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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development
Report: #2025-INFO-20
Date: April 4, 2025

Subject:

Region of Durham Annual Business Count (Employment Survey) – 2024 Findings

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the results of the 2024 Business Count which was conducted during the summer of 2024.

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 determined. 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 Community Growth and Economic Development Department with support from Finance, Corporate Services (Information Technology and Human Resources), the Office of the CAO (Corporate Communications), and the area municipalities.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 The last Business Count was conducted in 2023 (See Report [#2024-INFO-18](#)).

4. 2024 Durham Region Business Count

Methodology

- 4.1 2024 marked the twelfth 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 post or e-mail, answering the questionnaire over the phone, or by completing the survey online 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 involves visiting locations in all the Region's urban areas, hamlets, and rural employment areas. In the rural areas, a visual inspection is conducted in an effort to locate new or missed businesses so that the database can be as complete as possible.
- 4.2 Business locations surveyed included professional offices, stores, places of worship, hotels, medical offices, industrial facilities, farm operations, schools, government offices, hospitals, not-for-profit establishments as well as 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 using an online form available on the Region's website.
- 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). Although many farms could not be surveyed in-person due to the transmission risk of avian-flu, they were contacted via phone or email. However, farms with a public storefront were still visited as they have a designated public area. 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 2024 Business Count. In the summer of 2024, there were:

- 218,205 jobs in the Region, a 3.89% increase over 2023;
- 12,620 businesses in the Region, a 0.77% decrease over 2023; and
- The top three employment sectors in the Region were:
 1. Retail trade (35,000 jobs, across 2,500 businesses);
 2. Health care and social assistance (33,000 jobs, across 1,500 businesses);
 3. Educational services (21,000 jobs, across 540 businesses).

4.6 Job gains were reported in 18 of 21 sectors. The following sectors each reported job increases of over 1,000 jobs:

- Manufacturing (+1,532 jobs);
- Utilities (+1,417 jobs); and
- Other Services not classified elsewhere, including general and specialized services such as but not limited to: Repair and Maintenance Services, Pet Care Services, Civic Organizations (+1,036 jobs).

4.7 Jobs losses were reported in 3 sectors, although at lower levels. The sectors with job losses in 2024 were:

- Arts, entertainment and recreation (-240 jobs);
- Retail trade (-218 jobs);
- Finance and insurance (-120 jobs).

4.8 Attached is a highlights document which includes the results, analysis, and year-over-year trends, by area municipality, as of the Summer of 2024 (Attachment 1). The survey findings underscore Durham's attractiveness, not only as a place to reside, but also as a prime location for businesses to invest and expand, offering residents rewarding career opportunities.

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Strategic Direction(s) and Pathway(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

a. Resilient Local Economies

- R1. Attract and retain quality employers that strengthen key economic sectors, including energy and technology.
- R2. Support the growth of new business startups and small to medium local businesses.
- R3. Develop, attract, and support a skilled and qualified workforce, including youth and newcomers.

b. Strong Relationships

- S1. Enhance inclusive opportunities for community engagement and meaningful collaboration.
- S3. Collaborate across area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.

5.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- a. People: Making the Region of Durham a great place to work, attracting, and retaining talent.
- b. Processes: Continuously improving processes to ensure we are responsive to community needs.
- c. Technology: Keeping pace with technological change to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The data collected during the 2024 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 growth monitoring and business retention and expansion. The data collected will also provide the foundation for the next Business Count. A Business Count will be completed in the summer of 2025, and will be reported on in early 2026.
- 6.2 For additional information, contact: Hidy Ng, Manager – GIS & Visualization, at 905-668-7711, extension 2570.

7. Attachments

Attachment #1: 2024 Business Count Highlights

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP, PLE
Commissioner of Community Growth and
Economic Development



Community Growth and
Economic Development
Department

2024 Business Count Highlights

Released April 2025

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Message from the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development

In 2024, the Region of Durham conducted the 12th annual Business Count. From May to September, the Business Count Team surveyed over 15,000 businesses across the Region's eight area municipalities to gather essential information about the location, type, and characteristics of businesses.

Results from the Business Count provide valuable insights into the types of employment, number of employees, and overall characteristics of businesses in the Region. The data collected during the annual Business Count, along with its analysis of year-over-year trends, are used to update the Region's online business directory; provide background information for various planning studies; monitor growth; and promote economic development initiatives within the Region.

The information below provides the key findings from the 2024 Business Count. In the Summer of 2024, there were:

- 218,205 jobs in the Region, a 3.89% increase from 2023;
- 12,620 businesses in the Region, a figure consistent with 2023; and
- The top three employment sectors in the Region are retail trade, health care and social assistance, and educational services.

Despite escalating trade uncertainty, the looming threat of tariffs, and persistent supply chain challenges creating unpredictability

within the business community, Durham Region remains resilient and well-positioned for sustained growth. Through strategic investments in infrastructure, the Region continues to foster a competitive and adaptive business environment. Our robust economic programming also supports local businesses, innovation, and workforce development. These proactive measures not only mitigate the impact of external economic pressures but also strengthen Durham's ability to attract new investments, create job opportunities, and support long-term prosperity. The Region's commitment to resilience will enable us to weather economic storms and emerge stronger, maintaining its status as a thriving hub for business and innovation.

I encourage you to review the findings from the 2024 Business Count to gain a deeper understanding of Durham's local business landscape and the reasons why businesses continue to open and expand here. I extend my gratitude to the Region's Business Community for your support and continued participation in this crucial initiative, and for your collective efforts in maintaining Durham as an excellent place in which to live, work, and invest.

Brian Bridgeman
Commissioner, Community Growth 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, and other relevant details. The 2024 Business Count Highlights Report provides a comprehensive overview of the survey results.

The data collected during the 2024 Business Count is shared with the area municipalities and will be used to update the Region's business directory. Additionally, it will serve various 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 or phone interviews. On average, each survey takes less than five minutes to complete. If a face-to-face interview is not possible, businesses have the option to return the survey by mail, 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 rural areas, a visual inspection is conducted to locate additional businesses that may have been missed, ensuring the database is as complete as possible.

The surveyed business locations 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, and commercial, industrial, and institutional areas. Since 2022, farm operations without a public frontage 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 due to the challenges of visiting these types of businesses in person. Instead, a targeted social media advertising campaign and radio ads are used to encourage participation using the online form available on the Region's website.



