

# Factors that Attract and Keep Working Families in Upstate New York



**Cornell Careers Institute: A Sloan Center for the  
Study of Working Families**

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# Cornell Employment and Family Careers Institute

*A Sloan Center for the Study of Working Families*



Promotes understanding of the dramatic changes in two fundamental social institutions, *families* and *work*, and their intersections throughout the *life course*.

# Key Questions

- ⇒ Who are upstate New Yorkers at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- ⇒ What factors influence families to locate in upstate New York?
- ⇒ What factors influence families intending to relocate out of upstate New York?
- ⇒ What can be done keep maintain a solid population base?

# Sources of Data

## ⇒ Government and Corporate Information

- U.S. Census, NYS Dept of Labor, Claritas, NYS Dept of Education, Woods and Poole, NYS Criminal Justice Services

## ⇒ Cornell Careers Institute Surveys

- Three surveys of hour long telephone interviews with 4637 upstate New York residents, 1914 couples;
- In-depth interviews and focus groups with over 200 upstate New Yorkers;
- Interviews with human resource personnel at 13 major upstate New York employers.
  - Note - the samples in these studies tend to concentrate on middle class couples working for the best employers in New York State.

# Who are Upstate New Yorkers At the Dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century



# Who Are Upstate New Yorkers?

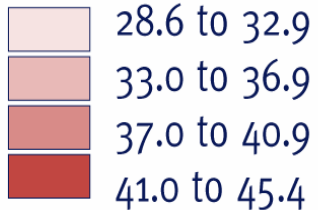
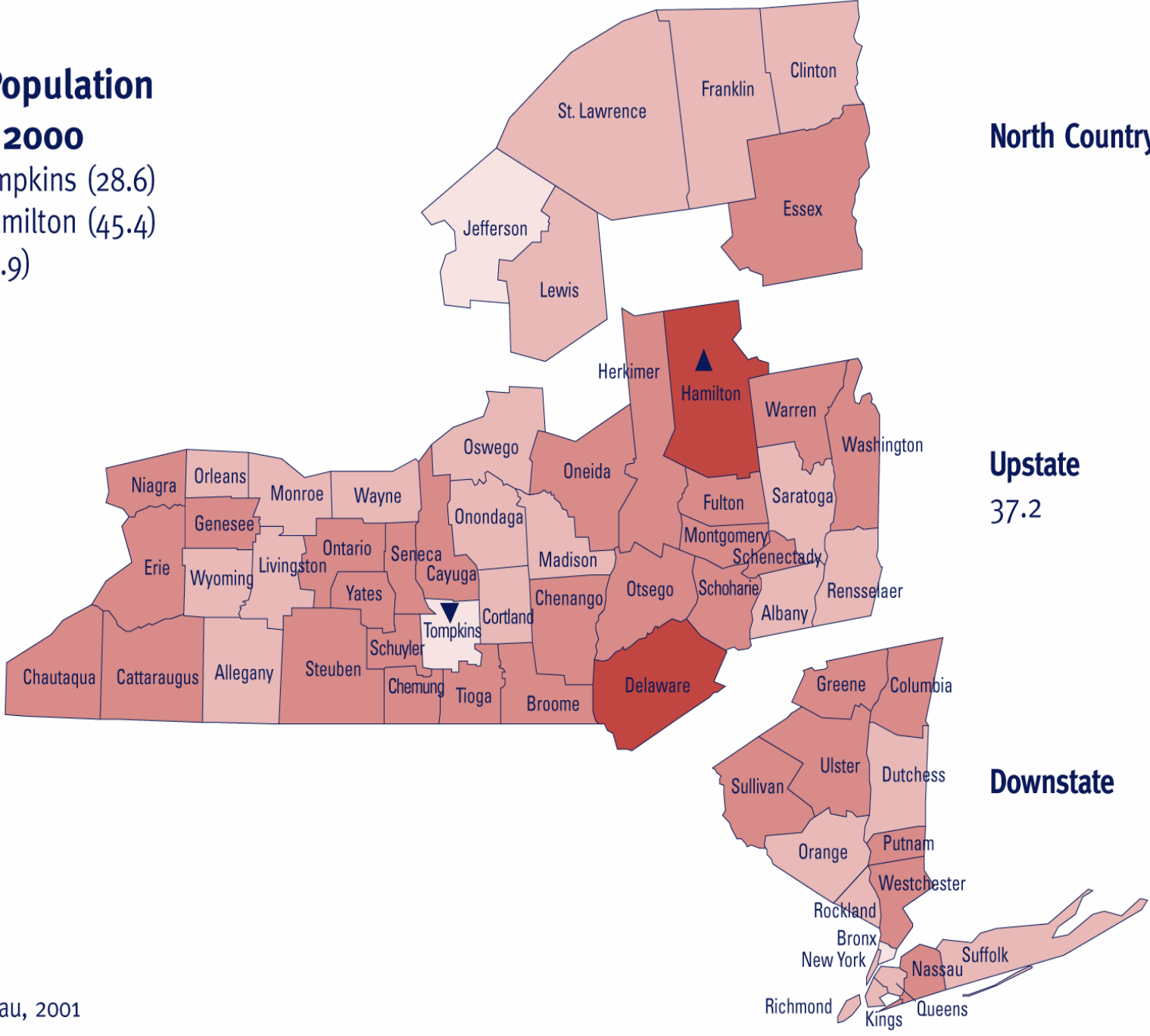
*The 2000 Census tells us they are . . .*

⇒ **Getting older**

# Map 1-3

## Median Age of Population New York State, 2000

▼ Lowest County: Tompkins (28.6)  
▲ Highest County: Hamilton (45.4)  
New York State (35.9)  
US (35.3)



