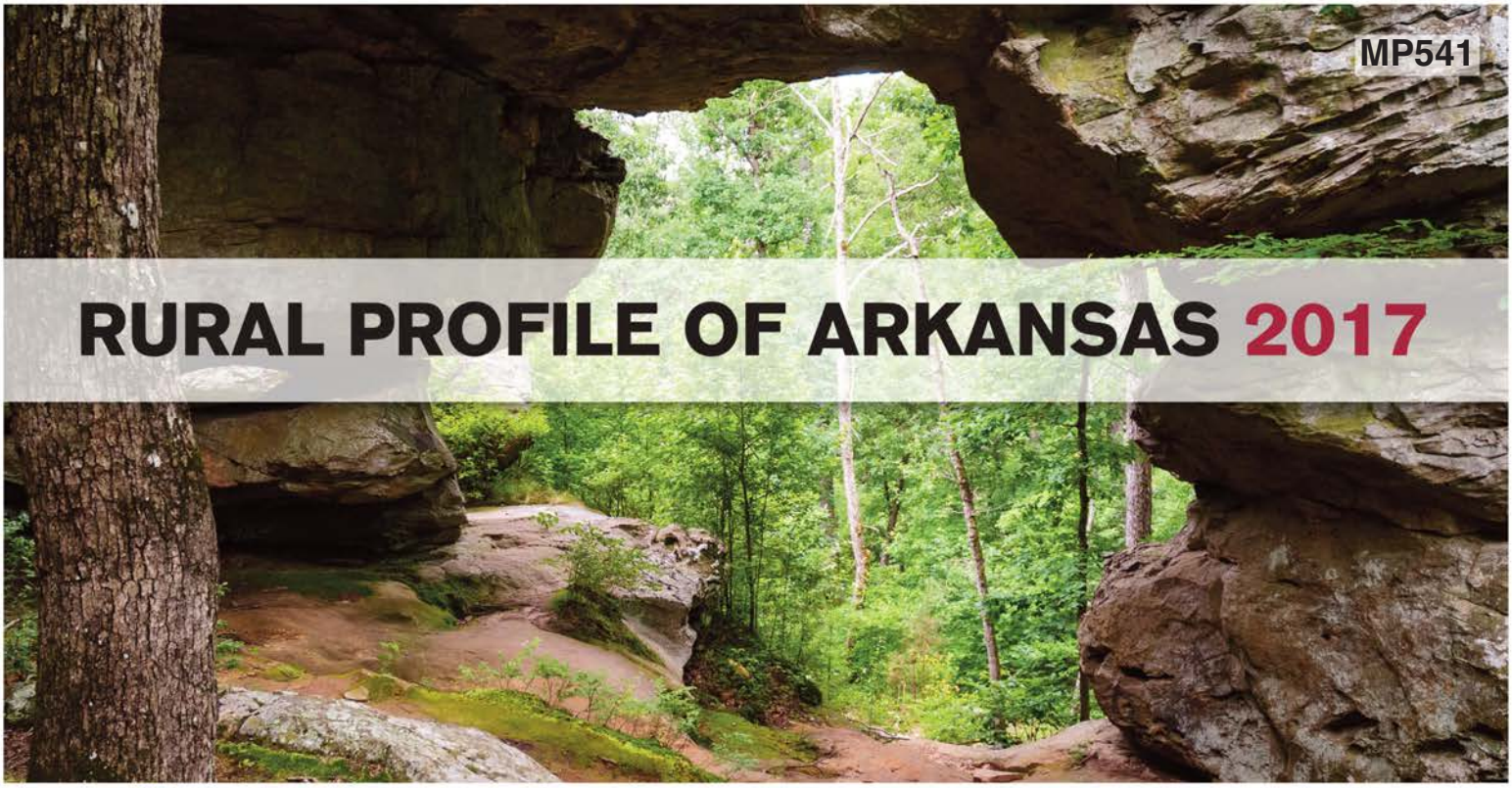
MP541

RURAL PROFILE OF ARKANSAS 2017



UofA
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Dear Fellow Arkansans,

As a native Arkansawyer who has lived most of my life here, I can see where it might be easy to take for granted the unique opportunities and challenges that living in a mostly rural state can bestow.

For nearly a quarter of a century, the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture has taken a close and careful look at our home, with its findings presented in the *Rural Profile of Arkansas*.

Contained in its more than five-dozen pages is a sweeping look at the many factors that affect the lives of the 42 percent of our people who call rural Arkansas home, including its government, economy, health and education. There is probably no other publication that drills down into the detail described in this year's *Rural Profile of Arkansas*.

But what does the profile really tell us? It provides insights into key trends for rural Arkansas, especially those that followed the economic downtown of 2007-2009 known as the Great Recession. While the statewide employment rate and population gradually rose, rural Arkansas saw losses in both categories. The profile also shows that Arkansas continues to struggle with poverty, as 19 counties have a poverty rate of 25 percent or more.

Of course, Arkansas' rural areas are far from consistent. The *Rural Profile of Arkansas* is unique in outlining the differences among the state's three distinct rural areas – the Delta, the Coastal Plains and the Highlands.

For elected leaders, government stakeholders, public servants or anyone keen to understand Arkansas and formulate policies and laws aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of its people, the *Rural Profile of Arkansas* is a critical and independent data source.

If you have questions about how to interpret and use the information that follows, contact your county Cooperative Extension Service Office. You'll find the staff to be a valuable resource on this and many other issues.

We thank you for your interest and look forward to serving you.

Richard D. Cartwright, Ph.D.
Interim Associate Vice President for Agriculture-Extension and
Director, Cooperative Extension Service
University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture

Rural Profile of Arkansas 2017

Social & Economic Trends Affecting Rural Arkansas

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NOTE: All dollar values reported in this publication are constant dollars using the South Urban Consumer Price Index to adjust for inflation. The most current year for which data are available for each indicator is used as the base in calculating the constant dollar values.

Summary Highlights

Population

- Arkansas' population grew 2.1 percent from 2010 to 2015, about half the 3.9 percent growth nationally. Nearly all of the growth occurred in urban areas.
- The Delta and Coastal Plains continued to lose population, losing 4.1 percent and 3.6 percent of their people, respectively.
- For the first time in over a decade, the Highlands as a region experienced a population loss, although it was small at 0.5 percent.
- Although migration drove population increases in the early 2000s, the migration rates have continued to drop off even faster after 2007. Rural counties experienced net outmigration, resulting in population loss, while urban counties are growing primarily from natural increase.
- Rural areas of Arkansas had an older population than urban areas in 2015. Although the median age of Arkansas' population was similar to the nation (about 38), it was 42.0 in rural counties and only 36.8 in urban areas.
- Rural areas also had higher dependency ratios, meaning more people ages 0 to 17 and 65 and older per 100 working age (18-64) people, in 2015.
- Elderly people 65 years and over made up 18.8 percent of the rural population, presenting unique challenges for rural areas where health services are already strained in some counties.
- Arkansas' population is becoming increasingly diverse in its racial and ethnic makeup. The Hispanic population grew to 7.2 percent of the state's total population in 2015 and 5.1 percent of total population in rural counties, primarily in the western half of the state.
- "Other races" made up 4.3 percent of Arkansas' population, with higher concentrations in urban areas of the state.

Economy

- At the end of 2015, Arkansas' economy as measured by employment had increased nearly 2 percent from the pre-recession high in 2007. However, rural areas had not fully recovered from the Great Recession and had nearly 3 percent fewer jobs than in 2007. Since 2010, employment in most rural areas has remained stagnant while employment in many urban areas has increased.
- The Arkansas economy did not decline as much as the U.S. economy during the Great Recession, but has not grown as rapidly since the recession.
- All three rural regions had a net loss of jobs from 2007 to 2015. Since 2010, a few counties in the Delta and Highlands gained jobs while the Coastal Plains continued to lose jobs.
- Arkansas lost approximately 34,000 manufacturing jobs from 2007 to 2015, which has greatly affected the economic base of rural areas in particular. The state lost 17.5 percent of its manufacturing employment over this time period.
- All three rural regions had a net loss of manufacturing jobs during this eight-year period. Jobs in other sectors were not created in sufficient quantity to replace the lost manufacturing jobs in the rural areas.
- Although earnings per job increased, in rural areas in particular, from 2011 to 2014, real earnings per job remained below the high in 2004. Average earnings per job remained lower in rural areas and were approximately 85 percent of the urban average in 2014.

- Median household incomes declined in both urban and rural areas of the state from 2007 to 2014 and remained lower in rural regions.
- With the historically dominant industries of agriculture, forestry and manufacturing in rural areas employing fewer people, the structure and economic base of rural Arkansas has changed. In 2015, 25 percent of the jobs in rural areas were either in farming, forestry or manufacturing as compared to about one-tenth in urban areas. Approximately 42 percent of the jobs in urban areas are in professional and other service industries as compared to 29 percent in rural areas.

Social and Economic Stress

- Arkansas continues to rank among the five states with the highest poverty rates (19.2 percent in 2014) in the country. Poverty in the rural Delta and Coastal Plains remained substantially higher than poverty in urban counties. Pockets of extreme poverty remain throughout the state with 19 counties having a rate of 25 percent or greater.
- The state poverty rate for children under 18 was 27.7 percent, 4th in the nation. In the Delta and Coastal Plains, more than one in three children (36 percent) were living in poverty.
- Twelve rural counties had a child poverty rate higher than 40 percent. Thirty-three counties in the state, 29 of them rural, had more than one in three children living in poverty.
- Although the state poverty rate for persons 65 and older has fallen since 1999, rural counties had higher rates of elder poverty than urban areas. Eight rural counties had an elder poverty rate of 20 percent or greater.
- Statewide, more than one in five (21.4 percent) Arkansans received supplemental nutrition assistance in 2015. This is considerably higher than the national rate of 14 percent.
- Rural areas and children were more likely to receive supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP) than urban areas and adults. Nearly one in four rural residents (24.1 percent) received SNAP benefits compared to one in five urban residents (19.5 percent).
- Four in ten (41 percent) children statewide received SNAP benefits. In the rural Delta, more than half of the children (55.5 percent) received SNAP benefits compared to 37.3 percent in urban areas.
- In rural areas, more than one in four persons was eligible for Medicaid (26.4 percent), and that number rises to over 31 percent for the Delta.
- Seventy of 75 counties had over one-half of their child population eligible to receive ARKids First.
- Food insecurity, inability to purchase or no access to enough food for adequate nutrition, is a serious problem for low-income residents, especially for children. It is estimated that about one in four children (26.3 percent) were food insecure in 2014 compared to 19 percent of Arkansas' total population.

Health

- Arkansas' infant mortality and child obesity rates, important indicators of the overall health of the population, were higher than the national average. The U.S. infant mortality rate in 2014 was 5.8 compared to 6.9 in Arkansas, ranking 4th highest in the nation. Arkansas ranked 6th nationally in the percent of adults who were obese, 36 percent of the population.
- The average rural and urban infant mortality rates were similar, although the rate among counties varied from 0 to 13.9 percent.
- Nearly 40 percent of children in Arkansas were overweight or obese in 2015, with the Delta having the highest rate of 44.1 percent.

Summary Highlights

- Rural Arkansas averaged just 69 primary care physicians per 100,000 people compared to 166 in urban Arkansas.
- Statewide, 15 percent of adults were approved to be eligible for the Private Option under the Affordable Care Act. Reflecting greater poverty in rural areas, 18 percent of rural adults were approved eligible with that rising to 20.5 percent in the Delta.
- Many Delta and Coastal Plains counties were in the bottom 25 percent of both "health factors" and "health outcomes" rankings, whereas 8 of the 13 urban counties ranked in the top 25 percent.

Education

- Although the number of children ages 3 to 5 enrolled in pre-K programs is growing, less than one-half of children in this age category were enrolled in a pre-K program in 2014.
- Rural areas experienced a 7 percent decline in public school enrollment compared to a growth of 9 percent in urban counties from 2007-08 to 2016-17. This difference is a result of population loss in rural areas and associated aging of the population.
- Public school enrollment declined by 15 percent in the Delta and 10 percent in the Coastal Plains. Six rural counties lost 20 percent or more of their public school enrollment.
- In 2010, Arkansas ranked 44th nationally in the percentage of adults with high school diplomas and 49th in the percentage of people with college degrees. An associate's degree was the highest level of educational attainment for only 6 percent of Arkansans compared to 8 percent nationally.
- Just 81 percent of rural Arkansans had high school diplomas compared to 86 percent of urban Arkansans aged 25 and older. Only 14.4 percent of adults living in rural areas had college degrees compared to 25.5 percent of urban areas and 29 percent nationally.
- The college-going rate in Arkansas increased from 45.5 percent in 2005 to 51.4 percent in 2013 with little difference between rural and urban areas. However, Arkansas' college-going rate remains substantially lower than the national rate of 66 percent.
- Due in part to an increase in the number of programs classified as STEM, enrollment and degrees given increased by 58 percent in four-year higher education institutions, but only 2 percent at two-year institutions from 2010 to 2014.

Local Government

- A high percentage of Arkansans reside in unincorporated areas and small towns (44 percent), placing an unusually heavy burden on local governments in rural areas with declining local tax bases.
- Rural areas were hit harder by the recession, and many county governments received less revenue from their sales and/or property tax in 2012 compared to 2007.
- Twenty-four counties received less revenue from the property tax in 2014 compared to 2007. Thirty-one counties lost revenue from the sales tax between 2007 and 2014. This was in spite of 30 counties increasing their sales tax rate between December 2006 and 2014.
- The ability to generate local revenue from the property tax varied greatly. Per capita property assessments ranged from $8,665 to $38,704 in 2015. Exacerbating this situation was a declining property tax base in nine counties. However, property assessments increased substantially in five central Arkansas counties that had considerable natural gas production.
- While the sales tax provides another option to generate local government revenue, the ability to generate revenue from the sales tax also varied greatly among counties. Per capita retail sales were substantially lower in rural areas and ranged from $1,552 to $18,595 in 2015.

The *Rural Profile of Arkansas* presents a data-driven depiction of social, demographic and economic characteristics of rural and urban regions of the state. The goal is to provide information and data that allow insight into the critical issues facing different regions of the state which may require diverse policies and programs to address regional concerns. To accomplish this, we use a classification scheme to delineate rural versus urban areas and different rural regions of the state.

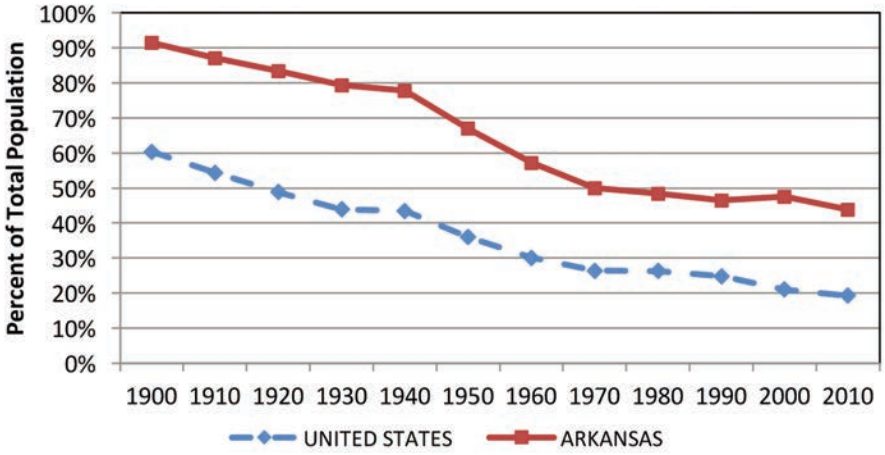
Like much of rural America, rural areas of Arkansas have been greatly affected by the changing economic structure. This in turn affects the well-being of people living in these areas, population composition and migration, and access to resources required to maintain viable communities. In this publication we provide information on demographic, economic, social and fiscal conditions affecting the well-being of Arkansas citizens to inform local and state leaders as they develop policies and programs that will help people in all areas of the state live healthy and productive lives.

Urban-Rural Classification

In the current *Profile*, we continue use of long-established categorization of counties as metropolitan and nonmetropolitan. However, other classifications exist and are variously used (see Appendix A). In this profile, we use the words "rural" and "non-metropolitan" and "urban" and "metropolitan" interchangeably. Populations residing in counties with large cities are classified as metropolitan, and those counties are grouped into a category termed "urban."

In addition to the rural-urban regions described above, we divide the rural areas into three regions that have similar economic activity, history, physical setting, settlement patterns and culture. The three rural regions of Arkansas are the Coastal Plains, the Delta and the Highlands. This approach combines nonmetropolitan counties in similar regions and facilitates comparison with the metropolitan counties. A map with all the county names and the regions can be found on the back cover.

Figure 1R. Rural Population, 1900-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Arkansas – A Rural State

No matter how you measure it, Arkansas is a very rural state. When using the county-based metropolitan/nonmetropolitan definitions, 42 percent of Arkansans live in a rural county, according to 2015 population estimates. This compares with 15 percent in the country as a whole living in nonmetropolitan counties.

As can be seen in the graph (Figure 1R), Arkansas has historically had a greater percentage of rural people than the nation since 1900. In the 2010 national census, only 19 percent of the country's population was identified as rural compared with 44 percent for Arkansans. Here the rural population is defined as people living in nonurbanized areas, irrespective of county boundaries. In 1900, nearly 91 percent of Arkansans lived in rural areas compared to about 60 percent of the United States population. For both the United States and Arkansas, the percentage of rural people has declined dramatically between 1900 and 2010.

Population Change

The state's population grew 2.1 percent between 2010 and 2015, about half the 3.9 percent growth nationally. However, this increase represents over 62,000 new residents in the state. The trend seen in the 2000s – loss of population from rural regions to urban regions – has continued into the 2010s. In 2000, rural areas represented slightly over 47 percent of the state's population, but by 2015 the rural regions were slightly under 42 percent of the state's total population. As a whole, the rural areas have shrunk by about 2 percent between 2010 and 2015, while urban areas saw a relatively large increase of over 5 percent, more than double the state's overall rate of growth. In a trend that first became evident only recently, instead of growing, the Highlands registered a small population loss of 0.5 percent from 2012 to 2015. Both the Coastal Plains and the Delta continued to experience much greater rates of population loss of 3.6 percent and 4.1 percent, respectively.

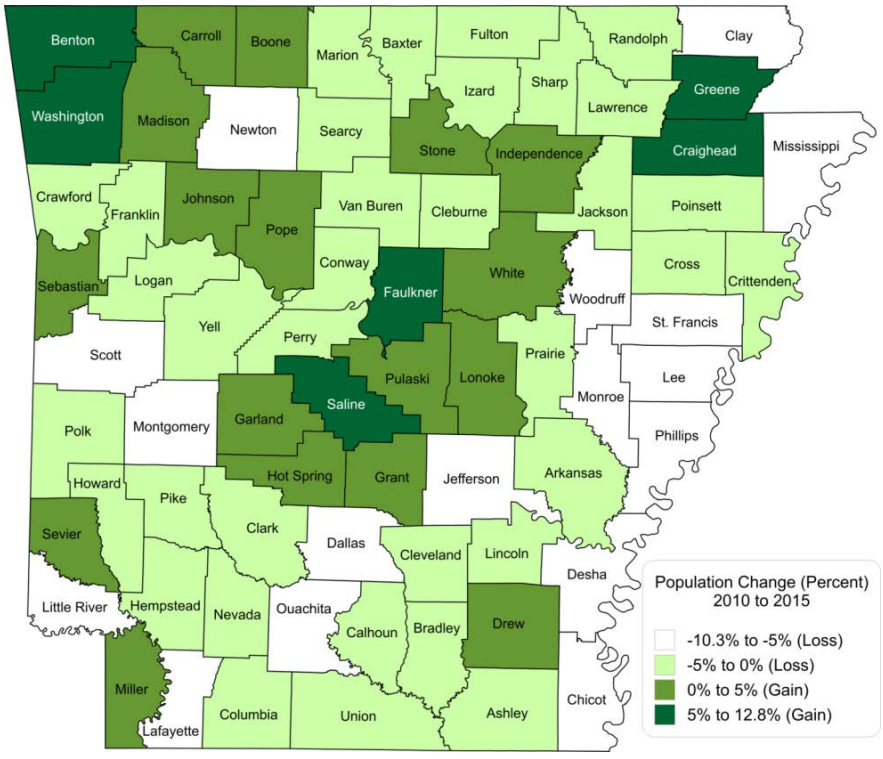
Longer term trends are apparent when looking back to 2000. Of the rural regions, only the Highlands had a net gain in population for the last 15 years, although the population in the region has declined since 2012. Over the last 15 years, the Highlands had a net gain of nearly 39,000 people or a 5.5 percent increase. The Coastal Plains, however, had a net loss of over 22,000 people in that same period or a loss of nearly 10 percent. The Delta lost an even larger percentage, 11 percent or over 36,000 persons. The urban areas have been the source of the state's overall growth, adding nearly 320,000 people in the last 15 years or an increase of 22 percent. As a result, the state had a net growth of nearly 300,000 people or an 11 percent gain in the last 15 years.

Across the state, variation in population growth is apparent. The map in Figure P1 shows the differences in population growth from 2010 to 2015. Six counties exceeded growth of 5 percent, and all of these are urban. Benton County continued to lead the state in population growth with a 12.8 percent increase during this five-year period. Of the remaining 17 counties with positive population growth, five were urban. Greene County in the Delta, with a 5 percent increase, and Drew County in the Coastal Plains were the only two rural counties that had grown outside of the Highlands.

> The trend seen in the 2000s – loss of population from rural regions to urban regions – has continued into the 2010s.

Fifty-two of the state's 75 counties experienced a population loss from 2010 to 2015, and all of these but three (Crawford, Crittenden and Jefferson counties) were rural. Seventeen counties experienced a population loss of 5 percent or more, and Jefferson County is the only urban county in this group, with a loss of 7.6 percent. The highest population losses are found in the Delta, where Phillips County had a population loss of 10.3 percent and Monroe County of 9.2 percent. All but one county in the Delta and one in the Coastal Plains lost population. Of the 34 counties in

Figure P1. Population Change (Percent), 2010 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

the Highlands, only 11 had an increase in population during this five-year period. This is a change for the Highlands, which until 2012 consistently experienced population gains.

Components of Population Change

Populations grow and decline in two ways, from natural increase or decrease (the difference of births over deaths) and from migration. Figures P2, P3 and P4 show the separate effects of each of these components for the state and for rural and urban counties. These graphs clearly illustrate that the migration patterns and rates of natural increase have changed since the first half of the 2000s.

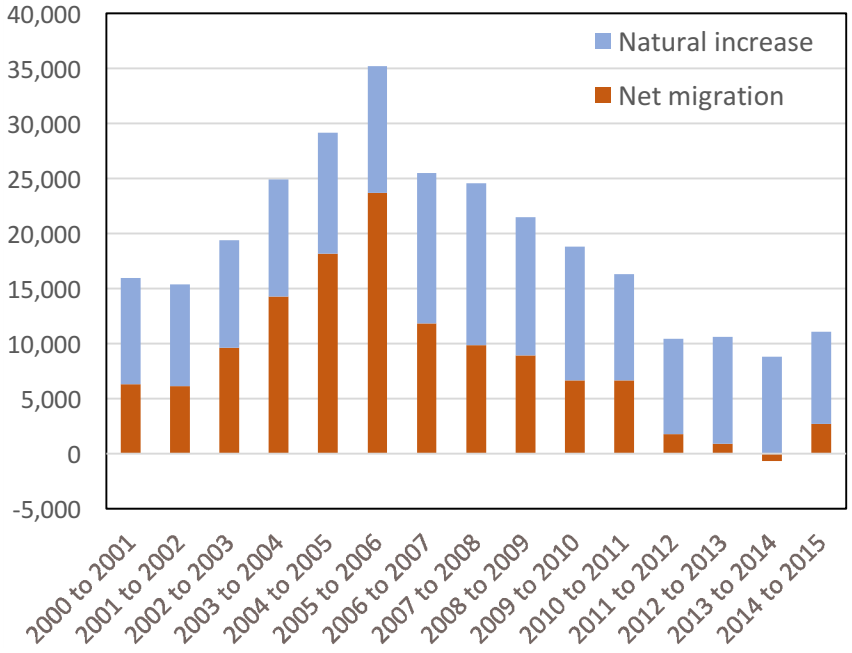
> From 2011, urban counties grew primarily from natural increase, with a rate of 4.9 per 1,000 population for 2014-2015.

As a whole, the state's rate of population growth slowed considerably since the first half of the 2000s, largely as a result of the decline of migration into the state. The state's population continued to grow, but the growth rate flattened. Natural increase (more births than deaths) is playing a more important role in population growth than before.

Even more notable was the difference between rural and urban counties. From 2011, urban counties grew primarily from natural increase with a rate of 4.9 per 1,000 population for 2014-2015. Net migration rate for 2014-2015 for urban counties was 3.9 per 1,000 population, down from peaks in 2005-2006. Following the economic downturn in 2007, migration into the state also began to slow in urban areas.

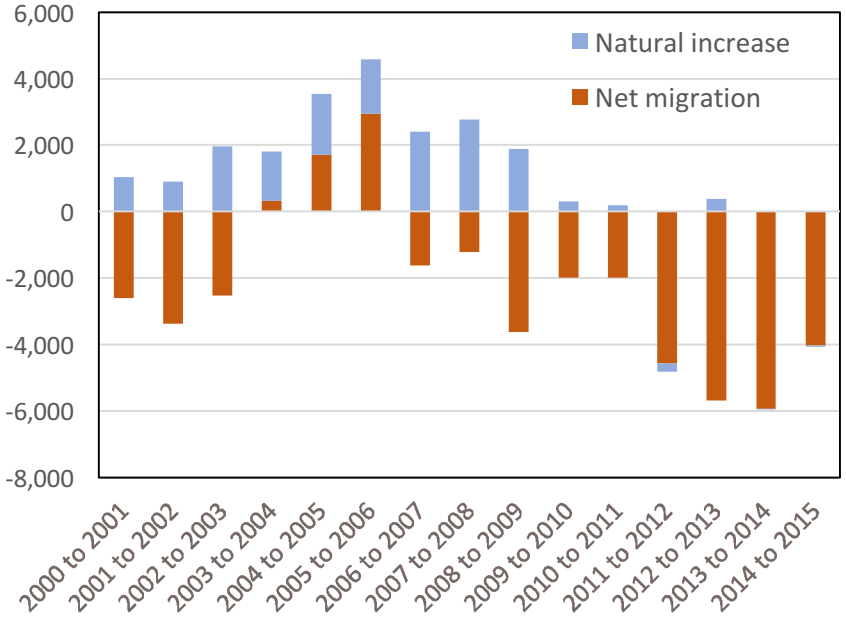
For rural areas, natural increase declined and was close to 0.0 per 1,000 population since 2010. Except for a small net in-migration in rural areas from 2004 to 2007, there was a net out-migration for all years

Figure P2. State Population Components of Change, 2001-2015



Source: Annual Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009, 2010 to 2015 Census Bureau.

Figure P3. Rural Population Components of Change, 2001-2015



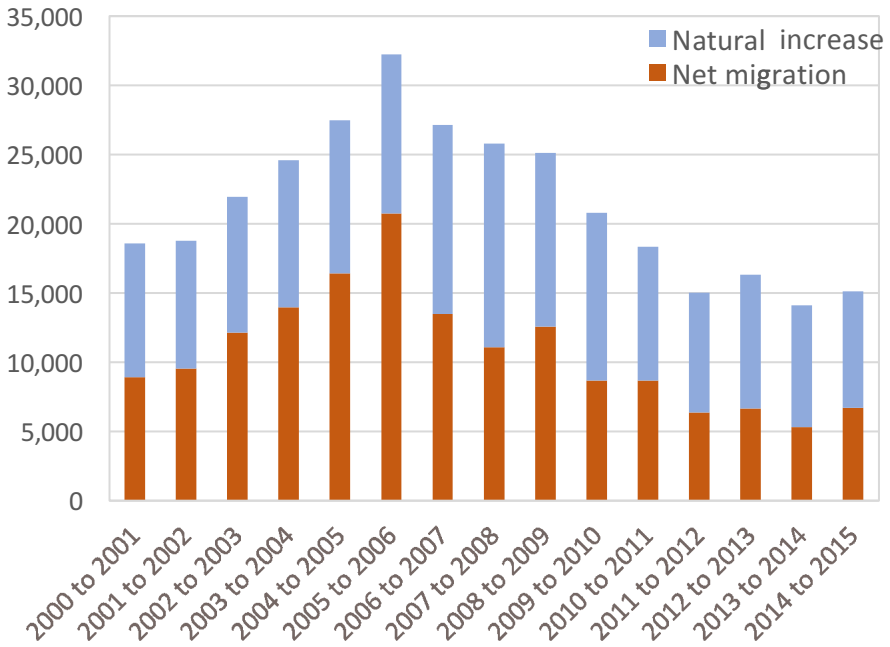
Source: Annual Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009, 2010 to 2015 Census Bureau

from 2000 to 2015. The net out-migration increased following the economic downturn. Differences between the rural regions suggest an important shift is occurring in the Highlands counties. For the first time in at least 20 years, the Highlands lost population every year from 2012 to 2015. This loss is primarily a result of out-migration, making the Highlands similar to the other rural regions in this respect. Reduction in the flow of people migrating into the Highlands began in 2009 and resulted in a net out-migration from 2012 to 2015.

The map in Figure P5 shows variations across the state in natural increase/decrease. Of the ten counties with the highest natural increase, all were urban counties but three (Sevier and Pope counties in the Highlands and Hempstead in the Coastal Plains). All of the 39 counties with a natural decrease (more deaths than births) were rural counties except for Garland County. Baxter, Fulton, Izard, Marion, Montgomery (in the Highlands) and Woodruff (in the Delta) counties had the greatest natural decrease rates, over -5 per 1,000 population.

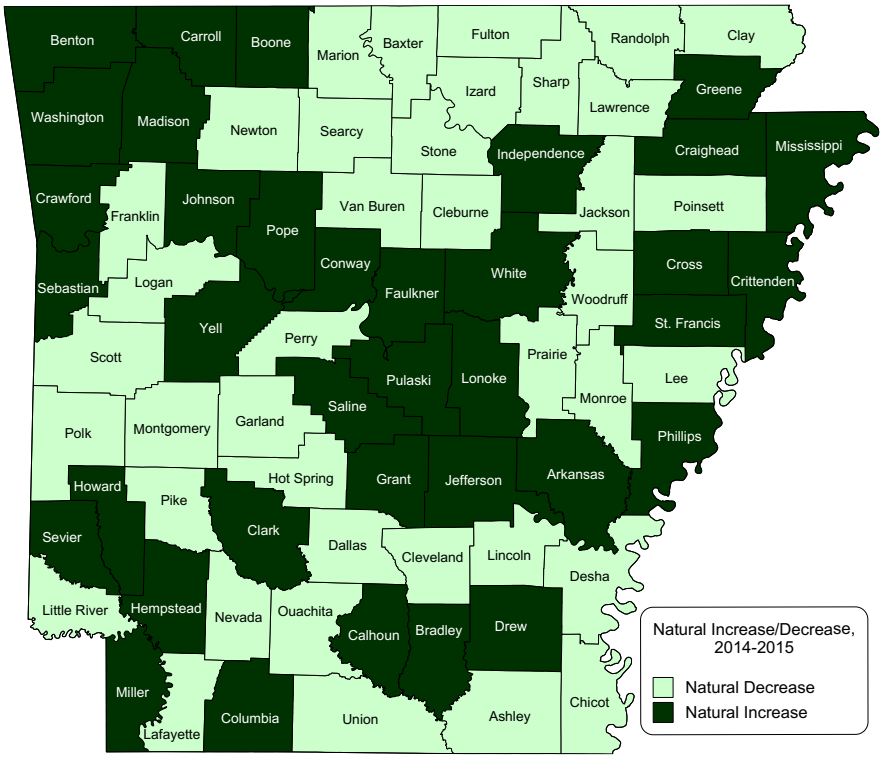
Migration rates also varied across the state, as can be seen in the map in Figure P6. The inflow of persons into urban counties is evident as is the outflow of persons from rural counties. Fifty-one counties experienced net out-migration (a negative migration rate) between 2010 and 2015. Of these 51 counties, five (Crittenden, Jefferson, Pulaski, Lonoke, Crawford and Faulkner) were metropolitan counties; the other 46 counties were rural. Among the ten counties with the highest net out-migration rates, all but one

Figure P4. Urban Population Components of Change, 2001-2015



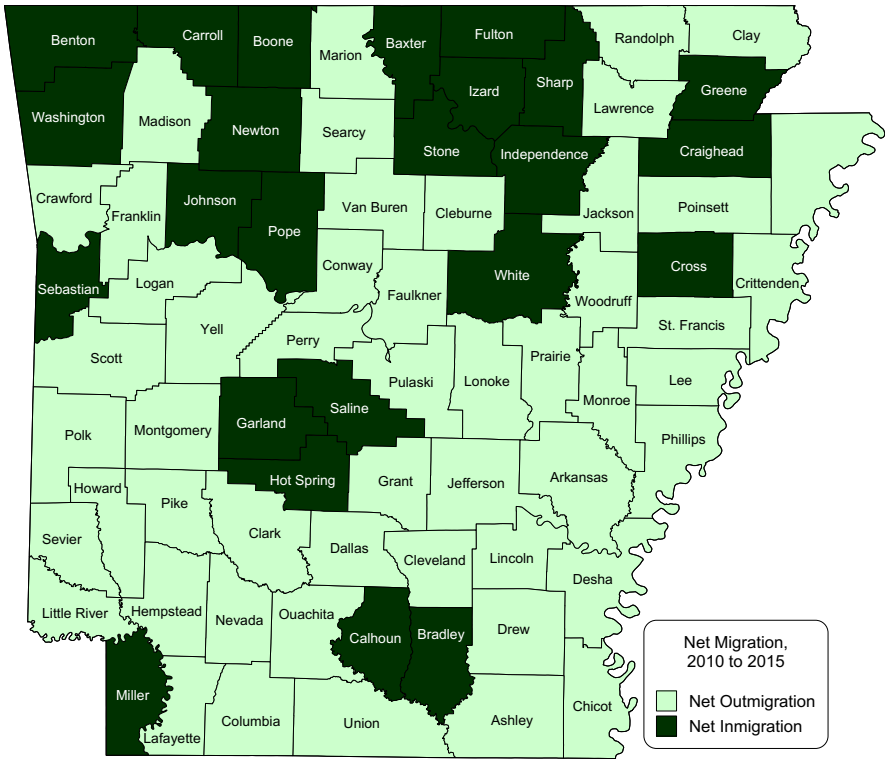
Source: Annual Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009, 2010 to 2015 Census Bureau.

