

Michigan State University Extension



Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

Since its beginning, Extension in Michigan has focused on bringing knowledge-based educational programs to the people of the state to improve their lives and communities. Today, community based agents supported by on-campus faculty members are serving every county, providing base programs focusing on agriculture and natural resources; children, youth and families; and community and economic development.

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A portrait of

Mecosta County



Bringing Knowledge to Life!

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Population

Mecosta County

Change from 1990 to 2000

Number Change

Green 376	Grant 36	Chippewa 204	Fork 283
Big Rapids 1754	Colfax 60	Martiny 258	Sheridan 337
Big Rapids T 149	Mecosta 469	Austin 313	Morton 1475
Aetna 422	Deerfield 399	Hinton 40	Millbrook 69
		Wheatland 109	

Percent Change

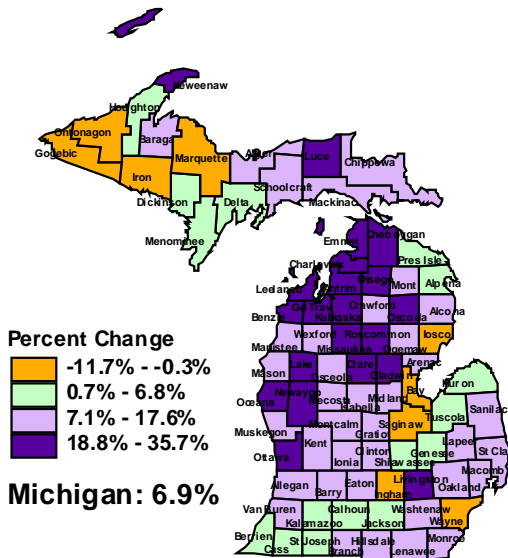
Orange	-13.9%
Light Green	3.1% - 8.0%
Light Purple	13.3% - 20.3%
Dark Purple	23.9% - 69.5%

Mecosta County had 40,553 people in 2000, ranking as the 41st most populous county in Michigan. The population increased by 3,245 persons, or 8.7% since 1990.

Morton Township showed the largest percentage gain from 1990 to 2000 at 69.5 percent. Morton Township also showed the largest number gain of 1,475 people.

There were 490 live births in Mecosta in 1998, of which 73 were to mothers age 19 and under, 378 to mothers age 20 to 34 and 39 to mothers age 35 and over.

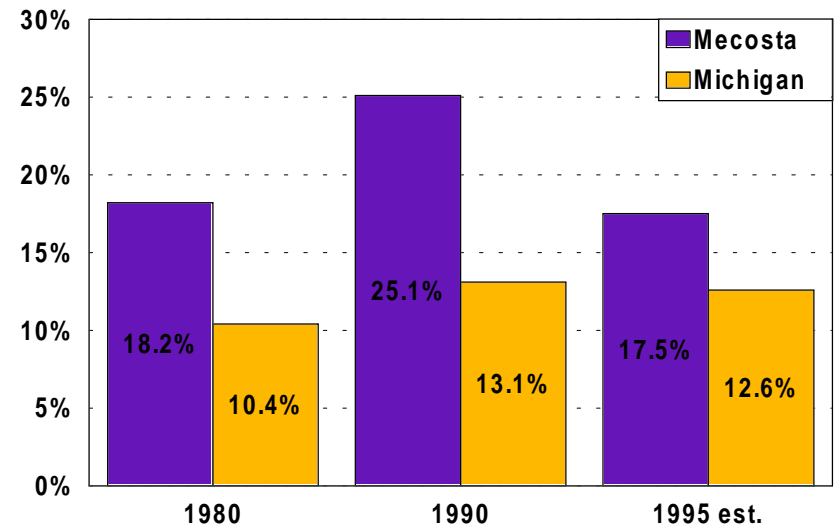
Population change (based on percent change) varied widely across Michigan counties.