Source: US Census Bureau, 2001

# Who Are Upstate New Yorkers?

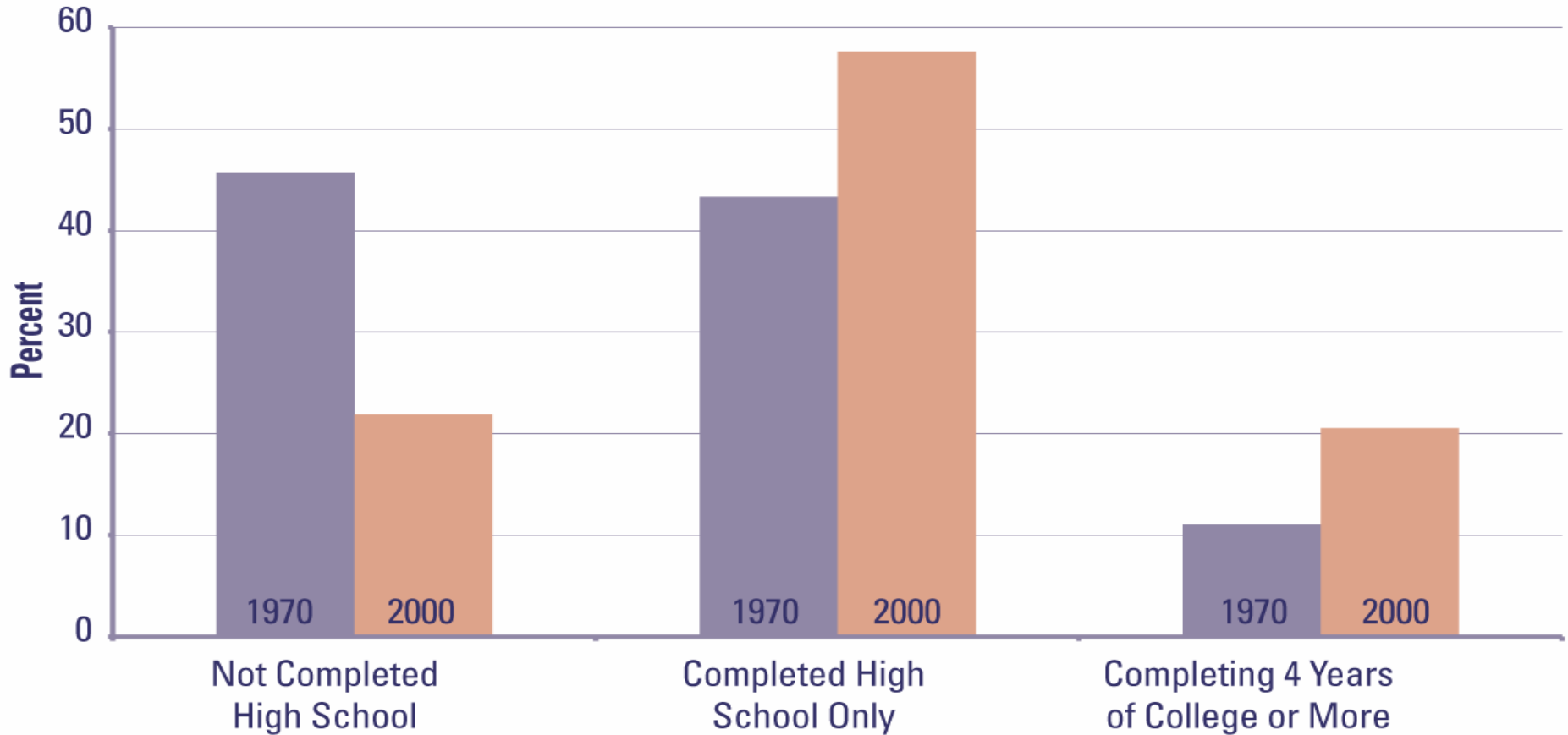
*The 2000 Census tells us they are . . .*

- ⇒ Getting Older
- **Better Educated**

# Who Are Upstate New Yorkers?

**Figure 2-1**

**Educational attainment of adults aged 25+, upstate New York, 1970 and 2000**



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (1970)  
CLARITAS estimate (2000)

