

MEMORANDUM

April 9, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Lon LaClaire, General Manager, Engineering Services
Jessie Adcock, General Manager, Development, Buildings and Licensing
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Chris Robertson, Assistant Director, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability
Matthew Bourke, Senior Planner, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability
Marten Hansen, Planner, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

FROM: Gil Kelley
General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

SUBJECT: Economic Impact of COVID-19 - Monthly Labour Force Data: March 2020

Highlights: Monthly Labour Force Survey Data, March 2020

- The unemployment rate in Metro Vancouver increased by 2.9 percentage points to 7.6%
- Nationally, the unemployment rate increased by 2.2 percentage points to 7.8%
- Overall employment in the region decreased by 114,800 (-7.9%)
- Sectors with the largest employment losses include:
 - o Accommodation and food services (-10,900 workers, -10.2%)
 - o Wholesale and retail trade (-7,900 workers, -3.3%).

Purpose of this memo

This memo highlights the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS) data published by Statistics Canada released on April 9th, 2020 for the reference period of March 15th to March 21st. The LFS provides estimates for the unemployment rate and employment totals by industry and occupation on a monthly basis. The information presented in this memo provides a snapshot of the impact COVID-19 has had on Vancouver's labour force and economy in the short period of time since the Pandemic. Staff in Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability will provide an

updated monthly memo as new data is released. This information is meant to be viewed in conjunction with other socio-economic and community statistics to form a cohesive picture of the City’s current state and assist with recovery and resilience planning. This information will be posted to the City website and shared with the business community.

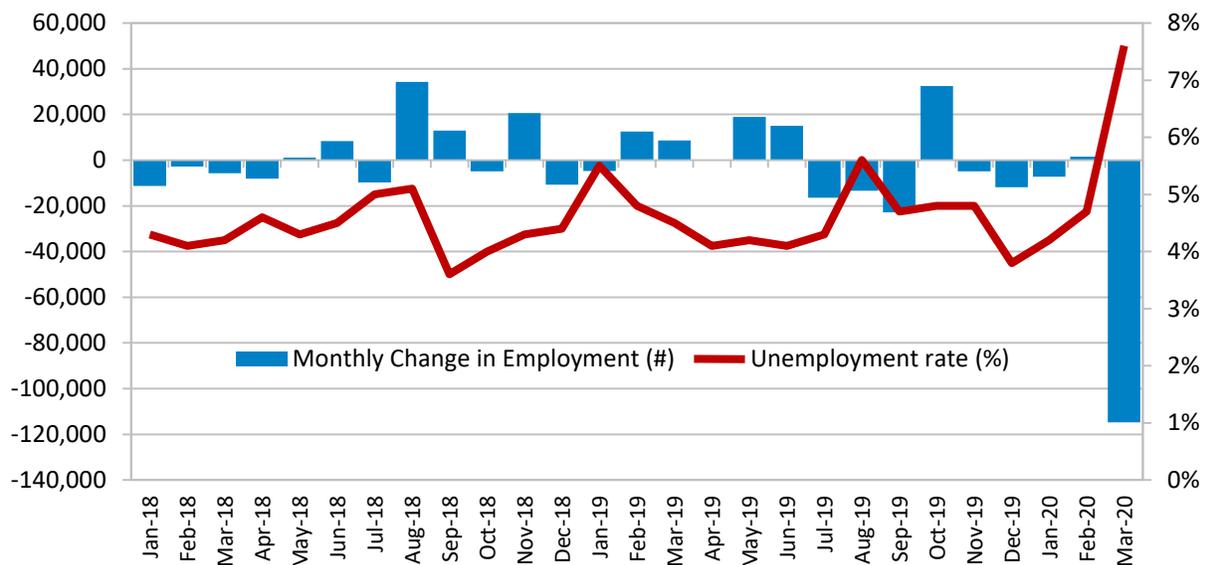
Important notes about the data

The statistics presented in this memo are for the Metro Vancouver region as the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) is the smallest geography level available for LFS data tables published by Statistics Canada. LFS data for the city of Vancouver proper is not available. Throughout this memo, the term “Vancouver” refers to the Vancouver CMA. The LFS data used to create the statistics presented in this report are not seasonally adjusted¹.

Changes in employment totals and unemployment rate

Employment in Vancouver decreased from 1,461,400 in February to 1,346,600 in March for a loss of -114,800 (-7.9%). The unemployment rate increased 2.9 percentage points to 7.6%, the highest unemployment rate in the region since August 2011. Nationally, the unemployment rate increased by 2.2 percentage points to 7.8%. A number of major orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic were issued by various levels of government during this reference week (March 15 to 21). Please see Figure 6 for a full list. The next labour force survey release will be on May 8th (for reference week April 12 to 18). The data provided in the May 8th release will provide important insights into the impacts that senior government mitigation measures taken after March 21 have had on employment and the economy.

