

# Unemployment Claims Data Summary for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Region

Periods covering January 2020 to June 2021

August 18, 2021



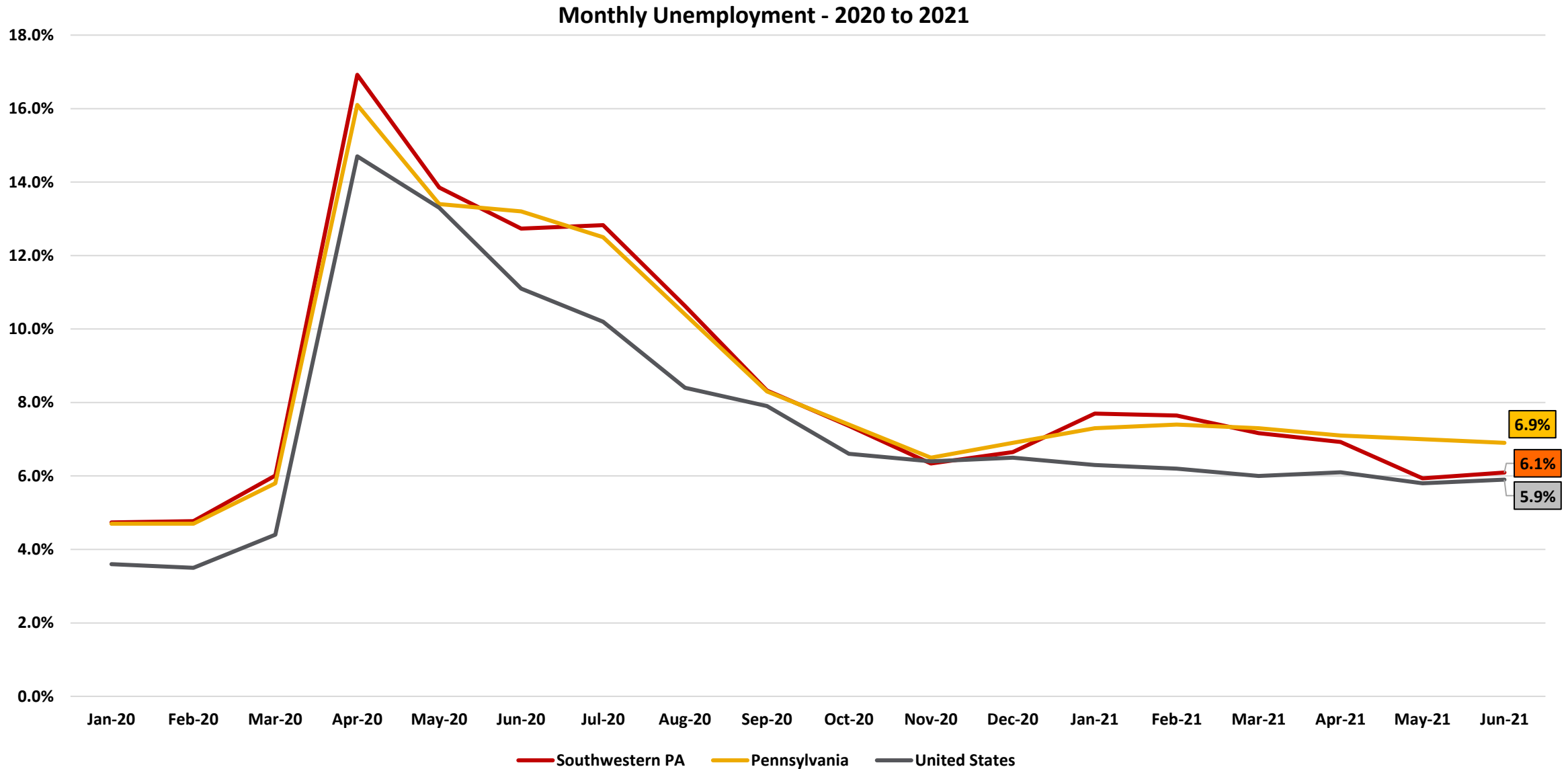
Pennsylvania Economy League  
of Greater Pittsburgh