Figure P5. Natural Increase/Decrease of Population, 2014-2015



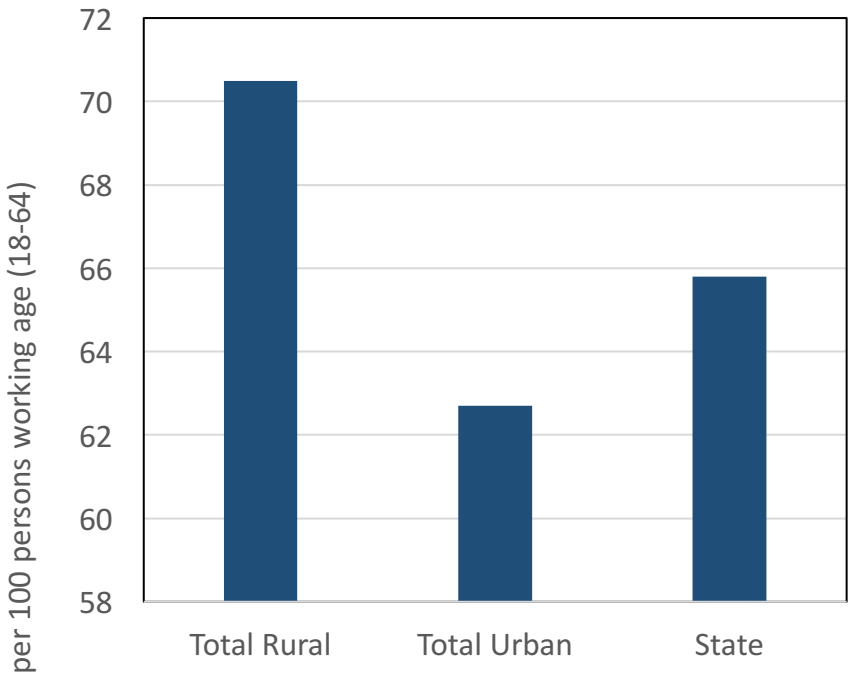
Source: Annual Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure P6. Net Migration of Population, 2010-2015



Source: Annual Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure P7. Dependency Ratio, 2015



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for the United States, States, Counties, and Puerto Rico Commonwealth and Municipios: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.

was urban (Crittenden), and the Delta makes up five of those ten.

Dependency Ratio and Median Age

The dependency ratio and median age measure the population not typically in the labor force compared with those typically in the labor force and aging of the population in the state. The median age in Arkansas was similar to the rest of the nation in 2015, but the dependency ratio was somewhat higher in Arkansas. Both the dependency ratio and median age varied greatly among regions and counties in the state.

> The entire state of Arkansas had 65.8 dependent-age people per 100 working-age people in 2015 compared to 60.7 per 100 nationally in 2015.

The dependency ratio used by the U.S. Census calculates how many dependent-age people (17 years old and younger and 65 years old and older) there are per 100 working-age people (ages 18 through 64). The entire state of Arkansas had 65.8 dependent-age people per 100 working-age people in 2015 compared to 60.7 per 100 nationally in 2015. The state's dependency ratio in 2010 stood at 63.4 per 100. The counties range from a low dependency ratio of 46.4 per 100 in Lincoln County to a high of 92.9 per 100 in Baxter County. As seen in Figure P7, the dependency ratios varied between rural and urban areas with rural counties being substantially higher (70.5 per 100 vs. 62.7, respectively). Of the rural regions, the Highlands had the highest dependency ratio of 72.7 per 100. This compares to a

rate of 68.6 per 100 in 2010. Forty-three counties had a dependency ratio that exceeded 70 persons per 100 population, and only one of those is not a rural county (Garland). Eleven counties exceeded 80 persons per 100 population; all of those were rural and in the Highlands.

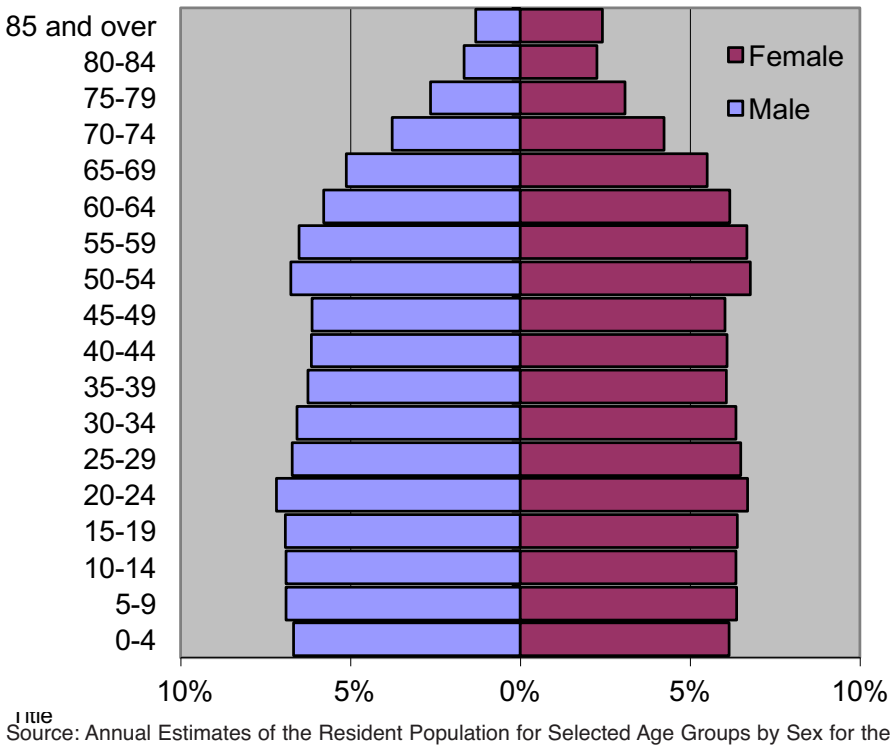
Median age is the age that divides a population into two equal groups in which one-half are younger and one-half are older. It summarizes the age distribution of a population. The median age in the U.S. was 37.8 in 2015. Arkansas had a similar median age of 37.9. Older still were the rural populations of the state with a median age of 42.0. Urban areas in the state were younger at 36.8. The Highlands, home to a number of retirement communities and aging-in-place communities, had the highest median age at 43.4. Marion and Baxter counties, both in the Highlands, had a median age that exceeded 50 (52.2 and 51.9, respectively).

Age and Gender

The population pyramid in Figure P8 shows the distribution of males and females by age in Arkansas. The left side of the pyramid shows the percentage of males in each of the five-year age brackets and the right side shows females. The pyramid shows the familiar "bulge" created by the "baby boom" population, as well as the greater life expectancy of women, a pattern that mirrors the national data.

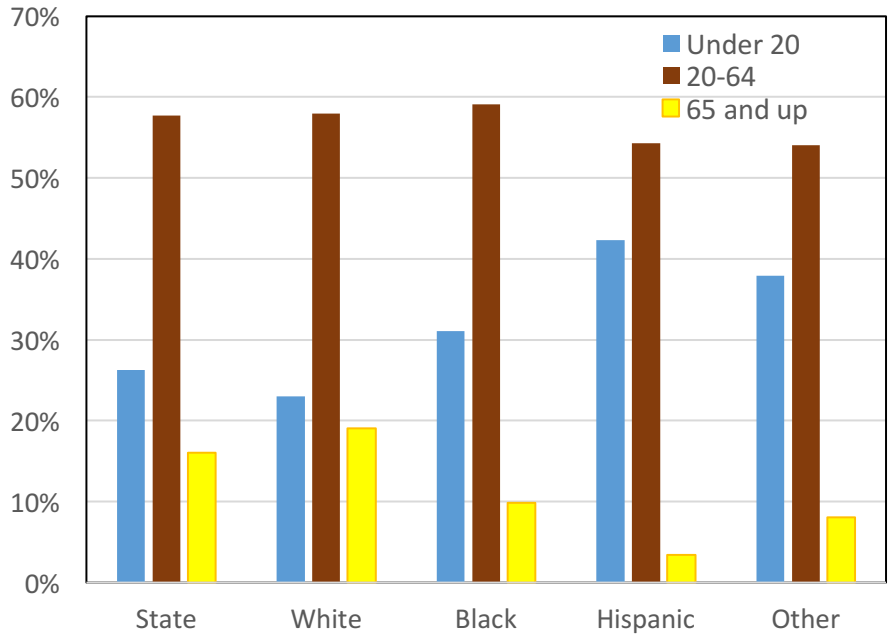
Figure P9 highlights some of the key differences between different race and ethnic sub-populations found in the state and demonstrates some of the important underlying population

Figure P8. Arkansas State Population Pyramid, 2015



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for the United States, States, Counties, and Puerto Rico Commonwealth and Municipios: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.

Figure P9. Comparison of Age Groups by Race and Ethnicity, 2015



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for the United States, States, Counties, and Puerto Rico Commonwealth and Municipios: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.

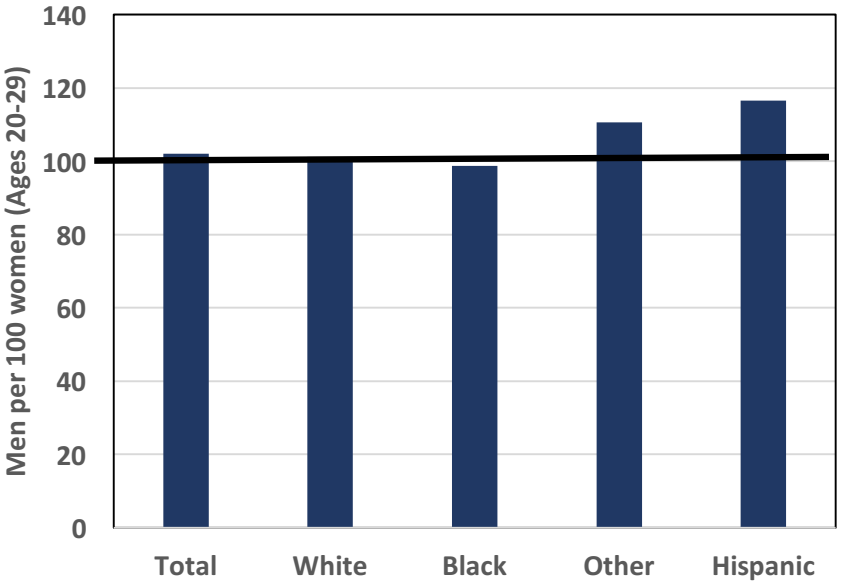
dynamics. In 2015, the White population was slightly older, a result of both aging in place and the growth of retirement communities. The Black population also shows aging in place but with a greater percentage of young adults of child-bearing age and more children. The Hispanic and Other Races populations (largely comprised of Asian and Native American persons) had a much younger population and more males in the 20-30 year age range. In Figure P10 the bar shows the ratio of men to women for young people (ages 20-29) for different race and ethnic subpopulations.

In 2015, the White population was slightly older, a result of both aging-in-place and the growth of retirement communities.

A value of 100 means an equal number of men and women in the population; a number below 100 means more women than men, and a number above 100 means more men than women. The pattern shown in Figure P10 illustrates differences typically seen in migrant populations, as in the case for the Hispanic and Other Races subpopulations with many more young men than young women. All groups show the greater life expectancy of women as women outnumber men past the age of 65.

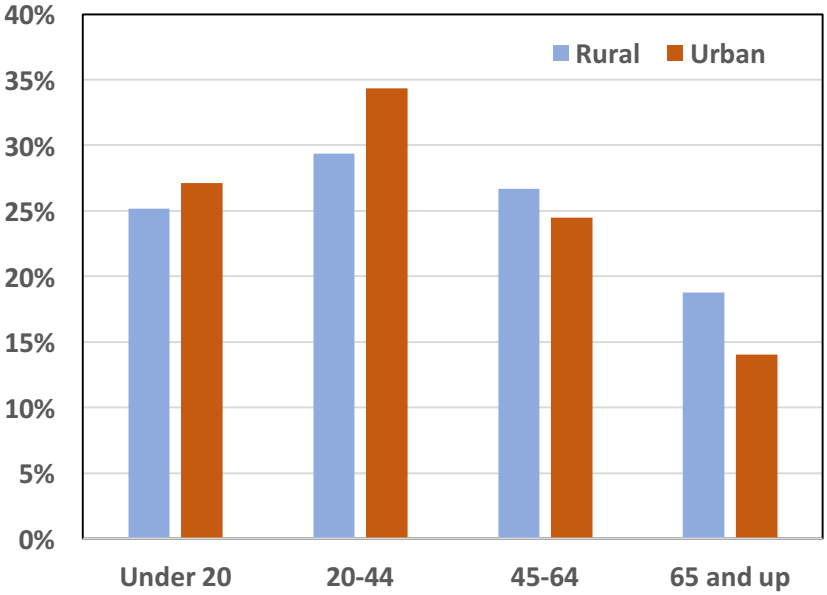
Significant differences between the rural and urban populations are underscored in Figure P11. The older population found in rural areas is clearly evident in the taller bar for the mid-forties to the sixties, while the out-migration of working-age adults is seen in the smaller proportion of people 20-44. The smaller proportion of children in rural areas can also be seen. In contrast, urban populations are younger with a larger percentage of working age and children.

Figure P10. Number of Men Per 100 Women, Aged 20-29, by Race and Ethnicity, 2015



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for the United States, States, Counties, and Puerto Rico Commonwealth and Municipios: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.

Figure P11. Rural and Urban Populations by Age Group, 2015



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for the United States, States, Counties, and Puerto Rico Commonwealth and Municipios: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.

Population Age 65 and Older

The map in Figure P12 shows the distribution of the elderly population in Arkansas in 2015. Baxter County had the highest percentage of population aged 65 and over at 30 percent (30.3), while Washington County had the lowest at 11 percent. The six counties with the lowest percentage of elderly were all urban counties: Craighead (13.1), Benton (13.0), Lonoke (13.0), Crittenden (12.5), Faulkner (11.6) and Washington (11.0). The elderly population made up 14.1 percent of the urban counties compared to 18.8 percent for the rural counties. The Highlands had the highest percentage of persons aged 65 or older at 19.8 percent, whereas the Delta had only 16.7 percent. A similar pattern is seen when examining the percentage of the very elderly, defined as persons 75 and older. Ten counties had a very elderly population (75 and older) greater than 10 percent, and all of these were in the Highlands (Baxter, Cleburne, Montgomery, Izard, Sharp, Van Buren, Fulton, Stone, Marion and Searcy).

Race and Ethnic Diversity

The state experienced increasing diversity over the past years. Some very clear patterns emerged in 2015 when using four categories of race/ethnicity, including White, Black, Hispanic and Other Races. Only seven counties in Arkansas did not have a majority White population. Five of those seven counties were located in the Delta region, and the other two were urban counties (Jefferson and Crittenden) located on the fringe of the Delta. The majority of the Highlands counties had a White population exceeding 90 percent.

Hispanic population was largely concentrated in the northwest counties of the state and along the western edge of the state. That said, the Hispanic population has grown in the Delta and Coastal Plains as well.

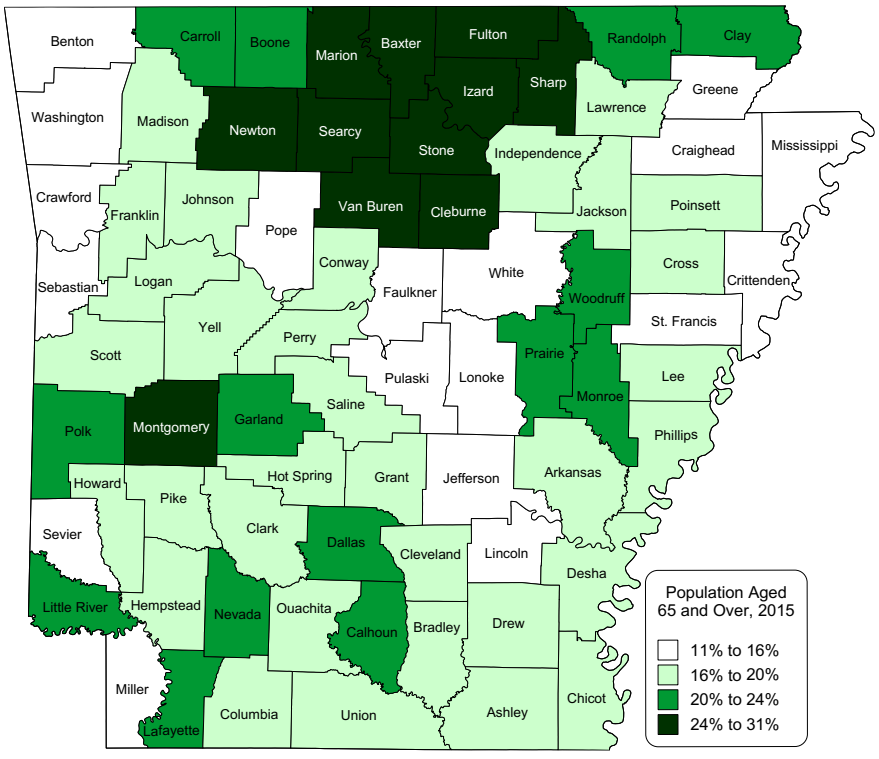
> In 2015, only seven counties in Arkansas did not have a majority White population.

Statewide the Hispanic population has grown to 7.2 percent of the total. Urban counties have 8.7 percent Hispanic population compared to 5.1 percent in rural counties. The Highlands have the greatest concentration of Hispanics with 5.9 percent, while the Delta has 3.1 percent. The counties vary quite a bit, however.

Nearly one-third of Sevier County's population was Hispanic (32.5 percent) compared to Fulton and Prairie counties with barely 1 percent. Ten counties in the state reported more than 10 percent of their populations as Hispanic; three of these were urban (Benton, Sebastian and Washington counties), and among the remaining seven rural counties, all but one (Bradley) were located in the western half of the state. Almost one in five residents in Yell County (18.9 percent) was Hispanic.

The category "other races" presented here captures a wide range of individuals who identify themselves in the Census as not identifying as White or Black or African American. It may include such peoples as Hmong, Turkish,

Figure P12. Population Aged 65 and Over, 2015

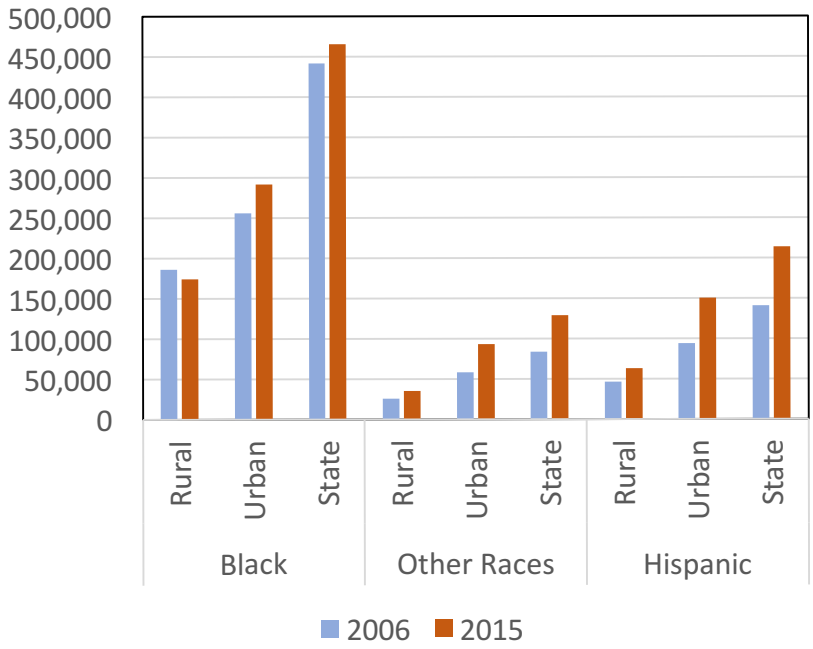


Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Vietnamese, Indian, Burmese, Marshallese, Native American, etc. Five counties in the state had 5 percent or more of their population in this category; among these, four were urban. The largest percentages were found in the western urban counties: Sebastian (9.3), Washington (8.5), Benton (7.6) and Crawford (6.4). The one rural county was Scott in the Highlands with 7.6 percent in the "other races" category. The urban areas as a whole had 5.4 percent in the "other races" category, while the rural areas overall had 2.9 percent. The state had 4.3 percent of its total population in this category.

Notably, in the last 10 years, the state has shown an increase in diversity. Figure P13 shows the change in the number of residents in the state from 2006 to 2015 by race and ethnic group. The broad trend of increasing diversity was seen in rural and urban areas alike.

Figure P13. Growth of Diversity, 2006-2015



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States, States, and Counties: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006 and April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau

Economy

Employment

The Arkansas economy as measured by total employment has been growing since the low point in 2010. However, this growth varies greatly among regions of the state and has been less than the national average.

Total employment in Arkansas grew by approximately 5 percent (4.7 percent) from 2010 to 2015, less than the national average of nearly 10 percent (Figure E1). However, part of this difference is due to the Arkansas economy not declining as much from the Great Recession. From 2007 to 2010, total employment in Arkansas declined only 2.7 percent compared to a decline of 3.8 percent in the nation. In 2015, both Arkansas and the U.S. had total employment levels above the 2007 pre-recession numbers. In 2015, total employment was nearly 2 percent (1.9 percent) above 2007 levels compared to 5.7 percent in the U.S. Thus, while Arkansas's economy did not decline as much as the U.S. economy from the Great Recession, it also has not grown as rapidly since 2010.

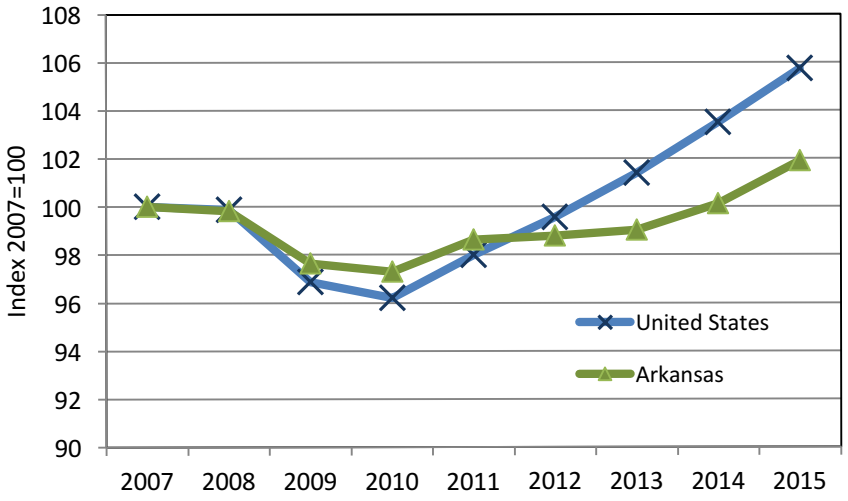
While the Arkansas economy has grown since 2010, there continues to be a big difference in the growth/decline between the urban and rural economies in the state from 2010 to 2015.

While the Arkansas economy has grown since 2010, there continues to be a big difference in the growth/decline between the urban and rural economies in the state from 2010 to 2015.

Most urban areas of the state, with the notable exceptions of Jefferson, Sebastian and Crawford counties, experienced a smaller decline and a larger increase in employment during the recession and post-recession recovery, respectively. Employment declined by 2.2 percent in urban areas from 2007 to 2010 compared to 3.5 percent in rural areas (Figure E2). During the post-recession recovery from 2010 to 2015, employment in urban areas increased 7.2 percent compared to a slight increase of 0.6 percent in rural areas of the state.

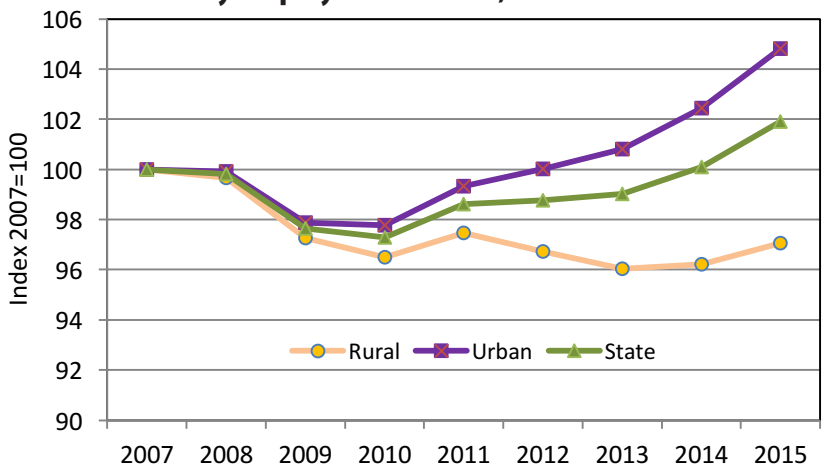
While the urban areas of the state experienced an increase in total employment of 4.8 percent from 2007 to 2015, the rural regions have not recovered from the recession and have yet to reach pre-recession employment levels. Employment in rural areas of the

Figure E1. Index of Total Employment in the United States and Arkansas From 2007 to 2015



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Figure E2. Arkansas Rural and Urban County Employment Trends, 2007 to 2015



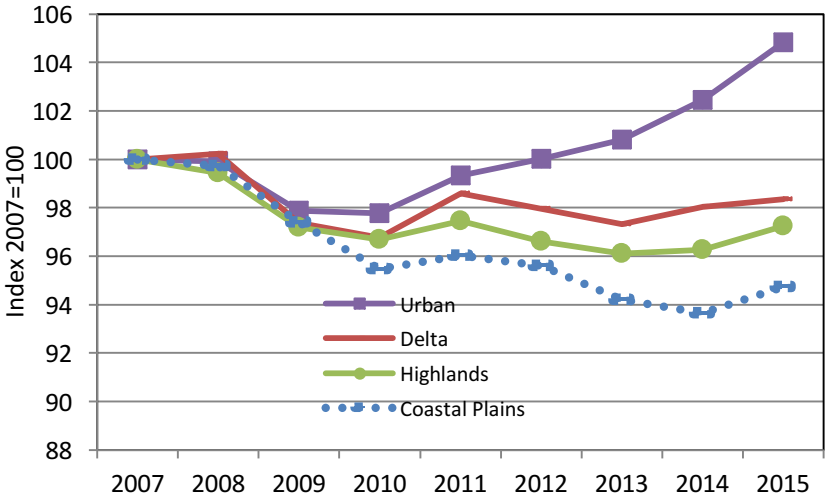
Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

state was nearly 3 percent less in 2015 compared to 2007. Among all rural areas, the Coastal Plains had the largest percent decline in employment, 5.3 percent from 2007 to 2015 (Figure E3). The Highlands and Delta regions experienced declines of 2.7 percent and 1.7 percent, respectively, during this period. All rural regions experienced a decline in employment from 2007 to 2010 ranging between 3.2 percent and 4.5 percent, but only the Coastal Plains experienced a decrease in employment of 0.8 percent from 2010 to 2015. Employment in the Highlands and Delta regions increased by 0.6 percent and 1.6 percent, respectively, during this recent five-year period. Although some rural areas of the state are creating new jobs, most are struggling to create the jobs that keep and attract residents.

These regional averages mask large variations in employment gains and losses within both rural and urban regions from 2007 to 2015 (Figure E4). Although there was an increase in total employment in Arkansas of nearly 2 percent from 2007 to 2015, 52 of the 75 counties in Arkansas had a net loss of jobs during this period. The lost jobs were scattered across rural and urban regions alike. Four of the 13 urban counties experienced a decline in the total number of jobs. These included Sebastian and Crawford counties in western Arkansas and Jefferson and Garland counties in central Arkansas. However, nine urban counties had an increase in employment during this period, ranging from 2.4 percent in Pulaski County to nearly 17 percent in Benton County.

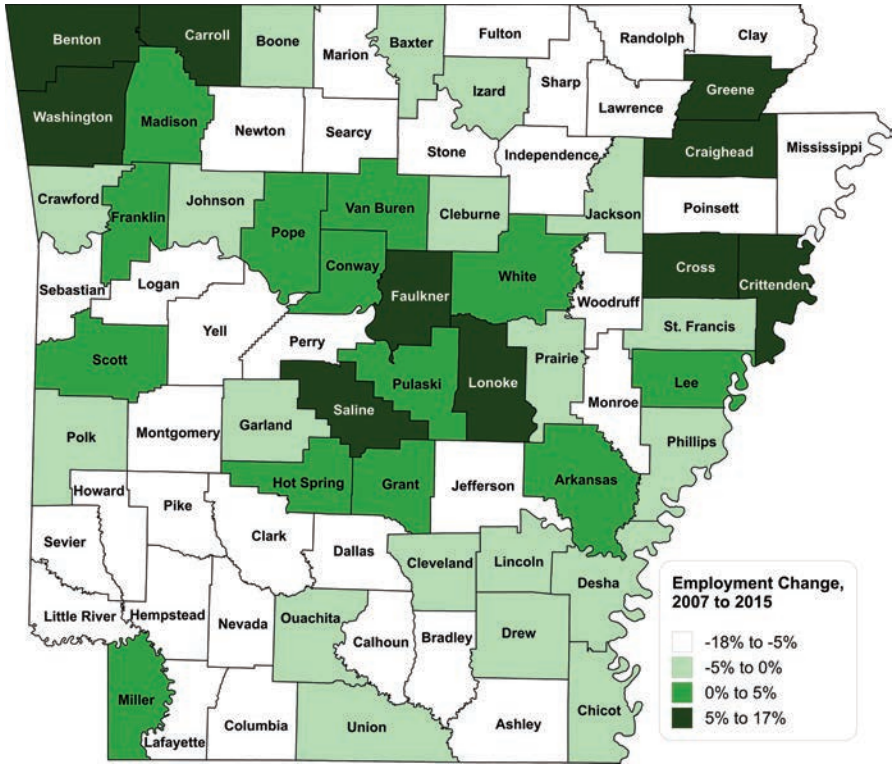
In the Coastal Plains, a region greatly affected by the recession, all 12 counties had a net loss of jobs during this eight-year period. The Highlands region was also hit hard by the recession where 24 of the 34 counties had a net loss of jobs between 2007 and 2015. Likewise, 12 of the 16 counties in the Delta region had a net loss of jobs during this same period.

Figure E3. Arkansas Urban and Rural Regions Employment Trends, 2007 to 2015



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Figure E4. Total Employment Change, 2007 to 2015



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Economy

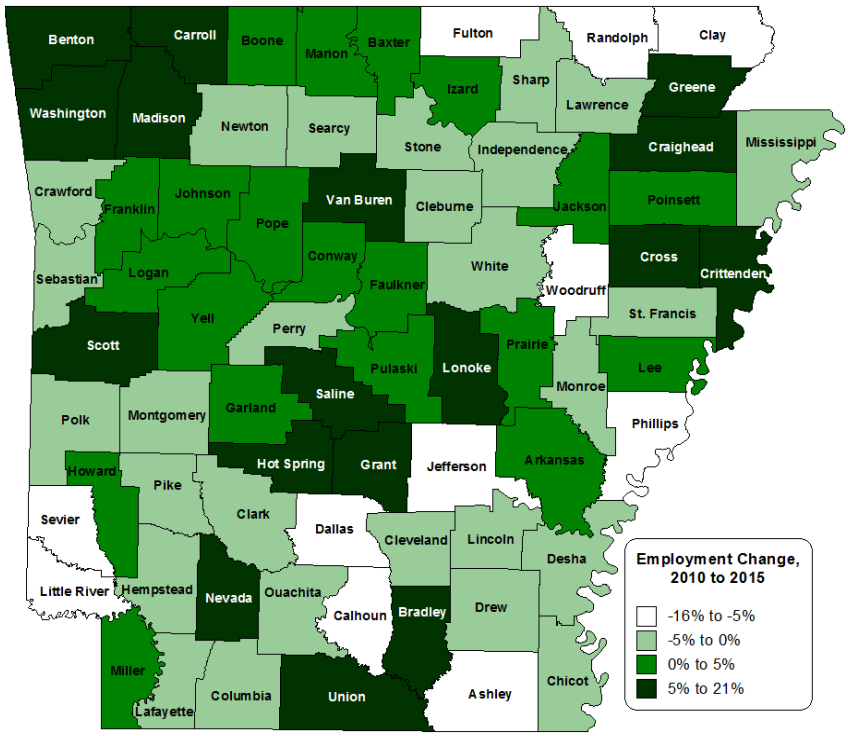
One-half of all rural counties lost more than 5 percent of their jobs, and five rural counties lost more than 10 percent of their jobs from 2007 to 2015. The five rural counties that were especially hard hit and lost more than 10 percent of employment opportunities include Pike, Clay, Calhoun, Little River and Sevier. All five counties, like 56 percent of all rural counties in Arkansas, continued to lose jobs in the post-recession recovery period from 2010 to 2015.

Although the recession took a toll on jobs across the state, nearly half of the Arkansas' 75 counties had net employment gains following the recession, from 2010 to 2015. The highest rate of job growth occurred in counties in or surrounding the urban areas of northwest, northeast and central Arkansas (Figure E5). Seventeen counties, six urban and eleven rural, had 5 percent or greater growth in employment from 2010 to 2015. Employment in Benton County grew by 20 percent during this period compared to between 12 percent and 14 percent for Greene, Washington, Saline and Craighead counties.

Employment by Major Industry Sector

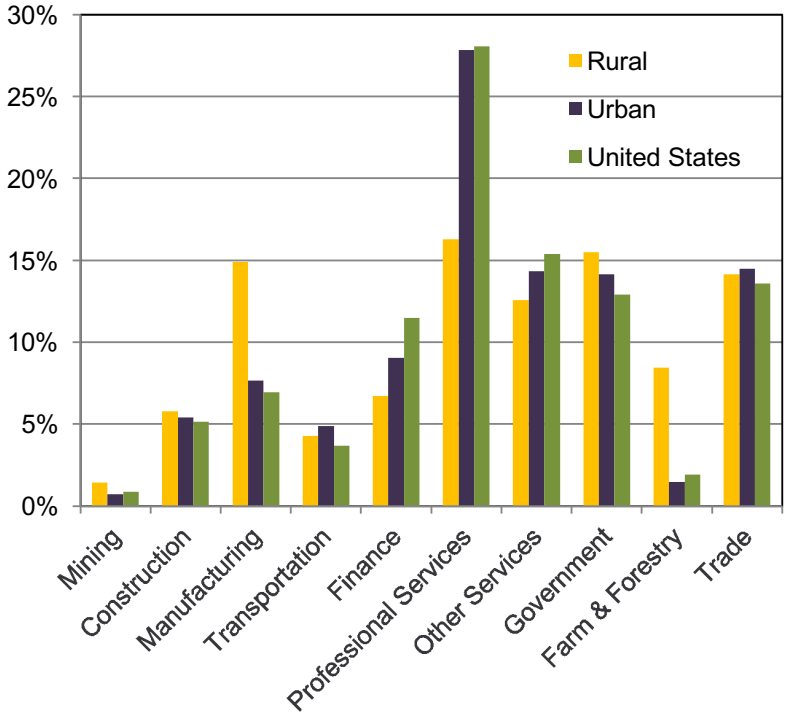
Diversity in type of industry and sources of income is vital to the success of Arkansas' economy. While the natural resources (agriculture, forestry and mining) and manufacturing sectors are critical to the state's economy, the service sector provided the largest share of employment in both urban and rural areas in 2015. However, compared to the United States economy, farming and manufacturing remained larger shares of the Arkansas economy in 2015.

