# The Socio-Economic Impact of COVID19 on Vulnerable Populations in Calgary

## Brief 1: Employment and Financial Security

## APRIL UPDATE

This brief provides an update on the impact of the economic lockdown on vulnerable workers in Calgary based on April data from the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey. A previous brief provided a detailed examination of the initial impacts of the lockdown based on the March Labour Force Survey and is available at: https://www.povertyinstitute.ca/s/Vulnerability-Assessment-Brief-1-Employment.pdf

Following a loss of 21,200 jobs in March, the Calgary region experienced a further 5.1% decline in employment in April, as the economy shed a further 42,700 jobs. As a result, the number of unemployed jumped by 21% from March, for a total of 95,700 unemployed workers by the end of April. This resulted in a rise in the unemployment rate to 10.8% compared to 8.6% the previous month.[1] As in the previous month, industries experiencing the sharpest job loss in Alberta were Accommodation and Food Services (-31%), Other Services (-23%), and Wholesale and Retail Trade (-16%) (See Table 1).
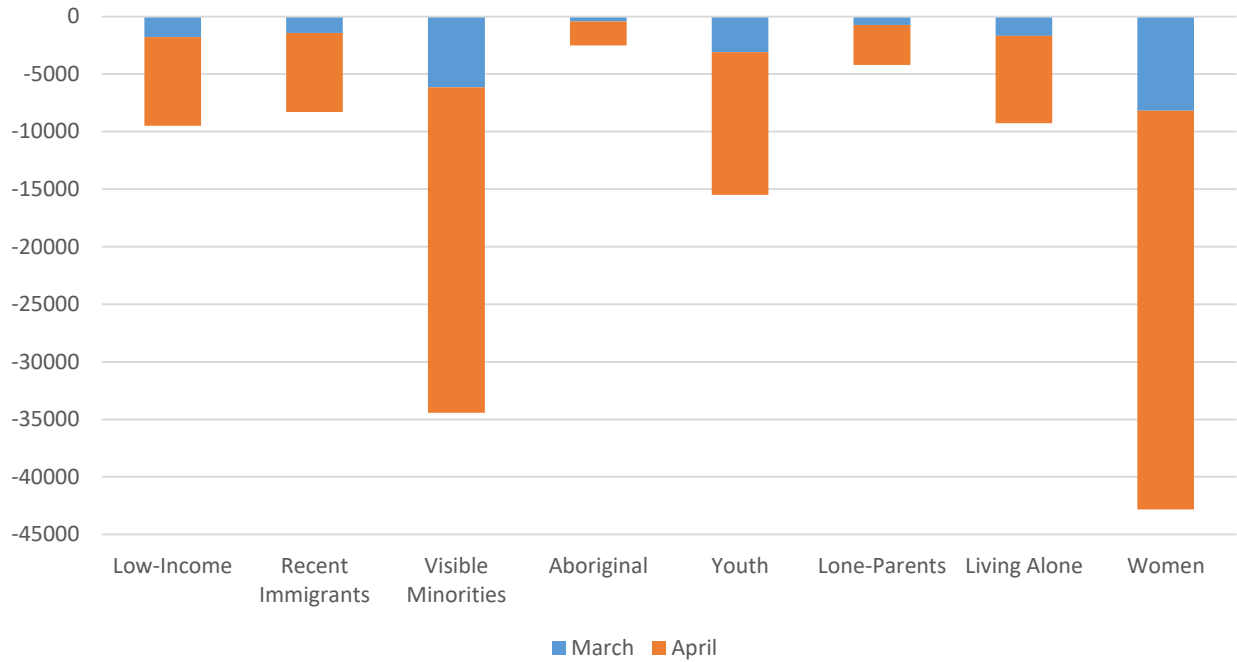
Once again, low-income workers and those from vulnerable population groups are expected to be impacted the most due to their over-representation in sectors most affected by the lockdown (See Appendix 1). For this brief, vulnerable workers include low-income workers as well as women, youth, recent immigrants, visible minorities, indigenous persons, lone-parents and persons living alone. Applying the provincial rate of change for each industry to the labour force profile of each of these population groups provides an estimate of the impact of the pandemic and lockdown on each worker group.

