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Economic Trends: Pratt County

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Foreword

The Kansas Center for Community Economic Development (KCCED) is a joint center of the Institute for Public Policy and Business Research at the University of Kansas and the Kansas Center for Rural Initiatives at Kansas State University. Its purpose is to enhance economic development efforts by bringing university expertise to rural Kansas.

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Economic Trends: Pratt County

Introduction

The use of data in economic development is important because it assists a community in “taking stock” and understanding its current situation across several different areas of economic and demographic performance. However, data alone do not lead to a well-founded understanding of the community. Data must be analyzed and interpreted, taking into account the intuition of those within the community about what the overall trends really mean. In other words, data serve as the foundation for an analysis which concludes: 1) what is happening in the community relative to other regions over time, and 2) what potential impacts or consequences can be inferred from the data.

This report looks at the following demographic and economic variables:

- Population,
- Employment,
- Earnings and Income,
- Retail Trade,
- Agriculture, and
- Education.

Throughout the report, Pratt County’s performance is compared with the performance of the State of Kansas and Comparative Counties¹ and Surrounding Counties.² It is by no means a comprehensive analysis of economic trends facing Pratt County but rather an overview of some key economic and demographic variables.

Population

Population size and economic activity are closely related. Changes in population size are directly linked to employment opportunities, wage differentials between regions, and a community’s overall economic conditions and quality of life. Communities with growing populations are generally regarded as being more able to adapt to a changing economic environment due to the opportunities presented by new residents as additional consumers, taxpayers, and suppliers of labor. Without population growth, communities face problems of a tightening labor market, lack of new customers for businesses, a shrinking tax base, and an overall decline in economic activity. Generally, areas of population growth are also areas of economic growth, whereas areas of population loss suffered previous economic decline and restructuring.

¹ “Comparative Counties” are Barton, Ford, Reno, Pawnee, and Kingman counties.

² “Surrounding Counties” are Edwards, Stafford, Reno, Kingman, Harper, Barber, Comanche, and Kiowa counties. “Selected Counties” include both the Comparative and the Surrounding Counties.

Population characteristics are regarded as indicators of a region's economic conditions and economic potential. The level of Pratt County's population relative to the state's population reflects the county's overall level of competitiveness with respect to other regions within the state. A minimum population is necessary to sustain a basic level of public and private services and facilities. Past and projected population change is indicative of community economic trends and can be compared to other counties and the statewide and national averages.

Migration is linked to job opportunities and demand as well as wage differentials between regions. Counties with low rates of job creation and low wages will face higher worker mobility due to a "push" (lack of opportunity) or a "pull" factor which is caused by urban areas with higher wages, better job opportunities, and a perceived better quality of life. Other determinants of regional migration are age and education. Generally, there is a life-cycle pattern to migration with the 18 to 45 age group being the most mobile age group. The effect of education on migration is reflected by the movement of well-educated workers toward better job matches for themselves and their spouses and their attempts to raise their income levels by migrating to areas with employment opportunities.

The following section consists of population tables, figures, and maps, which together illustrate population totals, rates of population change, population growth rates, population rankings, percent population change, and percent net migration.

Population: Key Findings

- Pratt County's population peaked in 1930 at 13,312 people. The decade from 1960 to 1970 showed the most severe population decline at seventeen percent since the thirteen percent decline of 1890 to 1900. The decade of greatest population growth for the county was the 1900's at 57 percent (Table 1). Population is projected to continue to decrease for every decade approaching the year 2020.³
- Pratt County experienced a 2.2 percent population increase during the 1970's followed by a population decline of 5.6 percent in the 1980's. Population estimates from 1990 to 1995 show a fairly stable population for the county, with a 0.03 percent increase estimated (Table 2).
- Pratt County's population growth during the 1970's lagged behind Kansas' and the US's. Kansas and the U.S. experienced growth during the 1980's while Pratt County's population declined. Most of the counties in the region also experienced the same lagging pattern of population growth to Kansas and the U.S. Ford County is the only county in the region with growth estimates from 1990 to 1997 greater than Kansas. None of the selected counties had growth estimates greater than the U.S. for the same period (Table 2 and Figure 1).

³ Floerchinger, Teresa D., "Kansas Population Projections 1990-2030," Kansas Division of the Budget, September 1992.

- Most of the counties in the south central portion of the state experienced declining populations in the 1980's. However, this area generally experienced less decline than the southeast and northern areas of Kansas (Map 1). Two of the surrounding counties and two of the comparable counties that lost population from 1980 to 1990, gained population between 1990 and 1997 (Table 2, Map 3).
- During the 1980's, most of the counties in Kansas, particularly the rural counties, experienced a negative net migration. Pratt County experienced a negative 9.7 percent net migration from 1980 to 1990 (Map 3).

**Table 1 Population Totals, Growth Rates, Rank & Share
Actual 1890-1990 and Estimates 1991-1997**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pratt County</u>		<u>Kansas</u>		<u>Rank</u>	<u>Share (%)</u>
	<u>Population Total</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>	<u>Population Total</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>		
1890	8,118		1,427,096		67	0.56
1900	7,085	-12.72 %	1,470,495	3.04 %	70	0.48
1910	11,156	57.46	1,690,949	14.99	64	0.65
1920	12,909	15.71	1,769,257	4.63	54	0.72
1930	13,312	3.12	1,880,999	6.32	52	0.70
1940	12,348	-7.24	1,801,028	-4.25	48	0.68
1950	12,156	-1.55	1,905,299	5.79	44	0.64
1960	12,122	-0.28	2,178,611	14.34	41	0.56
1970	10,056	-17.04	2,249,071	3.23	44	0.45
1980	10,275	2.18	2,364,236	5.12	44	0.43
1990	9,702	-5.58	2,477,588	4.79	44	0.39
1991*	9,612	-0.93	2,492,577	0.60	44	0.39
1992*	9,629	0.18	2,515,760	0.93	44	0.38
1993*	9,539	-0.93	2,534,668	0.75	44	0.38
1994*	9,589	0.52	2,553,889	0.76	44	0.38
1995*	9,751	1.69	2,569,619	0.62	44	0.38
1996*	9,717	-0.35	2,579,149	0.37	44	0.38
1997*	9,705	-0.12	2,594,840	0.61	44	0.37

