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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2024-INFO-18
Date: March 22, 2024

Subject:

Region of Durham Annual Business Count (Employment Survey) - 2023

Recommendation:

Receive for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the results of the 2023 Business Count which was conducted during the summer of 2023.

2. Background

2.1 The annual Business Count is a comprehensive program to build and maintain the Region's employment information. Through regular collection, updating, and monitoring of the Region's Business Count information, year-over-year trends can be reported on. The Business Count is also used to update the Region's on-line business directory; provide background information for various planning studies; monitor growth; and promote economic development initiatives in the Region. The Business Count is a collaborative project, led by the Planning and Economic Development Department with support from Social Services, Finance, Corporate Services (Information Technology and Human Resources), the Office of the CAO (Corporate Communications), and the area municipalities.

- 2.2 The COVID-19 pandemic forced a pause in the Business Count in 2020. A modified Business Count was conducted in 2021, which wholly consisted of phone and email interviews, but did not yield reliable results to be directly comparable to previous years. In 2022, traditional data collection of Business Count information was resumed, while adhering to pandemic-related restrictions.
- 2.3 Since 2022, the avian flu has changed how farms are surveyed. Farm owners are no longer visited in-person, they are contacted via phone and encouraged to complete the survey online.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 The last full Business Count was conducted in 2022 (See Report [#2023-INFO-38](#)).

4. 2023 Durham Region Business Count

Methodology

- 4.1 2023 marked the eleventh annual Business Count, with in-person interviews primarily completed by nine summer students. The students were generally able to conduct each survey in less than five minutes. In cases where face-to-face interviews were not possible, businesses had the option of returning the survey by mail, fax, or by completing the survey via the Region's website. Major employers such as school boards, Ontario Power Generation, and municipalities were contacted by phone or email through their respective head offices. The Business Count process included visiting locations in all the Region's urban areas, hamlets, and rural employment areas. In the rural areas, a visual inspection was conducted in an effort to locate additional businesses so that the database would be as complete as possible.
- 4.2 Business locations surveyed included professional offices, stores, places of worship, hotels, medical offices, industrial facilities, schools, government offices, hospitals, not-for-profit establishments as well as vacant commercial, industrial, and institutional locations.
- 4.3 Home-based and mobile businesses were not included in the door-to-door survey, since they may not advertise, or be readily identifiable. A targeted social media advertising campaign was used to encourage home-based businesses to participate.
- 4.4 Farms were identified through signage which shows the name of the farm, as well as whether the farm is a member of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) or

the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO). Farm operators were also encouraged to participate in the Business Count through targeted radio and social media campaigns.

Key Findings

4.5 The information below provides the key findings from the 2023 Business Count for the Region of Durham. In the summer of 2023, there were:

- 210,038 jobs, a 4.3% increase over 2022;
- 12,718 businesses, a 0.2% decrease from 2022; and
- The top three employment sectors in the Region were:
 1. Retail trade (approximately 35,000 jobs at 2,500 businesses),
 2. Health care and social assistance (approximately 31,000 jobs at 1,500 businesses), and
 3. Educational services (approximately 20,000 jobs at 500 businesses).

4.6 Job gains were reported in 14 of 21 sectors. The following sectors each reported job increases of over 1,000 jobs:

- Educational services (+2,130 jobs);
- Transportation and Warehousing (+1,786 jobs);
- Health care and social assistance (+1,213 jobs);
- Public administration (+1,163 jobs); and
- Accommodation and food services (+1,066 jobs).

4.7 Jobs losses were reported in 7 sectors, although at lower levels. The sectors with the greatest job losses in 2023 were:

- Wholesale trade (-167 jobs);
- Information and cultural industries (-143 jobs);
- Manufacturing (-106 jobs).

4.8 The strong increase in jobs over 2022 appears to represent a return to pre-pandemic levels, including a modest year-over-year increase from 2019 (approximately 1.7% increase over 206,469 jobs in 2019). This is consistent with the easing of pandemic-related restrictions in the second half of 2022. While the COVID-19 pandemic was associated with a loss of jobs between 2019 and 2022, and many of the same social and economic uncertainties were still present in 2023 (including concerns such as climate change, supply chain issues, inflation, high interest rates, global political instability, and housing affordability challenges),

Durham's strong job numbers in 2023 indicate that the regional economy is recovering and continues to weather such challenges.

- 4.9 Attached is a highlights document which includes the results, analysis, and year-over-year trends as of the Summer of 2023 (Attachment 1). The findings from the survey confirm that Durham is a great place to live, work and invest.

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Economic Prosperity: To build a strong and resilient economy that maximizes opportunities for business and employment growth, innovation, and partnership.
- Goal 3.1 – Position Durham Region as the location of choice for business;
 - Goal 3.4 – Capitalize on Durham's strengths in key economic sectors to attract high-quality jobs;
- b. Service Excellence: To provide exceptional value to Durham taxpayers through responsive, effective, and fiscally sustainable service delivery.
- Goal 5.1 – Optimize resources and partnerships to deliver exceptional quality services and value; and
 - Goal 5.3 – Demonstrate commitment to continuous quality improvement and communicating results.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The data collected during the 2023 Business Count will be provided to the Area Municipalities and will be used to update the Region's business directory. Additionally, it will be used for a variety of planning and economic development purposes such as land use studies and growth monitoring. It will also provide the foundation for the next Business Count. A Business Count is planned to be completed in 2024 and will be reported on in early 2025.
- 6.2 For additional information, contact: Hidy Ng, Manager – GIS & Visualization, at 905-668-7711, extension 2570.

7. Attachments

Attachment #1: 2023 Business Count Highlights

Prepared by: Graham Wilson, Spatial Planner – Growth Management, at 905-668-7711, extension 2554.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP, PLE
Commissioner of Planning and Economic
Development



Planning and
Economic Development
Department

2023 Business Count Highlights

Released March 2024



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Message from the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development

In 2023, the Region of Durham and its municipal partners conducted the 11th annual Business Count. Between May and September, the Business Count Team visited over 14,000 businesses across the Region's eight area municipalities to gather vital information about the location, type, and characteristics of businesses.

Results from the Business Count tell us about the type of employment, number of employees, and overall characteristics of businesses in the Region. The data collected during the annual Business Count and its analysis of year-over-year trends is used to: update the Region's on-line business directory; provide background information for various planning studies; monitor growth; and promote economic development initiatives in the Region.

The information below provides the key findings from the 2023 Business Count. In the Summer of 2023, there were:

- a. 210,038 jobs in the Region, a 4.3% increase from 2022;
- b. 12,718 businesses in the Region, similar to 2022; and
- c. The top three employment sectors in the Region are retail trade, health care and social assistance, and educational services.

Attracting a wide range of high-quality jobs across sectors promotes economic resilience and ensure the residents of Durham Region have the chance to live, work, and play in their community. Despite prolonged economic uncertainty as the economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, that is attributed to macro-economic concerns such as supply chain issues, inflation, higher interest rates and housing affordability, Durham's investment in infrastructure and economic programming puts the Region in a strong position to thrive.

I encourage you to read the findings from the 2023 survey to learn more about Durham's local business landscape and why businesses continue to open and expand here. Thank you to the Region's Business Community for your support and continued participation in this very important initiative, and working together to keep Durham a great place to live, work and invest in.

Brian Bridgeman
Commissioner, Planning and Economic Development





Business Count Overview

Between May and September, the Region's Business Count team visit each visible business establishment in Durham to gather basic information about the type and nature of the business, the number of employees, etc. The 2023 Business Count Highlights Report details the survey results.

The data collected during the 2023 Business Count is shared with the area municipalities and will be used to update the Region's business directory. Additionally, it will be used for a variety of planning and economic development purposes such as land use studies and growth monitoring.

The Region's annual Business Count is conducted by a group of nine summer students primarily through short face-to-face interviews. The students, on average, conduct each survey in less than five minutes. In the event a face-to-face interview is not possible, businesses have the option of returning the survey by mail, fax, e-mail, or by completing it on the Region's website. Large employers such as school boards, Ontario Power Generation and municipal government offices are contacted by phone or email. The survey coverage includes all the Region's urban areas, hamlets and rural employment areas. In the rural areas, a visual inspection was conducted in an effort to locate additional businesses, so that the database would be as complete as possible.

Business locations surveyed include, but are not limited to, professional offices, stores, places of worship, hotels, medical offices, industrial facilities, schools, government offices, hospitals, not for profit establishments, vacant commercial, industrial, and institutional locations. Since 2022, farm operations are surveyed remotely due to the risk of spreading avian flu.

Home-based and mobile businesses are not included in the door-to-door survey. These types of businesses are challenging to survey in person due to a lack of a traditional bricks and mortar location. A targeted social media advertising campaign and radio ads are used to encourage home-based businesses to participate.



Durham Region

Total Businesses

12,718



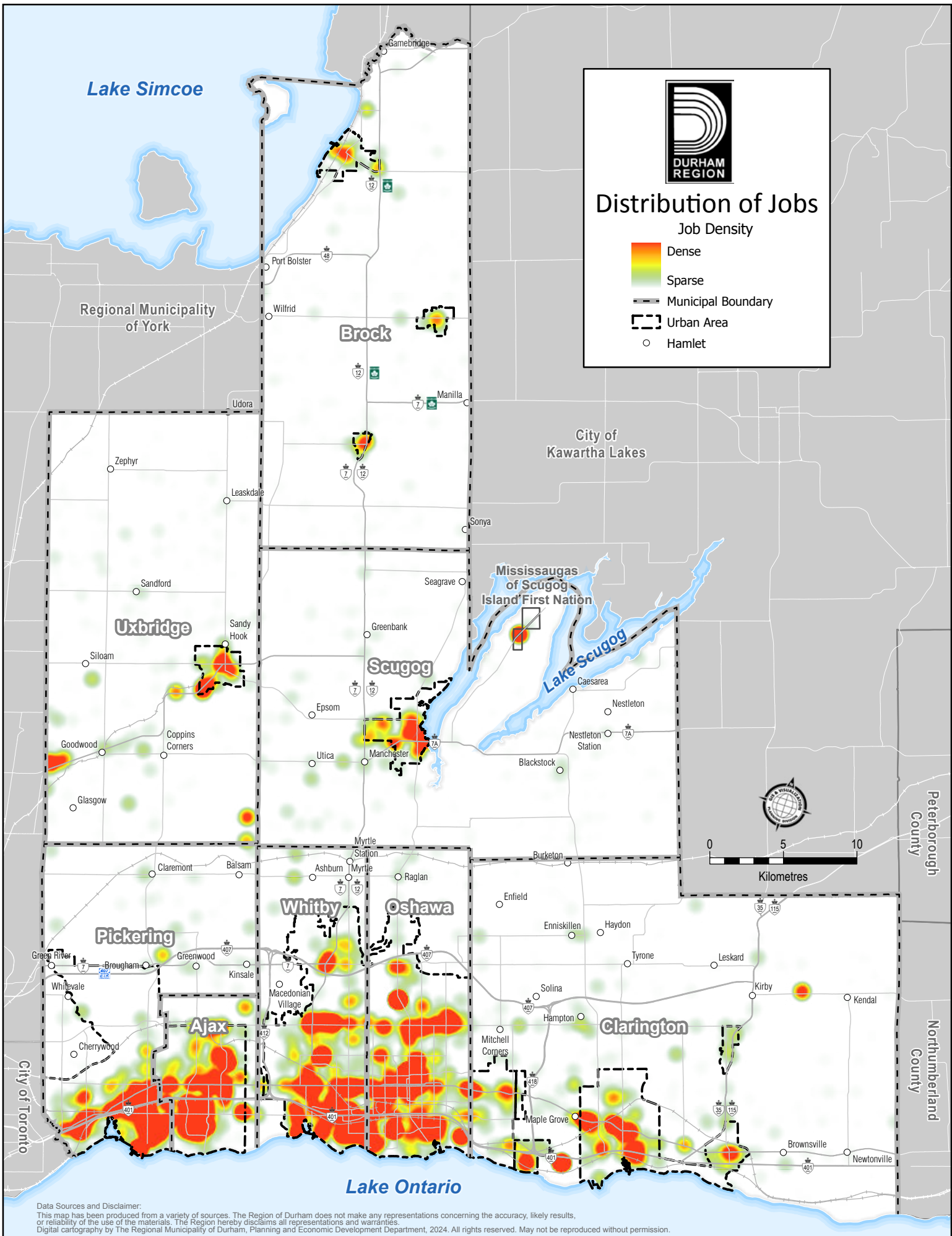
Total Jobs

210,038



Jobs Relative to 2022





Distribution of Jobs

Job Density



Dense

Sparse

--- Municipal Boundary

--- Urban Area

○ Hamlet



Data Sources and Disclaimer:
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Population, jobs and business growth

