

Mid-Hudson Valley Community Profiles

Regional Overview

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Prepared for:

Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley, Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan, Dyson Foundation, United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region

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Summary

The Mid-Hudson Valley Community Profiles project represents a commitment by four of the region's leading philanthropic organizations to provide the public with continuously updated comparative information regarding Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Sullivan and Ulster counties. The project is designed to provide government and nonprofits with an important tool for assessing and understanding the populations they serve.

The Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley, Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan, Dyson Foundation, United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region jointly commissioned the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) to collect and analyze the data and maintain the website. With input from local health and human service providers, the four organizations selected 59 indicators within the following fields to be included on the site: Children & Youth, Community Engagement, Demographics, Economy, Education, Financial Stability, Health, Housing, and Public Safety.

This web-based project provides an "apples-to-apples" understanding of regional trends and comparative information that has been difficult to obtain in the past because of variations in how each county reports certain types of information. The project enables organizations to track community conditions, develop programs, and affect change that will ultimately contribute to the well-being of citizens in the Mid-Hudson Valley.

In addition to converting to a newly designed, responsive format, the project expanded this year to cover four additional counties (Columbia, Greene, Putnam and Sullivan) and added indicators, including data on drug-related deaths that show the spike in opioid abuse, living wage estimates and the share of our residents who are foreign-born.

This Overview highlights findings from each of the nine topics for the Mid-Hudson Valley region.

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A Portrait of the Region

The Mid-Hudson Valley continues to be a relatively strong region of New York State, with increasing population, higher job growth, rising home values, and high rates of high school graduation and graduates attending college.

However, some challenges persist, such as unaffordable housing and relatively low academic performance, especially among some student groups. New challenges, such as the rise of drug-related deaths connected to the opioid epidemic, have emerged. And making ends meet in the Mid-Hudson Valley, where the cost of living is high, can be difficult for a broad swath of the population.

While poverty is relatively low at 11% for the region, 28% of residents had incomes between 100% and 299% of the poverty level, which may make affording basic needs a challenge. Living wage models estimate two working parents with two children need to earn \$86,000 a year, more than three times the poverty level (about \$25,000) for a family of this type. A single earner with two children to support needs an even higher wage, \$79,000 a year, to make a living wage.

The overviews and data presented in this report serve to highlight positive characteristics that the region continues to develop, as well as note the challenges that the community faces, in hopes of helping the community set a firm foundation for continued growth.

Note: In this report, comparisons to state statistics reflect the state excluding New York City.

Children and Youth

The challenges facing our community's children can diminish their chances for successful adult lives. In this section we review several indicators that describe family supports and risk exposure of our youngest residents.

There are more [children living in poverty](#) than in 2000, similar to state and national trends. In 2013-17, about 16% of children in the region were living in poverty, up 3 points since 2000 and lower than the national rate (20%). Dutchess County continued to have the lowest rate of child poverty in the region (12%), while Sullivan County had the highest percentage of children living in poverty (23%). [Poverty was highest among](#) African American (29%) and Hispanic (22%) children in the Mid-Hudson Valley region in 2013-17. White children (14%) were less likely to be living in poverty, though there was a 4 point increase since 2000.

There are more [single-parent families](#) in the region, though still below the state and nation. The proportion of single-parent families in the region increased 4 percentage points from 2000, similar to state and national trends. In 2013–17, slightly more than one-quarter (28%) of families in the region were headed by single parents, below the rates for the state (excluding NYC) (32%) and nation (34%). Ulster, Sullivan and Columbia counties had the highest proportion of single-parent families (36%), while Putnam had the lowest (17%). Over half (59%) of African American families in the [region were headed by single parents](#), the highest of any racial or ethnic group. This was below the rates for African American families throughout the state (excluding NYC) (64%) and nation (66%). In the region, 37% of Hispanic families and 30% of white families were headed by single parents.

Rates of [child abuse and neglect](#) have fluctuated but not changed substantially since 2000. In 2017, there were 14 abused children for every 1,000 children in the region, up 4% from 2000 and below the statewide rate of 17. Rates were lowest in Orange (9 per 1,000) and Putnam (7 per 1,000) counties.

[Foster care admissions](#) are decreasing, though the regional rate is higher than the state's. The rate of children admitted to foster care declined to 2.4 children per 1,000 in 2017 from 2.8 in 2000. However, beginning in 2010, rates in the region exceeded statewide rates. Admissions were greatest in Greene County, with 4.7 children per 1,000 admitted to foster care, followed by Ulster (3.3).

