

Unemployment Claims Data Summary for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Region

Periods covering January 2020 to December 2021

February 14, 2022

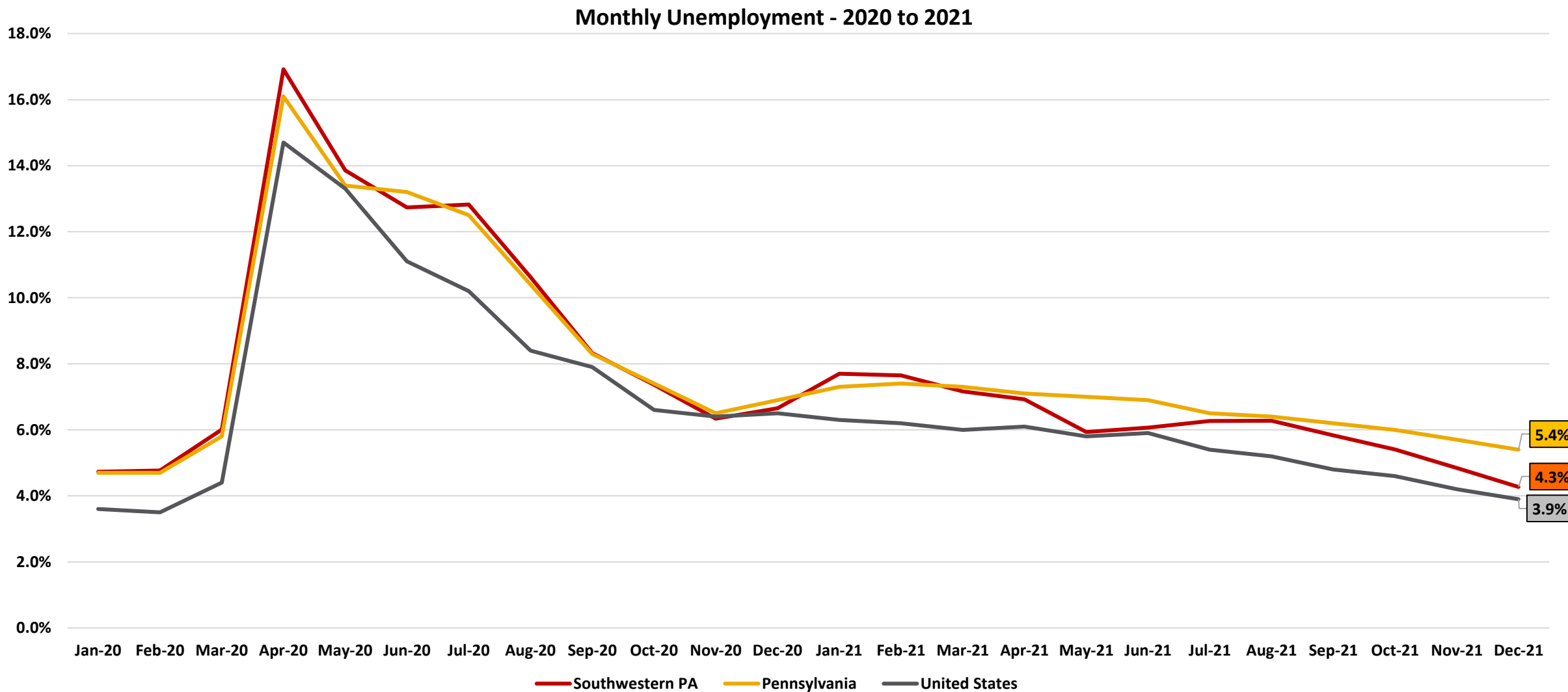


Key Takeaways

This report uses data from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) series. LAUS is a survey of households and as a result subject to revision once additional data are collected.

