

# HARDIN COUNTY

## Comprehensive Development Guide Existing Conditions Summary



Comprehensive Development  
Guide 2023



## INTRODUCTION

Understanding the demographics of an area provide keen insight as to how growth and development may unfold over the next 10 to 20 years. A demographic analysis can provide a snapshot as to where Hardin County is today and what it may look like going forward. Demographic analysis, paired with a review of market conditions and growth and development patterns, are foundational to the planning process. For the purposes of this analysis, the used in this analysis is from the 2000, 2010, and 2020 Decennial Censuses and the 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates unless otherwise noted.

These analyses can assist in formulating policies for effective growth, as well as identify projects that could enhance the quality of life for those that live in the community. Several peer communities or municipalities have been used as a comparison for this analysis. These communities were chosen either for their proximity, similarities in demographics, or similarities in their land use distribution. The peer communities used for this analysis are Daviess County, Shelby County, Warren County, and Elizabethtown as well as Kentucky and the United States.

### Population Growth

In 2020, Hardin County had a total population of 110,702 people, of which 48,524 people lived in the unincorporated areas (outside of Elizabethtown, Radcliff, and Fort Knox). Hardin County has not had the population growth that some of its peer counties experienced over the last decade. From 2010 to 2020, Hardin County had a population growth of 4.9% (1.7% growth within the unincorporated areas), which was less than Daviess County (6.9%), Shelby County (14.2%), Warren County (18.2%), and Elizabethtown (10%). In 2020, Kentucky saw a 3.8% increase in population.

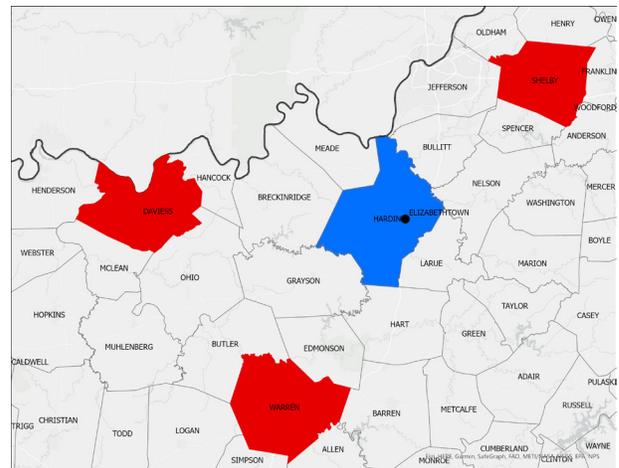
The Kentucky State Data Center projects the population of Hardin County in 2040 will be 125,394 people, inclusive of all incorporated areas and military installations. However, this projection does not account for the current development of the BlueOval SK Battery Park in Glendale. With 5,000 jobs being located on that site alone, population growth is expected to vastly outpace the projections. However, it is expected that the majority of this growth will occur within the cities unless utilities and infrastructure are available in other portions of the county.

The median age of Hardin County is 37 years, which represents an almost 5% increase from 2010. The median age is younger than the state (39 years), nation (38.2 years), Daviess County (38.9 years) and Shelby County (39.3 years) but older than Warren County (32.9 years) and Elizabethtown (36.7 years). About 27% of the population in Hardin County is under the age of 20, and 14.1% of the population is over 65 years old. Both of these population groups tend to need additional services such as

schools, transportation, and specialized healthcare. Individuals between 25 and 44 years old comprise about 26.5% of the population in the county.

### Educational Attainment

Almost 92% of the residents of Hardin County have a high school degree or greater, which is higher than the nation (88.5%), state (87.2%), and peer counties, and the same as Elizabethtown. About 22% of Hardin County residents (over the age of 25) hold a bachelor's degree and 9.3% have a graduate degree, which is lower than the nation, state, peer counties, and the City of Elizabethtown. This indicates that many residents of incorporated Hardin County are likely either entering the workforce or a trade following high school.



## Racial/Ethnic Breakdown

About 78% of the population of Hardin County is white, 12% is African American, 2% is Asian, and 2.8% is two or more races. Additionally, 5.8% of the population is of Hispanic ethnicity. Hardin County is a slightly less diverse than the nation, however, it has a more diverse population than Kentucky and the peer counties.

