



Nebraska

Economic Insight and Outlook

NEBRASKA

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Economic Insight and Outlook

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Overview

The Nebraska Economic Insight and Outlook report presents data on the demographics, educational characteristics, labor market conditions, wages, industries, occupations, and businesses in the state. Businesses and economic stakeholders can use this information to better understand the state's labor market, including worker characteristics and wages, as well as industry, employment, and business trends. Job seekers, students, and career counselors can also use this information to identify educational and career paths with high wages and growing employment opportunities in the state of Nebraska. The report addresses trends and challenges at both state and sub-state levels in employment, unemployment, and growing and in-demand occupations and industries and assists in the development of the state plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Nebraska is comprised of 93 counties, with a statewide population of 1,961,504 as of 2020. Since 2010, Nebraska's total population has increased by 7.4%, the same as the 7.4% population growth rate of the United States as a whole. Nebraska is also becoming increasingly diverse, with 23.9% of the 2018 state population identifying as a racial or ethnic minority, an 18.8% increase since 2013.

Nebraska continues to enjoy a strong economy. Like other states, Nebraska's unemployment rate was elevated during the pandemic in 2021. However, at 2.8%, the rate was significantly lower than the national unemployment rate of 5.3%. Nebraska's median household income for 2020 was \$63,015, slightly below the national median household income of \$64,994.

Quick Facts, Nebraska and United States

	Nebraska	United States
2020 Population	1,961,504	331,449,281
2010-2020 Population Growth	7.4%	7.4%
2020 Percent Minority Population	23.9%	45.0%
% of Population 25 & Over With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	32.5%	32.9%
2021 Labor Force	1,049,033	161,204,000
2021 Unemployment Rate	5.1%	9.4%
2020 Median Household Income	\$63,015	\$64,994
2020 Poverty Rate	10.4%	12.8%
2021 Largest Private Industry	Healthcare and Social Assistance (15.9%)	Healthcare and Social Assistance (16.6%)
2022 Most Common Occupation	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (2.7%)	Retail salespersons (5.4%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Population Estimates, 2017 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

However, the cost of living in Nebraska was also substantially lower than in many other areas of the country.

Nebraska had one of the nation's lowest rates of homelessness in 2020, and the state's 2020 poverty rate was 10.4%, below the nationwide estimate of poverty (12.8%).

The largest private industry sector in Nebraska was healthcare and social assistance, which made up 15.9% of total 2021 employment statewide.

The Nebraska industry sector projected to experience the highest growth rate from 2020-2030 is arts, entertainment, and recreation, where a 43.8% increase in employment is expected, creating over 5,000 new jobs. The accommodation and food service industry is projected to see Nebraska's largest numeric employment gains through 2030: approximately 16,700 jobs, or an 24.7% increase.

The occupational group with the highest projected growth rate is food preparation and serving occupations, where a 19.8% increase in employment is expected by 2030.

Demographics

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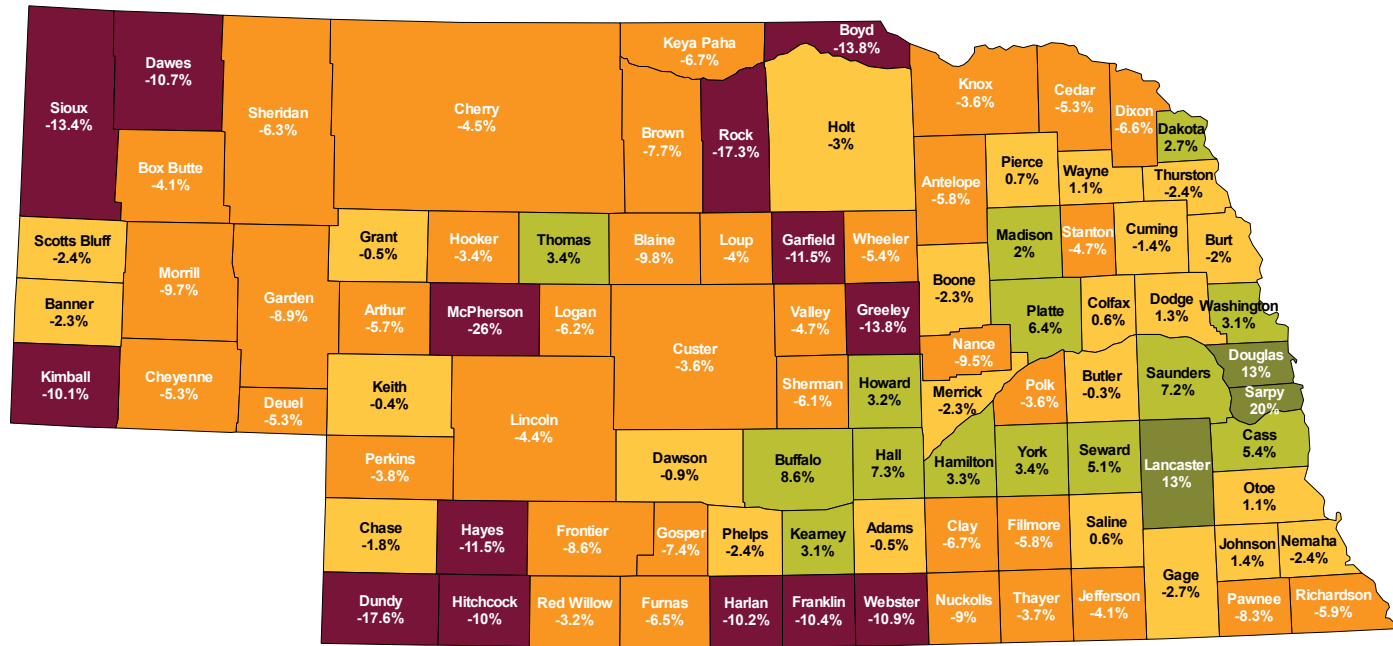
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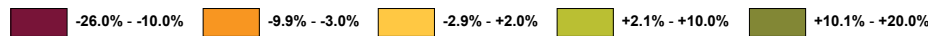
Unless otherwise noted, data from this section can be found at **census.gov**. Under Topics, choose Population. Then choose Population Estimates.



NE Population Change by County 2010 – 2020



Population



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171)

What is it?

The distribution of population change by county looks very similar to the map of total population distribution. Typically, counties with the highest populations also had the greatest population increases from 2010-2020, while counties with the lowest populations had the greatest population decreases. This suggests that Nebraska has become more urbanized, and over time many Nebraskans from rural areas may have migrated to or near the state's metropolitan areas.

Since 2010, the state's population increased by 7.4%, about the same as the national population growth rate during the same time period.

Sarpy County had Nebraska's largest population increase of 20.0% since 2010, followed by Douglas County at 13.0%. McPherson County had the state's largest population decrease at -26.0%, followed by Dundy County at -17.6%.

How to use it

Historical population trends can be a strong predictor of future population trends. Therefore, counties with a declining population could expect their population to continue to decline, while growing counties in or near the state's metropolitan areas could expect continued population growth. Data can be used to develop recruitment strategies.

What is it?

In 2020, the largest age group in Nebraska was 20-44, which accounted for roughly one-third of the state population. Next was the under-20 age group, which made up 27.5% of the population, followed by 45-64, with 24.0% of the total. The remaining 15.7% of the population was 65 and older. By 2030, the under-20 and 20-44 age groups are expected to see mild population increases of 2.7% and 2.0% respectively, while the total statewide population is projected to increase by 6.8%. The 65 and older demographic is expected to increase by a massive 38.6% as the baby boomer generation continues to age. Nebraska's 65+ population is projected to increase from 15.7% of the state's total in 2020, to 20.4% in 2030.

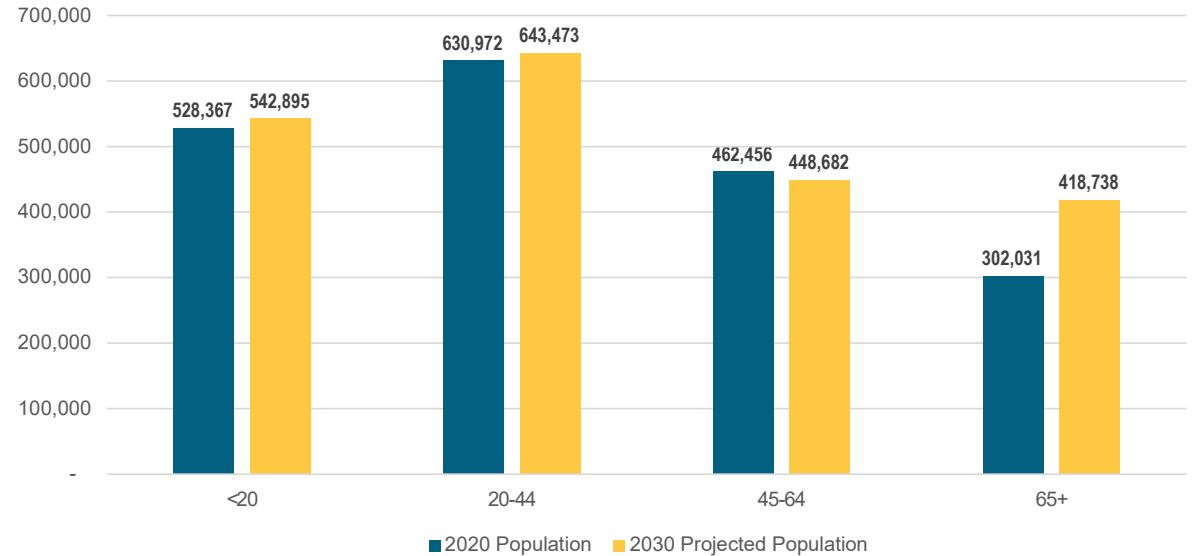
How to use it

Historical demographic shifts can foreshadow future demographic shifts and changes to the state's labor force. In areas with a declining labor force, it may prove difficult for businesses to quickly replace retiring workers, especially in occupations requiring specialized skills or experience. The aging baby boomer population may also spur growth in the health care sector and increase demand for healthcare workers statewide.

Where to find it

Data are available from the American Community Survey, at data.census.gov. Search for Table DP05.

NE Population by Age Group 2020-2030



Age Group	2020 Population	2030 Projected Population	% Change
<20	528,367	542,895	2.7%
20-44	630,972	643,473	2.0%
45-64	462,456	448,682	-3.0%
65+	302,031	418,738	38.6%
Total	1,923,826	2,053,788	6.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP05

What is it?

In the 2020 Census, non-Hispanic whites alone comprised 81.2% of the state population. African Americans alone (not Hispanic or Latino) accounted for 4.5% of the state population, the largest racial minority group, followed by Asians alone (not Hispanic or Latino) at 2.7%. Another 5.7% of the population reported two or more races.

Across all racial groups, 9.8% of Nebraskans identified their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino. Nebraska is considerably less diverse than the United States overall. Nationally, the total minority population (the sum of all groups excluding non-Hispanic whites) made up 52.7% of the United States in 2020, a percentage almost twice as large as Nebraska's 28.6% minority population.

Hispanics and Latinos (all races) made up 16.8% of the U.S. population and 9.8% of the Nebraska population. African Americans comprised 12.0% of the U.S. population and 4.5% of the Nebraska population, while all other races combined accounted for 14.1% of the U.S. population and 7.5% of the Nebraska population.

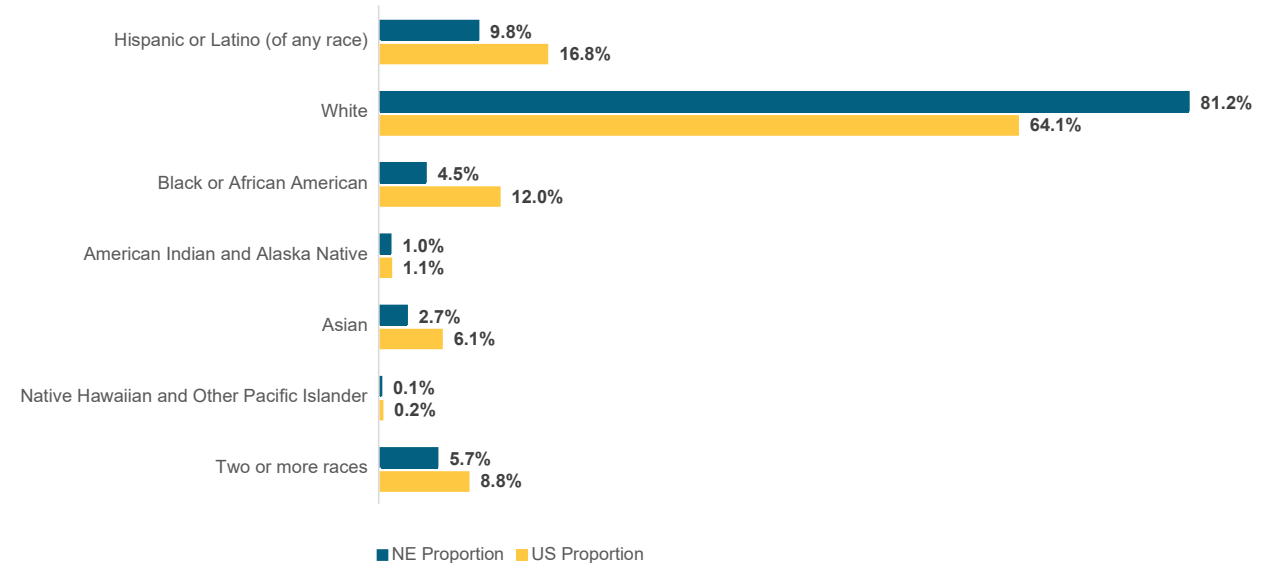
How to use it

Data on racial/ethnic diversity are useful to estimate diversity within the labor force and in the population more broadly. Businesses, schools, healthcare institutions, and other service providers can use the data to help identify and meet the needs of the populations they serve.

Where to find it

Data are available from the U.S. Census Bureau, at data.census.gov. Search for Population by Race/Ethnicity.

NE & US Population by Race/Ethnicity 2020



	Nebraska		United States	
	Population	%	Population	%
Total	1,476,127	100%	258,343,281	100%
Hispanic or Latino	145,297	9.8%	43,322,792	16.8%
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,330,830	90.2%	215,020,489	83.2%
Population of one race	1,391,504	94.3%	235,506,648	91.2%
White alone	1,199,242	81.2%	165,547,610	64.1%
Black or African American alone	67,094	4.5%	30,942,735	12.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	15,096	1.0%	2,718,370	1.1%
Asian alone	39,166	2.7%	15,879,613	6.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	1,093	0.1%	494,844	0.2%
Some Other Race alone	69,813	4.7%	19,923,476	7.7%
Population of two or more races	84,623	5.7%	22,836,633	8.8%

Source: : U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171)

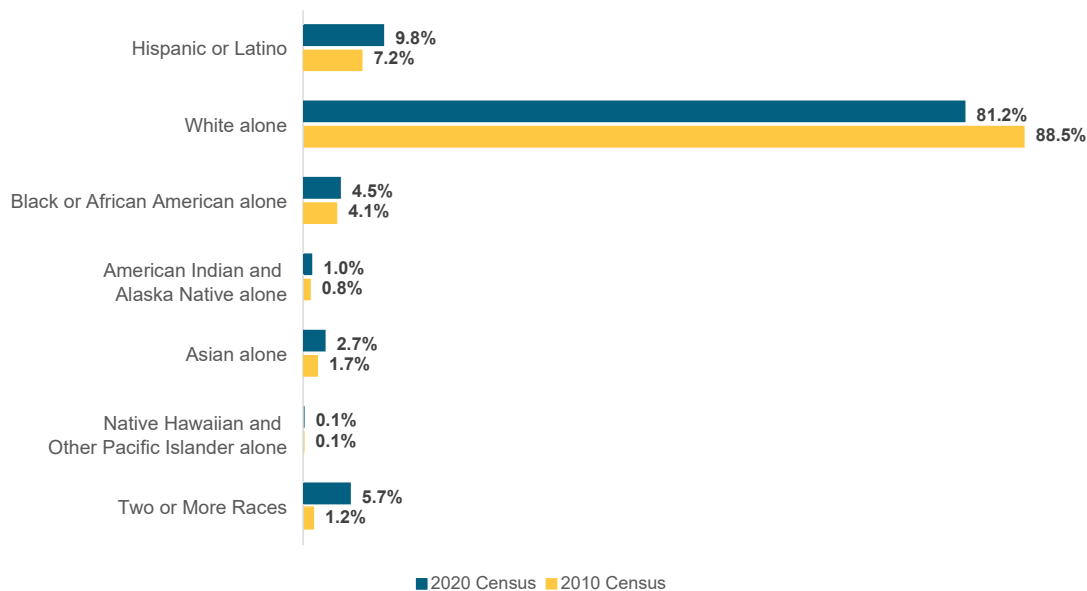
What is it?

Although Nebraska remains less diverse than the nation as a whole, the state saw significant growth in its minority populations from 2010-2020. The overall minority population in Nebraska (the sum of all individuals except non-Hispanic whites) increased 65.4%, more than eight times as fast as the total statewide population growth rate of 8.0%.

NE Demographic Change Over Time by Race/Ethnicity 2010 – 2020

	2010	2020	Total Change	% Change
Total Population	1,367,120	1,476,127	109,007	8.0%
Hispanic or Latino	98,221	145,297	47,076	47.9%
White alone	1,210,078	1,199,242	-10,836	-0.9%
Black or African American alone	56,024	67,094	11,070	19.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	11,531	15,096	3,565	30.9%
Asian alone	23,654	39,166	15,512	65.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	881	1,093	212	24.1%
Some Other Race alone	47,923	69,813	21,890	45.7%
Total Minority	255,263	422,182	166,919	65.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 and 2019 American Community Surveys, 5-Year Estimates, Table DP05



Nebraska's Hispanic and Latino population had the state's largest numeric population increase from 2010-2020, growing by over 47,000 individuals, a 47.9% rise. The Asian population saw the state's second-largest numeric increase, adding more than 15,000 individuals for 65.6% population growth, which was the largest percentage change among any racial or ethnic group during this time period. The Black or African American population increased by about 11,000 individuals, accounting for the fourth largest numeric increase.

Due to rapid minority population growth, the proportion of racial/ethnic minorities in Nebraska increased by 9.9 percentage points from 2010-2020. During this time period, the population of individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino increased from 7.2% to 9.8% of the state's total population, and the African American population rose from 4.1% to 4.5%. The Asian population in Nebraska grew from 1.7% to 2.7% of the state's total, while the non-Hispanic white population fell from 88.5% to 81.2%.

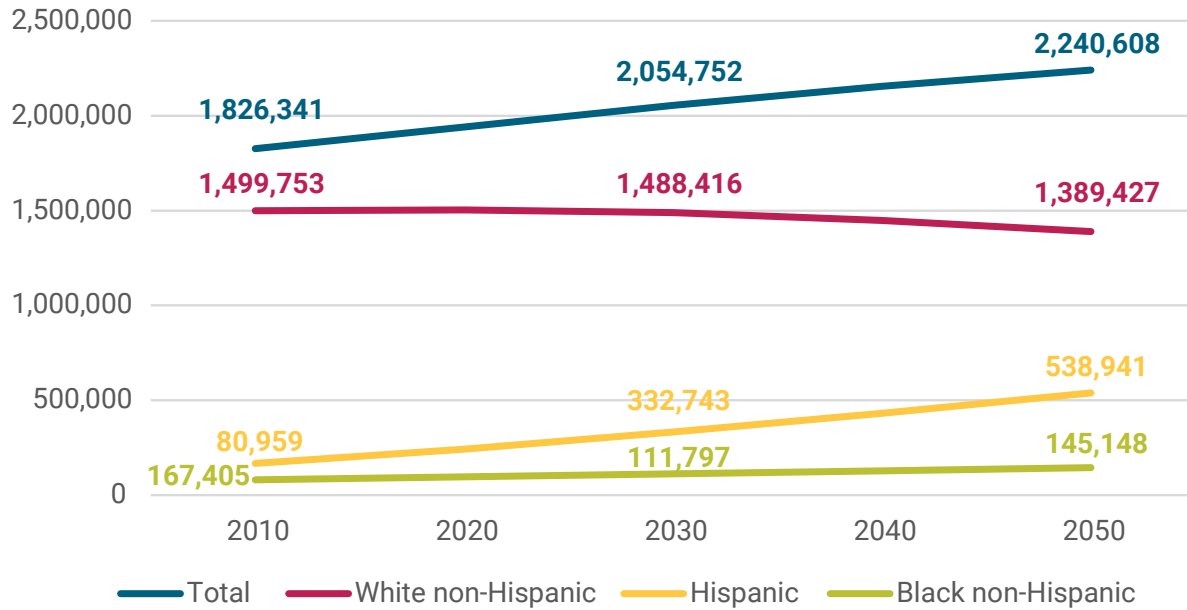
How to use it

Demographic data on changes in race and ethnicity over time can be a valuable tool for establishing the need for economic and social adaptation. A growing minority population could increase demand for certain goods and services. Employers may see greater diversity in both their workforce and customer populations.

Where to find it

Data are available from the 2010 and 2020 Census, at data.census.gov. Search for Population by Race/Ethnicity.

Projections by Race/Ethnicity 2010 – 2050



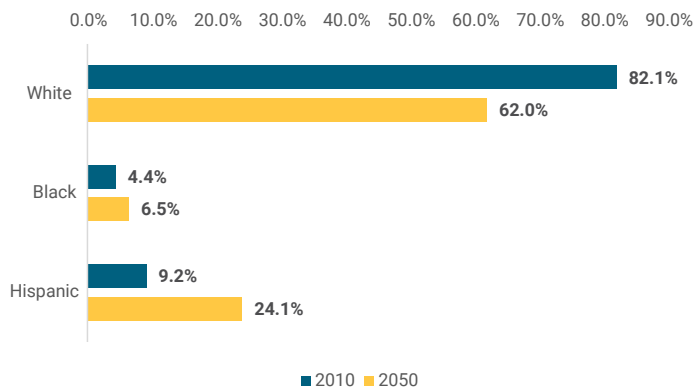
Source: Center for Public Affairs Research-University of Nebraska Omaha, data dated 2013

From 2010 to 2050, Nebraska’s population is expected to increase by 22.7%, to around 2,240,000 individuals. Minority population growth, particularly Hispanic and Latino population growth, is expected to account for much of this increase.

From 2010 to 2050, the Hispanic population is expected to increase by 221.9%. In 2010, Nebraska’s Hispanic and Latino population was approximately 167,000 individuals, accounting for less than 10% of the state’s total population. In 2050, Nebraska’s Hispanic and Latino population is expected to grow to over half a million individuals, making up almost a quarter of the total population. Additionally, the state’s African American/Black population is expected to increase by 79.3%, from approximately 81,000 individuals in 2010 to approximately 145,000 individuals in 2050.

In contrast, the white population is expected to decrease by 7.4% from 2010 to 2050. In 2010, the white population was approximately 1,500,000 individuals and 82.1% of the total population. In 2050, the white population is expected to decrease to 1,390,000 individuals and 62% of the total population.