Figure E5. Total Employment Change, 2010 to 2015



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Figure E6. Employment by Sector in the U.S. and Rural and Urban Regions of Arkansas, 2015



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce and the 2014 IMPLAN database.

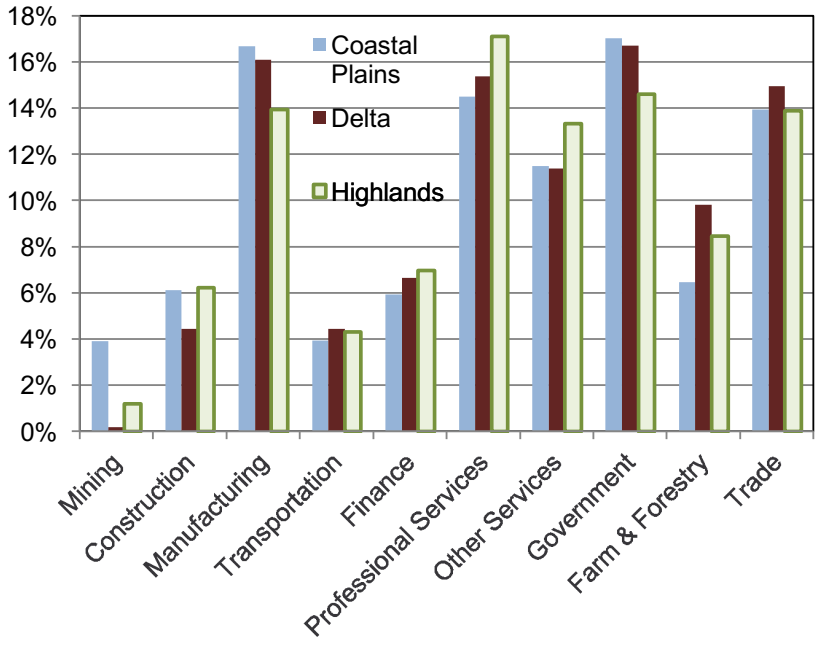
The major structural difference between rural and urban economies is that the manufacturing and natural resource sectors provided a larger share of employment in rural regions, whereas the service sector employed a larger share of workers in urban areas (Figure E6).

In 2015, nearly 25 percent of jobs in rural areas were in farming, forestry, mining and manufacturing, compared to approximately 10 percent in urban areas. Conversely 42 percent of jobs in urban areas were in the service sector compared to 29 percent in rural areas. Many jobs in manufacturing are related to agriculture and forestry products, so while farming and manufacturing are critical to the Arkansas' rural economy, employing 8 percent and 15 percent, respectively, the service sector remains the largest employer. Importantly, many of the service sectors jobs in rural areas are also agriculture- and forestry-related, which suggests that a strong agriculture and forestry industry remains central to the rural regions of the state. Natural gas extraction has also become an important component of the economies of many rural counties, accounting for between 3.7 percent and 8.6 percent of total employment in seven counties.

Forty-two percent of jobs in urban areas were in the service sector compared to 29 percent in rural areas.

While the type of agriculture, forestry and manufacturing differs among the rural regions of the state, Figure E7 depicts the importance of these industries to all three rural regions.

Figure E7. Employment by Sector in Rural Regions of Arkansas, 2015



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce and the 2014 IMPLAN database.

Employment Changes by Industry

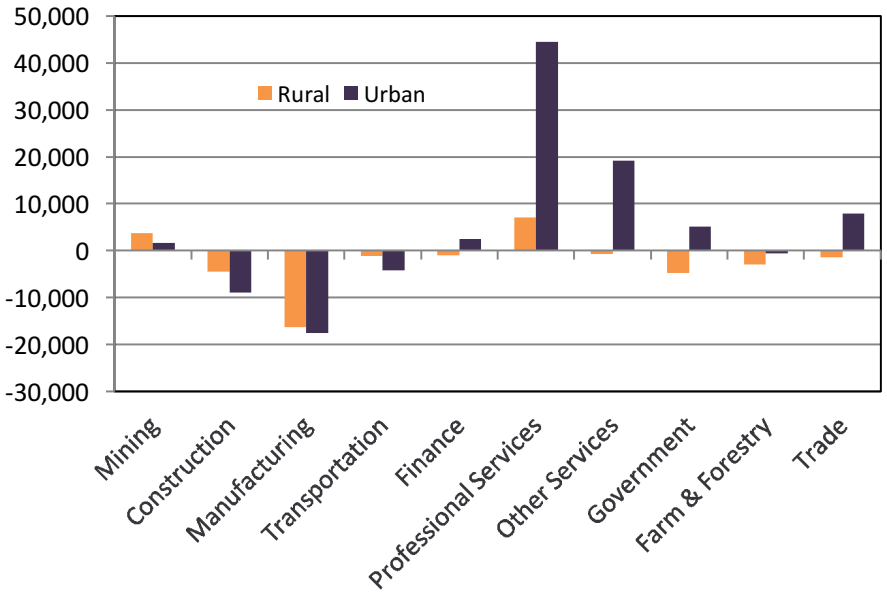
From 2007 to 2015, there was a continuing shift from manufacturing to service sector jobs in Arkansas. This trend disproportionately affected rural areas. Rural areas lost about the same number of manufacturing jobs, but did not gain as many service sector jobs, as the urban areas (Figure E8). Not only were manufacturing jobs lost, but construction and transportation jobs were also lost in both the urban and rural areas during this eight-year period. The industries in Arkansas that lost the most jobs between 2007 and 2015 were manufacturing, construction and transportation.

In addition to adding service industry jobs, additional employment opportunities in urban areas were also generated in the mining, finance, government and trade sectors from 2007 to 2015. The rural areas added jobs only in the professional services and mining sectors during this same period.

Although both rural and urban areas experienced employment growth in professional services and mining industries during this eight-year period, rural areas benefited more from the increase in mining activities, while urban areas benefitted more from an increase in service sector and government jobs. The urban areas added approximately 63,700 service sector jobs, approximately ten times more than rural areas. Rural areas also lost jobs in the trade, other services and government sectors, whereas the urban areas gained jobs in these sectors.

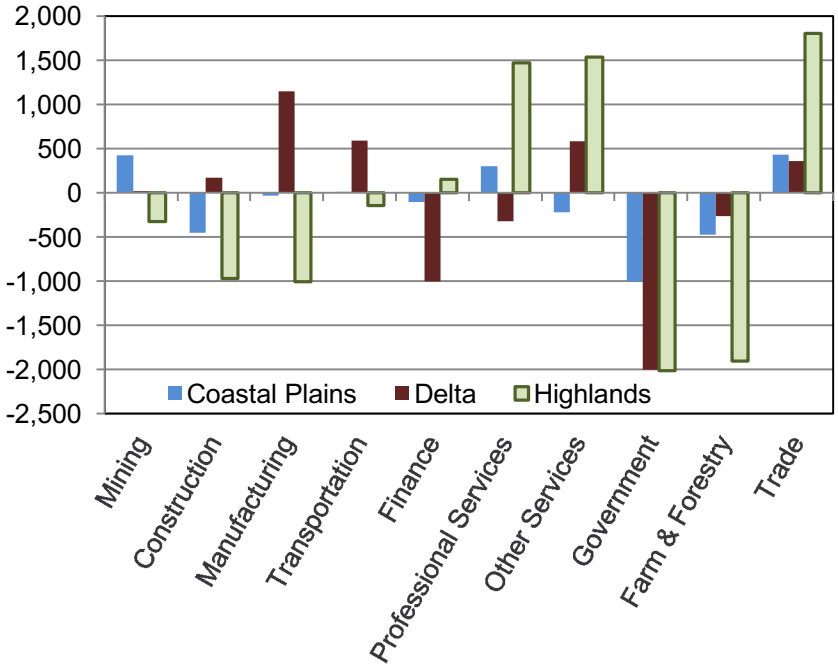
Beginning in 2010, the growing state economy saw an employment increase in many sectors for both urban and rural regions of the state. However, from 2010 to 2015,

Figure E8. Employment Change by Sector in Rural and Urban Regions of Arkansas, 2007 to 2015



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce and the 2014 IMPLAN database.

Figure E9. Employment Change by Sector in Rural Regions of Arkansas, 2010 to 2015



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce and the 2014 IMPLAN database.

employment in the manufacturing, construction, farming and government sectors declined in both urban and rural areas of the state. While there was a slight increase in employment in rural areas during this recent five-year period, there was a net loss of jobs in the basic industries of farm and forestry, mining and manufacturing.

Again, the rural and urban averages mask differences within regions (Figure E9). Although manufacturing, construction and transportation employment declined in the urban areas throughout the eight-year period, several urban counties had slight increases in some of these sectors from 2007 to 2015.

> While there was a slight increase in employment in rural areas between 2010 and 2015, there was a net loss in the basic industries of farm and forestry, mining and manufacturing.

The Delta region added manufacturing jobs from 2010 to 2015, while the Coastal Plains and Highlands regions continued to lose employment in this sector. The Highlands region gained considerably more jobs in the service and trade sectors than the Coastal Plains and Delta regions during this five-year period. The Delta region gained more jobs in the construction, manufacturing and transportation sectors than the other two rural regions during this period.

The changing structure of the Arkansas economy, especially in the rural areas, suggests a need to diversify and invest in economic enterprises that utilize and add value to local resources. The

increasing need for skilled technicians in many industries suggests that those regions with a skilled and dependable workforce will be in a better position to grow their regional economies.

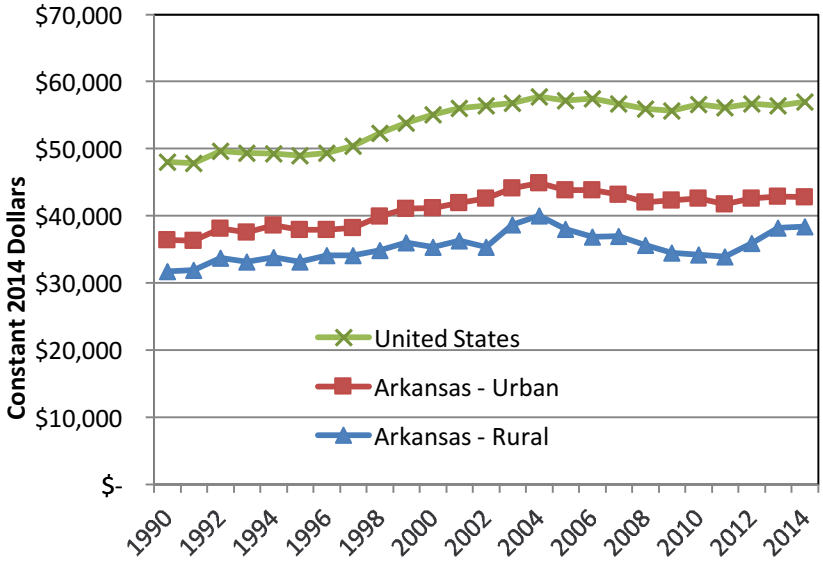
Average Earnings Per Job

The average earnings per job in Arkansas in 2014 were approximately 80 percent of the national average, $45,275 in Arkansas compared to a national average of $56,965. The real average earnings per job in Arkansas increased 3.8 percent from 2010 to 2014, while the national earnings per job increased only slightly (0.7 percent). However, the increase in the average earnings per job from pre-recession levels increased less than 2 percent (1.7 percent) due to a decline in earnings per job from 2007 to 2010 (Figure E10).

Although the earnings per job increased at a faster rate in rural areas of Arkansas, there remains a persistent gap between rural and urban earnings per job. The rural earnings per job increased by 3.8 percent from 2007 to 2014 compared to the urban decrease of 0.9 percent. This resulted in rural earnings per job growing from 86 percent to 90 percent of that in urban areas during this seven-year period.

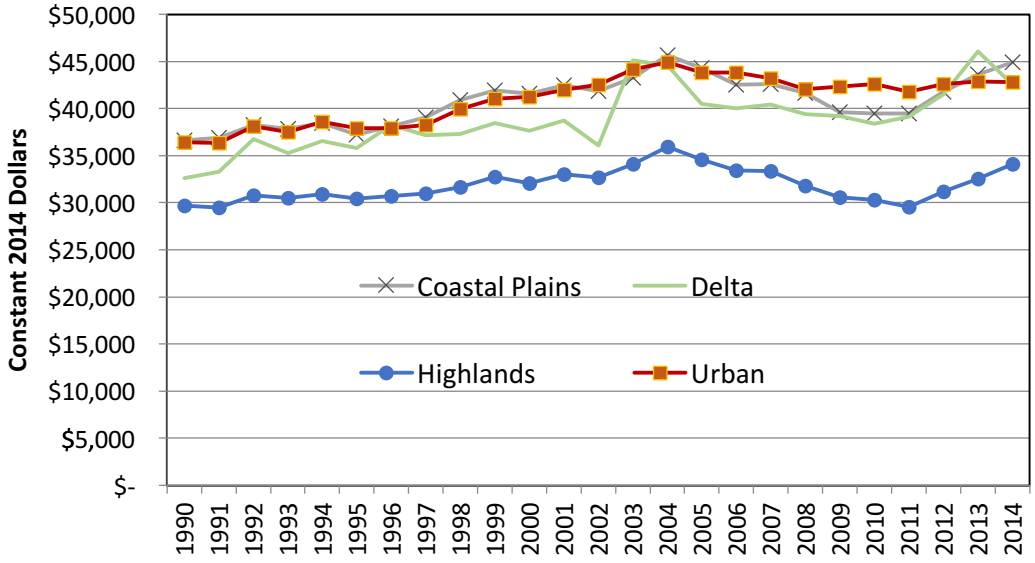
Regional changes in average earnings per job suggest a positive trend. The average earnings per job in the Coastal Plains and Delta regions increased by 5.5 percent and 5.3 percent, respectively. This increase resulted in earnings per job that were approximately the same or a little higher than the average for the urban counties (Figure E11). However, the earnings per job in the Highlands increased only 2.2 percent during this seven-year period and remained considerably lower than the other regions in the state and approximately 80 percent of urban earnings per job.

Figure E10. Average Earnings Per Job in the U.S. and the Urban and Rural Regions of Arkansas, 1990 to 2014



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce

Figure E11. Average Earnings Per Job in Urban and Rural Regions of Arkansas, 1990 to 2014



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Economy

Although there was an increase in earnings per job in all three rural regions, substantial variation existed among counties. Earnings per job declined in 26 counties from 2007 to 2014, including six urban counties. The remaining 49 counties experienced an increase in earnings per job ranging from only slight increases to 28 percent in Van Buren County. Many of the counties experiencing a decline in earnings per job were in the Highlands region with Lee County having the greatest decrease of 19 percent.

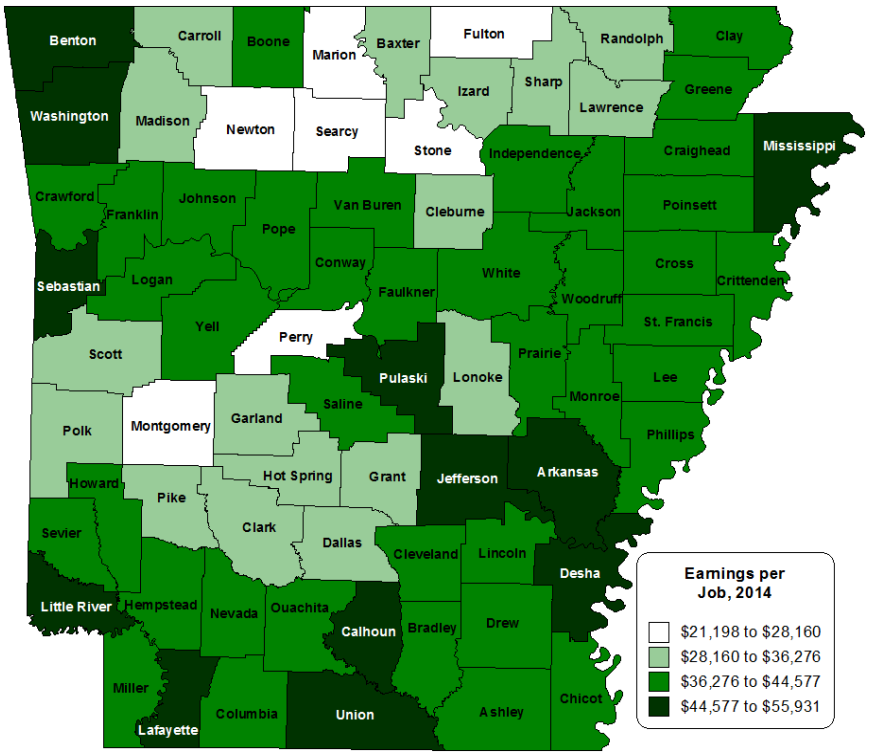
While there are definite differences in the earnings per job among regions, there are also differences among counties within regions. Earnings per job ranged from a low of $20,198 in Newton County to a high of $55,931 in Benton County (Figure E12). The largest differences among counties within regions were in the Highlands and urban regions. In the Highlands, earnings per job in 2014 ranged from a low of $20,198 in Newton County to a high of $42,121 in Pope County. Of the counties in urban areas, Lonoke County had the lowest earnings per job of $33,403 compared to a high of $55,931 in Benton County.

Although earnings per job increased on average in rural regions, the difference between urban and rural areas remains great.

Median Household Income

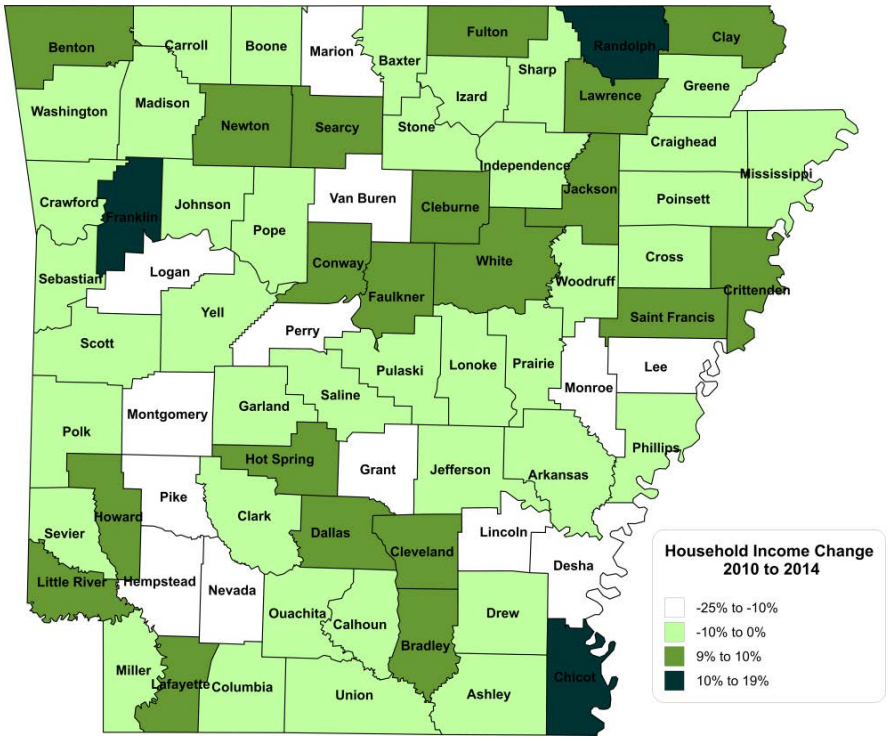
The median household income in Arkansas was $41,264 in 2014, which was approximately 77 percent of the median household income in the nation. Unlike average earnings per job, median household income did not vary greatly between regions but varied

Figure E12. Average Earnings Per Job, 2014



Source: Computed from REIS database, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Figure E13. Change in Median Household Income, 2010 to 2014



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

greatly within regions of the state. We use five-year averages (2006-2010 and 2010-2014) of median household income to compare over time since the yearly estimates vary greatly due to the small sample size in sparsely populated counties.

Median household income varied greatly among counties, ranging from a low of $26,986 in Lee County to a high of $56,325 in Benton County using the five-year average from 2010 to 2014. Although average regional median household incomes did not vary greatly, there was considerable variation among counties within regions. For example, there was a $16,000 difference in median household income between the low of $29,982 in Stone County and a high of $46,074 in Grant County in the Highlands region. Similarly, there was nearly a $16,000 difference between the lowest and highest median household income among the urban counties, ranging from $36,799 in Jefferson County to $56,325 in Benton County.

Although the regional average earnings per job increased from 2010 to 2014, median household income declined for the same period. Both rural and urban areas saw median household income decline, by 4.5 percent in rural areas and 3.1 percent in urban areas. Among rural regions, the Delta experienced the greatest decline of 5.8 percent.

Among all Arkansas counties, Nevada experienced the largest decline of nearly 25 percent in median household income, followed by Lee County with a decline of nearly 19 percent. Twenty-three counties had an increase in median household income during this four-year period, and of these, only Chicot, Franklin and Randolph counties had an increase over 10 percent (Figure E13).

Although average earnings per job have increased between 2010 and 2014, there are fewer jobs in rural areas of the state and many rural households have low and declining household incomes.

Social and Economic Stress

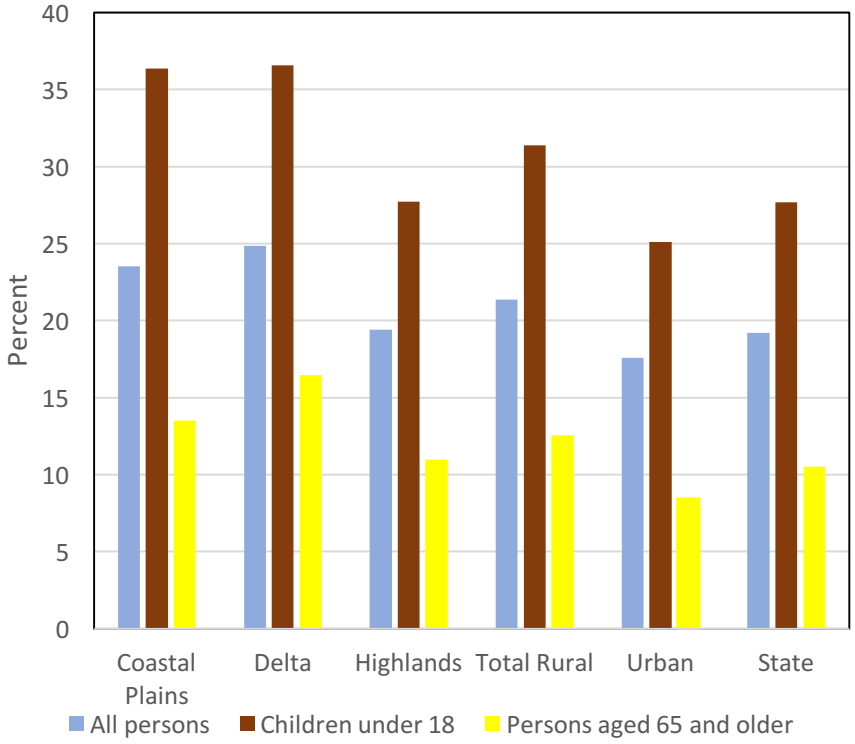
Indicators of social and economic stress are found by looking at the incidence and patterns of poverty and social service supports provided by state agencies. Information from the Department of Human Services on the number of people receiving supplemental nutrition assistance, participation in the free and reduced price lunch program and eligibility for Medicaid or ARKids First sheds light on financial stress. Food insecurity provides additional information on levels of social and economic stress.

Poverty

With an overall poverty rate estimated at 19.2 percent for 2014, Arkansas continued to rank in the five states with the highest poverty rates in the country. The national rate in 2014 was 15.6 percent. While the state as a whole ranked high, many rural areas of Arkansas had even higher rates of poverty. The rural regions of the state overall had a poverty rate of 21.4 percent, but nearly one in four persons in the Delta was poor (24.8 percent) (Figure SES1). Even in the Highlands, which had the lowest poverty rate of any of the rural regions, almost one in five persons was in poverty (19.4 percent). These rates were substantially higher than the urban counties of the state. Urban areas had a poverty rate of 17.6 percent, which still exceeded the national rate.

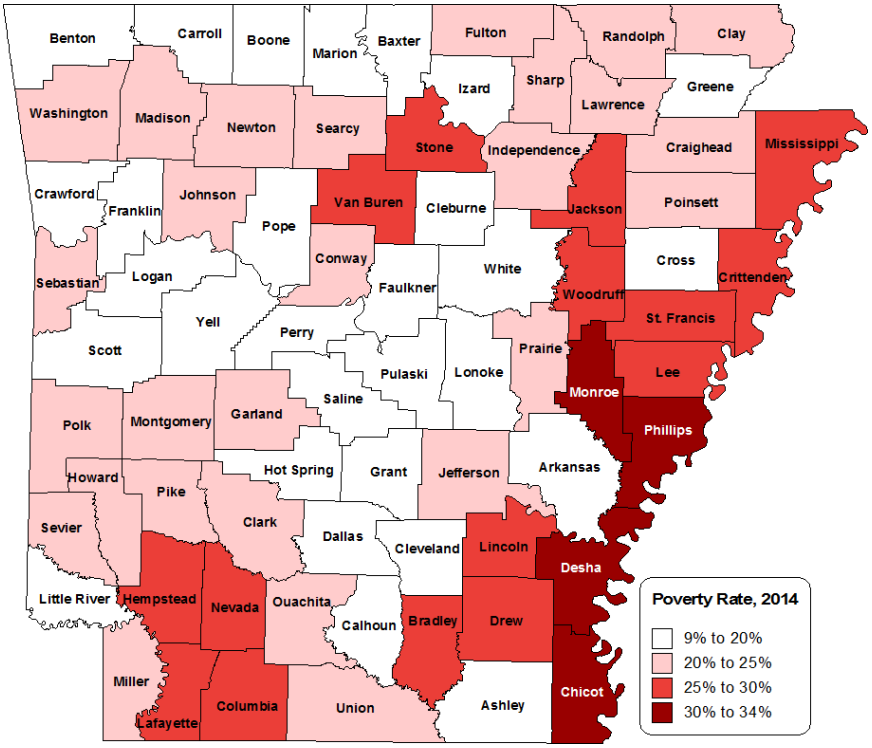
A glance at the map of poverty rates shown in Figure SES2 illustrates pockets of more extreme poverty. Nineteen counties had a poverty rate of 25 percent or greater. Only one of these counties was urban (Crittenden). Ten of the 19 counties with 25 percent poverty or more were in the Delta,

Figure SES1. Percent Persons in Poverty by Age, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Poverty Status

Figure SES2. Poverty Rate, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Poverty Status

six in the Coastal Plains and two in the Highlands. Four of these counties – all of them in the Delta – had a poverty rate exceeding 30 percent. More than one-third of the counties (27) had a poverty rate between 20 percent and 25 percent, and all but six were rural counties, with 16 of them in the Highlands. The only county with a poverty rate below 10 percent was Saline County, which is an urban county.

Counties with a long history of high poverty rates are classified as "persistent poverty" counties by the USDA's Economic Research Service. These are counties with poverty rates above 20 percent in the 1980, 1990, 2000 census and again in the American Community Survey 2007-2011. Counties with child poverty rates above 20 percent at the same time points are classified as "persistent child poverty" counties. Figure SES3 shows the 17 "persistent poverty" counties in the state. All but two (Crittenden and Jefferson) were rural. Of the 15 rural "persistent poverty" counties, nine were in the Delta, four are in the Coastal Plains and two in the Highlands.

Among the states, Arkansas' child poverty rate ranked fourth highest in 2014 at 27.7 percent compared to the U.S. rate of 21.9 percent, a national rate among the highest of the industrialized countries in the world. Rural regions again had child poverty rates considerably higher than those in urban areas. The Delta had a child poverty rate approaching 40 percent (36.6), while the Coastal Plains had a similarly high rate of 36.3 percent. The Highlands had the lowest rate, but even that was 27.7 percent.

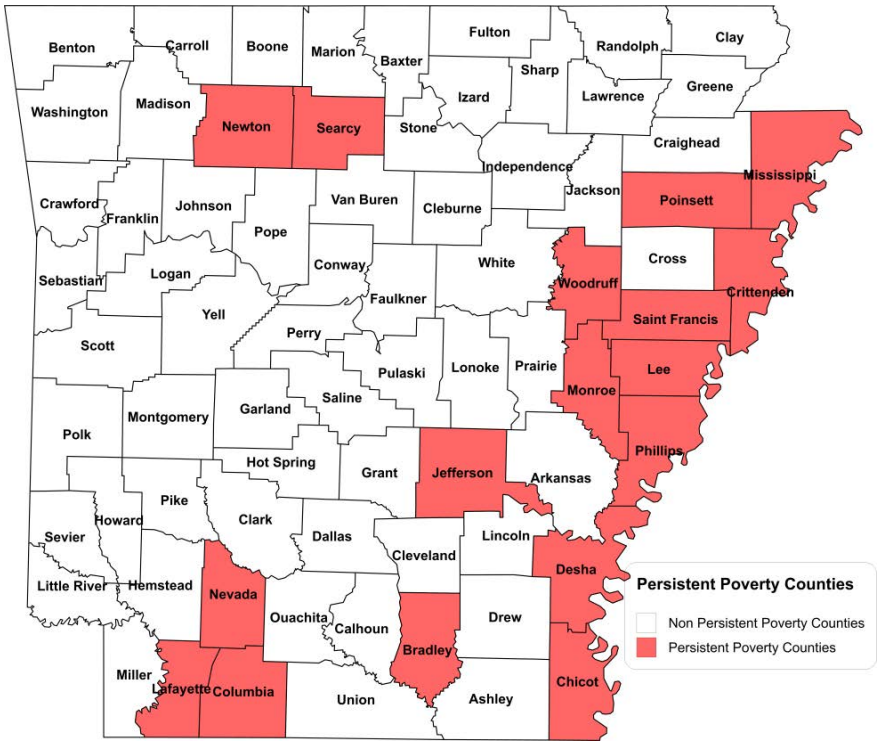
Over half (52.4 percent) of the children under 18 in the Coastal Plains county of Nevada live in poverty and nearly as many (50.2) live in poverty in the Delta's Phillips County. Twelve counties, all of them rural and most of them in the Delta, had a child poverty rate that exceeded 40 percent. Thirty-three counties in all, or almost half of the state's 75 counties, had more than one in three children under 18 living in poverty. Only four of these counties were urban. Of these 33 counties with one-third or more of children in poverty, eight were in the Coastal Plains, 11 are in the Delta and 10 are in the Highlands.

Among the states, Arkansas' child poverty rate ranked fourth highest in 2014 at 27.7 percent compared to the U.S. rate of 21.9 percent.

Perhaps even more striking is that more than half (39) of Arkansas' 75 counties were identified as persistent child poverty counties (Figure SES4). For more than 30 years, these counties have experienced deep child poverty. Only three of these "persistent child poverty" counties were urban (Crittenden, Jefferson and Miller). Fourteen counties were in the Delta, 14 in the Highlands, and eight are in the Coastal Plains. This means that the children in almost all Delta counties (87.5 percent), just under half of the Highlands (41 percent), and two-thirds (66.7 percent) of the Coastal Plains have long suffered from poverty.

Arkansas had an older population compared with the U.S. average, as many rural areas

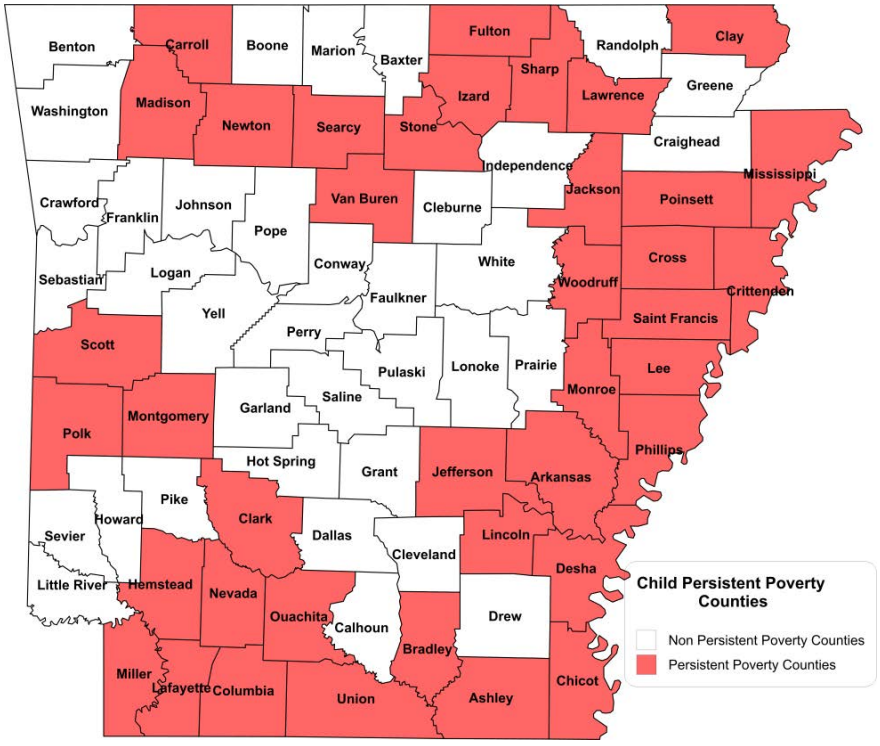
Figure SES3. Persistent Poverty Counties



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Poverty Status

in the state experience both aging in place and in-migration of retirees (see the discussions under Population). Poverty rates for persons over 65 years of age have fallen since the 1960s. In Arkansas, the poverty rate for people 65 and older has fallen slightly since 1999 (13.8 percent) to the current rate of 10.5 percent. Urban areas had an elderly poverty rate of 8.5 percent. However, rural counties had a higher elderly poverty rate of 12.5 percent, with the Delta region approximately one in six persons over 65 living in poverty (16.5 percent). The overall rate for rural counties, however, hides great variation. Lee County had the highest rate of older persons in poverty at 31.7 percent. Eight counties had an elder poverty rate of 20 percent or greater. All of these were rural counties, and six of them were in the Delta.

