



MICHIGAN'S LABOR MARKET NEWS

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MARCH 2021

Findings From Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey

Feature Article pg. 11

Infographic of the Month: Highlights From Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey

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Data Spotlight: 2020 Census Workers in Michigan

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Payroll jobs rose by 24,000 in Michigan in January 2021, but remained nearly 400,000 below year-ago levels, reflecting the impact of the pandemic.

JANUARY 2021 JOBLESS RATE

MICHIGAN

5.7%

NATIONAL

6.3%

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HAILEY BARRUS
DESIGNER
Communications Representative
barrush1@michigan.gov



WAYNE ROURKE
EDITOR
Associate Director
rourkew@michigan.gov



BRUCE WEAVER
CONTRIBUTOR
Economic Manager
weaverb1@michigan.gov



NICK GANDHI
CONTRIBUTOR
Economic Analyst
gandhin@michigan.gov



TRISHA SCHLEGEL
CONTRIBUTOR
Economic Analyst
schlegelt@michigan.gov



YAN XU
CONTRIBUTOR
Economic Analyst
xuy1@michigan.gov



TYLER LEIGHTON
CONTRIBUTOR
Economic Analyst
leightont1@michigan.gov



ASHLEY TARVER
CONTRIBUTOR
Demographic Analyst
tarvera2@michigan.gov

IT'S BIGGER THAN DATA.

The Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives is your one-stop shop for information and analysis on Michigan's population, labor market, and more.

- Our Federal-State Programs division runs the state's cooperative agreements with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau, making us the official source for this information.
- Our Research and Analytics division conducts workforce research and program evaluation, giving you the insight you need to make smarter decisions.

Michigan's unemployment rate dropped to 5.7 percent in January 2021, largely due to a sharp decline in the state's labor force. Over the year, the state jobless rate was two percentage points higher while total labor force levels remained 4.1 percent lower. Nonfarm payroll jobs edged higher by 0.6 percent over the month, with this modest overall gain spread across several service industries. Also released with January's data were the annual revisions to our historic data for employment, unemployment, and payroll jobs.

This issue of *Michigan's Labor Market News* releases the results of our 2020 Job Vacancy Survey, which provides key information on the number of openings and characteristics of vacancies for industries, occupations, and geographies across Michigan. This month's *Relevant Rankings* highlights occupations and industry sectors that have the most vacancies. Finally, our *Data Spotlight* this month looks back at how intermittent and temporary census workers from the 2020 Census impacted Michigan's employment totals.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Michigan's Labor Market News*. Please let us know if there is something you would like to know more about.



SCOTT POWELL
DIRECTOR

Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives
powells6@michigan.gov

MICHIGAN JOBLESS RATE DECLINES DUE TO LABOR FORCE WITHDRAWAL

Michigan's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell sharply in January 2021 to 5.7 percent. This rate drop was largely due to significant monthly labor force withdrawal, as employment edged up only marginally over the month. During the pandemic, monthly shifts in labor force levels have been somewhat erratic and difficult to evaluate. The state's January workforce total of 4,736,000 was the lowest recorded since May 2020. As a result of the annual data revision process, the statewide December 2020 rate was revised upwards by seven-tenths of a percentage point to 8.2 percent.

The national jobless rate edged down between December and January by four-tenths of a percentage point to 6.3 percent. Michigan's January jobless rate was 0.6 percentage points below the rate of the nation. The U.S. unemployment rate rose by 2.8 percentage points over the year, while the state rate advanced by 2.0 percentage points since January 2020.

Total employment in Michigan inched up by 0.2 percent in January. This was similar to the 0.1 percent rise in national employment.

The statewide number of unemployed fell substantially in January, reflecting fewer jobless people in the labor force seeking work.

Over the year, total employment in the state dropped sharply by 6.1 percent, reflecting the impact of the pandemic. This was slightly larger than the 5.4 percent decline nationwide. The number of unemployed residents in Michigan jumped by 47.3 percent since January 2020, while the U.S. unemployment total soared by 74.8 percent over this period. Michigan's total workforce fell by 4.1 percent over the year, whereas the national workforce saw a 2.6 percent decline since January 2020.

Detroit Metro Region Unemployment Rate Falls Considerably in January

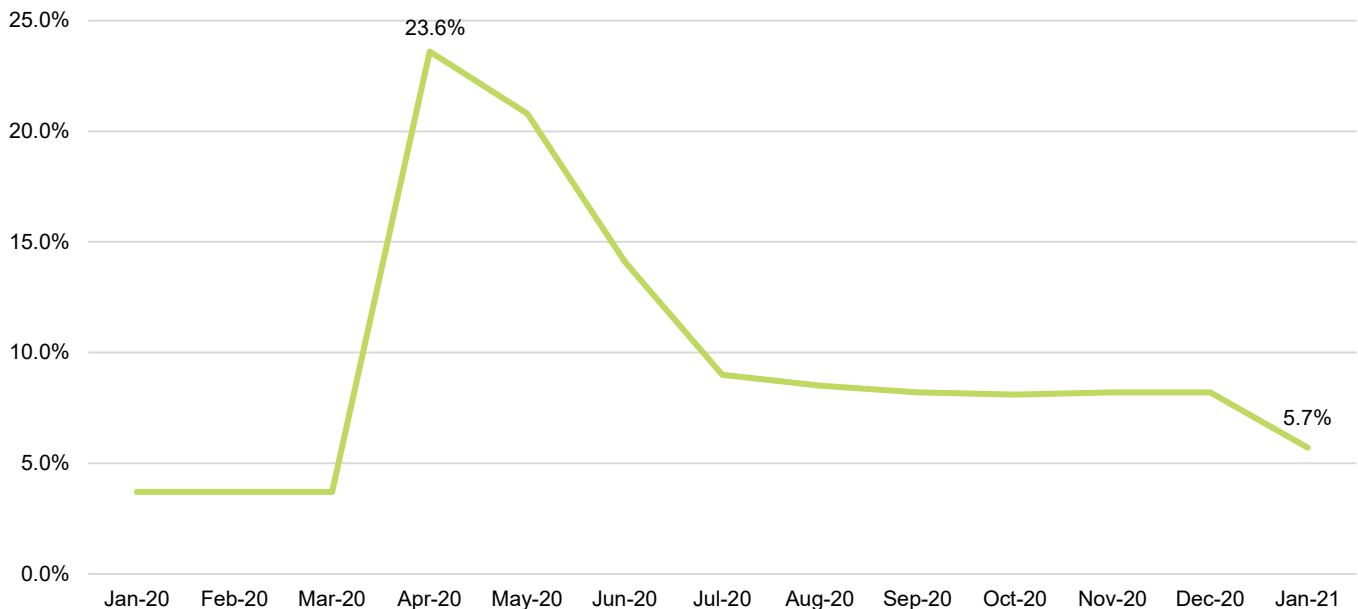
The Detroit metropolitan statistical area's (MSA) seasonally adjusted jobless rate dropped sharply in January 2021 to 5.2 percent. This was a result of a significant monthly cut of 100,000 in the area's workforce and was not primarily due to more employed residents, as employment moved up by only 14,000.

Over the year, the Detroit metro region jobless rate rose by a full percentage point. Employment receded by 148,000 while the number of unemployed moved up by 15,000, resulting in a net workforce reduction of 133,000 since January 2020.

With the annual revision process, the Detroit metro region annual average unemployment rate for 2020 was revised upward slightly from 11.0 percent to 11.7 percent. This process increased the unemployment rate marginally for most months, however the overall trend remained similar for the year. The Detroit region's unemployment rate spiked in the second quarter due to pandemic-related layoffs, averaging 22.5 percent. The rate dropped to a 10.7 percent average in the third quarter, then dipped by 0.5 percentage points to 10.2 percent in the fourth quarter.

WAYNE ROURKE
Associate Director

MICHIGAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, JANUARY 2020–JANUARY 2021



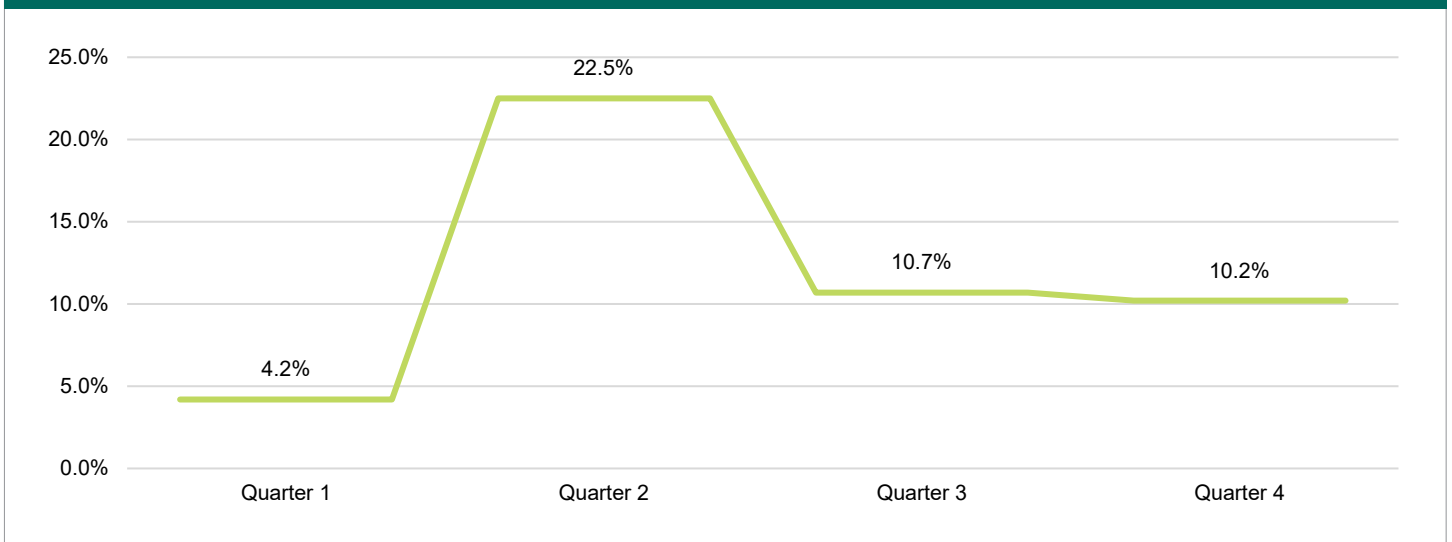
Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

MICHIGAN LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES, JANUARY 2021 (SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)

	JANUARY 2021	DECEMBER 2020	JANUARY 2020	OVER THE MONTH		OVER THE YEAR	
				NUMERIC	PERCENT	NUMERIC	PERCENT
Civilian Labor Force	4,736,000	4,855,000	4,937,000	-119,000	-2.5%	-201,000	-4.1%
Employed	4,465,000	4,455,000	4,753,000	10,000	0.2%	-288,000	-6.1%
Unemployed	271,000	400,000	184,000	-129,000	-32.3%	87,000	47.3%
Unemployment Rate	5.7	8.2	3.7	-2.5	XXX	2.0	XXX

