

# Lowndes County by the Numbers

## How Do We Compare With Peer and Aspirant Communities?

### 2014 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

## 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.

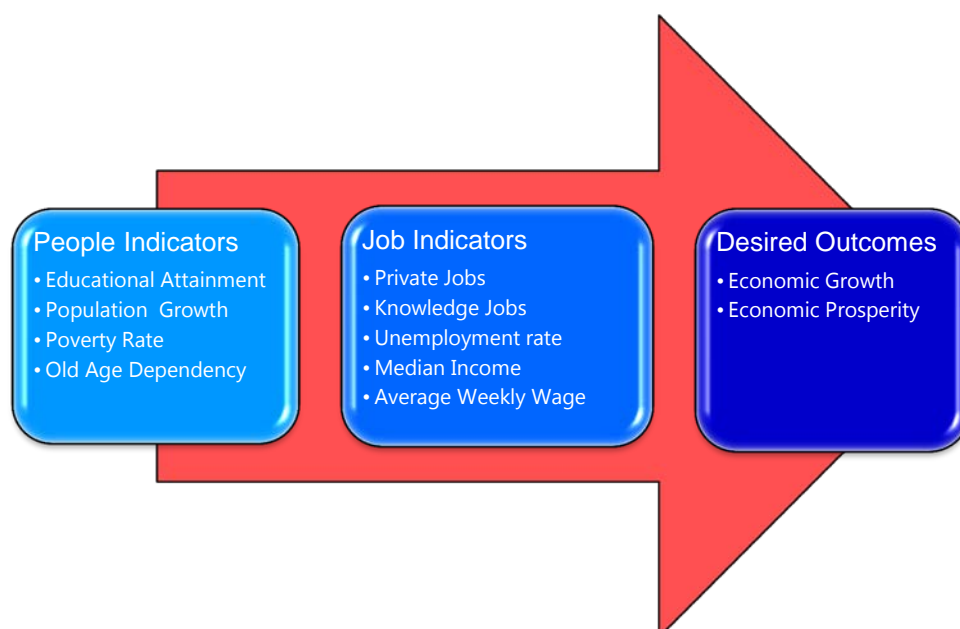
The twelve indicators are divided into two categories:

- **People Indicators** reflect the demographic characteristics of a community.
- **Job Indicators** reflect 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.

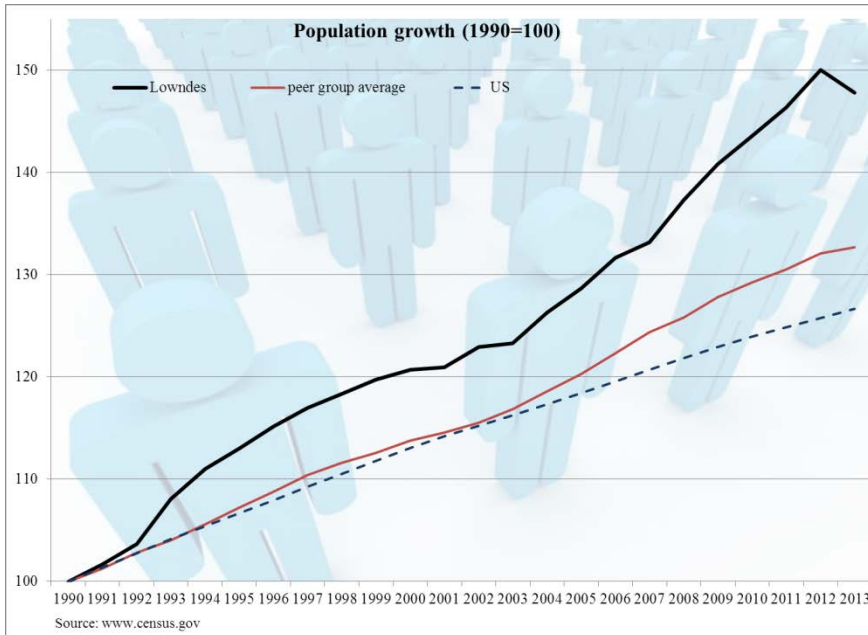
## The Report

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.