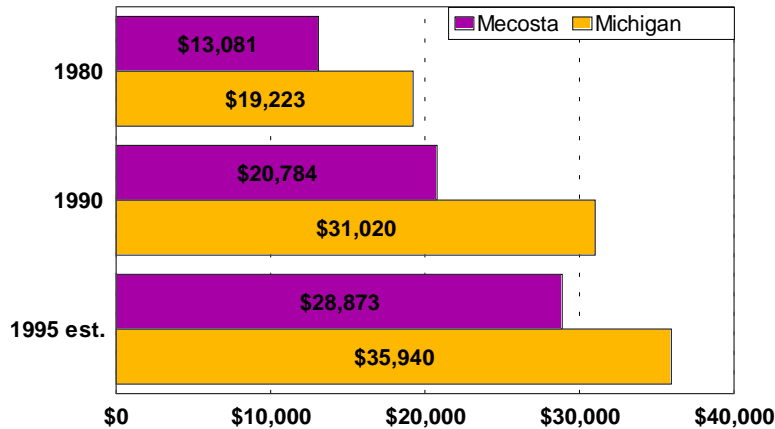
Poverty

- In 1995, 6,439 persons in Mecosta County were below the poverty line, decreasing from 8,179 persons in 1990.
- The poverty threshold for a family of four in 1995 was \$15,569. In 1990, it was \$13,360.
- Mecosta County ranked 29th among all Michigan counties on the number of persons in poverty in 1995 and 9th on the poverty rate.
- Children represent the highest poverty rate of any age group. 2,131 kids (ages 0-17) in Mecosta County were below the poverty level in 1995. This represents one child in four. In 1990, 2,044 kids were poor.
- The poverty rate for Seniors (persons age 65 and over) in 1990 was 13.6 percent. This was no significant change from the previous decade when the poverty rate for Seniors was 13.7 percent.

Poverty Rates of All Persons



Median Household Income



- Between 1990 and 1995, households in Mecosta County experienced an increase in real median income of 19.1 percent, from \$24,235 to \$28,873. Real income is adjusted for inflation based on changes in the Consumer Price Index.
- Compared to other Michigan counties, Mecosta County ranked 58th in 1995 in median household income.
- Michigan leads most other Mid-West states in median household income at \$38,127 (1996 est.) ranking 4th among the 12 states in the region. Nationally, we rank in the top third. The U.S. median income was \$35,492.
- PerCapita income in Mecosta County in 1998 was \$17,181, compared to \$14,755 in 1990 (in 1998 dollars), a 16.4 percent increase.

Household Income Distribution*

	\$ 0 - \$24,999	\$25,000 - 49,999	\$50,000 +
Mecosta County	57.9%	29.9%	12.2%
Michigan	40.6%	34.1%	25.5%

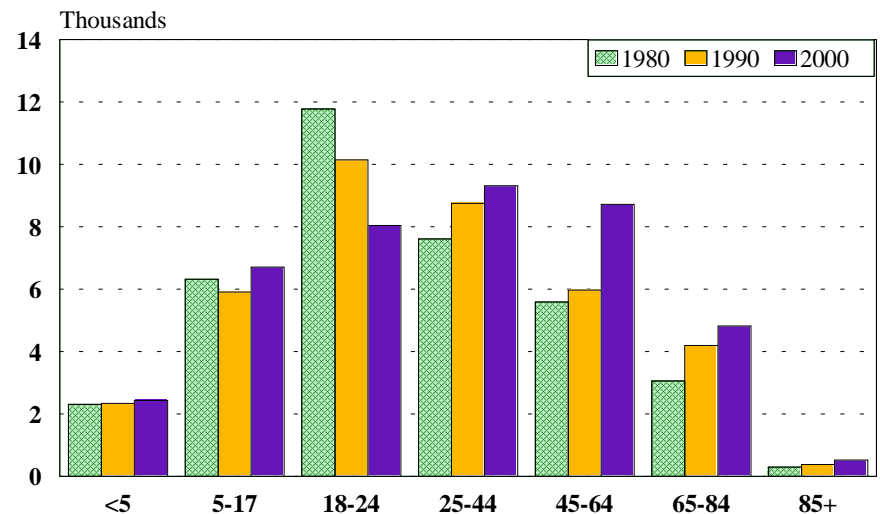
* 1990 Census of Population & Housing

The Median age of Mecosta residents continues to go up:

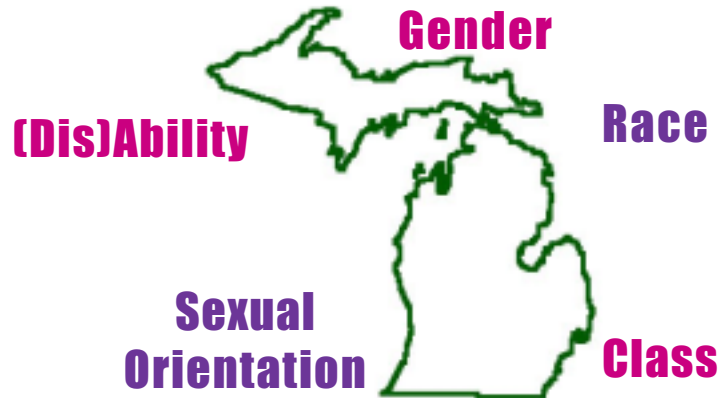
	1980	1990	2000
Mecosta	22.8	25.6	31.9
Michigan	28.8	32.6	35.9
U.S.	30.0	33.0	36.5

- Of the 40,553 people who lived in Mecosta in 2000, 64.3 percent were between 18 and 64 years of age; the remaining 35.7 percent included 6.0 percent children under the age of 5, 16.5 percent youth ages 5 to 17 and 13.2 percent over the age of 65.
- The fastest growing age group is the 45 to 64 year -olds, which includes the oldest of the “baby boomers.” This group grew by 2,748 or 46.0 percent since 1990.
- “Seasoned citizens,” those age 65 and over, grew by 1,144 or 27.3 percent since 1990. One in eight Mecosta residents is age 65 or older.

Age Distribution in Mecosta County



Multiculturalism



- In 2000, Mecosta County's population included 20,561 males and 19,992 females, or 50.7 percent and 49.3 percent respectively. For Michigan, males represent 48.7 percent and females 51.3 percent.
- Of the 14,915 households living in Mecosta County in 2000, 10,985 or 73.7 percent owned their own home and 3,930 or 26.3 percent rented. For Michigan, the rate of home ownership was 71.0 percent and those renting 29.0 percent.
- Six to ten percent of the U.S. population are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered persons according to the *Cultural Diversity Sourcebook*.
- One out of five Michigan citizens, approximately two million people, experience a disability according to the Michigan Centers for Independent Living.

Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin: 2000

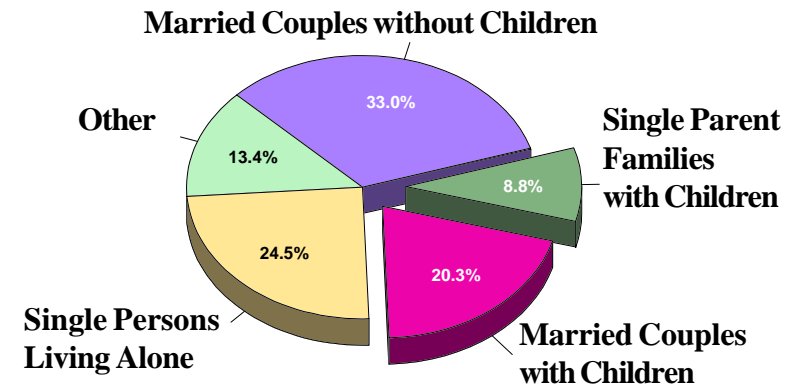
	Mecosta County		Michigan
	Number	Percent	Percent
White*	37,259	91.9	78.6
Black*	1,450	3.6	14.1
American Indian*	247	0.6	0.5
Asian*	346	0.9	1.8
Other*	60	0.1	0.1
Two or more races*	671	1.7	1.6
Hispanic or Latino	520	1.3	3.3

* Not Hispanic or Latino

Households & Families

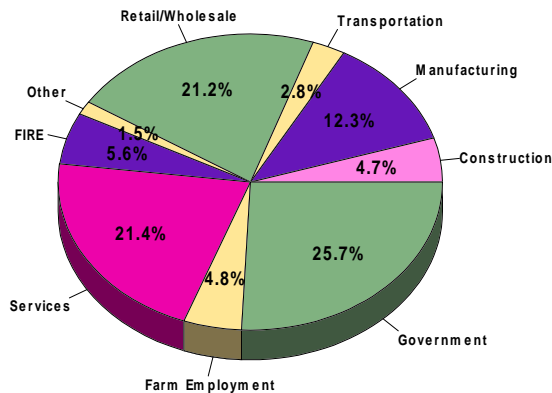
- There were 258 marriages in Mecosta County during 1998, up from 1990 when 239 marriages occurred. Across the state, marriage numbers and rates have fallen since the '70s.
- In Michigan, median age at marriage continues to go up, from age 25 for males and 23 for females in the mid-'70s, to age 28 for males and 26 for females in 1998.
- 65.1 percent of all marriages in Michigan in 1998 were first marriages, down from 66.8 percent a decade earlier.
- The divorce rate in Mecosta County in 1990 was 7.4 when 139 divorces occurred. In 1998, the rate was 6.3 when 127 marriages ended in divorce.
- In 1998, 37,210 Michigan children were impacted by divorce of their parents. These numbers have declined since 1976 when Michigan reached a peak of 49,555 children involved in divorce.
- In 1990, 1,526 children in Mecosta County under age 18 lived with a single parent. This represented 18.6 percent of all children in Mecosta. In Michigan, 22.5 percent of all children lived in single parent families.

