

ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Federal Reserve Bank *of* New York



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

Jaison R. Abel and Richard Deitz

Economic Inequality Policy Series

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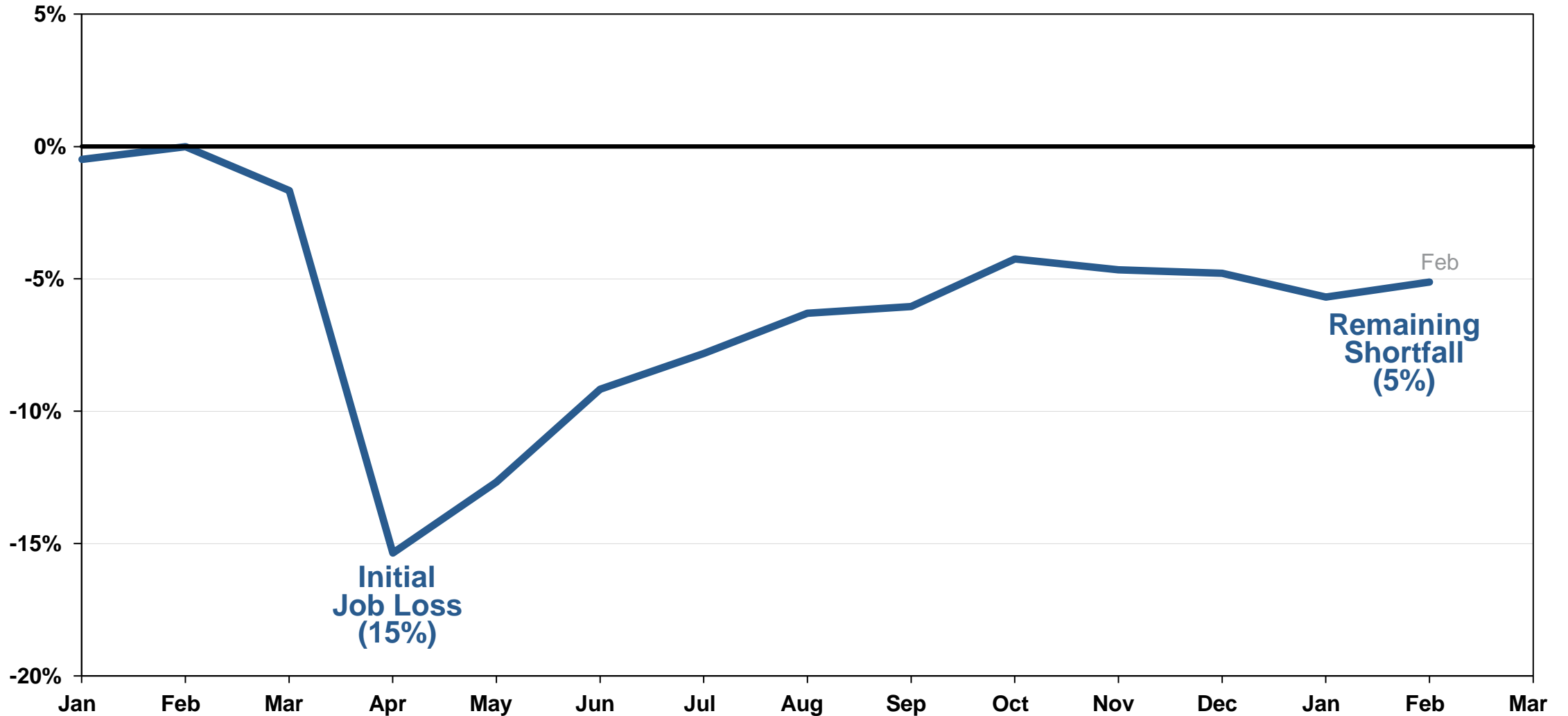
Overview