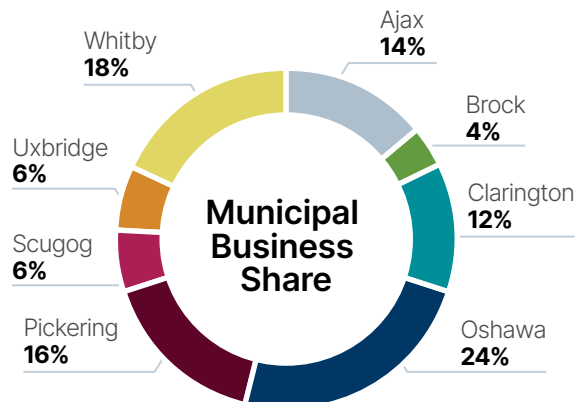
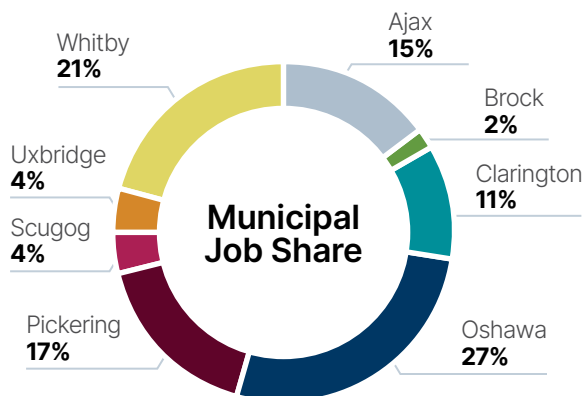
Population Estimate by Year



Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



Lake Simcoe



Distribution of Businesses

Business Density

Value



★ Top Employer in Municipality

— Municipal Boundary

- - - Urban Area

○ Hamlet

Regional Municipality of York

Brock

City of Kawartha Lakes

Uxbridge

Scugog

Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation

The Great Blue Heron Charity Casino

Lakeridge Resort Limited

Pickering

Whitby

Oshawa

Ajax

Regional Municipality of Durham - HQ

Lakeridge Health - Oshawa Hospital

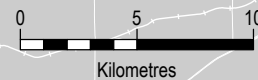
Clarington

Lakeridge Health - Ajax

OPG - Pickering Nuclear Plant

OPG - Darlington Nuclear Power Plant

Lake Ontario



Peterborough County

Northumberland County

Data Sources and Disclaimer:

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Top 10 Employers in Durham are:

Company	Employees
Lakeridge Health	8,500 - 8,999
Durham District School Board (DDSB)	7,000 - 7,499
Ontario Power Generation (OPG)	7,000 - 7,499
Regional Municipality of Durham	5,000 - 5,499
Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB)	3,750 - 3,999
General Motors of Canada	3,750 - 3,999
Durham College	2,500 - 2,749
Tim Hortons	2,500 - 2,749
Walmart	2,000 - 2,249
McDonald's	2,000 - 2,249



