



northeastern
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD



EMDC EASTERN MAINE
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

NWDB 2025 LAWP Stakeholder Briefing & SWOT Analysis

NWDB & EMDC

Purpose of NWDB LAWP

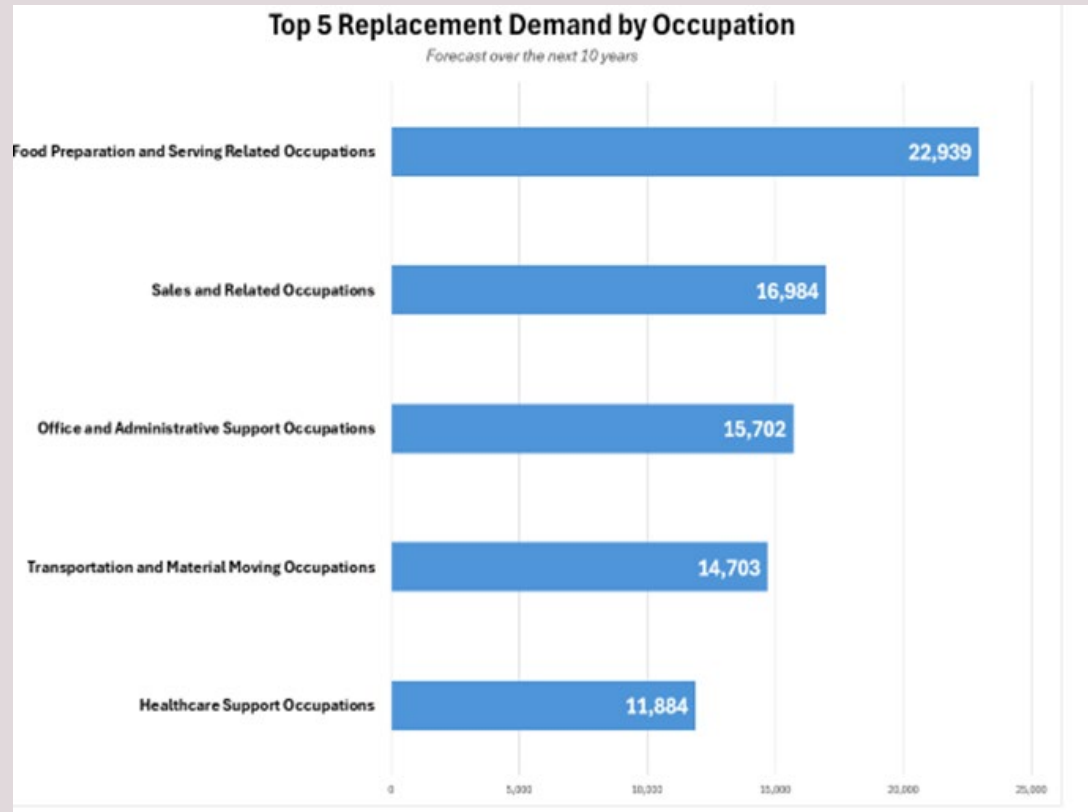
- The Northeastern Workforce Development Board (NWDB) serves Aroostook, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Washington Counties.
- We provide access to education, training, and resources that lead to sustainable employment and livable wages.
- We help businesses find and retain qualified workers, especially in high-demand sectors.
- Our strategies address skill gaps, support career pathways, and foster collaboration among stakeholders.
- NWDB's Local Area Workforce Plan (LAWP)'s work guides our strategy to build a strong regional economy by aligning workforce development with business needs.

Replacement Demand

Projected Demand: 160,849 replacement positions over 10 years
16,103 replacement positions over 1 year

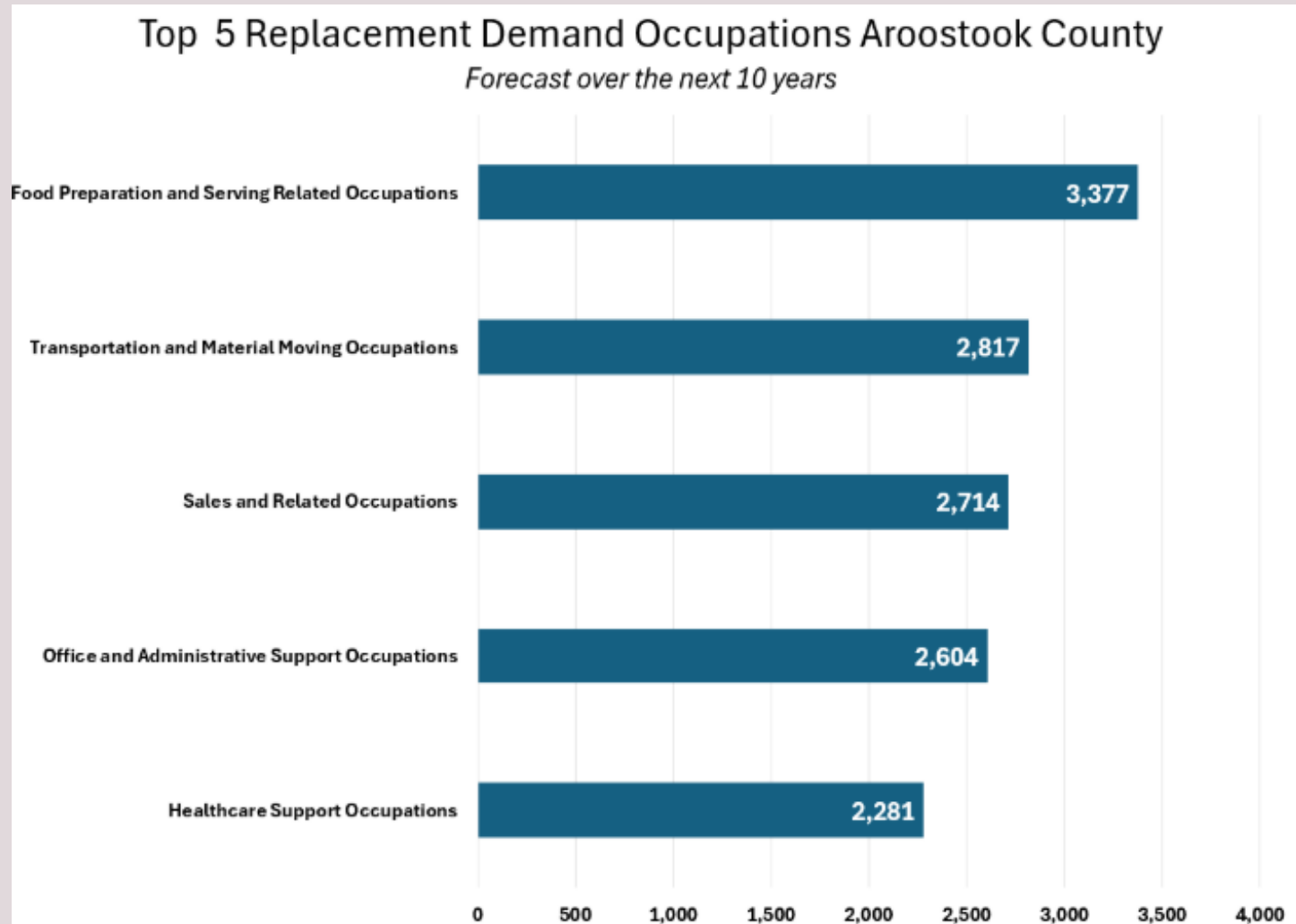
These are existing roles being vacated due to retirements or other exits. This signals an aging workforce and the urgency of succession planning. It highlights the need to build up training pipelines, expand outreach to nontraditional workers, and proactively upskill underemployed individuals or new labor force entrants.

If unaddressed, these vacancies could cause disruptions in essential sectors, especially healthcare and public services.



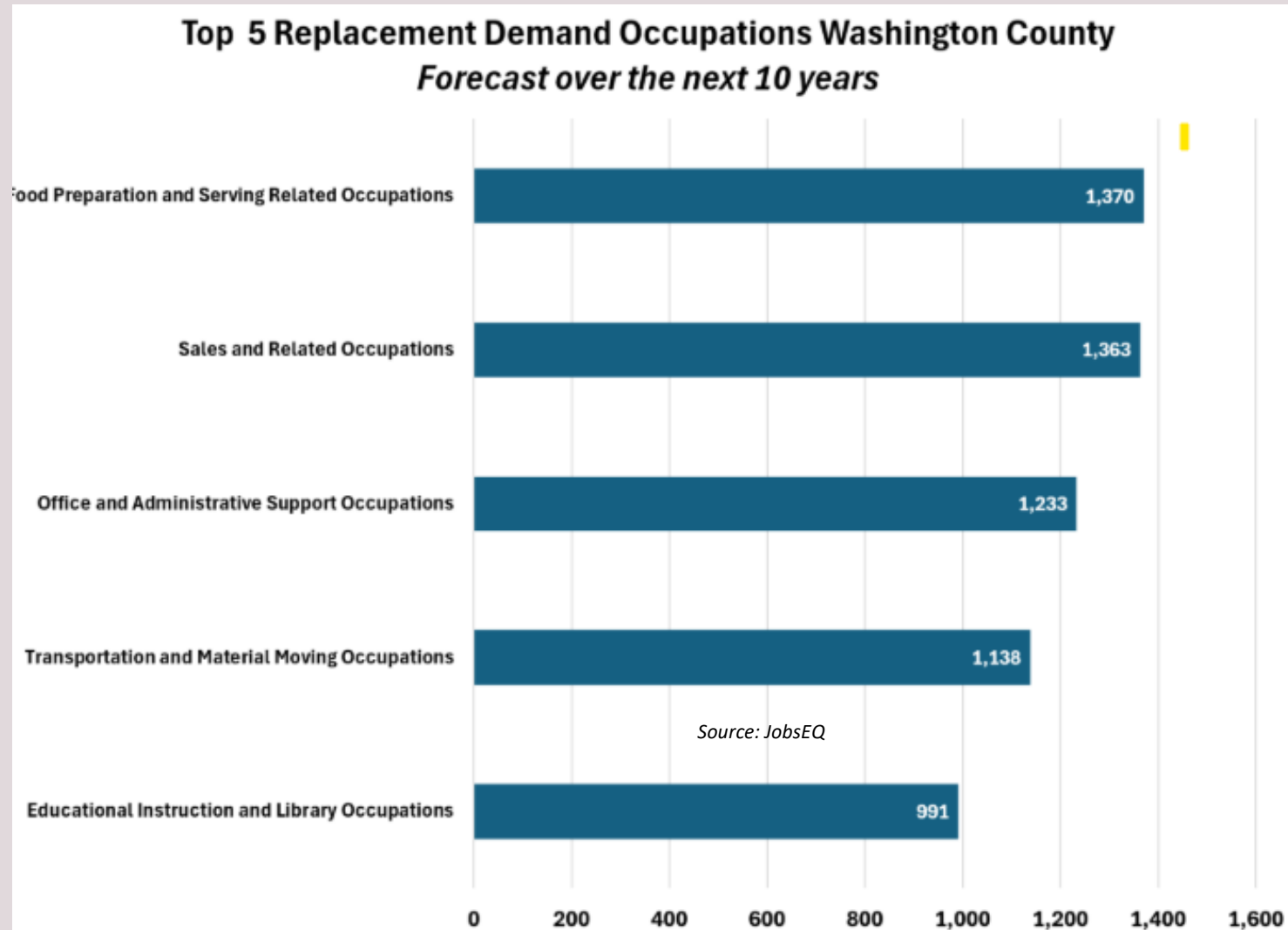
Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2024Q3 unless noted otherwise
Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Replacement Demand by County - Aroostook



