Introduction

The Workforce Intelligence Network for Southeast Michigan (WIN) partnership is a collaboration of Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs) and community colleges across a 16-county region in Michigan. The counties in the WIN partnership include: Genesee, Hillsdale, Huron, Jackson, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Saint Clair, Sanilac, Shiawassee, Tuscola, Washtenaw, and Wayne, along with the City of Detroit.

The WIN partnership region’s labor shed highlights why, when it comes to talent, we must think regionally: The workforce is mobile. Although 90.4% of the region’s workforce live and work in the 16-county area, not all residents work in their home county. It is not uncommon for workers to commute one or two counties over for work. This means that the residents in every county should be ready for the job demands of employers hiring throughout southeast Michigan.

This document provides detailed information on where employees in the area commute to and from each day for work, how far they travel, along with other information about workers and businesses in the area. For more detail on the labor market please see WIN’s Quarterly Labor Market Report publications.

Where Residents Work

In 2017, Macomb County’s workforce consisted of 380,503 residents. 160,717 (42.2 percent) of the residents lived and worked within Macomb County, while the remaining 219,786 residents (57.8 percent) traveled outside of the county for work. Since 2015, the number of residents that traveled outside of the county for work increased by 6,853 (3.2 percent) individuals, growing from 212,933 to 219,786 commuters.

Macomb County residents reported slightly longer commutes in 2017 than in 2015. In 2015, 16.4 percent of the county’s workforce (60,615 individuals) traveled greater than 25 miles to their place of employment compared to 17.1 percent (64,972 individuals) in 2017. Oakland County was the most popular destination outside of Macomb County for residents to find employment. In 2017, 112,513 residents (29.6 percent of the county’s workforce) traveled to Oakland County for employment, followed by 66,859 residents (17.6 percent of the county’s workforce) that traveled to Wayne County.

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Where Workers Live

Macomb County is a net exporter of workers, making the county a commuting community. Overall, 314,110 workers were employed in Macomb County in 2017. 153,393 workers were employed in Macomb County but lived outside its borders. Of those that traveled to Macomb County for work, 36,435 (23.8 percent) of the workers were 29 or younger. While Macomb County employers were able to attract many young workers in 2017, 82,664 total jobs in the county (51.4 percent) were filled by workers between the ages of 30 and 54. This indicates a desire for experienced workers in Macomb County.

Similar to the outflow of Macomb County residents, the great majority of workers that travel to Macomb reside in either Oakland or Wayne counties. In 2017, 51,453 (16.4 percent) of Macomb County workers travel in from Oakland County followed by 45,639 (14.5 percent) that travel in from Wayne County. 59,253 (20.5 percent) of the 314,110 workers in Macomb County traveled more than 25 miles to their place of employment in 2017.

†This fact and labor shed statistics throughout this brief are analyzed from the U.S. Census OnTheMap, Center for Economic Studies (2017).

Data Sources: Economic Modeling Specialists International (Emsi), and U.S. Census OnTheMap
Analysis: Workforce Intelligence Network