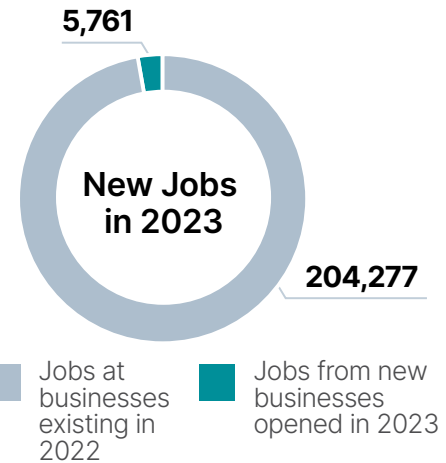
Business locations
opened in 2023

860

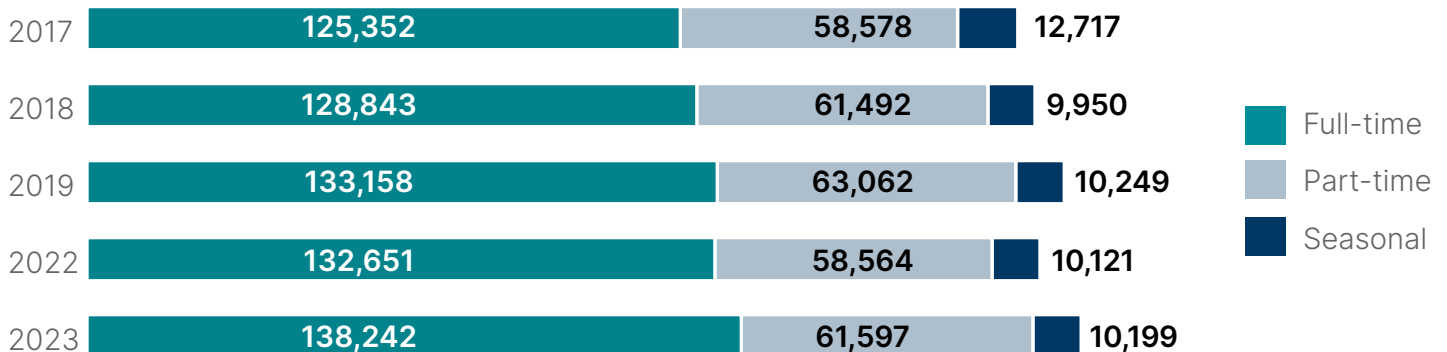


Business locations
vacant in 2023

1,550

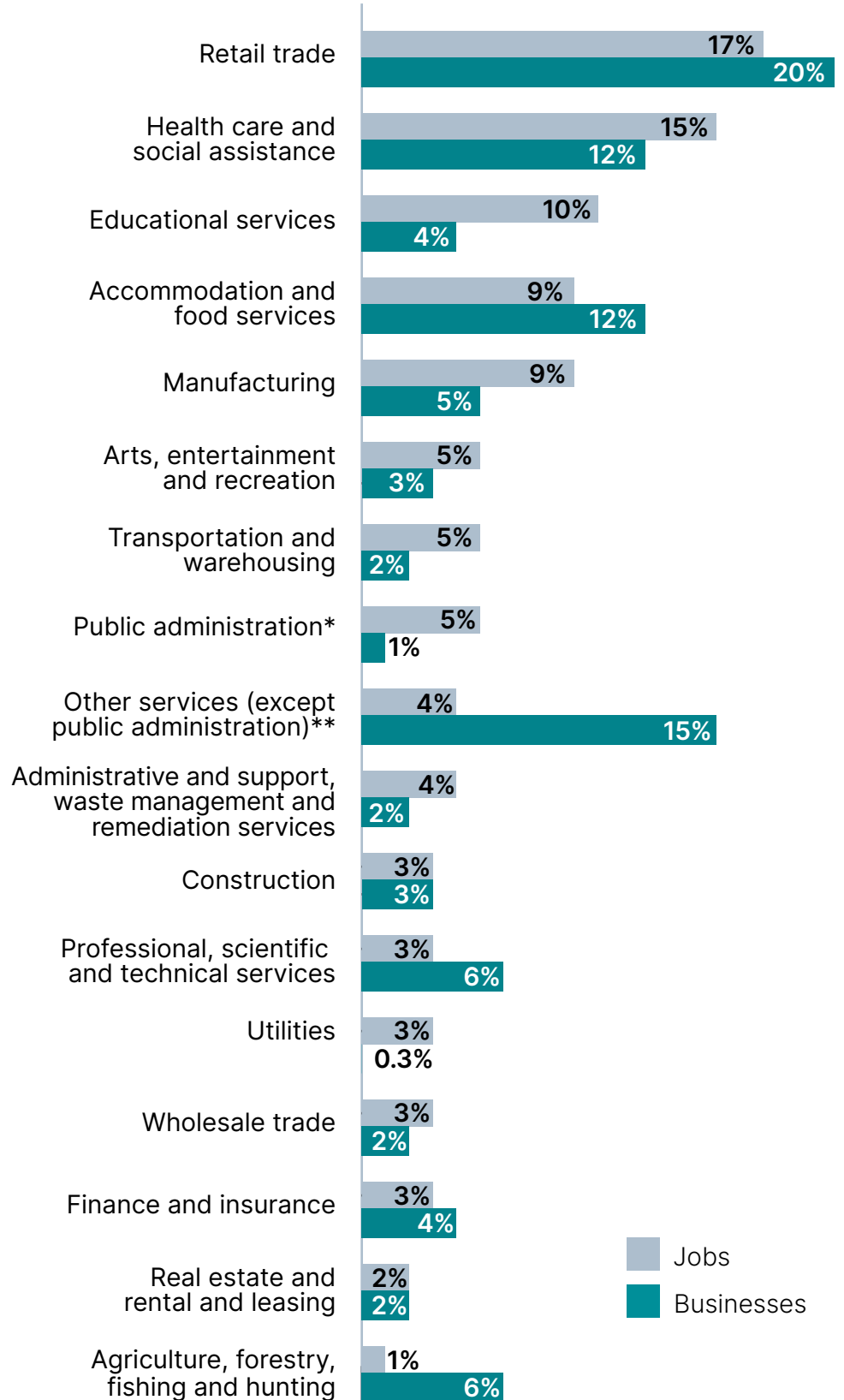


Jobs by Employment Type





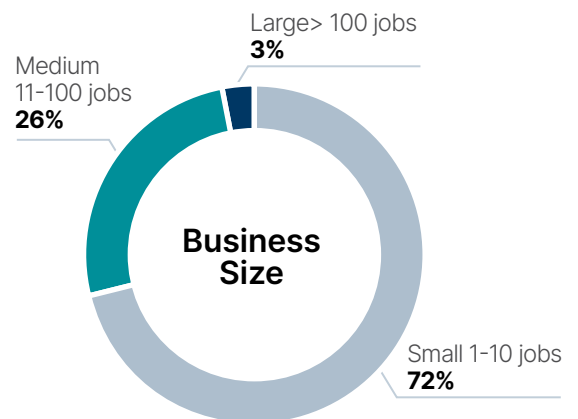
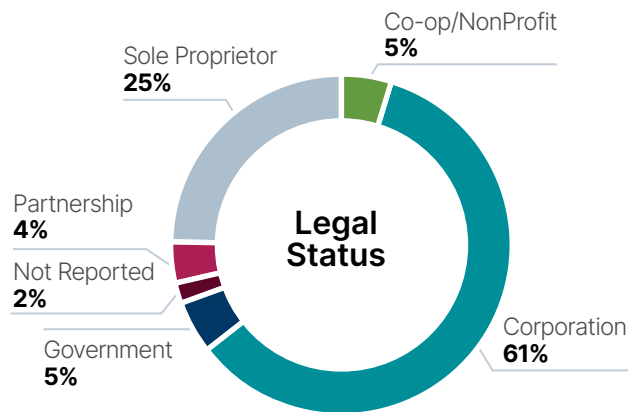
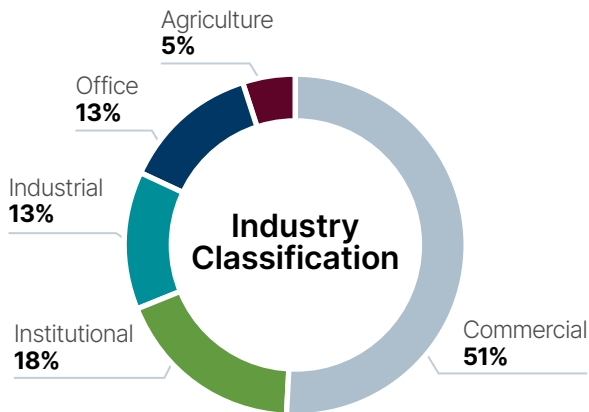
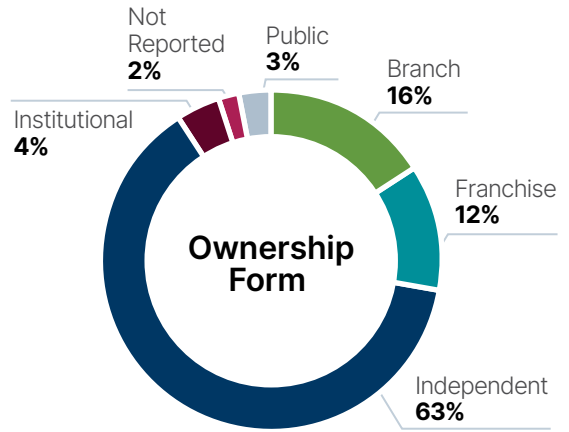
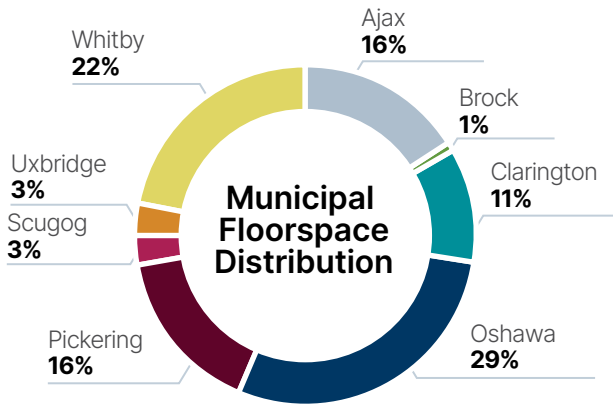
Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



*Public administration, e.g.: government, law enforcement, and other public agencies.

**Other services (except public administration), e.g.: personal services, repair, and civic organizations.

Percentage of Businesses by:



Businesses most often reported difficulty in finding skilled workers in the following occupations: labour; customer services, sales, and management; chefs/cooks; auto mechanic; automotive; medical/health services; trades; education; hair stylist or esthetician. Businesses also often reported a lack of applicants for available positions.



751

Businesses Import






440

Businesses Export



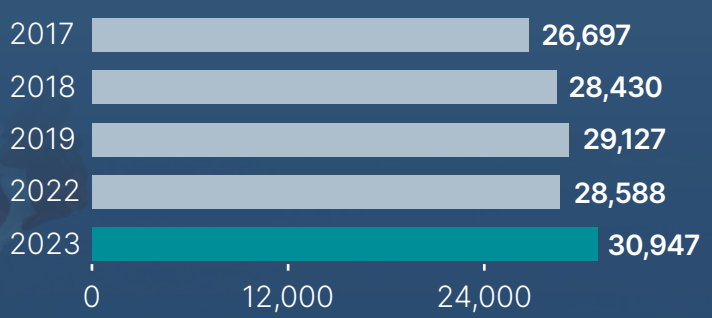
Ajax



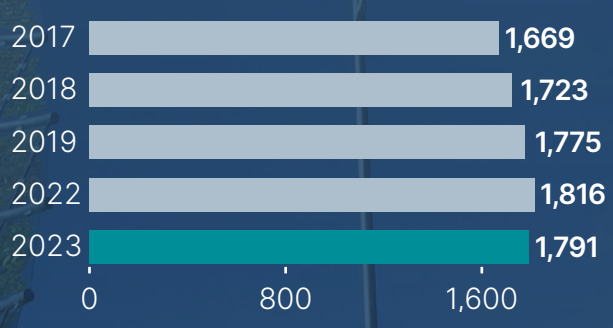
Total Businesses	1,791	
Total Jobs	30,947	
Jobs Relative to 2022	8.25%	

Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



122

Businesses Import



70

Businesses Export

TOWN OF AJAX
OPERATIONS CENTRE

Top 10 Employers in Ajax are:

Company	Jobs
Lakeridge Health	1,750 - 1,999
Durham District School Board (DDSB)	1,250 - 1,499
Amazon Inc.	1,250 - 1,499
Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB)	1,000 - 1,249
Town of Ajax	750 - 999
Loblaws Companies Limited	750 - 999
SaFran Landing Systems	500 - 749
Intact Insurance Company	250 - 499
Costco Wholesale	250 - 499
Lear Canada	250 - 499



