

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) 2021

Prepared by Western Illinois Regional Council (WIRC) **Community Development Team**

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MISSION

The Western Illinois Regional Council-Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the catalyst to address and reverse regional economic decline.

VISION

Western Illinois is committed to the enhancement of existing regional assets and developing new innovations to expand economic and community development opportunities throughout the region; this through network partnerships and collaborations.

INTRODUCTION

Western Illinois Regional Council (WIRC) was established under Illinois Public Act 76-913 in 1973 to bring units of local government together to address economic and community development issues. WIRC is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors elected by the full membership. The board is comprised of two-thirds elected officials and one-third other community/organizational members. The 2021-2022 Board of Directors and members are listed in the Appendices.

The Economic Development Administration designated the WIRC in 2001 as an Economic Development District (EDD). The EDD consists of six-member counties; Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough and Warren. Each of the six-member counties passed resolutions to participate in the district. The Board of Directors, along with a CEDS Strategy Committee, is responsible for reviewing and updating the CEDS. The Strategy Committee has strong economic development and private sector representation and provides advice to the Board of Directors and staff concerning current economic and community development goals, objectives and strategies for the western Illinois region.

"An Economic Development District is a federally designated organization that helps lead a locally-based, regionally driven economic development planning process that leverages involvement of the public, private and non-profit sectors to establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration. The strategic blueprint, known as a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development" (U.S. Economic Development Administration, 2019).

WIRC created the first regional CEDS in 2011 and updated that document in 2016. The current version was created during a time of political, economic and social uncertainty due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has forced local, state and federal governments to reevaluate the way citizens interact with businesses.



Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND OUTCOMES

The 2016 CEDS listed four objectives for the region to focus on over the next five years:

<u>Objective 1</u>: "Provide high quality and innovative workforce vocational, entrepreneurship and apprenticeship education and training opportunities that make the region attractive for business startups and expansions."

<u>Objective 2</u>: "The region is committed to creating economic prosperity through growing the region's tax and employment base."

<u>Objective 3</u>: "Expand western Illinois' intermodal transportation system through investment in highway and port expansions, and provide incentives for new industrial projects to locate near railroad access to enhance the region's economic growth and prosperity."

Objective 4: "Foster a vibrant rural economy driven by small, diverse, and value-added farming practices."

Each of these objectives were then combined with a list of strategies and action plans. The EDD will continue to pursue these objectives and evolve new strategies to build on the work accomplished over the last five years.

Other areas that were discussed by regional stakeholders as being important to economic development were tourism and the arts. The Economic Development District is located between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers and offers a wide array of outdoor adventures. Hiking, boating, hunting, fishing, bird

watching and many other leisurely pursuits can be found within the six-county area. Many communities in the district have started to realize the importance of public arts. Murals and mosaics are popping up with regularity throughout the district.

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

S.W.O.T. stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The S.W.O.T. analysis shows variables that are unique to the western Illinois region and some that are common throughout rural communities across the United States.

Strengths:

- Multiple institutions of higher education within the six-county district, including Western Illinois University, Knox College, Monmouth College, Carl Sandburg College and Spoon River College
- Access to two major rivers: the Illinois River and the Mississippi River
- Plentiful rail transportation
- Low cost of living
- Productive agricultural land
- Diversified economy
- Low crime rates

Weaknesses:

- Population loss/aging population/out-migration
- Lower wages
- Lack of new home construction
- Negative self-perception

Opportunities:

- Proximity to Chicago and St. Louis
- Expansion of existing industries
- Broadband expansion
- Plentiful outdoor recreational opportunities

Threats:

- Lack of diversity
- Out-migration of youth
- Lack of retail in small communities
- Population loss

PROJECT WISH LIST

Western Illinois Regional Council solicited a list of Economic Development projects from the communities located in the EDD. Below is a list organized by city:

• Macomb: New water treatment plant; South Bower Road extension; South Walton Way extension; Macomb Inn project; Hemp Road project; Spoon River College Career Technical Center;

Adams Street improvements; Haegar Site revitalization; Ameren Site redevelopment; and Cross Motors Site redevelopment.

- Galesburg: Rail Infrastructure Installation.
- Canton: Expansion of the wastewater treatment plant.

This list is not exhaustive and only reflects the communities that replied to the request.



Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA

STRATEGIC DIRECTION/CALL-TO-ACTION

OBJECTIVE 1: Education

Employment was identified as one of the top persistent economic challenges in the region and businesses were identified as the top regional asset as a mechanism to address regional shocks. With this in mind, Objective One focuses on the development of the regional workforce that will be ready for employment at existing and new businesses.

STRATEGY 1: Development

Establish a strong developmental area in local communities for small businesses to thrive and conducive to business startups.

- Action Plan 1: Encourage local communities and economic development committees to better support potential and current small business owners.
- Action Plan 2: Create a database of possible funding resources.
- Action Plan 3: Identify potential sites for small business startups within the region.

STRATEGY 2: Education Partnerships and Mentoring

Promote an educational foundation in the area of entrepreneurship.

- Action Plan 1: Develop collaborations with resources, colleges, universities, etc. for local schools
 to establish youth entrepreneurship opportunities and training. Concentrated Employment
 Program (CEP) and local Employment for the Future (EFF).
- Action Plan 2: Establish partnerships with universities and the business community, with entrepreneurial experience, to develop educational and mentoring programs.
- Action Plan 3: Survey major employers for skill development/employee needs.
- Action Plan 4: Establish public/private co-ops.

STRATEGY 3: Employment Needs

Be proactive to changing employment needs for youth, retrainables and the general workforce.

- Action Plan 1: Initiate vocational training opportunities.
- Action Plan 2: Keep abreast of statistical data for job trends in the region.
- Action Plan 3: Research the impact of climate change on employment trends.
- Action Plan 4: Conduct periodic job fairs including introduction to employment programs.
- Action Plan 5: Promote a diverse population and workforce.

STRATEGY 4: Partnerships, Marketing & Recruitment

Sustain the focus on "anchor institutions."

- Action Plan 1: Expand regional collaborations and partnerships to promote usage of existing and diversified community and economic development assets (e.g. DCEO, USDA, WIU, individual ED directors, communities and schools, etc.).
- Action Plan 2: Educate business leaders about the need for succession planning and recruitment costs to bring skilled workers to rural regions such as western Illinois.
- Action Plan 3: Develop a regional brand to market assets and expand potential for economic development.



Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA



Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA

OBJECTIVE 2: Employment

Throughout the development of this economic plan, business has been at the forefront of all discussions involving regional growth. Expansion of business programs was identified by stakeholders as the number one mechanism to address economic shocks and as such, the focus of Objective Two is the business itself.

STRATEGY 1: Regional Employment

Develop policies and programs that will expand regional employment.

- Action Plan 1: Focus on traditional business retention and expansion.
- Action Plan 2: Market for new business attraction.

STRATEGY 2: Training Programs and Education

Expand educational opportunities.

- Action Plan 1: Expand workforce and entrepreneurial training programs, including career pathways for junior and senior high school students.
- Action Plan 2: Advocate for funding for primary, secondary and higher education.
- Action Plan 3: Advocate for increased post-secondary educational financial assistance for lower income individuals.

STRATEGY 3: Agriculture

Expand agricultural emphasis.

- Action Plan 1: Develop innovative agricultural business opportunities, including value-added agriculture.
- Action Plan 2: Conduct educational workshops to expand crop varieties such as milkweed, pennycress, etc.
- Action Plan 3: Develop and market for agro-tourism such as heritage farms, outfitters, etc.



Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA

OBJECTIVE 3: Transportation

Transportation infrastructure has been essential to the western Illinois region since the arrival of railroads to the region back in the late 19th century. The existing regional infrastructure was identified by stakeholders as deficient for attracting new businesses and growing the economy. As such, Objective Three aims to enhance and expand the existing transportation infrastructure.

STRATEGY 1: Transportation Coalitions

Organize all western Illinois transportation coalitions.

- Action Plan 1: Identify and prioritize "bang for the buck"
- Action Plan 2: Identify common needs and goals.
- Action Plan 3: Identify additional nonprofit/government (IDOT) partners

STRATEGY 2: Stakeholder Relationships

Partnership and collaboration with economic stakeholders

- Action Plan 1: Identify stakeholders.
- Action Plan 2: Establish contact group to approach business.
- Action Plan 3: Organize public/private partnerships.
- Action Plan 4: Readdress common needs and goals.

STRATEGY 3: Legislation

Increase legislative advocacy.

- Action Plan 1: Develop a list of legislative goals.
- Action Plan 2: Establish budget for lobbying.
- Action Plan 3: Hire lobby firms and organize DC trips.



Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA

OBJECTIVE 4: Economy

Population loss, especially youth out-migration, and community profiles were identified as a persistent economic challenge for the region. Community development gives the region the opportunity to reassess its assets for economic growth, and agriculture was the third most named asset after higher education and business.

Objective Four embraces a new field of thought for creating a resilient regional economy in trying to balance the emphasis on business development and community development.

The region's natural environment and climate are conducive to both small- and large-scale agricultural production. Southwestern Iowa has been showcased as a success story for the theory of "investing in place". This quiet corner of the state has capitalized on its regional assets to promote an environment of civic engagement which has resulted in a growing economy and population.

As such, Objective Four aims to tap into this new approach by developing local food production.

STRATEGY 1: Community Supported Agriculture

Promote an environment conducive to the development of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in regional hubs.

- Action Plan 1: Inventory operating CSAs in region and identify regional stakeholders.
- Action Plan 2: Conduct case studies with existing CSAs to identify best practices to success.
- Action Plan 3: Develop approach for implementing CSAs throughout the region.

STRATEGY 2: Promote Local Produce

Sustain and grow CSAs to provide more locally grown produce and meat products.

- Action Plan 1: Inventory existing co-ops and find potential stakeholders in other communities or regions.
- Action Plan 2: Encourage community involvement and buy-in to local agriculture production through events such as community festivals and farmers markets to showcase local agriculture production.

STRATEGY 3: Develop Business Opportunities

Foster the development of business opportunities arising from the availability of local foods and community investment.

- Action Plan 1: Develop partnerships between co-ops, CSAs, local producers, and retail operations
 including restaurants and markets.
- Action Plan 2: Create local supply chain to deliver local foods.
- Action Plan 3: Educate local restaurant owners to advantages of using locally sourced ingredients.

STRATEGY 4: Sustainability and Export

Create regional food sustainability and export surplus to other regions.

- Action Plan 1: Development of hydroponics and greenhouse technology to extend growing season in region.
- Action Plan 2: Utilize WIU Department of Agriculture to develop model for building local and regional food systems.
- Action Plan 3: Develop a regional farm to school lunch program.
- Action Plan 4: Create a supply chain to expand outside the region.

REGIONAL PROJECTS

Regional Projects in the Western Illinois Counties of Hancock, Henderson, Fulton, Knox, McDonough and Warren

PROJECT: Develop Western Illinois Regional Marketing Brand	PROJECT: Youth Entrepreneurial Programs	PROJECT: Four Lane Highway Expansions of Heavy Truck Traffic Routes	PROJECT: Expansion of Farm to Table Economy	PROJECT: Develop Regional Vocational Training and Apprenticeship	PROJECT: Regional Retention and Expansion of Existing Businesses
SPONSOR: Western Illinois EDD and economic development professionals	SPONSOR: Area high schools and WIOA	SPONSOR: IDOT	SPONSOR: Local Economic Development professionals	SPONSOR: Workforce Investment community colleges, unions	SPONSOR: TIF Districts, enterprise zones, SBDC, area economic development
DESCRIPTION: Collaborative development of a unified brand to market the region's new business start- ups and tourism	DESCRIPTION: Successful existing model expanded throughout region	DESCRIPTION: Include highways 34, 41, and other truck routes in five- year plan	DESCRIPTION: Local CSA marketing to schools and restaurants	DESCRIPTION: Training and apprenticeship programs for low income and displaced workers	professionals DESCRIPTION: Marketing of skilled workforce and benefits for business in this rural region
COST ESTIMATE: \$50,000	COST ESTIMATE: \$25,000	COST ESTIMATE: \$500 million	COST ESTIMATE: \$50,000	COST ESTIMATE: \$100,000	COST ESTIMATE: \$100,000

APPENDICES

2021-2022 WIRC & CAA Board Members



Western Illinois Regional Council

Chairperson: Kim Pierce

First Vice President: Delbert Kreps Second Vice President: Jim Nightingale

Additional Board Members:

- David Amor
- Cindy Arnett
- Joe Clark
- Letha Clark
- Chuck Gilbert
- Mike Inman
- Lauren Merritt
- Justin Nelson
- Brendan Schaley
- Edward Swearingen
- Two vacancies



