



POPULATION BRIEF

Trends in the Western U.S.

The State of Arizona

By Don E. Albrecht

Overview

Rural development is the process by which the lives of individuals and families living in rural areas are improved. Effective rural development necessarily involves several components that include 1) good jobs that provide individuals and families the opportunity to earn and maintain a livable income; 2) a chance to complete an education and have lifelong opportunities to learn and improve one's circumstances; 3) and the opportunity to live a reasonably long and healthy life. Communities that effectively meet these conditions are likely to retain existing residents and attract new residents and thus experience population growth.

Additionally, effective rural development means that opportunities to obtain high-quality employment, complete an education, and live a long and healthy life must be available to all residents of the community, rather than only to certain segments of the population.

The first step in advancing an effective rural development program is to carefully assess baseline conditions. In response, the Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is providing a set of population briefs that provide some of this baseline information. Each population brief will assess one of the components of rural development listed above. This brief examines population changes in Arizona. Each brief will explore overall conditions, and then examine the extent to which opportunities are available to all segments of the population by making comparisons on race/ethnicity, gender, family structure or geography. The geographic component will provide comparisons between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas and will compare

the west with the remainder of the United States. Further, population briefs for each of the 13 states comprising the western region are developed that provide more detailed information on rural development issues. Data for these population briefs are obtained from the United States Census.

Growth in Arizona

Between 1980 and 2006, the population of the State of Arizona more than doubled, growing from 2.7 million in 1980 to 6.2 million in 2006, an increase of 126 percent. Nevada was the only state in the entire nation that had a higher rate of population growth, and only four states (California, Texas, Florida, and Georgia) had larger increases in the number of inhabitants. Arizona population growth was pervasive in both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties. The population of metropolitan counties increased by 135 percent, from 2.4 million in 1980 to 5.7 million in 2006, while nonmetropolitan counties grew at a slower but still substantial rate of 51 percent, increasing from 308,530 to 467,217 (See Figure 1).

Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan

The Arizona population is heavily concentrated in the greater Phoenix area. In 1980, about 59 percent of Arizona residents lived in either Maricopa or Pinal Counties, the two counties comprising the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale Metropolitan area. However, after two decades of very rapid growth, the population

The population of metropolitan counties increased by 135 percent, from 2.4 million in 1980 to 5.7 million in 2006, while nonmetropolitan counties grew at a slower but still substantial rate of 51 percent, increasing from 308,530 to 467,217 (See Figure 1).

of the greater Phoenix metropolitan area had grown to over 4 million residents who made up nearly two-thirds (65.5 percent) of the total state's population. Each of the five other metropolitan areas in the state also experienced rapid population growth between 1980 and 2006. The populations of Prescott (Yavapai County) and Lake Havasu City-Kingman (Mohave County) more than tripled, while the population of Yuma (Yuma County) more than doubled. Also notable, the population of Tucson (Pima County) increased by more than 400,000 from 531,443 in 1980 to nearly one million (946,362) in 2006. Among nonmetropolitan



counties, the growth in Santa Cruz County in the southernmost part of the state was most extensive, as the population more than doubled between 1980 and 2006, growing from 20,459 in 1980 to 43,080 in 2006. Greenlee was the only county in the state that experienced population loss (Table 1).

Figure 2 reveals that the population is heavily centered in the Phoenix and Tucson areas of central and south Arizona. Widespread growth throughout the state is apparent as every county in the state, except one, experienced relatively rapid population growth (Figure 3).

Minority Population Growth

Among the more significant aspects of Arizona population change is the extremely rapid growth of minorities, and especially Hispanic populations. Although the White population increased by more than 1.2 million people, the proportion of the State's population that was White declined from about 75 percent in 1980 to 65 percent in 2000. Between 1980 and 2000, the Hispanic population grew by 192 percent, from 444,102 to 1.3 million, and grew as a proportion of the State's population from 16 percent to 26 percent. In addition, the Asian population increased by 284 percent, from 24,562 to 94,252, while the Black population more than doubled to 146,183. The State's third most numerous population group, Native Americans, increased by 61 percent, from 144,787 to 233,352 (Figure 4).

