AMBROSE

CANADIAN POVERTY INSTITUTE

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

Brief 1: Employment and Financial Security

MAY UPDATE

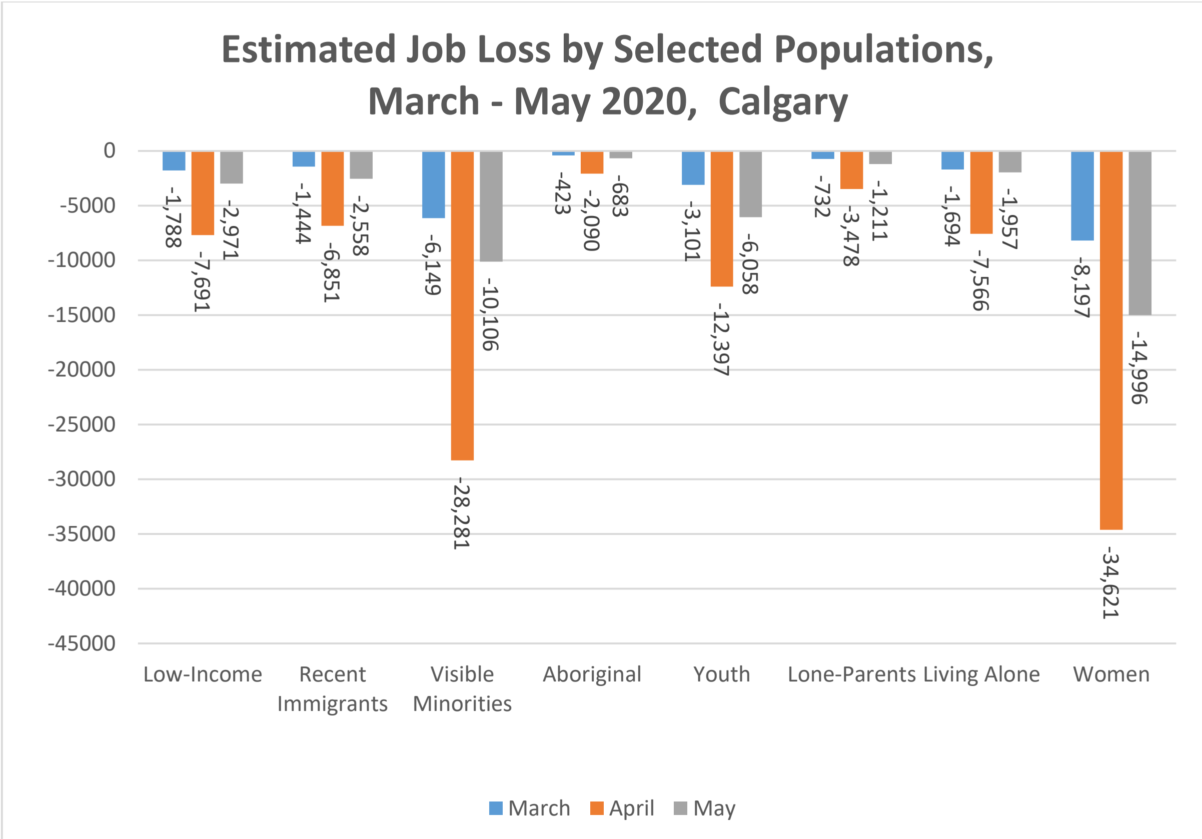
This brief provides an update on the impact of the economic lockdown on vulnerable workers in Calgary based on May data from the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey. A previous brief provided a detailed examination of the initial impacts of the lockdown based on the March Labour Force Survey and is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

Following a loss of 42,700 jobs in April, the Calgary region experienced a further 4.3% decline in employment in May, as the economy shed a further 33,900 jobs. As a result, the number of unemployed jumped by 23% from April, for a total of 117,800 unemployed workers by the end of May. This resulted in a rise in the unemployment rate to 13.5% compared to 10.8% the previous month (See Table 1). As in the previous month, industries experiencing the sharpest job loss in Alberta were Accommodation and Food Services (-20.5%) and Wholesale and Retail Trade (-7%), although the rate of job loss in each industry slowed. At the same time, there was a 15% increase in employment in Utilities. (See Table 2).

