



UKG



# UKG WORKFORCE ACTIVITY REPORT

October 2024





# Severe weather creates labor market disruptions

Major hurricanes, plus October holiday, cause temporary workforce activity decline.

By analyzing weekly employee shift work trends across ~6.2 million active U.S. employees, this index provides directional insight into the health of the frontline working economy.

See historical weekly reports at [UKG.com/WorkforceActivityReport](https://UKG.com/WorkforceActivityReport).



-1.9% decline reflects tolls of Hurricanes Helene, Milton

# Executive summary

October 2024



## Mid-month shift growth

|       |           |
|-------|-----------|
| 0.5%  | May       |
| 0.0%  | June      |
| -0.8% | July      |
| -1.8% | August    |
| 0.4%  | September |
| -1.9% | October   |



## Shift growth by company size

|       |             |
|-------|-------------|
| 1.6%  | <100        |
| -0.3% | 101-500     |
| -1.8% | 501-1,000   |
| -1.5% | 1,001-2,500 |
| -5.3% | 2,501-5,000 |



## Monthly trends

|       |              |
|-------|--------------|
| -0.9% | October 2021 |
| -1.3% | October 2022 |
| -1.3% | October 2023 |
| -1.9% | October 2024 |



## Regional outlook

|       |           |
|-------|-----------|
| -3.7% | Southeast |
| -1.4% | West      |
| -1.0% | Midwest   |
| 0.0%  | Northeast |



## Shift growth by industry<sup>1</sup>

|       |                                     |
|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 0.6%  | Healthcare                          |
| -2.1% | Manufacturing                       |
| 0.0%  | Retail, food service, & hospitality |
| -1.3% | Services & distribution             |
| -5.3% | Public sector                       |



## Workforce activity provides most up-to-date glimpse into a noisy month

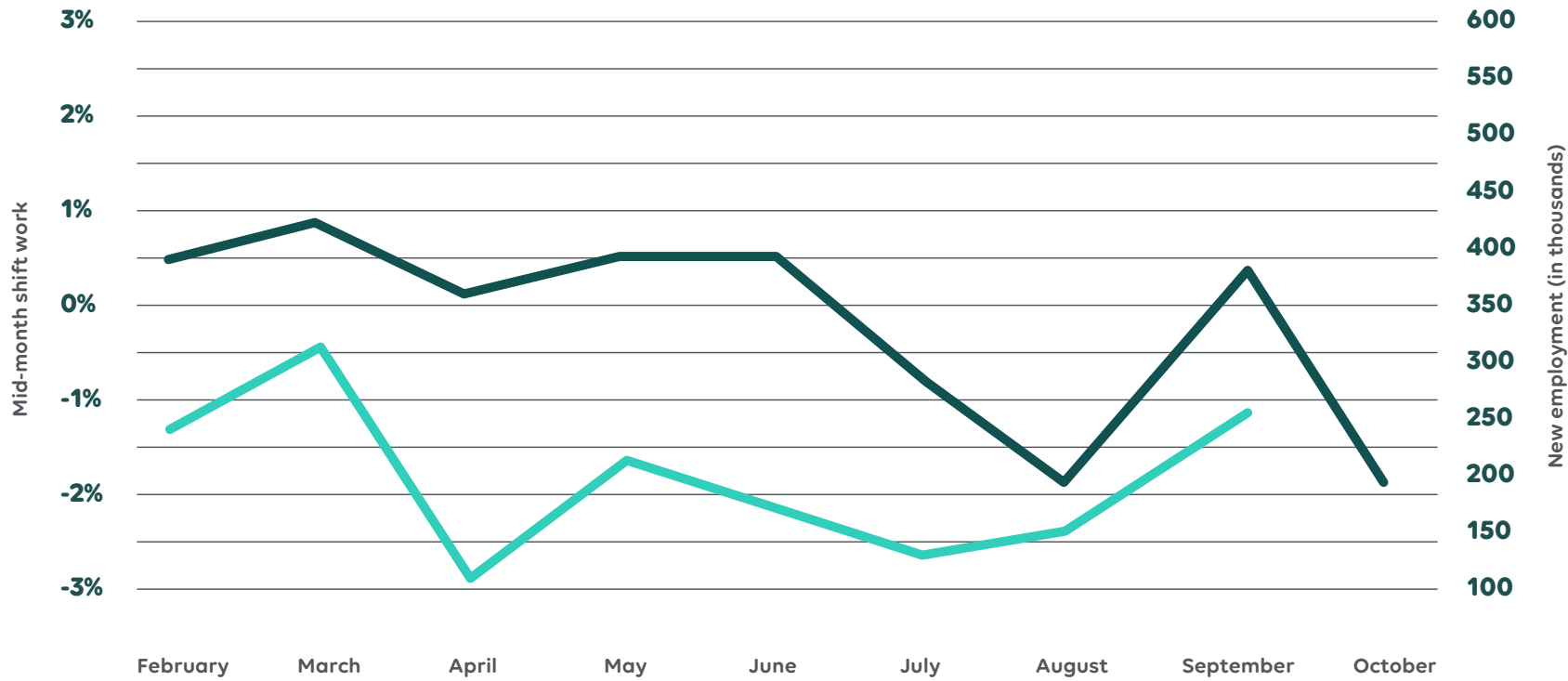
"On the eve of the election, this month's jobs report might be the most anticipated, and consequential, in recent memory. Ironically, it will not yet reflect a full labor market picture. Two major hurricanes have created disruptions in typical labor and hiring pattern, in near conjunction with the October holiday. BLS findings are likely to be less representative than usual (until more evidence from storm-affected areas is gathered). In non-affected areas, working activity is at or near its historic monthly rate."

