

Toward an Equitable Future of Work in Detroit: Critical Indicators for Jobs, Opportunity, and Workforce Equity



Workforce Demographics



People of color account for 30 percent of the Detroit region's workforce.

More than two million people work in the Detroit region, including about 600,000 people of color.

While white workers are still a large majority of the labor force, the region’s population is rapidly diversifying.

White people are slightly overrepresented in the workforce (70 percent) compared to their share of the overall population (66 percent), But this is partly due to the racial generation gap in the region: 41 percent of youth are people of color, compared to just 24 percent of seniors.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Number and share of workers by race/ethnicity, Detroit Metro region, 2019

Ethnicity ▲	Population	Percent
Total	2,029,950	
Asian or Pacific Islander	97,766	5%
Black	391,245	19%
Latinx	83,721	4%
Mixed/Other	37,214	2%
Native American	5,171	0%
White	1,414,833	70%

Latino includes people of Hispanic origin of any race; all other groups are non-Hispanic.

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Occupational Segregation



Persistent occupational segregation is a pressing challenge for workforce equity.

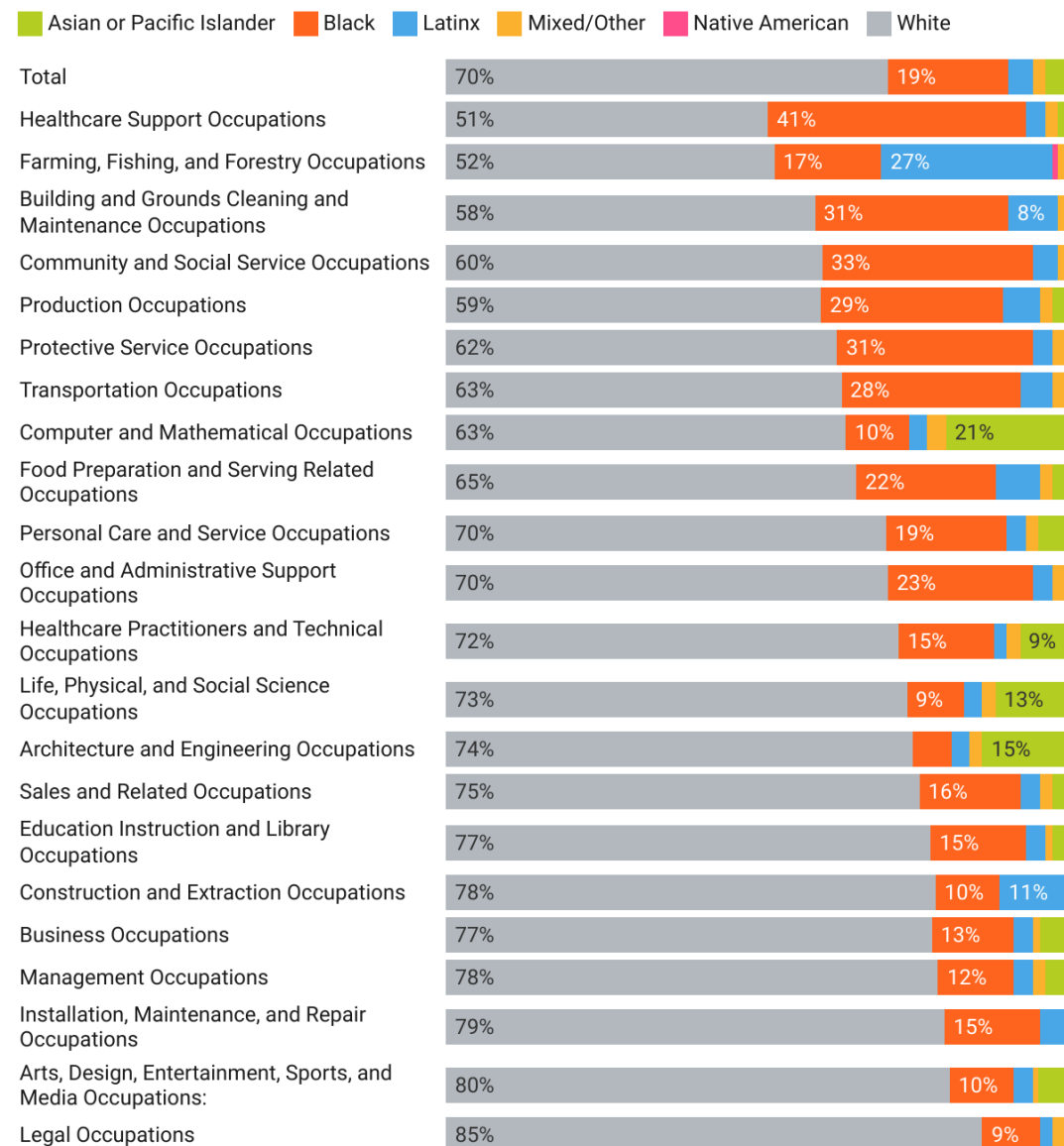
Occupational segregation continues to crowd many workers of color – particularly Black and Latinx workers – into lower wage, lower quality jobs.