Figure SES4. Child Persistent Poverty Counties

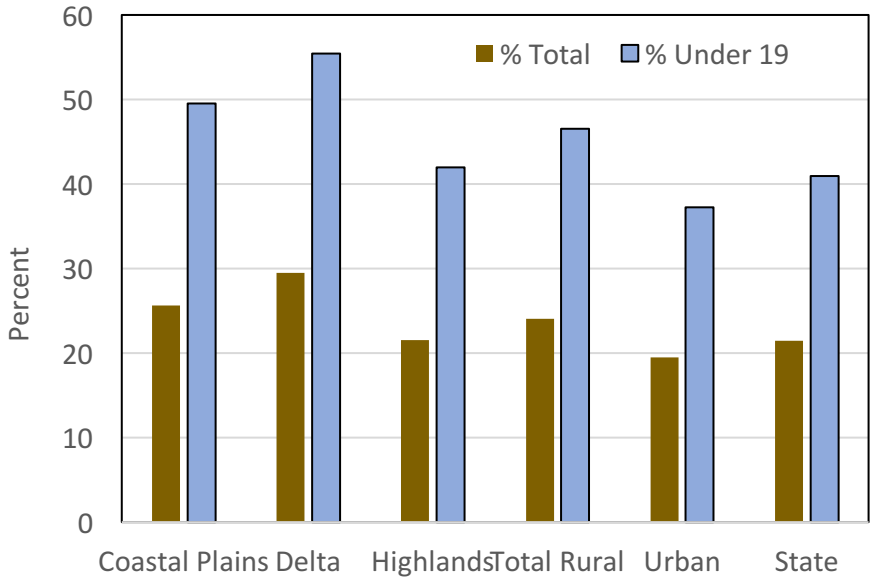


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Poverty Status

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Statewide, more than one in five (21.4 percent) Arkansans received supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP) in 2015, formerly known as food stamps. This is considerably higher than the national rate of about 14 percent. Rural areas and children were more likely to receive SNAP benefits than urban areas and other age groups (Figure SES5). Nearly one in four rural residents (24.1 percent) compared to one-in-five urban residents (19.5 percent) received SNAP benefits in 2015. Of the rural regions, the Delta had the highest rate of 29.5 percent, followed by the Coastal Plains with 25.6 percent.

Figure SES5. Percent of Population Receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)



Source: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Recipients Breakdown by Age, Arkansas Department of Human Services Statistical Report 2015

Twenty-seven counties in the state had more than one-fourth of their residents receiving supplemental nutrition assistance (Figure SES6). More than one-third of the population in six counties received supplemental nutrition assistance, five of which were in the Delta, plus Crittenden County, the only urban county.

Nearly two-thirds of public school children participated in the school lunch program during the 2015-2016 year.

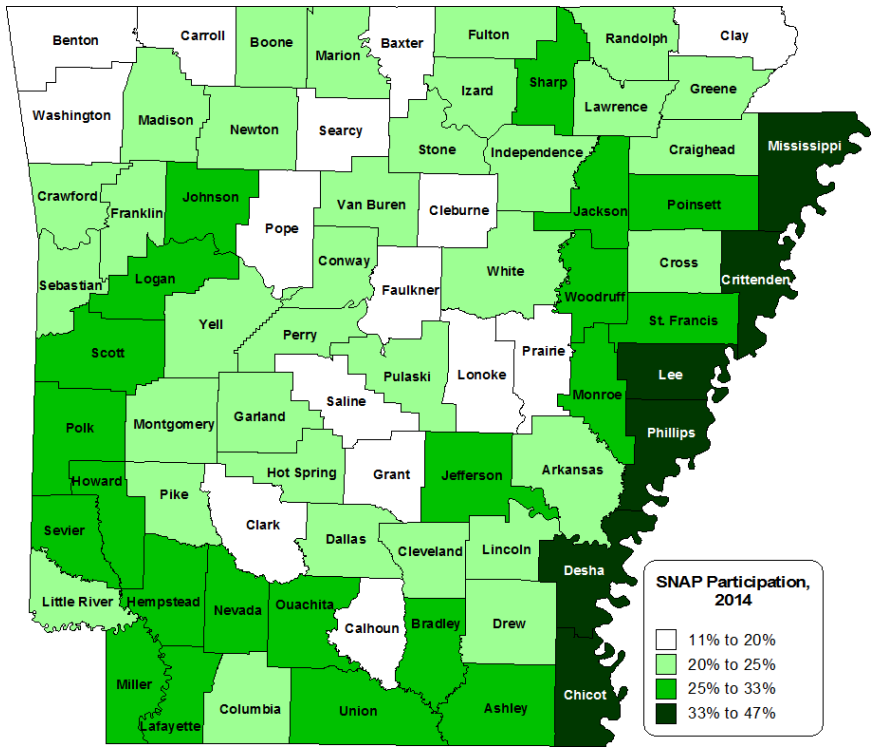
Children were more likely to receive SNAP benefits (41 percent) than working adults (18 percent) and the elderly (4 percent). More than half of the children in the Delta received SNAP benefits (55.5 percent) compared to 37.3 percent in urban areas. The Delta led again in the highest percentage of working-age adults receiving supplemental nutrition assistance with a rate of one in four (25.6 percent) compared to one in six (15.6 percent) for urban working-age adults. Elderly adults, those over 65, receiving food stamps were also concentrated in the Delta and rural areas compared to urban areas. In Lee County, a rural Delta county, nearly one in eight (12.6 percent) adults over 65 received supplemental nutrition assistance.

Free and Reduced Price Lunch

To ensure that every child enrolled in public school has lunch, the National School Lunch Program provides meals for eligible children for free or at a reduced cost. Nearly two-thirds of public school children in Arkansas (62.9 percent) participated in the school lunch program during the 2015-2016 year. This was a substantial increase from the 55.5 percent participation rate in the 2005-2006 school year.

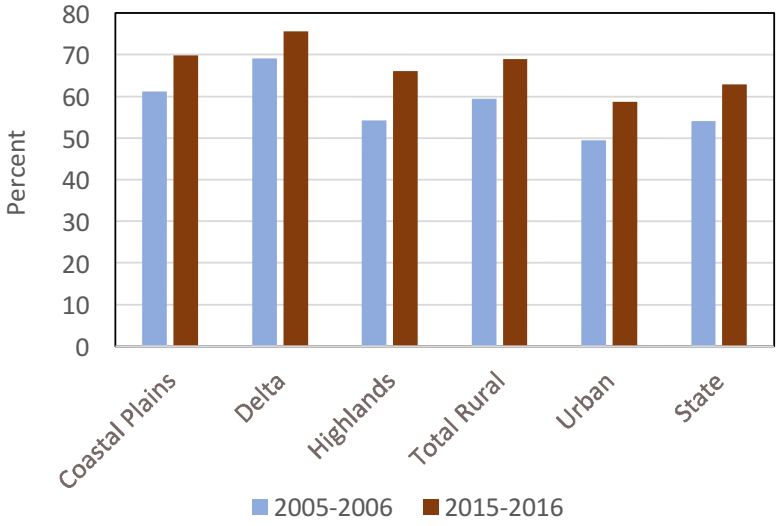
There was disparity between rural and urban enrollment rates in the free or reduced-price lunch program, with 69 percent participating in rural areas compared to

Figure SES6. SNAP Participation, 2014



Source: 2015 Statistical Report, Arkansas Department of Human Services.

Figure SES7. Percent of Enrolled Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch Programs



Source: Meal Status Counts SY 2015-2016, Arkansas Department of Education.

58.7 percent in urban areas (Figure SES7). Among the rural regions, the Delta had an enrollment rate of 75.7 percent, or three out of four students, whereas the Coastal Plains and Highlands had rates of 69.8 percent and 66 percent, respectively. Four counties, all rural, had 100 percent of their students enrolled in the free or reduced-price lunch program. Only five counties, four of them urban, had an enrollment below 50 percent.

Medicaid Eligibility

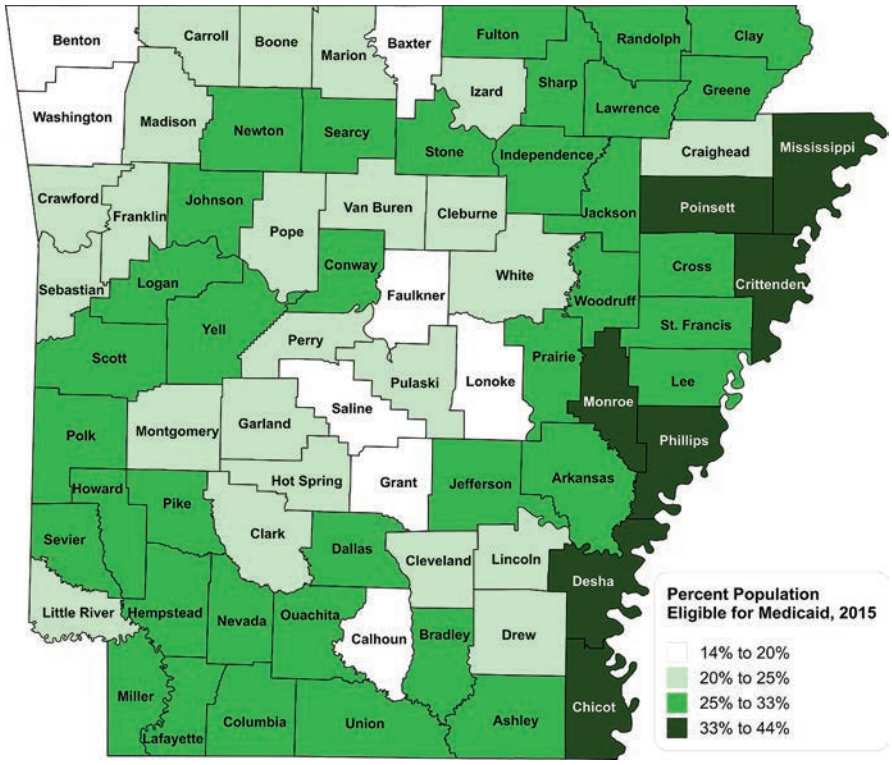
Overall, 23 percent of Arkansas' population was eligible for Medicaid in 2015. In rural areas, more than one-fourth of the population was eligible for Medicaid (26.4 percent), and that number rises to 31.2 percent for the Delta. The rate was one in five (20.8 percent) in urban areas. In Phillips County in the Delta, more than four-in-ten people qualified for Medicaid (43.7 percent). Seven counties, six of them Delta counties and one urban county (Crittenden) had a rate of Medicaid eligibility that exceeded one in three. Thirty-six counties or half the state had a rate of one out of four people or higher. All but two (Jefferson and Miller counties) were located in rural regions.

Figure SES8 shows the concentration of Medicaid eligibility in rural areas, especially in the Delta.

ARKids Eligibility

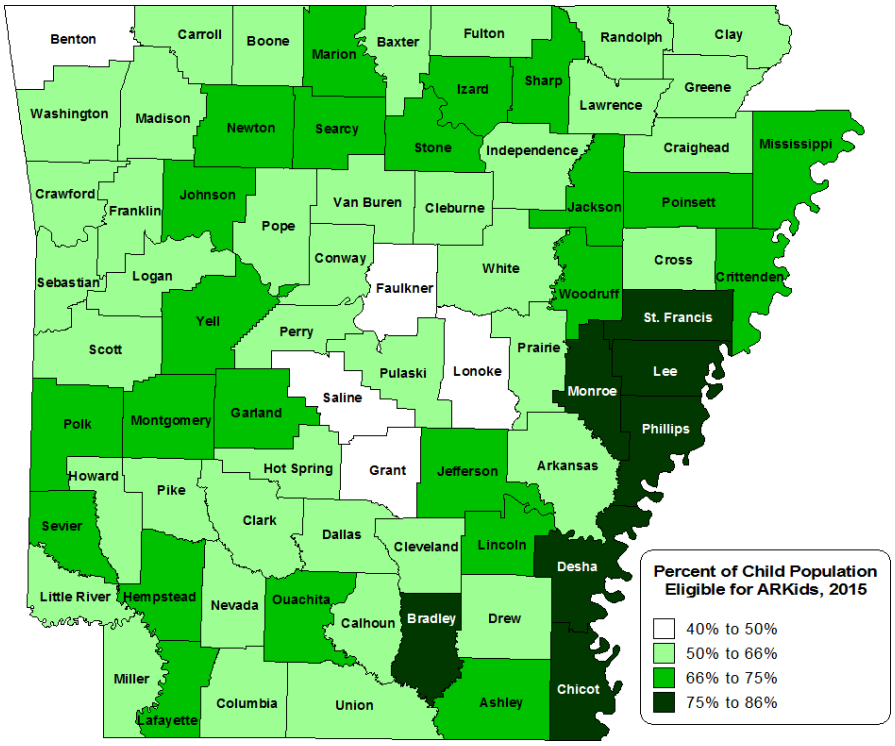
The percentages of children eligible for ARKids First in 2015 were also geographically concentrated. Figure SES9 shows the distribution across the state of children eligible for ARKids. All

Figure SES8. Percent of Population Eligible for Medicaid, 2015



Source: Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families.

Figure SES9. Percent of Child Population Eligible for ARKids, 2015



Source: Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families.

of the rural regions exceeded 60 percent of children eligible for ARKids, but the Delta had the highest rate with 70.3 percent compared to 54 percent for urban areas. Overall, the state had nearly six out of ten children (58.3 percent) eligible for ARKids First.

Seventy of the 75 counties in the state had over half of their child population eligible to receive ARKids First insurance. Thirty (30) counties had an eligibility rate of at least two-thirds (66 percent or greater). Of these, only three were urban counties. Seven counties, all of them rural and six in the Delta, had three out of four children eligible for ARKids First or more. Phillips County in the Delta had the state's highest rate, with more than eight out of ten (85 percent) children eligible for ARKids.

Food Insecurity

Another measure of vulnerability for communities is food insecurity. Food insecurity is defined by USDA and means that persons at times do not have enough food for an active and healthy life for all members in the household and limited or unreliable availability of foods providing adequate nutrition. Food insecurity indicates that the household is struggling and may at times have to make choices between adequate food and other basic needs such as housing or medicines.

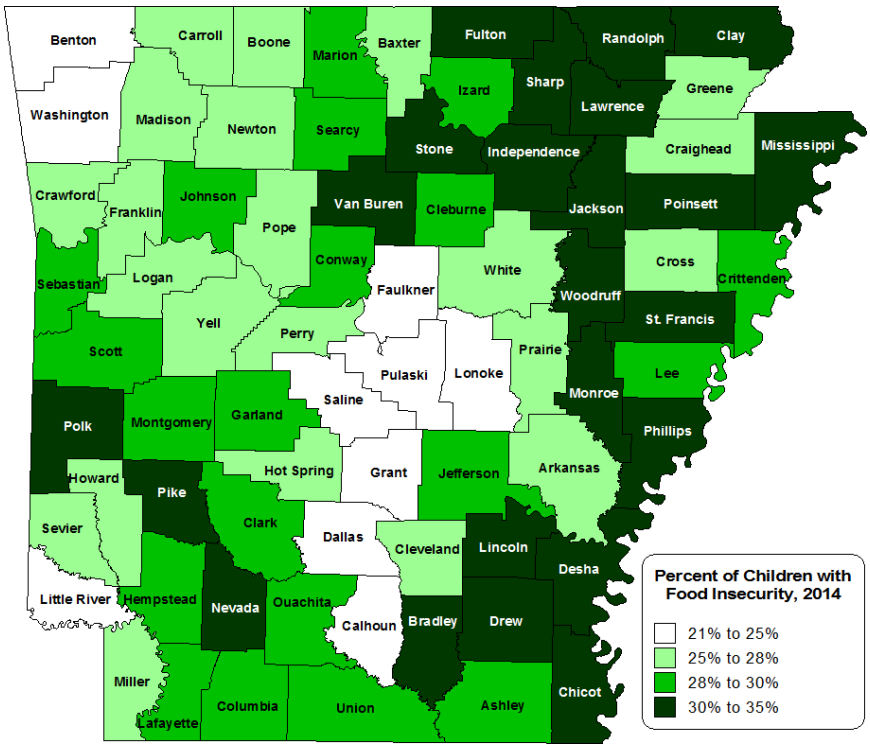
Nationally, about 42.2 million or about 13 percent of the population is food insecure. Arkansas had the second highest rate of food insecurity in the country averaged over 2013-2015 according to the latest figures released by USDA. Statewide for the latest annual data available, 2014, the rate of food insecurity was 18.8 percent. Rural areas experienced slightly more food insecurity nationally and in Arkansas where the rate was 19.6 or nearly one out of five persons. The Delta had the highest regional rate at nearly one out of four (23.5 percent).

> Food insecurity indicates that the household is struggling and may at times have to make choices between food and other basic needs such as housing or medicines.

Rates of food insecurity were higher among children than adults. Arkansas was ranked among the five states with the highest child food insecurity. The rate in Arkansas was estimated at slightly more than one in four children (26.3 percent). Urban areas had a slightly lower rate at 24.7 percent. Rural children, however, fared worse where 28.6 percent were food insecure. The rate rises to 30.1 percent in the Delta. Twenty-three counties, or nearly one-third of the state's 75 counties, had a child food insecurity rate of 30 percent or higher. All of these were rural counties, with 11 of them in the Delta. Of the ten counties with the lowest rates of child food insecurity, and having rates below 25 percent, six were urban counties.

Figure SES10 shows the geographic distribution of child food insecurity rates.

Figure SES10. Percent of Children With Food Insecurity, 2014



Source: Map the Meal Gap 2016: Overall Food Insecurity in Arkansas by County in 2014, Feeding America.

Health

Infant mortality rates and obesity levels are used as broad measures of the health of Arkansans. Availability of health care is measured by physicians per 100,000 people. In addition to availability of care, two other factors related to poor health outcomes are considered: eligibility for the Private Option insurance plan and lack of a regular doctor. New this year is the inclusion of County Health Rankings provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). These rankings include a number of indicators in health outcomes and health risk factors that, if improved, can result in healthier individuals, communities and counties in the state.

Infant Mortality

The five-year infant mortality rate[1] (IMR) for Arkansas for the combined years between 2010 and 2014 was 6.9 deaths per 1,000 live births. The U.S. rate in 2014 was 5.8 deaths per 1,000 live births. Nationally, in 2014, Arkansas ranked fourth highest among all the states.

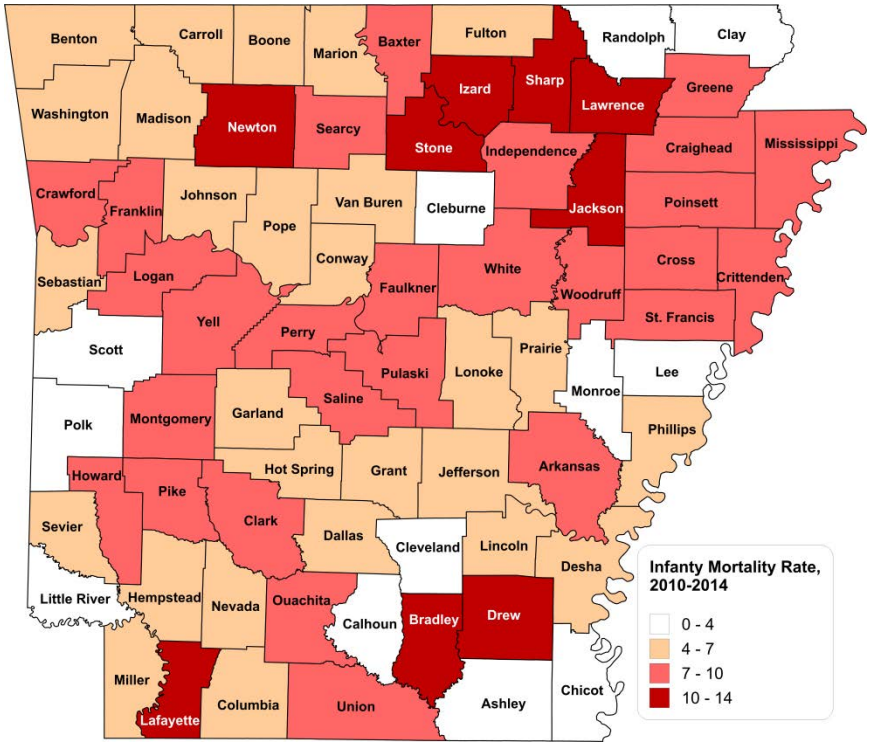
While the state's urban and rural infant mortality rates were not substantially different, there was very notable variation between rural regions and among counties. The rural regions had a range of IMRs from a low of 6.7 in the Coastal Plains to a high of 7.2 in the Delta.

Counties displayed even more variation in the five-year average, ranging from a low of 0 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in Calhoun, Cleveland and Little River counties, to a high of 13.9 in Lafayette County. Nine counties had IMRs of 10.0 or above, all of which were rural counties, and in the 20 counties with the highest IMRs, 17 of them were rural.

> The rural regions had a range of infant mortality rates from a low of 6.7 in the Coastal Plains to a high of 7.2 in the Delta.

Counties display even more variation in the five-year average, ranging from a low of 0 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in Calhoun, Cleveland and Little River counties, to a high of 13.9 in Lafayette County (Figure H1).

Figure H1. Infant Mortality Rate, 2010-2014



Source: Arkansas Department of Health.

Obesity

Obesity can also be used as a measure of population health status. An individual is considered overweight with a body mass index (BMI) of 25 to 30. Obesity is defined as a BMI of 30 or more. In 2015, 36 percent of the adult population in Arkansas was categorized as obese (Figure H2). In a 2016 report by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Arkansas ranked sixth nationally in the percentage of adults who were obese or had a BMI of 30 or more. Every county in the state had over 30 percent of their adult population classified as obese. The highest rate was in Phillips County with nearly half of all adults (45.5 percent) having a BMI of 30 or more. The lowest rate of 30.1 percent was in Benton County. Regionally, the Coastal

[1] Infant Mortality Rates tend to be somewhat "unstable" meaning they will sometimes have large changes between time periods. Because the number of births in some counties is relatively small in number and the infant deaths even smaller, a change of one or two deaths can sometimes result in a large change in the IMR.

Plains and Delta had higher percentages of obese adults at approximately 37 percent, meaning slightly more than one out of three adults were obese.

While the latest available data for adults considered only those with a BMI ≥ 30 (classified as obese), data for children included those with a BMI ≥ 25 (overweight) as well as those with a BMI ≥ 30 (obese). Children who are classified as overweight or obese are discussed here in part because these children face both increased risks as children and later as adults.

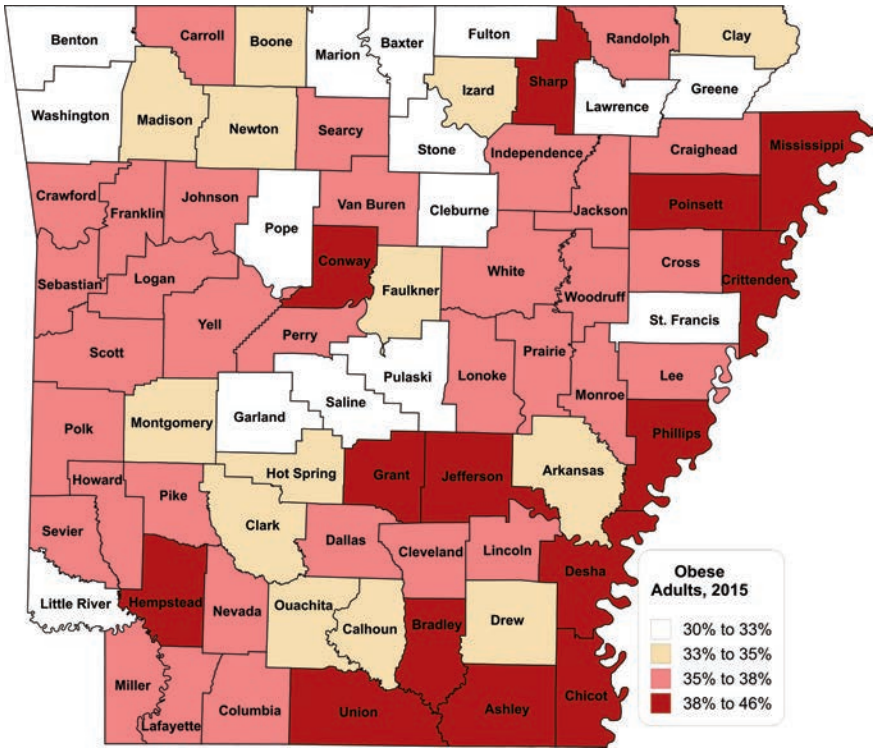
> In 2015, 36 percent of the adult population in Arkansas was categorized as obese.

When children between the ages of 2 and 19 are considered, 38.7 percent were either overweight or obese (having a BMI of 25 or higher) (Figure H3). The urban counties had a slightly lower obesity rate than rural counties. Among the rural regions, the Highlands had the lowest rates of overweight or obese children at 39.5 percent while the Delta has the highest at 44.1 percent. These were both slightly higher than the urban rate of 37.1 percent. Izard County had the lowest rate of overweight or obese children at 32.7 percent, while Chicot County had the highest at 49.4 percent or nearly one out of two children. (Data for Lee County was not included.)

Health Care Availability and Access

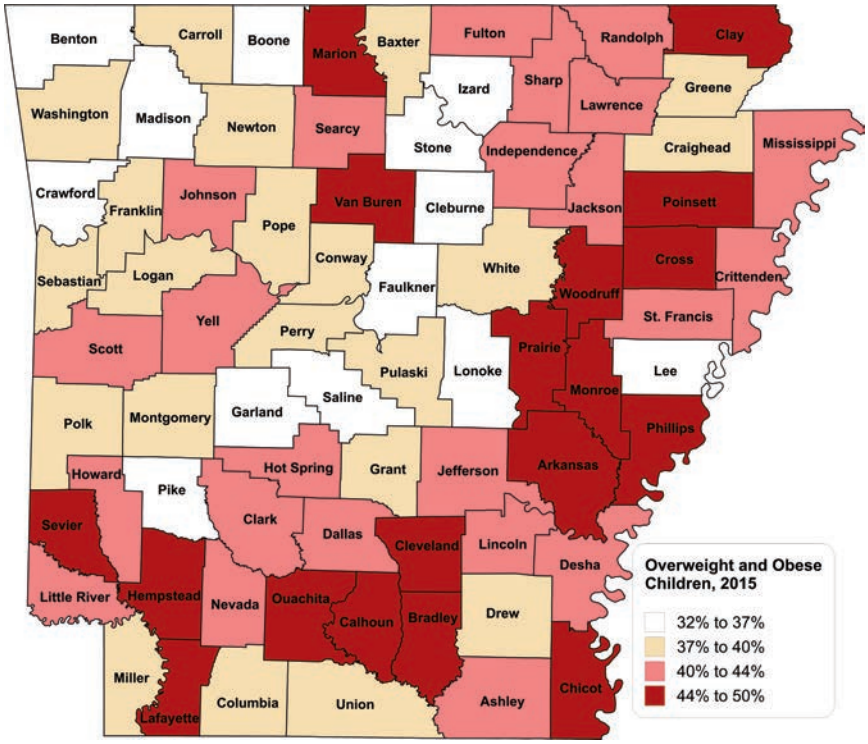
Accessing health care is more of a challenge for rural residents than for urban residents. This is due in part to rural areas having less availability of health care services (Figure H4). Overall, in 2014, the state had 125.4 primary

Figure H2. Obese Adults (Percent), 2015



Source: Arkansas Department of Health.

Figure H3. Overweight and Obese Children (Percent), 2015



Source: Arkansas Department of Health.

care physicians per 100,000 people. However, this number masked substantial variations in rural and urban availability. The rural areas had 69.2 primary care physicians per 100,000 as compared to 166.3 per 100,000 for urban areas, a rate more than double that of the rural areas. These numbers also mask the regional variation in rural areas.

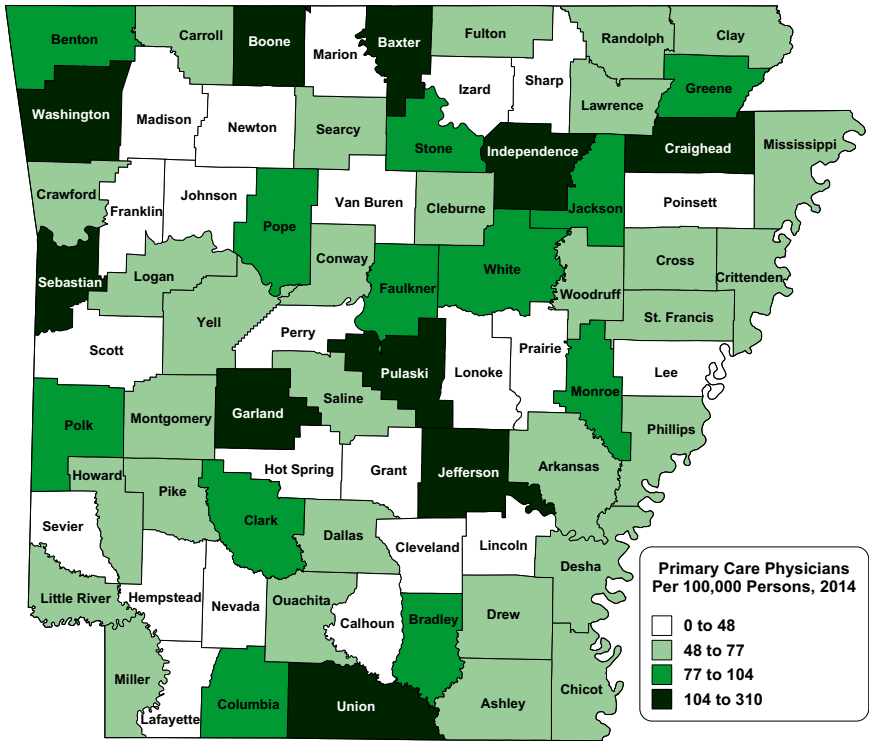
When comparing rural regions, the Delta had the lowest number of primary care physicians per 100,000 at 57.8. The Coastal Plains had 73.0 per 100,000 and the Highlands had 72.7 per 100,000. Again, these numbers mask even greater variability between rural counties. Eight rural counties had less than 20 primary care physicians per 100,000 including Prairie County, which had no primary care physicians in 2014. Only six rural counties had more than 100 primary care physicians per 100,000 with Baxter County having the highest number for rural counties at 144.5 per 100,000.

> In 2014, rural areas had 69.2 primary care physicians per 100,000 compared to 166.3 per 100,000 for urban areas.

Unsurprisingly, Pulaski County had the highest rate in the state with 309.8 physicians per 100,000 persons, more than double the statewide rate, and more than four times the rate for rural counties combined.

In April of 2014, Arkansas became the first state in the country to offer the "private option" under the Affordable Care Act. As it is now called, the Private Option (Health Care Independence Act) extends coverage to lower-income working age adults with the goal of reducing the number of uninsured

Figure H4. Primary Care Physicians Per 1,000 Persons, 2014



Source: Arkansas Department of Health.

Arkansans without expanding Medicaid. Under the current Private Option plan, subsidized insurance is available for persons with an income up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. Statewide, as of June 2015, 15.1 percent of adults between the ages of 19 and 64 were eligible for the Private Option. Reflecting greater poverty of rural areas, a higher percentage of working age adults in rural communities, 18.1 percent, were eligible. In the Delta, this rate increased to 20.5 percent or about one in five working age adults. Four counties in the state had rates that exceeded 25 percent, and all of these were in the Delta. Benton County, an urban county, had the lowest rate at 8.3 percent.

Another indicator of health care access is having a regular doctor. Persons without a regular doctor often have inconsistent medical attention and might receive conflicting treatment or prescriptions because the practitioner may not have complete or accurate patient information.

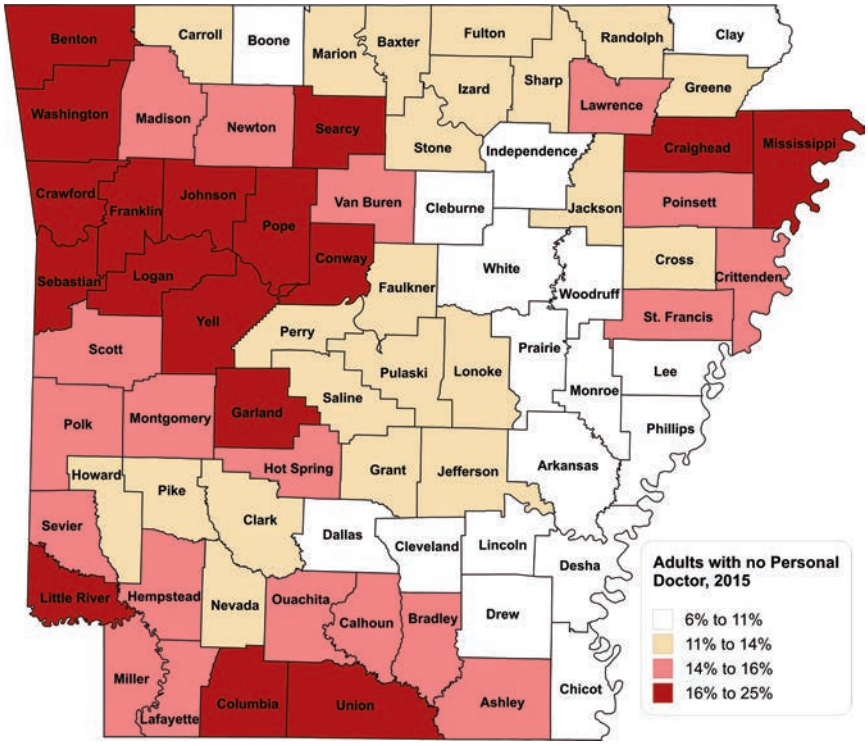
Approximately 16 percent of adults in Arkansas had no personal doctor (Figure H5). In this measure of health care availability, rural counties fared slightly better than urban counties. The percent of adults with no personal doctor in rural areas was 13.7 percent, whereas in urban areas it was almost 16 percent. Among the rural regions, the Delta had the lowest rate at 12.2 percent and the Coastal Plains had the highest rate at 14.3 percent. Counties ranged from a low of just over 6 percent in Cleveland County to a high of just over 24 percent in Pope County. Two counties (Pope and Yell), both rural and in the Highlands, reported 20 percent or more of adults did not have a regular source of health care.

Figures H6 and H7 show the County Health Rankings and Health Outcomes for each county in the state. The County Health Rankings use an index, which is a way to summarize many indicators into a single number. Health Outcomes include measures of length and quality of life such as premature death, days of poor physical or mental health, and low birthweight of babies. Health Factors include measures of health behaviors (such as smoking, diet, physical activity), clinical care (access and quality of health care services and providers), social and economic factors (such as educational attainment, unemployment, poverty, crime rates), and physical environment (air and water quality, housing and transit systems). The indicators are combined into a single value or index each for Health Outcomes and Health Factors and then the counties in the state ranked from highest to lowest.

