Menominee County

2025 WORKFORCE PROFILE

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DWD
Department of Workforce Development

WisConomy

DETI-17957-MNM-P (R. 05/2025)

State Narrative for County Profiles

Wisconsin's labor market experienced a strong year in 2024. Employment reached record levels, inflation appeared on the wane, and interest rates are accommodating a largely reconstrued supply chain. In addition, real wages turned positive, and consumer spending was robust.

The primary challenge still facing the future economic construct is the labor quantity challenge and its broader economic impacts.

Wisconsin Jobs

The 2024 employment picture was favorable for Wisconsin, reaching new records in December at 3,076,500. The state's low unemployment rates were also noteworthy registering 3.0% or below the entire year. Although setting new records is always a good sign, new highs in employment would be expected through new expansionary economic periods.

Total non-farm employment also reached new highs, climbing through the year to peak in August at a seasonally adjusted basis of 3,048,000 and consolidating high levels through the remainder of the year, ending in December at 3,042,100. That marks a 1.6% increase over the pre-pandemic highs set in December 2019.

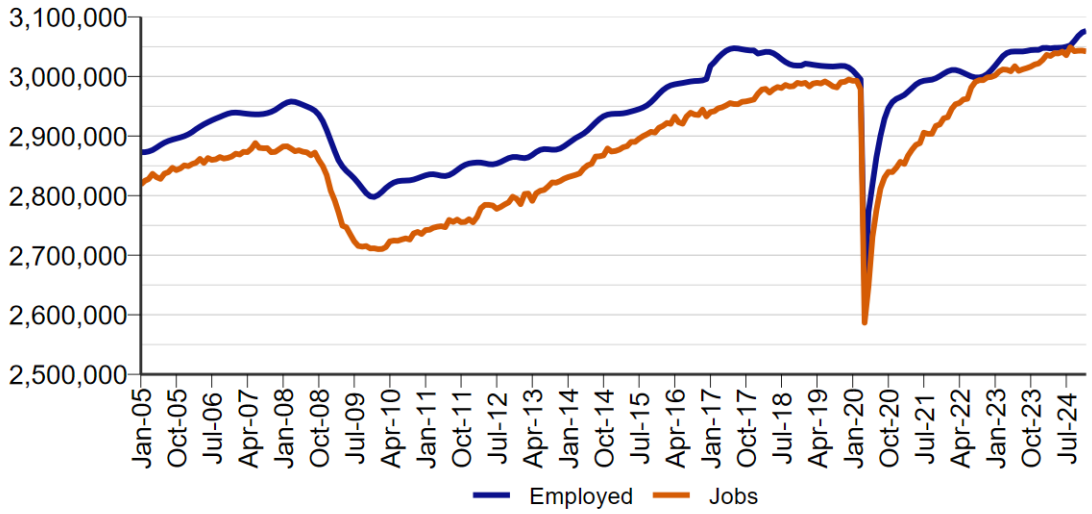


Figure 1: Wisconsin employment and jobs.

Economy

Wisconsin Gross Domestic Product (WGDP) reached new highs in nominal and real dollar terms in 2024[1], at $456 billion or $357 billion in real 2017 dollars. After a slower recovery coming out of the COVID-19 recession, Wisconsin's GDP growth rate has mimicked that of the country.

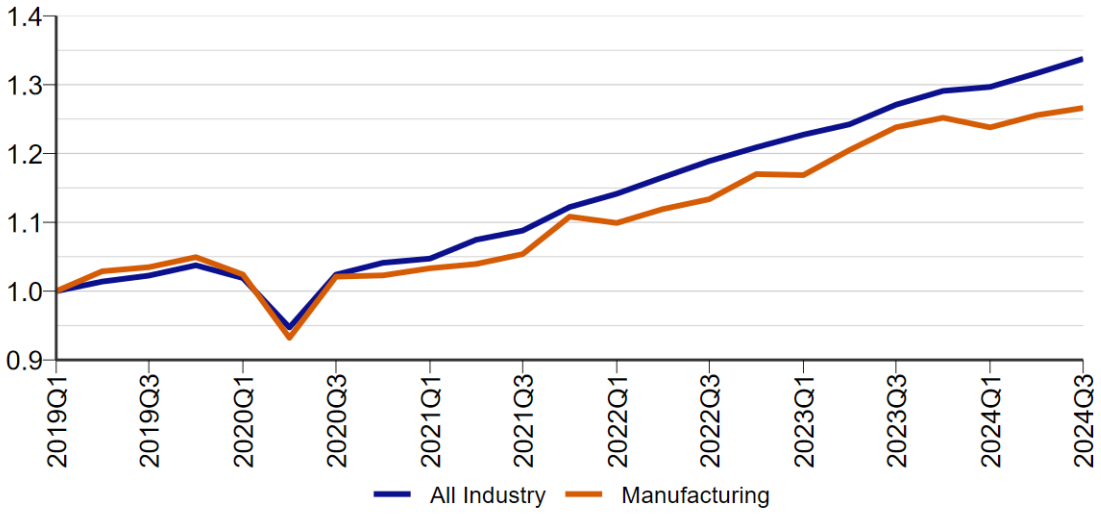


Figure 2: GDP growth index (2019Q1 = 100).

Many industry sectors were vibrant. Construction industry jobs hit new records, surpassing 140,000. Healthcare jobs also set new highs at 324,200. The leisure and hospitality sector recovered almost all the nearly 50% loss of jobs experienced during the COVID-19 recession, finishing with 285,200 jobs. Manufacturing jobs rose above 2023 levels to 481,200, but have not yet returned to pre-Covid19 levels.

Wisconsin ranks first in the number of manufacturing jobs per government job and second in manufacturing jobs share of total jobs. However, state-level manufacturing output was relatively weak against overall economic output. Two of the state's primary manufacturing industries, fabricated metal and machinery manufacturing, lost jobs through 2024. Fabricated metal manufacturing jobs peaked in July 2019, before the COVID-19 recession at 79,400 jobs, and ended 2024 with 74,300. Machinery manufacturing peaked in early 2023 with 68,800 jobs and finished 2024 with 67,200.

[1]Third quarter 2024 is latest data available.

