

Lowndes County by the Numbers

How Do We Compare With Peer and Aspirant Communities?

2018 Report



VALDOSTA - LOWNDES COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
CENTER for BUSINESS
& ECONOMIC RESEARCH

This report has been prepared for the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce by the Center for Business and Economic Research at Valdosta State University.

Establishing a plan for economic success and growth requires an unbiased knowledge of a community's endowments and economic indicators. While community endowments are the unique characteristics that arise from location and geography and therefore are not likely to change, economic indicators such as demographics and labor market structure can be cultivated and enhanced in ways to improve the economic growth and prosperity of a community. Progress toward achieving these desired outcomes can only be assessed by comparing oneself to peer and aspirant communities. This report identifies the peer and aspirant communities for Lowndes County and compares economic indicators that measure the strengths and opportunities for this community.

The purpose of the report is to provide

- A collection of data to assess the economic performance of Lowndes County as benchmarked against peer and aspirant communities. The quantitative data allows for an objective assessment.
- A comparison of benchmarks as general economic conditions change over time. This allows for assessing whether or not incremental improvements keep pace or exceed the peer and aspirant communities.
- A foundation for developing strategic planning and growth strategies for the Lowndes County community.

Peer and Aspirant Communities

The primary counties of 104 Metropolitan Statistical Areas covering eleven states in the Southeastern region of the United States were considered as potential peer and aspirant communities for the Lowndes County community. Based upon economic, geographic, and demographic similarities, fourteen peer and aspirant communities emerged as benchmark communities for Lowndes County.

Benchmarking allows for a "snapshot" comparison of communities as well as provides for an "across time" comparison of changes over time. Benchmarking using data provides an unbiased means of assessing economic progress and shortfalls.



Houston County, Alabama, located in southeast Alabama along the Florida border, has a population of just over 100,000 residents. Although it does not have direct interstate access, Houston is bisected by U.S. highways 84 and 231. Houston is home to a branch of Troy University and a community college. Major industries include agriculture, aerospace, distribution, retail and advanced technology. County seat: Dothan

Lee County, Alabama, located in east central Alabama along the Georgia border, has a population of over 135,000 residents. I-85 and three U.S. highways crisscross the county. Lee is home to Auburn University and a community college. Major industries include high-tech manufacturing, education, research firms and retail. County seat: Opelika

Morgan County, Alabama, located in north central Alabama along the Tennessee River, has a population of over 115,000 residents. Morgan is a transportation hub with access to I-65, two U.S. highways, two railways, and a river port. Morgan is home to Redstone Arsenal U.S. Army post. Major industries include high-tech manufacturing, distribution, retail and tourism. County seat: Decatur

Clarke County Georgia, located in northeast Georgia, has a population of over 115,000 residents. Although it does not have direct interstate access, Clarke is bisected by U.S. Routes 441 and 29. Clarke is home to the University of Georgia and a technical college. Major industries include research and development, education, retail, publishing and tourism. County seat: Athens

Floyd County, Georgia, located in northwest Georgia along the Alabama border, has a population of nearly 100,000 residents. Although it does not have direct interstate access, Floyd is bisected by U.S. Routes 441 and 27. Floyd is home to Berry College, Shorter College and two two-year colleges. Major industries include healthcare, technology, tourism, education and manufacturing. County seat: Rome

Houston County, Georgia, located in central Georgia, has a population of over 135,000 residents. Houston is at the crossroads of Georgia with direct access to I-75 and several major state and U.S. roadways. Houston is home to Robins Air Force Base and a two-year college. Major industries include technology, aviation, retail, and tourism. County seat: Perry

Lowndes County, Georgia, located in south central Georgia along the Florida border, has a population of over 105,000 residents. Lowndes has direct access to I-75 and several major U.S. and state roadways. Lowndes is home to Moody Air Force Base, Valdosta State University, and two two-year colleges. Major industries include healthcare, education, retail and leisure and hospitality services. County seat: Valdosta

Warren County, Kentucky, located in south central Kentucky near the Tennessee border, has a population of over 105,000 residents. Warren has direct access to I-65 and several major U.S. and state roadways. Warren is home to Western Kentucky University and a technical college. Major industries include high-tech manufacturing, healthcare, technology, education and leisure and hospitality services. County seat: Bowling Green

Ouachita Parish, Louisiana, located in north central Louisiana, has a population of over 150,000 residents. Ouachita has direct access to I-20 and several major U.S. and state roadways. Ouachita is home to the University of Louisiana at Monroe and two two-year colleges. Major industries include plastics, paper and wood, telecommunications, insurance and healthcare. Parish seat: Monroe

Rapides Parrish, Louisiana, located in central Louisiana, has a population of over 130,000. Rapides has direct access to I-49, several major U.S. and state roadways, and a river port. Rapides is home to Louisiana State University at Alexandria and a technical college. Major industries include manufacturing, distribution, and healthcare. Parish seat: Alexandria

Forrest County, Mississippi, located in southeast Mississippi, has a population of over 80,000 residents. Forrest has direct access to I-59 and several major U.S. and state roadways. Forrest is home to the University of Southern Mississippi, William Carey University, and a two-year college. Major industries include manufacturing, education and healthcare. County seat: Hattiesburg

Nash County, North Carolina, located in northeast North Carolina, has a population of nearly 95,000 residents. Nash has direct access to I-95 and U.S. Highways 64 and 301. Nash is home to North Carolina Wesleyan College and a community college. Major industries include advanced manufacturing, software and information technology, bio-pharmaceuticals and financial services. County seat: Nashville

Wayne County, North Carolina, located in central North Carolina, has a population of over 110,000 residents. Although it does not have direct interstate access, Wayne is bisected by U.S. Highway 70 and several major state highways. Wayne is home to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, Mount Olive College and a community college. Major industries include manufacturing, agriculture and healthcare. County seat: Goldsboro

Florence County, South Carolina, located in eastern South Carolina, has a population of over 130,000 residents. Florence has direct access to I-95 and I-20. Florence is home to Francis Marion University and a technical college. Major industries include manufacturing, healthcare, pharmaceutical, financial services and distribution. County seat: Florence

Montgomery County, Tennessee, located in north central Tennessee along the Kentucky border, has a population of over 160,000 residents. Montgomery has direct access to I-24 and several major U.S. and state roadways. Montgomery is home to Austin Peay State University and neighbor to Fort Campbell Army Base located in Kentucky. Major industries include technology, manufacturing, printing and publishing and consulting and professional services. County seat: Clarksville