WIRC-Community Action Agency

Chairperson: Tammie Leigh Brown-Edwards

First Vice President: Nancy Mowen

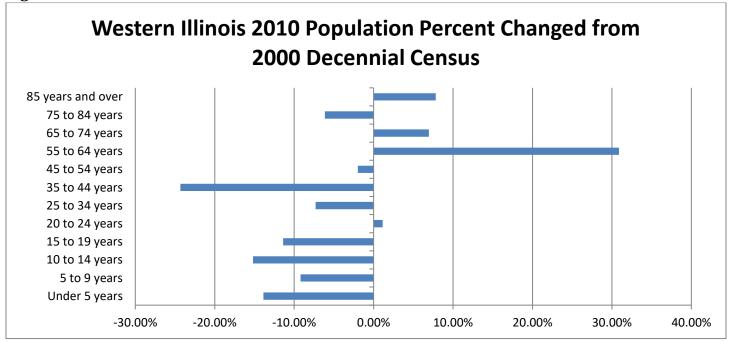
Second Vice President: Dennis Castlebury

Additional Board Members:

- Diane Copeland
- Patsy Davis
- Gay Dickerson
- Laun Dunn
- Ashley German
- Deckle McLean
- Eddie Murphy
- LeeAnn Porter
- Lyman Schar
- Byron Shabazz
- Patricia Weston
- One vacancy

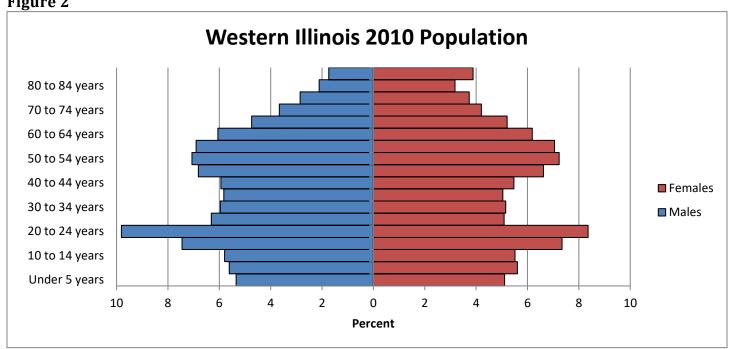
DATA

Figure 1



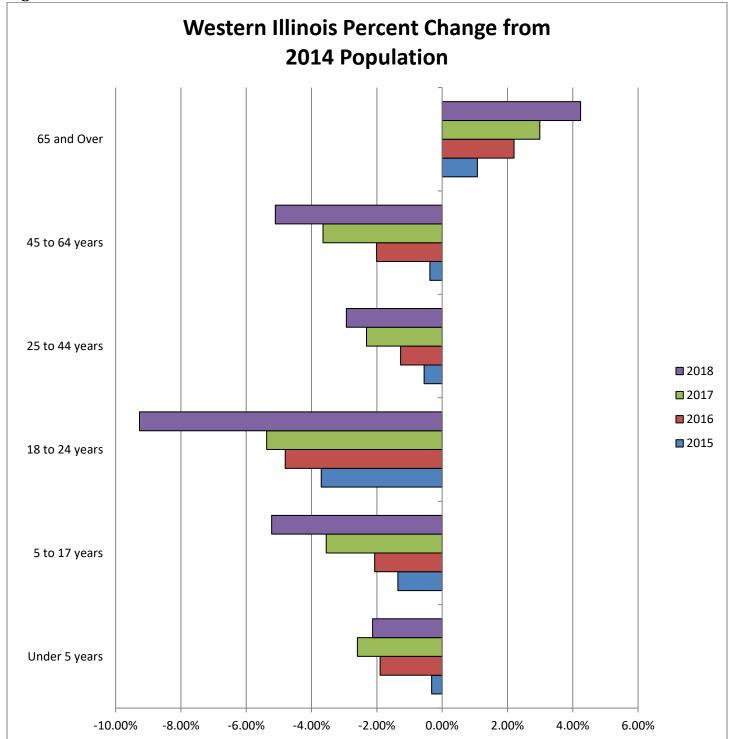
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 2

Figure 2



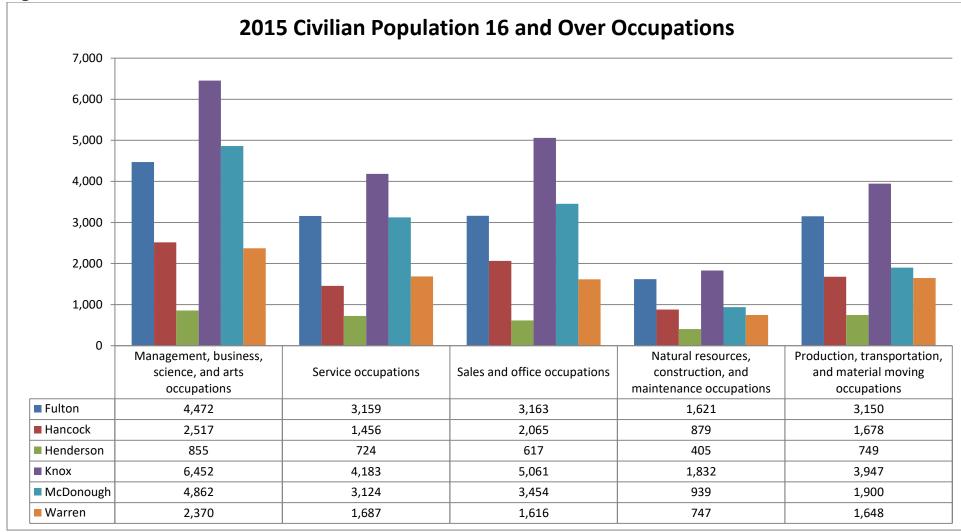
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 2

Figure 3



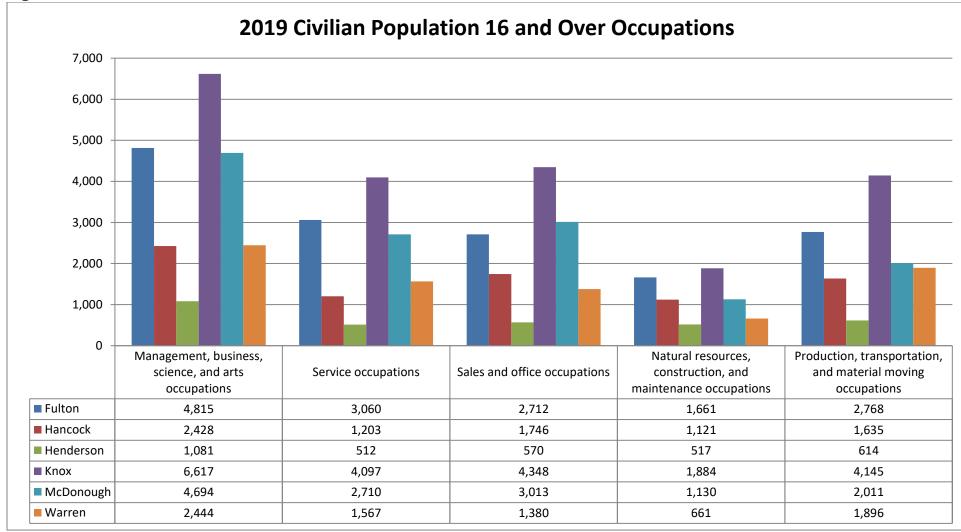
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014, 2011-2015, 2012-2016, 2013-2017, 2014-2018, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, B01001: Sex by Age

