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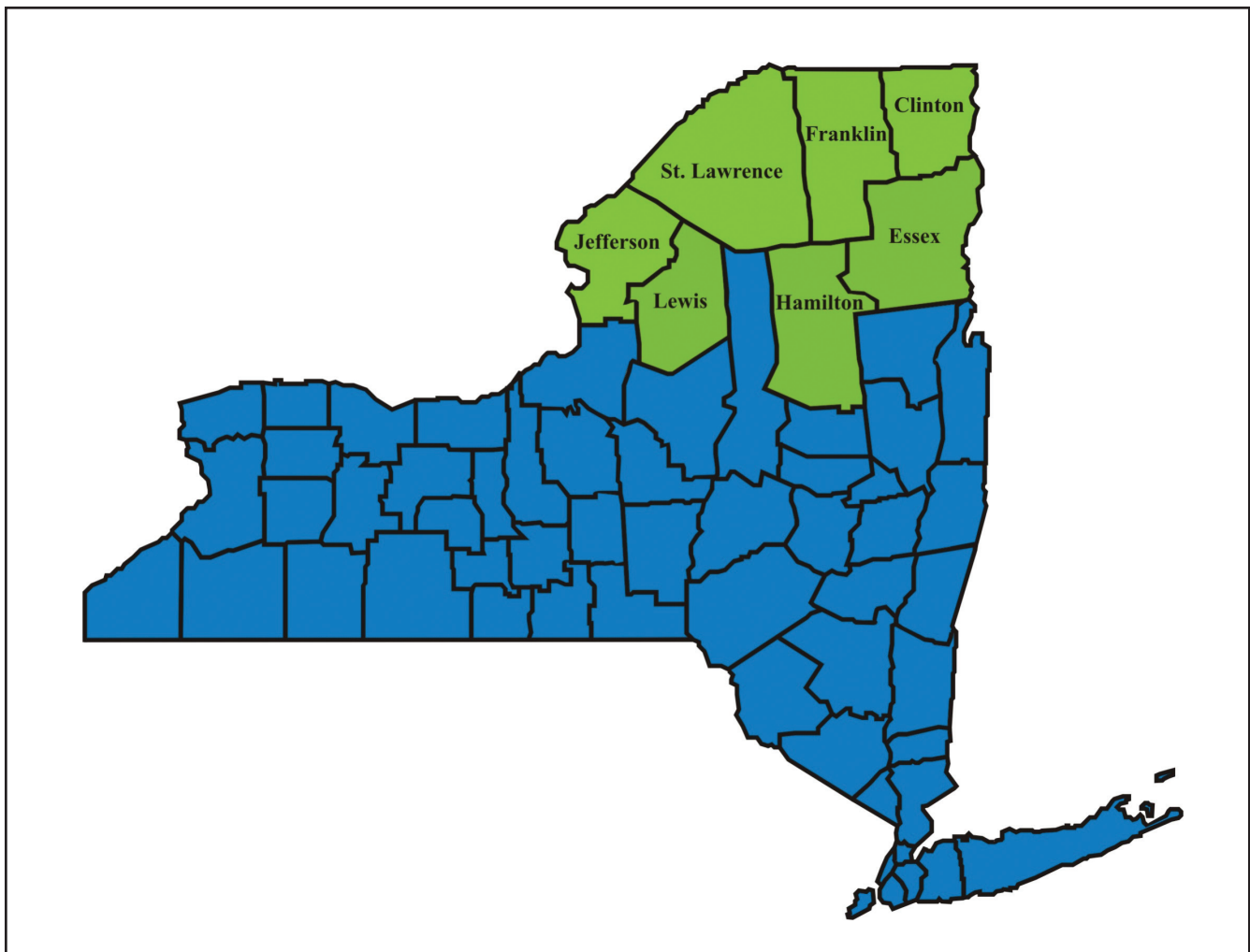
# CaRDI Reports

ISSUE NUMBER 5/APRIL 2008

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## The North Country in Statistical Profile

Juraj Gavurnik



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## The North Country in Statistical Profile

Juraj Gavurnik\*

\*Juraj Gavurnik is an undergraduate student at Cornell University, scheduled to receive his B.S. Degree in Development Sociology in May 2008. He has worked closely with members of CaRDI and the department faculty on various projects. In particular, he wishes to express his appreciation to Professor David L. Brown who served in an advisory capacity on this project and whose support over his undergraduate career is greatly appreciated.

# Abstract

The changing socio-economic and demographic profile of New York State's North Country – an area comprised of the seven northernmost counties in the state - is the focus of this report. The report is part of a wider focus in CaRDI (Community & Rural Development Institute) on the North Country region. Our analysis uses county-level Census data to describe the North Country as a whole, provide data for each of the seven individual counties in the region, and compare these data to averages for the state's non-metropolitan (both micropolitan and non-core) counties.

Our analysis reveals a number of important points about the North Country region and how it compares with other parts of non-metropolitan New York:

- The North Country is very diverse.
- The North Country's least-urban counties may have a higher standard of living, based on select indicators, when compared to the more urbanized areas.
- Low population density and loss of young adults are the North Country's defining demographic characteristics.
- Poverty is no higher in the North Country than elsewhere in non-metropolitan New York State.
- The North Country older population is increasing even more rapidly than the state average.
- With the exception of Lewis County, the North Country does not have particularly high civilian employment in agriculture and/or manufacturing. The North Country's level of dependence on these industries is similar to the level elsewhere in rural New York.

# Table of Contents

<b>I. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose of the report.....	1
Data and Research Strategy .....	1
Map of the North Country.....	2
Overview of major findings .....	2
<b>II. Demographics and community .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Population size (2006 estimate).....	2
Population change.....	3
Population density.....	4
Recent trends in aging .....	4
Long-term trends in aging .....	4
Access to doctors.....	6
<b>III. Socio-economic Status .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Median household income.....	6
Per capita income .....	7
Poverty status .....	7
Educational attainment .....	8
<b>IV. Housing .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Housing value .....	8
Mobile home occupancy .....	9
Age of housing.....	9
<b>V. Economy.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Unemployment.....	10
Employment by industry.....	11
Employment in government and education .....	11
<b>VI. Appendices .....</b>	<b>13</b>



# I. Introduction

## Purpose:

In states across the U.S., regional areas take on their own personalities based on economic structure, political forces, social change and even geography. One such region, New York State's North Country – an area comprised of the seven northernmost counties in the state – has long been characterized as a rural area with intense winter weather, a focus on service, agricultural and wood-related industries, a large military base and working-class residents. But the area is far more diverse than these characterizations allow and recent changes make this even more apparent.

The North Country faces challenges related to its population composition and human capital endowment. Perhaps most challenging is the fact that the region's educational attainment lags behind the rest of the state and the nation. This lack of human capital combined with the region's shrinking young adult population is a significant development challenge. Aging is also a challenge, but not more so than for the rest of rural New York.

To put the North Country into a comparative context, and to gain a better understanding of the forces affecting this region, we examined various demographic and socioeconomic indicators in the region and compared them with the non-metropolitan county average in the state. We further differentiated non-metropolitan counties in our analysis by providing averages for both micropolitan and non-core counties. In addition, we focused on variability *within* the North Country itself, between its seven constituent counties and between more and less urbanized parts of the region (as indicated by micropolitan vs. non-core status).

## Data and Research Strategy:

Our analysis uses county-level data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Most of this data is from various decennial census years, although we also used the most up-to-date population estimates for New York State counties. All comparisons are presented in graphic form. Tables providing the source data for these graphs are included in the appendix.

All comparisons are between individual counties or county groups, even though we realize that there is much variability among the towns, cities and villages within the counties themselves. For some of the indicators, we used only the most recent available data, while for others we tracked changes over a longer period of time, to see whether there are variations in trends among different county groups, as well as between the individual counties of interest.

