Introduction

The Workforce Intelligence Network for Southeast Michigan (WIN) partnership is a collaboration of Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs) and community colleges across a 19-county region in Michigan. The counties in the WIN partnership include: Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Hillsdale, Huron, Jackson, Ingham, 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 19-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 2019, the City of Detroit’s workforce consisted of 186,667 residents. 58,675 (31.4 percent) of the residents lived and worked within the City of Detroit, while the remaining 127,992 residents (68.6 percent) traveled outside of the city for work. Since 2017, the number of residents that traveled outside of the City of Detroit for work decreased by just 106 (<0.01 percent) individuals, from 128,098 to 127,992 outbound commuters.

Detroit residents had very similar commutes between 2019 and 2017. In 2017, 14.3 percent of the city’s workforce (26,560 individuals) traveled more than 25 miles to their place of employment, compared with 14.3 percent (26,604 individuals) in 2019. Destinations in Wayne County were the most popular places for Detroit residents to find employment. 41,619 residents (41.5 percent of the city’s workforce) traveled to destinations in Wayne County outside of the City of Detroit for employment in 2019. There were 100,294 total Detroit residents employed in Wayne County in total. Another 47,044 residents (24.1 percent of the city’s workforce) traveled to Oakland County.
Where Workers Live

The City of Detroit is a net importer of workers, making the city a job center, though there are high numbers of both inbound and outbound commuters. In 2019, there were 235,654 workers employed in the City of Detroit. 166,070 (73.9 percent) of those workers were employed in the City of Detroit but lived outside of its borders. Of those that traveled to Detroit for work, 28,945 (17.4 percent) of the workers were 29 or younger, compared to 41,348 of workers (32.3 percent) of outbound workers in this age group.

Similar to the outflow of Detroit residents, the great majority of workers that travel to the city reside elsewhere in Wayne County or in Oakland County. 119,788 (50.8 percent) of Detroit workers reside in Wayne County (61,113 live in outer Wayne) followed by 49,375 (21.0 percent) that travel in from Oakland County, and 38,339 (16.3 percent) that travel in from Macomb County. 39,547 (17.6 percent) of the 224,745 workers in the City of Detroit traveled more than 25 miles to their place of employment in 2019.

Data Sources: Lightcast and U.S. Census OnTheMap
Analysis: Workforce Intelligence Network

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**COMMUTING PATTERN**

166,070
LIVE OUTSIDE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT AND COMMUTE IN

58,675
LIVE AND WORK IN THE CITY OF DETROIT

127,992
LIVE IN THE CITY OF DETROIT AND COMMUTE OUT

1This fact and labor shed statistics throughout this brief are analyzed from the U.S. Census OnTheMap, Center for Economic Studies (2019).

Data Sources: Lightcast and U.S. Census OnTheMap
Analysis: Workforce Intelligence Network