



County Economies: Under the Hood of National Economic Trends

2024 Profiles • Bergen County, N.J.

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT



Gross Domestic Product (GDP), also known as economic output, is a widely used measure of economic health, as it reflects the total value of goods and services produced by an economy over a given period. The period from 2020 to 2022 showed more robust GDP growth at both the county and national level than pre-pandemic. **One-third (32 percent) of counties kept pace with the national rate of 7.8 percent from 2020 to 2022.**

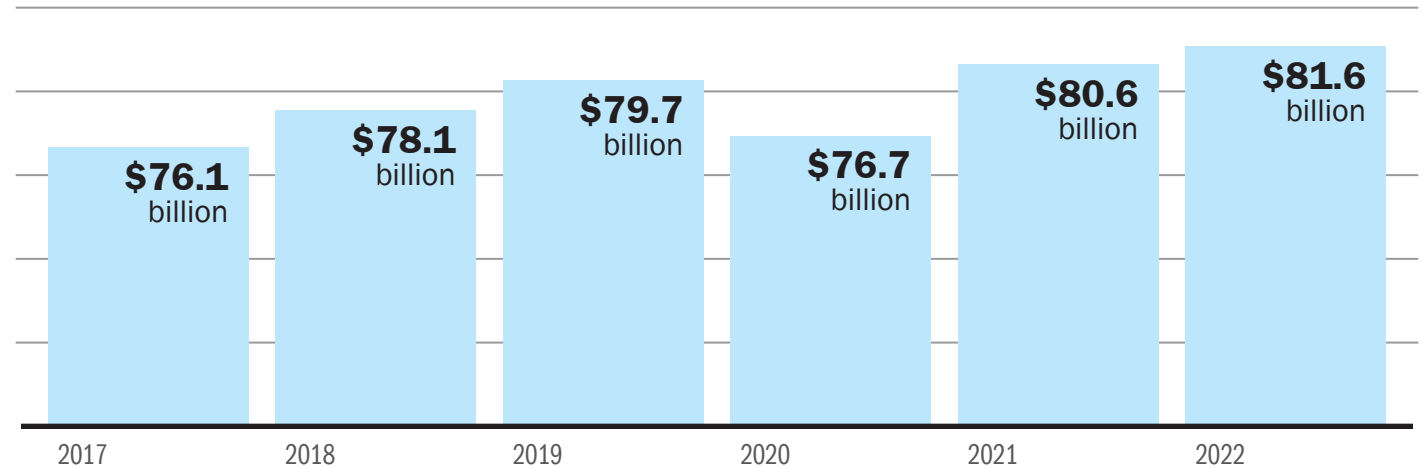
Trends in GDP for Bergen County



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis - Local Area Gross Domestic Product, 2022 vintage.

From 2020 to 2022, GDP in Bergen County increased by 6.3 percent. In the three years before the COVID-19 pandemic (2017-2019), GDP within the county increased by 4.8 percent and the U.S. GDP grew by 5.5 percent.

GDP by year for the county - 2017 to 2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis - Local Area Gross Domestic Product, 2022 vintage.

Output for the three industries by GDP in the county - 2020 to 2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis - Local Area Gross Domestic Product, 2022 vintage.

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Demographic data aids with understanding a community's structure as it reveals information about age, gender, ethnicity, education and other primary factors of the population. Between 2021 and 2022, the U.S. experienced a slight population increase of 0.4 percent. **Nationwide, one-third of counties had population increases of more than 0.5 percent and one-third experienced a decline of over 0.5 percent.** Bergen County, home to 952,997 residents, kept a steady population level, with a 0.2 percent decrease in population between 2021 and 2022.

