



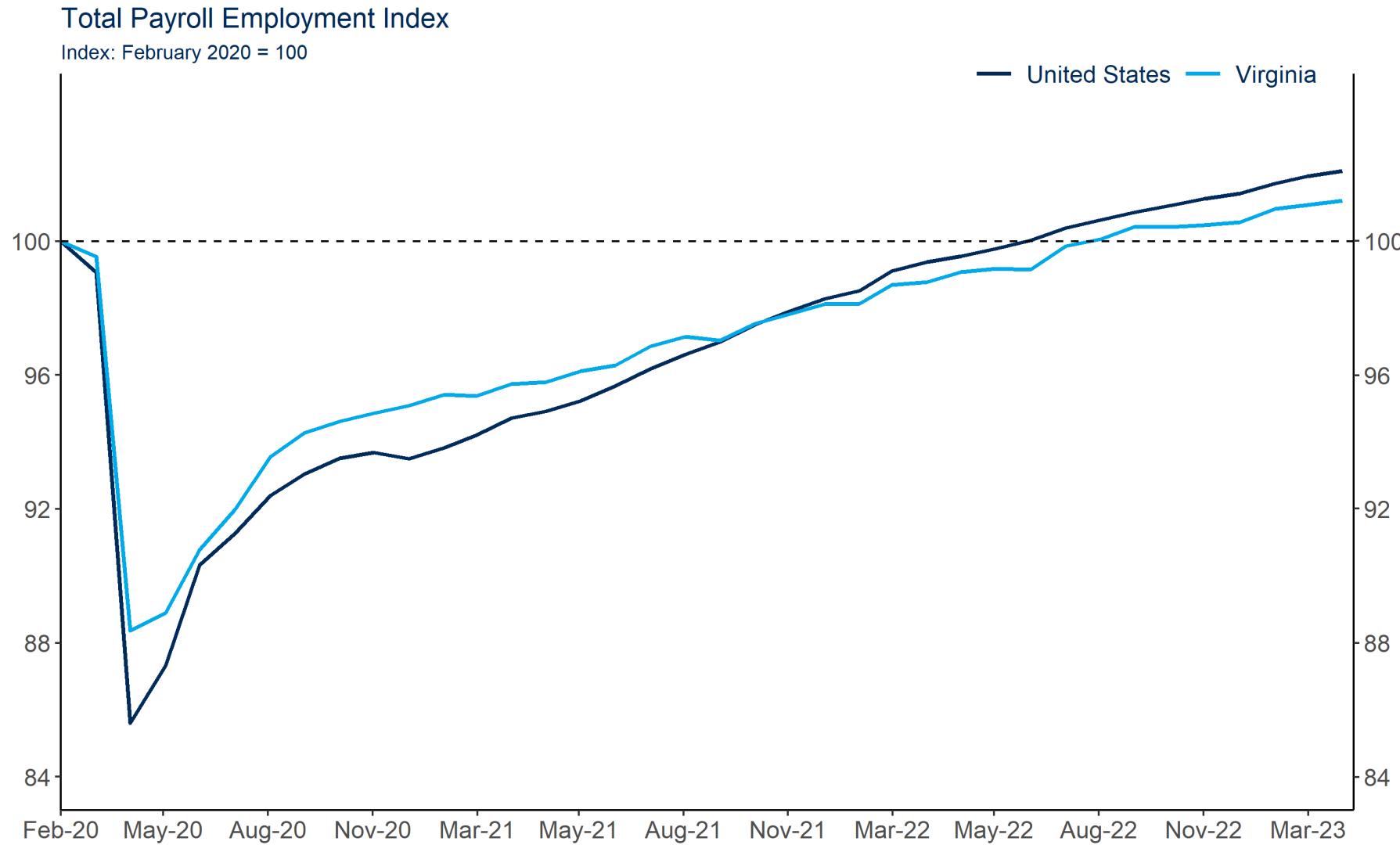
Virginia: Where are we and what is the outlook?

