2021

A publication of Forward Analytics
A Division of the Wisconsin Counties Association

THE
GREEN
BOOK

A book of county facts, 4th Edition

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Introduction

Wisconsin counties are essential for our state to prosper. In addition to maintaining both county and state highways, county social and public health services aid the state's most vulnerable citizens. County governments provide these and a vast array of other services in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible.

Long range, strategic thinking is critical to successfully carrying out the county mission. Data plays an important role in strategic planning. To this end, Forward Analytics, a division of the Wisconsin Counties Association, is pleased to present the 4th edition of *The Green Book, A Book of County Facts*.

Included in this fact book is information on county government structure, county demographics, finances, employment, and new construction.

Counties can use the data contained in *The Green Book* for a variety of purposes including gauging future service needs, economic development planning, and forecasting revenues and expenditures.

In addition to the 48 pages of data for all counties, a data sheet containing all of *The Green Book* data for your county can be found at the back of the book.

The Green Book is also available interactively at *www.forward-analytics.net*. If you would like additional copies to share, give us a call at 608-663-7188.

I hope you find this tool useful as you continue to make Wisconsin's counties wonderful places to live, work, and prosper.

Mark D. O'Connell, Executive Director
Wisconsin Counties Association

How to Use This Book

The Green Book is organized into four color-coded sections, each with a variety of measures:

- *Wisconsin's Counties* (orange) has information on county administration and board size.
- *Population* (blue) shows population change, the size of various age cohorts, veteran population, educational attainment, and commuting patterns.
- *Finances* (red) includes information on county revenues, spending, and debt.
- *Economy/Development* (purple) highlights jobs and unemployment, income and poverty, property values, and county highway miles.

Most measures have information on two pages. On the first page is a color-coded map that organizes counties into four groups of 18 (quartiles). For those unfamiliar with county locations, a map can be found on page 2. For each measure, the 18 counties with the lowest numbers are shown with the lightest color; the 18 with the highest numbers are darkest. The key below the map shows the ranges for each quartile.

The second page displays a table of detailed information for each county. The statewide average and median (half of counties lower, half higher) are shown below the table.

In the back of the book is a county insert that summarizes your county's information on all of the measures in *The Green Book*. For each measure, it also shows the county's rank among the 72 counties, as well as the state average.

County Government in Brief

Wisconsin has 72 counties whose boundaries were drawn by the legislature and are specified in state law. Generally, county boundary lines run north to south and east to west or follow major physical features.

Counties are governed by a county board of supervisors who are elected for two-year terms. While a "self-organized" county can opt to have supervisor terms concurrent or staggered, none have chosen the latter option. Thus, all supervisors in the state are elected in the spring election of even-numbered years.

Each county determines the size of its board, subject to a statutory maximum that is based on county population. Board size can be changed following the decennial census. Additionally, the number of supervisors can be reduced once between each decennial census by resolution or by citizen petition and referendum.

Counties must have a central administrative officer. A county can create an office of county executive or county administrator, or it can designate an individual holding an existing elective or appointive office (other than county supervisor) to also serve as the administrative coordinator.

County constitutional officers are elected to four-year terms in the fall partisan general election. These include the county clerk, county treasurer, register of deeds, clerk of circuit court, and sheriff.

Counties provide a variety of services, many of which are state mandated. They enforce the state's criminal laws and incarcerate many violators of those laws. They maintain state-mandated vital and property records, and oversee elections. They also administer state human service programs and maintain both county and state roads.

County Types

One way to characterize Wisconsin counties is by how urban or rural they are. Urban counties can be thought of as part of a metropolitan statistical area, or MSA, which is a group of counties with close economic ties and relatively high population at its core. Twenty-six counties in Wisconsin are part of an MSA. A micropolitan statistical area is a county or group of counties (sometimes from different states) with close economic ties and centered on a core area of 10,000 to 50,000 people. Fourteen counties fall into this category. The remaining 32 counties are neither metropolitan nor micropolitan. Most economic researchers consider micropolitan and "neither" counties rural.

Wisconsin County Map, 2020
Metropolitan, Micropolitan, Neither

Metropolitan   Micropolitan   Neither
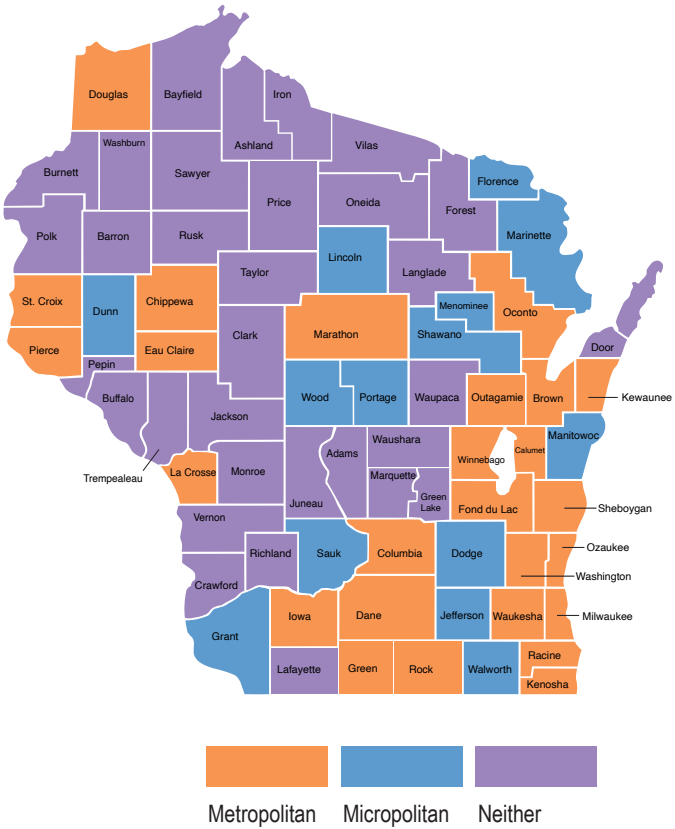
County Board Size

Maximum county board sizes are set by state law and depend on population. Some county boards are smaller due to board policy or approval by voters in a referendum. Board members are elected by district. The average number of residents per district varies widely, from fewer than 1,000 in 14 counties to nearly 53,000 in Milwaukee County.

**Board Size and Population Per District, 2020**
(in thousands)

County	Bd. Size	Pop./ Dist.	County	Bd. Size	Pop./ Dist.
Adams	20	1.0	Marathon	38	3.6
Ashland	21	0.8	Marinette	30	1.4
Barron	29	1.6	Marquette	17	0.9
Bayfield	13	1.2	Menominee	7	0.6
Brown	26	10.1	Milwaukee	18	52.6
Buffalo	14	1.0	Monroe	16	2.9
Burnett	21	0.7	Oconto	31	1.3
Calumet	21	2.5	Oneida	21	1.7
Chippewa	15	4.3	Outagamie	36	5.2
Clark	29	1.2	Ozaukee	26	3.5
Columbia	28	2.0	Pepin	12	0.6
Crawford	17	1.0	Pierce	17	2.5
Dane	37	14.5	Polk	15	3.0
Dodge	33	2.7	Portage	25	2.9
Door	21	1.4	Price	13	1.1
Douglas	21	2.1	Racine	21	9.4
Dunn	29	1.5	Richland	21	0.9
Eau Claire	29	3.6	Rock	29	5.5
Florence	12	0.4	Rusk	19	0.8
Fond du Lac	25	4.2	St. Croix	19	4.7
Forest	21	0.4	Sauk	31	2.0
Grant	17	3.1	Sawyer	15	1.1
Green	31	1.2	Shawano	27	1.5
Green Lake	19	1.0	Sheboygan	25	4.7
Iowa	21	1.1	Taylor	17	1.2
Iron	15	0.4	Trempealeau	17	1.8
Jackson	19	1.1	Vernon	29	1.0
Jefferson	30	2.8	Vilas	21	1.0
Juneau	21	1.3	Walworth	11	9.5
Kenosha	23	7.4	Washburn	21	0.8
Kewaunee	20	1.0	Washington	26	5.3
La Crosse	29	4.1	Waukesha	25	16.2
Lafayette	16	1.1	Waupaca	27	1.9
Langlade	21	1.0	Waushara	11	2.2
Lincoln	22	1.3	Winnebago	36	4.7
Manitowoc	25	3.3	Wood	19	4.0

County Administration

Wisconsin provides counties with three options for the daily management of county government. A county executive is elected every four years in nonpartisan spring elections. The executive appoints certain personnel, submits budgets, and exercises veto powers. A county administrator is appointed by the county board and has many of the same powers as an executive. Administrators do not have veto power. Counties not choosing one of these two options are required to designate an administrative coordinator, either on a full-time or part-time basis.

In 2021, 12 counties had an elected county executive and 31 had a county administrator. The remaining 29 counties designated either a full-time (8) or part-time (21) administrative coordinator.

Administration Type, 2021

Administrator Type

PT Admin. Coordinator — FT Admin. Coordinator — Administrator — Executive
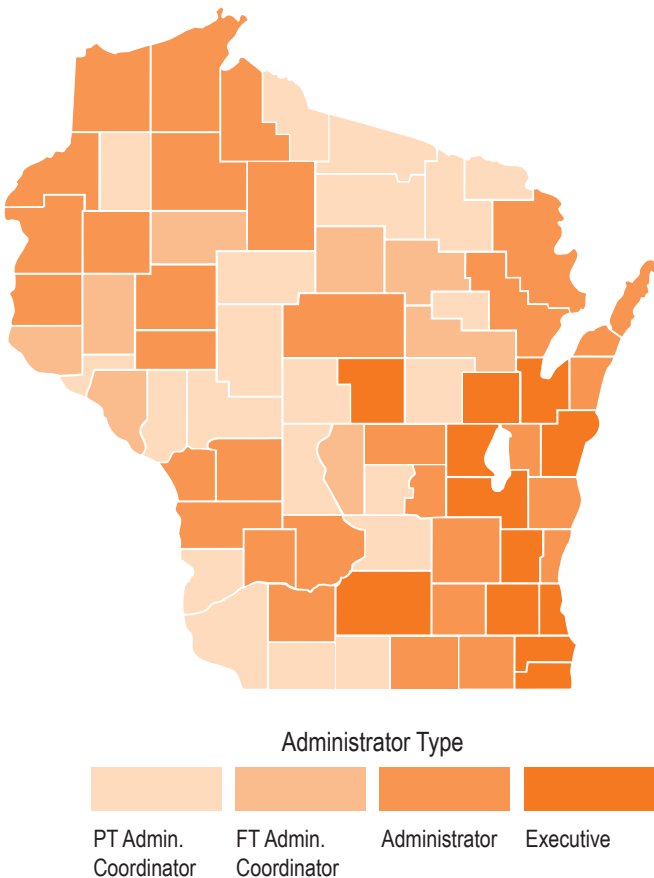
Source: Wisconsin Counties Association, 6/1/21

Administration Type, 2021

County	Type	County	Type
Adams	Coord.-FT	Marathon	Admin.
Ashland	Admin.	Marinette	Admin.
Barron	Admin.	Marquette	Coord.-PT
Bayfield	Admin.	Menominee	Coord.-PT
Brown	Exec.	Milwaukee	Exec.
Buffalo	Coord.-FT	Monroe	Admin.
Burnett	Admin.	Oconto	Admin.
Calumet	Admin.	Oneida	Coord.-PT
Chippewa	Admin.	Outagamie	Exec.
Clark	Coord.-PT	Ozaukee	Admin.
Columbia	Coord.-PT	Pepin	Coord.-PT
Crawford	Coord.-PT	Pierce	Coord.-FT
Dane	Exec.	Polk	Admin.
Dodge	Admin.	Portage	Exec.
Door	Admin.	Price	Admin.
Douglas	Admin.	Racine	Exec.
Dunn	Coord.-FT	Richland	Admin.
Eau Claire	Admin.	Rock	Admin.
Florence	Coord.-PT	Rusk	Coord.-FT
Fond du Lac	Exec.	St. Croix	Admin.
Forest	Coord.-PT	Sauk	Admin.
Grant	Coord.-PT	Sawyer	Admin.
Green	Coord.-PT	Shawano	Coord.-FT
Green Lake	Admin.	Sheboygan	Admin.
Iowa	Admin.	Taylor	Coord.-PT
Iron	Coord.-PT	Trempealeau	Coord.-PT
Jackson	Coord.-PT	Vernon	Admin.
Jefferson	Admin.	Vilas	Coord.-PT
Juneau	Coord.-PT	Walworth	Admin.
Kenosha	Exec.	Washburn	Coord.-PT
Kewaunee	Admin.	Washington	Exec.
La Crosse	Admin.	Waukesha	Exec.
Lafayette	Coord.-PT	Waupaca	Coord.-PT
Langlade	Coord.-FT	Waushara	Admin.
Lincoln	Coord.-FT	Winnebago	Exec.
Manitowoc	Exec.	Wood	Coord.-PT

Exec. = Executive; Admin. = Administrator
Coord. = Administrative Coordinator; PT = part-time; FT = full-time

POPULATION

Country population can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. Is it growing or declining? How many school-aged or working-aged people reside in the county? What levels of education do adult residents have? Do residents work in the county or commute to neighboring counties?

Understanding county demography can help policymakers gauge a region's potential for growth and the degree to which current and future service demands are placed on county government.

Seven demographic measures are provided in this section. Although presented separately, some of these measures are related to each other. For example, the working-age share of the population depends not only on the size of that age group, but also on the size of the school-aged and senior populations.

