TALENT ON THE MOVE

Analyzing Job Flows in the Capital Region

October 2025

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CAPITAL DISTRICT
Regional
Planning
Commission

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Introduction

To better understand trends in talent acquisition and workforce development, the **Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC)** has analyzed data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the U.S. Census Bureau. Unless otherwise noted, all data in this report reflects 2023, the most recent year data is available from the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamic (LEHD) data from the US Census. This analysis examines whether the Capital Region is successfully **attracting and retaining** an educated, skilled workforce or if those individuals are seeking employment elsewhere.

For the purposes of this report, the Capital Region is defined as **Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, and Schoharie Counties.** While Schoharie is not always included in other definitions of the Capital Region, its inclusion in this report ensures consistency across multiple datasets, since most of the data is reported at the **Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) level.**

Understanding the workforce flows in the Capital Region is important for several reasons:

- **Economic competitiveness:** A strong, skilled workforce is essential for attracting and maintaining employers.
- **Workforce development planning:** Identifying gaps and opportunities within the workforce can better equip policymakers, educators, and training providers align programs with industry needs.
- **Population and community stability:** The movement of professionals influence long-term population and housing trends.
- **Regional investment:** Investment in infrastructure, education, and innovation are more effective when based on accurate knowledge of workforce flows.

2023 Capital Region Snapshot

76,359 Average Annual Salary
Includes both public and private sectors

Total Number of Employees
Includes both public and private sectors

440,777

2.1%
Increase from 2022

Number of Employers
Includes both public and private sectors

25,213

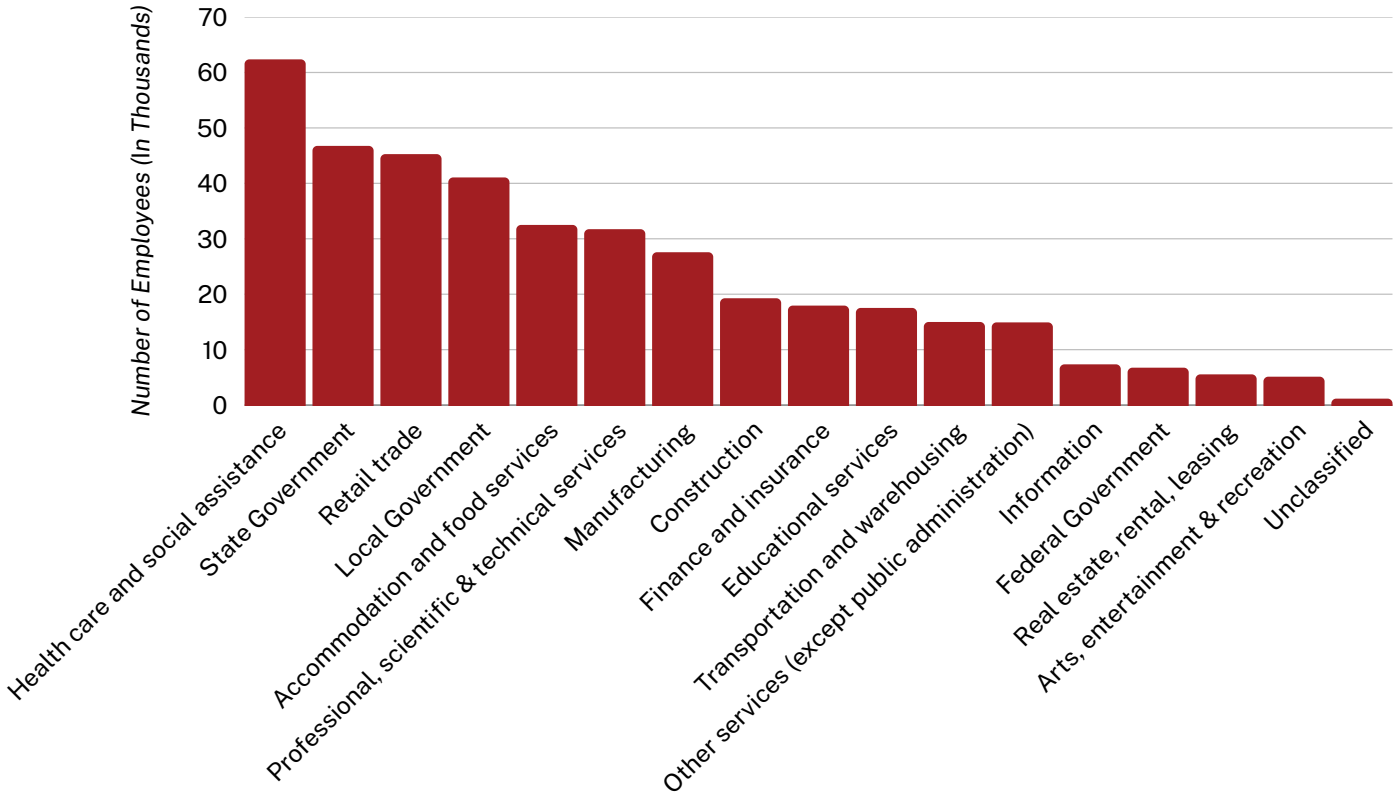
1.8%
Increase from 2022

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 2022 & 2023

Employment in the Capital Region

BY THE NUMBERS

Number of Employees by NAICs Code in the Capital Region



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 2023