- 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



Job Categories

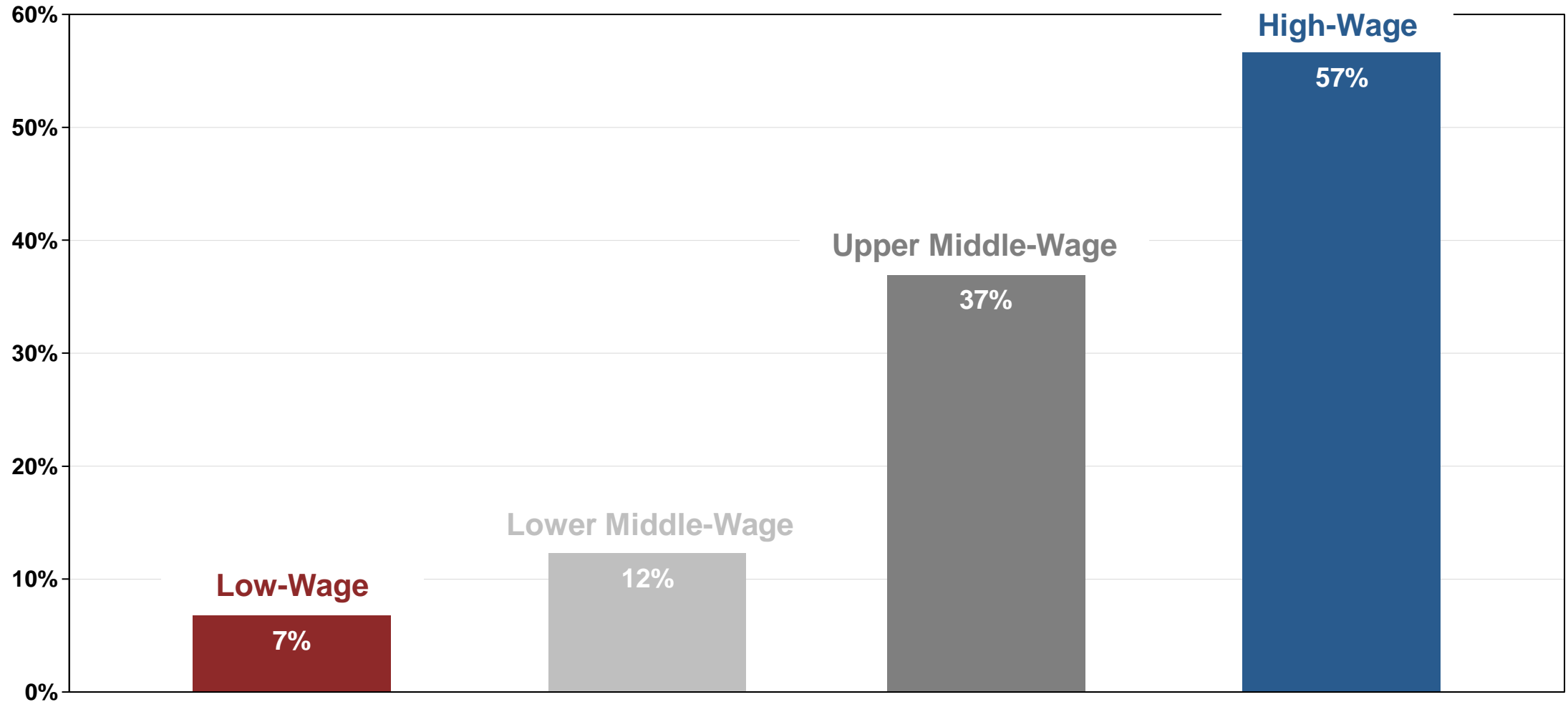
Based on Annual Median Wage of Occupation

Low-Wage	Lower Middle-Wage	Upper Middle-Wage	High-Wage
<\$30K	\$30K-49K	\$50K-\$85K	>\$85K
food servers cashiers home health aides childcare workers	admin. assistants hairdressers carpenters truck drivers	teachers police officers accountants financial managers	software developers engineers lawyers business executives



