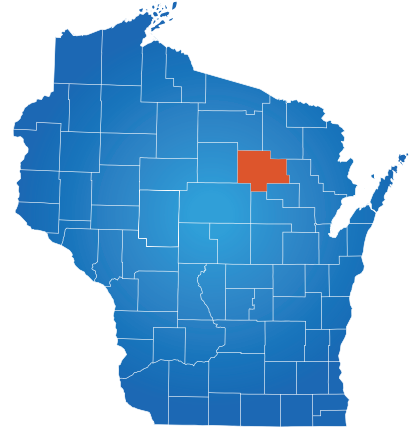


# Langlade County



## 2023 WORKFORCE PROFILE



## 2022 Wisconsin Overview

Wisconsin's economy broke numerous records during 2022, as the rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic continued.

During January through April, the state achieved a record low seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 2.8%, while also achieving record lows in initial and continuing weekly unemployment insurance claims. As the number of unemployed people trended downward, construction employment reached a record high, and the manufacturing industry also experienced strong growth.

By year end, the state had regained 99% of the 404,000 jobs lost during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the short, sharp recession of March and April 2020. In addition to the strong rebound in jobs during 2022, Wisconsin's real GDP reached record highs and the state concluded the year with a record high state surplus approaching \$7 billion.

While Wisconsin's year-ending labor force participation rate of 64.6% remained more than 2 percentage points above the national average, demographic trends including the aging and retirement of Baby Boomers contributed to the labor quantity challenge. Concerns over inflation, compounded by China's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting supply chain disruptions, also defined the year.

As demand for workers grew throughout 2022, employers voiced concerns about their inability to attract talent and workers in general. This is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. The primary underlying challenge is the demographic situation as Baby Boomers exit the workforce. This lifecycle event will continue to complicate employers' ability to find workers and talent. These demographic problems extend beyond Wisconsin and affect the upper Midwest, the U.S. as a whole, much of Western Europe, and in fact, the developed world. Even China faces a talent shortage.

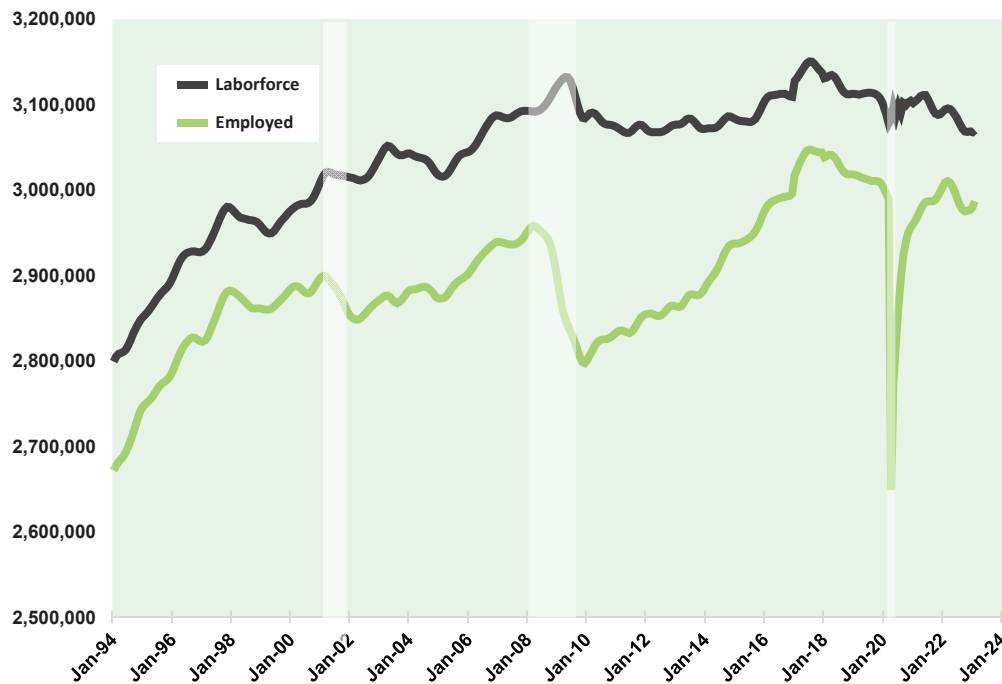


## EMPLOYMENT

Wisconsin's labor force held relatively steady through the pandemic, while employment dropped severely and then recovered quickly. See Graphic 1.

The employment gyrations pushed the unemployment rate to 14.1% in April 2020. As employment recovered, the unemployment rate fell to new lows of 2.8% in March and April of 2022. As of December 2022, Wisconsin's seasonally adjusted unemployment is 3.2%.

