

Understanding the Prevalance of

PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT

— IN THE FOUR COUNTY AREA —



Acknowledgements

The Four County Labour Market Planning Board (Planning Board) is a community-directed, not-for-profit organization that specializes in providing labour market information for Bruce, Grey, Huron, and Perth counties.

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this research report is to measure the prevalence of precarious employment in the Four County area.

There are several key variables that identify the extent to which workers in the four county area may be precariously employed. Among them are: Part-time employment (including both duration and reasons for part time employment), temporary employment and the threat of permanent layoffs, self-employment, and low income measures for both individuals and families. These measurable indicators provide a starting point from which to evaluate the extent of precarious employment in the four county region.

Key findings concerning the prevalence of precarious employment in the four county area are as follows:

- Between 2010 and 2019, the four county region had a greater proportion of part-time workers than the Ontario average;
- Long-term (60+ months) part-time employment with the same employer is more prevalent in the four county region than it is on average across Ontario;
- Compared to the Ontario average, a greater proportion of part-time workers in the Four County region have voluntarily chosen part-time employment;
- Temporary employment decreased between 2010 and 2019, with 11.2% of the Four County area workforce temporarily employed in 2019;
- Self-employment represents approximately 1/5 workers in the region, with 31,800 self-employed individuals in 2019;
- Locally, certain types of full-time occupations, particularly those in Agriculture (both managers and general farm workers), include a high number of workers with a median income of less than \$30,000; those working in Agriculture are also more likely to be self-employed;
- The number of individuals and families living in low income¹ situations varies in each of the four counties, with Grey County having the greatest incidence of low income families and individuals;
- The incidence of low income couple families ranges from 6.2 percent in Grey County to 4.9 percent in Perth County, considerably lower than 10.6 percent in Ontario;
- The incidence of low income lone parent families ranges from 33.3 percent in Grey County to 24.5 percent in Perth County, compared to 32.2 percent in Ontario;
- The incidence of low income non-family persons (individuals) ranges from 29.6 percent in Grey County to 23.4 percent in Perth County, compared to 34.7 percent in Ontario.

¹ The Low Income Measure (LIM), after tax, refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted for different household sizes and reflects the fact that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases.

Purpose

While the impacts and definition of precarious employment are fairly well understood, the nuances of precarious employment make it difficult to measure (and certainly can't be quantified with one number or one data source). As such, the purpose of this research report is to **measure the prevalence of precarious employment in the four county area** (also referred to as the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region).

The goal of this work is to establish a methodology that allows for the monitoring of precarious employment and its labour market implications over time. While evaluating the social and societal consequences of precarious employment is beyond the scope of this research, a quantitative understanding of its pervasiveness within the four county area can provide a foundation for the exploration of those challenges.

Introduction

Just a few short years ago (2016 to 2019) the four county area witnessed significant job growth and extraordinarily low unemployment rates. Even under these desirable labour market conditions, however, lurked the challenge of precarious employment and its implications.

Statistics Canada defines precarious employment as “non-standard employment that includes part-time work, temporary employment, multiple jobholders and own-account employment (self-employment without paid employees.” Those who are vulnerable to precarious employment include individuals with unpredictable schedules due to inconsistent hours, seasonal work, and contract-based work. Particular industrial sectors include a higher proportion of precariously employed workers. Certain individual characteristics – including gender, being a visible minority, immigrant status and educational attainment – also correlate more highly with precarious work.

Precarious employment can have serious implications on workers and their families. Some of the more significant issues created are:²

- Harmful effect on worker's physical and mental well-being;
- Limited access and support for workplace training and educational upgrading;
- Inability to meet basic financial needs such as housing, transportation, and/or childcare;
- Increased health and safety concerns on and off the job;
- Work-life imbalance created by difficult schedules;
- Lack of benefits or wage coverage during times of illness or family emergencies;
- Inability of multiple job holders to qualify for employment insurance if an income or wage are lost;
- Inability to access the supports and services available to the unemployed.

