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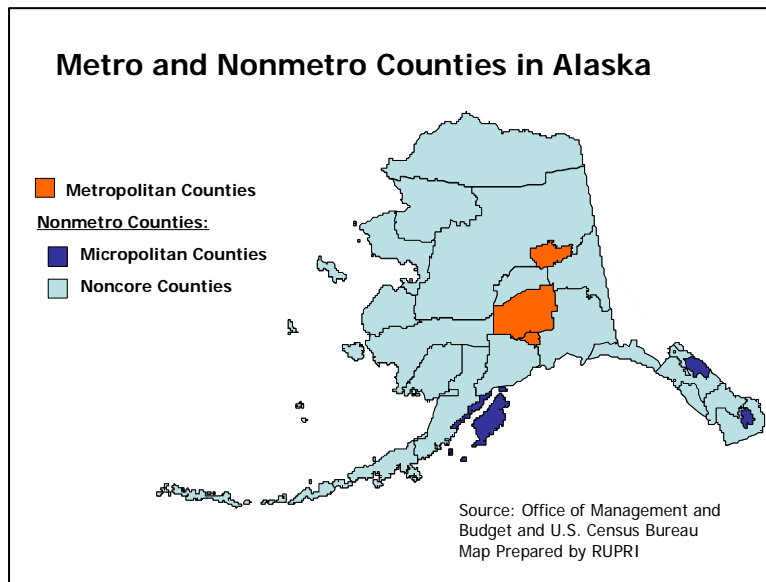
Demographic and Economic Profile

Alaska

Updated August 2006

Metro and Nonmetro Counties in Alaska

Based on the most recent listing of core based statistical areas by the Office of Management and Budget (December 2005), 3 counties in Alaska are part of metropolitan areas, and 3 counties are part of micropolitan areas. The micropolitan category defines counties that include an urban area with a population of 10,000 to 49,999 plus surrounding counties that are linked through commuting ties. These areas often represent important economic and trade centers in rural areas. The remaining 21 counties in Alaska are considered noncore counties. Using these classifications and the population estimates for 2005, 66.1 percent of Alaska residents live in metropolitan areas, 8.6 percent live in micropolitan areas, and 25.3 percent live in noncore areas.

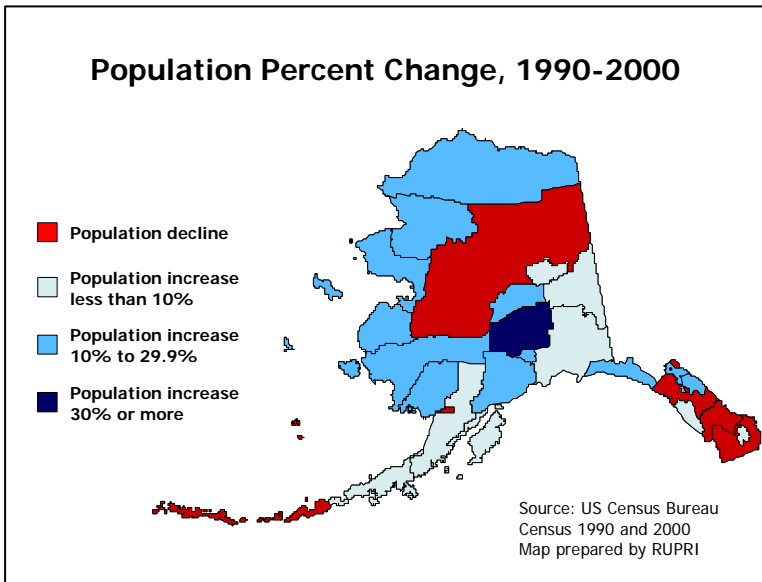


Population

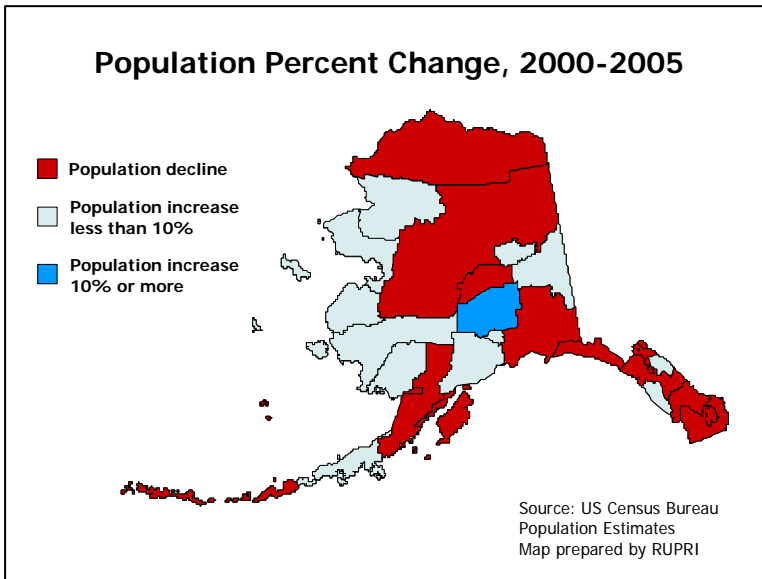
Alaska's population in July of 2005 was 663,661, up 5.9 percent from the 2000 Census. During the 1990s, the population in Alaska increased by 14.0 percent. Nationally, population increased 13.1 percent during the 1990s and 5.3 percent from April 2000 to July 2005. The population growth in Alaska's metropolitan areas outpaced the nonmetropolitan areas during both time periods.

