

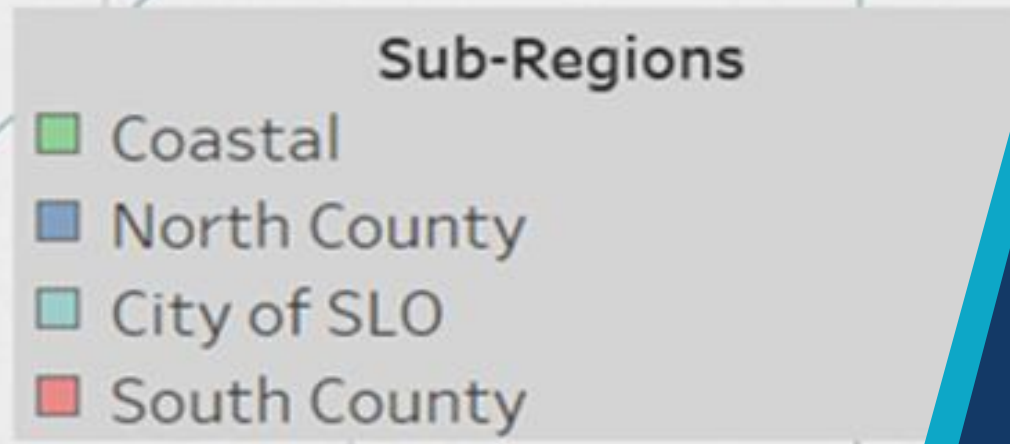
**2023**

**San Luis Obispo County  
State of the Workforce**



# Regional Definition

## Zip Codes



93402, 93412, 93424,  
93428, 93430, 93435,  
93442, 93443, 93452,  
93422, 93423, 93432,  
93446, 93447, 93451,  
93453, 93461, 93465,  
93401, 93403, 93405,  
93406, 93407, 93408,  
93409, 93410, 93420,  
93421, 93433, 93444,  
93445, 93448, 93449,  
93475, 93483

# Agenda



**Research  
Objectives &  
Methodology**



**Key Findings from  
the Research**



**Next Steps:  
Challenges &  
Opportunities**

# Research Objectives



## Measure

### County Workforce Characteristics

Assess current workforce demographics

Analyze workforce needs in infrastructure-related sectors

Analyze performance of key industry clusters



## Assess

### Current Economic Trends

and their impacts on workforce demand and supply



## Identify

### Challenges & Opportunities

for workforce development in San Luis Obispo County

# Methodology



**Develop Research Plan**  
to Identify Research Priorities



**Conduct Executive Interviews**  
with Key Regional Stakeholders



**Compile & Analyze**  
Economic, Employment & Demographic Data



**Conduct Follow-Up Interviews**  
to Identify Challenges & Opportunities for Workforce Development



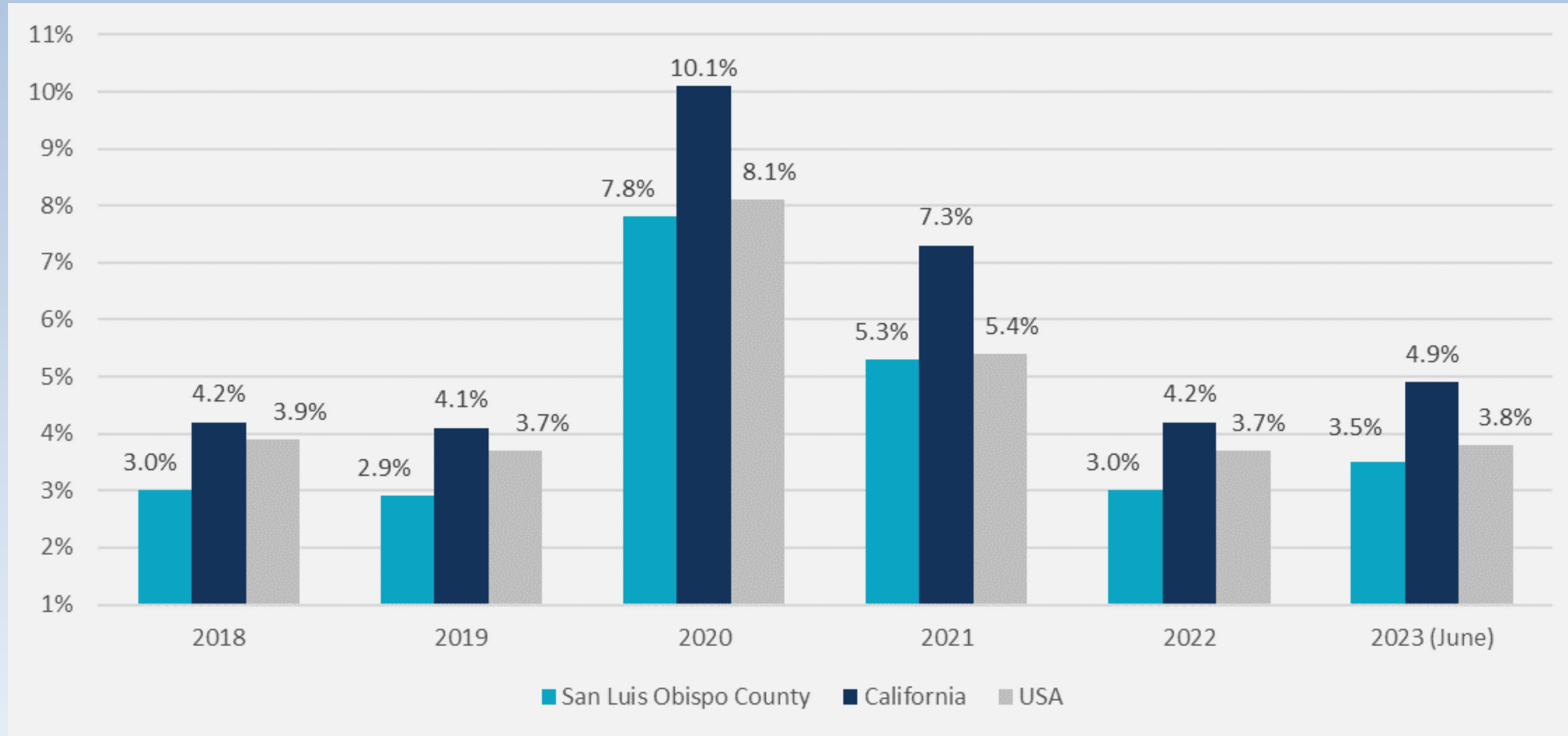
**Develop Recommendations**  
Based on the Results of the Research



