



# ***Regional Economic Trends for Branch County***



**FEBRUARY 2022**

# BRANCH COUNTY

**The Trend:** Branch County employment grew, with an increase of 201 jobs from Q1 2021 to Q2 2021. Between October and November, the unemployment rate and the labor force participation rate fell, while the employment-to-population ratio rose. This is likely a sign that unemployed individuals are either finding work or leaving the labor market entirely. Job postings were lower in November than in October, with truck driver as the most in-demand job.

## COUNTY UPDATE



The labor force participation rate was 55.1% in November. This is a 0.1 percentage point decrease from the previous month.



The employment-to-population ratio was 52.9% in November. This is a 0.1 percentage point increase from the previous month.



The unemployment rate was 4.0% in November. This is a 0.4 percentage point decrease from the previous month.



The total labor force saw a decrease of 25 people from October to November. The number of employed people increased by 57, and the number of unemployed people decreased by 82.



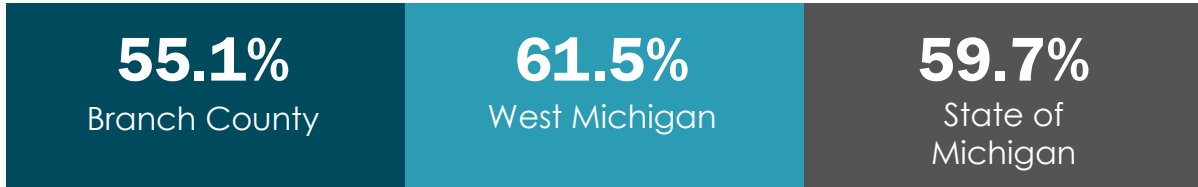
Total employment increased by 2.3% from Q1 2021 to Q2 2021.



There were 178 job postings in November, a decrease of 6.3% from October.

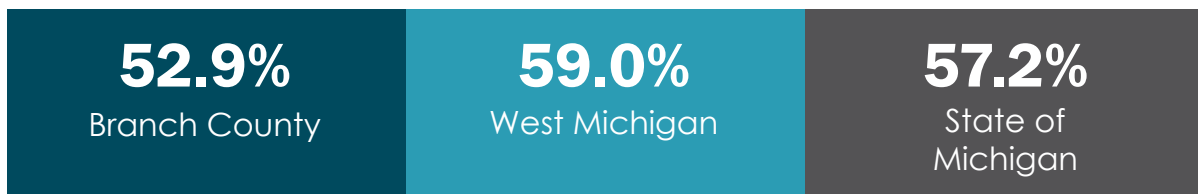
# KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## Labor Force Participation Rate



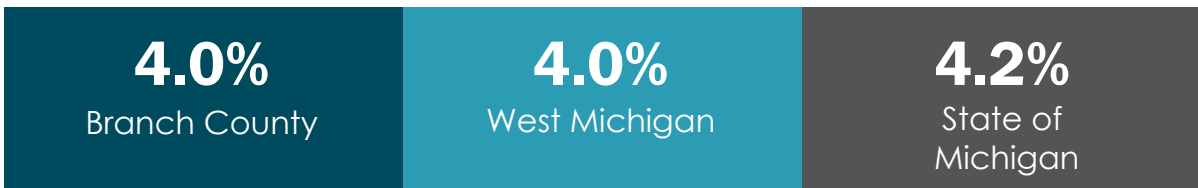
The labor force participation rate, which measures the economy's active workforce, was 55.1% in Branch County in November. This was lower than the rate for west Michigan by 6.4 percentage points, and lower than that of the state of Michigan by 4.6 percentage points.

## Employment-to-Population Ratio



The employment-to-population ratio, which measures the proportion of the population that is employed, was 52.9% for Branch County in November. This was 6.1 percentage points below the ratio for west Michigan and 4.3 percentage points lower than that of the state of Michigan.

