

Kentucky Economic Analysis PY 2024

Prepared for



U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration

Prepared in Accordance with
Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 14-23

Prepared by



Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)
Workforce Intelligence Branch
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
www.kystats.ky.gov

September 2025

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	3
Personal Income.....	8
Population Estimates and Projections	9
Educational Attainment.....	14
Civilian Labor Force	16
Labor Force Participation.....	19
Unemployment Insurance Claims.....	20
Covered Employment and Wages.....	22
Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates	31
Occupational Projections	42

This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the recipient and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.

The Federal Government reserves a paid-up, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use for federal purposes: i) the copyright in all products developed under the grant, including a subgrant or contract under the grant or subgrant; and ii) any rights of copyright to which the recipient, subrecipient or a contractor purchases ownership under an award (including but not limited to curricula, training models, technical assistance products, and any related materials). Such uses include, but are not limited to, the right to modify and distribute such products worldwide by any means, electronically or otherwise. Federal funds may not be used to pay any royalty or license fee for use of a copyrighted work, or the cost of acquiring by purchase a copyright in a work, where the Department has a license or rights of free use in such work, although they may be used to pay costs for obtaining a copy which is limited to the developer/seller costs of copying and shipping. If revenues are generated through selling products developed with grant funds, including intellectual property, these revenues are program income. Program income must be used in accordance with the provisions of this grant award and 2 CFR 200.307.

List of Tables

Table 1 - Covered Employment by Major Industry Sector in Kentucky, 2014, 2019, & 2024	24
Table 2 - Comparison of Median Hourly Earnings by Major Occupational Group	32
Table 3 - Largest Occupations in Kentucky by Typical Education Required for Entry, 2025.....	34
Table 4 - Est. Employment and Median Hourly Wage by Occupational Group and LWA, 2025.....	38
Table 5 - Top Five Occupations by Estimated Employment in Each LWA, 2025.....	40
Table 6 - Most Job Openings by Skill Classification.....	46
Table 7 - Job Openings by LWA.....	47

List of Figures

Figure 1 - Kentucky's Local Workforce Areas (LWA).....	2
Figure 2 - Gross Domestic Product in Kentucky (in billions USD)	3
Figure 3 - Over-The-Year Change in Gross Domestic Product.....	3
Figure 4 - Kentucky Quarterly GDP, 2019-2024 (in billions).....	4
Figure 5 - U.S. and Kentucky GDP for Public and Private Sectors, 2014-2024	5
Figure 6 - Share of Kentucky GDP by Industry, 2014 and 2024	7
Figure 7 - Per Capita Personal Income for Kentucky and U.S.	8
Figure 8 - Per Capita Personal Income by LWA, 2023	8
Figure 9 - Change in Population by Decade, Kentucky and the U.S., 1910 - 2020.....	9
Figure 10 - Kentucky Population, 1910-2020.....	9
Figure 11 - Population by LWA, 2014-2024	10
Figure 12 - Kentucky Population by Age Group, 2014 to 2024	11
Figure 13 - Population by Age Group by LWA, 2014 to 2024.....	12
Figure 14 - Population Projections to 2050	13
Figure 15 - Population Projections to 2050 by LWA.....	13
Figure 16 - Educational Attainment Adults Age 25 - 64	14
Figure 17 - Share of Kentucky Adults (25-64) with at least a High School Diploma by LWA	15
Figure 18 - Share of Kentucky Adults (25-64) with at least a Bachelor's Degree by LWA.....	15
Figure 19 - Annual Unemployment Rates, U.S. and KY, 2009-2024 (not seasonally adjusted).....	16
Figure 20 - Monthly Unemployment Rates for KY, 2022-2024 (not seasonally adjusted).....	17
Figure 21 - Kentucky Civilian Labor Force, 2014 to 2024 (not seasonally adjusted).....	17
Figure 22 - Unemployment Rates in Kentucky LWAs, April 2020 (not seasonally adjusted).....	18
Figure 23 - Average Civilian Labor Force and Unemployment Rates in Kentucky LWAs, 2024 (not seasonally adjusted).....	18
Figure 24 - Annual Labor Force Participation Rate (not seasonally adjusted)	19
Figure 25 - Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims in Kentucky, 2014-2024	20
Figure 26 - Share of Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims by Quarter in Kentucky, 2020-2024.....	20
Figure 27 - Initial and Continuing Unemployment Insurance Claims in Kentucky by Month, 2024.....	21
Figure 28 - Initial and Continuing Unemployment Insurance Claims by LWA Relative to Total Kentucky Claims, 2024	21
Figure 29 - Average Annual Covered Employment in Kentucky, 2014-2024	22
Figure 30 - Change in Average Annual Covered Employment from Prior Year, 2014 to 2024	22
Figure 31 - Year Over Year Change in Covered Employment by Quarter, 2023 to 2024	23
Figure 32 - Share of Covered Employment by LWA, 2014, 2019, & 2024.....	25
Figure 33 - Change in Covered Employment by LWA, 2014-2024.....	26
Figure 34 - Share of Covered Employment by Major Industry Groups, 2014 and 2024.....	27
Figure 35 - Average Annual Wages, 2014 to 2024	28

Figure 36 - Average Annual Wages by Industry Sector, 2014, 2019, and 2024.....	29
Figure 37 - Average Annual Wages by LWA, 2014, 2019, and 2024.....	30
Figure 38 - Share of Occupational Employment by Median Hourly Wage in Kentucky, 2025.....	31
Figure 39 - Estimated Employment by Level of Education.....	33
Figure 40 - Median Hourly Wage by Level of Education.....	33
Figure 41 - Median Hourly Wage for All Occupations by LWA, 2025.....	37
Figure 42 - Projected Job Openings in Kentucky by Event Type.....	42
Figure 43 - Total Job Openings by Major Occupational Group, 2022 to 2032	43
Figure 44 - Projected Job Openings by Required Education.....	44
Figure 45 - Change in Employment by Required Education, 2022-2032.....	45
Figure 46 - Projected Job Openings by LWA, 2022 to 2032.....	47
Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032.....	49

The Program Year (PY) 2024 Kentucky Economic Analysis report is produced by the Workforce Intelligence Branch of the Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS) to provide a detailed analysis of the economy and workforce of the Commonwealth and its ten Local Workforce Areas (LWAs). This report is compiled in accordance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 14-23, issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

This analysis provides an in-depth review of Kentucky's labor market conditions and economy, including population, demographics, workforce, and industrial and occupational employment trends and activities. The report also compares the state's economic outcomes relative to the nation as a whole.

The primary focus of this report includes the years 2014 to 2024. Projection estimates for occupations covers the years 2022 to 2032.

To better understand the diversity of Kentucky's economy, this report also provides demographic and economic information on the Commonwealth's ten LWAs, shown in Figure 1 below. The designation of LWAs was mandated in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA).

Like the counties that comprise them, these ten LWAs can vary significantly in terms of unemployment, occupational employment and growth, population, and educational attainment. Generally speaking, the more populous and urban LWAs have higher educational attainment levels, greater employment growth, and lower unemployment rates when compared to the more rural LWAs.

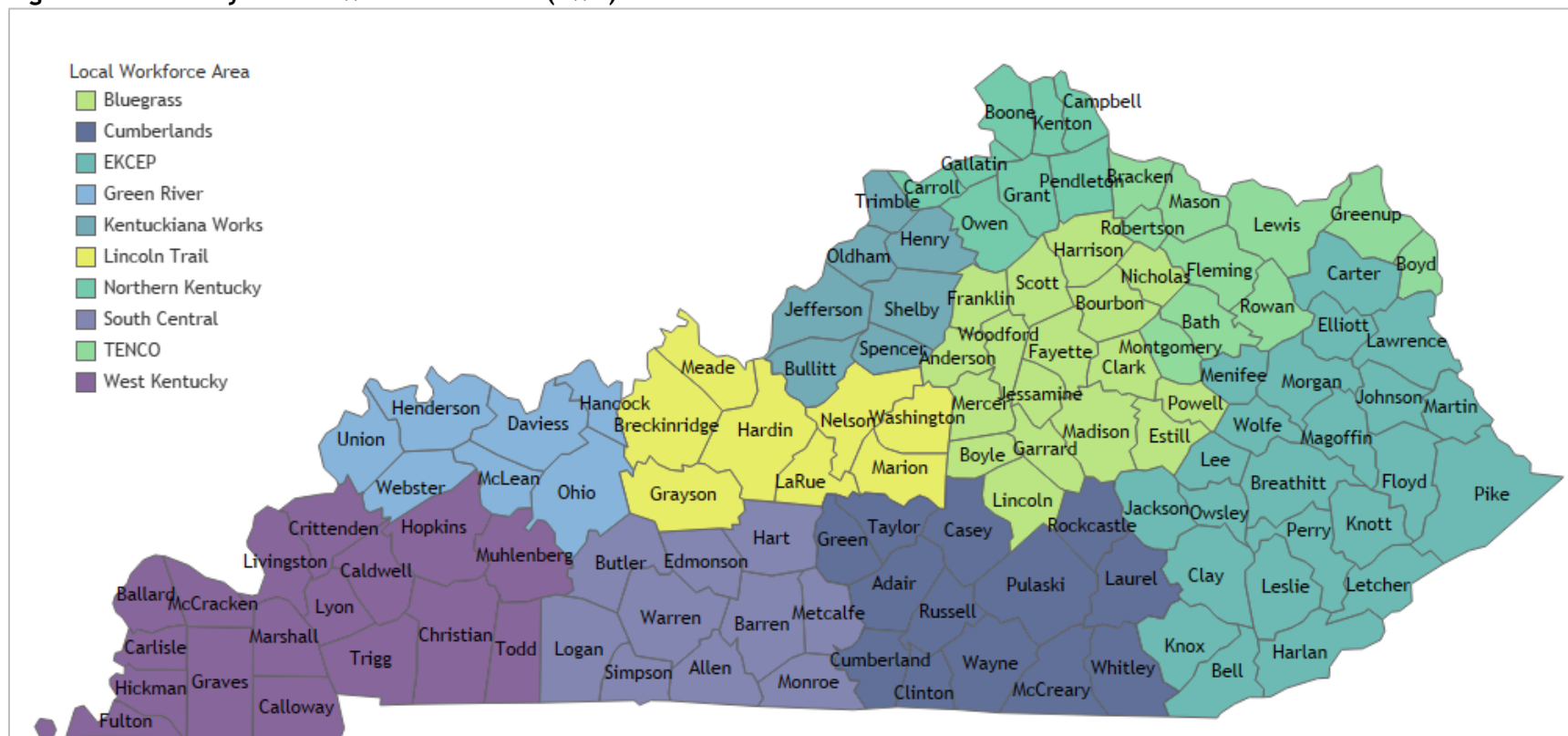
Multiple data sources are used in this report. Measures of the overall economy include Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and personal income, which come from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). Population and population projections are from the Kentucky State Data Center at the University of Louisville. Other demographic information is from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 Census and the American Community Survey (ACS). ACS 5-year estimates (2019-2023) provide information on economic and demographic characteristics at the county level. Data for all 120 counties are aggregated to provide estimates at the LWA level.

Labor force data are from Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) programs. Information on the United States labor force comes from the Current Population Survey (CPS). Additional labor force data for Kentucky and the ten LWAs come from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program administered by the Workforce Intelligence Branch at KYSTATS.

Data from the BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program are used to measure covered industry employment and wage growth over time.

Occupational estimates are available for more than 700 detailed occupations produced by the BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program and KYSTATS.

Figure 1 - Kentucky's Local Workforce Areas (LWA)



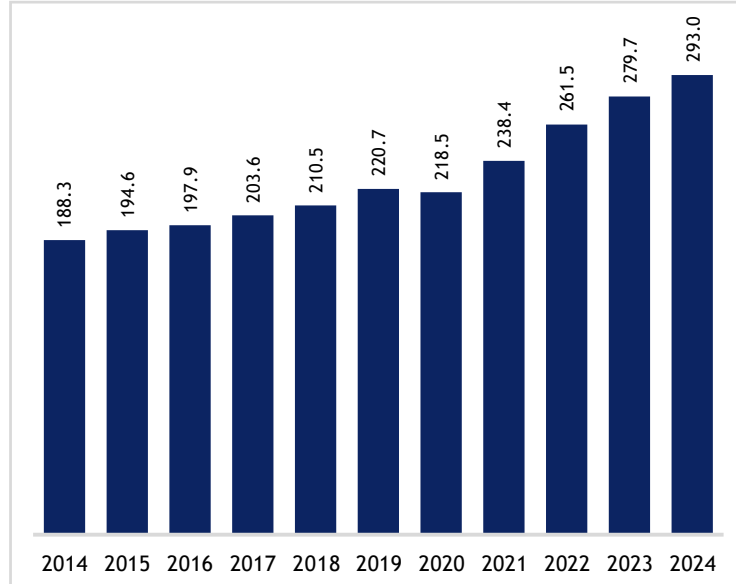
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

GDP, produced by the BEA, measures the value of the goods and services produced in the U.S., states, and Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). GDP estimates are also available by industry.

Kentucky's GDP was \$293.0 billion in 2024, a 4.8 percent increase from 2023.

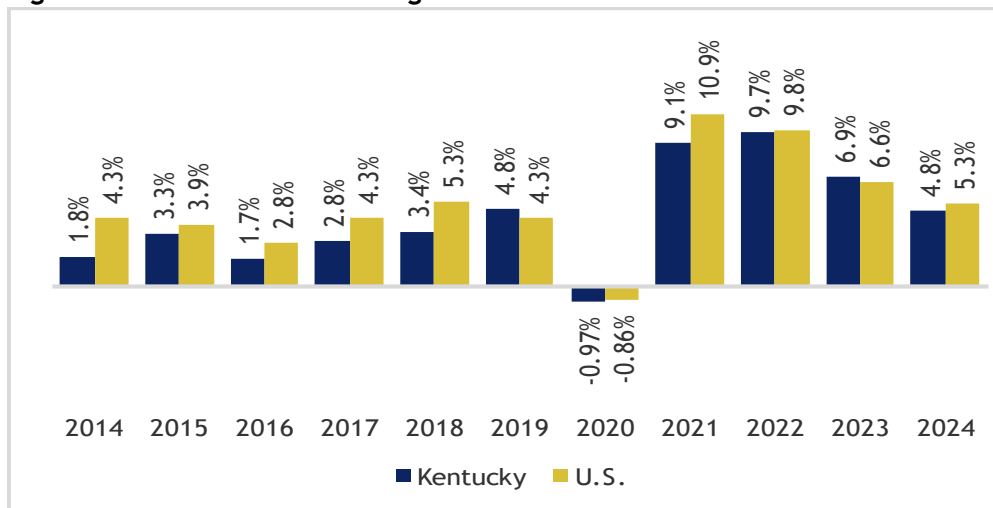
The growth rate of GDP is an indicator of a region's overall economic health. Figure 3 compares the annual change in GDP for the U.S. and Kentucky. From 2014 to 2019 (prior to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic), Kentucky's GDP grew at a slower compound annual rate than the U.S.: 3.2% vs. 4.1%. In 2020, the GDP of Kentucky fell 0.97 percent from 2019, a slightly greater decrease than the U.S. drop of 0.86 percent. From 2021 through 2024, Kentucky's GDP grew at a compound annual rate more than twice that of the pre-COVID years (7.1%), and just slightly less than the U.S. post-COVID-19 GDP compound annual growth rate of 7.2%.

Figure 2 - Gross Domestic Product in Kentucky (in billions USD)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by State," (accessed June 2025)

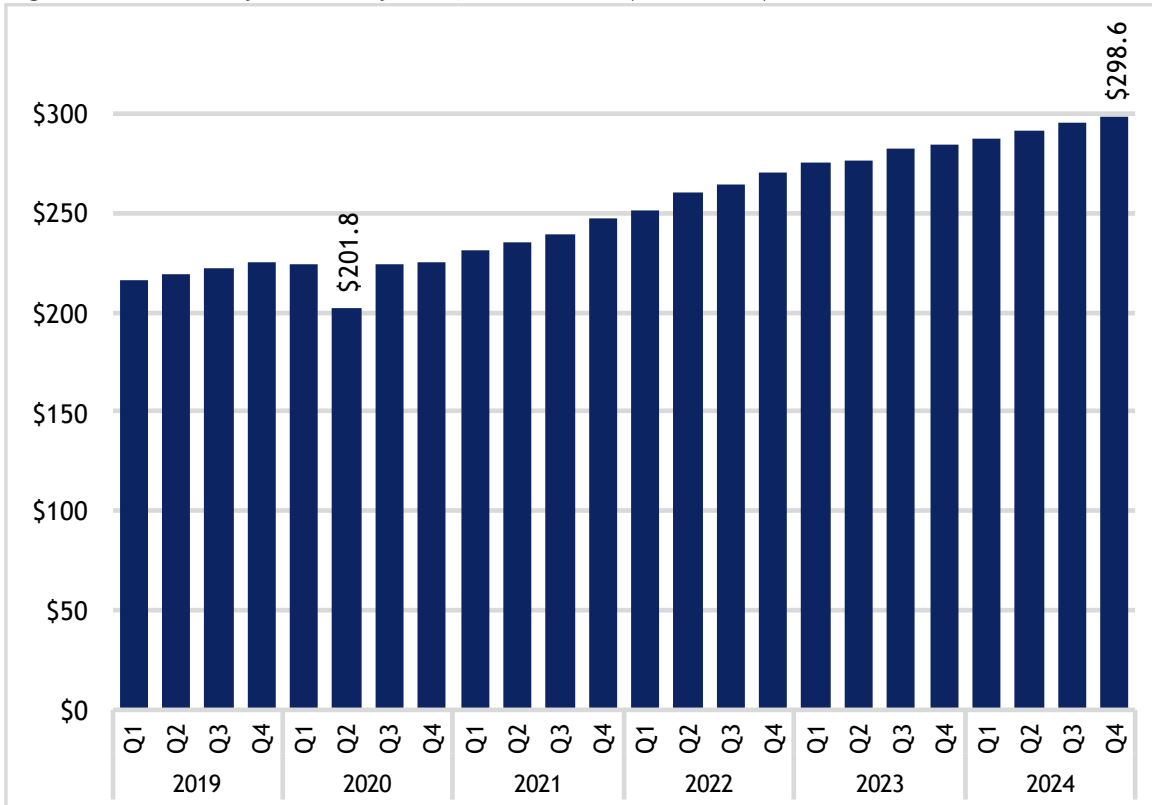
Figure 3 - Over-The-Year Change in Gross Domestic Product



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by State," (accessed June 2025)

Kentucky GDP dropped sharply in the second quarter of 2020 as businesses closed in response to the coronavirus; GDP fell below 2019 levels but rose just as sharply in the third quarter. By the first quarter of 2021, GDP exceeded pre-COVID levels and has continued to rise to \$298.6 billion in the fourth quarter of 2024.

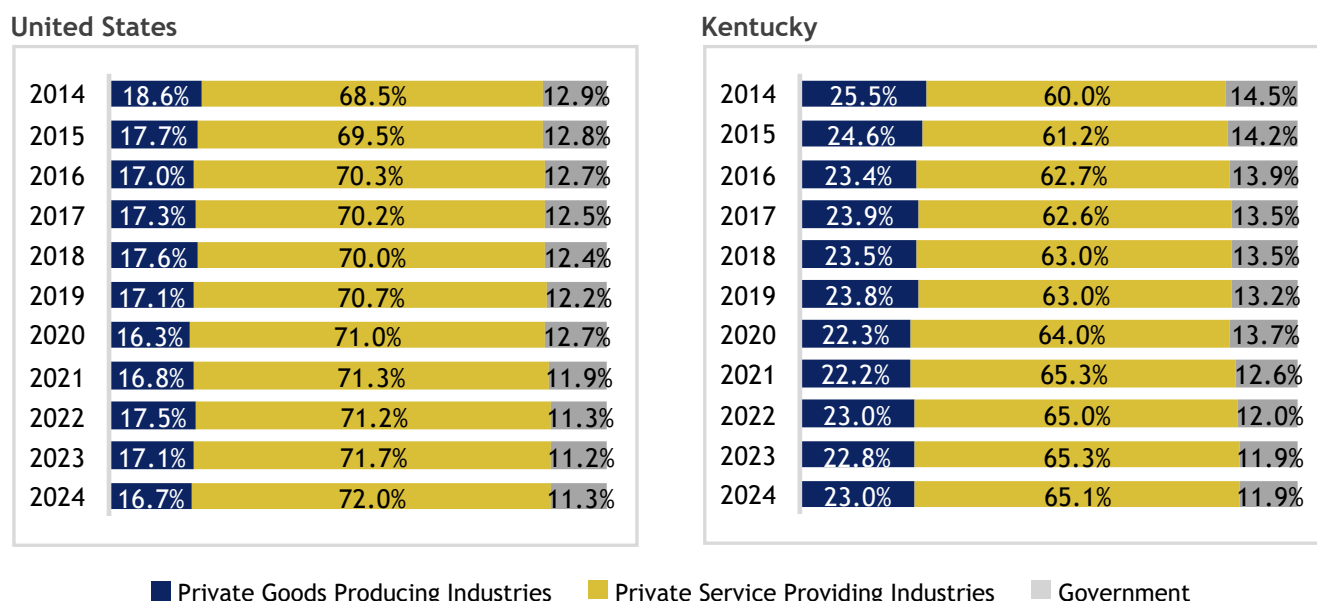
Figure 4 - Kentucky Quarterly GDP, 2019-2024 (in billions)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Quarterly Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by State," (accessed June 2025)

GDP is classified into three major categories: Private Goods Producing, Private Service Providing, and Government. Compared to the U.S., a larger percentage of Kentucky's economy is made up of Private Goods Producing industries and Government, while Private Service Providing industries comprise a smaller percentage of total GDP. Further examination of the data at this level shows the shift between Goods Producing sectors and Service Providing sectors. As shown in Figure 5, 68.5 percent of U.S. GDP in 2014 was from Private Service Providing industries. This increased to 72.0 percent in 2024. In Kentucky, 65.1 percent of the state's GDP was attributed to Private Service Providing industries in 2024, an increase of 5.1 percentage points from the 60.0 percent recorded in 2014, but still below the U.S. percentage (72.0%).

Figure 5 - U.S. and Kentucky GDP for Public and Private Sectors, 2014-2024



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by State," (accessed June 2025). Yearly percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

As mentioned above, Kentucky's economy relies more heavily on Private Goods producing industries than the U.S. economy. In 2024, nearly one-quarter of the state's GDP was attributed to Private Goods Producing industries, 23.0 percent, which was down from a peak of 25.5 percent (2014) in the years between 2014 and 2024. The U.S. share declined from 18.6 percent to 16.7 percent between 2014 and 2024, and the gap between the U.S. and Kentucky narrowed. The difference of the share in the Private Goods Producing industries between the U.S and KY was 6.9 percentage points in 2014 and 6.3 percentage points in 2024.

Government as a share of GDP was also higher in Kentucky than in the U.S., 11.9 percent in 2024 compared to 11.3 percent in the U.S. This share declined for both the U.S. and Kentucky, but Kentucky experienced a larger drop, 2.6 percentage points, since 2014.