Durham Region

Total Businesses

12,620



Total Jobs

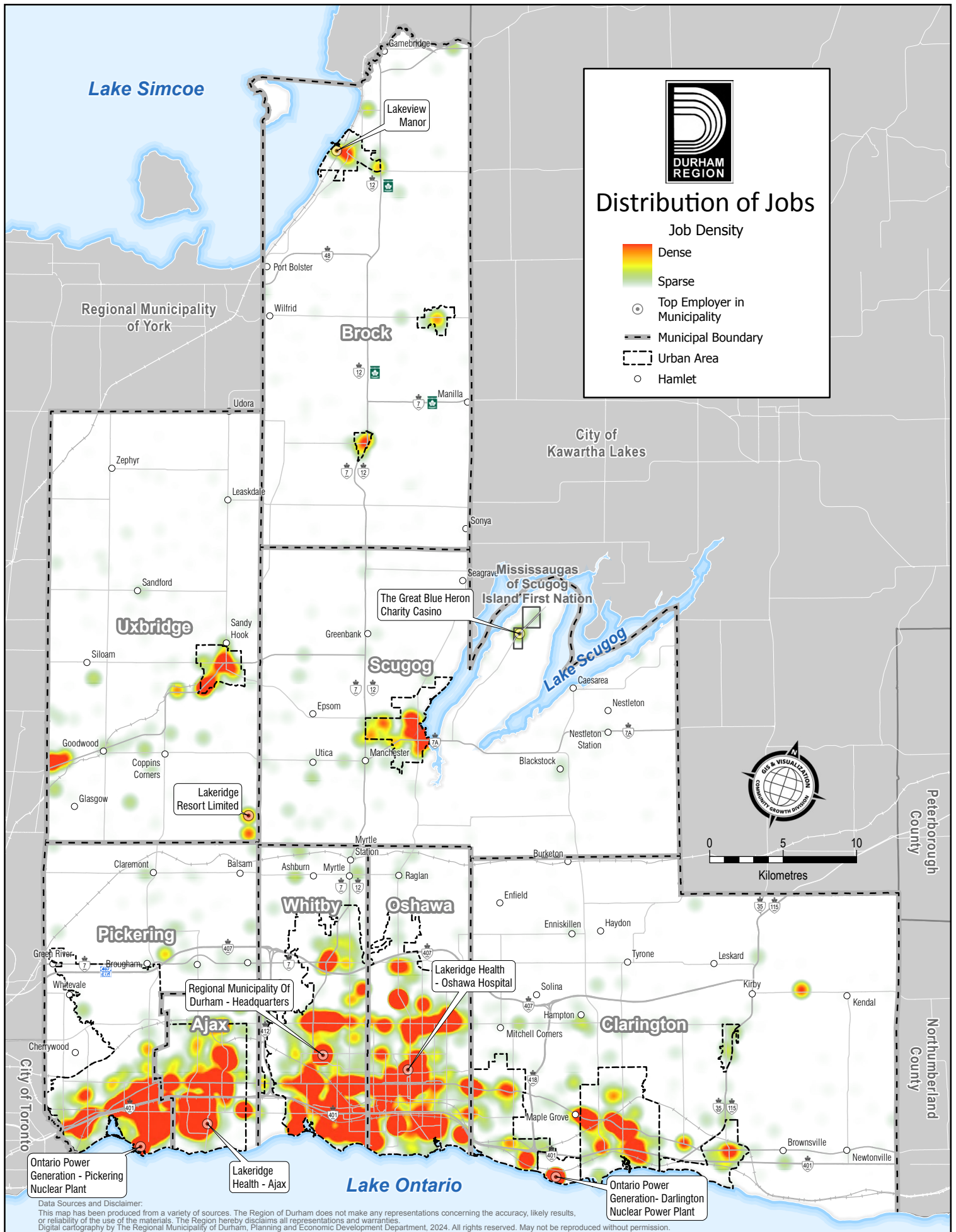
218,205



Jobs Relative to 2023

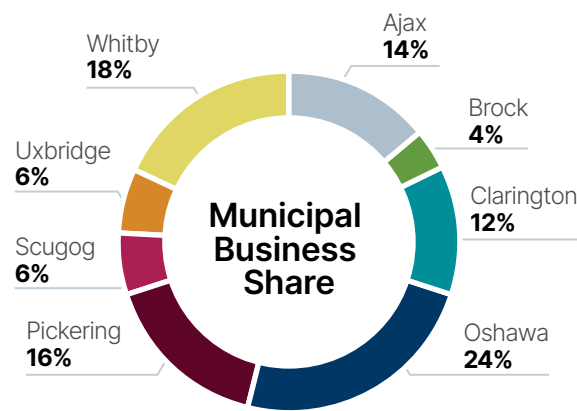
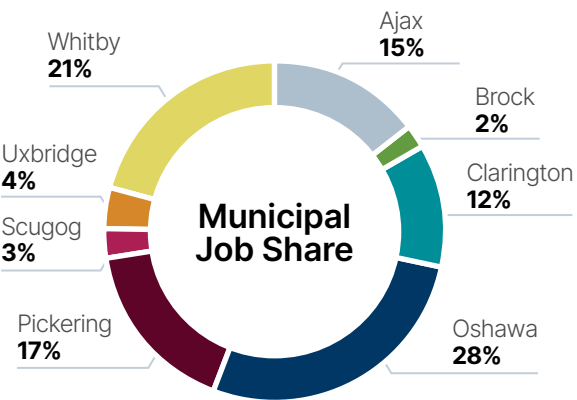
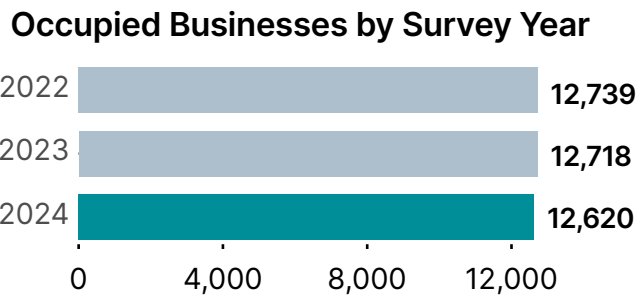
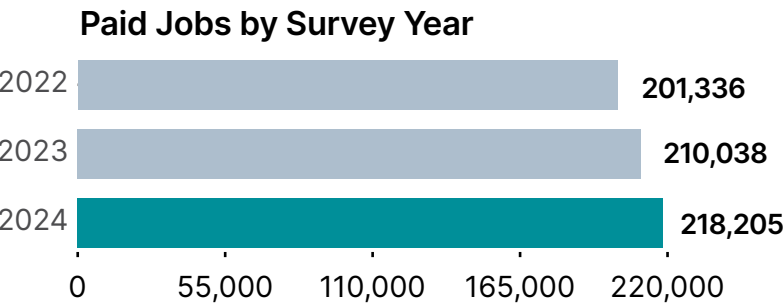
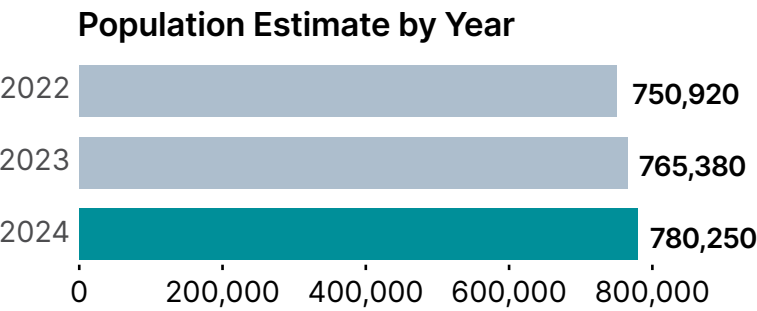
3.89%





Data Sources and Disclaimer:
This map has been produced from a variety of sources. The Region of Durham does not make any representations concerning the accuracy, likely results, or reliability of the use of the materials. The Region hereby disclaims all representations and warranties.
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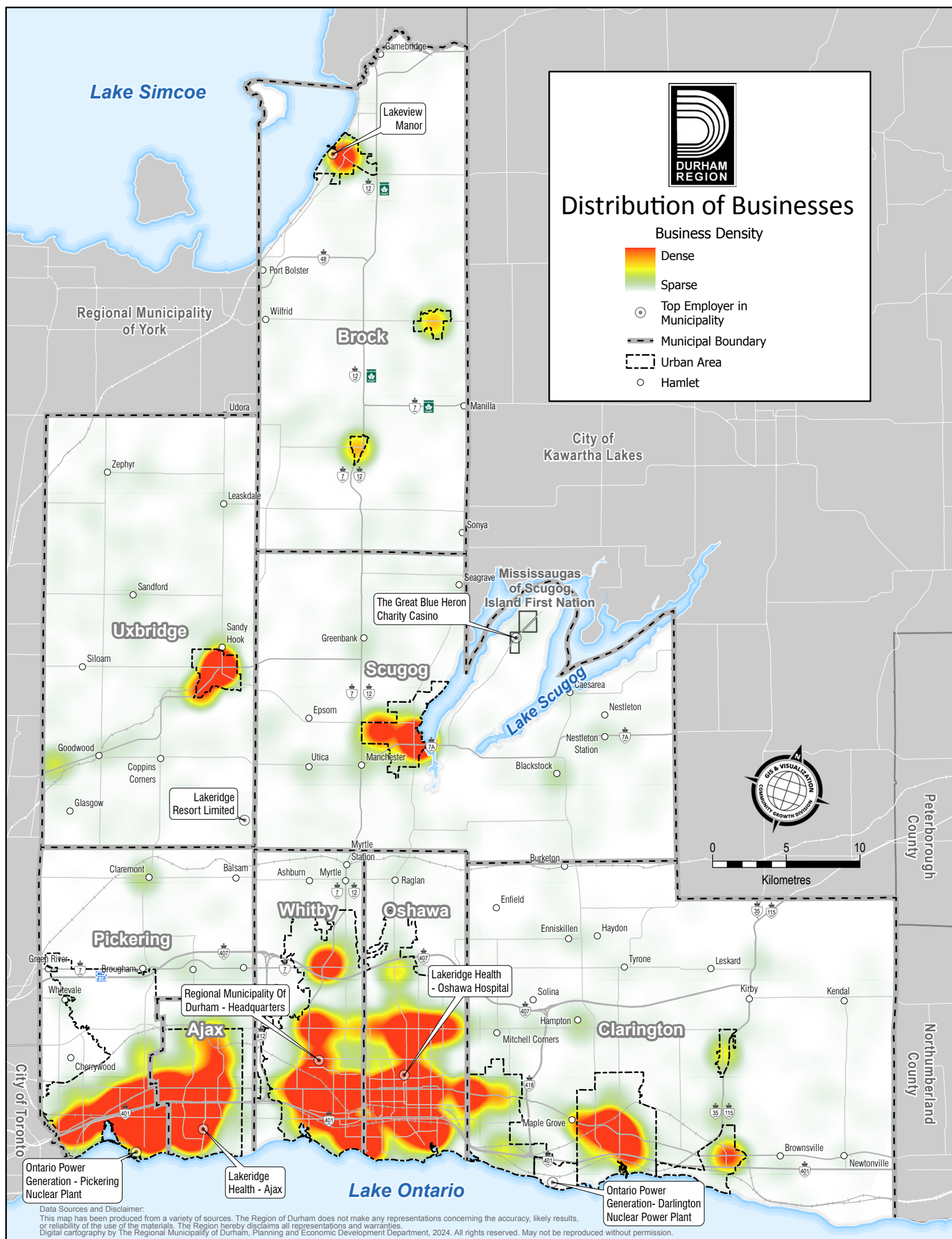
Population, jobs and business growth



Change in Paid Jobs

| Municipality | 2023 | 2024 | Difference in Paid Jobs between 2023 and 2024 | Percentage |
|---------------|---------|---------|---|------------|
| Durham Region | 210,038 | 218,205 | 8,167 | 3.89% |
| Ajax | 30,947 | 31,716 | 769 | 2.48% |
| Brock | 3,549 | 3,578 | 29 | 0.82% |
| Clarington | 23,407 | 25,494 | 2,087 | 8.92% |
| Oshawa | 56,673 | 60,304 | 3,631 | 6.41% |
| Pickering | 35,373 | 36,180 | 807 | 2.28% |
| Scugog | 7,740 | 7,188 | -552 | -7.13% |
| Uxbridge | 7,990 | 8,497 | 507 | 6.35% |
| Whitby | 44,359 | 45,248 | 889 | 2.00% |

Total Paid Jobs is a subset of Total Jobs, as some positions are volunteer or unpaid.



Top 10 Employers in Durham are:

| Company | Employees |
|---|---------------|
| Ontario Power Generation (OPG) | 9,000 - 9,499 |
| Lakeridge Health | 8,000 - 8,499 |
| Durham District School Board (DDSB) | 7,500 - 7,999 |
| Regional Municipality of Durham | 5,000 - 5,499 |
| General Motors of Canada | 3,750 - 3,999 |
| Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB) | 3,500 - 3,749 |
| Durham College | 2,500 - 2,749 |
| Tim Hortons | 2,250 - 2,499 |
| Amazon Inc. | 2,000 - 2,249 |
| McDonald's | 1,750 - 1,999 |



