



# WORKFORCE RESET

*Surrey Labour Market Intelligence and Impact Reports*

## September 2021 LMI Summary Report

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

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# Surrey Board of Trade COVID-19 Surrey Labour Market Intelligence Report August 2021 (including results of Statistics Canada's August 2021 Labour Force Survey)

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

**The Surrey Board of Trade (SBOT) continues to provide the only Surrey-specific labour market data on a regular basis.** This summary report compares employment changes in Surrey from before the COVID-19 pandemic (February 2020) and through to August 2021 to show the local employment impacts of the pandemic. This report is prepared by Human Capital Strategies in conjunction with SBOT.

*Please note that until December 2020, the Labour Force Data provided by Statistics Canada was based on population counts from the 2011 Census of Population. As of January 2021, the estimates have been adjusted to reflect the population counts from the 2016 Census. As a result, you will see some minor changes in numbers from Labour Market Intelligence Reports published in 2020. All the numbers for 2020 provided in this report have been updated based on the revised labour force data from Statistics Canada.*

## HIGHLIGHTS

In August 2021, Surrey's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be driven by a two-pronged strength: knowledge-based industries and resource industries. Many other goods and services sectors in Surrey remain impacted and below February 2020 employment levels.

Healthcare, technology, public administration, and resource sectors – collectively agriculture, fishing, forestry, mining and oil and gas, lead Surrey's recovery. Many British Columbians do not realize the extent to which non-agricultural resource companies are prevalent in Surrey.

On the other hand, the construction sector in Surrey continues to lag recovery; and of course, the high-touch, large-group accommodation & food services, retail/wholesale and arts & culture jobs remain below pre-pandemic levels.

Based on these sectoral trends in Surrey, business, finance and & administration, health, natural resource, and science-related positions have recovered the most. Sales and service jobs and trades and transport ones – the latter due to construction impacts and a slow manufacturing recovery – remain the most negatively impacted positions in Surrey.

## COVID-19 EMPLOYER, LABOUR FORCE AND WORKFORCE IMPACTS IN AUGUST 2021

*Surrey Employer COVID-19 Employment Impacts: Estimates extrapolated from Statistics Canada's 2016 Census and 2021 Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey (August 2021)*

### Surrey Employment COVID-19 Impacts BY INDUSTRY – February 2020 to August 2021

Table 1 shows employment change between February 2020 (Pre-COVID) and August 2021 in Surrey, by industry.

The Surrey economy has recovered an estimated over 7,000 jobs for a 2.4% growth since pre-pandemic February 2020. It is up overall almost 32,000 jobs or 11.8% since the lowest level of employment in April 2020.

The sectors most impacted and still not fully recovered in Surrey are estimated to be:

- Construction is still down almost 7,000 jobs or -21.3%;
- Educational services (private and public) is down over 3,100 jobs or -19%;
- Accommodation and food services is lower than pre-pandemic levels by almost 1,500 jobs or -7.7%;
- Retail & wholesale trade is still over 1,000 jobs lower or -2.1%.

The sectors showing the greatest recovery since February 2020 in Surrey are estimated to be:

- Health care & social assistance is up almost by 6,000 jobs or +17.3%;
- Business, building & other support has recovered by over 3,500 jobs or +24.1%;
- Professional, scientific & technical businesses in Surrey are up by almost 3,300 jobs or +16.8%;
- Public administration employment is up over 2,800 jobs or +30.4% in Surrey;
- The sector with the largest percentage recovery in Surrey is resources with a gain of almost 1,100 or +36.3% since February 2020.

After Table 1, several charts break down the employment patterns over the last 18 months for key sectors.

