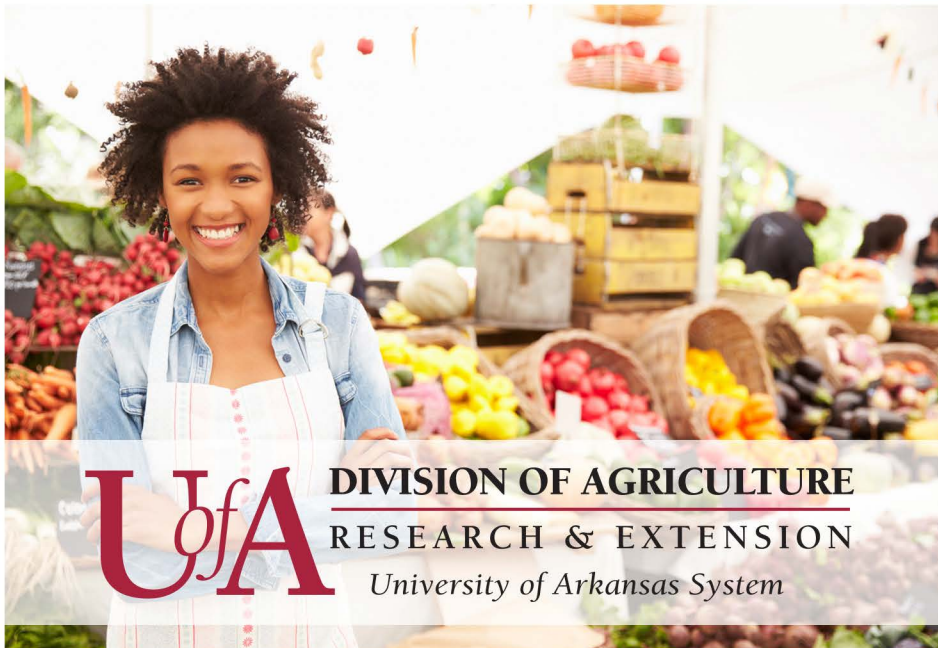


RURAL PROFILE OF ARKANSAS



UofA

DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Dear Fellow Arkansans,

The Rural Profile of Arkansas - 2021 is the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture's ongoing contribution to greater understanding of the social, demographic and economic conditions in rural and urban regions of the state. This profile has been providing information for approximately 30 years and has served as a valued source of data and information for elected leaders in the state as well as for local government stakeholders and public servants.

Rural areas in the state have been greatly challenged over the past several decades by economic and demographic changes and now find the loss of businesses and continuing migration of youth and talent to urban areas of critical concern. Adding to these challenges is the COVID-19 pandemic, which is affecting both rural and urban communities and highlighting some of the difficulties facing rural communities. The 2021 Rural Profile describes important social, demographic and economic trends. This data may be useful in developing strategies to build strong communities and support entrepreneurship and broadband access, which will stabilize and reverse some of the negatives experienced by rural communities. We want to help make sure rural Arkansas remains a great place to live and a great place to make a living.

While the major focus of the profile remains on understanding the differences between rural and urban areas of the state, conditions also vary within the rural areas. To provide insight into how circumstances differ in rural areas, three distinct regions – the Delta, the Coastal Plains and the Highlands – were studied.

The profile is designed to be a tool for leaders in planning and directing policies and programs to enhance the well-being of all Arkansans, and we believe that positive progress in rural areas complement and enhance progress in urban areas. A healthy rural economy and society benefits everyone. If you have any questions on how to interpret and use the information in this profile, please contact your local Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service agent. They are a valuable resource to you and your community.

We look forward to continuing our service to the State of Arkansas by providing an analysis of some of the important issues facing Arkansans living in rural and urban regions of the state.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert C. Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" being the most prominent part.

Robert Scott, Ph.D.
Senior Associate Vice President for Agriculture -
Extension & Director, Cooperative Extension Service
University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture

2021

RURAL PROFILE OF ARKANSAS

Social & Economic Trends Affecting Rural Arkansas

Authors:

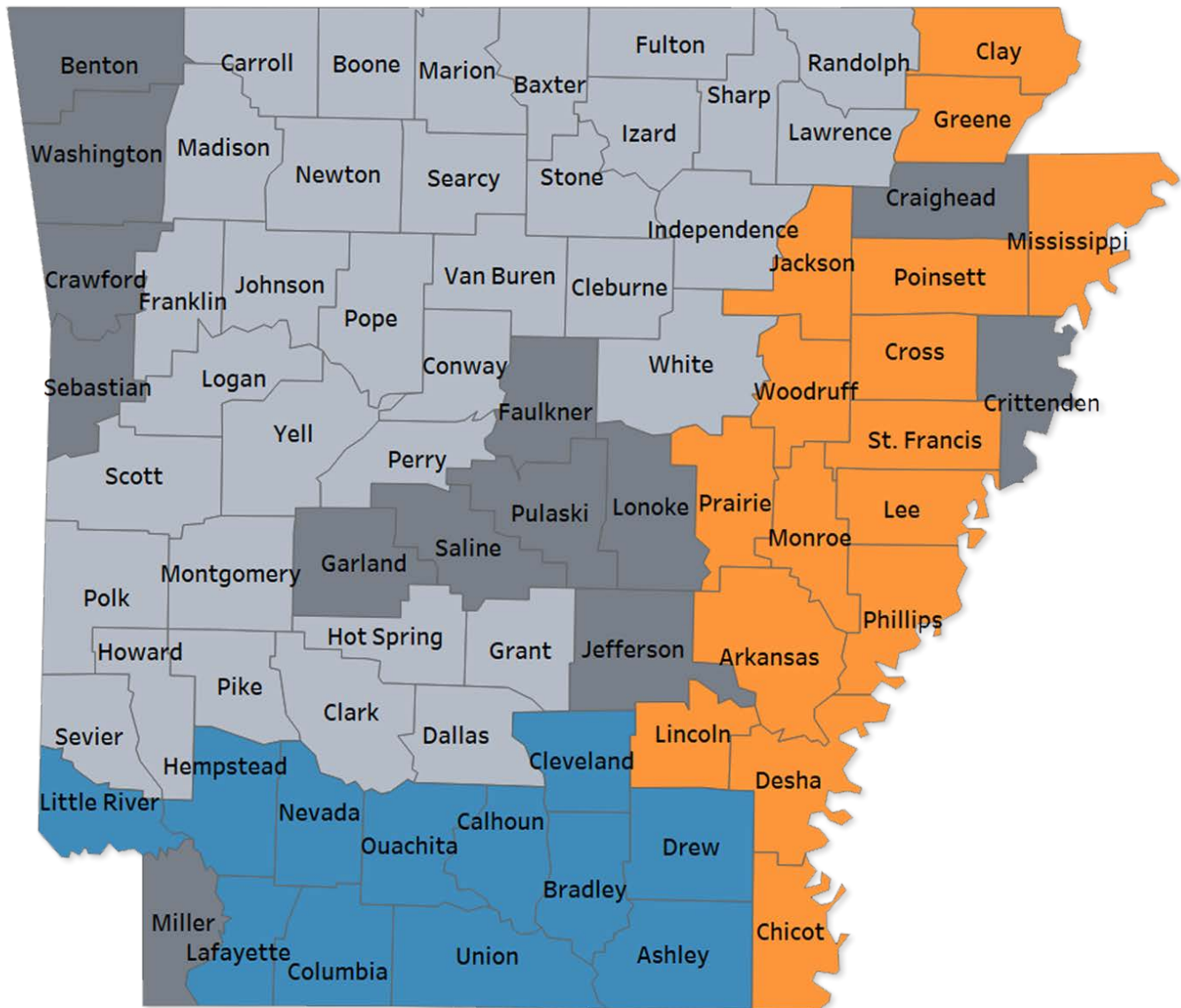
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ARKANSAS REGIONS AND COUNTIES



Coastal Plains Delta
Highlands Urban

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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

- The population of Arkansas grew by over 95,800 people from 2010 to 2019, slightly more than half the 6.1 percent rate of growth nationally.
- The population in the Rural region decreased 3.3 percent between 2010 and 2019, ranging from 0.3 percent in the Highlands to 7.0 percent in the Coastal Plains and 8.3 percent in the Delta.
- The decline of Arkansas' rural population between 2010 and 2019 was largely driven by out-migration. In the Urban region during the same period, natural increase and in-migration both played a significant role in population growth.
- Rural Arkansas counties tend to have an older population than urban counties. In 2019, the median age in the Rural region was 42.9 years compared to 37.5 years in the Urban region.
- The share of population 65 and older increased from 15 percent in 2010 to 17 percent in 2019. Twenty percent of the population living in rural counties were 65 years of age and older compared to 15 percent in urban counties.
- Racial and ethnic diversity increased in Arkansas, both in terms of the number and share of the population. The population of People of Color (POC) in Arkansas increased 10 percent compared to 2 percent growth in the white population from 2010 to 2019, resulting in a 1 percent increase in the share of POC.

ECONOMY

- The impacts from COVID-19 are affecting rural economies, which are still struggling to fully recover from the Great Recession. In 2018, the Rural region in Arkansas had employment numbers 3 percent below their pre-recession levels in 2007.
- While Arkansas' economy, as measured by total employment, grew steadily since the end of the Great Recession, employment in Arkansas grew by about half the rate of the national economy from 2010 to 2018. During that time, Arkansas' employment grew 9 percent versus 18 percent nationally.
- The Urban region saw employment increase 13 percent from 2010 to 2018 while employment in the Rural region remained stagnant. Employment in all three Rural regions remained below 2007 levels.

- From 2007 to 2018, Arkansas saw a shift from Manufacturing to Service sector jobs, a trend that was larger in the Urban region where more Service sector jobs were created. The share of manufacturing jobs lost was similar in the Urban region and Rural region of the state. However, there was considerable variation among the Rural regions, with the Coastal Plains losing 22 percent of manufacturing jobs and the Delta losing 8 percent.
- In 2018, average earnings per job in the Rural region was 14 percent lower than in the Urban region. Average earnings per job in the Rural region also remain slightly below their pre-recession levels compared to a slight increase in the Urban region.
- In 2018, rural counties had an average median household income that was 20 percent lower than urban counties and 35 percent lower than the national average. In 2018, the average median household income of counties in the Rural region was approximately \$39,000 compared to \$49,000 in the Urban region.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) uses a benchmark of 25 megabits per second, or Mbps, download and 3 Mbps (25/3 Mbps) to measure the availability of adequate broadband internet. In Arkansas, 79 percent of the population lived in areas with 25/3 Mbps internet availability.

- The majority of Arkansas' 12,902 state, county and city bridges are in good or fair condition. Fifty-one percent were rated as good, 44 percent as fair and 5 percent as poor (structurally deficient) by the Federal Highway Administration in 2019.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maintains regulations for public drinking water and records violations of those standards for communities across the nation. In 2018, 41 of 75 counties in Arkansas had some form of drinking water violation.
- The American Society for Civil Engineers (ASCE) estimated that \$7.38 billion was needed in 2017 to upgrade deteriorating drinking water systems in Arkansas. According to ASCE, the federal government reduced its share of capital investments in water and wastewater systems from 31 percent in 1977 to 4 percent in 2017.

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRESS

- Arkansas is a high poverty state, with over 510,000 people, including more than 171,000 children, who lived below the federal poverty level in 2018. Total poverty rates in Arkansas remained 3 to 4 percentage points higher than the national average from 2010 to 2018.
- Rural counties had higher poverty rates (20 percent) compared to urban counties (16 percent). Within the Rural regions, the Delta had the highest rate of total poverty (23 percent).
- Like total poverty rates, rates of child poverty were higher in the Rural region (29 percent) compared to the Urban region (22 percent) in 2018. Eighteen percent of all residents and 25 percent of children in Arkansas live below the federal poverty line.
- Thirty-seven million people (12 percent) were food insecure nationwide in 2018, compared to 500,000 or 17 percent of Arkansans. Within Arkansas, rural areas experienced slightly more food insecurity compared to urban areas of the state, 18 percent and 15 percent respectively. The Delta had the highest regional rate of 21 percent.
- In 2019, Arkansans living in the state's Rural region were more likely to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits than those living in the Urban region. About one-in-five rural residents (19 percent) received SNAP compared to 15 of urban residents.

HEALTH

- Health Factor scores (representing health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors and the physical environment) and Health Outcome scores (representing length and quality of life) can be used to assess factors related to health. In general, the counties in the Urban region of Arkansas had better health factor scores than in the Rural region.
- Arkansas' infant mortality rate for 2018 was 7.5 deaths per 1,000 live births, above the national average of 5.7 deaths per 1,000 live births. This placed Arkansas as the third highest in the nation for infant mortality that year, behind Louisiana and Mississippi.
- In FY2018, 71 percent of the adult population in Arkansas was categorized as overweight or obese. Eighty-five percent of adults in rural counties, compared to 62 percent in urban counties, were overweight or obese.

- Twenty-three percent of children in Arkansas were considered obese and 40 percent were considered either overweight or obese in 2019. Children living in rural counties in Arkansas were more likely to experience obesity (25 percent) compared to urban counties (22 percent).
- Nationally, Arkansas had the sixth highest number of COVID-19 cases in prisons (9,484) as of Nov. 25, 2020, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Rural counties in Arkansas have a demographic profile that puts people in those communities at greater risk of hospitalization and death from COVID-19 infections. Rural counties have a higher share of people over the age of 65, identifying as minorities and considered obese, all of which are linked to more severe outcomes of a COVID-19 infection.

EDUCATION

- Arkansas had a similar rate of pre-K enrollment compared to the U.S. in 2018. Arkansas pre-K enrollment rates (50 percent) in the Rural region of the state were slightly higher than rates in the Urban region (48 percent).
- Over 479,000 children were enrolled in Arkansas public schools in the 2019-20 school year, up 3 percent from the 2009-10 school year. However, these gains were primarily in urban counties where enrollment increased 10 percent. In the Rural region, public school enrollment declined 7 percent during that 10-year period.
- Educational attainment levels in Arkansas are persistently below the national average and remained so in 2018 despite some gradual improvements. Nearly 30 percent of Arkansans age 25 and older had an associate, bachelor's, graduate or professional degree as their highest level of education completed compared to 40 percent nationally.
- Twenty-three percent of adults in rural counties had an associate degree or higher, considerably less than the 35 percent in urban counties. Among the Rural regions, the Delta had the lowest rates of educational attainment for associate, bachelor's, graduate or professional degrees.
- The ratio of people with associate or bachelor's degrees in science and engineering has been increasing in Arkansas. In 2006, fewer than 10 people per 1,000 in the 18-24 age group had a bachelor's degree in science and engineering. By 2018 that number had grown to 16 per 1,000 people.

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- County government revenue increased, on average, for Arkansas counties from 2007 to 2017. Much of that growth was from local sources, the property and sales tax revenue, which increased 26 percent and 27 percent respectively.
- The property tax base, measured by total property assessments, grew 15 percent statewide, with slightly faster growth in the Rural region of 16 percent compared to growth of 14 percent in the Urban region.
- Retail sales, which we use as a proxy for the sales tax base, climbed 3 percent above pre-recession levels statewide from 2007 to 2017. During this 10-year period, retail sales increased 7 percent in the Urban region, but declined 5 percent in the Rural region.
- The average millage of counties in the Rural region was slightly higher (8.0) compared to the Urban region (7.4). Rural counties on average increased their millage rate more than urban counties, 0.50 versus 0.19 respectively, from 2007 to 2020.
- Nearly one-half (28) of rural counties increased their county government millage between 2007 and 2020.
- Forty-three of Arkansas' 75 counties increased their county sales tax rate between 2007 and 2020, 39 of which are rural. Thus, over 60 percent of rural counties increased their sales tax rate compared to 30 percent of urban counties.

RURAL AND URBAN DEFINED

The Rural Profile of Arkansas presents a data-driven depiction of social, economic and demographic 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 structure of the global economy. This in turn affects the well-being of people living in these areas, as well as the population composition, 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 to help people in all areas of the state live healthy and productive lives.

The Urban and Rural Classifications

In the current Profile, we continue the use of long-established categorization of counties as metropolitan and nonmetropolitan. However, we use the word “Rural” in place of “Nonmetropolitan” and the word “Urban” in place of “Metropolitan.” Populations residing in counties with large cities are classified as metropolitan and those counties are grouped into a category termed “Urban region.”

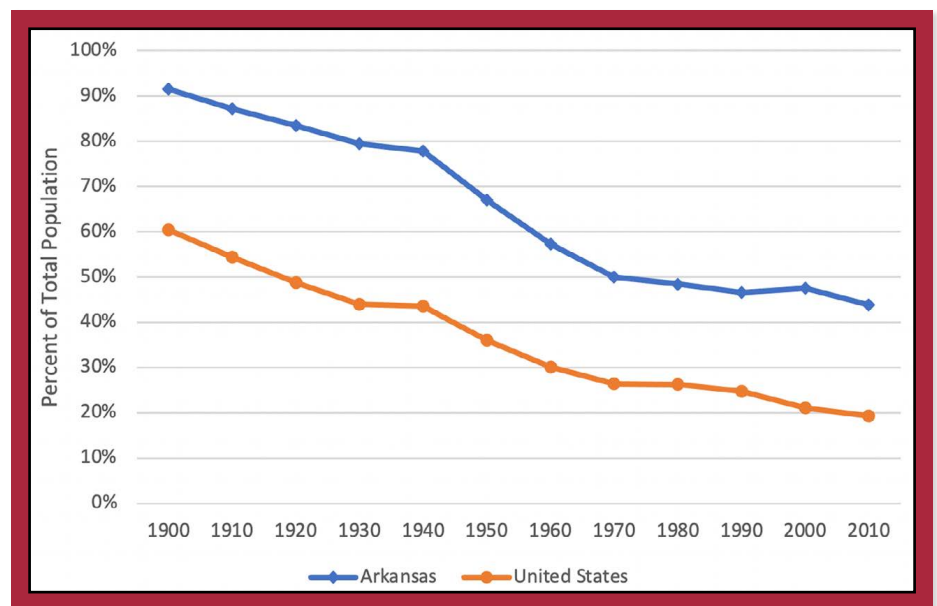
In addition to the Rural and Urban regions described above, we divide the rural areas into three regions composed of counties with similar economic activity, history, physical setting, settlement patterns and culture. The three Rural regions of Arkansas are the Coastal Plains, Delta and Highlands. This

approach combines nonmetropolitan counties in similar regions and facilitates comparison with the metropolitan counties. A map showing each county and region is on page 2 of this publication.

Arkansas – A Rural State

No matter how you measure it, Arkansas is a very rural state. When using the county-based metropolitan/nonmetropolitan definitions, 41 percent of Arkansans live in rural counties, according to 2019 population estimates. In contrast, only 14 percent of the United States population lives in rural counties. As seen in Figure R1, Arkansas’ percentage of people living in rural areas has been higher than the nation’s since 1900. In the 2010 Census, 19 percent of the U.S. population was rural compared with 44 percent for Arkansas. Here the rural population is defined as people living in nonurbanized areas,

FIGURE R1. RURAL POPULATION, 1900-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

irrespective of county boundaries. In 1900, almost 91 percent of Arkansans lived in rural areas compared to 60 percent of Americans. Both nationally and in Arkansas, the percentage of people living in rural areas decreased dramatically between 1900 and 2010.

POPULATION

Arkansas' Rural Population Continues Decline

The population of Arkansas grew by over 95,800 people from 2010 to 2019, but the rate of growth was slower than the national average. Arkansas' population increased 3 percent compared to 6 percent nationally during that time. Despite moderate population growth statewide, growth patterns within the state continue to show population movement from the Rural region to the Urban region. In 2000, the Rural region contained slightly over 47 percent of Arkansas' population; by 2010 that ratio declined to 43 percent, and in 2019 it was 41 percent.

The population in the Rural region decreased 3.3 percent between 2010 and 2019. During this time the urban counties continued to gain population, increasing 8.3 percent. Among the rural counties, 12 had population declines of 10 percent or more. There were no rural counties with double-digit growth; the rural county with the largest population increase was Green County with 7 percent growth during that nine-year period.

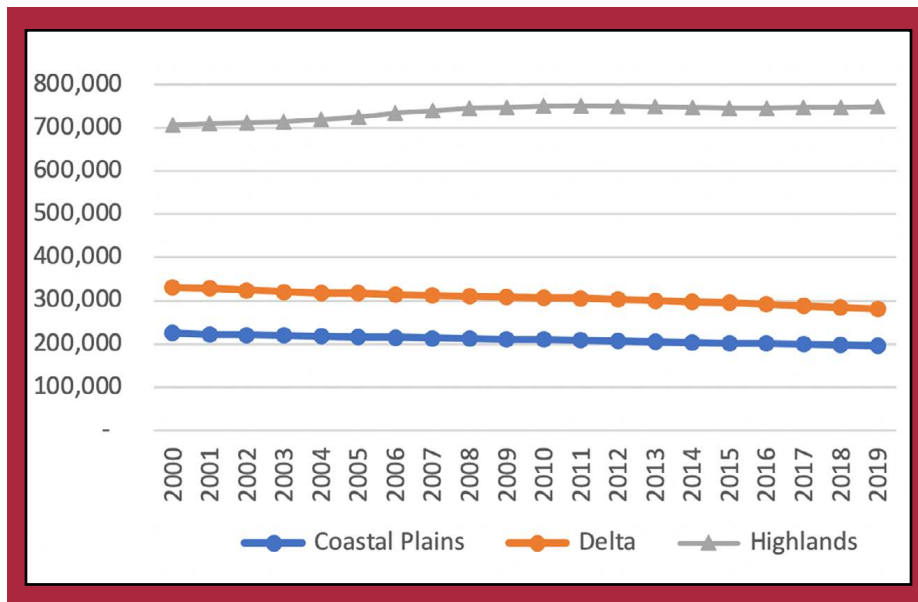
Population in the Delta decreased the most among the Rural regions, dropping 8 percent from 2010 to 2019. The Coastal Plains also saw considerable losses in population during that time (-7 percent) while the Highlands remained relatively flat (-0.3 percent). While population in the Highlands has increased slightly since 2015, the growth was not large enough for the region's population to return to its 2011 high.

Longer-term trends are evident when analysis is extended to the year 2000. Arkansas' population grew 12.7 percent during that time, with a 3 percent decline in the Rural region and a 27 percent increase in the Urban region. Of the Rural regions, only the Highlands had a net gain in population (6 percent) from 2000 to 2019 (Figure P1). The Rural region exhibited population growth between 2003 and 2010, followed by a period of decline from 2010 to 2019. Population in the Coastal Plains and Delta declined steadily since 2000 without any major change in course during the Great Recession.

The regional trends in population mask the large differences in population change among counties. Figure P2 shows county-level population change between 2010 and 2019. Population declined in 48 of Arkansas' 75 counties—including 45 rural counties and 3 urban counties (Crittenden, Jefferson and Miller). The largest growth rate in population, 25 percent, was in Benton County.

The rate of decline was highest in Phillips County at -18 percent. Notably, the 27 counties with population growth during the nine-year period were disproportionately urban (10) or located in the Highlands (16). However, population growth in the 16 Highlands counties was substantially less than growth in the urban counties. In comparison,

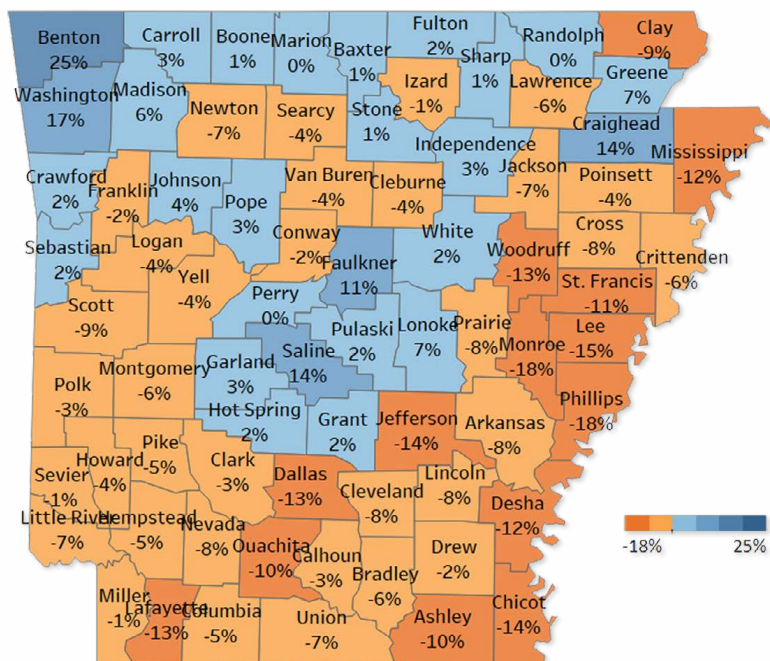
FIGURE P1. POPULATION IN RURAL REGIONS OF ARKANSAS, 2000 TO 2019



Source: Annual Estimates of Resident Population, April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau

POPULATION

FIGURE P2. PERCENT CHANGE IN POPULATION, 2010 TO 2019



Source: Annual Estimates of Resident Population, April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau

of the 12 counties with population declining 10 percent or more, only two were outside of the Delta and Coastal Plains. Population decline in the Delta and Coastal Plains was so widespread that only one county's population (Greene County) grew from 2010 to 2019.

Out-migration from Rural to Urban Regions Continues

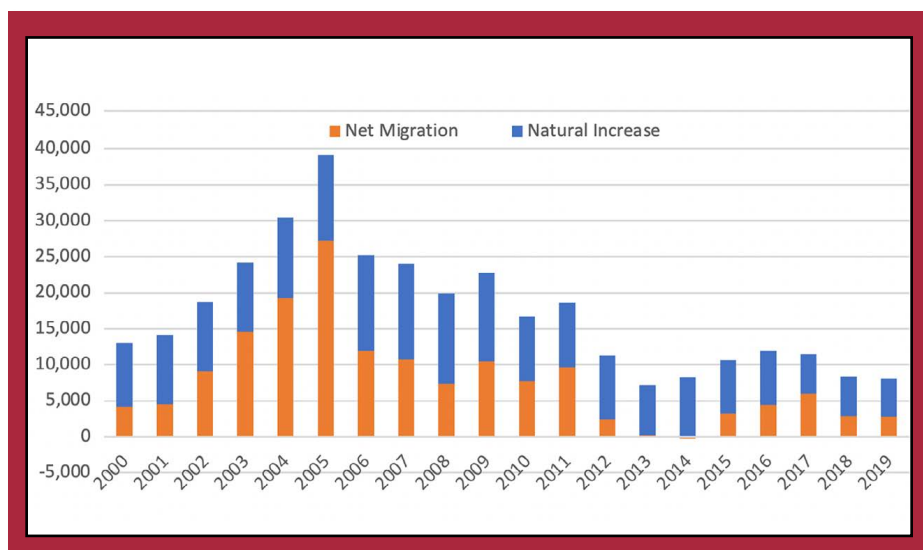
The population decline in the Rural region of the state was primarily due to out-migration of people, whereas, both in-migration and natural increase resulted in population growth in the Urban region. Populations grow and decline in two ways: from natural increase or decrease and from migration. A natural increase indicates more births than deaths (positive value) while a natural decrease denotes more deaths than births (negative value). Net in-migration indicates more in-migration than

out-migration (positive value), and a net out-migration indicates more out-migration than in-migration (negative value). Figure P3 shows a peak of net migration and natural increase in Arkansas in 2005.

Figures P4 and P5 show that the migration patterns and rates of natural increase differ greatly between Urban and Rural region of the state and have changed since the first half of the 2000s. Statewide population growth slowed considerably from 2006 to 2014, the result of declining net in-migration and natural increase. Net in-migration declined from a high of 27,288 in 2005 to a slight net outmigration in 2014 (-271) and was 2,783 in 2019. The natural increase of the population grew from 2000 to 2006 (8,879 to 13,310) before declining to a low of approximately 5,397 in 2017.

The Rural region saw consistent net out-migration, while the Urban region saw net in-migration. Nearly every year from 2000 to 2019 (except for 2004 and 2005), there was a net out-migration of people from the Rural region of the state. This was in contrast to the Urban region where there was a net in-migration of people

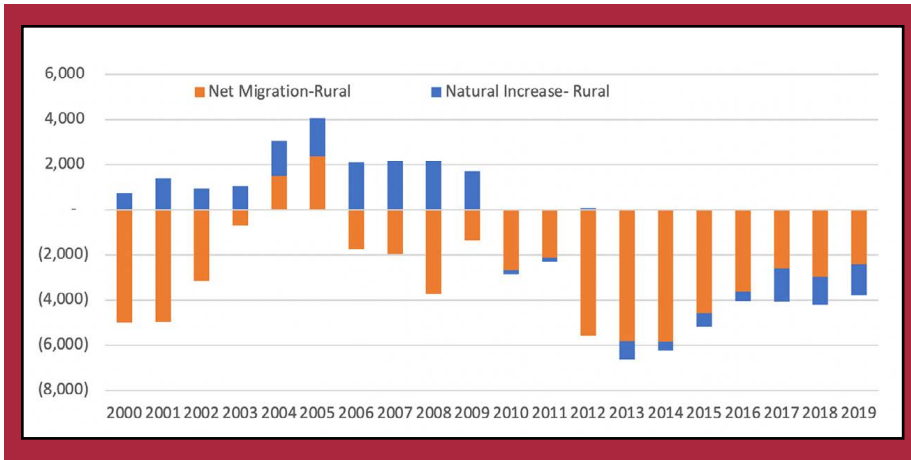
FIGURE P3. STATE POPULATION COMPONENTS OF CHANGE, 2000 TO 2019



Source: Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change, U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

POPULATION

FIGURE P4. RURAL POPULATION COMPONENTS OF CHANGE, 2000 TO 2019



Source: Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change, U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

every year during this 19-year period. Net in-migration in urban areas increased in the early 2000s to a high of 24,915 in 2005.

The Rural region had few instances of net in-migration in the past several decades. The Highlands region was the only one of the three Rural regions to have any years of net in-migration from 2000 to 2019. The Highlands experienced a span of in-migration that lasted 11 years (2000 to 2011). For two of those years (2004 and

2005), in-migration in the Highlands was large enough to eclipse the out-migration in the other two Rural regions.

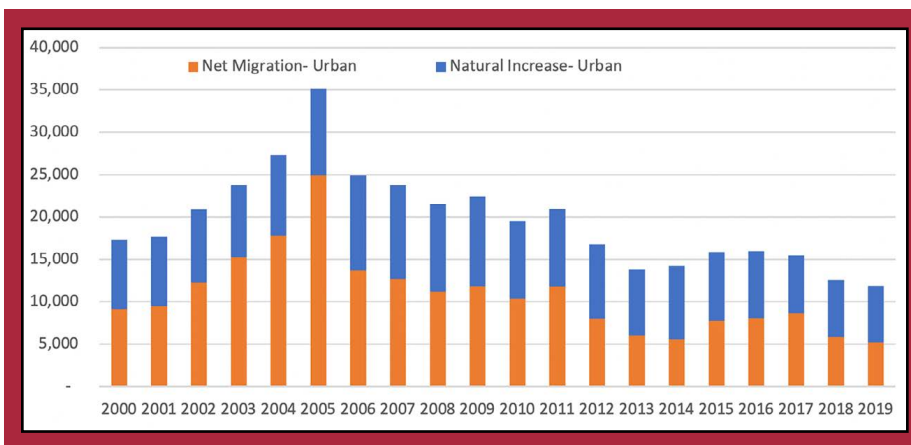
Recent migration trends from 2010 to 2019 indicate that most counties in the Delta and Coastal Plains regions continue to lose population due to out-migration (Figure P6). In 2019, only two counties in the Delta and Coastal Plains regions (Prairie and Little River) had a net in-migration of residents. During the 10-year period from 2010 to 2019 in these regions, only Green County had a positive

Natural Increase in Population Declined

overall net migration. From 2010 to 2019, about half of urban counties had a net in-migration of residents. During that time, 16 of 34 of the counties in the Highlands region also had positive net migration.

There was a growing natural increase in population in both Rural and Urban regions of the state in the early 2000s. After 2006, Arkansas still maintained a positive annual natural increase, but the increase became smaller nearly every year. Although the Urban region experienced a positive natural increase in its population from 2000 to 2019, both Rural and Urban counties had smaller and smaller annual natural increases in population since the late 2000s. Starting in 2010, the Rural region experienced a natural decrease in population and this natural decrease continued almost every year through 2019.