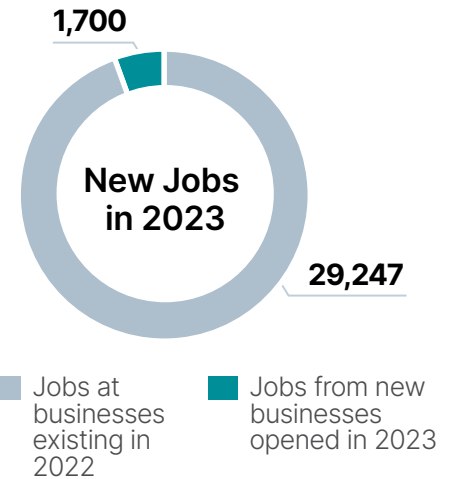
Business locations
opened in 2023

83

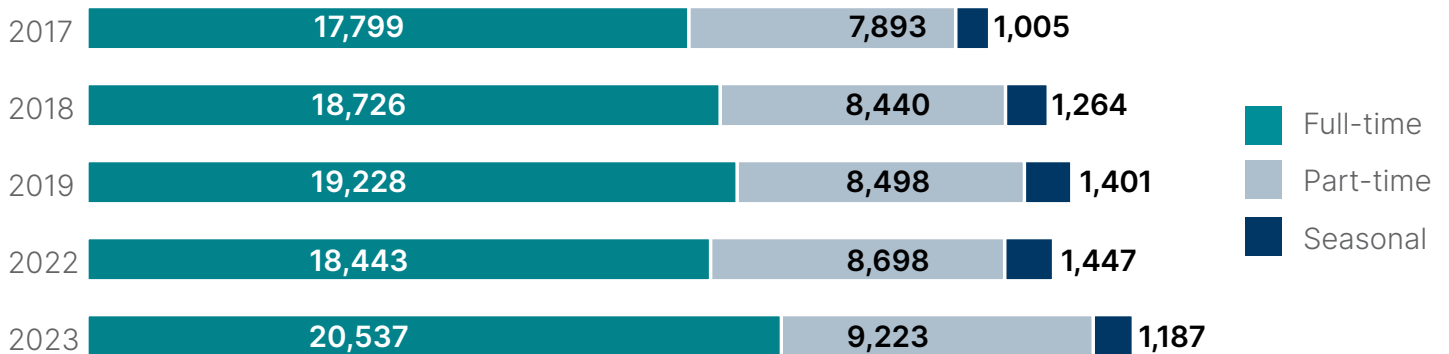


Business locations
vacant in 2023

198

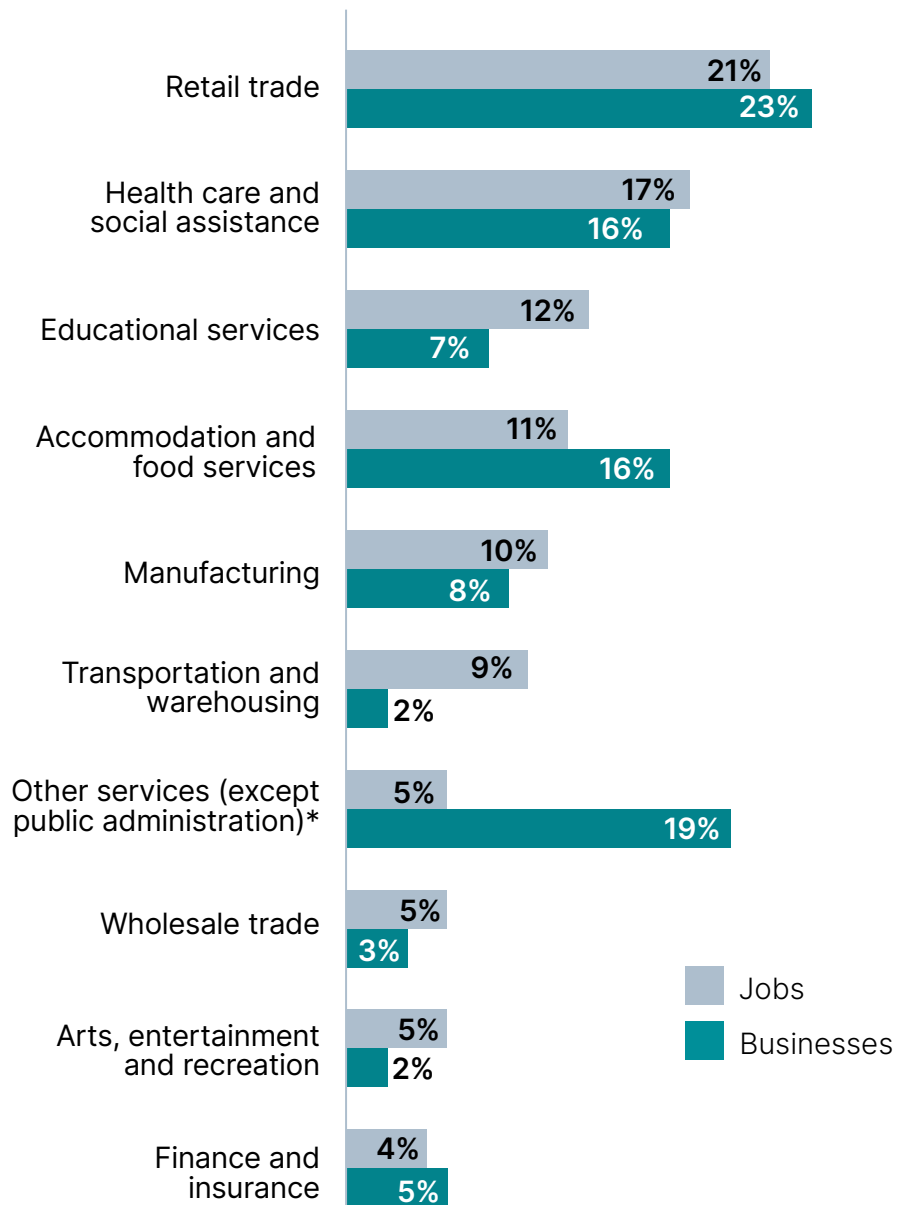


Jobs by Employment Type





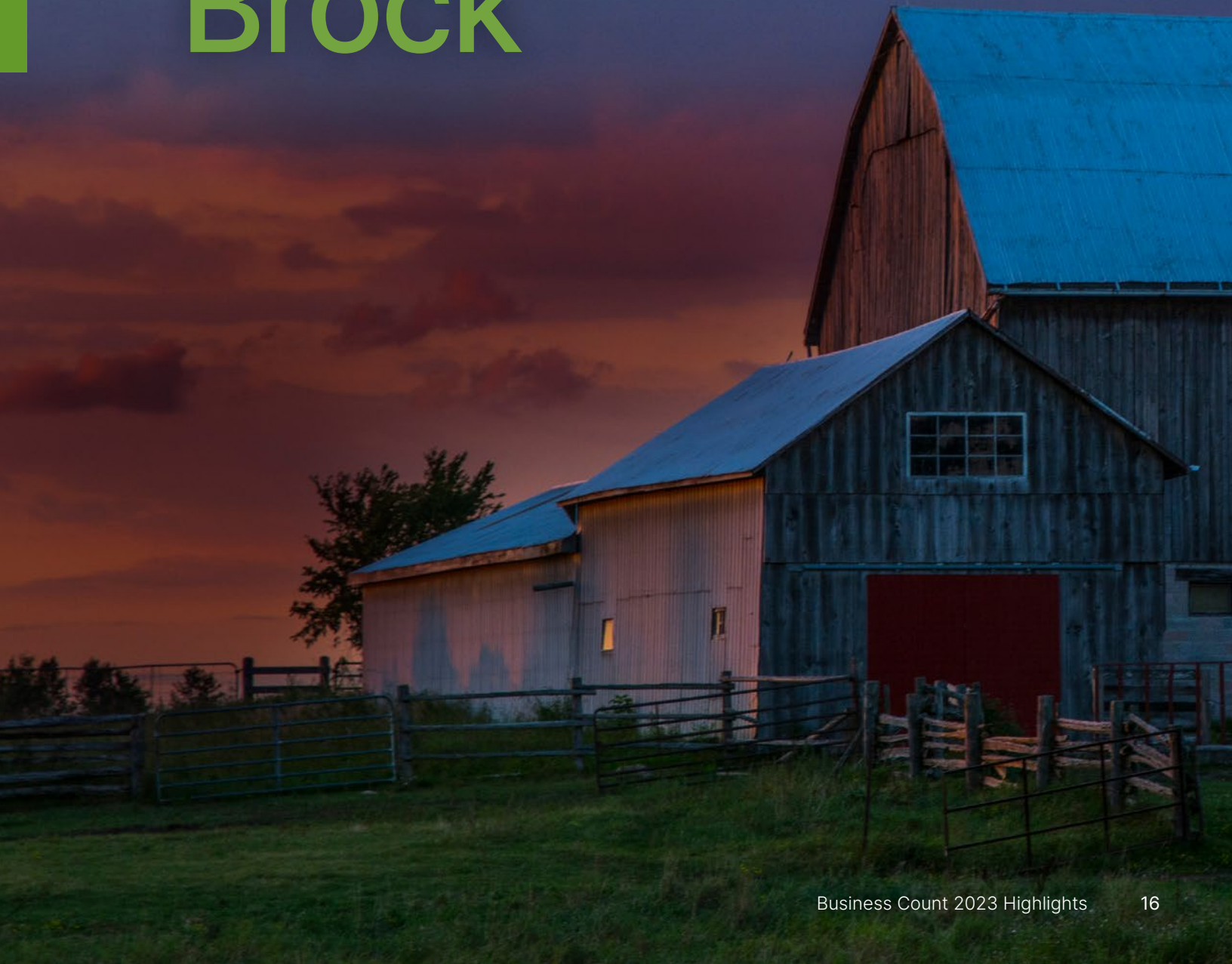
Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



*Other services (except public administration), e.g.: personal services, repair, and civic organizations.



Brock



Total Businesses

508



Total Jobs

3,549



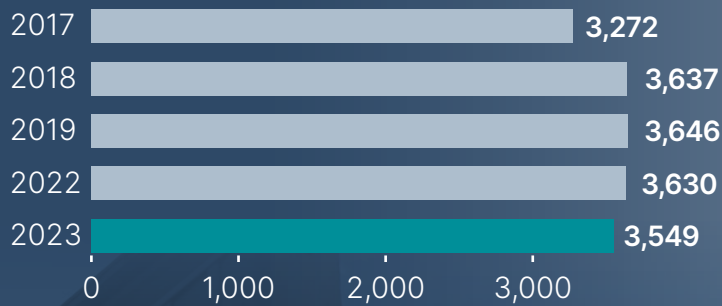
Jobs Relative to 2022

-2.23%



Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



10

Businesses Import



12

Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Brock are:

Company	Jobs
Regional Municipality of Durham	250 - 499
Stock Transportation	100 - 249
Durham District School Board (DDSB)	100 - 249
Township of Brock	100 - 249
GoodYear Farm	100 - 249
Fisher's Independent Grocer	100 - 249
Sunderland Co-Operative	50 - 99
Flex -N- Gate	50 - 99
Bon Air Residence	50 - 99
Fairgreen Sod Farms	50 - 99



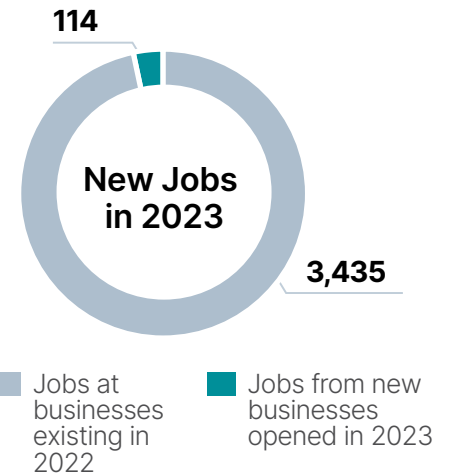
Business locations
opened in 2023

26

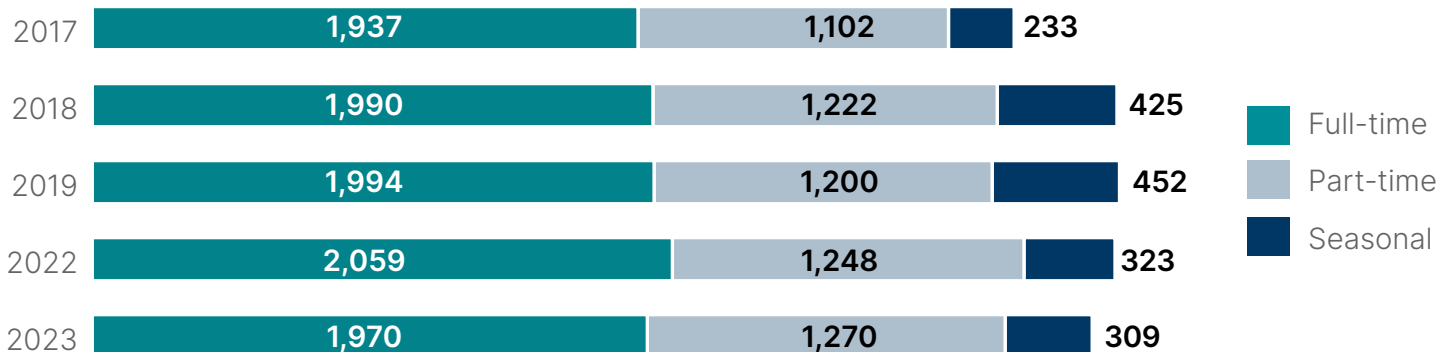


Business locations
vacant in 2023

46

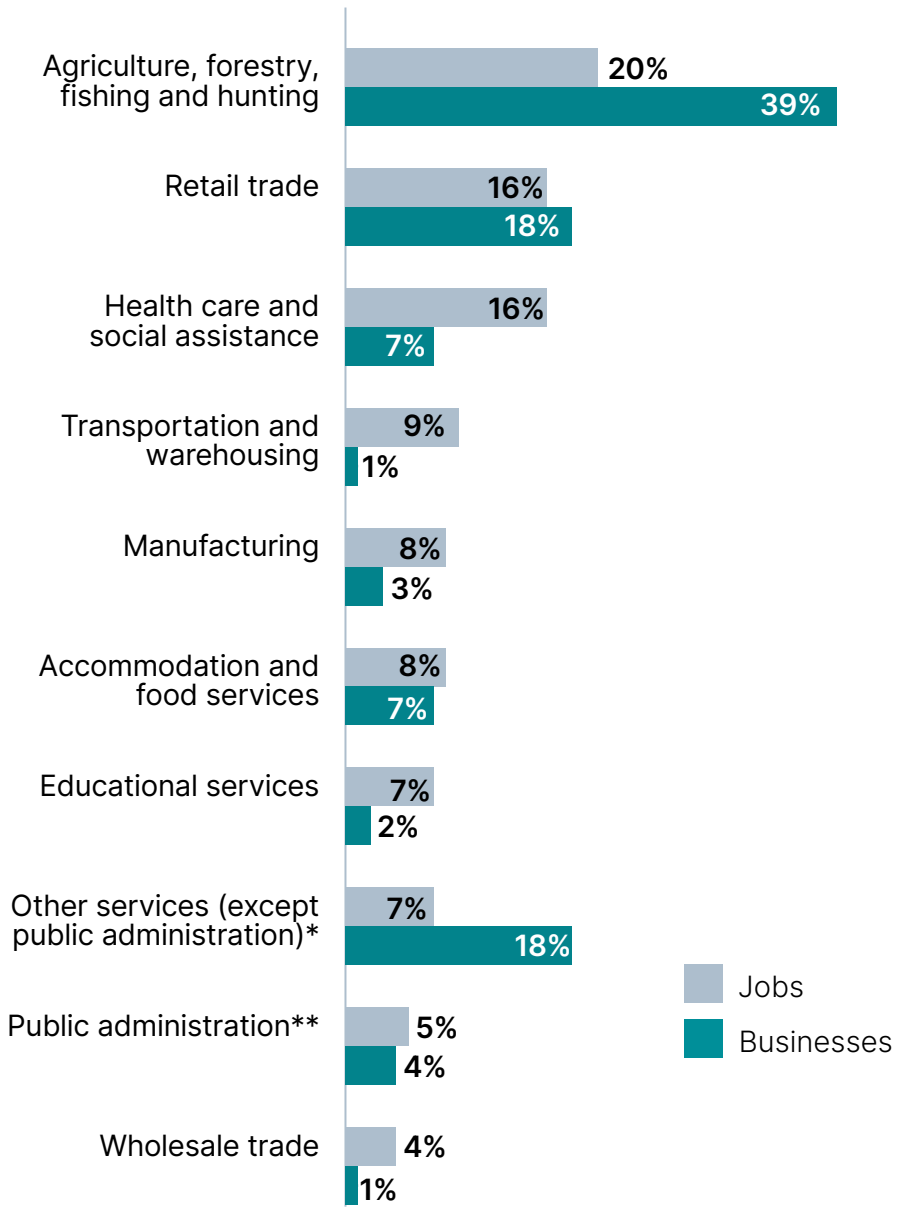


Jobs by Employment Type



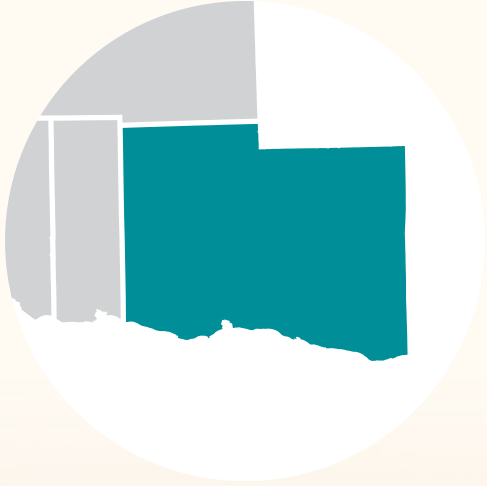


Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses






*Other services (except public administration), e.g.: personal services, repair, and civic organizations.

