

BLS Employment Projections and the Pandemic

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Employment Projections Program

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Overview

- Background on BLS projections and methods
- Potential structural impacts from the pandemic
- Implications for industry and occupational growth



Employment Projections Background

- BLS releases long-term employment projections annually
- 2019-29 projections were released in September 2020, but were developed and finalized in the Spring of 2020
- 2019-29 projections cover more than 800 occupations and 290 industries
- BLS projections prepared at the national level only
 - ▶ BLS projections serve as an input for state and local employment projections



Projections Users and Their Uses

- Career counselors and students making career choice decisions
- Jobseekers looking to find work or switch occupations
- Education and training officials making decisions on policy, funding, and program offerings based on demand for occupations
- Researchers interested in how the economy is changing



BLS Projections Alternate Scenarios

- BLS recognized there would be strong customer demand for information on the impact of the pandemic
- It was not feasible to rerun the full projections model, but a partial run on impacts of consumer spending decisions was doable
- Two scenarios – moderate impacts and strong impacts – were generated to better reflect uncertainty
- 2020-30 projections will have additional impacts

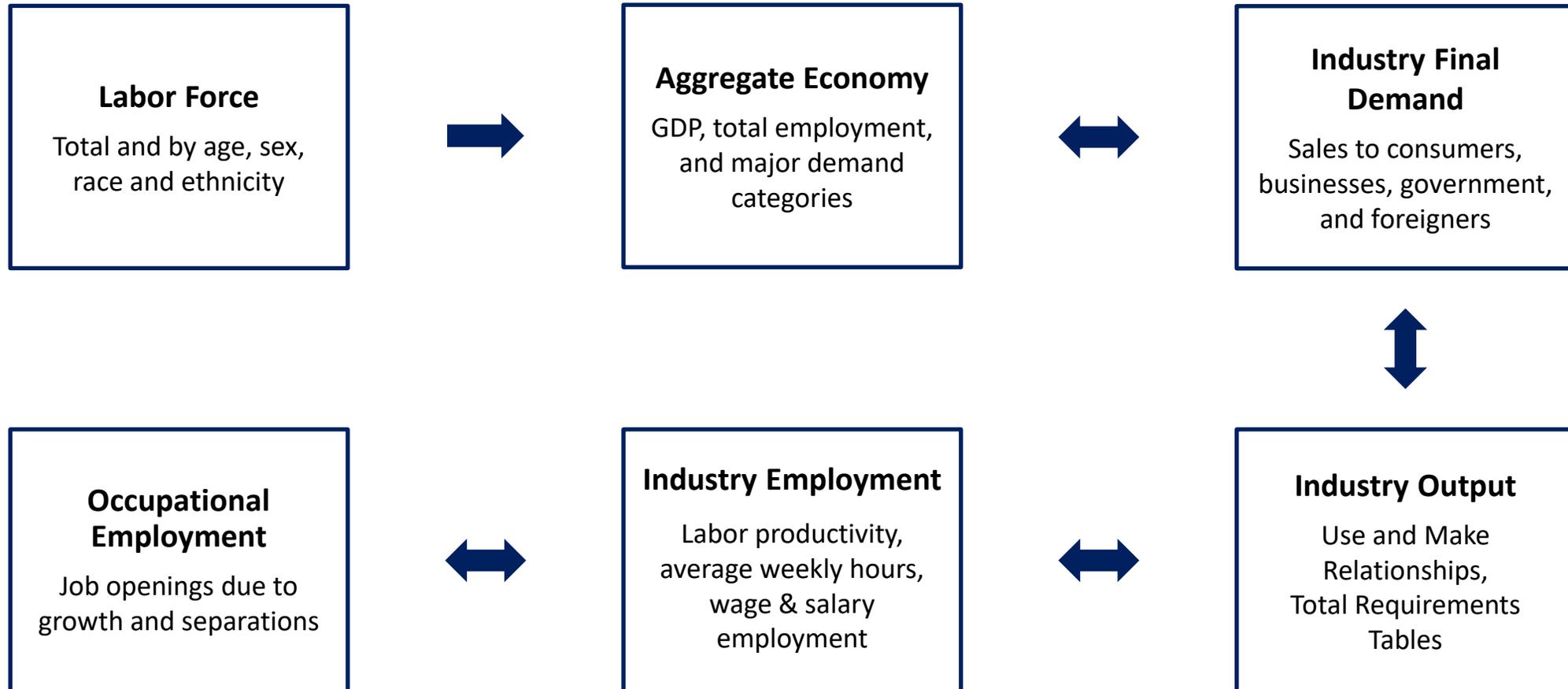


Alternate Scenarios Interpretation

- Moderate and strong impact scenarios complement, rather than replace, the baseline scenario (2019-29 projections as originally released)
- The future is always uncertain, but the pandemic heightens uncertainty
- Occupations and industries with differences between the three projection scenarios have increased uncertainty because of the pandemic