Income, Poverty and Education

Compared to other western states, Arizona struggles with low median household incomes (only Montana and New Mexico have lower incomes), high poverty rates (only New Mexico has higher) and relatively low levels of educational attainment (only Hawaii has a lower percentage of adults who have completed high school, and only

Nevada has a lower percentage who have completed college). The rapid growth of minority populations exacerbates concerns about the extent to which opportunities are distributed among all segments of the population. The data in Figures 5 through 9 show there is extensive diversity in incomes levels, poverty rates and educational attainment levels for different population categories. Figure 5 shows that, on average,

the incomes of White households were about \$10,000 higher than minority incomes and the incomes of metropolitan households were about \$6,000 higher than the incomes of nonmetropolitan households in 2000. From Figure 6 it is apparent that minority households are much more likely to be in poverty than White households. While about 10 percent of White households were in poverty, 25.5 percent of minority

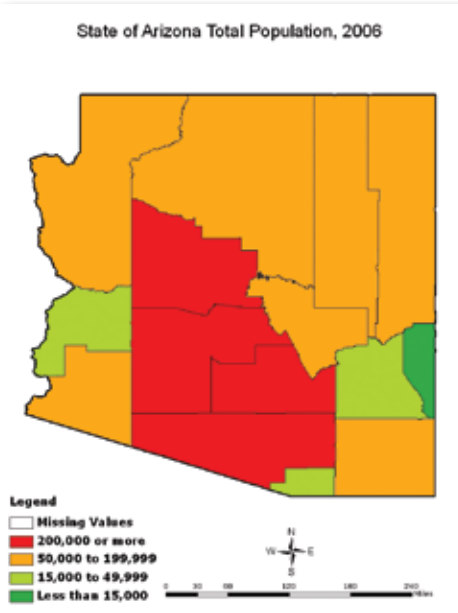


Figure 2

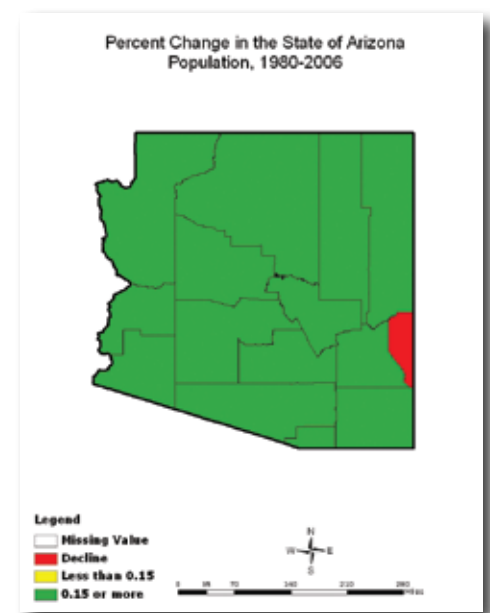


Figure 3

Table 1: Population change for Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties in Arizona, 1980 - 2006

	1980	1990	2000	2006	Change 1980 - 2006	
					Total	Percent
State Total	2,729,515	3,679,072	5,130,632	6,166,318	3,436,803	125.9
Metropolitan Areas						
Total	2,420,985	3,323,901	4,694,517	5,699,101	3,278,116	135.4
Flagstaff						
Coconino County	75,008	96,591	116,320	124,953	49,975	66.6
Lake Havasu City - Kingman						
Mohave County	55,865	93,497	155,032	193,035	137,170	245.5
Phoenix - Mesa - Scottsdale						
Total	1,599,970	2,238,480	3,251,876	4,039,182	2,439,212	152.5
Maricopa County	1,509,052	2,122,101	3,072,149	3,768,123	2,259,071	149.7
Pinal County	90,918	116,379	179,727	271,059	180,141	198.1
Prescott						
Yavapai County	68,145	107,714	167,517	208,014	139,869	205.3
Tucson						
Pima County	531,443	666,880	843,746	946,362	414,919	78.7
Yuma						
Yuma County	90,554	120,739	160,026	187,555	97,001	107.1
Nonmetropolitan Counties						
Total	308,530	355,171	436,115	467,217	158,687	51.4
Apache County	52,108	61,591	69,423	71,118	19,010	36.5
Cochise County	85,686	97,624	117,755	127,757	42,071	49.1
Gila County	37,080	40,216	51,335	52,209	15,129	40.8
Graham County	22,862	26,554	33,489	33,660	10,798	47.2
Greenlee County	11,406	8,008	8,547	7,738	-3,668	-32.2
La Paz County	11,300	13,844	19,715	20,256	8,956	79.3
Navajo County	67,629	77,658	97,470	111,399	43,770	64.7
Santa Cruz County	20,459	29,676	38,381	43,080	22,621	110.6