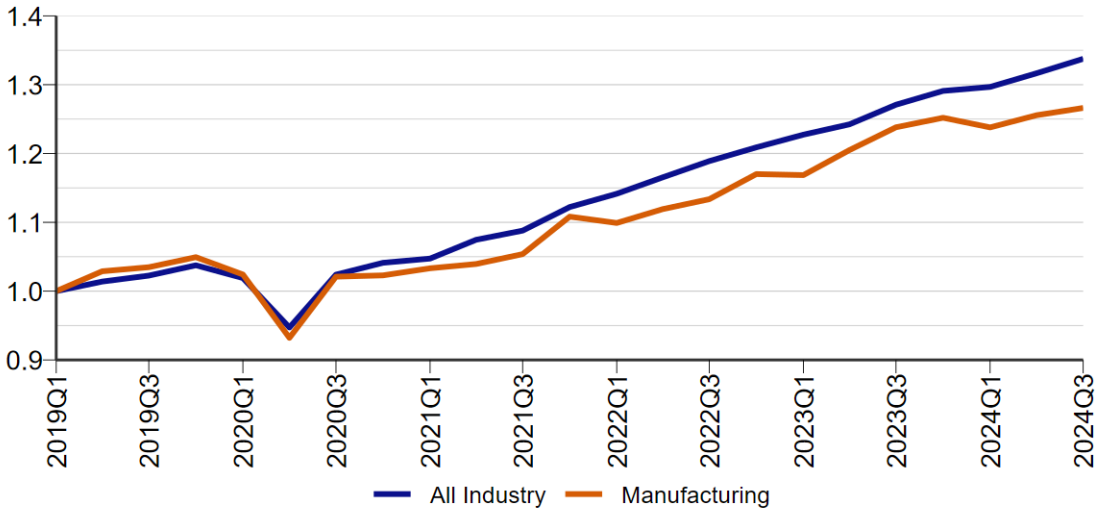


Figure 3: Wisconsin all industry v manufacturing growth (2019Q1 = 100).

While the durable goods manufacturing sector saw declines, non-durable goods manufacturing in Wisconsin has made headway. Jobs in the non-durables industries have increased since the pre-Covid high of 198,600 in July of 2019, to 201,000 in December 2024. Most of that has occurred in the food processing industry.

Labor Quantity Challenges

Employers continue to express challenges finding workers. This situation is being felt in all industries and most occupations – locally, regionally, and globally. Even China is experiencing population and workforce declines. Industries that are showing steady job growth, such as construction and healthcare, are limited by the number of workers available for positions.

As noted in studies dating back to 2000, there are not sufficient numbers of young workers to fill the jobs being vacated by the generation of baby boomers and the increased demand for workers associated with economic growth. The number of workers entering the labor market is essentially the same as the boomers exiting. A growing economy necessitates an increasing labor force or at least a more productive one. Wisconsin's labor force growth has remained close to zero.

The new high in Wisconsin's labor force reached in December 2024 of 3,170,300 is only 0.63% above the previous high in July 2017 and only 0.83% above the peak before that in June of 2009. That amounts to an annual average labor force growth rate of 0.08% per year, or about zero over 15 years.

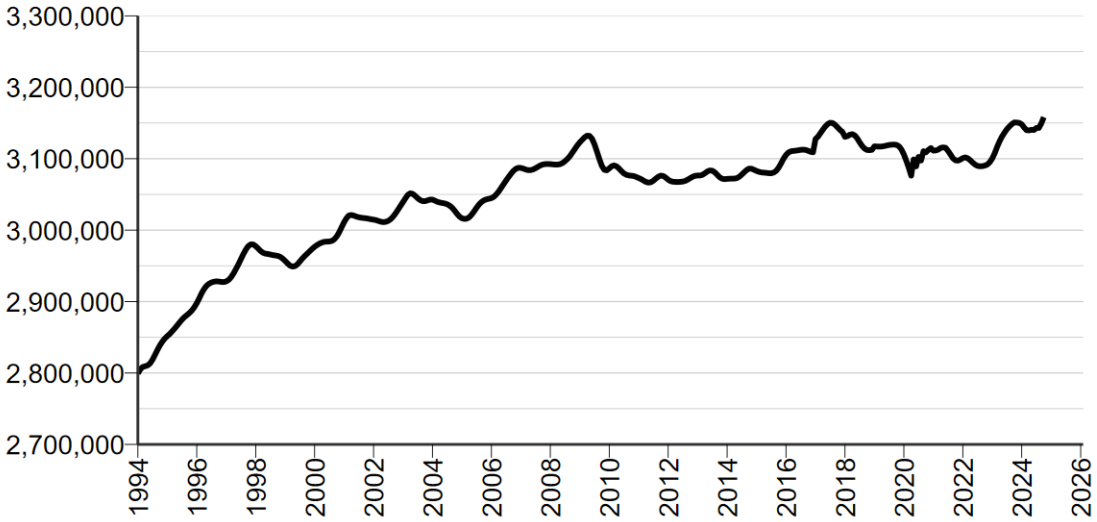


Figure 4: Wisconsin labor force.

This shift has long been anticipated and is well documented. The front edge of the baby boomers turned 63 years old in 2009. By 2024, the back edge of the boomers (those born in 1964) were 60 years old. And while the labor force participation rates of workers 65 and older has increased since the 1990s, the remaining tenure of the boomers is short.

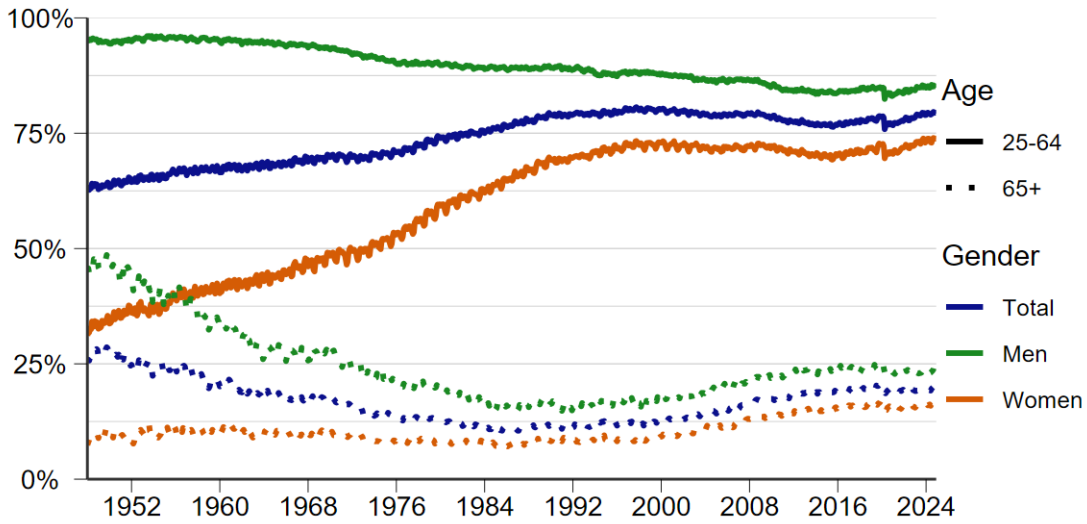


Figure 5: US labor force participation rate.

