



## Press Release

# The Rise of Synthetic Opioids Could Explain Part of the Missing Workforce

PAULINA ENCK | DECEMBER 7, 2022

In new research, Labor Policy Analyst Isabella Hindley considers the link between the rise in synthetic opioid use and the 6.3 million missing from the U.S. workforce.

### Key findings:

- This study estimates that the loss of at least 1.3 million of the 6.3 million missing workers may be attributable to the ongoing opioid epidemic.
- The rise of synthetic opioid use increased overall opioid overdose fatalities by more than 200 percent between 2013 and 2021.
- It also contributes to lower worker productivity, increased worker absenteeism, increased job openings through employee turnover, and a reduced labor supply.
- The loss of more than 1.3 million workers due to opioid use indicates a cumulative loss of 7 billion work hours and \$526.1 billion in reduced real output supply between 2013 and 2021.

[Read the analysis](#)