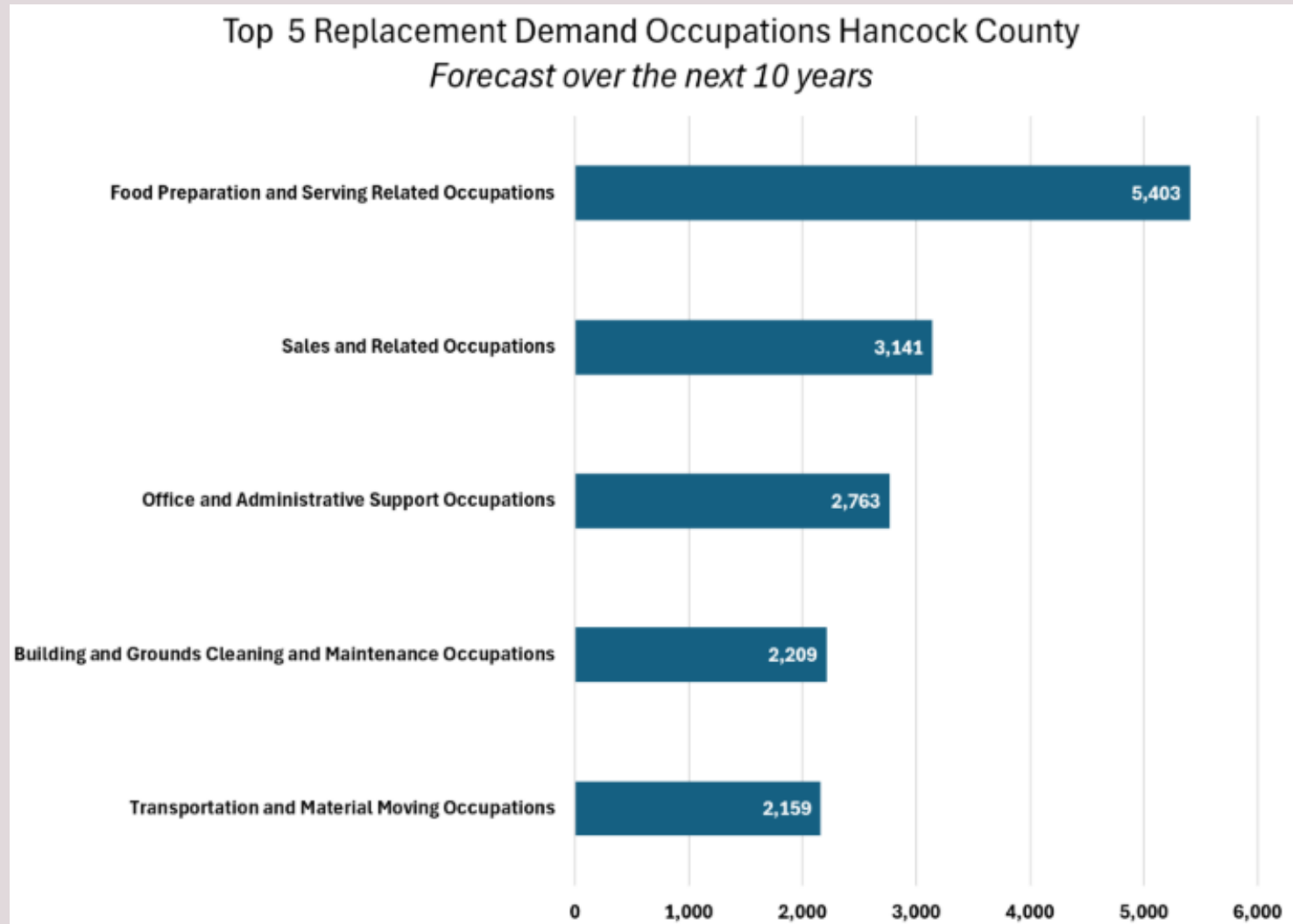
Source: JobsEQ

Replacement Demand by County - Washington



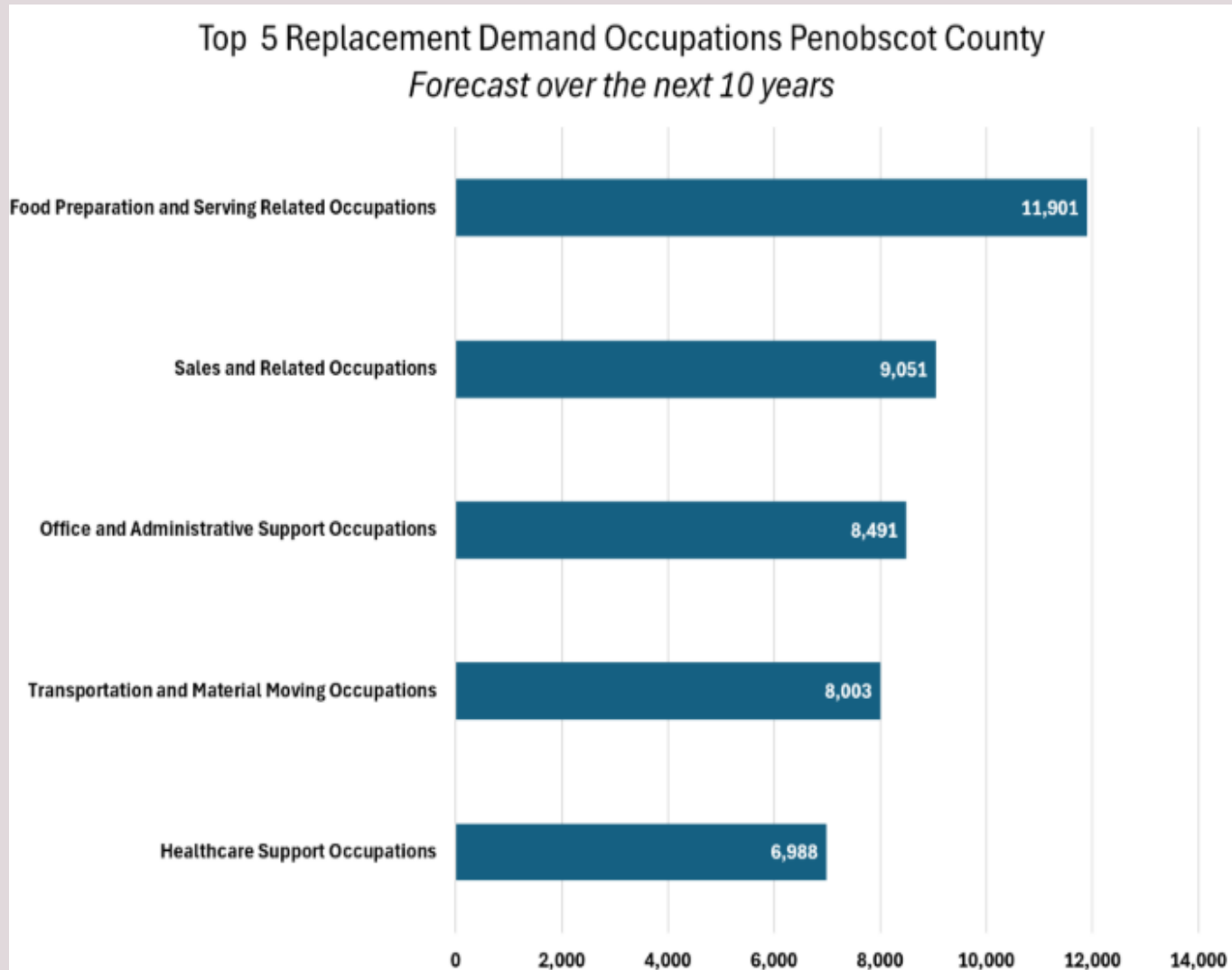
Source: JobsEQ

Replacement Demand by County - Hancock



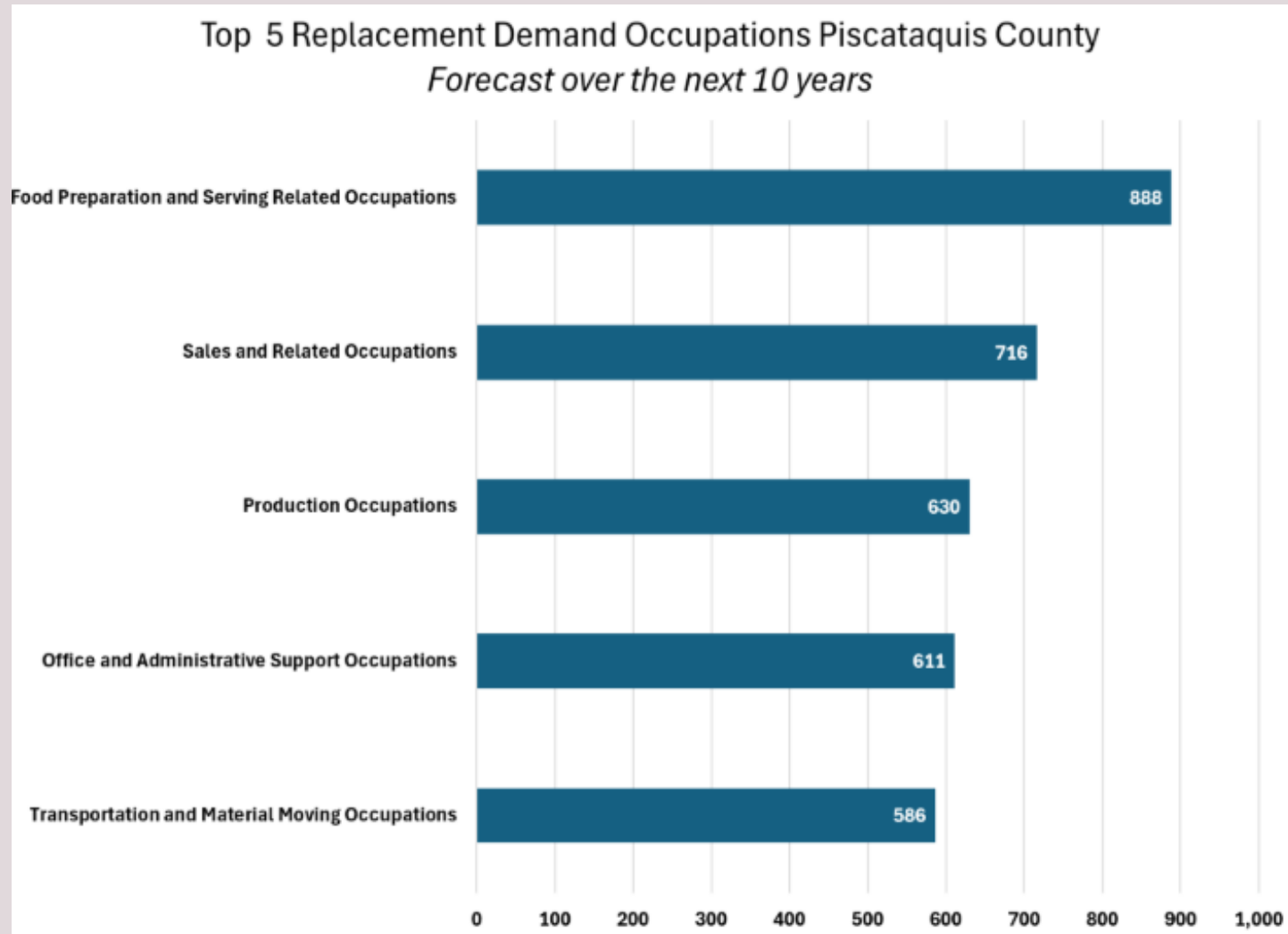
Source: JobsEQ

Replacement Demand by County - Penobscot



Source: JobsEQ

Replacement Demand by County - Piscataquis



Source: JobsEQ

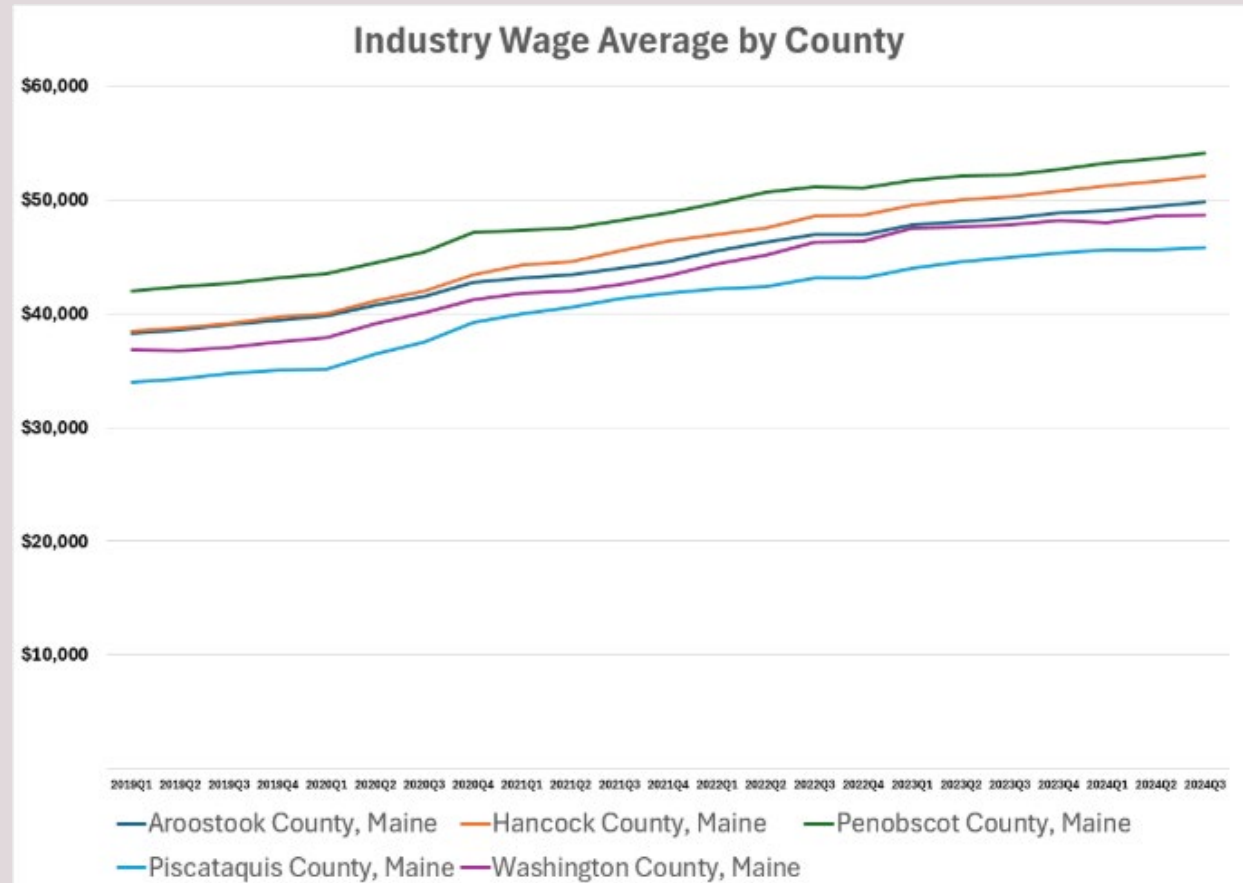
Industry Wages by County