Below is a graph of Wisconsin's population and labor force projected out to 2040 based on the latest information from the Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services. On a decennial basis, Wisconsin's population has already peaked. This suggests that the workforce will not experience substantial growth moving forward.

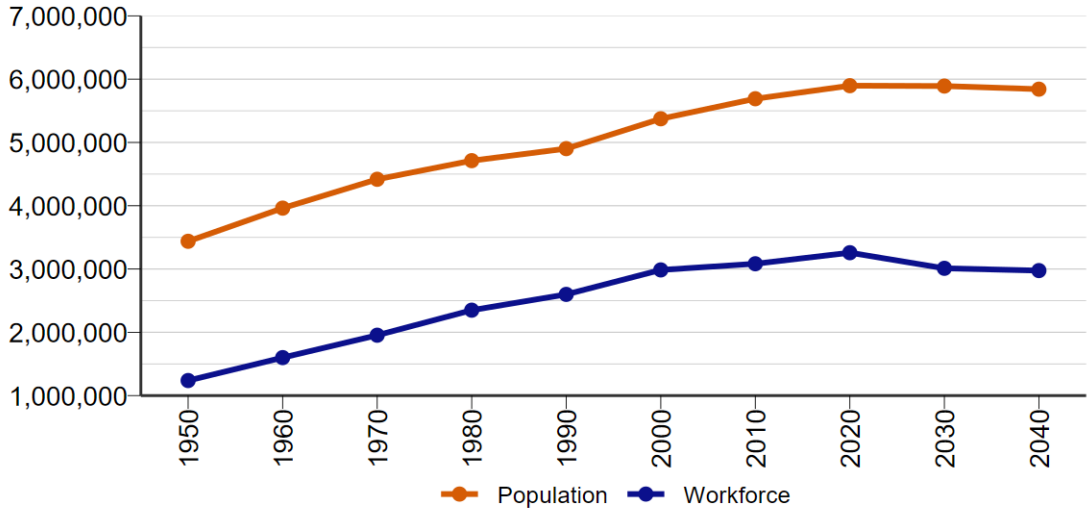


Figure 6: Wisconsin population and workforce projections.

While the overall situation has been realized for some time, the actual quantity of the shortfall has been undetermined until now. Staff at the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Office of Economic Advisors estimate that by 2031, the state could face a labor shortage exceeding 241,000 workers. (See Labor Supply Projections for Wisconsin 2020 – 2040, Winters, Kaur, and Otis, Labor Supply Projections for Wisconsin).

New Construct

Human resource constraints affect the entire economic construct. As one of the three primary components of economic inputs – along with natural resources and capital – a compromise in the abundance of labor permeates the economy. Having never encountered a labor constraint before, it needs to be noted – old models and old policies do not apply.

Moreover, the labor quantity challenge is a macroeconomic phenomenon. It cannot be remedied with microeconomic solutions. Microeconomic attraction and retention incentives of higher wages, better benefits, early exposure, and more are, at best, short-term and limited symptom remedies.

Jobs will go unfilled. Macroeconomic solutions to the challenge include:

1. A workable immigration policy
2. Reducing barriers to employment (see 2023 Wisconsin County Profiles)
3. Expanding trade
4. Technology infusion

Altering a fundamental input of the macroeconomic construct will impact all sectors. The limited and shifting human resource segment will alter income streams, change demand for goods and services, and affect the provision of public goods and services.

Wisconsin's economic health and vigor has been illustrated in the employment and jobs data. However, record low unemployment rates signify two usually unassociated yet coupled performance indicators. On the one hand, low unemployment rates indicate an engaged labor force – a relatively large numerator. On the other hand, in today's environment, low unemployment rates indicate a scarce labor force – a relatively small denominator.

This is an unprecedented situation – and it is not likely to resolve itself quickly.

Yet to be explored are how the limited labor pool and aging population effects other critical economic drivers, such as personal income, as a significant portion of the population (Baby Boomers) shifts to transfer payments that are fixed in real dollar terms, housing stock, dependency ratios, and fiscal balances.

One major unknown on the horizon are the effects that Artificial Intelligence (AI) will have on the future of economic and workforce development. The Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence Advisory Action Plan (dwd.wisconsin.gov/ai-taskforce/pdf/ai-advisory-action-plan.pdf) outlines some of the expected effects of AI. For example, the chart below sheds some light on the extent that occupations may be affected by AI.

