

STATE OF THE EDC 2026



Q+A INSTRUCTIONS

1. Go to Slido.com
2. Enter Code: **UKYEDC**

Do you have other questions/feedback?
email us at **edc@uky.edu**

An aerial photograph of a city skyline, featuring a prominent university building with a central tower and a dome. The foreground is filled with lush green trees. The text "PREVIOUS HIGHLIGHTS" is overlaid in a large, bold, blue font across the center of the image.

PREVIOUS HIGHLIGHTS

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT DASHBOARD



One **UK**®



Catalent®

LOCKHEED MARTIN 

Turner
Construction Company





GROWING OUR OWN



An aerial photograph of a city skyline at dusk. The sky is a mix of soft blues and oranges. In the foreground, a large, multi-story university building with a prominent central tower and arched windows is visible. The building's lights are on, and it stands out against the darker background. In the distance, several skyscrapers are visible, including one with a 'Central Bank' sign. The overall scene is a blend of urban architecture and natural light.

5 YEAR
EDC REVIEW

FEEDBACK

2-Pronged Feedback approach

Select Small Group Interviews

EDC-wide Survey



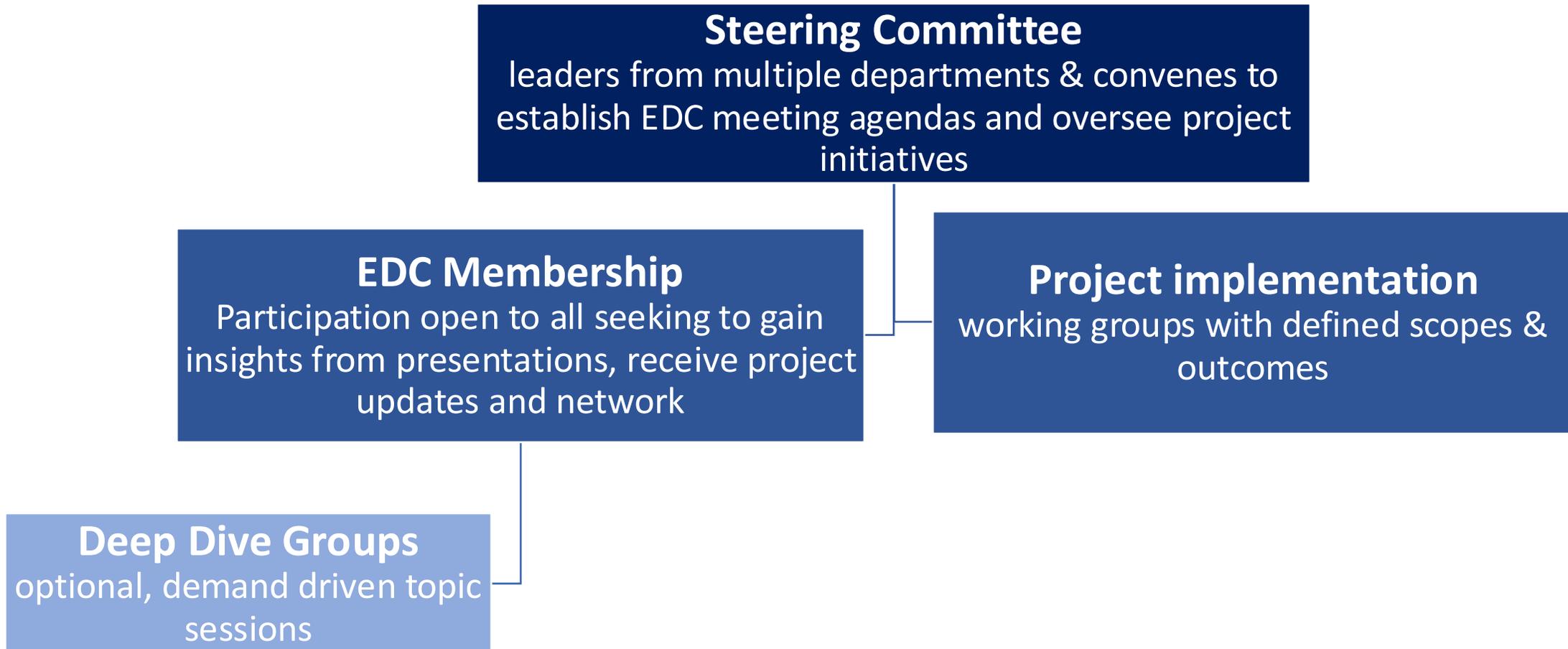
Results

Value as a connector,
convener & information
sharer

Desire for more tools &
voices

Call for mission clarity

EDC STRUCTURE



IMPLEMENTATION & IMPACT

Builds on the EDC's strengths in convening and sharing information

- EDC Resource Hub

Allows us to implement strategic projects requiring cross-departmental resources

- Project implementation groups

Leadership structure allows EDC to respond to evolving priorities & AKTN objectives

- Steering Committee leadership, sunsetting the Bold Ideas

The new structure is designed to enhance engagement & incorporate new voices

- EDC membership-wide meetings and Deep Dive Groups

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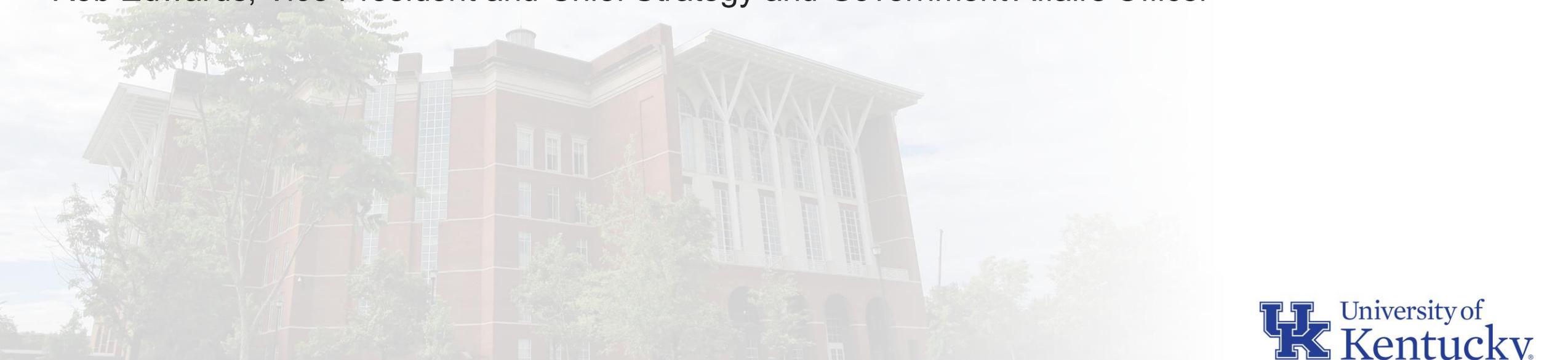
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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jay Blanton, Vice President for University Relations

Rob Edwards, Vice President and Chief Strategy and Government Affairs Officer



A nighttime photograph of a city skyline. In the foreground, a large, modern building with a flat roof and several HVAC units is visible. Behind it, a row of older, multi-story brick buildings is illuminated with warm yellow lights. In the background, several skyscrapers are lit up, including one with a prominent blue 'C' logo and another with a glowing top section. The sky is a deep twilight blue.