Black workers make up 19 percent of the region’s workforce overall, but 41 percent of those in health-care support occupations, 33 percent in community and social services, 31 percent of those in building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, 31 percent of those in protective service jobs.

Latinx workers are just 4 percent of the workforce but 27 percent of those in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations and 11 percent of those in construction and extraction occupations.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Share of workers by race/ethnicity and occupational group, Detroit metro, 2019



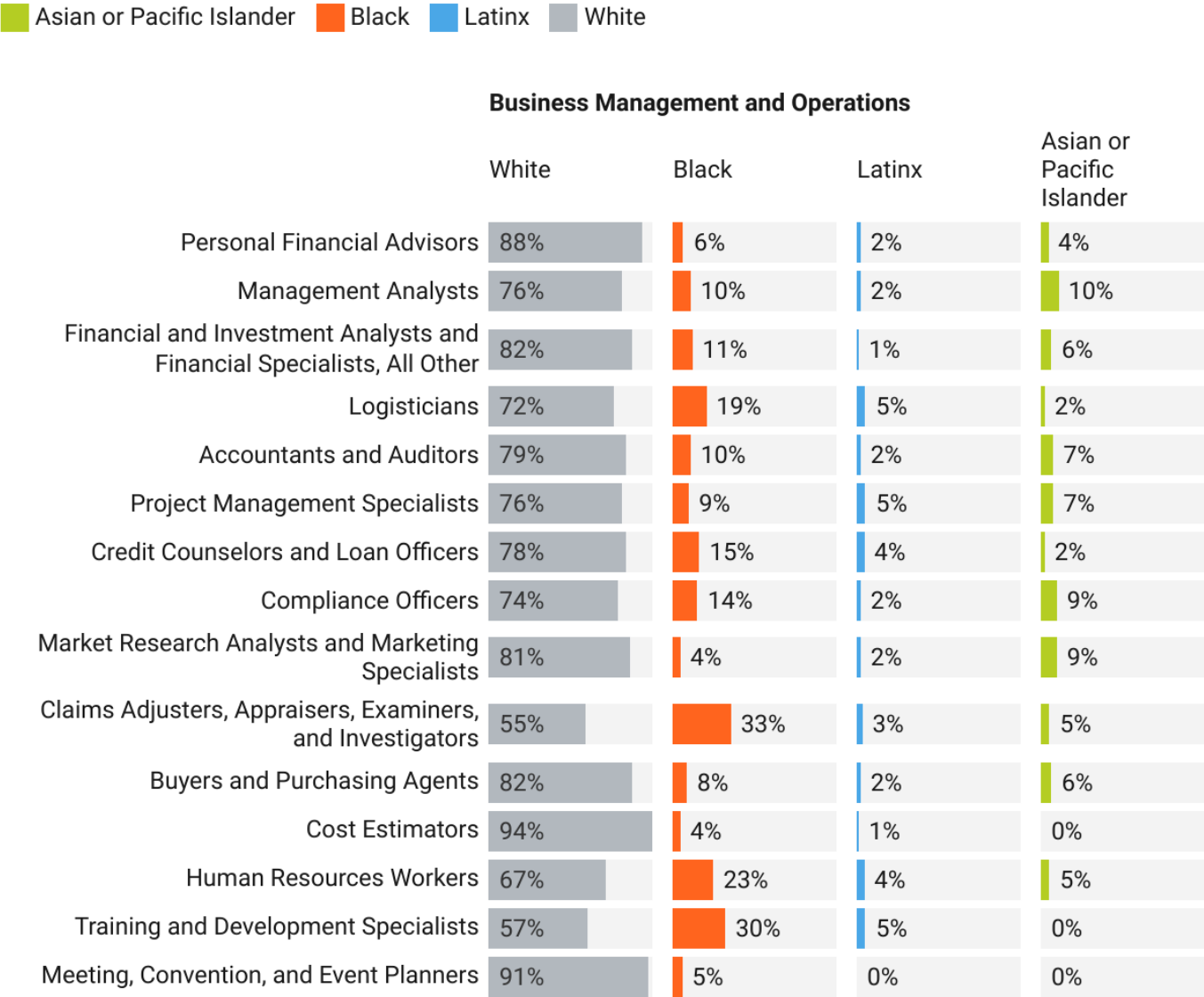
Persistent occupational segregation is a pressing challenge for workforce equity.

White workers are overrepresented among most of the region’s largest business occupations – especially cost estimators and meeting, convention, and event planners.

