



Understanding the Laid-Off UI Workforce in Milwaukee County

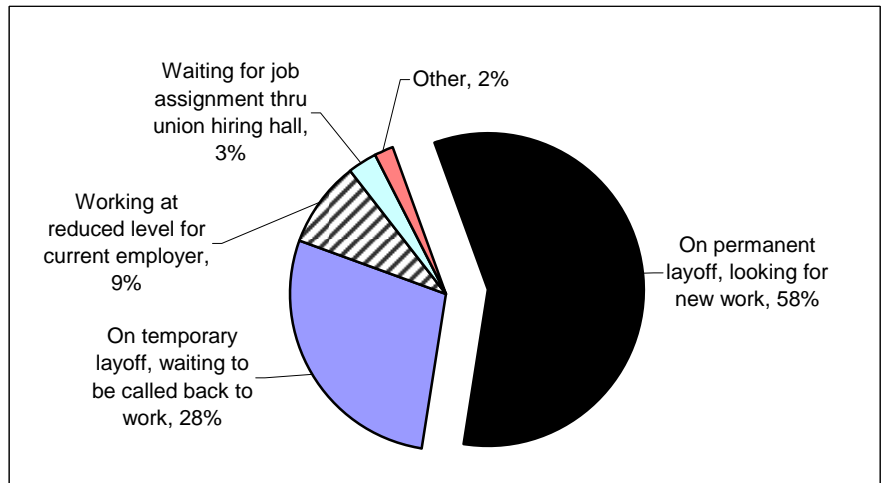
In 2010 over 50,000 Milwaukee County residents were laid off and receiving weekly unemployment insurance (UI) payments instead of pay checks. To aid the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute analyzed the populations of workers receiving weekly UI payments in Spring 2009 and in Fall 2009 and examined their prior 5 quarters of employment history using employer-reported wages from the state Department of Workforce Development.

12 variables were identified to categorize needs of the current UI population and to evaluate the effectiveness of program supported by the Workforce Investment Board:

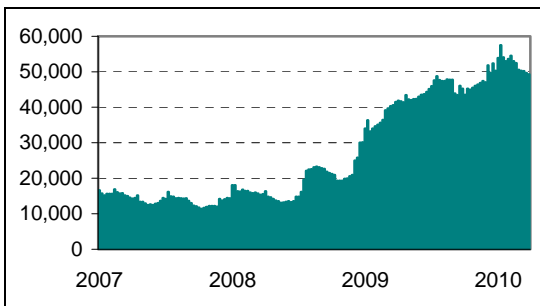
- Timing of workers' layoffs
- Job status during the layoff period
- Workers expecting to be recalled to their jobs
- Number of prior employers
- Workers running out of UI benefits
- UI benefit levels
- Prior wages by gender and type of business
- Geography of unemployment
- Age of workers
- Driver's license status
- Ex-offenders from the state corrections system
- Parents in the CARES and Shares public assistance systems.

Over half (58%) of workers on UI are on permanent layoff and looking for new jobs; 37% are on reduced hours or waiting to be called back to their current job.

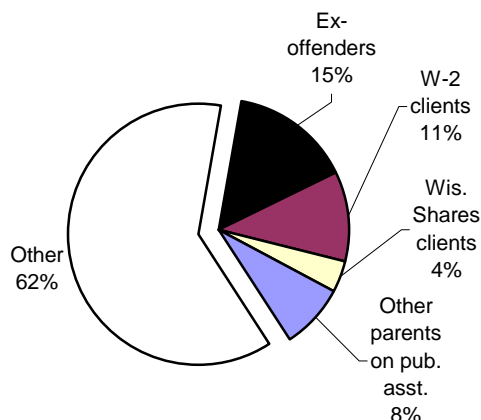
Job Status of Workers Receiving UI Benefits



