



# *Regional Economic Trends*

*for Michigan Works! Southwest Region*



**JUNE 2021**

**W.E. UPJOHN  
INSTITUTE**  
FOR EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH

# MICHIGAN WORKS! SOUTHWEST REGION

**The Trend: The Michigan Works! Southwest Region continues to recover, gaining more than 14,000 jobs from Q2 2020 to Q3 2020. Between February and March 2021, the unemployment rate remained the same, while the labor force participation rate and the employment-to-population ratio both increased. This may be a positive sign, indicating that individuals are quickly finding work. Job postings were higher in March than in February as there were slightly more postings in Health Care and Social Assistance and Manufacturing.**

## REGION UPDATE



The labor force participation rate was 57.9% in March. This is a 0.1 percentage point increase from the previous month.



The employment-to-population ratio was 54.8% in March. This is also a 0.1 percentage point increase from the previous month.



The unemployment rate stood at 5.4% in March. This is a 0.0 percentage point shift, meaning no change from the previous month.



The total labor force saw an increase of 367 people from February to March. The total increase in employed people was 436, and the total increase in unemployed people was 69.



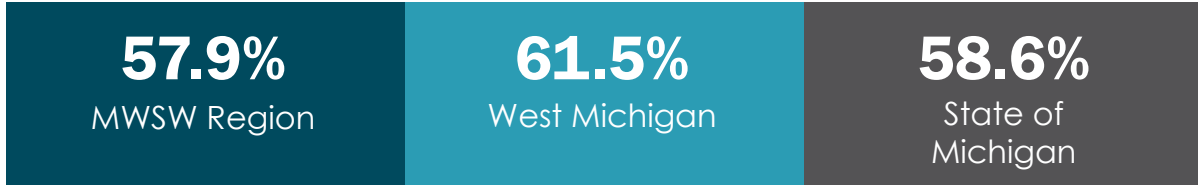
Total employment increased by 9.5% from Q2 to Q3 2020.



There were 4,565 job postings in March 2021, an increase of 22.8% from the previous month.

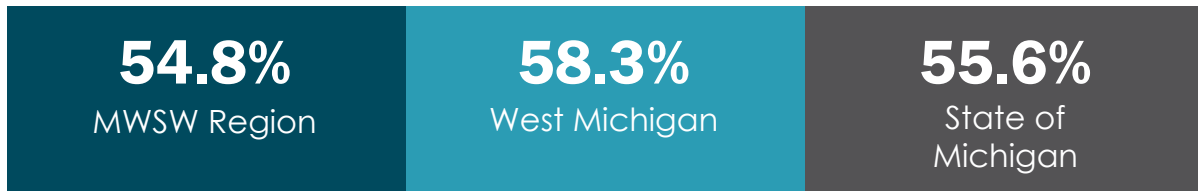
# KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## Labor Force Participation Rate



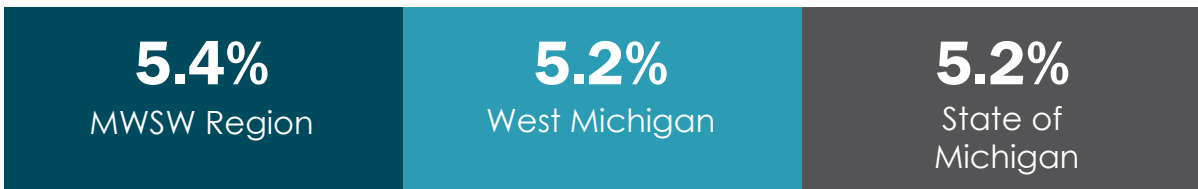
The labor force participation rate, which measures the economy's active workforce, stood at 57.9% in the Michigan Works! Southwest Region in March. This was lower than the rate for west Michigan by 3.6 percentage points, and lower than for the state of Michigan by 0.7 percentage points.

## Employment-to-Population Ratio



The employment-to-population ratio, which measures the proportion of the population that is employed, was 54.8% in the Michigan Works! Southwest Region in March. This was 3.5 percentage points below that of west Michigan and 0.8 percentage points lower than the rate for the state of Michigan.