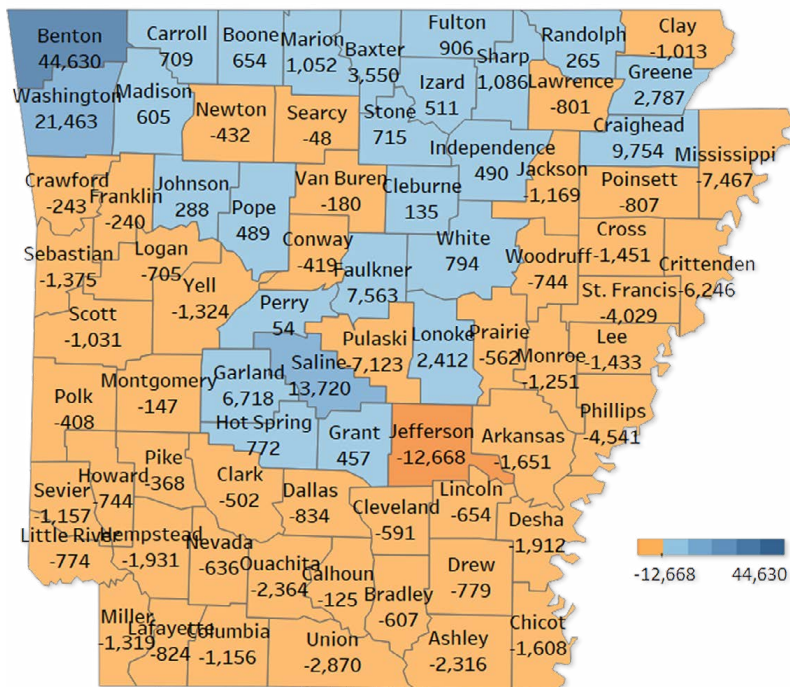
FIGURE P5. URBAN POPULATION COMPONENTS OF CHANGE, 2000 TO 2019



Source: Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change, U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

POPULATION

FIGURE P6. NET MIGRATION OF POPULATION, 2010-2019



Source: Annual Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change,
April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau

The Rural region experienced its highest natural increase of 2,159 in 2007 and then declined to a low of 1,474 in 2017. Similarly, the natural increase of the population in the Urban region grew to a high of 11,216 in 2006 and then declined to 6,696 in 2019. Recent trends from 2010 to 2019 show that 30 Arkansas counties (40 percent) had an overall natural increase of their population denoting more births than deaths during that time (Figure P7).

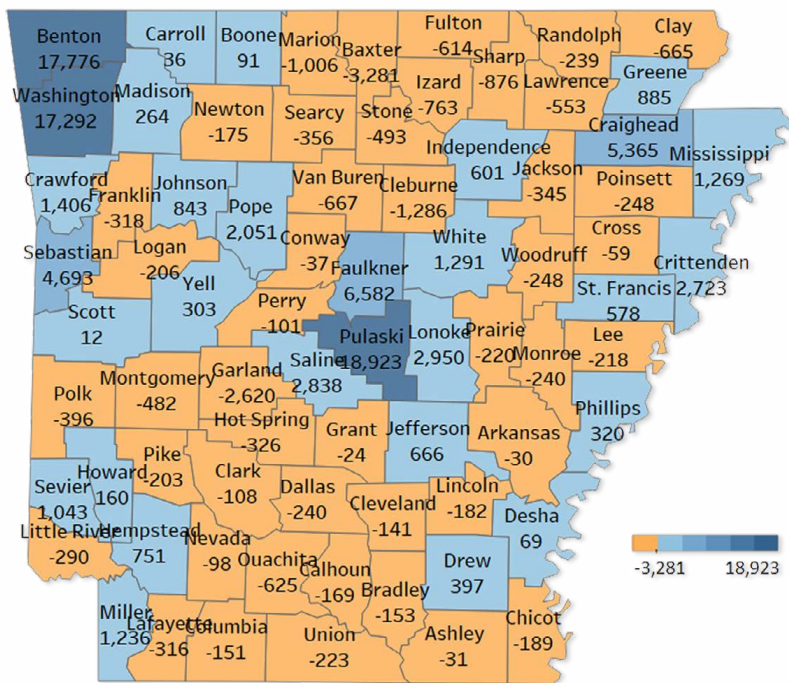
Population 65 and Older Growing

Arkansas' population of seniors (65 years of age and older) became a larger share of the total population between 2010 and 2019. The share of population 65 and older increased from 15 percent in 2010 to 17 percent in 2019.

There was considerable variation in the share of the total population in this age group among counties and regions of Arkansas (Figure P8). The share of county populations aged 65 and older ranges from a low of 12 percent in Washington County to a high of 31 percent in Baxter County. Likewise, there were large differences between rural and urban counties in the state. Twenty percent of the population living in rural counties were 65 years of age and older compared to 15 percent in urban counties.

However, the share of the population in this age category increased in both Rural and Urban regions of the state from 2010 to 2019. This age group increased from 13 percent to 15 percent of the total population in the Urban region and from 17 percent to 20 percent in the Rural region.

**FIGURE P7. NATURAL INCREASE/DECREASE OF POPULATION,
2010-2019**



Source: Annual Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change,
April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau

POPULATION

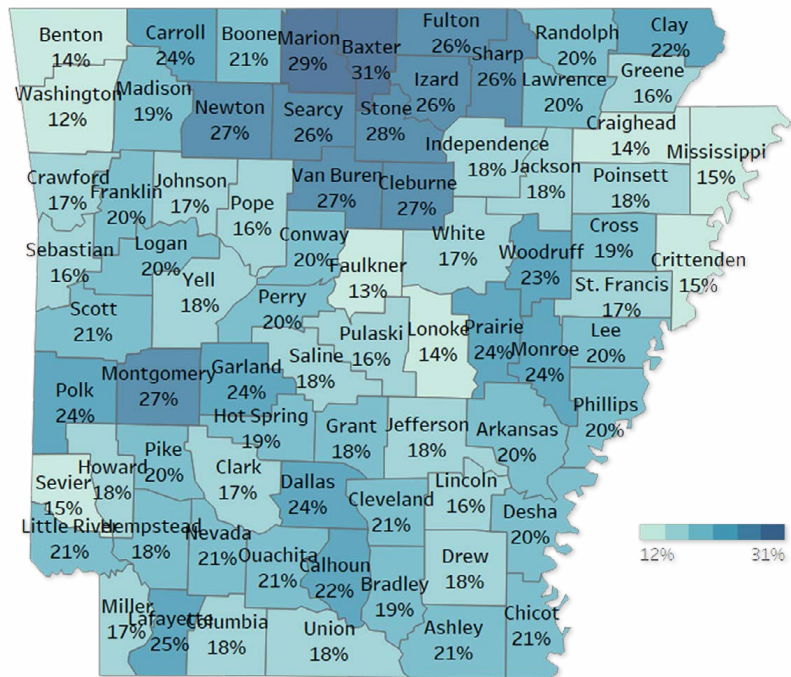
Median Age Higher in Rural Regions

The median age of Arkansans (38.5) was similar to the national median age (38.4) in 2019, and both increased slightly from 2011 to 2019 (Figure P9). However, the statewide median age masks the difference in median age among regions and counties in the state (Figure P10). In 2019, the median age ranged from 32.3 in Washington County to 52.8 in Marion County. Not surprisingly the Highlands region, which had a larger share of its population 65 years of age and older, had a substantially higher median age than other regions in the state. The average median age of the Highlands region was 43.8 in 2019 compared to 42.1 in the Coastal Plains, 41.6 in the Delta and 37.1 in the Urban region.

Racial and Ethnic Diversity Growing

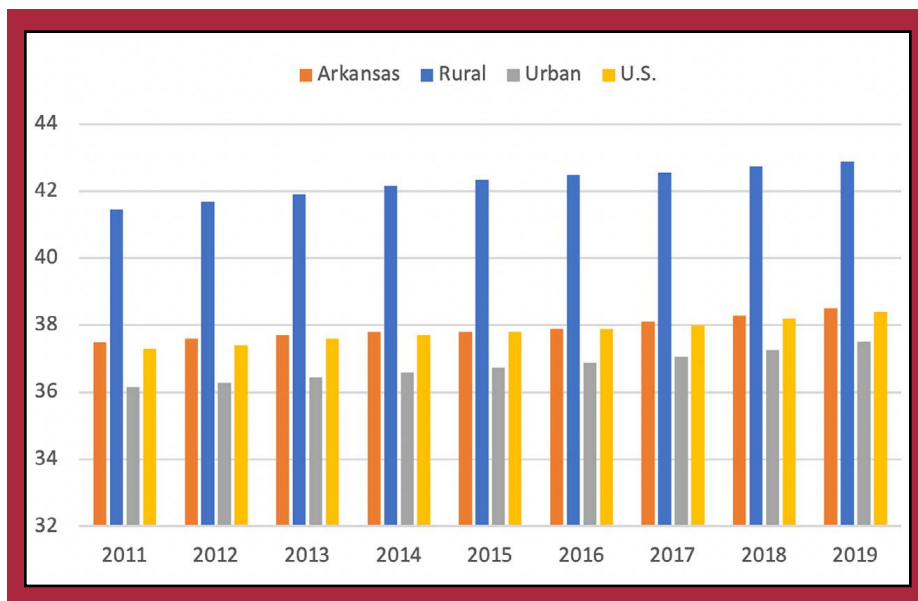
Racial and ethnic diversity in Arkansas, both in terms of the number and share of the population,

FIGURE P8. POPULATION AGED 65 AND OVER, 2019



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, 2019

FIGURE P9. MEDIAN AGE, 2011-2019



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, 2011 to July 1, 2019

increased from 2010 to 2019. The population of People of Color (POC) in Arkansas increased 10 percent compared to 2 percent growth in the white population during this 10-year period.

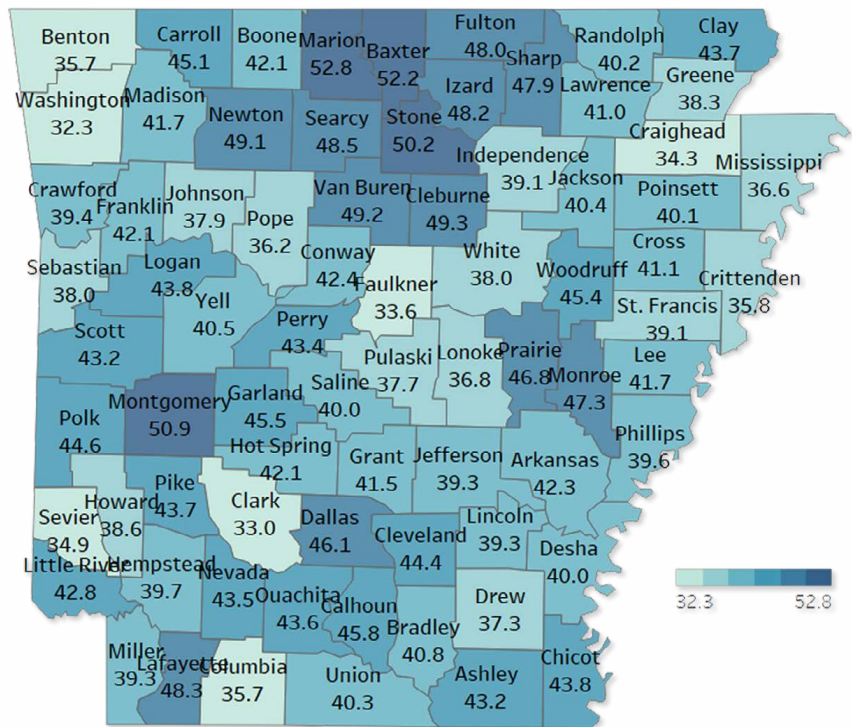
Most of the growth in the POC population occurred in the urban area (16 percent) compared to the rural area (-1 percent) as shown in Figure P11. Both the Delta and Coastal Plains saw their population of POC decrease from 2010 to 2019. However, the Highlands region experienced the highest percentage growth (19 percent) in its POC population.

POPULATION

Statewide, the share of the population that is a POC increased by one percentage point, from 20 percent to 21 percent from 2010 to 2019 (Figure P12). During that time, the share of the white population in the state decreased by one percentage point from 80 percent to 79 percent. The share of the POC population increased in all regions of the state during this period.

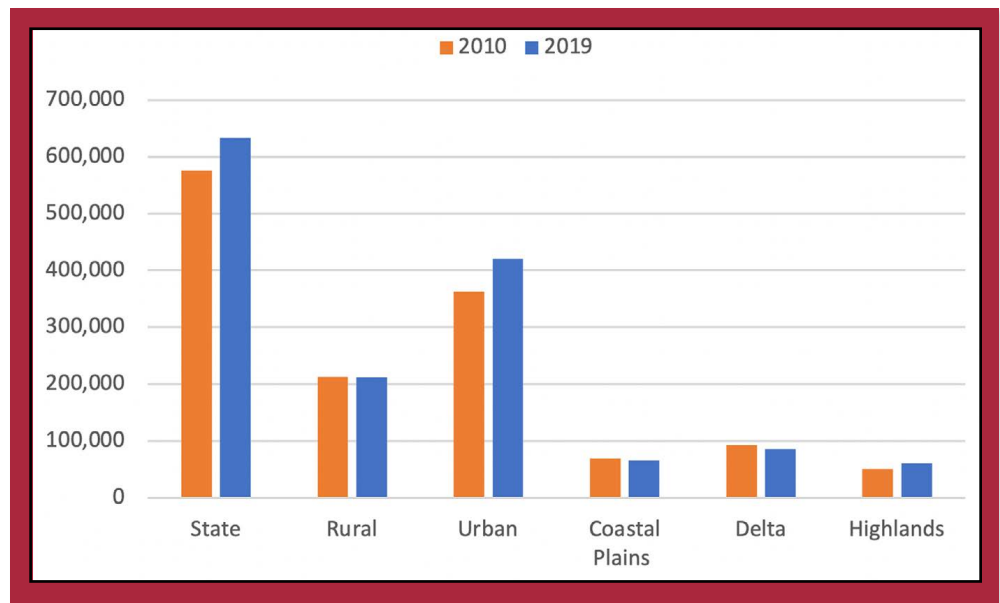
The Hispanic population also grew statewide and in both rural and urban areas of the state from 2010 to 2019 (Figure P13). Statewide, the Hispanic population grew by over 49,000 people, or 26 percent during this period. Three-fourths of this growth (over 37,000 people) was in the Urban region. Rural areas experienced growth in their Hispanic population of a little over 12,000 people. Statewide, the share of the Hispanic population grew from 6.4 percent of the total population in 2010 to 7.8 percent in 2019. The share of the Hispanic population in the Urban region was 9.4 percent in 2019 compared to 5.6 percent in the Rural region.

FIGURE P10. MEDIAN AGE, 2019



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, 2019

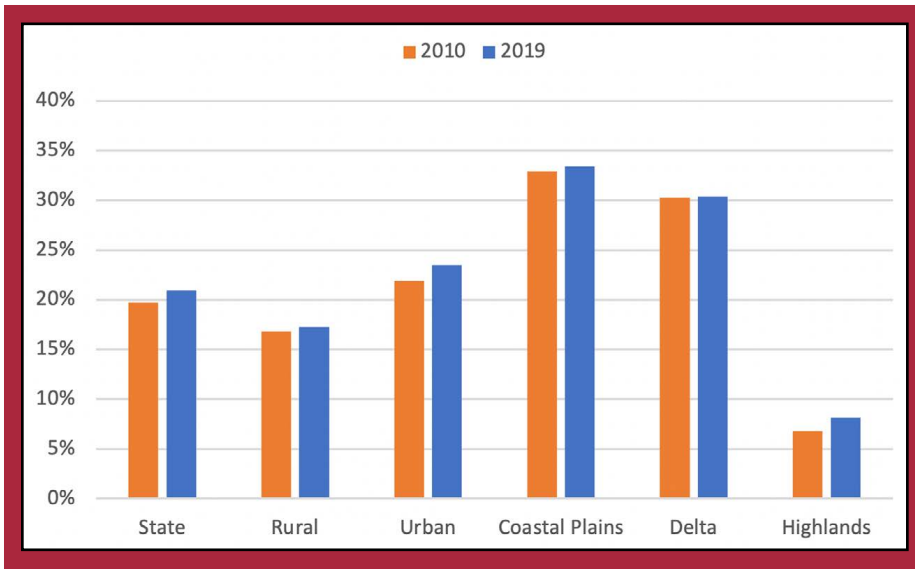
FIGURE P11. NON-WHITE POPULATION, 2010 AND 2019



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau

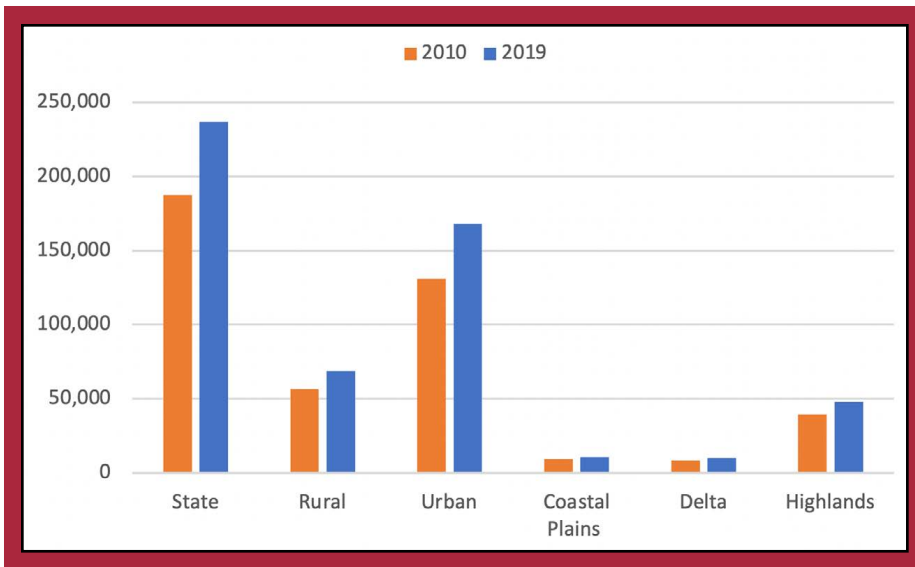
POPULATION

FIGURE P12. NON-WHITE POPULATION AS A SHARE OF TOTAL POPULATION, 2010 AND 2019



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau

FIGURE P13. HISPANIC POPULATION, 2010 AND 2019



Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau

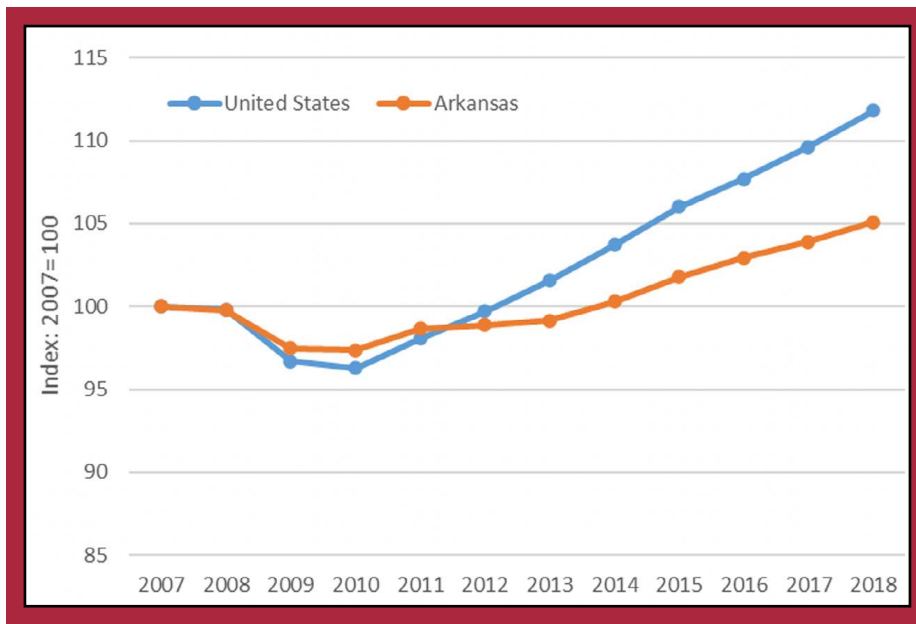
ECONOMY

Statewide Employment Trending Up Until COVID-19 Pandemic

The Arkansas economy, as measured by total employment, declined significantly during the Great Recession. Since 2010, when statewide employment was lowest,

to a decline of less than 3 percent in Arkansas. Since 2010, (2010 to 2018) employment in Arkansas grew about half the rate of the national economy, 9 percent in Arkansas versus 18 percent nationally. Arkansas' employment growth since 2010 also varied greatly between the Rural and Urban regions of the state.

FIGURE E1. ARKANSAS AND NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS, 2007 TO 2018



Source: Computed from Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce

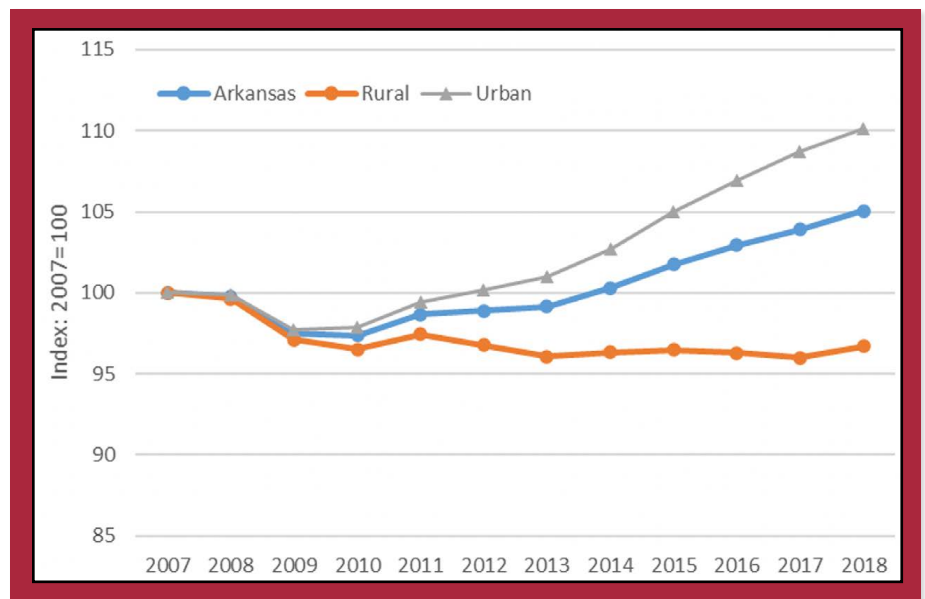
total employment grew consistently through 2018. However, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a substantial impact on employment since March 2020 as reported later in this section.

While employment in Arkansas did not decline as much during the Great Recession as nationally, it also has not recovered as rapidly (Figure E1). Employment in the U.S. economy declined nearly 4 percent from 2007 to 2010 compared

Uneven Growth in Rural and Urban Employment

While it will take time to know the full economic impact of COVID-19, we identify trends from the decade before the pandemic to understand the structure and state of Arkansas rural and urban economies. Urban areas of the state experienced less decline during the Great Recession and showed greater gains during the recovery compared to rural areas. From 2007 to 2010, employment declined more rapidly in rural areas (down 3.5 percent) compared to urban areas (down 2 percent) (Figure E2).

FIGURE E2. ARKANSAS RURAL AND URBAN COUNTY EMPLOYMENT TRENDS, 2007 TO 2018



Source: Computed from Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce

ECONOMY

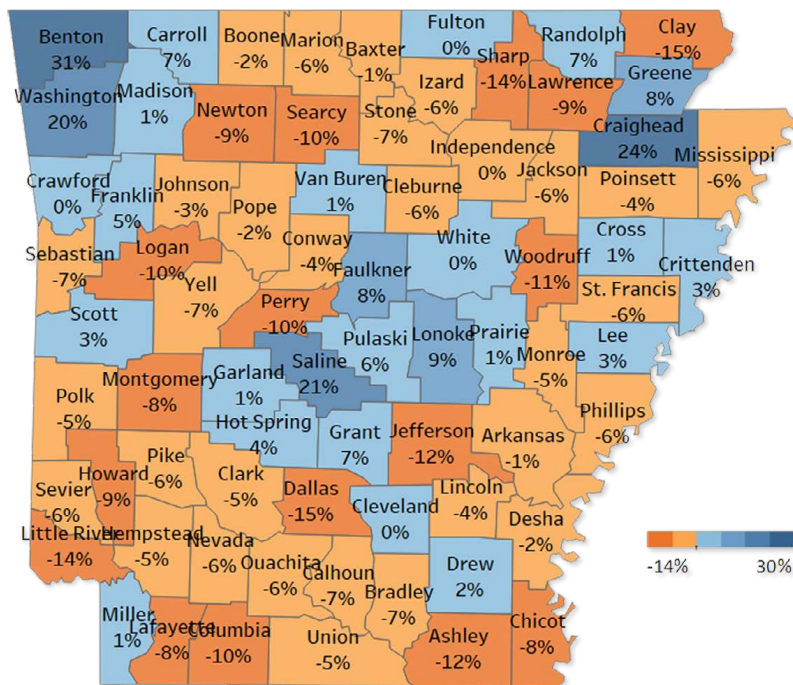
From 2010 to 2018, the Arkansas economy grew, but that growth varied between the Urban and Rural regions and among counties. Employment in Arkansas during this nine-year period grew 8 percent, most of which occurred in the Urban region. The Urban region saw employment increase 13 percent from 2010 to 2018 while employment in the Rural region remained stagnant.

Economic impacts from COVID-19 are just as likely to threaten rural economies, which are still struggling to fully recover from the Great Recession. In 2018, rural counties in Arkansas had employment numbers 3 percent below their pre-recession levels in 2007. Urban counties have surpassed their pre-recession employment levels by 10 percent.

Employment Declines in all Three Rural Regions

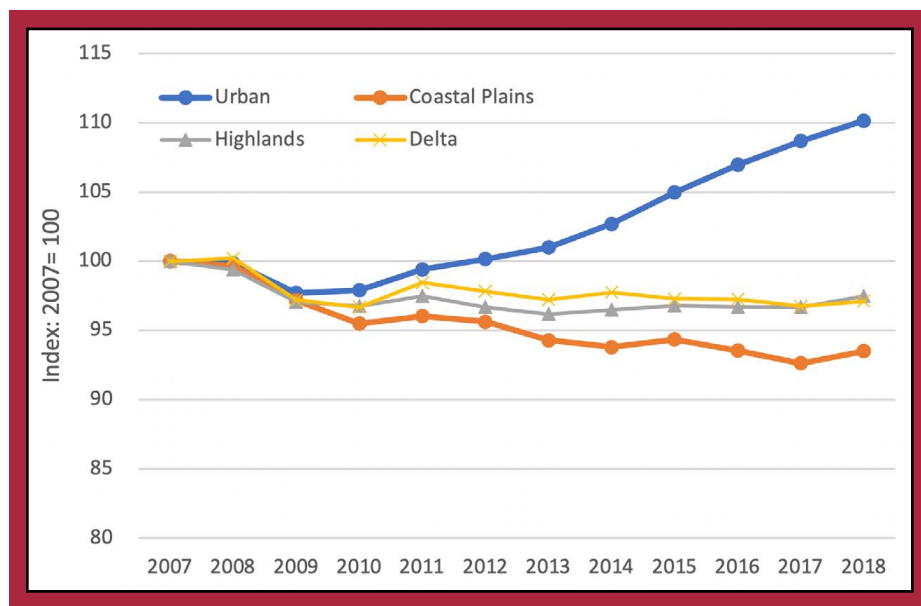
All three Rural regions were harder hit by the Great Recession and slower to recover compared to the

FIGURE E4. PERCENT CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT 2007-2018



Source: Computed from Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce

FIGURE E3. ARKANSAS RURAL AND URBAN REGIONS EMPLOYMENT TRENDS, 2007 TO 2018



Source: Computed from Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce

Urban region. The Coastal Plains Region saw particularly lasting negative employment effects from the Great Recession with the largest percent decline in employment, falling nearly 7 percent from 2007 to 2018. The Highlands and Delta regions experienced declines in employment of approximately 3 percent each during this period. Although there were slight increases in employment in the Coastal Plains and Highlands regions from 2017 to 2018, employment for all three Rural regions remained below 2007 levels (Figure E3). Although some rural areas of the state created new jobs, most struggled to create the jobs that keep and attract residents.

ECONOMY

Employment Differences Within Regions

Regional averages mask large variations in employment gains and losses among counties in Arkansas from 2007 to 2018 (Figure E4). Although total employment in Arkansas increased 5 percent from 2007 to 2018, 48 of the 75 counties (64 percent) in Arkansas had a net loss of jobs during this period.

Two of the 13 urban counties experienced a decline in the total number of jobs during this period (Jefferson and Sebastian). The remaining 11 urban counties had an increase in employment during this period, ranging from 0.1 percent in Crawford County to 31 percent in Benton County.

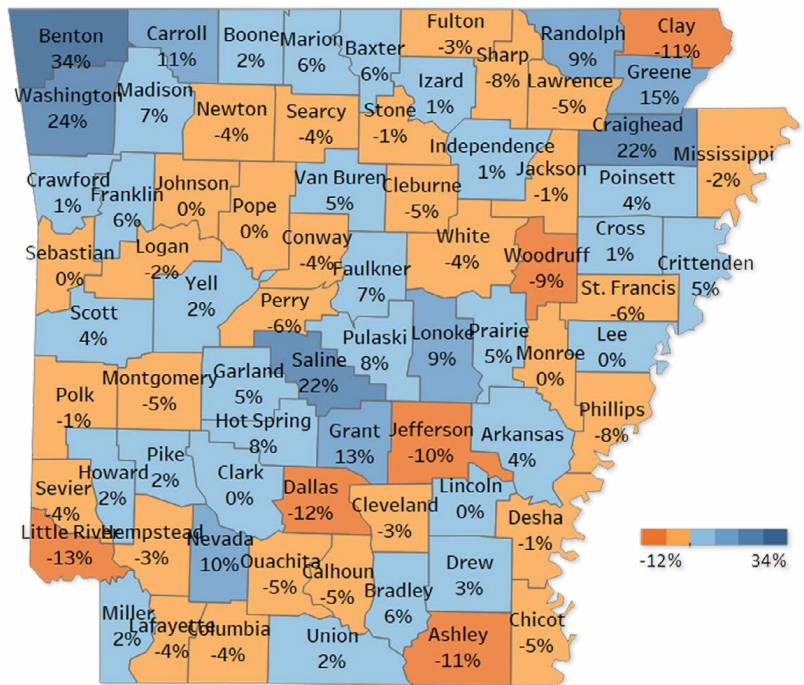
In the Coastal Plains, a region greatly affected by the recession, 10 of 12 counties had a net loss of jobs during from 2007 to 2018. Only Drew and Cleveland Counties had a slight increase in employment, 2 percent and 0.2 percent respectively.

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 2018. Likewise, 12 of the 16 counties in the Delta region had a net loss of jobs during this same period.

Slightly more than half of all rural counties lost more than 5 percent of their jobs from 2007 to 2018. Seven rural counties lost more than 10 percent of their jobs during that time (Ashley, Clay, Dallas, Little River, Perry, Sharp and Woodruff).

Although the recession took a toll on jobs across the state, 39 of Arkansas' 75 counties had net employment gains following the recession from 2010 to 2018. The highest rate of job growth occurred in counties that were in or surrounding the urban areas of Northwest, Northeast and Central Arkansas (Figure E5). Twenty-one counties, nine urban and 13 rural, had 5 percent or greater growth in employment during this period. Employment grew 34

FIGURE E5. PERCENT CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT 2010-2018



Source: Computed from Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce

percent in Benton County, 24 percent in Washington County and 22 percent in both Craighead and Saline County during this period.

Employment By Major Industry Sector

Although county-level employment data is not yet available for COVID-19 months, we know that some economic sectors fared better than others in Arkansas. From August 2019 to August 2020, Arkansas' seasonally adjusted employment numbers dropped the most in the Leisure and Hospitality (-15 percent) and Manufacturing (-11 percent) sectors. Other sectors including Finance, Information & Real Estate sector, Education and Health Services and the Government sector also showed decreases of 4 percent, 4 percent and 2 percent respectively. Some other sectors saw smaller gains during that time, including Trade, Transportation & Utilities, Construction and Professional and Business sectors which increased by 3 percent, 2 percent and 1 percent respectively.