## Livability

The median household income of Hardin County is \$57,101. This represents a 20% increase from 2010. This figure is higher when compared to the state (\$52,238) and Elizabethtown (\$47,270), but about 14% lower than the nation (\$64,994). Among the peer counties, Hardin County does well with higher household incomes than Daviess (\$54,881) and Warren counties (\$54,325). The St. Louis Federal Reserve calculated the unemployment rate in August 2022 for Hardin County at about 3.8%, showing that employment in the county has recovered from the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Commuting

In 2020, 92.7% of the Hardin County workforce commuted to work in a car, truck, or van, with 82.7% commuting alone. About 79% of the workforce lived and worked in Hardin County in 2020, with an average commute time of about 22 minutes. This commute time was similar to the peer counties, state, and nation.

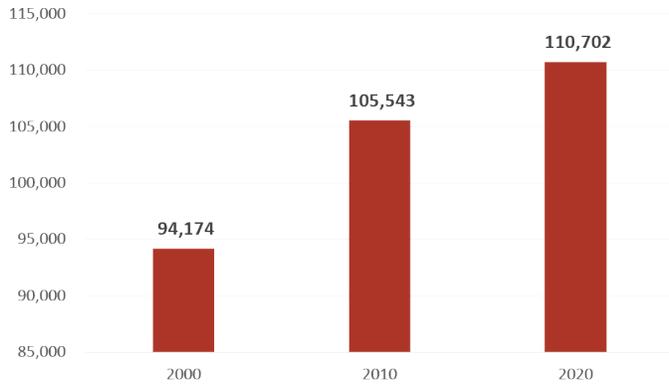
## Housing

There are 46,970 housing units in Hardin County, which includes 14,338 units in Elizabethtown. There are 4,911 vacant units in Hardin County (1,299 of those are with Elizabethtown), for a vacancy rate of about 10.5%. The 2020 vacancy rate represents a 3.2% reduction from 2010 to 2020 (163 dwelling units). Owner-occupied units increased by 4.1% (1,011 units) from 2010 to 2020. The number of renter-occupied units increased more dramatically with a 28.4% increase, or 3,622 new renter-occupied units, from 2010 to 2020.

The median home value in 2020 was \$157,000 in Hardin County, which is about 19.6% higher than the median home value in 2010; however, data from the Hardin County Building Department shows the average home price of newly built homes in the county was \$201,402 in 2020 and \$248,073 in 2021. These figures include 211 new single-family homes built in this time period and reflect the rise of inflation and supply chain issues the building industry faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 median home value in Hardin County is higher than the state (\$147,100) and Daviess County (\$143,500), however it is lower than the nation (\$229,800), Shelby County (\$202,000), Warren County (\$180,000), and Elizabethtown (\$175,400). In 2020, the median contract rent within Hardin County was \$811 per month. This is higher than the median rent for the state (\$783) and Elizabethtown (\$765), and similar to the peer counties.

# DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

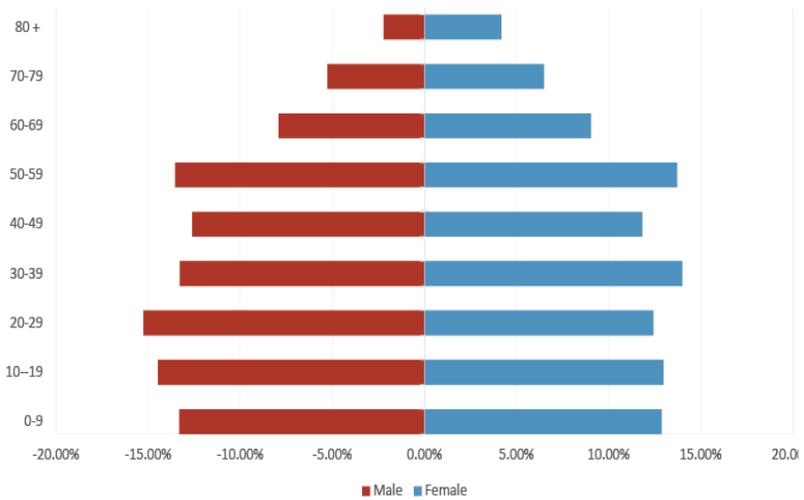
## Hardin County Total Population



### Slight Growth

Hardin County has not had the population growth that some of its peer counties experienced over the last decade. From 2010 to 2020, Hardin County had a population growth of 4.9% (1.7% growth within the unincorporated areas), which was less than Daviess County, Shelby County, Warren County, and Elizabethtown.

