



Employment & Economic Growth

Community Conversation Fact Sheet

Preparing the Region's Workforce for the Needs of Businesses

- In a national survey, 39% of employers said that recent high school graduates are unprepared for entry-level positions. Almost half said that high schools are graduating students who lack skills to read complicated materials, to think critically, and to problem solve.¹
- Two thirds of all new jobs nationally require some college education.² By 2010, jobs that require at least a bachelor's degree are expected to grow by 22 percent, while jobs requiring at least an associate's degree are projected to grow by 32 percent.³
- In Northeast Ohio, three of four people between the ages of 18 and 34 do not have a college degree.⁴ Across the state, 70% of those who start high school end up graduating, 40% start college, 29% return the second year and 19% earn a degree.⁵ Among African Americans and Hispanics, only about half of those students who start high school end up graduating.

Uncompetitive Business Environment

- The overall cost of doing business – which can include labor costs, energy, state and local taxes and office rent – is high in Northeast Ohio compared to other regions, with energy costs leading the way.⁶ Recent business tax reforms are likely to improve the region's competitive position on this factor.⁷

Support for Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

- Entrepreneurship and small business development are part of the business dynamics of a region that influence job growth because these firms have greater potential for innovation than larger, more established ones.⁸
- Northeast Ohio lagged behind other regions on several key indicators that are often associated with places where entrepreneurs are successful, including venture capital, high-tech employment, and public offerings from new corporations.⁹ Four new business startups occur in Northeast Ohio for every 100 people employed in the economy.¹⁰

Need for More Competitive Industries

- Northeast Ohio's economy has historically been grounded in heavy manufacturing industries. These older industries have grown slower nationally than others, like computers and electronics. At the same time, Northeast Ohio firms have not been as productive as others in their own industries.¹¹

- Many new industries that have emerged elsewhere have not performed well in Northeast Ohio, including most high tech industries. We do have successful firms within some of these industries, but the region has not created enough to replace our losses in manufacturing.¹²

Regional Public Transportation

- In recent years, the location of jobs in various industries has changed dramatically, moving away from central city downtowns to locations along highways outside of core cities and public transportation hubs. This has resulted in people traveling greater distances for daily trips to work.¹³

Need for Jobs with Higher Wages and Benefits

- Over the past five years, workers nationally have seen their wages rise as Ohio workers have seen their wages fall. The current median hourly wage in Ohio of \$13 is lower than the national average.¹⁴
- The largest numbers of jobs expected to be created over the next six years are in the service and retail sectors. These jobs offer an average wage between \$7 and \$10 an hour; less than many manufacturing jobs that have been lost by the region in recent years.¹⁵
- Recently, even those with a college education have seen wages decline. Nevertheless, inequality between low- and high-income families is greater than it was ten years ago.”¹⁶

Attracting New Immigrants

- The Cleveland/Akron metro area lags behind the nation in attracting immigrants to the region; only 1% of people living here in 2000 were recent immigrants. However, three times more foreign immigrants moved into the region than left the region between 1995 and 2000.¹⁷
- Nationally, research has shown that regions with the highest percentages of foreign-born Asian and Hispanic populations are regions with stronger economies.¹⁸

Managing Regional Growth

- While Northeast Ohio’s population has not significantly grown in recent years, people are now dispersed over a much larger area at smaller densities. This trend is expected to increase over the next 20 years.¹⁹ As people and jobs shift out of existing cities, new infrastructure – like roads and sewers – must be built and maintained.

Public School Funding

- There is a greater difference in spending per student in Northeast Ohio than elsewhere in the state. For example, the Beachwood school district in Cuyahoga County spent almost \$12,000 more per student than North Central in Wayne County. Outside of Northeast Ohio, the largest gap in spending between school districts was about \$6,000 per student. While spending per student has grown more equal across the rest of the state over the past five years, it has remained about the same in our region.²⁰
- In a recent study conducted for the state, business leaders across Northeast Ohio cited the on-going debate over school funding as a challenge to doing business in the region.²¹



Education & Skills

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- In Northeast Ohio, three of four people between the ages of 18 and 34 do not have a college degree.²⁷ Across the state, 70% of those who start high school end up graduating, 40% start college, 29% return the second year and 19% earn a degree.²⁸ Among African Americans and Hispanics, only about half of those students who start high school end up graduating.

