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# Sustaining Wisconsin

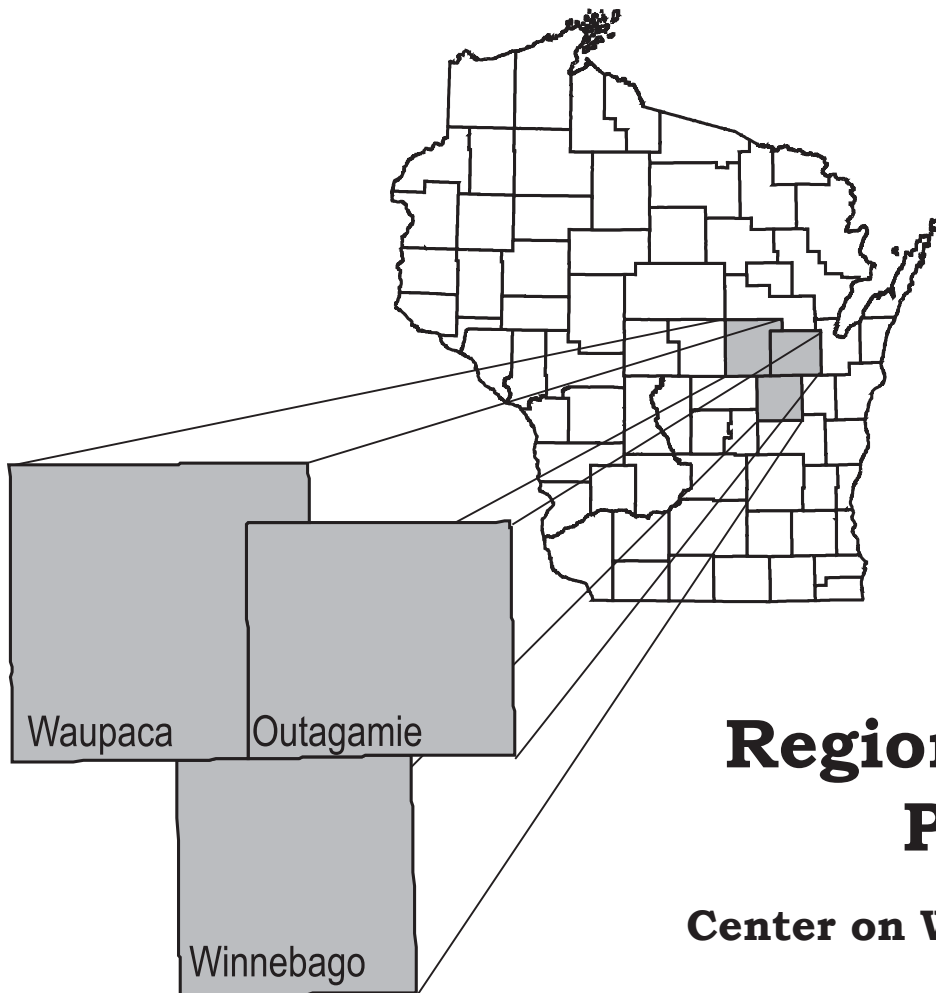
A Statewide Dialogue on Wisconsin's Future

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A project of the Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS), UW-Madison

## Outagamie, Waupaca, & Winnebago Counties

An Economic, Social, Environmental, and Political Snapshot



## Regional Briefing Paper Series

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## **Preface: Why we need State of the Region Reports**

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In January the Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) launched an 18-month statewide grassroots public education campaign — complete with coordinated media outreach, public discussion forums, an interactive web site, and regular electronic mailings — on major issues of concern to the state. “Sustaining Wisconsin” offers a model for mass education on public policy and involvement that will produce real results now and can be used elsewhere in the future.

A central component of Sustaining Wisconsin is providing useful, accessible information to people in their communities. Integral to this mission is a series of regional reports we are releasing throughout the campaign. The regional reports are an attempt to understand and portray issues and matters that are of specific importance to residents in particular areas of Wisconsin. The regional reports focus more detailed attention on the many facts within Sustaining Wisconsin’s five broad issue categories: Jobs and the Economy, Families and Communities, The Future, Environment and Natural Resources, and Democracy and Civic Participation.

The regional reports are also part of a larger project currently underway at COWS to explore the state of rural Wisconsin. The rural areas of Wisconsin vary significantly depending on the region. In the northern part of the state, rural economies are facing unique challenges as tourism grows and the mining and timber industries change. In the southern part of the state, the pressures of suburban development and the current low prices for agricultural commodities, including milk, Wisconsin’s farming backbone, are forcing many farmers into heavier debt and often foreclosure.

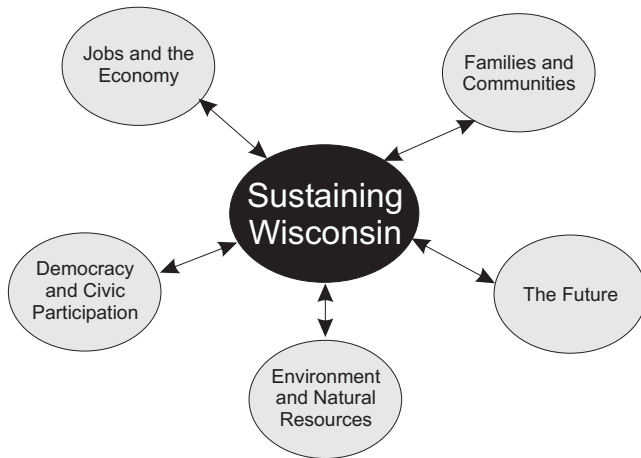
There are similarities behind the concerns facing residents of rural Wisconsin, as there are common features in the concerns that face us all. Our rural areas do not exist independently of the urban areas and the state of rural affairs is directly related to the state as a whole. By dividing the state into regions comprised of three to six counties, and then exploring in detail the particular issues, trends, opportunities and challenges, we believe that we can better understand our state as a whole, and for the first time begin to articulate a policy agenda for long-term, statewide economic sustainability.

Many decisions that impact our daily lives are made at the local and regional levels. More information about job growth, unemployment, health and social services, schools, lakes and rivers, and political participation can help us in making the right policy choices in our local areas. The regional reports are designed to contribute to the discussion around these issues, and draw attention to important choices and challenges that we face right in our own backyards.

The differences in geographical location, landscape, industry base, political affiliations, and environmental concerns all offer a chance to compare one area of Wisconsin to another area and to the state as a whole.

As with virtually all regions in Wisconsin, the counties explored in this regional report highlight how great it is to live here. The challenge before us as a state is to preserve our strongest traditions while confronting our greatest challenges.

## Findings: The State of the Outagamie—Waupaca—Winnebago Region



Even a quick review of the challenges we face — that is, the problems we need to solve and the opportunities we need to preserve — reveals important connections between seemingly unrelated issues. The choices we and our leaders make should embrace those connections.

### ***Jobs and the Economy***

- Per capita income in Outagamie and Winnebago counties has exceeded the state average since 1989. While per capita income has increased similarly in Waupaca County, its income levels are lowest in the region and are below the state average.
- The highest level of job growth in the region is in Winnebago County’s construction industry, which increased by over 34 percent.

- In 1998, over 46 percent of workers in Waupaca County had sub-poverty earnings in their primary job. Outagamie and Winnebago counties were among the counties with the lowest rates in Wisconsin, at 34.6 and 31.5 percent, respectively.

### ***Families and Communities***

- Outagamie County had the highest percentage of families in this region that could not afford the Fair Market Rent. All three counties in this region had a larger percentage of families that could not afford FMR than Wisconsin as a whole.

### ***The Future***

- Outagamie County’s infant mortality rate was significantly below the statewide average, while Waupaca County had an infant mortality rate significantly higher than the Wisconsin average.
- The majority of the public school districts in this region have a higher student-to-teacher ratio than the statewide average, and all of the public school districts in this region had higher graduation rates than Wisconsin as a whole.
- All counties in the region had lower adult arrest rates than the statewide average.
- In 1999, Outagamie and Waupaca counties had higher juvenile arrest rates than Wisconsin as a whole, while Winnebago County’s juvenile arrest rate was only slightly lower than the statewide average.

### ***The Environment and Natural Resources***

- The region contains a noticeably small percentage of conservation and recreation land, with Waupaca County ranking the 7th lowest in the state in percentage of such land.
- Winnebago and Outagamie counties rank 4th and 10th highest in the state for number of Superfund sites.

### ***Democracy and Civic Participation***

- Three of the ten state legislative races in the region were “won” by candidates who ran unopposed. Another three races featured insignificant opposition to the incumbent legislators.
- Republican officials hold all but one of the seats representing the major state legislative districts in this region.

### **Top 10/Bottom 10 in WI**

- **Labor Force Participation Rate 1999** — Outagamie 3rd highest; Winnebago 10th highest
- **Percent of Jobs in Manufacturing 1998** — Winnebago 8th highest
- **Manufacturing Wage 1998** — Winnebago 5th highest
- **Unemployment Rate 1998** — Winnebago 6th lowest
- **Poverty Rate 1997 and Poverty Rate for kids 1997** — Outagamie 7th lowest
- **Percentage of Workers with Poverty Earnings** — Winnebago 3rd lowest
- **Number of Families who Could Not Afford FMR 1999** — Outagamie 8th highest; Waupaca 2nd lowest
- **Growth of Renter Households 1990–2000** — Outagamie 5th highest
- **Travel Spending 2000** — Outagamie 8th highest
- **Percentage of Conservation Land** — Waupaca 7th lowest
- **Number of Superfund Sites** — Winnebago 4th highest; Outagamie 10th highest

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## Jobs and the Economy

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While Wisconsin as a whole has recently experienced an economic boom, we continue to face challenges in building a sustainable future for our state. The nature of work in Wisconsin is changing, as the economy shifts from family-supporting jobs in the manufacturing sector to low wage, dead-end jobs in the retail and service sectors. People are required to work longer hours to maintain their standards of living. Furthermore, not all citizens have shared equally in the economic boom. The wealthy have benefited disproportionately from the growth in the last decade, the middle class is largely stuck, and the poor are slipping further behind.

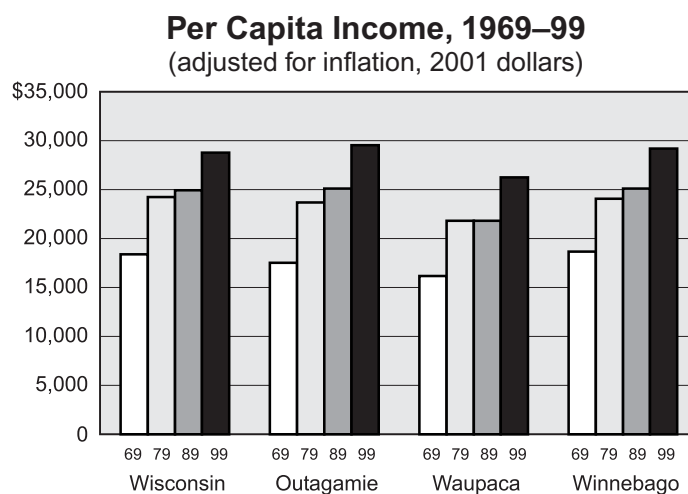
Following the statewide trend, unemployment levels in Outagamie and Waupaca counties fell during the 1990s, while Waupaca County saw a rise in unemployment in 1999 and exceeded the state average. The Wisconsin trend toward growth in sectors with lower wages and fewer benefits is fairly visible in this region, where high rates of job creation and growth have been in the service industry. The manufacturing sector, which typically pays higher wages and provides better benefits, has seen the slowest growth, and actually declined in Outagamie County. Overall, while the service sector employs at least 20 percent of the working population in all three counties, unlike many other regions in Wisconsin, the manufacturing sector continues to serve a prominent role, also employing over 20 percent of the workers.