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May 2, 2023

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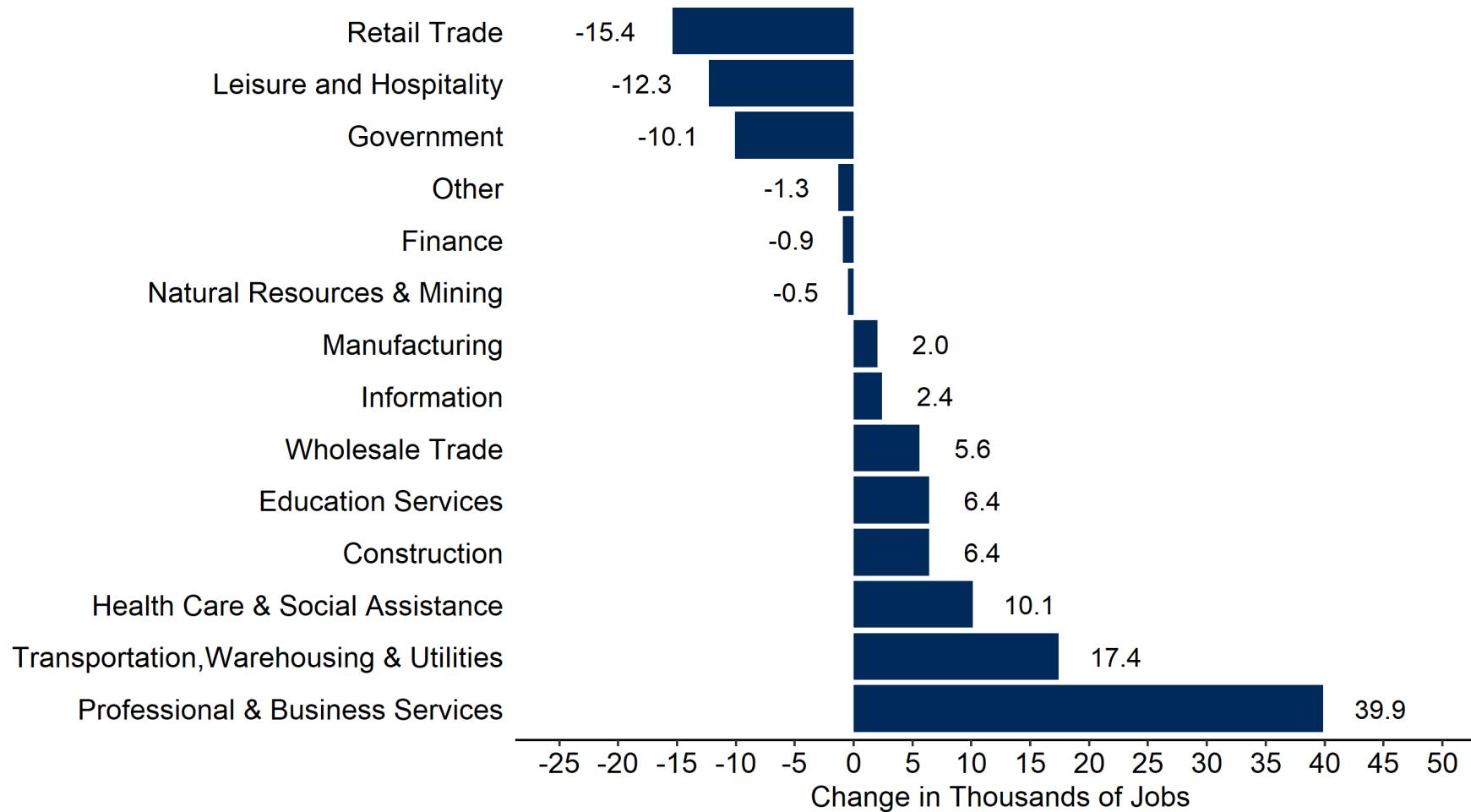


Employment growth in Virginia has been lagging U.S. growth



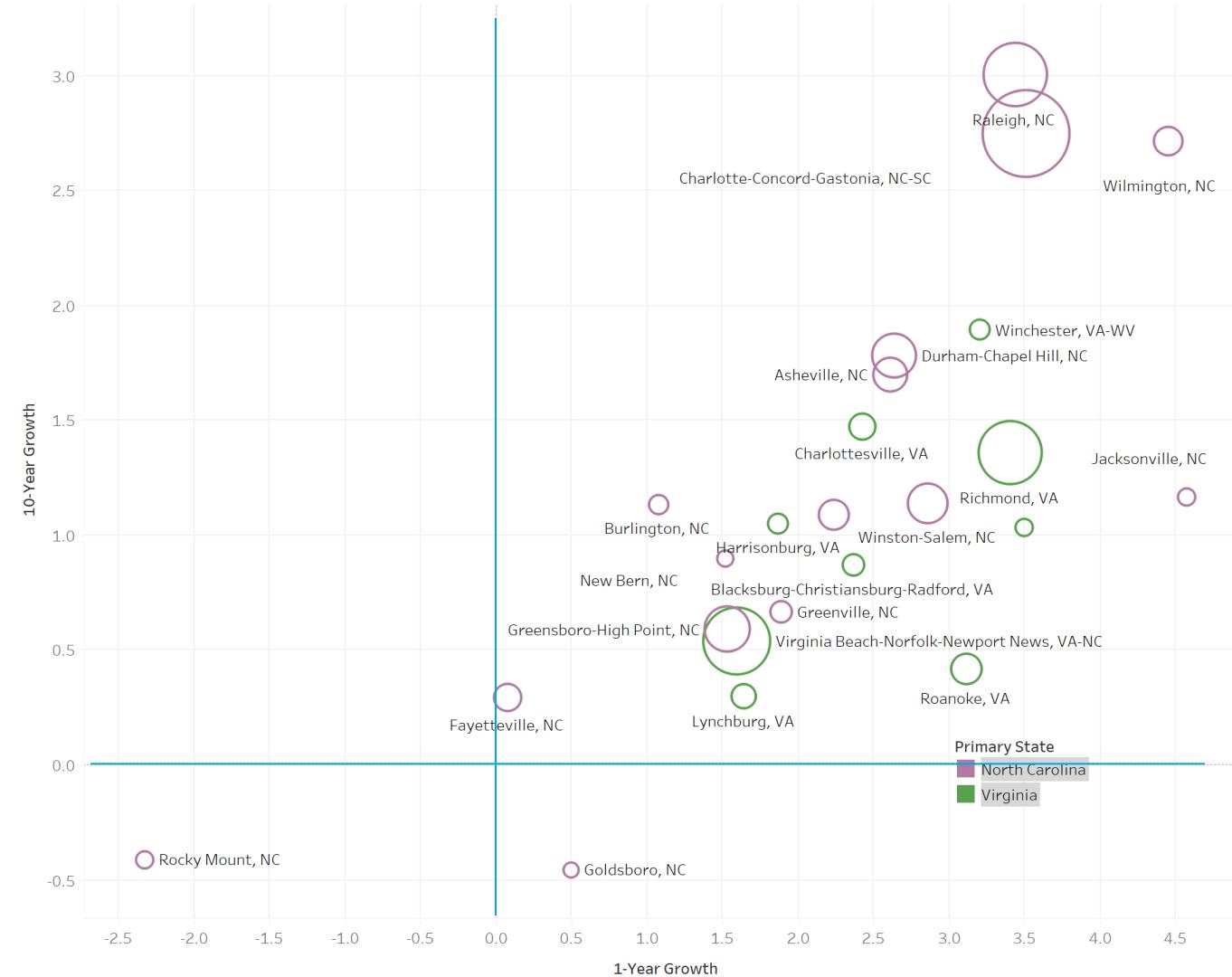
The (employment) recovery from COVID has varied by industry...

