POPULATION TRENDS

AND CHARACTERISTICS

FIGURES 1–4
The regional population displayed a substantial drop over the 2013–2019 period.

- Recent population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau show the population of the Upper Peninsula Prosperity Alliance dropping by over 10,500, from 309,400 in 2013 to 298,850 in 2019. The area lost about 3,000 residents in just the past two years (2017–2019). All 15 counties in the area recorded population reductions over this period. (Figure 1)

- The state population steadily rose since 2013 to add over 74,000 by 2019. Nationwide, the population rose by close to 4 percent (or about 12.2 million) over this period. (Figure 1)
The UP population peaked in 1975 and has been declining ever since, due mostly to domestic out-migration.

- Natural population growth has also been declining because of decreasing birth rates and increasing death rates following an aging population. The population decline is projected to continue over the next 25 years. (Figure 34)

Source: DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Population Projections
The residents of the Upper Peninsula are much older than the state’s population, on average.

- The population of the Upper Peninsula has been and remained majority male at 52 percent or 157,800, in 2019. In contrast, the female population holds a slight majority statewide at 51 percent. (Figure 2)

- Sixty percent of the UP residents live in four counties and only two counties (Houghton and Marquette) have a median age below the statewide median. All four counties (Marquette, Chippewa, Houghton, and Delta) have a university or college.

### POPULATION BY AGE AND RACE/ETHNICITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Upper Peninsula</th>
<th>Michigan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15–19</td>
<td>6.4% 6.7%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–24</td>
<td>8.3% 7.2%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–54</td>
<td>33.7% 37.8%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55–64</td>
<td>15.6% 14.0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>20.9% 16.3%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>89.0% 75.2%</td>
<td>75.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Asian</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other</td>
<td>3.6% 2.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1.6% 5.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates
The educational attainment of the Upper Peninsula’s residents continues to be below statewide averages.

- The educational attainment structure of the population 25 years and older has not changed over the past several years. Individuals with a high school diploma or a GED have typically constituted the largest group in the Upper Peninsula. This remained true in 2019, when 36 percent of UP residents fell into this category. The share was 29 percent statewide. (Figure 3)

- The Upper Peninsula still shows lower proportions of individuals with a bachelor’s degree or higher (almost 24 percent) than statewide (about 29 percent).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014–2018 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates
LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT
TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS

FIGURES 4–7, 12
Unemployment rates in the Upper Peninsula remain above statewide and national averages.

- The unemployment rate movements for the Upper Peninsula followed state and national trends, dropping by over 4 percentage points between 2013 and 2019. The area’s jobless rates continued to fall over the past two years (2017–2019) by a full percentage point. (Figure 6)

- Over the 2013–2019 period, the count of unemployed individuals dropped by 48 percent, from 13,760 in 2013 to 7,200 in 2019. (Figure 12)

Source: DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)
Area jobless rates are higher for males, youth, and certain racial groups.

- The overall jobless rate of the population 16+ years old in the UP was similar to the state rate for the 2014–2018 period. Unemployment rates have displayed a steady decline since the end of the Great Recession. (Figure 7)

- There were more males than females participating in the labor market in the UP during the 2014–2018 period. Males also experienced higher unemployment rates than females by nearly 3 percentage points. (Figure 7)

- Minority groups experienced higher unemployment rates than whites, over the period.
INDIVIDUALS WITH BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

FIGURES 28–36
The UP has a higher share of males and whites with a disability than statewide.

- Disability increases with age. Of the 15 counties that comprise the UP, only two (Houghton and Marquette) have a population with a median age below the statewide average.

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 48,150 people in the UP reported a disability during the 2014–2018 period. Over half of them were male. Statewide, females displayed a greater share of persons with a disability. About 44 percent of individuals with a disability in the UP were 65 years and older; close to 5 percentage points higher than the state average. (Figure 28)
Regional assistance program recipients are still concentrated in the working age and white demographics.

