



Regional Economic Trends for Kalamazoo County



JUNE 2021

KALAMAZOO COUNTY

The Trend: Kalamazoo County continues to rebound, gaining more than 7,700 jobs from Q2 2020 to Q3 2020. However, between February and March 2021, there was functionally no change within the labor force in the county. Exactly why is difficult to determine, as there may be several things causing this failure to move the needle. One notable issue has been that employers reportedly are having difficulty in finding workers, but the cause for these reported labor shortages remains unclear. Job postings were higher in March than in February, as there were slightly more postings in Health Care and Social Assistance and Manufacturing.

COUNTY UPDATE



The labor force participation rate was 59.4% in March. This is a 0.0 percentage point shift, or no change from the previous month.



The employment-to-population ratio was 56.4% in March. This is also a 0.0 percentage point shift—no change from the previous month.



The unemployment rate was 5.1% in March. Again, this is a 0.0 percentage point shift, meaning no change from the previous month.



The total labor force saw an increase of 52 people from February to March. The total increase in employed people was 17, and the total increase in unemployed people was 35.



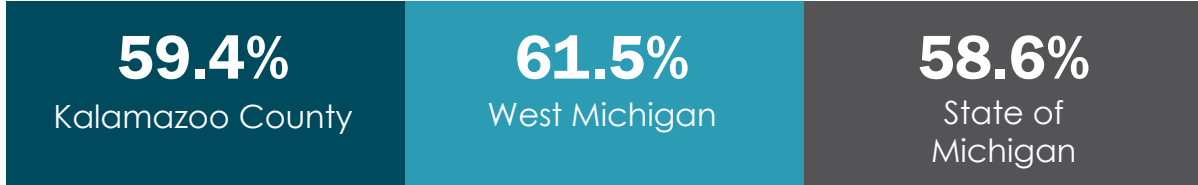
Total employment increased by 8.4% from Q2 to Q3 2020.



There were 2,646 job postings in March 2021. This means job postings increased by 19.9% from the previous month.

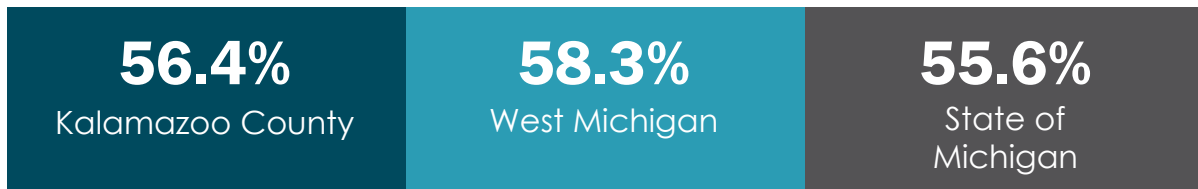
KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Labor Force Participation Rate



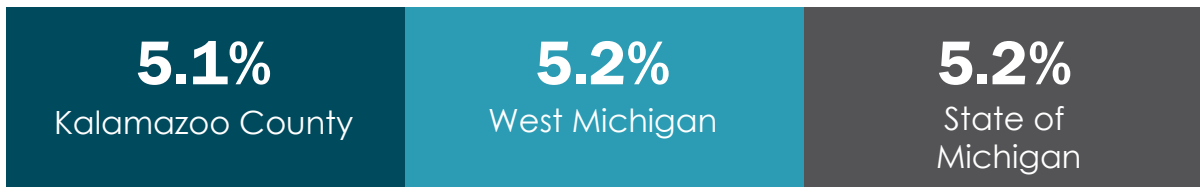
The labor force participation rate, which measures the economy's active workforce, was 59.4% in Kalamazoo County in March. This was lower than the rate for west Michigan by 2.1 percentage points and higher than the rate for the state of Michigan by 0.8 percentage points.