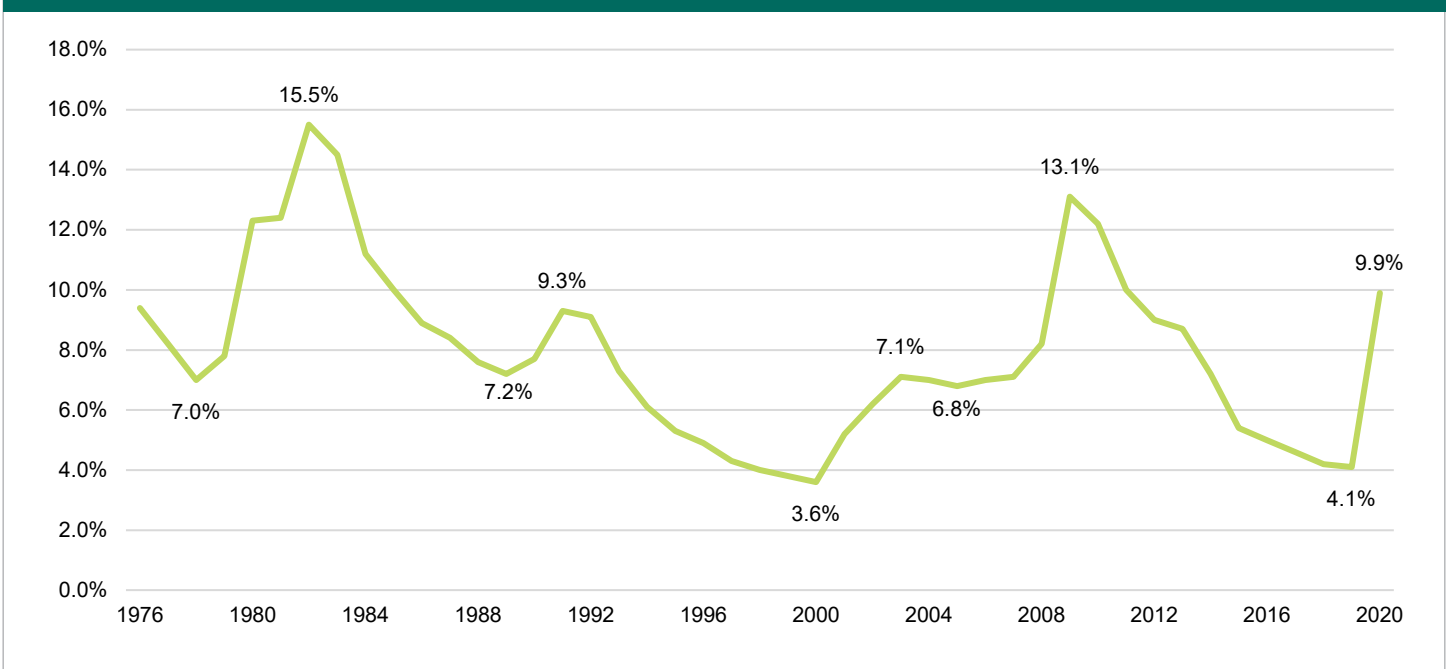
Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

DETROIT MSA AVERAGE QUARTERLY RATE, 2020



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

MICHIGAN ANNUAL AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 1976–2020



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget



MICHIGAN JOB TRENDS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR

Monthly Overview

Michigan payroll jobs increased by 23,800 (+0.6 percent) over the month in January. This comes one month after a loss of 67,800 (-1.7 percent) jobs in December 2020. On the national scale, total payroll jobs slightly increased by 0.1 percent (+166,000) in January.

All but three industries recorded employment gains in January. *Leisure and hospitality* jumped by 8,800 (+3.2 percent) after cutting 18.5 percent of jobs (-62,800) in December. Other job gainers included *Government* (+7,500);

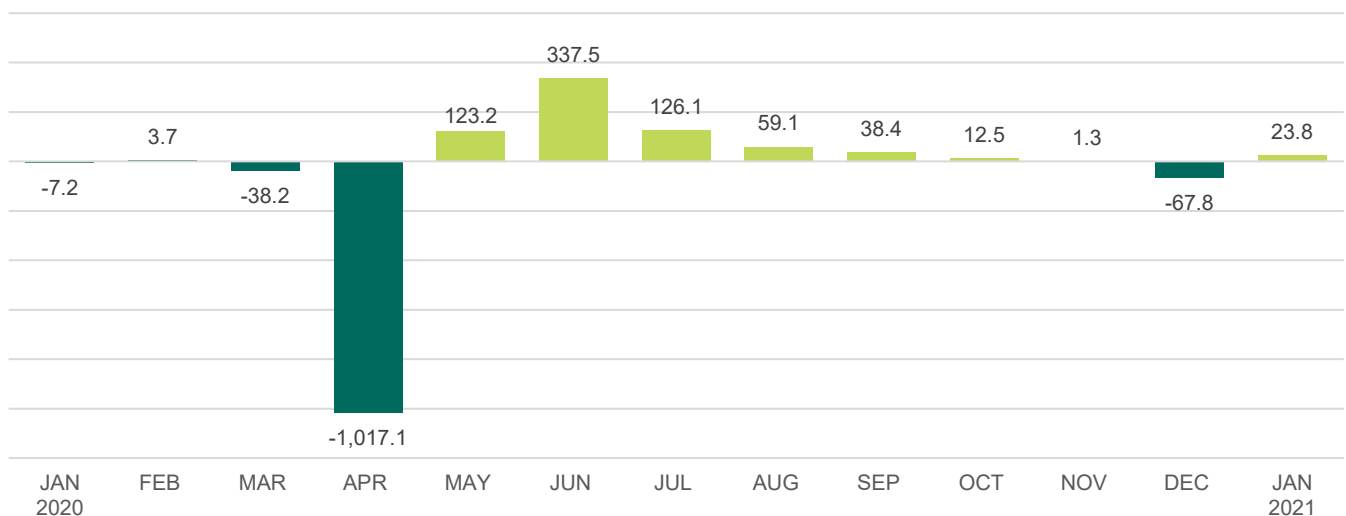
Trade, transportation, and utilities (+3,700); and *Professional and business services* (+3,300). On the other end, job losers included *Other services* (-1,400), *Financial activities* (-600), and *Construction* (-100).

Over-the-Year Analysis

Total nonfarm seasonally adjusted employment in Michigan has fallen by 8.9 percent or 397,500 jobs since January 2020. Michigan was especially impacted over the year by the COVID-19 pandemic compared to the U.S. overall, which observed an employment decline

of 6.3 percent. *Leisure and hospitality* led all major industries in employment reductions over the year. The sector receded by 149,000 jobs or 34.3 percent. *Educational and health services* also recorded sizable cuts, losing 51,200 jobs or 7.4 percent since January 2020. Other industry sectors with notable employment losses were *Other services* (-14.5 percent), *Information* (-11.8 percent), and both *Government* and *Manufacturing* (-7.8 percent). *Mining and logging* was the only major industry which did not record losses over the period, edging higher by only 1.4 percent.

MICHIGAN OVER-THE-MONTH PAYROLL JOB CHANGE, JANUARY 2020–JANUARY 2021 (IN THOUSANDS)



Source: Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

MICHIGAN EMPLOYMENT CHANGE BY INDUSTRY

INDUSTRY	MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT			JOBS LOST		JOBS RECOVERED		NET CHANGE		
	MAR 20	APR 20	JAN 20	#	%	#	%	#	%	
	TOTAL NONFARM	4,414,700	3,397,600	4,051,700	-1,017,100	-23.0%	654,100	19.3%	-363,000	-8.2%
Goods Producing	Mining and Logging	6,900	6,100	7,100	-800	-11.6%	1,000	16.4%	200	2.9%
	Construction	177,900	106,600	174,900	-71,300	-40.1%	68,300	64.1%	-3,000	-1.7%
	Manufacturing	617,100	415,600	572,400	-201,500	-32.7%	156,800	37.7%	-44,700	-7.2%
	Trade, Transportation and Utilities	794,600	636,200	773,600	-158,400	-19.9%	137,400	21.6%	-21,000	-2.6%
Service Producing	Information	55,200	48,800	48,800	-6,400	-11.6%	0	0.0%	-6,400	-11.6%
	Financial Activities	228,600	215,700	223,900	-12,900	-5.6%	8,200	3.8%	-4,700	-2.1%
	Professional & Business Services	649,900	506,500	612,700	-143,400	-22.1%	106,200	21.0%	-37,200	-5.7%
	Education and Health Services	685,700	582,100	640,500	-103,600	-15.1%	58,400	10.0%	-45,200	-6.6%
	Leisure and Hospitality Services	418,300	193,500	285,400	-224,800	-53.7%	91,900	47.5%	-132,900	-31.8%
	Other Services	164,800	113,800	142,700	-51,000	-30.9%	28,900	25.4%	-22,100	-13.4%
	Government	615,700	572,700	569,700	-43,000	-7.0%	-3,000	-0.5%	-46,000	-7.5%

Source: Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

Signs of Recovery

Employment reductions in April 2020 were among the worst in recorded history, with some industries experiencing more significant employment losses than that of the Great Recession. Total nonfarm employment dropped by 1,017,100 jobs (-23.0 percent) in April 2020. Industry sectors that contributed to the shock to the economy included *Leisure and hospitality* (-224,800 jobs), *Manufacturing* (-201,500 jobs), *Trade, transportation, and utilities* (-158,400 jobs), and *Professional and business services* (-143,400 jobs).

Since April 2020, Michigan has started to show some signs of recovery. The state has

experienced a recovery of 654,100 total nonfarm jobs, nearly two-thirds of the April loss. The industries which were hit hardest have slowly turned around, though job counts remain well below pre-pandemic levels. *Leisure and hospitality* has recovered 91,900 jobs but remains 132,900 jobs below March 2020 levels. Similarly, *Manufacturing* has added 156,800 jobs since April 2020 but has yet to recoup 44,700 jobs. The *Government* industry sector has further reduced jobs by 3,000 since April 2020, bringing total employment lost in the sector to 46,000.

On the other side, *Mining and logging* was the only industry sector to not have recorded job

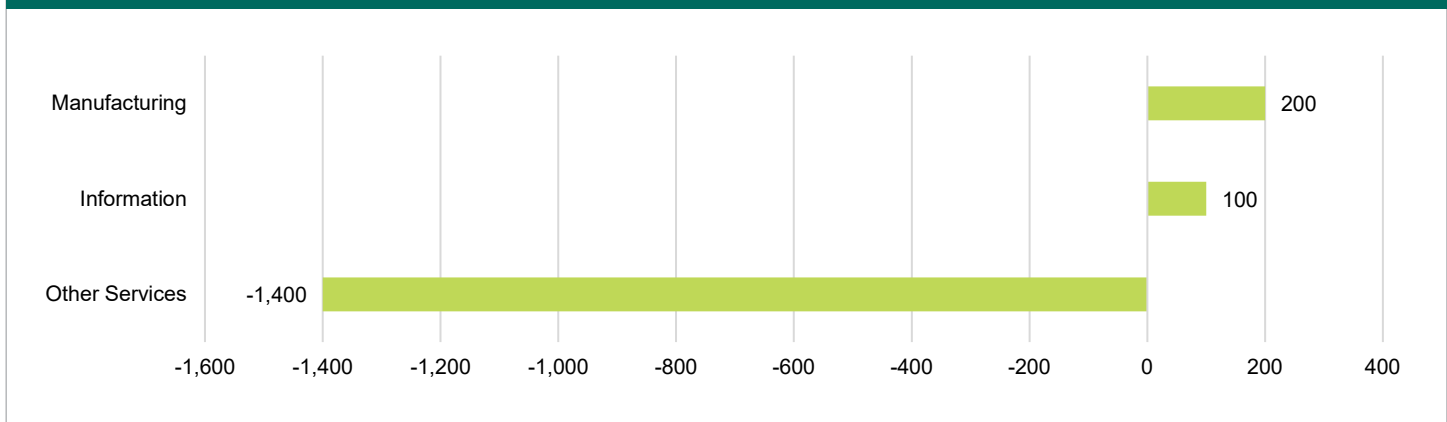
losses since March 2020, marginally expanding by 2.9 percent. *Construction* has also nearly recovered fully since April 2020, recovering 68,300 jobs from the loss of 71,300 jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Significant Industry Employment Developments

