



# WORKFORCE RESET

## *Surrey Labour Market Intelligence and Impact Reports*

Surrey Board of Trade

COVID-19 Surrey Labour Market Intelligence Report #1

September 2020 (including results of Statistics Canada's August 2020 Labour Force Survey)

**\*\*THE ONLY SURREY-FOCUSED LABOUR MARKET REPORT\*\***

This is the first of a series of monthly SBOT Labour Market Intelligence Report on COVID-related impacts on the Surrey labour market, including the best available quantitative, qualitative and anecdotal information on implications for Surrey employers, workers and service providers. This is considered a 'baseline' report on how Surrey's labour market looked before 2020 and how it is evolving during the pandemic, particularly from a business and workforce perspective to inform decision-making and planning on recovery and resilience.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- There has been a loss of over 37,000 jobs in Surrey between February 2020 and July 2020; Youth, immigrants, people of colour and women have been more adversely affected by these job losses, raising significant concerns for Surrey's diverse population.
- Aside from some limited gains for the job market in Agriculture & Natural Resources, Utilities and Professional, Scientific & Technical Services industries (for a total gain of 3,534 jobs), all other major industries have diminished in size to varying degrees.
- The hardest hit industries are Arts, Culture & Recreation, Personal Services, Accommodation & Food Services, Transportation & Warehousing and Retail. 60% of BC small businesses were fully open in August with Construction (89%) and Hospitality (36%) having the highest and lowest proportion of businesses fully open, respectively, in August 2020.
- Job losses are concentrated on the service sector, many of which are not expected to return.
- 15% of businesses in BC do not expect to ever reach pre-COVID levels of staffing, while 30% are not expecting to reach normal levels until at least 2021. Agriculture (57%), Finance (56%), Construction (53%), Wholesale (52%) and Professional Services (51%) had the highest proportion of their full staffing capacity working in August 2020.
- Only 29% of small businesses were making or exceeding their normal revenue levels for this period in August 2020.
- As businesses and industry in Surrey shifts as a result of COVID-19, reskilling and upskilling for new products/services and positions will be required.
- The greatest obstacles related to re-opening businesses were voiced as the complexity of health & safety requirements, the difficulty of implementing re-opening requirements and the cost associated of implementation.
- Just below half of the businesses surveyed were not confident that the current government support would help them succeed through the COVID-19 period, while only 12% showed at least some confidence in government measures.
- When asked what type of government support would be most helpful for recovery, most cited solutions which included more wage support, greater tax relief, more / better rent relief and more / better cash flow relief.
- Canadians over the age of 15, in all demographics, reported significant negative impacts on mental health.

# 1. Pre-2020 (Pre-COVID-19) The Surrey/Metro Vancouver Economy and Labour Market

This is an analysis of the economic and labour market situation in Surrey and the broader region conducted before the end of 2019 (pre-COVID-19). For more details on this analysis, see the secondary research section of the (click here) [Surrey Labour Market Priorities Project Research Report](#) published by the Surrey Board of Trade in September 2019.

The City of Surrey is the second largest municipality in British Columbia with a 2016 population of 518,000 residents. The city is one of the fastest growing and most diverse communities in Canada, adding close to 10,000 residents annually since 2011. With the largest developable land base in the Lower Mainland/Southwest (MSW) region, Surrey's resident population is projected to reach close to 650,000 by 2026 and 738,000 by 2036 – a growth rate of more than 2% annually over the next 20 years. This is positive news for the city's growth potential and expansion of its labour force to accommodate the inflow of new residents.

Some key economic, demographic, and labour market trends in Surrey and Metro Vancouver in recent years are shared below:

## Economy

- For the last five years, the provincial economy has experienced robust growth largely driven by real estate and construction activity in BC's Lower Mainland, as well as manufacturing, transportation and service sectors across much of the province.
- Metro Vancouver has been Canada's fastest growing metropolitan region for several years, and now accounts for close to 60% of the BC economy.
- As part of the Metro region, the Surrey economy continues to grow with activity across most goods and services sectors. In 2018, Surrey accounted for 21% of the regional economy with an economic contribution estimated at \$29 billion (Gross Domestic Product); This represents an increase of close to \$5 billion in added value since 2014.
- Growth is expected to moderate in Metro Vancouver and Surrey in 2019 and 2020, as real estate and construction activity levels off due to rising interest rates and stricter mortgage requirements.

## Business Development

- Surrey has a strong, innovative and sustainable economy, in large part due to the strength of its small business sector.
- Surrey saw the total number of businesses grow from 94,000 to 108,500 between 2014 and 2018, an increase of more than 15%. Over the same period, the total number of businesses in the MSW region increased by nearly 12%. Surrey's share of small businesses (with or without employees) in the MSW region continues to climb, illustrating the dynamic nature of the city's economy.
- Apart from the construction industry, business growth occurred primarily in the service sector. The decline in the number of registered businesses in the goods-producing sector was likely the result of industry consolidation and advanced automation<sup>1</sup>. These industries have otherwise experienced above-average growth in recent years.

The decline in the number of businesses in the Surrey goods-producing sector was likely the result of industry consolidation and advanced automation<sup>2</sup>. The other industries have experienced above-average growth in recent years.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, Business Register; BC Stats

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

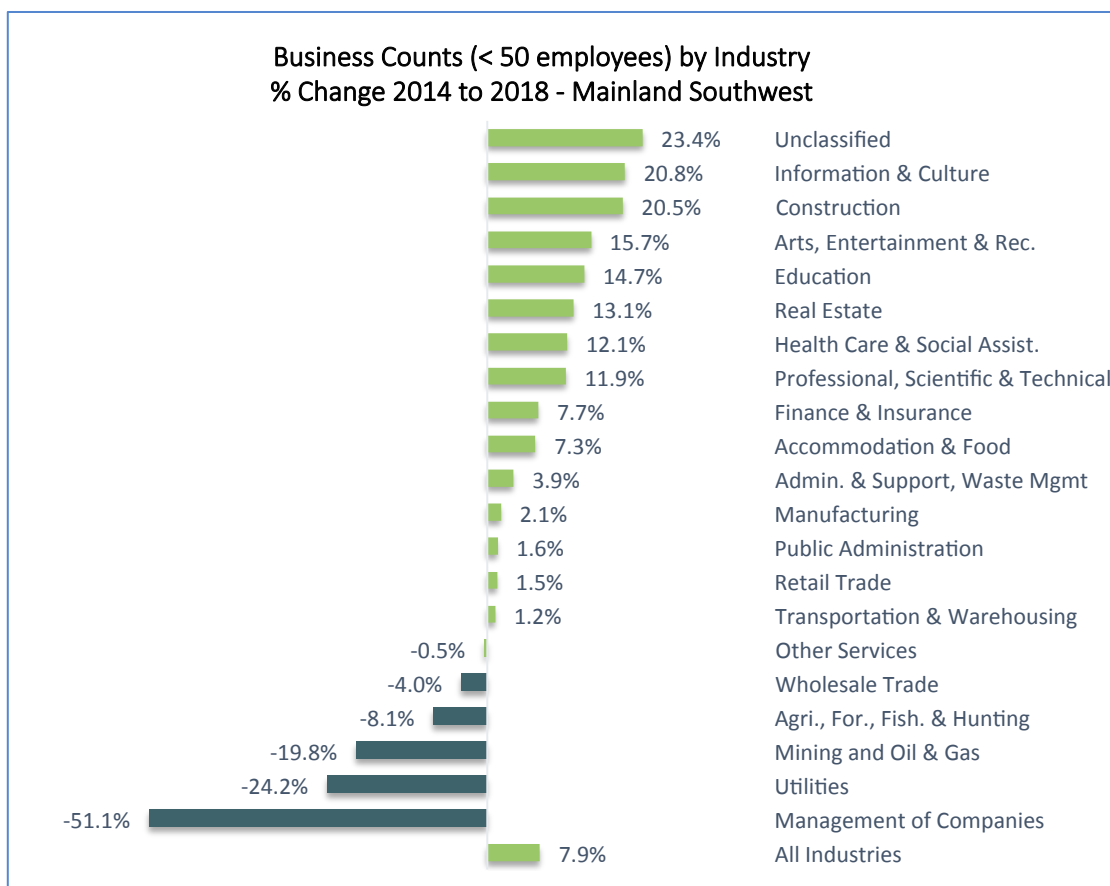


Figure 1: Small Business Counts Percentage Change 2014 to 2018  
Statistics Canada, Business Register; BC Stats

## Population

- Surrey has recently been characterized by a faster growing and younger population than in the broader MSW region. Over three-quarters of the Surrey population growth during 2011-2016 was from international migration – this appears even more significant when one considers that only 36% of Metro Vancouver’s population growth was driven by immigration during this period.
- Over the last 20 years, Surrey’s population has been rapidly growing at an annual rate surpassing both Metro Vancouver and the rest of BC. Since 2014, Surrey added close to 65,000 residents while growing at an annual rate of 2.5%. Surrey is on track to becoming the most populated city in BC in less than 25 years (by 2041) as an estimated 260,000 people from around the world seek to make a new life in one of Canada’s most culturally diverse cities.
- According to the 2016 Census, Metro Vancouver received an average of 28,500 immigrants between 2011 and 2016, of which more than 25% located in Surrey. Today, an estimated 43% of Surrey’s total population are immigrants.
- Surrey’s resident population is also one of the youngest in BC, with a median age in 2016 of 38.7 years and Metro Vancouver’s being just under 41 years.
- 51% of Surrey residents speak a language other than English or French – 102 languages are spoken in Surrey.

## Education

- Overall, Surrey has a population with lower educational attainment than Metro Vancouver. For example, in 2016, 42% of the Surrey working age population possessed no post-secondary certification (i.e. apprenticeship, college or university), compared to 32% of the population in the broader region.