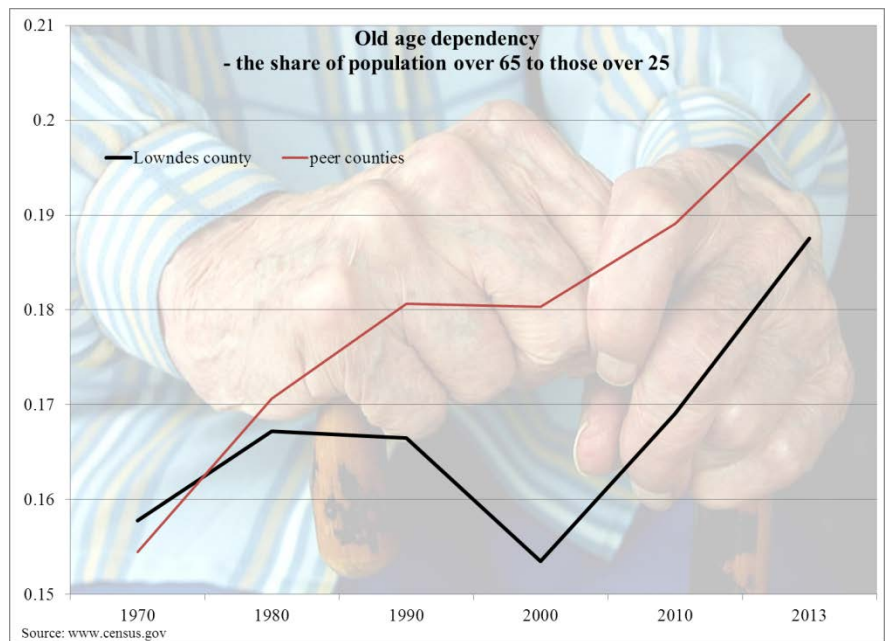


This section of the report compares economic indicators for the Lowndes County community to the peer and aspirant average, the Southeast region average, and the national average. The comparison reveals the trends of the various indicators for and weaknesses of the Lowndes County community over time.

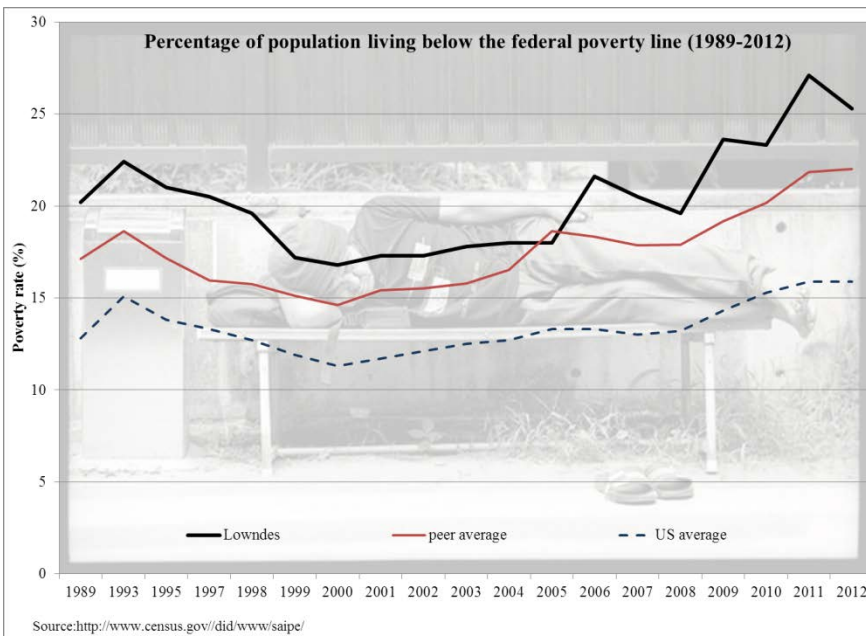
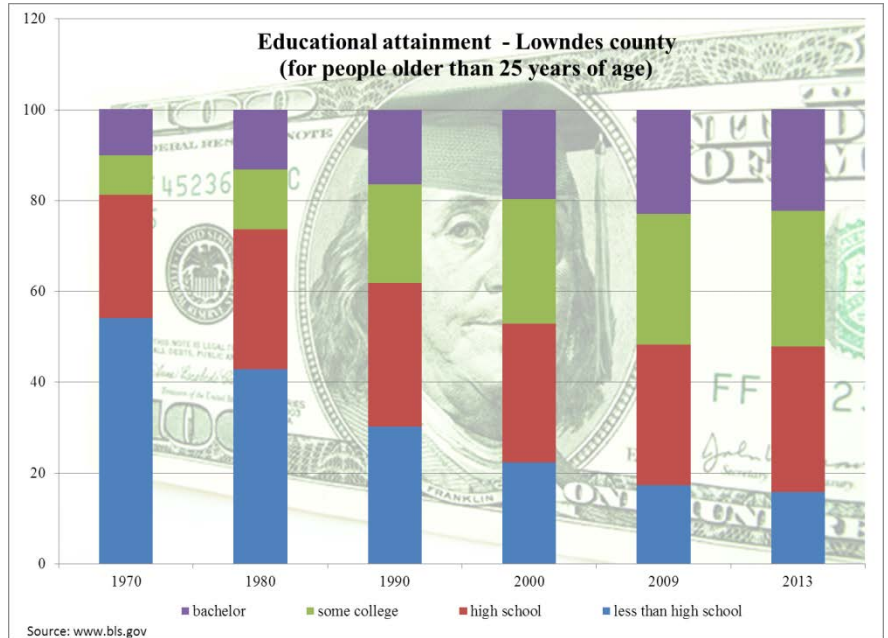


**Population Growth:** From 1993 to 2002, Lowndes County's population grew at a slower rate than the peer and aspirant average and the United States. From 2003 through 2012, Lowndes County's population grew at a faster rate than both the United States and the peer and aspirant communities. Since the end of 2012, the Lowndes County population has declined 1.5%. Although Floyd, Nash, and Montgomery county populations also declined, the Lowndes County community experienced the largest loss.