OTHER SERVICES

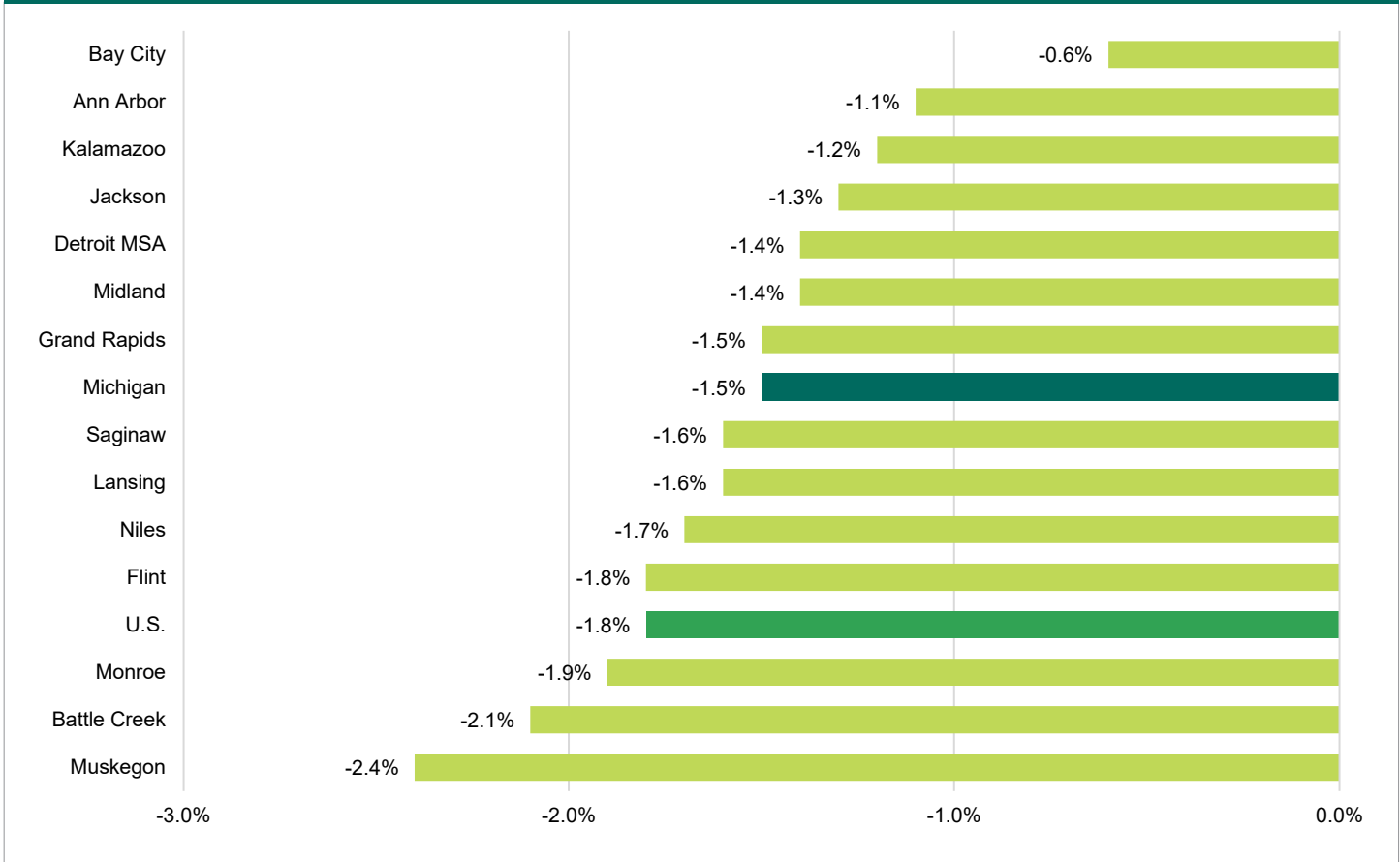
In January, *Other services* reported the largest monthly employment decrease among major industry sectors. The industry cut 1,400 jobs over the month, down 1.0 percent since December and was one of three major industries to report job losses during the month.

MICHIGAN OVER-THE-MONTH JOB CHANGE BY SELECT INDUSTRY, DECEMBER 2020–JANUARY 2021



Source: Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

MICHIGAN METROPOLITAN AREA JOB CHANGE, DECEMBER 2020–JANUARY 2021 (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)



Source: Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

Over the year, *Other services* has cut 24,200 jobs. On a percentage basis, this was a loss of 14.5 percent, the second largest decline among the major industry sectors. Since April 2020, the height of the pandemic, this industry has regained 28,900 of the 51,000 jobs that were lost. Prior to the pandemic, employment in this industry has not been below the current levels since 1991.

INFORMATION

The *Information* industry sector is about one-third the size of *Other services* currently. In January, the industry reported marginal employment gains of 100 jobs or 0.2 percent. Since January 2020, this industry has been among the hardest hit on a percentage basis, down 11.8 percent. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, this industry has not employed fewer than 50,000 in recorded history (dating back to January 1990). Since the pandemic began, each month has been below this number and currently sits at 48,800 in January 2021. Previously, the lowest employment in *Information* occurred in the second quarter of 2011 amidst the fallout from the Great Recession.

MANUFACTURING

Over the month, *Manufacturing* industry sector employment has held steady, adding only 200 jobs. However, over the year, the sector has reduced by 48,500 jobs or 7.8 percent. Unsurprisingly, this industry was among the hardest hit industries during the COVID-19 pandemic, and Michigan reported lower employment levels in April 2020 than at the height of the Great Recession by about 15,000 jobs. As of January 2021, the *Manufacturing* industry has recouped 156,800 of the 201,500 jobs that were lost in April 2020. Furthermore, employment growth in the sector has stagnated over the last five months as monthly employment gains since August 2020 have averaged 840 jobs per month. During the previous four months, average monthly employment additions were 38,200 jobs per month.

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)

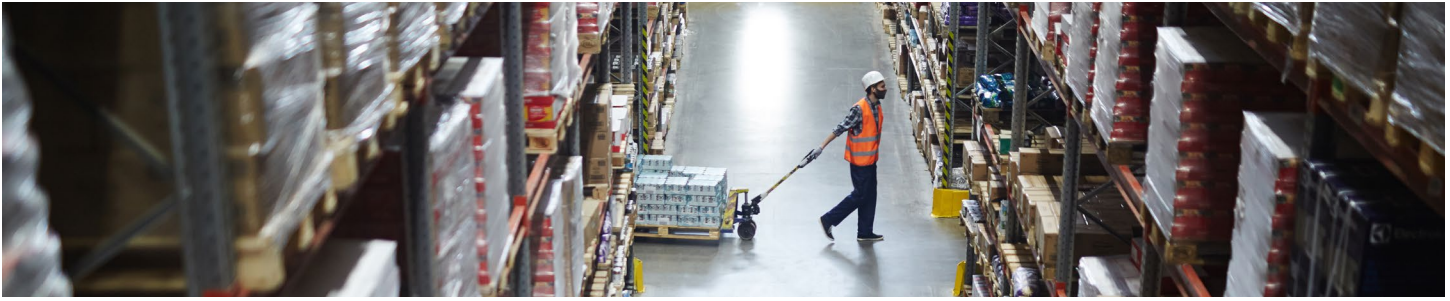
Each of Michigan's 14 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) observed cuts in employment in January, on a not seasonally adjusted basis. This

was in line with what was observed across each of the MSAs in December, when each area also recorded declines in employment.

Over the month, the MSAs of Muskegon, Battle Creek, and Monroe each had an employment loss greater than that of the United States as a whole (-1.8 percent) at -2.4 percent, -2.1 percent, and -1.9 percent, respectively. On the opposite end, Bay City recorded a loss of 0.6 percent, the only MSA with a job reduction of less than a 1.0 percent.

Since January 2020, the state logged a drop in not adjusted employment of 9.2 percent due to fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. Three MSAs recorded job losses greater than that of the state including Lansing (-10.7 percent), Monroe (-10.4 percent), and Kalamazoo (-9.3 percent). Midland had the lowest year-over-year drop in employment at -5.5 percent, 2.2 percentage points greater than the next lowest MSA (Battle Creek).

NICK GANDHI
Economic Analyst

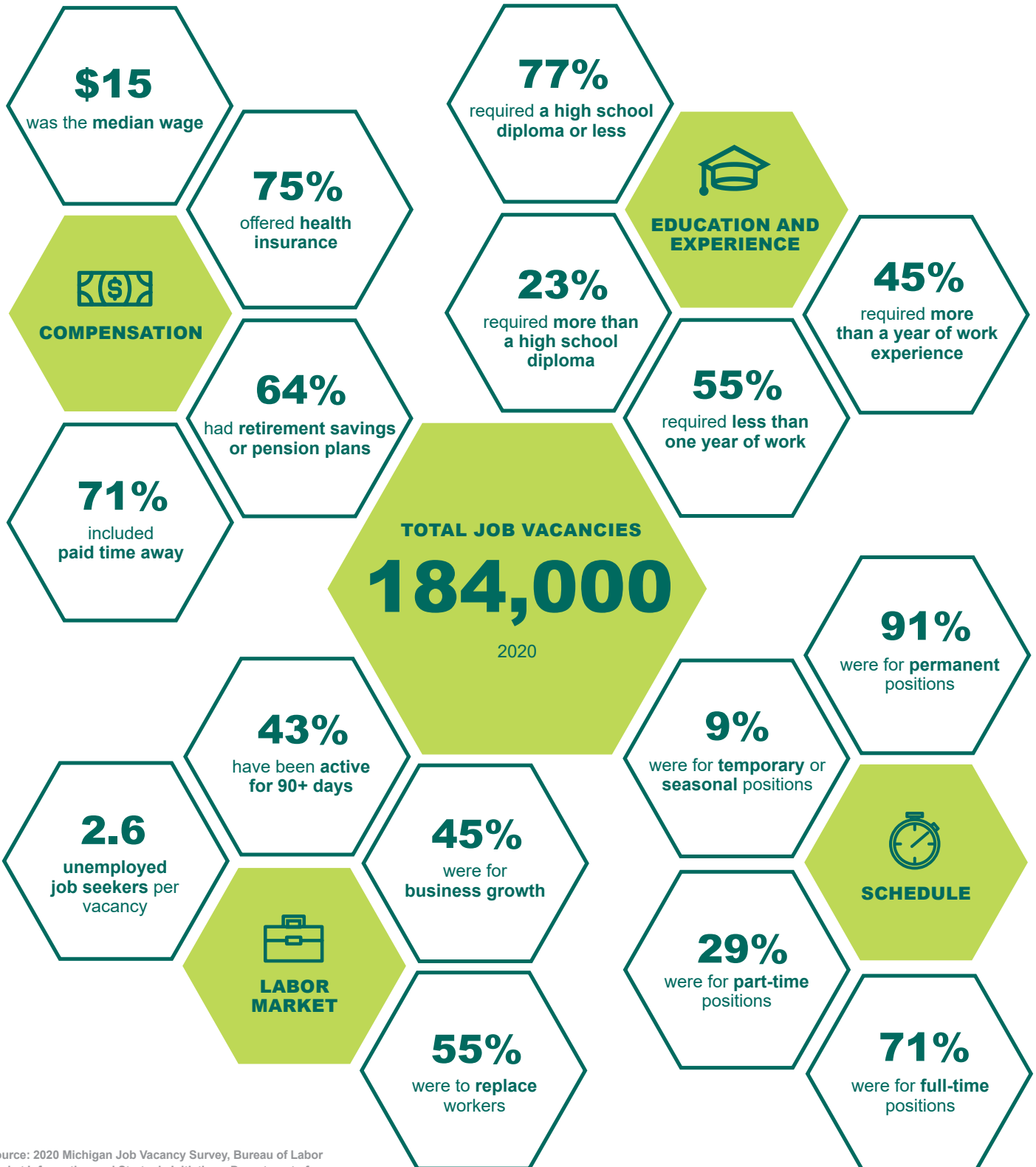


MICHIGAN PAYROLL JOBS (SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)

