

# Kenosha County

## 2021 WORKFORCE PROFILE



# Kenosha County

## Population and Demographics

A little over 170,000 people reside in Kenosha County. The county gained 4,088 residents, or 2.5%, over the course of the 2010's. The population of the state and the nation grew by 3.0% and 6.7%, respectively, over the same timeframe. Eight of the county's 10 most populated municipalities gained residents. Pleasant Prairie had the largest numeric and percent gain with its addition of 2,737 residents (13.9%) over the

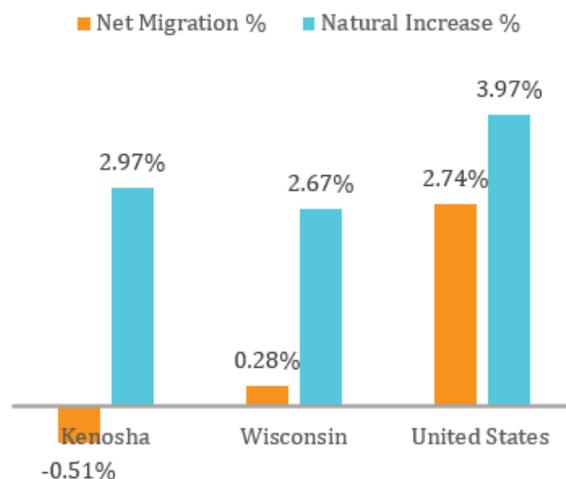
**Graphic 3: 10 Most Populous Municipalities in County**

	2010 Census	2020 Final Estimate	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Kenosha, City	99,218	98,891	-327	-0.33%
Pleasant Prairie, Village	19,719	22,456	2,737	13.88%
Salem Lakes, Village	14,478	14,679	201	1.39%
Somers, Village	0	9,182	9,182	N/A
Twin Lakes, Village	5,989	6,189	200	3.34%
Bristol, Village	4,914	5,139	225	4.58%
Wheatland, Town	3,373	3,362	-11	-0.33%
Randall, Town	3,180	3,189	9	0.28%
Paddock Lake, Village	2,992	3,176	184	6.15%
Paris, Town	1,504	1,516	12	0.80%
<b>Kenosha County</b>	<b>166,426</b>	<b>170,514</b>	<b>4,088</b>	<b>2.46%</b>
Wisconsin	5,686,986	5,854,594	167,608	2.95%
United States	308,745,538	329,484,123	20,738,585	6.72%

Source: Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Department of Administration

Natural increase and migration are the two components of population change. A natural increase of the population occurs when there are more births than deaths, while an increase from migration arises when more people enter the county than exit. The county gained population through natural increase; a rate that was high when compared to the state (3.0% vs 1.3%). Natural increase is largely a function of age, and while the measure does not show immediate labor market availability, it provides some insight into the long-term workforce pipeline. The county lost a nominal 0.5% of its population due to net migration. Net migration has more of an immediate impact of the two components on the county's labor force. Improving net migration could help to mitigate long-run workforce challenges that will continue to compound as the Baby Boomer population ages out of the workforce.

**Graphic 4: Components of Population Change**



## Employment by Industry

Employment in the county decreased by 1,235 jobs (-1.8%) across all industries from 2019 to 2020. These employment losses were primarily caused by the pandemic and the many changes in work and daily life that followed. The outlier within Kenosha County was the Trade, Transportation, & Utilities sector, the county's largest industry, which actually grew by 7.5%. Growth in this sector was not common in other parts of the state, and it can likely be attributed to the growth in online deliveries. The remaining industry subsectors netted a loss of 2,668 jobs from year to year – a decline of 5.9%.

**Graphic 5: 2020 Annual Employment by Industry**

	2020 Average Monthly Employment	1-year Numeric Change	1-year Percent Change	Percent of Total Employment	Total Payroll	Percent of Total Payroll
Construction	1,803	17	0.95%	2.74%	\$ 119,076,590	3.76%
Education & Health Services	14,435	-626	-4.16%	21.94%	\$ 738,281,038	23.30%
Financial Activities	1,408	-3	-0.21%	2.14%	\$ 84,421,673	2.66%
Information	260	-19	-6.81%	0.40%	\$ 33,373,122	1.05%
Leisure & Hospitality	6,270	-1,249	-16.61%	9.53%	\$ 105,263,685	3.32%
Manufacturing	8,376	-136	-1.60%	12.73%	\$ 498,475,965	15.73%
Natural Resources & Mining	228	-3	-1.30%	0.35%	\$ 8,361,040	0.26%
Other Services	1,506	-179	-10.62%	2.29%	\$ 42,965,349	1.36%
Professional & Business Services	7,611	-334	-4.20%	11.57%	\$ 393,112,910	12.40%
Public Administration	3,221	-136	-4.05%	4.89%	\$ 162,204,356	5.12%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	20,687	1,435	7.45%	31.44%	\$ 983,636,344	31.04%
<b>All Industries</b>	<b>65,803</b>	<b>-1,235</b>	<b>-1.84%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$ 3,169,172,072</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: WI DWD, Labor Market Information, QCEW 2020

As was common in many counties across the state in 2020, the Leisure and Hospitality industry experienced Kenosha County's greatest employment losses in both numeric and percentage terms. Employment declined by 16.6%. The industry made up about 18% of total employment but accounted for 28.8% of total job loss. The state experienced a larger decline, shedding 19.9% of jobs when compared to 2019. This industry took a historically drastic hit at both the state and county level. While it can be expected to improve, the long-term changes that will occur in this sector are still unknown.