Industry Wage Average by County 2024

Source: JobsEQ

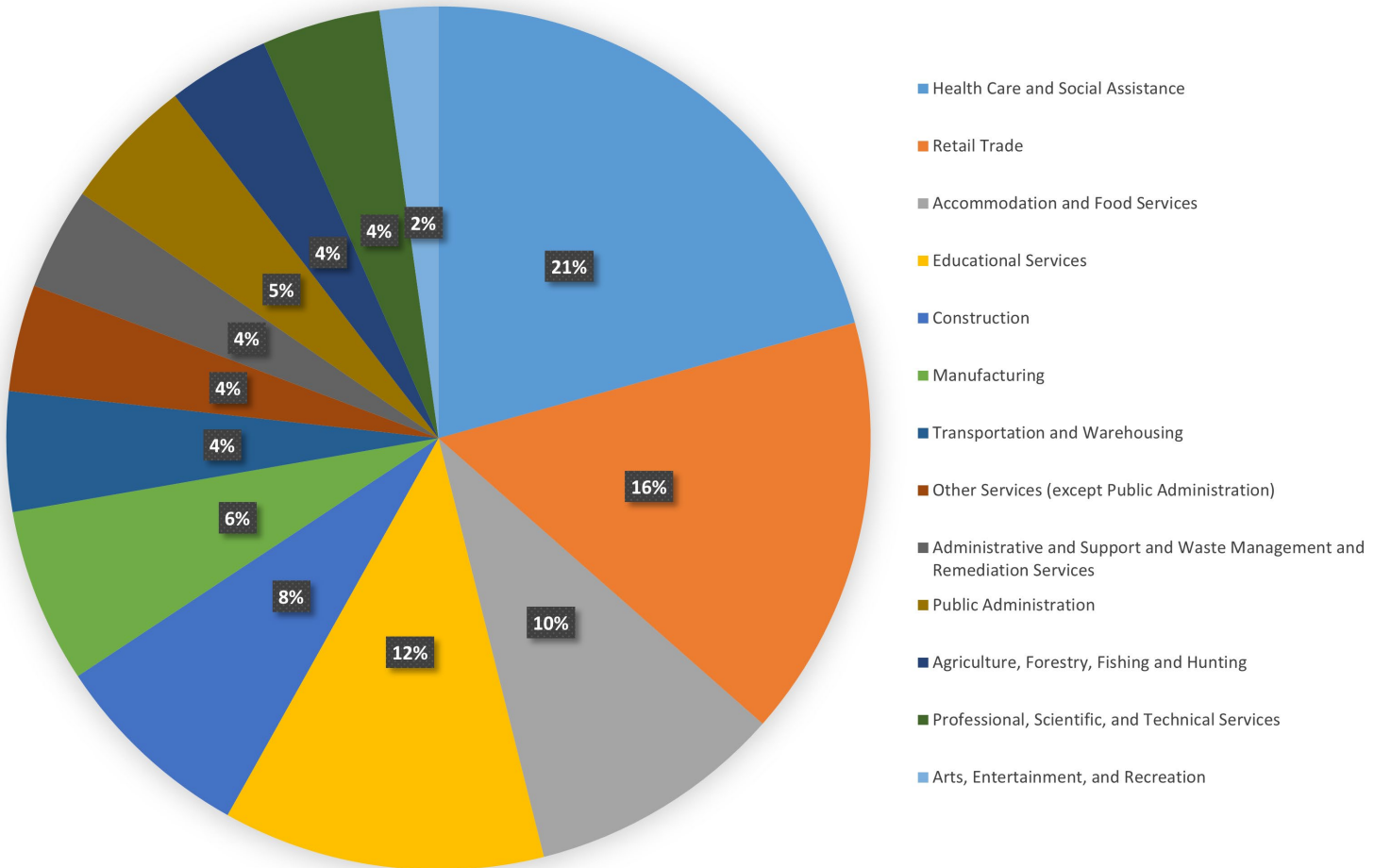
At first glance, wages across the five NWDB counties have shown steady and encouraging growth over a five-year span.

Despite all counties improving, the gap between the highest (Penobscot) and lowest (Washington, Piscataquis) remains significant (up to \$10,000+) in some quarters. This creates unequal economic opportunity across the region.