* Estimate

Source: Population Totals: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Vol.1; "Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants; 1980 Census of Population," Vol.1, Chapter A, Part 18; "1990 Decennial Census," mimeographed sheet; Population Estimates and Population Distribution Branches, U.S. Bureau of the Census. Calculations: IPPBR.

**Table 2 Population Growth Rates (percent)
1970 - 1997
Pratt County, Selected Counties, Kansas, and United States**

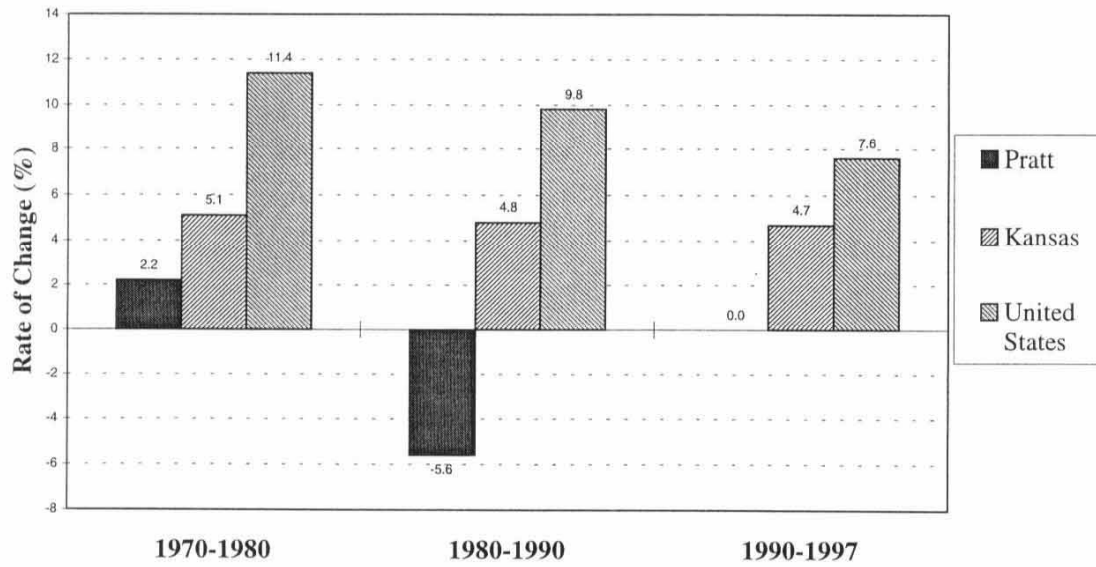
<u>Year</u>	<u>1970-1980</u>	<u>1980-1990</u>	<u>1990-1997*</u>
Pratt	2.2%	-5.6%	0.03%
Surrounding Counties			
Kingman	0.8%	-7.5%	2.7%
Reno	6.9%	-4.0%	0.9%
Stafford	-4.2%	-5.8%	-4.9%
Harper	-1.2%	-8.4%	-8.8%
Kiowa	-1.0%	-9.5%	-6.0%
Barber	-6.7%	-10.3%	-7.9%
Edwards	-6.8%	-11.3%	-9.5%
Comanche	-5.5%	-9.4%	-12.6%
Comparative Counties			
Ford	7.7%	12.9%	6.5%
Kingman	0.8%	-7.5%	2.7%
Reno	6.9%	-4.0%	0.9%
Pawnee	-4.9%	-6.3%	-4.2%
Barton	2.2%	-6.3%	-4.9%
Kansas	5.1%	4.8%	4.7%
United States	11.4%	9.8%	7.6%

* 1997 estimate. 1990-97 is a seven-year period.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants," Final Report: "1980 Census of Population," PC90-1-A-18; "1990 Decennial Census." Population Estimates and Population Distribution Branches, U.S. Bureau of the Census. Calculations: IPPBR.

Figure 1

**Rates of Population Change
1970 – 1997
Pratt County, Kansas, and U.S.**



Note: The third period lasts seven years, compared to the ten years of each of the first two periods.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Vol. 1"; "Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants, Final Report"; "1980 Census of Population, Vol. 1, Chapter A, Part 18," "1990 Census of Population," STF1-A. Population Estimates and Population Distribution Branches, U.S. Bureau of the Census. Calculations: IPPBR.

Employment

Employment levels are an important measure of a community's economic vitality. The size of the labor force shows the number of people who are either working or willing to work. The size of the labor force is influenced not only by population but also by the perceptions of individuals that suitable job opportunities exist. Diverse, healthy economies tend to offer a larger variety of job opportunities and thereby attract a large number of job seekers, which increases the size of the labor force. The level of unemployment reflects the amount of economic activity within an area and how well the local market is able to match the supply and demand for labor. Job creation rates (net change in average annual employment) reflect the growth in employment levels and the range of employment opportunities. As some jobs are lost in a community due to changing economic circumstances, they may be replaced by new jobs. Net job creation reflects the net gain or net loss in jobs over a given period.