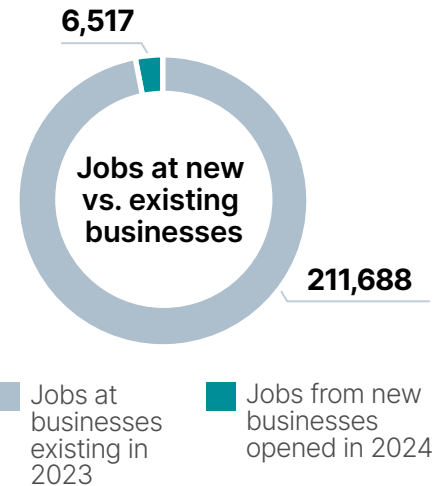
Business locations
opened in 2024

915

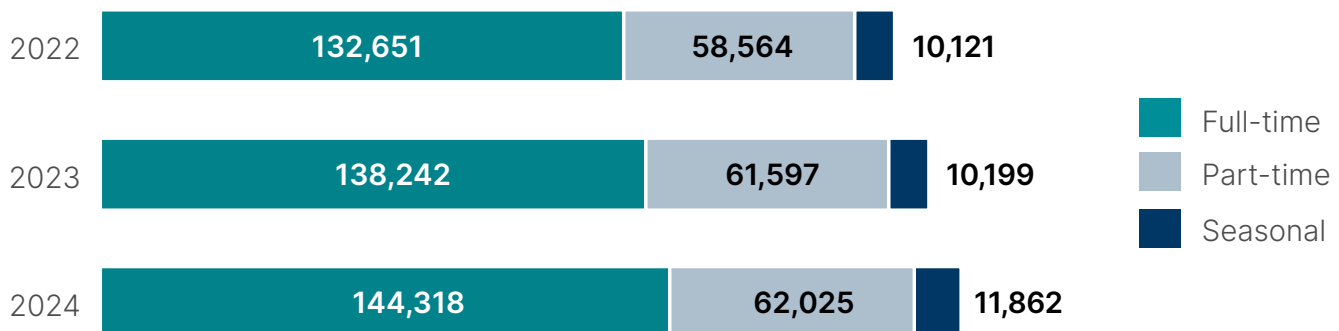


Business locations
vacant in 2024

1,798

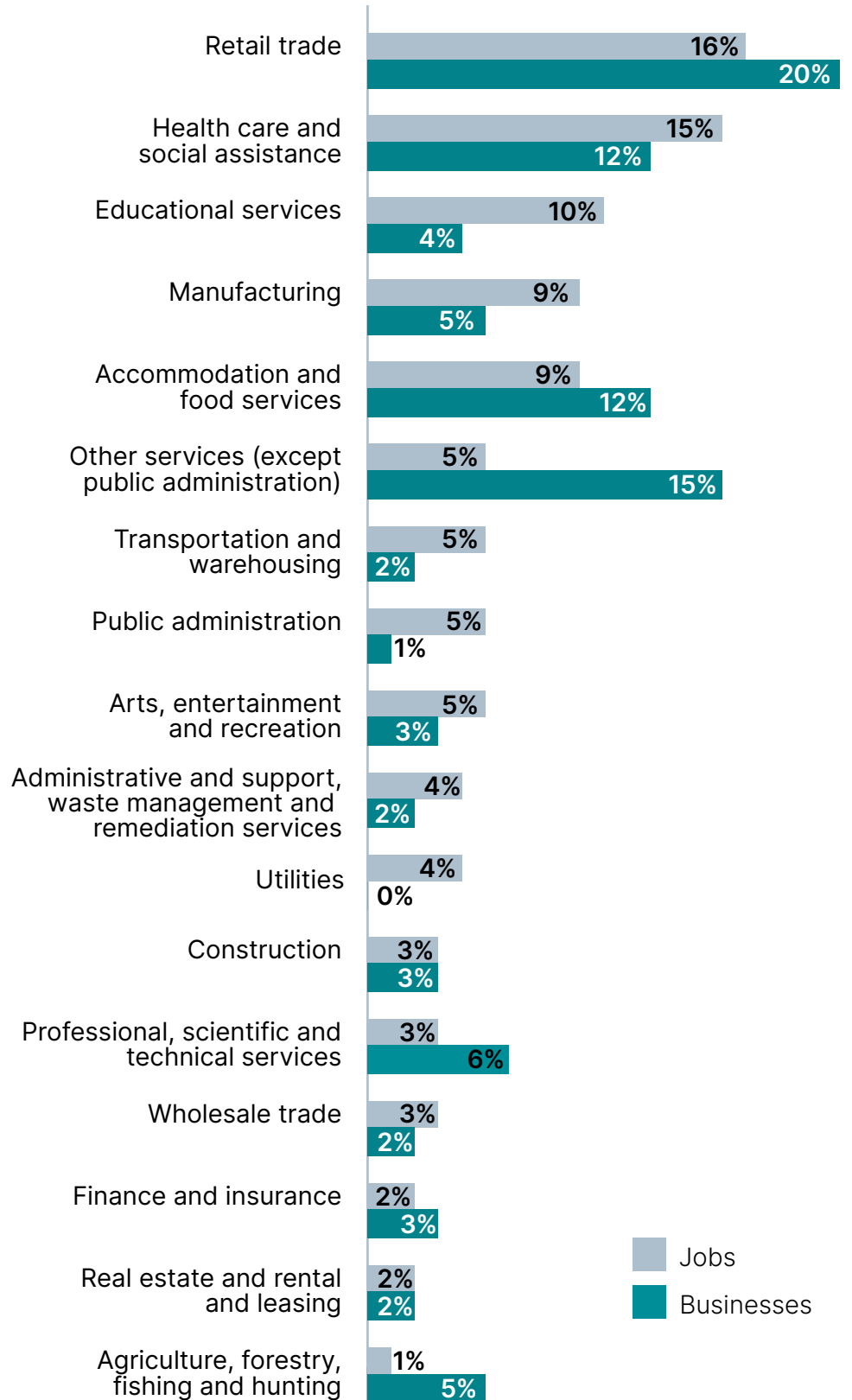


Jobs by Employment Type





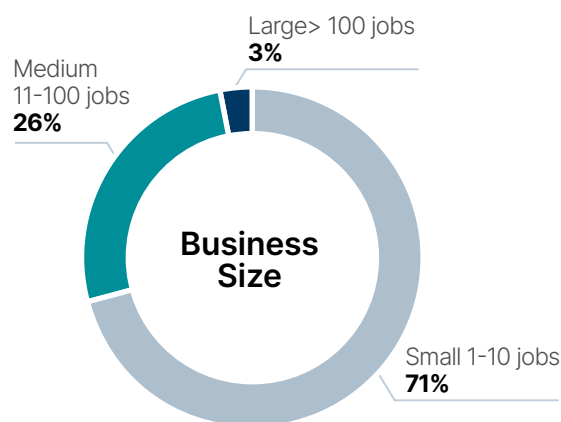
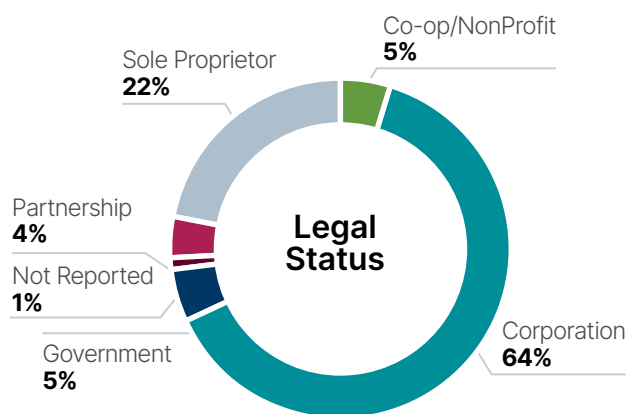
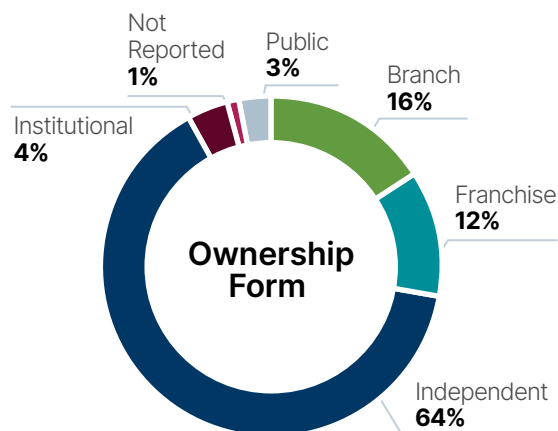
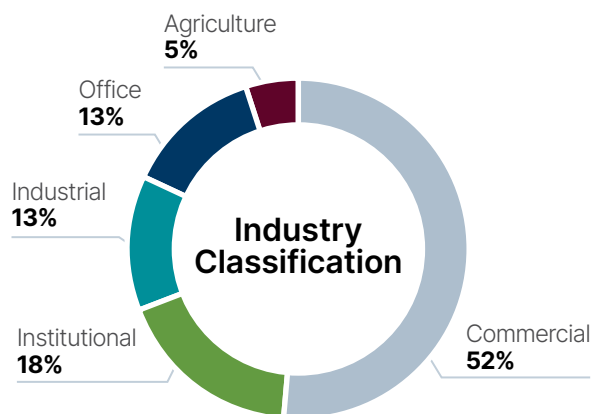
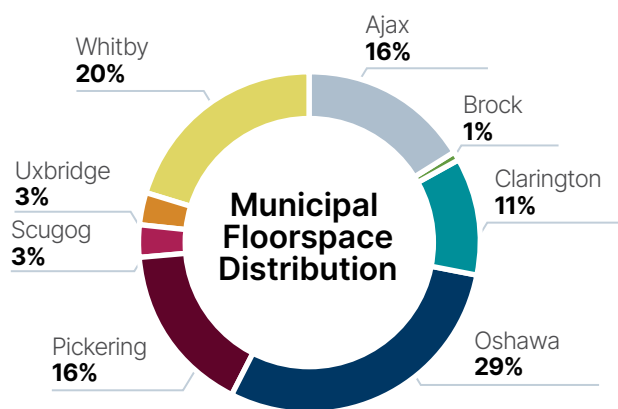
Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



*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.



849
Businesses Import



474
Businesses Export



Ajax



Total Businesses

1,753



Total Jobs

31,716



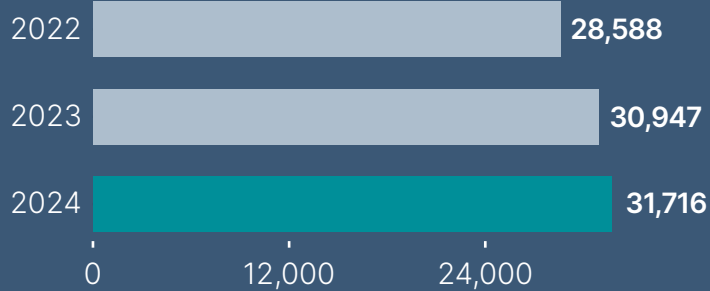
Jobs Relative to 2023

2.48%



Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



140

Businesses Import



75

Businesses Export

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 | 1,000 - 1,249 |
| Loblaws Companies Limited | 1,000 - 1,249 |
| SaFran Landing Systems | 500 - 749 |
| Intact Insurance Company | 500 - 749 |
| Costco Wholesale | 250 - 499 |
| Lear Canada | 250 - 499 |