The region has labor force participation rates above the state average. In fact, the participation rate in Outagamie County was nearly 10 percentage points higher than the state average and over 16 percentage points higher than the national average. Yet, despite the region's high labor force activity, over 30 percent of the workers in each county had sub-poverty earnings in their primary job in 1998; in Waupaca County over 45% of workers had sub-poverty earnings in their primary job.

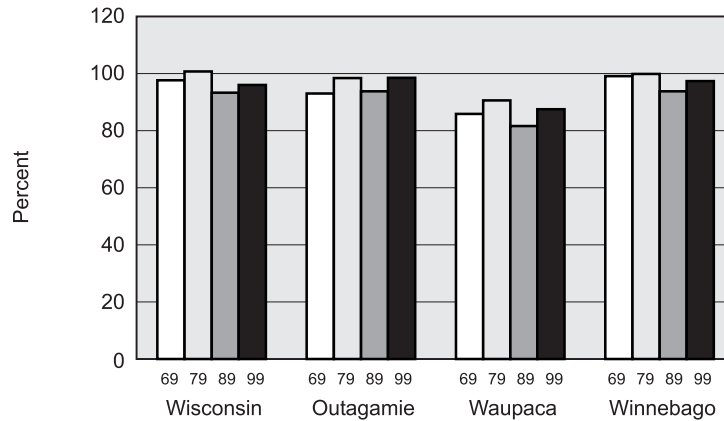
Finally, as is the case statewide, many of the farmers in Outagamie, Waupaca, and Winnebago counties are having an increasingly difficult time. The fate of the farmers in these counties should be of concern to all residents of the area, as farming is the center of a large cluster of local economic activities. Throughout Wisconsin and this region, there is a general trend toward large factory farms. Local farmers are rapidly losing their land and livelihoods as less acreage is applied toward agricultural activities in these counties, as well as throughout Wisconsin.

### **Economic Growth**

- The growth in per capita income in the region reflects the general growth in Wisconsin over the last three decades. Per capita income in Outagamie and Winnebago counties has exceeded the state average since 1989. While per capita income has increased similarly in Waupaca County, its income levels are lowest in the region and are below the state average.
- Per capita income as a percentage of the national average also shows Outagamie, Waupaca, and Winnebago counties following growth patterns similar to Wisconsin. Per capita income in both the region and the state is at or near the national average, with the exception of Waupaca County.



**Per Capita Income as a Percentage of the U.S. Per Capita, 1969–99**



***Labor Force Participation and Unemployment***

Workers in Wisconsin and this region rightfully take pride in their strong work ethic.

- Outagamie, Waupaca, and Winnebago counties all had labor force participation rates above the national average. Rates in both Outagamie and Winnebago counties also exceeded the state average.

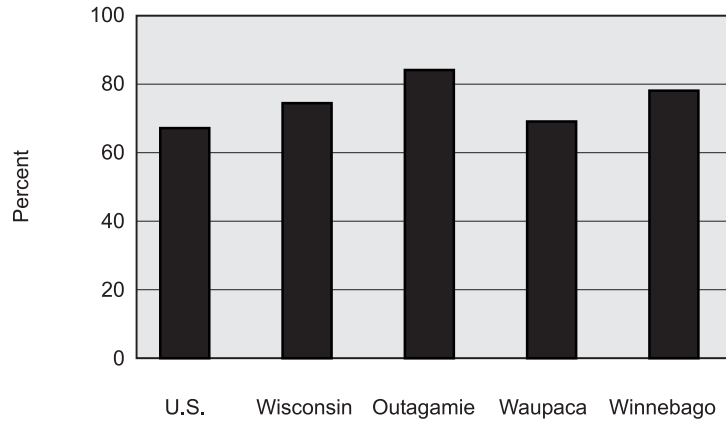
Through the 1990s, unemployment rates were at historic lows in Wisconsin. While unemployment in 1999 was lower than in the beginning of the decade in each county, the patterns of decline are not uniform.

- Rates in Outagamie County throughout the decade were among the lowest in the region, and were consistently below the state average. Winnebago County experienced the greatest decline in unemployment during this period and had the lowest rate in the region in 1999. Unemployment in Waupaca County was the highest in the region and above the state average in 1999.

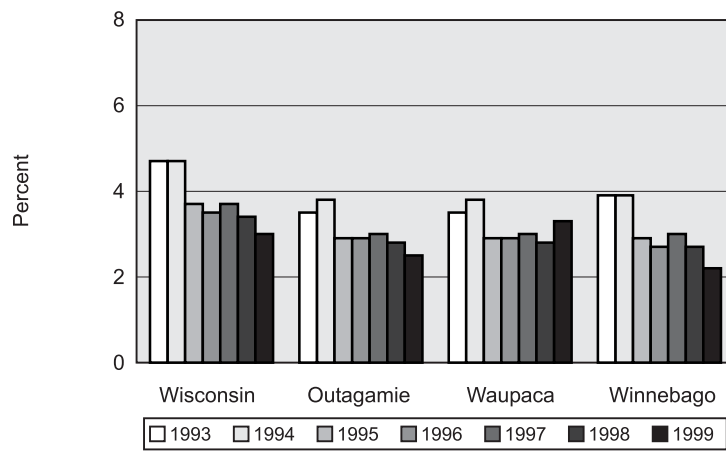
Unemployment rates fluctuate and change with seasons. Seasonal unemployment rates take into account jobs such as those in the hospitality sector that are added during the summer to meet increased tourist demands, and as such they reveal cycles of economic activity in particular areas.

- Unemployment in Winnebago County experienced the least seasonal variation, while the unemployment rate in Outagamie County jumped from 2 percent in August 2000 to nearly 7 percent in January 2001; it fell back to 3 percent by April 2001.

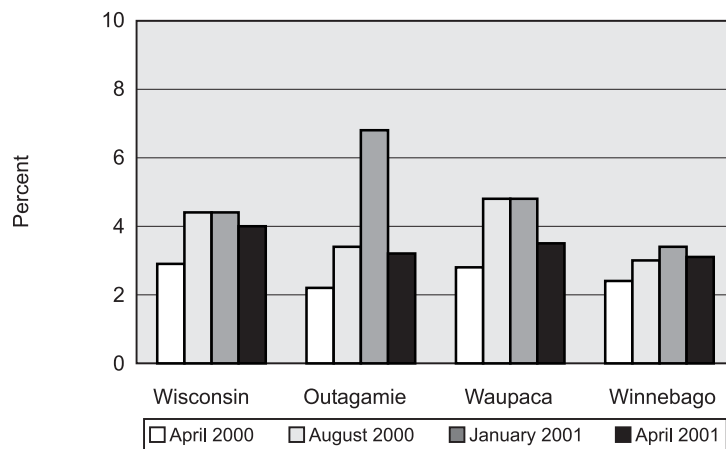
### Labor Force Participation Rate, 1999



### Unemployment Rate, 1993–99



### Recent Seasonal Unemployment Rates



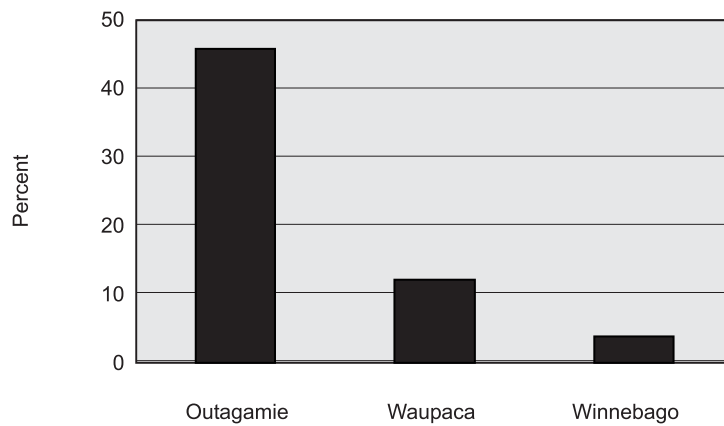
**Job Growth**

It is important to look not only at labor force participation and unemployment trends, but also at how much job growth the region experienced and in which sectors that growth occurred.

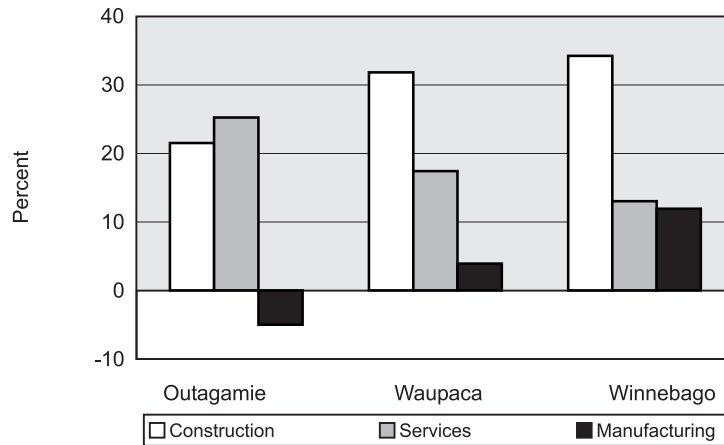
Although each county in this region is growing, job growth in Outagamie County far exceeds growth in the other counties.

- Between 1990 and 1998, total employment increased by 46% in Outagamie County, compared to only 12% and 4% in Waupaca and Winnebago counties, respectively.
- In each county the most growth between 1994 and 1999 has been in the services and construction sectors. The highest level of job growth in the region is in Winnebago County’s construction industry, which increased more than 34 percent. The manufacturing sector experienced the smallest growth and actually declined in Outagamie County during this period.

**Change in Total Employment, 1990–98**



**Job Growth Across Sectors, 1994–99**



### ***Employment by Sector***

Manufacturing jobs typically pay higher wages and provide better benefits than service jobs. While the manufacturing sector is strong in the region, the services sector is one of the largest employers in every county.

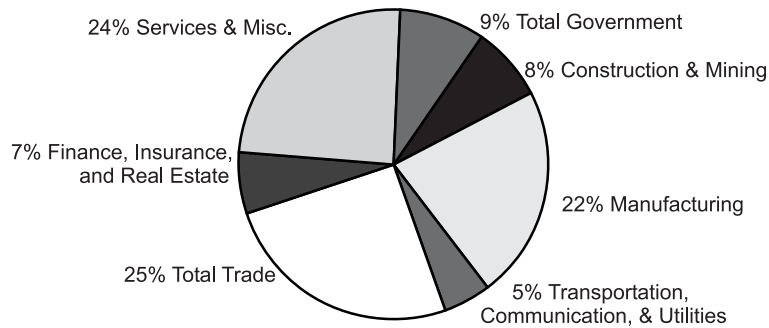
#### ***Outagamie***

- Nearly half of the jobs in Outagamie County are in the service and trade industries. Employment in manufacturing is the third largest employment sector.

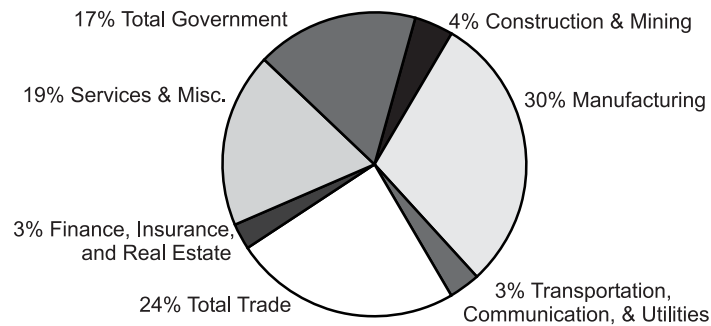
#### ***Waupaca***

- Employment in Waupaca County is dominated by the manufacturing industry, where 30% of the working population is employed. Another 24% of people are employed in the trade sector.

