

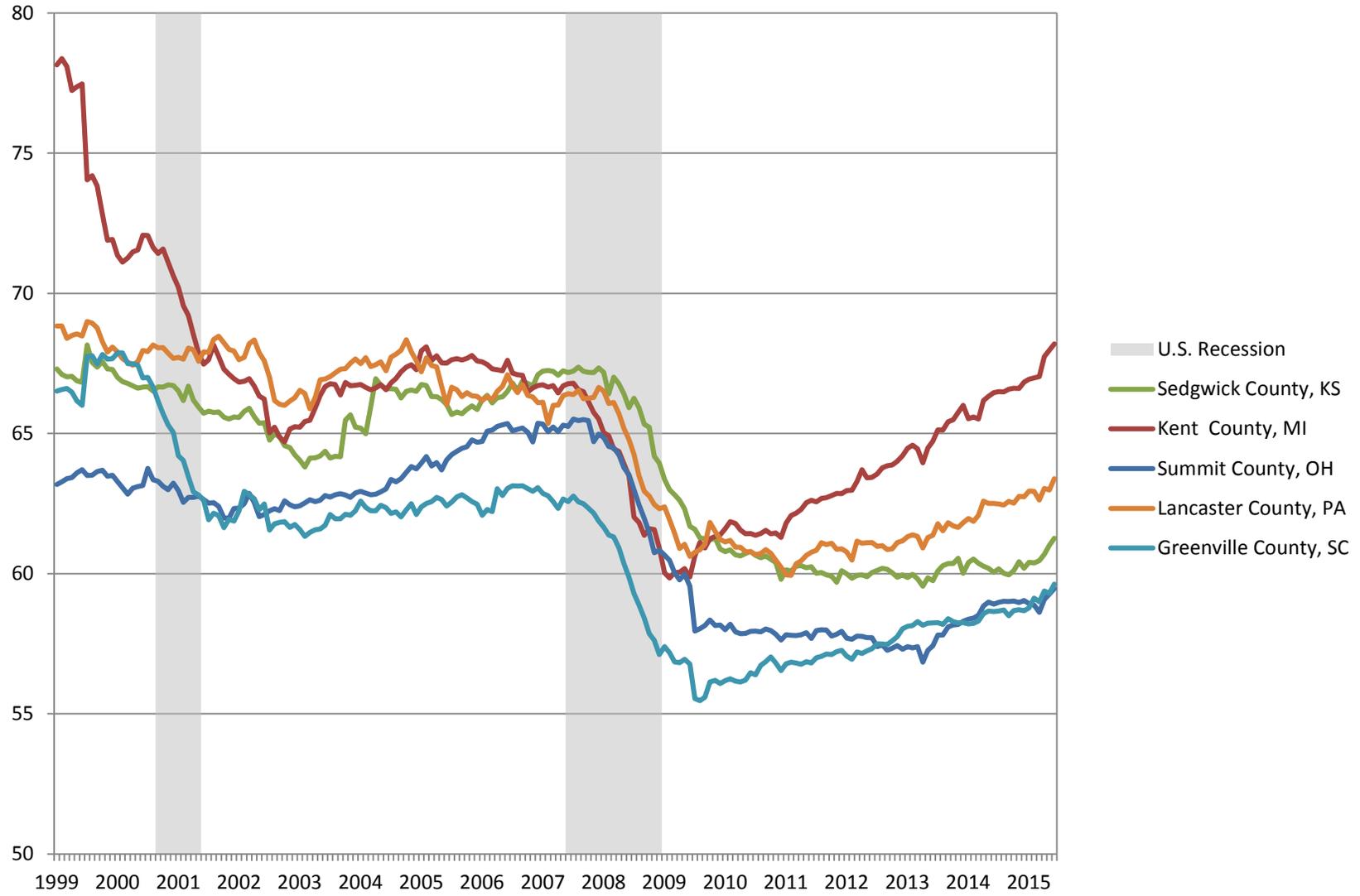
## Employment-Population Ratio in Wichita and Peer Cities

Wichita and similar cities have seen large changes, mostly declines, in their employment-population ratio over the last decade. Many have been more strongly affected by the 2008 recession than the rest of the United States. The employment-population ratio is a measure of labor market strength; it is calculated by dividing the number of employed workers in an area by the total civilian non-institutionalized population aged 16 and over in that region. Typically, the employment-population ratio will increase during expansionary periods and decline during recessionary periods.

The graph below presents the employment-population ratio for Sedgwick County, KS, home of Wichita; Summit County, OH, home of Akron; Kent County, MI, home of Grand Rapids; Greenville County, SC, home of Greenville; Lancaster County, PA, home of Lancaster; and the United States. United States recessionary periods are highlighted in grey. These peer communities were selected based on their similarities to Wichita in population, demographics, and industrial mix.

- All five counties experienced a decline in their employment-population ratios in both the 2001 and 2008 recessions. In the 2001 recession, Kent County, Michigan, experienced the largest drop in its employment-population ratio, while in the 2008 recession, Summit County, Ohio, had the largest drop in the employment-population ratio.
- The average decline in the employment-population ratio among these counties due to the 2008 recession was roughly seven percentage points.
- After the official end of the 2008 recession in June 2009, Sedgwick County's employment-population ratio continued to decline for a longer period than any of the four peer counties. In 2014, Sedgwick County's ratio began to increase consistently for the first time since the recession, whereas Kent and Greenville Counties began to recover in 2010, Lancaster County in 2011, and Summit County in 2013.
- In 2015, all five counties saw increases in their employment-population ratios. Kent County had the largest increase in its employment-population ratio, growing over 1.5 percentage points. Sedgwick County's increased by 1.1 percentage points over 2015.

# Employment-Population Ratio for Sedgwick County & Peers



## **Methodology**

The employment-population ratio is calculated by dividing the number of civilian employed workers by the civilian non-institutionalized population, ages 16 and over, in a region. For this study, the source for the number of civilian employed workers is the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS). The source for the civilian non-institutionalized population data is the U.S. Census Bureau's annual population estimates.