



# *Regional Economic Trends* for Kalamazoo County



OCTOBER 2021

# KALAMAZOO COUNTY

**The Trend:** Kalamazoo County lost nearly 1,400 jobs from Q4 2020 to Q1 2021. Between June and July, the unemployment rate, labor force participation rate, and employment-to-population ratio all fell slightly. This is likely a sign that unemployed individuals are leaving the labor force. Job postings were higher in July than in June, with retail sales associate as the most in-demand job.

## COUNTY UPDATE



The labor force participation rate was 60.2% in July. This is a 0.5 percentage-point decrease from the previous month.



The employment-to-population ratio was 57.1% in July. This is a decrease of 0.3 percentage points from the previous month.



The unemployment rate was 5.1% in July. This is a 0.2 percentage-point decrease from the previous month.



The total labor force saw a decrease of 891 people from June to July. The decrease in employed people was 593, and the decrease in unemployed people was 298.



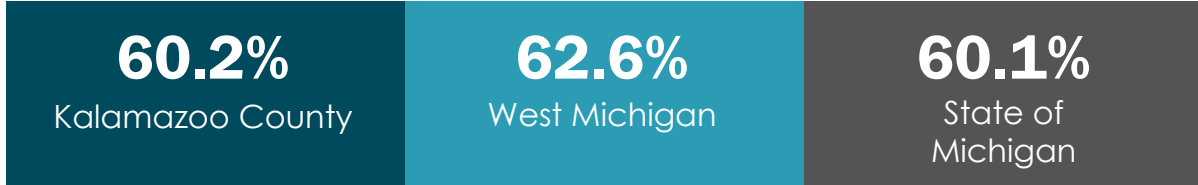
Total employment fell by 1.4% from Q4 2020 to Q1 2021.



There were 2,811 job postings in July, an increase of 2.8% from June.

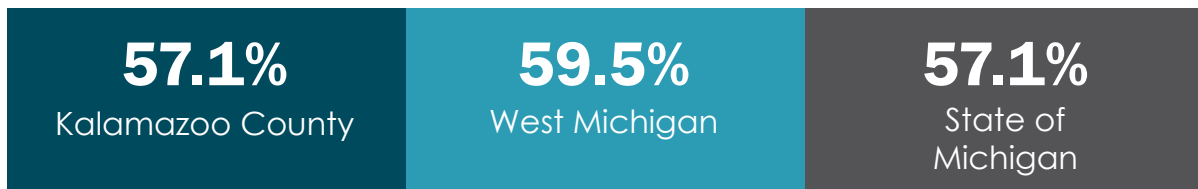
# KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## Labor Force Participation Rate



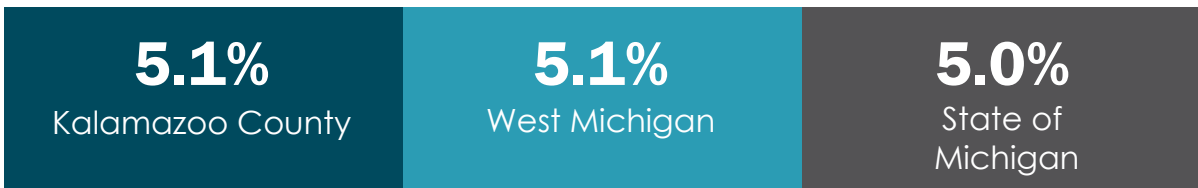
The labor force participation rate, which measures the economy's active workforce, was 60.2% in Kalamazoo County in July. This was lower than the rate for west Michigan by 2.4 percentage points, and higher than that of the state of Michigan by 0.1 percentage points.

## Employment-to-Population Ratio



The employment-to-population ratio, which measures the proportion of the population that is employed, was 57.1% for Kalamazoo County in July. This was 2.4 percentage points below the ratio for west Michigan and the same as that of the state of Michigan.

