

Workforce Supply

- **Workforce Development Region 9 has a 105,167-strong available labor pool that includes 83,415 underemployed workers who are looking for better jobs, as well as 21,752 unemployed residents.**

The underemployed are willing to commute longer times and distances for a better job. For the one-way commute, about 48.0 percent are prepared to travel 20 or more minutes longer and 44.0 percent will go 20 or more extra miles.

Labor Force	318,921
Employed	297,169
Underemployment rate	28.1%
Number of underemployed workers	83,415
Unemployed	21,752
Available labor pool	105,167

Note: Based on March 2016 labor force data.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama and Alabama Department of Labor.

- **More people are traveling to work in Region 9. Commute times dropped in 2015 from 2014 while distances were about the same implying that congestion eased in the region. However, as the economy recovers from the last recession congestion is likely to worsen.**

Continuous maintenance and development of the region's transportation infrastructure and systems is essential because impeding the mobility of workers and the flow of goods can slow economic development.

- **Region 9 has roughly similar educational attainment as the state while population growth is currently faster due to population growth in Baldwin County.**

	Region 9	AL
Population growth, 2010-2015	2.6%	1.7%
<i>Educational attainment, age 25 and over</i>		
High School or higher	84.9%	83.7%
Bachelor's or higher degree	21.6%	23.1%

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama and U.S. Census Bureau.

Workforce Demand

- **Employment declined due to last recession but is expected to grow faster than the region's labor force.**
- **By sector, the five largest employers in the region provided 154,927 jobs (58.6 percent of the region's 264,393 total) in the first quarter of 2015.**

Industry	Employment	Share
Retail Trade	37,401	14.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	35,171	13.3%
Manufacturing	30,547	11.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	27,641	10.5%
Educational Services	24,167	9.1%

Source: Alabama Department of Labor and U.S. Census Bureau.

- **On average 14,458 jobs were created per quarter from second quarter 2001 to first quarter 2015; quarterly net job flows averaged 1,346.**

Job creation is the number of new jobs that are created either by new businesses or through expansion of existing firms. Net job flows reflect the difference between current and previous employment at all businesses.

- **The 50 highest earning occupations are mostly in the fields of management, health, postsecondary education, and engineering and have a minimum mean salary of \$77,721. Only one of these does not require a bachelor's or higher degree. Eight of the top 10 are health occupations.**
- **The top five high-demand occupations are:**
Registered Nurses
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
Personal Care Aides
Computer User Support Specialists
Medical Assistants

- **The top five fast-growing occupations are:**
Athletic Trainers
Occupational Therapists
Personal Care Aides
Occupational Therapy Assistants
Physical Therapist Assistants.

- **Nine jobs are high-earning and in high-demand:**
Construction Managers
Management Analysts
Medical and Health Services Managers
Anesthesiologists
Computer and Information Systems Managers
Personal Financial Advisors
Nurse Practitioners
Surgeons
Physician Assistants

- **The region has 12 jobs that are both fast-growing and in high-demand:**
Occupational Therapists
Personal Care Aides
Physical Therapist Assistants
Avionics Technicians
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
Physical Therapists
Aerospace Engineers
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians
Computer User Support Specialists
Operations Research Analysts
Physician Assistants
Medical Secretaries

- **Only one occupation is in all three categories:**
Physician Assistants

Implications for Workforce Development

- **Worker shortfalls of about 29,800 and 54,400 are estimated by 2022 and 2030, respectively.**

Change from 2012	2022	2030
Total population growth	7.3	11.8
Age 20-64 population growth	1.6	1.4
Job growth	12.3	20.8
Worker shortfall (percent)	10.6	19.4
Worker shortfall (number)	29,831	54,437

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

A focus on worker skills and the projected shortfalls must be a high priority through 2030. Worker shortfalls in critical occupations will also need to be addressed continuously.

- **Strategies to address skill needs and critical occupation shortfalls should aim at increasing labor force participation and raising worker productivity.**

Such strategies might include:

1. Improving education and its funding
2. Continuing and enhancing programs to assess, retrain, and place dislocated workers
3. Focusing on hard-to-serve populations (e.g. out-of-school youth)
4. Lowering the high school dropout rate
5. Using economic opportunities to attract new residents
6. Facilitating in-commuting
7. Encouraging older worker participation

- **Investment in education/training and skills development is crucial.**

Improving education is important because: (a) a highly educated and productive workforce is a critical economic development asset, (b) productivity rises with additional education, (c) more educated people are more likely to work, and (d) education yields high private and social rates of return on investment.

Publicizing both private and public returns to education can encourage individuals to raise their own educational attainment levels and also promote public and legislative support for education.

Higher incomes that come with improved educational attainment and work skills would help increase personal income for the region as well as raise additional local (county and city) tax revenues. This is important, even for a region that has moderate population and labor force growth rates.

Of the region's 711 single occupations, 65 are expected to decline over the 2012 to 2022 period. Twenty occupations are expected to see a sharp decline of at least 10.0 percent with each losing a minimum of 10 jobs. Education and training for declining occupations should slow accordingly.

- **Skill and education requirements keep rising. In the future, more jobs will require postsecondary education and training at a minimum.**

The importance of basic skills generally and for high-demand, high-growth, and high-earning jobs indicates a strong need for training in these skills.

The pace of training needs to increase for technical, resource management, and two basic (science and mathematics) skills while the scale of training is raised for basic and social skills.

Ideally, all high school graduates should possess basic skills so that postsecondary and higher education can focus on other and more complex skills.

Employers should be an integral part of planning for training as they can help identify future skill needs and any existing gaps.

- **Economic development should target high-earning industries and workforce development should ensure the availability of workers for such industries.**

Economic development should aim to diversify and strengthen the Region 9 economy by retaining, expanding, and attracting more high-wage providing industries. This is necessary even though large employment sectors pay higher than average wages.

- **Workforce development and economic development can together build a strong and well-diversified Region 9 economy. Indeed, one cannot achieve success without the other.**

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