

Extension Area 1: Economic Overview

Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding and Williams Counties

Report prepared January 2025 by Kyle White and Eric Romich, OSU Extension Community Development

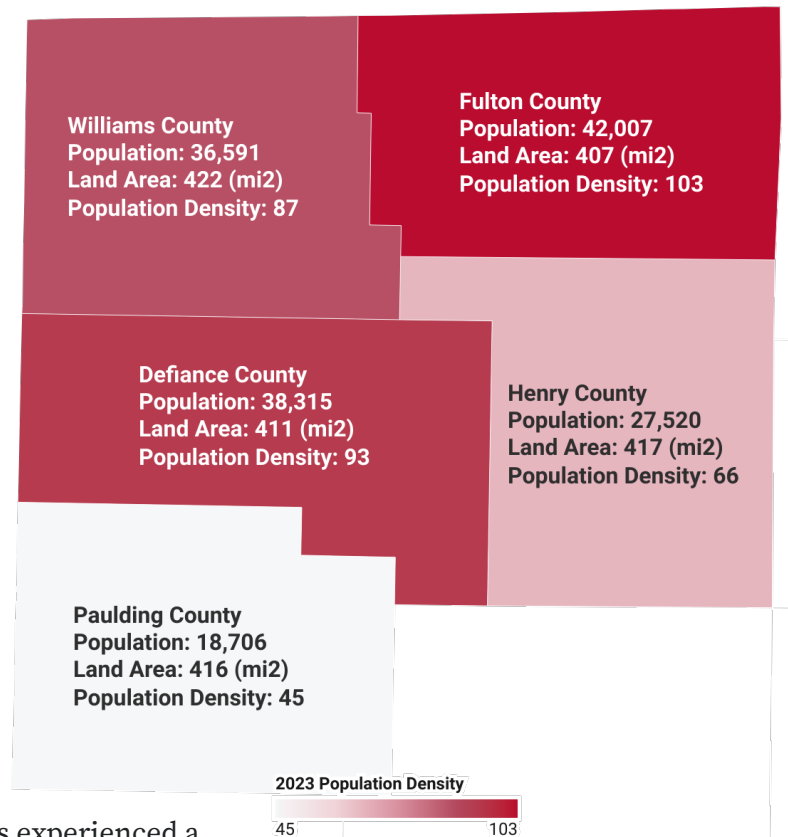
Spring 2025 Edition

Regional Overview

OSU Extension Area 1 is a five-county area in the north-west corner of the state, including Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, and Williams counties. The combined Area 1 footprint is 2,073 square miles (mi²) supporting a population of 163,139 residents and an overall population density of close to 79 residents per square mile. Population density is a ratio of total population to total land area, simply described as a count of residents per square mile. As illustrated in Image 1, Fulton County has the highest population density of 103, followed by Defiance County with a population density of 93, followed by Henry and Williams counties at 66 and 87 residents per square mile, respectively. Paulding had the lowest density at 45 residents per square mile.

Between 2001 and 2023, the combined population in Area 1 dropped by 4%, or from 170,167 in 2001 to 163,139 in 2023. All five counties experienced a decrease in population during this 22-year period, with the greatest percentage loss in Paulding County at -6.9%, followed by Williams and Henry County at -6.7 and -6.1 respectively. Defiance County’s population dropped 2.7% from 39,360 to 38,315, with Fulton County’s population dropping .47% with a loss of only 198 residents, from 42,205 in 2001 to 42,007 in 2023. Fulton (26%), Defiance (23%) and Williams (22%) counties comprise the largest percentage of population in Area 1.

Image 1: OSU Extension Area 1 Population Density



Key Stats

Total of 322 Industries
Total Employment of 92,248
Gross Domestic Product \$9.8 B

Regional Industry Sector Overview

IMPLAN defines the total annual production value of each Industry or Commodity as Output. Total output represents the total production value of an industry including intermediate inputs, employee compensation, proprietor income, taxes on production and imports, and other property income.

Table 1 below ranks the top 10 industries in Area 1 by total output in 2023. Iron and steel mills and ferroalloy manufacturing remained the highest ranked industry in total output with \$1.6 billion, supporting 794 jobs and an average employee compensation of \$127,430. Canned specialties manufacturing remained in the number 2 slot in 2023 with total output at \$1.33 B and total employment rose 56% from 1025 in 2022 to 1,595 regaining losses from the prior year (2021) and inching closer to the 2021 total employment level of 1656. The average employee compensation for Canned specialties manufacturing was identical to 2022 at \$97,183 .