## Unemployment Rate

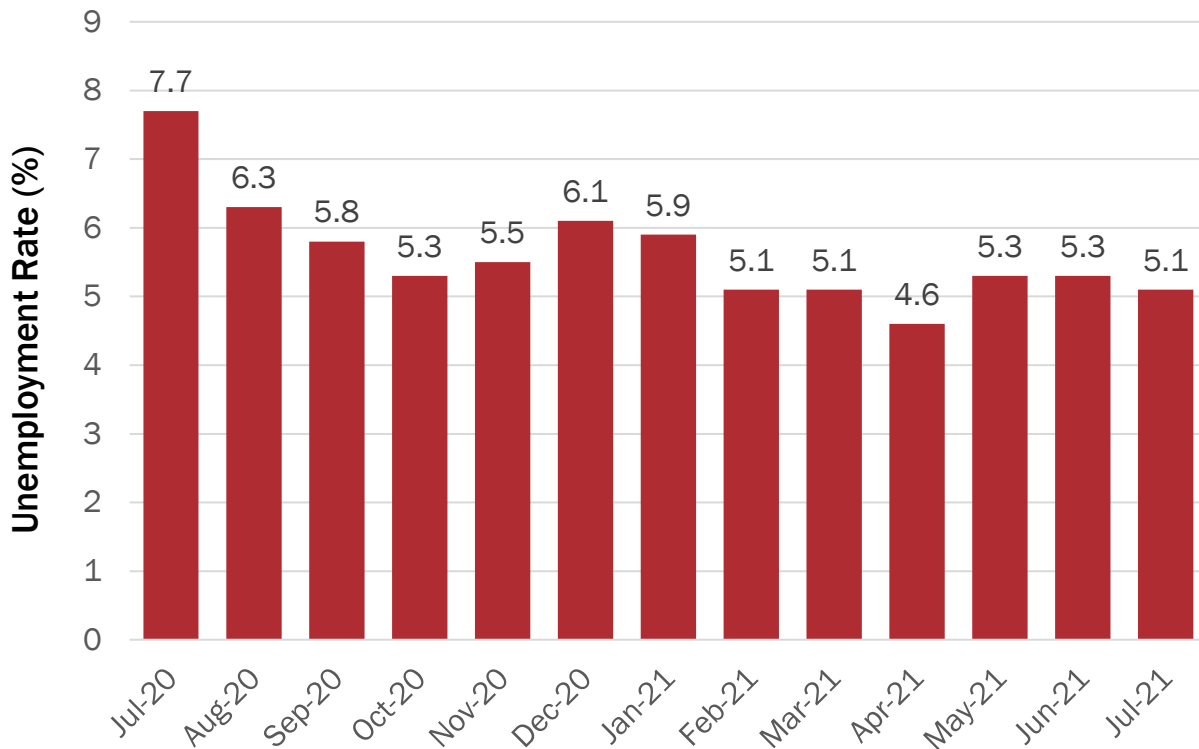


The unemployment rate, which measures the percentage of the workforce that is looking for work, was 5.1% in Kalamazoo County in July. This was the same as the rate for west Michigan and 0.1 percentage points higher than the rate for the state of Michigan.

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 (not seasonally adjusted)