**Eddie Hearn, Ph.D.**  
Lead Labor Economist, UKG

## Workforce activity and job creation: Tracking shift levels during the mid-month week



Workforce activity decreased 1.9%



High-frequency UKG® shift data correlates each month with new employment gains reported by the U.S. Department of Labor — providing an indication of the direction of jobs recovery. The UKG data often comes into even closer alignment following ensuing Department of Labor revisions.

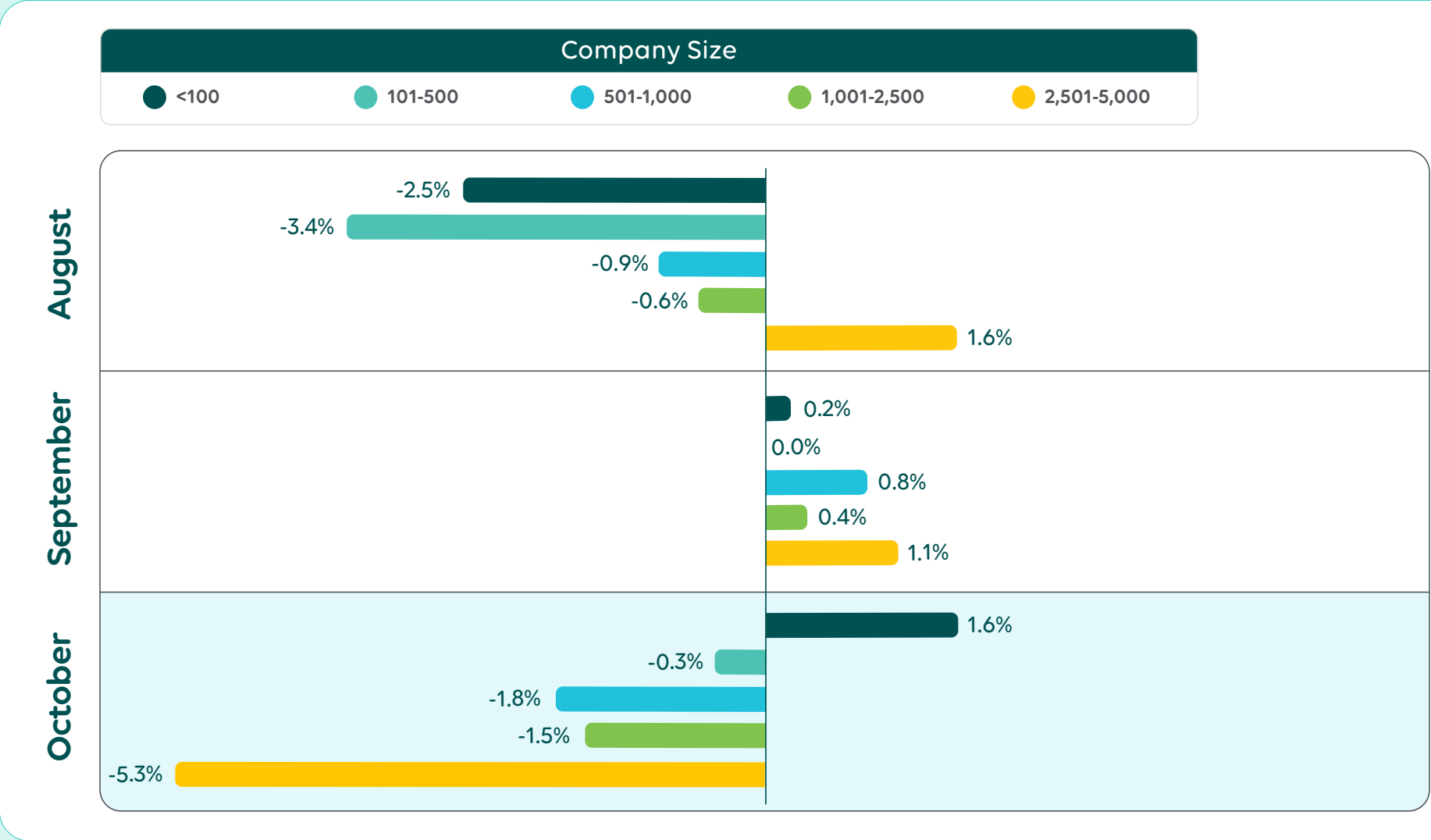
- UKG Shifts Worked
- BLS New Employment (in thousands)