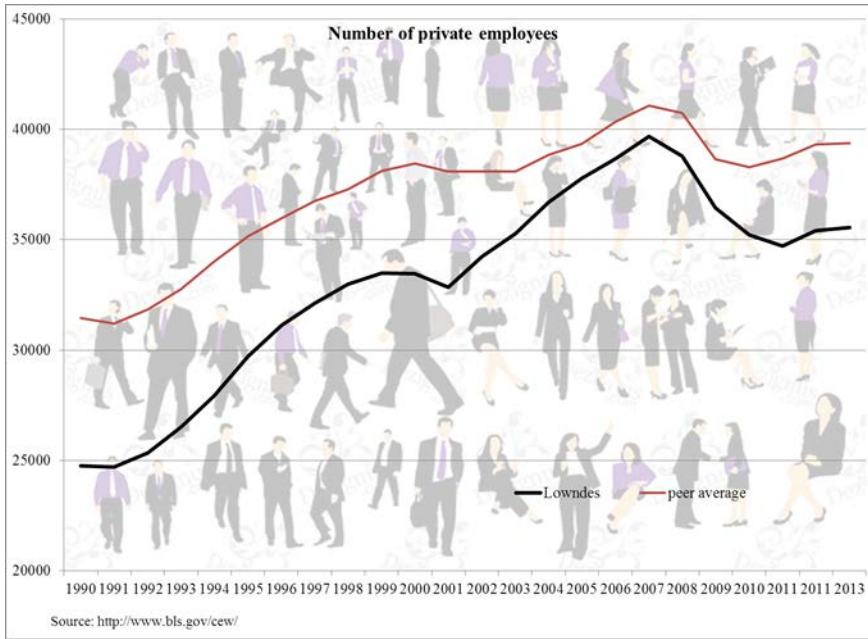
**Old Age Dependency:** Old Age Dependency is the ratio of people 65 years and older as a percent of population 25 years and older. The Lowndes County community has a lower ratio of Old Age Dependency over the forty year time horizon. The growth rate of old age dependency for the Lowndes County community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



**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.

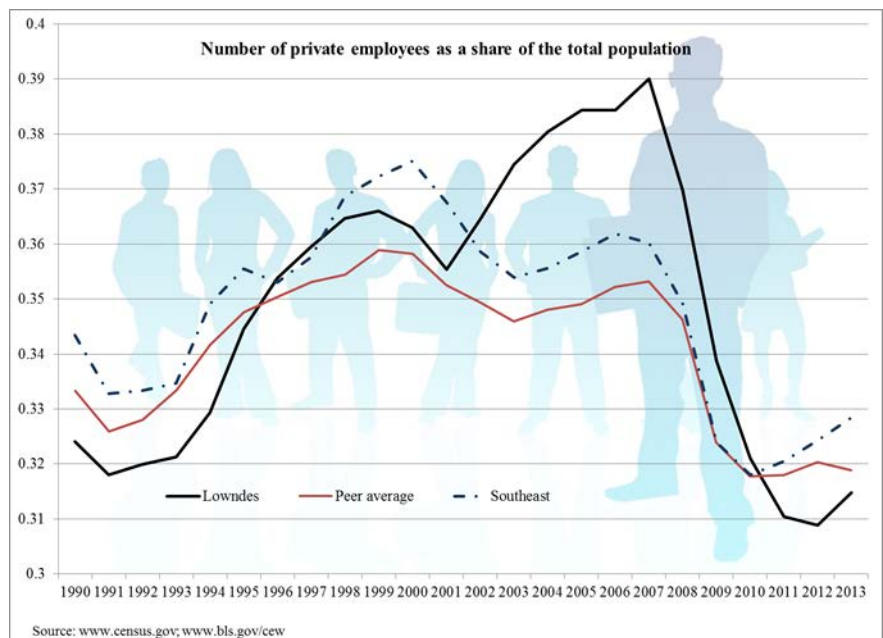


**Poverty Rate:** The poverty rate for the Lowndes County community is higher than the United States and the peer and aspirant averages. Since the beginning of the Great Recession in 2007, the Lowndes County community’s poverty rate has increased at a faster rate than the United States average and the peer and aspirant communities. Although the Lowndes County community poverty rate has declined since reaching a peak in 2011, it remains above the peer and national averages.