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

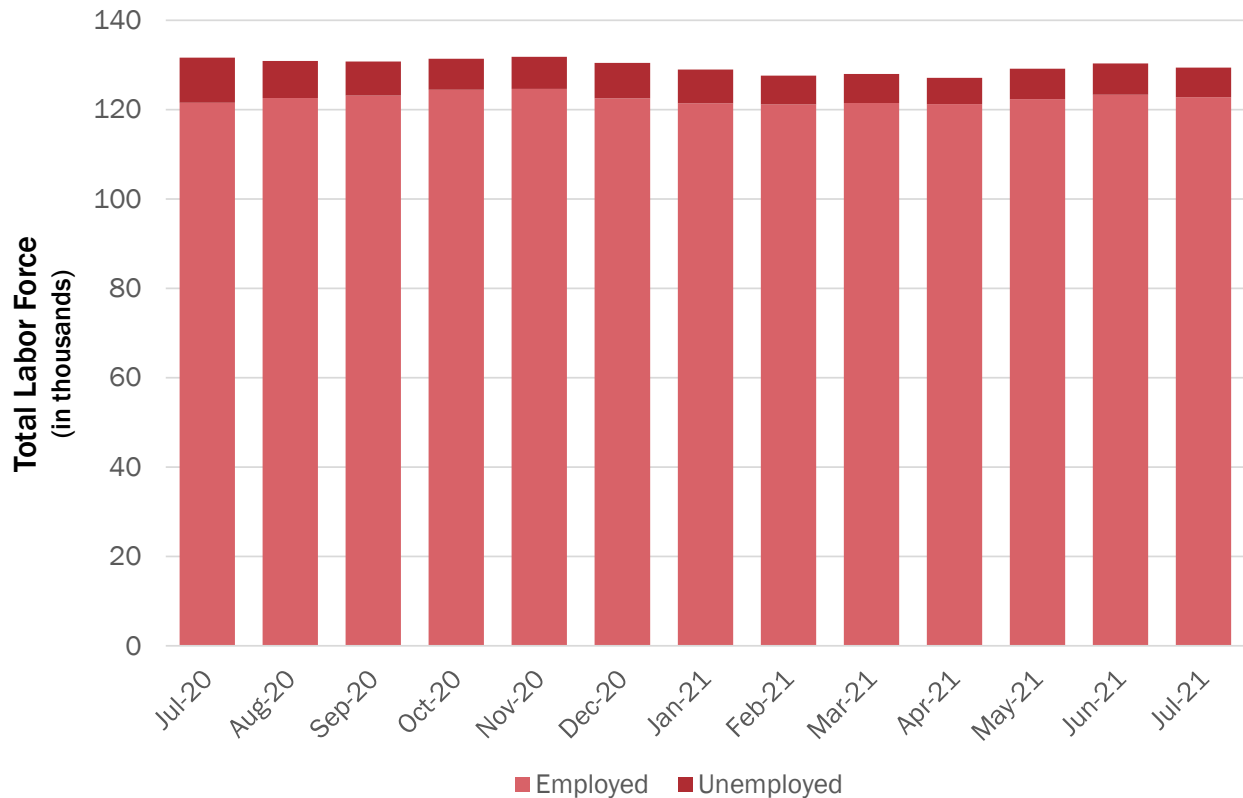
From June to July, the unemployment rate in Kalamazoo County decreased by 0.2 percentage points, to 5.1 percent. The unemployment rate for July was 2.6 percentage points lower than it was at the same time last year.

In July, there were **2.4 job seekers** for every **job posting** in Kalamazoo County.\*

—Burning Glass Technologies, BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics (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 (not seasonally adjusted)



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

The total labor force in Kalamazoo County in July stood at 129,413, a decrease of 891 people from the June labor force of 130,304. The total labor force in the county has shrunk by 1.2% since July 2020, when it stood at 131,642. This indicates a decrease in the available labor for firms in the area.

## Labor Force by the Numbers, Q3 2020

- 19.8%** Percentage of workers 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or advanced degree
- 35.1%** Percentage of workers 25 and older with an associate degree or some college
- 33.4%** Percentage of workers 25 and older with a high school degree or equivalent

