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## Orleans County Summary\*

### General Overview

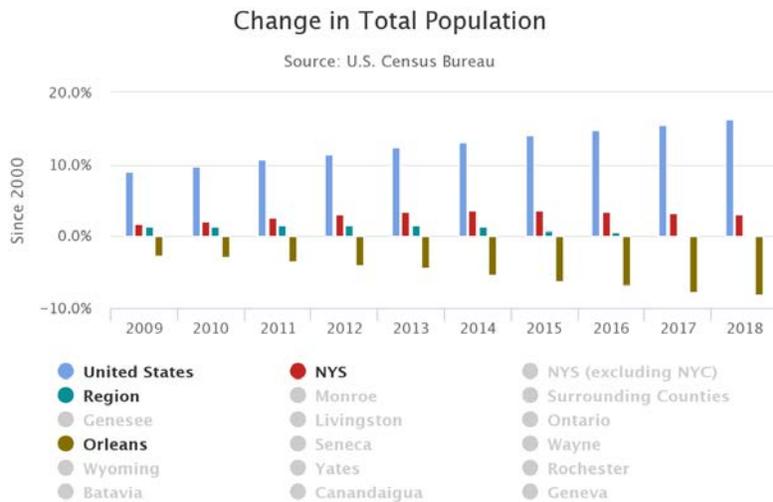
Situated between Rochester and Buffalo, Orleans County is among the smaller counties in the Finger Lakes region. Orleans was formed in 1824 from portions of Genesee County, and saw a large population increase shortly thereafter, due to the Erie Canal. Large portions of the county consist of farmland; other sectors driving the economy include Manufacturing and Government.

Orleans County has a declining population, and among the highest rates of single families and child poverty in the region. However, the high school graduation rate remains strong, as do the rates for homeownership and growth in salaries in the county.

### Demographic Overview

Orleans' population is shrinking:

- Orleans lost 8.1% of its population from 2000 to 2018, in contrast to increases of 16.3% for the nation, 3% for the state, and 0.3% for the region. Orleans declined the most of any county in the region.
- In 2018, Orleans was home to 40,612 residents, or 3% of the regional population. Orleans was the fourth smallest county in the region by population, ahead of Wyoming, Seneca, and Yates.



\*Please note, the indicator information included in this summary reflects the data available at the time of its composition. Some indicator data may have since been updated on our website. Visit [actrochester.org/all-indicators](http://actrochester.org/all-indicators) for updates.

Like other counties in the region, Orleans County has a population that is aging:

- Orleans' population of young people declined more than every other county in 2013-17, losing 25% of residents under 20 years old, and 18% of those 20-39.
- During that same period, the number of residents 60-84 increased by 34% from 2000 to 2013-17, and those over 85 by 32%.

Orleans was the second most diverse county in the region, after Monroe:

- In 2013-17, 91% of Orleans residents were white, the smallest share in the region besides Monroe. African Americans made up the largest minority group, at 6%, followed by Hispanic (5%) and Asian (1%) residents.
- From 2000 to 2013-17, the African American and white populations shrank (20% and 6%, respectively), while the Asian and Hispanic populations grew (215% and 13% respectively). Orleans had the largest decrease of any county in its African American population, and its white population shrank faster than the state and region.

### **Community Vitality**

Despite a substantial increase from 2005 to 2007, tourism revenue per resident in Orleans County has grown only slightly since and was the second lowest in the region in 2017:

- In 2017, tourism revenue per resident was \$661, well below the state excluding NYC (\$2,089) and the region (\$1,368)). Only Wayne County had lower revenue per resident than Orleans.

Recreation spending per resident has also struggled since 2007:

- From 2005 to 2007, recreation spending per resident more than quadrupled, far beyond any county or the state. However, since 2007, revenue has fallen by 3%. Orleans' recreation spending per resident level in 2017 was slightly below 2007 levels.
- In 2017, recreation spending was \$124 per resident, above the region (\$76) and the regional counties (except for Genesee and Wyoming) but below the state excluding NYC (\$184).

The voter registration rate in Orleans fell from a peak of 83% in 2005 to 75% in 2018, below the regional and state rates of 83% and 82%, respectively.

