

Economic Prosperity Indicator: Bachelor's Degrees

Why: A workforce with a high percentage of individuals with Bachelor's degrees is attractive to prospective employers. In a knowledge-based economy, highly educated employees are seen as vital to business success and economic prosperity. A high percentage of young adults with Bachelor's degrees in a community is seen as an indication of the area's attractiveness and high quality of life.

What: Percent of population ages 25 to 34 with highest level educational attainment of Bachelor's degree.

Where: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 – Table QT-P20; 2005 – American Community Survey table S1501 from "Fact Finder." <http://www.census.gov/>

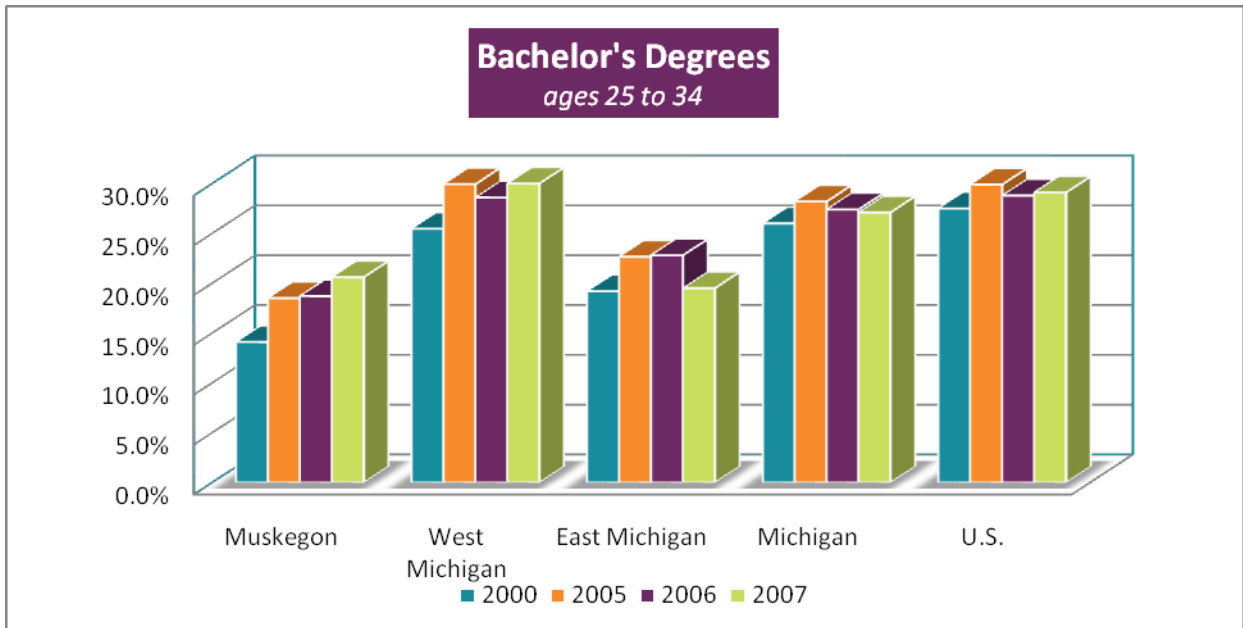
Bachelor's Degrees ages 25 to 34								
Geography	2000		2005		2006		2007	
	%	Index Score	%	Index Score	%	Index Score	%	Index Score
Muskegon County	14.10%	1.7	18.50%	2.2	18.70%	2.2	20.60%	2.4
Kent County	30.20%	3.6	31.80%	3.7	30.20%	3.5	31.90%	3.8
Ottawa County	32.10%	3.8	33.40%	3.9	31.50%	3.6	31.80%	3.7
West MI Average	25.50%	3	29.90%	3.5	26.80%	3.1	30.00%	3.5
Bay County	20.20%	2.4	22.40%	2.6	21.40%	2.5	18.10%	2.1
Genesee County	18.60%	2.2	24.30%	2.9	21.50%	2.5	19.50%	2.3
Saginaw County	18.80%	2.2	19.30%	2.3	26.20%	3.1	20.10%	2.4
East MI Average	19.20%	2.3	22.70%	2.7	23.00%	2.6	19.50%	2.3
Michigan	26.00%	3.1	28.20%	3.3	27.40%	3.2	27.10%	3.2
U.S.	27.50%	3.2	29.90%	3.5	28.80%	3.4	29.10%	3.4

Index Scores

Rubric: There is no definitive standard for a sustainable percent of young adults with Bachelor's degrees. The levels are based on the quintile distribution of the rankings of percent of 25 to 34 year olds with Bachelor's degrees among 280 U.S. Metropolitan Statistical Areas in 2000.

Scale: The percentage level for each index score is the lower limit of each quintile in the distribution reported in 2000.

Rubric: Bachelor's Degrees		
Level	Index	%
Thriving	5	42.5%
Advancing	4	34.0%
Sustainable	3	25.6%
Needs Improvement	2	17.1%
Failing	1	8.6%



- *The percent of young adults in Muskegon County with Bachelor's degrees has increased since 2000, but still is not at a sustainable level.*
- *Muskegon County has the lowest percent of young adults with Bachelor's when compared with the other West Michigan Counties, but it is now ahead of all the East Michigan Counties.*
- *Kent and Ottawa Counties have the highest index scores for this indicator among all the geographies reported.*