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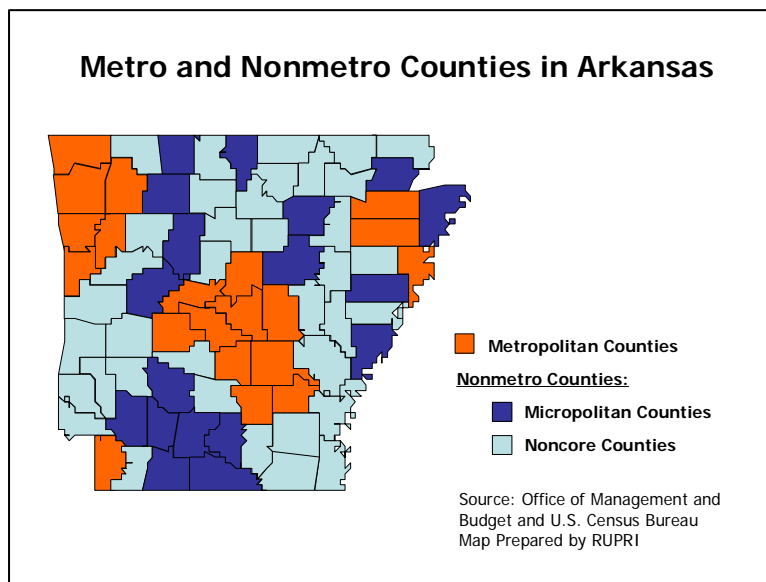
## Demographic and Economic Profile

# Arkansas

Updated July 2006

### Metro and Nonmetro Counties in Arkansas

Based on the most recent listing of core based statistical areas by the Office of Management and Budget (December 2005), 20 counties in Arkansas are part of metropolitan areas, and 18 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 37 counties in Arkansas are considered noncore counties. Using these classifications and the population estimates for 2005, 58.5 percent of Arkansas residents live in metropolitan areas, 20.3 percent live in micropolitan areas, and 21.2 percent live in noncore areas.

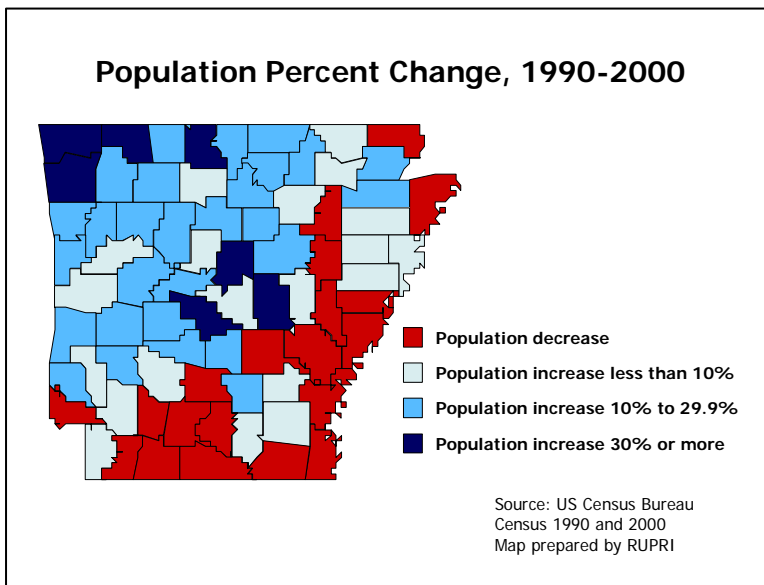


## Population

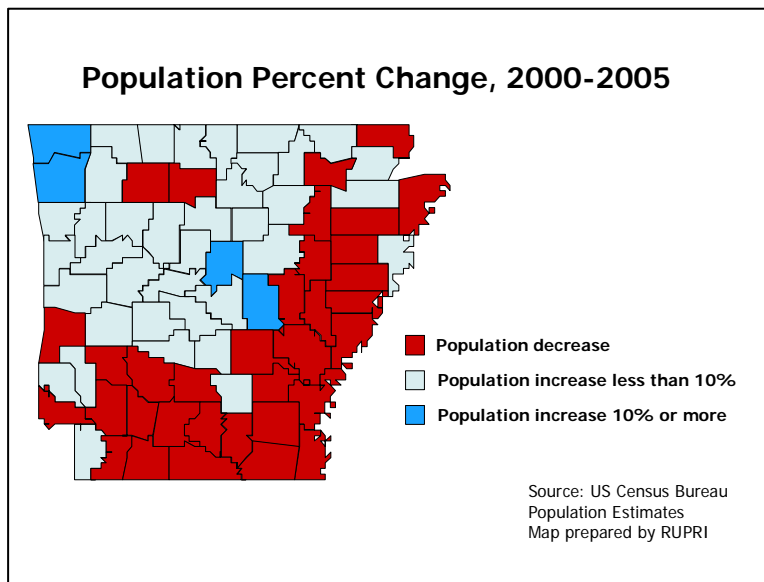
Arkansas's population in 2005 was 2,779,154, up 4.0 percent from the 2000 Census. During the 1990s, the population in Arkansas increased by 13.7 percent. Nationally, population increased 13.1 percent during the 1990s, and 5.3 percent from April 2000 to July 2005. The population growth in metro areas of Arkansas outpaced the nonmetro areas, and the nonmetro areas lost population during the 2000-2005 period.

Percent Change in Population		
Area:	1990-2000	2000-2005
<b>U.S.</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
Metropolitan	18.8%	7.2%
Nonmetropolitan	7.7%	-0.3%
Micropolitan	7.7%	-0.1%
Noncore	7.8%	-0.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

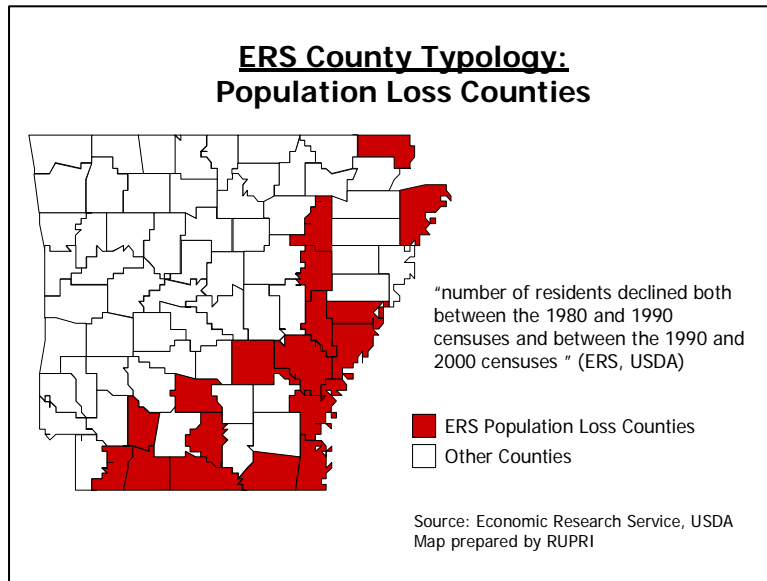


During the 1990s, 20 counties in Arkansas lost population, all but one of them nonmetro. The fastest growth during this time was in Benton County in the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers Metropolitan Area, with a population increase of 57.3 percent during the 1990s.



