



Nebraska Thriving Index

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A Tool for a Thriving Rural Future

Nebraska Thriving Index

- **Purpose:** Benchmarking tool for the non-metropolitan and small metropolitan regions of Nebraska
 - Eight Nebraska regions are compared on economic and quality of life indicators with peer regions located around the northern Plains
- **Value:** Will help to identify areas of economic strength in Nebraska's regions and areas where Nebraska regions lag
 - Allows community and state leaders to develop future-focused strategies to build on regional advantages and address areas of concern

Nebraska Thriving Index

Compared according to three indexes of **economic prosperity**



Growth Index: Measures total employment growth, private employment, private wage growth, growth in households with children, and growth in dividend, interest and rent income (5 variables)



Economic Opportunity & Diversity Index: Measures entrepreneurial activity, industry diversity, occupation diversity and share of telecommuters (7 variables)



Other Prosperity Index: Measures non-farm proprietor personal income, total personal income stability, life span, percent in poverty and share of income from dividends, interest and rent (5 variables)

Nebraska Thriving Index

Compared according to five indexes of **economic conditions**



Demographic Growth & Renewal Index: Measures long-term population growth, dependency ratio, median age, millennial and Gen Z balance, and population diversity (6 variables)



Education & Skill Index: Measures high school and college education attainment, labor force participation and employment in knowledge-based occupations (4 variables)



Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business Index: Measures access to broadband, interstate highways and universities as well as wage rates, marginal tax rates and the presence of opportunity zones (6 variables)



Quality of Life Index: Measures the appeal of living and working in a region including commute times, housing, relative wages, public safety, climate and recreational amenities, access to health care, day care, parks, and arts and cultural activity (10 variables)



Social Capital Index: Measures involvement with volunteer organizations, programs to build the community environment, and voter participation (5 variables)

Thriving Index Regions & Comparison Regions

Nebraska Regions



North 81

Madison, Pierce, Platte and Stanton



Northeast

Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dodge, Knox, Nance, Thurston and Wayne



Panhandle

Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scottsbluff, Sheridan and Sioux



Sandhills

Blaine, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Custer, Garfield, Grant, Greeley, Holt, Hooker, Keya Paha, Loup, Rock, Thomas, Valley and Wheeler



Siouxland

Dakota and Dixon



Southeast

Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Thayer and York



Southwest

Arthur, Chase, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins and Red Willow



Tri-Cities

Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Franklin, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Nuckolls, Phelps, Sherman and Webster

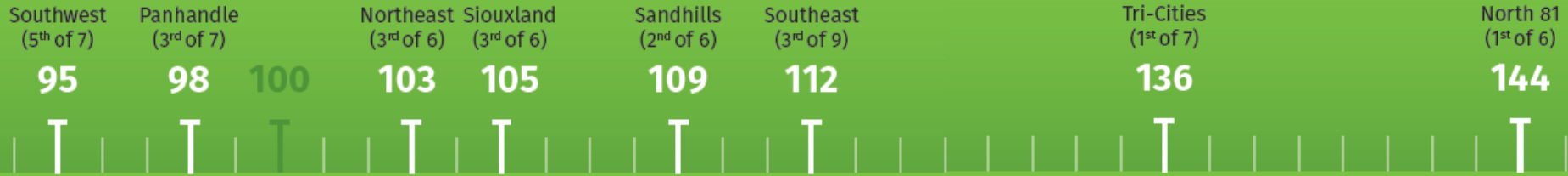
Note: Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, Saunders, Washington, Lancaster and Seward counties are not included in any of the eight regions

Comparison Regions

- Either other Nebraska regions or U.S. Economic Development Administration regions located in another northern Plains state:
 - Iowa, South Dakota, Kansas, Minnesota, (western) Illinois, (eastern) Colorado and (eastern) Wyoming
- Comparison regions identified with a statistical matching technique

