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## Yates County Summary\*

### General Overview

Formed in 1823, Yates is the smallest county by population in the nine county Finger Lakes region. Situated in the southeast corner of the region and home to three of the Finger Lakes, the county's economy relies heavily on agriculture and tourism, and has seen a significant boost in manufacturing jobs since 2001.

Yates is the least racially and ethnically diverse county in the Finger Lakes Region – with a population that is 97% white – but nonetheless has seen growth in its small Asian, African American, and Hispanic populations. Yates has one of the highest child poverty rates in the region.

The unemployment rate in Yates County has rebounded since the Great Recession. Though average salaries are relatively low, Yates was the only regional county in which median household income kept up with inflation since 2000.

### Demographic Overview

Yates is the smallest county by population:

- In 2018, Yates was home to just under 25,000 residents, or 2% of the total regional population.
- The total population grew by 1.0% from 2000 to 2018, a smaller increase than the nation (16.3%) and state (3.0%) but above the region (0.3%).

Like other counties across our region and the state, Yates has an aging population, but to a lesser extent than some areas:

- In 2014-18, the number of adults aged 60-84 increased 38% and those 85 and older increased by 3%.
- Over that period, Yates' population under 20 fell 12%, less than the 14% drop in the region, and the second smallest decline among regional counties.

Yates is the most racially homogenous of the Finger Lakes counties:

- In 2018, 97% of Yates residents were white, far above the 64% for the state and 83% for the region. White residents' share in the surrounding counties as a whole was 93%.
- In 2014-18, the small populations of Asians, African Americans, and Hispanics have grown significantly.

*\*Please note, the indicator information included in this summary reflects the data available at the time of its composition. Some indicator data may have since been updated on our website. Visit [actrochester.org/all-indicators](http://actrochester.org/all-indicators) for updates.*

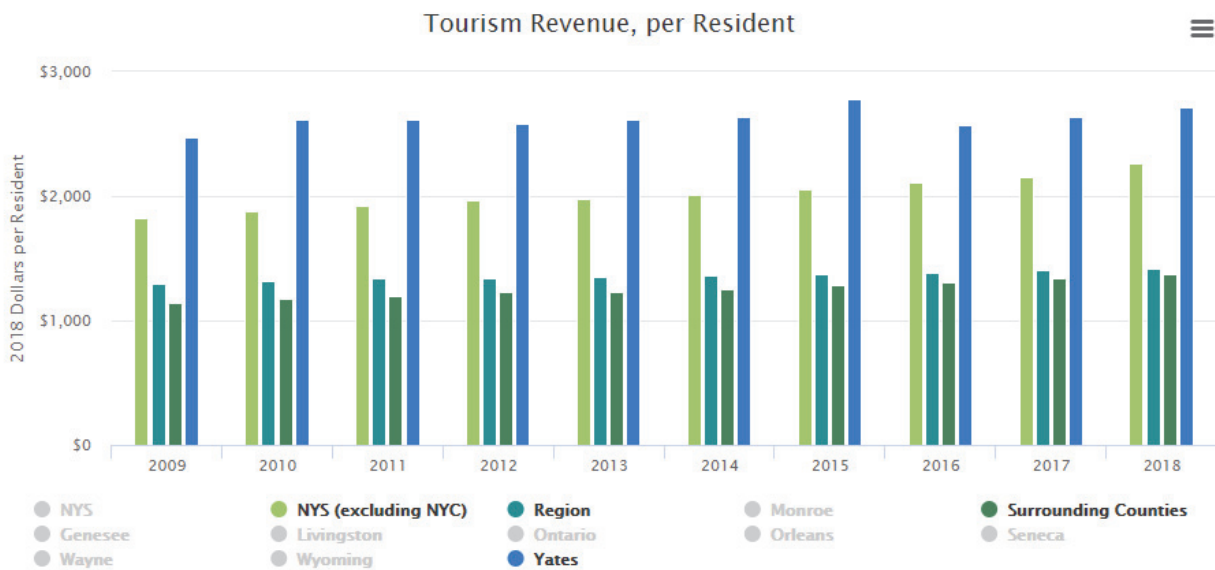
For Yates County, approximately 15% of the population is from the Mennonite Community:

- The largest group is from the Old Order Groffdale. Smaller numbers are with the Crystal Valley and Horning Groups. It is estimated that of the total 916 farms located in Yates County, 40% are owned by Mennonite Families, as are 98% of the Dairy Farms in the county.
- Each year, the birth cohort in Yates County is approximately 300 live births. In 2017, there were 319 total births in the county. Of this cohort, 151 were born to Mennonite parents, equating to 47% of the births for the year. This percentage appears to be rising annually.