Diversity in type of industry and sources of income is vital to the success of Arkansas' economy. While the natural

resources (Farming & Forestry and Mining) and Manufacturing sectors are critical to the state's economy, the Professional Services sector provided the largest share of employment in both the Urban and Rural regions of Arkansas in 2018. However, compared to the U.S. economy, Farming & Forestry and Manufacturing remained larger shares of the Arkansas economy in 2018.

Industry Sector Share in Rural and Urban Counties

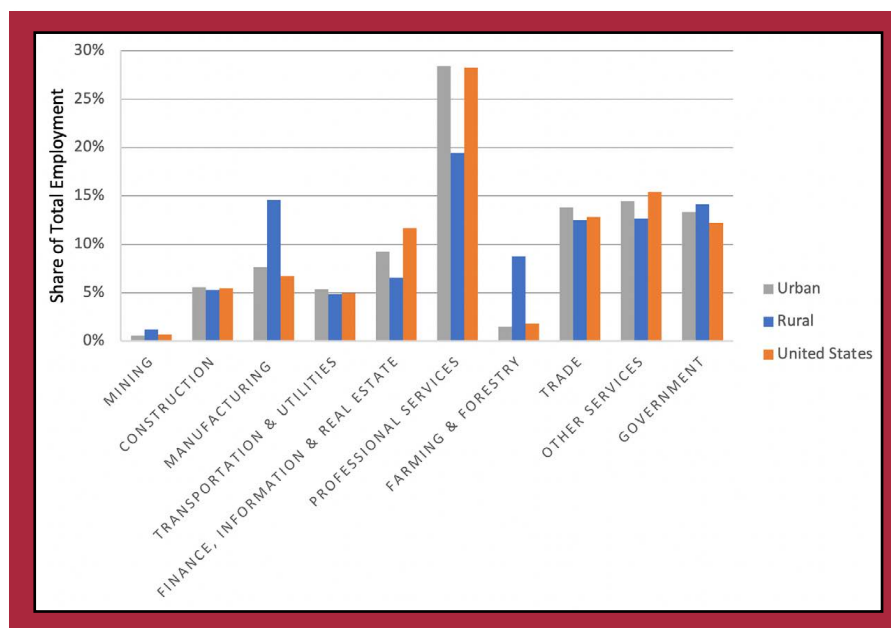
All three Rural regions were harder hit by the Great Service industry jobs continue to make up a large portion of jobs in both the Rural and Urban regions of the state. Forty-three percent of jobs in the Urban region and 32 percent of jobs in Rural region are in the Professional and Other Services sectors. The Professional Services sector alone made up a quarter or more of employment in the Urban region in 2018 (28 percent) (Figure E6).

Other industry sectors diverged in importance between the Rural and Urban regions. Twenty-five percent of jobs in the Rural region were in either Farming & Forestry, Mining or Manufacturing, compared to 10 percent in the Urban region.

Although Farming & Forestry provide 9 percent of the jobs in rural Arkansas, agriculture and forestry remain vital to the Rural region of the state. Many jobs in Manufacturing are complementary to the Farming & Forestry sector, such as processing agriculture and forestry products. Likewise, numerous Professional and Other Services sector jobs are required to support the Farming & Forestry and Manufacturing industries.

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture estimates that one of every six jobs in Arkansas in 2018 is either directly or indirectly tied to the agriculture and forestry sectors. This suggests that a strong agriculture and forestry industry remains vital to the Rural region of the state.

FIGURE E6. EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR IN THE U.S. AND RURAL AND URBAN REGIONS OF ARKANSAS, 2018



Sources: Computed from Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce and 2020 Woods & Poole database

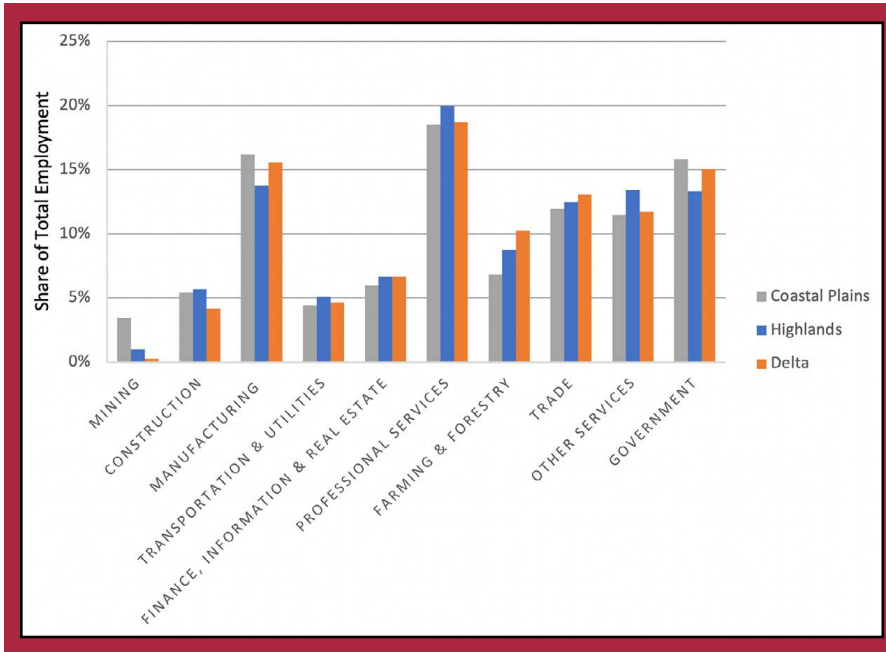
While the type of agriculture, forestry and manufacturing differs among the Rural regions of the state, Figure E7 depicts the importance of these industries to all three Rural regions. Combined, the Farming & Forestry and Manufacturing sectors contribute between 23 percent and 26 percent of total employment in all three Rural regions of the state.

Industry Sector Employment Trends in Rural and Urban Areas

From 2007 to 2018, Arkansas saw a shift from Manufacturing to Service sector jobs. This trend was larger in urban areas. The Rural region lost a slightly lower percentage of manufacturing jobs from 2007 to 2018 (-13 percent) compared to urban areas (-14 percent). However, there was considerable variation among the Rural regions, with the Coastal Plains losing 22 percent of manufacturing jobs and the Delta losing 8 percent (Figure E8).

During that time, the Urban region saw faster job growth in the professional and other services sectors (26 percent and 22 percent respectively) compared to rural areas where those sectors grew by 12 percent and 0.1 percent respectively.

FIGURE E7. EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR IN RURAL REGIONS OF ARKANSAS, 2018



Sources: Computed from Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce and 2020 Woods & Poole database

The Construction and Farming & Forestry sectors exhibited job losses in both the Rural and Urban regions during this time period. Construction losses were -17 percent in rural counties and -6 percent in urban counties. Among the Rural regions, the losses were particularly high in the Highlands region (-20 percent). Losses in the Farming & Forestry sector were milder, decreasing 2 percent in rural counties and 1 percent in urban counties.

There were multiple sectors where urban counties gained jobs while rural counties lost them. There was an increase (7 percent) in jobs in the Transportation and Utilities sector in urban counties and a decrease of 0.3 percent in rural counties. Similarly, employment in the Finance, Information & Real Estate sector increased 11 percent for urban counties and decreased 1 percent in rural counties. The Trade sector also diverged, improving 6 percent

for urban and decreasing 8 percent for rural counties. The Government sector also saw growth in urban counties (3 percent) and decline in rural counties (-8 percent).

The Mining sector was the single area where jobs grew for rural counties while decreasing for urban areas. From 2007 to 2018, mining jobs increased 45 percent in rural areas and decreased 7 percent in urban areas.

Beginning in 2010, the economic recovery was reflected in employment increases in many sectors for Urban and Rural regions of the state. Both Urban and Rural regions experienced considerable job growth in the Transportation & Utilities, Professional Services and Other Services sectors from 2010 to 2018. Both regions also had modest growth in the Manufacturing sector. However, growth in the Urban region dwarfed the growth in the Rural region for all of these sectors except Manufacturing (Figure E9).

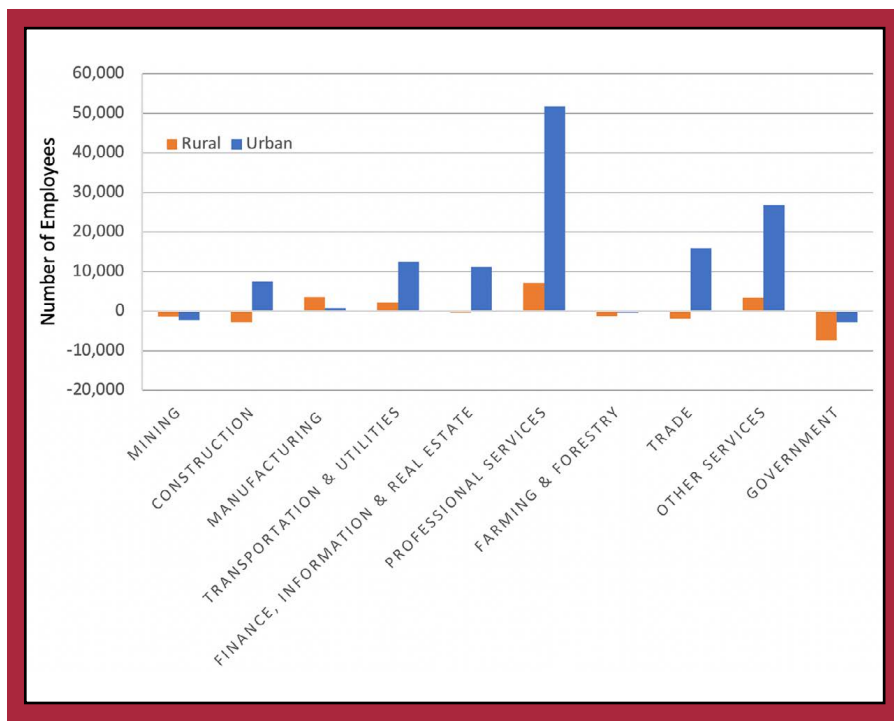
FIGURE E8. EMPLOYMENT CHANGE BY SECTOR IN RURAL AND URBAN REGIONS OF ARKANSAS, 2007-2018



Source: Computed from Employment by Sector, 2020 Woods & Poole database

ECONOMY

FIGURE E9. EMPLOYMENT CHANGE BY SECTOR IN RURAL AND URBAN REGIONS OF ARKANSAS, 2010-2018



Source: Computed from Employment by Sector, 2020 Woods & Poole database

The direction of job growth diverged between rural and urban counties for some sectors after the end of the Great Recession. From 2010 to 2018, the Urban region experienced growth in the Construction, Finance, Information & Real Estate and Trade sectors, while the Rural region saw job decreases in those areas. During that time Government, Mining and Farming & Forestry sector employment declined in both the Rural and Urban regions.

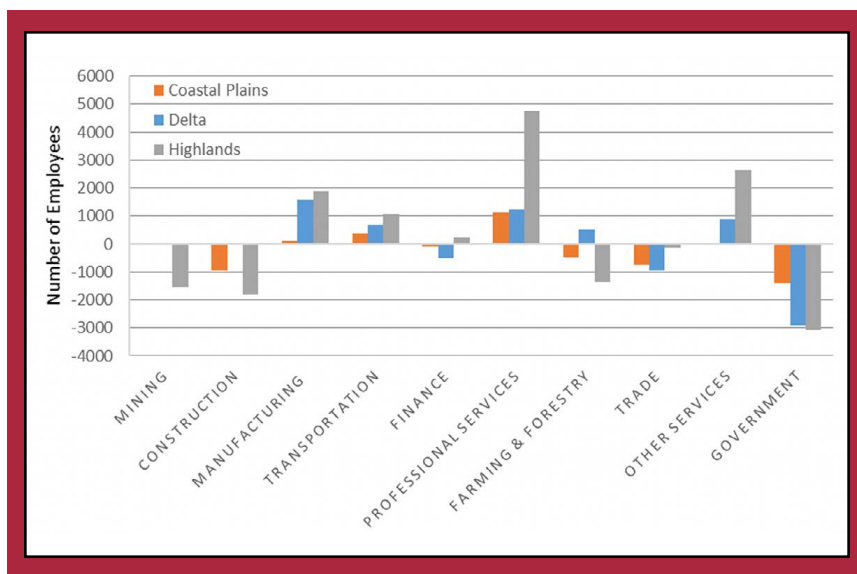
Industry Sector Employment Trends by Region

Again, the rural and urban averages mask differences among Rural regions (Figure E10). While Farming & Forestry employment declined in the

Highlands and Coastal Plains from 2010 to 2018, the Delta experienced an increase in employment in this sector during this nine-year period. The Delta region also added over 1,500 manufacturing jobs from 2010 to 2018 (an 8 percent increase) while the Highlands and the Coastal Plains had job increases of 4 percent and 1 percent respectively during that time.

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.

FIGURE E10. EMPLOYMENT CHANGE BY SECTOR IN RURAL REGIONS OF ARKANSAS, 2010-2018



Source: Computed from Employment by Sector, 2020 Woods & Poole database

ECONOMY

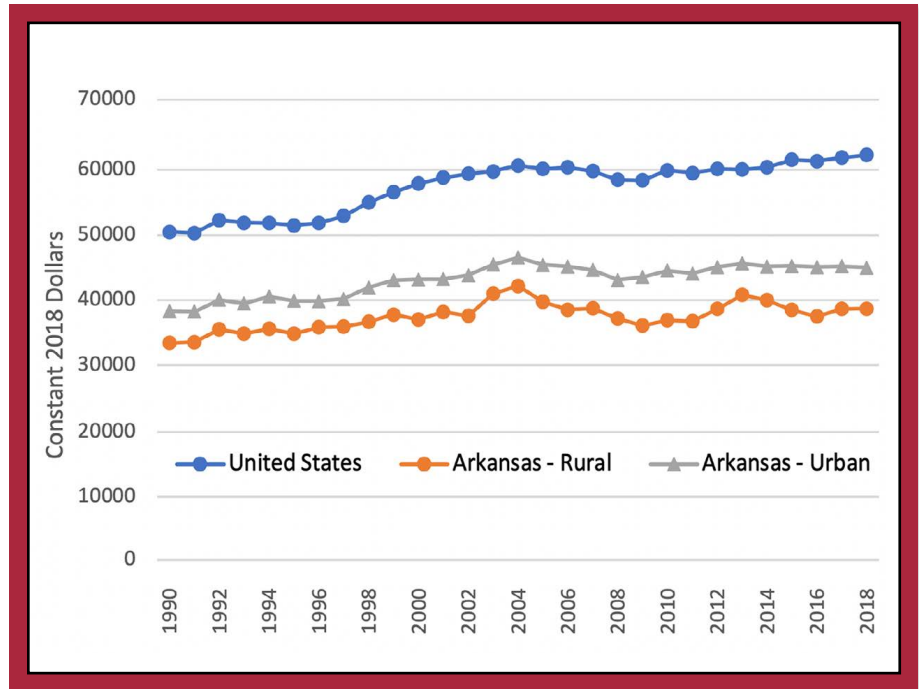
GROWTH IN AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB SINCE 2010

On average, Arkansans earn about 24 percent less per job compared to the national average. In 2018, the average earnings per job in Arkansas were \$47,272 compared to \$62,321 nationally. Arkansas' average earnings per job grew only 1.9 percent from 2007 to 2018 (due to a considerable decline from 2007 to 2010) compared to national growth of 4.2 percent. However, from 2010 to 2018 the average earnings per job in Arkansas grew only slightly less than nationally, 3.7 percent in Arkansas compared to 4.0 percent nationally.

Earnings per job in the urban parts of Arkansas remain steadily higher than in rural areas (Figure E11). In 2018, average earnings per job in the Rural region were 14 percent lower than in the Urban region. Earnings per job in rural areas also remain lower than their pre-recession levels, while urban earnings per job have edged past their pre-recession 2007 level by 0.8 percent.

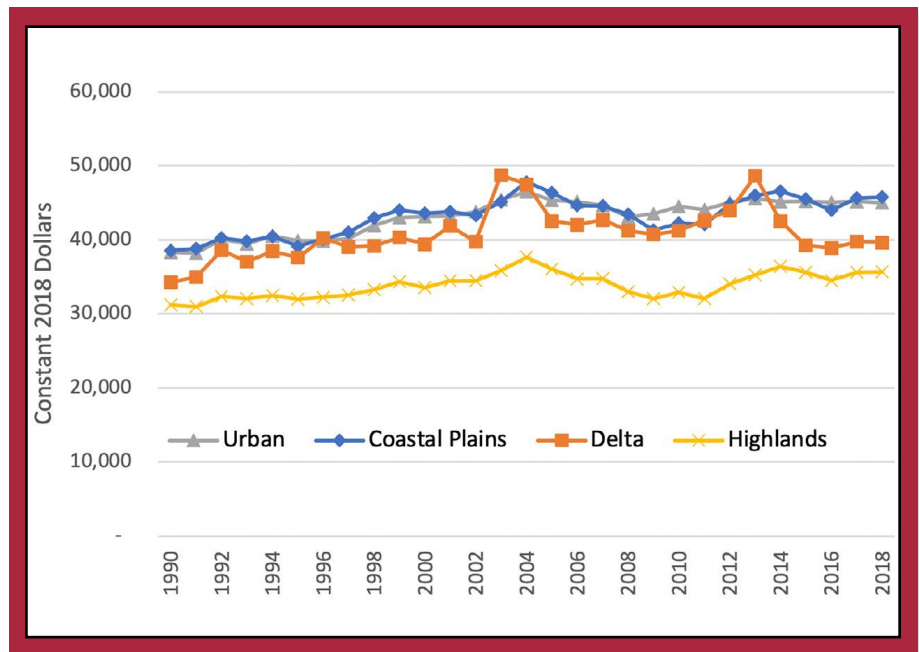
From 2010 to 2018 the growth of earnings per job was faster in the Rural region (4.9 percent) compared to the Urban region (1.1 percent), but not fast enough to close the persistent gap in earnings. Among the Rural regions, the Highlands consistently had the lowest average earnings per job during this time period (Figure E12). Earnings per job ranged from a low of \$21,401 in Newton County to a high of \$63,051 in Calhoun County in 2018 (Figure E13).

FIGURE E11. AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB IN THE U.S. AND THE URBAN AND RURAL REGIONS OF ARKANSAS, 1990-2018



Sources: Regional Economic Accounts, Economic Profile, 1990-2018, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce; South Urban Consumer Price Index, 1990-2018, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

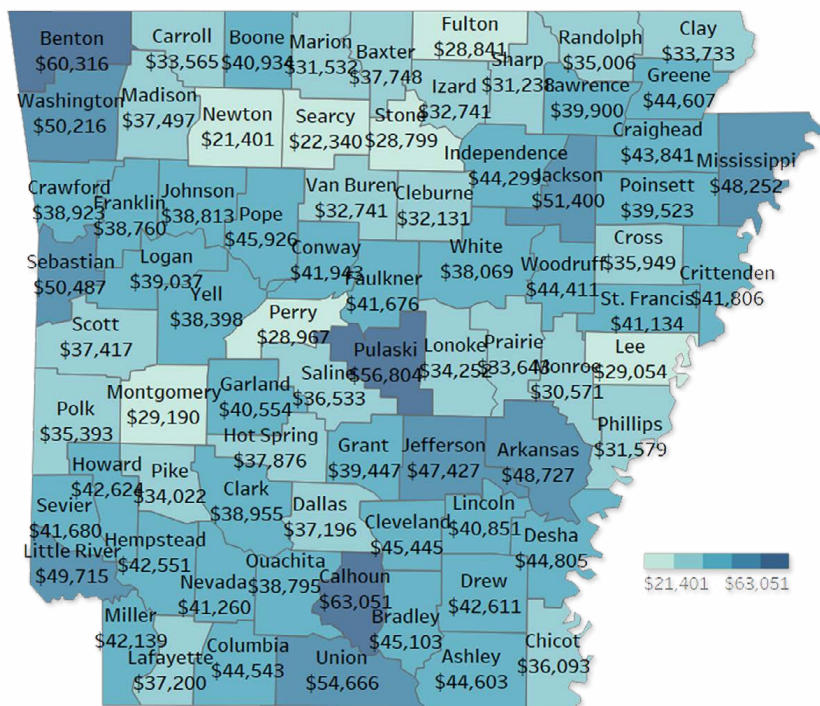
FIGURE E12. AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB IN THE URBAN AND RURAL REGIONS OF ARKANSAS, 1990-2018



Sources: Regional Economic Accounts, Economic Profile, 1990-2018, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce; South Urban Consumer Price Index, 1990-2018, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

ECONOMY

FIGURE E13. AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB, 2018



Source: Regional Economic Accounts, Economic Profile, 1990-2018, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce

Urban region. Median household income varied greatly among counties, ranging from a low of \$28,367 in Lee County to a high of \$64,141 in Benton County in 2018.

The change in median household income from 2010-2018 also varied by county (Figure E14). Median household income grew from a high of 33% in Chicot County to a low of -19% in Lee County from 2010 to 2018.

Labor Force Declining and Unemployment Increasing Due To COVID-19

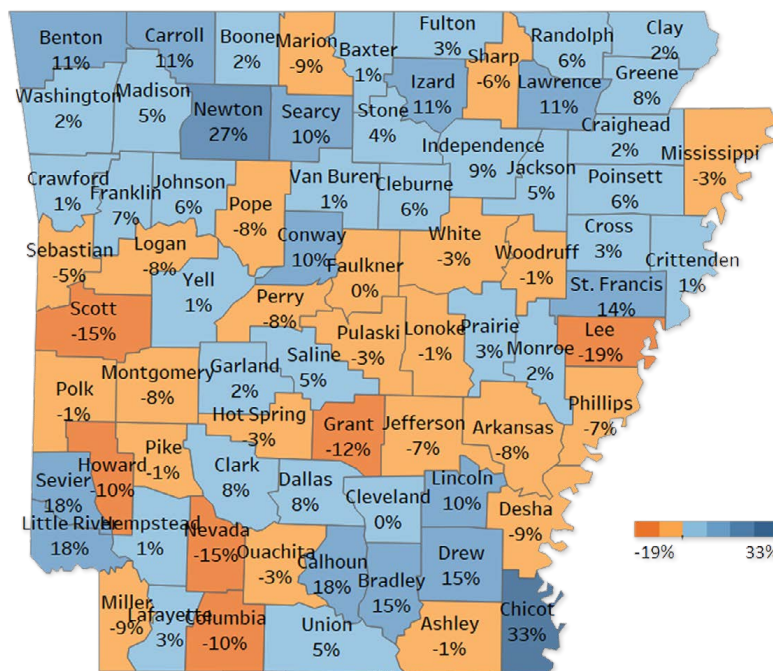
The COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected and will continue to affect the labor force and unemployment in the U.S. and Arkansas until the pandemic is under control. The U.S. unemployment rate increased from 4.5 percent to 7.7 percent from March to September 2020, whereas the Arkansas unemployment rate increased from 4.9 percent to 7.0 percent during

Median Household Income

Median household income in Arkansas increased 1.4 percent from 2010 to 2018, a slower rate than the 3.7 percent growth rate of average earnings per job for the same time period. This growth in median household income was similar to the national growth during this period. However, Arkansas' median household income remains considerably below the national average.

The median household income in Arkansas was \$45,726 in 2018, which was 24 percent less than national median household income. Urban counties in Arkansas had higher median household incomes on average compared to rural counties. In 2018, rural counties had an average median household income that was 20 percent lower than urban counties and 35 percent lower than the national average. In 2018, the average median household income of counties in the Rural region was approximately \$39,000 compared to \$49,000 in the

FIGURE E14. PERCENT CHANGE IN MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2010-2018



Sources: Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months, 2006-2010 to 2014-2018 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

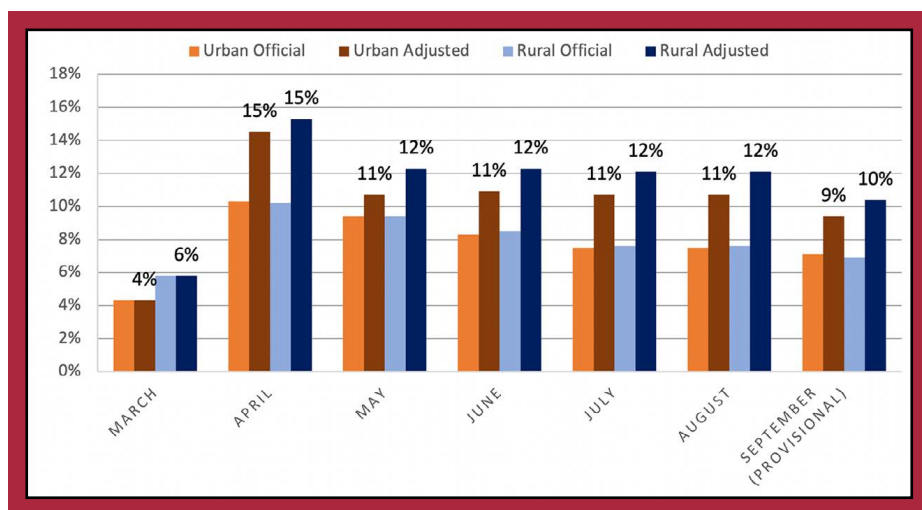
this same period. However, the Arkansas labor force also declined 3.0 percent during this five-month period. If those dropping out of the labor force were added to the officially unemployed, the adjusted Arkansas unemployment rate would be 9.8 percent or two percentage points above the official August rate.

Rural Versus Urban Unemployment

Typically, the official unemployment rate has been higher in rural compared to urban areas of the state. However, from April to September 2020, the official unemployment rate in the Urban region was near or above the rate in the Rural region of the state. This was in part due to the decline in employment in the leisure and hospitality, information and service industries. However, rural areas of the state were also affected by the loss of employment in the mining and logging and manufacturing industries. At the same time, some basic industries like poultry processing were required to remain open.

Another reason for the merging of the official unemployment rates between the Rural and Urban regions of the state was that labor force participation rates fell faster in the Rural region. The labor force declined by 3.8 percent in the Rural region from March to September 2020 compared to a smaller decline of 2.5 percent in the Urban region. Therefore, if those who dropped out of the labor force between March and September 2020 are included as unemployed, the adjusted unemployment rate was higher in the Rural region and was 3.5 percentage points above the official unemployment rate in September 2020. The adjusted unemployment rates were 10.4 percent and 9.4 percent in the Rural and Urban regions respectively in September 2020 (Figure E15).

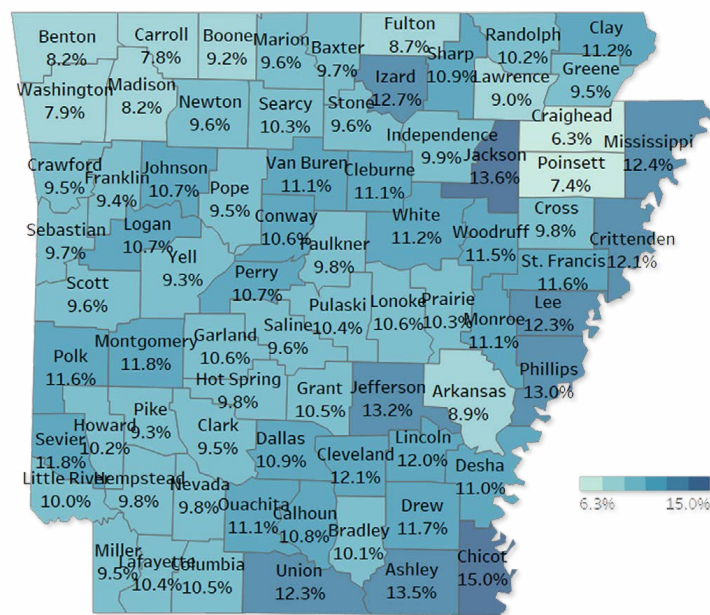
FIGURE E15. OFFICIAL AND ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY URBAN AND RURAL REGIONS IN ARKANSAS



Sources: Computed official and adjusted unemployment rates for Urban and Rural Arkansas Regions from Local Area Unemployment Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

This suggests that rural areas of the state have been more greatly affected by COVID-19 than urban areas when accounting for people dropping out of the labor force in addition to those counted as unemployed. As Figure E16 indicates, 58 of Arkansas' 75 counties had adjusted unemployment rates of 9 percent or higher in August 2020, and many of these counties are rural.

FIGURE E16. ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AUGUST 2020



Source: Computed official and adjusted unemployment rates for Urban and Rural Arkansas regions from Local Area Unemployment Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

INFRASTRUCTURE

Modern infrastructure is essential for a growing, healthy economy and allows for improved overall quality of life. Good infrastructure connects people and businesses to the global economy, provides enhanced opportunities for education and employment and is necessary for the health of residents. Providing this critical infrastructure is more difficult for some rural counties that have decreasing ability to generate local tax revenue. If unable to maintain basic infrastructure, these counties will likely experience a continuing cycle of revenue, infrastructure and economic decline.

Broadband

High-speed internet access is a quintessential component of modern infrastructure, which the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted. Governmental agencies, workers,

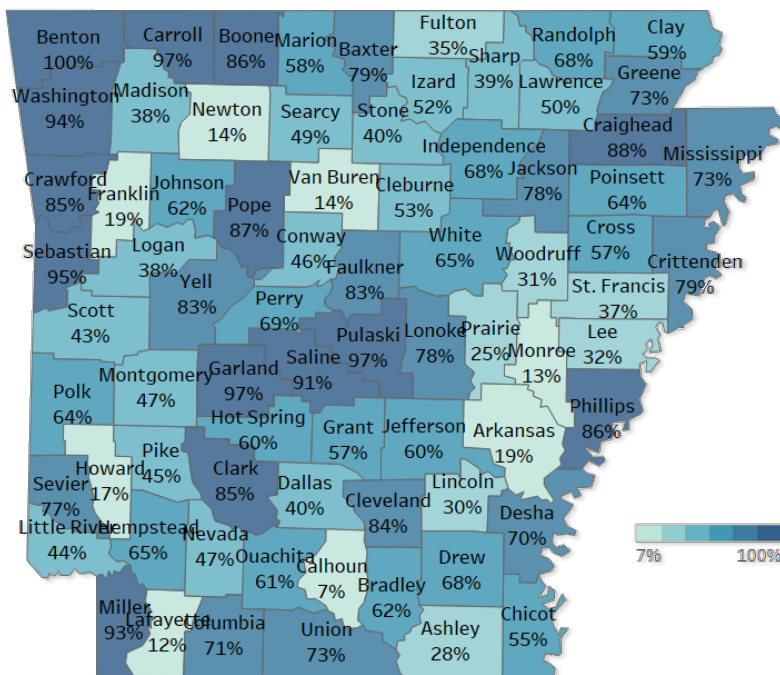
The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) uses a benchmark of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload (25/3 Mbps) to measure high quality broadband internet. Nationally, 94 percent of the population lived in areas that met or exceeded this 25/3 Mbps benchmark in 2018. People living in rural areas across the United States had lower rates of coverage at 78 percent according to the FCC. In Arkansas, 79 percent of the population lived in areas with 25/3 Mbps internet access while only 60 percent of Arkansans in rural counties lived in areas with internet at these speeds.

While many people in Arkansas live in areas with no broadband service or broadband with below standard speeds, people living in rural counties are disproportionately impacted by substandard internet (Figure I1). Only 60 percent of people living in rural counties had, on average, broadband coverage of speeds 25/3 Mbps or higher in 2018, compared to 92 percent on average in urban counties. Less than 50 percent of the population living in 28 counties, all rural, lived in areas with the standard 25/3 Mbps broadband service.

It should be noted that the above figures, which indicate the percentage of the population living in areas with available broadband speeds of 25/3 Mbps, likely overstate the availability of broadband services. Beginning in 2020 the Federal Communications Commission will require telecommunications companies to use polygonal, granular maps instead of census blocks to report broadband coverage. This should provide a more accurate picture of where people have broadband coverage.

High-speed broadband availability, especially in rural counties of the state, remains a critical problem for state and local governments to address. However, providing the availability of high-speed broadband does not always provide access. Many low-income households cannot afford to purchase computers and connect to the internet or do not have the knowledge

FIGURE I1. PERCENT OF POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO 25/3 MBPS OR FASTER INTERNET ACCESS, 2018



Source: Federal Communication Commission

students, schools and businesses rely on internet access to connect them to markets and information. Despite the importance of high-speed broadband in a globalized economy, rural Arkansans' access to it remains low.

