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**An Analysis of the City of Norman, Oklahoma Labor Force Study Data  
Conducted Among Residents Living in Norman, Oklahoma**

**Survey Conducted by the University of Oklahoma Public Opinion Learning  
Laboratory**

**Report prepared by  
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OU POLL**

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## Introduction

This report is an analysis of the Norman, Oklahoma labor force data. The entire survey was conducted in all of Cleveland and McClain counties but this analysis only concerns data from residents of Norman in Cleveland County.

Approximately 70,828 of the 101,350 adults who live in the city are employed, which is equal to 69.9% of the population who is 18 years of age or older.

In the Norman a considerable portion of the adult population are not employed for a variety of reasons. This group includes the retired, disabled, students, homemakers, and the unemployed. This study found that approximately 30,522 members of the adult population are not currently working. Of this group, the majority, 85.9%, indicate that they are not interested in working outside the home or they are unable to do so (see Table 1 below).

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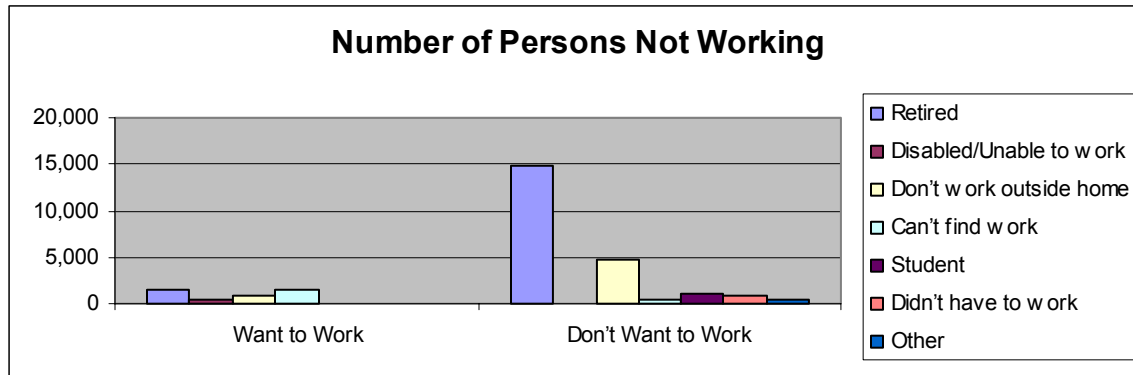
**Table 1: Number of Persons Not Working**

<u>Reason for Not Working</u>	<u>Want to Work</u>	<u>Don't Want to Work</u>	<u>Total</u>
Retired	1,565	14,870	16,435
Disabled/Unable to work	391	0*	391
Don't work outside home	783	4,696	5,479
Can't find work	1,565	391	1,956
Student	0	1,174	1,174
Didn't have to work	0	783	783
Other	0	391	391
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,304</b>	<b>22,305</b>	<b>26,609**</b>

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\* Does not include those people who are unable to work in the next six months

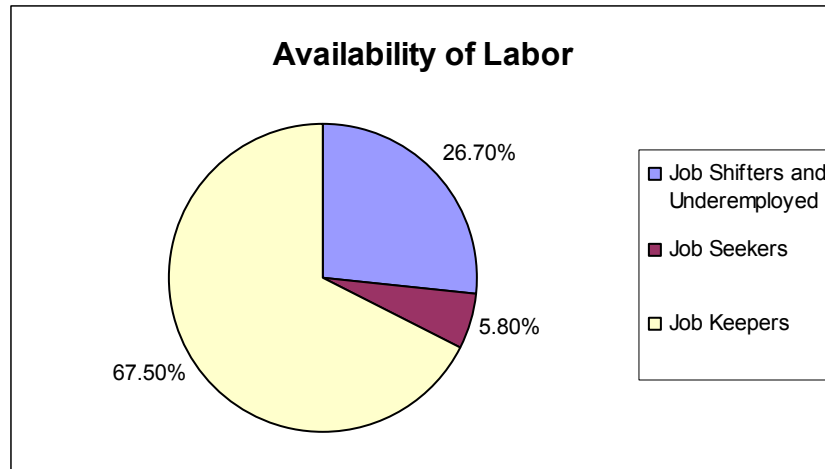
\*\* Does not include those people who are temporarily away from work without pay or who are waiting to start work.