Black workers are most concentrated among claims adjusters, appraisers, examiners, and investigators; training and development specialists; and human resources workers. They are most dramatically among cost estimators and insurance underwriters.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Share of workers by race/ethnicity and detailed occupation, Detroit region, 2019



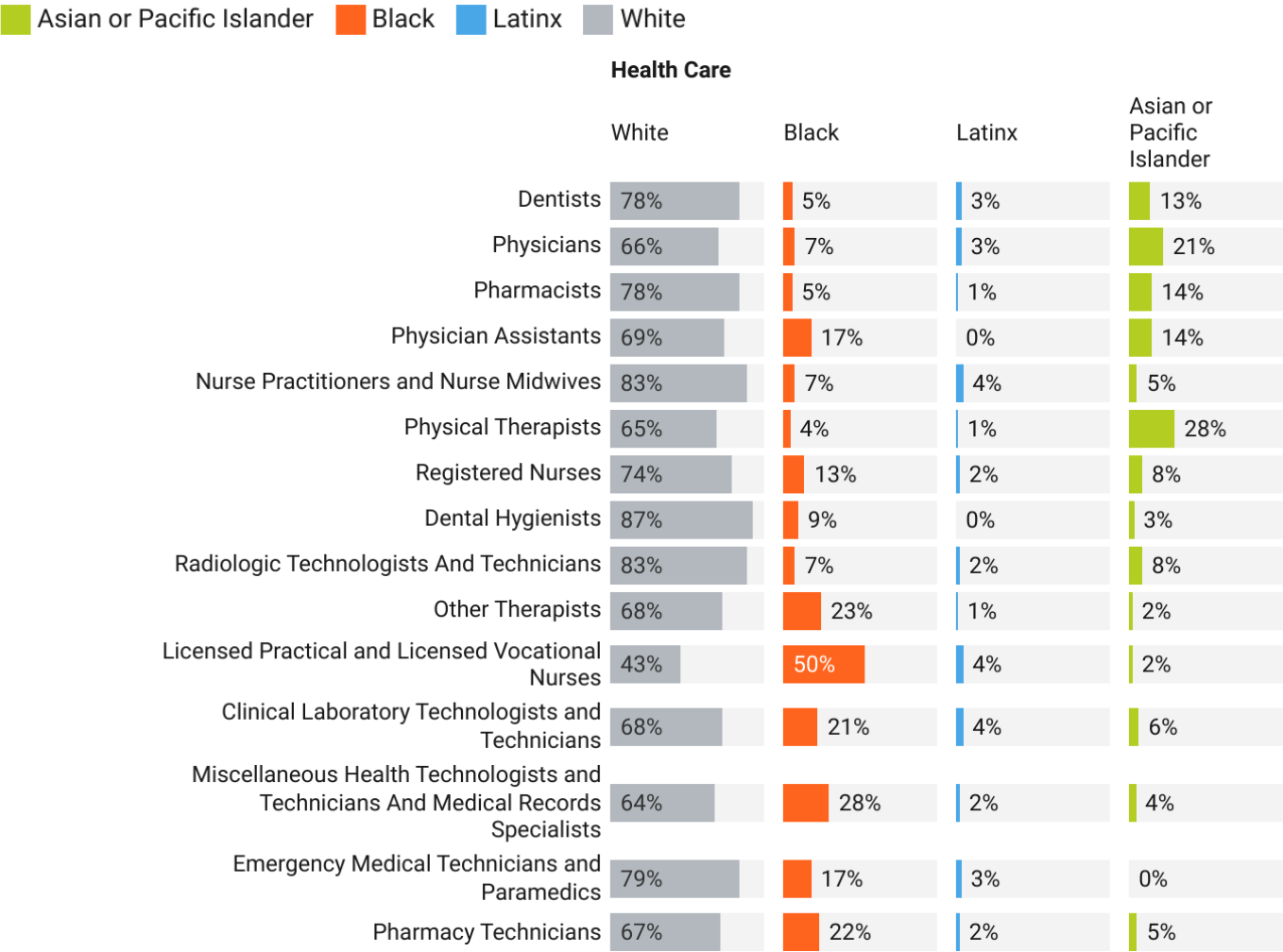
Persistent occupational segregation is a pressing challenge for workforce equity.

Among health-care jobs, Black workers are significantly concentrated among licensed practical and vocational nurses, of whom they comprise 50 percent. Yet they are just 4 percent of physical therapists, 5 percent of dentists, pharmacists, and 7 percent of physicians, nurse practitioners and midwives, and radiologic technologists and technicians.

Latinx workers are underrepresented among most large health-care occupations, with the exceptions of nurse practitioners and midwives, licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses, and clinical laboratory technologists and technicians.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Share of workers by race/ethnicity and detailed occupation, Detroit region, 2019



Values reported are estimates and subject to error. As such, values of 0 or 100 percent should be interpreted as approaching those values and not exactly those values.