INFRASTRUCTURE

and technical skills to access and use the internet. Therefore, programs are also needed to provide financial and technical assistance to these households to enable them to access and use the internet productively.

The importance of broadband access to everyday life and the economy has been heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Instances of remote work, online education, video conferencing and telehealth have become widespread and relatively commonplace across the nation. Because many residents and businesses in rural areas of the state do not have access to high-speed broadband, they are less able to successfully compete with other students and businesses and have less access to health care and other resources needed for a high quality of life. The COVID-19 pandemic accentuated these issues and the need for universal access to high speed broadband.

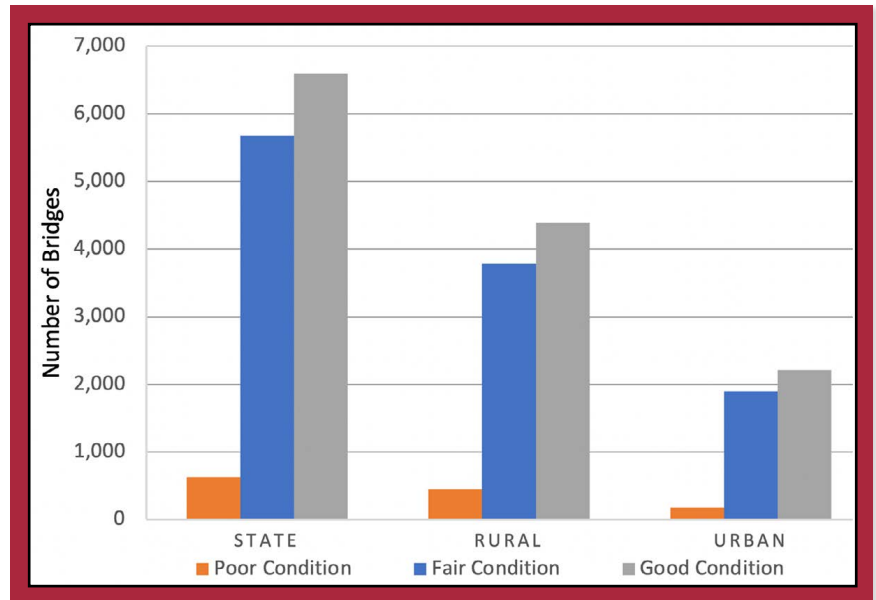
Bridge Condition

The majority of Arkansas' 12,902 state, county and city bridges are in good or fair condition. Fifty-one percent were rated as good, 44 percent as fair and 5 percent as poor (structurally deficient) by the Federal Highway Administration in 2019 (Figure I2). There was no major difference between rural and urban counties in the percentage of bridges rated as good, fair or poor in 2019. Of bridges rated as being in poor condition, 448 were in rural counties and 172 were in urban counties.

The Delta had the highest rate of structurally deficient bridges among the Rural regions (8 percent). The Coastal Plains had the fewest number of structurally deficient bridges (67) and the lowest rate (2 percent).

Many of the structurally deficient bridges were concentrated in a few counties, and five counties had no bridges classified as structurally deficient. Fourteen Arkansas counties had more than half of the structurally poor bridges in the state. Six of these counties made up more

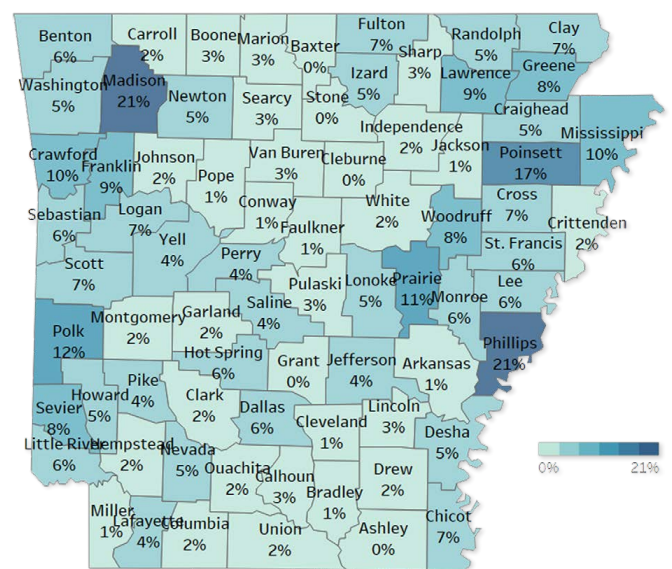
FIGURE I2. CONDITION OF ARKANSAS BRIDGES IN THE STATE AND RURAL AND URBAN COUNTIES, 2019



Source: Bridge Condition by County 2019, Federal Highway Administration

than a quarter of the structurally poor bridges in 2019. Three counties – Poinsett, Mississippi and Madison – had more than 30 each (Figure I3). The five counties with no structurally deficient bridges were Ashley, Baxter, Cleburne, Grant and Stone counties.

FIGURE I3. STATE, COUNTY AND CITY STRUCTURALLY POOR BRIDGES, 2019



Source: Bridge Condition by County 2019, Federal Highway Administration

Drinking Water

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maintains regulations for public drinking water and records violations of those standards for communities across the nation. Drinking water regulations protect public health by identifying potentially dangerous drinking water conditions. Contaminants evaluated by the EPA include metals like lead and copper and various chemicals and carcinogens. These contaminants are evaluated based on the impacts of short-term and long-term exposure, which may lead to adverse health effects including lead poisoning or cancer, according to the EPA.

While clean and safe drinking water is vital for the health of every Arkansan, many water systems in the state are aging and need upgrading. The American Society for Civil Engineers (ASCE) estimated

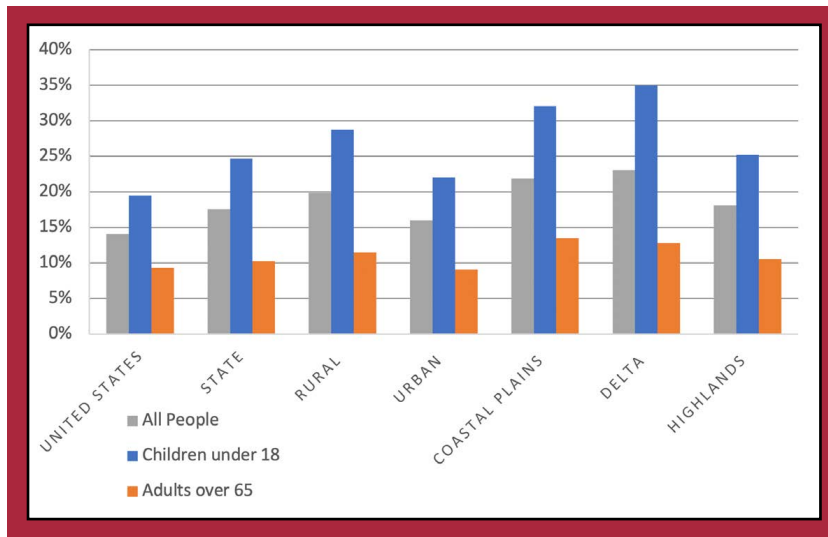
14. DRINKING WATER VIOLATIONS IN 2018



SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRESS

Arkansas is frequently among the states with the highest levels of social and economic stress indicators, and Rural regions of the state have higher levels of economic stress than the Urban region. Markers of economic stress are part of a complex and interrelated web of community well-being. Poverty and food insecurity, for instance, are both products and drivers of other indicators like education and health.

FIGURE SES1. PERCENT PERSONS IN POVERTY BY AGE, 2018



Source: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex by Age, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2014-2018, U.S. Census Bureau

The majority of available county level data on economic and social stressors are from time periods before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the economic and social context of a community going into the pandemic may impact its ability to adapt to and recover from it. For example, people in areas with relatively high rates of poverty or food insecurity may find it harder to overcome the unexpected financial costs like medical bills and unemployment that have come with the pandemic.

People living in rural areas of Arkansas are especially likely to face social and economic stresses compared to those living in urban areas. We use several indicators to provide a snapshot of the social and economic stress experienced by Arkansans, including:

- Adults and children living in poverty.
- People experiencing food insecurity.
- People participating in food assistance programs like SNAP.
- Households with high housing cost burdens.

Poverty Remains High With Some Improvements

Arkansas is a high poverty state, with over 510,000 people, including more than 171,000 children, who lived below the federal poverty line in 2018. Eighteen percent of all residents and 25 percent of kids in Arkansas lived below the federal poverty line compared to 14 percent and 20 percent respectively for the nation (Figure SES1). Total poverty rates in Arkansas remained 3 to 4 percentage points higher than the national average from 2010 to 2018.

From 2010 to 2018 total poverty rates in Arkansas remained relatively stable, starting and ending the period at 18 percent. Child poverty increased slightly from 26 percent to a high of 28 percent in 2013 before falling to 25 percent in 2018.

The poverty rate of people 65 years of age and older (10 percent) was substantially lower than total and child poverty rates (25 percent) in Arkansas and about the same as the national average for seniors in 2018 (Figure SES1). The senior poverty rate declined slightly between 2010 and 2018, from 12 percent to 10 percent.

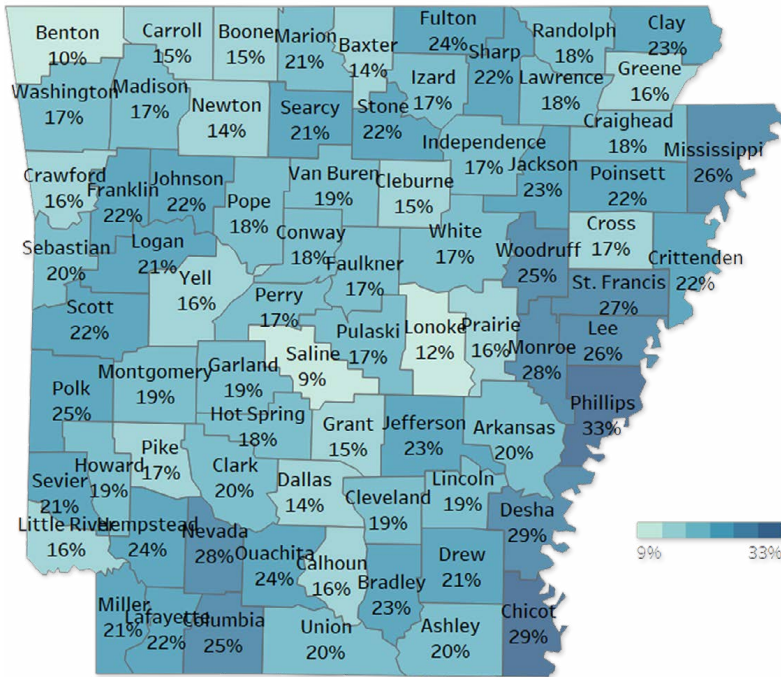
While total poverty rates remained relatively stable over this eight-year period, there were substantial differences in the percent of people in poverty across regions of the state (Figure SES1) and among counties (Figure SES2) in 2018. Total poverty rates ranged from a high of 33 percent in Phillips County to a low of 9 percent in Saline County.

Higher Rates of Poverty in Rural Arkansas

Rural counties have higher poverty rates compared to urban counties. The total poverty rate in the Rural region in 2018 was 20 percent, compared to 16 percent in the Urban region (Figure SES1). Within the Rural regions, the Delta had the highest rate of total poverty (23 percent).

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRESS

FIGURE SES2. POVERTY RATE, 2018



Source: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex by Age, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2014-2018, U.S. Census Bureau

There was no change in total poverty rates for either the Rural or Urban regions from 2010 to 2018.

Among adults aged 65 and over, poverty rates declined statewide from 12 percent in 2010 to 10 percent in 2018. Decreases in senior poverty rates in Rural regions of the state made up most of the statewide decline. The Rural region saw senior poverty rates decrease from 14 percent to 11 percent during that time period while the Urban region remained stable at 9 percent. In 2018, the poverty rate for seniors ranged from 20 percent in Nevada County to 6 percent in Scott County.

Child Poverty Rates High and Declining Slightly in Rural and Urban Areas

Like total poverty rates, rates of child poverty were higher in the Rural region (29 percent) compared to the Urban regions (22 percent) in 2018. Among the Rural regions, the Delta showed the highest rate of child poverty (35 percent). Both Rural and Urban regions saw slight improvement in child poverty rates from 2010 to 2018, but rates fell faster in the urban counties. From 2010 to 2018, child poverty decreased by less than one percentage point

in rural counties. In urban counties it fell by 2 percentage points from 24 percent to 22 percent.

Child poverty rates ranged from a high of 53 percent in Phillips County to a low of 11 percent in Saline County. Twenty-one counties have more than one third of children living in poverty. Of those, two are urban counties. The remaining are in Rural regions: 11 in the Delta region, 5 in the Coastal Plains region and 3 in the Highlands region.

Food Insecurity Remains a Concern in Arkansas

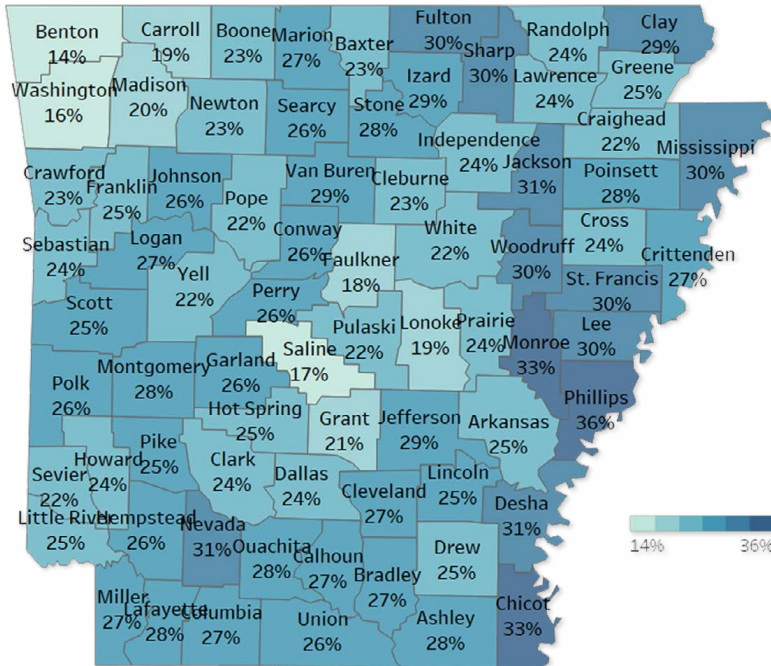
Another measure of household vulnerability is food insecurity. According to the USDA, food insecure households do not have constant access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all people in the household. A household would be considered food insecure even if they only have trouble accessing enough quality meals for part of the year. Food insecure households may experience concern over where their next meal is coming from, lower quality diets and family members who skip meals for all or part of the year. Food insecurity may lead to hunger but is not the same as a measure of hunger. 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, approximately 37 million people or about 12 percent of the population was food insecure in 2018, according to Feeding America. Statewide, nearly 500,000 Arkansans or 17 percent of the population faced food insecurity in 2018. Within Arkansas, rural areas experienced slightly more food insecurity compared to urban areas of the state, 18 percent and 15 percent respectively. The Delta had the highest regional rate at 21 percent. Factors like access to grocery stores, income levels and job availability may contribute to increased rates of food insecurity in rural areas of Arkansas.

Generally, rates of food insecurity are higher for children than for adults. This was true nationally and across all

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FIGURE SES3. PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH FOOD INSECURITY, 2018



Source: Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap 2018:
Child Food Insecurity in Arkansas by County

regions of Arkansas. Children with food insecurity are at risk for lower educational outcomes as well as adverse short-term and long-term health outcomes¹. Arkansas was ranked the fourth highest state for child food insecurity in 2018 with a rate of 23 percent.

The Rural region had a higher rate of child food insecurity at 26 percent compared to the Urban region, which had a rate at 20 percent. Within the Rural regions, the Delta had the highest rate of child food insecurity at 30 percent. Twenty-four of the 25 counties with the highest rates of food insecurity were rural counties. Figure SES3 shows the geographic distribution of food insecurity rates for children.

Food Assistance

Statewide, more than 495,000 people or nearly one in six (16 percent) Arkansans received food assistance through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in 2019, formerly known as food stamps. Although many Arkansans receive SNAP assistance, the number has been declining since the peak in 2013, due in part to an improving economy. Free and

reduced-price school lunch is another important part of food assistance in Arkansas and across the nation. Over 310,000 kids in Arkansas (65 percent) received free or reduced-price lunch at school.

SNAP Rates Higher in Rural Arkansas and for Younger Age Groups

People in rural counties were more likely to receive SNAP benefits than in urban counties in 2019. About one in five residents in rural counties (19 percent) compared to 15 percent of residents in urban counties received SNAP benefits in 2019. Of the Rural regions, the Delta had the highest rate of SNAP recipients at 24 percent, followed by the Coastal Plains with 20 percent.

Children were more likely to receive SNAP benefits than other age groups in 2019, especially in rural counties. Thirty-eight percent of children in the Rural region of the state were receiving SNAP benefits, compared to 29 percent in the Urban counties. During that time adults aged 19-64 received SNAP benefits at lower rates in both rural and urban counties (17 percent and 12 percent respectively).

Twenty-six counties in the state had more than one-fifth (20 percent) of their residents receiving SNAP (Figure SES4). More than 25 percent of the population received supplemental nutrition assistance in 11 counties. Two of those 11 counties were urban; the remaining nine were in the Delta region.

SNAP and COVID-19

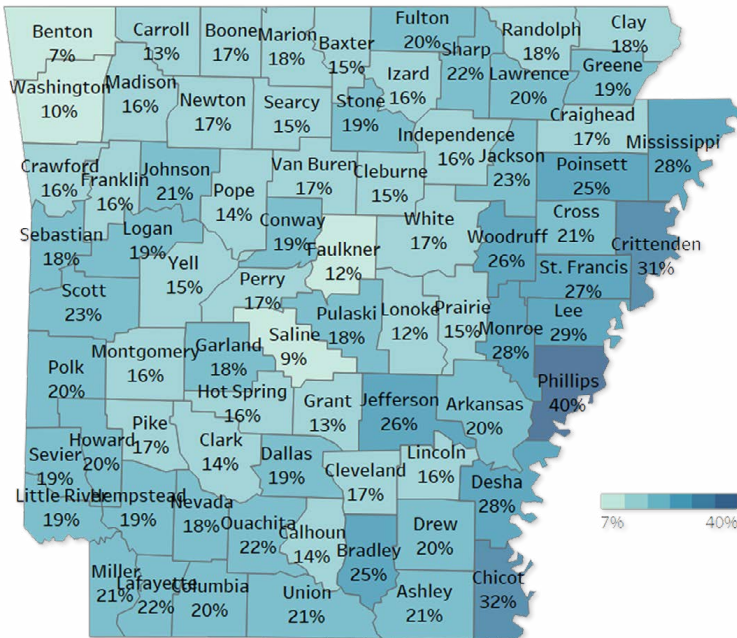
SNAP is a policy tool that acts as a counterbalance to economic downturns. As more families face financial hardship, more qualify for food assistance. An increase in government spending on benefits like SNAP provide more purchasing power to low-income households, which puts more money into the economy.

This additional purchasing power has been critical for families who are struggling during the COVID-19

¹ Feeding America

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FIGURE SES4. SNAP PARTICIPATION, 2019



Sources: SNAP Program Recipients by Age, Arkansas Department of Health FY2018 Statistical Report; Population Estimates 1999-2019, U.S. Census Bureau; Annual County Resident Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau

face a high housing cost burden compared to those in rural counties.

As you move up the income spectrum in Arkansas, rates of high housing cost burden decrease for both Rural and Urban regions. Eight percent of households with incomes between \$20,000 and \$34,999 had a high housing cost burden. That rate dropped to 3 percent for households making \$35,000 to \$49,999 a year and to 1 percent for those making \$50,000 to \$74,999 annually. Less than one percent of households with incomes of \$75,000 a year or more faced a high housing cost burden in 2018.

Since Arkansas has a large share of low-income households, this suggests that many Arkansas households have a high housing cost burden. More than one in four (27 percent) of Arkansas households had incomes of less than \$25,000 in 2018. This is higher than the national average where only one in five (20 percent) of households had incomes of less than \$25,000.

pandemic and has helped the local economies in which they live. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that SNAP participation increased 17 percent nationally and 24 percent in Arkansas from February to May 2020².

Housing

A high housing cost burden is defined as spending more than 30 percent of income on housing costs, including rent³. Low-income Arkansans have relatively high rates of housing cost burdens. In Arkansas in 2018, 14 percent of households with income less than \$20,000 had a high housing cost burden. Households in rural counties in that income group were more likely to have a high housing cost burden (15 percent) compared to households in urban counties (13 percent). For all higher income groups, households in urban counties were slightly more likely to

The high cost housing burden was felt by many households in the Rural region of Arkansas. This is because the Rural region had a larger share of low-income households. It is also because rural, low-income households were more likely to spend over 30 percent of their income on housing compared to low-income households in the Urban region.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbates the housing cost burden experienced by many Arkansas households, especially those that are low income or already have high housing cost burdens. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, one in six U.S. renters reported that they were not caught up on rent in a September 2020 survey. In that survey, 106,000 renters in Arkansas (17 percent) said they were not caught up on rent.

²The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

³American Community Survey (ACS) Five-Year Income Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

Community health is influenced by social, economic, behavioral, clinical and environmental factors, all of which determine health outcomes in complex and interconnected ways. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, clinical care is responsible for 20 percent of health outcomes while the remaining 80 percent of health outcomes are determined by non-clinical factors including behavioral and environmental conditions [Figure H1]. Public Health experts often use indexes to track how a variety of health factors and outcomes vary across different communities. In this section, we provide County Health Rankings that summarize a number of health outcomes and health risk factors for different areas of Arkansas.

This section also provides data on infant mortality and obesity. Although neither is a perfect or comprehensive representation of population health, measures like infant mortality and obesity each offer a way to broadly view the health of Arkansans. Infant mortality is often used as a public health indicator because structural factors affecting the health of entire populations also influence infant health⁴. Obesity is another common metric used to assess population health because it is associated with higher risk for many other serious diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer⁵. A growing economy depends on a skilled and healthy workforce. Supporting programs to improve health factors contributes to the physical and economic well-being of Arkansas citizens.

Health Rankings

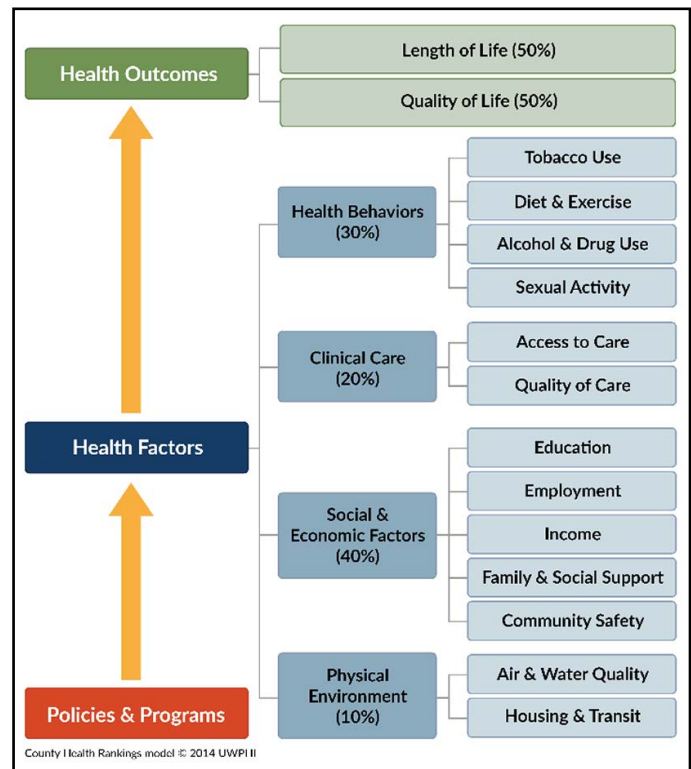
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings combine many indicators into a single index for easy comparison. The indicators are grouped into two scores. The Health Factors score measures several underlying contributors to public health. This index includes data on:

- **Health behaviors** like smoking, diet and physical activity.
- **Clinical care factors** which includes access to and quality of health care services and providers.
- **Social and economic factors** like educational attainment, unemployment, poverty and crime.
- **Physical environment factors** like air and water quality, housing and transit systems.

⁴ Infant Mortality Rates as an Indicator of Population Health, by D.D. Reidpath and P. Allotey, Journal of Epidemiol Community Health 2003; 57:344-346.

⁵ Obesity, Healthline, July 16, 2018

FIGURE H1. COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS MODEL



Source: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2019. www.countyhealthrankings.org

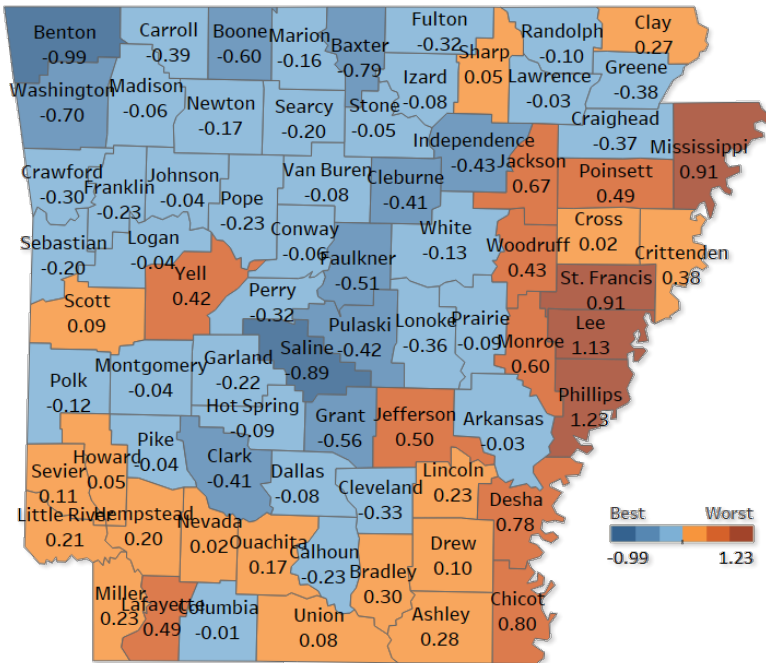
The Health Outcomes score measures the major health results that communities experience. This index includes data on:

- **Length of life** measuring premature death and life expectancy.
- **Quality of life**, which includes indicators of poor physical or mental health and low birthweight of babies.

Rural Areas Rank Low in Health Factors and Outcomes

Health Factor scores vary across Arkansas counties [Figure H2]. This score is designed to help us understand the conditions that determine how long and well people live. A lower score indicates more favorable conditions for positive health outcomes. In general, counties in the Urban region of the state had better health factor scores than in the Rural region. Four of the seven counties with the best health factor scores were urban. The Delta and

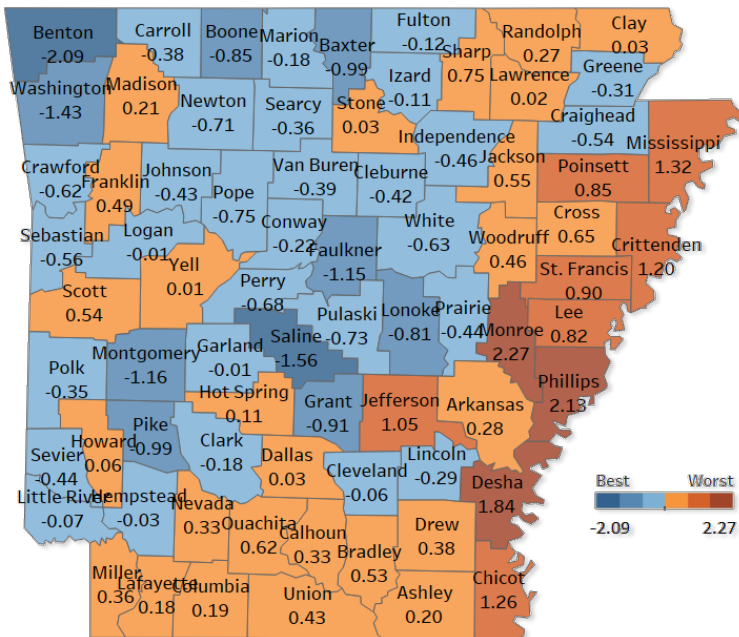
FIGURE H2. HEALTH FACTOR SCORES, 2020



Source: County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Coastal Plains regions had the worst health factor scores. All seven counties with the worst health factor scores were in the Delta region.

FIGURE H3. HEALTH OUTCOME SCORES, 2020



Source: County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Similarly, [Figure H3] shows that counties in the Urban region have better health outcome scores compared to the Rural region. This suggests there was a positive relationship between health factors and health outcomes in 2020⁶. Four of the five counties with the best health outcomes were in the Urban region. Counties in the Delta and Coastal Plains had the worst health outcomes. Eight of 11 counties with the worst health outcomes were in the rural Delta region.

Infant Mortality

Arkansas' infant mortality rate (IMR) in 2018 was 7.5 deaths per 1,000 live births, well above the national average (5.7)⁷. This placed Arkansas third highest in the nation for infant mortality that year, behind Louisiana and Mississippi.

Nationally, infant mortality has been trending down, falling from 6.1 per 1,000 births in 2010 to 5.7 in 2018. However, Arkansas' infant mortality rate increased during that time, from 7.3 per 1,000 to 7.5. Arkansas' infant mortality rate remains high compared to the United States and the rest of the world. Fifty-four countries had lower infant mortality rates than the U.S. according to the CIA World Factbook⁸. If Arkansas were a country, its IMR would rank worse than 74 countries including Serbia, Cuba and Ukraine.

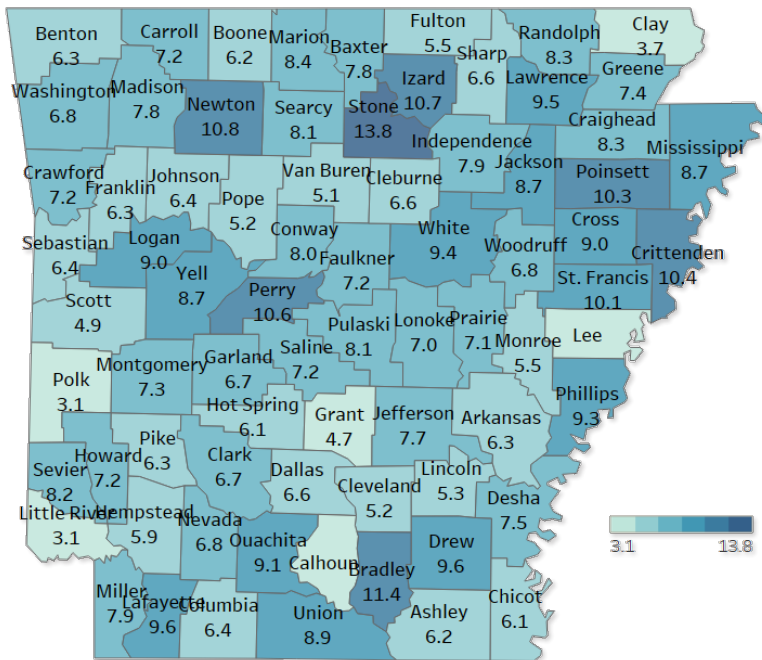
Because infant mortality is relatively rare, multiple years of data must be combined for meaningful data in counties with low populations. We combine data for the years 2008 to 2018 enable us to examine county level data. Infant mortality varied across Arkansas counties, from a high of 13.8 in Stone County to a low of 3.05 in Polk County (Figure H4). Although there was no

⁶The correlation coefficient between health factors and health outcomes among counties in 2020 was .84, which indicates a high correlation, but this alone does not indicate cause and effect.

⁷Annie E Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center

⁸CIA World Factbook

FIGURE H4. INFANT MORTALITY RATE, 2008-2018



Source: Infant Mortality Rate 2008-2018 Arkansas Department of Health

meaningful difference between average infant mortality rates between the Urban and Rural regions, seven of the eight counties with infant mortality rates above 10 per 1,000 births were rural counties.

