



Mid-Hudson Valley Community Profiles

Regional Overview

June, 2023

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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.

The project expanded 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

While the Mid-Hudson Valley continues to be a strong region of New York State with below average poverty and above average incomes, living there is becoming harder. The cost of housing and inflationary pressures more generally have pushed living expenses beyond what many residents can afford to pay.

Comparing the region's median household income to living wage estimates shows that costs are outpacing incomes. In 2012-16, the regional median income of \$76,500 exceeded the 2015 living wage for a variety of household types – including a single parent with two children (\$68,400). By 2017-21, the median income rose to \$80,700, but living wages for most household types were higher – topping out at \$113,000 for a family of four (two earning adults and two children).

Housing continues to be a key driver of unaffordability. The region's affordability ratio (comparing median home value and income) was 3.5, above the 2-3 range considered affordable. On average, rent consumed 32% of income, above the recommended 30% threshold.

And racial and structural inequity continues in the Mid-Hudson Valley, as it does throughout the U.S. Incomes are lower and poverty higher for African Americans and Latinos – for example, child poverty rates are 22% for Black children, 17% for Latino, 14% for white and 11% for Asian children.

On the positive side, jobs in the region are increasing, and growing economic sectors include traditionally high-paying ones such as Financial Activities and Professional and Business Services. The population of the region continues to increase and is up 8.6% since 2000, with growing diversity include 10% of residents being foreign-born.

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 slightly more [children living in poverty](#) than in 2000, similar to state and national trends. In 2017-21, about 15% of children in the region were living in poverty, up 2 points since 2000 and lower than the national rate (17%). Putnam County had the lowest rate of child poverty in the region (6%), while Sullivan

County had the highest percentage of children living in poverty (23%). [Poverty was highest among](#) African American (22%) and Hispanic (17%) children in the Mid-Hudson Valley region in 2017-21. White children (14%) were less likely to be living in poverty, though this represents 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 5 percentage points from 2000, similar to state and national trends. In 2017–21, slightly more than one-quarter (29%) of families in the region were headed by single parents, below the rates for the state (excluding NYC) (31%) and nation (34%). Ulster (39%) , Sullivan (40%), Ulster (38%), and Columbia (37%) counties had the highest proportion of single-parent families, while Putnam had the lowest (20%). Over half (53%) 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) (65%) and nation (66%). In the region, 37% of Hispanic families and 32% of white families were headed by single parents.

Rates of [child abuse and neglect](#) have fluctuated but not changed substantially since 2000. In 2020, there were 11 abused children for every 1,000 children in the region, down 15% from 2000 and below the statewide rate of 16. Rates were lowest in Orange (8 per 1,000) and Putnam (6 per 1,000) counties and highest in Greene County (27 per 1,000 children under 18).

[Foster care admissions](#) are decreasing, and the regional rate is lower than the state's. The rate of children admitted to foster care declined to 1.1 children per 1,000 in 2021 from 2.8 in 2000. The rate is below the statewide rate of 1.5 children per 1,000. Admissions were greatest in Greene County, with 3.0 children per 1,000 admitted to foster care and lowest in Putnam County (0.2).

The region has seen a decline in the [teen pregnancy rate](#), which is similar to the state. In 2020, the number of pregnancies among females 12-19 was 0.9%, 2 percentage points lower than in 2000. Teen pregnancy was highest in Sullivan County at 1.5% and lowest in Putnam at 0.4%.

[Live births to teen mothers](#) have also declined since 2000. In 2020, there were 8 live births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 in the region, below the state and nation (10 and 15 respectively). This makes for a 68% decrease since 2000. Sullivan County had the highest rate in the region, with 16 births per 1,000 teen females while Putnam had the lowest at 3 births per 1,000.

[Juvenile delinquency intakes](#) are down drastically since 2000, and the regional rate is lower than the state's. In 2021, the region had a rate of 15 juvenile

delinquency intakes for every 10,000 juveniles, a decrease of 84% since 2000 and lower than the statewide rate (24). Putnam and Sullivan counties had the lowest rate of juvenile delinquency intakes at 6 per 10,000 juveniles, while Greene County had the highest rate at 49 per 10,000 juveniles.

