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01 overview

Foothills Region, NC
Overview

Foothills Region

The Foothills Region is comprised of three North Carolina counties. Interstate I-40 passes through the northern part of the region connecting to I-77 to the east and I-26 to the west.

- Cleveland
- McDowell
- Polk
- Rutherford
02 Industry cluster analysis

Foothills Region, NC
Industry cluster analysis

How to interpret cluster data results

The graph’s four quadrants tell a different story for each cluster.

- **Mature**: Top left (strong but declining)
  - Contains clusters that are more concentrated in the region and are declining (negative growth). These clusters typically fall into the lower quadrant as job losses cause a decline in concentration.

- **Stars**: Top right (strong and advancing)
  - Contains clusters that are more concentrated in the region and are growing. These clusters are strengths that help a region stand out from the competition. Small, high-growth clusters can be expected to become more dominant over time.

- **Transforming**: Bottom left (weak and declining)
  - Contains clusters that are under-represented in the region (low concentration) and are also losing jobs. Clusters in this region may indicate a gap in the workforce pipeline if local industries anticipate a future need. In general, clusters in this quadrant show a lack of competitiveness.

- **Emerging**: Bottom right (weak but advancing)
  - Contains clusters that are under-represented in the region but are growing, often quickly. If growth trends continue, these clusters will eventually move into the top right quadrant. Clusters in this quadrant are considered emerging strengths for the region.

Industry and occupation

Industry cluster bubble chart

Percent change in LQ, 2009-2014

Mature

-20% -10% 0% 10% 20% 30%

LQ, 2014

Glass & Ceramics, 4.08, 684
Mfg Supercluster, 1.57, 5,204
Biomedical/Biotech, 1.64, 12,583
Chemicals & Chemical Based, 3.71, 4,403
Transportation & Logistics, 1.16, 3,583
Agri. & Food Process., 0.97, 2,818
Mining, 0.86, 251

Star

Apparel & Textiles, 5.07, 3,657
Forest & Wood Prod., 2.17, 3,035
Advanced Materials, 1.86, 5,425
Edu. & Knowledge, 0.94, 2,146

Transforming

-10% 0% 10%

Defence & Security, 0.56, 2,344
Energy (Fossil & Renewable), 0.76, 4,041
Business & Financial Service, 0.47, 6,094
IT & Telecomm., 0.48, 1,845
Printing & Publishing, 0.90, 1,507
Arts & Ent., 0.60, 2,400

Emerging

20% 30%

Edu. & Knowledge, 0.94, 2,146

Source: EMSI Class of Worker 2014.4 (QCEW, non-QCEW, self-employed and extended proprietors).
Note: Label includes cluster name, LQ 2014, and Employment 2014; NAICS 2012 definitions.
Industry and occupation

Manufacturing sub-cluster bubble chart

Source: EMSI Class of Worker 2014.4 (QCEW, non-QCEW, self-employed and extended proprietors).
Note: Label includes cluster name, LQ 2014, and Employment 2014; NAICS 2012 definition
## Industry cluster analysis

### Mature Clusters
- Biomed/Biotechnical (Life Science) (1.6; 12,583)
- Transportation Equipment Mfg. (1.5; 1,268)
- Transportation & Logistics (1.2; 3,583)

### Star Clusters
- Apparel & Textiles (5.1; 3,657)
- Glass & Ceramics (4.1; 684)
- Chemicals/Chemical-based Products (3.71; 4,403)
- Electrical Equip., App & Comp Mfg. (3.0; 636)
- Forest & Wood Products (2.2; 3,035)
- Fabricated Metal Product Mfg. (2.1; 1,655)
- Primary Metal Mfg. (2.1; 462)
- Machinery Mfg. (1.6; 1,052)
- Advanced Materials (1.9; 5,425)
- Manufacturing Supercluster (1.6; 5,204)

### Emerging Clusters
- Education & Knowledge Creation (0.9; 2,146)
- Energy (Fossil & Renewable) (0.8; 4,041)
- Defense & Security (0.6; 2,344)
- Business & Financial Services (0.5; 6,094)

### Transforming Clusters
- Agribusiness, Food Processing & Tech (0.97; 2,818)
- Printing & Publishing (0.9; 1,507)
- Mining (0.9; 251)
- Arts, Ent, Rec. & Visitor Industries (0.6; 2,400)
- Information Technology & Telecom. (0.5; 1,845)
- Computer & Electronic Prod Mfg. (0.2; 130)

NOTE: The first number after each cluster represents its location quotient while the second number represents the number of total jobs (full and part time jobs by place of work) in that cluster in the region in 2014. The clusters are sorted in decreasing order by location quotient.
Industry and occupation

Bubble chart interpretation

Mature Industries

Three industry clusters in the Foothills Region are in the Maturing stage: Biomed/Biotechnical (Life Science); Transportation Equipment Mfg.; and Transportation & Logistics. These industries are relatively concentrated, but their growth is trending downward. It is worth noting, however, that the Foothills Region may find it worthwhile to invest in efforts to shore up the concentration of these industries.

Transforming Industries

Transforming clusters capture the mix of industries that are experiencing relative decline and limited export capability. In the Foothills Region, Agribusiness, Food Processing & Technology; Printing & Publishing; Mining; Arts, Entertainment, Recreation & Visitor Industries; Information Technology & Telecommunications; and Computer & Electronic Product Mfg. are all Transforming clusters. Any amount of growth in these industries would require relatively large investments.

Star Industries

Star industry clusters are highly concentrated, exporting and still experiencing growth in the region. The most highly concentrated of the Star industry clusters in the Foothills Region is Apparel & Textiles. Its location quotient is 5.1, indicating that the cluster is 5 times more concentrated in the region compared to the U.S. The other strong clusters in the region are Glass & Ceramics; Chemicals/Chemical-based Products; Electrical Equipment, Appliance & Component Mfg.; Forest & Wood Products; Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.; Primary Metal Mfg.; Machinery Mfg.; and Manufacturing supercluster.

Emerging Industries

Industry clusters that may be poised for future growth are classified as “Emerging.” There are four Emerging clusters in the Foothills Region: Education & Knowledge Creation; Energy (Fossil & Renewable); Defense & Security; and Business & Financial Services.

Source: EMSI Class of Worker 2014.4 (QCEW, non-QCEW, self-employed and extended proprietors).