The fastest-growing counties tend to be more urban and have a younger population. Compared to slower-growing counties, a larger portion of their population is of working age. Fast-growing counties tend to have more residents with post-secondary degrees, either at the associate or bachelor's level. This, in turn, can attract employers and ensure better-paying jobs that serve as a magnet to attract workers from other counties.

Counties with aging populations often grow more slowly and are more likely to face worker shortages. As the maps on the following pages reveal, such counties tend to be located in the north, in the central part of the state, or to the southwest.

Population Change

Population change can have both economic and service implications. Changes in the number of residents are due to both internal and external factors. Natural population change (internal) is the difference between the number of births in a county and the number of deaths.

Migration (external) is when residents of other Wisconsin counties, states, or countries move into a county. Net migration is the difference between the number of residents moving out of a county and the number moving in.

A growing population spurs local businesses and demand for public services. A shrinking population can mean less economic activity and a smaller tax base.

Population Change, 2015-20
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent Change

Change: Low to High

1st Quartile	2nd Quartile	3rd Quartile	Top Quartile
To -0.12%	-0.11-0.53%	0.54-1.58%	1.59% & over

Source: Wisconsin Demographic Services Center

Population Change, 2015-20

County	% Change	County	% Change
Adams	-0.75	Marathon	1.40
Ashland	-1.22	Marinette	-0.67
Barron	0.70	Marquette	-0.29
Bayfield	0.98	Menominee	0.54
Brown	3.70	Milwaukee	-0.60
Buffalo	-0.01	Monroe	3.05
Burnett	-0.26	Oconto	1.85
Calumet	5.29	Oneida	0.10
Chippewa	2.83	Outagamie	3.50
Clark	-0.41	Ozaukee	3.36
Columbia	0.19	Pepin	-0.34
Crawford	-0.36	Pierce	2.82
Dane	6.89	Polk	0.83
Dodge	0.46	Portage	1.03
Door	2.11	Price	0.26
Douglas	-0.33	Racine	0.14
Dunn	1.11	Richland	0.22
Eau Claire	2.96	Rock	0.04
Florence	-0.16	Rusk	0.64
Fond du Lac	1.21	St. Croix	5.55
Forest	-1.12	Sauk	1.83
Grant	-0.99	Sawyer	1.05
Green	0.11	Shawano	-0.26
Green Lake	0.02	Sheboygan	1.40
Iowa	0.33	Taylor	0.38
Iron	-0.27	Trempealeau	2.53
Jackson	0.45	Vernon	1.49
Jefferson	0.52	Vilas	0.83
Juneau	0.97	Walworth	1.58
Kenosha	1.80	Washburn	0.49
Kewaunee	0.21	Washington	3.58
La Crosse	2.90	Waukesha	3.26
Lafayette	0.35	Waupaca	-0.52
Langlade	0.78	Waushara	-0.26
Lincoln	-0.12	Winnebago	0.79
Manitowoc	-0.03	Wood	0.55

Statewide Measures			
Average	1.76%	Median	0.53%

Working-Age Population

Counties with larger working-age populations often have higher average incomes. These counties have a greater number of wage earners over which to spread the cost of public services and, likely, fewer residents in need of county services.

In 2019, residents 25 to 64 years of age (prime working ages) accounted for 51.4% of Wisconsin's population, down from 52.7% four years earlier. As the senior population grows rapidly for the foreseeable future, this percentage will continue to fall.

Percentage of Population 25 to 64, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent

Percent: Low to High

| 1st Quartile | 2nd Quartile | 3rd Quartile | Top Quartile |
| To 48.4% | 48.5-50.3% | 50.4-51.8% | 51.9% & over |
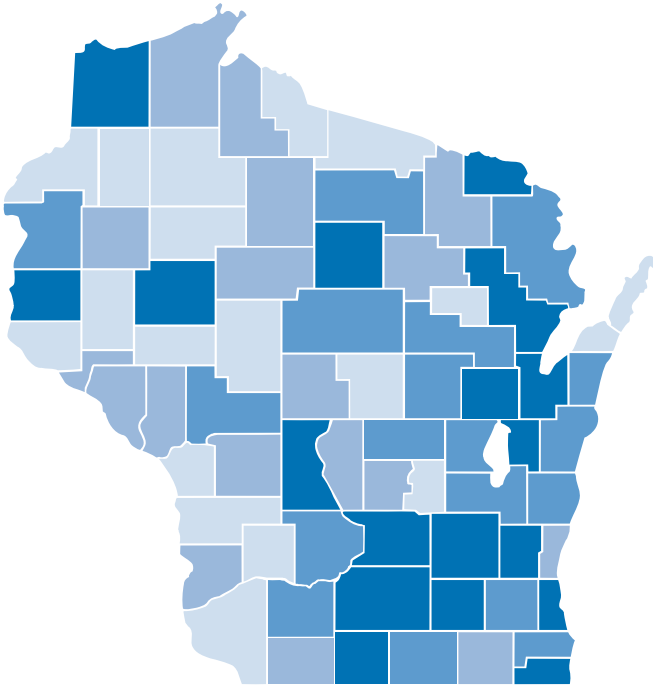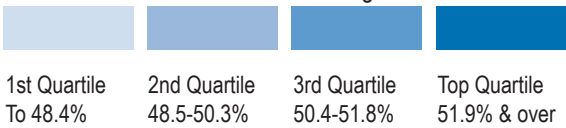
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Percentage of Population 25 to 64, 2019

County	% 25-64	County	% 25-64
Adams	50.3	Marathon	51.6
Ashland	48.7	Marinette	50.3
Barron	49.2	Marquette	49.9
Bayfield	48.8	Menominee	43.8
Brown	51.9	Milwaukee	52.7
Buffalo	49.8	Monroe	50.3
Burnett	47.6	Oconto	52.7
Calumet	53.6	Oneida	50.4
Chippewa	52.5	Outagamie	53.1
Clark	45.3	Ozaukee	49.8
Columbia	53.2	Pepin	49.0
Crawford	48.7	Pierce	48.3
Dane	52.3	Polk	51.5
Dodge	54.5	Portage	47.7
Door	47.6	Price	49.5
Douglas	52.8	Racine	51.7
Dunn	45.9	Richland	47.8
Eau Claire	47.9	Rock	51.6
Florence	53.8	Rusk	48.4
Fond du Lac	51.3	St. Croix	53.3
Forest	49.0	Sauk	50.9
Grant	44.3	Sawyer	48.1
Green	51.9	Shawano	50.4
Green Lake	48.1	Sheboygan	51.4
Iowa	51.5	Taylor	50.2
Iron	47.8	Trempealeau	49.6
Jackson	51.7	Vernon	47.2
Jefferson	52.5	Vilas	46.7
Juneau	52.7	Walworth	48.5
Kenosha	53.3	Washburn	48.1
Kewaunee	50.5	Washington	52.7
La Crosse	47.8	Waukesha	51.8
Lafayette	49.0	Waupaca	51.5
Langlade	49.2	Waushara	50.6
Lincoln	52.8	Winnebago	51.2
Manitowoc	51.2	Wood	50.3

Statewide Measures			
Average	51.4%	Median	50.3%

Senior Population

Wisconsin, like the rest of the nation, is experiencing the retirement of the large baby-boom generation. Since 2010, Wisconsin's 65-or-older population has increased by nearly 240,000. As this group leaves the work-force, counties may struggle with worker shortages. Additionally, as this large group ages, the demand for assisted living, nursing homes, and various social services will rise.

Residents 65 or older accounted for 17.5% of the state's population in 2019, up from 13.7% in 2010. In 55 of 72 counties, the senior share of the population was above the state average. In 13 counties, seniors accounted for more than a quarter of the population.

Percentage of Population 65 or Older, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent
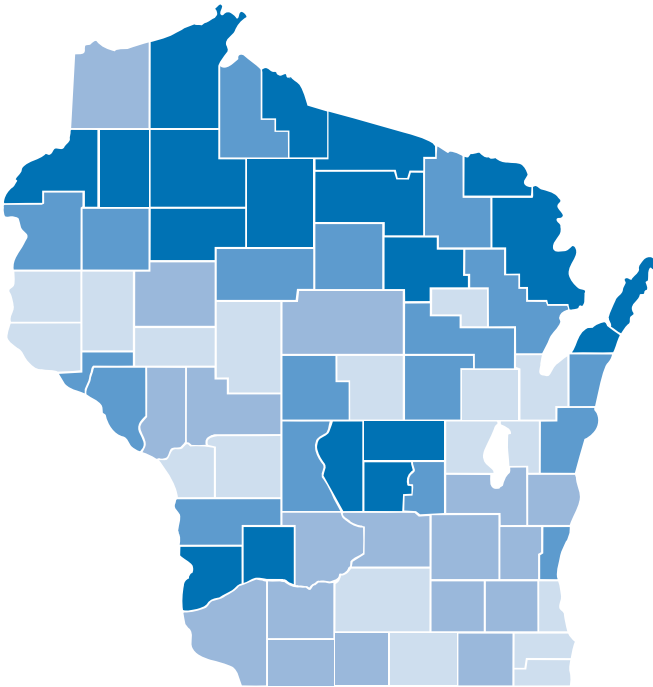
Percent: Low to High

1st Quartile To 17.5%	2nd Quartile 17.6-19.5%	3rd Quartile 19.6-23.5%	Top Quartile 23.6% & over
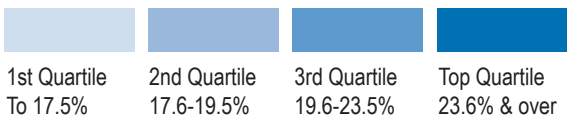
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Percentage of Population 65 or Older, 2019

County	% 65+	County	% 65+
Adams	30.2	Marathon	18.2
Ashland	20.2	Marinette	24.5
Barron	22.6	Marquette	25.1
Bayfield	28.2	Menominee	14.0
Brown	15.4	Milwaukee	14.0
Buffalo	22.8	Monroe	17.5
Burnett	29.4	Oconto	20.9
Calumet	15.7	Oneida	26.7
Chippewa	18.4	Outagamie	15.3
Clark	17.0	Ozaukee	20.4
Columbia	18.4	Pepin	23.5
Crawford	24.0	Pierce	15.3
Dane	14.2	Polk	21.3
Dodge	18.2	Portage	17.3
Door	30.5	Price	26.5
Douglas	19.2	Racine	17.1
Dunn	16.1	Richland	23.6
Eau Claire	16.2	Rock	17.1
Florence	27.1	Rusk	24.8
Fond du Lac	19.0	St. Croix	14.7
Forest	23.1	Sauk	19.1
Grant	17.7	Sawyer	26.7
Green	19.3	Shawano	21.6
Green Lake	22.8	Sheboygan	18.5
Iowa	19.5	Taylor	19.6
Iron	32.1	Trempealeau	18.4
Jackson	19.3	Vernon	20.0
Jefferson	17.7	Vilas	31.0
Juneau	20.8	Walworth	18.4
Kenosha	14.6	Washburn	27.4
Kewaunee	20.9	Washington	18.5
La Crosse	16.9	Waukesha	19.2
Lafayette	19.4	Waupaca	21.3
Langlade	24.7	Waushara	25.0
Lincoln	22.2	Winnebago	16.8
Manitowoc	21.1	Wood	21.1

Statewide Measures			
Average	17.5%	Median	19.5%

School-Age Population

Since 2010, Wisconsin's school-aged population has declined by more than 50,000. In 2010, the 5-to-19 year old cohort comprised more than 20% of the state population. In 2019, it was down to 18.7%.

It is often said that the children of today are the workers of tomorrow. For counties, the number of young people represents a potential future workforce. Declines in this cohort will likely lead to future workforce challenges.

