2022

State of Working Vermont 2022

DECEMBER 2022

PUBLIC ASSETS INSTITUTE

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WHEN do we get back to normal? It's a pressing question after the turmoil we've been through since 2020. More than 140,000 Vermonters contracted COVID-19; over 700 of them died. Even those who escaped illness had their daily lives upended, with schools and businesses closed, work and income lost, and anxiety about the virus's next mutation.

Yes, Vermonters are longing for stability and security. But to take stock for a moment, do we really want to go *back* to normal?

No. As the evidence in State of Working Vermont 2022 shows, **we need a new normal**: a Vermont where state tax and budget policies advance social, racial, and economic equity. Where the state raises and spends money adequately and equitably, and the promise of the "People's Budget" added to statute 10 years ago is realized: "Spending and revenue policies will ... recognize every person's need for health, housing, dignified work, education, food, social security, and a healthy environment."

We also want to build on the spirit of solidarity awakened by the pandemic. During those years, workers long overlooked were recognized as essential. Historical racialized health inequities became more obvious. Many people came to understand that economic and social needs are shared—and deserving of collective attention and action, both by communities and government.

Vermont had **problems before the pandemic**:

- Household income—which means wages for most people—was barely keeping up with inflation.
- In 2019, **58,000** Vermonters—or **one in 11**—were living in poverty.
- By 2019, after a decade of slow job growth, Vermont had over **316,300** nonfarm jobs, just **2.5** percent more than before the Great Recession of 2008-09.

Then the pandemic struck. It caused a lot of suffering—in part because Washington failed to mount the coherent, science-based public health response that would have saved thousands of lives.

But government, both at the federal and state levels, also did some things right. The feds sent out direct economic stimulus payments, supplemental unemployment checks, and tax credits. Thanks largely to increases in the federal Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit, poverty declined in Vermont in 2020 and 2021. Vermont directed discretionary funds to boost essential workers' pay and expand eligibility for food programs and temporary housing. Consumer spending rose, the economy grew, and the state took in hundreds of millions in new tax revenue. People-centered pandemic-related policies gave us a glimpse of how we all can benefit when low- and moderate-income families have more money in their pockets.

It's time to create a Vermont that works for everyone

We also saw how state policy can directly address racial disparities. In response to pressure from advocates, the Vermont Department of Health started tracking COVID statistics by race, in addition to age and sex. When initial tracking showed Vermonters of color disproportionately falling ill, the department worked with community partners to adjust its vaccination program to reach people who appeared most vulnerable to the virus.

Vermonters—neighbors, nonprofits, businesses—had come together and helped each other weather the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. But communities cannot go it alone. Aggressive actions by both Washington and Montpelier demonstrated what government can do to meet people's needs, whether urgent or ongoing.

Unfortunately, much of the government's response was short-lived—and COVID isn't over. Americans are still dying from it, and no doubt new variants will emerge. Shortages, supply chain issues, global inflation, and private sector profiteering still vex the marketplace. While demand for workers drove up wages at the low end, over the last year and a half Vermonters' family budgets have been stretched to the limit. Vermont has little control over these larger forces. But the state can—and should—invest in the public services and infrastructure that can shield people from the worst effects of those forces. The need for government action has not passed.

In **State of Working Vermont 2022**, we recall some key indicators from 2019, before COVID-19 arrived. We compare those with data showing where things stood at the end of 2021 and, when information is available, in 2022. How are Vermonters doing? Are they better or worse off since the pandemic began? How have life, home and work—and Vermonters themselves—changed? And what did government intervention accomplish?

The report is divided into four sections:

BIG PICTURE Vermont's economy bounced back in 2021 and continued to grow into 2022, largely due to the influx of federal COVID relief funds. But high inflation has been worrying consumers and slowing growth.

LIFE Vermont saw a decrease in poverty and an increase in household income thanks to federal COVID aid. But the effects were temporary. And poverty among Vermonters 65 and older has increased.

HOME Rents and housing prices were rising even before the pandemic, but a spike in migration to Vermont increased demand for homes and probably drove a bigger rise in 2021. And more Vermonters found themselves homeless than before the pandemic.

WORK The pandemic was the biggest disruptor of work since the Great Depression. Those two years saw record unemployment, albeit short lived, people leaving the workforce, and many job changes. While jobs and workers are coming back, some industries, like hospitality, have not recovered. Women have been slower to return to jobs, and labor force participation is at its lowest level in over 40 years.

Vermont, like the rest of the country, is still dealing with the effects of the pandemic, and it's not yet clear which changes are temporary and which more lasting. But this much the pandemic taught us: We cannot return to the status quo pre-pandemic.

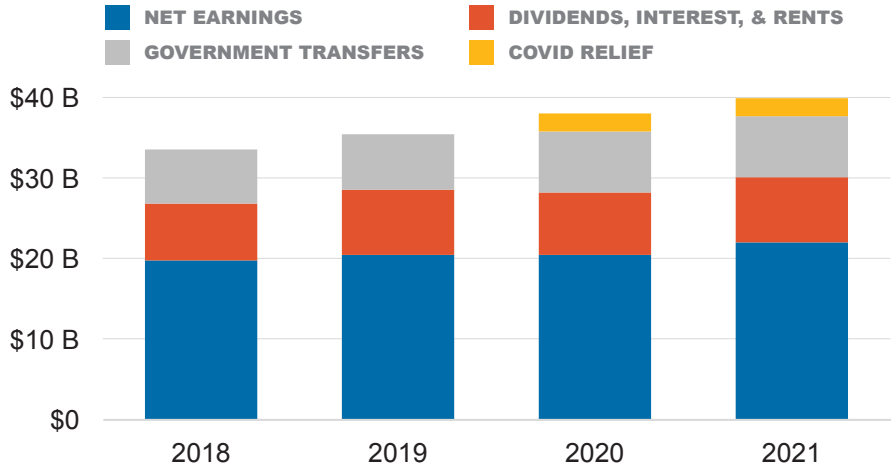
Whether the need is child care, health care, housing, food, clean water, or livable wages, **it's time to create a Vermont that works for everyone.**

BIG PICTURE

Vermont's total **personal income** saw steady growth, from $33.5 billion in 2018 to nearly $40 billion in 2021. This growth was helped along in 2020 and 2021 by federal COVID-related unemployment support, direct stimulus payments, and child tax credits.

Vermont's personal income grew to $40 billion

Personal income, by major components, 2018-2021



Data source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

PERSONAL INCOME
Personal income is the total income received by people from most sources, including wages, salaries, self-employment, and certain investment income, as well as government and business transfer payments. It does not include capital gains.

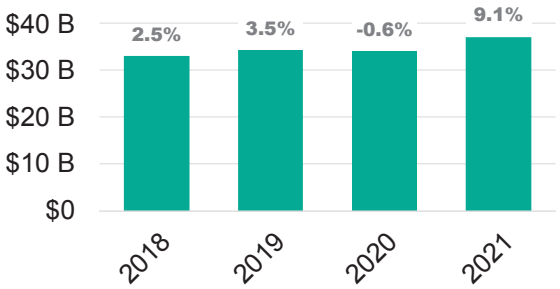
GROSS STATE PRODUCT
Gross state product (GSP) is the total value of goods and services produced by the state. It is the state counterpart of gross domestic product (GDP), the total national output.

While personal income climbed steadily, Vermont's economy had a bumpier ride. **Gross state product** declined at the start of the pandemic, then bounced back to a new high of $37.1 billion in 2021, a 9.1 percent increase in nominal—or non-inflation-adjusted—GSP over 2020. More than $10 billion of federal COVID relief contributed to this rise.

While federal funds will continue to flow in for a year or more, the Federal Reserve Board is aggressively raising interest rates to slow the economy and reduce inflation. State economist Tom Kavet summed up the situation in August 2022: "With one foot still on the gas and the other now slamming on the brakes, federal fiscal and monetary policies are generating opposing forces that will both confuse and control the economic environment, affecting the state economy and revenue flows in the coming years."

