Union County

Division of Economic and Demographic Research

Office of Research & Information

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
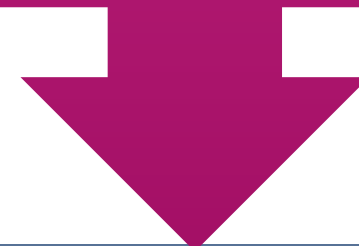
February 2026

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WHO ARE WE?

New Jersey Department of Labor
Office of Research and Information

Division of Economic and Demographic Research

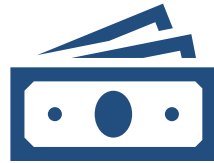| SDC	BLS	LMI

The purpose of this report is to highlight the key demographic and economic trends in the county

Union County's population is **younger and more diverse** than the state average, with a slightly higher proportion of residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher.

Union County's real GDP ranks 9th among all New Jersey counties. **Unemployment** follows state trends but stays slightly below the New Jersey average.
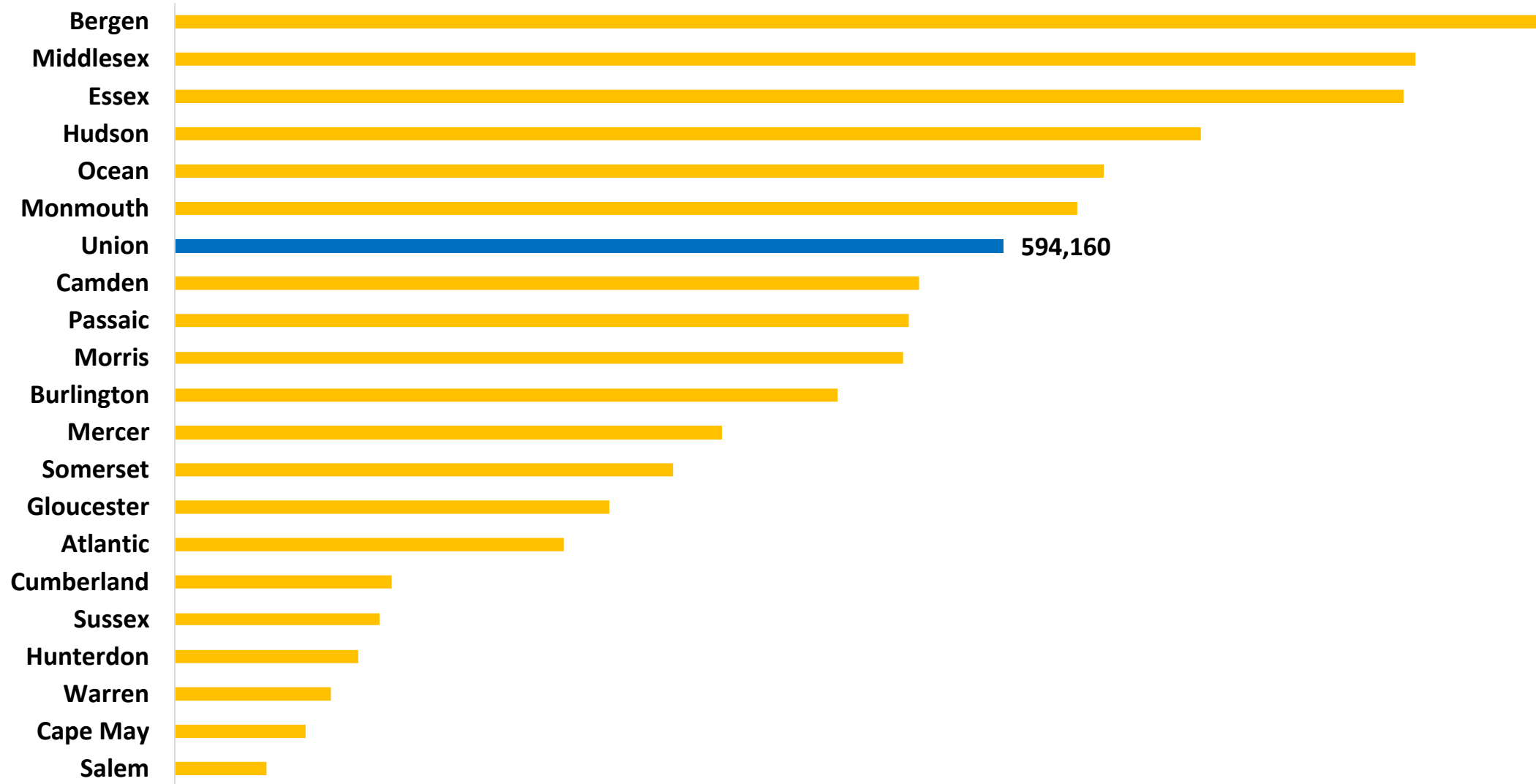
The **top** occupations in demand include Registered Nurses, Retail Salespersons, Software Developers and Truck Drivers

DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Union County's population was 594,160 in 2024.

Population Estimates by County in New Jersey, 2024

County	
Union	594,160

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in New Jersey (Vintage 2024)

Union County's population is younger and more diverse than the state overall.

Demographic Characteristics

Indicator	Union County	New Jersey
Median Age	38.7	40.1
% of Older Population (65+)	15.6%	18.0%
% of Language Other Than English Spoken at Home	49.8%	34.3%
% of Foreign-Born Population	35.7%	25.0%
% of Hispanic or Latino (of Any Race)	36.7%	23.5%

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

The share of Union County residents with a bachelor's degree or higher is 3.6 percentage points below the state average.

Educational Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)

Indicator	Union County	New Jersey
High School or Equivalent Degree	26.1%	24.7%
Some College, No Degree	15.0%	14.5%
Associate's Degree	5.7%	6.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	22.8%	26.4%
High School Degree or Higher	85.9%	90.4%

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Union County has a lower median household income and a higher poverty rate compared to the state overall.

Income & Poverty

Indicator	Union County	New Jersey
Median Household Income	$101,963	$104,294
% of Poverty	9.8%	9.2%

Note: Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2024 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Union County residents pay higher rent and have a higher homeownership rate compared to the state average.