Jobs by Industry Sector

Jobs by Industry Sector, 2024

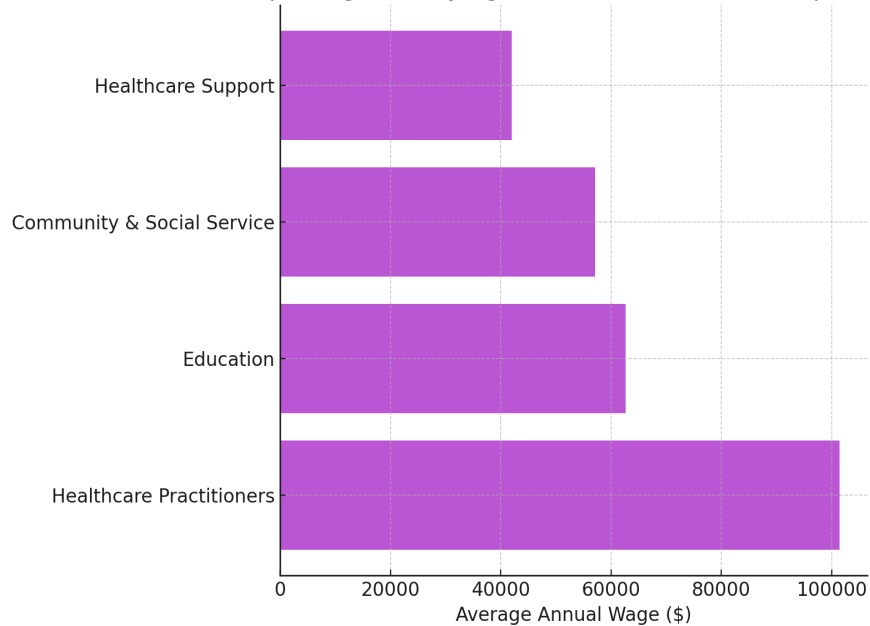


Industry Wages by Gender

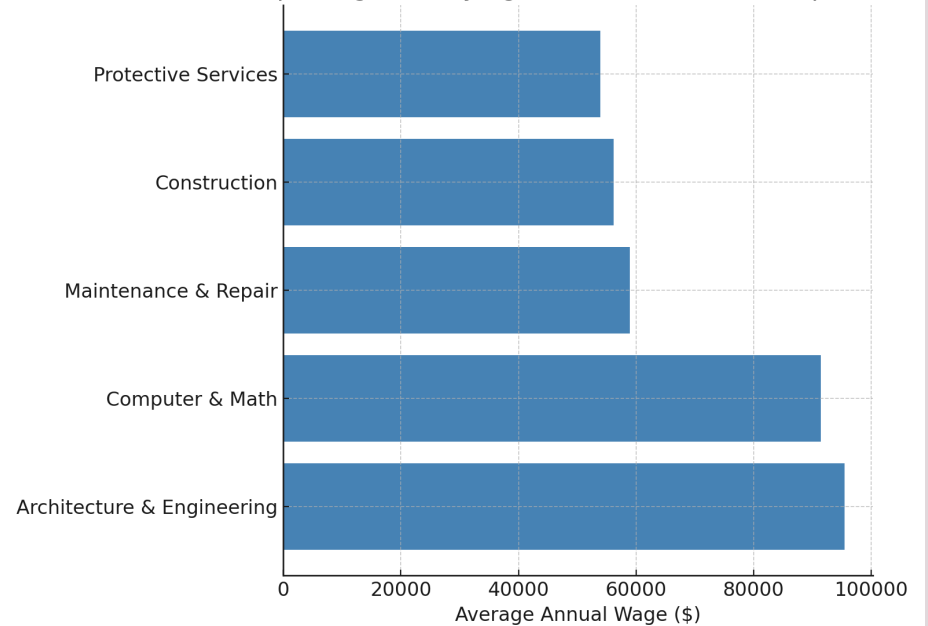
Top 5 Highest Paying Gender Dominated Occupations 2024

Source: JobsEQ

Top 5 Highest Paying Female-Dominated Occupations

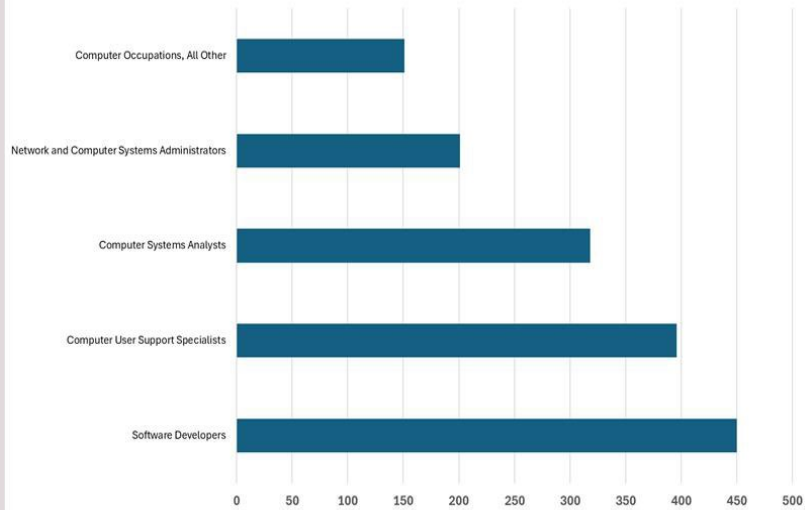


Top 5 Highest Paying Male-Dominated Occupations



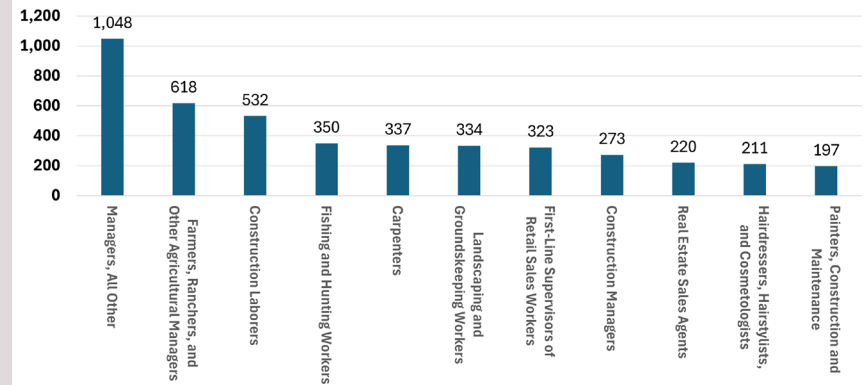
Occupational Growth

Top 5 Information Technology Occupations in the NWDB Region



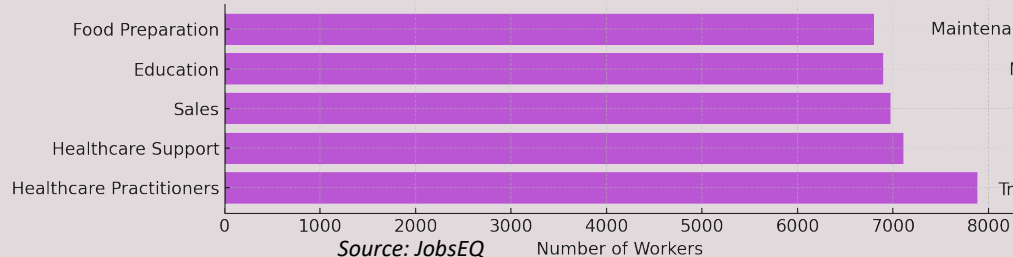
Source: JobsEQ

Top 10 Self-Employed Occupations in the NWDB Region



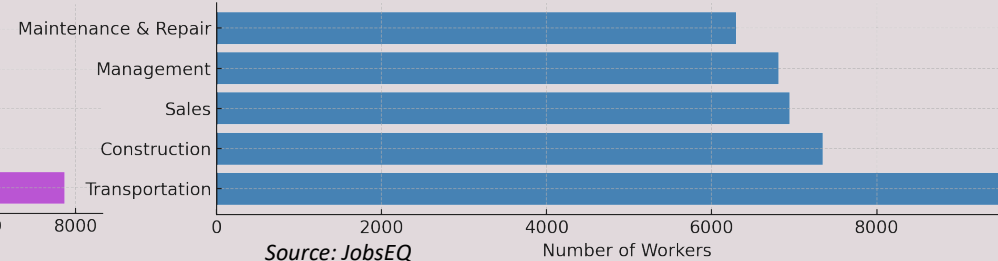
Source: JobsEQ

Top 5 Female-Dominated Occupations



Source: JobsEQ

Top 5 Male-Dominated Occupations

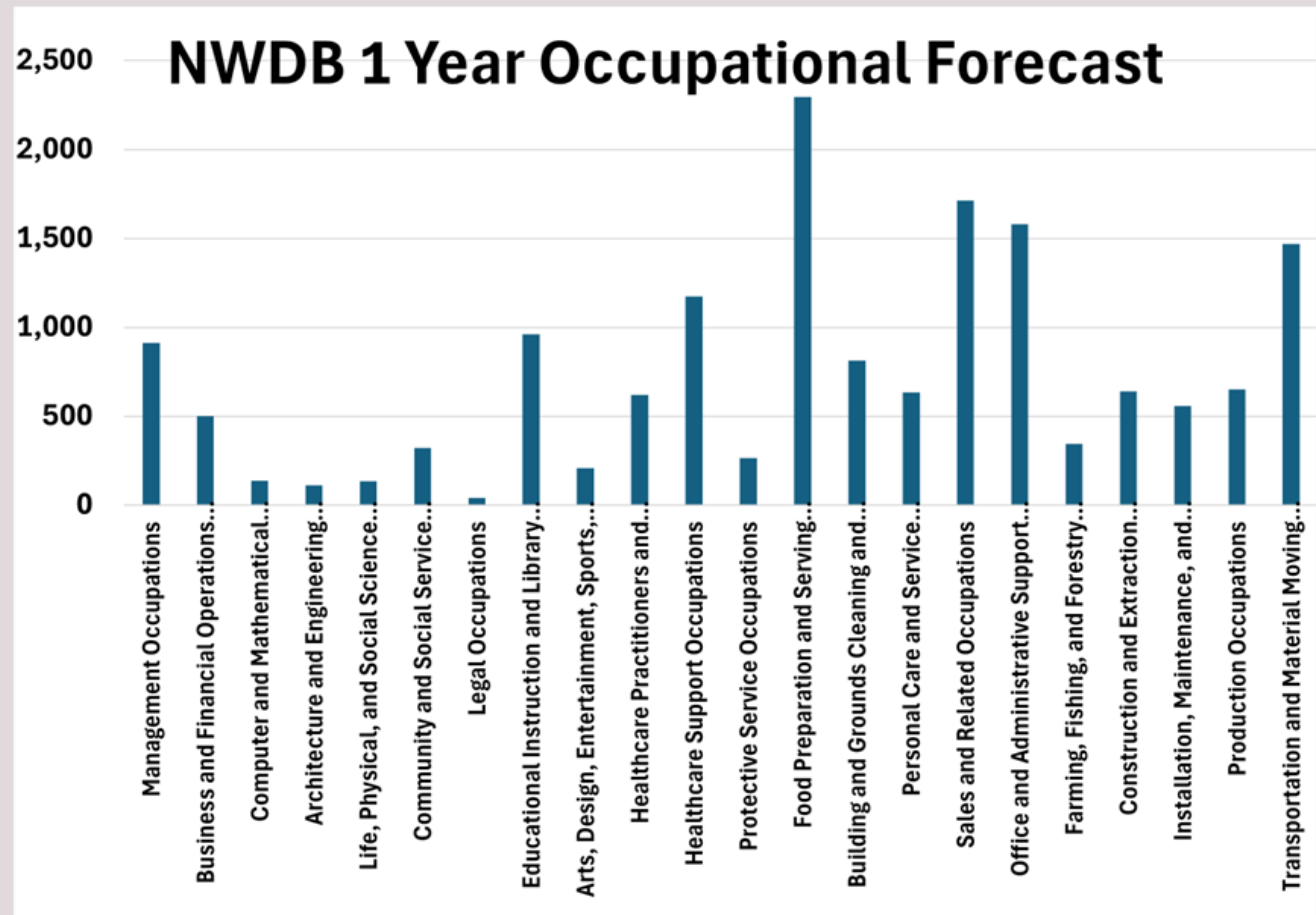


Source: JobsEQ

Occupational Forecast

Key Sectors: Health Care, Retail Trade, Accommodation & Food Services, Educational Services, Construction

While the region has a diverse employment base, not all sectors offer the same long-term career prospects. It's critical that training efforts align with the sectors poised for growth and stability, while also supporting economic mobility out of lower-wage roles.