The Delta and much of the Coastal Plains counties were found in the bottom 25 percent of the Health Outcome rankings in the state.

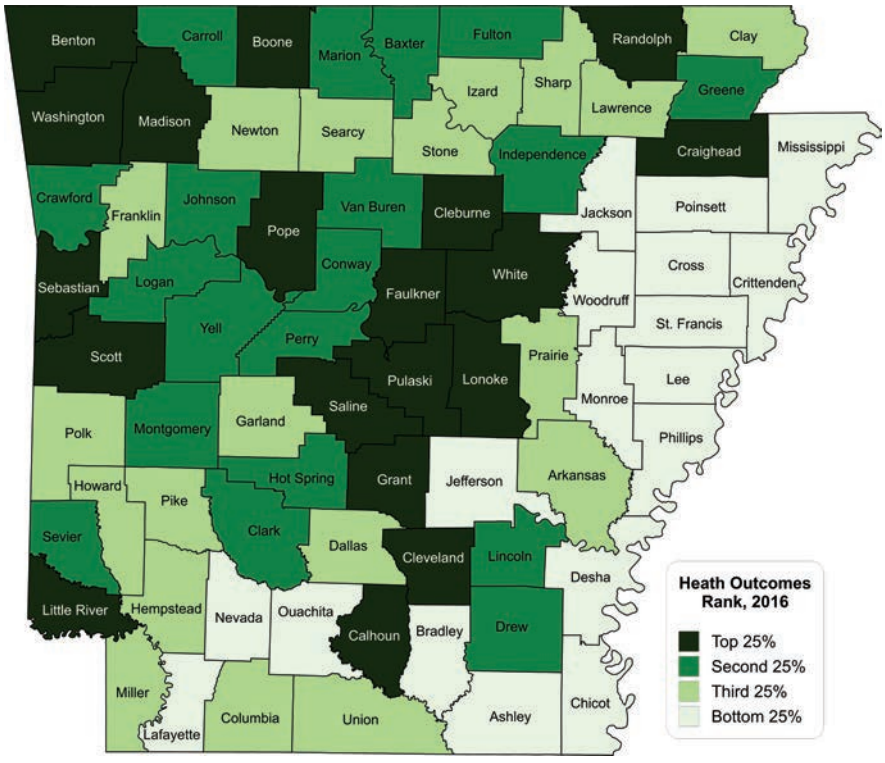
Figure H6, which shows the Health Outcome rankings, makes clear that the Delta and much of the Coastal Plains counties were found in the bottom 25 percent of the rankings in the state. Also, the map clearly shows the advantage of the urban areas in better health outcomes as eight of the 13 urban counties were in the top 25 percent. Jefferson and Crittenden were the only urban counties in the bottom 25 percent. Eight of the 11 rural counties which were in the top 25 percent were in the Highlands and the remaining three were in the Coastal Plains.

Figure H5. Adults With No Personal Doctor (Percent), 2015



Source: Arkansas Department of Health.

Figure H6. Health Outcomes Rank (Percent), 2016



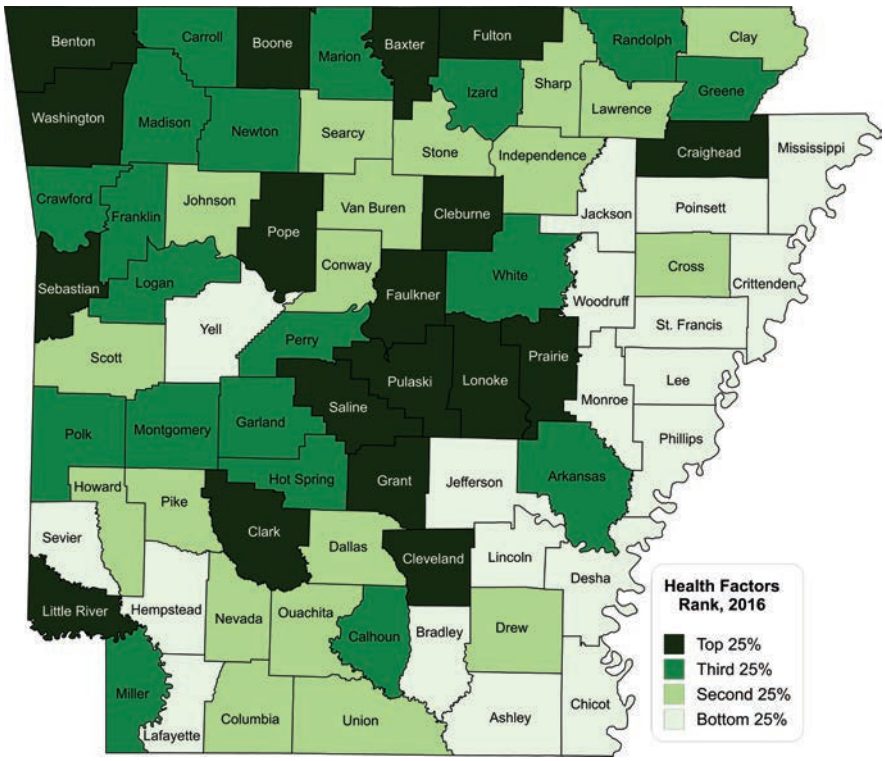
Source: Arkansas Department of Health.

Health

Figure H7 displays the Health Factors rankings. The pattern for the bottom 25 percent was largely the same as for Health Outcomes, comprised mostly of the Delta and much of the Coastal Plains. Eight of the 13 urban counties were in the top 25 percent of the Health Factors rankings. Ten rural counties were in the top 25 percent, including Prairie County from the Delta region. The bottom 25 percent was again dominated by rural counties from the Delta and the Coastal Plains, with Jefferson and Crittenden Counties the only urban counties and Sevier and Yell Counties the only ones from the Highlands.

The maps demonstrate the close relationship between positive health outcomes for residents and the importance of both individual behaviors such as smoking and community-level measures such as access to and availability of health care.

Figure H7. Health Factors Rank (Percent), 2016



Source: Arkansas Department of Health.

Education

People are Arkansas' greatest resource, and the social and economic value of a well-educated population cannot be overstated. Investing in education provides a more skilled work force, lowers poverty rates and creates the ability to participate in civil society, which benefits the individual, communities and the state. To maintain and improve the state's human capital, improving access to high-quality education from pre-kindergarten to community college and beyond is critical.

Pre-K Enrollment

Pre-K education is vital to the cognitive development of children as well as a critical component for ensuring child preparedness for kindergarten and elementary education. Providing good pre-K opportunities also provides long-term benefits to the individual and society, including higher lifetime earnings, avoidance of criminal behavior, better health and less dependence on government assistance.

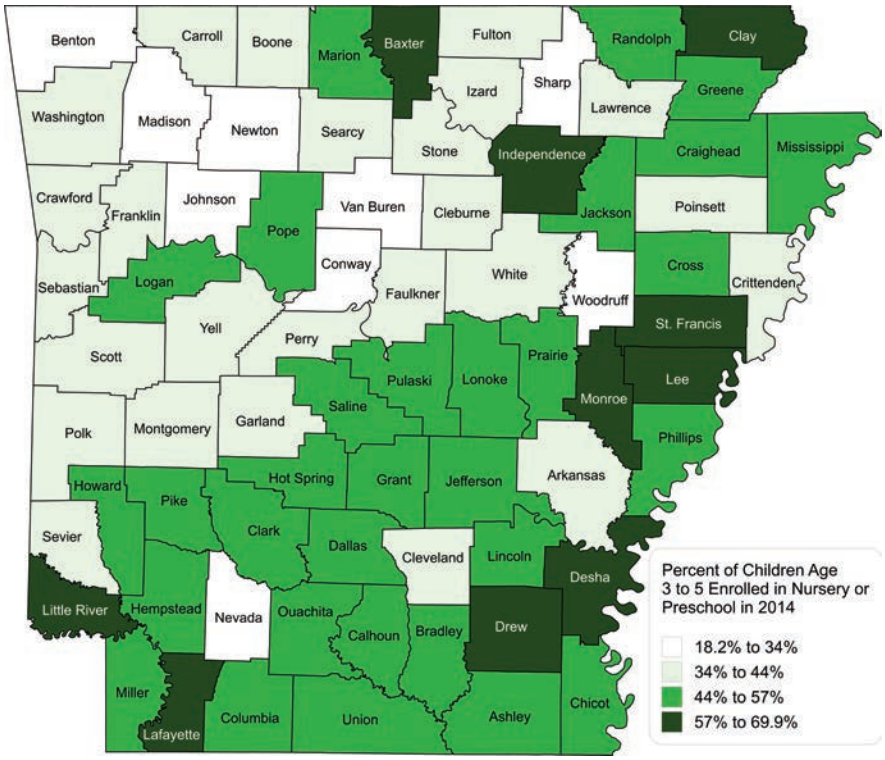
Rural areas had a somewhat higher percentage of children enrolled in pre-K programs compared to urban areas.

Although the number of children ages three to five enrolled in pre-K programs is growing, in 2014 less than one-half (43 percent) of children in this age category were attending pre-K programs. Within the state, there were differences in pre-K enrollment between rural and urban areas, regions of the state and counties within the same region. Rural areas had a somewhat higher percentage of children enrolled in pre-K programs (46 percent) compared to urban areas (41 percent). Although there was some variation among regions, with the Delta and Coastal Plains having slightly more than one-half of children enrolled in pre-K programs, the greatest differences were among counties within regions.

While the number of children ages three to five declined in the rural areas of the state by about 1 percent from 2007 to 2012, the number enrolled in pre-K programs increased nearly 6 percent. This contrasted with urban areas of the state where both the number of children ages three to five and those enrolled in pre-K programs increased by about 6 percent.

Despite leading the state in pre-K enrollment in 2014, the Coastal Plains also includes the counties with the highest and lowest rates of enrollment in the state (Figure ED1). Nevada County had the lowest rate of enrollment, where only about one in five children were enrolled in pre-K programs in 2014. Conversely, in Little River County nearly seven of every ten children were enrolled in pre-K. Of the four counties with 65 percent to 70 percent enrollment, two were in the Coastal Plains and two were in the Delta. Only two Highlands counties, Baxter and Independence, had enrollment greater than 55 percent in 2014.

Figure ED1. Percent of Children 3 To 5 Years Old Enrolled in Nursery or Preschool in 2014



Source: Computed from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Education

Public School (K-12) Enrollment

While public school K-12 enrollment increased by 9 percent in urban counties, it declined by 7 percent in rural counties from 2007-08 to 2016-17 (Figure ED2). All three rural regions experienced enrollment declines in their public schools during this period, from a loss of 15 percent of students in the Delta to nearly 10 percent in the Coastal Plains to slightly over 3 percent in the Highlands.

Fifty-one of the 62 rural counties had declining K-12 enrollment from 2007-08 to 2016-17. All counties in the Delta and Coastal Plains, except for Greene and Columbia, had declining school enrollments during this period. Six rural counties lost 20 percent or more of their public school enrollment.

To overcome shrinking population, decreased funding and rising costs, public school districts are often forced to consolidate into large school districts. Such decisions burden students who must be bused long distances to attend school and strain rural communities due to job loss. School consolidation may also result in the loss of identity for small communities as, historically, the local school often serves as a gathering place and site of social interactions for the entire community.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment levels in Arkansas continued to grow slowly, but remained well below the national average in 2014. There also remains a wide divide in educational attainment between the rural and urban areas of the state. In 2010, Arkansas ranked 44th nationally in percentage of adults age 25 and over with high school diplomas and 49th in percentage of people with college degrees. In 2014, 6.2 percent of Arkansans ages 25 and older had an associate's degree and 20.7 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 7.9 percent with an associate's degree and 29.3 percent with a bachelor's degree or higher in the United States.

While more than 86 percent of urban residents had a high school diploma, only about 81 percent of rural residents had a high school diploma in 2014 (Figure ED3). There is only a small difference in the percentage of population with associate's degrees between urban and rural areas of the state, 6.4 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively, However, the difference in the percentage with bachelor's degrees or higher is large, 25.5 percent in urban areas versus 14.4 percent in rural areas.

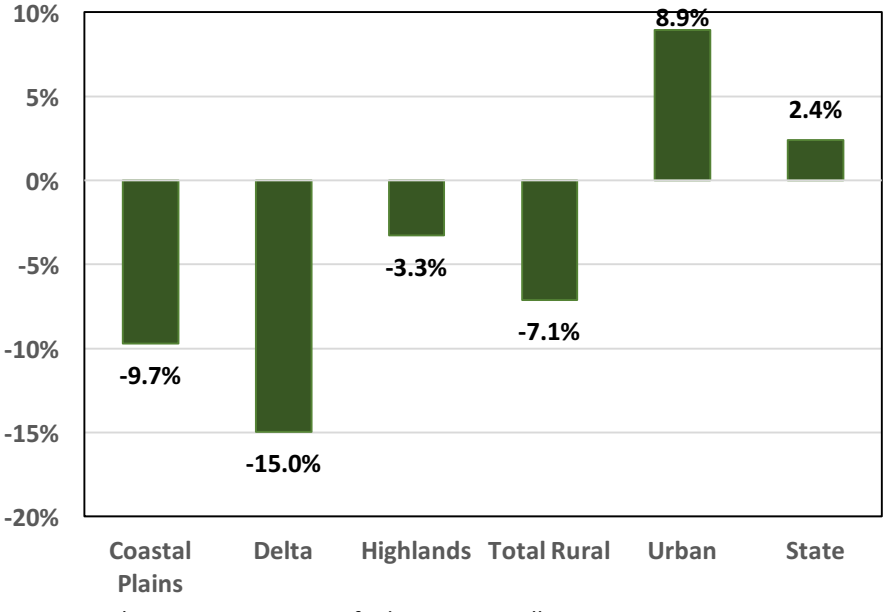
Not only was the population in the rural regions less likely to have bachelor's degrees or higher, but the Delta region had a smaller share of their population holding these degrees than the other two regions. In the Delta, only 11.5 percent of the population 25 years and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 15.7 in the Coastal Plains and 15.2 percent in the Highlands.

Low rates of growth in educational attainment, from associate's degrees to bachelor's degrees and higher, have left all regions of Arkansas, but especially the rural regions, far behind national levels, where more than 29 percent of Americans 25 or older had graduated with a four-year degree or higher.

College-Going Rates

In 2005, 68.6 percent of high school graduates in the United States entered college as first-time students, compared to only 45.5 percent of Arkansas high school graduates. In 2013, the

Figure ED2. Percent Change in K-12 Public School Enrollments, 2007-2008 to 2016-2017



Source: Arkansas Department of Education Enrollment Data.

college-going rate in Arkansas had grown by nearly 13 percent to more than 51.4 percent. Despite this growth, college-going rates in Arkansas in 2013 remained lower than the U.S. average of 66 percent.

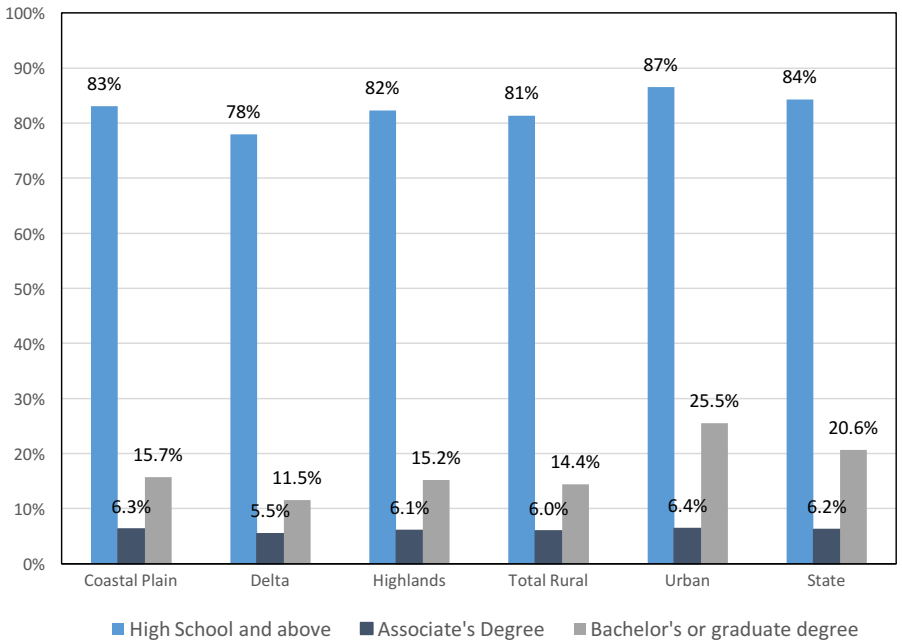
> Low rates of growth in educational attainment, from associate's degrees to bachelor's degrees and higher, have left all regions of Arkansas, but especially the rural regions, far behind national levels.

However, college-going rates in the state decreased by 5.5 percent between 2012 and 2014. College-going rates in Arkansas during this period decreased for all regions, except the Coastal Plains, where college-going increased to 53 percent. Other rural regions saw small decreases in college-going rates – Delta counties only sent 52 percent of high school grads to Arkansas public colleges in 2014 while the Highlands sent about 51 percent. Urban college-going rates decreased 11 percent between 2012 and 2014.

There was only a slight difference in college-going rates between rural and urban regions and no substantial difference among rural regions of the state. The college-going rate was 48.5 percent in urban areas and 51.6 percent in rural areas. However, there were differences among counties.

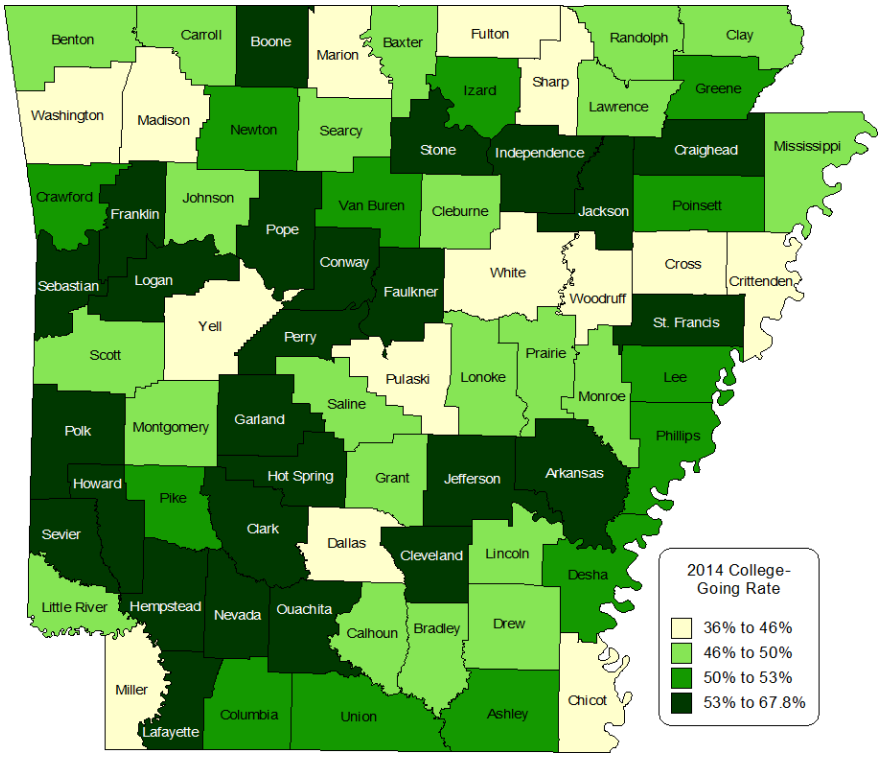
The college-going rate also varied widely among counties (Figure ED4). Sixty-eight percent of high school graduates from Clark county went to college in 2014, and four other counties had

Figure ED3. Educational Attainment by Percent of Population 25 Years of Age and Older, 2014



Source:Computed from 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure ED4. 2014 College-Going Rate of Public School Graduates Attending Arkansas Public Universities and Community Colleges



Source: Computed from 2015 report on the College-Going Rate of Public School Graduates, Arkansas Department of Higher Education.

college-going rates above 60 percent. In contrast, three counties had college-going rates below 40 percent.

STEM Education

Between 2010 and 2014 the number of STEM-related degrees awarded increased by 41 percent. However, a large portion of this growth was attributable to an increase in the number of programs classified under the STEM system, rather than an increase in the number of students enrolling in and graduation from STEM programs.

Nonetheless, there remain clear divisions between STEM graduates in four-year institutions and two-year institutions. Between 2010 and 2014 STEM credentials awarded increased by 58 percent at four-year universities. In contrast, growth at two-year colleges was relatively stagnant, increasing by only 2.3 percent during the same period and decreasing by nearly 16 percent between 2012 and 2014.

The number of STEM graduates continuing their education in graduate programs also declined between 2010 and 2014. In 2010, 28 percent of all public and private STEM baccalaureate students continued their education in an advanced degree program within five years of graduation. By 2014, only 15 percent of STEM graduates continued to a higher-level degree, representing a nearly 47 percent decrease.

While most agree that high quality education is critical for individual well-being and for the state to remain competitive in a global economy, rural communities struggle to provide educational services to their citizens. Even though recent years have seen rural areas with higher college-going rates, as well as higher early childhood education enrollment rates, such differences had not translated into higher rates of educational attainment for rural citizens. The ability of state and local leaders to improve educational services in rural communities will be critical for Arkansas' continued growth.

Local Government

Many local governments in rural Arkansas have been affected by the structural changes in their economies and the recent "Great Recession." The structural changes in rural economies and "Great Recession" have caused business loss and population decline in rural areas of the state, making it difficult to provide the infrastructure and services demanded by the remaining citizens and businesses. This has led to a decline in the local tax revenue for many rural counties, thus inhibiting the ability of local and county governments to maintain or enhance the infrastructure and services needed to support economic growth.

Despite rural population loss, approximately 44 percent of people (1.3 million) living in Arkansas counties still reside in unincorporated areas or towns of less than 2,500. Similarly, more than 1.2 million people, or 42 percent, of Arkansans lived in counties classified as rural in 2015. This places an unusually heavy burden on rural county and town governments.

Local Tax Base

Property Tax Base

The tax base on which county governments generate their local property and sales tax revenue is also changing. Although the value of property assessments increased in all four regions of Arkansas between 2007 and 2015, there was a large difference in the change in property assessments among counties within regions (Figure LG1). While the value of property assessments increased in all urban and most rural counties (53) during this period, nine rural counties saw their property tax base decline.

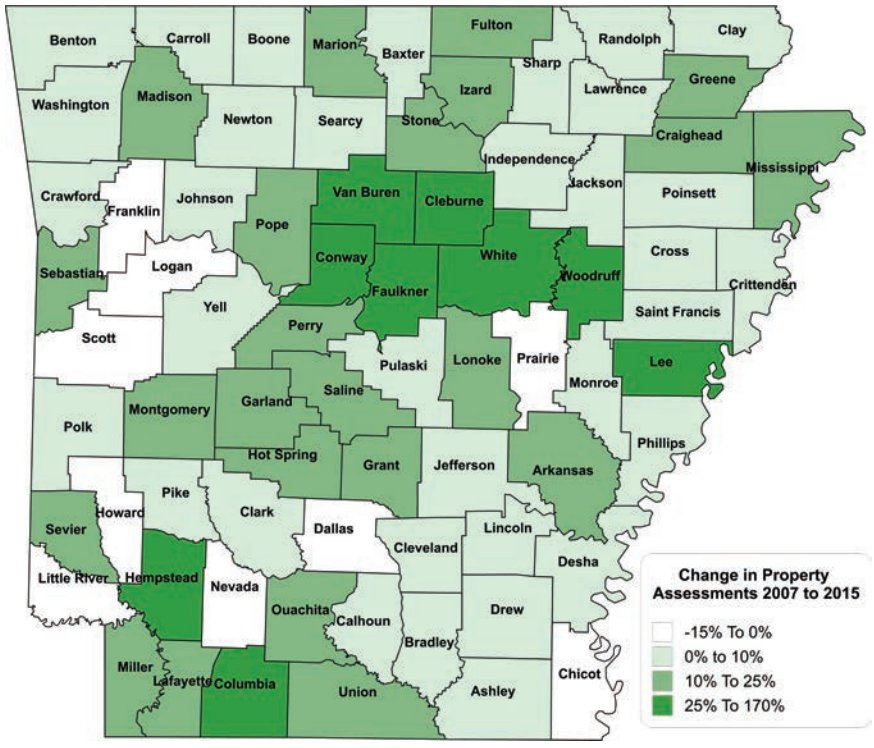
In total the value of assessed property for rural counties increased by 20 percent between 2007 and 2015, with growth of 24 percent in the Highlands, 17 percent in the Coastal Plains and 11 percent in the Delta. The largest share of this increase was in counties experiencing growth of the natural gas and petroleum industries. Urban counties saw more modest growth in value of assessed properties, only increasing 10 percent from 2007 to 2015.

The structural changes in rural economies and the "Great Recession" have caused business loss and population decline in rural areas of the state, making it difficult to provide the infrastructure and services demanded by the remaining citizens and businesses.

Using per capita assessed value of property as an indicator of the capacity of counties to raise revenue, we found some differences between regions, but greater variation between counties within regions in 2015 (Figure LG2). The per capita value of assessed property was somewhat greater in urban compared to rural areas ($16,242 and $15,293, respectively). The major difference among regions was that the per capita property assessments in the Delta region ($13,547) were considerably lower than for the urban and other rural regions of the state.

The Highlands counties exhibited the greatest variation in per capita property assessments,

Figure LG1. Change in Property Assessments, 2007 to 2015



Source: Computed with data from the Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department.

ranging from a low of $9,642 in Sevier County to a high of $38,704 in Van Buren County. Cleburne and Conway counties, like Van Buren County had high per capita property assessments largely due to natural gas assessments and small populations.

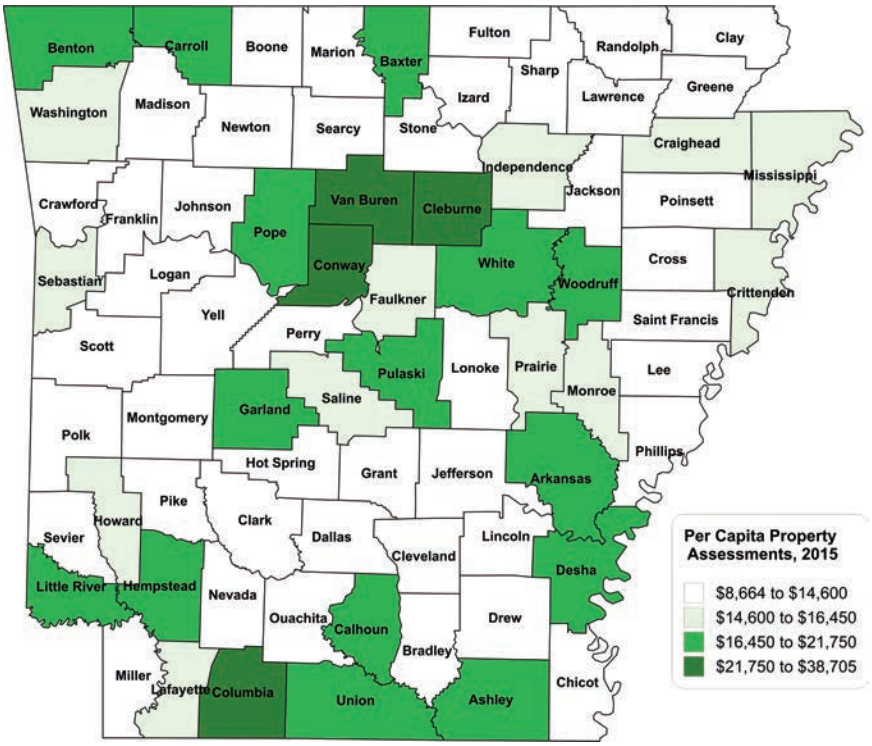
In the Coastal Plains, per capita assessments also varied widely. Six counties (50 percent) had per capita assessed property values of greater than $16,000 while five counties (42 percent) were below $12,000.

In the Delta, Lincoln County had lowest per capita value of property assessments in the state, at $8,665. In contrast, Woodruff County's per capita property assessment was $21,064. In total, only three of 16 Delta counties had per capita assessments greater than $16,000, while nine fell between $12,500 and $16,000; the remaining four Delta counties all generated less than $12,500 in 2015.

Sales Tax Base

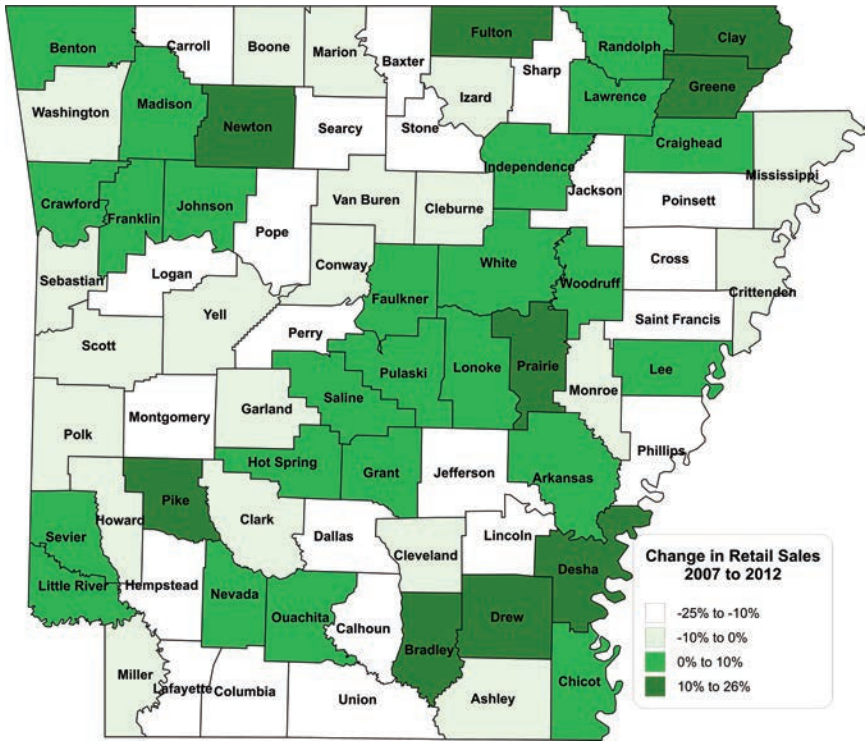
Arkansas' sales tax base was hard hit by the recession. Between 2007 and 2012, the total number of retail businesses operating in Arkansas decreased by 983, or by 8.3 percent. More than 60 percent of businesses lost occurred in rural counties. The decreases in the number of business operating corresponded to stagnant retail sales growth statewide, increasing only 0.2 percent between 2007 and 2012. Only the urban region exhibited growth (2.3 percent) during this time span, whereas in the rural region retail sales decreased 3.6 percent during this five-year period (Figures LG3 and LG4). The greatest loss of retail sales occurred in the Highlands, which

Figure LG2. Per Capita Property Assessments, 2015



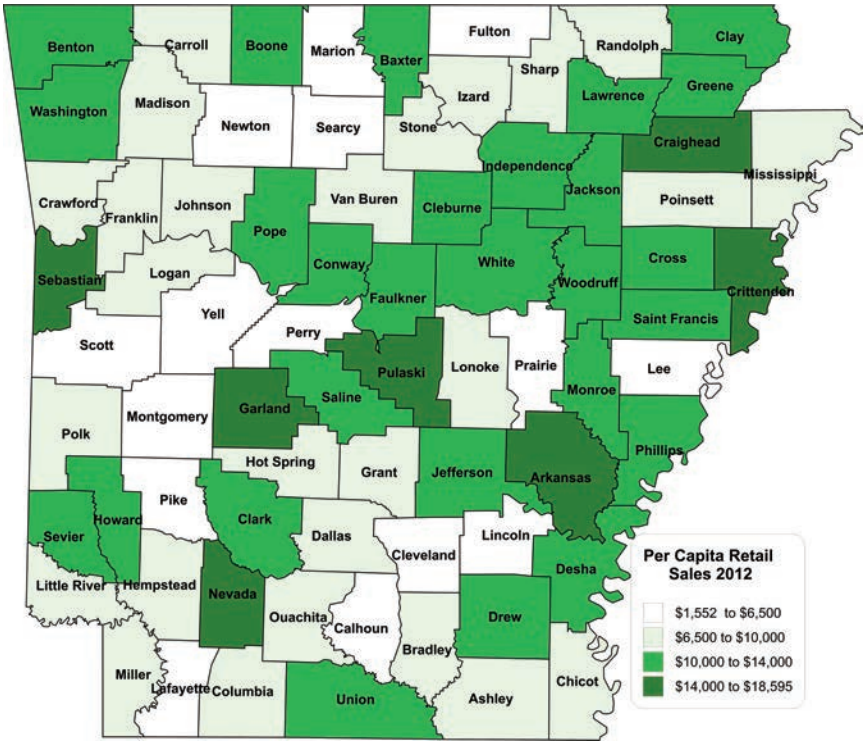
Source: Computed with data from the Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department and the Bureau of Census.

Figure LG3. Change in Retail Sales, 2007-2012



Computed with data from the Census of Retail Trade, Bureau of Census.

Figure LG4. Per Capita Retail Sales, 2012



Computed with data from the Census of Retail Trade and Population estimates, Bureau of Census.

saw a decline of 4.3 percent. Despite losing the greatest percent of businesses between 2007 and 2012, Delta counties saw the smallest decrease (2.3 percent) in retail sales among all rural regions. Retail sales in the Coastal Plains decreased by 2.7 percent during this five-year period.

Despite growth in the region, six of 13 urban counties had decreased retail sales from 2007 to 2012. Retail sales decreased in 36 (58 percent) rural counties; 21 in the Highlands, 8 in the Coastal Plains and 7 in the Delta.

The sales tax generating capacity, as measured by per capita retail sales, varied greatly between rural and urban counties. Rural regions of the state had considerably lower per capita retail sales ($9,901) than urban areas ($14,411). While there was little variation between rural regions, there were large variations among rural counties within regions. Per capita retail sales in Cleveland County were only $1,552 in 2012, compared to $18,595 in Pulaski County. The small and declining sales tax base in rural counties greatly affects their ability to generate local revenue.

Local Tax Revenue

The ability to generate local tax revenue is dependent on the tax base as described above and the property and sales tax rates. Twenty-seven counties increased their property tax millage between 2006 and 2014 and only nine counties decreased their millage during this period. Not surprisingly, the average county millage was highest in the Delta (8.49) where the property tax base is small. The average millage rates did not vary greatly among the other regions of the state, from 7.38 in the Highlands to 7.63 in Urban counties and 7.73 in the Coastal Plains. However, the total county millage varied greatly among counties from 2.8 in Scott County to 10.7 in Pike County.