# Key Findings



# Key Finding 1: Unemployment Rate



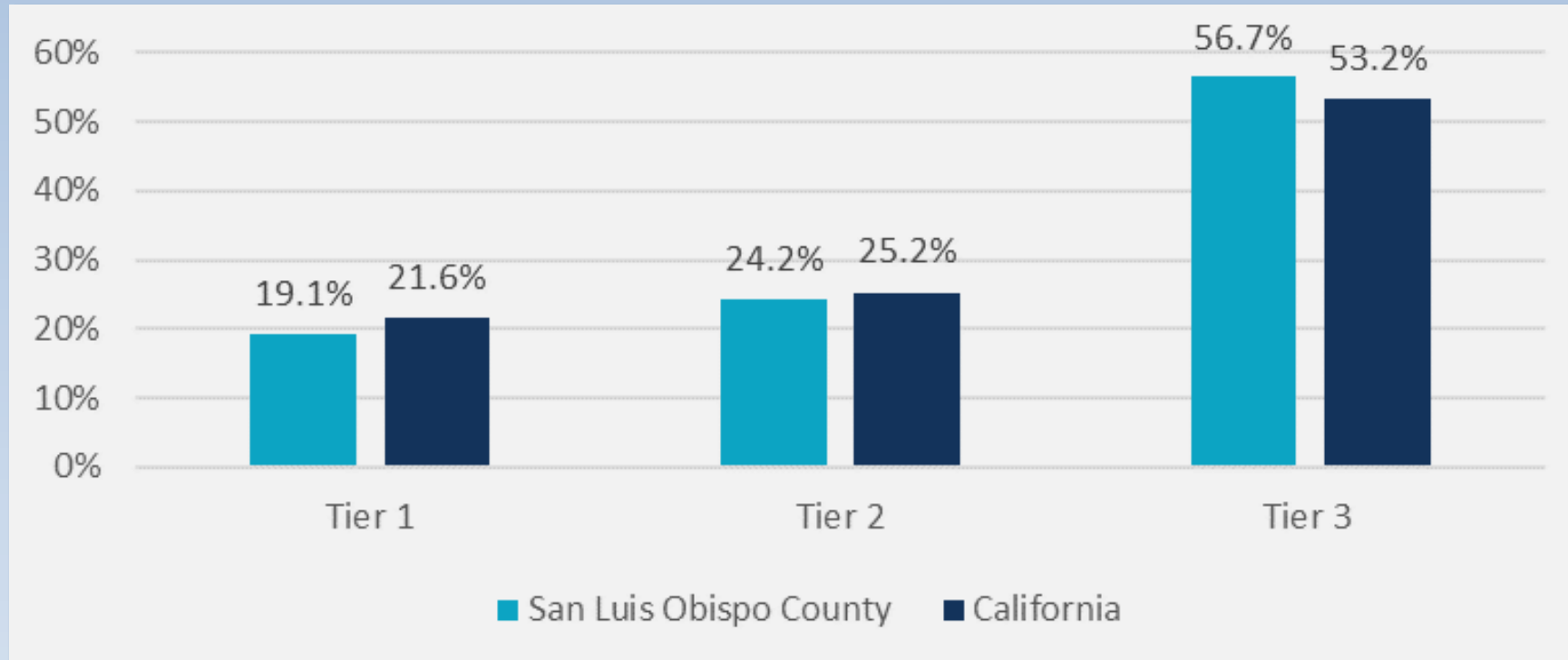
San Luis Obispo County's economy is **recovering more quickly** from the COVID-19 pandemic than the rest of the state.

San Luis Obispo County's unemployment rate has also continued to fall, **reaching pre-pandemic levels** in 2022.

California Employment Development Department (EDD). Local Area Unemployment Statistics (2018-2023).

# Key Finding 2: Cost of Living

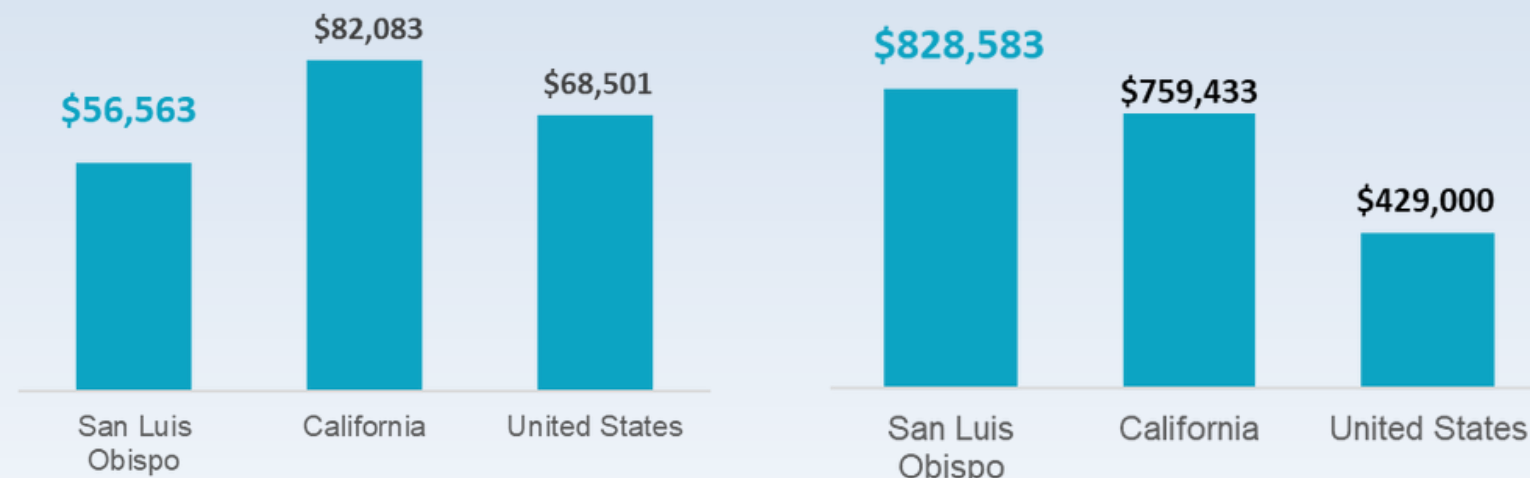
## Job Quality by Tiers, 2022



JobsEQ Q3 2022, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2022).

San Luis Obispo County has a higher share of **low-wage jobs, lower average earnings, and higher housing costs** than the statewide average.

## Average Earnings vs. Median Home Cost

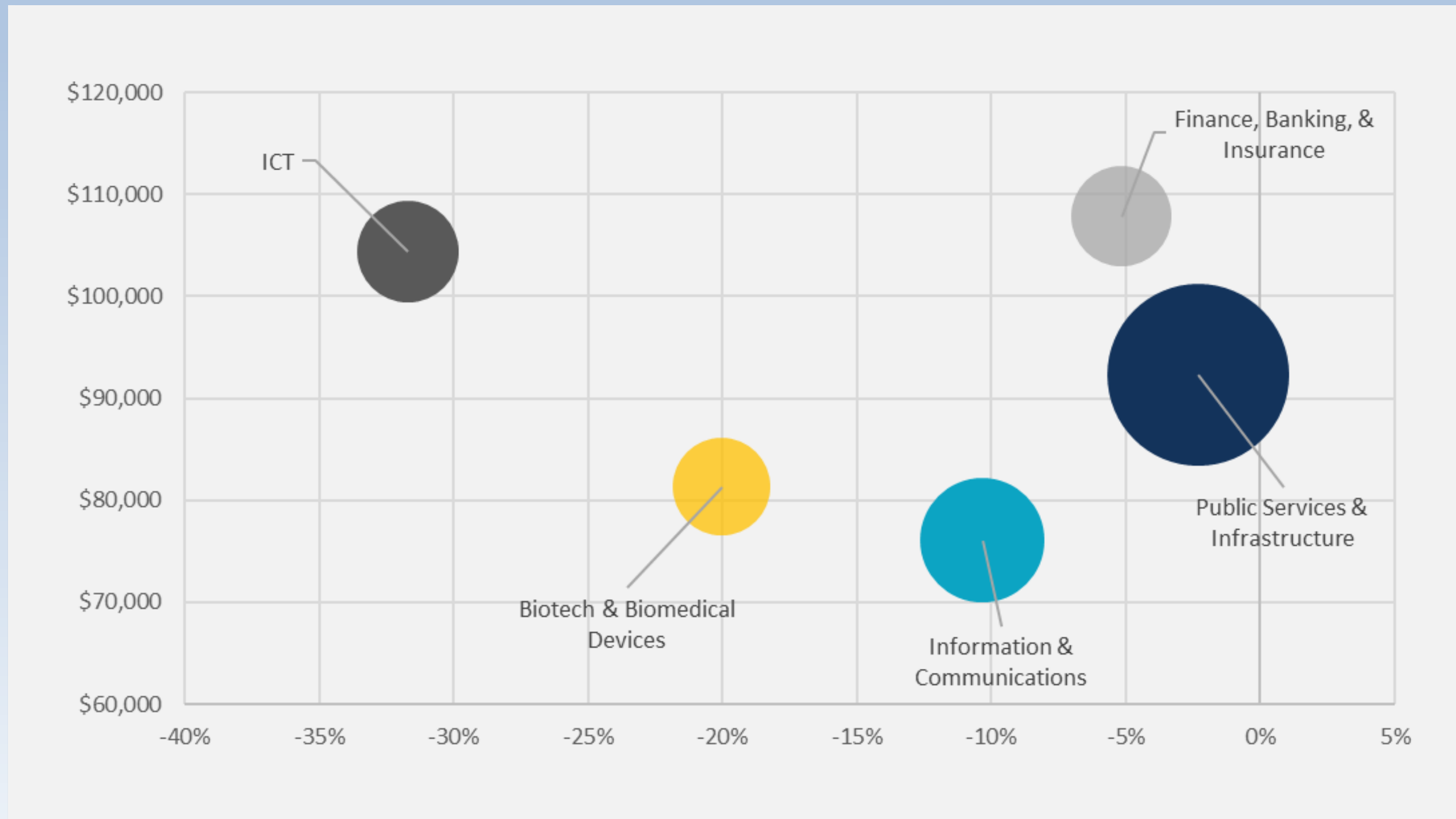


JobsEQ Q1 2023, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2023).