Projected Population Distribution



Where to find it

The Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska Omaha produces population projections by race/ethnicity. NDOL’s Labor Market Information division may also be contacted for additional information.

How to use it

Population projections provide a glimpse into what Nebraska’s population may look like in the near future. Schools, healthcare providers, and businesses can expect to expand and adjust in order to effectively absorb the growing population. Businesses and community service providers can use these population trends to help ensure that they are effectively recruiting and serving the state’s increasingly diverse populations today, and preparing for a continued increase in racial and ethnic diversity throughout future decades.

Language Spoken at Home & Ability to Speak English

What is it?

From the 2015-2019 ACS to the 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS), the number of Nebraskans who spoke a language other than English rose by 2.8%, and the number of these Nebraskans who spoke English less than “very well” rose by 1.5%. Change in the number of “Other Indo-European language” speakers helped drive this trend. From the 2015-2019 ACS to the 2016-2020 ACS, this group increased by 2.6%, and the number who spoke English less than “very well” increased by 8.3%. The number of speakers of Asian and Pacific Islander languages rose by 6.3%, with a 0.5% increase in those who spoke English less than “very well.” Speakers of Spanish increased by 2.9%.

Overall, Nebraska has a smaller share of residents who speak languages other than English compared to the U.S. as a whole, but a higher rate of other language speakers who speak English less than “very well.” About 11.8% of the state population speaks a language other than English, which is close to half of the national percentage of 21.5%. About 43.8% of Nebraska’s speakers of languages other than English speak English less than “very well,” compared to 38.3% nationally.

Where to find it

Data are available from the American Community Survey, at data.census.gov. Search for Table B16001.

Language Skills of the NE & US Population

	Nebraska			United States	
	2015-2019	2016-2020	% Change	2016-2020 Proportion	2016-2020
Population 5 years and over	1,783,098	1,793,084	0.6%	100%	306,919,116
English Only	1,578,669	1,581,987	0.2%	88.2%	240,826,040
Language other than English	204,429	211,097	3.3%	11.8%	66,093,076
Speak English less than “very well”	91,000	92,367	1.5%	5.2%	25,312,024
Spanish	133,473	137,352	2.9%	7.7%	40,537,337
Speak English less than “very well”	60,470	60,751	0.5%	3.4%	15,949,582
“Other Indo-European languages”	25,864	26,548	2.6%	1.5%	11,270,634
Speak English less than “very well”	6,997	7,577	8.3%	0.4%	3,422,525
“Asian and Pacific Islander languages”	29,276	31,134	6.3%	1.7%	10,800,470
Speak English less than “very well”	16,442	16,521	0.5%	0.9%	4,886,876
Other languages	15,816	16,063	1.6%	0.9%	3,484,635
Speak English less than “very well”	7,091	7,518	6.0%	0.4%	1,053,041

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 - 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, released 2021

How to use it

Growth in the number of non-English speakers signals the need for community and business adaptation. Limited English proficiency can present challenges for workers looking to learn new skills or transfer their skills and knowledge across occupations. Businesses and community institutions might therefore choose to expand their investments in outreach efforts, training programs, or other strategies for communicating with and serving non-English-speaking populations.

Components of Population Change

Components of Population Change 2020 – 2021

2020	2021	Total Population Change ¹	Natural Change		Net Migration			
			Total	Births	Deaths	Total	International ²	Domestic
United States		392,665	148,043	3,581,986	3,433,943	244,622	244,622	0
Nebraska		2,237	4,311	23,524	19,213	-2,269	1,044	-3,313
Grand Island, NE		-710	151	961	810	-854	93	-947
Lincoln, NE		1,602	969	3,726	2,757	556	182	374
Omaha-Council Bluffs, NE-IA		3,144	3,265	12,052	8,787	-239	492	-731
Beatrice, NE		-47	-82	197	279	32	3	29
Columbus, NE		-39	110	461	351	-154	28	-182
Fremont, NE		1	-95	412	507	92	19	73
Hastings, NE		-120	-14	357	371	-110	46	-156
Kearney, NE		189	87	660	573	88	24	64
Lexington, NE		-208	113	407	294	-319	54	-373
Norfolk, NE		-159	102	620	518	-268	14	-282
North Platte, NE		-462	-99	351	450	-361	12	-373
Scottsbluff, NE		-249	-83	421	504	-170	4	-174

¹Total population change includes a residual. This residual represents the change in population that cannot be attributed to any specific demographic component. See Population Estimates Terms and Definitions at <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/about/glossary.html>.

²Net international migration for the United States includes the international migration of both native and foreign-born populations. Specifically, it includes: (a) the net international migration of the foreign born, (b) the net migration between the United States and Puerto Rico, (c) the net migration of natives to and from the United States, and (d) the net movement of the Armed Forces population between the United States and overseas. Net international migration for Puerto Rico includes the migration of native and foreign-born populations between the United States and Puerto Rico.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change: July 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021, released March 2022.

How to use it

The components of population change highlight the dynamics underlying population growth and decline. The data shows that births account for a majority of population growth in Nebraska. Statewide migration trends also show that Nebraska's large metropolitan areas are gaining residents from domestic migration, while most of its small micropolitan areas and the state overall are losing residents from domestic out-migration. The negative domestic migration in the state and many of its regions indicates a continuing emphasis on retaining the state's workforce and attracting new workers.

What is it?

There are two components of population change: natural change, consisting of births and deaths, and migration, which can be international (migration to and from other countries) or domestic (migration to and from other counties or states).

From 2020 to 2021, Nebraska had a net population increase of 2,237 individuals. There were 4,311 more births than deaths, but a loss of 2,269 in net migration lessened the overall population growth. Only the Lincoln, Omaha, Fremont, and Kearney areas in Nebraska saw a net population increase. Most areas in Nebraska saw more births than deaths, but many areas also saw a net out migration.

In several cases the net out migration was large enough to erase the gains in population from births.

Migration

What is it?

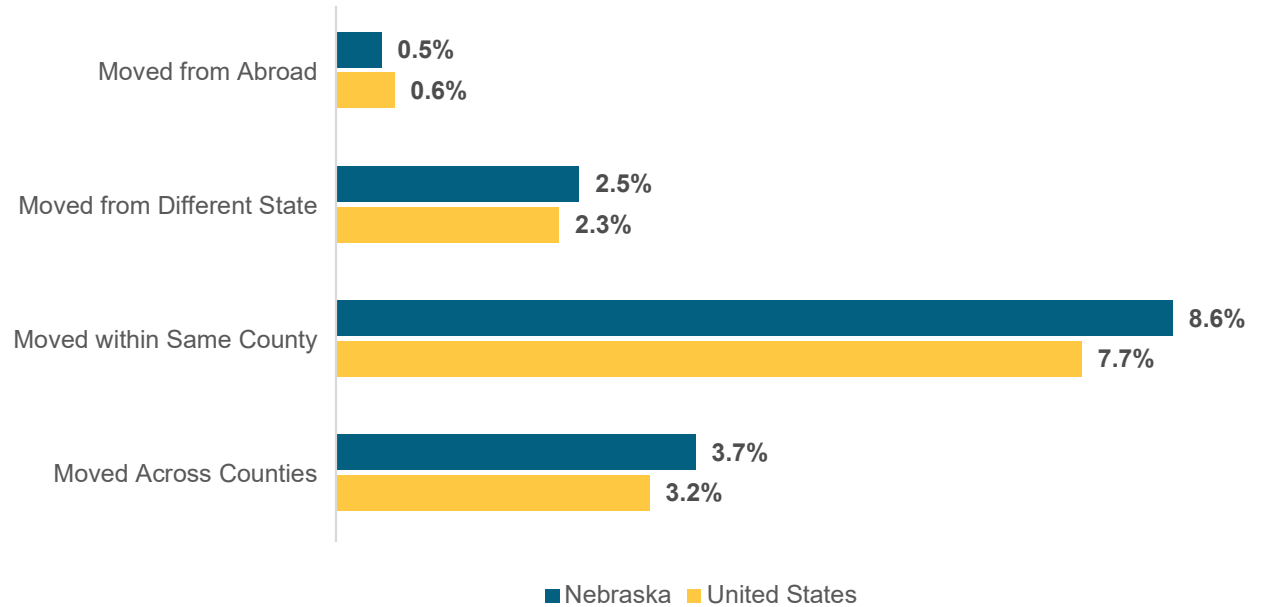
In 2020, approximately 525,000 individuals, or 27.7% of the state population, moved to or within Nebraska. Almost half—44.6%— of Nebraskans who migrated during 2020 moved within the state. About 8.6% of the state’s total population relocated within the same county, while 3.7% moved between counties in Nebraska. About 2.5% of Nebraska residents migrated to Nebraska from another state in 2020, and 0.5% moved from abroad.

Nebraska had a slightly lower rate of international migration than the U.S. as a whole (0.5% versus 0.6%). However, Nebraska had a higher percentage of migration from other states than the national rate (2.5% versus 2.3%). Nebraska also had a higher rate of within-state migration: about 12% of Nebraskans moved within the state in 2020, compared to a 10.9% rate of relocating to a new address within the same state for U.S. residents overall.

How to use it

Rates of migration can indicate how attractive the state is to domestic and international migrants. Nebraska’s relatively high rate of domestic and within-state migration could indicate that Nebraska is attractive to local workers and workers nationwide. The state’s distance from national borders may account for the comparatively lower rate of international migration to Nebraska. In some cases, international migrants may choose to move to Nebraska after first living in a different state.

Domestic & International Migration 2020



	Nebraska		United States	
	Total	%	Total	%
Total Population 1 year and over	1,899,820	100%	322,943,283	100%
Population that moved	525,317	27.7%	79,943,319	24.8%
Population that moved from abroad	8,910	0.5%	1,942,663	0.6%
Population that moved from a different state	47,681	2.5%	7,428,810	2.3%
Population that moved within the state	234,363	12.3%	35,285,923	10.9%
Population that moved from different county	70,413	3.7%	10,445,339	3.2%
Population that moved within same county	163,950	8.6%	24,840,584	7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 – 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, released 2021

Where to find it

Data on domestic and international migration comes from the American Community Survey, available at data.census.gov. Search for Table B07001.

International Migration

What is it?

International immigrants moved to Nebraska at an average rate of approximately 8,910 immigrants per year from 2016 to 2020. The number of international immigrants varied greatly across the state, with more populous counties having the highest number of international immigrants. The vast majority of international immigrants moved to the Lincoln and Omaha areas. In 2020, Douglas and Lancaster Counties gained approximately 3,565 and 1,971 international immigrants respectively, and Sarpy County received an additional 970 international immigrants.

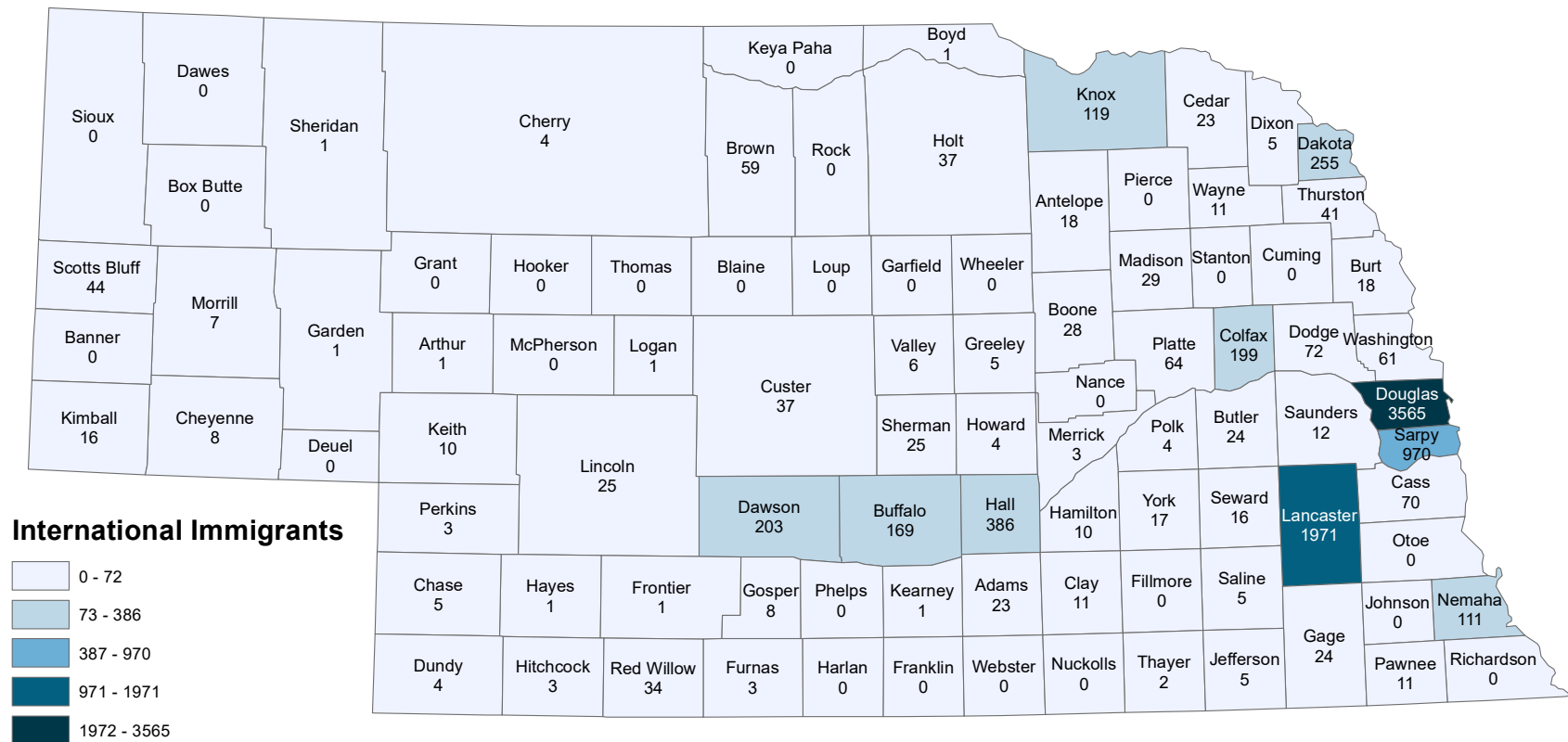
How to use it

It is important to identify regions with a high volume of international immigrants so that these areas can adjust to meet the needs of immigrant populations. In order to effectively provide education, healthcare, and other services to growing immigrant populations, community businesses and service institutions can benefit from being aware of migration patterns.

Where to find it

Data on international migration comes from the American Community Survey, available at data.census.gov. Search for Table B07003.

International Migration to NE by County 2020



Estimate of Homelessness

Each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development releases national and state-level information regarding homelessness. Nebraska had one of the lowest homelessness rates in the nation in 2020, at about 0.1% of the total population statewide. On a single night in January 2020, there were an estimated 2,404 people experiencing homelessness in Nebraska, including individuals and families with children. This total represents a decrease of 38.0% since 2010. The state's homeless population is largely concentrated in the Omaha MSA, where an estimated 1,405 people experienced homelessness in 2020.

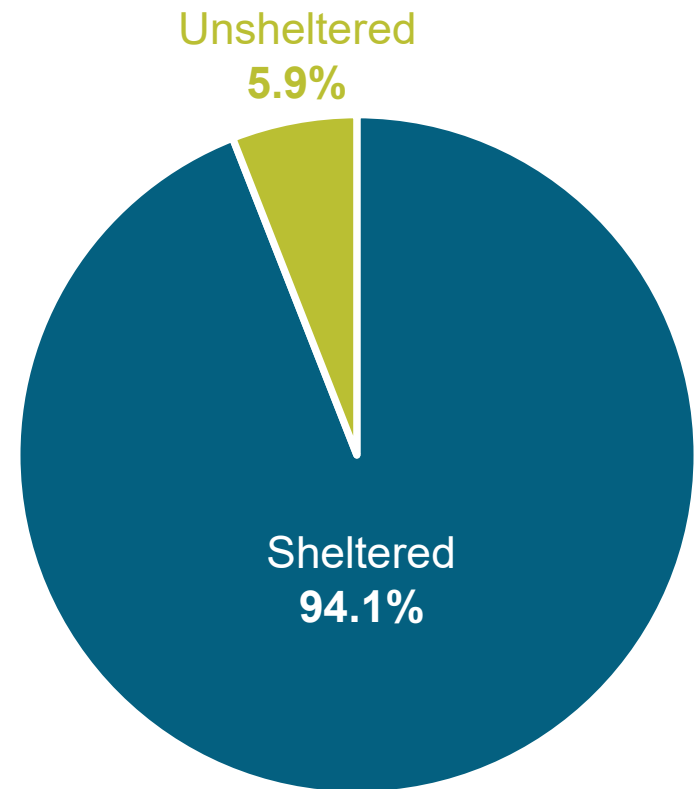
In 2020, Nebraska was one of only five states with more than 94% of all homeless people reported as sheltered (defined as staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, or safe havens). Additionally, statewide, 98.7% of Nebraska's homeless families with children were sheltered in 2020.

How to use it

Homelessness estimates are used by local and state agencies to help assess the need for shelters and services to assist homeless individuals and families with children. Homelessness rates are also an indicator of the economic health of a region. Nebraska's low homelessness rate signals a strong, healthy economy.

	2020 Estimates of Homelessness
Total Homeless Population	2,404
People in Families with Children	682
Individuals	1,722
Unaccompanied Youth	145
Veterans	153
Chronically Homeless Individuals	463

Status of NE Homeless Population 2020



Where to find it

Annual data on homelessness is available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Community Planning and Development in the Annual Homeless Assessment Report, which can be found at www.hudexchange.info under Resources.

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Educational Attainment

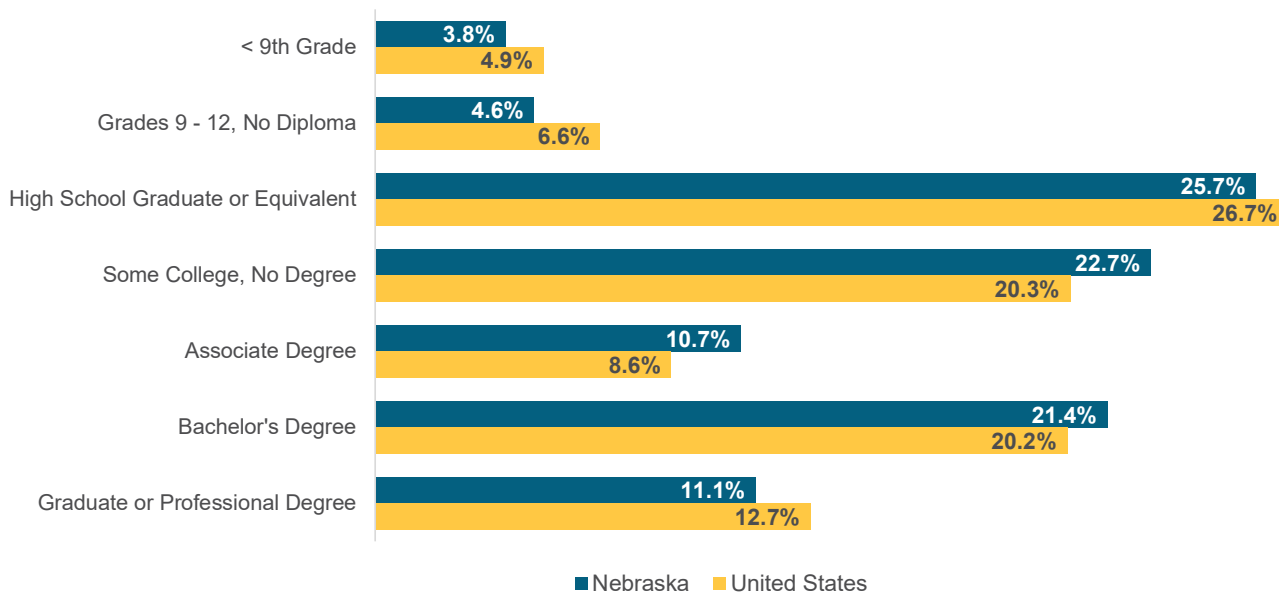
Nebraskans are generally well educated. Over 90% of Nebraskans age 25 and older possessed at least a high school diploma or GED in 2020, and 65.8% possessed at least some postsecondary education. The most commonly-reported highest level of educational attainment was a high school diploma or GED at 25.7%; followed by some college, no degree at 22.7%; and bachelor's degree at 21.4%. Just over 10% of Nebraskans age 25 and up reported having an associate degree, and 11.1% reported having a graduate or professional degree.

Nebraskans are better educated than U.S. residents as whole. U.S. residents are 1.6 percentage points more likely than Nebraskans to report having a graduate or professional degree, but Nebraskans were more likely to report having all other forms of postsecondary education.

Where to find it

Data on educational attainment from the American Community Survey is available at data.census.gov. Search for Table S1501.

Educational Attainment of the NE & US Population, ages 25 and older



Source: US Census Bureau, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, released 2021

How to use it

Information on the educational attainment of Nebraska's workforce may be useful to businesses that are considering expanding into Nebraska. High levels of educational attainment in the population can signal that there is a well-educated labor force, which may be desirable for businesses. Government officials and other stakeholders may also be interested in the population's educational attainment as a measure of a region's social development.

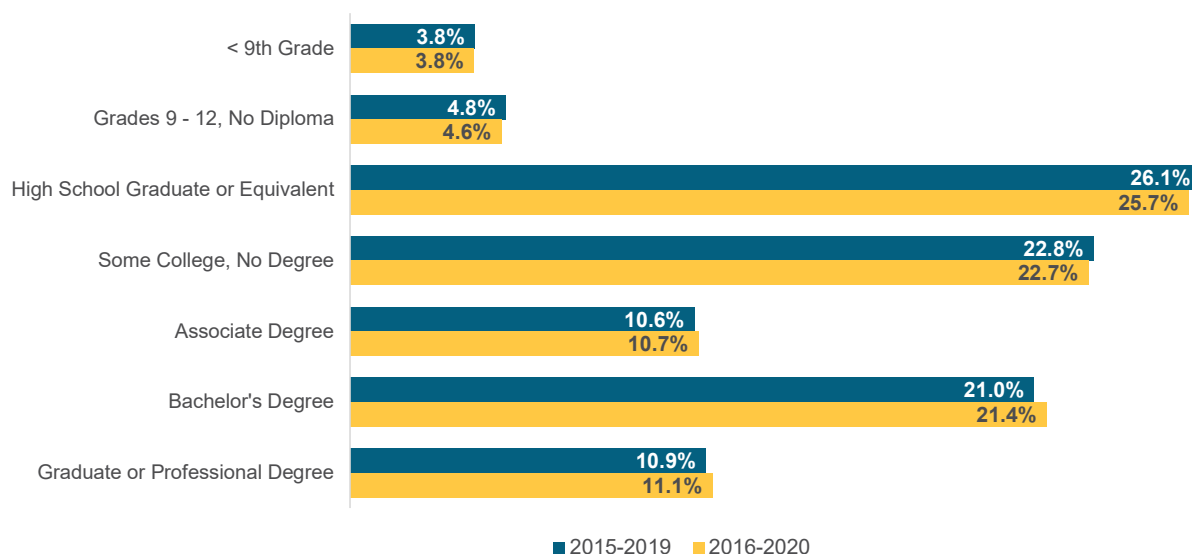
Educational Attainment Change

Change in NE Educational Attainment 2015-2020

	2015-2019	2016-2020	Difference	% Change
Population 25 years and over	1,251,026	1,259,540	8,514	0.7%
Less than 9th grade	47,833	47,818	-15	0.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	59,702	58,366	-1,336	-2.2%
High school graduate/equivalency	326,594	324,098	-2,496	-0.8%
Some college or higher	816,897	829,258	12,361	1.5%
Some college, no degree	285,487	285,338	-149	-0.1%
Associate degree	132,185	134,605	2,420	1.8%
Bachelor's degree	262,614	269,312	6,698	2.6%
Graduate or professional degree	136,611	140,003	3,392	2.5%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 & 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, released 2020 & 2021

NE Population by Educational Attainment



Note: Population age 25 and older.