Milwaukee County Residents Receiving Weekly Unemployment Insurance Payments

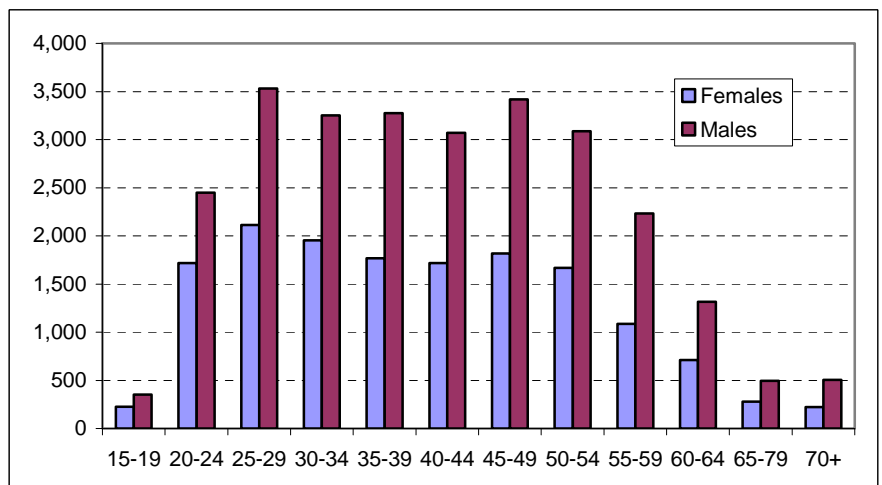


At least 18,000 laid-off workers on UI (as of Qtr 2, 2009) were difficult-to-serve



Most laid-off workers are of prime working age. Eighty percent of the UI population is ages 25 through 59. Only 8% are near retirement age (60 and above).

Age of Laid-Off Workers Receiving Unemployment Insurance

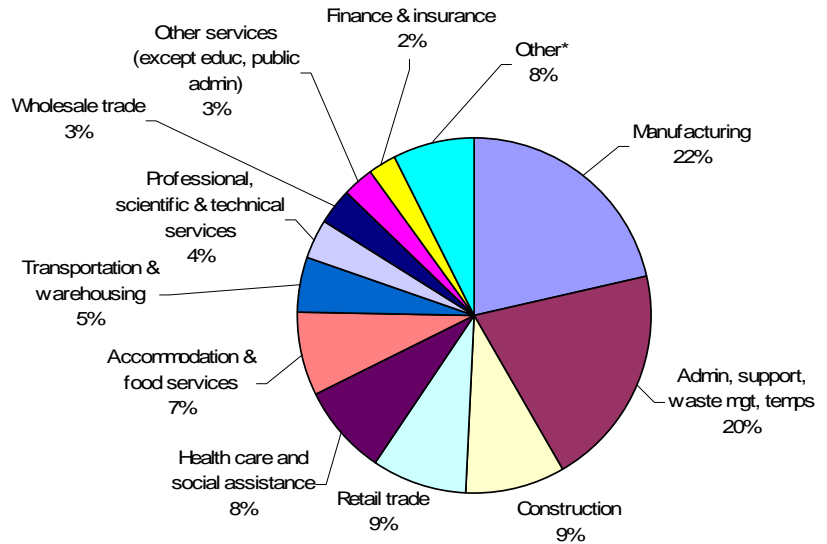


While a majority (59%) of laid-off workers had **one steady prior employer**, 41% had worked for 2 or more employers and 16% had worked for 3 or more employers in the last 5 quarters.