California Association of Realtors. Historical Housing Dataset (2023).



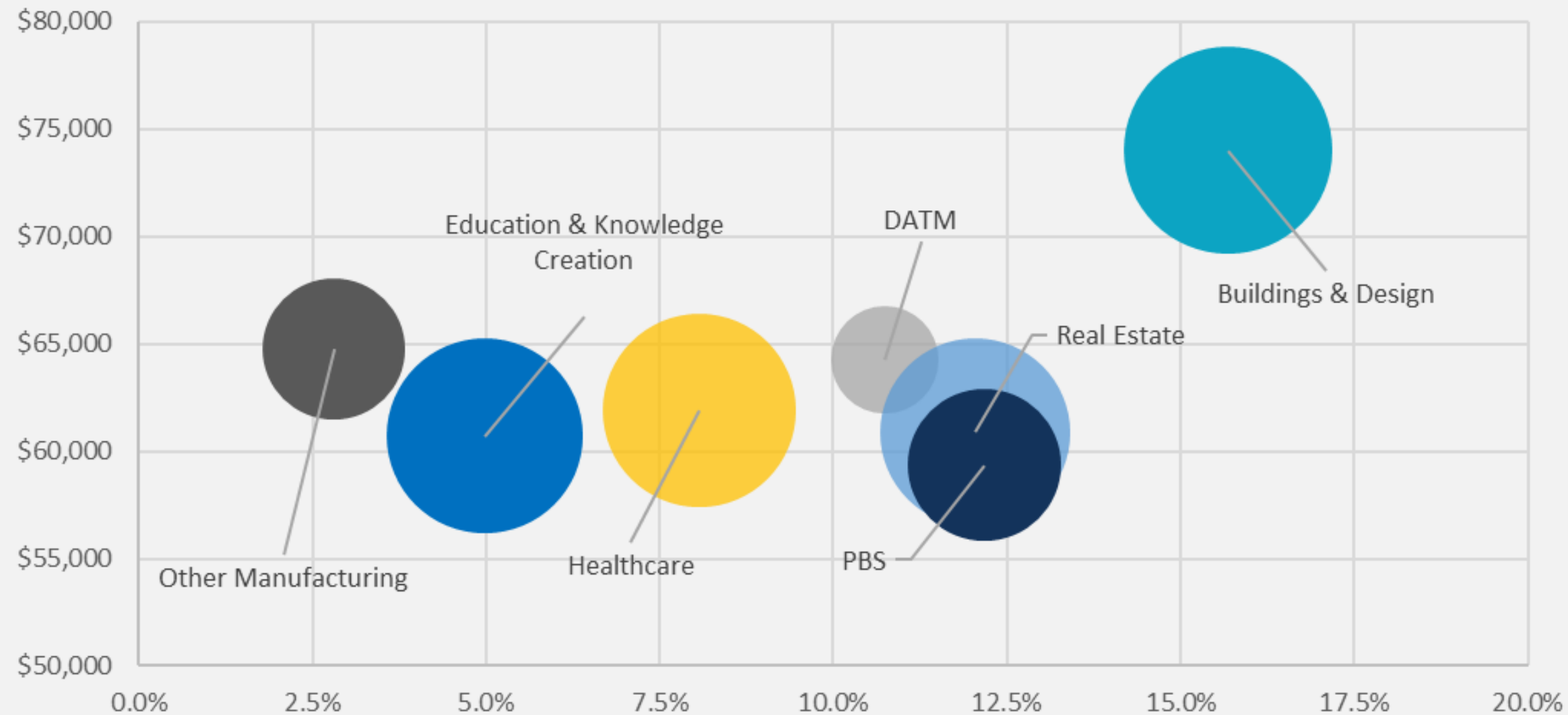
# Key Finding 3: High-Earning Industry Clusters



All of the county's high-earning industry clusters **declined** between 2018 and 2022.

JobsEQ Q3 2022, American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

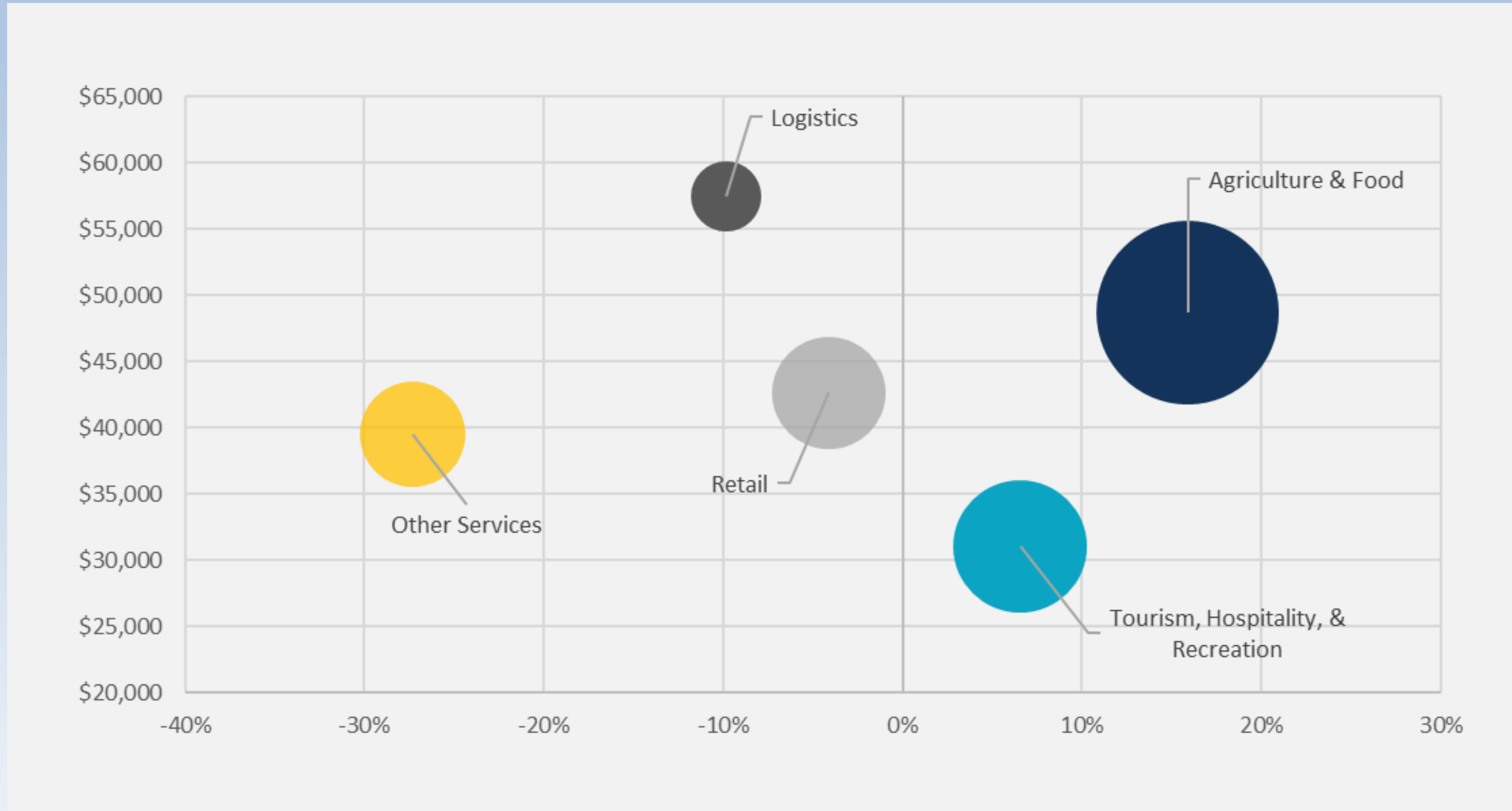
# Key Finding 4: Mid-Earning Industry Clusters



All of the county's mid-earning industry clusters **grew** between 2018 and 2022.

