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Workforce and Demographic Profile of Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties

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Prepared for the Whirlpool Corporation.

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Workforce and Demographic Profile of Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties

Prepared for



Prepared by

Regional and Economic Planning Services
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W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

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Introduction

The Whirlpool Corporation, located in Benton Harbor Charter Township, asked the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research to develop a dashboard of indicators portraying the current and future (where possible) “economic” health of the region.

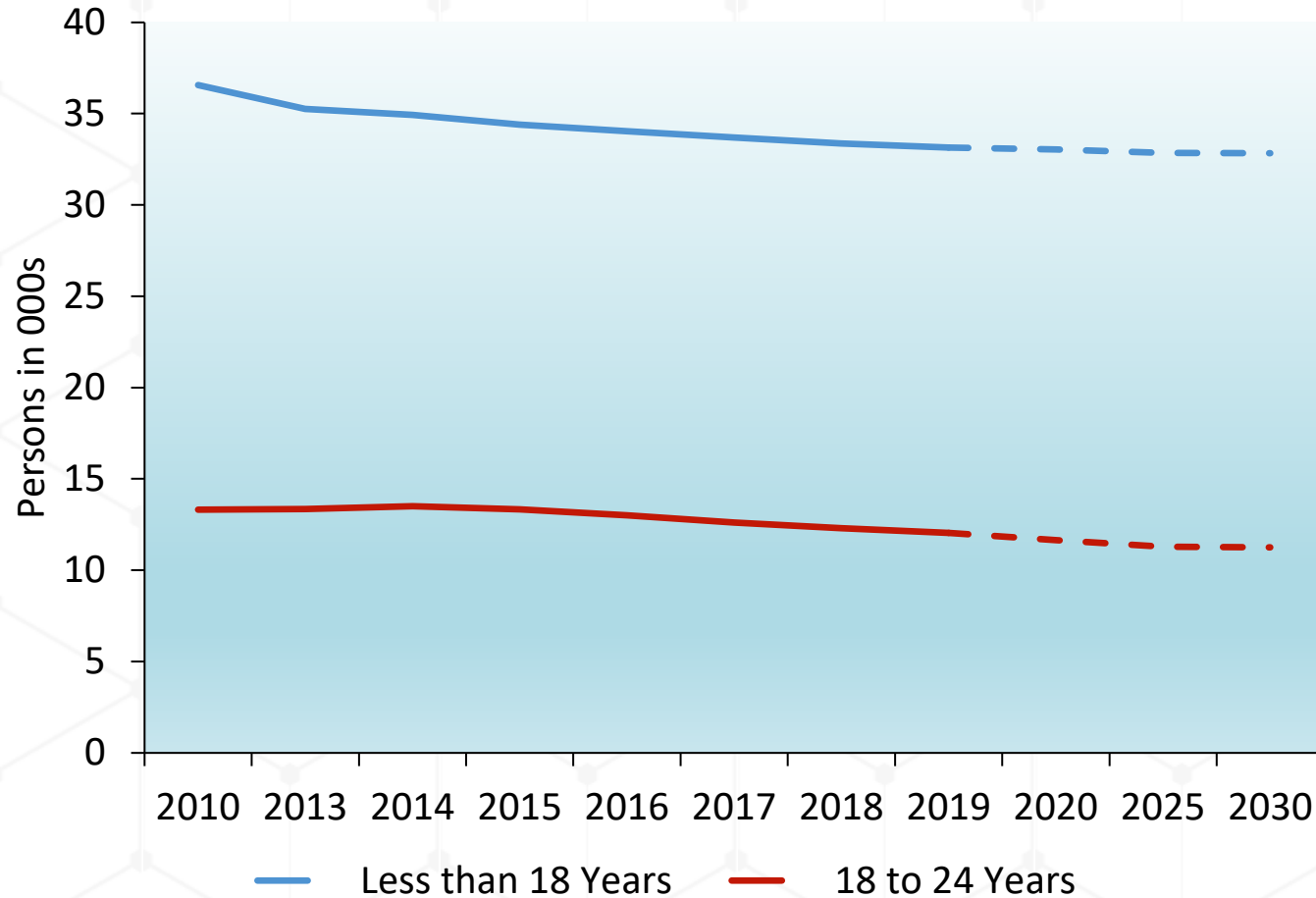
This report is the first step in creating a more comprehensive dashboard focusing on the labor shed and region that supports the growth of Whirlpool Corporation. While the initial focus is on the home county of Berrien, data are provided for the larger region, which includes Cass and Van Buren counties. Comparisons to the state of Michigan and the nation are made where applicable and where data are available.

This first round of indicators focuses primarily on demographic and workforce conditions in the study areas. The indicators are based on a variety of sources, such as the University of Michigan (for Michigan Department of Transportation), the American Community Survey, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.



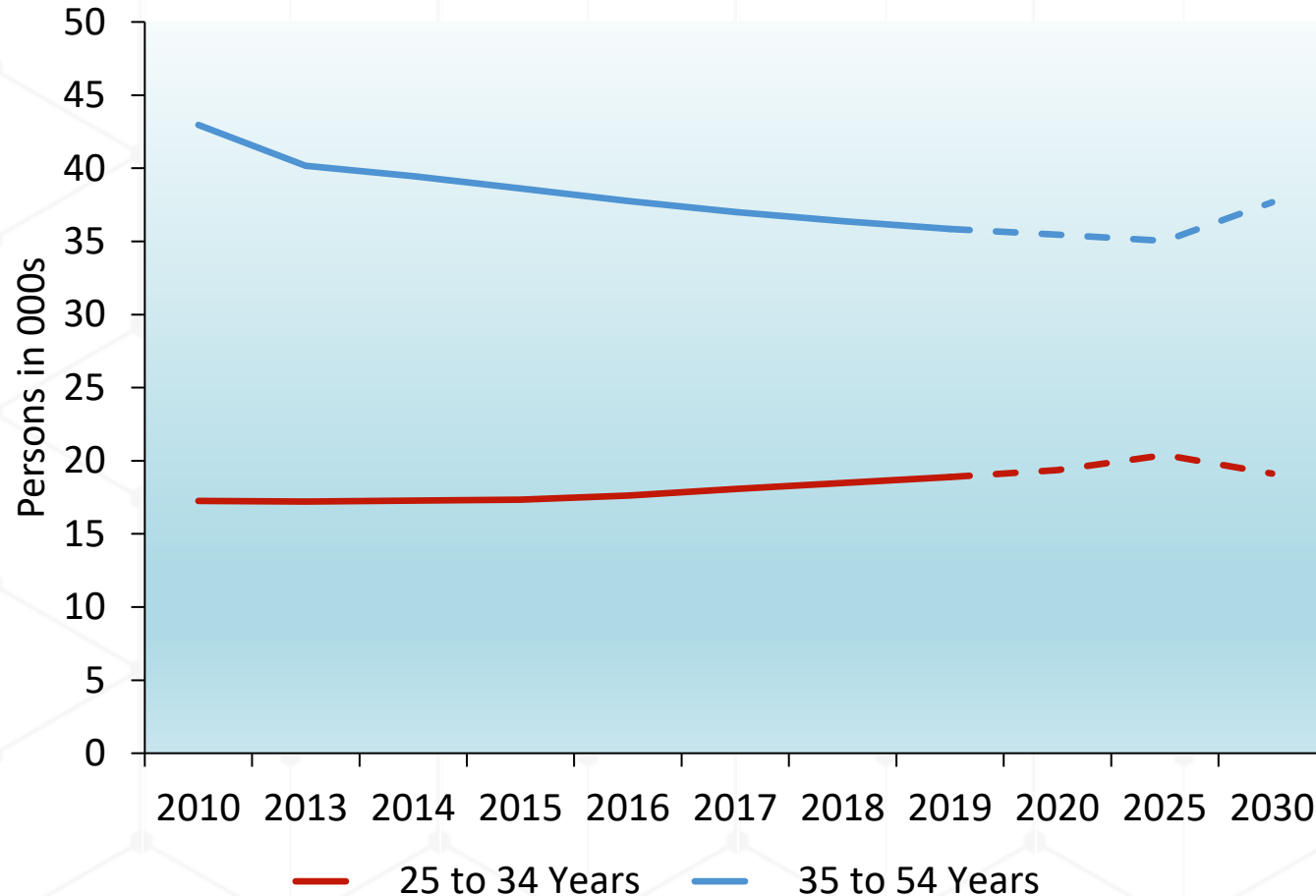
BERRIEN COUNTY

Berrien County Population Estimates for Ages Less Than 18 and 18 to 24



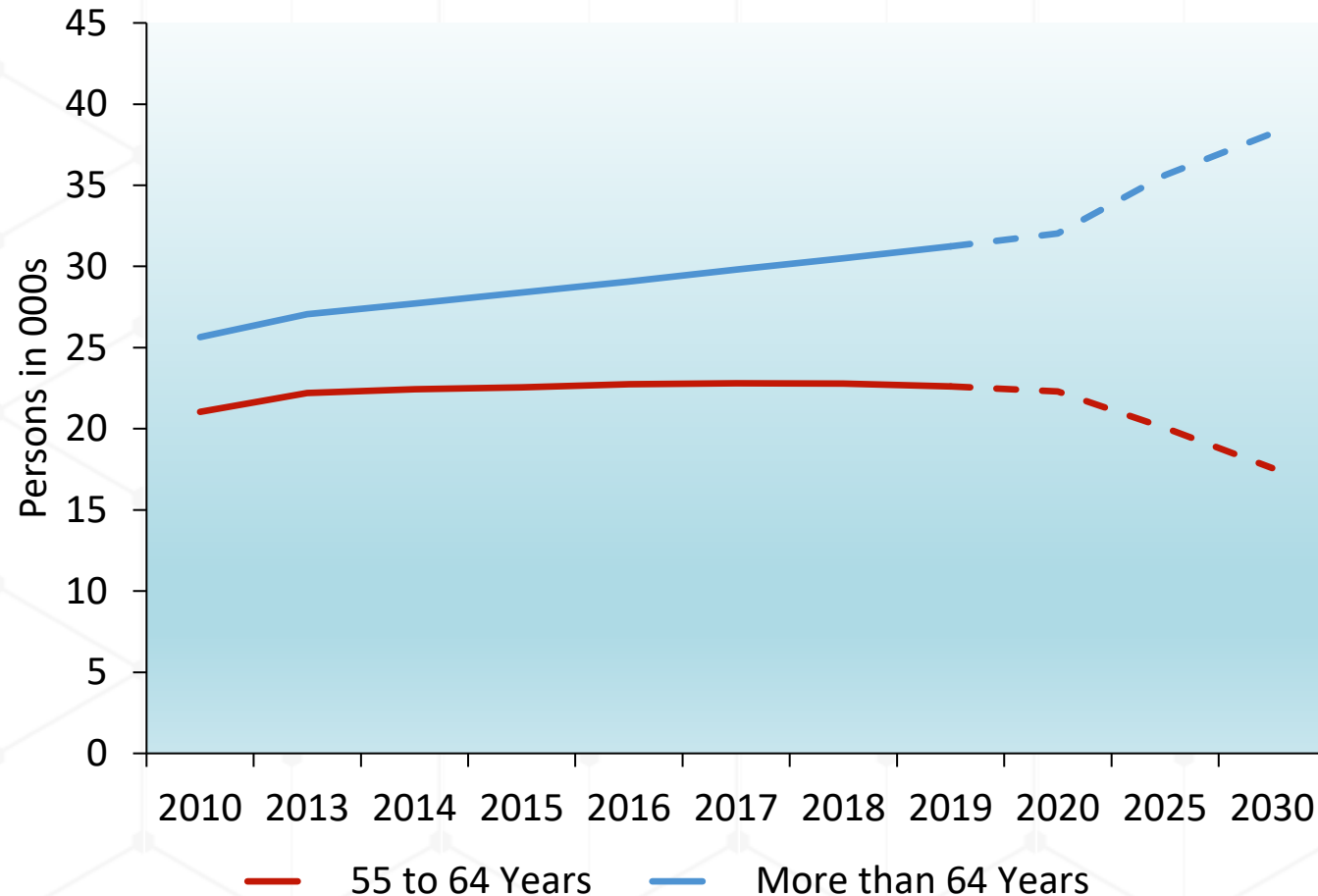
Berrien County continues to see a decline in components of the future workforce. Although the decline is small, it will affect the available workforce in the future.

Berrien County Population Estimates for Emerging and Prime-Aged Workers



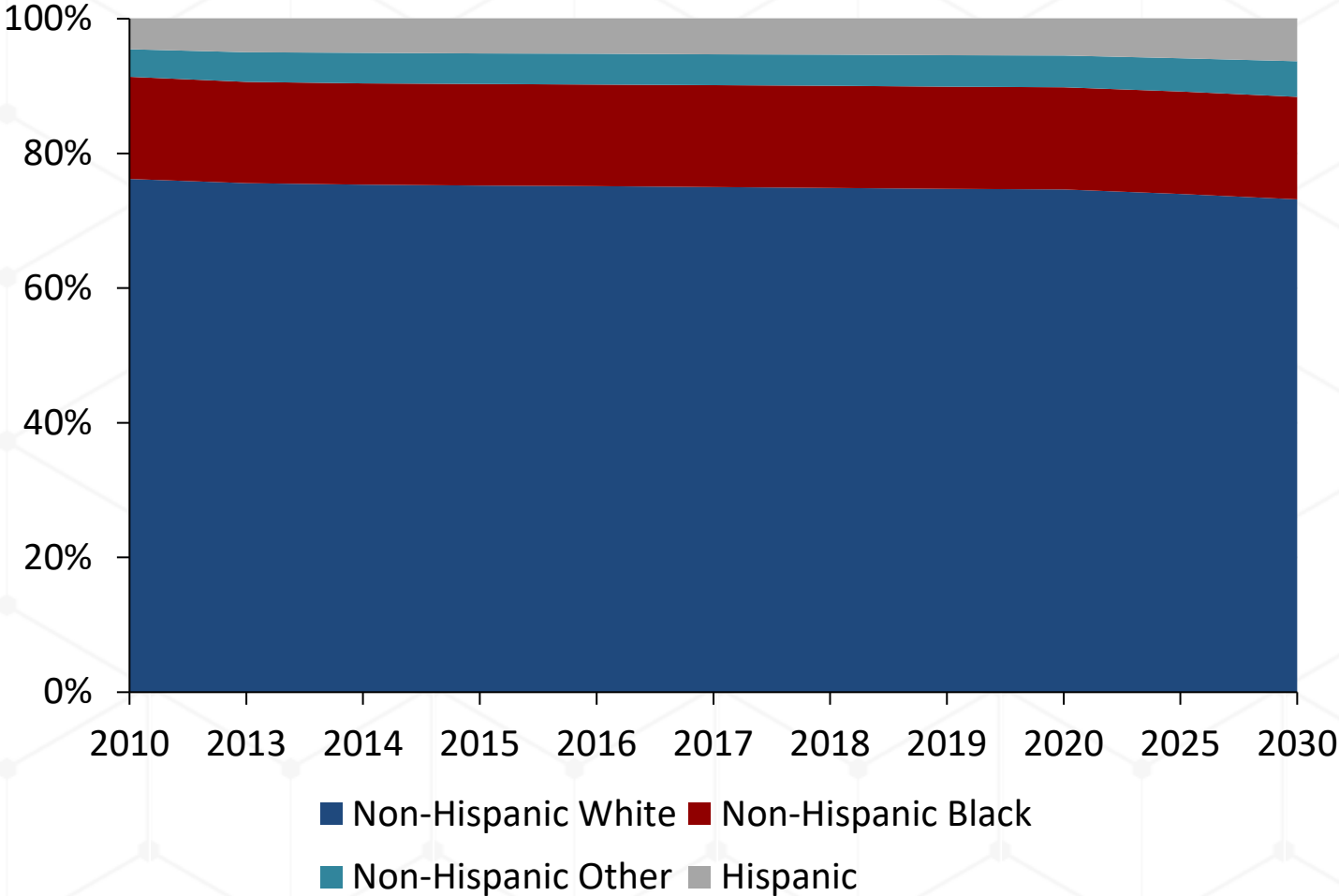
While the emerging workforce (age 25 to 34) has been increasing slightly, the trend turns slightly negative in 2025. Conversely, the trends for prime-aged workers (age 35 to 54) has been negative. As emerging workers age into that group, the trend turns positive in 2025.

Berrien County Population Estimates for Post-Prime and Post-Work Ages



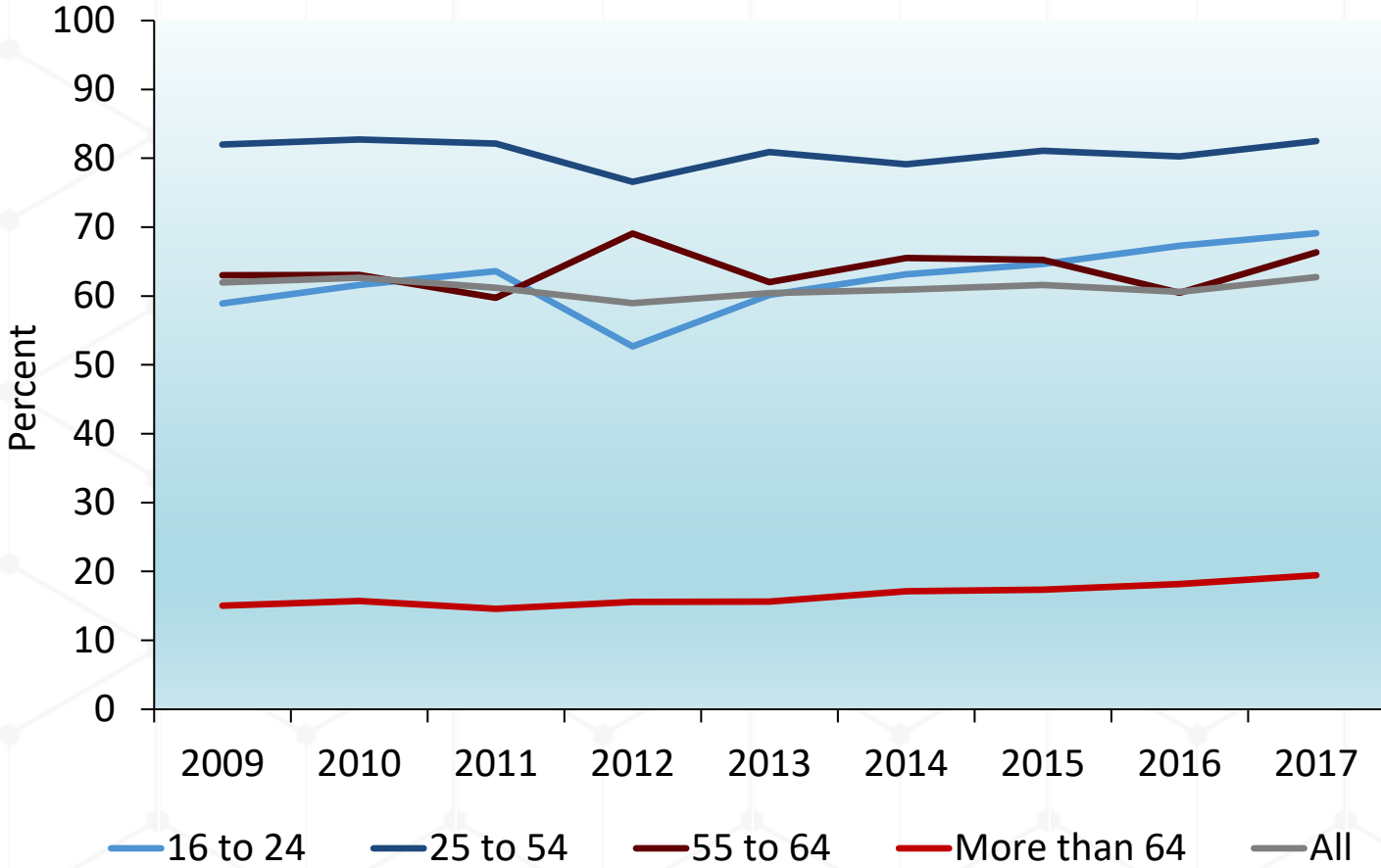
The number in the share of post-prime age workers (age 55 to 64) show a rapid decline in 2020. This is likely supporting a forecast for significant growth in the post-work age (age 65 & older) population in the county.

Berrien County Population by Ethnicity



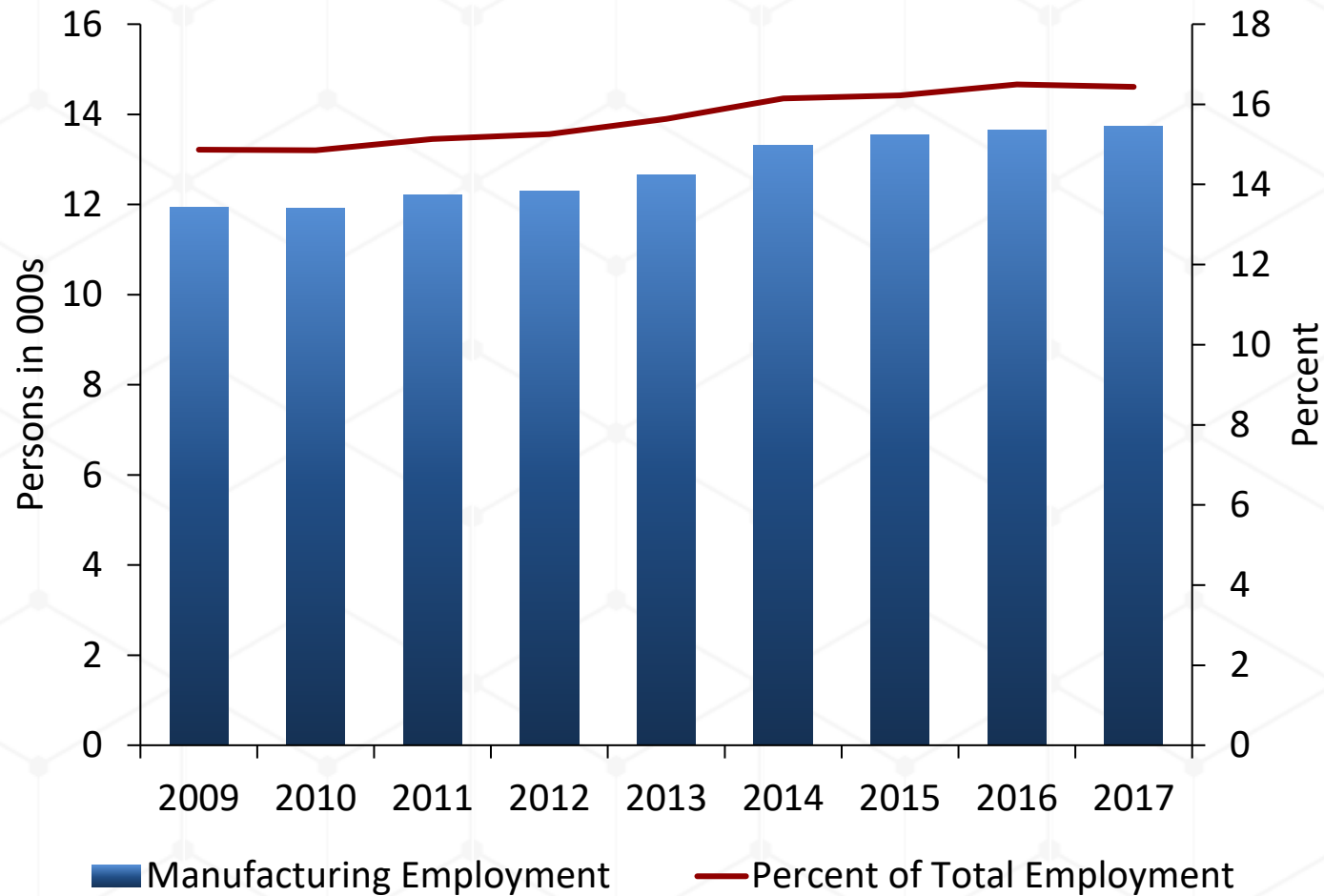
The graphic indicates the history and forecast for Census-based definitions of ethnicities. While the ethnic make-up of the county is relatively stable over time, the share of minorities does increase in the forecast period.

Berrien County Labor Force Participation Rate



Currently, the labor force participation rate (LFPR) for all workers in the United States is about 62.8% and the county is close to that rate for all workers. The LFPR is the share of workers age 16 and older who are part of the labor force.

Manufacturing Employment Berrien County

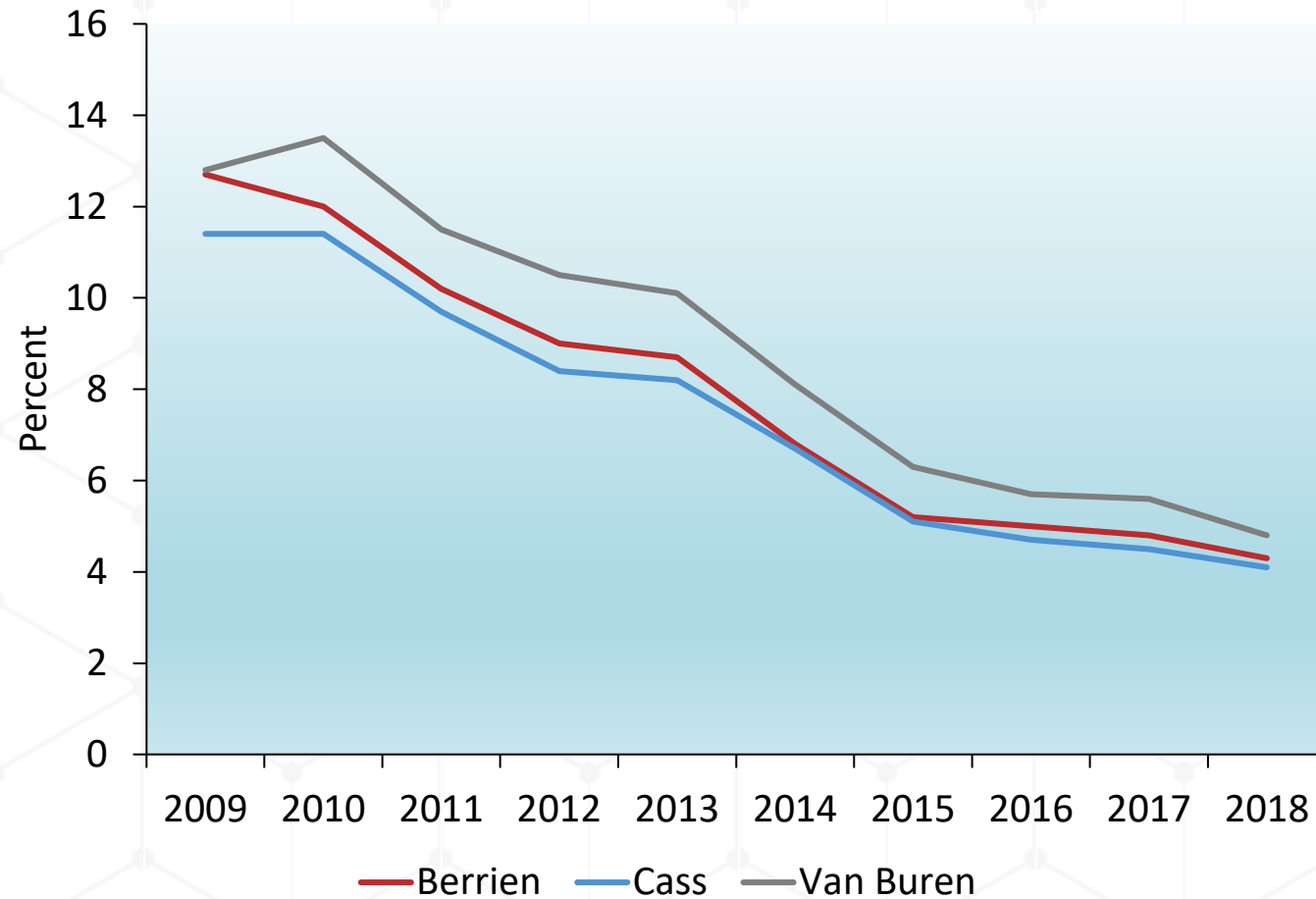


Manufacturing employment in the county continues to increase, as does the share of total employment. Michigan's share of employment in manufacturing in 2019 was 13.95% and, by comparison, the national share was 8.19%.



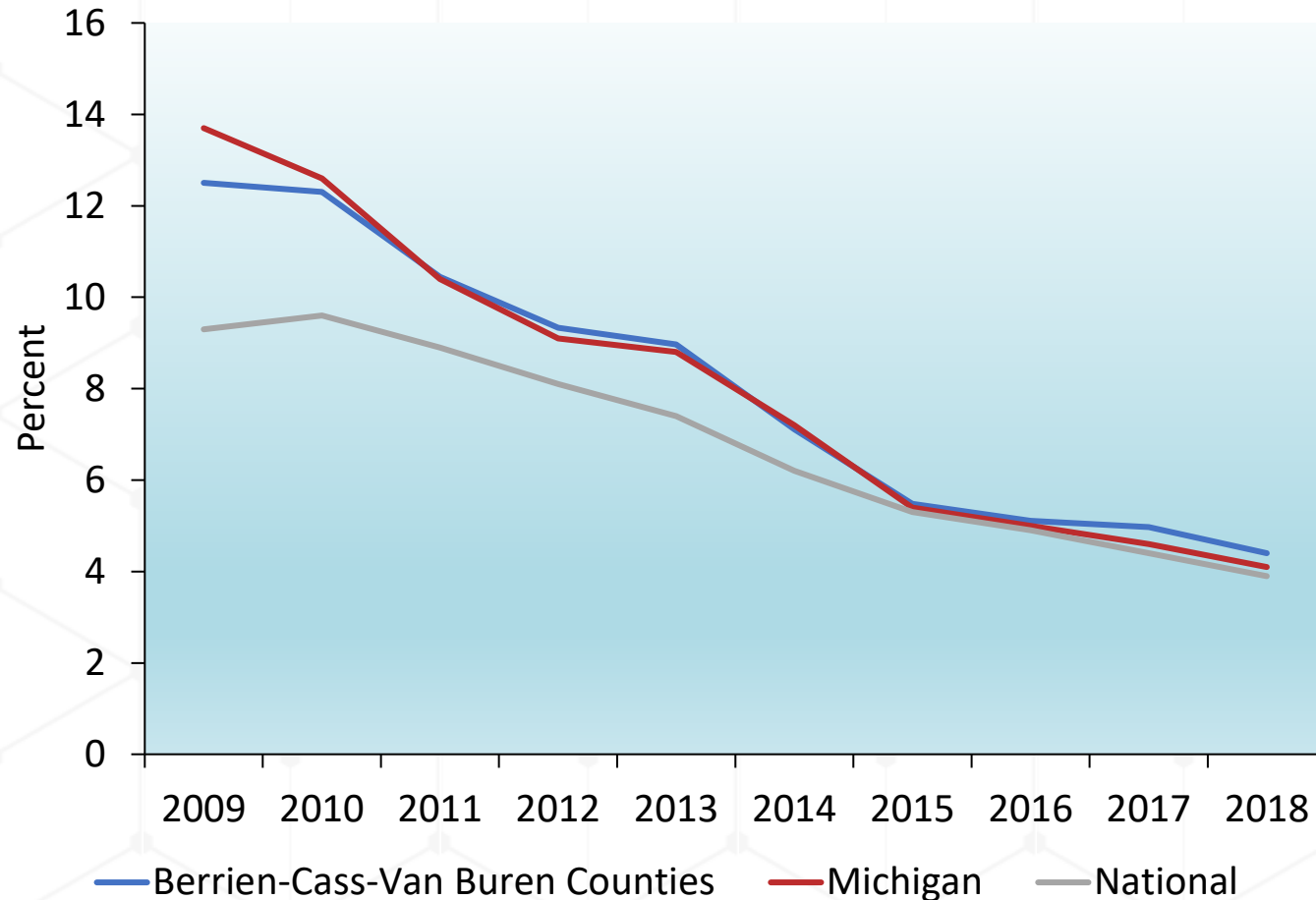
THE REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE: BERRIEN, CASS, AND VAN BUREN COUNTIES

Annual Unemployment Rates for the Region



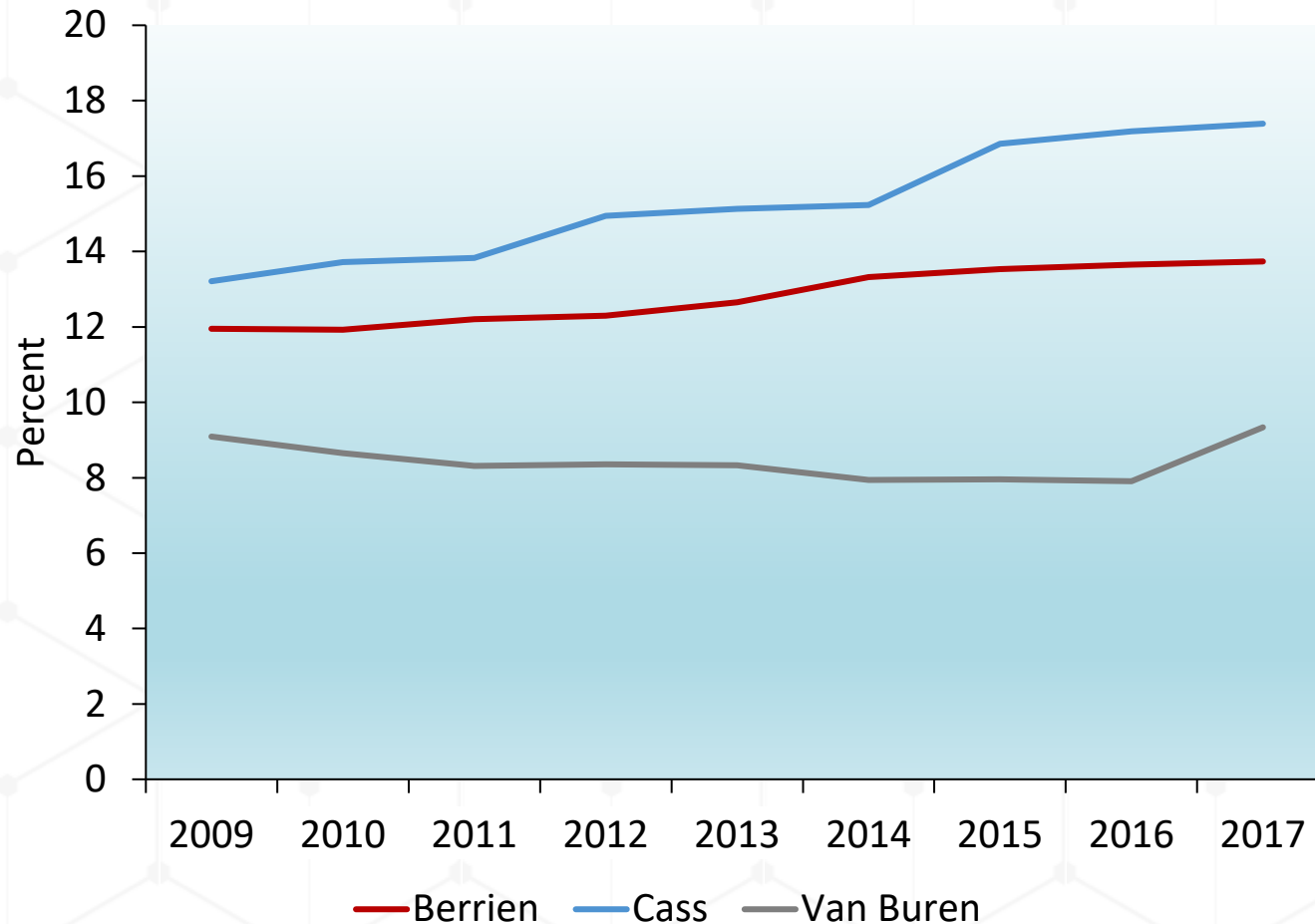
Since the Great Recession, unemployment rates across the region have been declining. The region's rates are at or near Michigan's rates at 4.2%, but well above the nation at 3.6% in May.

Annual Unemployment Rates for the Region, the State, and the Nation



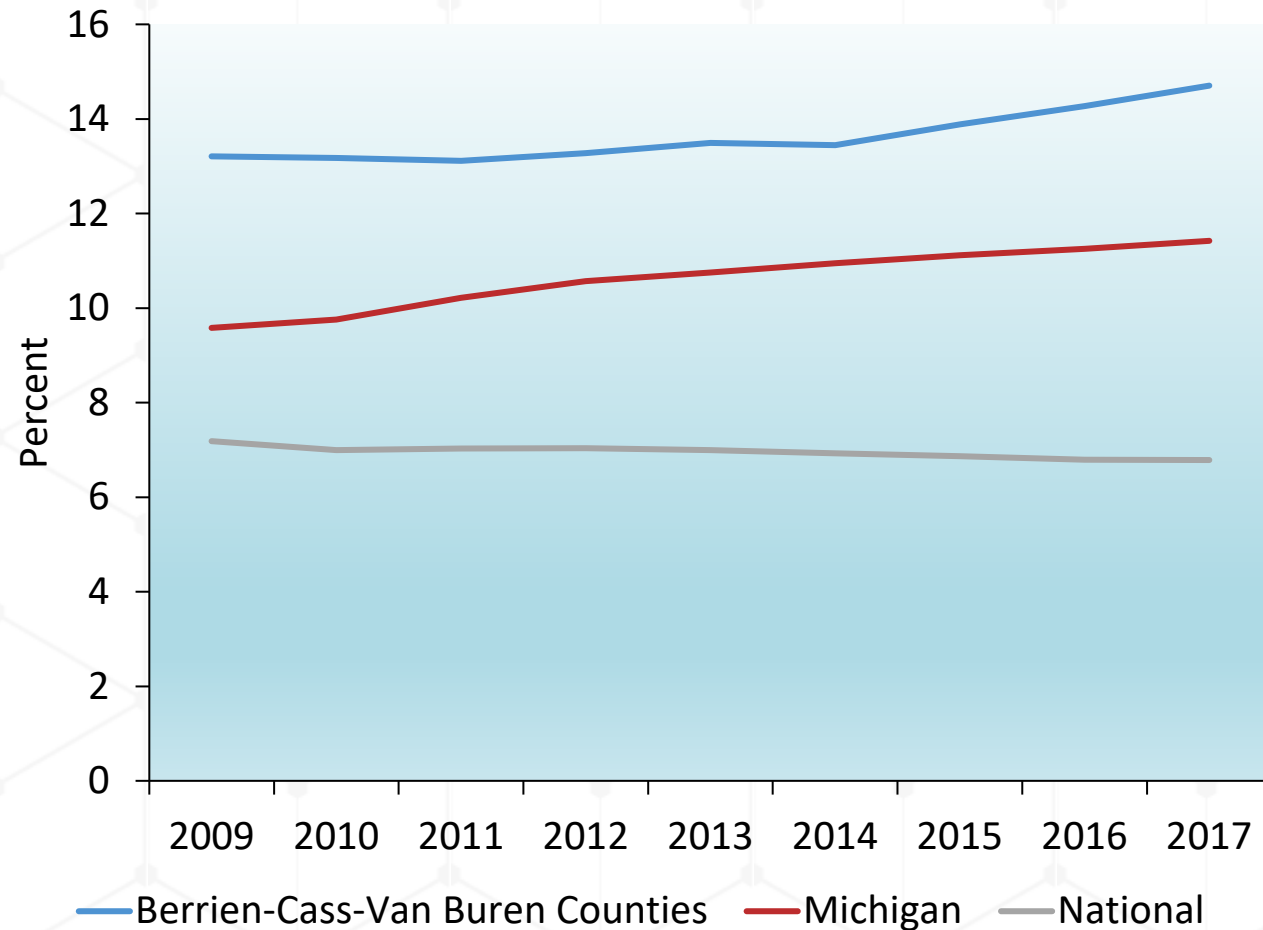
While the state and the region struggled coming out of the 2009 recession, rates have generally converged since 2015. The most recent natural rate of unemployment, the indicator of when the economy is at full employment, was 4.6% in Q2 of 2019.

Manufacturing Employment as Percent of Total Employment



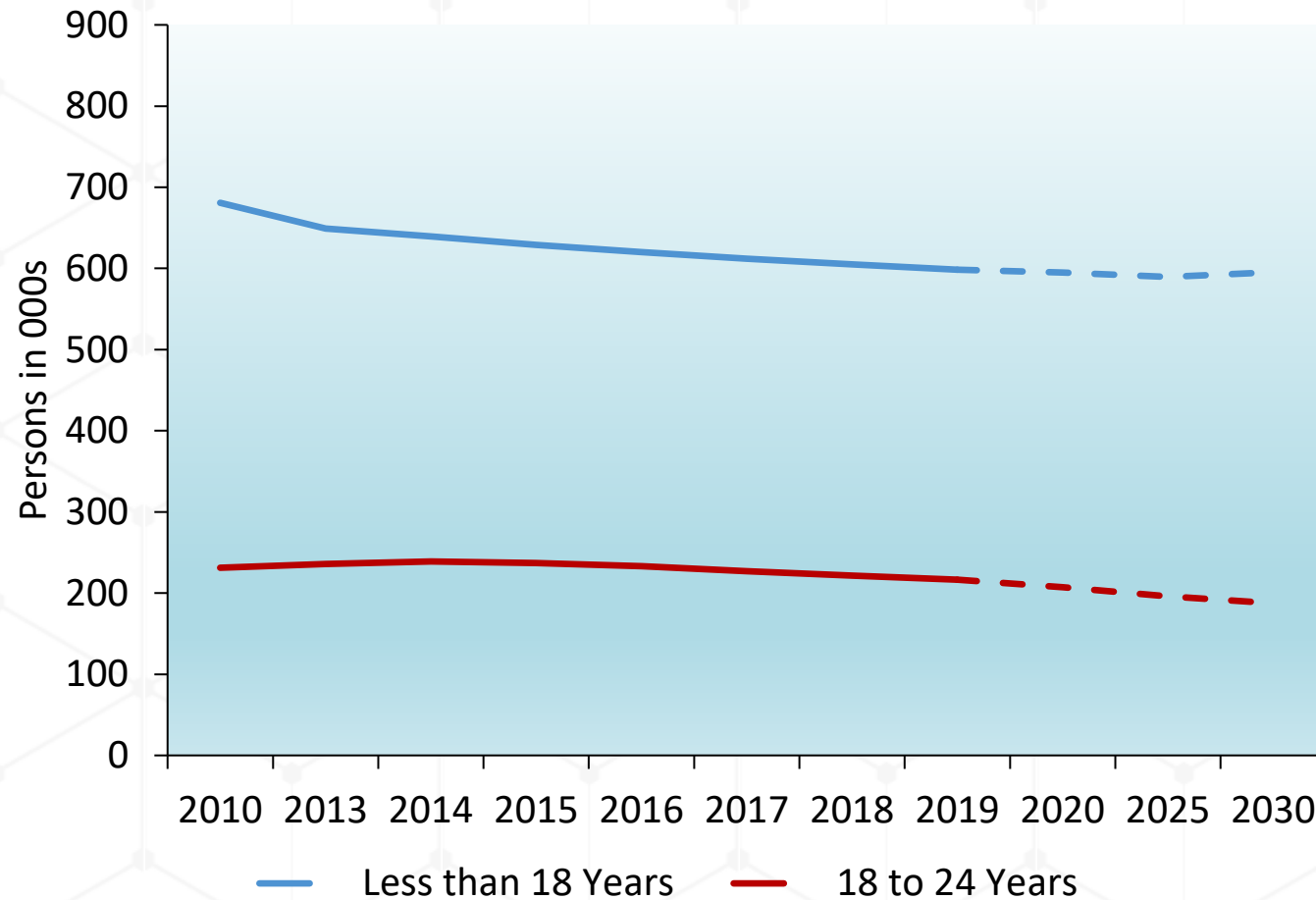
Berrien and Cass counties have a significantly higher share of manufacturing employment, while Van Buren's share is much closer to that of the national share.

Manufacturing Employment as Percent of Total Employment



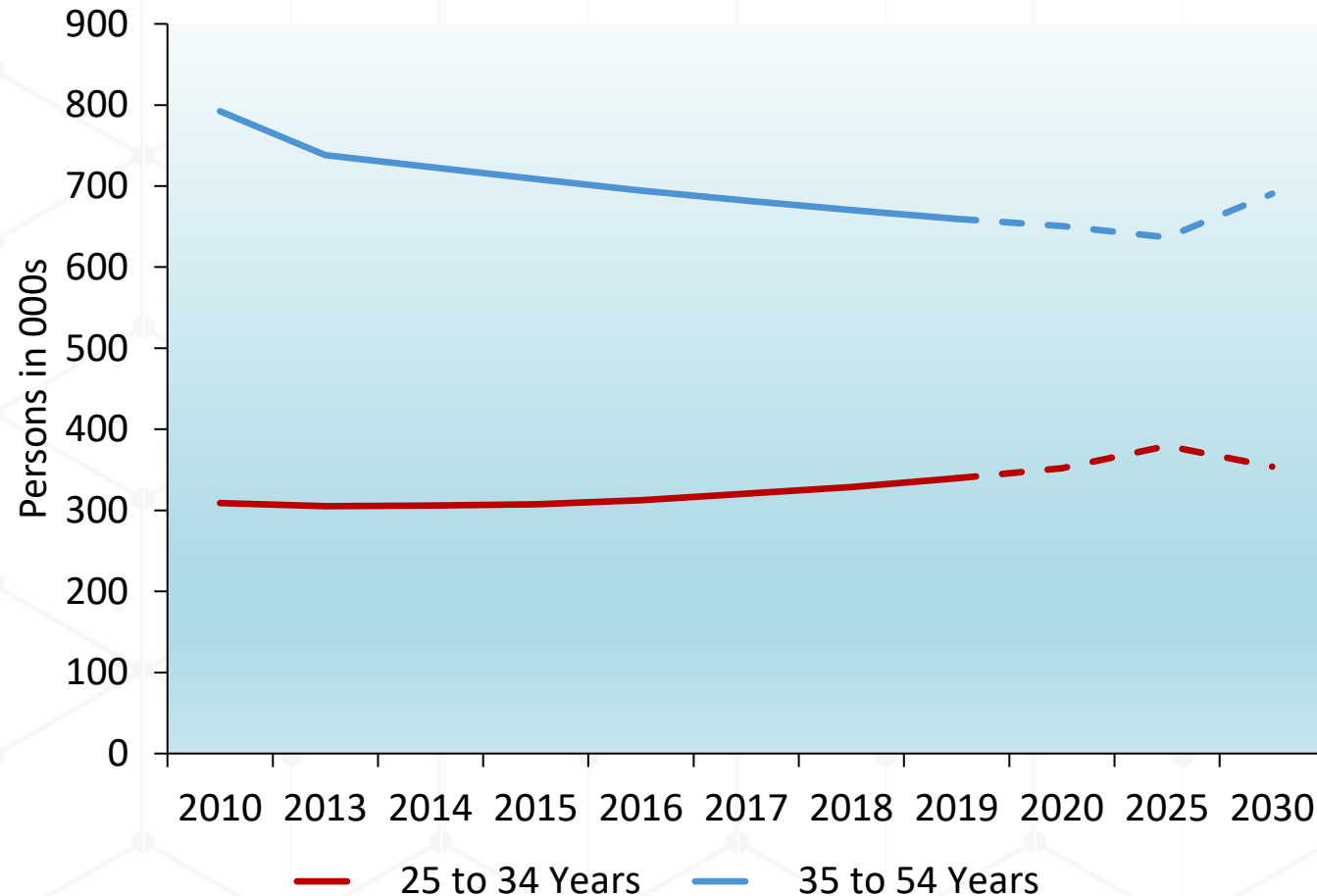
The three-county region's share of manufacturing employment is well above that of both the state and the nation.

Berrien-Cass-Van Buren Population Estimates for Ages Less Than 18 and 18 to 24



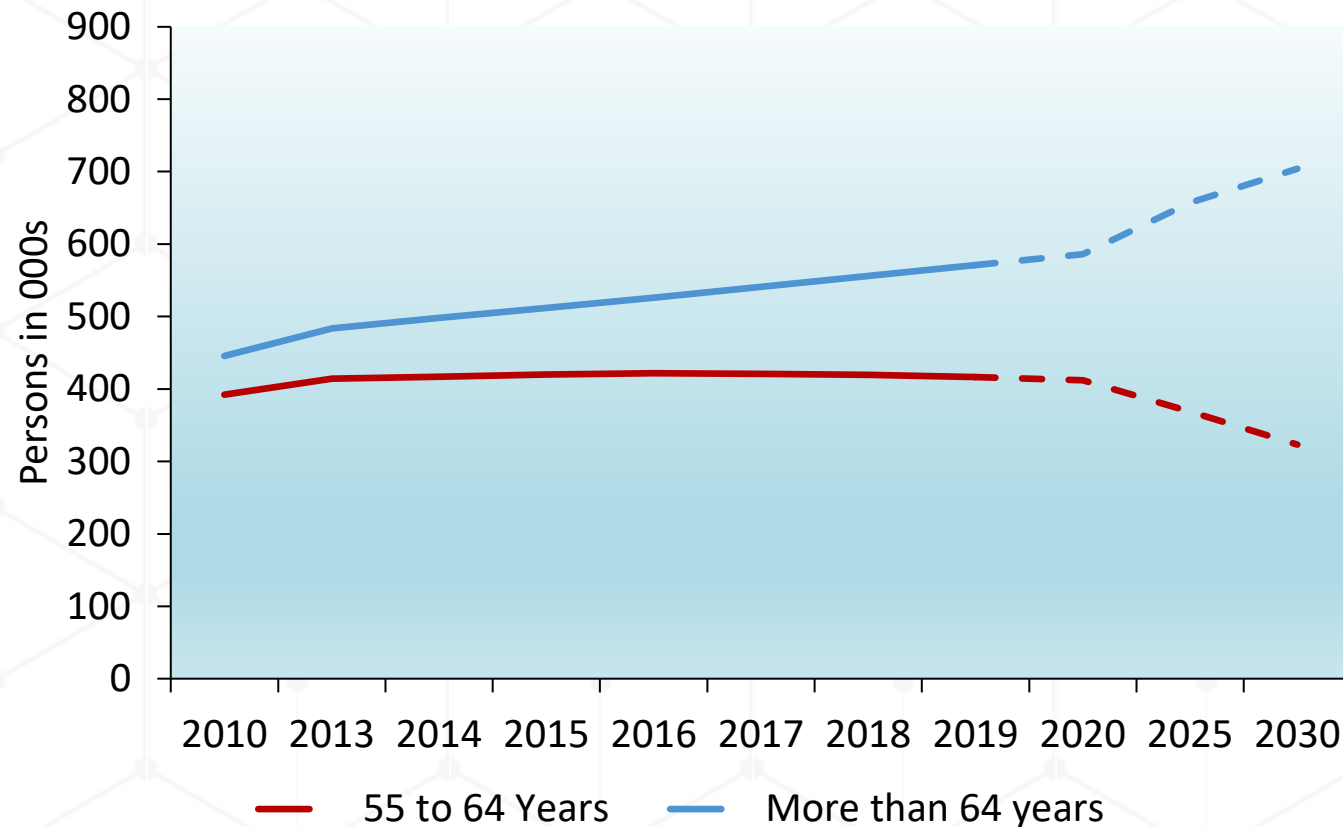
The pool of future workers has been in decline and is forecast to continue this trend into 2030.

Berrien-Cass-Van Buren Population Estimates for Emerging and Prime-Aged Workers



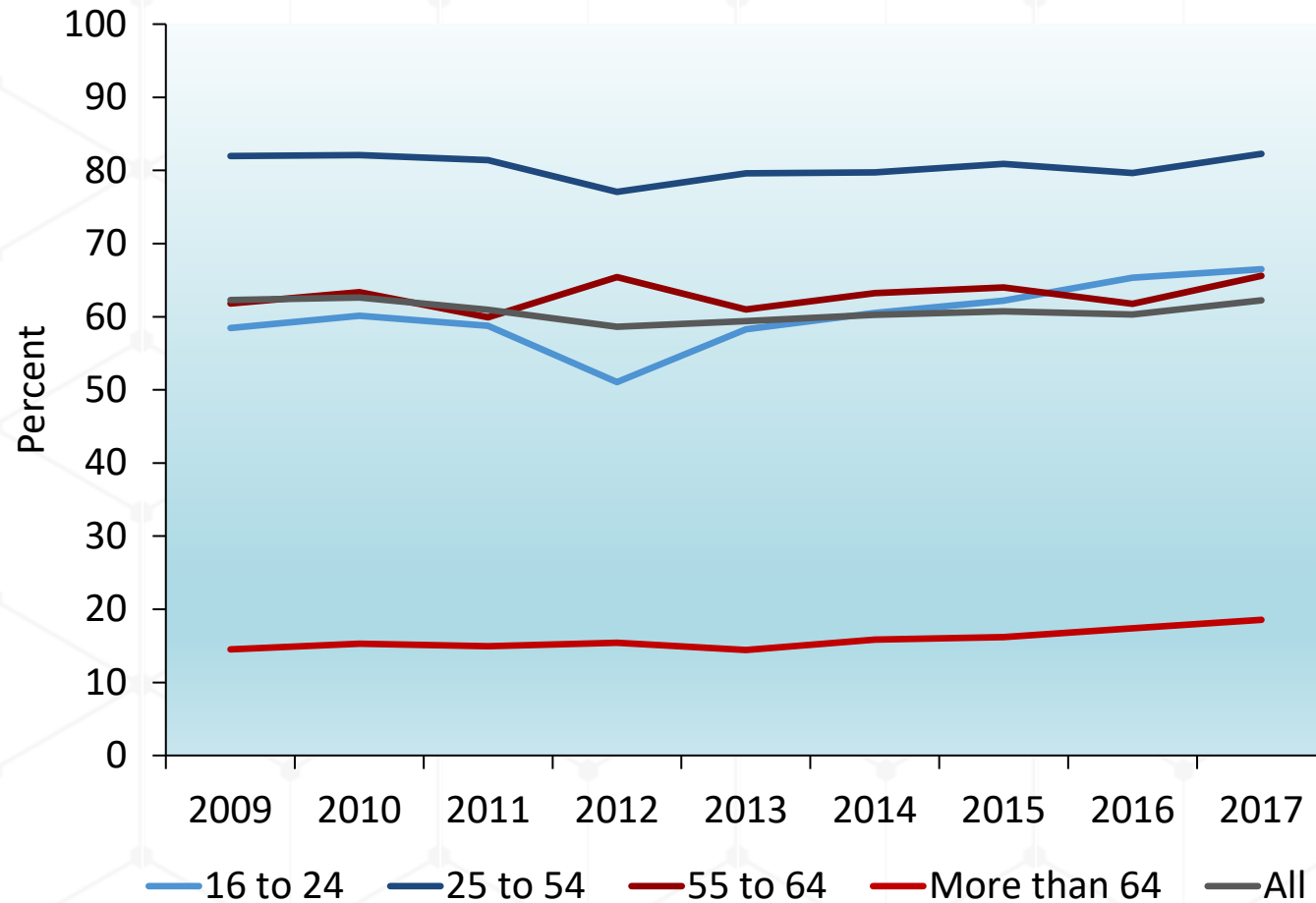
Potential emerging workers (age 25 to 34) have shown a slight increase, with that trend continuing into 2025. Conversely, prime-aged workers (35 to 54) have shown a decline, but as these workers age, a slightly positive trend upward begins in 2025.

Berrien-Cass-Van Buren Population Estimates for Post-Prime and Post-Work Ages



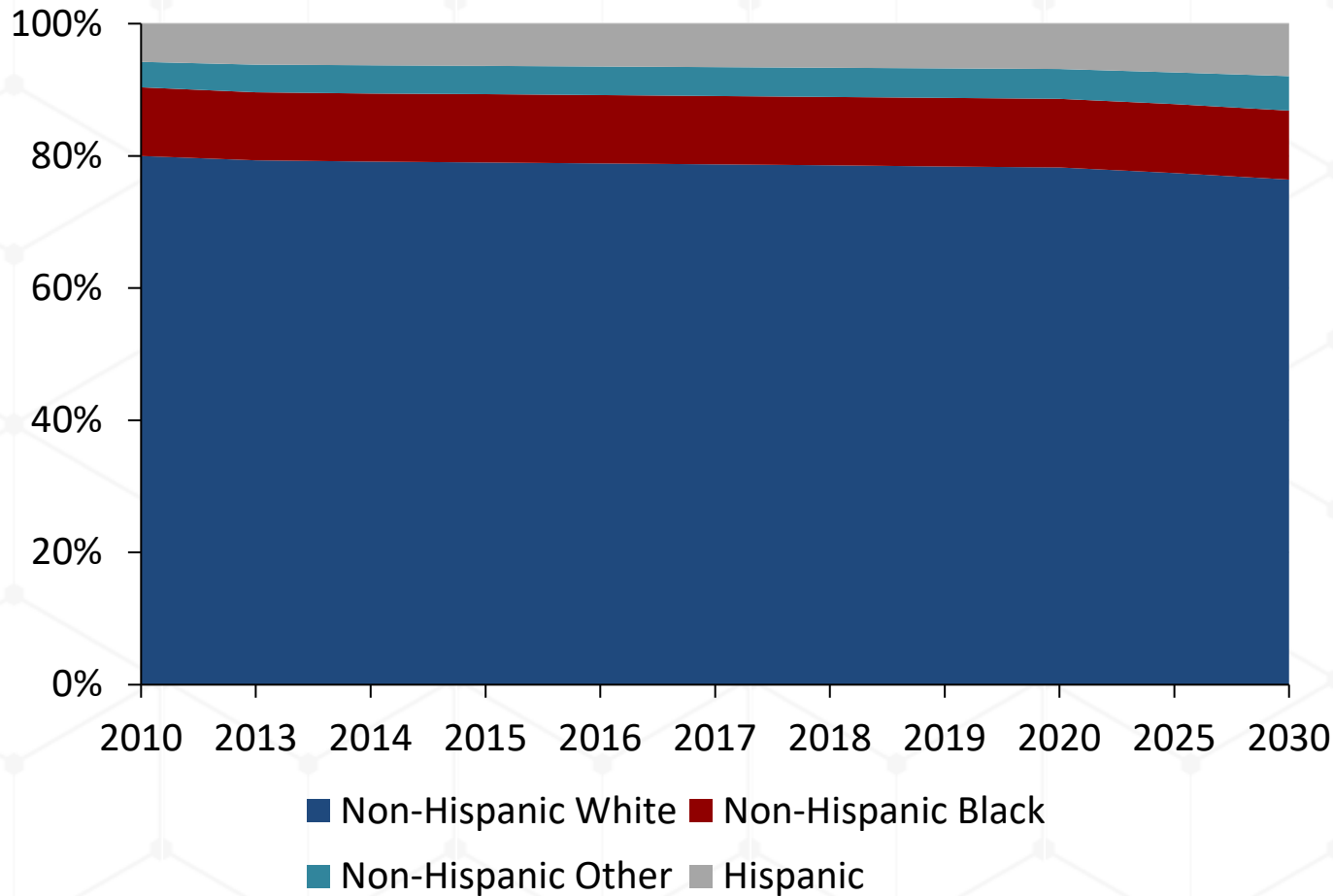
The region has an aging population and an aging workforce. The University of Michigan estimates that, in the next 5 years, the number of people in the post-prime population will decline and the 65+ population will increase significantly over time.

Berrien-Cass-Van Buren Labor Force Participation Rate



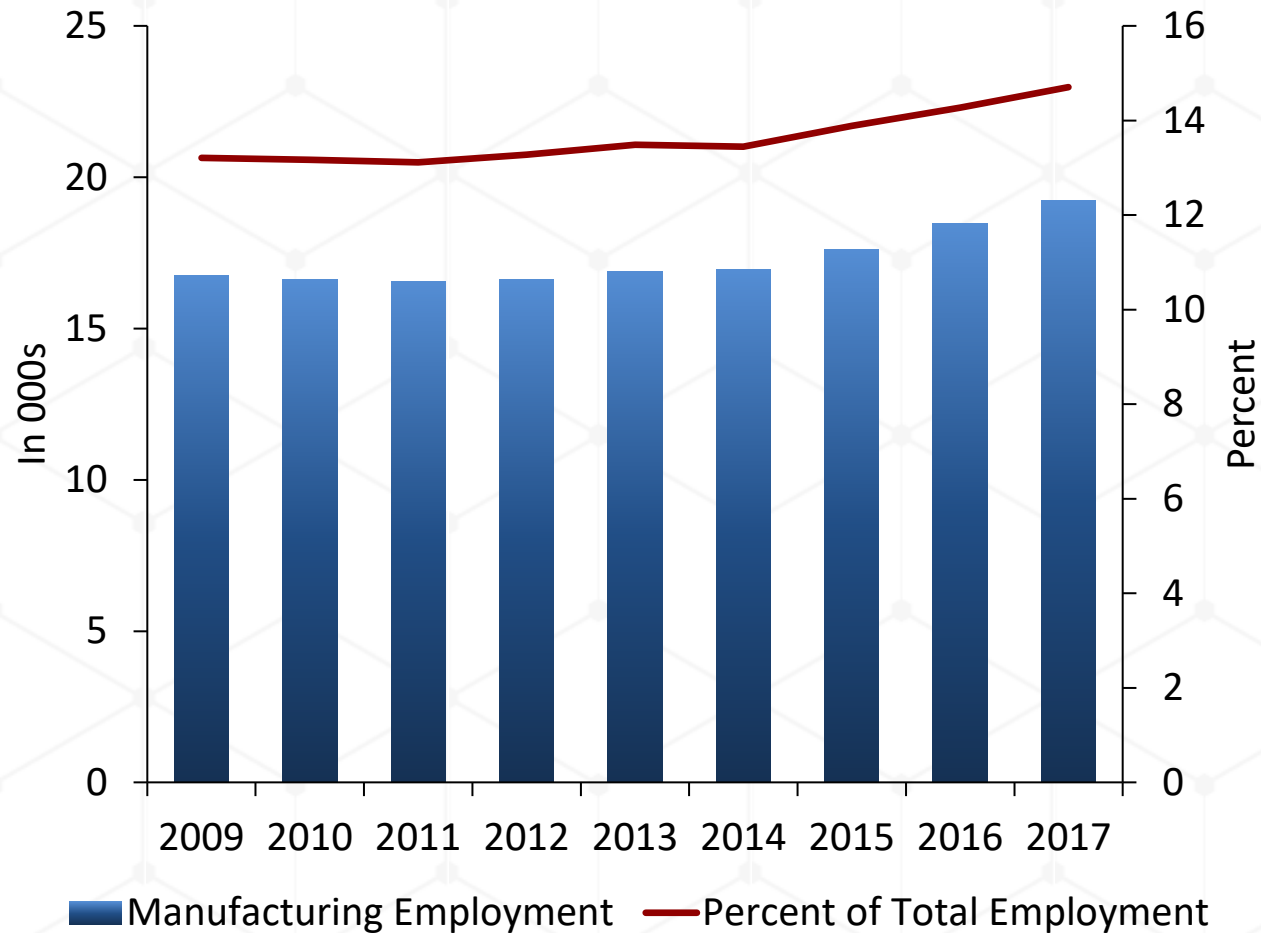
Currently, the labor force participation rate for all workers in the United States is about 62.8%. The region's labor force participation rate for all workers is relatively consistent with the national rate.

Berrien-Cass-Van Buren Population by Ethnicity



The region's population is slightly less diverse than that of the nation. According to the American Community Survey, in 2017 the nation's population was about 28% minority. For the region, the share of minorities is expected to increase in the forecast period.

Manufacturing Employment: Berrien-Cass-Van Buren Counties

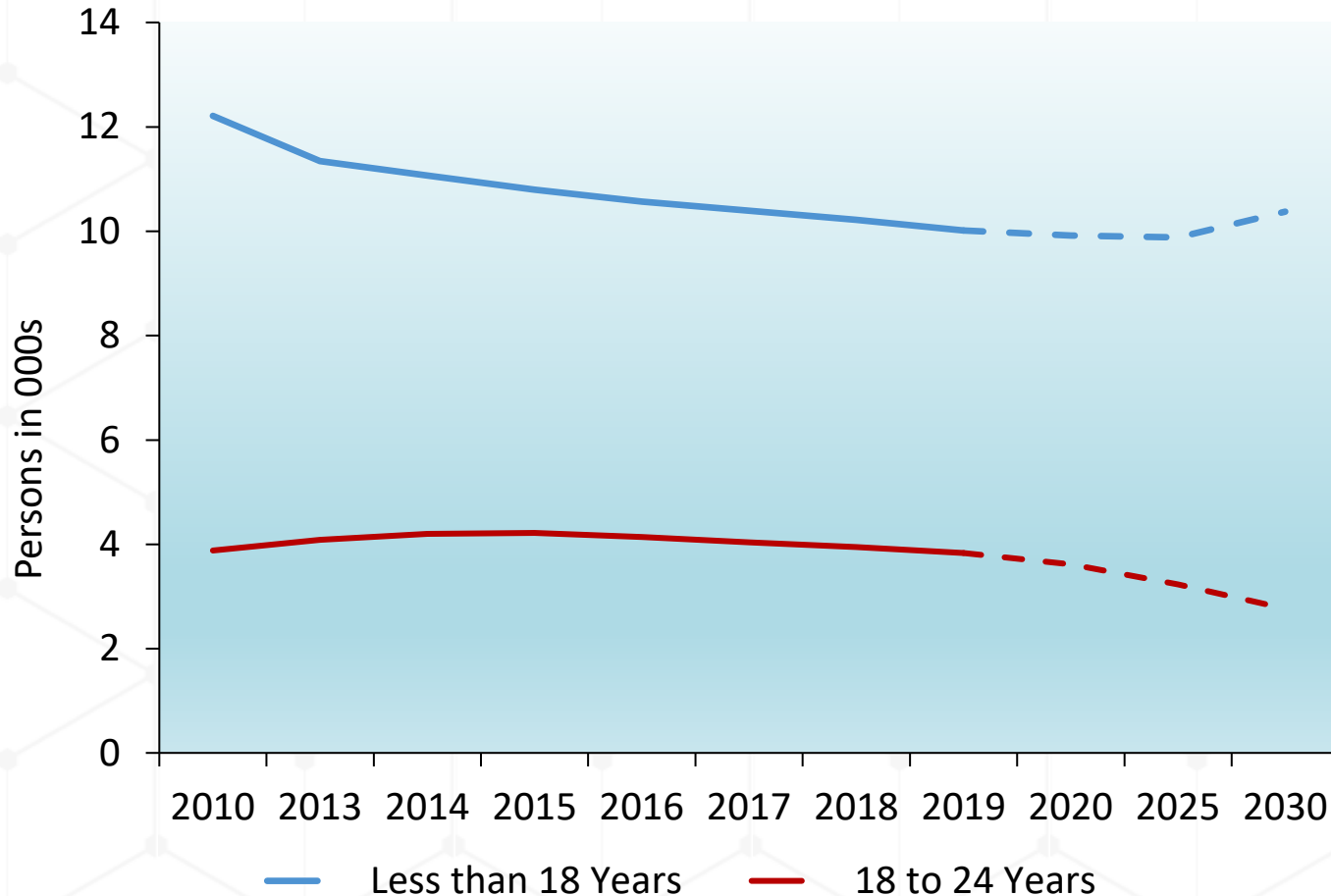


Manufacturing employment in the region has been increasing since 2009. Similarly, the share of manufacturing employment has been increasing. Berrien County employment in manufacturing dominates the region, with the county housing 71% of manufacturing employees.



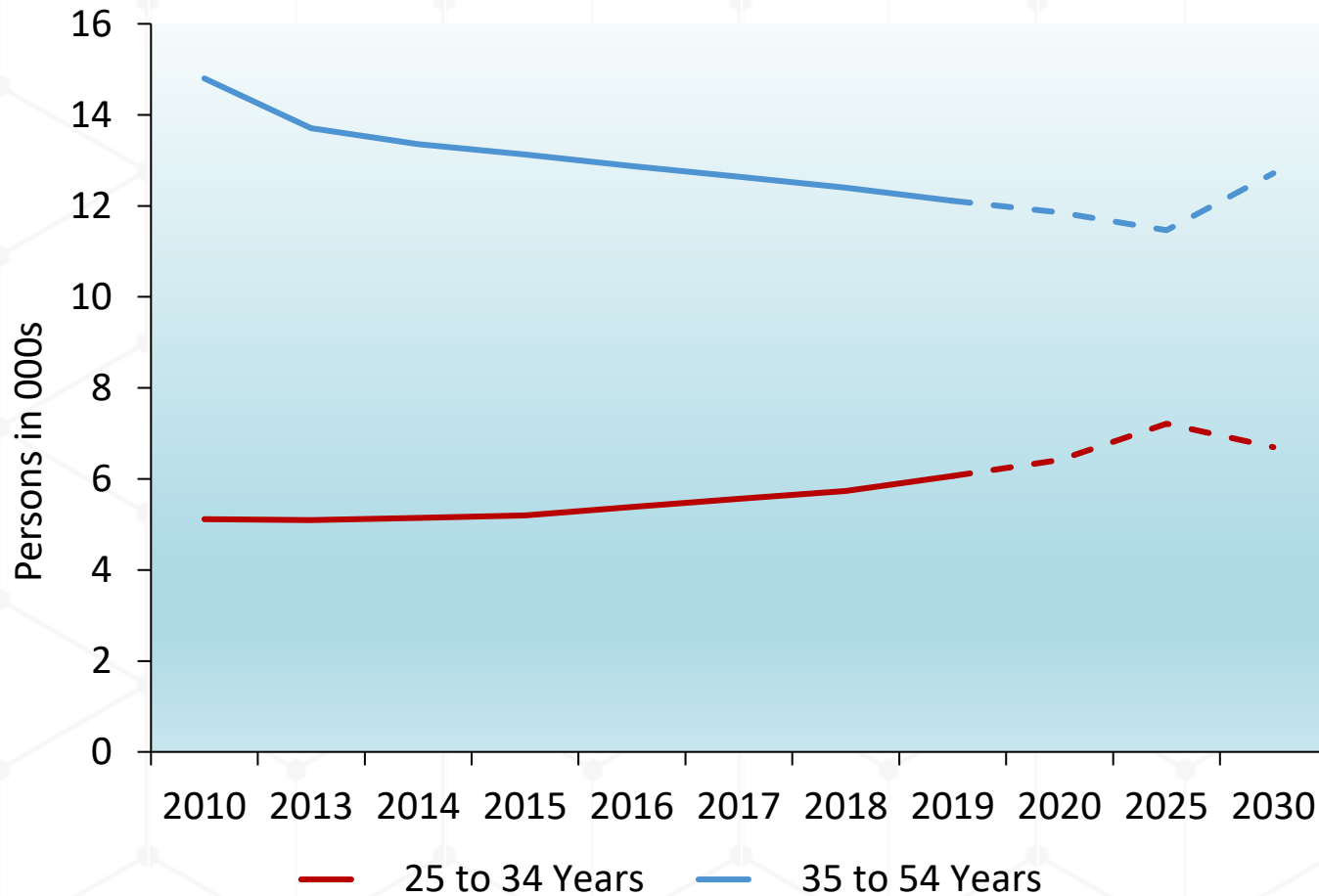
CASS COUNTY

Cass County Population Estimates for Ages Less Than 18 and 18 to 24



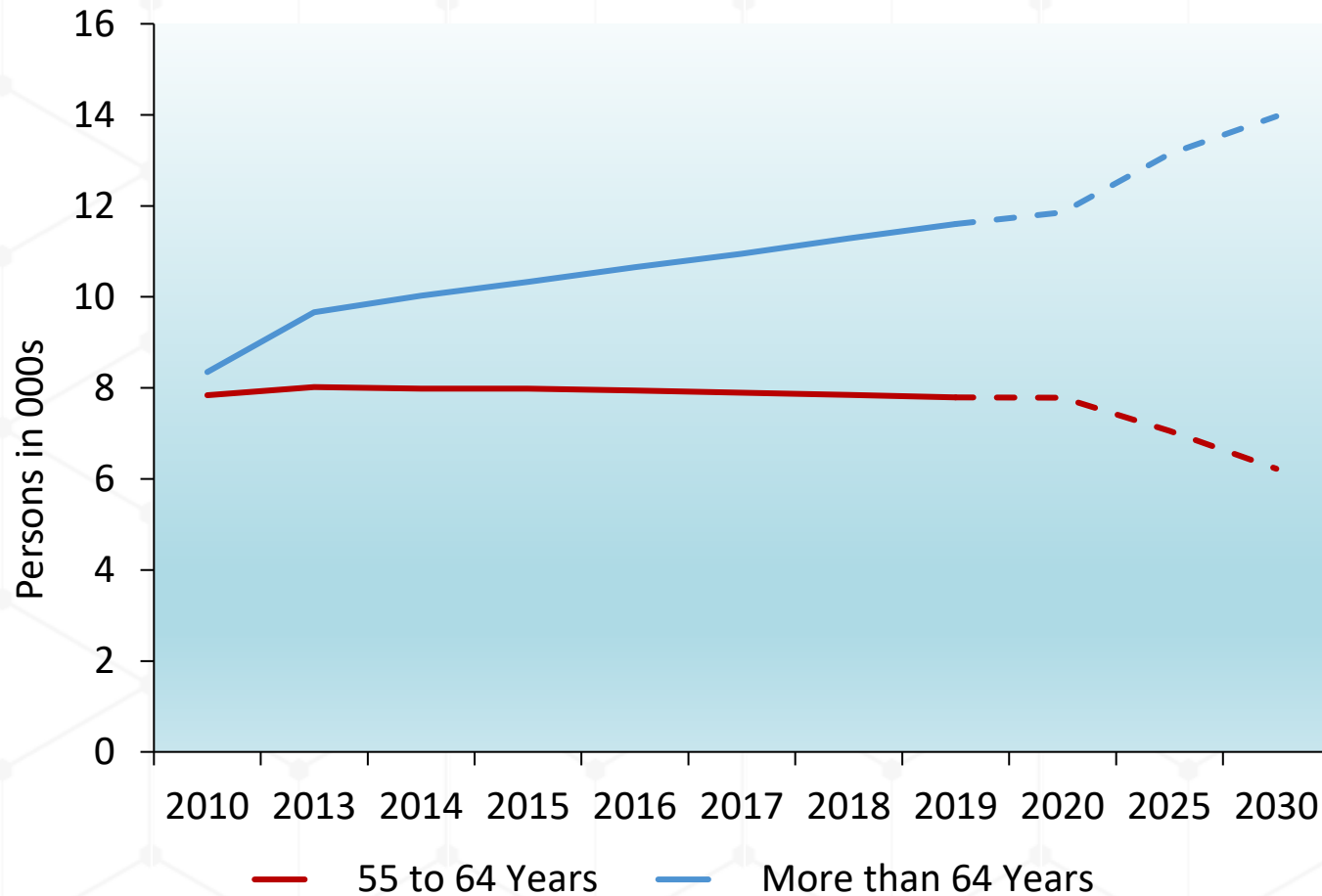
The future workforce estimates in the county show different trends. While the forecast slightly increases in the population less than age 18, the forecast for future workers is trending to the negative.

Cass County Population Estimates for Emerging and Prime-Aged Workers



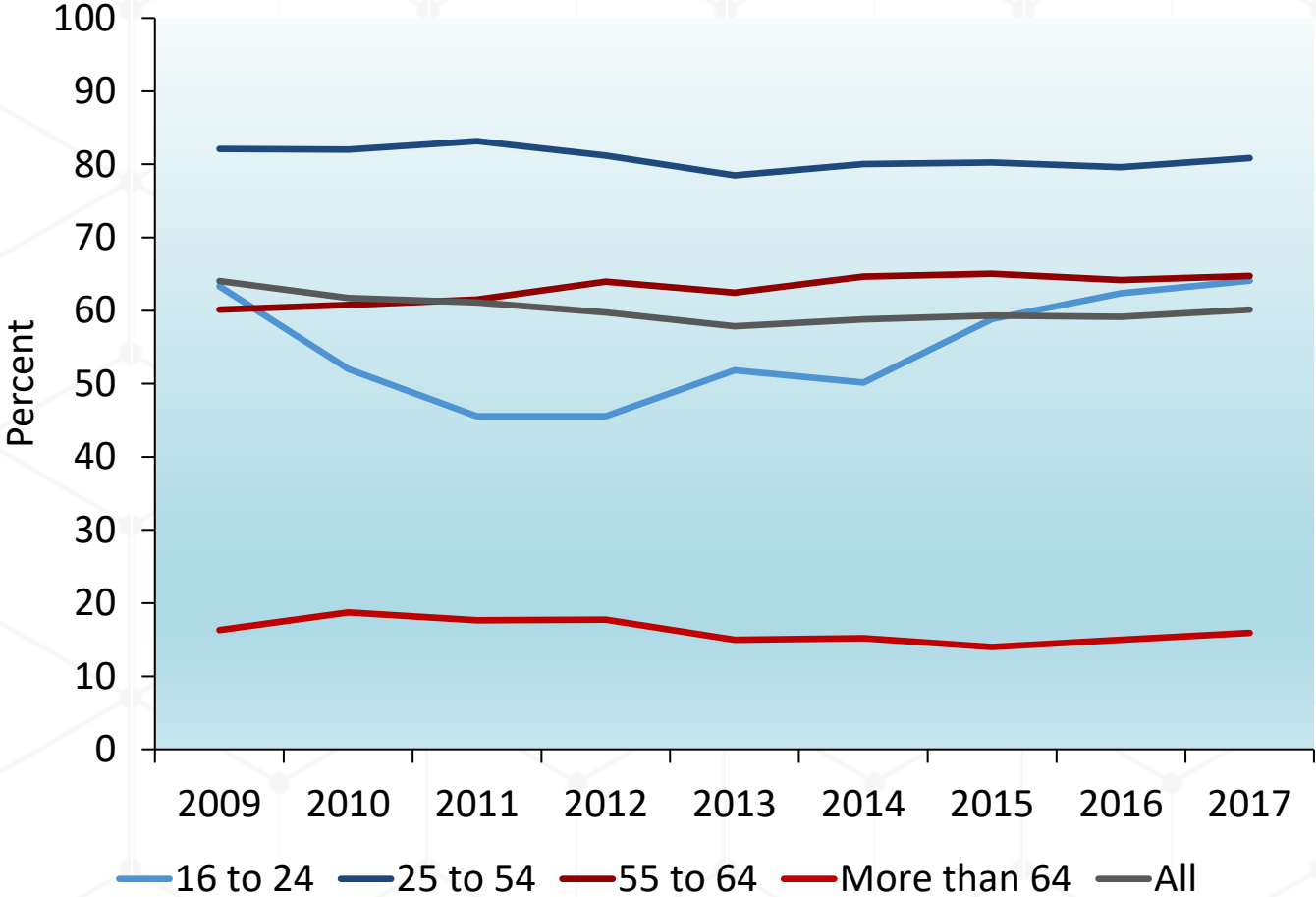
Emerging workers (age 25 to 34) are trending upward in the estimates until 2025. Prime-age workers (35 to 54) have been trending downward, but as the population ages from emerging to prime, estimates are for that age group in the county to grow.

Cass County Population Estimates for Post-Prime and Post-Work Ages



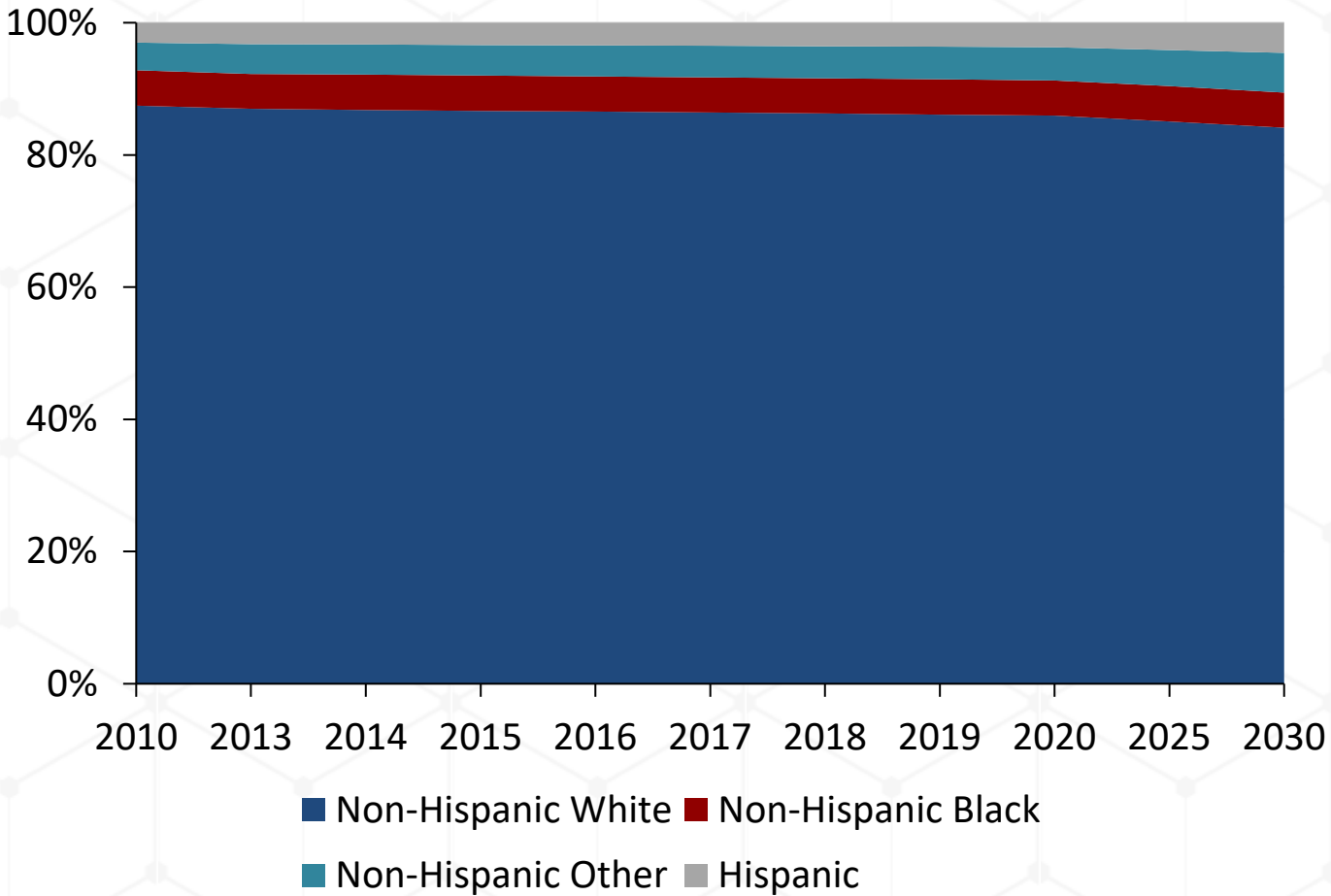
The population of people near or at retirement (age 65+) are forecast to increase significantly. The post-prime population, while holding steady in the history period, is forecast to decline through at least 2030.