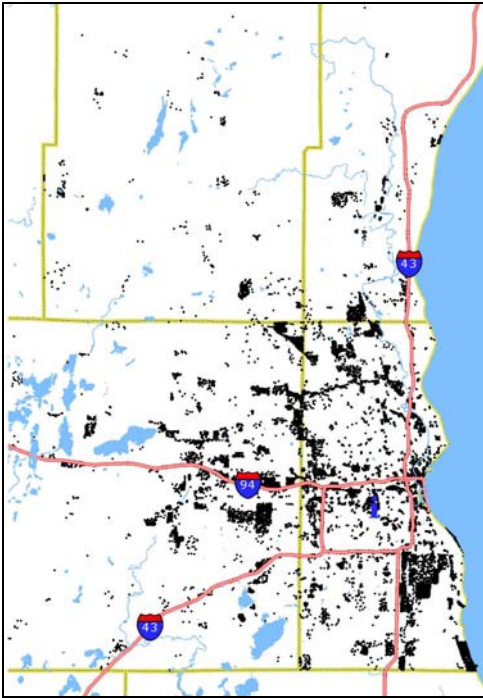
Most of those on UI have been **out of work for months**. Of those on UI in Fall of 2010 (from 8/22/09-11/7/09), 28% had been laid off in 2008 and 53% laid off earlier in 2009. Only a fifth (19%) showed very recent layoffs.

Industries of Laid-Off Milwaukee County Workers

The largest number of workers losing their jobs in Milwaukee County worked in manufacturing, but layoffs occurred in all industrial sectors. Other hard-hit industries were administrative support (including temp agencies), construction, retail trade, health and social services, and accommodations and food service. Among the industries with fewer layoffs were utilities, governments, and educational services.



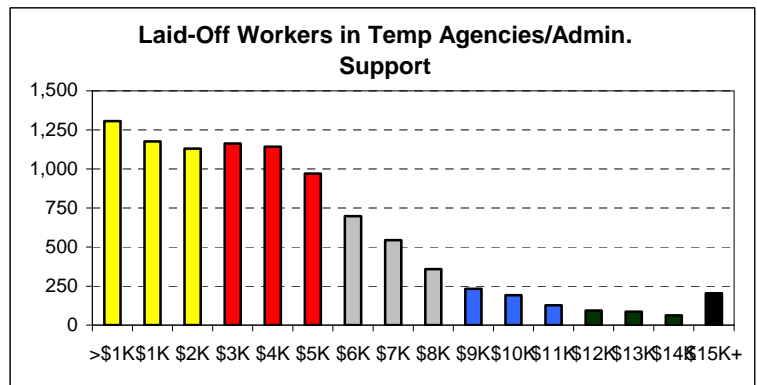
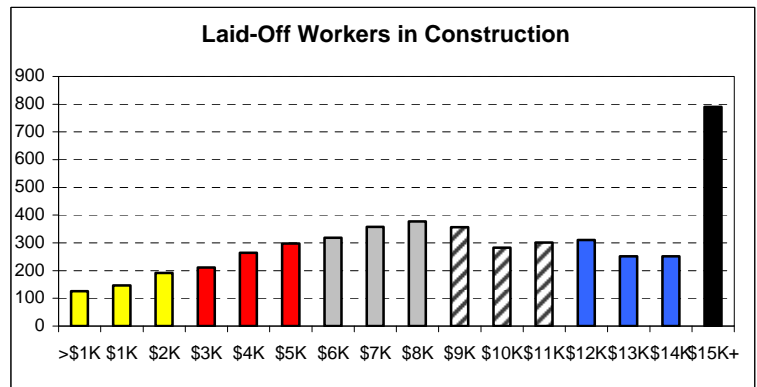
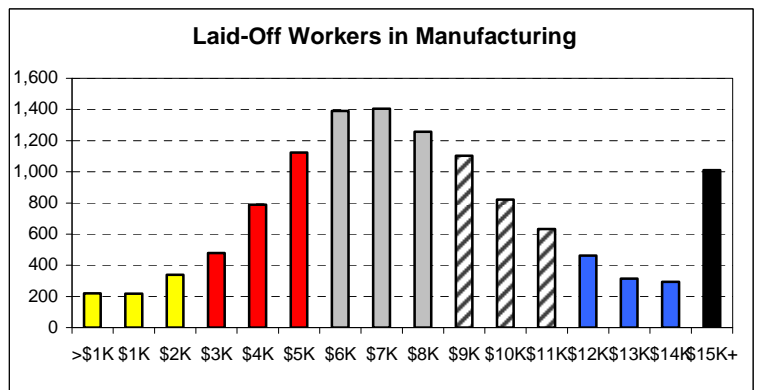
Job Sites of Laid-Off Workers in Milwaukee County with Prior Quarterly Earnings of \$10,000 or More



