

# The Majority Status of Arkansas Minority Populations:

Transitioning to a  
Hispanic Major Minority



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Transitioning to a Hispanic Major Minority**

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# **The Majority Status of Arkansas Minority Populations: Transitioning to a Hispanic Major Minority**

By

Gregory L. Hamilton, Ph.D.

When people participate in a decennial census, they are asked to identify their race and to indicate whether their ethnicity is of Hispanic or Latino origin or not. Since the 2000 Census, people have been asked to identify their race according to whether they are White, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, "Some other race" , and People of two or more races. The information that people provide is self-identified, and it is used by the Census Bureau to determine the racial composition and ethnicity of the population in terms of Hispanic or Latino origin or not.

A majority race is one that makes up more than 50% of the total population in a geographical area. A minority race is a race whose composition is less than 50% of the population. In the United States, White is identified as the majority race. The remaining races by definition are minority races. A majority-minority or alternatively a minority-majority refers to a geographic area where the racial composition is less than 50% White (White non-Hispanic). According to the 2010 Census, Hawaii, Texas, California, and New Mexico are the only states that have populations characterized by a majority-minority. The District of Columbia and the territories of the United States are also characterized by majority-minority.<sup>1</sup>

This brief report traces the changing nature of the minority status of Arkansas' racial and Hispanic populations that have been enumerated in the U.S. Censuses since 1990. The report reviews the censuses racial and ethnicity enumerations, and:

- Identifies Arkansas Counties' major minority populations (to wit, whether there are a greater number of Black African Americans or people of Hispanic or Latino origin),
- Identifies counties whose minority status are transitioning from one minority group to another,
- Identifies counties that have a majority-minority racial or ethnic composition.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. "2010 Census Shows America's Diversity." March 24, 2011 News Release, [http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010\\_census/cb11-cn125.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010_census/cb11-cn125.html)

## Arkansas' Changing Population

The racial and ethnicity characteristics for Arkansas' population are reported in Table 1. The Table shows the enumerations from the Censuses, the percentage shares of the total population by race and Hispanic or Latino Origin, and their respective growth rates. Between 1990 and 2000, the U.S. Census Bureau altered their racial groups by (1) separating Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders from Asians, and (2) adding a new racial group that included people of two or more races. These racial and ethnic groups were carried over into the 2010 Census. <sup>2</sup>

Table 1: Arkansas Population Enumerations 1990-2010 U.S. Census									
Census	Total	White	Black African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pac. Islander	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
1990	2,350,725	1,944,393	373,454	14,320	12,098	NA	6,460	NA	19,586
2000	2,673,400	2,138,598	418,950	17,808	20,220	1,668	40,412	35,744	86,866
2010	2,915,918	2,245,229	449,895	22,248	36,102	5,863	99,571	57,010	186,050
Racial and Ethnic Composition (Population Shares Percent)									
Census	Total	White	Black African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pac. Islander	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
1990	100.0%	82.7%	15.9%	0.6%	0.5%	NA	0.3%	NA	0.8%
2000	100.0%	80.0%	15.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.1%	1.5%	1.3%	3.2%
2010	100.0%	77.0%	15.4%	0.8%	1.2%	0.2%	3.4%	2.0%	6.4%
Changing Ethnic and Hispanic Composition (Percentage Change in Population)									
Census	Total	White	Black African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pac. Islander	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
1990-2000	13.7%	10.0%	12.2%	24.4%	67.1%	NA	525.6%	NA	343.5%
2000-2010	9.1%	5.0%	7.4%	24.9%	78.5%	251.5%	146.4%	59.5%	114.2%
Annualized Population Growth Rates									
Census	Total	White	Black African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pac. Islander	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
1990-2000	1.3%	1.0%	1.2%	2.2%	5.3%	NA	20.1%	NA	16.1%
2000-2010	0.9%	0.5%	0.7%	2.3%	6.0%	13.4%	9.4%	4.8%	7.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and State Data Center, Institute for Economic Advancement, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Comparisons of Census counts indicate that there have been major changes in the people identifying themselves as a member of some other race and those identified as people of two or more races. The large numerical change for these groups has resulted in large percentage changes for these two groups. In part, the large numerical changes are due to reclassification of the racial groups.

Black or African Americans are the largest minority group in Arkansas. Their share of the growing state population has remained effectively constant at approximately 15%. Over the twenty year period from 1990 to 2010, Black or African American's annualized growth rate has declined from 1.2% to 0.7%.

Arkansas' White population share of the total population has declined by approximately 5.7% over the 1990-2010 period. Over this twenty year period, the percentage change in the White population and their annualized growth has both declined by a half.

<sup>2</sup> Census data for this report was obtained from : Census State Data Center, Institute for Economic Advancement, University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

The number of people identifying themselves as Hispanic or Latino origin continued to grow very rapidly, but at a declining rate. The Hispanic population’s annualized growth rate fell from 16.1% between 1990 and 2000 to 7.9% between 2000 and 2010. The number of people of Hispanic or Latino origin has more than doubled since the 1990 Census. Their current share of the state population is 6.4%.

The top two minority populations in the state are Black or African American and people of Hispanic or Latino origin.<sup>3</sup> These are not mutually exclusive population groups. In fact, Black or African Americans are a racial group while people of Hispanic or Latino origin are an ethnic group. An individual could identify themselves as Black or African American of Hispanic origin in which case they are counted in both groups. In the 2010 Census there were 2,793 people who identified themselves as Black or African American of Hispanic or Latino origin in Arkansas. Since this report focuses on majority-minority populations and on comparing the counts of Black or African American to people of Hispanic or Latino origin, no adjustments are made for the double counting of the Black or African American of Hispanic or Latino origin.