- [BC's Post-Secondary Supply Model](#) provides projections of the new supply of skilled labour for all age groups that will exit BC's public post-secondary education system with a credential between 2017/18 and 2026/27. Graduate estimates for Surrey are based on the City's share of the provincial population (11.1%) as of 2016.
- Competition for skilled graduates will continue to intensify over time, while the challenge for Surrey employers will be to attract and recruit graduates for their growing industries.
- The positive news is that from 2011 to 2016, the number of Surrey residents with a college or university credential rose by 17% and 24.5% respectively. Unfortunately, the number of workers with an apprenticeship or trades credential decreased by 13% during this period.

### **Labour Market and Labour Force**

- The Surrey labour market continues to expand in line with a growing population and increasing demand for workers across most industries.
- Unemployment trended downwards from 7.9% to 6.5% between 2011 and 2016.
- The Surrey labour force was estimated at just under 274,690 workers in 2016, an increase of more than 12% since 2011.
- As a share of the MSW labour force, Surrey accounted for 17.7% of the more than 1.5 million workers.
- On a relative basis, the Surrey labour force has a larger share of workers in certain industries, including trades & transport and manufacturing, reflecting a more industrial nature to the Surrey economy.
- The Surrey labour force grew at an annual rate of 2.5% between 2011 and 2016, far outpacing the annual rate of 1.4% for the broader MSW.
- The Surrey economy experienced above average labour force growth in several service industries over this period, including in Accommodation & Food, Management of Companies, Administration, Support, Waste, and Health & Social Assistance. As well, growth was seen in construction in Surrey's goods-producing sector.
- Except for in Natural Resources, Agriculture & Related Industries, the Surrey labour force experienced positive growth across all major occupational groups between 2011 and 2016. Occupational growth was particularly evident in Sales & Services jobs, Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators, and health-related occupations.
- Additional labour force issues for Surrey workers are the increasing housing costs (owning and renting) in Surrey and Metro Vancouver and transportation challenges, including the need for better public transit and commuting time for workers traveling from and to Surrey.

### **Employment and Unemployment**

- Surrey experienced a strong increase in employment through 2018 and sharply declining levels of unemployment in both goods and services.
- Surrey's goods-producing sector added more than 6,000 jobs during 2014-2018.
- The rate of growth in the region's goods sector (4%) was double that for the services sector (2%); This is a positive indicator for Surrey's growing economic base.
- Unemployment in both the goods and services sectors correspondingly trended downwards over the same period. For the goods sector, the unemployment rate for the region fell from 5.9% in 2014 to 2.7% in 2018, and from 3.5% to 2.5% in the services sector over the same period.
- At these rates (i.e. full employment), the potential for labour shortages intensifies and the need to more effectively utilize the skills of underemployed workers and attract workers from outside Surrey and the MSW region will become essential.

### **Projected Employment, Job Openings and Gaps (BC Labour Market Outlook)**

- Through 2028, employment demand in Surrey is anticipated to increase 1.2% on average each year, which is faster than the BC annual average growth rate of 1.1%.
- In 2018, Surrey employed an estimated 288,000 workers and employment demand is projected to increase by a total of 11.8% over the next 10 years. Industries with above average employment demand

over this period include Professional, Scientific & Technical, Health & Social Assistance, Transportation & Warehousing, and Accommodation & Food.

- More than two-thirds of total openings are anticipated in four of the 10 major occupations, led by Sales & Service, Trades, Transport & Equipment, Business, Finance & Administration, and management occupations.
- Although gaps do not emerge at the major occupational level over this period, individual occupational gaps already exist and will become more acute each year. BC's high-tech industry, for example, is expected to continue to grow with occupations such as computer system designers projected to be one of the fastest growing jobs through 2028. These, and other in-demand occupations, will be further explored throughout this study. An imbalance or shortage of almost 7,000 workers could materialize in Surrey by 2028 without preventative strategies.

Table 1 shows that in 2018 Surrey employed an estimated 288,000 workers, which is consistent with other estimates based on Labour Force Survey data (above). Employment demand is projected to increase by a total of 11.8% over the next 10 years (1.2% annually). Industries with above average employment demand over this period include Professional, Scientific & Technical, Health & Social Assistance, Transportation & Warehousing, and Accommodation & Food, while projections for Surrey's primary resource industries are expected to decline. Employment demand overall is projected to accelerate in the 2023-2028 period.

Industry	Employment Baseline			Projected Employment – Surrey		
	MSW 2018	Surrey % Share	Surrey 2018	2023	2028	% (10 years)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	16,560	19.6%	3,253	3,235	3,228	-0.8%
Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas	6,159	11.2%	690	779	833	20.7%
Utilities	8,507	17.6%	1,499	1,525	1,558	4.0%
Construction	144,978	21.8%	31,593	29,906	32,640	3.3%
Manufacturing	117,769	23.5%	27,633	27,792	28,051	1.5%
Wholesale Trade	67,637	19.9%	13,432	14,197	14,701	9.5%
Retail Trade	184,318	18.2%	33,594	34,605	35,825	6.6%
Transportation & Warehousing	99,458	28.1%	27,918	29,968	32,246	15.5%
Information & Culture	55,478	10.5%	5,842	6,535	7,306	25.1%
Finance & Insurance	74,261	15.3%	11,333	12,215	12,889	13.7%
Real Estate	38,988	13.5%	5,280	5,399	5,690	7.8%
Professional, Scientific & Tech.	149,986	11.7%	17,544	19,667	22,331	27.3%
Management of Companies, Admin. & Support, Waste	71,507	21.1%	15,060	16,336	16,877	12.1%
Education	107,678	13.4%	14,481	14,824	15,472	6.8%
Health & Social Assistance	183,355	18.3%	33,559	36,990	41,058	22.3%
Arts, Entertainment & Rec.	47,323	12.8%	6,048	6,431	6,889	13.9%
Accommodation & Food	111,920	16.0%	17,860	19,452	21,031	17.8%
Other Services	67,614	17.6%	11,907	12,511	12,902	8.4%
Public Administration	55,716	17.1%	9,514	9,937	10,496	10.3%
<b>Employment Totals (Growth)</b>	<b>1,609,213</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>288,039</b>	<b>302,306 (5.0%)</b>	<b>322,022 (6.5%)</b>	<b>11.8%</b>

Table 1: Employment Baseline and Projections by Industry  
BC Labour Market Outlook 2018; Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Employment projections by major occupation provide a similar picture of Surrey's future economy (Table 2, below). Total employment estimates vary slightly due in part to the method in which data is aggregated by

industry and occupation, as well as rounding. Occupation groups facing above-average employment demand over the 10-year horizon, include Natural & Applied Sciences, Health, and Arts, Culture, Recreation & Sport.

Occupation	Employment Baseline			Projected Employment – Surrey		
	MSW 2018	Surrey % Share	Surrey 2018	2023	2028	% (10 years)
Management	191,034	14.7%	28,134	29,415	31,260	11.1%
Business, Finance & Admin.	255,259	16.2%	41,295	43,861	46,893	13.6%
Natural & Applied Sciences	119,368	13.1%	15,590	16,862	18,557	19.0%
Health	107,599	18.5%	19,876	21,762	24,025	20.9%
Education, Law & Social; Community & Gov't	174,180	14.7%	25,534	27,033	28,804	12.8%
Art, Culture, Rec. & Sport	74,735	9.1%	6,776	7,366	8,074	19.2%
Sales & Service	383,002	18.8%	71,890	76,065	80,339	11.8%
Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators	229,940	25.1%	57,620	58,297	62,244	8.0%
Natural Resources, Agriculture & Related	21,813	19.9%	4,344	4,539	4,675	7.6%
Manufacturing & Utilities	52,284	28.5%	14,923	15,199	15,561	4.3%
<b>Employment Totals (Growth)</b>	<b>1,609,214</b>	<b>17.8%</b>	<b>285,983</b>	<b>300,399 (5.0%)</b>	<b>320,433 (6.7%)</b>	<b>12.0%</b>

Table 2: Employment Baseline and Projections by Occupation  
BC Labour Market Outlook 2018; Census 2016

Over the next 10 years, a total of 588,470 job openings are anticipated in the MSW regional economy. About two-thirds of job openings are due to the need to replace exiting workers, the remaining one-third are related to economic growth. The MSW region makes up two-thirds (65%) of the Province's total forecasted job openings over the 10-year horizon. Table 3 shows projected openings by industry and major occupation in Surrey; Projections are based on the Surrey economy's share of the MSW labour force in 2016.

The data below shows that over the next ten years (2018-2028), total job openings in the Surrey economy will reach an estimated 103,000, or 10,300 each year through 2028. Similar to the employment projections above, high demand industries include Health & Social Assistance, Transportation & Warehousing, and Professional, Scientific & Technical – all of which will experience above average employment demand over the next 10 years.