Housing Characteristics

| Indicator	Union County	New Jersey
Total Households	57,741	3,543,944
Median Gross Rent	$1,829	$1,800
Homeownership Rate	57.2%	63.9%
% of Housing Value of Owner Occupied (≥$300,000)	92.4%	80.7%

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Union County residents have shorter commute times, and a lower percentage of remote workers compared to the state average.
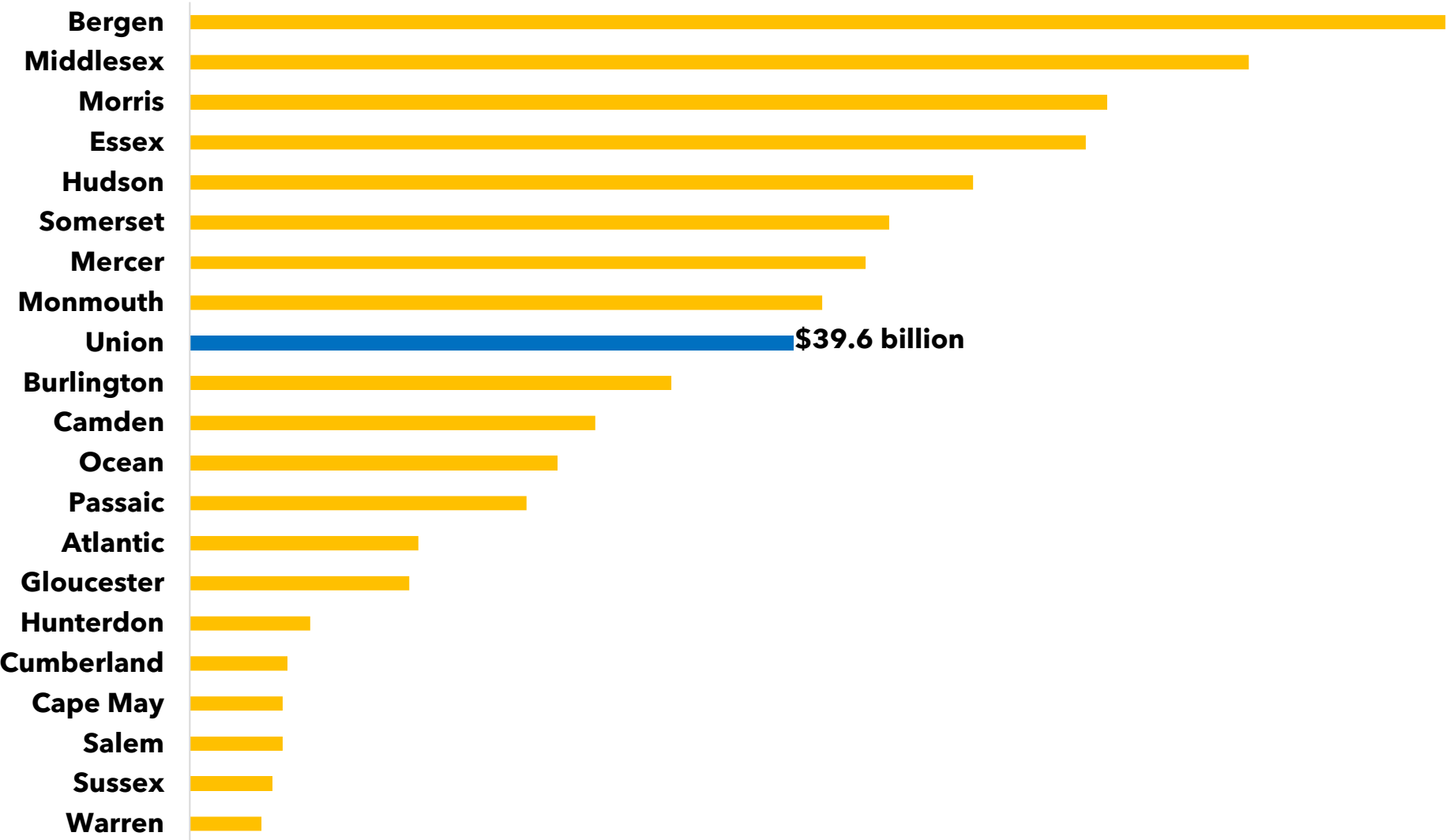
Commuting Characteristics

Indicator	Union County	New Jersey
Average Travel Time to Work (in Minutes)	30.7	31.9
% of Public Transportation	9.9%	9.7%
% of Working From Home	10.8%	13.5%

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates
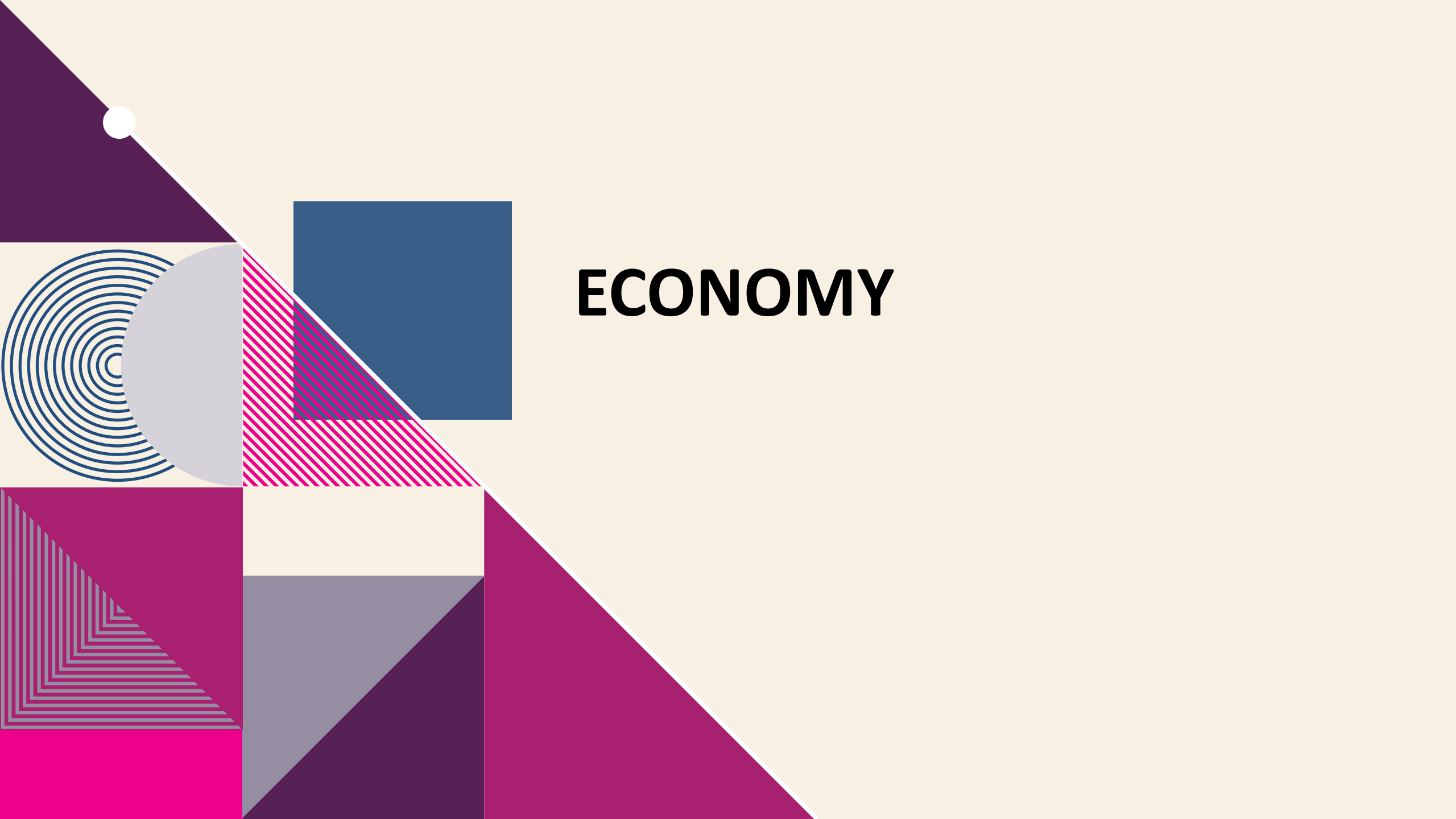
ECONOMY