Student Performance

- Ohio is ranked in the top ten states in the nation for 8th graders in science and writing, according to national testing.²⁹ Overall, the state received a C+ grade from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education on preparation of high school students for college.
- 7th grade tests in math reveal a gap of 38 points between white and African American students.³⁰ At the sixth grade level, only a quarter of African American students demonstrated proficiency in reading, compared to two-thirds of white students.³¹
- 78% of those students who started 9th grade in Ohio graduated from high school, which places the state at 10th in the nation. However, a graduation rate gap exists between whites and minorities—83% for white students but only 55% for both African American and Hispanic students.³²

Accountability of Public Schools

- High school seniors in the class of 2007 will be the first to have to pass the new Ohio Graduation Test in order to graduate. When these students were sixth graders in 2001, only 43% of white students passed all sections of their proficiency tests; African American students fared much worse at 11%.³³
- Of those 9th graders in Ohio who graduate high school on time, only 31% are estimated to be ready for college. Readiness percentages drop to as low as 13% for Hispanic graduates.³⁴
- Only one-third of Ohio high school graduates complete the courses needed to succeed in a good entry-level job, an apprenticeship, the military, or in college, according to the Ohio Board of Regents.³⁵

Accessibility and Affordability of College Education

- Annual tuitions at Northeast Ohio's public universities range from \$6,333 at Youngstown State to \$7,958 at University of Akron; in comparison, annual cost to full time students at a community college is about \$2,300.³⁶ Students pay for a larger portion of their higher education costs in Ohio (49%) than in most states, earning the state an "F" grade from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.
- There are 22 public or private colleges and universities in Northeast Ohio; virtually every county is home to one or more school, which includes community or technical colleges and branch campuses.

Quality of Inner City Schools

- The school districts for Akron, Cleveland, Lorain and Youngstown were each rated as "Academic Watch" for the 2003-2004 school year, having met five or less of Ohio's 18 standards. Proficiency test results in math and science for 10th graders fell below the state requirement of 85% in the Akron, Canton, Cleveland, Lorain and Youngstown school districts.³⁷
- Only 58% of urban high school students graduate in Northeast Ohio compared to 86% of students overall in the region.³⁸ Only one in three high school graduates from major cities in Ohio go immediately to college compared to over half of all Ohio graduates.³⁹

The Value of Education

- Eight of ten Ohioans say the state should spend more on education; only health care for the poor and elderly comes close to this figure. The majority (74%) oppose further reductions in funding to Ohio's higher education system.⁴⁰



Equity & Fairness

Community Conversation Fact Sheet

Need for Jobs with Higher Wages and Benefits

- Over the past 25 years in Ohio, the gap has grown between the earnings of those who are paid the most and those who are paid the least. The 10% of people making the most earn four times as much as the 10% who make the least.⁴¹
- The largest numbers of jobs expected to be created over the next six years are in the service and retail sectors. These jobs offer an average wage between \$7 and \$10 an hour; less than many manufacturing jobs that have been lost by the region in recent years.⁴²
- In order to meet their basic needs, a family with two children in Northeast Ohio must earn between \$31,050 a year in Youngstown-Warren and \$34,531 in greater Cleveland, which is almost twice the amount that is considered the poverty level.⁴³

Public School Funding

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Access to Quality Health Care

- Fifteen percent of Ohio adults under 65 lack health insurance. Young adults between 18 and 29 have the highest rates of uninsured, as do African American and Hispanic residents. In Cuyahoga County, 10% of white adults were uninsured while 23% of African Americans and 20% of Hispanics lacked insurance.⁴⁶
- In several Northeast Ohio counties, uninsured adults were nearly five times as likely to report unmet health care needs as those with insurance. Among adults with and without insurance, those working either full- time or part-time were less likely to have unmet health care needs. Poor and near-poor adults were more likely to have unmet needs, as were people who reported only poor or fair health.⁴⁷

Access to Affordable and Integrated Housing

- Housing prices in Northeast Ohio are relatively affordable compared with other regions. For example, housing costs for the Cleveland-Akron metro areas are quite similar to those across Ohio and the nation. In

