



Current Conditions of Low- and Moderate-Income Communities

To gain insight into the conditions of low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities in the seven states it serves, the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis regularly surveys those who work with this population: community and economic development organizations, schools and colleges, financial institutions, government agencies, nonprofits, other community organizations and public officials. This sample of questions and answers comes from the latest survey, taken by 673 people in the fall of 2019.

To see the complete survey results, go to www.stlouisfed.org/CDOS.

If you have questions about this report or would like to participate in future surveys, please email: communitydevelopment@stls.frb.org.



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ALL RESPONDENTS:

Compared with two years ago, general economic conditions of the LMI communities you serve are...



Which issues are having the greatest negative impact on LMI communities by region?

TOP FIVE ISSUES AMONG METROPOLITAN AREAS:



1. Availability of affordable housing
2. Generational poverty

3. Job skills
4. Other
5. Education

TOP FIVE ISSUES AMONG RURAL AREAS:



1. Generational poverty
2. Job availability
3. Availability of affordable housing

4. Education
5. Job skills

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCE:

20.0% of respondents **invested** in a Community Development Financial Institution.



FINANCIAL SECURITY:

38.3% of respondents reported that **improving financial literacy and capability** is the most effective strategy to improve financial security of individuals in LMI communities.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT:

Respondents indicated the top three **housing and neighborhood challenges** facing LMI communities as:

Vacant and abandoned properties

27.2%

Neighborhood blight

20.3%

Out-of-state investor-owned properties

17.1%

SMALL BUSINESS:

60.5% of **small businesses market** via social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), according to respondents.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

Of **workforce agencies** that work directly with employers,

44.3% partner with **small businesses** (1-250 employees)

34.4% partner with **mid-sized businesses** (251-500 employees)

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT (CRA):

54.7% of respondents reported that they and their staff have a strong understanding of the CRA.

32.5% of respondents indicated they do not have a strong understanding of the CRA.