**Outagamie County Employment by Sector, 1999**

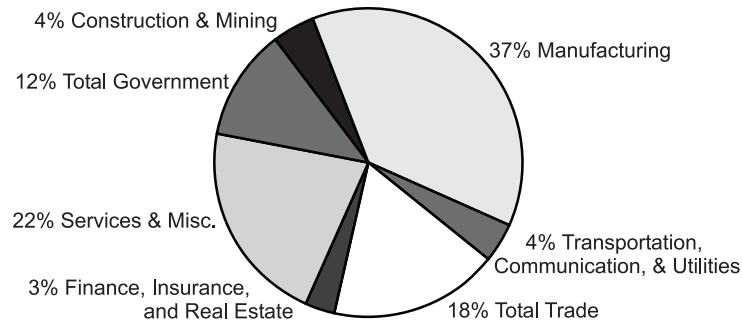


**Waupaca County Employment by Sector, 1999**



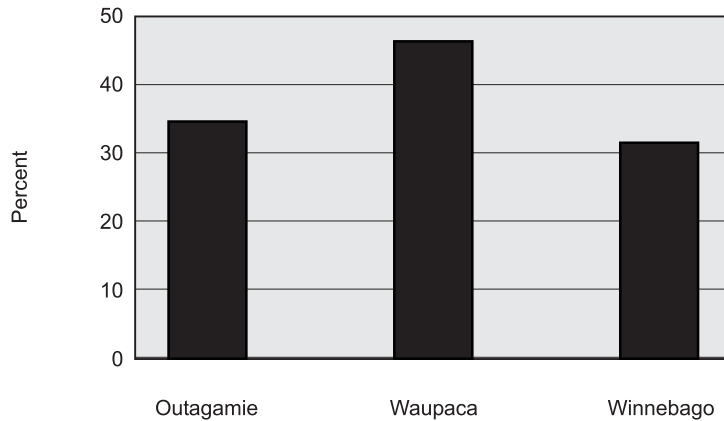
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### Winnebago County Employment by Sector, 1999



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### Workers with Poverty Earnings, 1998 (in primary occupation)



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#### **Winnebago**

- Far more people work in manufacturing than any other sector in Winnebago County. The bulk of the remaining jobs are in the services and trade industries at a combined 40 percent.

A high percentage of workers in this region had sub-poverty earnings in their primary job in 1998. The prevalence of workers with poverty earnings — \$17,650 for a family of four in 2001 — in itself does not mean that people are living in poverty. These workers may live with another wage earner, work multiple jobs, or draw on alternative income sources. But poverty earnings are reflective of the type of jobs that are available in particular counties in Wisconsin and the chances residents have of securing the income and the benefits sufficient for a basic quality of life.

The percentage of workers with poverty earnings in this region is moderate compared to counties throughout the state, which range from a high of 68% to a low of 30%.

- In 1998, over 46% of workers in Waupaca County had sub-poverty earnings in their primary job. Outagamie and Winnebago counties were among the counties with the lowest rates in Wisconsin, at 34.6% and 31.5 percent, respectively.

## Agriculture

Agriculture has always played an important role in Wisconsin. This role is declining as farmers continue to be squeezed by low commodity prices and development pressures. Farmers spend roughly seventy-five cents in the local economy for every dollar they earn and as a result, as farms disappear, many local businesses may follow.

- Like Wisconsin in general, the number of full-time farms declined in all five counties between 1992 and 1997. The rate of decline is fastest in Outagamie and Waupaca counties and is above the state average. The future of these farms will affect all residents of these counties not only in the supermarket but also in terms of the environment and the local economy.
- Between 1992 and 1997 the amount of land used for farming decreased in each county, particularly in Waupaca County. Loss of farmland in Winnebago County was the lowest in the region and below the state average at only 1 percent.

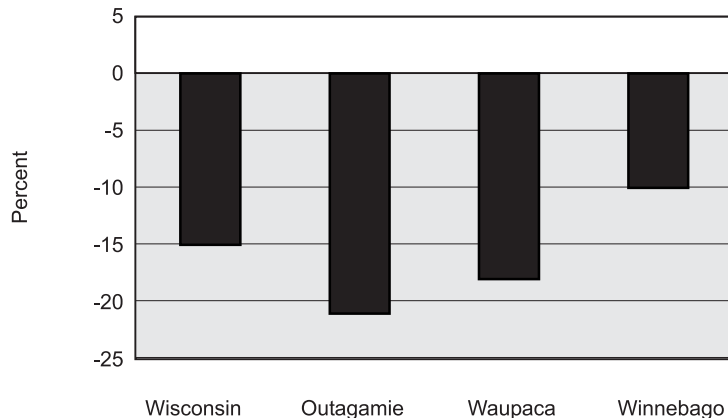
There are a growing number of large farms in Wisconsin. The number of farms that are larger than 1000 acres increased 32% between 1987 and 1997. The number of farms with more than 1000 acres in the United States increased by just 4.3% over the same time period.

- This region reflects the trend toward large farms as each county gained at least five farms of over 1000 acres during this period. Winnebago County experienced the highest growth with seven additional large farms.

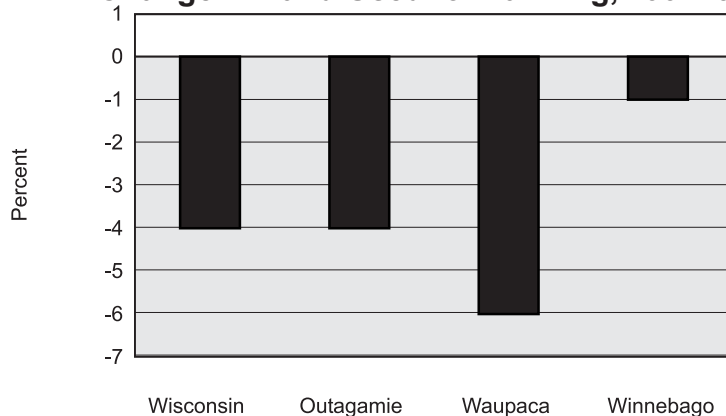
The characteristics of farmers in Wisconsin are changing and this region is no exception. Farmers are more and more likely to rely on additional income earned off of the farm, and income earned from two workers.

- The number of farmers who report farming as their principal occupation decreased in all three counties, following the statewide trend. This pattern is especially pronounced in Outagamie and Waupaca counties, where the decline has been faster than the state average.

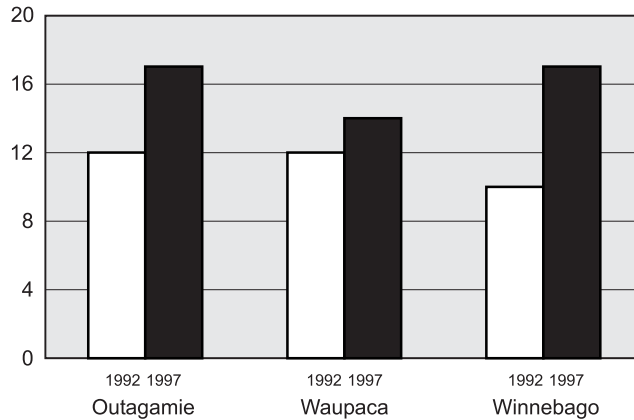
**Change in Full Time Farms, 1992–97**



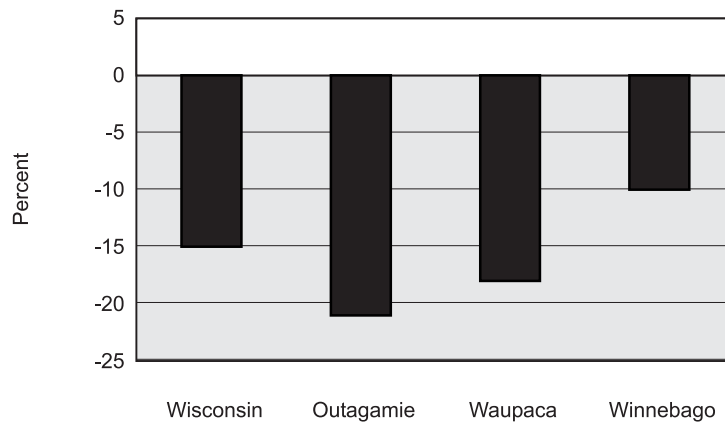
**Change in Land Used for Farming, 1992–97**



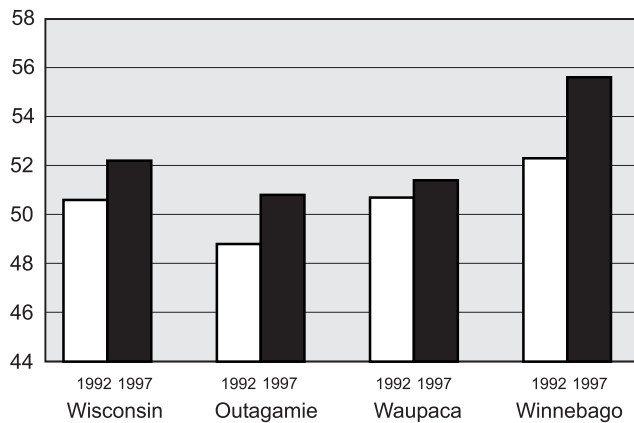
**Farms Larger than 1,000 Acres, 1992–97**



**Change in Those Reporting Farming as Principal Occupation, 1992–97**



**Average Age of Farmers, 1992–97**



The average age of Wisconsin farmers is increasing, indicating that young people are not entering the occupation as quickly as older farmers are retiring. Higher average ages signal that a disproportionate number of farmers will retire without being replaced. In Wisconsin, the average age of a farmer was 50.6 years in 1992 and 52.2 years in 1997.

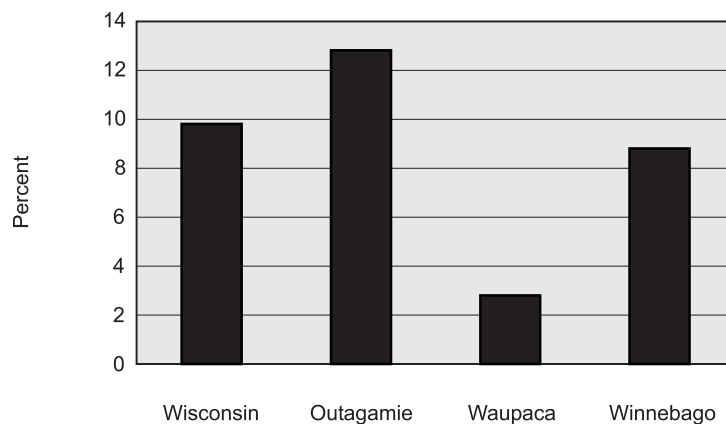
- Outagamie and Waupaca counties showed similar increases in average farmer age during the same period, while the average age of farmers in Winnebago County jumped significantly more than elsewhere.