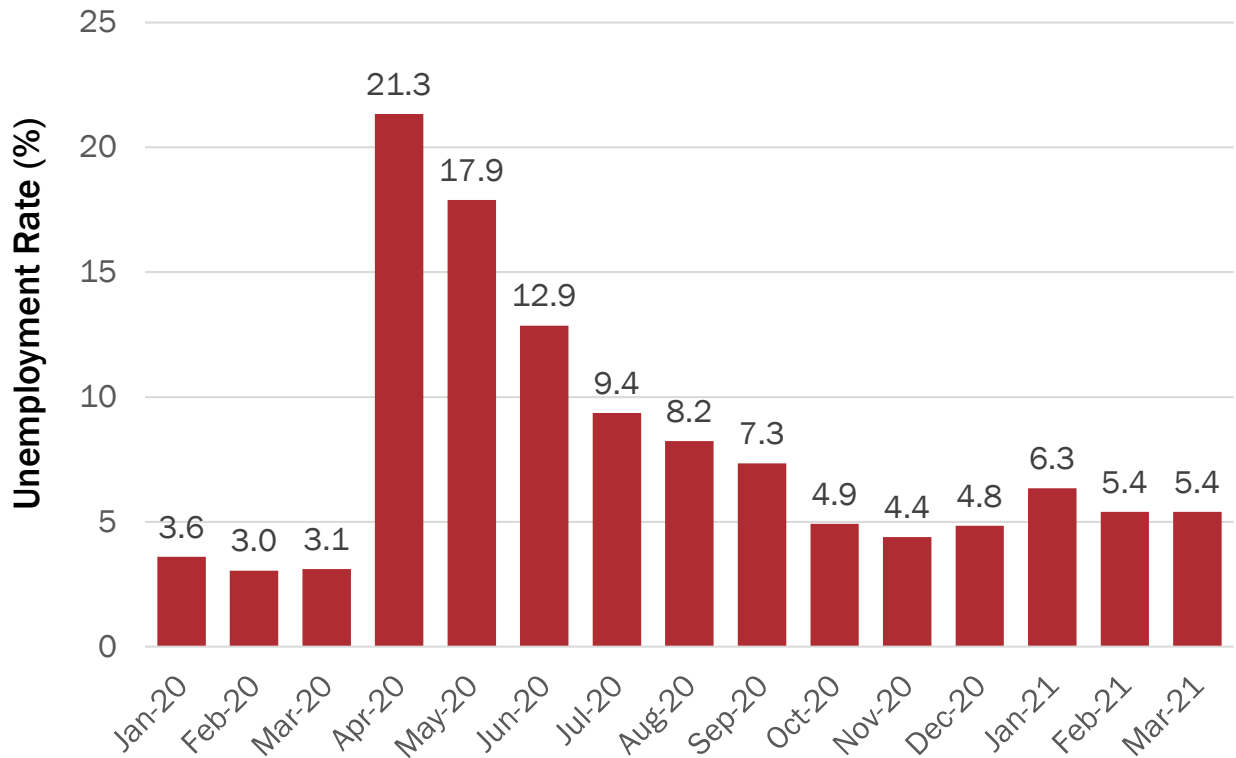
## Unemployment Rate



The unemployment rate, which measures the percentage of the workforce that is looking for work, was 5.4% in the Michigan Works! Southwest Region in March. This was 0.2 percentage points higher than in west Michigan and also 0.2 percentage points higher than in the state of Michigan.