Among the manufacturing workers on lay-off and receiving UI, 8% had been making \$15,000 or more a quarter (\$60,000+ annualized) and another 9% had been earning at least \$12,000 a quarter. Only 6% of the total on lay-off who had earned less than \$3,000 a quarter. Among the construction workers on lay-off and receiving UI, 16% had been making \$15,000 or more a quarter (\$60,000+ annualized) and only 10% earned less than \$3,000 a quarter.

By contrast, temp agencies showed the highest concentrations of laid-off workers earning less than \$3,000 a quarter (38%), and a majority (72% of laid-off workers) earning less than \$6,000 a quarter (i.e., less than \$24,000 annualized).

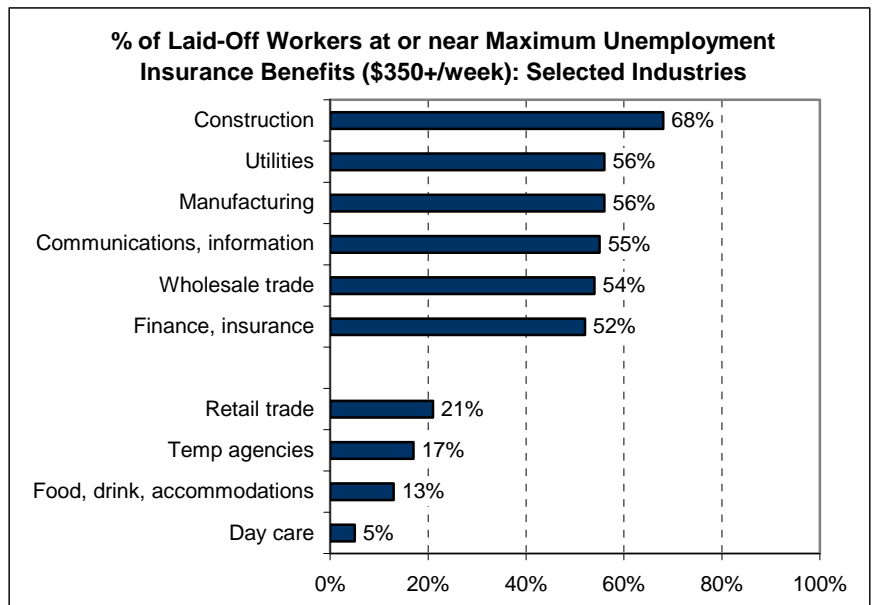
Prior Quarterly Earnings of Laid-Off Workers on UI



The **amount of weekly UI benefits** is determined by a worker's prior wages and weeks worked. As such, the UI benefit levels provide an indication of how much financial assistance workers are receiving from UI and the quality of their past employment. The unemployment insurance program offers modest temporary relief ranging from a low of \$54 a week (for workers with prior quarterly earnings of at least \$1,350) to a maximum of \$363 per week (for workers with prior quarterly earnings of \$9,075 or above).

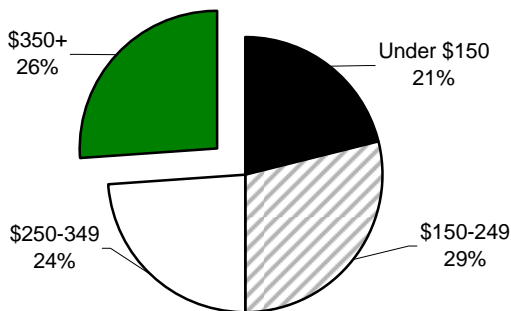
Laid-off workers may receive up to 26 months of payments in a state benefit year (i.e., from \$1,404 to \$9,438). In times of economic distress, the federal government has added additional weeks to the state payment period.