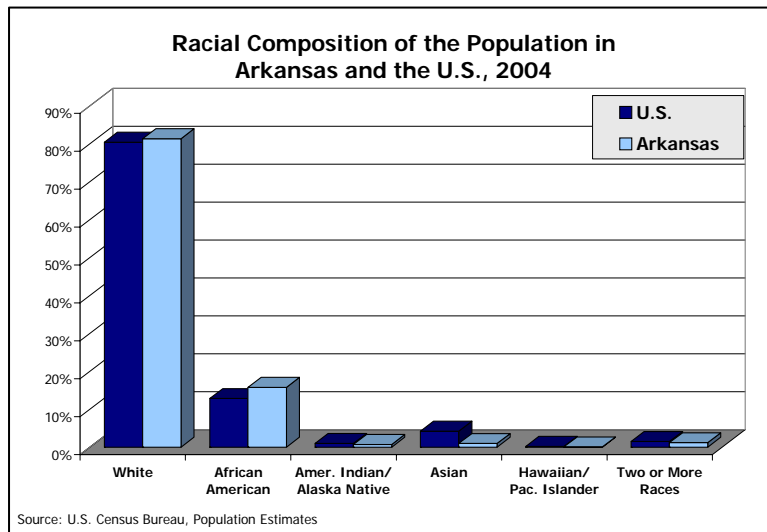
From 2000 to 2005, 34 counties in Arkansas lost population, all but three of them nonmetro. The fastest growth during this time was again in Benton County, with a population increase of 21.9 percent during the time period.

The Economic Research Service, USDA, classifies counties as population loss counties if they lost population from 1980 to 1990 and from 1990 to 2000. In Arkansas, 18 counties are classified as population loss counties. All but one of these counties are nonmetro.

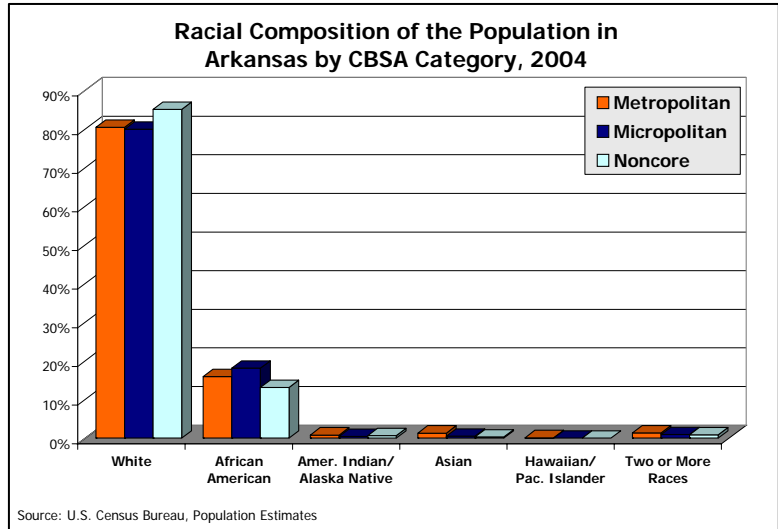


### Race / Ethnicity

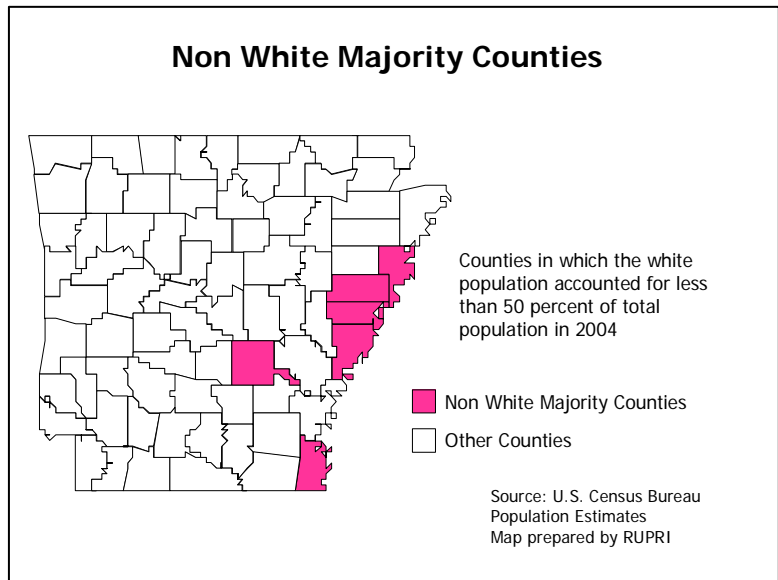
The population in Arkansas is 81.3 percent white and 15.8 percent African American. Nationally, the population is 80.4 percent white and 12.8 percent African American (2004 Census Bureau population estimates).



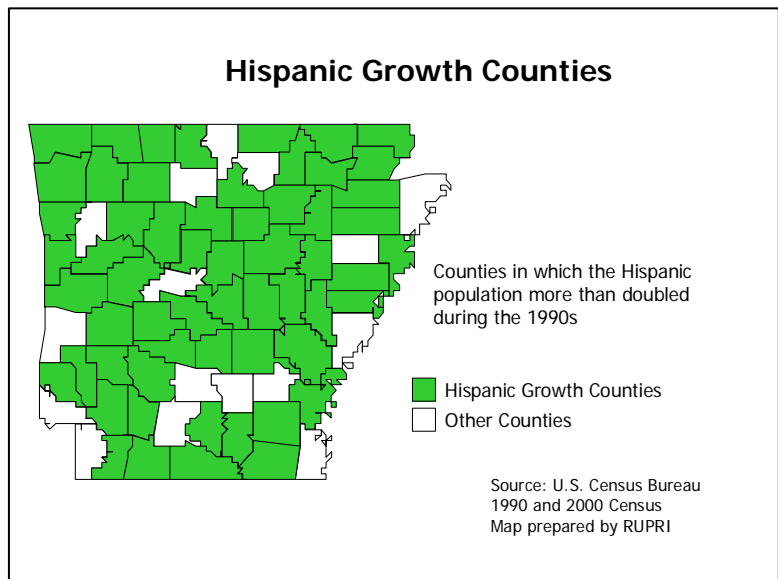
Within Arkansas, the metropolitan population is 80.4 percent white and 15.9 percent African American. The micropolitan population is 80.0 percent white and 18.1 percent African American, and the noncore population is 85.1 percent white and 13.1 percent African American.