County population components of change - 2022

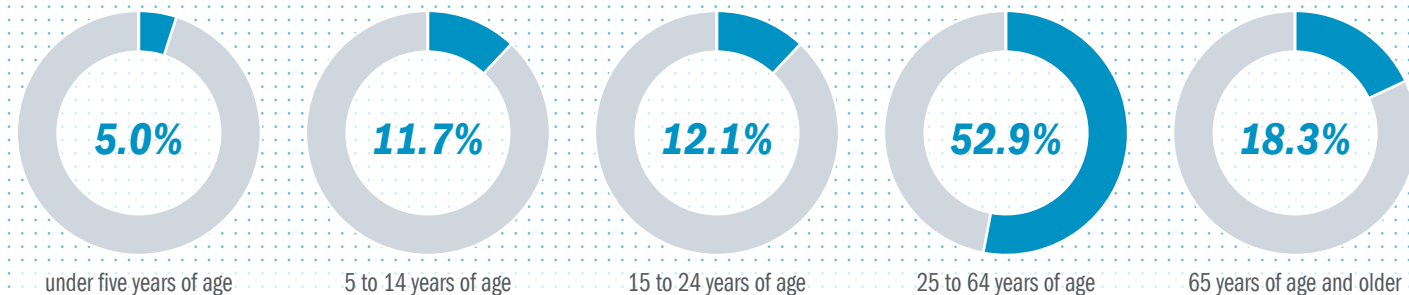
1.61 PER 1,000 RESIDENTS
natural population change

-3.5 PER 1,000 RESIDENTS
net migration

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Population Estimates Program (PEP) - 2022.

The positive natural population rate of change for Bergen County indicates births outnumbering deaths and can lead to population growth in the community. The county's net migration rate is negative which indicates an outflow of people, or that more people are leaving the county than moving in.

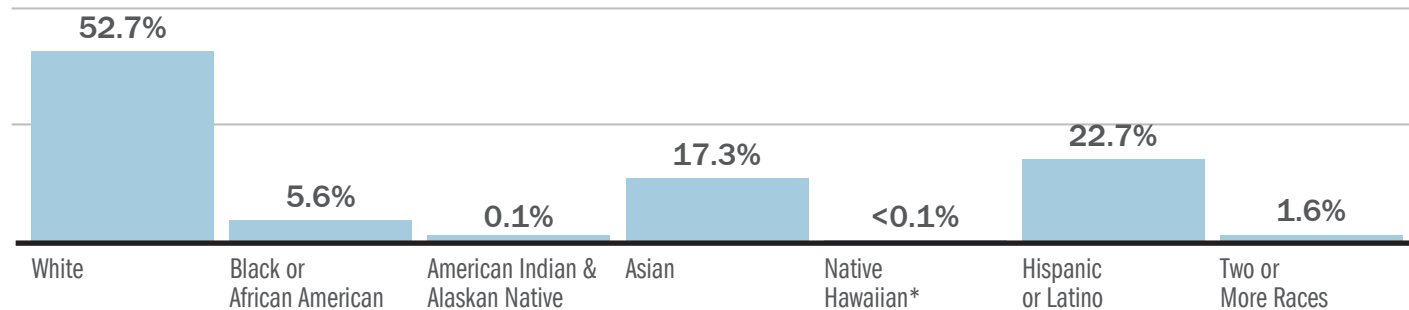
County population breakdown by age - 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Population Estimates Program (PEP) - 2022.

Age distribution data helps plan for the economy, healthcare resources, education, labor force, social services and housing demands. Community leaders may use the data to formulate policies and programs that address various age groups' needs and challenges.

County population breakdown by race and ethnicity - 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Population Estimates Program (PEP) - 2022. Notes: * Native Hawaiian includes other Pacific Islanders

LABOR FORCE TRENDS

The labor market is a key determinant of economic growth and residents live in places where they can find work. Labor force indicators, such as the unemployment rate and labor force size, assess local economic dynamics and employment trends. Through analysis of these metrics, decision-makers can gain insights into workforce health, anticipate future labor needs and identify areas for intervention. **The nation’s unemployment rate, which was a healthy 3.6 percent in 2023. More than half (56 percent) of counties had unemployment rates below this national figure in 2023.**

Labor force trends in Bergen County - 2023 annual estimates



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), 2023 annual averages.

In Bergen County, labor market statistics show that there are 514,345 individuals either employed or actively seeking employment. Out of these, 494,480 people are currently employed. **The unemployment rate in the county stands at 3.9 percent, which is above the national average of 3.6 percent.**

Unemployment rate change within the county Jan. 2018 to Feb. 2024 data



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), 2024 data.