In the Capital Region, **health care and social assistance** employs the largest number of workers, with over **62,000** employees. Close behind, **state and local government** collectively account for more than **87,000** jobs, highlighting the region's strong public sector presence. **Retail trade** ranks third, supporting over **45,000** workers, followed by **professional, scientific, and technical services**, which employs roughly **32,000** people.

When looking at the number of establishments, **professional, scientific, and technical services** leads with over **3,000** locations, making it the most common type of business in the region. Other sectors with substantial establishment counts include **retail trade and construction**, each with more than **2,200** establishments, reflecting the region's diverse economic base.

Worker Migration from the Capital Region

Job mobility from the Capital Region is **overwhelmingly local**, with most workers remaining within New York State.

The **largest destination** by far is the **New York-Newark-Jersey City** MSA, reflecting its role as the state's primary economic hub. By comparison, inter state job mobility is limited, **only one out-of-state area**, **Boston-Cambridge-Newton**, MA-NH, appears among the top **10** destinations, attracting just **162** workers.

Overall, the top **10** destinations below account for **78%** of all job-to-job flows from the Capital Region, highlighting that worker movement is both highly localized and concentrated in a small set of metropolitan areas.

Top 10 Job-to-Job Outflows from Capital Region to Other MSAs, 2023

	Rank	Number of Movers	% of Total
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ	1	3,668	35%
Not in metropolitan area, NY	2	1,250	12%
Glens Falls, NY	3	627	6%
Syracuse, NY	4	580	5%
Rochester, NY	5	519	5%
Kiryas Joel-Poughkeepsie-Newburgh, NY	6	489	5%
Buffalo-Cheektowaga, NY	7	431	4%
Utica-Rome, NY	8	331	3%
Binghamton, NY	9	163	2%
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	10	162	2%
Total		10,549	78%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Worker Migration to the Capital Region

Beyond Boston, **out-of-state job mobility** from the Capital Region **is limited**, with smaller flows reaching nearby or major U.S. metros. Key destinations include Vermont (**90** workers), Philadelphia (**76**), Washington, D.C. (**68**), and several Sun Belt and Northeast metros such as Miami (**66**), Atlanta (**53**), Dallas (**53**), Hartford (**53**), Pittsfield (**47**), and Orlando (**45**).

