



Cornell University
ILR School

Cornell University ILR School
DigitalCommons@ILR

Buffalo Commons

Centers, Institutes, Programs

3-16-2012

Geographies of Poverty: Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Area

Christopher Szczygiel

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/buffalocommons>

Thank you for downloading an article from DigitalCommons@ILR.

Support this valuable resource today!

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Centers, Institutes, Programs at DigitalCommons@ILR. It has been accepted for inclusion in Buffalo Commons by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@ILR. For more information, please contact catherwood-dig@cornell.edu.

If you have a disability and are having trouble accessing information on this website or need materials in an alternate format, contact web-accessibility@cornell.edu for assistance.

Geographies of Poverty: Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Area

Abstract

The local economy is often discussed in terms of the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), a multi-county area with a population of over one million. While it is useful to take a regional perspective, it is also useful to consider individual cities, towns or villages. The economic picture in the city of Buffalo (population 266,012) is so quite different than that of the town of Holland (population 3,430). The poverty rates in the cities of Buffalo (29.6%) and Niagara Falls (21.8%) are vastly higher than in the remaining parts of the MSA (just over 8%). The 2010 poverty rates for a sampling (52) of the municipalities and "census designated areas" (densely settled areas that may or may not be municipalities) in the Buffalo-Niagara MSA are detailed below.

Keywords

Buffalo, Poverty/Low Wage Work/Income Inequality, Data/Demographics/History, Demographics and Data, General, Fact Sheet, PPG, PDF

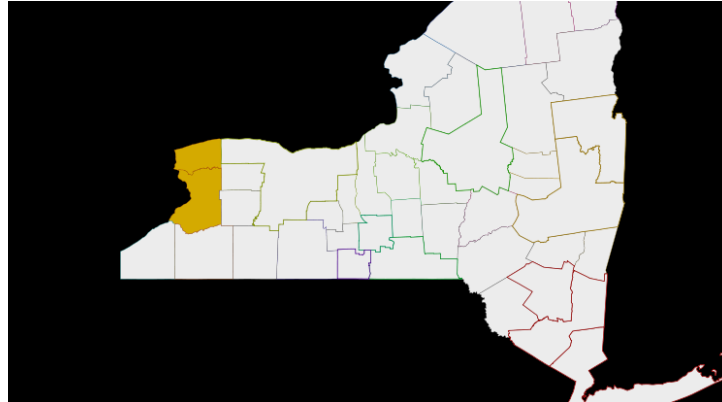
Geographies of Poverty: Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Area

Christopher Szczygiel
University at Buffalo Law Student

What is the poverty rate in the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area?

The local economy is often discussed in terms of the Buffalo-Niagara Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), a multi-county area with a population of over one million. While it is useful to take a regional perspective, it is also useful to consider individual cities, towns or villages.¹ The economic picture in the city of Buffalo (population 266,012) is so quite different than that of the town of Holland (population 3,430).²

The Buffalo-Niagara MSA:



The poverty rates in the cities of Buffalo (29.6%) and Niagara Falls (21.8%) are vastly higher than in the remaining parts of the MSA (just over 8%).³ The 2010 poverty rates for a sampling (52) of the municipalities and “census designated areas” (densely settled areas that may or may not be municipalities) in the Buffalo-Niagara MSA are detailed below:⁴