**Tourism**

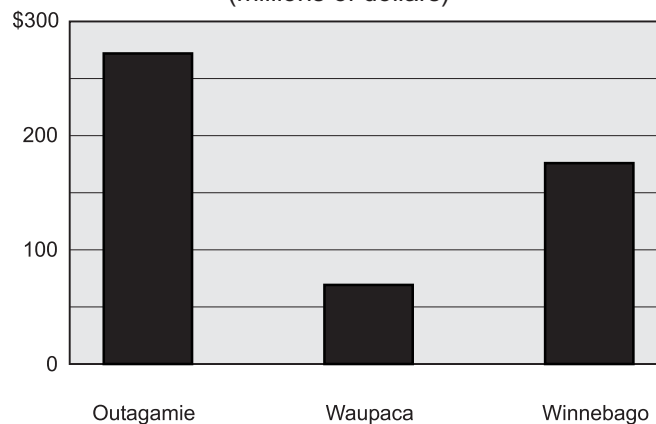
Tourism is an important industry throughout Wisconsin; revenue from tourism supports job growth and local businesses. On the other hand, the jobs that the tourism industry generates are frequently low-wage and seasonal. Tourism can be a healthy business for a county, but the organization of the industry must be carefully planned in order to ensure that workers are being paid sustainable wages.

- Tourism revenue in each county increased between 1999 and 2000. Increased revenue in Outagamie County exceeded the level of both the state and the other counties in the region. Winnebago County experienced gains slightly below the state average of 9.8%, while Waupaca had a 2.8% increase in revenue.
- Outagamie and Winnebago counties received the largest amount of tourism dollars at \$271 and \$175 million in 2000, respectively. During the same year, tourism revenue contributed less than \$70 million to Waupaca County's economy.
- Accordingly, tourism accounts for a larger number of jobs in Outagamie and Winnebago counties than it does in Waupaca County. Outagamie County employed 5410 more people in the tourism industry and it generated over \$200 million more in tourism revenue than Waupaca County in 2000.

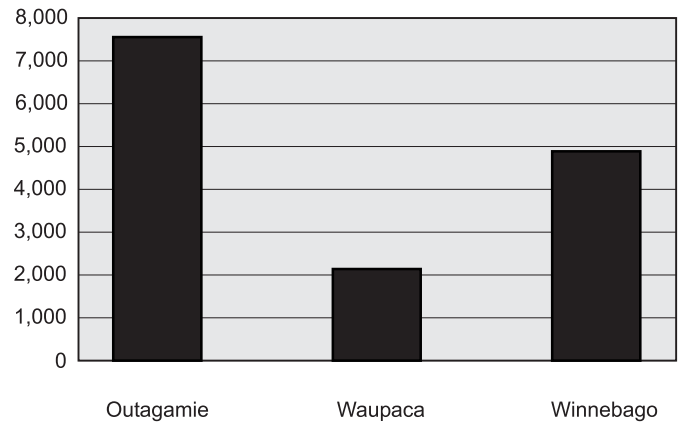
**Change in Tourism Revenue, 1999–2000**



**Travelers' Spending, 2000**  
(millions of dollars)



**Total Jobs in Tourism, 2000**



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## Families and Communities

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Strong families and communities are integral to the realization of the American dream. In Wisconsin, work is up and welfare rolls are down, yet many workers remain poor. Shelter is considered a fundamental right, yet many of our citizens do not have access to affordable housing. Even as household incomes rise, the percentage of families who cannot afford the Fair Market Rent in their communities remains stubbornly high. By supporting working families, we promote strong communities. We must ensure that local economies can provide family-supporting wages, that our children and those in need are cared for, and that we provide affordable housing options to the citizens of our state.

As a whole, this region has experienced increasing median household incomes, lower Fair Market Rents than Wisconsin as a whole, and a lower number of students eligible for free or reduced cost lunch as compared to the entire state. Higher incomes and fewer children requiring social services demonstrate that this region is moving in the right direction.

Yet, as this area moves forward, it will become increasingly important to recognize the needs of all of its families, including those who have so far been left behind. In all of the counties in this region, more than 30% of families could not afford the Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment. Across all three counties, the poverty rate for children is significantly higher than the poverty rates for all citizens of these counties. These challenges and others will become increasingly visible in the region as it continues to grow.

### ***Income Levels and Poverty Wage Jobs***

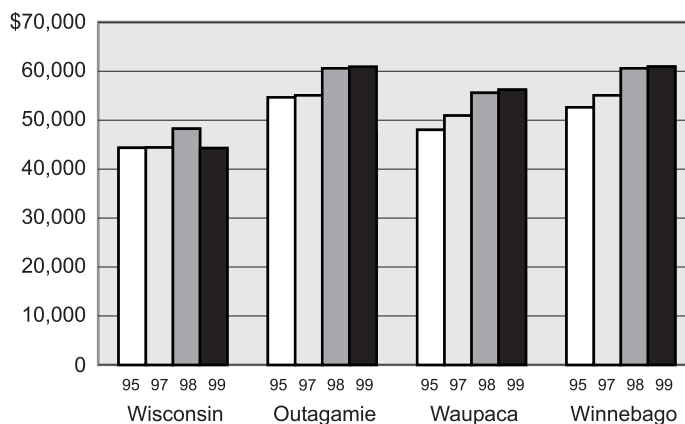
Economic changes noted in the previous section, including job growth, low unemployment rates, and increased economic performance have improved many lives in the region. But these indicators need to be further explored to assess whether the benefits of economic improvement are within the reach of all residents.

- The median household income has risen in all three counties since 1995, with all of the counties consistently maintaining higher median household incomes than Wisconsin as a whole.

The reasons for the growth in household income must be looked at more closely, however, as this growth is often the result of working longer hours and an increased number of households with two income-earners, both working full time. In fact, the typical married couple in Wisconsin now works the equivalent of 1.9 full-time jobs.

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**Median Household Income, 1995–99**  
(adjusted for inflation, 2001 dollars)



### **Single Parent Families**

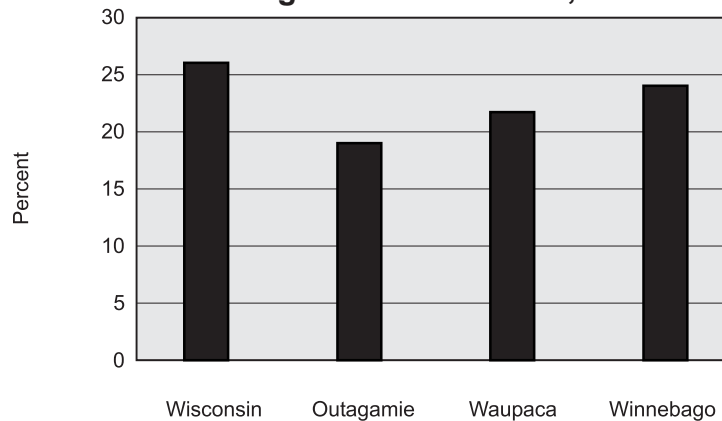
The number of single parent families should be a concern to all residents of this region. Single parent families often have lower median family incomes than their two-parent counterparts. Further, single parent families are often required to spend a significant portion of their income on childcare costs. The increased cost for services such as childcare makes it more difficult for many single parent families to make ends meet.

- While all three counties have a lower percentage of single parent families than Wisconsin as a whole, almost one in four families in Winnebago County is headed by a single parent. Outagamie County has the lowest percentage of single parent families in this region, with a little less than one in five families headed by a single parent.

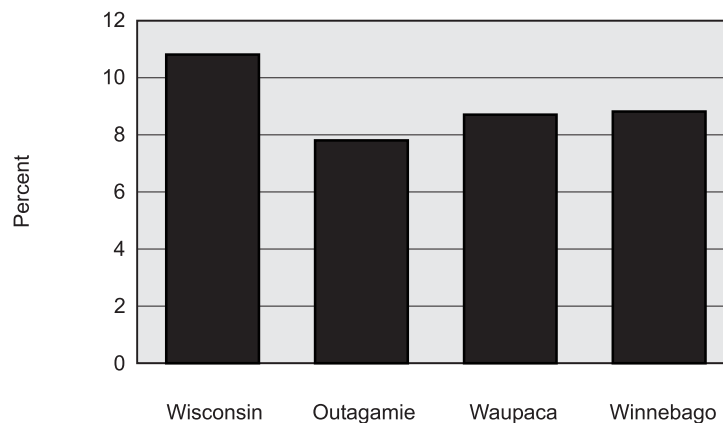
The incidence of teen births should be another area of concern for our state. Teen parents often require additional services to assist them in caring for their children. As these services become more costly, the region and the state will have to explore new methods for ensuring that all parents have access to these services.

- All three of these counties had lower rates of teen births than Wisconsin as a whole. Outagamie had the lowest percentage of teen births in this region.

**Single Parent Families, 2000**



**Teen Births, 1999**

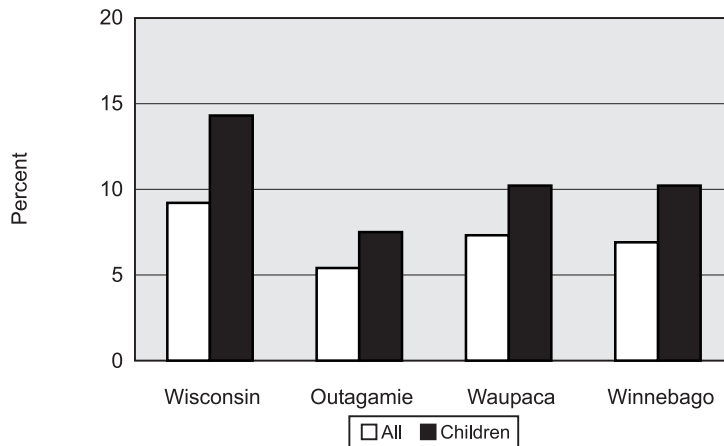


**Poverty**

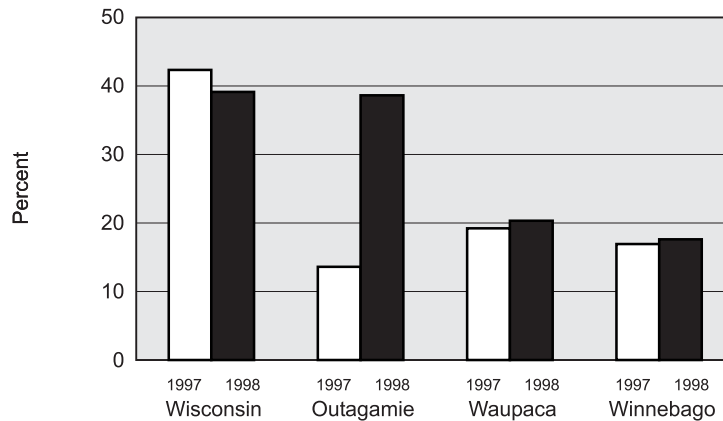
Poverty rates — defined as having income at or below \$17,650 for a family of four in 2001 — in this region vary significantly. On the positive side, all of the counties in this region had poverty rates below the Wisconsin average in 1997. But with poverty rates for children still at 7% to 10% throughout the region, it is clear that large numbers of people, and more specifically children, are struggling.

- All of the counties in this region have lower numbers of children eligible for free or reduced cost lunch programs compared to Wisconsin as a whole. Outagamie County has a considerably higher percentage of children who are eligible for this program compared to the other counties in this region.

**Poverty Rates, 1997**



**Children Eligible for Free or Reduced Cost School Lunch, 1997–98**



### **Affordable Housing**

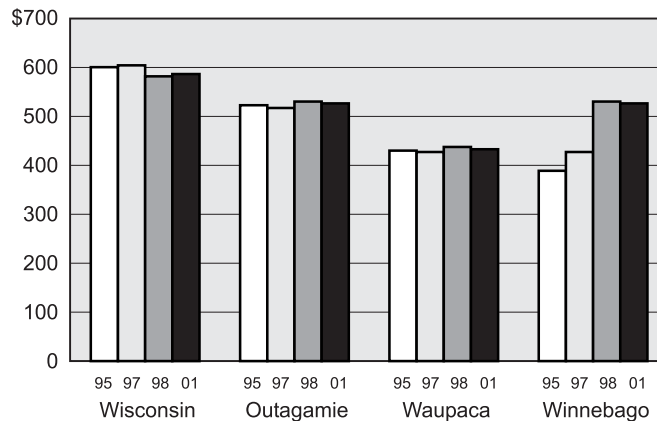
Wisconsin’s building industry has been at the forefront of the recent economic boom. Unfortunately, this boom has not benefited all residents equally. Construction rates for single-family residences have increased, but construction rates for apartments and other affordable housing options lag desperately behind. This means that competition for rental units increases and more people are forced to rent instead of buy their homes. This, in turn, forces prices for rental units up in areas where demand is highest, which ultimately causes those most in need to struggle to provide shelter for their families.