The region has seen a decline in the [teen pregnancy rate](#), which is similar to the state. In 2016, the number of pregnancies among females 15-19 was 2.0%, the lowest in the decade. Teen pregnancy was highest in Orange and Sullivan counties at 2.8% and 2.7% respectively, than in Putnam (0.6%), Greene (1.2%) and Dutchess (1.9%).

[Live births to teen mothers](#) have also declined since 2000. In 2016, there were 10 live births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 in the region, below the state and nation (12 and 20 respectively). This makes for a 61% decrease since 2000. Sullivan County had the highest rate in the region, with 18 births per 1,000 teen females, followed by Orange and Columbia (each at 14 births per 1,000).

[Juvenile delinquency intakes](#) are down drastically since 2000, and the regional rate is lower than the state's. In 2017, the region had a rate of 30 juvenile delinquency intakes for every 10,000 juveniles, a decrease of 72% since 2000 and lower than the statewide rate (42). Dutchess County had the lowest rate of juvenile delinquency intakes at 4 per 10,000 juveniles, followed by Putnam (15) and Orange (28), while Greene County had the highest rate at 77.

Reported bullying incidents have declined in the region since 2004, but the rate is higher than the statewide rate. In 2018 there were 9.3 bullying incidents per 1,000 students in the region, higher than the statewide rate (8.1). Rates have decreased for all counties except Orange in the region. Greene had the highest rate in the region at 16 in 2018.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is the extent to which individuals take responsibility for addressing civic issues and improving the life of their community.

Average levels of charitable giving are below the state and the nation.

In 2016, average charitable contributions in the Mid-Hudson Valley region ranged from approximately \$2,800 in Greene to \$4,300 in Columbia, below the statewide and national average of \$5,100 and \$6,300, respectively.

Individuals' average charitable giving was up 16% from approximately \$3,100 in 2011, to just over \$3,600 in 2016, below the increases at the state and national levels of 25% and 28% respectively over the same time period.

The region's **voter registration rates** have remained steady at above 80%, yet they are persistently a bit lower than the state.

Between 2000 and 2017, the average voter registration rate was 82% for the Mid-Hudson region and 84% for the state. Of the region's voting-age residents, 82% were registered in 2017, compared to 84% of the state overall.

Voter registration rates vary somewhat across the region. Columbia County's registration rate has been equal to or greater than the statewide rate in every year except 2000. In 2017, Columbia County (88%) had the highest registration rate of the seven counties.

Voter turnout in the region approaches 60% in presidential election years, and is about even with the state rate. In the 2016 presidential election, voter turnout in the region was 1 point lower than the state at 56%. Turnout was highest in Columbia and Putnam counties at 62%.

Demographics

Population measures provide insight on the changing size and face of communities, and an area's needs and assets.

The [total population](#) of the Mid-Hudson Valley Region is growing. Counter to the population declines experienced in Western and Central New York, most of the seven counties in the Mid-Hudson Valley region have gained residents since 2000. From 2000 to 2017, the region gained 6% more residents, higher than the state (2%), yet below the rate for the nation (16%). Orange led the region with its robust 12% growth, followed by Dutchess (6%), Putnam (4%), Sullivan (2%) and Ulster (1%), while Columbia and Greene decreased 4% and 1% respectively.

The [population over the age of 60 has been growing the fastest](#), while the [population under 40 has been shrinking](#). All counties in the region are experiencing the “graying” phenomenon affecting much of the country. Since 2000, the 85 and over age group grew the fastest, at 69% for Dutchess, 62% for Orange and 49% for the region overall. The under 20 group shrank 8% throughout the region. Orange was the only county with an increase in the under 20 group, but this was countered by decreases in Columbia and Greene (both 23%). The 20 to 39 age group also shrank 5% throughout the region, or by 15% in Putnam, 9% in Ulster, and 8% in Columbia.

While the [counties are gradually becoming more diverse](#) in terms of race and ethnicity, they remain overwhelmingly white. Despite the large percentage increases in minority populations and a modest decline in the white population (2%), the region remains predominantly white, representing 80% of total residents. Hispanics were the region’s fastest growing group, up 86% from 2000. Putnam had the greatest increase in Hispanic population, at 129%, followed by Dutchess with 97%. The Asian population was the second fastest growing group, growing by 74%.

Regionally, married couples without children were the [most common household type](#), similar to state and national trends. In 2013-17, 30% of households were made up of married couples without children and 22% were married couples with children. Among the counties, Greene had the largest share of households composed of people living alone at 32%, and Orange had 27% of households made up of married couples with children.