INDUSTRY	JANUARY 2021	DECEMBER 2020	JANUARY 2020	OVER THE MONTH		OVER THE YEAR	
				LEVEL	PERCENT	LEVEL	PERCENT
TOTAL NONFARM	4,051,700	4,027,900	4,449,200	23,800	0.6%	-397,500	-8.9%
Total Private	3,482,000	3,465,700	3,831,000	16,300	0.5%	-349,000	-9.1%
Private Service-Providing	2,727,600	2,711,600	3,026,600	16,000	0.6%	-299,000	-9.9%
GOODS-PRODUCING	754,400	754,100	804,400	300	0.0%	-50,000	-6.2%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	182,000	181,900	183,500	100	0.1%	-1,500	-0.8%
Mining and Logging	7,100	6,900	7,000	200	2.9%	100	1.4%
Construction	174,900	175,000	176,500	-100	-0.1%	-1,600	-0.9%
Manufacturing	572,400	572,200	620,900	200	0.0%	-48,500	-7.8%
Durable Goods	431,900	431,600	468,500	300	0.1%	-36,600	-7.8%
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	178,300	178,900	188,600	-600	-0.3%	-10,300	-5.5%
Non-Durable Goods	140,500	140,600	152,400	-100	-0.1%	-11,900	-7.8%
SERVICE-PROVIDING	3,297,300	3,273,800	3,644,800	23,500	0.7%	-347,500	-9.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	773,600	769,900	797,300	3,700	0.5%	-23,700	-3.0%
Wholesale Trade	162,000	161,400	171,700	600	0.4%	-9,700	-5.6%
Retail Trade	445,100	442,700	463,600	2,400	0.5%	-18,500	-4.0%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	166,500	165,800	162,000	700	0.4%	4,500	2.8%
Information	48,800	48,700	55,300	100	0.2%	-6,500	-11.8%
Financial Activities	223,900	224,500	228,100	-600	-0.3%	-4,200	-1.8%
Finance and Insurance	174,100	174,300	172,100	-200	-0.1%	2,000	1.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	49,800	50,200	56,000	-400	-0.8%	-6,200	-11.1%
Professional and Business Services	612,700	609,400	652,900	3,300	0.5%	-40,200	-6.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	293,500	293,900	299,600	-400	-0.1%	-6,100	-2.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	69,700	69,600	71,800	100	0.1%	-2,100	-2.9%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	249,500	245,900	281,500	3,600	1.5%	-32,000	-11.4%
Education and Health Services	640,500	638,400	691,700	2,100	0.3%	-51,200	-7.4%
Educational Services	66,600	63,400	73,900	3,200	5.0%	-7,300	-9.9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	573,900	575,000	617,800	-1,100	-0.2%	-43,900	-7.1%
Leisure and Hospitality	285,400	276,600	434,400	8,800	3.2%	-149,000	-34.3%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	36,200	34,300	53,300	1,900	5.5%	-17,100	-32.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	249,200	242,300	381,100	6,900	2.8%	-131,900	-34.6%
Other Services	142,700	144,100	166,900	-1,400	-1.0%	-24,200	-14.5%
Government	569,700	562,200	618,200	7,500	1.3%	-48,500	-7.8%
Federal Government	53,700	53,300	52,700	400	0.8%	1,000	1.9%
State Government	170,600	168,500	196,100	2,100	1.2%	-25,500	-13.0%
Local Government	345,400	340,400	369,400	5,000	1.5%	-24,000	-6.5%

Source: Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MICHIGAN'S 2020 JOB VACANCY SURVEY



Source: 2020 Michigan Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget



FINDINGS FROM MICHIGAN'S 2020 JOB VACANCY SURVEY

About the Survey

The Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives (LMISI) is Michigan's official source for state and regional demographic and labor market information. As part of its mission to provide high-quality, comprehensive labor market insights and analysis, LMISI conducted the 2020 Michigan Job Vacancy Survey (JVS), the fifth since 2006. The primary goal of the JVS is to analyze the number and nature of current Michigan job vacancies. While other sources of information on vacancies are available, directly asking employers with open positions about their vacancies in this survey can provide a more accurate and comprehensive picture of the demand-side of the state's labor market.

Results of the survey have a variety of uses. They include the following:

1. Assisting employers and human resources departments when making hiring decisions and setting wage levels.
2. Helping educators and workforce developers when identifying the education and training programs that lead to high-demand jobs.

3. Guiding policymakers when developing and prioritizing workforce and economic development initiatives and programs.
4. Providing residents—including parents, students, and job seekers—vital information when exploring career options.

Methodology

SAMPLE DESIGN

Information on 2020 job vacancies came from a survey of more than 15,000 randomly selected businesses from a universe of approximately 250,000 establishments maintained by Michigan's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program. The establishments were selected based on a sampling procedure stratified by North American Industry Classification industry sectors, employment size classes, and Michigan's 10 prosperity regions. The sampling process excluded private households, personnel service industries, and establishments with no reported employees. Out-of-business establishments and units that could not be located were removed from the sample through data processing.

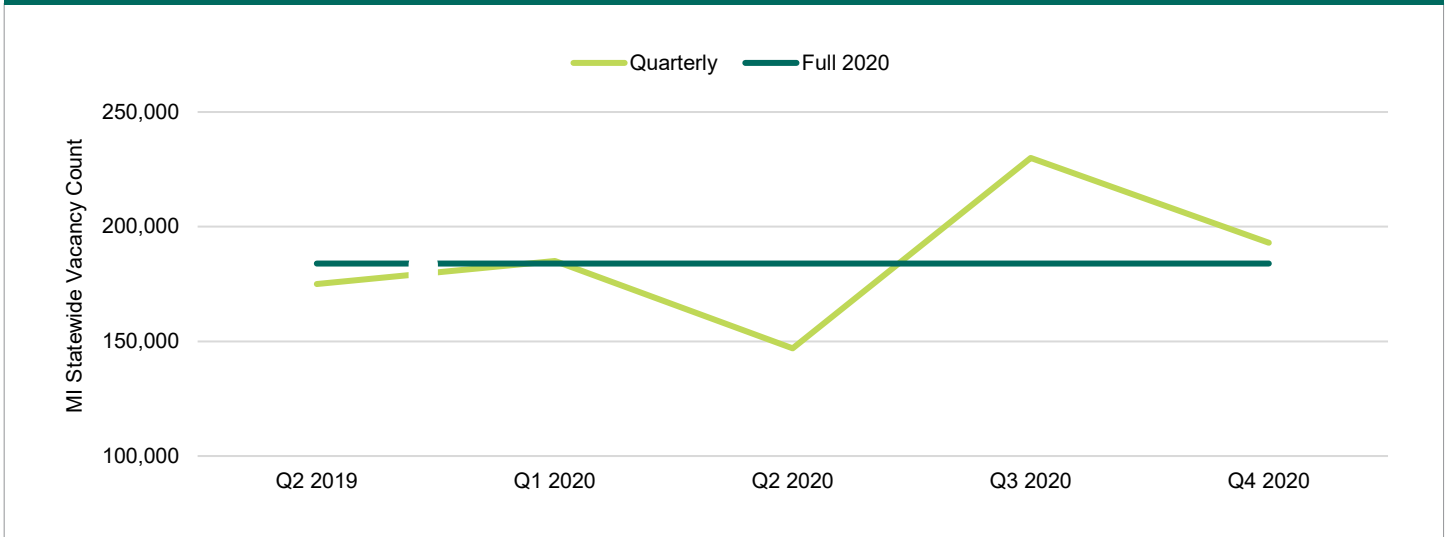
Unlike prior JVS surveys, which were conducted during a single quarter, the 2020 JVS was designed to capture vacancy information for all four quarters of 2020. To account for this, the samples for the four quarters of the 2020 JVS were drawn from each of the corresponding four quarters of QCEW data from the prior year.

SURVEY COLLECTION

Michigan employers were asked to provide information on their current job vacancies, including the number of vacancies, the job titles for open positions, the education and experience required for open positions, and the compensation for vacancies. Positions reserved for consultants, outside contractors, and others not considered employees were excluded. Establishments without job vacancies were also asked to return the survey reporting that information.

The survey proceeded in eight mailing waves throughout 2020. In each mailing, businesses were given a survey instrument and a cover letter explaining the survey and soliciting a response. In addition to the physical survey, online data collection, telephone calls, fax, and email were used to obtain survey responses through the end of 2020.

FIGURE 1: MICHIGAN STATEWIDE VACANCY ESTIMATES, 2ND QUARTER 2019–4TH QUARTER 2020



Source: Michigan's 2nd Quarter 2019 Job Vacancy Survey, Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget

CODING JOB TITLES

Employers provided job titles in an open field on the survey instrument. Economic analysts reviewed job titles and matched them to the appropriate 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) titles. Along with the job title, additional information on the position such as job description, wage, education, and work experience were used to link the employer job title with an occupation title from the 2018 SOC title structures. This is the official coding structure used by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau to standardize reported job titles.

RESULTS AND ADJUSTMENTS

Following a review of the survey results, the data was weighted to produce representative estimates. The calculations that produced the estimates were modified to account for the 2020 survey implementation over four quarters. Additionally, further adjustments were made for the survey's low response rate of 34 percent, which largely stemmed from business closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. For purposes of comparison later in this article, the same methods were also applied to the results of the second quarter 2019 JVS.

Michigan Vacancies and Employment Trends

TOTAL JOB VACANCIES

The 2020 JVS asked employers to provide information on any current job vacancies that

existed at their locations. Based on employer responses, the JVS estimated an average of 184,000 Michigan job vacancies in 2020, a modest five percent increase from the 175,000 estimated in the second quarter of 2019. However, this growth masks significant variations between the quarters of 2020 (see Figure 1). While 185,000 vacancies were estimated for the first quarter, openings dropped by more than one-fifth to 147,000 in the second, primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying response measures. This was followed by a strong recovery in vacancies in the third and fourth quarters of 230,000 and 193,000, respectively.

JOB VACANCY RATE

Comparing Michigan's estimated 184,000 vacancies to the 4.3 million filled positions (2019 Occupational Employment Statistics) produced a job vacancy rate of 4.2 vacancies for every 100 positions filled. This is also a slight increase from the second quarter of 2019, when the job vacancy rate was 4.0. A higher vacancy rate suggests that, overall, labor market demand in 2020 rose, despite variations between the quarters.

SUPPLY-DEMAND RATE

Comparing Michigan's job vacancies to the 470,000 unemployed residents in 2020 (2020 Local Area Unemployment Statistics) resulted in a supply-demand rate of 2.6, meaning there were nearly three job seekers per job opening.

This is more than double the estimated 1.1 supply-demand rate in the second quarter of 2019. This elevated rate is due to higher unemployment driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and related response measures, as well as potential problems matching the unemployed to existing vacancies.