In 2023, Union County's real GDP was $39.6 billion, ranking 3rd among all New Jersey counties.

Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by County in New Jersey, 2023

Union — $39.6 billion

Counties (top to bottom): Bergen, Middlesex, Morris, Essex, Hudson, Somerset, Mercer, Monmouth, Union, Burlington, Camden, Ocean, Passaic, Atlantic, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Cumberland, Cape May, Salem, Sussex, Warren

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "CAGDP1 County and MSA gross domestic product (GDP) summary" (accessed Wednesday, April 2, 2025).

Establishments and Employment

Union County

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, 2024

The QCEW program produces quarterly and annual data on the number of establishments, total employment, and wages for workers covered by New Jersey unemployment insurance (UI) laws, as well as federal employees under the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) program. This data is published at various geographical and industry levels.
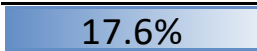
19% of Union County establishments are in the health care and social assistance.

Union County Establishments, Ranked by Percent of the Total*

Private Ownerships

Industry	Establishments	Employees	% of Private Establishments
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,114	35,125	19.0%
Retail Trade	1,736	25,097	10.6%
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	1,676	10,383	10.2%
Professional and Technical Services	1,496	15,456	9.1%
Construction	1,343	9,694	8.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,245	15,357	7.6%
Administrative and Waste Services	977	15,867	6.0%
Wholesale Trade	773	12,823	4.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	749	14,710	4.6%
Finance and Insurance	644	5,023	3.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	499	3,158	3.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	212	3,164	1.3%
Educational Services	201	3,159	1.2%
Information	175	3,370	1.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	61	2,306	0.4%
Utilities	30	1,442	0.2%
Mining	6	31	0.0%

Source: ORI-EDR, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, 2024

In Union County, other services, ex public admin have the higher employment shares as compared to the state average.

Employment by Private Service-Providing Industries
Union County vs. New Jersey, 2024

Industry	Union County		New Jersey		Difference between
	Employment	% of Total	Employment	% of Total	(2) and (4)
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	10,383	5.2%	144,086	3.9%	1.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	14,710	7.4%	233,943	6.4%	1.0%
Retail Trade	25,097	12.6%	427,521	11.6%	1.0%
Wholesale Trade	12,823	6.4%	213,549	5.8%	0.6%
Construction	9,694	4.9%	164,014	4.5%	0.4%
Administrative and Waste Services	15,867	8.0%	286,750	7.8%	0.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	3,158	1.6%	63,263	1.7%	-0.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	35,125	17.6%	656,356	17.8%	-0.2%
Information	3,370	1.7%	76,199	2.1%	-0.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3,164	1.6%	73,699	2.0%	-0.4%
Educational Services	3,159	1.6%	90,018	2.4%	-0.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,306	1.2%	82,588	2.2%	-1.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	15,357	7.7%	328,905	8.9%	-1.2%
Professional and Technical Services	15,456	7.8%	336,105	9.1%	-1.4%
Finance and Insurance	5,023	2.5%	189,987	5.2%	-2.6%

Source: ORI-EDR, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, 2024

Between 2018 and 2024, information saw the largest employment growth in Union County, increasing by 61.2%.

Percent Change in Employment by Industry
Union County, 2018-2024 (ranked by percentage change in employment)

Industry	Percent Change
Information	61.2%
Educational Services	26.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	26.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	14.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	6.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1.8%
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	1.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	-2.4%
Professional and Technical Services	-3.0%
Construction	-4.1%
Wholesale Trade	-4.5%
Administrative and Waste Services	-7.0%
Retail Trade	-11.1%

Source: ORI-EDR, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, 2024

Transportation, warehousing, and utilities saw strong growth in New Jersey, expanding by 21.9% from 2018 to 2024.

Percent Change in Employment by Industry
New Jersey, 2018-2024 (ranked by percentage change in employment)

Industry	Percent Change
Transportation and Warehousing	21.9%
Educational Services	13.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	13.6%
Professional and Technical Services	11.6%
Information	9.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	8.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	6.4%
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	6.1%
Construction	4.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	3.6%
Finance and Insurance	3.5%
Manufacturing	3.0%
Administrative and Waste Services	0.1%
Wholesale Trade	-0.5%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-1.5%
Utilities	-1.6%
Retail Trade	-5.9%

Source: ORI-EDR, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, 2024

Unemployment Trend

Union County vs. New Jersey

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), 2024

The Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program produces monthly and annual employment, unemployment, and labor force data for Census regions and divisions, States, counties, metropolitan areas, and many cities, by place of residence.

Unemployment in Union County follows state trends.