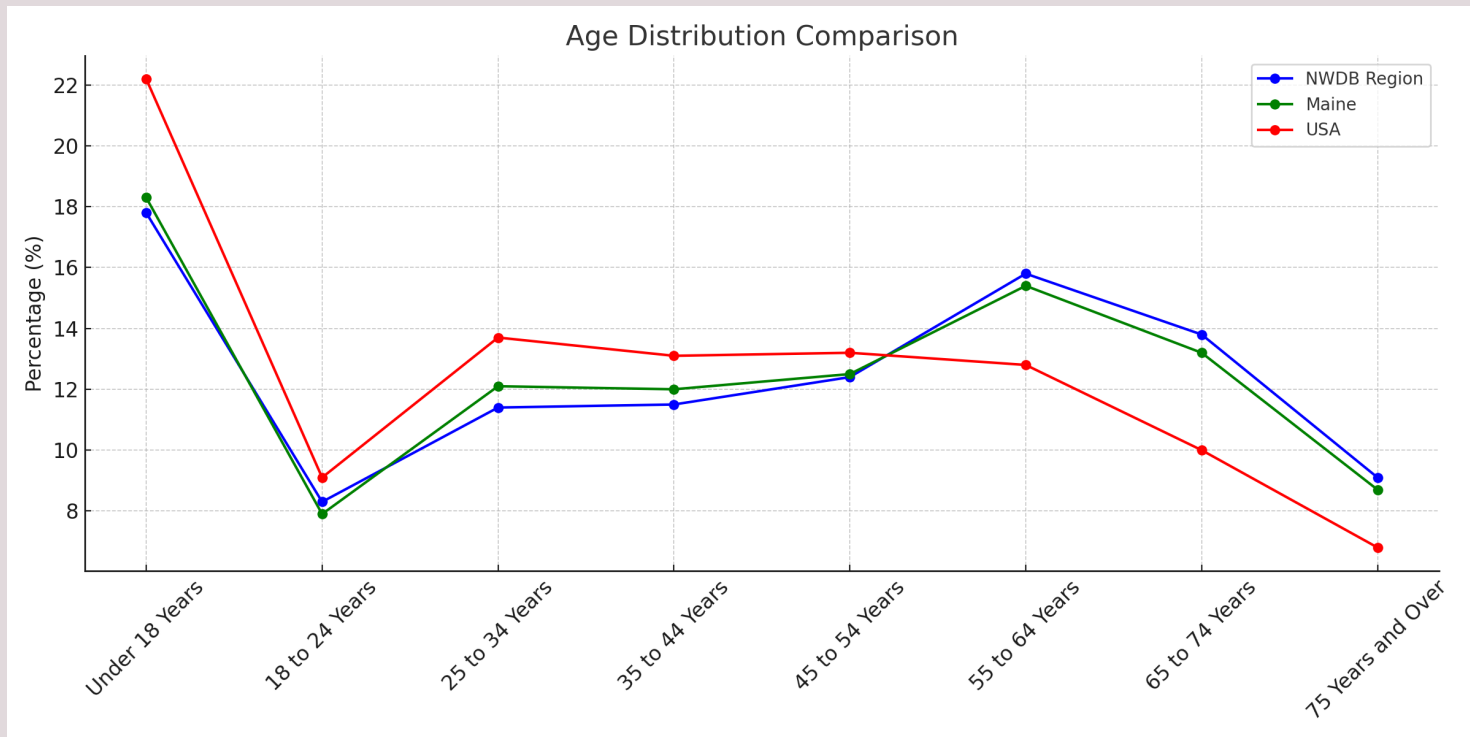


Source: JobsEQ®.

Regional Demographics

Age Distribution (Population) 2024Q3

Source: JobsEQ®

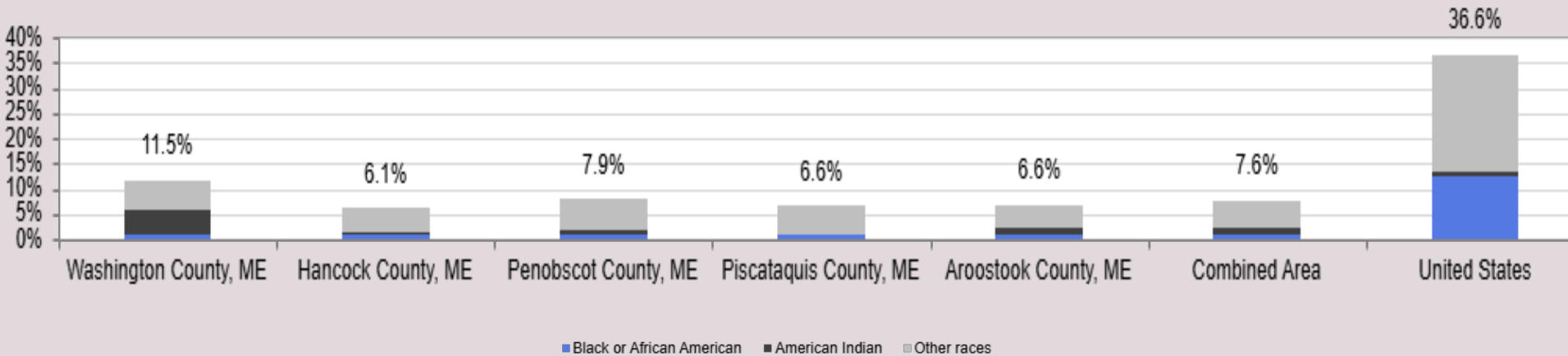


Nearly 29% of the population is aged 55 or older, many of whom are already retired or preparing to exit the workforce. This foreshadows rising replacement demand and potential skill gaps in industries like healthcare, trades, and public service.

Regional Demographics

Non-White Population by Race, Percent of Total, 2023*

Source: ACS



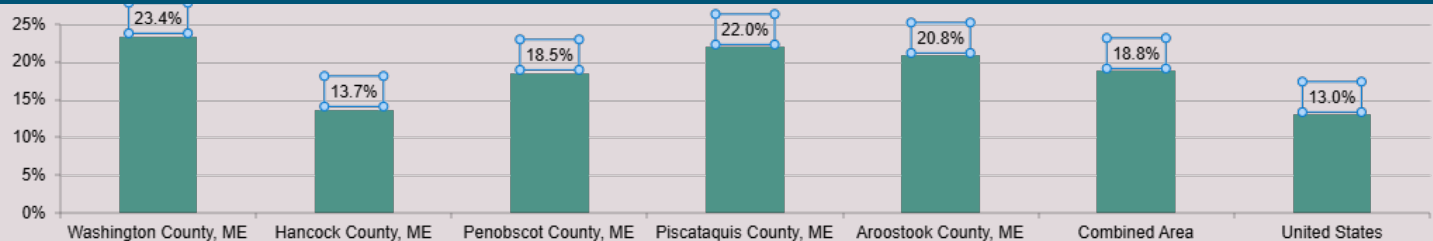
Washington County has the largest percentage of non-white population with 11.5%. Hancock County has the lowest with 6.1%

Barriers to Employment

People with Disabilities, Percent of Total, 2023*

Source: ACS

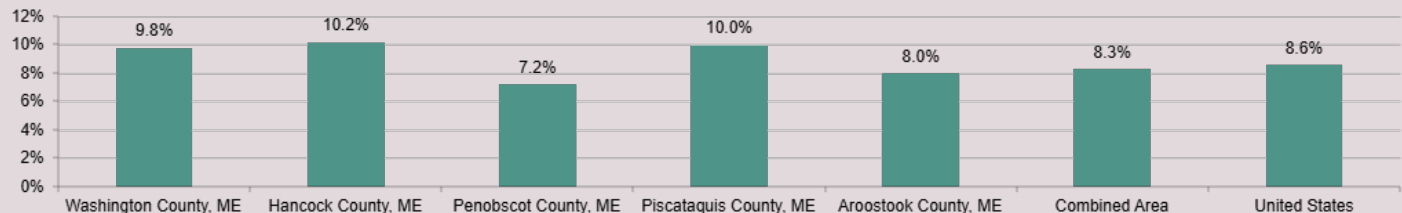
Washington County has the largest share of the noninstitutionalized population that is disabled (23.4%).



People without Health Insurance, Percent of Total, 2023*

Source: ACS

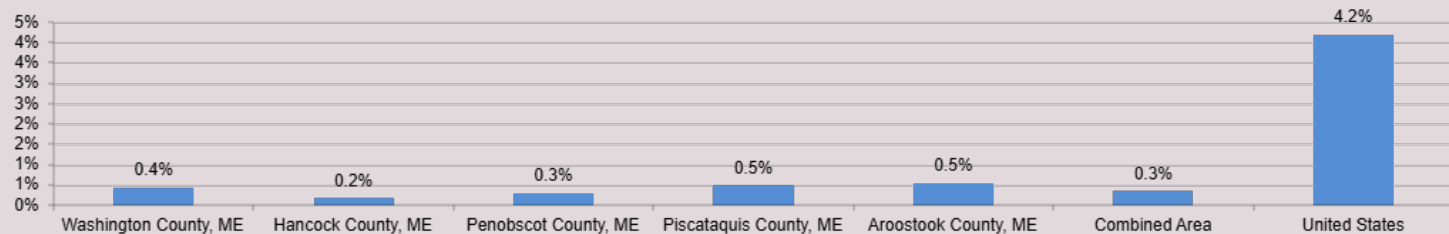
Hancock County has the largest share of the noninstitutionalized population without health insurance (10.2%).



People Who Speak English "Not Well", Percent of Total, 2023*

Source: ACS

Aroostook and Piscataquis Counties, have the largest share of the population of people who speak English "Not Well" (0.5%).