Figure 4



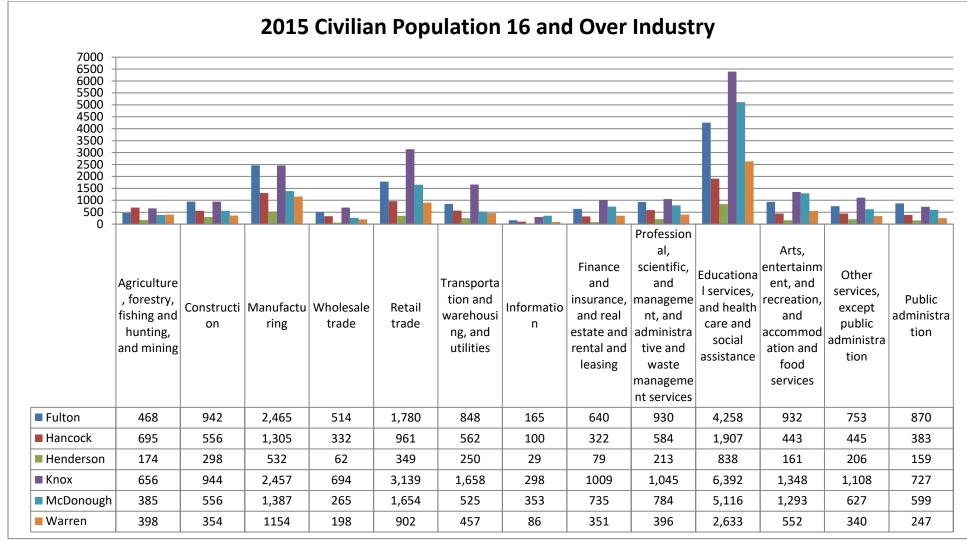
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 5



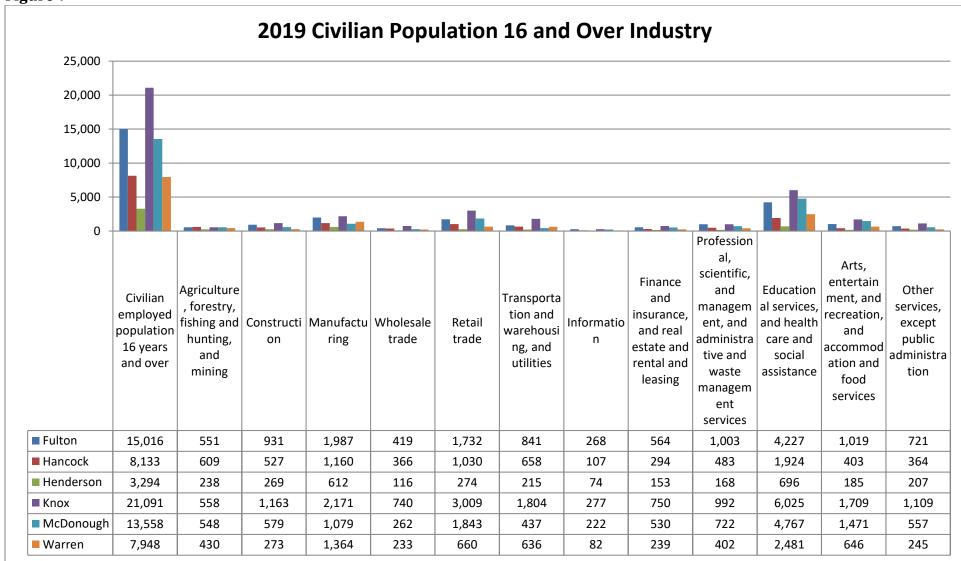
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 6



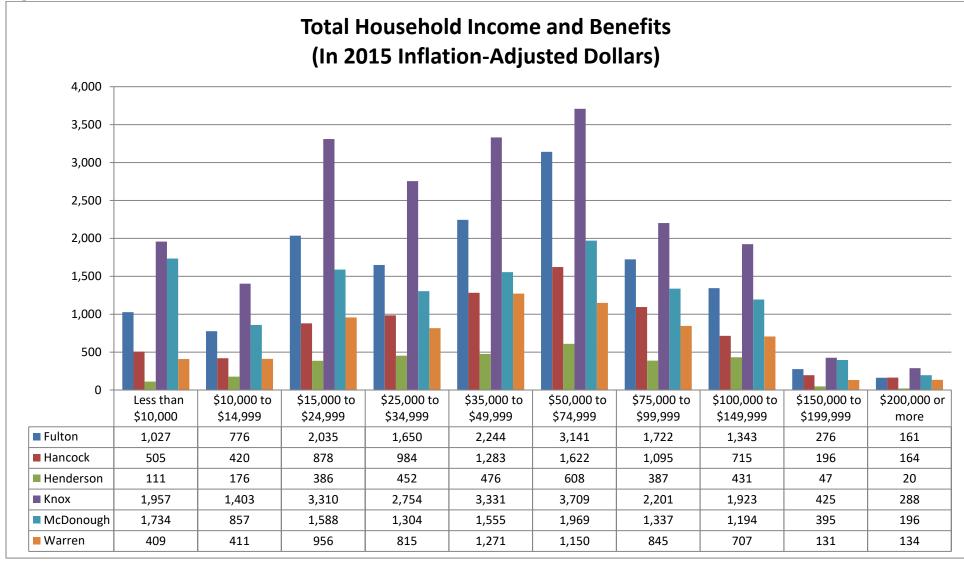
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 7



