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Yates County

General Overview

Formed in 1823, Yates is the smallest county by population in the region. Situated in the southeast corner of the region and home to three of the Finger Lakes, the county's economy relies heavily on agriculture and tourism. Yates is the least diverse county in the Finger Lakes Region – with a population that is 97% white – but nonetheless has seen growth in its small Asian, African American, and Hispanic populations. Yates has one of the highest child poverty rates in the region.

The unemployment rate has rebounded since the Great Recession, and though average salaries are relatively low, Yates was the only regional county in which median household income kept up with inflation since 2000.

Demographic Overview

Yates is the smallest county by population:

- In 2016, Yates was home to just under 25,000 residents, or 2% of the total regional population.
- The total population grew by 1.2% from 2000 to 2016, a smaller increase than the nation (14.8%) and state (4%) but above the region (1.1%).

Like other counties across our region and the state, Yates has an aging population, but to a lesser extent than some areas:

- Between 2012 and 2016, the number of adults aged 60-84 increased 18% and those 85 and older shrank by 5% - the only other county-level decrease for that age group was in Yates, which shrank 2%.
- Over that period, Yates' population under 20 fell 11%, less than the 13% drop in the region, and the second smallest decline among regional counties.

Yates is the most racially homogenous of the Finger Lakes counties:

- In 2016, 97% of Yates residents were white, far above the 64% for the state and 82% for the region. White residents' share in the surrounding counties as a whole was 93%.
- Between 2012 and 2016, the small populations of Asians, African Americans, and Hispanics have grown significantly.

The share of households married with children fell from 2000:

- In 2012-16, 19% of Yates households were composed of married couples with children, down 4 points from 2000. Over the same period, the share of single parents with children was steady at 9%.
- The share of married couples without children increased from 32% to 36% from 2000 to 2012-16. Yates' share was higher than in the nation (28%), state (25%), region (28%), and every other county in the region.

Arts, Culture and Leisure

In 2016, tourism revenue in Yates, at \$2,440 per person, was nearly double the regional figure (\$1,305) and well above every other county in the region. Yates' revenue per person rose by 68% from 2005 to 2016.

In contrast, recreational spending was low in Yates (\$25 per resident) compared to the state (\$363) and region (\$72), and was only a modest increase (11%) from the rate in 2005.

Children and Youth

Child poverty in Yates is the third highest among the surrounding counties:

- In 2012-16, the child poverty rate in Yates was 22%, on par with the state (22%), nation (21%), and region (21%).
- The child poverty rate in 2012-16 is unchanged from its rate from 2000, as compared to increases in the region (up 7 points), nation (up 4 points) and the state (up 2 points).

Yates had the second smallest share of single-parent families in the region:

- In 2012-16, 33% of Yates families were headed by a single parent, lower than the nation (35%), state (37%) and region (39%), and every regional county except Genesee.
- The rate was 3 points higher than in 2000, the smallest increase among all counties in the region, which had an increase of 8 points overall.

Yates' rate of early prenatal care is an outlier among the regional counties:

- In 2015, only 50% of mothers in Yates County received prenatal care in the first trimester, significantly below the region (79%), the state (76%), and all other regional counties. Yates' rate has consistently been much lower than the state, nation, region, and every county in the region.
- The rate has decreased 8 points since 2000, in contrast to small rate increases for the state and region.

In 2015, 5.3% of births in Yates were low birth weight babies, lower than the national (8.1%), state (7.8%), and regional (7.6%) rates. Yates' rate was the lowest among the regional counties.

Yates had a rate of child abuse and neglect in 2016 that was far above the region and state:

- Yates' rate of 31 substantiated cases per 1,000 children in 2016 was nearly double the state (16) rate and higher than regional (18) rate and the rate for every county in the region. The rate has effectively doubled from 2000 when it was 16, as compared to a 21% increase for the state and a 25% increase for the region.

The rate of teen pregnancy in Yates – 1.2% in 2015 – was lower than the region (2.2%). The number of teen pregnancies fell 68% from 2000, slightly higher than the regional decrease (62%). Yates' rate of teen pregnancy was the second lowest among regional counties.