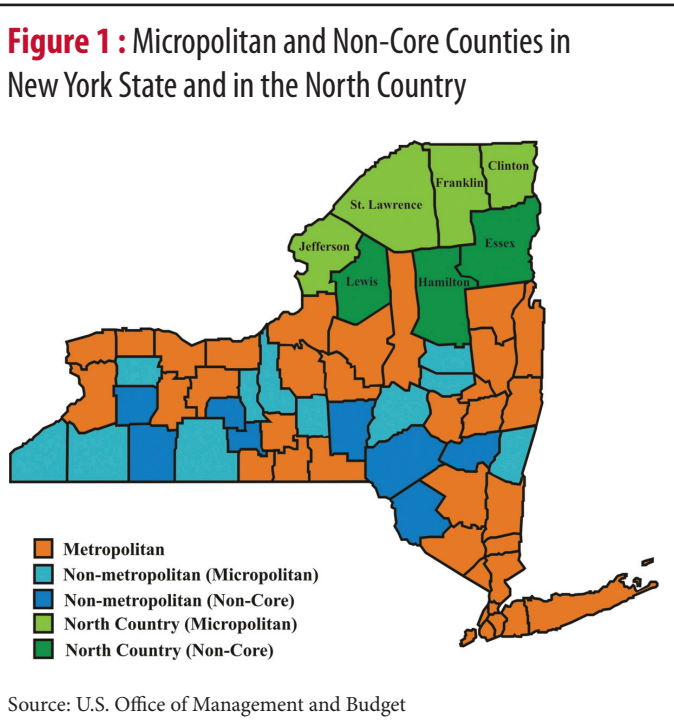
To provide another point of comparison for the non-metropolitan counties that comprise the North Country region, we disaggregated New York State's non-metropolitan counties into micropolitan and non-core county groups and included these averages in the analysis. Comparing micropolitan vs. non-core areas is one way to examine social and economic differences based on the level of urbanization, because non-core areas are considered to be the state's most rural areas.

Micropolitan and non-core counties are officially determined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Counties are reclassified into these categories after each decennial census. Micropolitan counties are those that have at least one population center with a population of at least 10,000 persons. We identified 15 of these counties in the state, four of which are a part of the North Country region (Jefferson, Franklin, St. Lawrence and Clinton).

Non-core counties, on the other hand, are counties that lack a population center of at least 10,000 persons. As of the latest 2000 Census, New York State had 11 non-core counties, three of which are in the North Country (Essex, Lewis and Hamilton). (For more information on these statistical concepts, see CaRDI Reports, Issue #2, September 2007, "Losing and Gaining Metropolitan Status: Implications for Program Eligibility, Community Image, and Local Development.")

In this report, all of our graphs follow the same general approach. Each graph contains three sections, each focusing on a different area of analysis. The first section compares North Country averages to averages for non-metropolitan New York State as a whole. The second section compares micropolitan New York State with each

of the four micropolitan counties in the North Country. The last section compares non-core based New York State averages with each of the North Country's non-core based counties. Weighted averages are used in all cases for these analyses.



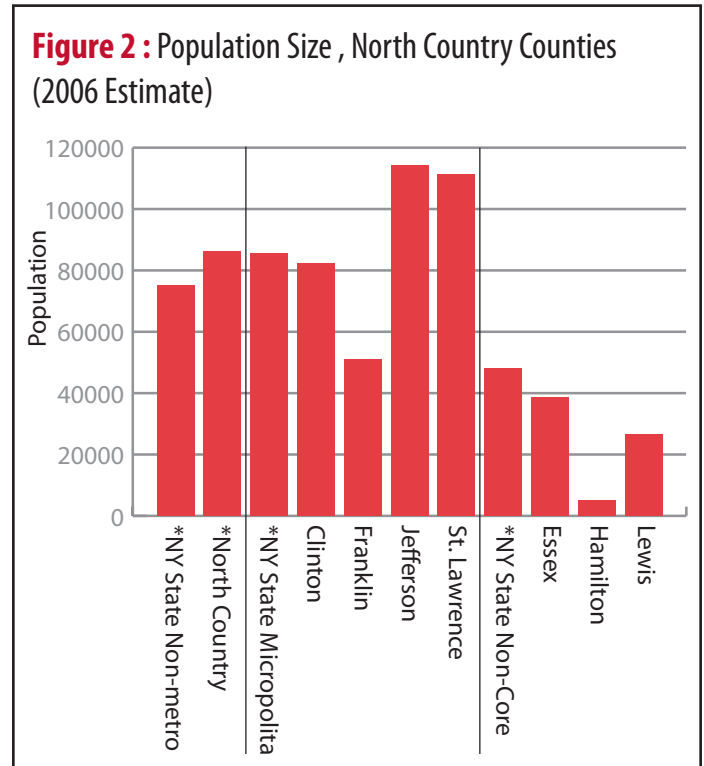
**Overview of Major Findings:**

Our analysis reveals a number of important points about the North Country region and how it compares with other parts of non-metropolitan New York State:

- The North Country is very diverse.
- The North Country's least-urban counties (non-core) may have a higher standard of living, based on select indicators, when compared to the more urbanized areas.
- Low population density and the loss of young adults are the North Country's defining demographic characteristics.
- Poverty is no higher in the North Country than elsewhere in non-metropolitan New York State.
- With the exception of Lewis County, the North Country does not have particularly high levels of civilian employment in agriculture and/or manufacturing. The North Country's level of employment in these industries is similar to the level elsewhere in rural New York.

**II. Demographics and Community**

**Population size**



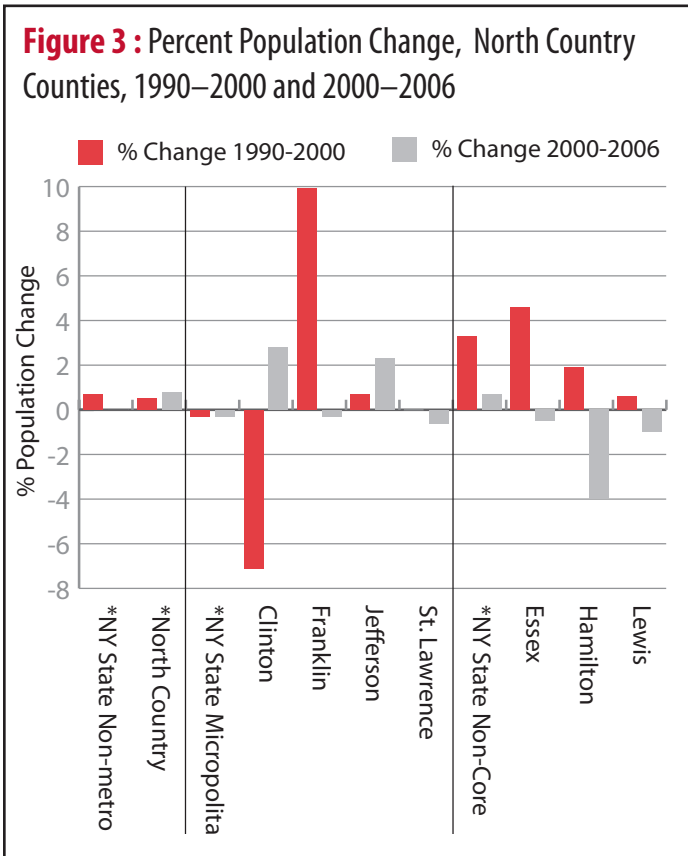
\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, County and City Data Book: 2000.  
[http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/00ccdb/cc00\\_tabB1.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/00ccdb/cc00_tabB1.pdf)  
 U.S. Census Bureau, State and county quick facts: New York State.  
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36000.html>

- Population size of North Country counties varies widely. In 2006, the average population of North Country counties exceeded the average New York State non-metro county population by more than 10,000, but there is quite a bit of variability in county population size within the region. The North Country's county average was 86,171 persons, even higher than the average of 85,487 persons for New York's micropolitan counties. This was mainly due to two of the North Country's micropolitan counties, Jefferson and St. Lawrence, which have populations larger than 111,000. With a population of 82,166, Clinton County is only slightly smaller than the state micropolitan average. Franklin County, with a population of 50,968, was the only North Country micropolitan county with population below the state's non-metro and micropolitan averages. In fact, Franklin County's population

was only slightly higher than the state's non-core average of 48,067.

- None of the North Country's non-core counties had a population higher than the state's non-core average. Essex County's population was more than 9,000 below and Lewis County more than 21,000 below this average. As New York State's least populated county, Hamilton County's population of 5,162 was only slightly more than 10 percent of the state's non-core average.

## Population change



\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties.  
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, County and City Data Book: 2000  
[http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/00ccdb/cc00\\_tabB1.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/00ccdb/cc00_tabB1.pdf)  
 U.S. Census Bureau, State and County Quick Facts: New York State  
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36000.html>

Population changes for the period 1990-2006 show wide variability among North Country counties:

### 1990-2000:

- Non-metropolitan New York State grew by an average of 0.72 percent between 1990 and 2000. The North Country experienced a slightly slower rate of population increase for the same period of time, slightly less than 0.5 percent.