Industry	Total Projected Job Openings				
	MSW 2028	Surrey % Share	Surrey 2023	Surrey 2028	% Total Openings
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	3,970	19.6%	390	780	0.8%
Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas	3,175	11.2%	178	356	0.3%
Utilities	2,600	17.6%	229	458	0.4%
Construction	36,495	21.8%	3,976	7,953	7.7%
Manufacturing	32,439	23.5%	3,806	7,612	7.4%
Wholesale Trade	23,819	19.9%	2,365	4,730	4.6%
Retail Trade	48,696	18.2%	4,438	8,876	8.6%
Transportation & Warehousing	41,990	28.1%	5,893	11,787	11.5%
Information & Culture	27,615	10.5%	1,454	2,908	2.8%
Finance & Insurance	29,546	15.3%	2,254	4,509	4.4%
Real Estate	13,456	13.5%	911	1,822	1.8%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	80,118	11.7%	4,686	9,371	9.1%
Management of Companies, Administrative &	28,042	21.1%	2,953	5,906	5.7%

Industry	Total Projected Job Openings				
	MSW 2028	Surrey % Share	Surrey 2023	Surrey 2028	% Total Openings
Support, Waste					
Education	32,883	13.4%	2,211	4,422	4.3%
Health & Social Assistance	88,044	18.3%	8,057	16,115	15.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	15,871	12.8%	1,014	2,028	2.0%
Accommodation & Food	37,744	16.0%	3,012	6,023	5.9%
Other Services	21,158	17.6%	1,863	3,726	3.6%
Public Administration	20,811	17.1%	1,777	3,554	3.5%
<b>Total Job Openings</b>	<b>588,474</b>	<b>17.5%</b>	<b>51,467</b>	<b>102,934</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3: Projected Job Openings by Industry  
BC Labour Market Outlook 2018; Census 2016

Total job openings by major occupation vary somewhat from projections by industry, with fewer total openings anticipated in the first five years (Table 4). More than two-thirds of total openings are anticipated in four of the 10 major occupations, led by Sales & Service, Trades, Transport & Equipment, Business, Finance & Administration, and management occupations. These occupations, likewise, account for the largest shares of employment in the Surrey economy.

Occupation	Total Projected Job Openings				
	MSW 2028	Surrey % Share	Surrey 2023	Surrey 2028	% Total Openings
Management	82,331	14.7%	5,390	12,103	11.8%
Business, Finance & Administration	102,008	16.2%	7,926	16,525	16.2%
Natural & Applied Sciences	51,225	13.1%	3,039	6,710	6.6%
Health	48,917	18.5%	4,240	9,050	8.9%
Education, Law & social, Community & Government	64,022	14.7%	4,494	9,411	9.2%
Art, Culture, Recreation & Sport	28,467	9.1%	1,190	2,590	2.5%
Sales & Service	118,935	18.8%	11,021	22,360	21.9%
Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators	69,003	25.1%	6,660	17,320	16.9%
Natural Resources, Agriculture & Related	6,647	19.9%	688	1,323	1.3%
Manufacturing & Utilities	16,920	28.5%	2,357	4,822	4.7%
<b>Total Job Openings</b>	<b>588,475</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>47,006</b>	<b>102,214</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 4: Projected Job Openings by Major Occupation  
BC Labour Market Outlook 2018; Census 2016

### Job Openings by Skill Level

The BC Labour Market Outlook (BCLMO) provides projected job openings by skill level defined as the education and training requirements typically needed to perform the job. Occupations have been organized into to five skill level categories from among jobs that require no formal education or training to those that require a combination of post-secondary education and experience. BCLMO projections by skill level are provided for BC only, with estimates developed for Surrey based on their equivalent share of total openings over the next 10 years. Estimates by skill level are then analyzed in relation to the BC education system's capacity to graduate students with the education and training needed to meet future skill requirements.

Table 5 details the requirements of each skill level and the projected number of job openings each year in Surrey through 2028. About two-thirds of all job openings will require some level of post-secondary education or training, while the remaining one-third will require a high school certificate or less. Skill requirements in the future economy continue to become more complex for most in-demand occupations.



Skill Level (Credential)	Total Job Openings			
	BC 2028	Surrey % Share	Surrey 2028	Surrey (Annual)
O (Post-Secondary Education + Experience - Management)	124,352	13.8%	14,175	1,417
A (Post-Secondary Degree)	180,548	20.0%	20,581	2,058
B (Post-Secondary Diploma/Certificate)	286,613	31.7%	32,671	3,267
C (High School Certificate)	228,435	25.3%	26,039	2,604
D (Less than High School)	83,059	9.2%	9,468	947
<b>Totals</b>	<b>903,008</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>102,934</b>	<b>10,293</b>

Table 5: Total Job Openings by Skill Level (2028)  
BC Labour Market Outlook 2018; Statistics Canada, Census 2016

As a means to determining whether BC's education system has the capacity to help meet future skill requirements, the following examines graduation rates of both the post-secondary and K-12 education systems in BC. BC's Post-Secondary Supply Model provides projections of the new supply of skilled labour for all age groups that will exit BC's public post-secondary education system with a credential between 2017/18 and 2026/27. Graduate estimates for Surrey are based on the City's share of the provincial population (11.1%) as of 2016. The BC Ministry of Education provides graduation rates (Grade 12) for all school districts as of 2015, with estimates developed through 2028. High school graduation rates are difficult to estimate due to the myriad of factors that influence such outcomes. In this case, estimates are conservatively based on an average growth of 1.0% through 2028 – roughly equivalent to the projected growth rate for the Surrey population aged 0-19 years.

## 2. The New Normal: COVID-19 Employer, Labour Market and Workforce Impacts

### Surrey Employer COVID-19 Employment Impacts: Estimates based on Statistics Canada's 2016 Census and 2020 Labour Force Survey

**For the first time, Surrey has Surrey-specific labour market data!<sup>3</sup> This section compares employment changes in Surrey from 2019 and for each month from February through July 2020 to show the impact of COVID-19**

#### Surrey Employment COVID-19 Impacts by Industry – 2019 to July 2020

Based on estimates from the Labour Force Survey, the table below shows the structure of the Surrey labour market in 2019 with almost 300,000 employed and employment being led by service industries such as Wholesale & Retail trade (over 48,000), Health Care & Social Services (over 33,000) and Transportation & Warehousing (almost 29,000). Strong goods industries in Surrey are Construction (over 32,000) and Manufacturing (almost 27,000). The smallest employment sectors, but nevertheless important, are Utilities (over 1,300) and Agriculture & Natural resources (over 4,000).

Some of these and other industries grew or contracted slightly by February 2020, but almost all were impacted by COVID-19 in March through April 2020.

<sup>3</sup> This has been estimated by comparing the industry and occupational shares of employment in Surrey and the broader Vancouver Census Metropolitan Region (or Metro Vancouver Regional District) in 2016 and assuming the industrial and occupational structure in 2019 and 2020 are similar. This is Labour Force Survey data which is estimated at the regional district or Metro Vancouver level but it is not available for communities like Surrey within the broader region. For example, if construction employment in Surrey was 26.2% of total construction employment in Metro Vancouver in 2016, we used that metric to estimate Surrey employment in 2019 and in February through July 2020.



Table 6 shows employment change between February 2020 (pre-COVID) and July 2020 (Phase 3 of the Restart Plan), by which time some employment was recovered since the trough of the labour market in April.

- Overall, Surrey lost over 37,000 (or 12.7% of) jobs in this 5-month period.
- The biggest winners, in percentage terms, are the smallest Surrey industries; Agriculture & Natural Resources rose 72% or by 2,139 jobs, Utilities increased by 53% or 894 jobs.
- All other Surrey industries contracted to varying degrees over this period, except a small growth of 501 jobs or 2.6% in Professional, Scientific & Technical services.
- The hardest hit industries during February-July 2020 were:
  - Other Services (including high-touch personal businesses), which lost over 7,000 jobs or a drop of 46%
  - Business, Building & Other Support Services dropped almost 4,000 jobs or 28.5%
  - Accommodation & Food Services lost over 5,400 positions or a 28% reduction
  - Transportation & Warehousing employment fell by 5,500 jobs or a 20% contraction
  - The Big-event Intensive Information, Culture & Recreation industry in Surrey lost over 1,700 jobs for a 18% drop in employment
  - Retail was also severely impacted but has rebounded, still with a loss of 7,000 jobs by July or a 14% reduction
- Big employers in Surrey that kept operating through the pandemic retained most employment but Construction (down by 8%) and Manufacturing (down by 10%) together are still down from pre-COVID levels by 5,300 jobs

**Estimated Employment by Industry<sup>4</sup> – 2019, February 2020 and July 2020 - Surrey, BC**  
Adapted from Table: 14-10-0097-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0130)

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Two-Digit Codes	2019	February 2020	Change 2019 - February 2020		July 2020	Change February 2020 - July 2020	
			Jobs	%		Jobs	%
Total Employed (all industries) <sup>5</sup>	297,895	295,632	-2,263	0.7	258,223	-37,408	-12.7
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas	4,185	2,963	-1,222	-29.2	5,102	2,139	72.2
Utilities	1,361	1,691	330	24.2	2,586	894	52.9
Construction	32,331	32,567	236	0.7	29,973	-2,594	-8.0
Manufacturing	26,657	26,934	277	1.0	24,191	-2,743	-10.2
Wholesale & Retail trade	48,589	50,571	1,982	4.1	43,572	-6,999	-13.8
Transportation & Warehousing	28,739	27,731	-1,008	-3.5	22,204	-5,527	-19.9
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (rental & leasing)	21,170	18,545	-2,625	-12.4	16,000	-2,545	-13.7
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	19,396	19,321	-75	-0.4	19,822	501	2.6

<sup>4</sup> Estimates based on Surrey share of Metro Vancouver (Census Metropolitan Area) by Industry in 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Sum of all industries do not add up to total because of rounding and estimates.

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Two-Digit Codes	2019	February 2020	Change 2019 - February 2020		July 2020	Change February 2020 - July 2020	
			Jobs	%		Jobs	%
Business, Building & Other Support Services	16,729	13,904	-2,825	-16.9	9,946	-3,959	-28.5
Educational Services	15,652	16,495	843	-5.4	13,915	-2,543	-15.4
Health Care & Social Assistance	33,453	33,328	-125	-0.4	32,078	-1,250	-3.8
Information, Culture & Recreation	10,921	9,564	-1,357	-12.4	7,811	-1,752	-18.3
Accommodation & Food Services	18,964	19,642	678	3.6	14,214	-5,429	-27.6
Other Services (except public administration)	13,926	15,134	1,208	8.7	8,120	-7,014	-46.3
Public Administration	10,422	9,778	-644	-6.2	8,631	-1,147	-11.7

Table 6: Estimated Employment by Industry

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

### Surrey Employment COVID-19 Impacts by Occupation – 2019 to July 2020

When we consider employment by occupation in Surrey and impacts by occupation, Table 7, below, shows the greatest number of positions were in Sales & Services (over 83,000), Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators (over 55,000), Business, Finance & Administration (over 44,500), Education, Law, Social, Community & Government Services (almost 26,000) and Management Occupations (over 23,500) as of 2019.