Thirty counties increased their sales tax rates between December 2006 and December 2014, 27 rural and three urban. During this same period nine counties decreased their sales tax rates, six rural and three urban. The average sales tax rate was 2.15 percent in Urban and Coastal Plains counties and 1.55 percent in Delta and Highlands counties in 2014. These rates were slightly higher in all regions in 2014 compared to 2006, when they averaged 1.56 percent in Urban and Coastal Plains counties and approximately 1.3 percent in Delta and Highlands counties.

Between 2007 and 2014, rural counties received a larger share of their local tax revenue from the sales tax, whereas urban counties received a larger share from the property tax. The ability of county government to grow property and sales tax revenues varied greatly by region and among counties within regions. Many of the changes in rural areas result from long-term structural changes in their local economies which caused slow growth or declines in local tax revenue.

Property Tax Revenue

Statewide the property tax revenue generated by county governments grew 19 percent from 2007 to 2014 and grew only slightly more in rural compared to urban areas of the state, 19.6 percent and 18.5 percent, respectively.

Despite this substantial growth in property tax revenue received by county governments in urban and rural areas of the state, nearly 30 percent of the counties (22) saw their property tax revenue decline during this period (Figure LG5). While there was great variation in the growth of property tax revenue among counties, there were also regional differences. Property tax revenue generated by county governments in the Coastal Plains grew 13 percent compared to nearly 24 percent in the Highlands and 15 percent in the Delta.

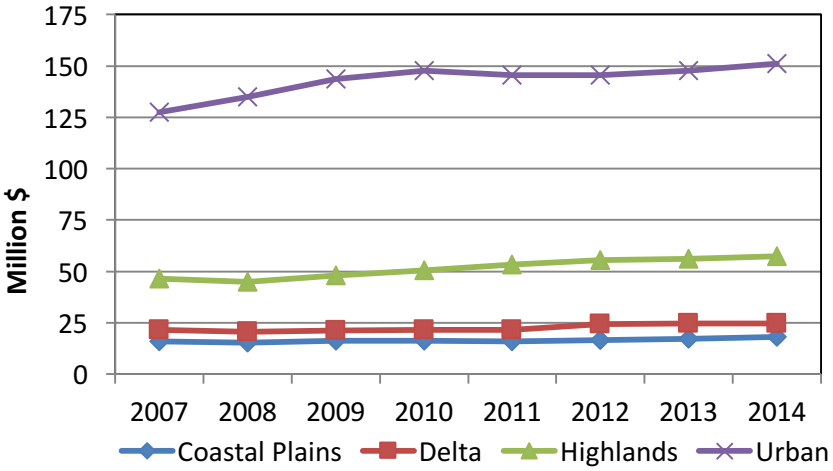
The Highlands experienced the greatest growth of property tax revenue, primarily due to an increase in natural gas assessments in a few counties. Growth of property tax revenues in the Delta from 2007 to 2014 was largely the result of strong growth in 2012.

Of the 22 counties that saw declines in property tax revenue during the period from 2007 to 2014, 20 were in rural areas of the state.

From 2007 to 2011 and 2012 to 2014, growth was low or negative in each year. Slow growth of property tax revenue has persisted in the Coastal Plains during the entire seven-year period.

These increases mask the reality that many rural and some urban counties saw a decline in their property tax revenue from 2007 to 2014. Of the 22 counties that saw declines in property tax revenue during this period, 20 were in rural areas of the state. Of the 20 rural counties with declining property tax revenue, one-half (10) were in the Highlands, six in the Delta and four in the Coastal Plains.

Figure LG5. County Government Property Tax Revenue, 2007 to 2014



Source: Computed from Legislative Audit Reports, Bureau of Legislative Audit.

While the potential to raise property tax revenue varied greatly among counties, Arkansas raised less revenue per capita from property tax than most states. In fiscal year 2010, Arkansas ranked 49th in total property tax revenue collected per capita ($598). For the same fiscal year, the national average was $1,434. In general, Arkansas counties tend to raise more revenue from the sales tax.

Sales Tax Revenue

Counties in Arkansas received 15.4 percent more county sales tax revenue in 2014 compared to 2007 (Figure LG6). This was in spite of a decline in sales tax revenue from 2008 to 2011 due to the "Great Recession." Since 2011 the sales tax revenue received by counties increased 15 percent. Although there was a slight increase in sales tax revenue in rural counties since 2011, most of this growth was in urban counties. Sales tax revenue increased by 29 percent in the urban region compared to only 7 percent in rural areas from 2011 to 2014.

All regions of the state saw an increase in sales tax revenue from 2007 to 2014 ranging from 8 percent growth in the Urban region to 34 percent in the Coastal Plains. However, these regional totals hide the fact that nearly one-third (24) of county governments, 16 rural and eight urban, saw their sales tax revenue decline during this period.

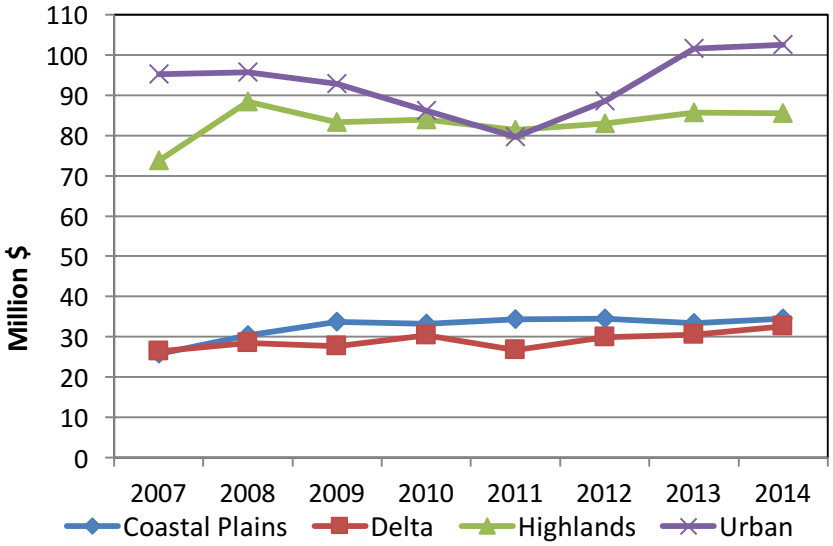
Since 2011, rural counties have not seen the growth in their sales tax revenue as have many urban counties. Although in total, rural counties received a 7 percent increase in sales tax revenue from 2011 to 2014, 23 of 62 rural counties saw their sales tax revenue decline during this period. In comparison only two urban counties received less sales tax revenue in 2014 than in 2011. Of the rural regions, only the Delta experienced a substantial growth in retail sales since 2011, and this was due in large part to four counties in the northeast part of the state.

Property and Sales Tax Revenue

Total property and sales tax revenue received by county governments grew 17 percent from 2007 to 2014 (Figure LG7). The growth in urban counties was 14 percent compared to 20 percent in rural counties. This overall growth masks the differences among counties. Thirteen rural and four urban counties generated less revenue from their combined sales and property taxes in 2014 than in 2007. Of the rural counties generating less revenue from these sources, nine were in the Highlands, three in the Delta and one in the Coastal Plains.

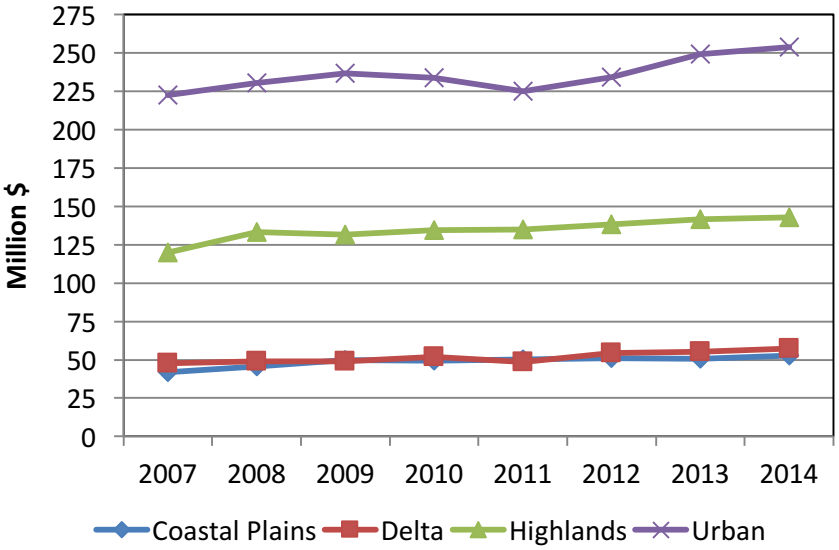
Post-recession growth in the local tax base and revenue has been slow or declining in many rural counties. While the state has experienced moderate growth in property and sales tax revenue, many counties, especially rural counties, face declining local tax revenue. The disparity of revenue generating capacity between wealthy and poor counties continues to widen. The ability of counties to provide, maintain and improve infrastructure and services to support and grow their economies depends in part on each county's ability to generate revenue, much of which comes from local sources.

Figure LG6. County Government Sales Tax Revenue



Source: Computed from Legislative Audit Reports, Bureau of Legislative Audit.

Figure LG7. County Government Property Plus Sales Tax Revenue, 2007 to 2014



Source: Computed from Legislative Audit Reports, Bureau of Legislative Audit.

Appendix A. The Concept of "Rural" and How to Measure It

F The idea of "rural" is not one that is easily expressed. Researchers, policymakers and government agencies often use different definitions (c.f. Farmer, 2008). While acknowledging the difficulty of capturing the gradations and nuances of the concept of "rural," the U.S. Census Bureau provides measurement guidelines that allow a standardized use of data and information about people and places outside of urban and metropolitan areas. Those guidelines are provided here (see also Moon and Farmer, 2008).

In this profile, we use the words "rural" and "nonmetropolitan" and "urban" and "metropolitan" interchangeably. Populations residing in counties with large cities are classified as metropolitan, and those counties are grouped into a category termed "urban." Additionally, we use the 1999 Census designation of nonmetropolitan and metropolitan rather than the 2003 or 2013 Core-Based Statistical Areas. Statistical analysis of current data indicates that the regions we use in this profile have greater similarities within regions and greater differences between regions compared to the Core-Based Statistical Areas. Because our concern is primarily with differences and similarities across regions in the state, we believe this approach provides a clearer picture as to the rural and urban character of the regions.

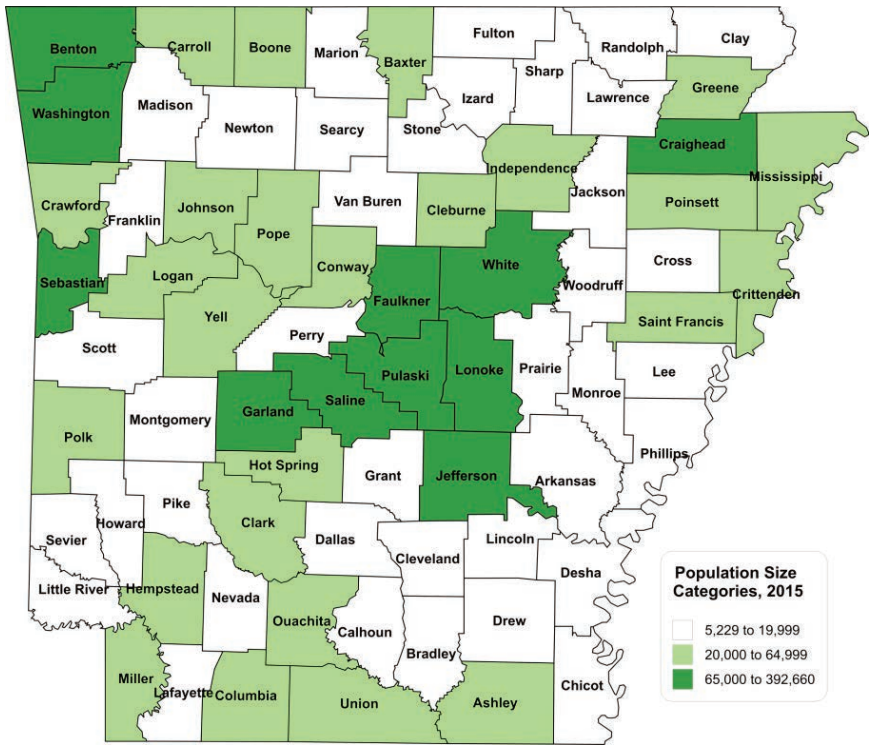
Arkansas – A Rural State

No matter how you measure it, Arkansas is a very rural state. When using the county-based metropolitan/nonmetropolitan definitions, 42 percent of Arkansans live in a nonmetropolitan county according to 2015 population estimates. This compares with 15 percent in the country as a whole living in nonmetropolitan counties.

When defining the rural population as people living in non-urbanized areas, irrespective of county boundaries, 44 percent of Arkansas' population was rural compared to only 19 percent of the country's population. In 1900, nearly 91 percent of Arkansans lived in rural areas compared to about 60 percent of the United States population. For both the United States and Arkansas, the percentage of rural people has declined dramatically between 1900 and 2010.

In the current *Profile*, we continue use of long-established categorization of counties as metropolitan and nonmetropolitan. However, other classifications exist, and are variously used. One such classification scheme assigns counties to three groups using categories based on population cutoffs for the American Community Survey. In the map below, the darkest category shows counties with populations of 65,000 or greater. The Census Bureau produced annual data for all states and cities or counties with a population of 65,000 or more. These are considered "urban" areas with sufficient population size for annual sampling.

Figure A1. Population Size Categories, 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Appendix A. The Concept of "Rural" and How to Measure It

The next category is for counties with a population of at least 20,000 persons but less than 65,000. These counties fall into the three-year cycle for the ACS and are generally counties adjacent to the largest cities in the state or are micropolitan areas (large towns but not big cities).

The last category could be considered "rural" or small communities. This is the category of counties with less than 20,000 persons. Over half the counties in the state of Arkansas (39 counties) fall into this smallest population category. The map in Figure A1 helps demonstrate just how "rural" Arkansas remains. Because Arkansas has many communities (and half its counties) that fall below 20,000 in population, the detailed data from the Census Bureau will be available for all counties and communities only in these five-year estimates. Much of the detailed data in this Profile comes from the 2010-2014 American Community Survey estimate data.

American Community Survey Data

Population estimate data used in this publication are the most current available data and are the official population counts available from the Census Bureau. The American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing data collection project run by the U.S. Census Bureau. This data provides details on demographic, social, economic and housing characteristics of the U.S. population. ACS data replaces the so-called "long form" data used by the Census Bureau in earlier years.

The ACS data are generated from a sample of the population rather than from the entire population. The ACS collects and releases data in three ways. Each year, ACS data comes out for cities with a population of 65,000 or more and for states and the country as a whole. The ACS releases information about cities and towns with at least 20,000 people on a rolling three-year basis. The ACS data become available on a rolling five-year basis for the entire country, including places with less than 20,000 populations. The ACS data is provided with margins of error, similar to polling data often seen on TV news programs. The margin of error information enables statisticians to calculate if actual change has taken place over time or if differences in data are due to random differences in sampling.

Regions of Arkansas

This publication focuses on issues facing rural Arkansas and on the differences between rural and urban areas and among rural regions of the state. Therefore, a classification scheme is used to delineate rural versus urban areas and different rural regions of the state. The three rural regions of Arkansas are the Coastal Plains, the Delta and the Highlands. This approach combines nonmetropolitan counties that have similar economic activity, history, physical setting, settlement patterns and culture and facilitates comparison with the metropolitan counties. A map with all the county names and the regions can be found on the back cover of this publication.

The Measurement of Metropolitan, Micropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Areas

In 2000, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) revised and replaced the 1990 Metropolitan Area (MA) standards with the Core-Based Statistical Area (CBSA) standards, effective in 2003.

Most of the criteria for the central counties of metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) were retained with the new standards, plus urban clusters can now be used for identifying MSAs. Most of the previous criteria for outlying counties – population density, total county population, percent urban and urban growth rates – were dropped with the new CBSA standards. Outlying counties are now added to a metropolitan statistical area if 25 percent or more of their workers commute to a neighboring central county, or if 25 percent or more of the workforce in an outlying county commutes from a central county.

The OMB also added a new area classification called the "micropolitan statistical area" that subdivides the nonmetropolitan category. Nonmetropolitan counties are classified as "micropolitan" if they have an urban cluster of 10,000 to 49,999 persons. As with metropolitan areas, adjacent counties are added to the micropolitan area on the basis of 25 percent commuting ties.

Appendix A. The Concept of "Rural" and How to Measure It

In 2003, the OMB released a list of the newly defined metropolitan and micropolitan counties based on the 2000 CBSA standards. In applying the OMB's new standards in Arkansas, eight counties changed from nonmetropolitan status to metropolitan status. Eighteen new micropolitan counties were also defined.

The definition of urban and rural counties in this publication is based on the long-standing metropolitan and nonmetropolitan definitions, with ongoing review of changes in population, population density and commuting patterns. We also use a more broad definition of "rural" to include similar history, physical setting, settlement patterns, culture and economic activity as well.

We provide the CBSA definitions here for those who may encounter them in other research or publications.

References

Farmer, F. L 2008. "The Definition of Rural" in G. Goreham (ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Rural America: The Land and the People* (2nd Edition). Millerton, New York: Grey House Publishing.

Moon, Z., and Frank L. Farmer. 2008. "The Measurement of Rural" in G. Goreham (ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Rural America: The Land and the People* (2nd Edition). Millerton, New York: Grey House Publishing.

Appendix B. Table 1. Population

County Name	Population 2010	Population 2015	% Population Change 2010-2015	Natural Increase/ Decrease Per 1,000 Population, 2014-2015	Net Migration Rate Per 1,000 Population, 2014-2015	Aged 0-17 2015	Aged 65 and Over 2015	Aged 75 and Over 2015	Median Age 2015	Dependency Ratio Per 100 Population 2015
Arkansas	19,019	18,433	-3.1%	0.6	-6.2	23.1%	17.8%	8.0%	41.2	69.1
Ashley	21,853	20,838	-4.6%	-0.4	-4.5	23.5%	18.9%	7.6%	41.8	73.4
Baxter	41,513	41,053	-1.1%	-7.3	10.7	17.8%	30.3%	13.7%	51.9	92.9
Benton	221,339	249,672	12.8%	7.1	19.3	26.8%	13.0%	5.4%	35.3	66.1
Boone	36,903	37,222	0.9%	0.6	0.4	22.4%	20.3%	8.9%	42.5	74.6
Bradley	11,508	11,094	-3.6%	0.5	1.4	23.5%	18.6%	8.2%	41.1	72.6
Calhoun	5,368	5,229	-2.6%	1.0	7.3	18.4%	20.1%	9.3%	45.8	62.5
Carroll	27,446	27,704	0.9%	0.5	1.3	22.2%	21.5%	8.3%	44.7	77.6
Chicot	11,800	11,027	-6.6%	-2.9	-13.7	23.0%	19.5%	9.4%	42.7	73.9
Clark	22,995	22,633	-1.6%	0.3	-3.0	19.1%	16.1%	7.3%	33.4	54.4
Clay	16,083	15,109	-6.1%	-1.6	-1.9	20.9%	21.6%	9.5%	44.2	73.9
Cleburne	25,970	25,467	-1.9%	-4.7	-4.2	19.6%	25.8%	11.7%	48.4	83.3
Cleveland	8,689	8,311	-4.4%	-0.2	-12.8	22.5%	19.9%	8.4%	42.9	73.6
Columbia	24,552	24,114	-1.8%	0.5	-0.4	21.3%	16.7%	7.9%	35.7	61.4
Conway	21,273	21,019	-1.2%	1.8	-1.8	22.9%	18.5%	8.2%	41.7	70.7
Craighead	96,443	104,354	8.2%	4.9	10.3	24.8%	13.1%	5.5%	34.0	61.0
Crawford	61,948	61,703	-0.4%	3.1	-2.7	24.8%	15.7%	6.3%	39.0	68.1
Crittenden	50,902	48,963	-3.8%	6.2	-17.6	27.7%	12.5%	4.9%	35.0	67.4
Cross	17,870	17,284	-3.3%	0.3	6.7	24.2%	17.5%	7.3%	40.3	71.7
Dallas	8,116	7,604	-6.3%	-1.2	-16.0	22.0%	20.8%	9.3%	44.4	74.6
Desha	13,008	11,965	-8.0%	-1.5	-20.6	25.6%	17.8%	7.6%	40.0	76.5
Drew	18,509	18,778	1.5%	2.6	-0.7	22.1%	16.3%	7.4%	36.3	62.3
Faulkner	113,237	121,552	7.3%	5.9	-0.7	23.6%	11.6%	4.5%	32.3	54.4
Franklin	18,125	17,702	-2.3%	-0.8	-2.6	23.3%	18.3%	7.9%	41.0	71.1
Fulton	12,245	12,204	-0.3%	-5.4	9.7	20.5%	25.9%	10.8%	48.7	86.2
Garland	96,024	97,177	1.2%	-2.3	2.2	20.7%	22.0%	9.5%	44.4	74.7
Grant	17,853	18,102	1.4%	0.9	-2.2	23.4%	16.6%	6.5%	40.7	66.5
Greene	42,090	44,196	5.0%	2.7	8.0	24.7%	15.1%	6.1%	38.0	66.3
Hempstead	22,609	22,084	-2.3%	4.4	-14.4	26.1%	16.7%	7.2%	39.1	74.8
Hot Spring	32,923	33,426	1.5%	-0.1	3.4	21.2%	17.5%	6.9%	41.4	63.0
Howard	13,789	13,300	-3.5%	2.3	-13.3	25.8%	17.3%	7.6%	39.1	75.6
Independence	36,647	37,052	1.1%	0.6	0.5	23.9%	17.1%	7.6%	39.5	69.4
Izard	13,696	13,445	-1.8%	-5.3	3.5	18.2%	25.1%	11.1%	48.1	76.4
Jackson	17,997	17,338	-3.7%	-1.1	-6.9	20.1%	17.0%	6.9%	40.7	59.0
Jefferson	77,435	71,565	-7.6%	1.6	-12.0	23.1%	15.6%	6.4%	38.4	62.9
Johnson	25,540	26,141	2.4%	3.4	1.7	24.9%	16.0%	6.7%	37.5	69.3
Lafayette	7,645	6,996	-8.5%	-2.1	-16.6	19.6%	21.9%	9.6%	46.8	70.8
Lawrence	17,415	16,779	-3.7%	-3.0	-9.9	22.2%	19.5%	8.8%	41.2	71.7
Lee	10,424	9,650	-7.4%	-0.6	-12.3	19.4%	17.1%	7.7%	40.3	57.7
Lincoln	14,134	13,820	-2.2%	-0.8	-10.4	17.6%	14.0%	6.2%	38.4	46.4
Little River	13,171	12,472	-5.3%	-1.0	-4.5	22.1%	20.1%	8.0%	43.0	73.2
Logan	22,353	21,714	-2.9%	-1.6	-7.2	22.0%	19.6%	8.4%	43.3	71.1
Lonoke	68,356	71,645	4.8%	4.9	-3.2	26.1%	13.0%	5.1%	36.0	64.2
Madison	15,717	15,767	0.3%	3.7	-1.8	23.6%	18.1%	7.3%	42.2	71.8
Marion	16,653	16,185	-2.8%	-6.7	-4.3	17.4%	27.5%	10.5%	52.2	81.4
Miller	43,462	43,908	1.0%	3.6	4.6	24.2%	15.5%	6.4%	38.0	65.9
Mississippi	46,480	43,738	-5.9%	3.6	-14.2	26.6%	13.6%	5.7%	35.9	67.1
Monroe	8,149	7,399	-9.2%	-2.7	-21.2	21.5%	20.8%	9.6%	45.3	73.4

Appendix B. Table 1. Population

County Name	Population 2010	Population 2015	% Population Change 2010-2015	Natural Increase/ Decrease Per 1,000 Population, 2014-2015	Net Migration Rate Per 1,000 Population, 2014-2015	Aged 0-17 2015	Aged 65 and Over 2015	Aged 75 and Over 2015	Median Age 2015	Dependency Ratio Per 100 Population 2015
Montgomery	9,487	8,970	-5.4%	-5.4	-6.1	19.2%	25.8%	11.6%	49.7	81.8
Nevada	8,997	8,558	-4.9%	-1.3	-15.4	22.2%	20.1%	8.7%	43.7	73.6
Newton	8,330	7,913	-5.0%	-3.4	2.8	19.8%	25.0%	9.9%	48.6	80.9
Ouachita	26,120	24,358	-6.7%	-2.2	-14.5	22.6%	18.9%	8.2%	43.0	71.1
Perry	10,445	10,189	-2.5%	-1.1	-2.8	22.0%	18.1%	7.4%	43.2	67.1
Phillips	21,757	19,513	-10.3%	2.0	-21.0	26.6%	17.0%	7.1%	38.1	77.2
Pike	11,291	10,824	-4.1%	-2.5	-11.9	22.2%	19.0%	8.0%	42.5	70.1
Poinsett	24,583	24,040	-2.2%	-1.6	-3.9	23.6%	17.5%	7.0%	40.1	69.7
Polk	20,662	20,216	-2.2%	-1.0	-0.4	23.6%	22.0%	9.0%	43.9	83.6
Pope	61,754	63,390	2.6%	3.8	2.1	22.9%	14.6%	6.1%	35.1	59.9
Prairie	8,715	8,291	-4.9%	-2.2	-2.1	20.2%	22.5%	9.9%	46.1	74.5
Pulaski	382,748	392,664	2.6%	5.0	-4.7	23.6%	14.0%	5.7%	36.8	60.2
Randolph	17,969	17,469	-2.8%	-2.2	-3.6	22.2%	20.3%	9.0%	42.4	74.2
Saint Francis	28,258	26,589	-5.9%	2.6	-16.0	22.6%	14.3%	5.5%	37.9	58.5
Saline	107,118	117,460	9.7%	3.1	10.7	23.7%	17.5%	6.9%	39.7	69.9
Scott	11,233	10,513	-6.4%	-0.5	-13.5	23.9%	19.2%	8.0%	42.1	75.8
Searcy	8,195	7,869	-4.0%	-2.8	-3.4	20.3%	24.2%	10.5%	47.8	80.4
Sebastian	125,744	127,780	1.6%	3.4	2.6	24.3%	14.7%	6.1%	37.4	64.1
Sevier	17,058	17,290	1.4%	7.4	-12.2	28.8%	13.8%	5.9%	35.0	74.1
Sharp	17,264	16,912	-2.0%	-4.0	6.6	20.6%	25.8%	11.1%	47.6	86.6
Stone	12,394	12,456	0.5%	-3.0	2.0	19.7%	26.2%	11.0%	49.9	84.9
Union	41,639	40,144	-3.6%	-1.1	-0.6	23.9%	17.0%	7.6%	40.4	69.3
Van Buren	17,295	16,771	-3.0%	-3.9	-2.3	20.1%	25.0%	11.0%	48.1	82.1
Washington	203,065	225,477	11.0%	7.9	12.8	25.0%	11.0%	4.5%	31.7	56.1
White	77,076	79,161	2.7%	2.7	3.0	23.8%	15.4%	6.4%	36.5	64.4
Woodruff	7,260	6,741	-7.1%	-5.2	-15.1	21.2%	21.6%	9.4%	44.9	75.0
Yell	22,185	21,713	-2.1%	1.6	-10.7	24.6%	17.4%	7.6%	40.3	72.4
Rural										
Coastal Plains	210,660	202,976	-3.6%	0.1	-5.7	22.9%	18.1%	7.9%	41.6	69.5
Delta	307,627	295,133	-4.1%	0.6	-7.7	23.4%	16.7%	7.1%	40.9	66.9
Highlands	749,810	746,175	-0.5%	-0.3	-0.8	22.2%	19.8%	8.4%	43.4	72.2
Total Rural	**1,268,097**	**1,244,284**	**-1.9%**	**0.0**	**-3.2**	**22.6%**	**18.8%**	**8.0%**	**42.0**	**70.5**
Total Urban	**1,647,821**	**1,733,920**	**5.2%**	**4.9**	**3.9**	**24.5%**	**14.1%**	**5.8%**	**36.8**	**62.7**
State	**2,915,918**	**2,978,204**	**2.1%**	**2.8**	**0.9**	**23.7%**	**16.0%**	**6.7%**	**37.9**	**65.8**

Source: Annual Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.
Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for the United States, States, Counties and Puerto Rico Commonwealth and Municipios: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.
Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.

Appendix B. Table 2. Population by Race and Ethnic Origin, 2015

County	White Alone, Not Hispanic, 2015		Black Alone, Not Hispanic, 2015		Other Races, Not Hispanic, 2015		Hispanic, All Races, 2015	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Arkansas	12,938	70.2%	4,418	24.0%	521	2.8%	556	3.0%
Ashley	14,100	67.7%	5,244	25.2%	390	1.9%	1,104	5.3%
Baxter	39,013	95.0%	149	0.4%	1,055	2.6%	836	2.0%
Benton	185,368	74.2%	4,478	1.8%	18,992	7.6%	40,834	16.4%
Boone	35,028	94.1%	163	0.4%	1,147	3.1%	884	2.4%
Bradley	6,224	56.1%	3,038	27.4%	219	2.0%	1,613	14.5%
Calhoun	3,786	72.4%	1,143	21.9%	112	2.1%	188	3.6%
Carroll	22,328	80.6%	178	0.6%	1,089	3.9%	4,109	14.8%
Chicot	4,377	39.7%	5,856	53.1%	184	1.7%	610	5.5%
Clark	15,727	69.5%	5,335	23.6%	568	2.5%	1,003	4.4%
Clay	14,431	95.5%	106	0.7%	277	1.8%	295	2.0%
Cleburne	24,126	94.7%	119	0.5%	575	2.3%	647	2.5%
Cleveland	7,038	84.7%	941	11.3%	151	1.8%	181	2.2%
Columbia	14,239	59.0%	8,486	35.2%	688	2.9%	701	2.9%
Conway	17,067	81.2%	2,366	11.3%	697	3.3%	889	4.2%
Craighead	80,710	77.3%	15,313	14.7%	3,260	3.1%	5,071	4.9%
Crawford	52,643	85.3%	912	1.5%	3,921	6.4%	4,227	6.9%
Crittenden	21,401	43.7%	25,307	51.7%	1,103	2.3%	1,152	2.4%
Cross	12,648	73.2%	3,944	22.8%	366	2.1%	326	1.9%
Dallas	4,087	53.7%	3,123	41.1%	165	2.2%	229	3.0%
Desha	5,536	46.3%	5,605	46.8%	227	1.9%	597	5.0%
Drew	12,464	66.4%	5,283	28.1%	456	2.4%	575	3.1%
Faulkner	98,093	80.7%	13,847	11.4%	4,610	3.8%	5,002	4.1%
Franklin	16,337	92.3%	158	0.9%	674	3.8%	533	3.0%
Fulton	11,672	95.6%	74	0.6%	303	2.5%	155	1.3%
Garland	80,141	82.5%	8,297	8.5%	3,523	3.6%	5,216	5.4%
Grant	16,718	92.4%	536	3.0%	358	2.0%	490	2.7%
Greene	41,468	93.8%	547	1.2%	941	2.1%	1,240	2.8%
Hempstead	12,181	55.2%	6,501	29.4%	607	2.7%	2,795	12.7%
Hot Spring	27,588	82.5%	3,813	11.4%	917	2.7%	1,108	3.3%
Howard	8,649	65.0%	2,789	21.0%	376	2.8%	1,486	11.2%
Independence	33,027	89.1%	804	2.2%	1,029	2.8%	2,192	5.9%
Izard	12,572	93.5%	254	1.9%	353	2.6%	266	2.0%
Jackson	13,312	76.8%	3,043	17.6%	453	2.6%	530	3.1%
Jefferson	28,756	40.2%	39,420	55.1%	1,932	2.7%	1,457	2.0%
Johnson	20,993	80.3%	436	1.7%	1,023	3.9%	3,689	14.1%
Lafayette	4,184	59.8%	2,549	36.4%	106	1.5%	157	2.2%
Lawrence	16,075	95.8%	162	1.0%	319	1.9%	223	1.3%
Lee	4,010	41.6%	5,152	53.4%	235	2.4%	253	2.6%
Lincoln	8,936	64.7%	4,155	30.1%	230	1.7%	499	3.6%
Little River	9,101	73.0%	2,473	19.8%	487	3.9%	411	3.3%
Logan	19,800	91.2%	310	1.4%	1,012	4.7%	592	2.7%
Lonoke	61,991	86.5%	4,337	6.1%	2,327	3.2%	2,990	4.2%
Madison	14,233	90.3%	55	0.3%	645	4.1%	834	5.3%
Marion	15,255	94.3%	83	0.5%	452	2.8%	395	2.4%

Appendix B. Table 2. Population by Race and Ethnic Origin, 2015

County	White Alone, Not Hispanic, 2015		Black Alone, Not Hispanic, 2015		Other Races, Not Hispanic, 2015		Hispanic, All Races, 2015	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Miller	30,293	69.0%	10,886	24.8%	1,323	3.0%	1,406	3.2%
Mississippi	25,802	59.0%	15,267	34.9%	925	2.1%	1,744	4.0%
Monroe	4,070	55.0%	2,933	39.6%	219	3.0%	177	2.4%
Montgomery	8,239	91.9%	34	0.4%	340	3.8%	357	4.0%
Nevada	5,450	63.7%	2,614	30.5%	206	2.4%	288	3.4%
Newton	7,433	93.9%	21	0.3%	317	4.0%	142	1.8%
Ouachita	13,450	55.2%	9,760	40.1%	614	2.5%	534	2.2%
Perry	9,399	92.2%	217	2.1%	285	2.8%	288	2.8%
Phillips	6,945	35.6%	11,849	60.7%	378	1.9%	341	1.7%
Pike	9,473	87.5%	367	3.4%	288	2.7%	696	6.4%
Poinsett	20,945	87.1%	1,966	8.2%	456	1.9%	673	2.8%
Polk	17,766	87.9%	88	0.4%	987	4.9%	1,375	6.8%
Pope	53,553	84.5%	2,057	3.2%	2,486	3.9%	5,294	8.4%
Prairie	7,059	85.1%	1,000	12.1%	124	1.5%	108	1.3%
Pulaski	210,263	53.5%	140,994	35.9%	17,846	4.5%	23,561	6.0%
Randolph	16,636	95.2%	168	1.0%	339	1.9%	326	1.9%
Saint Francis	10,801	40.6%	13,915	52.3%	654	2.5%	1,219	4.6%
Saline	100,909	85.9%	7,961	6.8%	3,563	3.0%	5,027	4.3%
Scott	8,834	84.0%	69	0.7%	797	7.6%	813	7.7%
Searcy	7,365	93.6%	17	0.2%	318	4.0%	169	2.1%
Sebastian	89,945	70.4%	8,346	6.5%	11,939	9.3%	17,550	13.7%
Sevier	10,121	58.5%	723	4.2%	822	4.8%	5,624	32.5%
Sharp	15,805	93.5%	131	0.8%	620	3.7%	356	2.1%
Stone	11,802	94.7%	46	0.4%	355	2.9%	253	2.0%
Union	24,537	61.1%	13,049	32.5%	1,046	2.6%	1,512	3.8%
Van Buren	15,683	93.5%	86	0.5%	481	2.9%	521	3.1%
Washington	162,028	71.9%	7,385	3.3%	19,186	8.5%	36,878	16.4%
White	69,683	88.0%	3,674	4.6%	2,448	3.1%	3,356	4.2%
Woodruff	4,710	69.9%	1,756	26.0%	151	2.2%	124	1.8%
Yell	16,533	76.1%	363	1.7%	712	3.3%	4,105	18.9%
Rural:								
Coastal Plains	126,754	62.4%	61,081	30.1%	5,082	2.5%	10,059	5.0%
Delta	197,988	67.1%	81,512	27.6%	6,341	2.1%	9,292	3.1%
Highlands	648,620	86.9%	28,968	3.9%	24,352	3.3%	44,235	5.9%
Total Rural:	**973,362**	**78.2%**	**171,561**	**13.8%**	**35,775**	**2.9%**	**63,586**	**5.1%**
Total Urban	**1,202,541**	**69.4%**	**287,483**	**16.6%**	**93,525**	**5.4%**	**150,371**	**8.7%**
State	**2,175,903**	**73.1%**	**459,044**	**15.4%**	**129,300**	**4.3%**	**213,957**	**7.2%**

Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015, Census Bureau.