BLS National Employment Projections Process



Pandemic Structural Impacts

- BLS alternate scenarios for 2019-29 are built around changes in consumer spending and business hiring practices from:
 - ▶ Increased remote work
 - ▶ Increased E-commerce
 - ▶ Increased medical research
 - ▶ Decreased spending on leisure and hospitality (strong impact scenario)

Multiple Scenarios Interpretation

- Moderate impacts scenario includes effects of increased remote work, e-commerce, and medical research
- Strong impacts scenario includes these same effects, but at a higher magnitude
- Strong impacts scenario also includes impacts from decreased spending on leisure and hospitality.



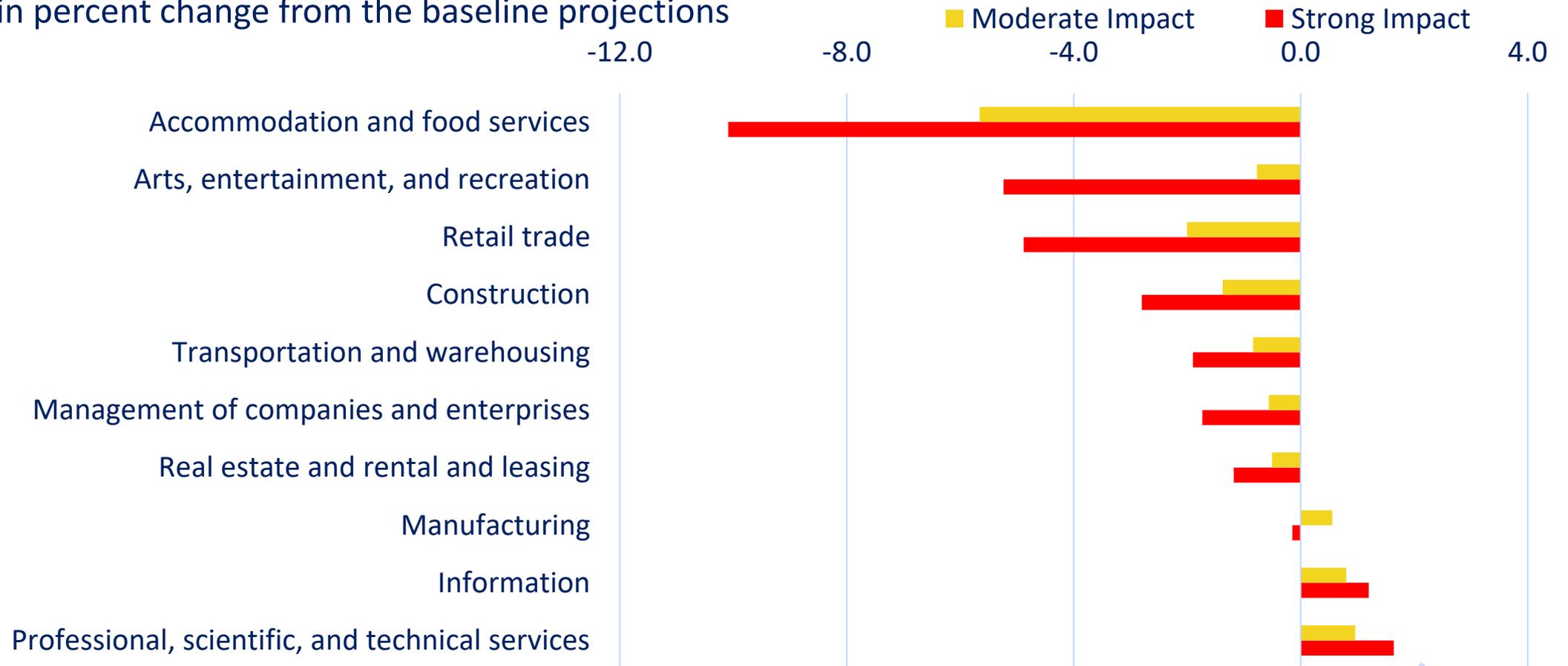
Pandemic Structural Impacts

- Other possible structural changes not able to be captured in the alternate scenarios
 - ▶ Reshoring of manufacturing
 - ▶ Increased automation
 - ▶ Altered labor force participation