As noted, employment in some types of Surrey business increased during the February-July 2020 period. Health Occupations (over 2,600 or 12.8%), natural resource positions (almost 2,200 or 64%) and manufacturing and utilities occupations (over 2,000 or 15.5%) saw the greatest growth. Significant reductions in employment over this period were experienced in the following occupational categories in Surrey:

- Sales and services jobs dropped by over 26,000 or -32%
- Trades, transport and equipment operators saw a loss of over 8,900 jobs or -15%
- Employment in education, law and social, community and government services positions decreased by over 4,200 or -16%

While smaller in numbers of job loss, other occupations experienced significant percentage declines in employment – art, culture, recreation and sport (-24%); and natural and applied sciences jobs (-9.5%)

### **Estimated Employment by Occupation<sup>6</sup> – 2019, February 2020 and July 2020** Surrey, BC

Adapted from Table: 14-10-0313-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0159)

National Occupational Classification One-Digit Categories	2019	February 2020	Change 2019 - February 2020		July 2020	Change February 2020 - July 2020	
			Jobs	%		Jobs	%
Total Employed (all)	297,895	295,632	-2,263	0.7	258,223	-37,408	-12.7

<sup>6</sup> Estimates based on Surrey share of Metro Vancouver (Census Metropolitan Area) by Industry in 2016.

National Occupational Classification One-Digit Categories	2019	February 2020	Change 2019 - February 2020		July 2020	Change February 2020 -July 2020	
			Jobs	%		Jobs	%
occupations) <sup>7</sup>							
Management	23,521	22,572	-949	-4.0	22,855	283	1.3
Business, Finance & Administration	44,567	41,700	-2,867	-6.4	40,947	-753	-1.8
Natural & Applied Sciences and related	19,276	19,670	394	0.2	17,898	-1,862	-9.5
Health	19,511	20,733	1,222	6.3	23,388	2,655	12.8
Education, Law & Social, Community and Government Services	25,946	26,195	249	1.0	21,945	-4,250	-16.2
Art, Culture, Recreation & Sport	6,715	6,557	-158	-2.4	4,960	-1,597	-24.4
Sales & Services	83,179	82,882	-279	-0.3	56,387	-26,495	-32.0
Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators and related	55,223	58,549	3,326	6.0	49,609	-8,940	-15.3
Natural Resources, Agriculture & related Production	4,150	3,368	-782	-18.8	5,533	2,165	64.3
Manufacturing & Utilities	14,982	13,359	-1,623	-10.8	15,430	2,071	15.5

Table 7: Estimated Employment by Occupation

Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0313-01 Employment by census metropolitan areas and occupation, annual](#)

## C. Qualitative Business and Labour Market COVID Impacts

Looking at more qualitative information, COVID impacts on Surrey businesses are extrapolated from recent surveys by business groups, including an extensive one with data on business impacts in the Lower Mainland.

### SBOT Surrey Economic Recovery Summit Survey

In early/mid-June 2020, SBOT with MNP administered a survey on COVID-19 impacts to a small sample of Surrey employers. It found the following:

- 48% kept their business open
- 47% shifted to working remotely
- 25% reduced hours of operation while 21% closed temporarily
- 27% had to change operations to pivot to new products/services

Sectors most impacted – having to close temporarily – were Health (50%), Tourism-Related Services (45%), Creative, Arts & Culture (40%), Education (25%) and General Services (22%). Manufacturing, Construction, Transportation and Technology were least likely to have to close.

<sup>7</sup> Sum of all occupations do not equal total because of rounding and estimates.

In terms of confidence about future sales and operations, Infrastructure & Transportation, Technology and General Service businesses had the highest confidence level, while Creative, Arts & Culture and Tourism-Related businesses had the least.

## Survey Analysis

### Workforce

Key Issue	Creative/Arts Culture	Manufacturing	Technology	Education	Infrastructure and Transportation	Health	Services - General	Services - Tourism-Related
Staff Is Laid Off Temporarily	X			X		X	X	X
Staff Can't Work Remotely	X	X						X
Issues with Absenteeism	X	X	X		X		X	X
Challenges in Returning/Attracting Employees Back to Work	X					X		X

X Responses indicated moderate issue  
X Responses indicated significant issue  
 Responses did not indicate this was a significant issue

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Figure 2: COVID-19 Workforce Issues – Surrey Businesses, June 2020  
MNP: Surrey Economic Recovery Summit, June 25, 2020

## Survey Analysis

### Finance

	Creative/Arts Culture	Manufacturing	Technology	Education	Infrastructure and Transportation	Health	Services - General	Services - Tourism-Related
Decrease in Revenue	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Increase in Revenue		↑	↑		↑			
Increase in Operating Cost	X	X			X	X		X
Adjusted Pricing Strategy	X		X	X	X		X	X

X Responses indicated moderate change  
X Responses indicated significant change  
 Responses did not indicate this was a significant change

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Figure 3: COVID-19 Finance Issues – Surrey Businesses, June 2020  
MNP: Surrey Economic Recovery Summit, June 25, 2020

The following are conclusions from the Summit on what has changed as a result of the pandemic:

- The foundation of many business models has changed to:
  - A need to adapt work to accommodate new requirements;
  - How people will engage; and,
  - Reliance on global suppliers for some goods is being questioned.
- Job losses are concentrated in the service sector and many of those jobs will not return.

Issues identified to address are:

- Government programs like CERB that may produce disincentives for people returning to work;
- Health and safety concerns include not only ability to maintain physical distancing at the workplace but transportation to and from work and access to child care;
- Mental health supports are needed by workers impacted directly or indirectly by COVID-19; and,
- Uncertainty about the future is affecting decisions about layoffs and hiring.

This disruption affords an opportunity to accelerate Surrey's (and Surrey businesses') digital transformation and develop target industries.

#### **BCMindReader.com COVID Impact Pulse Check 4 – Mid-July 2020**

The BC Chamber of Commerce created [BCMindReader.com](https://www.bcmindreader.com) to poll a sample of BC businesses on key issues and provide a voice to share concerns and feedback on policy issues directly with government. It has been administering a series of pulse surveys during the pandemic. Data from its latest survey, including a sample of businesses in the greater Vancouver region on COVID-19 related impacts, is summarized here.

Surrey employers are part of the broader Mainland/Southwest region of BC. The BCMindReader.com COVID Impact Pulse Check 4 with data collected in mid-July 2020 found the following impacts during the pandemic to date:

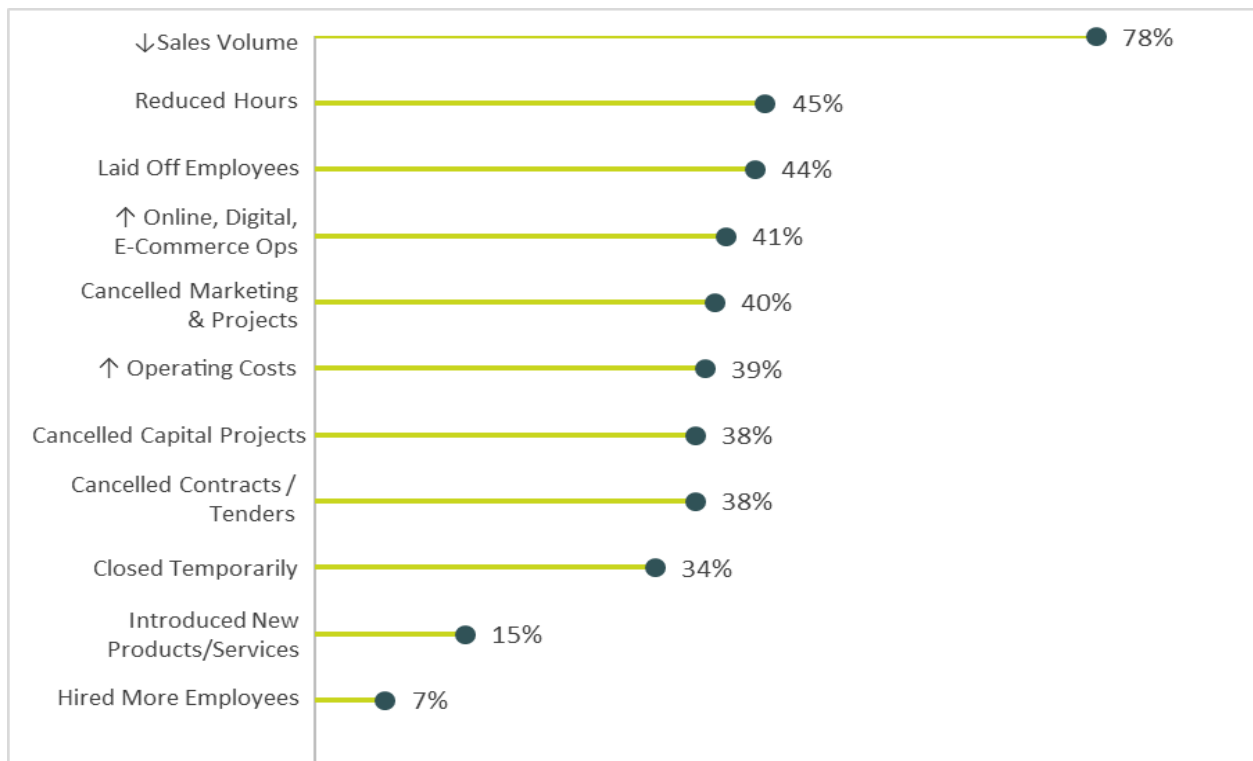


Figure 4: Covid-19 Related Impacts by Percent of Businesses Affected at Mid-July 2020

Those surveyed had laid off an average of 5.3 employees over the preceding two weeks, keeping in mind deeper impacts would have been experienced in March through April during Phases 1 and 2 of the BC Restart Plan.