# Who Are Upstate New Yorkers?

*The 2000 Census tells us they are . . .*

⇒ Getting Older

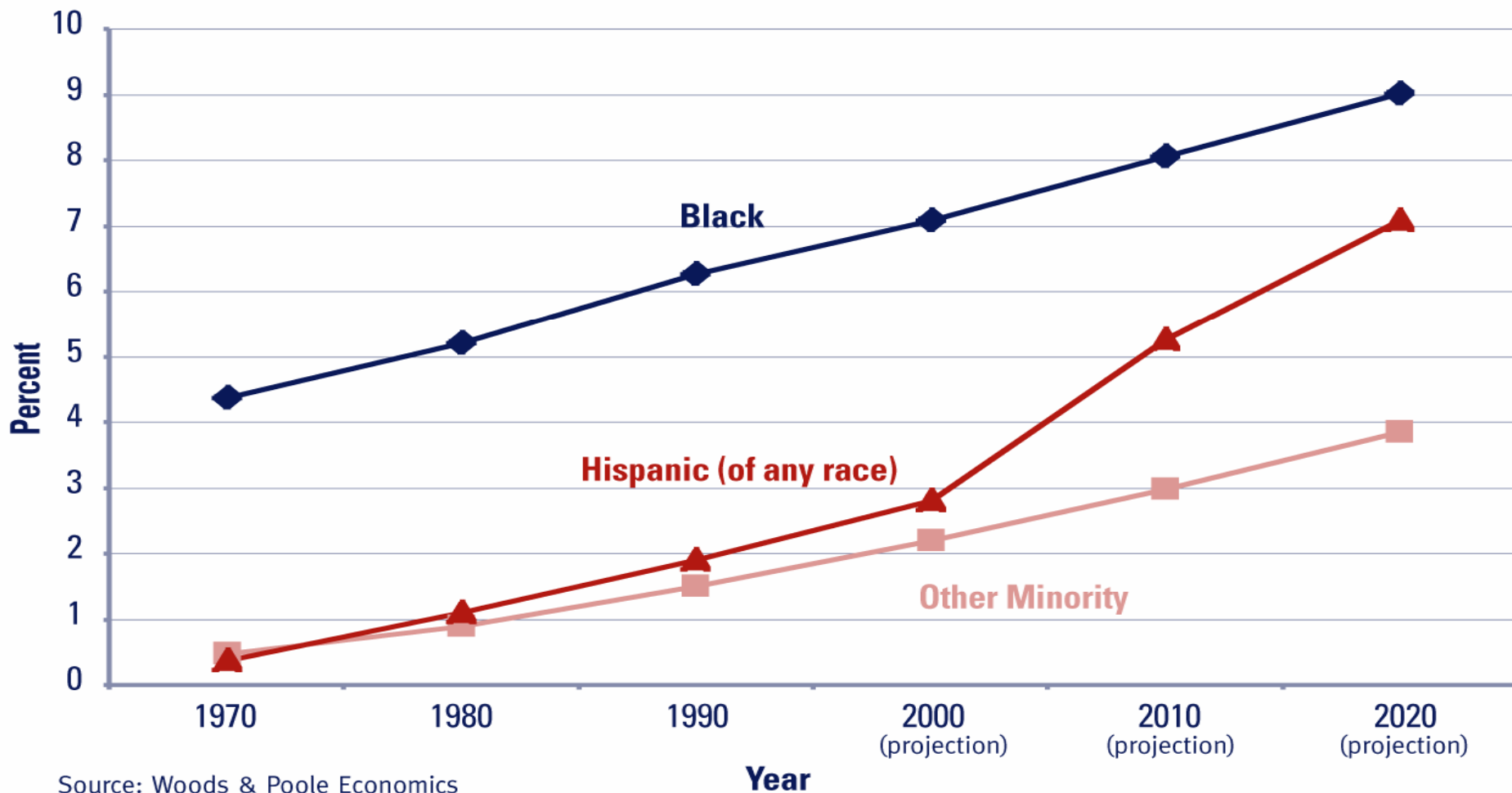
⇒ Better Educated

- **More Diverse**

# Who Are Upstate New Yorkers?

**Figure 1-3**

**Population by minority status and hispanic origin, upstate New York 1970-2020**



Source: Woods & Poole Economics

# Who Are Upstate New Yorkers?

*The 2000 Census tells us they are . . .*

⇒ Getting Older

⇒ Better Educated

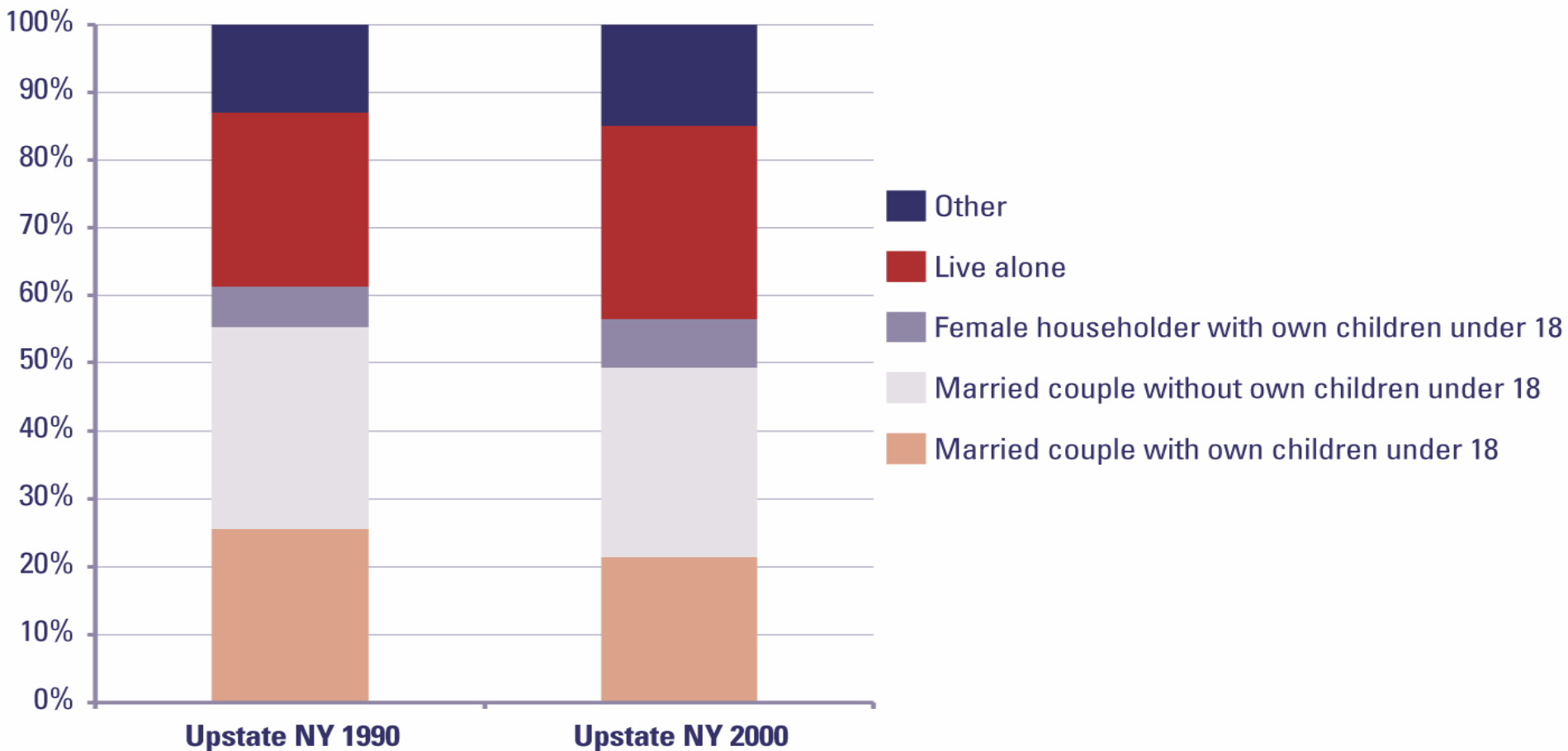
⇒ More Diverse

- Less apt to be  
“Ozzie & Harriet”
  - more 2+ earner families
  - more “young retired”

