

## Appendix A: About the Data in This Report

A majority of the information in this report derives from HAC tabulations of the 2000 Census of Population and Housing public use data sets. Census 2000 was conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census, which collected information on 281.4 million people and 115.9 million housing units across the United States between March and August 2000. Most of the Census 2000 information utilized in this report derives from one of two data sets. The first is Summary File 1, commonly referred to as the "short form," on which a limited number of questions were asked about every person and every housing unit in the United States. Secondly, Summary File 3 or "long form" data provide more detailed information on population and housing characteristics. These data came from a sample (generally one in six) of persons and housing units.

For detailed information about Census 2000 data used in this report please consult the following reports produced by the Census Bureau.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. 2001. *Technical Documentation: Summary File 1, 2000 Census of Population and Housing*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. 2002. *Technical Documentation: Summary File 3: 2000 Census of Population and Housing*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. 2002. *Technical Documentation: Demographic Profile 2000*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

### Geographic Terms and Concepts<sup>1</sup>

Establishing a definition of rural poses many challenges. In general, rural areas share the common characteristics of comparatively few people living in a geographic area, and limited access to large cities and market areas for work or everyday-living activities. Rurality exists on a continuum, however, and varies based on proximity to a central place, community size, population density, total population, and social and economic factors. Over the years, public agencies and researchers have used combinations of these factors to define rural and to designate geographic areas as rural.

HAC is aware that data users often rely on differing definitions of "rural" and "urban." Therefore we have provided several traditionally used rural/urban designations for the state and county data in this report. These include the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) Metropolitan/Micropolitan status, Census defined urbanized population, and a special HAC designated rural and urban counties status.

Given recent changes in the definitions of OMB metropolitan areas and Census defined urban and rural areas, HAC devised a county based designation of urban and rural "counties" which incorporates both residential patterns, as found in the Census definition, and economic connection patterns, as found in the OMB definition, to establish a more precise measure of rural character. As such, rural counties as defined by HAC in this report include all counties outside of a metropolitan area, and metropolitan counties that have no urbanized population. Likewise, urban counties are metropolitan counties with an urbanized population. It is extremely important to note that this is not the same definition of rural/urban devised by the Census Bureau or Metropolitan Areas devised by OMB.

### County (or Statistically Equivalent Entity)

The primary legal divisions of most states are termed "counties." In Louisiana, these divisions are known as parishes. In Alaska, which has no counties, the statistically equivalent entities are census areas, city and boroughs (as in Juneau City and Borough), a municipality (Anchorage), and organized boroughs. Census areas are delineated cooperatively for data presentation purposes by the state of Alaska and the U.S. Census Bureau. In four states (Maryland, Missouri, Nevada, and Virginia), there are one or more incorporated places that are independent of any county organization and thus constitute primary divisions of their states; these incorporated places are known as "independent cities" and are treated as equivalent to counties for data presentation purposes. (In some data presentations, they



may be treated as county subdivisions and places.) The District of Columbia has no primary divisions, and the entire area is considered equivalent to a county for data presentation purposes.

## Rural Minority Counties Defined

This analysis highlights rural areas with relatively substantial and long-term racial and ethnic minority populations. Rural minority counties are those rural counties (defined as explained above) with a specific racial or ethnic minority population of one-third or more in 1980, 1990, and 2000. For example, African-American RMCs are rural counties that have had an African American population of one-third or more for the past three decades. Given the minority population in rural America (18 percent), the one-third/three-decade criterion is a substantial threshold to meet. This methodology best captures rural communities with significant long-term minority populations and their housing needs. Please note the data presented in this report do not include all rural racial and ethnic minorities, only populations who reside in the designated RMCs. HAC has identified 304 RMCs.

Because of changes in the questioning of race concerning two or more races, the Census 2000 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 1990 Census or earlier censuses. Caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the U.S. population over time.

## Definitions<sup>2</sup>

**Race.** The concept of race as used by the Census Bureau reflects self-identification by people according to the race or races with which they most closely identify. The categories are sociopolitical constructs and should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature. Furthermore, the race categories include both racial and national-origin groups. The racial classifications used by the Census Bureau adhere to the October 30, 1997, *Federal Register Notice* entitled, “Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity” issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). These standards govern the categories used to collect and present federal data on race and ethnicity. The OMB requires five minimum categories (White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander) for race. The race categories are described below with a sixth category, “Some other race,” added with OMB approval. In addition to the five race groups, the OMB also states that respondents should be offered the option of selecting one or more races. If an individual could not provide a race response, the race or races of the householder or other household members were assigned by the computer using specific rules of precedence of household relationship. For example, if race was missing for a natural-born child in the household, then either the race or races of the householder, another natural-born child, or the spouse of the householder were assigned. If race was not reported for anyone in the household, the race or races of a householder in a previously processed household were assigned.

**Minority Population.** Minority population in this report is defined as all population that do not classify themselves as white and not of Hispanic origin.

**White.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as “White” or report entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Near Easterner, Arab, or Polish.

**Black or African American.** A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as “Black, African Am., or Negro,” or who provide written entries such as African American, Afro American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian.

**American Indian and Alaska Native.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment. It includes people who classify themselves as described below.

**American Indian.** Includes people who indicate their race as “American Indian,” entered the name of an Indian tribe, or report such entries as Canadian Indian, French-American Indian, or Spanish-American Indian.

**Alaska Native.** Includes written responses of Eskimos, Aleuts, and Alaska Indians as well as entries such as Arctic Slope, Inupiat, Yupik, Alutiiq, Egegik, and Pribilovian. The Alaska tribes are the Alaskan Athabaskan, Tlingit, and Haida. The information for Census 2000 is derived from the American Indian Detailed Tribal Classification List for the 1990 census and was expanded to list the individual Alaska Native Villages when provided as a written response for race.

**Asian.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. It includes “Asian Indian,” “Chinese,” “Filipino,” “Korean,” “Japanese,” “Vietnamese,” and “Other Asian.”

**Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. It includes people who indicate their race as “Native Hawaiian,” “Guamanian or Chamorro,” “Samoan,” and “Other Pacific Islander.”

**Some other race.** Includes all other responses not included in the “White,” “Black or African American,” “American Indian and Alaska Native,” “Asian,” and the “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander” race categories described above. Respondents providing write-in entries such as multiracial, mixed, interracial, or a Hispanic/Latino group (for example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban) in the “Some other race” category are included in this category.

**Two or more races.** People may have chosen to provide two or more races either by checking two or more race response check boxes, by providing multiple write-in responses, or by some combination of check boxes and write-in responses. The race response categories shown on the questionnaire are collapsed into the five minimum race groups identified by the OMB, plus the Census Bureau “Some other race” category. For data product purposes, “Two or more races” refers to combinations of two or more of the following race categories:

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian and Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- Some other race

**Hispanic or Latino.** People who identify with the terms “Hispanic” or “Latino” are those who classify themselves in one of the specific Hispanic or Latino categories listed on the questionnaire—“Mexican,” “Puerto Rican,” or “Cuban”—as well as those who indicate that they are “other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino.” Hispanic is an ethnic origin and not a race. Ethnic origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of a person or person’s parents or ancestors before his or her arrival in the United States. Hispanics may be of any race. Hispanics are compared to other racial groups in this report to illustrate the significance of major racial and ethnic groups in the nation.

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1 Excerpted from U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, *Technical Documentation: Summary File 3, 2000 Census of Population and Housing* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002), A-4 to A-24.

2 Excerpted from U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, *Technical Documentation: Demographic Profile 2000* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002).