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 734 people in the fall of 2017.

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.

61.9% believe that general economic conditions of the LMI communities are unchanged compared with one year ago.

36.9% believe that the status of LMI communities will be unchanged in 3–5 years.

Which issues are having the greatest negative impact on LMI people?

**METROPOLITAN AREAS:**

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

**RURAL AREAS:**

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

What is the greatest employment barrier facing people living in LMI communities?

- 27.5% Essential skills (soft skills)
- 14.7% Education
- 11.9% Adequate wages

What source of capital are most of your clients using to start small businesses in LMI areas?

- 33.6% Banks and/or credit unions
- 23.3% Family and friends
- 17.5% Community Development Financial Institutions and/or Microlending Organizations

What type of project is attracting the most investment in LMI areas?

- 29.2% Residential real estate
- 19.3% Commercial real estate
- 17.5% Small business

36.4% of respondents believe creditworthiness is the most significant obstacle for homeownership.

31.4% of respondents believe vacant and abandoned properties is the most significant neighborhood challenge.

29.1% of financial institutions report that demand for loans funding community and/or economic development projects is increasing.

48.1% of respondents report that such demand is unchanged.

Meta-Analysis