

# JUST THE FACTS:

## Chicago Business Climate Snapshot

As of June 12, 2025

### #1 IN CORPORATE RELOCATION

Chicago led the nation in 2024 with the highest number of corporate relocations and expansions—nearly 100 more than Dallas.

### #2 U.S. PORT BY TRADE VALUE

O'Hare International Airport ranks as the second largest U.S. port as of April 2025, handling \$152.8 billion in trade year to date—marking a 52% increase from this time last year.

### FORTUNE 500 MAGNET

Chicago ranks #2 in the U.S. for number of Fortune 500 headquarters—30 major firms call the region home.

### AMERICA'S MOST DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY

No single sector accounts for more than 13% of Chicago's GDP, providing resilience across market cycles and access to a broad-base of customers.

### A GLOBAL-SCALE ECONOMY

At \$886B in 2024, Chicagoland's Gross Regional Product ranks between the world's 21st and 22nd largest economies, behind Switzerland, and ahead of Taiwan, Belgium, and Argentina.

### TALENT PIPELINE

With 145,000 post-secondary graduates annually, Chicago ranks as the 3rd largest talent producer in the U.S.

### EDUCATED & SKILLED

Over 3.1 million Chicago-area residents hold an associate's degree or higher, and 42% of Chicago-area residents hold a college degree, outpacing the national average of 36%.

### RESEARCH POWERHOUSE

Home to four R1 research universities and two national labs (Argonne and Fermilab), Chicago leads on innovation in clean energy, quantum, AI, and life sciences.

### EMERGING SECTOR GROWTH (2024-2025)

- Food Manufacturing: +7.2%
- Life Sciences: +4.4%
- Finance & Insurance: +4.1%

### LABOR FORCE STRENGTH

With over 5 million workers, Chicago's labor force is larger than that of 41 U.S. states.

### TOP PRIVATE EMPLOYER

Amazon is Chicagoland's largest private-sector employer by headcount.

### BUSINESS DENSITY

256,032 businesses operate in the metro—4th highest among U.S. regions.

### GROWTH CAPITAL MOMENTUM

Chicagoland companies raised \$4.3B in growth capital in 2024. Recent Q2 2025 highlights include:

- **Energize Capital**, a climate tech-focused venture firm co-founded by Michael Polsky, closed a \$430M third fund—30% larger than its last. The fund doubled its institutional investor base and now draws over half its capital from outside the U.S.
- **Thoma Bravo**, Chicago's largest private equity firm, raised more than \$34.4B across three funds, including \$24.3B for large-scale software investments, \$8.1B for middle-market tech firms, and over \$2B for its first dedicated Europe Fund.

### PRO-CHICAGO MOMENTUM

- **2024:** 110 expansions, 30 new market entries, 14,800 new jobs.
- **2025 YTD:** 63 Pro-Chicago decisions—38 in the city, including 3 on the South and West Sides.

### #1 BIG CITY IN THE U.S.

Voted "Best Big City in the U.S." by Condé Nast Traveler readers—8 years running.