Economic Indicators

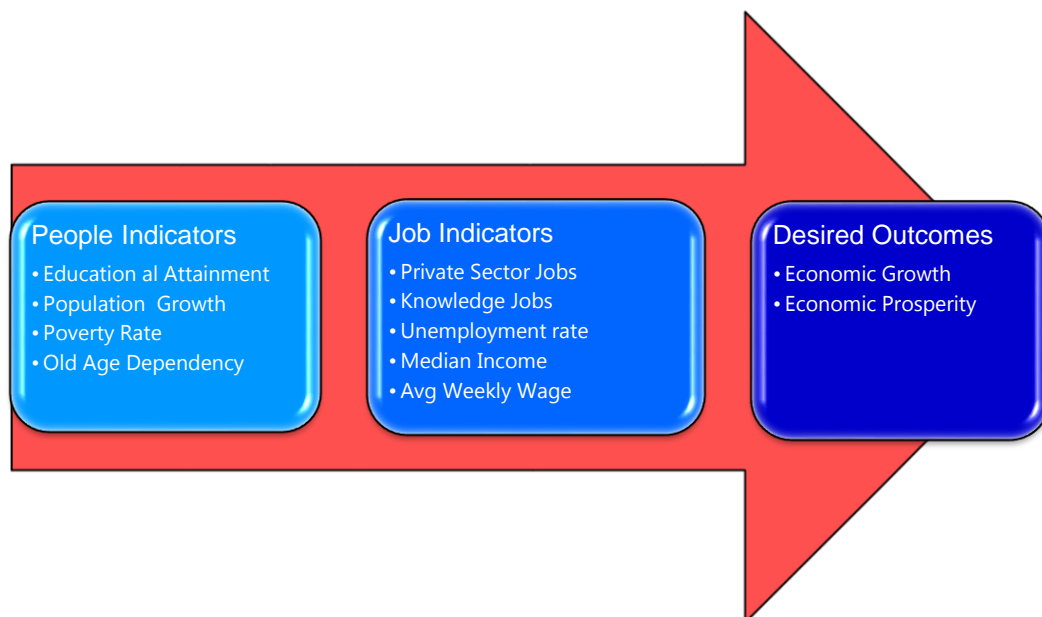
To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Lowndes County community relative to its peer and aspirant communities, we identified twelve indicators that are linked to economic growth and prosperity.

The twelve indicators are divided into two categories, **People Indicators** which capture the demographic characteristics of a community and **Job Indicators** which capture the labor market characteristics of a community. The economic indicators used to compare and rank the fifteen communities are obtained from widely-accepted and reliable sources, and are regularly updated.

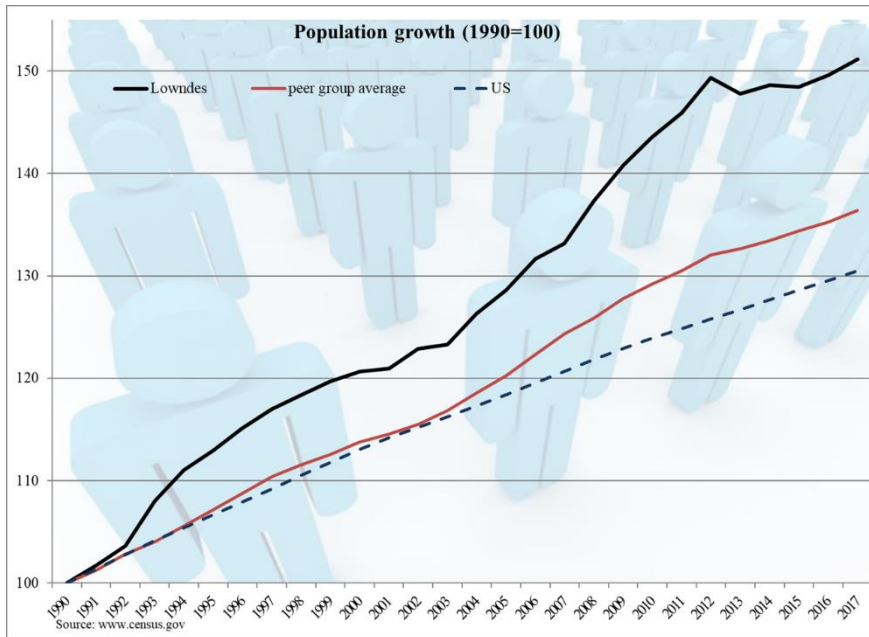
The Report

The report is divided into two major sections:

- **The Region Over Time** - The first section provides a comparison of the people and job indicators over time. The Lowndes County community indicators are compared to the peer and aspirant communities' average, the Southeast region, and the United States indicators over time.
- **The Region Today** - The second section compares the most recent people and job indicators for the fifteen communities and uses the data to rank the fifteen communities.

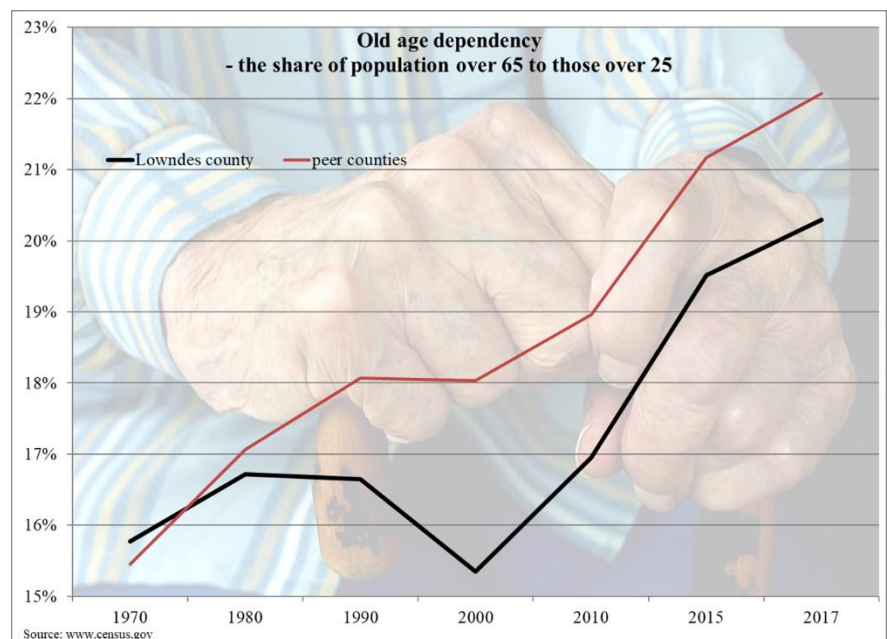


This section of the report compares economic indicators for the Lowndes County community to the peer and aspirant average, the Southeast region, and the United States. The comparison reveals the trends of the various indicators for and weaknesses of the Lowndes County community over time.