Sources

1- University of Wisconsin-Madison - [Local & Regional Economic Analysis](#).

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The types of jobs in a county are essential, and local industry makeup is a top factor influencing the county's economy. Understanding the employment breakdown by industry allows for economic structure analysis, policy formulation and resource allocation. **Industry composition is critical to preparing local infrastructure, workforce and community development, encouraging current and future industry diversification and providing good, stable jobs for residents.**

Jobs in the county - 2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Employment by Industry, 2022 vintage.

Bergen County had 693,756 jobs in 2022, with the majority (99.9 percent) being nonfarm jobs. The top three sectors with the most jobs were: Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing, Professional & Business Services and Health Care & Social Assistance (also highlighted on the table below).

Full list of industries with number of jobs: 2020 to 2022

Compared to prior year, jobs: ▲ increased ■ stayed constant (less than 1% change) ▼ decreased

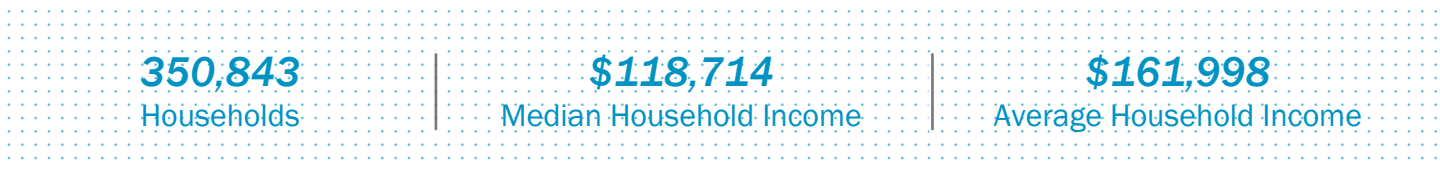
Industry	2020	2021	2022
Farming	445 ▲	647 ▲	583 ▼
Forestry, Fishing & Related Activities	120 ▼	136 ▲	144 ▲
Mining, Quarrying, & Oil and Gas Extraction	262 ▲	236 ▼	251 ▲
Utilities	1,437 ▼	1,425 ■	1,467 ▲
Construction	27,303 ▼	27,152 ■	28,221 ▲
Manufacturing	31,609 ▼	30,689 ▼	31,753 ▲
Wholesale Trade	39,271 ▼	41,169 ▲	42,029 ▲
Retail Trade	56,921 ▼	59,617 ▲	61,615 ▲
Transportation & Warehousing	30,284 ▲	31,725 ▲	34,284 ▲
Information	11,830 ■	13,099 ▲	13,800 ▲
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing	98,548 ▲	107,777 ▲	120,058 ▲
Professional & Business Services	101,949 ▼	106,769 ▲	110,934 ▲
Educational services	16,643 ▼	17,046 ▲	17,962 ▲
Health Care & Social Assistance	85,014 ▼	88,628 ▲	91,635 ▲
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	12,007 ▼	13,435 ▲	14,710 ▲
Accommodation and Food Services	28,449 ▼	31,702 ▲	36,329 ▲
Government & Government Enterprises	48,500 ▼	48,788 ■	50,030 ▲

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Employment by Industry, 2022 vintage.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Statistics on household income help with understanding the financial state of families and individuals living in local communities. The data can be used by decision-makers to inform planning and policy formulation, allocate resources and target areas based on needs. **From 2018 to 2022, the median household income in the U.S. stood at \$75,149, with four out of five counties having a household income below this national median.**