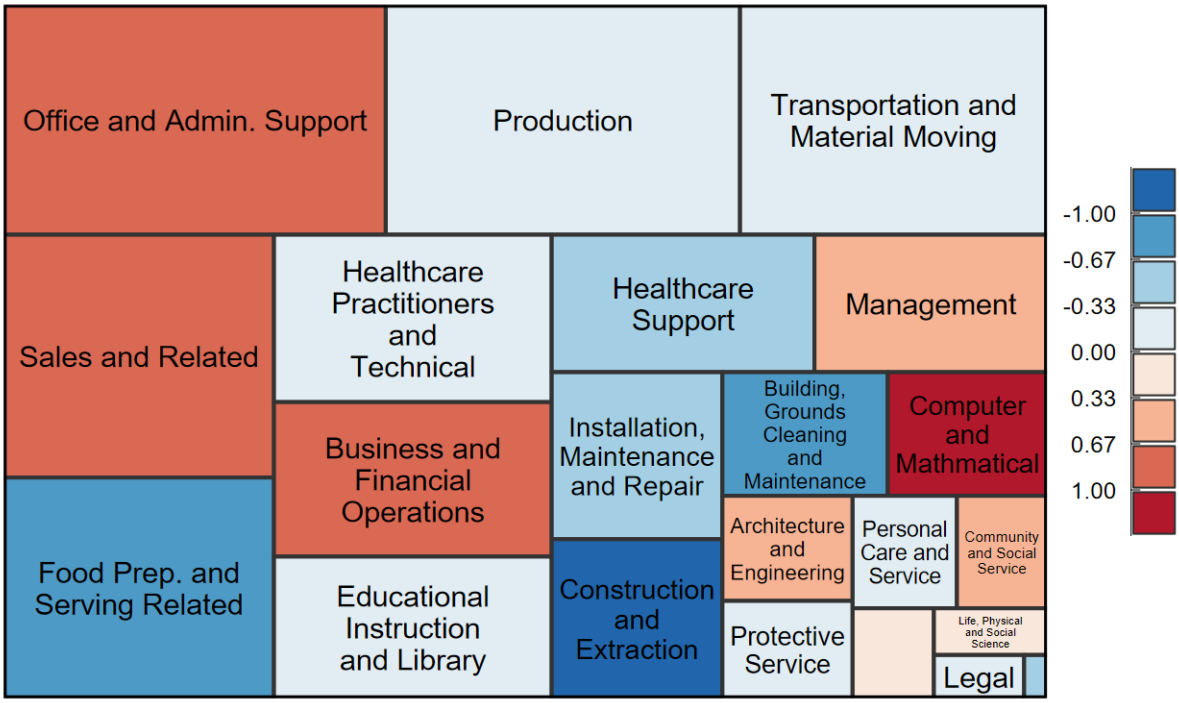


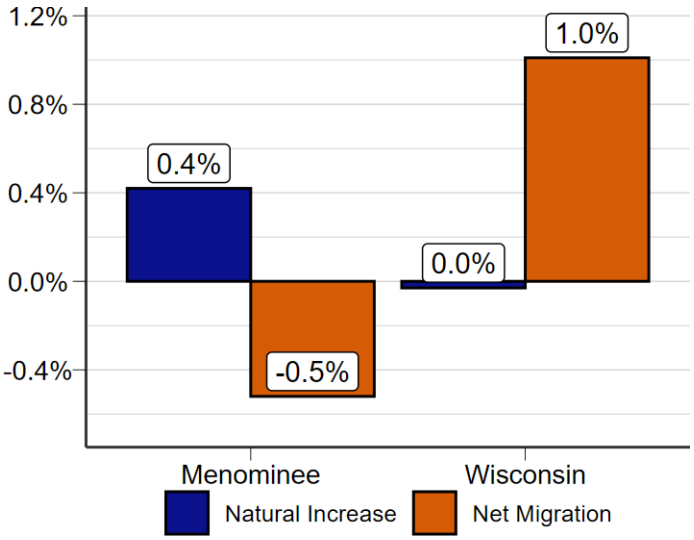
Figure 7: AI exposure per occupation group by number employed.

Fundamental changes are in store for Wisconsin's economy due primarily to two new influencers: workforce constraints and artificial intelligence technology. The degree to how each will affect the other and the whole is yet to be determined.

Population and Demographics

	2020 Census	2023 Final Estimate	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Menominee, Town	4,255	4,251	-4	-0.1%
Menominee, County	4,255	4,251	-4	-0.1%
Wisconsin, State	5,893,718	5,951,400	57,682	1.0%

With 4,251 residents, Menominee County is the least populous county in Wisconsin. It is also among the 30 counties in the state that experienced population decline. Since the 2020 Census, the county's population has remained virtually unchanged, decreasing by just four residents. In contrast, Wisconsin's population increased by 1.0% from 2020 to 2023.



Components of Population Change

Population change is driven by natural increase and migration. Natural population increase occurs when there are more births than deaths, while migration increases when more people move into the county than leave. Natural increase is primarily influenced by the population's age structure, while migration has a more immediate and actionable impact on the county labor force.

Figure 8: Source: WI Department of Administration.

Net migration has been the primary driver of population growth in Wisconsin in recent years. At the statewide level, domestic net migration totaled 21,519 from 2022 to 2024 – marking a reversal from previous trends – while international net migration was significantly higher at 60,086.

Although 2024 data are not yet available at the county level, from 2020 to 2023, Menominee County experienced negative net migration, driven entirely by domestic out-migration (-36). The county was one of only two in northeast Wisconsin – along with Florence County – that recorded zero international net migration during that period (Source: U.S. Census Bureau). As a result, the county's net migration rate of -0.5% ranked 64th in the state.

However, Menominee County continues to see a relatively high rate of natural increase, a trend not new to the area. This is partly due to its low median age of 32.1 years, the lowest in Wisconsin. From 2020 to 2023, the county's rate of natural increase was 0.4%, ranking 10th statewide. Because the county's two components of population change – natural increase and net migration – are nearly equal in size but opposite in direction, the resulting overall population change was -0.1%.

Population Projections

	2020	2030	2040	2050	2020-2050 Population Change
Menominee	4,255	4,150	3,870	3,575	-16.0%
Wisconsin	5,893,718	5,890,915	5,841,620	5,710,120	-3.1%

Source: Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Department of Administration.

According to recently released population projections from the Wisconsin Department of Administration, future patterns of population change in Menominee County are expected to differ from those of the past. The county is one of 59 counties in Wisconsin projected to experience population decline between 2020 and 2050. The anticipated decline of -16.0% ranks as the 29th largest percentage decrease among counties in the state. The projected population change is expected to occur in three stages by decade: a decrease of 105 residents in the 2020s, 280 residents in the 2030s, and 295 residents in the 2040s.

Employment by Industry

	2023 Avg Monthly Employment	5-year Change	5-year % Change	% of Total Employment
Total, All Industries	1,974	-100	-4.8%	100.0%
Education and Health Services	771	33	4.5%	39.1%
Public Administration	359	-33	-8.4%	18.2%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	219	37	20.3%	11.1%
Other Services	24	0	0.0%	1.2%
Natural Resources and Mining	0	NA	NA	0.0%
Construction	NA	NA	NA	NA
Manufacturing	NA	NA	NA	NA
Information	NA	NA	NA	NA
Financial Activities	NA	NA	NA	NA
Professional and Business Services	NA	NA	NA	NA
Leisure and Hospitality	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Menominee County lost a net total of 100 jobs from 2018 to 2023. Average employment levels were 1,974 jobs in 2023. The largest industry was education and health services, accounting for 39.1% of total employment that year. Between 2018 and 2023, the fastest-growing industry was trade, transportation, and utilities, which added 37 jobs – a 20.3% growth rate.

