



Student teams estimate impact of employment cuts among the area's largest firms

Job losses can spike during a pandemic. While the [US unemployment rate](#) has fallen since the 2020 peak, questions remain. In a simulation of economic impact, ECON 412 students researched the biggest employers in Union and Mecklenburg Counties and examined the extent to which the counties could be impacted if these firms undertook extensive job cuts.

Each county had different industries that propel the economy. In Mecklenburg County the biggest employers were Wells Fargo Bank, Atrium Health, Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education, Bank of America, and Amazon Fulfillment Services. In Union County, the top employers were Union County Public Schools, Tyson Farms, Tdy Industries, Harris Teeter, and Union County. Information on the largest employers was found through [AccessNC](#). Results were calculated in the [IMPLAN](#) application using 2019 year data (which was the most recent available at the time of the analysis in Spring 2021).

In order to create equality in the report, a hypothetical 1000 employees were downsized in the simulation. The 1,000 employees lost was counted as a direct effect. This number expanded as direct effects create indirect effects related to other businesses. For example, if Wells Fargo were to cut jobs, this would not only affect the former bank employees but would also affect real-estate, restaurants, and more. The total losses in employment and GDP are larger when the jobs cut were in higher-paying industries than in lower paying ones.

Mecklenburg County

Wells Fargo

- Hypothetical employment cut: (1,000)
- Total Loss in Employment: **(2,579)**
- Loss in County GDP: (\$700,006,800)

Atrium Health

- Hypothetical employment cut: (1,000)
- Total Loss in Employment: **(1,881)**
- Loss in County GDP: (\$194,696,854)

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

- Hypothetical employment cut: (1,000)
- Total Loss in Employment: **(1,164)**
- Loss in County GDP: (\$100,656,750)

Union County

Union County Public Schools:

- Hypothetical employment cut: (1,000)
- Total Loss of Employment: **(1,134)**
- Loss in County GDP: (\$90,236,589)

Tyson Foods:

- Hypothetical employment cut: (1,000)
- Total Loss of Employment: **(2,169)**
- Loss in County GDP: (\$114,463,097)

Tdy Industries (ATI Allvac):

- Hypothetical employment cut: (1,000)
- Total Loss of Employment: **(2,599)**
- Loss in County GDP: (\$215,039,724)