Six Arkansas counties have a non-white majority population; that is, the white population accounts for less than 50 percent of total population. In most of these counties, African Americans account for the majority of population. In Crittenden County, no race accounts for a majority of population (white is 49.5% and African American is 49.2%).

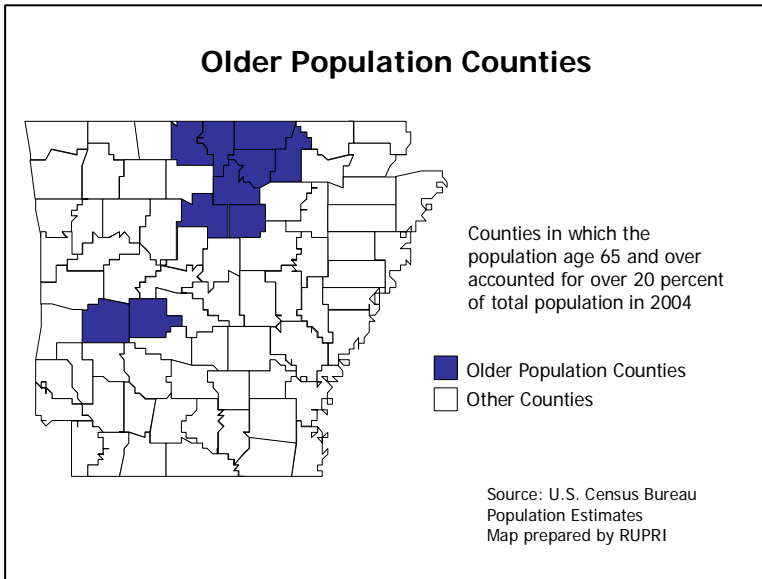
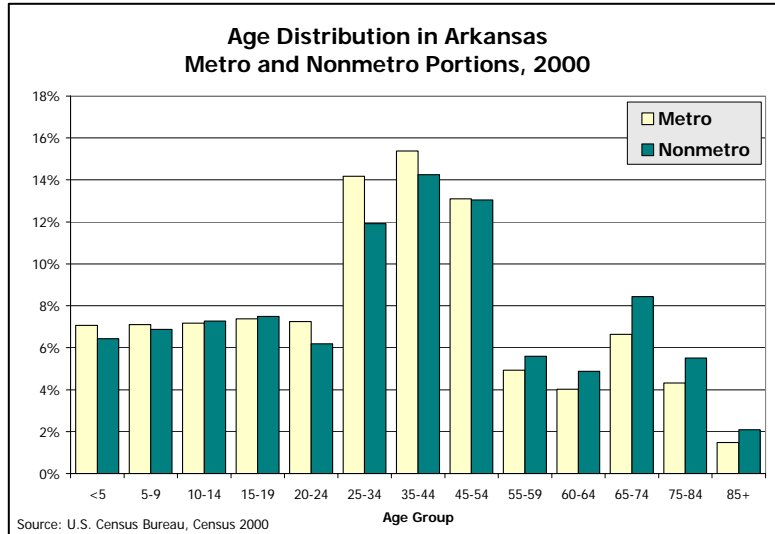


People of Hispanic origin make up 4.4 percent of Arkansas's population, and 14.1 percent of the total U.S. population. Many areas have experienced significant growth in the Hispanic population over the past decade and a half. The map to the right shows the counties in which the Hispanic population more than doubled during the 1990s. Hispanics account for over 10 percent of population in seven Arkansas Counties, and in Sevier County, Hispanics make up 25.5 percent of total population.

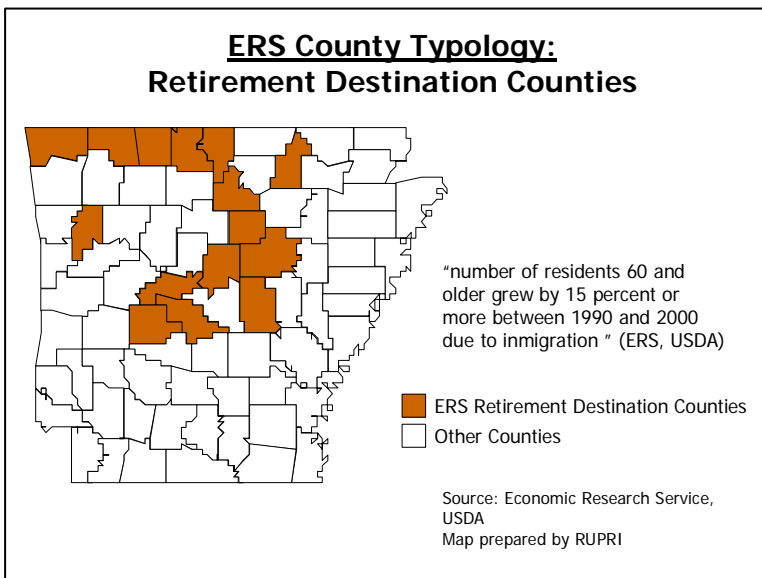


## Age

The age distribution of the metro and nonmetro population in Arkansas is shown in the chart to the right. 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 and over is greater in the nonmetro areas.



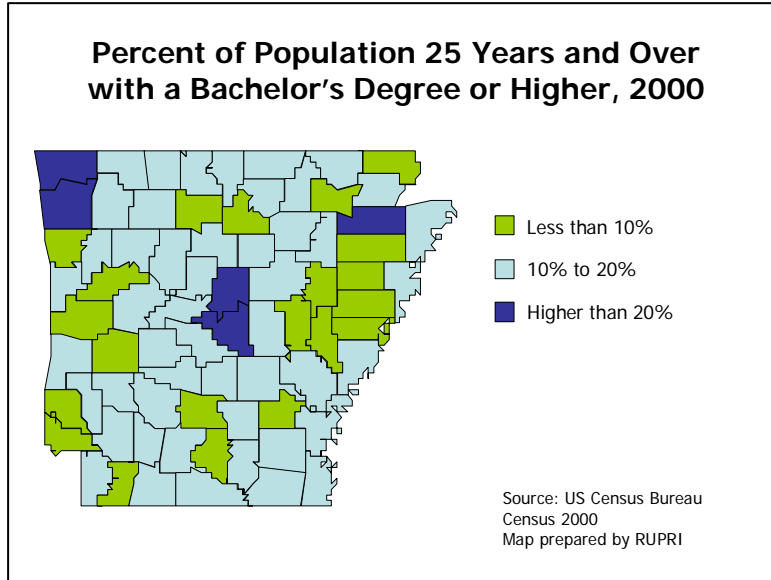
Many areas, particularly rural areas, have experienced an aging of their populations over time, in some cases due to immigration of retirees, and in other cases due to outmigration of younger populations and an aging-in-place of residents. In Arkansas, there are 10 counties (9 of them nonmetro) in which the population age 65 and over accounts of over 20 percent of total population.