- The unemployment rate in Southwestern Pennsylvania has decreased steadily since August and in November was 4.3%, just 0.4 percentage points higher than the nation and 1.1 points below the state. While the region continues to trail the national unemployment rate, the gap is the smallest it's been since June.
- The region's Labor Force fell for a fourth straight month in December, dropping 1.0%, remaining at its lowest level in over 30 years.
- The number of unemployed individuals in the region has also been seeing significant decreases, falling -14.7% in December, well above the state and nation. Given that employment in Southwestern Pennsylvania was essentially flat since May, the drop in the unemployment rate is being driven by people leaving the labor force.
- In December, the unemployment rate in the region (4.3%) was below what it was in February 2020. Based on the data, the unemployment rate in all ten counties has fallen to below pre-pandemic levels.
- Continuing unemployment claims had a slight uptick in January but remain below levels not seen since the pandemic began. For much of 2021, the region's share of claims has remained consistent in the 20% range but since late 2021, the share has increased from 19% to nearly 22%, a level not seen since the pandemic began.
- Regionally, for the week ended 2/5/22, the top five most impacted industries are Construction; Administrative and Waste Services; Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting; and Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction.
- Unemployment is not affecting demographic groups equally, and the 35-44 age segment and Black population are suffering more.

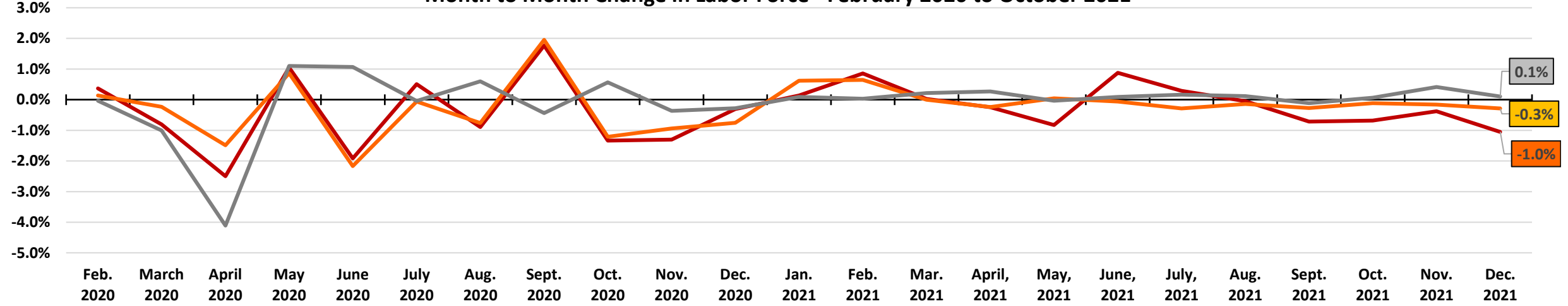
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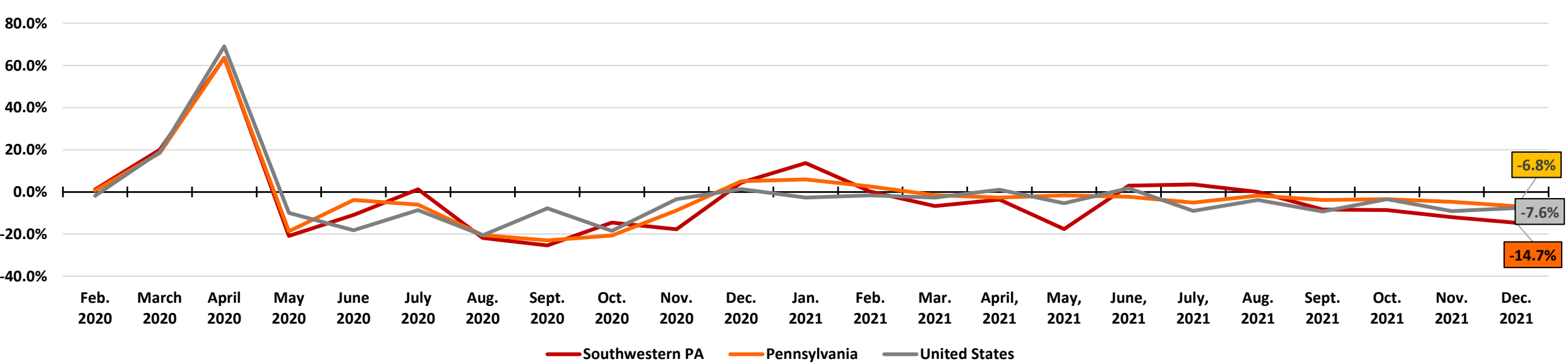
Source: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics; Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry – Seasonally Adjusted

