

The State of the Regional Economy

To determine any changes in the regional economy we looked at four factors in each county:

1. Commuting Patterns
2. Unemployment Rates
3. Leading Industrial Employers
4. The Per Capita Income compared to the State and National Levels.

Commuting Patterns

When studying the commuting patterns, we looked at the number of persons who live in the particular county in our region, but commute to a different county or state for employment. In addition, we looked at the number of persons who live outside a county, but commute into a county within the region for employment. According to *STATS Indiana*, the 2004 commuting patterns have not been tabulated at the time of this report. However, the 2003 commuting patterns have been revised to reflect a more accurate count. For this report we looked to see what effect the revised numbers had on the commuting patterns.

Unemployment Rates

Using information from Indiana Workforce Development, unemployment rates were analyzed from 2004 to July of 2005. Then we compared each county's rate to that of the state and the nation.

Leading Industrial Employers

The largest industrial employers were identified in each county. We then analyzed if each company had increased, decreased, or maintained its employment level over the last years. Lastly, we looked at what type of industry each county had.

Per Capita Income

Utilizing data from the Indiana Workforce Development, we graphed the per capita income from each county and analyzed the changes from 2002 to 2003. Then we compared each county's per capita income level to that of the state and nation.

Following is a review of each county and then the analysis of the overall region.

CRAWFORD

Commuting Patterns

The number of persons commuting out of Crawford County to find employment in another county or state has increased by fourteen (14) people from 2002 to 2003. However, fifteen percent (15%) more persons are commuting into Crawford County for employment in that same period.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate has increased 1.5% since this time last year. As of July of 2005, the unemployment rate was 6.8%. Crawford County's unemployment rate was 1.6% higher than the state and national unemployment rate.

Leading Industrial Employers

Crawford County's two largest employers continue to be Jasper Engines and Transmissions and Mulzer Crushed Stone, Inc. Both industries have maintained their level of employment over the last year. According to the 2005 Indiana Harris Industrial Directory, the type of industry in Crawford County has not changed in the last year.

Per Capita Income

Crawford County's per capita has continued to increase over the past few years. From 2002 to 2003, the per capita income has increased 4.6%. However the average per capita income rate in Crawford County in 2003 was about \$5,173 less than the national level and approximately \$6,683 less than the state average.

DUBOIS

Commuting Patterns

The number of persons commuting out of Dubois County to find employment in another county or state has increased nine percent (9%) from 2002 to 2003. In addition, the number of persons commuting into Dubois County for employment has decreased three percent (3%) in that same period.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate in Dubois County has once again increased, hitting the highest amount in the last eight (8) years. However, it is still lower than most other counties in the State of Indiana.

Leading Industrial Employers

According to the 2005 Harris Indiana Industrial Directory, there are still six industries in Dubois County that employ over 550 people. Five of the six industries have added jobs over the last year. According to the 2005 Harris Indiana Industrial Directory, the wood working industry continues to be the largest industry in Dubois County.

Per Capita Income

Dubois County's per capita income increased 3.1% from 2002 to 2003. Dubois County's per capita income level is still approximately \$5,120 higher than the nations average and \$3,610 higher than the state's average.

ORANGE

Commuting Patterns

The number of persons commuting out of Orange County to find employment in another county or state has increased four percent (4%) from 2002 to 2003. In addition, the number of persons commuting into Orange County for employment has decreased three percent (3%) in that same period.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate in Orange County has significantly decreased over the past year; however, it still remains higher than that of the nation and state. As of July 2005, the rate was at 6.9%, which is 1.7% higher than the national and state rate.

Leading Industrial Employers

Of the industries employing over 100 people in Orange County, the majority have maintained their employment levels over the last year. Mi-Lin Wood Products, slightly decreased their employment level and White Castle System Inc. slightly increased its employment level. According to the 2005 Harris Indiana Industrial Directory, the wood working industry continues to be very active in Orange County.

Per Capita Income

Orange County's per capita income increased 0.6% in 2003. On average, Orange County's per capita income level is still \$5,812 less than the national level and \$7,322 less than the state level.

PERRY

Commuting Patterns

The number of persons commuting out of Perry County to find employment in another county or state has decreased five percent (5%) from 2002 to 2003. In addition the number of persons commuting into Perry County for employment has increased three percent (3%) in that same period.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate in Perry County only slightly increased over the last year. As of July 2005 the unemployment rate was at 5.8%, which is 0.6% higher than the national level, and 0.6% higher than the state level.