² “Quick Facts about Vulnerable Workers and Precarious Work.” Law Commission of Ontario. Accessed October 2020. <https://www.lco-cdo.org/en/our-current-projects/vulnerable-workers-and-precarious-work/vulnerable-workers-interim-report-august-2012/quick-facts-about-vulnerable-workers-and-precarious-work/>

This project was conceived in January 2019, prior to COVID-19, and the unfortunate irony is that precariously employed workers have been exceptionally hard hit by this pandemic. The data for this project was ordered in the spring of 2020, and data and observations in this report do not capture the COVID-19 period, as 2020 annual data has only begun to be released as of February 2021, with more to follow throughout the year. As such, the information presented in this report gives a baseline for understanding precarious employment before the impact of COVID-19 was felt in the labour market.

National Background

Almost 20 years ago, research was already beginning to identify that an increasing proportion of Canadian workers were in precarious employment situations.³ By 2019, it was estimated that over 800,000 Canadian workers between 25 and 54 years old were working in casual or temporary contract work situations.⁴ This increase coincided with a decrease in stable long-term jobs providing benefits (including paid leave pensions) to Canadian workers, which impacts Canadians' ability to plan and save for retirement.⁵ Without the income security that comes from stable employment and regular working hours, precariously employed workers are also less likely to spend money, thereby impacting tax revenues and government spending.⁶

With more workers in less stable employment situations,⁷ Canada is seeing a long-term change in the Standard Employment relationship (SER) which was previously understood as full-time, permanent employment with one employer for a long period of time. National research conducted by Statistics Canada indicates that "13.3% of employees (2.1 million) worked in a temporary job in 2018, up from 11.8% (1.4 million) in 1998,"⁸ confirming that this is a growing segment of the Canadian workforce.

As discussed earlier, multiple jobholders frequently meet the criteria for precarious employment. In 2019, Statistics Canada reported that over the previous 10-year-period, the proportion of multiple jobholders increased from 5.0% to 5.7%. Multiple jobholders were most commonly found in healthcare



3 Cranford, Cynthia J., Leah F. Vosko and Nancy Zukewich. 2003. "Precarious Employment in the Canadian Labour Market: A Statistical Portrait." Statistics Canada: Just Labour, volume 3.

4 Agopsowicz, Andrew. "COVID-19's Threat to Canada's Vulnerable Workers." Accessed September 2020. <https://thoughtleadership.rbc.com/covid-19-could-affect-millions-of-canadas-most-vulnerable-workers/>

5 "Un- and Under-employed: the "New Normal" of Precarious Work." Canada without Poverty. Accessed September 2020. <https://cwp-csp.ca/2017/04/un-and-under-employed-the-new-normal-of-precarious-work/>

6 DePratto, Brian., and Randall Bartlett. "Precarious Employment in Canada: Does the Evidence Square with the Anecdotes?" Accessed September 2020. <https://www.td.com/document/PDF/economics/special/PrecariousEmployment.pdf>

7 Agopsowicz, Andrew. "COVID-19's Threat to Canada's Vulnerable Workers." Accessed September 2020. <https://thoughtleadership.rbc.com/covid-19-could-affect-millions-of-canadas-most-vulnerable-workers/>

8 "Temporary employment in Canada." Statistics Canada. Accessed September 2020. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190514/dq190514b-eng.htm>

and social assistance, and in education.⁹ Another subset of precarious workers— gig workers— were also found to increase nationally over the last 10 years. Gig workers include “independent contractors or freelancers” who work on task-based contracts for various employers.¹⁰

National data shows that gig workers increased from 5.5% to 8.2% of the Canadian workforce between 2005 and 2016.¹¹

Provincial Research

Ontario-based research has begun to look at the characteristics of precarious employment and what efforts could help mitigate challenges moving from precarious to more stable employment when opportunities arise in the labour market.

A report commissioned by the Law Commission of Ontario found that precariously employed individuals in Ontario were more likely to:

- Work in jobs with increased health and safety risks;
- Suffer from prolonged stress and other health impacts related to their work;
- Lack benefits covering prescription drug costs and other non-covered healthcare costs.¹²

Research suggests that women, members of visible minorities, and immigrants to Canada are all more likely to have work that is characterized as precarious.¹³ Those who are marginalized in society because of gender, minority status and education level are significantly more likely to work in precariously employed situations and/or to not benefit from positive labour market changes and growth.