Unemployment Rate
Union County vs. New Jersey, 2000-2024

Source: ORI-EDR, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program, 2024
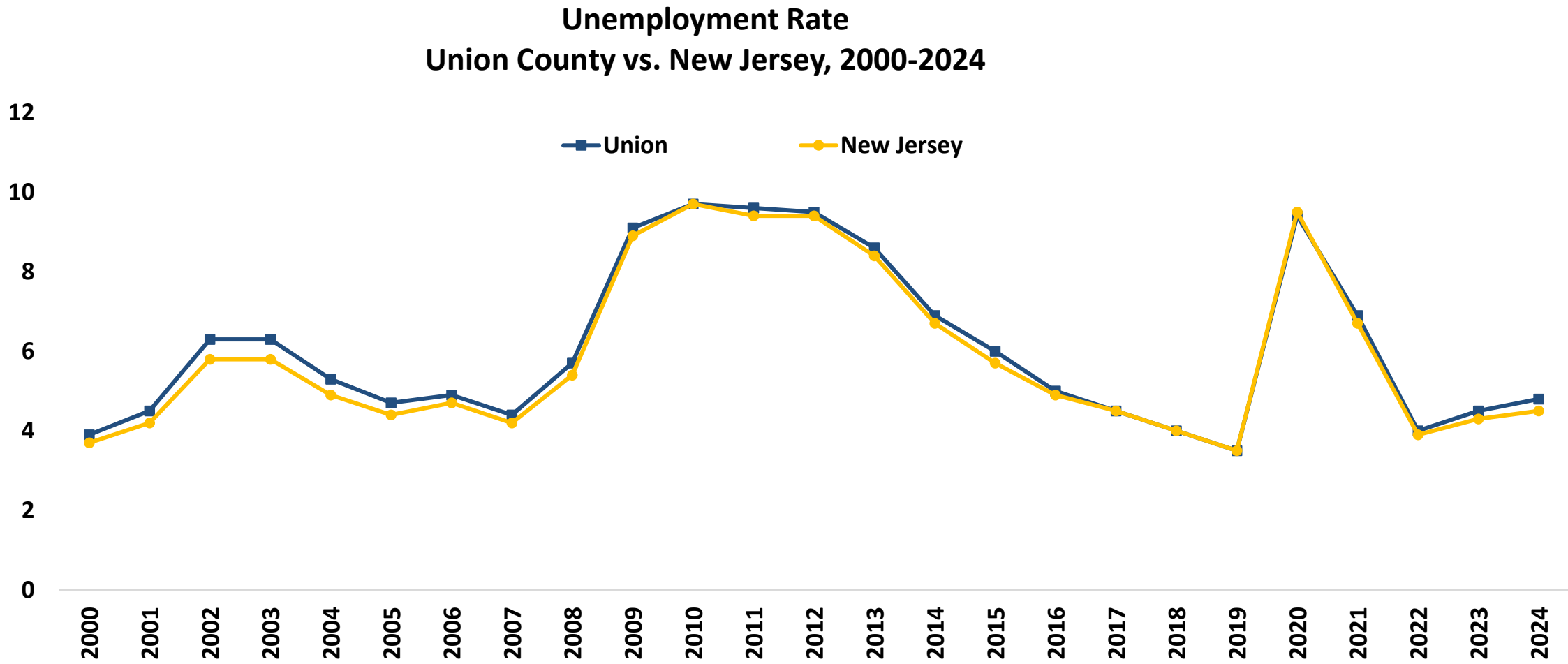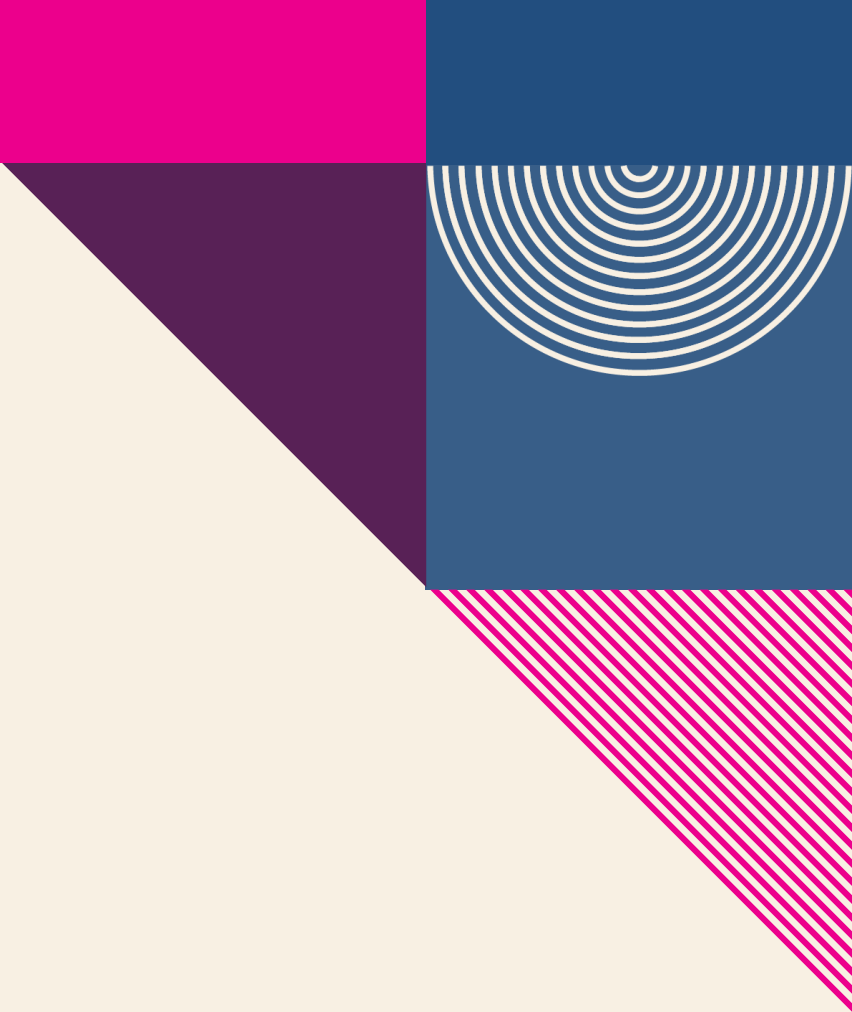
Occupational Employment and Wages

Union County vs. New Jersey

Source: 2024 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates (OEWS)

The Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program produces employment, and wage estimates annually for approximately 830 occupations. These estimates are available for the nation, for individual states, and for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas; national occupational estimates for specific industries are also available.