The sector with the most employees in the region was employment and payroll of local government and education with 4,769 employees. The average annual income for these workers rose from \$62,466 per year in 2022 to \$68,828 which exceeded the 2021 average annual income of 2021 which was \$68,319. The sector is primarily made up of teachers and administrators.

The owner-occupied dwellings sector represents the wealth generated from home ownership. Owning and maintaining a home is also a major area of spending and the owner-occupied dwellings sector captures that economic effect. However, there is no employment or labor income generated in the owner-occupied dwellings sector, as the employment positions such as property managers and real estate agents is captured in the other real estate sector.



Table 1: Area 1 Top 10 Industries by Total Output

Industry Description	Output	Total Employment	Average Employee Compensation
Iron and steel mills & ferroalloy manufacturing	\$1,556 M	794	\$127,430
Canned specialties	\$1,326 M	1,595	\$97,183
Owner-occupied housing	\$818 M	N/A	N/A
Monetary authorities & depository credit intermediation	\$595 M	992	\$76,220
Mineral wool manufacturing	\$560 M	773	\$129,300
Truck transportation	\$484 M	2,108	\$78,424
Other animal food manufacturing	\$474 M	292	\$87,109
Automobile & light duty motor vehicle manufacturing	\$443 M	318	\$53,199
Other plastics product manufacturing	\$416 M	1,190	\$68,127
Motor vehicle gas engine & engine parts manufacturing	\$396 M	584	\$78,569

Area 1 Annual Employment Trends

The Total Employment figure reported by IMPLAN represents a full and part-time annual average including the self-employed, all federal, state, and local government employment and military employment (including overseas military).

Chart 1 illustrates the ratio of location of work for county residents. Those who commute out of the county for employment represent 26% of the employed population while 74% of those employed work within the five (5) county area. Chart 2 provides a visual reference of the Area 1 annual employment trends between 2001 and 2023. As shown in the chart, Area 1 experienced negative growth between 2001 and 2023, peaking in 2001 with an overall employment of 100,436 and dropping to a low of 89,101 in 2020. Employment rebounded to 92,731 in 2022 and dropped to 92,248 in 2023, a net decrease of 483 jobs. Employment declines during 2019-2021 were affected not only by the pandemic, but as result of a collapse of the U.S. housing market, which triggered a period of recession in the U.S. economy.

During the 3-year recessionary period between 2008 and 2010, Area 1 also experienced the greatest loss of jobs during the 21-year period, with employment dropping from a high of 98,942 in 2007 to 89,862 in 2010, or by over 9,000 jobs, just 3 years later.

When considering the long-term employment trends by county, all five counties experienced decreasing employment, with Paulding (-8%) and Henry (-5%) and Defiance (-7%) counties experiencing the least decline in employment and Fulton and Williams with the greatest decline at -10%.