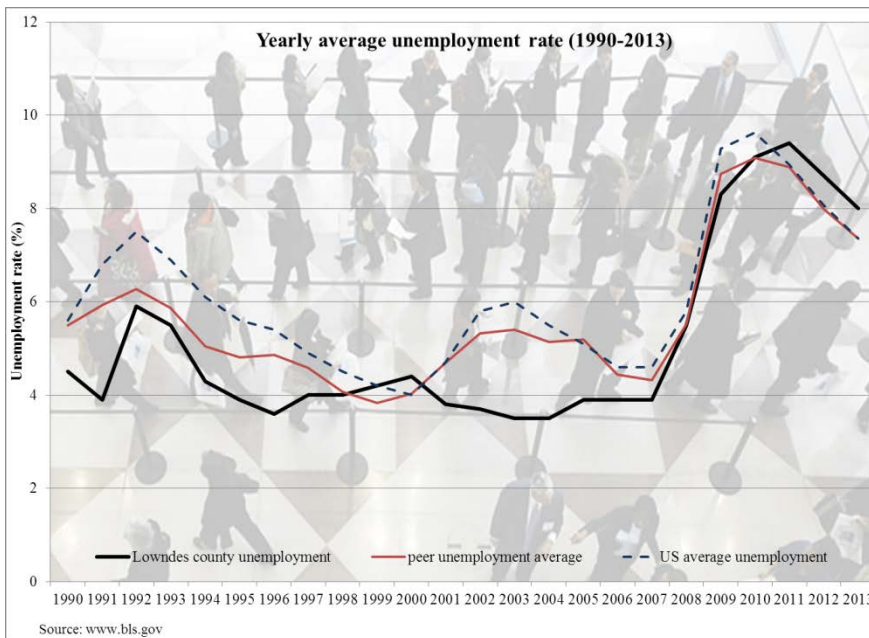
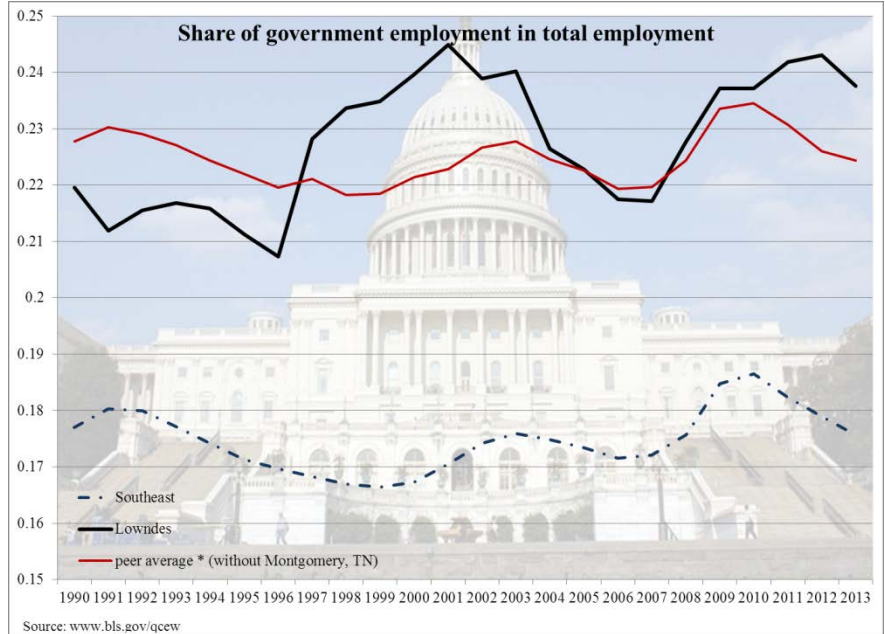


**Total Private Sector Jobs:** While the total number of private sector jobs was below the peer and aspirant average, the number of private sector jobs in the Lowndes County community increased at a faster rate than the peer and aspirant community average from 1990 through 2007. From 2007 through 2011 the Lowndes County community lost 12.5% of its private employment, which is more than each of the peer and aspirant counties. Since 2011, job growth for the Lowndes County community has been similar to the average of the peer and aspirant communities.

**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.

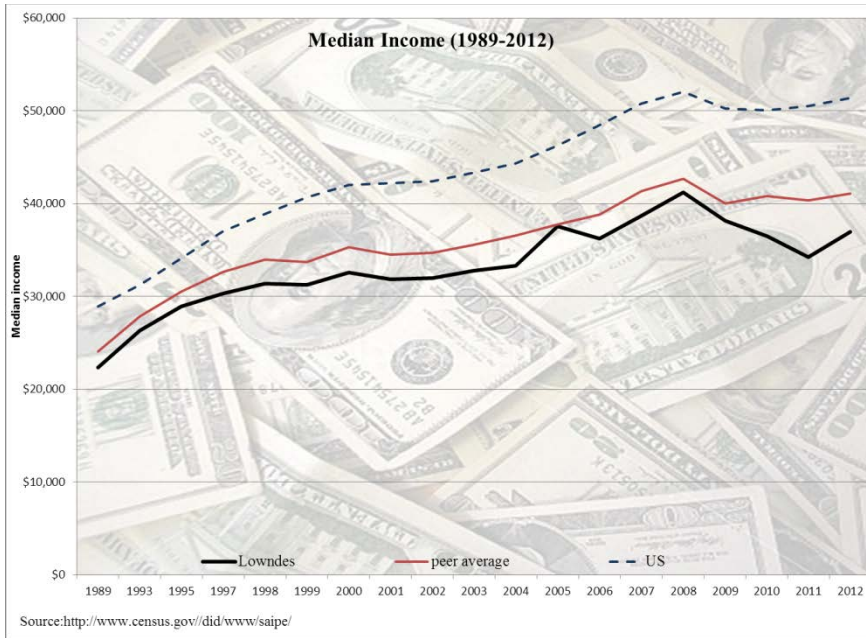


**Government Employment:** The share of government employment as a percent of total employment for the Lowndes County community and the peer and aspirant community average is above the Southeast region average.



**Unemployment Rate:** From 1993 through 2007, the Lowndes County community had a low and steady average unemployment rate of around 4%. For most of that time period, the Lowndes County community's average unemployment rate was below the average peer and U.S. average unemployment rates. From 2007 through 2009, the Lowndes County community unemployment rate increased at a rate similar to the United States and the peer averages. Since 2010 however, the Lowndes County community's unemployment rate has remained above the peer and U.S. average unemployment rates.

