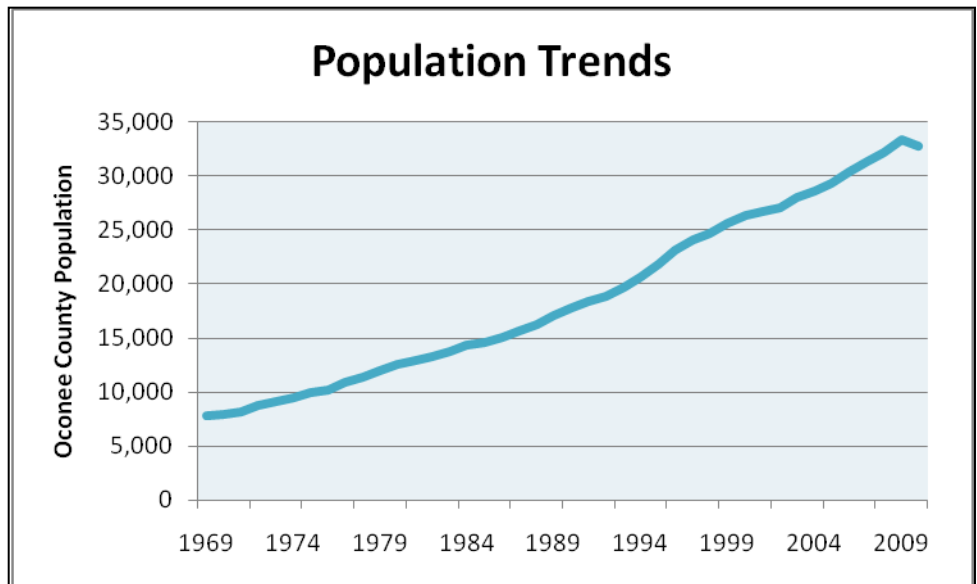

A SocioEconomic Profile

Oconee County, Georgia

Produced by the
Oconee County Economic Development Department
November 29, 2011

Population

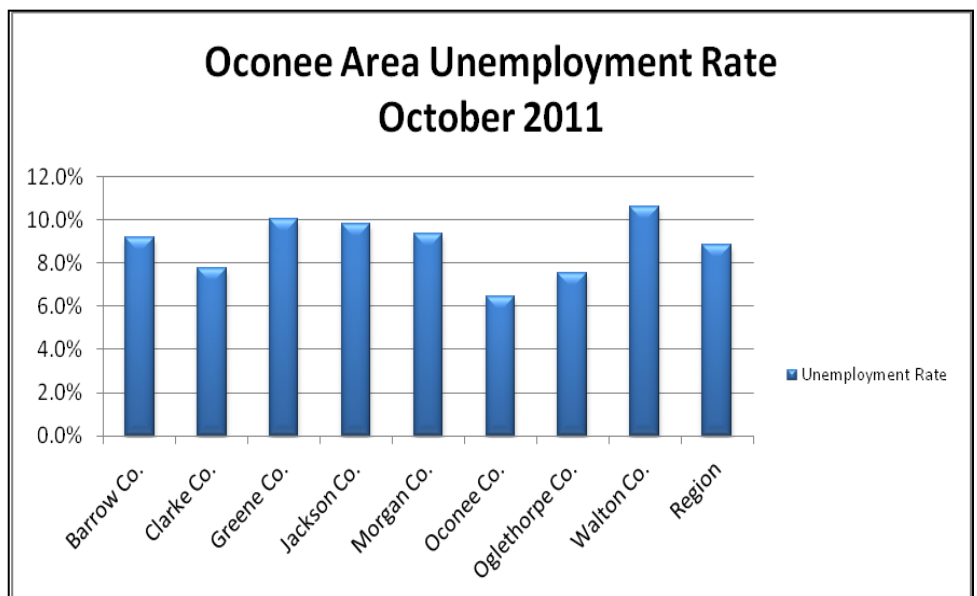
- Oconee County has experienced steady population growth over the past four decades.
- The 1970's had a population growth in Oconee Co. of 51%, the highest percentage of the four decades.
- The decade with the largest increase of persons was the 1990's, with an increase of 7,817 persons. The 2000's saw Oconee Co. grow by 6,433.
- Growth within the 2000's has slowed to a level approximately equal to regional and state growth.



Source: BEA REIS 2007 Table CA30

Current Unemployment Rate

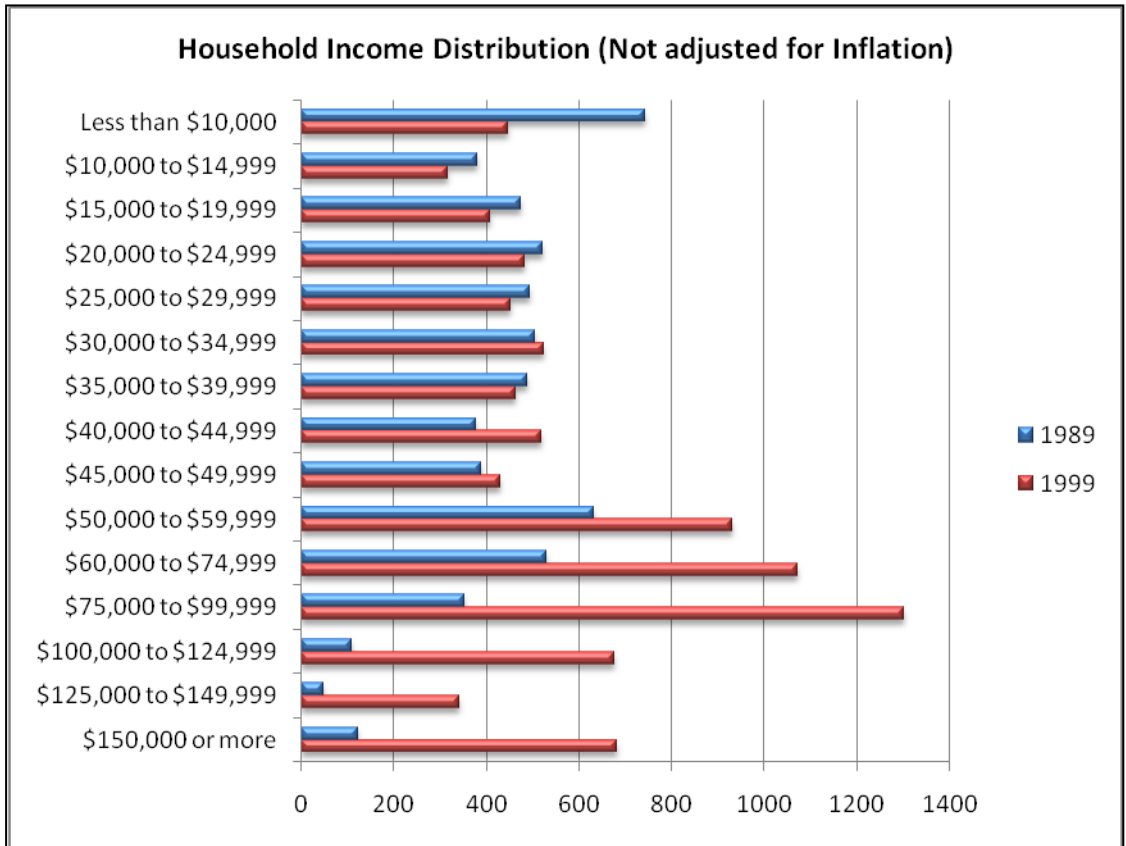
- The regional unemployment rate for October 2011 was 8.8 percent, down from the prior month.
- The national unemployment rate for October 2011 was 8.5 percent; Georgia was 10.0 percent using non-seasonally adjusted figures.
- The Athens Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) had the lowest rate in the state (7.5 percent), a rate below that of the previous month. The MSA consists of Clarke, Madison, Oconee & Oglethorpe counties.
- Ninety eight counties have double-digit unemployment rates, down from the two prior months of 110 and 116. Fifteen counties now have rates at or below 8%, up from ten in September.
- Oconee County (6.4%) has the lowest unemployment rate in the state of Georgia.



Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Household Income Distribution

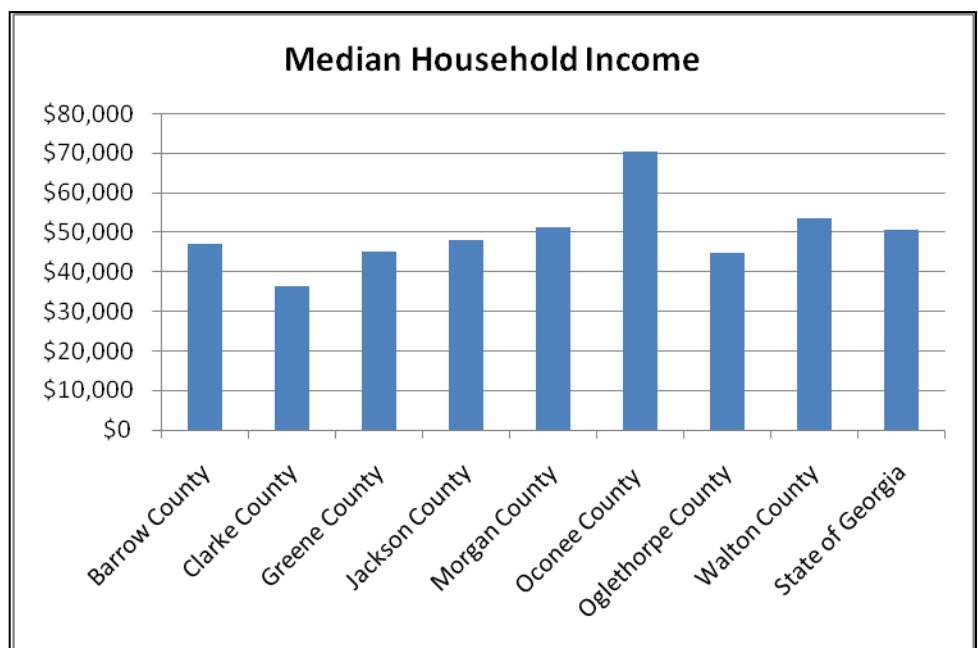
- Household income in Oconee Co. has increased quite significantly since 1989.
- In 1989, 70% of households in Oconee Co. earned less than \$50,000 per year.
- In 1999, only 45% of households in Oconee Co. earned less than \$50,000 per year.
- The percentage of households in Oconee Co. earning over \$75,000 per year tripled over the decade of the 1990s.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Median Household Income

- Median household income within the region is below that of the state of Georgia.
- Median household income in Oconee Co. exceeds the income levels within the region and the state.
- The median household income in Oconee Co. was estimated to be \$70,532 at the end of 2010.
- Morgan and Walton counties also had median household incomes exceeding the state's median.

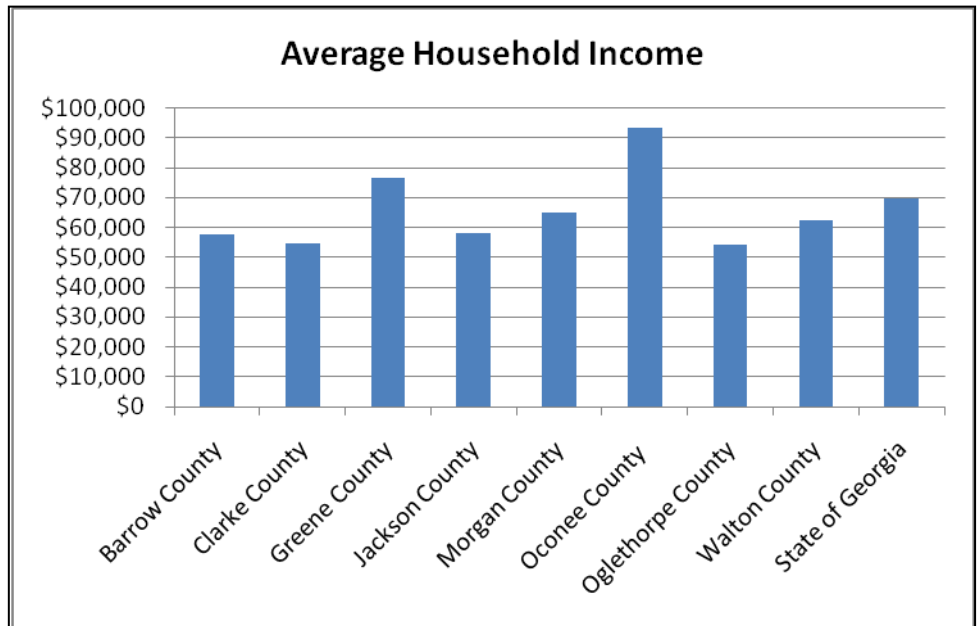


Source: Decision Data (2011)

Average Household Income

- Average household income in Oconee Co. was the highest in the region at \$93,165 at the end of 2010.
- Oconee County’s average household income exceeded the median household income by over \$23,000 at the end of 2010.
- Greene Co. (\$76,385) also exceeded the state average for household income. This is due, in part, to the presence of Reynolds’ Plantation and Lake Oconee.

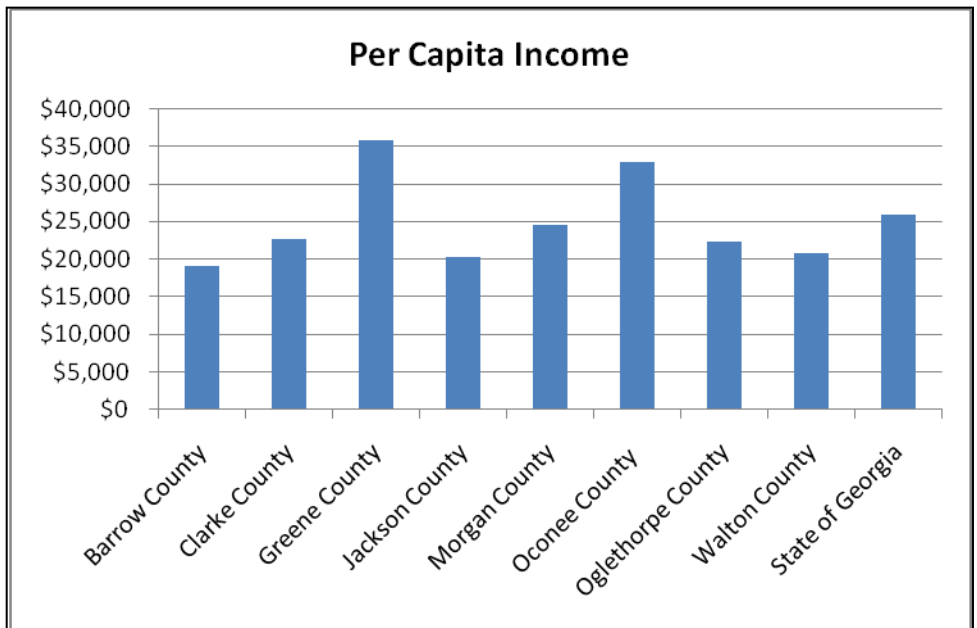
Source: Decision Data (2011)



Per Capita Income

- Per capita income in Oconee Co. was \$32,844 at the end of 2010.
- Oconee County’s per capita income was the second-highest in the region for this period, with Greene County having the highest level at \$35,863.
- Morgan County had a per capita income level relatively close to the state average.