An affiliate of the Allegheny Conference

# Key Takeaways

- While the unemployment rate in Southwestern Pennsylvania increased slightly in June (to 6.1%) after four consecutive monthly decreases, it remained below the state average (6.9%) and only slightly above the nation (5.9%).
- After dropping for a few months, the Labor Force in Southwestern Pennsylvania increased in June while remaining flat nationally and statewide.
- The unemployment rate in the region is just 1.3 percentage points higher than it was in February 2020, a full percentage point smaller than the U.S. or state. Unemployment rates vary by county from a low of 5.3% in Butler County to a high of 8.4% in Fayette County.
- Continuing unemployment claims have dropped to levels to seen since the pandemic began, with a four-week average in late-July of just 35,215. They continued to drop into August and were just 22,111 the week ended August 7, 2021.
- Regionally, for the week ended 8/7/21, the top five most impacted industries are Transportation and Warehousing; Construction; Administrative and Waste Services; Accommodation and Food Services; and Manufacturing.
- Unemployment is not affecting demographic groups equally, and the 35-44 age segment and Black population are suffering more.

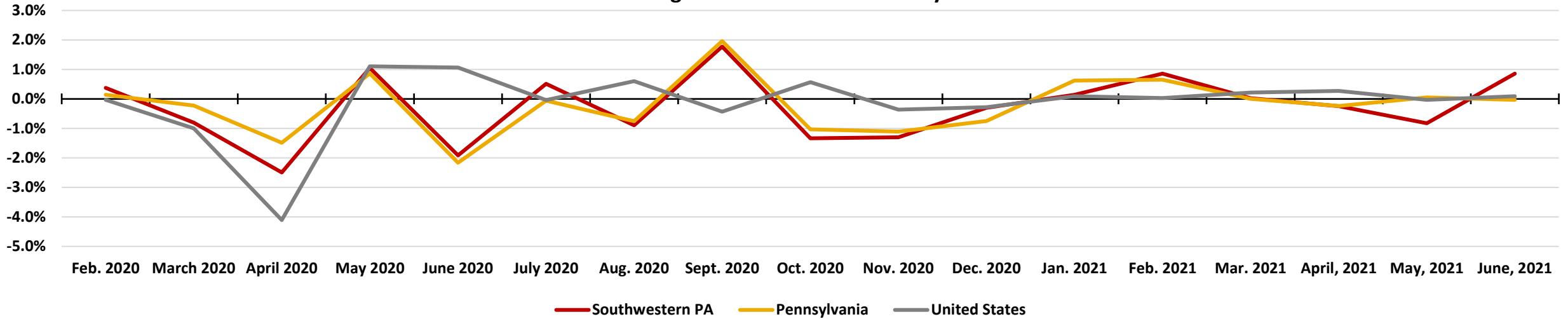
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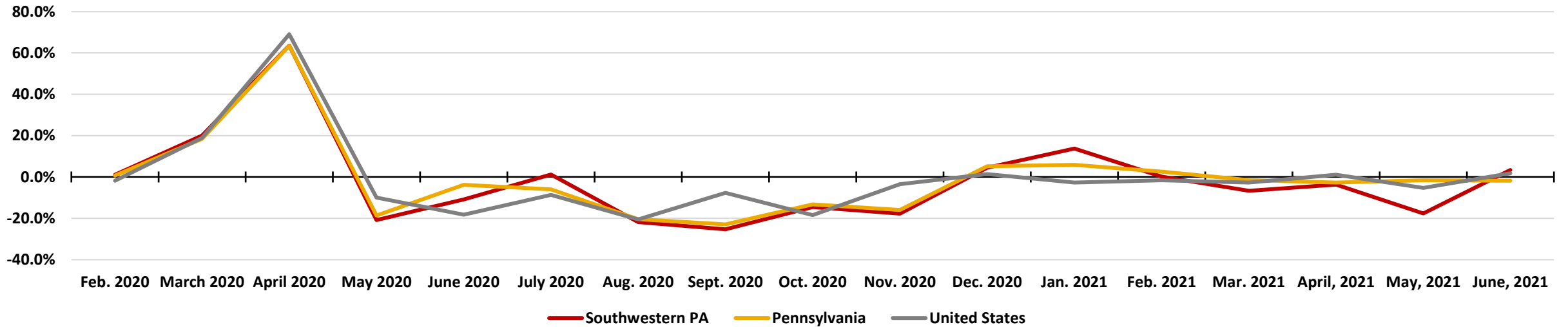
Source: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics; Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

After dropping for a few months, the Labor Force in Southwestern Pennsylvania increased in June while remaining flat nationally and statewide. In addition, the number of unemployed individuals in the region also grew in June when compared to the previous month at twice the rate of the nation (3.4% vs. 1.8%), while dropping 1.8% statewide.