Orleans had the lowest voter turnout for the 2016 presidential elections:

- Just 29% of registered voters cast ballots in the 2014 midterms, below the region (35%) and every county in the region. Turnout fell by 5 points from 34% in the 2010 midterms.
- Turnout for the 2016 presidential election improved from 2012 – 50% of voters cast ballots, on par with the state and below the 58% for the region. Orleans' turnout in 2016 was lower than every other county in the region.

The share of registered library borrowers increased by 6 points since 2000 in Orleans County, the only county in the region besides Monroe with an increase:

- In 2017, 62% of residents of Orleans’ county library system were registered borrowers, above the state (56%) and region (61%).
- Orleans ranks first in the number of library visits per capita (7.0), an increase of 64% since 2000. This increase is greater compared to that of the state, region, and every other county except Livingston during the same period.

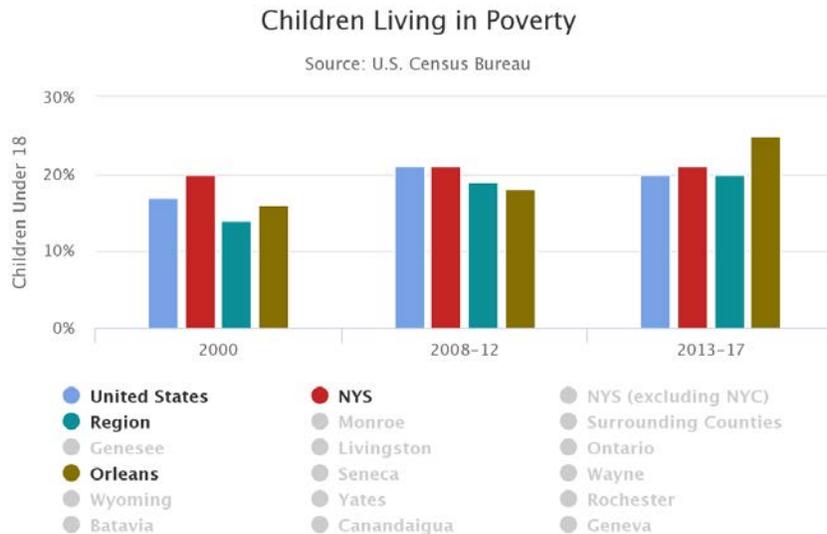
In 2016, residents in Orleans County gave 1% of their income to benefit charitable causes, a slight decrease from 2011 (1.1%). Orleans’ rate was the lowest of all regional counties, and its total contribution amount in 2016 (\$8.8 million) was 10% less than its amount from 2000 (\$9.8 million).

In 2013-17, Orleans had a lower share of households without a vehicle (8%) than the nation (9%), as well as the region and the state excluding NYC (both 10%). Though the rate increased 2 points from 2000, it has remained relatively low and on par with many other regional counties.

### Children and Youth

The child poverty rate in Orleans has increased since 2000 and was the highest in the region:

- In 2013-17, 25% of Orleans children lived below the poverty line, greater than the nation and region (both 20%), state (21%), or any county in the region.
- The rate rose by 9 points since 2000, greater than increases for the state (1 point), nation (3 points), and the region (6 points).



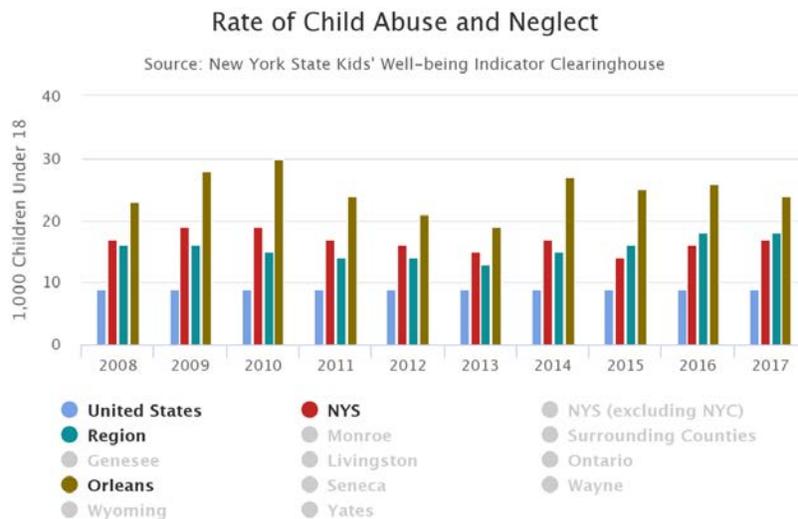
The rate of single-parent families in Orleans in 2013-17 increased 11 points since 2000 and was the highest rate in the region:

- In 2013-17, 42% of families were headed by a single parent, above the nation (34%), the state (36%) and the region (39%).

In 2016, 82% of Orleans mothers received prenatal care in the first trimester, above the state (77%) and the regional (80%) rates. Orleans early prenatal care rate has increased by 6 points since 2000, a larger increase than the region, state, and all regional counties except for Genesee and Monroe.

The rate of indicated cases of child abuse and neglect doubled from 2000 to 2017, and was higher than the state and region:

- In 2017, there were 24 cases of child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children under 18, more than the state (17), the region (18), and the nation (9).
- The rate in Orleans has doubled since 2000, a much larger increase than the state (31%), the region (29%), and every other county. In 2000, Orleans had the lowest rate of any county in the region.



The rate of foster care admissions in Orleans decreased 23% since 2000, but remains among the highest in the region:

- In 2018, there were 2.7 per 1,000 children, a rate above the state (2.0) region (2.3) and most other regional counties.

The teen pregnancy rate in 2017 was 2%, on par with the state, region and many other regional counties.

Despite a considerable decline from 2000, teen births in Orleans County were the highest of all regional counties:

- In 2017, there were 19 live births per 1,000 females 15 to 19 years old in the county, on par with the nation, but greater than the state (12) and the region (13).
- Orleans' rate for 2017 is half the rate from 2000 (38).

## **Economy**

Unemployment in Orleans was the highest of all regional counties, and has consistently been higher than the nation, state and region:

- In 2018, the unemployment rate in Orleans was 4.9%. Despite falling from a high of 9.7% in 2012, the rate in 2018 was higher than the nation (3.9%), state (4.1%), region (4.2%), and every other county in the region.
- Since its peak in 2012, unemployment in Orleans County has dropped 49%, similar to the nation, state and region.
- Total jobs in Orleans decreased by 1.3% from 2016 to 2017, in contrast to improved job growth for the nation, state and region.

Total job growth since 2001 has been slightly above that of the region for most sectors:

- The number of jobs grew most in Natural Resources and Mining (134%), Financial Activities (76%), and Professional and Business Services (37%). These increases outpaced the nation, state, and region. It is important to note that the small number of overall jobs for each sector means that a large increase in the sector's employment may represent a modest increase in total jobs.
- The manufacturing sector in Orleans grew by 27% from 2001 to 2017 – an extraordinary achievement, given large losses in the sector for the nation (down 21%), state (down 34%) and region (down 36%). Orleans was the only county besides Yates to experience an increase in manufacturing jobs over that period.
- The Government, Information; and Trade, and Transportation sectors lost jobs from 2001 to 2017 (14%, 36% and 16%, respectively).

Growth in average salary in Orleans has been relatively strong:

- In 2017, the average salary in Orleans was \$41,441, an increase of 13% from 2000. This increase compares to an increase of 10% for both the nation and state.
- However, Orleans' average salary in 2017 was lower than the nation (\$55,375), and state (\$70,538).

## **Education**

Despite the extraordinary growth in prekindergarten participation that Orleans experienced in 2016 (78%, its overall peak so far, and the highest rate in the region that year), pre-k participation dropped substantially in 2017:

- In 2017, 57% of eligible Orleans children were enrolled in prekindergarten. Though higher than the state (52%) and region (44%), the rate is a 21-point decrease since last year in 2016 (78%).

