

Alberta  
Low Wage Profile  
April 2016 – March 2017



## Introduction

This *Alberta Low Wage Profile* presents current information on low wage earners which are persons whose average hourly earnings<sup>1</sup> are below \$15 in Alberta and other provinces. Statistics include the percentage of employees<sup>2</sup> earning below \$15 per hour in each province plus the characteristics for those persons in Alberta.

The profile is based on two reference periods: April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016 and April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.

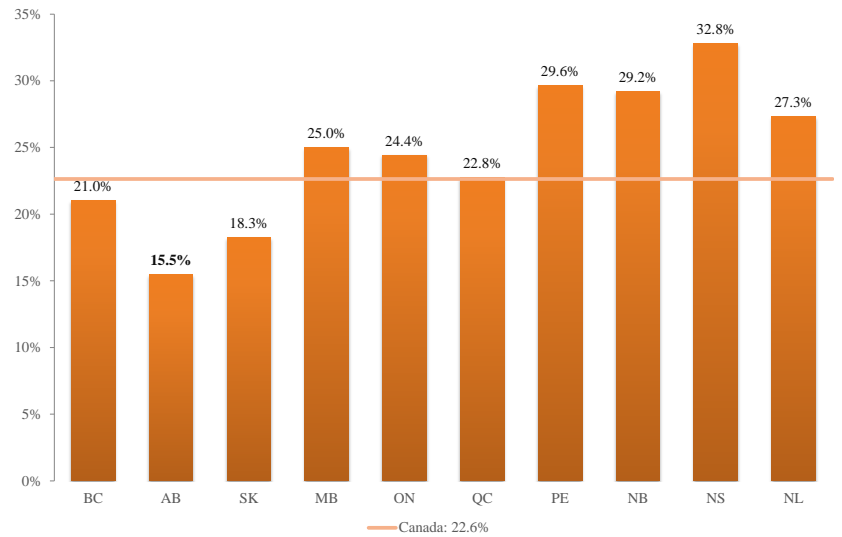
## Interprovincial Analysis

The number of employees earning below \$15 per hour in Alberta decreased over the two reference periods from 296,200 to 292,400. Alberta had the lowest percentage of low wage earners among the Canadian provinces, followed by Saskatchewan. For Canada, the proportion decreased between the two periods to 22.6% from 23.6% (Table 1, figure 1).

**Table 1: Percentage of Employees Earning Low Wage**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Alberta	296,200	15.4%	292,400	15.5%
Canada	11,626,000	23.6%	3,484,300	22.6%

**Figure 1: Percentage of Employees Earning Low Wage by Province**



<sup>1</sup> See definition (Average hourly earnings) in Appendix A

<sup>2</sup> See definition (Employees) in Appendix A

## Alberta Analysis

At 26.2%, the 15 to 19 year old group remained the largest group of low wage earners in Alberta, and the 20 to 24 year old group was the second largest in the April 2016 to March 2017 period (Table 2).

The proportion of low wage earners increased for the following age groups in the April 2016 – March 2017 period compared to the April 2015 – March 2016 period:

15 to 19 years, up 2.2 percentage points;  
25 to 29 years, up 0.4 percentage points;  
30 to 34 years, up 1.0 percentage points;  
40 to 44 years, up 0.3 percentage points;  
45 to 49 years, up 0.3 percentage points; and  
50 to 54 years, up 0.3 percentage points.

There were proportionately fewer low wage earners in all other age groups in the current reference period compared to the previous period (Table 2).

Just over half, or 51.1%, of low wage earners worked full-time between April 2016 and March 2017 (Table 3).

As in the previous reference period, a larger proportion, or 79.0% of low wage earners were in permanent employment (Table 4).

During the current reference period, 39.4% of low wage earners had children of which 13.9% were single earner families with children (Table 5).

