

# New Hampshire ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

July 2022

Fireworks (image by Nick on Pixabay)

## Youth Employment In New Hampshire

While many New Hampshire residents age 14 to 21 are employed year-round, youth employment typically peaks during the third quarter of each year, as youth, who are mostly enrolled in either secondary or postsecondary education, are more likely to work during summers, when school is not in session.

In the first, second and fourth quarters of 2019, youth employment averaged 50,700 workers. In the third quarter, youth employment increased to 62,000, a gain of 11,300 workers, or 22 percent. When the coronavirus pandemic first affected employment in New Hampshire, youth employment fell 19 percent, from 51,340 workers in the first quarter of 2020 to 41,330 in the second quarter. In the third quarter of 2020, youth employment increased to 50,060 workers, just 2.5 percent less than first quarter employment, but well below typical third quarter employment. However, youth employment, which typically declines by roughly 10,000 workers

in the fourth quarter, increased by approximately 800 workers. Between the fourth quarter of 2020 and the second quarter of 2021, youth employment averaged 50,100 workers, just below pre-pandemic employment levels. In the third quarter of 2021, youth employment increased to 61,220 workers, approximately 800 workers, or 1.3 percent, less than in the third quarter of 2019.

Youth workers were likely less concerned about the health risks of COVID than older workers, and more willing to work in-person during the early months of pandemic, particularly in public-facing industries such as retail trade and accommodation and food services. Other issues that kept workers out of the labor force during the pandemic, such as access to childcare, also likely had a smaller effect on youth workers.

Among those age 14 to 21, more females were employed than males, with females accounting for

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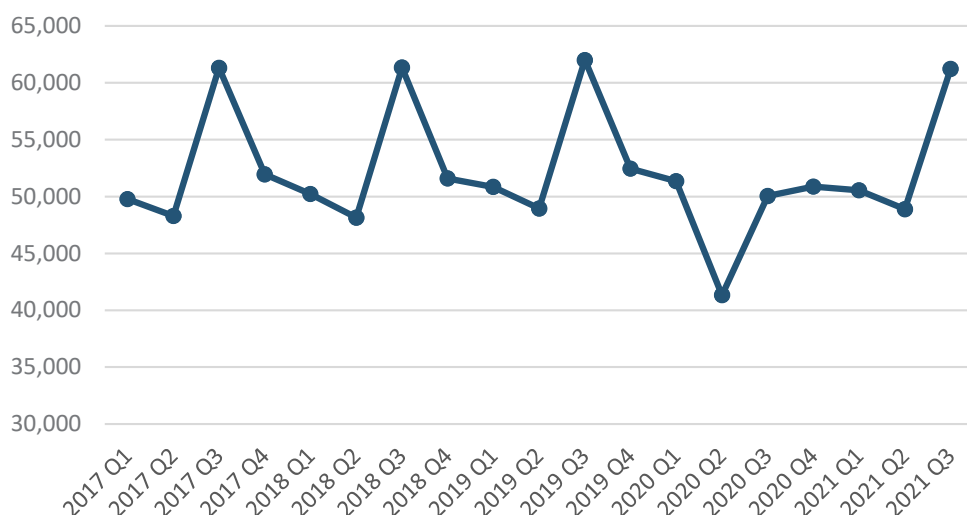
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53 percent of young workers. The share of female workers in this age group fell by almost two percent during the second and third quarters of 2020, before returning to previous levels by the end of 2020. This was in contrast to older workers in 2019, 50.3 percent of whom were male. Since the pandemic began, the share of male workers age 22 and older increased to 51.1 percent, while the share of female workers decreased to 48.9 percent. This diminished share of female workers age 22 and older persisted through the third quarter of 2021.