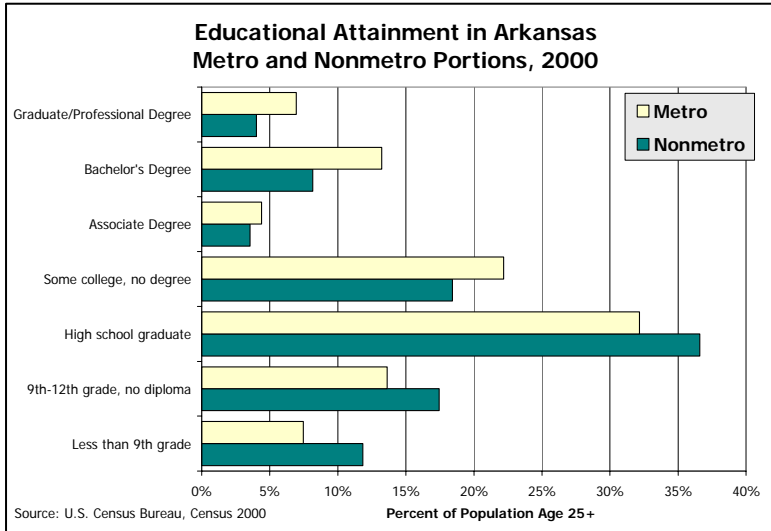
The Economic Research Service classifies counties as retirement destination counties based on population change due to immigration. In Arkansas, 15 counties (7 metro and 8 nonmetro) are classified as retirement destination counties.

## Educational Attainment

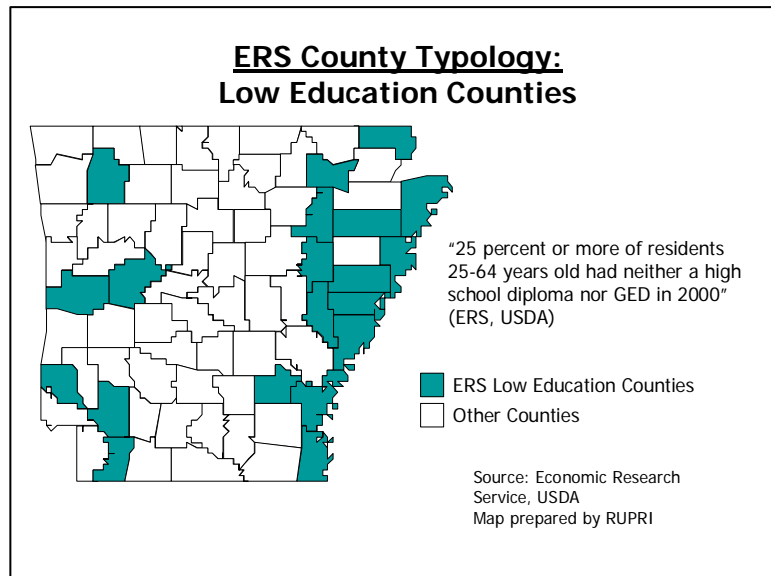
The percent of the population age 25 and over that has earned a Bachelor's Degree or higher is 24.4 percent in the U.S. and 16.7 percent in Arkansas. In metro areas of Arkansas, this percentage is 20.2 percent, compared to only 12.2 percent in nonmetro areas.



The chart to the right compares the educational attainment of Arkansas'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 lower educational attainment (high school degree or lower) is greater in the nonmetro areas.

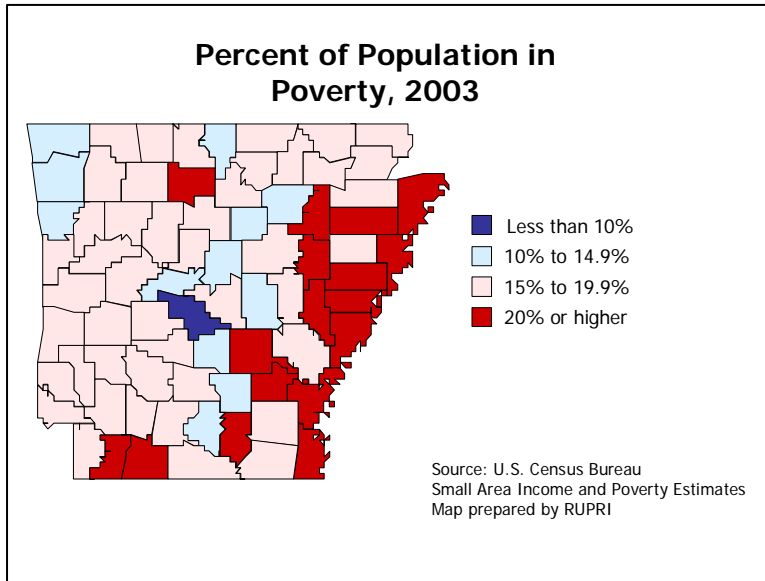


The Economic Research Service classifies counties as low education counties if "25 percent or more of residents 25-64 years old had neither a high school diploma nor GED in 2000." In Arkansas, 20 counties (4 metro and 16 nonmetro) are classified as low education counties.

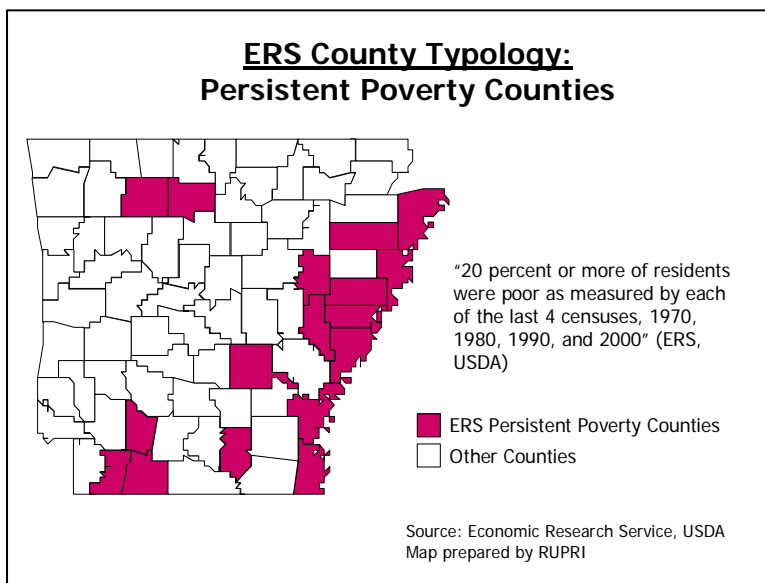


## Poverty

The poverty rate in Arkansas in 2003 was 16.0 percent, compared to 12.5 percent for the U.S. (Census Bureau estimates). Within Arkansas, the 2003 poverty rate ranged from 9.4 percent in Saline County to 29.1 percent in Lee County.