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 & 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, released 2020 & 2021

Where to find it

Data on educational attainment from the American Community Survey is available at data.census.gov. Search for Table S1501.

The table displays the percentage change of educational attainment within the population age 25 and older between the two 5-year periods of 2015-2019 and 2016-2020. Between these time periods, the number of Nebraskans who reported having some college education or higher increased by 1.5%. The educational attainment level with the largest increase was bachelor's degrees, at 2.6%. There was also a 2.5% increase in the number of Nebraskans with a graduate or professional degree and a 1.8% increase in associate degrees between 2015-2019 and 2016-2020.

The bar chart shows the distribution of educational attainment in Nebraska's population 25 years old and above, using 5-year American Community Survey estimates for the years 2015-2019 and 2016-2020. In 2015-2019, 42.5% of the population age 25 and over had some sort of postsecondary degree; this number decreased to 41.6% in 2016-2020. The percentage of Nebraskans in this age range with a graduate or professional degree increased from 10.9% in 2015-2019 to 11.1% in 2016-2020.

How to use it

The increase observed in the number of Nebraskans with associate and graduate degrees, in particular, could suggest that there is strong demand for technical and trade skills and certifications, as well as advanced educational qualifications, in Nebraska's labor force. With an increasingly educated workforce, possessing a postsecondary degree can be an important asset for job applicants in many occupations and industries.

Graduation Rates

Nebraska has one of the highest high school graduation rates in the nation. In 2021, Nebraska’s four-year public school graduation rate for all students was 87.6%.

According to the 2021 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report from the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, Nebraska had the nation’s 12th highest public -school four-year graduation rate in 2017-2018, at 88.7%. Iowa had the highest graduation rate, at 91.4%. Nebraska’s four-year public high school graduation rate has decreased by 1.6 percentage points since 2016-2017.

Female students in Nebraska graduate from high school at higher rates than their male peers. In 2021, the public-school four-year graduation rate for female students was 90.5%, compared to 84.9% for males.

Graduation rates also vary by race and ethnicity. White non-Hispanic students had Nebraska’s highest four-year public high school graduation rate in 2021, at 91.8%. Graduation rates were 3 percentage points lower among Nebraska students who reported their race or ethnicity as Asian (88.8%), and more than 12 percentage points lower among those who reported their race or ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino (79.1%), or Black/African American (74.8%). Compared to 2017, Nebraska has seen declines in graduation rates for students in every racial/ethnic demographic except Asian and Native Hawaiian.

Where to find it

Data on high school graduation rates is available at nep.education.ne.gov. From there, click on State Data, then View Data under Graduation Rate.

NE Public High School Graduation Rates, 4-Year Cohorts, 2017 – 2021

	2017 Cohort	2021 Cohort	2021 Graduates	% Change
Total	89.1%	87.6%	20,914	-1.6%
Gender				
Male	86.7%	84.9%	10,505	-1.8%
Female	91.7%	90.5%	10,409	-1.3%
Race/Ethnicity				
White	92.5%	91.8%	14,613	-0.7%
Hispanic/Latino	81.6%	79.1%	3,654	-2.4%
Black or African American	81.2%	74.8%	1,159	-6.4%
Asian	81.8%	88.8%	569	7.0%
American Indian/Alaska Native	70.3%	72.6%	228	2.3%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	85.4%	82.9%	29	-2.5%
Two or More Races	86.0%	81.4%	662	-4.6%

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska Public Schools State Snapshot, 2017-2021

How to use it

High school graduation rates provide one measure of the health of Nebraska’s educational system. Improving graduation rates among minority students continues to be a focus of education groups, particularly with Nebraska’s rapidly growing minority population.

Postsecondary Fall Enrollment 2019-2020

Number of Graduates by Degree Level

	University of Nebraska System	Nebraska State Colleges	Community College	Private not-for-profit	Private for-profit	Total Enrollment
White	36,703	6,736	25,412	24,324	447	93,622
Black or African American	1,939	330	1,872	2,807	37	6,985
American Indian or Alaska Native	103	96	499	201	1	900
Asian	1,703	62	930	1,571	6	4,272
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	42	11	46	128	0	227
Hispanic/Latino	4,912	757	5,369	3,911	123	15,072
Two or more races	1,726	254	1,039	1,030	22	4,071
Nonresident Alien	3,370	117	247	448	2	4,184
Total enrollment	50,498	8,363	35,414	34,420	638	129,333

Source: National Center for Educational Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

How to use it

Postsecondary institution enrollments provide one more measure of the health of Nebraska's educational system. Improving attendance rates among minority students continues to be a focus of education groups, particularly with Nebraska's rapidly growing minority population.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, almost 130,000 students were enrolled in the 40 postsecondary educational institutions across Nebraska. The largest sector of institutions was the University of Nebraska system, with almost 51,000 students. The Nebraska Community College system enrolled over 35,000 students and private not-for-profit institutions enrolled almost as many. The Nebraska State College system enrolled just over 8,000 students, and private for-profit institutions less than 700.

The largest percentage of minority students were enrolled in private for-profit colleges. Almost 30 percent of students enrolled at for-profit colleges in Nebraska were a racial or ethnic minority. The lowest percentage of minority students (19.50%) were enrolled at one of the three state colleges, while 27.3% of students enrolled in the University of Nebraska system were minorities.

Where to find it

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System can be found at the National Center for Education Statistics website, nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data.

Graduates by Degree Level

2019-2020 Graduates by Award Level

There were approximately 30,000 postsecondary graduates from Nebraska's postsecondary educational institutions in the class of 2019-2020. Approximately 47.2% of these graduates received a bachelor's degree. Out of all the bachelor's degrees awarded, more than 50% were from the University of Nebraska system. The Nebraska State College System had the highest proportion of graduates earning bachelor's degrees, with 69.8% of State College graduates earning that level of award. The bachelor's degree was also the most often awarded degree level at the University of Nebraska System and private not-for-profit institutions.

How to use it

Postsecondary awards are the next logical step in the education system pipeline into the workforce, and another measure of the overall health of the education system. Improving graduate outcomes when graduates enter the workforce continues to be a priority for the Department of Labor and economic developers across the state.

Where to find it

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System can be found at the National Center for Education Statistics website, nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data.

Number of Graduates by Degree Level

Degree Level	Grand Total	University of Nebraska	Nebraska State College System	Community Colleges	Private not-for-profit	Private for-profit
Certificates of less than 1 year	1,934	1	0	1,778	20	135
Certificates of 1 but less than 2 years	1,094	0	0	1,063	22	9
Associate degree	4,389	0	0	4,159	199	31
Certificates of 2 but less than 4 years	379	65	0	11	0	303
Bachelor's degree	14,081	7,927	1,184	N/A	4,961	9
Postbaccalaureate certificates	510	231	0	N/A	279	0
Master's degree	5,532	2,486	487	N/A	2,559	0
Post-master's certificates	145	72	25	N/A	48	0
Doctor's degree - research/scholarship	492	398	0	N/A	94	0
Doctor's degree - professional practice	1,160	439	0	N/A	721	0
Doctor's degree - other	91	47	0	N/A	44	0
Degree Level Total	29,807	11,666	1,696	7,011	8,947	487

Note: A table entry of zero means the degree level is offered, but no students graduate in that category. A table entry of N/A means that degree level is not offered at that institution level. Source: National Center for Educational Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

Graduate Demographics

2019-2020 Graduates by Race, Ethnicity and Gender

	Grand Total	University of Nebraska System	Nebraska State Colleges	Community College	Private not-for-profit	Private for-profit
American Indian or Alaska Native	136	26	14	49	43	4
Asian	799	307	10	117	363	2
Black or African American	1,194	331	62	264	514	23
Hispanic or Latino	2,210	566	117	706	735	86
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	45	9	3	10	23	0
White	20,285	8,371	1,392	4,231	5,941	350
Two or more races	961	533	47	107	258	16
Race/ethnicity unknown	1,059	146	15	130	764	4
Nonresident alien	1,290	1,042	36	63	148	1
Grand Total	27,979	11,331	1,696	5,677	8,789	486

	Grand Total	University of Nebraska System	Nebraska State Colleges	Community College	Private not-for-profit	Private for-profit
Male	11,800	5,043	639	2,762	3,308	48
Female	16,179	6,288	1,057	2,915	5,481	438
Grand Total	27,979	11,331	1,696	5,677	8,789	486

Source: National Center for Educational Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

Where to find it

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System can be found at the National Center for Education Statistics website, nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data.

Most of Nebraska's postsecondary education graduates in the 2019-2020 academic year were white. White graduates made up over 70% of graduates across all educational sectors with the exception of private not-for-profit institutions. The Nebraska State College system had the highest percentage of white graduates (82.1%). Private for-profit institutions had the highest percentage of Hispanic or Latino graduates (17.7%). Private not-for-profit institutions had the highest percentage of Black or African American graduates (5.8%). The University of Nebraska System had the highest percentage of nonresident alien students (9.2%).

Overall, there were more women graduates than men in the 2019-2020 academic year. The largest split was at private for-profit institutions, at which 90.1% of graduates were women. The most even split was at Nebraska Community Colleges, where women made up 51.3% of all graduates.

How to use it

Comparing the racial, ethnic and gender proportions of recent college graduates to the proportions among the general population can provide insights into how well our educational institutions are serving various populations. These data are important to educators and policy makers who wish to ensure all prospective students are able to achieve their educational goals.

Graduates by Field of Study

2018-2019 Graduates by Field of Study

Among postsecondary graduates, the three most popular fields of study were Business, Management, Marketing; Health Professions and Education degree programs. Almost half (47.7%) of all graduates chose one of these fields of study. Business, Management, and Marketing fields of study were the most popular degree programs in the University of Nebraska System. Education degree programs were most popular at the Nebraska State Colleges. Health Profession degree programs were most popular at Community Colleges, private not-for-profit institutions, and private for-profit institutions.

How to use it

Prospective students planning their education can use these data to help select a school and field of study. Colleges and regulatory commissions likewise can use these data to evaluate the success of their academic programs and improve educational services throughout the state. Workforce Investment Boards, economic developers, and policymakers may also use graduate data to track labor market conditions and determine whether the state's workforce is prepared to meet the demands of area employers.

Where to find it

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System can be found at the National Center for Education Statistics website, nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data.

Field of Study	University of Nebraska System	Nebraska State Colleges	Community College	Private not-for-profit	Private for-profit	Total All Institutions
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	16.9%	25.8%	12.5%	26.9%	0.0%	19.1%
Health Professions and Related Programs	11.1%	0.2%	19.1%	28.6%	5.5%	17.5%
Education	12.7%	35.7%	1.3%	12.7%	0.0%	11.2%
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	3.1%	0.9%	16.0%	0.7%	0.0%	5.2%
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	4.5%	1.8%	4.6%	5.7%	0.0%	4.7%
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	5.3%	4.4%	0.1%	4.4%	0.0%	3.7%
Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians	0.0%	0.0%	14.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%
Agricultural/Animal/Plant/Veterinary Science and Related Fields	5.5%	1.4%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
Psychology	3.8%	6.4%	0.2%	2.7%	0.0%	2.8%
Visual and Performing Arts	2.7%	2.1%	2.3%	2.3%	4.5%	2.5%

Source: National Center for Educational Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

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Labor Force

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Labor Force

The labor force is the total civilian, non-institutionalized population, age 16 years old or older, who are either employed or unemployed but actively seeking employment. Labor force estimates exclude military personnel and all persons confined to institutions including nursing homes, mental institutions, and prisons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons divided by the size of the labor force.

In 2021, Nebraska's labor force was comprised of approximately 1,049,033 individuals. Nebraska's unemployment rate for 2021 was 2.5% (not seasonally adjusted), well below the national unemployment rate of 5.3%.

The Columbus and Lexington MCs had the lowest unemployment rate of all Nebraska MCs and MSAs, at 2.1%. The Omaha MSA had the state's highest unemployment rate at 3.0%.

How to use it

The unemployment rate is one way to measure the health of an economy. A low unemployment rate can signal a stable, thriving economy, in which most workers are able to find suitable employment. While a low unemployment rate can reflect economic health, a very low unemployment rate can also make it more difficult for businesses to find employees, as the labor pool of unemployed workers is relatively small. Nebraska's low unemployment rate, coupled with its high labor force participation rate, point to a strong, stable economy, which is critical to attracting both employers and employees to the region.

Labor Force Estimates 2021 *

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
United States	161,204,000	152,581,000	8,623,000	5.3%
Nebraska	1,049,033	1,022,662	26,371	2.5%
Beatrice MC	10,945	10,679	266	2.4%
Columbus MC	18,327	17,934	393	2.1%
Fremont MC	20,420	19,940	480	2.4%
Grand Island MSA	44,944	43,728	1,216	2.7%
Hastings MC	16,942	16,539	403	2.4%
Kearney MC	32,022	31,392	630	2.0%
Lexington MC	14,817	14,508	309	2.1%
Lincoln MSA	187,485	182,908	4,577	2.4%
Norfolk MC	27,893	27,247	646	2.3%
North Platte MC	19,500	19,076	424	2.2%
Omaha MSA (Omaha-Council Bluffs, NE-IA MSA)	499,366	484,451	14,915	3.0%
Scottsbluff MC	19,313	18,791	522	2.7%

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, released 2022

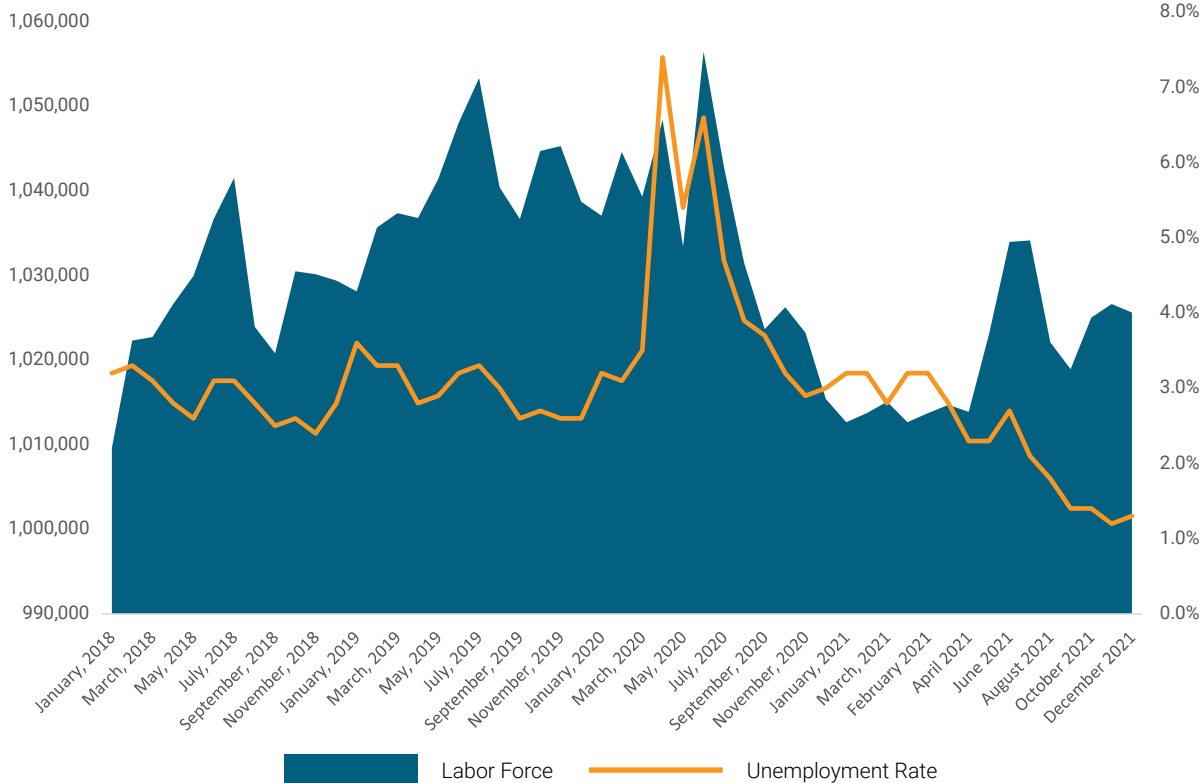
* Not seasonally adjusted

Where to find it

State and local data on labor force estimates are available networks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Labor Market Analysis to view the data, or download data by going to the Data Download Center, located under Labor Market Data. The national unemployment rate is available at www.bls.gov/cps.

Seasonal Labor Force Fluctuations

Nebraska Unemployment Rate & Seasonal Fluctuations in Labor Force 2018 – 2021



Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, released 2021

Where to find it

State and local data on labor force estimates are available at neworks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Labor Market Analysis. Then, under Labor Market Data, select Labor Force Data, or download data by going to the Data Download Center, located under Labor Market Data.

The labor force and unemployment rate can vary by season. Over the previous three years, from 2018 to 2021, the size of Nebraska’s labor force peaked in June 2020. The state’s annual labor force average was approximately 1,017,729 in 2018 and 1,035,175 in 2020.

Nebraska’s not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate experienced some major fluctuations in 2020, with a record high of 7.4% in April 2020, and a low of 2.4% in Nov 2018. In 2020, there was a sharp increase in the unemployment rate due to the Covid-19 pandemic. When compared to March 2020, the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, the labor force in March 2021 was only 2.3% lower and the unemployment rate has dropped to pre-pandemic levels.

How to use it

Knowledge of seasonal labor force and unemployment patterns can help predict future labor force and unemployment fluctuations. Employers can use this information to plan business processes such as recruitment and possibly anticipate changes related to seasonal economic fluctuations. Harvests, weather changes, holidays, and school openings and closings are a few examples of seasonal events that can lead to significant fluctuations in the state’s labor force and unemployment rates.

U6 Rates

The U6 rate is an alternative measure of labor underutilization compared to the traditional unemployment rate. The U6 rate measures all unemployed workers, marginally attached workers (discouraged workers who are not employed and have sought work in the past 12 months, but not in the last 4 weeks), and workers who are employed part-time, but who desire to and are available to work full-time.

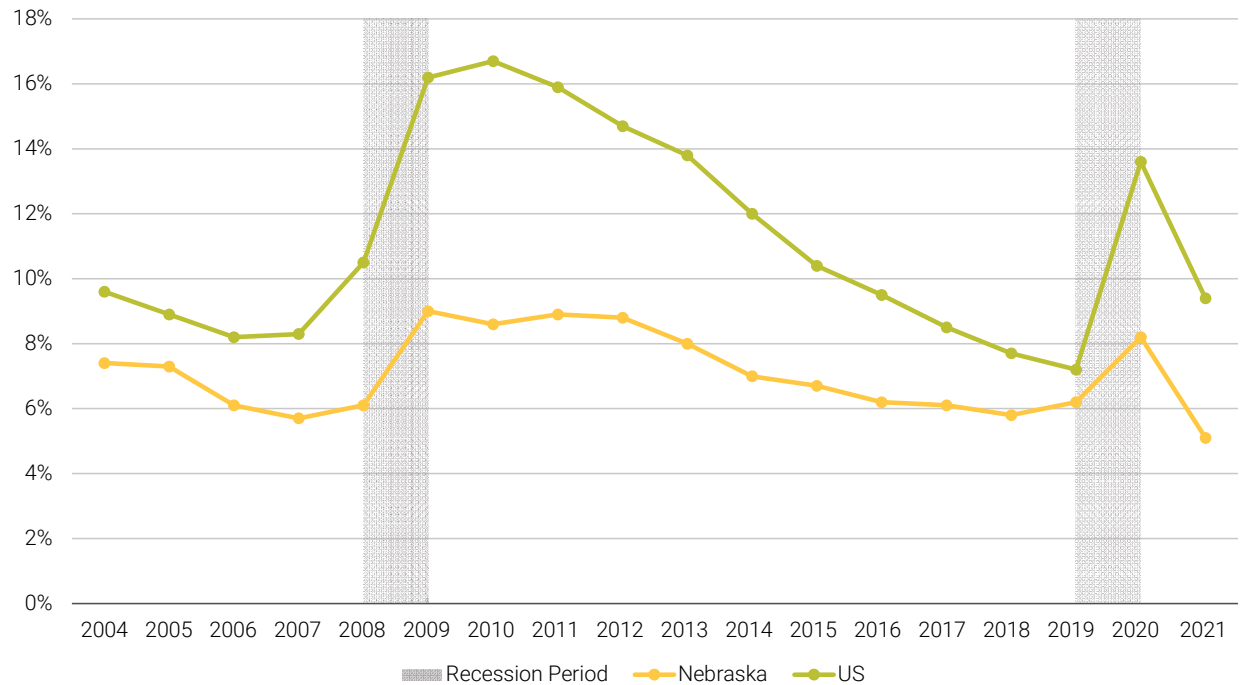
In 2008, Nebraska's U6 rate was around 6.1%. The U6 rate jumped to 9.0% in 2009, after the onset of the economic recession, and stayed close to 9.0% until 2012. In 2018, Nebraska's U6 rate was 5.8%, its lowest since 2007. In 2020 Nebraska's U6 rate increased to 8.2% due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Nebraska's U6 rate has consistently been lower than the rate for the U.S. as a whole. The difference between Nebraska versus the national U6 rate was greatest during the recession period in 2009 and 2010. The difference has shrunk gradually since then, and began to diverge again in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

How to use it

Because the U6 rate includes marginally attached and some part-time workers, it can provide a more expansive measure of workers who are underutilized or left out of the labor force than the traditional unemployment rate. Additionally, trends in the U6 rate over time can help predict unemployment and labor underutilization in the next several years.