*Over the course of 2020, employment in the county decreased by 1,235 jobs (1.8%) across all industries.*

While much of the attention regarding the economic impacts of the pandemic was concentrated on Leisure and Hospitality, and deservedly so, it is worth keeping in mind that employment losses were widely felt in many industries. All of the county's industries super-sectors lost employment with the exception of Trade, Transportation, & Utilities and Construction.

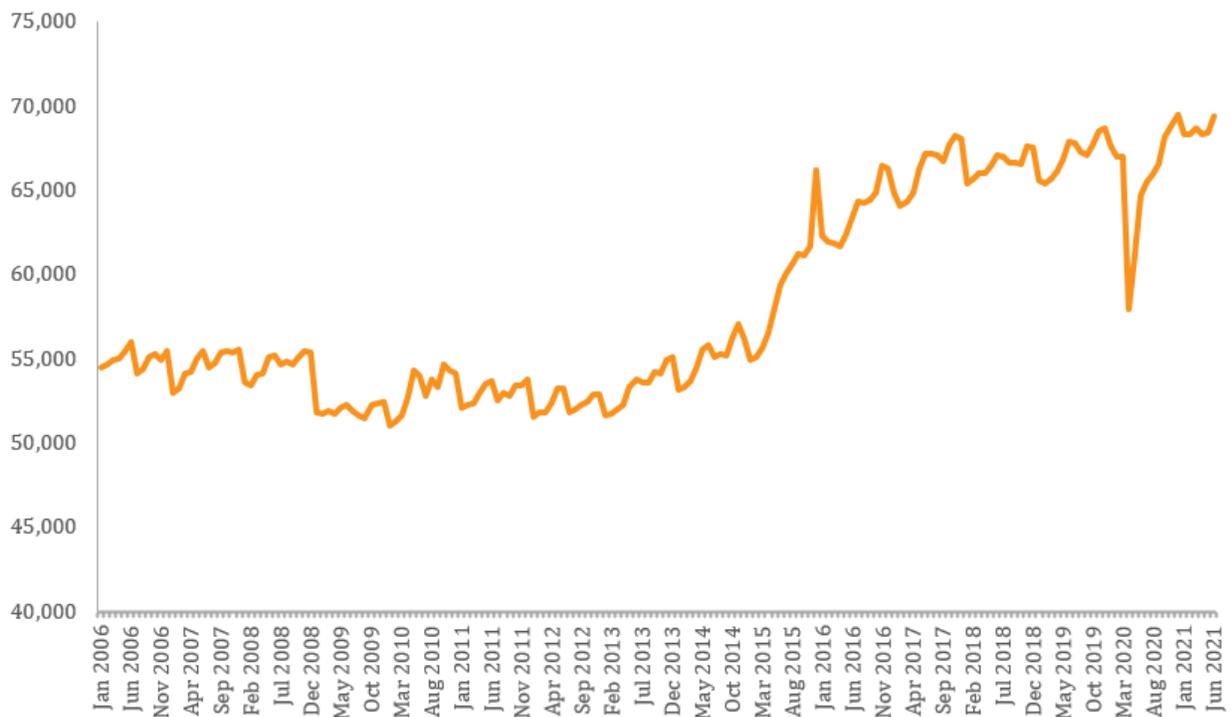


## Total Monthly Employment: January 2006 – March 2021

Ongoing economic disruption and volatility driven by the COVID-19 pandemic complicate efforts to separate structural economic shifts from transitory changes. With the pandemic, employment total took an unprecedented dip in April of 2020.

Seasonal fluctuation occurs regardless of economic conditions. For example, retail employment always ramps up for the holiday season, and construction activity is usually higher during the summer months when weather conditions are favorable. Making a comparison to the same month of a previous year is a way to account for these seasonal patterns. For Kenosha County, job counts in the month corresponding with economic shutdowns were 12.4% below the county job count from the same month of 2019.

**Graphic 6: QCEW Monthly Employment**



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

While the decline was historically drastic, the initial bounce back was rapid. April 2020 marked the first month of substantial employment decline, as well as the trough. By the end of the year, employment was already above pre-pandemic levels. Growth has been steady through the first part of 2021, and the recovery of employment in the county has been more promising than the recovery in the state as a whole. Statewide employment initially saw rapid improvement, but it slowed down in the last quarter of 2020 and through the first quarter of 2021.