A significant proportion of the adult population is not currently working but only a small minority can be officially considered unemployed. The United States Department of Labor designates a person as being unemployed if they are without work but have been actively seeking work. Based on this definition 1.5% of the adult population living in Norman are currently unemployed.

### Availability of Labor

This study has identified 19,958 workers who are currently available for *other* work. The categories of Job Shifters and the Underemployed (described below) are included in this estimate. **Some workers are both Job Shifters and Underemployed, so the total number of workers in both categories is somewhat less than their sum.** Additionally, there are those adults who are not working but want to work (Job Seekers), and those workers who are not underemployed and have not looked for work in the past three months (Job Keepers), which can be included in the pool of potential workers. These two groups total another 54,784 potential workers for a grand total of approximately 74,742 adults who are either in the labor force or want to be in it.



### *Job Shifters*

Roughly 20% (or 14,479 workers) in the labor market area have looked for other work in the past three months. Of all the methods used to look for other work the slim majority, 50.8%, were active (such as contacting an employer or filling out applications) and the minority, 49.2%, were passive (such as looking at ads or browsing the internet).

The reasons why the Job Shifters were looking for work were varied but the primary reason for 78.4% of people was in order to get higher pay and/or better benefits.

### *Underemployed*

The data from this study estimates that 17.1%, or 12,131, of all adult workers are currently underemployed. To be classified as Underemployed a worker must:

- 1) feel underutilized in their present employment,
- 2) possess training and/or education that is not required by their present job, **and**
- 3) be willing to change jobs to better utilize their skills.

### *Job Keepers*

Job Keepers are those individuals who have not been identified as being underemployed and have not looked for work within the past three months. This group makes up 71.3% of all workers or 50,480 people.

*Job Seekers*

This last category of potential workers contains those who are not currently employed but want to work. Four point two percent of all adults in Norman are represented by this category which is equivalent to 4,304 people.

**Education**

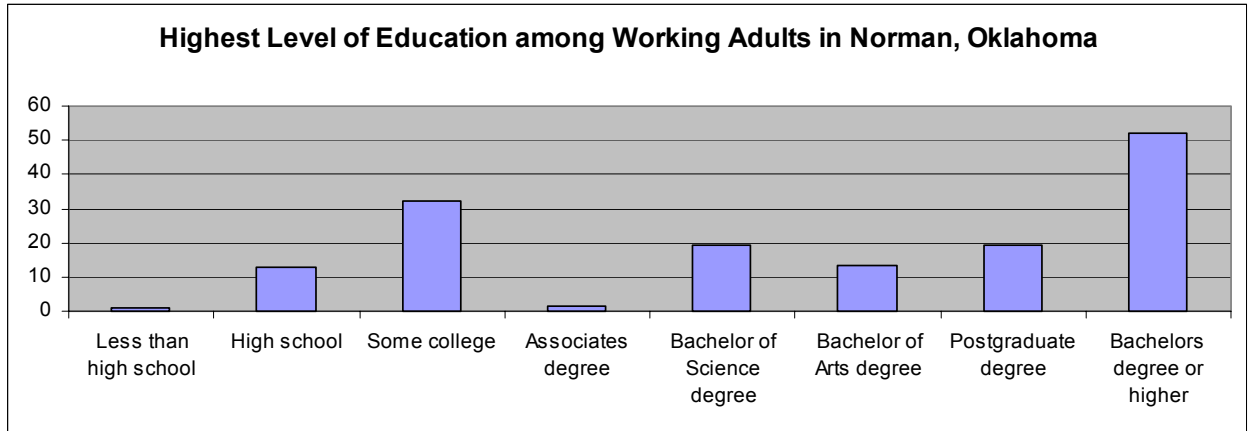
The percentage of workers in Norman with a least a Bachelors degree is about half of the current work force (Table 2) and about 86% of the workers have had at least some college.