GSP bounced back in second COVID year after a decline in 2020

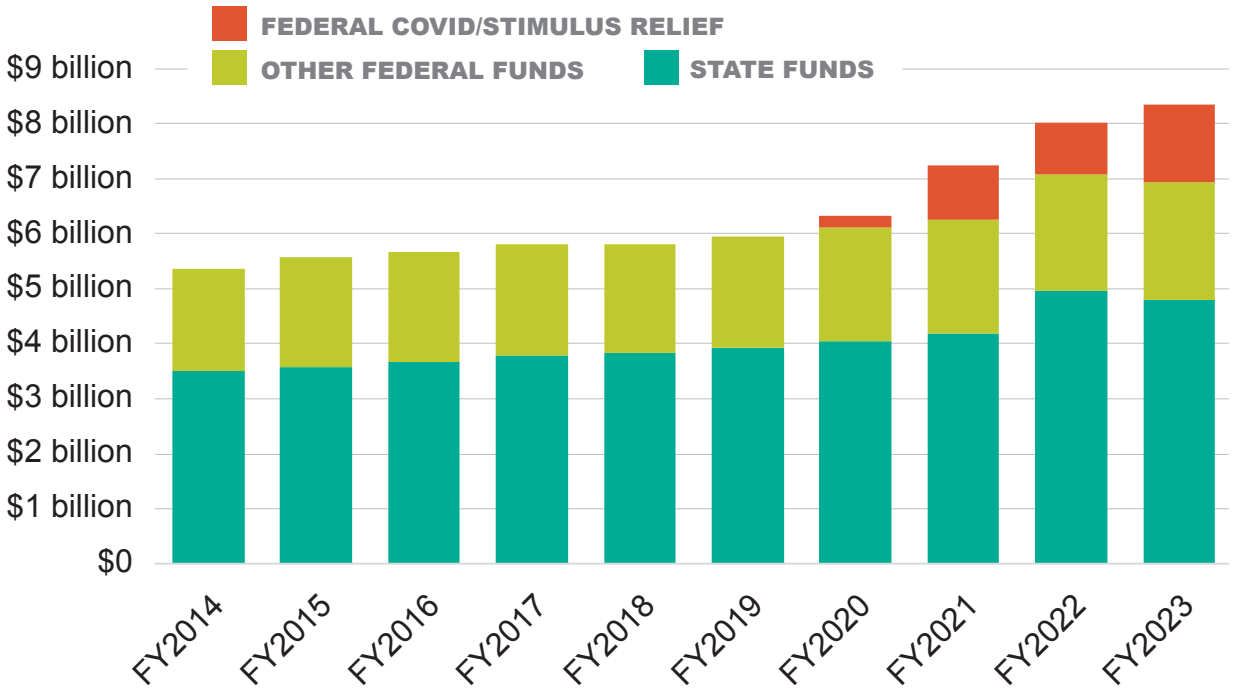
Vermont gross state product, 2018-2021, with annual change



Data source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

COVID relief boosted both federal and state funding

Total Vermont budget appropriations by funding source, FY2014-FY2023



Note: For FY2020-FY2023, federal COVID relief plus other federal funds represent total annual federal funds; allocation between these two categories for each year is estimated based on the pre-pandemic federal funding trend.

Data source: Vermont Joint Fiscal Office

STATE APPROPRIATIONS

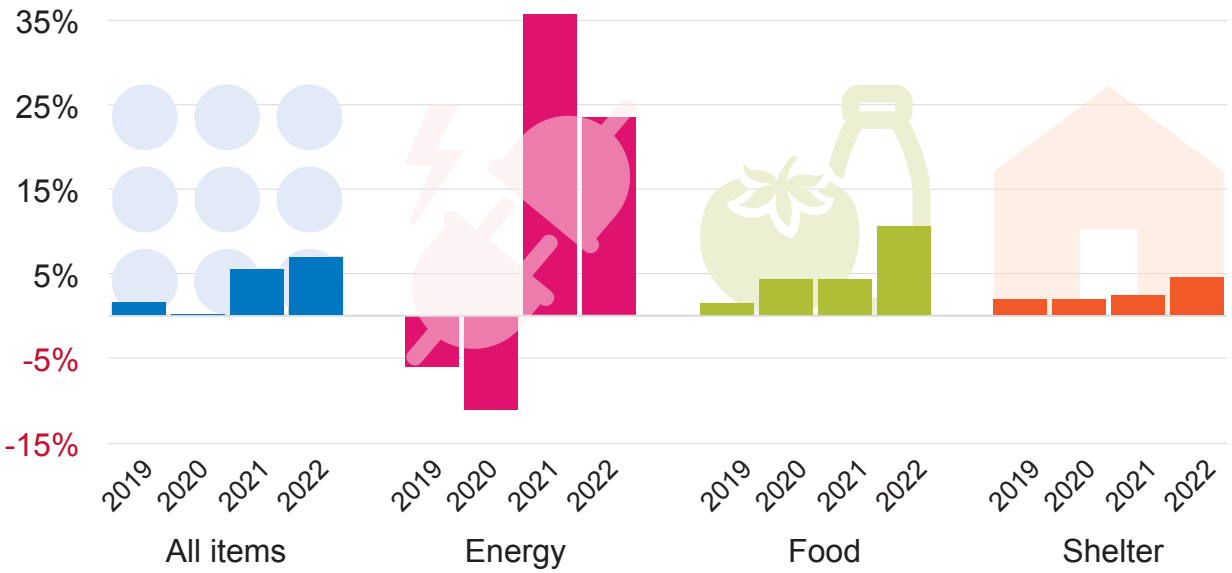
Vermont has a variety of government accounts that are supported by state taxes and fees. The primary accounts, comprising 90 percent of state funds, are the General Fund, Transportation Fund, and Education Fund. In addition, Vermont receives federal funds, which in normal times support about a third of the state's annual appropriations.

Vermont state government, along with businesses and individuals, received a massive amount of federal support to respond to the health and economic crises brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a small state, Vermont received the minimum allocation set by Congress when it approved some of the federal aid packages, which meant the state got more money per capita than many larger states. As intended, putting more money in people's pockets stimulated the economy, which in turn boosted state tax revenue. The direct and indirect effects of this federal assistance allowed Vermont to increase the state budget by about a third. Total state spending in fiscal 2019 was just under $6 billion. By fiscal 2022 it had risen to $8 billion and in fiscal 2023 will exceed $8.3 billion.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The consumer price index (CPI) is probably the best-known inflation indicator. It tracks changes in the cost of what is called a "market basket" of goods and services, which include food, energy, shelter, clothing, medical care, and transportation. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics issues the index, as well as price changes for individual components, nationally and by region monthly.

Energy costs are driving inflation 12-month percent change in selected consumer price indexes for New England, Oct. 2019-Oct. 2022



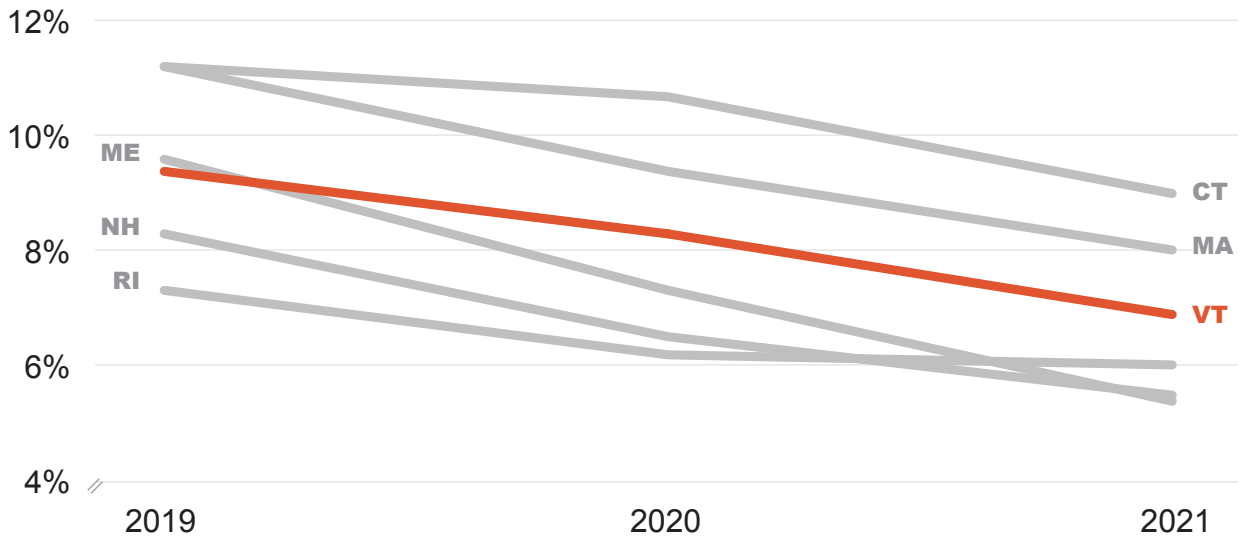
Data source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

After remaining largely in check for decades, inflation began to climb during the pandemic. Many factors have contributed. Climate change and drought affected food production. The war in Ukraine also squeezed food and oil supplies. OPEC and the giant oil companies have been accused of profiteering. And when consumers shifted their purchases from services to goods in the early days of the pandemic, manufacturers and sellers had trouble keeping up with demand; that too sent prices upward. In New England, the high price of energy has been a big driver of inflation, while the cost of food rose more than 10 percent between October 2021 and October 2022. These price increases are squeezing Vermonters' budgets. Hurting most are those who struggled to meet their basic needs before the pandemic.

LIFE

When government aid is counted, poverty fell during the pandemic

Percentage of population below the Supplemental Poverty Measure threshold, New England states, 2019-2021



Note: Due to small sample sizes, state estimates are rolling, 3-year averages. The year labels show the third year of each 3-year average.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement

SUPPLEMENTAL POVERTY MEASURE

The supplemental poverty measure includes cash income and noncash benefits like tax credits and child and health care subsidies. It also factors in the cost of food, clothing, shelter, and utilities.

Poverty in Vermont fell during the pandemic, according to the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), which includes the impact of government aid when assessing poverty. Thanks to federal pandemic relief paid to individuals, including expanded Earned Income Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits, just under 7 percent of Vermonters lived in poverty in 2021, compared with over 9 percent in 2019.