The following tables, figures and maps are included in the employment section: employment growth rates, number of firms by number of employees, percentage distribution of firms by number of employees, employment levels by industry, labor force participation, unemployment rates, and job growth.

Employment: Key Findings

- From 1991 to 1996, Pratt County experienced an increase in employment of 3.6 percent. For the same period, Kansas and the U.S. experienced an increase in employment of 9.1 percent and 9.7 percent, respectively (Table 3 and Figure 2).
- Pratt County's employment increase of 3.6 percent from 1991 to 1996 is the fourth highest increase for selected counties from that region. Kingman County experienced the greatest employment growth at 11 percent. Pratt and surrounding counties, with the exception of Kingman and Reno, under-performed the state and nation in average annual employment growth (Table 3).
- Average annual employment for Pratt County declined 0.7 percent from 1986 to 1991. The growth rate for Kansas during this same period was 9.1 percent and the nation's growth rate was 9.3 percent. Pratt, Harper, Stafford, Barber and Barton Counties experienced employment rate declines 1986 to 1991 (Table 3, Figure 2).
- The total number of establishments in Pratt County declined by 9.4 percent from 1985 to 1995, while the total number of firms in the state increased by 8.2 percent. The decline was attributed to firms with fewer than 20 employees. The number of firms employing more than 20 but fewer than 100 people grew at 24.1 percent in Pratt County while the comparable state rate was 24.6 percent. There also was growth in the number of firms of at least 100 but fewer than 500 employees (Table 4).

- In 1995, 90 percent of firms in Pratt County and 87 percent of firms in Kansas are small firms employing fewer than 20 people (Table 5).
- Total employment for Pratt County increased by 2.8 percent in the years 1986 to 1996 compared to an increase of 19.0 percent for Kansas during the same period. The greatest number of jobs was created in the Services sector, which saw an increase of 318 people employed from 1986 to 1996. Government Services, Transportation, and Agricultural Services also experienced strong employment increases of 100, 48, and 46, respectively (Table 6).
- For non-farm employment, the Mining sector saw a decrease of 291 jobs while the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate saw a decrease of 77 jobs (Table 6).
- Farm employment for Pratt County decreased by 6.6 percent (46 jobs) from 1986 to 1996, which was comparable to the state's 8.1 percent decrease (Table 6).
- At 63.7 percent, Pratt County had one of the higher labor force participation rates in its region, indicating that employers may have difficulty with supplying workers when additional jobs are created (Map 4).
- The unemployment rate for Pratt County in 1997 was 2.5 percent, which is below the state's rate of 4.4 percent for 1997⁴ (Map 5).
- Based on an individual's place of residence date, Pratt County experienced a positive 2.6 percent job growth rate from 1990 to 1997 (Map 6). This means that more county residents were employed in 1997 than in 1990.

⁴ Source: Institute for Public Policy and Business Research, The University of Kansas, "Kansas Statistical Abstract, 1997," using data from Kansas Labor Force Estimates Annual Average 1997, Kansas Department of Human Resources, Labor Market Information Services.

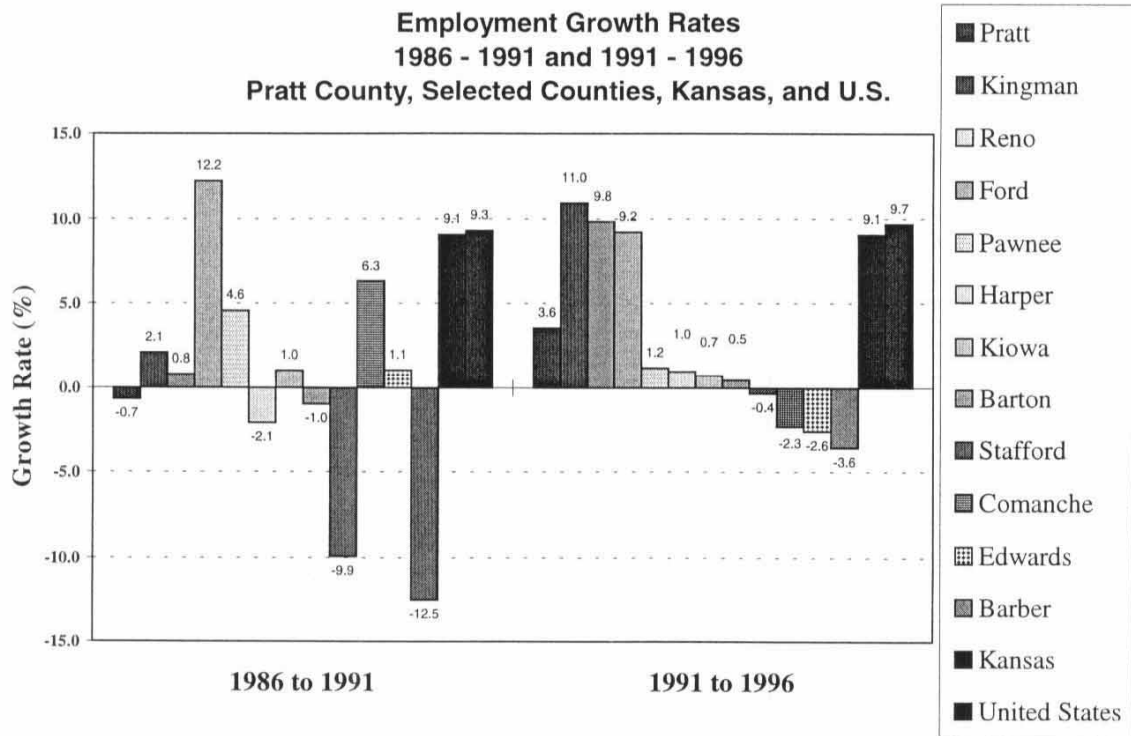
**Table 3 Employment Growth Rates
1986 – 1996
Pratt County, Selected Counties, Kansas, and United States**