Adult Obesity

Obesity continues to be an epidemic in the United States and across Arkansas. 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 2018, 71 percent of adults in Arkansas were considered either overweight or obese, higher than the national average of 66 percent, according to ASPIRE Arkansas, a project of the Arkansas Community Foundation. The high rate of obesity in Arkansans puts residents at increased risk for other severe health conditions, including diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

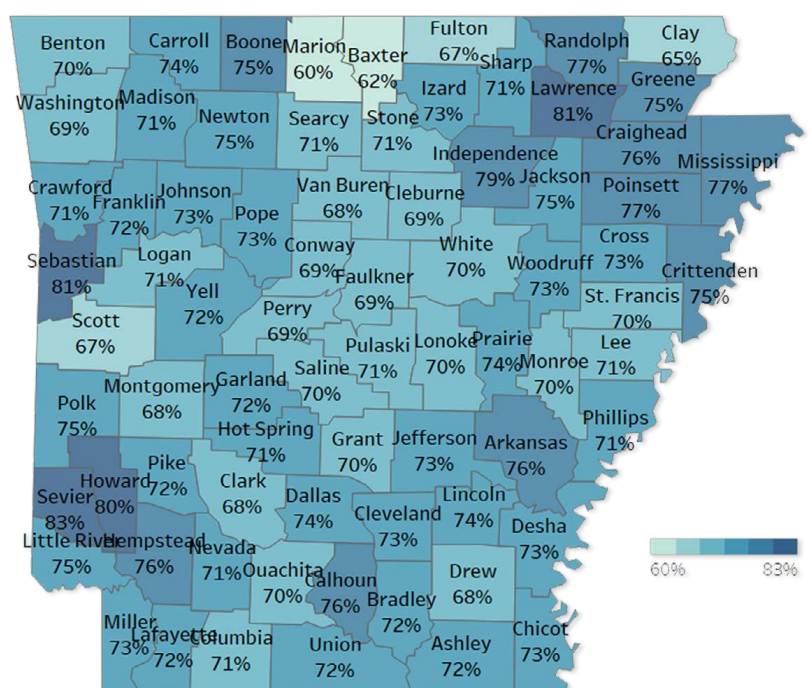
Arkansas counties had high rates of adults who are considered overweight or obese, ranging from a high of 83 percent in Sevier County to a low of 60 percent in Marion County. Adults

in rural counties were more much more likely to be overweight or obese than those living in urban counties. Eighty-five percent of adults in rural counties compared to only 62 percent in urban counties were either overweight or obese. Of the 15 Arkansas counties with 75 percent or more of adults considered overweight or obese, 12 of these were rural counties (Figure H5).

Child Obesity

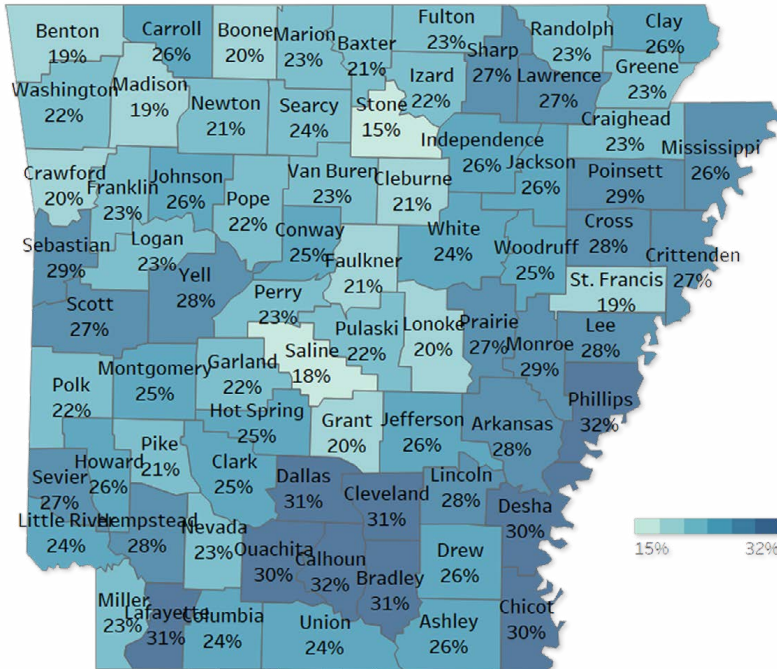
Children who are classified as overweight or obese face both increased health risks now as children and later as adults. Twenty-three percent of children in Arkansas were considered obese, and 40 percent are considered either overweight or obese in 2019. Children living in rural counties in Arkansas were more likely to experience obesity (25 percent) compared to urban counties (22 percent). Among the Rural regions of Arkansas, the Coastal Plains had the highest rate of child obesity (28 percent) followed by the Delta (27 percent) and the Highlands (24 percent). Figure H6 provides the breakdown by county.

FIGURE H5. PERCENT OVERWEIGHT AND OBESE ADULTS, 2018



Source: County Health Fact Sheets, Arkansas Department of Health

**FIGURE H6. PERCENT OBESE CHILDREN
2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR**



Source: ACHI Assessment of Childhood and Adolescent Obesity in Fall 2018–Spring 2019

According to the CDC, short-term symptoms of COVID-19 include flu-like symptoms like fever, chills, fatigue, headache, sore throat and muscle aches as well as other symptoms including loss of taste or smell. The CDC also reports that more serious acute symptoms may include trouble breathing, confusion, chest pressure, bluish lips or face and the inability to stay awake. Heart damage is among the currently known long-term impacts of some COVID-19 infections and may be related to other symptoms like shortness of breath, chest pains and heart palpitations.

General Health Risks Associated with COVID-19

Scientists and researchers are still learning about the short and long-term health effects of COVID-19. According to the CDC, short-term symptoms of COVID-19 include flu-like symptoms like fever, chills, fatigue, headache, sore throat and muscle aches as well as other symptoms including loss of taste or smell. The CDC also reports that more serious acute symptoms may include trouble breathing, confusion, chest pressure, bluish lips or face and the inability to stay awake. Heart damage is among the currently known long-term impacts of some COVID-19 infections and may be related to other symptoms like shortness of breath, chest pains and heart palpitations.

Populations with Higher COVID-19 Vulnerability

The CDC reports that while mild to severe symptoms are possible for anyone, certain populations like older adults or those with underlying health conditions are more likely to develop severe cases of COVID-19. Those in the 65-74 age range are 5 times as likely to be hospitalized and 90 times as likely to die from COVID-19 compared to the 18-29 year age group. People with certain underlying health conditions like asthma, hypertension, obesity, diabetes and chronic kidney disease are also much more likely to be hospitalized if they contract COVID-19,

There have been some improvements in the percentage of children who are overweight and obese among younger age groups. One third (33 percent) of kindergarteners were considered overweight or obese in 2010. By 2019 that percentage had dropped to 31 percent. For older children, rates of obesity and overweight are increasing. From 2010 to 2019, the percentage of 10th graders who were considered overweight or obese increased from 38 percent to 44 percent⁹. Obesity remains a major health and economic issue for Arkansas, and child obesity rates are especially indicative of future health outcomes.

COVID-19

General Health Risks Associated with COVID-19

Scientists and researchers are still learning about the short and long-term health effects of COVID-19.

⁹ ACHI year 16 annual BMI report

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especially if they have more than one of these conditions according to the CDC.

COVID-19 research also shows that racial and ethnic disparities exist in hospitalization and fatality outcomes for patients. This follows an unfortunate trend in the United States where minority populations fare worse in a spectrum of health outcomes from life expectancy to infant mortality. The general array of health disparities reflects underlying differences in access to healthcare and income inequality that occur along racial and ethnic lines. For COVID-19 specifically, the underlying disparities also include differences in the exposure risk to people employed in certain front-line and essential jobs.

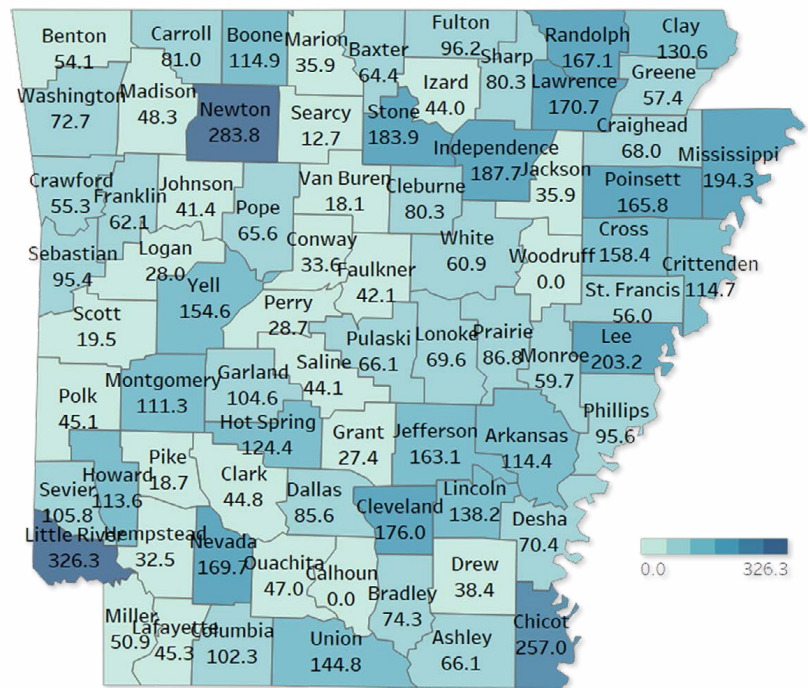
The CDC finds that white patients are much less likely to die or be hospitalized after contracting COVID-19. Specifically, minority populations including American Indian, Alaska Native, Black and Hispanic populations are approximately 5 times more likely to be hospitalized due to COVID-19 compared to White, Non-Hispanic people. Black patients are more than twice as likely to die from COVID-19 compared to their white counterparts.

Other populations face unique challenges in confronting COVID-19, including those in working and living in correctional facilities and those providing direct health-care services. Nationally, Arkansas had the sixth highest number of COVID-19 cases in prisons (9,484) as of Nov. 25, 2020 according to the CDC.

Fatality Rates

Arkansas and the United States both had considerably higher rates of death from COVID-19 compared to the rest of the world. Arkansas' rate of COVID-19 deaths was 79.7 per 100,000, which was similar to the U.S. average (80.0) but higher than the global average (18.7) as of Nov. 25, 2020. Case rates vary greatly across counties

FIGURE H7. COVID-19 DEATHS PER 100,000 (AS OF NOV. 25, 2020)



Source: United States CDC

in Arkansas. Van Buren County reported 2,079 cases per 100,000 people or 20.8 cases per 1,000 population as of Nov. 25, 2020.

Rural counties in Arkansas have a demographic profile that puts those communities at greater risk of hospitalization and death from COVID-19 infections. Rural counties have a higher percentage of people over the age of 65, identifying as minorities and considered obese, all of which are linked to more severe outcomes of a COVID-19 infection. Rural counties in Arkansas had 93 COVID-19 deaths per 100,000, compared to 71 per 100,000 in urban counties. Among the rural counties, the Delta Region had 116 COVID-19 deaths per 100,000, followed by 101 in the Coastal Plains Region and 82 in the Highlands Region.

These numbers were reported as of Nov. 25, 2020. Since then deaths from COVID-19 have increased dramatically and as of this writing are still rising rapidly.

EDUCATION

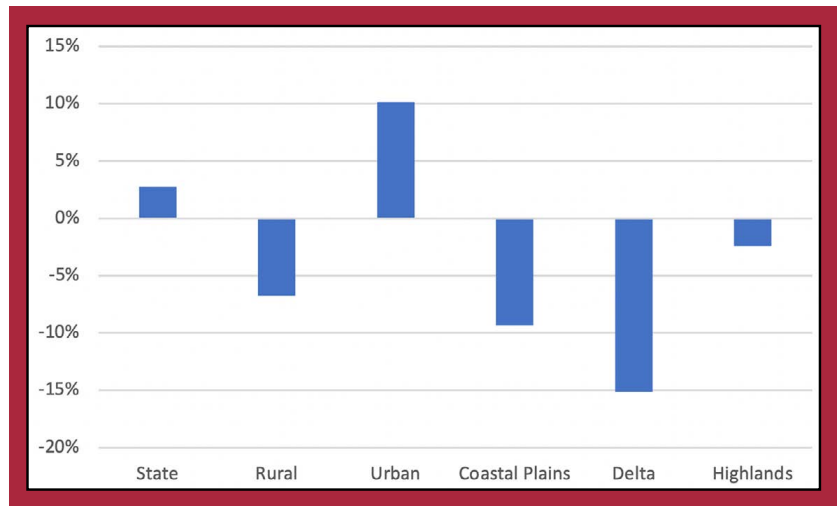
People are Arkansas' greatest resource, and the social and economic value of a well-educated population cannot be overstated. Investing in education provides a more skilled workforce and lowers poverty rates, which benefits the individual, communities and the state. To maintain and improve the state's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

Pre-K Enrollment Rates Unchanged

Pre-K education is vital to the cognitive development of children and is a critical component for ensuring child preparedness for kindergarten and elementary education. Providing good pre-K opportunities also creates long-term benefits to the individual and society, including higher lifetime earnings and financial security, improved health outcomes and civic contributions.

The number of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in school slightly increased nationally from 2010-2018 but declined 2 percent

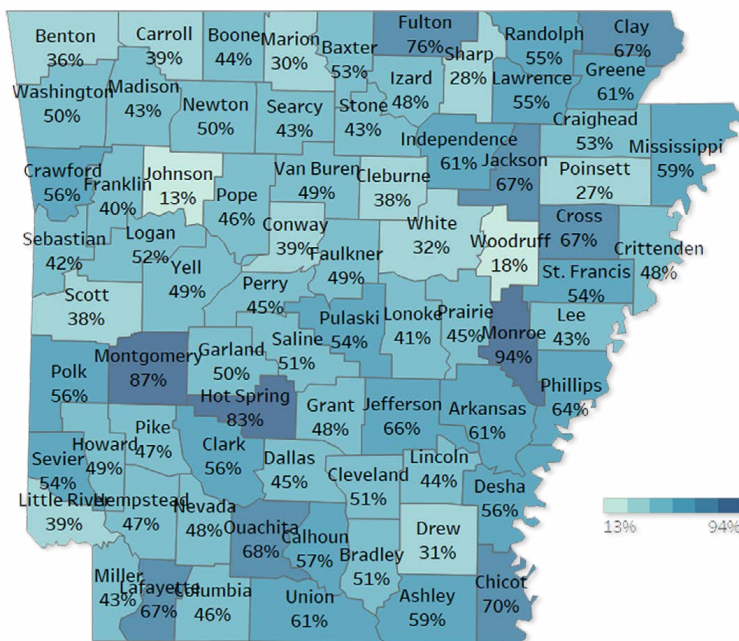
FIGURE ED2. PERCENT CHANGE IN K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS, 2009-10 TO 2019-20



Source: Enrollment Count by County, Arkansas Department of Education

in Arkansas. Within Arkansas, enrollment increased 5 percent in the Urban region from 2010-2018, while the Rural region decreased 11 percent. However, enrollment rates can be more informative because they account for population changes over time. Arkansas' population of 3- and 4-year-olds declined 1.5% percent from 2010 to 2018.

FIGURE ED1. PERCENT OF CHILDREN 3 TO 5 YEARS OLD ENROLLED IN NURSERY OR PRESCHOOL, 2018



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018
5-Year Estimates

Arkansas had a slightly higher rate of pre-K enrollment compared to the U.S. in 2018. Both Arkansas and national rates of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in school in 2018 are flat compared to 2010 rates. Arkansas pre-K enrollment rates (50 percent) in the Rural region of the state were slightly higher than rates in the Urban region (48 percent). The difference between rural and urban pre-K enrollment rates narrowed slightly from 2010-2018. Among Rural regions, the Delta region had highest enrollment rate in 2018 (58 percent), although the Delta region also had the largest percentage point decrease from 2010-2018 (Figure ED1).

Public School Enrollment Numbers

Over 479,000 children were enrolled in Arkansas public schools in the 2019-20 school year, up 3 percent from the 2009-10 school year (Figure ED2). However, these gains were primarily in urban counties. The Urban region's

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enrollment increased 10 percent while the Rural region decreased 7 percent during that 10-year period. All three Rural regions experienced enrollment declines since the 2009-10 school year. The Delta region experienced the largest decline in public school enrollment (-15 percent) during that time.

Fifty-four of Arkansas' 75 counties saw enrollment declines from 2009-10 to 2019-20, only 4 of which were urban counties. Four counties, all rural, lost over a quarter of their student enrollment during that time (Lafayette, Lee, St. Francis, Monroe). Four additional counties, all urban, saw their enrollment increase by roughly a fifth or more (Benton, Craighead, Saline, Washington).

Declining enrollment numbers can pose difficult funding challenges for local communities. Lower student enrollment decreases some forms of school funding, but many costs for public education are fixed, like school facility maintenance and teacher and staff salaries. To overcome shrinking population, decreased funding, and rising costs, public school districts are often forced to consolidate into large school districts.

While there may be efficiency gains and more educational opportunities for students, there are also costs in school consolidation. Such decisions often burden students who must be bused longer 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.

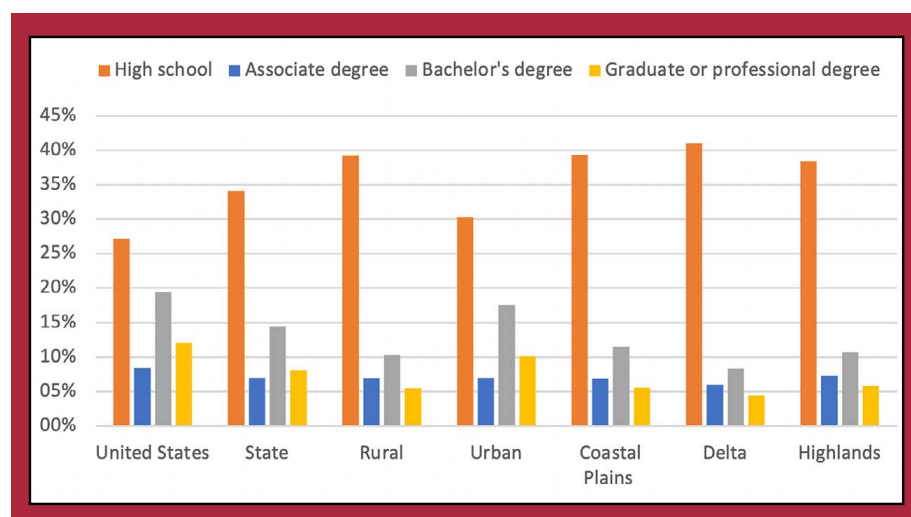
Educational Attainment Below National Averages

Educational attainment levels in Arkansas are persistently below the national average and remained so in 2018 despite some gradual improvement over time. Arkansas remains behind the U.S. average across the board in terms of completion of higher education, including attainment of associate, bachelor's and graduate degrees in 2018 (Figure ED3).

In 2018, 30 percent of Arkansans age 25 and older had an associate, bachelor's, or graduate or professional degree as their highest level of education completed compared to 40 percent nationally. Arkansas was also behind the nation in the percent of adults 25 and older with a graduate degree (8 percent compared to 12 percent nationally).

Arkansans are also more likely to enter adulthood without a high school diploma. Fourteen percent of Arkansans in the 25 and older age group had less than a high school diploma compared to 12 percent nationally.

FIGURE ED3. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY PERCENT OF POPULATION 25 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, 2018



Source: Educational Attainment, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Finally, Arkansans are more likely compared to the national average to have some college but no degree, 23 percent compared to 21 percent nationally. This status may put some Arkansans in the position of facing student loans without the degree that could qualify them for higher paying jobs needed to repay their loans.

Educational Attainment Lower in Rural Arkansas

Within Arkansas there remains a considerable divide in educational attainment between the rural and urban areas of the state. Twenty-three

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percent of adults in rural counties have at least an associate degree, considerably less than the 35 percent in urban counties. Among the Rural regions, the Delta had lowest rates of educational attainment for associate, bachelor's and graduate or professional degrees.

This divide persists for attainment of high school diplomas as well. In rural counties in Arkansas, 16 percent of adults lack a high school diploma or equivalence compared to 12 percent in urban counties. Within the Rural regions, the Delta had the highest rate of adults without a high school diploma (19 percent).

STEM Graduates Growing

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 graduate students with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) degrees at their two-year colleges for local residents.

The ratio of people with associate or bachelor's degrees in science and engineering has been increasing in Arkansas. In 2006, less than 10 people per 1,000 in the 18-24 age group had a bachelor's degree in science and engineering. By 2018 that number grew to 16 per

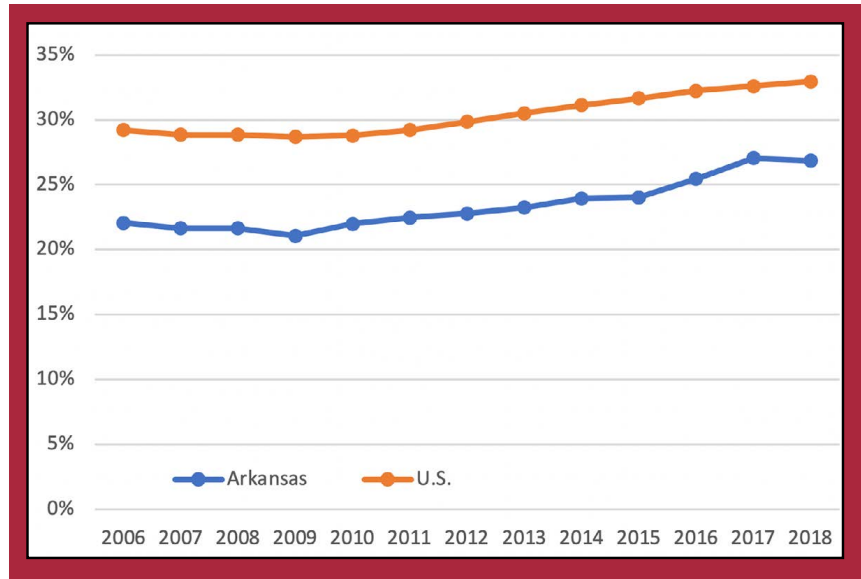
1,000 people (Figure ED4). The number of people with associate degrees in technology as well as science and engineering also grew during that time, but still remained at or below 1 per 1,000 residents in the 18-24 age group.

Arkansas ranks low (46th) compared to other states in the percent of all degrees conferred that are in the science and technology field. Despite this relatively low rank, the percent of degrees conferred to science and technology graduates increased from 22 percent in

2006 to 27 percent in 2018 (Figure ED5). Arkansas saw faster growth in the ratio of science of engineering degrees per degrees conferred compared to the U.S. average. This ratio increased 13 percent nationally from 2006 to 2018 and 22 percent in Arkansas, suggesting Arkansas may be starting to close the gap.

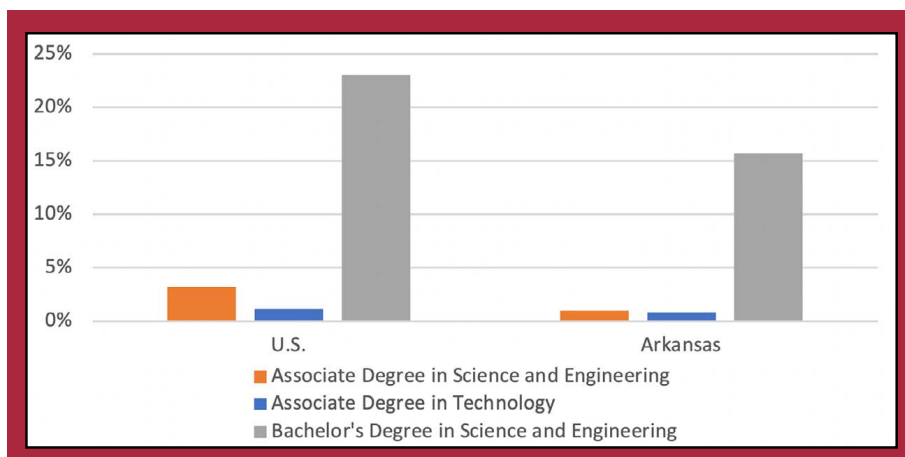
The ability of state and local leaders to improve educational services in rural communities will be critical for Arkansas' continued economic growth.

FIGURE ED5. SCIENCE & ENGINEERING DEGREES AS A PERCENT OF ALL DEGREES CONFERRED, 2006-2018



Sources: Science & Engineering Indicators, National Science Board, National Science Foundation

FIGURE ED4. DEGREES CONFERRED PER 1,000 INDIVIDUALS BY TYPE, 2018



Sources: Science & Engineering Indicators, National Science Board, National Science Foundation

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Many local governments in rural Arkansas have been affected by structural changes in their economies, which affect their tax base and ability to generate revenue from local sources. Structural changes in rural economies, accelerated by the Great Recession, triggered business loss and population decline in rural areas of the state. The lost businesses and population resulted in a declining local tax base and local tax revenue for some rural counties. Other counties have increased their property tax millage and/or the county sales tax rate help maintain their revenue and ability to provide the infrastructure and services needed to support economic development and a good quality of life for residents.

In addition to structural changes in rural economies, the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting both rural and urban communities. While the CARES Act provided some economic stimulus to mitigate large declines in spending, some of this funding has expired, and we are beginning to see declines in retail sales in some rural areas, which affects their local revenue.

Despite rural population loss, more than 1.2 million people, or 41%, of Arkansans lived in counties classified

as rural in 2019. Many Arkansans still reside in unincorporated areas or towns of less than 2,500 people. The decline of the local tax base places an unusually heavy burden on rural county and town governments to provide the infrastructure and services demanded by local residents and businesses.

County Government Local Tax Base

County governments generate a large share of their revenue from local sources. The largest local sources of county government revenue come from property and sales taxes. Changes in property and sales tax bases can greatly impact a county government's ability to generate revenue from local sources. While both the property and sales tax bases continue to grow statewide, many rural counties have seen declines in one or both of them in recent years.

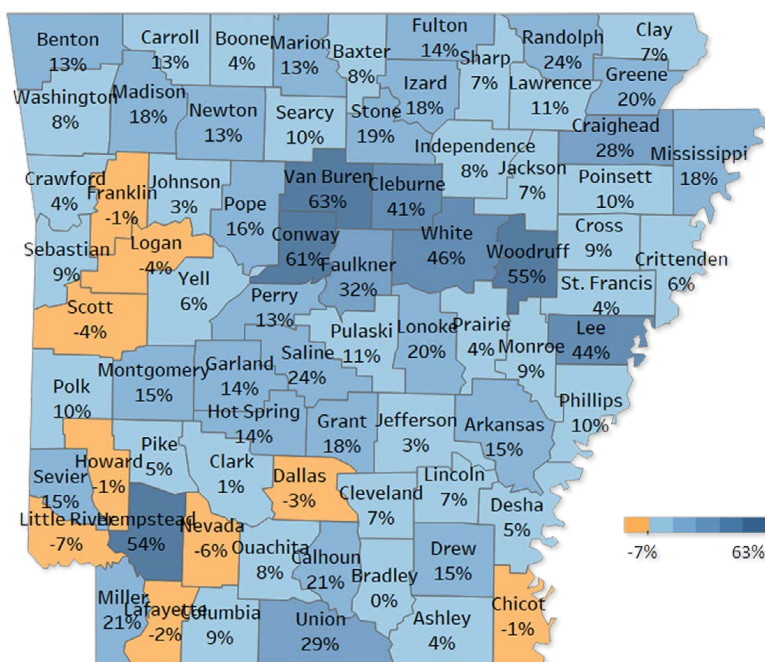
Property Assessments Growing Slowly Statewide, but Declining in some Rural Counties

Statewide, inflation adjusted property assessments grew 14.5 percent, with slightly faster growth in the Rural region compared to the Urban region (16 percent versus 14 percent respectively). Although property assessment grew slightly faster in the Rural region of the state compared to the Urban region during this 10-year period, which was due in part to increasing natural gas extraction and utility expansions, many rural counties had stagnant or declining property assessments. During this period nine counties, all rural, experienced a decline in their inflation adjusted property assessments (Figure LG1).

Growth in property assessments in the Rural region slowed in recent years. From 2015 to 2019 property assessments in the Rural region grew only one percent. In comparison, growth of property assessments in the Urban region increased nearly seven percent during this four-year period.

Property assessments per capita were higher in the Urban region (\$16,976) than the Rural region

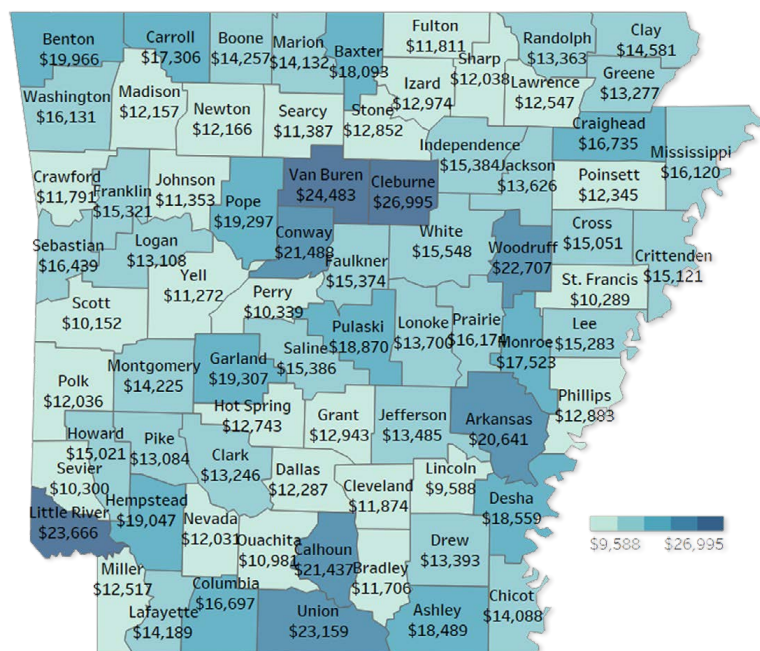
FIGURE LG1. PERCENT CHANGE IN PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS, 2007-2017



Sources: Assessed Values, Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department; South Urban Consumer Price Index, Bureau of Labor Statistics

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

FIGURE LG2. PER CAPITA PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS, 2017



Sources: Assessed Values, Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department; South Urban Consumer Price Index, Bureau of Labor Statistics

(\$15,336) in 2017. The variation in per capita property assessments in 2017 ranged from a low of \$9,588 in Lincoln County, to a high of \$26,995 in Cleburne County. Van Buren and Conway counties, like Cleburne County had high per capita property assessments largely due to natural gas assessments and small populations (Figure LG2). Assessments per capita grew considerably faster in rural areas during that time, increasing 19 percent compared to 4 percent in urban counties. The Delta region had a particularly high rate of growth in assessments per capita (26 percent), driven by growth in total assessments and a declining population.

Retail Sales Growing Slowly Statewide, but Declining in many Rural Counties

Local government sales tax revenue is driven by the local sales tax base and sales tax rates. Retail sales, which we use as a proxy for the sales tax base, grew 3 percent above pre-recession levels statewide after adjusting for inflation. However, from 2007 to 2017, the Urban region saw retail sales increase 7 percent while

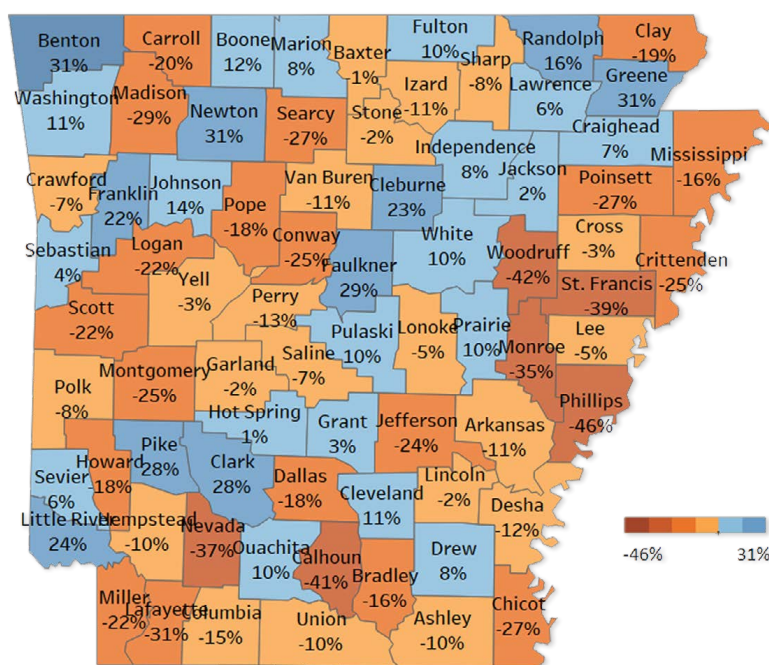
the Rural region declined 5 percent (Figure LG3). Per capita retail sales are still 2 percent below prerecession levels statewide, and the largest decrease from 2007 to 2017 was in urban areas (-4 percent). Retail sales per capita in 2017 were significantly higher in urban areas (\$15,344) compared to rural areas (\$10,584).