The region's Labor Force fell for a fourth straight month in December, dropping -1.0%, remaining at its lowest level in over 30 years. The number of unemployed individuals in the region has also been seeing significant decreases, falling -14.7% in December, well above the state and nation. Given that employment in Southwestern Pennsylvania was essentially flat since May, the drop in the unemployment rate is being driven by people leaving the labor force.

Month to Month Change in Labor Force - February 2020 to October 2021



Month-to-Month Change in Unemployed - February 2020 to October 2021

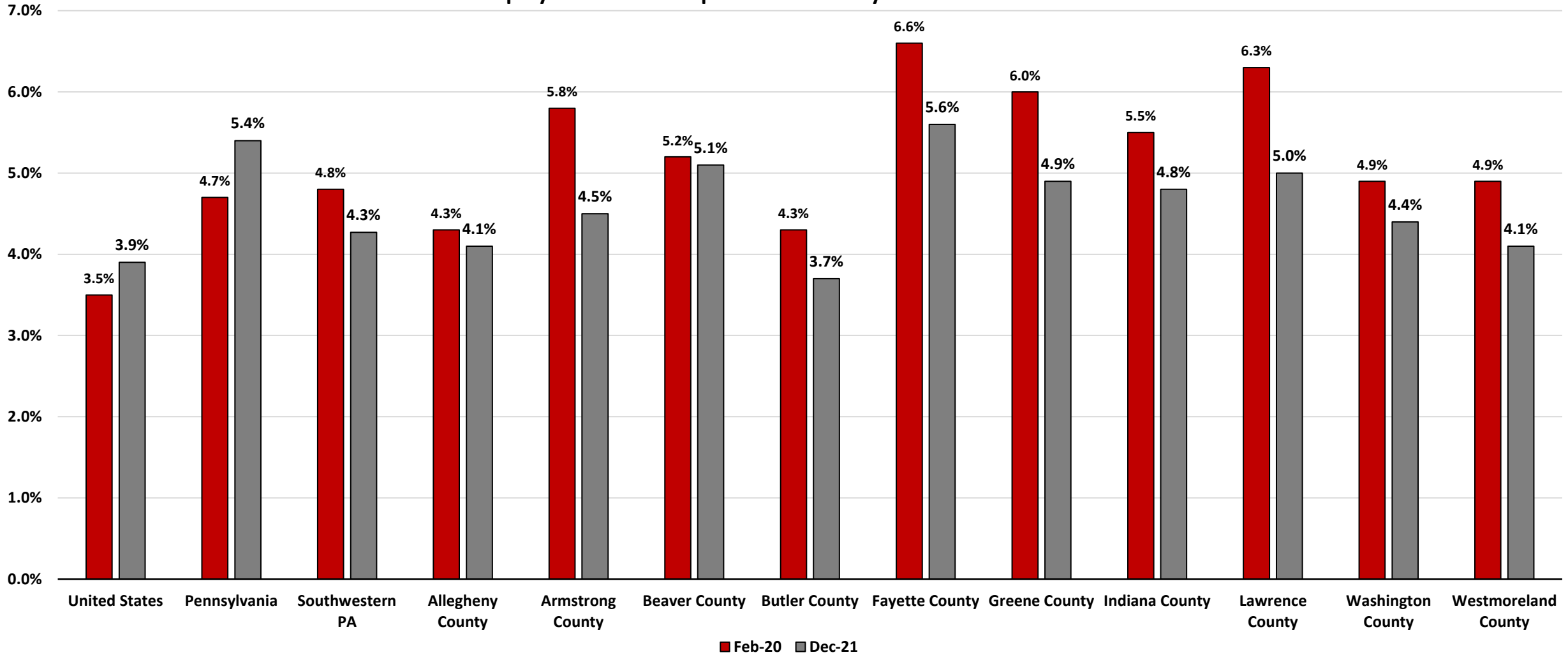


— Southwestern PA — Pennsylvania — United States

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

In December, the unemployment rate in the region (4.3%) was below what it was in February 2020. However, it's important to note that as a survey-based data collection tool, there could be significant changes once final revisions are made. Based on the data, the unemployment rate in all ten counties has fallen to below pre-pandemic levels with Fayette County remaining the highest (the only county above the state average) and Butler County being the lowest.