**Table 1: Estimated Employment by Industry in Surrey<sup>1</sup> – February 2020 through August 2021**  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0379-01, Statistics Canada<sup>2</sup>

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)	Employment February 2020	Employment April 2020	Employment August 2021	Change February 2020 to August 2021	
				Jobs	%
Total Employed (all industries)	296,748	271,848	303,800	7,052	2.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas	3,008	4,483	4,099	1,091	36.3%
Utilities	1,687	2,230	2,005	319	18.9%
Construction	32,644	29,793	25,684	-6,960	-21.3%
Manufacturing	26,833	25,580	27,269	436	1.6%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	51,604	46,077	50,525	-1,080	-2.1%
Transportation & Warehousing	27,229	23,931	27,888	660	2.4%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	18,511	16,766	17,684	-827	-4.5%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	19,536	19,337	22,817	3,281	16.8%
Business, Building & Other Support	14,609	14,212	18,131	3,522	24.1%
Educational Services	16,380	15,489	13,262	-3,119	-19.0%
Health Care & Social Assistance	34,132	32,973	40,052	5,919	17.3%
Info, Culture & Recreation	9,496	8,164	10,745	1,249	13.2%
Accommodation & Food Services	19,052	13,845	17,592	-1,460	-7.7%
Other Services (except public administration)	13,420	11,700	13,100	-320	-2.4%
Public Administration	9,416	8,376	12,280	2,864	30.4%

<sup>1</sup> Estimates based on Surrey share of Metro Vancouver (Census Metropolitan Area) by Industry in 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Employment by Industry, three month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

Chart 1 shows that employment in Surrey ‘troughed’ in July 2020 with a low of over 258,000 jobs; its economy has then continually recovered since then through September-December 2020 and in spring and summer 2021.

**Chart 1: Total Estimated Employment by Industry in Surrey – February 2020 through August 2021**  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0379-01, Statistics Canada

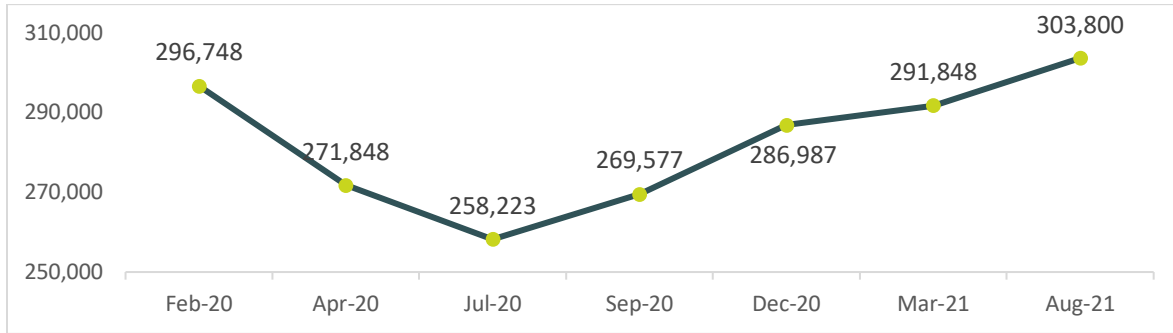
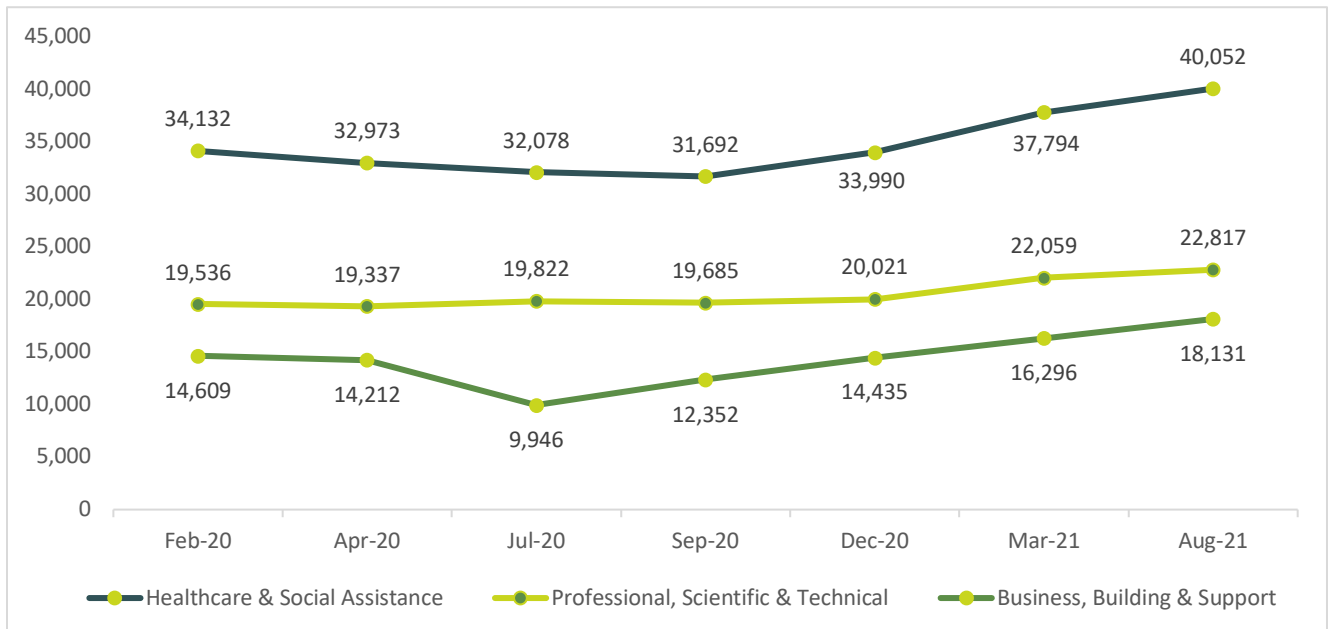