Regional Results

Nebraska Thriving Index – Value & Rank within Peer Group



Interpreting an Index Value

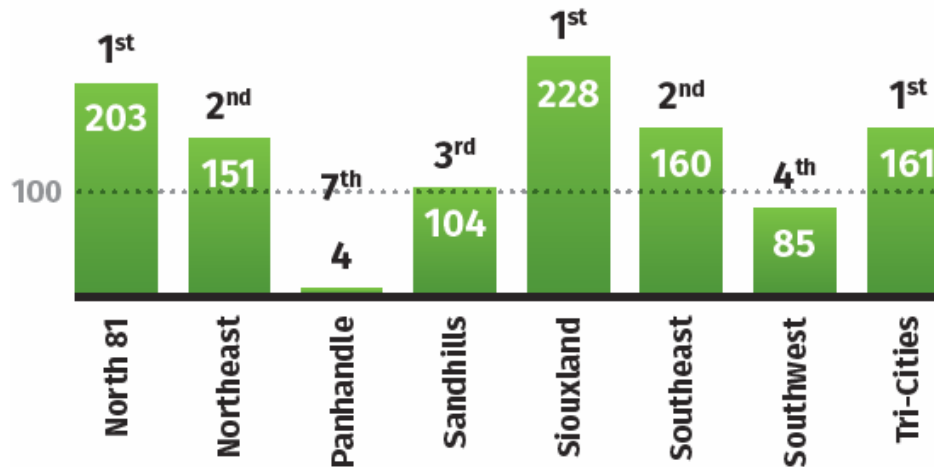
- 100 means that the Nebraska region is at the average value of its peers
- 0 means that a Nebraska region is one standard deviation behind its peers
- 200 means that a Nebraska region is one standard deviation ahead of its peers