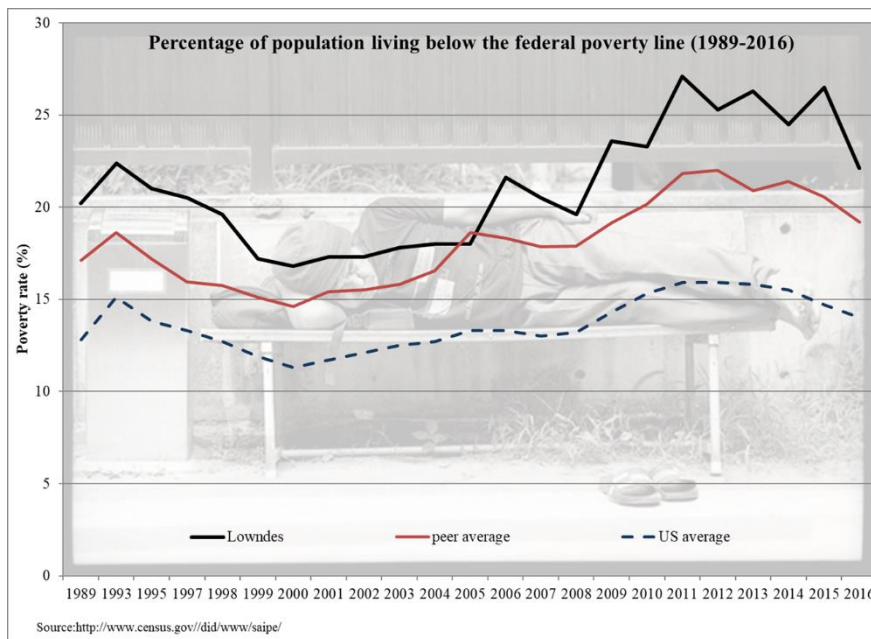
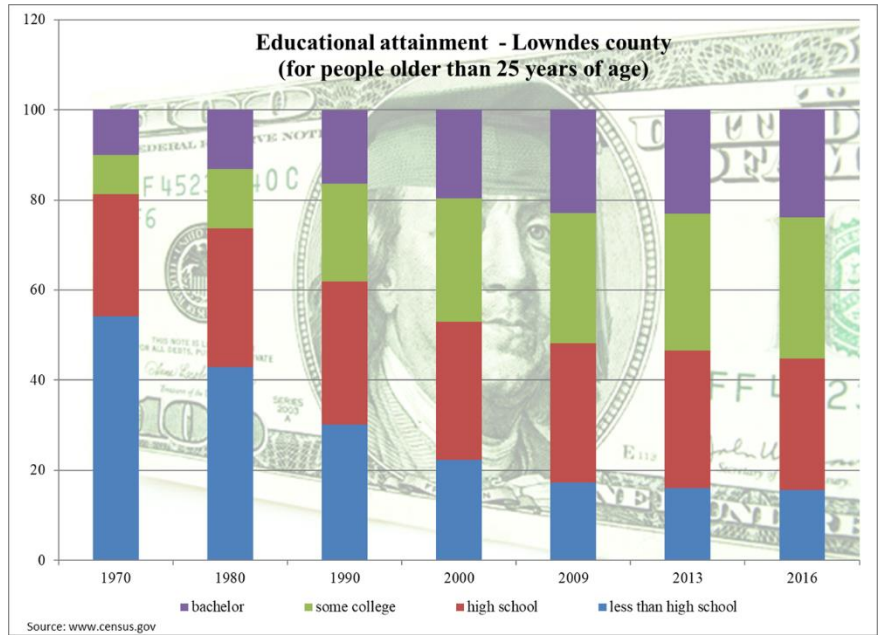


Population Growth: After a population surge between 1992 and 1994, the Lowndes County population grew at a rate comparable to the peer communities and the United States average growth rates. From 2003 through 2012, the Lowndes County population grew at a faster rate than both the peer communities and the United States. The Lowndes County population has rebounded over the last five years.

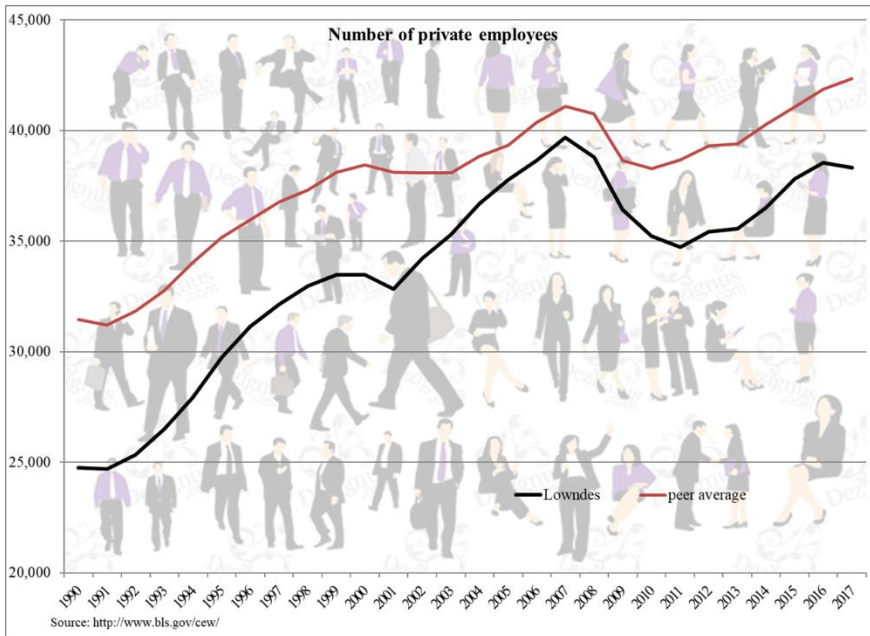
Old Age Dependency: Old Age Dependency is the ratio of people 65 years and older as a percent of population 25 years and older. The Lowndes County community has a lower ratio of Old Age Dependency over the forty year time horizon. The growth rate of old age dependency for the Lowndes County community has increased at a faster rate than the average rates of the peer and aspirant communities over the last fifteen years.