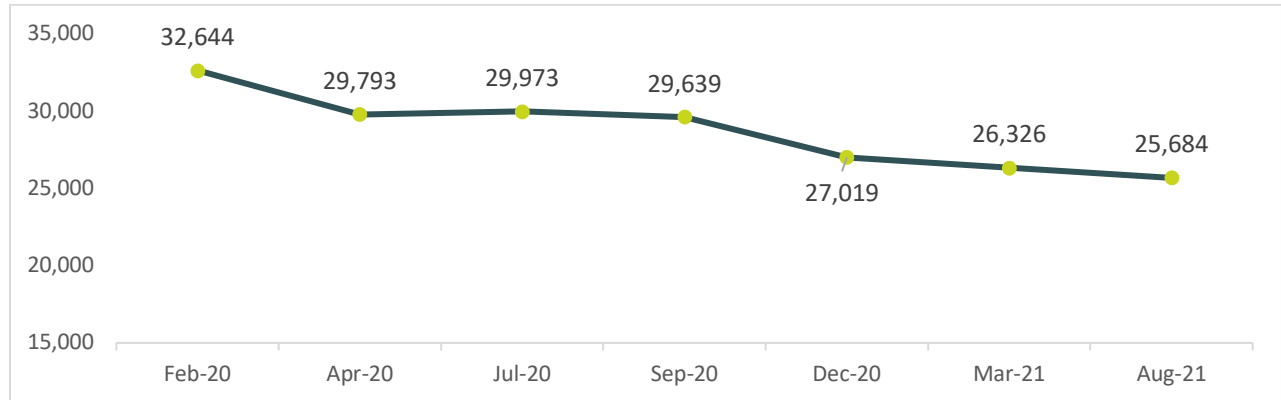
Chart 2 shows the recovery patterns of the least negatively impacted industries in Surrey during the pandemic. Interestingly, the tech sector employment rose continually throughout the last 18 months, while business, building & support, and health care dropped slightly but have recovered significantly. These are three key sectors in Surrey.

**Chart 2: Estimated Employment by Industry in Highest-Recovery Sectors in Surrey – February 2020 through August 2021**  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0379-01, Statistics Canada



On the other hand, the most impacted sector in Surrey during the pandemic is construction (Chart 3). It initially declined by almost 3,000 jobs in March-April 2020 but continually dropped further by August 2021, by another 4,000 jobs, and is at its lowest employment level during the pandemic.

**Chart 3: Estimated Employment by Industry: Construction in Surrey – February 2020 through August 2021**  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0379-01, Statistics Canada



### Surrey Employment COVID-19 Impacts BY OCCUPATION – February 2020 to August 2021

When we consider employment by occupation in Surrey and impacts by occupation, the greatest number of jobs impacted were in:

- Sales & service employment (over 7,200 or -8.7%);
- Trades, transport & equipment operators (almost 7,200 or -12.3%); and,
- Arts, culture, recreation & sport (1,000 jobs or -15.1%).