OUR PARTNERSHIP

Our Day with Local Government

- Met in Gatton Student Center
- 13 of 15 council members present
- Hour-long campus bus tour followed by lunch
- Discussion
 - Campus transformation
 - Continued growth in enrollment and graduation rates; student success
 - Public safety with UK and Lexington police departments
 - Further deepen our relationship with the city as we grow alongside Lexington

ADVANCING KENTUCKY



ADVANCING KENTUCKY TOGETHER NETWORK



Upcoming Engagement

Feb. 26: All-campus Microsoft AI engagement showcase at the Gatton Student Center

April: AI Literacy and Training Hub AKT Network training month for partners

April 3: UK Advancing Kentucky Together Transylvania Stakes

Campus News

UK to feature 'AI in Action' at Feb. 26 event

By Dave Melanson Wednesday



UK x Microsoft: CATS AI in Action is free and open to all faculty, staff and students as well as community members.

LEXINGTON, Ky. (Feb. 11, 2026) — Artificial intelligence (AI) programs, partnerships and possibilities will take center stage during a campus AI showcase on Thursday, Feb. 26. The event — UK x Microsoft: CATS AI in Action — is free and open to all faculty, staff and students as well as community members. It will feature officials from both Microsoft and the University of Kentucky in a day of exploration and discovery at the Gatton Student Center.

Media Resources

CONTACT

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DAVID.MELANSON@UKY.EDU

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Latest Stories

CAMPUS NEWS Thursday
University of Kentucky receives STARS silver rating for sustainability achievements

UK HAPPENINGS Thursday
Annual 'Pastures Please!!' program set for Feb. 17 in Lexington

STUDENT NEWS Thursday
'UK at the Half' Join the Big Blue Nation

UK HEALTHCARE Thursday
UK students train together to build collaborative health care workforce

CAMPUS NEWS Wednesday
UK to feature 'AI in Action' at Feb. 26 event

QUESTIONS



Kentucky's Economy

Economic Development Collaborative

February 26, 2026

Michael W. Clark, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Economics

Director, Center for Business and Economic Research

michael.clark@uky.edu

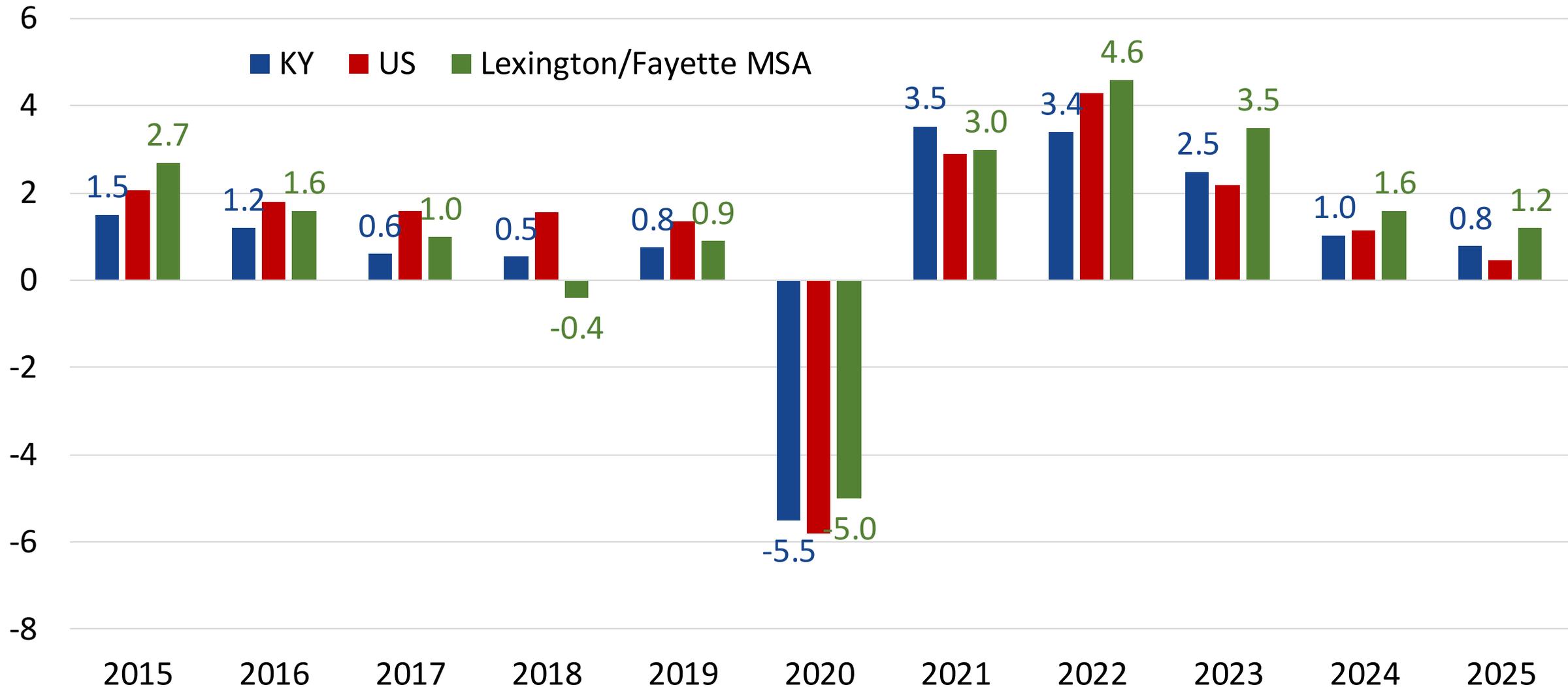
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Overview

- U.S. Economy
 - Weaker employment growth
 - Good GDP growth in 2025
 - Increased productivity
 - Inflationary pressures remain

- Kentucky Economy
 - Good GDP growth
 - Job growth has stalled in recent months
 - Labor supply is weak

