

# On the Pennsylvania Economy

Keystone Research Center

October 3rd, 2024

# Pennsylvania Economy Resource Page

Our resource page contains Keystone Research Center (KRC) research with the facts on how the Pennsylvania economy is performing.

We provide easy access to PA county-level data and interactive maps on jobs, wages, unemployment now compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The page is also a “one stop” with links to earlier KRC materials on the performance of the PA economy.

## Pennsylvania County-Level Data

- [Unemployment, Employment, and Wages Data PDF](#)
- [Unemployment, Employment, and Wages Data Excel](#)

## Pennsylvania State-wide Economic Analysis

*The State of Working Pennsylvania 2024:*

- [Full 2024 Report](#)

Readily digestible, updated blogs on individual topics in the full report:

- [Unions Blog](#)
- [Inflation Blog](#)
- [Jobs Blog](#)
- [Unemployment Blog](#)

*Report on the Performance of the Economy by Presidential Administration*

- [National report from the Economic Policy Institute](#)
- [Pennsylvania report from KRC](#)

# The Washington Post



Heather Long is an economic columnist at *The Washington Post*. In 2020, she played a key role in coining the "K-shaped recovery" and identifying that this was the most unequal recession in modern U.S. history. In 2021, she was the first to recognize the "Great Re-assessment of Work" taking place with many Americans wanting something very different in their careers after the pandemic.

# Economic Policy Institute



Heidi Shierholz is the president of the Economic Policy Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank that uses the power of its research on economic trends and on the impact of economic policies to advance reforms that serve working people, deliver racial justice, and guarantee gender equity. She previously served the Obama administration as chief economist at the Department of Labor, where she developed and executed initiatives to boost workers' rights, wages, and benefits.

# The State of Working Pennsylvania



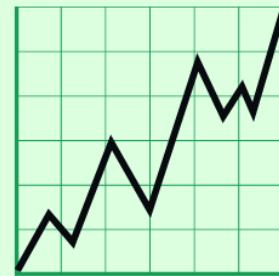
<https://keystoneresearch.org/2024-state-of-working-pennsylvania-resource-page/>

- The PA economy is thriving. Workers are doing better than in decades—need more progress because of inequality since 1980.
- Workers have leverage in the job market.
- PA unemployment (3.4% in 8/24) below prior record low (4.1% in 2/2000) for 26 months.
- PA job growth similar to US job growth (usually its half that level).
- In 2023, typical PA workers earned nearly a dollar per hour more than US—like in 1979!
- Women, Blacks, Hispanics, blue-collar and low-wage workers all earning more.



# Bite-size pieces—KRC Blogs:

## Organizing the Facts



**43%**

of Americans would personally like to see labor unions have more influence (up from 39% in 2018)

**34%**

of Americans think labor unions will become stronger (up from 19% in 2018)

**70%**

of Americans approve of labor unions (up from 67% in 2023)

- Unions
- Inflation
- Jobs
- Unemployment

Source: Gallup, August 30th 2024. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/12751/labor-unions.aspx>

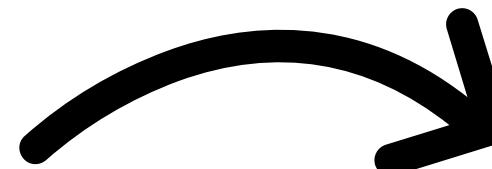
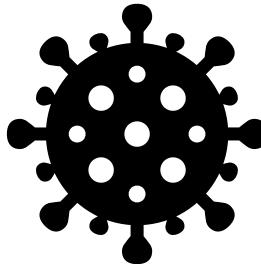


# Unemployment, Employment, and Wages

## Pennsylvania County-Level Data

- [Unemployment, Employment, and Wages Data PDF](#)
- [Unemployment, Employment, and Wages Data Excel](#)