The [foreign-born share of the population](#) in the region has increased since 2000. Putnam County had the largest share of foreign-born population (13%) followed by Dutchess and Orange (both at 11%), while Greene has the smallest share (6%).

Economy

A vibrant economy is the foundation of a thriving community.

Regional [job growth](#) has been strong through the decade overall, despite job losses in 2010. Between 2001 and 2017, total jobs in the region increased 13%, below the nation (18%) but above the state (10%). Between 2016 and 2017, jobs increased 1.4% in the region and 0.9% in the state, compared to a 1.4% increase for the nation. Sullivan County led the region with a 1.8% increase in jobs in 2017 followed by 1.7% in Dutchess and 1.6% in Putnam. Columbia County had the least growth with 0.4%.

Some of the largest [employment sectors](#) in the region added a significant number of jobs between 2001 and 2017. Industries with the largest gains were Financial Activities (42%), Leisure and Hospitality (34%), Professional and Business Services (33%), and Health Care and Social Assistance (34%), while Government lost jobs (3%). Putnam and Orange counties had the largest total gains at 26% and 22% respectively. Dutchess and Ulster counties had the lowest gains at 7%.

[Spending by county government, after adjusting for inflation](#), grew 14% from 2000 to 2017. That compares to a statewide increase of 3%. County government spending per capita for the region was about \$2,200 in 2017, compared to \$2,400 for the state. From 2000 to 2017, per capita spending increased the most, 25%, in Orange County followed by 24% in Sullivan. Putnam County (8%) was the only county with a decrease in per capita spending from 2000 to 2017. In 2017, Sullivan County had the highest county spending (\$4,130), while Putnam had the least (\$1,590).

[Tourism revenue](#) increased 11% in the region since 2005. Tourism brought about \$2,200 per capita into the region in 2017 and was strongest in Sullivan and Greene counties on a per-capita basis. Adjusted for inflation, tourism revenue per capita declined after the Great Recession in 2008 but has slowly rebounded.

Education

Quality educational opportunities are critical to helping our children develop to their maximum potential and to our community's ability to compete in the global economy.

The percentage of [preschoolers receiving special education services](#) has been increasing since 2000. From 2000 to 2017, the share increased almost 3 percentage points, surpassing the state percentage. In 2017, 7.3% of all 3- to 5-year-olds in the region and 6.4% in the state were receiving special education services.

[Prekindergarten enrollment](#) has been increasing since 2007, but remains below the rate for the state. About 28% of the region's 4-year-olds were enrolled

in publicly funded prekindergarten programs in 2017, below the 39% rate for the state. Participation was highest in Orange and Sullivan counties (38% and 37% respectively), followed by Greene (36%). Dutchess had the lowest enrollment at 16%.

Per-student spending by school districts is slightly higher in the region than in the state. In 2017, per-student spending by school districts in the region was approximately \$25,100, more than the state at \$23,700. Per-student spending in the region has increased 63% since 2000, even after adjusting for inflation. Spending in Sullivan County was the highest in the region, about \$30,000 per student, followed by Putnam County school districts at \$28,100 and Ulster County at \$26,300. Dutchess County was the lowest in the region at \$23,700 per student.

The region has lower passing rates on fourth-grade English exams than the state. The 2018 passing rate of 39% in English was 5 points below the state. Passing rates on state tests were significantly lower for low-income, English language learners, and students with disabilities than for their peers. In the region, 28% of low-income fourth-graders passed the English exams, 5% of English language learners, and 7% of students with disabilities. Sullivan County's economically disadvantaged students had the lowest proficiency rate among the counties at 17% and Columbia and Putnam had the highest (both at 32%). We note that 28% of students in the region opted not to take the exam.

The region has lower passing rates on fourth-grade math exams than the state. The 2018 passing rate of 43% in math was 4 points below the state. Passing rates on state tests were significantly lower for low-income, English language learners, and students with disabilities than for their peers. In the region, 28% of low-income fourth-graders passed the math exams, 10% of English language learners, and 9% of students with disabilities. Sullivan County had the lowest proficiency rate among economically disadvantaged students at 21% and Greene and Putnam had the highest (both at 35%). About 30% of students region-wide opted out of the exam.

Both high school graduation and dropout rates are in line with statewide trends. By 2018, 87% of the region's 2014 cohort graduated on time, similar to the state (86%). About 6% of the cohort dropped out, just above the state rate of 5%.