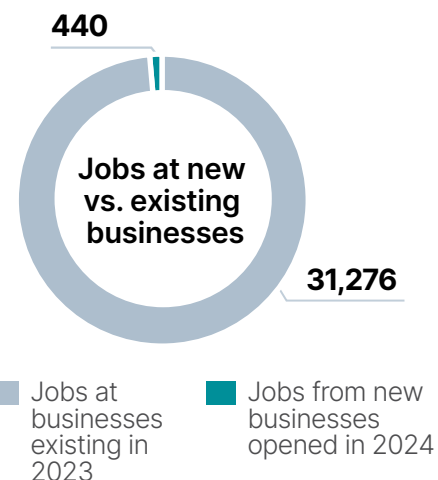
Business locations
opened in 2024

112

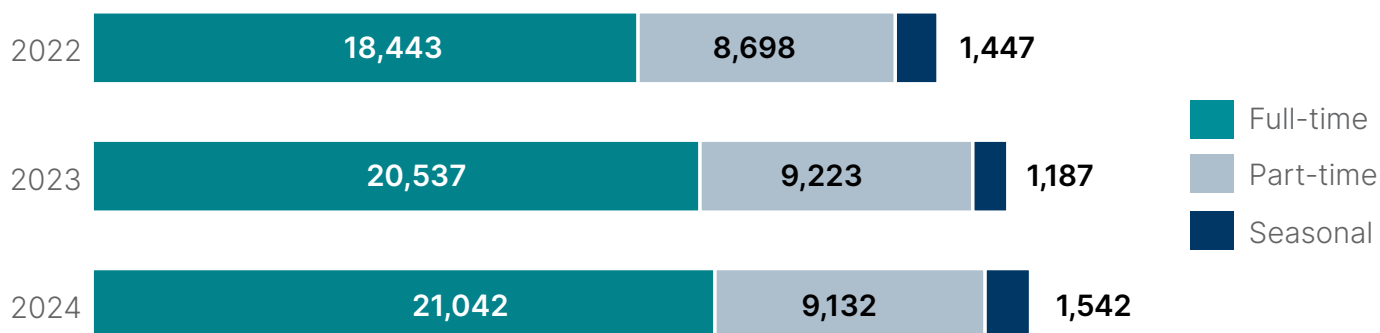


Business locations
vacant in 2024

268

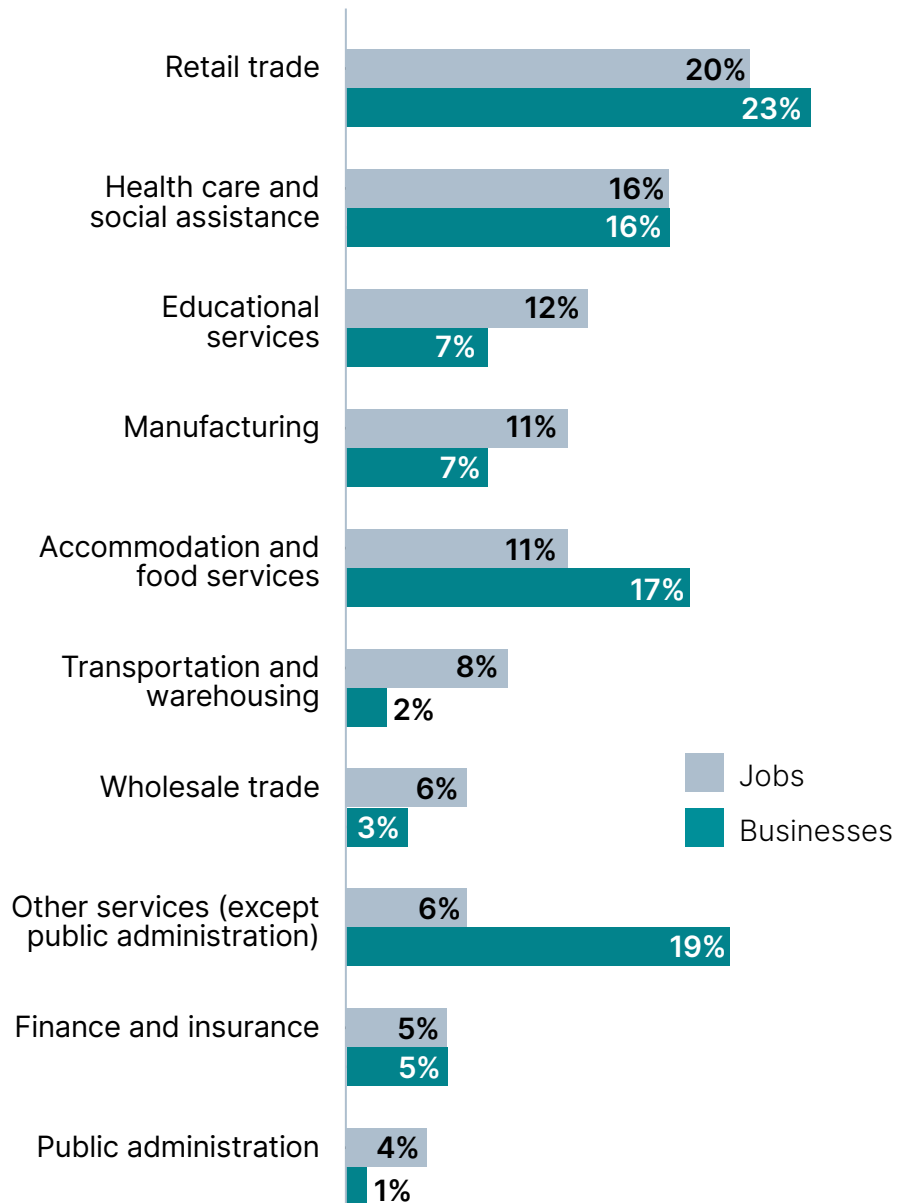


Jobs by Employment Type





Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



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



Brock



Total Businesses

485



Total Jobs

3,578



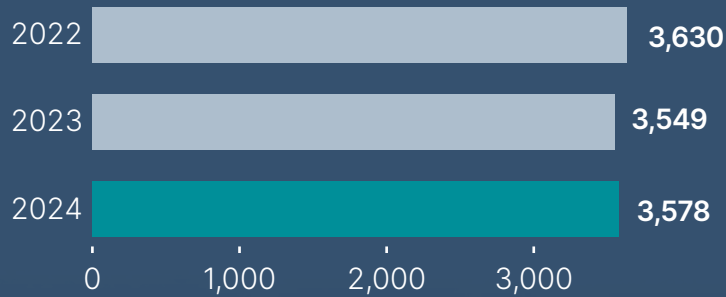
Jobs Relative to 2023

0.82%

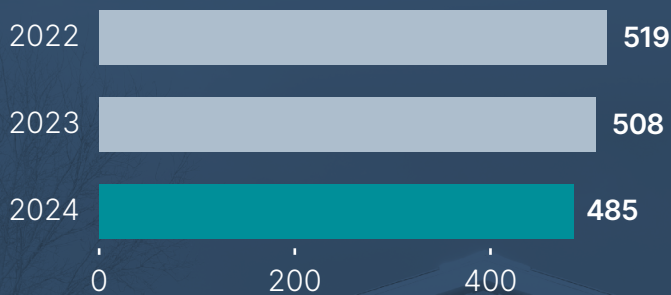


Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



11
Businesses Import



13
Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Brock are:

| Company | Jobs |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Regional Municipality of Durham | 250 - 499 |
| Stock Transportation | 100 - 249 |
| GoodYear Farm | 100 - 249 |
| Township of Brock | 100 - 249 |
| Durham District School Board (DDSB) | 100 - 249 |
| Fisher's Independent Grocer | 100 - 249 |
| Flex -N- Gate | 100 - 249 |
| Fair Havens Bible Conference | 100 - 249 |
| McDonald's | 50 - 99 |
| Bon Air Residence | 50 - 99 |



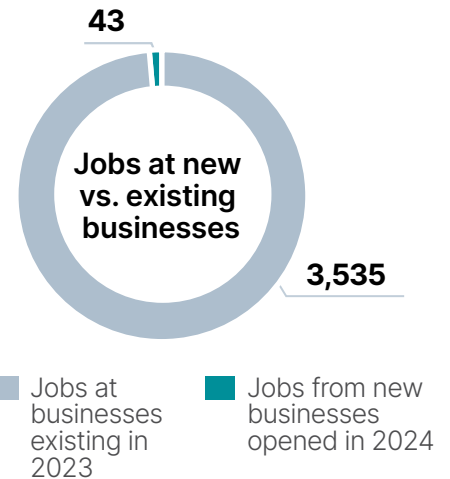
Business locations
opened in 2024

12

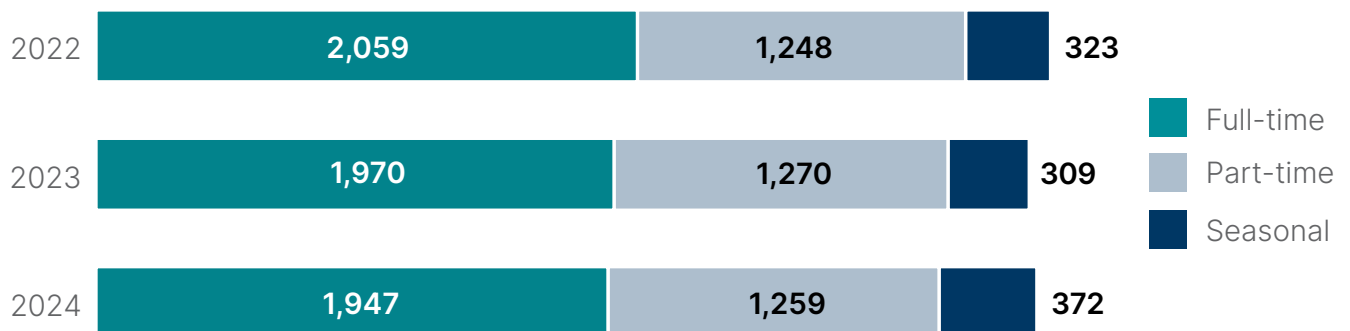


Business locations
vacant in 2024

53

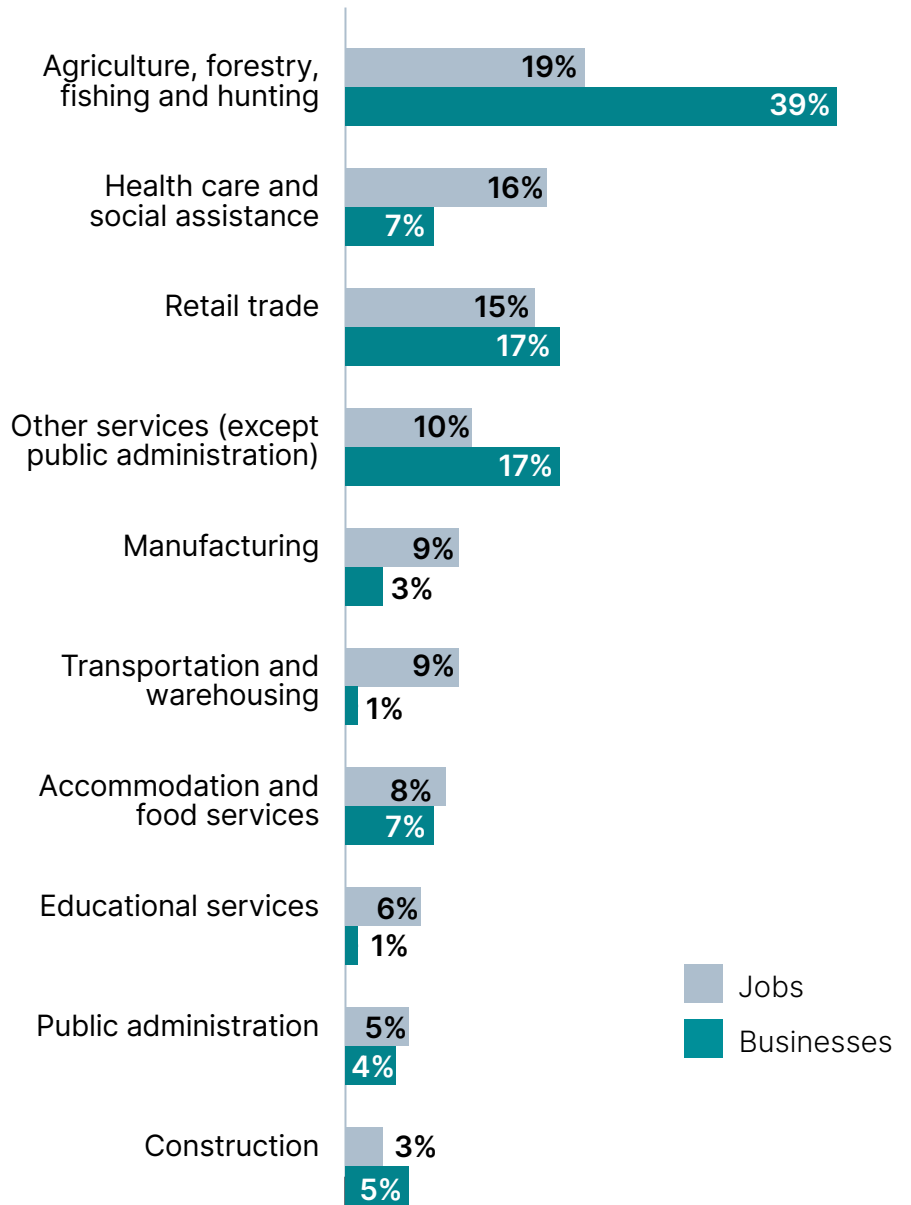


Jobs by Employment Type





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

1,548



Total Jobs

25,494



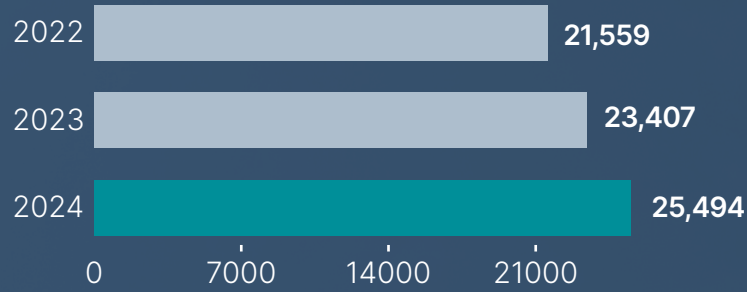
Jobs Relative to 2023

8.92%



Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



88

Businesses Import



58

Businesses Export

welcome

Top 10 Employers in Clarington are:

| Company | Jobs |
|---|--------------|
| Ontario Power Generation (OPG) | 4,000 - 4249 |
| Municipality of Clarington | 1,500 - 1749 |
| Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPRDSB) | 1,000 - 1249 |
| Black&McDonald - Nuclear Services | 500 - 749 |
| Lakeridge Health | 500 - 749 |
| Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board (PVNCCDSB) | 500 - 749 |
| Algoma Orchards | 250 - 499 |
| Brimacombe | 250 - 499 |
| Wal-Mart | 250 - 499 |
| Tim Hortons | 250 - 499 |