**Public administration, e.g.: government, law enforcement, and other public agencies.



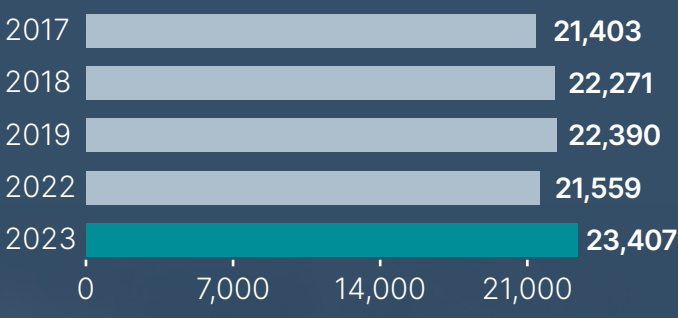
Clarington



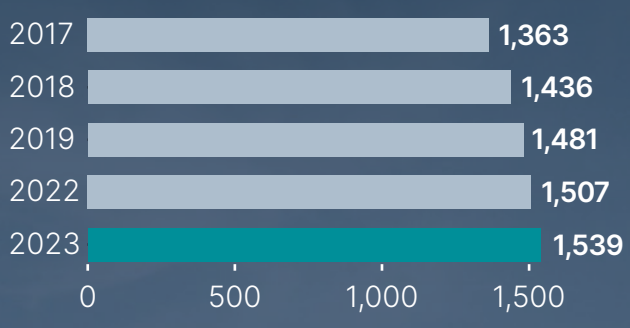
Total Businesses	1,539	
Total Jobs	23,407	
Jobs Relative to 2022	8.57%	

Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



76

Businesses Import



52

Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Clarington are:

Company	Jobs
Ontario Power Generation (OPG)	2,750 - 2,999
Municipality of Clarington	1,250 - 1,499
Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPRDSB)	1,000 - 1,249
Black&McDonald - Nuclear Services	500 - 749
Lakeridge Health	500 - 749
Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board (PVNCCDSB)	500 - 749
Brimacombe	250 - 499
Wal-Mart	250 - 499
Tim Hortons	250 - 499
Durham Christian Homes Society Inc.	250 - 499



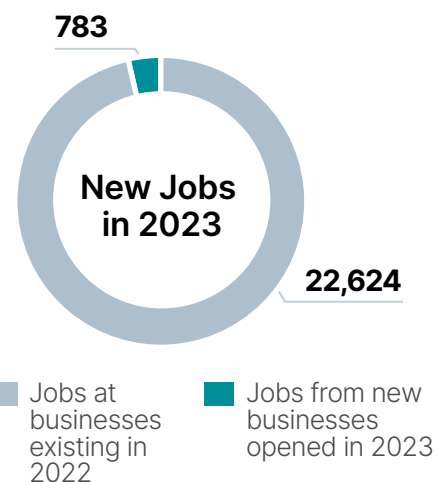
Business locations opened in 2023

133

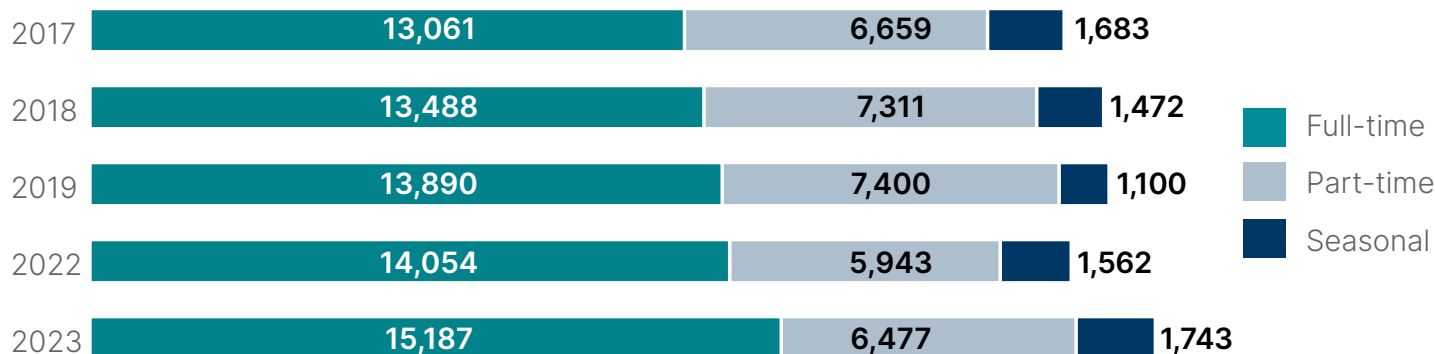


Business locations vacant in 2023

89

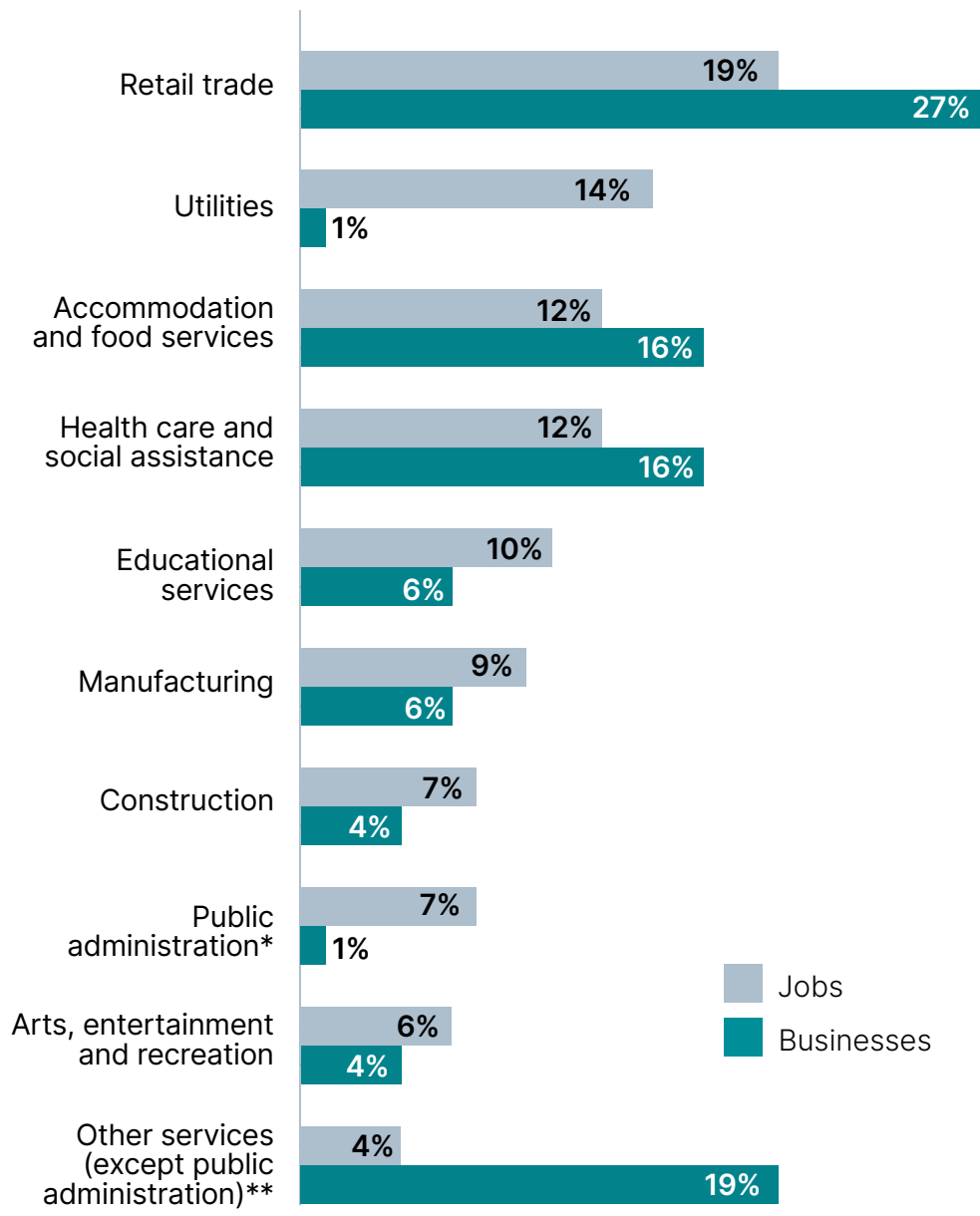


Jobs by Employment Type





Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses






*Public administration, e.g.: government, law enforcement, and other public agencies.
 **Other services (except public administration), e.g.: personal services, repair, and civic organizations.



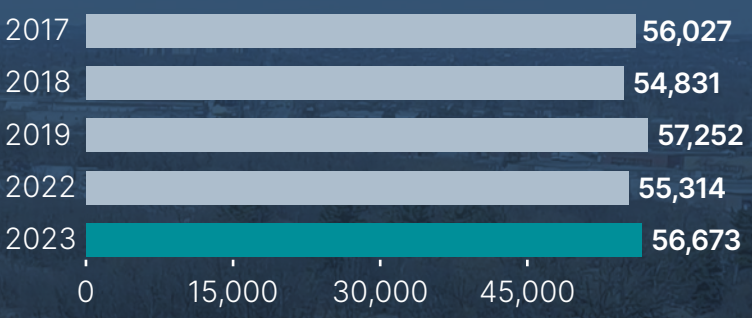
Oshawa



Total Businesses	3,067	
Total Jobs	56,673	
Jobs Relative to 2022	2.46%	

Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



155
Businesses Import



70
Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Oshawa are:

Company	Jobs
Lakeridge Health	4,250 - 4,499
General Motors of Canada	3,750 - 3,999
Durham College	2,000 - 2,249
Durham District School Board (DDSB)	1,750 - 1,999
Ontario Tech University	1,250 - 1,499
City of Oshawa	1,250 - 1,499
Regional Municipality of Durham	1,250 - 1,499
Concentrix	1,000 - 1,249
Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB)	1,000 - 1,249
Ministry of Finance	1,000 - 1,249