Employment-to-Population Ratio



The employment-to-population ratio, which measures the proportion of the population that is employed, was 56.4% in Kalamazoo County in March. This was 1.9 percentage points below the rate for west Michigan and 0.8 percentage points higher than the rate for the state of Michigan.

Unemployment Rate

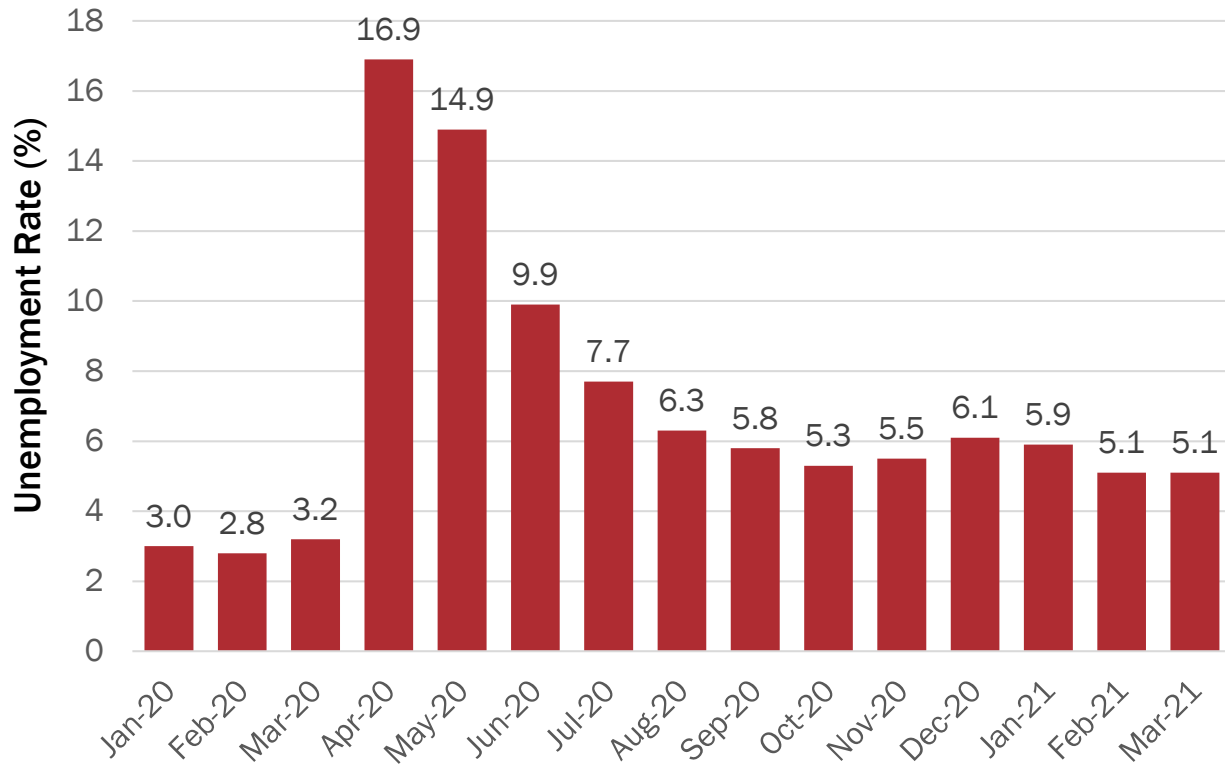


The unemployment rate, which measures the percentage of the workforce that is looking for work, was 5.1% in Kalamazoo County in March. This was 0.1 percentage points lower than for west Michigan and also 0.1 percentage points lower than for the State of Michigan.

SOURCE: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics & Upjohn Institute, 2021

“West Michigan” includes Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, Ottawa, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties.