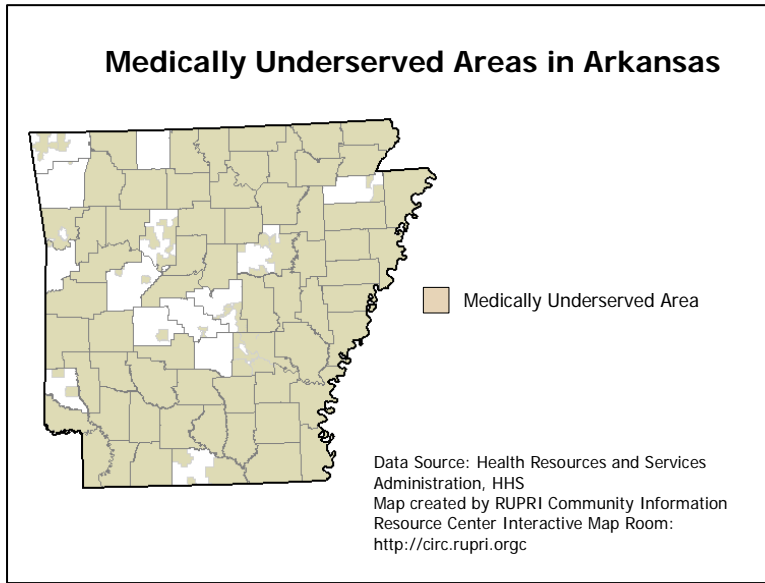


The Economic Research Service classifies counties as persistent poverty counties if they experienced poverty rates of 20 percent or higher in each census from 1970 through 2000. There are 386 persistent poverty counties in the U.S., and 17 are located in Arkansas (3 metro and 14 nonmetro counties).

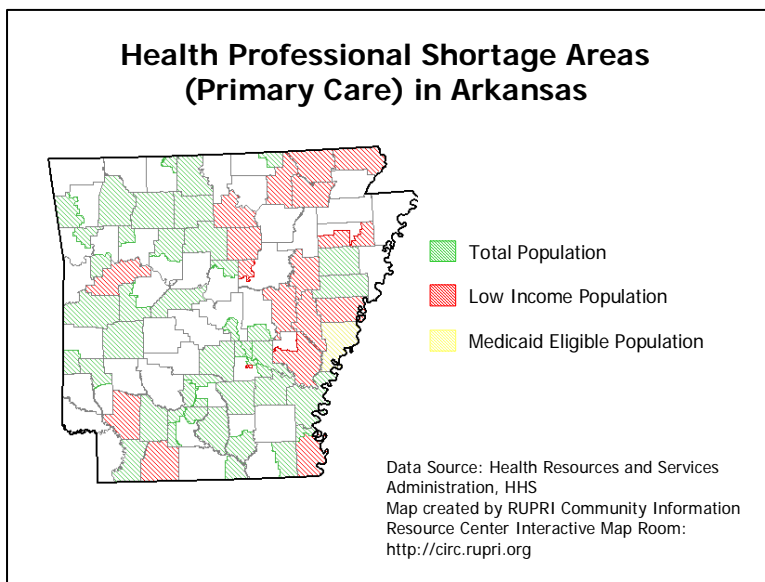


## Health Services

The designation of areas or populations as medically underserved is based on an index of four variables - the ratio of primary care physicians per 1,000 population, the infant mortality rate, the percent of the population with incomes below the poverty level, and the percent of the population age 65 and over (Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS). Within Arkansas, many areas of the state are considered medically underserved, shown in the map below.

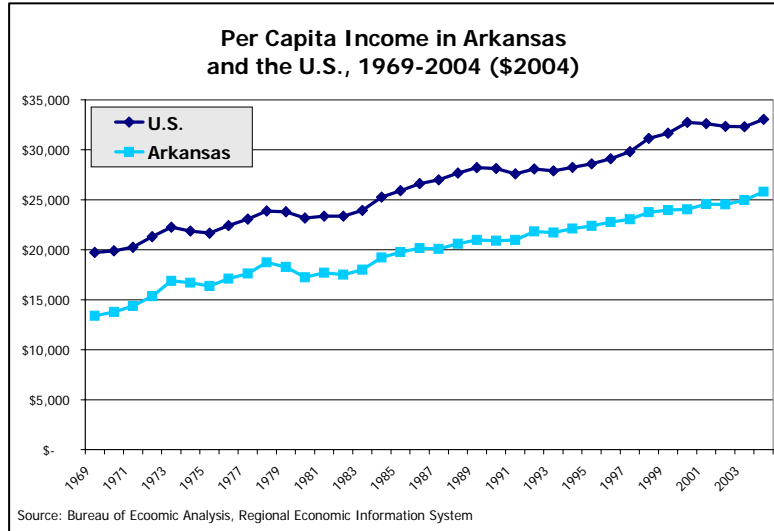


Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) are those areas that “may have shortages of primary medical care, dental or mental health providers and may be urban or rural areas, population groups, or medical or other public facilities” (Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS). Within Arkansas, several areas in the state are designated as primary care HPSAs for the total or low income populations.