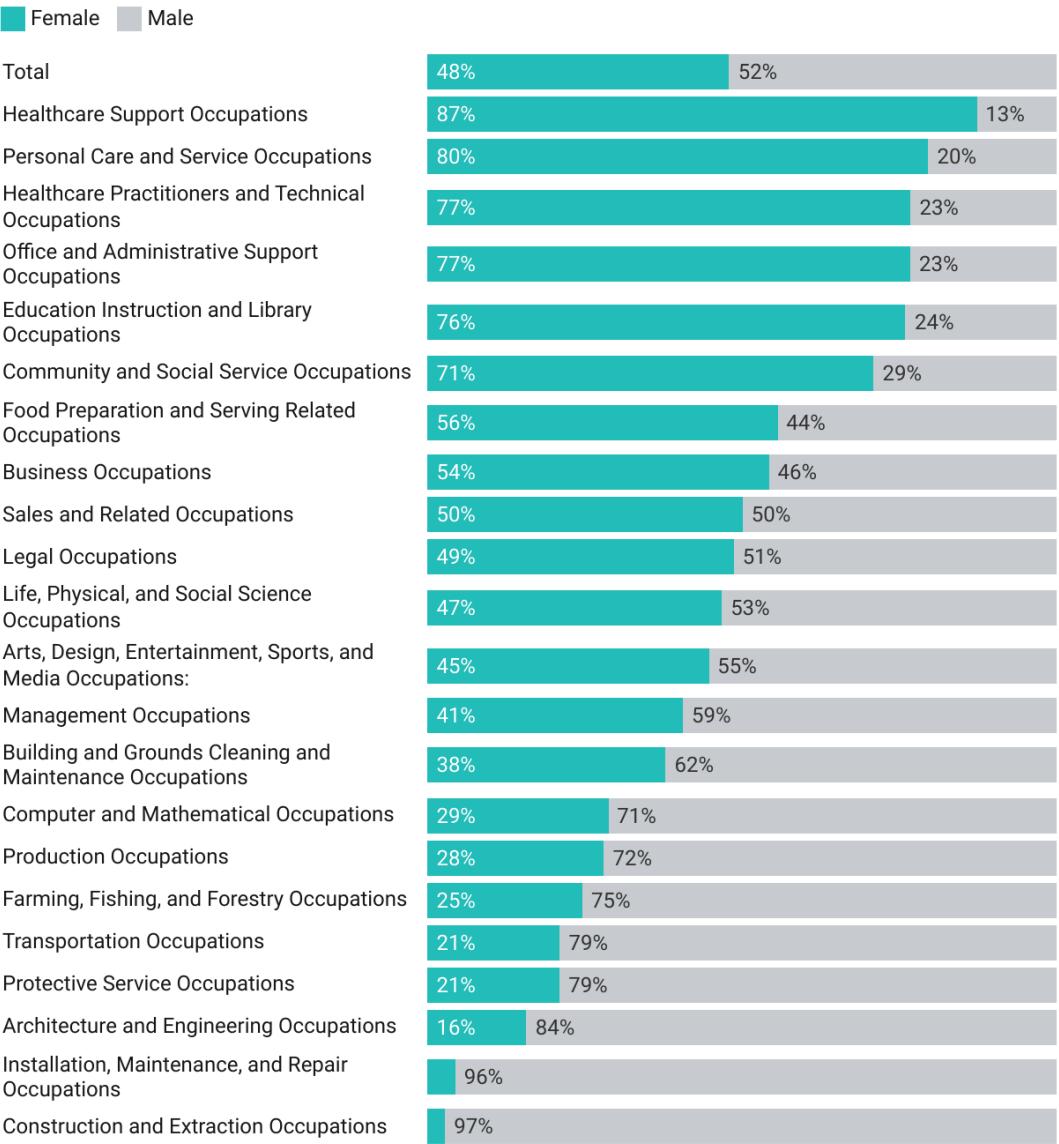
Most occupational groups are also segregated by gender.

Women make up just under half of the Detroit workforce (48 percent) but only 16 percent of those in architecture and engineering jobs and 29 percent of those in computer and mathematical jobs.

They are most overrepresented among health-care support occupations (87 percent), personal care and service occupations (80 percent), healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (77 percent), and office and administrative support occupations (77 percent).

[See the interactive data.](#)

Share of workers by gender and occupational group, Detroit metro, 2019



Future-Ready Jobs



Growing the number of future-ready jobs — and ensuring equitable access to those opportunities — is key to a thriving and sustainable Detroit economy.

Future-ready jobs are those that provide stable, family-supporting incomes for workers and strong future prospects for employers and communities, as defined below.

Living wage compensation:

Average wage for the occupation is sufficient to sustain a family of two working adults and two children — \$50,148 in Detroit (for an annual family income just over \$100,000).

Adequate wages are essential for families to meet their basic needs, weather emergency expenses, and plan for the future.

Stable or growing base of employment:

The number of jobs is projected to grow or to remain relatively stable for the next decade. That is, employment in the occupation is not declining by more than 10 percent over 10 years for large occupations, or more than 2 percent over 10 years for small occupations.

A reliable base of employment provides stability for businesses and communities.

Automation resilient:

The occupation has a probability of computerization lower than 50 percent, given the full array of tasks that compose the role.

Automation and digitization change the way work gets done, and some workers are at heightened risk of job displacement. If more than half the tasks of a job can be computerized, that job is considered vulnerable to automation.