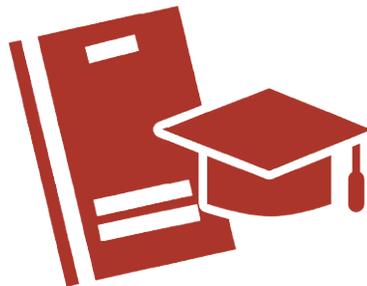
## Hardin County 2020 Population Pyramid



### Aging Population

The median age of Hardin County is 37 years, which represents an almost 5% increase from 2010.

## Hardin County 2020 Educational Attainment



35% hold a Bachelor's or Graduate Degree

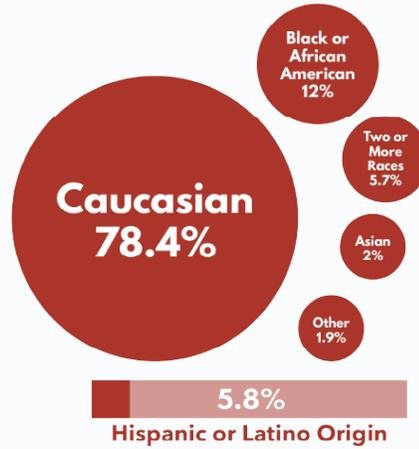
### Trades-Focused Education

About 35% of Hardin County residents (over the age of 25) hold a bachelor's degree or graduate degree, which is slightly low. This indicates that many residents are likely either entering the workforce or a trade following high school.

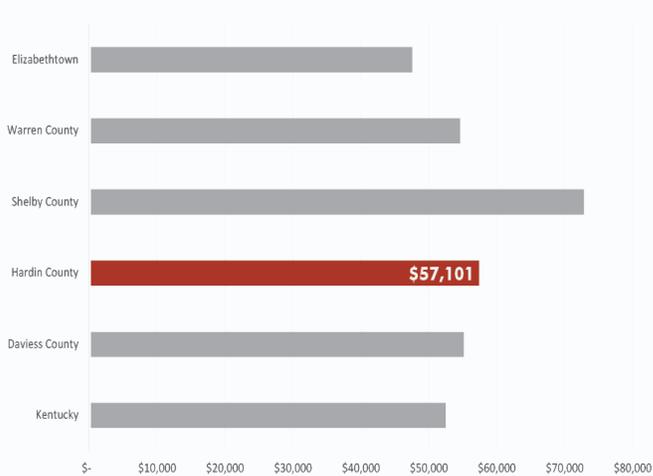
## Hardin County 2020 Racial breakdown

### More Racially Diverse

Hardin County is a slightly less diverse than the nation, however, it has a more diverse population than Kentucky and the other peer counties.



## 2020 Median Household Income Comparison



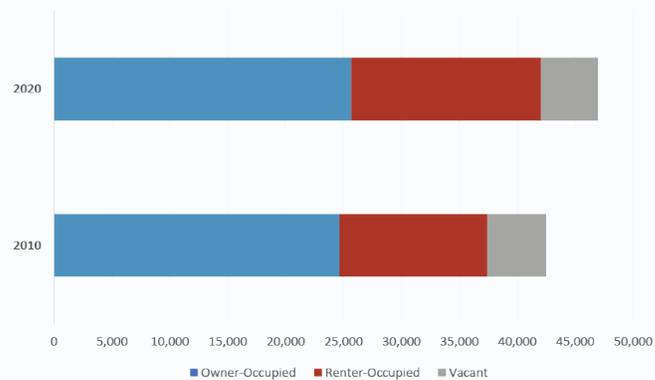
### Higher than average median household income

Compared to the state and peer counties, Hardin County has a higher than average household income.

## Hardin County Housing Occupancy

### Shifting Housing Occupancy

While owner-occupied has decreased by 3.4%, the percentage of renter-occupied units has increased by nearly 5%.



WHAT IS THE DATA TELLING US?

## MARKET ANALYSIS

The following section provides an overview of the current market conditions of Hardin County. This includes information on employment strengths and trends, industry overview, and the regional concentration of employment and industry. Additionally, the BlueOval SK Battery Park is discussed, and the impact this will have throughout the county.

This overview of industry trends, coupled with other analysis, can provide a roadmap for the county's redevelopment strategy; however, the BlueOval SK development will be a driving force in the growth of industry in the County, and these trends will likely be fluid for the first few years following the commencement of construction activities.