**Table 2: Estimated Employment by Occupation in Surrey – February 2020 through August 2021**  
Adapted from Table 14-10-0381-01, Statistics Canada

National Occupational Classification	Employment February 2020	Employment August 2021	Change February 2020 to August 2021	
			Jobs	%
Total Employed (all occupations)	296,748	303,800	7,052	2.4%
Management	22,822	22,772	-50	-0.2%
Business, Finance & Administration	41,703	49,034	7,331	17.6%
Natural & Applied Sciences	19,658	22,682	3,024	15.4%
Health	21,380	25,747	4,367	20.4%
Education, Law & Social, Community and Gov Services	26,370	27,017	646	2.5%
Art, Culture, Rec & Sport	6,636	5,636	-1,000	-15.1%
Sales & Services	83,042	75,815	-7,227	-8.7%
Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators	58,356	51,167	-7,190	-12.3%
Natural Resources Agriculture & related production	3,414	6,651	3,237	94.8%
Manufacturing & Utilities	13,226	14,820	1,594	12.1%

The occupational sectors which have recovered the most in Surrey during the pandemic are estimated to be:

- Business, finance & administration (over 7,300 jobs or +17.6% since February 2020);
- Health (almost 4,400 jobs or +20.4%);
- Natural resources, agriculture & related production (over 3,200 jobs or +95%) – single largest occupational recovery area in percentage terms; and,
- Natural & applied sciences (over 3,000 jobs or +15.4%).

Chart 4 shows continual growth in employment in Surrey in business, finance and administrative positions, ending up almost 18% over pre-pandemic levels.

**Chart 4: Estimated Employment by Occupation: Business, Finance & Administration in Surrey – February 2020 through August 2021**  
Adapted from Table: 14-10-0381-01, Statistics Canada

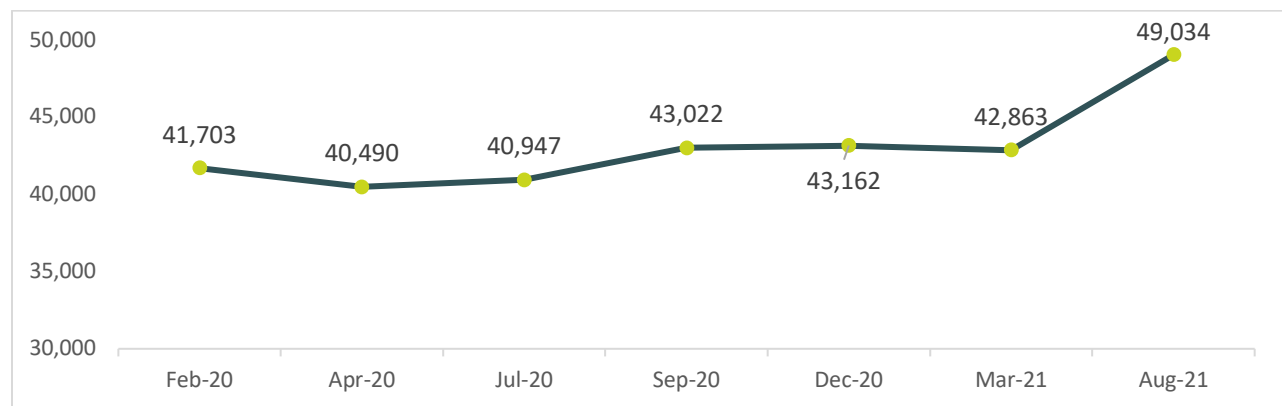


Chart 5 shows almost opposite trends with trades, transport & equipment operator positions in Surrey, partly driven by the impact on the construction sector and a slow rebound in manufacturing in the community.