Educational Attainment: This graphic reveals the positive changes in educational attainment for the Lowndes County community over the last forty years. The percent of the population with less than a high school education has steadily declined over the last forty years. While the percent of the population with a high school degree has not changed significantly, the growth rates of the population with some college or a bachelor’s degree or higher have increased significantly. The peer and aspirant average changes are consistent with Lowndes County’s changes over time.

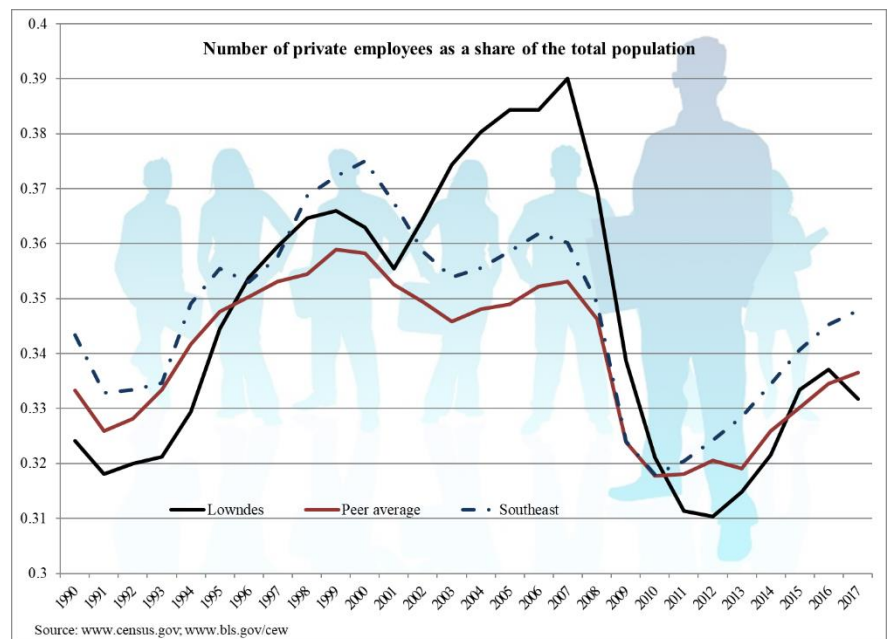


Poverty Rate: The poverty rate for the Lowndes County community is higher than the peer communities and United States average poverty rates. From the beginning of the Great Recession in 2007 through 2011, the Lowndes County community poverty rate increased at a faster rate than the peer communities and the United States averages. Since 2014, the Lowndes County poverty rate has declined more rapidly than the peer and aspirant communities.

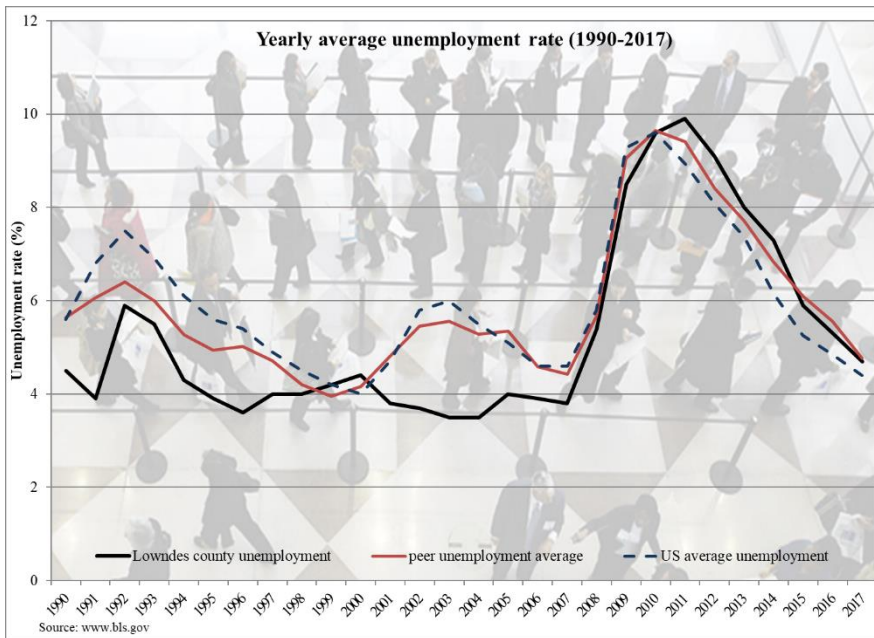
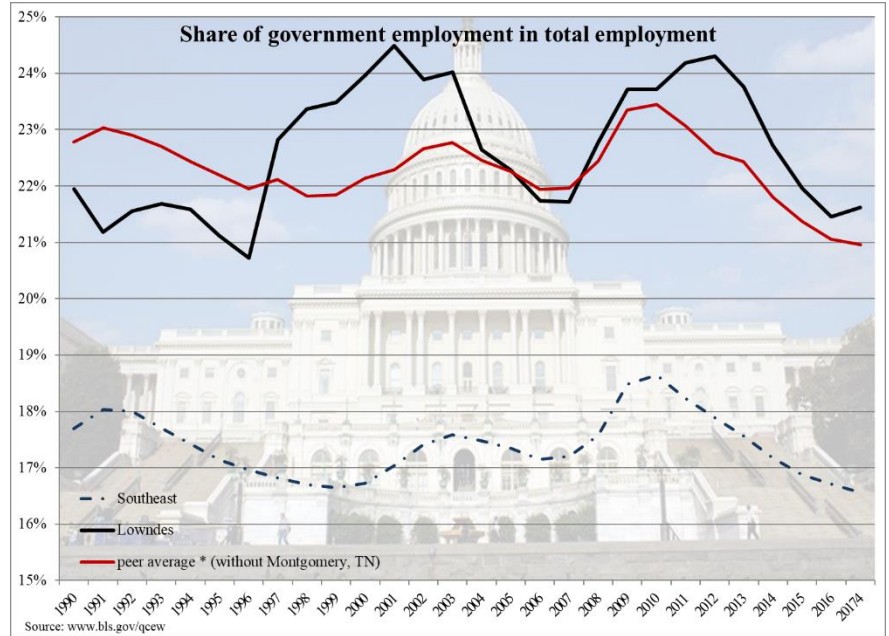


Total Private Sector Jobs: While the total number of private sector jobs was below the peer and aspirant average, the number of private sector jobs in the Lowndes County community increased at a faster rate than the peer and aspirant community average between 1990 through 2007. From 2007 through 2011 the Lowndes County community lost 12.5% of its private employment, which was more than each of the peer and aspirant communities. For the last two years, net job creation has been flat for the Lowndes community.