Virginia Employment Change from February 20 to March 23



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics/Haver Analytics

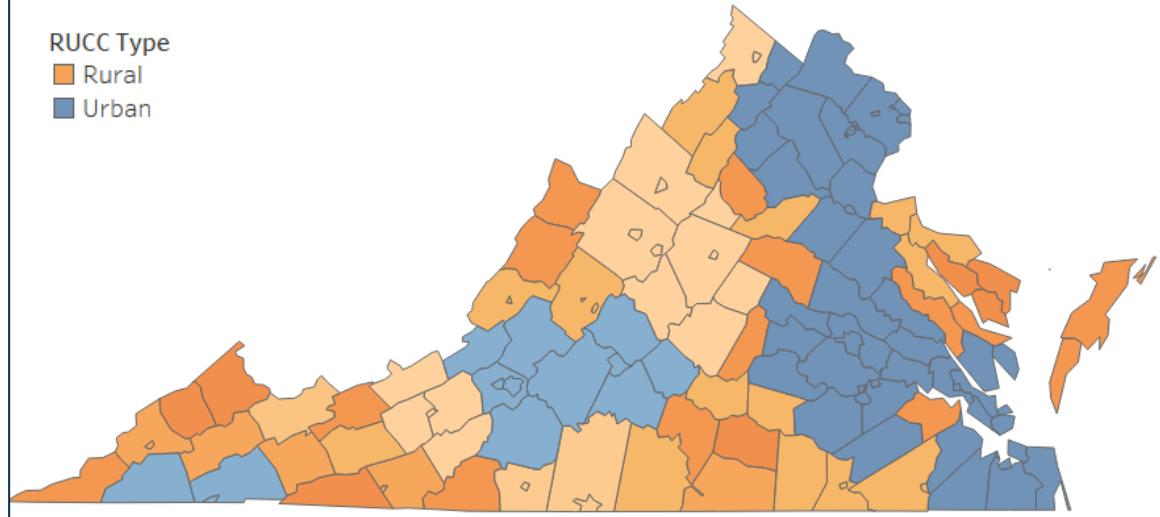
...and by area



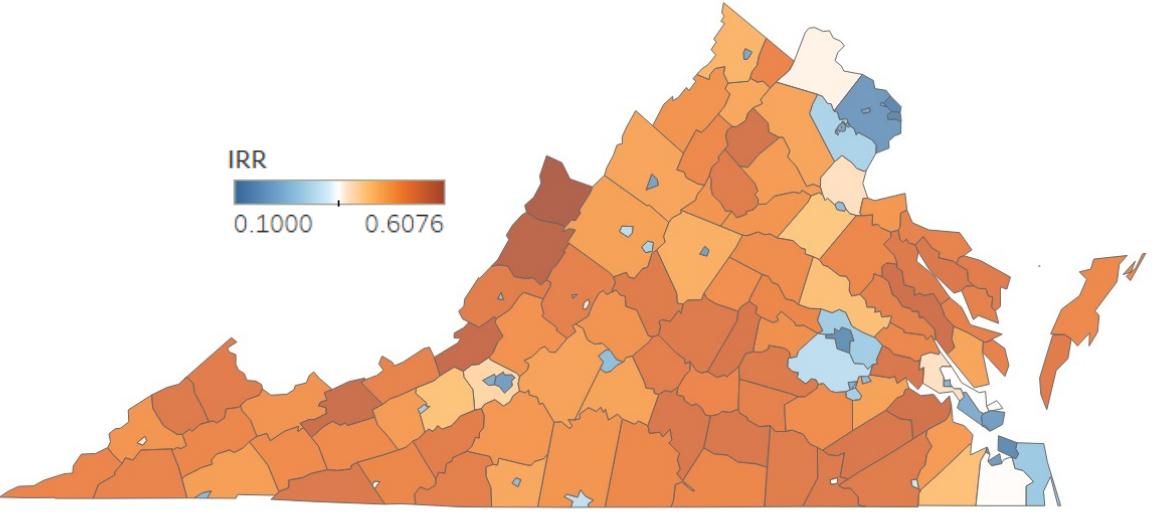
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics/Haver Analytics

How do we categorize areas?