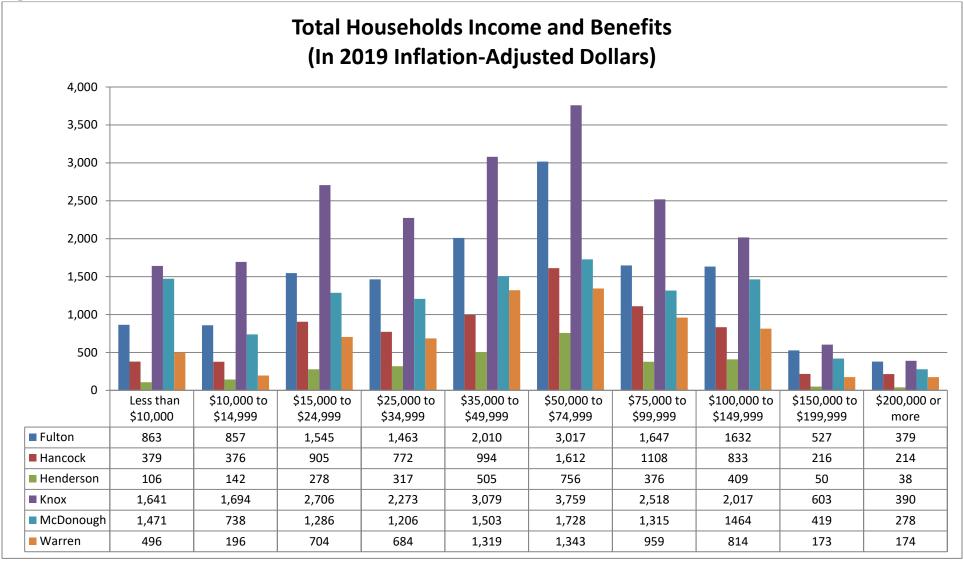
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 8



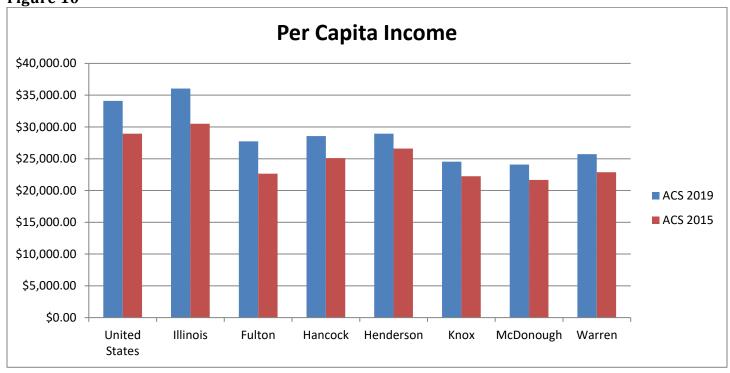
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 9



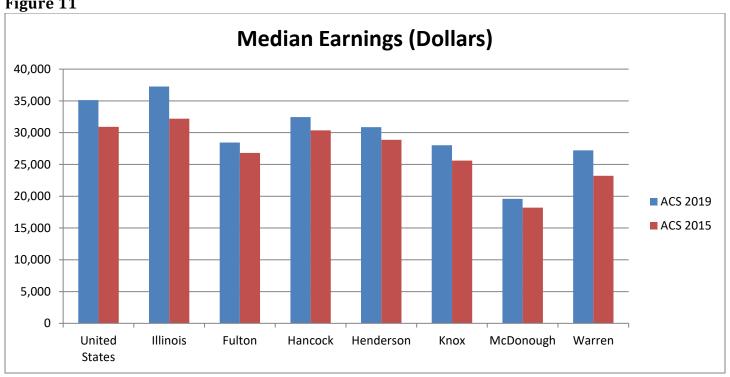
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 10



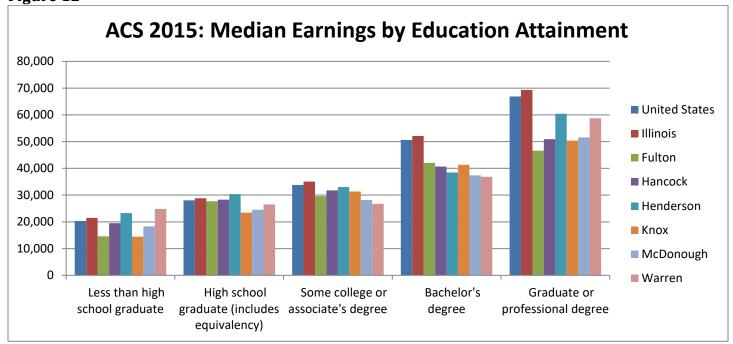
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 11



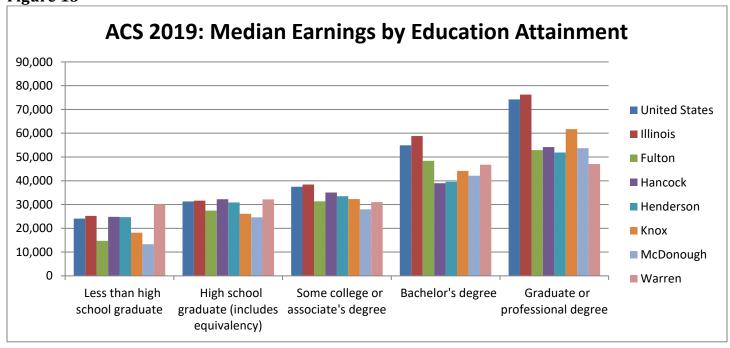
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 and 2015-2019 American Community Survey, S2001: Earnings in the Past 12 Months

Figure 12



Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, S2001: Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2015 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

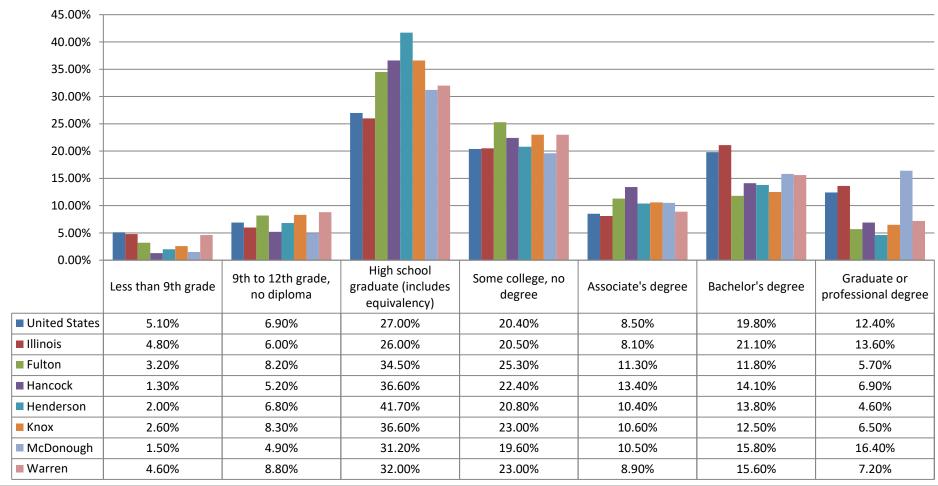
Figure 13



Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, S2001: Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2019 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

