



Growing ND by the Numbers

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Population Changes Since 2010

Of the 87 Census Tracts in the state with a population density of fewer than 10 persons per square mile, slightly more than half are estimated to have gained population since Census 2010. Those in the Bakken Region saw the largest increase. Census Tract 9623, which includes the western side of Watford City, grew the most but several other Bakken area tracts, including those in Stark, Mountrail, Dunn, Billings and Williams counties, also grew.

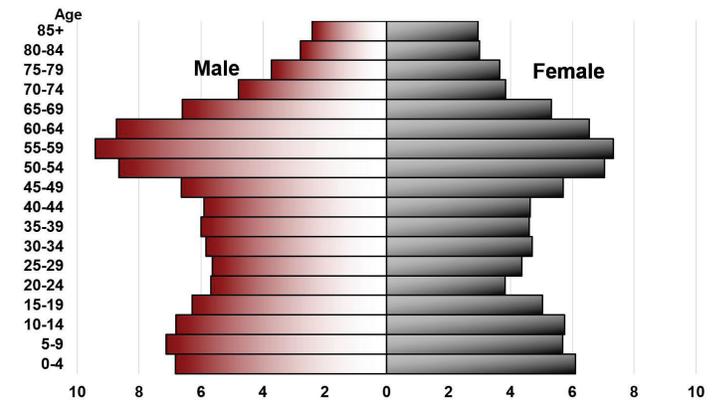
Source: Census Bureau Census 2010 file P1, 2017 Gazetteer Files and ACS 5-Yr File S0101

Demographic Characteristics of ND's Most Rural Populations

There are an estimated 195,000 North Dakota residents residing in one of the 87 Census Tracts where there are less than 10 people per square mile. While these Census Tracts cover 96 percent of the state's land area, their population is less than a quarter of the state's total population. These tracts exist in all counties of the state, including the state's most populous counties of Cass, Burleigh, Grand Forks and Ward. Populations in these tracts tend to be heavily weighted with people in their 50s and 60s. The percentage of individuals in the 20-34 age range is considerably less than that of the state as a whole. Many of these areas show signs of out-migration of younger adults.

While the typical areas with more than 10 persons per square mile have about 26 percent of their populations in the 20-34 age range, that number drops to 15 percent in the most rural areas. Given fewer adults of working age, they also typically have a higher "Old-Age Dependency Ratio" due to the higher numbers of elderly in these areas. The median age in these

Typical Population Distribution Most Rural Census Tracts of ND by Age and Sex, 2012-2016



The above chart shows the typical population distribution in areas of the state with fewer than 10 residents per square mile. Compared to the state as a whole, there is a much larger portion of the population in their 50s and 60s. In most areas, with the notable exception of the tracts that include American Indian reservations, residents are much more likely to be White Non-Hispanic than the state as a whole.

Source: Census Bureau 2017 Gazetteer Files and ACS 5-Yr File S0101

areas is typically about nine years higher than that of the state, although the range varied widely from 25 to 55 years of age based upon the area. However, this is not consistent across the state. Tract 9408 in Sioux County has an estimated median age of 25 years of age. Other rural tracts in McKenzie, Benson, Sioux and Rolette counties all have a median age of less than 30. Those rural tracts

with higher populations of American Indians typically have much younger median ages than those with higher white populations. The populations typically have a higher percentage of male residents than the state as a whole. The average shows that in the 87 most rural tracts there were 109 males for

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Least Populated Areas of the State

Two tracts in the state have fewer than one person per square mile and another 13 tracts located in 13 different counties, including Bowman, Burleigh, Cavalier, Dickey, Divide, Golden Valley, Grant, Kidder, Logan, McKenzie, Sheridan and Wells counties, have fewer than two persons per square mile. Census Tract 9650, which represents all of Slope County, has just more than .5 persons per square mile. Census Tract 9631 (Billings County) had just more than .8 persons per square mile.

Source: Census Bureau 2017 Gazetteer Files and ACS 5-Yr File S0101

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Employment Characteristics of Most Rural Areas

Individuals in the most rural areas that are workforce age (age 16 and above) tend to have a slightly lower workforce participation rate than the state as a whole and those individuals living in more urban areas. This is likely a factor of an older population in these areas. When these individuals are in the labor force, they tend to have lower unemployment rates. Individuals in these most rural areas tend to have a slightly lower rate of poverty than the state.

Source: Census Bureau 2017 Gazetteer Files and ACS 5-Yr File S2301

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every 100 females. In 15 tracts, there were more than 120 males for every 100 females.

Individuals living in these rural areas are also much more likely to be married and less likely to be divorced or separated than their more urban counterparts. On average, about 62 percent of individuals ages 15 or over residing in these most rural tracts were married, compared to 52 percent of the state's population during

Least Populated Areas in the State



North Dakota Census Tracts
Less than 10 Persons Per Square Mile

Census Tracts with fewer than 10 persons per square mile cover 96 percent of the land area in the state and includes less than a quarter of the state's total population.

Source: Census Bureau 2017 Gazetteer Files and ACS 5-Yr File Table S0101
Prepared by North Dakota Census Office, March 2018

the same timeframe. These rural areas are far more likely to be White, Non-Hispanic than the rest of the state. On average, the populations of these areas are 91 percent White Non-Hispanic, compared to 86 percent for the state as a whole.

When minorities do exist, they are far more likely to be American Indian. Racial diversity hardly existed in many of the rural areas of the state. More than 95 percent of

the residents were White Non-Hispanic in nearly half of the Census Tracts with less than 10 residents per square mile. Black residents were estimated to have more than one percent representation in only 19 of these most rural tracts. Tract 9650 (Slope County) stands out with an estimated 5 percent of its residents being black.

Source: Census Bureau 2017 Gazetteer Files and ACS 5-Yr Files B03002, S0101, S1201

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