Research identifying similarities and differences between urban vs. rural regions of Ontario found that approximately 8% of workers in rural areas were in involuntary part-time positions. These individuals were more likely to fit the following demographic groups: women, youth, and those with lower educational attainment.¹⁴

A project undertaken by Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario (PEPSO) found that vulnerability to precarious work depends significantly on individual factors such as gender,

9 “Multiple jobholders in Canada.” Statistics Canada. Accessed September 2020. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-222-x/71-222-x2019003-eng.htm>

10 Jeon, Sung-Hee., Hujun Liu and Yuri Ostrovsky. “Measuring the Gig Economy in Canada Using Administrative Data.” Statistics Canada. Accessed September 2020. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2019025-eng.htm>

11 Ibid.

12 “Quick Facts about Vulnerable Workers and Precarious Work.” Law Commission of Ontario. Accessed October 2020. <https://www.lco-cdo.org/en/our-current-projects/vulnerable-workers-and-precarious-work/vulnerable-workers-interim-report-august-2012/quick-facts-about-vulnerable-workers-and-precarious-work/>

13 “Vulnerable Workers and Precarious Work.” Law Commission of Ontario. Accessed September 2020. <https://www.lco-cdo.org/en/our-current-projects/vulnerable-workers-and-precarious-work/>

14 “Involuntary Part-time Jobs.” Precarious Employment in Rural Ontario. Accessed November 2020. <https://ruralprecariousemployment.wordpress.com/2018/05/25/involuntary-part-time-jobs/>

race, and educational background.¹⁵ One's ability to benefit from positive labour market changes and opportunities depends significantly on these individual characteristics and impacts household income stability, community engagement, family anxiety and stress levels, and standard of living among others. Further projects conducted by PEPSO¹⁶ focus further on the personal and family consequences of precariously employed individuals, as well as how labour market changes will positively or negatively impact certain groups of people more than others.

Local Data Observations

The national and Ontario-based research studies cited above give us context for exploring the nature of precarious employment across Bruce, Grey, Huron, and Perth counties.



Key Variables

There are several key variables that identify the extent to which workers in the four county area may be precariously employed. Among them are: Part-time employment (including both duration and reasons for part time employment), temporary employment and the threat of permanent layoffs, self-employment, and low income measures for both individuals and families.

These data may be used to inform broader discussions about the relationship between precarious employment and individual, family, and community wellbeing.

Part-time Employment

Part-time employment consists of persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week at their main or only job. Understanding how many people work part-time in the four county area and how the proportion of part-time workers has changed over time provides insight into one aspect of precarious employment.

Table 1 shows that in 2019 there were 33,900 workers employed part-time in the four county area, representing 21.9 percent of total employment. This is down from the high of 23.5 percent in 2012. When compared to Ontario, the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula consistently has a higher proportion of workers employed part-time over the 2010 to 2019 time period.



Between 2010 and 2019, the four county region had a greater proportion of part-time workers than the Ontario average



¹⁵ Lewchuk, Wayne., Stephanie Procyk, Michelynn Laflèche, Diane Dyson, Luin Goldring, John Shields, and Peter Viducis. "Getting Left Behind." 2018. Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario. Accessed September 2020.

¹⁶ Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario. <https://pepsoc.ca/research-projects>

**Table 1: Proportion of People Employed Part-time
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region and Ontario**

	Employed Part-time #	Part-time Employment as Percent of Total Employment Stratford-Bruce Peninsula %	Part-time Employment as Percent of Total Employment Ontario %
2010	30,400	20.3	19.6
2011	36,700	23.3	19.3
2012	35,900	23.5	19.3
2013	32,900	21.8	19.6
2014	33,700	22.3	19.5
2015	30,700	21.2	18.8
2016	32,100	22.1	19.0
2017	30,100	20.2	18.9
2018	29,800	19.1	18.4
2019	33,900	21.9	18.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Part-time Employment and Job Tenure

Part-time employment can also be examined from the perspective of job tenure. Job tenure measures the number of consecutive months or years a person has worked for the current (or most recent) employer. The employee may have worked in one or more occupations or in one or more locations or businesses and still be considered to have continuous tenure if the employer has not changed. If a person has worked for the same employer over different periods of time, job tenure measures the most recent period of uninterrupted work. A temporary layoff does not constitute an interruption.