JobsEQ Q3 2022, American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

# Key Finding 5: **Lowest-Earning Industry Clusters**

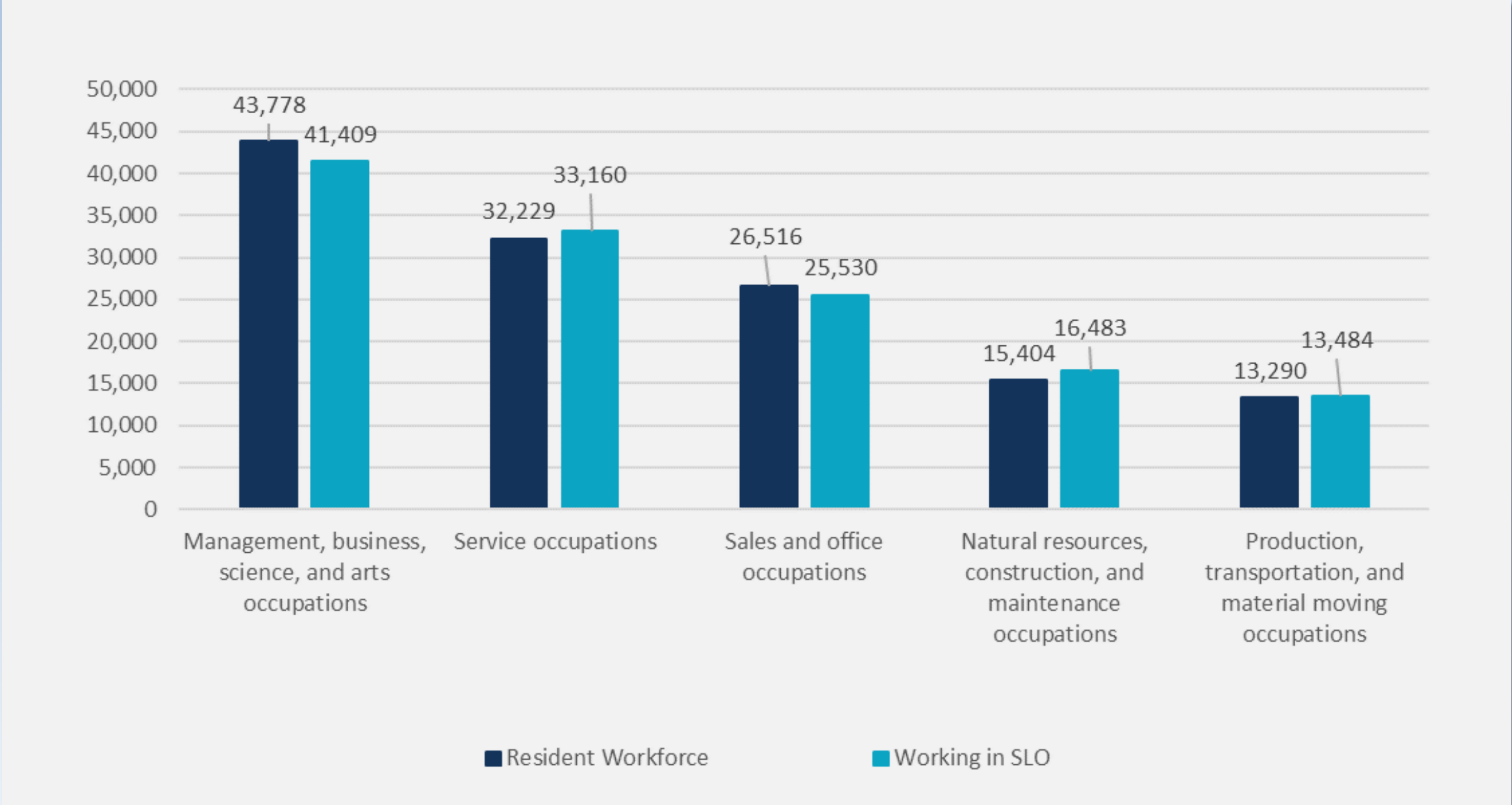


The county's lowest-earning industry clusters experienced **mixed growth** from 2018 to 2022.

Agriculture and Tourism **grew** while Logistics, Retail, and Other Services **declined**.