**Month to Month Change in Labor Force - February 2020 to June 2021**



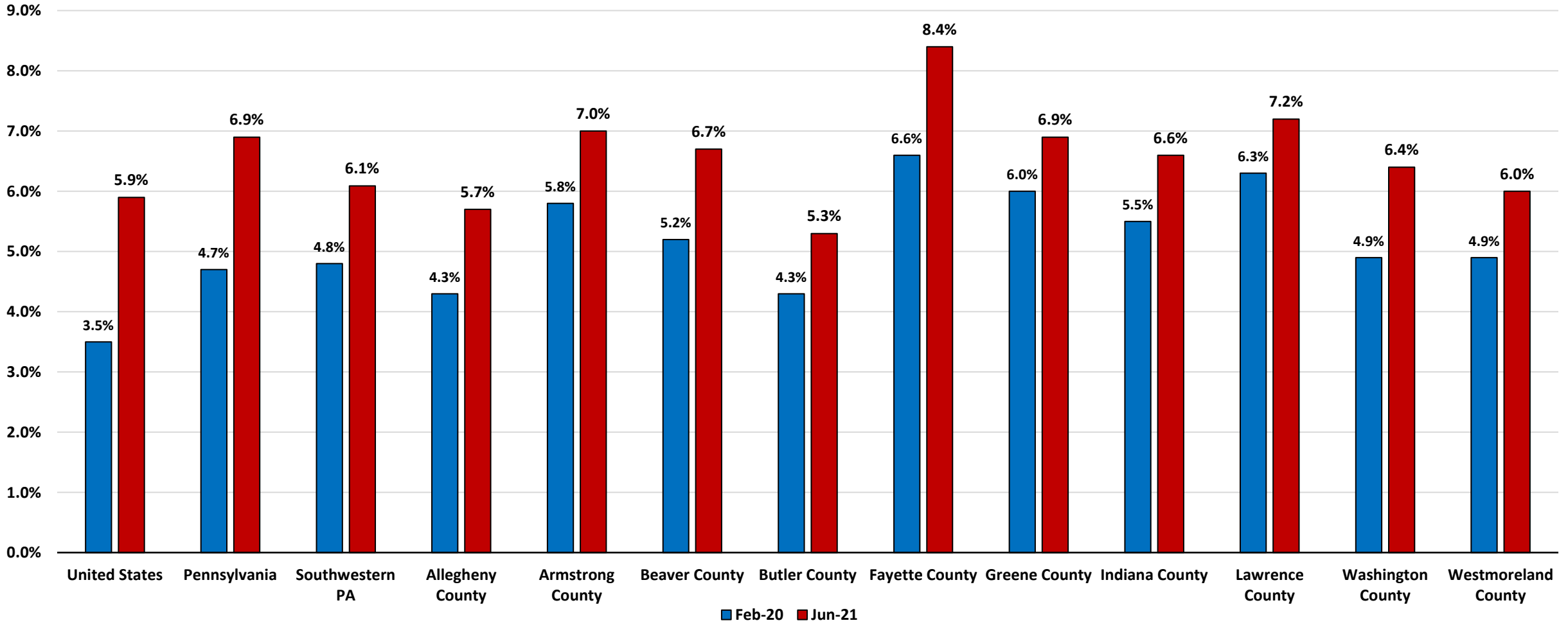
**Month-to-Month Change in Unemployed - Feb. 2020 to June 2021**



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

The unemployment rate in the region is just 1.3 percentage points higher than it was in February 2020, a full percentage point smaller than the U.S. or state. The gap between the last pre-pandemic unemployment rate and the current one is smallest in Greene and Lawrence Counties (0.9 percentage points) and largest in Fayette County (1.8). Unemployment rates vary by county from a low of 5.3% in Butler County to a high of 8.4% in Fayette County.