## Unemployment Rate

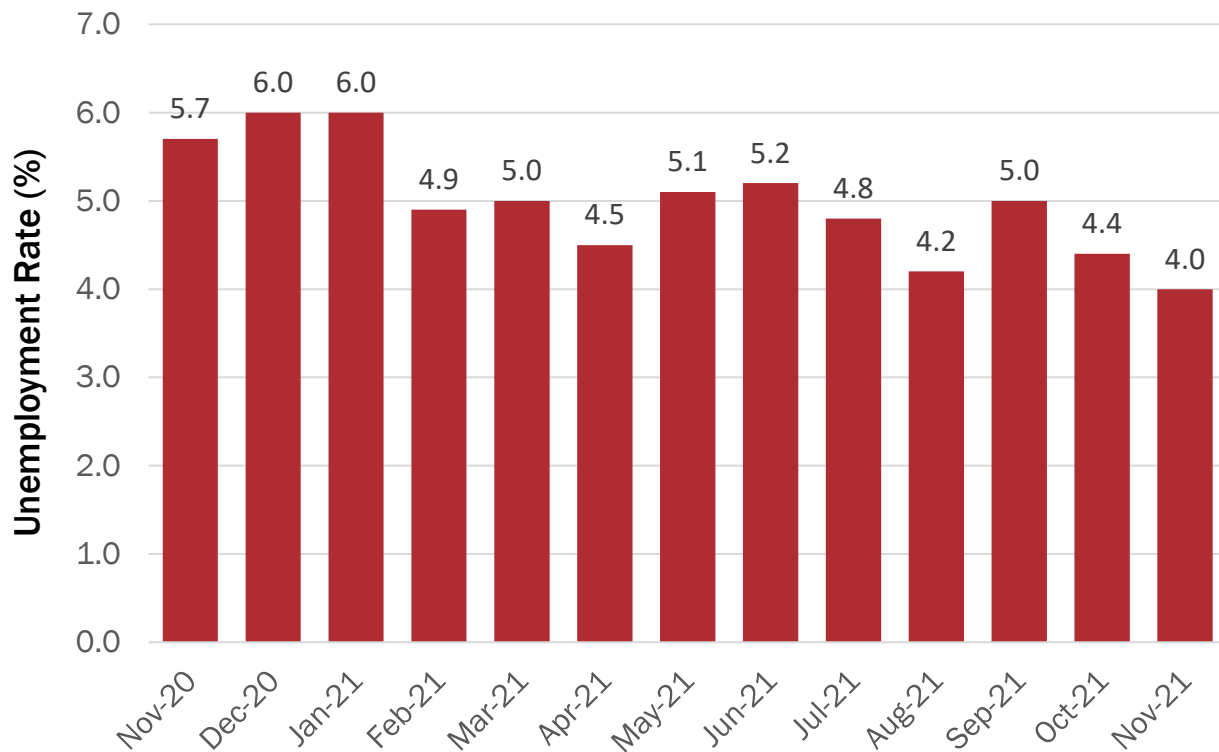


The unemployment rate, which measures the percentage of the workforce that is looking for work, was 4.0% for Branch County in November. This was the same as the rate for west Michigan and 0.2 percentage points lower than that of the state of Michigan.

SOURCE: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) & 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 October to November, the unemployment rate in Branch County decreased by 0.4 percentage points, to 4.0 percent. The unemployment rate for November is 1.7 percentage points lower than it was at the same time a year earlier.

In November, there were **4.2 job seekers** for every **job posting** in Branch County.\*

—Burning Glass Technologies, BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), & Upjohn Institute, 2021

\*Burning Glass data capture only 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 (LAUS) & Upjohn Institute, 2021

The total labor force in Branch County in November stood at 19,058, a decrease of 25 people from the October labor force of 19,083. The labor force in Branch County has shrunk by 3.0% since November 2020, when it stood at 19,653. This indicates a decrease in the available labor for firms in the area.

## Labor Force by the Numbers, Q2 2021

- 20.0%** Percentage of workers 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or advanced degree
- 34.8%** Percentage of workers 25 and older with an associate degree or some college
- 33.2%** Percentage of workers 25 and older with a high school degree or equivalent