Unemployment Rate Kalamazoo County (not seasonally adjusted)



SOURCE: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics & Upjohn Institute, 2021

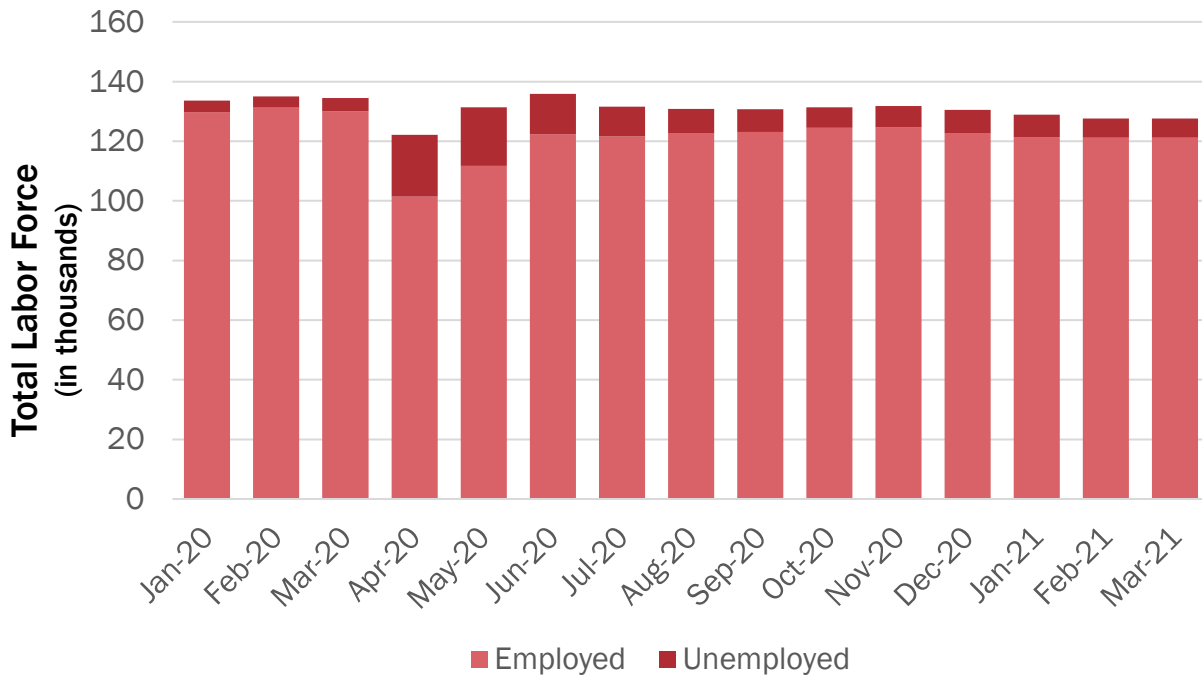
From February, the unemployment rate in Kalamazoo County did not change in March. The March unemployment rate is 1.9 percentage points higher than it was at the same time last year.

In March, there were **2.5 job seekers** for every **1 job posting*** in Kalamazoo County.

SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, BLS LAUS, & Upjohn Institute, 2021

*Burning Glass data only capture jobs that are posted online and in more traditional employment relationships. Singular job postings for multiple positions may not be fully counted.

Total Labor Force Kalamazoo County (not seasonally adjusted)



SOURCE: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics & Upjohn Institute, 2021

The total labor force in Kalamazoo County in March stood at 127,663, an increase of 52 people from February. The total labor force in Kalamazoo County has shrunk by 5.0% since March 2020, when it stood at 134,435. This indicates a decrease in the available labor for firms in the area.