Job mobility into the Capital Region mirrors the patterns seen in job flow out of the Capital Region, with most movement occurring within **New York State** and among nearby regions. **Rochester, Syracuse**, and **Glens Falls** consistently rank between third and fifth for both inflows and outflows, underscoring their strong labor market ties to the Capital Region. The main difference is at the lower end of the top 10, where **Kingston** ranks ninth for inflow to the Capital Region while **Binghamton** holds ninth position for outflow from the Capital Region.

Top 10 Job-to-Job Inflows to Capital Region from Other MSA, 2023

	Rank	Number of Movers	% of Total
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ	1	3,693	34%
Not in metropolitan area, NY	2	1,379	13%
Rochester, NY	3	629	6%
Glens Falls, NY	4	608	6%
Syracuse, NY	5	595	6%
Kiryas Joel-Poughkeepsie-Newburgh, NY	6	531	5%
Buffalo-Cheektowaga, NY	7	509	5%
Utica-Rome, NY	8	327	3%
Kingston, NY	9	178	2%
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	10	175	2%
Total		10,728	80%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Worker Migration to the Capital Region

The largest source of **incoming workers** from out-of-state locations are **Boston–Cambridge–Newton**, MA–NH (**175**), followed by non-metropolitan **Vermont** (**99**). Smaller numbers arrive from major metros such as **Philadelphia**, **Washington**, **DC**, **Miami**, **Atlanta**, and **Los Angeles**, each contributing fewer than **70** workers.

Overall, while **most job-to-job moves occur within New York**, the Capital Region also draws a smaller but geographically **diverse pool of workers** from **across the U.S**.

Job Mobility by Age

In 2023, the Capital Region experienced a net inflow of **172** movers from other MSAs. The **strongest gains** came from the **prime working-age** group (25-44), with a net increase of **98** , while both **younger residents** (up to 24) and older residents (45+) also showed positive, though more modest, gains.

The data suggests that the **Capital Region** has become **more attractive** across all age cohorts **in 2023**, particularly among working-age adults, strengthening its position as a net receiver of population from other MSAs.

Job Flow by Age Category, 2023

	From Capital Region → MSA	From MSA → Capital Region	Net
Up to 24	2,487 (24%)	2,505 (23%)	+18
25 - 44	5,076 (48%)	5,174 (48%)	+98
45 and Over	3,011 (28%)	3,067 (29%)	+56
Total	10,574	10,746	+172