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

## Unemployment Rate MWSW Region (not seasonally adjusted)



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

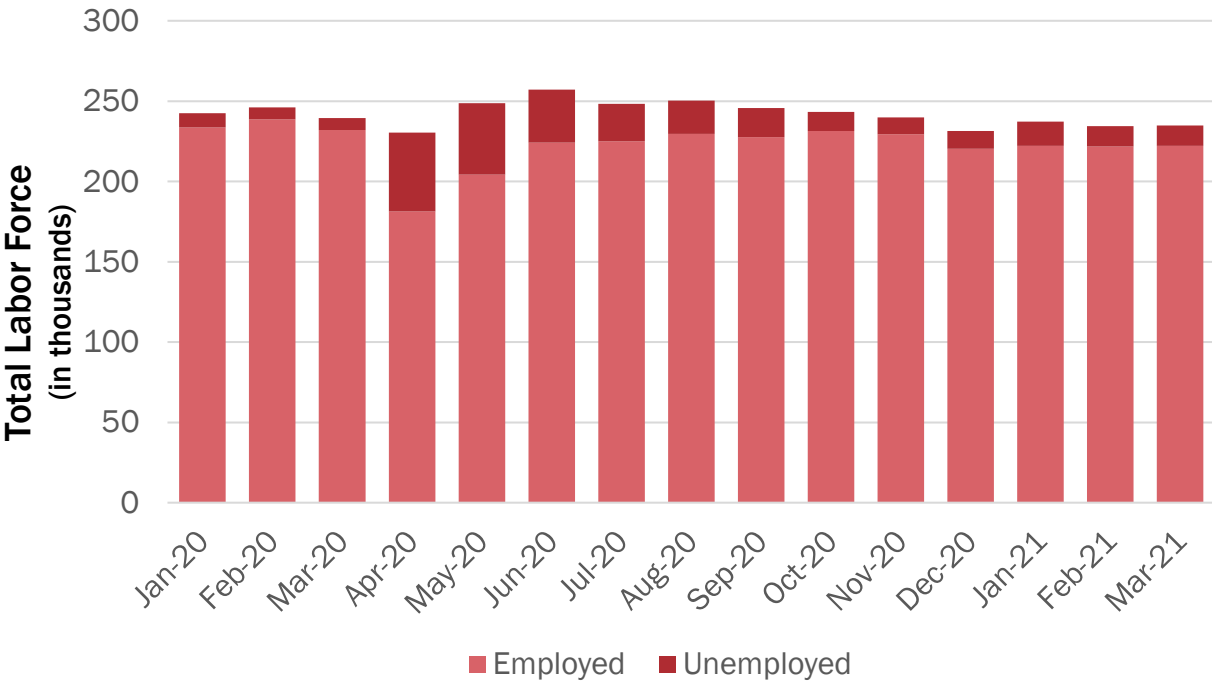
From February, the unemployment rate in the Michigan Works! Southwest Region remained the same in March, at 5.4%. The March unemployment rate is 1.8 percentage points higher than it was at the same time last year.

In March, there were **2.8 job seekers** for every **1 job posting\*** in the MWSW Region.

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 MWSW Region (not seasonally adjusted)



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

The total labor force in the Michigan Works! Southwest Region in March stood at 234,783, an increase of 367 people from February. The total labor force in the region has shrunk by 3.6% since March 2020, when it stood at 243,612. This indicates a decrease in the available labor for firms in the area.

## Labor Force by the Numbers, Q3 2020 MWSW Region

- 25.7%** Percentage of workers 25 years or older with a bachelor's degree or advanced degree
- 33.9%** 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