Student performance on Common Core-aligned tests in 2018 generally fell behind the state:

- The percent of students passing the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade English and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Math tests (42% and 49% respectively) were similar to the regional rates, but 9 and 5 points below the state rates.
- The percent of students passing 8<sup>th</sup> grade English (41%) matched the region but fell below the state (48%), while the passing rate for Math in Orleans (40%) fell behind both the region and the state (45% and 48%, respectively).
- We note that a substantial number of students did not take state exams in 2018 due to parent concerns about testing in schools. In our region in 2018, 19% of 3rd-8th graders in the region opted not to take the English or Math exams.

In 2018, for both the English and Algebra 1 Common Core Regents tests, Orleans had a higher percent passing rate (both 83%) than the state and the region.

The 4-year graduation rate in Orleans in 2018 (87%) moved ahead of the region and state by 2 and 4 points respectively. Orleans' graduation rate rose by 7 points from 2008 to 2018.

Less adults attended college in Orleans than their peers in the country, state and region:

- In 2013-17, 48% of adults 25 and older in Orleans had attended at least some college, well below the region (62%), and the state and nation (both 60%). Orleans had the lowest figure of any regional county except Wyoming.
- Adults who had obtained a bachelor's degree or higher made up a smaller share of the population (16%) than the state, nation, and region. Orleans had a higher share of high school graduates (39%) than the state, nation and region.
- The share of adults who had less than a high school diploma (13%) was above the region (10%), equal to the nation, and below the state (14%).

Spending per student by school districts in Orleans increased at a higher rate than most of the region with a 75% increase since 2000. In 2017, Orleans school districts spent \$22,069 per student, below the state (\$24,712), and slightly below the region (\$22,208).

In 2017, Orleans County spent \$14,762 per student on instructional expenses (spending directly related to a student's classroom experience), below the region (\$15,778), and the state (\$18,604). The county's instructional spending per student has increased 54% since 2000, more than the region (43%), but less than the state (60%).

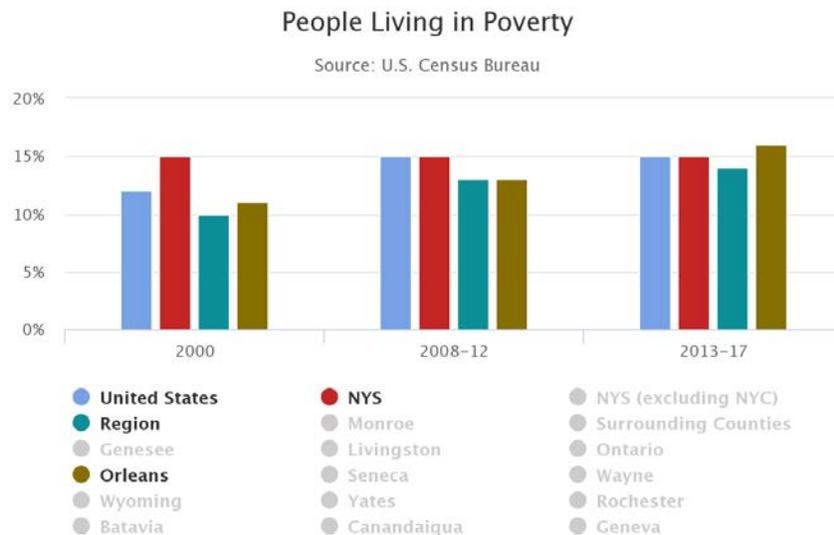
## **Economic Security**

Orleans, like the nation, state and region experienced a drop in median household income, after adjusting for inflation:

- In 2013-17, the median household income in Orleans was \$49,223, the lowest among the counties in the region and below the nation (\$57,652) and state (\$62,765).
- Median income in Orleans fell by 12% from 2000 to 2013-17, a larger drop than the state (2%), and the nation (7%).

Orleans' poverty rate was highest of all regional counties and slightly higher than the nation, region, and the state:

- In 2013-17, 16% of Orleans residents were living in poverty – an increase of 5 points from 2000. The region and nation had smaller increases (4 points and 3 points respectively), while the state rate was unchanged.
- Orleans' rate in 2013-17 was similar to the state (15%), nation (15%), and region (14%).