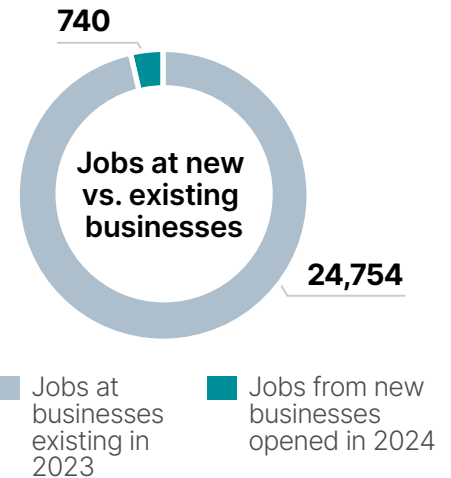
Business locations
opened in 2023

103

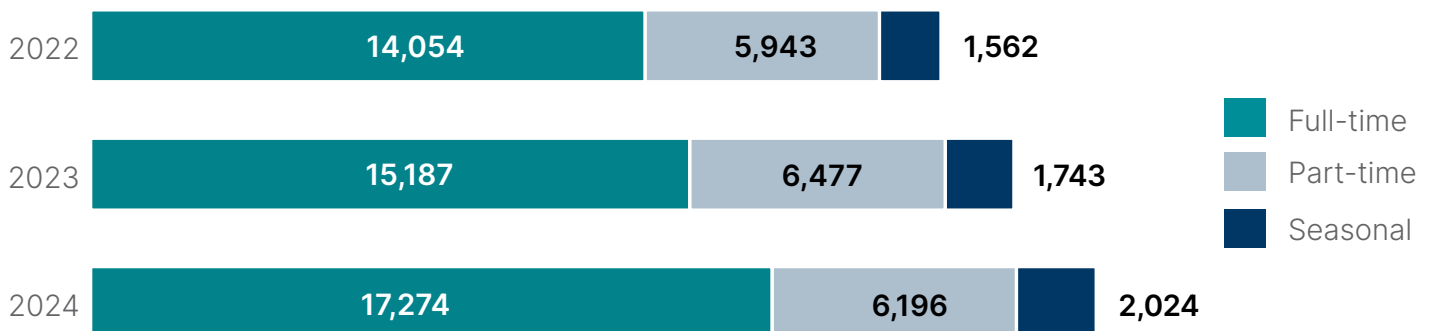


Business locations
vacant in 2023

110

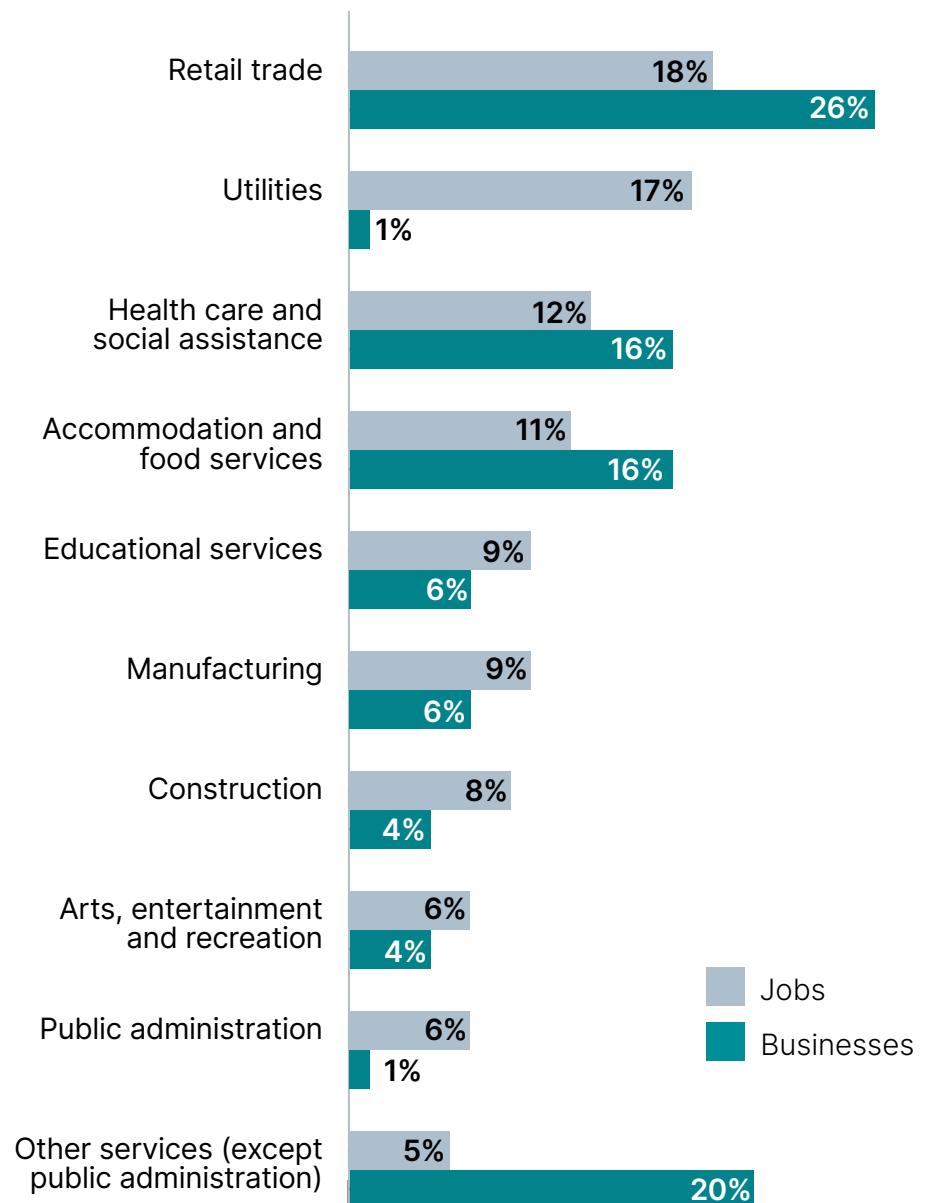


Jobs by Employment Type





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

3,077



Total Jobs

60,304



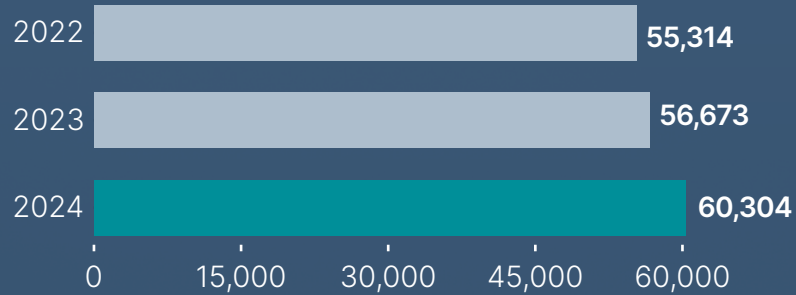
Jobs Relative to 2023

6.41%

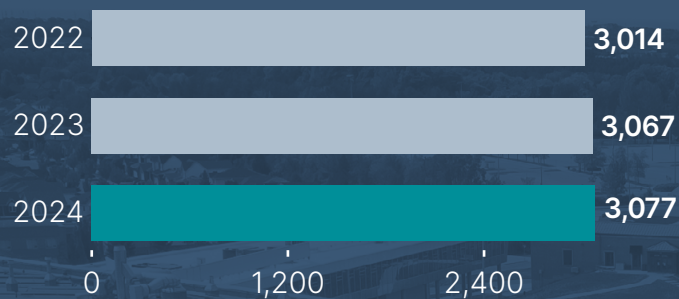


Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



186

Businesses Import



80

Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Oshawa are:

| Company | Jobs |
|---|---------------|
| Lakeridge Health | 4,000 - 4,249 |
| General Motors of Canada | 3,750 - 3,999 |
| Durham College | 2,250 - 2,499 |
| Durham District School Board (DDSB) | 1,750 - 1,999 |
| Ontario Tech University | 1,500 - 1,749 |
| City of Oshawa | 1,500 - 1,749 |
| 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 |