Forty-six of Arkansas' 75 counties experienced a decline in retail sales between 2007 and 2017, 40 of which were rural counties. This decline in the sales tax base for two-thirds of Arkansas' rural counties and the decline or stagnation of the property assessments limits the ability of many rural county governments to raise revenue from local sources.

County Government Tax Rates Increasing

One way to generate more revenue when the local tax base is stagnant or declining is to increase property and/or sales tax rates. In 2020 the average millage (property tax rate) for Arkansas' 75 county governments, which does not include city, school district or special district millage, was approximately 7.9 mills, ranging from 2.8 in Scott

FIGURE LG3. PERCENT CHANGE IN RETAIL SALES, 2007-2017



2007 and 2017 Census of Retail Trade, U.S. Census Bureau and South Urban Price Index, 2007-2017, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

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County to 12.4 in Carroll County (Figure LG4). The average millage of counties in the Rural region was slightly higher (8.0) compared to the Urban region (7.4). Also, rural counties on average increased their millage rate from 2007 to 2020 more than urban counties, 0.50 versus 0.19 respectively. During this period, six counties reduced rates and 35 counties increased their county government millage. Nearly one-half (28) of rural counties increased their county government millage during this period.

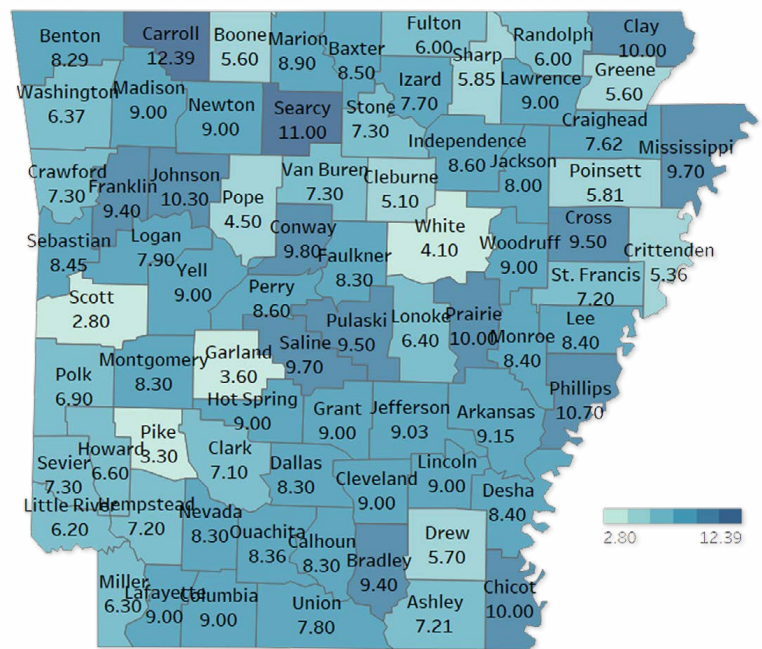
Rural counties on average have higher county sales tax rates than urban counties and have increased their rates more than urban counties between 2007 and 2020. In 2020 the average sales tax rate in rural counties was approximately 1.9 percent compared to 1.2 percent in urban counties (Figure LG5). During this time-period the average sales tax rate for rural counties increased by 0.5 percent compared to an average increase in urban counties of 0.2 percent. The Coastal Plains region had the highest average county sales tax rate at 2.3 percent in 2020, an increase of 0.74 percent since 2007.

Forty-three of Arkansas' 75 counties increased their county sales tax rate over this 13-year period, 39 of which are rural. Over 60 percent of rural counties increased their sales tax rate compared to 30 percent of urban counties.

County Tax Revenue

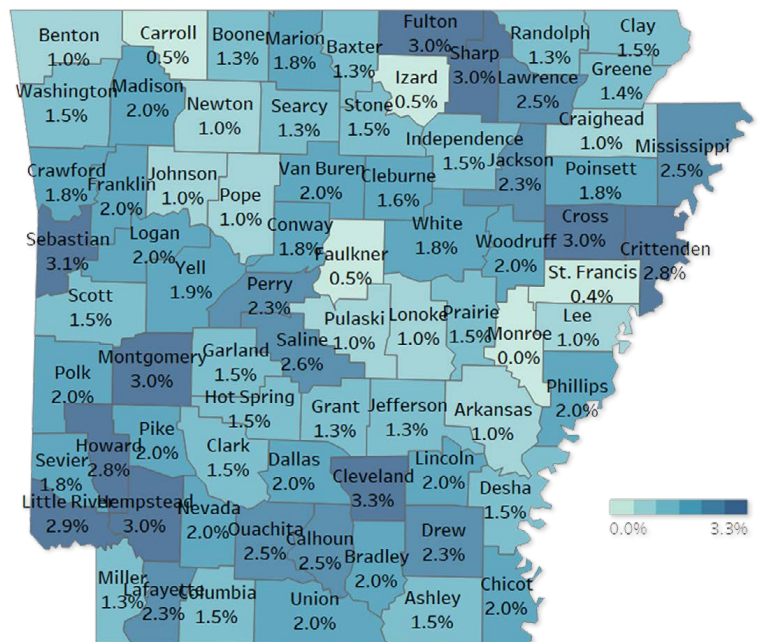
County government revenue increased, on average, from 2007 to 2017. Property and sales taxes made up the largest share of county government revenue in 2017 (23 percent and 25 percent respectively). During the 2007 to 2017 time-period, county government property tax revenue increased 26 percent, after adjusting for inflation (Figure LG5). Sales tax revenue adjusted for inflation increased a similar 27 percent during that time. Urban counties had a larger share of local government revenue that came from the property tax (30 percent compared to 17 percent) in 2017. Conversely, rural counties relied more on the sales tax (28 percent compared to 21 percent).

FIGURE LG4. COUNTY GOVERNMENT MILLAGE, 2020



Sources: State of Arkansas 2019 Millage Report (2020 Collections),
Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department

FIGURE LG5. COUNTY SALES TAX RATES, 2020



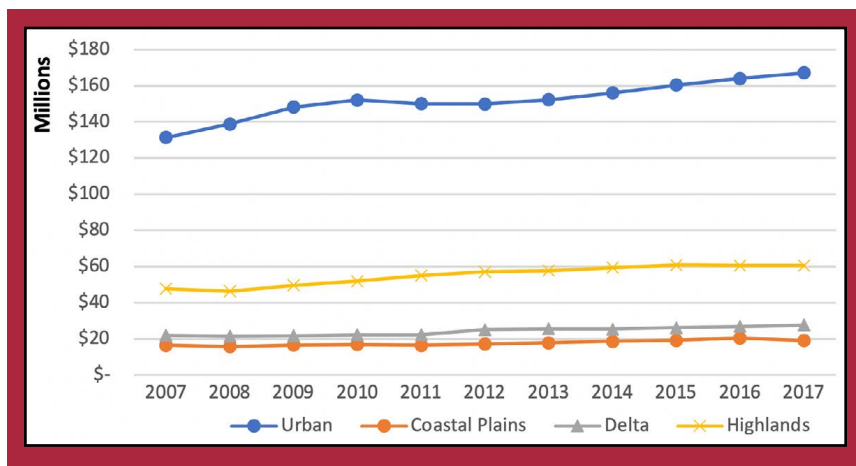
Sources: City County Sales Tax Table October-December 2020,
Arkansas Department of Finance & Administration

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Property Tax Revenue 2007-2017

Growth in property tax revenue for county governments increased statewide from 2007 to 2017. During that time, property tax revenue growth in urban counties outpaced that of rural counties (27 percent compared to 24 percent) as shown in Figure LG6. Of the Rural regions, the Coastal Plains grew the slowest (16 percent). While all regions experienced growth, it is important to note that 10 counties experienced declines in their property tax revenue during this 10-year period, and nine of these were rural counties.

FIGURE LG6. COUNTY GOVERNMENT PROPERTY TAX REVENUE, 2007-2017



Sources: Legislative Audit Reports, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban Consumer Price Index, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Sales tax revenue growth was faster in rural counties compared to urban counties (increasing 33 percent and 19 percent respectively) as seen in Figure LG7. Among Rural regions, sales tax revenue growth in the Coastal Plains showed the highest rate of growth during that time (growing 42 percent). Again, the overall growth in regions masks the major differences among counties. During this 10-year period, 19 counties experienced declines in their sales tax revenue even though sales tax revenue grew in all four regions.

Sales tax revenue per capita was lower in urban areas (\$66 per person) compared to rural areas (\$140 per person) in 2017. Among the Rural regions, the Coastal Plains had the highest sales tax revenue per capita at \$190.

COVID-19 Impact on County Tax Revenue

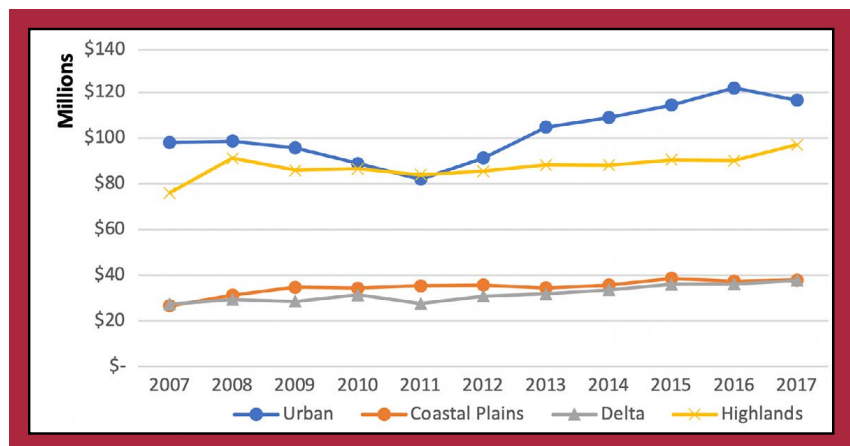
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on county government revenue through July 2020 was lessened due to increased financial assistance to individuals, state and local governments, businesses and unemployed workers from the federal government. However, much of this financial assistance has expired and August 2020 was the first month that

Arkansas county governments statewide saw a month-to-month decline in their sales tax revenue since April 2020.

Sales Tax Revenue 2007-2017

Sales tax revenue is more volatile and prone to fluctuations along with the overall economy compared to the relatively stable property tax. Consumers may tighten their belts and reduce spending on goods and services subject to the sales tax during lean times, whereas it usually takes longer for downturns in the economy to affect property values. Therefore, counties that depend largely on the sales tax for revenue may experience greater loss of revenue from downturns in the economy than those that are more reliant on the property tax.

FIGURE LG7. COUNTY GOVERNMENT SALES TAX REVENUE, 2007-2017



Sources: Legislative Audit Reports, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban Consumer Price Index, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Without knowing when the COVID-19 pandemic will end and without additional federal financial assistance, it is likely that local government revenue will continue to decline due to decreased consumer spending and, therefore, less sales tax revenue.

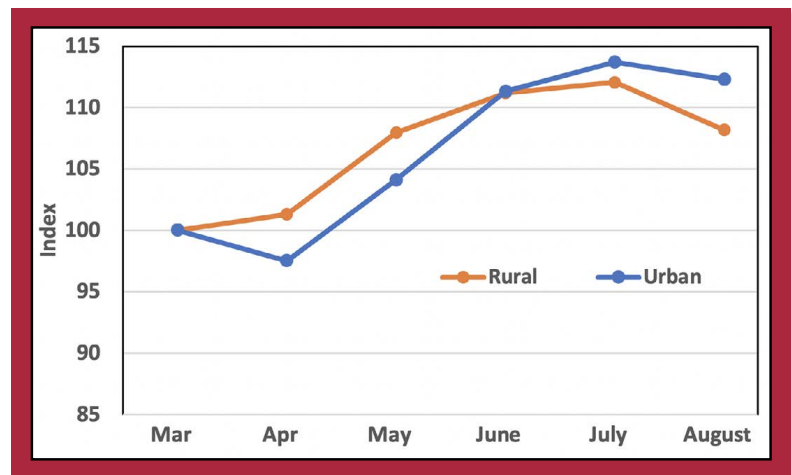
As discussed previously in this section, rural counties are more dependent on local sales tax revenue than urban counties. Since sales tax revenue fluctuates with the state of the economy, and since rural county governments are more dependent on sales tax revenue, the COVID-19 recession is expected to greatly impact the ability of rural counties to generate revenue to pay for infrastructure and services. Not surprisingly, it was the urban counties that experienced the greatest decline in sales tax revenue early in the COVID-19 pandemic resulting from a decline in restaurant, travel and tourism spending. However, from July to August 2020, it was the rural counties that experienced the sharpest decline in sales tax revenue (Figure LG8).

Over two-thirds (51) of Arkansas' 74 counties with a sales tax saw their revenue from the county sales tax decline from July to August 2020 (Figure LG9). Forty-four of the 51 counties experiencing declines in their sales tax revenue were rural. While the declines in sales tax revenue for some counties were small, 24 counties experienced declines between 5 percent to 14 percent from July to August.

While statewide county sales tax revenue was still above March 2020 levels in November 2020, 12 rural counties had less sales tax revenue in August than March. Also, 17 rural counties generated less revenue from their county sales tax in August 2020 compared to August 2019.

While we cannot project long-term effects of losing COVID-19 federal funding on county sales tax revenue from one month-to-month change in sales tax revenue, it could be an indicator of this effect. It would suggest that without additional federal funding and until the COVID-19 pandemic is under control, rural county governments that rely heavily on sales tax revenue to pay for the infrastructure and services they provide may need to find alternative sources of

FIGURE LG8. COUNTY SALES TAX REVENUE - ARKANSAS RURAL & URBAN COUNTIES (MARCH TO AUGUST 2020)

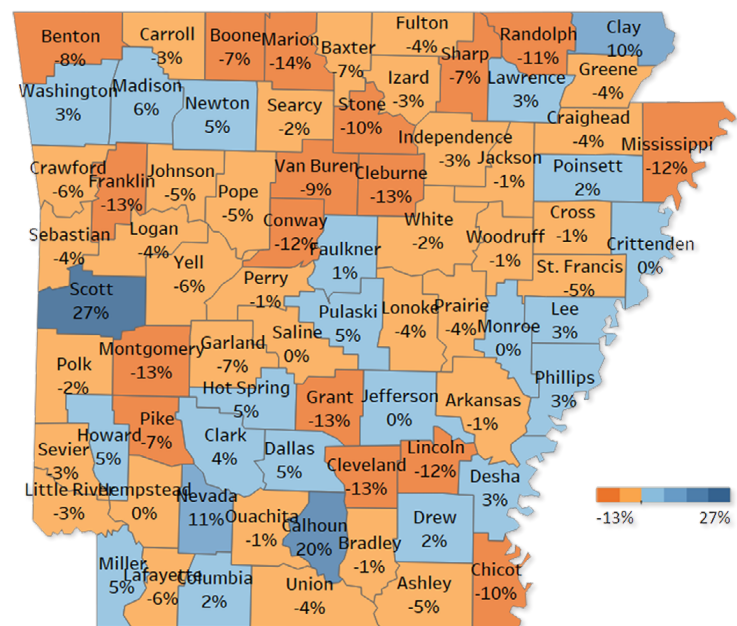


Sources: Legislative Audit Reports, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban Consumer Price Index, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

revenue, become more efficient, or cut back on the services provided to residents and businesses in their county.

Local governments that are required to cut their budgets may delay upgrading and maintaining their infrastructure of roads, bridges, water & sewer systems, solid waste facilities, etc. Delaying the maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure will likely increase the future cost.

FIGURE LG9. PERCENT CHANGE IN COUNTY SALES TAX REVENUE: JULY TO AUGUST 2020



Source: Computed from "Local Tax Distributions 2020," Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration

APPENDIX TABLE 1. POPULATION

COUNTY NAME	POPULATION 2010	POPULATION 2019	PERCENT POPULATION CHANGE, 2010-2019	NATURAL INCREASE/ DECREASE PER 1,000 POPULATION, 2019	NET MIGRATION PER 1,000 POPULATION, 2019	MEDIAN AGE 2019	SHARE OF POPULATION AGED 65 AND OVER, 2019	PEOPLE OF COLOR SHARE OF POPULATION, 2019	PERCENT CHANGE IN PEOPLE OF COLOR SHARE OF POPULATION, 2010-2019
Arkansas	19,009	17,486	-8.0%	-0.6	-13.3	42	20.3%	28.2%	-2.7%
Ashley	21,829	19,657	-10.0%	-1.9	-16.1	43	20.9%	27.1%	-12.1%
Baxter	41,510	41,932	1.0%	-8.3	15.6	52	31.1%	3.5%	37.7%
Benton	222,593	279,141	25.4%	6.9	17.7	36	13.6%	11.5%	63.4%
Boone	36,893	37,432	1.5%	-1.4	2.8	42	20.9%	4.0%	31.2%
Bradley	11,470	10,763	-6.2%	-1.3	-5.7	41	19.2%	31.2%	-5.4%
Calhoun	5,362	5,189	-3.2%	-1.7	-5.6	46	22.0%	24.5%	-1.6%
Carroll	27,553	28,380	3.0%	-0.1	10.2	45	23.9%	7.9%	94.0%
Chicot	11,799	10,118	-14.2%	-3.9	-28.2	44	21.1%	57.0%	-12.8%
Clark	22,925	22,320	-2.6%	-0.4	0.7	33	16.8%	27.6%	2.6%
Clay	16,050	14,551	-9.3%	-2.9	-11.7	44	21.9%	3.2%	49.5%
Cleburne	25,986	24,919	-4.1%	-6.3	3.4	49	27.2%	3.5%	33.0%
Cleveland	8,677	7,956	-8.3%	-1.6	-3.3	44	21.4%	13.7%	-5.2%
Columbia	24,723	23,457	-5.1%	-0.7	-4.7	36	17.7%	38.6%	-6.8%
Conway	21,219	20,846	-1.8%	0.7	0.4	42	19.7%	15.2%	4.7%
Craighead	96,748	110,332	14.0%	3.9	9.9	34	14.0%	20.5%	42.2%
Crawford	61,956	63,257	2.1%	1.6	-3.5	39	17.2%	9.3%	21.4%
Crittenden	50,958	47,955	-5.9%	3.9	-12.5	36	14.5%	57.0%	0.6%
Cross	17,862	16,419	-8.1%	-0.8	-12.2	41	19.3%	26.0%	0.3%
Dallas	8,066	7,009	-13.1%	-0.9	-19.3	46	24.4%	43.5%	-13.4%
Desha	12,954	11,361	-12.3%	-3.3	-9.6	40	19.6%	50.6%	-11.0%
Drew	18,666	18,219	-2.4%	1.6	-7.6	37	18.2%	30.7%	-0.1%
Faulkner	114,026	126,007	10.5%	4.7	2.2	34	12.9%	16.4%	29.2%
Franklin	18,142	17,715	-2.4%	-0.7	-2.0	42	19.9%	5.6%	28.4%
Fulton	12,215	12,477	2.1%	-5.4	19.0	48	26.0%	4.0%	42.7%
Garland	96,067	99,386	3.5%	-2.8	7.0	46	24.3%	13.0%	16.0%
Grant	17,886	18,265	2.1%	-0.9	5.5	42	18.5%	5.3%	33.8%
Greene	42,201	45,325	7.4%	1.8	-2.1	38	16.3%	4.8%	96.4%
Hempstead	22,596	21,532	-4.7%	2.7	-9.8	40	18.5%	34.3%	0.4%
Hot Spring	33,231	33,771	1.6%	-0.5	3.5	42	19.3%	14.6%	10.2%
Howard	13,796	13,202	-4.3%	0.1	-7.7	39	18.1%	25.0%	1.0%
Independence	36,809	37,825	2.8%	2.2	-0.6	39	18.0%	6.2%	28.9%
Izard	13,726	13,629	-0.7%	-5.1	8.4	48	26.1%	5.0%	38.2%
Jackson	18,057	16,719	-7.4%	-1.1	-0.8	40	18.3%	20.8%	0.8%
Jefferson	77,341	66,824	-13.6%	-0.6	-18.1	39	18.0%	60.2%	-9.5%
Johnson	25,556	26,578	4.0%	2.8	-5.8	38	16.9%	8.4%	67.8%
Lafayette	7,647	6,624	-13.4%	-5.0	-3.2	48	24.7%	38.8%	-13.5%
Lawrence	17,518	16,406	-6.3%	-3.4	1.8	41	19.9%	3.5%	34.9%
Lee	10,395	8,857	-14.8%	-4.4	-9.0	42	20.2%	56.9%	-15.4%
Lincoln	14,089	13,024	-7.6%	-3.5	-8.6	39	15.9%	32.4%	-4.4%
Little River	13,132	12,259	-6.6%	-3.3	0.2	43	20.9%	24.5%	-1.0%
Logan	22,308	21,466	-3.8%	-2.8	-6.8	44	20.5%	6.8%	13.3%

APPENDIX TABLE 1. POPULATION

COUNTY NAME	POPULATION 2010	POPULATION 2019	PERCENT POPULATION CHANGE, 2010-2019	NATURAL INCREASE/DECREASE PER 1,000 POPULATION, 2019	NET MIGRATION PER 1,000 POPULATION, 2019	MEDIAN AGE 2019	SHARE OF POPULATION AGED 65 AND OVER, 2019	PEOPLE OF COLOR SHARE OF POPULATION, 2019	PERCENT CHANGE IN PEOPLE OF COLOR SHARE OF POPULATION, 2010-2019
Lonoke	68,744	73,309	6.6%	2.3	-3.5	37	13.8%	10.2%	20.1%
Madison	15,684	16,576	5.7%	4.0	8.9	42	19.4%	5.9%	65.0%
Marion	16,665	16,694	0.2%	-8.2	10.1	53	29.1%	4.5%	64.0%
Miller	43,562	43,257	-0.7%	1.1	-3.5	39	17.2%	28.9%	4.2%
Mississippi	46,399	40,651	-12.4%	2.0	-16.5	37	15.0%	38.2%	-7.9%
Monroe	8,138	6,701	-17.7%	-7.0	-19.8	47	24.1%	43.9%	-15.9%
Montgomery	9,510	8,986	-5.5%	-6.7	15.2	51	27.0%	6.0%	40.6%
Nevada	8,997	8,252	-8.3%	-0.2	-6.5	44	21.0%	33.6%	-5.5%
Newton	8,304	7,753	-6.6%	-3.1	-2.8	49	27.2%	4.8%	20.6%
Ouachita	26,046	23,382	-10.2%	-3.8	-6.3	44	21.1%	43.5%	-8.0%
Perry	10,444	10,455	0.1%	-2.0	9.3	43	20.5%	5.5%	28.7%
Phillips	21,676	17,782	-18.0%	0.7	-16.0	40	19.5%	64.6%	-18.1%
Pike	11,264	10,718	-4.8%	-2.6	7.7	44	20.5%	7.5%	17.4%
Poinsett	24,515	23,528	-4.0%	-1.0	-15.0	40	18.4%	10.9%	16.1%
Polk	20,667	19,964	-3.4%	-3.6	0.9	45	23.6%	6.2%	25.8%
Pope	62,109	64,072	3.2%	2.7	4.8	36	16.2%	7.9%	17.5%
Prairie	8,722	8,062	-7.6%	-4.5	2.1	47	23.9%	13.5%	-7.4%
Pulaski	383,538	391,911	2.2%	3.2	-3.2	38	16.1%	42.8%	10.0%
Randolph	17,955	17,958	0.0%	-1.1	0.4	40	19.7%	5.7%	110.7%
St. Francis	28,194	24,994	-11.3%	-0.4	-20.2	39	16.8%	56.0%	-8.9%
Saline	107,656	122,437	13.7%	1.5	9.7	40	18.2%	12.1%	81.1%
Scott	11,275	10,281	-8.8%	-0.5	-5.2	43	21.4%	8.9%	-1.1%
Searcy	8,182	7,881	-3.7%	-4.8	-1.1	49	26.0%	5.0%	29.2%
Sebastian	125,737	127,827	1.7%	3.9	-1.9	38	16.4%	18.2%	13.3%
Sevier	17,151	17,007	-0.8%	5.7	-8.9	35	14.9%	12.2%	17.2%
Sharp	17,250	17,442	1.1%	-2.7	11.5	48	26.4%	4.9%	44.4%
Stone	12,389	12,506	0.9%	-4.4	8.6	50	27.9%	3.8%	41.3%
Union	41,573	38,682	-7.0%	-1.8	-10.0	40	18.4%	36.0%	-5.1%
Van Buren	17,310	16,545	-4.4%	-6.6	1.2	49	26.7%	4.1%	14.9%
Washington	204,024	239,187	17.2%	6.7	4.0	32	12.1%	13.7%	40.9%
White	77,356	78,753	1.8%	0.6	4.2	38	16.8%	8.3%	20.5%
Woodruff	7,236	6,320	-12.7%	-5.1	-17.7	45	23.4%	29.2%	-13.8%
Yell	22,146	21,341	-3.6%	0.7	-6.3	41	18.1%	6.1%	15.6%
SUMMARY									
State	2,921,964	3,017,804	3.3%	1.8	0.9	39	17.4%	21.0%	9.9%
Total Urban	1,652,950	1,790,830	8.3%	3.7	2.9	38	15.4%	23.5%	16.1%
Total Rural	1,269,014	1,226,974	-3.3%	-1.1	-2.0	43	20.2%	17.3%	-0.7%
Coastal Plains	210,718	195,972	-7.0%	-1.2	-7.7	42	19.6%	33.4%	-5.6%
Delta	307,296	281,898	-8.3%	-0.8	-11.8	42	18.3%	30.3%	-8.0%
Highlands	751,000	749,104	-0.3%	-1.2	3.2	44	21.0%	8.1%	19.1%

APPENDIX TABLE 2. TOTAL EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT CHANGE

	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT			EMPLOYMENT CHANGE %			EMPLOYMENT CHANGE		
COUNTY NAME	2007	2010	2018	2007-2010	2010-2018	2007-2018	2007-2010	2010-2018	2007-2018
Arkansas	13,482	12,855	13,348	-4.7%	3.8%	-1.0%	(627)	493	(134)
Ashley	10,775	10,602	9,430	-1.6%	-11.1%	-12.5%	(173)	(1,172)	(1,345)
Baxter	22,166	20,765	21,963	-6.3%	5.8%	-0.9%	(1,401)	1,198	(203)
Benton	125,050	121,745	163,291	-2.6%	34.1%	30.6%	(3,305)	41,546	38,241
Boone	21,118	20,361	20,668	-3.6%	1.5%	-2.1%	(757)	307	(450)
Bradley	5,564	4,834	5,147	-13.1%	6.5%	-7.5%	(730)	313	(417)
Calhoun	3,540	3,474	3,300	-1.9%	-5.0%	-6.8%	(66)	(174)	(240)
Carroll	15,050	14,551	16,091	-3.3%	10.6%	6.9%	(499)	1,540	1,041
Chicot	5,133	4,975	4,738	-3.1%	-4.8%	-7.7%	(158)	(237)	(395)
Clark	13,509	12,838	12,856	-5.0%	0.1%	-4.8%	(671)	18	(653)
Clay	6,503	6,217	5,556	-4.4%	-10.6%	-14.6%	(286)	(661)	(947)
Cleburne	11,932	11,763	11,233	-1.4%	-4.5%	-5.9%	(169)	(530)	(699)
Cleveland	1,959	2,030	1,963	3.6%	-3.3%	0.2%	71	(67)	4
Columbia	12,831	12,044	11,567	-6.1%	-4.0%	-9.9%	(787)	(477)	(1,264)
Conway	10,460	10,422	10,006	-0.4%	-4.0%	-4.3%	(38)	(416)	(454)
Craighead	55,806	56,957	69,437	2.1%	21.9%	24.4%	1,151	12,480	13,631
Crawford	27,622	27,265	27,642	-1.3%	1.4%	0.1%	(357)	377	20
Crittenden	22,847	22,425	23,596	-1.8%	5.2%	3.3%	(422)	1,171	749
Cross	7,757	7,765	7,825	0.1%	0.8%	0.9%	8	60	68
Dallas	4,013	3,913	3,428	-2.5%	-12.4%	-14.6%	(100)	(485)	(585)
Desha	6,679	6,626	6,545	-0.8%	-1.2%	-2.0%	(53)	(81)	(134)
Drew	9,255	9,129	9,434	-1.4%	3.3%	1.9%	(126)	305	179
Faulkner	55,536	56,004	60,024	0.8%	7.2%	8.1%	468	4,020	4,488
Franklin	7,026	6,960	7,377	-0.9%	6.0%	5.0%	(66)	417	351
Fulton	3,951	4,078	3,957	3.2%	-3.0%	0.2%	127	(121)	6
Garland	52,990	50,918	53,599	-3.9%	5.3%	1.1%	(2,072)	2,681	609
Grant	5,996	5,674	6,393	-5.4%	12.7%	6.6%	(322)	719	397
Greene	19,714	18,543	21,290	-5.9%	14.8%	8.0%	(1,171)	2,747	1,576
Hempstead	11,214	10,904	10,631	-2.8%	-2.5%	-5.2%	(310)	(273)	(583)
Hot Spring	12,031	11,591	12,514	-3.7%	8.0%	4.0%	(440)	923	483
Howard	9,706	8,679	8,857	-10.6%	2.1%	-8.7%	(1,027)	178	(849)
Independence	21,540	21,166	21,471	-1.7%	1.4%	-0.3%	(374)	305	(69)
Izard	5,741	5,355	5,391	-6.7%	0.7%	-6.1%	(386)	36	(350)
Jackson	7,828	7,402	7,355	-5.4%	-0.6%	-6.0%	(426)	(47)	(473)
Jefferson	41,703	40,713	36,634	-2.4%	-10.0%	-12.2%	(990)	(4,079)	(5,069)
Johnson	11,734	11,416	11,400	-2.7%	-0.1%	-2.8%	(318)	(16)	(334)
Lafayette	2,418	2,322	2,220	-4.0%	-4.4%	-8.2%	(96)	(102)	(198)
Lawrence	7,169	6,903	6,545	-3.7%	-5.2%	-8.7%	(266)	(358)	(624)
Lee	3,346	3,446	3,456	3.0%	0.3%	3.3%	100	10	110
Lincoln	4,690	4,498	4,517	-4.1%	0.4%	-3.7%	(192)	19	(173)
Little River	5,776	5,700	4,977	-1.3%	-12.7%	-13.8%	(76)	(723)	(799)
Logan	9,357	8,615	8,434	-7.9%	-2.1%	-9.9%	(742)	(181)	(923)

APPENDIX TABLE 2. TOTAL EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT CHANGE