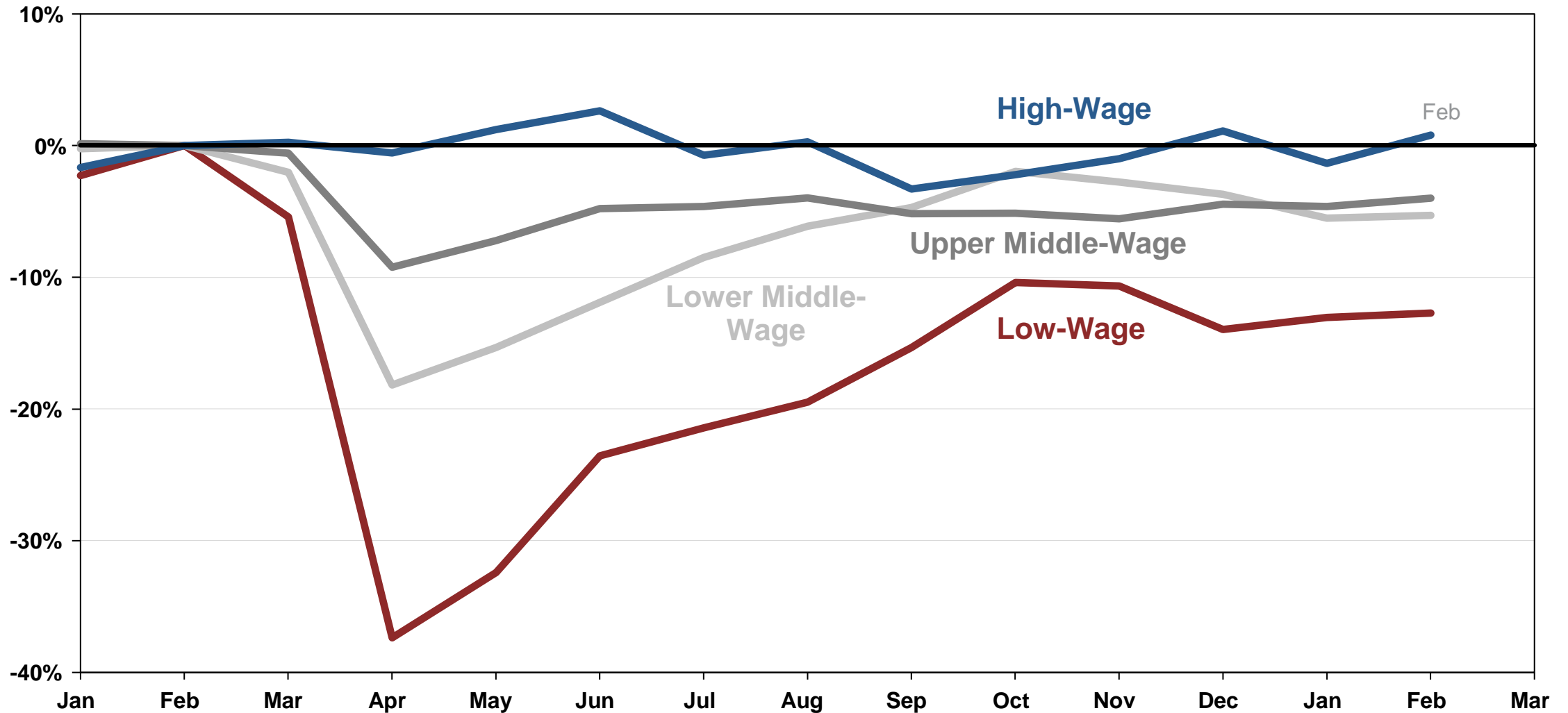
Lower-Wage Workers Least Likely to Work Remotely