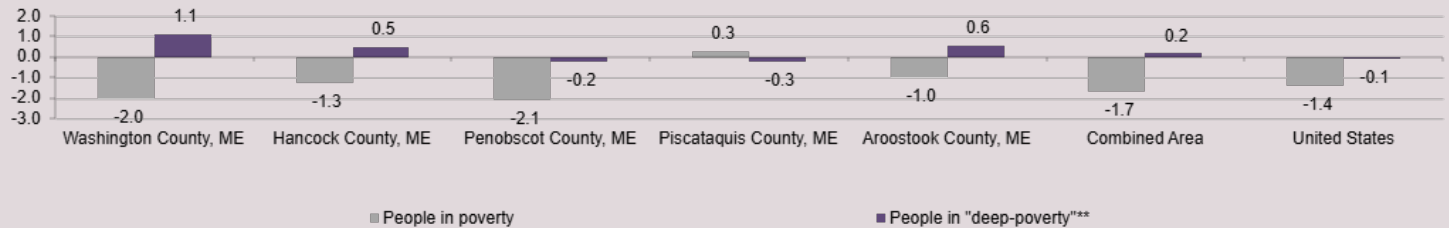


Barriers to Employment

People in Poverty, Change in Percentage Points, 2010*-2023*

Source: ACS

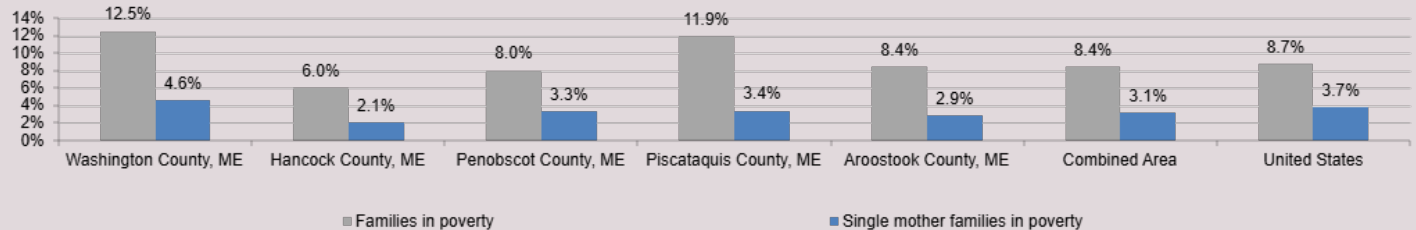
The largest change in the share of people in "deep poverty" occurred in Washington County, which went from 6.0% to 7.1%.



Families in Poverty, Percent of Total, 2023*

Source: ACS

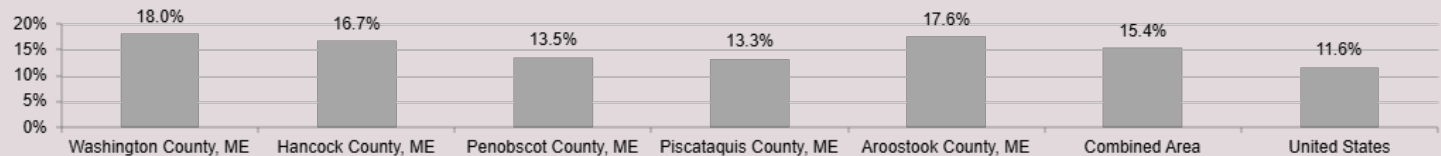
Washington County has the largest share of single mother families in poverty (4.6%).



People > 65 Yrs and Living Alone as a Percent of Total Households, 2023*

Source: ACS

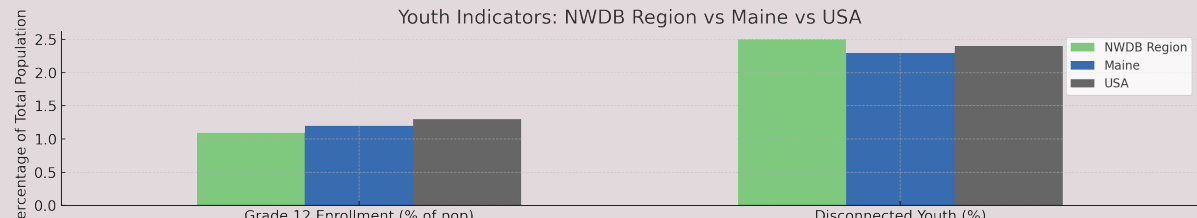
Washington County has the largest share of households with people over 65 living alone (18.0%).



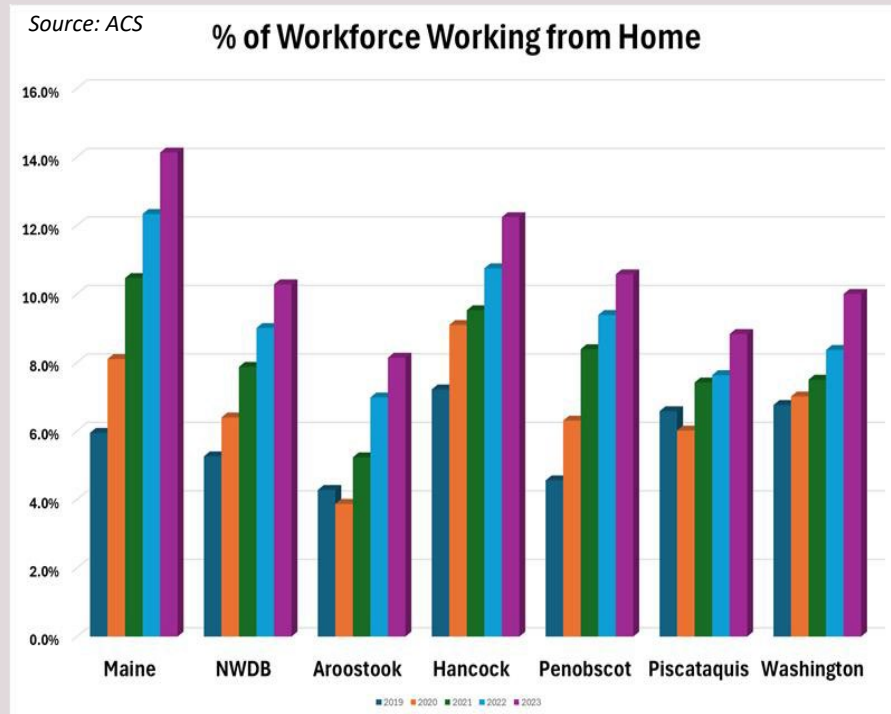
Youth – Disconnected & Enrolled in Grade 12 2024Q3

Source: JobsEQ

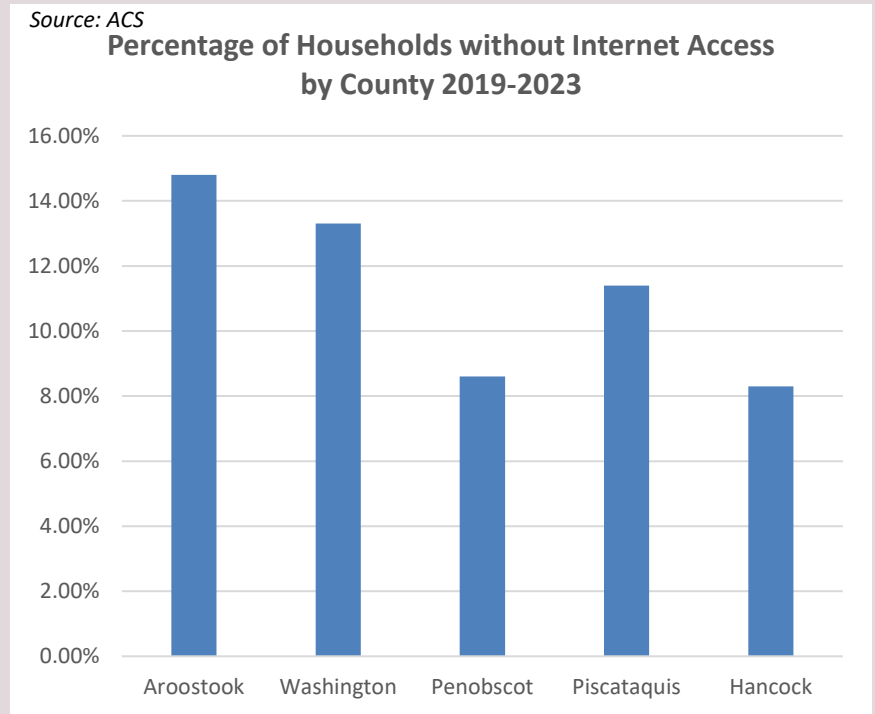
The NWDB Region has a slightly lower share of grade 12 students and a slightly higher rate of disconnected youth compared to both Maine and the U.S.



Socioeconomics – Technology



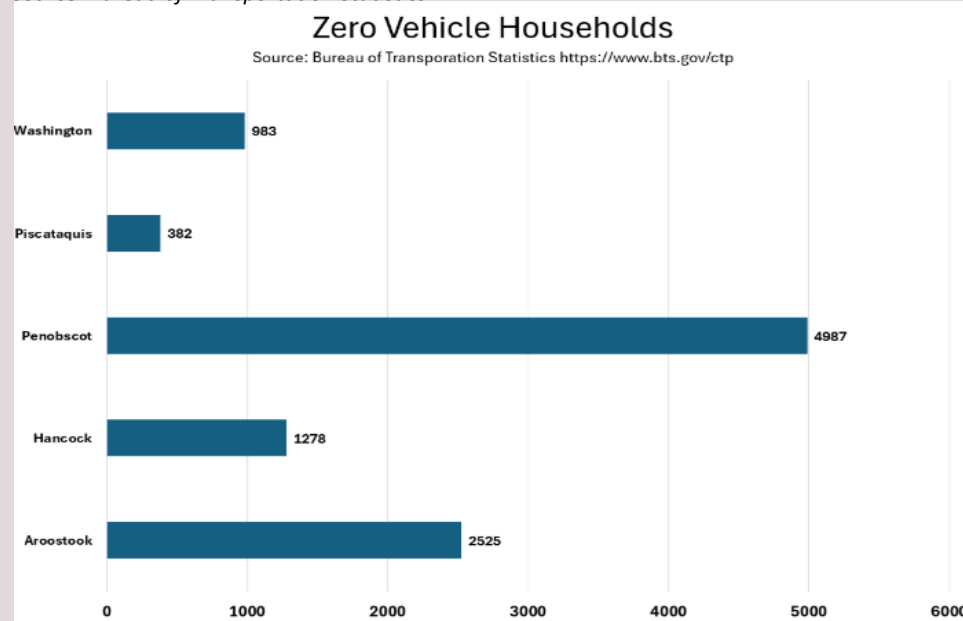
Hancock County has the largest percentage of the workforce working from home.



Aroostook County has the largest share of households without internet access, with 14.87%.

Socioeconomics – Transportation & Housing

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

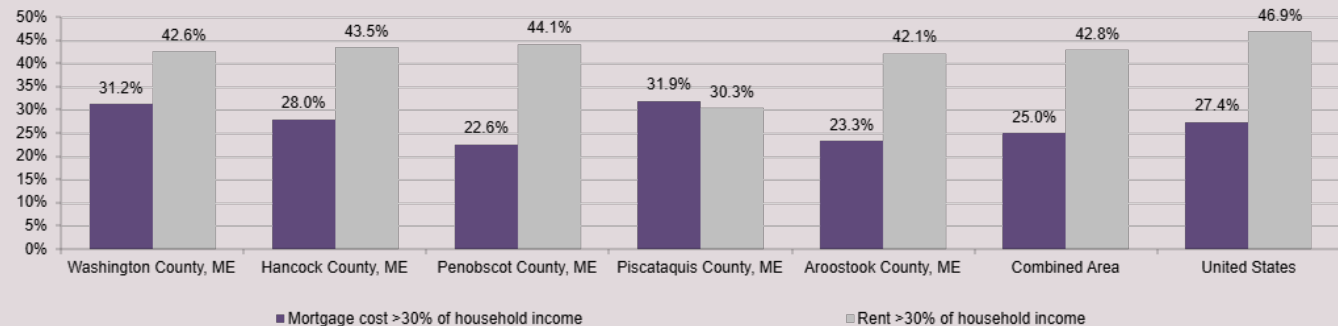


Penobscot County has the largest number of zero vehicle households, with 4,987.