Major Industry Impacts

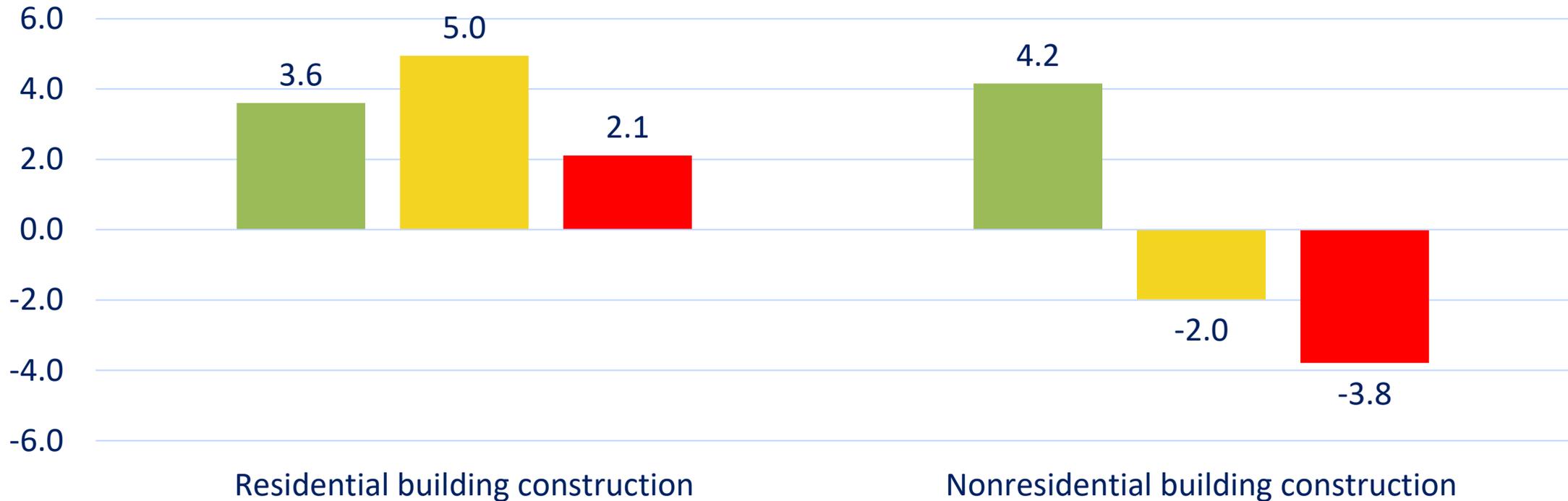
Difference in percent change from the baseline projections



Impacts on Construction

Projected percent change, 2019-29

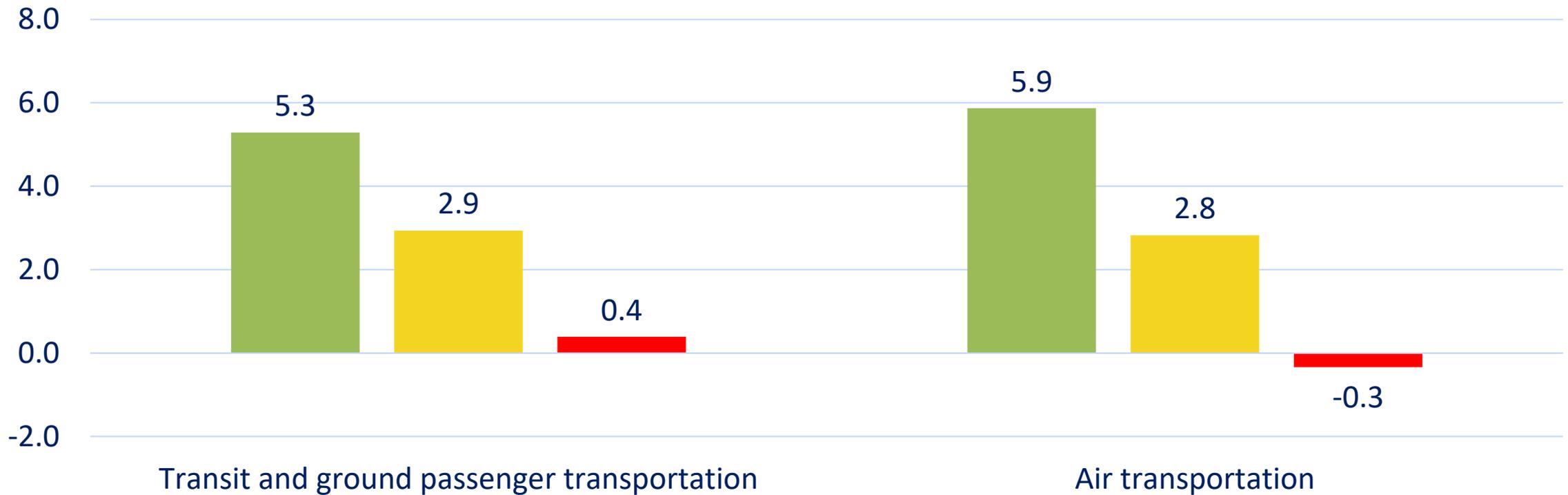
■ Baseline ■ Moderate Impact ■ Strong Impact