	<u>Average Annual Employment</u>			<u>% Employment Growth</u>	
	<u>1986</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>86 to '91</u>	<u>91 to '96</u>
Pratt	6,177	6,134	6,352	-0.7 %	3.6 %
Surrounding Counties					
Kingman	4,203	4,291	4,761	2.1	11.0
Reno	34,939	35,229	38,697	0.8	9.8
Harper	4,031	3,946	3,985	-2.1	1.0
Kiowa	2,138	2,160	2,176	1.0	0.7
Stafford	3,451	3,108	3,097	-9.9	-0.4
Comanche	1,379	1,466	1,432	6.3	-2.3
Edwards	2,083	2,105	2,050	1.1	-2.6
Barber	4,199	3,673	3,541	-12.5	-3.6
Comparative Counties					
Kingman	4,203	4,291	4,761	2.1	11.0
Reno	34,939	35,229	38,697	0.8	9.8
Ford	15,784	17,715	19,349	12.2	9.2
Pawnee	4,317	4,514	4,568	4.6	1.2
Barton	19,704	19,508	19,599	-1.0	0.5
Kansas	1,377,296	1,502,336	1,638,597	9.1	9.1
United States	126,941,200	138,785,800	152,393,900	9.3	9.7

Note: Employment by place of work.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System: May 1998, Table CA25.

Figure 2



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, May 1998, Table CA25.

**Table 4 Number of Establishments, by Number of Employees
1985 and 1995
Pratt County and Kansas**

<u>Employees</u>	<u>Pratt</u>			<u>Kansas</u>		
	<u>1985</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>% Change</u>
1 -- 19	383	336	-12.3 %	58,347	61,719	5.8 %
20 -- 99	29	36	24.1	6,234	7,767	24.6
100 -- 499	1	2	100.0	840	1,281	52.5
500+	0	0	n/a	89	127	42.7
Total	413	374	-9.4%	65,510	70,894	8.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "County Business Patterns, 1995."

**Table 5 Percentage Distribution of Establishments, by Number of Employees
1985 and 1995
Pratt County and Kansas**

<u>Employees</u>	<u>Pratt</u>		<u>Kansas</u>	
	<u>1985</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1995</u>
0 - 19	92.7 %	89.8 %	89.1 %	87.1 %
20 - 99	7.0	9.6	9.5	11.0
100 - 499	0.2	0.5	1.3	1.8
500+	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "County Business Patterns, 1995."

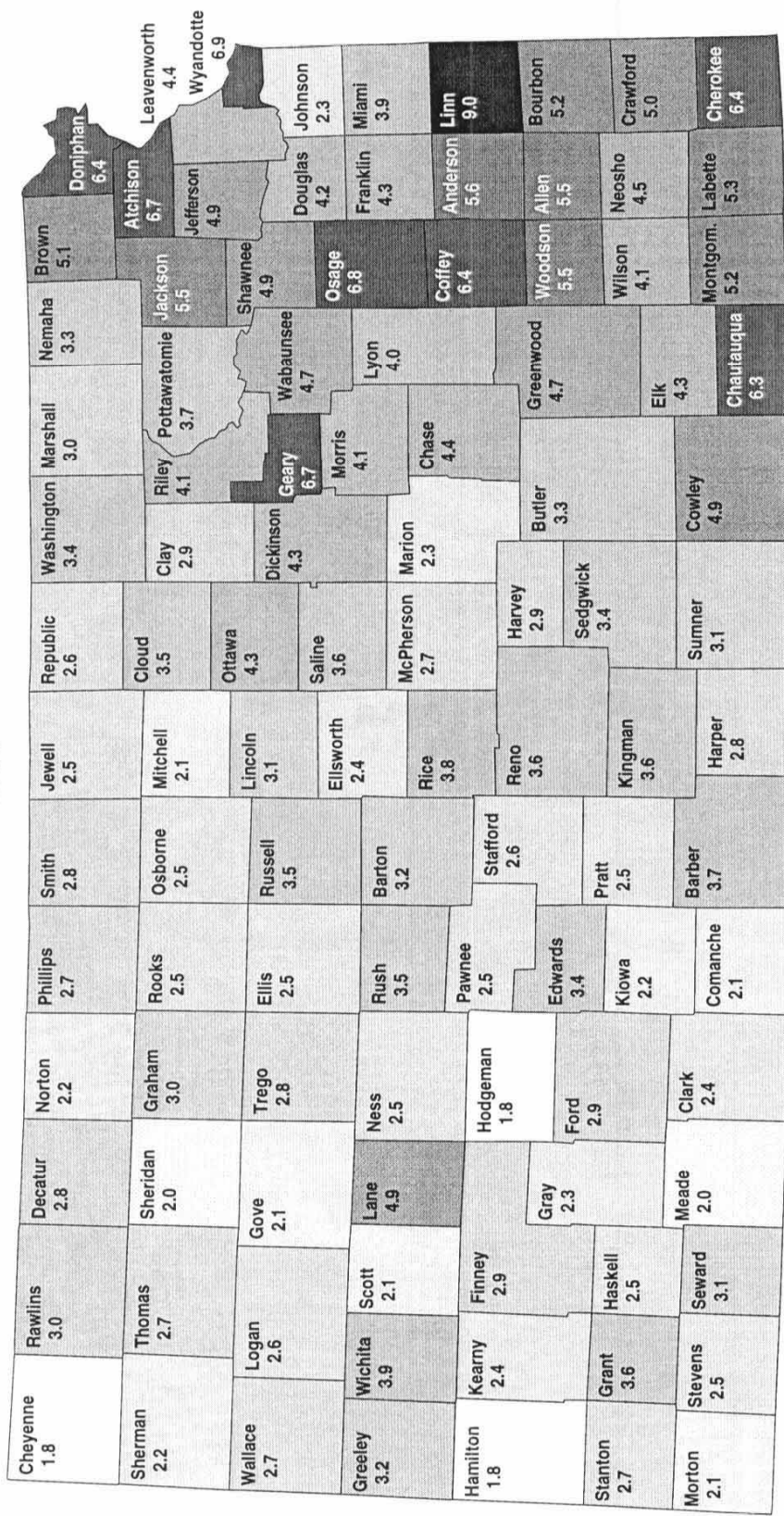
**Table 6 Employment Levels by Industry
1986 and 1996
Pratt County and Kansas**