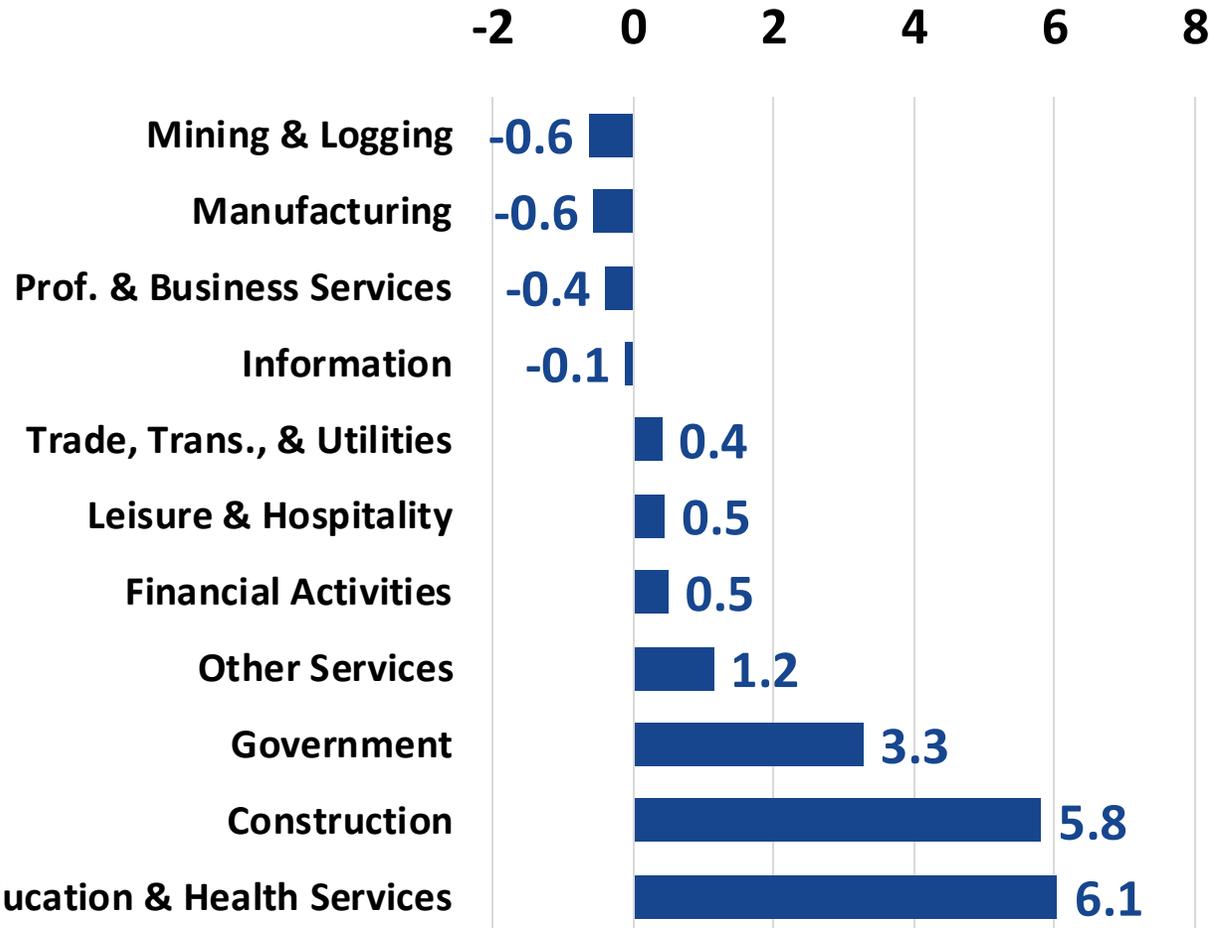
Percent Change in Annual Total Nonfarm Employment (Jobs)



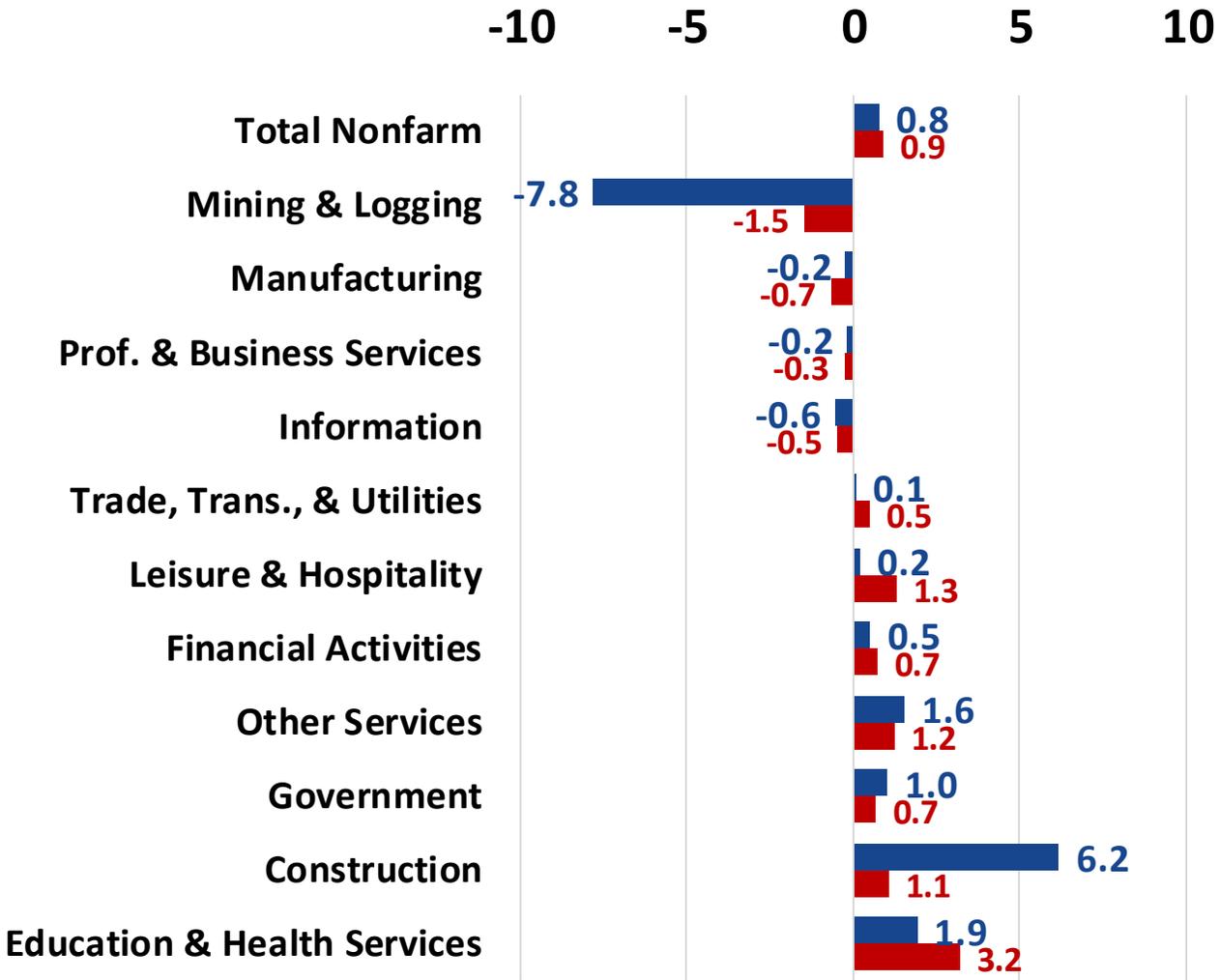
Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Current Employment Statistics.