Pre-Pandemic



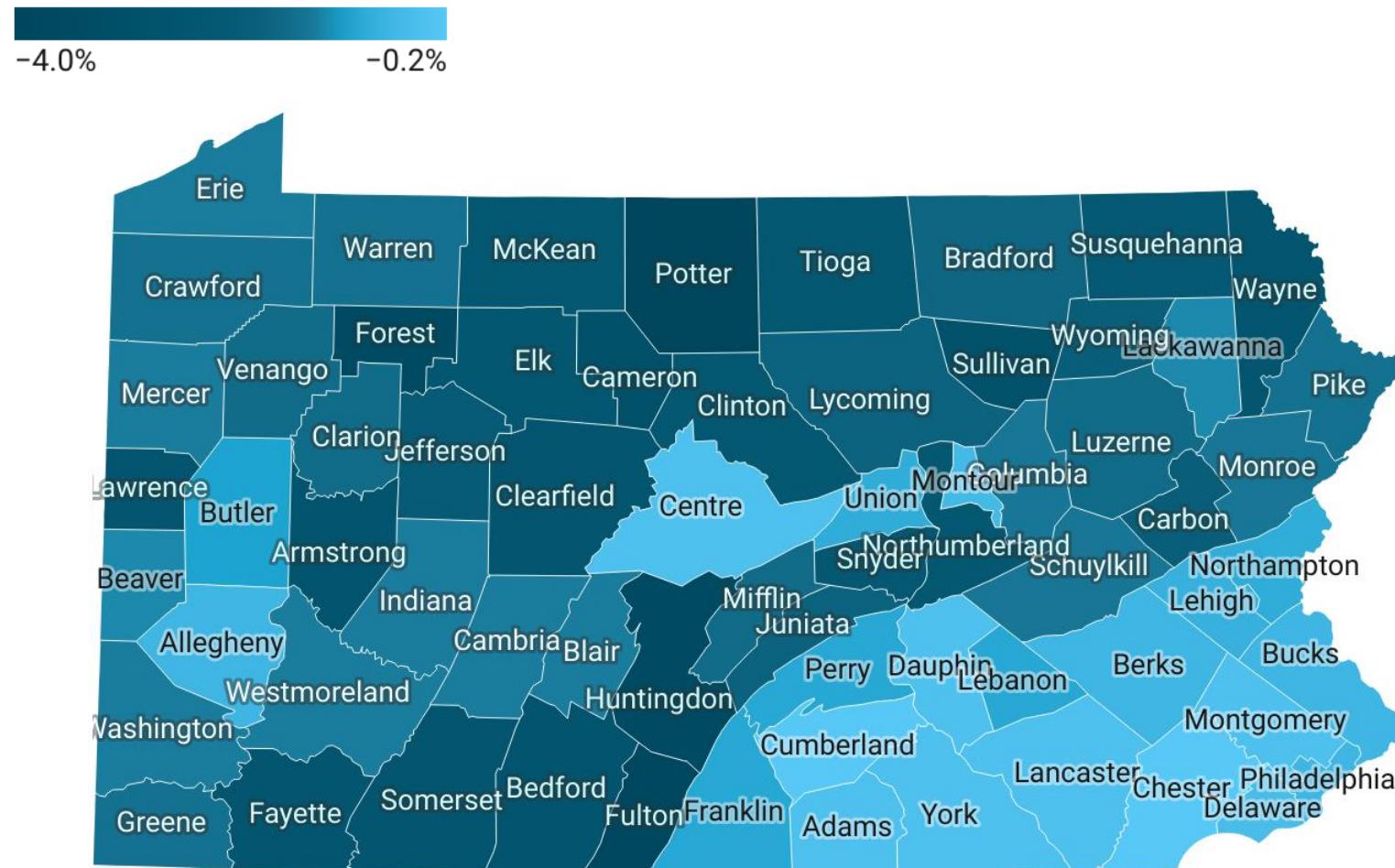
Now





# The Unemployment Rate Is Lower In Every PA County Than Before the Pandemic

Data shown for the average unemployment rate difference between December 2019 through February 2020 and May 2024 through July 2024.