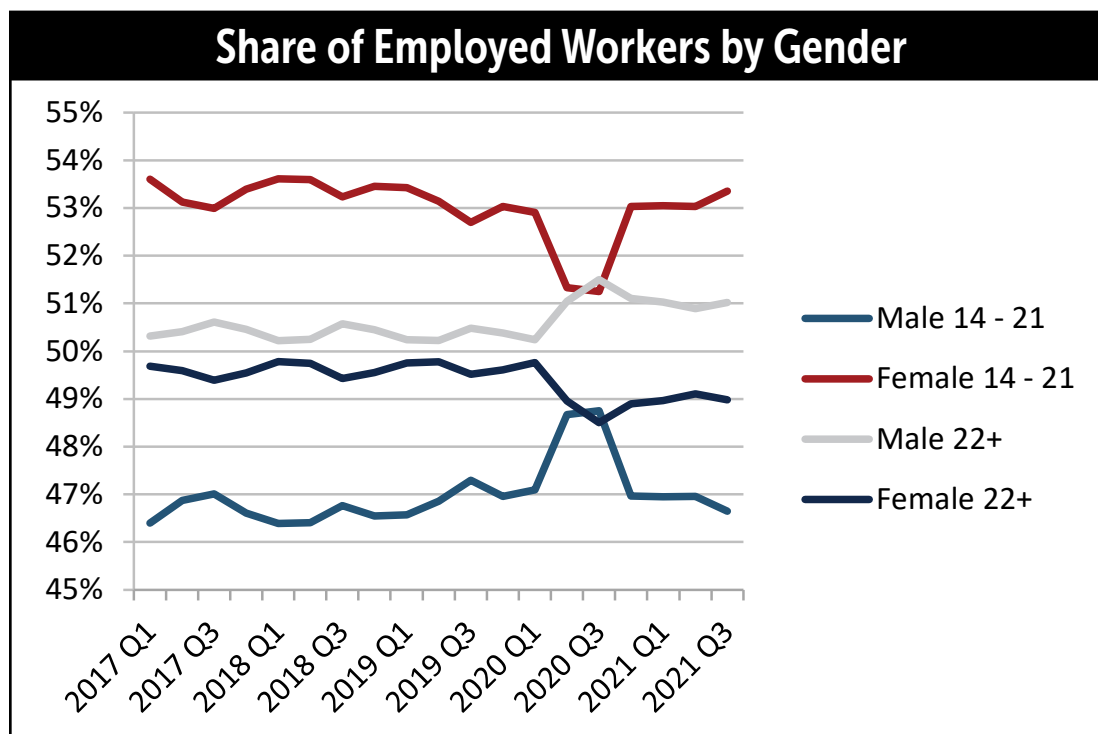
### Youth Employment By Industry

Workers age 14 to 21 were primarily employed in two industries: accommodation and food services and retail trade. Establishments in these two industries, which employ approximately 27 percent of the total workforce, employ two-thirds of young workers. This percentage declines to approximately 60 percent during the third quarter of each year, as youth employment in other industries increases at a greater rate. In the third quarter of 2021, just under 40,000 youth were employed in accommodation and food services and

### Youth Employment



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators



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retail trade. These two industries are more likely than others to offer part-time and seasonal work, allowing youth the flexibility to work while attending school. In addition, many occupations in these industries usually require low levels of formal education for entry-level workers, so youth, most of whom have yet to achieve their desired level of educational attainment, are qualified to work in these positions.

Outside of retail trade and accommodation and food services, youth employment did not recover as quickly as employment among older workers. Youth employment in the third quarter of 2021 was 10.6 percent below 2019 Q3 employment, while for workers age 22 and older, employment was just 0.8 percent below 2019 Q3 levels. In particular, youth employment in arts, entertainment and recreation and other services have been slow to recover from the pandemic. Compared to the third quarter of 2019, youth employment in arts, entertainment and recreation was 20 percent lower in the third quarter of 2021, and youth employment in other services was 26 percent lower.

### ***International and Out-of-State Youth Workers***

Some New Hampshire businesses struggle to find enough local workers to satisfy their demand for labor, particularly during periods of high seasonal tourist activity. Many

of these businesses rely on international youth workers, sponsored through J-1 visa programs, to fulfill their labor demand.<sup>1</sup> Exchange Visitor (J) visas are non-immigrant visas, allowing international visitors to work or study in the U.S. for a relatively short duration. The summer work travel visa program is intended to provide seasonal or temporary employment opportunities in the U.S. for students at international colleges and universities. J-1 visas are also available for interns, camp counselors, and au pairs.

Nationally, the number of J-1 visas issued declined 70 percent in 2020, as limited visa services were available during the pandemic.<sup>2</sup> The number of J-1 visas increased only slightly in 2021, remaining well below half of 2019 levels. In 2021, 104 New Hampshire businesses sponsored more than 1,600 workers with J-1 visas, with approximately 1,300 receiving J-1 visas through the summer work travel and camp counselor programs.<sup>3</sup> With a smaller pool of international labor to rely on, New Hampshire businesses also looked within the U.S. to increase their supply of youth labor. In 2022, businesses in Hampton Beach developed a pilot program to bring a dozen young Lakota workers to New Hampshire from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota to provide seasonal labor.<sup>4</sup>