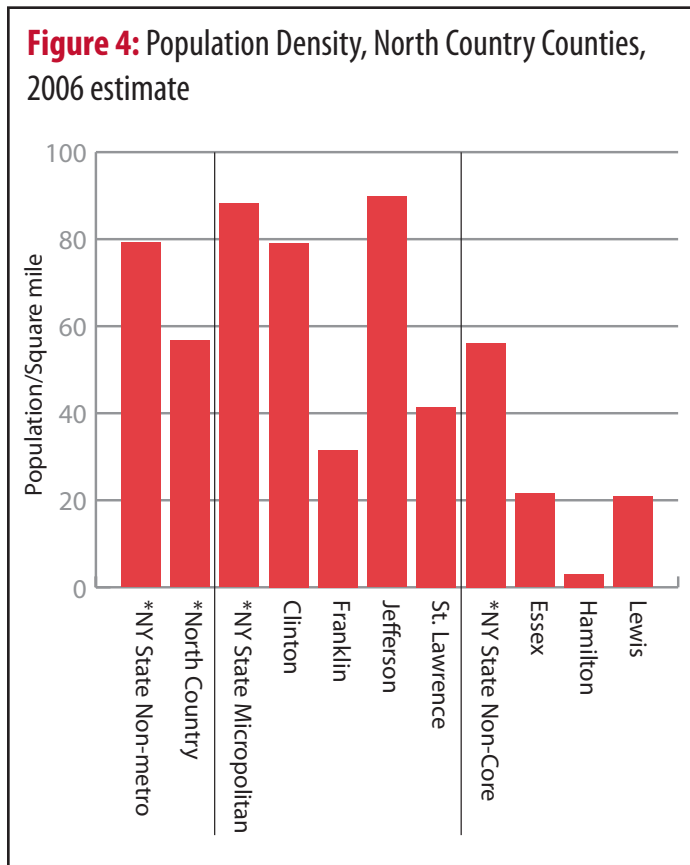
- Although the state's non-metro counties grew during this time period, the rate of change differed between micropolitan and non-core counties. In fact, New York's micropolitan countries *declined* by an average of 0.29 percent during the 1990s, while non-core counties showed a 3.3 percent increase.
- Population change was quite variable among North Country counties during this decade. Among micropolitan counties, St. Lawrence County was completely stagnant, Jefferson grew slightly, and Franklin increased by nearly 10 percent. Both Franklin and Jefferson grew more rapidly than the North Country as a whole. In contrast, Clinton County's population decreased more than 7 percent.
- During the same time period all three North Country non-core counties experienced population increases. Essex County had the largest increase at 4.6 percent. Hamilton County increased by 1.9 percent and Lewis County increased by 0.6 percent for this time period. Both Hamilton and Lewis were far below the average for all non-core counties.

### 2000-2006:

- An examination of the 2006 population estimates reveals quite a different story of change between 2000 and 2006, compared to the previous decade. While five out of the seven North Country counties recorded a population increase between 1990 and 2000, five of seven North Country counties showed population losses between 2000 and 2006.
- Interestingly, the North Country, and especially its non-core counties, has grown more in population than the rest of non-metropolitan New York since 2000. Averages for non-metro and micropolitan counties in the state show relative population stagnation.
- Micropolitan counties in the North Country were evenly split between a population increase and decrease during this time period. Clinton and Jefferson counties experienced 2.8 percent and 2.3 percent population increases respectively, while Franklin and St. Lawrence counties declined by 0.3 percent and by 0.6 percent, respectively.
- Population has significantly declined in the North Country's most rural counties since 2000. The population gains experienced by all three counties from 1990 to 2000 during 1990-2000 were reversed to population decreases between 2000 and 2006.



## Population density



\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: US Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts: New York State  
[http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/new\\_york\\_map.html](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/new_york_map.html)

- Low density is one of the North Country's defining characteristics. As can be seen in Figure 4, at 56.7 persons per square mile, the region is far less dense than other parts of non-metropolitan New York.
- Average population density in the state's micropolitan counties exceeded that in the North Country by more than 30 persons per square mile. Only Jefferson County exceeded this state average. Density in the North Country's other three micropolitan counties was much lower than the average. Clinton County's population density of 79 persons per square mile far exceeded the North Country's average but was slightly lower than the state average. St. Lawrence and Franklin counties had lower densities than the averages for even non-core counties.
- The population densities for Essex and Lewis counties were both slightly less than half of the New York State non-core county average. Hamilton County had a population density of only 3 persons per square mile, the lowest of any county in New York State.

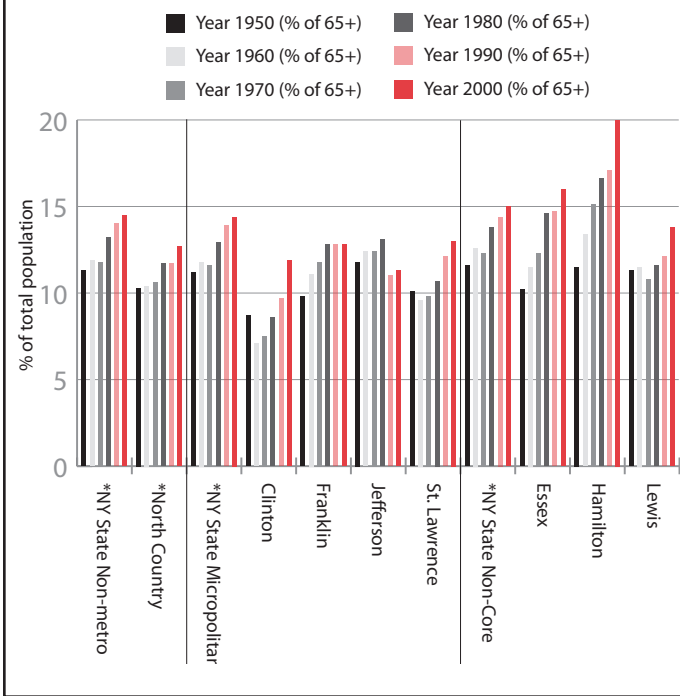
## Recent trends in Aging:

- New York's population is aging across the state. The percentage of people age 65 and older in New York's non-metropolitan counties increased from 14 percent in 1990 to 14.5 percent in 2000.
- The North Country older population is increasing even more rapidly than the state average (from 11.7 percent in 1990 to 12.7 percent in 2000).
- Micropolitan counties followed a similar aging trend, increasing the proportion of those 65 and older from 13.9 percent in 1990 to 14.4 percent in 2000. With the exception of Franklin County, whose population in this age category remained at 12.8 percent, all other counties of the North Country recorded a proportional increase. Clinton County had the largest percentage increase in the proportion of the population aged 65 and older, from 9.7 percent in 1990 to nearly 12 percent in 2000.
- Following this trend, non-core counties increased their share of population aged 65 and older from 14.4 percent in 1990 to 15 percent in 2000. Hamilton County recorded the largest percentage increase, going from 17 percent to 20 percent in 2000. Interestingly enough, Figure 5 also suggests that in 2000, all of the North Country's non-core counties had a higher proportion of older residents in their population than did their metropolitan counterparts.

## Long-term Trends in Aging:

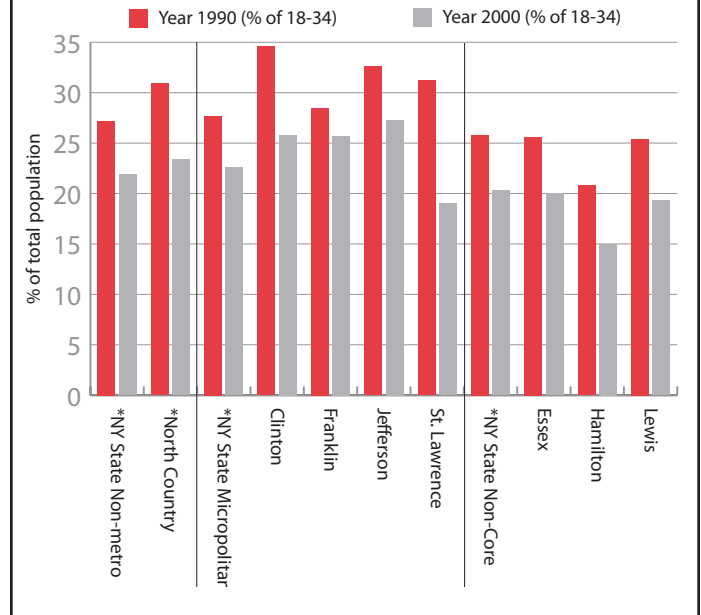
- On average, New York State's non-metro counties recorded a significant increase in the older population in the period between 1950 and 2000. In 1950, 11.3 percent of New York's non-metro population was age 65 and above. This figure increased to 14.5 percent by the year 2000. A similar pattern can be seen in the North Country, although the proportional increase was slightly lower, from 10.3 percent in 1950 to 12.7 percent in 2000. Both micropolitan and non-core counties followed this pattern of population aging from 11.2 percent to 14.4 percent and from 11.6 percent to 15 percent, respectively.
- Three of the North Country's micropolitan counties, Clinton, St. Lawrence and Franklin follow this pat-

