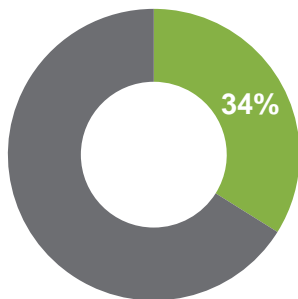


# Employment Equity: The Path to a More Competitive Louisiana

Louisiana’s future competitiveness depends on the participation and inclusion of all of our residents, especially those who are locked out of the economy. Employment equity—when everyone who wants to work has a good job that pays family-supporting wages—is the path forward. By addressing lingering societal barriers to full economic inclusion and connecting more Louisianans to career pathways, we can reduce economic insecurity, meet employers’ needs for talent, and bolster economic growth, building a prosperous Louisiana for all.

## Louisiana’s economy is booming, but 800,000 adults are economically insecure\* ...

- Economically Insecure
- Economically Secure



## ...growth is not reaching everyone. Of economically insecure adults,



49% are stuck in low-wage jobs

8% are looking for work

43% are out of the labor force

“As a young, educated Black male, employers don’t see that – they just see color. Even if you have that degree – you still are not accepted.”

- PAUL, NEW ORLEANS FOCUS GROUP

## Louisiana would be stronger with employment equity. With full employment for all,\*\* Louisiana could have seen...

**\$3.5 billion**

in additional economic activity (GDP)

This translates to more than the state’s entire 2016 budget for higher education.

**163,623**

more people connected to work

**36,536**

fewer people in poverty

**\$555 million**

in additional tax revenue

## GDP growth with full employment would be felt across the state

+\$203 million  
in Shreveport

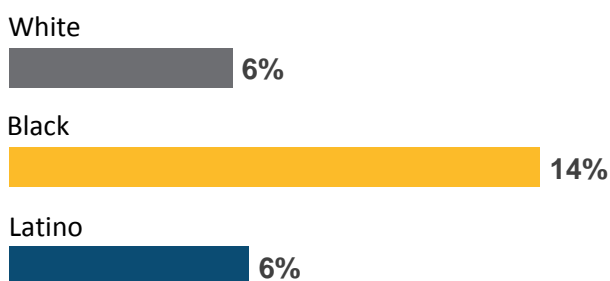


+\$424 million in Baton Rouge

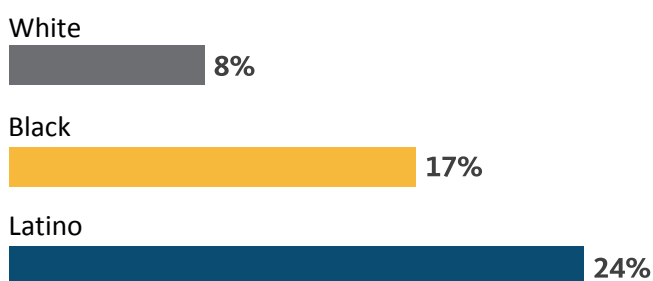
+\$1.1 billion  
in New Orleans

## Employment equity means closing gaps in unemployment and wages

### % of men who are unemployed



### % of men who are working poor



## What's holding Louisianans back?

- Limited childcare and transportation options
- Criminal background checks
- Need for workforce training and skill development

“Finding a job in Louisiana after you’ve been incarcerated is like trying to win the lottery.”

- CARL, BATON ROUGE FOCUS GROUP

## The way forward: Employment equity.

- 1) **Remove barriers** that prevent economically insecure workers from accessing good jobs, e.g., ban the box asking about criminal history on job applications; make childcare more accessible.
- 2) **Scale up workforce development efforts** that connect struggling workers to quality jobs and career pathways, e.g., through local and targeted hire.
- 3) **Grow the base of employers committed to providing quality jobs** to disadvantaged workers and supporting the growth of minority- and women-owned businesses.

Data analysis from the [National Equity Atlas](#), a partnership between PolicyLink and the USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE). For details on our methodology, visit <http://plcyllk.org/2ApazHr>.

For the full report:

[www.nationalequityatlas.org/reports/reports-analyses](http://www.nationalequityatlas.org/reports/reports-analyses)

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\*Economic insecurity is defined as living below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. “Adults” refers to those of working age (25 to 64).

\*\*Full employment for all is defined as unemployment of no more than 4 percent and minimum labor force participation rates of at least 71 percent for men and 57 percent for women across all race/ethnic groups, with all benchmarks adjusted to account for the different age structures of each demographic group.