JobsEQ Q3 2022, American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

# Key Finding 6: Working Residents & County Jobs

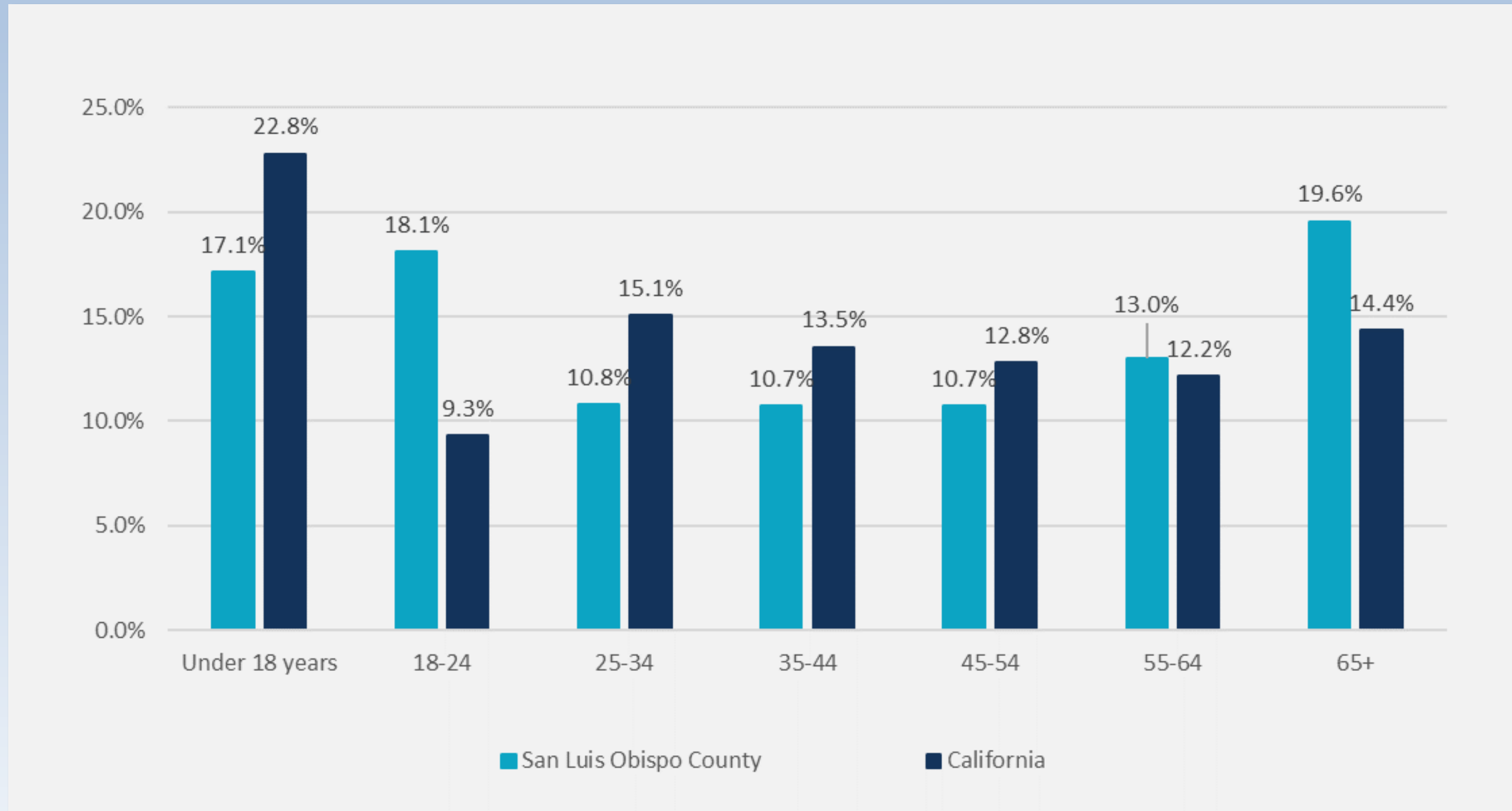


San Luis Obispo County has had **difficulty retaining high-level local talent.**

JobsEQ Q3 2022, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2022).



# Key Finding 7: Demographics

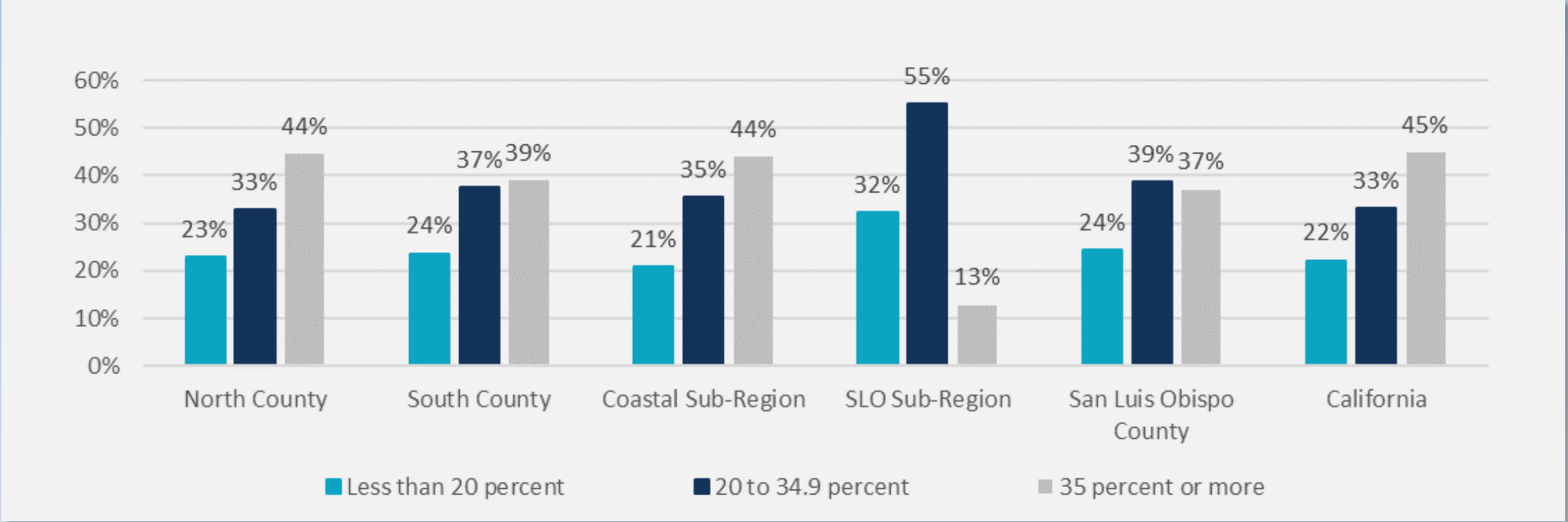


San Luis Obispo County has a **“U-shaped” age distribution.**

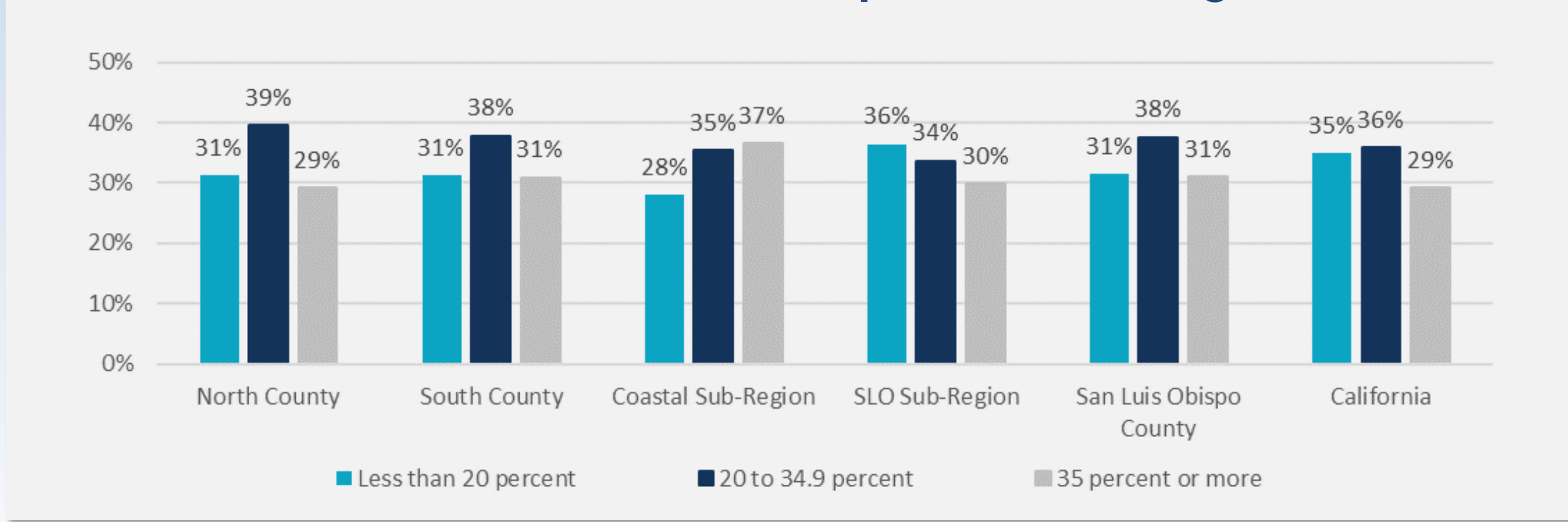
United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2021).