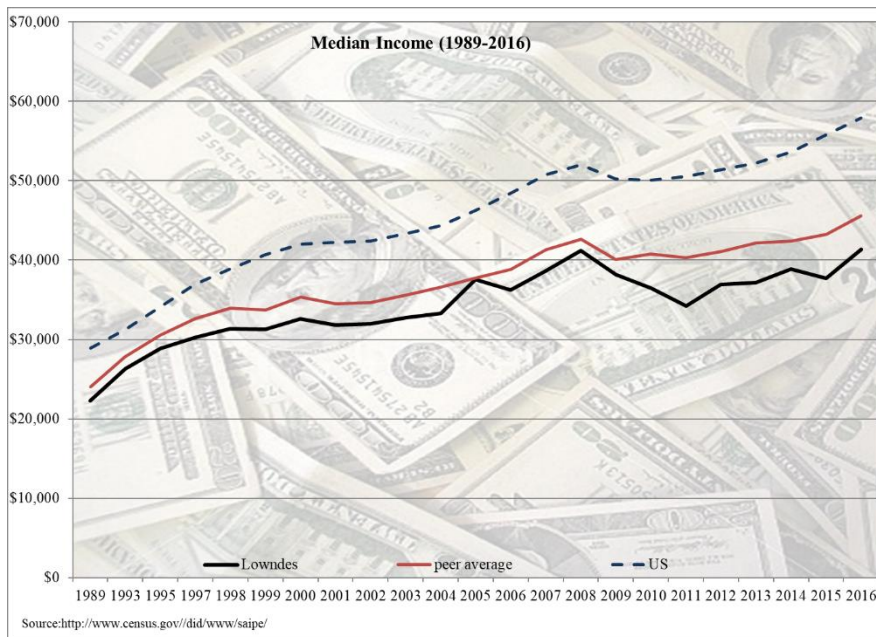
Private Sector Employment: Over the last twenty-five years, the Lowndes County community private sector employment as a share of the total population has been more volatile than the peer and Southeast region averages. Since the beginning of the Great Recession, the number of private employees as a share of the total population for the Lowndes County community declined to a level lower than the peer and Southeast region averages. Although improved since 2012, the number of private employees as a share of total population for the Lowndes County community declined over the last year.



Government Employment: Since 2012, the share of government employment as a percent of total employment for the Lowndes County community has declined at a faster rate than the peer and aspirant community average with a slight rebound over the last year. The share of government employment as a percent of total employment for the Lowndes County community and the peer and aspirant community averages remain significantly higher than the Southeast region average.

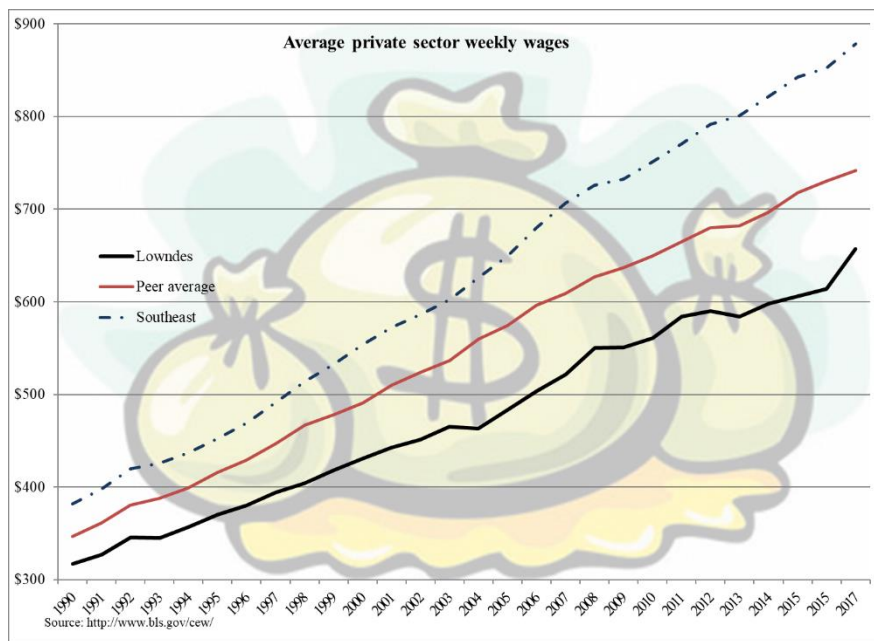


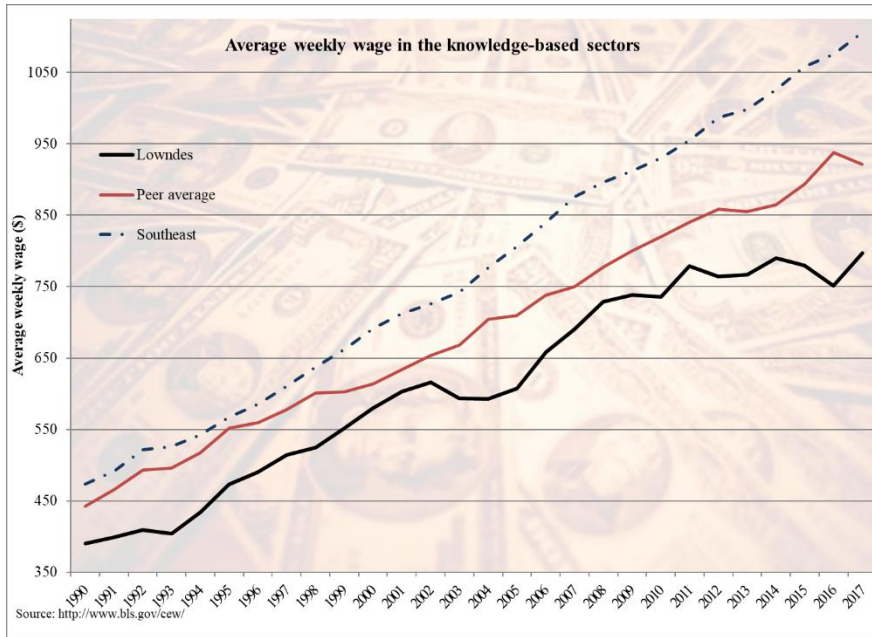
Unemployment Rate: From 1993 through 2007, the Lowndes County community had a low and steady average unemployment rate of around 4%. For most of the time period, the Lowndes County community’s average unemployment rate was below the average peer and U.S. average unemployment rates. Since its peak during 2011, the Lowndes County community unemployment has declined and has followed a similar trend as peer and U.S. average unemployment rates.