Percentage of Population 5 to 19, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent

Percent: Low to High

| 1st Quartile To 16.7% | 2nd Quartile 16.8-18.4% | 3rd Quartile 18.5-19.1% | Top Quartile 19.2% & over |
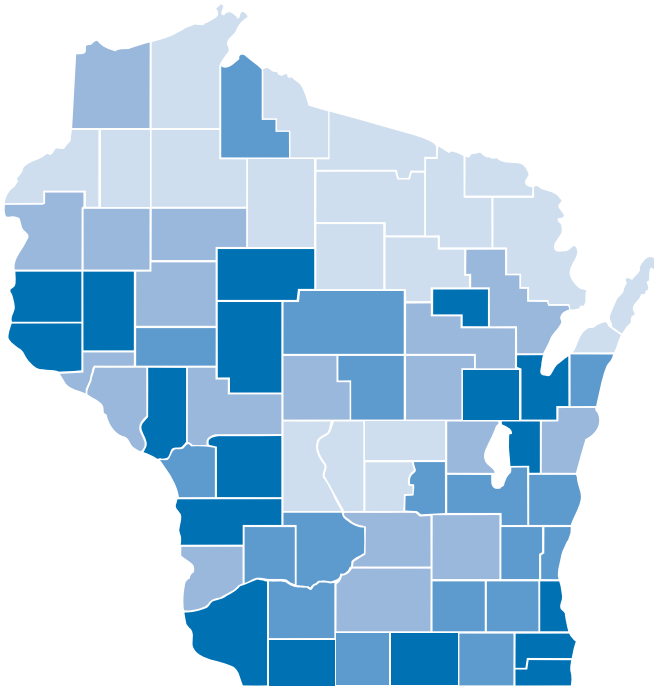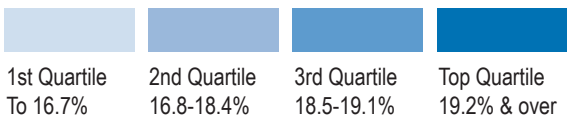
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Percentage of Population 5 to 19, 2019

County	% 5-19	County	% 5-19
Adams	12.3	Marathon	19.0
Ashland	19.0	Marinette	16.1
Barron	17.9	Marquette	16.2
Bayfield	14.5	Menominee	26.8
Brown	19.9	Milwaukee	19.8
Buffalo	17.0	Monroe	20.6
Burnett	14.8	Oconto	17.0
Calumet	20.4	Oneida	14.1
Chippewa	18.3	Outagamie	19.6
Clark	23.8	Ozaukee	18.8
Columbia	17.7	Pepin	17.2
Crawford	17.4	Pierce	20.9
Dane	17.9	Polk	17.5
Dodge	17.0	Portage	18.6
Door	14.0	Price	15.5
Douglas	17.2	Racine	19.1
Dunn	20.0	Richland	18.8
Eau Claire	18.6	Rock	19.3
Florence	12.3	Rusk	17.0
Fond du Lac	18.4	St. Croix	20.7
Forest	16.7	Sauk	18.8
Grant	20.9	Sawyer	16.3
Green	18.7	Shawano	17.9
Green Lake	18.4	Sheboygan	18.6
Iowa	18.9	Taylor	19.8
Iron	13.5	Trempealeau	20.0
Jackson	18.1	Vernon	21.4
Jefferson	19.0	Vilas	14.0
Juneau	16.5	Walworth	19.1
Kenosha	19.9	Washburn	16.0
Kewaunee	18.4	Washington	18.6
La Crosse	18.9	Waukesha	18.5
Lafayette	20.0	Waupaca	17.1
Langlade	16.5	Waushara	15.4
Lincoln	15.3	Winnebago	18.0
Manitowoc	17.5	Wood	17.8

Statewide Measures			
Average	18.7%	Median	18.4%

Veterans

Every Wisconsin county has a veterans service office to assist veterans in navigating the complicated network of state and federal benefits. The size of the veteran population varies widely by county.

Statewide, veterans comprised an estimated 7.9% of the 18-or-older population in 2019. In 26 mostly rural counties, that percentage was above 10%. The state's two largest counties had significant numbers of veterans, but they comprised a relatively small percentage of the population.

Veterans, Percentage of Adult Population, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent

Percent: Low to High

1st Quartile	2nd Quartile	3rd Quartile	Top Quartile
To 7.8%	7.9-9.1%	9.2-10.8%	10.9% & over
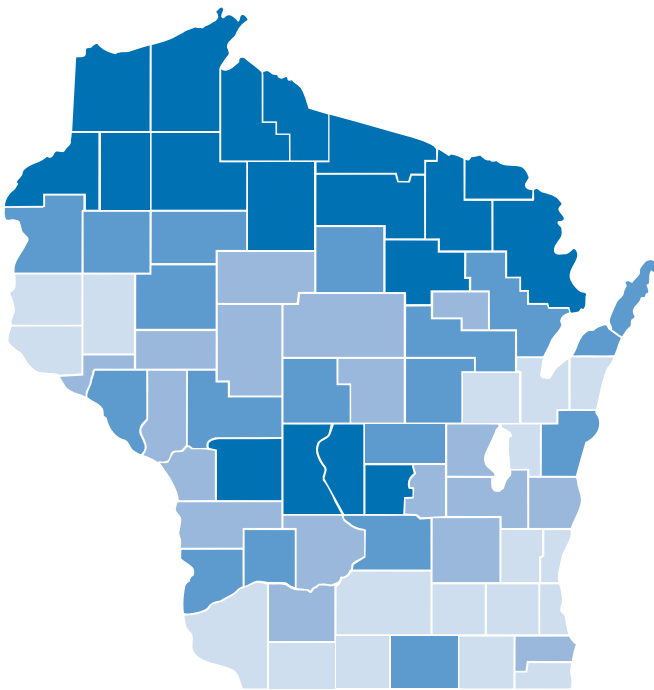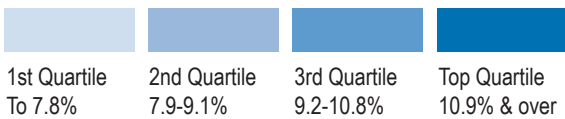
Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2019 estimate

Veterans, Percentage of Adult Population, 2019

County	% Veterans	County	% Veterans
Adams	12.2	Marathon	7.8
Ashland	10.9	Marinette	12.0
Barron	10.1	Marquette	11.8
Bayfield	11.5	Menominee	8.9
Brown	7.7	Milwaukee	6.2
Buffalo	9.5	Monroe	14.1
Burnett	14.1	Oconto	9.6
Calumet	6.5	Oneida	11.8
Chippewa	9.2	Outagamie	7.4
Clark	8.0	Ozaukee	6.5
Columbia	9.2	Pepin	9.0
Crawford	10.2	Pierce	7.6
Dane	5.9	Polk	9.9
Dodge	8.2	Portage	8.2
Door	9.9	Price	12.2
Douglas	11.0	Racine	8.2
Dunn	7.6	Richland	9.1
Eau Claire	8.3	Rock	9.2
Florence	14.3	Rusk	10.8
Fond du Lac	8.6	St. Croix	7.3
Forest	13.4	Sauk	8.6
Grant	7.3	Sawyer	11.8
Green	7.4	Shawano	9.7
Green Lake	8.7	Sheboygan	8.4
Iowa	8.6	Taylor	8.9
Iron	12.0	Trempealeau	8.4
Jackson	10.4	Vernon	8.5
Jefferson	7.3	Vilas	12.8
Juneau	10.8	Walworth	7.0
Kenosha	7.8	Washburn	12.8
Kewaunee	7.5	Washington	7.5
La Crosse	9.0	Waukesha	7.1
Lafayette	7.3	Waupaca	10.8
Langlade	11.8	Waushara	10.6
Lincoln	10.6	Winnebago	8.6
Manitowoc	9.4	Wood	10.1

Statewide Measures			
Average	7.9%	Median	9.1%

Educational Attainment

Higher-paying jobs often require a post-secondary degree, be that an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree. The percentage of a county's 25-or-older population with at least an associate degree indicates the availability of a skilled workforce demanded by today's employers.

In 2019, 41.0% of state residents 25 or older had at least an associate degree. That percentage was less than 37% in 2013. This population was concentrated in urban counties and counties with two- or four-year universities.

In four less-populous counties, residents with at least an associate degree accounted for under 25% of the population.

Percentage with Associate Degree or More, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent

Percent: Low to High

| 1st Quartile | 2nd Quartile | 3rd Quartile | Top Quartile |
| To 30.2% | 30.3-34.2% | 34.3-38.8% | 38.9% & over |
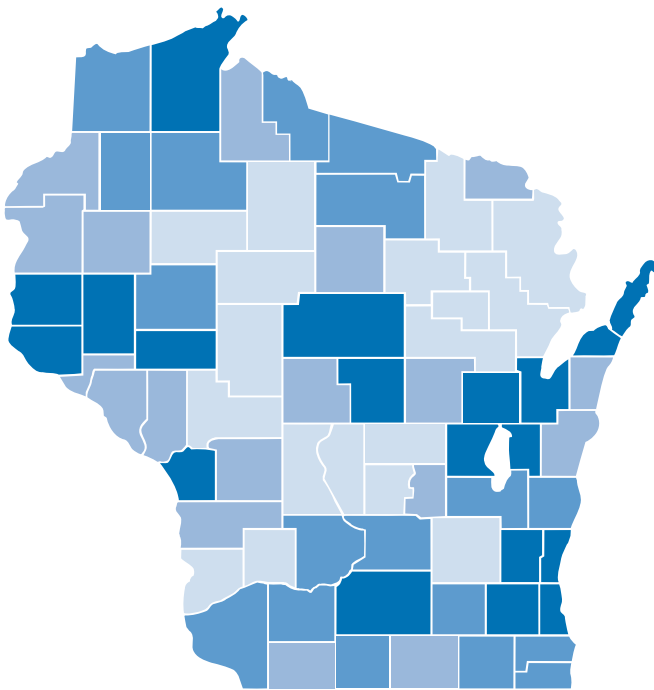
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Percentage with Associate Degree or More, 2019

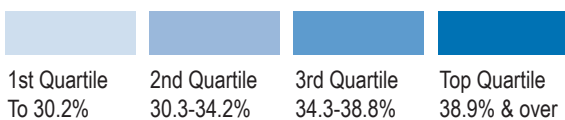| County	% Assoc. +	County	% Assoc. +
Adams	22.1	Marathon	38.8
Ashland	32.8	Marinette	26.3
Barron	33.9	Marquette	25.8
Bayfield	43.5	Menominee	27.9
Brown	42.8	Milwaukee	38.8
Buffalo	32.7	Monroe	31.7
Burnett	32.4	Oconto	28.3
Calumet	43.4	Oneida	38.4
Chippewa	36.7	Outagamie	42.6
Clark	23.5	Ozaukee	57.9
Columbia	36.5	Pepin	32.3
Crawford	30.2	Pierce	41.3
Dane	61.1	Polk	34.0
Dodge	28.6	Portage	43.6
Door	43.1	Price	29.7
Douglas	37.5	Racine	35.8
Dunn	39.9	Richland	29.3
Eau Claire	47.8	Rock	33.5
Florence	31.1	Rusk	28.2
Fond du Lac	34.8	St. Croix	49.7
Forest	26.5	Sauk	35.7
Grant	37.2	Sawyer	35.6
Green	35.8	Shawano	28.0
Green Lake	31.0	Sheboygan	36.1
Iowa	37.5	Taylor	25.5
Iron	34.2	Trempealeau	33.4
Jackson	25.4	Vernon	34.1
Jefferson	37.5	Vilas	38.8
Juneau	24.0	Walworth	37.1
Kenosha	36.5	Washburn	35.4
Kewaunee	31.9	Washington	42.9
La Crosse	48.0	Waukesha	54.1
Lafayette	30.6	Waupaca	31.5
Langlade	27.4	Waushara	24.2
Lincoln	30.9	Winnebago	39.2
Manitowoc	32.2	Wood	34.1

Statewide Measures			
Average	41.0%	Median	34.2%

Commuting

Commuting in or out of a county can be the result of many factors. Workers typically seek high-paying jobs. Many also choose to live in locations with particular amenities, e.g., good schools, affordable housing, and parks and recreation. The place with good jobs may be in a different county than the one with amenities, which results in commuting.

Here, net commuting is measured as the number of commuters into a county minus the number commuting out as a percentage of the total county workforce. A positive figure indicates the county attracts more workers than the number leaving.

Net In-Commuting, Percentage of Labor Force, 2015
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent

Percent: Low to High

1st Quartile To -21.0%	2nd Quartile -20.9% to -9.9%	3rd Quartile -9.8% to 2.7%	Top Quartile 2.8% & over
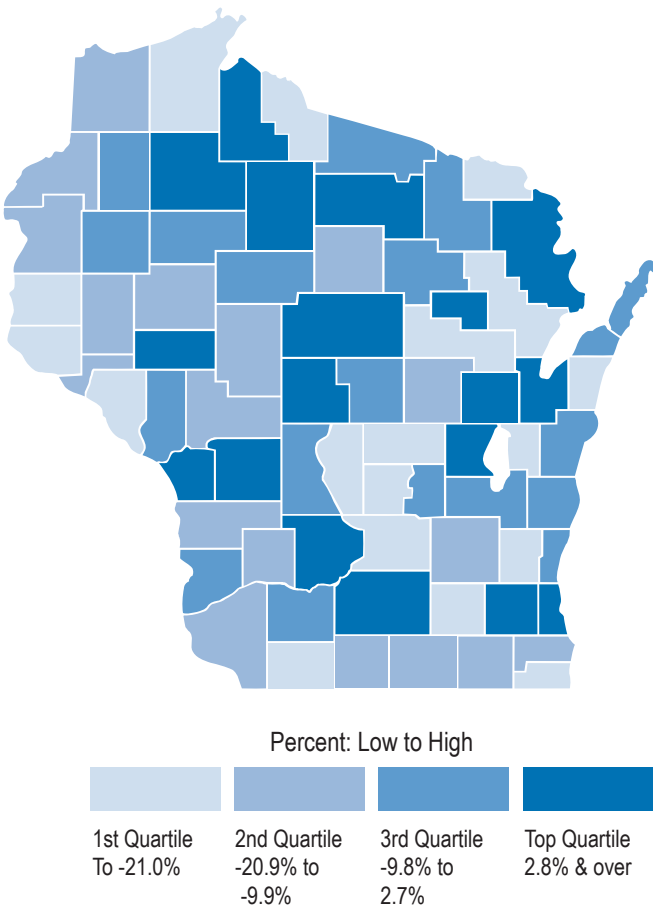
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Net In-Commuting, Percentage of Labor Force, 2015

County	% Net In	County	% Net In
Adams	-34.2	Marathon	2.9
Ashland	13.9	Marinette	7.0
Barron	0.8	Marquette	-31.6
Bayfield	-27.0	Menominee	65.9
Brown	13.9	Milwaukee	7.2
Buffalo	-37.8	Monroe	6.4
Burnett	-15.2	Oconto	-42.5
Calumet	-41.9	Oneida	3.8
Chippewa	-14.2	Outagamie	4.9
Clark	-13.6	Ozaukee	-8.5
Columbia	-24.9	Pepin	-18.9
Crawford	2.7	Pierce	-44.9
Dane	12.2	Polk	-18.5
Dodge	-14.1	Portage	0.8
Door	-4.0	Price	4.4
Douglas	-13.8	Racine	-12.4
Dunn	-14.1	Richland	-13.8
Eau Claire	11.9	Rock	-13.9
Florence	-33.9	Rusk	-1.6
Fond du Lac	-7.3	St. Croix	-24.1
Forest	-6.1	Sauk	7.6
Grant	-14.2	Sawyer	3.9
Green	-11.5	Shawano	-23.4
Green Lake	-8.4	Sheboygan	1.5
Iowa	-6.9	Taylor	-5.2
Iron	-21.0	Trempealeau	-1.4
Jackson	-9.9	Vernon	-19.0
Jefferson	-22.7	Vilas	-2.3
Juneau	-9.8	Walworth	-10.4
Kenosha	-21.7	Washburn	-2.8
Kewaunee	-21.1	Washington	-21.9
La Crosse	14.1	Waukesha	12.2
Lafayette	-29.8	Waupaca	-10.3
Langlade	-7.2	Waushara	-26.1
Lincoln	-15.7	Winnebago	11.4
Manitowoc	-8.2	Wood	10.3

Statewide Measures			
Average	-1.5%	Median	-9.9%

Counties provide a vast number of local services, from child welfare services, to assisting veterans and the elderly, to maintaining both county and state roads. Understanding where counties spend their dollars and how they pay for public services is an essential part of a county official's job.