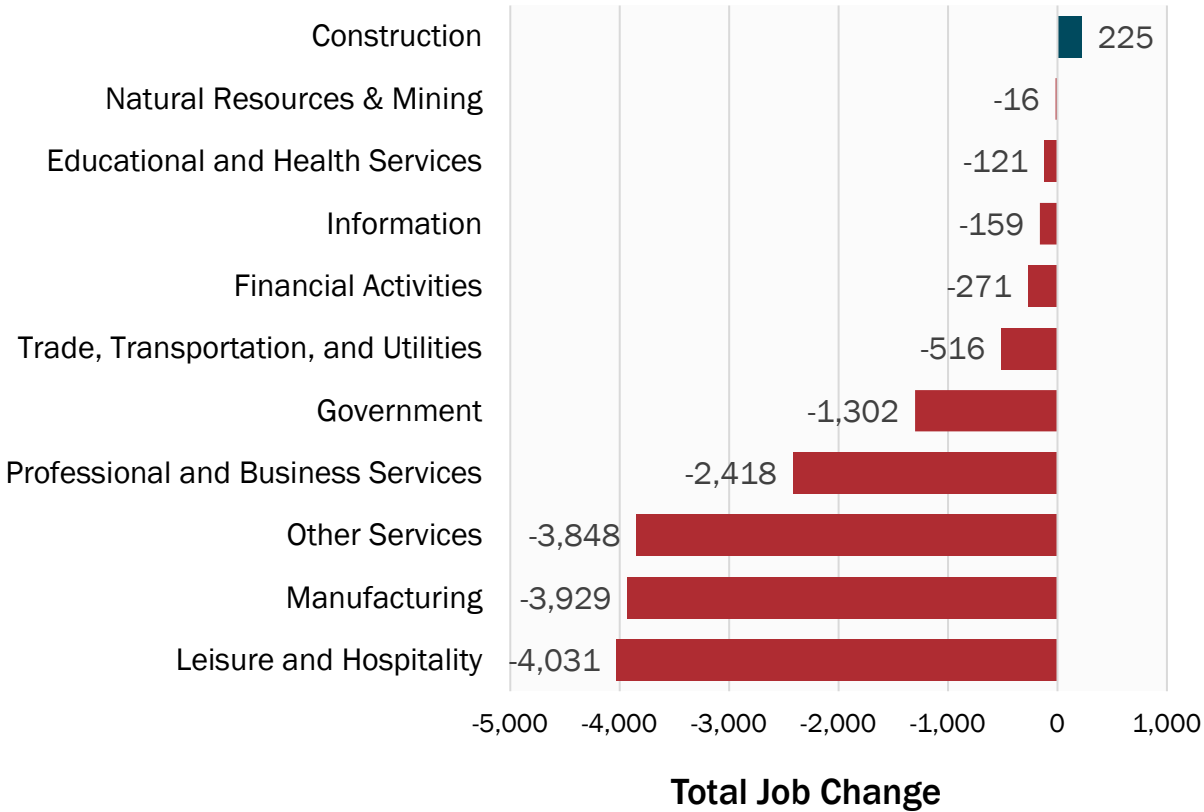
## Employment by Industry MWSW Region (not seasonally adjusted)

Measure	Q3 2020	Q2 2020	% Change, Q2 to Q3	Q3 2019	% Change, Q3 to Q3
<b>Employment (by place of work)</b>					
Total Private Sector Employment	169,766	154,981	9.5%	185,079	-8.3%
Goods-Producing	49,593	45,728	8.5%	53,312	-7.0%
Natural Resources & Mining	2,582	2,747	-6.0%	2,598	-0.6%
Construction	8,766	7,136	22.8%	8,540	2.6%
Manufacturing	38,245	35,845	6.7%	42,174	-9.3%
Private Service-Providing	120,173	109,253	10.0%	131,767	-8.8%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	36,048	32,707	10.2%	36,564	-1.4%
Information	897	945	-5.0%	1,057	-15.1%
Financial Activities	9,554	9,416	1.5%	9,825	-2.8%
Professional and Business Services	16,234	14,842	9.4%	18,652	-13.0%
Educational and Health Services	34,339	32,812	4.7%	34,460	-0.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	17,277	13,211	30.8%	21,308	-18.9%
Other Services	5,484	5,037	8.9%	9,332	-41.2%
Unclassified	340	284	19.7%	569	-40.2%
Government	23,729	25,014	-5.1%	25,031	-5.2%