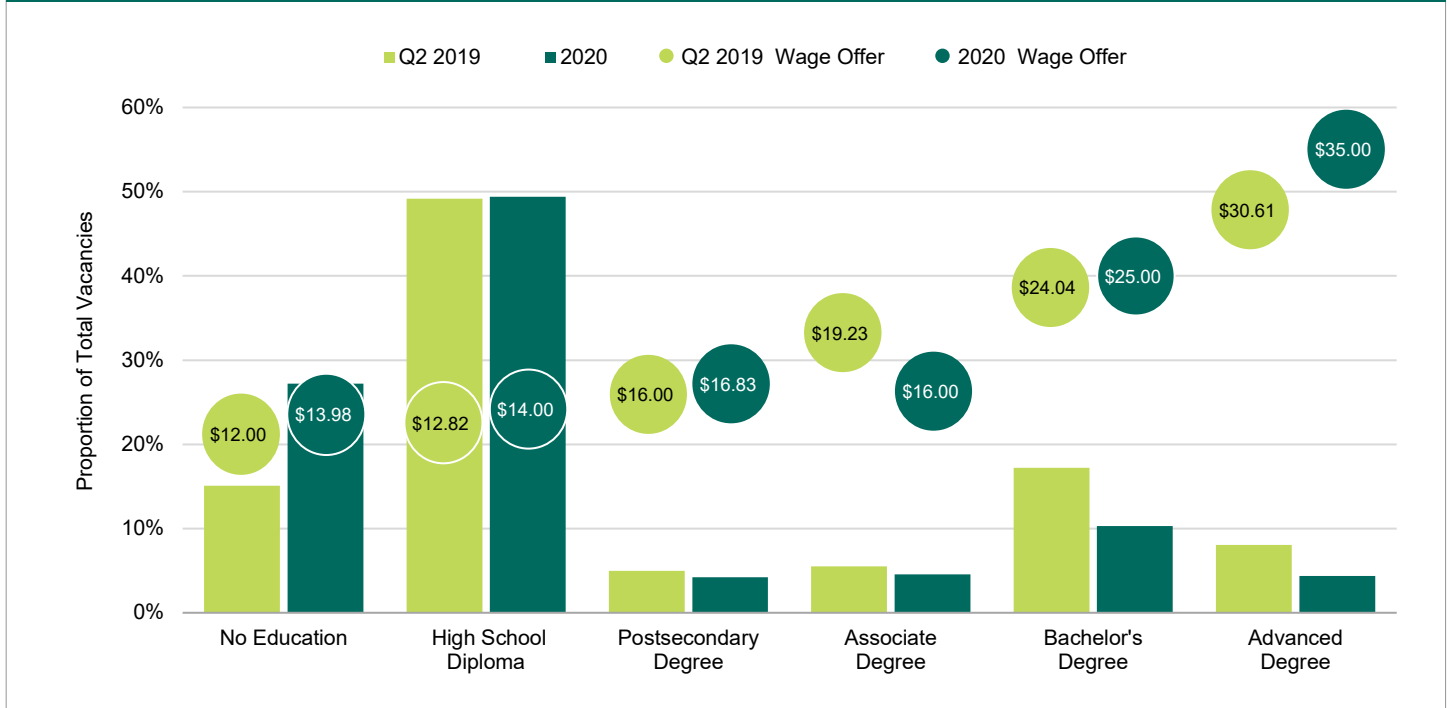
OTHER VACANCY TRACKING SURVEYS

JOLTS is a monthly survey administered by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to provide data on job openings, hires, and separations. In 2019, the JOLTS survey began publishing experimental state-level estimates as three-month moving averages. The statewide JOLTS three-month moving average of openings for the four quarters of 2020 averaged 189,000 openings. This is comparable to the 184,000 openings estimated by the JVS for all of 2020. JOLTS also publishes a job openings rate, which is somewhat comparable to the JVS job vacancy rate.¹ Like Michigan's 2020 job vacancy rate of 4.2, the JOLTS openings rate averages 4.4 for 2020.

Job vacancies from the 2020 survey were also consistent with the number of online job ads from The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine® series. The average of the sum of new not seasonally adjusted ads for each of the four quarters was 185,000, less than one percent higher than the 2020 vacancies measured by the JVS.

¹The 2020 JVS estimated the Michigan Job Vacancy rate by taking the number of total estimated job vacancies and dividing by the total employment from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program. In contrast, BLS calculated the JOLTS openings rate for the state, region, and nation by dividing the estimated number of job openings by the sum of employment from the Current Population Survey (CPS) program and job openings.

FIGURE 2: MICHIGAN JOB VACANCIES BY REQUIRED EDUCATION AND MEDIAN WAGE OFFER, 2ND QUARTER 2019 VS. 2020



Source: Michigan's 2nd Quarter 2019 Job Vacancy Survey, Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget

Wages, Education, and Experience

MEDIAN WAGE

The 2020 JVS asked employers to list the wage offer for any job vacancies they had. Based on employer responses, the statewide median hourly wage estimate for all Michigan vacancies was \$15.00. While this was about \$3.00 per hour less than Michigan's 2019 median hourly wage of \$18.60 for existing occupations, it was more than \$3.00 per hour greater than the 2019 statewide entry-level wage of \$11.55.² Overall, the median wage estimate for all Michigan vacancies was a slight increase from the \$14.50 estimated in the second quarter 2019 JVS.

Education

Assessing the educational requirements of Michigan vacancies can give the state's job seekers and policymakers a sense of what is needed to meet employers' skill and knowledge needs. In 2020, most Michigan vacancies called for lower levels of education, as expected.

- A majority of openings (77 percent) required a high school diploma or less, with 27 percent requiring no education.

- Nearly 10 percent preferred a postsecondary nondegree award or associate degree, 10 percent preferred a bachelor's degree, and only 4 percent called for an advanced degree.
- Compared to the second quarter of 2019, education requirements of Michigan vacancies appeared to relax. The proportion of vacancies requiring no prior education nearly doubled, while those requesting a high school diploma continued to cover nearly half of all vacancies. The share of vacancies preferring a postsecondary nondegree award, associate degree, bachelor's degree, or advanced degree all declined modestly. This lowering of education prerequisites may indicate relatively high demand for low-skill jobs during the pandemic.
- The 2020 JVS also examined wage offers of vacancies by educational attainment. As expected, in 2020 there was a clear correlation between higher levels of preferred education and median wage offers (see Figure 2). Vacancies that preferred an advanced degree had a median wage offer of \$35.00, about two and a half times higher than those requiring no education (\$13.98).

- The largest wage difference between educational attainment occurred between vacancies preferring a bachelor's degree and advanced degrees, at \$10.00 per hour. At the same time, the smallest wage difference occurred between vacancies requiring no education and high school diplomas, which were virtually identical. Surprisingly, the estimated median wage of vacancies requesting an associate degree was below that for vacancies preferring a postsecondary nondegree award.
- As shown in Figure 2, the 2020 JVS median wage estimates for most preferred education categories had an insignificant change relative to the second quarter of 2019. However, vacancies requesting an associate degree registered a notable decline of greater than \$3.00 per hour.

Experience

Like education, an examination of the experience requirements of Michigan vacancies can provide key insights into how the workforce can meet current and future labor market demand. As expected, most vacancies in 2020 requested little to no experience as a prerequisite for employment.

²The entry-level wage was computed as the average of the bottom third of wages from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program.

FIGURE 3: MICHIGAN VACANCIES BY REQUIRED EXPERIENCE AND MEDIAN WAGE OFFER, 2ND QUARTER 2019 VS 2020



Source: Michigan's 2nd Quarter 2019 Job Vacancy Survey, Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget

- Just over half of job openings accepted less than one year of experience, while nearly four out of 10 openings requested one to three years. Vacancies calling for four years or more of experience made up less than one in 10 openings.
- Experience requirements relative to the second quarter of 2019 tightened. As demonstrated in Figure 3, the share of vacancies preferring one to three years and four or more years of experience rose. At the same time, the proportion of openings calling for less than one year of experience fell. This could indicate that employers have shifted towards an emphasis on relevant work experience in their selection criteria, and may be the result of a higher number of unemployed relative to available vacancies.
- As with education, Figure 3 shows there was a positive correlation between experience and wage offers. Openings preferring four or more years of experience had a median hourly wage offer that was nearly double the median wage of those requesting less than one year of experience.
- Relative to the second quarter of 2019, the median wage of vacancies calling for less than one year of experience indicated an increase of eight percent. The remaining experience categories registered insignificant changes.

Other Characteristics of Job Vacancies

As with prior surveys, the 2020 JVS questionnaire asked employers to provide additional information regarding the characteristics of their job vacancies. Understanding these characteristics is important when helping job seekers prepare for these and other vacancies.

EMPLOYMENT TYPE

- 71 percent of Michigan job vacancies were for full-time positions, an increase of nine percentage points from the second quarter of 2019. The remaining 29 percent were for part-time vacancies.
- Most vacancies (91 percent) were for permanent positions, while the other nine percent were for seasonal or temporary jobs. These figures were nearly identical to the second quarter 2019 estimates.

VACANCY DURATION

- Vacancy recruitment times notably increased in 2020 relative to the second quarter of 2019 survey results. Employers recruited for 90 or more days for more than 43 percent of vacancies, up from 25 percent in the second quarter of 2019. The remaining 57 percent were recruited for less than 90 days. This increase in recruitment time suggests that employers were struggling to fill openings and may reflect fears of working during the pandemic.

BENEFITS

- Results indicate that 75 percent of vacancies offered health insurance, 71 percent offered paid leave, and 64 percent offered a retirement savings plan or pension. These numbers are a notable increase from the second quarter of 2019, with all three benefits rising by no less than nine percentage points.

ESTABLISHMENT SIZE

- Nearly six in 10 vacancies occurred in small establishments with less than 50 employees. Among the remaining, 29 percent of total vacancies occurred in medium establishments between 50 and 499 employees, while around one in 10 occurred in large establishments with 500 or more employees. Relative to the second quarter of 2019, small establishment total openings increased, and medium-sized establishment openings decreased. Total vacancies from large firms were relatively unchanged.

REPLACEMENT VS. GROWTH

- In 2020, the need to replace workers drove an estimated 55 percent of Michigan vacancies, while the remaining openings were due to business growth. These figures are virtually unchanged from the second quarter 2019 JVS.

Job Vacancies by Industry

Analyzing vacancies for industry-specific data can provide useful information on what industries were hiring during the pandemic.³ In 2020, two industry supersectors—*Education and health services* and *Trade, transportation, and utilities*—accounted for nearly half (44 percent) of total vacancies. This is slightly more than their share of total Michigan employment (42 percent).

- *Education and health services* had the largest number of vacancies, followed by *Trade, transportation, and utilities* and *Leisure and hospitality*.
- However, supersectors that exhibited the highest job vacancy rates (as a proportion of supersector employment) were *Construction* (9.3 percent); *Leisure and hospitality* (6.0); and *Other services* (5.8).
- The lowest vacancy counts were found in *Government*, *Other services*, and *Financial*

activities. Collectively, they represented 10 percent of total vacancy counts, consistent with their 13 percent share of Michigan employment.

- The lowest job vacancy rates were found in *Government* (1.3 percent), *Manufacturing* (2.8 percent), and *Professional and business services* (3.3 percent) (see Figure 4).
- Since the second quarter of 2019, the industry supersectors that experienced the largest percentage increase in openings were *Construction* (139.2 percent); *Professional and business services* (38.5 percent); and *Manufacturing* (29 percent). *Construction's* particular strength is likely related to increased demand in the housing market, along with a shift to more remote work locations.
- The only supersectors with decreases in vacancy counts relative to the 2019 JVS were in *Leisure and hospitality* (27.8 percent) and

Education and health services (3.9 percent). The decline in *Leisure and hospitality* is likely rooted in the pandemic and related mitigation measures having a disproportionate impact on this sector.