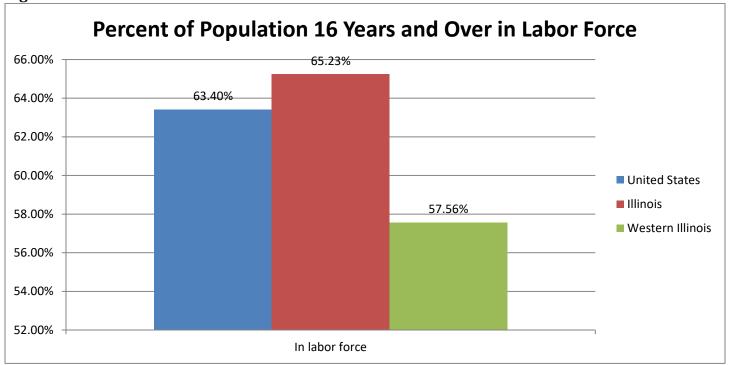
Figure 14





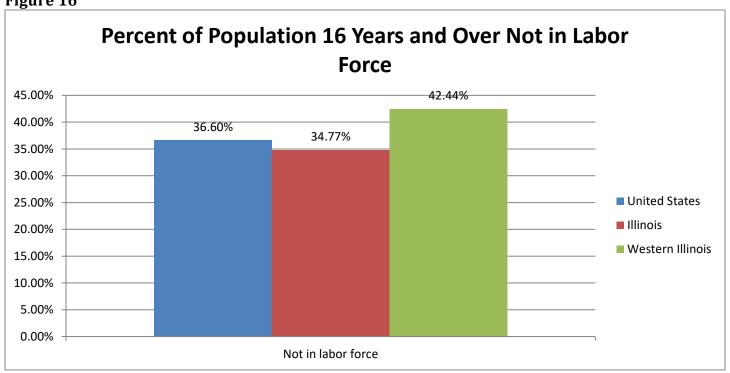
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, S1501: Educational Attainment

Figure 15



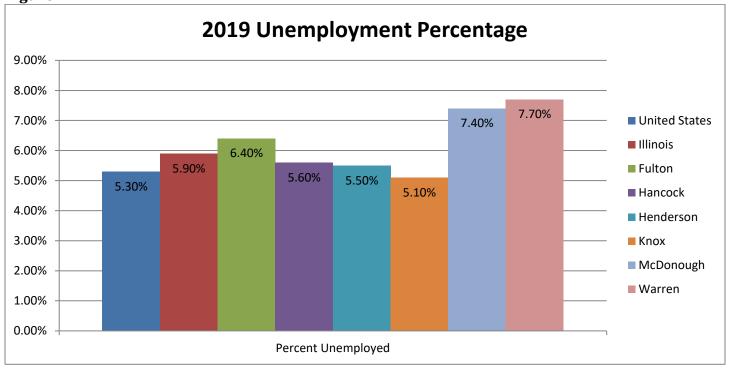
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 16



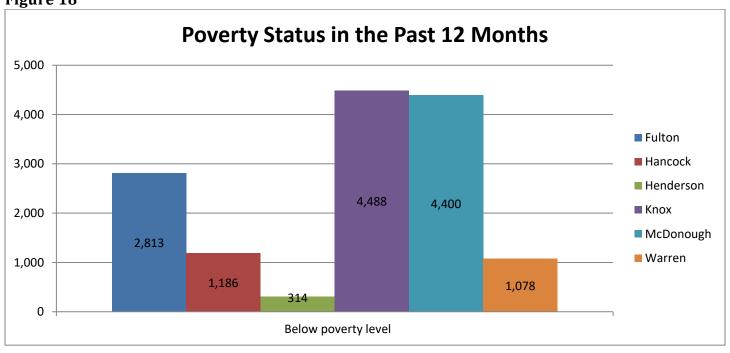
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 17



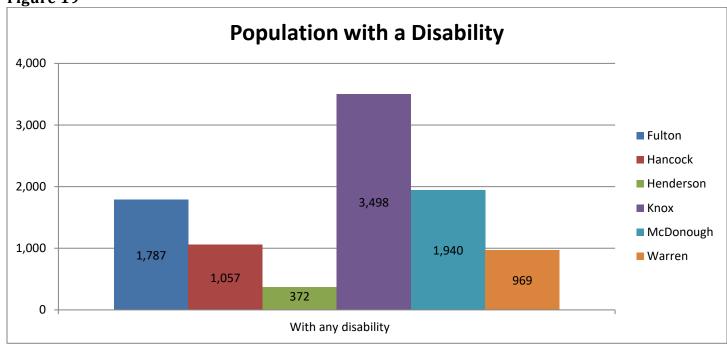
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

Figure 18



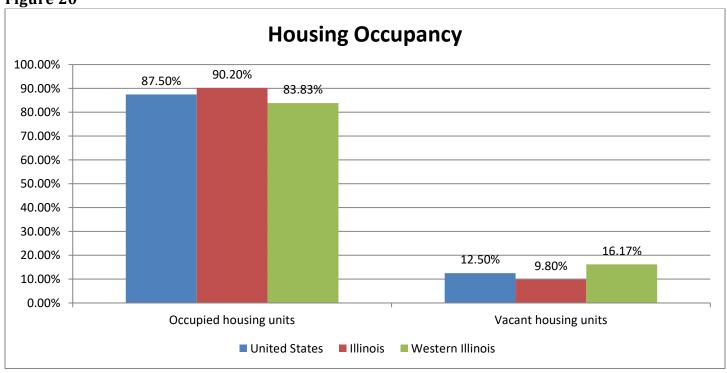
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, S2301: Employment Status