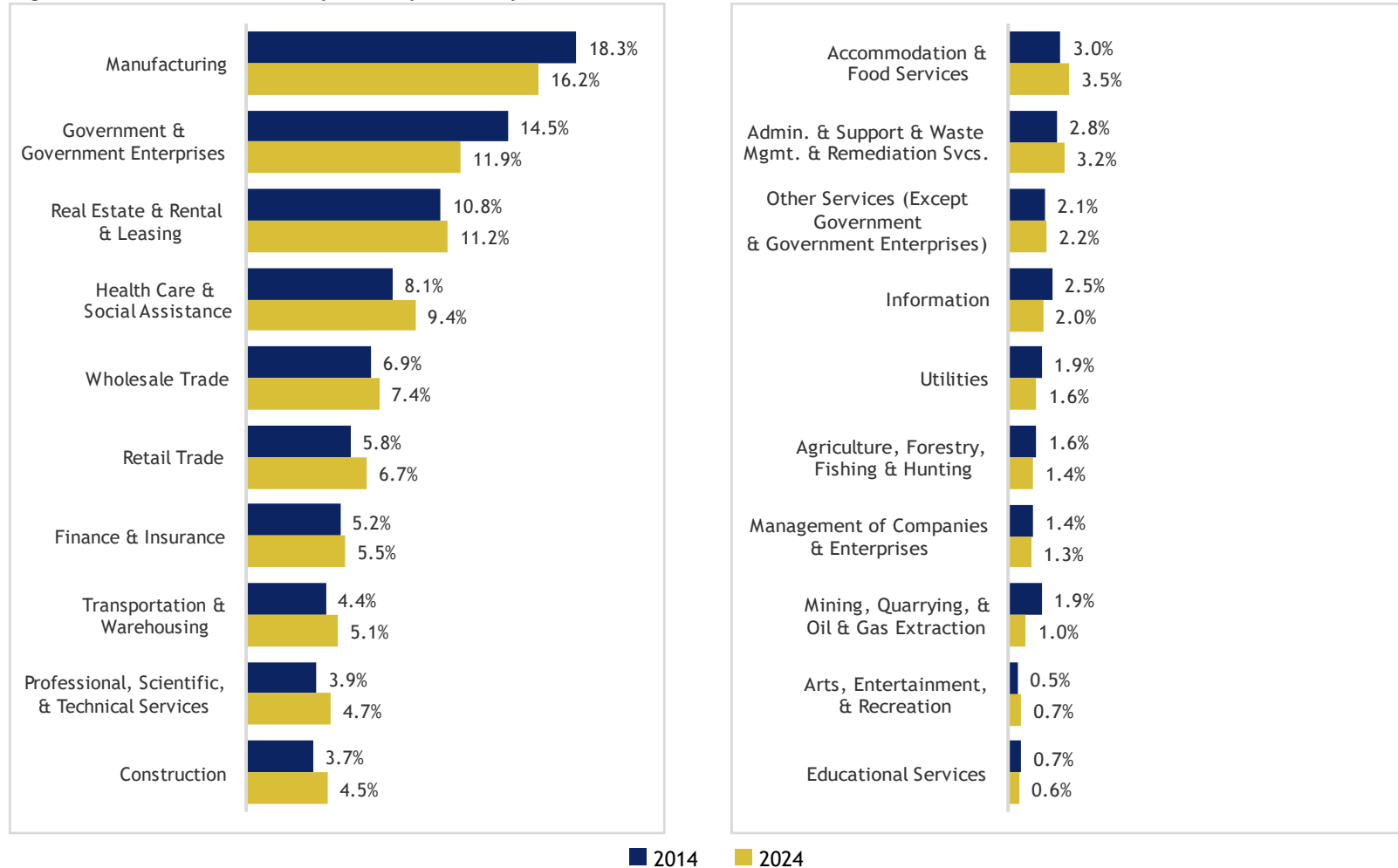
Figure 6 examines the contribution individual economic sectors made towards the state GDP in 2014 and 2024. In 2014, four sectors made up just over half of the state's GDP; Manufacturing, Government, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, and Health Care and Social Assistance together accounted for 51.7% of Kentucky GDP. By 2024, the combined share of GDP for these four sectors had fallen to 48.7%. During this period, the largest gains in GDP on a percentage basis were found in the Health Care & Social Assistance (1.3%), Retail Trade (0.9%), Professional, Scientific,

& Technical Services (0.8%), and Construction (0.8%) sectors.

Manufacturing was the largest contributor to state GDP in both 2014 and 2024, decreasing from 18.3 percent to 16.2 percent of total GDP over that period. The second largest contributor to Kentucky GDP was Government, which also made up a declining share of state GDP as discussed above. Nationally, manufacturing decreased its contribution to GDP from 11.4 percent to 10.0 percent over this same period.

In addition to Manufacturing and Government, several other sectors experienced a declining share of GDP since 2014, but the Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction sector was the only sector in which GDP decreased over that period. In 2014, this sector contributed \$3.51 billion to state GDP, 1.9 percent of total GDP. In 2024, this dropped to \$2.83 billion, 1.0 percent of state GDP.

Figure 6 - Share of Kentucky GDP by Industry, 2014 and 2024



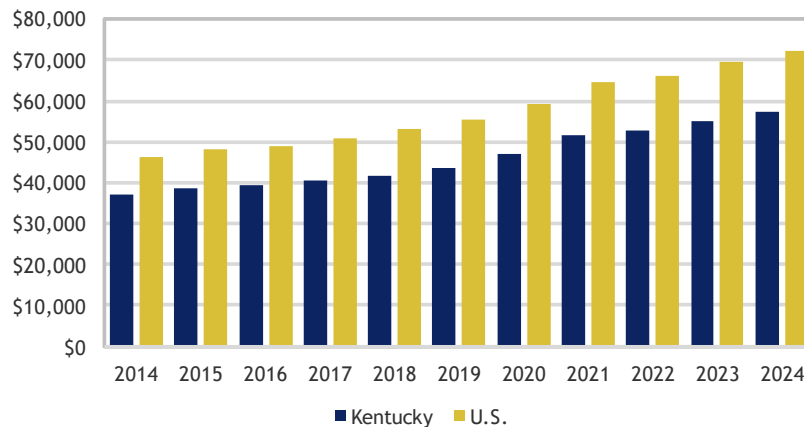
Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by State," (accessed June 2025). Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Personal Income

While GDP is a measure of the economic health of the state, a metric that measures the economic well-being of its residents is personal income. Personal income includes wages, employer-provided supplements such as insurance, proprietors' income, dividends, interest, rents, and government benefits. Personal income does not include capital gains or losses from investments. Per capita personal income allows for comparison across states or with the U.S.

Kentucky residents received \$264 billion in personal income in 2024, an increase of 5.3 percent from 2023, slightly lower than the national increase of 5.4 percent. Personal income has grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.8 percent per year in Kentucky since 2014 compared to U.S. growth of 5.2 percent over the same period.

Figure 7 - Per Capita Personal Income for Kentucky and U.S.



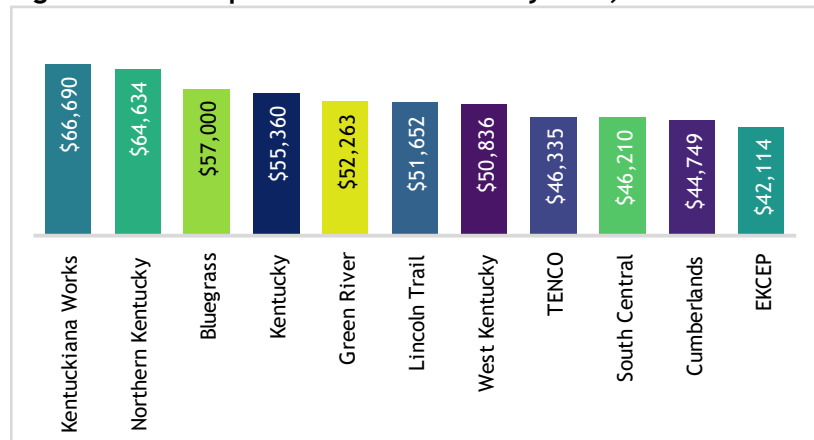
A comparison of per capita income in the U.S. and Kentucky is shown in Figure 7. In 2024, Kentucky's per capita income reached \$57,526. For the U.S., per capita income was \$72,425. For most of the last decade, the gap has widened. In

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Personal Income Summary," (accessed June 2025)

2024, Kentucky's per capita personal income was 79.4 percent of the U.S. average, down from 80.4 percent in 2014. While per capita income is growing in Kentucky at a compound annual rate of 4.4 percent, it remains lower than the U.S. average and is growing at a slower rate (U.S. CAGR of 4.6 percent).

Personal income, population, and per capita personal income data are available at the county level through 2023. As shown in Figure 8, when these 2023 estimates are aggregated by LWA, Kentuckiana Works, Northern Kentucky, and Bluegrass LWAs had higher per capita personal income than the state overall.

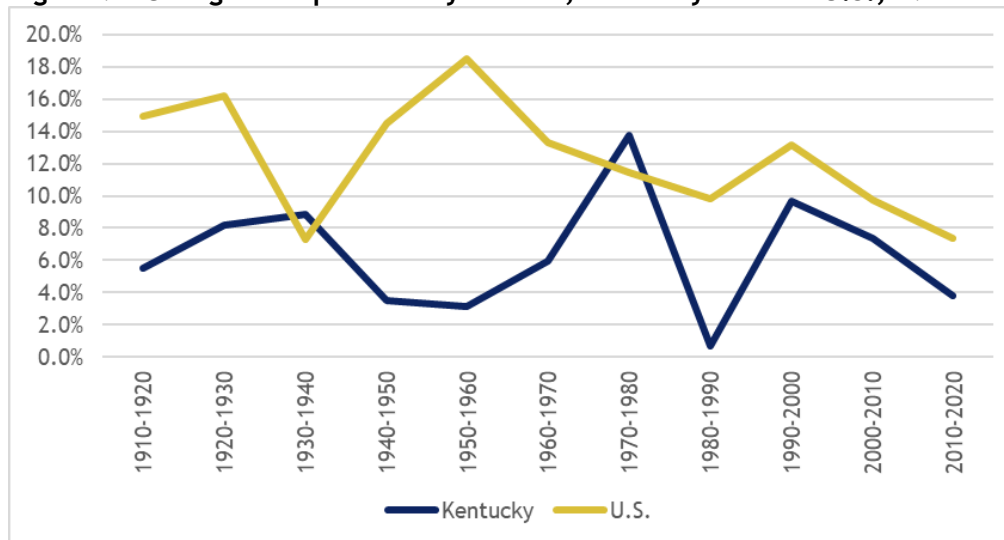
Figure 8 - Per Capita Personal Income by LWA, 2023



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Personal Income Summary," (accessed June 2025)

In 2020, Kentucky's population surpassed 4.5 million residents. However, population growth in the Commonwealth has lagged national rates for decades. Between 1910 and 2020, Kentucky's population growth rate exceeded the national average twice, first between 1930 to 1940 and most recently between 1970 and 1980. In 2020, Kentucky's population increased 3.8 percent since 2010, about half of the national rate (7.4%).

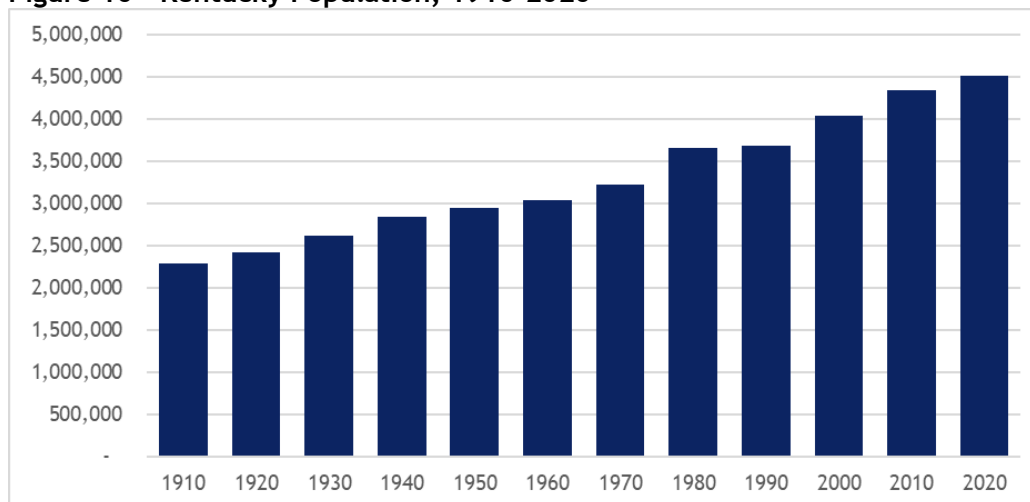
Figure 9 - Change in Population by Decade, Kentucky and the U.S., 1910 - 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Historical Population Change Data (1910-2020)," (accessed June 2025)

Between 1970 and 1980, the state added 442,071 residents, the most growth in any decade between 1910 and 2020. The next largest growth occurred between 1990 and 2000 with 356,473 additional residents. Between 2010 and 2020, Kentucky's population grew by an additional 166,469 residents, the smallest population increase since the ten-year period from 1980 to 1990.

Figure 10 - Kentucky Population, 1910-2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Historical Population Change Data (1910-2020)," (accessed June 2025)

Two of the 10 LWAs in Kentucky lost population between 2014 and 2024 with the largest decrease occurring in EKCEP with 37,156 fewer residents. West Kentucky also lost population over this time frame. The largest population increase occurred in the Bluegrass LWA with 63,187 additional residents. More than half of Kentucky's population is concentrated in three LWAs: Kentuckiana Works (22.8 percent), Bluegrass (18.8 percent), and Northern Kentucky (10.6 percent).

Figure 11 - Population by LWA, 2014-2024



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "County Population by Characteristics:" 2010-2020 and 2020-2024, (accessed June 2025)

Counties with the largest absolute growth were:

- Jefferson (+ 31,843 residents)
- Boone (+ 17,383 residents)
- Warren (+ 26,456 residents)
- Madison (+ 12,457 residents)
- Fayette (+ 17,445 residents)

The five counties with the largest absolute decreases were:

- Pike County (- 7,540 residents)
- Letcher County (- 3,213 residents)
- Bell County (- 4,779 residents)
- Harlan County (- 2,966 residents)
- Floyd County (- 3,480 residents)

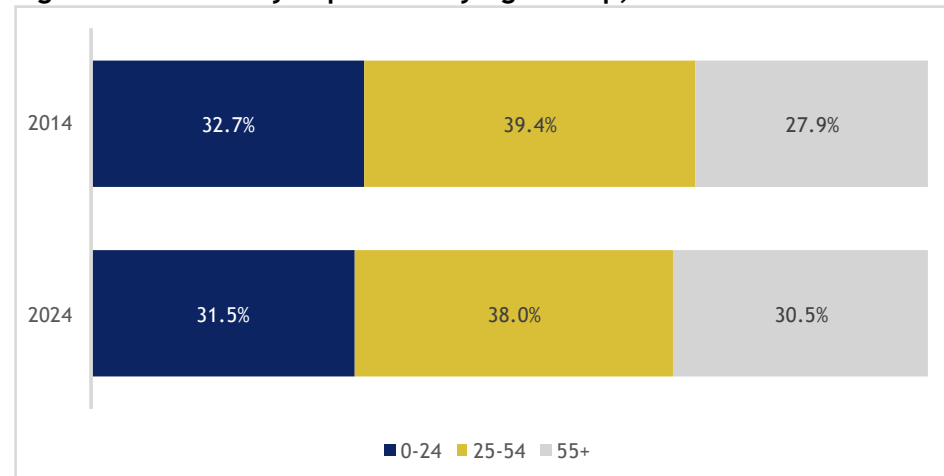
Age

Kentucky's population is slightly older than the nation as a whole. In 2024, the median age of the Kentucky population was 39.2 while the U.S. median age was 39.1.

A closer look at population by age group shows that the share of the Kentucky population that is

between the ages of 25 and 54 (gold bars in Figure 12), considered prime age workers, has declined. In 2014, 39.4 percent of Kentucky's population was between the ages of 25 and 54. This fell to 38.0 percent by 2024. The share of Kentucky's population over the age of 54 increased over this same period, up to 30.5 percent in 2024 from 27.9 percent in 2014, an additional 169,334 residents. The share of young people, those under the age of 25, decreased slightly since 2014. In 2024, there were 1,443,912 residents under the age of 25, compared to 1,446,116 people under 25 in 2014, a decrease of 0.2%.

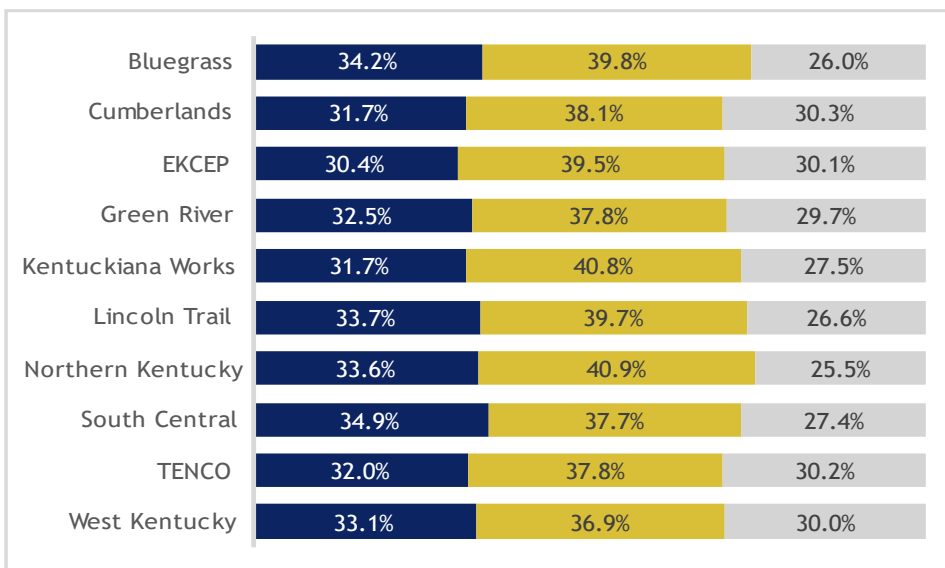
Figure 12 - Kentucky Population by Age Group, 2014 to 2024



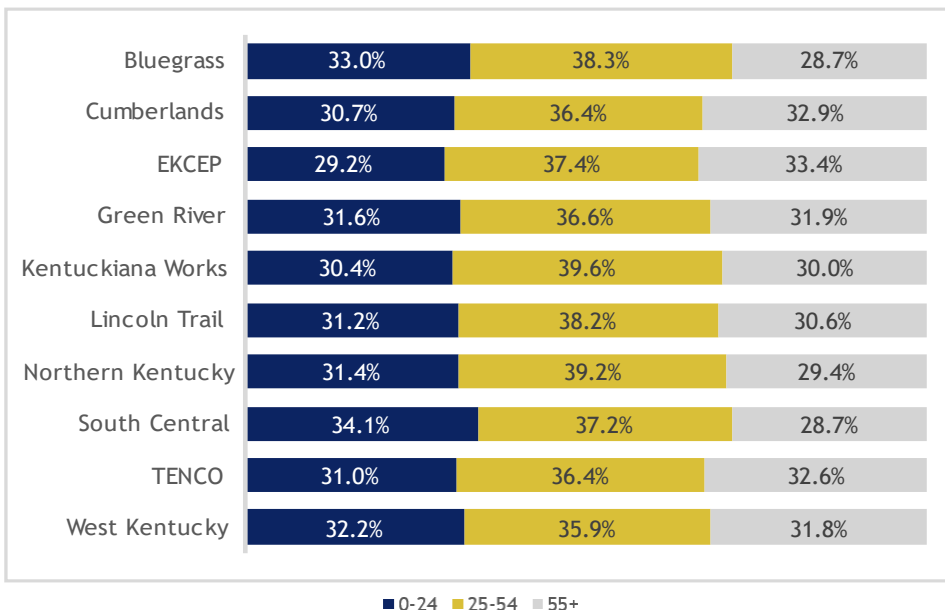
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "County Population by Characteristics:" 2010-2020 and 2020-2024 (accessed June 2025)

Figure 13 - Population by Age Group by LWA, 2014 to 2024

2014



2024



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "County Population by Characteristics:" 2010-2020 and 2020-2024 (accessed June 2025) Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

LWA experienced the largest decline in share for this population group, down 2.1 percentage points between 2014 and 2024.

There were four LWAs where the share of their population between the ages of 25 and 54 exceeded the state share of 38.0 percent in 2024 - Kentuckiana Works (39.6 percent), Northern Kentucky (39.2 percent), Bluegrass (38.3 percent), and Lincoln Trail (38.2 percent).

In all the LWAs, the share of the population over the age of 54 grew between 2014 and 2024. Growth in this group was highest in the Lincoln Trail and Northern Kentucky LWAs. In 2014, 26.6 percent of the Lincoln Trail LWA population was over the age of 54. This increased 4.0 percentage points to 30.6 percent in 2024. Northern Kentucky experienced a 3.9 percentage point increase, up to 29.4 percent in 2024 from 25.5 percent in 2014. The LWA with the highest share of its population over the age of 54 in 2024 was EKCEP at 33.4 percent.

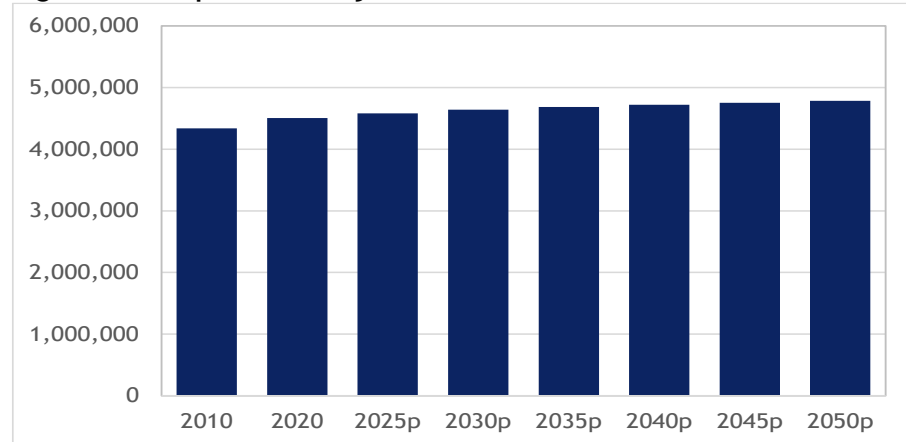
The prime working-age population share was 38.0 percent in the state in 2024, down from 39.4 percent in 2014. The EKCEP

South Central LWA had the largest share of residents younger than 25 in 2024, 34.1 percent, as compared to 31.5 percent for the state.

Population Projections

According to the Kentucky State Data Center, the state population is projected to reach nearly 4.8 million residents by 2050. As shown in Figure 14, this is an increase of more than 279,000 residents between 2020 and 2050, a CAGR of 0.2 percent per year.

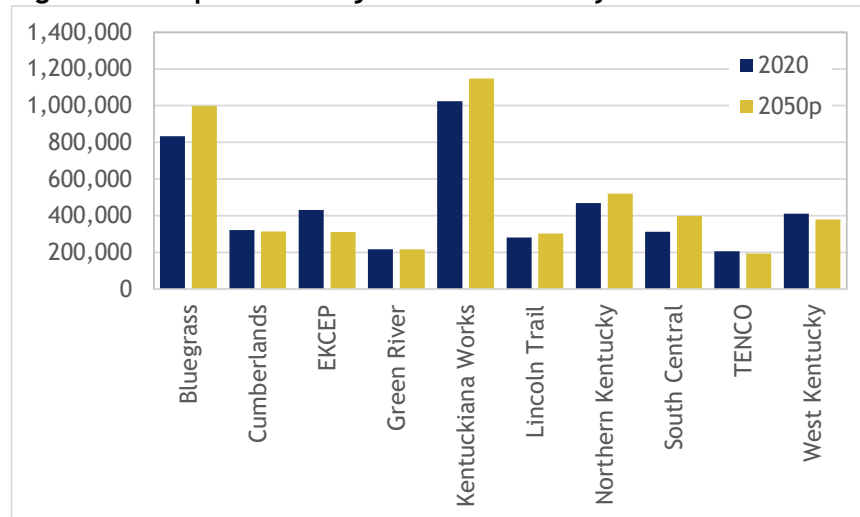
Figure 14 - Population Projections to 2050



p = projection

Source: Kentucky State Data Center, "Population Projections by Sex and Five-Year Age Group," (accessed August 2022)

Figure 15 - Population Projections to 2050 by LWA



p = projection

Source: Kentucky State Data Center, "Population Projections by Sex and Five-Year Age Group," (accessed August 2022)

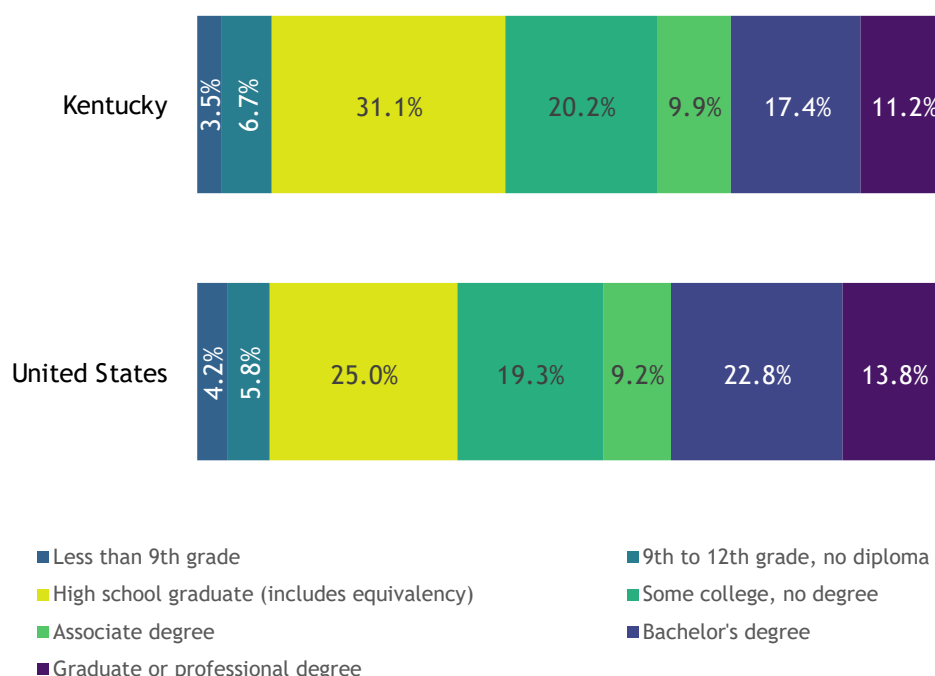
Kentuckiana Works LWA, and 0.8 percent per year growth in South Central LWA. Four LWAs are projected to experience population declines between 2020 and 2050: Cumberland (-0.1 percent per year), EKCEP (-1.1 percent per year), TENCO (-0.2 percent per year) and West Kentucky (-0.3 percent per year).