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Pratt</u>			<u>Kansas</u>		
	<u>1986</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Ag. Services	106	152	43.4 %	10,633	19,003	78.7 %
Mining	557	266	-52.2	41,097	23,155	-43.7
Construction	249	268	7.6	68,306	84,694	24.0
Manufacturing	139	171	23.0	179,472	202,636	12.9
Transportation	286	334	16.8	71,562	79,535	11.1
Wholesale Trade	350	361	3.1	70,202	80,504	14.7
Retail Trade	1,145	1,160	1.3	212,911	280,810	31.9
Finance, Insur., Real Est.	316	239	-24.4	96,291	91,612	-4.9
Services	1,294	1,612	24.6	305,232	425,536	39.4
Gov't. and Gov't. Services	1,040	1,140	9.6	234,909	271,432	15.5
Subtotal -- Non-Farm	5,482	5,703	4.0	1,290,615	1,558,917	20.8
Farm Employment	695	649	-6.6	86,681	79,680	-8.1
Total Employment	6,177	6,352	2.8	1,377,296	1,638,597	19.0

Note: Employment by place of work.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System: May 1998, Table CA25.

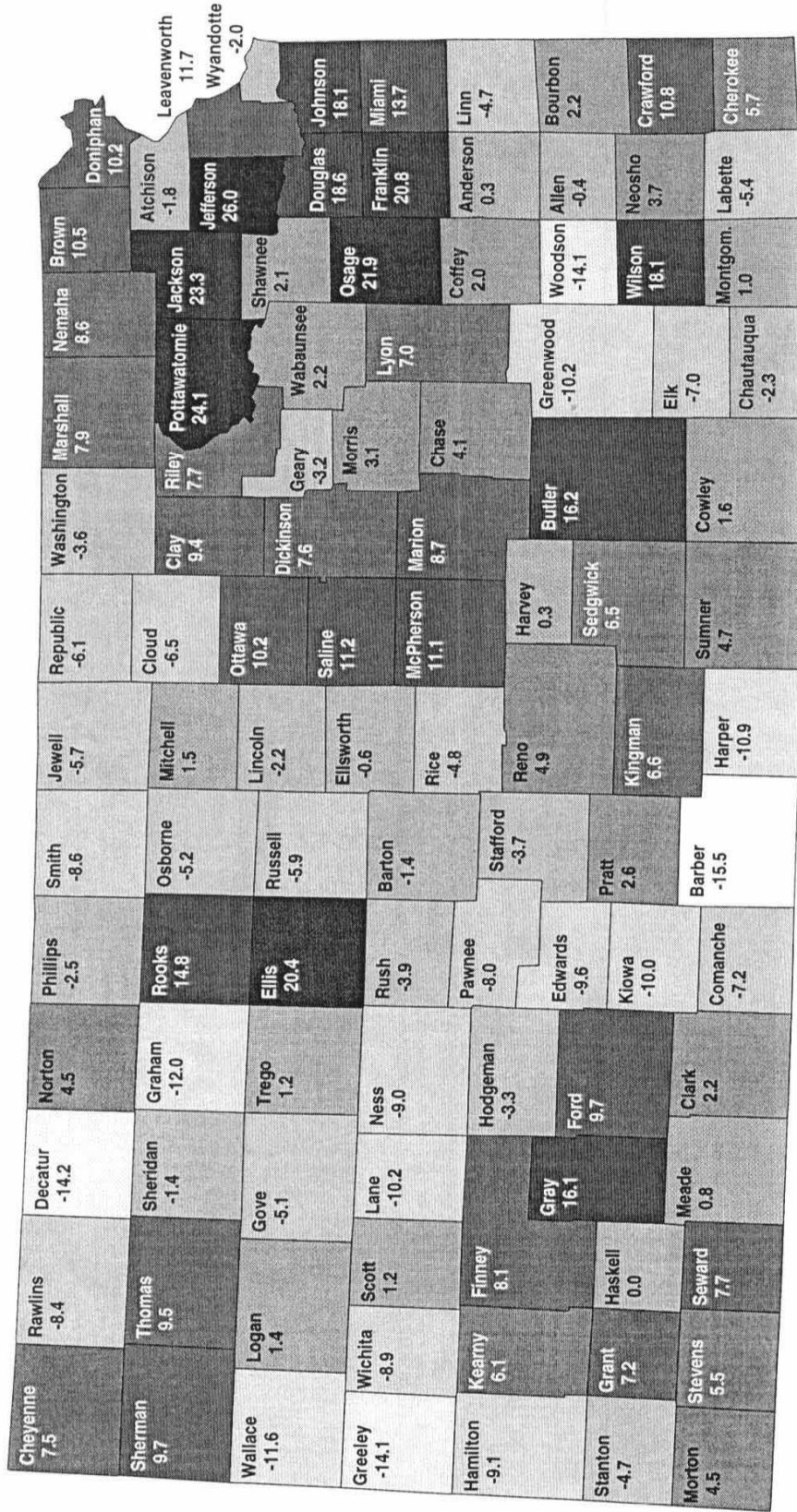
Map 5 County Unemployment Rates
1997



Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of residence.
Source: Kansas Department of Human Resources, Labor Market Information Services, August 1998.