Labor Force by the Numbers, Q3 2020 Kalamazoo County

- 27.9%** Percentage of workers 25 years or older with a bachelor's degree or advanced degree
- 33.5%** Percentage of workers 25 years or older with an associate degree or some college
- 63.5%** Percentage of workers aged 25–54 years

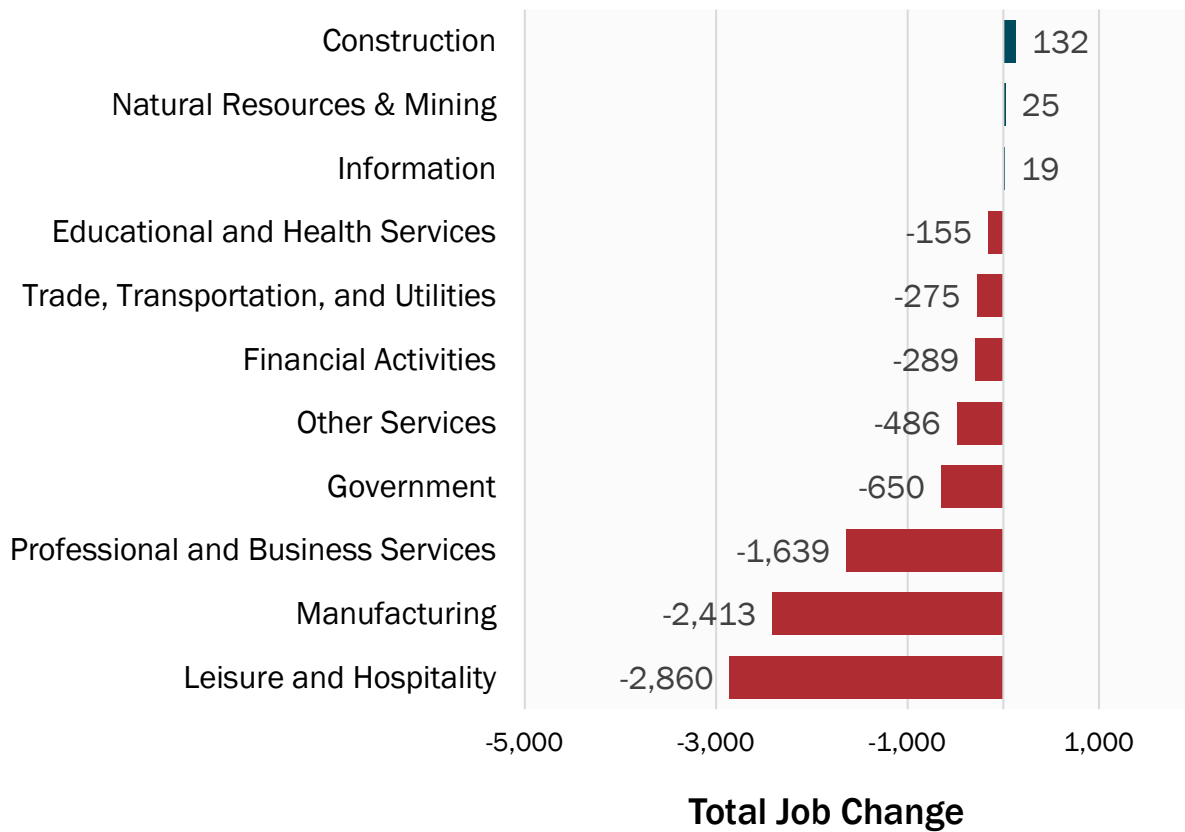
SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2020

Employment by Industry Kalamazoo County (not seasonally adjusted)

Measure	Q3 2020	Q2 2020	% Change Q2 to Q3	Q3 2019	% Change Q3 to Q3
Employment (by place of work)					
Total Private Sector Employment	100,269	92,491	8.4%	108,156	-7.3%
Goods-Producing	24,952	24,389	2.3%	27,209	-8.3%
Natural Resources & Mining	1,289	1,646	-21.7%	1,264	2.0%
Construction	5,949	4,913	21.1%	5,817	2.3%
Manufacturing	17,715	17,830	-0.6%	20,128	-12.0%
Private Service-Providing	75,316	68,102	10.6%	80,946	-7.0%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	21,136	18,677	13.2%	21,411	-1.3%
Information	566	578	-2.1%	547	3.5%
Financial Activities	7,356	7,268	1.2%	7,645	-3.8%
Professional and Business Services	10,520	9,364	12.3%	12,159	-13.5%
Educational and Health Services	21,537	20,688	4.1%	21,692	-0.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	10,775	8,277	30.2%	13,635	-21.0%
Other Services	3,222	3,082	4.5%	3,708	-13.1%
Unclassified	206	167	23.4%	149	38.0%
Government	11,790	12,916	-8.7%	12,440	-5.2%

SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages & Upjohn Institute, 2021

Employment Change, Q3 2019 to Q3 2020 Kalamazoo County (not seasonally adjusted)



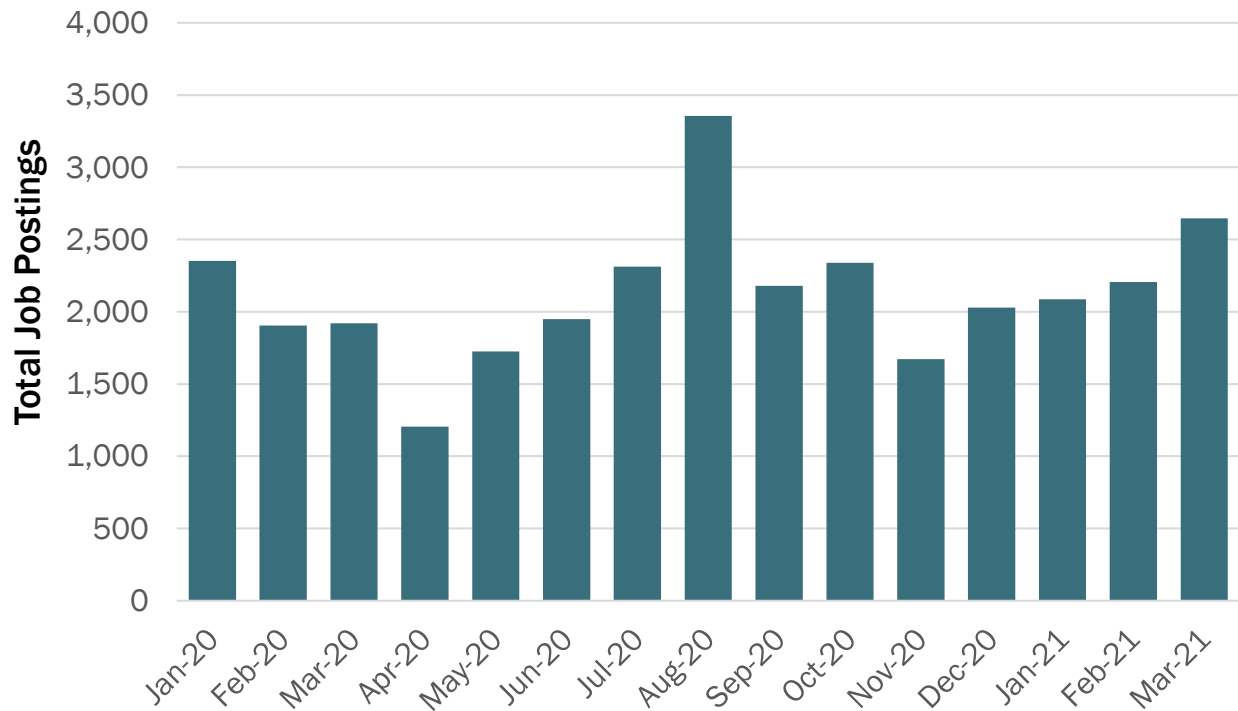
SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages & Upjohn Institute, 2020

The most recent data shows that the greatest decrease in employment in Kalamazoo County from Q3 2019 to Q3 2020 was in Leisure and Hospitality, which declined by 2,860 jobs, or 21.0%. The greatest increase in employment from Q3 2019 to Q3 2020 was in Construction, which grew by 132 jobs, or 2.3%.