Percent Change in Population		
Area:	1990-2000	2000-2005
U.S.	13.1%	5.3%
Alaska	14.0%	5.9%
Metropolitan	17.1%	9.0%
Nonmetropolitan	8.8%	0.3%
Micropolitan	8.9%	-2.4%
Noncore	8.8%	1.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



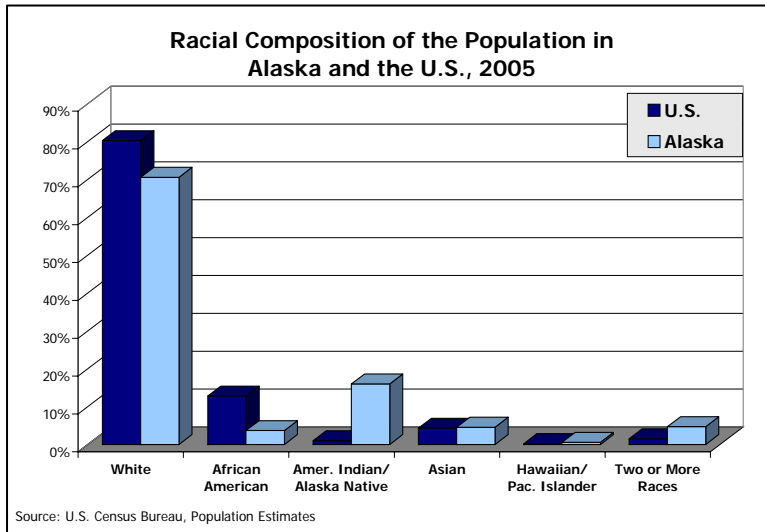
During the 1990s, six counties in Alaska lost population, all of them nonmetro. The fastest growth during this time was Matanuska-Susitna Borough, part of the Anchorage Metropolitan Area, with a population increase of 49.5 percent.



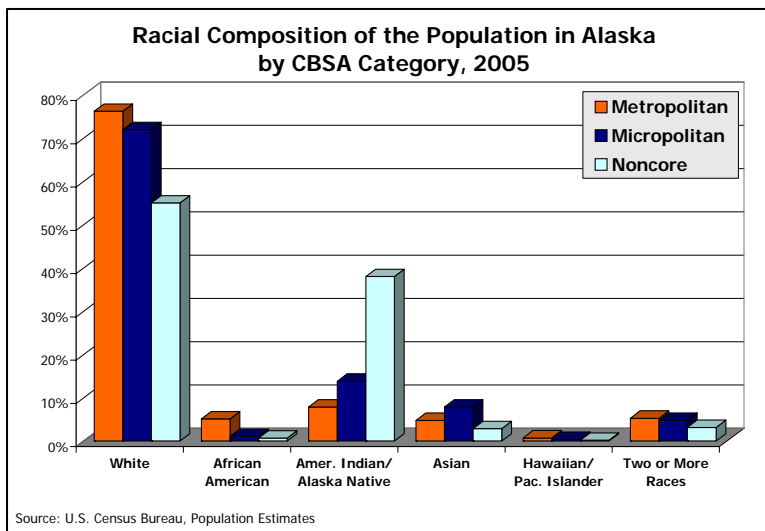
From 2000 to 2005, 14 counties in Alaska lost population, all of them nonmetro. The fastest growth during this time was again in Matanuska-Susitna Borough, with a population increase of 28.1 percent.

Race / Ethnicity

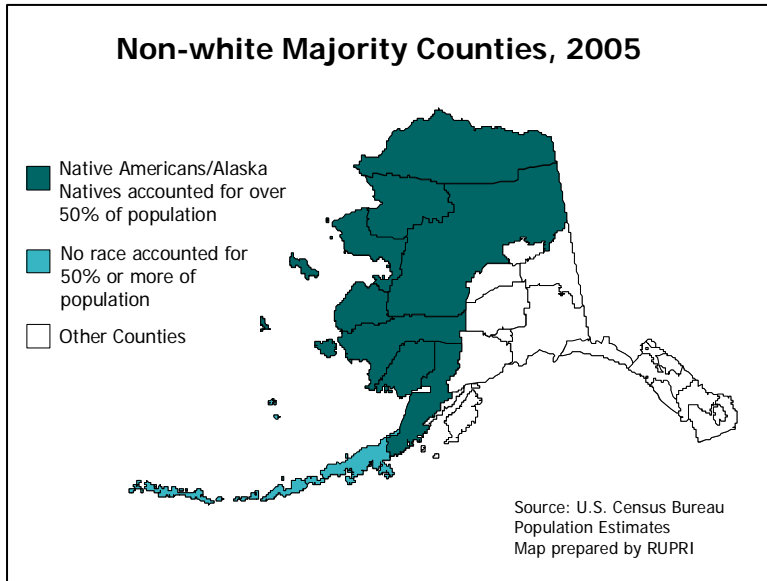
The population in Alaska is 70.5 percent white and 3.7 percent African American. Nationally, the population is 80.2 percent white and 12.8 percent African American (2005 Census Bureau population estimates). Native Americans and Alaska Natives make up 16.0 percent of the population in Alaska. People of Hispanic origin make up 5.1 percent of Alaska's population, compared to 14.4 percent of the total U.S. population.



Within Alaska, the metropolitan population is 76.2 percent white, 5.1 percent African American, and 7.9 percent Native American/Alaska Native. The micropolitan population is 72.0 percent white, 1.1 percent African American, and 13.8 percent Native American/Alaska Native. The noncore population is 55.0 percent white, 0.7 percent African American, and 38.0 percent Native American/Alaska Native.