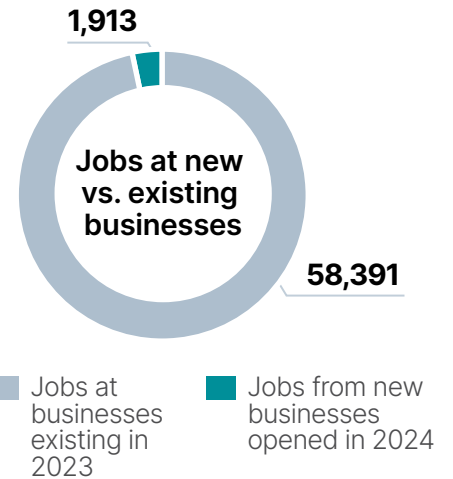
Business locations
opened in 2024

271

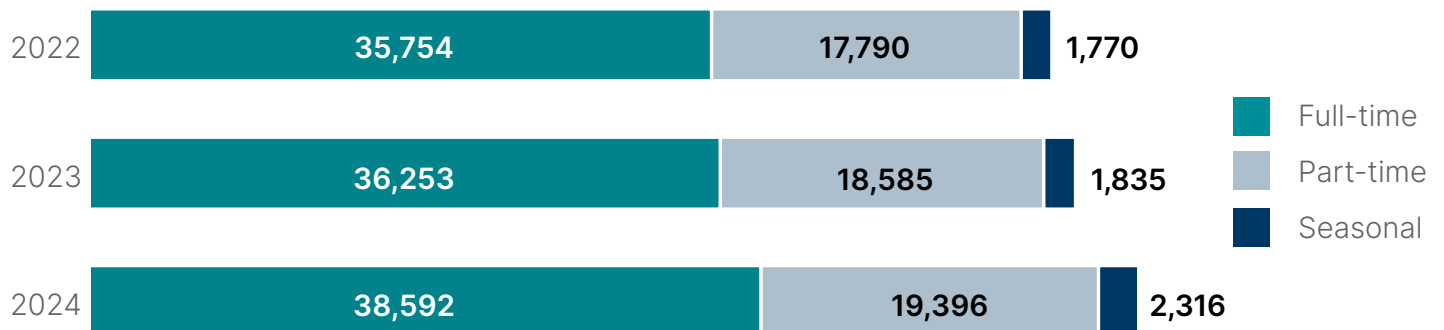


Business locations
vacant in 2024

567

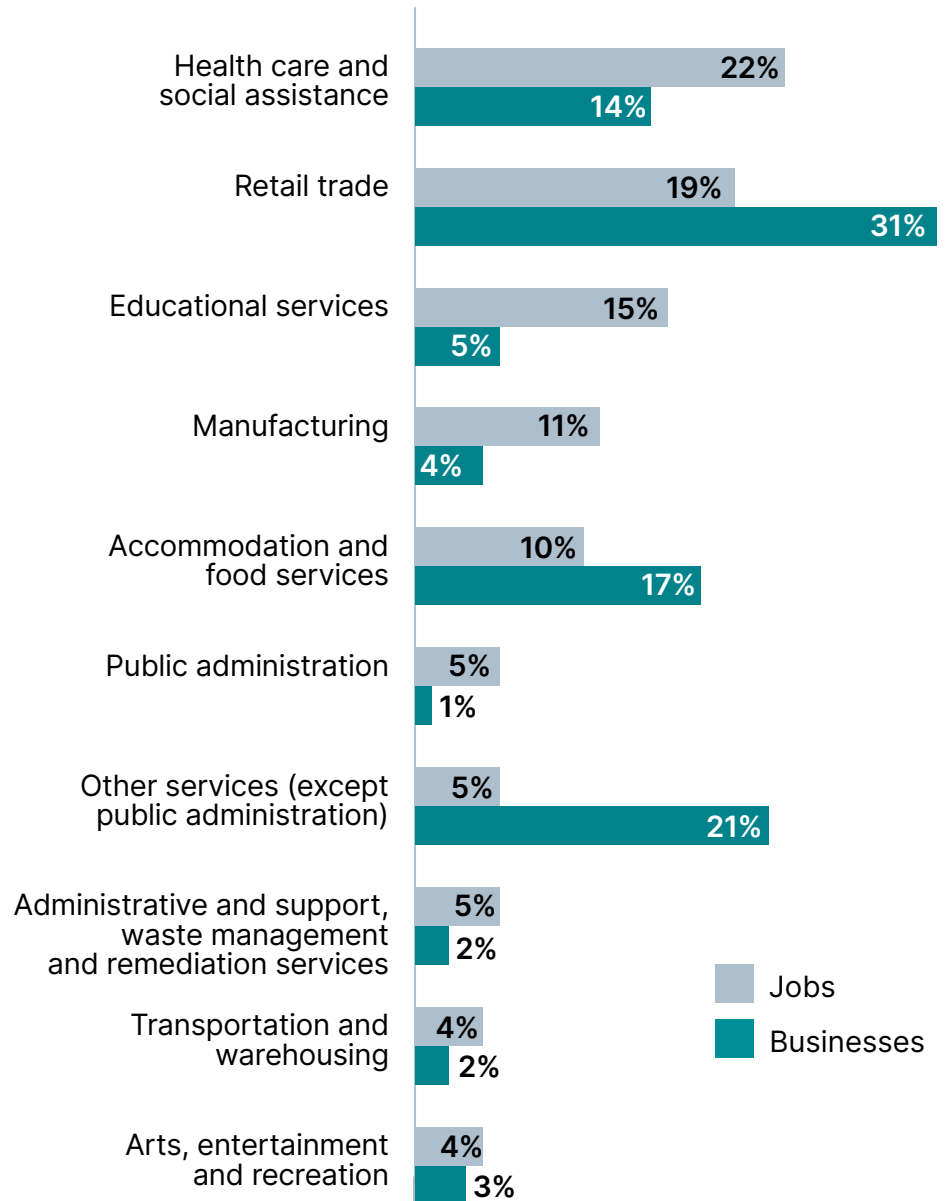


Jobs by Employment Type





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

1,962



Total Jobs

36,180



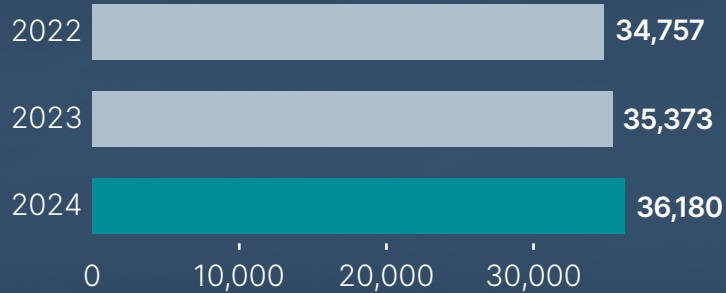
Jobs Relative to 2023

2.28%

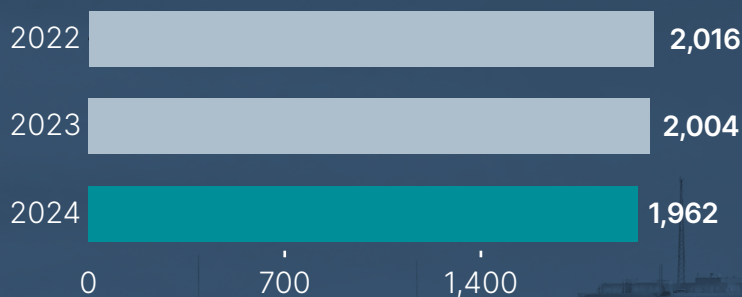


Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



203

Businesses Import



120

Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Pickering are:

| Company | Jobs |
|--|---------------|
| Ontario Power Generation (OPG) | 4,500 - 4,749 |
| City of Pickering | 1,000 - 1,249 |
| Durham District School Board (DDSB) | 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 |
| AutoLux Ltd. Rapid Transit | 250 - 499 |
| Tetra Tech | 250 - 499 |
| Tribute Communities | 250 - 499 |



