

Foreign Competition and North Carolina's Furniture Industry

Pre-Seminar Questions

Readings

1. North Carolina in the Global Economy overview of the furniture industry from Duke University's Center on Globalization, Governance & Competitiveness
http://www.soc.duke.edu/NC_GlobalEconomy/furniture/overview.shtml
2. North Carolina in the Global Economy article on public policy and the furniture industry from Duke University's Center on Globalization, Governance & Competitiveness
http://www.soc.duke.edu/NC_GlobalEconomy/furniture/public.shtml

Overview

Introduction

1. How has foreign competition impacted U.S. furniture manufacturers? Cite three examples.
2. What question about government has been raised as a result of this "global transformation?"

Key Furniture Companies in North Carolina

3. Identify two to three furniture companies that are important to North Carolina's economy.
4. Where are most of these companies located?

Employment and Wages

5. In terms of employment, how does N.C. rank as a furniture manufacturing state?
6. What happened to employment in the furniture industry?
7. What happened to the average wage for furniture industry employees?

Global Competition and Outsourcing

8. What is one reason for increased furniture imports to the U.S.?
9. Why is employment falling in the N.C. furniture manufacturing industry? Cite three reasons.
10. How did the outsourcing of furniture products change from 1996 to 2000? Why?

Public Policy

Overview

1. What has led to a rise in offshoring?

2. How is the U.S. furniture industry responding to the offshoring rise?
3. Why does the U.S. furniture industry monitor China's manufacturing industries?
4. Why are companies also focusing on worker retraining?

Impact of Chinese Imports on NC's Furniture Industry

5. What led to the quick growth of China's furniture industry?
6. Though the N.C. furniture industry's labor force had contracted, what happened to wages during the same period?
7. Why do N.C. manufacturers source to China?
8. What has led to the "sharp increase" in Chinese imports?
9. Chinese firms have been able to "upgrade their facilities and more sophisticated product lines." How has this impacted N.C. companies?