## Community Vitality

In 2018, Yates led local counties in tourism revenue by resident, at \$2,717 and was the only county whose figure was higher than the state's excluding NYC (\$2,259):

- Tourism revenue in Yates for 2018 was nearly double the regional figure (\$1,419) and well above every other county in the region.
- Yates' revenue per person rose by 77% from 2005 to 2018.



In contrast, recreational spending was low in Yates (\$28 per resident) compared to the state (\$362) and region (\$80), an increase of 17% from the rate in 2005.

The voter registration rate in Yates County was among the lowest of all the counties in the region:

- In 2018, 74% of eligible Yates adults were registered to vote, below the state (82%) and regional figures (83%).
- Yates' rate fell by 13 points from 2000, in contrast to the generally unchanged rates for the state and region.

Yates' voter participation rate in 2018 was below the region but above the state:

- In the 2018 midterm elections, voter turnout in Yates was 42%, 16 points above the state and similar to the region. Yates' rate was down 8 points from the 2014 midterms.
- In the 2016 presidential election, 53% of registered voters cast votes, above the state (50%) but below the nation (55%) and region (59%). Yates' rate increased by 4 points from the 2012 presidential election.

The rate of registered library borrowers in Yates was below the state and region:

- In 2017, 54% of Yates residents were registered library borrowers, slightly below the state (56%) and well below the region (61%).
- Yates' rate fell 2 points since 2000, smaller than the decreases for most regional counties.

In 2017, the rate of charitable contributions as a percent of income in Yates was 1.2%, similar to most other counties in the region and, like those counties, lower than the nation (2.3%), state (2.5%) and the region as a whole (1.7%).

In 2014-18, Yates had among the highest shares of households without a vehicle (13%), higher than the nation (9%), the state excluding New York City and the region (both 10%).

- While most counties remained stable from 2000 to 2014-18, Yates increased 3 points during that period.
- According to local officials, these results could be relative to the large portion of Mennonite families that do not use vehicles.

## **Children and Youth**

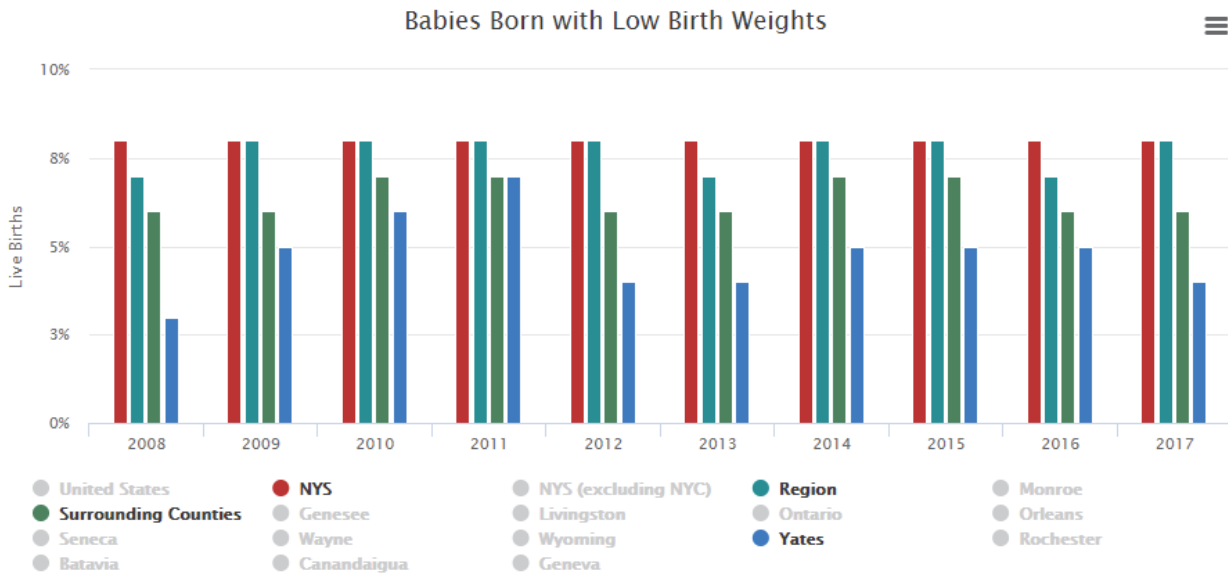
Yates has the lowest share of single-parent families in the region:

- In 2014-18, 27% of Yates families were headed by a single parent, below the nation (34%), the state (36%) and region (39%), and every regional county.
- The rate was 3 points lower than in 2000, the only decrease among all counties in the region, which had an increase of 8 points overall.