### Industrial Profile

Hardin County historically has had a strong manufacturing presence, as well as a strong goods production, information sector, and leisure and hospitality sector. Hardin County's manufacturing and goods producing sectors will likely see continued growth over the next decade, due primarily to the BlueOval SK Battery Park, and the ancillary operations that will be needed to support the new plant.

### Regional Concentration

Regional concentration of employment and industry is tracked by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). To analyze how a single industry is distributed geographically across the nation, BLS uses a measure called location quotient. Location quotients can determine the share or concentration of particular industry within one community compared to the United States. If the location quotient is greater than 1.0, employment within that industry is more concentrated locally than the nation. Alternatively, if the location quotient is less than 1.0, the specific industry is less concentrated than the nation. In Hardin County, manufacturing has a location quotient of 1.67, goods producing is 1.16, the information sector is 1.05, and the leisure and hospitality sector is 1.05. These are the highest share industries in Hardin County. It is anticipated that when the BlueOval SK Battery is operational, the automotive sector will also be more concentrated than the nation.

### Employment Trends and Comparisons

Hardin County's labor force includes about 54,375 people (63.3%), which is a similar percentage as peer communities and higher than the state (59.5%). There were 44,811 jobs located in Hardin County in 2020, and 79% of those jobs, or roughly 35,400 positions, were filled by residents of Hardin County. About 19% of the Hardin County population (over the age of 16) works outside of the county and 1.5% works outside of Kentucky. With approximately 63% of the Hardin County population leaving the county each day for work, residents are more likely to shop and spend money outside of the county.

### Industry Overview

The BLS provides industry profiles that include the number of business establishments, the annual average employment, and the average wages per employee. Some of the larger industries within Hardin County include goods-producing and manufacturing, information and financial activities, as well as leisure and hospitality businesses. In 2020, goods producing and manufacturing businesses offered an average of 14,411 jobs in Hardin County, with an average wage of \$61,545 per year. Other noteworthy industries include the Information industry, which had 920 jobs across 53 businesses in 2020 and an average salary of \$53,760. Additionally, the construction industry, which employed 1,282 people at 215 companies in 2020, had an average salary of \$50,308 per year.

## Largest Industries

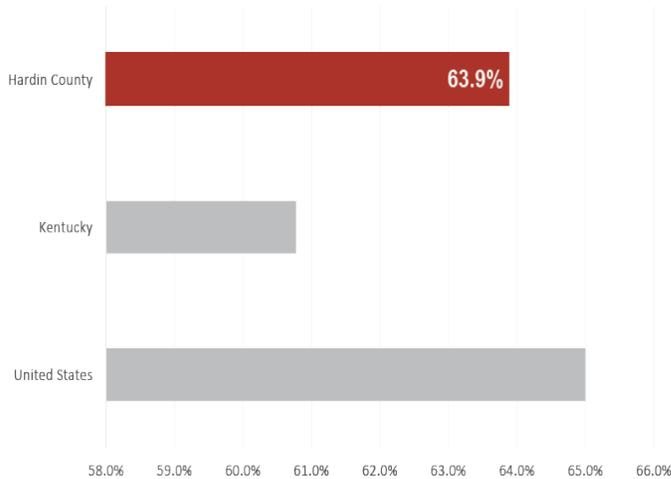
The three industries with the largest employment in Hardin County are the manufacturing, goods-producing, and trade and transportation sectors, with a combined 22,123 jobs. Some of the area's larger employers within these sectors include Altec Industries, Metalsa, Kruger Packaging, and Quest Industries.

## Blue Oval

In October, 2021, officials announced that Ford Motor Company would begin construction on a 1,500-acre campus to develop electric vehicle batteries outside of Glendale, called the BlueOval SK Battery Park. This \$5.8 billion investment will transform the employment landscape in Hardin County. The "Battery Park" will eventually employ over 5,000 people, not including the ancillary businesses that will support the operation. The facility expects to be operational by 2026. This project will present some potential challenges for Hardin County, specifically with regards to temporary and workforce housing, which will have to be addressed to ensure a smooth rollout of the development