# Key Finding 8a: Housing Costs

Homeowners' Share of Income Spent on Housing Costs



Renters' Share of Income Spent on Housing Costs

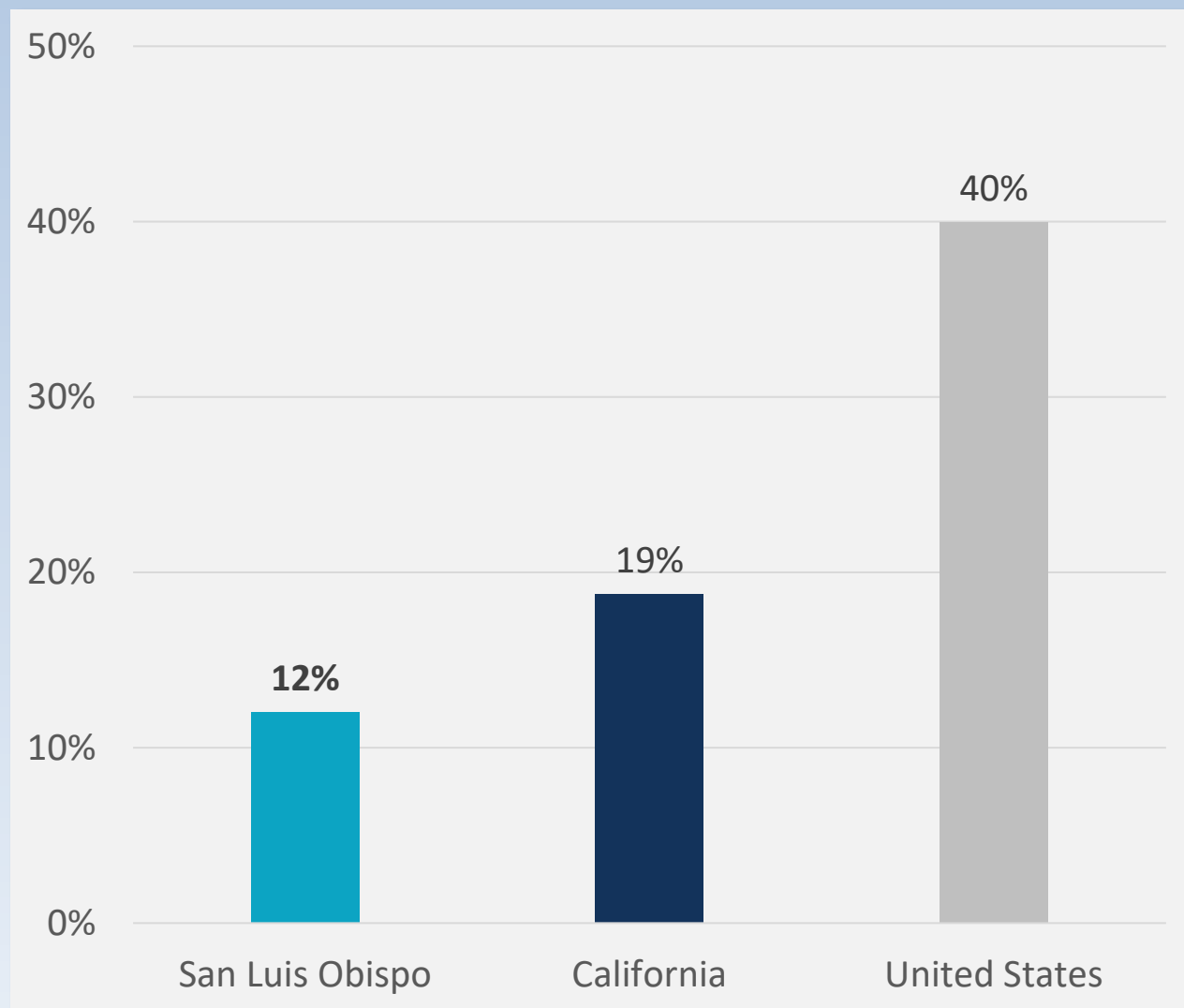


Housing burdens are significant in San Luis Obispo County.

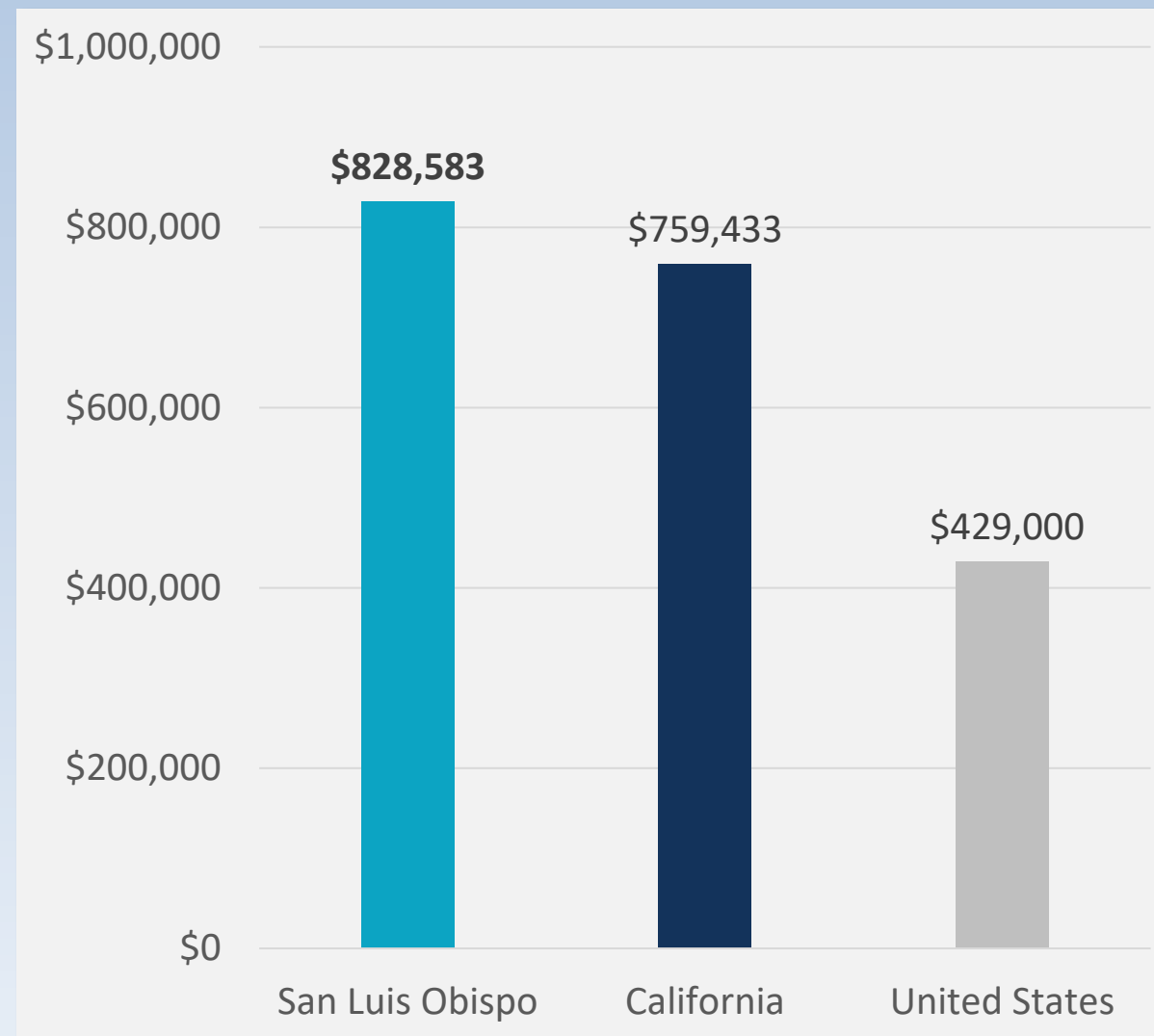
United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2021).