At a more detailed level, the county's three largest industry subsectors were educational services (399 jobs), executive, legislative, and other general government support (324 jobs), and social assistance (145 jobs).

It's important to note that 30.4% of employment in the county – or 601 jobs – is not shown in the table below. These data were withheld to protect the confidentiality of employers in those industries.

Unemployment

Menominee County's monthly average unemployment rate in 2023 was 6.1%, compared to the statewide rate of 3.0%. This is similar to the county's pre-COVID rate of 5.8% recorded in 2018.

Despite other indicators pointing to a softening labor market in Wisconsin – such as downward trends in both hiring and quits – unemployment has remained relatively low across the state. A major reason for this is that layoffs have remained stable and are generally consistent with pre-2020 levels. With the exception of the COVID-19 period and its immediate aftermath, monthly layoffs statewide typically hover around 30,000.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate is the percentage of people who are not working but actively looking for work compared to the total number of people in the labor force.

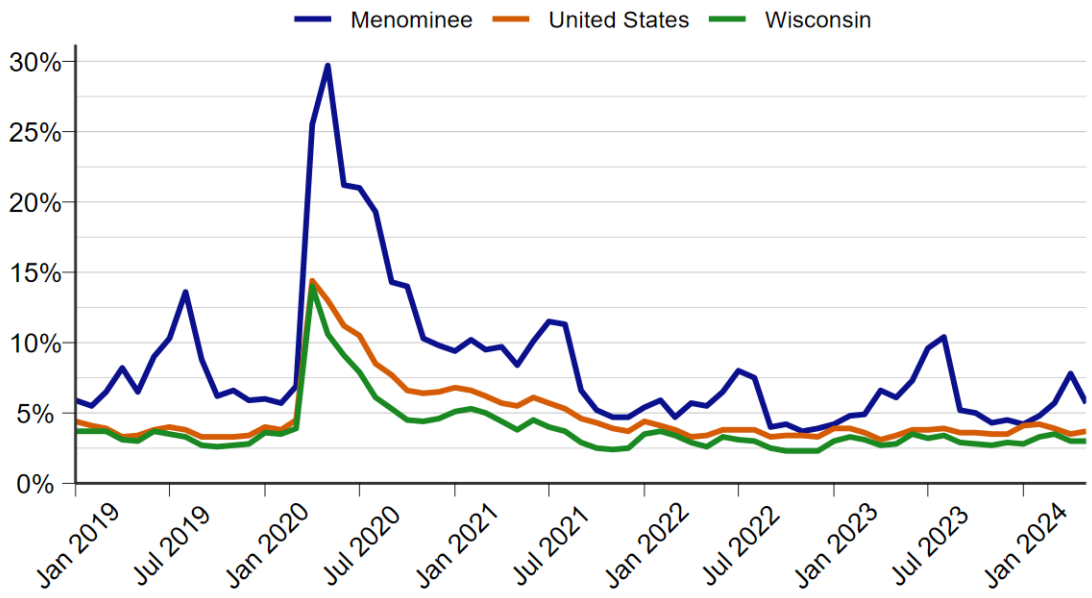


Figure 9: Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Labor Force Participation

Menominee County's labor force participation rate (LFPR) was 49.6% in 2023, ranking 70th among Wisconsin counties. Much attention has been given to the changing age structure of the population, as LFPR varies significantly by age group. These compositional shifts are a key factor in the long-term decline of overall participation rates (see the "Aging Population" section of this profile).

In Menominee County, the LFPR is lower than the statewide rate across every age group except for residents aged 60 to 64, according to the American Community Survey 2018–2022 5-Year Estimates.

Labor Force Participation Rate

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) looks at the relative labor resources available and is expressed as the percentage of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and older that is working or actively looking for work.

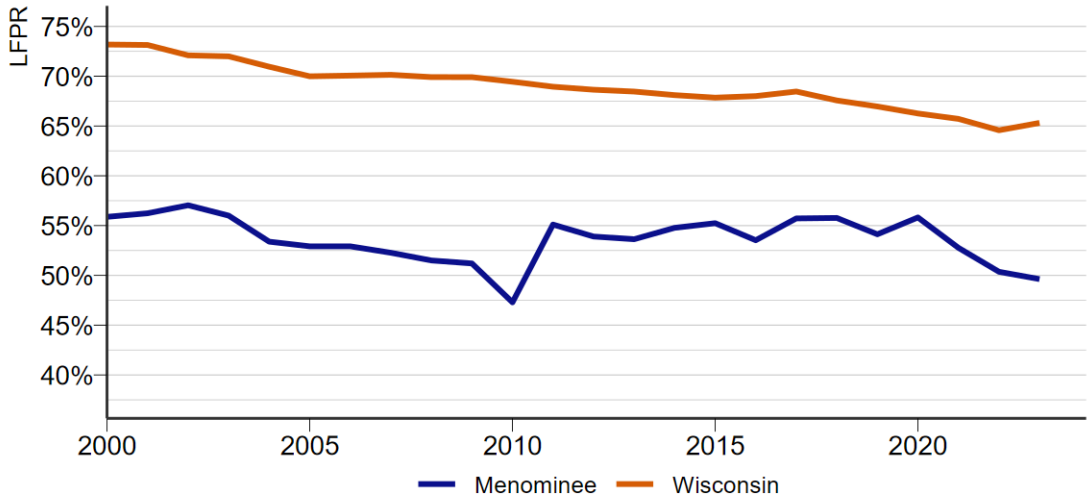


Figure 10: Source: WI Department of Workforce Development Office of Economic Advisors.

AI Impact

Occupation	Employment	% of Total Employment	AI Exposure Index
Cashiers	10,350	2.5%	0.89
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	10,200	2.4%	-0.78
Retail Salespersons	10,050	2.4%	0.40
Fast Food and Counter Workers	9,600	2.3%	-1.00
Customer Service Representatives	8,420	2.0%	0.75
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	8,370	2.0%	-0.09
Registered Nurses	8,340	2.0%	0.04
Office Clerks, General	6,890	1.7%	1.00
Stockers and Order Fillers	6,560	1.6%	-0.05
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	5,470	1.3%	-1.27

Source: Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence.