# MARKET ANALYSIS Overview

## 2020 Labor Force Participation Rate



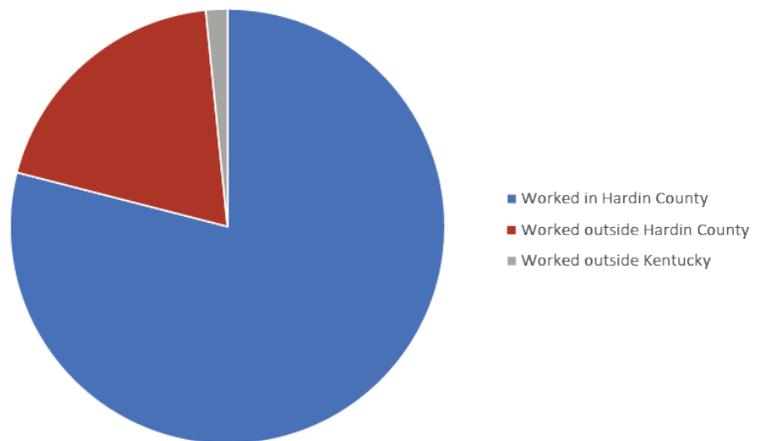
### Stable Workforce Participation

The percentage of individuals over the age of 16 that are participating in the labor force has remained the same since 2010.

## 2020 Hardin County Commuting Data

### Majority of Residents work in Hardin County

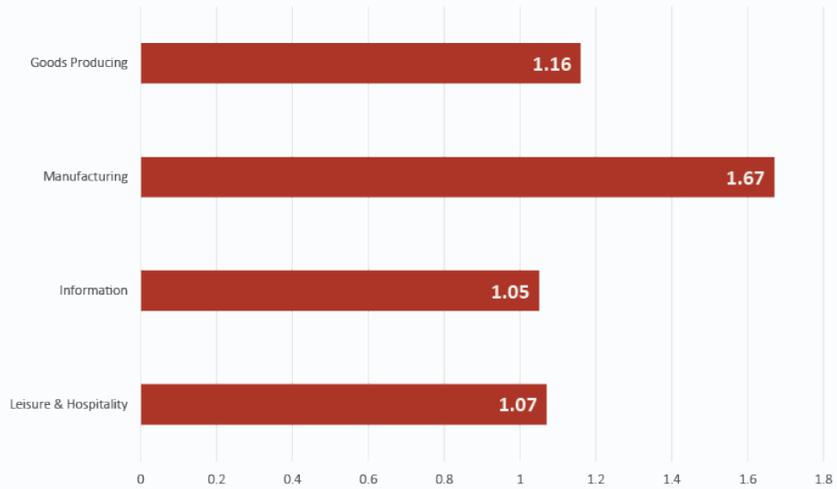
With 79% of Hardin County's labor force working within Hardin County, only 21% of workers are leaving the county each day for work.



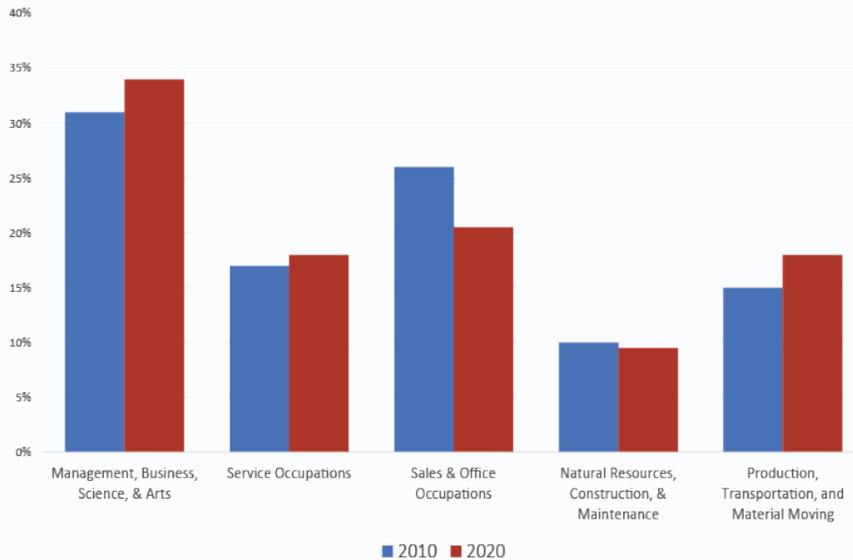
### Robust Manufacturing Concentration

If the location quotient is greater than 1.0, employment within that industry is more concentrated locally than the nation. In Hardin County, manufacturing, goods producing, information, and the leisure and hospitality sector are the highest share industries.

### 2020 Hardin County Employment Location Quotient Over 1.0



### Hardin County Occupation Comparison



### Leading Occupations

Management, Services, and Production/Transportation occupations have grown since 2010.

WHAT IS THE DATA TELLING US?