Chart 1: Area 1 Location of Workforce

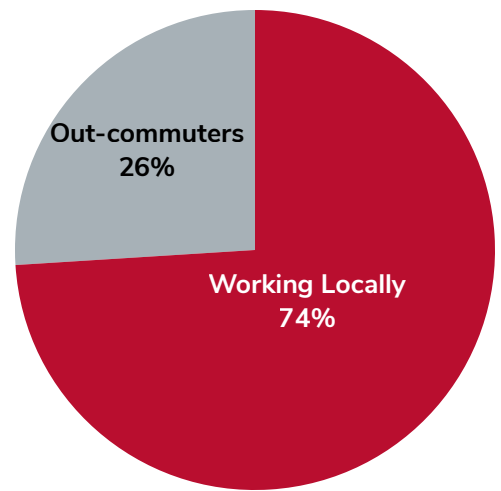


Chart 2: Area 1 Annual Employment

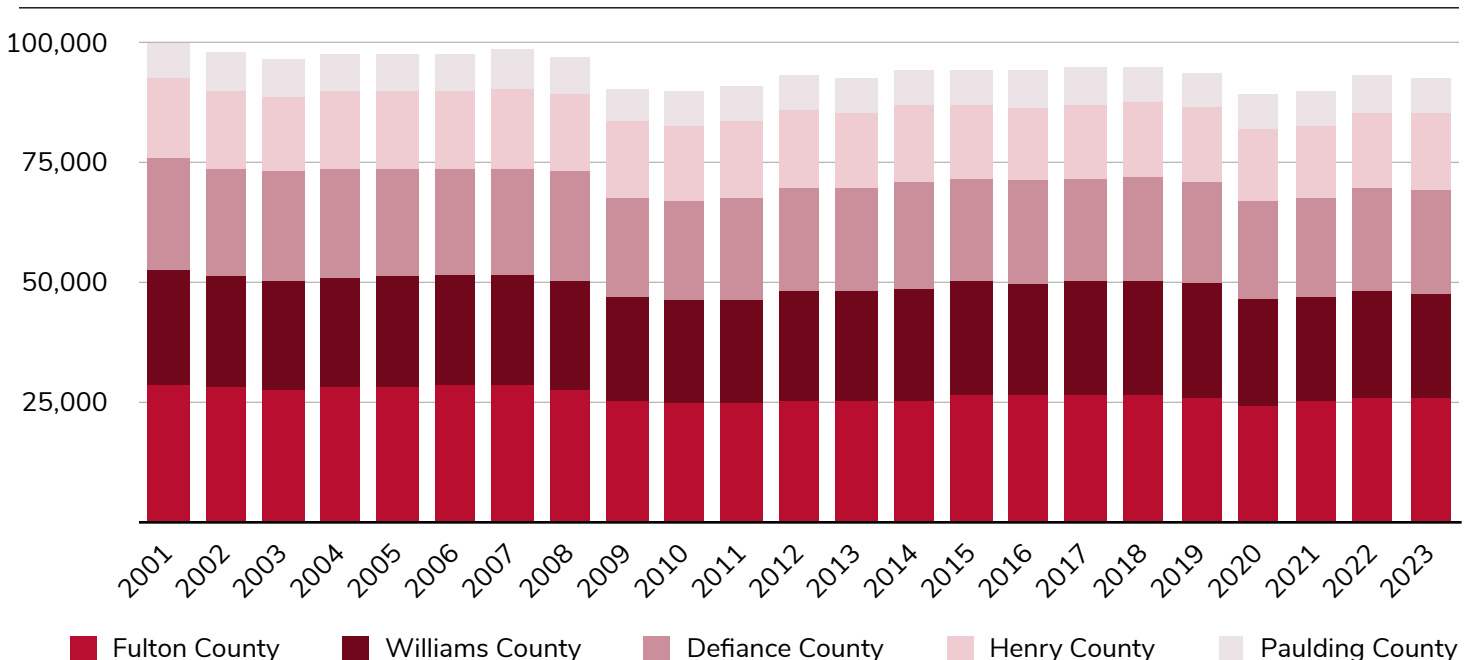
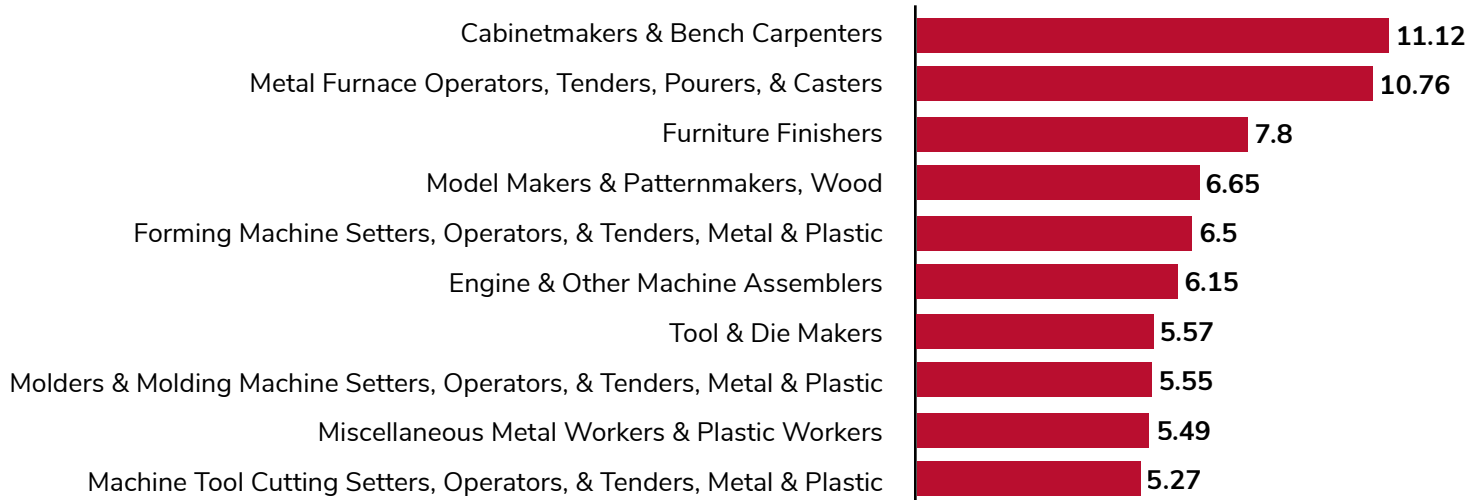