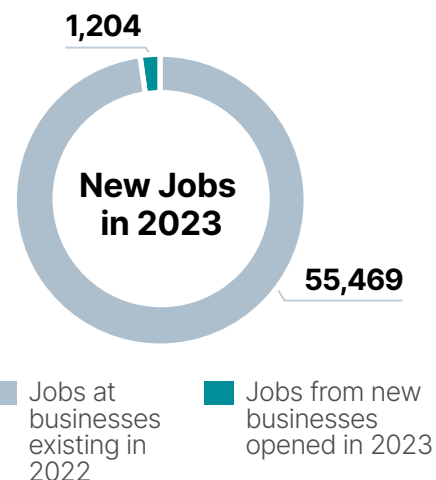
Business locations
opened in 2023

267

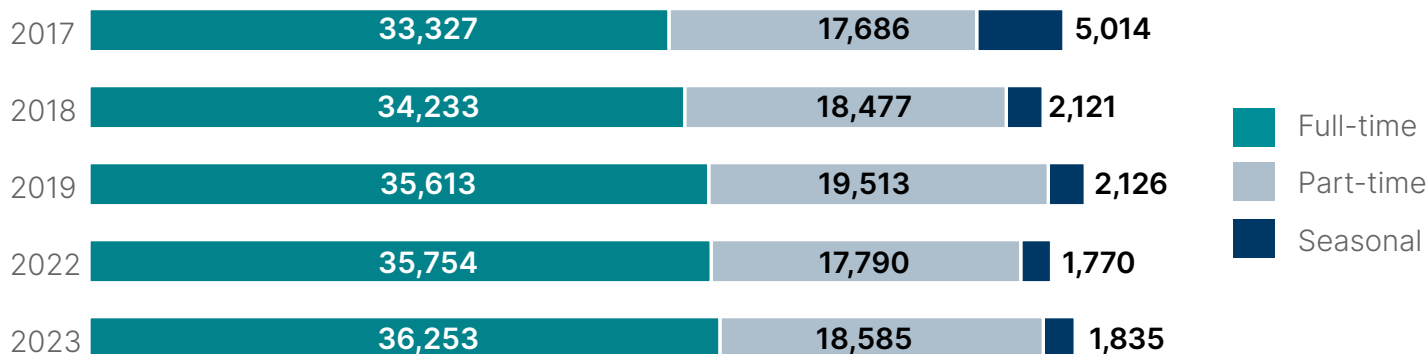


Business locations
vacant in 2023

492

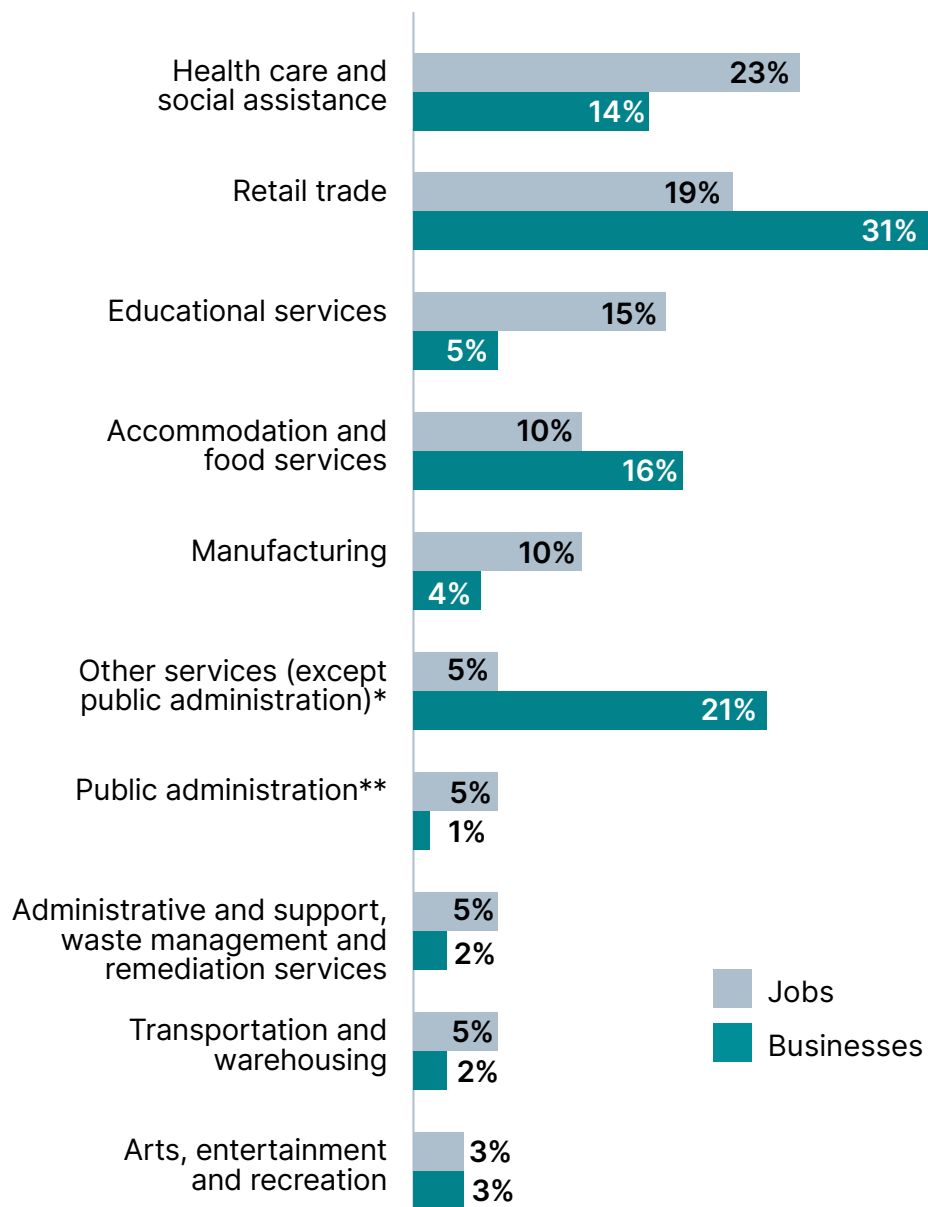


Jobs by Employment Type





Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses






*Other services (except public administration), e.g.: personal services, repair, and civic organizations.

**Public administration, e.g.: government, law enforcement, and other public agencies.



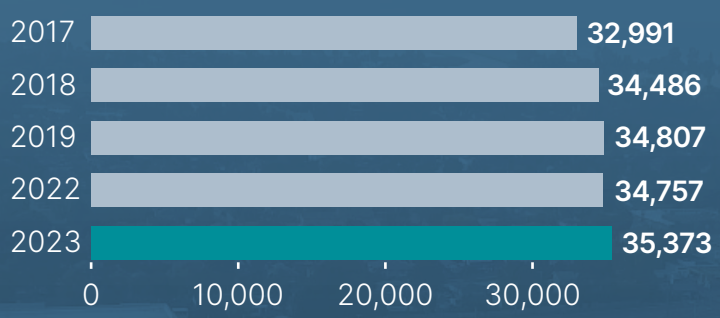
Pickering



Total Businesses	2,004	
Total Jobs	35,373	
Jobs Relative to 2022	1.77%	

Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



176
Businesses Import



114
Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Pickering are:

Company	Jobs
Ontario Power Generation (OPG)	3,750 - 3,999
City of Pickering	1,000 - 1,249
Durham District School Board (DDSB)	750 - 999
Rogers	750 - 999
Pickering Casino Resort	500 - 749
Aspect Retail Logistics	500 - 749
MPAC (Municipal Property Assessment Corporation)	500 - 749
Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB)	250 - 499
Orchard Villa Long Term Care	250 - 499
Trigo	250 - 499



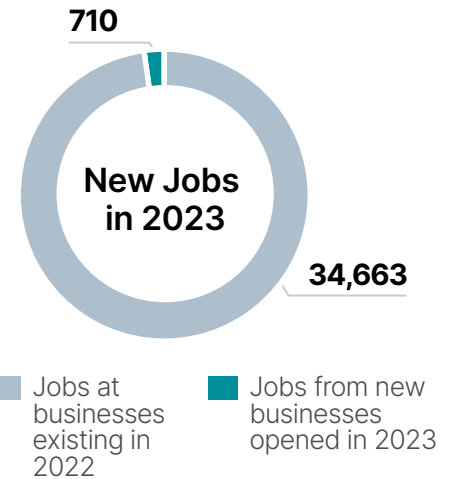
Business locations
opened in 2023

128

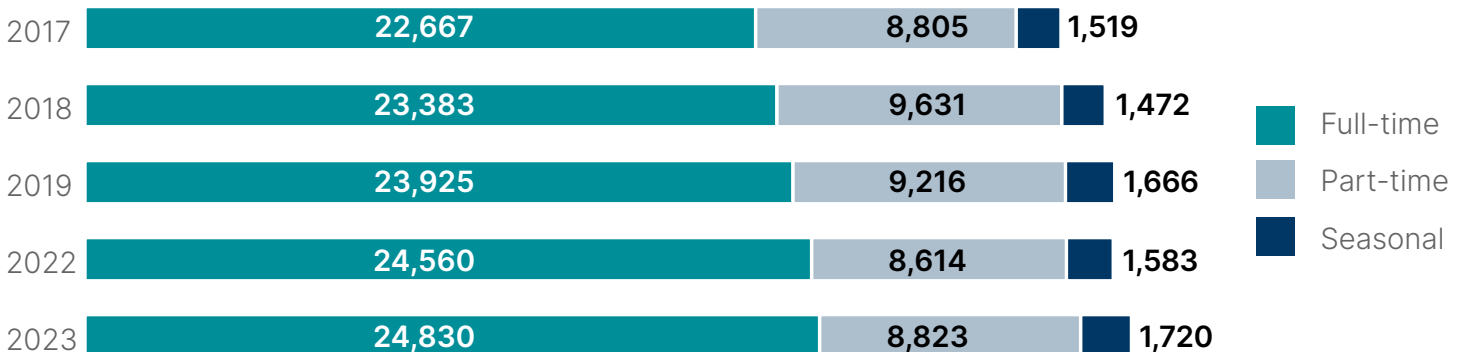


Business locations
vacant in 2023

315

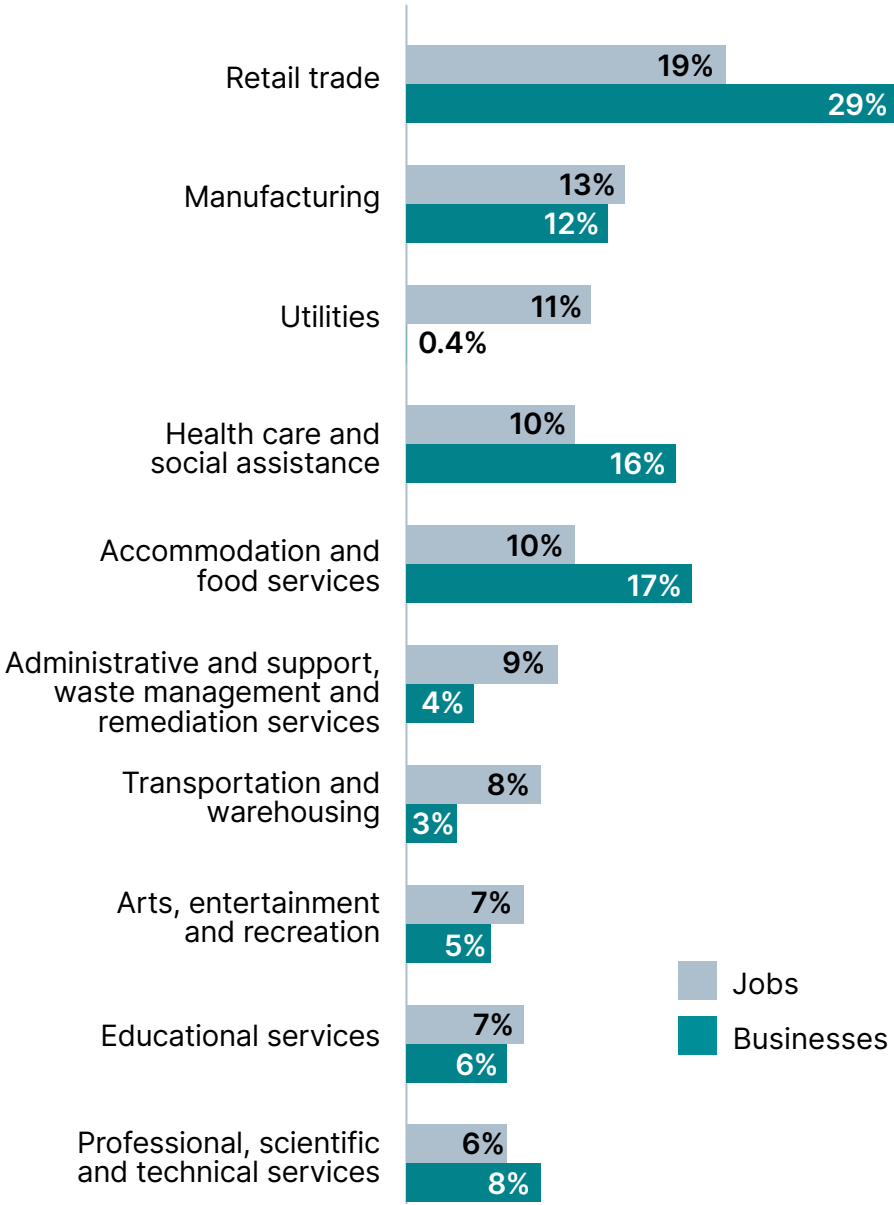


Jobs by Employment Type





Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses





Scugog



Total Businesses

782



Total Jobs

7,740



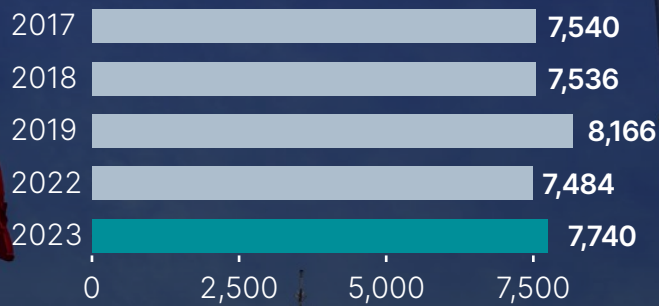
Jobs Relative to 2022

3.42%

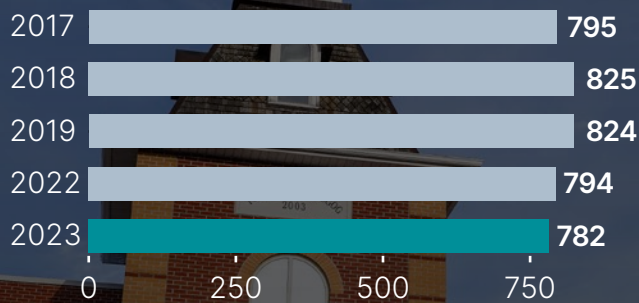


Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



34
Businesses Import



25
Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Scugog are:

Company	Jobs
The Great Blue Heron Charity Casino	750 - 999
Durham District School Board (DDSB)	250 - 499
Walmart	250 - 499
Independent Grocers	100 - 249
Lakeridge Health	100 - 249
Port Perry Place Care Home	100 - 249
Greenwood Mushroom Farm	100 - 249
Regional Municipality of Durham	100 - 249
Tim Hortons	100 - 249
Willow Tree Farms	100 - 249



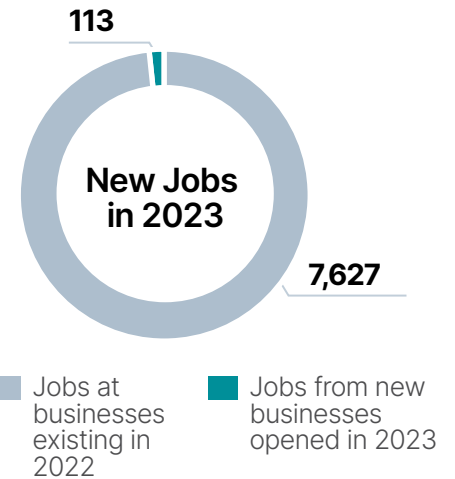
Business locations
opened in 2023

37

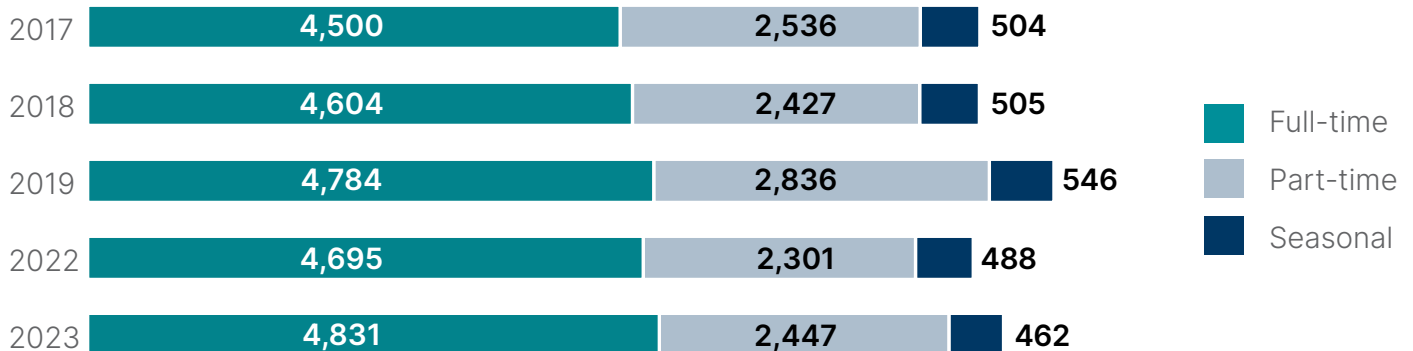


Business locations
vacant in 2023

105

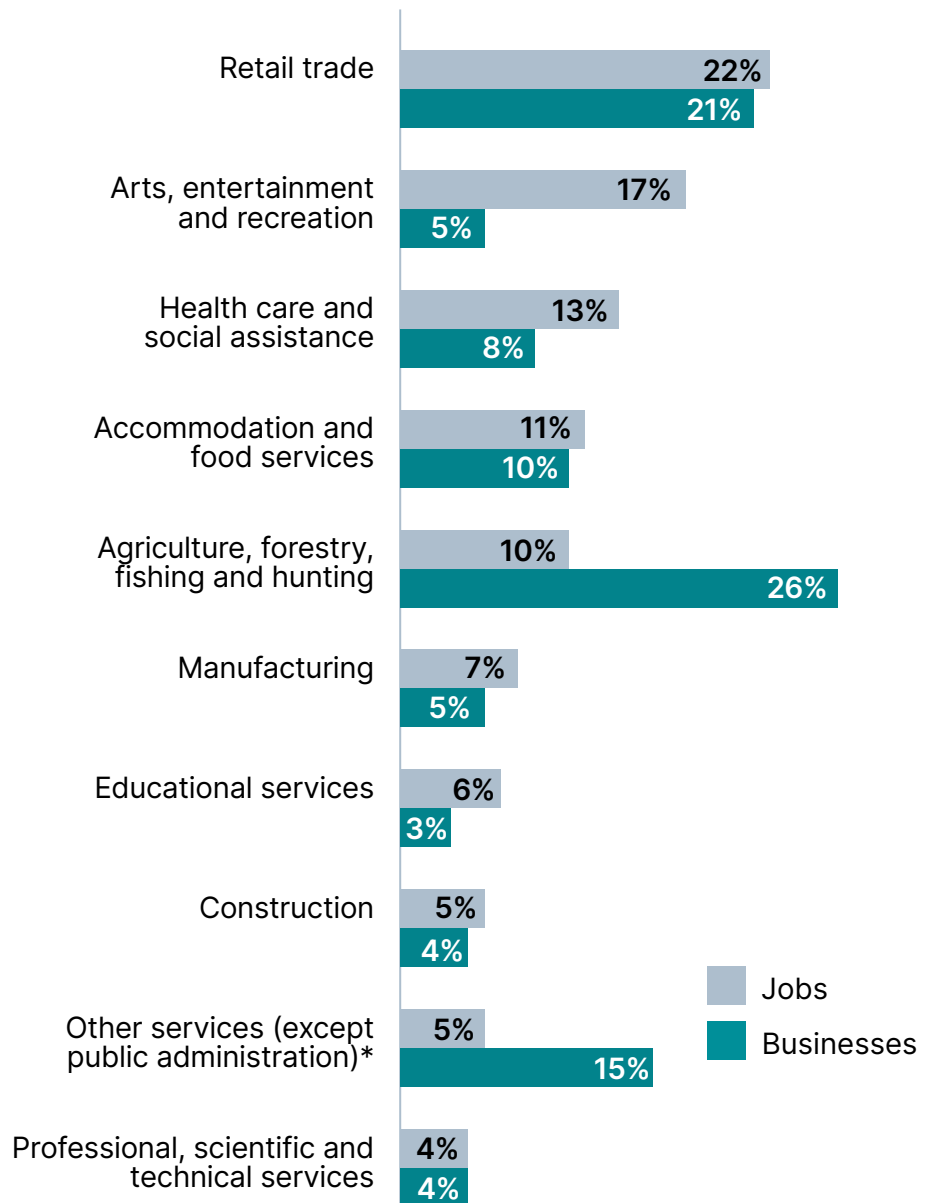


Jobs by Employment Type





Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



*Other services (except public administration), e.g.: personal services, repair, and civic organizations.



Uxbridge

Total Businesses

715



Total Jobs

7,990



Jobs Relative to 2022

0.44%



Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



38

Businesses Import



25

Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Uxbridge are:

Company	Jobs
Lakeridge Resort Limited	250 - 499
Durham District School Board (DDSB)	250 - 499
Dagmar Ski Resort	250 - 499
Heritage Restoration Inc	100 - 249
Township of Uxbridge	100 - 249
Loblaw Companies Ltd	100 - 249
Stanmore Load Lifter Manufacturing Ltd.	100 - 249
Stanmore Equipment Ltd	100 - 249
Castool Tooling Systems	100 - 249
Mill Run Golf Club	100 - 249