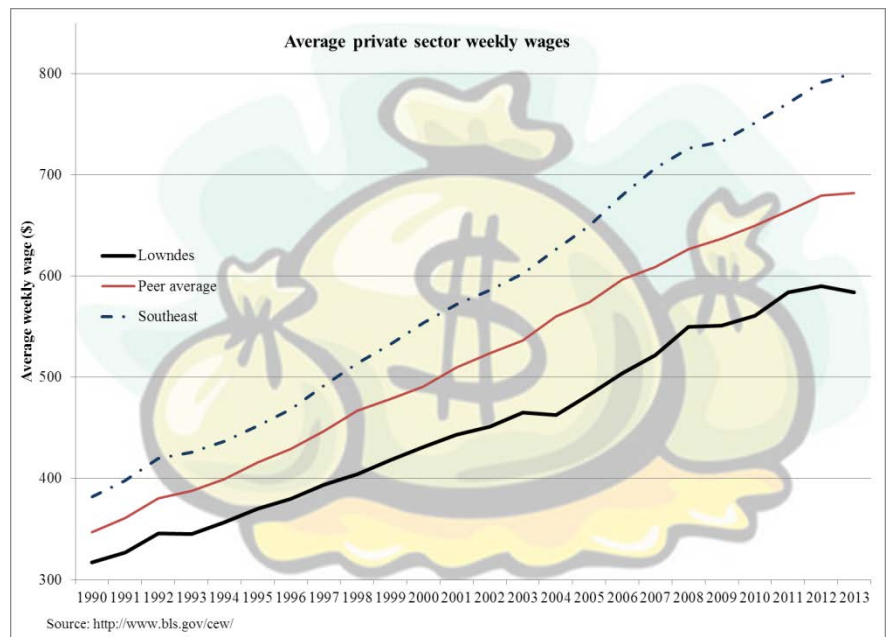


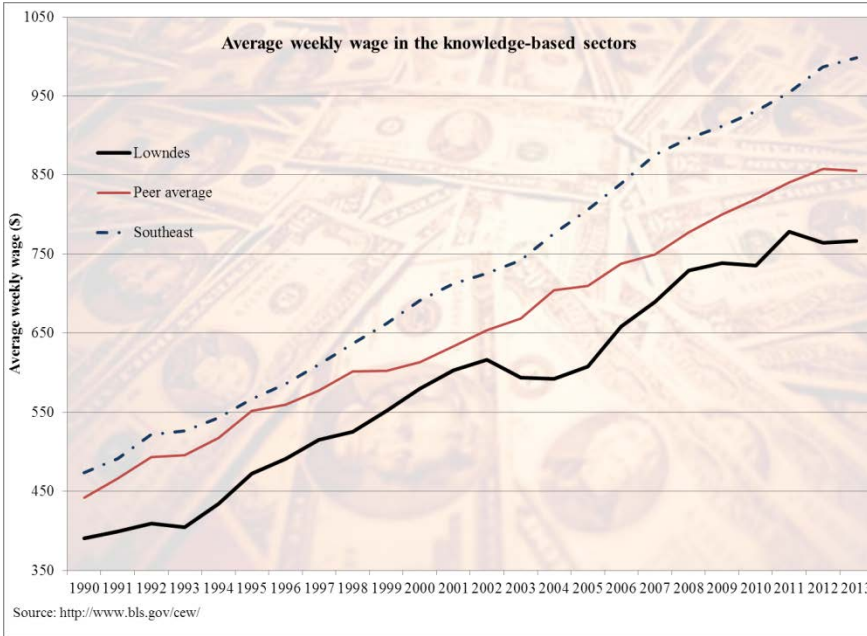


**Median Household Income:** The Lowndes County community’s median income is lower than the United States, and the peer and aspirant communities. Since widening during the late 1990s, the median income gap between the Lowndes County community and the United States has remained fairly constant with the median income approximately \$12,000 lower for the Lowndes County community. Since 2011, the median income gap has improved for the Lowndes County community.

### Average Private Sector Weekly Wage:

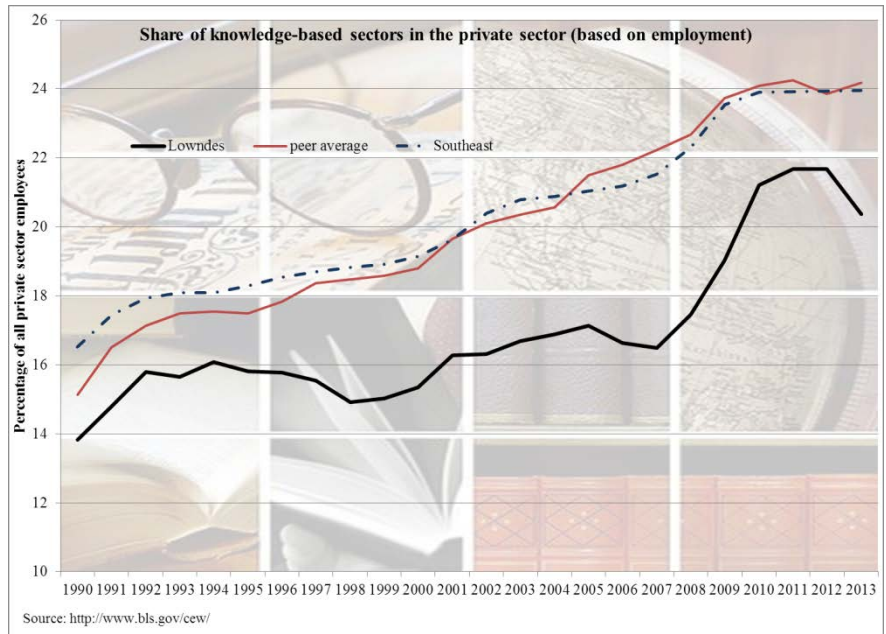
The Lowndes County community’s average private sector weekly wage is less than the Southeast region’s average and peer and aspirant’s average weekly wages. Although Lowndes County’s average weekly wage has increased over the twenty-year period, the rate of increase is slower than both the average for the Southeast, and the peer and aspirant communities. The average private sector weekly wage for the Lowndes County community declined between 2012 and 2013.