Impacts on Transportation

Projected percent change, 2019-29

■ Baseline ■ Moderate Impact ■ Strong Impact



Impacts on Retail, Leisure, and Hospitality

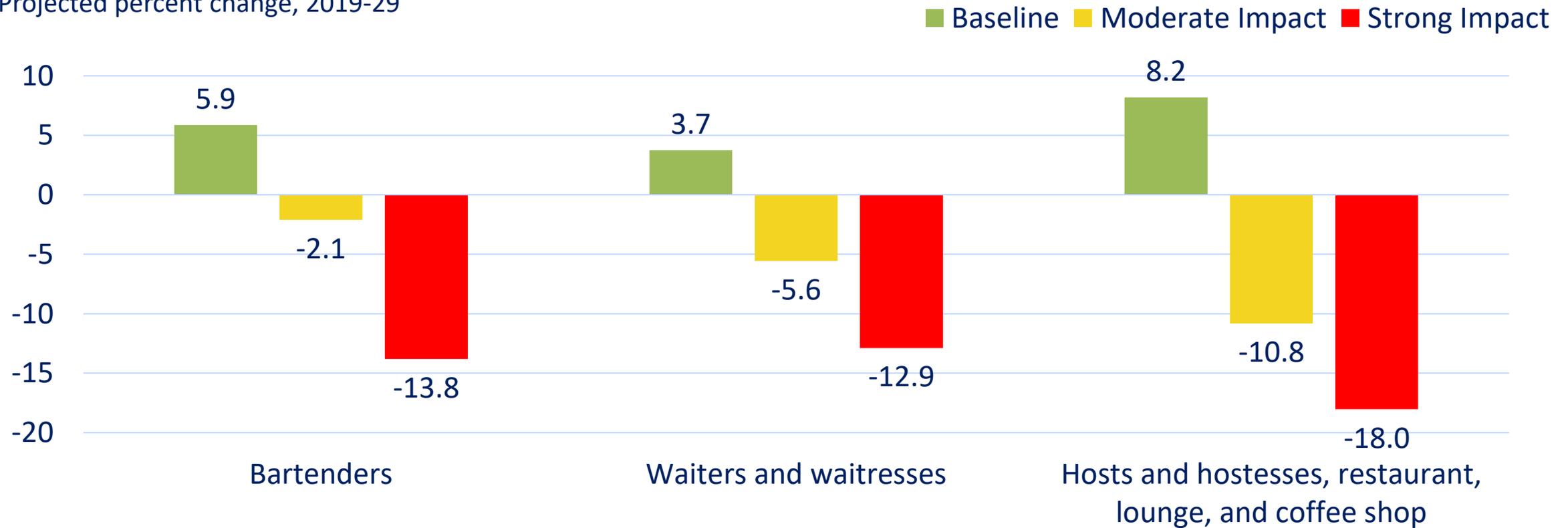
Projected percent change, 2019-29

■ Baseline ■ Moderate Impact ■ Strong Impact



Impacts on Food Service Occupations