- In less than two years, the number of assistant program recipients in the UP has dropped by almost a half from 10,900 in June 2017 to 5,900 in December of 2019. (Figure 30)

- There continues to be more female than male recipients of public assistance in both the UP and the state. The share of Native Americans on public assistance in the UP is nine times the statewide rate. Over a quarter of all Michigan Native Americans live in the UP. (Figure 30)

### Assistance Program Recipients by Gender, Age, and Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>14–15</th>
<th>16–19</th>
<th>20–21</th>
<th>22–44</th>
<th>45–54</th>
<th>55+</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
<th>Native American</th>
<th>All Other</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source:</td>
<td>Michigan Department of Health and Human Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Older workers continue to stay longer in the labor market in Michigan and the Upper Peninsula.

- Close to four in 10 persons age 16 and older in the Upper Peninsula and the state are in the category of older workers (age 55 years or more). (Figure 35)

- Only about 29 percent of older workers in the UP have jobs, compared to 36 percent statewide. The jobless rate of older workers in the UP, although higher than the statewide rate, has been declining since the end of the Great Recession. (Figure 35)

**FIGURE 9: LABOR FORCE STATUS OF OLDER WORKERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of 55+ Years Old Individuals in Total Population</th>
<th>Labor Force Participation Rate</th>
<th>Employment/Population Ratio</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Peninsula</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Upper Peninsula</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014–2018 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates
The poverty rate is at 15.6 percent in the Upper Peninsula; slightly above the statewide rate.

- Based on the 2014–2018 five-year estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 15.6 percent Upper Peninsula residents (47,300 persons) lived under the poverty line. The state’s poverty rate was 15 percent over this period, about 1.5 million persons. (Figure 36)

- Individuals identifying themselves as some other race or two or more races had the highest poverty rate in the Upper Peninsula at 26 percent; the poverty rate of this group statewide was almost 37 percent. The share of Native Americans in poverty (22 percent) is noticeably higher than the statewide rate (14 percent). (Figure 36)
IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

FIGURES 8–11, 17–26
Close to 60 percent of regional employment is concentrated in three industries.

- The current ranking of regional industries based on their share in total private payroll jobs has remained unchanged compared to two years ago in 2017.

- In the 2nd quarter of 2019, *Trade, transportation, and utilities* was the region’s largest private industry, employing about one in four workers. Statewide, the share of this industry group in total payroll jobs was one in five. (Figure 8)
Only three of the 10 regional private industries recorded positive job growth over the 2013–2019 period.

- Private sector jobs in the Upper Peninsula inched down by 290 (-0.4 percent) since 2013. Statewide, private payroll employment grew by 343,390 or 9.9 percent during the same period. (Figure 8)

- **Construction** recorded the largest job expansion, followed by **Manufacturing**, and **Leisure and hospitality**. The remaining seven industry groups recorded employment reductions amounting to a total of about 3,400. The loss of jobs in the **Natural resources and mining** industry is mainly the result of the closure of an iron ore mine in the summer of 2016, while job cuts in **Education and health services** occurred mostly in **Social assistance**. (Figure 8)
Online job postings reached 2,460 in the second quarter of 2019.

- In the second quarter of 2019, there were 2,460 online advertised job postings in the Upper Peninsula, according to the Conference Board’s Help Wanted OnLine® Database. (Figure 18)

- Most of the top job advertisements posted online require a high school diploma, some vocational training, or an associate degree. In the Upper Peninsula, eight of the top 10 online job postings during the second quarter of 2019 fell in this category. (Figure 18)

- Registered nurses continued to be in extremely high-demand in Southeast Michigan and across the state. (Figure 18)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOB TITLE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service Representatives</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Practical &amp; Licensed Vocational Nurses</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Salespersons</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and Health Services Managers</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janitors &amp; Cleaners, Exc. Maids and Housekeeping</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service Managers</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Conference Board, Help Wanted OnLine® Database
About half of Upper Peninsula jobs are projected to be in three job groups by 2026.