Median Household Income: The Lowndes County community's median income is lower than the United States, and the peer and aspirant communities. Since widening during the late 1990s, the median income gap between the Lowndes County community and the United States has remained fairly constant with the median income approximately \$12,000 lower for the Lowndes County community. Although Lowndes community median income is below our peer average, the rate of growth has improved.

Average Private Sector Weekly Wage: The Lowndes County community average private sector weekly wage is less than the Southeast region's average and peer and aspirant's average weekly wages, and has increased at a slower rate than both groups. Adjusting for price changes, the purchasing power of weekly wages for the Lowndes County community has remained fairly flat over the last twenty-four years. Since 2015, the average private sector weekly wage growth has increased reducing the wage difference with our peer communities.



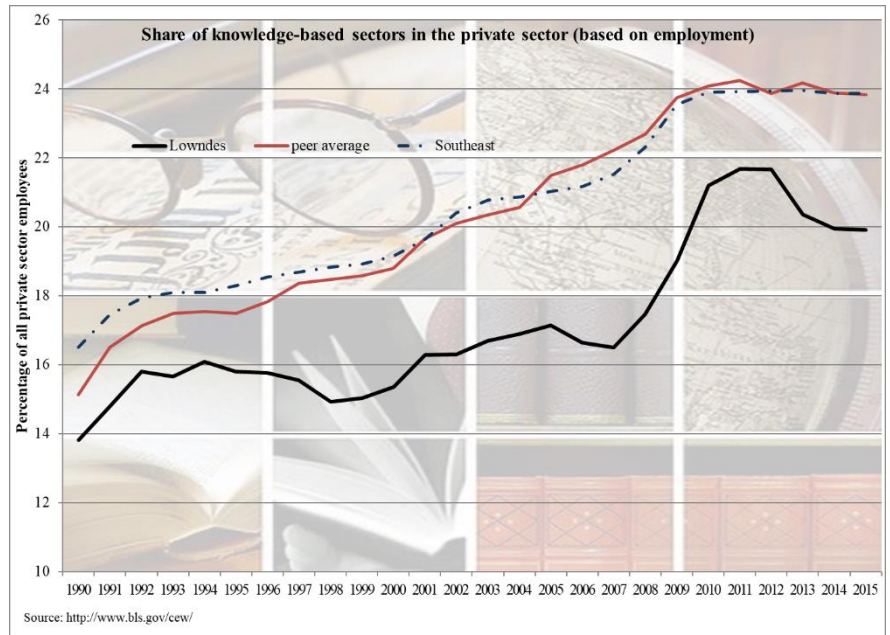


Knowledge-Based Sector

Average Weekly Wage: The Lowndes County community’s knowledge-based sector average weekly wage while improving over the last year remained lower than the average for the Southeast region, and the peer and aspirant communities. After widening for four years, the wage gap between the Lowndes County community and peer average declined over the two years.

Knowledge-based Sector Share of Private Sector:

While the share of knowledge-based sector jobs in the private sector for the Lowndes County community increased from 2007 through 2010, the share of knowledge-based sector jobs declined and has remained flat since 2014. The Lowndes County community share of knowledge-based sector jobs remained below the peer and Southeast averages.



The people of the Lowndes County community are an important asset and are vital to the health and success of the community. The People Indicators are the five indicators that reflect the demographic foundations of the communities and measure how well-prepared the people in the community are for work. The following tables rank the fifteen communities for each of the five People Indicators.

Population Growth: A strong population growth rate is a sign that the community is growing and that job opportunities are available. Using the average population growth rate for the eight-year period ending 2017, the Lowndes County community rank is 6th among the peer and aspirant communities, down from 5th.

Rank	County	State	Population growth (2010-2017)
1	Montgomery	TN	15.6%
2	Lee	AL	14.8%
6	Lowndes	GA	5.3%
	Average		4.7%
14	Morgan	AL	-0.7%
15	Nash	NC	-1.9%

Source: www.census.gov

Educational Attainment – High School: A low graduation rate increases the likelihood of lifelong low wages and increases risk of poverty. Although improving, the population over 25 years of age with a high school diploma or equivalent for the Lowndes County community is below the average for peer and aspirant communities and the rank fell from 6th in 2014 to 11th in 2016.

Rank	County	State	High school diploma or higher (2012-2016)
1	Montgomery	TN	92.2%
2	Houston	GA	89.8%
	Average		85.6%
11	Lowndes	GA	84.5%
14	Morgan	AL	82.5%
15	Floyd	GA	79.7%

Source: www.census.gov

Educational Attainment – Bachelor Degree: As markets become more competitive, workforce preparedness will become increasingly more important. Obtaining the skills to build home-grown businesses and to recruit knowledge based jobs require an educated labor force. The Lowndes County community is in the middle below average and the rank declined from 7th in 2014 to 8th in 2016.

Rank	County	State	Bachelor degree or more (2012-2016)
1	Clarke	GA	40.8%
2	Lee	AL	34.4%
	Average		24.7%
8	Lowndes	GA	23.9%
14	Nash	NC	19.6%
15	Wayne	NC	18.7%

Source: www.census.gov

Poverty Rate: This is the percentage of people whose income is below the poverty level. The Lowndes County community rank improved from 13th to 12th when compared to the fourteen peer communities. While remaining above the peer and aspirant average, the Lowndes County community poverty rate decreased from 26.3% to 22.1%.

Rank	County	State	Poverty rate (2016)
1	Montgomery	TN	12.9%
2	Houston	GA	14.9%
	Average		19.4%
12	Lowndes	GA	22.1%
14	Forrest	MS	25.4%
15	Clarke	GA	27.9%

Source: www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe

Old Age Dependency: Old Age Dependency is the ratio of people over 65 years versus those 25 years and older. While an aging population may bring an accumulation of life-long wealth to a community, an aging population requires more services and support. The Lowndes County community rank is unchanged at the 5th lowest ratio suggesting that it has a relative larger working-age population.

Rank	County	State	Old age dependency (2017)
1	Montgomery	TN	14.6%
2	Clarke	GA	18.7%
5	Lowndes	GA	20.3%
	Average		22.0%
14	Houston	AL	25.2%
15	Nash	NC	26.1%

Source: www.census.gov

Jobs are the life-blood of a community. High paying jobs attract skilled workers to a community and contribute to a higher quality of life. The Job Indicators are the six indicators that reflect the workforce foundations of the communities. The following tables rank the fifteen communities for each of the six Job Indicators.

Number of Private Jobs: The Lowndes County community ranked 10th relative to the peer and aspirant communities, unchanged from last year.