# Who Are Upstate New Yorkers?

**Figure 1-2**

**Distribution of households by type, upstate New York 1990 and 2000**



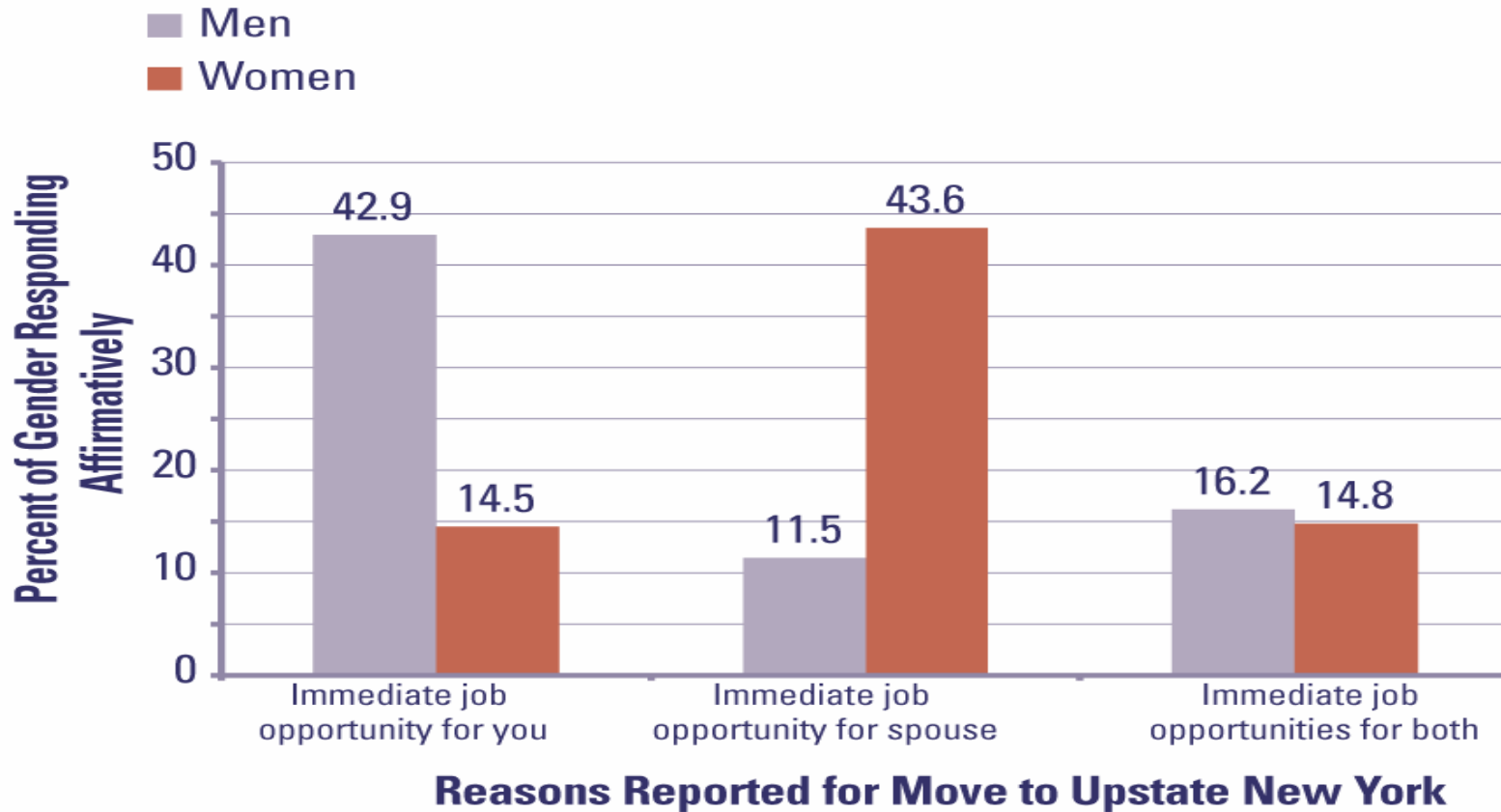
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Why Do They Live Here?

- ⇒ Eight in ten working adults live here because of job opportunity for themselves or their spouse.

## Figure 3-1

**Men more likely to report moving to upstate NY for job opportunity for themselves; women more likely to move for job opportunity for husbands**