Laid-off male workers in the **inner city** were far more likely to have low weekly UI benefits. Only a fourth (26%) earned the maximum benefits (\$350-363/week) while 52% of men in the rest of the county received the maximum benefits.



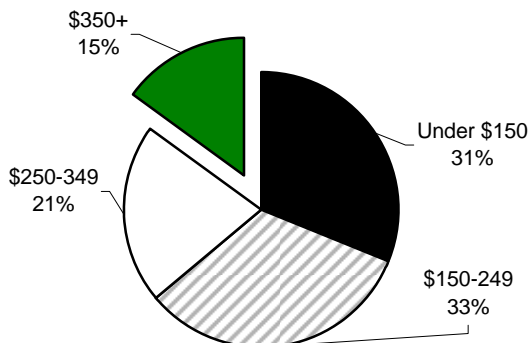
Laid-off workers from construction companies had on average the highest level of UI weekly benefits, with 68% earning at or near the UI maximum (i.e., \$350+ weekly). Sectors where laid-off workers were earning the lowest benefits included day care, temp agencies, food/drink/accommodations, and retail trade.

Weekly UI Benefits of Males from 9 Inner City ZIP Codes

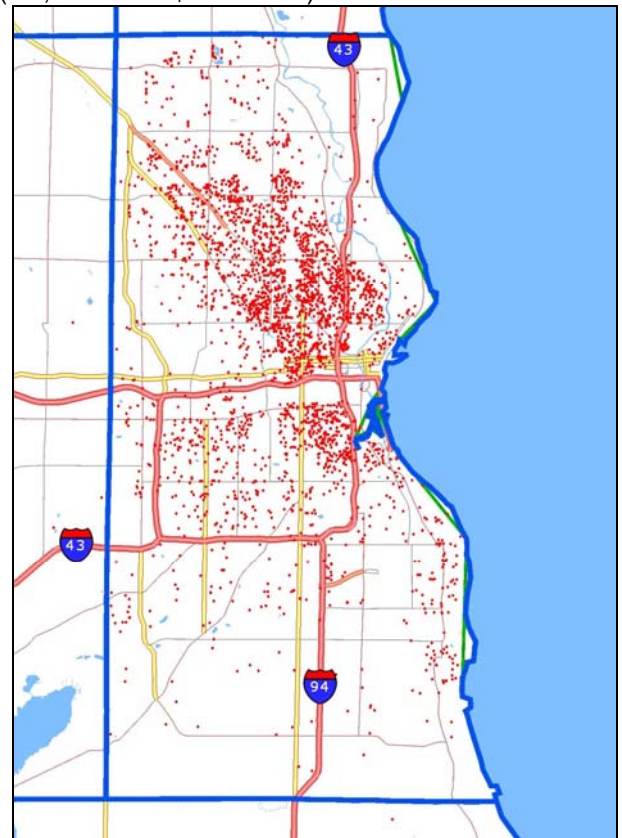


Of inner city women on lay-off and drawing unemployment insurance, only 15% earned the maximum UI benefits while almost 2/3 received UI benefits of under \$250/week. About a third (32%) of women in the rest of the county received the maximum UI benefits.

Weekly UI Benefits of Females from 9 Inner City ZIP Codes



Workers Whose UI Benefits Have Expired and Who Previously Received Low UI Checks (i.e., less than \$150/Week)



The full reports, including descriptions of data sources and methodology, are online at www.eti.uwm.edu/2009/UnemployedWorkforce.pdf and www.eti.uwm.edu/2010/UIWorkforce.pdf.