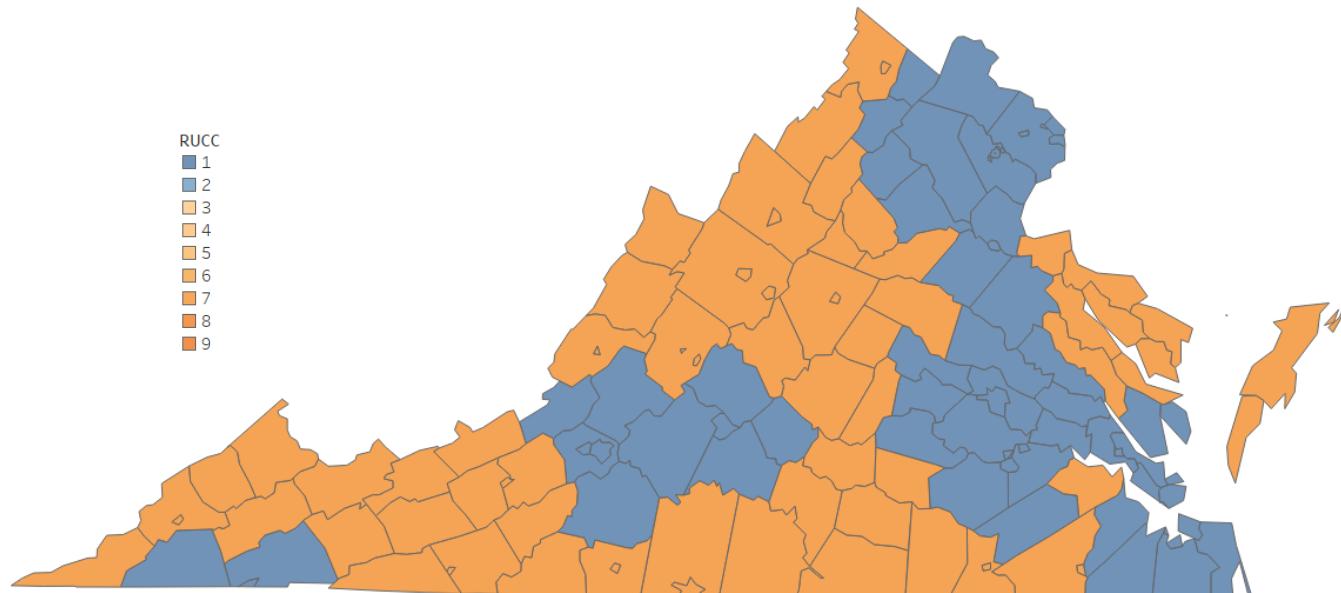
RUCC Type
Rural
Urban



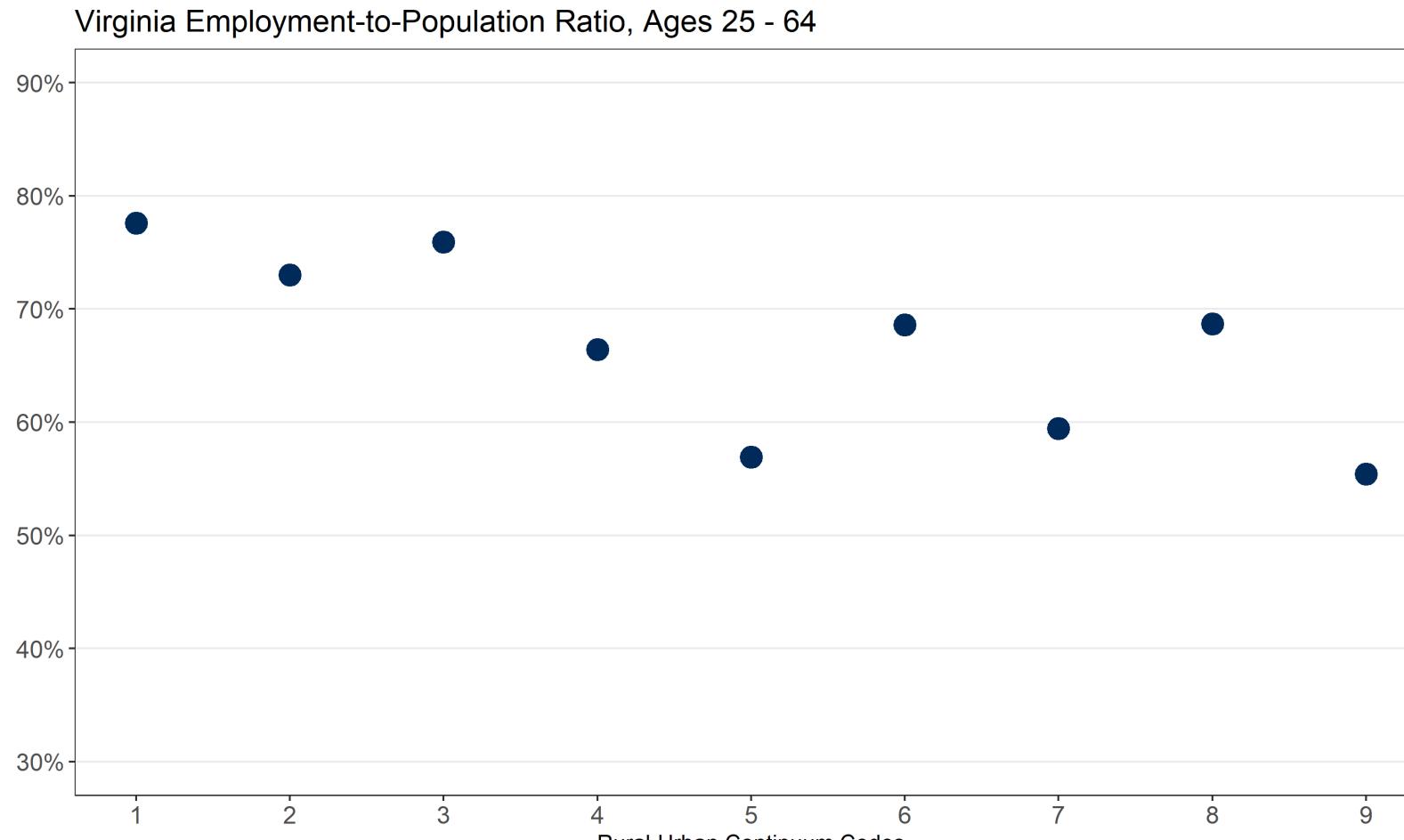
IRR
0.1000 0.6076



RUCC
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Employment tends to be lower in rural counties in Virginia...