Community Engagement

The voter registration rate in Yates County was below the state, region, and all the other counties in the region:

- In 2016, 75% of eligible Yates adults were registered to vote, below the state (80%) and regional figures (82%).
- Yates' rate fell by 12 points from 2000, in contrast to small increases for the state and region (up 2 and 1 point respectively over that period).

Yates' voter participation rate is consistently on par or below the region but above the state:

- In the 2014 midterm elections, voter turnout in Yates was 35%, 10 points above the state and on par with the region. Yates' rate was down 3 points from the 2010 midterms.
- In the 2016 presidential election, 53% of registered voters cast votes, above the state (50%) but below the nation (55%) and region (58%). Yates' rate increased by 4 points from the 2012 presidential election.

The rate of registered library borrowers in Yates was below the state and region:

- In 2016, 54% of Yates residents were registered library borrowers, slightly below the state (55%) and well below the region (63%) and several of the surrounding counties.
- Yates' rate fell 3 points since 2000, larger than the decrease for the region (down 1 point) but smaller than the decreases for most regional counties.

Yates with a 3% increase in average charitable giving between 2011 and 2015, had the lowest increase compared to the nation (23%), state (26%), region (25%), and all the other regional counties. The average charitable donation per tax return in Yates was \$3,353 in 2015, below the nation, state, and region, but higher than the other regional counties except for Seneca, Monroe and Ontario

Economy

Yates has the second lowest unemployment rate in the region:

- In 2016, the unemployment rate in Yates was 4.4%, below the nation (4.9%), state (4.8%), region (4.7%), and every regional county besides Ontario.
- Though Yates' unemployment rate was still slightly above its low in 2000 (by 0.7 of a point), it has made progress since the recession, falling by 3 points since 2010. Yates' recovery in terms of reduced unemployment since 2010 was not as strong as the state, region, and nation.

Overall job growth in Yates far outpaced the region:

- Total jobs grew by 17% from 2001 to 2016, on par with the nation (17%), state (18%), and well above the region (2%) and every regional county. The small number of total jobs in Yates (12,199) mean that large changes for individual sectors can be misleading. However, there was positive growth in two of the county's two largest sectors – Trade, Transportation, and Utilities and Manufacturing. In particular, Yates 29% growth in Manufacturing bucks the statewide and regional trend of severe losses.
- Yates' average salary in 2016 (\$33,105) was below the nation (\$52,953), state (\$67,093), region (\$46,463), and every other county in the region. Yates' average salary grew by nearly 5% from 2000, slightly above the increase for the region, but below the nation, state, and most regional counties.

Education

In 2016, 44% of eligible Yates children were enrolled in prekindergarten, below the state rate (52%) and on par with the region (44%). Yates' rate rose by 34 points from 2001, a lower increase than the state and almost similar to the region (up 37 and 33 points respectively).

Yates underperformed the region and state on most 2017 Common Core-aligned tests but had higher scores on Regents:

- Yates had lower passing rates for 3rd grade English (28%), 4th grade math (35%), 8th grade math (6%), and 8th grade English (20%) than the region.
- In 2017, 87% of Yates students passed the Common Core Algebra 1 Regents, above the state (75%), region (78%), and half of the county's regions. Yates students also scored higher than the state and region on the English Regents (91% passing).

The graduation rate in Yates was 79% in 2017, below the state (82%), region (85%), and all regional counties.

Adults were less educated in Yates than the region:

- In 2012-16, just 51% of Yates adults had attended at least some college, well below the region (62%), state and nation (both 59%). The discrepancy was similar for the share of residents who had attained a bachelor's or higher.
- Yates had a higher proportion of high school graduates (34%) than the region (28%), state (26%) and nation (28%).

Per-student spending by Yates districts was \$22,535 in 2016, below the state (\$23,360) but above the region (\$21,160). Spending has increased by 81% since 2000, more than for the state (52%) and region (46%).