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

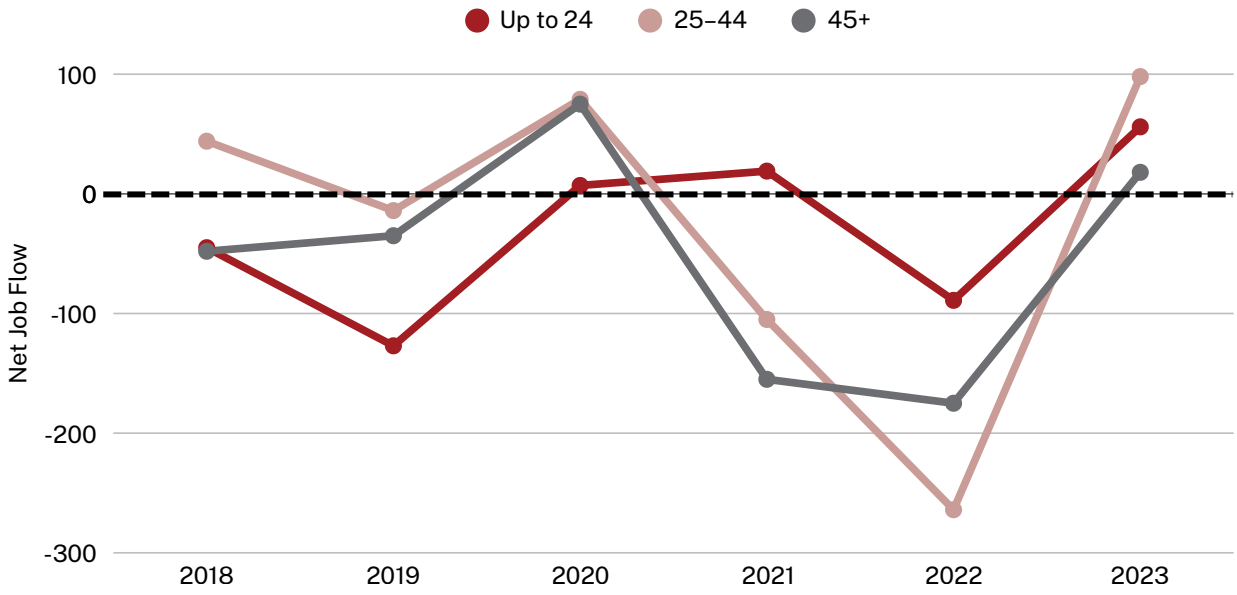
Job Mobility by Age

Net job movement by age shows **sharp fluctuations** between **2018** and **2023**.

The **25-44** group, representing the core of the labor force, was the **most volatile**, shifting from **modest losses** to strong gains in **2020**, **steep outflows** in **2021-2022**, and a **rebound** in **2023**.

Workers **45+** followed a **similar arc** but with **smaller swings**, while those under **24** saw steadier, more **modest changes**.

Net Job Flow by Age Category



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Job Mobility by Education

In 2023, net job movement between other MSAs and the Capital Region was modest across educational levels.

- Workers with some **college or an associate degree** saw the **largest** net gain (**+71**), followed by **high school** graduates without college (**+40**) and those under 24 (**+54**).

- Workers with **less than a high school diploma** had a small net gain (**+22**), while bachelor's and advanced degree holders were essentially balanced (**+1**).

Overall, these patterns suggest that in **2023** the **Capital Region retained** most of its educated workforce, with the strongest inflows among mid-level education and younger workers.

Job Flow by Education Level, 2023

	From Capital Region → MSA	From MSA → Capital Region	Net
Less than HS	1,118	1,140	+22
High School or Equ., No College	2,061	2,101	+40
Some College or Associate Degree	2,376	2,447	+71
Bach or Advanced Degree	2,100	2,101	+1
Total	7,655	7,789	+54

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Note: Excludes Data Not Available for Workers Under 24