Figure 1 – Unemployment rate and monthly employment change in Metro Vancouver



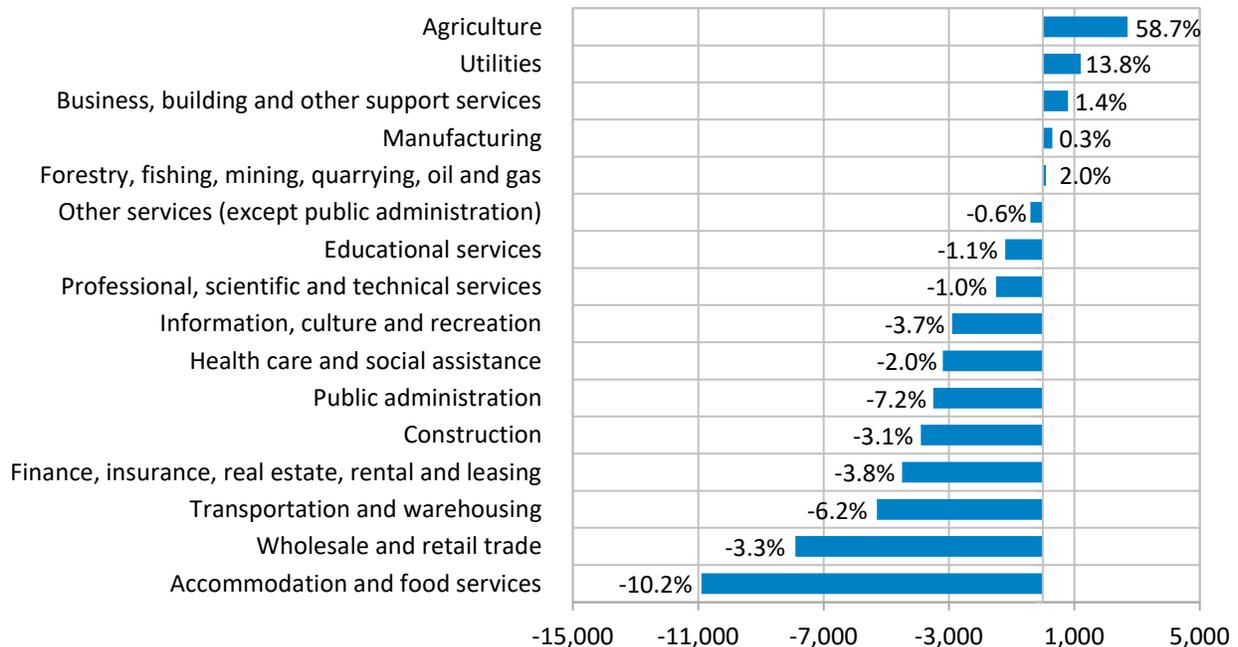
Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0295-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan areas, unadjusted for seasonality.

¹ Seasonal adjustments to labour force data are done to eliminate the effect of seasonal and calendar influences (e.g. seasonal shopping or agricultural work).

Industry overview

Employment in accommodation and food services experienced the largest month to month loss in Metro Vancouver, declining by 10,900 people (-10.2%) working in the sector. The second most losses were attributed to wholesale and retail trade, which lost 7,900 people (-3.3%) working in the sector. The third most employment losses were in transportation and warehousing, which declined by 5,300 people (-6.2%). Between February and March, employment in agriculture grew by 2,700 people, an increase of +58.7% to its workforce. Employment for the utilities sector increased by 1,200 people (+13.8%).