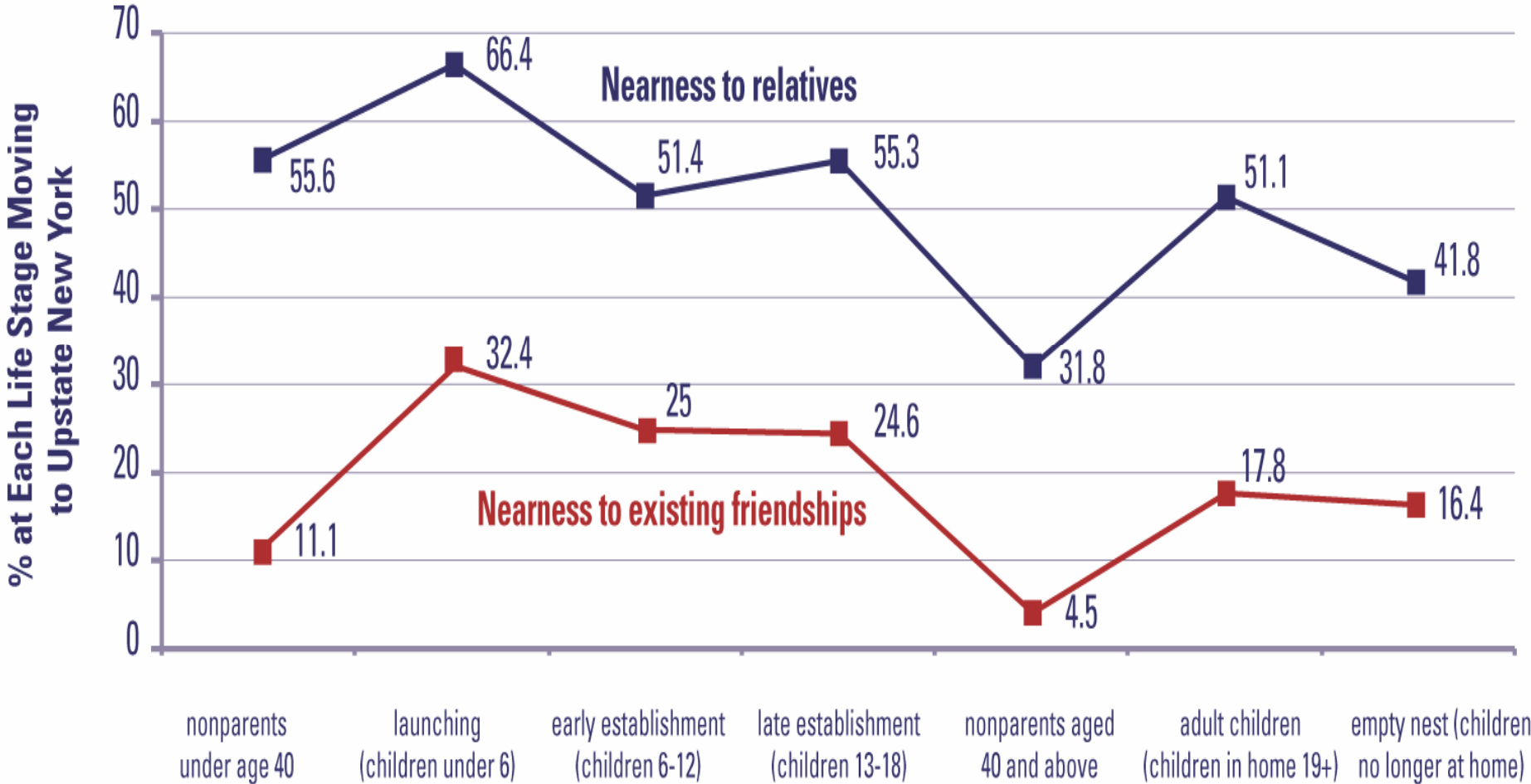
Source: Cornell Community Study; N=392 men, 372 women.

Differences for "Immediate Job Opportunity for You" and "Immediate Job Opportunity for Spouse" significant at  $p < .01$ .

# Why Do They Live Here?

⇒ One in two live here because of relatives, one in four because of friends.

# Men and Women In Couples In the Launching Stage Are Most Likely to Move to Upstate New York Because of Relatives and Friends



Source: Cornell Community Study. N=623 individuals. Differences by women's life stages are statistically significant at the p<.01 level.

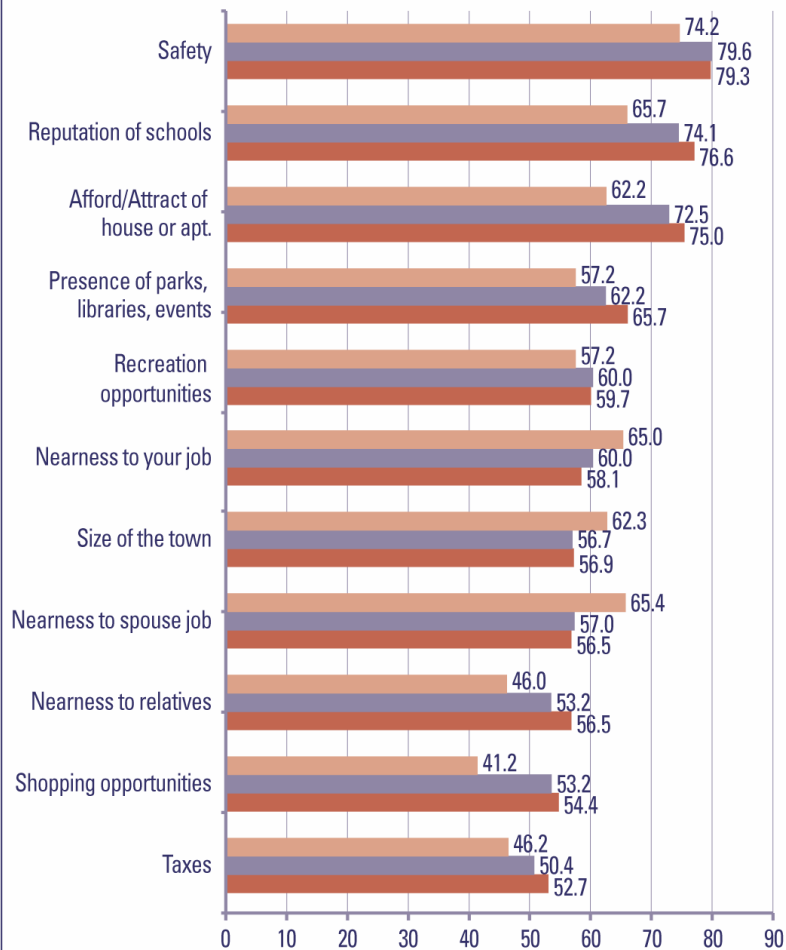
# How do they Pick Communities within Upstate New York?