An increasing proportion of high school graduates plans to attend college. In 2017, 83% of high school seniors in the region planned to attend college, with 36% planning to attend a 2-year program and 47% planning to attend a 4-year program. The regional college-bound rate in 2017 was slightly higher than the state rate of 82%. Rates were similar across most of the regional counties except for Putnam where 90% of graduates planned to attend college.

Education levels among adults are rising, with more having a college education. In 2013-17, 61% of adults had attended at least some college, up from 52% in 2000 and even with the nation. About 31% of the region's residents had a 4-year degree or higher in 2013-17, compared to 25% in 2000. Just 10% of residents in the region did not have a high school diploma in 2013-17. Educational attainment among counties in the region was highest in Putnam County, with 39% of residents possessing a 4-year degree or higher, compared to 22% in Greene and 23% in Sullivan.

The [share of residents with a bachelor's or higher](#) was highest among Asians in the region (57%), followed by whites (32%), African Americans (21%) and Hispanics (20%). Still, those figures reflect increases of 9 percentage points for African Americans and 7 points for Hispanics from 2000.

Financial Stability

Indicators of financial stability are a critical benchmark of a community's well-being.

Regionally, [median household income](#) has declined similar to losses at the state and national levels. Households in the region lost some economic ground over the past decade, with median household income decreasing 4%, after adjusting for inflation. At \$70,150 in 2013-17, median incomes were above the levels for the state (\$66,000) and nation (\$57,700). Median incomes were higher than the region in Putnam (\$99,600), Dutchess (\$75,600) and Orange counties (\$75,100), while Ulster (\$61,700), Columbia (\$61,100) and Sullivan (\$53,900) were lower.

Asian and white residents in the region had [the highest median incomes](#), at \$100,400 and \$73,000, respectively. African American and Hispanic residents had the lowest median incomes at \$52,500 and \$58,500, though both exceeded rates for their respective groups in the state and nation.

[Poverty rates in the region are below the state and nation.](#) In 2013-17, about 11% of the region's residents were living in poverty, below the state (12%) and nation (15%). Sullivan County had the highest poverty rate in the region at 16%, followed by Ulster with 13%. Putnam County had the lowest at 5%, followed by Dutchess at 9%.

[Poverty rates were highest](#) for African American residents in the region (20%), as was true for the state and nation. In 2013-17, Hispanic residents had the second highest poverty rate (17%), while Asians and whites had the lowest (8% and 10%

respectively). About 7% [of seniors](#) and 5% of [veterans were living in poverty](#) in 2013-17. While poverty is relatively low at 11% for the region, another 14% of residents had incomes between 100% and 199% of the poverty level, and 14% were between 200% and 299% of poverty.

Living wage models suggest that this broader group of regional residents may have trouble making ends meet. The [living wage](#) measures the level of income that households require to pay for necessities, including housing and food, without assistance. The estimated hourly living wage for two working parents with two children was \$20.68 in the region, or \$86,000 a year, more than three times the poverty level (about \$25,000) for a family of this type. A single earner with two children to support needs an even higher wage, \$38/hour or \$79,000 a year, to make a living wage.

More students were [economically disadvantaged](#) in 2018 compared to 2013 in the region. In 2018, 44% of students in the region were economically disadvantaged, slightly below the state rate of 46%. Sullivan County, at 62%, had the highest rate in the region, followed by Columbia, at 52%. The lowest rates were in Putnam, at 27%, and Dutchess, at 39%.

A low percentage of children are receiving [subsidized child care](#). In 2017, 1.5% of the region's children participated in subsidized child care, below the rate of 2.3% for the state.

A lower percentage of the region's population received the [Earned Income Tax Credit \(EITC\)](#) than nation. About 14% of tax filers in the region received the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) in 2016, on par with the state and below the nation (18%). The rates for each county, the state (excluding NYC) and nation have remained relatively unchanged since 2011.

Health

Healthy communities are built on a foundation of healthy children, youth and adults.

The rate of [individuals without health insurance](#) fell between 2008 and 2017. The percentage of residents under the age of 65 without health insurance in the region fell from 13% in 2008 to 6% in 2017. This puts the region slightly above the statewide rate yet below the national rate (10%). Ulster and Sullivan counties had 7% of residents lacking insurance, followed by Dutchess and Putnam (both 5%).