Chart 3: Area 1 Top 10 Occupations by Location Quotient

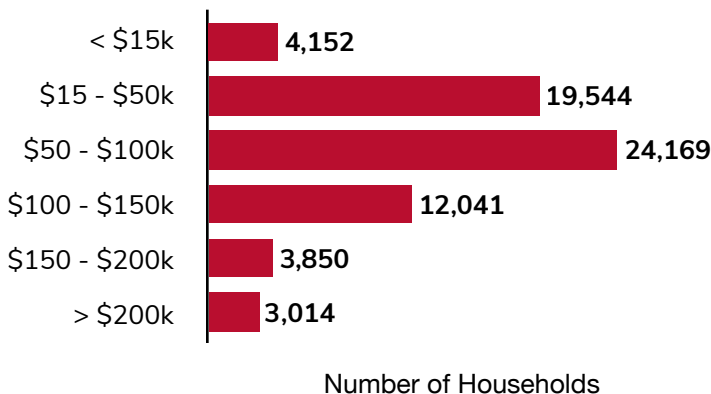


Occupations by Location Quotient

A location quotient (LQ) is a metric that compares the relative concentration of a local regions workers in a specific industry sector to the concentration of workers nationally in the same sector. An LQ equal to 1 signifies that the local share is equal to the national share, while an LQ greater than 1 means the local share is greater than the national share and is typically an exporter or perhaps has a specialization in that sector. Where there is an occupational concentration, there also tends to be higher core competencies relative to other areas, creating a competitive advantage. In addition, training and education opportunities associated with the occupation are often readily available to meet hiring demands.

Illustrated above, Chart 3 lists the Top 10 occupations with the highest LQ in Area 1 demonstrating a significant concentration of workers relative to the nation. In 2023, the top occupation by LQ in Area 1 was cabinetmakers and bench carpenters, with an LQ of 11.12. This suggests the region has over eleven times the number of woodworkers compared to the national average. The second highest occupation by LQ in Area 1 was metal furnace operators at 10.76 followed by furniture finishers with an LQ of 7.8 and model makers and patternmakers, wood at 6.65.