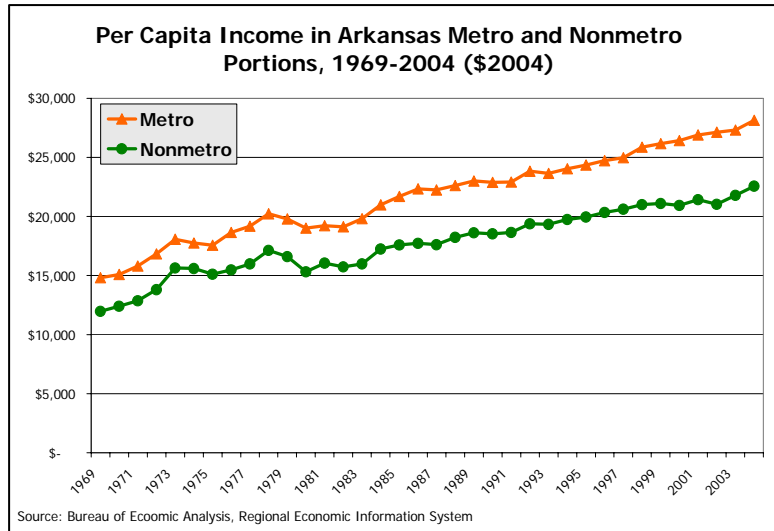


## Per Capita Income

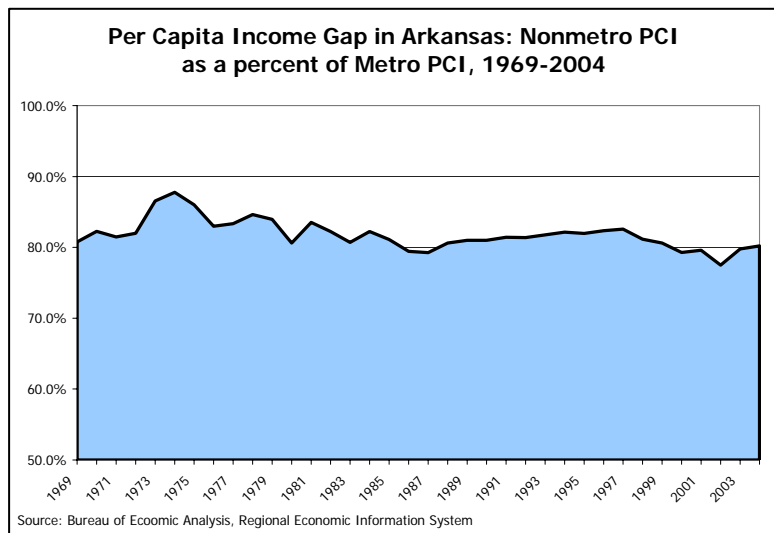
Per capita income trends in Arkansas have mirrored national trends, with Arkansas's income lagging behind over the past several decades. In 2004, per capita income in Arkansas was \$25,814, compared to \$33,050 for the U.S.



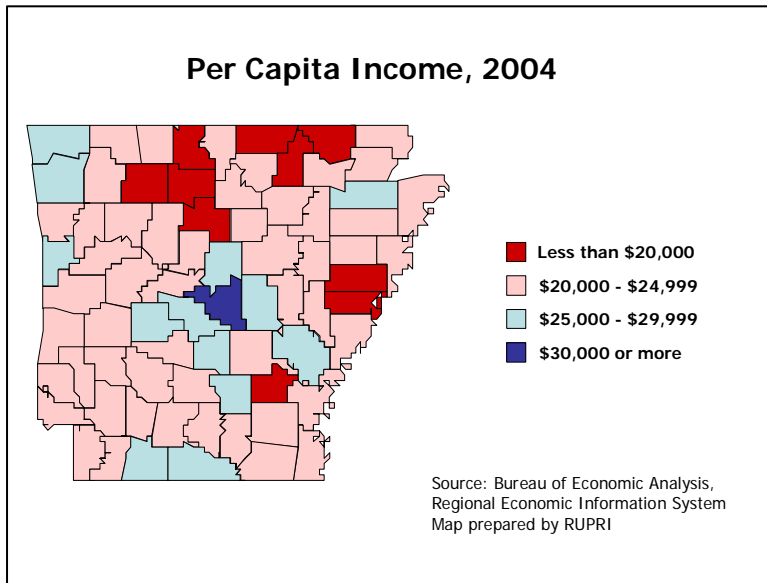
Nonmetro per capita income in Arkansas has lagged behind metro per capita income over the past several decades. In 2004, metro per capita income was \$28,145, compared to \$22,574 in nonmetro areas.



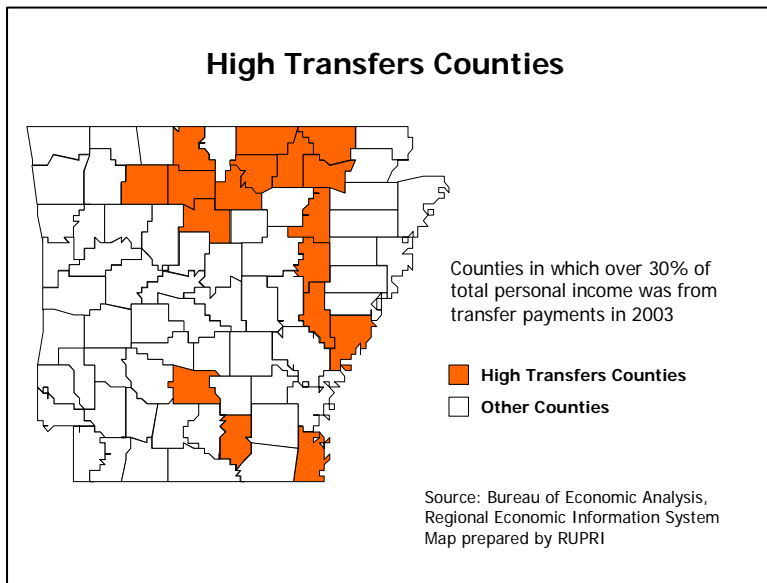
The per capita income gap is measured with nonmetro per capita income as a percent of metro per capita income. In Arkansas, the gap was at its smallest in 1974 and at its largest in 2002. In 2004, nonmetro per capita income was 80.2 percent of metro per capita income.



Within Arkansas, 2004 per capita income ranged from \$17,618 in Searcy County to \$35,264 in Pulaski County. Ten counties (1 metro and 9 nonmetro) had per capita income less than \$20,000 in 2004.