Early prenatal care rates varied among racial and ethnic groups throughout the region, similar to statewide trends. In 2016, the share of white mothers receiving early prenatal care ranged from 89% in Dutchess County to 69% in Sullivan County. African American mothers had the lowest rates, ranging from 55% in Greene County to 86% in Putnam County. Rates were somewhat higher among Hispanic mothers, ranging from 86% in Greene County to 64% in Ulster County. Dutchess and Putnam counties were the only counties to surpass statewide rates for each racial and ethnic category.

The rate of **low birth weight babies** increased since 2000, similar to statewide trends. In 2016, 7.2% of babies born in the region had low birth weights, below the state and national rates of 7.6% and 8.2%, but up from 6.5% in 2000. Columbia County had the lowest rate in 2016 (3.9%), while Greene County had the highest rate at 8.7%.

Deaths from **drug poisoning have increased** in the region similar to statewide and national trends. There were 10.7 drug poisoning deaths per 100,000 residents in the Mid-Hudson Valley region in 2016, an increase of nearly 160% since 2000. That put the region above the state rate of 9.2 but below the national rate of 19.8. Greene County had the highest rate of drug poisoning deaths in the region at 15, followed by Columbia, Orange and Putnam (all at 11), while Dutchess and Ulster had the lowest rates (both at 9).

The rate of **people living with HIV** has decreased since 2002 in the Mid-Hudson Valley region. In 2016, there were 97 people per 100,000 residents with HIV, similar to the state rate of 93. The rate has decreased by 4% in the region since 2002, in contrast to an increase in the state (20%). Columbia County had a rate of 143 per 100,000 residents with HIV followed by Sullivan County (134). Putnam County had the lowest rate in 2016 at 59 people per 100,000 residents with HIV.

The region's rate of **mental health clinic visits** declined since 2001. There were 5.2 mental health clinic visits per 1,000 residents in the region in 2017, compared to 6.0 in 2001. Orange had the lowest rate (3.4), followed by Putnam (4.6), and Greene County (8.2) had the highest rate. Sullivan County had the largest decline (40%), compared to a 13% decrease region-wide.

Housing

Housing fulfills the basic human need for shelter and is a strong measure of a community's cost of living, relative wealth and general prosperity.

Homeownership rates have remained steady across the region and on par with the state at 70%. Rates were similar across the Mid-Hudson Valley, except Putnam County with the highest rate at 82%.

The Mid-Hudson Valley experienced a decrease in the rate of **homelessness** since 2007. In 2017, there were 14 homeless people per 10,000 residents in the region. Among the counties, Ulster County had the highest rate at 23 homeless people per 10,000 residents, followed by Sullivan County (22) while Orange County had the lowest rate at 9 homeless people per 10,000 residents in 2017. The region's rate of homelessness decreased by 27% between 2007 and 2017, similar to a 21% decline in the national rate.

Owning a home has become harder in the Mid-Hudson Valley, with rising home values and income not keeping pace. The affordability ratio (median home value divided by household income) was 3.6 in the region in 2013-17, up from 2.7 in 2000. Across the region, ratios ranged from a low of 3.1 in Sullivan County to a high of 3.7 in Columbia - all above the 3.0 considered affordable.

Rental housing has become less affordable between 2000 and 2013–17, similar to state and national trends. Region-wide, 34% of the median household income went to cover rent in 2013-17, above the federal affordability guideline that housing should cost no more than 30% of household income. In 2013-17, renters in Greene County spent 41% of their income on rent, below Columbia, Putnam, and Sullivan (each 31%) renters, but above the 28% spent in the state. These proportions were up from 2000, 7 points in the region, 14 points in Greene and 9 points in Ulster and Orange counties.

Public Safety

Public safety affects the emotional and physical well-being of residents and contributes to quality of life for individuals at home, at work, and in the community.

Violent crime rates have decreased across the region. In 2017, the Mid-Hudson Valley region had 20 violent crimes reported per 10,000 residents, below the state rate of 38 violent crimes per 10,000 residents. This was a 19% decrease in the rate of violent crimes since 2000, compared to a 24% decrease statewide. Greene and Sullivan (29) had the highest rates in the region, followed by Orange (23) and Columbia (22). All counties experienced a rate decrease since 2000.

The **rate of domestic violence** slightly increased in the Mid-Hudson Valley region. The region had a 2% increase in the rate of reported domestic violence between 2009 and 2017. In 2017, there were 37 reports of domestic violence per

10,000 residents in the region, up from 36 in 2009 and below the state rate (42). The rate grew the most in Orange County, increasing 56%, in contrast to Greene and Putnam counties, which had decreases of 61% and 49%, respectively, since 2009.