2000, the average family's income exceeded the amount needed to pay for the average home by 70%, which is consistent with state-wide and national figures. This was a slight improvement from 1990.⁴⁸

- In both the Youngstown/Warren and Cleveland/Akron metropolitan areas, low income and affordable housing is largely concentrated in certain areas, such as the core cities themselves and outlying townships. This pattern tends to keep people with low and moderate incomes from accessing growing job bases and higher performing schools.⁴⁹

Racial Segregation and Discrimination

- Northeast Ohio's African American and Latino residents reside primarily in or around the region's core cities. This means these ethnic populations are segregated from white residents who live outside of the core cities in greater numbers. In fact, only Flint, MI, and Milwaukee, WI, ranked lower than Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria in terms of racial inclusion, according to a recent study of the region.⁵⁰

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Regional Public Transportation

- Less than three percent of Northeast Ohio workers use public transit to get to work, compared with close to five percent nationally.⁵³
- In recent years, the location of jobs in various industries has changed dramatically, moving away from central city downtowns to locations along highways outside of core cities and public transportation hubs. This has resulted in people traveling greater distances for daily trips to work.⁵⁴

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Quality of Life & Place

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Impact of Regional Growth Trends

- While Northeast Ohio's population has not significantly grown in recent years, people are now dispersed over a much larger area at smaller densities. This trend is expected to increase over the next 20 years.⁶⁰ As people and jobs shift out of existing cities, new infrastructure – like roads and sewers – must be built and maintained.
- “Overwhelming movement of opportunity in the region is outward. Gains in population, tax base, household income, and jobs are occurring in outlying communities at the expense of the core.” The cities of Cleveland, Youngstown, Warren, and Akron have residential tax bases that are less than half the regional average while the more affluent suburbs, on average, enjoy tax bases over 2.5 times the regional average.⁶¹
- In the Cleveland/Akron metro area, over two-thirds of the area's residents – those in central cities and at-risk places – live in communities facing fiscal stress. This means most residents live in areas with limited resources and growing social needs. These areas face higher costs in providing public services without the ability to increase revenues.
- In the Youngstown/Warren metro area, near three-fourths of the area's residents live in places with low or slow-growing tax bases and no population growth. These areas face higher costs in providing public services without the ability to increase revenues.⁶²

Balancing Economic Development with Environmental Preservation

- As stated above, people are now dispersed over a much larger area of the region despite no overall population growth. This means that some land, especially in former rural areas, that had formally been open is now being developed for use. Limited information is available about how much former open space across the region has been redeveloped.

Need for Jobs with Higher Wages and Benefits

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- Recently, even those with a college education have seen wages decline. Nevertheless, inequality between low- and high-income families is greater than it was ten years ago.”⁶⁵

Income Inequality

- Over the past 25 years in Ohio, the difference between the earnings of those who are paid the most and those who are paid the least has grown. The 10% of people making the most earn four times as much as the 10% who make the least.⁶⁶
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Regional Public Transportation System

- Less than three percent of Northeast Ohio workers use public transit to get to work, compared with close to five percent nationally. More than six percent use transit in Cuyahoga compared to less than one percent in Lorain County.⁶⁹
- There are few links between transit providers from different parts of the region, making it difficult for those dependent on transit to commute to areas outside of their local transit system.
- In recent years, the location of jobs in various industries has changed dramatically, moving away from central city downtowns to locations along highways outside of core cities and public transportation hubs. This has resulted in people traveling greater distances for daily trips to work.⁷⁰

Overall Lack of Cooperation across Communities

- Northeast Ohio has more than 500 political jurisdictions, including 15 county governments, more than 230 municipalities, more than 100 school districts, and dozens of special districts. Limited information is available about the level of cooperation that takes place among these bodies.
- In 2005, the Northeast Ohio Sourcing Office was formed to help municipalities pool resources and to reduce duplication of services.