Fair Market Rent is defined as a “gross rent estimate”, including the cost to rent a home or apartment plus the cost of all utilities. “Affordable FMR” is commonly calculated to be 30% of a household’s total gross income. Even in counties where the real Fair Market Rent held steady or slightly decreased, many residents remain priced out of a significant portion of the rental housing.

- FMR largely held steady in Outagamie and Waupaca counties, but increased significantly in Winnebago County between 1995 and 2001.
- Outagamie County had the highest percentage of families in this region that could not afford the FMR. All three counties in this region had a larger percentage of families that could not afford FMR than Wisconsin as a whole.
- All three counties in this region required lower wages to afford FMR than Wisconsin as whole. Outagamie County required the highest hourly wage to afford FMR in this region.

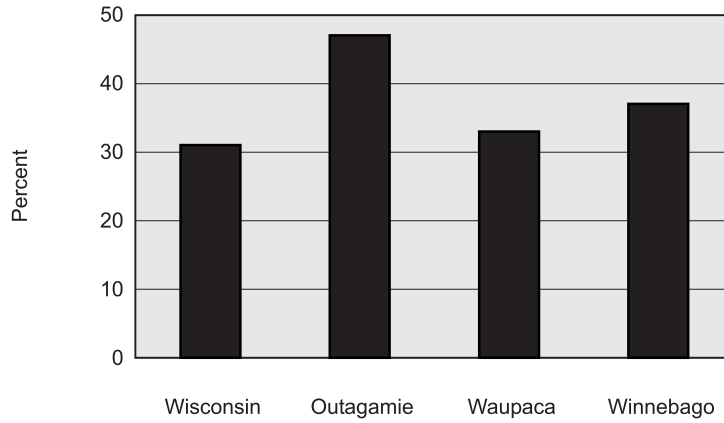
Home ownership has become increasingly expensive and out of reach for many Wisconsin residents. In Wisconsin in 1990, there were 608,794 rental households. By 2000 that figure had increased to 658,183 rental households. Similarly, the number of rental households increased modestly in each county in the same time period.

**Fair Market Rent (FMR) For a Two Bedroom Apartment, 1995–2001**  
(adjusted for inflation, 2001 dollars)



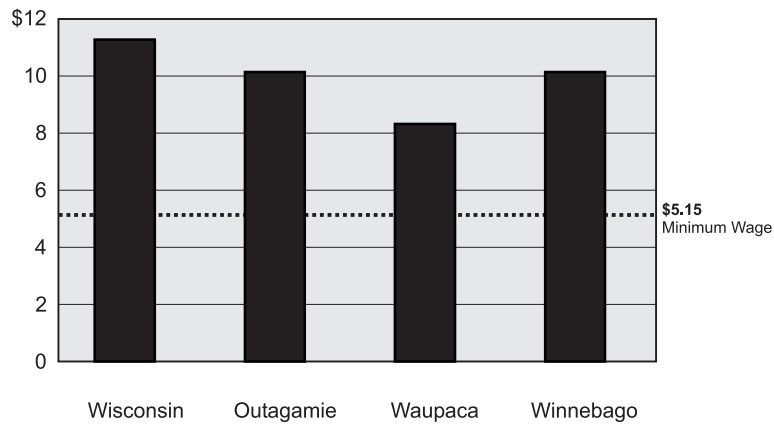
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### Families That Could Not Afford FMR, 1999



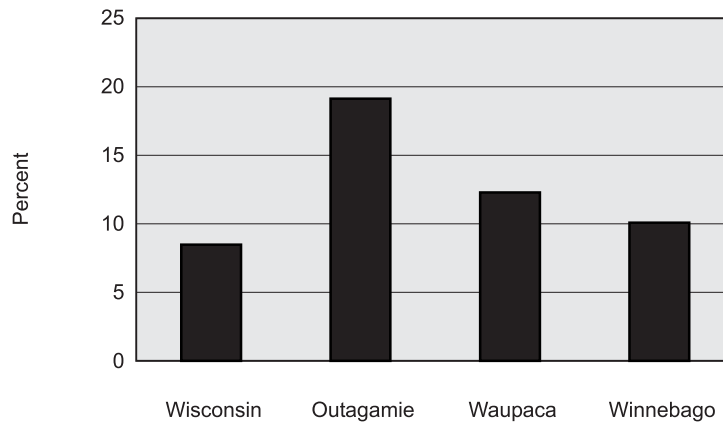
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### Hourly Wage Needed to Meet FMR, 2001



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### Change in Renter Households, 1990–2000

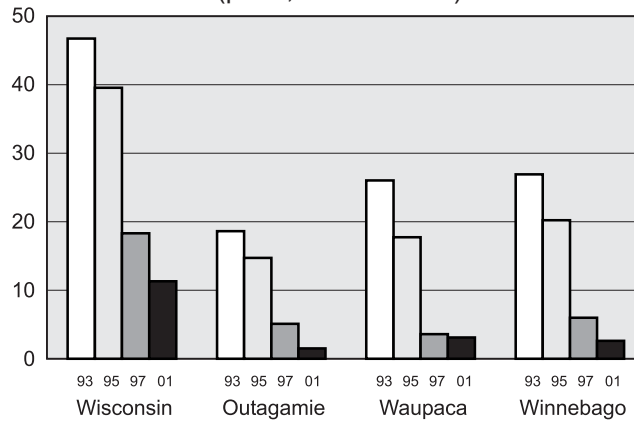


**Welfare Reform**

Wisconsin’s landmark welfare reform — W2 — has significantly altered the social services system. Welfare rolls have been cut by almost two-thirds in the state. While encouraging work as a solution, close attention should be paid to the jobs that are available and whether these jobs provide the resources necessary to support working families.

- In all of the counties in this region, as in Wisconsin as a whole, the number of recipients of AFDC/W2 declined significantly between 1993 and 2001.
- All of these counties had fewer AFDC/W2 recipients than the Wisconsin average over this period; Winnebago County saw the most significant decline.

**AFDC/W2 Recipients, 1993–2001**  
(per 1,000 residents)



## The Future

This region is undergoing significant transformations, and the future of these counties will depend on how well the needs of all residents are met. The overall population in the region is growing, particularly among people ages 40-54 years old, and issues of concern for older generations will come to the forefront.

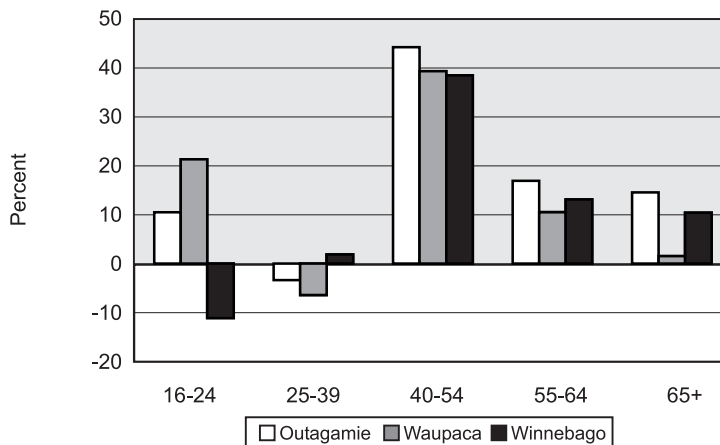
All counties in the region show prenatal care rates higher than the statewide average. On measures of assistance to lower income families - WIC and Badger Care - the levels indicate that while residents need these services at a lower rate than Wisconsin as a whole, factors determining the need for these services must still be examined.

Essential to a strong future is maintaining the strong foundation in education in all communities across the state. The three counties in the region vary greatly in terms of educational indicators, although for the most part, they have enjoyed lower dropout rates and higher graduation rates than Wisconsin as a whole. ACT scores in these counties are in line with the rest of the state.

### Population

The population in all of these counties is increasing, although not uniformly across age groups. While the region has seen significant growth in middle-aged adults, the number of individuals aged 25-39 has declined overall. Concerns related to this changing demographic will arise as the Baby Boom generation continues to move towards retirement.

**Change in Population by Age Group, 1990–2000**



### Health Services

Wisconsin is among the nation’s leaders when it comes to quality health care and employer-provided health insurance. Continued attention, however, must be paid to the working poor, the unemployed, and the disabled, especially as county agencies are forced to bear an increasing portion of safety net services.

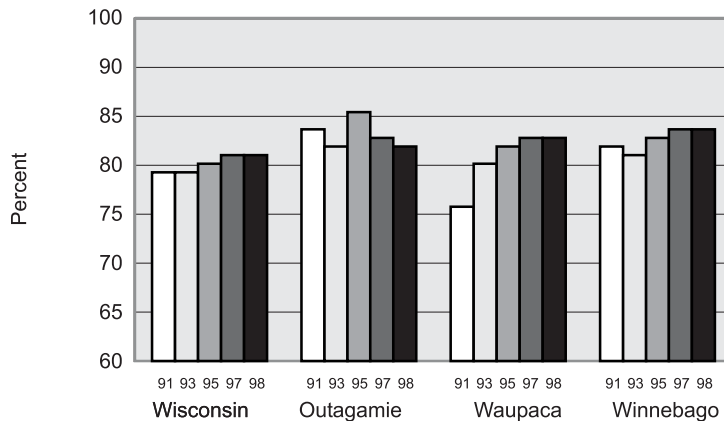
Prenatal care initiated in the first trimester decreases the likelihood of complications during childbirth and helps to ensure that both women and infants are healthy. While the region had higher rates of prenatal care than the Wisconsin average, it is important that continued attention be paid to access to such care, in particular to the availability of these services for low-income women.

- In 1998, Winnebago County led the region, with 87 percent of pregnant women seeking prenatal care in the first trimester.

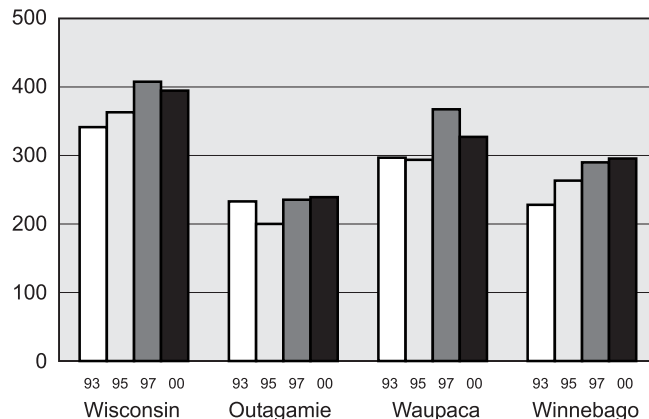
Federal aid for women, infants, and children (WIC) is a program that provides pregnant or breastfeeding women and children up to age five with necessary medical care if the family is earning less than 185% of the federal poverty level (\$31,504 for a family of four in 1999).

The measure of WIC rates can be read in at least two ways. The first is that participation rates indicate that residents in need of WIC assistance are receiving the services they require. On the other hand, higher rates of WIC assistance indicate more families in need, a concern that should be addressed throughout this region. In addition, the correlation of WIC recipient rates with childhood poverty rates indicates a significant number of children under age five living in households in which the primary income is barely exceeding the poverty level.