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



## Employment Change Q3 2019 to Q3 2020 MWSW Region (not seasonally adjusted)



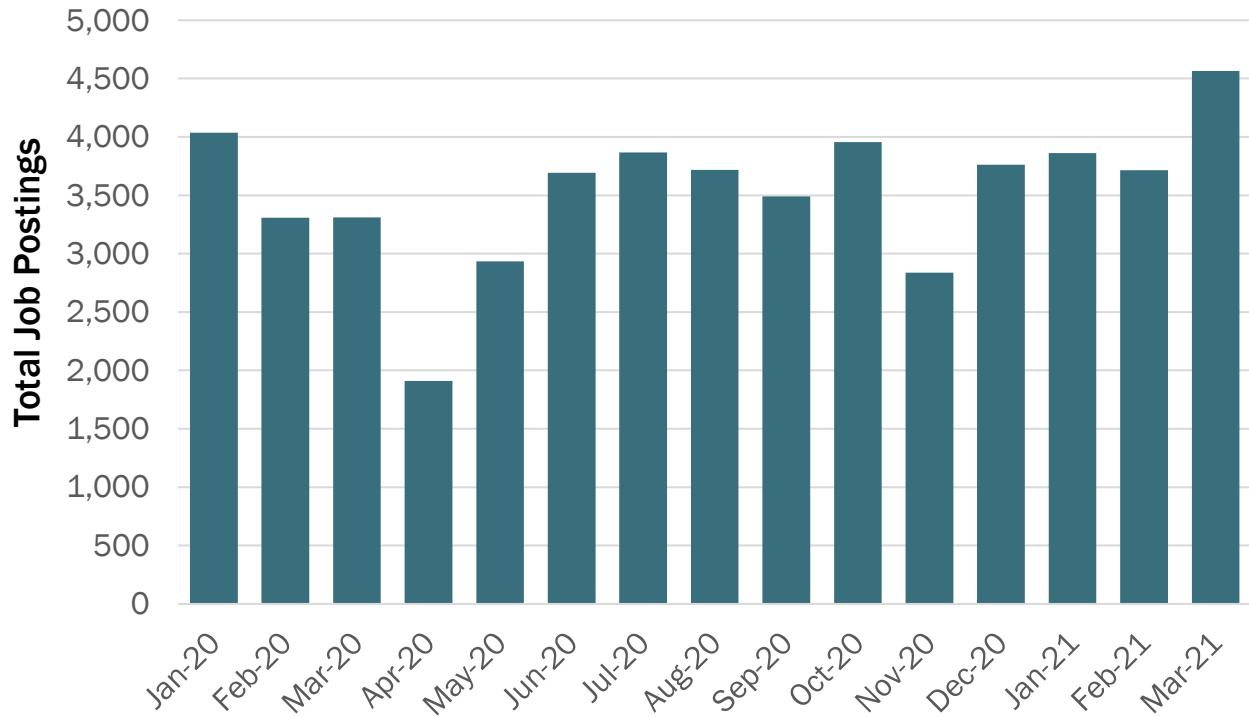
SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages & Upjohn Institute, 2020

The most recent data shows that the greatest decrease in employment in the Michigan Works! Southwest Region from Q3 2019 to Q3 2020 was in Leisure and Hospitality, which declined by 4,031 jobs, or 30.8%. The greatest increase in employment from Q3 2019 to Q3 2020 was in Construction, which grew by 226 jobs, or 22.8%.

**The average weekly wage for nonfarm jobs in Q2 2020 in the MWSW Region was \$931.**

SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2021

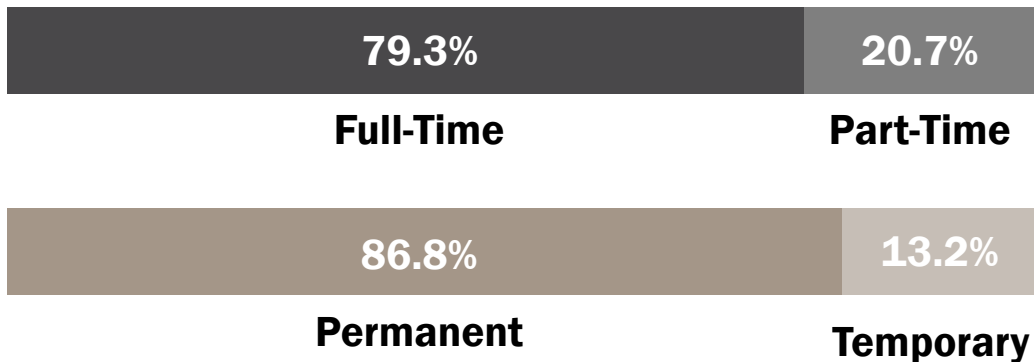
## Total Job Postings, March 2021 MWSW Region



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

The number of job postings in the Michigan Works! Southwest Region, which demonstrates demand for labor, increased by 22.8% between February and March, from 3,716 postings to 4,565. The majority of postings in the Michigan Works! Southwest Region, as reported through Burning Glass Technologies, were for full-time and permanent positions.