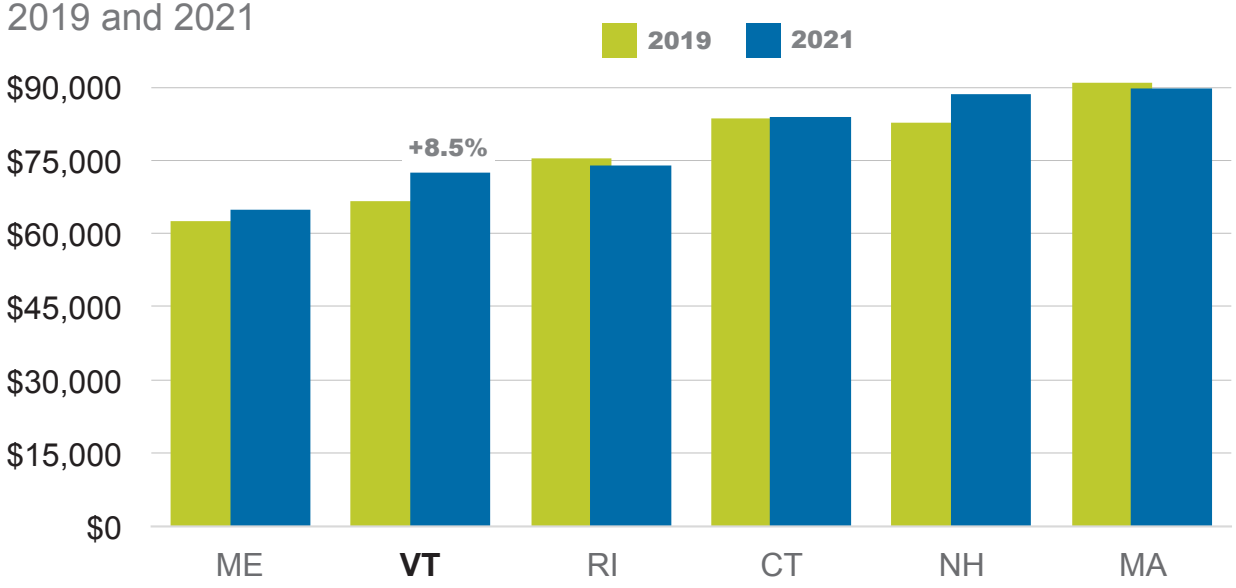
But that good news wasn't universal. For people 65 and older nationally, SPM ticked up from 9.5 percent in 2020 to 10.7 percent in 2021. While SPM is not available for Vermont by age, the official poverty rate, which does not count federal aid, showed an increase for older Vermonters from 2019 to 2021. The rise is probably a sign of the pandemic "disproportionately disrupting the employment and income of older people," as the New York Times put it.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median household income is the middle amount of annual income—half of Vermont households receive more than the median and half receive less. Household income includes the income of all household members over the age of 15.

Vermont household income growth rate topped New England states

Median household income, adjusted for inflation, 2019 and 2021

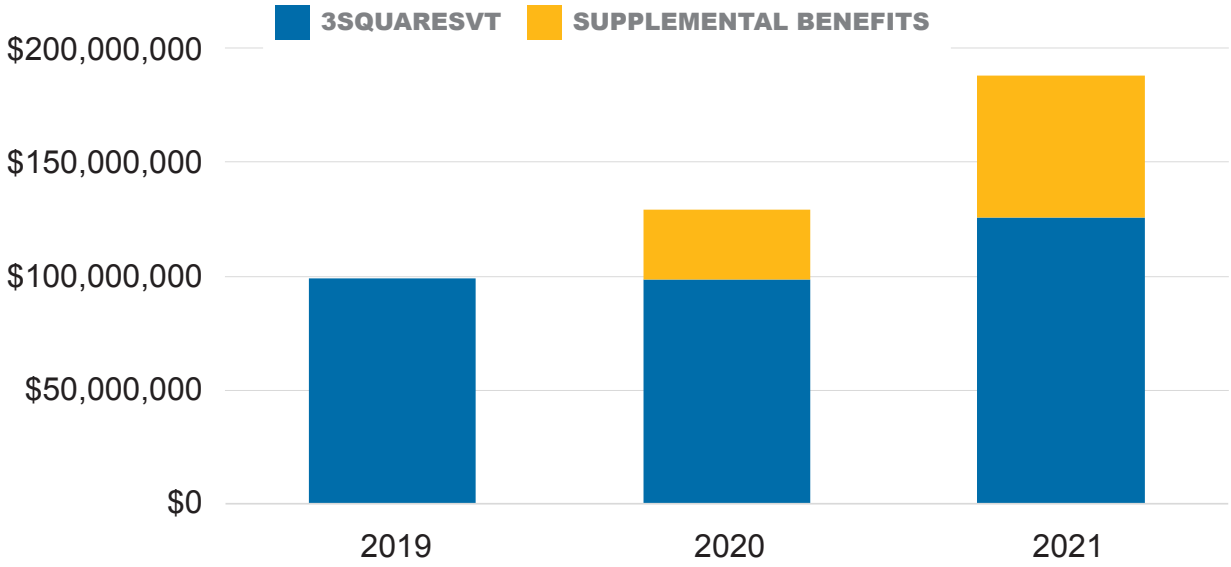


Data source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities analysis of American Community Survey 1-year estimates, 2019 and 2021

Vermont's household income grew 8.5 percent—from $66,766 to $72,431—between 2019 and 2021. The jump followed a decade of slow growth after the Great Recession and was helped by massive federal aid during the pandemic, including supplemental unemployment insurance. Vermont's rate of growth was the fastest in New England, and this was the first time the state's median household income surpassed $70,000. But that income still lagged behind most of the region's.

3SquaresVT nearly doubled food aid

Federal cash assistance for 3SquaresVT participants, 2019-2021



Data source: Vermont Department for Children and Families

3SQUARESVT ASSISTANCE

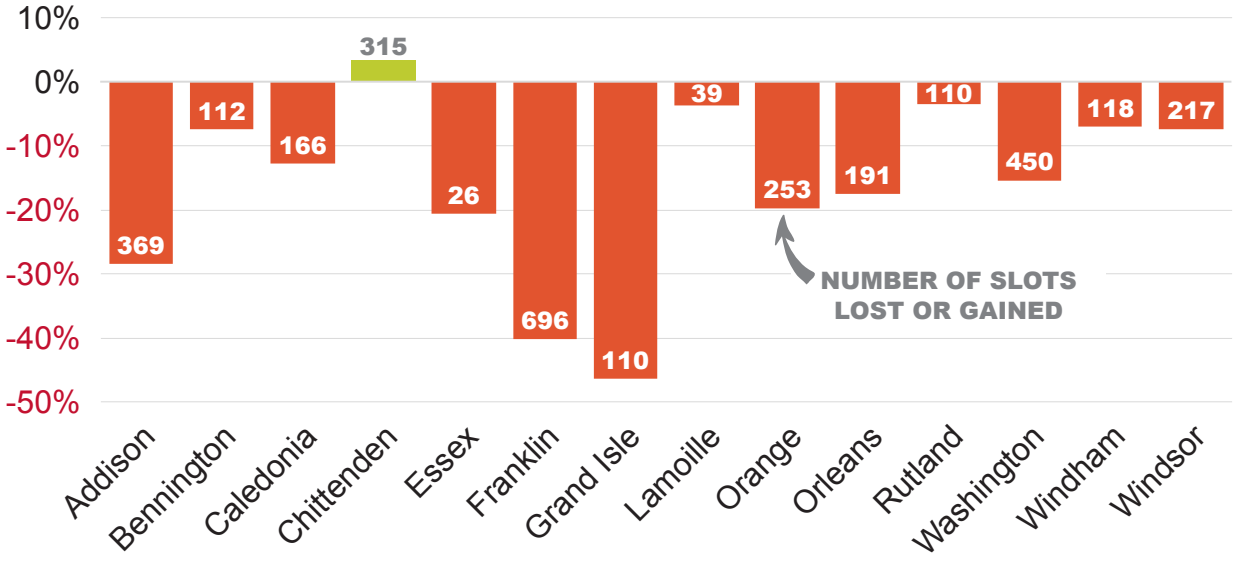
3SquaresVT provides food assistance to Vermonters with incomes up to 185 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Participants receive benefits through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The number of Vermonters receiving 3SquaresVT benefits dropped from an average of 68,414 in 2019 to 67,521 in 2021. But thanks to increased monthly payments to individual participants, total federal cash assistance for food nearly doubled, to $188 million in 2021. In 2020, 2021, and 2022, federal aid also increased for universal school meals, food pantries, and community food pickup sites, meeting increased demand both from those who do and do not get 3SquaresVT. And in October 2021, regular 3SquaresVT benefits increased permanently by more than 25 percent, better addressing food needs identified through revised national nutrition standards. Federal supplemental benefits are still in effect, but if the state doesn't step in when they end, 3SquaresVT recipients could be left with less to stock their pantries.

CHILD CARE CAPACITY

Child care capacity is the number of slots licensed providers and registered homes have available for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children, as reported to the Department for Children and Families. The providers' desired capacity differs from licensed capacity set by the state and more accurately reflects the number of children that child care facilities can accommodate.