**Table 2: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Age (years)**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
15-19	71,200	24.0%	76,500	26.2%
20-24	63,500	21.4%	59,800	20.4%
25-29	30,600	10.3%	31,300	10.7%
30-34	21,900	7.4%	24,500	8.4%
35-39	19,200	6.5%	19,000	6.5%
40-44	20,600	7.0%	21,500	7.3%
45-49	14,200	4.8%	14,800	5.1%
50-54	13,400	4.5%	14,000	4.8%
55+	41,600	14.0%	31,100	10.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 3: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Type of Work**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Full-Time	160,800	54.3%	149,400	51.1%
Part-Time	135,400	45.7%	143,100	48.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 4: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Job Permanence**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Permanent	231,900	78.3%	231,000	79.0%
Temporary*	64,200	21.7%	61,400	21.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*includes seasonal, temporary, and casual employees.

**Table 5: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Family Type**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Married, Dual earners with Children	77,800	26.3%	74,400	25.4%
Married, Dual earners no children	64,000	21.6%	63,500	21.7%
Married, Single earner no children	22,700	7.7%	22,700	7.8%
Married, Single earner with children	21,000	7.1%	22,500	7.7%
Other	51,400	17.3%	52,100	17.8%
Single Parent with children	15,900	5.4%	18,200	6.2%
Unattached individual	43,400	14.7%	39,100	13.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: Children are only considered if under 18

Of all low wage earners, 39.2% had less than one year of job tenure in the April 2016 – March 2017 reference period. The proportion that had one to five years of job tenure was 48.1%, which was higher than the 41.8% in the previous reference period. Overall, the proportion of low wage earners who had job tenure of five years or less increased from 83.0% in the previous period to 87.3% in the current reference period (Table 6).

Between April 2016 and March 2017, less than one quarter of Alberta low wage earners were students (Table 7).

Of all Alberta low wage earners over the April 2016 to March 2017 period, 21.2% had some high school as their highest level of education and 30.4% had high school diplomas as their highest level of education. The proportion with less than high school was lower in the current period, at 22.8%, compared to the previous period, at 24.3% (Table 8).

Females made up 59.6% of the low wage earners in Alberta in the current reference period, which is lower than the 61.7% in the previous period. The proportion of male low wage earners from April 2016 to March 2017 was 40.4% (Table 9).

During the current reference period, 37.8% of low wage earners were living with their parents. Another 9.1% were the main income earner in their household and had children under 18 (Table 10).

**Table 6: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Job Tenure**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Less than One Year	122,100	41.2%	114,600	39.2%
One to Five Years	123,900	41.8%	140,500	48.1%
More than Five Years	50,200	17.0%	37,200	12.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 7: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Student Status**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Student	73,300	24.7%	49,900	17.1%
Non-Student	222,900	75.3%	242,500	82.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 8: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Highest Educational Attainment**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
0-8 Years (Elementary)	7,800	2.6%	4,800	1.6%
Some High School	64,200	21.7%	62,000	21.2%
High School Graduate	86,200	29.1%	89,000	30.4%
Some Post-Secondary	27,100	9.2%	30,300	10.4%
Post-Secondary Certificate or Diploma	64,000	21.6%	62,700	21.4%
University Degree	46,800	15.8%	43,700	15.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 9: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Sex**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Female	182,700	61.7%	174,200	59.6%
Male	113,500	38.3%	118,200	40.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 10: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Position in Household**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Head of house hold	110,200	37.2%	102,800	35.2%
With Children	26,200	8.8%	26,500	9.1%
No Children	84,000	28.4%	76,300	26.1%
Other	20,000	6.8%	16,800	5.7%
Parent (or parent-in-law)	7,800	2.6%	8,700	3.0%
Son or daughter (or Son or daughter-in-law)	108,300	36.6%	110,600	37.8%
Spouse	49,800	16.8%	53,600	18.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Between April 2016 and March 2017, more than half, or 62.5%, of Alberta's low wage earners were employed in two industries: Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services (Table 11).