Change in Average Annual Employment, Kentucky 2024 to 2025

Change (000s)



Percentage Change

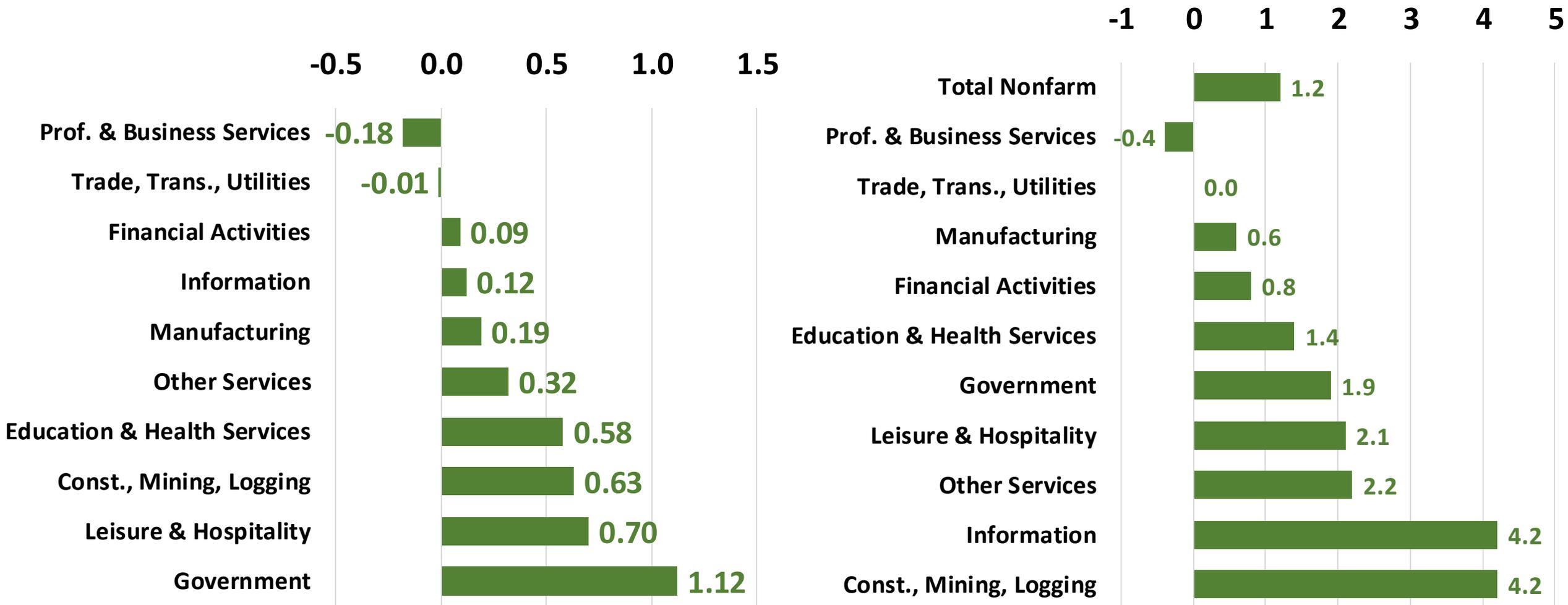


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Current Employment Statistics.

Change in Average Annual Employment, Lexington-Fayette MSA 2024 to 2025

Change (000s)