Housing Costs as a Percent of Household Income, 2023*

Source: ACS.

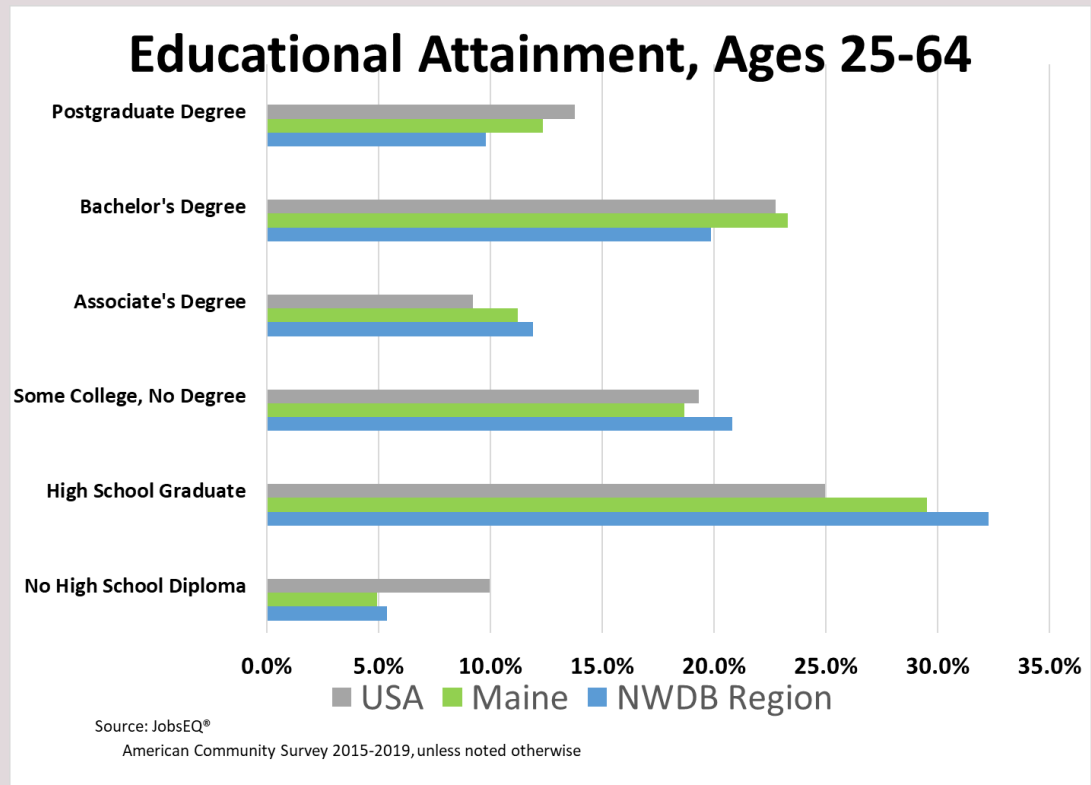
Piscataquis County has the largest share of unaffordable housing for homeowners, with 31.9% spending over 30% of household income on mortgage costs.



Educational Attainment

The NWDB region stands out for its concentration of associate degrees and some college/no degree individuals. These are the people most ready for targeted upskilling through short-term credentials, certifications, and employer training. This is a key workforce asset for industries like healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and trades.

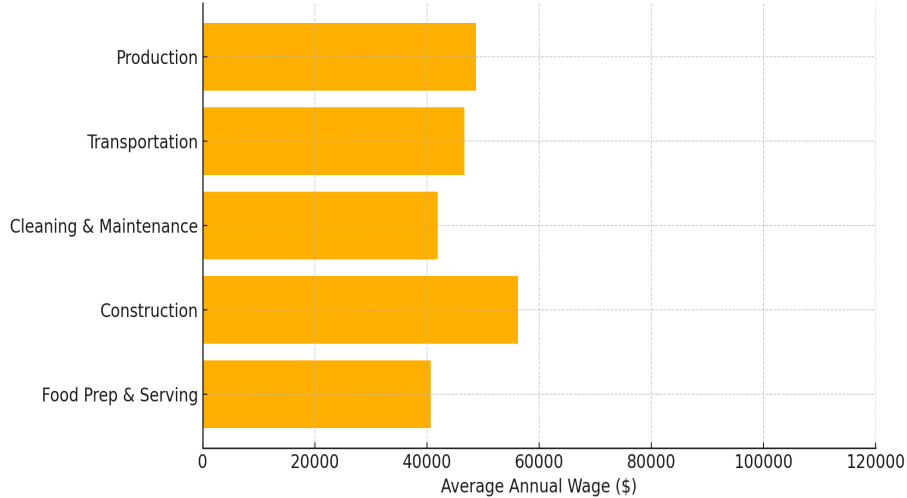
The NWDB Region's lower levels of four-year and postgraduate degrees can make it harder to attract or grow industries that rely on highly specialized talent, like tech, engineering, finance, or clean energy. Employers seeking those skills may struggle to hire locally or may overlook the region altogether.



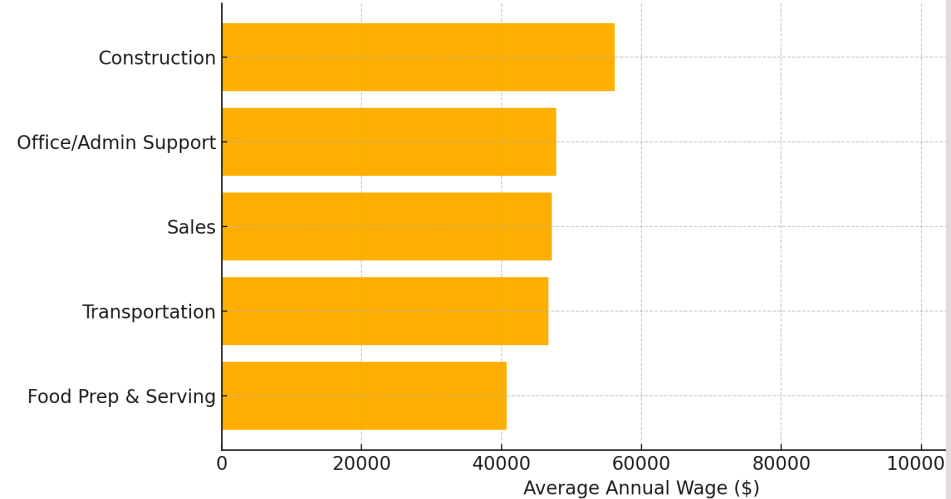
Educational Attainment - Wages

Source: JobsEQ®.

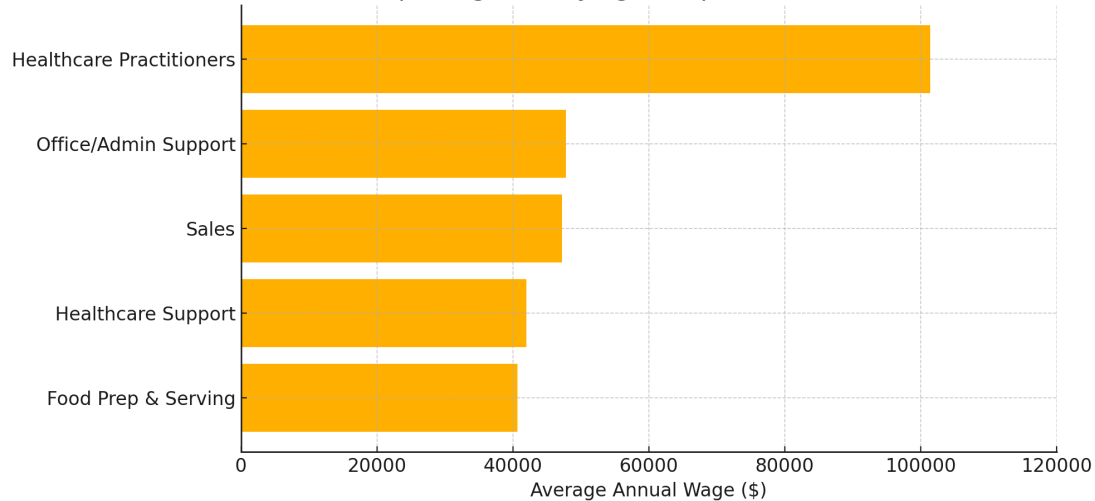
Top 5 Highest Paying Occupations - Less Than High School



Top 5 Highest Paying Occupations - High School



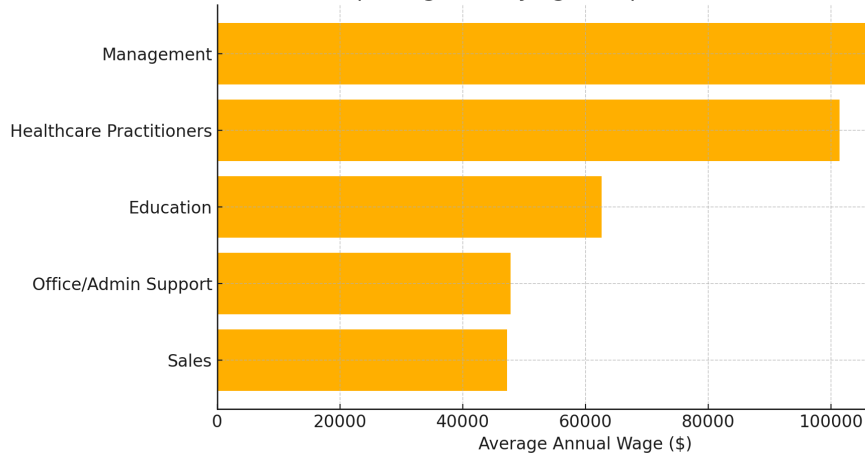
Top 5 Highest Paying Occupations - Two-Year



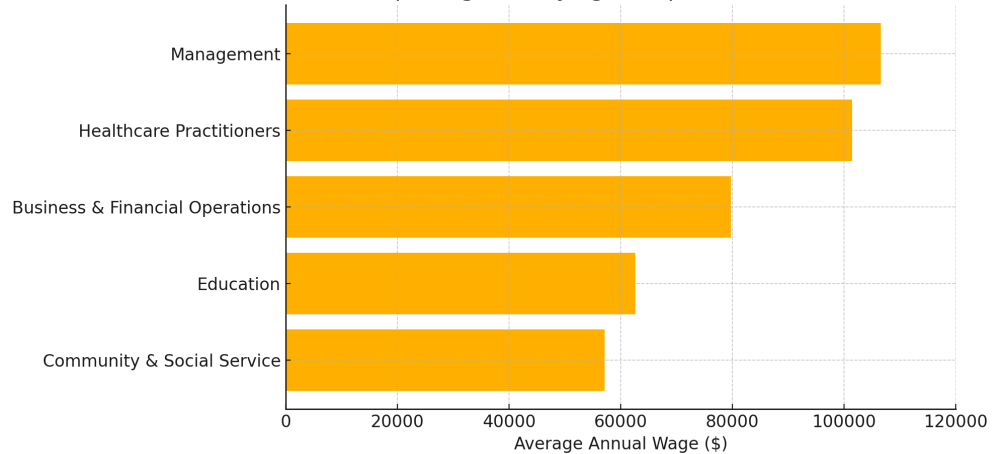
Educational Attainment - Wages

Source: JobsEQ®.