NE & US U6 Rates 2004 – 2021



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
NE	8.6%	8.9%	8.8%	8.0%	7.0%	6.7%	6.2%	6.1%	5.8%	6.2%	8.2%	5.1%
US	16.7%	15.9%	14.7%	13.8%	12.0%	10.4%	9.5%	8.5%	7.7%	7.2%	13.6%	9.4%

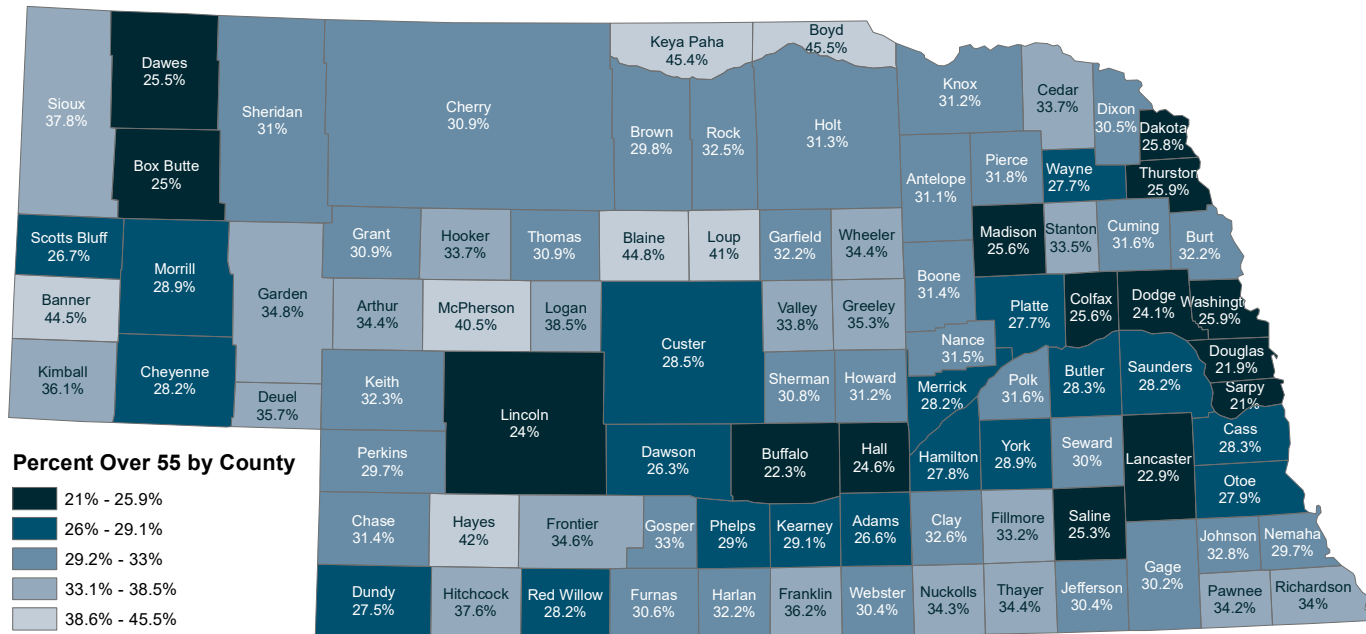
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, released January 2022

Where to find it

Information on the U6 rate is available at [bls.gov](https://www.bls.gov). Under Subjects, select State and Local Unemployment Rates, then select Alternative Measure of Labor Underutilization for States.

Older Workers

Percentage of County Workforce, ages 55 and older, 2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, QWI Explorer, released 2022

How to use it

The growing proportion of older workers in the labor force signals the need for business adaptation. Older workers can contribute valuable skills and experience to businesses. As older workers reach retirement, businesses will need to adjust and refill their positions, possibly with a younger, less experienced workforce.

Where to find it

The Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics program from the U.S. Census provides data on worker age at lehd.ces.census.gov. Under Applications, select QWI Explorer.

Older workers comprise a much larger proportion of Nebraska's workforce than in the recent past, perhaps because of the aging baby boomer population. In 2021 there were more than 225,000 workers ages 55 and older in Nebraska, comprising 24.1% of the state's total workforce. In comparison, approximately 113,000 workers, or 13.1% of the workforce, were 55 or older in 2000, and about 161,400 workers, or 18.0% of the workforce, were 55 or older in 2007.

Older workers tended to comprise a larger share of the non-MC/MSA workforce than the MC/MSA workforce. Almost 30% of Nebraska's non-MC/MSA workforce was 55 or older in 2021, compared to 23.1% of the MC/MSA workforce.

Sarpy County had the state's smallest percentage of older workers, at 21.0%. The county where older workers made up the largest share of the labor market was Boyd, where 45.5% of the workforce was 55 or over in 2021.

Labor Availability Study - Important Factors

The Labor Availability Study (LAS) is an ongoing research project which typically produces three distinct reports for each surveyed region of Nebraska: the Labor Availability Report, which uses data obtained through surveys of local individuals; the Hiring and Training Needs Report, consisting of data received from area employers; and the Skills Gap Report, which utilizes the data from LAS surveys as well as additional secondary sources to provide recommendations for the local labor market, produced by the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Nebraska- Lincoln. The Nebraska Department of Labor partners with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development to produce the Labor Availability Report and the Hiring and Training Needs Report.

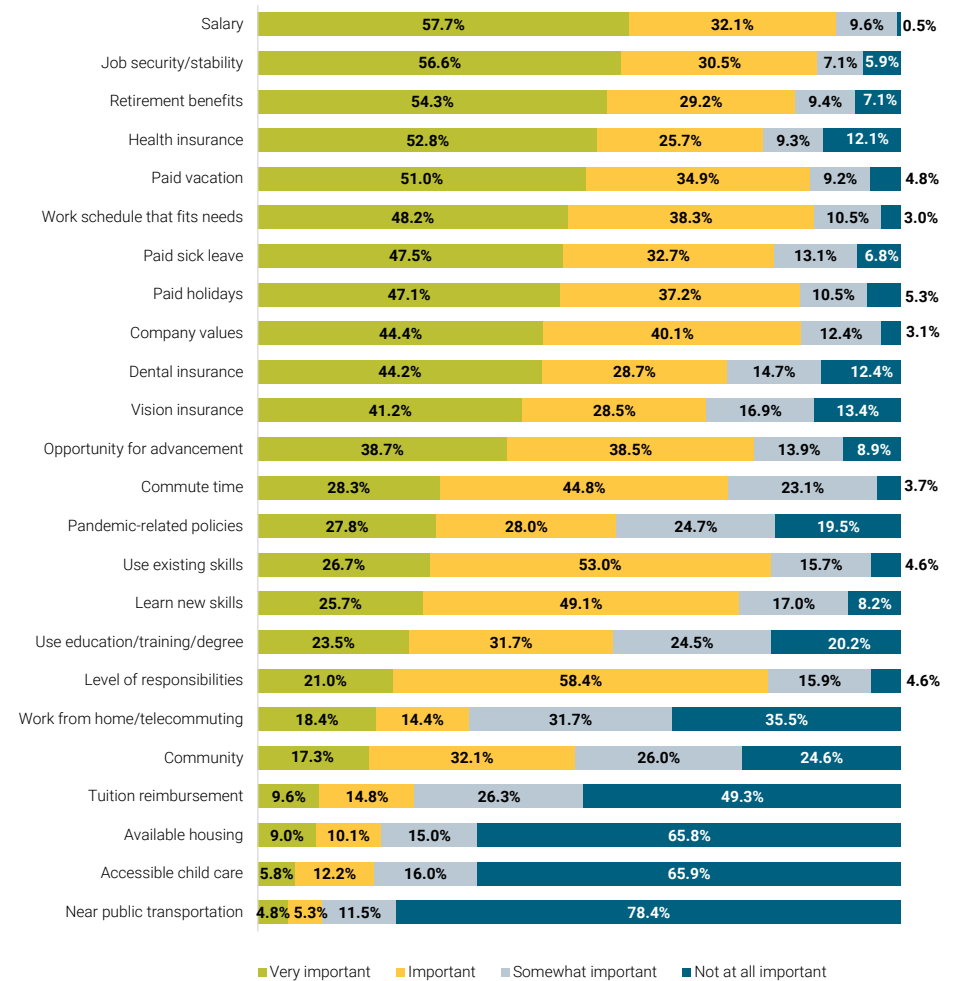
In the fall of 2020 two statewide surveys were conducted to assess the impacts the COVID-19 pandemic was having on the labor market and business operations in Nebraska. One category of respondents that was analyzed included potential job seekers— those who were likely to change jobs or re-enter the workforce in the next year if a suitable job is available. Potential job seekers who responded to the LAS survey rated the importance of various factors when considering a new job opportunity.

To the right is a sample of results from the Nebraska Statewide Pandemic Impacts report that was published in the summer of 2021. The top three considerations that respondents rated important or very important were salary (89.8%), job security/ stability (87.1%), and a work schedule that fit their needs (86.5%). More than half of potential job seekers (55.7%) indicated that a business having pandemic-related policies was important or very important. While only 32.8% said working from home/telecommuting was an important or very important consideration, this factor was significantly higher in 2020 than the 22.8% previously reported in the Nebraska Statewide Labor Availability Report published in 2019.

How to use it

The Labor Availability Study was designed to measure labor availability and to help determine the hiring and training needs of employers in Nebraska. Data on the important factors workers consider when evaluating new job opportunities can help employers and other stakeholders understand what potential job seekers are looking for in local labor markets.

Reported Important Factors for Potential Job Seekers, Statewide Labor Availability Report



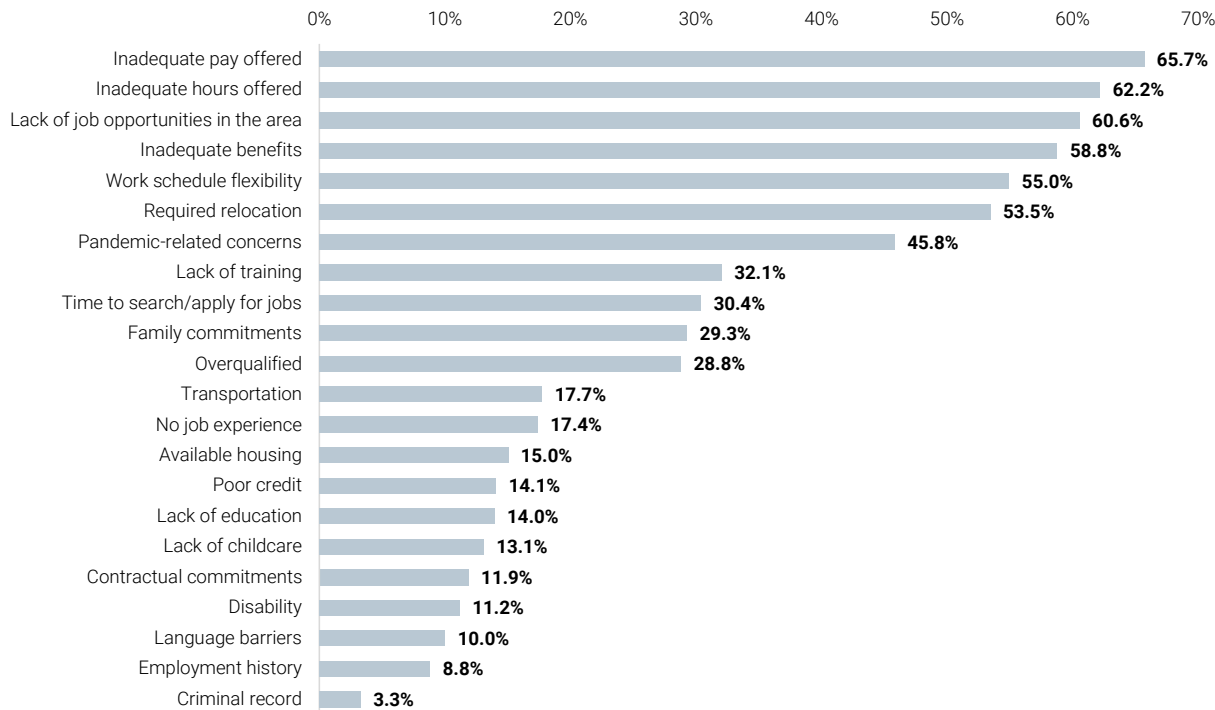
Where to find it

In addition to the Nebraska Statewide Pandemic Impacts report, Labor Availability Study reports have been published most recently for the Southeast area (including Fairbury, Beatrice, Nebraska City, and Falls City), Northeast Nebraska (Fremont, Columbus, Norfolk, and Wayne), and Greater Omaha. All LAS reports can be found on [NEworks](#).

Labor Availability Study

Obstacles to Employment

Obstacles to Employment Reported by Potential Job Seekers, Statewide Labor Availability Report



Where to find it

In addition to the Nebraska Statewide Pandemic Impacts report, Labor Availability Study reports have been published most recently for the Southeast area (including Fairbury, Beatrice, Nebraska City, and Falls City), Northeast Nebraska (Fremont, Columbus, Norfolk, and Wayne), and Greater Omaha. All LAS reports can be found at [NEworks](#).

LAS survey respondents reported any obstacles that may prevent them from changing jobs or reentering the workforce within the next year. As seen in the chart, taken from the Nebraska Statewide Pandemic Impacts report published in the summer of 2021, potential job seekers were asked to identify any obstacles that applied to their individual employment situations.

The top obstacles to employment, as expressed by potential job seekers, were inadequate pay, inadequate hours, lack of job opportunities, and inadequate benefits. Nearly 46% of potential job seekers said pandemic-related concerns may be an obstacle to changing jobs or reentering the workforce within the next year.

How to use it

Information about the reasons why individuals don't change jobs or re-enter the workforce is not regularly collected through the Bureau of Labor Statistics or the Census Bureau. The Labor Availability Study fills this gap by producing reports for local areas, detailing the types of obstacles respondents say may prevent them from changing jobs or reentering the workforce within the next year. This information can be used to determine the unique challenges a local labor market might face (e.g., lack of training or language barriers).

Commuting

'In-commuters' refers to workers who commute into the state for work. The map to the [right] shows the number of workers from surrounding states who commuted into Nebraska for their primary jobs in 2019.

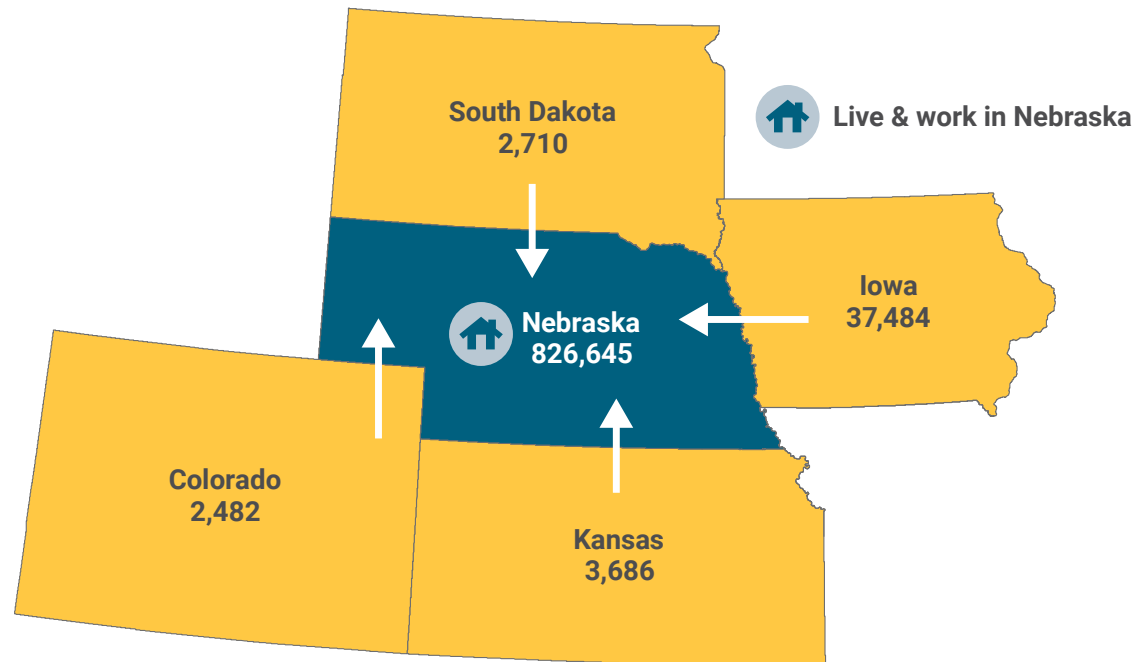
There were 891,986 primary jobs in Nebraska in 2019. Nebraska residents filled approximately 826,645, or 92.7%, of those jobs. Iowa residents comprised the next-largest portion of Nebraska's workforce. Approximately 37,484, or 4.2%, of workers in Nebraska commuted from Iowa. Almost half of all Iowa commuters traveled from Council Bluffs or Sioux City, IA.

Nebraska had a net gain of workers from cross-state commuting. Approximately 25,906 more workers commuted into Nebraska for work than commuted out of Nebraska for work in 2019.

How to use it

Commuting data that compares net in-commuting and out-commuting can indicate whether or not a state has attractive work opportunities. States that have more in-commuters than out-commuters may have more work opportunities and higher wages than surrounding areas. In contrast, states that have a higher number of workers leaving for work than coming into that state for work may have fewer employment opportunities and/or less appealing wages than surrounding areas.

Nebraska In-Commuters 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, OnTheMap, released 2021

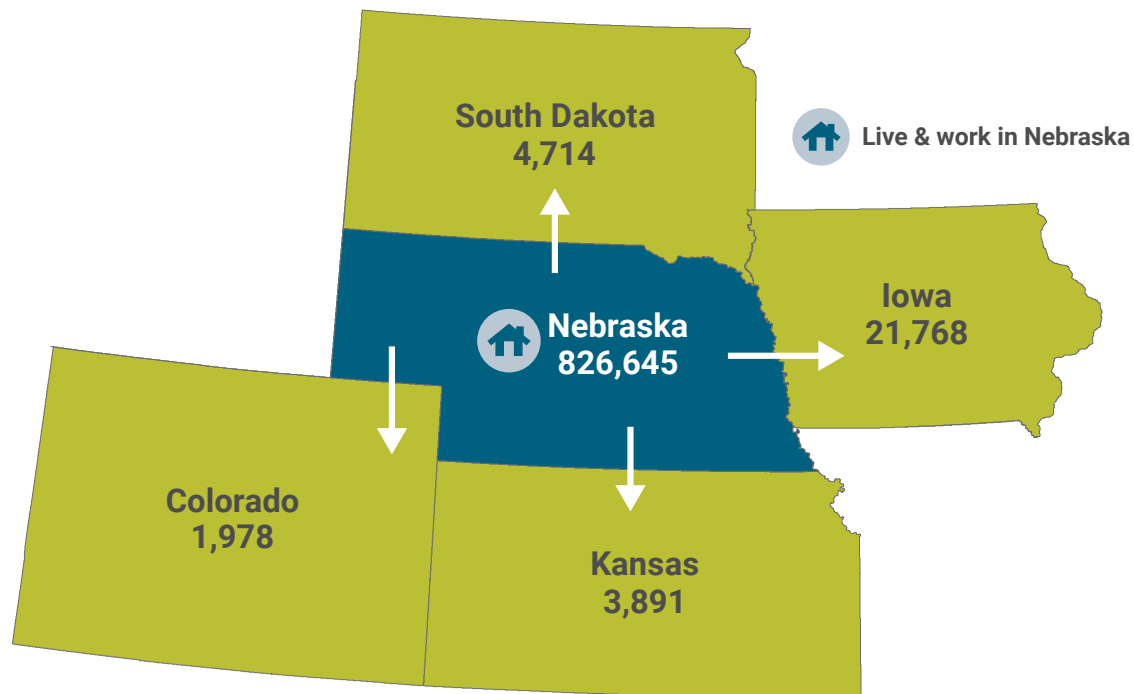
A primary job is the highest paying job for an individual worker for the year.
The count of primary jobs is the same as the count of workers.

Where to find it

The Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics program from the U.S. Census provides commuting data at lehd.ces.census.gov. Under Applications, select OnTheMap.

Commuting

Nebraska Out-Commuters 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, OnTheMap, released 2021.

Where to find it

The Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics program from the U.S. Census provides commuting data at lehd.ces.census.gov. Under Applications, select OnTheMap.

'Out-commuters' refers to Nebraska residents who commute out of the state for work. The map to the left shows states where Nebraskans commuted for their primary jobs in 2019.

There were 866,080 Nebraskans with primary jobs in 2019. Approximately 826,645, or 95.4%, of these Nebraskans were employed within the state. The majority of Nebraskans who commuted out-of-state went to Iowa. About 21,768 Nebraskans, or 2.5% of those with primary jobs, commuted to Iowa for work. More than 62.8% of Nebraskans who commuted to Iowa worked in Council Bluffs or Sioux City, IA.

Nebraska had fewer in-commuters than out-commuters in 2019. Approximately 25,000 more workers commuted into the state than commuted out of state for work.

How to use it

Commuting data that compares net in-commuting and out-commuting can indicate whether or not a state has attractive work opportunities. States that have more in-commuters than out-commuters may have more work opportunities and higher wages than surrounding areas. In contrast, states that have a higher number of workers leaving for work than coming into that state for work may have fewer employment opportunities and/or less appealing wages than surrounding areas.

2020 Commute Times

In 2020, the average commute time for Nebraska workers was 18.9 minutes— significantly shorter than the U.S. average of 26.9 minutes. Almost a quarter of Nebraskans traveled less than 10 minutes to work, compared to only 12.3% of workers nationwide. About 35.8% of employed Nebraskans commuted 10 to 19 minutes, while 40.7% reported traveling 20 minutes or more to work.

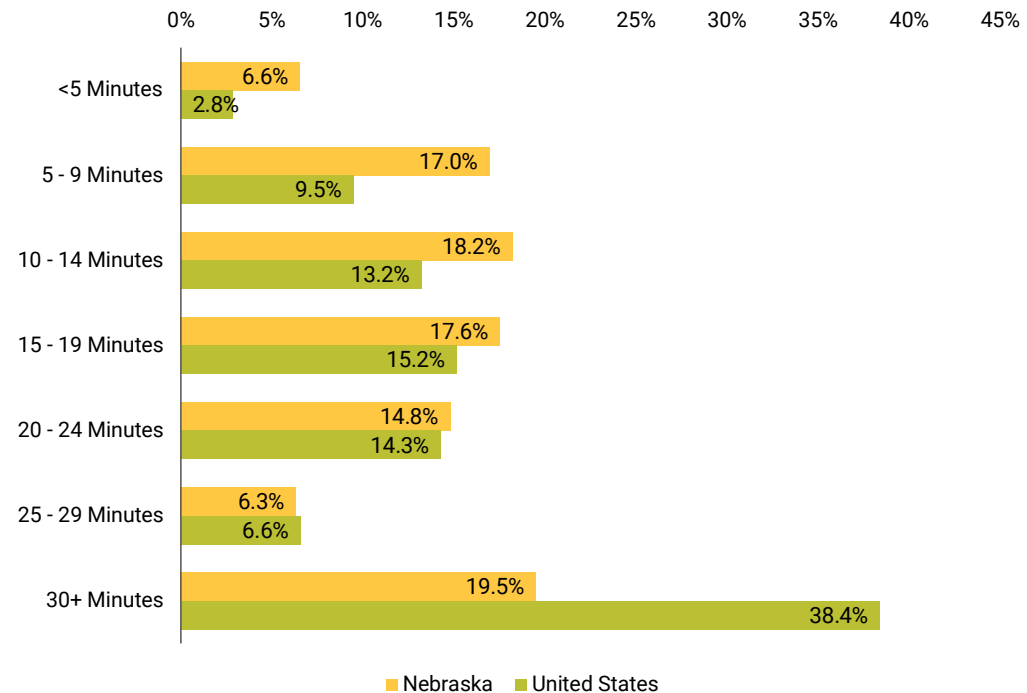
How to use it

Commuting statistics are one way to estimate how long workers may be willing to travel for work, as well as which geographic regions businesses might look to for employee recruitment. Businesses in regions where a high proportion of workers have longer commutes may be more likely to draw workers from a broader geographic area than businesses in regions where workers tend to have shorter commutes.