Reported bullying incidents have declined in the region since 2014, and the rate is similar to the statewide rate. In 2021, there were 2.4 bullying incidents per 1,000 students in the region, similar to the statewide rate (2.6). Rates have decreased for all counties in the region. Greene County had the highest rate in the region at 4.3 per 1,000, while Dutchess had the lowest at 1.5 per 1,000.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is the extent to which individuals take responsibility for addressing civic issues and improving the life of their community. In all cases, comparisons to state statistics reflect the state excluding New York City.

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

In 2020, average charitable contributions in the Mid-Hudson Valley region ranged from approximately \$12,900 in Columbia to \$7,000 in Sullivan, below the statewide and national average of \$12,000 and \$15,900 respectively.

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 2021, the average voter registration rate was 83% for the Mid-Hudson region and 85% for the state. Of the region's voting-age residents, 87% were registered in 2021, compared to 86% 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 2021, Columbia County (95%) had the highest registration rate of the seven counties.

Voter turnout in the region approaches 64% in presidential election years, and is about even with the state rate.

In the 2020 presidential election, voter turnout in the region was on par with the state. Turnout was highest in Columbia (72%) and lowest in Sullivan County at 59%.

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 2021, the region gained 8.6% more residents, higher than the state (3.7%), yet below the rate for the nation (18%). Orange led the region with its robust 19% growth, followed by Dutchess (6%), Putnam (2.3%), Sullivan (8%), and Ulster (2.9%), and Greene (1%) while Columbia decreased 2.1%.

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 79% for Greene and 51% for the region overall. The under 20 group shrank 11% throughout the region. Columbia and Greene had the largest declines in population under age 20 (down 31% and 30%, respectively), while Orange increased (5%). The 20 to 39 age group also shrank 2% throughout the region, or by 13% in Putnam 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 (5%), the region remains predominantly white, representing 74% of total residents. Hispanics were the region’s fastest growing racial group, up 109% from 2000. Putnam had the greatest increase in Hispanic population, at 165%, followed by Orange with 115%. The Asian population was the second fastest growing group in the region, growing by 73%.

Regionally, married couples without children were the [most common household type](#), similar to state and national trends. In 2017-21, 30% of households were made up of married couples without children and 21% were married couples with children. Among the counties, Putnam had the largest share of households composed of people living alone, at 35%, and Orange and Putnam had 26% of households made up of married couples with children.

The [foreign-born share of the population](#) in the region has increased since 2000 to 10%. Putnam County had the largest share of foreign-born population (14%) followed by Orange at 12%, while Greene has the smallest share (6%) in 2017-21.

Economy

A vibrant economy is the foundation of a thriving community.

Regional [jobs](#) increased in 2021, recovering from pandemic lows.

The region's total number of jobs increased 3% in 2021 as it recovered from job losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was the same rate of increase as the state and nation. All of the region's counties experienced increases in total jobs from 2020 to 2021. Orange had the highest increase at 4.1%, followed by Sullivan at 4% and Putnam at 3.5%.

Some of the largest [employment sectors](#) in the region added and lost a significant number of jobs between 2001 and 2021. Industries with the largest gains were Financial Activities (64%) and Educational Services (38%), while the Information and Manufacturing sectors experienced decreases of 35% and 34%, respectively. Orange and Putnam counties had the largest total gains at 25% and 24%, respectively while Dutchess and Ulster counties experienced 5% and 4% decreases, respectively.

[Spending by county government](#), after adjusting for inflation, grew 69% from 2000 to 2021.

County government spending per capita for the region was about \$2,100 in 2021. From 2000 to 2021, per capita spending increased the most, 92%, in Greene County, followed by 87% in Dutchess. In 2020, Sullivan County had the highest county spending (\$2,900), while Putnam had the least (\$3,500).

[Tourism revenue](#) increased 40% in the region since 2005.

Tourism revenue rebounded from the COVID pandemic, increasing 54% from 2020 to 2021. Per-resident revenue was highest in Sullivan (\$8,900) and Greene (\$4,900) counties on a per-capita basis. Adjusted for inflation, tourism revenue per capita declined after the Great Recession in 2008, rebounded from 2010 to 2019, declined in 2020, and recovered to its pre-pandemic levels in 2021.

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 2021, the share increased 3 percentage points. In 2021, 6.9% of all 3- to 5-year-olds in the region and 6.3% in the state were receiving special education services.

[Prekindergarten enrollment](#) has declined since 2011.

About 23% of the region's 4-year-olds were enrolled in publicly funded

prekindergarten programs in 2021, above the 22% rate for the state. Participation was highest in Orange and Sullivan counties (30% and 29% respectively), followed by Comubia and Ulster (both 27%). Dutchess had the lowest enrollment at 14%.