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**Table 2: Highest Level of Education among Working  
Adults in Norman, Oklahoma**

<u>Level of Education</u>	<u>Percent Adult Workers</u>
Less than high school	1.1
High school	12.7
Some college	32.0
Associates degree	1.7
Bachelor of Science degree	19.3
Bachelor of Arts degree	13.3
Postgraduate degree	19.3
Bachelors degree or higher	51.9

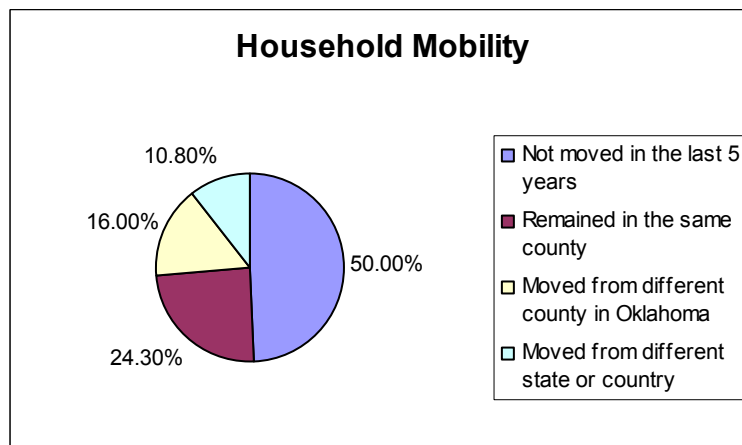
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### Household Mobility

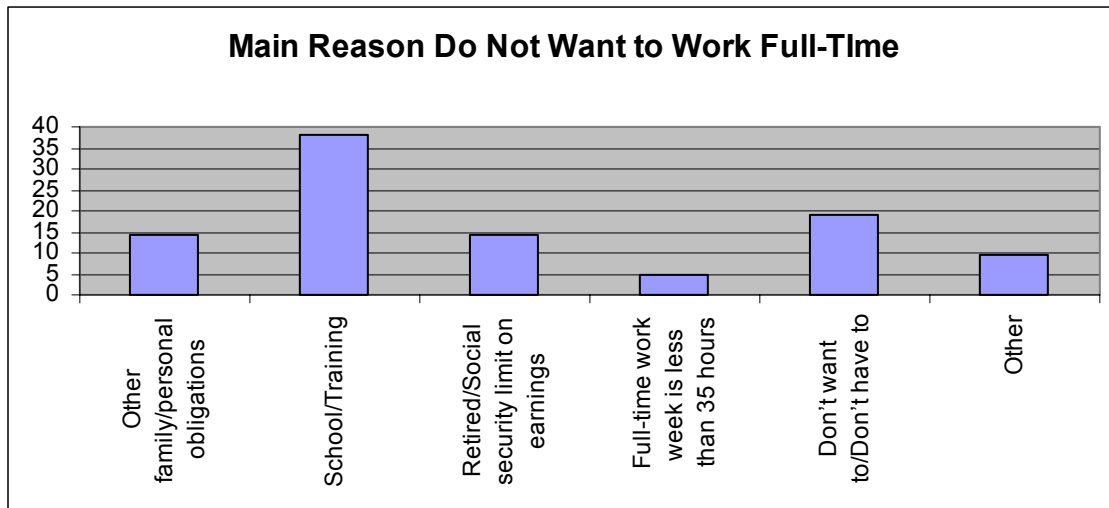
To understand how much the area population shifts in a five year period, respondents were asked if they have lived at the same residence for the last five years. Almost fifty percent had not moved and an additional 24.3% remained in the same county. About 16% had moved from a different county in the same state but only an additional 10.8% had moved from a different state or country.