**Knowledge-Based Sector Average Weekly Wage:** The Lowndes County community's knowledge-based sector average weekly wage is lower than the average for the Southeast region, and the peer and aspirant communities. Since peaking in 2011, the average weekly knowledge-based sector wage for the Lowndes County community declined and then remained unchanged. Over the last two years, the Lowndes County community and its peer and aspirant communities have underperformed relative to the Southeast region.

**Knowledge-based Sector Share of Private Sector:** Between 1999 and 2010, the share of knowledge-based sector jobs in the private sector increased faster for the Lowndes County community than the comparable groups. Since 2011, while growth of knowledge-based sector jobs remained constant for the comparable groups, the share of the knowledge-based sector for the Lowndes County community has declined.



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 eleven-year period ending 2013, the Lowndes County community rank is unchanged at 5<sup>th</sup> among the peer and aspirant communities.

Rank	County	State	Population growth (2003-2013)
1	Montgomery	TN	32.2%
2	Lee	AL	25.7%
<b>5</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>19.9%</b>
	Average		13.2%
14	Rapides	LA	4.8%
15	Floyd	GA	2.4%

Source: www.census.gov

**Educational Attainment – High School:** A low graduation rate increases the likelihood of lifelong low wages and increases risk of poverty. With 84.2% of the population over 25 years of age with a high school diploma or equivalent, the Lowndes County community is unchanged at 6<sup>th</sup> among the fifteen communities.

Rank	County	State	High school diploma or GED (2010-2012)
1	Montgomery	TN	90.7%
2	Houston	GA	88.0%
<b>6</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>84.2%</b>
	Average		84.0%
14	Wayne	NC	81.6%
15	Floyd	GA	77.6%

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 of the pack ranking 7<sup>th</sup>, an improvement over last year's rank of 8<sup>th</sup>.

Rank	County	State	Bachelor degree, population over 25 (2010-2012)
1	Clarke	GA	40.4%
2	Lee	AL	32.2%
	Average		23.1%
<b>7</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>22.4%</b>
14	Rapides	LA	17.3%
15	Wayne	NC	15.1%

Source: www.census.gov

**Poverty Rate:** This is the percentage of people whose income is below the poverty level. The Lowndes County community rank is unchanged at 13<sup>th</sup> out of the 15 peer and aspirant communities and is below the peer average poverty rate.

Rank	County	State	Poverty Rate (2012)
1	Morgan	AL	16.2%
2	Houston	GA	16.8%
	Average		22.2%
<b>13</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>25.3%</b>
14	Forrest	MS	29.0%
15	Clarke	GA	34.2%

Source: www.census.gov

**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 5<sup>th</sup> lowest ratio suggesting that it has a relative larger working-age population.

Rank	County	State	Old Age Dependency (2012)
1	Montgomery	TN	13.9%
2	Lee	AL	17.0%
<b>5</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>18.8%</b>
	Average		20.2%
13T	Houston	AL	23.1%
13T	Nash	NC	23.1%
15	Floyd	GA	23.4%

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 show how Lowndes County ranks among the fifteen communities for each of the six Job Indicators.

**Number of Private Jobs:** The Lowndes County community ranks 10<sup>th</sup> relative to the peer and aspirant communities, down from a rank of 9<sup>th</sup> last year.

Rank	County	State	Total Private Sector Employment (2013)
1	Ouachita	LA	58,896
2	Warren	KY	49,733
	Average		39,129
<b>10</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>35,548</b>
14	Nash	NC	30,381
15	Forrest	MS	25,945

**Median Income:** Median household income is one measure of household purchasing power. Median household income measures income from all sources. The Lowndes County community improved from a rank of 13<sup>th</sup> in 2011 to 12<sup>th</sup>. The Lowndes County community remains below the 2009 rank of 11<sup>th</sup>.

Rank	County	State	Median Household Income (2012)
1	Houston	GA	\$54,307
2	Montgomery	TN	\$48,267
	Average		\$40,816
<b>12</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>\$36,920</b>
14	Clarke	GA	\$32,720
15	Forrest	MS	\$32,210

**Average Weekly Wage:** Although the peer and aspirant average weekly wage increased, the Lowndes County community average weekly wage did not change between 2011 and 2013. The Lowndes County community rank remains at 14<sup>th</sup>.

Rank	County	State	Average Weekly Wage (2013)
1	Morgan	AL	\$774
2	Floyd	GA	\$753
	Average		\$676
<b>14</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>\$584</b>
15	Lee	AL	\$570

### 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 has declined from 10<sup>th</sup> two years ago to 13<sup>th</sup> this year.