Share Reporting Remote Work by Wage Group



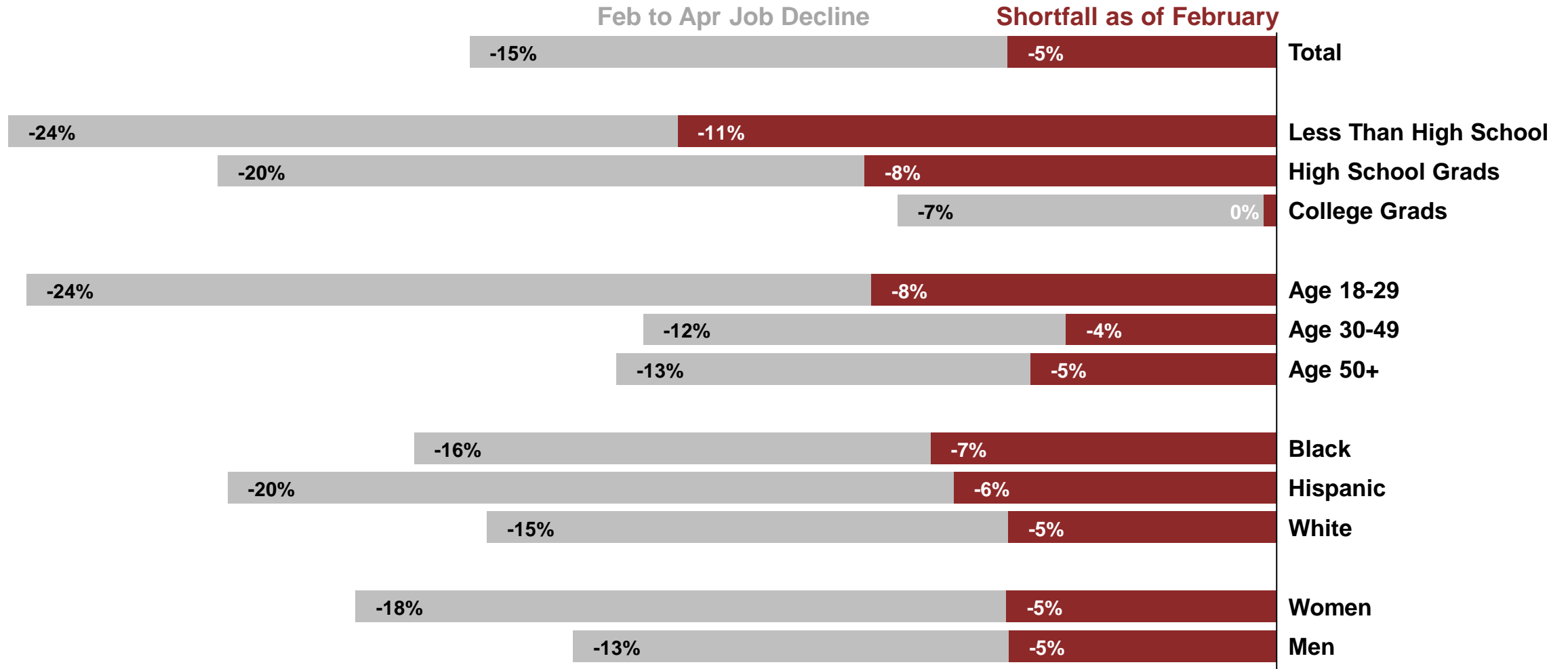
Lower-Wage Workers Hit the Hardest

Percent Change in Employment by Wage Group Since February 2020