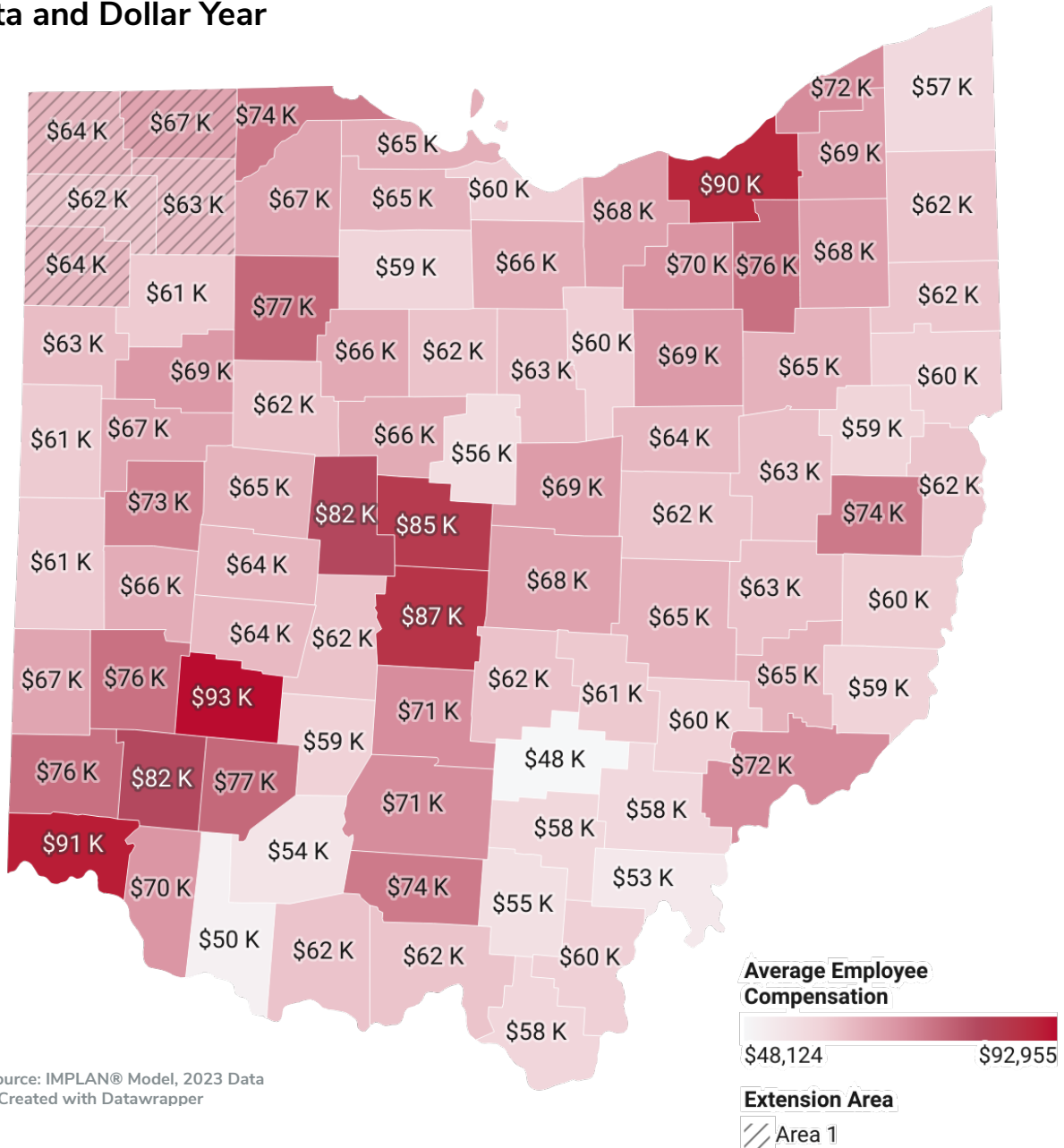
Chart 4: Area 1 Households Income



Household Income

Illustrated in Chart 4 is the distribution of household income in Area 1. The majority of households earn over \$50,000 / year (64.5%), 6% earn under \$15k and the remaining balance of 28% earn between \$15k and \$50k.

Image 2: Average Employee Compensation by County 2023 Data and Dollar Year



Source: IMPLAN® Model, 2023 Data
Created with Datawrapper

Image 2 illustrates the average employee compensation by county for 2023. Employee Compensation is the total payroll cost of an employee including wages and salaries, all benefits, and payroll taxes. The average employee compensation is calculated as Employee Compensation divided by wage and salary Employment. When comparing counties statewide, Greene County had the highest average employee compensation of \$92,955 while Hocking County posted the lowest county average of \$48,124

in 2023. When combining all Ohio counties, the statewide average employee compensation in 2023 was \$66,126 per worker, which was a 4% increase compared to 2022. Of the counties in Area 1, Fulton County had the highest average employee compensation of \$67,384, 30th highest in Ohio. The next highest average employee compensation in Area 1 was Williams County at \$64,151, followed by Henry County at \$63,985, Paulding County at \$59,866, and Defiance County at \$61,787.



Modeling Data Source

IMPLAN® model, 2023 Data, using inputs provided by the user and IMPLAN Group LLC, IMPLAN System (data and software), 16905 Northcross Dr., Suite 120, Huntersville, NC 28078.
www.IMPLAN.com.

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