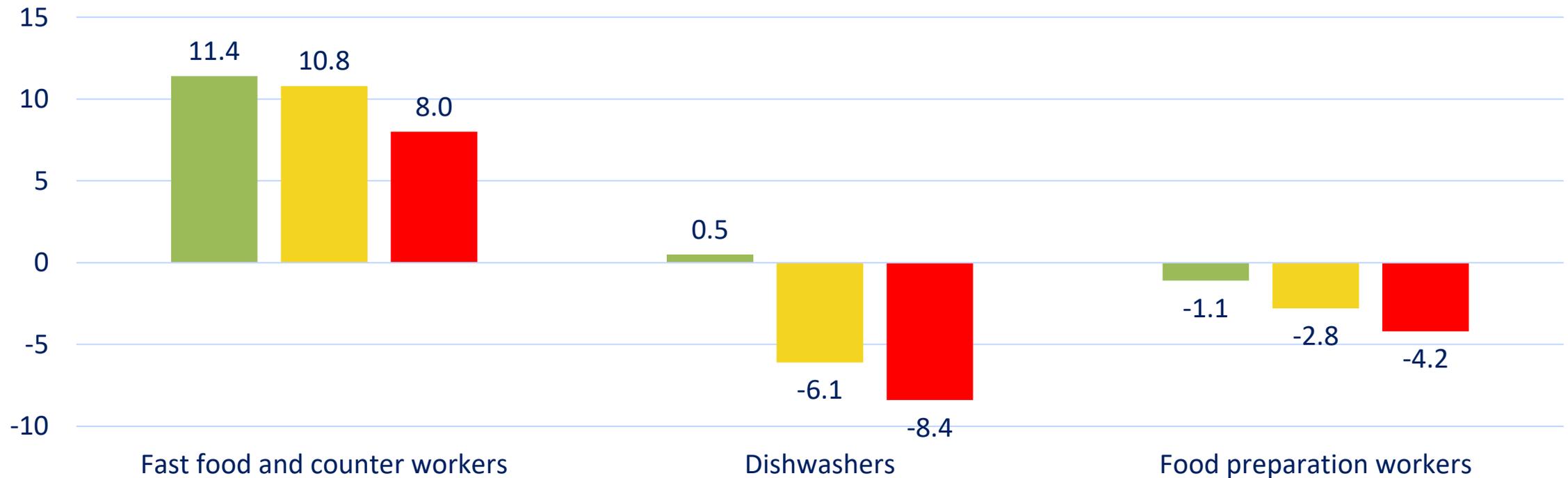
Projected percent change, 2019-29



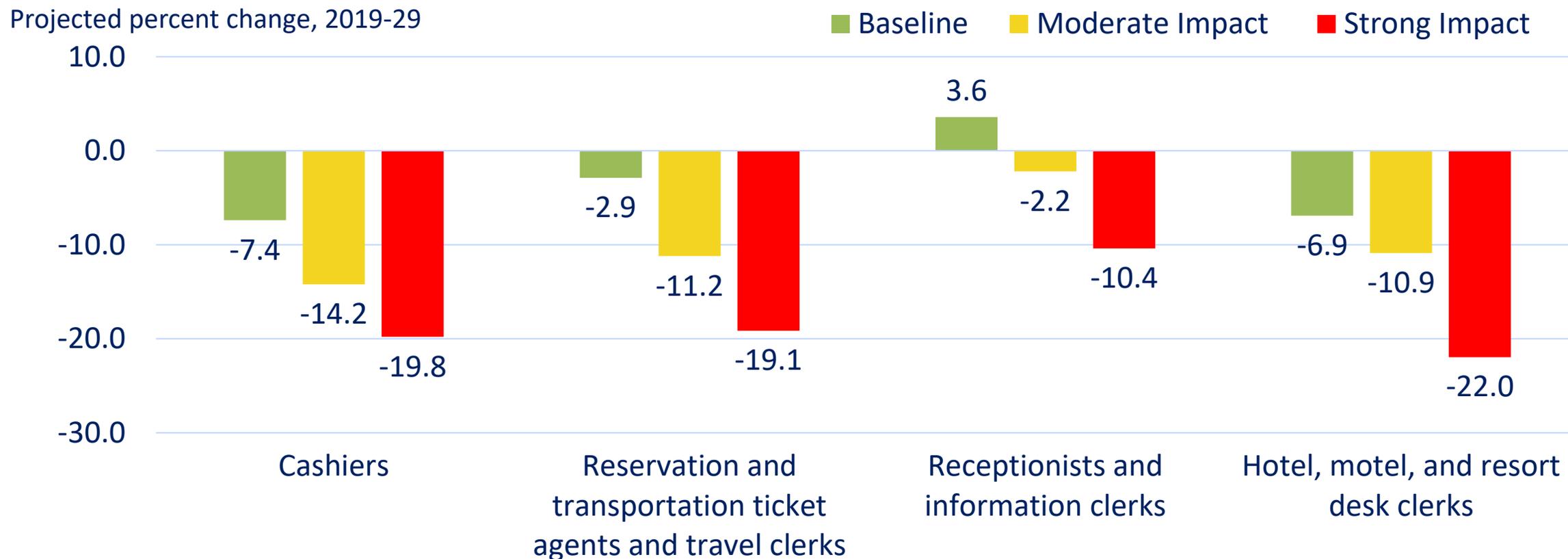
Impacts on Food Service Occupations

Projected percent change, 2019-29

■ Baseline ■ Moderate Impact ■ Strong Impact



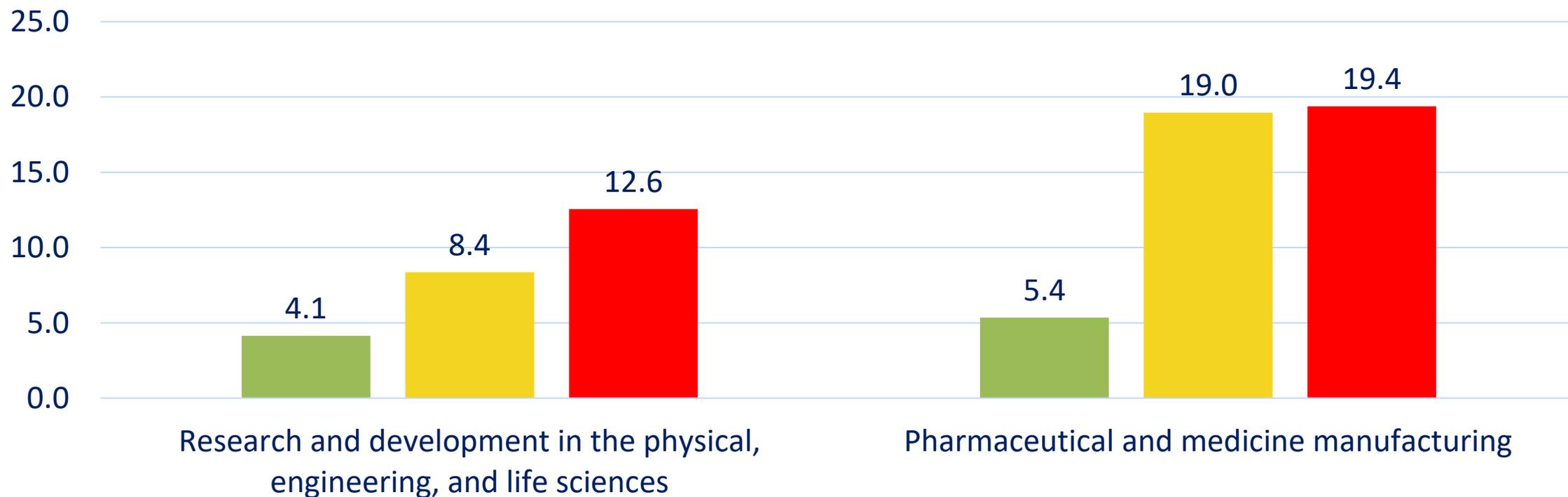
Impacts on Clerical/Sales Occupations



Impacts on Medical Research