Most counties lost child care capacity Percent change in desired child care slots reported by providers, Sep. 2019-Sep. 2022

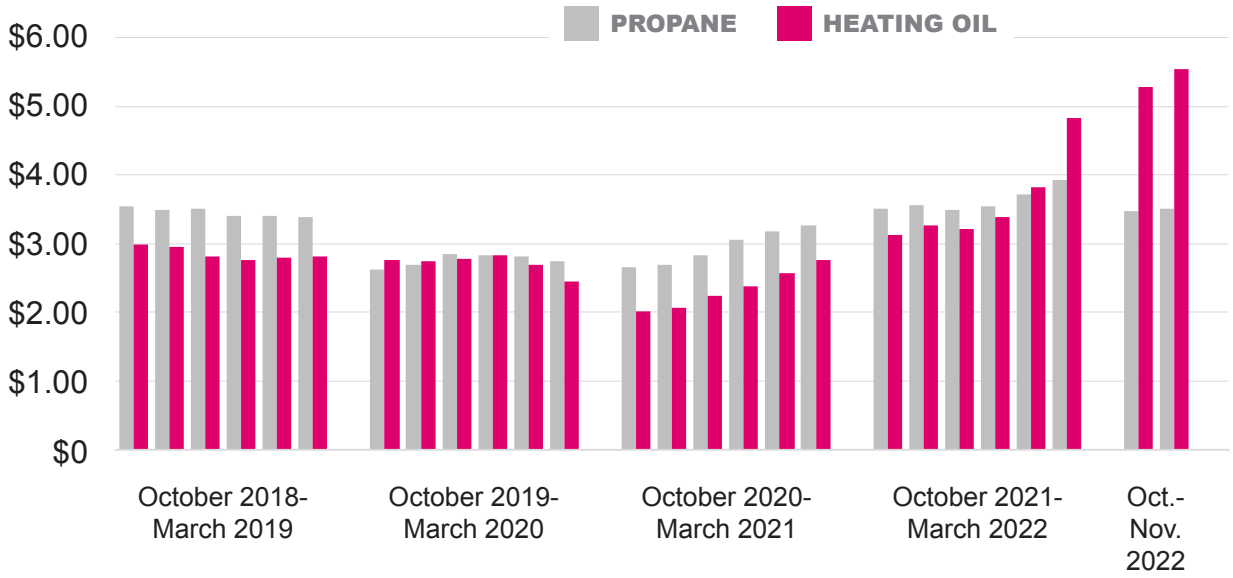


Data source: Vermont Department for Children and Families

The COVID-19 pandemic took a toll on child care in Vermont. In September 2022, there were 133 fewer active child care providers than three years earlier, a 12 percent decrease. Between the loss of providers and a decline in slots among remaining providers, the state reported about 2,500 fewer slots, a drop of 8.5 percent. The decrease was seen across the state, except in Chittenden County, where capacity increased about 3 percent, or just over 300 slots. According to Let's Grow Kids' 2022 "Stalled at the Start" report, "Many early childhood education programs have struggled to remain open due to rising costs and staffing shortages, and many families are still trying to determine how best to balance work, family, health, and safety needs."

Vermonters' heating bills are rising

Average monthly price per gallon for residential heating oil and propane, 2018-19 to 2022-23 heating seasons



Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

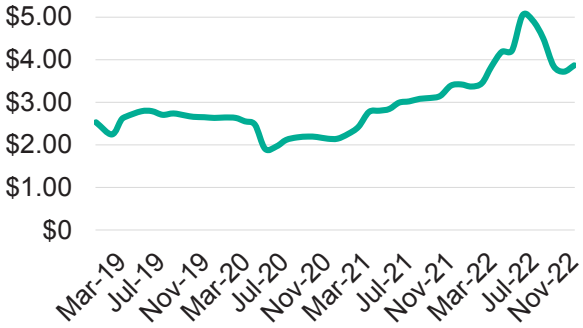
One of the commodities hit worst by inflation in 2022 was fuel, both at the pump and for the home furnace. Gasoline prices exceeded $5.00 a gallon in late summer and have since fallen below $4.00. Heating fuels were up last winter, and signs this fall suggest another difficult heating season ahead. While these prices are affecting Vermonters, the factors driving them are largely outside the state's control.

ENERGY PRICES

The Vermont Department of Public Service tracks state gasoline prices year-round and provides prices for home heating fuels during the heating season from the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Price at the pump topped $5 in 2022

Average monthly gas price per gallon, Vermont, Jan. 2019-Nov. 2022



Data source: Vermont Department of Public Service

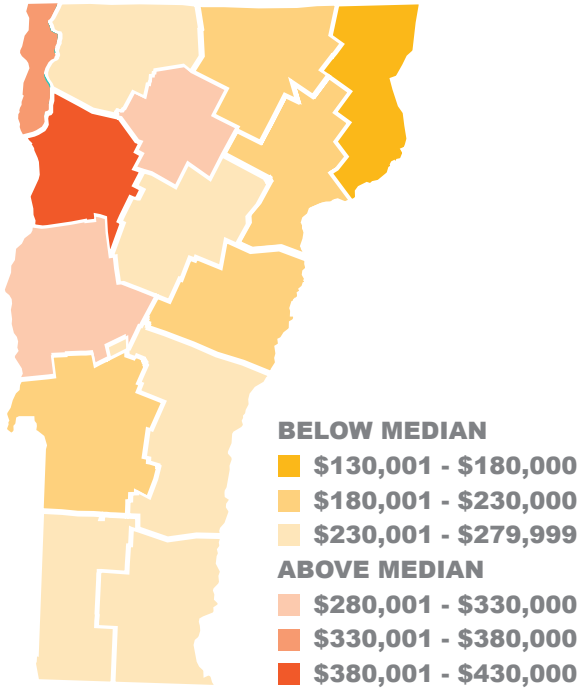
HOME

MEDIAN HOME PRICE

Median home price is the midpoint of primary single-family home prices each year—half of those sold are below it and half are above. Primary homes are homes designated as primary residences by the homebuyer on property transfer tax records. Home prices reflect actual sale price and are not adjusted for inflation.

Home prices climbed during the pandemic

Median 2021 single-family home price and change in price and sales volume, Vermont, 2019-2021



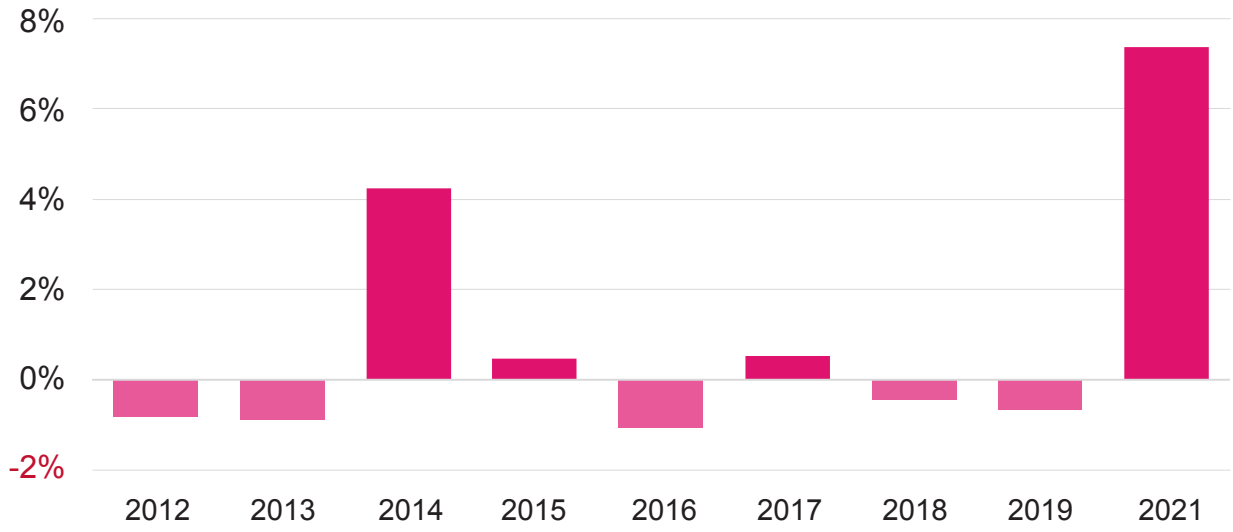
County	Median home price 2021	Change in price from 2019	Change in # of sales from 2019
Addison	$300,000	17.6%	6.6%
Bennington	$240,000	20.6%	21.2%
Caledonia	$205,000	30.2%	5.7%
Chittenden	$425,000	21.4%	-11.2%
Essex	$159,000	36.2%	19.4%
Franklin	$275,000	18.5%	3.5%
Grand Isle	$330,050	24.5%	25.3%
Lamoille	$315,000	34.6%	-7.9%
Orange	$228,000	23.6%	13.5%
Orleans	$189,200	22.1%	14.7%
Rutland	$200,000	25.0%	5.9%
Washington	$270,000	20.0%	10.6%
Windham	$250,000	28.2%	3.5%
Windsor	$265,000	25.6%	15.7%
Statewide	**$280,000**	**19.1%**	**4.4%**

Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency analysis of Vermont Department of Taxes data

The statewide median single-family home price jumped over 19 percent from 2019 to 2021, to $280,000. This was the biggest two-year increase since 2004-2005, although prices had been climbing since 2014 after the slowdown following the Great Recession. And the statewide volume of sales—more than 7,000 in both 2020 and 2021—is at its highest level since the early 2000s. Growth was not evenly distributed across the state. While prices went up in every county over the two-year period, the volume of sales declined in two counties, Chittenden and Lamoille.