**Graphic 1: Wisconsin's Labor Force and Employment**



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Bureau of Labor Statistics

## SHORT-RUN OUTLOOK

The short-run outlook for the state looks positive. Job levels continue at high levels, registering gains in 10 out of 12 months in 2022.

Job gains coupled with higher wages translate into healthy consumption, which makes up two-thirds of the economy. Wage gains have been robust. However, the surge in inflation brought about by supply chain disruptions and the war in Europe have undercut the gains in real terms. We expect high inflation to be transitory while wage gains will be permanent. With continued job and wage gains, consumption will be the underpinning of economic growth.

The most prominent economic risk is the Federal Reserve Bank (Fed) aggressively combatting inflation through higher interest rates. The Fed raised interest rates seven times in 2022 – going from essentially zero to 5%. They set a range of 25 basis points. As of March 1, 2023 the range is 4.7 – 5%. Interestingly, Fed fiscal policy contributed to inflation pressures over the last few years.

Experts expect that inflation pressures will ease as supply chains readjust. As inflation pressures ease, the Fed will be able to conduct a more accommodative monetary policy. Tighter fiscal policy will have an influence over the coming years as well.

Businesses continue to voice lack of workforce talent as the primary constraint on production growth. Pursuit of workers has brought about wage and benefit increases, signing bonuses, and other incentives to attract workers. However, other workforce barriers such as transportation, dependent care, housing affordability, and the uncertainty of workplace safety surrounding COVID-19. Solutions to these barriers are discussed below.



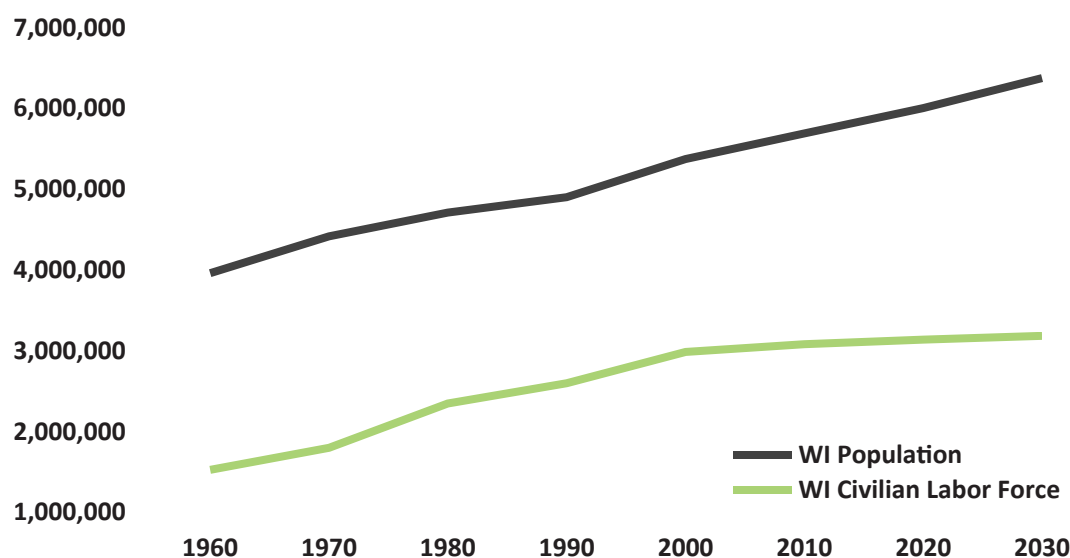
## LONG-RUN CHALLENGE

Workforce quantity is the primary challenge facing Wisconsin's economic future. The demographic dynamics facing the state, other upper-Midwest states, the U.S., and most of the developed economies will advance unaltered in the coming decades.

While Wisconsin's population will continue to grow over the next 20 years, the workforce faces serious constraints. The labor force trend began to seriously flatten in 2008 after slowing in the late 1990s as the first baby boomers (those born in 1946) reached age 62 and began to leave the workforce. Baby boomers continue to exit the workforce in great numbers and will continue to do so over the next 20 years.

The number of retiring baby boomers nearly match the influx of new workers, resulting in a slow-growing workforce. This constrains employers' ability to secure talent across industries. Many businesses report that the lack of available workers has hindered expansion, and in some cases, even curtailed the ability to meet current business needs.

**Graphic 2: Wisconsin Population and Labor Force**



Source: WI DWD, OEA Special Tabulation

There are four solutions to the macroeconomic labor quantity challenge: 1) offshoring production, 2) immigration, 3) mitigating barriers to employment of the chronically unemployed, and 4) technological advancement. Critical to the technology solution is the concomitant match of labor skills with technologies' sophistication. This is true for designing, building, installing, operating, and maintaining the advanced technology being put in place as well as for development of the infrastructure and facilities needed to support technological progress: broadband, power, water, transportation.