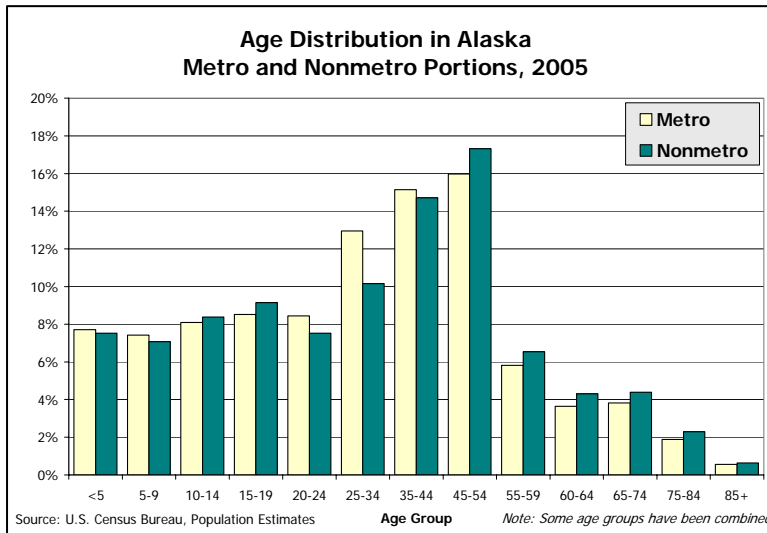


In ten Alaska counties, whites account for less than half of total population. In eight counties, Native Americans and Alaska Natives make up more than half of total population. In Aleutians East Borough and Aleutians West Census Area, no race accounts for a majority of total population; Whites, Asians, and Native Americans/Alaska Natives all make up significant portions of total population.

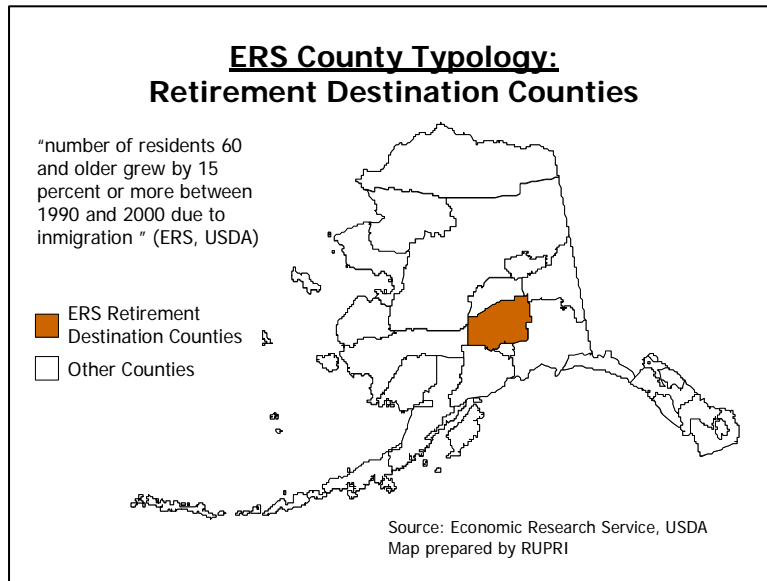


Age

The chart below shows the age distribution of the metro and nonmetro populations in Alaska. The percent of the population in the 20 to 44 age groups is greater in the metro areas, while the percent of the population age 55 to 84 is greater in the nonmetro areas.

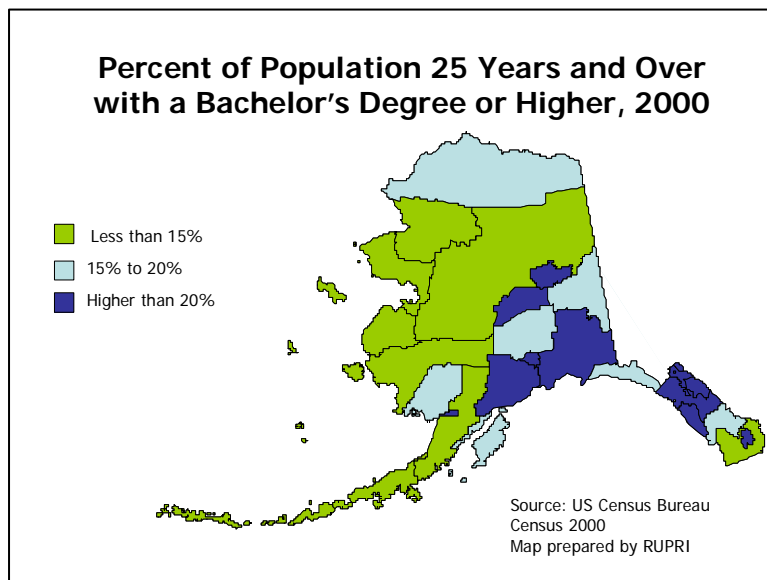


The Economic Research Service, USDA, classifies counties as retirement destination counties based on population change due to immigration. In Alaska, one county is classified as a retirement destination county (Matanuska-Susitna Borough).