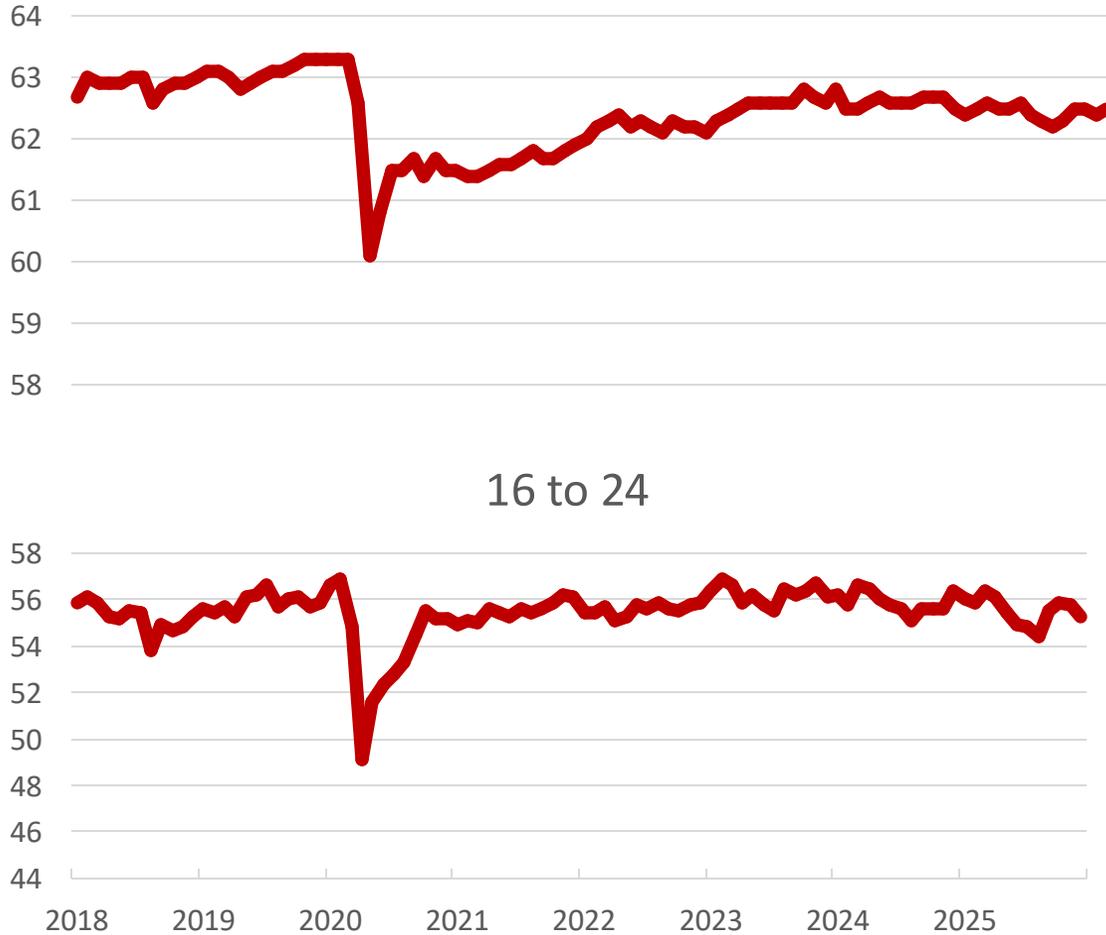
Percentage Change



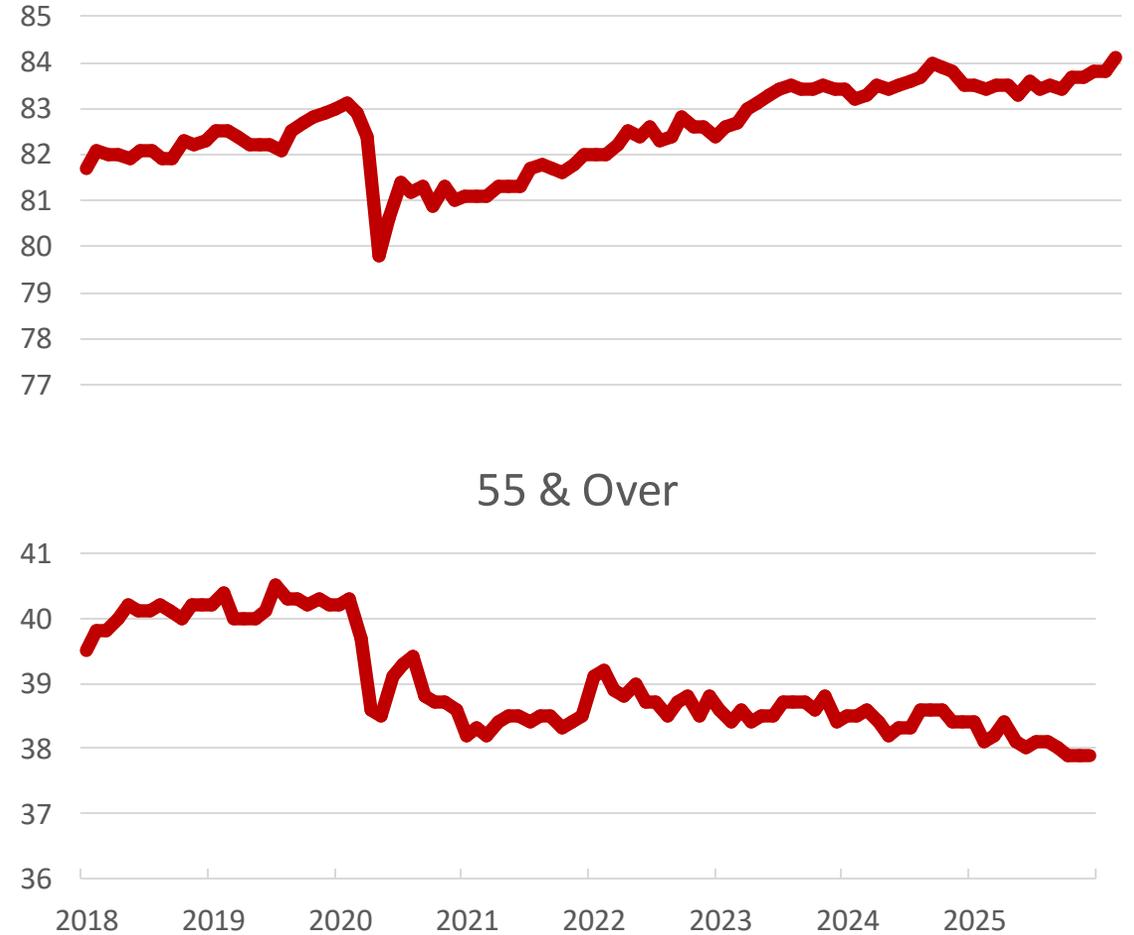
Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Current Employment Statistics.