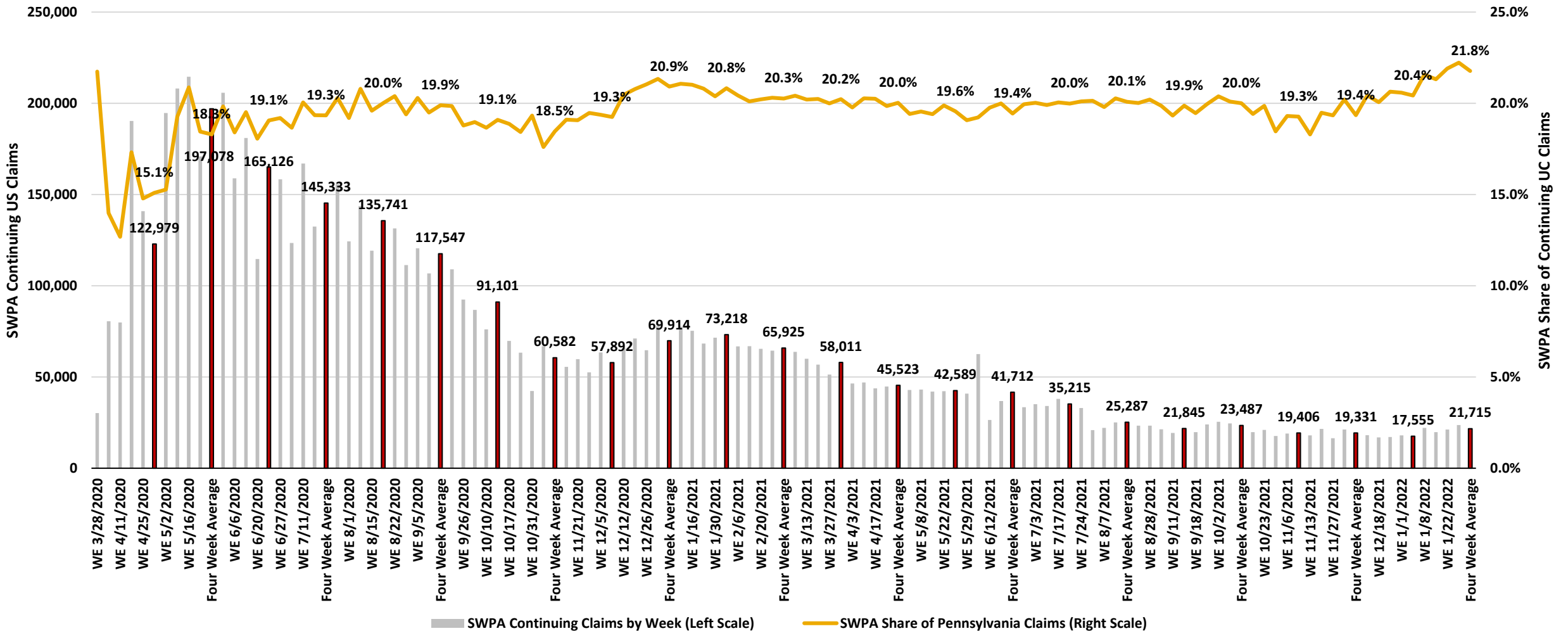
Unemployment Rate Comparison - February 2020 vs. December 2021



