



Growing ND by the Numbers

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Highest Percent Rural Population

For the Midwest Region, our neighbor to the south has the highest percent rural population at 42.9 percent. North Dakota's rural population represents 39.4 percent of the state's total population. Maine and Vermont are tied for the highest percent rural population in the nation at just over 61 percent.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2011-2015

Defining Rural Population

The U.S. Census Bureau defines individual urban areas, and then all that is remaining is considered rural. The Census Bureau defines the urban and rural areas after each decennial census. The designations reached are then used in the American Community Survey for the remaining years of the decade. It is worth noting that other federal agencies may use different definitions of rural. The urban classification includes two types of urban areas. Areas with population of 50,000 or more are noted as urbanized areas. The other urban area is urban clusters, which are areas with at least 2,500 but fewer than 50,000 people. Though urban areas include only three percent of the land area in the United States, they include 80.7 percent of the nation's

population. On-the-other hand, rural areas command 97 percent of the land area with only 19.3 percent of the population.

Census blocks are the building blocks for urban areas. For block-level geography to be considered urban, it must have a density of 1,000 people per square mile. Of the 3,142 counties in the United States, 1,253 are classified as mostly urban, 1,185 are classified as mostly rural and 704 are considered completely rural. Only 29 counties have no rural residents. Mostly urban counties contain 86.3 percent of the United States' total population. The mostly rural counties contain 11.9 percent of the total population. The completely rural counties

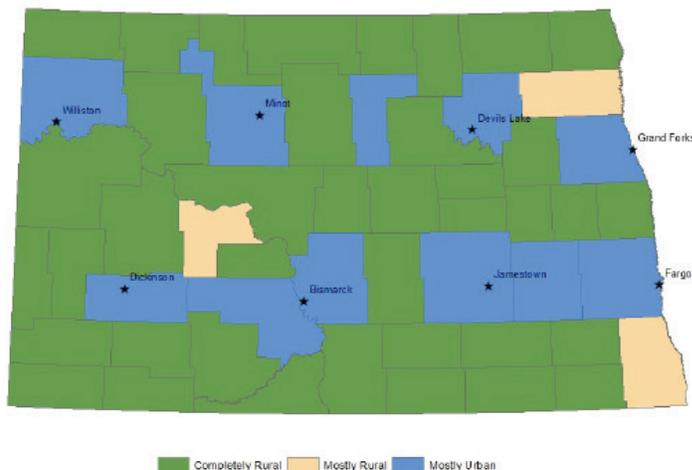
contain only 1.7 percent of our country's population.

North Dakota has 53 counties, of which 39 are classified as completely rural. Three counties are mostly rural and 11 counties are mostly urban.

According to the 1910 Census, more than 54 percent of the nation's population lived in rural areas. The 2010 Census showed that the total population living in rural areas has changed little, but now only represents just over 19 percent of the nation's population, while almost 81 percent are now urban.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census and American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2011-2015

**LEVEL OF RURALITY BY COUNTY
2010**



County Rural Level in North Dakota. Thirty-nine counties are completely rural. All states combined, there are 704 counties that are completely rural. Source: North Dakota Census Office 2017 Map using data from U.S. Census Bureau

Veterans Prefer Rural Areas

The percentage of North Dakota's veteran population living in rural areas is approximately 42 percent, placing the state in the top 10. The leading state is Maine where more than 65 percent of their veteran population live in rural areas. Just over 24 percent of the United States' veteran population live in rural areas or about 5 million.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2011-2015

Joe Cicha
Census Specialist

Phone
701-328-7283

E-mail
jcicha@nd.gov

Web
NDCensus.gov

Rural Population in Decline Nationwide

Recent numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau show rural America lost an estimated 21,000 people between July 2015 and July 2016, after adjusting for births, deaths and migration. The U.S. rural population now stands at just over 46 million people, or about 14 percent of the U.S. population. As recent as the year 2000, rural population was at 21 percent, though as mentioned earlier, techniques defining rural can change with each decennial census.

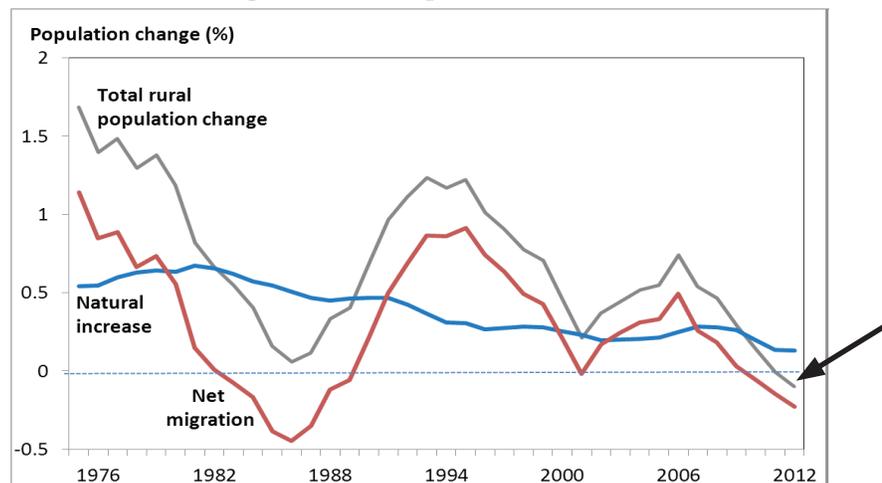
For many counties, rural population decline is nothing new and has been the trend for years, but between 2010 and 2012, rural counties as a whole declined in population. Births in rural U.S. are no longer offsetting deaths and migration of people to larger population areas.

Since decennial Census 2010, there were 270,000 more births than deaths in the nation's rural population. However, over the same period, the rural areas

registered outmigration of an estimated 462,000, accounting for the overall decline. Areas that rely on agriculture have seen the largest population losses, including the Corn Belt and parts of the Great Plains.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Using U.S. Census Bureau Data.

Population Change in Rural Counties



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, using U.S. Census Bureau data

North Dakota Department of Commerce
1600 E. Century Ave., Suite 2
Bismarck, ND 58503 | 701.328.5300

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