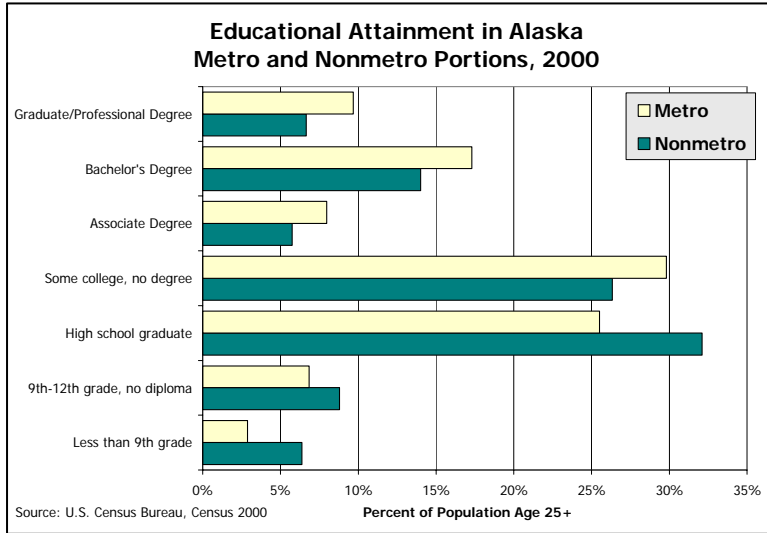


Educational Attainment

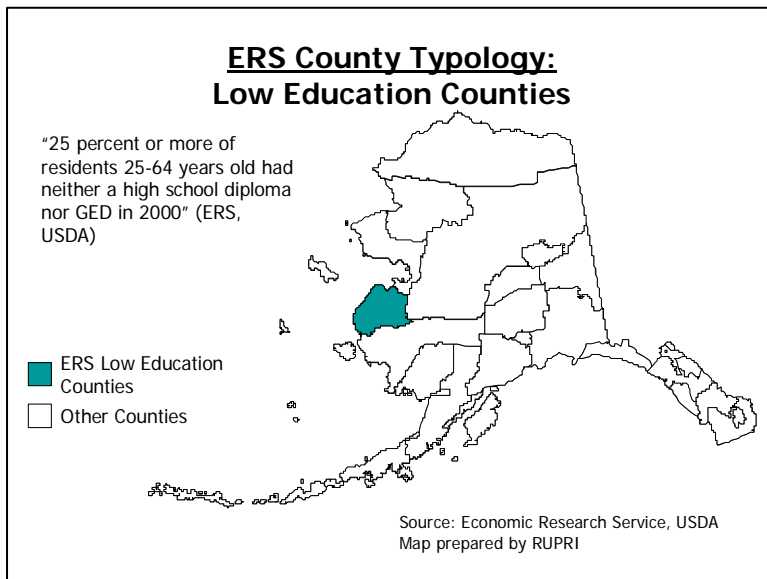
The percent of the population age 25 and over that has earned a Bachelor’s Degree or higher is 24.4 percent in the U.S. and 24.7 percent in Alaska. In metro areas of Alaska, this percentage is 27.0, compared to 20.7 in nonmetro areas.



The chart below compares the educational attainment of Alaska’s metro and nonmetro populations. The percent of the population with high educational attainment (B.S. or higher) is greater in the metro areas, while the percent of the population with low educational attainment (high school degree or lower) is greater in the nonmetro areas.

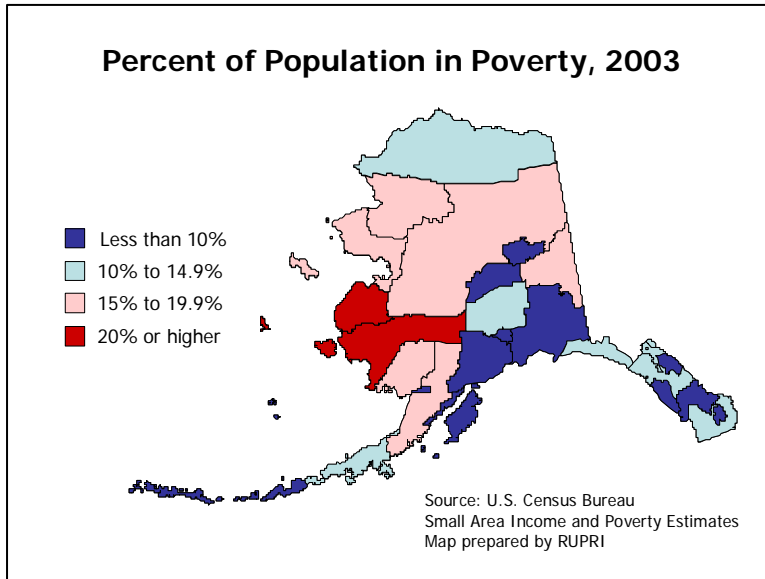


The Economic Research Service classifies counties as low education counties if “25 percent or more residents 25-64 years old had neither a high school diploma nor GED in 2000.” In Alaska, one county is classified as a low education county (Wade Hampton Census Area).

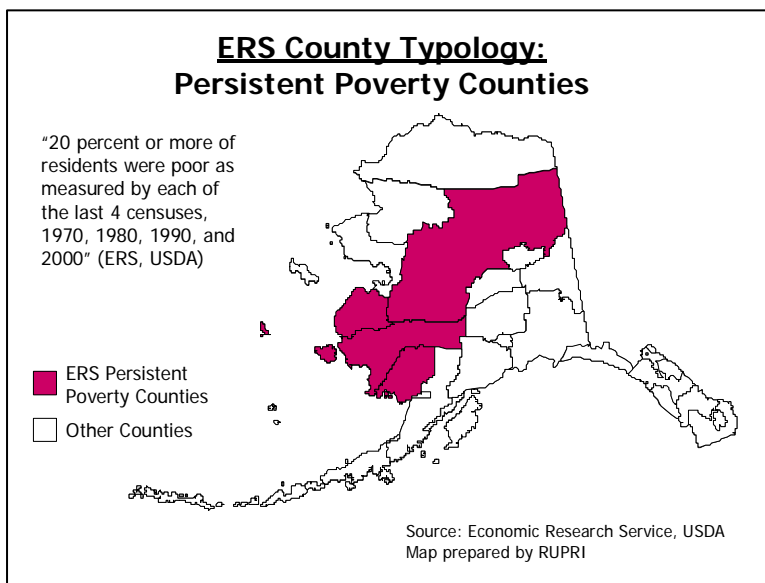


Poverty

The poverty rate in Alaska in 2003 was 9.9 percent, compared to 12.5 percent for the U.S. (Census Bureau estimates). Within Alaska, the 2003 poverty rate ranged from 6.6 percent in Denali Borough to 25.1 percent in Wade Hampton Census Area.