- Safety, schools, and housing, life quality, and proximity to jobs are primary factors

### Figure 3-7

## Decisions to Live in Communities are Most Strongly Influenced by Safety, School Quality and Housing Opportunities

■ Tompkins/Cortland Counties  
■ Syracuse MSA  
■ Rochester MSA



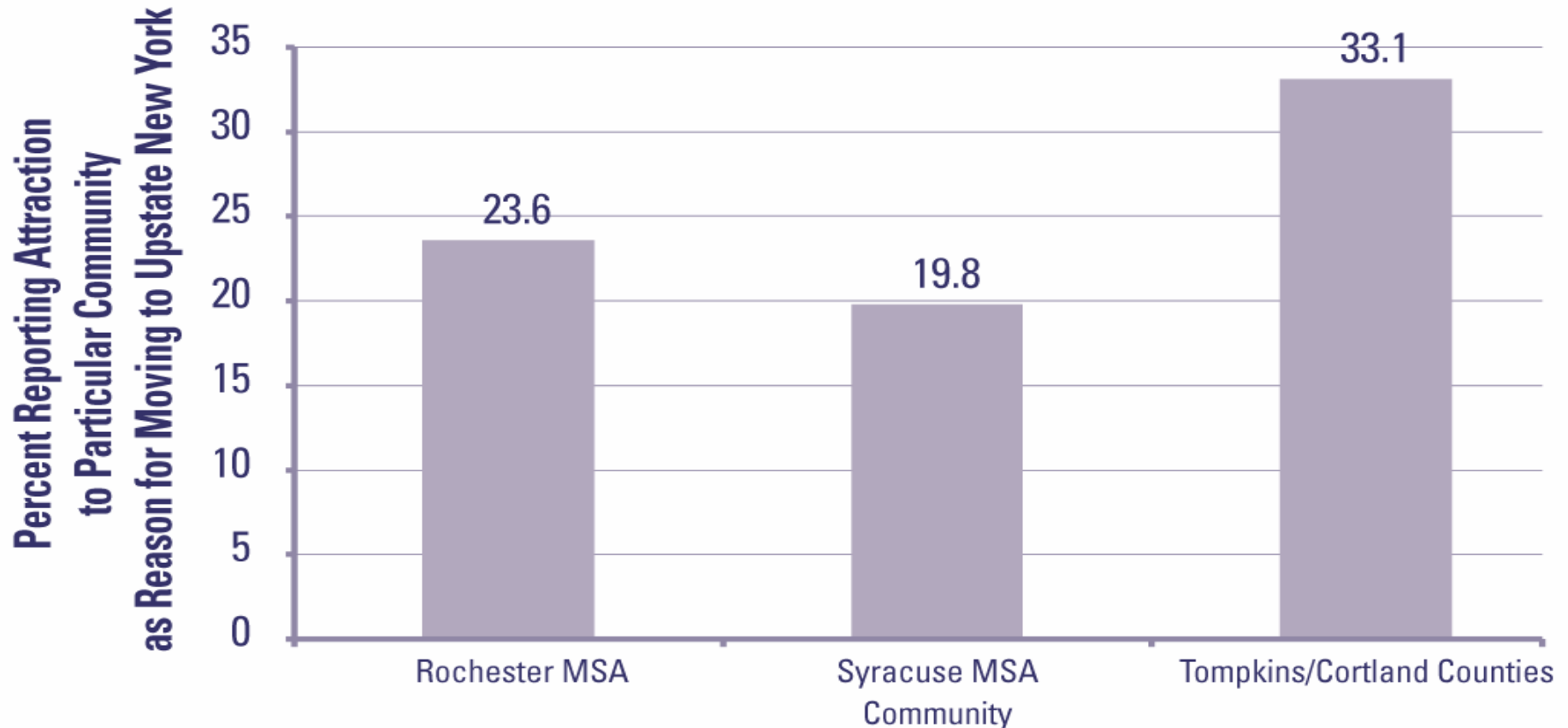
Source: Cornell Community Study. Rating of importance (0-100) factors were in selecting community to live in. N=739 individuals. Differences by city are statistically significant at the p<.01 level for "nearness to relatives," "reputation of schools," "presence of parks, libraries, events," "shopping opportunities," and "affordability/attractiveness of residence." Differences are statistically significant at the p<.05 level for "nearness to spouse's job," and "safety." Differences are statistically significant at the p<.10 level for "size of town," and "taxes."

# Why Do They Live Here?

⇒ One in four were attracted to a particular type of community.

## Figure 3-6

An attraction to a particular kind of community influences decisions to live in upstate New York



Source: Cornell Community Study. N=313 in Rochester, 298 in Syracuse, and 157 in Tompkins/Cortland counties. Differences among communities statistically significant at  $p < .01$  level.