# Shift recovery: Company size

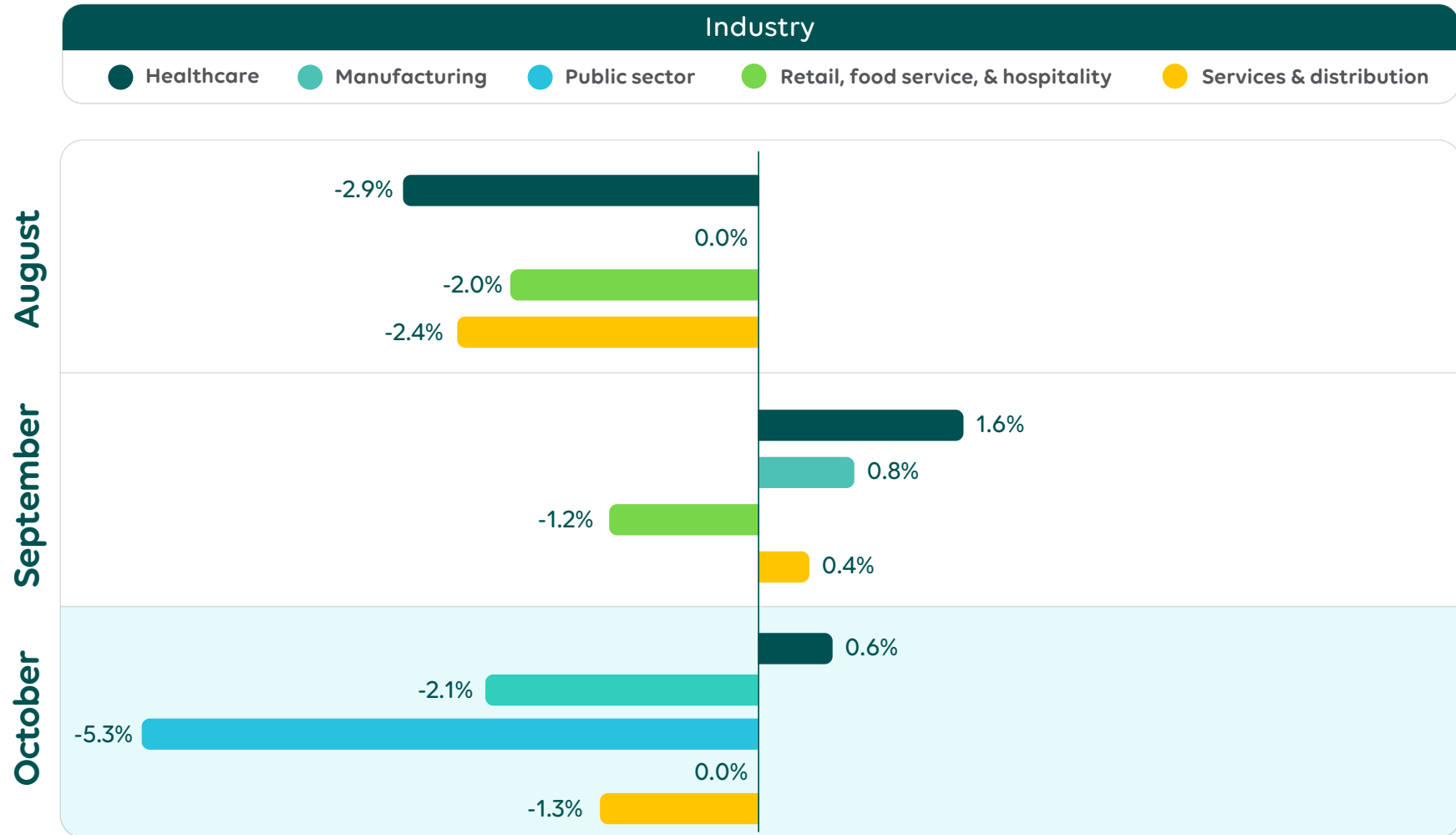
Larger businesses were more impacted by disruptions



Most business size segments experienced declines in October, with small businesses bucking this trend. There was a large negative effect in the 2,500–5,000 employee size-segment stemming from storm-related school and business closures throughout the Southeast.