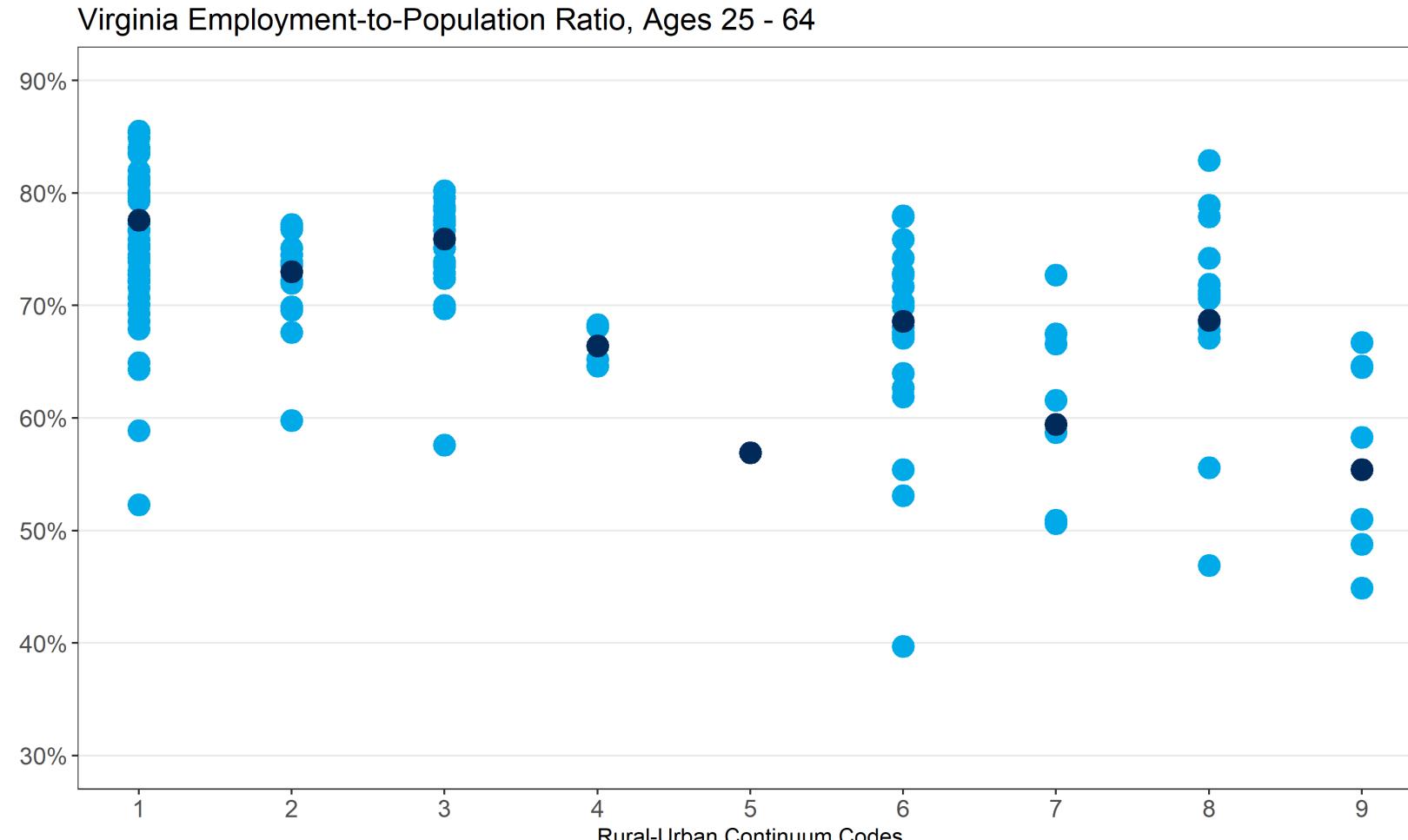


Not Rural

Small Town and Rural

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates; U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural-Urban Continuum Codes