Long-term (60+ months) part-time employment with the same employer is more prevalent in the Four County region than it is on average across Ontario

The majority (43.1 percent) of Stratford-Bruce Peninsula’s part-time workers have been with their current employer for 60 plus months. This proportion is far higher than the proportion in Ontario which sits at 31.5 percent (Table 2). This means that long term part-time work is more customary in Stratford-Bruce Peninsula than it is on average throughout the province.

**Table 2: Part-time Employment by Job Tenure
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region and Ontario 2019**

Job Tenure	Stratford-Bruce Peninsula #	Stratford-Bruce Peninsula %	Ontario %
1 to 6 months	5,100	15.0	19.6
7 to 12 months	4,100	12.1	11.9
13 to 60 months	10,100	29.8	37.0
60+ months	14,600	43.1	31.5
Total	33,900	100.0	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Reasons for Part-time Employment

Compared to the Ontario average, a greater proportion of part-time workers in the four county region have voluntarily chosen part-time employment



It is important to observe that some people choose or prefer part-time employment. Table 3 provides insight into the reasons for part-time employment. The first observation is that in the four county area, 44.0 percent of part-time workers gave the reason as personal preference; this is significantly higher than 31.7 percent in Ontario. Part-time workers who reported “business conditions” and “could not find full-time work” represented just 15.9 percent of all part-time workers. This means that in 2019, only 5,400 of the 33,900 part-time workers in Stratford-Bruce Peninsula would have preferred full-time work. In Ontario, 22.5 percent of part-time workers would prefer full-time work.

**Table 3: Reasons for Part-time Employment
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region and Ontario 2019**

Reasons for Part-Time Employment	Stratford-Bruce Peninsula #	Stratford-Bruce Peninsula %	Ontario %
Own illness	2,200	6.5	4.1
Personal or family responsibilities	4,800	14.2	12.3
Going to school	6,600	19.5	29.4
Personal preference or other voluntary	14,900	44.0	31.7
Business Conditions	4,300	12.7	15.7
Could not find full-time work	1,100	3.2	6.8
Part-time employment, all reasons	33,900	100.0	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Temporary Jobs

Job insecurity is a primary factor attributed to precarious employment. A permanent job is one that is expected to last as long as the employee wants it, given that business conditions permit. That is, there is no pre-determined termination date. In order to have a permanent job, one must be an employee.

A temporary job has a predetermined end date, or will end as soon as a specific project is completed. Temporary jobs include seasonal jobs; temporary, term or contract jobs including work done through a temporary help agency; casual jobs; and other temporary work. Temporary workers do not include people who are self-employed.

Table 4 shows that 13,700 or 11.2 percent of jobs in Stratford-Bruce Peninsula are temporary jobs, slightly lower than the province at 12.2 percent. Employees working “term or contract jobs” accounted for 7,100 of the total temporary jobs in 2019.



Temporary employment decreased between 2010 and 2019, with 11.2% of the four county area workforce temporarily employed in 2019

**Table 4: Employee Job Permanency
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region and Ontario 2019**

	Stratford-Bruce Peninsula #	Stratford-Bruce Peninsula %	Ontario %
Permanent Job	109,200	88.9	87.8
Temporary Job	13,700	11.2	12.2
Seasonal Job	3,200	2.6	2.2
Term or Contract Job	7,100	5.8	6.8
Casual Job	2,800	2.3	2.9
Other Temporary Job	x	X	0.4
Total	122,800	100.0	100.0