households in metropolitan counties and 31.6 percent minority households in nonmetropolitan counties were in poverty in 2000.

Differences in the likelihood of living in poverty were especially apparent when making comparisons by family structure. As shown in Figure 7, while 10 percent of married-couple households in metropolitan counties were in poverty, nearly one-half (46.2 percent) of female-headed households in nonmetropolitan counties were in poverty in 2000. Figures 8 and 9 reveal extensive differences in educational attainment for different segments of the population. While over 85 percent of White Arizona adults have completed high school, less than 60 percent of minority adults have a high school education (Figure 8). Similarly, more than 20 percent of White adults have a college degree, while less than 10 percent of minority adults have completed a college education (Figure 9). Also of concern, the teenage fertility rate and the proportion of

babies born to unmarried women in Arizona are among the highest in the nation.

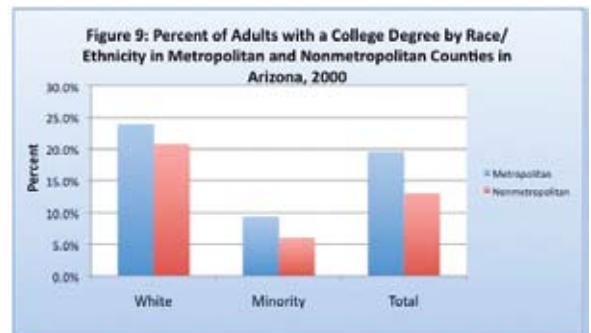
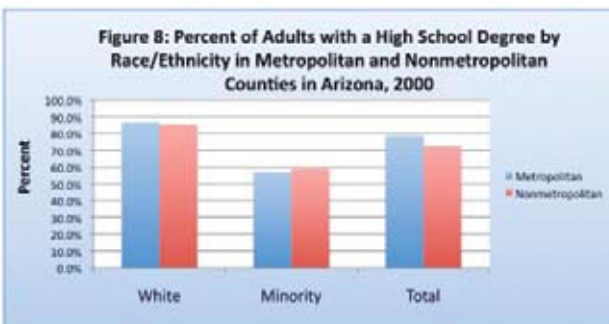
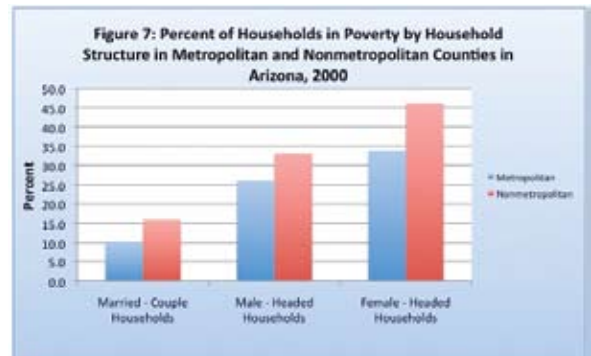
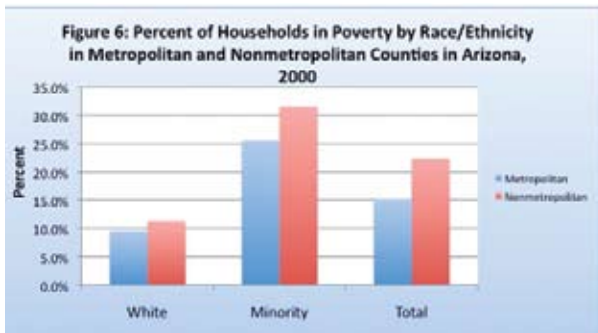
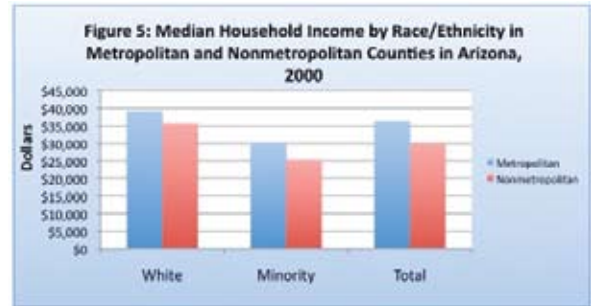
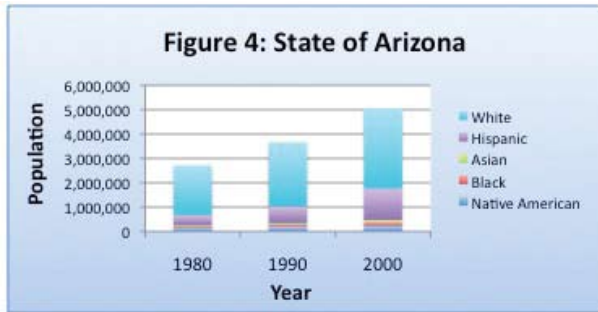
Conclusion