Types of Households in Mecosta County



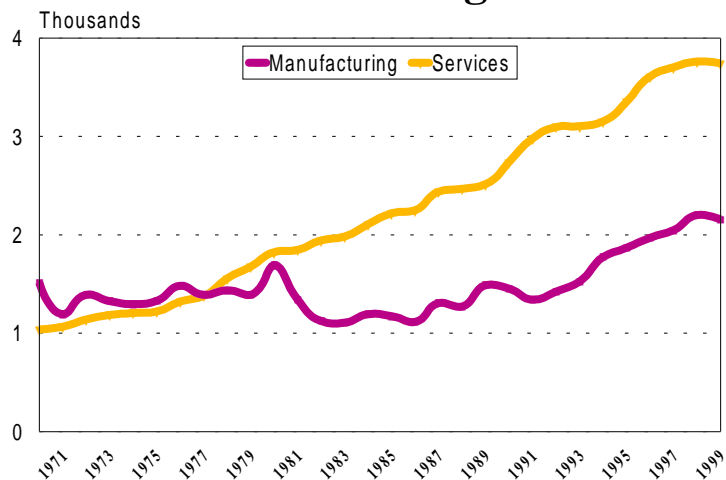
2000 Census of Population and Housing

1999 Employment by Industry in Mecosta County



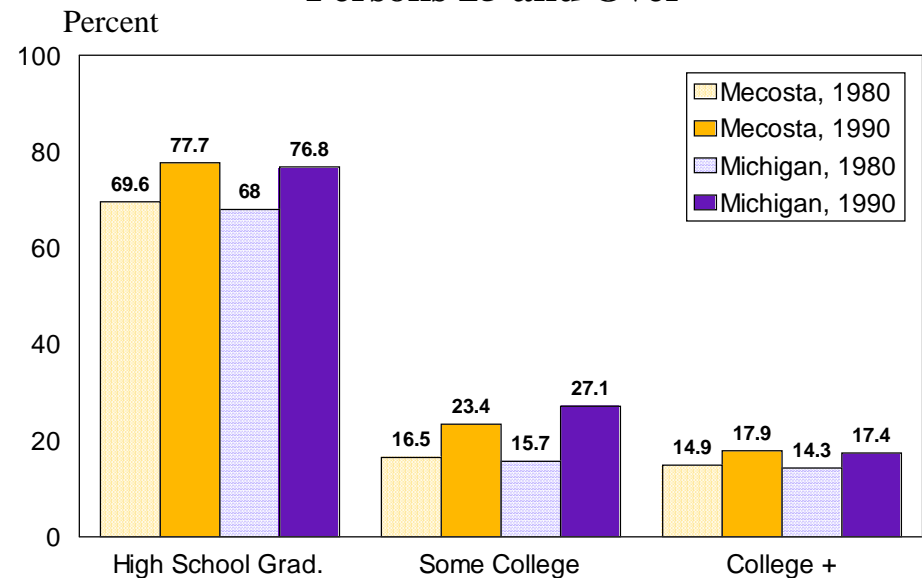
- The total number of full- and part-time jobs has increased in Mecosta from 14,181 in 1990 to 17,495 in 1999, a 23.4 percent increase.
- The Government accounted for 25.7% of all employment in 1999, leading Services by 4.3 percentage points. Jobs in Manufacturing have risen the fastest of all major industries, climbing 48.5 percent since 1990.