**Chart 5: Estimated Employment by Occupation: Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators in Surrey – February 2020 through August 2021**  
Adapted from Table: 14-10-0381-01, Statistics Canada

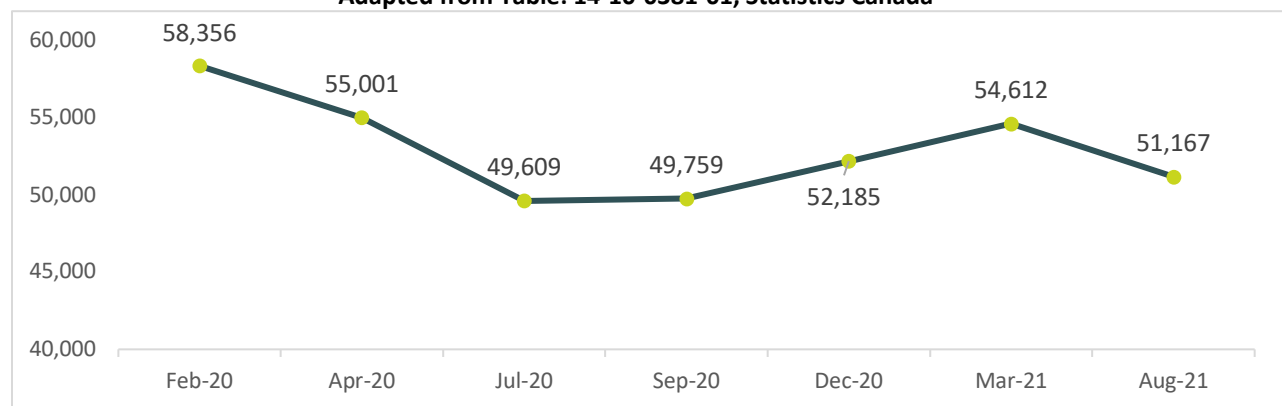
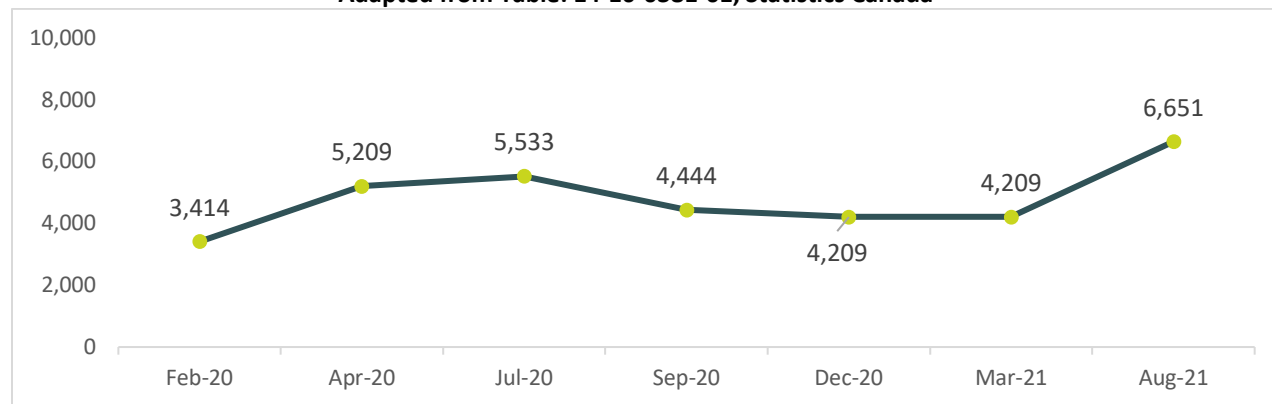


Chart 6, consistent with industry trends, shows employment in positions in natural resource and related categories experienced mostly monthly growth in jobs. In fact, unlike many sectors and occupations, this category grew by almost 1,800 jobs or +53% in the first two months of the pandemic (March-April 2020).

**Chart 6: Estimated Employment by Occupation: Natural Resources, Agriculture & Related Production in Surrey – February 2020 through August 2021**

Adapted from Table: 14-10-0381-01, Statistics Canada



**Sources:**

Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0379-01 Employment by industry, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality \(x 1,000\)](#)

Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0381-01 Employment by occupation, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality \(x 1,000\)](#)

**MORE INFORMATION:**

**SURREY BUSINESS LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE**

**BC Labour Force Survey Data, Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, August 2021 (Released September 10, 2021)**

Source: BC Stats – *Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, August 2021*. Released September 10, 2021. Retrieved from [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/data/statistics/employment-labour-market/lfs\\_data\\_tables.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/data/statistics/employment-labour-market/lfs_data_tables.pdf)

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