**Women Seeking Prenatal Care in First Trimester, 1991–98**



**Children Under Age 5 Receiving WIC Services, 1993-2000**  
(per 1,000 children under age 5)



- In 2000, none of the counties in the region exceeded the state average for WIC participation, yet the participation levels are still very high; roughly three in ten children under age five are receiving WIC assistance. That means that three in ten children under age five are growing up in households that earn at or below 185% of the federal poverty line.

Infant mortality rates are also a significant measure of the overall quality of life in Wisconsin. Infant mortality rates are based on live births, and measure the rate of deaths occurring within the first year of an infant's life; as such, they are one indication of the level and quality of care and nutrition received during that first year.

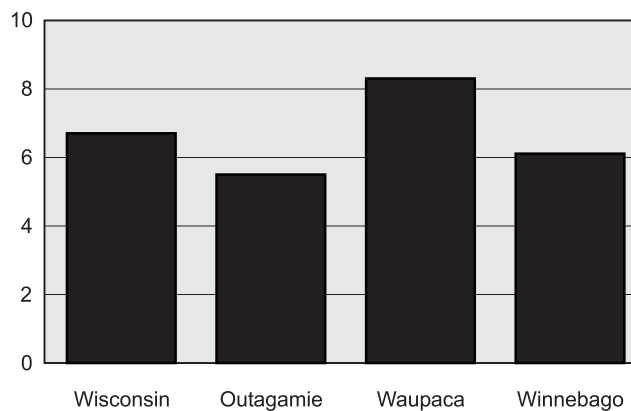
- Outagamie County's infant mortality rate was significantly below the statewide average, while Waupaca County had an infant mortality rate significantly higher than the Wisconsin average.

Badger Care is a health insurance program for families whose income does not exceed 185% of the federal poverty line, are not covered by an employer's group plan that pays 80% or more of the premium, and who are not eligible to be covered by Medicaid. As with other assistance programs, Badger Care participation rates indicate the presence of people in need.

- All of the counties in this region had a lower percentage of people enrolled in Badger Care than the statewide average. Outagamie County was ranked 5th lowest statewide in percentage of Badger Care enrollment.

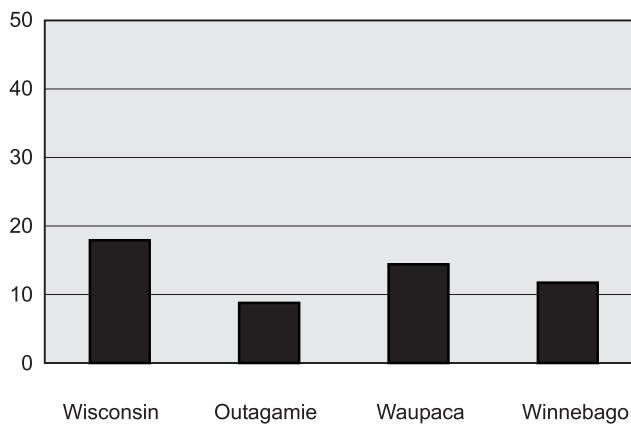
### Infant Mortality Rate, 1999

(per 1,000 births)



### Badger Care Enrollment, 1999

(per 1,000 residents)



**Education**

This region has had varying degrees of success in maintaining or improving the quality of education services as indicated by student-to-teacher ratios, dropout rates, and graduation rates.

- The majority of the districts in this region have a higher public school student-to-teacher ratio than the statewide average.

A “dropout” is officially defined as a student who was enrolled in school at some point during the school year, but who was not enrolled in school during the following school year and who did not graduate.

- Overall dropout rates in this region are significantly below the statewide average. In fact, every school district in this region has a lower graduation rate than Wisconsin as a whole.

The “graduation rate” is the number of graduates divided by the total number of graduates and dropouts over a four-year period.

- As a whole, this region has a significantly higher graduation rate than the Wisconsin average. In fact, the Neenah school district in Winnebago County was the only school district in this region to have a lower graduation rate than the Wisconsin average. Standardized test scores, however, do enable comparisons of academic performance on specific tasks across the state.
- The ACT scores in this region mostly hovered around the statewide average, although some school districts have ACT scores that are significantly lower than the statewide average. These numbers, however, are by no means the only indicator of performance, as they typically include only college bound students.

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**Public School Information, 2000–2001**

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County	District	Student/Teacher Ratio	Dropout Rate	Graduation Rate	ACT Average
<b>Wisconsin</b>		<b>12.8</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>22.2</b>
<b>Outagamie</b>	Appleton Area	13.1	0.9	96.3	23.1
	Freedom Area	14.4	0.6	97.4	22.5
	Hortonville	12.9	0.0	100.0	23.1
	Kaukauna Area	13.5	1.3	93.9	22.0
	Kimberly Area	13.3	0.6	97.3	21.5
	Seymour Community	14.6	0.1	99.4	22.9
<b>Waupaca</b>	Clintonville	11.6	1.0	95.9	22.6
	Iola-Scandinavia	12.6	0.0	100.0	21.8
	Manawa	13.0	1.7	96.3	20.6
	Marion	12.2	0.0	97.8	21.5
	New London	13.5	0.0	99.0	21.4
	Waupaca	12.9	0.9	95.7	21.1
	Weyauwega - Fremont	12.4	2.2	91.8	22.0
<b>Winnebago</b>	Neenah	14.3	2.3	88.0	23.6
	Omro	12.3	1.6	94.3	22.6
	Oshkosh Area	13.5	1.1	93.4	22.7
	Winneconne Community	14.0	0.9	96.1	22.5

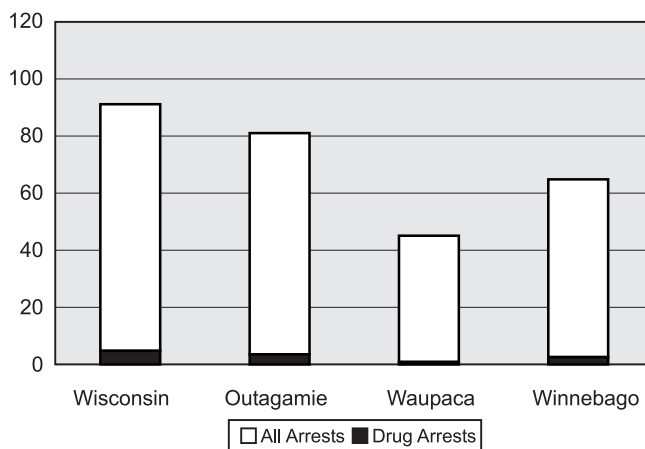
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## Crime

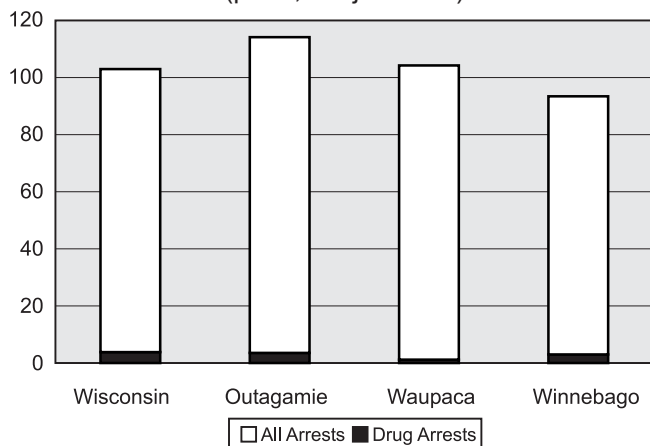
While crime rates are not the only determinant in assessing the quality of life in an area, they nevertheless remain a central concern in all of our communities.

- All counties in the region had lower adult arrest rates than the statewide average. Outagamie County had the highest arrest rate in this region.
- Similarly, the percentage of adults arrested on drug-related charges in the region was lower than the statewide average. Outagamie County had the highest rate of drug-related adult arrests in the region, while Waupaca County had the lowest rate of adult drug arrests.
- In 1999, Outagamie and Waupaca counties had higher juvenile arrest rates than Wisconsin as a whole, while Winnebago County's juvenile arrest rate was slightly lower than the statewide average.

**Total Adult Arrests, 1998**  
(per 1,000 adults)



**Total Juvenile Arrests, 1999**  
(per 1,000 juveniles)



## The Environment and Natural Resources

The environment and natural resources are keys to a successful future in all regions of Wisconsin. Water, air, and land quality is important for jobs, families, communities, and health in Wisconsin. Whether used for industry, recreation, or consumption, Wisconsin’s natural resources must be safeguarded.

Wisconsin’s environment has always been a source of pride for its citizens. Yet, our state faces continuing threats to clean air, clean water, and open space that put Wisconsin’s health, economy and green legacy at risk. While it is vital that other regions in the United States share responsibility for improving air quality, immediate action is necessary in Wisconsin to protect our more vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, and those with respiratory ailments. Urban sprawl and farmland conversion are reducing open space and drastically changing Wisconsin’s landscape, and continued reliance on short-term land use policies force farmers to reduce their productive acreage and cause urban centers to deteriorate.

On the whole, the Outagamie, Waupaca and Winnebago region contains a modest amount of wetlands and forestland, and a small amount of recreation and conservation land. Flooding, erosion, and polluted water bodies are issues requiring attention in this area. Of particular concern are the number of Superfund sites located in Winnebago and Outagamie counties, ranking 4th and 10th highest, respectively, for the number of such sites statewide.

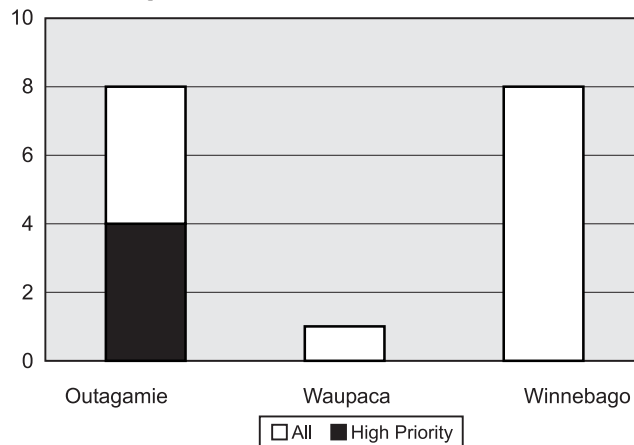
### Water Quality

A number of water bodies in the region are polluted enough to be listed as “impaired waters” under the terms of the Clean Water Act, which requires states to identify waters that do not meet federal water quality standards. States are obligated to establish a priority ranking for these waters, taking into account their designated uses and pollution severity.

- This three-county region has seventeen impaired water bodies, with eight each in Outagamie and Winnebago counties. Waupaca County has only one impaired water body.
- Four impaired water bodies in Outagamie County are classified as high priority for cleanup and abatement.

As with the rest of the state, this region faces some threat from mercury contamination of area water bodies and the fish that inhabit them. Recently, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources expanded their mercury warning to include all Wisconsin water bodies, noting that it may be unsafe for women who are pregnant or of childbearing age to consume any fish from any Wisconsin inland water body.

**Impaired Water Bodies, 2000**



**Wetlands**

In January 2001, a United States Supreme Court ruling limited the protections of the Clean Water Act to water and wetlands connected to navigable waters only. This decision removed many of Wisconsin’s wetlands from protection, some of which were filled in within weeks following the Court’s decision. In May 2001, the Wisconsin legislature enacted Act 6, reestablishing protections for all wetlands in the state, including those not connected to navigable waters.