Figure 2 – Employment change by industry in Metro Vancouver, February to March

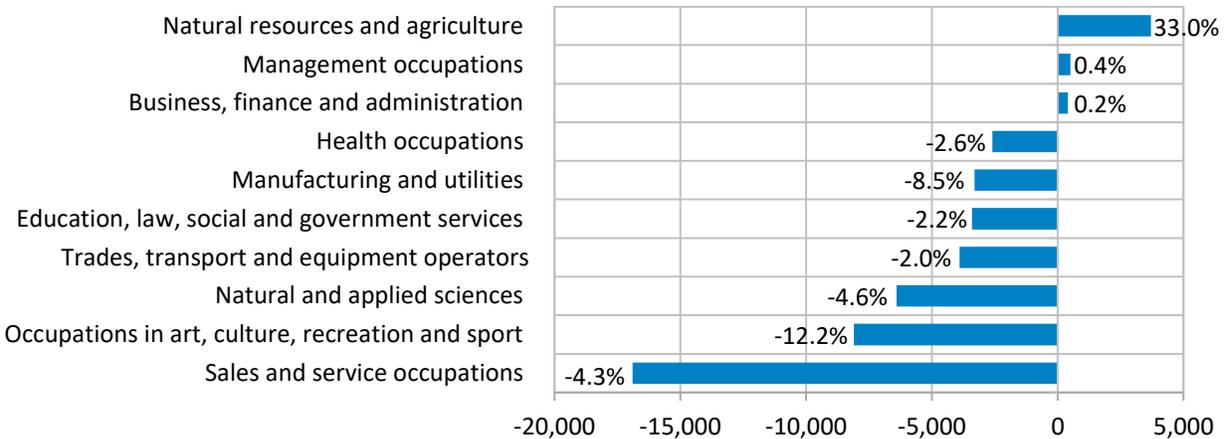


Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0097-01 Employment by industry, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, census metropolitan areas.

Occupation overview

Employment in sales and service occupations experienced the largest month to month loss in Metro Vancouver, declining by 16,900 people (-4.3%) working in that occupation. The second most losses were attributed to occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport, which lost 8,100 people (-12.2%). The third most employment losses were in natural and applied sciences, which declined by 6,400 people (-4.6%). Employment in natural resources and agriculture grew by 3,700 people (+33.0%).

Figure 3 – Employment change by occupations in Metro Vancouver, February to March

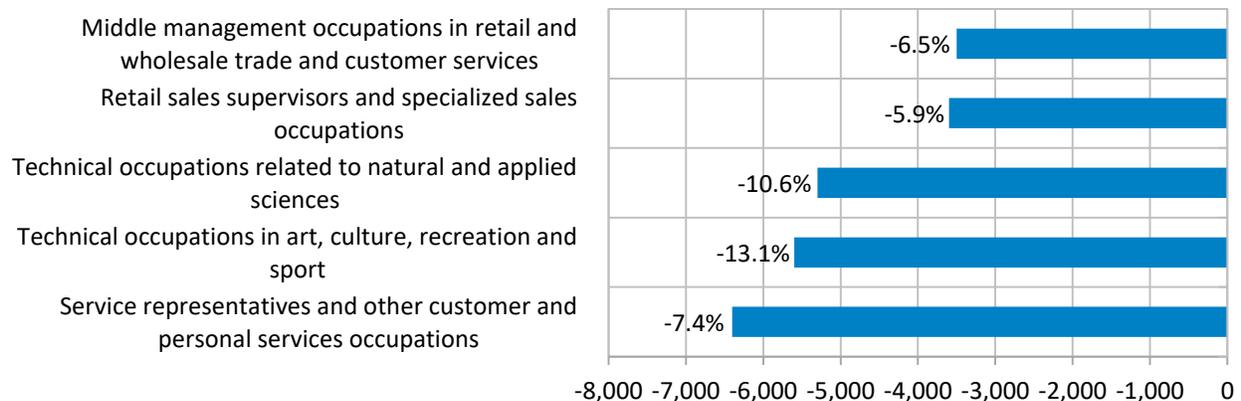


Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0313-01 Employment by occupation, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, census metropolitan areas.

The largest decrease in employment by detailed occupations was for service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations, which lost 6,400 (-7.4%) workers since the previous month. Other occupations with significant employment losses include:

- Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport (-5,600 ; -13.1%)
- Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences (-5,300; -10.6%)
- Retail sales supervisors and specialized sales (-3,600; -5.9%)
- Middle management in retail and wholesale trade and customer services (-3,500; -6.5%)