#### **Return to Work Expectations:**

When asked how quickly their business anticipates the share of employees at the workplace to return to pre-COVID-19 levels, they answered that all/most employees will be back in the workplace by:

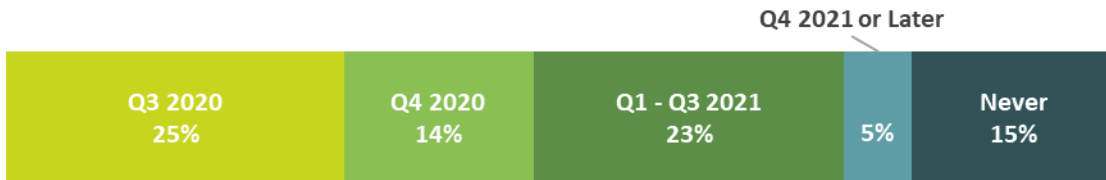


Figure 5: Expected Date of Return to Pre-Covid Level of Staffing

In terms of the obstacles related to re-opening their businesses, the respondents shared the following:

- Clarity of Health & Safety Requirements: 17% found these complicated, while 32% felt they were straightforward
  - Implementation of Re-Opening Requirements: 27% found these requirements to be difficult, while 33% shared that they were easy to implement
- Cost of Implementing Re-Opening Measures: 29% found such measures to be expensive or very expensive.

The survey also indicated that businesses in the Mainland/Southwest do not expect business travel to return quickly. When asked when they expect to any business travel, the respondents answered as follows:



Figure 6: Expected Timeline of Return to Business Travel

### Government Planning / Policies

Just under half of the businesses surveyed were not confident that the government recovery/rebuilding plan will help them succeed through the COVID period; only 12% were very or somewhat confident of this.

When asked “What are the top 3 most important components of any recovery/rebuilding plan?” the most critical were as follows:



Figure 7: Critical Elements of a Recovery Plan as Identified by Businesses in the MSW Region

Businesses in the region see the following workforce changes or policies resulting from COVID:

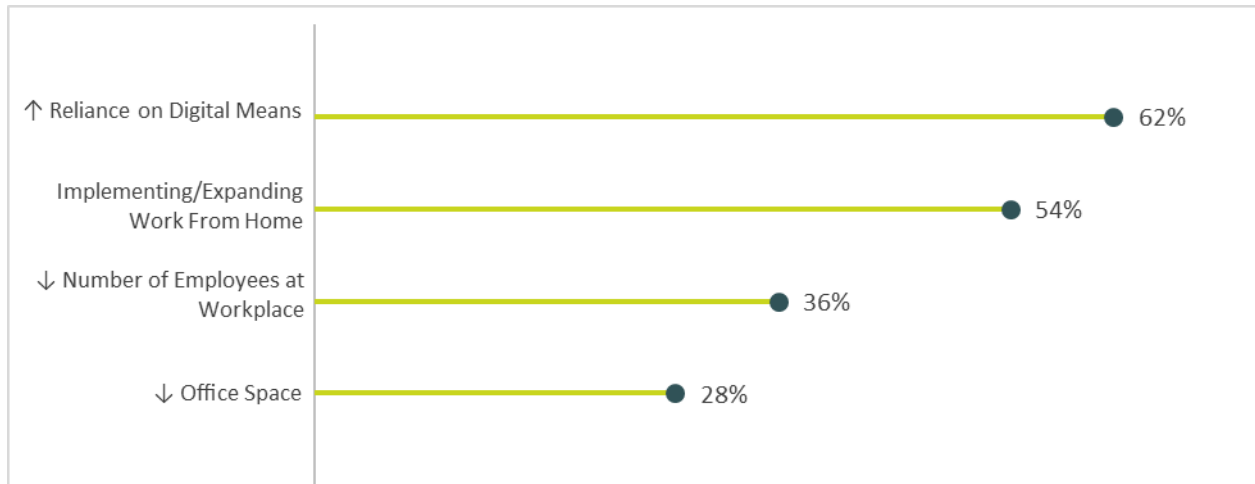


Figure 7: Expected Workforce or Policy Changes Related to Covid-19

The barriers to bringing back employees to the workplace identified by the businesses surveyed were:

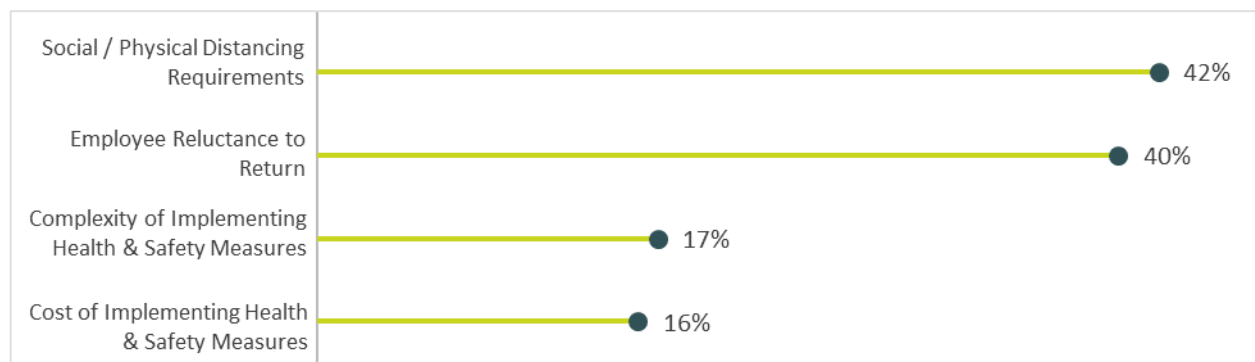


Figure 8: Barriers Related to Employees' Return to the Workplace

Of the businesses surveyed, 68% are using one or more of the following government programs: CEWS, CERB, CECRA, LEEFF, CEBA, BCAP or tax deferrals. Once government support programs end (e.g. CEWS, CERB, CECRA), the businesses in the region surveyed have the following plans:

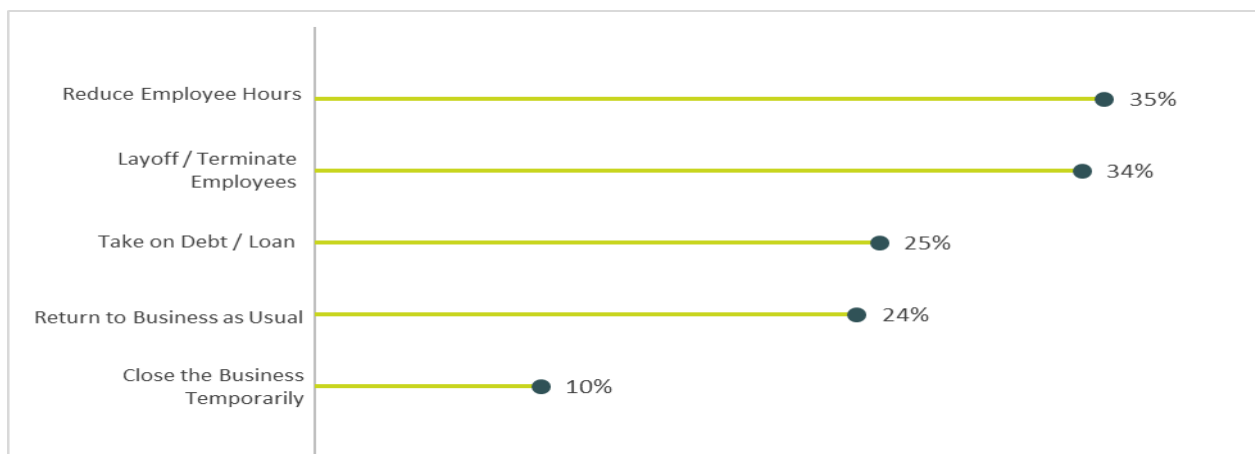


Figure 9: Expected Business Measures Upon the End of Government Support



When temporary lay-off period ends, businesses anticipate taking the following action:

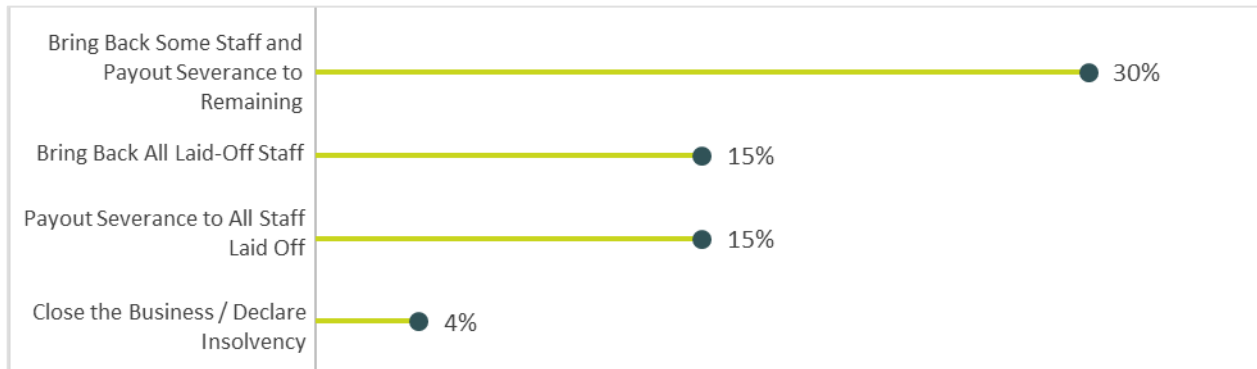


Figure 10: Expected Business Measures Upon End of Temporary Lay-Off Period

When asked what government support programs would be most helpful for them to recover from the pandemic impacts, the businesses indicated the following:

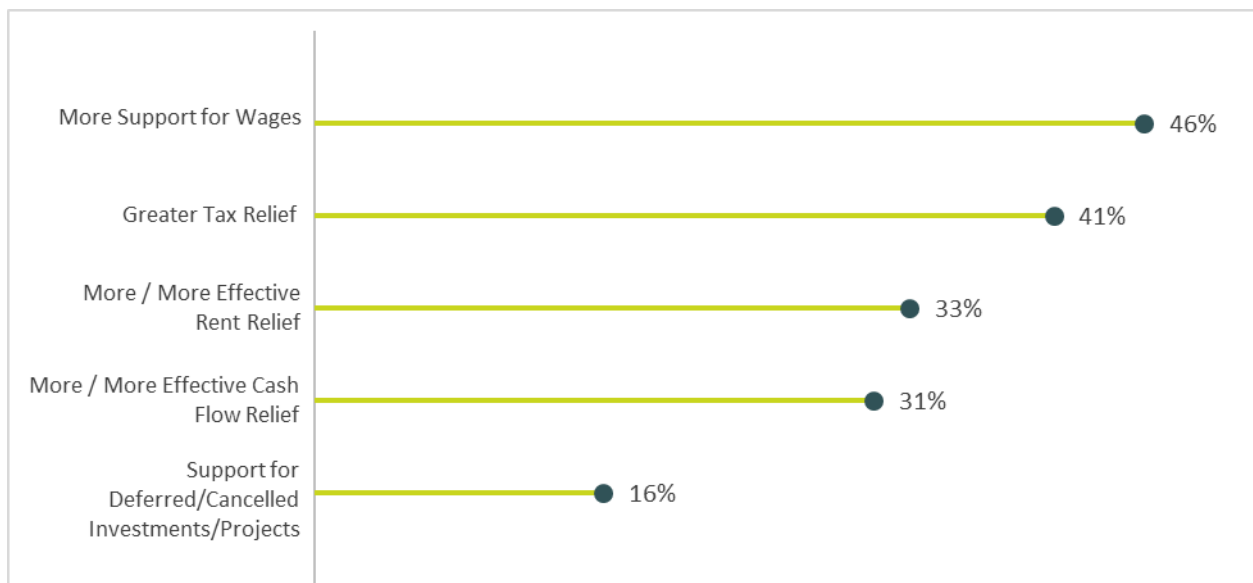


Figure 11: Most Helpful Government Support Programs as indicated by Businesses

### **CFIB COVID-19 State of Small Business (August 18, 2020)**

In a mid-August 2020 “[Your Business and COVID-19](#)” online survey, CFIB surveyed small businesses across Canada on the impacts of the pandemic.

The proportion of businesses fully open in BC in mid-August was 60% (66% across Canada). Overall, Hospitality and Arts, Recreation and Information industry businesses were least likely to be fully open, while Construction and Agriculture businesses were most likely to be fully open.

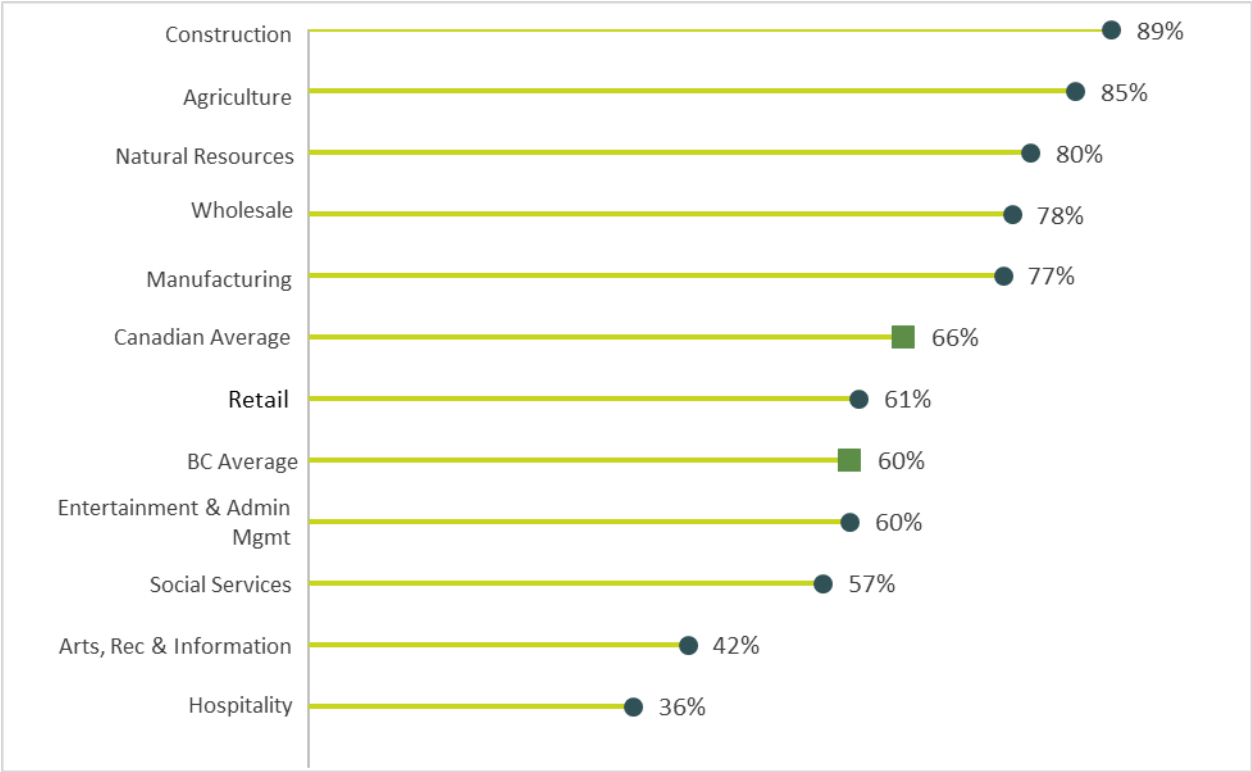


Figure 12: Percentage of BC Businesses Fully Open, By Industry

When asked how much of their “usual staffing capacity for this time of year is your business currently using”, BC small business indicated 40% (40% across Canada) were at usual or more than usual staffing levels. The highest and lowest staff utilizing industries are show below in Figure 13:

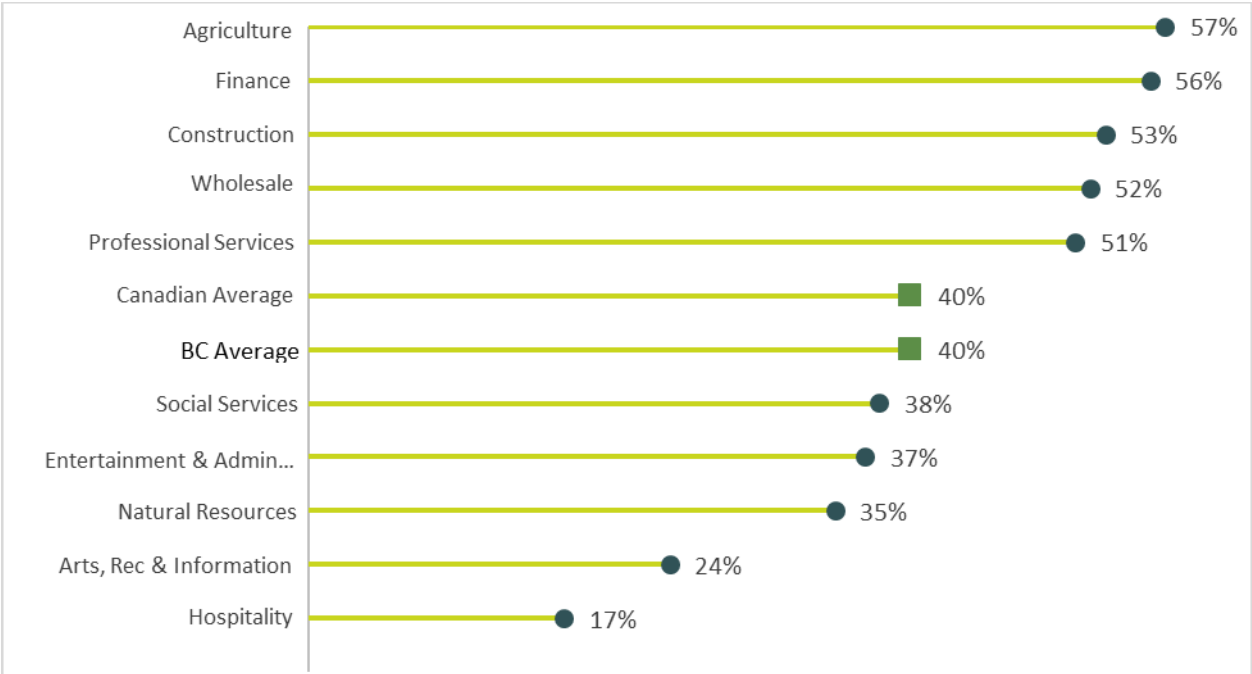


Figure 13: Percent of Businesses in BC at Full Staffing Capacity, By Industry

In mid-August, only 29% of BC small businesses (28% across Canada) were making or exceeding their usual revenue levels for this time of year. The most impacted revenue levels were highly correlated with the above lowest staffing utilization (8% in Arts, Recreation and Information, 10% in Hospitality and 18% in Natural Resources).