Where to find it

Data on commuting comes from the American Community Survey, available at data.census.gov. Search for Tables S0801 and B08303.

Avg. Commute Time for NE & US Workers 2020



Commute Time	Nebraska		United States	
	Population	%	Population	%
<5 minutes	60,888	6.6%	4,015,943	2.8%
5 to 9 minutes	157,483	17.0%	13,513,625	9.5%
10 to 14 minutes	169,212	18.2%	18,838,076	13.2%
15 to 19 minutes	162,877	17.6%	21,619,878	15.2%
20 to 24 minutes	137,490	14.8%	20,372,651	14.3%
25 to 29 minutes	58,848	6.3%	9,365,254	6.6%
30+ minutes	181,266	19.5%	54,787,132	38.4%
Total:	928,064	100.0%	142,512,559	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 - 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, released 2021

Wages & Compensation

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Earnings

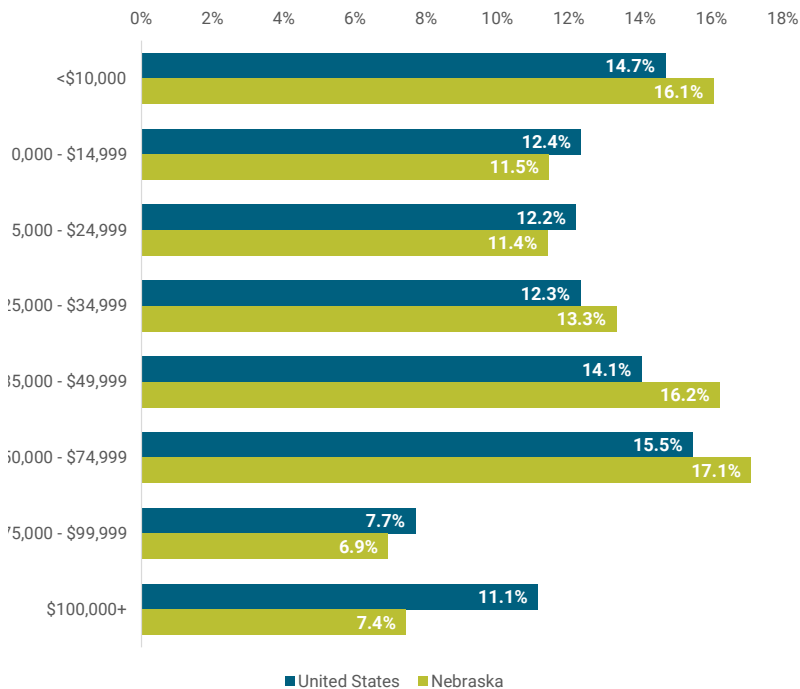
According to the American Community Survey, 27.5% of working Nebraskans ages 16 and over earned less than \$15,000 per year in 2020, and another 24.7% earned \$15,000-\$34,999. More than a quarter of the state's 16+ population earned \$50,000 or more. About 17.1% of Nebraskans earned \$50,000-\$74,999, while 14.4% earned \$75,000 or more annually.

Nebraska has a lower proportion of high earners (workers who earned \$50,000 or more per year) than the nation as a whole, and a slightly higher proportion of very low earners (workers who earned less than \$10,000 annually). About 31.5% of Nebraskans earned \$50,000 or more annually, compared to 34.3% of workers nationwide. Additionally, only 7.4% of Nebraskans earned more than \$100,000 per year, versus a national percentage of 11.1%. Approximately 16.1% of Nebraskans earned less than \$10,000 annually, compared to 14.7% nationwide.

How to use it

The earnings in a region should be viewed along with the area's relative cost of living. Although a population may have a higher percentage of lower-income earners, their earnings in that region may be able to buy a better quality of life than they would in other regions, due to a lower cost of living. For instance, according to the CNN Money Cost of Living Calculator, a salary of \$50,000 in Omaha, Neb. would be equivalent to a higher salary of \$60,557 in Denver, Colo.; \$66,184 in Chicago, Ill.; \$85,745 in Washington, D.C.; or \$131,672 in Manhattan, N.Y.

Share of NE & US Population, ages 16 and over, by Annual Earnings 2020



Earnings	United States		Nebraska	
	Population*	%	Population*	%
<\$10,000	27,132,881	14.7%	187,320	16.1%
\$10,000-\$14,999	22,786,385	12.4%	133,583	11.5%
\$15,000-\$24,999	22,521,554	12.2%	132,959	11.4%
\$25,000-\$34,999	22,736,726	12.3%	155,514	13.3%
\$35,000-\$49,999	25,914,080	14.1%	189,389	16.2%
\$50,000-\$74,999	28,562,035	15.5%	199,609	17.1%
\$75,000-\$99,999	14,191,792	7.7%	80,846	6.9%
\$100,000+	20,531,044	11.1%	86,685	7.4%
Total:	184,376,497	100.0%	1,165,905	100.0%

*Population age 16 and older.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 - 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, released 2021

Where to find it

Earnings data from the American Community Survey are available at data.census.gov.

Search for Table B20001.

CNN money's Cost of Living Calculator is available at money.cnn.com/calculator/pf/cost-of-living/index.html.

Median Earnings

Median Annual Earnings by Educational Attainment 2020

	United States	Nebraska	% Difference
Population 25 years and over with earnings	\$42,002	\$41,351	1.6%
Less than high school graduate	\$25,351	\$28,150	-9.9%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$32,002	\$32,260	-0.8%
Some college or associate degree	\$38,258	\$38,210	0.1%
Bachelor's degree	\$56,152	\$50,886	10.3%
Graduate or professional degree	\$75,328	\$64,792	16.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 - 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, released 2021

How to use it

Data on median wages by educational attainment can be used to show the income benefits of postsecondary education. Educators and students can use median wage information to make decisions that will help put students on track to earn their desired wages. Educational earnings data, along with occupational and industry wage data, can also help workers gauge how their current wages compare to workers with similar characteristics.

According to the American Community Survey, median annual earnings tend to increase dramatically with higher levels of educational attainment. In 2020, median earnings for Nebraskans with a high school diploma were approximately \$32,260 per year. Median earnings increased to over \$50,000 for Nebraskans with a bachelor's degree, and over \$64,000 for those with a graduate or professional degree.

Workers with bachelor's and graduate degrees earned significantly higher median wages nationally than in Nebraska. The national median for bachelor's degree earners was 10.3% higher than in Nebraska, and 16.3% higher for graduate/professional degree earners.

The national median for workers overall, regardless of educational attainment, was only 1.6% higher than the median in Nebraska.

For workers with less than a high school diploma and those with a high school diploma or equivalent, the Nebraska median wage was higher than for the nation as a whole (9.9% and 0.8% higher respectively).

Where to find it

Data on earnings by educational attainment are from the American Community Survey, available at data.census.gov. Search for Table S1501.

Industry Earnings

The industry sector that paid the state's highest average annual wage for men during the first quarter of 2020 was public administration, where the average annual wage was \$136,152. Finance and Insurance was the industry sector that paid the state's highest average annual wage for women, at \$84,564 per year. The accommodation and food services industry had Nebraska's lowest average annual wage for men (\$20,568), and women (\$16,656).

How to use it

Data on industry earnings by gender provide can provide insights into how typical rates of compensation in various industries may differ by gender. Prospective job seekers and students may be interested in industry earnings by gender, as this information can provide a more precise estimate of an industry's typical wages. However, this data does not include specific details that can impact average pay, such as occupations held or hours worked.

Where to find it

The Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics program from the U.S. Census provides data on earnings by industry and gender at lehd.ces.census.gov. Under Applications, select QWI Explorer.

Annual Earnings by Industry for Men & Women 2020

Industry	Average Annual Wage Female	Average Annual Wage Male
Accommodation and Food Services	\$16,656	\$20,568
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	\$41,364	\$47,604
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$33,384	\$45,240
All NAICS Sectors	\$42,288	\$61,776
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$17,364	\$24,900
Construction	\$38,904	\$53,028
Educational Services	\$42,180	\$56,484
Finance and Insurance	\$76,404	\$136,152
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$42,360	\$80,088
Information	\$67,548	\$89,448
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$63,552	\$110,412
Manufacturing	\$48,240	\$62,400
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	\$43,284	\$62,592
Other Services (except Public Administration)	\$29,472	\$42,528
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	\$55,596	\$91,224
Public Administration	\$40,260	\$51,000
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$39,828	\$50,988
Retail Trade	\$24,336	\$38,748
Transportation and Warehousing	\$38,256	\$52,104
Utilities	\$84,564	\$106,572
Wholesale Trade	\$56,244	\$74,772

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, QWI Explorer, accessed February 2022

Annual Earnings by Occupational Group

The table gives the entry, median, and experienced annual wages for all major occupational groups in Nebraska. Nebraska's 2021 wages tended to be lower than the national median for most occupational groups, but were significantly higher for a few. The greatest differences between state and national earnings were in Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media occupations, where national median wages were 22.7% higher than in Nebraska, and in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, where the national median was 20.7% lower than the median for Nebraska.

How to use it

Occupational wage data provides a convenient means to identify typical wages for different occupational groups. Employers can use occupational wage data to offer their employees' wages that are competitive within their region. Workers can also use occupational wage data to gauge how their compensation compares to other workers in similar occupations and with similar levels of experience. Additionally, students can use wage data to pick occupational paths that are most likely to meet their earnings requirements.

Occupational Group	Nebraska Annual Wages			US Wages*	
	Entry	Median	Experienced	Median	% Difference
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	\$27,994	\$41,729	\$60,669	\$51,190	22.7%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	\$48,006	\$80,702	\$100,379	\$97,540	20.9%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	\$43,904	\$63,601	\$86,067	\$76,570	20.4%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	\$41,205	\$60,726	\$77,525	\$72,740	19.8%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	\$44,212	\$64,636	\$116,179	\$75,040	16.1%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	\$22,390	\$25,593	\$35,763	\$29,450	15.1%
Total all occupations	\$27,140	\$39,794	\$66,634	\$45,760	15.0%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	\$22,336	\$25,026	\$30,761	\$28,400	13.5%
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	\$31,893	\$51,440	\$71,411	\$57,220	11.2%
Legal Occupations	\$43,574	\$76,525	\$108,311	\$82,430	7.7%
Management Occupations	\$52,178	\$96,356	\$130,693	\$102,450	6.3%
Community and Social Service Occupations	\$32,093	\$46,364	\$56,014	\$48,410	4.4%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	\$50,124	\$78,105	\$96,141	\$79,840	2.2%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	\$34,107	\$47,512	\$57,188	\$48,210	1.5%
Sales and Related Occupations	\$23,550	\$30,462	\$52,667	\$30,600	0.5%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	\$28,216	\$38,296	\$46,722	\$38,050	-0.6%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	\$33,661	\$48,424	\$60,472	\$47,940	-1.0%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	\$24,932	\$30,946	\$37,426	\$30,240	-2.3%
Production Occupations	\$30,311	\$38,602	\$49,145	\$37,710	-2.3%
Healthcare Support Occupations	\$26,557	\$31,167	\$38,091	\$29,880	-4.1%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	\$27,694	\$39,138	\$52,786	\$36,860	-5.8%
Protective Service Occupations	\$30,597	\$49,539	\$64,518	\$46,590	-6.0%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	\$28,885	\$37,649	\$43,724	\$29,860	-20.7%

Sources: Nebraska Department of Labor, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, released 2022
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, released 2022

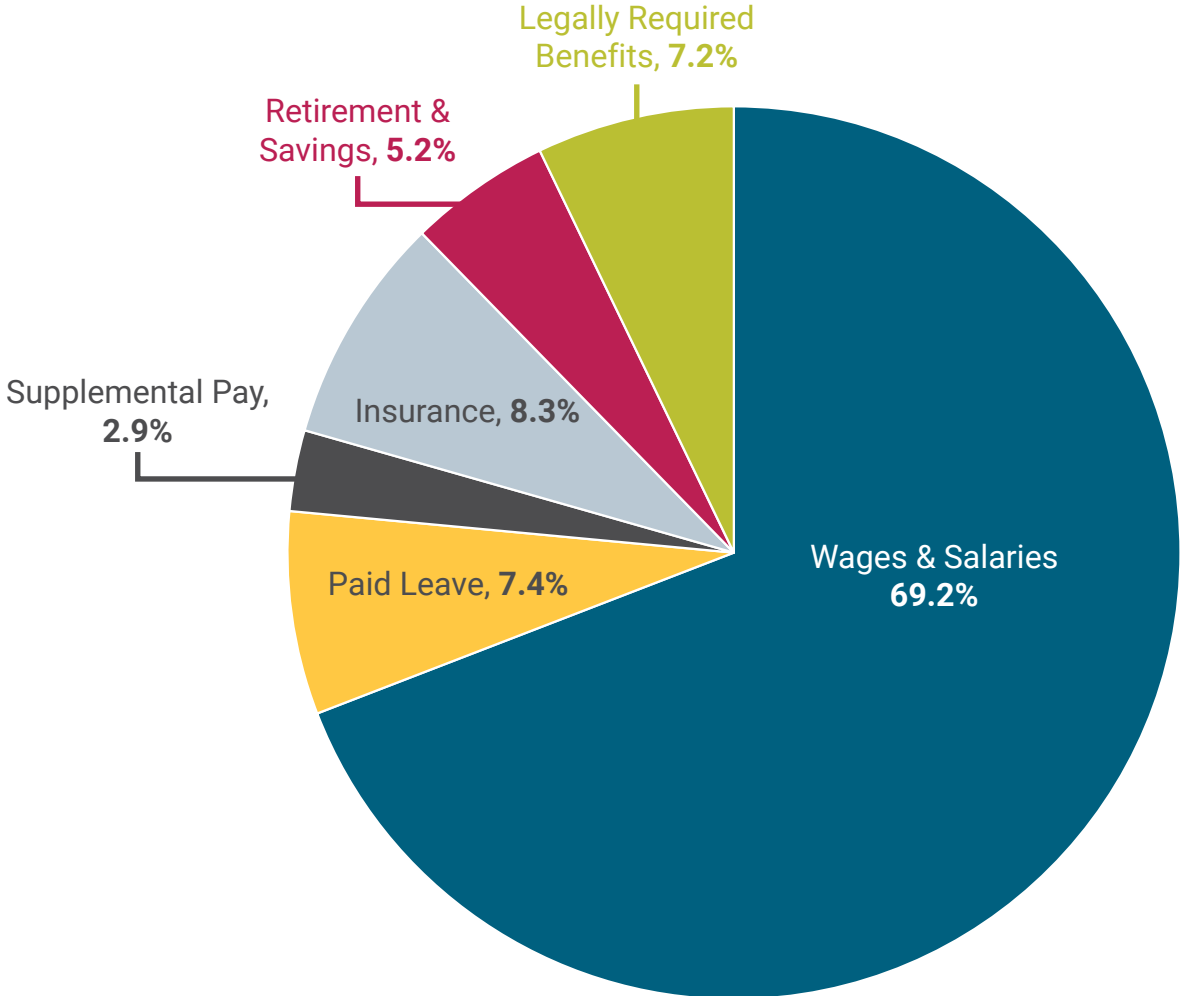
*National Wages are May 2021 OES estimates.
Occupations ordered by percent difference.

Where to find it

Occupational Employment data for Nebraska is available at neworks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Employment and Wage Data.

Total Compensation

3rd Quarter 2021 Total Compensation



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Compensation Survey, released 2022

Employee compensation cost is greater than the sum of employee wages alone. Non-wage/salary employee compensation costs include paid leave, insurance, retirement, Social Security and Medicaid, and more. The chart breaks down total employee compensation costs for private industry workers.

In the 3rd quarter of 2021, wages and salaries accounted for about 69.2% of the total cost of employee compensation. Insurance was the second-largest compensation cost, at 8.3%, followed by paid leave at 7.4% and legally required benefits (e.g., Social Security, Medicare, worker’s compensation, etc.) at 7.2%. Retirement and savings made up 5.2% of employee compensation costs, and supplemental pay (e.g., overtime, bonuses, etc.) accounted for 2.9%.

How to use it

Total compensation data provides employers with a more complete and accurate estimate of the total cost of employee compensation versus considering wage/salary costs alone. Businesses can use total compensation data to estimate employment costs and compare their employee compensation costs with the regional average.

Where to find it

Compensation data from the National Compensation Survey is available at bls.gov/ncs.

Benefits

This chart shows the rates at which private businesses in Nebraska offered benefits to full- and part-time employees in the fall and winter of 2020-2021, according to a statewide survey conducted by the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL).

Paid vacation leave was the benefit most often offered to either all or some full-time employees (88.1%), while retirement plans were the most offered to all or some part-time employees (34.1%).

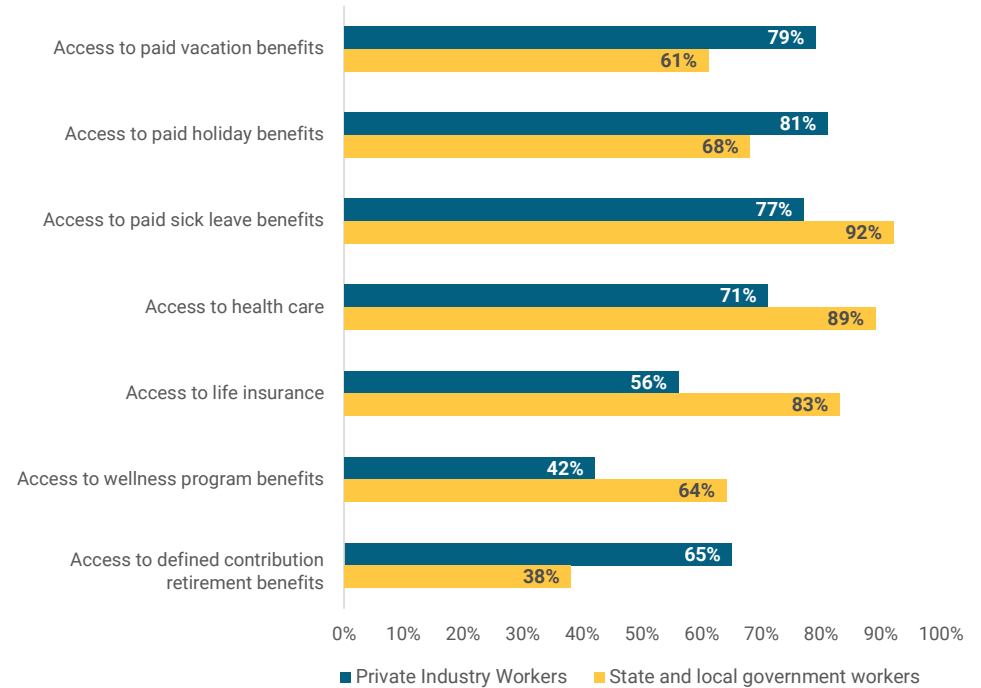
Child care was the benefit least likely to be offered by either full- or part-time employees among the benefits included in the survey.

How to use it

Employers can use benefits data to gauge the rate at which competitors offer various types of benefits to their employees. Businesses that are interested in attracting and retaining workers may want to consider offering more benefits to their employees in order to better compete with other area employers. For workers interested in retirement, medical, sick leave, or other benefits, benefits data can highlight where each benefit is most likely to be offered.

	Full-Time			Part-Time		
	All	Some	None	All	Some	None
Paid Vacation Leave	78.8%	9.3%	11.9%	16.6%	13.3%	70.1%
Health Insurance	67.5%	4.1%	28.4%	6.5%	10.7%	82.8%
Retirement Plans	64.4%	4.8%	30.8%	22.5%	11.6%	65.9%
Dental Insurance	59.5%	2.7%	37.8%	8.2%	9.3%	82.5%
Life Insurance	57.0%	3.9%	39.1%	9.7%	8.1%	82.2%
Paid Sick Leave	56.6%	7.9%	35.5%	11.6%	10.4%	78.0%
Vision Insurance	55.1%	2.5%	42.3%	7.7%	9.0%	83.3%
Disability Insurance	54.5%	3.9%	41.7%	9.1%	8.0%	82.9%
Tuition Reimbursement	23.1%	8.4%	68.5%	6.9%	9.1%	84.0%
Profit-Sharing	17.8%	6.0%	76.2%	6.2%	3.2%	90.6%
Pension Plans	9.9%	3.2%	86.9%	2.3%	2.0%	95.7%
Child Care	3.1%	1.2%	95.7%	1.8%	0.8%	97.4%

Employers Offering Benefits, West North Central Division* March 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, released September 2021. *This division includes (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri)

Where to find it

The 2021 Nebraska Statewide Benefits Report is available on the Publications page at networks.nebraska.gov.