# Key Finding 8b: Housing Costs

Percent of Households who can Afford a Median-Priced Home (2023)



Median Home Price, Single-Family Detached Homes (2023)

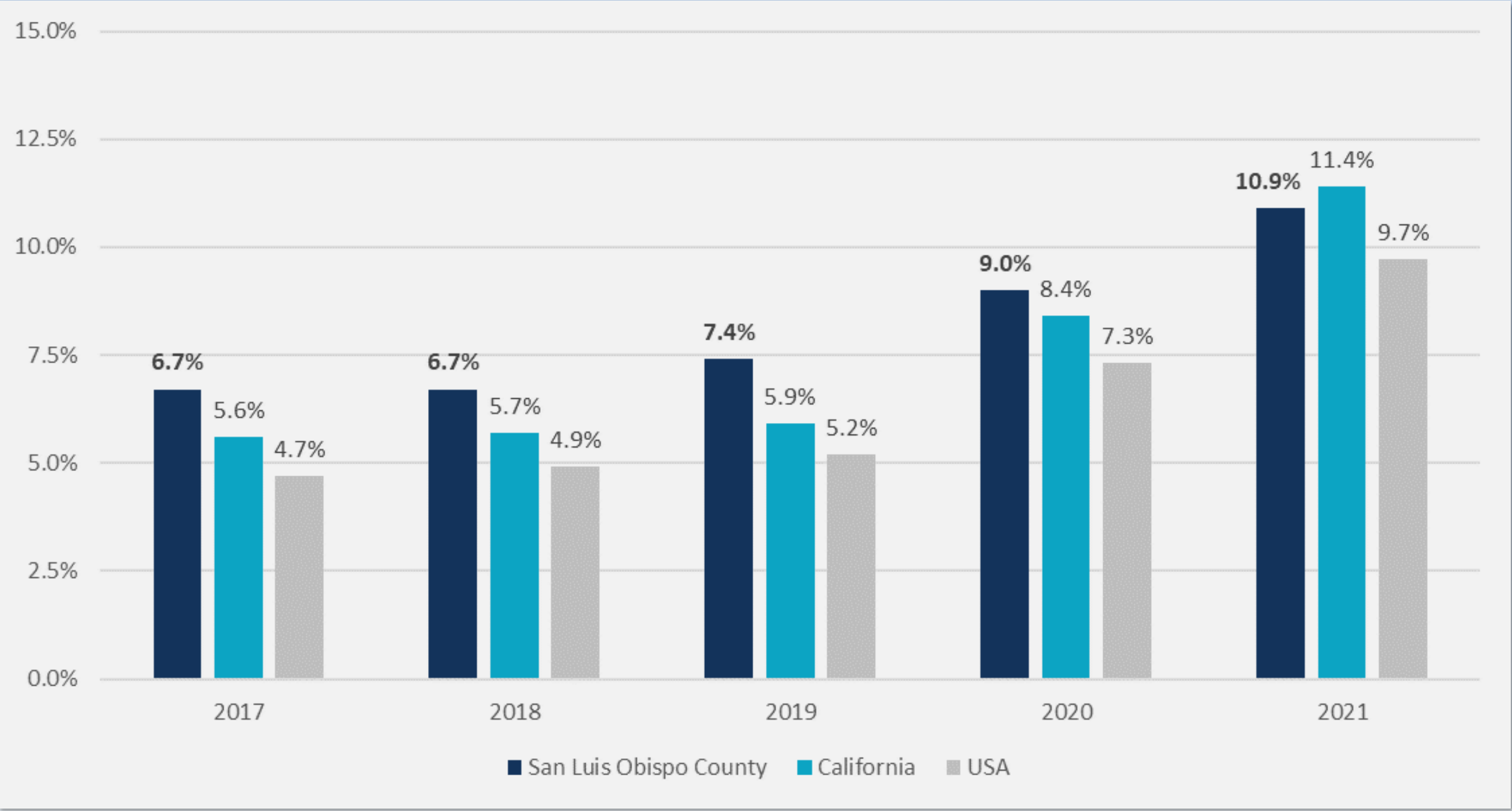


Housing costs in San Luis Obispo County are higher than state and national averages.

California Association of Realtors. Housing Affordability Index and Historical Housing Dataset (2023).

# Key Finding 9: Remote Work

## Percent of Residents Working From Home (2021)



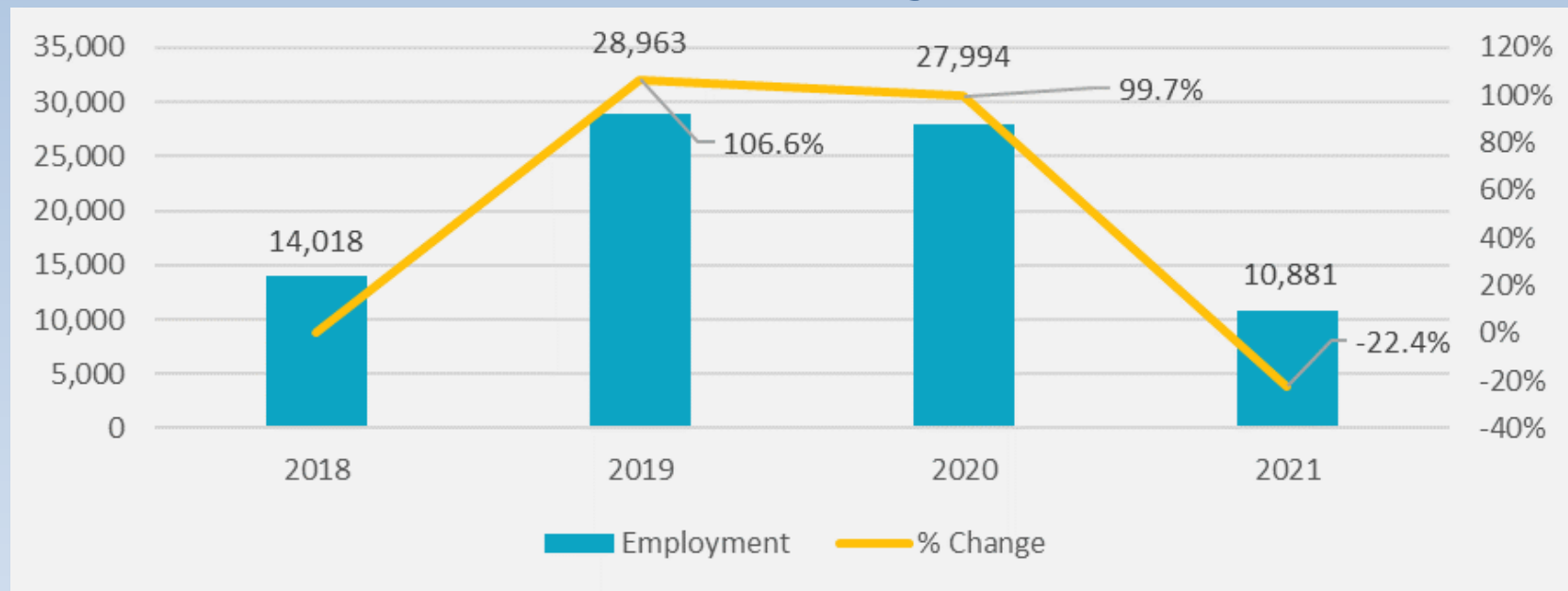
**Remote work is growing** in San Luis Obispo County.

United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2021).