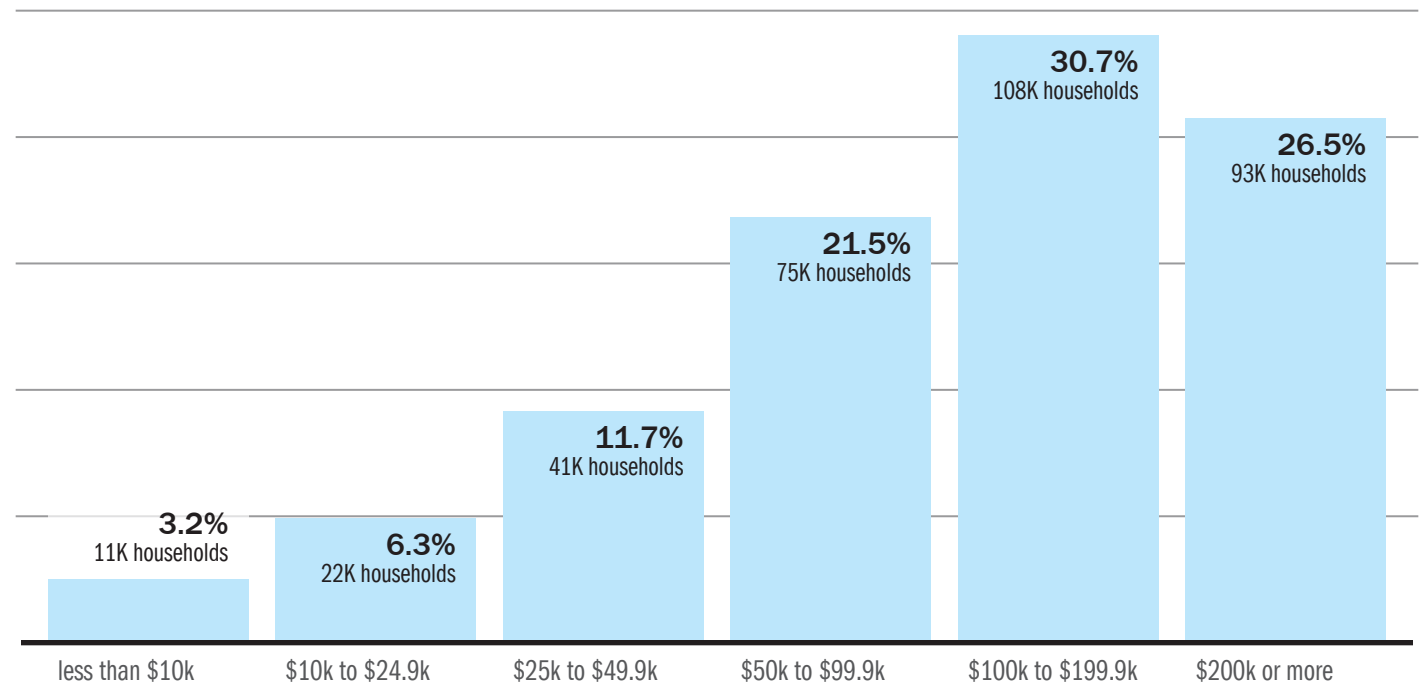
Household income statistics for Bergen County: 2018 - 2022 data



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year estimates, 2018-2022 B19001, B19025 and B19049 tables.

The median household income for Bergen County stands at **\$118,714**, which surpasses the national median by **58.0 percent**. The county has an average household income of \$161,998 among its 350,843 households.

Distribution households within the county by income levels: 2018 - 2022 data



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year estimates, 2018-2022 B19001 table.

Notes

Household income includes the pretax cash income of the householder and all other people 15 years old and older in the household.