21.5% of Union County's total employment is concentrated in the top 10 occupations.

Top 10 Occupations, Ranked by Employment
Union County, 2024

Occupation	Employment	% of Total Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6160	2.8%	$15.26
Retail Salespersons	5590	2.6%	$18.45
Cashiers	5310	2.4%	$16.72
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	5310	2.4%	$16.06
Fast Food and Counter Workers	4790	2.2%	$20.37
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleane	4350	2.0%	$17.53
Registered Nurses	4150	1.9%	$17.86
Stockers and Order Fillers	4080	1.9%	$49.73
General and Operations Managers	3550	1.6%	$24.29
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	3270	1.5%	$61.03
Top 10 Occupations, Total	46,560	21.5%	
All Occupations, Total	217,000	100.0%	$27.54

Note: OES collects the data for 2024.

Source: ORI-EDR, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program, 2024

In New Jersey, the top 10 occupations account for 20% of total employment.

Top 10 Occupations, Ranked by Employment
New Jersey, 2024

Occupation	Employment	% of Total Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	105,460	2.5%	$18.30
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	101,720	2.4%	$20.17
Registered Nurses	95,150	2.2%	$51.44
Cashiers	93,270	2.2%	$16.66
Retail Salespersons	87,760	2.1%	$19.87
Fast Food and Counter Workers	86,980	2.0%	$16.42
Packers and Packagers, Hand	76,060	1.8%	$19.42
Office Clerks, General	71,140	1.7%	$24.23
Stockers and Order Fillers	70,780	1.7%	$18.87
Janitors and Cleaners	67,590	1.6%	$19.23
Top 10 Occupations, Total	855,910	20.1%	
All Occupations, Total	4,250,430	100.0%	$36.69

Note: OEWS collects the data for 2024.

Between 2022 and 2032 in Union County, transportation and material moving occupation group are projected to see the largest growth (+2000).

Actual and Projected Employment by Occupation Group, Union County
Top 10 Occupation groups ranked by 2032 Employment Projections

Occupational Group	2022 Actual	2032 Projected	Net Change		Percent Change
Transportation and Material Moving	31,600	34,450		2,850	9.0%
Healthcare Support	10,750	12,500		1,750	16.5%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	13,450	14,950		1,500	10.9%
Management	18,400	19,400		1,000	5.4%
Computer and Mathematical	8,900	9,850		950	10.6%
Personal Care and Service	9,950	10,750		800	8.4%
Educational Instruction and Library	16,750	17,300		550	3.3%
Food Preparation and Serving Related	13,900	14,400		500	3.3%
Construction and Extraction	8,850	9,250		400	4.8%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	9,700	10,100		400	4.5%

Note: Employment data for Top 15 occupational groups is available in the Appendix.

Source: ORI-EDR, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program, 2024

JOB POSTINGS

Job Postings
Union County vs. New Jersey

Source: Lightcast

Lightcast collect raw data on postings from more than 160,000 online sources, then synthesize and interpret those findings to provide meaningful insight in near real time. Job posting analytics can identify supply and demand for workers, skills, and jobs all over the world, as well as important contextual details like compensation trends.

Limitations: One job posting does not necessarily equal one actual job opening. Some companies may post jobs to signal growth to investors or advertise positions in multiple states. Additionally, a decline in job postings doesn't always indicate reduced demand; it could simply mean that companies have already filled their positions and are no longer actively recruiting. We treat this data as directional, offering insights into employer demand rather than exact measurements.

Top 5 Hiring Companies
Union County, 2024

- **Merck & Co.**
- **RWJ Barnabas Health**
- **Atlantic Health System**
- **Summit Health**
- **Fiserv**

Top 5 Occupations
Union County, 2024

- **Registered Nurses**

- **Retail Salespersons**

- **First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers**

- **Software Developers**

- **Truck Drivers**

Source: Lightcast

Top 5 Specialized Skills
Union County, 2024

- **Project Management**

- **Nursing**

- **Marketing**

- **Merchandising**

- **Pharmaceuticals**

Top 5 Software Skills

- **Microsoft Office (e.g., Excel, and PowerPoint)**

- **SAP Applications**

- **Programming Language (e.g., SQL, Python, and R)**

- **Application Programming Interface**

- **Amazon Web Services**
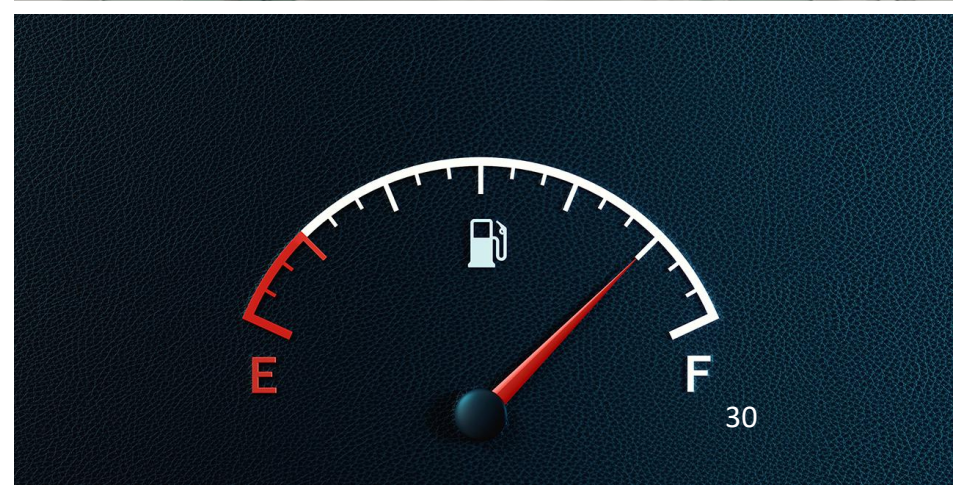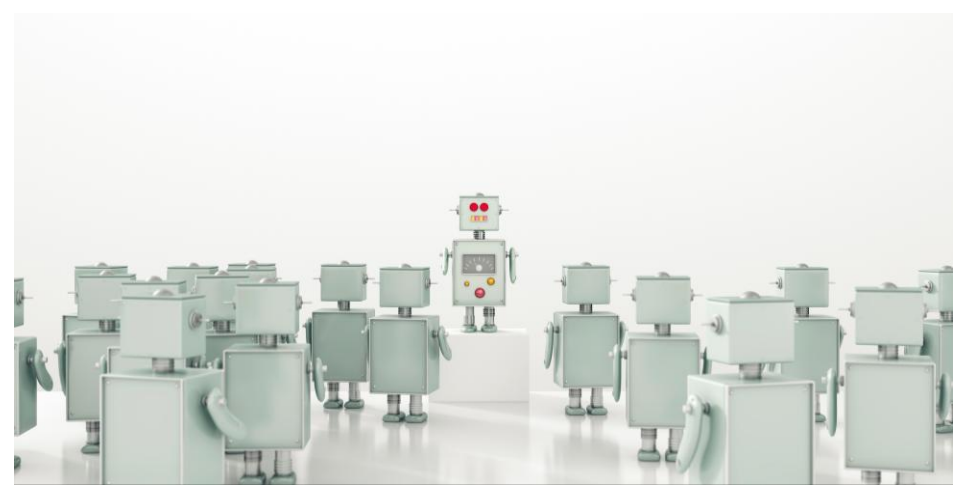
Top 5 Soft Skills
Union County, 2024