According to the most recent state figures available, total spending by county governments averaged just over $1,000 per capita in 2019. By county, spending ranged from under $600 to more than $2,400 per resident. Counties with relatively small populations and significant fixed costs often have higher per capita costs.

The largest share of county expenditures, about a third, paid for health and human service programs delivered to a variety of groups, including children, seniors, veterans, and the mentally ill.

Counties have several sources of revenue to fund the services they provide. Property taxes typically account for about 40% of revenues, although that varies by county. State aid, particularly for human services, accounts for more than a quarter of revenues on average.

In recent decades, the 0.5% optional sales tax has been adopted by most counties in Wisconsin. It typically contributes 10% or less of revenues.

Note: Spending figures are self reported using Wisconsin Department of Revenue accounts. It should be noted that counties can differ on how spending is categorized. Users should be cautious when comparing spending categories.

Total Spending

County government spending depends on a variety of factors, including poverty, crime, and miles of county and state roads. Spending figures reported here are provided by counties to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue and include both operating and capital expenditures. They are presented here on a per capita basis to adjust for county population differences.

Per capita spending in 2019 averaged $1,011 per resident statewide and was generally higher in less populous counties.

Total County Expenditures Per Capita, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount

Expenditures: Low to High

| 1st Quartile | 2nd Quartile | 3rd Quartile | Top Quartile |
| To $955 | $956-1,120 | $1,121-1,355 | $1,356 & over |
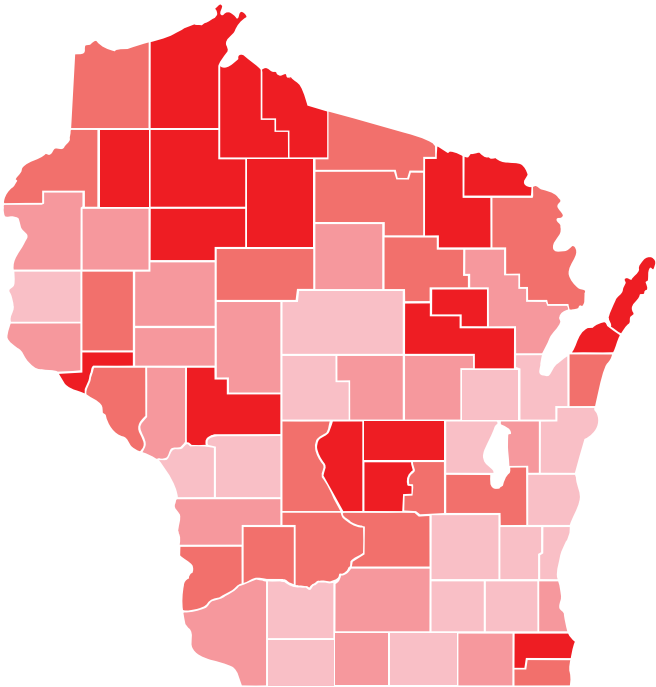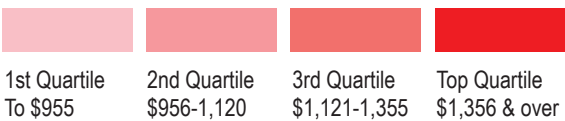
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue: County and Municipal Revenues and Expenditures (CMRE)

Total County Expenditures Per Capita, 2019

County	Total Exp.	County	Total Exp.
Adams	$1,775	Marathon	819
Ashland	1,526	Marinette	1,167
Barron	1,077	Marquette	1,586
Bayfield	1,780	Menominee	1,909
Brown	913	Milwaukee	1,083
Buffalo	1,287	Monroe	820
Burnett	1,355	Oconto	975
Calumet	973	Oneida	1,123
Chippewa	1,010	Outagamie	732
Clark	1,104	Ozaukee	668
Columbia	1,239	Pepin	1,406
Crawford	1,226	Pierce	976
Dane	995	Polk	988
Dodge	818	Portage	1,011
Door	1,733	Price	1,387
Douglas	1,336	Racine	1,402
Dunn	1,237	Richland	1,129
Eau Claire	1,098	Rock	926
Florence	2,479	Rusk	1,531
Fond du Lac	1,347	St. Croix	914
Forest	1,468	Sauk	1,161
Grant	1,105	Sawyer	1,631
Green	1,054	Shawano	1,678
Green Lake	1,315	Sheboygan	874
Iowa	908	Taylor	1,213
Iron	3,596	Trempealeau	1,078
Jackson	1,518	Vernon	989
Jefferson	826	Vilas	1,315
Juneau	1,297	Walworth	1,118
Kenosha	1,193	Washburn	1,834
Kewaunee	1,122	Washington	636
La Crosse	912	Waukesha	582
Lafayette	955	Waupaca	1,070
Langlade	1,250	Waushara	1,400
Lincoln	967	Winnebago	719
Manitowoc	953	Wood	904

Statewide Measures			
Average	$1,011	Median	$1,120

Highway Expenditures

Counties are responsible for maintaining, repairing, and upgrading county highways. They are also responsible for maintaining any state or interstate highways within their boundaries. In some cases, counties also maintain town roads.

A county's highway expenditures depend on road miles, as well as pavement condition. Since capital spending is included, spending can be volatile due to material and equipment purchases.

Statewide, county highway spending averaged $91 per capita in 2019. As counties are responsible for state and interstate highways, expenditures listed here will not correlate perfectly with the county road miles reported on page 55.

Highway Expenditures Per Capita, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount

Expenditures: Low to High

| 1st Quartile To $102 | 2nd Quartile $103-137 | 3rd Quartile $138-189 | Top Quartile $190 & over |
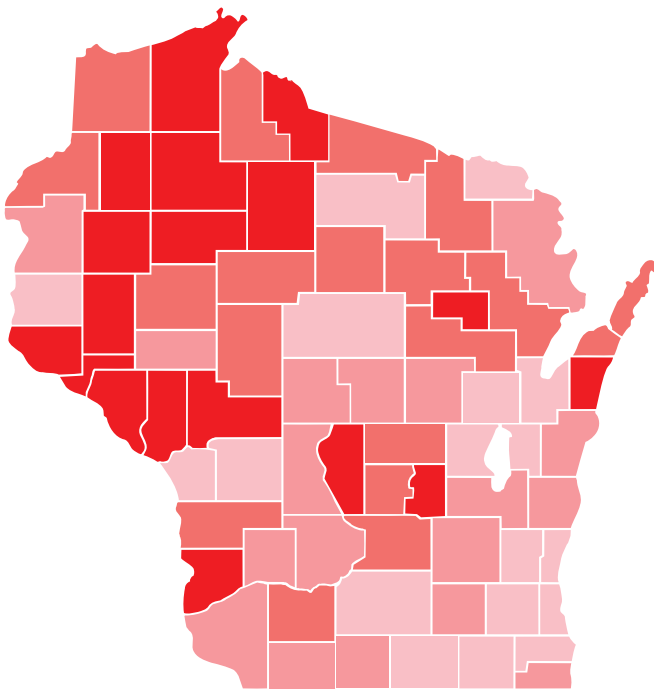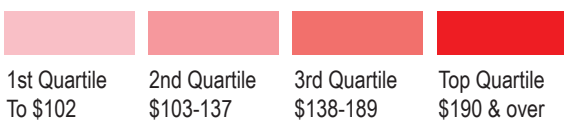
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, CMRE

Highway Expenditures Per Capita, 2019

County	Hwy. Exp.	County	Hwy. Exp.
Adams	$404	Marathon	97
Ashland	140	Marinette	105
Barron	194	Marquette	189
Bayfield	346	Menominee	234
Brown	69	Milwaukee	32
Buffalo	322	Monroe	82
Burnett	188	Oconto	139
Calumet	102	Oneida	83
Chippewa	162	Outagamie	88
Clark	167	Ozaukee	60
Columbia	143	Pepin	191
Crawford	313	Pierce	220
Dane	57	Polk	128
Dodge	128	Portage	126
Door	158	Price	206
Douglas	155	Racine	34
Dunn	204	Richland	112
Eau Claire	135	Rock	32
Florence	87	Rusk	227
Fond du Lac	123	St. Croix	97
Forest	157	Sauk	115
Grant	111	Sawyer	198
Green	107	Shawano	167
Green Lake	201	Sheboygan	125
Iowa	154	Taylor	165
Iron	220	Trempealeau	223
Jackson	236	Vernon	163
Jefferson	106	Vilas	148
Juneau	108	Walworth	72
Kenosha	119	Washburn	384
Kewaunee	201	Washington	71
La Crosse	74	Waukesha	55
Lafayette	123	Waupaca	112
Langlade	140	Waushara	165
Lincoln	162	Winnebago	49
Manitowoc	129	Wood	129

Statewide Measures			
Average	$91	Median	$137

Health & Human Services

The largest expenditure category for counties is health and human services (HHS), accounting for about one-third of all county spending. According to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, spending in this area includes "health officers, health inspections, mental health programs, general relief, cemetery, humane shelter, institution care, social programs, aging and veterans programs." In 2019, HHS spending averaged $327 per capita statewide.

HHS Expenditures Per Capita, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount

Expenditures: Low to High

1st Quartile To $300	2nd Quartile $301-349	3rd Quartile $350-423	Top Quartile $424 & over
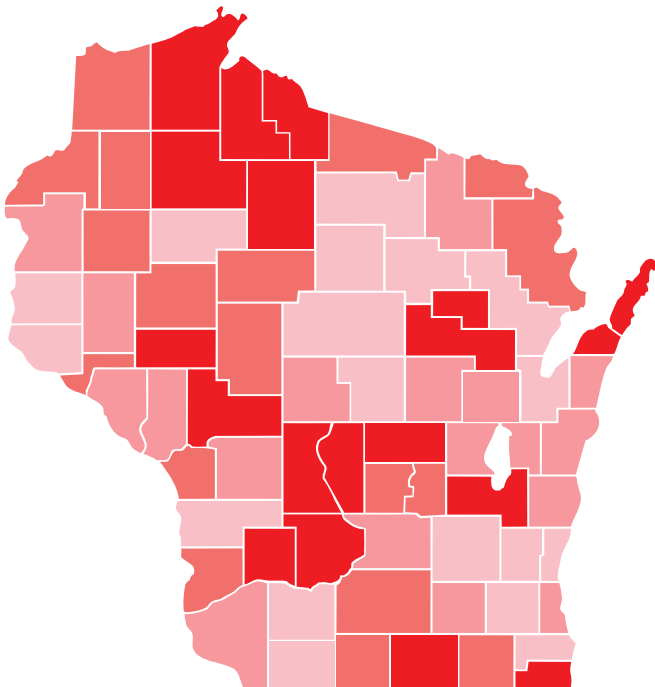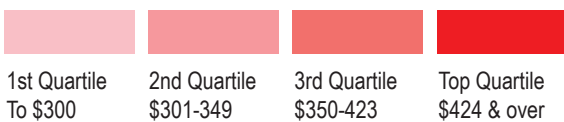
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, CMRE

HHS Expenditures Per Capita, 2019

County	HHS Exp.	County	HHS Exp.
Adams	$526	Marathon	216
Ashland	567	Marinette	375
Barron	396	Marquette	380
Bayfield	472	Menominee	813
Brown	259	Milwaukee	329
Buffalo	338	Monroe	314
Burnett	355	Oconto	300
Calumet	322	Oneida	277
Chippewa	423	Outagamie	302
Clark	402	Ozaukee	196
Columbia	314	Pepin	422
Crawford	349	Pierce	275
Dane	360	Polk	331
Dodge	291	Portage	286
Door	449	Price	475
Douglas	369	Racine	133
Dunn	323	Richland	429
Eau Claire	478	Rock	474
Florence	421	Rusk	291
Fond du Lac	465	St. Croix	245
Forest	330	Sauk	475
Grant	312	Sawyer	459
Green	365	Shawano	576
Green Lake	402	Sheboygan	314
Iowa	192	Taylor	352
Iron	724	Trempealeau	301
Jackson	428	Vernon	287
Jefferson	332	Vilas	359
Juneau	532	Walworth	405
Kenosha	439	Washburn	392
Kewaunee	334	Washington	215
La Crosse	416	Waukesha	196
Lafayette	298	Waupaca	307
Langlade	281	Waushara	465
Lincoln	179	Winnebago	326
Manitowoc	317	Wood	348

Statewide Measures			
Average	$327	Median	$349

State Aids

S tate aids fund about 26% of the cost of county services. The largest share of these aids helps pay for a variety of human service programs. Counties also receive state assistance for health, highways, and law enforcement, as well as county and municipal aids (shared revenues) that can be used for any purpose. Taken together, shared revenues and aids for health and human services accounts for about 80% of the total.