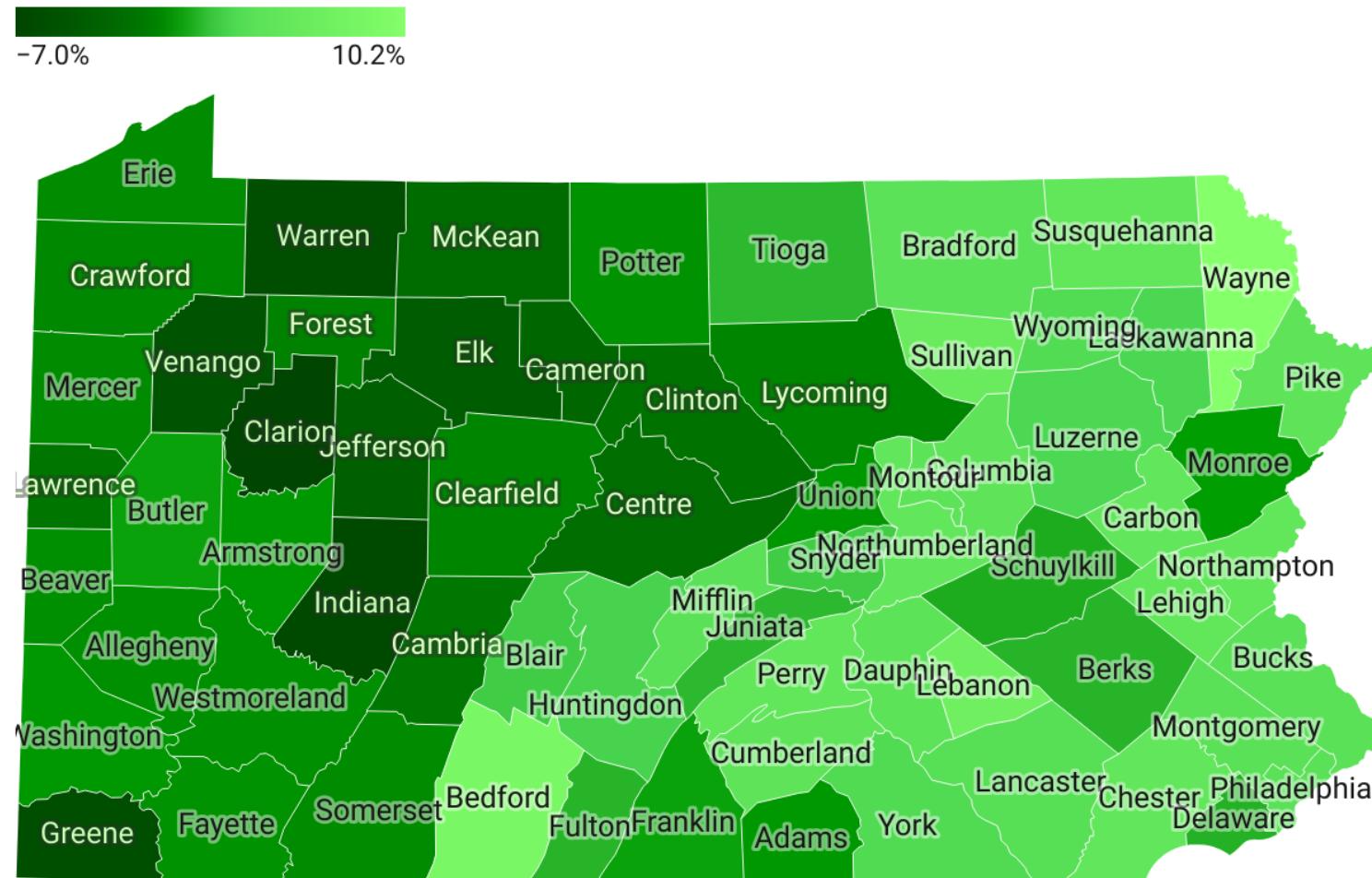


Map: Keystone Research Center Analysis of Local Area Unemployment Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics ·  
Created with Datawrapper



# Pennsylvania Employment Change Since the COVID-19 Pandemic, by County

Data shown for the employment percent change between December 2019 through February 2020 and May 2024 through July 2024.