Rank	County	State	Total private sector employment (2017)
1	Ouachita	LA	60,435
2	Warren	KY	55,447
	Average		42,078
10	Lowndes	GA	38,312
14	Wayne	NC	33,184
15	Forrest	MS	29,187

Source: www.bls.gov/cew

Median Income: Median household income is one measure of household purchasing power. Median household income measures income from all sources. While median household income increased from \$36,920 in 2014 to \$41,331 in 2016, the Lowndes County community rank remained unchanged at 12th.

Rank	County	State	Median household income (2016)
1	Houston	GA	\$61,795
2	Montgomery	TN	\$55,351
	Average		\$45,274
12	Lowndes	GA	\$41,331
14	Forrest	MS	\$36,709
15	Clarke	GA	\$36,692

Source: www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe

Average Weekly Wage: Although the Lowndes County community average weekly wage increased from \$584 in 2014 to \$657 in 2017, the rank remained at 14th.

Rank	County	State	Average Weekly Wage (2017)
1	Morgan	AL	\$849
2	Floyd	GA	\$806
	Average		\$736
14	Lowndes	GA	\$657
15	Lee	AL	\$655

Source: www.bls.gov/cew

Knowledge-based sector jobs as a share of all jobs: Knowledge-based sector jobs are based on two-digit NAICS numbers for Information (51), Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services (54), Management of Companies & Enterprises (55), and Health Care and Social Assistance (62). The Lowndes County community share of knowledge-based jobs rank remained unchanged from last year.

Rank	County	State	Share of knowledge-based jobs (2017)
1	Ouachita	LA	33.0%
2	Rapides	LA	32.5%
	Average		23.6%
12	Lowndes	GA	20.7%
14	Morgan	AL	16.2%
15	Lee	AL	14.1%

Source: www.bls.gov/cew

Knowledge-based sector Average Weekly wage: Knowledge-based sector jobs are often high paying jobs. The Lowndes County community knowledge sector average weekly improved to \$797, the highest wage since this we began gathering information for this report. The Lowndes County community rank is 14th and the wage below the average of \$913.

Rank	County	State	Knowledge sector average weekly wage (2017)
1	Forrest	MS	\$1,128
2	Houston	AL	\$1,054
	Average		\$913
14	Lowndes	GA	\$797
15	Wayne	NC	\$783

Source: www.bls.gov/cew

Unemployment Rate: With an average unemployment rate of 4.7%, the Lowndes County community unemployment rate is below the peer and aspirant average unemployment rate. The Lowndes County community unemployment rate decline has been primarily driven by net job gains. The Lowndes County community rank has improved from tied for 10th in 2017 to 7th in 2017.

Rank	County	State	Unemployment rate (2017)
1	Lee	AL	3.9%
2	Morgan	AL	4.1%
7	Lowndes	GA	4.7%
	Average		4.8%
14	Rapides	LA	5.6%
15	Nash	NC	6.1%

Source: www.bls.gov

Overall Rankings

Report 2018

The rank order of the economic indicators provides a quantifiable ranking of how the Lowndes County community compares to the fourteen peer and aspirant communities. The economic indicators are divided into two major groups: the People Indicators and the Job Indicators. The numerical ranking of each indicator within the major categories are summed together to determine a rank standing for each group and overall.

People Indicators			
Rank	City	County	State
1	Clarksville	Montgomery	TN
2	Perry	Houston	GA
3	Opelika	Lee	AL
4	Bowling Green	Warren	KY
5	Athens	Clarke	GA
6	Valdosta	Lowndes	GA
7	Monroe	Ouachita	LA
8	Florence	Florence	SC
9	Dothan	Houston	AL
10	Hattiesburg	Forrest	MS
11	Rome	Floyd	GA
12	Alexandria	Rapides	LA
13	Decatur	Morgan	AL
14	Goldsboro	Wayne	NC
15	Nashville	Nash	NC

Jobs Indicator			
Rank	City	County	State
1	Bowling Green	Warren	KY
2	Decatur	Morgan	AL
3	Florence	Florence	SC
4	Monroe	Ouachita	LA
5T	Athens	Clarke	GA
5T	Clarksville	Montgomery	TN
7	Rome	Floyd	GA
8	Dothan	Houston	AL
9T	Opelika	Lee	AL
9T	Alexandria	Rapides	LA
11	Perry	Houston	GA
12	Nashville	Nash	NC
13T	Valdosta	Lowndes	GA
13T	Hattiesburg	Forrest	MS
13T	Goldsboro	Wayne	NC

Overall Rankings				Rankings		
2018	City	County	State	2011	2015	2017
1	Bowling Green	Warren	KY	2	1	1
2	Clarksville	Montgomery	TN	5	5	4
3	Athens	Clarke	GA	3	2	2
4	Monroe	Ouachita	LA	6	4	5
5	Florence	Florence	SC	8	9	9
6	Opelika	Lee	AL	10	6	8
7	Perry	Houston	GA	1	3	3
8	Decatur	Morgan	AL	12	8	7
9	Dothan	Houston	AL	7	6	5
10	Rome	Floyd	GA	13	13	13
11	Valdosta	Lowndes	GA	11	12	10
12	Alexandria	Rapides	LA	4	10	10
13	Hattiesburg	Forrest	MS	9	11	10
14	Nashville	Nash	NC	14	15	15
15	Goldsboro	Wayne	NC	15	14	14

The Lowndes County community overall standing improved to **eleventh** among the fifteen peer and aspirant communities unchanged from the previous year. This standing is a snapshot in time ranking of the fifteen communities.

The following are the economic indicator complete tables.