AI Exposure

AI exposure, as computed by the Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence, is the median value across four different research paper's measures of exposure after normalizing each paper's measure to the same mean and variance. A positive value of AI exposure indicates placement in the top 50% of occupations for AI exposure, with higher values indicating greater exposure to AI. Conversely, negative numbers indicate exposure in the bottom 50%. For more information about AI exposure, refer to The Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence Advisory Action Plan (dwd.wisconsin.gov/ai-taskforce/pdf/ai-advisory-action-plan.pdf)

Artificial intelligence (AI) exposure measures featured in the Advisory Action Plan are available at the local level through Workforce Development Areas (WDAs). Menominee County is part of the Bay Area WDA, which also includes, Brown, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, and Sheboygan Counties.

The largest occupation in the Bay Area WDA is cashiers, accounting for 2.5% of the area's employment. This occupation has an AI exposure index of 0.89. For comparison, bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks – the occupation with the highest potential exposure to AI – have an index of 1.89. Among the ten largest occupations in the WDA, janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners have the lowest AI exposure index at -1.27.

These AI exposure measures are primarily comparative, allowing analysts to determine which occupations are more – or less – likely to be impacted by AI. Because the occupational makeups of Wisconsin's 11 WDAs vary, geographic comparisons are also possible.

In the Bay Area WDA, 48.9% of employment is in occupations with positive AI exposure, ranking it sixth-highest among the state's WDAs. For context, the South Central and Milwaukee County WDAs rank first and second, with 54.5% and 54.1% of employment in AI-exposed occupations, respectively. These differences reflect a general tendency for computer-based occupations – which are more AI-exposed – to cluster in urban areas.

Industry Employment Projections

	Industry	2022 Employment	2032 Projected Employment	Employment Change 2022-2032	% Change 2022-2032
Highest Number Employed	Manufacturing	93,011	96,873	3,862	4.15%
Highest Percent Growth	Financial Activities	24,280	27,218	2,938	12.10%
Most Jobs Added	Education and Health Services	88,640	94,511	5,871	6.62%
Total	Total All Industries	463,024	497,026	34,002	7.34%

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development Office of Economic Advisors.

While examining past trends is valuable, DWD also produces industry and occupation employment projections to better understand the future of the workforce. These projections account for key factors such as retirements, career changes, and shifting demand within the labor market.

In the Bay Area WDA, regional employment is projected to grow by 7.3% – an increase of 34,002 jobs – between 2022 and 2032. This growth rate slightly exceeds the statewide projection of 7.1% during the same period.

The education and health services industry is projected to add the most jobs in the region. However, because it is already one of the largest industries in the WDA, its proportional growth (relative to its size) is 0.7 percentage points lower than the overall growth rate across all industries.

It's important to note that these projections estimate the number of filled positions, not the total potential demand. As a result, they may understate workforce shortages – particularly those tied to an aging population. Despite slower labor force growth, job growth is expected to continue, which will likely intensify challenges related to labor supply.

For more detailed projections of both occupations and industries, visit Wisconomy's projections page (jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/pub/projections).

Occupation Employment Projections

	Occupation	2022 Employment	2032 Projected Employment	Employment Change 2022-2032	% Change 2022-2032
Highest Percent Growth	Computer and Mathematical	9,209	10,846	1,637	17.8%
Lowest Percent Growth	Office and Administrative Support	54,447	54,620	173	0.3%
Highest Number Employed	Production	62,381	64,442	2,061	3.3%
Most Jobs Added	Transportation and Material Moving	43,226	47,160	3,934	9.1%
Total	Total, All	463,024	497,026	34,002	7.3%

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development Office of Economic Advisors.

While industry projections offer a broad view of employment expectations, occupational projections tend to be more useful for career planning and workforce development strategies.

In the Bay Area WDA, the transportation and material moving occupational group is projected to add the most jobs between 2022 and 2032, accounting for 11.6% of total employment growth in the region. Within this group, projected gains are led by stockers and order fillers (1,064), laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand (854), and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (607).

In terms of proportional growth, computer and mathematical occupations have the highest projected rate at 17.8%. Key contributors to this growth include software developers (513 jobs), computer systems analysts (182), and computer user support specialists (151).

Other occupational groups with relatively high projected growth rates include personal care and service (15.9%), healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (12.9%), and construction and extraction (12.7%).

Aging Population

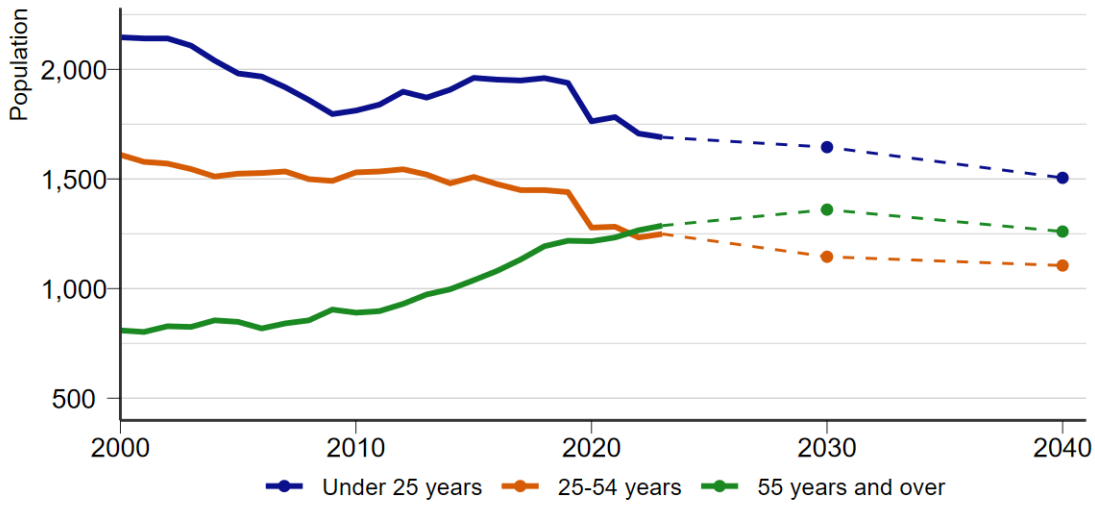


Figure 11: US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program and
WI Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center.

Menominee County's changing age structure is shown here. One visible manifestation of these changes is the growth in the number of residents who are at least 55 years old. This age group grew from 809 in 2000 to 1,287 in 2023. As a share of the total population, it increased from 17.7% to 30.5% over that time. By 2040, this share is projected to rise further to 32.6%.