Figure 4 – Most employment losses by detailed occupation, February to March

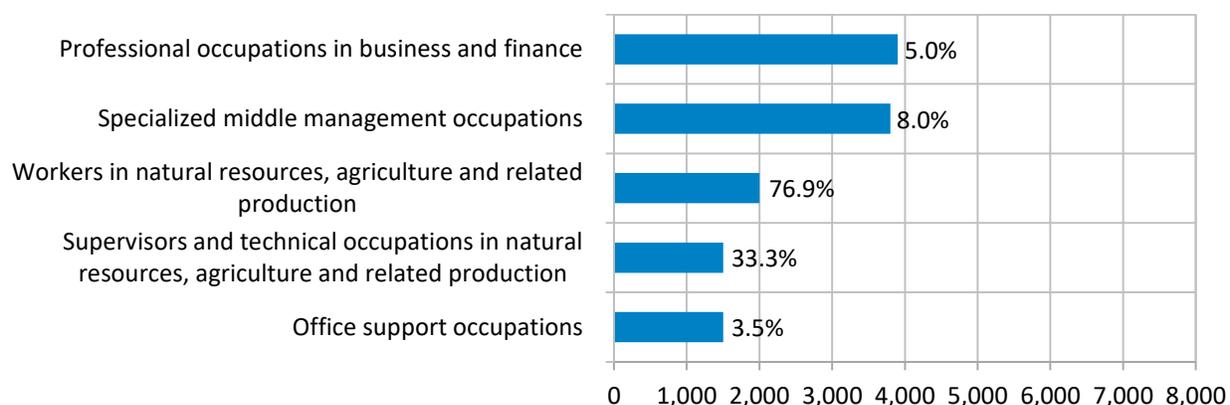


Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0313-01 Employment by occupation, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, census metropolitan areas.

The largest increase in employment by detailed occupations was for professional occupations in business and finance, which gained 3,900 (5.0%) workers since the previous month. Other occupations with employment gains February to March include:

- Specialized middle management occupations (+3,800; +8.0%)
- Workers in natural resources and agriculture (+2,000; +76.9%)
- Supervisors and technical occupations in natural resources and agriculture (+1,500; +33.3%)

Figure 5 – Most employment gains by detailed occupation categories, February to March



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0313-01 Employment by occupation, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, census metropolitan areas.

Government orders

A number of major orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic were issued by various levels of government during this reference week (March 15 to 21). Please see Figure 6 for a full list. The next labour force survey release will be on May 8th (for reference week April 12 to 18). The data provided in the May 8th release will provide important insights into the impacts that senior government mitigation measures taken after March 21 have had on employment and the economy.

Figure 6 - Labour-Related Government orders in place during the March 15th to March 21st reference period

Government	Date declared	Announcements/Orders
Province of British Columbia	March 12 th	Gatherings of over 250 people prohibited
Canada	March 13 th	Cruise ships with over 500 people prohibited from docking at any Canadian port
Province of British Columbia	March 16 th	Gatherings of over 50 people prohibited
Canada	March 17 th	Bank of Canada lowered the interest rate by 50 basis points to 0.75%
Canada	March 17 th	Canada closed its border to non-citizens (with some exceptions) Inbound travelers must self-isolate
City of Vancouver / Parks Board	March 17 th	All VPL, Civic Theatre, and Park Board facilities closed
Province of British Columbia	March 17 th	State of emergency declared
Province of British Columbia	March 17 th	Those travelling on or after March 12 th must self-isolate
Province of British Columbia	March 17 th	Order to shut down all restaurant and bar dine-in service
Province of British Columbia	March 17 th	Notice to close casinos
Canada	March 18 th	Income tax payment deferral for business to after August 31 st
Canada	March 18 th	10% wage subsidy for small employers and non-profits for three months

Government	Date declared	Announcements/Orders
City of Vancouver	March 19 th	State of emergency declared
Canada	March 20 th	Canada-U.S. border closed to all non-essential travel starting March 20 th
City of Vancouver	March 20 th	Order to shut down all restaurant table service starting March 20 th

Upcoming LFS data releases

Statistics Canada is scheduled to release LFS data on a monthly basis. The following table illustrates the upcoming LFS data releases and their reference period.

Figure 7 - Schedule of Labour Force Survey release dates

Release dates	Reference period
April 9, 2020	March 15 to 21, 2020
May 8, 2020	April 12 to 18, 2020
June 5, 2020	May 10 to 16, 2020
July 10, 2020	June 14 to 20, 2020

Additional Data Sources: Employment Lands and Economy Review

The Employment Lands and Economy Review team has also prepared 30 fact sheets using a variety of data sources detailing the economic structure of the city of Vancouver and the role of the city within the regional economy. These fact sheets are available on the City's website here: <https://vancouver.ca/employment-lands>.

City of Vancouver business support webpage launch

On Friday, April 3rd, City staff established the COVID-19 Business Communications and Support Office to assist local businesses at this critical time. The office is a single point of contact for Vancouver's local business owners to get information from the City of Vancouver regarding business support programs, to learn what City-run business services are currently available, and to make suggestions to the City concerning business and the economy. The webpage is available here: <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/covid-19-coronavirus-support-for-local-businesses.aspx>. Staff in the City-Wide & Regional Planning division of the Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability department are supporting this office, ensuring that information for business remains current and accessible as well as assisting with developing resources for responding to concerns raised by local business operators.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact me or Chris Robertson, Assistant Director for City-Wide & Regional Planning, at 604-873-7684 or chris.robertson@vancouver.ca.



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