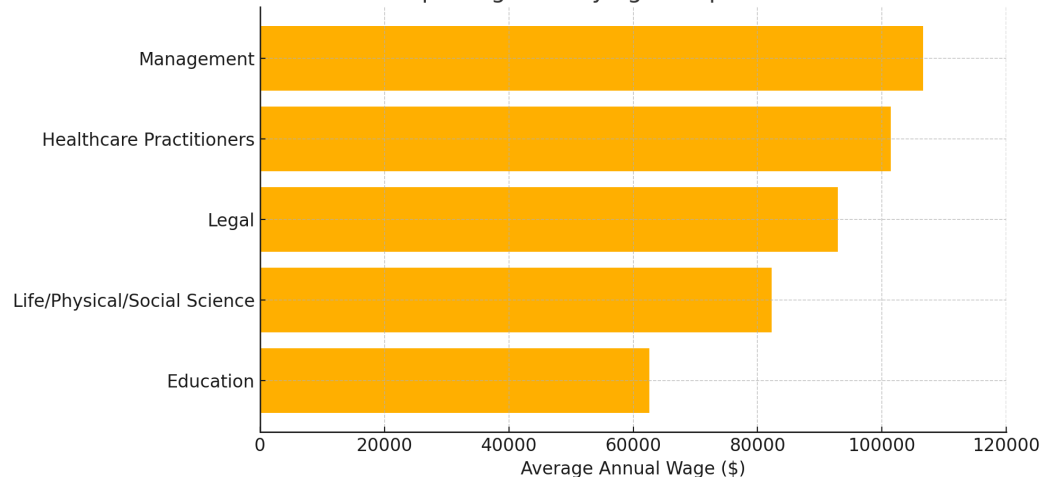
Top 5 Highest Paying Occupations - Four-Year



Top 5 Highest Paying Occupations - Master's



Top 5 Highest Paying Occupations - PhD

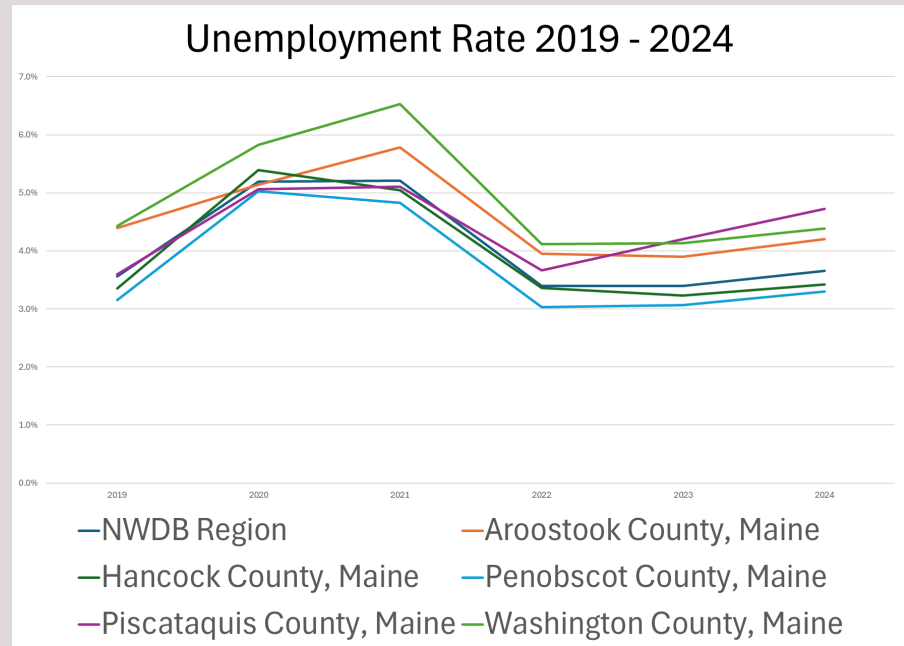


Unemployment by County

Unemployment Rate (2024): 3.7% in NWDB region (vs. Maine 3.4%)

3.7% is a regional average. Each county may have different economic difficulties.

With a participation rate of only 57.9%, a large segment of the population isn't being counted in unemployment stats. Workers may be employed, but underemployed, working part-time, seasonally, or in jobs beneath their skill level. Even with low unemployment, employers may report difficulty finding workers with the right skills or credentials, especially in healthcare, trades, or technology.

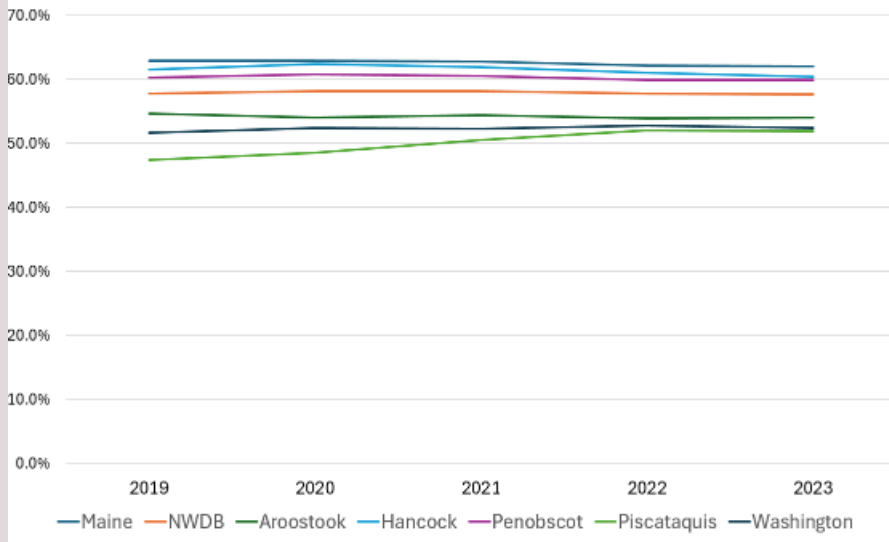


Source: JobsEQ®

Labor Force Participation

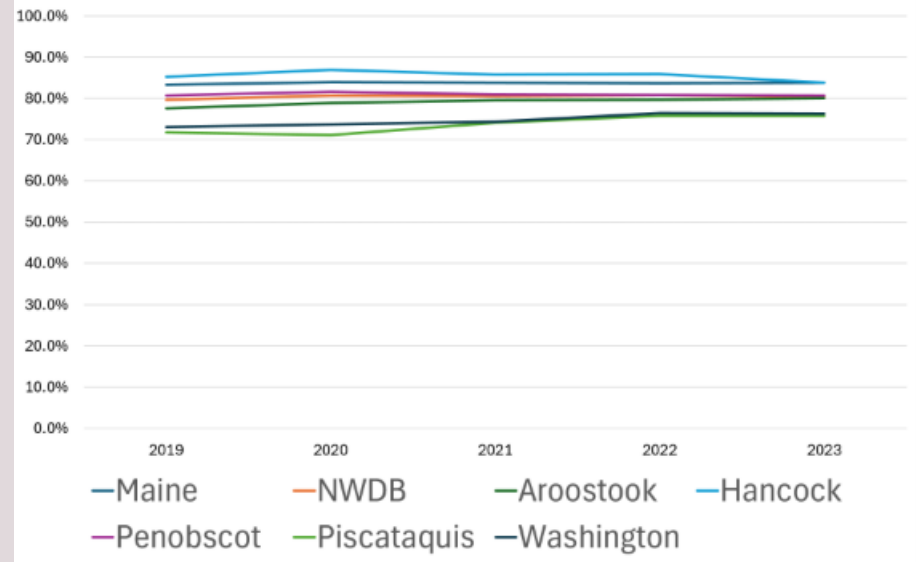
Labor Force Participation(ages 16+) : NWDB 57.9%, Maine 62%
Prime Age Labor Force Participation(ages 25-54): 79.7%, Maine 83.8%

**Labor Force Participation Rate and Size
(civilian population 16 years and over)**



Source: JobsEQ®

**Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size
(civilian population 25-54)**



Source: JobsEQ®

Labor force participation in the NWDB Region lags behind state and national rates, especially among the overall 16+ population. Prime-age participation is stronger but still varies across counties. Piscataquis and Aroostook Counties consistently show the lowest labor force participation. This points to barriers like childcare, transportation, and long-term unemployment.

Data Walk Guide

- **What might be driving this trend in our region?**
Consider local factors - economic shifts, policy changes, industry closures or expansions, infrastructure, education systems, etc.
- **How does this relate to your experience or what you hear from your community?**
Does this align with what you see on the ground, or are there gaps between the data and lived experience?
- **What does this mean for the future of our workforce?**
Think about who is (or isn't) participating, who's being left behind, and how this affects your ability to find, train, and retain workers.
- **Is this a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, or Threat (SWOT) for the region?**
Use the data to begin placing issues into the SWOT framework.

SWOT Analysis

- Goal: Evaluate Maine's workforce from your perspective using SWOT.
- Guiding Questions:
 - Strengths: What helps Maine's labor force succeed? (e.g., partnerships, training assets)
 - Weaknesses: What limits Maine labor force's impact? (e.g., demographic trends)
 - Opportunities: What can be leveraged? (e.g., clean energy jobs)
 - Threats: What challenges exist? (e.g., retirements, low participation)

Employer and Business Survey



Summary of Findings

- Strengths:
 - Diverse employment base across healthcare, education, construction, and services
 - Predictable demand: 160,849 replacement jobs projected over 10 years
 - Low regional unemployment rate (3.7%) signals general economic stability
- Weaknesses:
 - Low labor force participation (57.9%) limits talent pool availability
 - Localized unemployment disparities hidden by regional averages
 - Aging population and workforce outmigration reduce long-term capacity
- Opportunities:
 - Strong demand for healthcare, clean energy, and tech workers
 - Upskilling underemployed residents to meet replacement demand
 - Leverage higher education and training infrastructure for career pathways
- Threats:
 - Retirements may outpace workforce entry without intervention
 - Barriers like childcare, transportation, and access keep many out of the workforce
 - Heavy reliance on low-wage sectors limits regional wage growth and retention