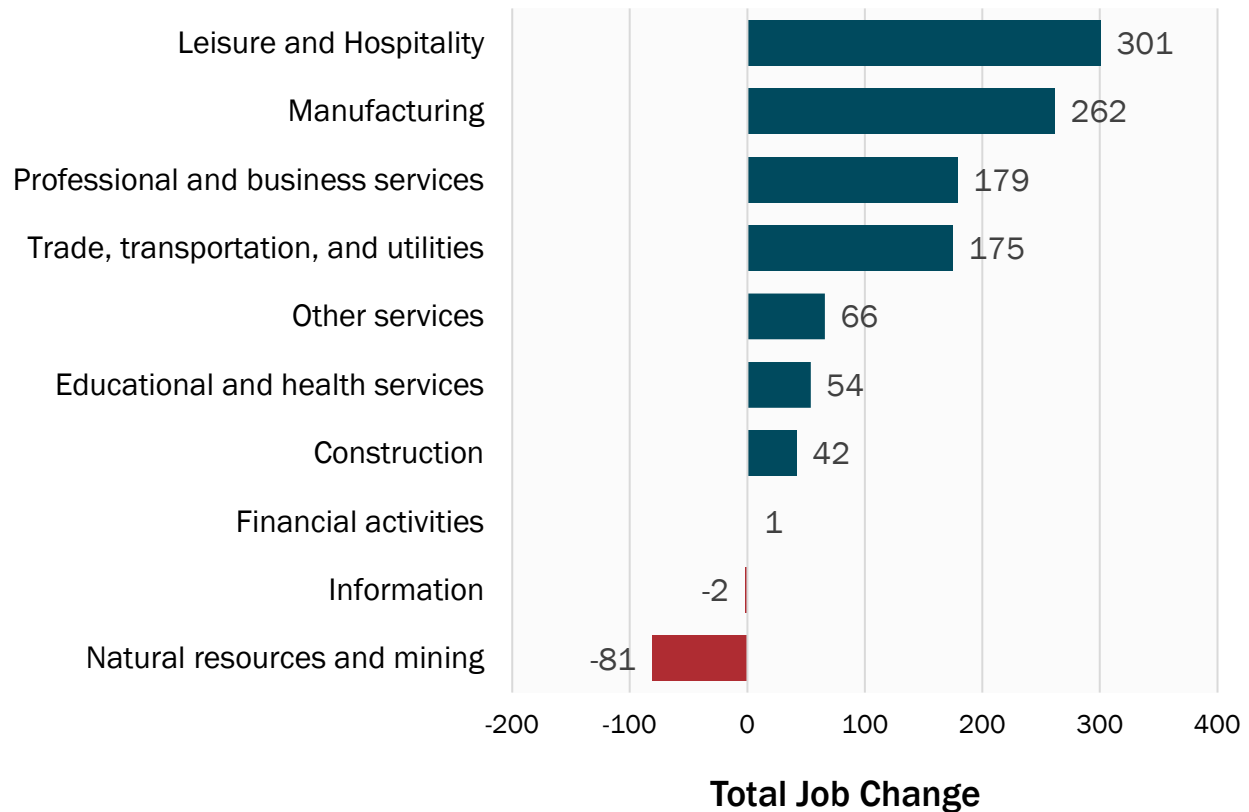
SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2021

## Employment by Industry (not seasonally adjusted)

Measure	Q2 2021	Q1 2021	% Change Q1 to Q2	Q2 2020	% Change Q2 to Q2
<b>Employment (by place of work)</b>					
Total private sector employment	11,271	11,070	1.8%	10,267	9.8%
Goods-producing	3,549	3,564	-0.4%	3,326	6.7%
Natural resources and mining	252	233	8.2%	333	-24.3%
Construction	420	399	5.3%	378	11.1%
Manufacturing	2,877	2,932	-1.9%	2,615	10.0%
Private service-providing	7,722	7,506	2.9%	6,941	11.3%
Trade, transportation, and utilities	3,644	3,726	-2.2%	3,469	5.0%
Information	103	94	9.6%	105	-1.9%
Financial activities	588	584	0.7%	587	0.2%
Professional and business services	588	533	10.3%	409	43.8%
Educational and health services	867	876	-1.0%	813	6.6%
Leisure and hospitality	1,638	1,425	14.9%	1,337	22.5%
Other services	269	247	8.9%	203	32.5%
Unclassified	25	21	19.0%	18	38.9%
Government	84	84	0.0%	89	-5.6%