The average weekly wage for nonfarm jobs in Q3 2020 in Kalamazoo County was **\$1,052.**

SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2021

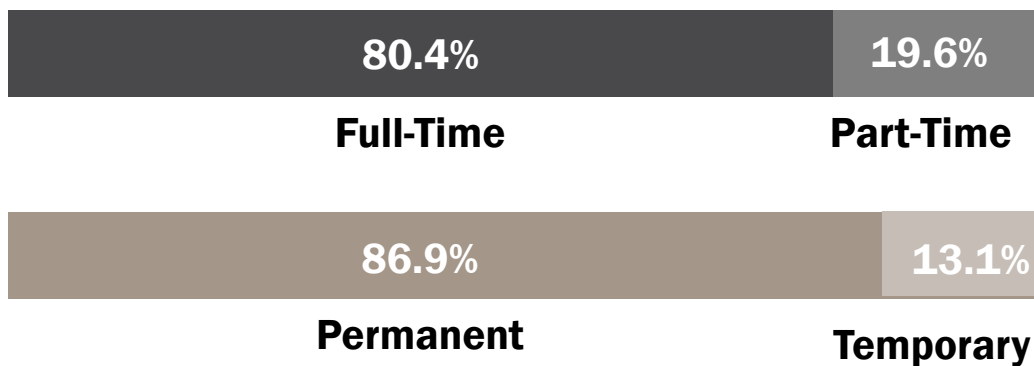
Total Job Postings, April 2021 Kalamazoo County



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

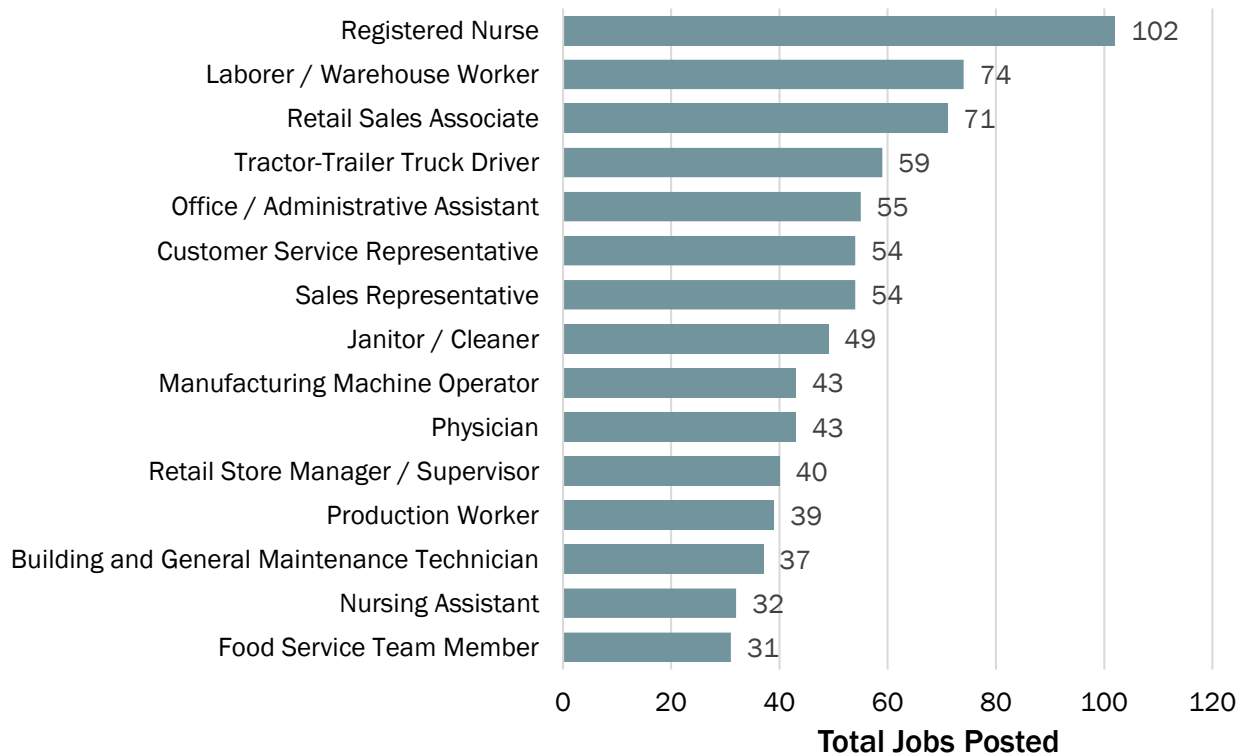
The number of job postings in Kalamazoo County, which demonstrates demand for labor, increased by 19.9% between February and March, from 2,206 postings to 2,646. The majority of postings in Kalamazoo County, as reported through Burning Glass Technologies, were for full-time and permanent positions.