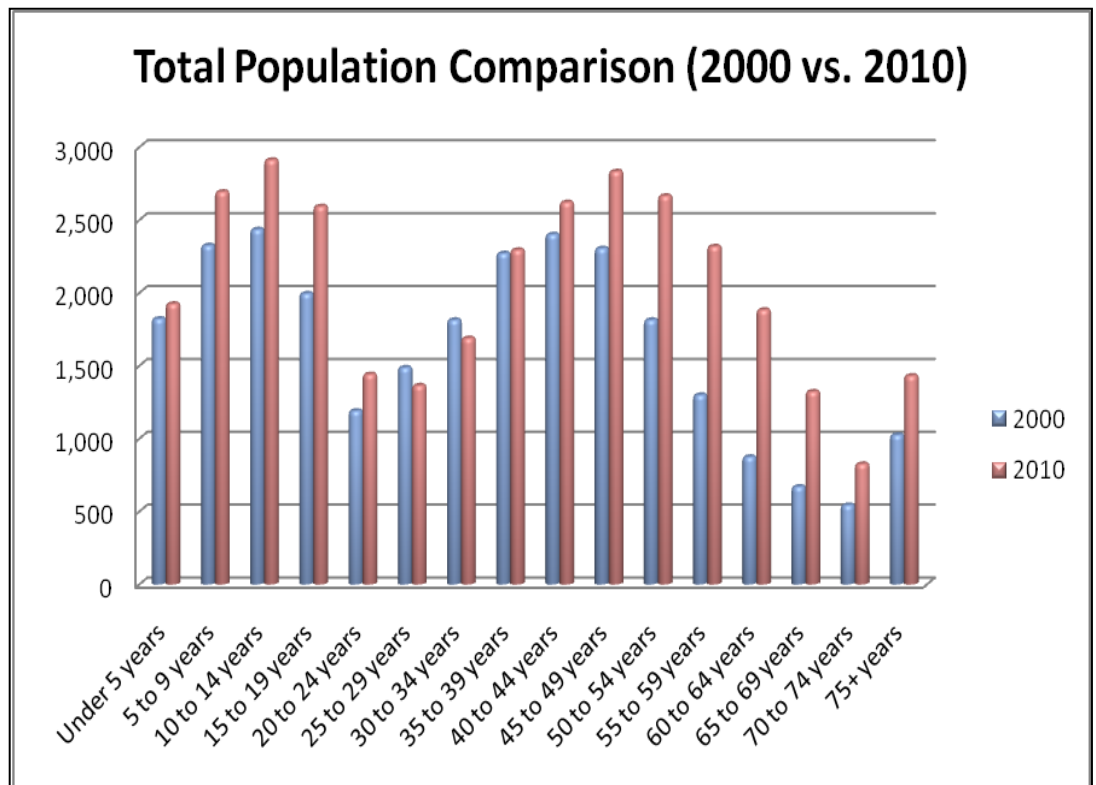
Source: Decision Data (2011)



Age & Gender Distribution

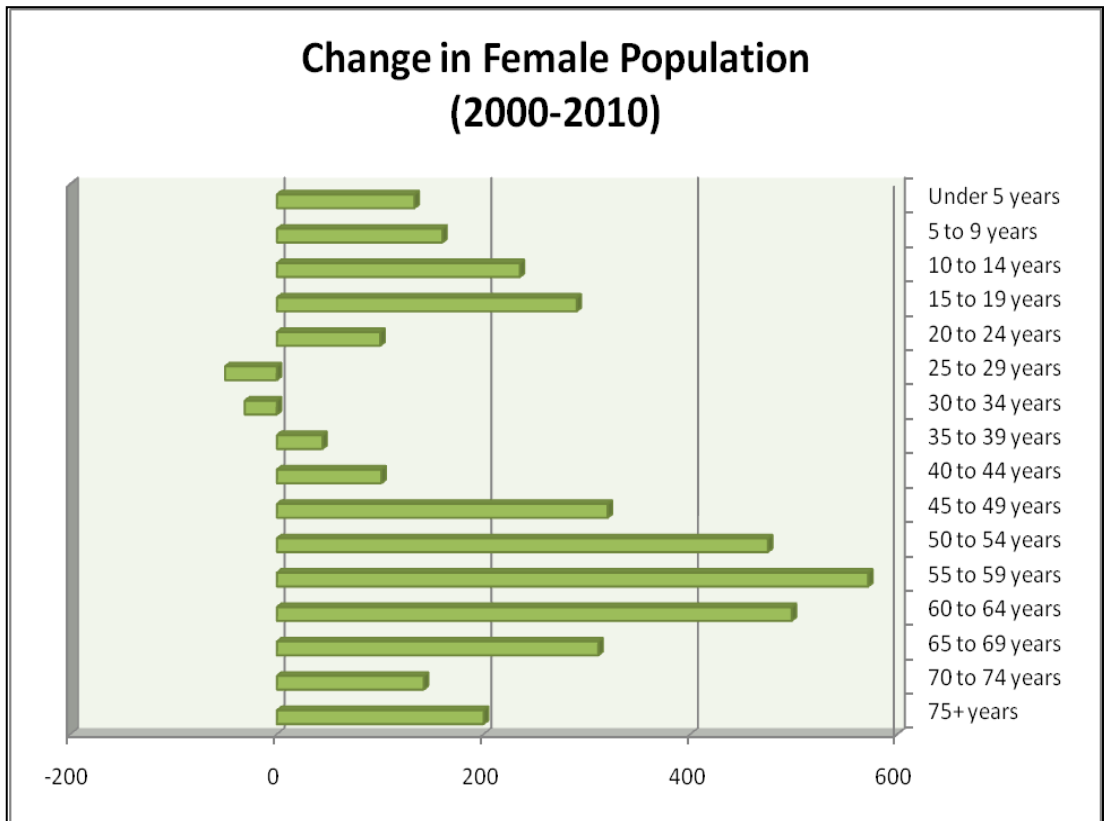
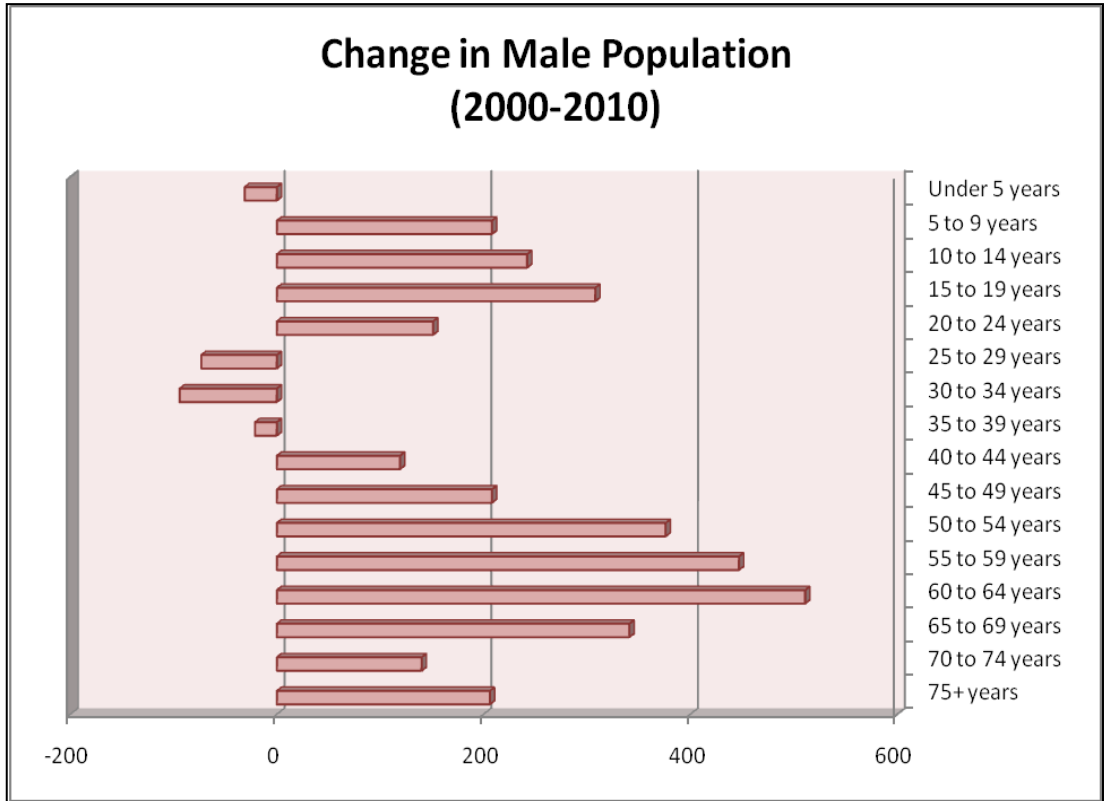
| Population by Age and Gender | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|------------|
| | Total Number | Under 20 Years | | 40-54 (Baby Boom in 2000) | | 65 years and over | | Median Age |
| | | Number | Share | Number | Share | Number | Share | |
| Total Population | | | | | | | | |
| 2010 | 32,808 | 10,122 | 31% | 6,866 | 21% | 3,578 | 11% | 39.1 |
| 2000 | 26,225 | 8,577 | 33% | 6,520 | 25% | 2,238 | 9% | 35.2 |
| 10 Yr. Change | 6,583 | 1,545 | 1% | 346 | 5% | 1,340 | -1% | 3.9 |
| 10 Yr. % Change | 25% | 18% | | 5% | | 60% | | 11% |
| 2000 Gender Breakout | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 16,007 | 5,185 | 32% | 3,384 | 21% | 1,597 | 10% | 38.1 |
| Female | 16,801 | 4,937 | 29% | 3,482 | 21% | 1,981 | 12% | 39.8 |
| Male/Female Split | 49% / 51% | 51% / 49% | | 49% / 51% | | 44% / 56% | | |