Leading Industrial Employers

There has not been much change in the employment levels of the biggest employers in Perry County. General Electric, Perry County's third largest industrial employer, however, shut its doors in January 2005, resulting in the loss of 60 jobs. The other industries have absorbed the loss of jobs within the county. Perry County, unlike most counties in the region, continues to have a diverse type of manufacturers, not solely depending on one industry.

Per Capita Income

Perry County's per capita income level has increased 3.4% from 2002 to 2003. On average, Perry County's per capita income level is now approximately \$3,139 less than the national level and \$4,649 less than the state level.

PIKE

Commuting Patterns

The number of persons commuting out of Pike County to find employment in another county or state has increased two percent (2%) from 2002 to 2003. In addition, the number of persons commuting into Pike County for employment has increased two percent (2%) in that same period.

Unemployment Rate

Even with the closure of the County's second largest employer, the unemployment rate has decreased slightly. As of July 2005 the unemployment rate was 5.6%, which is 0.4% higher than the national level and 0.4% higher than the state's level.

Leading Industrial Employers

Pike County had three companies that employed over 100 people, two of which mine bituminous surface coal. Pike County lost its second largest employer, a coal mining facility, in September 2004, losing approximately 240 jobs.

Per Capita Income

In 2003 Pike County's per capita income increased four percent (4%). However Pike County's per capita income level is still on average \$4,821 less than the nation's level and \$6,331 less than the state's level.

SPENCER

Commuting Patterns

The number of persons commuting out of Spencer County to find employment in another county or state has increased two percent (2%) from 2002 to 2003. In addition, the number of persons commuting into Spencer County for employment has decreased by nine (9) people in that same period.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate in Spencer County has increased to 5.3% in the past year. The increased unemployment rate was somewhat expected with the closure of Peerless Pottery. However, as of July 2005, Spencer County's unemployment rate is only 0.01 higher than that of the state and national level.

Leading Industrial Employers

Spencer County's fifth largest employer, Peerless Pottery, Inc. shut its doors in October 2004 losing 167 jobs. Of the remaining large industrial employers, only one has added substantial jobs over the past year. The other employers have maintained their employment levels.

Per Capita Income

Spencer County's per capita income increased 11.2 percent from 2002 to 2003. However, Spencer County's per capita income is still on average \$1,972 lower than the national average but \$3,482 less than the state average.

Conclusion

Commuting Patterns

The number of people commuting into the region for employment has decreased 1.3% from 2002 to 2003. The number of people within the region that are leaving the region to find employment in another county or state has increased 1.5% from 2002 to 2003.

The trend of the region not retaining its workers has continued to grow since the problem was identified in the 2003 - 2007 CEDS. There are some definite warning signs of possible trouble ahead. Dubois County employs the majority of the workers in the region and the number of people leaving Dubois County for employment has increased thirty percent (30%) since 1998.

Unemployment Rates

Overall, the unemployment rate for the entire region has only slightly increased over the last year. Which means other small employers absorbed the employees of the three major industries that were closed in the region over the last year. The three counties that suffered the loss of major employers did not see much of an impact in the unemployment rate, with the exception of Spencer County which increased by 1.2%. The biggest changes in the region were seen in Orange County. Orange County's unemployment rate decreased by 1.6%. Crawford County's unemployment rate increased by 1.5%.

Leading Industrial Employers

The region lost three of its largest industrial employers over the last year. In Perry County, General Electric, a manufacturer of electric motors closed its doors in January 2005. In Pike County, Kindill Mining, Inc., an underground bituminous coal mining company closed its doors in September 2004. In Spencer County, Peerless Pottery Inc. a manufacturer of vitreous china plumbing fixtures, closed its doors in October 2005. However, a number of the manufacturers in the region have increased their employment, absorbing some of the lost jobs. In addition, there has been a number of new automotive suppliers to come into the region due to the new Toyota Plant in Princeton, Indiana.

Per Capita Income

From 2002 to 2003, the nation's per capita income increased drastically by twenty percent (20%). The state's per capita income increased by three percent (3%). Like the state, over that same time period, the region's per capita income increased by three percent (3%). However on average, the regions per capital income is \$2,634 less than that of the nation and \$4,144 less than that of the state.