... but there's a lot of variation

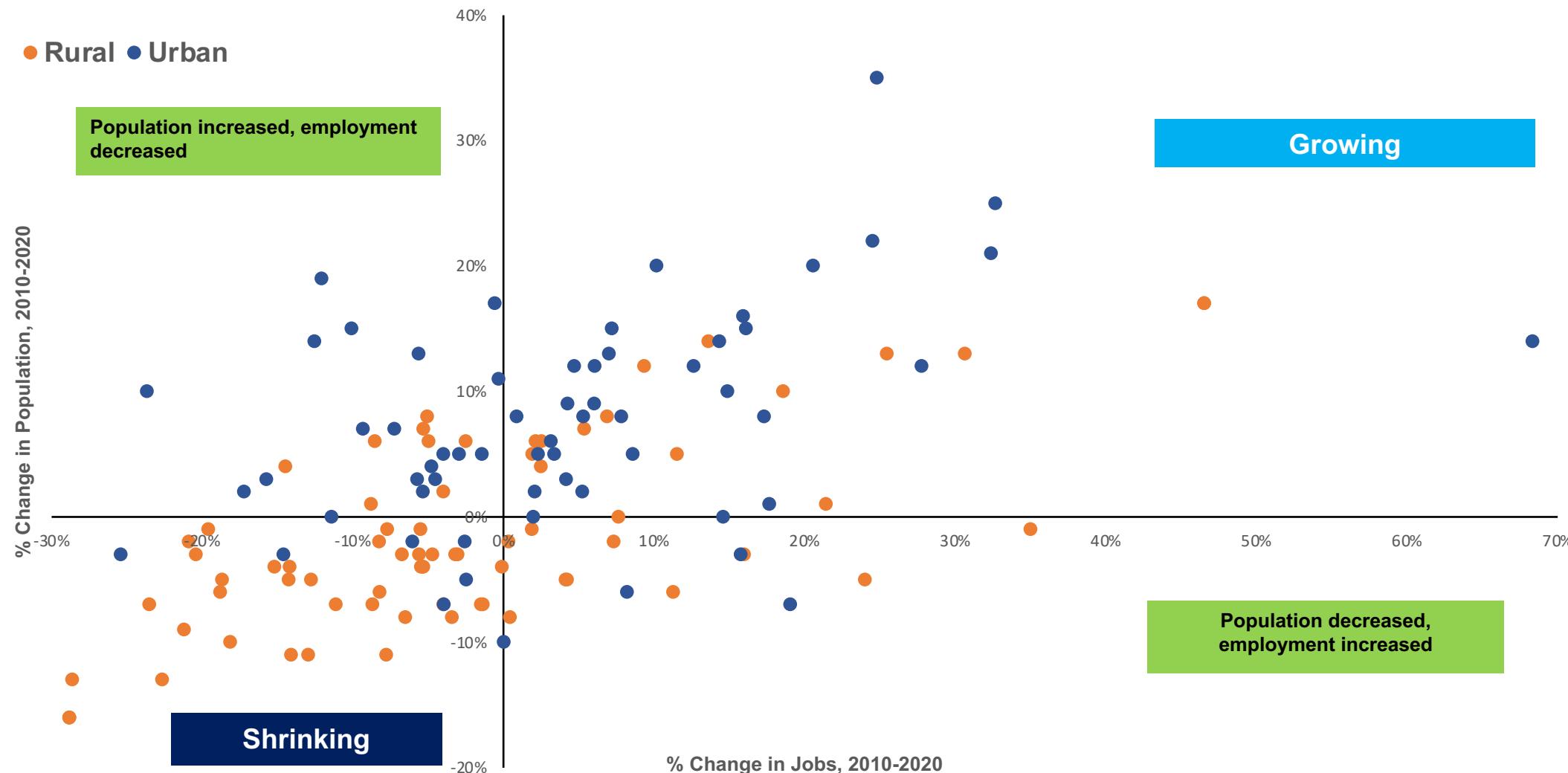


Not Rural

Small Town and Rural

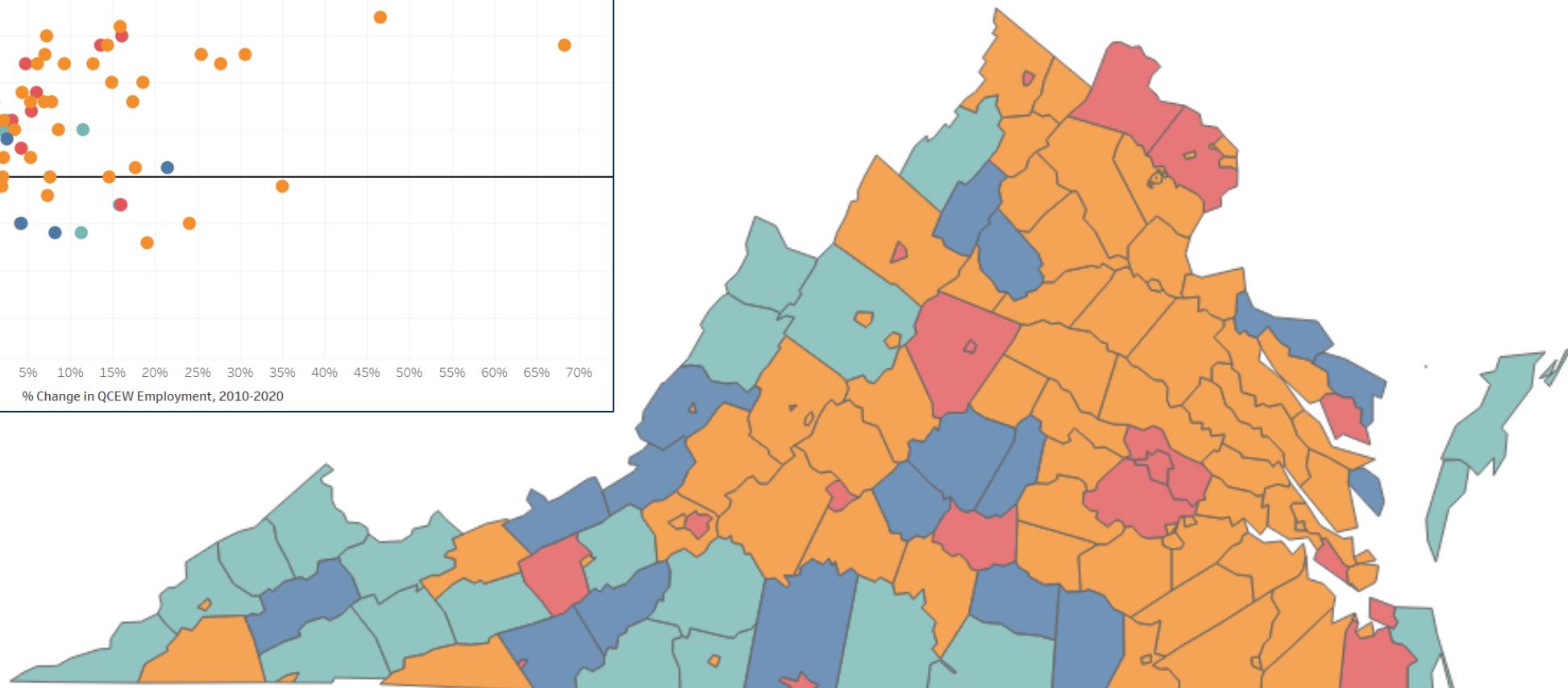