Worker skills must align with skills demanded by the position. If you have the talent and not the job, the talent goes elsewhere. If you have the job and not the talent, the job goes elsewhere. For Wisconsin to successfully compete in the global economy, the state needs to attract and retain every body it can and educate and train everybody to match the requirements of the new technologies.

## FOUR SOLUTIONS



## Langlade County

### POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Langlade County has 19,457 residents and is the 19th least populous county in Wisconsin. It's also Wisconsin's sixth slowest growing county. It lost 34 residents from 2020 to 2022 decreasing its population at a rate of 0.2%. This change followed the declining trend of the 2010s, where the county's population shrunk by 486 residents, decreasing at a rate of 2.4%. The 10 most populous municipalities in Langlade County accounted for 86.3% of the county's overall population, and the city of Antigo was the largest contributor with a 41.4% share. From 2020 to 2022, these municipalities collectively lost 39 residents.

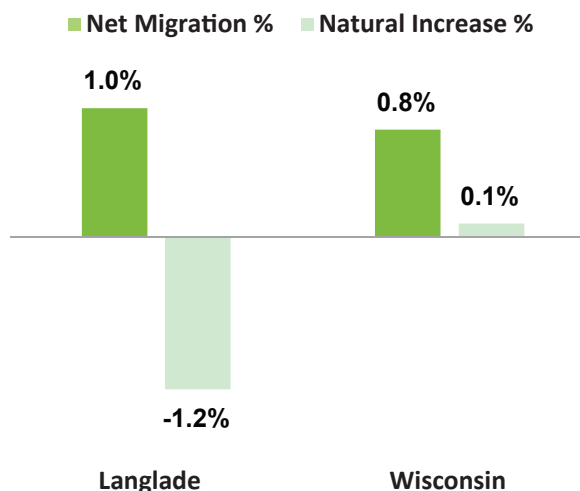
**Graphic 3: 10 Most Populous Municipalities in County**

	2020 Census	2022 Final Estimate	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Antigo, City	8,100	8,053	-47	-0.6%
Rolling, Town	1,432	1,431	-1	-0.1%
Antigo, Town	1,369	1,369	0	0.0%
Elcho, Town	1,168	1,170	2	0.2%
Polar, Town	1,018	1,009	-9	-0.9%
Norwood, Town	907	911	4	0.4%
Neva, Town	846	845	-1	-0.1%
Wolf River, Town	783	793	10	1.3%
Upham, Town	726	729	3	0.4%
Ainsworth, Town	477	477	0	0.0%
<b>Langlade County</b>	<b>19,491</b>	<b>19,457</b>	<b>-34</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>
<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>5,893,718</b>	<b>5,949,155</b>	<b>55,437</b>	<b>0.9%</b>

Source: WI Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services Center

Population change is caused by net migration and natural increase. Net migration, which is defined as people moving into the county minus those leaving, increased the county's population by 1%. This was marginally higher than the state rate of 0.8%. Natural increase, which is defined as births minus deaths, decreased the county's population by 1.2%. This was less favorable than the state, which grew by 0.1%. The combined impacts of both components result in overall population change; Langlade County's growth was solely attributable to net migration. Net migration impacts a county's labor force potential immediately, and natural increase gives insight into the long-term workforce pipeline. Largely a function of an aging population, natural increase is expected to decline in the coming decades because the state's fertility rate has been below replacement level since 1975.

**Graphic 4: Components of Population Change**



Source: Demographic Services Center, WI Dept. of Administration

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

From 2020 to 2021, employment in the county increased by 72 jobs (1%) across all industries. This fell short of the state's job growth of 2.5%, marking the county's initial employment recovery from COVID-19 as comparatively sluggish. Comparing employment totals to 2019, an accurate pre-pandemic reference point, provides the relative employment loss and recovery needed to reach pre-pandemic employment levels. As of 2021, the county was down 2.7% to its 2019 employment level, while the state was down 3.1%.

**Graphic 5: Employment Change by Industry**

	2021 Average Monthly Employment	1-year Numeric Change	1-year Percent Change	2-year Numeric Change	2-year Percent Change	Percent of Total Employment
Construction	226	12	5.6%	32	16.5%	3.1%
Education & Health Services	1,276	-20	-1.5%	-120	-8.6%	17.7%
Financial Activities	330	0	0.0%	7	2.2%	4.6%
Information	32	-6	-15.8%	-20	-38.5%	0.4%
Leisure & Hospitality	636	36	6.0%	-40	-5.9%	8.8%
Manufacturing	1,269	-30	-2.3%	-91	-6.7%	17.6%
Natural Resources & Mining	399	-39	-8.9%	-60	-13.1%	5.5%
Other Services	191	3	1.6%	-17	-8.2%	2.7%
Professional & Business Services	359	105	41.3%	94	35.5%	5.0%
Public Administration	422	-9	-2.1%	2	0.5%	5.9%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	2,067	20	1.0%	15	0.7%	28.7%
<b>All Industries</b>	<b>7,207</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>- 199</b>	<b>-2.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: WI DWD, Labor Market Information, QCEW 2021