- Significant population increases occurred within the 45 to 60 year age ranges, as well as for children under the age of 20 years.
- As Oconee Co. values a quality educational system, these statistics indicate a significant number of families with school-aged children relocating continued to relocate through the early 2000's.
- The number of Oconee County residents between the ages of 20 and 34 actually declined between the years 2000 and 2010.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

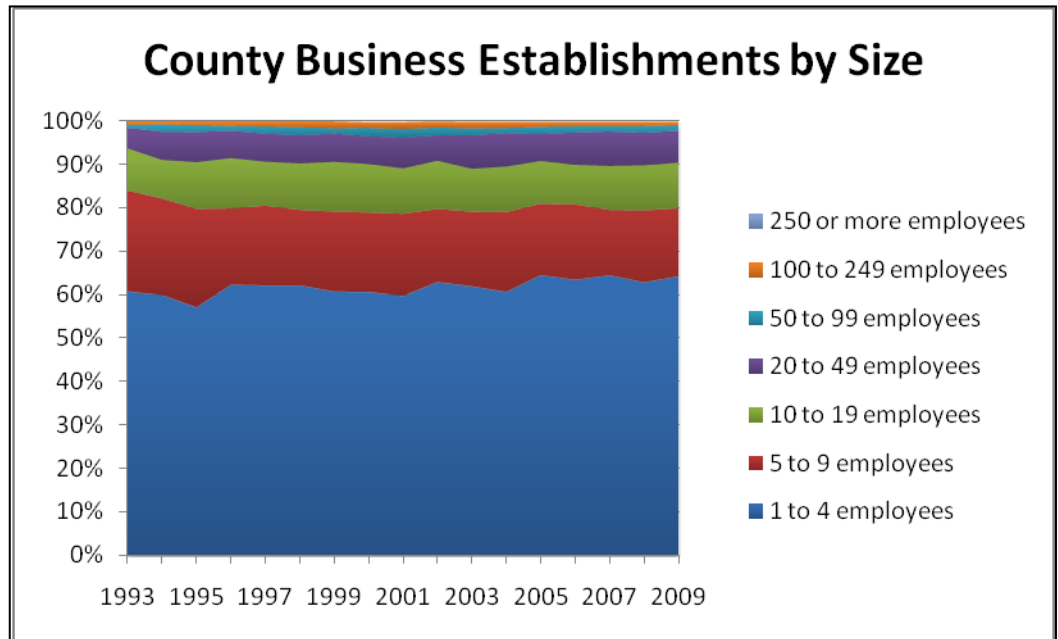
- Each age range within Oconee Co. experienced an increase in population between 2000 and 2010 except the 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 year old cohorts.
- The significant increase in the number of persons in the 50-64 year age range by the year 2010 indicates a demographic shift caused primarily by the baby boom generation.
- The parallel increases between the families 5 to 19 year-old demographic with the 40 to 54 year-old bracket indicates that significant growth occurred within the early 2000's as numerous families moved into Oconee Co.
- Males and females within the 10 to 19 year age brackets increased by virtually identical amounts during the decade.
- The number of Oconee Co. residents between the ages of 25 and 34 actually decreased within the decade of the 2000's.
- All age cohorts over the age of 40 saw significant gains over the course of the decade.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Firms by Size

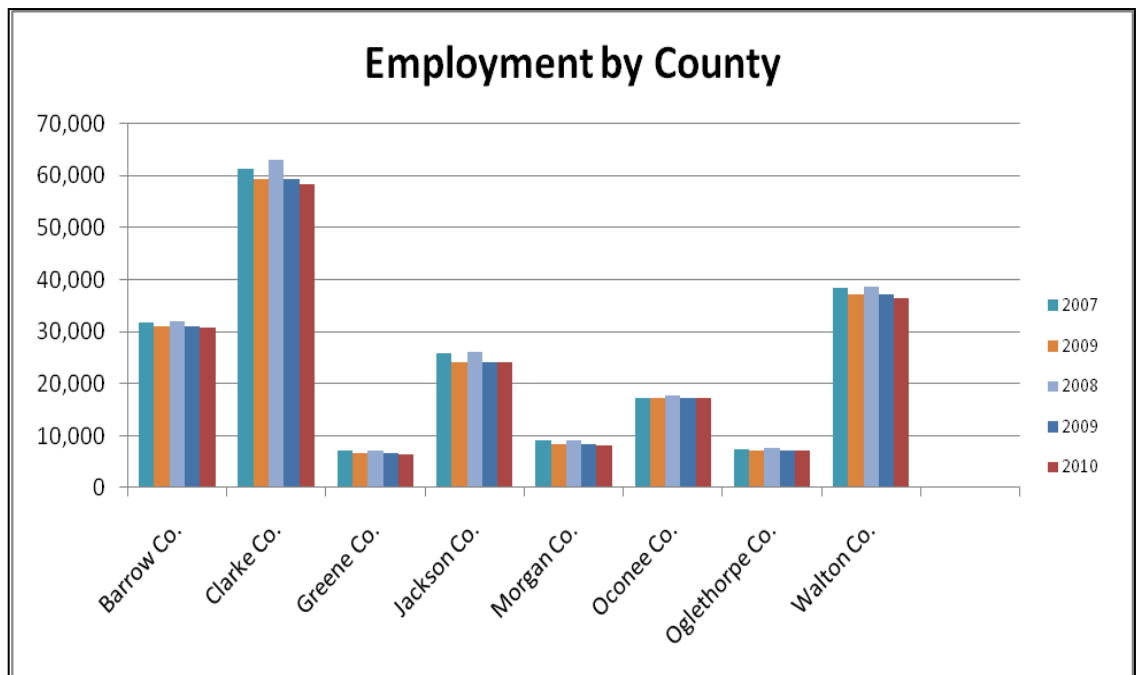
- Businesses in Oconee Co. with fewer than 10 employees traditionally have made up approximately 80 percent of the total number of establishments within the county.
- Firms employing 10 to 19 employees consistently comprise approximately 10 percent of the overall number of business establishments in the county.
- Firms with fewer than 5 employees make up over 60 percent of the county’s employees.



