



## Macomb Business Blog

The Macomb Business Blog is a collection of insights shared by the Macomb County Business Development Team, community partners and local businesses about Macomb County's business environment. Do you have a story to share? Please email us at [info@macombbusiness.com](mailto:info@macombbusiness.com).

### Macomb then and now

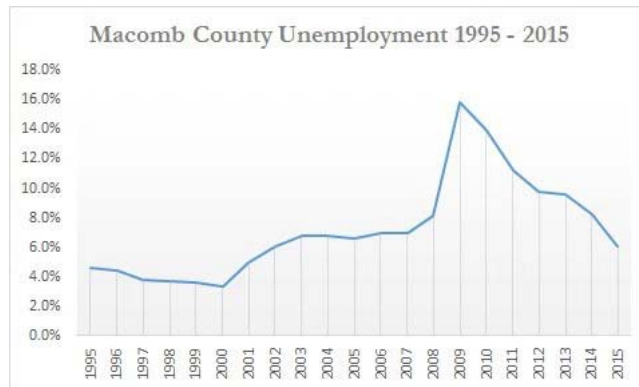
On a daily basis, we are bombarded with facts and figures about how the economy is doing: the jobs report, quarterly GDP, auto sales, stock indexes. Those with an agenda may have an overly bleak or optimistic viewpoint, while others seem far too concerned with the price of tea in China when all you want to know is how things are going in Macomb.

Macomb County's economy is strong. But just how strong depends largely on perspective. The county has undergone significant economic growth since the turn of the new decade, but still hasn't fully recovered from highs reached back around the new millennium.

In 2010, Macomb County had an unemployment rate of 13.9 percent. Nearly 60,000 individuals of the county's approximately 425,000 labor force were drawing unemployment. In 2015, that number dwindled to 6.1 percent (roughly 25,000).

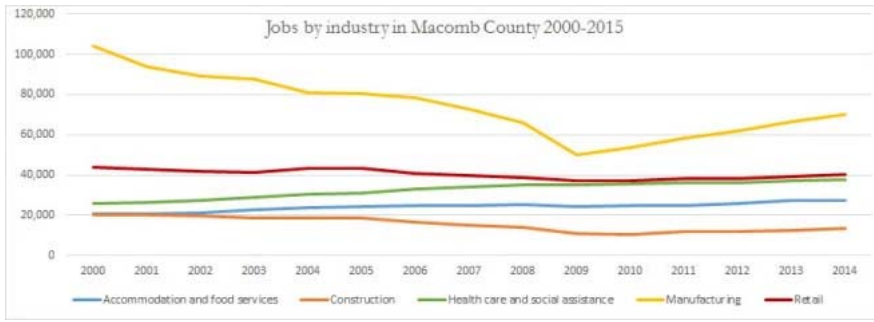
The economy in Macomb County has steadily improved since bottoming out in 2009, where Michigan was hit especially hard during the Great Recession.

To go back to when things were best, you have to look back to 1999 when Macomb County hit its maximum – 427,668 people in the county had jobs and unemployment was only 3.3 percent. Today, 390,572 are employed, up from a low of 350,776 in 2009.



#### Where are the jobs coming from?

Manufacturing in Macomb County declined for nine straight years from 2000-2009, but has since rebounded six straight years. Health care and accommodation and foodservices industries have seen growth, while retail and construction have both declined.



Looking at these industries over the past 15 years highlights two key points. The first is that manufacturing was and continues to be Macomb County’s driving economic force. The second is that it has also been the industry most sensitive to change. From 2000 – 2009, manufacturing in Macomb lost 54,095 jobs (51.82 percent – more than half!), then from 2009 – 2015 gained 19,755 of them back. The change in the number of manufacturing jobs outnumbers the entire number of jobs in many of Macomb’s major industries.

While manufacturing is the single biggest industry within the county, it is worthwhile to point out a few other trends. Construction has also been impacted by the recession and has seen a downturn (and subsequent rebound). Health care and social assistance industries meanwhile have showed continuous healthy growth across the entire time period.

**Earning a living wage**

Jobs are only part of the story. What those jobs are paying is equally as important.

Since the turn of the millennium, private sector wages within the county have steadily risen, even during the recession.