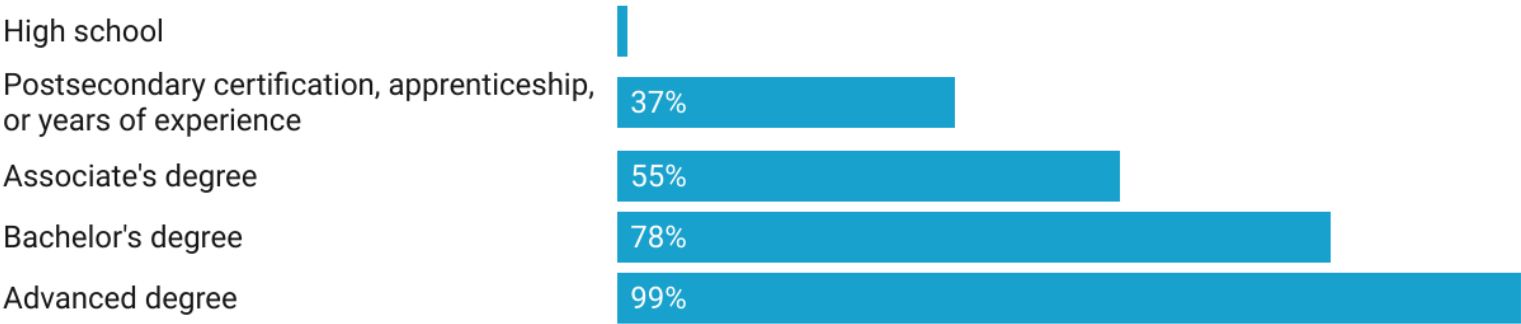
The majority of jobs in Detroit that require a college degree are future-ready.

Nearly all jobs in Detroit that require an advanced degree are future-ready – providing family-sustaining wages, a stable base of employment, and resilience to automation. Almost 80 percent of jobs that require a bachelor’s degree are also good jobs.

In contrast, only 1 percent of jobs that require only a high school diploma are future ready.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Future-ready job rate, by required education, Detroit Metro region, 2019



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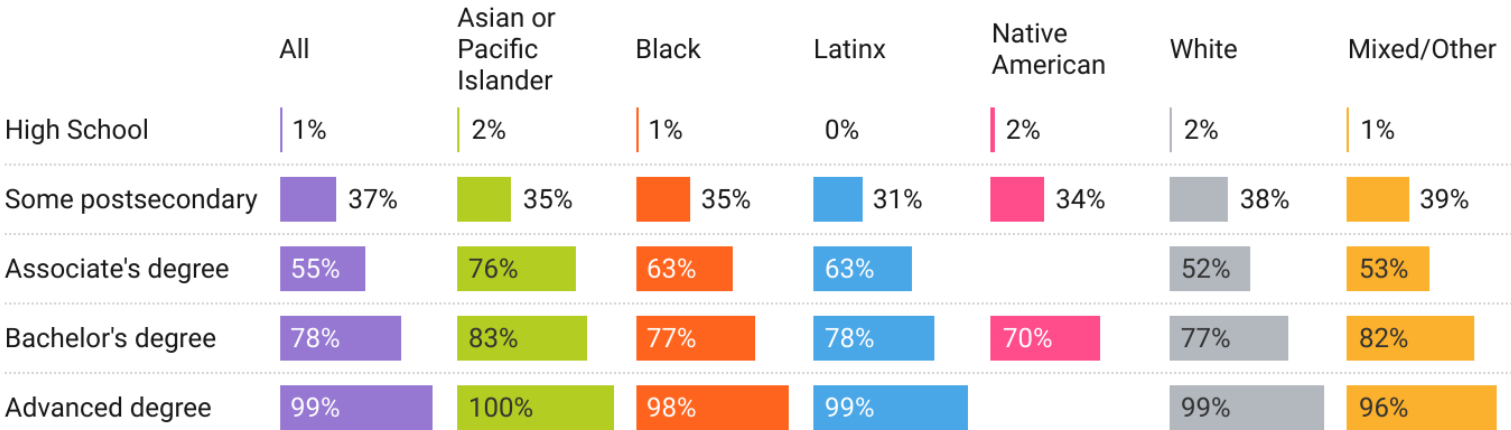
Among occupations that do not require a college degree, there are racial gaps in access to future-ready roles.

Very few jobs in Detroit that require less than an associate’s degree are considered future-ready. Among workers in jobs that do not require a college degree, white workers are more likely than workers of color to have future-ready roles.

Among occupations that require at least a four-year college degree, racial gaps are quite narrow. Still, Native American workers in jobs that require a bachelor’s degree are less like than other workers to have future-ready jobs.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Share of workers in future-ready jobs by race/ethnicity and educational requirements, Detroit metro, 2019



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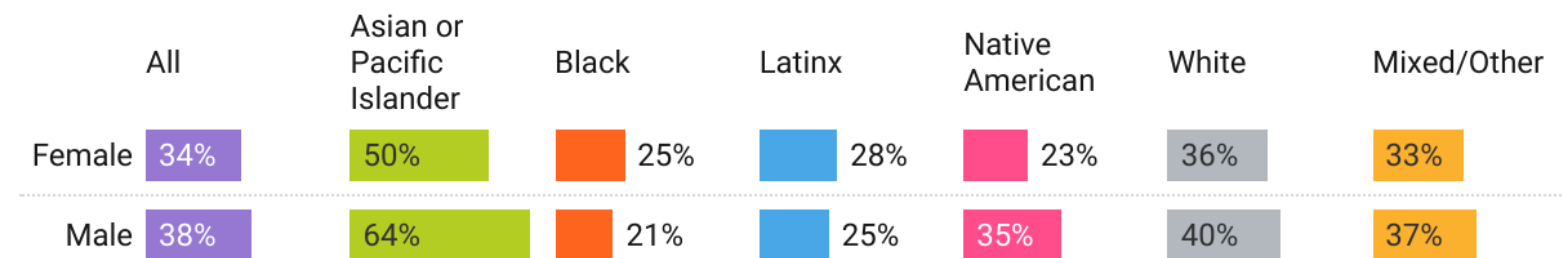
Among some racial/ethnic groups, access to future-ready jobs differs considerably by gender.

