

2019 Cengage Student Opportunity Index

A comprehensive assessment of opportunity for near and recent college graduates.

The first annual Cengage Student Opportunity Index showcases the opportunity landscape for U.S. college graduates, measuring 17 indicators across four categories—employment, economic, social and personal well-being—using existing public data and a survey of 2,500 recent and upcoming graduates.



82%

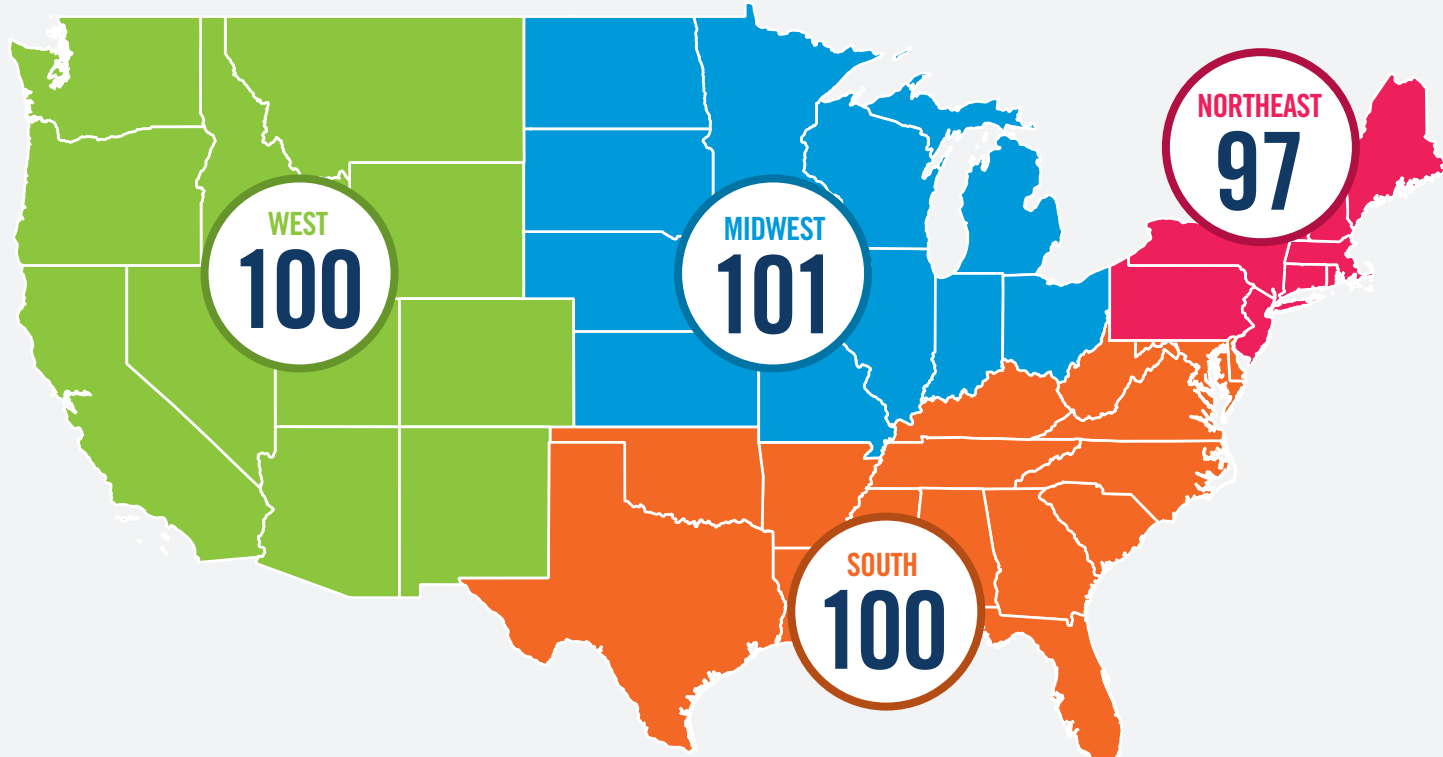
of students are optimistic about their future



61%

of which think they will be better off than their parents

Regional Opportunity: Index Scores at a Glance



WEST

With an index score of 100, the West performs better economically than any other region.

MIDWEST

With an index score of 101, the Midwest boasts the highest college graduate employment score of all regions.

SOUTH

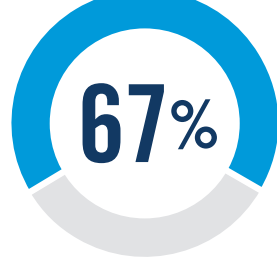
With an index score of 100, the South has the second lowest student debt levels across regions.

NORTHEAST

With an index score of 97, the Northeast ranks highest in personal well-being.

Employment Opportunity

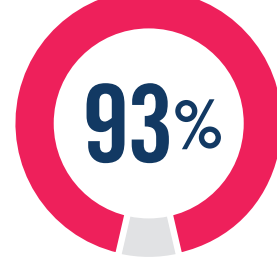
Upcoming and recent graduates are optimistic about job opportunities, but some may be in for a surprise.



expect to meet their salary expectations within a year



believe the number of available jobs in their field of study will increase in the next 2 years



of students expect to land a job related to their educational background within 6 months of graduating



Only an average of

60%

of graduates work in a job related to their education background

Economic Opportunity

Household income and GDP per capita are on the rise—alongside student loan debt and housing costs.



51%

of near and recent grads report having student loan debt



Upcoming and recent graduates with student debt report having around

\$22,919

in debt upon graduation

The average time near and recent grads think their debt will be paid off by?

6 YEARS

On average, it takes college graduates

20 YEARS

to pay off their student debt



65%

say they will have to move away from their current area to afford a house

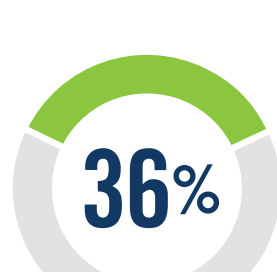
Near and recent graduates in the Northeast and West are particularly impacted with saying they will have to move to buy a home

73%

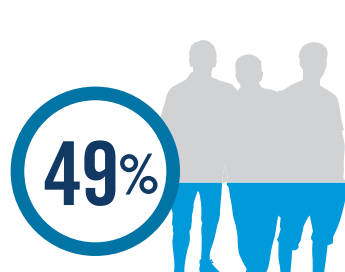


Social Opportunity

While almost half of near and recent grads believe the economic outlook is better, there are concerns about the future of the country.



of near and recent graduates believe the country is headed in the right direction



of U.S. males view the country's direction in a positive light



of U.S. females view the country's direction in a positive light

Personal Well-Being Opportunity

While most near and recent graduates feel safe and healthy, there is room for improvement.



66%

are satisfied with their physical health



62%

have had difficulty covering a healthcare expense



71%

are satisfied with their mental health



70%

are satisfied with their romantic relationships

About the Cengage Student Opportunity Index

The Cengage Student Opportunity Index is calculated from secondary data and primary data obtained from an online survey conducted by [Wakefield Research](#) among 2,500 recent or near college graduates—defined as those who graduated in the past 12 months or who will graduate in the next 12 months. The survey was fielded between January 18 and February 1, 2019, with quotas for 500 students in each of the following majors: business, biological sciences, health-care, humanities and social sciences and STEM. The margin of error for this study among the total sample is +/- 2.0 percentage points, calculated at the 95 percent confidence level.



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