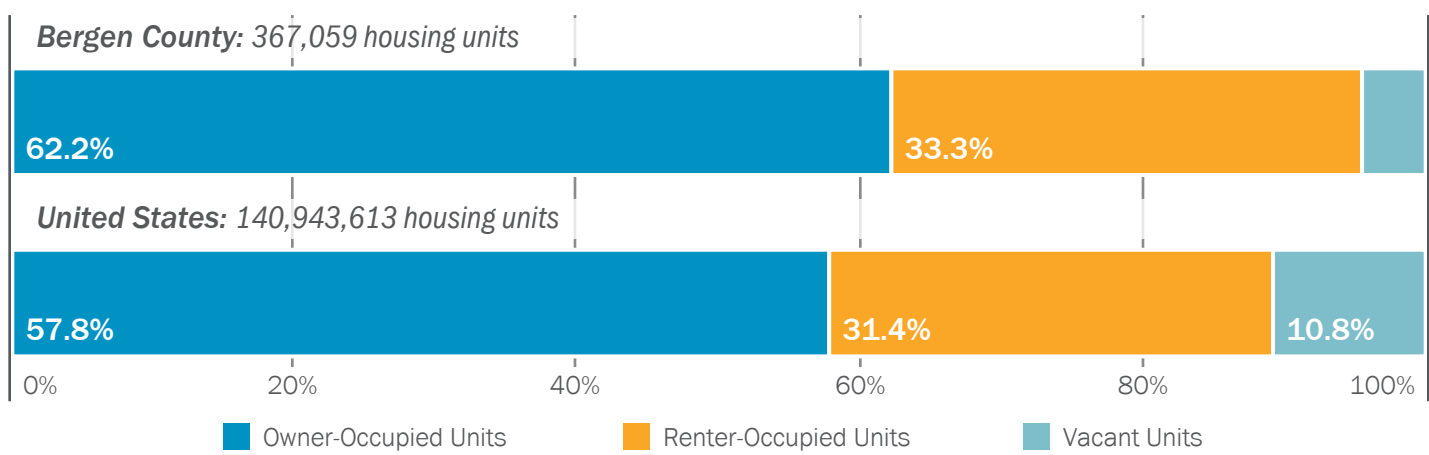
Sources

- 1- United States Census Bureau - American Community Survey Briefs. Link: [Household Income: 2021](#).
- 2- United States Census Bureau - American Community Survey Briefs. Link: [Income in the United States: 2022](#).

HOUSING UNITS

Housing statistics provide insights into a community's economic status, social structure and overall condition. **These figures cover various factors**, including occupancy and vacancy rates, housing affordability and other demographics factors. Combining housing data with indicators such as homeownership rates, access to education and infrastructure can inform aspects of planning and development.

Housing units statistics for Bergen County: 2018 - 2022 data



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year estimates, 2018-2022 DP04 and B07013 tables.

Housing Affordability

Households that pay more than 30 percent of their income on housing are considered cost burdened and, **in most counties, renters are more likely to be cost-burdened than homeowners.**

Housing affordability statistics for Bergen County: 2018 - 2022 data

Owner-Occupied Housing Units			Renter-Occupied Housing Units		
Percent Moderately-Burdened Owners		17.2%	Percent Moderately-Burdened Renters		22.7%
Percent Severely-Burdened Owners	+	13.6%	Percent Severely-Burdened Renters	+	26.0%
Total Percent Cost-Burdened Owners	=	30.8%	Total Percent Cost-Burdened Renters	=	48.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year estimates, 2018-2022 B25070 and B25091 tables.

Nationwide, 49.9 percent of all renters are burdened by the cost of rent. **For Bergen County, the figure is 1.2 percentage points below the national average.** Out of all homeowners in the U.S., 21.9 percent of households are cost-burdened **and in Bergen County, the percentage is 8.9 percentage points above the national average.**

POVERTY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

After decreasing for years, the national poverty rate increased slightly from 2020 to 2021, and remained stable in 2022 at **11.5 percent**. Poverty tends to be concentrated in specific geographical areas and often persists over extended periods. Vulnerable groups, including individuals with disabilities, those residing in rural areas and specific racial and ethnic minorities, face higher risk of poverty.