**Figure 5: Percent of Population age 65 years and older, North Country Counties, 1950- 2000**



**Young adult population**

**Figure 6: Percent of population ages 18 to 34, North Country Counties, 1990- 2000**



\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties

Sources: 1) U.S. Census Bureau: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

- a) QT-P1A. Age and Sex for the Total Population: 1990 Data Set: 1990 Summary Tape File 1 (STF 1) - 100-percent data, Geographic Area: New York, All Counties.
- b) QT-P1. Age Groups and Sex: 2000, Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-percent Data, Geographic Area: New York, All Counties.
- 2) U.S. Bureau of the Census. U.S. Census of Population (1950,1960,1970); Summary Tape File (S.T.F.) # 3, 1980,1990, 2000; Vol.I - Number of Inhabitants; Vol.II - General Population Characteristics, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

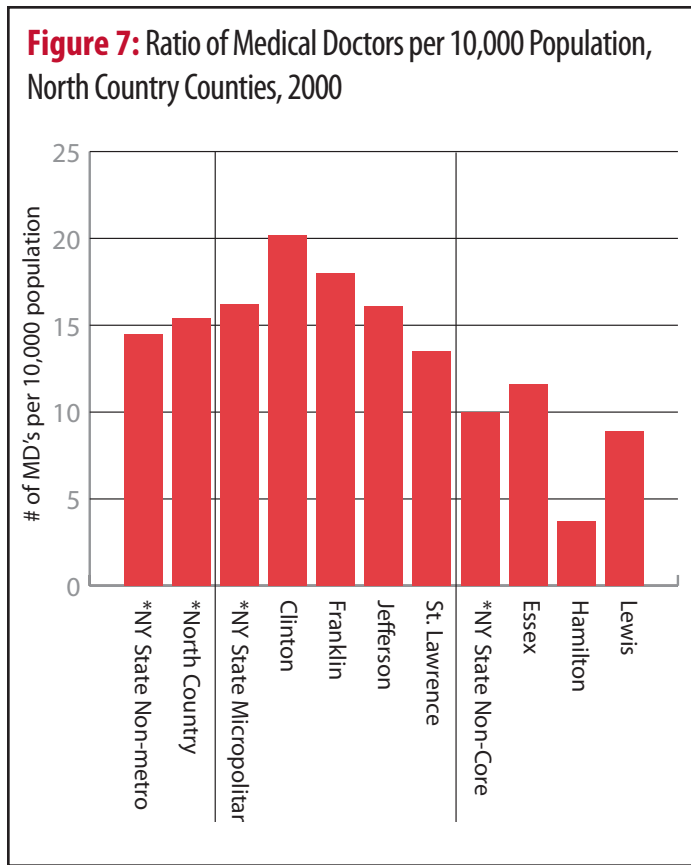
- QT-P1A. Age and Sex for the Total Population: 1990 Data Set: 1990 Summary Tape File 1 (STF 1) - 100-percent data, Geographic Area: New York, All Counties
- QT-P1. Age Groups and Sex: 2000 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-percent Data

tern, although the percentage of people age 65 and above in Franklin County stayed unchanged for the last three decades. In contrast, Jefferson County was the only North Country county to record a lower proportion of older people in the year 2000 than in 1950. This is undoubtedly associated with the military buildup at Fort Drum.

- Non-core counties also recorded a gradual increase in the proportion of those ages 65 and older, from 11.6 percent in 1950 to 15 percent in 2000. Hamilton County recorded the highest increase during the 50-year period; from 11.5 percent in 1950 to 20 percent in 2000. The remaining two non-core North Country counties, Essex and Lewis, also experienced an increase for the same time period, although not as large as in Hamilton County.

- New York State’s non-metro areas have been losing young adults. The overall non-metro county young adult (persons age 18-34 years of age) population declined from just over 27 percent in 1990 to slightly below 22 percent in 2000. Decline was even more dramatic in the North Country, from 30.9 percent in 1990 to 23.4 percent in 2000.
- New York State’s micropolitan counties followed a similar pattern, with the proportion of 18 to 34 year olds decreasing from 27.7 percent in 1990 to 23.4 percent in 2000. While all North Country micropolitan counties showed a decrease in this age group during the decade, the most pronounced decreases were in St. Lawrence and Clinton counties, with St. Lawrence’s young adult population declining by 12.2 percent and Clinton County’s by 8.8 percent.
- The decline in young adults was less rapid in New York’s non-core counties, about 5 percentage points. All three of the North Country’s non-core counties recorded approximately the same relative decline in young adults during the 1990s.

## Access to doctors

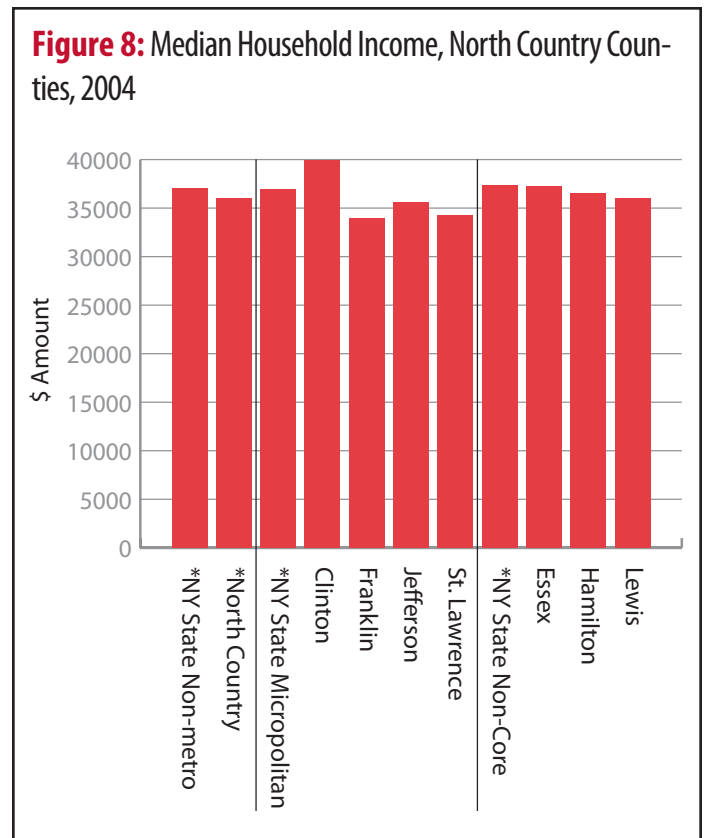


\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: New York State Department of Health. Vital Statistics of New York, State Center for Health Statistics, Albany, N.Y (1950-2000)

- In 2000, New York State’s non-metro counties averaged 14.5 medical doctors per 10,000 people. The North Country’s average of 15.4 doctors per 10,000 was slightly higher than this average, but slightly lower than the state’s micropolitan average of 16.2.
- Clinton and Franklin counties exceeded this micropolitan average, and Jefferson County’s ratio was equal. With only 13.5 doctors per 10,000 people, St. Lawrence fell below the regional and micropolitan averages. Doctors are very scarce in New York’s non-core counties with only about 10 doctors per 10,000 people, but both Hamilton and Lewis Counties have ratios even lower than this.
- With 11.6 doctors per 10,000 people, Essex County was the only North Country non-core county to exceed the state average for this county type.

## III. Socio-Economic Status

### Median household income

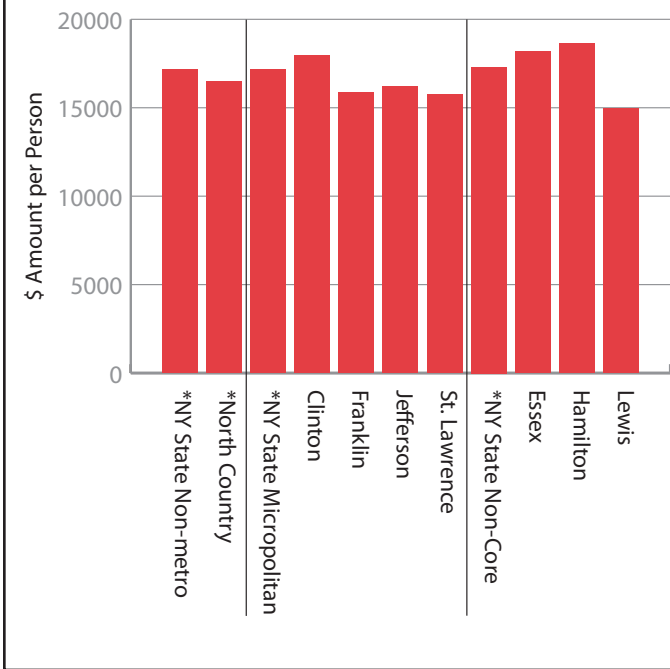


\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: US Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts: New York State [http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/new\\_york\\_map.html](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/new_york_map.html)

- In 2004, the North Country’s median household income was \$36,019, slightly lower than the average for state non-metro counties. Of the North Country’s four micropolitan counties, only Clinton County’s median income exceeded the state micropolitan average, by approximately \$3,000.
- Ironically, the average median household income for NYS non-core counties was higher than the micropolitan and overall non-metropolitan average. At \$37,279, Essex County had the highest median household income of any county in the North Country, but this was still slightly lower than the state non-core average. The median household incomes for Hamilton and Lewis counties were \$36,503 and \$35,997, respectively, or slightly higher than three of the North Country’s micropolitan counties.