Figure 19



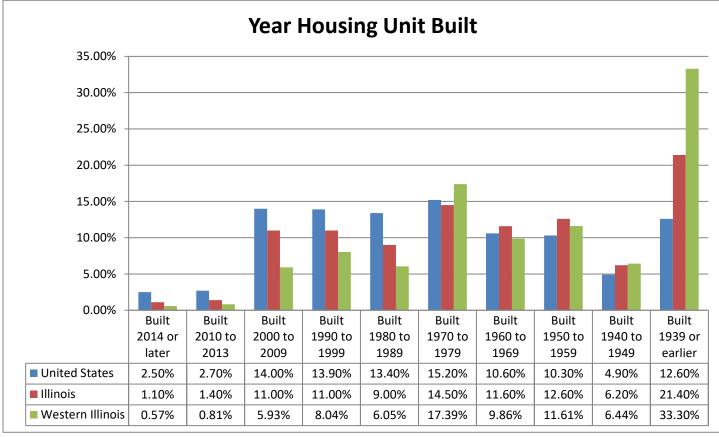
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, S2301: Employment Status

Figure 20

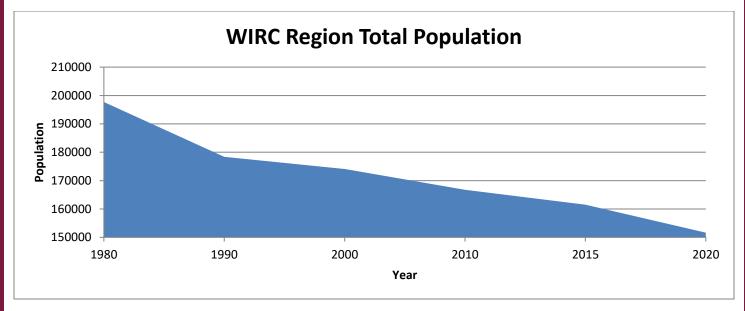


Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics

Figure 21

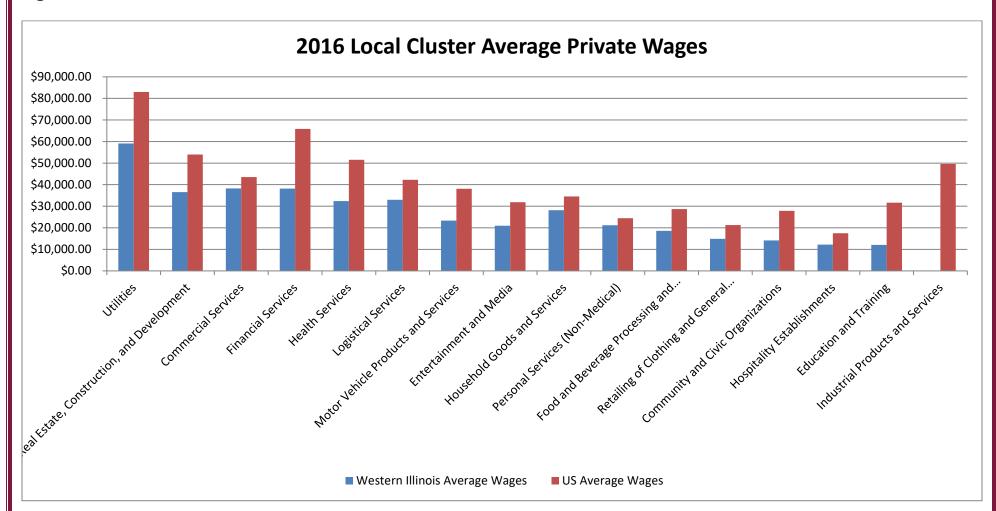


Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics Figure 22



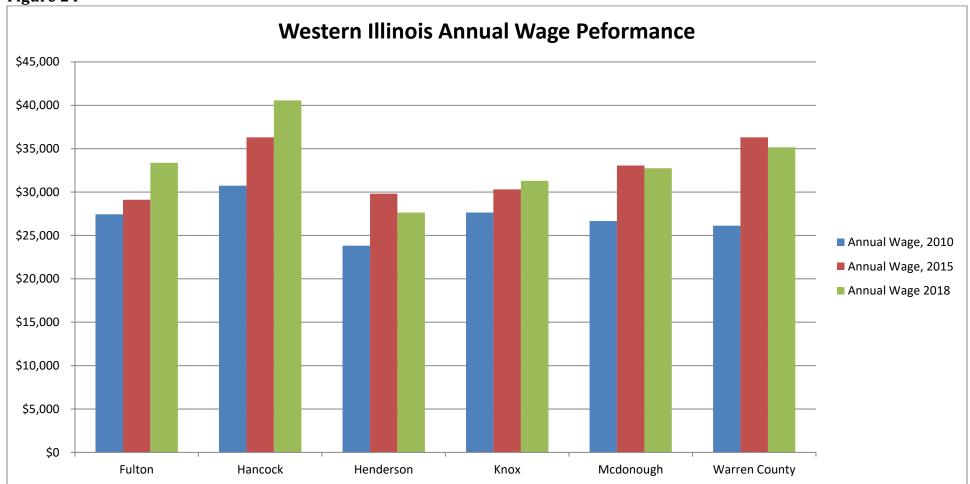
Note. U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171)

Figure 23



Note. U.S. Cluster Mapping (http://clustermapping.us), Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School. Copyright © 2018 President and Fellows of Harvard College. All rights reserved. Research funded in part by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration.

Figure 24



Note. U.S. Cluster Mapping (http://clustermapping.us), Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School. Copyright © 2018 President and Fellows of Harvard College. All rights reserved. Research funded in part by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration.

