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| REGIONAL DATA – GARRETT COUNTY |

**Summary & Location**

Garrett County is the westernmost [county](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/County_(US)) of the [U.S. state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._state) of [Maryland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maryland). As of the [2010 census](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_United_States_Census), the population was 30,097, making it the third-least populous county in Maryland. Its [county seat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/County_seat) is [Oakland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oakland,_Maryland).  Created from [Allegany County, Maryland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegany_County,_Maryland) in 1872, it was the last Maryland county formed.

The [Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Pennsylvania) is to the north. The eastern border with Allegany County was defined by the Bauer Report, submitted to Governor [Lloyd Lowndes, Jr.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lloyd_Lowndes,_Jr.) on November 9, 1898. The [Potomac River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Potomac_River) and [State of West Virginia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_of_West_Virginia) lie to the south and west.

Garrett County lies in the [Allegheny Mountains](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegheny_Mountains), which here form the western flank of the [Appalachian Mountain Range](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appalachian_Mountain). [Hoye-Crest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoye-Crest), a summit along [Backbone Mountain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Backbone_Mountain), is the highest point in Maryland. The [Eastern Continental Divide](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Continental_Divide) runs along portions of [Backbone Mountain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Backbone_Mountain). The western part of the county, drained by the [Youghiogheny River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youghiogheny_River), is the only part of Maryland within the [Mississippi River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mississippi_River) [drainage basin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drainage_basin). All other parts of the county are in the [Chesapeake Bay](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chesapeake_Bay) basin.

Garrett County contains over 76,000 acres (310 km2) of parks, lakes, and publicly accessible forestland. Popular activities in the county include camping, hiking, backpacking, rock climbing, alpine and cross country skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, ice fishing, fly fishing, whitewater canoeing, kayaking, rafting, boating, swimming, sailing, horseback riding, and water skiing.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garrett_County,_Maryland#cite_note-dbed-garrett-7)

Garrett County is a designated HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business) by the U.S. Small Business Administration and is home to the Garrett Information Enterprise Center (GIEC), supporting small technology businesses since 2002. Major employers include Beitzel Corporation, ClosetMaid, Casselmine Mine and Wisp Resort.

**Regional Map**

A map of the state of maryland

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**Transportation & Linkages**

**Highways:** MD Routes 135 and 495; U.S. Routes 40, 50 and 219; Interstate-68; easy access to Interstates 70, 79 and 81

**Rail:** CSX Transportation

**Truck:** 134 local and long-distance trucking establishments in Western Maryland; major companies include Pitt Ohio Express, Overnite Transportation Company, Larry Wagner Trucking, Jones Trucking, Marple Trucking, and R & R Trucking

**Water:** Served by the Port of Baltimore, a leading U.S. automobile and break-bulk port; closest Atlantic port to major midwestern population and manufacturing centers; port for Royal Caribbean and Carnival Cruise Lines; seven public terminals, including the state-of-the-art Intermodal Container Transfer Facility and the Cruise Maryland Terminal; 190 miles from Oakland

**Air:** Charter service at Garrett County Airport near Deep Creek Lake; runway open 24/7; 5000’ runway with parallel taxiway; new terminal building is handicap-accessible and includes a pilots’ lounge, snack room, and lobby area; scheduled services at Morgantown, West Virginia (40 miles from Oakland) and Pittsburgh International Airport (100 miles from Oakland)

**Population[[1]](#footnote-1)**

As of the census there were 28,579 people living in Garrett County and a total of 12,392 households. There population per square mile was 44. In 2010, there were 30,097, and 12,057 households residing in the county. The population was 47 people per square mile (18/km). Please note the following chart that shows slowly declining population over the last decade.

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Date source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Income[[2]](#footnote-2)**

The estimated median household income in the county was $58,011 in 2021; the [per capita income](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Per_capita_income) for the county was $36,300. Approximately 11% of the population was below the poverty level, slightly below the national poverty level of 11.6%. In 2021 the most recent data at the State, Garrett County was ranked 12th in the percentage of population living below poverty. In addition, income levels for nearly 52.5% of Garrett County households are below $50,000.