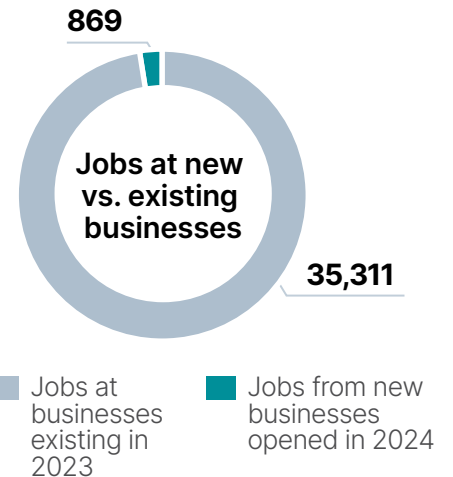
Business locations
opened in 2023

144

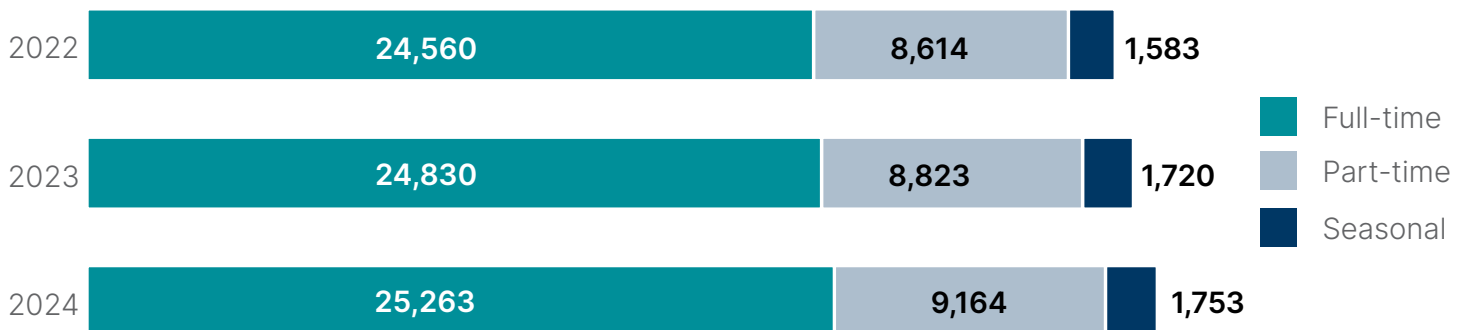


Business locations
vacant in 2023

358

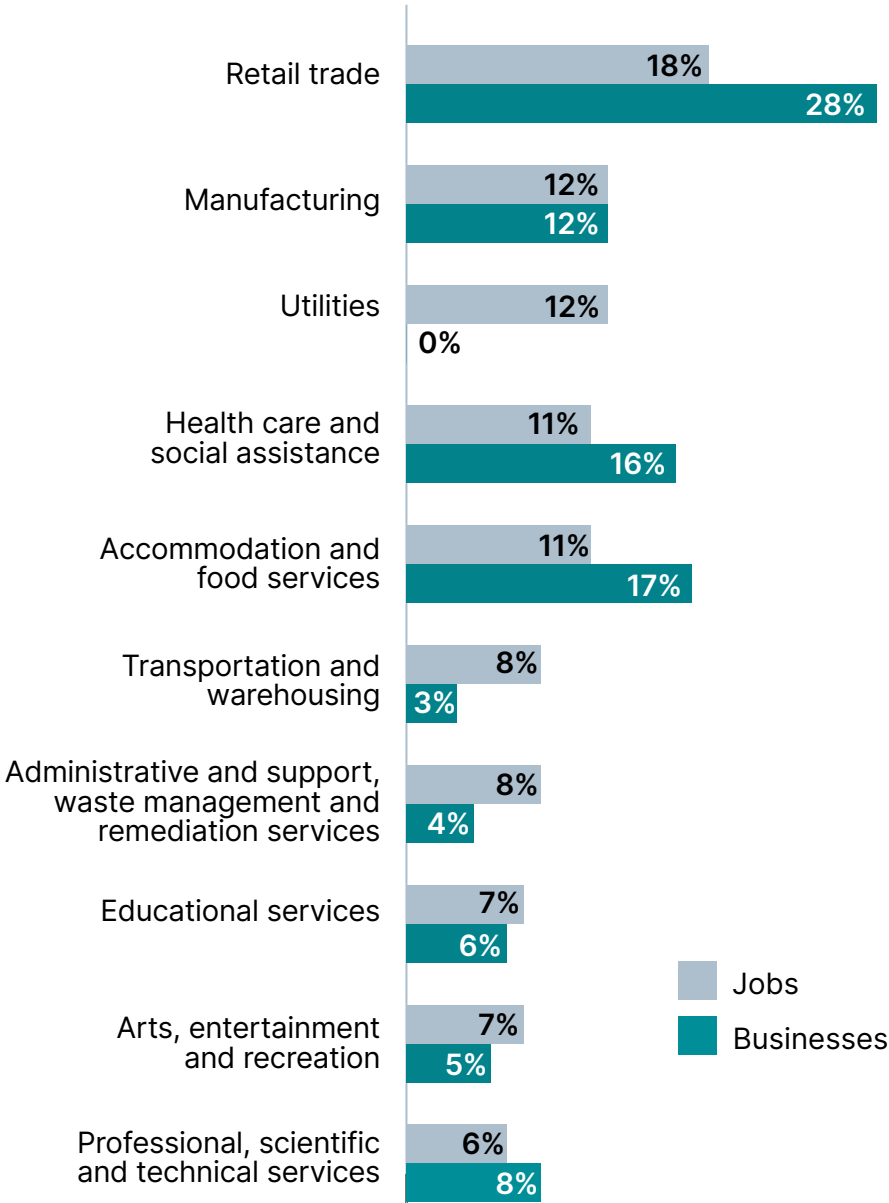


Jobs by Employment Type



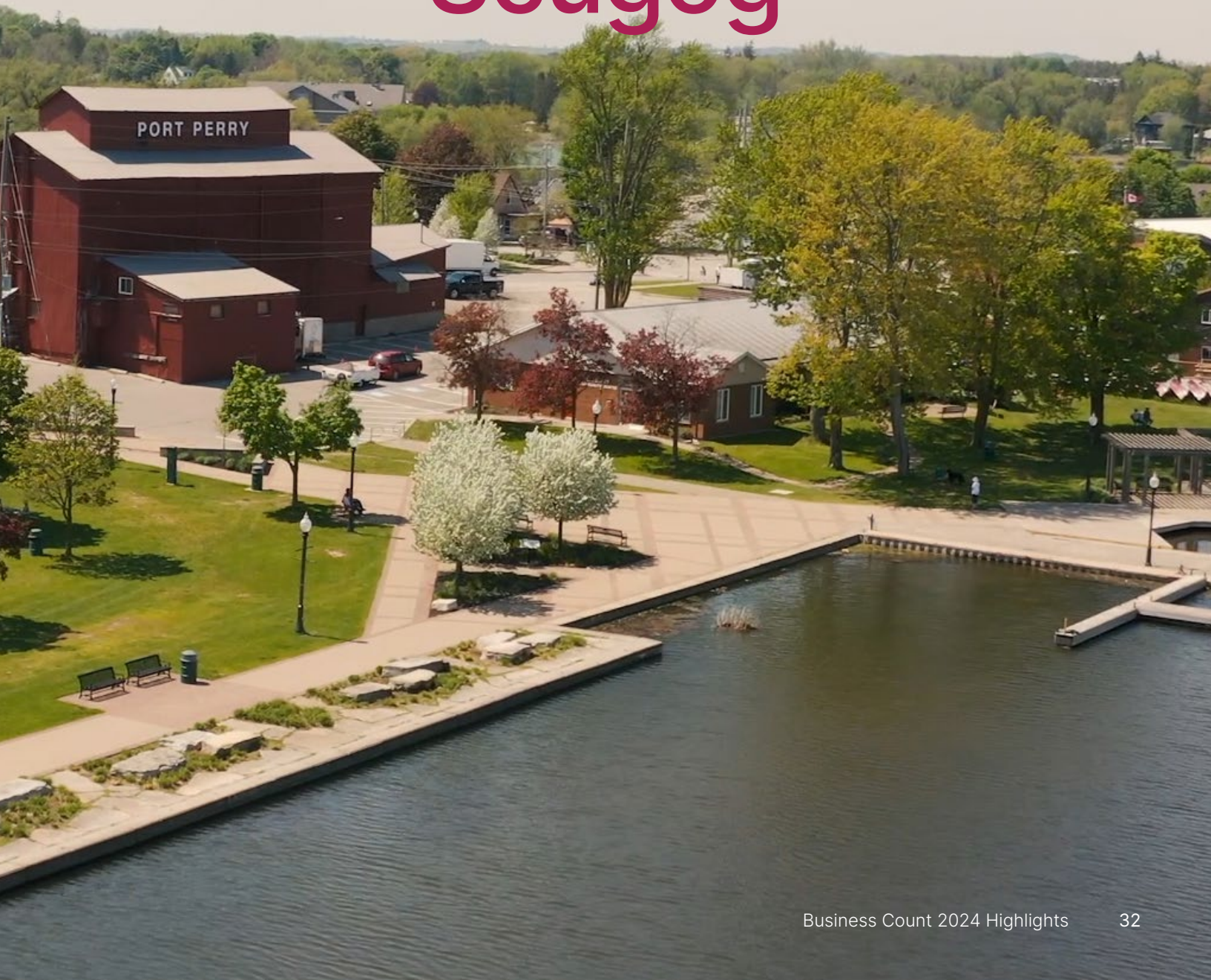


Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses





Scugog



Total Businesses

763



Total Jobs

7,188



Jobs Relative to 2023

-7.13%

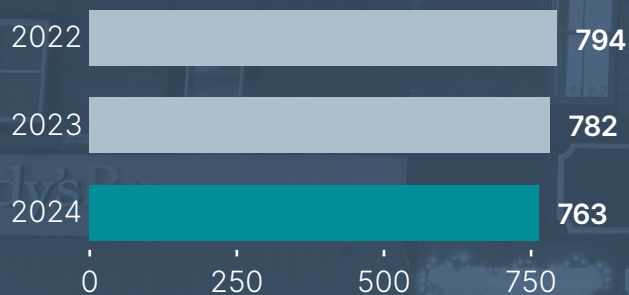


Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



37

Businesses Import



31

Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Scugog are:

| Company | Jobs |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Durham District School Board (DDSB) | 250 - 499 |
| The Great Blue Heron Charity Casino | 100 - 249 |
| Community Living North Durham | 100 - 249 |
| Independent Grocers | 100 - 249 |
| Regional Municipality of Durham | 100 - 249 |
| Port Perry Place Care Home | 100 - 249 |
| Greenwood Mushroom Farm | 100 - 249 |
| Adamson Systems Engineering | 100 - 249 |
| McDonald's | 100 - 249 |
| Township of Scugog | 100 - 249 |



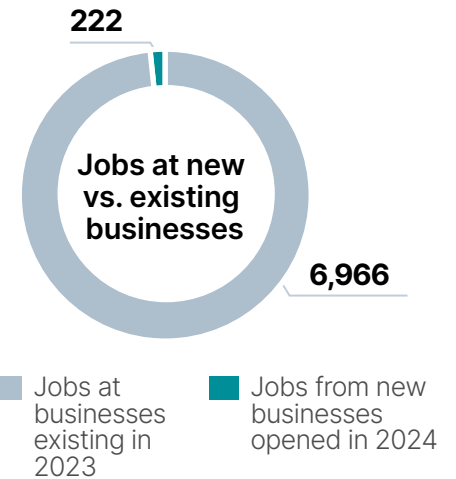
Business locations
opened in 2023

40

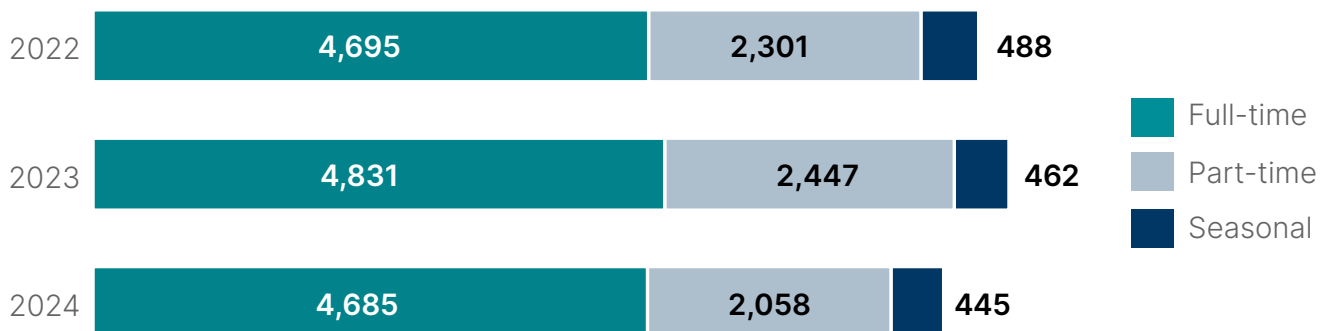


Business locations
vacant in 2023

105

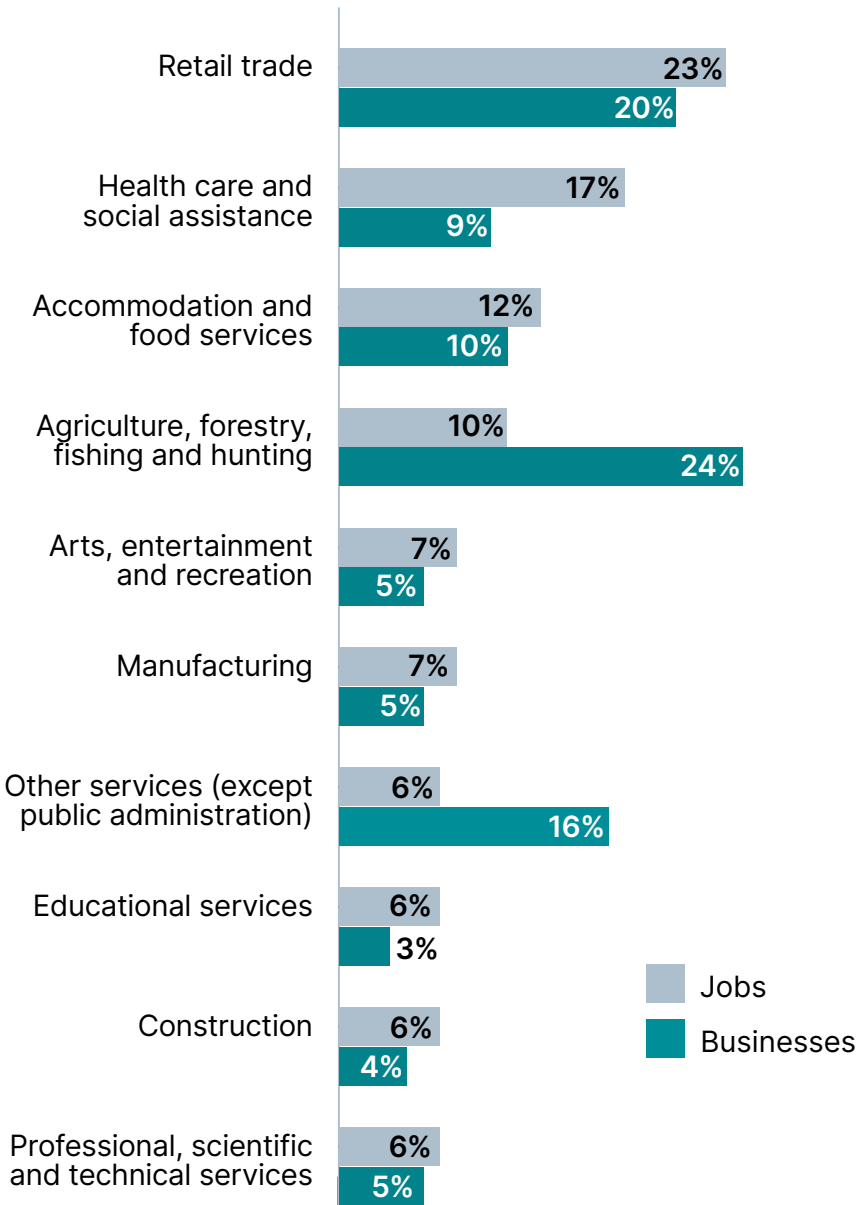


Jobs by Employment Type





Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



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



Uxbridge



Total Businesses

707



Total Jobs

8,497



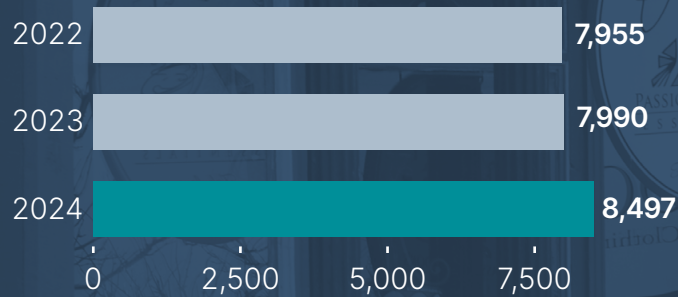
Jobs Relative to 2023

6.35%

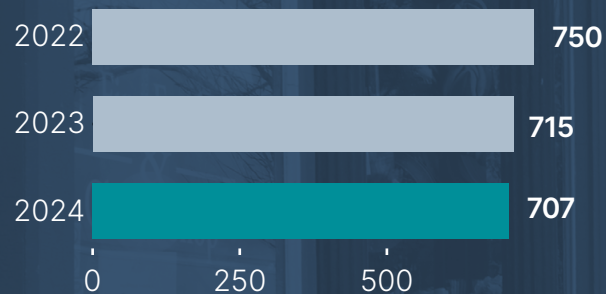


Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



43

Businesses Import



29

Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Uxbridge are:

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



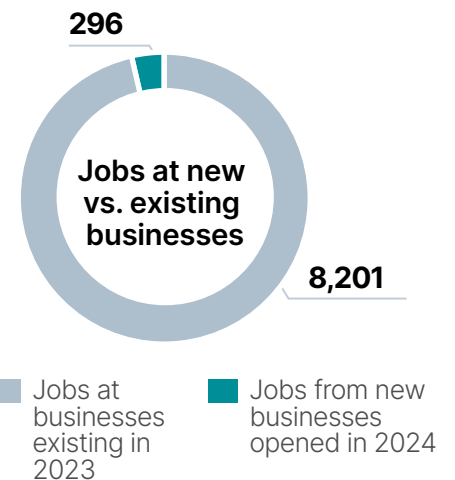
Business locations
opened in 2023

44

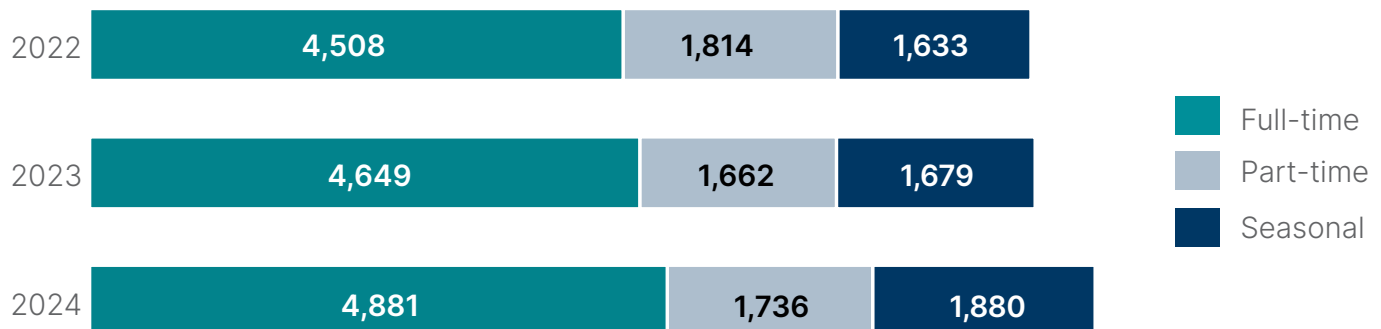


Business locations
vacant in 2023

71

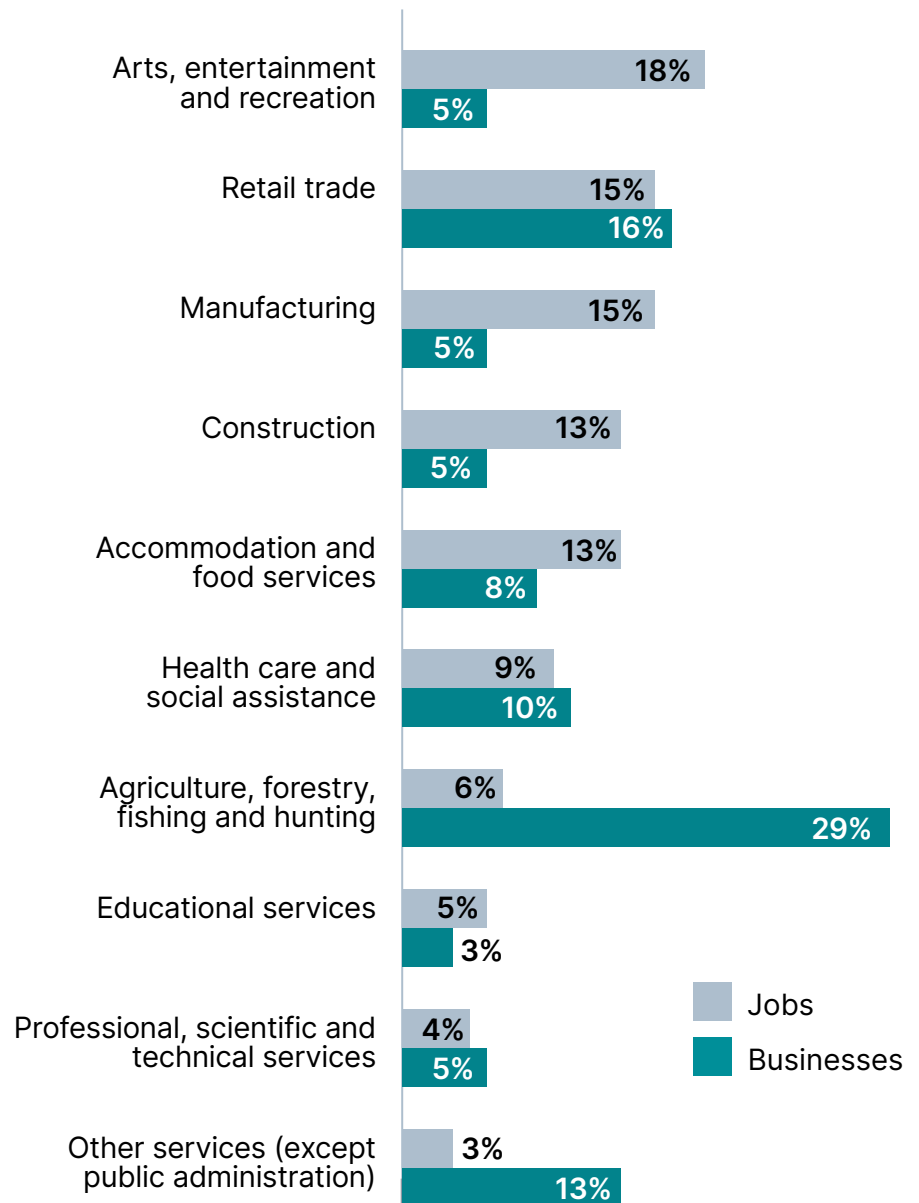


Jobs by Employment Type





Highest Employment Sectors and Proportion of Related Businesses



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



Whitby



Total Businesses

2,325



Total Jobs

45,248



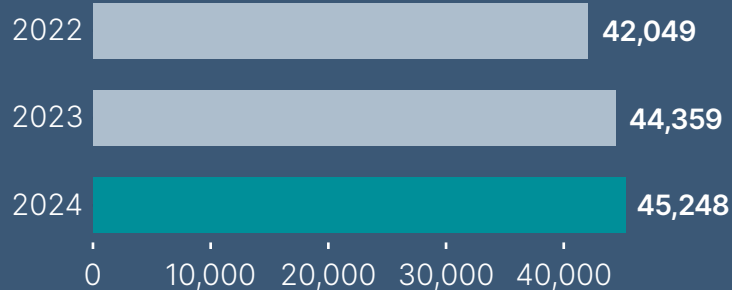
Jobs Relative to 2023

2.00%

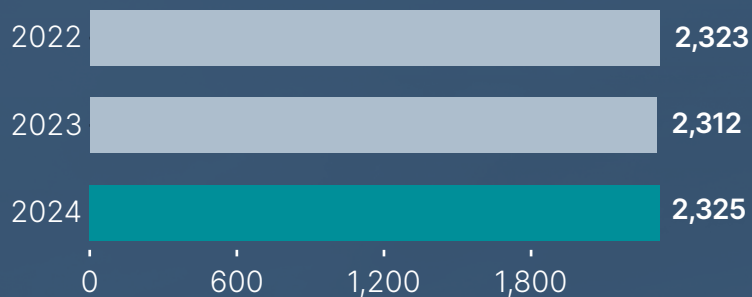


Jobs and business growth

Paid Jobs by Survey Year



Occupied Businesses by Survey Year



141

Businesses Import



68

Businesses Export

Top 10 Employers in Whitby are:

| Company | Jobs |
|---|---------------|
| Regional Municipality of Durham | 2,500 - 2,749 |
| Durham District School Board (DDSB) | 2,250 - 2,499 |
| Lakeridge Health | 1,750 - 1,999 |
| Town of Whitby | 750 - 999 |
| ThermoFisher Scientific (Patheon) | 750 - 999 |
| Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB) | 750 - 999 |
| Amazon Inc. | 500 - 749 |
| Durham Regional Police | 500 - 749 |
| Gerdau | 500 - 749 |
| Sobeys Whitby Service Centre | 500 - 749 |



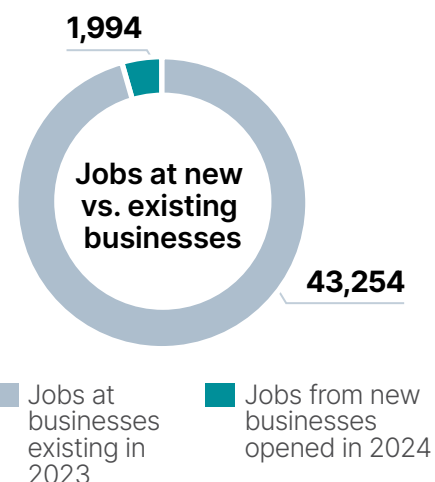
Business locations
opened in 2023

189

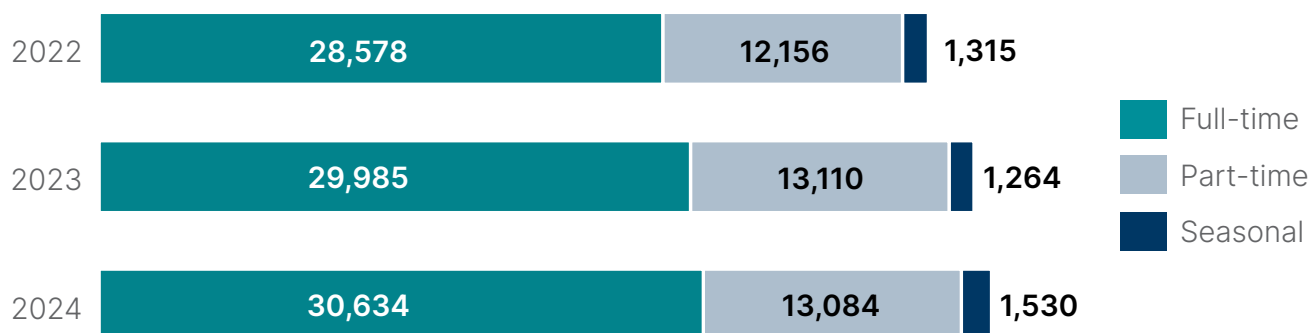


Business locations
vacant in 2023

266

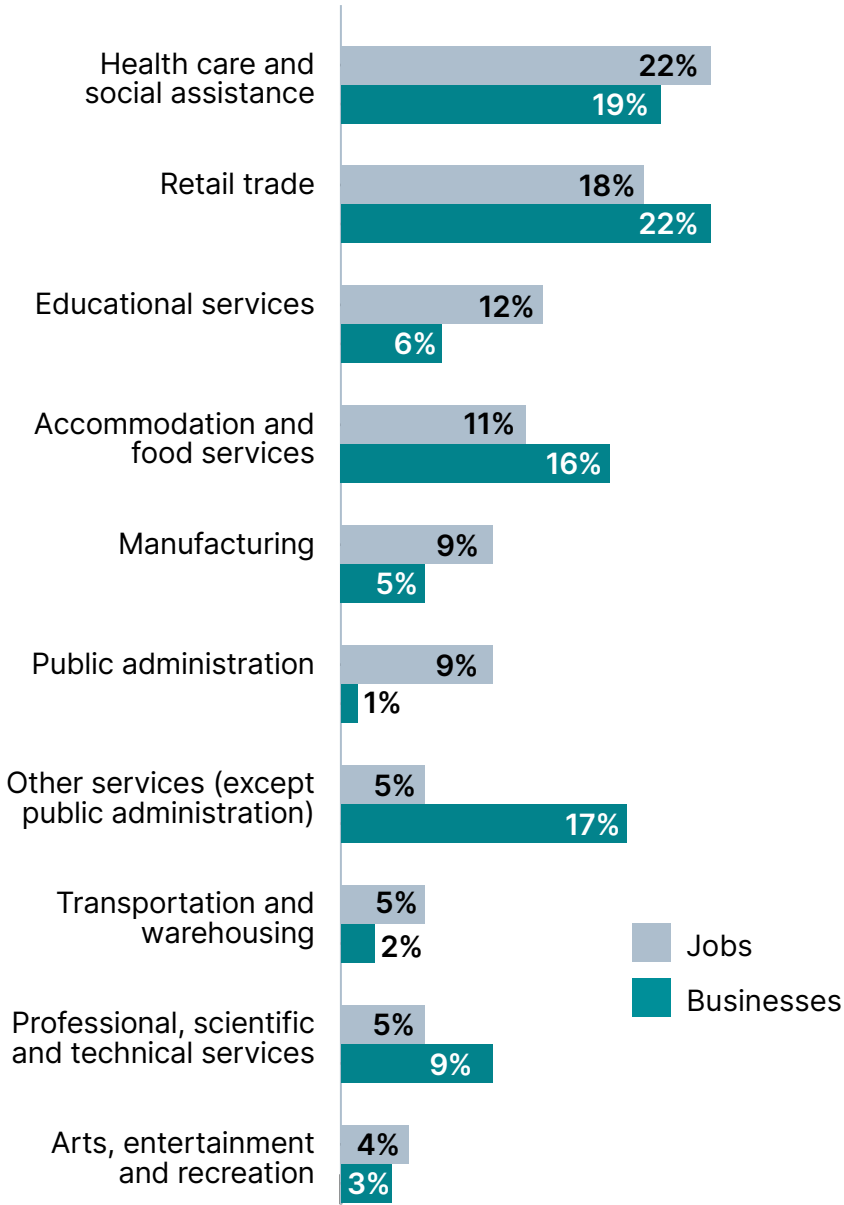


Jobs by Employment Type





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