Pandemic Accelerates Jobs Lost to Automation

Workforce Outlook for the SREB Region, 2021-2025

The COVID-19 pandemic has **accelerated automation** by **5 years**, meaning **30%** of work activities could be automated by **2025**.
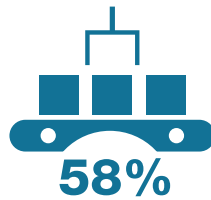
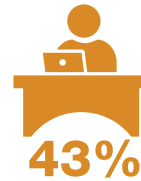In the industries that employ the most people, automation potential is often greater:
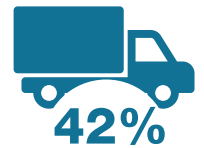
46%
Food Preparation and Serving

28%
Sales and Related

58%
Production Occupations

43%
Office and Administrative

42%
Transportation and Material Moving

Adults with **lower levels of education** are **more vulnerable** to technology advancements.

64% of the SREB region's workers have a high school diploma or less.

based on employment in May 2019

Pandemic Exacerbates Risk for Vulnerable Workers

Unemployment Potential in the SREB Region

Workers most **vulnerable to automation** are also those with the **greatest risk** for work disruptions during the pandemic:

Those with the lowest levels of education

Women and people of color

Workers ages 16-23 and 56-74

24.6 million workers — **47% of the workforce** **— are at risk** for unemployment, reduced work hours or exiting the labor force due to economic impacts from the pandemic.

17% of workers are considered essential

32% of workers can work from home

and are therefore highly unlikely to be out of work in the pandemic.

based on employment in May 2019

The **percentage of vulnerable workers** varies by industry:

100%
Food Preparation and Serving

73%
Sales and Related

90%
Production Occupations

99%
Installation and Maintenance

52%
Transportation and Material Moving

6.9 million workers were officially **unemployed** while **3.3 million more** were likely **out of work** or left the labor force. Of these, **5.5 million** are highly **unlikely to be called back** to work.