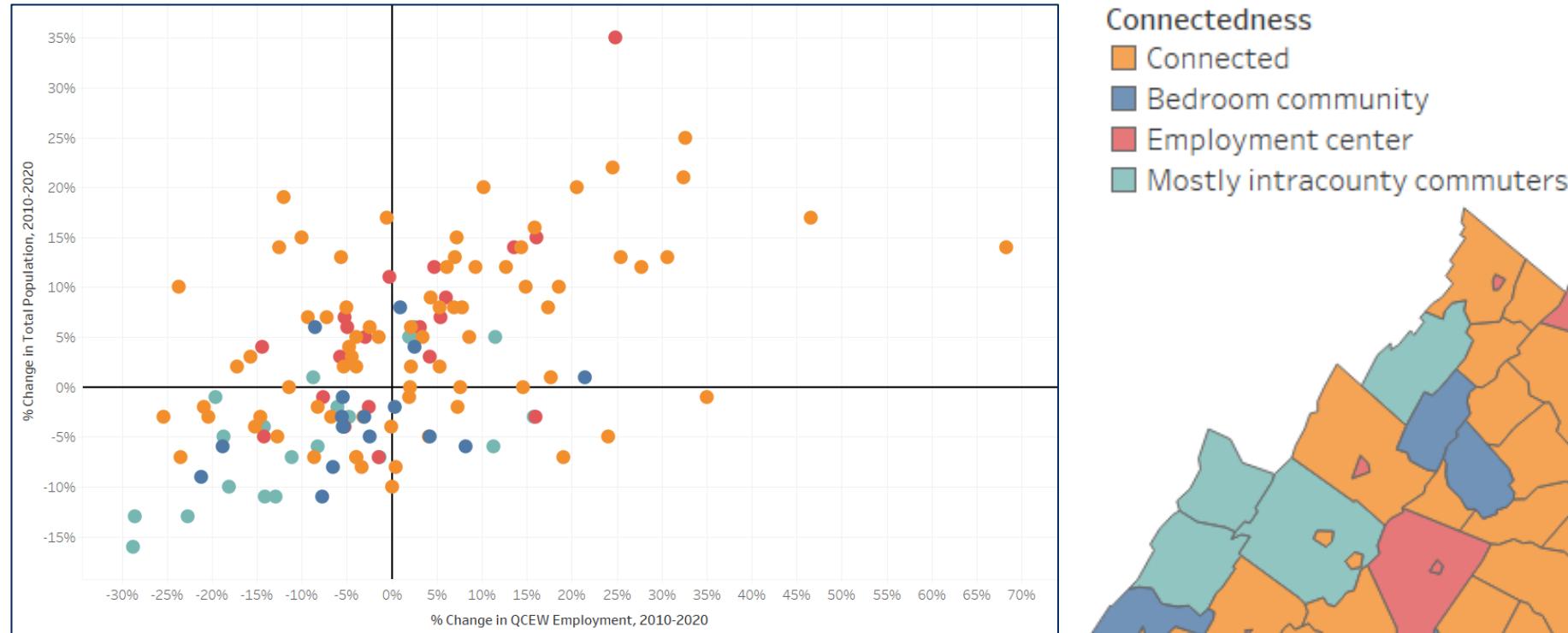
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates; U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural-Urban Continuum Codes