Rank	County	State	Share of Knowledge-based Jobs (2013)
1	Ouachita	LA	32.2%
2	Rapides	LA	31.6%
	Average		23.9%
<b>13</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>20.4%</b>
14	Morgan	AL	15.2%
15	Lee	AL	13.8%

### Knowledge-based sector Average Weekly wage:

Knowledge-based sector jobs are often high paying jobs. The Lowndes County community knowledge sector average weekly declined from \$779 in 2011 to \$767 in 2013. The Lowndes County community's rank declined from 11<sup>th</sup> back to the rank of 13<sup>th</sup>, which was its rank in 2010.

Rank	County	State	Knowledge Sector Average Weekly Wage (2013)
1	Forrest	MS	\$1,003
2	Houston	GA	\$969
	Average		\$849
<b>13</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>\$767</b>
14	Lee	AL	\$764
15	Wayne	NC	\$727

**Unemployment Rate:** With an average unemployment rate of 8.0%, the Lowndes County community unemployment rate is slightly higher than the peer and aspirant average unemployment rate. Since 2009, the Lowndes County community rank has declined from 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>. For the Lowndes County community, a smaller labor force has been a primary reason for the lower unemployment rate.

Rank	County	State	Unemployment Rate (2013)
1	Lee	AL	5.2%
2	Morgan	AL	6.0%
	Average		7.4%
<b>10T</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>8.0%</b>
10T	Wayne	NC	8.0%
14	Floyd	GA	8.8%
15	Nash	NC	10.9%

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 Indicator Standings			Job Standing Indicators			Overall Standing 2013		
Rank	County	State	Rank	County	State	Rank	County	State
1	Montgomery	TN	1	Warren	KY	1	Warren	KY
2	Houston	GA	2	Rapides	LA	2	Houston	GA
3	Lee	AL	3	Clarke	GA	3	Clarke	GA
4	Warren	KY	4T	Houston	AL	4	Montgomery	TN
5	Clarke	GA	4T	Morgan	AL	5	Lee	AL
<b>6</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	4T	Ouachita	LA	6	Houston	AL
7	Houston	AL	7	Houston	GA	7T	Morgan	AL
8	Florence	SC	8	Florence	SC	7T	Ouachita	LA
9	Forrest	MS	9	Floyd	GA	9	Florence	SC
10T	Morgan	AL	10	Forrest	MS	10	Rapides	LA
10T	Ouachita	LA	11T	Lee	AL	11	Forrest	MS
12	Nash	NC	11T	Montgomery	TN	<b>12</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>
13	Wayne	NC	13	Wayne	NC	13	Floyd	GA
14	Rapides	LA	14	Nash	NC	14	Nash	NC
15	Floyd	GA	<b>15</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	15	Wayne	NC

T is a tie ranking between two communities

The Lowndes County community has an overall standing of **twelfth** among the fifteen peer and aspirant communities, down from eleventh last year. This standing is a snapshot in time ranking of the fifteen communities.

The following are the complete economic indicator tables.

Rank	County	State	Population growth (2003-2013)
1	Montgomery	TN	32.2%
2	Lee	AL	25.7%
3	Houston	GA	23.7%
4	Warren	KY	21.1%
<b>5</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>19.9%</b>
6	Clarke	GA	14.1%
7	Houston	AL	13.5%
8	Wayne	NC	8.7%
9	Florence	SC	7.5%
10	Forrest	MS	7.4%
11	Nash	NC	6.3%
12	Morgan	AL	6.1%
13	Ouachita	LA	5.2%
14	Rapides	LA	4.8%
15	Floyd	GA	2.4%

Source: www.census.gov

Rank	County	State	High school diploma or GED (2010-2012)
1	Montgomery	TN	90.7%
2	Houston	GA	88.0%
3	Lee	AL	86.7%
4	Warren	KY	86.0%
5	Clarke	GA	85.9%
<b>6</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>84.2%</b>
7	Ouachita	LA	84.1%
8	Houston	AL	84.0%
9	Nash	NC	83.1%
10	Florence	SC	82.4%
11	Forrest	MS	82.3%
12	Morgan	AL	82.2%
13	Rapides	LA	81.9%
14	Wayne	NC	81.6%
15	Floyd	GA	77.6%

Source: www.census.gov

Rank	County	State	Bachelor degree, population over 25 (2010-2012)
1	Clarke	GA	40.4%
2	Lee	AL	32.2%
3	Warren	KY	27.1%
4	Forest	MS	26.1%
5	Houston	GA	23.9%
6	Montgomery	TN	23.6%
<b>7</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>22.4%</b>
8	Ouachita	LA	22.1%
9	Florence	SC	21.1%
10	Houston	AL	19.8%
11	Morgan	AL	18.9%
12	Floyd	GA	18.5%
13	Nash	NC	18.0%
14	Rapides	LA	17.3%
15	Wayne	NC	15.1%

Source: www.census.gov

Rank	County	State	Poverty Rate (2012)
1	Morgan	AL	16.2%
2	Houston	GA	16.8%
3	Montgomery	TN	16.9%
4	Houston	AL	19.0%
5	Warren	KY	19.8%
6	Florence	SC	20.0%
<b>7</b>	<b>Nash</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>20.8%</b>
8	Rapides	LA	22.0%
9	Lee	AL	23.0%
10	Floyd	GA	23.3%
11	Wayne	NC	23.4%
12	Ouachita	LA	23.6%
<b>13</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>25.3%</b>
14	Forrest	MS	29.0%
15	Clarke	GA	34.2%