Source: Census County Business Patterns

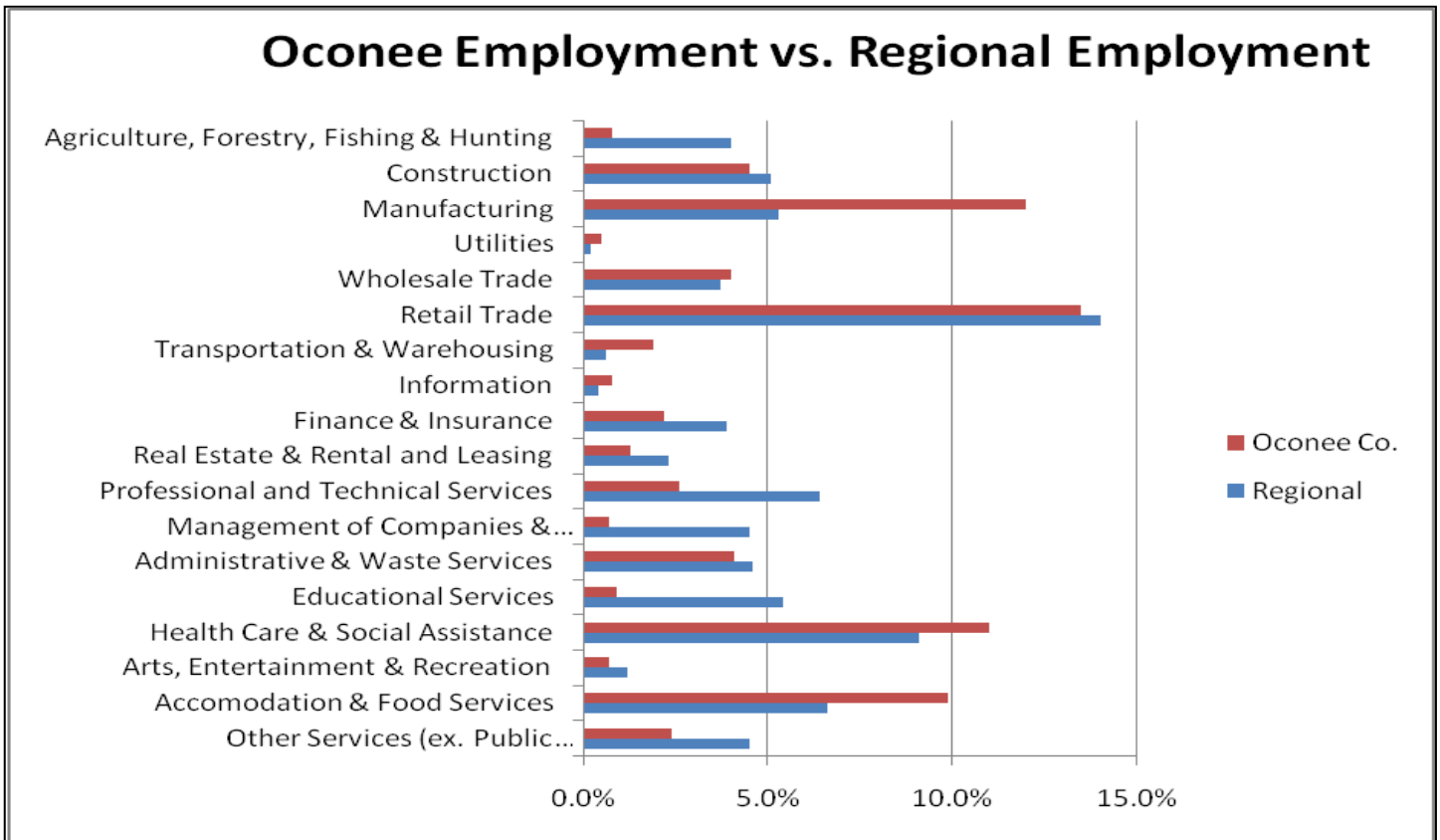
Labor Force

- The regional labor force has declined slightly over the past two years, increased each year, as well as in each individual county, over the previous five years.
- Barrow, Clarke and Walton counties each make up a large portion of the regional labor force due to their larger population bases.
- All counties in the region except Green and Oglethorpe have a labor force that is growing at roughly the same rate.



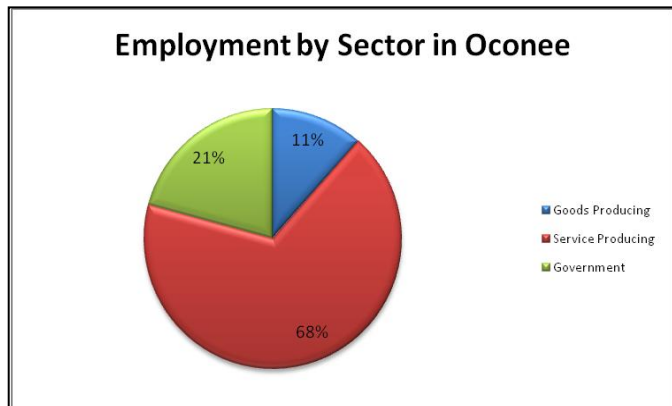
Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Yearly Average Labor Force Estimates

Industry Sector Employment



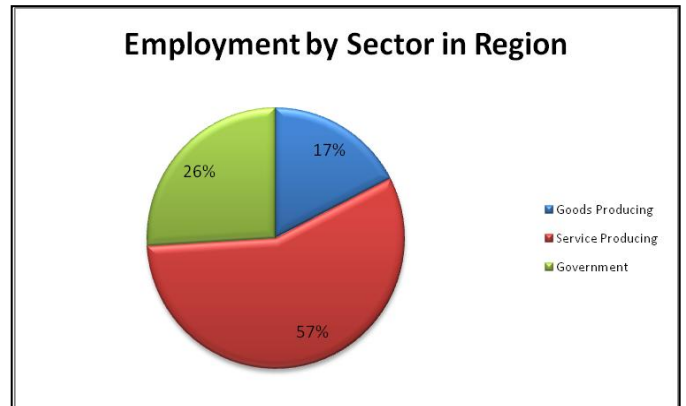
Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Area Labor Profile

- Retail trade in Oconee Co. continues to grow as a percentage of the overall employment.
- Oconee Co. has a higher percentage of white-collar jobs than the region as a whole.
- Oconee Co. has fewer manufacturing jobs than the region as a whole due primarily to the fact that Athens-Clarke and Jackson counties have higher industrial bases.



Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Area Labor Profile

- Oconee County outpaces the region in regards to the percentage of service jobs within the community.



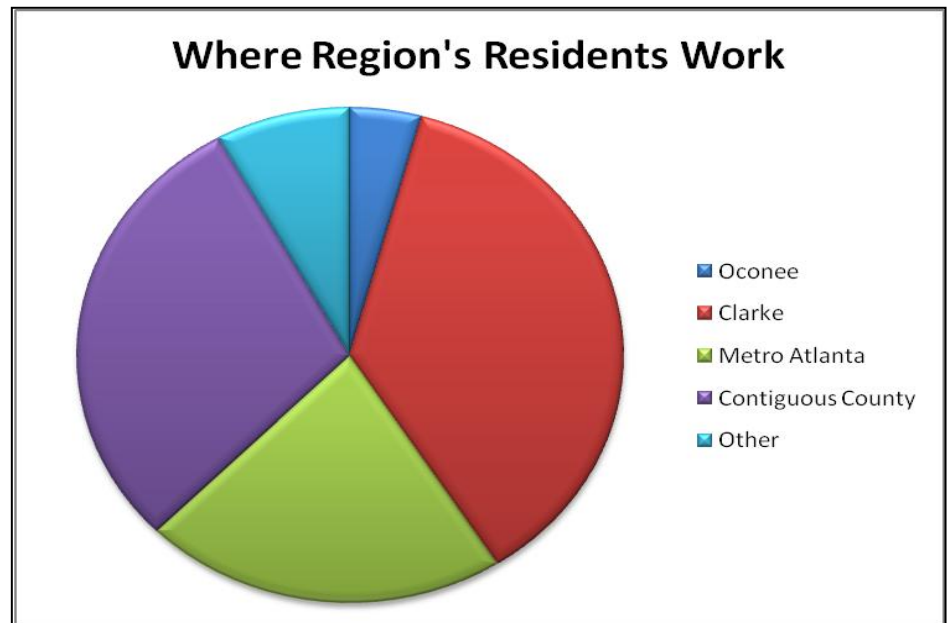
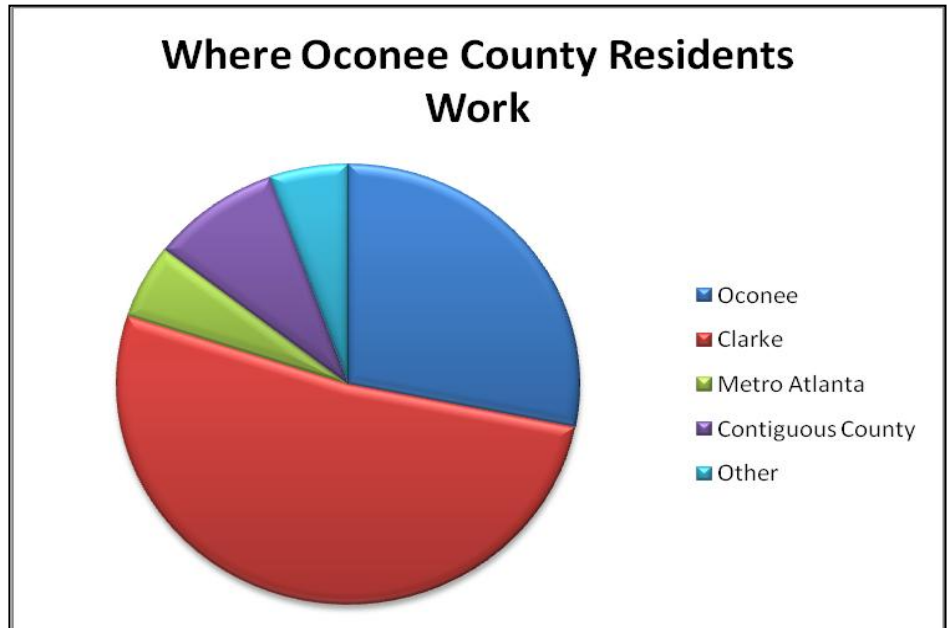
Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Area Labor Profile