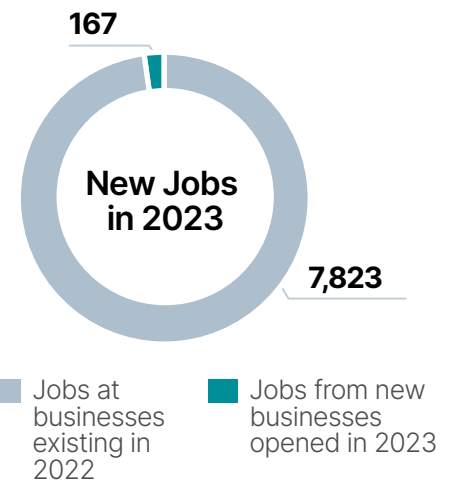
Business locations opened in 2023

31

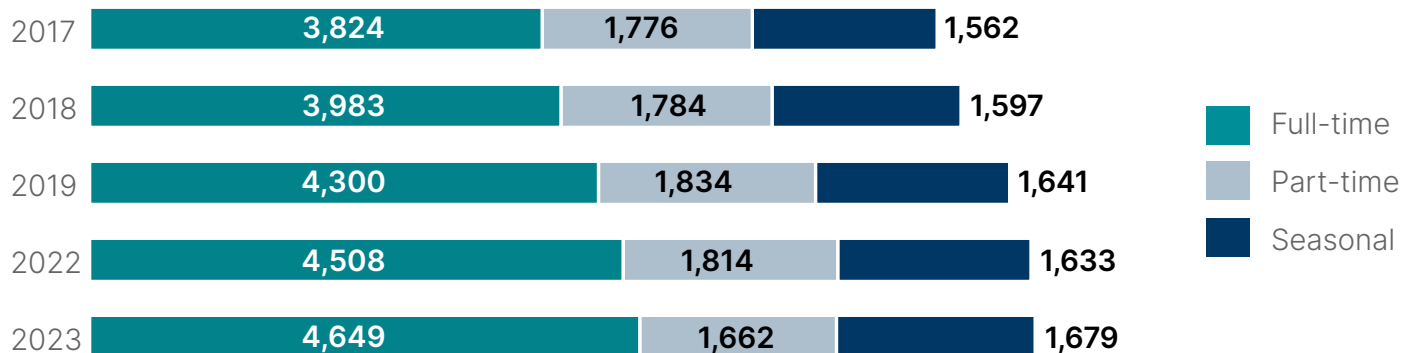


Business locations vacant in 2023

73

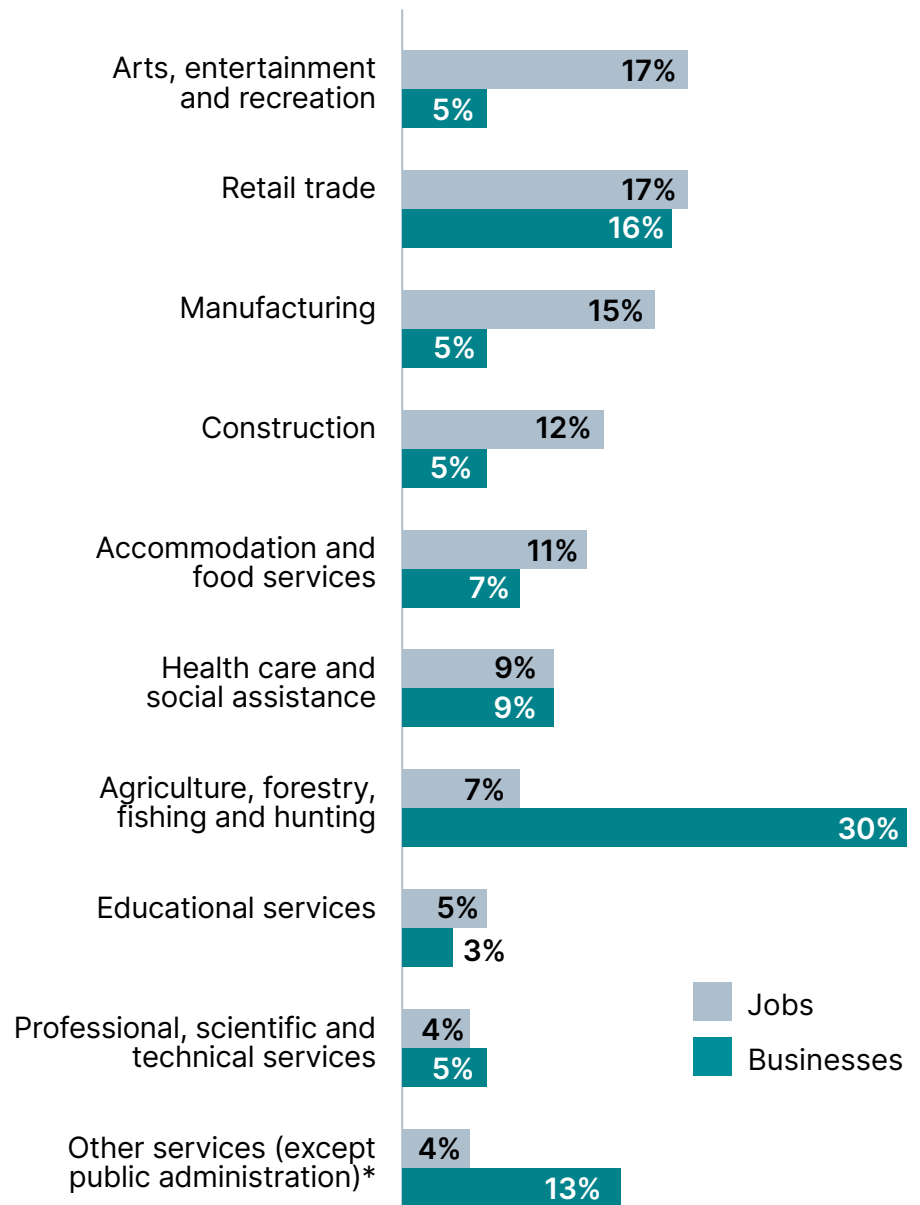


Jobs by Employment Type








Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



*Other services (except public administration), e.g.: personal services, repair, and civic organizations.

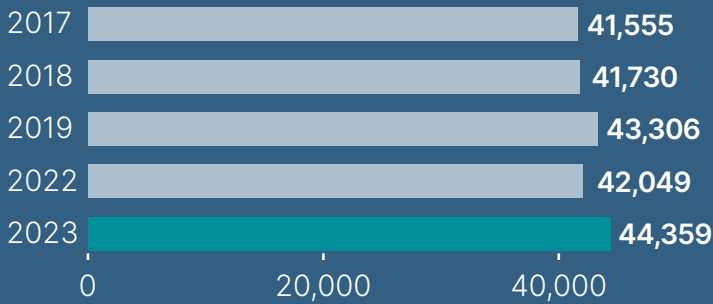


Whitby

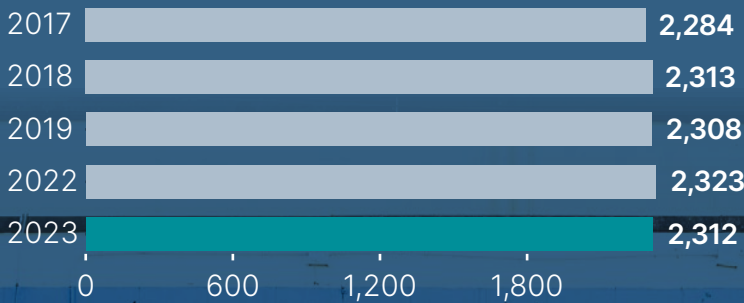
Total Businesses	2,312	
Total Jobs	44,359	
Jobs Relative to 2022	5.49%	

Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



DOWNTOWN



140
Businesses Import



72
Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Whitby are:

Company	Jobs
Regional Municipality of Durham	2,250 - 2,499
Durham District School Board (DDSB)	2,250 - 2,499
Lakeridge Health	1,500 - 1,749
Town of Whitby	750 - 999
Gerdau	750 - 999
Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB)	750 - 999
Central East LHIN	500 - 749
Durham Regional Police	500 - 749
Sobeys Whitby Service Centre	500 - 749
Tim Hortons	500 - 749

MUNICIPALITY OF DURHAM HEADQUARTERS



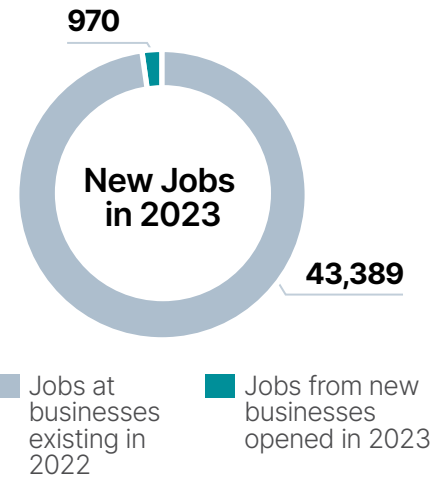
Business locations opened in 2023

155

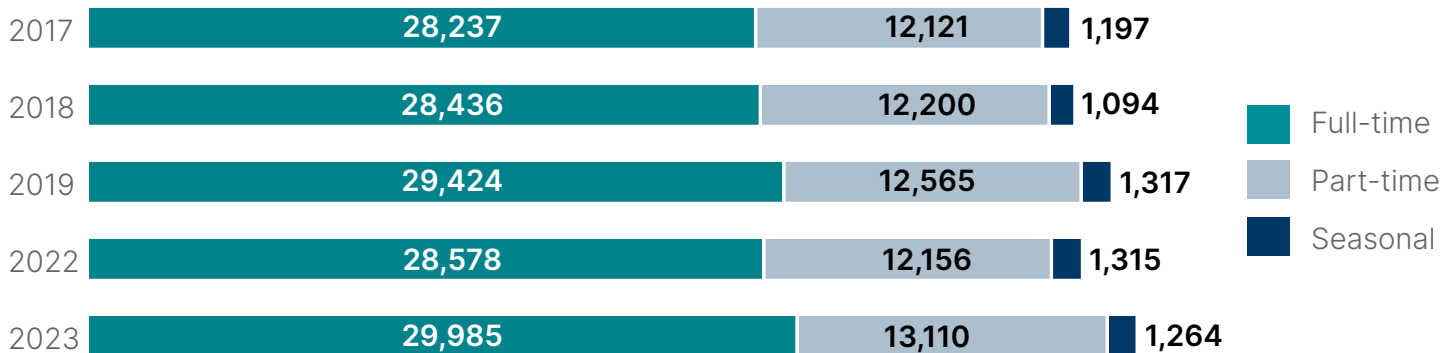


Business locations vacant in 2023

232

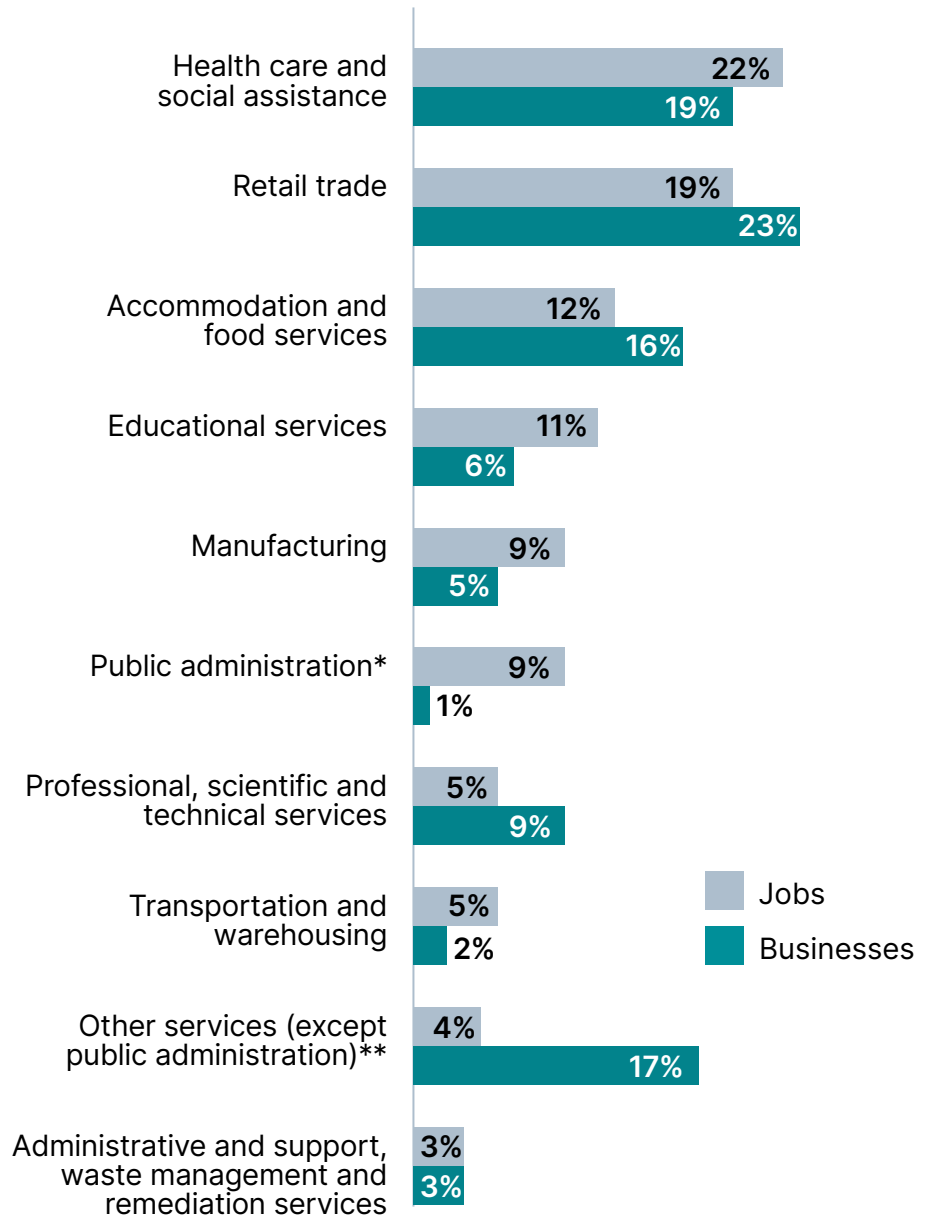


Jobs by Employment Type





Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



*Public administration, e.g.: government, law enforcement, and other public agencies.

**Other services (except public administration), e.g.: personal services, repair, and civic organizations.



The Regional Municipality of Durham
Planning and Economic Development Department, Planning Division
605 Rossland Rd. E., 4th Floor
PO Box 623
Whitby, ON L1N 6A3

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact us.
Within Durham: 311 • Toll-Free: 1-800-372-1102