Missouri Economy Indicators

Multiple-Job and Self-Employed Trends

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An increasing share of Americans' work now takes place outside a single, traditional employer. As people pursue additional sources of income, take on multiple jobs, or build businesses of their own, nontraditional work arrangements have become a more visible part of the U.S. economy. In 2025, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that 8.8 million people held multiple jobs, representing 5.4% of U.S. workers. About 5 million supplemented a full-time primary job with part-time work, while a smaller share (417,000) worked two full-time jobs. Both figures increased from 2024, continuing a steady rise in multiple jobholding since 2015. Some workers take on extra jobs due to economic pressures or to supplement their income. Others start a business on the side, hoping to eventually make it their primary source of income.

Multiple Job Growth Varies by Age and Demographic Factors

Across nearly all categories, more Americans worked multiple jobs in 2025 than in 2015. Adults aged 25 to 54 saw the largest increase of any age group, with the multiple-jobholding rate rising by nearly 1 percentage point (pp). Workers aged 16 to 24 were the only group to see a decline, with the rate falling 0.2 pp.

Multiple jobholder growth was similar for men (0.4 pp) and women (0.6 pp). Among racial and ethnic groups, Black (1.6 pp), Asian (0.8 pp), and Hispanic and Latino (0.6 pp) Americans were all more likely to be working multiple jobs in 2025, while White Americans saw a more modest increase of 0.3 pp.

U.S. Multiple Jobholders, by Select Characteristics

And Percentage Point Change from 2015 to 2025

Category	Group	2025	2015-25 % pt.
Total	**All**	**5.4**	**0.5**
Age	16 to 19 years	4.0	-0.2
	20 to 24 years	5.5	-0.2
	25 to 54 years	5.7	0.8
	55 to 64 years	4.8	0.1
	65 years and over	4.2	0.4
Gender	Men	4.9	0.4
	Women	5.9	0.6
Race & Ethnicity	White	5.3	0.3
	Black or African American	6.6	1.6
	Asian	3.9	0.8
	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	3.8	0.6

Source: MU Extension graphics using 2015-25 U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey. U.S. workers age 16 and older.

Self-Employment Expands Opportunities for Independent Work

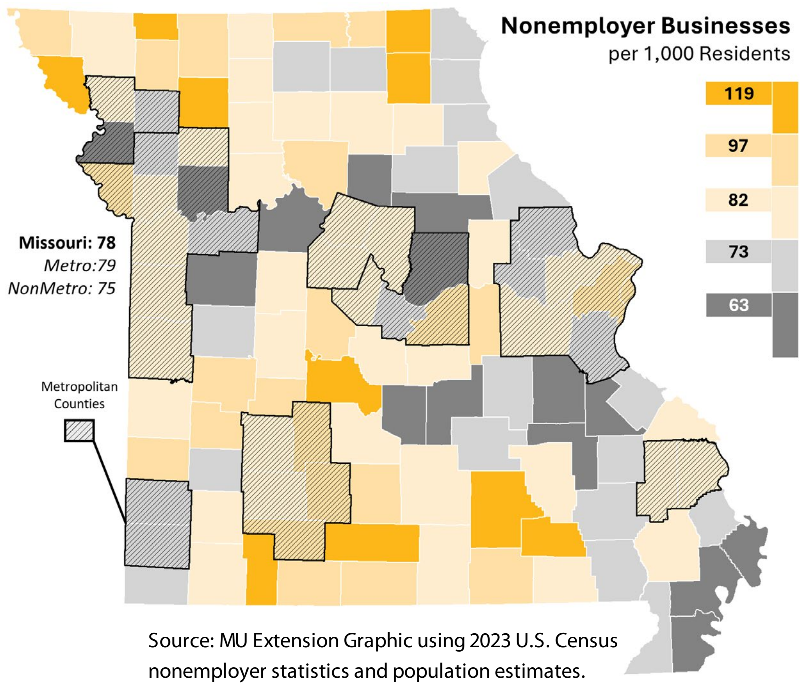
Self-employment provides another way for individuals to earn income outside traditional wage and salary jobs. The U.S. Census Bureau's Nonemployer Statistics track businesses with no paid employees, including many sole proprietorships, providing a broader measure of employment activity. In 2023, the U.S. had roughly 30 million nonemployer businesses, including 26 million sole proprietorships, that generated an estimated $1.75 trillion in revenue. Professional, scientific, and technical services accounted for the most nonemployer establishments, with over 4 million establishments generating more than $234 billion in revenue.

Missouri had more than 485,000 nonemployer establishments in 2023, including 429,000 sole proprietorships, generating $26.2 billion in revenue. The transportation and warehousing sector, which includes tractor-trailer truck operators, had the largest number of nonemployer establishments (58,614), followed by construction.

Self-Employment Differs in Metro and Nonmetro Areas

Sole proprietorships, which are unincorporated businesses with one owner, provide a relatively simple and low-cost path to independent work and represent the vast majority of nonemployers. In 2023, Missouri's metro counties accounted for roughly three-quarters of nonemployers and revenue, while nonmetro counties accounted for about one-quarter. Despite their smaller share of businesses, nonmetro nonemployers generated slightly more revenue per establishment than their metro counterparts, about $56,200 compared to $53,300.

Nonemployer Businesses per 1,000 Residents



Source: MU Extension Graphic using 2023 U.S. Census nonemployer statistics and population estimates.

The counties with the highest concentration of nonemployer businesses and the highest revenue per business were all nonmetro, accounting for the top 12 in businesses per 1,000 residents and the top 15 counties in revenue per business. Scotland County ranked first in both measures, with 119 businesses per 1,000 residents, and more than $106,000 in revenue per business.

Industries driving these businesses vary by geography. Transportation and warehousing had the largest number of establishments in metro areas, while construction led in nonmetro areas. Traditional labor statistics, built around single employers and standard payrolls, capture only part of how Americans earn income. Multiple jobholding, sole proprietorships, and other measures of employment reveal a broader picture of how the workforce engages outside traditional employment relationships.

Additional Notes and Resources

- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics **tracks multiple job holders, by age, race and ethnicity, marital status, and working arrangements** at the national level through the Current Population Survey (CPS).
- A recent finding by **Gallup notes 46% of self-employed Americans have quality jobs**, based on five factors: agency, autonomy, financial wellbeing, culture and safety, and opportunities for growth and development.

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