Rank	County	State	Population growth (2010-2017)
1	Montgomery	TN	15.6%
2	Lee	AL	14.8%
3	Warren	KY	12.7%
4	Houston	GA	9.0%
5	Clarke	GA	8.2%
6	Lowndes	GA	5.3%
7	Houston	AL	2.5%
8	Ouachita	LA	1.2%
9	Floyd	GA	1.2%
10	Florence	SC	1.1%
11	Wayne	NC	1.1%
12	Forrest	MS	0.6%
13	Rapides	LA	-0.1%
14	Morgan	AL	-0.7%
15	Nash	NC	-1.9%

Source: www.census.gov

Rank	County	State	High school diploma or higher (2012-2016)
1	Montgomery	TN	92.2%
2	Houston	GA	89.8%
3	Lee	AL	88.7%
4	Warren	KY	87.8%
5	Clarke	GA	86.3%
6	Forrest	MS	86.2%
7	Ouachita	LA	85.1%
8	Houston	AL	84.9%
9	Florence	SC	84.7%
10	Rapides	LA	84.7%
11	Lowndes	GA	84.5%
12	Nash	NC	84.1%
13	Wayne	NC	83.0%
14	Morgan	AL	82.5%
15	Floyd	GA	79.7%

Source: www.census.gov

Rank	County	State	Poverty rate (2016)
1	Montgomery	TN	12.9%
2	Houston	GA	14.9%
3	Morgan	AL	15.8%
4	Floyd	GA	15.8%
5	Nash	NC	16.5%
6	Lee	AL	18.3%
7	Florence	SC	18.3%
8	Warren	KY	18.5%
9	Houston	AL	19.4%
10	Rapides	LA	19.9%
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Source: www.census.gov/hhes/www/saiper

Rank	County	State	Bachelor degree or more (2012-2016)
1	Clarke	GA	40.8%
2	Lee	AL	34.4%
3	Warren	KY	29.1%
4	Forrest	MS	25.7%
5	Montgomery	TN	25.3%
6	Ouachita	LA	24.2%
7	Houston	GA	24.0%
8	Lowndes	GA	23.9%
9	Florence	SC	22.4%
10	Morgan	AL	21.4%
11	Houston	AL	21.0%
12	Rapides	LA	19.9%
13	Floyd	GA	19.8%
14	Nash	NC	19.6%
15	Wayne	NC	18.7%

Source: www.census.gov

Rank	County	State	Old age dependency (2017)
1	Montgomery	TN	14.6%
2	Clarke	GA	18.7%
3	Houston	GA	18.9%
4	Lee	AL	19.1%
5	Lowndes	GA	20.3%
6	Warren	KY	20.9%
7	Forrest	MS	21.5%
8	Ouachita	LA	21.9%
9	Rapides	LA	24.0%
10	Wayne	NC	24.2%
11	Florence	SC	24.3%
12	Morgan	AL	24.7%
13	Floyd	GA	24.9%
14	Houston	AL	25.2%
15	Nash	NC	26.1%

Source: www.census.gov

Rank	County	State	Median household income (2016)
1	Houston	GA	\$61,795
2	Montgomery	TN	\$55,351
3	Lee	AL	\$47,749
4	Nash	NC	\$47,403
5	Warren	KY	\$47,253
6	Morgan	AL	\$46,843
7	Floyd	GA	\$46,634
8	Florence	SC	\$45,044
9	Houston	AL	\$42,910
10	Rapides	LA	\$42,452
11	Wayne	NC	\$42,421
12	Lowndes	GA	\$41,331
13	Ouachita	LA	\$38,525
14	Forrest	MS	\$36,709
15	Clarke	GA	\$36,692

Source: www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe

Rank	County	State	Total private sector employment (2017)
1	Ouachita	LA	60,435
2	Warren	KY	55,447
3	Clarke	GA	51,571
4	Florence	SC	50,122
5	Rapides	LA	45,168
6	Lee	AL	43,148
7	Montgomery	TN	42,127
8	Morgan	AL	40,374
9	Houston	AL	39,385
10	Lowndes	GA	38,312
11	Houston	GA	35,267
12	Nash	NC	33,792
13	Floyd	GA	33,650
14	Wayne	NC	33,184
15	Forrest	MS	29,187

Source: www.bls.gov/cew

Rank	County	State	Knowledge sector average weekly wage (2017)
1	Forrest	MS	\$1,128
2	Houston	AL	\$1,054
3	Warren	KY	\$1,017
4	Clarke	GA	\$980
5	Floyd	GA	\$979
6	Florence	SC	\$944
7	Houston	GA	\$922
8	Ouachita	LA	\$912
9	Morgan	AL	\$867
10	Rapides	LA	\$853
11	Montgomery	TN	\$833
12	Lee	AL	\$813
13	Nash	NC	\$810
14	Lowndes	GA	\$797
15	Wayne	NC	\$783

Source: www.bls.gov/cew

Rank	County	State	Average Weekly Wage (2017)
1	Morgan	AL	\$849
2	Floyd	GA	\$806
3	Warren	KY	\$799
4	Clarke	GA	\$786
5	Houston	AL	\$767
6	Ouachita	LA	\$752
7	Nash	NC	\$740
8	Forrest	MS	\$737
9	Rapides	LA	\$734
10	Florence	SC	\$732
11	Montgomery	TN	\$680
12	Wayne	NC	\$677
13	Houston	GA	\$670
14	Lowndes	GA	\$657
15	Lee	AL	\$655

Source: www.bls.gov/cew

Rank	County	State	Share of knowledge-based jobs (2017)
1	Ouachita	LA	33.0%
2	Rapides	LA	32.5%
3	Floyd	GA	28.4%
4	Florence	SC	27.1%
5	Clarke	GA	25.3%
6	Warren	KY	23.7%
7	Wayne	NC	23.3%
8	Forrest	MS	23.2%
9	Houston	GA	23.0%
10	Houston	AL	22.7%
11	Montgomery	TN	21.0%
12	Lowndes	GA	20.7%
13	Nash	NC	20.1%
14	Morgan	AL	16.2%
15	Lee	AL	14.1%

Source: www.bls.gov/cew

Rank	County	State	Unemployment rate (2017)
1	Lee	AL	3.9%
2	Morgan	AL	4.1%
3	Warren	KY	4.1%
4	Montgomery	TN	4.1%
5	Houston	AL	4.3%
6	Florence	SC	4.6%
7	Lowndes	GA	4.7%
8	Clarke	GA	4.8%
9	Houston	GA	4.8%
10	Forrest	MS	4.8%
11	Wayne	NC	5.1%
12	Floyd	GA	5.2%
13	Ouachita	LA	5.3%
14	Rapides	LA	5.6%
15	Nash	NC	6.1%

Source: www.bls.gov

In the study we use data that are publicly available on the following websites:

The United States Census www.census.gov

- For population estimates, educational attainment we used the **American Community Survey**, and **Decennial Censuses**.
- For poverty and median income estimates we used the **Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates** (<http://www.census.gov//did/www/saipe/>).

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics www.bls.gov

- We collected unemployment data from the **Local Area Unemployment Statistics** (<http://bls.gov/lau/>).
- All the employment numbers (private, knowledge-based sector, government) and the corresponding wage estimates can be found at the **Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages** (<http://bls.gov/cew/>).

United States Military Bases www.militarybases.com

- Location of military bases

This report was funded by the Center for Business and Economic Research, Langdale College of Business Administration at Valdosta State University.



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