Of the Underemployed, 16.1% did not live in the same county five year ago whereas 35.1% of the Job Shifters had not lived in the same county and 27.1% of Job Keepers.



## Type of Employment

Of all workers, 80.9% (or about 57,281 people) have full-time positions, and another 19.1% (or about 13,547 people) have part-time jobs. Of those workers with part time jobs 33.3% would like to have a full-time position with just one employer. Part-time workers listed several reasons for why they wanted to work part-time instead of full-time and these are described below in Table 3.



	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Other family/personal obligations	3	14.3
School/Training	8	38.1
Retired/Social security limit on earnings	3	14.3
Full-time work week is less than 35 hours	1	4.8
Don't want to/Don't have to	4	19.0
Other	2	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0</b>

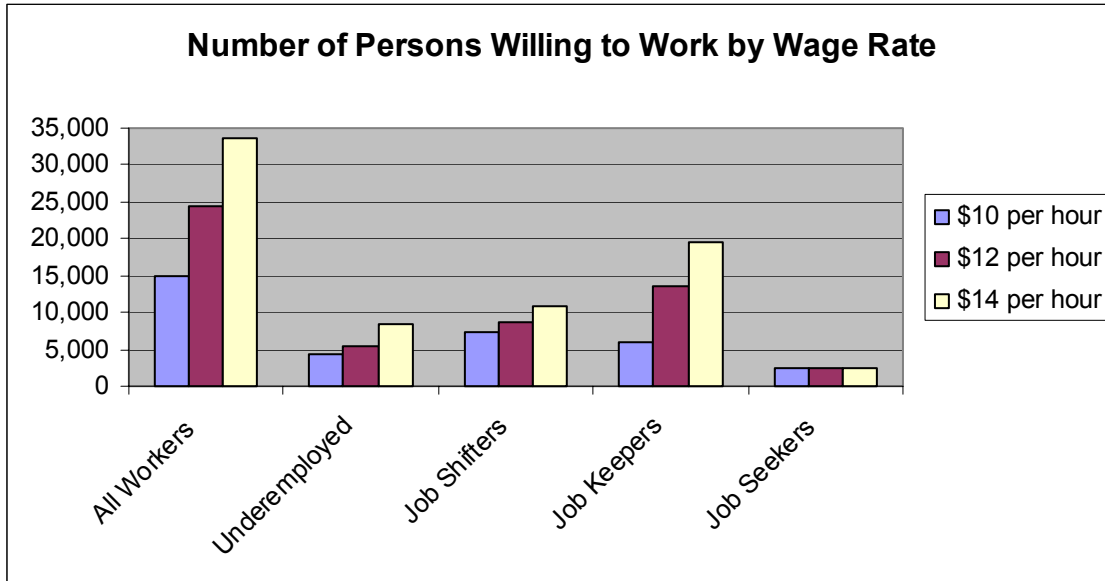
**Characteristics of Workers**  
**Wage Rates**

As the wage rate increases, so does the number of people who are willing to work. Table 4 describes how many people in each of the available worker categories are willing to take a position at various pay levels that includes a standard package of benefits.

Although Job Keepers by definition are those workers who are not interested in changing jobs, about 20,000 still find a job of \$14 per hour plus benefits to be either “attractive” or “very attractive”.

**Table 4: Number of Persons Willing to Work by Wage Rate**

	All Workers	Underemployed	Job Shifters	Job Keepers	Job Seekers
\$10 per hour	14,803	4,307	7,428	5,957	2,350
\$12 per hour	24,495	5,512	8,754	13,570	2,350
\$14 per hour	33,762	8,524	10,958	19,623	2,350

