WORKFORCE EDUCATION

A weighted measure of the educational attainment (advanced degrees, bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, or some college coursework) of the workforce.[8]

Why Is This Important? In the New Economy, which puts a premium on speed and flexibility, an educated workforce is critical to increasing productivity and fostering innovation. Fortunately, Americans have been getting more education. In 2000, 51 percent of workers had at least some college, up from 40 percent in 1991 and 33 percent in 1982. States with a more educated workforce are better positioned to capitalize on this trend.

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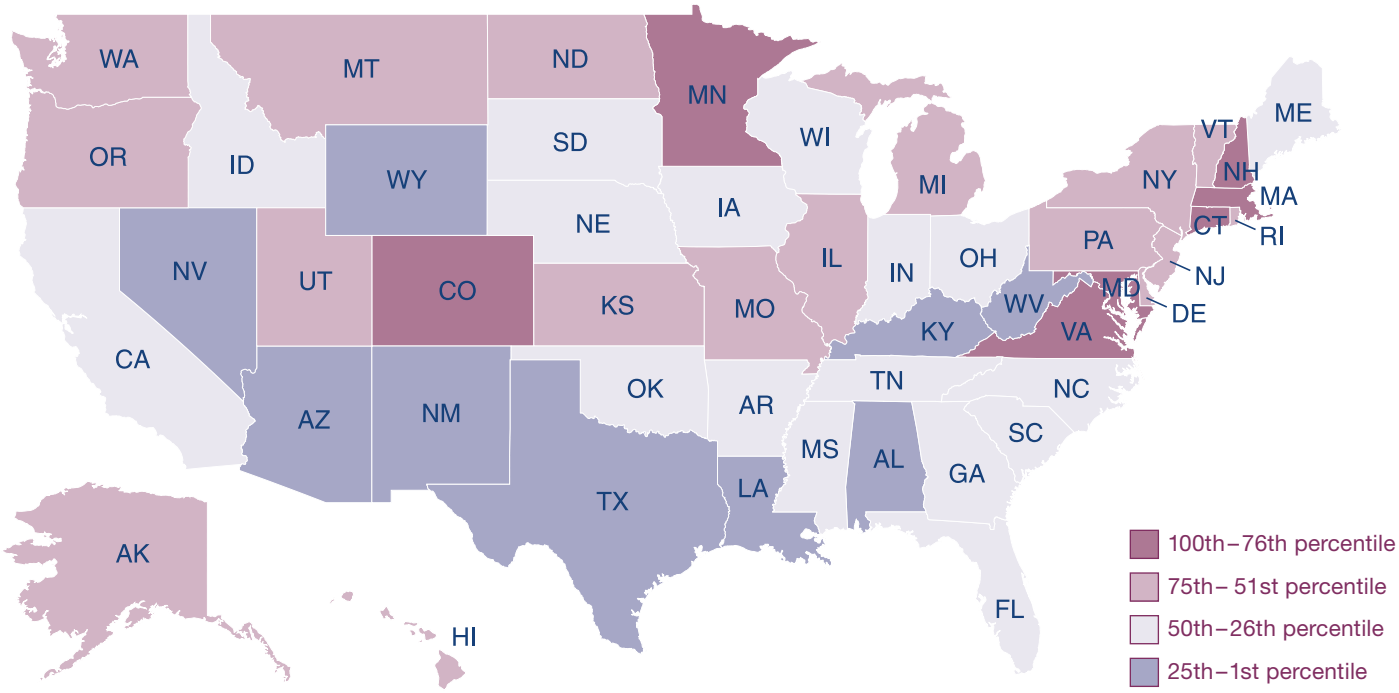
The Rankings: Demographic studies have shown that highly educated individuals are more geographically mobile than less educated individuals.[9] As a result, states like Colorado, Hawaii, and Washington that have attracted large numbers of people from other states generally have a more-educated workforce. Maryland and Virginia score high, in part because of the immigration of more-educated individuals to the Washington, DC region. States that have strong education systems, particularly in higher education (such as Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Minnesota), also score well. Meanwhile, many states with a less-educated workforce have high net out-migration (for example, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wyoming), or have historically invested less in education (like Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Nevada).

The top five		Composite score
1	Maryland	60.9
2	Colorado	59.6
3	Virginia	59.1
4	Massachusetts	58.2
5	New Hampshire	58.0
	U.S. average	**49.2**

Source: U.S. Census, 2001 data.