Regional Patterns – Advantage #1



Economic Growth Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

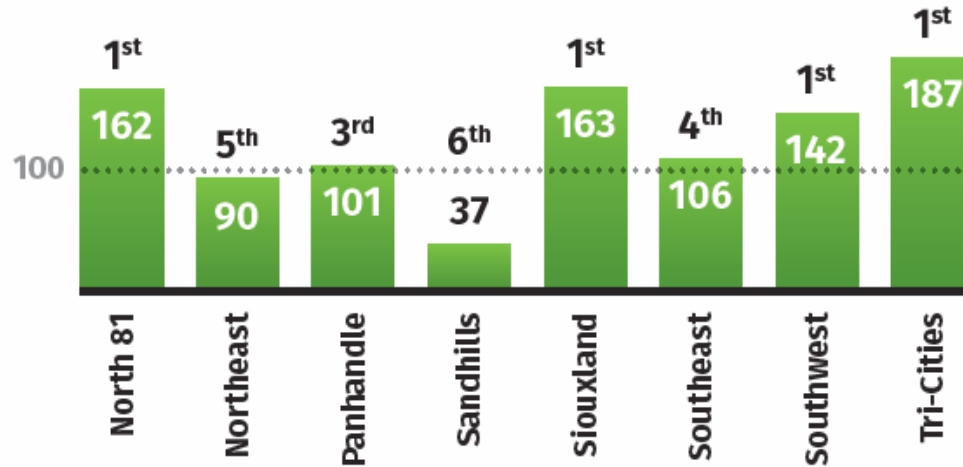


Regional Patterns – Advantage #2



Quality of Life Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

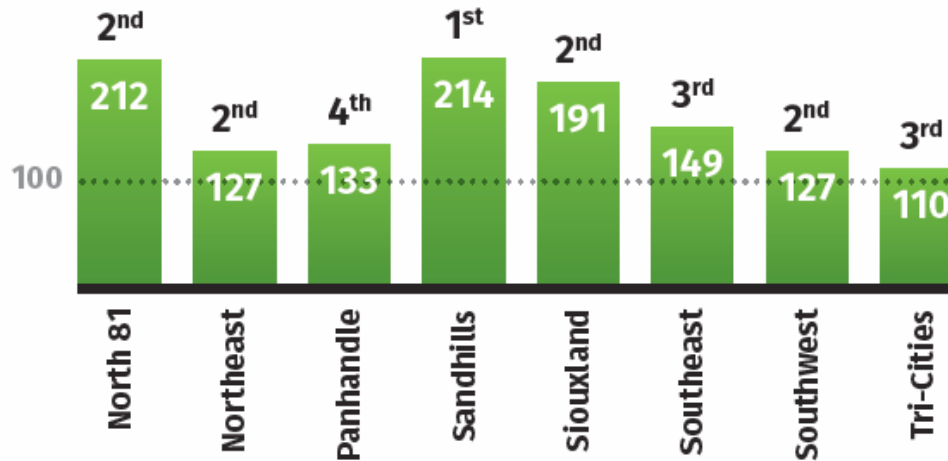


Regional Patterns – Advantage #3



Social Capital Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

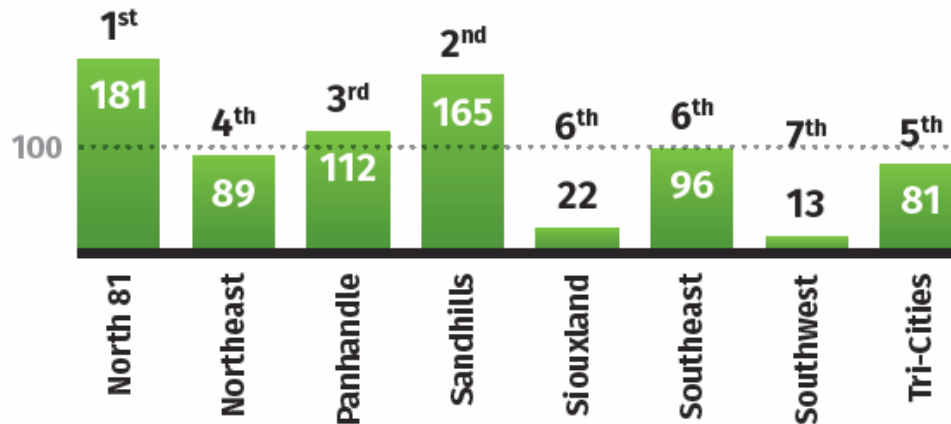


Regional Patterns – Concern



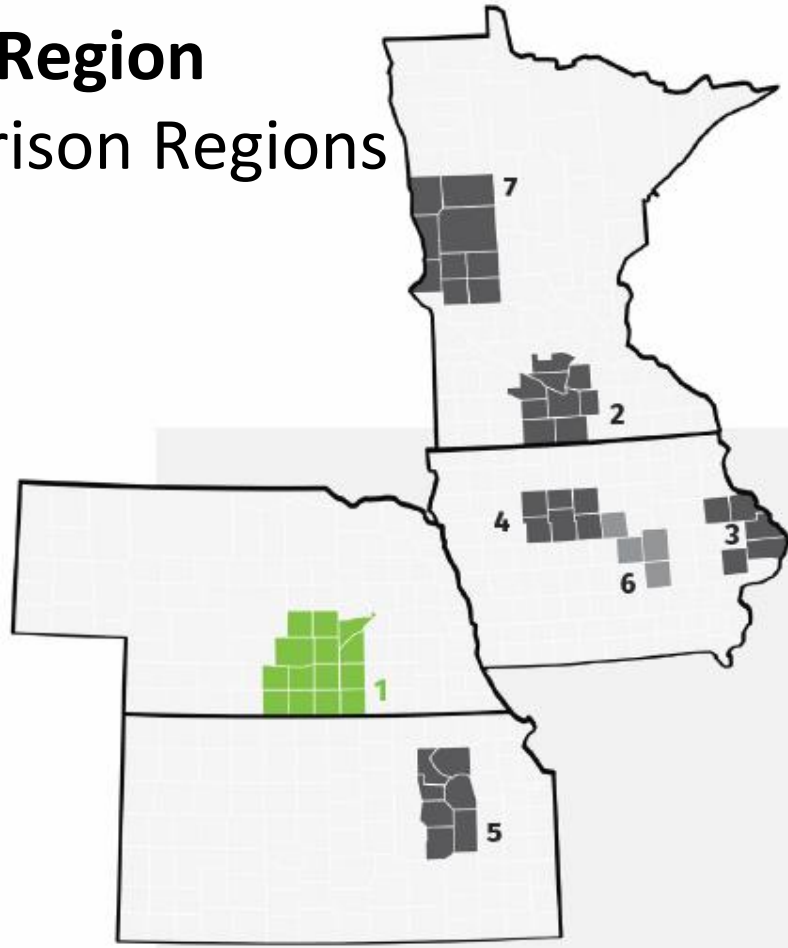
Education & Skill Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value