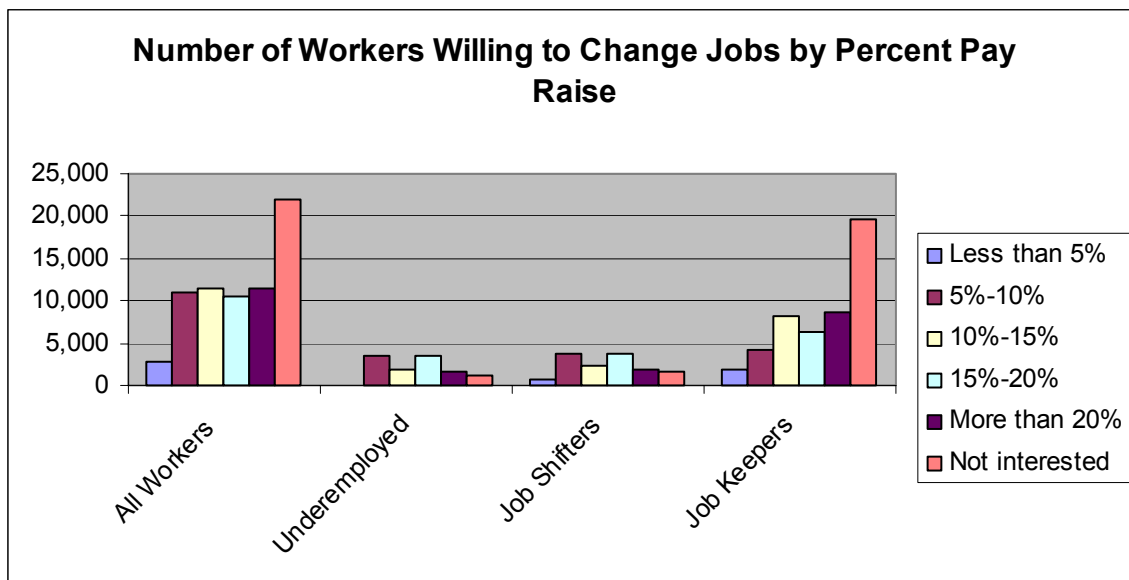


## Willingness to Change Jobs

As shown in Table 5, of the Underemployed, 5,479 workers (45.2%) indicated that they would be willing to change jobs for an increase in pay of 15% or less. Around 6,858 (47.4%) of Job Shifters were likely to change jobs for a 15% increase or less and Job Keepers were, not surprisingly, the group least likely to say they would change jobs for a pay increase of 15% or less with only 28.7% (or 14,479 workers). However, even though this figure is a smaller proportion than for the other two groups, it still represents a sizable group of workers. It is also interesting to note that only 38.8% of Job Keepers claimed to not be interested in changing jobs at all.

**Table 5: Number of Workers Willing to Change Jobs by Percent Pay Raise**

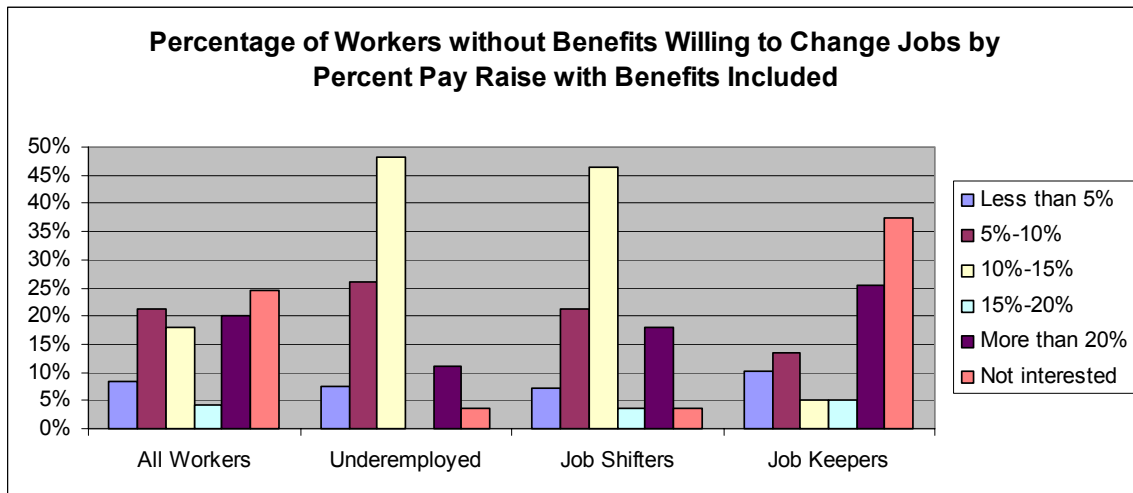
<u>Desired raise in pay</u>	<u>All Workers</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job Shifters</u>	<u>Job Keepers</u>
Less than 5%	2,739	0	762	1,957
5%-10%	10,957	3,522	3,810	4,304
10%-15%	11,348	1,957	2,286	8,218
15%-20%	10,565	3,522	3,810	6,261
More than 20%	11,348	1,565	1,905	8,609
Not interested	21,914	1,174	1,524	19,566