U.S. Labor Force Participation Rates

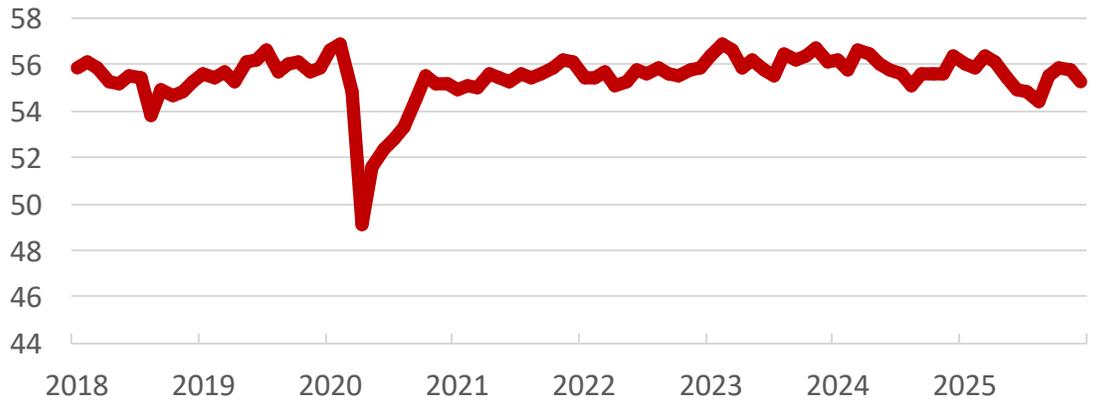
16 & Over



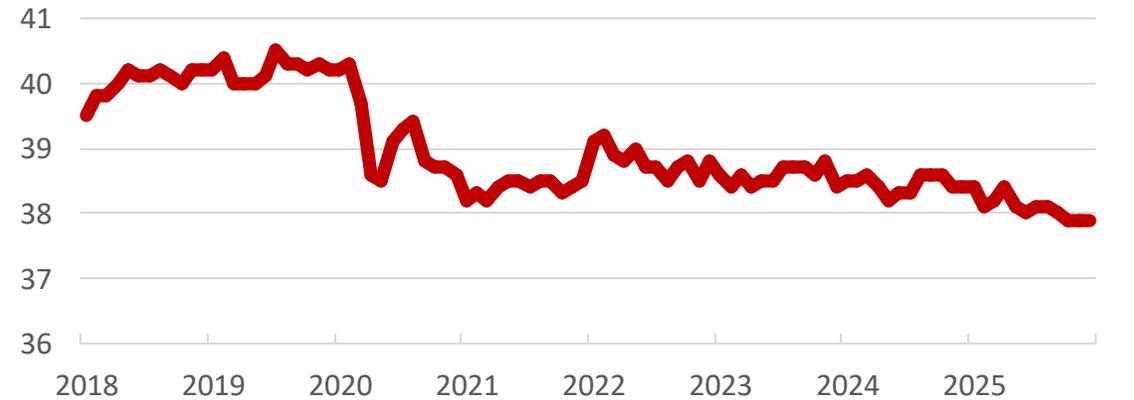
25 to 54



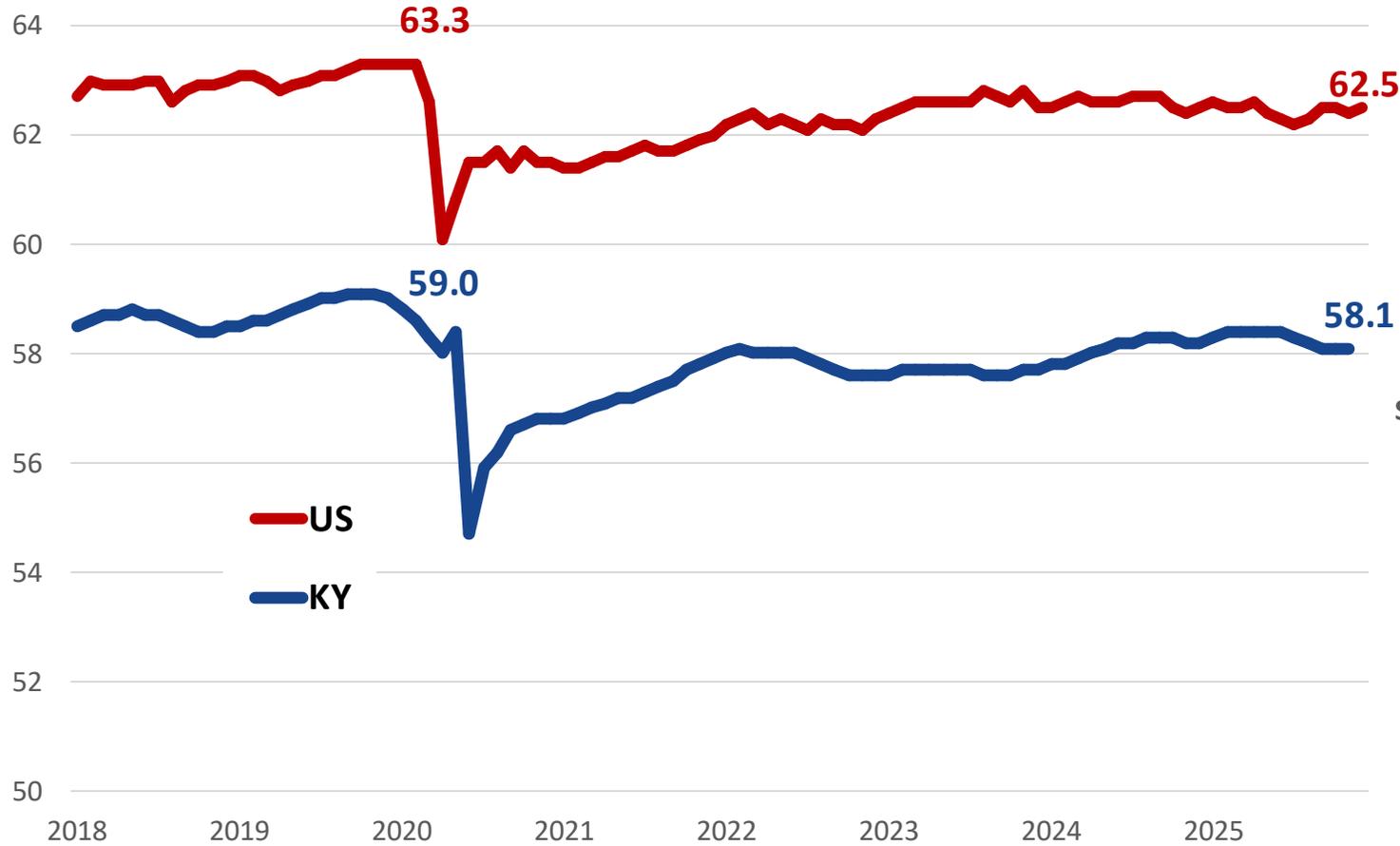
16 to 24



55 & Over

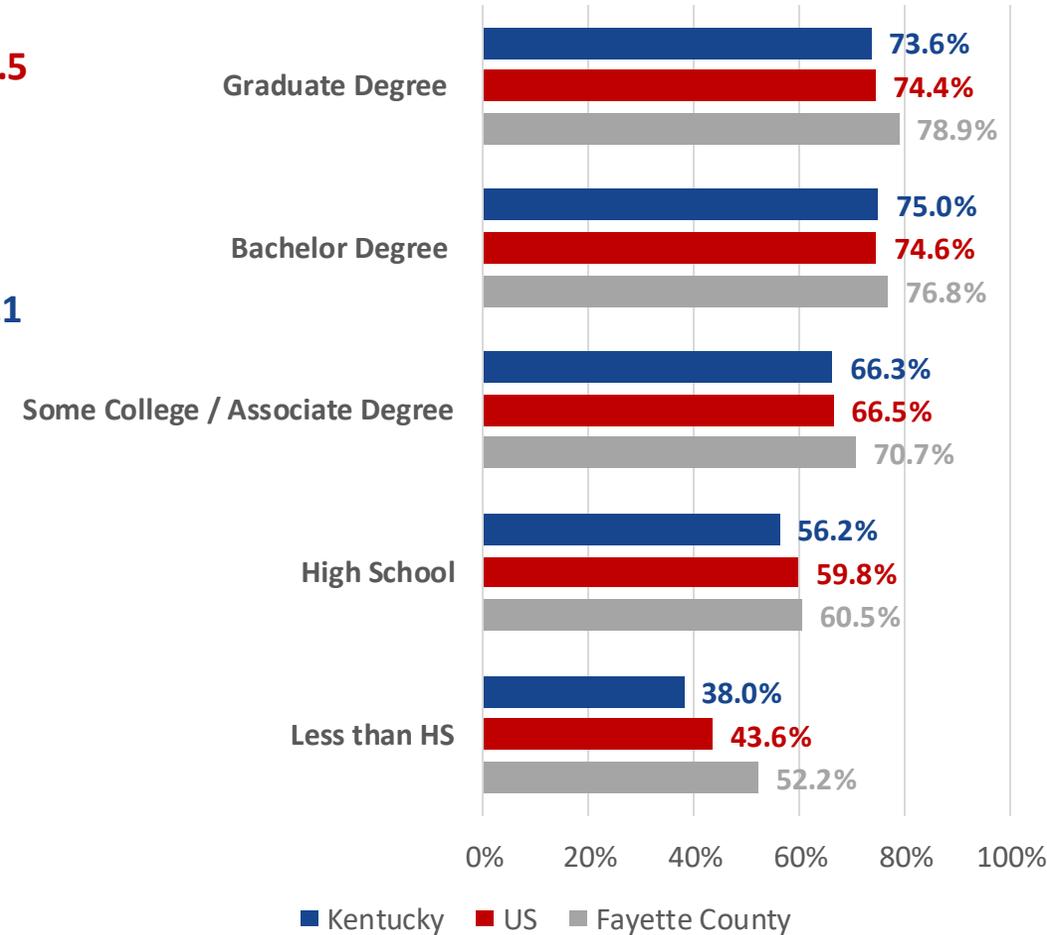


Labor Force Participation Rates



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Kentucky and US are seasonally adjusted. Lexington/Fayette MSA not seasonally adjusted.