Rents jumped over 7 percent in first two years of pandemic

Annual change in median rent, adjusted for inflation, 2012-2019, 2021*



*2021 reflects the change in median rent over two years because there are no data for 2020.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimates, 2012-2019, 2021

In the 10 years preceding the pandemic, Vermonters who rented housing typically paid $1,036 a month in 2021 dollars. In 2021 median rent was $1,115, an increase of over 7 percent compared with 2019. During the same period, the number of vacant rental units in Vermont fell by about half, to 1,838 in 2021. Just 2.4 percent of units were vacant in 2021, whereas a 4 to 6 percent vacancy rate is considered a healthy rental housing market.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD RENT

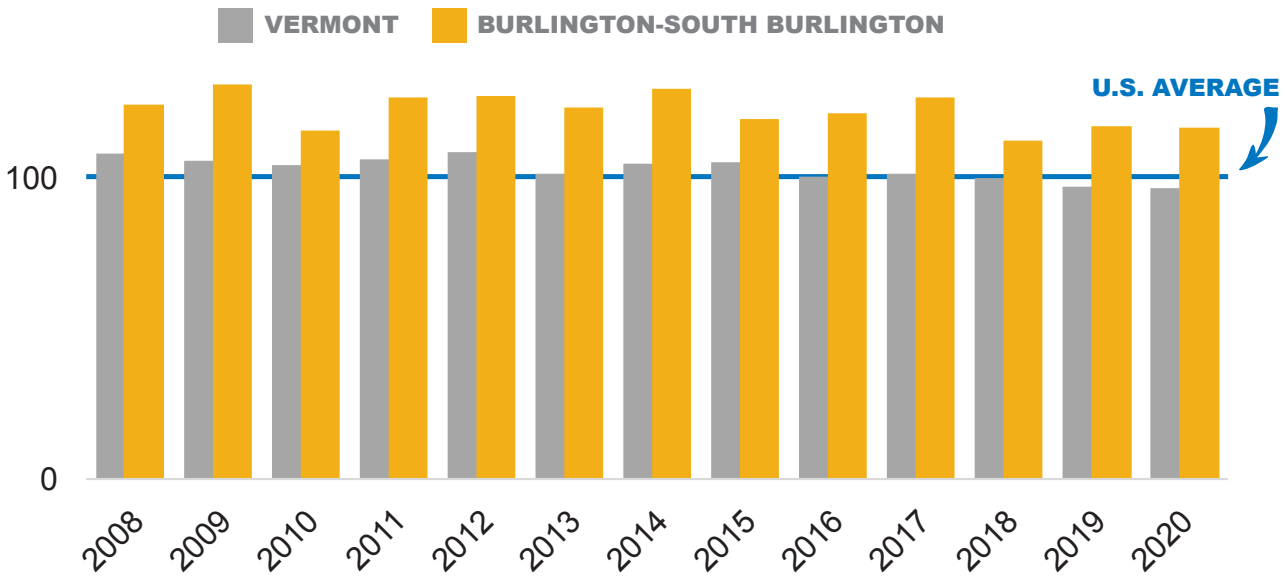
Median household rent is the middle amount of rent for housing units—half of Vermonters pay more than the median and half pay less. Rent includes the unit rental cost plus the estimated cost of utilities and fuel.

REGIONAL PRICE PARITIES – RENTS

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis gathers price data for a variety of items, including food, transportation, housing, medical services, and other goods and services, and creates a parity index that shows state and regional prices in relation to a national average of prices.

Vermont tenants paid around the average U.S. rent, except in Burlington

Index of regional rents, 2008-2020; U.S. average = 100



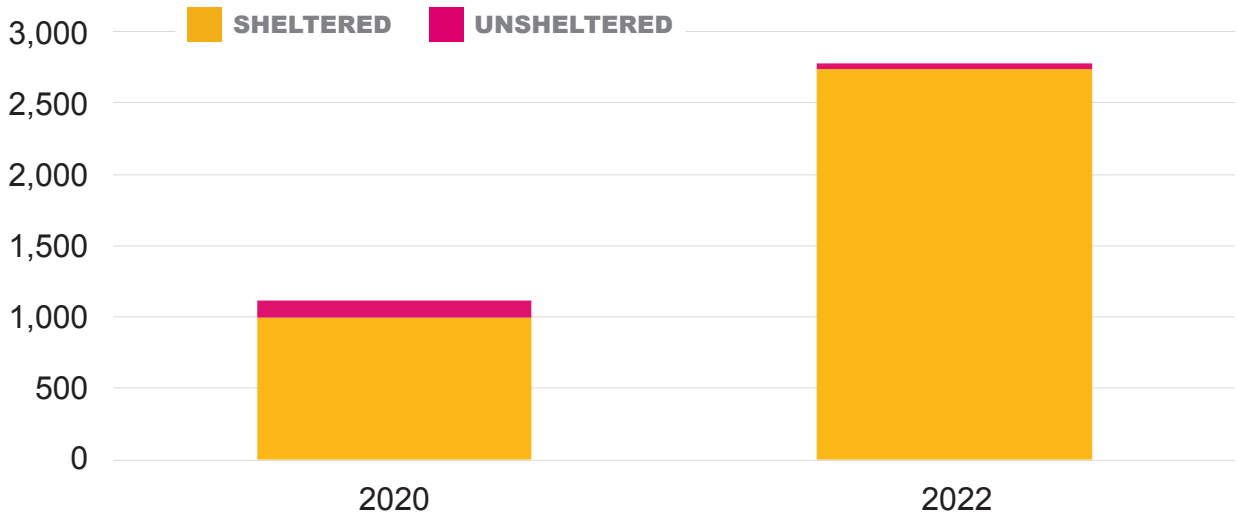
Data source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

While 2021 numbers aren't available yet, the average rent in Vermont in 2019 and 2020 fell below the national average. That wasn't true for the Burlington area, where rents have exceeded the national average for over a decade.

But staying under the national average doesn't guarantee affordability. According to 2021 U.S. Census data, nearly 35,000—or half—of rental households in Vermont struggled with unaffordable housing, meaning housing costs that exceed 30 percent of household income.

More Vermonters were homeless in 2022 than before COVID

Point-in-time count of homeless Vermonters by shelter status, 2020 and 2022



Data sources: Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness; Chittenden County Homeless Alliance

Over 2,700 Vermonters were identified as homeless in January 2022, more than two and a half times the number in January 2020, just before the start of the pandemic. During the pandemic, the state used federal relief funds to provide additional emergency motel capacity and changed the eligibility rules so that more people qualified for assistance.

When federal pandemic-related housing aid ended in July 2022 and the state returned to pre-COVID eligibility rules, many people were still homeless. That same month the state initiated a new transitional housing program, which immediately reached maximum capacity.

POINT-IN-TIME HOMELESS COUNT

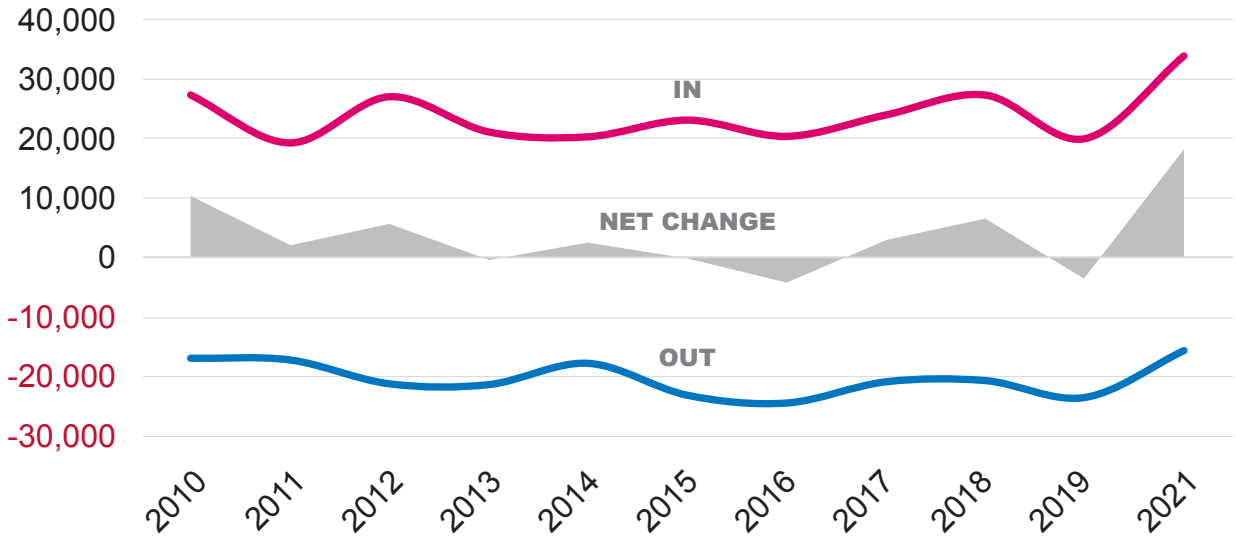
The point-in-time homeless count is a measure of the number of people living in emergency shelters, hotels, transitional housing, and places not meant for human habitation. It does not include households doubled up with family or friends. The figure is based on a census taken each year in one 24-hour period in January. Vermont housing organizations conduct the survey using methods established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

MIGRATION

The U.S. Census produces data showing how people move around the country from year to year. The Census data are based on population surveys, which are now done year-round. There are no data for 2020.