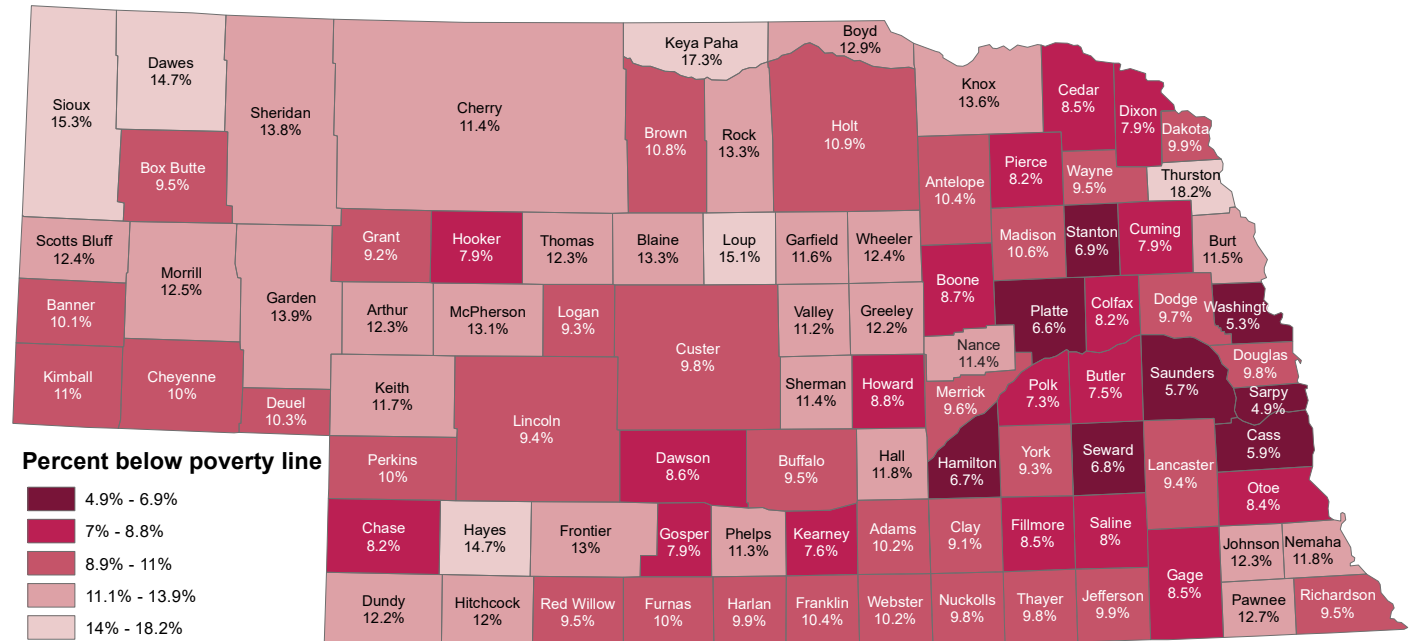
The Labor Availability Study also collects information on benefits offered by employers as reported by employers and employees in Labor Availability and Hiring Needs Reports for various communities throughout Nebraska. To access these reports, visit networks.nebraska.gov. **Click Labor Market Analysis, Publications, Nebraska Labor Availability Studies.**

Poverty Rate

The U.S. Census classifies individuals as under the poverty line if they fall below income thresholds that vary by family size and composition. Statewide, 9.2% of Nebraskans fell below the poverty line in 2020. Nebraska's poverty rate was significantly lower than the national rate of 11.9%.

Poverty rates in Nebraska vary widely by county, and poverty is not clearly concentrated in any particular region of the state. Sarpy County had the lowest 2020 poverty rate in the state, at 4.9%. Washington (5.3%), Saunders (5.7%), and Cass (5.9%) followed, each with poverty rates below 7.0%. Thurston County had Nebraska's highest poverty rate, at 18.2%. Keya Paha County had the state's second-highest poverty rate of 17.3%.

Percentage of Individuals Below the Poverty Line by County 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program, released December 2021

Where to find it

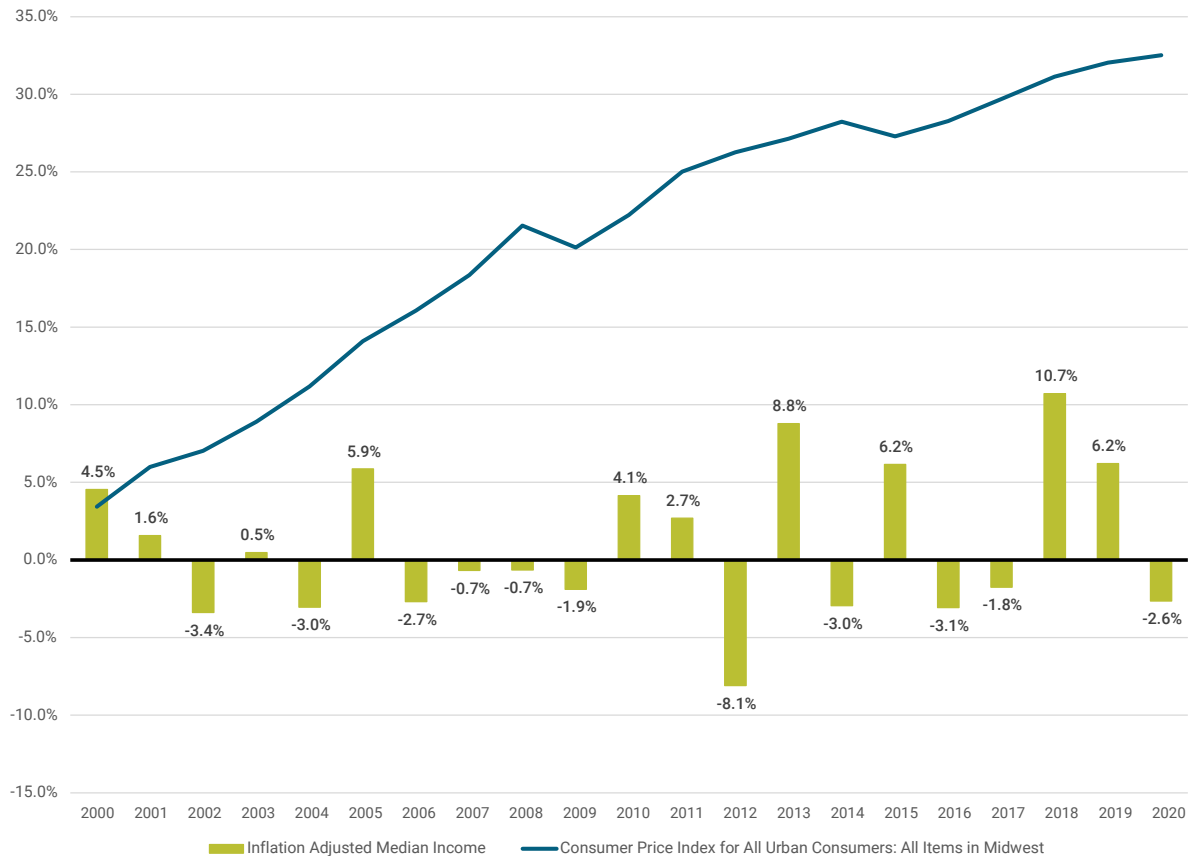
Data on poverty rates are available from the U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program. Visit [census.gov/programs-surveys/saie.html](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saie.html).

How to use it

Poverty thresholds are commonly used by government agencies to determine eligibility for aid programs. Poverty rates are also an indicator of the economic health of a region. Poor economic development and/or a poor labor market may contribute to high poverty rates in a region. Nebraska's relatively low poverty rate signals that the state has a strong, healthy economy. Areas of the state with higher poverty rates may want to consider developing and strengthening programs that combat poverty in their communities.

Inflation

Cumulative Inflation & Inflation-Adjusted Median Household Income, 2000-2020



How to use it

The inflation rate provides insight into how prices have changed over time. Inflation data is especially useful in conjunction with household income data, as it can show if earnings have more or less buying power than in the past. If income fails to increase at or above the rate of inflation, then fewer goods and services can be purchased for each dollar earned, meaning earnings have decreased in real value. If income rises faster than the rate of inflation, then the real value of earnings has increased.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of inflation that tracks changes in prices for goods and services over time. The Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates CPI based on prices paid by urban consumers.

The blue line of the chart depicts the price inflation of goods and services since 2000 using CPI data. From 2000 to 2020, the price of goods and services increased by 37.3% in the Midwest and 55.4% nationally.

The green columns of the chart shows the difference between Nebraska’s median household income and the Consumer Price Index by year over the same period. If the green column is positive, then the median income in Nebraska increased more than inflation. If the green column is negative, then Nebraska’s median income increased less than the CPI. Nebraska’s median income did not keep pace with inflation in 2002 coming out of the “.com” recession as well as during the Great Recession of 2008-2009. More recently, Nebraska’s median income has increased more than the rate of inflation in 2018 and 2019 and then dropped in 2020.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index, released 2022
U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, released 2021

Where to find it

Information on the Consumer Price Index is available at [bls.gov/cpi](https://www.bls.gov/cpi). State median household income and inflation-adjusted median household income data are available at [census.gov](https://www.census.gov). Under Topics, select Income and Poverty, then Income.



Occupation, Industry, & Business Review

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Employment

Total Employment & OTY Employment Change by Occupational Group

Occupational Group	2021 Total	2020 Total	2020 Metro	2020 Non-metro	OTY Change	OTY % Change
Total all occupations	958,260	942,550	630,920	327,340	15,710	1.7%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	11,220	11,280	8,270	2,960	-60	-0.5%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	10,870	10,170	8,300	2,570	700	6.9%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	29,040	28,890	17,970	11,070	150	0.5%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	51,640	48,770	37,950	13,700	2,870	5.9%
Community and Social Services Occupations	13,260	12,910	8,680	4,580	350	2.7%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	31,260	30,240	24,910	6,350	1,020	3.4%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	46,270	47,000	30,240	16,030	-730	-1.6%
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	58,310	58,630	37,010	21,300	-320	-0.5%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	2,710	3,410	710	2,000	-700	-20.5%
Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations	77,490	73,560	53,660	23,830	3,930	5.3%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	60,260	63,090	40,710	19,560	-2,830	-4.5%
Healthcare Support Occupations	35,590	35,430	22,720	12,860	160	0.5%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	42,760	41,850	24,440	18,330	910	2.2%
Legal Occupations	5,650	5,200	4,420	1,230	450	8.7%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	8,040	8,760	5,480	2,560	-720	-8.2%
Management Occupations	61,770	51,310	43,450	18,320	10,460	20.4%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	126,840	126,110	86,780	40,060	730	0.6%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	20,860	19,620	15,990	4,870	1,240	6.3%
Production Occupations	67,500	67,880	35,230	32,270	-380	-0.6%
Protective Service Occupations	15,870	14,960	10,530	5,340	910	6.1%
Sales and Related Occupations	89,760	90,930	58,720	31,050	-1,170	-1.3%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	91,280	92,560	54,770	36,510	-1,280	-1.4%

Occupations ordered alphabetically.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, released 2021

How to use it

Occupational employment data help identify common occupations and areas of occupational growth or decline. Workers and students can use this information to pursue occupations with high occupational growth and a large number of employment opportunities.

In 2021, office and administrative support occupations was the largest occupational group in Nebraska, with an estimated employment of 126,840. The next-largest occupational group was transportation and material moving occupations, at approximately 91,280.

About 65.8% of occupations in Nebraska were located within a metropolitan area. Computer and Mathematical occupations had the highest percentage of metropolitan-area jobs, at 79.7%. Farming, fishing, and forestry was the only occupational group with a higher percentage of non-metro employment, with 73.8% of jobs located outside of metropolitan areas. Production occupations were nearly evenly split between metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas.

Across all occupation groups, Nebraska had a increase of 15,710 jobs (1.7%) from 2020 to 2021. Management Occupations had the largest proportional increase at 20.4% (1,460 jobs). Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations had the largest proportional decrease at -20.5% (-700 jobs).

Where to find it

Occupational Employment data is available at [neworks.nebraska.gov](https://www.dor.nebraska.gov/neworks). Under Labor Market Information, select Employment and Wage Data.

Most Common Occupations

The table lists the most common occupations in Nebraska in 2021 as well as their median annual salaries and median hourly wages. The most common occupation in the state was heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, with an estimated employment of 25,740 and a median hourly wage of \$24.45. Next was fast food and counter workers and retail salespersons, with estimated employments of 25,090 and 23,660 respectively. The median hourly wage for fast food and counter workers was \$11.68, and the median for retail salespersons was \$14.03.

The highest-paying common occupation was general and operations managers, who earned a median hourly wage of \$37.86, followed by registered nurses, with a median hourly wage of \$31.46. The lowest-paying common occupation in Nebraska was waiters and waitresses, whose median hourly wage of \$10.70 was just barely surpassed by the \$11.68 median hourly wage for fast food and counter workers, the next lowest-paying common occupation.

How to use it

Occupational employment data provide an easy method of identifying common occupations and the expected wages for those occupations. Employers can use this data to set wages competitively in order to recruit and retain workers. Students who are interested in pursuing common occupations can also use occupational wage data to gauge whether the prevailing wages for those occupations will meet their expectations.

Where to find it

Occupational Employment data is available at neworks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Employment and Wage Data.

Employment & Wages for Most Common Occupations in NE

Occupation	May 2021	1 st Quarter, 2022	
	Estimated Employment	Hourly Median Wage	Annual Median Wage
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	25,740	\$24.45	\$50,855
Fast Food and Counter Workers	25,090	\$11.68	\$24,298
Retail Salespersons	23,660	\$14.03	\$29,174
Cashiers	21,780	\$11.70	\$24,326
Registered Nurses	20,660	\$31.46	\$65,449
General and Operations Managers	19,270	\$37.86	\$78,749
Customer Service Representatives	17,150	\$18.18	\$37,815
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	16,760	\$18.12	\$37,679
Office Clerks, General	15,350	\$15.80	\$32,877
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	14,470	\$18.33	\$38,119
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	14,180	\$14.64	\$30,442
Nursing Assistants	14,160	\$15.02	\$31,254
Waiters and Waitresses	11,660	\$10.70	\$22,258
Stockers and Order Fillers	11,390	\$14.84	\$30,852
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	11,010	\$14.47	\$30,086

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Occupational Employment Statistics, released 2020

Employment

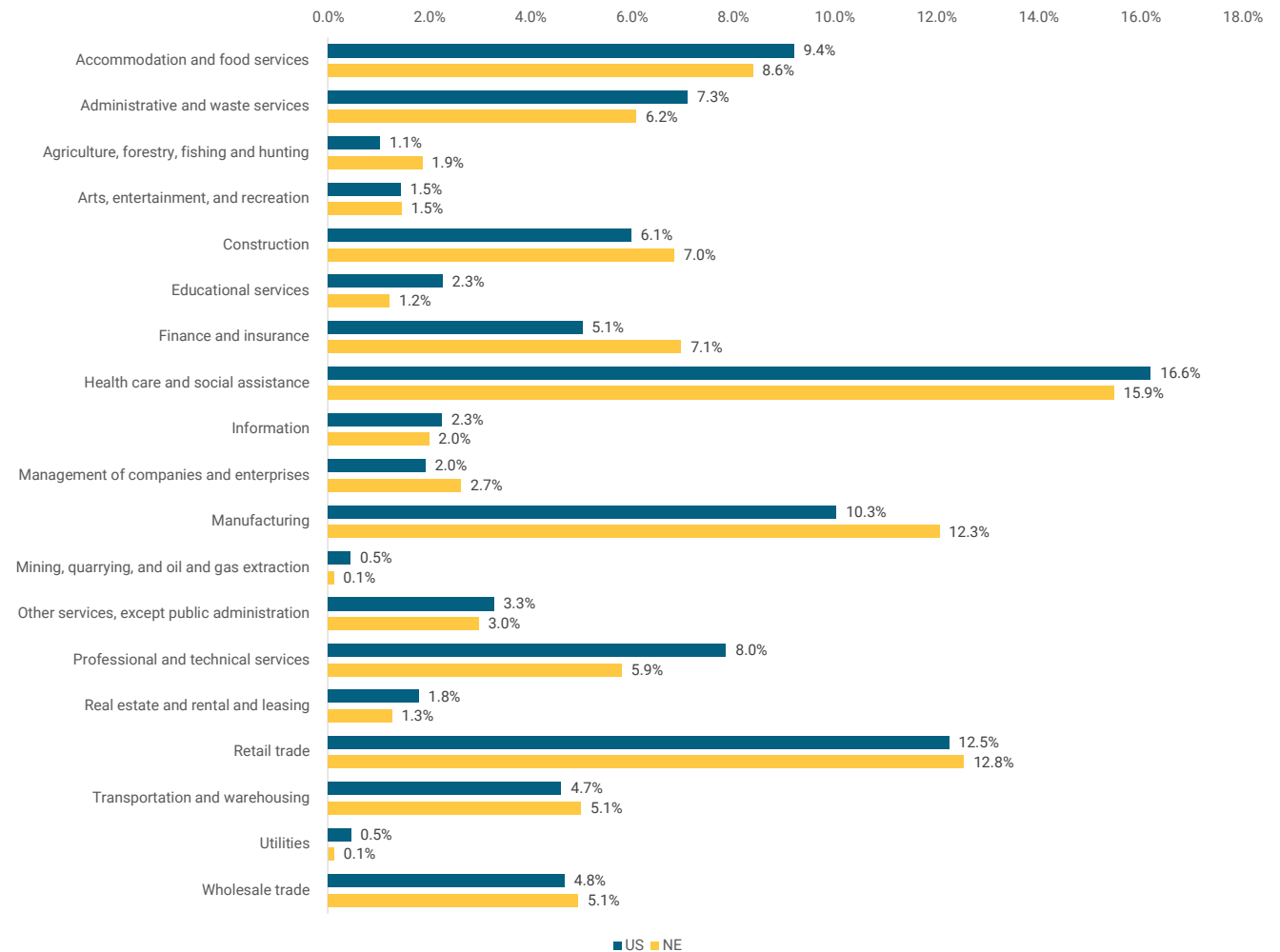
The chart shows employment by industry as a percentage of total employment in Nebraska and the nation. In 2020, the largest industry by employment in Nebraska was Health Care and Social Assistance, accounting for 15.9% of the state's total employment. The second-largest was Retail Trade, at 12.8%.

Nebraska's industry employment figures were largely comparable to those of the nation as a whole. The largest difference between statewide versus national employment was in the Professional and Technical Services industry, where employment in Nebraska was 2.1 percentage points lower than in the U.S. as a whole. In contrast, the U.S. Manufacturing industry employment was 2.1 percentage points lower than Nebraska and the Finance and Insurance industry was 2.0 percentage points lower.

How to use it

Data on employment by industry can be used to identify industries that are critical to a region's economy. A region's critical industries may account for a large portion of its economic output as well as its employment. Economic developers may be interested in industry concentration and employment when considering a region's potential for economic expansion. Industry employment can also signal to businesses whether or not a region has the infrastructure necessary to support their expansion.

Industries' Share of Total NE & US Employment 2020



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, released 2019

Where to find it

Data on industry employment is available at bls.gov/cew. Go to Tools and Tutorials on the left navigation pane, then select QCEW Data Viewer.

Location Quotients

Location quotients provide one way of comparing a state's employment by industry with that of the nation as a whole. A location quotient greater than 1 indicates that the state has a higher concentration of employment in that industry than the nation as a whole, while a location quotient of less than 1 indicates that the nation has a higher percentage of employment within that industry than the state.

In 2020, the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting industry had the highest location quotient in Nebraska, at 1.78. The next highest was the Finance and Insurance industry, at 1.37. The Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction industry (.26), Utilities industry (.27) and the Educational Services industry (.53) had the state's lowest location quotients.

The location quotients of Nebraska's Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting and Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction industries saw the greatest positive changes since 2014. Nebraska's location quotients fell the most for the Transportation and Warehousing and Utilities industries from 2014-2020.

How to use it

Along with data on employment by industry, location quotients can help identify industries that drive a region's economy. Industries with high location quotients and a large proportion of employment are likely to contribute heavily to a region's economic activity. Location quotients can also help identify industries that are likely to export goods and services to other regions. Industries with high location quotients likely export goods and services to other regions and draw in revenue, while industries with low location quotients are more likely to primarily support in-region consumers.

Location Quotients by Industry 2014 – 2020

Industry	2014	2020	Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1.65	1.78	0.13
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0.19	0.26	0.07
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0.94	1.00	0.06
Accommodation and Food Services	0.86	0.90	0.04
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0.66	0.70	0.04
Administrative and Waste Services	0.81	0.84	0.03
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	0.87	0.89	0.02
Construction	1.11	1.13	0.02
Manufacturing	1.18	1.18	0.00
Educational Services	0.54	0.53	-0.01
Retail Trade	1.03	1.01	-0.02
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1.38	1.34	-0.04
Wholesale Trade	1.08	1.04	-0.04
Information	0.92	0.88	-0.04
Professional and Technical Services	0.77	0.73	-0.04
Finance and Insurance	1.42	1.37	-0.05
Health Care and Social Assistance	1.00	0.94	-0.06
Utilities	0.34	0.27	-0.07
Transportation and Warehousing	1.33	1.07	-0.26

Note: Location Quotients were calculated by dividing the state's industry employment ratio (industry employment as a percent of total employment) by the nation's industry employment ratio.

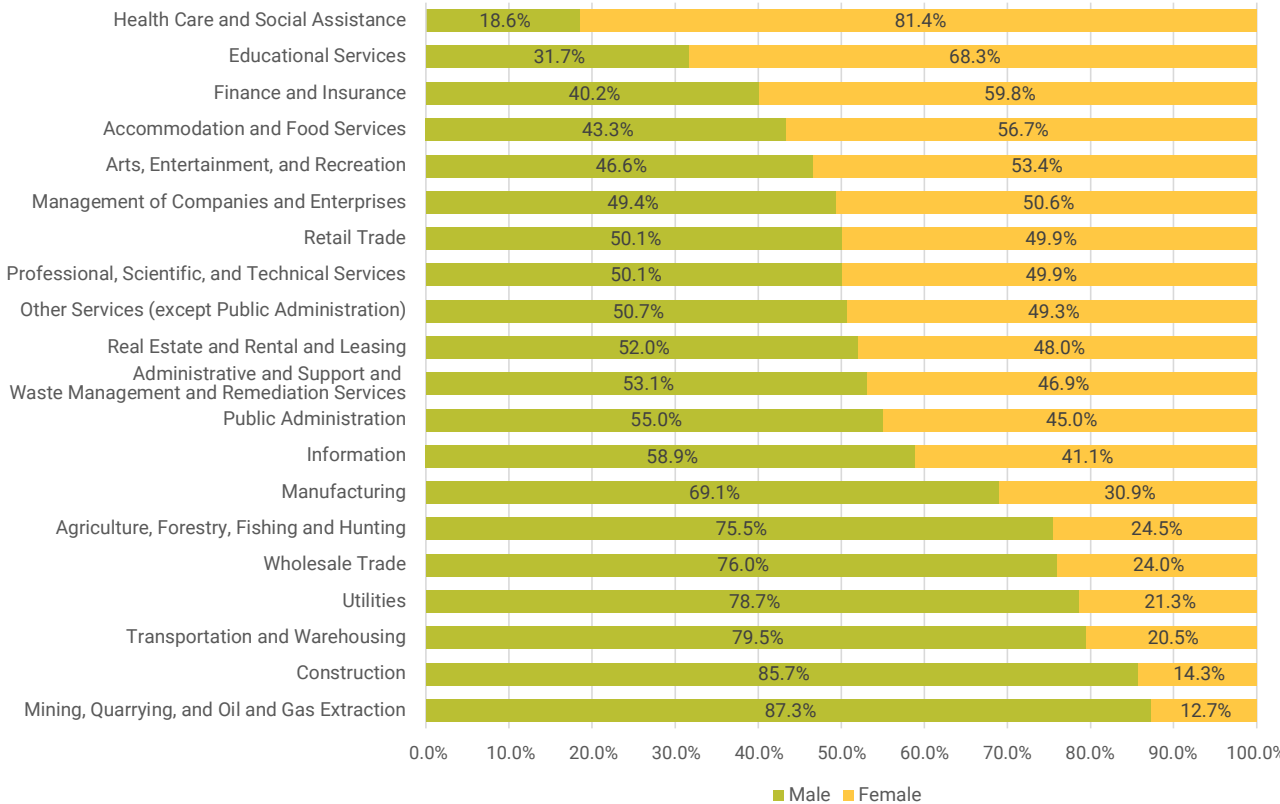
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, released 2022

Where to find it

The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides data location quotients. Go to [bls.gov](https://www.bls.gov). Under Subjects, select State and County Employment, and then use the QCEW Data Viewer.