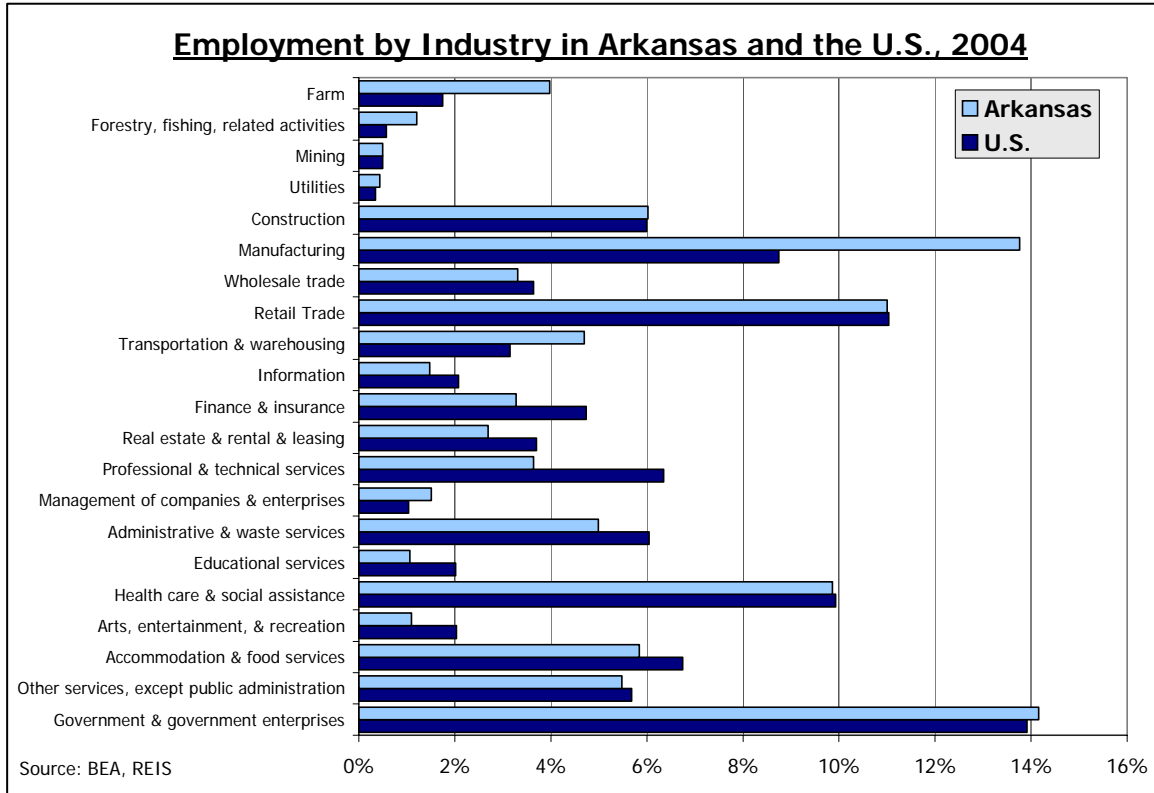


Transfer payments include retirement and disability payments, social security benefits, public assistance, and medical benefits. In Arkansas, 17 counties incomes' rely heavily on transfer payments. In these counties, shown in the map below, transfer payments account for over 30 percent of total personal income in the county. All of these counties are nonmetro.

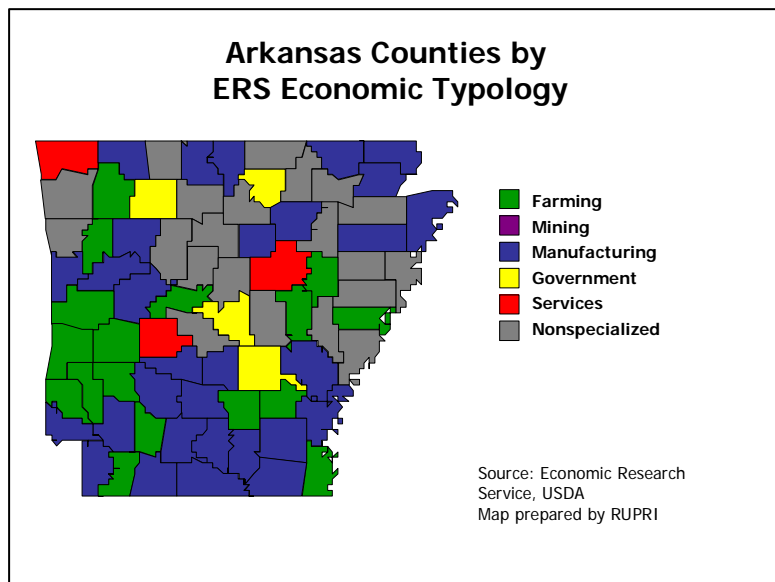


## Employment Structure

In 2004, government and government enterprises accounted for the largest shares of employment in Arkansas (14.2%) and the U.S. (13.9%). Manufacturing was the second largest employment sector in Arkansas (13.8%), while retail trade was the second largest sector in the U.S. (11.0%).

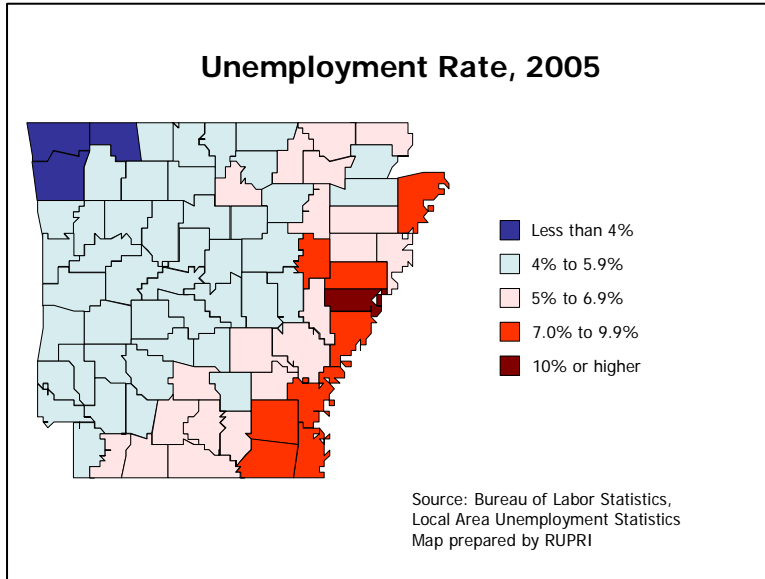


The ERS Economic Typology classifies counties into one of five industry categories of specialization or as nonspecialized. The map to the right shows the classification of Arkansas counties by this typology, illustrating the importance of manufacturing in many parts of the state.