Yates' rate of early prenatal care is an outlier among the regional counties:

- In 2017, only 49% of mothers in Yates County received prenatal care in the first trimester, significantly below the region and state (both 77%), and all other regional counties. Yates' rate has consistently been much lower than the state, nation, region, and every county in the region.
- According to local officials, these results may be attributed to the use of midwives among the county's Mennonite population for prenatal care.

In 2017, 4.1% of babies in Yates had low birth weights, lower than the national, state and regional rates (all 8%). Along with Seneca, Yates' rate was the lowest of all the regional counties.



Source: New York State Department of Health

Yates had a rate of child abuse and neglect in 2018 that was far above the region and state:

- Yates' rate of 33 substantiated cases per 1,000 children in 2018 was nearly double the state (17) rate and higher than the regional (20) rate and only below the rate in Orleans. The rate has effectively doubled from 2000 when it was 16, as compared to a 23% increase for the state and a 39% increase for the region.

The rate of teen pregnancy in Yates – 1.3% in 2017 – was below the region and most other counties. The number of teen pregnancies fell 68% from 2000.

In 2017, there were 10 live births per 1,000 females in Yates County age 15 to 19, below the national rate (19), but above the state and region (12 and 13 respectively). The rate has decreased 49% since 2000.

## Economy

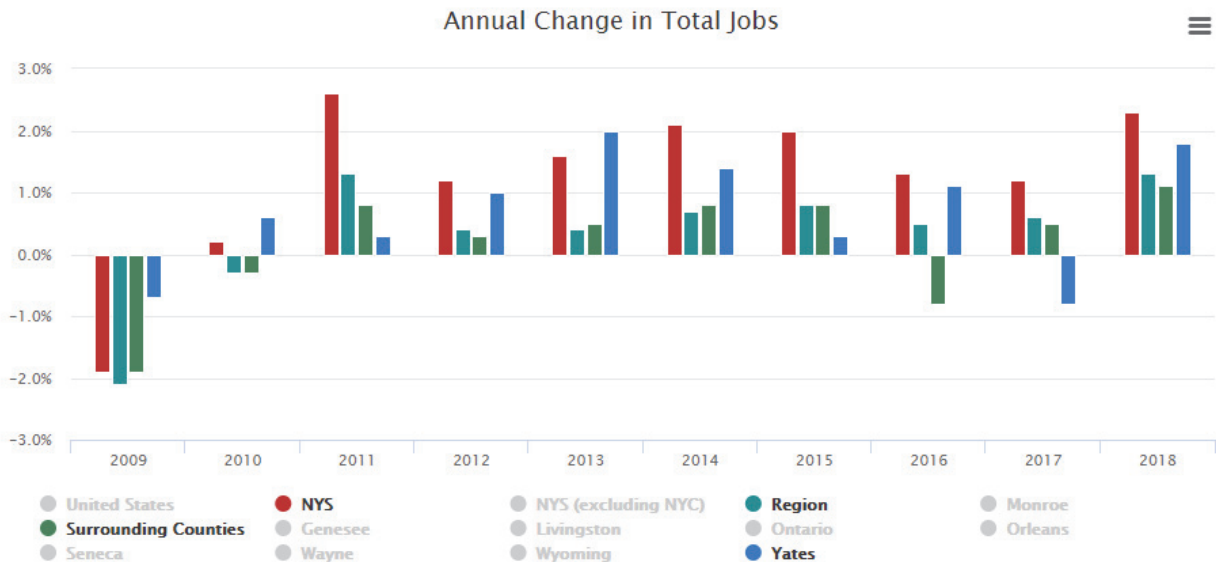
Yates had among the lowest unemployment rates in the region:

- In 2018, the unemployment rate in Yates was 3.8%, similar to the nation and below the state (4.1%), region (4.2%), and every regional county.
- Yates' unemployment rate has made progress since the recession, falling by nearly 3 points since 2010. Yates' recovery in terms of reduced unemployment since 2010 was not as strong as the state, region, and nation.