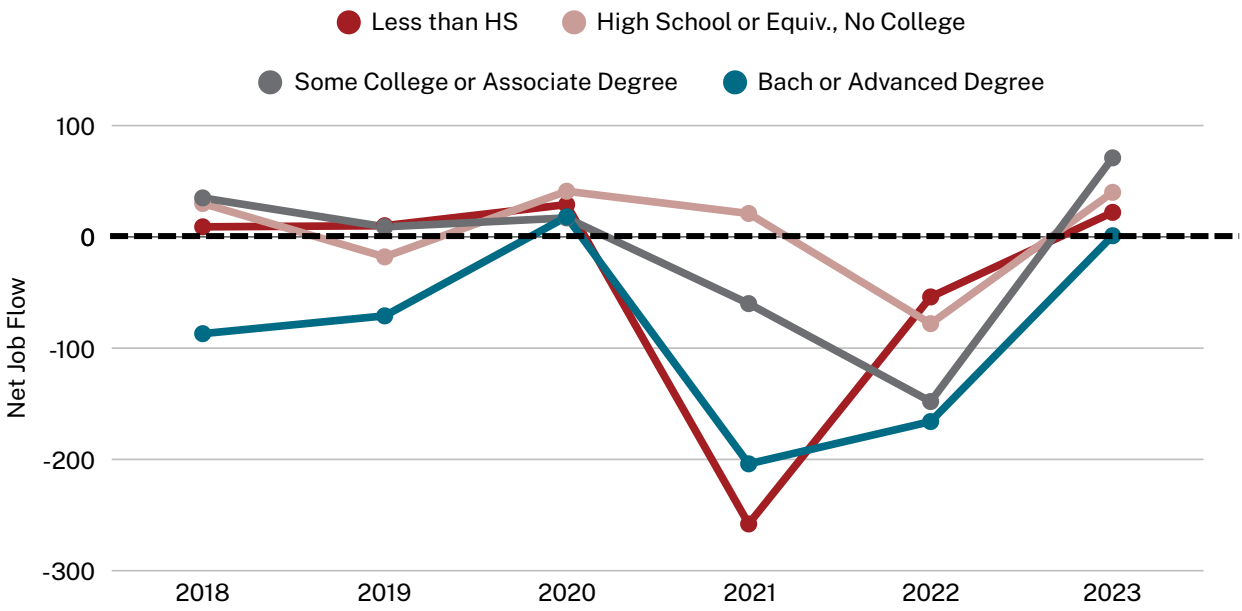
Job Mobility by Education

Net job movement by educational attainment between 2018 and 2023 shows that **losses** were **concentrated among** the most educated workers.

This pattern aligns with **national trends**, where college-educated individuals are generally more mobile and more likely to relocate outside their birth states.

To address this challenge, New York State has sought to strengthen retention of educated workers through initiatives such as the **The Excelsior Program**, which provides tuition assistance for residents attending SUNY and CUNY institutions and requires graduated to live and work in the state for a period of time after graduation.

Net Job Flow by Education Level



Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Note: Excludes Data Not Available for Workers Under 24

Job Mobility by Education