Poverty statistics for the Bergen County - 2022



Health Insurance

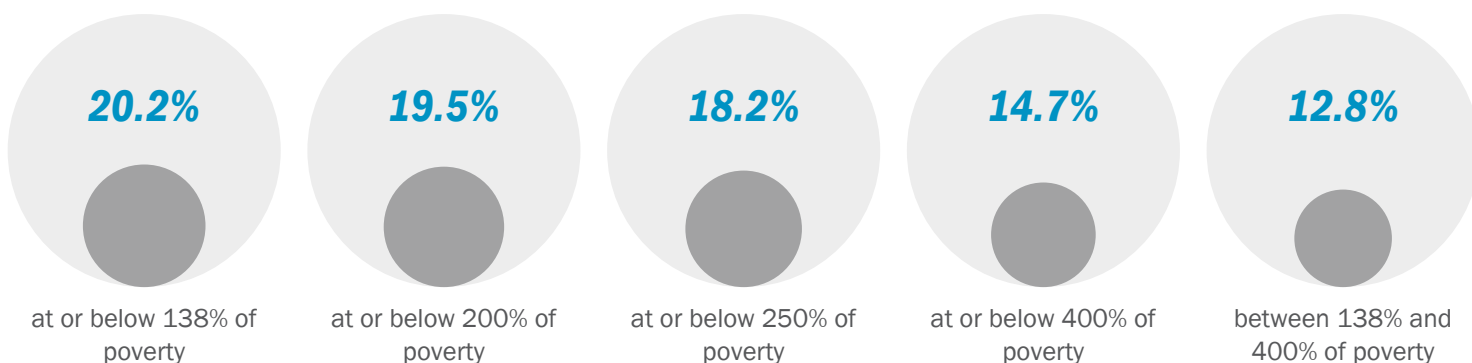
A healthy population contributes to a more productive workforce, and the health consequences of poverty are severe. **People living in poverty, especially children, are at a higher risk for mental illness, chronic disease, higher mortality and a lower life expectancy.**

Health insurance statistics in Bergen County - 2021 share



Health insurance plays an important role in ensuring access to health services, and 8.3 percent of all U.S. residents do not have health insurance. **The share of residents in Bergen County with no health insurance is 7.3 percent, 1.0 percentage points below the national level.**

Uninsured population within the county by poverty level - 2022



Sources

- 1- United States Census Bureau - [Poverty in the United States: 2021](#).
- 2- United States Department of Health and Human Services - Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Social Determinants of Health Literature Summaries. Link: [Healthy People 2030](#).

EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS

A county needs working-age residents to support current and prospective companies, and counties with sufficient working-age residents tend to have training and educational opportunities for young workers to develop their skills. Educational statistics can help community leaders to recognize areas of need, distribute resources, formulate policies and initiatives and involve the community in discussions about educational requirements, including vocational training and skill development. **There are over 95,000 public schools, more than 8,600 libraries and over 5,800 community colleges and universities in the United States, serving our communities and contributing to the landscape nationwide.**

Educational resources in Bergen County

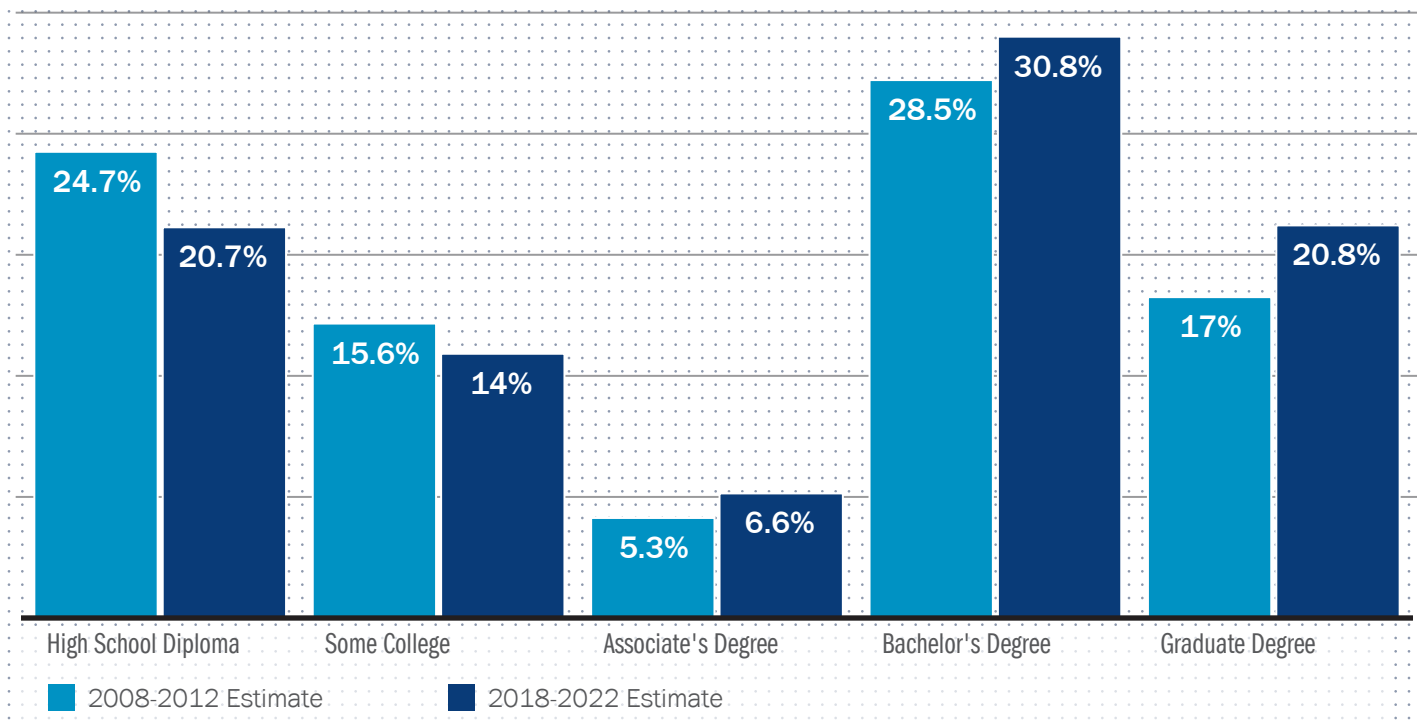
Public Libraries 2021 data	Operational Schools 2020 data	Colleges and Universities 2022 data
62 libraries	285 schools	15 institutions