## Shift recovery: Industry

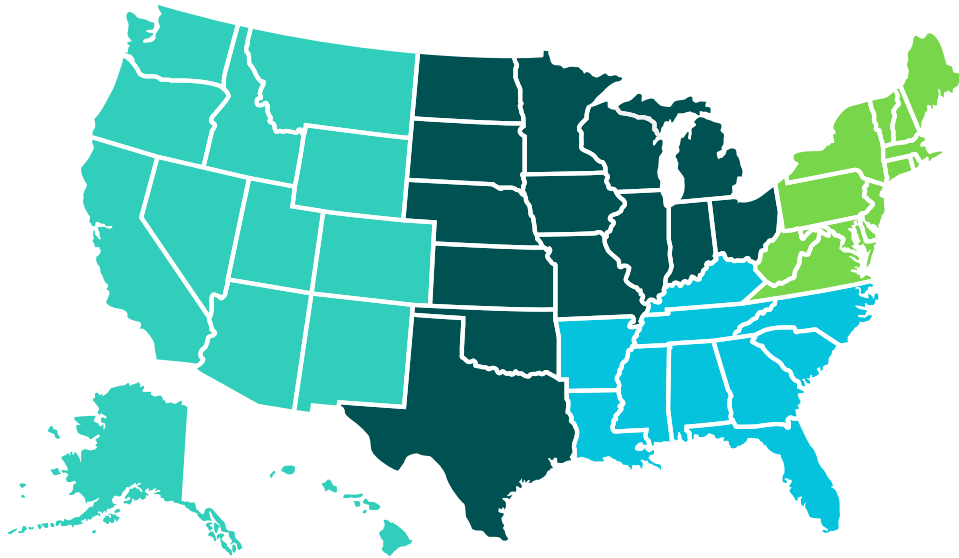


Retail activity slowly creeps upward ahead of shopping season

The steep decline in public sector workforce activity, which is inclusive of education, is representative of the pause in the labor and hiring market created by October’s weather and holiday patterns. Except for the most severely impacted areas, public-sector employees resumed pre-storm levels of shiftwork in most communities.

## Shift recovery: U.S. landscape

While the COVID-19 pandemic created regional inconsistencies in workforce activity from 2020-2022, large variations in regional changes today can often be attributed to localized events such as extreme weather emergencies.



Severe storms hit Southeast, other regions display slight weakness similar to previous Octobers.

### ● Northeast

**Aug:** -2.0%

**Sept:** 2.1%

**Oct:** 0.0%

### ● Southeast

**Aug:** -2.3%

**Sept:** -1.6%

**Oct:** -3.7%

### ● Midwest

**Aug:** -0.4%

**Aug:** -0.2%

**Oct:** -1.0%

### ● West

**Aug:** -3.0%

**Sept:** 0.3%

**Oct:** -1.4%

## Upcoming Reports



**December 3:** UKG Workforce Activity Report, November



**January 7:** UKG Workforce Activity Report, December



**February 4:** UKG Workforce Activity Report, January



Register to attend our monthly labor market briefing at 10:00 a.m. ET each month on the Tuesday prior to the BLS employment report publication by emailing [media@ukg.com](mailto:media@ukg.com).



# Methodology

The Workforce Activity Report by UKG is an index that measures week-by-week metrics including employee shifts worked and pay statements from 4.5 million employees across more than 40,000 U.S. businesses.

“Shifts worked” is a total derived from aggregated employee time and attendance data and reflects the number of times that employees — especially those who are paid hourly or must be

physically present at a workplace to perform their jobs — “clock in” and “clock out” via a time clock, mobile app, computer, or other device at the beginning and end of each shift.

<sup>1</sup>Public sector data, which includes K-12 education, is occasionally omitted because various seasonal breaks create large fluctuations in workforce activity, which are predicted and expected.

<sup>2</sup>In July 2024, UKG updated its methodology, which may have resulted in minor variations in data. While all data prior to July 2024 remains valid and accurate, please consult reports published from August 2024 and forward for the most up-to-date view of workforce activity.

For more information  
please contact:

[media@ukg.com](mailto:media@ukg.com)

For the latest data reports, visit:

[UKG.com/WorkforceActivityReport](https://UKG.com/WorkforceActivityReport)



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