Kansas 1997 Unemployment Rate: 4.4%

**Map 6 Employment Growth
1990 to 1997**



Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of residence.
 Source: Kansas Department of Human Resources, Labor Market Information Services, August 1998.

Earnings and Income

Earnings and income are the sources of revenue for the community residents. Higher average wages may indicate a greater number of jobs in high growth, high performance businesses. Low wage growth may indicate a higher concentration of stable, declining industries. Per capita personal income indicates the relative wealth of the area compared to the state. As the productivity of business and industry increases, personal per capita income also rises. Decreasing or stable rates may be the result of mature or declining industry. The following section contains data on the average wage per job and per capita personal income.

Earnings and Income: Key Findings

- From 1980 to 1996, the average wage per job for Pratt County was consistently lower than the state's average. In 1996, Pratt County's average annual wage was \$19,462 compared to \$24,093 for Kansas (Table 7).
- In general, per capita personal income for Pratt County has lagged behind the statewide figures from 1980 to 1996 except during 1984, 1985, and 1988 (Table 8 and Figure 3).
- Compared to other counties in the region and in Kansas, Pratt County's per capita personal income falls in the middle range (Map 7).

**Table 7 Average Wage per Job
1980 - 1996
Pratt County and Kansas
(Dollars)**

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>Avg Annual % Change</u>
Pratt	11,481	14,920	16,820	19,462	4.3
Kansas	12,697	16,906	19,868	24,093	5.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Table CA34 "Average Wage per Job."

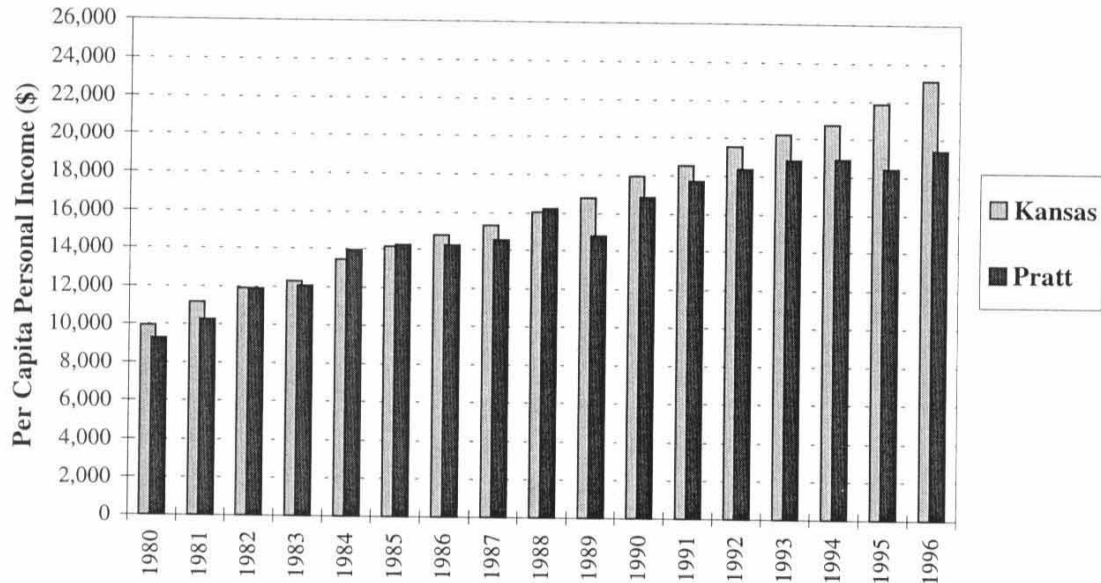
**Table 8 Per Capita Personal Income
1980 - 1996
Pratt County and Kansas**

	<u>Income (\$)</u>		<u>Growth Rates</u>	
	<u>Pratt</u>	<u>Kansas</u>	<u>Pratt</u>	<u>Kansas</u>
1980	9,289	9,950		
1981	10,283	11,176	10.7 %	12.3 %
1982	11,890	11,915	15.6	6.6
1983	12,058	12,296	1.4	3.2
1984	13,948	13,434	15.7	9.3
1985	14,234	14,151	2.1	5.3
1986	14,229	14,767	0.0	4.4
1987	14,526	15,366	2.1	4.1
1988	16,252	16,062	11.9	4.5
1989	14,781	16,818	-9.1	4.7
1990	16,863	17,968	14.1	6.8
1991	17,719	18,559	5.1	3.3
1992	18,380	19,541	3.7	5.3
1993	18,850	20,213	2.6	3.4
1994	18,921	20,784	0.4	2.8
1995	18,456	21,886	-2.5	5.3
1996	19,410	23,133	5.2	5.7

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, May 1998, Table CA05.1.

Figure 3

**Per Capita Personal Income
1980 - 1996
Pratt County and Kansas**



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, May 1998, Table CA05.1.

Retail

Retail trade is part of a community's business environment, which is affected by several things. Past decisions by investors, business managers, taxpayers and policy makers each contribute to share a climate which either promotes or inhibits the productivity of local businesses and therefore affects decisions about growth and expansion. Other contribution factors include the level of competition, the availability of suppliers and supporting industries, the cost of labor, and taxation and regulation within the community. Some types of establishments will thrive in an environment in which other firms cannot operate profitably.