- **Communication**
- **Customer Service**
- **Management**
- **Operations**
- **Sales**

Top 5 Certificates

- **Valid Driver's License**

- **Registered Nurse (RN)**

- **Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification**

- **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification**
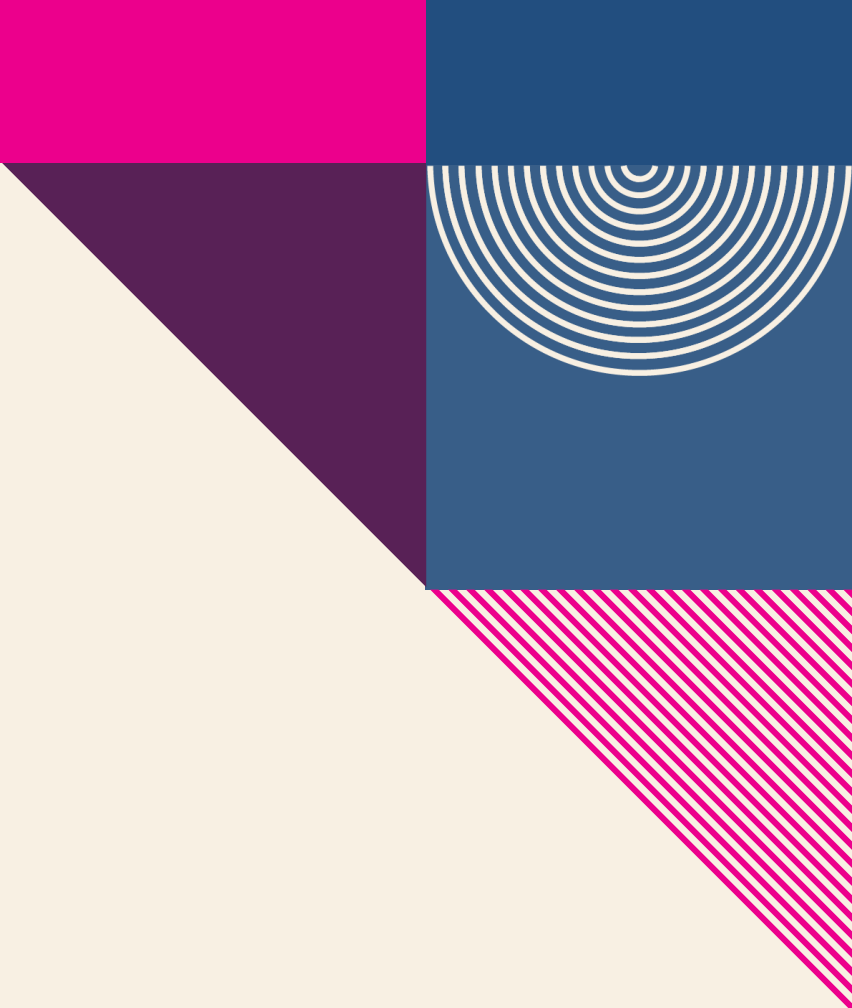
- **Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)**

25% of all job postings in Union County require a bachelor's degree or higher.

Job Postings by Educational Attainment
Union County, 2024

■ No education listed ■ High school or GED ■ Associate's degree ■ Bachelor's degree or higher

25%

7%

47%

25%
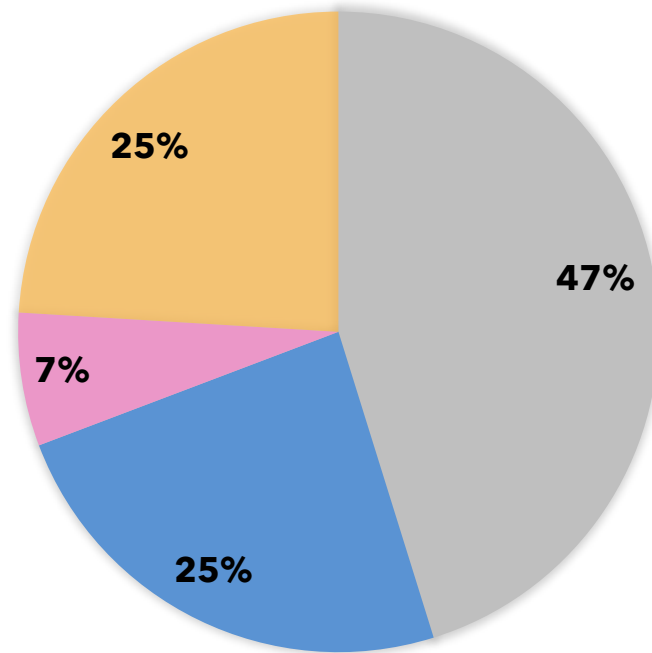
AI-related Job Postings
Union County vs. New Jersey

Source: Lightcast

To identify AI-related job postings, ORI-EDR compiled a curated list of 130 specific terms. A job listing is deemed AI-related if any of these terms appear in the skills section. A job listing is classified as AI-related if any of these terms are present in the skills section. This includes, but is not limited to, terms such as "AI/ML Inference," "Conversational AI," "Machine Learning Algorithms," "Supervised Learning," and "Deep Learning."