Per-student spending by school districts is slightly higher in the region than in the state. In 2021, per-student spending by school districts in the region was approximately \$28,800, more than the state at \$26,800. Per-student spending in the region has increased 68% since 2000, even after adjusting for inflation. Spending in Sullivan County was the highest in the region, about \$33,500 per student, followed by Putnam County school districts at \$32,600 and Ulster County at \$30,000. Dutchess and Orange counties were the lowest in the region at \$27,700 and \$27,100 per student.

The region has lower passing rates on fourth-grade English exams than the state. The 2022 passing rate of 34% 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, 22% of low-income fourth-graders passed the English exams and 5% for English language learners and 6% for students with disabilities. Sullivan and Ulster counties' economically disadvantaged students had the lowest proficiency rate among the counties at 16% and 18%. Columbia had the highest at 27%. We note that 18% 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 2022 passing rate of 34% in math was 8 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, 22% of low-income fourth-graders passed the math exams, 8% of English language learners and students with disabilities. Ulster and Sullivan counties had the lowest proficiency rate among economically disadvantaged students at 17% and Greene had the highest at 31%. About 20% of students region-wide opted out of the exam.

Both high school graduation and dropout rates are in line with statewide trends. By 2022, 88% of the region's 2018 cohort graduated on time, similar to the state (89%). About 6% of the cohort dropped out, above the state rate (4%).

Education levels among adults are rising, with more having a college education. In 2017-21, 62% of adults had attended at least some college, up from 52% in 2000 and even with the nation. About 34% of the region's residents had a 4-year degree or higher in 2017-21, compared to 25% in 2000. Just 9% of residents in the region did not have a high school diploma in 2017-21. Educational attainment among counties in the region was highest in Putnam County, with 41% of residents

possessing a 4-year degree or higher, compared to 26% in Greene and 27% in Sullivan.

The [share of residents with a bachelor's or higher](#) was highest among Asians in the region (54%), followed by whites (36%), African Americans (23%) and Hispanics (22%). Still, those figures reflect increases of 11 percentage points for African Americans and 9 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.

After adjusting for inflation, median household income remained essentially unchanged from 2000 to 2017-21. At \$80,700 in 2017-21, median incomes were above the levels for the state (\$77,800) and nation (\$69,000). Median incomes were higher than the region in Putnam (\$111,600), Dutchess (\$87,100) and Orange counties (\$85,600), while Ulster (\$71,000), Sullivan (\$63,400) and Greene (\$62,800) were lower.

Asian and white residents in the region had [the highest median incomes](#), at \$95,300 and \$82,700, respectively. African American and Hispanic residents had the lowest median incomes at \$63,700 and \$76,100, respectively, though both exceeded rates for their respective groups in the state and nation.

[Poverty rates in the region are below the nation.](#)

In 2017-21, about 11% of the region's residents were living in poverty, on par with the state and lower than the nation (13%). Sullivan County had the highest poverty rate in the region at 14%, followed by Ulster with 13%. Putnam County had the lowest at 6%, followed by Dutchess at 9%.

[Poverty rates](#) were highest for African American and Hispanic residents in the region (17% and 14% respectively), as was true for the state and nation. In 2017-21, Asians and whites had the lowest (12% and 9% respectively). About 8% [of seniors](#) and 4% of [veterans were living in poverty](#) in 2017-21. While poverty is relatively low at 11% for the region, another 13% of residents had incomes between 100% and 199% of the poverty level, and 13% 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 \$27.15 in the region, or \$112,900 a year, more than four times the poverty level (about \$27,479) for a family of this type. A single earner with two children to support needs an even higher wage, \$48.18/hour or \$100,200 a year, to make a living wage.

More students were [economically disadvantaged](#) in 2022 compared to 2013 in the region.

In 2022, 43% of students in the region were economically disadvantaged, slightly above the state rate of 42%. Sullivan County, at 58%, had the highest rate in the region, followed by Columbia at 49%, Ulster at 48% and Greene at 47%. The lowest rates were in Putnam, at 28%, and Dutchess, at 38%.

A low percentage of children are receiving [subsidized child care](#).

In 2021, 0.7% of the region's children participated in subsidized child care, below the rate of 1.4% for the state.