Vermont was a popular place to relocate in 2021

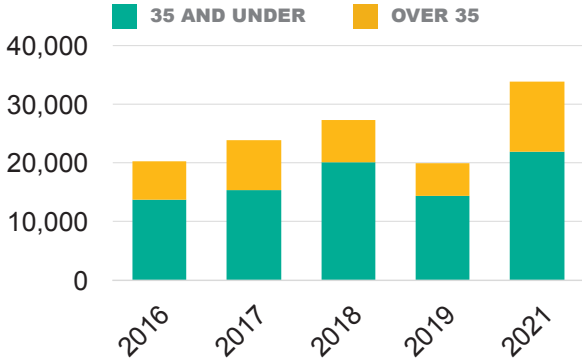
People moving in and out of Vermont and net change, 2010-2019, 2021



Data source: IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org

2021 immigration was up for all age groups

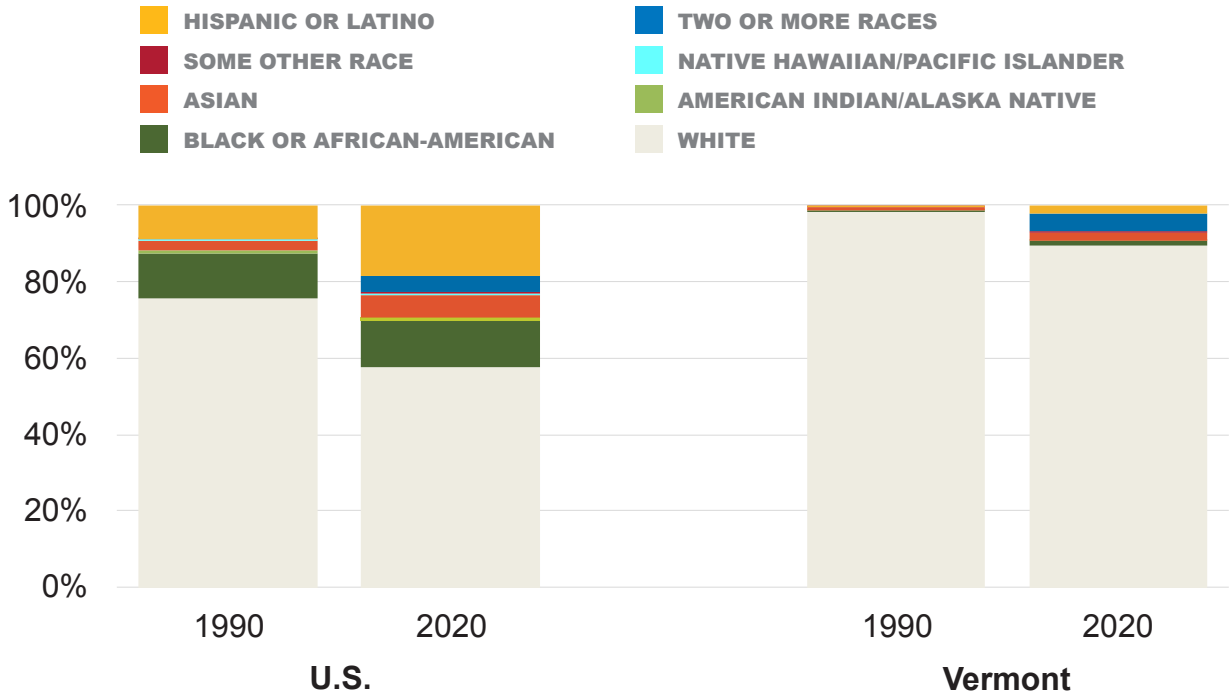
People moving to Vermont by age group, 2016-2019, 2021



Data source: IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org

Vermont appeared to be a safe and attractive haven as the pandemic and lockdowns persisted. Almost 34,000 people moved to the state in 2021, the most in a decade. Meanwhile, the number of Vermonters who moved away was the lowest since at least 2010. The inflow and outflow resulted in a net increase in Vermont's population of more than 18,000. Two-thirds of the newcomers were 35 years old and under. But older age groups also arrived in greater numbers than prior years.

Vermont changed in the last 30 years, but it's still less racially diverse than the U.S. Share of population by race, U.S. and VT, 1990 and 2020



Data source: Census Redistricting Data, (Public Law 94-171), 1990 and 2020

Between 1990 and 2020, the number of Vermonters of color grew from just 1 percent of the population to 11 percent. Over that same period, the share of people of color in the U.S. grew from 25 percent to 42 percent. By 2020, there were almost 70,000 people of color living in Vermont, 30,000 of whom identified as two or more races. From 2010 to 2020, the number of Vermonters of color nearly doubled.

DECENNIAL CENSUS POPULATION DATA BY RACE

Ten-year population data, like those released in 2010 and 2020, are based on actual counts and are therefore more accurate than annual estimates, which are based on surveys and other random sampling data with more room for error. The race categories are based on self-identification and are exclusive, meaning a person can be counted in only one category.

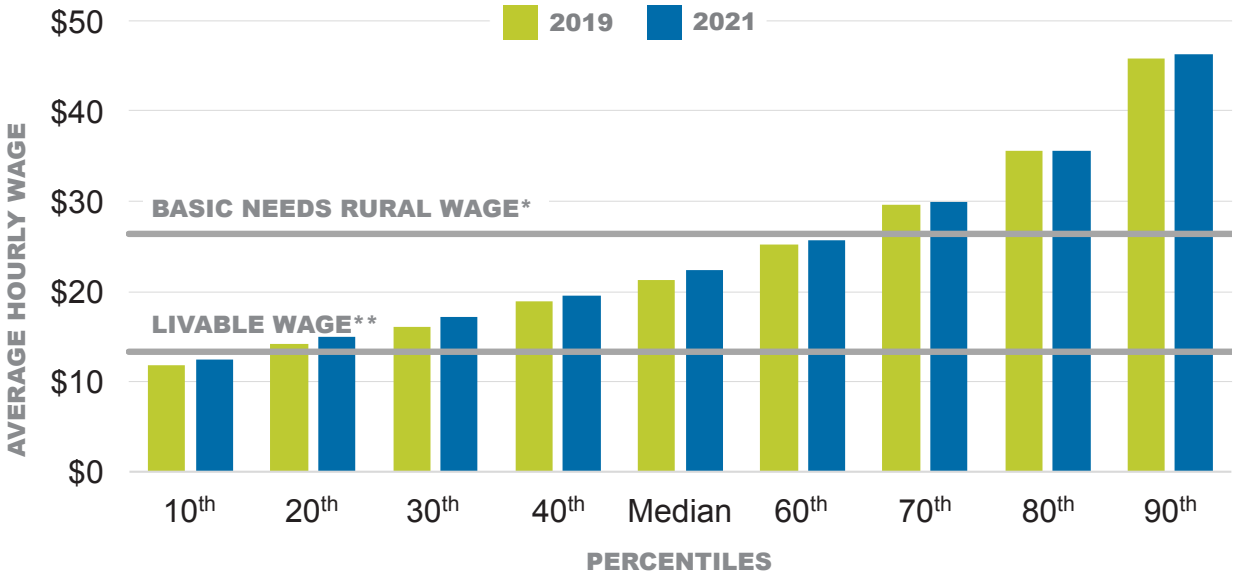
WORK

HOURLY WAGE BY PERCENTILE

Hourly wage by percentile shows the share of workers making above or below a given wage at a particular time. At the 10th percentile, 10 percent of workers make less than that amount per hour and 90 percent make more. Each year the U.S. Census publishes hourly wages for selected percentiles. Tracking these levels over time indicates which workers are seeing their wages rise or fall.

Low-wage workers made gains, but many still can't meet basic needs

Wages by selected percentiles, 2019 and 2021, adjusted for inflation, and 2021 Vermont livable wage



* Single parent with one child ** Per person for two-adult family, no children

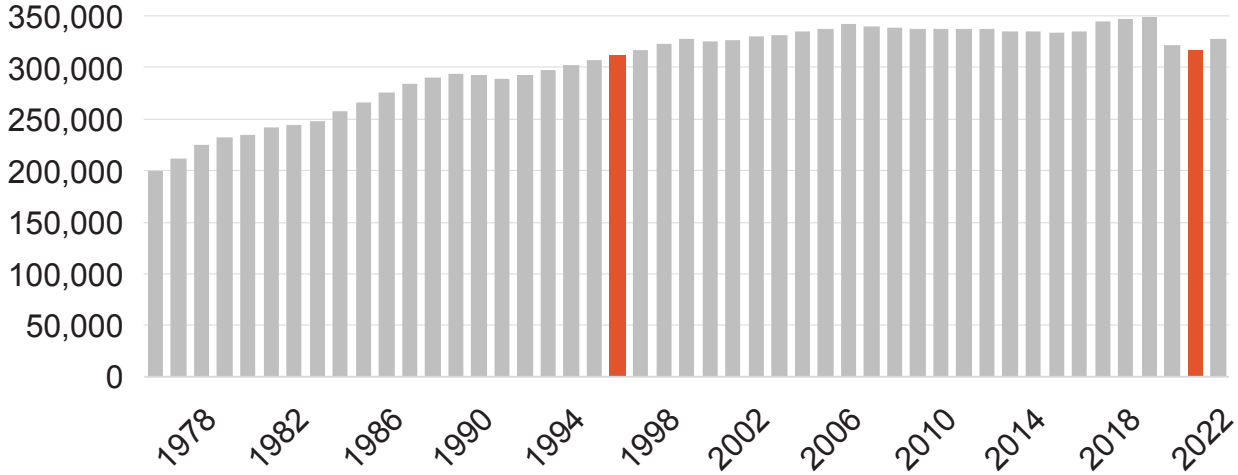
Data sources: Economic Policy Institute analysis of Current Population Survey data; Vermont Joint Fiscal Office

As businesses started to reopen after lockdown, the competition for workers appears to have pushed up wages in 2021. Hourly wages, even after adjusting for inflation, rose at almost all levels, and the biggest increases were at the low end. Early in the pandemic, in 2020, the average annual wage rose, but only because many low-wage workers dropped out of the labor force. Economists believe the gains recorded in 2021 were real—although significant inflation in 2022 may erode them.