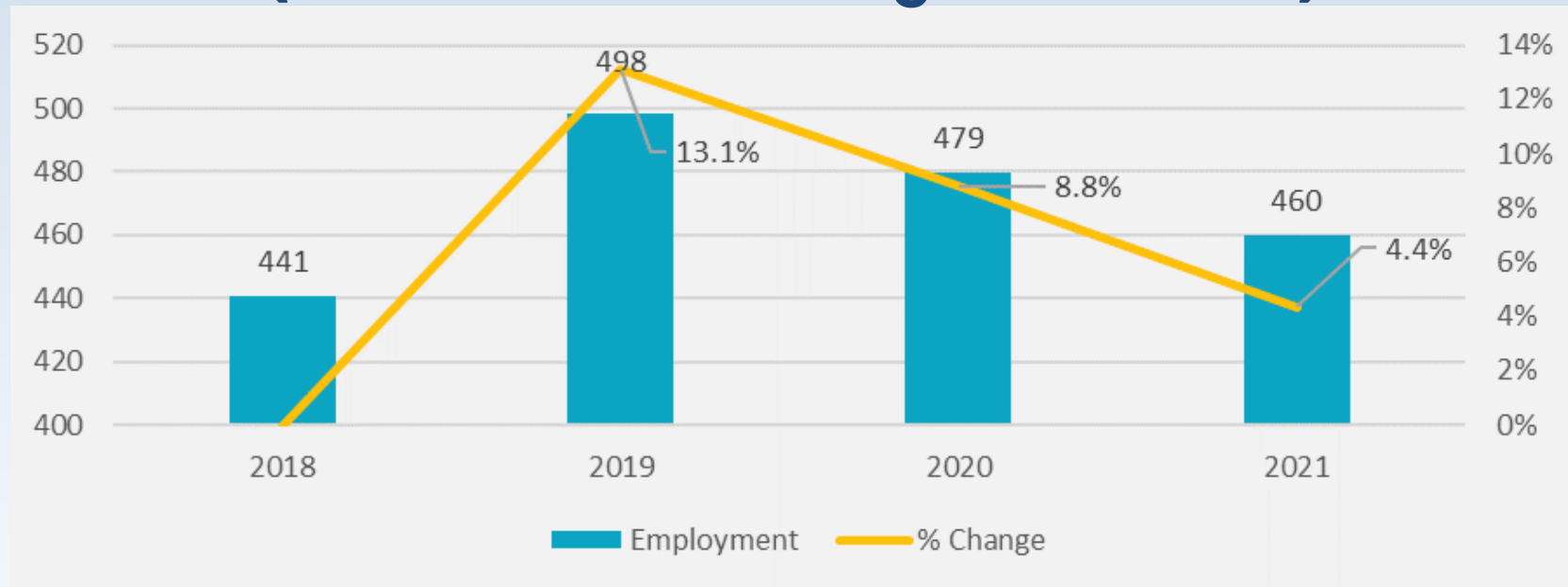


# Key Finding 10a: Infrastructure Workforce

## SLO County Energy Workforce Employment (Cumulative % Change, 2018–2021)



## SLO County Water Workforce Employment (Cumulative % Change, 2018–2021)



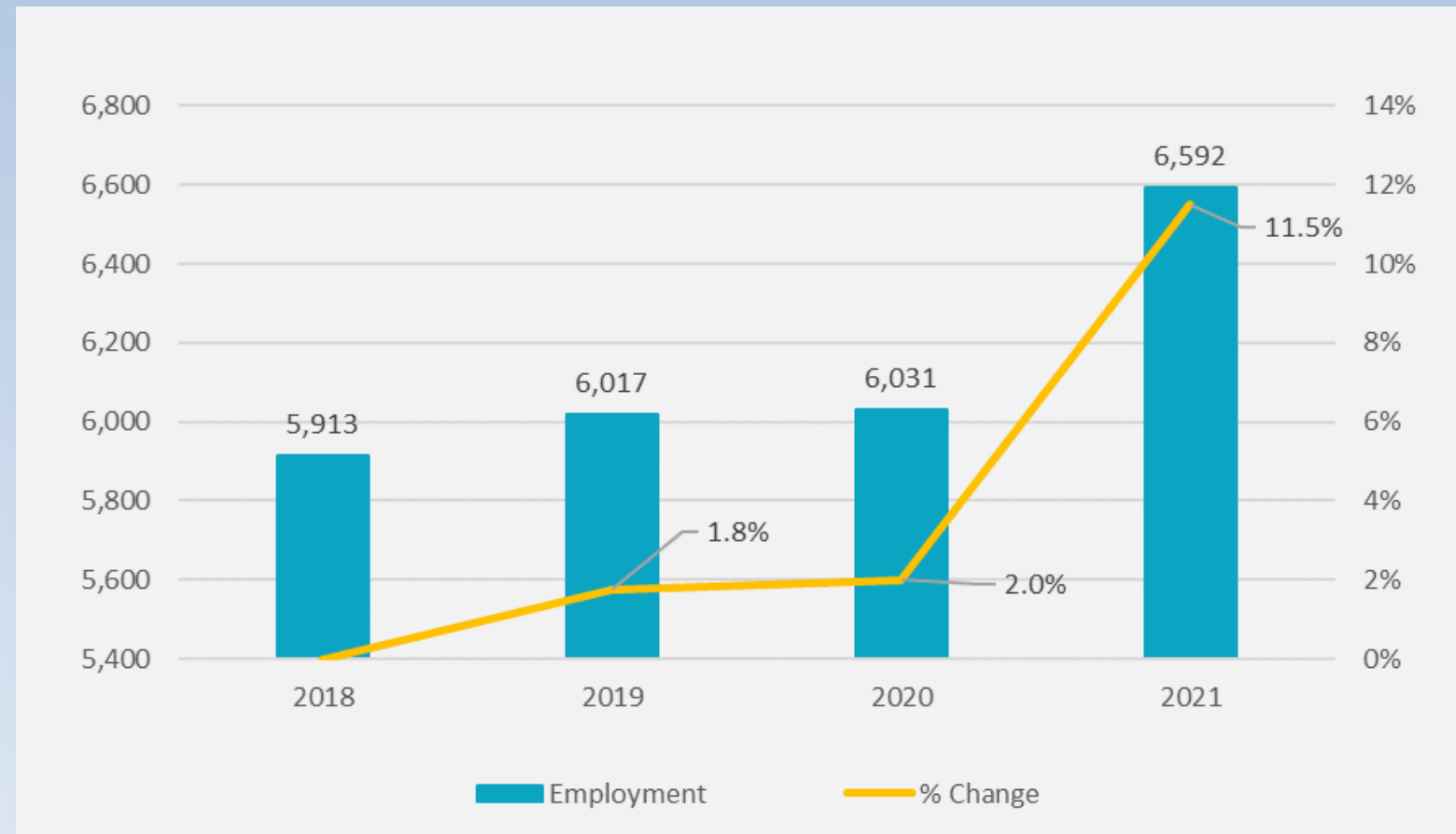
Crucial sectors of the county's infrastructure workforce have **shed jobs** in recent years.

Absent current investments in local talent, **future projects may be delayed** if workers from outside the region are not available to shore up the county's infrastructure workforce.

United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2021).

# Key Finding 10b: Infrastructure Workforce

SLO County Residential Construction Workforce Employment  
(Cumulative % Change), 2018-2021



The county's residential construction workforce is aging, and a **wave of retirements** is approaching.

SLO County Residential Construction Workforce  
Employment by Age Range, 2021

Age Group	14-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Employment (%)	8%	19%	28%	20%	17%	9%

# Next Step 1: **Attract & Retain Talent**



## **Develop the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem**

to support the growth of new local businesses, particularly in higher-wage sectors.



## **Support the Needs of Remote Workers**

by investing in local transportation and telecommunications infrastructure and better understand their role in the county economy.



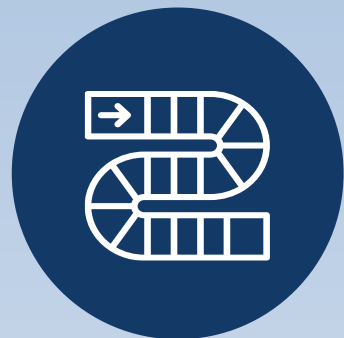
## **Ensure an Adequate Supply of Local Affordable Housing**

to help make sure that high housing costs do not constrain local labor market growth.





# Next Step 2: Address Declining Job Quality



## **Develop Local Employment Pathways**

for higher-wage jobs and industry clusters. Foster connections between local educational institutions and local businesses.



## **Partner with Educators to Fill Skills Gaps**

Work with Cuesta College, Cal Poly, and labor unions to develop training courses and programs to fill skills gaps in pathways to higher-wage jobs.



## **Support Local Hiring Initiatives**

in high-wage construction jobs to maximize employment opportunities for residents that will arise due to upcoming infrastructure investments.





# Questions: **What Should We Be Tracking?**



## **Business Birth & Growth Rate**

Are new businesses being birthed in SLO County, and are they expanding? If so, in which industries?



## **Evolution of Industry Clusters**

How are career pathways, supply chains, and use of technology changing in SLO County's larger, more dominant clusters (Tourism, Healthcare, Agriculture & Food, PBS, and Building & Design)



## **Demographics & Housing**

How is SLO County's demography and work to housing relationship evolving? How does the change in the available workforce impact long-term business and employment growth?



**2023**

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