Source: www.census.gov



Rank	County	State	Old Age Dependency (2012)
1	Montgomery	TN	13.9%
2	Lee	AL	17.0%
3	Clarke	GA	17.3%
4	Houston	GA	17.6%
<b>5</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>18.8%</b>
6	Warren	KY	19.3%
7	Forrest	MS	20.4%
8	Ouachita	LA	20.5%
9	Wayne	NC	21.5%
10	Florence	SC	21.9%
11	Rapides	LA	22.1%
12	Morgan	AL	22.7%
13T	Houston	AL	23.1%
13T	Nash	NC	23.1%
15	Floyd	GA	23.4%

Source: www.census.gov

Rank	County	State	Sector Employment (2013)
1	Ouachita	LA	58,896
2	Warren	KY	49,733
3	Florence	SC	46,945
4	Rapides	LA	45,629
5	Clarke	GA	45,192
6	Morgan	AL	38,751
7	Houston	AL	38,314
8	Montgomery	TN	37,426
9	Lee	AL	36,950
<b>10</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>35,548</b>
11	Wayne	NC	33,574
12	Houston	GA	32,634
13	Floyd	GA	31,022
14	Nash	NC	30,381
15	Forrest	MS	25,945

Rank	County	State	Median Household Income (2012)
1	Houston	GA	\$54,307
2	Montgomery	TN	\$48,267
3	Morgan	AL	\$44,766
4	Lee	AL	\$43,182
5	Warren	KY	\$42,514
6	Rapides	LA	\$41,036
7	Nash	NC	\$40,937
8	Houston	AL	\$40,609
9	Florence	SC	\$40,577
10	Wayne	NC	\$38,776
11	Floyd	GA	\$38,523
<b>12</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>\$36,920</b>
13	Ouachita	LA	\$36,895
14	Clarke	GA	\$32,720
15	Forrest	MS	\$32,210

Rank	County	State	Average Weekly Wage (2013)
1	Morgan	AL	\$774
2	Floyd	GA	\$753
3	Clarke	GA	\$715
4	Warren	KY	\$709
5	Houston	AL	\$699
6	Rapides	LA	\$696
7	Ouachita	LA	\$694
8	Forrest	MS	\$690
9	Florence	SC	\$677
10	Houston	GA	\$667
11	Nash	NC	\$646
12	Wayne	NC	\$635
13	Montgomery	TN	\$624
<b>14</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>\$584</b>
15	Lee	AL	\$570

Rank	County	State	Share of Knowledge-based Jobs (2013)
1	Ouachita	LA	32.2%
2	Rapides	LA	31.6%
3	Floyd	GA	28.1%
4	Clarke	GA	27.0%
5	Florence	SC	26.1%
6	Warren	KY	25.0%
7	Forrest	MS	24.4%
8	Wayne	NC	24.0%
9	Houston	GA	23.9%
10	Houston	AL	22.8%
11	Montgomery	TN	22.3%
12	Nash	NC	22.2%
<b>13</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>20.4%</b>
14	Morgan	AL	15.2%
15	Lee	AL	13.8%

Rank	County	State	Knowledge Sector Average Weekly Wage (2013)
1	Forrest	MS	\$1,003
2	Houston	GA	\$969
3	Houston	AL	\$948
4	Clarke	GA	\$920
5	Floyd	GA	\$893
6	Warren	KY	\$887
7	Florence	SC	\$856
8	Ouachita	LA	\$820
9	Rapides	LA	\$804
10T	Nash	NC	\$801
10T	Morgan	AL	\$801
12	Montgomery	TN	\$780
<b>13</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>\$767</b>
14	Lee	AL	\$764
15	Wayne	NC	\$727

Rank	County	State	Unemployment Rate (2013)
1	Lee	AL	5.2%
2	Morgan	AL	6.0%
3	Houston	AL	6.2%
4	Rapides	LA	6.3%
5	Clarke	GA	6.4%
6	Ouachita	LA	6.5%
7	Warren	KY	7.0%
8	Houston	GA	7.1%
9	Forrest	MS	7.9%
<b>10T</b>	<b>Lowndes</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>8.0%</b>
10T	Wayne	NC	8.0%
12	Montgomery	TN	8.1%
13	Florence	SC	8.5%
14	Floyd	GA	8.8%
15	Nash	NC	10.9%

In the study we use data that are publicly available from the sources shown below:

The United States Census [www.census.gov](http://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](http://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](http://www.militarybases.com)

- Location of military bases

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This report was prepared by Attila Cseh, Ph.D. and Cynthia Royal Tori, Ph.D.. Dr. Cseh is an associate professor of economics and the department head for economics and finance. He has a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Kentucky and has been a member of the Langdale College faculty since August 2006. Dr. Tori is a professor of economics at the Langdale College of Business and a regional economic forecaster for the Center for Business and Economic Research. Dr. Tori has a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Kentucky and has been a member of the Langdale College faculty since August 1998. For more details, please contact Scott Manley at 229-333-7878 or visit the Center for Business & Economic Research online at [www.valdosta.edu/cber](http://www.valdosta.edu/cber).

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