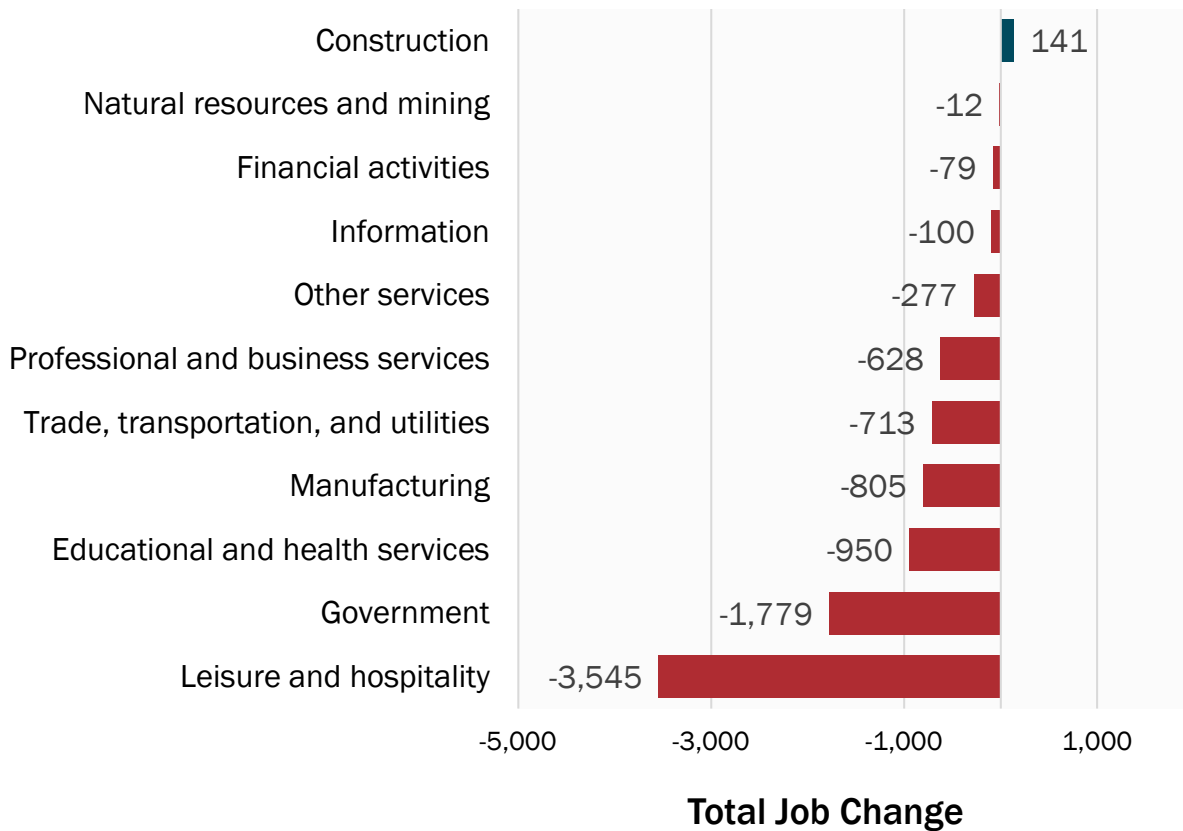
SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2020

## Employment by Industry (not seasonally adjusted)

Measure	Q1 2021	Q4 2020	% Change Q4 to Q1	Q1 2020	% Change Q1 to Q1
<b>Employment (by place of work)</b>					
Total private sector employment	100,925	102,319	-1.4	107,906	-6.5
Goods-producing	26,119	25,932	0.7	26,795	-2.5
Natural resources and mining	1,473	1,246	18.2	1,485	-0.8
Construction	5,543	6,062	-8.6	5,402	2.6
Manufacturing	19,103	18,624	2.6	19,908	-4.0
Private service-providing	74,806	76,387	-2.1	81,111	-7.8
Trade, transportation, and utilities	20,622	21,453	-3.9	21,335	-3.3
Information	535	546	-2.0	635	-15.7
Financial activities	7,253	7,320	-0.9	7,332	-1.1
Professional and business services	11,102	11,089	0.1	11,730	-5.4
Educational and health services	22,212	22,140	0.3	23,162	-4.1
Leisure and hospitality	9,522	10,245	-7.1	13,067	-27.1
Other services	3,395	3,374	0.6	3,672	-7.5
Unclassified	165	220	-25.0	178	-7.3
Government	11,540	11,804	-2.2	13,319	-13.4