Overall, men are slightly more likely than women to hold future-ready jobs (38 percent compared to 34 percent). The gap is largest among Asian or Pacific Islander workers: 64 percent of men are in future-ready roles, compared to just 50 percent of women.

Among women, Native American workers are the least likely to be in future-ready occupations (23 percent). Among men, Black workers are less likely to be in future-ready jobs (21 percent).

[See the interactive data.](#)

Share of workers in future-ready jobs by race/ethnicity and gender, Detroit metro, 2019



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Labor Market Trends



Automation risk is highest for Latinx and Black workers.

If more than half the tasks of a job can be computerized, that job is considered vulnerable to automation. In Detroit, 51 percent of male workers and 50 percent of female workers are in automation-vulnerable jobs.

The risk of automation-driven job displacement varies considerably by race/ethnicity: 59 percent of Black and Latinx workers and 52 percent of Native American workers are in automation-vulnerable occupations in the region, compared with 35 percent of Asian workers and 49 percent of white workers.

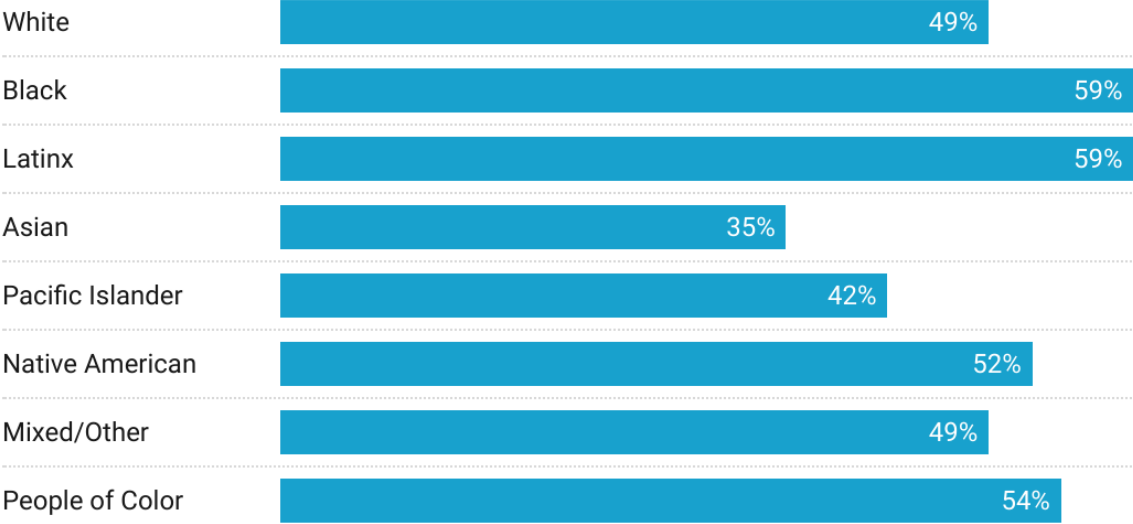
[See the interactive data.](#)

Automation risk by demographic characteristics, Detroit region, 2019

Gender



Race/ethnicity



Citizenship



Workers with higher educational attainment and greater English proficiency are more likely to be in automation-resilient jobs.

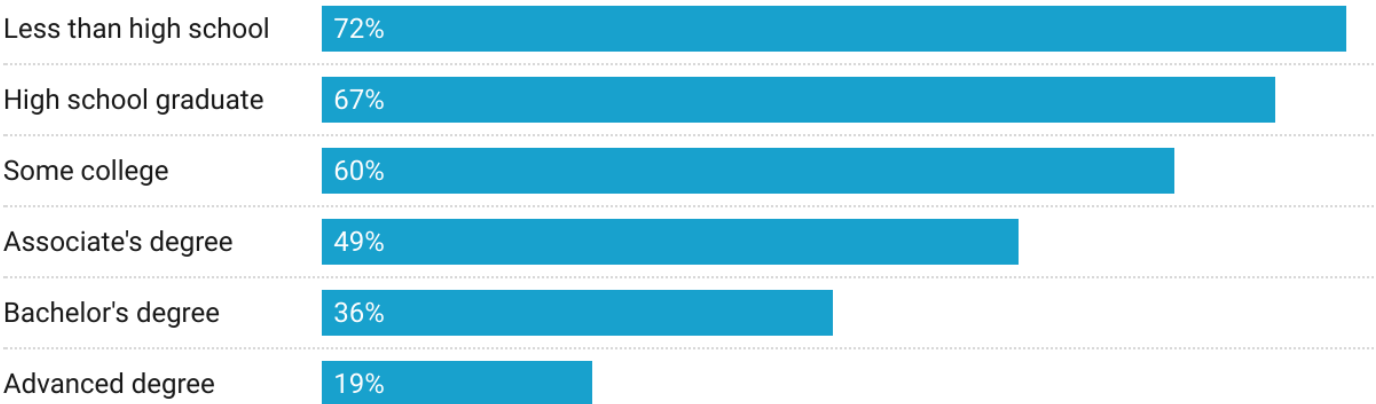
Higher education is strongly correlated with lower risk of automation. Just 19 percent of workers with an advanced degree are in automation-vulnerable jobs, compared to 72 percent of those without a high school diploma and 67 percent workers with only a high school diploma.