Limitations: One job posting does not necessarily equal one actual job opening. Some companies may post jobs to signal growth to investors or advertise positions in multiple states. Additionally, a decline in job postings doesn't always indicate reduced demand; it could simply mean that companies have already filled their positions and are no longer actively recruiting. We treat this data as directional, offering insights into employer demand rather than exact measurements.

Top 5 AI-related Hiring Companies
Union County, 2024

- **Merck & Co.**
- **Fiserv**
- **Bristol-Myers Squibb**
- **L'Oreal**
- **Wells Fargo**

Source: Lightcast. Pictures are downloaded from iStockphoto.

Top 5 AI-related Occupations
Union County, 2024

- **Software Developers**

- **Project Management Specialists**

- **Marketing Managers**

- **Medical and Health Service Managers**

- **Business Intelligence Analysts**
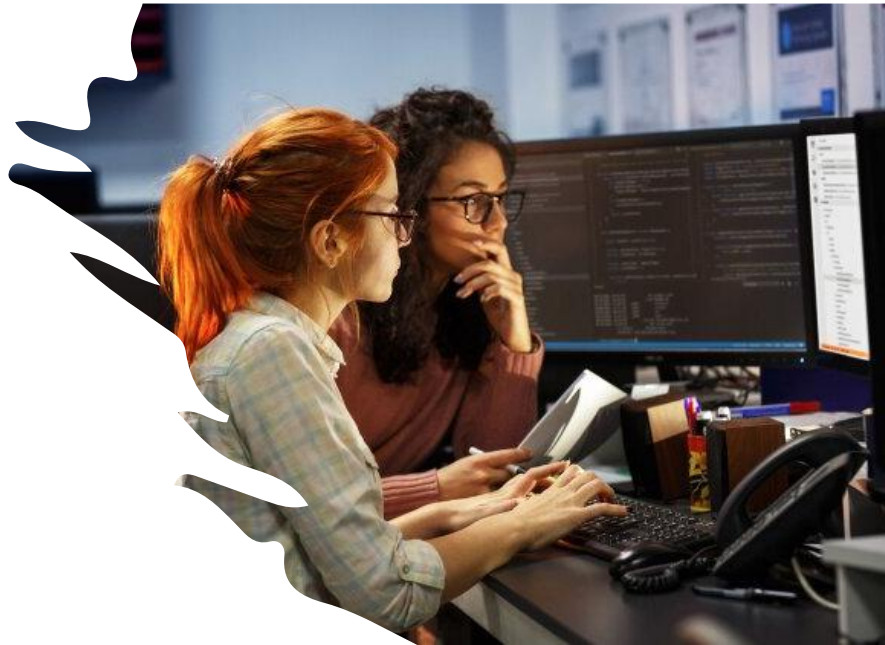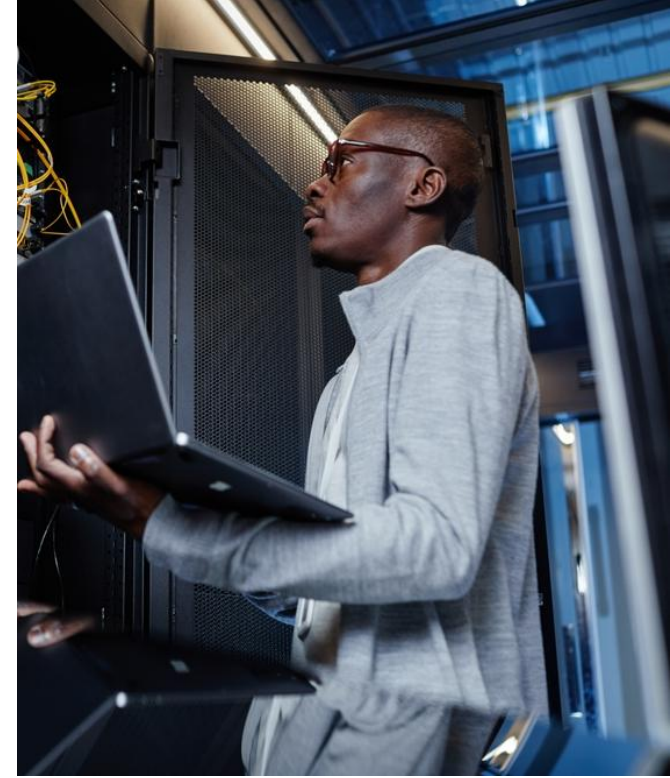
In Union County, the median hourly wage for AI-related job postings is lower than the state average for most of the years.

Median Hourly Wage in AI-related Job Postings
Union County vs. New Jersey, 2018-2024