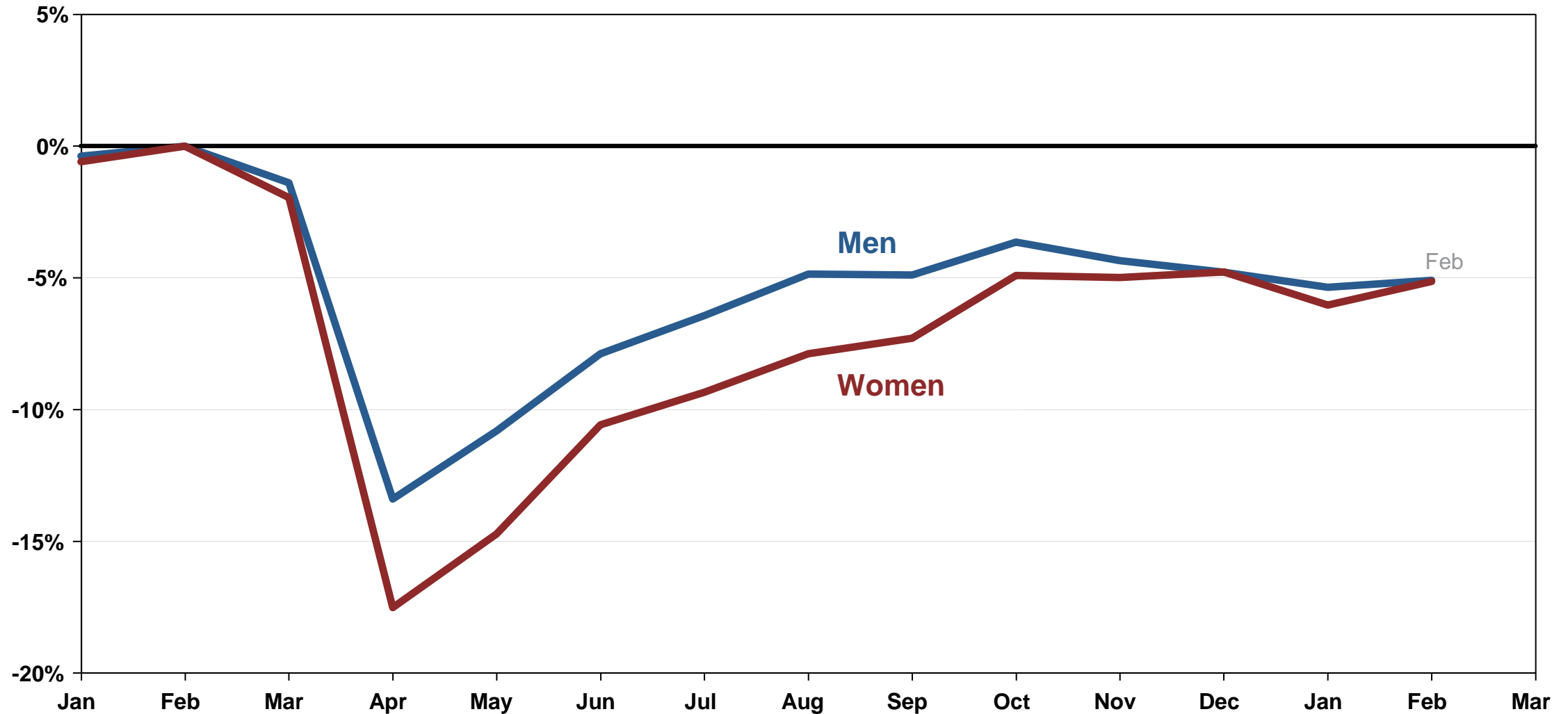
An Uneven Experience

Initial Job Losses and Remaining Shortfalls



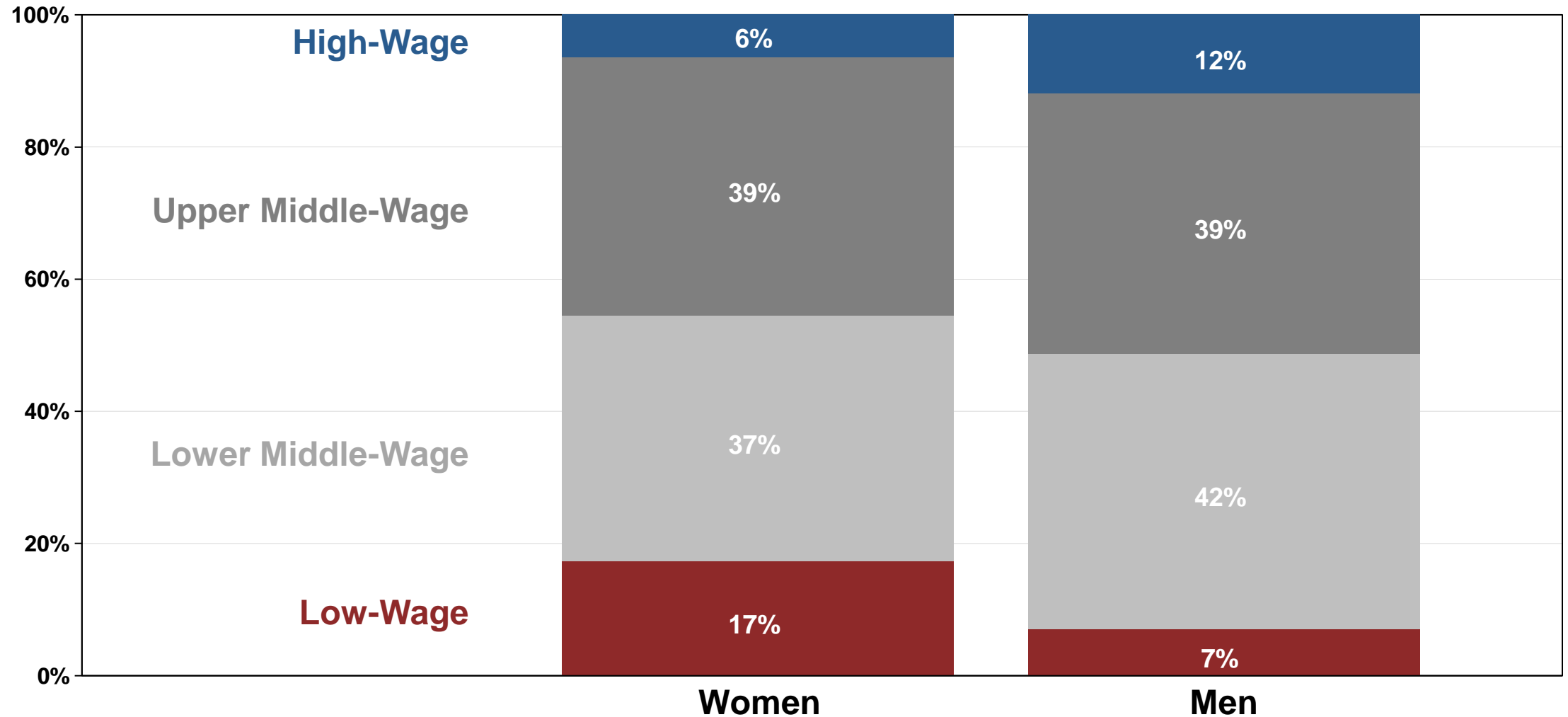
Steeper Initial Job Losses for Women, though Gap Has Closed