Workers who did not currently have a package of benefits were also asked what pay raise would be necessary for them to change jobs if benefits were included with that job. The Underemployed were most likely to be willing to change jobs under such circumstances.

**Table 6: Percentage of Workers without Benefits Willing to Change Jobs by Percent Pay Raise with Benefits Included**

<u>Desired raise in pay</u>	<u>All Workers</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job Shifters</u>	<u>Job Keepers</u>
Less than 5%	8.5%	7.4%	7.1%	10.2%
5%-10%	21.3%	25.9%	21.4%	13.6%
10%-15%	18.1%	48.1%	46.4%	5.1%
15%-20%	4.3%	0.0%	3.6%	5.1%
More than 20%	20.2%	11.1%	17.9%	25.4%
Not interested	24.5%	3.7%	3.6%	37.3%



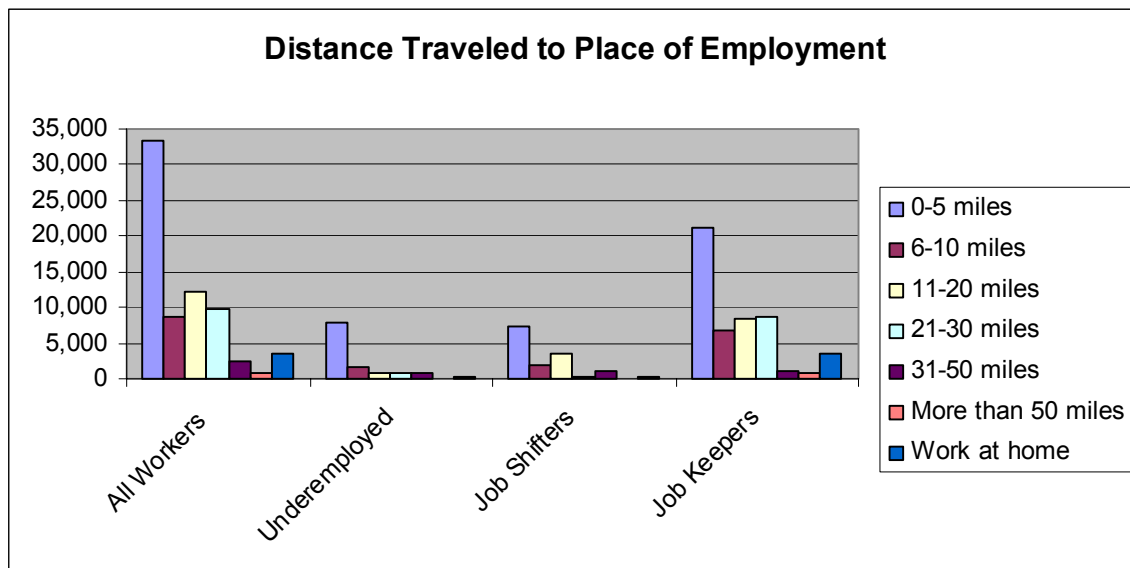
## Commuting Patterns

The majority of workers (69.1%) lives and works in the same county. About 75% of the remaining workers are employed in Oklahoma County

