

Geographic Areas

A labor market area is a general term used to describe an economically integrated region within which workers can readily change jobs without changing their place of residence. New Hampshire's current labor market areas were delineated after the 2010 Census. Note that historical data published prior to this designation are not comparable.

Who is responsible for designating these areas?

The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reviews the commuting patterns and economic dependence between counties. According to OMB, a Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA) is a statistical geographic entity consisting of a county associated with at least one core (urbanized area or urban cluster) and having a population of at least 10,000. The CBSA must have adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured through commuting ties. In New England the CBSA are also defined using cities and towns or groups of cities and towns rather than counties, and are identified as New England City and Town Areas, or NECTA.

New England City and Town Areas (NECTA)

NECTA are delineated using the same criteria as used to identify a statistical area as a metropolitan division, a metropolitan area, or a micropolitan area elsewhere in the country. Statistical areas are determined by combining both population data and journey-to-work commuting patterns, and the type of area is defined according to the population size of the core area or urban cluster. New Hampshire includes four different statistical area types: metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan statistical area divisions, micropolitan statistical areas, and small labor market areas.

Metropolitan NECTA: These areas consist of a core urban area with population of 50,000 or more, plus contiguous cities and towns that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the urban core as measured by commuting patterns. New Hampshire includes all or part of three Metro NECTA.

Metropolitan NECTA Division: A Metropolitan NECTA containing a single core urban area with a population of at least 2.5 million may be subdivided into NECTA Divisions. NECTA Divisions consist of a core urban area plus contiguous MCDs, all of which are included in the larger Metro NECTA, and must have a total population of 100,000 or more. The core urban area of a NECTA Division must have population of 50,000 or more, with the highest rate of out-commuting to any other city or town less than 20 percent. NECTA Divisions function as distinct social, economic, and cultural areas within the larger metropolitan region. New Hampshire includes portions of four NECTA Divisions, all of which are subdivisions of the Boston-Cambridge-Nashua MA-NH Metropolitan NECTA.

Micropolitan NECTA: These areas consist of a core urban area with a population of at least 10,000 (but less than 50,000), plus contiguous cities and towns that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the urban core as measured by commuting patterns. This area type was defined for places that behave similarly to a large metropolitan area, but have a much smaller population. New Hampshire includes all or part of five Micro NECTA.

Labor Market Areas (LMA): These areas do not meet the OMB minimum core population standard of at least 10,000 residents, but are socially and economically integrated regions, as measured by commuting patterns, within which workers can change jobs without changing place of residence. LMA, also known as small labor market areas, are defined independently by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics with input from state labor market information agencies. New Hampshire includes all or part of 16 LMA.

For more information see the February 2015 Edition of *Economic Conditions* at www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/documents/ec-0215.pdf