Similar to recent trends, the majority of the population growth through 2050 is projected to occur within the two largest LWAs: Bluegrass and Kentuckiana Works. The South Central LWA is also expected to experience strong growth, surpassing growth in the Northern Kentucky LWA. Population growth will outpace the state CAGR (0.2 percent) in these areas with 0.6 percent annual growth in the Bluegrass LWA, 0.4 percent growth in

The educational attainment of the adult working-age population (those between the ages of 25 and 64) is often used as an indicator of the skills of the workforce. For example, the share of the population with at least a bachelor's degree shows the potential supply of workers for occupations requiring those credentials for entry.

When comparing the educational attainment of Kentucky residents in this age range, the largest group is comprised of those who have attained a high school diploma or equivalent (31.1 percent), with the second largest group being those who have attended some college but did not earn a degree (20.2 percent). A little over one-quarter of Kentucky adults (28.6 percent) have at least a bachelor's degree compared to 36.5 percent in the U.S. The share of adults that have not completed high school was 10.2 percent in Kentucky compared to 10.0 percent in the U.S.

Figure 16 - Educational Attainment Adults Age 25 - 64



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 Five-Year Estimates, "Educational Attainment," (accessed June 2025). Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Figure 17 - Share of Kentucky Adults (25-64) with at least a High School Diploma by LWA

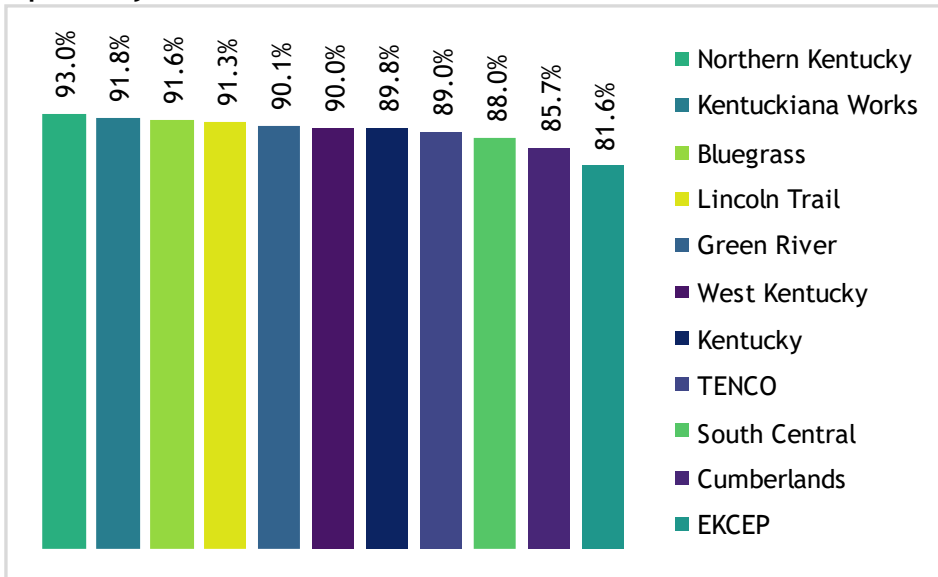
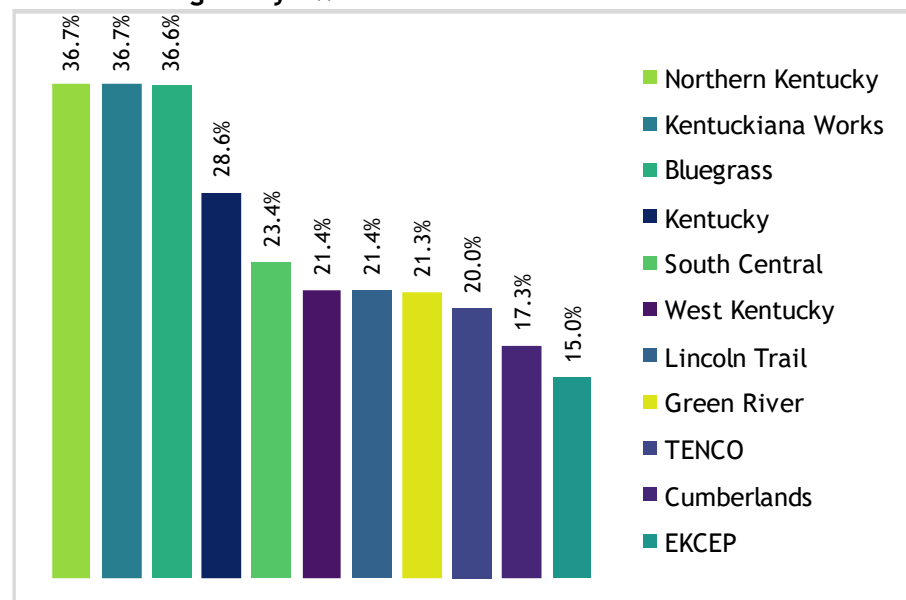


Figure 17 shows the percentage of Kentucky adults age 25 to 64 with at least a high school degree by LWA. Six LWAs have a larger share than the state value of 89.8 percent.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 Five-Year Estimates, "Educational Attainment," (accessed June 2025)

There are three LWAs with a higher share of the adult population with at least a bachelor's degree than the state value of 28.6 percent: Northern Kentucky (36.7%), Kentuckiana Works (36.7%), and Bluegrass (36.6%). The remaining seven LWAs have lower percentages of bachelor's degree completers, the lowest being EKCEP with 15.0 percent of the adult population age 25 to 64 with at least a bachelor's degree.

Figure 18 - Share of Kentucky Adults (25-64) with at least a Bachelor's Degree by LWA



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019-2023 Five-Year Estimates, "Educational Attainment," (accessed June 2025)

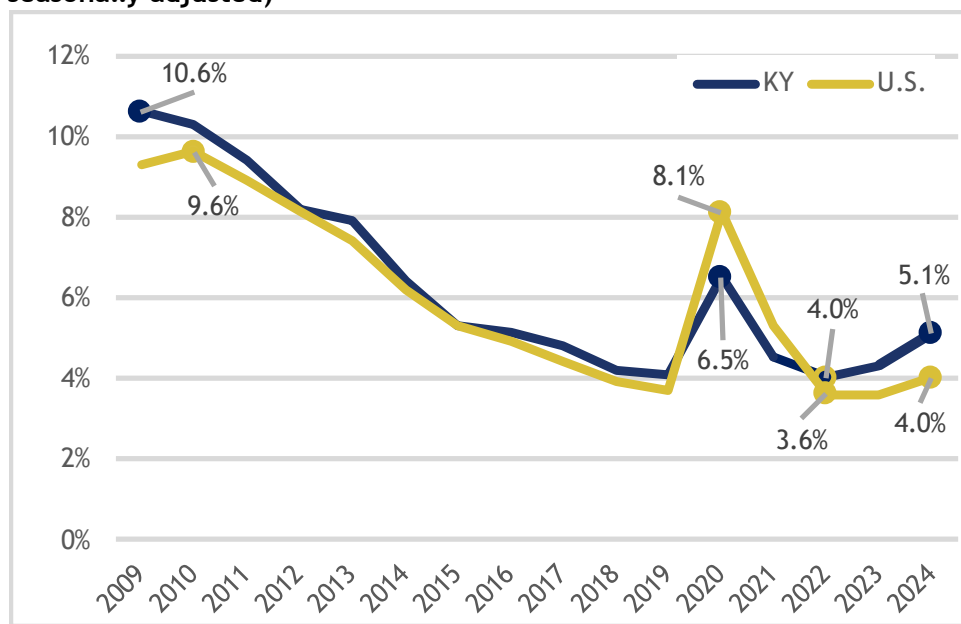
Civilian Labor Force

LAUS defines the civilian labor force as the civilian non-institutional population over the age of 16 that is either working or actively looking for work. Retirees and students without jobs, for example, are not included. The civilian non-institutional population includes those residing in the 50 states and the District of Columbia who do not live in institutions (for example, correctional facilities, long-term care hospitals, or nursing homes) and who are not on active duty in the Armed Forces. Persons are classified as unemployed if they do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the prior four weeks, and are currently available to work. Persons who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off need not have been looking for work to be classified as unemployed.

The LAUS program produces monthly and annual estimates of the civilian labor force, employment, unemployment, and unemployment rate for the state and substate areas. The unemployment rate is calculated as the unemployed percent of the civilian labor force. Employment estimates include agricultural workers, self-employed persons, unpaid family workers, private household workers, and those temporarily absent from work for reasons such as illness, vacation, or labor management disputes. National unemployment rates are from the Current Population Survey program, which is conducted by the Bureau of Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

During the 2008 recession, Kentucky's unemployment rate peaked in 2009 at 10.6 percent. The U.S. rate peaked at 9.6 percent in 2010, 0.7 percentage points lower than Kentucky's 2010 rate. From 2011 to 2019, rates fell steadily in both Kentucky and the U.S., and Kentucky's rate was at or above the U.S. rate each year. However, during the 2020 economic downturn, rates increased sharply to 8.1% in the U.S. and 6.5% in Kentucky. Rates decreased almost as sharply in 2021, then again in 2022 when the lowest unemployment rate for both Kentucky and the U.S. over this entire period was reached. Since 2022, rates in both areas have reversed their downward trend; in 2024, unemployment rates have risen to 5.1% in Kentucky and 4.0% in the U.S.

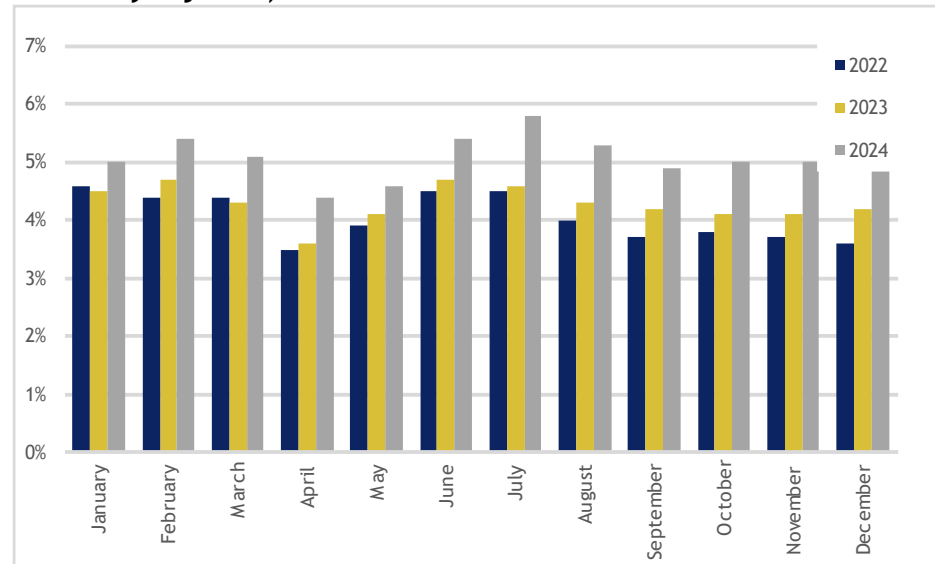
Figure 19 - Annual Unemployment Rates, U.S. and KY, 2009-2024 (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Report, (accessed June 2025)

Looking at annual averages masks the variability in monthly unemployment rates over the course of the year. Figure 20 presents an examination of monthly rates from 2022 through 2024. Yearly lows are found in April of each year, while highs are found in January, February, and July. However, consistent with the annual increases in rates experienced over this period, monthly

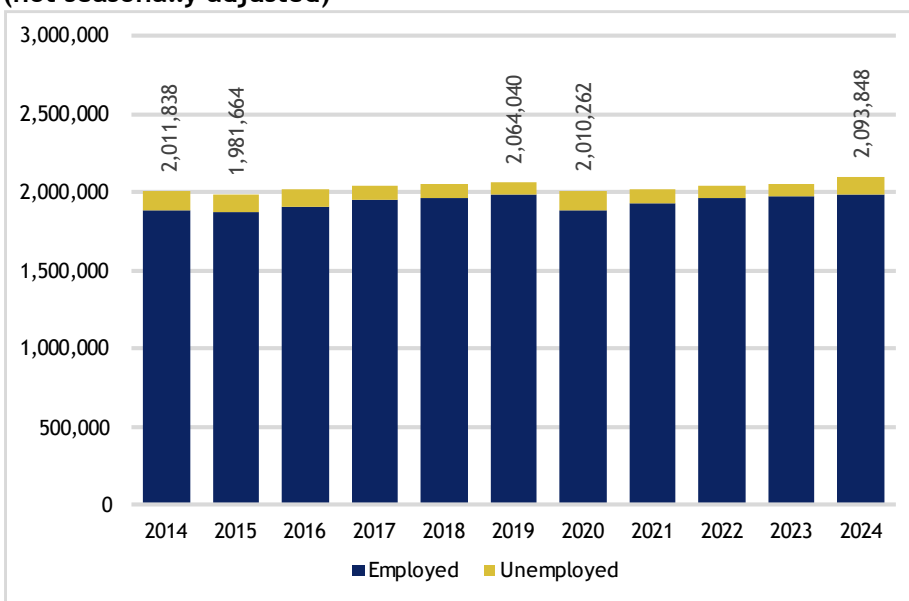
Figure 20 - Monthly Unemployment Rates for KY, 2022-2024 (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Report, (accessed June 2025)

unemployment rates in each month in 2023 and 2024 are higher than those of the corresponding month from the previous year with only two exceptions: January and March of 2023.

Figure 21 - Kentucky Civilian Labor Force, 2014 to 2024 (not seasonally adjusted)

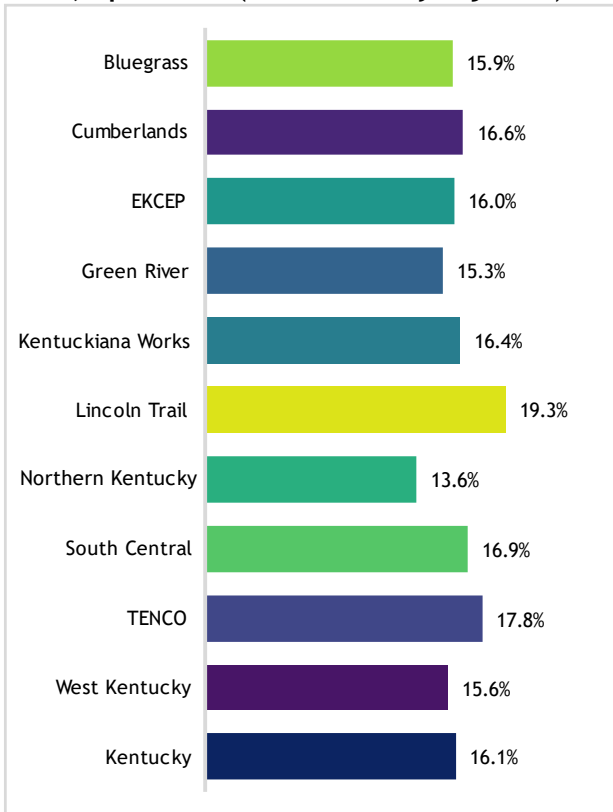


Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Report, (accessed June 2025)

The civilian labor force (CLF) includes the employed and the unemployed. Between 2014 and 2019, the labor force increased every year except 2015, gaining over 52,000 people. However, the impacts of COVID-19 in 2020 reduced the workforce by almost 54,000 to 2,010,262. In the time since, the civilian labor

force has increased each year, exceeding pre-COVID levels by 2024, when Kentucky's CLF was nearly 30,000 higher than in 2019.

Figure 22 - Unemployment Rates in Kentucky LWAs, April 2020 (not seasonally adjusted)



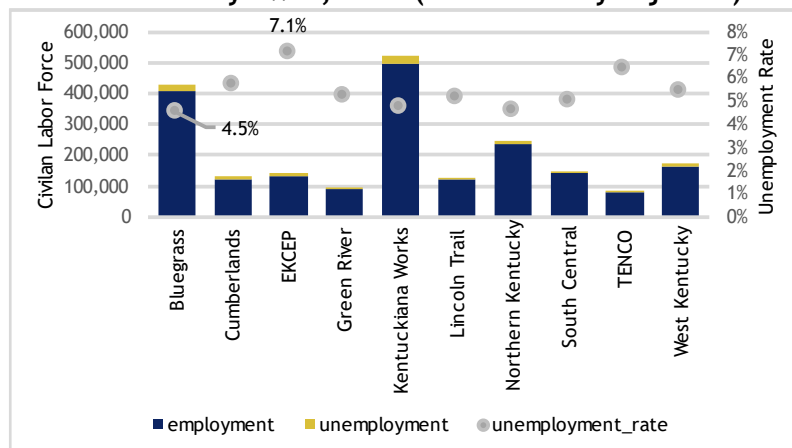
Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Report, (accessed July 2025)

The impact of the pandemic, as measured by peak monthly unemployment rates in 2020, was not uniform across the state. The three LWAs with the largest civilian labor force - Bluegrass, Kentuckiana Works, and Northern Kentucky - made up 56.5 percent of employment in Kentucky in April 2020, but had a disproportionately smaller share of the unemployed, 54.9 percent, indicating that unemployment hit the smaller LWAs harder.

Lincoln Trail had the highest unemployment rate in April 2020 at 19.3 percent, 3.2 percentage points higher than the state. Northern Kentucky's unemployment rate was 2.5 percentage points lower than the state average of 16.1 percent.

The scale of recovery also varied by region. As shown in Figure 23, the average annual unemployment rate in 2024 ranged from a low of 4.5 percent in the Bluegrass LWA (a 11.4 percentage point difference from April 2020) to a high of 7.1 percent in the EKCEP LWA (an 8.9 percentage point difference from April 2020).

Figure 23 - Average Civilian Labor Force and Unemployment Rates in Kentucky LWAs, 2024 (not seasonally adjusted)



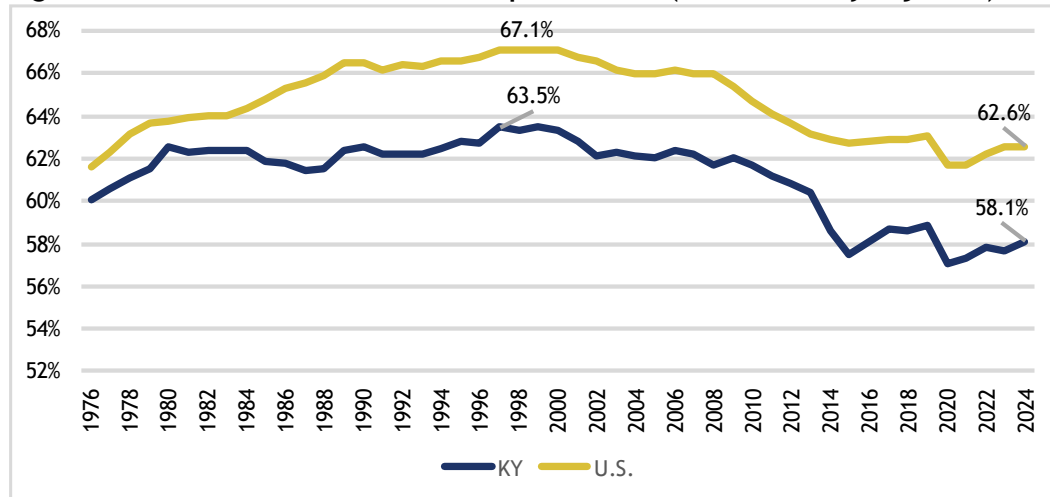
Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Report, (accessed July 2025)

Labor Force Participation

The Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is a key measure of the labor market - providing information on the share of the overall population in the labor force. The LFPR is the civilian labor force (employed plus unemployed) as a percent of the civilian non-institutional population.

The annual U.S. LFPR peaked from 1997 to 2000 at 67.1 percent, (not seasonally adjusted). By 2020, the U.S. rate had dropped to 61.7 percent. In Kentucky, the not seasonally adjusted LFPR peaked in 1997, and again in 1999, at 63.5 percent. Similar to U.S. trends, the LFPR in Kentucky decreased over the next two decades, dropping to its lowest point of 57.1 percent in 2020. As of 2024, at 58.1%, Kentucky's LFPR has not returned to 2019's pre-COVID-19 level of 58.9%.

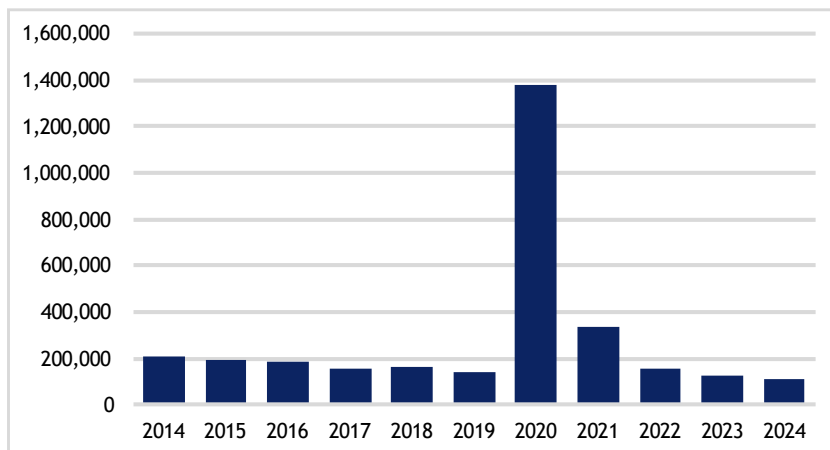
Figure 24 - Annual Labor Force Participation Rate (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Report, "Labor Force Participation Rate," (accessed June 2025)

Although Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims are not a representation of total unemployment, they are another way to assess the labor market. Initial claims can be an indicator of emerging unemployment, whereas continued claims indicate the level of difficulty the unemployed encounter finding a new job.

Figure 25 - Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims in Kentucky, 2014-2024



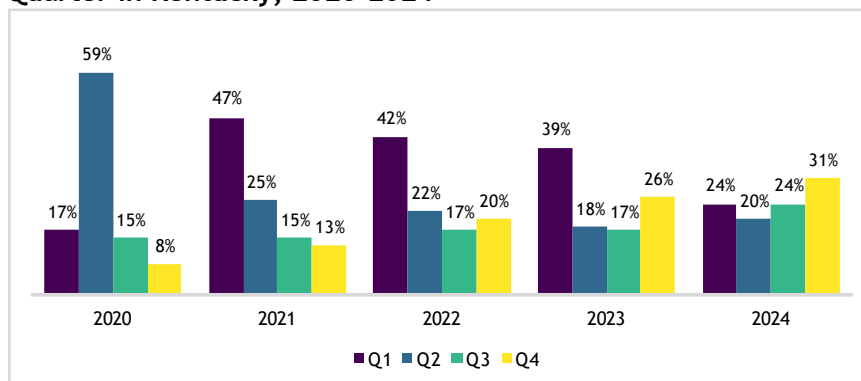
Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, "ETA 5159, Claims and Payment Activities" (accessed June 2025)

As shown in Figure 25, the number of initial UI claims filed in 2020 reached nearly 1.4 million. UI initial claims fell by more than a million in 2021 to 338,002, then in 2023 initial claims returned to pre-COVID levels at 125,598. It should be noted that in 2020, there was a

change in UI eligibility adopted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Unemployment benefits were expanded to include individuals typically not covered by UI including the self-employed, independent contractors, freelance workers, substitute teachers, and childcare workers employed by religious affiliated organizations and non-profits. In addition, workers that left employment due to risk of exposure or the need to care for a family member affected by COVID-19 were also eligible.

