Everything You’ve Always Wanted to Know About Rural?

STATE OFFICES OF RURAL HEALTH ORIENTATION MEETING

Steven Hirsch
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Health Resources and Services Administration
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
Who Defines Rural?

- The Census Bureau
- The Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- United States Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service (ERS)
- Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP)
The Census Bureau identifies two types of urban areas:

- Urbanized Areas (UAs) of 50,000 or more people;
- Urban Clusters (UCs) of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people.
For the 2010 Census, an urban area will comprise a densely settled core of census tracts and/or census blocks that meet minimum population density requirements, along with adjacent territory containing non-residential urban land uses as well as territory with low population density included to link outlying densely settled territory with the densely settled core. To qualify as an urban area, the territory identified according to criteria must encompass at least 2,500 people, at least 1,500 of which reside outside institutional group quarters.
## Urban/Rural Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2010 Population</th>
<th>2000 Population</th>
<th>Percentage of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>308.7 million</td>
<td>281.4 million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>249.2 million</td>
<td>222.3 million</td>
<td>80.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanized Areas</td>
<td>219.9 million</td>
<td>192.3 million</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Clusters</td>
<td>29.3 million</td>
<td>30 million</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>59.5 million</td>
<td>59 million</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rural % of US Population
Rural US Population

![Graph showing the rural US population from 1900 to 2010. The population trend shows an increase until the 1950s, followed by a decline until the 1970s, and then a slight increase again.](image)
Urbanized Areas and Urban Clusters: 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Urban Area Delineation Program
Baltimore Urbanized Area
Howard County, Maryland
OMB

• OMB defines Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas
  • Metro Areas contain a core urban area of 50,000 or more population
  • Micro Areas contains an urban core of at least 10,000 (but less than 50,000) population.

• Known as Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs)
Each metro or micro area consists of one or more counties and includes the counties containing the core urban area, as well as any adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration (as measured by commuting to work) with the urban core.
Metro, nonmetro micropolitan, and nonmetro noncore counties, 2013

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.
# OMB County Designations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Metro</th>
<th>Micro</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Non-Metro (Total Neither and Micro)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>870 (27.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2270 (72.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1100 (35.1%)</td>
<td>688 (21.8%)</td>
<td>1353 (43.1%)</td>
<td>2041 (66.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>1169 (37.1%)</td>
<td>657 (20.4%)</td>
<td>1316 (42.4%)</td>
<td>1973 (62.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## OMB Counties, 2010 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Population (%) (2009 OMB)</th>
<th>Population (%) (2013 OMB)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>258,317,763 (83.7)</td>
<td>262,452,132 (85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>30,943,552 (10)</td>
<td>27,154,213 (8.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>19,484,223 (6.3)</td>
<td>19,139,193 (6.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Non-metro</td>
<td>50,427,775 (16.3)</td>
<td>46,293,406 (15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Metro Counties in Maryland
FORHP and ERS

- Rural-Urban commuting area (RUCA) codes
  - Provides sub county alternative
  - Takes functional relationships, population, & population density into account
  - Taxonomy is adjustable to fit unique needs
  - Scheme allows better targeting
RUCAs

1. Metropolitan area core: primary flow within an Urbanized Area (UA)
2. Metropolitan area high commuting: primary flow 30% or more to a UA
3. Metropolitan area low commuting: primary flow 10% to 30% to a UA

4. Micropolitan* area core: primary flow within an Urban Cluster of 10,000 through 49,999 (large UC)
5. Micropolitan* high commuting: primary flow 30% or more to a large UC
6. Micropolitan* low commuting: primary flow 10% to 30% to a large UC

7. Small town core: primary flow within an Urban Cluster of 2,500 through 9,999 (small UC)
8. Small town high commuting: primary flow 30% or more to a small UC
9. Small town low commuting: primary flow 10% through 29% to a small UC

10. Rural areas: primary flow to a tract outside a UA or UC (including self)
Arizona Rural Census Tracts

Rural-Urban Commuting Areas

The map is based on Version 1.0 RUCA codes
Director: Gary Hart, PhD
Cartographer: Joseph Miller
WWAMI Rural Health Research Center
University of Washington 7/2000
FORHP’s Definition

- All Non-Metro Counties
- All RUCA Tracts 4-10 in Metro Counties
- Certain RUCA Tracts (over 400 sq. miles, fewer than 35 people per sq. mile and RUCA 2-3) in Metro Counties
- Around 57 million people
- Around 85% of the area of the USA
Rural Eligibility Analyzer

Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer

Health care providers who are located in geographic areas that are defined as Rural are eligible to apply for Rural Health Grants. Enter an address or choose a state and county to check for eligibility status.

Search Criteria

State/Territory:  
County:

Search  Reset
Map Tool
Contact Information

Steven Hirsch,
shirsch@hrsa.gov
301-443-0835
http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/