Gender Distribution

Gender Distribution by Industry Q3 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, QWI Explorer, released 2022

Where to find it

The Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics program from the U.S. Census provides data on employee gender by industry at lehd.ces.census.gov. Under Applications, select QWI Explorer.

In Q3 2019, the Nebraska industries with the highest concentrations of male employees were mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (87.3%); construction (85.7%); and transportation and warehousing (79.5%).

Health care and social assistance had the highest concentration of female employees (81.4%), followed by the educational services industry (68.3%), and the finance and insurance industry (59.8%).

The most even distribution of male and female employees was found in the retail trade industry, where there was a 50.1% male to 49.9% female split, and professional, scientific, and technical services (50.1% male, 49.9% female). Other industries with near-even divisions were management of companies and enterprises (49.4% male, 50.6% female) and other services except public administration (50.7% male, 49.3% female).

How to use it

Data on gender distribution can help employers identify whether they might want to recruit more women or men in order to take advantage of a labor pool that may remain largely untapped within their industry. Schools and training programs may also use industry gender distribution data to study social dynamics within labor markets and to prepare students to enter industries where they might be underrepresented.

Unionization

Public sector (government) workers were the most likely to be unionized in 2020. Nationally, 38.4% of public sector workers were represented by unions. Public sector workers made up almost half of all union representation nationwide, though they made up just 15.6% of the country's total workforce.

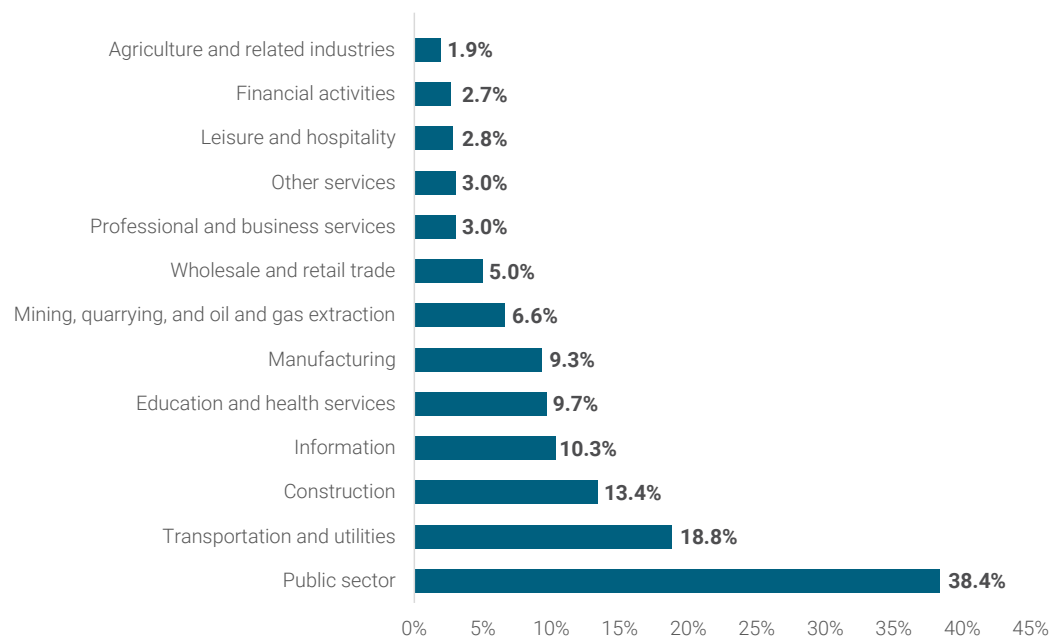
The transportation and utilities industry had the nation's highest private-sector union representation rate at 18.8%, followed by the construction industry at 13.4%. The industries with the lowest rates of union representation were agriculture and related industries (1.9%) and financial activities (2.7%).

In 2020, 9.6% of Nebraska workers were members of unions, and 10.5% were represented by unions. This was lower than the overall national unionization rate. Nationally, 10.8% of workers were union members in 2020, and 12.1% were represented by unions. Since 2008, the number of Nebraska workers who are union members has increased by 1.3 percentage points, while the number who are represented by unions has declined by 0.2 percentage points.

How to use it

For workers who are interested in union membership, unionization data can highlight industries that are the most likely to offer jobs with the option to join a union. Nationally, median weekly earnings for union members were 19.4% higher than for non-union members. Businesses, policymakers, and other stakeholders may also be interested in the state's unionization rate.

US Unionization Rates by Industry 2020*



*Includes employed wage and salary workers age 16 and over. Industries ordered by rank (low to high).

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Union Members Summary, released 2021

NE Union Membership & Representation 2008 – 2020

Nebraska	2008	2020
Total employed	840,000	890,000
Total union members	70,000	85,000
Percent union members	8.3%	9.6%
Total represented by unions	90,000	94,000
Percent represented by unions	10.7%	10.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Union Members Summary, released 2020

Where to find it

Data on unionization is available at [bls.gov](https://www.bls.gov). Under Economic Releases, select Quarterly, Annual, and Other.

Local Employment Dynamics

Quarterly Workforce Indicators by Industry Sector Q4 2020

Industry	Employment	New Hires	Separations	Turnover	Jobs Created	Net Job Change	Avg. Monthly Earnings	
							All Workers	New Hires
All NAICS Sectors	942,222	129,303	160,903	8.5%	36,508	12,634	\$4,812	\$2,812
Accommodation and Food Services	14,945	1,902	4,146	7.2%	531	-481	\$4,116	\$3,226
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	998	52	179	5.2%	0	-21	\$5,860	\$5,336
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	6,982	360	62	2.1%	417	100	\$9,002	\$5,615
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	56,486	7,126	12,110	8.9%	2,377	-1,167	\$5,438	\$3,891
Construction	101,101	9,601	10,768	5.7%	2,508	-82	\$5,484	\$4,025
Educational Services	39,093	2,885	3,818	5.4%	1,125	-240	\$6,353	\$4,215
Finance and Insurance	104,495	21,909	22,336	11.5%	5,721	2,537	\$2,923	\$1,677
Health Care and Social Assistance	41,510	9,460	10,644	10.6%	1,996	9	\$4,724	\$3,735
Information	16,395	1,157	1,837	5.3%	527	-506	\$7,395	\$4,606
Management of Companies and Enterprises	56,720	3,282	4,933	4.6%	945	-907	\$6,956	\$4,356
Manufacturing	10,195	1,105	1,614	8.1%	465	29	\$4,391	\$3,039
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	46,692	4,727	5,516	6.5%	2,608	-218	\$7,360	\$4,668
Other Services (except Public Administration)	21,619	2,232	2,640	5.8%	763	-176	\$8,382	\$4,250
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	50,061	18,179	23,089	14.3%	2,695	-68	\$4,230	\$2,754
Public Administration	88,546	4,860	5,870	6.1%	3,327	5,933	\$4,160	\$2,921
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	137,977	15,930	17,437	8.3%	4,575	1,889	\$4,887	\$3,254
Retail Trade	12,833	1,751	4,795	13.7%	754	-355	\$2,077	\$1,082
Transportation and Warehousing	69,054	17,459	20,963	19.0%	3,546	5,953	\$1,611	\$1,095
Utilities	24,492	3,013	4,064	10.1%	1,188	617	\$3,319	\$2,064
Wholesale Trade	42,026	2,531	4,357	4.7%	533	-75	\$4,334	\$2,972

Industries ordered alphabetically.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, QWI Explorer, released 2022

Where to find it

Quarterly Workforce Indicators are available at lehd.ces.census.gov. Under Applications, select LED Extraction Tool, or select QWI Explorer.

Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) data provide information on employment, job creation, separations, average monthly earnings, and other labor market statistics. The chart shows data by industry, but QWI also provides labor market data by worker demographic (e.g., gender, age, education) and business characteristics (e.g., business size, business age).

Nearly all industries in Nebraska saw a net increase in jobs in the 4th quarter of 2020. The industries experiencing the largest net decreases were Construction; Finance and Insurance; and Information.

The average turnover rate for all Nebraska industries combined was 8.5%. Turnover is the rate at which stable jobs begin and end. It provides a way to identify industries with the most 'churn' of employees. Accommodation and food services had the highest turnover rate at 19.0%, while utilities had the lowest at 2.1%.

How to use it

QWI data reveal the flow of employment throughout local industries and businesses. This allows economic stakeholders to track changes in stable employment, job creation, and earnings, which can be used to identify growing and declining industries and examine how businesses and workers may be reacting to economic conditions. Businesses can also use turnover data to calculate the cost of training and replacing workers, which may influence a business developer's decisions regarding where to locate or expand.

Business Employment Dynamics

Business Employment Dynamics (BDM) tracks changes in private sector employment at the business level. The chart shows quarterly job gains and losses in Nebraska throughout the past 12 years by quarter.

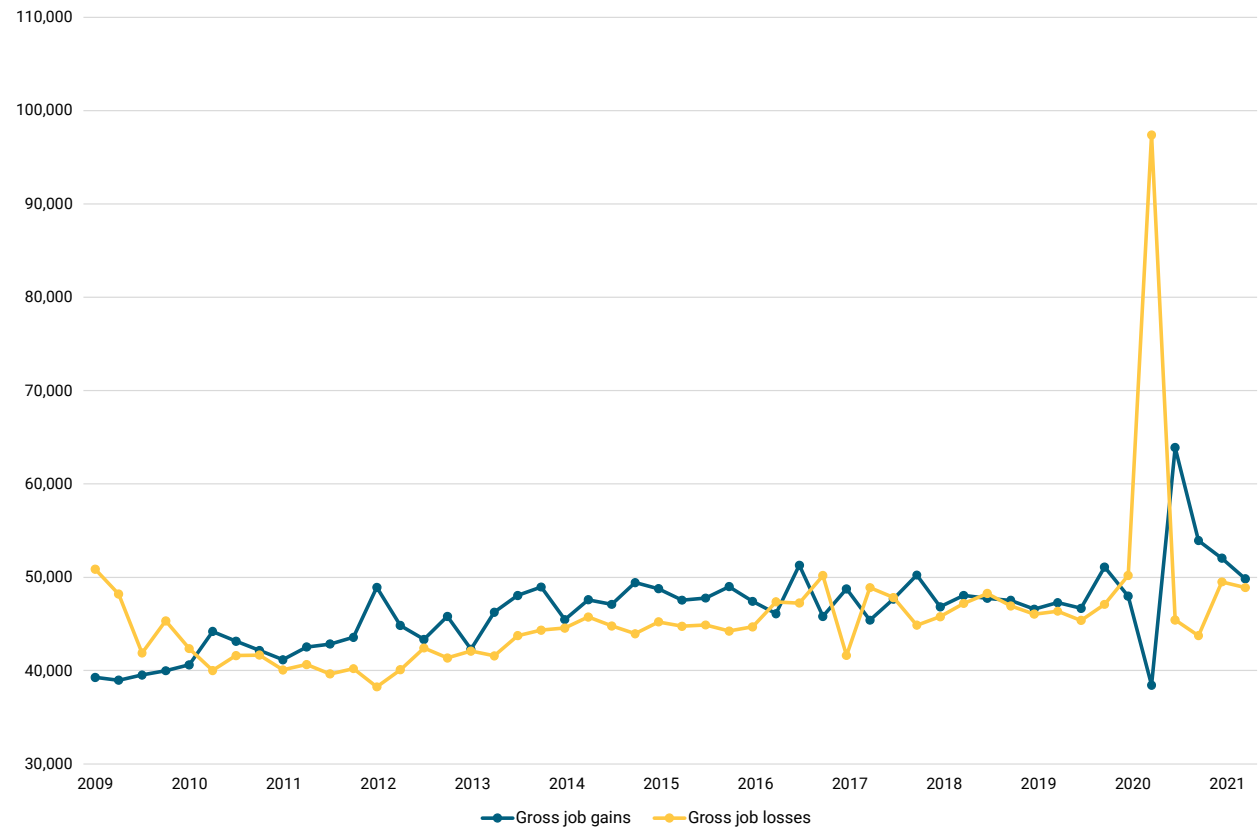
In 2nd quarter 2021, Nebraska saw approximately 49,834 jobs gained, but was almost matched by the quarterly job losses of 48,886. Job gains represented 6.2% of total employment in 2nd quarter 2021, and job losses represented 6.0%.

Over the last 12 years, Nebraska's number of jobs gained per quarter typically exceeded the number of jobs lost. Most of the exceptions to this trend were in the second and fourth quarters of 2016 and the second and third quarters of 2017, although the losses experienced were usually offset the following quarter. The major exception to this was the first and second quarters of 2020, where job losses far outpaced job gains due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This trend reversed in the 3rd quarter of 2020.

How to use it

Business Employment Dynamics data on job gains and losses allow examination of the components that underlie aggregate employment change. These data can identify shifts in demand for workers and predict future employment trends. Quarterly data on job gains and losses can also be used to track changes and identify trends in employment throughout the business cycle.

Job Gains & Losses by Quarter 2009 – 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Business Employment Dynamics, released 2022

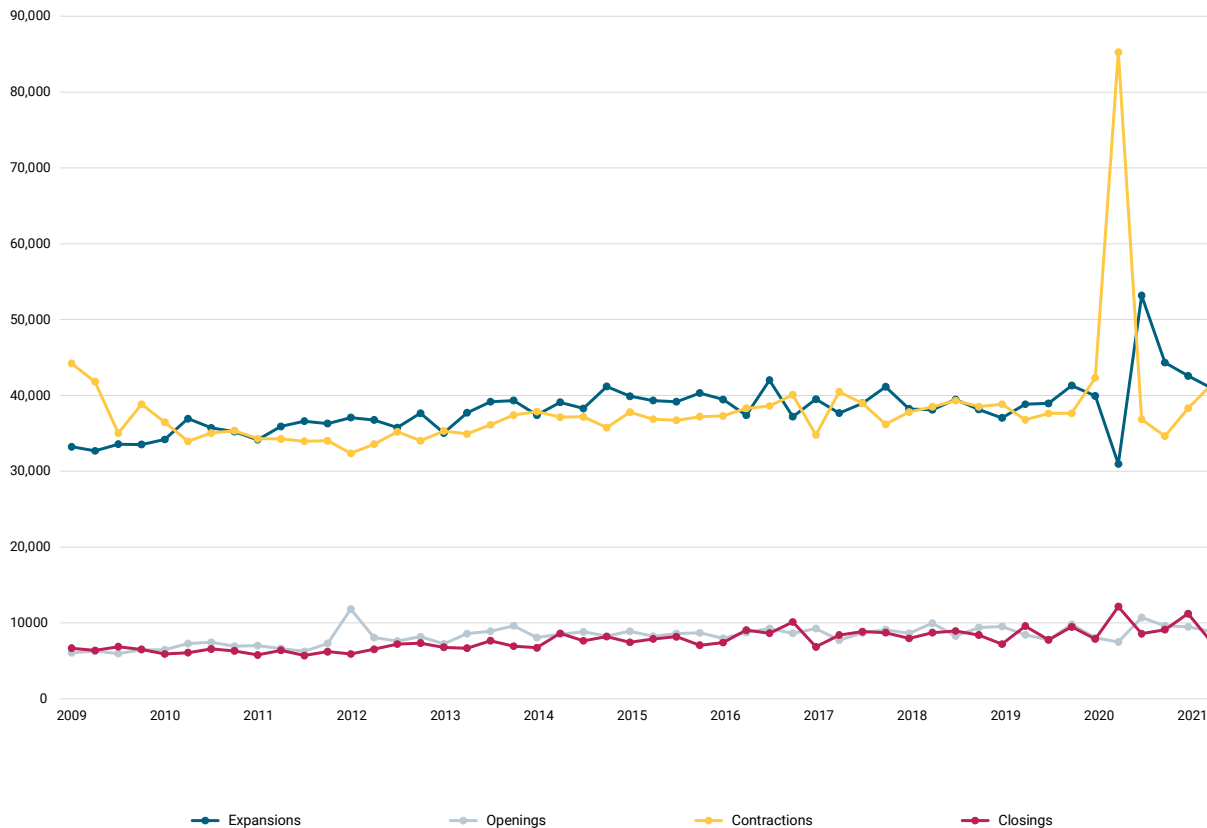
Where to find it

Data on job gains and losses are published through the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Business Employment Dynamics program, available at bls.gov/bdm.

Business Employment Dynamics

Expansions & Contractions

Job Gains & Losses by Business Employment Dynamics (BDM) Components 2009 – 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Business Employment Dynamics, released 2022

Where to find it

Data on job gains and losses are published through the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Business Employment Dynamics program, available at bls.gov/bdm.

The chart breaks down Business Employment Dynamics (BDM) data on total jobs gained and lost in Nebraska by the various BDM components. The components for job gains are business expansions and openings, and the components for job losses are business contractions and closings.

Business expansions and contractions accounted for most of Nebraska's job gains and losses over the past eight years. In 2nd quarter 2021, expansions accounted for 82.2% of jobs gained, while contractions accounted for 84.7% of jobs lost.

In most quarters from 2009-2020, Nebraska saw net job gains, as the number of jobs created through business openings and expansions slightly exceeded jobs lost due to business closings and contractions. The exceptions to this trend were in the second and fourth quarters of 2016, the second and third quarters of 2017, the third quarter of 2018, the first quarter of 2019 and the first and second quarters of 2020. Nebraska experienced overall job losses of almost 58,000 in the second quarter of 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the 2nd quarter of 2021, job expansions and contractions are about equal.

How to use it

The components of job gains and losses can illustrate the dynamics underlying employment change. The data show that, while business openings and closings can often create thousands of job gains and losses per quarter, most gains and losses result from expansions and contractions. These data track changes in employment at the business establishment level, providing a closer look at the factors driving net employment change.



Projections

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Long-Term

NE Employment Projections by Industry 2020-2030

Industry	2020 Employment	2030 Projected Employment	Change in Employment 2020-2030	Percent Change 2020-2030	Compound Annual Growth Rate
Total	1,098,952	1,188,450	89,498	8.1%	0.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	140,895	155,507	14,612	10.4%	1.0%
Educational Services (including state and local gov)	99,786	107,962	8,176	8.2%	0.8%
Retail Trade	101,298	105,602	4,304	4.2%	0.4%
Manufacturing	97,716	104,176	6,460	6.6%	0.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	67,757	84,464	16,707	24.7%	2.2%
Government	68,791	71,445	2,654	3.9%	0.4%
Finance and Insurance	65,244	68,740	3,496	5.4%	0.5%
Construction	55,091	59,563	4,472	8.1%	0.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	55,888	56,595	707	1.3%	0.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	49,131	54,094	4,963	10.1%	1.0%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	49,116	53,288	4,172	8.5%	0.8%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	46,685	51,606	4,921	10.5%	1.0%
Wholesale Trade	39,058	40,597	1,539	3.9%	0.4%
Other Services (except Government)	34,599	38,515	3,916	11.3%	1.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	19,518	21,092	1,574	8.1%	0.8%
Information	17,214	18,430	1,216	7.1%	0.7%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	11,781	16,937	5,156	43.8%	3.7%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	10,243	11,288	1,045	10.2%	1.0%
Utilities (private + state + local)	7,510	7,610	100	1.3%	0.1%
Mining	973	1,035	62	6.4%	0.6%

Industries ordered by 2030 projected employment, from largest to smallest.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, released July 2022

Where to find it

Occupational projections are published by the Nebraska Department of Labor, available at neworks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Labor Market Analysis. Then, under Labor Market Data, select Data Download Center.

The Nebraska Department of Labor calculates long-term employment projections by industry using historical employment data and current economic indicators. Statewide, employment in all industries is projected to increase by 8.1% from 2020-2030. The projected compound annual growth rate, or year-over-year growth rate, for all Nebraska industries is 0.8%.

Statewide, the accommodation and food services industry is projected to add the most jobs by 2030: approximately 16,707 new jobs, a 24.7% increase. The arts, entertainment and recreation industry is projected to see the highest percentage of employment growth at 43.8%, representing an increase of almost 5,156 jobs. Professional, scientific, and technical services industry is also projected to see a 10.5% increase in jobs by 2030, and 10.4% growth is expected in the educational services industry.

How to use it

Long-term industry projections can identify industries that are expected to see significant employment growth or decline over the next 10 years. This information can be useful to businesses considering their long-term goals, educators reviewing curricula, and students planning their careers and educational paths. It is important to remember that industries with the largest percentage growth projected over the next 10 years may not necessarily be the same industries that add the largest total number of jobs.

The Nebraska Department of Labor calculates long-term occupational projections by combining industry projections with staffing patterns from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment Statistics program. This combination reveals the occupational employment ratios within industries and forms the basis for long-term occupational projections.

Nebraska's overall occupational employment is projected to increase by 8.1% from 2020 to 2030. The occupational groups projected to have the largest employment growth by percentage are food preparation and serving related occupations (19.8%), personal care and service occupations (15.3%), and computer and mathematical occupations (13.7%). Food preparation and serving related occupations are also projected to see the largest numeric change, adding 15,137 jobs.

Farming, fishing and forestry occupations are projected to decrease in employment by 0.4% from 2020-2030.

How to use it

Long-term occupational projections can help predict future areas of occupational growth and decline. Students can use this information to inform their education and career planning choices. Occupational projections may be more useful than projections by industry to students and job seekers who are interested in particular jobs, as industry projections can only provide information on total job growth across an industry as a whole. Educators can also use occupational employment projections to direct students towards fields of study and occupations with promising future work opportunities.

Where to find it

Occupational projections are published by the Nebraska Department of Labor, available at networks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Labor Market Analysis. Then, under Labor Market Data, select Data Download Center.