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

## Employment Change, Q1 2020 to Q1 2021 (not seasonally adjusted)



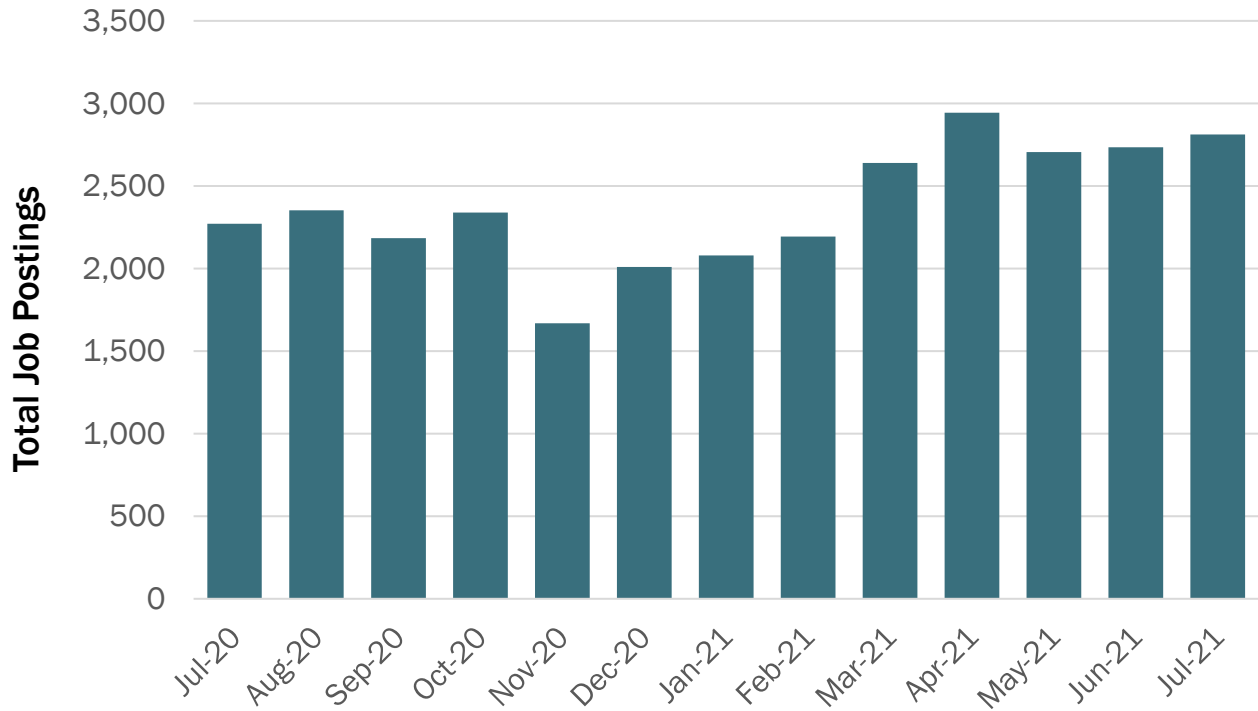
SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages & Upjohn Institute, 2020

The most recent data shows that the greatest decrease in employment in Kalamazoo County from Q1 2020 to Q1 2021 occurred in leisure and hospitality services, which declined by 3,545 jobs, or 27.1%. The greatest increase in employment from Q1 2020 to Q1 2021 in the county was in construction, which grew by 141 jobs, or 2.6%.

**The average weekly wage for nonfarm jobs in Kalamazoo County in Q1 2021 was \$1,122.**

SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2021

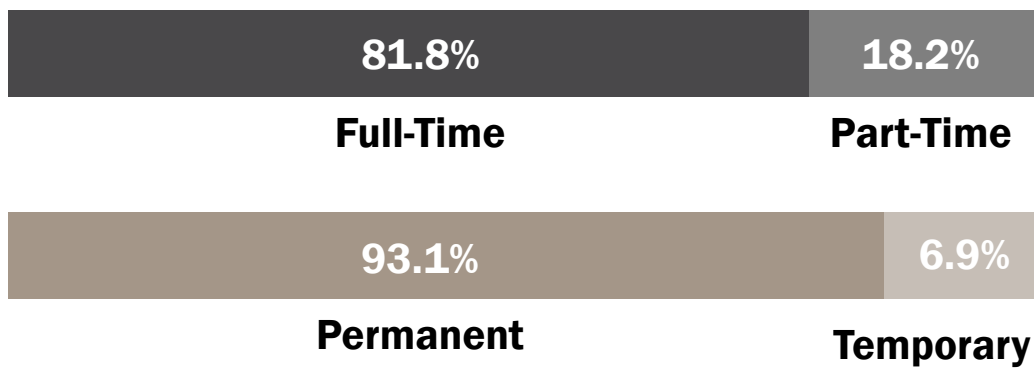
## Total Job Postings for July 2021



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

The number of job postings in Kalamazoo County, which demonstrates demand for labor, increased by 2.8% between June and July, from 2,734 postings to 2,811. The majority of postings in Kalamazoo County, as reported through Burning Glass Technologies, were for full-time and permanent positions.