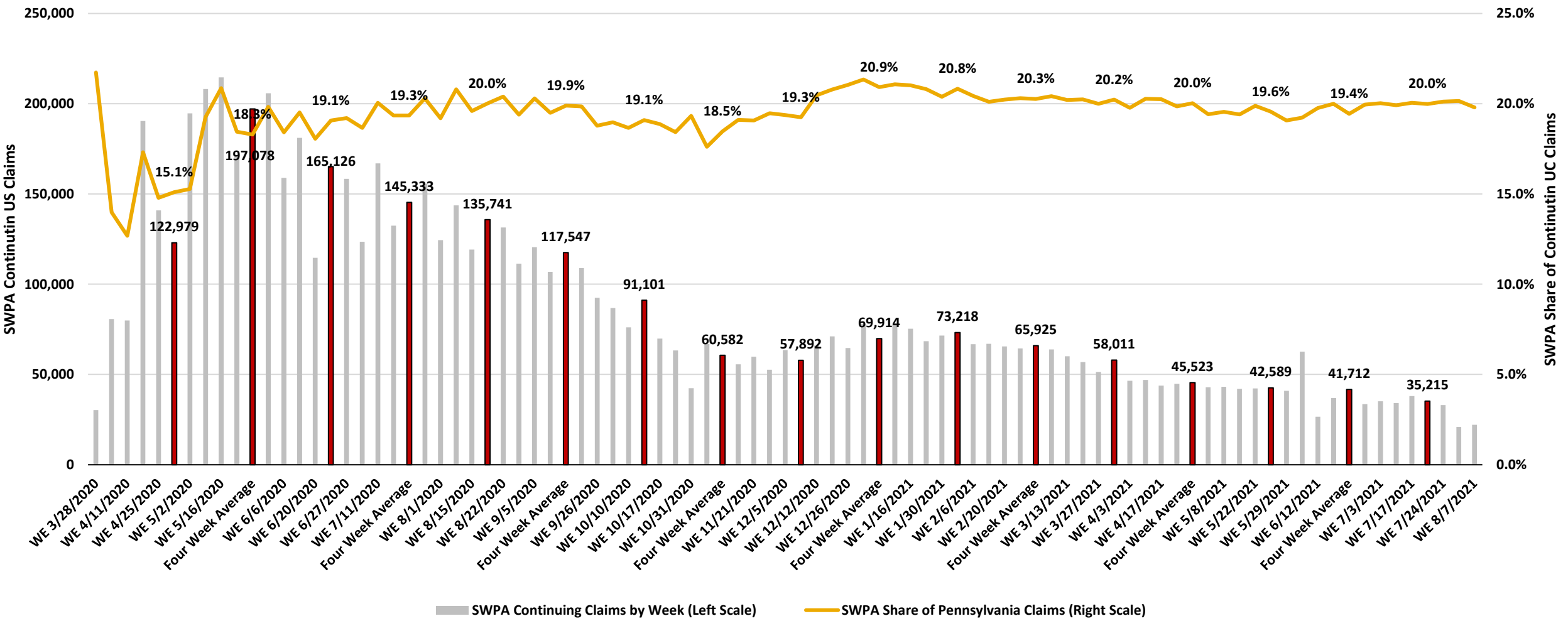
**Unemployment Rate Comparison - February 2020 vs. June 2021**



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

Continuing unemployment claims have dropped to levels to seen since the pandemic began, with a four-week average in late-July of just 35,215. They continued to drop into August and were just 22,111 the week ended August 7, 2021. The region's drop seems to be paralleling the state's as Southwestern Pennsylvania's share has remained consistent in the 19% to 20% range since the beginning of the year.