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

## Employment Change, Q2 2020 to Q2 2021 (not seasonally adjusted)



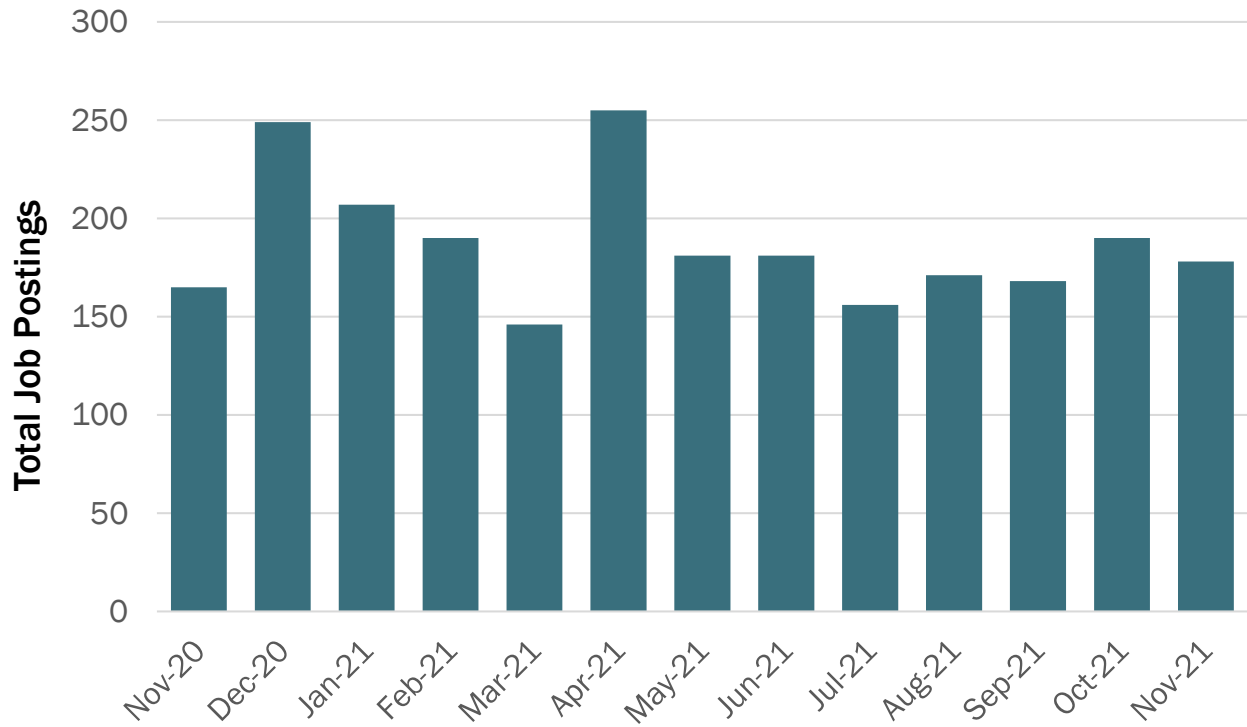
SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages & Upjohn Institute, 2021

The most recent data show that the greatest decrease in employment in Branch County from Q2 2020 to Q2 2021 occurred in natural resources and mining, which declined by 81 jobs, or 24.3%. The greatest increase in employment from Q2 2020 to Q2 2021 in the county was in leisure and hospitality, which grew by 301 jobs, or 22.5%.

**The average weekly wage for nonfarm jobs in Q2 2021 in Branch County was \$919.**

SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2021

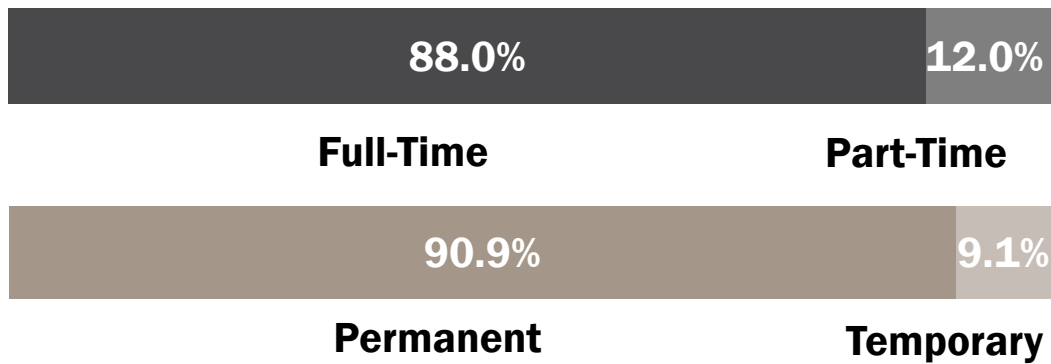
## Total Job Postings for November 2021



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

The number of job postings in Branch County, which demonstrates demand for labor, decreased by 6.3% between October and November, from 190 postings to 178. The majority of postings in the county, as reported through Burning Glass Technologies, were for full-time and permanent positions.