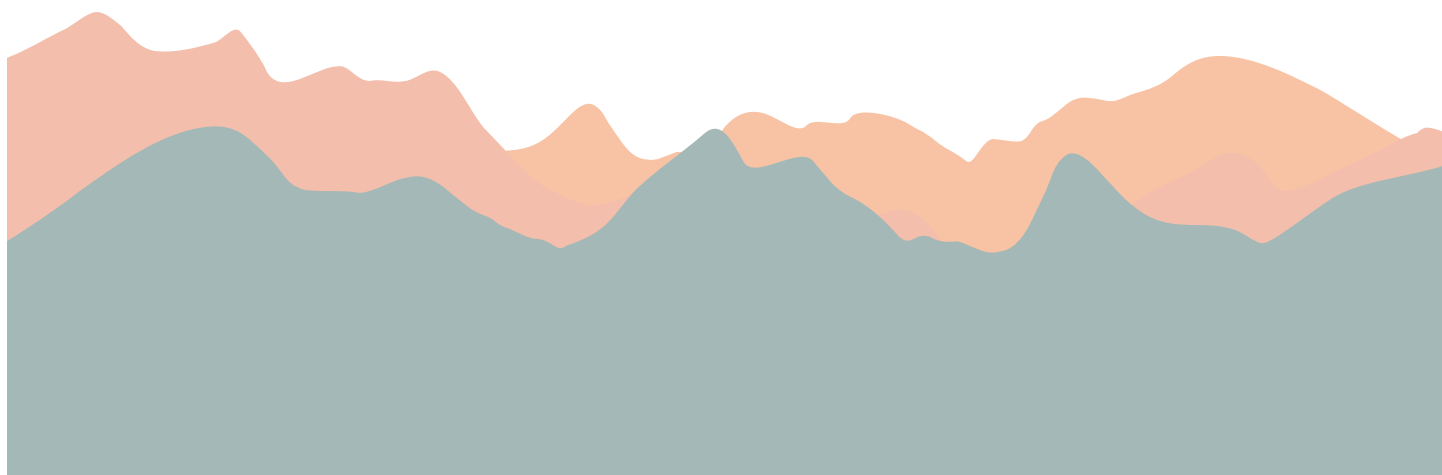
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

An examination of temporary jobs over time reveals that both the number and proportion of temporary jobs in Stratford-Bruce Peninsula has fallen between 2010 and 2019, from a high of 14.1 percent in 2011 to 11.2 percent in 2019.

Table 5: Number and Distribution Temporary Employment Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region

	Temporary Employment #	Temporary Employment %
2010	16,400	14.1
2011	18,200	14.9
2012	13,900	11.8
2013	12,700	10.8
2014	13,600	11.7
2015	14,700	12.9
2016	15,700	13.8
2017	12,100	10.2
2018	14,700	11.6
2019	13,700	11.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey



The Threat of Permanent Layoff

Job layoffs are an unpleasant reality of the labour market. The reasons employers lay people off can vary, and certain types of jobs and industries may be more vulnerable to this reality under specific circumstances. The percentage of permanent layoffs in Stratford-Bruce Peninsula decreased overall between 2010 and 2019.

**Table 6: Permanent Layoffs
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region**

	Total Employees	Permanent Layoffs #	Permanent Layoffs as a Percent of Total Employees %
2010	116,400	7,600	6.5
2011	122,100	6,500	5.3
2012	118,100	4,800	4.1
2013	117,800	7,100	6.0
2014	116,600	6,500	5.6
2015	113,700	7,000	6.2
2016	113,700	6,500	5.7
2017	118,700	5,700	4.8
2018	126,400	4,600	3.6
2019	122,800	5,900	4.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Self-Employment Characteristics

The self-employed include working owners of incorporated businesses with or without employees and working owners of unincorporated business with and without employees. Self-employed persons who do not have a business are also included (for example, a baby-sitter).

In 2019 there were 31,800 self-employed people in Stratford-Bruce Peninsula. Between 2010 and 2019 the number of self-employed people reached a high of 35,500 in 2011 and a low of 29,400 in 2018. Over the same time period, the proportion of self-employed people has declined slightly, with 2017, 2018 and 2019 as the only years accounting for less than 21 percent of total employment.

Self-employment represents approximately 1/5 workers in the region, with 31,800 self-employed individuals in 2019

**Table 7: Self-Employment
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region**

	Total Employed #	Self-employed #	Self-employed as a % of total employed
2010	149,800	33,400	22.3
2011	157,600	35,500	22.5
2012	152,800	34,700	22.7
2013	150,600	32,800	21.8
2014	151,100	34,500	22.8
2015	145,000	31,300	21.6
2016	145,500	31,800	21.9
2017	149,000	30,300	20.3
2018	155,800	29,400	18.9
2019	154,600	31,800	20.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Self-Employed Unincorporated

The group of self-employed people who are most likely to be precariously employed are those who run unincorporated businesses, as these businesses tend to be very small and lack benefits and employment supports. Table 8 shows the industries with the greatest number of unincorporated self-employed people. While the greatest number (4,890) of unincorporated self-employed people work in the Farm industry (NAICS 1110), a total of 27, 4-digit industries employ more than 100 unincorporated individuals. These 27 industries alone account for 13,415 individuals.