During 2020, the largest share of initial claims in Kentucky was filed in the second quarter (April through June) at 59 percent. By contrast, in 2024, the largest share of initial claims was

Figure 26 - Share of Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims by Quarter in Kentucky, 2020-2024

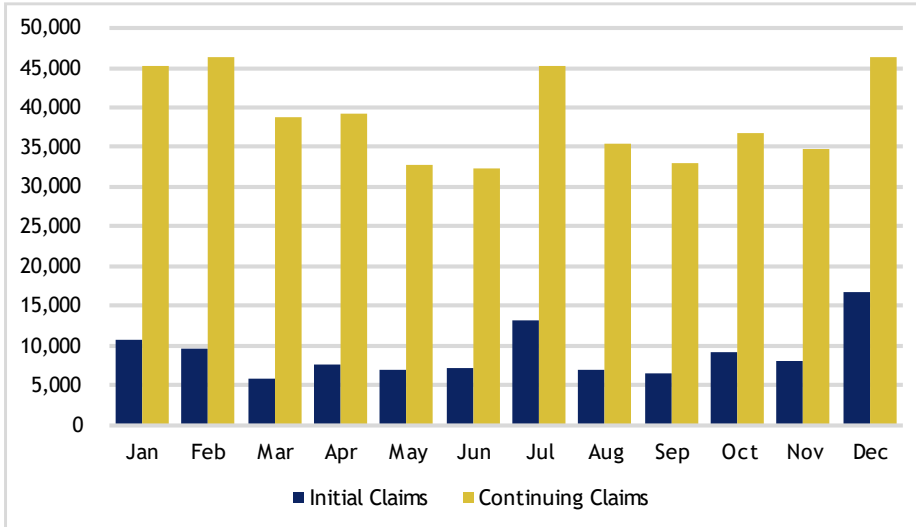


Source: U.S. Department of Labor, "ETA 5159, Claims and Payment Activities" (accessed June 2025). Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

filed in the fourth quarter (October through December); in each of the previous four years, the largest share of initial claims was filed in the first or second quarter. The percentage of claims filed in the fourth quarter of 2024 was significantly larger than in any other quarter that year and 23 percentage points higher than the share of initial claims in the fourth quarter of 2020. This trend was similar, though much more pronounced in Kentucky than in the U.S. after 2020; U.S. initial claims in 2022 through

2024 returned to pre-COVID-19 levels, and the initial claim shares were more similar across all four quarters.

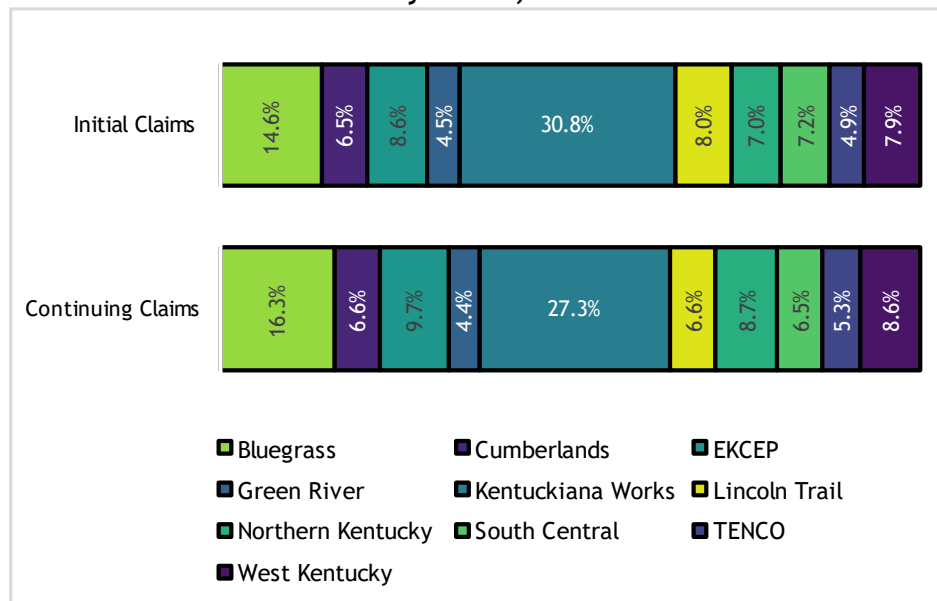
Figure 27 - Initial and Continuing Unemployment Insurance Claims in Kentucky by Month, 2024



In December 2024, initial unemployment insurance claims in Kentucky peaked with 16,666 claims. Continuing claims peaked in February at 46,434 claims. Continuing claims ebbed and flowed during 2024, staying between 32,379 and 46,434 claims per month.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, “ETA 5159, Claims and Payment Activities” (accessed June 2025)

Figure 28 - Initial and Continuing Unemployment Insurance Claims by LWA Relative to Total Kentucky Claims, 2024

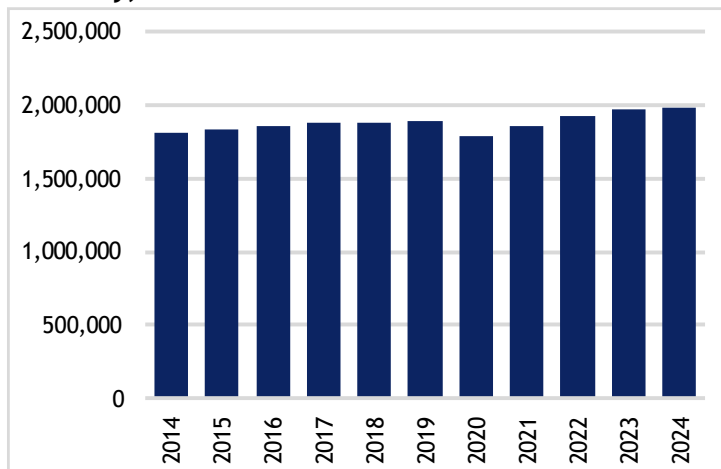


Source: Kentucky Unemployment Insurance (UI), Office of Employment and Training, UI Quality Control Branch, Unemployment claims data (accessed June 2025). Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Among Kentucky’s regions, UI claims in 2024 were concentrated in the larger LWAs. Almost 31 percent of all initial claims were made in the Kentuckiana Works LWA, followed by 14.6 percent in the Bluegrass LWA. Just over 27 percent of continuing claims were made in the Kentuckiana Works LWA. The fewest initial claims were made in the Green River LWA (4.5 percent of the total, or 4,540 initial claims). Green River also had the fewest continuing claims during 2024 (4.4 percent of the statewide total in each LWA with 18,924 continuing claims).

The QCEW program publishes quarterly employment and wages by industry sector for employers covered by the UI program. Data are aggregated from single establishments into industries organized by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

Figure 29 - Average Annual Covered Employment in Kentucky, 2014-2024

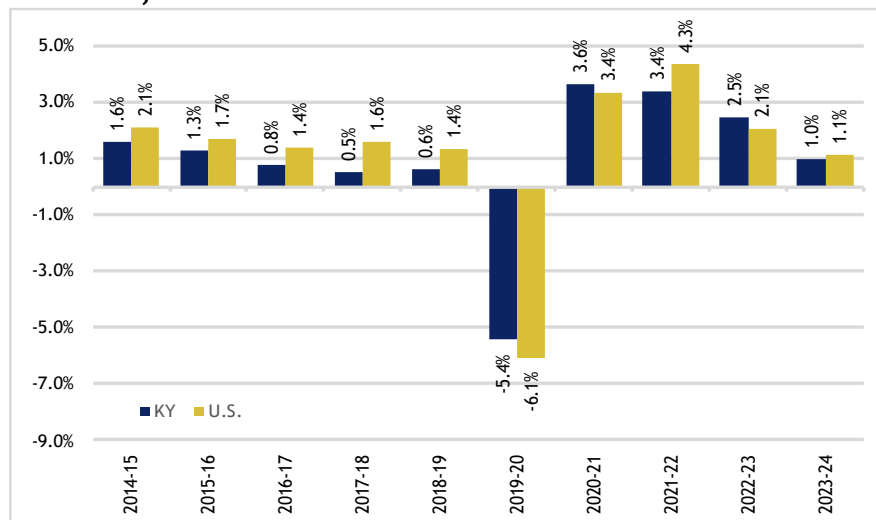


Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025)

In 2024, the average annual employment in Kentucky increased 1.0 percent, slowing from the pace set in 2021 through 2023. Following the 2020 decrease of 103,228 jobs in Kentucky, 65,302 jobs were added in 2021, 62,766 in 2022, 47,495 in 2023, and 19,626 in 2024 for a combined four-year total increase of 195,189 jobs in Kentucky.

Between 2014 and 2019, job growth in the U.S., measured by year-over-year changes in employment in the QCEW program, was higher than the rate of job growth in Kentucky. The rate of job loss in the U.S. between 2019 and 2020 was

Figure 30 - Change in Average Annual Covered Employment from Prior Year, 2014 to 2024



Sources: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025) and U.S. Bureau Labor Statistics, QCEW for the U.S., (accessed June 2025)

also greater, 6.1 percent compared to 5.4 percent in Kentucky. The post-pandemic recovery was stronger in Kentucky in two of the four years following 2020; in 2021 Kentucky experienced a 3.6 percent increase compared to 3.4 percent in the U.S., and

in 2023 Kentucky's 2.5 percent again exceeded the U.S. job growth of 2.1 percent. In 2022, U.S. employment growth outpaced Kentucky 4.3% to 3.4%, and in 2024 Kentucky's 1% growth was slightly behind the 1.1% level achieved in the U.S.

Figure 31 - Year-Over-Year Change in Covered Employment by Quarter, 2023 and 2024

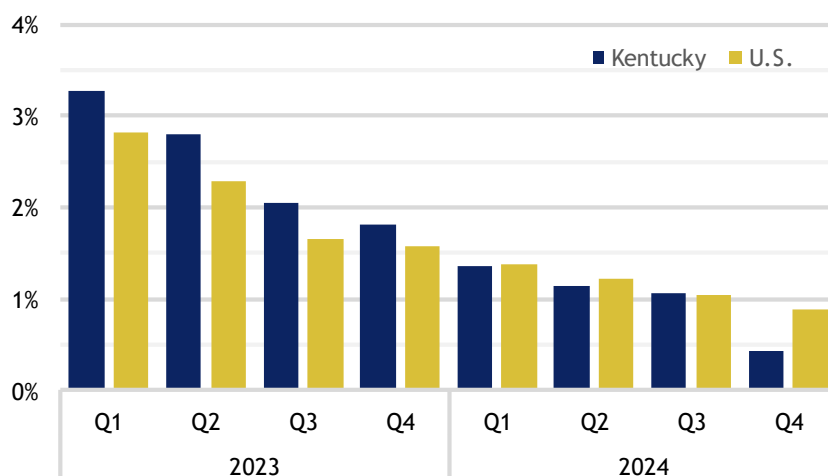


Figure 31 compares year-over-year quarterly employment changes in Kentucky and the U.S. from 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024. Looking at employment changes in this manner can minimize the effects of seasonality. The pace of job growth in each year generally decreased from quarter 1 to quarter 4 for both Kentucky and the U.S., with Kentucky leading each quarter in 2023 and Kentucky leading during one quarter of 2024.

Sources: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025) and U.S. Bureau Labor Statistics, QCEW for the U.S., (accessed June 2025)

Table 1 shows employment by the 20 major industry sectors in Kentucky in five-year increments from 2014 to 2024. In 2024, there was a slight change in the ranking of sectors with the largest number of jobs: Government, Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, and Retail Trade remain at the top of the list, however, Health Care and Social Assistance moved up one spot, swapping positions with Manufacturing. The largest sector, Government (294,399 jobs), experienced a decline of 4,716 jobs over this decade. Over this same period, Health Care and Social Assistance gained the largest number of jobs of any sector (54,572), narrowing the gap with Government for highest overall employment. Other sectors with significant job gains included Transportation and Warehousing (40,636), Manufacturing (22,972), and Construction (20,781).

Nine of the twenty sectors experienced stronger growth than the state CAGR (1.0%). Two sectors experienced a compound annual growth rate over 3 percent: the Transportation and Warehousing sector increased at a CAGR of 3.9 percent between 2014 and 2024, increasing from 86,544 to 127,180 jobs in the sector, and the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector saw jobs increase at a CAGR of 3.1 percent.

Five sectors experienced a decline in the number of jobs since 2014. Besides Government (as discussed above), Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction lost 8,293 jobs (-7.0% CAGR), Information saw a decrease of 5,463 jobs (-2.3% CAGR), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services saw a loss of 3,166 jobs (-0.3% CAGR) and Utilities fell by 155 jobs (-0.2% CAGR).

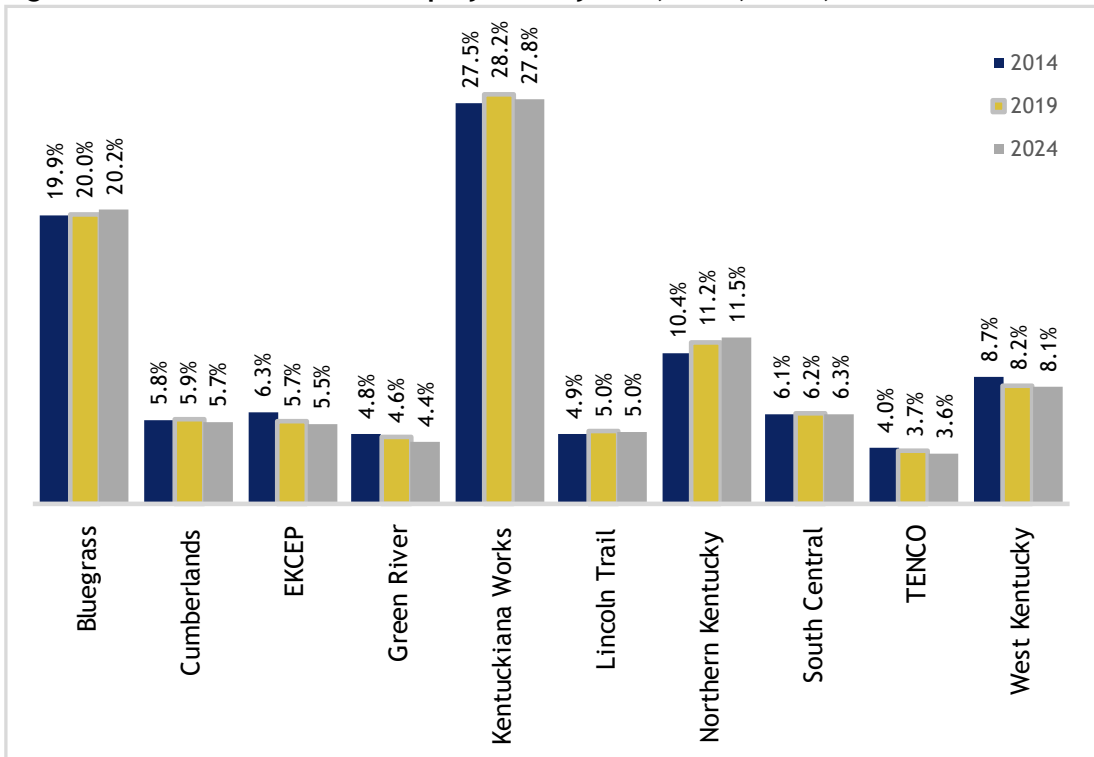
Table 1 - Covered Employment by Major Industry Sector in Kentucky, 2014, 2019, & 2024

Industry Sector	Employment			Change Since 2014		
	2014	2019	2024	Absolute	Percent	CAGR
Accommodation and Food Services	162,117	177,606	179,056	16,939	10.4%	1.0%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	118,288	118,920	115,122	-3,166	-2.7%	-0.3%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7,996	8,930	9,088	1,092	13.7%	1.3%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	20,008	24,014	27,226	7,218	36.1%	3.1%
Construction	72,904	80,480	93,685	20,781	28.5%	2.5%
Educational Services	18,533	19,456	20,716	2,183	11.8%	1.1%
Finance and Insurance	71,072	73,022	72,766	1,694	2.4%	0.2%
Government	299,115	291,534	294,399	-4,716	-1.6%	-0.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	229,454	253,350	284,026	54,572	23.8%	2.2%
Information	26,323	21,718	20,860	-5,463	-20.8%	-2.3%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	20,648	20,164	22,474	1,826	8.8%	0.9%
Manufacturing	234,669	252,079	257,641	22,972	9.8%	0.9%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	16,151	9,267	7,858	-8,293	-51.3%	-7.0%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	47,675	46,756	48,743	1,068	2.2%	0.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	72,069	77,349	88,604	16,535	22.9%	2.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	18,307	20,641	22,348	4,041	22.1%	2.0%
Retail Trade	205,145	210,472	209,875	4,730	2.3%	0.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	86,544	108,828	127,180	40,636	47.0%	3.9%
Utilities	6,623	6,763	6,468	-155	-2.3%	-0.2%
Wholesale Trade	74,536	75,898	81,073	6,537	8.8%	0.8%
All Industries	1,808,174	1,897,246	1,989,207	181,033	10.0%	1.0%

Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025)

As with civilian labor force statistics, QCEW data indicate that employment in Kentucky is concentrated in the LWAs with the largest population base: Kentuckiana Works, Bluegrass, and Northern Kentucky. This concentration is also growing as illustrated in Figure 32. In 2014, 27.5 percent of Kentucky’s overall employment was in the Kentuckiana Works LWA. This increased to 27.8 percent in 2024. Over the same ten-year period, Northern Kentucky and Bluegrass also increased their employment share. Northern Kentucky, which like Bluegrass grew each five-year period, had the largest percentage gain of the three, from 10.4 percent to 11.5 percent. Together, these three areas comprised 59.5 percent of the overall covered employment in the Commonwealth in 2024, up from 57.8 percent in 2014. Several LWAs experienced declining concentrations of employment over the same period. EKCEP suffered the largest drop in employment (-4,046 jobs) as well as employment concentration, dropping from 6.3 percent in 2014 to 5.5 percent in 2024. EKCEP suffered the largest drop in employment (-4,046 jobs) as well as employment concentration, dropping from 6.3 percent in 2014 to 5.5 percent in 2024.

Figure 32 - Share of Covered Employment by LWA, 2014, 2019, & 2024

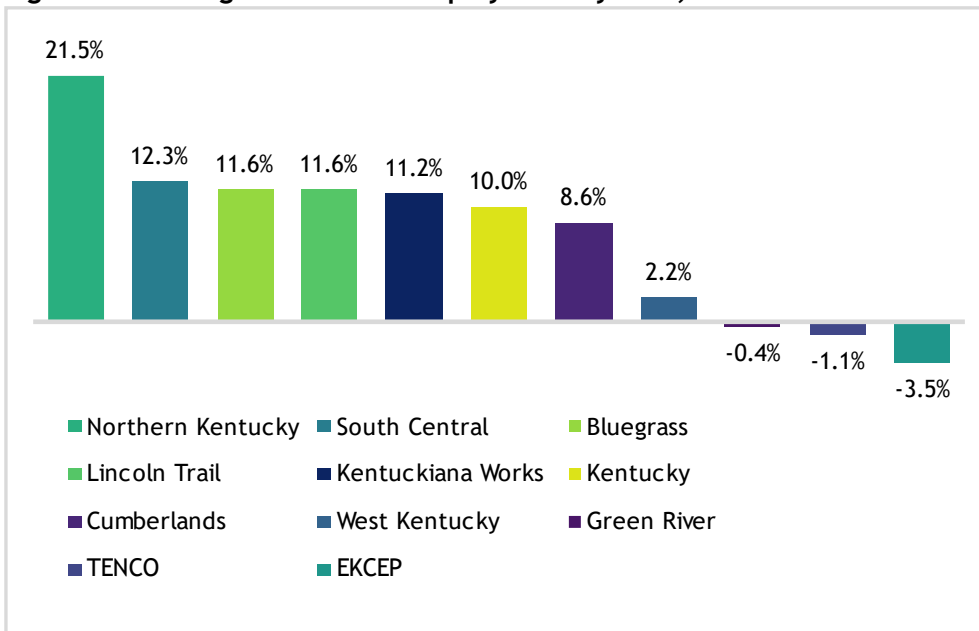


Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), “Employment and Wages by Industry,” (accessed June 2025)

Between 2014 and 2024, employment grew 10.0 percent throughout Kentucky, increasing by 181,033 jobs. Five of the LWAs experienced growth rates higher than the state. The areas with the largest growth as a percent of 2014 levels were Northern Kentucky at 21.5 percent (40,481 jobs) and South Central at 12.3 percent (13,629 jobs).

Of the remaining five LWAs, three showed declining employment over this period but even though overall employment decreased, there were still sectors in those LWAs that experienced growth. For example, in EKCEP, which saw the largest decline in overall employment, the following sectors saw growth between 2014 and 2024: Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Educational Services, Construction, Accommodation and Food Services, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Management of Companies and Enterprises.

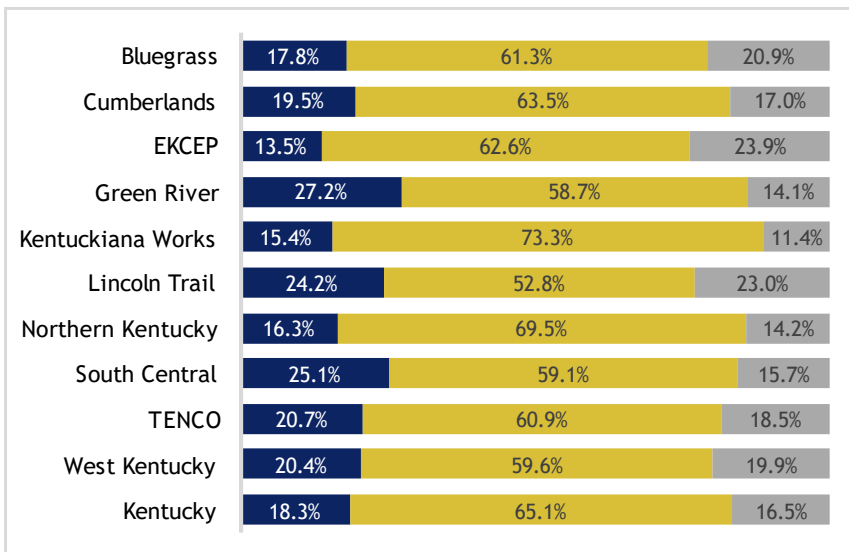
Figure 33 - Change in Covered Employment by LWA, 2014-2024



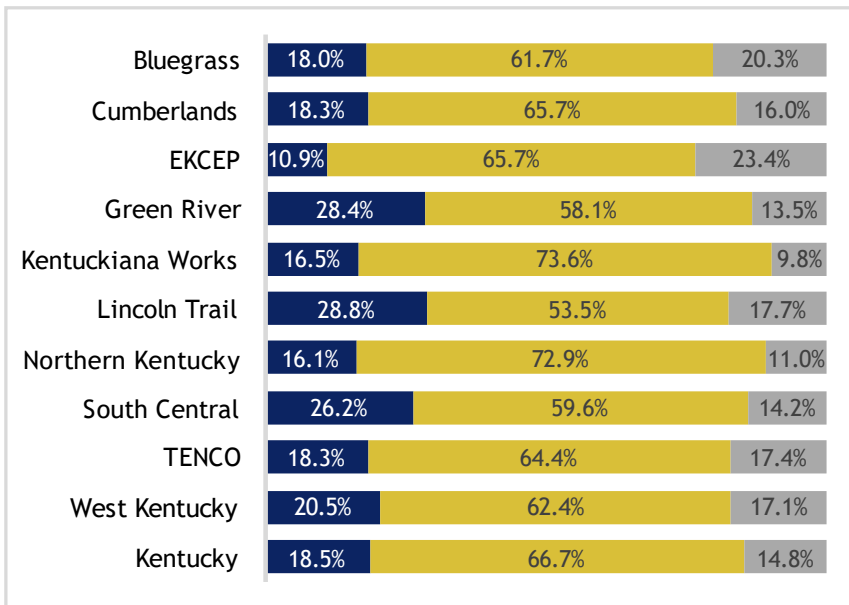
Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025)

Figure 34 - Share of Covered Employment by Major Industry Groups, 2014 and 2024

2014



2024



■ Goods producing ■ Service providing ■ Government

Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025)

Kentuckiana Works had the largest share of employment in this group (73.6 percent).

Employment in Government decreased from 16.5 percent in 2014 throughout Kentucky to 14.8 percent by 2024. LWAs with more than 20 percent of 2024 employment in Government were Bluegrass and EKCEP.