Six of 11 industries had employment growth from 2020 to 2021 in Langlade County. Over the year, professional and business services registered both the greatest numerical and proportional gain in employment, with a gain of 105 jobs (41.3%). Natural resources and mining displayed the greatest numerical loss in employment, with a loss of 39 jobs (-8.9%). In Wisconsin, leisure and hospitality had the greatest gain in jobs and public administration had the greatest loss in jobs over the year.

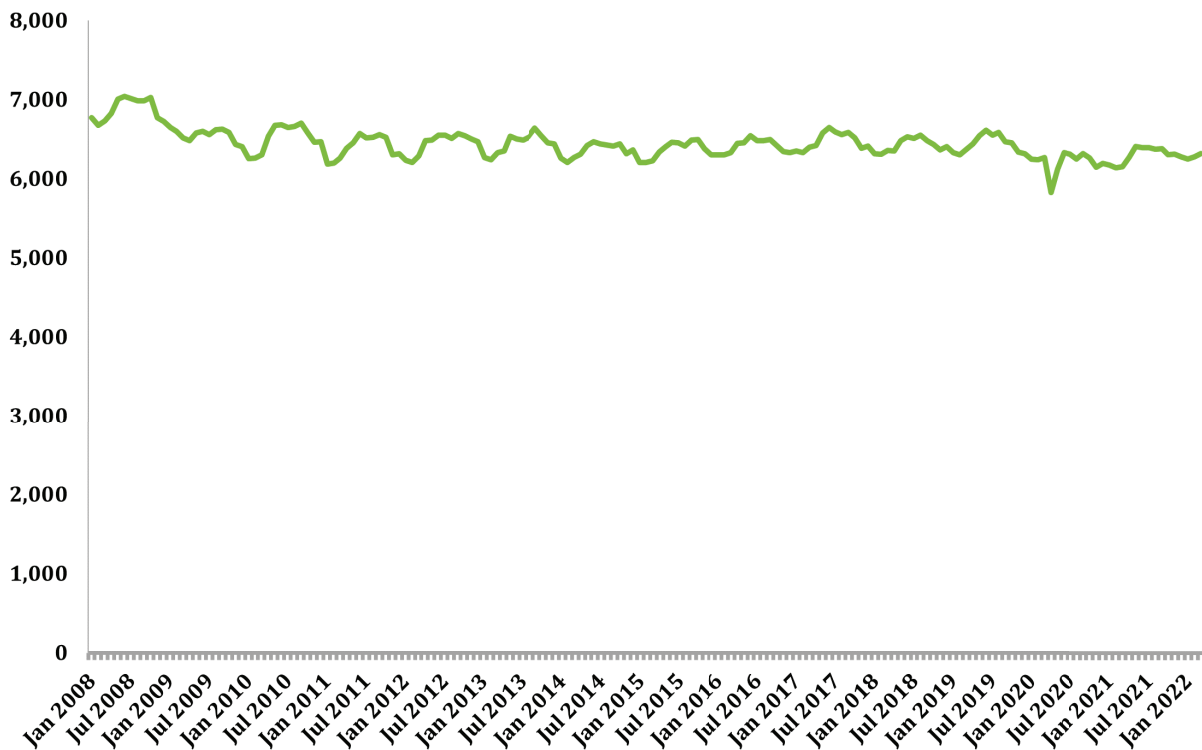
As of 2021, five industries in the county surpassed their 2019 pre-pandemic employment level: construction, financial activities, professional and business services, public administration, and trade, transportation, and utilities. In contrast, only construction and financial activities surpassed their pre-pandemic employment level statewide. In Langlade County, education and health services was the furthest from its pre-pandemic job numbers of 2019, needing to regain the greatest number of jobs (120). Information was proportionally the furthest from its pre-pandemic job numbers, needing the greatest growth of jobs (38.5%). In Wisconsin, leisure and hospitality was the most negatively impacted industry – experiencing the greatest numerical and proportional decrease of jobs.



## TOTAL MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT

Graphic 6 shows monthly employment in Langlade County, characterized by the presence of typical seasonal employment patterns and the pandemic. Seasonal patterns were interrupted in March and April 2020, when COVID-19 caused counter-cyclical job losses and introduced unprecedented volatility into the economic outlook. This makes it complicated to recognize temporary economic shifts from structural ones. The disruption lasted only two months and normal seasonal employment patterns resumed, but at lower levels. Seasonal variations in employment happen when business and industry activity changes and are best tracked with year-over-year comparisons in the same month.