Those with a bachelor's or advanced degree experienced consistent outflows in 2018, 2019, 2021, and 2022, with the **largest decline** in **2021** (**-204**). Workers with some college or associate degree also saw notable losses. in **2021** (**-60**) and **2022** (**-148**), though they rebounded strongly in **2023** (**+71**). By contrast, workers with l**ess than a high school diploma** or only a high school education **had smaller**, more mixed shifts, including **moderate gains** in **2020** and **2023**.

Overall, while **less educated workers** remained **relatively stable**, the region **struggled most** to retain **highly educated** talent, the group most critical for a skilled labor force.

With net gains across all education levels in 2023, it will be important to continue monitoring trends in retention among the educated workforce.

Job Mobility by Industry

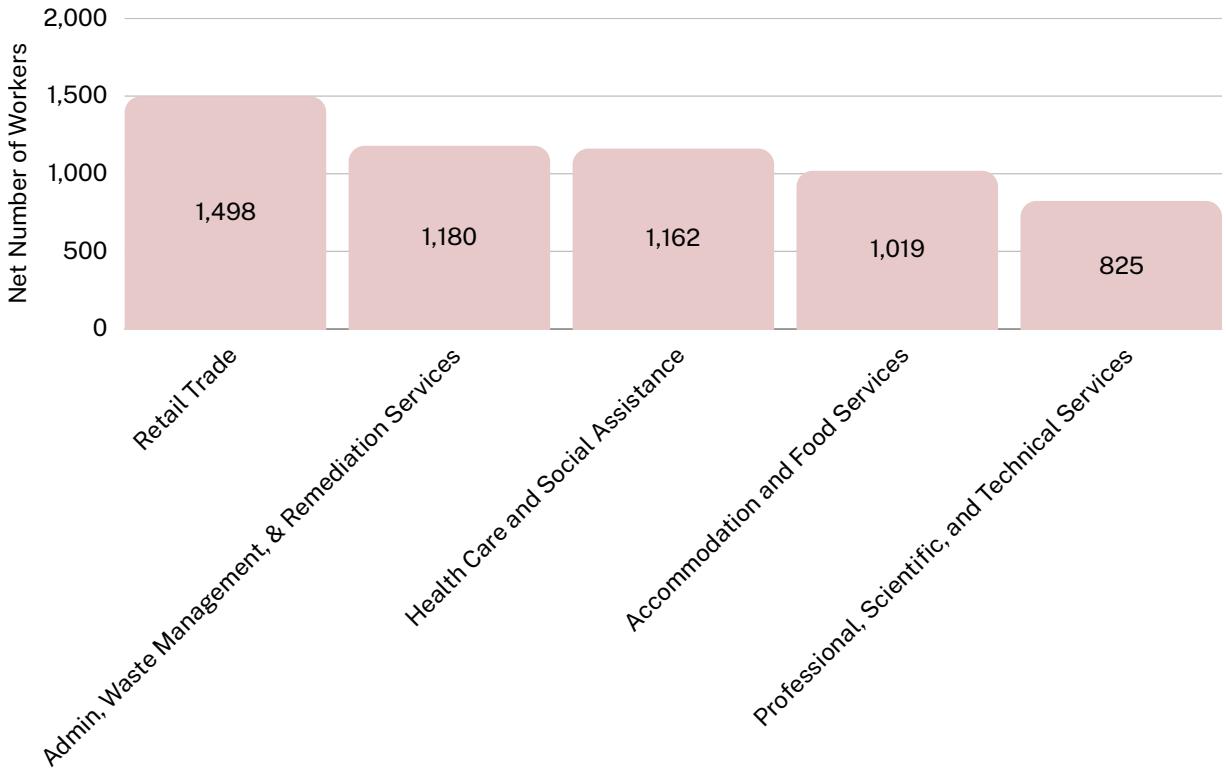
In **2023**, **job inflows** to the **Capital Region** from other MSAs were concentrated in a few key industries. The largest contributors were:

- Retail Trade (**1,498** workers), Administrative, Waste Management, and Remediation Services (**1,180**), and Health Care and Social Assistance (**1,162**), along with significant inflows in Accommodation and Food Services (**1,019**) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (**825**).

Many of the **largest inflows**, such as retail, administrative and waste management services, and accommodation, **require on the job experience rather than formal education** and offer greater flexibility, as skills are easily transferable between roles.

In contrast, **health care and professional/technical** services demand **more specialized education** and training.

Top 5 Job Inflow from MSA to the Capital Region by Industry, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Overall, the region provides a **diverse range of opportunities**, attracting both experience-based workers and highly skilled professionals.

Job Mobility by Industry

Job flows by industry from the **Capital Region to other MSAs** were relatively balanced, with only minor differences in rankings.

Health Care and Social Assistance **ranked second** instead of third, while Administrative and Remediation Services **ranked third** instead of second.

Overall, these shifts represent relatively **small and balanced exchanges of workers** when compared to the total number of job-to-job moves and the overall size of the regional workforce.

Top 5 Job Outflow from Capital Region to Other MSAs to by Industry, 2023

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Job Mobility by Industry

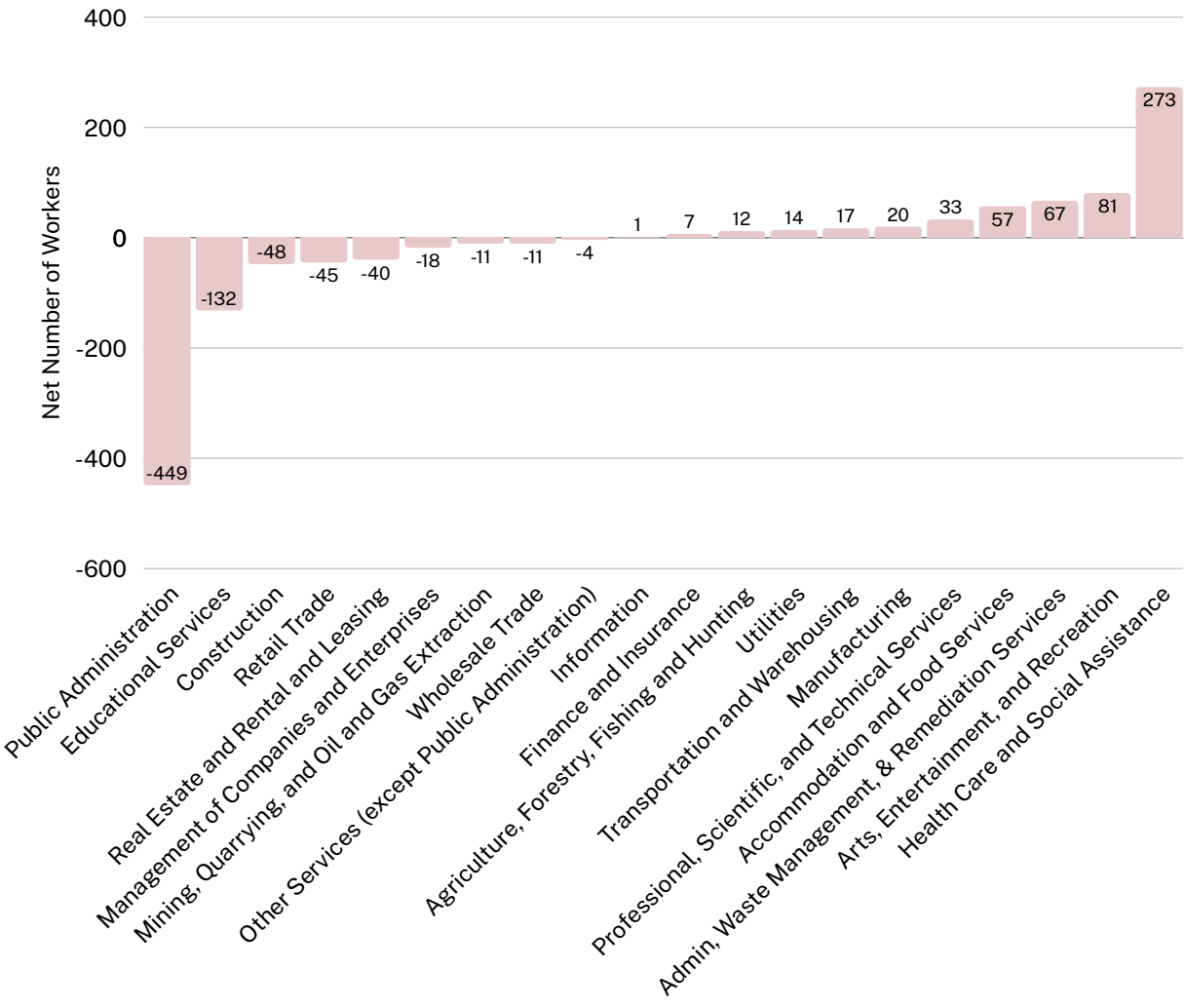
In **2023**, net job flows by industry show the Capital Region **gained the most workers in Health Care and Social Assistance** (**+273**), reflecting its role as a hub for hospitals and medical services.

Other notable gains came in **Arts, Entertainment,** and **Recreation** (**+81**), **Administrative and Support Services** (**+67**), and **Accommodation and Food Services** (**+57**).

The **largest net loss** was in **Public Administration** (**-449**), with smaller declines in **Educational Services** (**-132**) and **Construction** (**-48**).

Overall, while many industries remained close to balanced, the region saw meaningful **inflows** in **health care** and **service-related fields**, offset by **outflows** in **public administration and education.**

Net Job Flow by Industry, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Conclusion

The Capital Region's workforce **dynamics** in 2023 **reflect** both **stability and opportunity**.

Job flows remain **highly localized**, with most movement occurring within New York State and concentrated among a small set of nearby metropolitan areas.

While past years highlighted concerns over brain drain, 2023 showed a modest net inflow of workers across all age groups and education levels, suggesting that the region has regained momentum in attracting and retaining talent.

Importantly, the strongest gains were concentrated among prime working-age adults and mid-level education groups, strengthening the core of the labor force.

Industry patterns further emphasize the region's dual identity:

- a **strong base** of **experience-driven jobs** in retail, food service, and administrative support, coupled with **continued competitiveness in higher-skill sectors** such as health care and professional services.