	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT			EMPLOYMENT CHANGE %			EMPLOYMENT CHANGE		
COUNTY NAME	2007	2010	2018	2007-2010	2010-2018	2007-2018	2007-2010	2010-2018	2007-2018
Lonoke	21,487	21,414	23,385	-0.3%	9.2%	8.8%	(73)	1,971	1,898
Madison	6,556	6,179	6,613	-5.8%	7.0%	0.9%	(377)	434	57
Marion	6,781	5,975	6,341	-11.9%	6.1%	-6.5%	(806)	366	(440)
Miller	18,268	18,127	18,542	-0.8%	2.3%	1.5%	(141)	415	274
Mississippi	24,228	23,280	22,854	-3.9%	-1.8%	-5.7%	(948)	(426)	(1,374)
Monroe	3,661	3,483	3,480	-4.9%	-0.1%	-4.9%	(178)	(3)	(181)
Montgomery	3,253	3,152	2,989	-3.1%	-5.2%	-8.1%	(101)	(163)	(264)
Nevada	3,957	3,391	3,716	-14.3%	9.6%	-6.1%	(566)	325	(241)
Newton	2,969	2,831	2,709	-4.6%	-4.3%	-8.8%	(138)	(122)	(260)
Ouachita	10,344	10,298	9,749	-0.4%	-5.3%	-5.8%	(46)	(549)	(595)
Perry	3,169	3,029	2,839	-4.4%	-6.3%	-10.4%	(140)	(190)	(330)
Phillips	8,935	9,178	8,407	2.7%	-8.4%	-5.9%	243	(771)	(528)
Pike	4,686	4,318	4,389	-7.9%	1.6%	-6.3%	(368)	71	(297)
Poinsett	8,935	8,251	8,548	-7.7%	3.6%	-4.3%	(684)	297	(387)
Polk	10,057	9,674	9,561	-3.8%	-1.2%	-4.9%	(383)	(113)	(496)
Pope	36,241	35,528	35,365	-2.0%	-0.5%	-2.4%	(713)	(163)	(876)
Prairie	2,929	2,800	2,944	-4.4%	5.1%	0.5%	(129)	144	15
Pulaski	313,382	308,503	331,745	-1.6%	7.5%	5.9%	(4,879)	23,242	18,363
Randolph	7,925	7,764	8,497	-2.0%	9.4%	7.2%	(161)	733	572
St. Francis	11,619	11,592	10,883	-0.2%	-6.1%	-6.3%	(27)	(709)	(736)
Saline	33,064	32,764	40,093	-0.9%	22.4%	21.3%	(300)	7,329	7,029
Scott	4,575	4,540	4,732	-0.8%	4.2%	3.4%	(35)	192	157
Searcy	3,884	3,637	3,505	-6.4%	-3.6%	-9.8%	(247)	(132)	(379)
Sebastian	91,720	85,781	85,747	-6.5%	0.0%	-6.5%	(5,939)	(34)	(5,973)
Sevier	7,741	7,526	7,239	-2.8%	-3.8%	-6.5%	(215)	(287)	(502)
Sharp	7,251	6,740	6,205	-7.0%	-7.9%	-14.4%	(511)	(535)	(1,046)
Stone	5,447	5,146	5,078	-5.5%	-1.3%	-6.8%	(301)	(68)	(369)
Union	25,724	23,978	24,504	-6.8%	2.2%	-4.7%	(1,746)	526	(1,220)
Van Buren	6,326	6,095	6,386	-3.7%	4.8%	0.9%	(231)	291	60
Washington	125,925	122,022	151,670	-3.1%	24.3%	20.4%	(3,903)	29,648	25,745
White	36,008	37,492	36,099	4.1%	-3.7%	0.3%	1,484	(1,393)	91
Woodruff	3,134	3,066	2,791	-2.2%	-9.0%	-10.9%	(68)	(275)	(343)
Yell	10,161	9,275	9,474	-8.7%	2.1%	-6.8%	(886)	199	(687)
SUMMARY									
State	1,582,859	1,541,272	1,663,185	-2.6%	7.9%	5.1%	(41,587)	121,913	80,326
Total Urban	985,400	964,638	1,085,405	-2.1%	12.5%	10.1%	(20,762)	120,767	100,005
Total Rural	597,459	576,634	577,780	-3.5%	0.2%	-3.3%	(20,825)	1,146	(19,679)
Coastal Plains	103,357	98,706	96,638	-4.5%	-2.1%	-6.5%	(4,651)	(2,068)	(6,719)
Delta	138,573	133,977	134,537	-3.3%	0.4%	-2.9%	(4,596)	560	(4,036)
Highlands	355,529	343,951	346,605	-3.3%	0.8%	-2.5%	(11,578)	2,654	(8,924)

APPENDIX TABLE 3. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB

COUNTY NAME	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2018 \$)			AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB (2018 \$)				
	2010	2018	% CHANGE 2010 TO 2018	2007	2010	2018	% CHANGE 2010-2018	% CHANGE 2007-2018
Arkansas	\$42,761	\$39,466	-7.7%	\$44,122	\$46,158	\$48,727	5.6%	10.4%
Ashley	\$40,124	\$39,635	-1.2%	\$49,239	\$46,823	\$44,603	-4.7%	-9.4%
Baxter	\$40,896	\$41,481	1.4%	\$37,325	\$35,909	\$37,748	5.1%	1.1%
Benton	\$57,927	\$64,141	10.7%	\$52,773	\$54,642	\$60,316	10.4%	14.3%
Boone	\$42,471	\$43,262	1.9%	\$39,514	\$37,546	\$40,934	9.0%	3.6%
Bradley	\$34,352	\$39,510	15.0%	\$40,552	\$40,882	\$45,103	10.3%	11.2%
Calhoun	\$37,271	\$44,022	18.1%	\$54,756	\$56,455	\$63,051	11.7%	15.1%
Carroll	\$39,321	\$43,505	10.6%	\$34,273	\$29,467	\$33,565	13.9%	-2.1%
Chicot	\$24,896	\$33,051	32.8%	\$44,050	\$39,958	\$36,093	-9.7%	-18.1%
Clark	\$36,718	\$39,752	8.3%	\$38,283	\$38,148	\$38,955	2.1%	1.8%
Clay	\$33,384	\$33,935	1.6%	\$39,801	\$38,790	\$33,733	-13.0%	-15.2%
Cleburne	\$41,065	\$43,391	5.7%	\$32,598	\$32,815	\$32,131	-2.1%	-1.4%
Cleveland	\$42,448	\$42,460	0.0%	\$43,000	\$29,369	\$45,445	54.7%	5.7%
Columbia	\$40,370	\$36,148	-10.5%	\$45,371	\$41,715	\$44,543	6.8%	-1.8%
Conway	\$37,558	\$41,196	9.7%	\$38,751	\$38,860	\$41,943	7.9%	8.2%
Craighead	\$45,062	\$45,868	1.8%	\$43,263	\$45,184	\$43,841	-3.0%	1.3%
Crawford	\$46,169	\$46,619	1.0%	\$38,288	\$38,931	\$38,923	0.0%	1.7%
Crittenden	\$38,725	\$39,002	0.7%	\$44,701	\$41,947	\$41,806	-0.3%	-6.5%
Cross	\$42,521	\$43,838	3.1%	\$36,078	\$37,159	\$35,949	-3.3%	-0.4%
Dallas	\$34,000	\$36,628	7.7%	\$38,390	\$36,642	\$37,196	1.5%	-3.1%
Desha	\$33,367	\$30,234	-9.4%	\$45,792	\$44,895	\$44,805	-0.2%	-2.2%
Drew	\$37,395	\$43,014	15.0%	\$38,732	\$39,158	\$42,611	8.8%	10.0%
Faulkner	\$52,015	\$51,930	-0.2%	\$42,187	\$44,191	\$41,676	-5.7%	-1.2%
Franklin	\$36,828	\$39,463	7.2%	\$42,055	\$37,430	\$38,760	3.6%	-7.8%
Fulton	\$35,144	\$36,184	3.0%	\$28,516	\$27,794	\$28,841	3.8%	1.1%
Garland	\$42,318	\$43,146	2.0%	\$37,369	\$37,612	\$40,554	7.8%	8.5%
Grant	\$59,254	\$51,920	-12.4%	\$34,605	\$34,432	\$39,447	14.6%	14.0%
Greene	\$43,886	\$47,497	8.2%	\$41,766	\$43,967	\$44,607	1.5%	6.8%
Hempstead	\$41,013	\$41,355	0.8%	\$38,644	\$41,877	\$42,551	1.6%	10.1%
Hot Spring	\$42,669	\$41,262	-3.3%	\$39,345	\$37,901	\$37,876	-0.1%	-3.7%
Howard	\$39,688	\$35,900	-9.5%	\$43,453	\$36,653	\$42,624	16.3%	-1.9%
Independence	\$39,769	\$43,523	9.4%	\$41,232	\$41,594	\$44,299	6.5%	7.4%
Izard	\$36,379	\$40,218	10.6%	\$29,014	\$28,419	\$32,741	15.2%	12.8%
Jackson	\$31,718	\$33,174	4.6%	\$45,388	\$47,577	\$51,400	8.0%	13.2%
Jefferson	\$41,346	\$38,289	-7.4%	\$49,040	\$49,733	\$47,427	-4.6%	-3.3%
Johnson	\$35,137	\$37,170	5.8%	\$38,764	\$36,120	\$38,813	7.5%	0.1%
Lafayette	\$31,603	\$32,412	2.6%	\$44,267	\$29,890	\$37,200	24.5%	-16.0%
Lawrence	\$34,788	\$38,528	10.8%	\$34,288	\$35,018	\$39,900	13.9%	16.4%
Lee	\$35,025	\$28,367	-19.0%	\$51,525	\$40,573	\$29,054	-28.4%	-43.6%
Lincoln	\$41,047	\$45,166	10.0%	\$42,157	\$37,316	\$40,851	9.5%	-3.1%
Little River	\$38,381	\$45,388	18.3%	\$51,223	\$51,912	\$49,715	-4.2%	-2.9%
Logan	\$43,130	\$39,748	-7.8%	\$37,490	\$34,748	\$39,037	12.3%	4.1%

APPENDIX TABLE 3. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB

COUNTY NAME	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2018 \$)			AVERAGE EARNINGS PER JOB (2018 \$)				
	2010	2018	% CHANGE 2010 TO 2018	2007	2010	2018	% CHANGE 2010-2018	% CHANGE 2007-2018
Lonoke	\$58,298	\$57,509	-1.4%	\$34,713	\$34,369	\$34,252	-0.3%	-1.3%
Madison	\$41,925	\$43,891	4.7%	\$32,411	\$26,877	\$37,497	39.5%	15.7%
Marion	\$39,177	\$35,518	-9.3%	\$30,267	\$28,135	\$31,532	12.1%	4.2%
Miller	\$46,296	\$41,903	-9.5%	\$45,472	\$43,870	\$42,139	-3.9%	-7.3%
Mississippi	\$38,370	\$37,237	-3.0%	\$51,085	\$51,975	\$48,252	-7.2%	-5.5%
Monroe	\$34,416	\$35,190	2.2%	\$35,167	\$34,416	\$30,571	-11.2%	-13.1%
Montgomery	\$41,010	\$37,855	-7.7%	\$31,875	\$28,340	\$29,190	3.0%	-8.4%
Nevada	\$44,076	\$37,635	-14.6%	\$37,560	\$33,974	\$41,260	21.4%	9.9%
Newton	\$31,518	\$39,896	26.6%	\$23,824	\$20,032	\$21,401	6.8%	-10.2%
Ouachita	\$35,903	\$34,887	-2.8%	\$38,659	\$41,075	\$38,795	-5.6%	0.4%
Perry	\$50,118	\$46,071	-8.1%	\$29,720	\$30,175	\$28,967	-4.0%	-2.5%
Phillips	\$31,426	\$29,263	-6.9%	\$44,816	\$36,835	\$31,579	-14.3%	-29.5%
Pike	\$37,680	\$37,406	-0.7%	\$39,538	\$34,067	\$34,022	-0.1%	-14.0%
Poinsett	\$37,061	\$39,277	6.0%	\$44,068	\$43,970	\$39,523	-10.1%	-10.3%
Polk	\$37,357	\$37,035	-0.9%	\$31,802	\$30,821	\$35,393	14.8%	11.3%
Pope	\$45,760	\$41,914	-8.4%	\$41,152	\$42,049	\$45,926	9.2%	11.6%
Prairie	\$40,597	\$41,846	3.1%	\$40,118	\$39,735	\$33,643	-15.3%	-16.1%
Pulaski	\$51,825	\$50,093	-3.3%	\$60,963	\$57,102	\$56,804	-0.5%	-6.8%
Randolph	\$34,712	\$36,870	6.2%	\$33,528	\$31,886	\$35,006	9.8%	4.4%
St. Francis	\$31,033	\$35,356	13.9%	\$40,090	\$40,611	\$41,134	1.3%	2.6%
Saline	\$59,154	\$62,152	5.1%	\$36,786	\$37,084	\$36,533	-1.5%	-0.7%
Scott	\$41,828	\$35,509	-15.1%	\$32,938	\$29,542	\$37,417	26.7%	13.6%
Searcy	\$33,092	\$36,390	10.0%	\$24,160	\$24,211	\$22,340	-7.7%	-7.5%
Sebastian	\$45,348	\$43,240	-4.6%	\$49,244	\$48,779	\$50,487	3.5%	2.5%
Sevier	\$39,491	\$46,667	18.2%	\$41,072	\$35,578	\$41,680	17.2%	1.5%
Sharp	\$35,761	\$33,708	-5.7%	\$28,190	\$26,292	\$31,238	18.8%	10.8%
Stone	\$34,894	\$36,162	3.6%	\$29,338	\$28,117	\$28,799	2.4%	-1.8%
Union	\$41,882	\$44,000	5.1%	\$53,280	\$54,183	\$54,666	0.9%	2.6%
Van Buren	\$36,708	\$36,897	0.5%	\$32,495	\$32,281	\$32,741	1.4%	0.8%
Washington	\$48,588	\$49,629	2.1%	\$45,579	\$45,404	\$50,216	10.6%	10.2%
White	\$44,999	\$43,822	-2.6%	\$36,681	\$40,246	\$38,069	-5.4%	3.8%
Woodruff	\$31,225	\$31,023	-0.6%	\$37,317	\$36,028	\$44,411	23.3%	19.0%
Yell	\$42,045	\$42,361	0.8%	\$34,602	\$31,926	\$38,398	20.3%	11.0%
SUMMARY								
State	\$45,101	\$45,726	1.4%	\$46,392	\$45,588	\$47,272	3.7%	1.9%
Total Urban	\$48,698	\$48,732	0.1%	\$44,644	\$44,527	\$44,998	1.1%	0.8%
Total Rural	\$38,394	\$39,121	1.9%	\$38,711	\$36,893	\$38,682	4.9%	-0.1%
Coastal Plains	\$38,735	\$40,039	3.4%	\$44,607	\$42,276	\$45,795	8.3%	2.7%
Delta	\$35,796	\$36,495	2.0%	\$42,709	\$41,248	\$39,646	-3.9%	-7.2%
Highlands	\$39,497	\$40,032	1.4%	\$34,750	\$32,943	\$35,718	8.4%	2.8%

APPENDIX TABLE 4. INFRASTRUCTURE

COUNTY NAME	BROADBAND CONNECTIONS PER 1,000 HOUSEHOLDS BY SPEED		STRUCTURALLY DEFICIENT BRIDGES, 2019		
	NUMBER WITH ACCESS TO AT LEAST 25/3 MBPS 2018	PERCENT WITH ACCESS TO AT LEAST 25/3 MBPS 2019	NUMBER	PERCENT DEFICIENT BY NUMBER OF BRIDGES	PERCENT DEFICIENT BY BRIDGE AREA
Arkansas	3,394	19.1%	2	1.3%	0.9%
Ashley	5,613	28.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Baxter	32,962	79.2%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Benton	272,597	100.0%	22	5.6%	5.1%
Boone	32,233	86.0%	3	3.1%	5.3%
Bradley	6,777	62.2%	1	0.9%	0.1%
Calhoun	369	7.0%	3	2.8%	0.8%
Carroll	27,460	97.3%	2	1.7%	1.3%
Chicot	5,720	54.8%	6	6.6%	0.9%
Clark	18,708	84.8%	4	2.0%	1.2%
Clay	8,819	59.4%	14	6.9%	4.6%
Cleburne	13,281	53.2%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Cleveland	6,727	83.9%	1	1.2%	0.1%
Columbia	16,735	71.1%	2	1.5%	0.6%
Conway	9,673	46.3%	1	0.8%	0.1%
Craighead	95,303	87.8%	22	5.0%	2.3%
Crawford	54,084	85.3%	26	10.5%	7.0%
Crittenden	38,384	79.4%	5	2.1%	0.6%
Cross	9,505	57.0%	9	7.0%	6.7%
Dallas	2,894	40.3%	6	5.6%	2.9%
Desha	8,024	69.7%	4	4.8%	8.6%
Drew	12,445	67.9%	3	2.0%	3.2%
Faulkner	102,963	82.5%	2	0.9%	0.7%
Franklin	3,366	18.9%	13	9.2%	6.3%
Fulton	4,282	34.9%	7	6.7%	4.5%
Garland	96,377	97.2%	6	2.0%	1.7%
Grant	10,349	56.9%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Greene	32,861	72.5%	20	8.2%	4.8%
Hempstead	14,110	64.9%	3	1.7%	0.8%
Hot Spring	20,187	59.9%	14	6.3%	18.7%
Howard	2,281	17.1%	6	5.1%	11.0%
Independence	25,621	68.0%	4	2.2%	1.4%
Izard	7,000	51.5%	5	5.1%	2.0%
Jackson	13,096	77.9%	1	0.7%	5.5%
Jefferson	40,528	59.5%	14	4.1%	0.6%
Johnson	16,632	62.2%	3	1.9%	0.4%
Lafayette	822	12.3%	3	4.2%	7.6%
Lawrence	8,151	49.6%	12	9.4%	5.3%
Lee	2,866	31.9%	6	6.3%	7.7%
Lincoln	3,948	29.5%	3	2.7%	0.9%
Little River	5,411	43.9%	5	6.0%	6.1%
Logan	8,282	38.1%	10	6.6%	5.6%

APPENDIX TABLE 4. INFRASTRUCTURE

COUNTY NAME	BROADBAND CONNECTIONS PER 1,000 HOUSEHOLDS BY SPEED		STRUCTURALLY DEFICIENT BRIDGES, 2019		
	NUMBER WITH ACCESS TO AT LEAST 25/3 MBPS 2018	PERCENT WITH ACCESS TO AT LEAST 25/3 MBPS 2019	NUMBER	PERCENT DEFICIENT BY NUMBER OF BRIDGES	PERCENT DEFICIENT BY BRIDGE AREA
Lonoke	57,083	77.5%	9	4.9%	4.6%
Madison	6,329	38.4%	31	20.9%	16.9%
Marion	9,699	58.0%	2	3.1%	0.8%
Miller	40,410	92.7%	3	1.4%	0.9%
Mississippi	30,187	73.2%	32	10.3%	10.1%
Monroe	863	12.5%	5	5.8%	2.6%
Montgomery	4,168	46.7%	3	1.5%	1.2%
Nevada	3,930	47.2%	7	5.2%	12.8%
Newton	1,069	13.7%	3	4.7%	7.5%
Ouachita	14,400	61.0%	3	1.8%	0.4%
Perry	7,122	68.8%	5	4.3%	2.4%
Phillips	15,469	85.8%	24	21.4%	15.0%
Pike	4,760	44.6%	4	4.3%	11.7%
Poinsett	15,295	63.8%	34	17.1%	11.6%
Polk	12,731	63.5%	26	11.9%	10.0%
Pope	55,488	86.7%	1	0.5%	0.1%
Prairie	2,010	24.9%	10	10.8%	15.1%
Pulaski	381,292	97.1%	18	2.5%	6.9%
Randolph	12,220	68.1%	8	5.3%	7.7%
St. Francis	9,285	36.5%	13	6.4%	5.8%
Saline	110,594	91.1%	9	4.1%	10.9%
Scott	4,468	43.3%	13	6.7%	8.1%
Searcy	3,923	49.3%	2	3.1%	0.9%
Sebastian	120,727	94.5%	20	6.1%	3.3%
Sevier	13,180	76.9%	13	7.9%	9.2%
Sharp	6,825	39.3%	3	2.8%	1.1%
Stone	4,958	39.8%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Union	28,366	72.5%	5	1.7%	1.3%
Van Buren	2,274	13.7%	3	3.1%	1.7%
Washington	221,549	93.5%	22	4.9%	2.3%
White	51,094	64.9%	7	2.2%	1.5%
Woodruff	2,025	31.2%	6	7.7%	7.2%
Yell	17,960	83.4%	9	4.0%	3.5%
SUMMARY					
State	2,372,593	78.7%	626	4.9%	4.5%
Total Urban	1,631,890	91.6%	178	4.2%	4.2%
Total Rural	740,703	60.1%	448	5.2%	4.8%
Coastal Plains	115,705	58.5%	36	2.3%	2.6%
Delta	163,367	57.1%	189	8.1%	6.4%
Highlands	461,631	61.6%	223	4.8%	4.5%

APPENDIX TABLE 5. MEASURES OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRESS

COUNTY NAME	PERCENT PERSONS BELOW POVERTY, 2018			PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH FOOD INSECURITY, 2018	PERCENT PERSONS RECEIVING SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE (SNAP), 2019				PERCENT FREE AND REDUCED PRICED LUNCH, 2019-20
	2010	2018	% CHANGE 2010-2018		UNDER 19 YEARS OF AGE	20-64 YEARS OF AGE	65 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER	TOTAL	
Arkansas	18.9%	20.0%	1.8%	25.0%	36.3%	18.0%	6.4%	20.2%	84.8%
Ashley	18.5%	20.2%	1.8%	27.7%	37.4%	19.4%	6.3%	21.1%	65.9%
Baxter	15.5%	14.0%	-9.5%	23.2%	28.2%	16.2%	3.4%	14.6%	60.0%
Benton	11.7%	9.9%	4.4%	14.4%	12.7%	5.1%	2.6%	6.9%	40.2%
Boone	16.0%	14.9%	-4.8%	22.7%	28.5%	15.6%	5.1%	16.6%	57.6%
Bradley	30.4%	23.2%	-28.6%	26.7%	43.7%	21.6%	7.1%	24.6%	100.0%
Calhoun	11.9%	15.6%	19.4%	26.5%	27.4%	13.1%	4.7%	14.2%	73.6%
Carroll	17.2%	15.0%	-7.7%	19.2%	25.8%	11.0%	3.2%	12.7%	73.2%
Chicot	34.1%	29.2%	-23.1%	33.4%	59.1%	28.2%	11.6%	32.1%	100.0%
Clark	23.8%	19.8%	-17.9%	23.7%	25.2%	12.2%	5.1%	14.4%	60.9%
Clay	18.7%	22.6%	10.0%	28.8%	31.2%	16.7%	6.1%	17.8%	68.2%
Cleburne	17.4%	14.6%	-16.1%	23.3%	28.6%	15.2%	3.3%	14.7%	63.3%
Cleveland	15.1%	19.4%	19.1%	26.6%	31.8%	15.8%	5.4%	17.4%	57.9%
Columbia	22.9%	25.2%	4.8%	27.4%	32.8%	18.4%	7.4%	20.3%	64.8%
Conway	17.0%	18.2%	6.1%	25.8%	34.0%	18.2%	5.0%	19.5%	89.7%
Craighead	19.4%	18.4%	6.9%	21.8%	29.7%	13.4%	4.2%	16.7%	70.5%
Crawford	18.3%	15.9%	-11.3%	22.6%	28.3%	14.0%	4.4%	16.2%	64.0%
Crittenden	27.4%	22.2%	-21.3%	26.5%	51.5%	25.3%	9.4%	30.8%	88.7%
Cross	16.7%	16.7%	-6.4%	23.5%	36.8%	18.6%	5.8%	20.7%	67.4%
Dallas	17.7%	14.3%	-29.3%	23.7%	39.5%	17.5%	5.1%	19.5%	94.4%
Desha	27.6%	29.1%	-7.6%	30.5%	46.4%	26.0%	9.0%	28.3%	100.0%
Drew	23.6%	21.4%	-10.5%	24.6%	34.0%	17.8%	6.1%	19.8%	71.1%
Faulkner	15.3%	16.8%	24.3%	18.4%	20.3%	9.8%	3.1%	11.7%	47.8%
Franklin	17.8%	21.9%	18.8%	24.7%	28.6%	14.7%	5.9%	16.4%	59.6%
Fulton	20.3%	23.9%	17.5%	30.0%	32.3%	20.9%	5.8%	19.6%	75.8%
Garland	17.7%	18.6%	8.5%	25.5%	35.7%	17.6%	3.8%	18.3%	67.9%
Grant	8.8%	14.5%	68.7%	21.0%	23.7%	11.3%	2.8%	12.7%	47.6%
Greene	16.4%	16.3%	7.4%	24.6%	31.6%	16.9%	5.0%	18.9%	72.1%
Hempstead	23.2%	24.3%	5.0%	25.8%	32.9%	16.1%	6.2%	19.0%	88.2%
Hot Spring	12.3%	17.6%	42.5%	25.0%	32.3%	14.3%	4.1%	16.4%	65.8%
Howard	22.0%	19.2%	-15.8%	24.4%	35.6%	16.9%	5.6%	20.1%	77.8%
Independence	19.3%	17.3%	-7.0%	23.8%	27.3%	14.0%	4.9%	16.0%	66.7%
Izard	18.7%	17.1%	-11.3%	28.5%	32.1%	15.7%	5.9%	16.4%	65.7%
Jackson	25.9%	23.3%	-18.9%	30.6%	42.6%	20.4%	7.2%	22.9%	60.0%
Jefferson	22.6%	23.2%	-10.5%	28.5%	47.0%	23.1%	6.8%	26.1%	83.8%
Johnson	19.4%	22.4%	20.5%	25.6%	34.4%	18.4%	6.2%	20.8%	75.6%
Lafayette	19.9%	22.2%	-1.8%	27.8%	43.3%	19.6%	8.7%	21.7%	93.9%
Lawrence	24.5%	17.7%	-28.6%	23.9%	31.7%	18.9%	7.8%	19.9%	75.5%
Lee	28.8%	26.0%	-24.0%	29.6%	57.0%	24.4%	13.3%	28.8%	100.0%
Lincoln	25.8%	18.6%	-45.5%	25.2%	34.6%	12.5%	7.3%	15.8%	64.8%
Little River	18.5%	15.8%	-19.5%	24.6%	35.6%	16.7%	6.2%	19.1%	67.2%
Logan	14.3%	21.1%	40.3%	27.4%	33.9%	16.7%	6.5%	18.7%	90.8%

APPENDIX TABLE 5. MEASURES OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRESS

COUNTY NAME	PERCENT PERSONS BELOW POVERTY, 2018			PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH FOOD INSECURITY, 2018	PERCENT PERSONS RECEIVING SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE (SNAP), 2019				PERCENT FREE AND REDUCED PRICED LUNCH, 2019-20
	2010	2018	% CHANGE 2010-2018		UNDER 19 YEARS OF AGE	20-64 YEARS OF AGE	65 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER	TOTAL	
Lonoke	12.6%	12.2%	6.4%	18.6%	20.9%	10.6%	3.7%	12.5%	47.2%
Madison	18.8%	16.8%	-6.4%	20.4%	28.3%	14.0%	4.5%	15.8%	63.4%
Marion	15.5%	20.6%	29.9%	27.4%	37.7%	18.1%	4.4%	18.0%	87.2%
Miller	18.1%	21.2%	19.0%	26.9%	38.7%	18.0%	5.5%	21.1%	82.8%
Mississippi	25.5%	25.8%	-7.7%	29.9%	45.1%	23.3%	9.7%	27.5%	81.2%
Monroe	22.5%	28.1%	7.7%	32.9%	53.6%	24.7%	10.8%	27.9%	100.0%
Montgomery	19.8%	18.9%	-9.8%	27.7%	30.9%	15.7%	4.3%	15.7%	77.1%
Nevada	20.0%	27.7%	26.2%	30.8%	33.6%	16.2%	6.4%	18.5%	100.0%
Newton	22.5%	14.2%	-41.3%	22.6%	29.5%	16.9%	6.3%	16.7%	83.3%
Ouachita	19.9%	24.1%	10.9%	28.2%	39.6%	21.0%	5.8%	22.3%	71.5%
Perry	15.1%	17.0%	10.1%	25.6%	29.7%	16.4%	3.9%	17.1%	63.1%
Phillips	32.4%	33.2%	-12.9%	35.7%	66.0%	35.9%	13.8%	40.1%	100.0%
Pike	20.7%	16.6%	-24.2%	25.1%	33.4%	14.1%	4.9%	16.8%	72.0%
Poinsett	25.8%	21.8%	-18.3%	28.1%	41.1%	23.1%	9.3%	25.3%	94.5%
Polk	20.4%	24.5%	19.0%	26.3%	33.4%	20.4%	5.8%	20.2%	77.1%
Pope	18.2%	18.5%	5.0%	22.3%	23.0%	12.5%	3.9%	13.9%	60.0%
Prairie	15.2%	15.7%	-4.1%	23.8%	29.3%	14.2%	5.2%	15.4%	70.7%
Pulaski	16.4%	17.0%	8.6%	21.8%	34.7%	15.3%	4.1%	18.4%	70.5%
Randolph	19.7%	18.3%	-9.9%	23.6%	28.7%	16.6%	6.9%	17.8%	69.1%
St. Francis	29.6%	26.6%	-16.3%	29.7%	54.8%	21.8%	9.8%	27.3%	100.0%
Saline	9.9%	8.5%	-0.3%	17.1%	16.5%	7.6%	1.9%	8.8%	40.2%
Scott	23.9%	22.1%	-12.8%	25.4%	41.5%	21.0%	6.4%	23.0%	75.6%
Searcy	22.7%	21.1%	-9.0%	25.9%	24.4%	15.0%	6.6%	14.8%	72.5%
Sebastian	18.0%	20.3%	15.5%	23.6%	31.3%	16.2%	4.9%	18.3%	65.6%
Sevier	22.9%	21.0%	-4.9%	21.6%	31.2%	15.1%	6.8%	18.9%	77.7%
Sharp	21.5%	21.6%	-1.0%	29.5%	37.8%	22.3%	6.3%	21.6%	74.2%
Stone	23.4%	22.5%	-2.9%	28.1%	35.8%	19.0%	6.9%	19.1%	71.1%
Union	21.4%	20.1%	-10.8%	25.7%	35.8%	18.4%	5.5%	20.6%	75.3%
Van Buren	22.5%	18.8%	-19.5%	28.5%	32.4%	17.6%	4.9%	17.4%	100.0%
Washington	17.9%	16.8%	9.5%	16.0%	18.5%	7.1%	3.4%	9.9%	56.4%
White	15.7%	17.0%	14.2%	21.9%	26.8%	15.5%	4.6%	16.7%	59.1%
Woodruff	22.9%	25.0%	-6.1%	30.4%	44.3%	25.0%	10.8%	26.2%	74.7%
Yell	17.7%	16.3%	-9.2%	22.0%	27.6%	12.0%	5.2%	14.9%	77.4%
SUMMARY									
State	18.0%	17.6%	1.5%	23.1%	32.4%	13.5%	4.8%	16.4%	64.9%
Total Urban	16.4%	16.0%	6.0%	19.9%	29.2%	11.6%	3.9%	14.6%	59.6%
Total Rural	20.0%	19.9%	-3.2%	26.0%	37.5%	16.6%	5.8%	19.1%	72.9%
Coastal Plains	21.1%	21.9%	-2.1%	27.4%	40.1%	17.4%	6.2%	20.3%	75.3%
Delta	23.9%	23.1%	-10.5%	29.6%	47.3%	20.5%	8.4%	24.4%	82.4%
Highlands	18.1%	18.1%	0.4%	24.1%	33.0%	14.9%	4.9%	16.7%	68.6%