**Graphic 6: QCEW Monthly Employment**



Source: WI DWD, Labor Market Information, QCEW Second Quarter

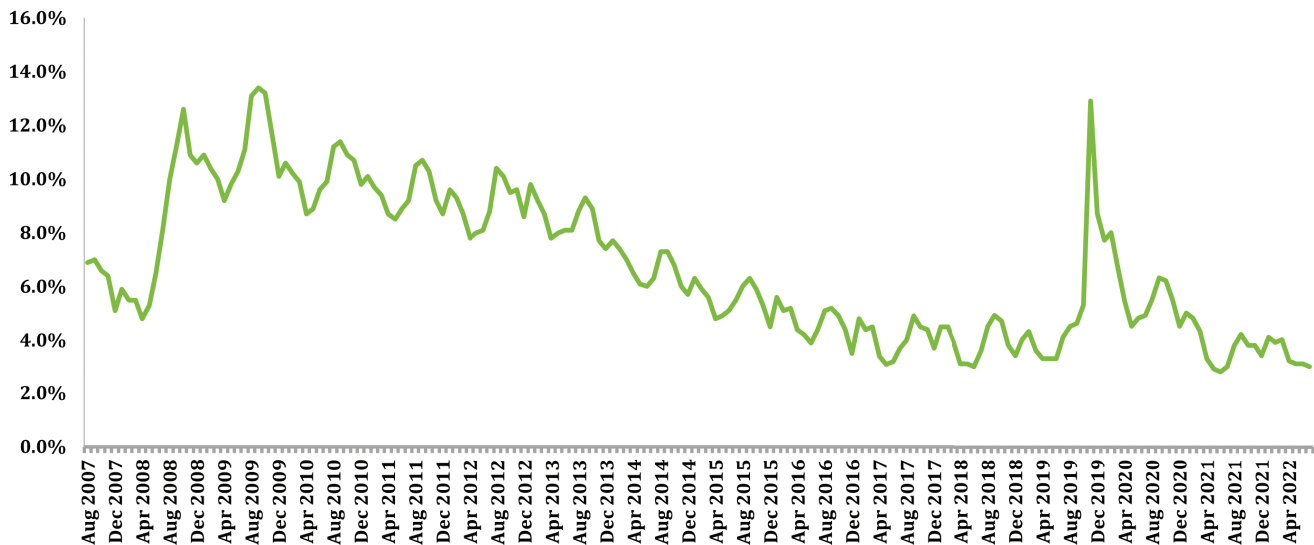
In April 2020, local employment experienced the initial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and sharply decreased by 446 jobs (-7.1%). This was the low point of the pandemic for employment. Compared to April 2019, Langlade County job counts were down 9.6%. Employment initially improved at a fast pace and by April 2021, jobs were only down 2.8%. However, the rate of employment recovery did not persist. As of March 2022, Langlade County employment was still down 0.9% compared to March 2019. It's not clear exactly when employment will reach pre-pandemic levels, but it is expected to recover more quickly than it did after the Great Recession.

Short-term changes in employment occur naturally. While these changes are important, it's more significant to highlight the long-term changes to how markets and the economy function. These structural changes often arise in economic recoveries. Many sudden changes emerged from COVID-19 as society and businesses adjusted. Virtual options arose in school, work and healthcare. Workplace flexibilities arose in the form of split-shifts, compressed work times, job-sharing of tasks or hours, and other forms of flexible work arrangements. Automation trends accelerated. These changes will persist in an ongoing effort to satisfy customer needs and worker demands. Ultimately, it will be vital for the county and its workers to align skills and training with the emerging demands of the future.

## UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Compared to the Great Recession, job loss and recovery were more prominent post-COVID-19. The unemployment rate represents the number of residents that did not have a job yet were actively seeking work as a share of the total labor force. In April 2020, Langlade County's unemployment rate climbed 7.6 percentage points. This resulted in a peak rate of 12.9%, nearly matching the highest rates experienced in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. Eight months after this initial spike, the unemployment rate fell to 4.9%. Positive momentum continues following a quick initial recovery. The unemployment rate improved to 3.0% in December 2022, the latest month for which county-level data are available.