Jobs in Manufacturing & Services



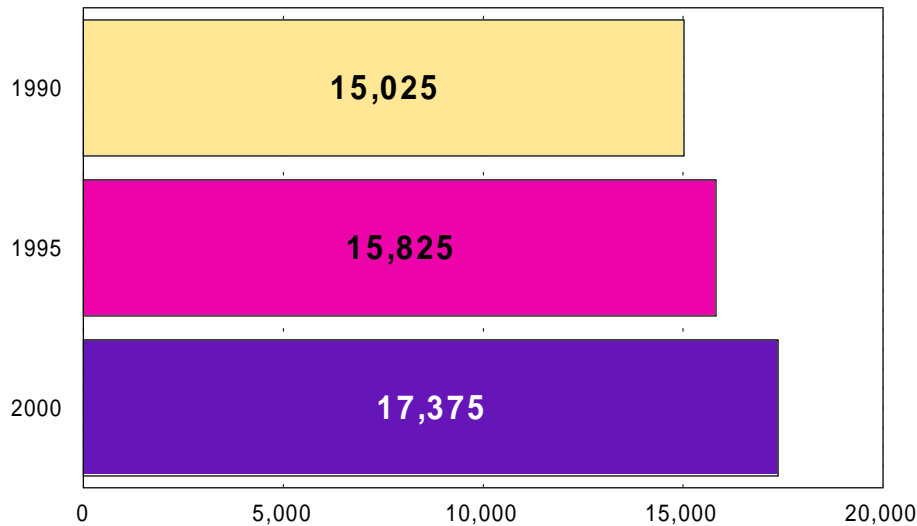
- High school graduation rates increased significantly from 1980 to 1990 for persons age twenty-five and over – by 8.2 percentage points in Mecosta County and 8.8 percentage points in Michigan. This is due largely to the fact that a much higher rate of young adults (age 25-29) has completed high school than those in older age groups.
- Mecosta County exceeds Michigan for those persons age 25 and over with a college degree. In 1990, 17.4 percent in Michigan had a college degree; in Mecosta County the rate was 17.9 percent. Mecosta ranks 16 among Michigan's 83 counties for persons age 25 and over with a college degree.
- 103 students dropped out of high school in Mecosta County during the 1997-98 school year for a rate of 5.4 percent. This is up from 1990-91 when 55 students dropped out (3.4 percent).

Educational Attainment Persons 25 and Over



Labor Force

Total Number of Persons Employed in Mecosta County

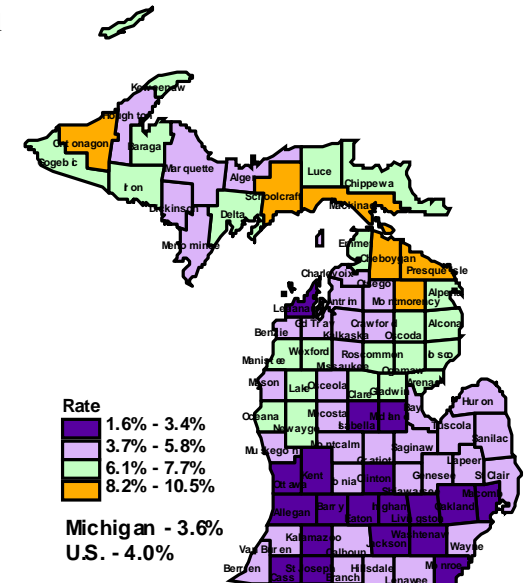


- The Labor Force consists of those who are employed and those currently unemployed but seeking employment. Mecosta's labor force has grown from 16,375 in 1990 to 18,100 in 2000.
- In 1990, 91.8 percent of the labor force was employed; in 2000 that increased to 96.0 percent employed.
- 55.8 percent of Mecosta's population age 16 and over were in the labor force in 2000, up from 54.7 percent in 1990.
- Seventy-six percent of all women with school age children worked in 1990, over 11 percentage points higher than in 1980. Nearly six out of ten women with children under age six were in the work force in 1990, compared to less than five out of ten in 1980.

Labor Force

2000 Unemployment Rate

- Even though Michigan's overall unemployment rate was low in 2000, many counties continue to experience high rates.
- Mecosta County's annual average unemployment rate in 2000 was 4.0 percent, compared to 4.1 percent in 1999 and 8.3 percent in 1990. 725 people were unemployed in 2000, compared to 1,350 in 1990.
- Michigan experienced high unemployment rates during the early '90s. In 1994 for the first time Michigan's rate was lower than the U.S. rate.



Unemployment Rate: 1980 -2000