Education and Experience by Industry

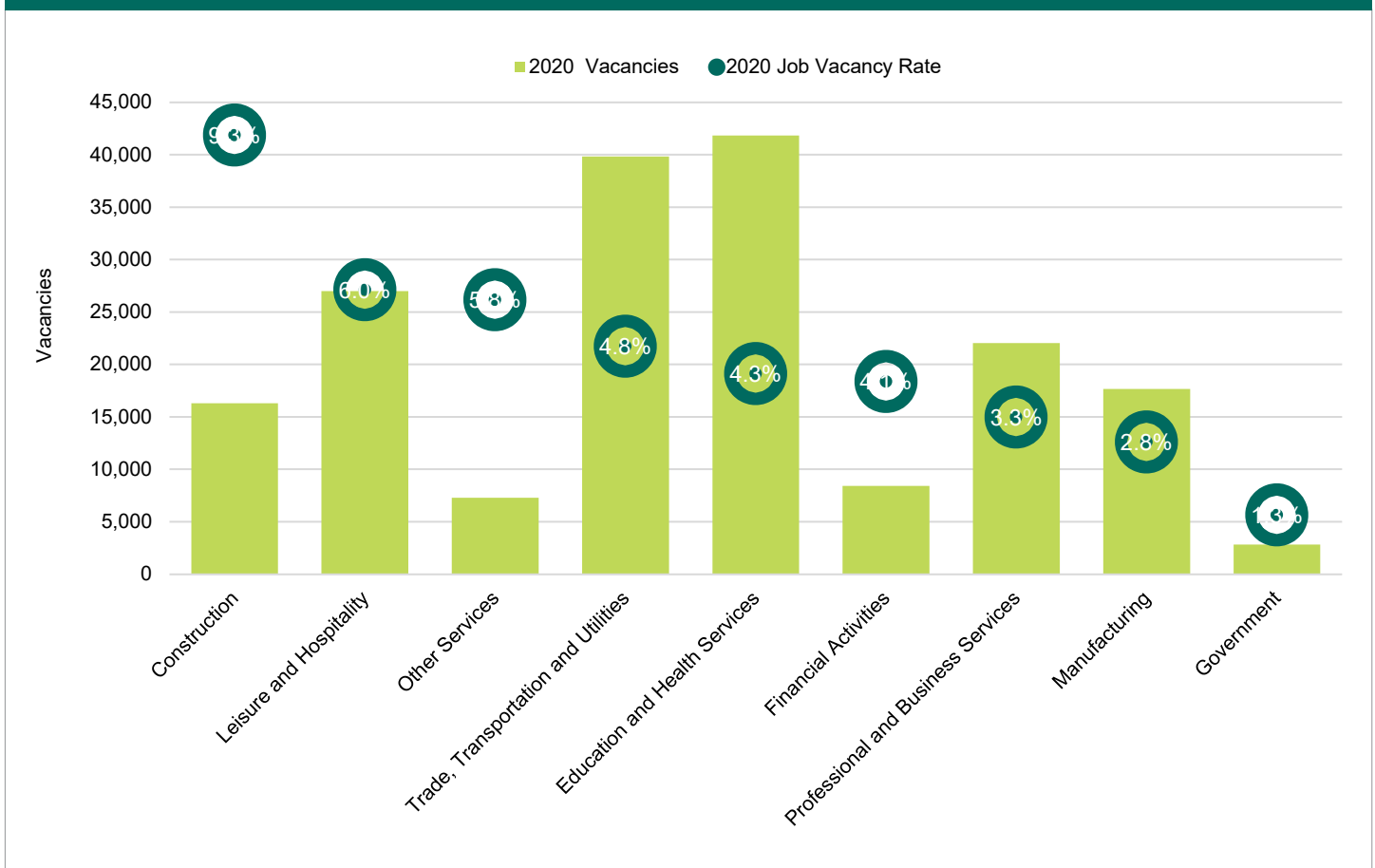
While most Michigan vacancies required lower levels of education and experience, these requirements varied significantly between industries. In industry supersectors where data were available:⁴

- *Financial activities* had some of the most selective experience requirements, with 64 percent of vacancies requiring one or more years of experience. Other top supersectors by experience requirements include *Professional and business services* and *Manufacturing*.

³ Due to insufficient data for the *Natural resources and mining* and *Information* supersectors were suppressed.

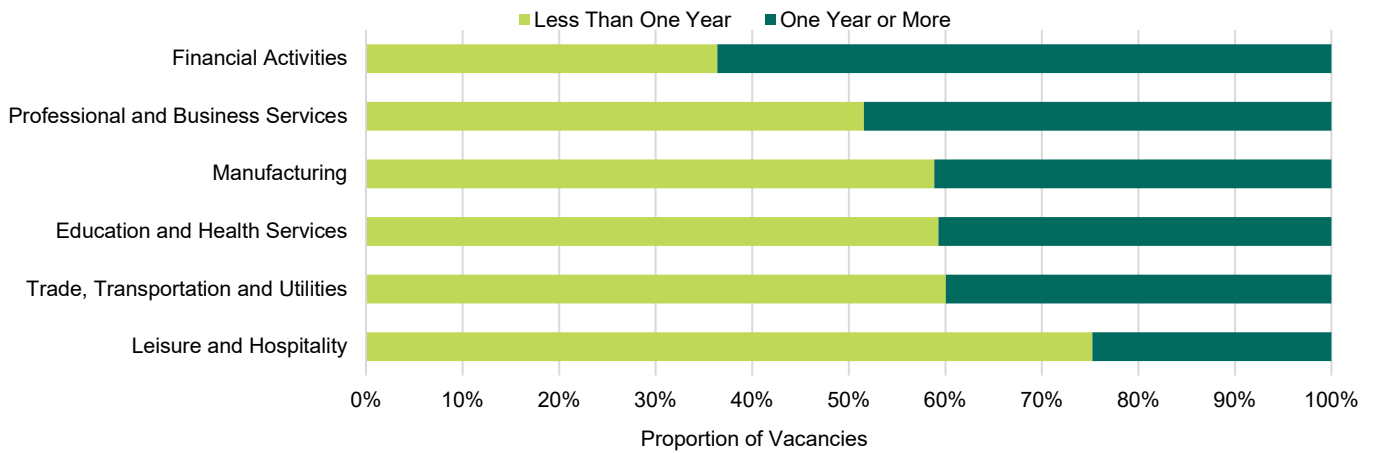
⁴ Due to insufficient data, education and or experience information for the *Construction*; *Information*; *Natural resources and mining*; *Other services*; *Leisure and Hospitality*; and *Government* supersectors were suppressed.

FIGURE 4: MICHIGAN JOB VACANCIES BY INDUSTRY SUPERSECTOR, 2020



Source: Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget; 2019 Research Estimates by State and Industry, Occupational Employment Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

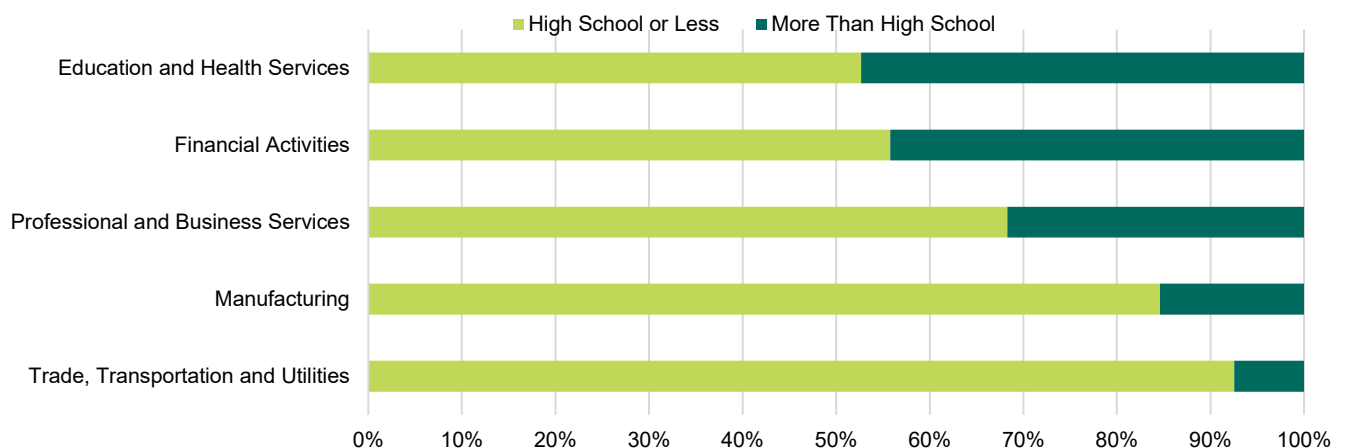
FIGURE 5: PREFERRED LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE IN MICHIGAN JOB VACANCIES BY INDUSTRY SUPERSECTOR, 2020



Source: Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget

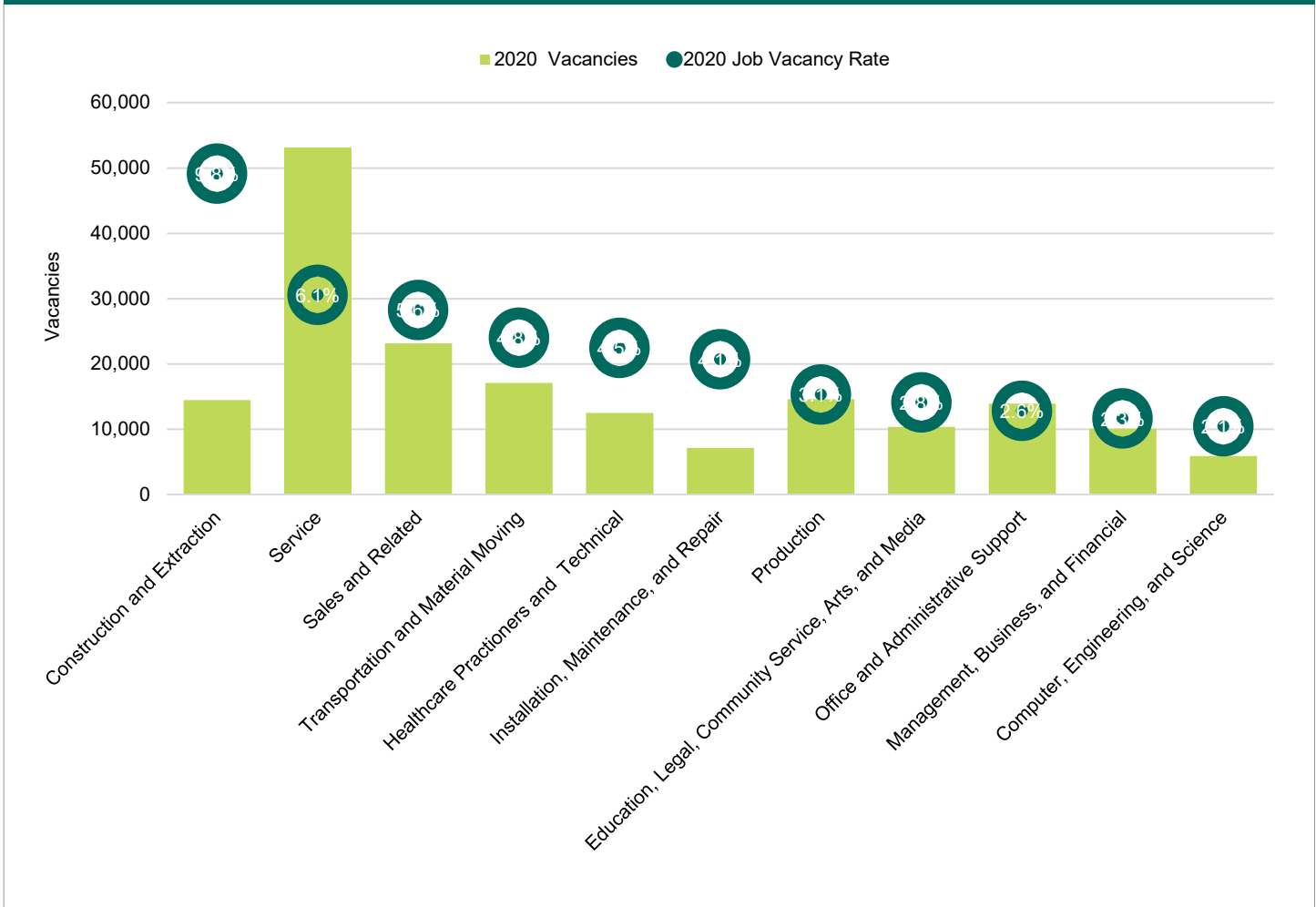
- In contrast, *Leisure and hospitality*; *Trade, transportation, and utilities*; and *Education and health services* had some of the least selective experience preferences. In *Leisure and hospitality*, fully three quarters of vacancies called for less than one year of experience (see Figure 5).
- Despite its relatively low experience criteria, *Education and health services* continued to have one of the most selective education requirements. Nearly five in 10 vacancies in the supersector asked for educational attainment beyond a high school diploma. Other relatively selective supersectors by education included *Financial activities* and *Professional and business services*.
- With less than one in 10 vacancies preferring more than a high school diploma, the *Trade, transportation, and utilities* supersector had some of the least selective education requirements (see Figure 6).
- Compared to the second quarter JVS of 2019, all industry supersectors other than *Leisure and hospitality* registered increases in proportions requiring one or more years of experience. Simultaneously, all supersectors other than *Financial activities* showed declines in the proportion of vacancies requiring more than a high school diploma.