Type of Job Postings, April 2021 Kalamazoo County



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

Top Occupations for Job Postings, April 2021 Kalamazoo County



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

The top occupations with job postings were for registered nurses, laborers/warehouse workers, and retail sales associates. Nearly half of job postings, 42.2%, required at a minimum a high school diploma or vocational training. This is an increase from February of 2.8 percentage points in the proportion of job postings requiring a high school diploma or vocational training. The proportion of jobs requiring an associate degree decreased by 1.4 percentage points from February, and the proportion requiring a bachelor's degree or higher decreased by 1.4 percentage points.

42.2% of job postings in March required a high school diploma or vocational training.

12.6% of job postings in March required an associate degree.

45.2% of job postings in March required a bachelor's degree or higher.

SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

About the Upjohn Institute

The W.E. Upjohn Unemployment Trustee Corporation was incorporated on October 24, 1932, as a Michigan 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, and is doing business as the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. The W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research has been conducting economic research and consultation for 75 years, since its founding in 1945.

The Upjohn Institute is governed by a Board of Trustees, which employs a President who is responsible for the overall operation of the Institute. The President of the Upjohn Institute is Dr. Michael Horrigan.

The Upjohn Institute currently employs 104 individuals. Upjohn's research and consultation program is conducted by a resident staff of professional social scientists, 12 of whom are PhD-level economists (senior staff). Senior staff is supported by a staff of research analysts and additional support staff. Upjohn also administers the federal and state employment programs for its four-county area through the local Workforce Investment Board. As well, Upjohn publishes books on economic development, workforce development, and other employment-related topics.

The PhD-level economists have more than 175 years of collective experience, conducting research on a broad variety of economic and employment topics. Their experience includes, but is not limited to, employment program evaluation, labor market dynamics, labor-management relations, employment and training programs, economic and workforce development, income replacement policy, worker adjustment, the role of education in labor markets, employment and compensation, disability, international comparison of labor adjustment policies, site selection experience, and state, regional, and local economic analysis.

About the Regional Team

The Upjohn Institute also has a Regional Economic Planning Services team of specialists who provide economic insights and analysis regionally and statewide in Michigan, in other individual states, and nationally. The team has experience in:

- Economic impact analysis
- Fiscal/cost-benefit impact analysis
- Labor market analysis
- Facilitating and conducting effective one-on-one interviews, focus groups, workshops, and charrette sessions in a diverse array of environments
- Economic and workforce development and education strategies
- GIS mapping abilities
- Rural and urban land use and economic development planning services
- Regional data analysis

Report Contributors

Jim Robey

Director, Regional Economic Planning Services

Kathleen Bolter

Regional Research Analyst

Gerrit Anderson

Mapping and Visualization Specialist

Emily Boyle

Editor

For More Information

For questions or information about this report, contact Jim Robey, Director of Regional Economic Planning Services, 269-365-0450, or jrobey@upjohn.org.

For definitions and descriptions of methodology and variables used in the report, please access our data dictionary at: http://www.upjohn.org/Business_Outlook/Data_Dictionary/.