## Per capita income

**Figure 9: Per Capita Income, North Country Counties, 1999**

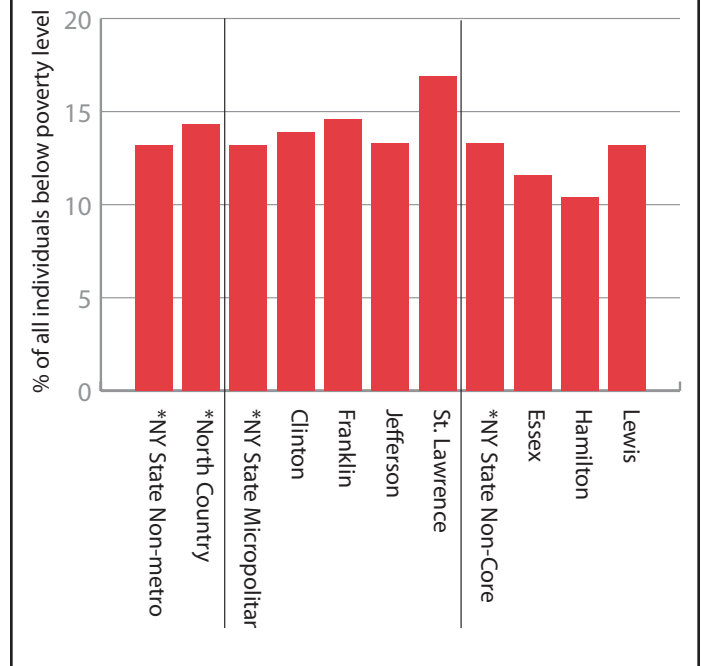


\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: US Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts: New York State  
[http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/new\\_york\\_map.html](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/new_york_map.html)

- Average per capita income for the North Country region was nearly \$700 less than the state average for non-metro counties.
- According to the 2000 Census, per capita income for the state’s non-metro counties averaged \$17,181. Similar to household income, non-core county residents have slightly higher personal incomes than their micropolitan counterparts. In comparison, the average per capita income for the North Country was \$16,491 or nearly \$700 less. The micropolitan average was virtually identical to that of the non-metro category.
- At \$17,946, Clinton County was the only micropolitan county in the North Country that posted higher per capita income than the above mentioned averages. Per capita income in Jefferson, Franklin and St. Lawrence counties was much lower than average. Both Hamilton and Essex counties exceeded the average income for the region and for the state’s non-metropolitan counties. On the other hand, at \$14,971, Lewis County’s per capita income was the lowest of all seven North Country counties and well below the average for non-core counties in the state.

## Poverty status

**Figure 10: Poverty Status in 1999 of Individuals, North Country Counties**

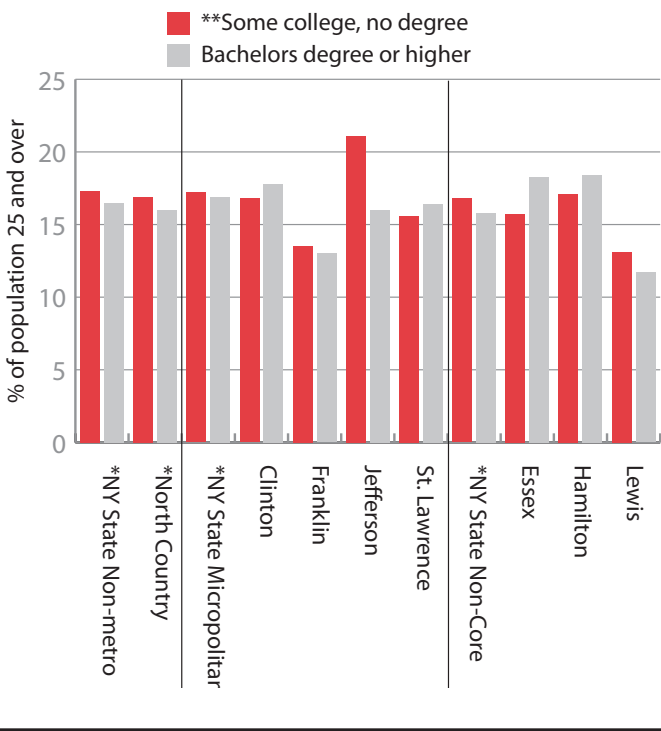


\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: US Census Bureau: <http://factfinder.census.gov>  
 QT-P34. Poverty Status in 1999 of Individuals: 2000  
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data  
 Geographic Area: New York, All Counties

- The percent of the population living in poverty in the North Country is higher than the state non-metro county average.
- According to the 2000 Census, 13.2 percent of all people living in New York’s non-metro counties were classified as living below the poverty level. This level was somewhat higher in the North Country, at 14.3 percent.
- The state’s micropolitan counties had exactly the same percentage of people below the poverty level as the state’s non-metro county average. However, all four of the North Country’s micropolitan counties had higher poverty levels than the state micropolitan average. Poverty was especially prevalent in St. Lawrence County, at nearly 17 percent. This is the highest poverty rate in the North Country.
- New York’s non-core counties averaged poverty levels of 13.3 percent. In the North Country, non-core counties generally have lower poverty rates than other non-metropolitan parts of the state – the rate in Hamilton County was only 10.4 percent and in Essex County, 11.6 percent.

## Educational attainment of adults

**Figure 11: Educational Attainment, Age 25 and Older, North Country Counties, 2000**



\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 \*\*Some College = some college credit, less than 1 year or + 1 or more years of college, no degree  
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: <http://factfinder.census.gov>  
 QT-P20. Educational Attainment by Sex: 2000  
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data  
 Geographic Area: New York, All Counties

- In 2000, there was very little difference in educational attainment for people age 25 and older between New York State’s non-metro counties and people living in the North Country. According to the 2000 Census, about 17 percent of adults had attended some college but hadn’t completed a degree in both the North Country and non-metro NYS counties as a whole. Similarly, 16.5 percent of adults in non-metro counties reported completing a bachelor’s degree or higher compared with 16 percent of adults in the North Country.
- The micropolitan and non-core county averages were also very similar to each other and to the state’s non-metropolitan total.
- However, educational attainment varied significantly among the North Country’s micropolitan counties. Ironically, Clinton and St. Lawrence counties had

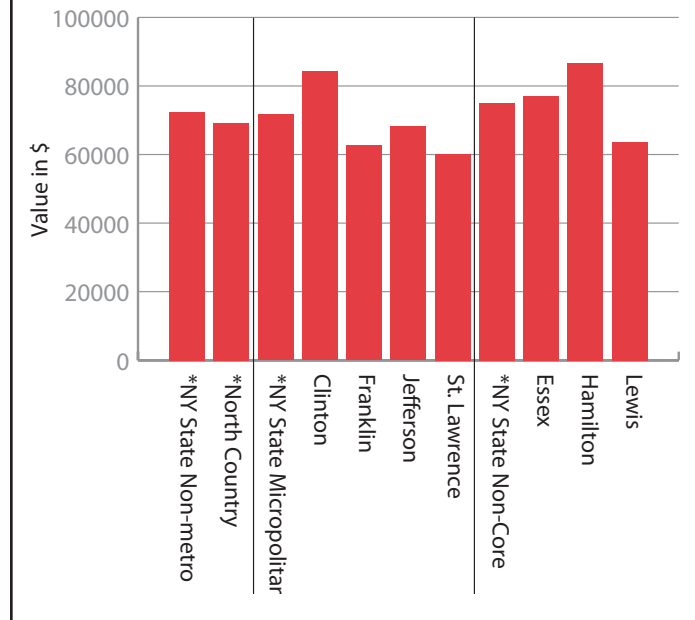
a higher percentage of people completing a bachelor’s degree than of people with only some college education. Jefferson County, at over 21 percent, had the highest percentage of adults who attended some college, even though the percentage completing a bachelor’s degree was below the state’s micropolitan county average. Franklin County was far below the state’s micropolitan averages for both measures of educational attainment.