- Greg David, Economist

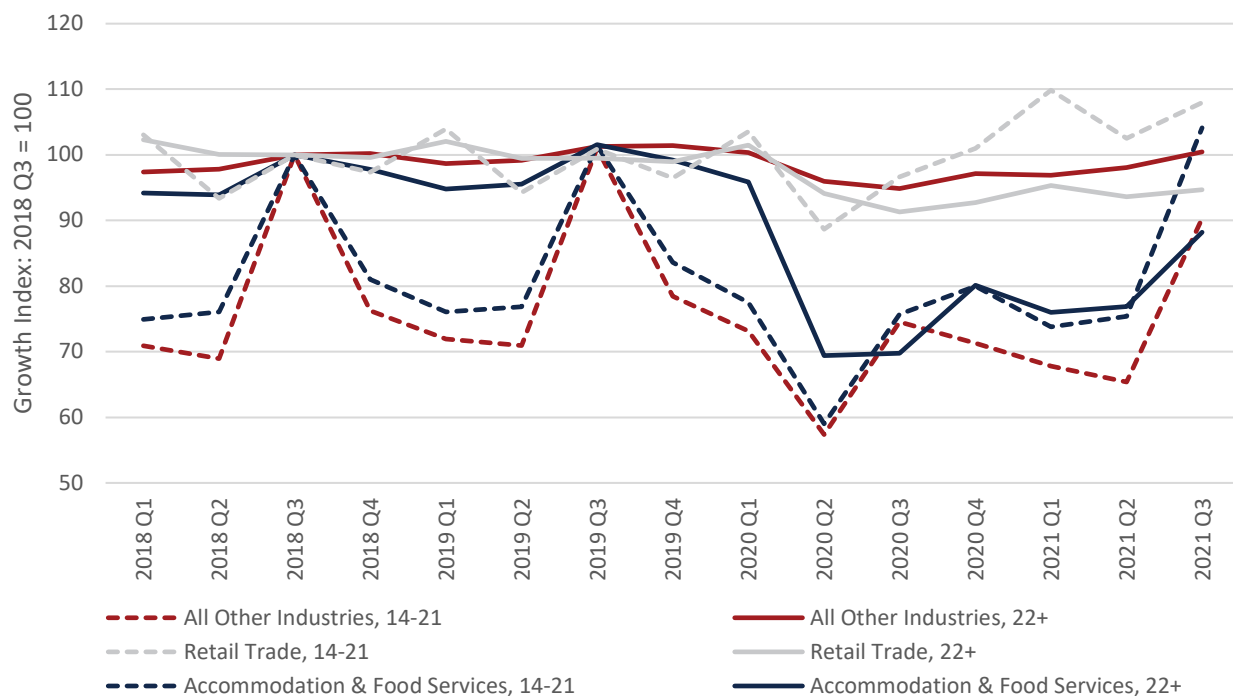
<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, J-1 Visa Basics. <https://j1visa.state.gov/basics/>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of State, Report of the Visa Office 2021. [https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/Statistics/AnnualReports/FY2021AnnualReport/FY21\\_%20TableXVB.pdf](https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/Statistics/AnnualReports/FY2021AnnualReport/FY21_%20TableXVB.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, J-1 Visa Basics, Facts and Figures. <https://j1visa.state.gov/basics/facts-and-figures/#participants>.

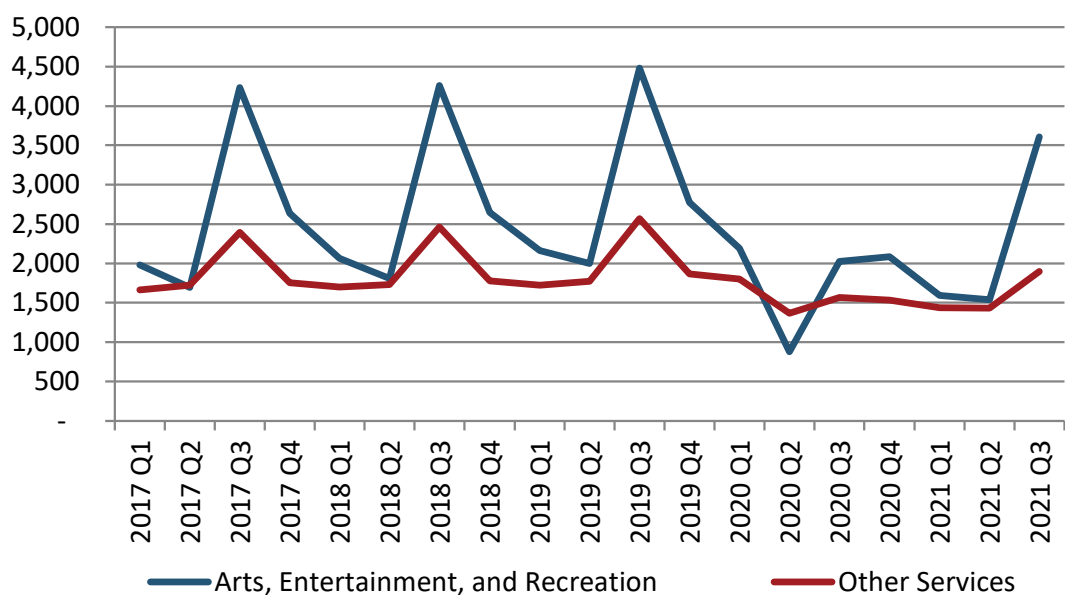
<sup>4</sup> Katherine Underwood, NBC Boston, "Summer Jobs With a Side of Adventure: Members of Lakota Tribe Head to Hampton Beach." <https://www.nbcboston.com/news/local/summer-jobs-with-a-side-of-adventure-members-of-lakota-tribe-head-to-hampton-beach/2676976/>.

## Growth Index for Youth and All Other Workers



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators

## Youth Employment in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation and Other Services



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators