

# **Unemployment Claims Data Summary for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Region**

Periods covering January 2020 to May 2021

June 10, 2021



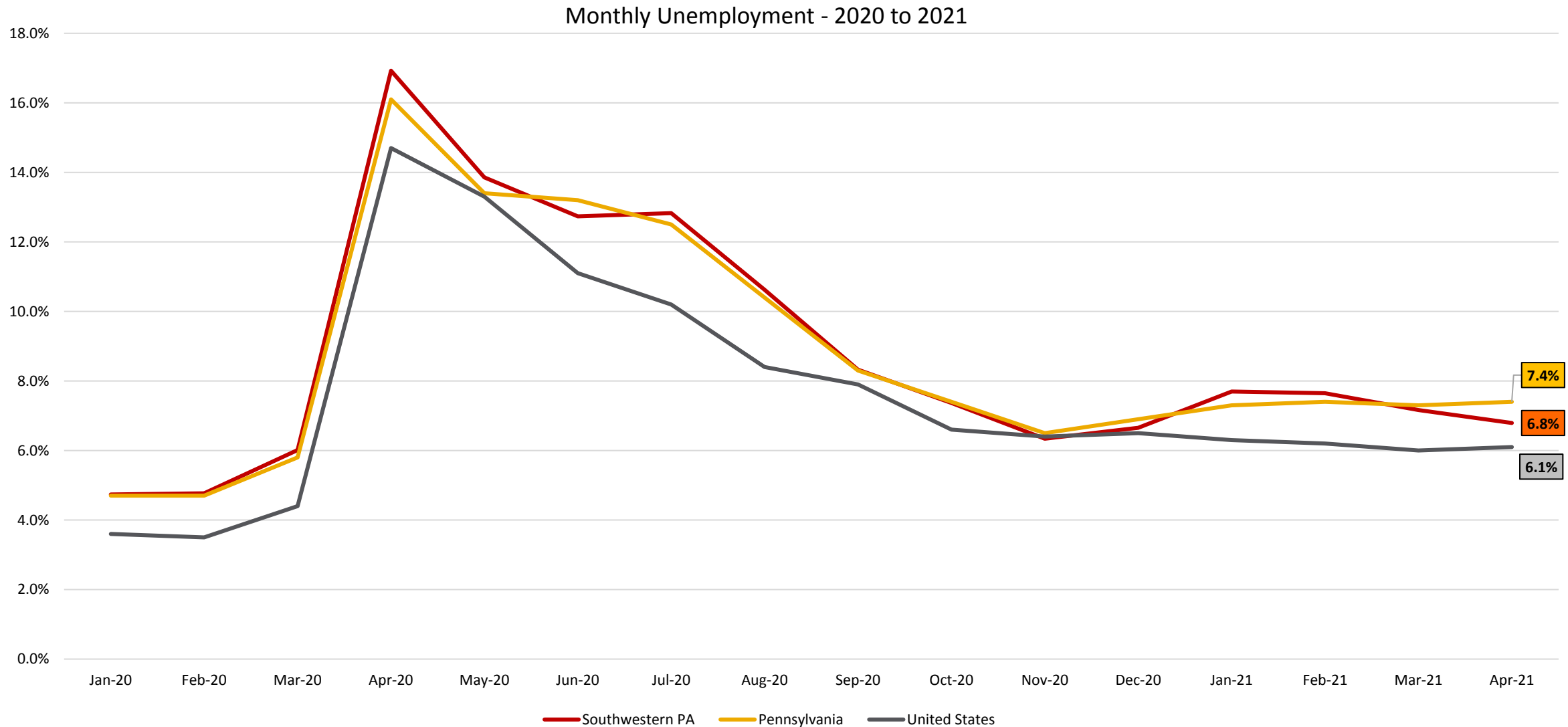
**Pennsylvania Economy League  
of Greater Pittsburgh**

An affiliate of the Allegheny Conference

# Key Takeaways

- In April 2021, the unemployment rate in Southwestern Pennsylvania of 6.8% was well above the national rate of 6.1%, and the region's labor force declined by 4.9% compared to 2.2% for the nation.
- The unemployment rate in the region varies by county from a low of 5.6% in Butler County to a high of 9.2% in Fayette County.
- After an increase in Continuing Unemployment Claims (UC) at the beginning of 2021 in the wake of renewed dining restrictions and seasonal slowdowns, UC have shown a steady downward trend since the beginning of February. The region's share of the state has been slowly trending downward since the beginning of the year.
- Regionally, for the week ended 5/29/21, the top five most impacted industries are Construction; Administrative and Waste Services; Accommodation and Food Services; Transportation and Warehousing; and Manufacturing for continuing unemployment claims.
- Unemployment is not affecting demographic groups equally, and the 35-44 age segment and Black population are suffering more.

The unemployment rate in Southwestern Pennsylvania dropped for the third consecutive month and is now below the state average.



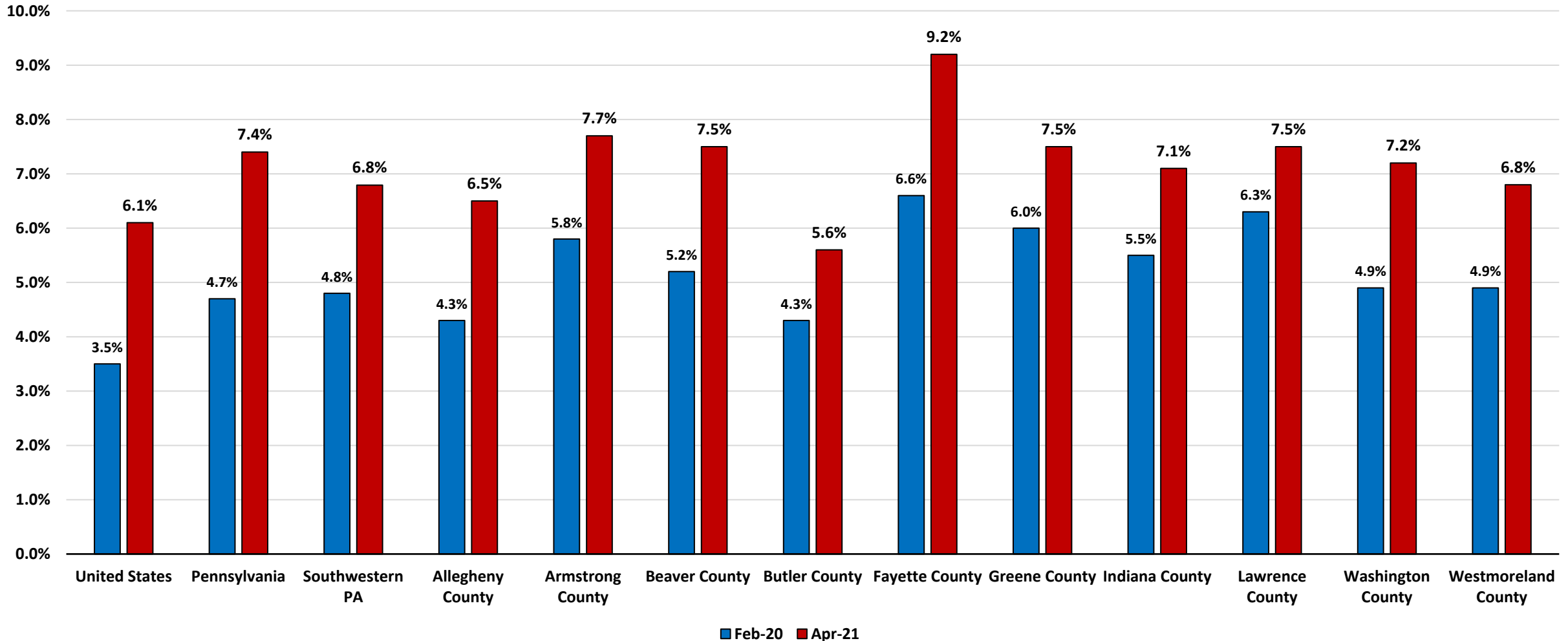
Source: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics; Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

The number of unemployed people in the region has dropped by more than 11,000 since February, driving the decrease in the unemployment rate. However, although the region's labor force dropped during the month of April. The number of unemployed individuals in Southwestern Pennsylvania increased at half the national rate since the beginning of the pandemic.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE																
	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	Aug. 2020	Sept. 2020	Oct. 2020	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021	Feb. 2021	Mar. 2021	Apr. 2021
Southwestern PA	4.7%	4.8%	6.0%	16.9%	13.9%	12.7%	12.8%	10.6%	8.3%	7.4%	6.3%	6.7%	7.7%	7.6%	7.2%	6.8%
Pennsylvania	4.7%	4.7%	5.8%	16.1%	13.4%	13.2%	12.5%	10.4%	8.3%	7.4%	6.5%	6.9%	7.3%	7.4%	7.3%	7.4%
United States	3.6%	3.5%	4.4%	14.7%	13.3%	11.1%	10.2%	8.4%	7.9%	6.6%	6.4%	6.5%	6.3%	6.2%	6.0%	6.1%
CHANGE IN LABOR FORCE FROM PREVIOUS MONTH																
	Feb. 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	Aug. 2020	Sept. 2020	Oct. 2020	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021	Feb. 2021	Mar. 2021	Apr. 2021	Feb. 2020 to Apr. 2021
Southwestern PA	0.4%	-0.8%	-2.5%	1.1%	-1.9%	0.5%	-0.9%	1.8%	-1.3%	-1.3%	-0.3%	0.1%	0.9%	0.0%	-0.4%	-4.9%
Pennsylvania	0.1%	-0.2%	-1.5%	0.9%	-2.2%	-0.1%	-0.8%	2.0%	-1.0%	-1.1%	-0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	-3.4%
United States	0.0%	-1.0%	-4.1%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.6%	-0.4%	0.6%	-0.4%	-0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	-2.2%
CHANGE IN UNEMPLOYMENT FROM PREVIOUS MONTH																
	Feb. 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	Aug. 2020	Sept. 2020	Oct. 2020	Nov. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. 2021	Feb. 2021	Mar. 2021	Apr. 2021	Feb. 2020 to Apr. 2021
Southwestern PA	1.1%	20.0%	63.6%	-20.9%	-10.9%	1.2%	-21.8%	-25.4%	-14.5%	-17.7%	4.4%	13.7%	0.2%	-6.7%	-5.8%	35.5%
Pennsylvania	0.6%	18.5%	63.5%	-18.6%	-3.8%	-6.0%	-20.5%	-22.9%	-13.3%	-15.9%	5.1%	5.9%	2.6%	-1.5%	0.9%	50.8%
United States	-1.8%	18.9%	69.1%	-10.0%	-18.2%	-8.6%	-20.6%	-7.7%	-18.5%	-3.5%	1.3%	-2.7%	-1.6%	-2.7%	1.0%	69.6%

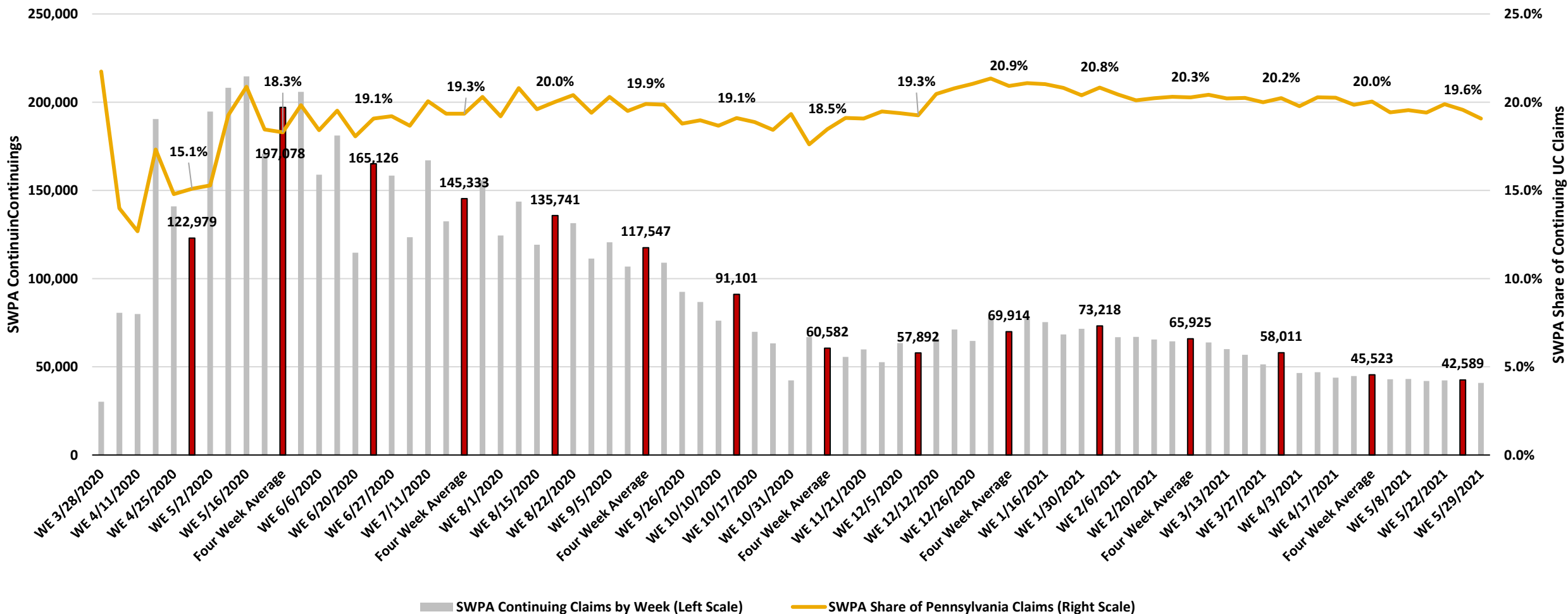
The unemployment rate in the region is two percentage points higher than it was in February 2020, a smaller gap than the U.S. or state. The gap between the last pre-pandemic unemployment rate and the current one is smallest in Lawrence (1.2 percentage points) and Butler Counties (1.3 percentage points) and largest in Fayette County (2.6). Unemployment rates vary by county from a low of 5.6% in Butler County to a high of 9.2% in Fayette County.

**Unemployment Rate Comparison - February 2020 vs. April 2021**



As the number of unemployed people had decreased since February, the four-week average for Continuing Unemployment Claims (UC) has continued its slow decrease. The region's share of the state has also dropped 1.2 percentage points over that period.

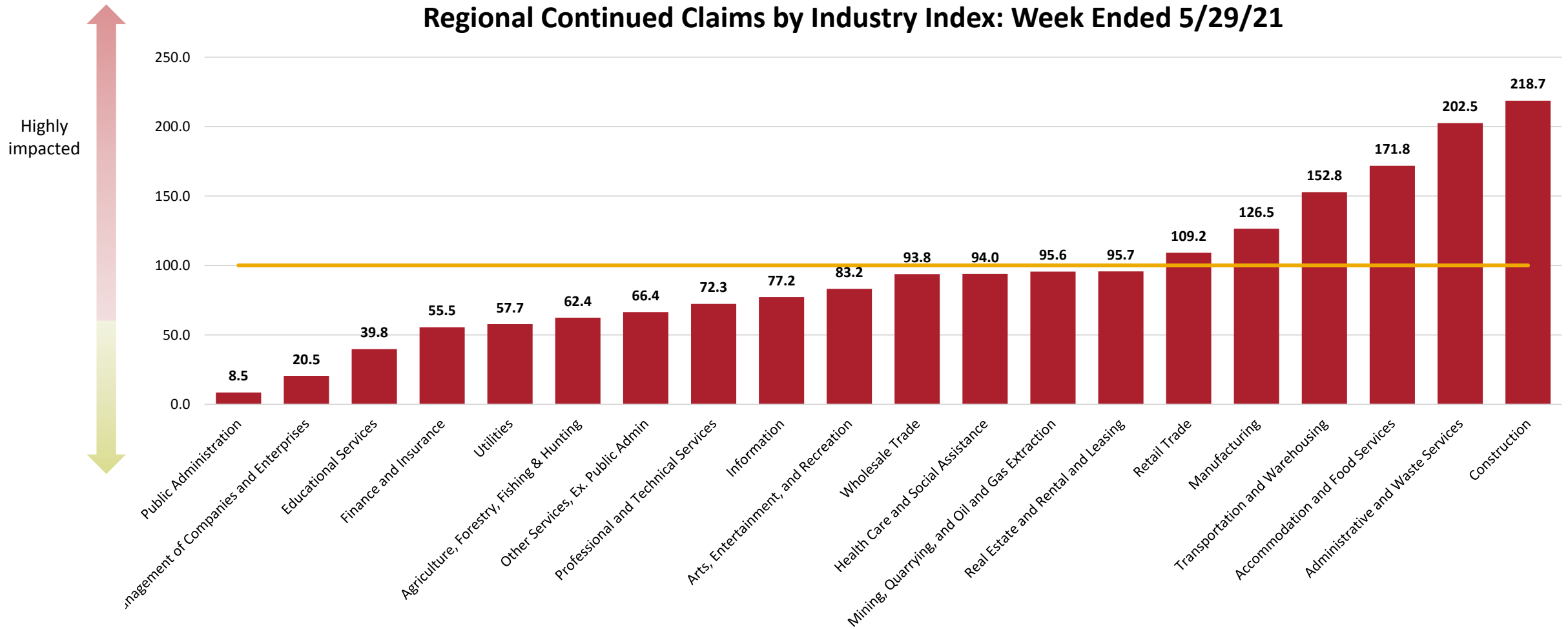
**Southwestern Pennsylvania Continuing UC Claim Trends**



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

By comparing percentage of claims to percentage of employment by industry, we can determine which industries are disproportionately impacted. A value above 100 indicates that the industry is highly impacted. Regionally, the top five most impacted industries are Construction; Administrative and Waste Services; Accommodation and Food Services; Transportation and Warehousing; and Manufacturing. Unlike other industries, Construction is impacted by seasonal slowdowns.

### Regional Continued Claims by Industry Index: Week Ended 5/29/21



By comparing percentage of claims to percentage of population by segment, we can determine which groups are disproportionately impacted. A value above 100 indicates that the group is highly impacted. By age, the 35-44 age segment is the most impacted, followed by the 25-34 segment. By race, the Black population is disproportionately impacted compared to other demographic groups.

Regional Continued Claims by Age		
	Week ended 5/29/21	Indexed
16-19 *	1.0%	16.2
20-24	6.9%	112.1
25-34	23.4%	178.7
35-44	21.4%	187.7
45-54	18.1%	138.4
55-64	20.2%	133.2
65 and older	8.8%	45.1
Unknown	0.3%	N/A
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>40,888</b>	
* Used 15 – 19 age group from American Community Survey		

Regional Continued Claims by Race		
	Week ended 5/29/21	Indexed
Black	17.0%	220.2
Hispanic	1.7%	95.6
Pacific Islander or Asian	1.0%	46.4
Unknown	3.8%	N/A
White	76.3%	87.5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>40,888</b>	

Regional Continued Claims by Sex		
	Week ended 5/29/21	Indexed
Female	47.9%	93.4
Male	52.1%	106.9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>40,888</b>	



Report produced by the Pennsylvania Economy League of Greater Pittsburgh, an  
affiliate of the Allegheny Conference

Data sources include the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry Center for  
Workforce Information and Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Emsi, and the US  
Census Bureau

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