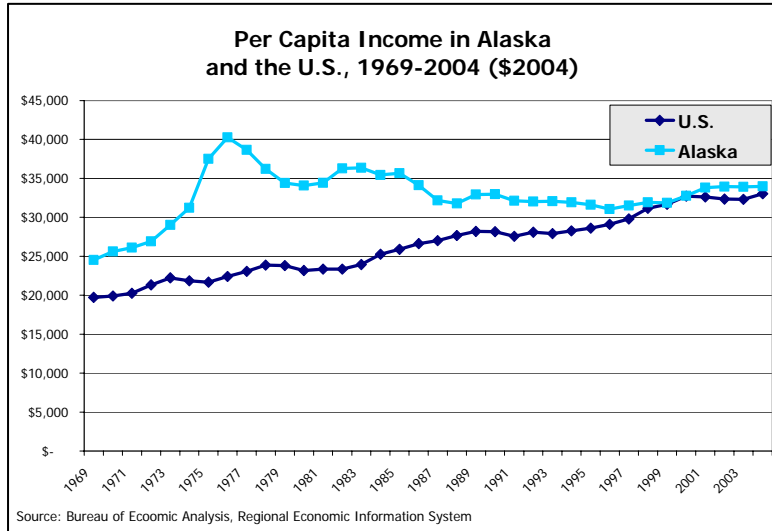


The Economic Research Service classifies counties as persistent poverty counties if they experienced poverty rates of 20 percent or higher in each decennial census from 1970 through 2000. There are 386 persistent poverty counties in the U.S., and 4 are located in Alaska.

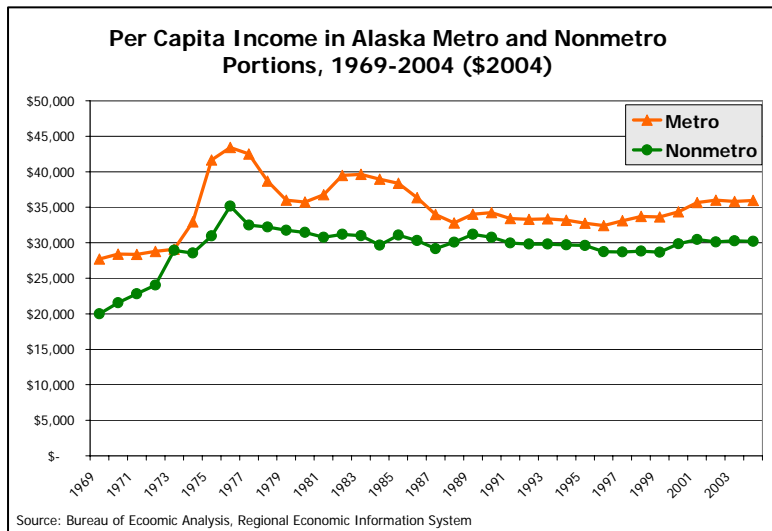


Per Capita Income

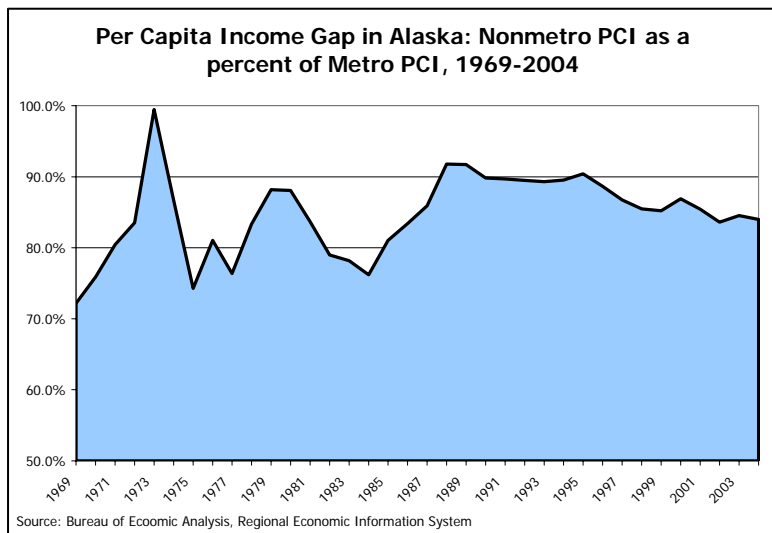
Per capita income in Alaska has exceeded national per capita income throughout the past several decades, with the gap narrowing in more recent years. In 2004, per capita income in Alaska was \$34,000, compared to \$33,050 for the U.S.



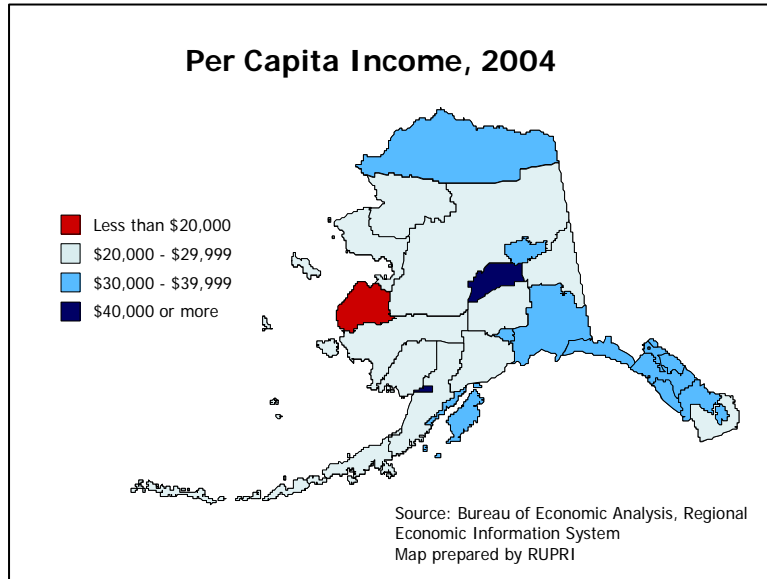
Nonmetro per capita income in Alaska has lagged behind metro per capita income over the past several decades. In 2004, metro per capita income in Alaska was \$35,966, compared to \$30,208 in nonmetro areas.