Cass County Labor Force Participation Rate



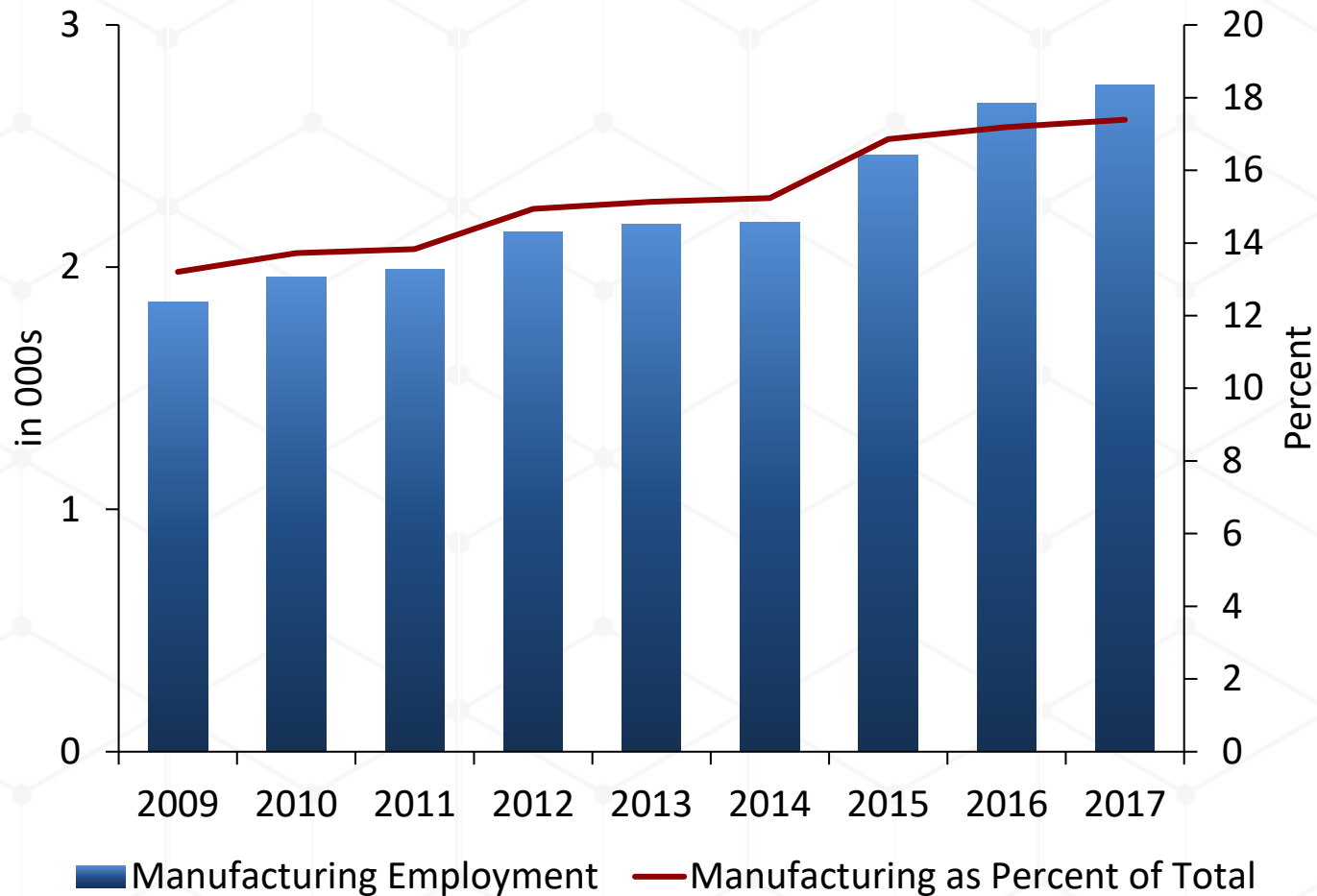
Currently, labor force participation for all workers in the United States is about 62.8%. Cass County's labor force participation is a little below the nation, but not significantly so.

Cass County Population by Ethnicity



Cass County is significantly less diverse than the nation, but the shares of the minority population are forecast to grow slightly through 2030.

Manufacturing Employment Cass County

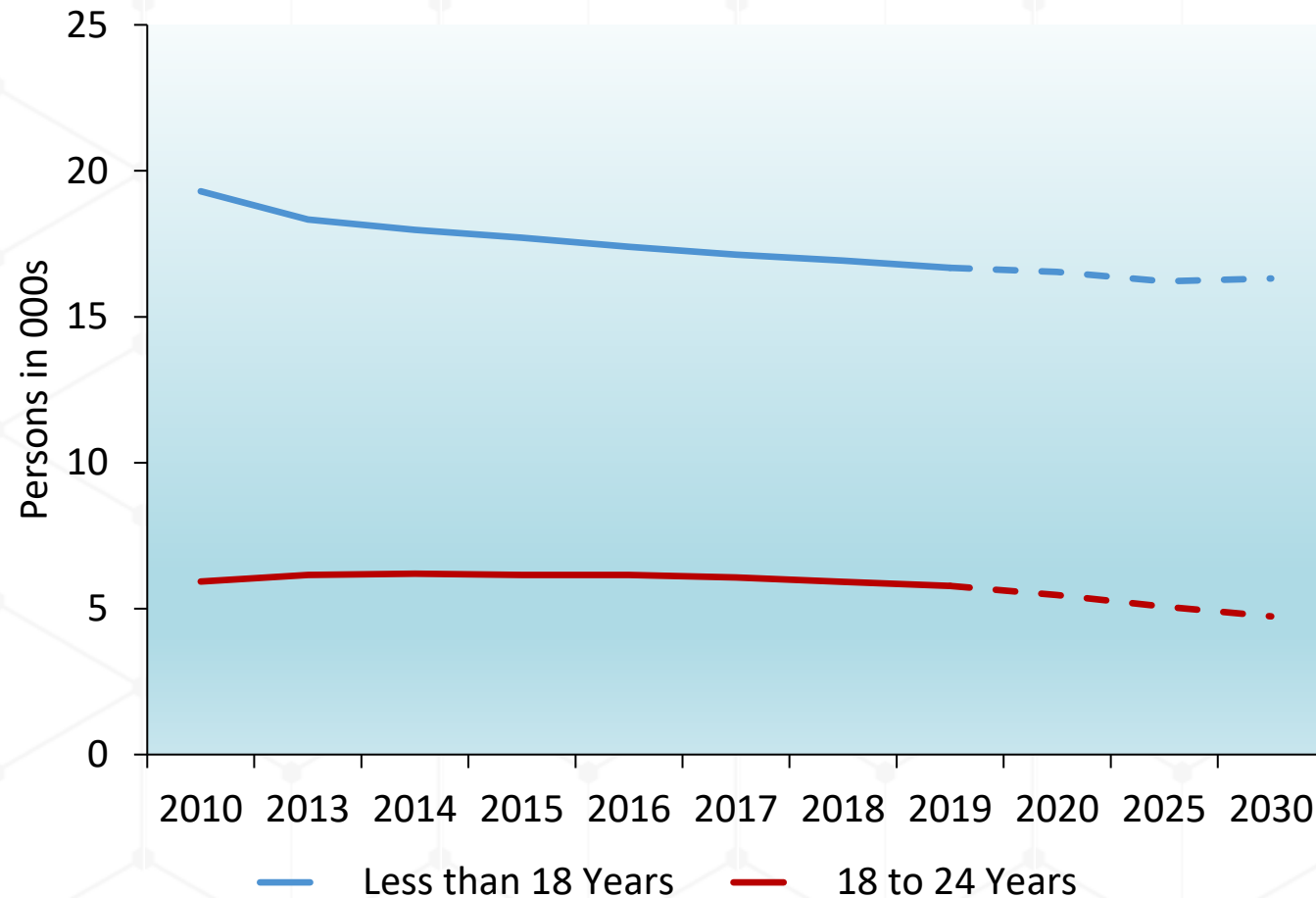


Manufacturing employment in the county, both in numbers and as a share of all employment, has grown significantly since the Great Recession.



VAN BUREN COUNTY

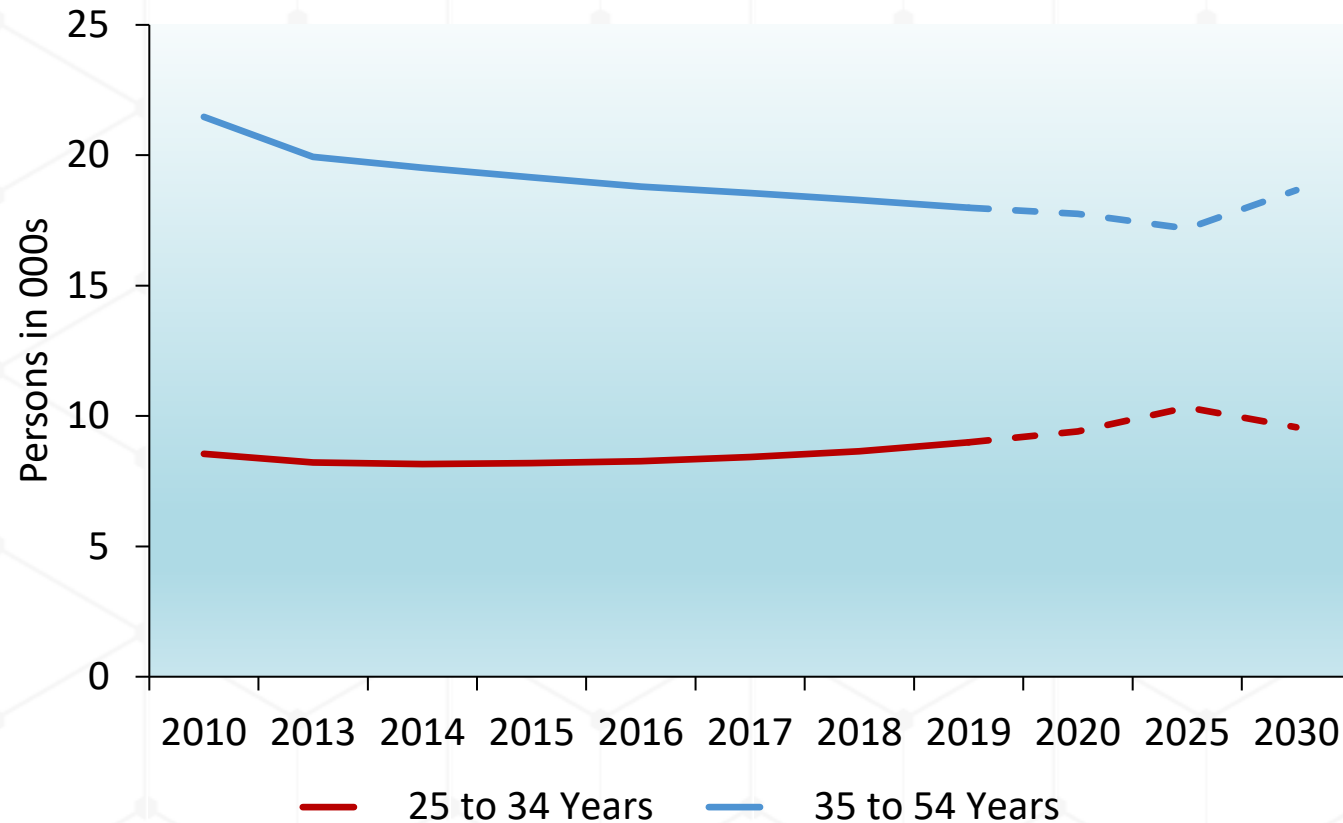
Van Buren County Population Estimates for Ages Less Than 18 and 18 to 24



The part of the population in K-12 has been declining in Van Buren County, and that trend is maintained in the forecast through 2030. The trend for future workers is relatively stable in the history period, but is forecast to decline through 2030.

Estimates for Emerging and Prime-Aged Workers

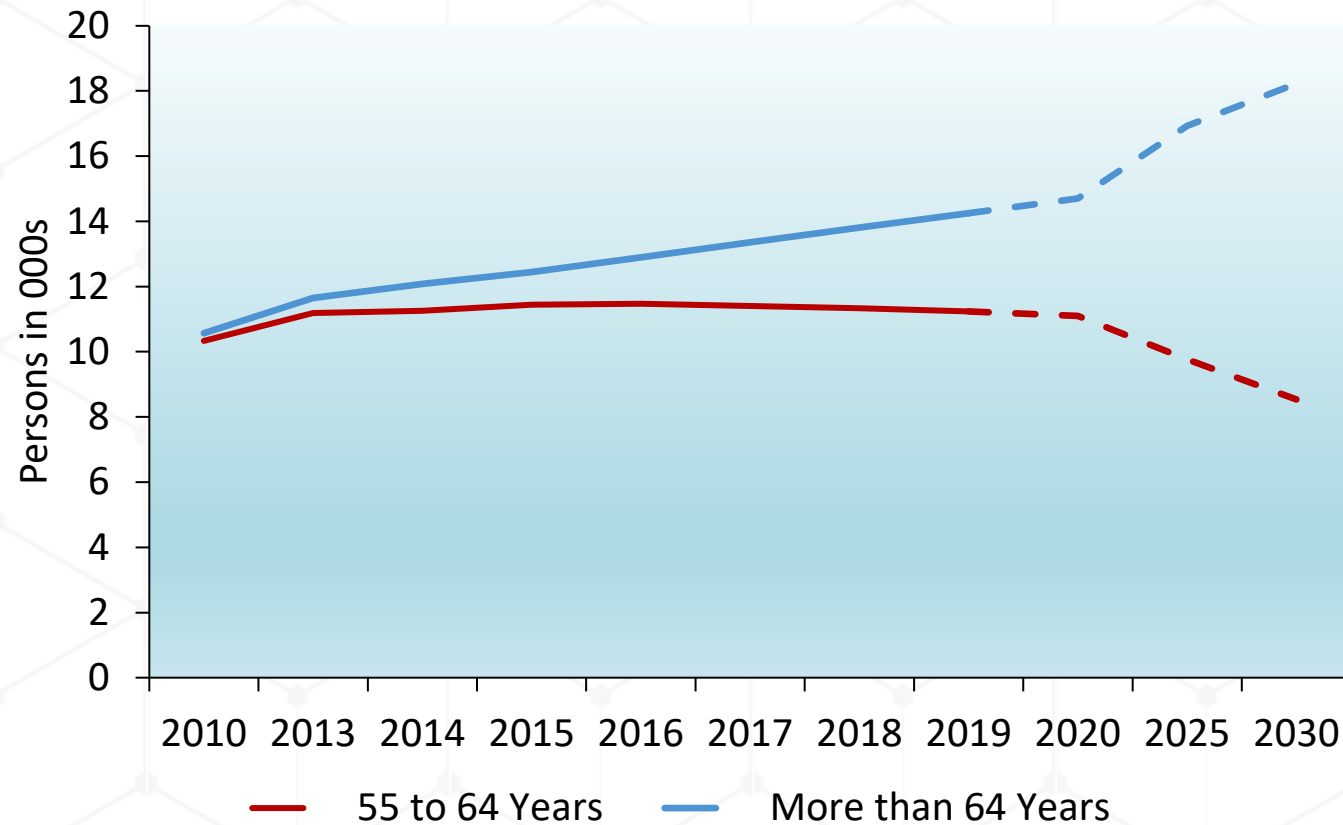
Van Buren County Population



The emerging worker population has seen some growth in the post-recession period, but is forecast to begin to decline after 2025. The prime-aged population has continued to decline since the recession, but is expected to get a push from emerging workers aging into their prime years.