- Educational attainment was slightly lower in the state’s non-core counties than in its micropolitan areas. Compared to state averages for non-core counties, Hamilton and Essex counties had significantly higher percentages attaining higher education while Lewis County had the lowest percentages in both educational attainment categories.

## IV. Housing

### Housing value

**Figure 12: Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing Units, North Country Counties, 2000**



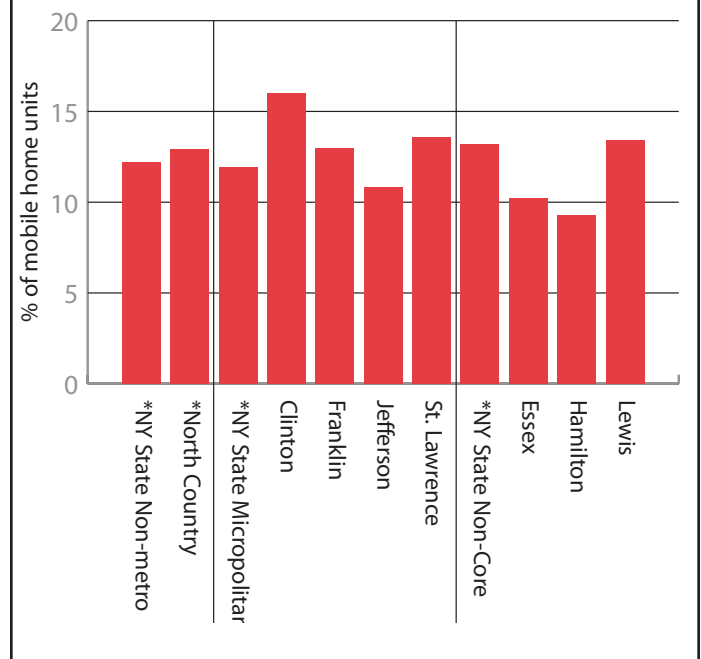
\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, <http://factfinder.census.gov>  
 QT-H14. Value, Mortgage Status, and Selected Conditions: 2000  
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data  
 Geographic Area: New York, All Counties

- In 2000, the average value of owner-occupied housing units in New York's non-metropolitan counties was \$72,431. The North Country's average was slightly lower, at \$69,187. Surprisingly, housing values were higher in the state's least urban counties. Non-core counties averaged \$75,083 compared with \$71,621 for their micropolitan counterparts.
- With median housing valued at \$84,200, Clinton County was the only micropolitan county in the North Country to exceed the state micropolitan county average. In comparison, median housing values in Jefferson and Franklin counties were \$68,200 and \$62,600, respectively. At \$60,200, St. Lawrence County had the lowest median housing value of the entire North Country. Hamilton County's median housing value, \$86,700, was the highest in the North Country, far exceeding all the above mentioned values. Essex County's median housing value also exceeded New York's non-core and total non-metropolitan county averages, but by just over \$2,000. In contrast, Lewis County's median housing value was nearly \$11,500 lower. However, this figure was still slightly above those in St Lawrence and Franklin counties, which are both more urban.

## Mobile Home Occupancy

- In 2000, mobile homes represented 12.2 percent of all occupied housing units in non-metropolitan New York State. In the North Country, the figure was 12.9 percent. Micropolitan counties posted a slightly lower percentage of mobile homes than the non-metropolitan county average, but three of the North Country's four micropolitan counties exceeded the state's micropolitan average. With a full 16 percent of its housing units being mobile homes, Clinton County exceeded this average by more than 4 percentage points. St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties also exceeded the statewide average, although by much smaller margins. In contrast, only 10.8 percent of Jefferson County's housing units are mobile homes. Jefferson County was the only North Country micropolitan county that ranked below the state micropolitan county average.
- New York State's non-core counties averaged 13.4 percent of their housing units in the mobile home

**Figure 13:** Mobile Homes as a Percent of Total Occupied Housing Units, North Country Counties, 2000



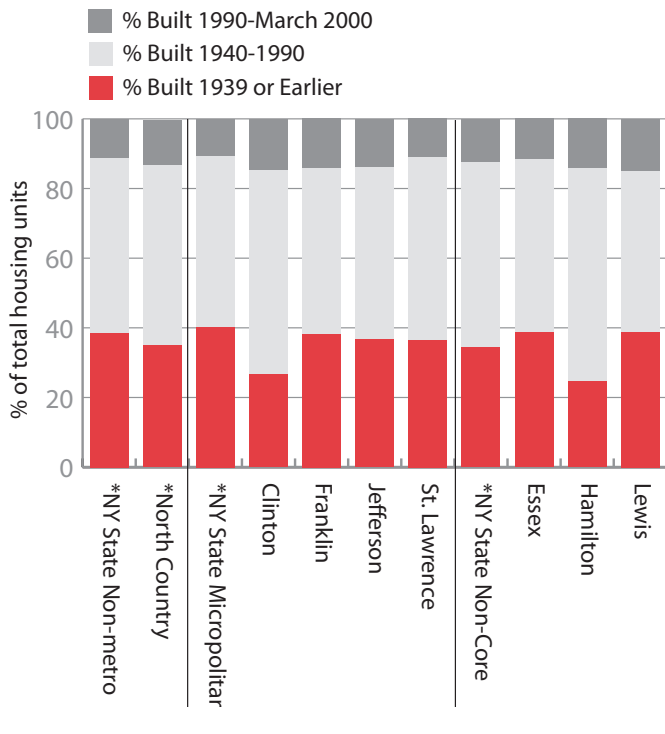
\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: <http://factfinder.census.gov>  
 QT-H10. Units in Structure, Householder 65 Years and Over, and Householder Below Poverty Level: 2000  
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data  
 Geographic Area: New York, All Counties

category, a slightly higher average than their micropolitan counterparts. At 13.4 percent, Lewis County was the only North Country county to exceed this average. Essex and Hamilton were both far below the state average.

## Age of housing

- The North Country's housing stock is slightly newer than in other non-metropolitan parts of the state. According to the 2000 Census, 38.5 percent of housing structures in New York's non-metropolitan counties were built in 1939 or earlier, while only 35 percent of housing in the North Country is this old. Housing tends to be newer in New York's non-core counties compared to micropolitan counties, where 40.2 percent and 34.3 percent, respectively, were built before 1940.
- The North Country's micropolitan counties have newer housing stock than do micropolitan counties on average around the state, with Clinton County having the newest housing stock.

**Figure 14: Age of Housing Structures, North Country Counties**



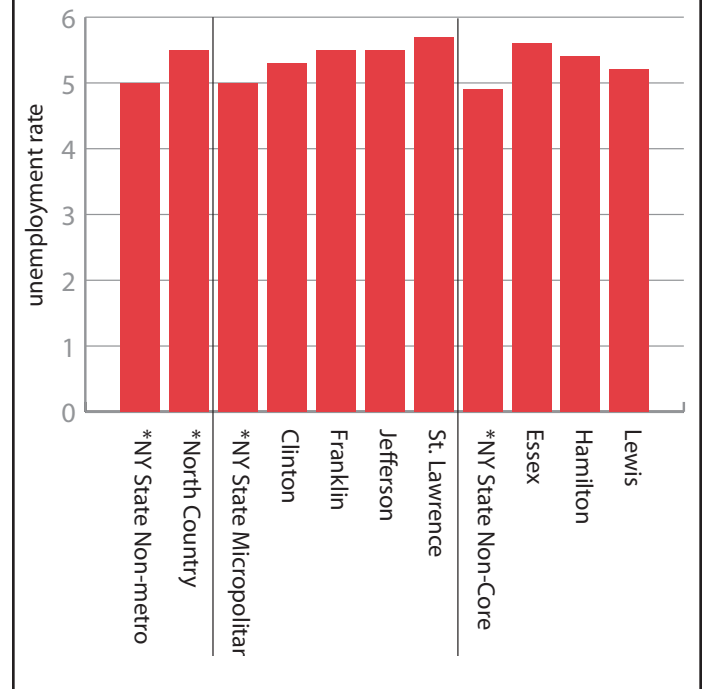
\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: <http://factfinder.census.gov>  
 GCT-H7. Structural and Facility Characteristics of All Housing Units: 2000  
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data  
 Geographic Area: New York, All Counties

- Housing in the North Country’s non-core counties also tends to be newer than state non-core county averages. Only Essex County exceeds the state’s average in the percentage of older housing structures and falls short of it with its percentage of new houses. Although Lewis County also exceeded New York’s non-core average in the percentage of older housing structures, at 15.1 percent it had the highest percentage of newer houses in the North Country. Hamilton County had the lowest percentage of older houses in the North Country, and also a higher than average share of new dwellings.