FIGURE 6: PREFERRED LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN JOB VACANCIES BY INDUSTRY SUPERSECTOR, 2020



Source: Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget

FIGURE 7: MICHIGAN JOB VACANCIES BY INTERMEDIATE OCCUPATIONAL AGGREGATION, 2020



Source: Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey; 2019 Wage Rates by Industry and Occupation, Occupational Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget

Job Vacancies by Occupation

While industry analysis reveals important characteristics about industry employers, occupational data provides workforce developers and policymakers with more specific information they need to make data-driven decisions. As shown in Figure 7, nearly half (41 percent) of 2020 vacancies were in the *Service* and *Sales* intermediate occupational aggregations. This is notably more than the 29 percent employment share these sectors represent in 2019.

- Intermediate aggregations with the largest vacancy counts were *Service*; *Sales*; and *Transportation and material moving*. Some high-demand detailed occupations within these groups included *Retail salespersons*; *Cashiers*; *Home health and personal care aides*; and *Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers*.
- However, while not leading in openings counts, the group with the highest job vacancy rate (9.8 percent) was *Construction and extraction*.

Several detailed occupations within this aggregation are found in LMISl's publication *Michigan's Hot 50* job outlook through 2028 of high-wage, in-demand occupations. These include *Carpenters*; *Electricians*; and *Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters*. *Service* and *Sales* aggregations also led in vacancy rates, at 6.1 and 5.6 percent, respectively.

- Intermediate occupational aggregations with the lowest vacancy counts include *Computer, science, and engineering*; *Installation, maintenance, and repair*; and *Management, business, and financial*. Together, they comprised 13 percent of Michigan vacancies, somewhat lower than their 20 percent share of employment.
- Occupational groups with the lowest job vacancy rates were *Computer, engineering, and science* (2.1 percent); *Management, business, and financial* (2.3 percent); and *Office and administrative support* (2.6 percent).

- Compared to the second quarter 2019 JVS, *Construction and extraction* exhibited the greatest increase in vacancies, rising by 124.1 percent. As noted, this is likely related to the strong housing market. Other aggregations with notable increases include *Transportation and material moving* (49.1 percent) and *Production* (48.6 percent), with the former possibly linked to an increase in delivery and shipping activity as people worked from home.
- Aggregations with the largest declines in vacancies included *Education, legal, community service, arts, and media* (36 percent); *Computer, engineering, and science* (27.5 percent); and *Sales* (11.3 percent).

TOP 10 DETAILED JOB VACANCIES

In addition to providing information on industries and occupation groups, the 2020 JVS was able to gather more detailed information about some of the most prevalent specific occupational openings in the state.

MICHIGAN JOB VACANCIES BY PROSPERITY REGION, 2020

PROSPERITY REGION	VACANCIES	VACANCY RATE	MEDIAN WAGE OFFER
Southeast Michigan	18,600	4.5%	\$16.00
Upper Peninsula	5,900	5.3%	\$15.71
South Central	7,200	3.3%	\$15.46
Southwest	13,600	4.5%	\$15.00
Detroit Metro	78,500	4.2%	\$15.00
West Michigan	29,800	4.0%	\$15.00
East Michigan	10,900	4.3%	\$13.82
Northwest	7,100	5.7%	\$13.46
Northeast	3,300	5.6%	\$13.00
East Central Michigan	7,100	3.4%	\$12.00

Source: Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey; 2019 Wage Rates by Industry and Occupation, Occupational Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget

- About one in three (31 percent) of job vacancies came from just 10 detailed occupations in 2020.
- Seven out of the top 10 detailed occupations by vacancy count required a high school diploma or less. Just one (*Registered nurses*) called for a bachelor's degree, while two (*Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers* and *Nursing assistants*) preferred a postsecondary nondegree award.

- Two of the top 10 detailed job vacancies also appear in *Michigan's Hot 50* job outlook through 2028 of high-wage, in-demand occupations: *Registered nurses* and *Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers*. Combined, they represent 16 percent of the top 10 detailed occupation vacancies, and one in 20 of the total statewide vacancies.

Job Vacancies by Region

- Beyond the types of jobs available, information on the geographic distribution of vacancies by Michigan prosperity region can help provide important insights for employers, job seekers, and policymakers alike to make informed decisions.
- Comprising 69 percent of total vacancies, the Detroit Metro, West Michigan, and Southeast Michigan Prosperity Regions had the largest vacancy counts. These three prosperity regions were also the highest ranked by employment, representing 69 percent of the state total.
- Conversely, areas with the lowest vacancy counts included the Northeast Prosperity Region, Upper Peninsula Prosperity Alliance, and the East Central Michigan Prosperity Region. These regions represented both 9 percent of vacancy counts and total state employment.
- The highest job vacancy rates occurred in the Northwest (5.7 percent), Northeast (5.6 percent), and Upper Peninsula (5.3 percent) Prosperity Regions. The lowest rates were found in the South Central (3.3 percent),

East Central (3.4 percent), and West Michigan (4.0 percent) Prosperity Regions.

- Compared to the second quarter 2019 JVS, regions with the greatest proportional increase in vacancies were the Detroit Metro (27.3 percent), Upper Peninsula (23.3 percent), and Northeast (20.9 percent). Those with the largest decreases were the Northwest (32.4 percent), East Michigan (17.8 percent), and East Central (9.8 percent) Prosperity Regions.
- Median wage offers also differed greatly throughout the state. Vacancies in Southeast Michigan had the highest median wage offer (\$16.00). At \$4.00 per hour less, East Central Michigan had the lowest wage offer (\$12.00) (see Figure 8).

Conclusion

The 2020 Michigan Job Vacancy Survey provided critical insights into the demand-side of the state's labor market, including its condition, trends, and key characteristics of existing openings. With this information, employers, job seekers, educators, workforce developers, and policymakers can make informed decisions when setting wage levels, searching for jobs, prioritizing training, and crafting workforce and economic development programs to best match labor supply with employment demand.

TYLER LEIGHTON
Economic Analyst

TOP TEN DETAILED MICHIGAN OCCUPATIONS WITH THE MOST VACANCIES, 2020

Retail Salespersons
Home Health and Personal Care Aides
Fast Food and Counter Workers
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
Registered Nurses
Cashiers
Customer Service Representatives
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
Nursing Assistants

Michigan's 2020 Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget



MICHIGAN ONLINE JOB ADS INCREASE OVER THE YEAR

In January 2021, there were 158,062 online job postings, a 1.6 percent decrease from December's 160,572 postings. Many of these ads were posted in previous months, but still available in January. For new job ads in January, 61,862 openings were posted, up 16.6 percent from December's 53,043 postings. Over the year, January job ads were 8.7 percent higher.

Supply/Demand Rate Drops

December 2020 was the second month in a row of an increasing supply/demand rate, but 2021 started off with a decrease to 1.8 in January, down from 2.5 in December. This rate indicates that there were approximately 183 unemployed individuals for every 100 open online job advertisements in January. Though the rate has dropped over the month, it is still noticeably higher than one year prior when the rate was 1.4.

Industry Job Ads Rise

Not seasonally adjusted data is available through Burning Glass Technologies. The system offers job advertisement information based on industry groups as well as detailed occupations. Out of 20 Michigan industry groups, 14 experienced growth in job advertisements over the year. The largest percent increase was attributed to *Utilities* at 37.2 percent. Following behind were *Information*

and *Public administration* at 32.4 percent and 30.9 percent, respectfully. Within *Utilities*, the detailed occupation with the largest percent rise in ads over the year was *Production, planning, and expediting clerks*. Next were *Education administrators, postsecondary* and *Computer systems analysts*. The largest numerical change in job advertisements over the year belongs to *Health care and social assistance*. Within this industry, for occupations that had at least 50 advertisements in January 2020, the largest increases belong to *Dental assistants*, *Home health aides* and *Speech-language pathologists*.

Detailed Occupations

Many detailed occupations experienced an uptick in online job advertisements over the year. The top three jobs in terms of percent growth were *Assemblers and fabricators, all other*, *Packers and packagers, hand*, and *Special education teachers*. Looking at the top three jobs by numerical increase, *Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand* (+1,717 ads), *Janitors and cleaners* (+1,165 ads), and *Registered nurses* (+1,143 ads) led the way in January.

Over the month, *Pesticide handlers, sprayers, and applicators, vegetation* rose by 119.0 percent, the largest percent increase for detailed occupations. Next in line were *First-*

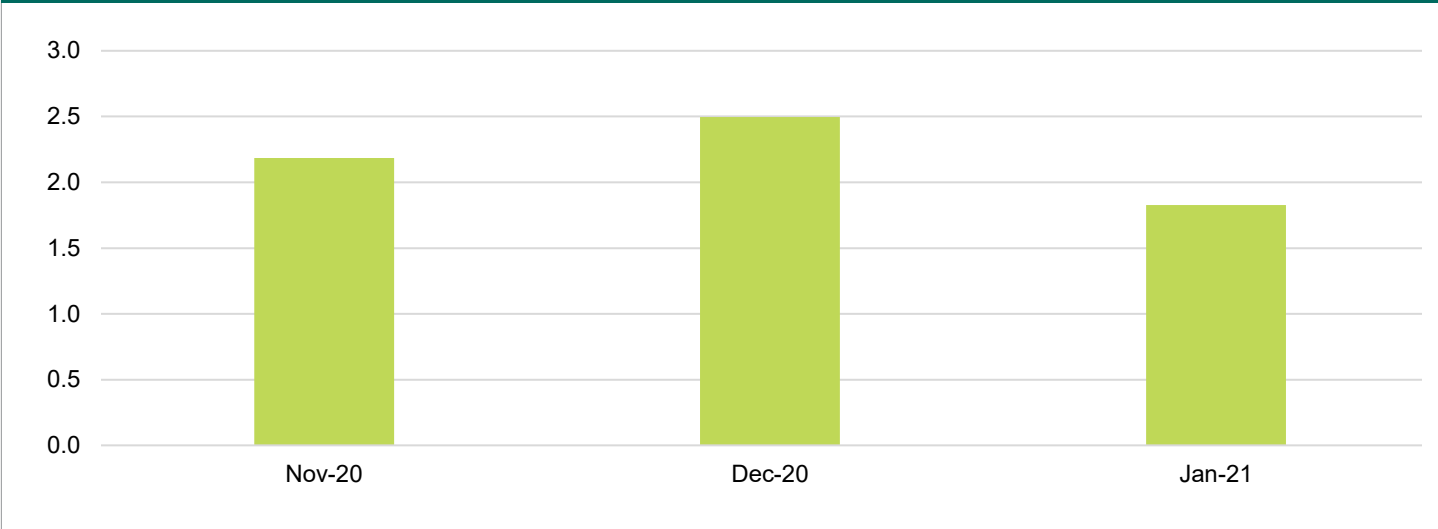
line supervisors of personal service workers and *Farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery, and greenhouse*, which expanded by 108.8 and 97.8 percent, respectively. The top three detailed occupations over the month when looking at numerical improvement varies from the percentage increases. These occupations were *Merchandise displayers and window trimmers* (+211 ads), *Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers* (+204 ads), and *Demonstrators and product promoters* (+95 ads).

Metropolitan Statistical Areas

In January 2021, seven metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) witnessed growth in job advertisements and seven experienced reductions. Niles-Benton Harbor had the largest decrease in postings at 5.6 percent, with the most notable losses in *Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses*, *Nurse practitioners*, and *Tellers*. Jackson had the largest job ad increase at 15.4 percent with the most notable growth in *Waiters and waitresses*, *Retail salespersons*, and *Secretaries and administrative assistants*.

TRISHA SCHLEGEL
Economic Analyst

MICHIGAN MONTHLY SUPPLY/DEMAND RATE, NOVEMBER 2020–JANUARY 2021



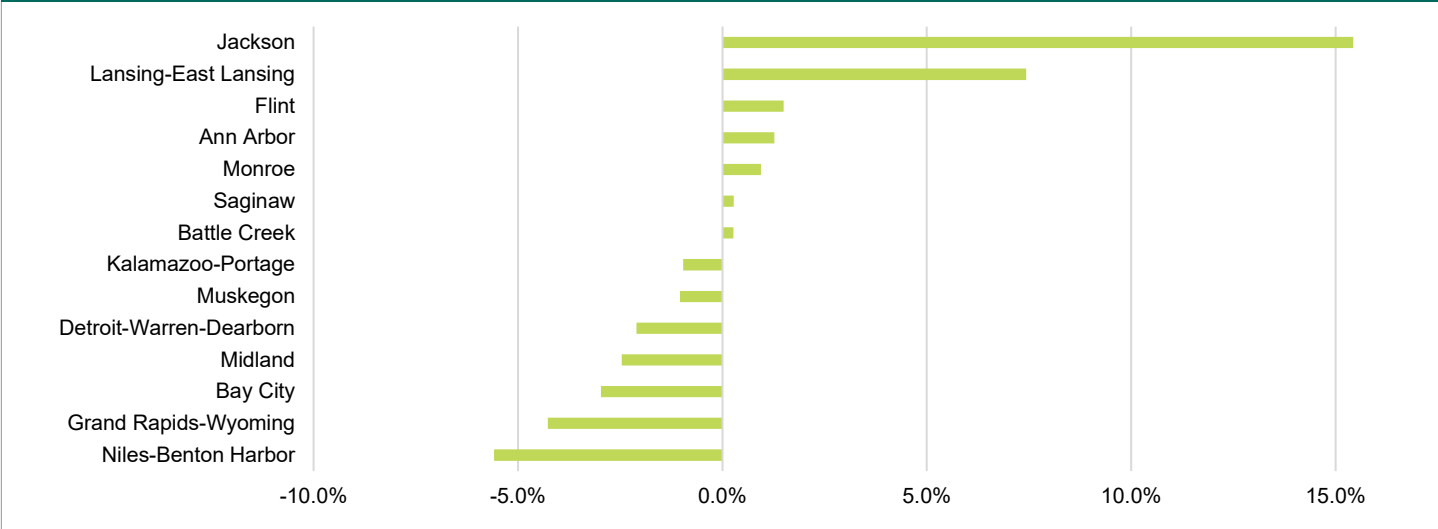
Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget; The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine®, Burning Glass Technologies

MICHIGAN ONLINE JOB ADS BY INDUSTRY, JANUARY 2021



Note: Roughly 33,000 postings did not have specific industry ties in the January 2021 data
 Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine®, Burning Glass Technologies

MONTHLY CHANGE IN JOB ADS BY MICHIGAN METRO AREA, DECEMBER 2020–JANUARY 2021



Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted OnLine®, Burning Glass Technologies

RELEVANT RANKINGS

TOP 10 DETAILED OCCUPATIONS REQUIRING MORE THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE IN MICHIGAN, 2020			
RANK	JOB TITLE	SHARE OF VACANCIES	TYPICAL ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENT
1	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2.6%	Postsecondary Nondegree Award
2	Registered Nurses	2.4%	Bachelor's Degree
3	Nursing Assistants	1.9%	Postsecondary Nondegree Award
4	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	0.5%	Postsecondary Nondegree Award
5	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	0.5%	Bachelor's Degree
6	Medical Assistants	0.5%	Postsecondary Nondegree Award
7	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	0.4%	Bachelor's Degree
8	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	0.3%	Bachelor's Degree
9	Coaches and Scouts	0.2%	Bachelor's Degree
10	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	0.2%	Associate Degree

Source: 2020 Michigan Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

TOP 10 INDUSTRY SECTORS BY TOTAL JOB VACANCIES IN MICHIGAN, 2020

RANK	INDUSTRY SECTOR	SHARE OF VACANCIES	SHARE OF OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	18.2%	14.5%
2	Retail Trade	16.4%	10.9%
3	Accommodation and Food Services	13.3%	9.0%
4	Manufacturing	9.6%	14.5%
5	Construction	8.9%	4.0%
6	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	6.0%	6.9%
7	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5.7%	6.8%
8	Educational Services	4.5%	8.1%
9	Other Services (Except Public Administration)	4.0%	2.9%
10	Finance and Insurance	3.0%	3.5%

Source: 2020 Michigan Job Vacancy Survey, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget; May 2019 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Photo Courtesy of the U.S. Census Bureau

DATA SPOTLIGHT

2020 CENSUS WORKERS IN MICHIGAN

Every 10 years, a decennial census is conducted to count the entire population of the United States. The scale of such a monumental task requires the U.S. Census Bureau to hire hundreds of thousands of workers, and these temporary jobs supplement the employment of the U.S.

During the most recent census in 2020 and the one prior to that in 2010, these jobs were even more valuable during the recent economic recessions, when job losses have been significant. The 2020 Census occurred alongside the COVID-19 recession, and the 2010 Census occurred right after the beginning of the Great Recession of 2009.

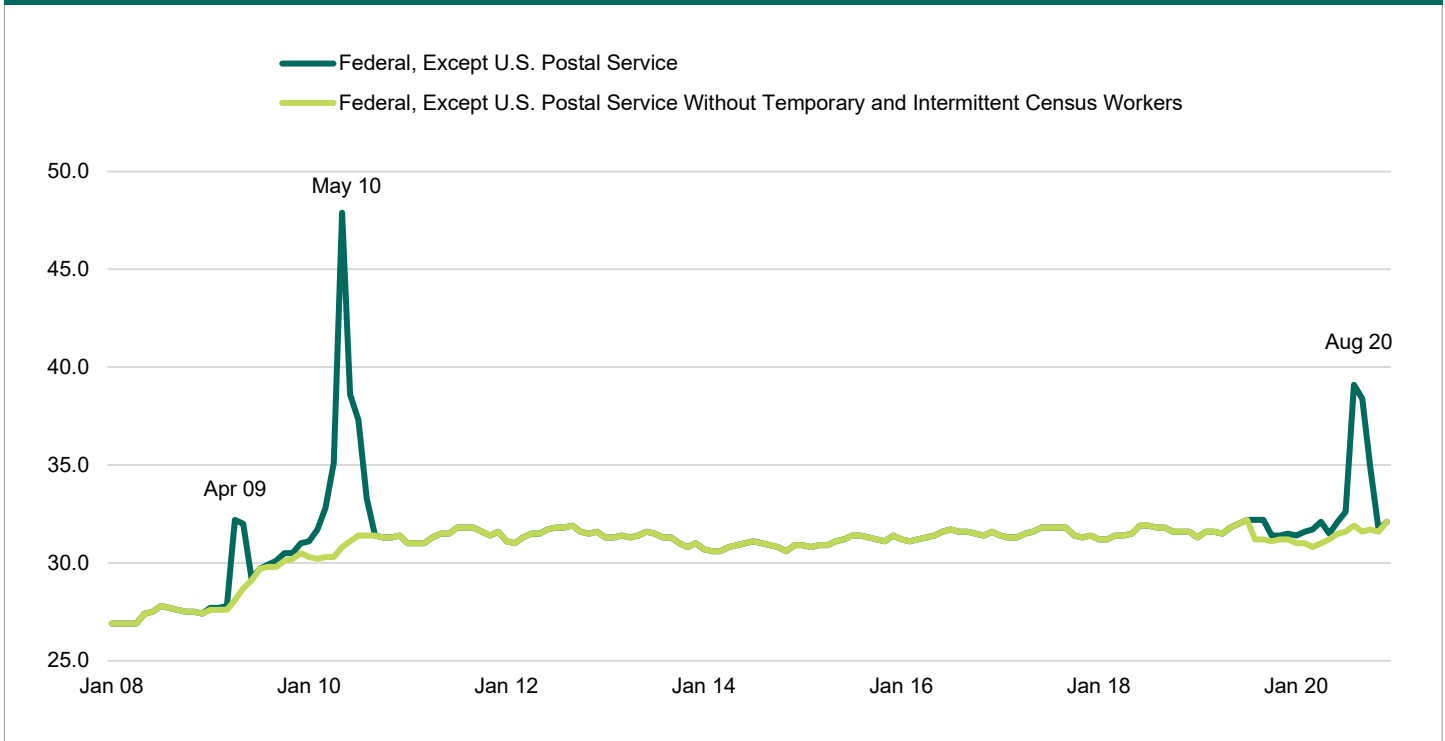
Knowing the number of census workers hired in Michigan is important because it allows for measurement of its direct impact on employment and helps tease out the underlying employment trends that occur in the absence of census temporary workers.

An analysis of the Current Employment Statistics Survey data produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics can reveal these trends, since the movement of these workers onto (and off) the U.S. Census Bureau payroll show up as sharp increases and declines in these monthly employment estimates over time.

Initial hiring for censuses may occur up to 24 months prior to the official Census Day (April 1 of the decennial year). Census workers are generally hired for two phases in the enumeration process that occur before and after Census Day—address canvassing and nonresponse follow-up operations, respectively.

During the address canvassing operation, census workers validate millions of addresses on the master address list to confirm the precise locations where a count is to be expected on April 1. The second operation—nonresponse follow-up—is the most intensive phase of the enumeration process because it requires the bulk of the workers who

FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT IN MICHIGAN, 2008 TO 2020 (IN THOUSANDS)



Source: Current Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Department of Technology, Management & Budget

were hired to conduct follow-up visits to all households that did not respond to the census questionnaire by April 1.

Both the intermittent and temporary nature of the work performed during these discrete phases of census employment becomes evident when the trends are plotted over time for Michigan, as illustrated by the lighter green line in the graph above. The graph shows the impact that census jobs had on federal employment in Michigan for the past two decennial censuses.

During the 2010 Census, there was a slight spike in temporary Michigan census workers in May of 2009, during the address canvassing phase, which was followed by a much sharper increase one year later during nonresponse follow-up. This trend has been characteristic of most censuses.

However, the 2020 Census was different in many ways. The specific months of employment for census workers and the total number of temporary workers hired were quite different compared to previous censuses.

Although the number of census workers on payroll in Michigan also peaked around the start of the nonresponse follow-up phase, this operation was delayed due to COVID-19. As

a result, census hiring activity peaked much later than usual, in August and September of 2020, when local area census offices could safely open.

The hiring activity that is typically evident during the address canvassing phase was also much less pronounced in the 2020 Census. This was largely because new technology eliminated the need for staff to physically canvass communities. Instead, high-resolution aerial imagery was used to validate most home addresses throughout the canvassing phase. This yielded a usable address list and reduced overall operating costs significantly.

Fewer workers were hired for nonresponse follow-up as well. The 2020 Census was the first that allowed respondents to submit their completed questionnaires online during the non-response follow-up operation in the 2020 Census. Adding these optional communication channels was intended to reduce overall costs by boosting response rates, which meant fewer Census workers would need to be hired for follow-up.

Plans were already underway to make 2020 the first online Census year before the onset of COVID-19. In retrospect, the timing for this new approach was serendipitous because it helped reduce the need for person-to-person contact

throughout the pandemic. It also allowed for data collection to continue while field operations were suspended due to COVID-19.

The overall magnitude of the difference between 2010 and 2020 census workers is evident. When the number of temporary and intermittent census workers were tabulated for 26 months prior to December of the last two decennial years, the results showed that half as many workers were hired in Michigan for the 2020 Census than in 2010, which was roughly the same reduction in workers, on average, nationwide.

ASHLEY TARVER
Demographic Analyst



STATE OF MICHIGAN

Department of Technology, Management & Budget

Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives

Detroit Office

Cadillac Place
3032 West Grand Boulevard
Suite 9-150
Detroit, Michigan 48202
(313) 456-3100

Lansing Office

George W. Romney Building, Floor 5
111 S. Capitol Ave.
Lansing, Michigan 48933
(517) 335-2472

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