**Table 8: Self-Employed Unincorporated by Industry
Four county area 2016**

NAICS	S-E Unincorporated #	Percent of Total Employed
1110 Farms (except Greenhouses and Aquaculture)	4,890	37.6%
5617 Services to buildings and dwellings	995	33.4%
2383 Building finishing contractors	795	39.6%
2361 Residential building construction	770	24.6%
8121 Personal care services	710	49.8%
6213 Offices of other health practitioners	515	40.4%
5412 Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping and payroll services	400	36.9%
7115 Independent artists, writers and performers	370	80.4%
6244 Child day-care services	355	27.4%
2382 Building equipment contractors	350	11.3%
6116 Other schools and instruction	320	49.6%
8111 Automotive repair and maintenance	305	16.9%
7225 Full-service restaurants and limited service eating places	295	4.3%
4841 General freight trucking	270	16.5%
2381 Foundation, structure, and building exterior contractors	265	16.2%
5312 Offices of real estate agents and brokers	215	23.2%
5415 Computer systems design and related services	205	29.5%
5416 Management, scientific and technical consulting services	195	28.1%
5414 Specialized design services	180	44.4%
5411 Legal services	160	21.9%
8114 Personal and household goods repair and maintenance	145	49.2%
7111 Performing arts companies	130	20.3%
8141 Private households	125	26.9%
2389 Other specialty trade contractors	120	11.2%
6241 Individual and family services	115	7.0%
4451 Grocery stores	110	3.1%
8129 Other personal services	110	52.4%

Source: 2016 Census, Custom Tabulation

There are five occupations in the four county area in which self-employment unincorporated account for at least 50% of total employment. They are:

- Clay product and refractory manufacturing
- Independent artists, writers and performers
- Other personal services
- Other textile product mills
- Computer and peripheral equipment manufacturing

Income

One local metric that can help identify the level of precarious employment in Bruce, Grey, Huron, and Perth counties is a comparison between the current minimum wage and the current living wage. An additional aspect of precarious employment includes those who are employed full-time, yet are not earning enough to live securely in our region. 2019 Living Wage calculations suggest that the income that is necessary to meet minimum financial needs surpasses the provincial minimum wage: \$18.39 (Bruce/Grey) and \$17.55 (Huron/Perth). These calculations suggest that even those with full-time minimum wage employment are unable to meet their financial needs. Precarious employment may, therefore, be more prevalent in our local communities than is often assumed. Full-time minimum wage work does not guarantee the minimum income required to support a family. Although this is just one aspect of precarious employment, it is important to keep in mind that minimum wage and living wage are not equivalent, and a high proportion of individuals and families in our communities may be employed full-time, yet meet the definition of precarious employment due to an inability to meet financial demands.

Low Income Occupations

While lower annual incomes are usually associated with part-time work, there are a significant number of occupations that have lower pay even when individuals work full-time. Table 9 examines the 4-digit occupations in the four county area with lower full-time incomes. In this instance, full-time refers to people working 49 to 52 weeks a year.

Locally, certain types of full-time occupations, particularly those in Agriculture (both managers and general farm workers), include a high number of workers with a median income of less than \$30,000; those working in Agriculture are also more likely to be self-employed

The occupation with the lowest income is Practitioners of natural healing (NOC 3232), with a full-time median employment income of \$10,363. The median is the mid-point, meaning half the 30 people in this occupation earned more than \$10,363 and half earned less. Far more people (315) work full-time as Home child care providers (NOC 4411), with a median employment income of \$11,989.