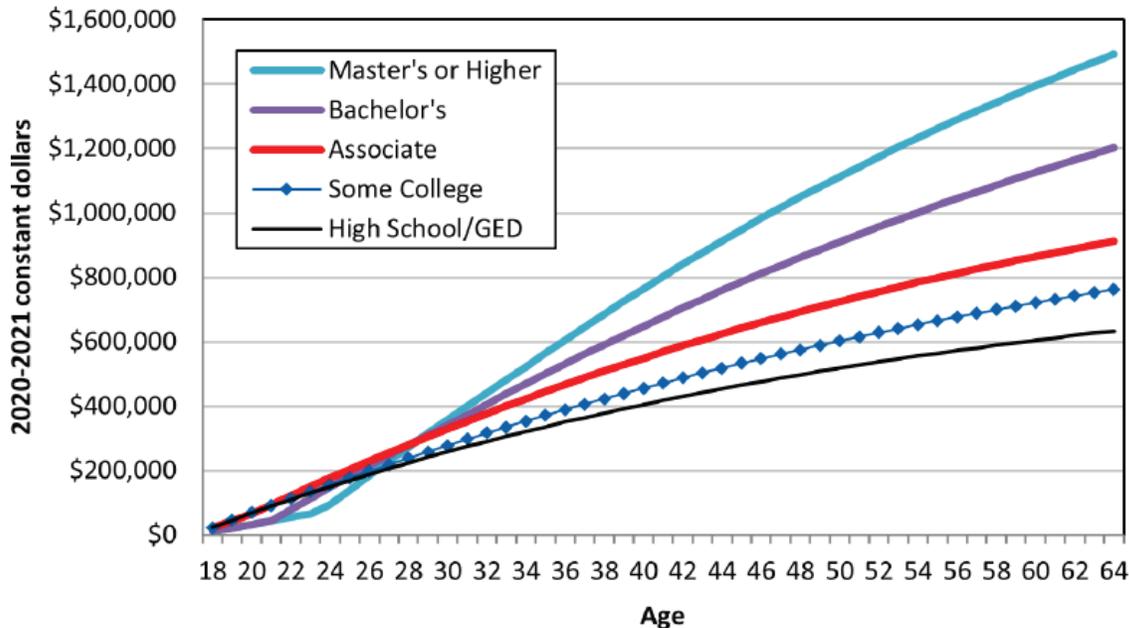
By Education (Aged 25 & Over)



Source: US Census Bureau. 2024 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates.

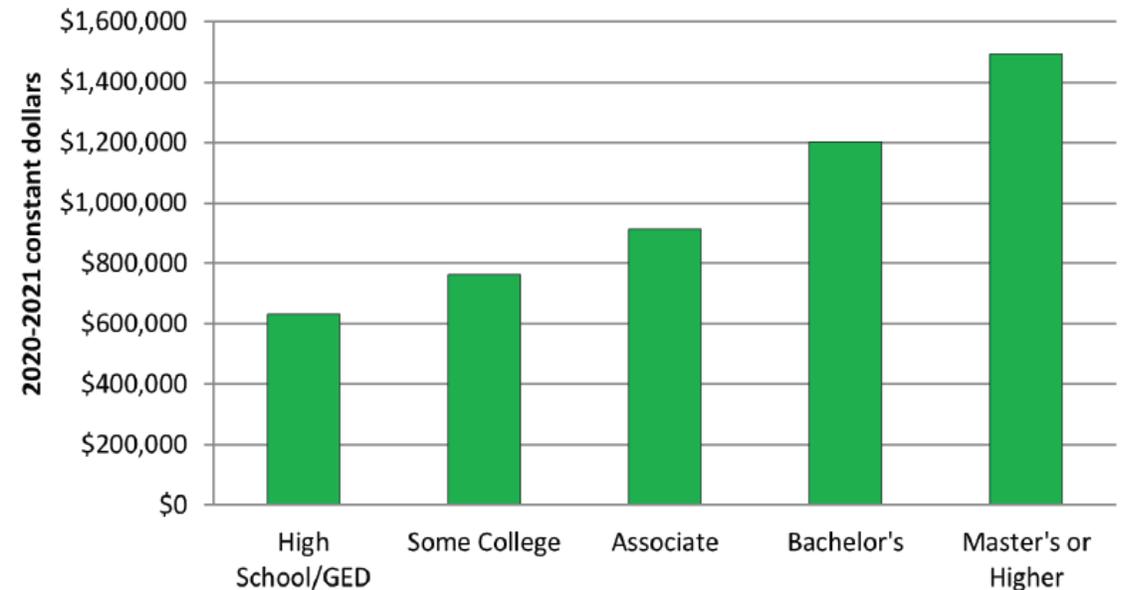
Lifetime Earnings by Educational Attainment

Figure 9: Estimated Cumulative Lifetime Earnings, Kentucky, Age 18 to 64, by Age and Education
(Net Earnings After Higher Education Costs)



Source: Model-based estimates calculated by the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), Gatton College of Business and Economics, University of Kentucky, using U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2021 and 2022 1-Year estimates, PUMS, using a 3 percent discount rate.

