

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Key Industries

Thanks to its growing population, diverse economy, four business parks, and high-quality education system, Eau Claire, Wisconsin has emerged as an attractive location for both new and existing businesses, specifically in these five sectors: retail, healthcare, manufacturing, education, and technology. The region’s supportive business environment further enhances its appeal, making it a prime destination for investment and development in these industries.

Largest Industries	Employment
Retail Trade	8,294
Healthcare & Social Assistance	8,077
Manufacturing	5,536
Educational Services	3,884
Public Administration	2,708
Finance & Insurance	2,357
Professional & Technical Services	1,945
Construction	1,334
Transportation & Warehousing	1,017
Administrative & Support Services	986
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	942

Source: Esri Community Analytics Software (2025)

Retail

Eau Claire’s largest employment sector is retail trade, employing over 10,000 in stores alone and 3,000+ more in admin. The industry is anchored by the city’s status as a regional retail center and as the base for Menards’ corporate operations.

- 1 Menards
- 2 Large Retailers
- 3 Oakwood Mall

Healthcare

Another large industry is health-care, employing over 12,000. Its two hospitals and various smaller clinics make Eau Claire an attractive employer for medical professionals, and its location makes it a natural choice for care for nearby communities.

- 1 Mayo Clinic System
- 2 Marshfield Clinic
- 3 OakLeaf Network

Manufacturing

Centered in Eau Claire’s industrial parks, manufacturing plays a major role in the city’s economy. The sector contains some of the area’s largest employers that combined provide about 10,000 well-paying jobs to skilled workers in the region.

- 1 Nestlé
- 2 Silver Spring Foods
- 3 American Phoenix

Major Private Employers	Employees
Menards	11,550
Mayo Clinic Health System	5,500
Eau Claire Area School District	1,400
UW—Eau Claire	1,275
Marshfield Clinic	1,026
Nestlé	999
City of Eau Claire	650
Eau Claire County	645
Chippewa Valley Technical College	592
Market & Johnson	350
Cascades Tissue Group	241

Source: City of Eau Claire (2024)

Education

Education is also a large sector in the region, employing over 4,000 across both Eau Claire’s school district and two colleges. These educational facilities are a significant part of the region’s local economy as well and help to foster a well-educated workforce.

Technology

A high-growth industry in Eau Claire is technology development, which now employs over 2,000 professionals. Fields include software development, data analysis, and IT support, as well as technological manufacturing.

Eau Claire's Renowned Creative Economy

Eau Claire has become a lively hub for creatives, blending its rich history with a thriving contemporary arts scene where innovation flourishes. The city is home to a plethora of local galleries, music venues, and public art installations that provide ample opportunities for emerging and established artists to showcase their talents. The community's commitment to nurturing the arts is also evident in its various festivals and events that draw in visitors from near and far to experience a unique blend of music, art, and culture.

Eau Claire's creative economy is bolstered by a growing number of enterprises and startups. The city's entrepreneurial spirit is driven by its diverse range of businesses, from artisan crafts and local boutiques to innovative tech companies and design studios. Collaborative spaces and incubators, such as The Coven and UWEC's Small Business Development Center, provide resources and support for creatives so they can turn their passions into thriving businesses. This collaborative atmosphere makes Eau Claire an ideal place for creatives to connect, grow, and succeed.

Entrepreneur Resources

Multiple organizations in the Eau Claire community offer helpful resources to creative professionals.

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| 1 UWEC Small Business Development Center | 4 SCORE, West Central Wisconsin |
| 2 Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce | 5 U.S. Small Business Administration |
| 3 Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council | 6 Eau Claire Area Economic Development Corporation |

Support Local Art

 **Pablo Center at the Confluence**

 **2 Roots Art & Wine Gallery**

 **Sculpture Tour Eau Claire**

 **Chippewa Valley Theatre Guild**

 **Wisconsin Makers Market**

 **Eau Claire Int'l Film Festival**

 **ColorBlock Eau Claire**

 **Chippewa Valley Symphony**

 **Clear Water Comedy**

 **Chippewa Valley Writers Guild**



Economic Impact

The economic impact of the arts in Eau Claire is significant and multifaceted, contributing to the local economy in various ways. This sector provides employment opportunities for creatives, as well as the support staff employed at galleries, theaters, museums, and music venues. It attracts visitors from outside the region who spend money on accommodations, dining, transportation, and shopping, providing a substantial boost to the local economy. Public art and creative placemaking initiatives also enhance the appeal of neighborhoods, leading to increased property values and attracting new residents and businesses to the city.