As of 2016, there were a total of 36, 4-digit occupations employing a total of 14,065 people that had median employment income of less than \$30,000. Details are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9: Occupations with a Full-time Median Employment Income Less Than \$30,000
Four county area 2016**

Occupation (NOC)	Employed Full-time #	Full-time Median Employment Income \$
3232 Practitioners of natural healing	30	10,363
4411 Home child care providers	315	11,989
5133 Musicians and singers	45	12,013
7295 Floor covering installers	80	15,764
5221 Photographers	40	15,913
6342 Tailors, dressmakers, furriers and milliners	60	16,041
6563 Pet groomers and animal care workers	45	16,337
8421 Chain saw and skidder operators	55	17,360
5244 Artisans and craftspersons	105	17,950
0821 Managers in agriculture	5,165	18,023
8432 Nursery and greenhouse workers	35	18,856
6512 Bartenders	40	18,953
7513 Taxi and limousine drivers and chauffeurs	130	19,464
6341 Hairstylists and barbers	480	20,568
6513 Food and beverage servers	330	21,378
6611 Cashiers	450	21,830
6711 Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related support occ.	760	23,245
5121 Authors and writers	65	23,725
8431 General farm workers	2,345	23,823
7384 Other trades and related occupations, n.e.c.	80	24,102
6525 Hotel front desk clerks	45	25,013
5136 Painters, sculptors and other visual artists	95	25,441
9431 Sawmill machine operators	45	25,578
1251 Court reporters, medical transcriptionists and related occupations	60	25,579
6621 Service station attendants	105	25,758
6332 Bakers	165	25,901
6562 Estheticians, electrologists and related occupations	150	26,415
6622 Store shelf stockers, clerks and order fillers	350	26,812
6311 Food service supervisors	170	26,821
6731 Light duty cleaners	615	26,989

continued...

Occupation (NOC)	Employed Full-time #	Full-time Median Employment Income \$
1513 Couriers, messengers and door-to-door distributors	40	27,828
6322 Cooks	630	27,980
7335 Other small engine and small equipment repairers	65	28,438
6732 Specialized cleaners	265	29,169
4412 Home support workers, housekeepers and related occupations	545	29,210
9471 Plateless printing equipment operators	65	29,660

Source: 2016 Census, Custom Tabulation

Precarious Employment and Low Income Families

Not all precariously employed people have low income; some may lack benefits or have a work-life imbalance created by an unpredictable schedule, etc. That said, one of the more common characteristics of precarious employment is a modest income.

The number of individuals and families living in low income situations varies in each of the four counties, with Grey County having the greatest incidence of low income families and individuals



While the analysis to this point has focused on the precariously employed individual, the family situation of a precariously employed individual deserves attention. For example, a precariously employed individual who has a partner with a well-paying stable job (i.e. teacher) will be less vulnerable to the shortfalls of precarious employment. However, two precariously employed individuals within the same family would be far more vulnerable to the instability of precarious employment. Precariously employed individuals (non-family persons) who live alone would obviously be vulnerable to their work situation.

With this in mind, this part of the research examines low income families. While the data is not available for the four county area as a whole, it is available for each of its counties. The data in Table 10 reveals the number of LIM families and persons in Bruce County, Grey County, Huron County and Perth County.

In 2018, Bruce County had 1,100 LIM couple families*, consisting of 3,080 individuals. These families had a median after tax income of \$26,060. Bruce also had 720 LIM lone parent families*, comprised of 1,950 individuals, with a median after tax income of \$23,690. Finally, the number of LIM non-family persons in Bruce was 2,810 with a median after tax income of \$15,740.

* Note: A couple family consists of a couple living together (married or common-law, including same-sex couples) living at the same address with or without children. A lone-parent family is a family with only one parent, male or female, and with at least one child.

Over the same time period, Grey County had 1,450 LIM couple families, consisting of 4,100 individuals. These families had a median after tax income of \$26,450. Grey also had 1,160 LIM lone parent families, comprised of 3,100 individuals, with a median after tax income of \$24,550. The number of LIM non-family persons in Grey was 4,740 with a median after tax income of \$15,750. Huron County had 880 LIM couple families, consisting of 2,460 individuals. These families had a median after tax income of \$25,330. Huron also had 560 LIM lone parent families, comprised of 1,510 individuals, with a median after tax income of \$24,540. The number of LIM non-family persons in Huron was 2,320 with a median after tax income of \$15,750.

The incidence of low income couple families ranges from 6.2 percent in Grey County to 4.9 percent in Perth County, considerably lower than 10.6 percent in Ontario

Perth County had 960 LIM couple families, consisting of 2,980 individuals. These families had a median after tax income of \$26,690. Perth also had 690 LIM lone parent families, comprised of 1,840 individuals, with a median after tax income of \$23,970. The number of LIM non-family persons in Perth was 2,840 with a median after tax income of \$15,400.