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. 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.

Following steep job losses in April, the rate of job loss slowed in May, although vulnerable workers continued to lose ground (See Table 3). Overall, women have been the most affected by the downturn, losing a further 14,996 jobs in May following a loss of 32,621 jobs in March. Over the past three months, employment among women has fallen by 16.9%, a loss of 57,814 jobs. Visible minority workers have been the next most affected group, with employment estimated to have fallen by a further 10,106 in May, for a total of 44,536 lost jobs for visible minority workers since the start of the pandemic, an 18% overall decline.

Although women and visible minority workers have experienced the greatest overall decline in employment in terms of total jobs lost, as a percentage of the workforce, low-income workers and youth experienced the greatest impact. Since the start of the pandemic, youth employment is estimated to have fallen by 23%, a loss of 21,556 jobs. It is also estimated that over 1 in 5 low-income workers have lost their jobs, a loss of 12,450 jobs over the past three months. Recent immigrants have also been hard hit, with an estimated 20% reduction in employment since March.


Estimated Job Loss by Selected Populations, March - May 2020, Calgary
0
-5000
-10000
-15000
-20000
-25000
-30000
-35000
-40000
-45000
-1,788
-7,691
-2,971
-1,444
-6,851
-2,558
-6,149
-28,281
-10,106
-423
-2,090
-683
-3,101
-12,397
-6,058
-732
-3,478
-1,211
-1,694
-7,566
-1,957
-8,197
-34,621
-14,996
Low-Income
Recent Immigrants
Visible Minorities
Aboriginal
Youth
Lone-Parents
Living Alone
Women
March
April
May