This latest CFIB survey shows that 30% of BC small businesses need additional funding beyond what is currently available through government programs. The greatest needs are related to payment of commercial rent and other fixed costs (63%), employee wages and benefits (57%) and business debt (50%).

## D. Labour Force COVID Impacts

**The population and labour force in Surrey have also been experiencing significant economic and personal impacts from the pandemic and this needs to be factored into employer and labour market strategies.**

While we do not have data on the impacts of COVID on specific segments of the labour force in Surrey, we know that in BC, youth unemployment reached 30% in May, and, while down to 23% in July, it remains 156% above pre-COVID levels.

More women have been impacted, with employment for women in BC down by 81,000 during February-July 2020 and 79,900 for men.

Private sector workers and workers in service industries such as Accommodation & Food, Retail, Personal Services, Recreation and Transportation have been impacted more in BC.

Across Canada, national data (Statistics Canada. *Economic Impact of COVID-19 Among Visible Minority Groups*. July 6, 2020) shows that members of certain visible minority groups report more/stronger impacts of COVID. A recent Statistics Canada report found that while 23% of white Canadians reported a “strong or moderate impact of COVID-19 on their ability to meet financial obligations and essential needs, the figure was 44% for Arabs, 43% for Filipinos, 42% for West Asians and 40% for Southeast Asians— almost double the non-visible minority rate. This has significant impacts on the Surrey labour force with its vast ethnic diversity.

In addition to economic impacts, COVID-19 has had significant mental health impacts on Canadians. A Statistics Canada survey (*Canada Perspectives Survey Series 1: Impacts of COVID-19*. April 4, 2020) found that large proportions of Canadians aged 15 and older reported that they feel “very” to “extremely” anxious about the possibility of “overloading the health system” (84%), their “personal health” (36%) and the “health of family members” (54%), as well as “family stress from confinement” (32%). In another survey of Canadian adults conducted by Maru/Blue, Statistics Canada report it was found that 4 in 5 Canadians are feeling negative emotions (e.g., concern, worry, anxiety) and that they continue to be concerned about the social impact of COVID-19 and the physical health of loved ones.

In *Canadians Report Lower Self-Perceived Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, Statistics Canada (April 24, 2020) reports that fewer Canadians feel they have excellent or very good mental health, while physical health has improved. 54% of Canadians aged 15 and older reported excellent or very good mental health during the COVID-19 period compared to 68% that reported this in 2018. Half of women said that their mental health was excellent or very good (49% compared to 60% of men). In 2018, women’s report of excellent/very good mental health was 17 points higher (66%) and that of men was 11 points higher (71%).

The survey also found that among Canadians who are not yet back in their regular workplace, close to 4 in 10 do not feel safe returning. The survey states, “Months after COVID-19 began to spread in Canada, a large number of Canadian workers continue to work from home or are simply absent from their physical workplace.” The most common reasons for not feeling safe were fear of contracting the virus and fear of infecting family members; 30% said that they felt safe returning to their physical workplace, and another 32% said that they did not know or chose not to answer the question.

Immigrant women were more likely to indicate that they did not feel safe going back to work (59%). Such results could be related to the nature of the work performed by this particular group of workers. A Statistics Canada report found the following:

“The contribution of immigrants and population groups designated as visible minorities to nurse aide, orderly and patient service associate occupations,” showed that immigrant women were more likely to be found in certain occupations, such as nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates.” (Statistics Canada, Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 3: Resuming economic and social activities during COVID-19, p.3)

The same survey asked workers what safety measures they want implemented in the workplace, and also asked workers who were not yet back in their workplace about the measures they would like to see implemented to feel comfortable returning to their workplace; The two measures that these workers would most like to see were employers increasing sanitization of the workplace (72%) and employers directing employees displaying any signs of illness to stay home (70%).

About 6 in 10 workers reported that they would like to see:

- Modifications to the workspace to increase the distance between employees;
- Their employer to offer facemasks, gloves and other protective equipment;
- Employees to be screened upon entry into the workplace for signs of illness.

**Precautions that workers would like to see implemented in their physical workplace to make them feel comfortable, June 2020**

Statistics Canada, Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 3: Resuming economic and social activities during COVID-19. Chart 5

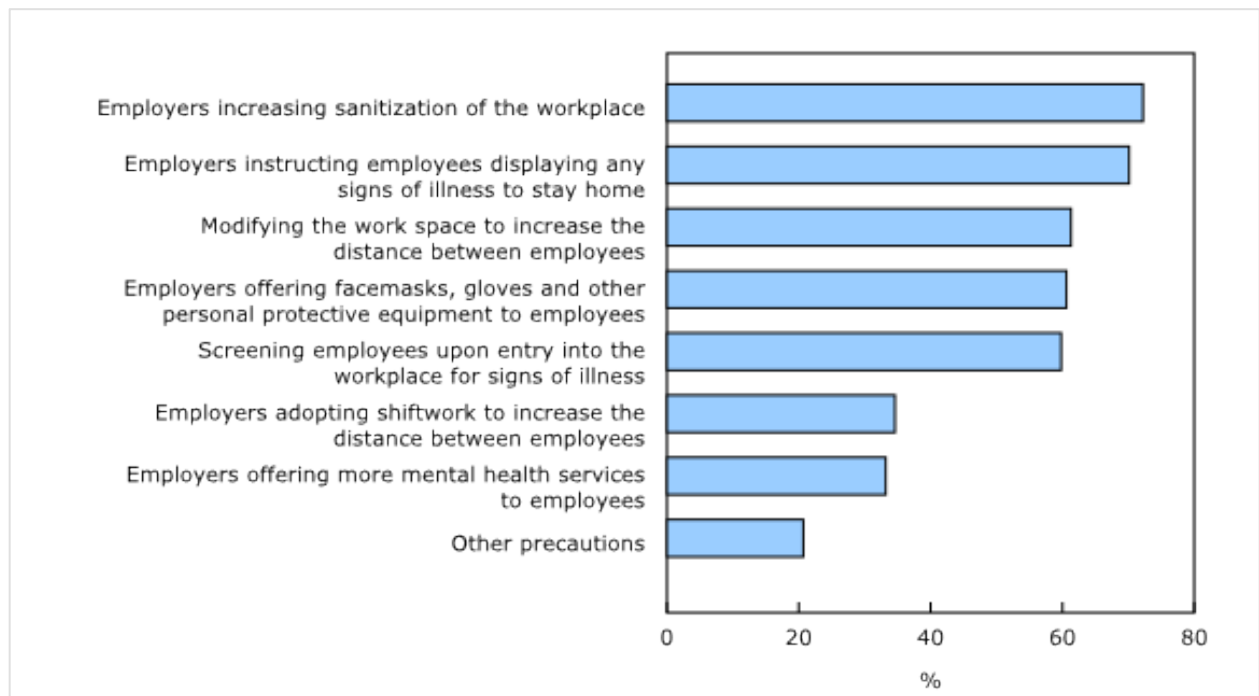


Figure 12: Total Job Openings by Skill Level (2028)

Statistics Canada: Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 3: Resuming economic and social activities during COVID-19

## E. Implications of COVID-19 Impacts for Surrey Labour Market Recovery and Resilience

The whole *SBOT Workforce Reset: Supporting Worker and Employer Resilience* project is developing and implementing tools and resources to support employers in Surrey for surviving and recovery due to COVID-19. In the meantime, from this first Labour Market Intelligence Report, a few implications should be flagged:

1. Focus should be on helping the businesses and workers in the most impacted sectors in Surrey – Accommodation & Food, Arts/Culture/Recreation, Retail, Personal Services, Tourism & Transportation.
2. Businesses have permanently laid off workers that have not become employed, this is a pool of new employees for business that need to hire.
3. Mental health and wellness along with anxieties and fear about COVID-19 must be addressed by employers, workers and support agencies.
4. Businesses and workers need to be supported in reskilling and upskilling for new products/services and positions resulting from COVID-19 opportunities.
5. Strong health and safety practices and protocols will increase worker confidence to return to and remain at work.
6. Surrey businesses and workers should be supported to seize opportunities to digitize work and develop digital skills (i.e. e-commerce, big data, automation, virtual learning, etc.).
7. Surrey businesses will need more support in the coming months of uncertainty, as current government programs end, schools and post-secondary start up, cold and flu season co-exists with COVID-19 and risks of outbreaks or a second (or more) waves arise.
8. Many businesses are open but barely hanging on and need urgent tax, rent, cash flow and other financial relief. SBOT can continue to advocate for this with other business organizations; In the meantime, this SBOT Workforce Reset project can provide resources, information and support to contribute to business resiliency in the short and longer terms.