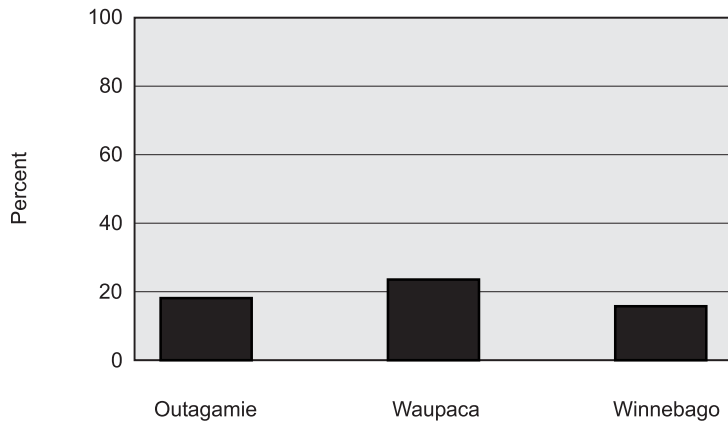
- The region has 231,362 acres of wetlands, comprising 20 percent of its total area, and 4 percent of Wisconsin’s total wetland acreage.
- With 112,761 acres of wetlands, Waupaca County has the most land designated as wetlands in the region.

**Forest Land**

Over 45% of Wisconsin’s land area is covered by forests, though more than 98% of these forests are unprotected timberlands. In the Outagamie, Waupaca and Winnebago region, a relatively moderate amount of land is covered with forests.

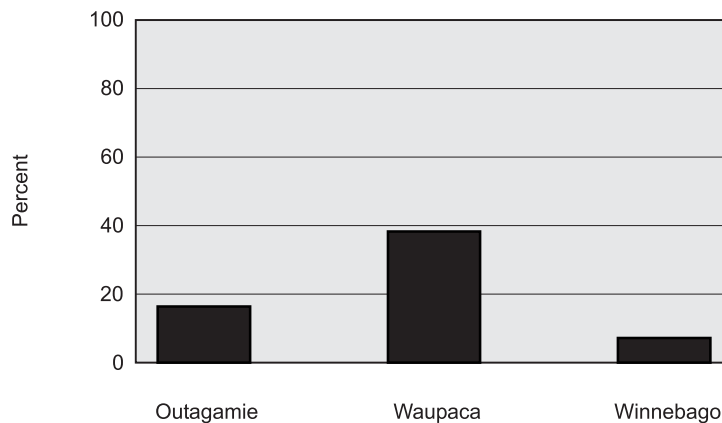
- Winnebago County has the smallest percentage of forestland in the region, with just over 7% of its area designated as such. Waupaca County, with 38% of its area forested, has the greatest percentage of such land in the region.

**Acreage in Wetlands\***

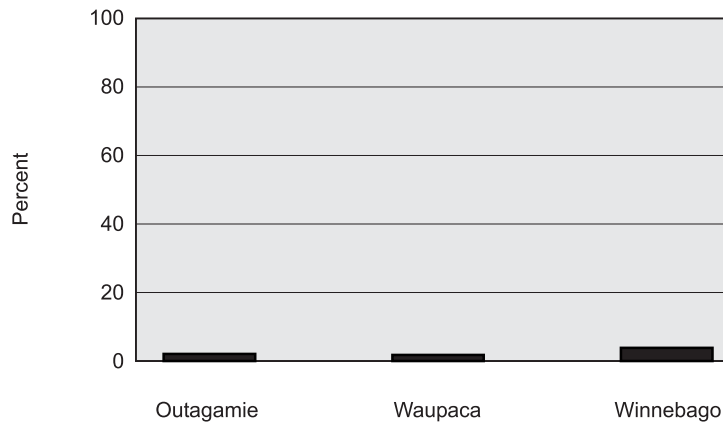


\* See Sources for year of data collection

**Acreage in Forests, 1996**



### Acreage in Conservation and Recreation Land, 2000



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### ***Conservation and Recreational Land Use***

Wisconsin is known for its strong tourism industry, much of which is fueled by the relatively high proportion of land designated for conservation and recreation purposes. These include federal land, state forests, DNR-owned land, county parks and forests, and privately held recreation areas.

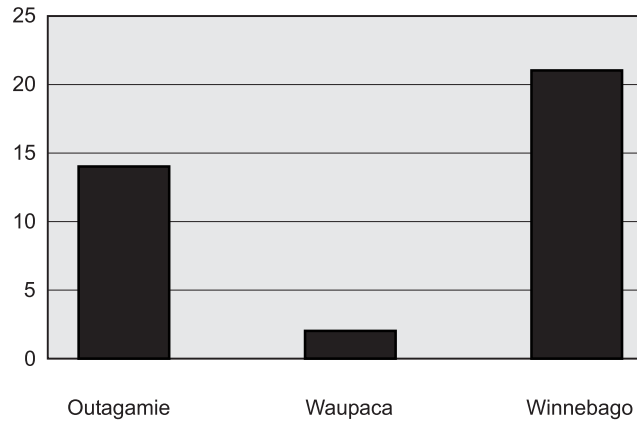
- The region contains a noticeably small percentage of conservation and recreation land, with Waupaca County ranking the 7th lowest in the state in percentage of such land.

### ***Environmental Health Risks***

The Pollutant Standards Index (PSI) is a uniform system developed by the EPA to measure five air pollutants: particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and ozone. It converts the measured pollutant concentrations in a community's air to a number on a scale of 0 to 500. A PSI over 100 is considered unhealthy.

- All of the counties in this region had PSI ratings of under 100 and thus did not make the EPA's rating scale.

### Superfund Sites, 1999



### ***Superfund sites***

In general, Superfund sites include regions where public health is threatened by the existence of serious environmental hazards.

- The region contains a total of thirty-seven Superfund sites.
- Winnebago and Outagamie counties rank 4th and 10th highest in the state for number of Superfund sites. One Winnebago County site is located at American Quality Fibers in Menasha; it is not currently on the National Priorities List.

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## **Democracy and Civic Participation**

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Wisconsin has a strong tradition of political independence, clean government and civic engagement. Unfortunately, today that tradition is waning. Lax civic participation and an unresponsive government are caught in a downward spiral fueled by big money and special interests. This is further exacerbated by a lack of substantive media coverage on issues and candidates, ultimately hurting voters who rely on such sources to inform their decisions. The challenge facing our state is how best to recapture our strong grassroots political tradition, including providing citizens with the information they need and encouraging all to actively participate in the political process.

Wisconsin's political system is awash in money, and the cost of running a state-level campaign is skyrocketing. Legislative candidates spent \$7.1 million, and special interests a reported \$2.5 million, setting new spending records in election year 2000; overall spending was 26% higher than in election year 1998, when candidates spent approximately \$5.6 million.

On average in Wisconsin, the cost of a competitive State Senate campaign in 2000 was \$224,888; it took roughly \$46,732 to run the average competitive State Assembly race. (Competitive here means any race where the winner garnered less than 60% of the total votes cast.) Incumbent spending was nearly double that of spending by challengers; not surprisingly, only three of sixty-two challengers statewide won contested seats in the 2000 state legislative elections.

### ***Campaign Spending***

Statewide in 2000, 36% of all legislative seats were uncontested. In the remaining races, only a handful were truly competitive. Unfortunately, these same races also draw an inordinate amount of special interest money and large individual contributions from outside the candidate's district.

Much of this region is heavily Republican, which often means minimal opposition from Democrats in state legislative races. As such, the bulk of competitive campaign spending occurs in the Republican primaries; due to the current schedule of campaign finance reporting, however, it is impossible to confirm the exact amount spent exclusively on the primary elections. Nevertheless, elections in the region are still heavily influenced by financial interests and the strength of candidate incumbency, ultimately reducing voter choice at the polls for primary and general elections alike.

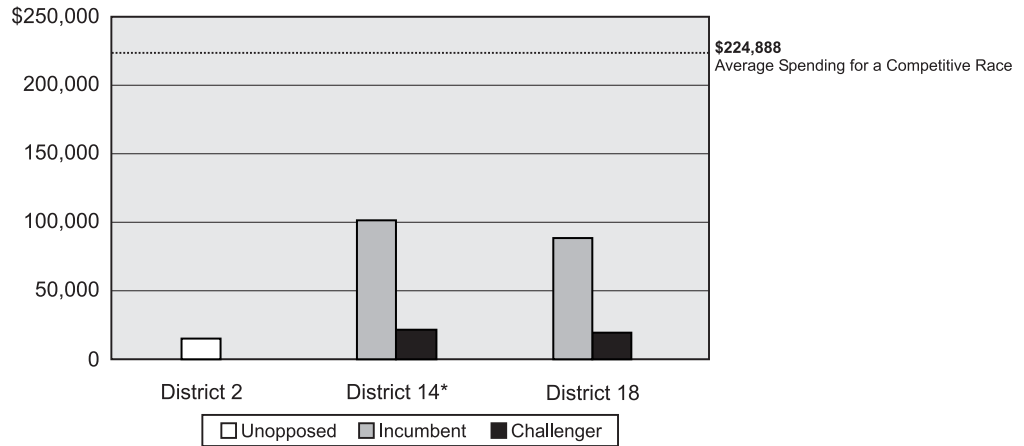
- In this region, three of the ten state legislative races were 'won' by candidates who ran unopposed. Another three races featured insignificant opposition to the incumbent legislators.
- Only one of the ten legislative races - Assembly District 5 - in the region was competitive, with the winner receiving less than 60% of the vote. Unfortunately, this race also drew substantial money from outside interests; nearly \$20,000 in "independent expenditures," the majority made on behalf of the challenger, poured into the race in the form of negative mailings and ads.
- In Assembly District 56 - an open seat - the most competitive spending occurred in the primary, where the winner and the leading challenger spent three to four times that of the remaining challenger.

Incumbents outspent their challengers in all but one of the contested races in the region, although spending in all but one race remained below the statewide average for competitive races.

- In Assembly District 54, the incumbent spent at least four times that spent by his challenger in the primary, and more than twenty times the total spent by his challenger in the general election.
- In Senate District 18, the incumbent candidate spent more than four times that spent by her challenger in the general election.

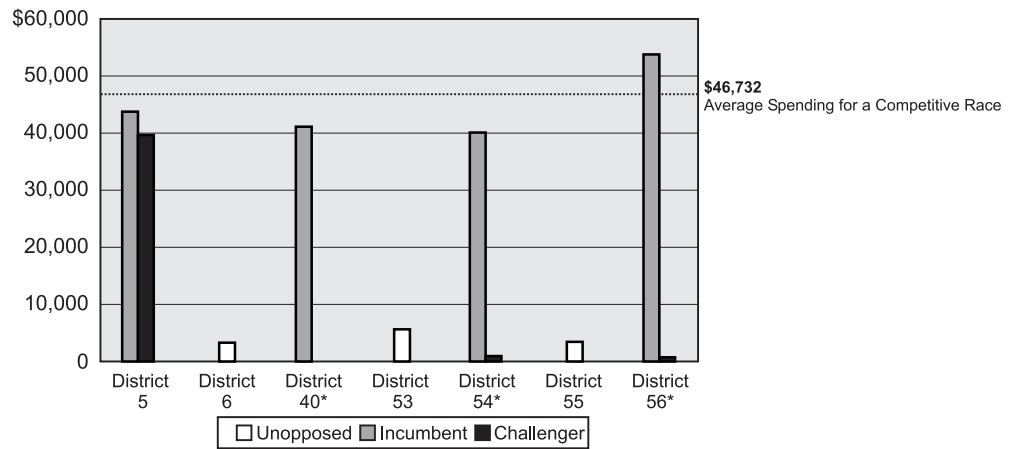
With the increased role of campaign money acutely evident in this region, it should come as no surprise that residents here have shown a desire to reduce the undue influence of money in the electoral process. A November 2000 advisory referendum to place limits on campaign spending passed by 90% or more in all three counties.