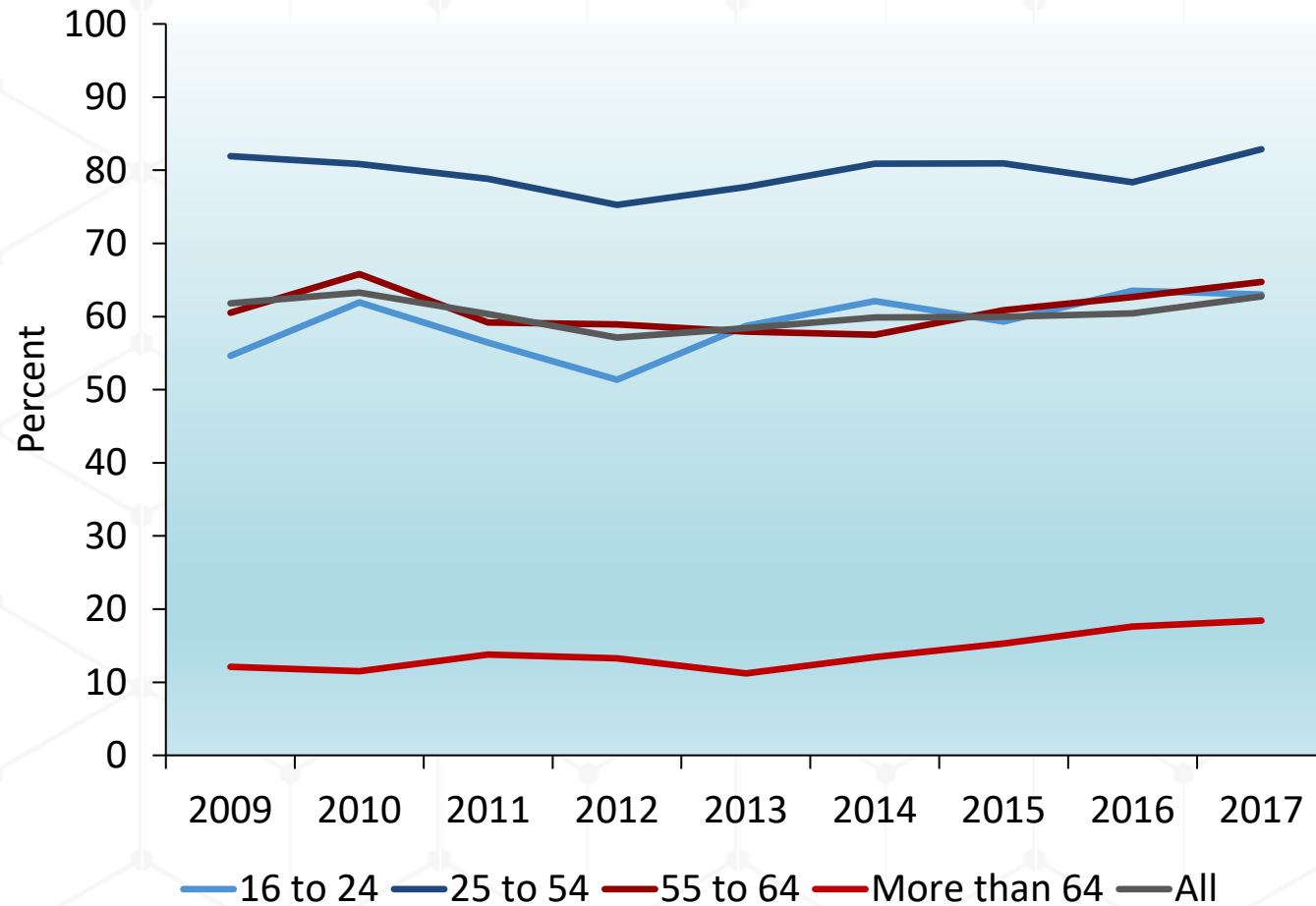
Estimates for Post-Prime and Post-Work Ages

Van Buren County Population



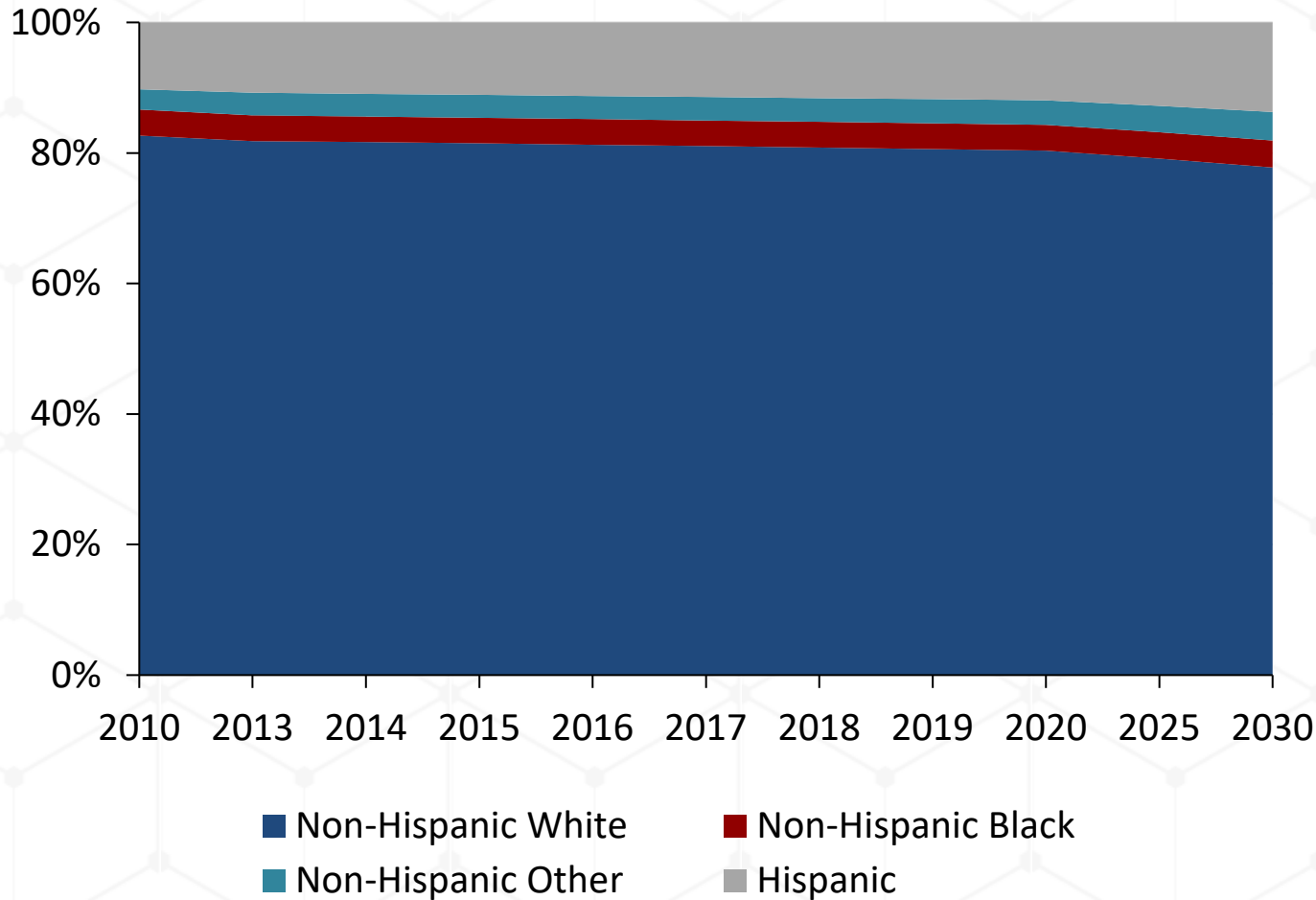
The post-prime population trend is relatively stable but then declines sharply after 2025. It is likely that the acceleration of the 65+ population is due to workers aging from the post-prime group.

Van Buren County Labor Force Participation Rate



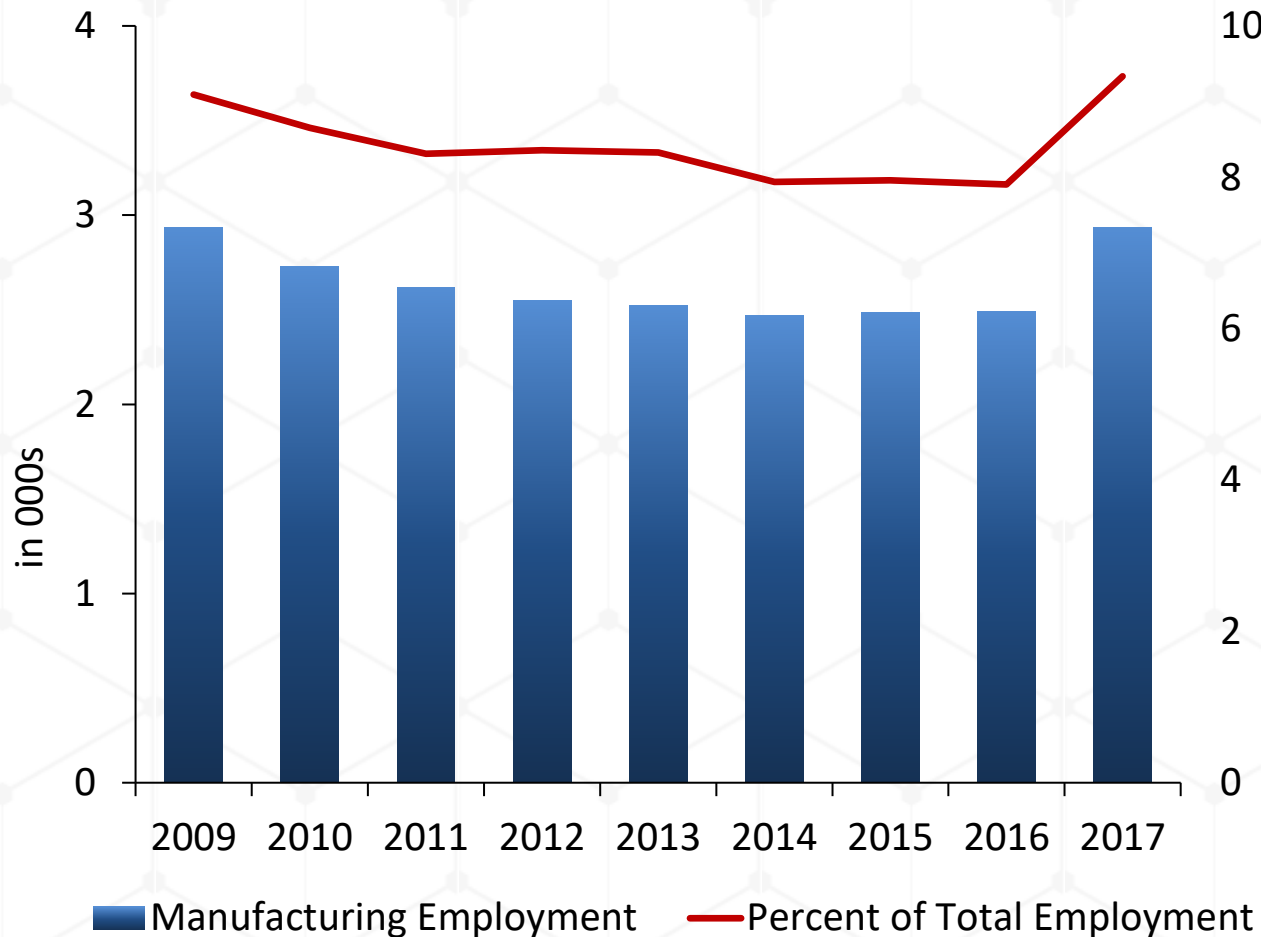
Currently, labor force participation for all workers in the United States is about 62.8%. Van Buren County's participation rate is similar to that of the nation.

Van Buren County Population by Ethnicity



Van Buren County, much like the rest of the region, has levels of minority populations less than that of the national average. In the forecast period, there are expected increases in the share of minorities in the population.

Manufacturing Employment Van Buren County



Manufacturing employment in Van Buren County was counter to the general trend of the region. For most of the time period since the recession, employment and share of employment has been declining. In the most recent period, both measures have trended upward, but the share of employment from manufacturing is lower than the surrounding counties.

Questions?

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