**Labor & Employment**

The April 2023 total civilian labor force was 14,760 in Garrett County. Of that number, 14,465 were employed), and the other 295 was unemployed, at a rate of 2.0% The labor market area includes Garret and Allegany Counties, along with Preston County, WV and Somerset County, PA. The labor market total within the labor market area is 117,056, of which 114,561 are employed as of April 2023. The unemployment rate for the larger area is 2.1%. Please note the following charst:

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| **Major Employers in Garrett County (2019)** | | |
| **Employers** | **Product/Service** | **Employment** |
| Garrett Regional Medical Center | Medical Service | 500 |
| Beitzel/Pillar | Industrial construction | 330 |
| Garrett College | Higher Education | 255 |
| ClosetMaid | Storage, shelving products | 230 |
| EPT Ski Properties/WISP Resort | Four-season resort | 220 |
| Goodwill Retirement Community | Nursing Care | 190 |
| First United | Banking, insurance services | 180 |
| Garrett County Community Action Committee | Social advocacy | 180 |
| Arrowhead | Cinema, Deli, Restaurant | 155 |
| Total Biz Fulfillment | Order fulfillment | 155 |
| Appalachian Parent Assoc. | Services for the disabled | 150 |
| Pine Lodge Steakhouse/Smiley’s Funzone | Restaurants | 150 |

The following information reflects the distribution by place of work in Garrett County for the last five years, compiled by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation. These data reflect modest increases in total employment since 2010, with slight decreases reflected in the Government Sector. Key drivers for the increase are increases in Service Providing industries, particularly Information and Professional and Business Services.

**Distribution of Employment by Industry**

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The following are the estimates of hourly wage rates by all occupation, compiled by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

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**Garrett County Government**

The County is governed by an elected [Board of County Commissioners](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Board_of_County_Commissioners) (the "Board"), whose three members serve four-year terms and must live in the District they represent. The Board is the traditional form of county government in Maryland and may exercise only such powers as are conferred by the [General Assembly of Maryland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Assembly_of_Maryland).

The County is administered under a line organizational method, with the County Administrator responsible for the general administration of County Government. The administration of the County is centralized with the County Administrator responsible for overseeing the financial planning, annual budget process, personnel management, and direction and management of operations within the organization.

**Education**

Garrett County Public Schools enrolled approximately 3,500 students (2022-2023), with 12 school facilities. There are three private schools, teaching approximately 84 students.

Garrett County’s post-secondary educational opportunities include Garrett (Community) College, which was founded in 1966, enrolled approximately 900 students in credit-bearing courses, and an additional 4,000 in non-credit, workforce training and continuing education classes. Frostburg State University, a University System of Maryland institution with an undergraduate and graduate enrollment of over 5,000 students, is located in adjacent Allegany County.

**Utilities**

**Electricity:** Potomac Edison and Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (SREC); customers of investor-owned utilities and major cooperatives may choose their electric supplier

**Gas:** Natural gas is supplied by Columbia Gas of Maryland, Inc.; customers may choose their gas supplier.

**Water:** Municipal systems in Accident, Grantsville and Oakland; county maintains water systems in many other towns/areas Sewer: Municipal systems in Accident, Grantsville, Loch Lynn Heights, Mt. Lake Park and Oakland; county maintains systems in many other towns/areas **Telecommunications:** Verizon Maryland is the largest provider and offers a full range of services including local, Frame Relay, SMDS, ISDN, and DSL (in some areas); ProCom Mountain Communications provides local, long distance, VoIP, broadband and internet; additional providers include Comcast and Shentel.

**Recreation**

Garrett County is home to Maryland’s only alpine ski resort, Wisp. Wisp offers year round recreational options, including skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, biking, fishing, kayaking and golf. Deep Creek Lake is the largest inland body of water in the State of Maryland, covering 3,900 acres with 69 miles of shoreline. The lake is manmade, as are all lakes in Maryland, and is home to a wide variety of fish and aquatic birds. Recreational boating is popular on Deep Creek Lake. There are six state parks in Garrett County, all offering picnicking and fishing and most also offer hiking and mountain biking trails.

1. Census.gov [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/economy/html/income.html#poverty [↑](#footnote-ref-2)