- Overall occupational employment in the Upper Peninsula is projected to decline by 1.5 percent (-1,770) between 2016 and 2026, compared to an expansion of 7 percent statewide. (Figure 19)

- At 20 percent, Service occupations is the largest occupational category in terms of projected total jobs in 2026 (same share in 2016). This group includes occupations in Protective services, Food preparation and service, Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, and Personal care services.
Only Healthcare and Service occupations are projected to display some growth in the UP through 2026.

- Employment in all occupational groups in the Upper Peninsula are projected to grow below the statewide average through 2026. Jobs in Healthcare are projected to inch up by 200 (+1.6 percent), while 90 additional jobs will be created in Service. Employment in the remaining nine occupational groups in projected to contract in the UP through 2026.

- The largest employment decline in the UP is projected in Production occupations. Production is also the only group forecast to contract statewide. (Figure 19)
Occupations with a large employment base will continue to create more openings out of the need to replace workers.

- Because of the need to replace workers who are retiring or otherwise exiting or transferring an occupation in the area, the largest groups are projected to see the most annual openings through 2026.

- **Service** occupations, the largest occupational group in the region, is expected to see the highest number of annual openings.

- Employment in most major occupational groups is projected to contract by 2026, except for **Healthcare** (+20 annually) and **Service** (+10). (Figure 20)
Close to half of jobs in the Upper Peninsula will require a H.S. diploma with minimal training.

- By 2026, it is projected that close to 46 percent of Upper Peninsula jobs (43 percent statewide) will still need only a high school diploma or less, with short-term or no on-the-job (OJT) training. These occupations have a large employment base and will create jobs through the need to replace workers. Many service careers, such as Waiters, fall in this category.

- Similarly, a little over a quarter of jobs in the area (two percentage points above the state rate) will require some moderate OJT or a postsecondary certificate (e.g.,). Heavy truck drivers

- The share of jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree or higher in the area is about 5 percentage points below state average.

**Source:** DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives
The Upper Peninsula has slower long-term projected growth compared to the state overall in every educational group.

- Jobs that require a bachelor’s degree or more is the only educational group projected to grow in the UP by 2026. Even for this group, the expansion rate in the UP is eight times lower than the statewide rate.

- Occupational employment in all other educational groups is projected to decline faster than the regional average.
Many jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree or more in the region are projected to be in high demand and to pay well.

- Levels of pay are directly correlated with the level of formal education and/or the length of job training or apprenticeship.
- Most high-wage, high-demand occupations requiring a bachelor’s degree or more in the UP are in engineering, health sciences, management, and social work.
- Jobs in this category are projected to grow fastest through 2026 and display higher pay scales than any other occupations. (Figure 23)
High-demand, high-wage jobs in the UP requiring an associate degree, long-term training, or apprenticeships are mostly in skilled trades.

- High-wage, high-demand occupations in the UP requiring an associate degree, long-term training, or apprenticeships are dominated by professional trades (Electricians, Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters, Machinists, HVAC and refrigeration mechanics and installers, Millwrights, etc.).

- Some of these careers display a large employment base (e.g. Electricians), while other are projected to grow above average (example: Physical therapist assistants). (Figure 24)
Most high-wage, high-demand careers calling for a postsecondary certificate or moderate training display growth rates below the state average.

- Jobs in this category are concentrated in construction (e.g., Highway maintenance workers), services (Police and sheriff’s patrol officers), and sales (Insurance sales agents).

- Most demand careers in this category display growth rates that are below the projected statewide average of 7 percent. Some are even forecast to contract (example: Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers).

(Figure 25)
Most high-demand occupations requiring a high school diploma or equivalent and short-term training pay below regional average wage.

- Careers in this category in the UP are predominantly in services. Examples include Food preparation and serving workers and supervisors, Home health aides, and others.

- Although in high demand, most careers in this group pay below the regional all-occupation average wage of $16.59 in 2018. For example, the occupation of Home health aides is projected to grow by about 14 percent over the 2016–2026 period but pay only $11 an hour in 2018. (Figure 26)