Cooperation & Governance

Community Conversation Fact Sheet

Government Fragmentation and Duplication of Public Services

- Northeast Ohio has more than 500 political jurisdictions, including 15 county governments, more than 230 municipalities, more than 100 school districts, and dozens of special districts. Research shows that regions with fewer local governments have greater job growth and higher average incomes.⁷¹ When political and economic power is divided across many competing municipalities, a small number of governmental units can “block progress, change and regional action.”⁷²
- Limited research is available about how the number of local governments relates to the cost of public services in a region. Some argue that greater numbers of local governments cost taxpayers more because they lead to duplicated public services. Others argue that competition between local governments for residents and businesses keep costs down.⁷³ Extensive case studies of the similar regions of St. Louis and Pittsburgh found that while consolidating some functions among governmental units did reduce costs, there was no evidence of lower costs per resident for such services as police and street services.⁷⁴

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Public Involvement in Community Life

- A national study of community connectedness (or “social capital”) found that Cuyahoga County residents were below average compared to the rest of the nation in their levels of volunteering and giving, and about average in their levels of involvement in politics and in local community groups, as well as in their leadership in civic activities.⁸⁰

Public Awareness of Regional Cooperation Benefits

- According to recent polling, Northeast Ohio citizens strongly support cooperation across counties. When asked if they would prefer to see counties working together or each county working on its own for a series of tasks, people overwhelmingly supported greater cooperation. These tasks included supporting job creation; supporting businesses; attracting international businesses; promoting tourism; training workers for new job opportunities; and developing an overall plan for economic growth. The only task for which a majority of people were not in favor of greater cooperation was deciding whether land is used for housing, business, agriculture, or other purposes.⁸¹