Greater English-language proficiency is likewise associated with greater resilience to automation. About 42 percent of workers who speak English very well are at risk of automation, compared with 74 percent of those who do not speak English.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Automation risk by education, Detroit region, 2019

Education



English-language proficiency



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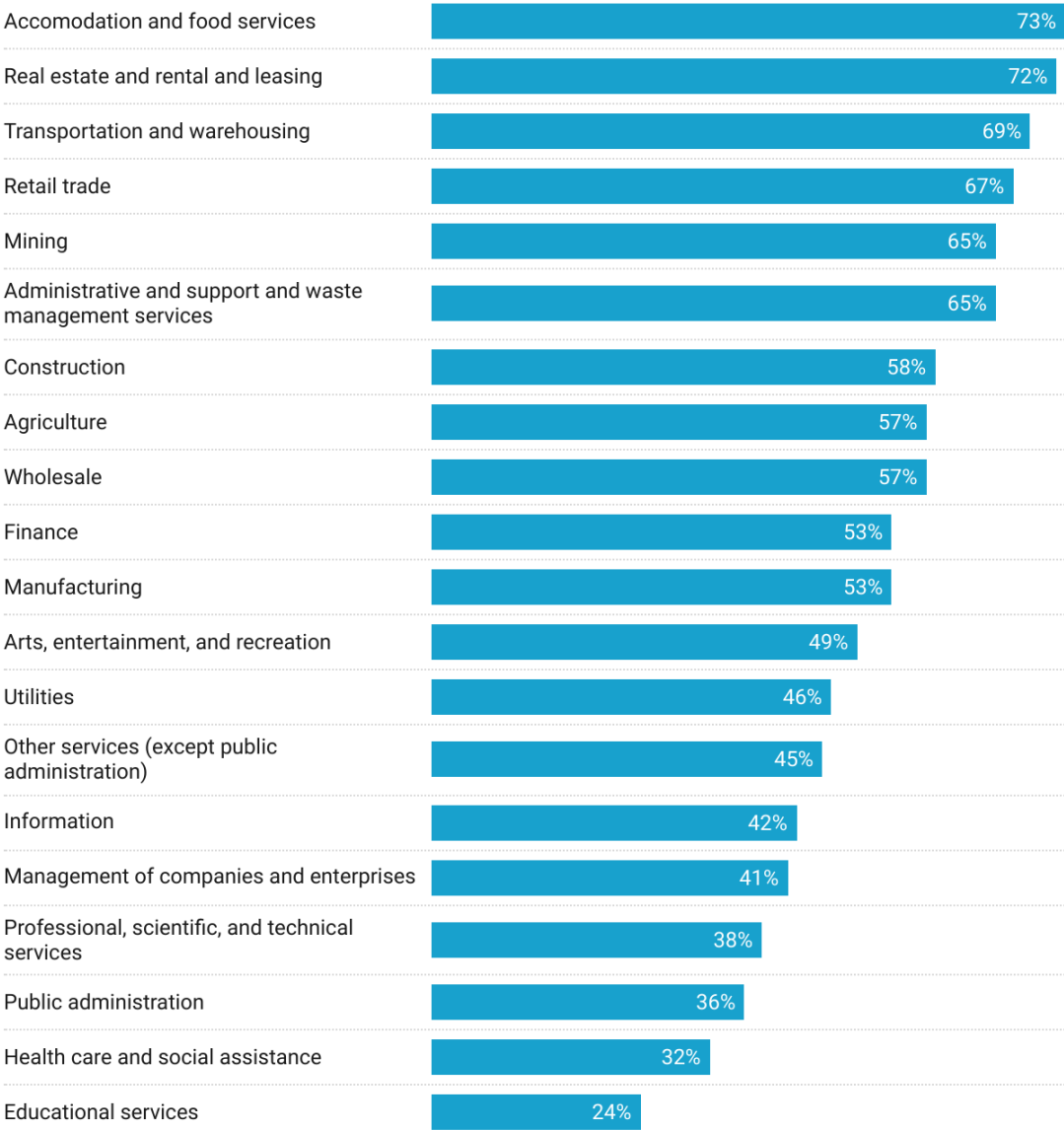
Workers in educational services have the lowest risk of automation, while those in accommodation and food services are at the highest risk.

Automation risk also varies by industry. In Detroit, the risk is highest among the accommodation and food services industry and the real estate and rental and leasing industry, in which more than seven out of ten workers are in jobs vulnerable to automation.

The most automation-resilient industries are educational services (24 percent of jobs at risk of automation) and health care and social assistance (32 percent of jobs at risk).