The number of individuals in the 25- to 54-year-old age range declined from 1,610 in 2000 to 1,249 in 2023, and their share of the total population fell from 35.3% to 29.6%. As of 2022, this group was eclipsed in size by the 55-and-over population. By 2040, the 25–54 group is projected to decline by another 144 residents.

The under-25 population followed a similar trend. It declined from 2,146 to 1,690 between 2000 and 2023, and its share of the total population dropped from 47.0% to 40.0%. Despite experiencing the largest projected decline through 2040 (a reduction of 185 people), it is expected to remain the county's largest age group.

These selected age groups are significant because they represent different stages of typical labor force participation. Participation tends to increase rapidly between the ages of 16 and 24, though many in this group are not employed full time due to enrollment in high school or postsecondary education. The 25–54 age range is considered the prime working years. At age 55, labor force participation begins to drop significantly as many residents approach or enter retirement.

Personal Income

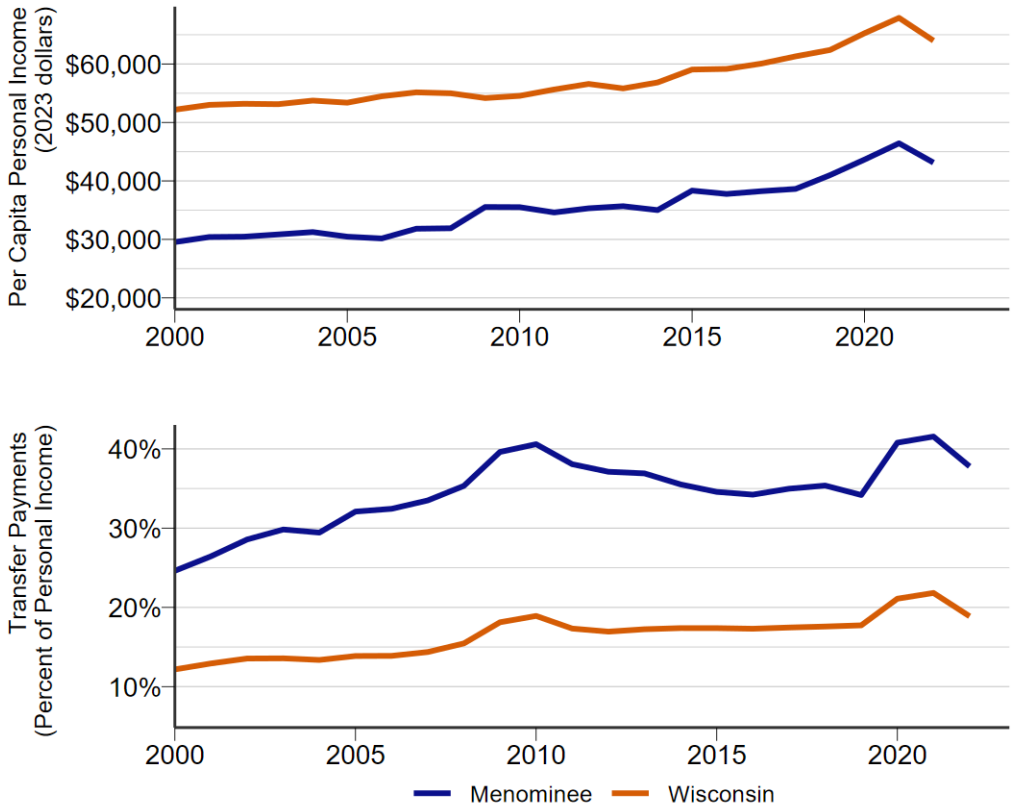


Figure 12: Source: United States Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Personal Income

Personal income includes income from all sources, such as wages, business income, rental income, investments, and government transfer payments. It excludes capital gains or losses, whether realized or unrealized. All dollar amounts are adjusted for inflation using 2023 dollars.

The per capita personal income (PCPI) in Menominee County was $43,133 in 2022, compared to the statewide average of $63,996. As shown in the first chart above, the county's PCPI has generally increased over time. In 2022, the local PCPI was $13,591 higher than in 2000. However, it declined by $3,303 from 2021 to 2022, highlighting the negative impact of post-COVID inflationary pressures on purchasing power.

The second chart shows the share of total personal income accounted for by transfer payments. In Menominee County, this share increased from 24.6% in 2000 to 40.6% in 2010. It then declined through much of the 2010s, reaching 34.2% in 2019.

This share typically rises during economic recessions, as downturns tend to reduce earned income sources such as wages and business earnings. At the same time, they trigger automatic stabilizers such as the Unemployment Insurance program. In 2021, when the economy was still recovering from the COVID-19 recession, transfer payments made up 41.6% of total personal income in Menominee County.

Workforce Pipeline

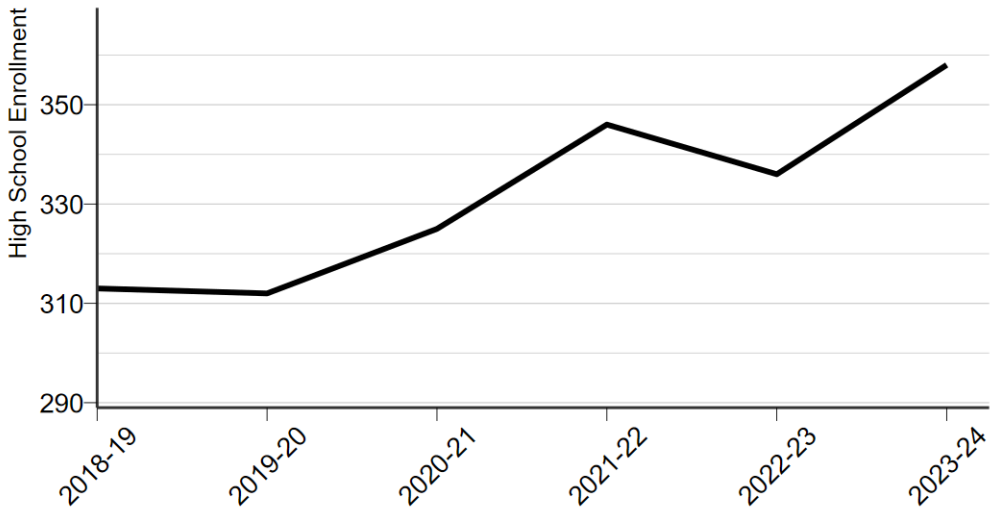


Figure 13: Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

As of the 2023–24 school year, 358 students were enrolled in grades 9–12 in Menominee County. This includes public, private, and home-based schools. It is important to note that school district boundaries often extend into multiple counties, so county-level enrollment counts may not precisely reflect the number of students living within Menominee County. These counts are based on the location of the school district's main office.

