

Economic Prosperity Indicator: Employment Growth

Why: Employment growth is a key indicator of economic development and prosperity. An increasing labor force indicates economic expansion and community sustainability.

What: Average annual percent change calculated from the reported year-end employment totals for the beginning and ending year for the indicated period. Employment totals used in calculating percents were for all industries, total covered, all establishment sizes, and all employees.

Where: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.
<http://www.bls.gov/>

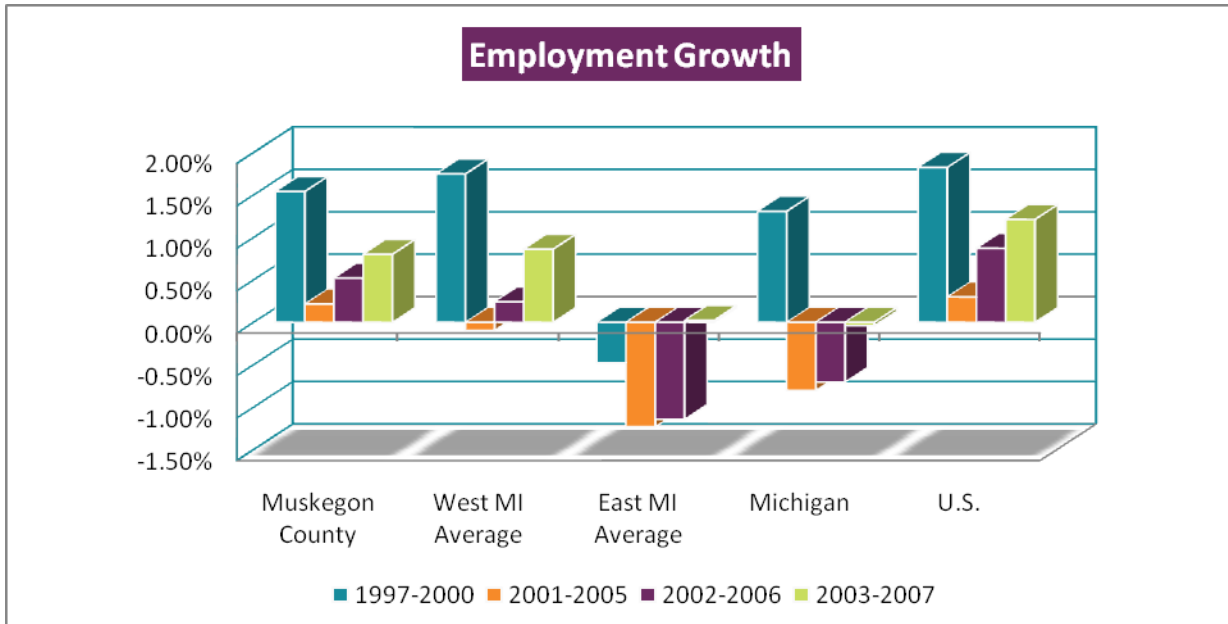
Employment Growth <i>average annual percent change</i>								
Geography	1997-2000		2001-2005		2002-2006		2003-2007	
	Avg/yr	Index Score	Avg/yr	Index Score	Avg/yr	Index Score	Avg/yr	Index Score
Muskegon County	1.54%	3.3	0.21%	1.3	0.52%	1.8	0.80%	2.2
Kent County	1.50%	3.3	0.03%	1.0	0.29%	1.4	1.05%	2.6
Ottawa County	2.20%	4.3	-0.53%	0.2	-0.10%	0.9	0.74%	2.1
West MI Average	1.75%	3.6	-0.10%	0.9	0.24%	1.4	0.86%	2.3
Bay County	-0.10%	0.9	-1.07%	0.0	-1.06%	0.0	0.08%	1.1
Genesee County	-1.42%	0.0	-1.51%	0.0	-1.44%	0.0	0.01%	1.0
Saginaw County	0.09%	1.1	-1.10%	0.0	-0.94%	0.0	-0.04%	1.0
East MI Average	-0.48%	0.3	-1.23%	0.0	-1.14%	0.0	0.02%	1.0
Michigan	1.31%	3.0	-0.80%	0.0	-0.70%	0.0	-0.04%	1.0
U.S.	1.82%	3.8	0.30%	1.5	0.87%	2.3	1.21%	2.9

Index Scores

Rubric: The levels are based on the quintile distribution of the ranking of average annual percent employment growth from 1997 to 2000 among 318 U.S. Metropolitan Statistical Areas – excluding the top and bottom 5% in the order.

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

Rubric: Employment Growth		
Level	Index	% Growth
Thriving	5	2.6%
Advancing	4	2.0%
Sustainable	3	1.3%
Needs Improvement	2	0.7%
Failing	1	0.0%



- *Employment growth in Muskegon County from 2003 to 2007 was better than most other Michigan geographies.*
- *East Michigan averages for employment growth was slightly positive for the 2003 to 2007 period for the first time since the 1997 to 2000 period.*
- *Even the U.S. employment growth average percentage between 2003 and 2007 did not achieve a sustainable level.*