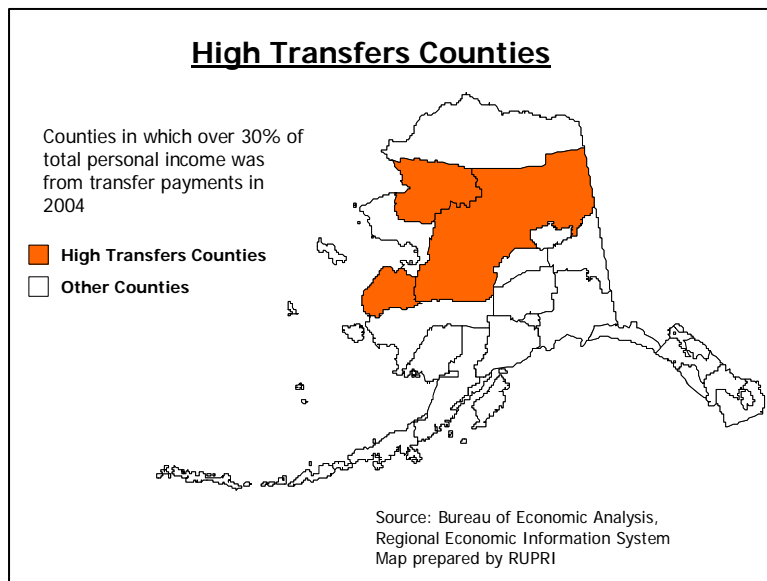
The per capita income gap is measured with nonmetro per capita income as a percent of metro per capita income. In Alaska, the gap was at its largest in 1969 and at its smallest in 1973. In 2004, nonmetro per capita income was 84.0 percent of metro per capita income.



Within Alaska, 2004 per capita income ranged from \$15,003 in Wade Hampton Census Area to \$43,720 in Bristol Bay Borough.

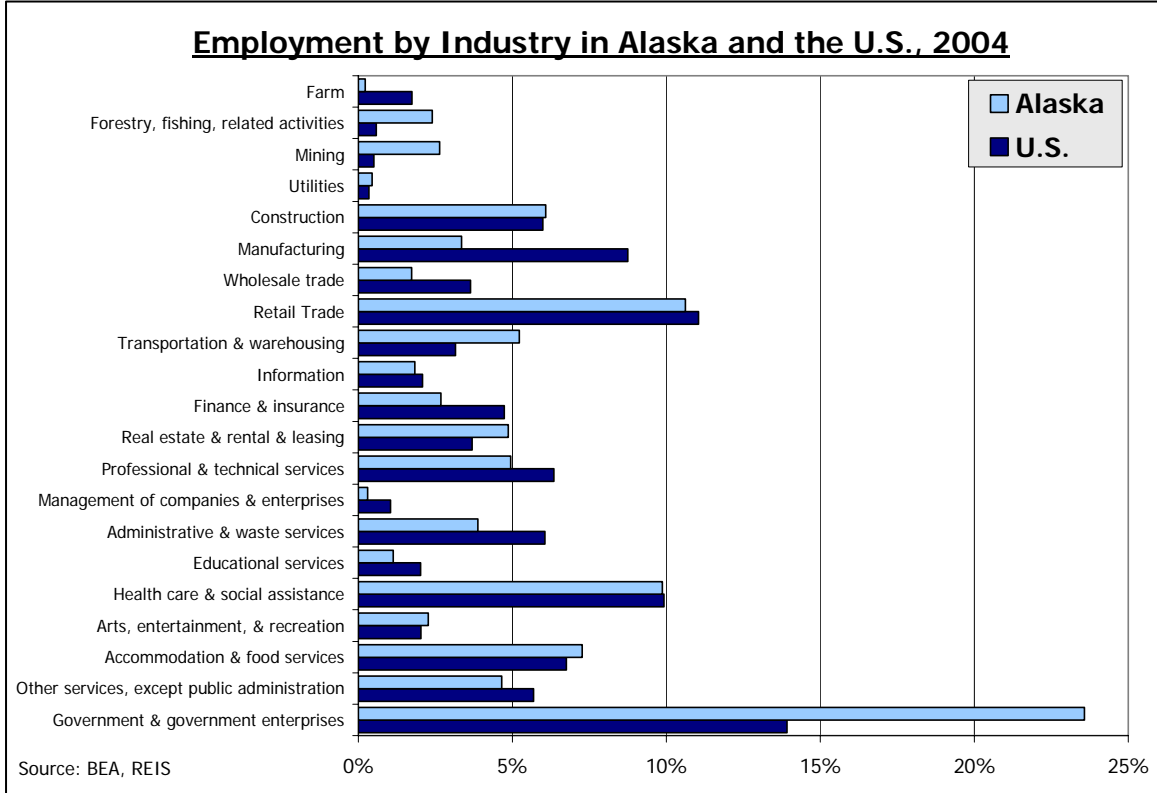


Transfer payments include retirement and disability payments, social security benefits, public assistance, and medical benefits. In Alaska, three counties' incomes rely significantly on transfer payments. In these counties (all nonmetro), transfer payments account for over 30 percent of total personal income in the county.