While the most current data available is for 2018, data for forthcoming years can be compared against this base year to determine if the situation for low income families is improving or getting worse.

**Table 10: Low Income Measure (LIM)* Families/Persons
2018**

	Bruce County	Grey County	Huron County	Perth County
LIM Couple Families				
Number of Families	1,100	1,450	880	960
Number of Persons	3,080	4,100	2,460	2,980
Median after tax \$	\$26,060	\$26,450	\$25,330	\$26,690
LIM Lone Parent Families				
Number of Families	720	1,160	560	690
Number of Persons	1,950	3,100	1,510	1,840
Median after tax \$	\$23,690	\$24,550	\$24,540	\$23,970
LIM Non-Family Persons				
Number of Persons	2,810	4,740	2,320	2,840
Median after tax \$	\$15,740	\$15,750	\$15,750	\$15,400

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler – Custom Tabulation

*The Low Income Measure (LIM), after tax, refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted for different household sizes and reflects the fact that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases.

In addition to tracking the number of low income families, it is also insightful to examine the number of low income families as a percentage of all families in each area. Grey County had the highest percentage of low income couple families (6.2 percent of all families), Bruce was at 6.0 percent, Huron at 5.8 percent and Perth, the lowest, was at 4.9 percent. Compared to Ontario's 10.6 percent, the incidence of low income couple families is much lower in each of the four counties.

The incidence of low income lone parent families ranges from 33.3 percent in Grey County to 24.5 percent in Perth County, compared to 32.2 percent in Ontario

Lone parent families have a much higher concentration of low income families. In Grey County, 33.2 percent of lone parent families are low income. Bruce was the next highest at 29.8 percent, followed by Huron at 27.7 percent and Perth the lowest at 24.5 percent. The percentage of low income lone parent families in Ontario was 32.2 percent, only Grey County had a higher percentage.

It is clear that in each of the four counties, the situation for low income lone parent families is far worse than it is for low income couple families.

The circumstances for low income non-family persons also vary among the counties. Grey has the highest percent of low income non-family persons, at 29.6 percent and Perth has the lowest percentage of low income non-family persons at 23.4 percent. Ontario's 34.7 percent is well higher than each of the four counties.

The incidence of low income non-family persons (individuals) ranges from 29.6 percent in Grey County to 23.4 percent in Perth County, compared to 34.7 percent in Ontario.



Table 11: Low Income Measure (LIM)* Families/Persons As a Percentage of Total Families/Persons 2018

	Bruce County	Grey County	Huron County	Perth County	Ontario
Couple Families					
Percent of Families	6.0%	6.2%	5.8%	4.9%	10.6%
Percent of Persons	5.9%	6.2%	5.6%	5.0%	9.9%
Lone Parent Families					
Percent of Families	29.8%	33.2%	27.7%	24.5%	32.2%
Percent of Persons	31.2%	35.1%	28.8%	25.3%	33.3%
Non-Family Persons					
Percent of Persons	26.3%	29.6%	25.9%	23.4%	34.7%

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler – Custom Tabulation

*The Low Income Measure (LIM), after tax, refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted for different household sizes and reflects the fact that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases.

Conclusion

This paper has isolated and presented measurable variables that are associated with precarious employment and can be tracked over time. The aim of this project has been both to provide a benchmark from which future changes can be assessed, and to provide labour market indicators that could be useful for further research concerning the relationship between precarious employment and community wellbeing.

While this information will change annually, particularly resulting from the impacts of COVID-19 which are not yet measured by these indicators at the time of this report (March 2021), the above data provides a framework from which to understand this issue and how it impacts the local region. Moving forward, each of the above data points can be updated to reflect changes in the prevalence of precarious employment in the four county area.

A survey conducted by the Four County Labour Market Planning Board in late 2020 asked residents of the four county region about their employment status and whether or not it fit the definition of precarious employment (as described above) both pre-COVID-19 and currently (as of October/November 2020). These survey questions allowed for a focused examination of the characteristics correlated with those in our region who identify as being precariously employed. Information from this survey can be found at <https://www.planningboard.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/COVID-Survey-Phase-2-Report-FINAL.pdf>.





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