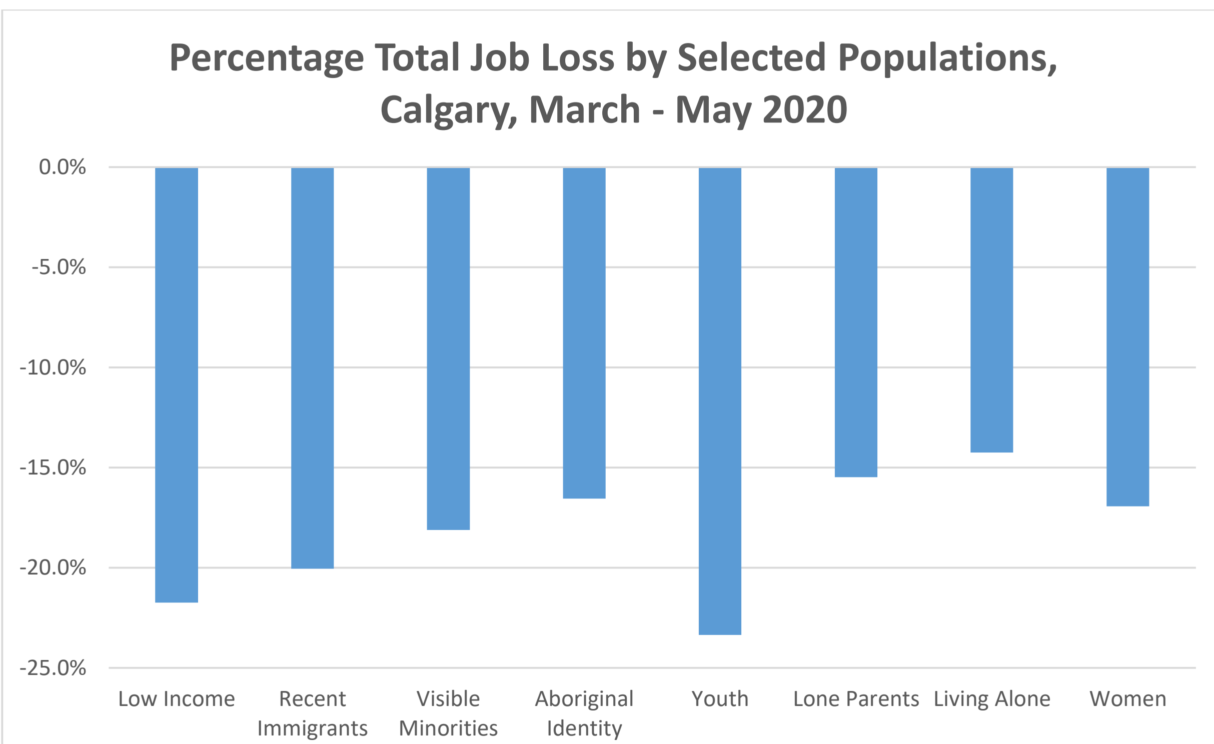

Percentage Total Job Loss by Selected Populations, Calgary, March - May 2020
0.0%
-5.0%
-10.0%
-15.0%
-20.0%
-25.0%
Low Income
Recent Immigrants
Visible Minorities
Aboriginal Identity
Youth
Lone Parents
Living Alone
Women

Table 1: Labour force characteristics, Calgary CMA, 3 month moving average, seasonally adjusted

	April 2020	May 2020	Change	Percent Change
Labour force	888.2	876.3	-11.9	-1.3
Employment	792.4	758.5	-33.9	-4.3
Unemployment	95.7	117.8	22.1	23.1
Participation rate	68.6	67.6	-1	...
Unemployment rate	10.8	13.4	2.6	...
Employment rate	61.2	58.5	-2.7	...

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey. May 2020. Table 14-10-0294-02 (formerly CANSIM table 282-0135).

Table 2: Total Employment (000s) by Industry, Calgary (CMA)

	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	% Change (Apr – May)
Natural resources	53.8	50.6	51.5	1.8%
Utilities	9	9.1	10.5	15.4%
Construction	67.6	67.9	66.3	-2.4%
Manufacturing	37.2	37.4	38.9	4.0%
Wholesale and retail trade	108.8	103.5	96.3	-7.0%
Transportation and warehousing	54.5	49.8	48	-3.6%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	40.6	40.4	40.9	1.2%
Professional, scientific and technical services	93.8	90	89.4	-0.7%
Business, building and other support services	27.7	29	31.4	8.3%
Educational services	66.6	62.6	58.7	-6.2%
Health care and social assistance	117.8	112.4	105.1	-6.5%
Information, culture and recreation	30.6	29.1	27.2	-6.5%
Accommodation and food services	53.2	43.9	34.9	-20.5%
Other services (except public administration)	34.9	31.7	31.2	-1.6%
Public administration	27.8	28	27.4	-2.1%

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0097-01 Employment by industry, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, census metropolitan areas (x 1,000)

Table 3: Estimated Change in Employment Based on Industry, Selected Populations, Calgary (CMA)[1]

	March	April	May	Total	% Change
Low-Income	-1,788	-7,691	-2,971	-12,450	-21.7%
Recent Immigrants	-1,444	-6,851	-2,558	-10,853	-20.0%
Visible Minorities	-6,149	-28,281	-10,106	-44,536	-18.1%
Aboriginal	-423	-2,090	-683	-3,196	-16.6%
Youth	-3,101	-12,397	-6,058	-21,556	-23.4%
Lone-Parents	-732	-3,478	-1,211	-5,421	-15.5%
Living Alone	-1,694	-7,566	-1,957	-11,217	-14.2%
Women	-8,197	-34,621	-14,996	-57,814	-16.9%

[1] Estimates were generated by applying the rate of change in employment for each industry to the labour force profile of each population group (Appendix 1) to provide an estimate of the impact of the pandemic and lockdown on each population.

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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