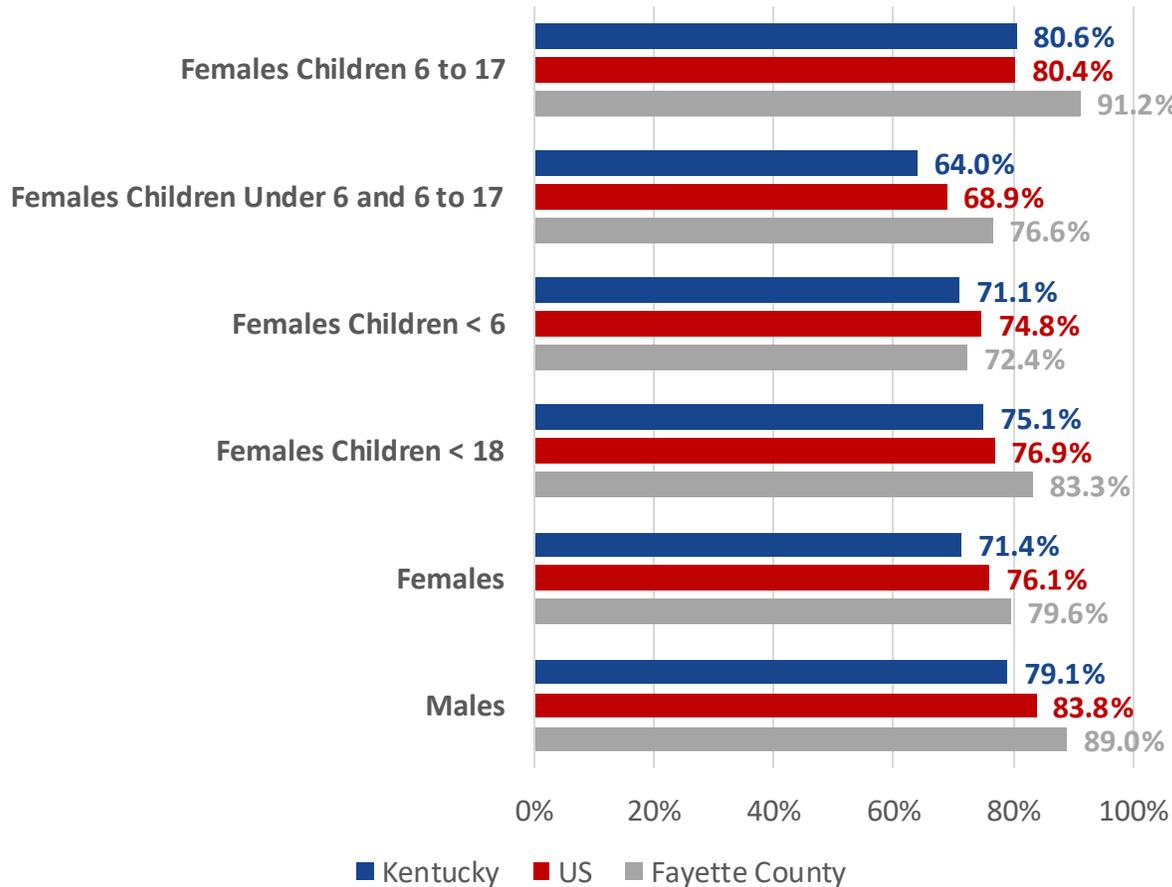
Figure 8: Estimated Cumulative Lifetime Earnings, Kentucky, Age 18 to 64, by Educational Attainment
(Net Earnings After Higher Education Costs)



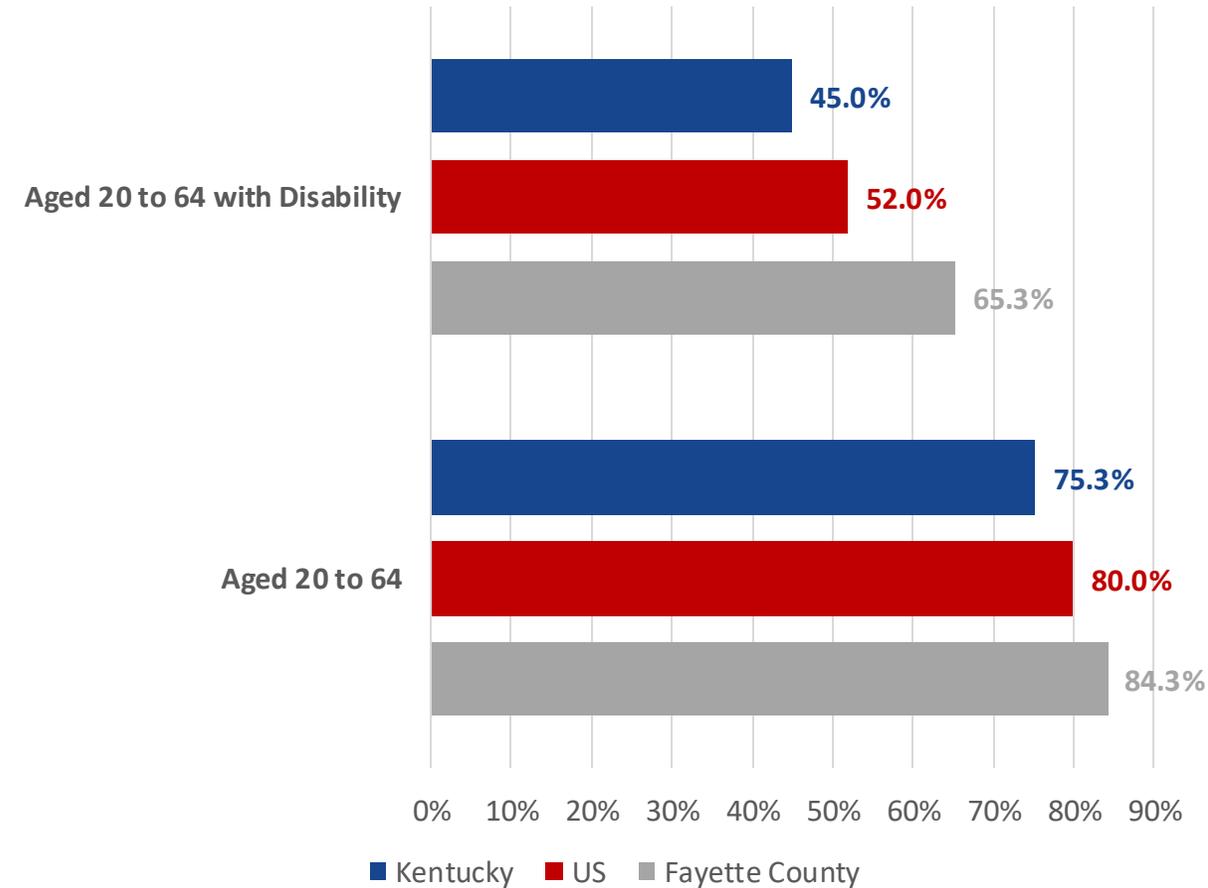
Source: Model-based estimates calculated by the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), Gatton College of Business and Economics, University of Kentucky, using U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2021 and 2022 1-Year estimates, PUMS, using a 3 percent discount rate.

Labor Force Participation Rates

Aged 20 to 64 By Gender and Presence of Own Children



Aged 20 to 64 Disability





Gatton College of Business and Economics

Center for Business and Economic Research

<http://cber.uky.edu/>



TARGET INDUSTRIES

FOR STATE AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Jacob Ball
Bluegrass AgTech
*Agriculture
Technology*



Justin Campbell
UK HealthCare
Health Care



Grant Duffy
Bullard
*Advanced
Manufacturing*



Jason Luring
ROIS
*Life Sciences/
Biotech &
Pharma*

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SUBMIT YOUR EDC
TOPIC IDEAS



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