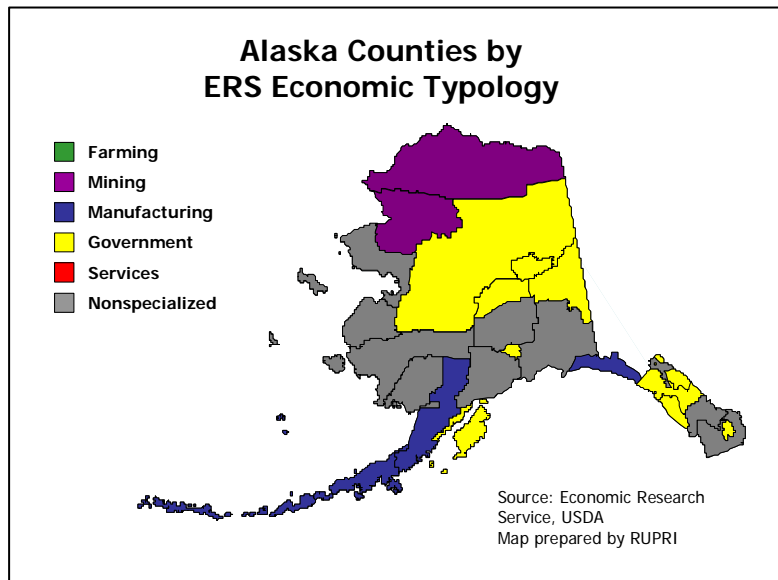


Employment Structure

In 2004, government and government enterprises accounted for the largest shares of employment in Alaska (23.6%) and the U.S. (13.9%). Retail trade was the second largest employment sector both in Alaska (10.6%) and the U.S. (11.0%).

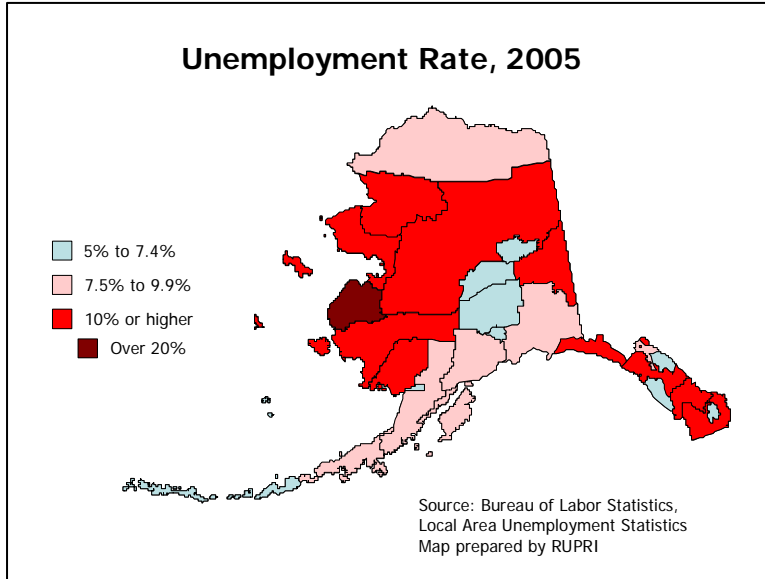


The ERS Economic Typology classifies counties into one of five industry categories of specialization or as nonspecialized. The map to the right shows the classification of Alaska counties by this typology, illustrating the importance of mining, government, and manufacturing.

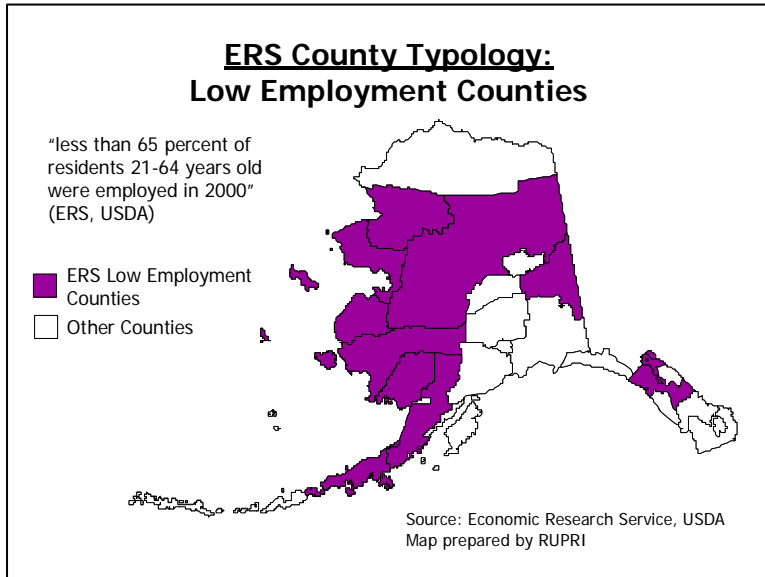


Unemployment

The unemployment rate in Alaska in 2005 was 6.8 percent, compared to 5.1 percent for the U.S. Within Alaska, the 2005 unemployment rate ranged from 5.3 percent in Juneau Borough to 20.8 percent in Wade Hampton Census Area.