A lower percentage of the region's population received the [Earned Income Tax Credit](#) (EITC) than in the nation.

About 12% of tax filers in the region received the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) in 2020, similar to the state and below the nation (16%). 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 2020.

The percentage of residents under the age of 65 without health insurance in the region fell from 13% in 2008 to 5% in 2019. This puts the region on par with the statewide rate yet below the national rate (10%). Columbia, Greene, Ulster and Sullivan counties were on the higher end of rates of uninsured residents (6%), while Putnam had the lowest rate, at 4%.

[Early prenatal care](#) rates varied among racial and ethnic groups throughout the region, similar to statewide trends.

In 2020, the share of white mothers receiving early prenatal care ranged from 89% in Putnam County to 67% in Sullivan County. African American mothers' rates ranged from 83% in Putnam County to 51% in Sullivan County. Rates among Hispanic mothers ranged from 73% in Putnam County to 61% in Orange 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 2020, 7.5% of babies born in the region had low birth weights, below the state and national rates of 7.8% and 8.2%, but up from 6.5% in 2000. Greene County had the lowest rate in 2020 (5%), while Sullivan County had the highest rate at 9.6%.

Deaths from [drug poisoning have increased](#) in the region, similar to statewide and national trends. There were 35 drug poisoning deaths per 100,000 residents in the Mid-Hudson Valley region in 2021, an increase of almost 750% since 2000. That put the region above the state rate of 27 drug poisoning deaths per 100,000 residents. Sullivan County had the highest rate of drug poisoning deaths in the region at 53. Columbia and Putnam counties had the lowest rates (26 and 29 respectively).

The rate of [people living with HIV](#) has decreased since 2002 in the Mid-Hudson Valley region. In 2021, there were 103 people per 100,000 residents with HIV, similar to the state rate of 93. The rate has increased by 2% in the region since 2002, in contrast to an increase in the state (18%). Greene County had a rate of 157 per 100,000 residents with HIV followed by Columbia County (152). Putnam County had the lowest rate in 2021 at 72 people per 100,000 residents with HIV.

The region's rate of [mental health clinic visits](#) declined since 2001. There were 5.8 mental health clinic visits per 1,000 residents in the region in 2019, compared to 6.0 in 2001. Orange had the lowest rate (4.8), followed by Putnam (4.9), and Greene County (8.5) had the highest rate. Dutchess County had the largest decline (30%), compared to a 4% decrease region-wide, while Greene County had the largest increase (50%).

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 83% in 2017-21.

The Mid-Hudson Valley experienced a decrease in the rate of [homelessness](#) since 2007.

In 2020, there were 17 homeless people per 10,000 residents in the region. Among the counties, Ulster County had the highest rate at 24 homeless people per 10,000 residents, followed by Dutchess County (20) while Orange County had the lowest rate at 12 homeless people per 10,000 residents in 2020. The region's rate of homelessness decreased by 12% between 2007 and 2020, lower than the 18% 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 3.5 in the region in 2017-21, up from 2.7 in 2000. Across the region, ratios ranged from a low of 2.9 in Sullivan County to a high of 3.6 in Ulster - all approximately at or above the 3.0 considered affordable.

Rental housing has become less affordable between 2000 and 2017-21, similar to state and national trends.

Region-wide, 32% of the median household income went to cover rent in 2017-21, above the federal affordability guideline that housing should cost no more than 30% of household income. In 2017-21, renters in Sullivan County spent 28% of their income on rent, below Greene (37%), Orange (35%) and Ulster (34%) renters, similar to the 28% spent in the state. These proportions were up from 2000, 10 points in Greene and 8 points in 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 2021, the Mid-Hudson Valley region had 17 violent crimes reported per 10,000 residents, below the state rate of 20 violent crimes per 10,000 residents. This was a 30% decrease in the rate of violent crimes since 2000, compared to a 23% decrease statewide. Greene (42) and Orange (19) had the highest rates in the region, while Putnam (5) had the lowest. All counties, except Greene, experienced a rate decrease since 2000.

The **rate of domestic violence decreased in the Mid-Hudson Valley region.** The region had a 10% decrease in the rate of reported domestic violence between 2009 and 2021. In 2021, there were 33 reports of domestic violence per 10,000 residents in the region, down from 36 in 2009 and below the state rate (43). The rate grew the most in Orange County, increasing 35%, in contrast to Greene and Putnam counties, which had decreases of 69% and 68%, respectively, since 2009.