Population data for residents ages 14 to 17 provides additional context, as this group serves as a proxy for the high school-aged population. Unlike enrollment data, this measure is not affected by school district boundaries. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's County Population by Characteristics, the size of this cohort was 322 in 2010, 305 in 2015, and 311 in 2023.

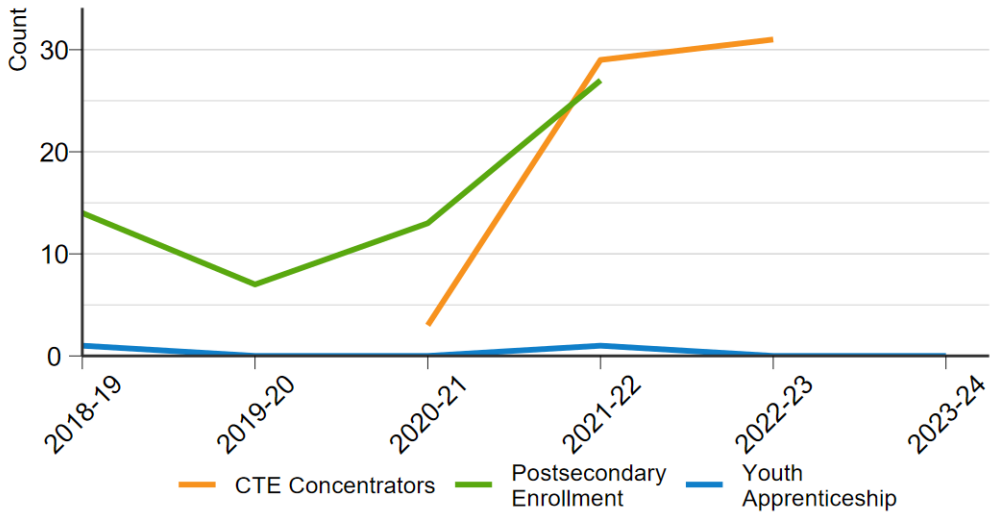


Figure 14: Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and Department of Workforce Development.

Career and Technical Education

Among 11th and 12th graders in Menominee County, 19.1% were concentrators in career and technical education (CTE) during the 2022–23 school year, compared to 44.3% statewide. CTE participation is an important indicator of efforts to improve career readiness among high school students.

The distribution of career clusters among local CTE concentrators is shown in the chart below. However, it's important to note that the small sample size in Menominee County – just 31 students – means that even small changes can result in large shifts in percentages across pathways. The hospitality and tourism pathway accounted for 64.5% of CTE concentrators in the county, which is 51.1 percentage points higher than the statewide rate.

i Career and Technical Education

Career and technical education (CTE) equips students for both the workforce and postsecondary education through work-based learning opportunities. CTE concentrators are 11th and 12th graders who have passed at least two CTE courses within a specific career pathway. Home-based students are not included in this data.

	CTE Concentrator	Percent of Grade 11 and 12
Menominee	31	19.1%
Wisconsin	64,124	44.3%

School year 2022-23. Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

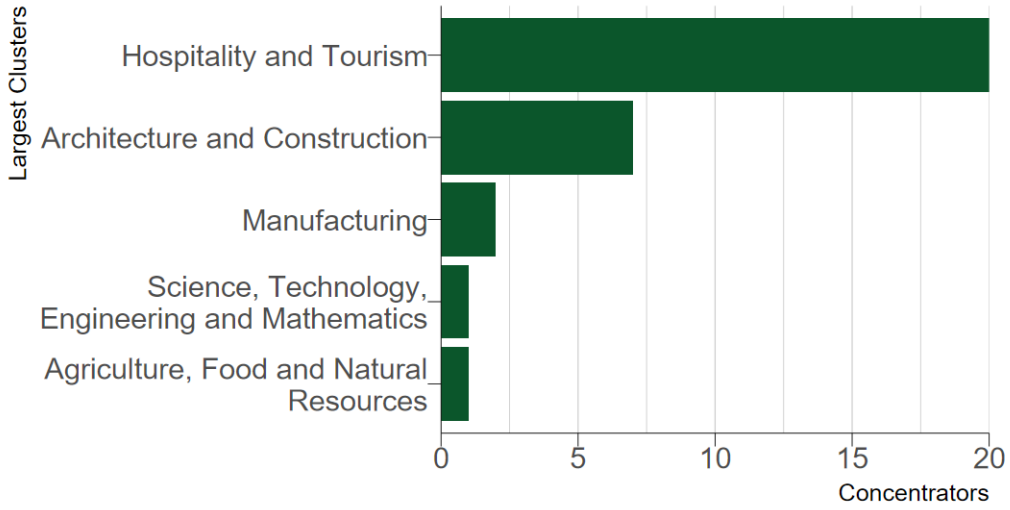


Figure 15: School year 2022-23. Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Postsecondary Enrollment

In Menominee County, 28.1% of high school completers enrolled in a postsecondary institution during the 2022–23 school year, compared to 43.6% statewide. This percentage reflects the share of all 12th grade students who continued on to college, university, or technical school.

Postsecondary Enrollment

Postsecondary enrollment tracks the percentage of high school graduates who attend a postsecondary school (public or private colleges, two- or four-year universities, technical colleges, or training programs) in the fall immediately following graduation. It is important to note that this data may slightly underrepresent actual enrollment due to limitations in how information is matched within the National Student Clearinghouse.

	Postsecondary Enrollment	Percent of Grade 12
Menominee	27	28.1%
Wisconsin	32,151	43.4%

School year 2021-22. Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Youth Apprenticeship

Youth apprenticeship is a program which allows participants prepare for the workforce through direct, hands-on work experience. In the 2022–23 school year, there were no youth apprentices in Menominee County.

Youth Apprenticeship

Youth Apprenticeship (YA) Program is a school-supervised program that combines work and classroom learning to help high school students prepare for a career. Participants receive on-the-job training directly from the employer. The program helps students explore career paths and helps employers develop a qualified workforce.

	Youth Apprenticeship Participants	Percent of Grade 11 and 12
Menominee	0	0.0%
Wisconsin	8,222	5.7%

School year 2022-23. Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.