Results For Example Region: TRI-CITIES

Tri-Cities Region & Comparison Regions

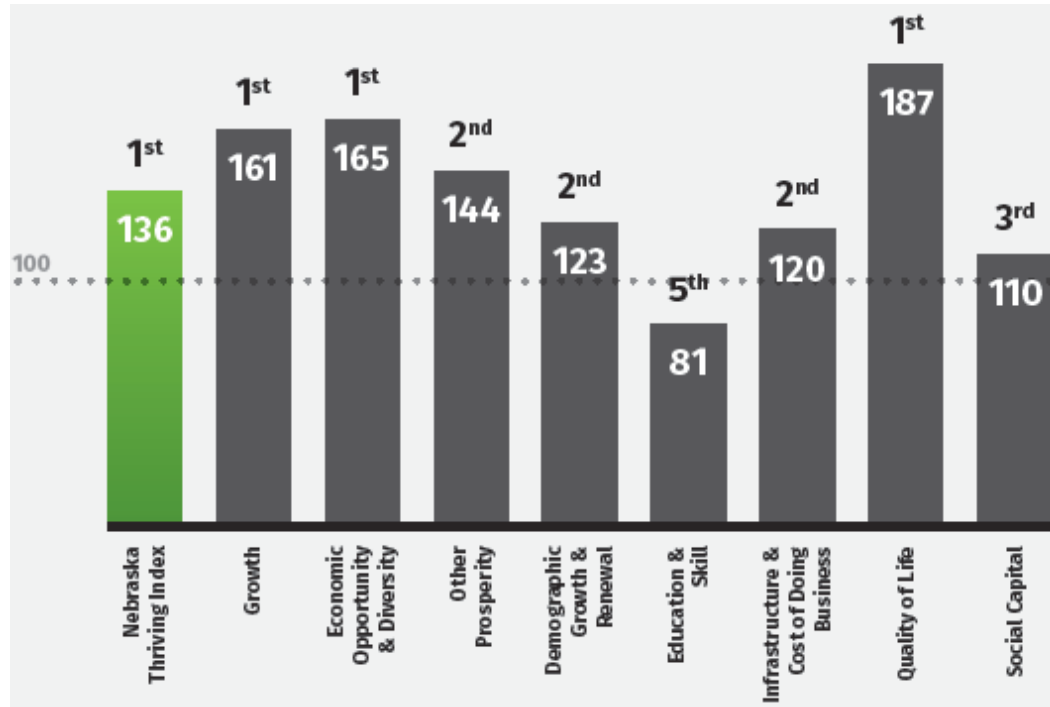


Region Key

1. NEBRASKA: Tri-Cities Region
2. MINNESOTA: Region Nine Development Commission
3. IOWA: East Central Intergovernmental Association
4. IOWA: Mid-Iowa Development Association
5. KANSAS: Flint Hills Economic Development District
6. IOWA: Region 6 Planning Commission
7. MINNESOTA: Minnesota West Central Initiative

Tri-Cities Region –

Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value



Neb. Thriving Index: 136
Ranks 1st Among Peers

- 1st Growth
- 1st Economic Opportunity & Diversity
- 1st Quality of Life

Question?

- Website: ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/nethrivingindex
 - Where you can find the Nebraska Thriving Index data
 - Where you can share feedback with us and find our upcoming in-person presentations and webinars