The level of taxable retail sales is an indicator of retail sector performance and the overall strength of the local consumer market. The County Trade Pull Factors (CTPF) account for the relative retail trade performance of each county in terms of the average retail trade activities of Kansas.⁵ CTPF is calculated by dividing the county's per capita sales tax collections by Kansas' per capita sales tax collections. A CTPF value of less than 1.00 indicates that the county is losing customers due to "out-shopping" by residents. A CTPF of more than 1.00 would indicate that the county is attracting retail customers.

Retail: Key Findings

- Retail sales vary from year to year; however, Pratt County and Kansas experienced steady improvement in taxable retail sales growth from 1987 to 1997 (Table 9, Figure 4).
- The County Trade Pull Factor for Pratt County for 1997 was 1.09, which would indicate that the county is attracting retail customers from adjacent counties. The pull factor for adjacent Reno County is 1.1, indicating the same trade-pull influence. The other surrounding counties, however, all appear to be losing retail sales to "out-shopping" (Map 8).

⁵ Chatura Ariyaratne and David Darling, Kansas State University Extension, Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service.

**Table 9 Taxable Retail Sales and Growth Rates
1987 - 1997
Pratt County and Kansas
(\$ Millions)**

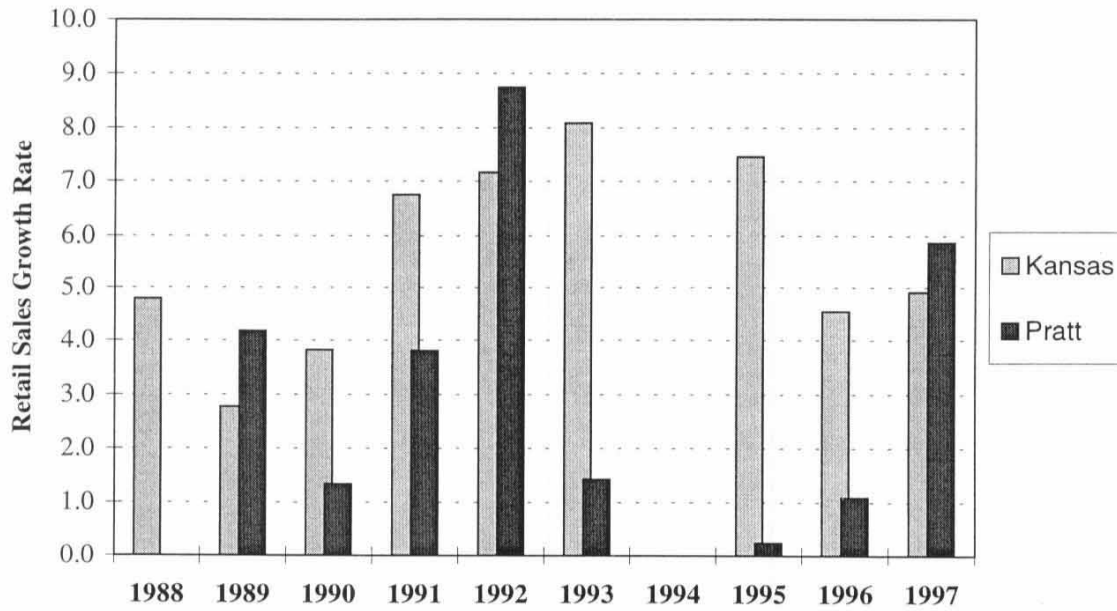
<u>Year</u>	<u>Pratt</u>		<u>Kansas</u>	
	<u>Nominal Sales</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>	<u>Nominal Sales</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>
1987	64.7		16,746.0	
1988	64.7	0.0 %	17,548.0	4.8 %
1989	67.4	4.2	18,034.4	2.8
1990	68.3	1.3	18,723.3	3.8
1991	70.9	3.8	19,988.0	6.8
1992	77.1	8.7	21,421.3	7.2
1993	78.2	1.4	23,154.4	8.1
1994	82.3	n/a	22,603.5	n/a
1995	82.5	0.2	24,289.1	7.5
1996	83.4	1.1	25,393.9	4.5
1997	88.3	5.9	26,643.1	4.9

Note: Data from 1994 to 1997 are not comparable to 1987-1993 data.

Source: Kansas Department of Revenue, State Sales Tax Collections by County Classification. Calculations, 1987-1993, CEDBR, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita State University; 1994-1997, IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Figure 4

**Taxable Retail Sales Growth Rates
1988 - 1997
Pratt County and Kansas**



Note: Data from 1994 to 1997 are not comparable to 1987-1993 data.

Source: Kansas Department of Revenue, State Sales Tax Collections by County Classification. Calculations, 1987-1993, CEDBR, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita State University; 1994-1997, IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Agriculture

The data on agriculture will help determine whether or not the overall importance of this sector in the county has been increasing or decreasing and how this compares with other counties and the state as a whole. The economic well being of Pratt County in the past was dependent on the strength of this industry sector. It is important to look at the level of activity in agriculture and how the character of this industry is changing in the county. The agriculture section contains tables and figures on the total value of field crops and the total value of livestock and poultry.

Agriculture: Key Findings

- The value of field crops in Pratt County has steadily increased from 1991 through 1996, except for a decline from 1993 to 1994. The state figures increased every year except for a slight decline from 1994 to 1995 (Table 10).
- The average annual change in Pratt County's field crop value was 15 percent compared to 31 percent for Kansas (Table 10).
- While the total value of livestock and poultry in Pratt County has fluctuated from 1991 to 1996, the trend has generally been a declining one. In 1991, the value was \$46 million and in 1996 it was \$29 million (Table 11).
- The annual average value of livestock and poultry for Pratt County has decreased by 15 percent compared to a 2.6 percent decrease for Kansas (Table 11).