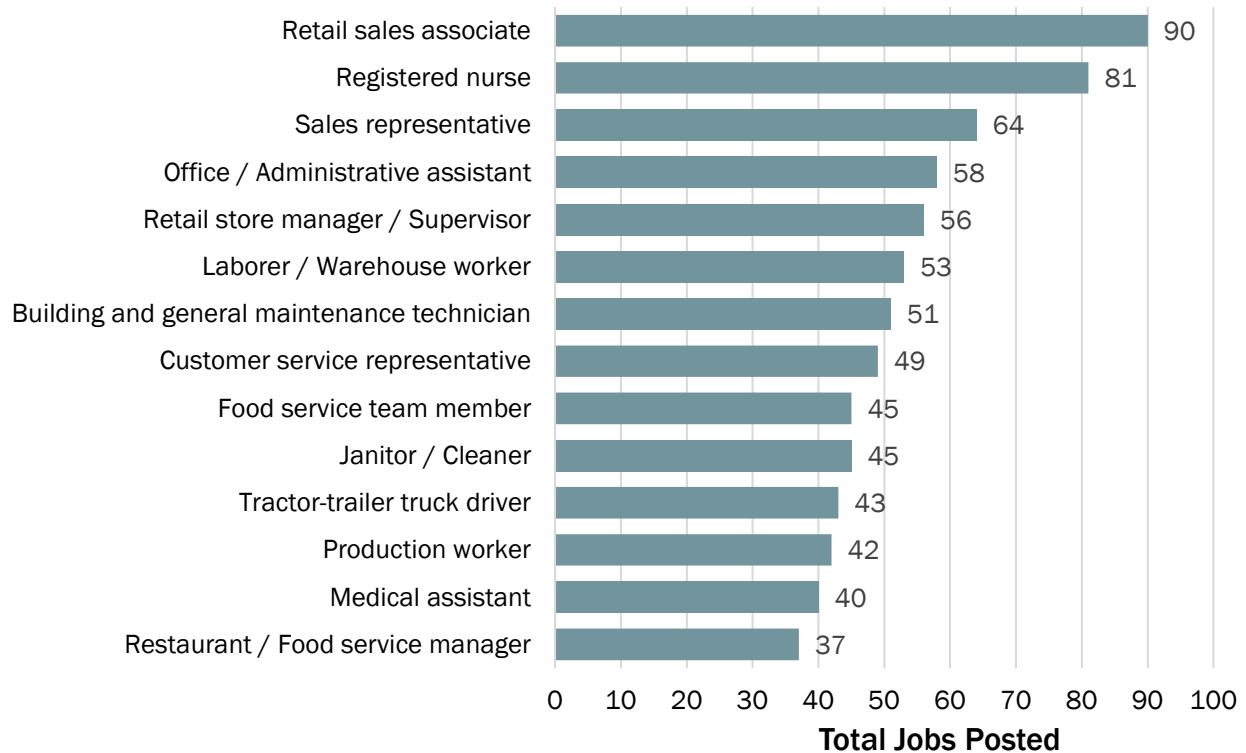
## Types of Job Postings for July 2021



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021



## Top Occupations with Job Postings for July 2021



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

The top occupations with job postings were for retail sales, registered nurses, and sales representatives. A plurality of job postings, 44.0%, required at minimum a bachelor's degree. This is an increase of 4.8 percentage points from June in the proportion of job postings requiring a bachelor's degree or higher. The proportion of jobs requiring an associate degree decreased by 1.3 percentage points from June, and the proportion of jobs requiring a high school degree or vocational training decreased by 3.5 percentage points.

**43.2%** of job postings in July required a high school diploma or vocational training.

**12.9%** of job postings in July required an associate degree.

**44.0%** of job postings in July 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. Upjohn also 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

**Brian Pittelko**

Research Coordinator

**Kathleen Bolter**

Regional Research Analyst

**Gerrit Anderson**

Mapping and Visualization Specialist

**Ben Jones**

Editor

**Erika Jones**

Production Coordinator

---

## For More Information

For questions or information about this report, contact Brian Pittelko, Research Coordinator, 269-385-0424 or [pittelko@upjohn.org](mailto:pittelko@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/](http://www.upjohn.org/Business_Outlook/Data_Dictionary/).