Health Care and Social Assistance emerged as a **key driver of net workforce gains**, underscoring the Capital Region's role as a medical hub, while **losses in public administration and education** highlight areas for closer attention.

Overall, the Capital Region's workforce flows indicate **resilience and balance**, with evidence of both retaining essential talent and attracting new workers.

Continued monitoring will be critical to ensure that the region not only sustains these gains but also strengthens its ability to compete for the highly educated professionals most essential for long-term economic growth and innovation.

Capital District Regional Planning Commission

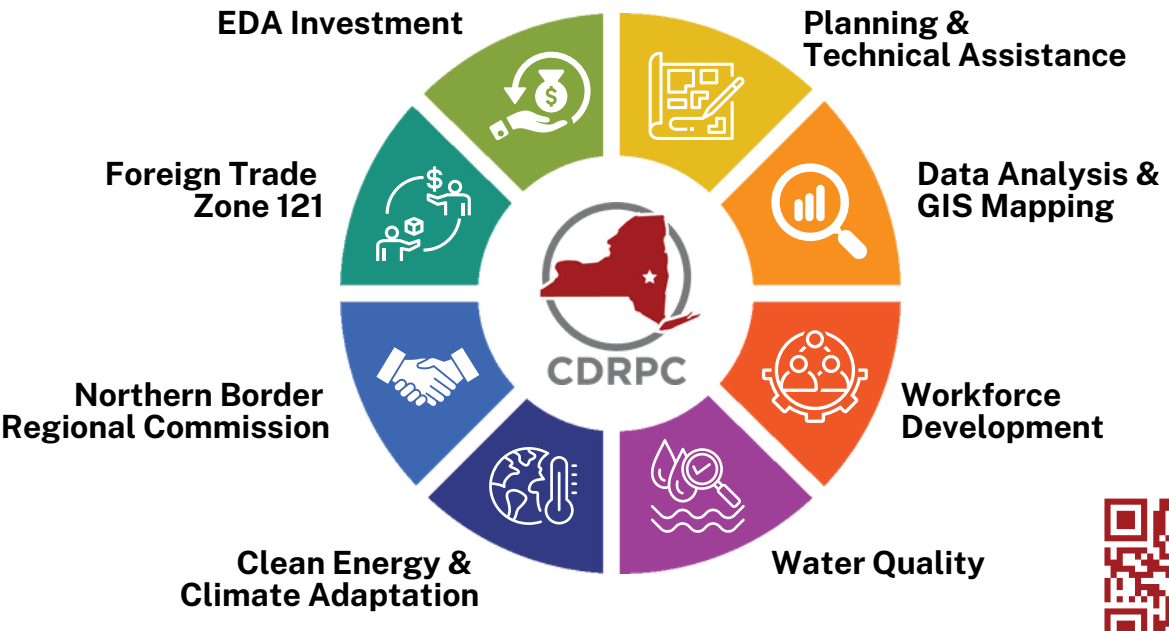
The Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) is a regional planning and resource center serving the upstate New York counties of **Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady**. **CDRPC** objectively analyzes data, trends, opportunities, and challenges relevant to the Region's economic development and planning communities.

CDRPC serves the best interests of both the public and private sectors by promoting intergovernmental cooperation; communicating, collaborating, and facilitating regional initiatives; and sharing information and fostering dialog on solutions to regional problems. Our organization provides added capacity to local municipalities through its regional coordination programs. By partnering with CDRPC, local municipalities can leverage the expertise of a full-time professional planning staff with significant network resources to provide added benefit to the work regularly performed in the Region.

PURPOSE

CDRPC was established in 1967 as a regional planning board by a cooperative agreement among the counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady. Its original purpose was to perform and support comprehensive planning work, including surveys, planning services, technical services, and formulating plans and policies to promote sound and coordinated development of the entire Region.

CDRPC PROGRAMS



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