Total state aids to counties averaged $240 per person across the state in 2019, about the same as five years earlier. Generally, per capita aids were highest in the north and lowest in the southeast.

Total State Aids Per Capita, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount

Aids: Low to High

1st Quartile To $225	2nd Quartile $226-288	3rd Quartile $289-373	Top Quartile $374 & over
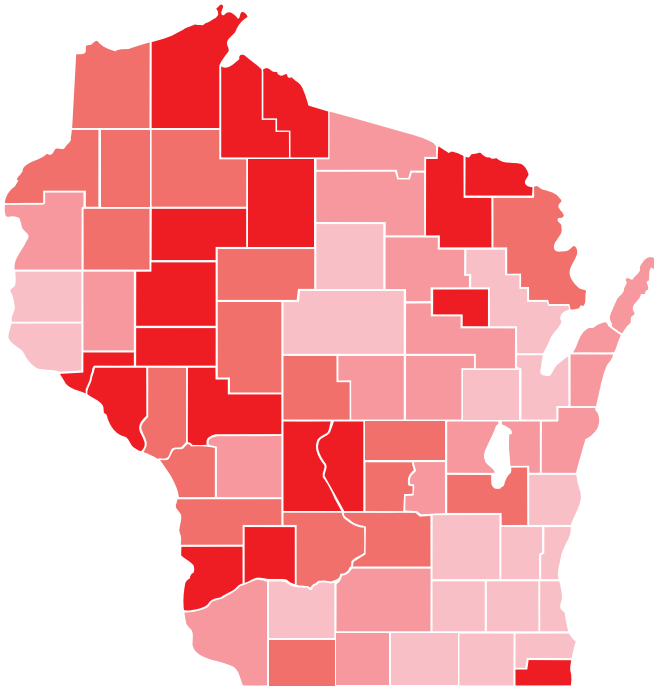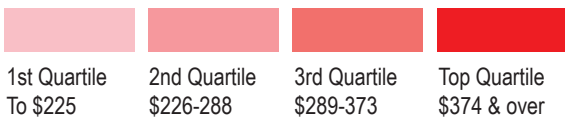
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, CMRE

Total State Aids Per Capita, 2019

County	State Aid	County	State Aid
Adams	$402	Marathon	190
Ashland	457	Marinette	290
Barron	323	Marquette	322
Bayfield	512	Menominee	1,085
Brown	225	Milwaukee	196
Buffalo	444	Monroe	255
Burnett	333	Oconto	219
Calumet	236	Oneida	228
Chippewa	435	Outagamie	212
Clark	294	Ozaukee	177
Columbia	330	Pepin	471
Crawford	418	Pierce	218
Dane	269	Polk	273
Dodge	211	Portage	228
Door	279	Price	401
Douglas	338	Racine	171
Dunn	287	Richland	466
Eau Claire	416	Rock	102
Florence	898	Rusk	515
Fond du Lac	309	St. Croix	146
Forest	404	Sauk	373
Grant	248	Sawyer	351
Green	246	Shawano	240
Green Lake	277	Sheboygan	198
Iowa	195	Taylor	339
Iron	603	Trempealeau	311
Jackson	388	Vernon	337
Jefferson	196	Vilas	264
Juneau	471	Walworth	155
Kenosha	393	Washburn	367
Kewaunee	278	Washington	173
La Crosse	302	Waukesha	125
Lafayette	332	Waupaca	270
Langlade	271	Waushara	330
Lincoln	193	Winnebago	228
Manitowoc	257	Wood	289

Statewide Measures			
Average	$240	Median	$288

Property Tax Levy

The property tax is the largest local revenue source for counties. On average, property taxes account for more than 40% of county revenues. In 2020, counties levied more than $2.2 billion in property taxes, or $398 per capita.

Since 2005, increases in county property taxes have been tied to net new construction in the county (see page 53). The highest property taxes per capita were found primarily in northern and central Wisconsin. Levies were above $700 per resident in 11 counties and below $300 per capita in five counties.

County Levy Per Capita, 2020/21
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount
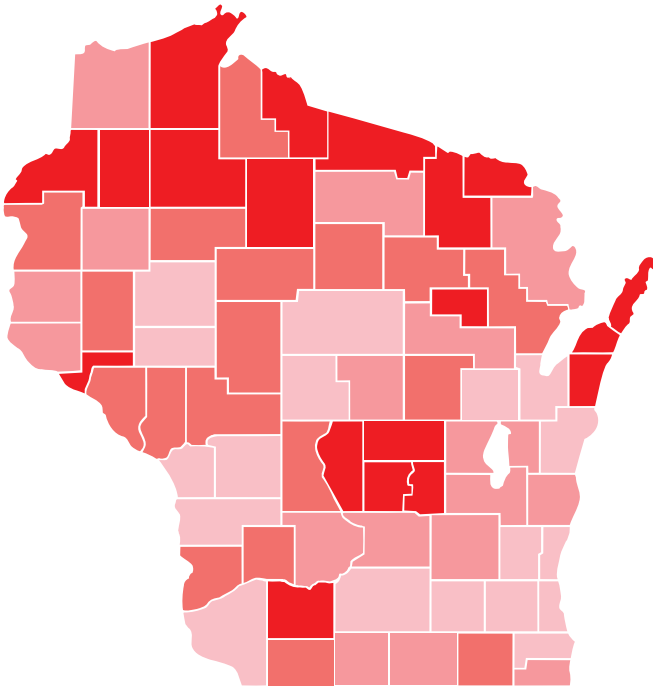
Property Tax Levies: Low to High

1st Quartile To $394	2nd Quartile $395-510	3rd Quartile $511-598	Top Quartile $599 & over
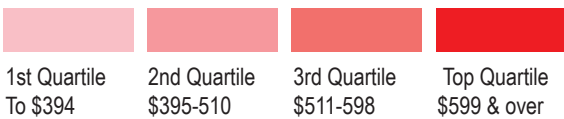
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

County Levy Per Capita
Levied in 2020, Payable in 2021

County	Prop. Tax	County	Prop. Tax
Adams	$891	Marathon	378
Ashland	528	Marinette	424
Barron	477	Marquette	914
Bayfield	738	Menominee	647
Brown	345	Milwaukee	323
Buffalo	521	Monroe	394
Burnett	665	Oconto	535
Calumet	422	Oneida	467
Chippewa	305	Outagamie	338
Clark	520	Ozaukee	240
Columbia	490	Pepin	639
Crawford	534	Pierce	474
Dane	369	Polk	525
Dodge	401	Portage	457
Door	1,067	Price	744
Douglas	401	Racine	294
Dunn	517	Richland	582
Eau Claire	360	Rock	453
Florence	999	Rusk	598
Fond du Lac	457	St. Croix	405
Forest	662	Sauk	509
Grant	246	Sawyer	733
Green	484	Shawano	414
Green Lake	783	Sheboygan	440
Iowa	602	Taylor	591
Iron	990	Trempealeau	525
Jackson	518	Vernon	376
Jefferson	367	Vilas	802
Juneau	511	Walworth	584
Kenosha	425	Washburn	686
Kewaunee	612	Washington	280
La Crosse	303	Waukesha	274
Lafayette	510	Waupaca	558
Langlade	558	Waushara	744
Lincoln	518	Winnebago	413
Manitowoc	383	Wood	374

Statewide Measures			
Average	$398	Median	$510

Property Tax Rates

Property tax rates vary widely by county. The tax rate is a ratio of the county levy to the value of all taxable property in the county, excluding the value in tax incremental finance (TIF) districts. Generally, counties with higher tax levies have higher rates, while those with more taxable property value have lower rates. In 2020/21, the highest rates were mostly in central and north central Wisconsin. Statewide, the county property tax rate averaged $3.97 per $1,000 of taxable property value.

County Property Tax Rates, 2020/21
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount

Rate: Low to High

1st Quartile To $3.98	2nd Quartile $3.99-5.14	3rd Quartile $5.15- 6.33	Top Quartile $6.34 & over
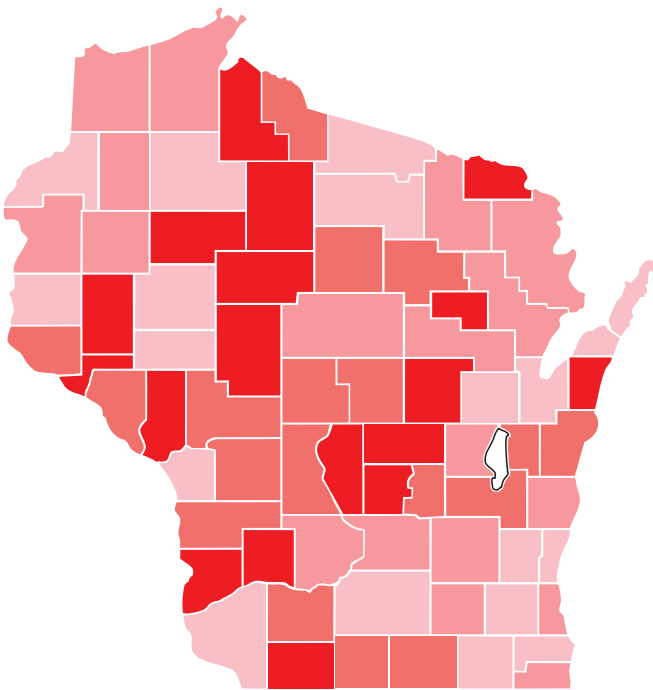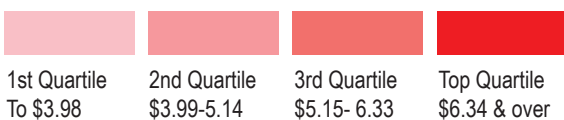
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

County Property Tax Rate (per $1,000 of Value)
Levied in 2020, Payable in 2021

County	Tax Rate	County	Tax Rate
Adams	$6.55	Marathon	4.53
Ashland	6.77	Marinette	4.33
Barron	4.82	Marquette	8.22
Bayfield	4.16	Menominee	7.79
Brown	3.98	Milwaukee	4.61
Buffalo	5.86	Monroe	5.15
Burnett	3.53	Oconto	4.91
Calumet	5.15	Oneida	2.28
Chippewa	3.26	Outagamie	3.71
Clark	8.04	Ozaukee	1.65
Columbia	4.67	Pepin	7.03
Crawford	7.19	Pierce	5.36
Dane	2.86	Polk	4.40
Dodge	5.13	Portage	5.23
Door	3.98	Price	7.22
Douglas	4.72	Racine	3.34
Dunn	6.71	Richland	8.32
Eau Claire	3.96	Rock	5.83
Florence	6.65	Rusk	7.16
Fond du Lac	5.81	St. Croix	3.29
Forest	5.03	Sauk	4.33
Grant	3.62	Sawyer	3.32
Green	5.34	Shawano	5.14
Green Lake	6.22	Sheboygan	4.96
Iowa	6.33	Taylor	8.18
Iron	5.87	Trempealeau	6.57
Jackson	6.20	Vernon	5.38
Jefferson	3.99	Vilas	2.37
Juneau	6.05	Walworth	3.70
Kenosha	4.49	Washburn	4.11
Kewaunee	7.07	Washington	2.34
La Crosse	3.48	Waukesha	1.82
Lafayette	7.13	Waupaca	6.70
Langlade	6.16	Waushara	6.50
Lincoln	5.77	Winnebago	4.95
Manitowoc	5.30	Wood	5.14

Statewide Measures			
Average	$3.97	Median	$5.14

County Sales Taxes

The state allows counties to impose a half-cent sales tax. In 2020, 68 of 72 counties imposed the tax, with Menominee and Outagamie beginning the tax that year.

Counties that have regional retail centers collect more sales taxes per capita than others. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, sales tax collections declined in only four counties. Statewide, collections averaged $81 per capita in 2020.