### Candidate Spending, State Senate, November 2000



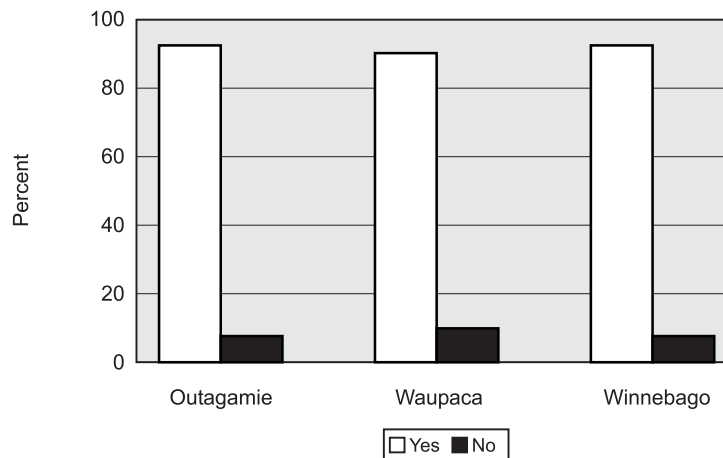
\* S14 Incumbent had primary opposition

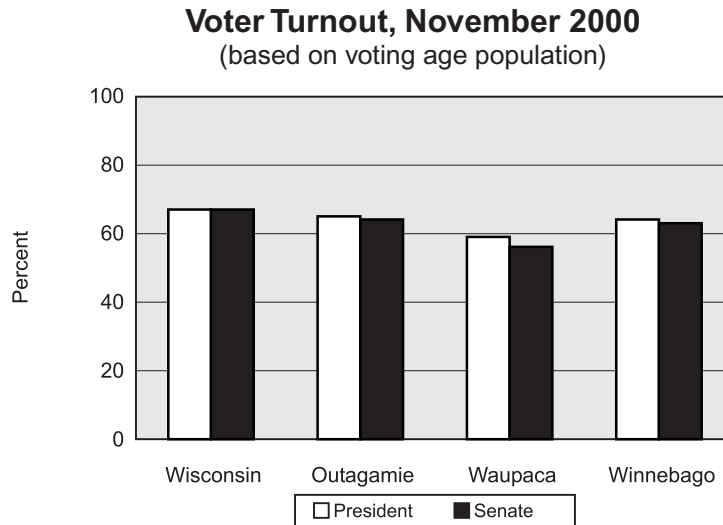
### Candidate Spending, State Assembly, November 2000



\* A40, A54, and A56 Incumbents had primary opposition

### Campaign Finance Reform Referendum, 2000





***Voter Turnout***

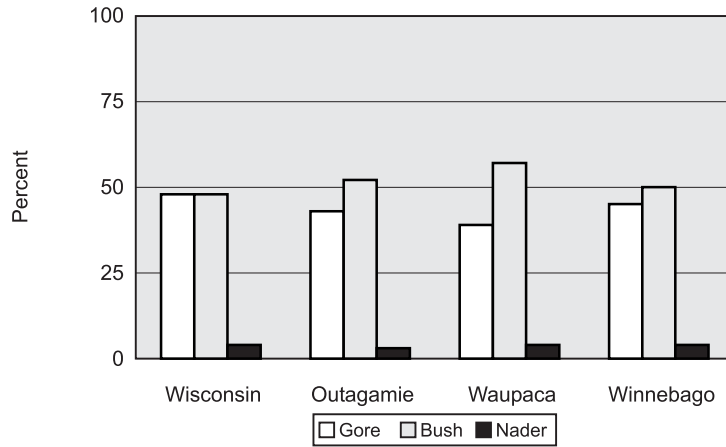
Statewide voter turnout in the general fall elections was nearly 67% in 2000, and all counties in the region show comparable levels of voter participation. Outagamie County had the highest participation rate, with 65% in the Presidential and 64% in the U.S. Senate elections. Waupaca County showed the lowest rate, with 59% in the Presidential and 56% in the U.S. Senate race.

***Political Independence***

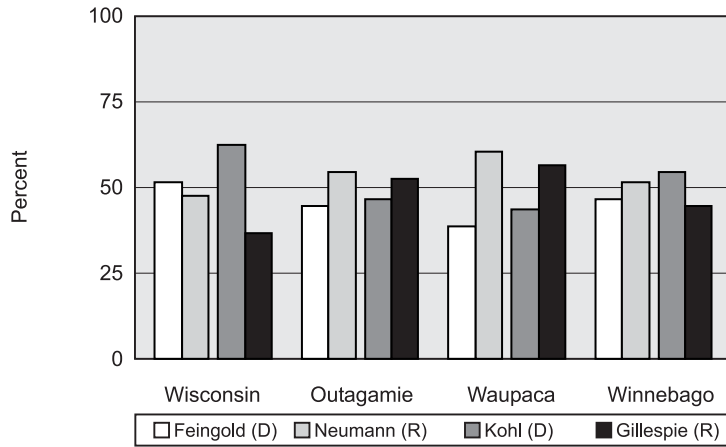
Wisconsin maintains a long tradition of independent, split-ticket voting. Our state currently has four Republican U.S. House members and five Democrats; two Democratic U.S. Senators; a Republican governor; a Republican controlled State Assembly; and a State Senate with a Democratic majority. Yet, this trend exists only faintly in the region, in which voting has tended to favor Republicans at all levels of government.

- The Republican candidates for President, Senate and Congress in 2000 won in all counties of the region, with the exception of Winnebago, which voted in favor of Democrat Senator Herb Kohl.
- Republican officials hold all but one of the seats representing the major state legislative districts in this region.

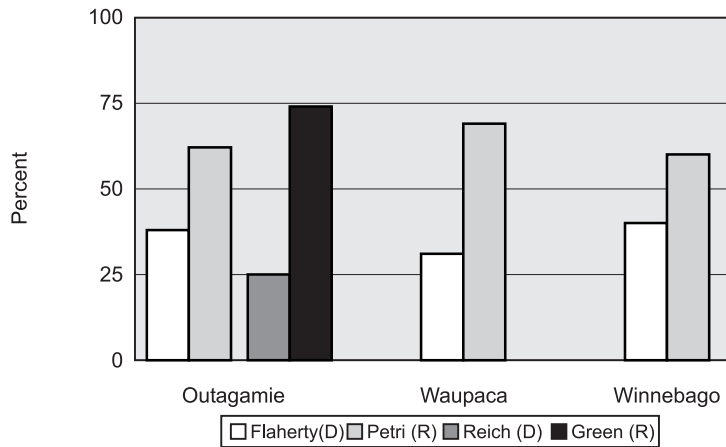
**Vote Distribution, U.S. Presidential Election, November 2000**



**Vote Distribution, U.S. Senate Elections, November 1998 and 2000**



**Vote Distribution, U.S. Congressional Elections, November 2000**



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## Sources

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### ***Jobs and the Economy***

- *Per Capita Income* and *Per Capita Income as Percent of U.S. Average* from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce at <http://www.bea.doc.gov/bea/regional/reis>.
- *Labor Force Participation Rate* from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development at <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us> (available only upon request).
- *Unemployment Rates, Recent Seasonal Unemployment Rates, and Change in Total Employment* from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Wisconsin Labor Market Information website at <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/>.
- *Job Growth Across Sectors*, and *Employment by Sectors* in each county from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development at <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us>.
- *Change in Full Time Farms, Change in Land Used for Farming, Number of Farms Larger than 1000 Acres, Change in Farmers who Report Farming as Principal Occupation, and Average Age of Farmers* from the 1997 Census on Agriculture by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/census97/profiles/wi/wi.htm>.
- *Change in Tourism Revenue*, and *Traveler's Spending* from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism at [http://agency.travelwisconsin.com/Research/EconomicImpact\\_Active/00econData.shtm#county](http://agency.travelwisconsin.com/Research/EconomicImpact_Active/00econData.shtm#county).
- *Total Jobs in Tourism* from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism at [http://agency.travelwisconsin.com/Research/EconomicImpact\\_Active/economipacthistory.shtm](http://agency.travelwisconsin.com/Research/EconomicImpact_Active/economipacthistory.shtm).

### ***Families and Communities***

- *Median Household Income, Single Parent Families, and Teen Births* from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families WisKids Count 2001 at <http://www.wccf.org/index.html>.
- *Poverty Rates* from the US Census Bureau at <http://www.census.gov/datamap/www/55txt.html>
- *Children Eligible for Free and Reduced Cost Lunch* and *Fair Market Rent* from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families WisKids Count 2001 at <http://www.wccf.org/index.html>.
- *Families That Could Not Afford FMR* from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families WisKids Count 2000 at <http://www.wccf.org/wiskidcounties.html>.
- *Hourly Wage Needed to Pay Fair Market Rent* from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families WisKids Count 2001 at <http://www.wccf.org/index.html>.
- *Change in Renter Households* from the National Low Income Housing Coalition at <http://www.nlihc.org/cgi-bin/oor2001.pl?getstate=on&getcounty=on&county=-all&state=WI>.
- *AFDC/W2 Recipients* from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families WisKids Count 2001 at <http://www.wccf.org/index.html>.

## **The Future**

- *Change in Population by Age Group* from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development at [http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/cp\\_pdf/cp\\_mainx.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/cp_pdf/cp_mainx.htm)
- *Women Seeking Prenatal Care in First Trimester* from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families WisKids Count 2000 at <http://www.wccf.org/wiskidcounties.html>.
- *Children Under Five Receiving WIC Services, Infant Mortality Rates, and Badger Care Enrollment* from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families WisKids Count 2001 at <http://www.wccf.org/index.html>.
- *Public School Information* from the Department of Public Instruction web site at <http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/spr/topselect.asp>.
- *Total/Drug Adult Arrests and Total/Drug Juvenile Arrests* from the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance at <http://oja.state.wi.us/static/publications.htm>.

## **Environment and Natural Resources**

- *Impaired Water Bodies* from the Department of Natural Resources website at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/wqs/303d/waterbody.html>
- *County Acreage in Wetlands* from the Department of Natural Resources website at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fhp/wetlands>.
- *County Acreage in Forests* calculated by COWS based on data from US Department of Agriculture publication Wisconsin Forest Statistics 1996 pp 35-36.
- *County Acreage in Conservation and Recreation Land* calculated by COWS based on data from the Wisconsin Blue Book 2001-2002, p. 649, and the Department of Natural Resources website at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fhp/wetlands>.
- *Superfund Sites* compiled from data provided by the Environmental Protection Agency, at Toxic Alert at <http://www.cqs.com/esuper.htm>.

## **Democracy and Civic Participation**

- *Campaign Spending* compiled from public records maintained by the State Elections Board by the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign at [http://www.wisdc.org/2000Campaign\\_Profiles\\_Links.html#top](http://www.wisdc.org/2000Campaign_Profiles_Links.html#top).
- *Campaign Finance Reform Referendum* from the Wisconsin Counties Association at <http://www.wicounties.org/LegInfo/wlegis.html>.
- *Voter Turnout Rates* calculated by COWS from data provided by the US Census Bureau at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/55000.html>, and the Wisconsin State Elections Board at <http://badger.state.wi.us/agencies/elections/>.
- *November 2000 and 1998 Presidential, Senate, and Congressional Elections* compiled by COWS from data maintained by the Wisconsin State Elections Board at <http://badger.state.wi.us/agencies/elections/sebpage38.html>.