## F. Urgent Post-Script – Statistics Canada’s August 2020 Labour Force Survey Results

### SURREY BUSINESS LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE BC Labour Force Survey Data

Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, August 2020 (Released September 4, 2020)

Overall – Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment recovery is continuing across the country. All provinces except New Brunswick (slight drop in employment but no in unemployment rate) saw gains in employment and reduced unemployment rates since July 2020 and earlier.</li> <li>• Canada gained almost 246,000 jobs between July and August 2020, a 1.4% increase in employment. The back to work trend has increased employment by more than 1.9 million jobs for a 11.8% increase since April.</li> <li>• The unemployment rate dropped to 10.2% in August from 10.9% in July, however it remains much higher than the 5.6% in February 2020.</li> <li>• Employment in Canada still has almost 1.1 million less jobs in August than in February 2020, a 5.7% decline due to the pandemic.</li> </ul>
Overall - BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment in the province increased by over 15,300 jobs or 0.6% between July and August 2020. This means BC has had an increase in employment of almost 247,000 jobs since the BC recovery started in April.</li> <li>• BC’s unemployment rate dropped to 10.7% in August from 11.1% in July, however it remains more</li> </ul>

	<p>than double the rate of 5% in February 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment is still down by almost 150,000 jobs between February and August 2020, a 5.9% deficit.</li> </ul>
Goods-Producing Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While BC’s employment in the goods sector is 10,300 less than in February, it has seen an increase of 36,100 jobs since April including growth of 20,700 jobs in August, a 4.6% increase. Goods-producing growth impressively outpaced service-producing industries in August unlike the national trend.</li> <li>• All goods-producing industries increased in jobs since July, with the biggest increases in agriculture in August at 6,600 jobs for a 27% increase, and with manufacturing growing by 6,000 jobs or 3.9%.</li> <li>• Excluding construction in BC, the goods-producing sector employment is 14,300 or 6% higher than in February of this year – it has gained all job losses from the pandemic and then some. However, construction employment in BC remains 24,600 or 10.2% lower in August than in February. Agriculture, natural resources, utilities and manufacturing are in growth mode in this pandemic.</li> </ul>
Service-Producing Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment in the service sector in BC was a different story. A combination of industries with growth and some with contraction means services lost 5,400 jobs in August for a slight 0.3% reduction. While it has grown by over 210,900 jobs since April, today services still have 139,300 less jobs than in February 2020 (-6.8%).</li> <li>• The biggest employment gains in August were mostly those previously hard hit by the pandemic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accommodation &amp; food services – up 6,000 (3.7%) in August, and a ‘job machine’ since April, up almost 98,000 or 118%; but it is still short of February employment by 14,400 or -7.4%.</li> <li>- Other services (including personal services) – up 7,900 (2.8%) in the last month, and up almost 33,800 jobs (13.4%) since April; however, it still has 56,400 less jobs now than in February 2020, a 16.4% shortfall in recovery.</li> <li>- Health care &amp; social assistance employment rose by 5,100 or 1.4% in August, is up since April by almost 19,000 jobs (+6.6%) but is slightly down from February by 6,200 jobs or -2.0%.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We see a different picture in other parts of the service-producing sector: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- After continuous growth in jobs since April, retail and wholesale trade lost 10,400 jobs in August for a 2.7% drop. While its employment has risen almost 42,000 or 12.7% since April, this industry’s jobs are now still almost 34,000 or 8.4% lower than in February.</li> <li>- Another industry which lost jobs in August was professional, scientific and technical services, dropping almost 11,000 jobs for a 4.6% drop. However, its current employment is 5,500 or 2.5% higher than in February.</li> <li>- Finance, educational services and public administration all experienced very small employment decreases since July (a combined loss of 3,100 jobs). Transportation and warehousing saw a small uptick of 500 jobs (0.4%) but is still down by 12,000 jobs (-8.7%) since February.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Occupations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment growth and changes in unemployment rates was mixed in occupational categories in BC.</li> <li>• July unemployment rates ranged from a low of 1.7% for health occupations to a high of 20.5% for art/culture/recreation/sport (ACRS) jobs. No surprise given large groups and events involving these occupations.</li> <li>• The biggest gains in jobs over the last month were in positions in management (24,100 or 10.9%), natural resources and agriculture (9,700 or 17.5%), natural and applied sciences (8,400 or 4.1%); and sales and service (2,700 or 0.5%).</li> <li>• The biggest employment losses in August were in several occupational categories: manufacturing and utilities positions (almost a drop of 15,000 or 15.8%); business, finance &amp; administration (-8,100 or -2.0%); education, law, social, community &amp; government (ELSCG) (-8,000 or -3.6%); arts, culture, recreation and sport (ACRS) (-4,200 or -4.8%); and health (-4,100 or -2.0%).</li> <li>• Occupations with biggest gains in July: sales and service grew by over 44,000 jobs (+8.4%); business, finance, and administration by over 32,00(+10.1%); 14,800 (+20.2%) in ACRS positions; and 6,700 (+8.2%) in manufacturing.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biggest changes in unemployment rates in August by occupation were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELSCG rate increased from 8.0% to 15.2%.</li> <li>- Manufacturing and utilities unemployment rate increased from 5.5% to 7.9%.</li> <li>- ACRS increased its unemployment rate to 22.4% (highest among categories).</li> <li>- Natural resources and agriculture’s rate dropped to 5.7% in August from 10.4% in July.</li> <li>- Management, health, sales and service occupations has appreciable but smaller decreases in the unemployment rate in August</li> </ul> </li> <li>• With the exception of two occupational categories, all others have higher unemployment rates in August than in February. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health’s rate is the same at a very low 0.5% and natural resources and agriculture has a lower rate that is three times less than in February (5.7% today versus 16.7% in February).</li> <li>- ACRS positions have a rate almost 5 times higher now than in February (22.4% vs. 4.9%).</li> <li>- Sales and service, trades, transport and equipment operators (TTEO) and business, finance and administration all more than doubled their unemployment rates over the last six months.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Occupations are at different stages of recovery to pre-pandemic employment levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Those positions still well below February employment levels are sales and service (-85,900 or -13.1%), ELSCG (-48,900 or -18.6%) and TTEO (-33,100 or -9.0%).</li> <li>- Those occupations with more jobs now than in February are natural resources and agriculture (up 22,800 or 53.9%), health (up 16,800 or 9.2%), manufacturing and utilities (up 14,900 or 23.1%) and natural and applied sciences (up 13,400 or 6.8%).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All metropolitan and development regions in BC saw employment gains in August 2020. Except for a very small drop of 700 jobs in Kelowna. Unemployment rates decreased in all areas since July, except for very small increases in Abbotsford-Mission and Cariboo region.</li> <li>• Employment increased in Vancouver by 38,800 jobs in August and in the broader Mainland region by 46,200. However, the Mainland employment level is still 147,000 (almost -9.0%) less than in February 2020. With this further recovery, Vancouver Island/Coast, Thompson/Okanagan, Kootenay and Cariboo regions all have higher employment levels now compared to February 2020.</li> <li>• Lowest metro area and regional unemployment rates were in Northeast (7.0%) and Abbotsford-Mission and Kelowna both at 8.6%.</li> <li>• In addition to the Mainland recovery, biggest job gains in July were in Vancouver Island/Coast (+18,300) and Thompson/Okanagan (over +12,000). More modest gains were seen in the smaller other regions.</li> </ul>
Age, Gender and Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The youth (15-24) unemployment rate in BC dropped to 22.2% in August from 23.3% in July, with the female youth unemployment rate dropping to 19.7% from 25% over the last month and the male youth rate climbing to 24.5% from 21.7%.</li> <li>• These rates are 244% above the February rate for all youth and over 3 times for female youth (from 6.2% in February to 19.7% in August); and more than double for male youth.</li> <li>• The unemployment rate for older cohorts in BC in August was 9.4% (8.1-8.5% for men and 10.3-10.7% for women).</li> <li>• Overall, over 41,000 less youth are employed in BC now compared to February (-20,200 for men and -20,900 for women); and there 53,300 more unemployed youth (29,900 men and 23,400 women).</li> <li>• Of the almost 150,000 jobs lost since February in BC, 51.3% were filled by men and 48.7% by women.</li> <li>• All age and gender categories have shown increasing participation rates in recent months (women at 59.5% and men at 68.6% in August).</li> <li>• In terms of part-time work in BC, it remained similar in August (22.6%) to July (22.7%). Men’s proportion dropped from 16.2% to 14.8% over the last month, while women’s proportion increased from 29.9% to 31.2%.</li> <li>• Of the over 15,000 new jobs in BC in August, women gained 23,300 while men lost over 8,000.</li> </ul>



	<p>However, 93% (21,600) of the increased employment for women was in part-time work while 143% (+11,500) of men’s employment change was in full-time work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In terms of class of worker, the biggest impact since February employment has been on the self-employed losing 10,600 jobs in the last month for 2.3% drop. Private sector employment outpaced public sector jobs since July, gaining 22,300 or 1.5% vs. 3,500 or 0.8%. However, private sector employment is now still 145,900 or 9.0% below February levels.</li> </ul>
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic activity in Canada and BC continues to produce increases in employment and slightly reduced unemployment rates since April and continues in August, although slightly less than in July growth.</li> <li>• In terms of job losses, BC’s economy is still in a job-deficit from impacts of the pandemic (almost 150,000 jobs lost and not yet recovered) and the recovery is variable across industries and occupations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Goods-producing industries – while smaller in employment than services – are now leading recovery (agriculture, manufacturing, natural resources and utilities, with construction lagging)</li> <li>- While accommodation and food services, health and other services continue to recover employment, retail and wholesale trade and professional, scientific and technical services each shed over 10,000 jobs in August after 3 successive month of job recovery.</li> <li>- Based on industry patterns, recovery is proving relatively challenging in ACRS, ESLCG, sales and service and TTEO occupations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• BC continues to be well-positioned fiscally and economically to move through the pandemic. Continued employment recovery will depend on planning for a new normal, safe work and consumer practices and mitigation of coronavirus outbreaks including new measures in light of school openings and the flu and cold season (e.g. testing, tracking/tracing, quarantining, treatments, etc.). Employers and employees will have an important role in this.</li> <li>• The August 2020 LFS data provides continued positive momentum for BC’s jobs recovery. Longer term recovery will require effective public policies and support, smart business practices, economic and business resilience and a shared blueprint for economic recovery among governments, businesses, workers and public sector service providers.</li> </ul>

Source: BC Stats – *Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, August 2020*. Released September, 2020.  
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