## V. Economy

### Unemployment

**Figure 15: Unemployment Rate, North Country Counties, 2006**

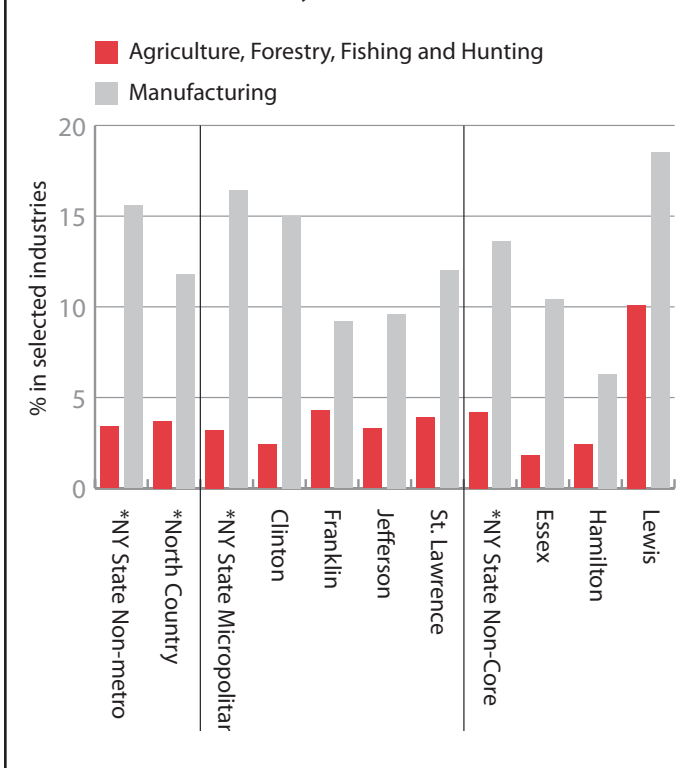


\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: U.S. Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics  
 Labor Force Data by County, 2006 Annual Averages  
<ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/la/laucnty06.txt>

- While the average unemployment rate in 2006 for New York State’s non-metropolitan counties was 5 percent, the unemployment rate was .5 percent higher in the North Country.
- Micropolitan and non-metropolitan counties had virtually the same unemployment rate (5.0%), but all four of the North Country’s micropolitan counties exceeded this average. Unemployment was highest in St. Lawrence County at 5.7 percent, and lowest in Clinton County (5.3%). In fact, St. Lawrence’s unemployment rate was the highest of the North Country counties.
- The average unemployment rate for non-core counties across New York was 4.9 percent. Non-core counties in the North Country exceeded this rate by as little as .3 percentage points in Lewis County and by as much as .7 percentage points in Essex County.

## Employment by industry

**Figure 16: Civilian Employees Age 16+ by Selected Industries, North Country Counties, 2000**



\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 - <http://factfinder.census.gov>  
 GCT-P13. Occupation, Industry, and Class of Worker of Employed  
 Civilians 16 Years and Over: 2000  
 Geographic Area: New York, All Counties

- Agriculture and manufacturing have historically been viewed as the backbones of New York's rural economy. However, in 2000, only 3.4 percent of civilian workers in the state's non-metro counties were employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing or hunting industries, and manufacturing employed only 15.6 percent of non-metropolitan county workers. In other words, less than one in five jobs in New York non-metropolitan counties were in these two traditionally rural employment categories.
- The North Country showed similar levels of employment in agricultural, forestry, fishing and hunting industries to the state non-metropolitan county average (3.7% and 3.4%, respectively), but only 11.8 percent of North Country workers were employed in manufacturing, compared to 15.6% for the state non-metropolitan county average. Non-metro and micro-

politan counties in NYS had relatively similar shares of workers in agriculture, forestry and fishing, but the percentage of workers employed in manufacturing was somewhat higher in micropolitan counties.

- Franklin, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties all had higher proportions of their workforces in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing industries than the state-wide micropolitan average. Clinton County was the only micropolitan county in the North Country below this average. In contrast, all four North Country micropolitan counties had lower percentages employed in manufacturing than the state average for this county type.
- Non-core counties may have low population density, but this does not necessarily indicate high employment dependence on agriculture, forestry, fishing or hunting. On average, only 4.2 percent of the North Country's non-core county workforce was employed in this sector. Lewis County is an exception, with 10.1 percent of its workforce thus employed, while agricultural employment is well below the non-core county average in both Essex and Hamilton counties. Lewis County has the North Country region's highest relative employment in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting.
- Statewide, 13.6 percent of the labor force in non-core counties work in manufacturing. Hamilton and Essex counties were both far below this state average. However, at 18.5 percent, Lewis County far exceeded this average. Lewis County, then, could be viewed as the most conventional rural economy in the North Country, if higher than average employment in manufacturing and agriculture, forestry, fishing or hunting industries are appropriate indicators.

## Employment in government and education

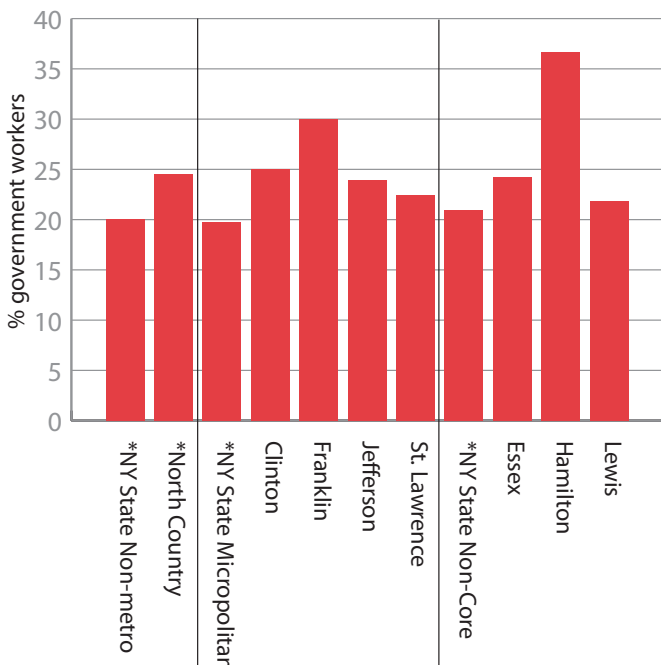
- Nearly one in four North Country workers is employed in local, state, or federal government and education, while the state average for such workers in non-metropolitan counties is only 20 percent.
- On average, one out of five workers in the state's non-metro counties was employed by local, state and federal governments or education during 2000. This percentage was even larger in the North Country, where government and education employment represented



24.5 percent of the civilian workforce. The average for micropolitan counties statewide is similar to the non-metro county figure, nearly 20 percent. However, in the North Country, all four micropolitan counties exceeded this average. At 30 percent, Franklin County had the highest percentage of government and education employees, followed by 25 percent in Clinton County, 23.9 percent in Jefferson County and 22.4 percent in St. Lawrence County.

- The average employment in government and education for non-core counties stood at just below 21 percent, but all three North Country non-core counties exceeded this average. At 37 percent, Hamilton County had by far the largest proportion of workers in this employment category.