About 13,000 workers (or 18.3%) living in Norman already commute at least 21 miles to work and an additional 17.2% commute 11-20 miles as shown in Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Distance Traveled to Place of Employment**

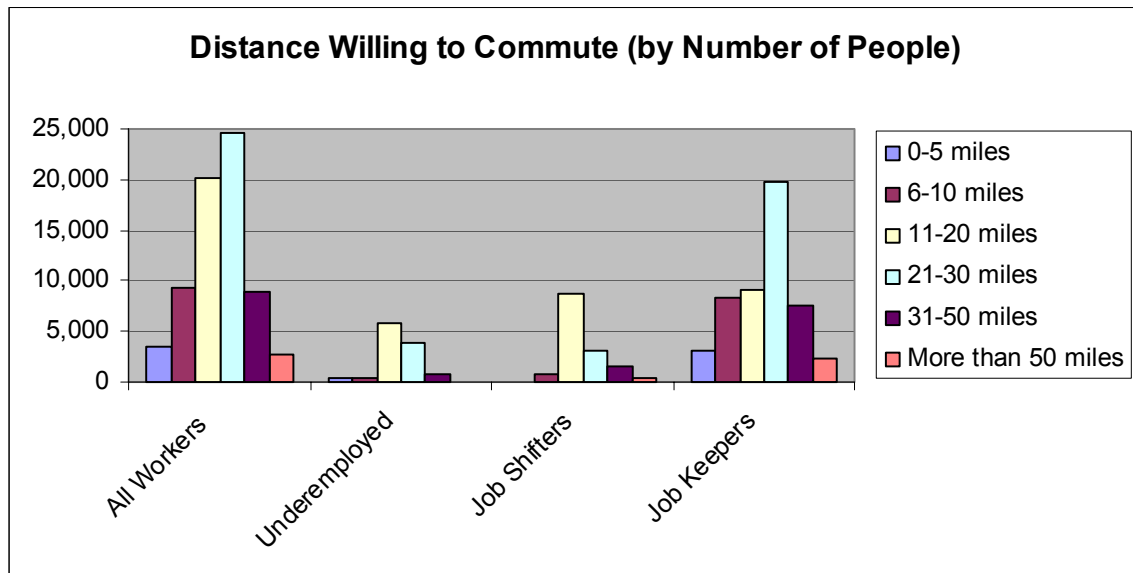
<u>Distance Traveled</u>	<u>All Workers</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job Shifters</u>	<u>Job Keepers</u>
0-5 miles	33,447	7,961	7,240	21,296
6-10 miles	8,657	1,516	1,905	6,704
11-20 miles	12,198	758	3,429	8,282
21-30 miles	9,837	758	381	8,676
31-50 miles	2,360	758	1,143	1,183
More than 50 miles	787	0	0	789
Work at home	3,541	379	381	3,549



Over half of all workers (51.1%) indicate a willingness to commute distances of 21 miles or more to their job and only 18.1% said that they would not commute more than ten miles to work.

**Table 8: Distance Willing to Commute (by Number of People)**

<u>Distance</u>	<u>All Workers</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job Shifters</u>	<u>Job Keepers</u>
0-5 miles	3,502	391	0	3,155
6-10 miles	9,340	391	762	8,282
11-20 miles	20,237	5,870	8,764	9,071
21-30 miles	24,517	3,913	3,048	19,719
31-50 miles	8,951	783	1,524	7,493
More than 50 miles	2,724	0	381	2,366



## Conclusions

- 19,958 residents of Norman, Oklahoma are either Underemployed or Job Shifters or both and are readily available to change jobs.
- 4,304 people are currently unemployed and but want to work.
- Among working adults about one-half (51.9%) have completed at least a Bachelor's degree and an additional 33.7% have had some college or an Associate's degree.
- A total of 24,495 current workers expressed a willingness to work for at least \$12 per hour and another 9,267 current workers would work for at least \$14 per hour.
- A total of 25,044 current workers are currently willing to change jobs for a pay raise of 15% or less.
- 36,192 current workers are willing to commute 21 miles or more to work.