APPENDIX TABLE 6. HEALTH INDICATORS

COUNTY NAME	INFANT MORTALITY RATE, 2008-2018	PERCENT OF ADULT POPULATION OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE 2018	CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, 2019					COUNTY HEALTH SCORES, 2020	
			UNDERWEIGHT	HEALTHY WEIGHT	OVERWEIGHT	OBESE	OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE	HEALTH OUTCOMES SCORES	HEALTH FACTORS SCORES
Arkansas	6.3	76.2%	1.7%	53.2%	17.4%	27.7%	45.1%	0.28	-0.03
Ashley	6.17	72.4%	1.7%	54.8%	17.4%	26.2%	43.5%	0.20	0.28
Baxter	7.83	62.4%	2.0%	58.8%	17.8%	21.4%	39.2%	-0.99	-0.79
Benton	6.28	69.8%	3.0%	61.8%	16.3%	19.0%	35.3%	-2.09	-0.99
Boone	6.2	75.3%	1.8%	61.5%	16.6%	20.1%	36.7%	-0.85	-0.60
Bradley	11.41	71.5%	1.1%	49.4%	18.0%	31.5%	49.5%	0.53	0.30
Calhoun	0	75.7%	0.0%	45.7%	21.9%	32.0%	53.9%	0.33	-0.23
Carroll	7.2	73.7%	1.8%	54.5%	18.2%	25.5%	43.8%	-0.38	-0.39
Chicot	6.11	73.0%	1.8%	52.2%	15.8%	30.3%	46.1%	1.26	0.80
Clark	6.74	68.2%	1.3%	57.1%	16.2%	25.4%	41.6%	-0.18	-0.41
Clay	3.72	65.4%	2.9%	53.4%	18.0%	25.8%	43.8%	0.03	0.27
Cleburne	6.59	68.9%	1.8%	62.9%	14.9%	20.5%	35.4%	-0.42	-0.41
Cleveland	5.19	73.1%	1.5%	49.5%	17.6%	31.3%	49.0%	-0.06	-0.33
Columbia	6.36	71.0%	1.9%	55.3%	18.6%	24.1%	42.7%	0.19	-0.01
Conway	8.01	69.3%	1.4%	56.4%	16.9%	25.3%	42.3%	-0.22	-0.06
Craighead	8.33	75.9%	2.4%	58.1%	16.8%	22.6%	39.5%	-0.54	-0.37
Crawford	7.17	71.4%	3.5%	59.6%	16.9%	20.0%	37.0%	-0.62	-0.30
Crittenden	10.35	75.2%	1.9%	54.7%	16.5%	27.0%	43.4%	1.20	0.38
Cross	8.95	73.3%	1.7%	53.8%	16.2%	28.3%	44.5%	0.65	0.02
Dallas	6.56	73.8%	1.8%	49.2%	18.1%	30.9%	49.0%	0.03	-0.08
Desha	7.47	72.7%	1.8%	50.5%	17.2%	30.4%	47.6%	1.84	0.78
Drew	9.57	68.1%	2.4%	55.2%	16.7%	25.7%	42.4%	0.38	0.10
Faulkner	7.21	68.5%	2.6%	60.2%	16.5%	20.8%	37.2%	-1.15	-0.51
Franklin	6.29	72.0%	2.5%	58.2%	16.8%	22.5%	39.3%	0.49	-0.23
Fulton	5.46	66.9%	1.0%	58.3%	17.8%	22.9%	40.8%	-0.12	-0.32
Garland	6.74	71.5%	2.9%	58.9%	16.6%	21.6%	38.2%	-0.01	-0.22
Grant	4.73	69.6%	2.2%	58.8%	18.8%	20.2%	39.0%	-0.91	-0.56
Greene	7.38	75.2%	1.9%	58.1%	17.0%	22.9%	40.0%	-0.31	-0.38
Hempstead	5.93	76.2%	2.2%	50.1%	19.7%	27.9%	47.6%	-0.03	0.20
Hot Spring	6.1	71.2%	1.5%	54.9%	19.1%	24.5%	43.6%	0.11	-0.09
Howard	7.22	79.7%	1.7%	54.0%	18.7%	25.6%	44.3%	0.06	0.05
Independence	7.86	78.6%	1.3%	54.8%	18.2%	25.7%	43.9%	-0.46	-0.43
Izard	10.7	73.0%	2.0%	61.3%	14.7%	22.0%	36.7%	-0.11	-0.08
Jackson	8.74	74.9%	1.5%	52.1%	20.5%	25.9%	46.4%	0.55	0.67
Jefferson	7.69	73.0%	1.9%	56.4%	16.0%	25.7%	41.7%	1.05	0.50
Johnson	6.42	73.3%	2.5%	55.9%	15.8%	25.8%	41.6%	-0.43	-0.04
Lafayette	9.64	71.6%	0.0%	48.8%	18.7%	30.6%	49.3%	0.18	0.49
Lawrence	9.48	80.9%	2.1%	56.6%	14.7%	26.6%	41.3%	0.02	-0.03
Lee	0	70.5%	3.2%	51.9%	16.8%	28.1%	44.9%	0.82	1.13
Lincoln	5.32	74.0%	1.4%	52.3%	18.1%	28.2%	46.3%	-0.29	0.23
Little River	3.1	74.9%	1.3%	60.4%	13.8%	24.5%	38.3%	-0.07	0.21
Logan	8.95	70.9%	2.2%	57.8%	17.3%	22.7%	40.0%	-0.01	-0.04

APPENDIX TABLE 6. HEALTH INDICATORS

COUNTY NAME	INFANT MORTALITY RATE, 2008-2018	PERCENT OF ADULT POPULATION OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE 2018	CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, 2019					COUNTY HEALTH SCORES, 2020	
			UNDERWEIGHT	HEALTHY WEIGHT	OVERWEIGHT	OBESE	OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE	HEALTH OUTCOMES SCORES	HEALTH FACTORS SCORES
Lonoke	7	70.0%	2.0%	60.3%	17.2%	20.5%	37.7%	-0.81	-0.36
Madison	7.83	71.4%	2.3%	64.0%	14.4%	19.3%	33.7%	0.21	-0.06
Marion	8.35	59.6%	1.9%	57.9%	16.9%	23.3%	40.2%	-0.18	-0.16
Miller	7.93	73.0%	2.1%	57.8%	16.7%	23.5%	40.1%	0.36	0.23
Mississippi	8.7	76.9%	2.5%	55.2%	15.9%	26.5%	42.3%	1.32	0.91
Monroe	5.48	70.3%	1.6%	53.3%	16.0%	29.1%	45.1%	2.27	0.60
Montgomery	7.29	68.0%	1.2%	58.1%	15.6%	25.1%	40.7%	-1.16	-0.04
Nevada	6.8	71.4%	3.1%	57.4%	16.3%	23.2%	39.5%	0.33	0.02
Newton	10.79	74.5%	2.1%	60.4%	16.2%	21.3%	37.5%	-0.71	-0.17
Ouachita	9.06	70.2%	1.3%	51.8%	17.4%	29.5%	46.9%	0.62	0.17
Perry	10.61	69.0%	1.6%	58.6%	17.1%	22.7%	39.8%	-0.68	-0.32
Phillips	9.31	71.2%	1.3%	50.2%	16.9%	31.7%	48.5%	2.13	1.23
Pike	6.26	72.3%	2.0%	59.3%	17.5%	21.2%	38.7%	-0.99	-0.04
Poinsett	10.29	76.8%	1.3%	50.9%	19.3%	28.5%	47.8%	0.85	0.49
Polk	3.05	74.8%	1.7%	59.5%	16.8%	22.0%	38.8%	-0.35	-0.12
Pope	5.21	72.8%	2.2%	57.1%	18.5%	22.2%	40.7%	-0.75	-0.23
Prairie	7.13	73.8%	0.0%	52.1%	20.0%	27.3%	47.2%	-0.44	-0.09
Pulaski	8.07	70.5%	2.3%	59.0%	16.7%	22.1%	38.8%	-0.73	-0.42
Randolph	8.3	77.1%	0.0%	57.8%	18.3%	23.4%	41.7%	0.27	-0.10
St. Francis	10.06	69.7%	2.7%	61.6%	16.8%	19.0%	35.8%	0.90	0.91
Saline	7.16	70.1%	2.0%	63.4%	16.8%	17.9%	34.6%	-1.56	-0.89
Scott	4.94	67.1%	2.2%	54.5%	16.8%	26.5%	43.3%	0.54	0.09
Searcy	8.14	70.9%	2.2%	56.9%	17.4%	23.6%	41.0%	-0.36	-0.20
Sebastian	6.35	80.5%	2.1%	50.0%	19.0%	28.9%	47.9%	-0.56	-0.20
Sevier	8.24	82.6%	3.1%	51.4%	18.6%	27.0%	45.6%	-0.44	0.11
Sharp	6.61	71.2%	2.5%	54.4%	16.4%	26.7%	43.1%	0.75	0.05
Stone	13.76	70.5%	2.3%	65.8%	16.6%	15.2%	31.9%	0.03	-0.05
Union	8.93	72.0%	2.1%	55.3%	18.1%	24.5%	42.6%	0.43	0.08
Van Buren	5.07	68.0%	2.6%	59.5%	15.0%	22.9%	37.9%	-0.39	-0.08
Washington	6.84	69.1%	2.2%	58.1%	17.9%	21.9%	39.7%	-1.43	-0.70
White	9.37	70.0%	2.0%	56.8%	17.5%	23.7%	41.2%	-0.63	-0.13
Woodruff	6.75	72.8%	2.4%	54.8%	17.8%	25.0%	42.8%	0.46	0.43
Yell	8.72	72.2%	1.7%	52.4%	17.6%	28.4%	46.0%	0.01	0.42
SUMMARY									
State	7.50	71.5%	2.0%	58.0%	17.0%	23.0%	40.0%		
Total Urban	7.34	62.0%	2.4%	58.3%	16.9%	22.4%	39.3%		
Total Rural	7.74	84.8%	1.9%	55.6%	17.3%	25.3%	42.6%		
Coastal Plains	8.18	72.1%	1.9%	52.8%	17.8%	27.6%	45.4%		
Delta	8.32	96.9%	2.0%	53.5%	17.5%	27.2%	44.6%		
Highlands	7.35	83.6%	2.0%	57.5%	17.0%	23.6%	40.6%		

APPENDIX TABLE 7. EDUCATION

COUNTY NAME	PRE K ENROLLMENT		K 12 PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT		PERCENT PERSONS AGED 25+ IN 2018 WITH		
	2018	PERCENT 3-5 YEAR OLDS	2019-2020	CHANGE, 2009-10 TO 2019-20	H.S. DIPLOMA OR HIGHER	ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	BACHELOR'S DEGREE
Arkansas	341	39.3%	2,735	-16.1%	83.0%	7.0%	15.5%
Ashley	366	53.9%	3,355	-13.2%	82.3%	6.3%	13.2%
Baxter	331	52.6%	5,131	0.9%	88.1%	9.1%	18.3%
Benton	2,708	39.0%	48,196	31.4%	88.1%	5.8%	32.5%
Boone	332	44.1%	5,889	-5.0%	87.0%	8.4%	16.0%
Bradley	124	59.3%	1,992	1.1%	81.9%	4.8%	15.3%
Calhoun	108	67.5%	538	-11.2%	82.6%	8.4%	12.0%
Carroll	279	29.2%	3,867	2.9%	85.9%	5.1%	20.5%
Chicot	236	74.2%	1,292	-20.9%	80.6%	5.2%	14.7%
Clark	224	60.5%	2,425	-10.5%	89.2%	8.3%	27.7%
Clay	236	72.6%	2,227	-16.2%	80.6%	5.7%	11.6%
Cleburne	154	22.2%	3,156	-4.0%	84.7%	7.3%	14.9%
Cleveland	88	48.5%	1,336	-7.9%	88.6%	6.5%	16.1%
Columbia	225	60.2%	3,682	5.1%	85.0%	5.2%	20.6%
Conway	204	39.0%	3,176	-1.1%	85.9%	7.6%	15.9%
Craighead	1,613	43.9%	19,362	21.3%	89.0%	7.2%	26.3%
Crawford	875	34.4%	10,739	-5.0%	85.1%	8.2%	15.3%
Crittenden	747	51.3%	9,617	-11.9%	82.4%	6.9%	18.0%
Cross	320	73.0%	3,215	-6.8%	82.7%	6.4%	15.4%
Dallas	63	97.8%	754	-23.6%	83.7%	6.1%	13.7%
Desha	162	73.5%	2,293	-14.5%	78.7%	3.3%	12.4%
Drew	99	73.5%	2,847	-6.4%	85.2%	8.1%	20.7%
Faulkner	1,537	44.5%	18,617	8.8%	91.3%	7.9%	30.1%
Franklin	121	30.8%	3,093	-4.3%	82.6%	7.6%	11.8%
Fulton	137	73.9%	1,662	7.0%	84.6%	7.2%	11.9%
Garland	1,020	57.5%	14,868	5.6%	88.4%	8.3%	20.2%
Grant	170	41.2%	4,733	1.6%	91.5%	7.5%	18.3%
Greene	626	58.8%	7,446	7.5%	87.3%	5.3%	15.9%
Hempstead	203	32.4%	3,368	-7.6%	80.9%	8.6%	15.1%
Hot Spring	600	34.3%	5,211	-1.2%	85.4%	7.6%	14.7%
Howard	202	47.9%	2,878	-1.3%	82.8%	8.6%	14.7%
Independence	578	60.9%	6,345	10.8%	85.7%	8.0%	18.9%
Izard	126	41.5%	1,736	-5.5%	85.2%	10.6%	13.8%
Jackson	334	58.8%	1,984	-10.9%	79.0%	5.6%	10.2%
Jefferson	1,069	46.2%	9,667	-23.1%	86.0%	6.2%	17.8%
Johnson	99	22.4%	4,492	5.6%	79.3%	4.7%	15.8%
Lafayette	112	38.8%	521	-57.0%	81.7%	6.4%	16.5%
Lawrence	199	62.9%	2,912	-4.8%	85.6%	7.3%	15.1%
Lee	53	91.8%	617	-44.7%	72.9%	4.4%	8.9%
Lincoln	98	53.0%	1,454	-13.8%	81.3%	5.4%	8.9%
Little River	124	59.5%	1,902	-9.6%	88.1%	6.5%	11.4%
Logan	256	38.4%	3,139	-9.8%	85.1%	6.6%	12.1%

APPENDIX TABLE 7. EDUCATION

COUNTY NAME	PRE K ENROLLMENT		K 12 PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT		PERCENT PERSONS AGED 25+ IN 2018 WITH		
	2018	PERCENT 3-5 YEAR OLDS	2019-2020	CHANGE, 2009-10 TO 2019-20	H.S. DIPLOMA OR HIGHER	ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	BACHELOR'S DEGREE
Lonoke	822	45.8%	13,459	1.6%	88.7%	10.1%	20.2%
Madison	166	43.8%	2,237	-3.5%	79.7%	5.0%	12.5%
Marion	79	43.7%	1,713	1.6%	86.8%	7.5%	17.2%
Miller	473	51.7%	6,132	-2.3%	85.9%	5.6%	16.5%
Mississippi	702	57.6%	6,716	-23.2%	80.7%	6.9%	12.8%
Monroe	144	52.0%	881	-28.7%	77.1%	4.8%	10.5%
Montgomery	102	54.8%	1,003	-7.3%	78.1%	7.3%	10.7%
Nevada	141	42.2%	1,310	-5.7%	86.8%	8.0%	15.4%
Newton	105	76.6%	1,256	-0.9%	82.6%	4.9%	16.2%
Ouachita	377	55.7%	3,709	-15.9%	85.4%	7.4%	15.9%
Perry	93	19.5%	1,543	-8.7%	83.5%	7.3%	11.9%
Phillips	473	68.3%	3,535	-14.6%	78.5%	8.0%	14.1%
Pike	146	43.1%	2,075	-10.0%	84.8%	7.7%	14.7%
Poinsett	115	47.0%	3,724	-15.2%	80.6%	5.0%	10.0%
Polk	303	52.1%	3,425	-8.9%	84.7%	9.9%	13.3%
Pope	755	51.4%	9,805	1.2%	84.9%	5.3%	22.0%
Prairie	83	64.7%	1,119	-10.7%	82.2%	6.6%	15.1%
Pulaski	6,092	59.7%	58,451	7.3%	90.5%	6.8%	34.1%
Randolph	157	64.4%	2,569	11.6%	82.7%	9.5%	14.0%
St. Francis	397	46.0%	2,994	-30.7%	80.7%	7.1%	10.7%
Saline	1,530	48.4%	17,723	20.3%	90.3%	8.5%	26.0%
Scott	123	40.8%	1,404	-15.0%	78.9%	6.8%	9.1%
Searcy	37	29.8%	1,404	-13.0%	84.5%	8.4%	12.5%
Sebastian	1,422	41.6%	20,420	1.4%	83.2%	7.7%	19.7%
Sevier	269	40.1%	3,205	-4.1%	74.3%	6.4%	11.5%
Sharp	108	44.2%	2,785	-14.1%	83.6%	7.5%	11.3%
Stone	87	30.3%	1,573	-6.9%	79.6%	9.2%	12.8%
Union	727	59.4%	7,025	-8.0%	84.7%	6.6%	20.8%
Van Buren	142	26.4%	2,117	-9.1%	85.8%	6.3%	14.1%
Washington	3,403	40.7%	42,256	19.4%	84.9%	5.4%	32.8%
White	639	54.3%	12,413	-1.0%	85.4%	7.2%	21.4%
Woodruff	32	54.5%	930	-18.4%	79.9%	6.5%	12.0%
Yell	325	57.2%	4,052	-4.9%	80.0%	4.1%	13.5%
SUMMARY							
State	38,068	49.2%	479,432	2.8%	86.2%	7.0%	22.6%
Total Urban	23,311	47.5%	22,270	10.1%	88.0%	7.0%	27.7%
Total Rural	14,757	51.7%	3,063	-6.8%	83.8%	6.9%	15.7%
Coastal Plains	2,694	54.2%	2,632	-9.3%	84.4%	6.9%	17.0%
Delta	4,352	59.8%	2,698	-15.1%	81.3%	6.0%	12.7%
Highlands	7,711	47.2%	3,388	-2.4%	84.6%	7.2%	16.5%

APPENDIX TABLE 8. PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS AND RETAIL SALES

COUNTY NAME	ASSESSMENTS			RETAIL SALES			COUNTY TAX RATES		CHANGE 2007 TO 2017	
	TOTAL ASSESSMENTS, 2017 (\$M)	PER CAPITA ASSESSMENTS, 2017	CHANGE IN ASSESSMENTS, 2007-2017	RETAIL SALES, 2017 (\$M)	PER CAPITA RETAIL SALES, 2017	CHANGE IN RETAIL SALES, 2007-2017	SALES TAX RATE, 2020	MILLAGE, 2020	PROPERTY TAX REVENUE	SALES TAX REVENUE
Arkansas	\$369	\$20,641	15.1%	\$302	\$16,888	-10.9%	0.01	9.15	21.1%	6.1%
Ashley	\$376	\$18,489	4.4%	\$183	\$9,007	-9.6%	0.015	7.21	4.2%	-30.0%
Baxter	\$747	\$18,093	8.2%	\$571	\$13,822	-1.0%	0.0125	8.50	22.9%	-11.3%
Benton	\$5,323	\$19,966	13.5%	\$3,717	\$13,949	31.2%	0.01	8.29	39.3%	-9.8%
Boone	\$534	\$14,257	3.7%	\$622	\$16,602	12.5%	0.0125	5.60	-1.5%	6.3%
Bradley	\$127	\$11,706	0.4%	\$71	\$6,579	-15.8%	0.02	9.40	27.8%	20.0%
Calhoun	\$111	\$21,437	20.8%	\$13	\$2,409	-40.5%	0.025	8.30	8.0%	83.3%
Carroll	\$482	\$17,306	12.6%	\$250	\$8,948	-20.5%	0.005	12.39	24.0%	4.2%
Chicot	\$150	\$14,088	-0.9%	\$58	\$5,483	-26.6%	0.02	10.00	-5.6%	-13.4%
Clark	\$294	\$13,246	0.8%	\$377	\$16,994	28.4%	0.015	7.10	32.5%	54.4%
Clay	\$217	\$14,581	7.1%	\$128	\$8,567	-18.7%	0.015	10.00	0.4%	40.6%
Cleburne	\$676	\$26,995	41.1%	\$413	\$16,471	23.3%	0.01625	5.10	59.0%	-13.3%
Cleveland	\$97	\$11,874	7.1%	\$16	\$1,980	11.4%	0.0325	9.00	23.0%	223.3%
Columbia	\$396	\$16,697	9.3%	\$199	\$8,400	-15.1%	0.015	9.00	26.5%	-6.8%
Conway	\$447	\$21,488	61.4%	\$242	\$11,592	-24.6%	0.0175	9.80	113.6%	57.8%
Craighead	\$1,794	\$16,735	27.6%	\$1,829	\$17,087	7.1%	0.01	7.62	47.0%	-24.1%
Crawford	\$742	\$11,791	4.4%	\$501	\$7,958	-6.6%	0.0175	7.30	40.1%	149.8%
Crittenden	\$737	\$15,121	6.0%	\$665	\$13,652	-25.2%	0.0275	5.36	7.3%	62.1%
Cross	\$253	\$15,051	8.9%	\$213	\$12,667	-3.0%	0.03	9.50	14.6%	256.0%
Dallas	\$90	\$12,287	-3.3%	\$77	\$10,506	-18.2%	0.02	8.30	-5.1%	-8.6%
Desha	\$218	\$18,559	5.2%	\$124	\$10,545	-12.4%	0.015	8.40	18.0%	4.1%
Drew	\$246	\$13,393	15.2%	\$254	\$13,837	7.8%	0.0225	5.70	12.5%	29.7%
Faulkner	\$1,899	\$15,374	31.9%	\$1,880	\$15,236	29.2%	0.005	8.30	68.1%	12.0%
Franklin	\$273	\$15,321	-0.5%	\$203	\$11,397	22.4%	0.02	9.40	-2.6%	22.8%
Fulton	\$143	\$11,811	14.2%	\$55	\$4,574	10.2%	0.03	6.00	10.7%	20.8%
Garland	\$1,898	\$19,307	13.6%	\$1,684	\$17,109	-1.5%	0.015	3.60	53.0%	102.4%
Grant	\$234	\$12,943	17.9%	\$132	\$7,271	3.2%	0.0125	9.00	18.1%	43.7%
Greene	\$597	\$13,277	19.9%	\$580	\$12,885	31.1%	0.01375	5.60	21.4%	45.4%
Hempstead	\$417	\$19,047	53.8%	\$217	\$9,926	-10.4%	0.03	7.20	157.4%	63.1%
Hot Spring	\$428	\$12,743	14.1%	\$248	\$7,387	1.0%	0.015	9.00	21.9%	61.2%
Howard	\$201	\$15,021	-1.1%	\$157	\$11,740	-17.6%	0.0275	6.60	7.1%	64.6%
Independence	\$575	\$15,384	7.6%	\$492	\$13,139	7.9%	0.015	8.60	5.3%	117.8%
Izard	\$177	\$12,974	18.5%	\$110	\$8,066	-11.1%	0.005	7.70	-12.6%	-41.4%
Jackson	\$232	\$13,626	7.2%	\$230	\$13,466	1.5%	0.0225	8.00	29.6%	454.1%
Jefferson	\$934	\$13,485	3.2%	\$777	\$11,214	-24.4%	0.0125	9.03	3.5%	2.2%
Johnson	\$300	\$11,353	3.3%	\$266	\$10,038	14.0%	0.01	10.30	45.4%	5.2%
Lafayette	\$96	\$14,189	-2.3%	\$27	\$3,947	-30.8%	0.0225	9.00	8.7%	34.0%
Lawrence	\$208	\$12,547	11.0%	\$206	\$12,444	6.4%	0.025	9.00	14.4%	120.5%
Lee	\$139	\$15,283	44.0%	\$40	\$4,387	-5.4%	0.01	8.40	30.1%	-2.1%
Lincoln	\$129	\$9,588	6.6%	\$67	\$4,956	-2.1%	0.02	9.00	2.5%	7.0%
Little River	\$293	\$23,666	-7.0%	\$130	\$10,452	23.9%	0.02875	6.20	9.8%	56.5%
Logan	\$285	\$13,108	-3.7%	\$165	\$7,575	-21.9%	0.02	7.90	-6.5%	164.6%

APPENDIX TABLE 8. PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS AND RETAIL SALES

COUNTY NAME	ASSESSMENTS			RETAIL SALES			COUNTY TAX RATES		CHANGE 2007 TO 2017	
	TOTAL ASSESSMENTS, 2017 (\$M)	PER CAPITA ASSESSMENTS, 2017	CHANGE IN ASSESSMENTS, 2007-2017	RETAIL SALES, 2017 (\$M)	PER CAPITA RETAIL SALES, 2017	CHANGE IN RETAIL SALES, 2007-2017	SALES TAX RATE, 2020	MILLAGE, 2020	PROPERTY TAX REVENUE	SALES TAX REVENUE
Lonoke	\$997	\$13,700	20.4%	\$557	\$7,645	-5.5%	0.01	6.40	45.8%	9.7%
Madison	\$198	\$12,157	17.7%	\$96	\$5,865	-29.5%	0.02	9.00	34.7%	10.5%
Marion	\$232	\$14,132	13.2%	\$113	\$6,850	8.3%	0.0175	8.90	9.4%	95.6%
Miller	\$547	\$12,517	21.2%	\$379	\$8,631	-21.6%	0.0125	6.30	-4.0%	-7.1%
Mississippi	\$679	\$16,120	18.5%	\$419	\$9,971	-16.1%	0.025	9.70	137.5%	26.8%
Monroe	\$123	\$17,523	9.2%	\$63	\$8,935	-35.4%	0	8.40	4.7%	
Montgomery	\$126	\$14,225	14.8%	\$29	\$3,239	-24.8%	0.03	8.30	5.9%	-3.0%
Nevada	\$100	\$12,031	-5.8%	\$102	\$12,218	-37.2%	0.02	8.30	-23.5%	220.6%
Newton	\$95	\$12,166	12.6%	\$21	\$2,630	31.1%	0.01	9.00	124.5%	74.8%
Ouachita	\$262	\$10,981	8.0%	\$242	\$10,168	10.1%	0.025	8.36	9.6%	476.7%
Perry	\$107	\$10,339	13.2%	\$34	\$3,259	-13.3%	0.0225	8.60	45.5%	42.1%
Phillips	\$240	\$12,883	9.5%	\$148	\$7,980	-45.5%	0.02	10.70	8.9%	-30.4%
Pike	\$140	\$13,084	5.2%	\$80	\$7,445	27.6%	0.02	3.30	21.2%	10.3%
Poinsett	\$297	\$12,345	10.4%	\$166	\$6,892	-27.4%	0.0175	5.81	0.8%	-3.2%
Polk	\$242	\$12,036	10.3%	\$194	\$9,610	-7.6%	0.02	6.90	33.3%	46.9%
Pope	\$1,228	\$19,297	15.5%	\$895	\$14,064	-17.8%	0.01	4.50	17.1%	-14.2%
Prairie	\$133	\$16,174	3.9%	\$51	\$6,220	9.6%	0.015	10.00	31.2%	278.2%
Pulaski	\$7,421	\$18,870	10.9%	\$7,998	\$20,320	9.5%	0.01	9.50	20.4%	-20.0%
Randolph	\$236	\$13,363	24.5%	\$189	\$10,739	16.4%	0.0125	6.00	81.4%	8.2%
St. Francis	\$267	\$10,289	3.6%	\$254	\$9,801	-39.4%	0.00375	7.20	-8.7%	42.0%
Saline	\$1,839	\$15,386	24.4%	\$1,277	\$10,670	-6.9%	0.02625	9.70	36.3%	-99.8%
Scott	\$105	\$10,152	-4.1%	\$45	\$4,315	-22.4%	0.015	2.80	-56.9%	79.8%
Searcy	\$90	\$11,387	10.2%	\$51	\$6,457	-26.7%	0.0125	11.00	3.9%	40.9%
Sebastian	\$2,101	\$16,439	8.6%	\$2,251	\$17,601	4.0%	0.03125	8.45	18.7%	152.8%
Sevier	\$176	\$10,300	14.9%	\$202	\$11,798	6.3%	0.0175	7.30	31.0%	31.1%
Sharp	\$206	\$12,038	7.0%	\$169	\$9,846	-8.4%	0.03	5.85	10.8%	7.1%
Stone	\$161	\$12,852	19.2%	\$126	\$10,098	-1.6%	0.015	7.30	70.4%	0.8%
Union	\$914	\$23,159	29.4%	\$560	\$14,208	-10.2%	0.02	7.80	1.1%	12.1%
Van Buren	\$405	\$24,483	63.0%	\$160	\$9,651	-11.5%	0.02	7.30	117.7%	-6.6%
Washington	\$3,754	\$16,131	8.1%	\$3,588	\$15,413	11.2%	0.015	6.37	6.2%	-0.4%
White	\$1,226	\$15,548	45.7%	\$1,052	\$13,325	10.5%	0.0175	4.10	72.0%	20.5%
Woodruff	\$149	\$22,707	54.8%	\$45	\$6,789	-41.6%	0.02	9.00	25.7%	3.7%
Yell	\$242	\$11,272	5.8%	\$126	\$5,846	-2.8%	0.01875	9.00	2.2%	141.1%
SUMMARY										
State	\$48,926	\$16,301	14.5%	\$40,174	\$13,385	2.8%			26.1%	26.9%
Total Urban	\$29,985	\$16,976	13.7%	\$27,103	\$15,344	7.1%			27.3%	18.9%
Total Rural	\$18,940	\$15,336	15.8%	\$13,071	\$10,584	-5.1%			24.5%	32.9%
Coastal Plains	\$3,433	\$17,237	15.1%	\$2,014	\$10,113	-7.8%			16.3%	42.4%
Delta	\$4,193	\$14,501	13.2%	\$2,889	\$9,991	-14.0%			25.5%	38.5%
Highlands	\$11,314	\$15,152	17.0%	\$8,168	\$10,939	-0.8%			26.8%	27.6%

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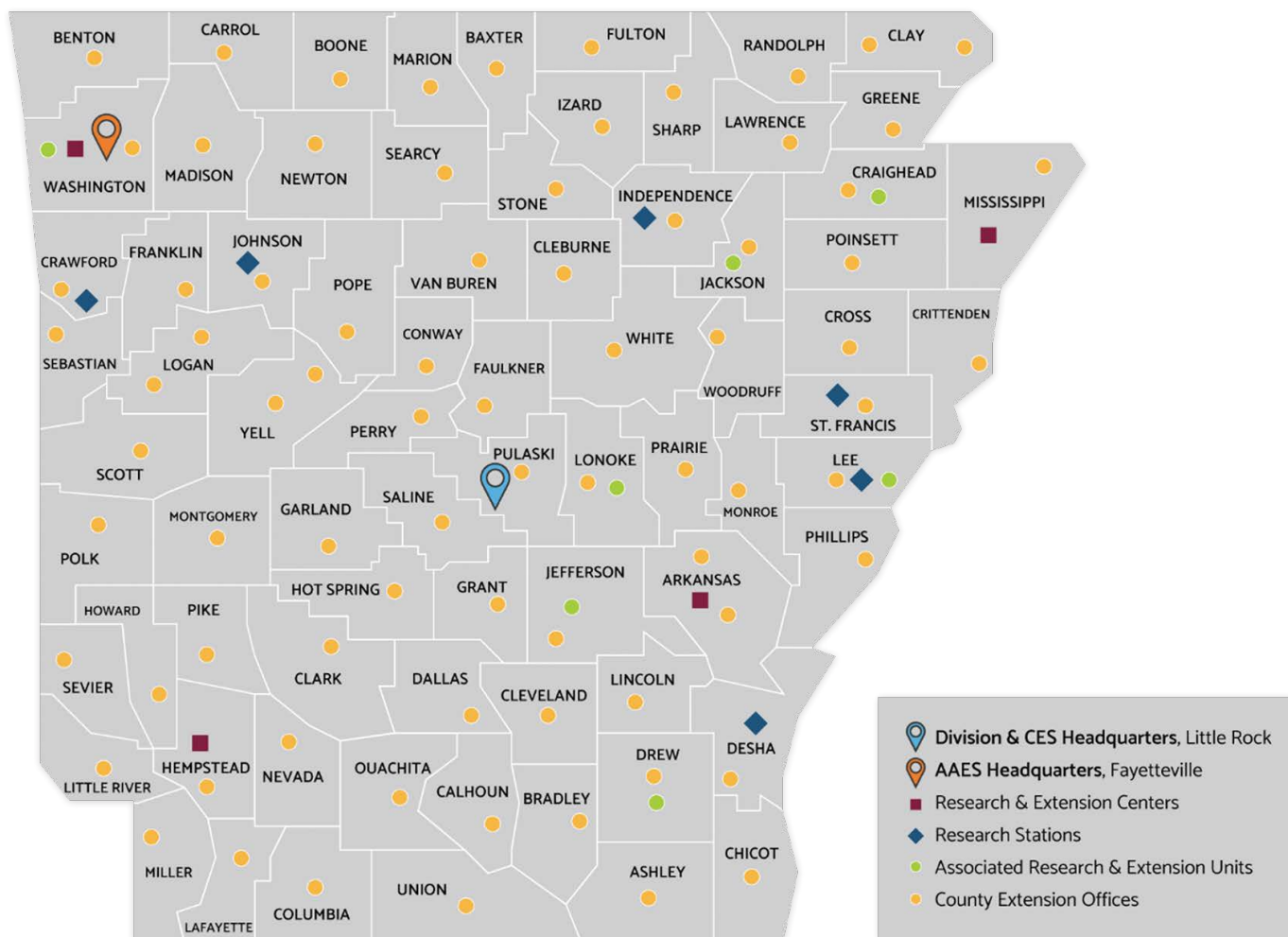
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