In 2018, 2.5% of Orleans residents received temporary assistance, slightly below the state (2.7%), and similar to the region (2.3%). Orleans' rate was higher than every county besides Monroe. The county's rate is relatively unchanged from 2000, in contrast to a drop of 0.9 points for the state, and 0.8 points for the region.

The rate of disengaged youth in Orleans County was 11% for 2013-17, higher than the region (6%), the nation and state (both 7%), and third highest of all the regional counties.

In 2013-17, Orleans County had the highest number of residents receiving SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits than any other county in the region. Orleans' rate for 2013-17 (17%) was higher than the region (14%), state (15%), and nation (13%).

## Health

In 2017, 6% of residents under the age of 65 did not have health insurance, above the regional rate of 5%, but below the state (7%), and national (10%) figures. Since 2008, the rate has fallen by 8 points in Orleans, compared to a 6-point drop for the state, 5-point drop for the region and 7-point drop for the nation.

Orleans' mortality rate was second highest among local counties:

- In 2016, the mortality rate was 772 deaths per 100,000 residents, well above the state excluding NYC (660), and the region (685).
- Most counties, the region, and state have demonstrated a decrease in mortality rates since 2000. Orleans' decrease (13%) was less than the state excluding NYC (18%) and the regional (16%) decreases.

In 2017, Orleans County reported 8 cases of gonorrhea per 10,000 residents, below the rates for the region and state (both 17). Reported cases of gonorrhea in Orleans increased 60% in 2017 from its rate in 2000.

In 2016, there were 0.7 cases of early syphilis infections per 10,000 residents in Orleans County, similar to number of cases reported for the region (0.8), and below the state (3.1).

## **Housing**

In 2013-17, the median home value in Orleans was \$93,600 – lowest among all surrounding counties, and below the state (\$293,000), nation (\$193,500), and region as a whole (\$133,156). This was a decrease of 10% from 2000 to 2013-17, a larger decrease than the 1% drop in the region overall and in contrast to increases for the state (35%) and nation (18%).

In 2013-17, the homeownership rate in Orleans was 75%, among the higher rates for the region's counties, and well above the rates for the state (54%) and nation (64%). Homeownership rates changed little from 2000 to 2013-17 for the nation, state, region and all of its counties, and Orleans was no exception.

The ratio of median home value to median household income – a measure of housing affordability – was 1.9 in 2013-17, the lowest ratio among counties in the region and well below the state (4.7) and nation (3.4). Housing affordability for homeowners has remained flat since 2000 in Orleans. Orleans was not as affordable for renters however, with rent consuming 34% of household income, slightly higher than the 30% considered affordable.

The vacant housing unit rate in Orleans County for 2013-17 was on par with the state and nation, and decreased much less since 2000 compared to most other regional counties:

- The vacant housing rate in Orleans was 12% for 2013-17. This rate was above the region (10%), but similar to or less than the majority of the region's counties, and equal to the state and nation.
- Orleans' rate increased 9% from 2000, the smallest increase after Wyoming, and much lower than the increases experienced by the region (25%), state (50%), and nation (33%).

## **Public Safety**

While still low relative to the nation and region, Orleans' serious crime rate rose while rates in all other regional counties declined:

- In 2017, there were 186 serious crimes per 10,000 people, lower than the region (214) and nation (275), but higher than the state (182).
- Orleans' rate has increased 19% since 2000, in contrast to steep drops nationally (33%), regionally (39%), and statewide (41%).

After experiencing rising rates during the mid-2000s, violent crime in Orleans County dropped to a low of 14 per 10,000 residents in 2014. However, the rate has climbed steadily since then with 21 reported violent crimes per 10,000 residents in 2017, lower than the region (28), state (36), and nation (38).

Orleans County had the highest arrest rate for 2017 with approximately 235 arrests per 10,000 residents. Arrests in the county saw an increase of 36% from 2000 (173), the largest increase in the region, and greater than those experienced by the region, state and nation during the same period.

Orleans County had an incarceration rate of approximately 17 per 10,000 residents in 2017, higher than the region (14), and the state (12). Orleans' rate for 2017 was equal to that of 2000.

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