- The high percentage of government jobs in the region is due, primarily, to The University of Georgia.

Commuting Patterns

- The majority of Oconee Co. residents commute outside of the county to work each day.
- Most Oconee Co. residents commute to Athens-Clarke Co. routinely due mainly to the presence of The University of Georgia and major regional health care opportunities.
- A small percentage of Oconee Co. residents commute to the metro-Atlanta area for work; however, that represents less than 6 percent of the overall Oconee Co. labor force.
- Athens-Clarke Co. serves as a regional employment center not only for Oconee Co. residents, but for residents throughout the region.
- More of the region’s residents work in Athens-Clarke Co. than Oconee Co. and the remaining six contiguous counties.
- Approximately 15% of the region’s residents work in metro-Atlanta counties. This is not surprising when considering that two contiguous counties are adjacent to metro-Atlanta counties.

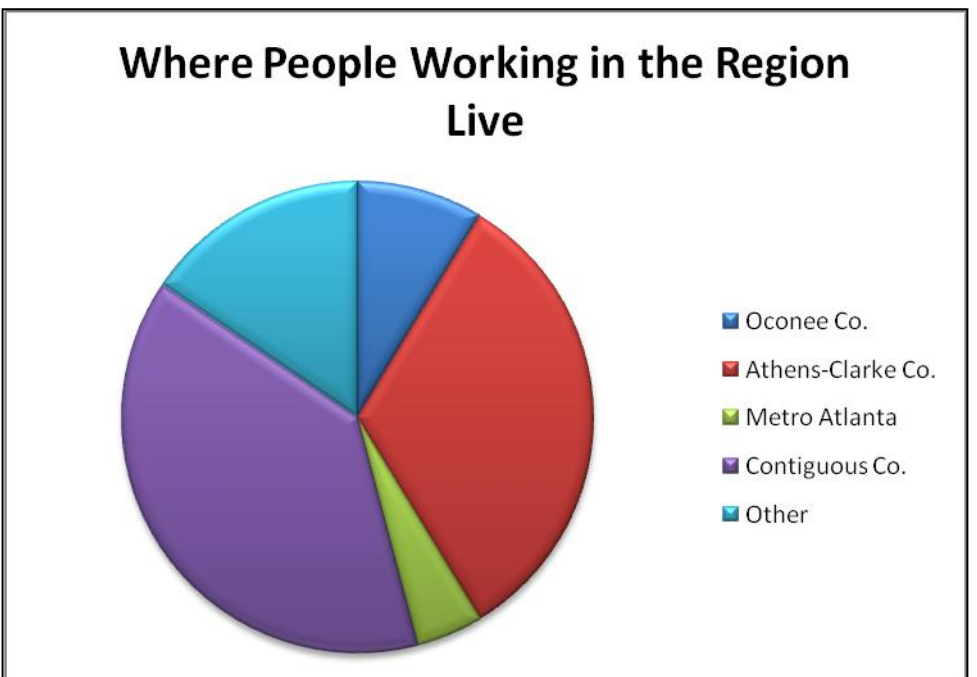
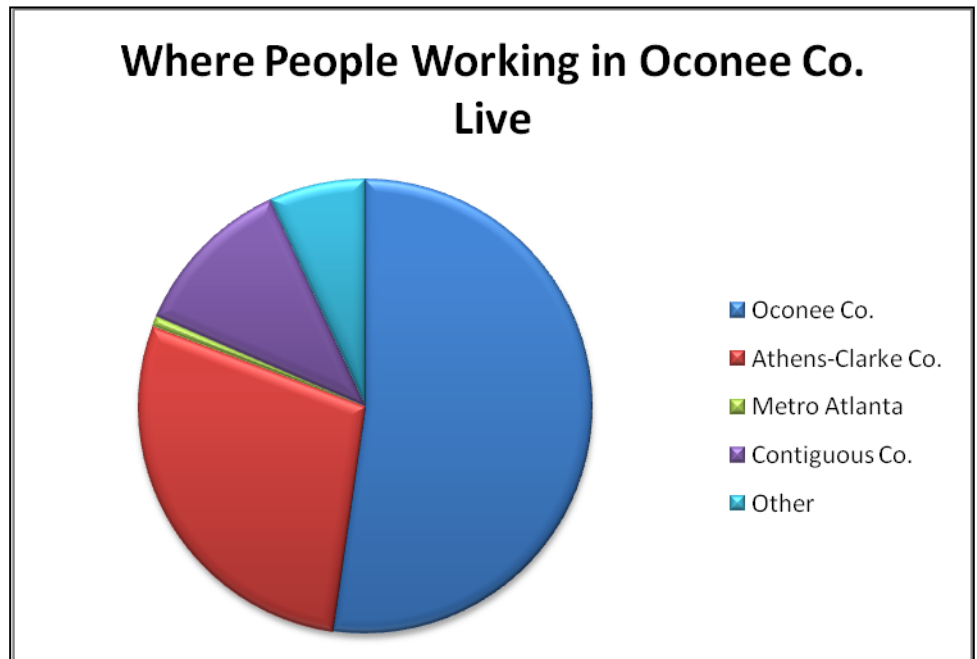
Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor



Commuting Patterns

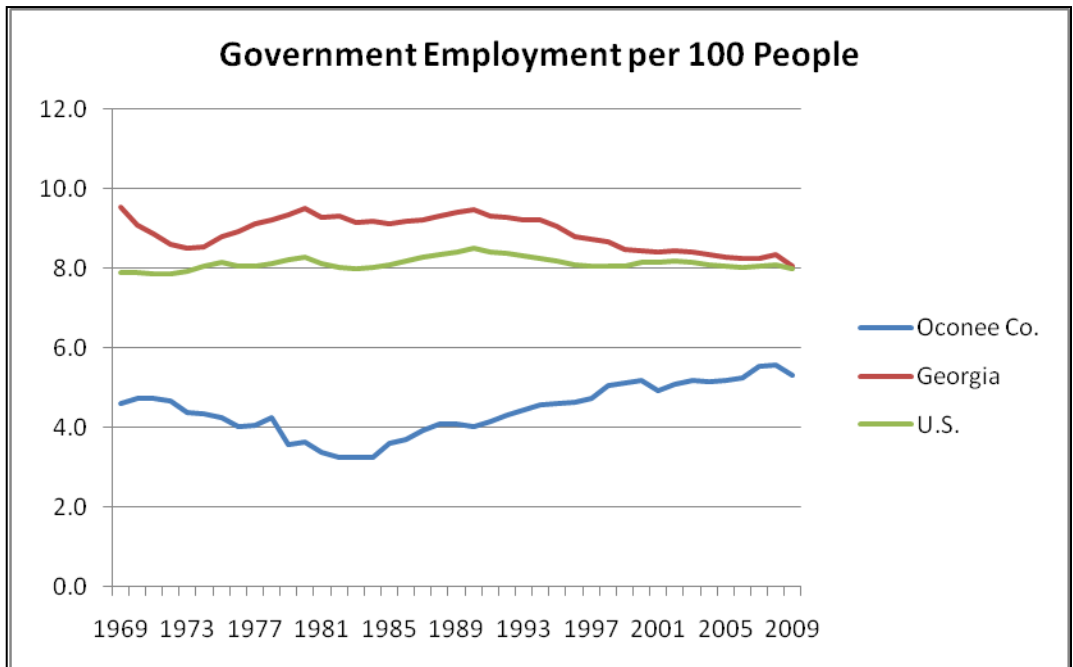
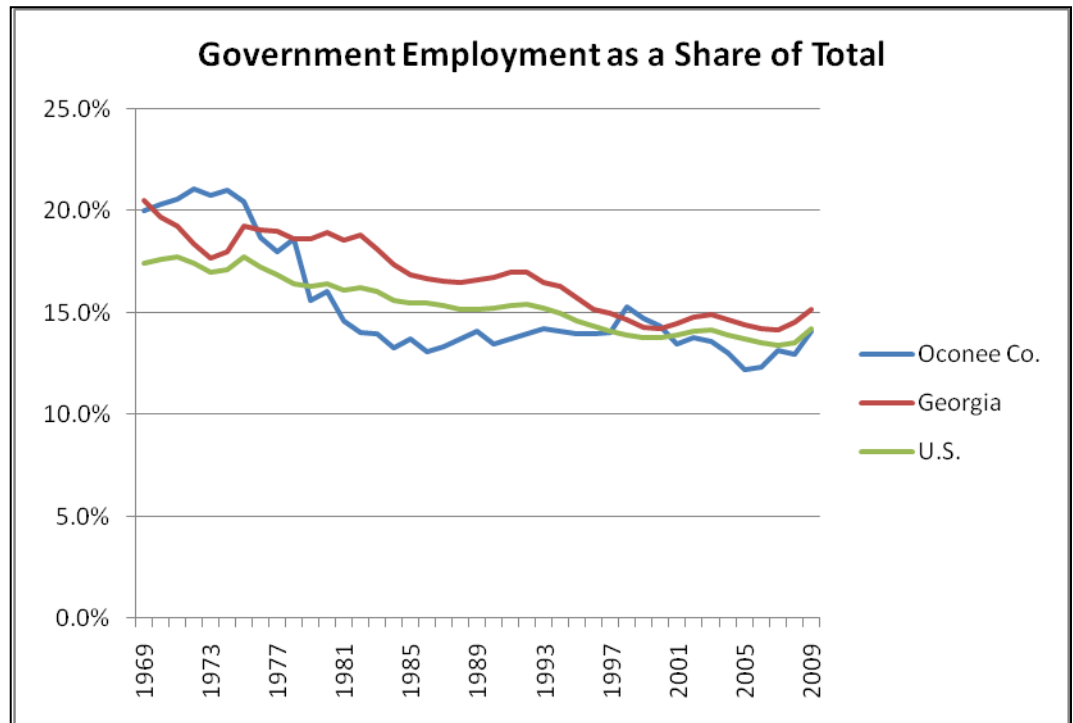
- Approximately half of persons working in Oconee Co. are actually county residents. The remainder come from elsewhere, but Athens-Clarke Co. is the largest supplier of workers to Oconee Co.
- Very few persons commute to Oconee Co. from communities that are not contiguous to Oconee.
- Less than 2 percent of persons working in Oconee Co. live in the Metro-Atlanta area.
- When considering the entire region’s labor force, the majority work within one of the counties that are contiguous to Oconee.
- Only 20 percent of the region’s workforce commutes from areas outside Oconee County and its contiguous counties.
- Less than 5 percent of the region’s total workforce commutes into the region from Metro-Atlanta counties each day.
- Oconee Co. residents make up approximately 9 percent of the region’s total workforce.

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor



Government Employment

- Traditionally, public sector employment in Oconee Co. has remained fairly consistent with state and national trends.
- Both nationally, statewide and locally, the level of government employment has been falling or remaining at a consistent level for approximately 35 years, with slight upticks in 1997 and within the last three years, using the percentage of the total employment as the measuring stick.
- The number of public sector jobs in Oconee Co. has increased in recent years due to expanded offerings at local recreation dept. facilities, the local board of education, and expanded course offerings at Gainesville State College.
- Oconee Co. has historically had fewer government jobs per capita than the state and nation. In fact, Oconee Co. is just over 2/3 of the state and national averages.
- This statistic takes into account state, federal, and local government jobs.



Source: BEA REIS Table CA 25 and CA25N

Cost of Living Index

According to Sperling's Best Places, Watkinsville (the county seat) has a cost of living that is slightly below the national average. In the categories of food, utilities, miscellaneous, and overall cost of living, the national average is represented by the value of "100". Oconee County's cost of living compares as follows.

| | Watkinsville/ Oconee Co. | United States |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Food | 99 | 100 |
| Utilities | 94 | 100 |
| Miscellaneous | 96 | 100 |
| Overall | 94 | 100 |

Source: *www.bestplaces.net*

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment levels within Oconee County (both in 1990 and 2000) exceed the averages achieved at both the state and national levels. The number of persons with high school degrees and associates degrees (or higher) both increased between 1990 and 2000. This is partially attributable to the transition away from an agrarian economy within the county and the state. The agrarian-based economy that was present throughout the area's history resulted in many people dropping out of school to assist their families on the farm.