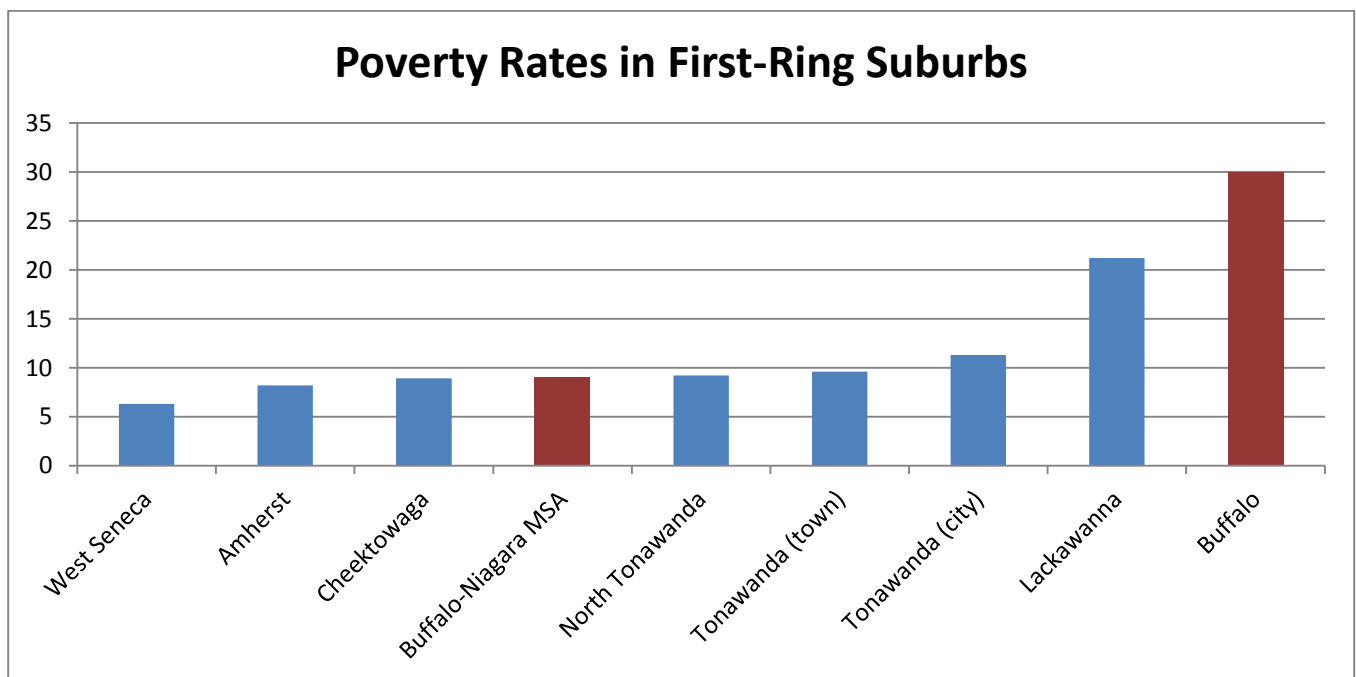
Village, Town, or City	Percentage in poverty
Akron (village)	10.7%
Alden (village)	7.6%
Amherst	8.2%
Angola (village)	15.9%
Angola on the Lake	8.5%
Barker (village)	18.9%
Billington Heights	9.5%
Blasdell (village)	13.5%
Buffalo (city)	29.6%
Cheektowaga	9.1%
Clarence	14.9%
Clarence Center	2.5%
Depew (village)	8.3%
East Aurora (village)	3.0%
Eden	1.7%
Eggertsville	12.8%
Elma Center	7.3%
Farnham (village)	7.2%
Gasport	1.9%
Gowanda (village)	13.7%
Grandyle (village)	5.4%
Hamburg (village)	4.4%
Harris Hill	3.8%
Holland	8.4%
Kenmore (village)	8.9%

Lackawanna (city)	21.2%
Lake Erie Beach	8.0%
Lancaster (village)	8.4%
Lewiston (village)	3.3%
Lockport (city)	19.5%
Middleport (village)	12.3%
Newfane	3.5%
Niagara Falls (city)	21.8%
North Boston	6.2%
North Collins (village)	14.1%
North Tonawanda (city)	9.2%
Olcott	4.5%
Orchard Park (village)	4.2%
Ransomville	15.3%
Rapids	13.7%
Sanborn	8.5%
Sloan (village)	16.9%
South Lockport	13.5%
Springville (village)	10.9%
Tonawanda (city)	11.3%
Tonawanda	9.8%
Town Line	4.2%
Wanakah	4.5%
West Seneca	6.3%
Williamsville (village)	8.3%
Wilson (village)	16.4%
Youngstown (village)	5.9%

What are poverty levels in Buffalo's suburbs?

Although Buffalo and Niagara Falls lead the area in poverty rates, poverty is increasing in the suburban areas as well. To illustrate, a recent study found that poverty rates generally increased in Buffalo's suburbs between 2000 and 2010. As a result "Of the 159,000 people in the region living below the poverty line, more than half -- 52 percent -- reside in the suburbs."⁵

'First-ring' suburbs are closest to, and intimately related to the city of Buffalo. However, they do not mirror the economic conditions of Buffalo as one might expect. There is actually a wide disparity between places like the town of Amherst, where the median household income is \$65,439, and the town of Lackawanna, where it is only \$33,544.⁶



¹ Some of the ‘municipalities’ listed below are actually a “Census Designated Place,” which is a densely settled concentration of population that is not within an incorporated place, but is locally identified by a name. The only Census Designated Place that is excluded from the data is the “University at Buffalo.”

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

⁵ Maki Becker and Jay Rey, “Suburban Plight for Poor,” The Buffalo News, updated October 30, 2011, available at <http://www.buffalonews.com/city/article612880.ece>

⁶ Id.

Partnership for the Public Good
www.ppgbuffalo.org
237 Main St., Suite 1200, Buffalo NY 14203