Even accounting for gains in 2021, some workers were not earning enough to make ends meet. That year more than 10 percent of Vermont workers earned less than the state's livable wage of $13.39, the wage two full-time working adults living together each need to earn to pay for essentials. Most Vermonters made less than $26.43 an hour, the basic needs wage for a single parent with one child in rural Vermont.

Vermont employment is climbing back from its lowest point in 25 years

Annual average of people working, 1976-2022*



*2022 data point is the 10-month average from January through October.

Data source: Vermont Department of Labor

The number of Vermonters who are working increased in 2022, following a sharp decline during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019, before COVID, the number of employed Vermonters rose to an all-time high: 347,000. But by 2021, that number had fallen to 316,941, the lowest level since 1996 and the largest drop of any state from 2019 to 2021. By October 2022 the number had climbed back to nearly 330,000.

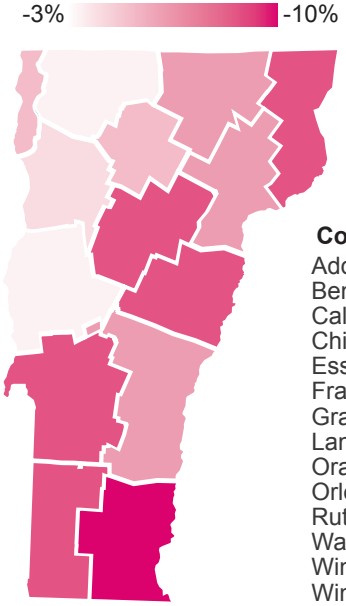
In every Vermont county, fewer people were working in October 2022 than in October 2019. The declines ranged from 3.2 percent in Addison County to 9.8 percent in Windham County. Chittenden County, home to more than a quarter of employed Vermonters, saw a decrease in employment of 4.4 percent, or almost 4,500 people.

EMPLOYMENT

The number of people working, including farmworkers and the self-employed.

All counties struggled to regain employment levels

Change in employment, by county, not seasonally adjusted, Oct. 2019-Oct. 2022



County	Change
Addison	-3.2%
Bennington	-7.2%
Caledonia	-6.5%
Chittenden	-4.4%
Essex	-7.7%
Franklin	-3.5%
Grand Isle	-5.6%
Lamoille	-5.8%
Orange	-7.8%
Orleans	-6.9%
Rutland	-8.0%
Washington	-8.3%
Windham	-9.8%
Windsor	-6.5%

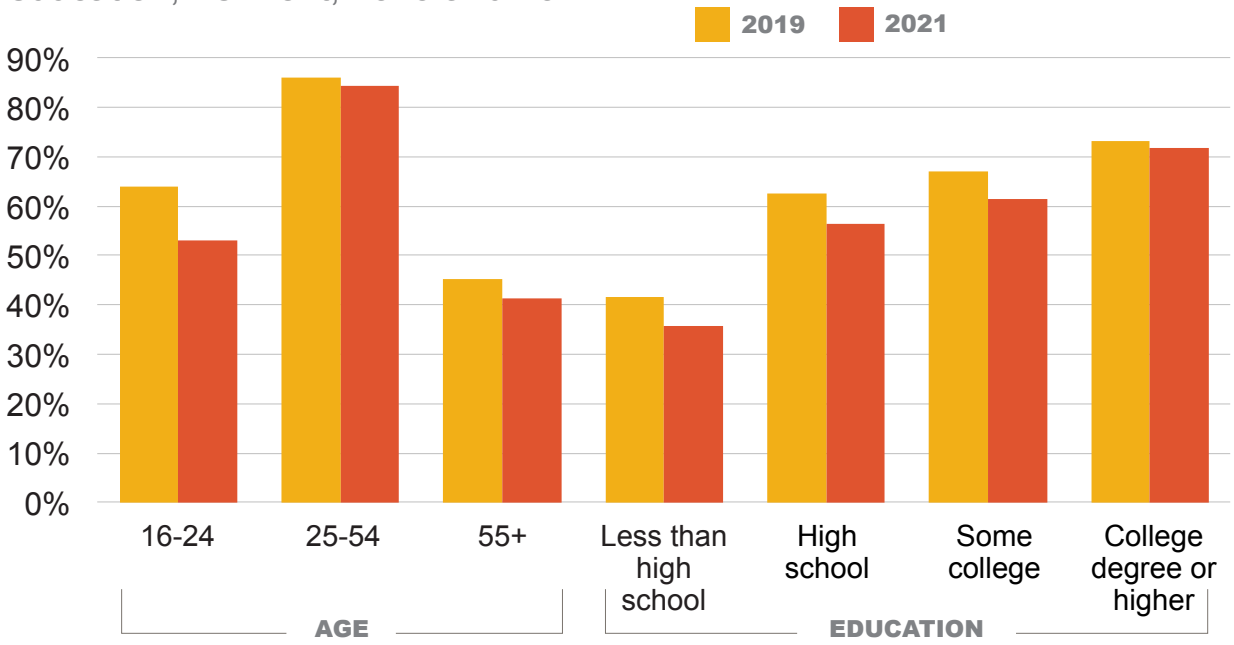
Data source: Vermont Department of Labor

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

Labor force participation rate is the percentage of working-age people working or looking for work, measured by demographic group.

Workers without college degrees found themselves worse off

Labor force participation rate by age group and level of education, Vermont, 2019 and 2021

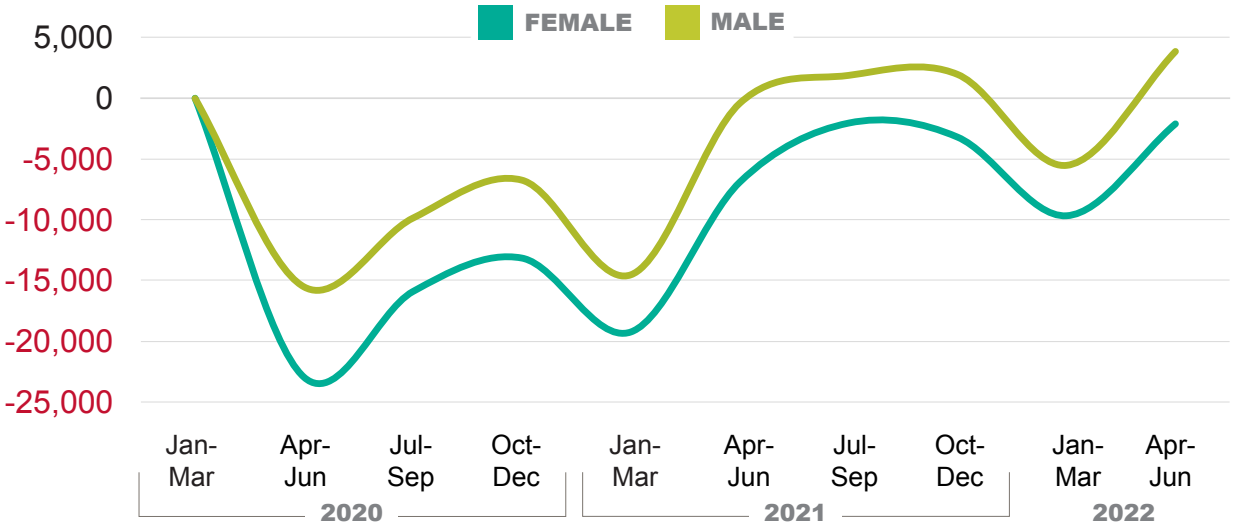


Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of Current Population Survey data

The youngest workers and those without a high school diploma have always struggled in the job market. They typically have some of the lowest labor force participation rates. But the pandemic made things worse. Before it, almost two-thirds of 16-to-24-year-olds were working or actively looking for a job. In 2021, just over half of this age group were in the labor force. For those who hadn't finished high school, workforce participation dropped from 41.6 percent before the pandemic to 35.8 in 2021. Overall workforce participation was at its lowest level in more than four decades.

Recouping job losses has taken longer for women

Cumulative change in jobs held by women and men, Vermont, by quarter, Jan. 2020-Jun. 2022



Data source: Vermont Department of Labor

Job losses hit women harder than men when the coronavirus arrived in Vermont in early 2020, with around 23,000 and 15,000 jobs lost, respectively. Both men and women made gains during the spring, summer, and fall and lost ground in the winter months. By June of 2022, women still had not recouped losses, while men had recovered jobs lost and then some: Men held about 3,900 more jobs than before the pandemic, while women were still down almost 2,100 jobs.

EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER

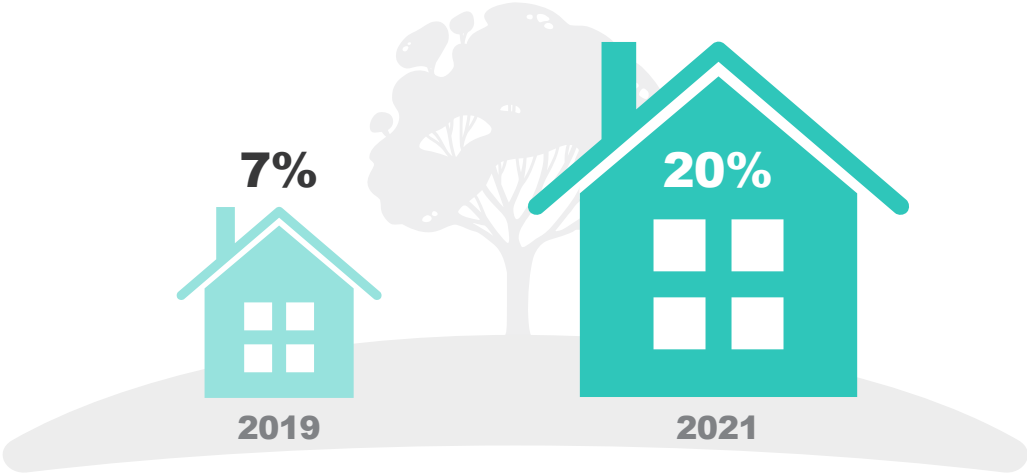
Employment by gender is based on quarterly wage records of employers who participate in unemployment insurance programs. Employers categorize employees as male or female, so information on nonbinary employees is not available. Employees working for more than one employer during a quarter are counted by each employer.

WORK AT HOME

The U.S. Census tracks where people work and, for those who commute, their travel time. The number of people who report that they work at home has been on the rise since the early 2000s. People in this group include those who work at home the majority of the week.

More Vermonters are working from home

Percentage of Vermonters working remotely, 2019 and 2021

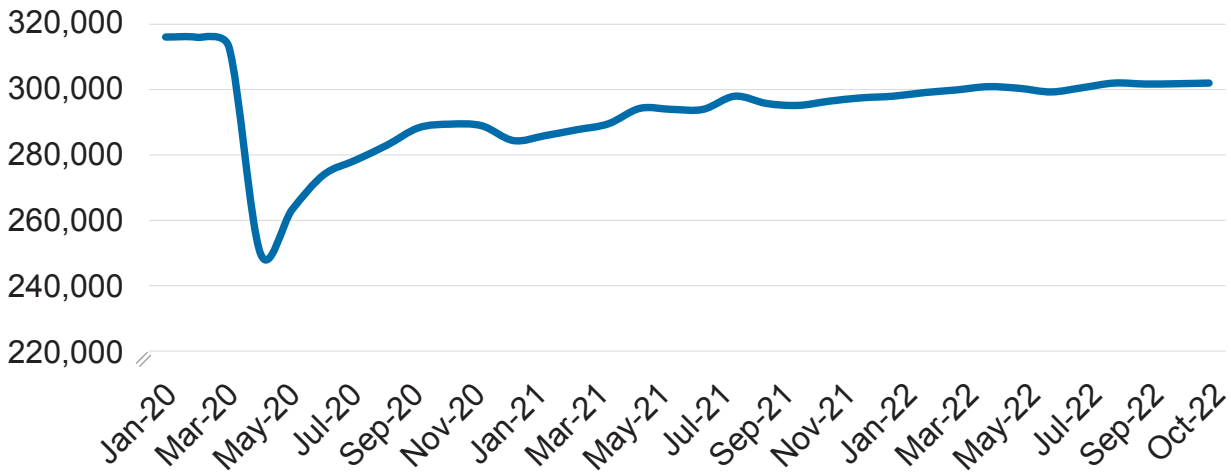


Data source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2019 and 2021

The pandemic forced many people to start working from home, and that lasted into 2021. Prior to COVID, just 7 percent of Vermonters reported that they worked remotely. In 2021, 20 percent said they were doing so. That shift appears to be holding. Recent mobility data tracked by Google found that in October 2022 travel to work was down 20 percent from the 2020 pre-pandemic baseline.

Jobs rebounded, but remain below pre-pandemic levels

Total Vermont nonfarm payroll jobs, seasonally adjusted, by month, 2020-2022



Data source: Vermont Department of Labor

The number of nonfarm payroll jobs climbed above 300,000 in 2022, but a shortage of workers has made it hard for Vermont employers to replace all the jobs lost during the pandemic. A quick rebound followed the COVID shutdown in the spring of 2020; employers added almost 40,000 jobs in just six months. For the last two years, job growth has not been as rapid but remained strong. About 13,000 jobs were added between October 2020 and October 2022.

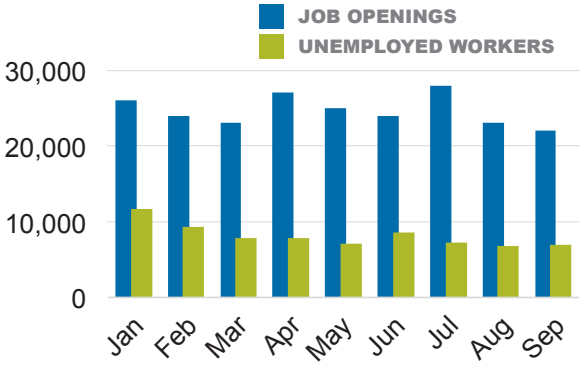
As of September, employers reported 22,000 job openings, which, if filled, would give Vermont more jobs than before the pandemic. However, in September only about 7,000 Vermonters were actively looking for work.

TOTAL NONFARM JOBS

The number of total nonfarm jobs is estimated through the Current Employee Statistics (CES) program, a monthly survey of employers conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics with the Vermont Department of Labor. This is the number of jobs currently filled, not the number of workers. One worker can hold multiple jobs.

In 2022 job openings outnumbered job-seekers

Job openings and unemployed workers, Vermont, by month, 2022



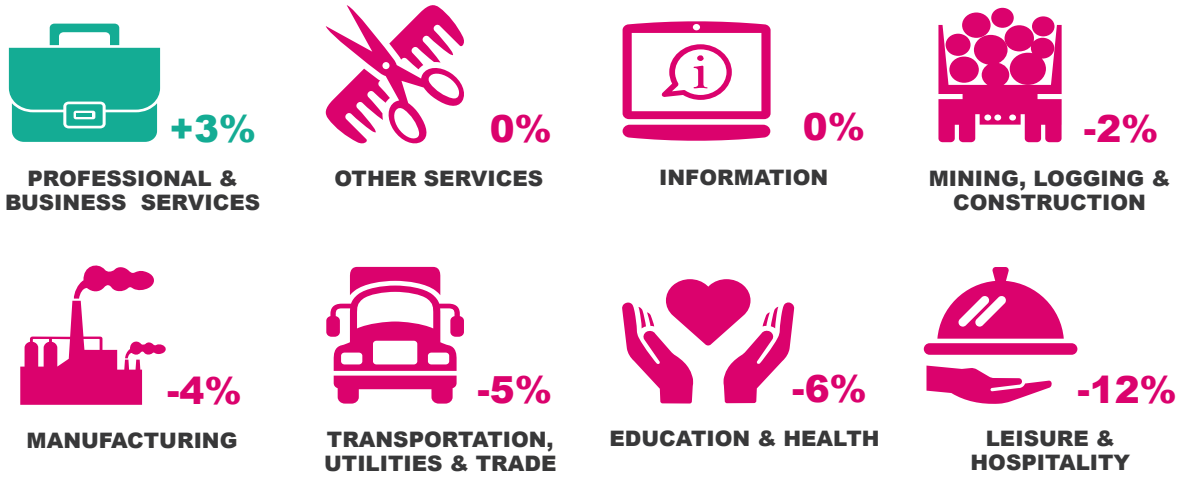
Data sources: Vermont Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

NONFARM JOBS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics works with the Vermont Department of Labor to track the number of nonfarm payroll jobs by industry sector. The data are provided by employers.

Only professional and business services industries have added to pre-pandemic jobs

Change in monthly nonfarm jobs by select industry, Vermont, seasonally adjusted, Feb. 2020-Oct. 2022



Data source: Vermont Department of Labor

In 2021 most industries still had not recovered jobs lost since early 2020, before the pandemic began. The exceptions were professional and business service industries, which saw a gain of 800 jobs, and information and other services, which lost and regained equal numbers of jobs during this period. The hotel, restaurant, and entertainment industry was still down over 12 percent, with 4,600 fewer jobs than in February 2020. Education and health services lagged behind pre-pandemic numbers by nearly 6 percent, or 3,600 jobs. Public sector jobs also had failed to recover. They were down 3.6 percent, or 2,000 jobs, from February 2020.

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The migration data on page 16 is credited to: Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Megan Schouweiler, and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 12.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2022. https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V12.0

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PO Box 942, Montpelier, Vermont 05842 | 802-223-6677 | publicassets.org