NE Employment Projections by Occupation 2020 – 2030

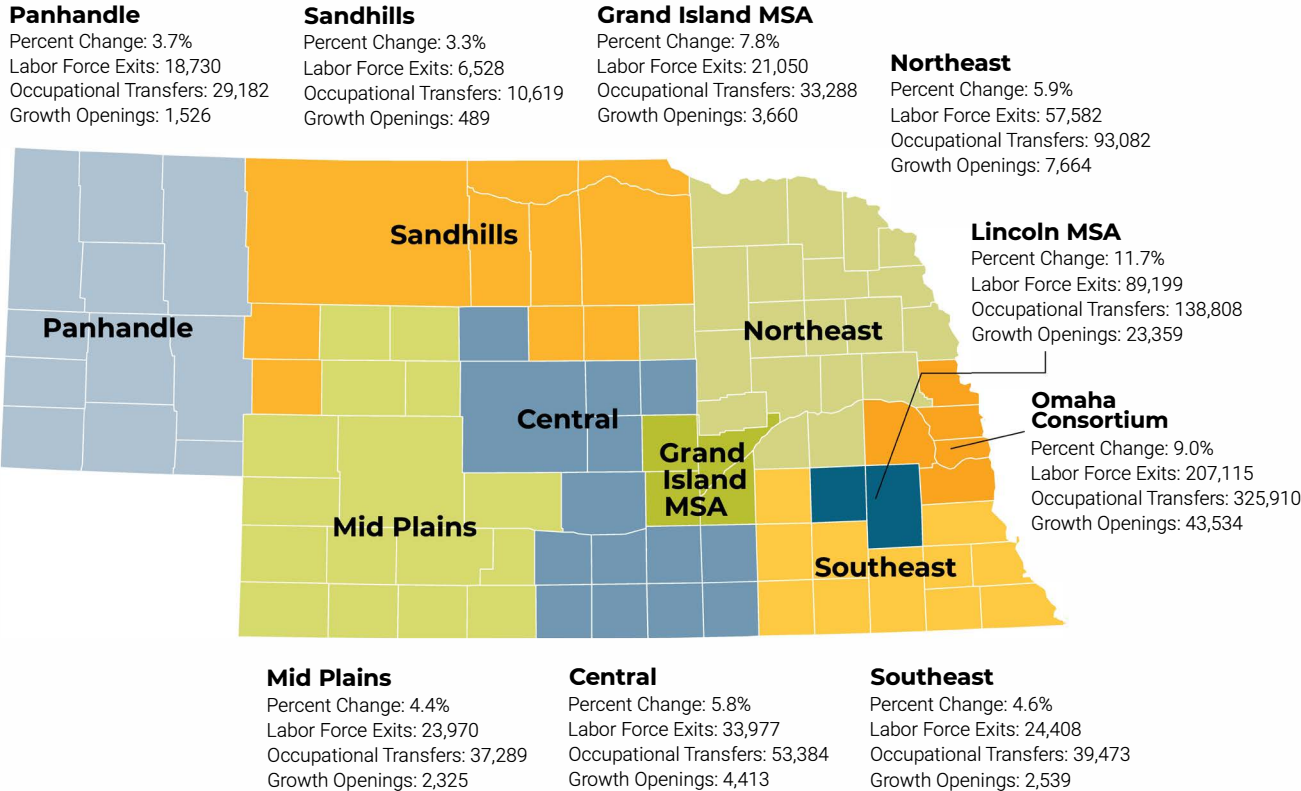
Occupation	2020 Estimated Employment	2030 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Avg Annual Openings
Total, All Occupations	1,098,952	1,188,450	89,498	8.14%	133,373
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	76,639	91,776	15,137	19.75%	16,532
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	99,146	108,045	8,899	8.98%	13,452
Management Occupations	71,951	79,281	7,330	10.19%	6,861
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	71,667	78,943	7,276	10.15%	4,851
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	66,395	71,853	5,458	8.22%	6,539
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	57,311	62,455	5,144	8.98%	5,583
Healthcare Support Occupations	37,763	42,781	5,018	13.29%	5,384
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	35,678	40,560	4,882	13.68%	3,161
Construction and Extraction Occupations	54,888	59,460	4,572	8.33%	5,996
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	46,540	50,825	4,285	9.21%	4,997
Personal Care and Service Occupations	27,637	31,873	4,236	15.33%	4,608
Sales and Related Occupations	101,652	105,857	4,205	4.14%	13,756
Production Occupations	71,829	75,260	3,431	4.78%	8,369
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	34,647	37,527	2,880	8.31%	4,953
Community and Social Service Occupations	15,326	16,939	1,613	10.52%	1,725
Protective Service Occupations	15,220	16,642	1,422	9.34%	1,934
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	14,841	16,235	1,394	9.39%	1,686
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	11,881	12,872	991	8.34%	1,027
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	9,946	10,824	878	8.83%	1,070
Legal Occupations	6,173	6,839	666	10.79%	530
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	136,114	136,024	-90	-0.07%	14,814
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	35,708	35,579	-129	-0.36%	5,540

Occupations ordered by largest positive change to largest negative change.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, released July 2022

Job Growth

NE Employment Projections by Economic Development Region 2020-2030



Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, released July 2022

Where to find it

Occupational projections are published by the Nebraska Department of Labor, available at networks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Labor Market Analysis. Then, under Labor Market Data, select Data Download Center. National projections are available at bls.gov/emp.

The map shows Nebraska's 2020-2030 projected employment growth by economic region. These data also provide an estimate of the number of job openings in each region expected due to exits, transfers, and growth. Nebraska's statewide projected employment growth rate of 8.1% is slightly higher than the 7.7% overall employment growth rate projected for the United States as a whole.

The Omaha Consortium and the Lincoln and Grand Island MSAs, the locations of Nebraska's most populous cities, are expected to experience faster job growth than the other regions in the state. Jobs in the Omaha Consortium and the Lincoln and Grand Island MSAs are projected to increase by 7.8% - 11.7%, compared to projected employment growth rates between 3.3% and 5.9% for Nebraska's other economic regions.

The Lincoln MSA is expected to experience the state's largest employment increase, at 11.7%. Employment in the Sandhills economic region is projected to increase by 3.3%.

How to use it

Regional job growth data can reveal which regions of the state are expected to undergo the greatest job growth and economic expansion. Economic developers, educational institutions, and businesses can use this information to plan and prepare for the future. Students and job seekers may also use this information to determine which regions might be most suitable to their career and personal goals.

Occupation

The table details which specific occupations employ the most Nebraska workers in each industry, based on 2030 estimates, as well as the outlook projected for that occupation and industry through 2030.

The table also shows the percentage of all jobs in an industry that are composed of its largest occupation, as well as the percentage of all workers in each occupation who work in the listed industry. For example, in the education and health services industry, 9.4% of all workers are registered nurses, and 81.6% of all registered nurses work in the education and health services industry.

The occupation and industry grouping with the highest projected growth rate is Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers in the Information industry, which are expected to increase by 25.4% through 2030. This is more than three times Nebraska's 8.1% overall projected growth rate for all occupations.

Farmworkers and laborers are projected to see a negative growth rate through 2030. Their employment in the Natural Resources and Mining industry is expected to decrease by 2.3%.

How to use it

It is not always obvious which industries employ the largest numbers of workers in any given occupation. These data can be useful to better understand what sorts of jobs might be available within different industries. Job seekers, dislocated workers, and students can use this information to identify industries that are likely to have suitable employment opportunities, as well as to determine the occupational outlook of jobs that interest them.

Where to find it

Occupational projections within industries are published by the Nebraska Department of Labor, available at neworks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Employment and Wage Data, then select Industry Data, followed by Staffing Patterns.

NE Employment Projections by Industry & Occupation 2020 – 2030

Industry	Largest Occupation	2020	2030	% Change	2020 %	2020 %
		Est. Employment	Projected Employment		% of Industry Workers within Occupation	% of Occupational Workers in Industry
Total All Industries	Total, All Occupations	1,098,952	1,188,450	8.1%	100.0%	100.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	Fast Food and Counter Workers	23,306	27,125	16.4%	29.3%	87.6%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	Retail Salespersons	23,537	25,439	8.1%	12.0%	91.6%
Education and Health Services	Registered Nurses	22,589	24,156	6.9%	9.4%	81.6%
Natural Resources and Mining	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	16,459	16,074	-2.3%	29.0%	90.2%
Manufacturing	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	7,914	8,476	7.1%	8.1%	41.0%
Financial Activities	Customer Service Representatives	6,722	6,789	1.0%	8.9%	34.3%
Construction	Carpenters	6,315	6,694	6.0%	11.5%	63.0%
Professional and Business Services	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	5,840	6,009	2.9%	5.1%	35.3%
Government	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	2,817	3,012	6.9%	4.1%	96.9%
Other Services (except Government)	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	1,895	2,248	18.6%	5.5%	47.5%
Information	Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	1,582	1,984	25.4%	9.2%	14.5%

Occupations ordered by 2030 projected employment, from largest to smallest.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, released July 2022

Projected Employment Change

NE Employment Projections by Education Level 2020 – 2030

Education	2020 Est. Employment	2030 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	% Change	Avg. Annual Openings
Doctoral or professional degree	28,652	31,337	2,685	9.4%	2,026
Master's degree	17,922	20,445	2,523	14.1%	1,689
Bachelor's degree	237,050	261,351	24,301	10.3%	21,664
Associate degree	21,308	23,306	1,998	9.4%	2,160
Postsecondary non-degree award	81,697	87,895	6,198	7.6%	9,430
Some college, no degree	28,042	29,170	1,128	4.0%	2,863
High school diploma or equivalent	422,128	448,661	26,533	6.3%	49,879
No formal educational credential	262,153	286,285	24,132	9.2%	43,663

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, released July 2022

How to use it

Data on occupational projections by education level show that Nebraska employers are likely to require a more highly-educated workforce in the future. Students and job seekers can use this insight to make informed decisions and choose educational paths that lead to promising employment opportunities. Educators, vocational coaches, and school officials can also use this information to ensure they are providing training that will help students achieve their goals and meet future workforce needs.

The Nebraska Department of Labor's projections program also produces occupational projections by education level. From 2020-2030, occupations requiring a master's degree are expected to see 14.1% growth in Nebraska, the largest of any educational attainment category. Occupations requiring an bachelor's degree are second, with a 10.3% projected growth rate through 2030. All occupations requiring a post-secondary non-degree award or greater are projected to increase by at least 7.6%. Occupations requiring a high school diploma or less are projected to increase at a rate of 6.3% - 9.2%. The slowest growth is expected in occupations requiring some college, no degree, at 4.0%.

Although occupations requiring a high school education or less are not projected to increase as rapidly as occupations requiring higher levels of educational attainment, jobs for high school graduates and below are nevertheless expected to have the most total annual openings through 2030. These occupations are projected to have an average of approximately 43,663-49,879 job openings annually, followed by occupations requiring a bachelor's degree, where about 21,664 annual openings are expected in Nebraska.

Where to find it

Information on occupational projections by education is published by the Nebraska Department of Labor, available at neworks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Labor Market Analysis. Then select Files, Facts and Figures, Data Download Center, and choose Occupational Employment Projections.

H3 Occupations

'H3 occupations' refers to jobs considered excellent career options due to their high scores in three important categories: having high projected demand in the local labor market, requiring a highly skilled workforce, and offering a high typical rate of pay. The table lists H3 occupations in Nebraska and their statewide annual median wages as of the second quarter of 2022.

The Nebraska Department of Labor classifies and ranks occupations as "H3" based on comparisons of level of future labor market demand, skill and training requirements, and typical wages. The number of projected annual openings, net change in employment, and growth rate determine whether an occupation can be considered 'High Demand.' A 'High Skill' rating means that the occupation requires workers to obtain a minimum of a high school diploma and at least some postsecondary education and/or long-term on-the-job training, apprenticeship, or internship/residency to qualify. 'High Wage' ratings are assigned when an occupation's wage equals or exceeds the region's overall wage for all occupations in at least four out of eight wage categories. An occupation must be High Wage, High Skill and High Demand to be classified as an H3 occupation.

Nebraska's top three H3 occupations in 2022 were heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (\$52,170 annual median wage), followed by registered nurses (\$66,985 annual median wage), and general and operations managers (\$80,890 annual median wage). Most of the top 20 H3 occupations require some form of postsecondary education, and more than half require a bachelor's degree.

How to use it

The classification of jobs into H3 occupations provides a way to identify in-demand occupations that offer highly competitive wages. H3 data may be especially useful for job seekers who have been laid off and are embarking on new careers, as well as students and career counselors who want to identify educational programs that may lead to strong job prospects. Educational institutions can also use H3 data to ensure they are providing programs that will produce skilled graduates who can fill openings for in-demand occupations.

Top 20 H3 Occupations in NE by Avg. Annual Openings

RANK	Occupation	Median Annual Wage	Avg. Annual Openings	Education, Experience & Training
1	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$52,170	3,517	Postsecondary non-degree award
2	Registered Nurses	\$66,985	1,704	Bachelor's degree
3	General and Operations Managers	\$80,890	1,349	Bachelor's degree
4	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	\$106,552	1,117	Bachelor's degree
5	Accountants and Auditors	\$65,704	916	Bachelor's degree
6	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$63,526	815	Bachelor's degree
7	Electricians	\$50,450	750	High school diploma or equivalent
8	Human Resources Specialists	\$54,808	577	Bachelor's degree
9	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	\$48,125	571	Bachelor's degree
10	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$51,447	554	High school diploma or equivalent
11	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$63,739	546	Bachelor's degree
12	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$49,682	524	Postsecondary non-degree award
13	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$49,334	503	Postsecondary non-degree award
14	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	\$61,027	481	Bachelor's degree
15	Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	\$67,127	476	Bachelor's degree
16	Financial Managers	\$127,215	460	Bachelor's degree
17	Machinists	\$50,600	459	High school diploma or equivalent
18	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$52,418	453	High school diploma or equivalent
19	Management Analysts	\$83,767	408	Bachelor's degree
20	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	\$50,397	392	Postsecondary non-degree award

Sources: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Workforce Information Grant Unit, released August 2022
Wage data from Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, 2nd Quarter 2022

Where to find it

Information on Nebraska's H3 occupations is available at neworks.nebraska.gov. Under Labor Market Information, select Labor Market Analysis. Then select Files, Facts and Figures, Data Download Center, and choose High Wage, High Skill, High Demand (H3) Occupations.

Area Definitions

The geographic regions used in Nebraska Department of Labor's Economic Insight and Outlook publication are defined below. In 2013, Nebraska added a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) and several of its micropolitan statistical areas (MCs) were revised. The state also revised its economic regions, adding the Grand Island MSA and the Sandhills economic regions.

Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas

The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas for the purpose of compiling and releasing federal data. The OMB defines MSAs as containing an urban core and a population of over 50,000. The OMB defines MCs as containing an urban core and a population of 10,000-50,000. MSAs and MCs include counties containing the urban core as well as contiguous counties that have a high level of social and economic integration with the core (determined by commuting data).

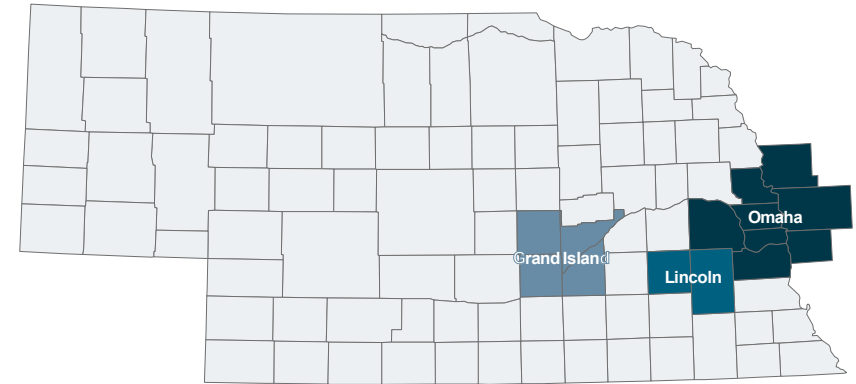
Nebraska has three MSAs, which are shown in the uppermost map. In 2013, the Grand Island MSA of Hall, Hamilton, Howard, and Merrick Counties was created, replacing the Grand Island MC of Hall, Howard, and Merrick Counties. The Sioux City MSA includes Nebraska counties, but it is considered an Iowa MSA because its core population is located in Iowa.

There are 9 MCs in Nebraska. These MCs are shown on the second map on this page. In 2013, three Nebraska MCs were altered. Grand Island MC was eliminated and replaced with Grand Island MSA (see first map), Hastings MC dropped Clay County, and Scottsbluff MC added Sioux County.

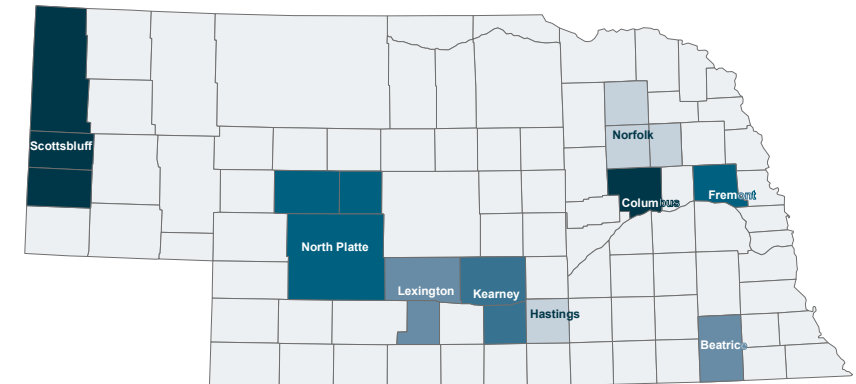
Omaha Consortium

The Omaha MSA includes eight counties: five in Nebraska and three in Iowa. The Omaha Consortium only includes the five counties in the Omaha MSA that are located in Nebraska.

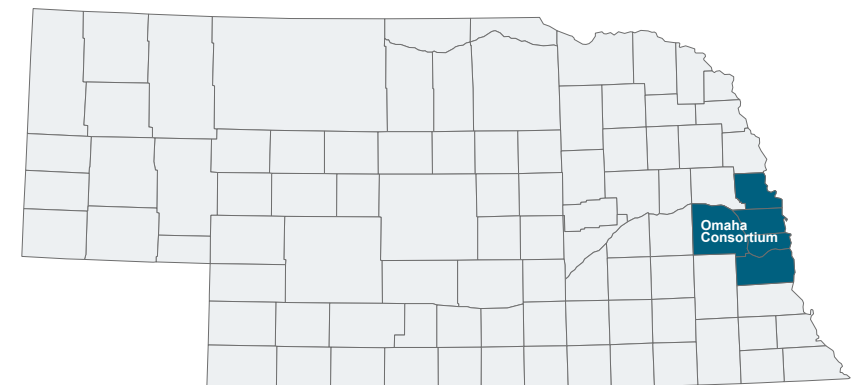
Metropolitan Statistical Areas



Micropolitan Statistical Areas



Omaha Consortium



Area Definitions

Community College Regions

There are six community college service regions in Nebraska, shown on the map to the right. The community college graduate outcomes data presented in this report are based on these community college service regions.

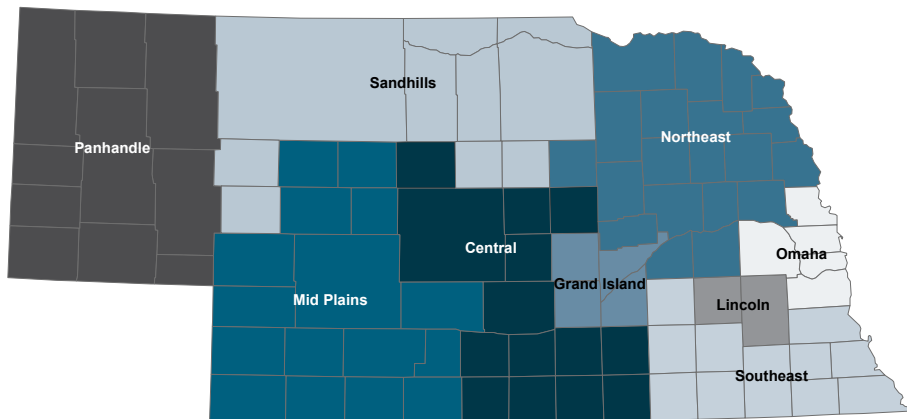
West North Central Division

The West North Central Division is a Census region that includes seven Midwestern states: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri. Data for the West North Central Division is used when it is the most geographically specific data available.

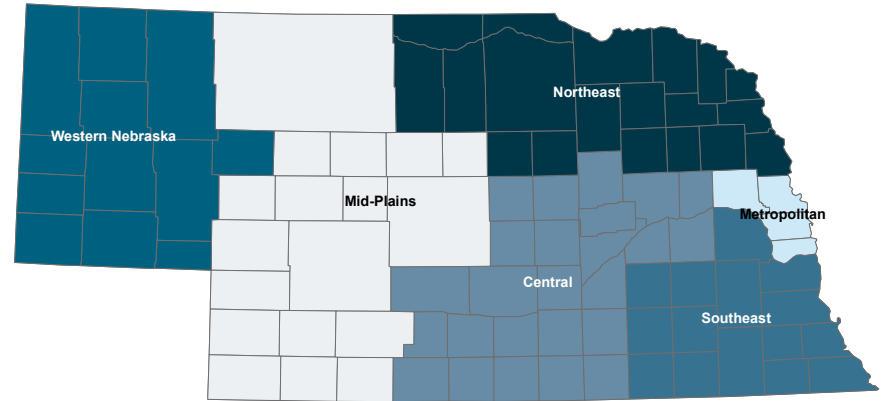
Economic Regions

There are nine economic regions in Nebraska. These regions are depicted on the map below. In 2013, Nebraska's economic regions were redrawn, and two new economic regions were added. The regions were grouped based on their level of social and economic integration, as determined by commuting data. The Grand Island MSA economic region was created out of counties formerly in the Central economic region, and the Sandhills economic region was created from counties formerly in the Mid-Plains, Central, and Northeast economic regions.

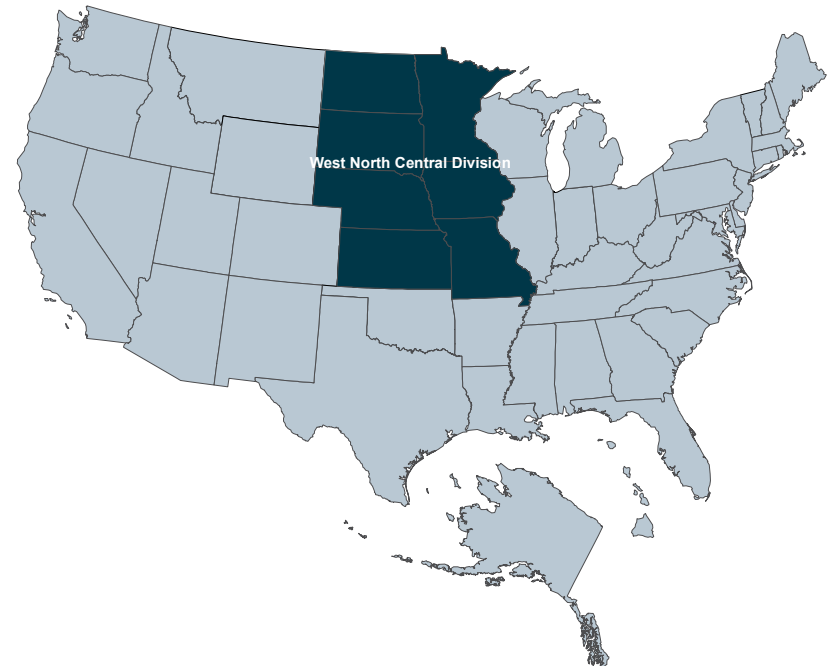
Economic Regions



Community College Regions



West North Central Division



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