Following modest impacts on each population group in March, April saw a significant contraction in employment for vulnerable population groups. Overall, women have been the most affected by the downturn, losing 32,621 jobs in April following a loss of 8,197 jobs in March. Visible minority workers have been the next most affected group losing a total of 32,430 jobs since the start of the pandemic, followed by youth (-15,498) and low-income workers (-9,479). As a percentage of total employment, however, youth and low-income workers have been hardest hit, suffering a 17% reduction in total employment, along with recent immigrants who have experienced a 15% reduction in total employment (See Table 2).

Job loss among workers from vulnerable population groups is of concern as they may have the fewest resources available to withstand the impacts of the recession. This may lead to long-term social and financial consequences for workers and their families. Social impacts may include compromised mental and physical health as well as reduced family functioning. Financial impacts may include long-term indebtedness, insolvency and an inability to meet basic needs.

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[1] Statistics Canada (2020). Labour Force Survey April 2020. Table 14-10-0294-02 (formerly CANSIM table 282-0135).

## Estimated Total Job Loss by Selected Populations, February - April 2020, Calgary



Legend: March (blue), April (orange)

## Estimated Percentage Job Loss by Selected Populations, February - April 2020, Calgary



Low Income: -17%
Recent Immigrants: -15%
Visible Minorities: -14%
Aboriginal Identity: -13%
Youth: -17%
Lone Parents: -12%
Living Alone: -12%
Women: -13%
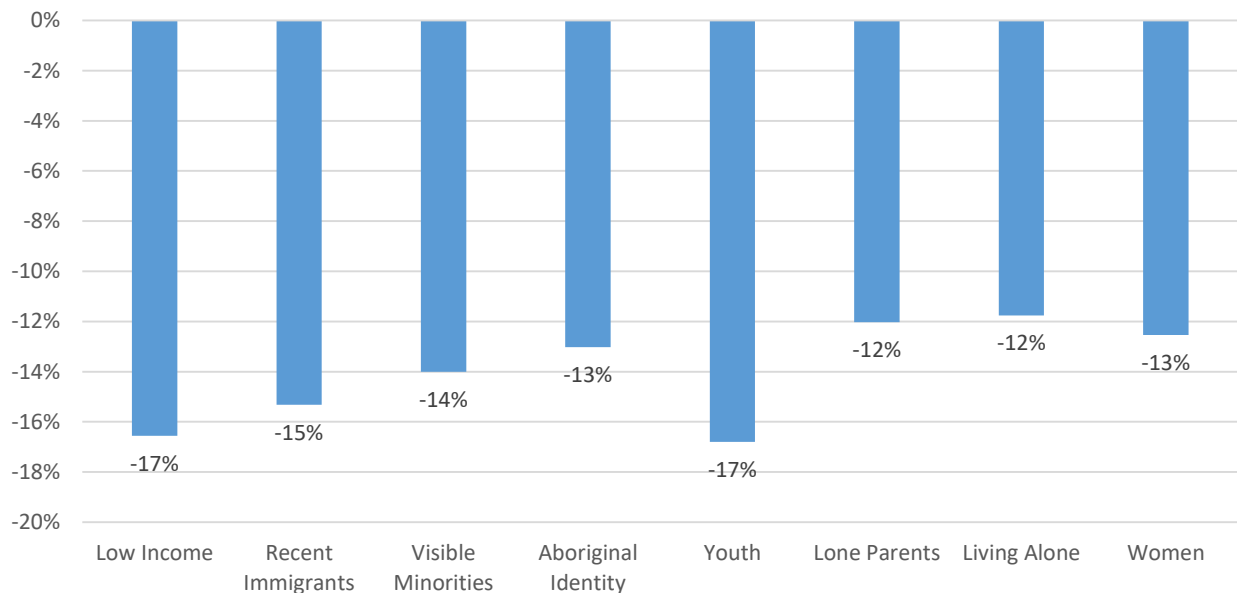
**Table 1: Total Employment (000s) by Industry, Alberta**