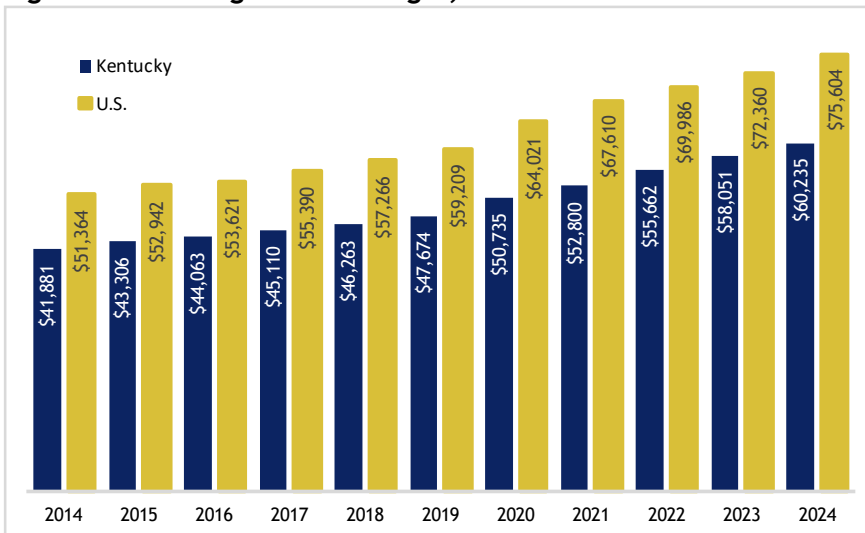
In 2014, 18.3 percent of all Kentucky employment was in Goods Producing sectors. This includes:

- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction.

The LWAs with more than 20 percent of employment in this major industry group in 2014 were Green River, Lincoln Trail, South Central, TENCO, and West Kentucky. By 2024, the share of goods producing employment had increased in each of these LWAs except TENCO, where it fell by 2.4 percentage points.

Service Providing sectors include all other sectors except for Government. This major group makes up most of the employment in all LWAs. From 2014 to 2024, employment in Service Providing industries in Kentucky grew from 65.1 percent to 66.7 percent. The LWA with the lowest share of employment in this supersector during 2024 was Lincoln Trail (53.5 percent of employment) while

Figure 35 - Average Annual Wages, 2014 to 2024



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025)

The average annual wage for covered workers in Kentucky grew 3.8 percent from 2023 to 2024, reaching \$60,235. This compares to an average annual wage for U.S. covered workers of \$75,604 which was an increase of 4.5 percent from 2023. The gap between the average wage in Kentucky and the U.S. overall widened from 2014 to 2024. In 2014, the average annual wage for Kentucky covered workers was 81.5 percent of the U.S. average. By 2024, this

had fallen to 79.7 percent. Over this period, average annual wages grew faster in the U.S. (3.9% CAGR) than in Kentucky (3.7% CAGR).

As shown in Figure 36, the highest average annual wage for covered workers during 2024 in Kentucky was \$114,195 in the Management of Companies and Enterprises sector followed by Utilities at \$112,182. Combined, employment in these two industries made up 1.5 percent of total covered employment. Industries with the lowest average annual wages were Accommodation and Food Services (\$23,795) and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (\$33,994). Combined, these two sectors accounted for 10.4 percent of jobs in 2024.

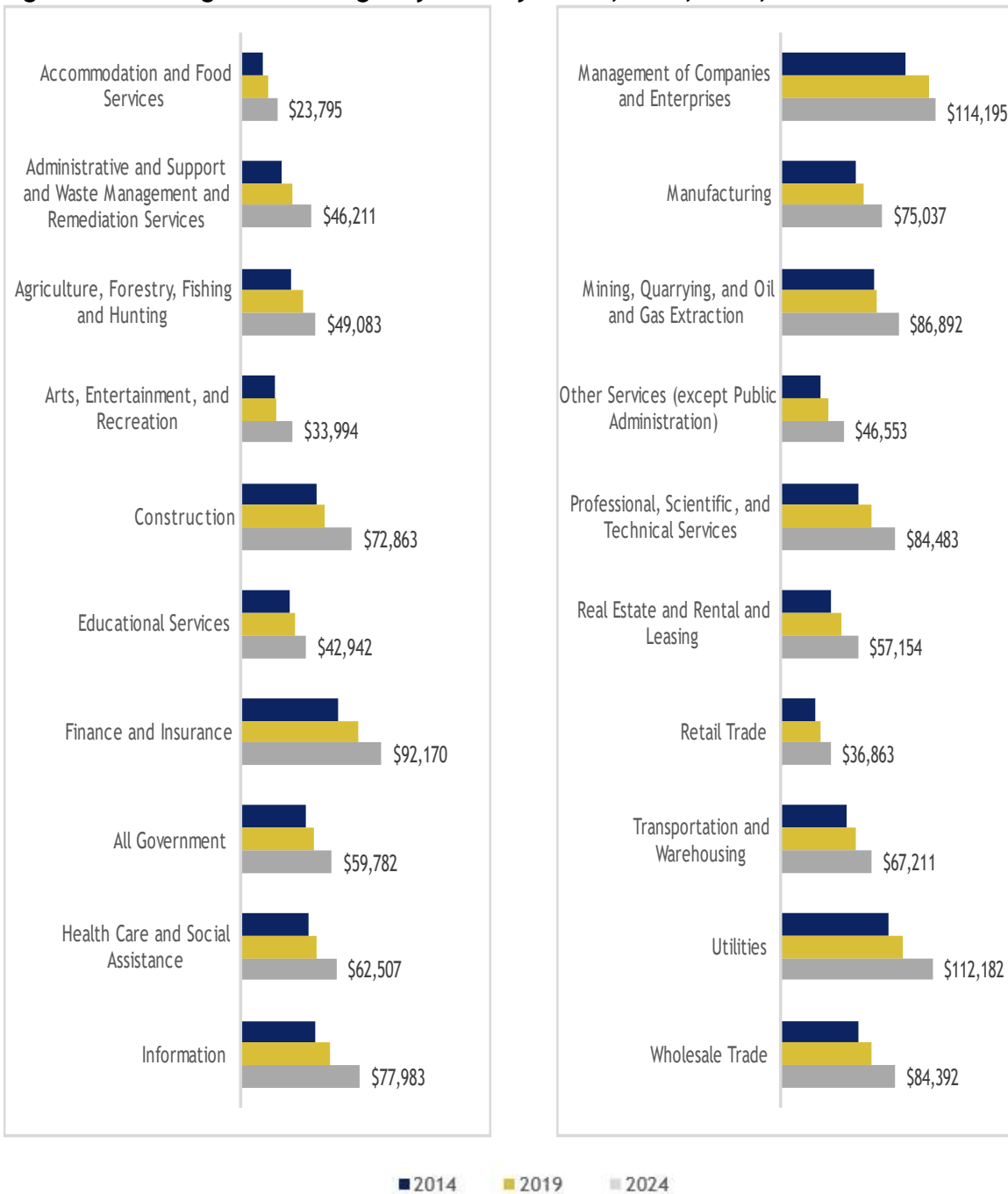
Industry sectors paying higher wages than the state average (\$60,235) in 2024 include:

- Construction
- Finance and Insurance
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Information
- Management of Companies and Enterprises
- Manufacturing
- Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Utilities
- Wholesale Trade

Sectors that experienced faster wage growth than the state between 2014 and 2024 (43.8 percent) include:

- Accommodation and Food Services (59.5%)
- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (70.1%)
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (49.3%)
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (53.5%)
- Construction (46.3%)
- Finance and Insurance (44.7%)
- Information (59.1%)
- Other Services (except Public Administration) (61.0%)
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (46.5%)
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (54.3%)
- Retail Trade (46.8%)
- Wholesale Trade (47.3%)

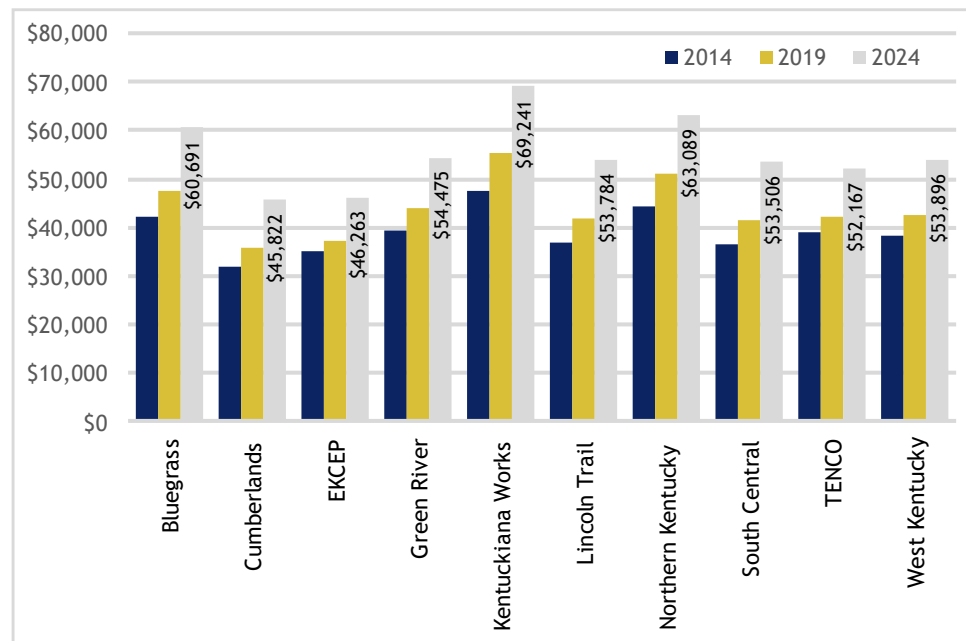
Figure 36 - Average Annual Wages by Industry Sector, 2014, 2019, and 2024



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025)

Average annual wages grew in all the LWAs between 2014 and 2024. The highest wages were paid in Kentuckiana Works, reaching \$69,241 in 2024, a 45.6 percent increase from 2014. The next highest wage was paid in Northern Kentucky at \$63,089 per year, a 42.4 percent increase from 2014. South Central, Kentuckiana Works, Lincoln Trail, and Bluegrass had higher growth rates than the state growth of 43.8 percent between 2014 and 2024. The lowest average annual wages were paid in the Cumberland LWA, averaging \$45,822 in 2024. EKCEP followed with an average of \$46,263. Wage growth was also the slowest in EKCEP over this time frame, 31.9 percent since 2014.

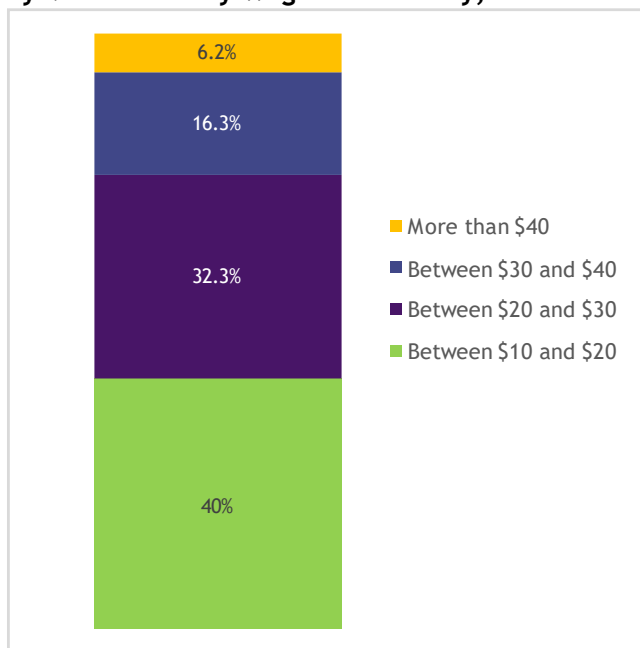
Figure 37 - Average Annual Wages by LWA, 2014, 2019, and 2024



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), "Employment and Wages by Industry," (accessed June 2025)

In addition to understanding employment and wages by industry sector, similar estimates are available by more than 700 detailed occupations produced by the OEWS program and KYSTATS. The OEWS survey is designed to create detailed, cross-sectional, employment and wage estimates, providing a “snapshot” of occupational employment and wages for a particular area and time. It is not designed to be used as a time series.

Figure 38 - Share of Occupational Employment by Median Hourly Wage in Kentucky, 2025



Note: Total does not sum to 100 percent since several occupations did not have a median hourly wage.
Source: KYSTATS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, "2025 Statewide Wage & Employment" (accessed June 2025)

According to occupational employment and wage estimates, Kentucky's median wage across all occupations was \$21.99 per hour compared to the U.S. median hourly wage across all occupations of \$23.80.

Figure 38 displays the distribution of wage estimates across all occupations in the Kentucky labor market. Of the nearly 2 million estimated jobs in Kentucky, the majority, 40.0 percent, paid between \$10 and \$20 per hour. In addition, 32.3 percent of all jobs paid between \$20 and \$30 per hour and another 22.5 percent paid more than \$30 per hour.

The OEWS estimates categorize occupations into 22 major groups. As shown in Table 2 below, the median wage was higher in Kentucky than the same group nationally for three

groups: Healthcare Support Occupations (\$18.03 per hour in Kentucky compared to \$17.87 in the U.S.), Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations (\$18.03 per hour in Kentucky compared to \$17.67 in the U.S.), and Production Occupations (\$22.39 per hour in Kentucky compared to \$22.09 in the U.S.).

In those occupational groups where the United States had a higher median hourly wage, the largest differences were seen in Legal Occupations, Computer and Mathematical Occupations, and Management Occupations.

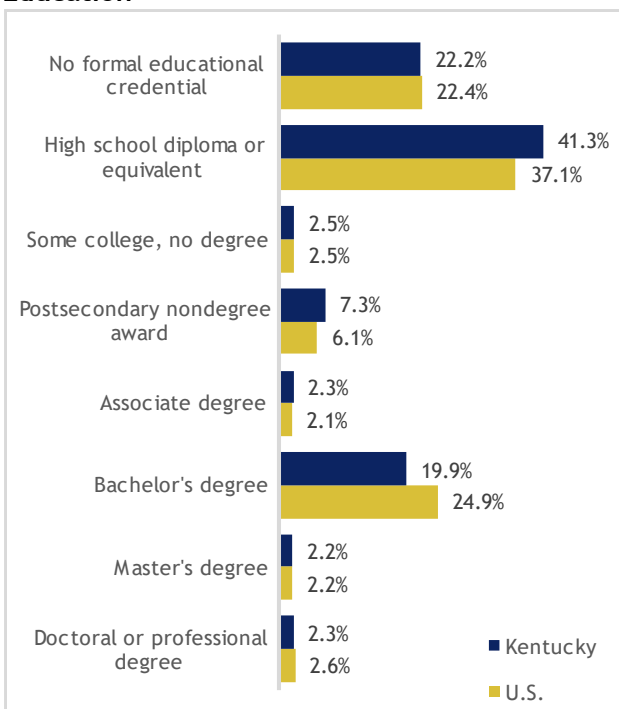
Table 2 - Comparison of Median Hourly Earnings by Major Occupational Group

SOC Code	Major Occupational Group	Median Hourly Wage		Estimated Employment in Kentucky
		U.S.	Kentucky	
00-0000	Total	\$23.80	\$21.99	1,993,680
11-0000	Management	\$58.70	\$44.28	123,890
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations	\$38.90	\$32.97	88,500
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical	\$50.89	\$38.71	38,670
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering	\$46.79	\$39.23	26,900
19-0000	Life, Physical and Social Science	\$37.97	\$32.12	13,350
21-0000	Community and Social Services	\$27.66	\$25.92	33,770
23-0000	Legal	\$48.07	\$37.73	10,830
25-0000	Education, Training and Library	\$28.47	\$24.28	107,210
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	\$28.91	\$21.24	17,970
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	\$39.95	\$36.72	141,320
31-0000	Healthcare Support	\$17.87	\$18.03	80,470
33-0000	Protective Service	\$24.32	\$19.75	41,540
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving-Related	\$16.41	\$13.38	173,200
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	\$17.69	\$15.43	53,910
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	\$16.88	\$14.25	33,570
41-0000	Sales and Related	\$18.01	\$16.01	163,590
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	\$22.27	\$19.62	256,580
45-0000	Farming, Fishing and Forestry	\$17.67	\$18.03	2,480
47-0000	Construction and Extraction	\$28.06	\$24.51	72,730
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance and Repair	\$27.99	\$26.67	92,880
51-0000	Production	\$22.09	\$22.39	190,670
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	\$20.55	\$20.51	229,640

Source: KYSTATS Labor Market Information Branch, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), "2025 Statewide Wage & Employment" and BLS, "U.S. Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2024" (accessed June 2025)

The occupational groups in Kentucky with the largest estimated employment were Office and Administrative Support, Transportation and Material Moving, Production, Food Preparation and Serving Related, and Sales and Related Occupations.

Figure 39 - Estimated Employment by Level of Education

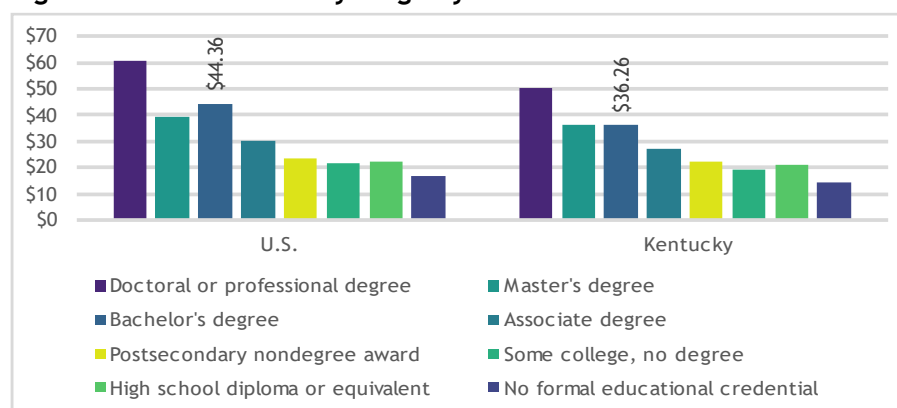


Sources: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), “2025 Statewide Wage & Employment” and BLS, “U.S. Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2024” and “Typical Entry-Level Educational Requirement Data, May 2024,” (accessed June 2025)

The BLS publication “Typical Entry-Level Educational Requirement Data, May 2024” presents employment and wage data for occupations by the typical education required for entry. As shown in Figure 39, 41.3 percent of Kentucky employment is in occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent for entry. This compares to 37.1 percent in the U.S. At the same time, the share of employees in occupations that require a bachelor’s degree or higher is lower in Kentucky (19.9 percent) than in the U.S. (24.9 percent).

The median hourly wage by level of education (Figure 40) shows that Kentucky employees make less per hour than U.S. employees with the same education level. An employee in an occupation that requires a high school diploma for entry in Kentucky earns 94.1 percent of U.S. workers with the same entry requirements. For occupations requiring a bachelor’s degree, Kentucky employees, with a median hourly wage of \$36.26, earn 81.7 percent of the median U.S. wage (\$44.36 per hour). In the U.S., employees in jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree have a median hourly wage 2.0 times higher than those employed in jobs requiring a high school diploma (\$22.41 per hour). In Kentucky, that ratio is lower at 1.7 (\$21.09 per hour).

Figure 40 - Median Hourly Wage by Level of Education



Sources: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), “2025 Statewide Wage & Employment” and BLS “U.S. Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2024” and “Typical Entry-Level Educational Requirement Data, May 2024,” (accessed June 2025)

Table 3 provides information on the five largest occupations in Kentucky by education typically required for entry.

Table 3 - Largest Occupations in Kentucky by Typical Education Required for Entry, 2025

SOC Code	Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Title	Estimated Employment	Hourly Wage				
			Entry	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Experienced
Less than high school							
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	58,120	\$14.58	\$17.01	\$20.08	\$23.12	\$23.41
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	47,680	\$10.52	\$12.33	\$14.16	\$17.10	\$21.42
41-2011	Cashiers	44,220	\$9.70	\$10.70	\$12.97	\$14.42	\$16.73
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	41,890	\$10.28	\$10.86	\$13.06	\$13.94	\$16.38
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	27,800	\$7.64	\$8.09	\$10.70	\$17.63	\$24.14
High school diploma or equivalent							
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	49,470	\$13.57	\$14.75	\$17.38	\$20.58	\$27.25
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	49,390	\$14.80	\$17.76	\$21.48	\$25.04	\$29.82
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	43,970	\$13.68	\$15.51	\$18.07	\$22.42	\$27.93
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	29,400	\$10.75	\$14.10	\$17.31	\$21.57	\$25.62
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	27,620	\$12.06	\$14.10	\$16.74	\$20.47	\$22.97
Postsecondary non-degree award							
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	33,430	\$18.33	\$22.90	\$26.73	\$31.35	\$44.73
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	22,910	\$14.24	\$16.53	\$17.95	\$20.56	\$22.28
31-9092	Medical Assistants	14,070	\$14.53	\$17.07	\$18.63	\$21.17	\$22.65
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	10,910	\$13.50	\$15.63	\$19.20	\$28.08	\$33.09
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	9,190	\$22.23	\$24.39	\$28.10	\$29.97	\$33.32

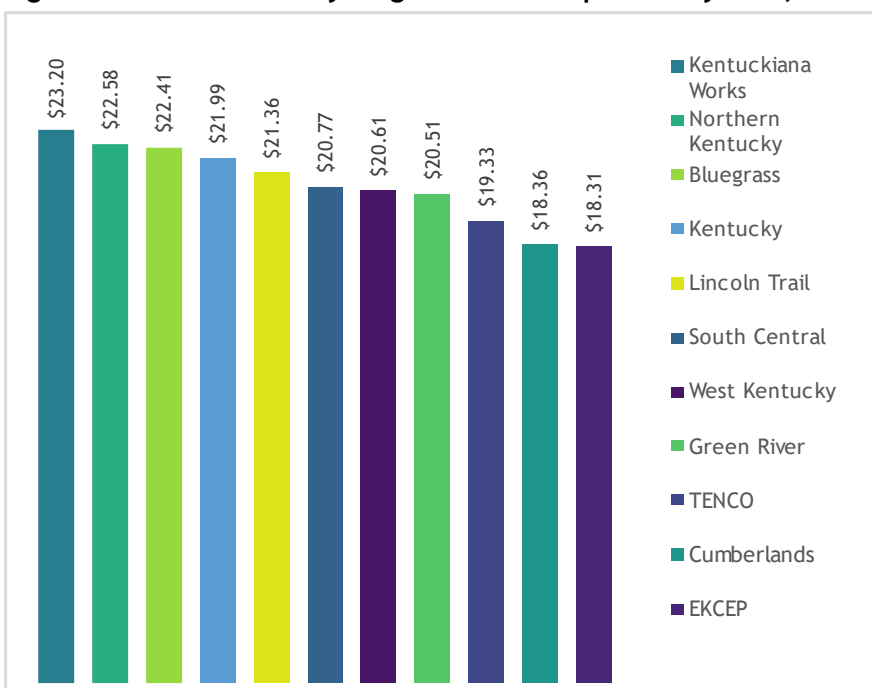
SOC Code	Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Title	Estimated Employment	Hourly Wage				
			Entry	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Experienced
Some college, no degree							
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	22,780	\$14.27	\$17.72	\$21.76	\$26.76	\$32.24
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	15,580	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	8,280	\$16.97	\$19.76	\$24.82	\$30.96	\$38.20
49-2011	Computer, Automated Teller, and Office Machine Repairers	1,280	\$18.32	\$19.52	\$23.27	\$27.90	\$29.95
43-4151	Order Clerks	950	\$13.05	\$17.16	\$19.07	\$22.34	\$27.18
Associate degree							
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	6,780	\$11.18	\$13.43	\$14.41	\$18.66	\$24.87
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	3,750	\$22.93	\$27.94	\$31.18	\$37.12	\$40.42
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	3,080	\$18.10	\$21.69	\$23.56	\$29.78	\$37.41
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	2,860	\$25.03	\$29.16	\$31.57	\$36.39	\$39.00
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	2,540	\$11.47	\$23.53	\$30.00	\$35.45	\$38.74
Bachelor's degree							
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	58,570	\$16.69	\$23.82	\$37.09	\$57.98	\$84.25
29-1141	Registered Nurses	48,170	\$30.38	\$34.83	\$38.42	\$45.76	\$50.21
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	18,680	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	12,760	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	12,180	\$23.02	\$28.52	\$34.72	\$43.35	\$55.19

SOC Code	Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Title	Estimated Employment	Hourly Wage				
			Entry	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile	Experienced
Master's degree							
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	8,030	\$16.33	\$19.02	\$24.90	\$36.21	\$43.12
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors	5,030	\$19.05	\$23.23	\$30.96	\$37.22	\$42.35
11-9032	Education Administrators, Kindergarten through Secondary	4,760	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	4,710	\$43.16	\$49.07	\$54.74	\$62.71	\$71.80
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators	3,140	\$18.94	\$23.97	\$29.36	\$38.08	\$47.08
Doctoral or professional degree							
23-1011	Lawyers	6,380	\$25.89	\$36.13	\$49.36	\$68.82	\$93.26
29-1051	Pharmacists	5,310	\$35.41	\$59.30	\$63.82	\$71.59	\$78.66
25-1199	Postsecondary Teachers, All Other	4,280	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
29-1123	Physical Therapists	3,570	\$29.71	\$37.61	\$46.88	\$52.11	\$58.46
29-1229	Physicians, All Other	3,280	\$54.86	\$100.56	>\$115.00	>\$115.00	>\$115.00

N/A = Not available

Sources: KYSTATS Labor Market Information Branch, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), "2025 Statewide Wage & Employment" and BLS, "Typical Entry-Level Educational Requirement Data, May 2024," (accessed June 2025)

Figure 41 - Median Hourly Wage for All Occupations by LWA, 2025



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, Occupational Employment and Wages Statistics (OEWS) "2025 Statewide Wage & Employment" and "2025 LWA Wage & Employment," (accessed July 2025)

The median hourly wage for all occupations by LWA ranged from a low of \$18.31 to a high of \$23.20, as shown in Figure 41. The middle of this range was occupied by four LWAs where the median hourly wage fell into a range from approximately \$20.50 to \$21.40. However, at the upper end of the spectrum, three LWAs, Kentuckiana Works, Northern Kentucky, and Bluegrass each had a median hourly wage that exceeded \$22.00. Conversely, the lowest median hourly wage for all occupations was \$18.31 in the EKCEP LWA followed by Cumberland LWA at \$18.36 per hour.

