Some Workers Have Been Hit Much Harder than Others by the Pandemic

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Overview

• Job losses during the COVID-19 pandemic have been highly uneven:
  ▪ Lower-wage workers and those without a college degree have been hit the hardest.
  ▪ Women, minorities, and younger workers experienced outsized losses early on.

• Much of these differences can be traced to the kinds of jobs held by workers—in particular, higher-wage workers are much more likely to be able to work from home than lower-wage workers.

• Many of the gaps that opened between workers narrowed considerably as jobs returned, especially across demographic groups, though some gaps started to widen again as the job market weakened toward the end of 2020.
  ▪ Of note, the gap between working-age women and men has largely closed, though mothers still have a larger shortfall than fathers.
Employment Dynamics through the Pandemic

Percent Change in Employment Since February 2020

Initial Job Loss (15%)

Remaining Shortfall (5%)

Job Categories
Based on Annual Median Wage of Occupation

Low-Wage
<$30K
food servers
cashiers
home health aides
childcare workers

Lower Middle-Wage
$30K-49K
admin. assistants
hairdressers
carpenters
truck drivers

Upper Middle-Wage
$50K-$85K
teachers
police officers
accountants
financial managers

High-Wage
>$85K
software developers
engineers
lawyers
business executives
Lower-Wage Workers Least Likely to Work Remotely

Share Reporting Remote Work by Wage Group

Lower-Wage Workers Hit the Hardest

Percent Change in Employment by Wage Group Since February 2020

An Uneven Experience
Initial Job Losses and Remaining Shortfalls

Feb to Apr Job Decline | Shortfall as of February
---|---
Total | -15% | -5%
Less Than High School | -24% | -11%
High School Grads | -20% | -8%
College Grads | | -7%
Age 18-29 | -24% | -8%
Age 30-49 | -12% | -4%
Age 50+ | -13% | -5%
Black | -16% | -7%
Hispanic | -20% | -6%
White | -15% | -5%
Women | -18% | -5%
Men | -13% | -5%

Steeper Initial Job Losses for Women, though Gap Has Closed

Percent Change in Employment by Gender Since February 2020

Women Disproportionately Work in Low-Wage Jobs

Pre-Pandemic Share of Jobs by Gender and Wage Group

- **Low-Wage**
  - Women: 17%
  - Men: 7%

- **Lower Middle-Wage**
  - Women: 37%
  - Men: 42%

- **Upper Middle-Wage**
  - Women: 39%
  - Men: 39%

- **High-Wage**
  - Women: 6%
  - Men: 12%

Childcare Responsibilities Also Contributing
Percent Change in Employment by Gender Since February 2020