[See the interactive data.](#)

Automation risk by industry, Detroit region, 2019



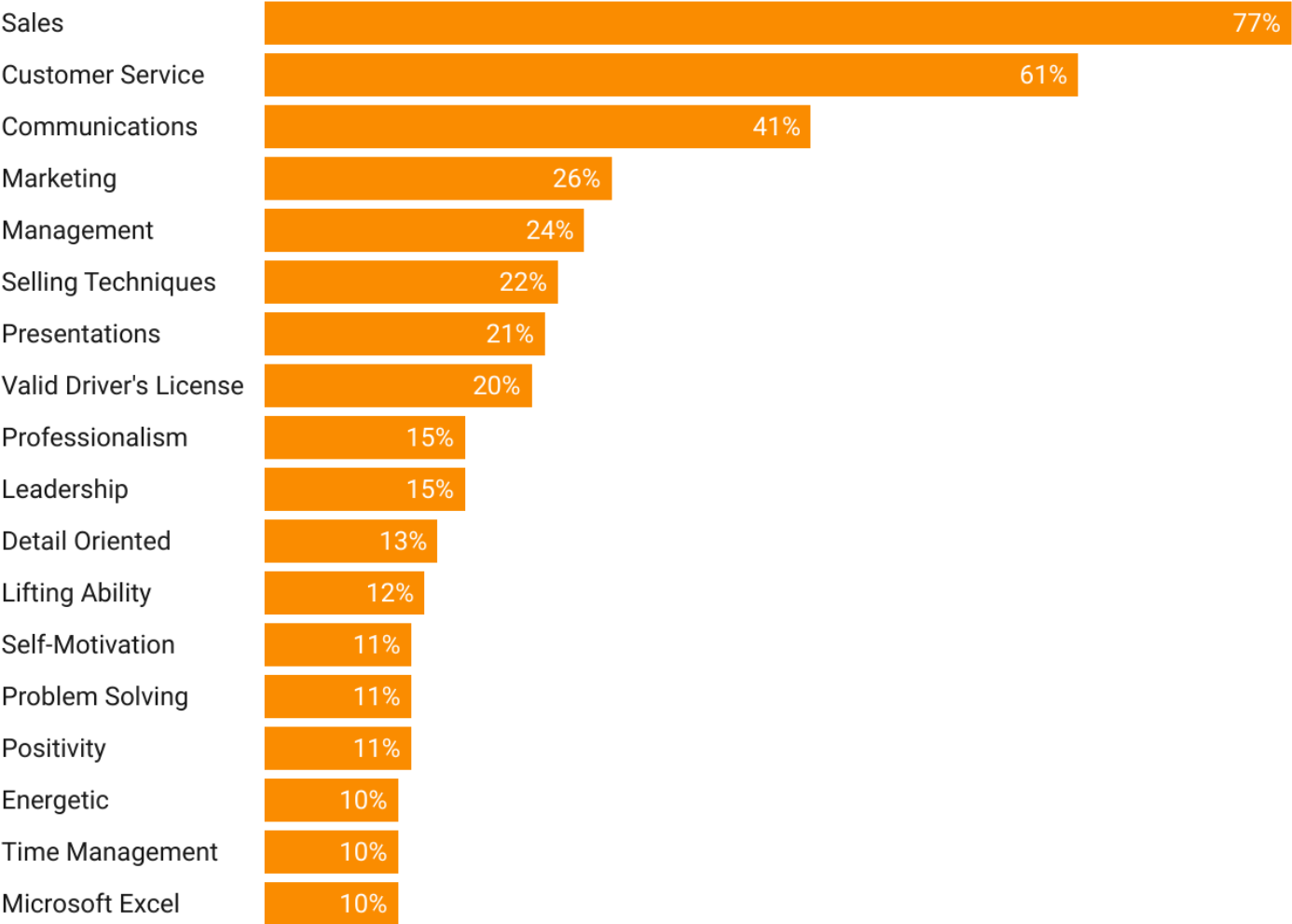
Building skills that are in demand for future-ready jobs can help workers access high quality employment opportunities.

Understanding the skills that employers are seeking in candidates for future-ready occupations can help jobseekers and training providers craft career pathways into good jobs.

This chart details the most-requested skills in job postings for sales representatives of services (except advertising, insurance, financial services, and travel) in Detroit, with sales, customer service, and communications skills topping the list.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Top skills for sales representatives of services, except advertising, insurance, financial services, and travel, Detroit region, 2019



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This chart details the most-requested skills in job postings for first-line supervisors of production and operating workers in Detroit. Communications, leadership, and management skills are listed in about 40 percent of postings for these occupations.

[See the interactive data.](#)

Top skills for first-line supervisors of production and operating workers, Detroit region, 2019



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Understanding the skills that employers are seeking in candidates for future-ready occupations can help jobseekers and training providers craft career pathways into good jobs.

This chart details the most-requested skills in job postings for licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses in Detroit, many of which can be developed and honed through other healthcare occupations (skills such as communications, medication administration, and customer service).

[See the interactive data.](#)

Top skills for licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses, Detroit region, 2019