County Sales Tax Revenue Per Capita, 2020
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount

X *Counties without a sales tax in 2020*

Sales Taxes: Low to High

| 1st Quartile | 2nd Quartile | 3rd Quartile | Top Quartile |
| To $71 | $72-85 | $86-98 | $99 & over |
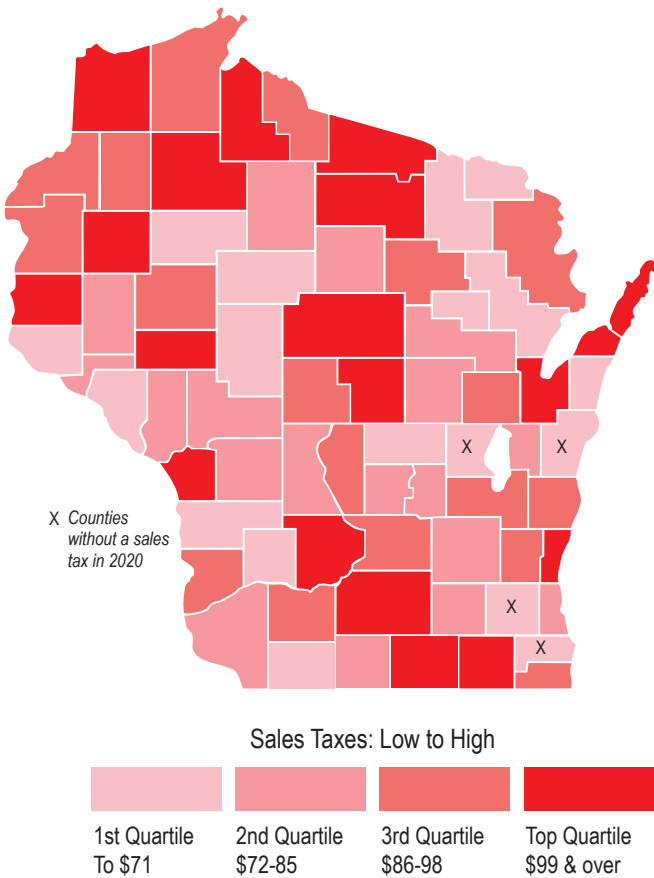
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

County Sales Tax Revenue Per Capita, 2020

County	Sales Tax	County	Sales Tax
Adams	$86	Marathon	101
Ashland	98	Marinette	96
Barron	106	Marquette	73
Bayfield	90	Menominee	17
Brown	112	Milwaukee	85
Buffalo	66	Monroe	80
Burnett	87	Oconto	60
Calumet	82	Oneida	146
Chippewa	95	Outagamie	86
Clark	68	Ozaukee	103
Columbia	91	Pepin	83
Crawford	97	Pierce	61
Dane	111	Polk	90
Dodge	82	Portage	98
Door	154	Price	76
Douglas	101	Racine	0
Dunn	79	Richland	71
Eau Claire	107	Rock	99
Florence	68	Rusk	70
Fond du Lac	86	St. Croix	107
Forest	70	Sauk	141
Grant	72	Sawyer	132
Green	83	Shawano	75
Green Lake	85	Sheboygan	91
Iowa	86	Taylor	68
Iron	92	Trempealeau	75
Jackson	73	Vernon	66
Jefferson	82	Vilas	140
Juneau	75	Walworth	108
Kenosha	95	Washburn	95
Kewaunee	64	Washington	97
La Crosse	111	Waukesha	0
Lafayette	60	Waupaca	79
Langlade	98	Waushara	68
Lincoln	81	Winnebago	0
Manitowoc	0	Wood	88

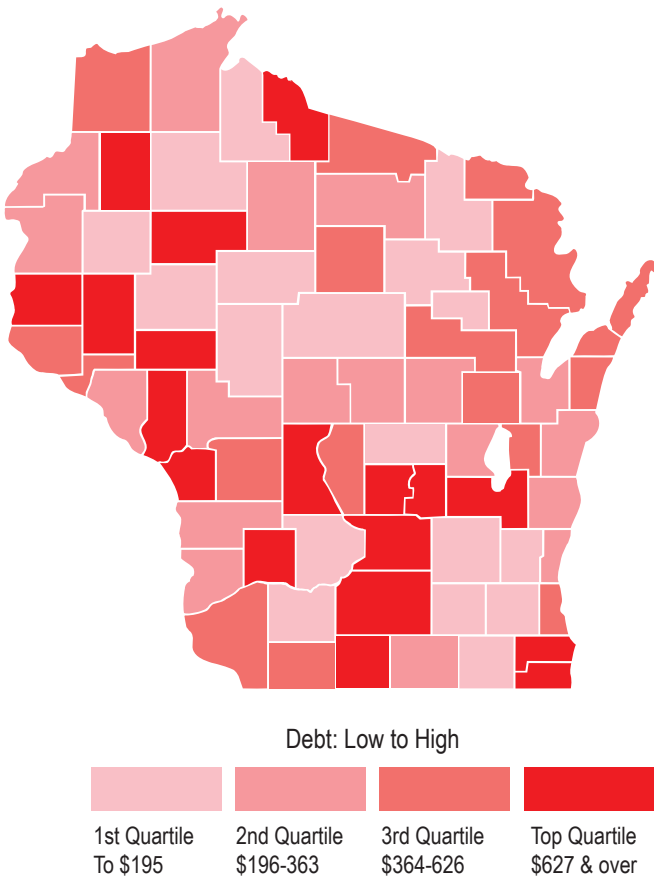| Statewide Measures			
Average	$81*	Median	$85

When counties without the sales tax are excluded, the average was $95.

County Debt

Counties typically borrow to pay for long-term capital projects, such as major highway construction, new or expanded jails, or other buildings. Typically, the debt is repaid over 20 years. The primary type of borrowing by counties is general obligation debt that is backed by the credit and taxing authority of the county.

On average in 2019, counties owed $447 per capita in general obligation debt, up from $401 in 2014. Three counties were debt free in 2019.

General Obligation (GO) Debt Per Capita, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount

Debt: Low to High

| 1st Quartile To $195 | 2nd Quartile $196-363 | 3rd Quartile $364-626 | Top Quartile $627 & over |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, CMRE

General Obligation (GO) Debt Per Capita, 2019

County	GO Debt	County	GO Debt
Adams	$558	Marathon	131
Ashland	179	Marinette	555
Barron	161	Marquette	702
Bayfield	212	Menominee	172
Brown	342	Milwaukee	503
Buffalo	200	Monroe	398
Burnett	330	Oconto	518
Calumet	579	Oneida	336
Chippewa	134	Outagamie	366
Clark	0	Ozaukee	281
Columbia	956	Pepin	496
Crawford	290	Pierce	626
Dane	754	Polk	276
Dodge	0	Portage	217
Door	479	Price	251
Douglas	552	Racine	879
Dunn	869	Richland	1,335
Eau Claire	842	Rock	304
Florence	441	Rusk	637
Fond du Lac	731	St. Croix	711
Forest	4	Sauk	179
Grant	489	Sawyer	95
Green	871	Shawano	481
Green Lake	686	Sheboygan	259
Iowa	26	Taylor	101
Iron	1,994	Trempealeau	1,068
Jackson	271	Vernon	288
Jefferson	161	Vilas	594
Juneau	820	Walworth	0
Kenosha	693	Washburn	651
Kewaunee	527	Washington	103
La Crosse	691	Waukesha	195
Lafayette	365	Waupaca	196
Langlade	148	Waushara	128
Lincoln	526	Winnebago	203
Manitowoc	351	Wood	362

Statewide Measures			
Average	$447	Median	$363

ECONOMY/DEVELOPMENT

A county's finances, and to some degree its demography, are related to its economic health. Income, poverty, unemployment, and property values help determine a county's ability to prosper and to provide public services. These factors can also point to the need for services, whether it be income maintenance, health care, job assistance, or redevelopment.

Like some of the other measures in this book, these economic factors are often related. High per capita incomes likely mean less poverty and joblessness, and a larger property tax base. The reverse is also true: Low incomes are often accompanied by poverty, unemployment, and less property ownership.

The geography of the state reflects these economic factors. Many counties in the southwest, rural center, and north illustrate the combination of modest incomes, above average poverty, and shrinking labor forces.

One way for a county to move from a position of relative disadvantage to one of prosperity is through economic expansion. Employment growth is one indicator. New construction is another measure of economic growth. This is especially important for local governments because new construction determines allowable increases in the property tax levy.
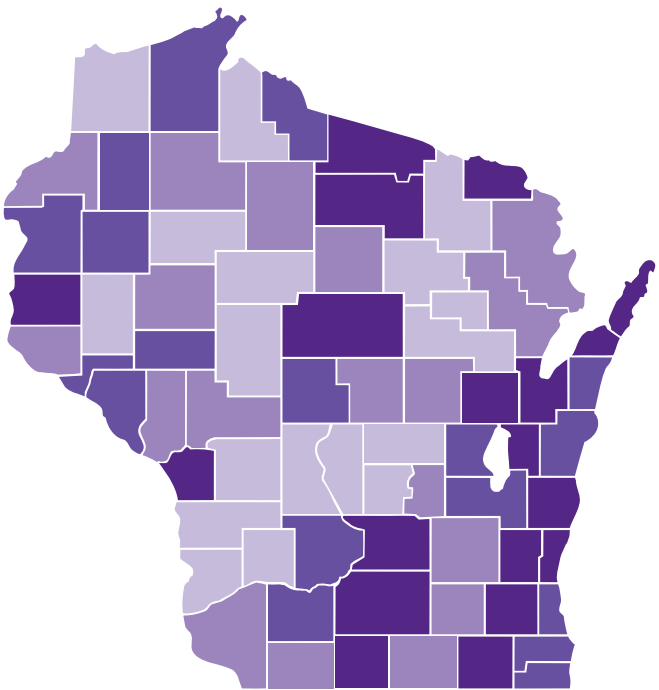
Construction activity has been greatest in counties with easy interstate access – areas that run from Brown County in the northeast, south to the Illinois border, and then northwest through Madison to La Crosse and toward Minneapolis.

Personal Income

Personal income is a broad economic measure that includes total wages, dividends and interest, rental income, and government payments, among others. To compare large and small counties, we report this measure on a per capita basis.

In 2019, Wisconsin's per capita personal income (PCPI) was $53,227. Per capita income tends to be highest in urban and suburban counties. Average wages and cost of living are generally higher there as well. In four counties, PCPI was above $60,000; in 18 counties, it was under $45,000.

Per Capita Personal Income, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Amount

PCPI: Low to High

| 1st Quartile | 2nd Quartile | 3rd Quartile | Top Quartile |
| To $44,941 | $44,942-47,569 | $47,570-51,115 | $51,116 & over |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Per Capita Personal Income, 2019

County	PCPI	County	PCPI
Adams	$40,841	Marathon	52,141
Ashland	42,007	Marinette	45,906
Barron	50,166	Marquette	42,513
Bayfield	50,750	Menominee	30,977
Brown	54,090	Milwaukee	49,098
Buffalo	47,630	Monroe	42,974
Burnett	45,023	Oconto	47,104
Calumet	52,859	Oneida	52,014
Chippewa	47,507	Outagamie	52,640
Clark	43,135	Ozaukee	85,492
Columbia	53,423	Pepin	49,793
Crawford	43,124	Pierce	47,114
Dane	64,071	Polk	47,856
Dodge	46,099	Portage	47,278
Door	64,249	Price	47,086
Douglas	44,941	Racine	50,845
Dunn	41,208	Richland	44,803
Eau Claire	49,851	Rock	46,236
Florence	53,310	Rusk	44,556
Fond du Lac	49,949	St. Croix	57,328
Forest	42,663	Sauk	51,115
Grant	45,392	Sawyer	47,360
Green	53,782	Shawano	44,196
Green Lake	46,260	Sheboygan	54,703
Iowa	50,309	Taylor	41,858
Iron	50,249	Trempealeau	45,218
Jackson	46,296	Vernon	42,578
Jefferson	47,152	Vilas	54,734
Juneau	39,218	Walworth	51,196
Kenosha	48,596	Washburn	49,456
Kewaunee	49,539	Washington	59,979
La Crosse	51,813	Waukesha	73,873
Lafayette	45,339	Waupaca	47,035
Langlade	44,923	Waushara	42,544
Lincoln	47,135	Winnebago	49,276
Manitowoc	48,502	Wood	48,046

Statewide Measures			
Average	$53,227	Median	$47,569

Employment Growth

J ob growth is important for the economic health of counties. Monthly and annual changes can sometimes be an aberration due to unusual activity. Thus, five-year changes are presented here to smooth those aberrations. However, the pandemic negatively impacted job numbers in 2020. During 2015-20, the number of jobs statewide declined 2.3%, with all of that decline in 2020. Despite the pandemic, 14 counties had positive growth over the five years.