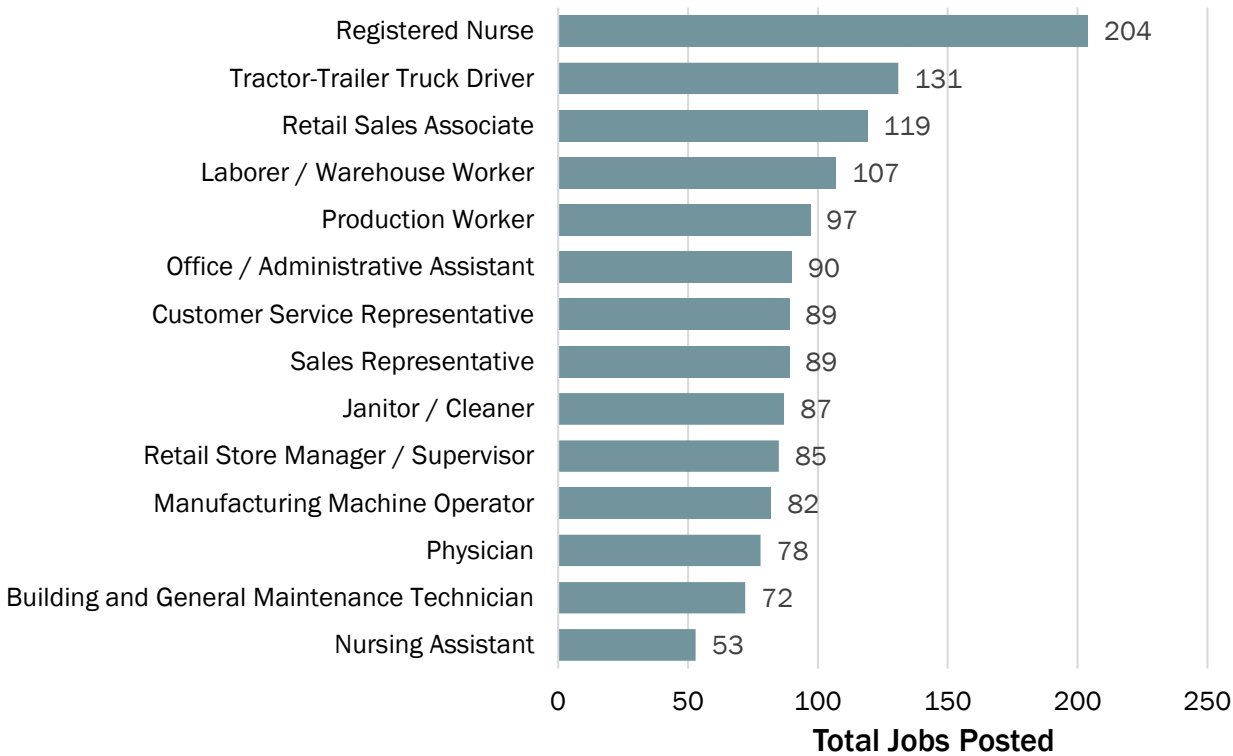
## Type of Job Postings, March 2021 MWSW Region



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021



Top Occupations for Job Postings, March 2021  
MWSW Region



SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies, 2021

The top occupations with job postings were for registered nurses, tractor-trailer truck drivers, and retail sales associates. Nearly half of job postings, 44.7%, required at a minimum a high school diploma or vocational training. This is an increase of 2.8 percentage points from February in the proportion of job postings requiring a high school diploma or vocational training. The proportion of jobs requiring an associate degree decreased by 1.8 percentage points from February, and the proportion of jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree or higher decreased by 0.9 percentage points.

**44.7%** of job postings in March required a high school diploma or vocational training.

**15.0%** of job postings in March required an associate degree.

**40.3%** 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. 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

**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](mailto: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/](http://www.upjohn.org/Business_Outlook/Data_Dictionary/).