| | March | April | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total employed, all industries | 2,212.8 | 1,969 | -11% |
| Agriculture | 48.8 | 44.3 | -9% |
| Natural resources | 144.7 | 133 | -8% |
| Utilities | 23.4 | 21.2 | -9% |
| Construction | 230.7 | 197.5 | -14% |
| Manufacturing | 136.2 | 117.9 | -13% |
| Wholesale and retail trade | 310 | 260.2 | -16% |
| Transportation and warehousing | 126.3 | 109.2 | -14% |
| Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing | 104 | 102.9 | -1% |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 185.8 | 169.3 | -9% |
| Business, building and other support services | 74.3 | 69.3 | -7% |
| Educational services | 157.5 | 147.7 | -6% |
| Health care and social assistance | 286.2 | 271 | -5% |
| Information, culture and recreation | 61.1 | 63.1 | 3% |
| Accommodation and food services | 113.1 | 77.5 | -31% |
| Other services (except public administration) | 103.9 | 80.2 | -23% |
| Public administration | 107 | 104.9 | -2% |

Statistics Canada – Labour Force Survey – April 2020. Table 14-10-0355-02 (formerly CANSIM table 282-0088).

**Table 2: Estimated Change in Employment Based on Industry, Selected Populations, Calgary (CMA)**

| | March | April | Total | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Low-Income | -1,788 | -7,691 | -9,479 | -17% |
| Recent Immigrants | -1,444 | -6,851 | -8,295 | -15% |
| Visible Minorities | -6,149 | -28,281 | -34,430 | -14% |
| Aboriginal | -423 | -2,090 | -2,513 | -13% |
| Youth | -3,101 | -12,397 | -15,498 | -17% |
| Lone-Parents | -732 | -3,478 | -4,210 | -12% |
| Living Alone | -1,694 | -7,566 | -9,260 | -12% |
| Women | -8,197 | -34,621 | -42,818 | -13% |

**Appendix 1**: Distribution of the Labour Force by Industry by Selected Population Groups, Calgary (CMA), 2016

| | Total | Women | Low-Income | Recent Immigrants | Visible Minorities | Aboriginal Identity | Youth | Lone Parents | Living Alone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total employed, all industries | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Agriculture | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 0% |
| Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas | 6% | 5% | 2% | 4% | 5% | 5% | 2% | 5% | 8% |
| Utilities | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Construction | 9% | 3% | 12% | 7% | 6% | 14% | 8% | 7% | 9% |
| Manufacturing | 5% | 3% | 3% | 7% | 6% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 4% |
| Wholesale and retail trade | 15% | 15% | 16% | 17% | 16% | 14% | 25% | 13% | 13% |
| Transportation and warehousing | 6% | 4% | 6% | 5% | 7% | 5% | 3% | 6% | 6% |
| Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, leasing | 6% | 6% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 7% | 7% |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 11% | 10% | 7% | 9% | 10% | 7% | 5% | 9% | 13% |
| Business, building and other support services | 5% | 4% | 8% | 7% | 5% | 6% | 5% | 6% | 5% |
| Educational services | 6% | 9% | 5% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 5% | 7% | 6% |
| Health care and social assistance | 11% | 19% | 8% | 12% | 13% | 11% | 6% | 17% | 11% |
| Information, culture and recreation | 4% | 4% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 5% | 8% | 4% | 5% |
| Accommodation and food services | 7% | 9% | 15% | 15% | 11% | 8% | 20% | 6% | 4% |
| Other services (except public administration) | 4% | 5% | 7% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 4% |
| Public administration | 4% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 5% | 2% | 4% | 5% |

Statistics Canada (2016). Census of Canada 2016. Custom Tabulations Available Through the Community Data Program

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