Five-Year Job Growth, 2015-20
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent

Growth: Low to High

| 1st Quartile | 2nd Quartile | 3rd Quartile | Top Quartile |
| To -6.7% | -6.6 to -3.6% | -3.5 to -0.5% | -0.4% & over |
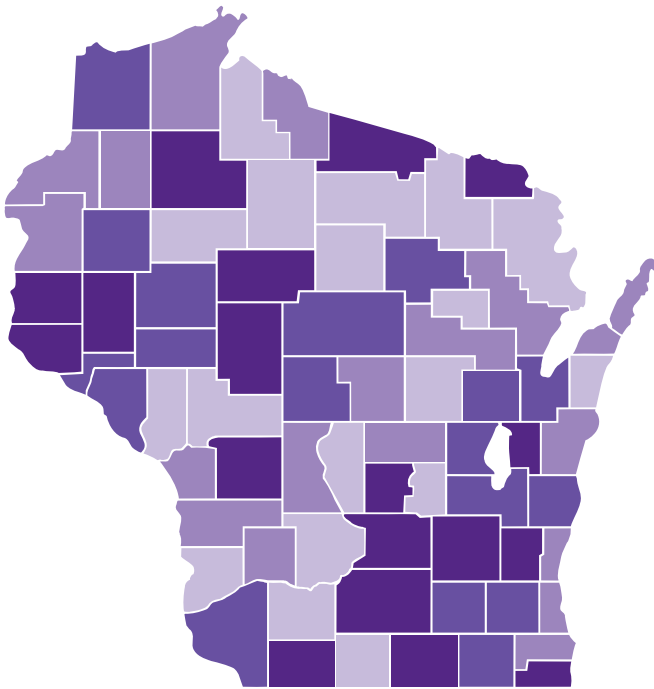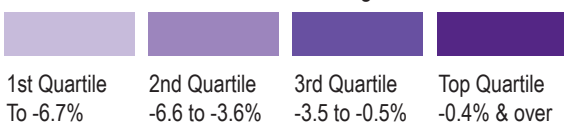
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW)

Five-Year Job Growth (%), 2015-2020

County	Job Growth	County	Job Growth
Adams	-10.0	Marathon	-2.4
Ashland	-6.9	Marinette	-7.1
Barron	-3.4	Marquette	2.9
Bayfield	-4.7	Menominee	-15.3
Brown	-1.0	Milwaukee	-6.4
Buffalo	-0.5	Monroe	1.4
Burnett	-6.2	Oconto	-4.6
Calumet	7.6	Oneida	-7.5
Chippewa	-0.6	Outagamie	-1.9
Clark	-0.5	Ozaukee	-4.2
Columbia	1.8	Pepin	-3.0
Crawford	-8.6	Pierce	0.6
Dane	1.8	Polk	-4.6
Dodge	-0.3	Portage	-4.7
Door	-5.1	Price	-14.0
Douglas	-3.3	Racine	-3.9
Dunn	1.5	Richland	-3.6
Eau Claire	-2.4	Rock	-0.5
Florence	0.4	Rusk	-9.8
Fond du Lac	-3.6	St. Croix	0.1
Forest	-10.9	Sauk	-9.9
Grant	-2.1	Sawyer	-0.1
Green	-6.7	Shawano	-5.1
Green Lake	-13.3	Sheboygan	-1.7
Iowa	-7.7	Taylor	1.5
Iron	-5.5	Trempealeau	-11.8
Jackson	-9.3	Vernon	-5.8
Jefferson	-2.3	Vilas	2.6
Juneau	-3.7	Walworth	-0.9
Kenosha	11.1	Washburn	-6.4
Kewaunee	-7.2	Washington	1.6
La Crosse	-4.0	Waukesha	-1.2
Lafayette	2.9	Waupaca	-8.7
Langlade	-3.2	Waushara	-3.9
Lincoln	-6.7	Winnebago	-1.1
Manitowoc	-4.6	Wood	-1.4

Statewide Measures			
Average	-2.3%	Median	-3.6%

Unemployment

The unemployment rate is another measure of economic health. The rate is calculated as the number of county residents 16 or older who are unemployed and looking for work as a percentage of the total workforce in the county.

In 2020, unemployment spiked due to the pandemic. Statewide, 6.3% of the labor force was unemployed in 2020, up from 3.3% in 2019. Unemployment rates tended to be higher in northern Wisconsin.

Unemployment Rate, 2020
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Rate
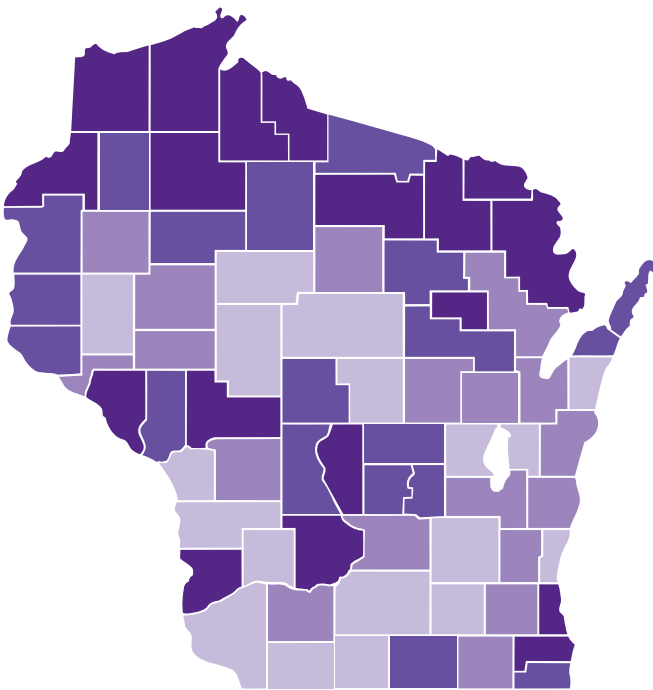
Unemployment Rate: Low to High

1st Quartile	2nd Quartile	3rd Quartile	Top Quartile
To 5.5%	5.6-6.3%	6.4-7.2%	7.3% & over
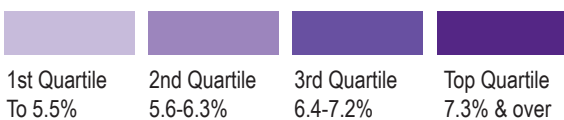
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Unemployment Rate (%), 2020

County	Rate	County	Rate
Adams	9.5	Marathon	5.0
Ashland	8.5	Marinette	7.8
Barron	6.1	Marquette	6.7
Bayfield	9.3	Menominee	15.3
Brown	6.0	Milwaukee	8.2
Buffalo	7.4	Monroe	5.5
Burnett	9.1	Oconto	6.3
Calumet	4.7	Oneida	7.3
Chippewa	6.2	Outagamie	5.5
Clark	4.5	Ozaukee	5.4
Columbia	5.9	Pepin	5.9
Crawford	7.3	Pierce	7.0
Dane	4.8	Polk	7.2
Dodge	5.3	Portage	5.4
Door	6.8	Price	6.8
Douglas	9.2	Racine	7.3
Dunn	5.5	Richland	5.1
Eau Claire	5.5	Rock	7.1
Florence	8.0	Rusk	6.6
Fond du Lac	5.9	St. Croix	7.1
Forest	12.4	Sauk	7.5
Grant	5.3	Sawyer	7.9
Green	4.8	Shawano	6.4
Green Lake	6.9	Sheboygan	5.7
Iowa	6.1	Taylor	4.9
Iron	11.2	Trempealeau	7.0
Jackson	9.3	Vernon	5.2
Jefferson	5.4	Vilas	7.2
Juneau	7.2	Walworth	6.1
Kenosha	7.1	Washburn	6.9
Kewaunee	4.6	Washington	5.6
La Crosse	5.4	Waukesha	5.6
Lafayette	4.3	Waupaca	5.5
Langlade	6.5	Waushara	6.3
Lincoln	5.9	Winnebago	5.4
Manitowoc	6.2	Wood	6.7

Statewide Measures			
Average	6.3%	Median	6.3%

Poverty

Reducing poverty can limit demand for tax-funded public services. The federal government set the 2019 poverty level for a family of four at $25,750. Families with incomes at or below that level are considered in poverty.

In 2019, the statewide poverty rate averaged 10.4%, down from 11.1% in 2018. Generally, poverty was lowest in southeast Wisconsin and highest in the north and southwest.

Note: For 2021, the income cutoff for a family of four is $26,500

Poverty Rate, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Rate

Rate: Low to High

| 1st Quartile To 8.8% | 2nd Quartile 8.9-10.1% | 3rd Quartile 10.2-12.3% | Top Quartile 12.4% & over |
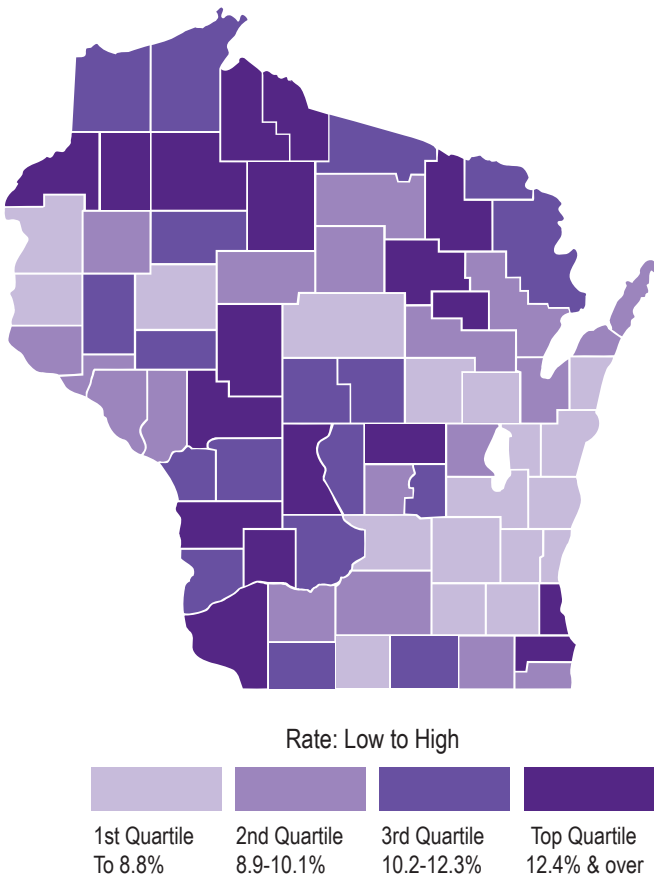
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Poverty Rate (%), 2019

County	Poverty Rate	County	Poverty Rate
Adams	11.6	Marathon	8.2
Ashland	17.8	Marinette	11.5
Barron	8.9	Marquette	10.0
Bayfield	10.3	Menominee	25.3
Brown	9.9	Milwaukee	16.9
Buffalo	9.5	Monroe	10.9
Burnett	12.6	Oconto	9.3
Calumet	5.4	Oneida	8.9
Chippewa	8.8	Outagamie	7.1
Clark	13.5	Ozaukee	4.5
Columbia	6.7	Pepin	9.0
Crawford	11.6	Pierce	9.8
Dane	9.4	Polk	8.6
Dodge	8.0	Portage	11.8
Door	9.3	Price	14.9
Douglas	11.5	Racine	12.4
Dunn	11.7	Richland	12.5
Eau Claire	10.6	Rock	12.3
Florence	10.9	Rusk	12.3
Fond du Lac	7.3	St. Croix	5.9
Forest	16.3	Sauk	10.2
Grant	13.4	Sawyer	12.7
Green	6.4	Shawano	9.6
Green Lake	11.7	Sheboygan	8.1
Iowa	9.5	Taylor	9.7
Iron	12.7	Trempealeau	8.9
Jackson	12.4	Vernon	14.1
Jefferson	7.1	Vilas	11.2
Juneau	13.4	Walworth	9.5
Kenosha	9.8	Washburn	12.8
Kewaunee	7.4	Washington	5.1
La Crosse	11.8	Waukesha	4.7
Lafayette	11.3	Waupaca	8.8
Langlade	13.0	Waushara	12.4
Lincoln	9.1	Winnebago	9.7
Manitowoc	8.8	Wood	10.7

Statewide Measures			
Average	10.4%	Median	10.1%

Property Values

Equalized values are state estimates of the current market value of all taxable property in a county. Per capita values tend to be higher in counties with more businesses and in those with more vacation property owned by non-residents. Statewide, values averaged $104,727 per capita in 2020, a 5.4% increase from 2019.

Of the 10 counties with the highest equalized value per capita, eight are in the north. These are generally sparsely-populated counties with large amounts of vacation property, most of it owned by nonresidents.

Equalized Values Per Capita, 2020
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Values
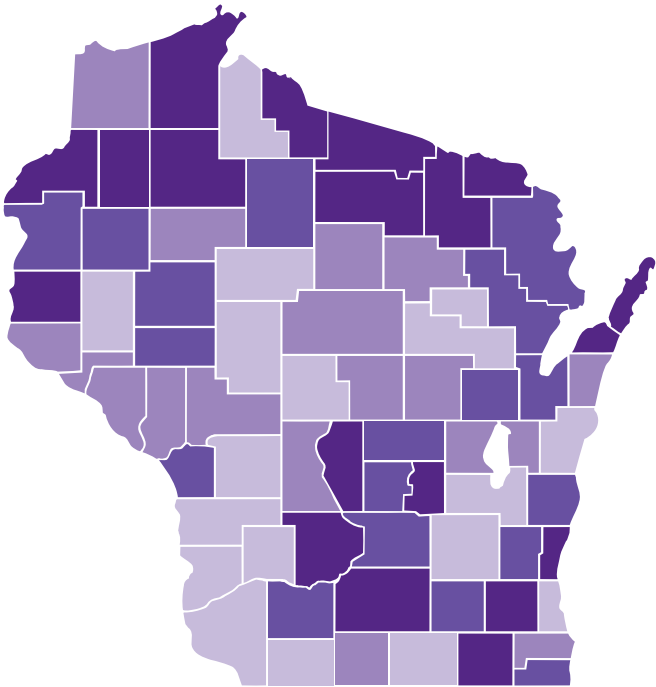
Per Capita Value ($ Thousands): Low to High

| 1st Quartile To $83,122 | 2nd Quartile $83,123-92,861 | 3rd Quartile $92,862-123,033 | Top Quartile $123,034 & over |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Equalized Values Per Capita, 2020