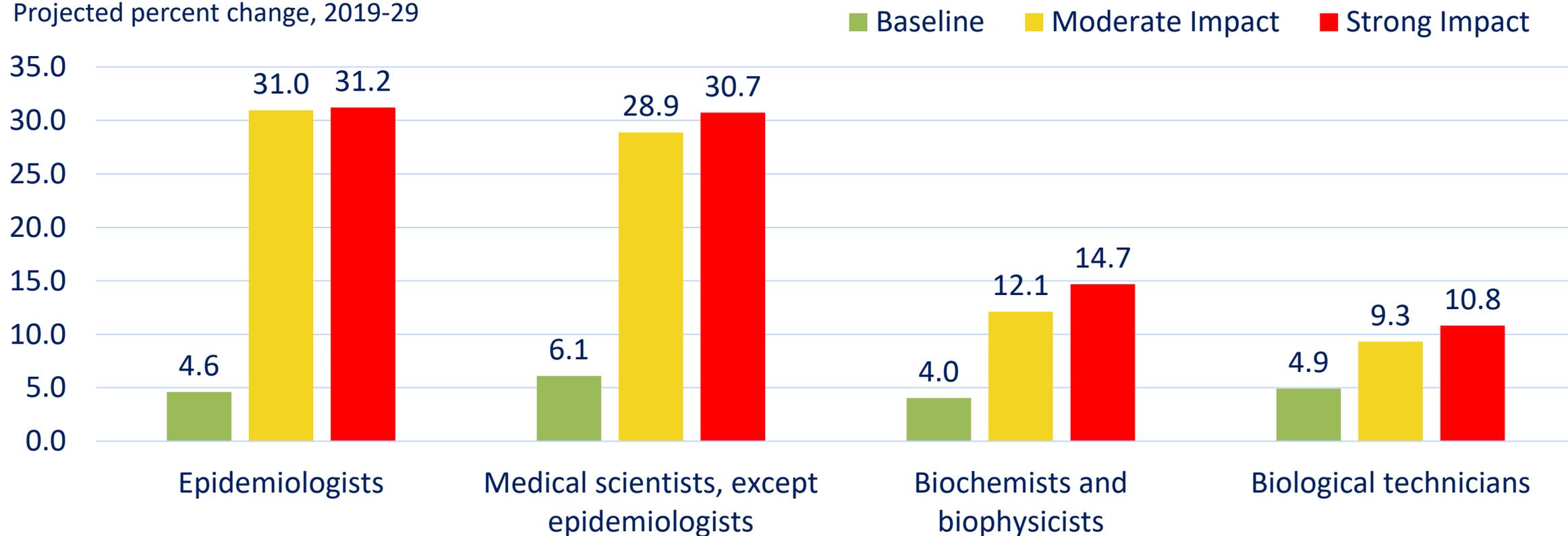
Projected percent change, 2019-29

■ Baseline ■ Moderate Impact ■ Strong Impact



Impacts on Medical Research Occupations

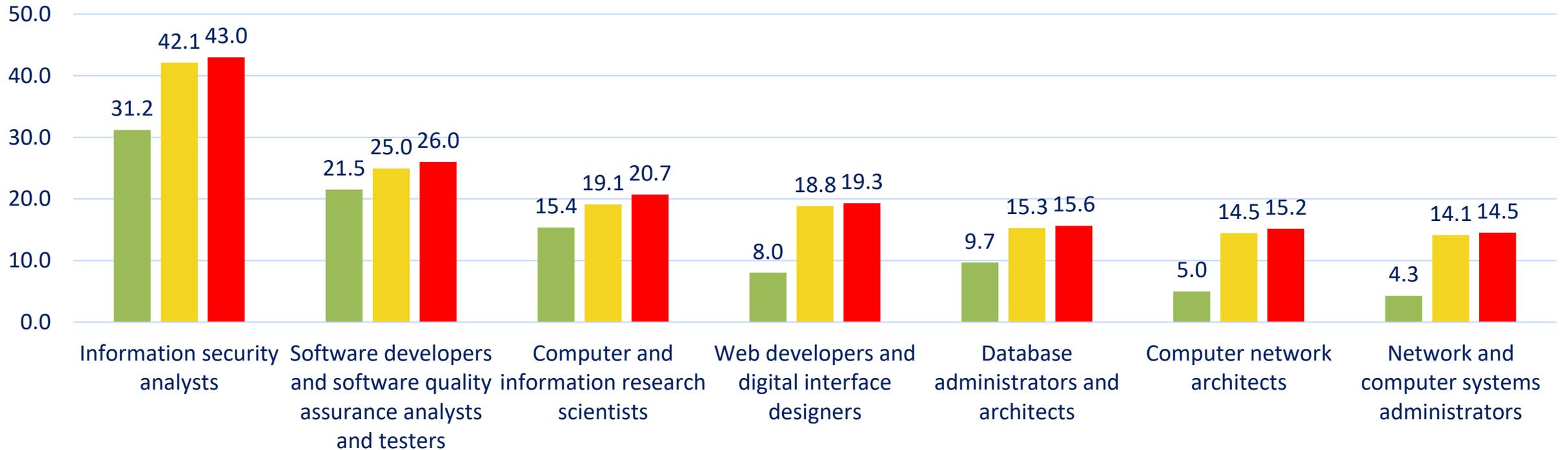
Projected percent change, 2019-29



Impacts on IT Occupations

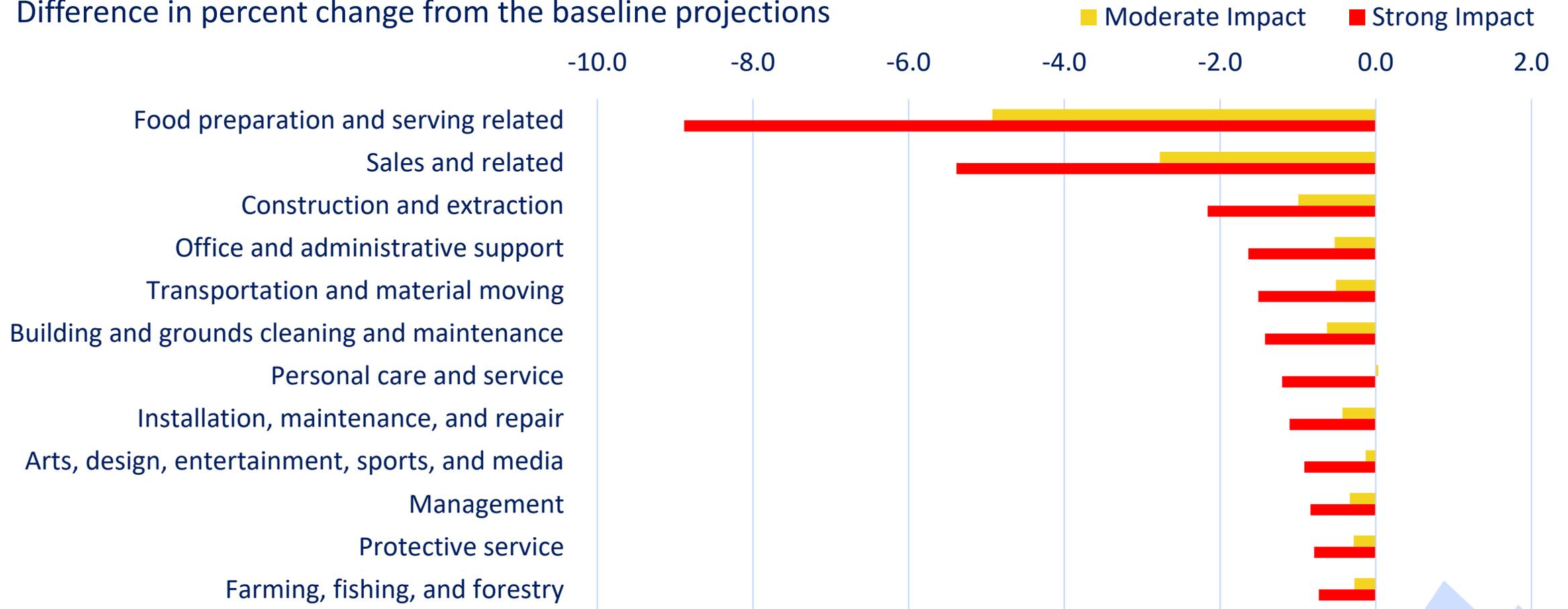
Projected percent change, 2019-29