Table 10 Total Value of Field Crops*
1991 - 1996
Pratt County, Selected Counties, and Kansas

	<u>Value of Field Crops (\$ Millions)</u>						<u>Annual Average</u>		
	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>91 - '93</u>	<u>94 - '96</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Pratt	43	45	52	49	52	59	46	53	14.9 %
Reno	55	55	56	60	60	88	55	69	25.5
Barton	43	35	53	51	59	77	44	62	43.5
Ford	41	40	63	57	58	68	48	61	27.9
Stafford	44	38	47	49	48	60	43	52	21.7
Edwards	41	39	53	50	48	57	44	52	16.7
Pawnee	34	31	43	48	48	52	36	49	36.7
Kingman	28	33	33	35	37	45	31	39	24.2
Harper	22	31	35	32	34	36	29	34	16.2
Kiowa	25	21	31	27	26	31	26	28	8.8
Barber	11	16	19	18	21	20	16	20	26.7
Comanche	9	9	13	11	13	12	10	12	16.7
Kansas	2,579	2,988	3,014	3,555	3,525	4,155	2,860	3,745	30.9
Crop Price Index+	99	108	104	113	130	160			

+ Index numbers are on 1990-1992 = 100 base

* Does not include any government program payments.

Source: Kansas Agricultural Statistics, Kansas Department of Agriculture; Calculations, KCCED.

**Table 11 Total Value of Livestock and Poultry
1991 - 1996
Pratt County, Selected Counties, and Kansas**

	Value of Livestock and Poultry (\$ Millions)						Annual Average		
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	91 - '93	94 - '96	% Change
Pratt	46	45	41	47	37	29	44	38	-15.1 %
Ford	88	87	91	96	88	82	89	89	0.2
Barton	45	44	45	52	52	46	45	50	11.8
Reno	45	43	43	46	47	41	44	45	2.1
Pawnee	37	42	33	37	39	34	37	37	-1.5
Barber	32	30	31	34	25	25	31	28	-8.9
Stafford	27	25	26	32	26	25	26	28	5.8
Harper	30	27	24	30	20	20	27	23	-14.0
Edwards	22	25	24	27	24	16	24	22	-5.4
Kingman	18	18	18	21	17	18	18	19	2.6
Comanche	17	17	18	18	14	14	17	15	-10.6
Kiowa	13	14	13	13	10	8	13	10	-21.8
Kansas	2,857	2,759	2,874	2,966	2,678	2,629	2,830	2,757	-2.6
Livestock & Products Price Index+	99	98	101	91	86	85			

+ Index numbers are on 1990-92 = 100 base.

Source: Kansas Agricultural Statistics, Kansas Department of Agriculture; Calculations, KCCED.

Education

Education is another key to a strong community. Residents who have a strong educational background will be more employable and command higher salaries. Employers will benefit as well because they will most likely experience lower turnover and training costs. Individuals with lower education levels have a harder time finding jobs that can supply a living wage and may be more likely to use social services, such as food stamps.

Education: Key Findings

- In 1990 Pratt County had a greater percentage of its over-25 population with some college education than did the state of Kansas (Table 12). Given that most new jobs created will require some post high school education, Pratt may be well positioned to face this challenge.
- While Pratt County's adult population in 1990 could be considered well-educated, 17.6 percent of the County's over 25 population had less than a high school education (Table 12). This indicates a need for adult education and training and retraining programs.

**Table 12 Educational Attainment of Persons over 25
1990
As a Percentage of the Population of Persons over 25
Pratt County and Kansas**

	Completed Less Than 9th Grade	9-12th Grade No Diploma	High School Graduate	Some College	College Degree*
Pratt County	7.6	10.0	31.1	25.7	25.6
Kansas	7.7	11.0	32.8	21.9	26.5

* Includes Associate, Bachelors, and Graduate or Professional Degrees.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990. Percent calculations by KCCED/IPPBR, The University of Kansas.

Conclusion

The data reviewed indicated several trends. Pratt County's population has been in steady decline since the 1930's. Recent population estimates indicate that the population may be stabilizing. Total employment increased slightly from 1986 to 1996. Several sectors experienced good job growth, such as the services, government and government services, manufacturing, transportation, and the agricultural services sectors. Services, government and governmental services, and retail trade sectors employ the most workers in the county, accounting for 61.6 percent of the county's total employment in 1996. The labor force participation rate is good for the region and the unemployment rate of 2.5 percent is well below the state's average. Retail sales are up for the county and the county trade pull factor indicates that the county draws in business from surrounding counties. The value of field crops increased 14.9 percent from 1991 to 1996; however, the value of livestock and poultry declined 15 percent during that same period. Pratt County has a higher percentage of its adult population with some college than Kansas' over- 25 population.

Other data reviewed show some trends that may be of concern to the county. The average annual employment increased 3.6 percent from 1991 to 1996 compared with 9.1 percent for the State and 9.8 percent for the country. The labor force participation and unemployment rates for Pratt County suggest that the county may have difficulty with supplying workers when additional jobs are created. The county's average wage per job and per capita personal income, in general, lag behind the State's figures.

As stated in the introduction, data alone do not lead to a well-founded understanding of the community. The intuition of those within the community as to what the trends really mean must also be considered. While the county does have a well-educated work force, it also has many adults that need education and training to meet the skill needs of jobs for the future. Other challenges face the county, such as creating more job opportunities and thereby curbing out-migration of the population. The actions taken now to address these challenges will influence the type of community Pratt County will be in the future.