More urban areas are more likely to be growing, but again there is a lot of variation

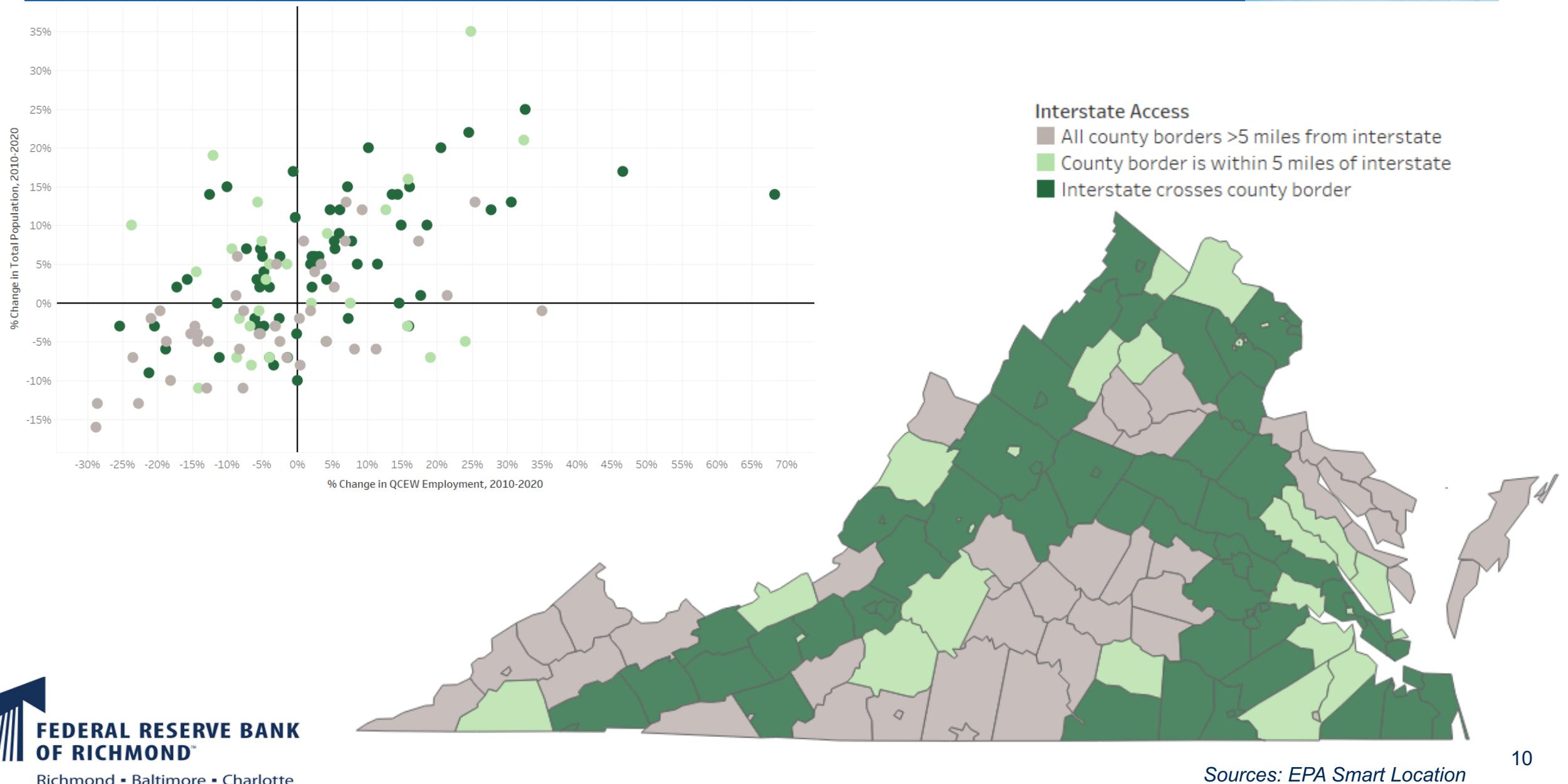


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Vintage Population Estimates; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW); U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural-Urban Continuum Codes

One factor in growing vs shrinking: connectedness



Interstate connectivity can drive economic growth



Skill barriers

- Education and training

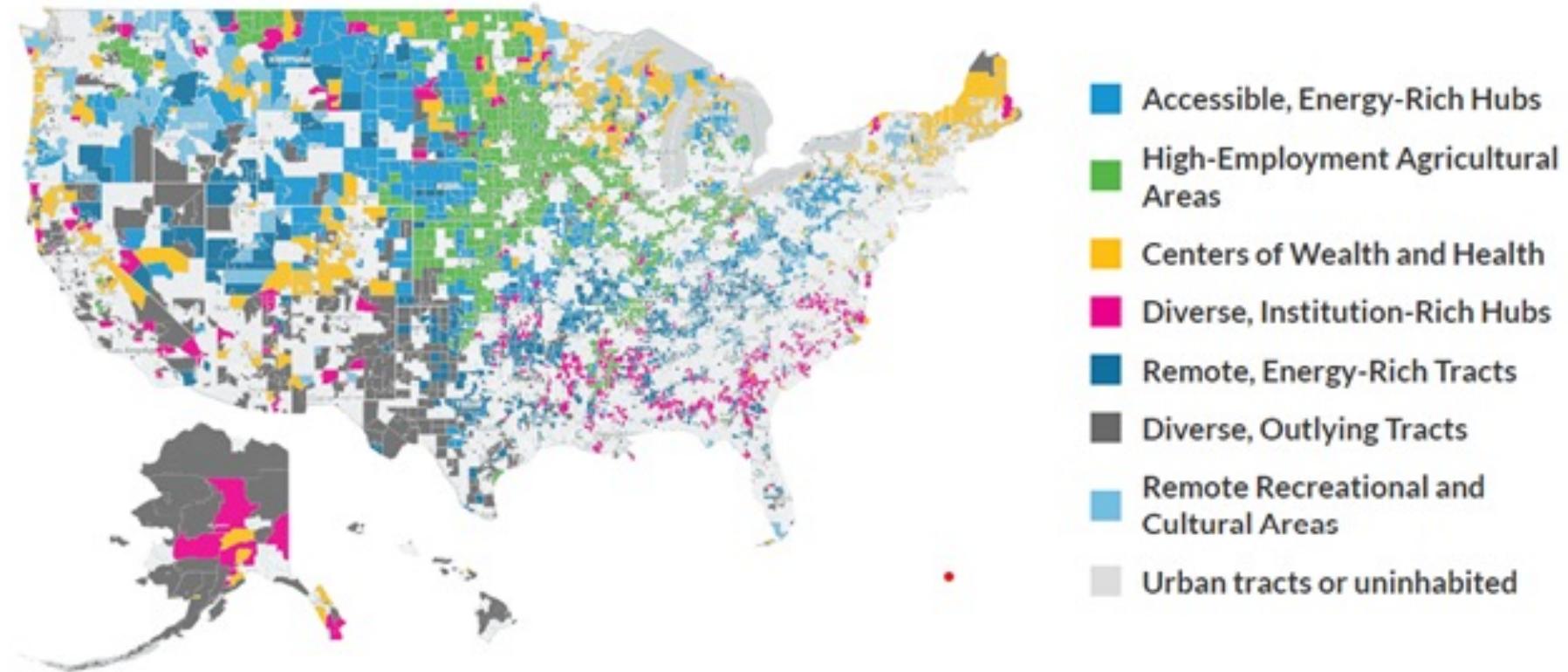
Non-skill barriers

- Personal: childcare, health
- Infrastructure: housing, transportation, broadband
- Incentives: benefits cliffs, aspiration

Solutions to any of these tend to be harder in rural communities.

And this is where community development – strengthening from within – is economic development.

What are the assets of rural areas? And how to build on them?



Note: Rural areas with either zero population or zero housing units were excluded from our peer group analysis.

[Reenvisioning Rural America \(urban.org\)](http://ReenvisioningRuralAmerica.urban.org)

For example, much of Virginia is institution rich

Local assets can include:

- Hospitals
- Community colleges
- Four-year colleges and universities
- Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs)

While these assets are important in all communities, their roles as anchor institutions can be even more vital to rural communities.