Endnotes

- ¹ Public Opinion Strategies, Rising to the Challenge: Are High School Graduates Prepared for College and Work?, Achieve, Inc. 2005, p. 6.
- ² Anthony Carnevale and Donna Desrochers, Standards for What? The Economic Roots of K-16 Reform, Education Testing Service, 2003.
- ³ U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Survey 2002-2003.
- ⁴ <http://factfinder.census.gov/>
- ⁵ National Center for Public Policy & Higher Education, Policy Alert, April 2004. Data are estimates only.
- ⁶ Center for Economic Development, Regional Economic Indicators: Business and Innovative Climate, Maxine Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University, 2004,
- ⁷ Ibid, p. 25. This report uses data from Economy.com's North American Business Cost Review
- ⁸ Randy Eberts, George Erickcek, and Jack Kleinhenz, Dashboard Indicators for the Northeast Ohio Economy, Draft Report for the Fund for Our Economic Future, January 2006, p. 37
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- ¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Establishment and Enterprise Micro Data (LEEM) file.
- ¹¹ UpJohn-Kleinhenz, Building a Set of Dashboard Indicators for the Northeast Ohio Economy, Draft Report, Fund for Our Economic Future, First Draft, July 2005.
- ¹² UpJohn-Kleinhenz, Building a Set of Dashboard Indicators for the Northeast Ohio Economy, Draft Report, Fund for Our Economic Future, Second Draft, September 2005, pp 3-17.
- ¹³ Maps of these findings are in Region Day Presentation by Hunter Morrison, Northeast Ohio Leadership Task Force, April 2004.
- ¹⁴ Policy Matters Ohio, State of Working Ohio 2005, p. 21.
- ¹⁵ Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Bureau of Labor Market Information, October 2002
- ¹⁶ Center for Budget & Policy Priorities, Pulling Apart: Ohio An Analysis of Income Trends, 2006, p. 3.
- ¹⁷ Mark Salling and Ellen Cryan, Foreign Migration to the Cleveland-Akron-Lorain Metropolitan Area From 1995 to 2000, NODIS, Cleveland State University (2005), pp 7 and 8.
- ¹⁸ Randy Eberts, et. al., Building a Set of Dashboard Indicators for the Northeast Ohio Economy, Draft Report, Fund for Our Economic Future, Oct. 2005, pp. 10, 12, 26 and 27.
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- ²⁰ http://www.ode.state.oh.us/school_finance/foundation/reports/exrevrpt.asp. The standard deviation of per student funding in Northeast Ohio is twice that for the rest of Ohio.
- ²¹ Deloitte-CSU, Industry-Based Competitive Strategies for Ohio: Managing Three Portfolios, 2005, p. 186
- ²² http://www.ode.state.oh.us/school_finance/foundation/reports/exrevrpt.asp. The standard deviation of per student funding in Northeast Ohio is twice that for the rest of Ohio.
- ²³ Deloitte-CSU, Industry-Based Competitive Strategies for Ohio: Managing Three Portfolios, 2005, p. 186
- ²⁴ Public Opinion Strategies, Rising to the Challenge: Are High School Graduates Prepared for College and Work?, Achieve, Inc. 2005, p. 6.
- ²⁵ Anthony Carnevale and Donna Desrochers, Standards for What? The Economic Roots of K-16 Reform, Education Testing Service, 2003.
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- ²⁸ National Center for Public Policy & Higher Education, Policy Alert, April 2004. Data are estimates only.
- ²⁹ National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Measuring Up 2004: State Report Card on Higher Education, p 5.
- ³⁰ Ohio Department of Education, 2004-2005 Annual Report on Education Progress in Ohio, p. 6.
- ³¹ Ohio Board of Education, Toward High Achievement for all Students, The Report of the Closing Achievement Gaps Task Force, May 2003, p. 5.
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- ³³ Ohio Board of Education, Toward High Achievement for all Students, The Report of the Closing Achievement Gaps Task Force, May 2003, p. 8.
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- ⁴⁴ http://www.ode.state.oh.us/school_finance/foundation/reports/exrevrpt.asp. The standard deviation of per student funding in Northeast Ohio is twice that for the rest of Ohio.
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- ⁴⁶ Center for Community Solutions, Lorain County’s Uninsured and the Problems They Face, p. 15; Cuyahoga County’s Uninsured and the Problems They Face, p. 15; and Summit County’s Uninsured and the Problems They Face, p. 15. These are the only counties in northeast Ohio for which these estimates are available.
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- ⁴⁸ Center for Community Solutions, Social Indicators 2003-2004 Housing, Appendix D: Reference Maps, pp. 58-93
- ⁴⁹ Ohio Metropatterns: A Regional Agenda for Community Stability, Myron Orfield and Thomas Luce, Ameregis Metropolitan Area Research Corporation, December 2002
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- ⁵² National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Measuring Up 2004 The Report Card of Higher Education, 2004,
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- ⁵⁴ Maps of these findings are in Region Day Presentation by Hunter Morrison, Northeast Ohio Leadership Task Force, April 2004.
- ⁵⁵ Public Opinion Strategies, Rising to the Challenge: Are High School Graduates Prepared for College and Work?, Achieve, Inc. 2005, p. 6.
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- ⁶⁰ Northeast Ohio Leadership Task Force, Region Day Presentation by Hunter Morrison, April 2004.
- ⁶¹ Ohio Metropatterns: A Regional Agenda for Community Stability, Myron Orfield and Thomas Luce, Ameregis Metropolitan Area Research Corporation, December 2002
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- ⁶³ Policy Matters Ohio, State of Working Ohio 2005, p. 21.
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- ⁶⁶ Policy Matters Ohio, State of Working Ohio 2005, P. 37
- ⁶⁷ Policy Matters Ohio, Towards a Richer Poverty Line, 2005, appended tables.
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⁶⁹ <http://www.ntdprogram.com/NTD/Profiles.nsf/ProfileInformation?OpenForm&2001&A>
- ⁷⁰ Maps of these findings are in Region Day Presentation by Hunter Morrison, Northeast Ohio Leadership Task Force, April 2004.
- ⁷¹ Hamilton, Miller and Paytas, “Exploring the Horizontal and Vertical Dimensions of the Governing of Metropolitan Regions”, Urban Affairs Review, Vol. 40, No. 2, November 2004, p.165-166.
- ⁷² Ibid, p161.
- ⁷³ Hamilton, Miller and Paytas, “Exploring the Horizontal and Vertical Dimensions of the Governing of Metropolitan Regions”, Urban Affairs Review, Vol. 40, No. 2, November 2004, pp 154-156; these researchers review the long history of research on arguments for and against metropolitan government versus metropolitan governance—consolidated government versus decentralized, multiple local governments of all sizes.
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- ⁷⁶ Ohio Metropatterns: A Regional Agenda for Community Stability, Myron Orfield and Thomas Luce, Ameregis Metropolitan Area Research Corporation, December 2002
- ⁷⁷ Ohio Metropatterns: A Regional Agenda for Community Stability, Myron Orfield and Thomas Luce, Ameregis Metropolitan Area Research Corporation, December 2002
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