Source: Lightcast
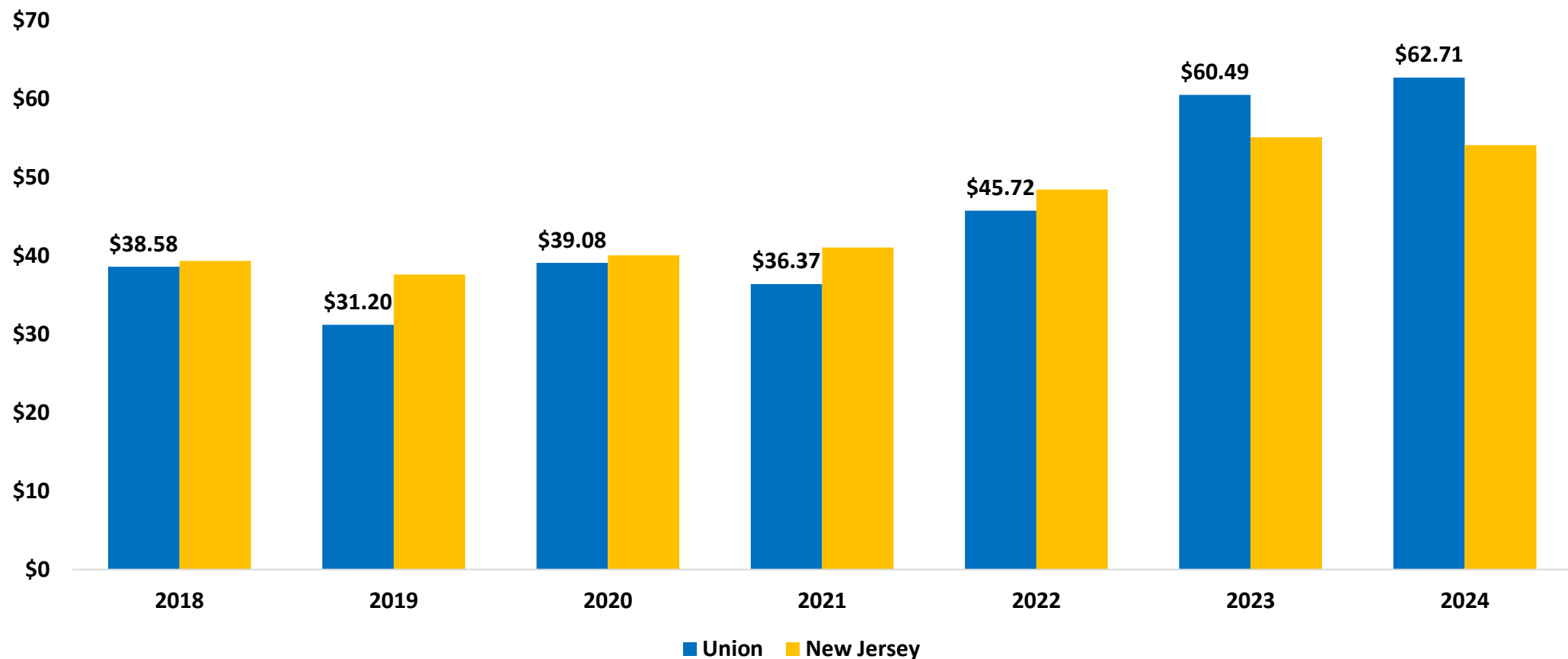
TAKEAWAYS

- **Key Economic and Workforce Insights: Union County**

  - **Demographics**

    - Union County's population is younger and more diverse than the New Jersey average.

    - Union County's education level is comparable to the state overall, but the proportion of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher is 3.6 percentage points lower than the state average.

  - **Regional Variation**

    - There are differences in economic and housing characteristics across Union County's municipalities.

Data Disclaimer: Data is subject to revision or change

- **Key Economic and Workforce Insights: Union County (Continued)**

  - **Industry Composition**

    - Nearly 19% of business establishments are in health care and social assistance.

    - Retail trade sectors have higher employment shares in Union County compared to state average**.**

- **Key Economic and Workforce Insights: Union County (Continued)**
  - **Occupational Demand in the County**
    - **Top Projected Occupations by 2032**
      - Transportation and Material Moving
      - Healthcare Support
      - Management
      - Computer and Mathematical
      - Personal Care and Services

- **Key Economic and Workforce Insights: Union County (Continued)**

  - **Occupational Demand in the County**

    - **Top Occupations by Job Postings**

      - Registered Nurses

      - Retail Salespersons

      - First-Line Supervisors of retail Sales Workers

      - Software Developers

      - Truck Drivers

Data Disclaimer: Data is subject to revision or change

2025 Report Overview and Subscription Information
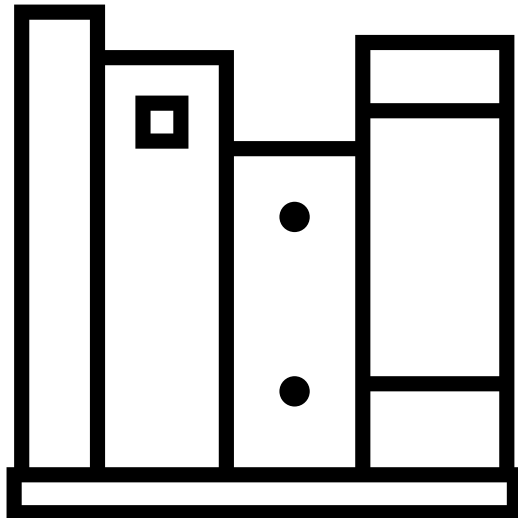
This report was prepared by the Office of Research and Information, Division of Economic & Demographic Research. This division collects and disseminates vital data on employers, employees, and population demographics.

2025-2026 NJDOL PUBLICATIONS

- [Real-Time Insights: Analysis of Job Posting Data in New Jersey for 2025](#) (January 2026)
- [Identifying and Tracking Emerging Occupations in New Jersey's Key Sectors](#) (January 2026)
- [New Jersey's Manufacturing Sector](#) (Winter 2025)
- [County Brief: Labor Market Facts](#) (December 2025)
- [Labor Market Spotlight - Celebrating New Jersey's Veterans](#) (Issue No. 28, Volume 3: November 2025)
- [Labor Market Spotlight - New Jersey's Waterways Help Keep the Economy Flowing](#) (Issue No. 27, Volume 3: October 2025)
- [New Jersey Employment Situation](#) (September 2025)
- [Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS)](#) (August 2025)
- [New Jersey Building Permits](#) (August 2025)
- [New Jersey's Life Sciences Sector](#) (Fall 2025)
- [Labor Market Spotlight - The Industries Powering New Jersey's Special Moments](#) (Issue No. 26, Volume 3: August 2025)
- [New Jersey's Health Care Sector](#) (June 2025)
- [New Jersey Business Employment Dynamics](#) (May 2025)
- [Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII)](#) (April 2025)
- [Labor Market Spotlight - Fortune 500 Companies](#) (Issue No. 25, Volume 3: March 2025)
- [Labor Market Spotlight - Young Adult Workforce](#) (Issue No. 24, Volume 3: January 2025)

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THANK YOU!

APPENDIX

Actual and Projected Employment by Occupation Group, Union County
Top 15 Occupations ranked by 2032 Employment Projections

Occupational Group	2022 Actual	2032 Projected	Net Change		Percent Change
Transportation and Material Moving	31,600	34,450		2,850	9.0%
Healthcare Support	10,750	12,500		1,750	16.5%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	13,450	14,950		1,500	10.9%
Management	18,400	19,400		1,000	5.4%
Computer and Mathematical	8,900	9,850		950	10.6%
Personal Care and Service	9,950	10,750		800	8.4%
Educational Instruction and Library	16,750	17,300		550	3.3%
Food Preparation and Serving Related	13,900	14,400		500	3.3%
Construction and Extraction	8,850	9,250		400	4.8%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	9,700	10,100		400	4.5%
Business and Financial Operations	14,850	15,200		350	2.1%
Community and Social Service	4,050	4,400		350	9.3%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	8,900	9,100		200	2.1%
Life, Physical, and Social Science	2,700	2,850		150	5.1%
Architecture and Engineering	3,300	3,400		100	3.2%

Source: ORI-EDR, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program, 2024