Financial Self-Sufficiency

Yates was the only county in which median household income remained unchanged from 2000:

- In 2012-16, median household income in Yates was \$50,105, lower than the nation (\$55,320), state (\$60,740), and region (\$54,110).
- Yates' median income was flat from 2000 to 2012-16, versus decreases for the nation (9%), state (3%), region (13%), and every other county in the region.

In 2012-16, 14% of Yates residents were below the poverty line, close to the state (15%) and nation (15%) and on par with the region. Yates' rate is 1 point higher than in 2000, a smaller increase than the region (4 points) and nation (3 points).

Yates had a very low rate of people receiving temporary assistance:

- In 2016, 1.0% of residents received assistance, versus 2.9% for the state and 2.8% for the region. Yates had the lowest rate among regional counties besides Wyoming and Genesee.
- Yates' rate rose by 0.4 points since 2001, in contrast to a decline for the state (0.7) and the region (0.3).

In 2016, Yates had a higher rate of emergency meals served per resident than the state, region, and every other regional county except Seneca. Since 2000, Yates' rate increased 171%, greater than the state (1%) and the region (119%).

Health

Yates has a higher rate of uninsured than the state and region:

- In 2015, 10% of Yates residents lacked health insurance, a rate similar to the nation (11%) but greater than the state (8%), region (6%), and every other regional county.

The rate of Medicaid Managed Care enrollees (14% of residents) was lower than the state (22%) and similar to the region (16%) in 2016.

Yates' mortality rate, while high relative to the state but similar to the region, has fallen since 2000:

- In 2015, Yates' mortality rate of 717 per 100,000 residents, greater than the statewide (634) and regional (706) rates.
- Though the rate in 2015 was third-highest among the regional counties, the rate has decreased 22% from 2000, the second-highest decrease among the regional counties. Yates is one of two regional counties to see a decrease in mortality rates from 2014 to 2015.

Housing

Home values in Yates rose more than any other county in the region:

- In 2012-16, the median home value in Yates was \$126,900, below the nation (\$184,700), state (\$286,300), and region (\$130,460).
- From 2000 to 2012-16, the median home value in Yates rose by 20%, more than the nation (19%) and in contrast to a decrease for the region (down 2%). Yates' home value rose more over that period than any other county in the region.

Yates was more affordable for renters relative to the region than homeowners:

- In 2012-16, Yates renters spent 33% of their income on rent, on par to the nation (32%) and below the state (36%) and region (34%). A proportion under 30% is considered affordable.
- The ratio of median home value to median income was 2.1 in 2012-16, above the region (1.9) and most regional counties but well below the nation (2.6) and state (3.4). A ratio below 2 or 3 is considered affordable.

In 2012-16, 77% of homes in Yates were owner-occupied, a higher share than the nation (64%), state (54%), and region (68%). Yates' rate was higher than all regional counties except for Wayne.

Yates had the third-highest rate of residential building permits in the region, with 2.2 per 1,000 residents in 2016. This was a dramatic increase from 0.7 per 1,000 residents in 2015 (the second lowest of the regional counties). Still, Yates' rate of residential building permits decreased by 47% from 2000 to 2016.

Public Safety

Yates' rate of serious crimes has decreased overall since 2000:

- In 2016, there were 128 serious crimes per 10,000 residents in Yates, below the national (284), statewide (166), and regional (215) rates.
- The rate only decreased 9% since 2000 – a sharp contrast to the larger decreases for the state (46%) and region (39%). Yates' rate, however, was the second-lowest in the region.

Yates had the lowest violent crime rate in the region, at 7 per 10,000, residents. This was well below the state (37), nation (39), and region (26), and was a decrease of 35% from 2000.

Yates had a similarly low property crime rate – 122 per 10,000 – in contrast to the nation (245), state (153), and region (189). Yates' rate fell by 7% from 2000 to 2016.

The juvenile delinquency intake rate in Yates County significantly declined from 2000 to 2016, from 94 intakes per 10,000 children in 2000 to 20 in 2016. This rate was lower than the state (45) and region (51). Yates' rate decreased 79% since 2000, a larger decrease than the in state (53%), region (58%), and all regional counties.

Note: Data research and analysis completed by [the Center for Governmental Research](#).