There are 285 public school in Bergen County being operated by 81 separate districts. Out of the 285 institutions, 276 are locally operated.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education that an individual has completed.

Educational attainment in the county: 2008-2012 vs. 2018-2022 estimates



Sources

- 1- The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - [Economic & Social Outcomes](#).
- 2- Brookings Institution - [What colleges do for local economies: A Direct Measure Based on Consumption](#).

NATURAL DISASTERS

Natural disasters can have a devastating impact on both the environment and local economies **causing an increase in people leaving the affected areas, a drop in home prices and higher rates of poverty**. Many residents are also facing increased insurance costs. In 2023, the U.S. was impacted by **28 separate billion-dollar disasters, which resulted in approximately \$92.9 billion in damages**. Additionally, 849 counties experienced at least one federally declared major disaster.

Federally declared disasters for the county - 2000 to 2023



Like every other county in the nation, **Bergen County faced the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was declared a major disaster by the federal government**. Additionally, between 2000 and 2023, the county was affected by fires, hurricanes, severe storms and snowstorms which were also federally declared disasters.

The National Risk Index

The National Risk Index is a tool developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the U.S. to assess the risk of natural hazards and their potential impact on communities. It considers factors such as the probability of hazards occurring in specific areas, along with demographics, infrastructure, socioeconomic factors and the built environment. With a comprehensive assessment of risk levels at the county level, the index enables community leaders to prioritize resources and develop strategies for disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

Risk Index breakdown for Bergen County

Avalanche Not Applicable	Coastal Flooding Very High	Cold Wave Very Low
Drought Very Low	Earthquake Relatively Low	Hail Relatively Low
Heat Wave Relatively High	Hurricane Relatively Moderate	Ice Storm Relatively High
Landslide Relatively Moderate	Lightning Relatively High	Riverine Flooding Relatively High
Strong Wind Very High	Tornado Relatively Moderate	Tsunami Not Available
Volcanic Activity Not Applicable	Wildfire Very Low	Winter Weather Relatively High

Sources

- 1- Leah Platt Boustan, Matthew E. Kahn, Paul W. Rhode and Maria Lucia Yanguas, "The Effect of Natural Disasters on Economic Activity in US Counties: A Century of Data." *Journal of Urban Economics* Volume 118, 2020, 103257.
- 2- See First Street, "The Insurance Issue" (Sep. 2023) and Shannon Martin, "The impact of natural disasters on insurance rates in 2024," *Bankrate* (Jun. 2023).