Between April 2016 and March 2017, more than half of Alberta low wage earners worked in the following three occupational groups: Service support and other service occupations, n.e.c.<sup>3</sup>, 18.9%; Sales support occupations, 17.3%; and Service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations, 14.4% (Table 12).

**Table 11: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Industry**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Accommodation and Food Services	79,100	26.7%	78,100	26.7%
Retail Trade	97,000	32.8%	104,600	35.8%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	18,400	6.2%	19,100	6.5%
Information, Culture and Recreation	17,900	6.1%	17,100	5.9%
Educational Services	10,400	3.5%	11,800	4.0%
All Other Industries	73,300	24.8%	61,700	21.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 12: Proportion of Alberta Low Wage Earners by Occupation**

	April 2015 - March 2016		April 2016 - March 2017	
	Employees	Share	Employees	Share
Service support and other service occupations, n.e.c. <sup>3</sup>	55,300	18.7%	55,300	18.9%
Sales support occupations	52,200	17.6%	50,700	17.3%
Sales representatives and salespersons - wholesale and retail trade	35,800	12.1%	42,000	14.4%
Service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations	26,200	8.8%	29,600	10.1%
Service supervisors and specialized service occupations	29,500	10.0%	27,300	9.3%
Care providers and educational, legal and public protection support occupations	7,700	2.6%	6,200	2.1%
Professional occupations in education services and; Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	11,200	3.8%	13,000	4.4%
Workers in natural resources, agriculture and related production and; Transport and heavy equipment operation and related maintenance occupations	10,000	3.4%	8,000	2.7%
Other occupations	68,200	23.0%	60,300	20.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>296,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>292,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<sup>3</sup> Not elsewhere classified

## Appendix A

### Methodology

The data for this profile are gathered from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) conducted by Statistics Canada. Each month, the Labour Economics and Statistics Unit of Alberta Labour receives LFS files from Statistics Canada. This includes a microdata file, which contains the complete file of all LFS responses.

The low wage analysis is performed on the microdata using the statistical software package SAS. The Canadian territories are excluded from this analysis. Twelve-month averages are used to ensure the results are not affected by seasonality. The microdata files for each of the twelve months examined are combined into one large data set and annual averages are then calculated. In this profile, the results are an average of the April 2016 to March 2017 numbers.

### Definitions

These definitions are from Statistics Canada, except for “Employees” and the occupational and industrial groups.

#### Employees

In this analysis, people who were either self-employed or listed as having an hourly wage rate of \$0.00 were removed from the overall employment figure to determine the number of employees. Please note that the number of employees in organizations is different from the employment figure for Alberta.

#### Full-Time Employees

People who usually work 30 hours or more per week at their main or only job.

#### Part-Time Employees

People who usually work less than 30 hours per week at their main or only job.

#### Permanent Job

A permanent job is one that is expected to last as long as the employee wants it, given that business conditions permit. There is no pre-determined termination date.

#### Temporary Job

A temporary job has a predetermined end date, or will end as soon as a specified project is completed. Included in temporary jobs are seasonal, temporary, term or contract jobs; also include work done through a temporary help agency; casual jobs; and other temporary work.

#### Average hourly earnings

Average hourly earnings before taxes and other deductions, and include tips, commissions and bonuses. Because tips, commissions and bonuses are included, the analysis may not include all low wage earners. This variable is not exclusive to wage earners and includes employees who are salaried, work on commission and other pay schemes. Because it is just based on hourly earnings and not hourly wage the analysis may include persons who are not low wage earners.

#### Industry

North American Industry Classification System – Canada 2012

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/subjects/standard/naics/2012/index>

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- Annual Alberta Labour Market Review
- Monthly Alberta Labour Force Statistics Highlights and Packages
- Alberta's Occupational Demand and Supply Outlook
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<http://work.alberta.ca/labour/labour-market-information.html>

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