■ Baseline ■ Moderate Impact ■ Strong Impact



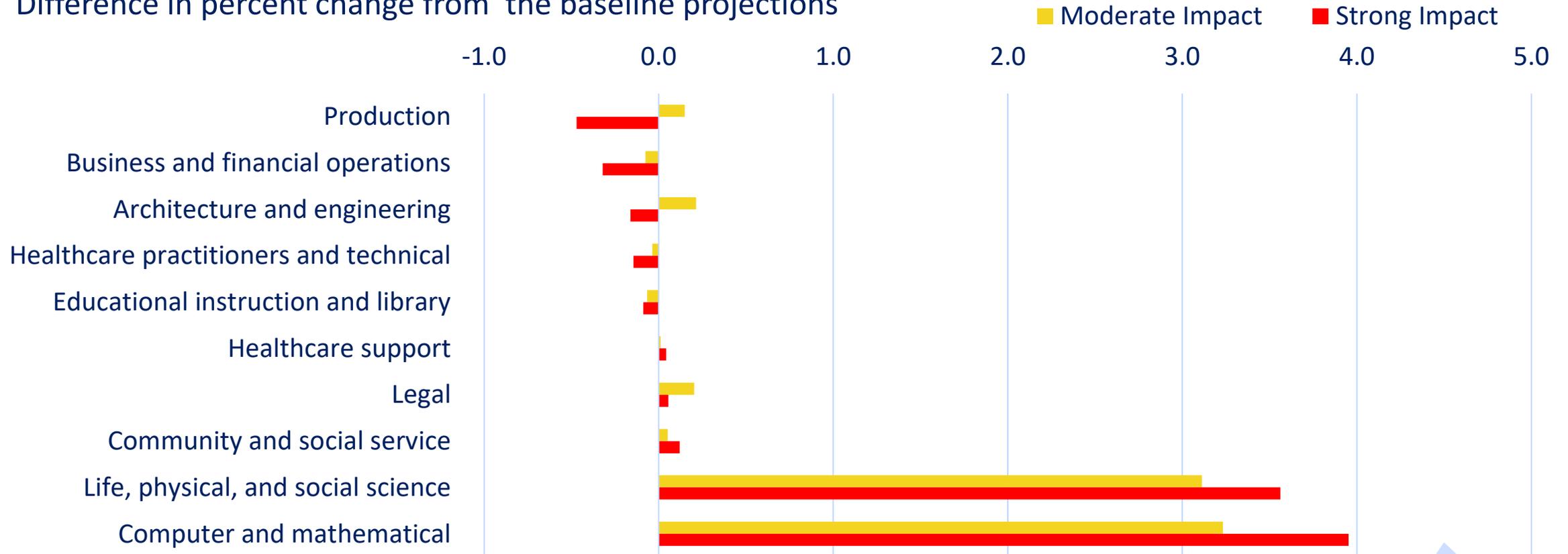
Occupational Groups Impacts

Difference in percent change from the baseline projections



Occupational Groups Impacts

Difference in percent change from the baseline projections



Useful Employment Projections Sites

- Employment Projections data and publications
 - ▶ <http://www.bls.gov/emp/>
- Occupational Outlook Handbook
 - ▶ <http://www.bls.gov/ooh>
- Frequently asked questions
 - ▶ <http://www.bls.gov/emp/frequently-asked-questions.htm>
- State employment projections
 - ▶ <http://www.projectionscentral.com/>



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