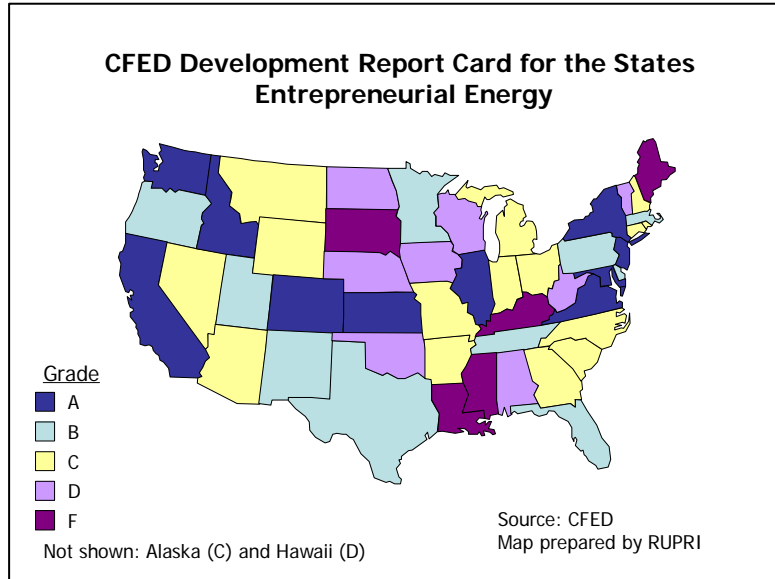


The Economic Research Service classifies counties as low employment counties if “less than 65 percent of residents 21-64 years old were employed in 2000.” In Alaska, 11 counties (all nonmetro) are classified as low employment counties.

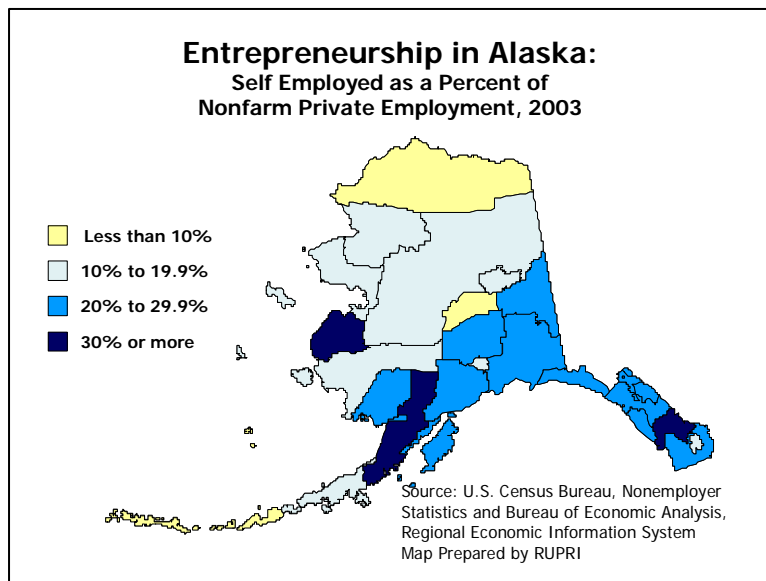


Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is an important component to economic development today. Unfortunately, data that allow us to measure entrepreneurial activity and trends is difficult to ascertain, particularly at the county level. The CFED *Development Report Card for the States* rates each state on its entrepreneurial energy, “evaluating the extent to which new firms are generated and whether they are contributing to employment growth.” While this is a state-level ranking, it provides useful insight as to how a state is performing. Alaska’s ranking is “C”.

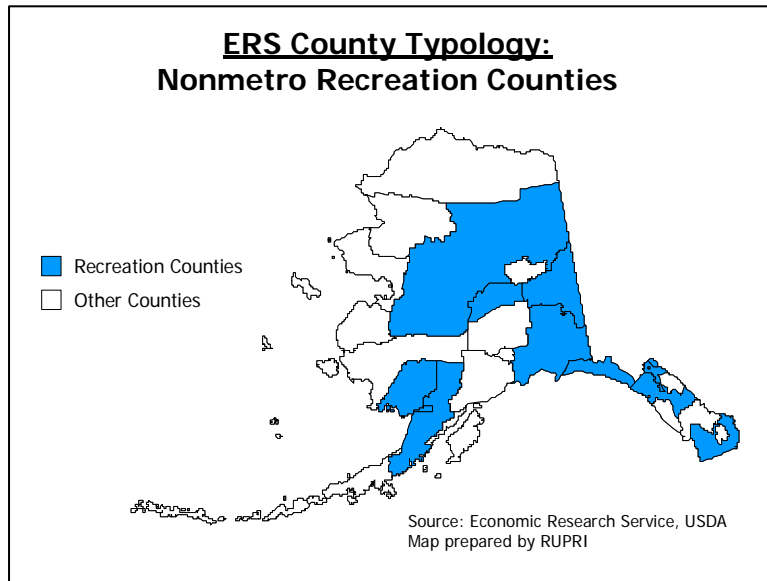


As mentioned, county level indicators of entrepreneurship are difficult to ascertain, but a good indicator is the proportion of workers that are self employed. The map below shows self employed workers as a percent of nonfarm private employment in the county.



Nonmetro Recreation Counties

The Economic Research Service's classification of nonmetro recreation counties captures the recreational opportunities and development in many rural parts of the nation. The classification is based on a number of factors, including employment and income derived from recreation-related activities, seasonal housing units within the county, and receipts from hotels and motels. Nationally, 334 counties are classified as nonmetro recreation counties, and eleven are located in Alaska.



Data Sources and References

Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System

<http://www.bea.gov/region/reis/>

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

<http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm>

CFED Development Report Card for the States

<http://drc.cfed.org/>

Economic Research Service, USDA, 2004 County Typology

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/Rurality/Typology/>

Office of Management and Budget, Statistical Area Definitions and Guidance on Their Uses

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/bulletins/fy05/b05-02.html>

U.S. Census Bureau

Census 2000

<http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html>

Population Estimates

<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>

Metropolitan and Micropolitan Area Classifications

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/metrodef.html>

Nonemployer Statistics

<http://www.census.gov/epcd/nonemployer/>

Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saibe/saibe.html>

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