For several decades policy makers in Arizona have struggled to cope with the problems resulting from rapid growth. Adding to this burden are concerns with low incomes, high poverty rates, and low levels of educational attainment. These issues are especially problematic as the gap between White and minority residents in Arizona is extensive. ●

About the Author

Don E. Albrecht is the Director of the Western Rural Development Center. don.albrecht@usu.edu 435.797.9732

Figure 5 shows that, on average, the incomes of White households were about \$10,000 higher than minority incomes and the incomes of metropolitan households were about \$6,000 higher than the incomes of nonmetropolitan households in 2000.



About the Briefs

Published by the Western Rural Development Center

Don E. Albrecht, Director

Betsy H. Newman, Publication Specialist

Trish Kingsford, Senior Staff Assistant

Whitney Mortensen, P/T Staff Assistant

The Population Briefs provide information on the population trends in the western U.S. They are intended to provide both basic information and, when combined with the data tables on the WRDC website, more detailed information for further analysis and application.

The series of Population Briefs will include population trends in the western U.S. related to minorities, natural amenities, education, employment/labor, health, fuel usage, and more. Each topic will include a regional overview and then one brief focused on each of the 13 states in the WRDC's region. The briefs will also include data, where available, related to the population trends in the four western U.S. Territories.

The Population Briefs are available in PDF format on the WRDC website (<http://wrdc.usu.edu>) under 'Publications' and in paper format through the WRDC offices via email to wrdc@usu.edu.

Data

Data for this series is obtained from the U.S. Census of Population for 1980, 1990, 2000, and, where available, 2006. Data is reported for all persons for whom race/ethnicity was reported.



The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is one of four regional centers funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Services (CSREES) to strengthen the capacity of local citizens to guide the future of their rural communities. Each of the four Centers link the research and extension capacity of regional land-grant universities with local decision-makers to address a wide range of rural development issues.

The WRDC also receives substantial support from several Utah State University units including Cooperative Extension, the Agricultural Experiment Station and the College of Natural Resources.

Our commitment to the environment

This publication was printed on a Xerox 700 Digital Press using New Leaf Reincarnation paper that is 100% Recycled, 50% Post-Consumer Waste and processed Chlorine Free.

There is a Population Brief for each of the 13 states in the Western Region, and when available, one brief on each of the four U.S. Territories in the region.

To access the state briefs visit 'Rural Resources' on the WRDC website at <http://wrdc.usu.edu>.

State Briefs are available for:

Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Hawaii
Idaho
Montana
Nevada
New Mexico
Oregon
Utah
Washington
Wyoming