Overall job growth in Yates was above the region:

- In 2018, Yates experienced a 1.8% increase in jobs, higher than the region (1.3%), but

below the increases for the nation and state (2.0% and 2.3% respectively).



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Jobs in certain sectors grew more in Yates County at a rate greater than the region, state and nation:

- In 2018, jobs in Agriculture increased 16% since 2001 while Construction jobs increased 23% in the same period.
- The largest increases were seen in the Manufacturing section (46%), and Financial Activities (58%). The latter sector exceeds increases of those of the region, state and nation, while former is in stark contrast to decreases experienced by the region, state and nation (all decreased Manufacturing jobs by no less than 20%).

Yates' average salary in 2018 (\$35,555) was below the nation (\$57,265), state (\$72,902), region (\$49,172), and every other county in the region.

## Education

In 2018, 33% of eligible Yates children were enrolled in prekindergarten, below the state rate (52%) and the region (45%).

- Yates' rate rose by 9 points from 2008, a lower increase than the state and the region (up 33 and 25 points respectively).
- According to local officials, these results may be impacted by the county's Mennonite population whose children attend schools that may not be tracked by this indicator.

Yates underperformed the region and state on most 2019 Common Core-aligned tests but had higher scores on Regents:

- In 2019, 84% of Yates students passed the Common Core Algebra 1 Regents, above the state (71%), region (73%), and half of the county's regions. Yates students also scored higher than the state and region on the Common Core English Regents (88% passing).

- We note that a substantial number of students did not take state exams in 2019 due to parent concerns about testing in schools. In our region in 2019, 15% of 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders in the region opted not to take the English exam while 16% of 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders opted not to take the Math exams.

The graduation rate in Yates was 84% in 2019, below the region (86%), but a 13 point increase since 2009.

Fewer adults attended college in Yates than other counties in the region:

- In 2014-18, 52% of Yates adults had attended at least some college, below the region (62%), state (60%), and nation (61%). This was similar for the share of residents who had attained a bachelor's or higher.
- Yates had a higher proportion of high school graduates (34%) than the region (28%), state (26%) and nation (27%).
- According to local officials, these results may be impacted by the county's Mennonite population where students do not pursue education beyond 8th grade.

Overall per-student spending by Yates districts was \$24,661 in 2018, similar to the state excluding NYC (\$24,553), and above the region (\$22,703). Spending has increased by 90% since 2000, well above the state (61%) and region (50%).

At \$17,462, Yates had the highest per student cost for *instruction* (expenses directly related to a student's classroom experience) of all counties in the region, followed closely by Seneca (\$17,236). Since 2000, the county's instructional spending per student has increased nearly 79% (\$9,729 in 2000).

### **Economic Security**

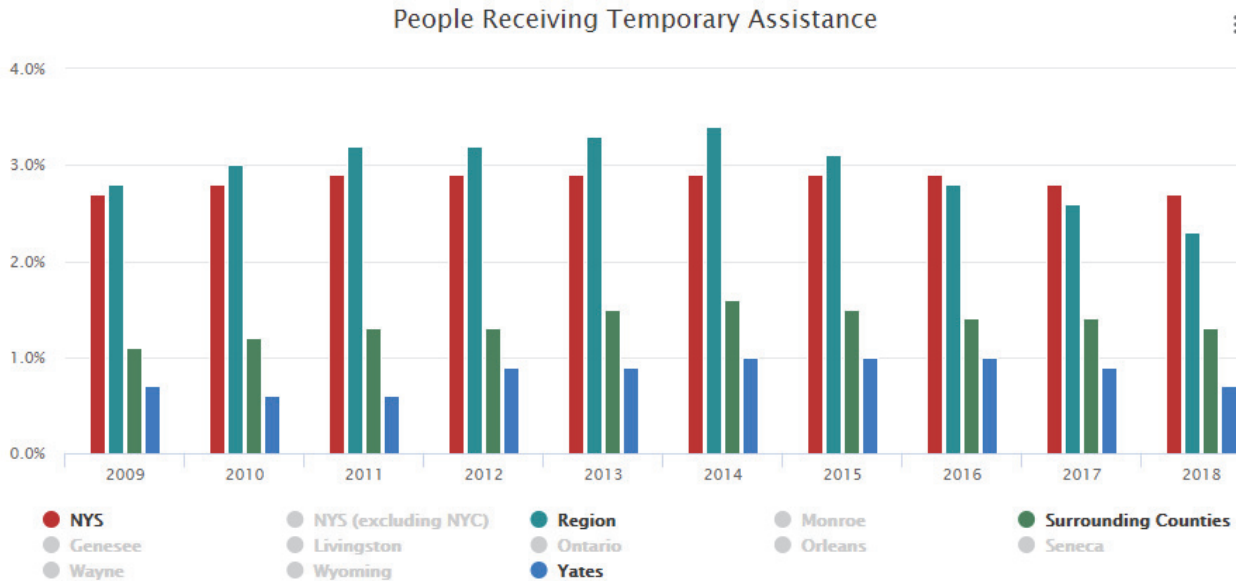
Yates was the only county that saw an increase, albeit small, in median household income in 2014-18:

- Yates' median household income increased 4% from 2000 and was the only county to increase in the region
- In 2014-18, median household income in Yates was \$54,343, lower than the nation (\$60,293), state (\$65,323), and region (\$57,350).

In 2014-18, 11% of Yates residents were below the poverty line, below the state (15%), nation and region (both 14%). Yates' rate decreased from 2000, in contrast to the national and regional increases (2 points and 4 points respectively).

Yates had a very low rate of people receiving temporary assistance:

- In 2018, 0.7% of residents received assistance, versus 2.7% for the state and 2.3% for the region. Yates had the lowest rate among regional counties besides Wyoming.



Source: New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

## Health

Yates had the highest rate of uninsured residents in the region:

- In 2018, 8% of Yates residents lacked health insurance, below the nation, but greater than the state (6%), region (5%), and every other regional county.
- According to local officials, the county’s Mennonite population is largely self-insured through their respective churches. Mennonite families may receive help with healthcare costs from the church. While this population’s medical costs may be “covered”, they will not be counted in this indicator as “insured” residents.

In 2017, 2 cases of gonorrhea per 10,000 residents were reported in Yates County, among the lowest in the region and much lower than the region and state (18 and 19 per 10,000 residents).

In 2018, 0.4 cases of early syphilis per 10,000 residents were reported in Yates County, lower than the region (1.8) and the state (3.5).

Yates’ mortality rate, while higher than the state and region, has fallen since 2000. In 2017, Yates’ mortality rate was 771 per 100,000 residents, greater than the statewide (610) and regional (700) rates.

## **Housing**

Home values in Yates rose more than any other county in the region besides Ontario:

- In 2014-18, the median home value in Yates was \$128,800, below the nation (\$204,900), state (\$302,200), and region (\$135,915).
- From 2000 to 2014-18, the median home value in Yates rose by 12%, and in contrast to a decrease for the region (down 1%).

Yates was more affordable for homeowners relative to the nation and state, but similar to nearly every other county in the region, renting was less affordable in 2014-18:

- The ratio of median home value to median income was 2.4 in 2014-18, on par with the region and similar to most regional counties but well below the nation (3.4) and state (4.6). A ratio below 2 or 3 is considered affordable.
- In 2014-18, Yates renters spent 33% of their income on rent, similar to the nation (32%) and region (34%), but below the state (36%). A proportion under 30% is considered affordable.

In 2014-18, 79% of homes in Yates were owner-occupied, a higher share than the nation (64%), state (54%), and region (68%). Yates' rate was higher than all regional counties.

The rate of vacant housing units was 35% in Yates County for 2014-18, the highest in the region and a 9-point increase since 2000. However, this rate may reflect seasonal vacancies in the county.

## **Public Safety**

Yates' rate of serious crimes has decreased overall since 2000:

- In 2018, there were 99 serious crimes per 10,000 residents in Yates, well below the national (257), statewide (178), and regional (190) rates.
- The rate decreased 30% since 2000, below the statewide (42%), national (38%) and regional (46%) decreases, but similar to about half of the other counties in the region. Yates' rate was the second-lowest in the region.

Yates had among the lowest violent crime rates in the region, at 7 per 10,000 residents. This was well below the state (35), nation (37), and region (24), and was a decrease of 35% from 2000.

Yates had the lowest arrest rate in the region, 128 per 10,000 residents. Arrests in 2018 were far less in Yates compared to the state (209) and the region (188).

Yates County had an incarceration rate of approximately 17 per 10,000 residents in 2018, above the statewide and regional rates (12 and 13 respectively).

*To learn more about our cities, counties and region, visit <https://actrochester.org/>.*