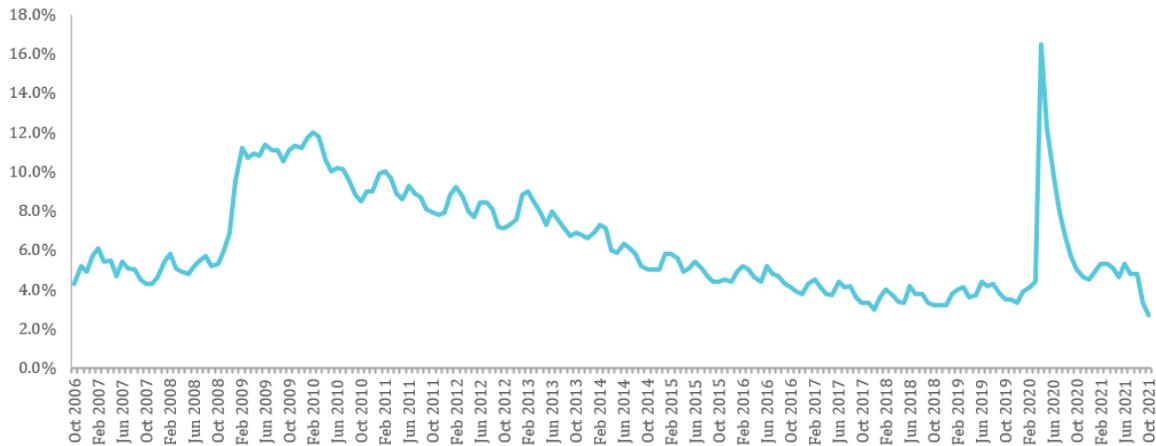
A temporary drop in employment totals is a "cyclical change". An important question for the future is how the economy will change permanently, or "structurally". Structural changes come out of every recession and recovery. History would tell us that these changes are typically concentrated in specific industries or sectors. A cyclical change usually involves a plant closures, which requires retraining and those impacted are relatively easy to identify. This recovery, however, will likely be different. A main theme will be changes in business processes as many modifications that were made out of sheer necessity may permanently be incorporated. For example, we can expect a permanent increase in telecommuting and work from home options. It will be important to identify the workers that are negatively impacted by these changes.



## Unemployment and Labor Force Participation

The unemployment rate represents the proportion of residents that did not have a job but were actively seeking work as a share of the total labor force. The county's seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate spiked to 16.5% in April of 2020, but it has since dropped to 2.7% as of October of 2021. This rate is remarkably low and indicative of "tight labor market" conditions that were experienced prior to the pandemic. A "tight labor market" means it is difficult for employers to find workers to fill open positions. There should be a continued emphasis on recruitment, retention, and training that "upskill" residents for high-demand job opportunities. Employers can expect to experience more difficulty finding workers as Baby Boomers continue to exit the workforce. Filling labor market needs will require creative methods to attract marginally attached residents into the workforce and ways to address barriers that deter otherwise qualified candidates.

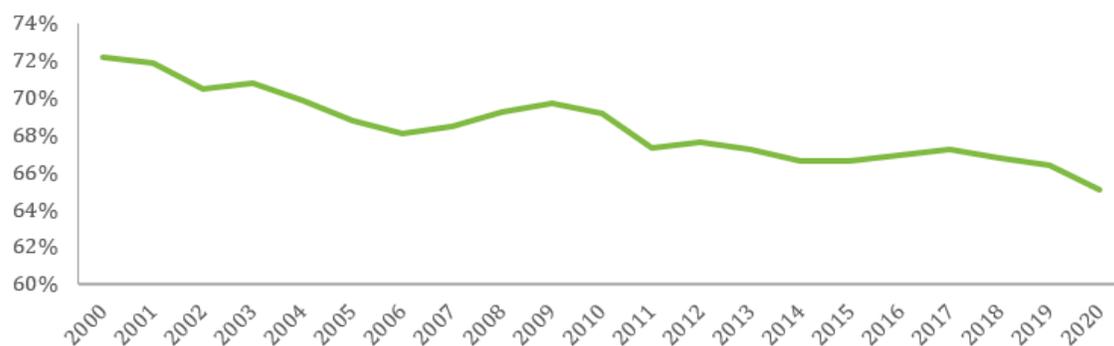
**Graphic 7: Unemployment Rate**



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

Two factors influence the size of the labor force. The first is the size of the working age population. The primary tool for improving this in the short term is net migration. The second influencing factor is the labor force participation rate (LFPR), which estimates an economy's active workforce by looking at the number noninstitutional civilians who are 16 and older and employed or actively seeking employment, which estimates an economy's active workforce by looking at the number noninstitutional civilians who are 16 and older and employed or actively seeking employment.. The LFPR faces downward pressure due to an aging population. The Wisconsin's LFPR traditionally holds steady at around 85% for residents between 25 and 54 years old. LFPR starts to decline at around 55 years old and declines sharply after participants turn 60.

**Graphic 8: Labor Force Participation Rate**



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