**Graphic 7: Unemployment Rate**

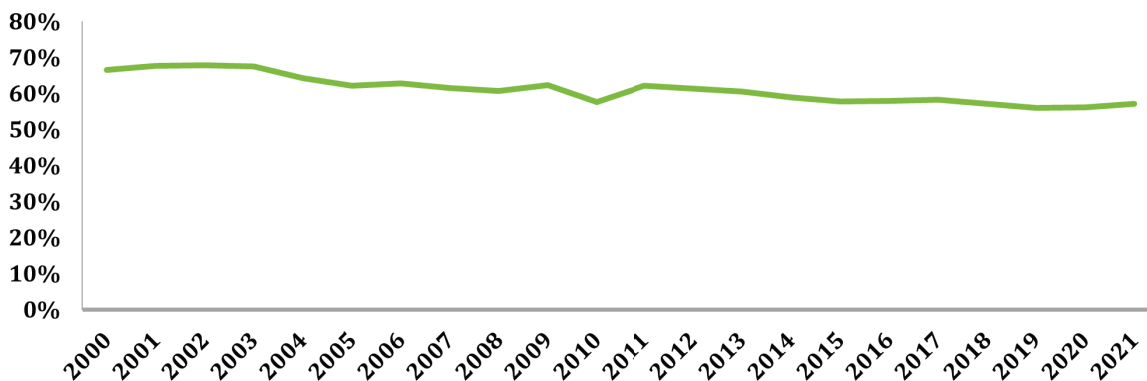


Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Bureau of Labor Statistics

Attracting and retaining employees was challenging for employers even before COVID-19. Trends in labor force participation indicate that this challenge is likely to continue into the future.

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) measures the percentage of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and older that is working or actively looking for work. This rate encounters downward pressure anytime there is an aging population. Langlade County's LFPR has been trending steadily downward since 2000, when the oldest baby boomers were in the late stages of their prime working years. The local LFPR was 66.6% in 2000 and has diminished to 57.2% in 2021.

**Graphic 8: Labor Force Participation Rate**



Source: WI DWD, Office of Economic Advisors (OEA)



## BARRIERS TO FULL UTILIZATION

As Wisconsin's population continues to age and baby boomers exit the workforce, the long-term challenge of workforce quantity worsens. This increases the importance of labor market engagement. Labor market engagement is constrained by barriers to employment, which prevent people from entering or fully participating in the labor market. Four common barriers persist across areas and industries. These barriers are transportation, housing, childcare and broadband access.s and industries. These barriers are transportation, housing, childcare, and broadband access.

### Transportation

Transportation is essential for employment. When people can't obtain transportation, they may not be able to work or pursue an employment opportunity, and businesses may have difficulty securing talent and filling positions. According to the most recent data available, 88.3% of employed Langlade County

Graphic 9: Means of Transportation

	Wisconsin	Langlade County
Drive Car	87.6%	88.3%
Drive Alone	79.9%	82.0%
Mean Commute Time - Residents	22.2	20.6
Mean Commute Time - Workers	21.9	19.6
% of Residents Working in another County	28.0%	21.0%
% of Workers Residing in another County	24.3%	20.5%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 5-year File

residents drive a car to work, a higher percentage than Wisconsin (87.6%). Most residents, 82%, drive alone. While reliance on a car to get to work is higher for county residents, commute times and share of residents traveling outside the county for work are lower. Residents had an average commute time of 20.6 minutes and 21% traveled outside of the county for work. Employers pulled 20.5% of their workers from other counties. Addressing transportation challenges will improve workforce outcomes.

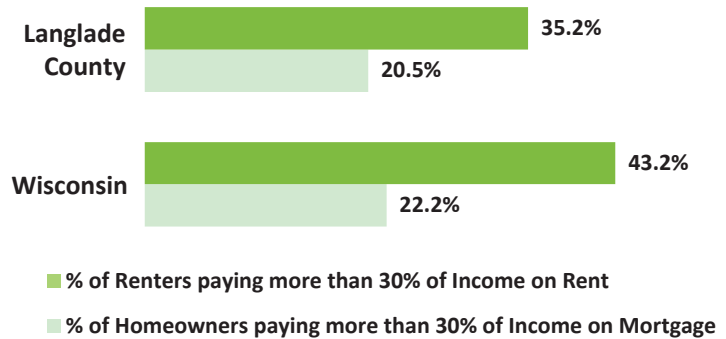


## Housing

Housing affordability and availability are barriers to employment and limit an area's ability to attract and retain workers. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses 30% of income as a guideline for housing affordability. Throughout the county and state, a greater proportion of renters than homeowners spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Early data shows that home values and monthly rent increased at an accelerated rate between 2020 and 2022, suggesting that the issue could worsen. Two ways to reduce this share would be to provide more housing at a lower cost and increase earnings.