MSA = Metropolitan Statistical Area

# What factors influence intentions to relocate out of Upstate New York?

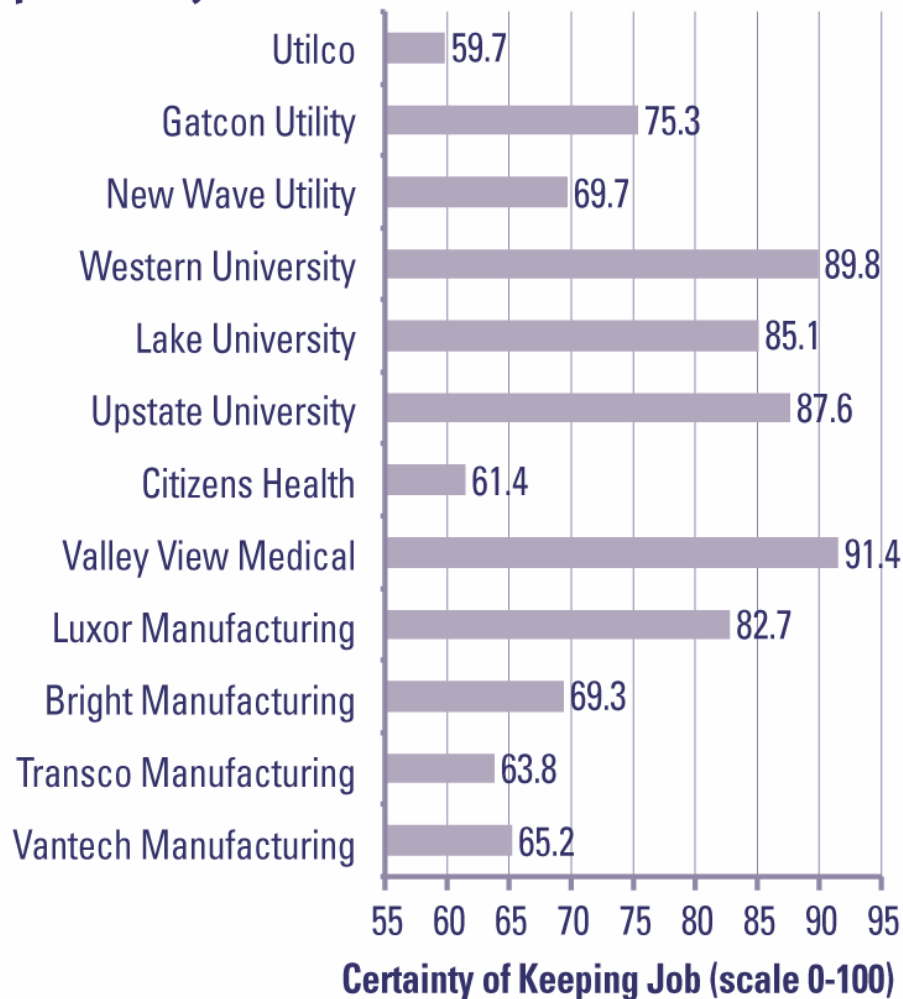
- ⇒ Jobs security and quality of employment is a primary consideration

# The New Face of Employment in Upstate New York

- Jobs are less secure and job security varies by employer.

**Figure 5-2**

**Workers in Valley View Medical report the highest certainty of keeping their present job**

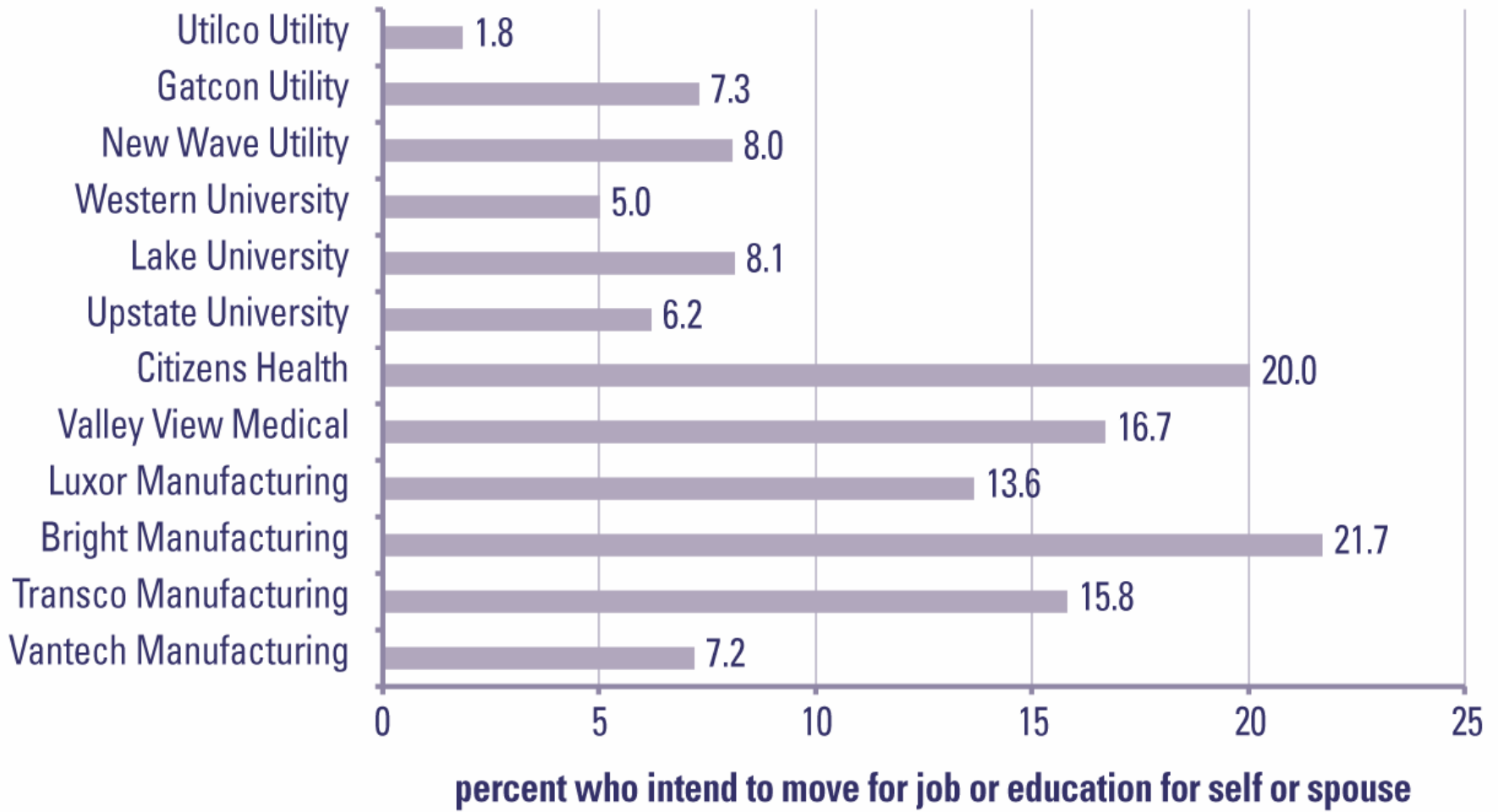


Source: Cornell Ecology of Careers Study; N=1928.

Differences for "certainty of keeping job" significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

## Figure 3-11

### Intention to Move Because of a Job or Education Varies by Employer



Source: Cornell Ecology of Careers Study; N=1106.

Differences for "percent intend to move" significant at  $\alpha=0.01$ .

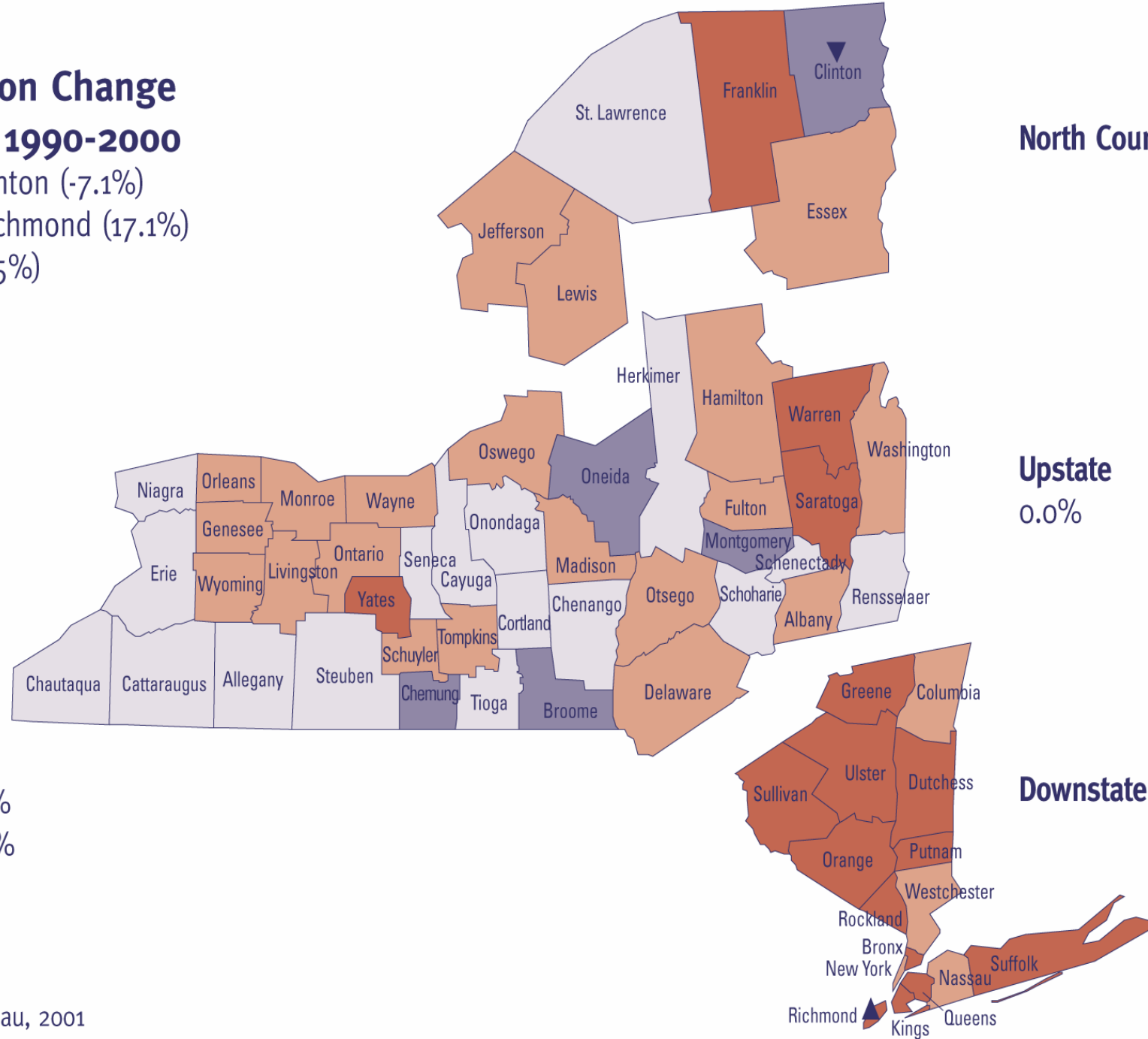
# Policy Implications: Attracting and Keeping Upstate New Yorkers



# Map 1-1

## Percent Population Change New York State, 1990-2000

▼ Lowest County: Clinton (-7.1%)  
▲ Highest County: Richmond (17.1%)  
New York State (5.5%)  
US (13.2%)



Source: US Census Bureau, 2001

# Implications for Employers

1. Existing arrangements aren't ideal; **workers want to work less, have control, flexibility and support**
2. Key ecological niches: supportive supervisors, control over time, reasonable workload - **need to look at ways jobs/careers are “prepackaged”**
3. Work/life not a single problem; **no single or simple solution**

# Implications for Community Leaders

1. Attracting employers is key to attracting and keeping families.
2. Quality of life and quality of key institutions are of greater importance than taxes, as they influence peoples decisions of where to locate
3. Development of innovative interfaces between government, corporate, and other agents are likely key to keeping and enhancing the attractiveness of upstate New York