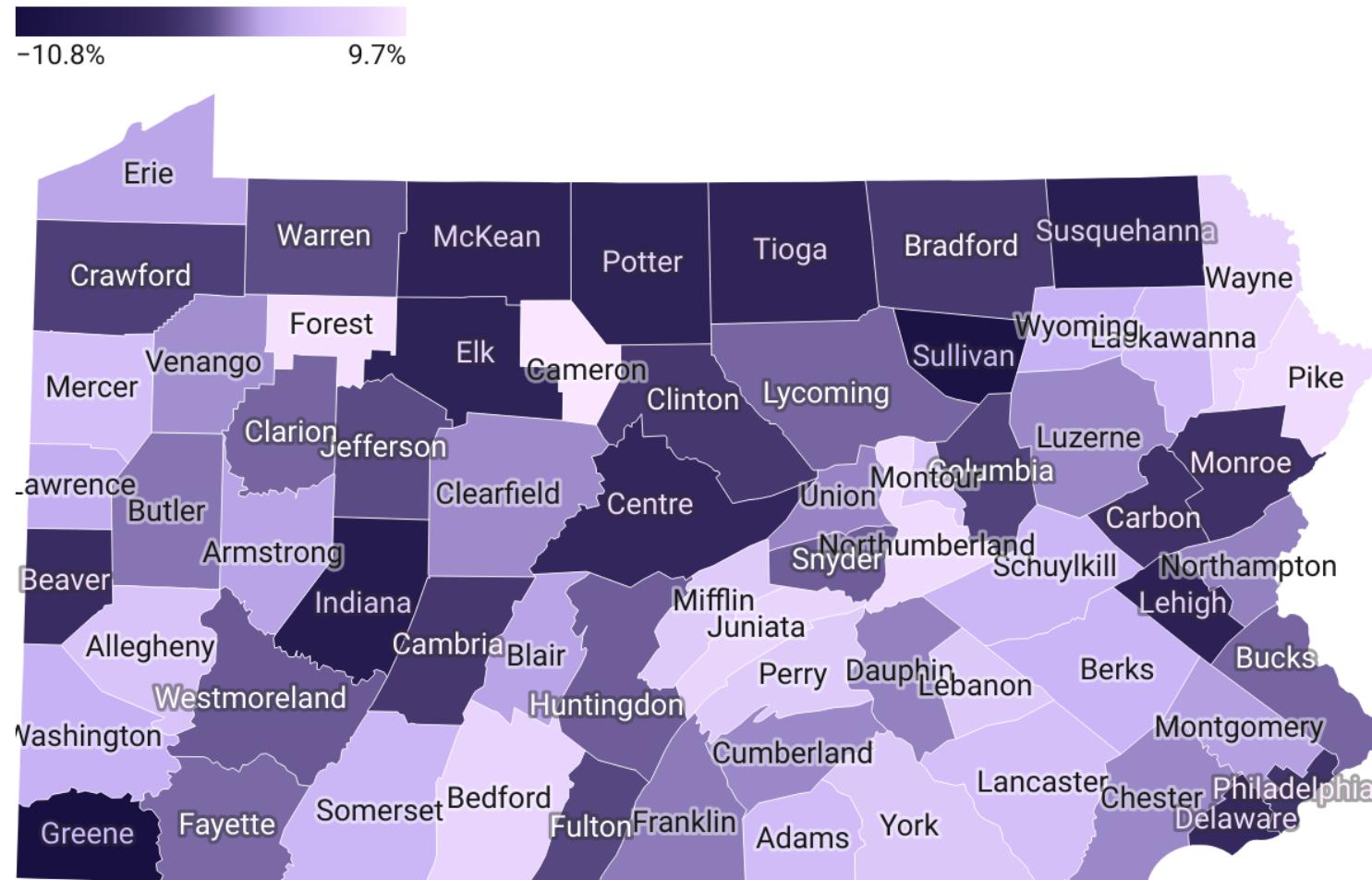


Map: Keystone Research Center Analysis of Local Area Unemployment Statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics •  
Created with Datawrapper



# Pennsylvania Average Weekly Wage Percent Change Since the COVID-19 Pandemic, by County

Data shown for the inflation-adjusted average weekly wage percent change between the first quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2024.



Map: Keystone Research Center analysis of Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data, inflation-adjusted using Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI-U • Created with Datawrapper

# Economic Performance Under Presidential Administrations

**National report from EPI**

Since 1949:

- Indicators like gross domestic product (GDP), income, and wages grow faster on average under Democratic Presidents, while negative indicators like unemployment, inflation, and interest rates are lower.



<https://www.epi.org/press/new-report-finds-that-the-economy-performs-better-under-democratic-presidential-administrations/>



# Pennsylvania Analysis by KRC

- Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) starting in 1998.
- The unemployment rate beginning in 1976.
- Employment growth starting in 1976.
- Pennsylvania real wages starting from 1979.
- Median household Income in Pennsylvania from 1984 to 2019.



- <https://keystoneresearch.org/research-publication/economic-performance-in-pennsylvania-is-stronger-when-democrats-hold-the-white-house/>



# Pennsylvania Economy Resource Page

## Pennsylvania County-Level Data

- [Unemployment, Employment, and Wages Data PDF](#)
- [Unemployment, Employment, and Wages Data Excel](#)

## Pennsylvania State-wide Economic Analysis

*The State of Working Pennsylvania 2024:*

- [Full 2024 Report](#)

Readily digestible, updated blogs on individual topics in the full report:

- [Unions Blog](#)
- [Inflation Blog](#)
- [Jobs Blog](#)
- [Unemployment Blog](#)

*Report on the Performance of the Economy by Presidential Administration*

- [National report from the Economic Policy Institute](#)
- [Pennsylvania report from KRC](#)