Appendix B. Table 3. Total Employment and Employment Change

County	Total Employment			Employment Change			Employment Change (%)		
	2007	2010	2015	2007 to 2010	2010 to 2015	2007 to 2015	2007 to 2010	2010 to 2015	2007 to 2015
Arkansas	13,506	13,009	13,591	-497	582	85	-3.7%	4.5%	0.6%
Ashley	10,783	10,608	9,792	-175	-816	-991	-1.6%	-7.7%	-9.2%
Baxter	22,203	20,785	21,373	-1,418	588	-830	-6.4%	2.8%	-3.7%
Benton	125,309	121,874	146,505	-3,435	24,631	21,196	-2.7%	20.2%	16.9%
Boone	21,158	20,379	20,383	-779	4	-775	-3.7%	0.0%	-3.7%
Bradley	5,560	4,840	5,114	-720	274	-446	-12.9%	5.7%	-8.0%
Calhoun	3,545	3,478	2,918	-67	-560	-627	-1.9%	-16.1%	-17.7%
Carroll	15,073	14,558	15,970	-515	1,412	897	-3.4%	9.7%	6.0%
Chicot	5,143	4,980	4,961	-163	-19	-182	-3.2%	-0.4%	-3.5%
Clark	13,530	12,847	12,667	-683	-180	-863	-5.0%	-1.4%	-6.4%
Clay	6,508	6,222	5,801	-286	-421	-707	-4.4%	-6.8%	-10.9%
Cleburne	11,944	11,774	11,642	-170	-132	-302	-1.4%	-1.1%	-2.5%
Cleveland	1,955	2,026	1,928	71	-98	-27	3.6%	-4.8%	-1.4%
Columbia	12,843	12,043	11,802	-800	-241	-1,041	-6.2%	-2.0%	-8.1%
Conway	10,475	10,431	10,599	-44	168	124	-0.4%	1.6%	1.2%
Craighead	55,925	57,008	64,041	1,083	7,033	8,116	1.9%	12.3%	14.5%
Crawford	27,708	27,314	26,784	-394	-530	-924	-1.4%	-1.9%	-3.3%
Crittenden	22,902	22,460	24,620	-442	2,160	1,718	-1.9%	9.6%	7.5%
Cross	7,772	7,777	8,183	5	406	411	0.1%	5.2%	5.3%
Dallas	4,014	3,921	3,618	-93	-303	-396	-2.3%	-7.7%	-9.9%
Desha	6,679	6,631	6,485	-48	-146	-194	-0.7%	-2.2%	-2.9%
Drew	9,256	9,127	9,122	-129	-5	-134	-1.4%	-0.1%	-1.4%
Faulkner	55,655	56,068	58,619	413	2,551	2,964	0.7%	4.5%	5.3%
Franklin	7,039	6,961	7,119	-78	158	80	-1.1%	2.3%	1.1%
Fulton	3,955	4,078	3,697	123	-381	-258	3.1%	-9.3%	-6.5%
Garland	53,077	50,947	52,270	-2,130	1,323	-807	-4.0%	2.6%	-1.5%
Grant	6,000	5,676	6,074	-324	398	74	-5.4%	7.0%	1.2%
Greene	19,722	18,559	21,080	-1,163	2,521	1,358	-5.9%	13.6%	6.9%
Hempstead	11,226	10,909	10,537	-317	-372	-689	-2.8%	-3.4%	-6.1%
Hot Spring	12,055	11,608	12,490	-447	882	435	-3.7%	7.6%	3.6%
Howard	9,732	8,701	9,078	-1,031	377	-654	-10.6%	4.3%	-6.7%
Independence	21,568	21,178	20,376	-390	-802	-1,192	-1.8%	-3.8%	-5.5%
Izard	5,743	5,355	5,599	-388	244	-144	-6.8%	4.6%	-2.5%
Jackson	7,843	7,418	7,559	-425	141	-284	-5.4%	1.9%	-3.6%
Jefferson	41,789	40,722	37,629	-1,067	-3,093	-4,160	-2.6%	-7.6%	-10.0%
Johnson	11,739	11,421	11,469	-318	48	-270	-2.7%	0.4%	-2.3%
Lafayette	2,419	2,326	2,249	-93	-77	-170	-3.8%	-3.3%	-7.0%
Lawrence	7,181	6,903	6,799	-278	-104	-382	-3.9%	-1.5%	-5.3%
Lee	3,355	3,449	3,475	94	26	120	2.8%	0.8%	3.6%
Lincoln	4,693	4,499	4,491	-194	-8	-202	-4.1%	-0.2%	-4.3%
Little River	5,776	5,702	5,104	-74	-598	-672	-1.3%	-10.5%	-11.6%
Logan	9,367	8,617	8,719	-750	102	-648	-8.0%	1.2%	-6.9%
Lonoke	21,513	21,420	22,639	-93	1,219	1,126	-0.4%	5.7%	5.2%
Madison	6,562	6,180	6,584	-382	404	22	-5.8%	6.5%	0.3%

Appendix B. Table 3. Total Employment and Employment Change

County	Total Employment			Employment Change			Employment Change (%)		
	2007	2010	2015	2007 to 2010	2010 to 2015	2007 to 2015	2007 to 2010	2010 to 2015	2007 to 2015
Marion	6,792	5,977	6,210	-815	233	-582	-12.0%	3.9%	-8.6%
Miller	18,320	18,157	18,784	-163	627	464	-0.9%	3.5%	2.5%
Mississippi	24,266	23,317	22,908	-949	-409	-1,358	-3.9%	-1.8%	-5.6%
Monroe	3,665	3,484	3,474	-181	-10	-191	-4.9%	-0.3%	-5.2%
Montgomery	3,261	3,153	2,994	-108	-159	-267	-3.3%	-5.0%	-8.2%
Nevada	3,961	3,390	3,736	-571	346	-225	-14.4%	10.2%	-5.7%
Newton	2,968	2,832	2,788	-136	-44	-180	-4.6%	-1.6%	-6.1%
Ouachita	10,367	10,310	10,094	-57	-216	-273	-0.5%	-2.1%	-2.6%
Perry	3,166	3,024	2,942	-142	-82	-224	-4.5%	-2.7%	-7.1%
Phillips	8,956	9,192	8,679	236	-513	-277	2.6%	-5.6%	-3.1%
Pike	4,705	4,330	4,177	-375	-153	-528	-8.0%	-3.5%	-11.2%
Poinsett	8,947	8,253	8,380	-694	127	-567	-7.8%	1.5%	-6.3%
Polk	10,067	9,685	9,668	-382	-17	-399	-3.8%	-0.2%	-4.0%
Pope	36,299	35,565	36,314	-734	749	15	-2.0%	2.1%	0.0%
Prairie	2,934	2,800	2,902	-134	102	-32	-4.6%	3.6%	-1.1%
Pulaski	313,977	308,577	321,592	-5,400	13,015	7,615	-1.7%	4.2%	2.4%
Randolph	7,939	7,779	7,207	-160	-572	-732	-2.0%	-7.4%	-9.2%
Saint Francis	11,635	11,602	11,594	-33	-8	-41	-0.3%	-0.1%	-0.4%
Saline	33,133	32,818	37,016	-315	4,198	3,883	-1.0%	12.8%	11.7%
Scott	4,577	4,546	4,780	-31	234	203	-0.7%	5.1%	4.4%
Searcy	3,886	3,636	3,550	-250	-86	-336	-6.4%	-2.4%	-8.6%
Sebastian	91,870	85,862	85,026	-6,008	-836	-6,844	-6.5%	-1.0%	-7.4%
Sevier	7,734	7,515	6,956	-219	-559	-778	-2.8%	-7.4%	-10.1%
Sharp	7,268	6,750	6,672	-518	-78	-596	-7.1%	-1.2%	-8.2%
Stone	5,415	5,104	4,886	-311	-218	-529	-5.7%	-4.3%	-9.8%
Union	25,772	24,009	25,604	-1,763	1,595	-168	-6.8%	6.6%	-0.7%
Van Buren	6,333	6,100	6,552	-233	452	219	-3.7%	7.4%	3.5%
Washington	126,147	122,144	139,416	-4,003	17,272	13,269	-3.2%	14.1%	10.5%
White	36,109	37,549	36,827	1,440	-722	718	4.0%	-1.9%	2.0%
Woodruff	3,139	3,069	2,898	-70	-171	-241	-2.2%	-5.6%	-7.7%
Yell	10,173	9,283	9,468	-890	185	-705	-8.7%	2.0%	-6.9%
Rural:									
Coastal Plains	103,463	98,768	98,000	-4,695	-768	-5,463	-4.5%	-0.8%	-5.3%
Delta	138,763	134,261	136,461	-4,502	2,200	-2,302	-3.2%	1.6%	-1.7%
Highlands	356,030	344,201	346,247	-11,829	2,046	-9,783	-3.3%	0.6%	-2.7%
Total Rural	**598,256**	**577,230**	**580,708**	**-21,026**	**3,478**	**-17,548**	**-3.5%**	**0.6%**	**-2.9%**
Urban	**987,325**	**965,371**	**1,034,941**	**-21,954**	**69,570**	**47,616**	**-2.2%**	**7.2%**	**4.8%**
State	**1,585,581**	**1,542,601**	**1,615,649**	**-42,980**	**73,048**	**30,068**	**-2.7%**	**4.7%**	**1.9%**
United States	**179,885,700**	**173,034,700**	**190,195,400**	**-6,851,000**	**17,160,700**	**10,309,700**	**-3.8%**	**9.9%**	**5.7%**

Source: Employment data from the REIS database, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Appendix B. Table 4. Median Household Income and Average Earnings Per Job

	Median Household Income (2014 $)			Average Earnings Per Job (2014 $)			Earnings Per Job	
County	2006-2010	2010-2014	Change 2006-10 to 2010-14	2007	2010	2014	2010-2014	2007-2014
Arkansas	40,615	37,813	-6.9%	43,351	43,754	50,645	15.7%	16.8%
Ashley	38,110	35,136	-7.8%	48,764	45,755	44,479	-2.8%	-8.8%
Baxter	38,843	35,594	-8.4%	33,942	33,650	34,419	2.3%	1.4%
Benton	55,019	56,325	2.4%	50,392	52,231	55,931	7.1%	11.0%
Boone	40,339	38,705	-4.1%	39,138	36,347	38,732	6.6%	-1.0%
Bradley	32,627	33,745	3.4%	38,019	37,789	41,141	8.9%	8.2%
Calhoun	35,400	35,000	-1.1%	51,711	49,962	49,780	-0.4%	-3.7%
Carroll	37,348	36,897	-1.2%	32,509	27,694	32,509	17.4%	0.0%
Chicot	23,647	28,086	18.8%	42,398	40,090	42,023	4.8%	-0.9%
Clark	34,874	34,109	-2.2%	36,633	36,222	36,275	0.1%	-1.0%
Clay	31,709	32,057	1.1%	37,541	37,236	38,355	3.0%	2.2%
Cleburne	39,004	40,768	4.5%	30,512	30,360	31,661	4.3%	3.8%
Cleveland	40,317	41,586	3.1%	40,006	26,591	44,066	65.7%	10.1%
Columbia	38,344	37,509	-2.2%	43,482	39,954	44,296	10.9%	1.9%
Conway	35,673	37,314	4.6%	35,862	34,894	39,454	13.1%	10.0%
Craighead	42,800	42,085	-1.7%	42,265	42,758	42,659	-0.2%	0.9%
Crawford	43,852	40,712	-7.2%	37,253	37,294	38,239	2.5%	2.6%
Crittenden	36,781	37,781	2.7%	42,979	38,442	38,608	0.4%	-10.2%
Cross	40,387	37,725	-6.6%	34,598	33,334	36,938	10.8%	6.8%
Dallas	32,293	32,554	0.8%	37,749	33,847	32,004	-5.4%	-15.2%
Desha	31,692	28,457	-10.2%	42,000	44,564	46,791	5.0%	11.4%
Drew	35,518	32,351	-8.9%	38,969	38,372	40,695	6.1%	4.4%
Faulkner	49,404	51,095	3.4%	40,360	41,747	41,087	-1.6%	1.8%
Franklin	34,979	39,879	14.0%	39,129	35,490	39,466	11.2%	0.9%
Fulton	33,380	36,244	8.6%	27,461	22,535	26,242	16.4%	-4.4%
Garland	40,194	39,558	-1.6%	34,472	34,956	35,033	0.2%	1.6%
Grant	56,279	46,074	-18.1%	32,702	31,176	34,590	11.0%	5.8%
Greene	41,683	39,500	-5.2%	39,555	41,044	40,918	-0.3%	3.4%
Hempstead	38,954	32,587	-16.3%	36,683	38,388	41,714	8.7%	13.7%
Hot Spring	40,528	41,353	2.0%	36,021	34,614	35,914	3.8%	-0.3%
Howard	37,696	38,050	0.9%	41,946	34,962	42,013	20.2%	0.2%
Independence	37,773	36,186	-4.2%	39,009	38,534	39,995	3.8%	2.5%
Izard	34,553	31,219	-9.6%	30,314	27,105	31,766	17.2%	4.8%
Jackson	30,126	31,512	4.6%	38,379	38,265	44,576	16.5%	16.1%
Jefferson	39,271	36,799	-6.3%	47,091	47,287	45,670	-3.4%	-3.0%
Johnson	33,373	32,553	-2.5%	37,180	33,284	36,850	10.7%	-0.9%
Lafayette	30,017	31,215	4.0%	42,144	28,760	48,366	68.2%	14.8%
Lawrence	33,042	33,481	1.3%	32,847	32,309	35,812	10.8%	9.0%
Lee	33,266	26,986	-18.9%	48,250	38,818	39,249	1.1%	-18.7%
Lincoln	38,986	32,615	-16.3%	39,193	34,160	43,504	27.4%	11.0%
Little River	36,454	39,494	8.3%	48,650	48,049	50,906	5.9%	4.6%
Logan	40,965	36,062	-12.0%	35,324	31,727	39,303	23.9%	11.3%
Lonoke	55,372	52,805	-4.6%	33,927	32,301	33,403	3.4%	-1.5%
Madison	39,821	37,351	-6.2%	31,310	24,351	34,904	43.3%	11.5%

Appendix B. Table 4. Median Household Income and Average Earnings Per Job

	Median Household Income (2014 $)			Average Earnings Per Job (2014 $)			Earnings Per Job	
County	2006-2010	2010-2014	Change 2006-10 to 2010-14	2007	2010	2014	2010-2014	2007-2014
Marion	37,210	33,293	-10.5%	29,521	25,188	28,159	11.8%	-4.6%
Miller	43,972	40,829	-7.1%	43,137	39,297	37,423	-4.8%	-13.2%
Mississippi	36,444	34,424	-5.5%	49,086	47,358	50,240	6.1%	2.4%
Monroe	32,688	27,571	-15.7%	33,403	33,918	40,603	19.7%	21.6%
Montgomery	38,951	32,293	-17.1%	28,200	22,736	26,757	17.7%	-5.1%
Nevada	41,864	31,614	-24.5%	37,182	31,118	38,917	25.1%	4.7%
Newton	29,936	32,500	8.6%	23,007	16,339	20,198	23.6%	-12.2%
Ouachita	34,101	32,220	-5.5%	37,184	38,434	39,382	2.5%	5.9%
Perry	47,602	42,030	-11.7%	28,866	25,490	26,920	5.6%	-6.7%
Phillips	29,849	27,183	-8.9%	42,685	34,325	42,044	22.5%	-1.5%
Pike	35,789	32,045	-10.5%	40,876	35,263	36,213	2.7%	-11.4%
Poinsett	35,201	33,238	-5.6%	39,471	38,142	43,997	15.4%	11.5%
Polk	35,482	33,558	-5.4%	30,681	29,060	33,442	15.1%	9.0%
Pope	43,463	40,818	-6.1%	39,906	40,439	42,121	4.2%	5.6%
Prairie	38,560	36,904	-4.3%	38,053	34,702	39,649	14.3%	4.2%
Pulaski	49,223	46,410	-5.7%	57,095	55,177	55,038	-0.3%	-3.6%
Randolph	32,970	36,487	10.7%	32,116	28,404	31,521	11.0%	-1.9%
Saint Francis	29,475	31,336	6.3%	42,643	40,460	39,900	-1.4%	-6.4%
Saline	56,184	55,697	-0.9%	37,475	37,201	37,601	1.1%	0.3%
Scott	39,728	36,754	-7.5%	31,563	27,224	35,757	31.3%	13.3%
Searcy	31,430	33,610	6.9%	23,742	21,200	23,476	10.7%	-1.1%
Sebastian	43,072	39,208	-9.0%	48,361	47,844	47,967	0.3%	-0.8%
Sevier	37,509	36,218	-3.4%	39,174	33,045	41,067	24.3%	4.8%
Sharp	33,966	30,826	-9.2%	29,590	24,858	30,526	22.8%	3.2%
Stone	33,142	29,982	-9.5%	26,857	23,530	26,400	12.2%	-1.7%
Union	39,779	38,762	-2.6%	48,069	50,745	55,159	8.7%	14.8%
Van Buren	34,866	31,030	-11.0%	30,645	29,157	39,213	34.5%	28.0%
Washington	46,149	41,983	-9.0%	46,738	47,182	47,882	1.5%	2.4%
White	42,740	42,852	0.3%	36,896	38,846	38,599	-0.6%	4.6%
Woodruff	29,658	27,165	-8.4%	35,760	33,683	41,213	22.4%	15.2%
Yell	39,934	37,378	-6.4%	34,065	30,953	37,747	22.0%	10.8%
Rural								
Coastal Plains	37,282	34,373	-2.4%	42,572	39,493	44,908	13.7%	5.5%
Delta	32,977	31,785	-6.1%	40,398	38,366	42,540	10.9%	5.3%
Highlands	37,279	36,202	-4.1%	33,391	30,319	34,118	12.5%	2.2%
Total Rural	**36,116**	**34,267**	**-5.3%**	**36,976**	**34,171**	**38,380**	**12.3%**	**3.8%**
Urban	**43,972**	**41,983**	**-4.6%**	**43,196**	**42,594**	**42,811**	**0.5%**	**-0.9%**
State	**42,837**	**41,264**	**-3.7%**	**44,500**	**43,603**	**45,275**	**3.8%**	**1.7%**
United States	**54,596**	**53,482**	**-2.0%**	**56,753**	**56,589**	**56,965**	**0.7%**	**0.4%**

Source: Median household income data from the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. Average earnings per job data from the REIS database, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Appendix B. Table 5. Measures of Social and Economic Stress

County Name	Percent Persons Below Poverty, 2014			Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Recipients, 2015				Percent Free-Reduced Price Lunch, School Year 2015-2016	% of Population Eligible for Medicaid, 2015	% of Population Under 19 Eligible for ARKids First, 2015	% of Population With Food Insecurity (Estimated), 2014	% of Children (Under 19) With Food Insecurity (Estimated), 2014	Persistent Poverty Counties (20% or More Poverty of All Persons)	Persistent Child Poverty Counties (20% or More Poverty of Children Under 18)
	All Persons	Children Uunder 18	Persons Aged 65 and Over	% Under 19	% 20-65	% Over 65	% Total							
Arkansas	17.7	26.9	9.8	45.9	21.3	4.5	24.0	73.6	28.4	65.2	19.9	25.1	0	1
Ashley	19.8	29.5	12.6	49.6	23.9	4.9	26.4	60.4	28.6	67.0	21.4	28.8	0	1
Baxter	14.9	19.9	8.7	42.1	20.1	2.2	18.6	61.1	19.5	60.4	16.4	27.1	0	0
Benton	11.7	16.5	5.7	22.2	9.3	2.2	11.8	44.5	15.0	40.6	12.9	21.7	0	0
Boone	16.9	23.4	8.4	40.7	19.7	3.5	21.1	56.5	23.2	56.5	16.7	27.3	0	0
Bradley	29.4	48.7	17.6	59.4	28.4	5.6	31.4	72.9	30.3	78.5	22.1	31.5	1	1
Calhoun	16.7	21.8	17.2	36.8	14.5	3.9	16.5	72.2	19.8	59.8	19.5	24.6	0	0
Carroll	17.9	26.5	10.9	41.2	16.6	2.9	19.1	70.8	22.0	63.3	14.6	25.3	0	1
Chicot	32.4	45.0	21.7	69.6	31.7	10.0	36.2	100.0	37.5	84.1	28.5	31.7	1	1
Clark	23.7	33.4	11.2	38.9	15.0	3.6	17.8	61.8	20.7	61.0	21.9	28.1	0	1
Clay	20.4	27.8	14.8	38.2	17.1	4.2	18.8	64.1	27.3	62.7	18.4	30.5	0	1
Cleburne	15.9	25.6	9.1	33.1	15.6	2.6	15.7	57.7	20.9	57.9	17.0	29.1	0	0
Cleveland	18.7	27.2	10.4	43.4	21.2	4.7	22.9	54.3	22.3	54.8	18.3	27.5	0	0
Columbia	26.8	38.4	13.4	48.8	20.2	3.3	23.4	65.7	25.4	61.9	23.8	28.5	1	1
Conway	22.7	32.7	13.6	43.7	22.2	4.0	23.7	70.6	26.0	60.1	19.1	29.1	0	0
Craighead	21.5	31.5	7.8	42.3	16.2	2.9	20.9	58.6	23.4	58.9	19.7	27.3	0	0
Crawford	18.8	29.3	10.8	41.1	18.5	3.8	21.8	66.5	24.0	54.9	16.1	27.8	0	0
Crittenden	25.9	39.6	16.6	65.4	30.6	7.2	37.3	84.5	35.0	72.9	26.7	28.8	1	1
Cross	19.4	26.2	17.4	46.1	21.4	4.4	24.4	62.5	27.7	64.5	21.1	26.7	0	1
Dallas	14.5	19.3	12.9	47.5	22.5	4.0	24.2	70.5	28.2	65.7	23.8	24.4	0	0
Desha	31.1	46.6	19.4	64.2	32.5	8.1	36.2	73.5	35.5	75.5	27.6	31.1	1	1
Drew	29.3	37.2	12.0	47.4	21.1	4.6	24.2	67.7	24.9	63.0	24.8	30.1	0	0
Faulkner	15.1	16.4	6.1	29.8	13.2	2.8	15.9	47.5	16.2	44.4	17.7	23.2	0	0
Franklin	19.9	24.2	13.4	43.1	20.5	3.9	22.7	57.3	23.8	55.6	16.6	27.4	0	0
Fulton	20.6	34.6	15.3	43.6	22.7	4.2	22.2	66.0	27.6	61.2	17.0	30.7	0	1
Garland	22.1	35.2	8.6	45.7	20.4	2.6	21.7	62.1	24.1	70.0	18.7	29.5	0	0
Grant	11.2	15.9	8.9	30.6	14.1	2.0	15.9	48.1	18.1	47.2	14.9	23.6	0	0
Greene	17.8	22.7	9.8	43.6	20.9	3.9	24.0	57.5	26.5	61.1	17.8	27.0	0	0
Hempstead	26.3	45.6	14.3	46.5	22.4	5.4	25.9	90.1	29.2	68.6	20.9	29.6	0	1
Hot Spring	14.5	20.1	8.0	45.1	19.3	3.8	22.0	64.4	23.0	63.3	17.4	25.5	0	0
Howard	21.0	31.7	11.6	49.3	23.0	4.0	26.5	74.5	29.1	65.5	19.3	26.8	0	0
Independence	23.2	34.3	12.2	39.1	18.4	3.6	20.8	60.4	25.3	61.1	18.8	30.7	0	0
Izard	18.7	23.3	11.8	49.2	21.4	4.3	22.2	67.8	24.7	67.2	17.3	28.6	0	1
Jackson	26.4	42.3	15.4	53.9	22.8	6.4	26.3	73.9	27.1	70.7	22.7	33.6	0	1
Jefferson	24.5	37.3	12.2	61.0	27.5	5.2	31.8	79.8	29.7	69.9	27.1	28.5	1	1
Johnson	21.2	33.2	9.8	45.9	21.9	4.5	25.1	75.8	27.4	69.9	16.7	28.7	0	0
Lafayette	26.0	35.0	21.4	59.0	27.0	6.5	28.8	83.9	30.5	66.7	24.0	28.1	1	1
Lawrence	23.6	35.0	11.5	45.7	21.6	4.9	23.7	67.3	28.9	64.8	19.1	31.6	0	1
Lee	29.8	42.1	31.7	67.5	30.1	12.6	34.4	100.0	32.7	77.3	28.8	29.9	1	1
Lincoln	26.7	37.2	20.6	52.0	17.3	6.5	21.9	64.2	21.8	66.2	22.9	30.0	0	1
Little River	16.4	23.1	10.9	46.3	21.4	5.0	23.6	69.1	24.6	57.7	18.5	24.9	0	0
Logan	17.1	24.4	8.0	50.2	23.6	5.2	25.9	81.6	27.6	65.8	16.7	27.3	0	0

Appendix B. Table 5. Measures of Social and Economic Stress

County Name	Percent Persons Below Poverty, 2014			Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Recipients, 2015				Percent Free-Reduced Price Lunch, School Year 2015-2016	% of Population Eligible for Medicaid, 2015	% of Population Under 19 Eligible for ARKids First, 2015	% of Population With Food Insecurity (Estimated), 2014	% of Children (Under 19) With Food Insecurity (Estimated), 2014	Persistent Poverty Counties (20% or More Poverty of All Persons)	Persistent Child Poverty Counties (20% or More Poverty of Children Under 18)
	All Persons	Children Under 18	Persons Aged 65 and Over	% Under 19	% 20-65	% Over 65	% Total							
Lonoke	13.2	17.7	10.2	27.4	13.3	3.2	15.6	44.5	17.9	42.4	15.5	23.9	0	0
Madison	21.1	29.9	12.1	41.1	17.8	3.7	20.7	66.8	24.6	63.1	15.7	27.6	0	1
Marion	18.8	26.7	9.7	52.6	23.2	3.2	22.8	73.7	23.1	68.7	16.6	28.8	0	0
Miller	20.0	29.8	12.4	48.5	21.5	5.1	25.5	65.6	27.3	63.9	20.7	26.6	0	1
Mississippi	26.7	40.8	16.1	58.0	28.0	6.9	33.1	84.2	33.6	67.9	25.5	31.4	1	1
Monroe	30.2	46.8	21.1	61.0	30.0	9.3	32.4	96.3	36.1	76.3	25.7	31.5	1	1
Montgomery	20.4	27.8	12.4	46.3	22.1	4.0	22.1	75.0	24.8	67.5	17.4	29.1	0	1
Nevada	29.4	52.4	22.2	52.2	22.9	5.4	25.9	100.0	29.8	65.0	22.4	31.2	1	1
Newton	20.4	25.0	15.6	39.6	20.4	5.4	20.5	71.7	26.0	66.2	16.1	27.4	1	1
Ouachita	21.9	33.4	12.6	53.8	25.4	4.7	27.9	72.4	29.6	68.9	24.2	28.7	0	1
Perry	13.5	19.3	7.6	40.3	20.8	3.1	21.9	58.5	23.1	58.3	15.8	26.2	0	0
Phillips	34.0	50.2	20.1	79.0	42.5	11.8	47.0	97.1	43.7	85.0	31.6	33.0	1	1
Pike	24.2	38.8	8.3	46.2	20.4	5.1	23.2	71.1	26.6	65.9	18.4	31.3	0	0
Poinsett	24.8	37.6	17.2	56.4	28.2	6.6	31.1	83.0	33.8	74.8	20.7	31.8	1	1
Polk	22.0	40.4	9.1	49.1	25.6	4.3	26.5	79.2	27.3	67.8	16.8	31.3	0	1
Pope	18.9	25.4	10.6	34.0	15.5	3.3	17.9	57.5	21.2	55.4	17.0	26.8	0	0
Prairie	20.2	27.5	20.4	41.4	18.2	4.0	19.7	71.8	25.1	60.7	18.9	27.4	0	0
Pulaski	16.9	25.2	7.7	42.6	16.1	3.7	22.2	68.3	22.4	58.3	21.1	23.4	0	0
Randolph	21.8	32.8	10.8	42.6	22.5	5.5	23.5	67.6	28.0	65.5	18.5	31.2	0	0
Saint Francis	27.7	43.1	15.5	64.3	26.2	6.4	32.0	71.9	32.2	75.9	27.8	31.0	1	1
Saline	9.0	11.2	4.3	24.0	11.3	1.5	12.6	39.8	14.3	41.9	13.9	21.4	0	0
Scott	19.4	31.8	13.7	49.9	23.8	5.6	26.6	73.4	30.4	63.5	15.5	28.4	0	1
Searcy	23.3	31.5	15.1	37.1	18.6	5.3	19.1	75.2	28.7	68.1	17.5	29.1	1	1
Sebastian	22.5	36.6	11.5	43.2	19.3	3.6	22.8	64.8	24.2	59.3	17.7	28.6	0	0
Sevier	22.6	34.0	10.1	48.5	23.5	5.2	28.2	75.5	28.5	70.8	14.3	26.4	0	0
Sharp	23.4	30.0	13.0	54.0	28.0	4.1	27.2	72.4	29.5	71.8	18.9	31.1	0	1
Stone	26.8	43.1	18.0	46.6	22.5	5.7	22.9	67.9	26.3	68.0	19.2	34.0	0	1
Union	21.3	35.3	10.7	49.0	22.8	4.5	25.9	61.6	28.0	65.5	22.2	28.0	0	1
Van Buren	26.3	44.9	14.0	45.9	23.9	3.8	23.3	100.0	22.9	65.5	19.3	34.3	0	1
Washington	20.7	26.1	10.0	34.4	13.1	3.1	17.3	57.9	18.4	53.5	16.4	24.4	0	0
White	18.1	20.5	11.5	37.8	18.2	4.3	20.7	59.0	22.9	57.4	17.9	26.1	0	0
Woodruff	26.1	34.1	14.8	54.0	28.4	9.7	29.8	75.7	33.2	72.1	24.3	30.2	1	1
Yell	19.9	26.6	12.1	41.1	17.6	4.5	21.1	79.4	27.3	69.1	14.9	25.1	0	0
Rural														
Coastal Plains	23.5	36.3	13.5	49.5	22.8	4.8	25.6	69.8	27.4	65.5	22.3	28.7	4	8
Delta	24.8	36.6	16.5	55.5	25.6	6.7	29.5	75.7	31.2	70.3	23.5	30.1	9	14
Highlands	19.4	27.7	11.0	42.0	19.7	3.8	21.5	66.0	24.3	62.0	17.4	27.9	2	14
Total Rural	**21.4**	**31.4**	**12.5**	**46.6**	**21.7**	**4.6**	**24.1**	**69.0**	**26.4**	**64.7**	**19.6**	**28.6**	**15**	**36**
Total Urban	**17.6**	**25.1**	**8.5**	**37.3**	**15.6**	**3.2**	**19.5**	**58.7**	**20.8**	**54.0**	**18.2**	**24.7**	**2**	**3**
State	**19.2**	**27.7**	**10.5**	**41.0**	**18.1**	**3.9**	**21.4**	**62.9**	**23.1**	**58.3**	**18.8**	**26.3**	**17**	**39**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Poverty Status.
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Recipients Breakdown by Age.
Arkansas Department of Human Services Statistical Report 2015.