Percent Change in Employment by Gender Since February 2020



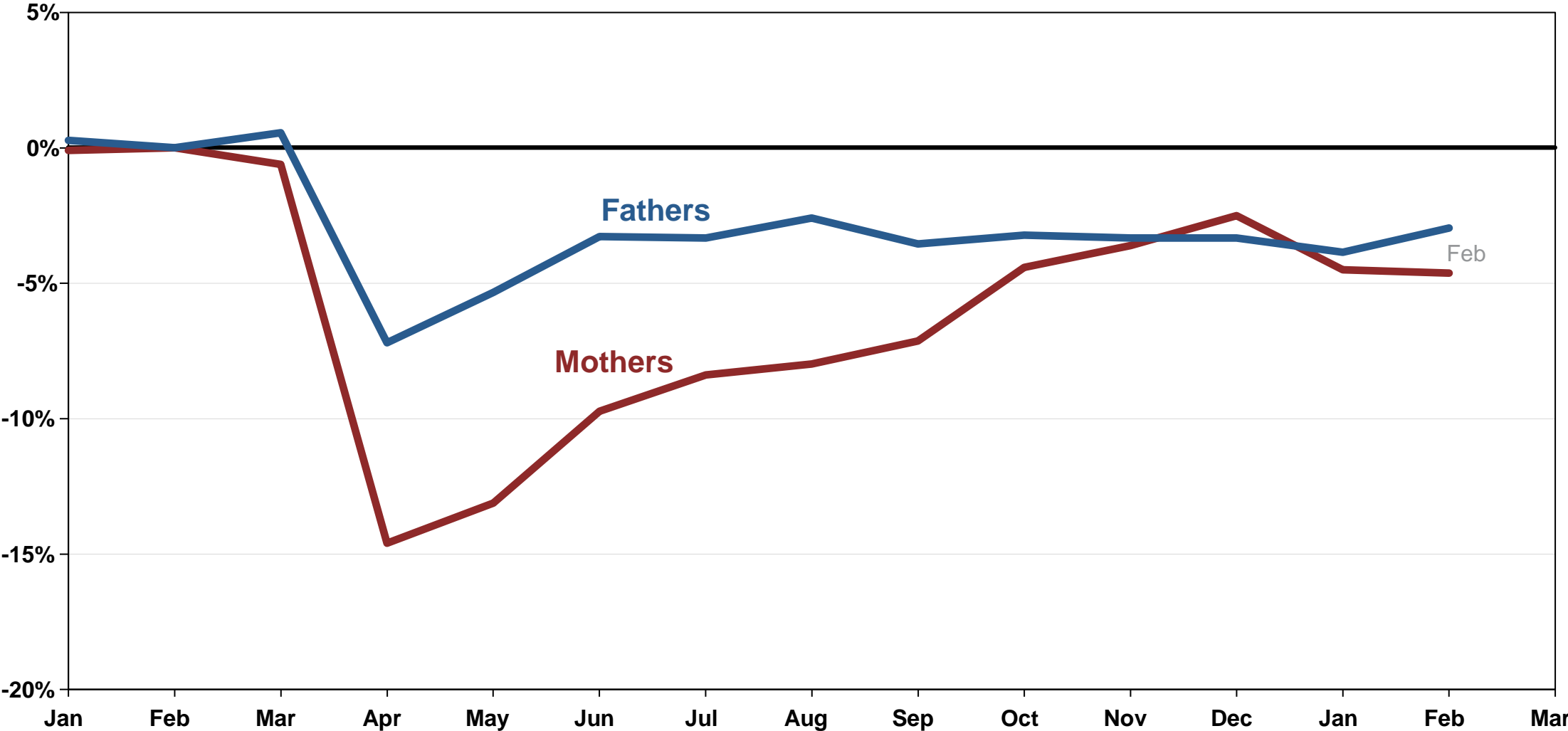
Women Disproportionately Work in Low-Wage Jobs

Pre-Pandemic Share of Jobs by Gender and Wage Group



Childcare Responsibilities Also Contributing

Percent Change in Employment by Gender Since February 2020



Source: IPUMS-CPS, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org.