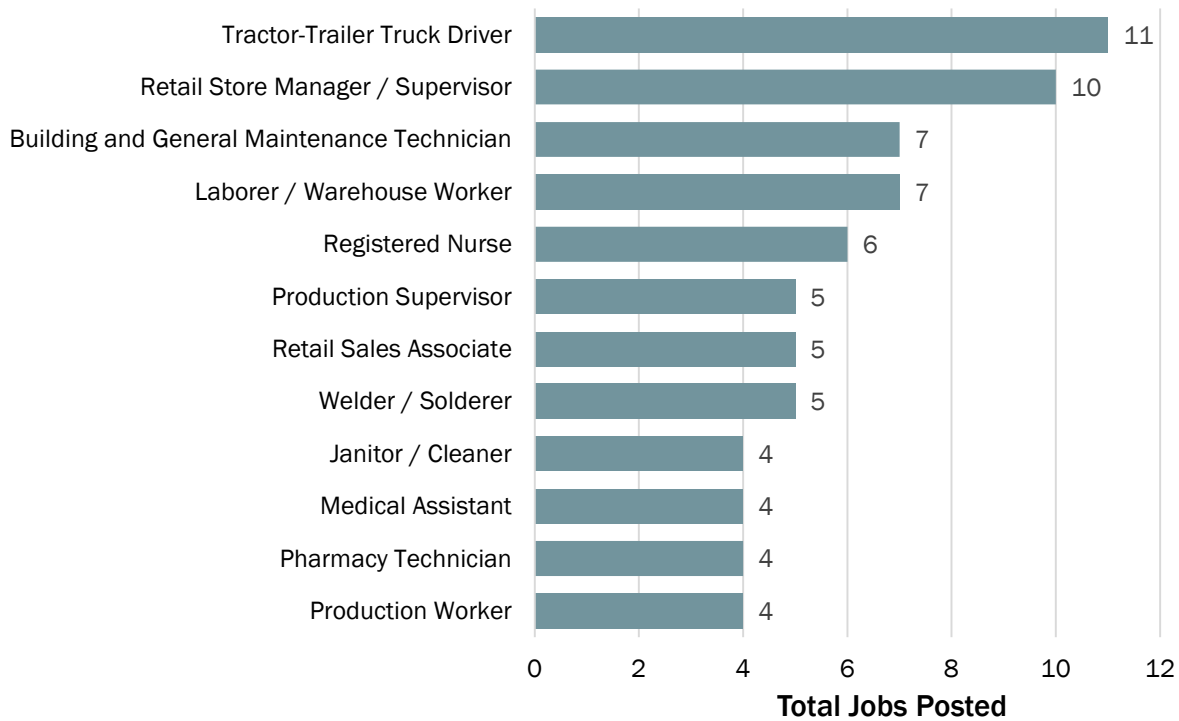
## Types of Job Postings for November 2021



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021



## Top Occupations with Job Postings for November 2021



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

The top occupation with job postings in November was truck driver, followed by retail manager. Building and maintenance technician was tied with laborer/warehouse worker for third. The majority of job postings, 62.6%, required no more than a high school diploma or vocational training. This is a decrease of 4.7 percentage points from October in the proportion of job postings requiring only a high school diploma or vocational training. The proportion of jobs requiring an associate degree increased by 6.5 percentage points from October, and the proportion of jobs requiring a bachelor's degree or higher decreased by 1.9 percentage points.

**62.6%** of job postings in October required only a high school diploma or vocational training.

**13.0%** of job postings in October required an associate degree.

**24.3%** of job postings in October required a bachelor's degree or higher.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100.0 because of rounding.

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.

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## 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

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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/).