County	Eq. Value	County	Eq. Value
Adams	$143,390	Marathon	90,191
Ashland	79,491	Marinette	100,129
Barron	101,386	Marquette	112,289
Bayfield	178,017	Menominee	83,122
Brown	93,033	Milwaukee	75,116
Buffalo	91,135	Monroe	80,437
Burnett	189,254	Oconto	109,322
Calumet	88,852	Oneida	205,983
Chippewa	99,397	Outagamie	94,706
Clark	67,355	Ozaukee	150,059
Columbia	106,722	Pepin	92,223
Crawford	78,236	Pierce	91,393
Dane	136,626	Polk	121,473
Dodge	81,027	Portage	92,726
Door	272,627	Price	104,628
Douglas	86,951	Racine	91,945
Dunn	80,425	Richland	70,462
Eau Claire	95,228	Rock	82,306
Florence	151,259	Rusk	86,383
Fond du Lac	80,991	St. Croix	126,820
Forest	131,912	Sauk	126,947
Grant	70,310	Sawyer	220,848
Green	92,199	Shawano	82,636
Green Lake	127,522	Sheboygan	93,011
Iowa	98,629	Taylor	75,063
Iron	169,405	Trempealeau	83,720
Jackson	85,036	Vernon	72,683
Jefferson	96,490	Vilas	339,820
Juneau	87,770	Walworth	160,780
Kenosha	105,376	Washburn	170,893
Kewaunee	88,911	Washington	123,033
La Crosse	92,996	Waukesha	153,939
Lafayette	74,530	Waupaca	85,388
Langlade	91,860	Waushara	116,646
Lincoln	92,521	Winnebago	87,679
Manitowoc	73,941	Wood	75,924

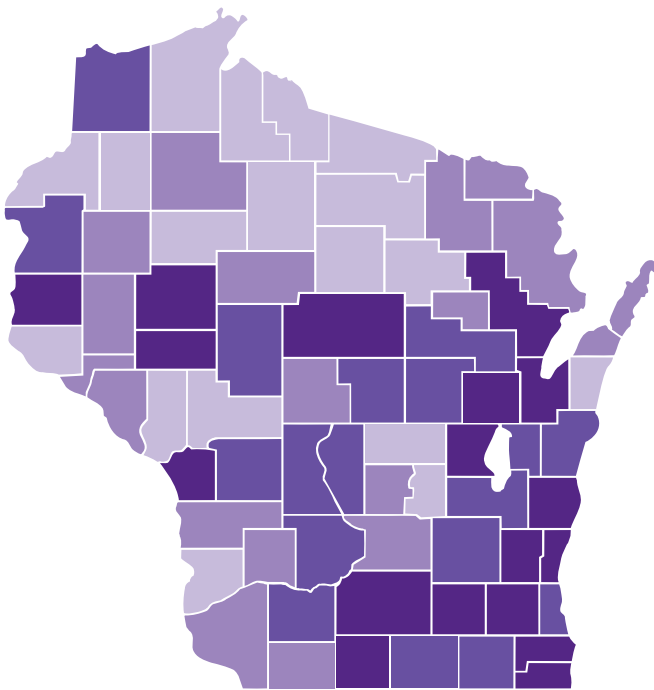| Statewide Measures			
Average	$104,727	Median	$92,861

New Construction

Net new construction measures the value of new taxable buildings in an area. This measure serves a dual purpose. First, it provides a measure of economic activity in a county. Second, the percentages are used in the state levy limit formula to determine the amount by which counties can increase their property tax levies. Net new construction for 2020 (activity during 2019) averaged 1.6% statewide.

Generally, new construction was greatest in counties with interstate access – from Brown County south to Kenosha County, and from Rock County running northwest to La Crosse and St. Croix counties. New construction activity was weakest in the northern third of the state.

Net New Construction, 2020
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Percent Change

Percent: Low to High

1st Quartile	2nd Quartile	3rd Quartile	Top Quartile
To 0.78%	0.79-1.04%	1.05-1.43%	1.44 % & over
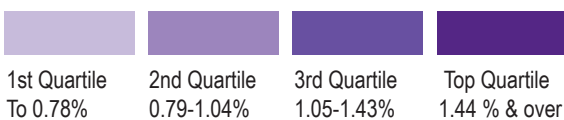
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Net New Construction (%), 2020

County	% NNC	County	% NNC
Adams	1.06	Marathon	1.98
Ashland	0.36	Marinette	0.87
Barron	0.93	Marquette	1.00
Bayfield	0.52	Menominee	0.82
Brown	1.83	Milwaukee	1.33
Buffalo	0.93	Monroe	1.37
Burnett	0.63	Oconto	1.57
Calumet	1.43	Oneida	0.74
Chippewa	1.83	Outagamie	1.79
Clark	1.23	Ozaukee	1.50
Columbia	1.03	Pepin	0.96
Crawford	0.74	Pierce	0.37
Dane	2.12	Polk	1.08
Dodge	1.09	Portage	1.12
Door	1.01	Price	0.72
Douglas	1.38	Racine	3.15
Dunn	1.01	Richland	0.83
Eau Claire	2.30	Rock	1.33
Florence	0.79	Rusk	0.59
Fond du Lac	1.32	St. Croix	2.71
Forest	0.85	Sauk	1.33
Grant	0.82	Sawyer	0.91
Green	1.87	Shawano	1.22
Green Lake	0.58	Sheboygan	1.88
Iowa	1.34	Taylor	0.97
Iron	0.60	Trempealeau	0.75
Jackson	0.71	Vernon	1.04
Jefferson	1.80	Vilas	0.75
Juneau	1.42	Walworth	1.40
Kenosha	2.63	Washburn	0.78
Kewaunee	0.66	Washington	2.01
La Crosse	1.58	Waukesha	1.64
Lafayette	0.91	Waupaca	1.04
Langlade	0.71	Waushara	0.78
Lincoln	0.75	Winnebago	1.45
Manitowoc	1.31	Wood	1.01

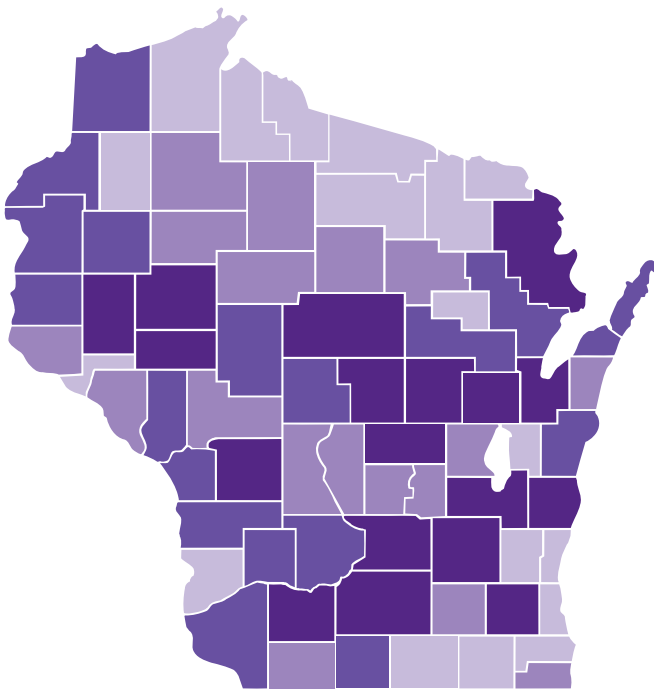| Statewide Measures			
Average	1.60%	Median	1.04%

County Highway Miles

Wisconsin has nearly 40,000 miles of county highways that county governments must maintain. By comparison, total state and interstate highway miles total less than 12,000.

Among many factors accounting for the number of highway miles, geography is among the most important – large counties generally have more county highway miles than small ones.

Caution: Since county highway spending includes expenditures for maintenance of state and interstate highways within the county, it should not be combined with the figures here to calculate spending per mile.

County Highway Miles, 2019
Counties by Quartile, Low to High Miles

Road Miles: Low to High

| 1st Quartile | 2nd Quartile | 3rd Quartile | Top Quartile |
| To 426 | 427-549 | 550-665 | 666 & over |
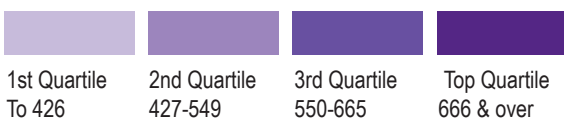
Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

County Highway Miles, 2019

County	Miles	County	Miles
Adams	453.6	Marathon	1,228.8
Ashland	182.7	Marinette	668.7
Barron	581.8	Marquette	474.4
Bayfield	345.6	Menominee	73.0
Brown	721.4	Milwaukee	169.2
Buffalo	440.1	Monroe	683.0
Burnett	635.8	Oconto	637.0
Calumet	266.9	Oneida	340.8
Chippewa	975.3	Outagamie	685.4
Clark	601.8	Ozaukee	309.5
Columbia	714.5	Pepin	155.0
Crawford	264.9	Pierce	494.2
Dane	1,049.4	Polk	662.7
Dodge	1,078.5	Portage	868.0
Door	591.1	Price	440.1
Douglas	664.5	Racine	305.7
Dunn	848.4	Richland	592.8
Eau Claire	835.0	Rock	426.2
Florence	98.2	Rusk	510.3
Fond du Lac	767.9	St. Croix	655.8
Forest	218.1	Sauk	610.3
Grant	622.1	Sawyer	457.9
Green	555.8	Shawano	587.9
Green Lake	457.8	Sheboygan	898.3
Iowa	725.2	Taylor	487.3
Iron	133.8	Trempealeau	583.4
Jackson	462.5	Vernon	570.4
Jefferson	510.3	Vilas	408.3
Juneau	468.4	Walworth	386.1
Kenosha	505.6	Washburn	397.5
Kewaunee	431.1	Washington	363.9
La Crosse	564.3	Waukesha	812.6
Lafayette	543.0	Waupaca	666.9
Langlade	542.0	Waushara	666.9
Lincoln	541.4	Winnebago	439.1
Manitowoc	563.1	Wood	648.7

Statewide Measures			
Average	548.4	Median	549.4

POPULATION APPENDIX

To provide comparative figures for the state's diverse 72 counties, much of the data contained in this report is presented on a per capita basis. However, there are times when users may prefer totals rather than per capita figures. To facilitate that, the appendix that follows provides two years of population figures: 2019 and 2020.

Population Appendix

Population, 2019

County	Population	County	Population
Adams	20,630	Marathon	136,517
Ashland	15,946	Marinette	41,401
Barron	46,472	Marquette	15,390
Bayfield	15,335	Menominee	4,265
Brown	262,452	Milwaukee	946,296
Buffalo	13,707	Monroe	46,994
Burnett	15,524	Oconto	38,778
Calumet	53,018	Oneida	36,285
Chippewa	64,881	Outagamie	187,092
Clark	34,748	Ozaukee	89,905
Columbia	57,282	Pepin	7,431
Crawford	16,669	Pierce	42,208
Dane	537,328	Polk	44,536
Dodge	90,032	Portage	71,680
Door	28,650	Price	14,216
Douglas	44,468	Racine	196,487
Dunn	44,621	Richland	18,007
Eau Claire	103,159	Rock	160,444
Florence	4,475	Rusk	14,919
Fond du Lac	104,423	St. Croix	89,692
Forest	9,195	Sauk	63,281
Grant	52,954	Sawyer	16,893
Green	37,086	Shawano	41,775
Green Lake	19,224	Sheboygan	116,547
Iowa	23,896	Taylor	20,849
Iron	5,894	Trempealeau	29,964
Jackson	20,832	Vernon	30,424
Jefferson	84,579	Vilas	21,798
Juneau	27,232	Walworth	104,062
Kenosha	170,071	Washburn	16,027
Kewaunee	20,782	Washington	137,637
La Crosse	119,484	Waukesha	405,991
Lafayette	17,002	Waupaca	52,368
Langlade	20,086	Waushara	24,517
Lincoln	28,957	Winnebago	170,580
Manitowoc	81,643	Wood	75,450

Statewide Measures			
Total	5,843,443	Median	41,588

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, January 1 Estimates

Population, 2020

County	Population	County	Population
Adams	20,701	Marathon	137,237
Ashland	15,871	Marinette	41,255
Barron	46,522	Marquette	15,387
Bayfield	15,334	Menominee	4,267
Brown	264,821	Milwaukee	944,099
Buffalo	13,671	Monroe	46,882
Burnett	15,486	Oconto	38,853
Calumet	53,338	Oneida	36,268
Chippewa	65,339	Outagamie	187,661
Clark	34,725	Ozaukee	90,630
Columbia	57,134	Pepin	7,393
Crawford	16,679	Pierce	42,413
Dane	543,408	Polk	44,628
Dodge	90,005	Portage	71,670
Door	28,770	Price	14,170
Douglas	44,246	Racine	195,766
Dunn	44,788	Richland	18,034
Eau Claire	103,959	Rock	160,120
Florence	4,467	Rusk	14,879
Fond du Lac	104,370	St. Croix	90,949
Forest	9,183	Sauk	63,343
Grant	52,572	Sawyer	16,903
Green	36,967	Shawano	41,739
Green Lake	19,178	Sheboygan	116,924
Iowa	23,915	Taylor	20,793
Iron	5,909	Trempealeau	30,047
Jackson	20,828	Vernon	30,496
Jefferson	84,692	Vilas	21,769
Juneau	27,250	Walworth	104,086
Kenosha	170,514	Washburn	15,993
Kewaunee	20,746	Washington	138,268
La Crosse	120,447	Waukesha	406,785
Lafayette	17,007	Waupaca	52,155
Langlade	20,063	Waushara	24,436
Lincoln	28,800	Winnebago	169,861
Manitowoc	81,349	Wood	75,381

Statewide Measures

Total	5,854,594	Median	41,497

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, January 1 Estimates