High Country
Council of Governments
myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles
2030 Proposed Regional Council Attainment Goal: 34,980

Population Spotlight

Growth Rate: Council of Governments: 0.9% vs. State: 2.5%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>10,439,414</td>
<td>10,698,973</td>
<td>259,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alleghany County</td>
<td>10,886</td>
<td>11,185</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashe County</td>
<td>26,581</td>
<td>27,110</td>
<td>529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avery County</td>
<td>17,812</td>
<td>17,571</td>
<td>-241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell County</td>
<td>14,906</td>
<td>15,094</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watauga County</td>
<td>54,077</td>
<td>55,089</td>
<td>1,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilkes County</td>
<td>65,968</td>
<td>65,784</td>
<td>-184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yancey County</td>
<td>18,470</td>
<td>18,811</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age Structure, 2022

Race/Ethnicity, 2022

Educational Attainment

High Country residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree: 23,689 (53.2%)
Have Degree or Credential: 20,870 (46.8%)

Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

In High Country Council of Governments:
17 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:
5,202 graduates in 2020
69% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
$44,421 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

38% of adults (ages 25-44) in High Country earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

Labor Force Snapshot - 2023 Q2

Total Jobs: 71,482
Business Establishments: 6,160
Employed: 92,673
Unemployed: 3,406
Avg. Weekly Wage: $833
Median Household Income: $53,749

Top Industries in High Country Council of Governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Name</th>
<th>Average Employment</th>
<th>Average Weekly Wages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>10,095</td>
<td>$596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>10,076</td>
<td>$1,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>8,537</td>
<td>$383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>7,780</td>
<td>$975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>6,921</td>
<td>$929</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top Job Sectors in High Country Council of Governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Sector</th>
<th>Average Employment</th>
<th>Average Weekly Wages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>57,721</td>
<td>$807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>7,539</td>
<td>$787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government</td>
<td>5,717</td>
<td>$1,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Government</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>$1,115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Success of High Country High School Graduates**
- 79% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 83% for the state. 2022
- 60% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years versus 59% for the state. 2022

**Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023**
- 3,908 of all college-goers attended Wilkes CC
- 1,657 of all college-goers attended Mayland CC
- 1,344 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI

**Degree Credentials Awarded, 2022**
- 763 certificate
- 499 associate
- 4,461 bachelor’s

**Postsecondary assets in High Country Council of Governments**
- Public, 4-year or above
  Appalachian State University
- Public, 2-year
  Mayland Community College, Wilkes Community College
- Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above
  Lees-McRae College
- Private not-for-profit, 2-year

**Adult Learners**
High Country resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022
- 427 Basic Skills
- 4,785 Continuing Education
- 822 Curriculum

**How students in High Country traditional schools are currently doing:**
To meet state goals, each year High Country needs:
- High Country Council of Governments has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). 2023
- 34% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 3,928 more needed to meet state goal of 73%, 2023
- 41% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 35% statewide; 4,545 more needed to meet state goal of 86%, 2023
- 89% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 119 more needed to meet state goal of 95%, 2023
- 22% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 27% statewide; 2,474 less needed to meet state goal of 11%, 2023
- 2% of students drop out of high school (131 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2023

**School Choice**
27,917 total students were enrolled in K-12 in High Country in the 2022-23 school year.
Note: This profile focuses on outcomes of students enrolled in district schools.

**Access to Postsecondary Credits**
Students in High Country completed 8,500 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (1,731 (20%) were industry-valued credentials) and 1,504 concentrations in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Human Services; and Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources.

- 704 high school students took at least one AP test (10%) versus 16% in the state (2023).
- 1,075 high school students participated in Career & College Promise programs (63%) versus 36% in the state (2023).

For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit:
dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/