Figure 25

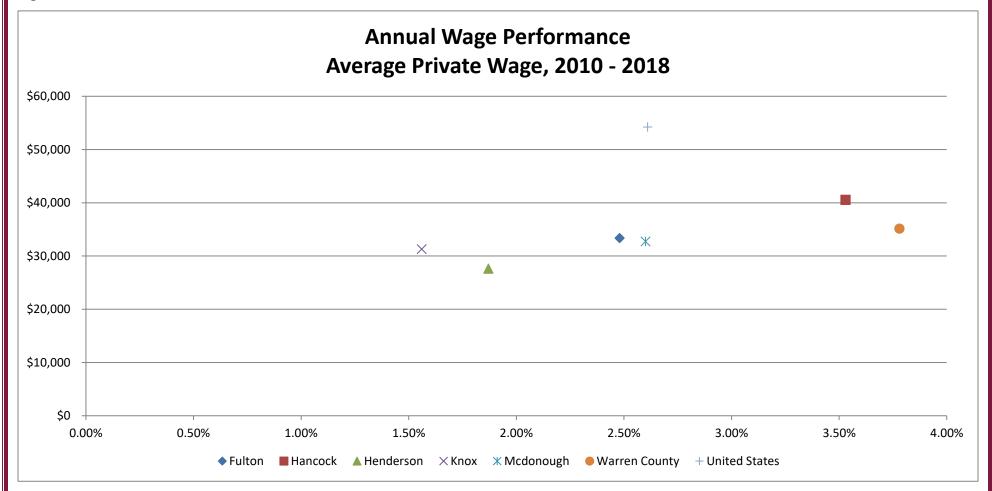


Table 1
Western Illinois Employment by Cluster

	WESTERN ILLINOIS EMPLOYMENT BY CLUSTER						
Cluster Name	2000 Employment	2005 Employment	2010 Employment	2013 Employment	2015 Employment	2016 Employment	
Agricultural Inputs and Services	160		120	150	190	200	
Apparel	185		10		10	10	
Automotive	2115		325	260	375	365	
Business Services	1169	791	768	720	1115	1,138	
Coal Mining	60	20	130	20			
Communications Equipment and Services	40	40	72	100	100	40	
Construction Products and Services	190		140	204	163	17	
Distribution and Electronic Commerce	1549	1903	1976	2171	1900	2,03	
Downstream Chemical Products	60	70	10	60	60	60	
Downstream Metal Products	1225	590	245	245	245	255	
Education and Knowledge Creation	803	1590	1560	2550	2540	2,540	
Electric Power Generation and Transmission	60	60	60				
Environmental Services		10	10			20	
Financial Services	400	410	403	440	374	404	
Fishing and Fishing Products			10	10	20	20	
Food Processing and Manufacturing	858	580	843	692	773	865	
Forestry	20	20	10	10	10	10	
Furniture	30	60	30	20	10	10	
Hospitality and Tourism	724	665	608	539	473	53	
Information Technology and Analytical Instruments	20	20	10		10		
Insurance Services	80	70	80	70	60	50	
Leather and Related Products	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Lighting and Electrical Equipment	120	10	10	10			
Livestock Processing	860	1780	1780	1790	1790	1,790	
Marketing, Design, and Publishing	316	220	145	150	180	190	
Medical Devices			10	10	10	10	
Metalworking Technology	180	265	40	110	50	40	
Nonmetal Mining	120	160	100	110	75	8	
Oil and Gas Production and Transportation	10	10	10	10	10		
Paper and Packaging	185	175	185	185	185	185	
Performing Arts	70	120	110	90	90	40	
Plastics	370	120	120	60	60	175	
Printing Services	165	100	90	60	52	62	
Production Technology and Heavy Machinery	1350	1060	1005	1690	1553	1,430	
Recreational and Small Electric Goods	120	100	80	130	80	30	
Textile Manufacturing	20	10	20	20	20		
Trailers, Motor Homes, and Appliances	1810	60	70	10	60	60	
Transportation and Logistics	633	660	629	482	425	510	
Upstream Chemical Products	10		60	60			
Upstream Metal Manufacturing	255	140	60	60	60	60	
Video Production and Distribution			20	20	10	10	
Vulcanized and Fired Materials	1295	80	30	205	395	405	
Water Transportation	70	60	20	10			
Wood Products	110		495	325	255	380	
Total Clusters Employment	17827		12519	13868	13798	14,188	

Table 2

Western Illinois Job Creation by Traded Clusters

WESTERN ILLINOIS JOB CREATION BY TRADED CLUSTERS						
Cluster Name	2014 Employment	2016 Employment	Actual Change	Expected Change		
Agricultural Inputs and Services	190	200	10	6		
Automotive	375	365	-10	31		
Business Services	997	1138	141	50		
Communications Equipment and Services	100	40	-60	3		
Construction Products and Services	234	171	-63	6		
Distribution and Electronic Commerce	2395	2031	-364	75		
Downstream Chemical Products	60	60	0	2		
Downstream Metal Products	245	255	10	12		
Education and Knowledge Creation	2540	2540	0	93		
Financial Services	405	404	-1	15		
Fishing and Fishing Products	10	20	10	-1		
Food Processing and Manufacturing	797	865	68	46		
Forestry	10	10	0	0		
Furniture	10	10	0	0		
Hospitality and Tourism	544	531	-13	21		
Insurance Services	70	50	-20	6		
Leather and Related Products	10	10	0	0		
Livestock Processing	1790	1790	0	111		
Marketing, Design, and Publishing	160	190	30	4		
Medical Devices	10	10	0	0		
Metalworking Technology	70	40	-30	-2		
Nonmetal Mining	74	81	7	2		
Oil and Gas Production and Transportation	10	0	-10	-2		
Paper and Packaging	185	185	0	-2		
Performing Arts	90	40	-50	6		
Plastics	60	175	115	2		
Printing Services	63	62	-1	-2		
Production Technology and Heavy Machinery	1680	1430	-250	-45		
Recreational and Small Electric Goods	80	30	-50	0		
Textile Manufacturing	20	0	-20	0		
Trailers, Motor Homes, and Appliances	10	60	50	1		
Transportation and Logistics	445	510	65	35		
Upstream Metal Manufacturing	60	60	0	-2		
Video Production and Distribution	10	10	0	1		
Vulcanized and Fired Materials	395	405	10	11		
Water Transportation	10	0	-10	0		
Wood Products	255	380	125	18		
County Totals (Traded Cluster)	14469	14158	-311	500		

Table 3
Western Illinois Job Creation by Local Clusters

WESTERN ILLINOIS JOB CREATION BY LOCAL CLUSTERS						
Cluster Name	2014 Employment	2016 Employment	Employment Change	Expected Employment Change		
Local Commercial Services	1,354	1,355	1	86		
Local Community and Civic Organizations	1,795	1,864	69	83		
Local Education and Training	605	723	118	20		
Local Entertainment and Media	652	632	-20	-13		
Local Financial Services	1,583	1,436	-147	20		
Local Food and Beverage Processing and Distribution	2,354	2,366	12	119		
Local Health Services	8,525	8,545	20	343		
Local Hospitality Establishments	5,321	5,392	71	402		
Local Household Goods and Services	711	613	-98	51		
Local Industrial Products and Services	375	425	50	-15		
Local Logistical Services	1,044	948	-96	83		
Local Motor Vehicle Products and Services	2,525	2,514	-11	153		
Local Personal Services (Non-Medical)	1,129	1,068	-61	87		
Local Real Estate, Construction, and Development	3,012	2,839	-173	518		
Local Retailing of Clothing and General Merchandise	2,340	2,267	-73	51		
Local Utilities	717	595	-122	1		
CEDS Region Local Cluster Total Employment	34,042	33,582	-460	1,988		

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