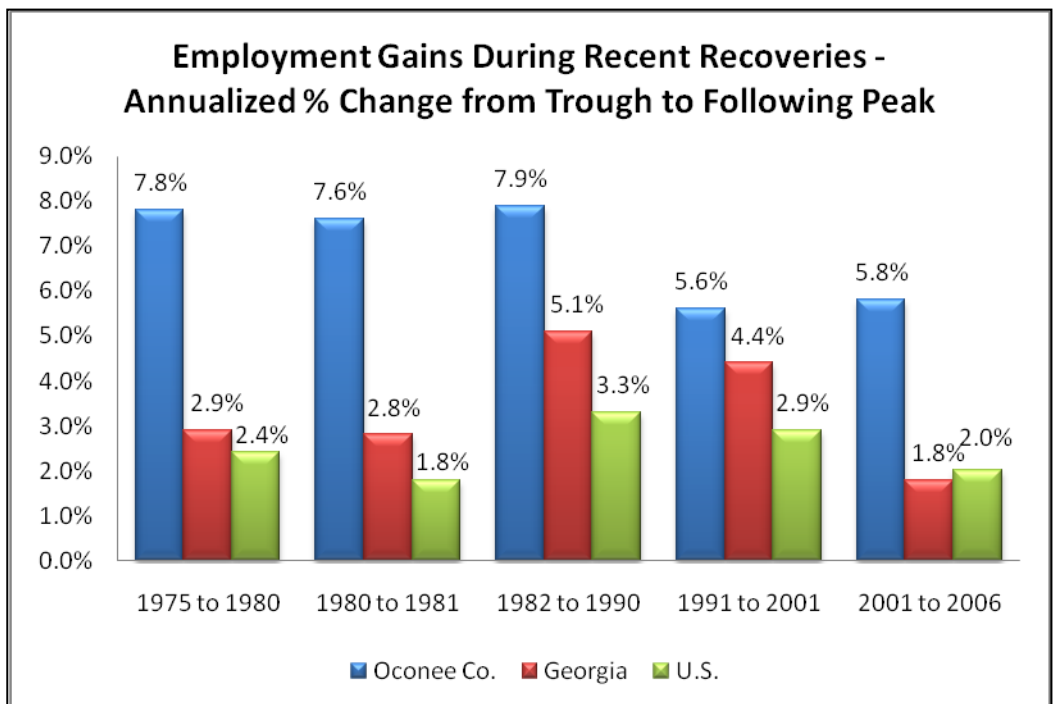
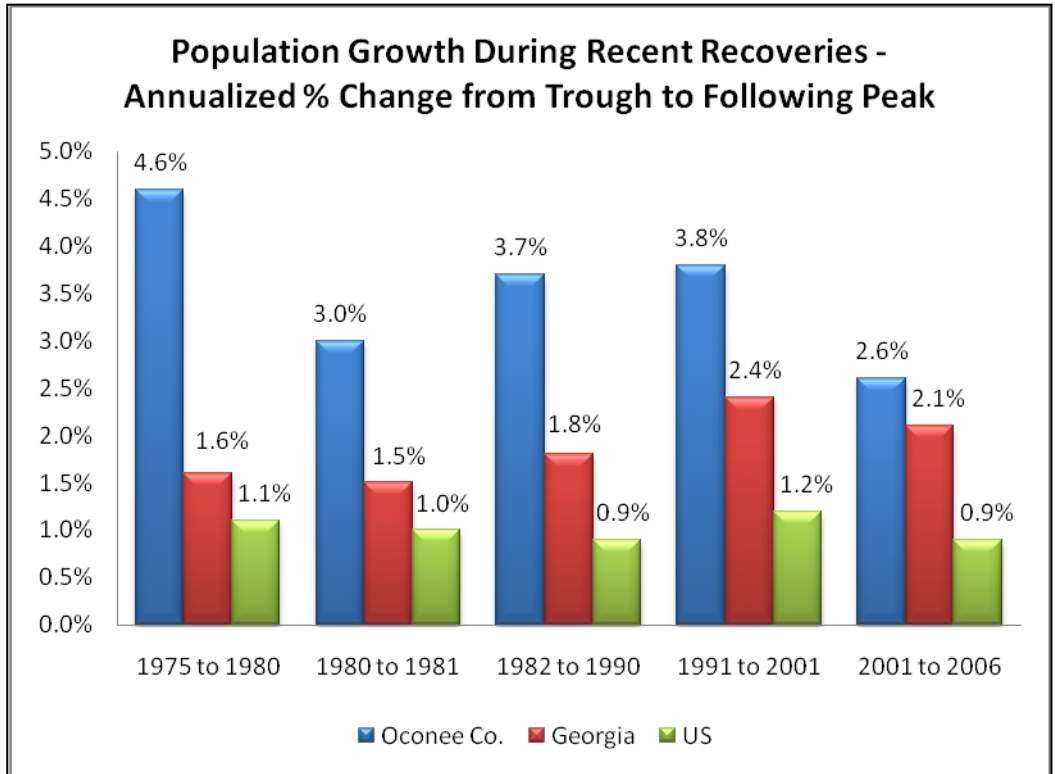
| | % with High School Diploma (1990) | % with Associates Degree or Higher (1990) | % with High School Diploma (2000) | % with Associates Degree or Higher (2000) |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Oconee Co. | 77.09% | 33.15% | 86.70% | 44.68% |
| Georgia | 70.92% | 24.27% | 78.57% | 29.50% |
| United States | 75.24% | 26.50% | 84.03% | 34.37% |

Source: *U.S. Census Bureau*

Recovery from Recessions

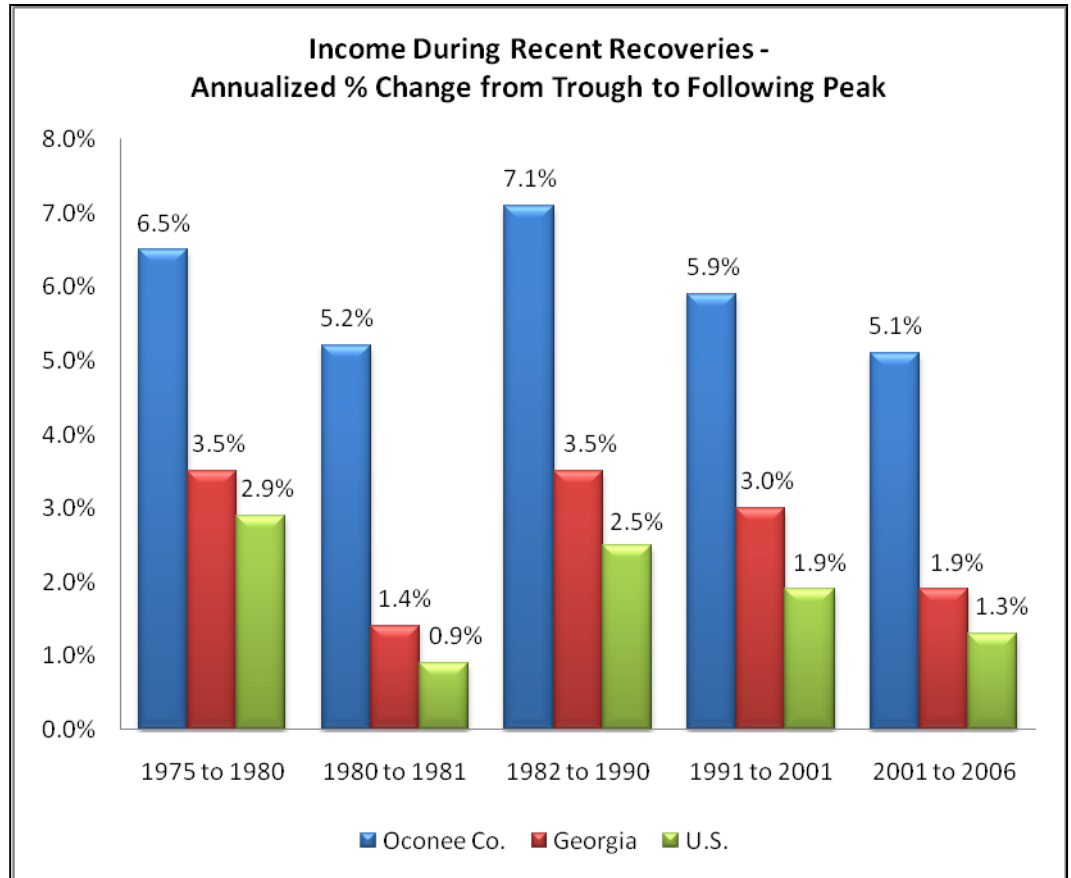
Note: Oconee County is currently suffering from a recession that is adversely affecting local, state, and national economies. Although this recession may be deeper and more painful than others in the past, recessions are not new phenomena. Following recessions, Oconee County has experienced a much healthier recovery than state and national areas of comparison. The following charts highlight periods between the trough (“bottom”) of one recession to the peak (“top”) of the next recession.

- Oconee County’s growth in population has always exceeded the growth within the state and nation for every recession since 1975.
- The gap between the growth rate in Oconee Co. vs. that of the state has been decreasing over the past two decades.
- The national growth rate during recession recovery has consistently hovered around 1 percent for each of the last five recessions.
- Employment gains within Oconee Co. have outpaced the population gains within the county following each of the five highlighted recessions by 150 to 250 percent.
- Oconee Co. traditionally experiences larger employment gains than the state or nation during periods of economic recovery.
- Most recently, Oconee Co. experienced employment gains over three times that of the state for the period spanning from 2001 to 2006.
- Oconee County’s lowest level of employment gain exceeds the highest level of employment gain at either the state or national level during periods of economic recovery.



Source: BEA REIS 2006 Table CA25 and CA25N

- Income growth within Oconee County has increased at roughly two times the rate of the state and nation during the last five periods of economic recovery from a recession.
- Income within Oconee Co. has increased at levels similar to the increased number of jobs within the county, but is slightly below the number of jobs.
- The period of the greatest income increase within Oconee Co. was the 1980s. The income increases were more than twice that of the state and almost three times that of the nation.



Source: BEA REIS 2006 Table CA25 and CA25N