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

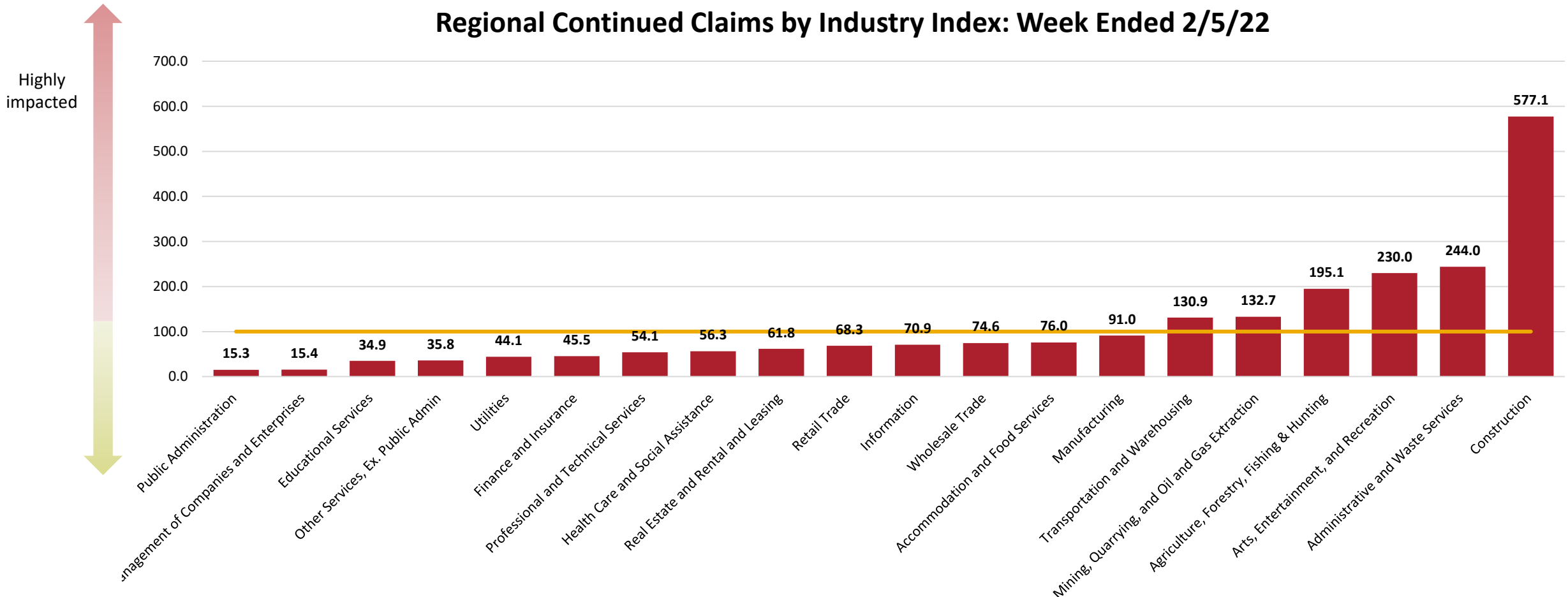
Continuing unemployment claims had a slight uptick in January but remain below levels not seen since the pandemic began. For much of 2021, the region's share of claims has remained consistent in the 20% range but since late 2021, the share has increased from 19% to nearly 22%, a level not seen since the pandemic began.

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; Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting; and Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction. Unlike other industries, Construction is impacted by seasonal slowdowns.



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry; Emsi

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

Regional Continued Claims by Age		
	Week ended 2/5/22	Indexed
16-19 *	2.2%	36.8
20-24	5.4%	88.7
25-34	21.0%	160.4
35-44	20.5%	179.6
45-54	19.5%	148.7
55-64	21.8%	143.8
65 and older	7.8%	39.7
Unknown	1.9%	N/A
Grand Total	24,311	
* Used 15 – 19 age group from American Community Survey		

Regional Continued Claims by Race		
	Week ended 2/5/22	Indexed
Black	8.7%	113.1
Hispanic	1.3%	72.3
Pacific Islander or Asian	0.4%	20.4
Unknown	10.0%	N/A
White	79.0%	90.6
Grand Total	24,311	

Regional Continued Claims by Sex		
	Week ended 2/5/22	Indexed
Female	30.3%	59.2
Male	69.7%	142.8
Grand Total	24,311	
Two data points did not report sex and are therefore not included		

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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