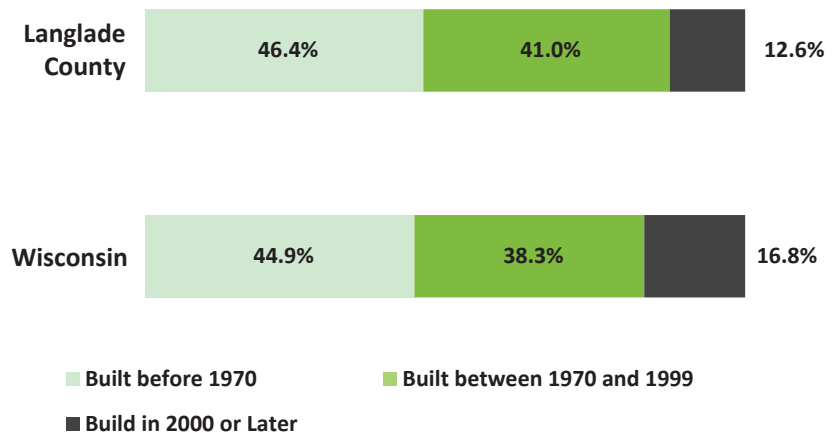
Housing availability is just as important as affordability but is difficult to quantify. One way to assess it is through the age distribution of housing stock in an area. The oldest category of homes, those built before 1970, contributed to a significantly higher share in Langlade County than the state. Among Wisconsin's 72 counties, Langlade had the 21st highest share of homes built before 1970. Conversely, the newest category of homes, those built in 2000 or later, represented a much smaller distribution of housing in Langlade County, 7.2 percentage points lower than the state distribution. While this illustrates the aged housing stock that accompanies the county, housing costs are a burden for a smaller proportion of Langlade County renters and homeowners in comparison to the state. This may mean there's potential for housing development and offers an interesting context for future strategic planning discussions.

**Graphic 10: % Paying more than 30% of Income on Housing**



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 5-year File

**Graphic 11: Housing Share by Year Built**



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 5-year File





## Childcare

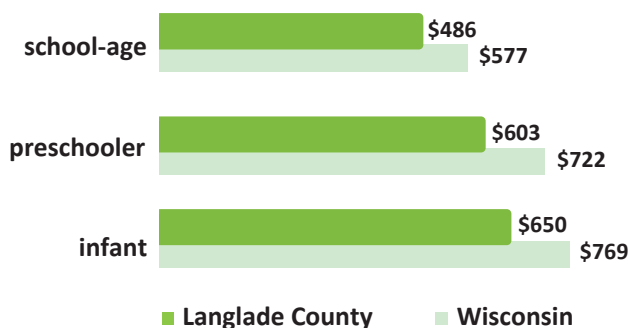
Childcare is a barrier to employment for Wisconsin families, as its cost and availability often dictate the labor force participation of parents. Some impacted parents refrain from entering the workforce, while others are reduced in their availability to work. Not only is housing more affordable for Langlade County residents than the state, but so is childcare. The monthly cost of childcare ranges from \$486 for a school-age child to \$650 for an infant. While residents are challenged with the cost of care, they are also challenged with the availability of care. According to the YoungStar provider database, which tracks 82% of childcare providers in the state, Langlade County has seven childcare providers for a potential capacity of 95 children. When compared to the population of children under 14, there are only three childcare slots available for every 100 children. In Wisconsin, there are 14 childcare slots available for every 100 children. This contrast indicates that Langlade County is facing a greater challenge in childcare availability. Easing the cost and access burden would allow more parents attain their full employment potential.

**Graphic 12: Childcare Capacity**

	Wisconsin	Langlade County
Providers	3,863	7
Maximum Capacity	132,075	95
Capacity/100 Children Under 14**	0.14	0.03

Source: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, Youngstar Database

**Graphic 13: Childcare cost**



Source: Center for Women's Welfare, Uni. of Washington, 2019 Self-Sufficiency Standards

## Broadband

Society responded to COVID-19 with virtual options in school, work and healthcare. Once thought of as temporary necessities, many of these will remain even after the pandemic has ended. Workforce shortages empower the rise of remote work options, which benefit both employers and workers. Employers gain a larger talent pool of candidates, and workers gain increased availability to work. However, high-speed internet must be available to capture the benefits of virtual options.

Graphic 14 summarizes the distribution of broadband internet access across households. Internet access varies across income levels and is more attained at higher household income groups. Across all income groups, Langlade County has a higher percentage of households without access to internet than the state. In the county, 10% of households earning \$75,000 or didn't have access to high-speed internet, 5.4 percentage points higher than the state. Among income levels, this was the greatest difference in distribution between the county and the state. In Langlade County, 42.1% of households earning below \$20,000 did not have access. High-speed internet access is disproportionately lower for low-income families and obstructs participation in virtual employment, training and educational opportunities.