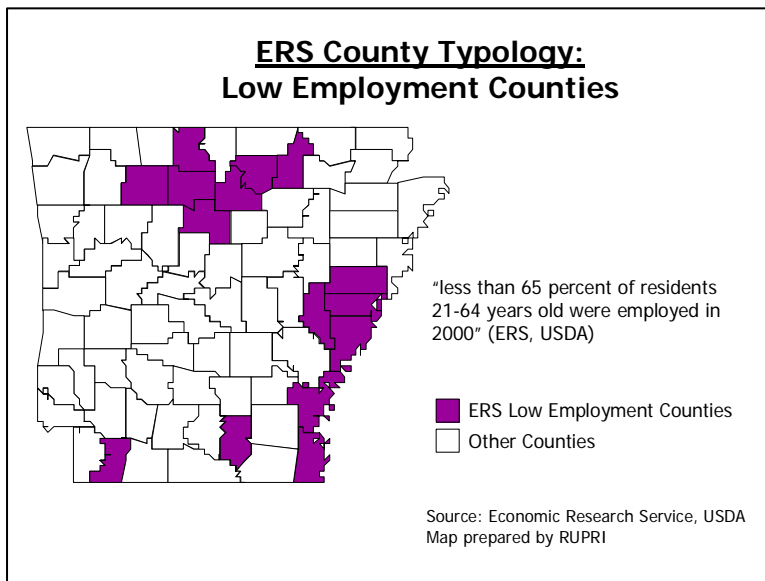


## Unemployment

The unemployment rate in Arkansas in 2005 was 4.9 percent, compared to 5.1 percent for the U.S. Within Arkansas, the 2005 unemployment rate ranged from 2.7 percent in Benton County to 10.4 percent in Lee County. The lowest unemployment rates in the state were in three counties in the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers Metropolitan Area.

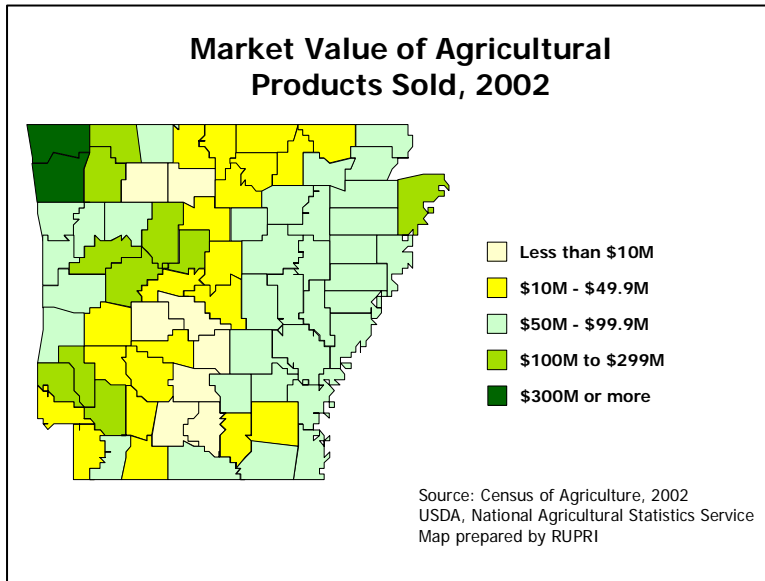


The Economic Research Service classifies counties as low employment counties if “less than 65 percent of residents 21-64 years old were employed in 2000.” In Arkansas, 15 counties (all nonmetro) are classified as low employment counties.

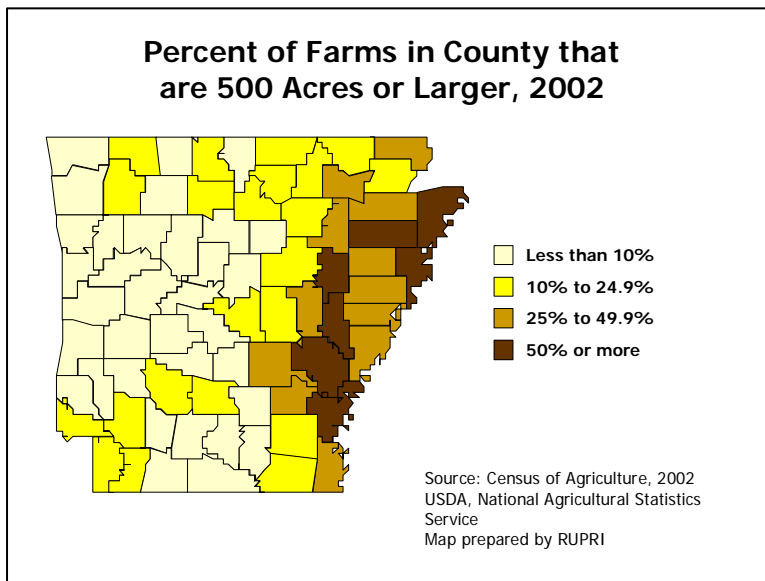


## Agriculture

Agriculture is an important industry in many parts of Arkansas, and 17 counties are classified by the Economic Research Service as farming dependent (see map on page 11). The map below shows the value of agricultural products sold in 2002 for Arkansas counties. In 12 counties the value was over \$100 million, and in Benton and Washington Counties, the value was over \$300 million.



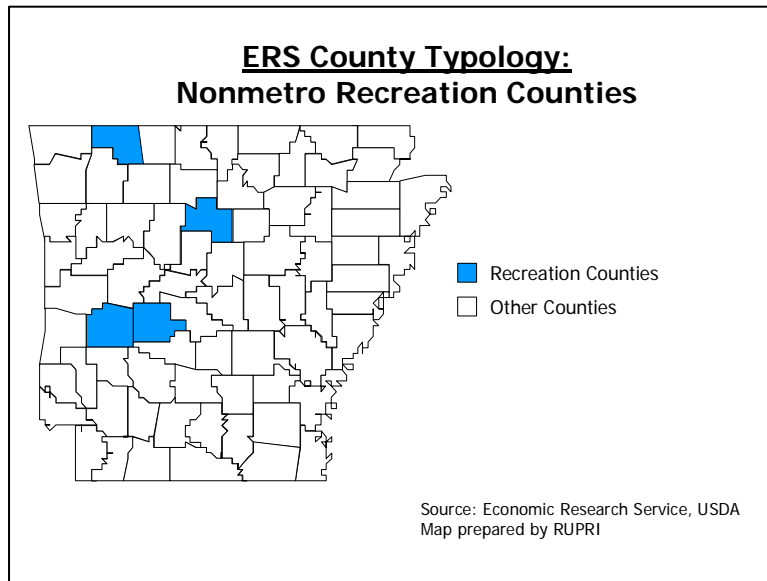
Average farm size in Arkansas is 305 acres, and 14.5 percent of farms in the state are 500 acres or larger. In 7 Arkansas counties, over half of the farms are 500 acres or larger.





## 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 4 are located in Arkansas. Counties that were nonmetro in 1993 or in 2003 are classified - Garland County was nonmetro in the 1993 classifications.



## **Data Sources and References**

**Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System**

<http://www.bea.gov/ea/regional/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/>

**Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, Designations of Health Professional Shortage Areas and Medically Underserved Areas and Populations**

<http://www.bhpr.hrsa.gov/shortage/>

**National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.**

2002 Census of Agriculture

[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Census\\_of\\_Agriculture/index.asp](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Census_of_Agriculture/index.asp)

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

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

**RUPRI Community Information Resource Center Interactive Map Room**

<http://circ.rupri.org/>

**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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