Table 4 provides estimated employment and median hourly wages for the major occupation groups for each LWA. The five occupations with the highest estimated employment for each LWA are presented in Table 5.

Table 4 - Est. Employment and Median Hourly Wage by Occupational Group and LWA, 2025

SOC Code	Major Occupational Group	Bluegrass		Cumberlands		EKCEP		Green River		Kentuckiana Works	
		Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage
00-0000	Total	399,630	\$22.41	114,710	\$18.36	111,380	\$18.31	86,270	\$20.51	555,520	\$23.20
11-0000	Management	27,160	\$44.14	5,780	\$37.31	6,520	\$36.69	4,590	\$40.15	36,080	\$49.10
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations	20,010	\$32.67	3,050	\$28.76	3,120	\$28.32	2,790	\$30.15	28,510	\$34.94
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical	9,080	\$38.65	1,170	\$29.39	1,060	\$29.08	740	\$31.61	13,200	\$40.38
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering	7,180	\$41.67	860	\$31.98	1,100	\$29.82	990	\$37.21	7,590	\$41.59
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science	4,100	\$30.54	580	\$30.75	750	\$31.59	540	\$31.48	3,020	\$35.09
21-0000	Community and Social Service	7,310	\$27.09	2,620	\$23.66	4,100	\$22.80	1,430	\$25.02	8,040	\$27.51
23-0000	Legal	2,790	\$38.84	390	\$31.05	670	\$35.38	300	\$35.42	3,700	\$38.84
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library	23,980	\$27.40	7,940	\$23.97	9,900	\$22.85	4,780	\$23.77	22,840	\$28.52
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	4,350	\$23.00	850	\$17.23	690	\$17.50	560	\$18.90	5,530	\$22.65
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	31,020	\$37.14	9,150	\$31.54	10,510	\$30.86	5,820	\$34.57	40,090	\$38.09
31-0000	Healthcare Support	14,950	\$18.27	6,310	\$17.19	7,020	\$16.85	3,880	\$17.59	21,890	\$18.89
33-0000	Protective Service	8,810	\$19.94	2,710	\$17.46	3,730	\$18.20	1,660	\$18.41	10,390	\$21.00
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	36,360	\$13.39	9,200	\$11.78	9,930	\$11.30	7,250	\$12.68	46,260	\$14.02
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	11,040	\$15.30	3,120	\$13.69	2,890	\$13.35	2,440	\$14.38	15,690	\$16.67
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	9,080	\$14.25	1,510	\$13.32	1,450	\$13.34	1,390	\$13.12	9,920	\$15.00
41-0000	Sales and Related	31,000	\$15.44	9,710	\$13.90	10,160	\$13.25	6,830	\$14.24	43,290	\$17.50
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	49,770	\$20.21	16,100	\$17.29	14,740	\$17.16	10,100	\$18.81	72,310	\$21.37
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	730	\$18.19	200	\$18.03	100	\$18.13	150	\$18.03	330	\$17.22
47-0000	Construction and Extraction	13,640	\$24.04	3,040	\$22.17	4,710	\$23.25	3,880	\$24.61	19,480	\$27.41
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	16,440	\$24.94	5,010	\$22.41	5,110	\$22.63	4,920	\$28.33	24,980	\$28.32
51-0000	Production	36,510	\$23.40	12,250	\$18.28	4,750	\$17.84	11,750	\$22.11	49,720	\$23.03
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	34,310	\$18.95	13,150	\$18.04	8,360	\$17.04	9,480	\$18.63	75,860	\$21.99

SOC Code	Major Occupational Group	Lincoln Trail		Northern Kentucky		South Central		TENCO		West Kentucky	
		Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage
00-0000	Total	99,190	\$21.36	229,700	\$22.58	124,510	\$20.77	72,110	\$19.33	159,910	\$20.61
11-0000	Management	5,730	\$43.07	14,270	\$47.50	7,110	\$40.87	3,990	\$38.41	9,030	\$40.11
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations	5,070	\$35.95	10,460	\$35.00	4,130	\$30.24	2,070	\$29.29	5,690	\$31.15
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical	1,880	\$39.87	4,550	\$42.74	1,180	\$32.51	660	\$32.98	2,040	\$35.97
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering	1,320	\$37.85	2,760	\$39.95	1,710	\$37.10	630	\$34.17	2,330	\$38.10
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science	530	\$34.49	1,240	\$33.84	680	\$31.71	380	\$31.92	1,290	\$35.26
21-0000	Community and Social Service	1,600	\$27.59	2,590	\$27.73	1,920	\$25.08	1,670	\$23.73	2,200	\$25.25
23-0000	Legal	390	\$35.01	1,050	\$38.75	590	\$35.14	280	\$31.44	560	\$33.61
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library	5,860	\$22.99	9,960	\$24.31	7,580	\$23.90	4,870	\$22.89	8,730	\$24.08
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	600	\$20.80	1,860	\$23.10	1,220	\$18.87	420	\$17.84	1,150	\$18.99
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	5,110	\$33.35	12,290	\$39.32	7,960	\$32.24	6,820	\$34.50	11,050	\$34.65
31-0000	Healthcare Support	3,770	\$17.90	6,480	\$18.91	5,000	\$18.00	4,080	\$17.18	6,200	\$17.74
33-0000	Protective Service	2,040	\$19.01	4,620	\$22.85	2,180	\$18.51	1,860	\$18.52	3,050	\$21.08
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	8,790	\$13.31	21,250	\$14.11	11,750	\$13.09	6,900	\$11.73	14,730	\$12.57
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	2,310	\$15.80	5,580	\$17.18	2,760	\$14.76	1,950	\$14.09	4,240	\$14.50
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	1,290	\$14.22	3,840	\$14.82	1,740	\$13.63	1,010	\$12.53	2,060	\$13.44
41-0000	Sales and Related	8,100	\$14.75	19,030	\$17.59	10,580	\$14.75	6,360	\$13.68	14,310	\$14.40
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	12,020	\$19.02	31,240	\$21.24	14,290	\$18.44	8,480	\$17.99	19,280	\$18.30
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	130	\$17.72	120	\$17.41	180	\$18.13	70	\$17.73	360	\$18.82
47-0000	Construction and Extraction	3,940	\$23.95	6,450	\$26.31	4,690	\$23.03	3,050	\$23.27	7,810	\$24.87
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	4,790	\$26.08	10,990	\$28.89	6,050	\$26.07	3,240	\$23.19	9,200	\$26.98
51-0000	Production	14,960	\$22.17	19,880	\$22.72	17,350	\$22.69	6,850	\$21.41	15,270	\$21.71
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	8,970	\$19.17	39,200	\$21.47	13,860	\$18.77	6,470	\$17.76	19,340	\$19.01

Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2025 LWA Wage & Employment," (accessed July 2025)

Table 5 - Top Five Occupations by Estimated Employment in Each LWA, 2025

SOC Code	Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Title	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage
Bluegrass			
00-0000	Total all occupations	399,630	\$22.41
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	12,590	\$37.09
29-1141	Registered Nurses	10,230	\$39.03
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	9,530	\$14.08
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	8,950	\$23.59
41-2011	Cashiers	8,570	\$13.10
Cumberlands			
00-0000	Total all occupations	114,710	\$18.36
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	3,730	\$17.14
41-2011	Cashiers	3,290	\$11.30
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	2,970	\$18.84
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2,920	\$36.65
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	2,820	\$29.60
EKCEP			
00-0000	Total all occupations	111,380	\$18.31
41-2011	Cashiers	3,870	\$10.74
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	3,250	\$29.81
29-1141	Registered Nurses	3,160	\$33.40
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	2,820	\$13.16
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	2,570	\$16.91
Green River			
00-0000	Total all occupations	86,270	\$20.51
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2,250	\$38.23
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	2,190	\$34.42
41-2011	Cashiers	2,170	\$11.95
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	2,150	\$13.80
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,100	\$18.15
Kentuckiana Works			
00-0000	Total all occupations	555,520	\$23.20
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	24,290	\$22.40
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	19,860	\$22.96
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	16,520	\$40.09
29-1141	Registered Nurses	14,770	\$39.15
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	13,980	\$19.08

SOC Code	Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Title	Est. Emp.	Median Hourly Wage
Lincoln Trail			
00-0000	Total all occupations	99,190	\$21.36
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	4,630	\$21.32
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	2,680	\$35.24
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	2,440	\$13.83
41-2011	Cashiers	2,400	\$12.78
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	2,310	\$12.86
Northern Kentucky			
00-0000	Total all occupations	229,700	\$22.58
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	10,260	\$20.83
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	9,760	\$17.66
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	6,940	\$38.61
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	5,240	\$18.82
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	5,170	\$14.87
South Central			
00-0000	Total all occupations	124,510	\$20.77
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	3,400	\$13.73
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	3,280	\$31.83
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	3,240	\$16.75
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	3,210	\$12.84
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	3,030	\$18.13
TENCO			
00-0000	Total all occupations	72,110	\$19.33
41-2011	Cashiers	2,260	\$11.40
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2,180	\$39.20
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	2,040	\$32.12
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	1,970	\$13.32
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	1,750	\$10.89
West Kentucky			
00-0000	Total all occupations	159,910	\$20.61
41-2011	Cashiers	4,650	\$12.20
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	4,450	\$33.65
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	4,380	\$13.59
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	4,210	\$15.83
29-1141	Registered Nurses	3,730	\$37.07

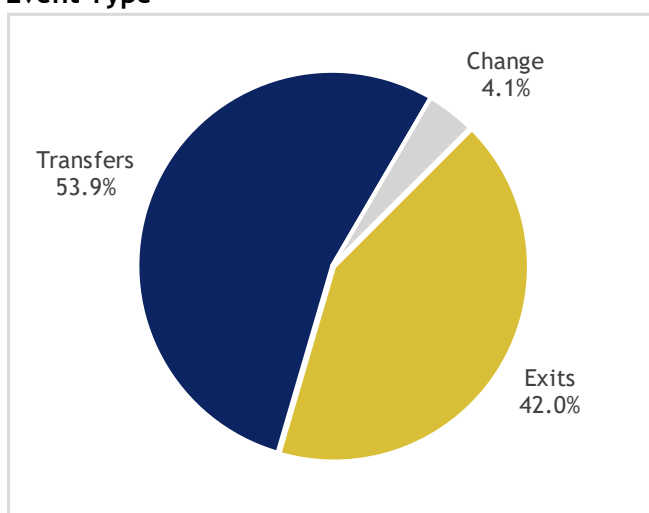
Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2025 LWA Wage & Employment," (accessed July 2025)

Long-term occupational employment projections reflect predicted employer demand for labor over a ten-year period. Projections are available at the major and specific SOC levels. Occupational employment projections include estimates on projected job openings resulting from three events:

- Individuals transferring among occupations (e.g., a career change)
- Individuals exiting the workforce (e.g., retirement)
- Economic growth (or decline)

The projections also include information on the typical education, training and experience needed for entry, and on-the job training typically needed to reach competency in the occupation from the BLS publication “Education and Training Assignments by Detailed Occupation.”

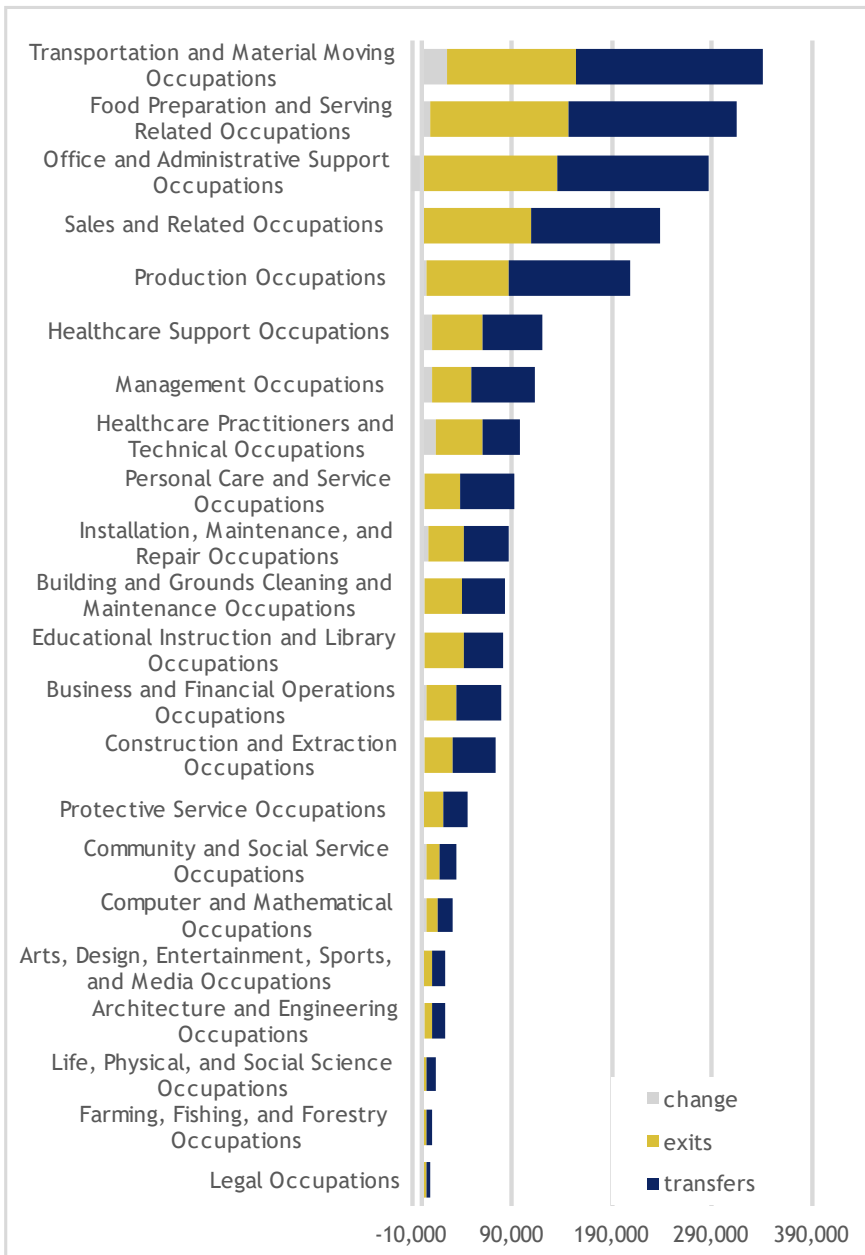
Figure 42 - Projected Job Openings in Kentucky by Event Type



In Kentucky, the job market is expected to experience almost 2.4 million job openings between 2022 and 2032, with most openings attributed to workers transferring between occupations. These transfers are expected to account for almost 54 percent of the total job openings between 2022 and 2032, 1.29 million openings. An estimated 1,005,096 exits are projected to occur over this period as individuals leave the labor force. Economic growth accounts for the remaining 4.1 percent of projected openings (97,441 openings) between 2022 and 2032.

Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, “2022-2032 KY Occupational Outlook,” (accessed June 2025)

Figure 43 - Total Job Openings by Major Occupational Group, 2022 to 2032



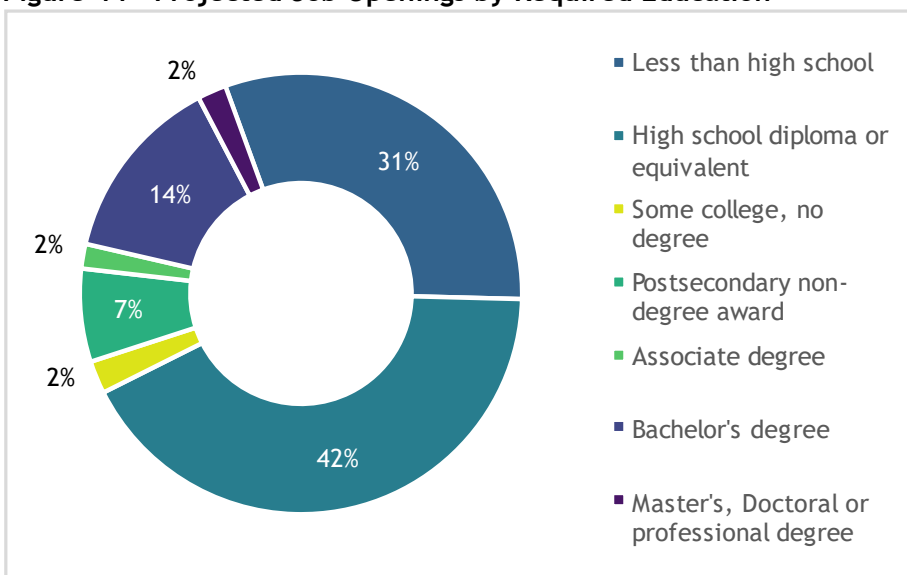
Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2022-2032 KY Occupational Outlook," (accessed June 2025)

The most projected job openings between 2022 and 2032 are in Transportation and Material Moving occupations. This occupational group is projected to have 340,637 openings, the most of any occupational group. This group also has the most anticipated growth with 24,933 jobs.

Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations are estimated to have the next largest number of openings (314,512 jobs).

Only one occupation group is expected to have negative growth (decline) between 2022 and 2032: Office and Administrative Support occupations (-9,848 jobs).

Figure 44 - Projected Job Openings by Required Education



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2022-2032 KY Occupational Outlook," (accessed June 2025)

Compared to current requirements, there will be more job openings in the next decade for those with lower levels of educational attainment. One-quarter (27 percent) of all projected job openings in Kentucky from 2022 to 2032 will require an education beyond a high school diploma or equivalent award. Among all projected openings, 31 percent typically require less than high school completion, and 42 percent require only a high school diploma or equivalent award. This is partially explained by the

high numbers of exits from the workforce and high numbers of transfers to other occupations expected among occupations requiring these levels of education.

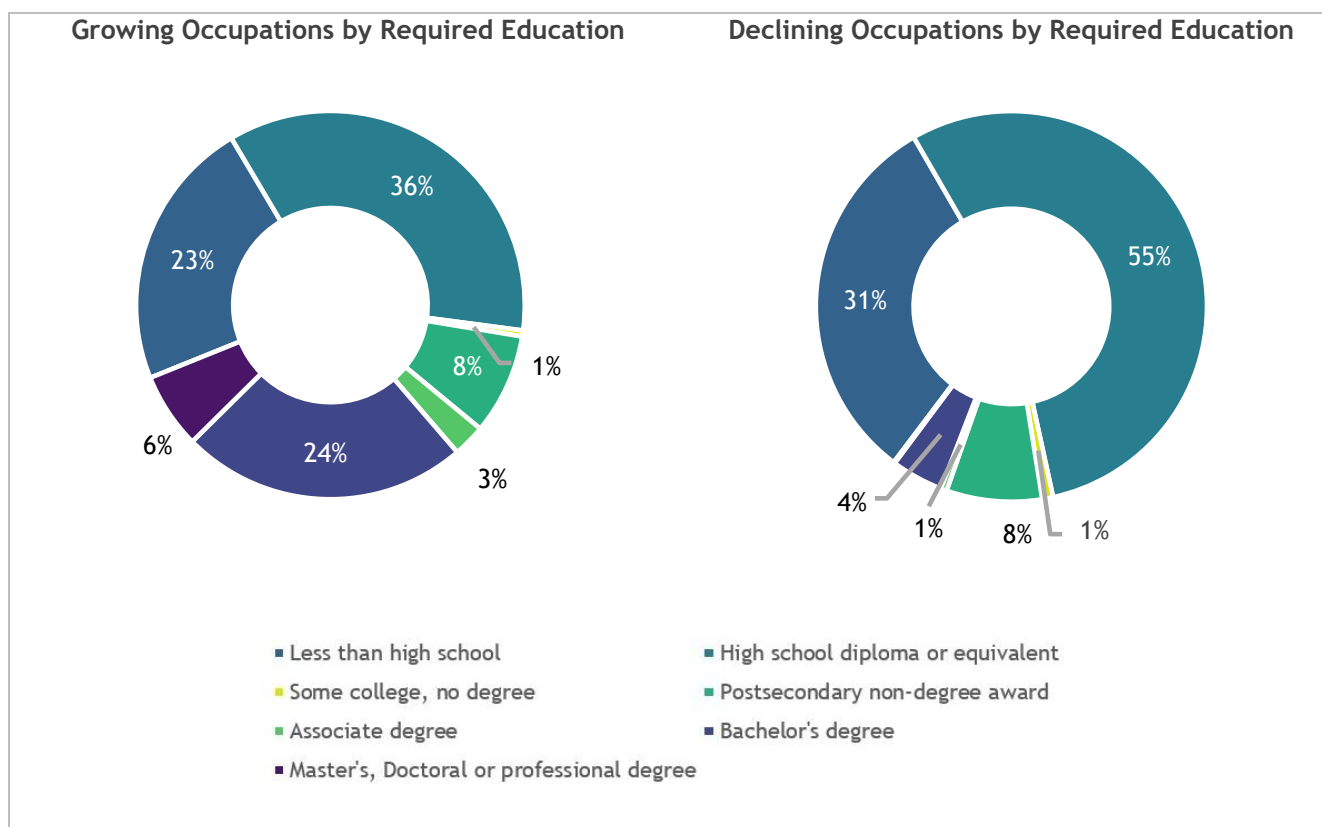
Every occupation in Kentucky is expected to have openings between 2022 and 2032. Recall that job openings come from people transferring between jobs, exiting the labor force, or growth in the occupation. There are 523 occupations that are projected to grow between 2022 and 2032, resulting in a total increase of 119,378 openings. While 30 percent of the employment growth will be in occupations requiring a bachelor's degree or higher for entry, 58 percent will require a high school diploma or less. Occupations that have the largest projected growth include:

- Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand (6,590)
- Stockers and Order Fillers (6,126)
- Home Health and Personal Care Aides (5,889)
- Cooks, Restaurant (4,904)
- General and Operations Managers (3,203)

There are 174 occupations that will have fewer jobs in 2032 than 2022. In total, employment (not accounting for exits or transfers) is projected to decrease by 25,383 jobs in these occupations, the majority of which require a high school diploma or less education. The occupations expected to experience the largest declines include:

- Office Clerks, General (-1,620)
- Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks (-1,694)
- Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, except Legal, Medical, and Executive (-2,490)
- Cashiers (-2,911)
- Cooks, Fast Food (-3,208)

Figure 45 - Change in Employment by Required Education, 2022-2032



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2022-2032 KY Occupational Outlook," (accessed June 2025)

High school diplomas and bachelor's degrees are the two levels of educational attainment that typically grant workers entry to the widest variety of occupations, with the former qualifying workers for 271 unique occupations across the state, and the latter granting access to 160 additional occupations. Advanced postsecondary degrees (Master's, Doctoral, and other professional degrees) grant access to 97 occupations that lower levels of educational attainment do not.