**Graphic 14: Percent of Households that **DO NOT** have Internet Access by Annual Household Income**

	Wisconsin	Langlade County
Total	14.8%	22.7%
Less than \$20,000:	38.4%	46.8%
\$20,000 to \$74,999:	17.5%	23.6%
\$75,000 or more:	4.6%	7.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 5-year File

## INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Graphic 15: Industry Employment Projections

Industry	2020 Employment	Projected 2030 Employment	Employment Change	Percent Change (2020-2030)
Total All Industries	212,222	227,014	14,792	7.0%
Natural Resources and Mining	6,702	7,242	540	8.1%
Construction	7,479	8,171	692	9.3%
Manufacturing	33,770	36,041	2,271	6.7%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	40,606	42,506	1,900	4.7%
Information	2,282	2,268	-14	-0.6%
Financial Activities	14,562	15,272	710	4.9%
Professional and Business Services	12,155	13,458	1,303	10.7%
Education and Health Services	41,542	45,466	3,924	9.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	16,782	19,548	2,766	16.5%
Other Services (except Government)	10,546	11,093	547	5.2%
Public Administration	11,604	11,936	332	2.9%
Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers	14,192	14,013	-179	-1.3%

The Department of Workforce Development produces projections of industry and occupation employment. The projections in this profile are produced every two years, following Bureau of Labor Statistics separations methodology. The workforce is constantly evolving, and workers are likely to work in several occupations throughout their lifetime. Workers leave occupations for reasons other than retirement, such as career changes or promotions. The separations methodology accounts for these different types of job changes. The current forecast looks at employment between 2020 and 2030 and is published at both the state and Workforce Development Area (WDA) level. The state is composed of 11 WDAs and the projections presented in this profile are for the nine-county North Central WDA. The current 10-year projections reflect both the low base-year employment of 2020 and the recovery from the 2020 recession.

Over the 10-year period, regional employment is expected to grow by 7%, above the state's rate of 6.3%. Employment in the region is anticipated to increase by 14,792 jobs, most attributable to education and health services (26.5%), leisure and hospitality (18.7%) and manufacturing (15.4%). Other than the information industry, all industries in the North Central area are expected to grow at varying rates. Note that these projections only forecast levels of filled positions rather than potential demand, which further illustrates the challenges of having an aging population. While growth in the labor force is slowing, and in some counties even declining, job growth is expected to continue. So, while businesses already have difficulty filling the job openings vacated by retirees, they'll have challenges filling new openings as well, which could constrain job growth and limit expansions. Although solutions will be different for each business, they will likely include a combination of talent pipeline development, increased automation, engagement of under-utilized groups, and retention of retirees in non-conventional work arrangements.





## OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Graphic 16: Occupational Employment Projections

Occupation Title	2020 Employment	Projected 2030 Employment	Occupational Openings	Percent Change (2020-2030)
Total All Occupations	212,222	227,014	25,625	7.0%
Management	11,661	12,436	1,089	6.7%
Business and Financial Operations	11,718	12,381	1,093	5.7%
Computer and Mathematical	5,608	6,391	497	14.0%
Architecture and Engineering	2,741	3,119	250	13.8%
Life, Physical, and Social Science	1,425	1,500	147	5.3%
Community and Social Service	2,674	2,870	295	7.3%
Legal	727	799	60	9.9%
Education, Training, and Library	10,800	11,772	1,081	9.0%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media	2,168	2,233	230	3.0%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	13,202	14,539	896	10.1%
Healthcare Support	9,189	10,382	1,292	13.0%
Protective Service	3,362	3,633	428	8.1%
Food Preparation and Serving Related	14,441	16,535	2,936	14.5%
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	6,098	6,439	849	5.6%
Personal Care and Service	5,481	6,361	931	16.1%
Sales and Related	18,593	19,091	2,552	2.7%
Office and Administrative Support	26,003	25,412	2,790	-2.3%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	4,388	4,646	727	5.9%
Construction and Extraction	8,775	9,559	969	8.9%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	8,790	9,461	927	7.6%
Production	23,487	24,621	2,743	4.8%
Transportation and Material Moving	20,891	22,834	2,843	9.3%

While industry projections have their uses and provide more of a broad view of employment expectations, a more functional approach is occupational projections. Occupational projections separate openings into three categories: growth, labor force exits and occupational transfers. Retirement is a key driver in labor force exits. While actual retirement age varies among individuals, age 65 is a rough proxy for expected retirement. With this in mind, Wisconsin baby boomers are about halfway through in reaching retirement. Occupational transfers can include workers that advance in careers or make lateral movements into different occupations. Generally, a higher need for replacements due to transfers can be expected in lower-paying occupations.

Analysis of projected occupational employment reveals that there will be a greater need to hire replacements than to fill new positions created by growth. One example is office and administrative support occupations, as this occupation group has the third highest number of projected openings but a declining number of total jobs. The need in this group is entirely driven by labor force exits and occupational transfers. While not the largest in terms of openings, the computer and mathematical category stands out as a growing field. Jobs in this group are typically high-paying, and growth in this area could complement the more established business and financial operations field, which is also expected to grow.