**Figure 17:** Percent of Civilian Employees Age 16+ Employed by Local, State or Federal Government, North Country Counties, 2000



\*All averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties  
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 - <http://factfinder.census.gov>  
 GCT-P13. Occupation, Industry, and Class of Worker of Employed  
 Civilians 16 Years and Over: 2000  
 Geographic Area: New York, All Counties

## VI. Appendices

\*(Non-metro, North Country, micropolitan and non-core county averages - weighted by 2006 population size of constituent counties)

**Table 1:** Population Size for North Country Counties (2006 Estimate)

	<b>Year 2006 (Estimate)</b>
*NY State Non-Metro	75,039
*North Country	86,171
*NY State Micropolitan	85,487
Clinton	82,166
Franklin	50,968
Jefferson	114,264
St. Lawrence	111,284
*NY State Non-Core	48,067
Essex	38,649
Hamilton	5,162
Lewis	26,685

**Table 2:** Percent Population change for North Country Counties, 1990 -2000 and 2000 - 2006.

	<b>% Change 1990 - 2000</b>	<b>% Change 2000 - 2006</b>
*NY State Non-Metro	0.7	0
*North Country	0.5	0.8
*NY State Micropolitan	-0.3	-0.3
Clinton	-7.1	2.8
Franklin	9.9	-0.3
Jefferson	0.7	2.3
St. Lawrence	0	-0.6
*NY State Non-Core	3.3	0.7
Essex	4.6	-0.5
Hamilton	1.9	-4.0
Lewis	0.6	-1.0

**Table 3:** Population Density for North Country Counties, 2006 (estimate).

	Year 2006 (Estimate)
*NY State Non-Metro	79.2
*North Country	56.7
*NY State Micropolitan	88.2
Clinton	79.1
Franklin	31.6
Jefferson	89.8
St. Lawrence	41.4
*NY State Non-Core	56.1
Essex	21.5
Hamilton	3.0
Lewis	20.9

**Table 4:** Percent of population age 65 years and older, North Country Counties, 1990 & 2000.

	Year 1990 (% of 65+)	Year 2000 (% of 65+)
*NY State Non-Metro	14.0	14.5
*North County	11.7	12.7
*NY State Micropolitan	13.9	14.4
Clinton	9.7	11.9
Franklin	12.8	12.8
Jefferson	11.0	11.3
St. Lawrence	12.1	13.0
*NY State Non-Core	14.4	15.0
Essex	14.7	16.0
Hamilton	17.1	20.0
Lewis	12.1	13.8

**Table 5:** Percent of Population age 65 years and older, North Country Counties, 1950- 2000.

	Year 1950 (% of 65+)	Year 1960 (% of 65+)	Year 1970 (% of 65+)	Year 1980 (% of 65+)	Year 1990 (% of 65+)	Year 2000 (% of 65+)
*NY State Non-Metro	11.3	11.9	11.8	13.2	14.0	14.5
*North County	10.3	10.4	10.6	11.7	11.7	12.7
*NY State Micropolitan	11.2	11.8	11.6	12.9	13.9	14.4
Clinton	8.7	7.1	7.5	8.6	9.7	11.9
Franklin	9.8	11.1	11.8	12.8	12.8	12.8
Jefferson	11.8	12.4	12.4	13.1	11.0	11.3
St. Lawrence	10.1	9.6	9.8	10.7	12.1	13.0
*NY State Non-Core	11.6	12.6	12.3	13.8	14.4	15.0
Essex	10.2	11.5	12.3	14.6	14.7	16.0
Hamilton	11.5	13.4	15.1	16.6	17.1	20.0
Lewis	11.3	11.5	10.8	11.6	12.1	13.8

**Table 6:** Percent of population ages 18 to 34 years old, North Country Counties, 1990- 2000.

	Year 1990 (% of 18-34)	Year 2000 (% of 18-34)
*NY State Non-Metro	27.2	21.9
*North Country	30.9	23.4
*NY State Micropolitan	27.7	22.6
Clinton	34.6	25.8
Franklin	28.5	25.7
Jefferson	32.6	27.3
St. Lawrence	31.2	19.0
*NY State Non-Core	25.8	20.3
Essex	25.6	20.0
Hamilton	20.8	15.0
Lewis	25.4	19.3

**Table 7:** Ratio of Medical Doctors per 10,000 Population, North Country Counties, 2000.

	Year 2000
*NY State Non-Metro	14.5
*North Country	15.4
*NY State Micropolitan	16.2
Clinton	20.2
Franklin	18.0
Jefferson	16.1
St. Lawrence	13.5
*NY State Non-Core	10.0
Essex	11.6
Hamilton	3.7
Lewis	8.9

**Table 8:** Median Household Income for North Country Counties, 2004.

	Year 2004
*NY State Non-Metro	\$ 36,995
*North Country	\$ 36,019
*NY State Micropolitan	\$ 36,962
Clinton	\$ 39,935
Franklin	\$ 33,956
Jefferson	\$ 35,546
St. Lawrence	\$ 34,247
*NY State Non-Core	\$ 37,343
Essex	\$ 37,279
Hamilton	\$ 36,503
Lewis	\$ 35,997

**Table 9:** Per Capita Income for North Country Counties, 1999.

	<b>Year 1999</b>
*NY State Non-Metro	\$ 17,181
*North Country	\$ 16,491
*NY State Micropolitan	\$ 17,182
Clinton	\$ 17,946
Franklin	\$ 15,888
Jefferson	\$ 16,202
St. Lawrence	\$ 15,728
*NY State Non-Core	\$ 17,306
Essex	\$ 18,194
Hamilton	\$ 18,643
Lewis	\$ 14,971

**Table 10:** Poverty Status in 1999 of Individuals for North Country Counties.

	<b>Year 1999</b>
*NY State Non-Metro	13.2%
*North Country	14.3%
*NY State Micropolitan	13.2%
Clinton	13.9%
Franklin	14.6%
Jefferson	13.3%
St. Lawrence	16.9%
*NY State Non-Core	13.3%
Essex	11.6%
Hamilton	10.4%
Lewis	13.2%

**Table 11:** Educational Attainment of the Population Age 25 and Older North Country Counties, 2000.

	<b>Year 2000, **Some college, No degree</b>	<b>Year 2000, Bachelor's degree or higher</b>
*NY State Non-Metro	17.3	16.5
*North Country	16.9	16.0
*NY State Micropolitan	17.2	16.9
Clinton	16.8	17.8
Franklin	13.5	13.0
Jefferson	21.1	16.0
St. Lawrence	15.6	16.4
*NY State Non-Core	16.8	15.8
Essex	15.7	18.3
Hamilton	17.1	18.4
Lewis	13.1	11.7

**Table 12:** Median value of owner occupied housing units for North Country Counties, 2000.

	<b>Median Housing Unit Value 2000</b>
*NY State Non-Metro	\$ 72,431
*North Country	\$ 69,187
*NY State Micropolitan	\$ 71,621
Clinton	\$ 84,200
Franklin	\$ 62,600
Jefferson	\$ 68,200
St. Lawrence	\$ 60,200
*NY State Non-Core	\$ 75,083
Essex	\$ 77,100
Hamilton	\$ 86,700
Lewis	\$ 63,600

**Table 13:** Age of Housing Structures for North Country Counties.

	<b>% Built 1939 or earlier</b>	<b>% Built 1940-1990</b>	<b>% Built 1990-March 2000</b>
*NY State Non-Metro	38.5	50.0	11.2
*North Country	35.0	51.6	13.2
*NY State Micropolitan	40.2	48.9	10.8
Clinton	26.7	58.5	14.8
Franklin	38.2	47.7	14.1
Jefferson	36.6	49.4	14.0
St. Lawrence	36.5	52.3	11.2
*NY State Non-Core	34.4	53.2	12.3
Essex	38.6	49.9	11.5
Hamilton	24.6	61.3	14.1
Lewis	38.8	46.1	15.1

**Table 14:** Mobile homes as a percent of total occupied housing units for North Country Counties, 2000.

	<b>Year 2000</b>
*NY State Non-Metro	12.2
*North Country	12.9
*NY State Micropolitan	11.9
Clinton	16.0
Franklin	13.0
Jefferson	10.8
St. Lawrence	13.6
*NY State Non-Core	13.2
Essex	10.2
Hamilton	9.3
Lewis	13.4

**Table 16:** Unemployment Rate for North Country Counties, 2006.

	2006 (annual average)
*NY State Non-Metro	5.0%
*North Country	5.5%
*NY State Micropolitan	5.0%
Clinton	5.3%
Franklin	5.5%
Jefferson	5.5%
St. Lawrence	5.7%
*NY State Non-Core	4.9%
Essex	5.6%
Hamilton	5.4%
Lewis	5.2%

**Table 17:** Civilian employees age 16 and over by selected industries for North Country Counties, 2000.

	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	Manufacturing
*NY State Non-Metro	3.4%	15.6%
*North Country	3.7%	11.8%
*NY State Micropolitan	3.2%	16.4%
Clinton	2.4%	15.0%
Franklin	4.3%	9.2%
Jefferson	3.3%	9.6%
St. Lawrence	3.9%	12.0%
*NY State Non-Core	4.2%	13.6%
Essex	1.8%	10.4%
Hamilton	2.4%	6.3%
Lewis	10.1%	18.5%

**Table 18:** Percent of Civilian employees age 16 and older employed by local, state or federal government and education in the North Country Counties, 2000.

	2000
*NY State Non-Metro	20.0%
*North Country	24.5%
*NY State Micropolitan	19.7%
Clinton	25.0%
Franklin	30.0%
Jefferson	23.9%
St. Lawrence	22.4%
*NY State Non-Core	20.9%
Essex	24.2%
Hamilton	36.7%
Lewis	21.8%