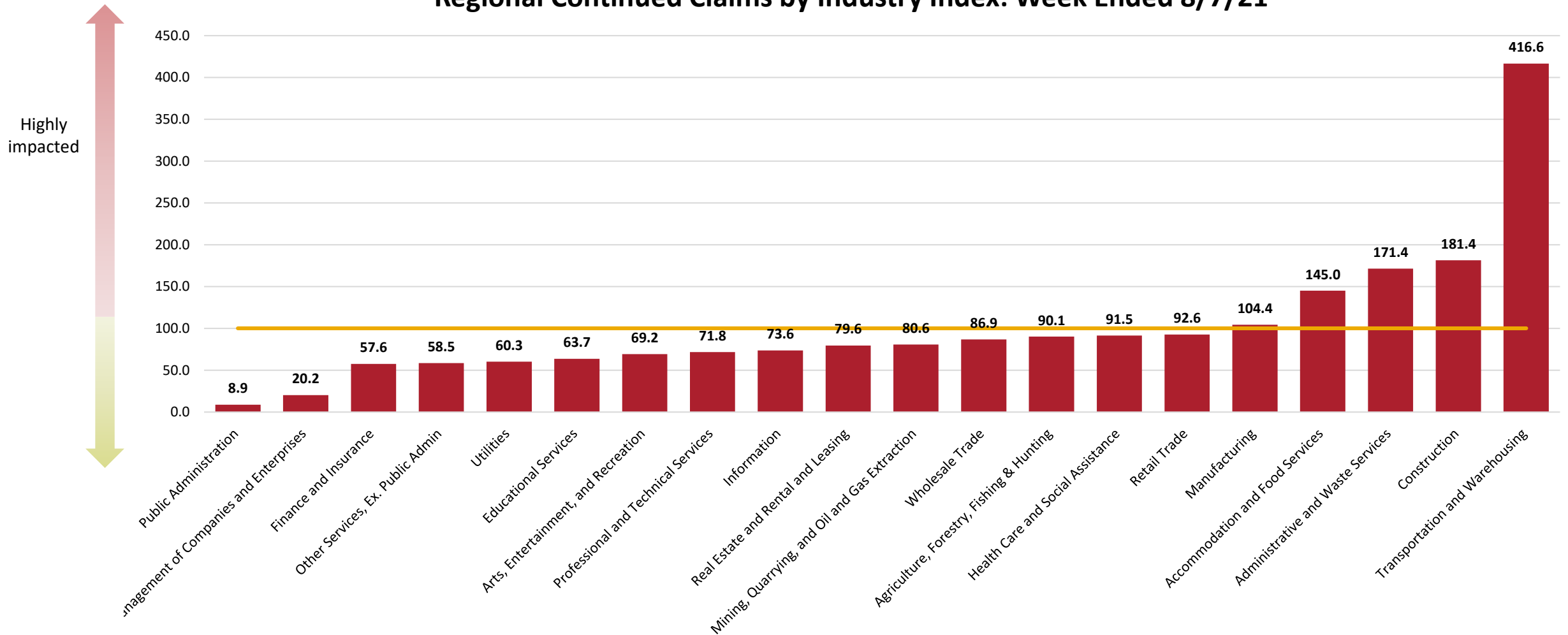
**Southwestern Pennsylvania Continuing UC Claim Trends**



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 Transportation and Warehousing; Construction; Administrative and Waste Services; Accommodation and Food Services; and Manufacturing. Unlike other industries, Construction is impacted by seasonal slowdowns.

## Regional Continued Claims by Industry Index: Week Ended 8/7/21



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 55-64 segment. By race, the Black population is disproportionately impacted compared to other demographic groups.

Regional Continued Claims by Age		
	Week ended 8/7/21	Indexed
16-19 *	0.5%	8.1
20-24	4.9%	79.5
25-34	18.4%	140.6
35-44	19.1%	167.5
45-54	19.6%	149.7
55-64	23.6%	156.1
65 and older	13.9%	71.2
Unknown	0.0%	N/A
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>22,111</b>	
* Used 15 – 19 age group from American Community Survey		

Regional Continued Claims by Race		
	Week ended 8/7/21	Indexed
Black	13.4%	173.0
Hispanic	1.4%	82.4
Pacific Islander or Asian	0.9%	40.9
Unknown	4.2%	N/A
White	79.8%	91.5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>22,111</b>	

Regional Continued Claims by Sex		
	Week ended 8/7/21	Indexed
Female	52.5%	102.5
Male	47.5%	97.4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>22,111</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 and Bureau of Labor Statistics

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