Appendix B. Table 6. Health Indicators

County	Infant Mortality Rate, 2010-2014, Deaths Per 1,000 Live Births	Primary Care Physician Per 100,000 Population, 2014	% of Adults Ages 19-64 Approved for Private Option Insurance, 2015	% of Adult Population With No Personal Doctor, 2015	% of Adult Population Obese (BMI >=30), 2015	Children and Adolescents Who Are					County Health Rankings	
						Underweight	Healthy Weight	Overweight	Obese	Overweight or Obese	Health Outcomes Rank, 2016	Health Factors Rank, 2016
Arkansas	9.5	70.0	19.4%	8.8%	33.8	1.2%	54.3%	18.8%	25.8%	44.5%	51	32
Ashley	3.7	66.9	21.0%	14.1%	42.1	1.3%	56.0%	18.8%	23.9%	42.7%	59	65
Baxter	9.9	144.5	17.5%	11.7%	32.3	1.9%	60.4%	17.4%	20.3%	37.7%	33	3
Benton	6.0	100.5	8.3%	18.7%	30.1	2.5%	62.5%	16.8%	18.1%	34.9%	1	1
Boone	5.4	110.4	18.2%	10.1%	33.9	2.4%	60.7%	17.1%	19.8%	36.9%	5	6
Bradley	10.1	81.4	19.7%	13.9%	39.0	1.8%	52.7%	16.1%	29.3%	45.5%	66	67
Calhoun	0.0	38.6	14.8%	15.9%	34.2	53.1%		19.4%	27.5%	46.9%	16	33
Carroll	6.4	72.1	17.0%	12.3%	35.8	2.5%	58.2%	16.2%	23.1%	39.4%	24	19
Chicot	2.7	62.4	25.2%	8.1%	43.1	1.6%	49.0%	16.8%	32.6%	49.4%	63	71
Clark	7.3	79.3	15.5%	12.5%	34.3	1.0%	57.8%	17.5%	23.6%	41.1%	37	15
Clay	2.4	59.3	20.6%	8.1%	33.7	2.9%	52.2%	19.0%	25.9%	44.9%	52	47
Cleburne	3.2	58.4	17.0%	7.4%	31.8	2.6%	61.5%	16.4%	19.6%	36.0%	14	12
Cleveland	0.0	11.9	16.0%	6.3%	35.7	1.4%	53.8%	17.8%	27.1%	44.8%	8	11
Columbia	4.8	95.4	17.2%	16.2%	36.4	3.0%	58.5%	18.3%	20.2%	38.5%	54	53
Conway	6.1	71.3	17.3%	18.7%	39.7	1.3%	61.3%	16.2%	21.2%	37.4%	32	42
Craighead	8.2	208.4	14.7%	19.0%	36.4	2.6%	59.5%	16.7%	21.2%	37.9%	17	17
Crawford	8.3	53.5	14.4%	17.5%	35.1	3.3%	63.2%	15.4%	18.1%	33.5%	27	25
Crittenden	7.8	76.7	23.3%	14.1%	38.8	2.0%	56.6%	17.4%	24.1%	41.4%	68	69
Cross	7.1	58.2	20.6%	12.5%	37.9	1.9%	52.5%	18.7%	26.8%	45.5%	67	51
Dallas	4.9	51.6	19.6%	9.5%	36.2	2.9%	54.5%	17.6%	25.0%	42.6%	46	48
Desha	6.9	65.5	29.3%	6.9%	39.6	2.6%	53.7%	19.4%	24.3%	43.7%	72	68
Drew	11.9	64.1	18.4%	8.5%	34.3	2.8%	59.4%	16.0%	21.8%	37.9%	35	54
Faulkner	7.6	89.3	11.3%	13.5%	33.2	2.8%	63.0%	16.1%	18.1%	34.2%	4	4
Franklin	7.0	39.4	17.7%	17.2%	37.1	3.0%	58.5%	17.8%	20.7%	38.5%	49	20
Fulton	5.4	57.7	21.9%	11.9%	32.9	59.7%		17.5%	22.9%	40.3%	30	13
Garland	5.4	165.7	19.2%	16.9%	32.3	3.0%	60.8%	16.2%	20.0%	36.2%	44	26
Grant	5.1	33.1	13.2%	11.2%	38.3	1.6%	58.9%	17.5%	22.0%	39.4%	10	7
Greene	7.5	80.0	16.1%	12.7%	31.2	1.5%	60.1%	16.3%	22.0%	38.4%	25	24
Hempstead	4.9	26.9	18.3%	14.5%	40.3	1.6%	54.1%	17.4%	26.9%	44.3%	57	62
Hot Spring	5.1	39.0	14.3%	15.5%	34.7	1.6%	56.2%	17.1%	25.1%	42.2%	28	35
Howard	7.3	59.4	19.7%	12.6%	35.7	2.4%	57.2%	17.4%	22.9%	40.3%	56	41
Independence	7.4	129.5	15.7%	8.6%	37.2	1.7%	56.1%	17.8%	24.4%	42.2%	21	50
Izard	10.0	7.4	18.3%	12.4%	33.9	3.8%	63.4%	14.1%	18.6%	32.7%	39	27
Jackson	12.2	91.4	19.7%	11.6%	37.2	1.4%	56.0%	15.4%	27.2%	42.6%	58	70
Jefferson	5.7	149.2	19.9%	13.5%	40.7	1.6%	56.4%	17.7%	24.3%	42.0%	62	64
Johnson	5.1	46.1	15.5%	19.8%	36.4	1.9%	56.5%	17.7%	23.9%	41.6%	20	43
Lafayette	13.9	28.1	20.3%	14.0%	36.3	1.9%	50.8%	22.0%	25.4%	47.3%	74	61
Lawrence	10.5	64.8	21.7%	14.9%	31.8	1.9%	57.2%	18.4%	22.4%	40.8%	40	52
Lee	3.8	40.9	21.7%	9.9%	35.7	---	---	---	---	---	73	74
Lincoln	6.6	7.2	12.6%	8.9%	37.5	1.4%	56.3%	14.3%	28.0%	42.3%	29	60
Little River	0.0	63.8	14.3%	16.7%	32.7	1.4%	57.6%	15.6%	25.3%	41.0%	9	18
Logan	7.8	50.2	15.0%	17.0%	37.5	2.9%	58.9%	16.0%	22.3%	38.3%	34	23
Lonoke	6.1	33.6	11.5%	11.4%	35.8	2.1%	62.0%	17.0%	18.9%	35.9%	7	8
Madison	6.2	19.1	15.4%	14.8%	34.0	2.3%	62.2%	19.6%	15.9%	35.5%	15	29

Appendix B. Table 6. Health Indicators

County	Infant Mortality Rate, 2010-2014, Deaths Per 1,000 Live Births	Primary Care Physician Per 100,000 Population, 2014	% of Adults Ages 19-64 Approved for Private Option Insurance, 2015	% of Adult Population With No Personal Doctor, 2015	% of Adult Population Obese (BMI >=30), 2015	Children and Adolescents Who Are					County Health Rankings	
						Underweight	Healthy Weight	Overweight	Obese	Overweight or Obese	Health Outcomes Rank, 2016	Health Factors Rank, 2016
Marion	6.6	18.3	18.3%	11.1%	31.7	1.8%	54.2%	18.6%	25.4%	44.0%	38	22
Miller	5.2	68.9	16.1%	13.8%	35.9	2.1%	59.9%	16.2%	21.8%	38.0%	48	36
Mississippi	7.6	56.5	19.5%	17.7%	39.8	2.0%	56.8%	16.1%	25.0%	41.1%	71	72
Monroe	2.1	79.0	25.3%	9.4%	37.5	2.2%	53.3%	20.7%	23.7%	44.4%	64	66
Montgomery	7.0	55.0	22.5%	14.6%	33.8	2.2%	60.0%	14.3%	23.5%	37.8%	23	37
Nevada	5.5	34.5	19.2%	12.5%	36.0	2.2%	55.9%	17.8%	24.1%	41.9%	70	55
Newton	11.1	25.3	23.3%	14.3%	34.2	1.7%	59.5%	14.7%	24.2%	38.9%	43	30
Ouachita	9.8	76.6	20.9%	13.8%	34.8	2.1%	53.7%	18.1%	26.1%	44.2%	61	46
Perry	9.4	19.5	17.4%	11.6%	37.5	2.3%	60.0%	17.5%	20.2%	37.7%	31	21
Phillips	5.9	65.3	30.7%	7.9%	45.5	0.7%	52.7%	16.8%	29.9%	46.6%	75	75
Pike	8.6	54.6	19.9%	11.5%	37.8	1.8%	61.5%	15.7%	21.0%	36.7%	41	45
Poinsett	9.9	12.4	21.6%	14.7%	38.4	1.7%	53.6%	16.9%	27.8%	44.7%	60	63
Polk	0.8	103.7	18.5%	15.4%	36.7	1.5%	61.0%	17.7%	19.8%	37.5%	42	28
Pope	5.4	101.5	13.8%	24.3%	32.1	2.3%	58.4%	17.2%	22.1%	39.3%	6	9
Prairie	6.6	0.0	17.4%	8.4%	36.3	2.9%	52.5%	17.7%	27.0%	44.7%	45	16
Pulaski	7.6	309.8	14.9%	13.2%	31.7	2.1%	60.2%	16.6%	21.0%	37.7%	11	10
Randolph	2.0	62.7	22.1%	12.3%	35.3	1.7%	56.2%	17.8%	24.3%	42.1%	13	34
Saint Francis	7.9	66.7	19.9%	13.7%	32.5	2.4%	56.7%	16.6%	24.2%	40.8%	65	73
Saline	8.3	63.9	9.6%	11.1%	32.5	2.1%	61.7%	16.8%	19.4%	36.2%	2	2
Scott	3.1	37.4	18.8%	16.0%	35.0	1.1%	57.6%	17.2%	24.2%	41.4%	12	44
Searcy	7.8	63.2	24.2%	16.2%	36.9	1.6%	57.6%	17.7%	23.1%	40.8%	47	38
Sebastian	6.3	207.9	12.9%	16.5%	36.7	2.4%	60.6%	16.8%	20.3%	37.1%	19	14
Sevier	6.5	46.0	13.7%	14.0%	37.3	1.5%	53.7%	19.2%	25.6%	44.8%	36	57
Sharp	11.6	47.3	23.9%	12.5%	42.5	2.0%	56.6%	16.5%	24.9%	41.4%	53	40
Stone	11.2	96.4	23.4%	11.7%	32.6	3.1%	64.1%	14.5%	18.4%	32.8%	55	56
Union	8.5	124.5	17.9%	17.6%	39.4	2.1%	58.2%	16.6%	23.1%	39.7%	50	39
Van Buren	5.8	29.6	17.6%	14.7%	35.6	2.4%	53.5%	20.4%	23.8%	44.2%	26	49
Washington	6.6	155.4	9.9%	18.9%	30.6	1.8%	60.3%	17.3%	20.6%	37.8%	3	5
White	9.4	91.6	15.4%	8.5%	36.3	2.0%	58.6%	16.8%	22.7%	39.5%	18	31
Woodruff	7.7	58.1	23.9%	8.8%	35.8	2.2%	49.6%	19.1%	29.0%	48.1%	69	59
Yell	7.6	73.0	13.1%	20.8%	37.1	2.0%	57.6%	17.5%	22.8%	40.4%	22	58
Rural:											**No. in Top 25% Outcomes**	**No. in Top 25% Factors**
Coastal Plains	6.7	73.0	18.4%	14.3%	36.8	6.2%	55.5%	17.8%	25.1%	42.9%	3	2
Delta	7.2	57.8	20.5%	12.2%	37.2	1.9%	54.0%	17.5%	26.6%	44.1%	0	1
Highlands	6.8	72.7	17.0%	14.1%	35.5	3.8%	58.5%	17.1%	22.3%	39.5%	8	7
Total Rural	**6.9**	**69.2**	**18.1%**	**13.7%**	**36.5**	**3.8%**	**56.8%**	**17.4%**	**23.9%**	**41.3%**	**11**	**10**
Total Urban	**6.9**	**166.3**	**13.1%**	**15.8%**	**34.6**	**2.3%**	**60.5%**	**16.7%**	**20.5%**	**37.1%**	**7**	**8**
State	**6.9**	**125.4**	**15.1%**	**16.4%**	**35.9**	**2.2%**	**59.2%**	**17.0%**	**21.7%**	**38.7%**	**18**	**18**

Source: Arkansas Department of Health – Arkansas Health Statistics Branch Query System.
Arkansas Department of Health – Arkansas Health Professions Manpower Statistics, 2014.
Arkansas Department of Human Services. Private Option data, June 2015. As of January 2016, 244,797 individuals (excluding the medically frail) were determined eligible for the program. This is not reflected above because county-level data was not available for 2016. The county-level data includes the medically frail, which account for 10% of the eligible. Arkansas Department of Health – Arkansas BRFSS 2015 County Estimates.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Diabetes, County Data Indicators.
Arkansas Center for Health Improvement – Assessment of Childhood and Adolescent Obesity in Arkansas, Year 12.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, County Health Rankings, 2016.

Appendix B. Table 7. Education

	Pre-K Enrollment		Public School Enrollment		College-Going Students		% Persons Age 25+ With		
County	2014	Percent 3-5 Year Olds	2015-2016	Enrollment Change, 2007-08 to 2015-16	2015	Percent	H.S. Degree or Higher	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Arkansas	255	35.52%	2,845	-13.74%	120	57.5%	83.25%	5.51%	13.88%
Ashley	460	47.82%	3,581	-10.21%	113	46.4%	84.79%	4.19%	12.74%
Baxter	628	57.04%	4,960	-1.59%	148	50.5%	86.98%	7.07%	17.42%
Benton	3,779	31.61%	44,092	25.72%	1,250	43.9%	86.42%	5.70%	29.58%
Boone	589	41.28%	5,849	-6.57%	214	55.8%	84.92%	6.73%	15.15%
Bradley	235	45.28%	2,022	-2.55%	62	50.7%	79.39%	5.67%	11.19%
Calhoun	99	51.56%	551	-18.13%	19	51.6%	81.94%	6.47%	10.61%
Carroll	350	34.76%	3,857	2.66%	110	42.7%	83.43%	5.96%	16.98%
Chicot	218	50.70%	1,387	-20.24%	39	37.8%	76.87%	2.98%	11.30%
Clark	364	54.65%	2,513	-12.77%	120	57.2%	85.43%	6.53%	22.34%
Clay	250	60.98%	2,363	-13.44%	89	39.3%	77.19%	4.18%	9.75%
Cleburne	310	37.62%	3,285	-4.56%	108	54.9%	84.58%	5.82%	17.24%
Cleveland	157	43.25%	1,441	-0.07%	59	66.3%	84.88%	8.50%	14.61%
Columbia	324	44.94%	3,799	4.54%	132	59.6%	84.03%	7.09%	21.30%
Conway	254	30.49%	3,122	-5.19%	102	62.7%	85.12%	5.24%	16.46%
Craighead	2,069	44.74%	18,205	17.75%	551	54.2%	86.49%	6.12%	24.84%
Crawford	1,135	43.86%	10,765	-5.88%	407	51.1%	84.52%	7.81%	14.34%
Crittenden	977	40.71%	10,004	-9.98%	305	44.5%	80.47%	6.38%	14.60%
Cross	320	44.94%	3,261	-8.50%	111	53.6%	78.55%	4.01%	12.42%
Dallas	101	45.91%	793	-24.69%	33	55.7%	83.90%	6.45%	11.83%
Desha	302	65.94%	2,487	-11.24%	79	47.6%	77.66%	4.22%	11.61%
Drew	506	66.84%	2,969	-5.02%	87	53.8%	82.88%	4.58%	20.35%
Faulkner	1,973	41.13%	18,513	10.43%	713	61.9%	89.71%	7.18%	27.28%
Franklin	237	39.50%	3,221	-4.48%	128	63.5%	83.20%	7.21%	12.62%
Fulton	164	39.52%	1,651	1.23%	62	49.6%	84.48%	5.06%	10.65%
Garland	1,601	41.49%	14,887	8.26%	535	55.1%	86.93%	7.60%	21.05%
Grant	313	44.02%	4,738	-1.50%	153	57.8%	85.68%	6.30%	15.31%
Greene	973	54.09%	7,530	11.05%	239	54.1%	83.84%	4.98%	14.91%
Hempstead	424	47.11%	3,414	-9.32%	130	54.2%	80.37%	6.36%	13.96%
Hot Spring	553	48.30%	5,305	-0.84%	228	55.8%	84.41%	8.20%	14.11%
Howard	299	46.14%	2,924	1.00%	129	60.3%	77.64%	4.91%	14.44%
Independence	897	63.98%	6,110	7.06%	224	61.8%	81.98%	6.20%	14.84%
Izard	139	36.01%	1,795	0.34%	65	53.9%	81.32%	6.84%	12.32%
Jackson	278	49.38%	2,066	-12.94%	78	47.1%	76.90%	5.18%	7.92%
Jefferson	1,463	52.93%	10,933	-17.61%	417	55.6%	84.29%	5.69%	17.10%
Johnson	237	18.78%	4,588	5.67%	116	58.2%	78.26%	3.59%	16.29%
Lafayette	176	66.17%	583	-53.47%	22	58.1%	77.72%	4.07%	12.42%
Lawrence	220	37.04%	2,921	-8.52%	112	52.4%	81.11%	6.47%	11.76%
Lee	172	60.99%	775	-38.93%	31	56.0%	68.33%	5.28%	6.45%
Lincoln	239	46.41%	1,533	-10.98%	49	49.5%	75.03%	4.25%	8.49%
Little River	350	69.86%	1,913	-8.47%	71	50.0%	85.07%	5.98%	11.76%
Logan	369	46.42%	3,205	-10.70%	141	48.2%	81.97%	5.63%	11.76%
Lonoke	1,557	50.88%	13,420	6.15%	418	45.8%	87.23%	8.58%	18.74%
Madison	167	25.77%	2,349	-5.85%	55	30.2%	76.72%	2.78%	9.69%

Appendix B. Table 7. Education

County	Pre-K Enrollment		Public School Enrollment		College-Going Students		% Persons Age 25+ With		
	2014	Percent 3-5 Year Olds	2015-2016	Enrollment Change, 2007-08 to 2015-16	2015	Percent	H.S. Degree or Higher	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Marion	207	48.25%	1,530	-15.14%	49	47.9%	84.65%	5.38%	12.81%
Miller	817	46.37%	6,460	2.59%	156	32.5%	84.62%	5.94%	12.75%
Mississippi	1,029	51.50%	7,293	-16.18%	243	46.7%	78.65%	6.34%	13.14%
Monroe	182	63.19%	980	-32.13%	37	42.0%	75.93%	6.04%	12.07%
Montgomery	79	35.27%	1,056	-5.71%	35	53.1%	81.74%	7.18%	13.63%
Nevada	49	18.28%	1,388	-6.91%	63	66.7%	81.95%	5.09%	14.21%
Newton	67	24.91%	1,180	-5.45%	50	55.9%	80.94%	4.90%	11.32%
Ouachita	569	51.82%	3,926	-16.13%	180	55.8%	85.48%	7.20%	15.90%
Perry	125	43.40%	1,606	-7.91%	73	52.9%	83.23%	5.08%	14.41%
Phillips	537	51.39%	3,951	-11.98%	117	65.2%	74.75%	10.07%	12.85%
Pike	165	47.55%	1,965	-16.06%	75	53.0%	80.33%	7.49%	12.82%
Poinsett	427	41.99%	4,022	-10.26%	126	47.1%	75.51%	4.79%	8.01%
Polk	236	34.25%	3,474	-9.32%	118	50.4%	85.31%	8.05%	12.59%
Pope	1,229	51.68%	9,910	2.45%	364	54.7%	82.78%	4.68%	21.13%
Prairie	167	51.38%	1,165	-10.93%	40	46.5%	79.34%	5.34%	10.36%
Pulaski	7,391	44.02%	57,232	6.27%	1523	50.4%	89.78%	6.34%	32.03%
Randolph	307	44.62%	2,335	-1.18%	67	61.5%	81.62%	7.35%	14.45%
St. Francis	672	62.92%	3,034	-34.84%	628	39.6%	77.31%	6.48%	11.77%
Saline	2,119	45.85%	17,137	23.55%	44	60.5%	88.77%	7.15%	22.99%
Scott	160	35.79%	1,454	-15.66%	53	44.2%	75.79%	4.44%	12.25%
Searcy	129	39.09%	1,472	-13.72%	621	61.4%	79.28%	5.93%	13.87%
Sebastian	2,167	39.08%	20,517	1.61%	120	49.0%	82.39%	7.69%	19.74%
Sevier	308	35.00%	3,229	-2.68%	114	54.4%	68.05%	5.37%	8.25%
Sharp	181	33.27%	2,812	-14.29%	137	58.2%	81.49%	7.40%	10.65%
Stone	117	40.77%	1,661	0.06%	61	57.4%	80.01%	5.63%	16.27%
Union	1,028	56.83%	7,250	-7.18%	263	62.1%	82.86%	7.79%	17.37%
Van Buren	166	27.67%	2,182	-6.23%	76	50.3%	81.28%	5.56%	12.21%
Washington	3,380	35.59%	40,553	20.14%	1091	42.1%	82.88%	4.57%	29.28%
White	1,121	34.51%	12,601	2.34%	356	46.2%	82.84%	7.03%	18.96%
Woodruff	69	26.54%	1,006	-14.89%	38	49.2%	70.54%	4.76%	9.00%
Yell	428	42.25%	4,141	-2.13%	113	46.0%	74.81%	3.23%	11.94%
Rural:									
Coastal Plains	4,377	52.38%	32,837	-9.72%	1201	53.0%	83.04%	6.34%	15.69%
Delta	6,090	51.23%	45,698	-14.97%	2064	51.9%	77.96%	5.47%	11.53%
Highlands	11,216	41.02%	115,794	-3.27%	4610	51.1%	82.31%	6.06%	15.23%
Total Rural:	**21,683**	**45.56%**	**194,329**	**-7.11%**	**7875**	**51.6%**	**81.39%**	**5.96%**	**14.42%**
Total Urban:	**30,428**	**40.97%**	**282,718**	**8.93%**	**7530**	**48.5%**	**86.57%**	**6.44%**	**25.51%**
State:	**52,111**	**42.77%**	**477,047**	**2.39%**	**15405**	**50.0%**	**84.30%**	**6.23%**	**20.65%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Pre-K Enrollment).
U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Educational Attainment).
Arkansas Department of Education (Public School Enrollment).
Arkansas Department of Higher Education (College-Going Rates).

Appendix B. Table 8. Property Tax Assessments and Retail Sales

County	Assessments			Retail Sales			Change 2007 to 2014 (%)	
	Total Assessments, 2015 (M$)	Assessments Per Capita 2015 ($)	Change in Assessments 2007 to 2015	Retail Sales, 2012 (M$)	Per Capita Retail Sales, 2012 ($)	Change in Retail Sales 2007 to 2012	Property Tax Revenue	Sales Tax Revenue
Arkansas	360.9	19,577	22.5%	336.0	17,688	5.3%	13.1%	8.7%
Ashley	362.1	17,375	10.8%	185.2	8,615	-2.7%	-0.3%	-25.9%
Baxter	715.1	17,418	8.0%	476.6	11,604	-12.1%	18.3%	-10.1%
Benton	4,732.2	18,954	-15.1%	2,906.0	12,486	9.1%	22.5%	-25.6%
Boone	521.4	14,008	3.1%	493.3	13,213	-5.2%	-12.2%	1.0%
Bradley	123.6	11,140	7.0%	98.9	8,750	24.0%	23.8%	18.7%
Calhoun	95.7	18,299	15.8%	17.8	3,365	-10.4%	-5.0%	29.2%
Carroll	455.8	16,453	5.8%	230.2	8,340	-22.1%	18.3%	-4.6%
Chicot	143.8	13,040	9.5%	75.9	6,624	1.6%	-10.6%	67.0%
Clark	288.5	12,748	4.4%	273.7	11,991	-0.9%	27.1%	53.6%
Clay	206.6	13,671	14.7%	179.4	11,517	21.4%	-11.4%	28.5%
Cleburne	831.0	32,632	79.4%	313.1	12,147	-0.5%	65.5%	-4.8%
Cleveland	91.9	11,053	12.1%	13.4	1,552	-2.1%	17.7%	40.8%
Columbia	524.6	21,755	54.1%	197.0	8,074	-10.7%	26.4%	1.1%
Conway	600.8	28,583	123.5%	287.6	13,557	-4.5%	116.4%	73.0%
Craighead	1,595.7	15,291	2.5%	1,680.9	16,825	4.7%	29.6%	-30.2%
Crawford	729.6	11,824	3.4%	525.4	8,484	4.2%	26.2%	-4.5%
Crittenden	724.7	14,801	10.8%	813.3	16,244	-2.7%	6.5%	-9.0%
Cross	238.0	13,769	11.3%	180.8	10,239	-12.6%	5.0%	253.6%
Dallas	86.8	11,409	6.0%	71.8	9,009	-19.2%	-8.0%	0.7%
Desha	208.5	17,424	17.3%	153.6	12,218	15.7%	4.9%	5.0%
Drew	223.1	11,880	6.4%	260.7	13,886	17.6%	7.8%	43.2%
Faulkner	1,877.0	15,442	16.9%	1,435.8	12,114	5.0%	65.5%	8.2%
Franklin	258.0	14,574	0.0%	163.0	9,087	4.3%	-10.9%	8.6%
Fulton	140.5	11,510	17.0%	59.3	4,843	25.4%	5.2%	20.7%
Garland	1,820.1	18,729	9.6%	1,564.0	16,150	-2.8%	39.6%	164.0%
Grant	226.5	12,514	13.6%	128.9	7,148	7.5%	7.8%	29.0%
Greene	553.3	12,519	6.1%	503.5	11,666	21.1%	20.5%	39.9%
Hempstead	412.4	18,673	63.0%	197.6	8,850	-13.3%	139.0%	67.7%
Hot Spring	421.4	12,606	13.1%	254.2	7,614	10.0%	20.4%	55.1%
Howard	196.0	14,734	2.5%	162.5	11,853	-9.3%	-7.7%	54.7%
Independence	562.4	15,178	4.5%	441.1	11,953	3.0%	7.1%	86.6%
Izard	168.4	12,525	17.0%	108.7	8,050	-6.8%	-12.6%	-40.2%
Jackson	222.7	12,846	10.9%	177.7	10,075	-16.4%	23.2%	271.9%
Jefferson	881.0	12,311	10.6%	843.9	11,315	-12.7%	-1.6%	2.6%
Johnson	288.8	11,050	-1.3%	237.3	9,175	8.2%	11.0%	-3.8%
Lafayette	112.1	16,024	31.4%	30.5	4,100	-16.8%	11.9%	54.3%
Lawrence	193.5	11,534	9.8%	196.3	11,520	7.6%	1.9%	3.3%
Lee	132.1	13,692	57.9%	43.8	4,299	9.8%	24.9%	6.7%
Lincoln	119.7	8,665	5.0%	57.5	4,064	-10.3%	-3.1%	12.7%
Little River	258.4	20,715	-11.0%	104.2	8,077	6.0%	-16.2%	56.3%
Logan	276.0	12,711	0.8%	152.8	6,942	-23.0%	-6.9%	-5.3%
Lonoke	941.7	13,144	5.5%	613.4	8,752	10.7%	31.7%	24.3%
Madison	194.1	12,313	15.8%	130.2	8,327	1.9%	38.4%	5.2%

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County	Assessments			Retail Sales			Change 2007 to 2014 (%)	
	Total Assessments, 2015 (M$)	Assessments Per Capita 2015 ($)	Change in Assessments 2007 to 2015	Retail Sales, 2012 (M$)	Per Capita Retail Sales, 2012 ($)	Change in Retail Sales 2007 to 2012	Property Tax Revenue	Sales Tax Revenue
Marion	222.4	13,740	16.1%	94.8	5,711	-3.2%	8.3%	2.0%
Miller	518.5	11,809	15.2%	435.7	9,990	-4.1%	-14.2%	-3.7%
Mississippi	662.7	15,152	27.8%	437.8	9,611	-6.9%	93.6%	-6.7%
Monroe	118.2	15,979	27.1%	90.6	11,560	-1.1%	-4.3%	--
Montgomery	121.2	13,513	19.9%	28.8	3,094	-20.1%	2.3%	-5.2%
Nevada	99.6	11,634	4.8%	159.1	17,866	4.4%	-25.2%	171.5%
Newton	87.8	11,099	14.3%	17.0	2,103	15.0%	102.1%	70.8%
Ouachita	273.2	11,216	26.3%	222.0	8,736	7.3%	3.5%	264.7%
Perry	104.6	10,262	17.7%	30.5	2,951	-16.5%	48.0%	28.5%
Phillips	227.8	11,675	25.4%	223.2	10,743	-12.7%	11.6%	-24.3%
Pike	135.6	12,529	9.8%	70.0	6,217	19.1%	13.5%	1.6%
Poinsett	281.1	11,692	11.2%	178.0	7,317	-17.3%	-13.4%	-3.8%
Polk	232.6	11,505	10.1%	193.5	9,465	-1.8%	-13.2%	47.1%
Pope	1,159.5	18,292	6.2%	869.4	13,862	-15.1%	9.2%	-16.3%
Prairie	124.0	14,960	7.6%	54.3	6,432	23.5%	14.7%	82.9%
Pulaski	7,066.6	17,997	3.6%	7,234.4	18,595	5.4%	14.3%	-21.8%
Randolph	195.7	11,204	10.1%	170.7	9,565	11.5%	5.8%	-1.2%
St. Francis	256.6	9,652	9.5%	316.2	11,341	-19.8%	-9.6%	-12.0%
Saline	1,715.1	14,602	2.0%	1,404.8	12,580	8.9%	25.2%	-99.9%
Scott	105.3	10,021	6.3%	50.4	4,575	-7.1%	-81.3%	78.2%
Searcy	86.7	11,012	14.7%	49.8	6,226	-24.4%	-14.0%	-5.5%
Sebastian	2,080.4	16,281	6.8%	1,944.5	15,266	-4.4%	15.0%	143.3%
Sevier	166.7	9,642	6.1%	190.5	11,092	6.5%	31.6%	16.6%
Sharp	193.0	11,411	6.8%	152.6	8,947	-12.2%	8.5%	2.9%
Stone	158.9	12,759	19.3%	107.5	8,511	-11.0%	63.5%	-3.9%
Union	792.2	19,734	21.9%	511.1	12,494	-12.9%	9.7%	16.3%
Van Buren	649.1	38,704	176.6%	168.4	9,814	-0.6%	210.3%	3.1%
Washington	3,479.6	15,432	-10.8%	2,925.8	13,818	-3.6%	1.3%	-12.8%
White	1,384.0	17,484	57.7%	911.7	11,591	1.8%	85.1%	5.0%
Woodruff	142.0	21,064	72.3%	74.2	10,498	2.9%	29.2%	6.4%
Yell	233.7	10,761	4.9%	121.4	5,565	-0.3%	-0.2%	67.9%
Rural:								
Coastal Plains	3,368.7	16,596	16.5%	1,997.4	9,613.9	-2.8%	13.2%	33.9%
Delta	3,998.0	13,547	11.4%	3,082.5	10,163.9	-2.3%	15.1%	23.1%
Highlands	11,661.8	15,629	24.4%	7,407.4	9,874.8	-4.3%	23.8%	16.0%
Total Rural:	**19,028.5**	**15,293**	**20.0%**	**12,487.3**	**9,901.3**	**-3.6%**	**19.6%**	**21.2%**
Total Urban:	**28,162.1**	**16,242**	**10.2%**	**24,327.9**	**14,411.2**	**2.3%**	**18.5%**	**7.8%**
State:	**47,190.6**	**15,845**	**13.9%**	**36,815.3**	**12,482.7**	**0.2%**	**18.9%**	**15.4%**

Source: Assessment Data from Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department
Retail Sales Data from the 2012 Economic Census, U.S. Census Bureau
Property and Sales Tax Data from Arkansas Legislative Audit

Project Team

Project Directors

Dr. Wayne P. Miller, Professor, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service

Dr. Zola K. Moon, Clinical Associate Professor, University of Arkansas, School of Human Environmental Sciences

Data Management/Writing

Tyler Knapp, Professional Assistant, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service

Publication Design/Layout/Editing

Laura Goforth, Associate Designer/Editor, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service

Cover Design

Chris Meux, Design Specialist, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service

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Wayne Miller, Professor
University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture
Cooperative Extension Service
2301 S. University Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72204
(501) 671-2072
wmiller@uada.edu

– OR –

Zola Moon, PhD
University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture
School of Human Environmental Sciences
HOEC 118
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479) 575-5123
zmoon@uark.edu

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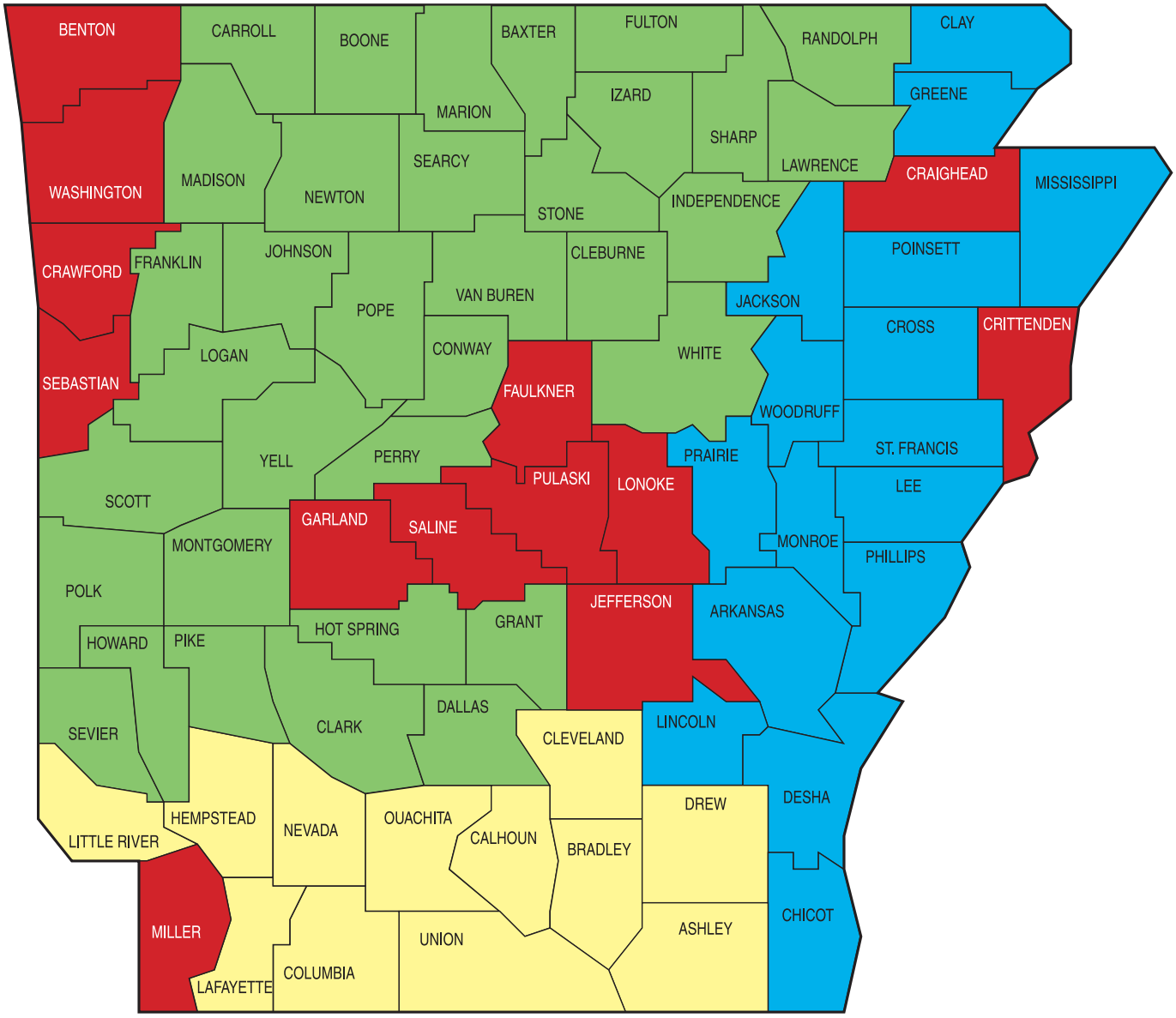
Arkansas Regions and Counties



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