Occupations can be classified as high, moderate, or basic skill by typical education required for entry.

- High skill occupations consist of those occupations requiring a bachelor's degree, master's degree or a doctoral or professional degree.
- Moderate skill occupations include occupations requiring an associate degree, postsecondary non-degree award, or some college with no degree.
- Basic skill occupations include occupations requiring either a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education.

The occupations with the most projected job openings for each skill group are shown in Table 6. Among high skill occupations, the most openings will occur in General and Operations Managers with an expected 44,788 openings by 2032. The median wage for this occupation was \$77,150 in 2025.

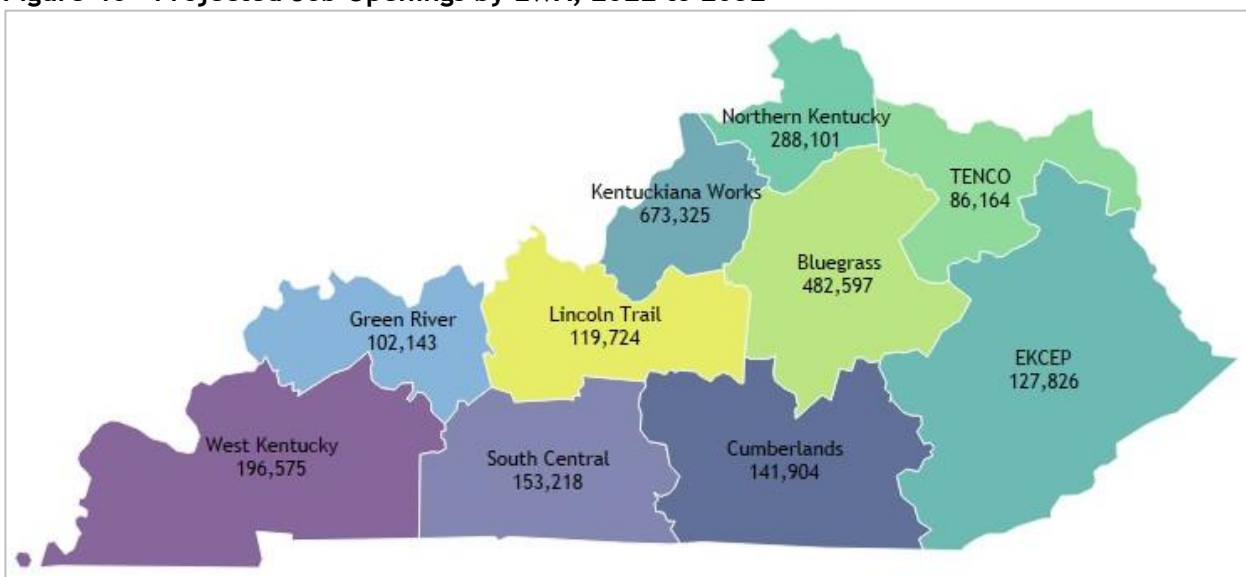
Table 6 - Most Job Openings by Skill Classification

		Job Openings					
SOC Code	SOC Title (Code)	Est. Emp.	Exits	Transfers	Change	Total	Median Wage
Basic Skill							
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	57,766	29,157	49,618	6,590	85,365	\$41,770
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	50,636	33,406	52,571	6,126	92,103	\$36,150
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	50,486	21,827	32,507	1,915	56,249	\$44,670
41-2011	Cashiers	47,823	44,596	44,935	-2,911	86,620	\$26,970
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	45,727	30,540	36,835	1,598	68,973	\$29,450
Moderate Skill							
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	31,109	14,589	18,878	2,234	35,701	\$55,590
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	29,397	18,509	14,552	-1,694	31,367	\$45,260
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	19,916	12,976	16,050	1,174	30,200	\$37,330
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	13,306	7,621	7,904	127	15,652	\$29,220
31-9092	Medical Assistants	13,085	6,569	11,249	1,831	19,649	\$38,750
High Skill							
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	51,299	13,172	28,413	3,203	44,788	\$77,150
29-1141	Registered Nurses	47,295	16,217	10,048	3,105	29,370	\$79,910
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	16,947	5,726	5,605	211	11,542	\$57,980
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	13,068	4,133	6,063	642	10,838	\$72,220
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	11,692	3,419	3,801	185	7,405	\$60,420

Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2022-2032 KY Occupational Outlook," and Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), "2025 Statewide Wage & Employment" (accessed June 2025)

Kentucky's ten LWAs are expected to experience uneven growth, with nine of the 10 LWAs growing by 2.2 percent to 5.8 percent by 2032. Five LWA's are expected to grow between 5.5 and 5.8 percent: Kentuckiana Works, Northern Kentucky, South Central, Bluegrass, and Cumberlands. The fastest growing area is projected to be Lincoln Trail (7.2 percent). The remainder will see growth between 2.2 and 4.1 percent.

Figure 46 - Projected Job Openings by LWA, 2022 to 2032



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2022-2032 KY Occupational Outlook," (accessed June 2025)

The following table presents total projected job openings for the LWAs (Table 7). Current and projected employment as well as total openings and contributions to openings are shown.

Table 7 - Job Openings by LWA

LWA	2022 Estimated Employment	2032 Projected Employment	Change	Exits	Transfers	Total Openings
Bluegrass	411,733	434,820	23,087	201,640	257,870	482,597
Cumberlands	117,652	124,153	6,501	60,381	75,022	141,904
EKCEP	113,569	116,022	2,453	56,935	68,438	127,826
Green River	89,776	91,926	2,150	44,058	55,935	102,143
Kentuckiana Works	576,283	609,708	33,425	277,987	361,913	673,325
Lincoln Trail	99,270	106,373	7,103	49,391	63,230	119,724
Northern Kentucky	240,252	254,094	13,842	118,048	156,211	288,101
South Central	127,130	134,341	7,211	64,284	81,723	153,218
TENCO	74,517	76,811	2,294	37,540	46,330	86,164
West Kentucky	167,672	174,598	6,926	83,470	106,179	196,575

Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2022-2032 KY Occupational Outlook," (accessed June 2025)

The following images are from the Occupational Outlook, an interactive dashboard which explores 2022-2032 long-term occupational projections for Kentucky and its LWAs, augmented with education and training requirement data. The highlighted region on the map indicates the area for which projections are being displayed.

The bar graph in the upper right displays the total number of projected job openings for a specific area in the next ten years, and the projected levels of each type of event that can produce an opening (Exits, Transfers, and Change).

The 'Educational Attainment' section provides context for the percent of projected job openings in a given area that require each level of educational attainment. Two additional bar charts show the

cumulative percentage of openings above the median wage and the share of projected openings above a selected wage (the default setting is the state median wage for all occupations, \$43,730).

At the bottom of the dashboard, the total projected openings and median wage estimates are provided for the five occupations by educational attainment expected to produce the most job openings in the next ten years in the selected area.

The Full Occupation Listing dashboard provides users with a sortable list of all available occupations. Clicking on any field name will automatically sort the list of occupations by that field in descending order, and a second click will sort in ascending order. The 'Area' and 'Typical Education Required' filters will filter the table appropriately. The 'Group' filter will limit the table to only those occupations within each of the major SOC groups (e.g., Production Occupations, or Legal Occupations). The 'Keyword' search bar allows users to filter the table to only those occupations with titles containing the entered text.

Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
Kentucky

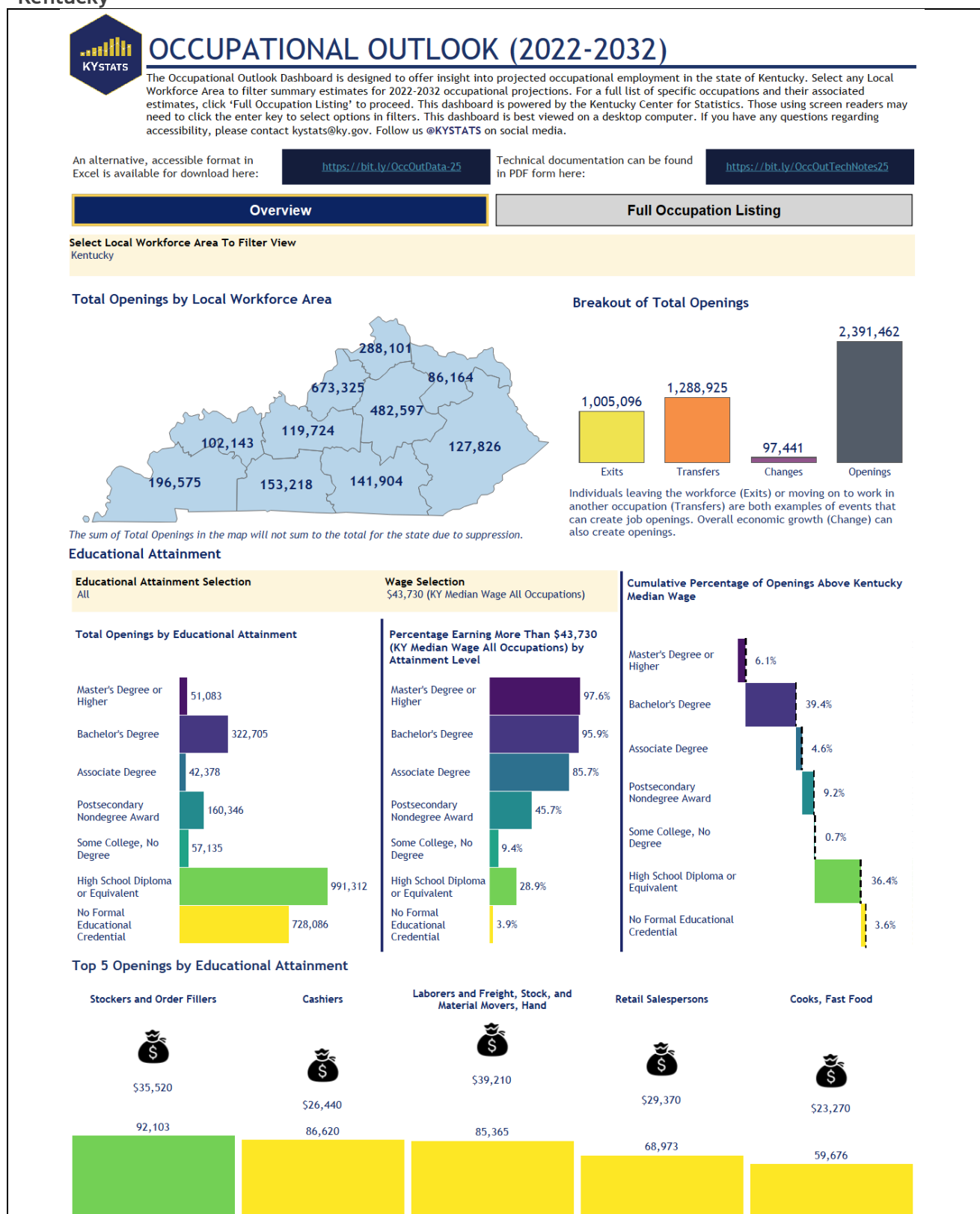


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
Bluegrass LWA

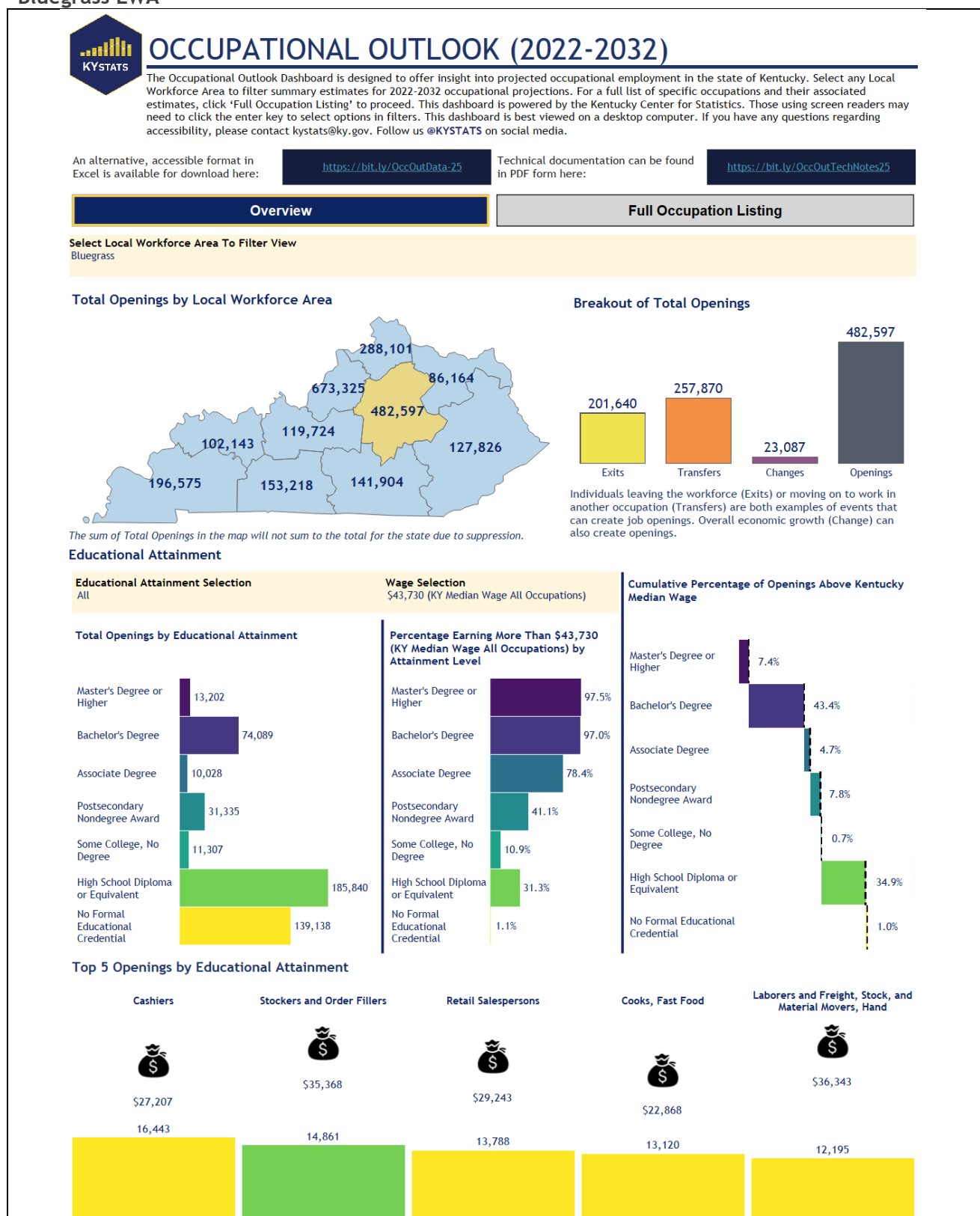


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
Cumberlands LWA

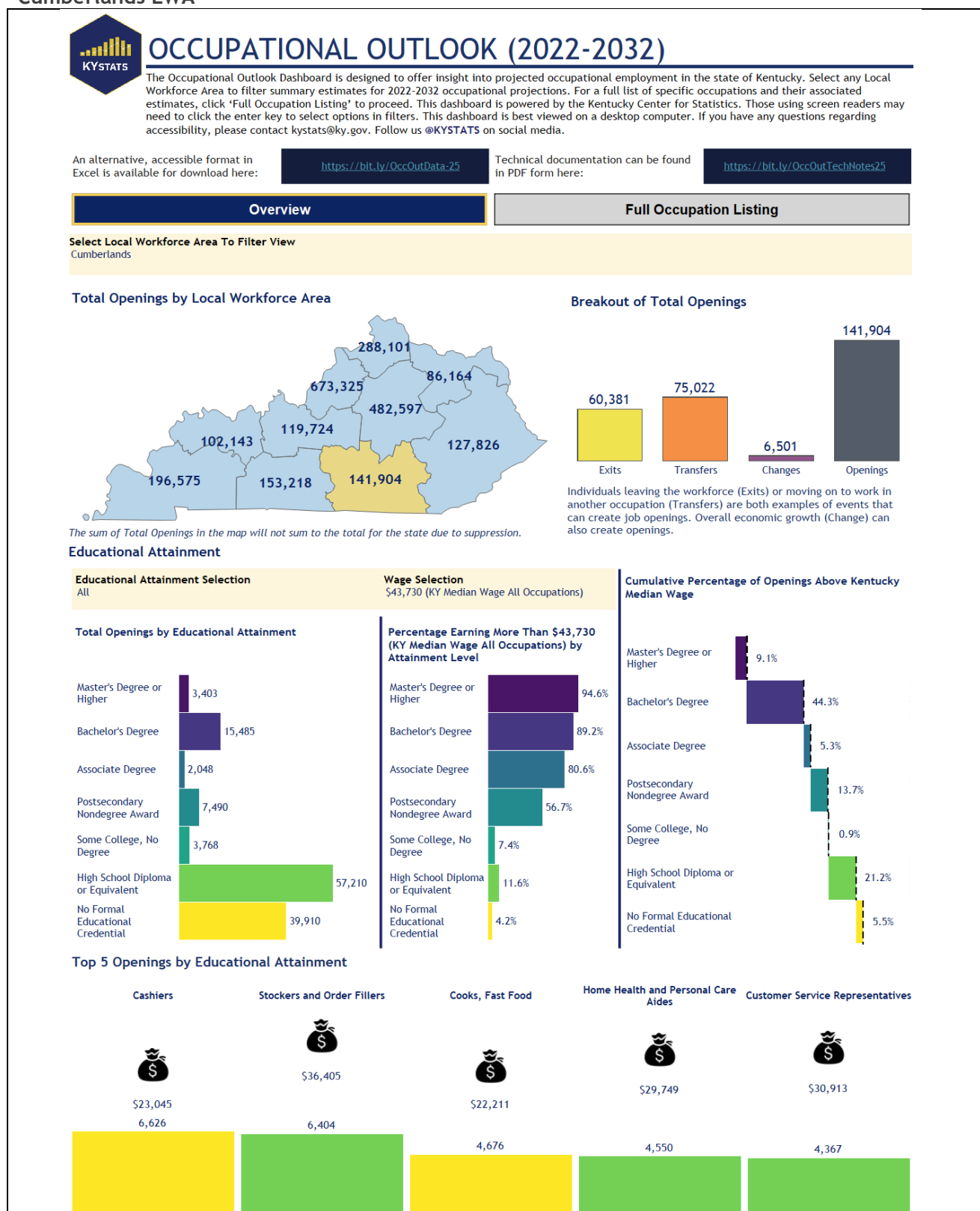


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
EKCEP LWA

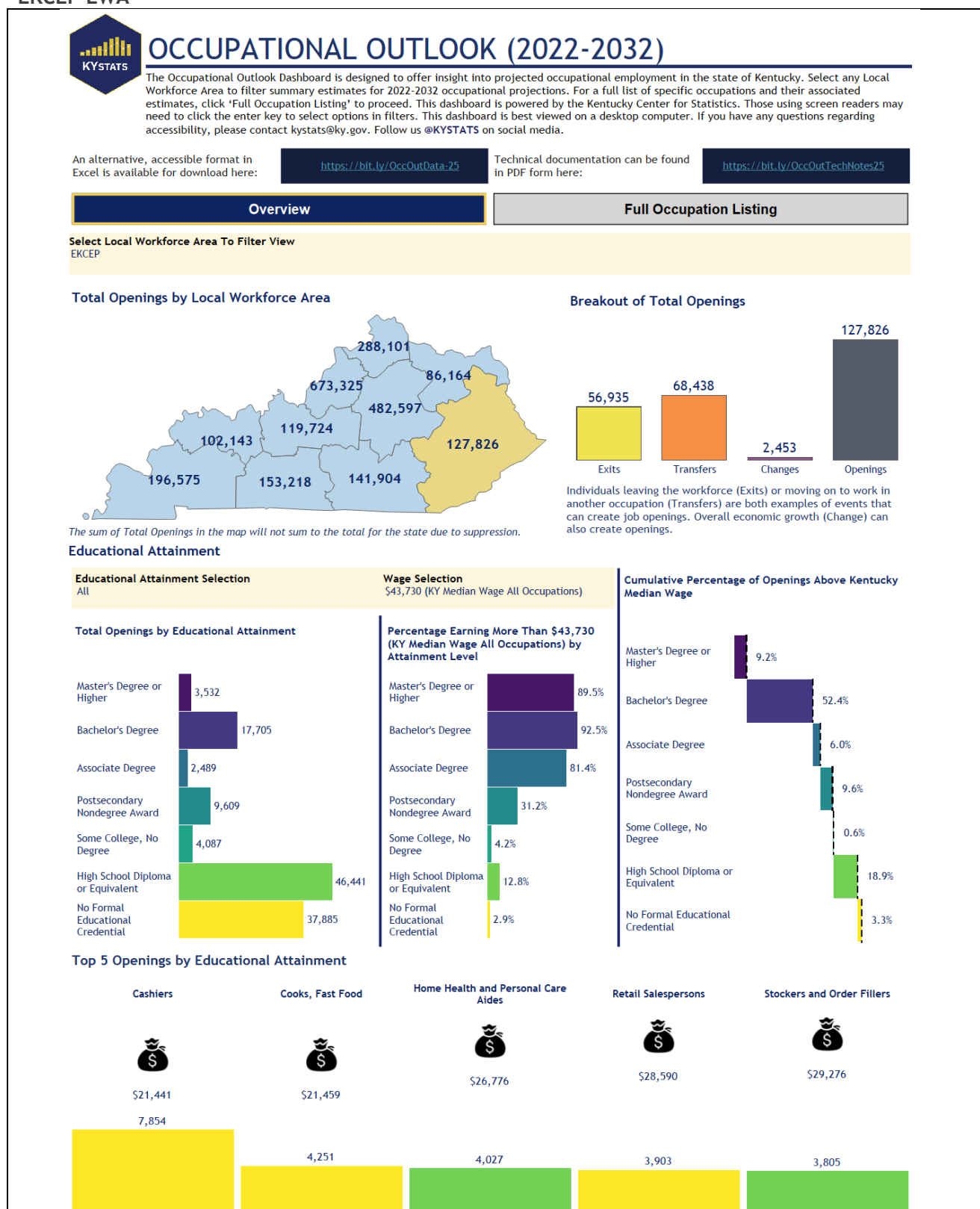


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
Green River LWA

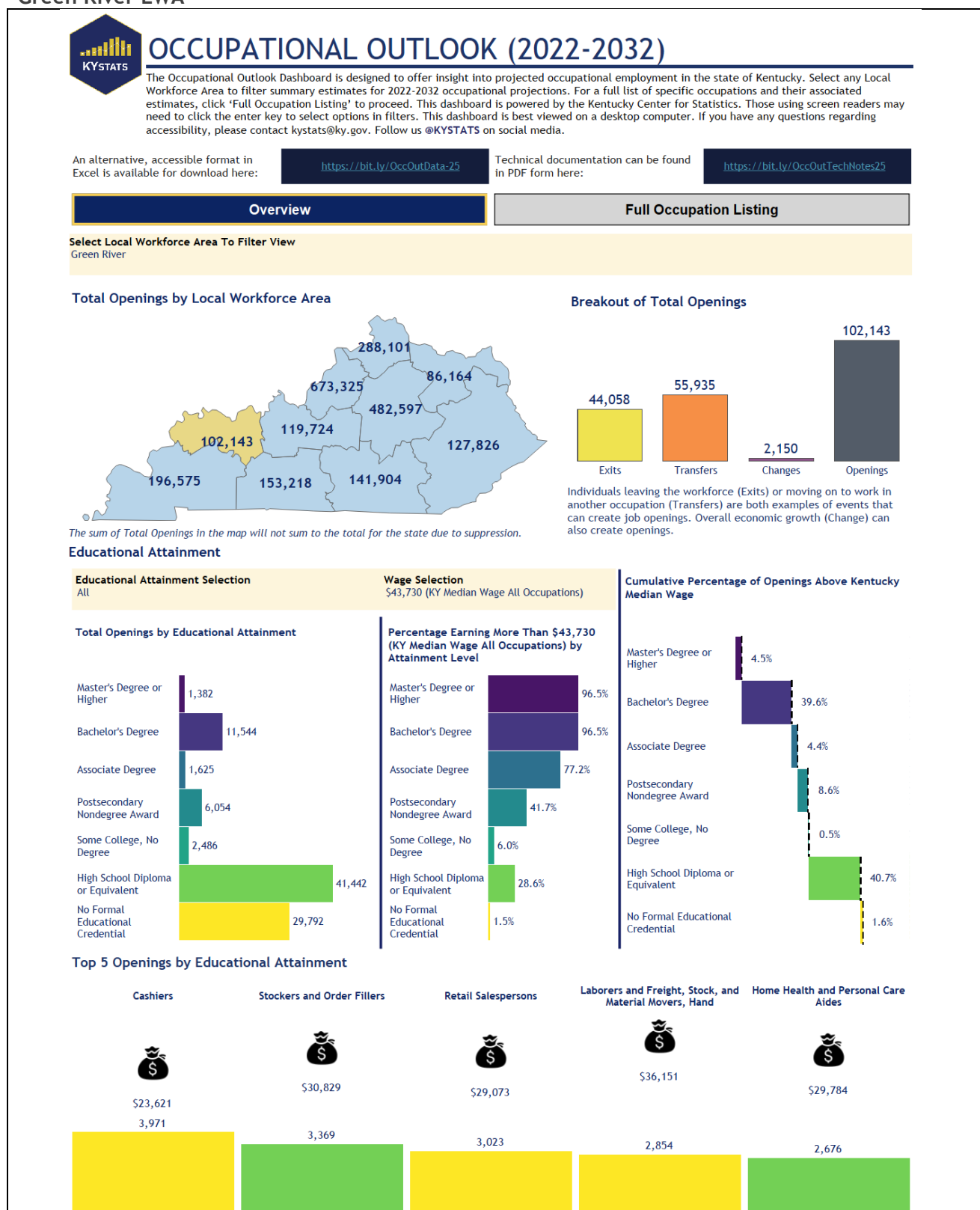


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
Kentuckiana Works LWA

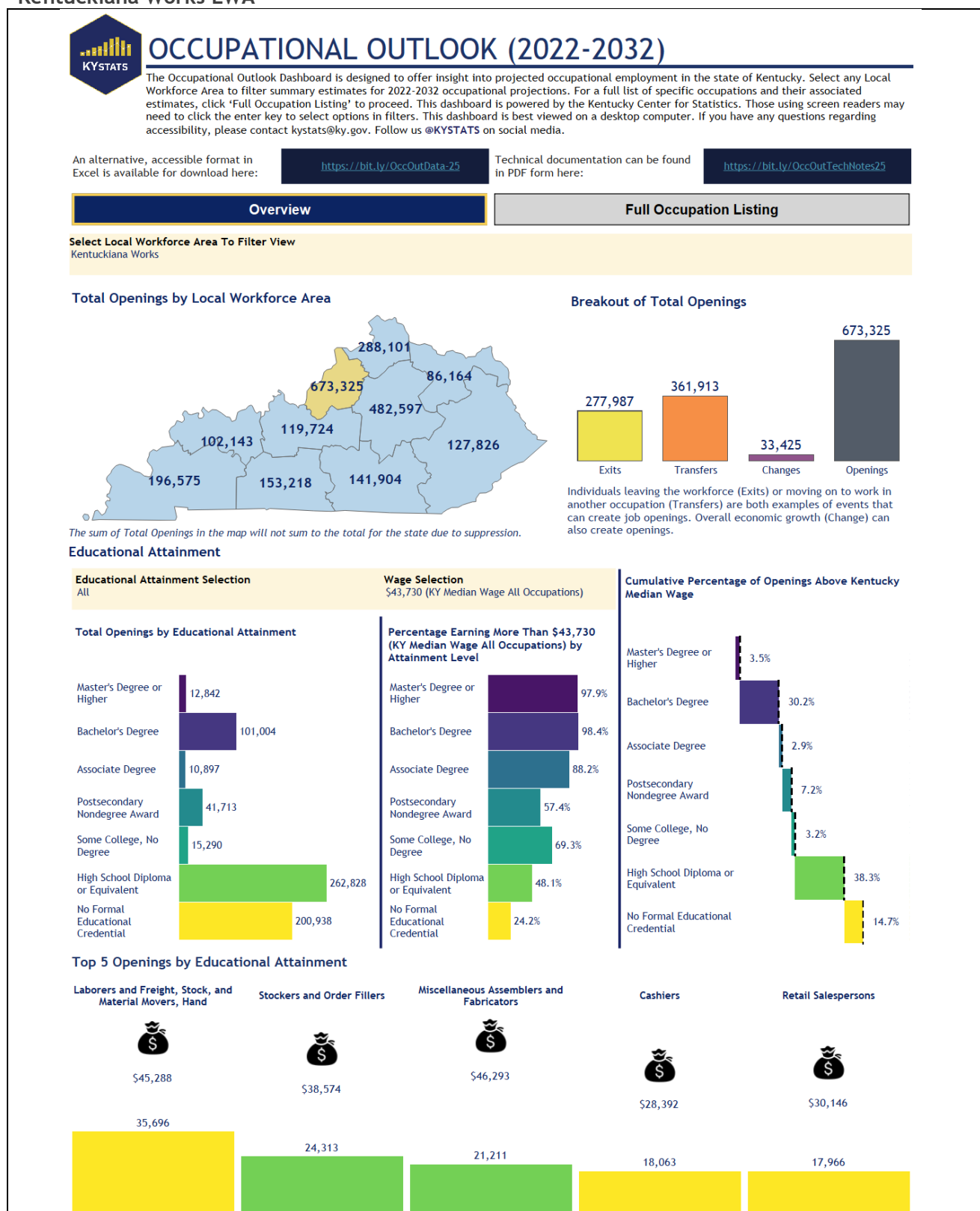


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
Lincoln Trail LWA

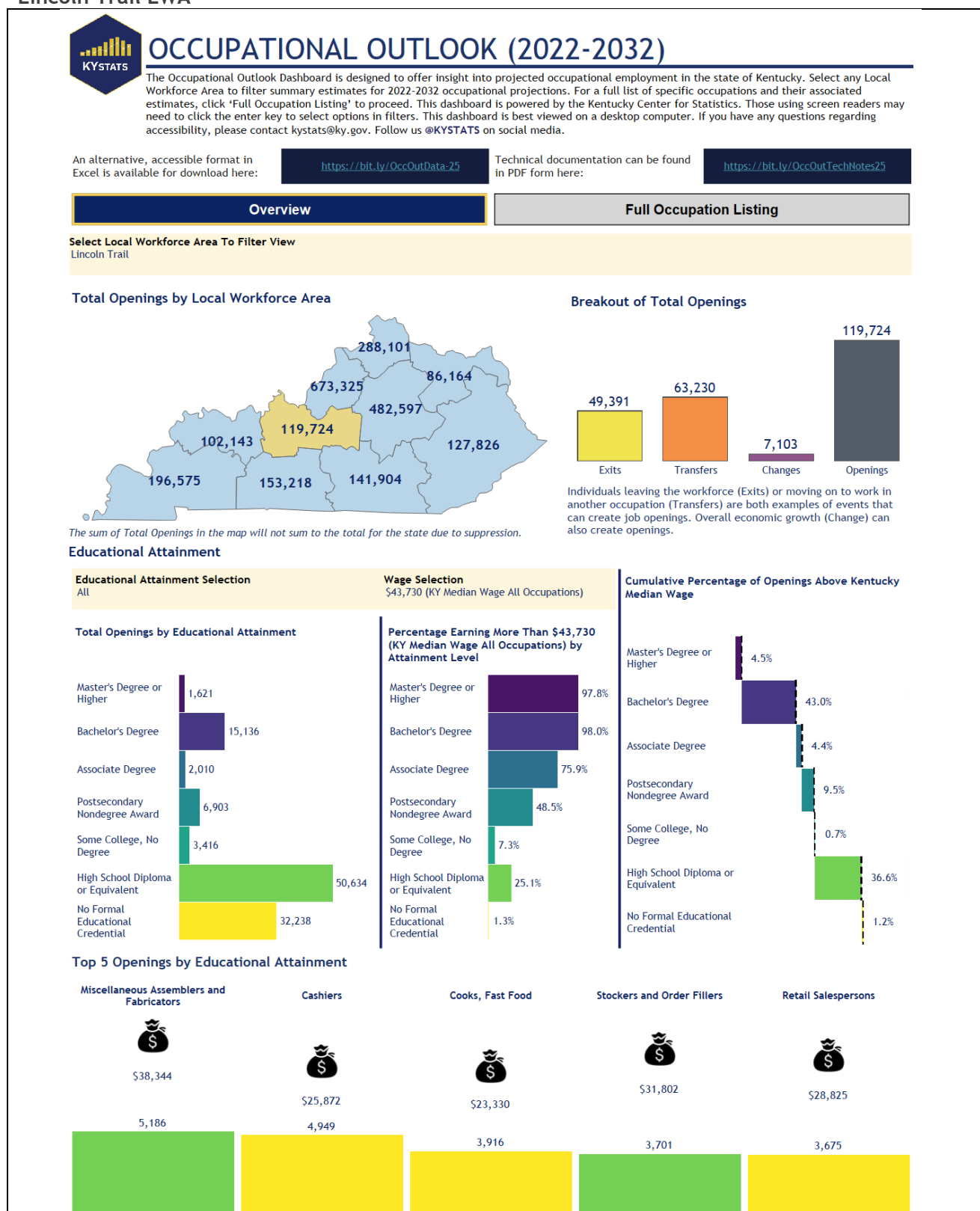


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
Northern Kentucky LWA

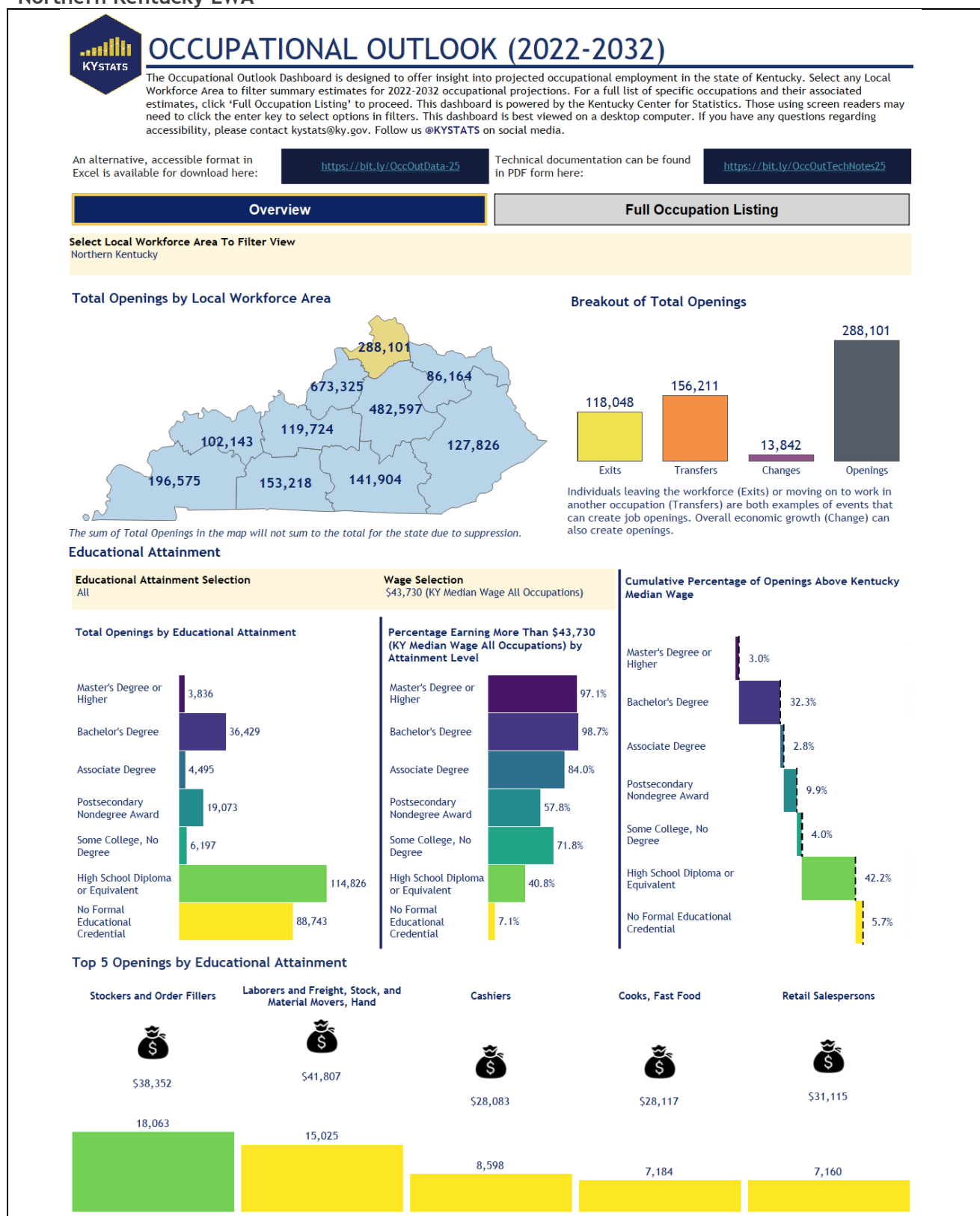


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
South Central LWA

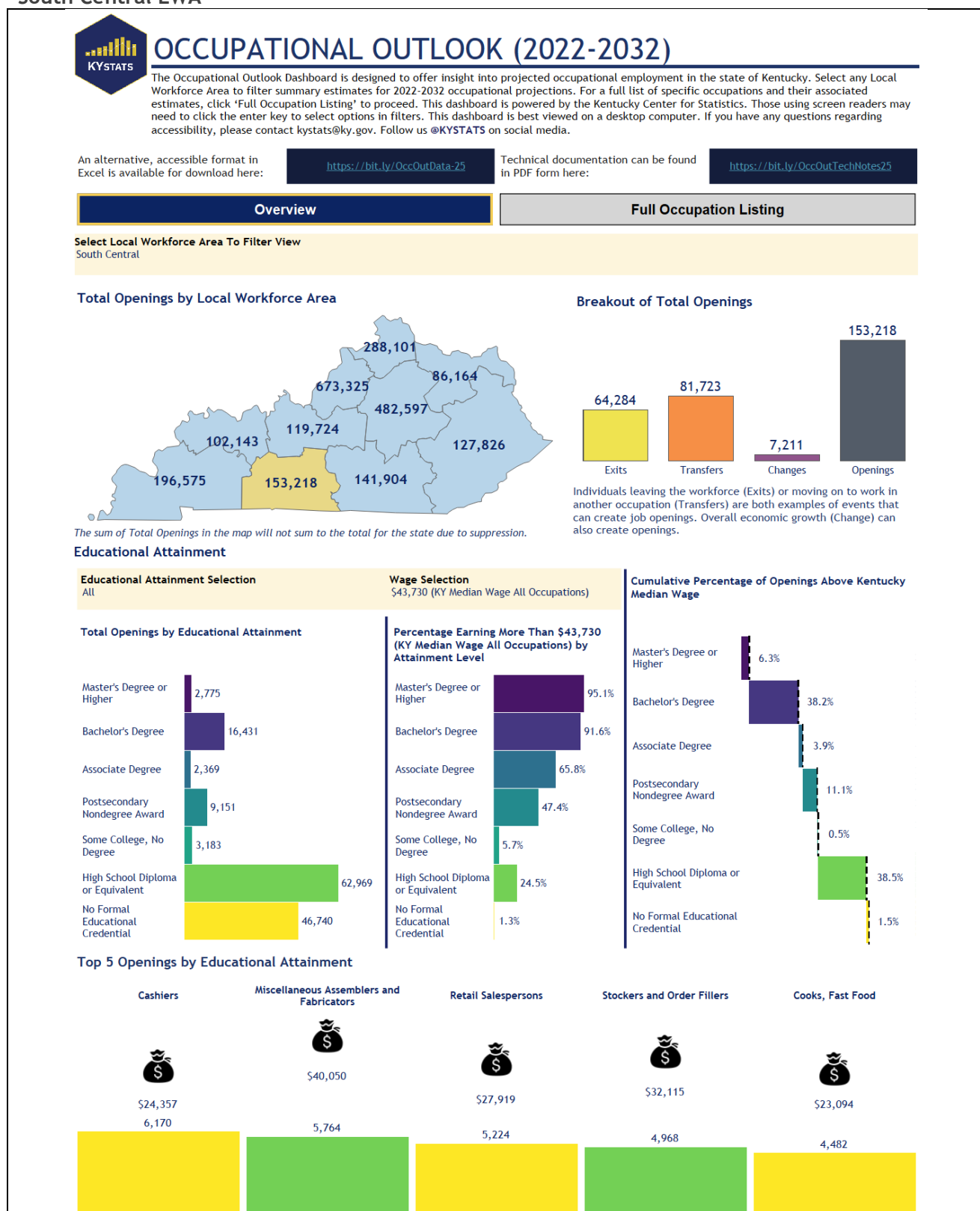


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
TENCO LWA

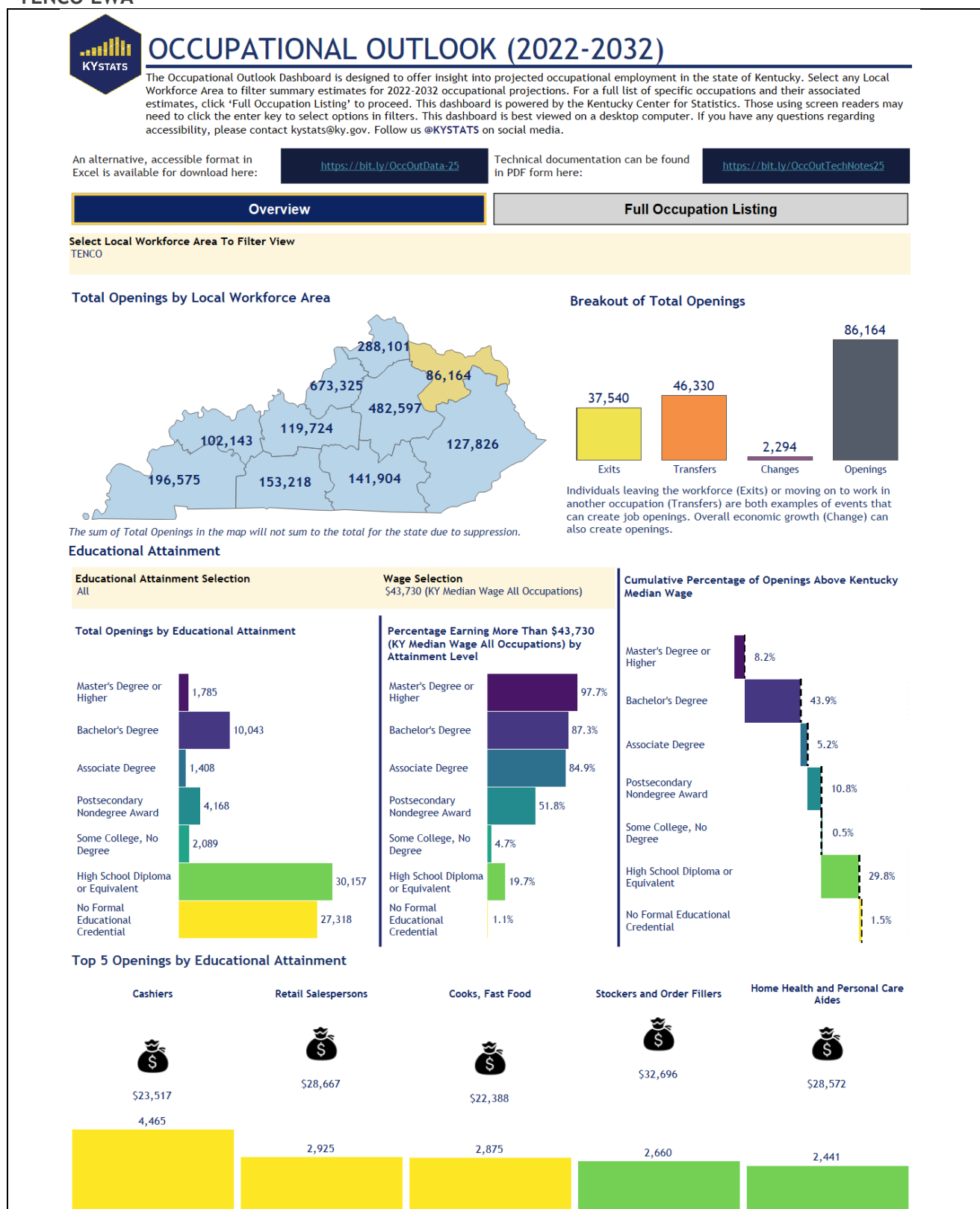
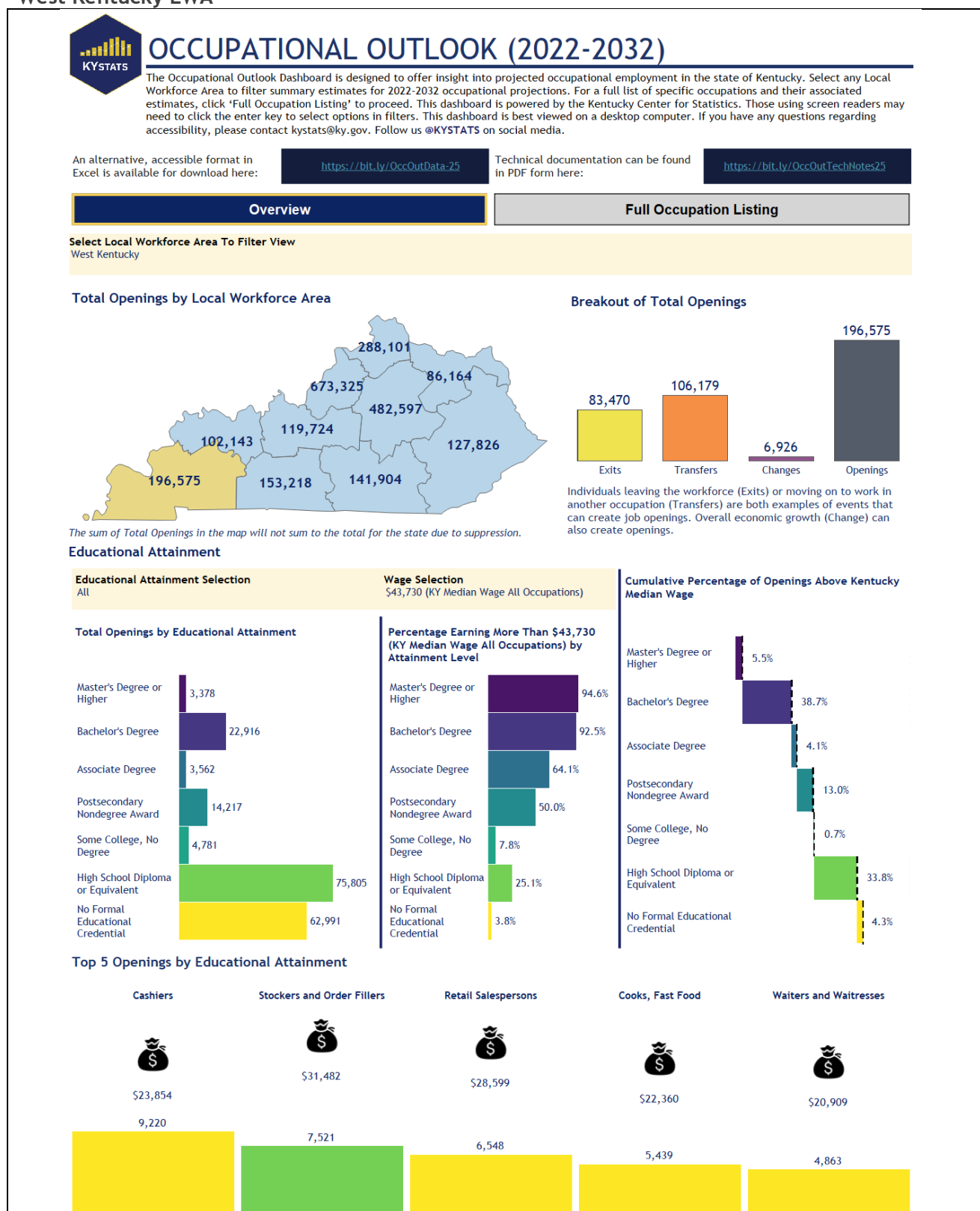


Figure 47 - Kentucky Occupational Outlook by LWA, 2022 to 2032
West Kentucky LWA



Source: KYSTATS, Labor Market Information Branch, "2022-2032 KY Occupational Outlook," (accessed July 2025)