**Predominate Minority Population at the County Level by Any Ethnicity**

Table 2 summarizes the county counts of the two major minority populations in Arkansas as reported in the three census enumerations. In the 1990 Census, there were 54 counties whose predominate minority was Black or African American. By the 2000 Census, the number of counties with a predominate Black or African American minority declined to a total of 47 counties, and by the 2010 Census the total had declined to 41 counties. This decline in the number of counties was offset by the increase in the number of counties where people of Hispanic or Latino origin predominated. In the 1990 Census, there were 21 counties where people of Hispanic or Latino origin were the major minority population. By the 2000 Census there were 28 counties, and in the 2010 Census there were 34 counties where people of Hispanic or Latino origin were the predominate minority group.

<b>Table 2: Predominate Minority Population By County (Totals)</b>			
Census	1990	2000	2010
Black or African American	54	47	41
Hispanic or Latino Origin	21	28	34
Source: Computations by IEA-UALR			

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<sup>3</sup> The terms minority population and minority races are used differently in this report. A minority population refers to a Non White population that is less than fifty percent of a total population. A minority race refers to races other than the majority White race. Minority race excludes people who indicate their race is White and their ethnicity is of Hispanic or Latino origin. Furthermore, people who indicate their ethnicity is of Hispanic or Latino origin can be of any race.

### **Counties with Predominate Minority Population in Transition**

The rapid growth of people of Hispanic or Latino origin over the last twenty years has changed the minority characteristic of many counties' populations throughout the state. Tables 3, 4, and 5 list Arkansas' counties by their urban-rural status, identifies each county's predominate minority population, and indicates the counties that have transitioned from one prevailing minority group to another during the 1990-2010 period.

### **Metropolitan Statistical Areas**

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) are defined by the Office of Management and Budget as areas that have high population densities at their core and contiguous geographic areas with close ties.<sup>4</sup> Table 3 lists the seven MSAs in Arkansas and their related counties. The minority status of the Arkansas MSA's counties supports the common belief that the Arkansas Hispanic population has primarily impacted the northwest corner of the state. In the 2000 Census, people of Hispanic or Latino origin have been the predominate minority in the Fort Smith and Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers MSAs. The 2010 Census indicates that Central Arkansas gained people of Hispanic or Latino origin. The minority status of two counties in the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway MSA transitioned to Hispanic between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses. Overall in the twenty year period of this study, four of the twenty MSA counties in Arkansas transitioned from a Black major minority to a Hispanic major minority.

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<sup>4</sup> Current lists of metropolitan and Micropolitan statistical areas and definitions are available at U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/metroareas/metrodef.html>, September 8, 2011.

<b>Table 3: Predominate Minority Populations In Metropolitan Statistical Areas</b>						
County	1990	2000	2010	Transition in 2000 to:	Transition in 2010 to:	
<b>Fort Smith (Arkansas Side)</b>						
Crawford	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-	
Franklin	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-	
Sebastian	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	
<b>Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers</b>						
Benton	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-	
Madison	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-	
Washington	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	
<b>Hot Springs</b>						
Garland	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
<b>Jonesboro</b>						
Craighead	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
Poinsett	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
<b>Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway</b>						
Faulkner	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
Grant	Black	Black	Hispanic	-	Hispanic	
Lonoke	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
Perry	Black	Black	Hispanic	-	Hispanic	
Pulaski	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
Saline	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
<b>Memphis (Arkansas Side)</b>						
Crittenden	1	1	1	-	-	
<b>Pine Bluff</b>						
Cleveland	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
Jefferson	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
Lincoln	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
<b>Texarkana (Arkansas Side)</b>						
Miller	Black	Black	Black	-	-	
<b>Totals of MSA Counties</b>						
Total Black	16	14	12	0	0	
Total Hispanic	4	6	8	2	2	

## Micropolitan Areas

A Micropolitan Area (MICROA) has a core area and a population limited to 10,000 to 49,999. With the exception of Harrison and Russellville, Arkansas' MICROA are single county areas as listed in Table 4. There are eighteen counties classified as MICROA in Arkansas. During the twenty years of this study, three MICROA counties' minority populations have transitioned to a predominately minority of people of Hispanic or Latino origin. Again these MICROA counties are predominately in the northwest quarter of the state.

County	Micropolitan Area	1990	2000	2010	Transition in 2000 to:	Transition in 2010 to:
Clark	Arkadelphia, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Independence	Batesville, AR	Black	Black	Hispanic	-	Hispanic
Mississippi	Blytheville, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Calhoun	Camden, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Ouachita	Camden, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Union	El Dorado, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
St. Francis	Forrest City, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Boone	Harrison, AR	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Newton	Harrison, AR	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Hempstead	Hope, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Nevada	Hope, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Columbia	Magnolia, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Baxter	Mountain Home, AR	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Greene	Paragould, AR	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Pope	Russellville, AR	Black	Black	Hispanic	-	Hispanic
Yell	Russellville, AR	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-
White	Searcy, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Phillips	West Helena, AR	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Totals of Micropolitan Counties						
Total Black		14	13	11	0	0
Total Hispanic		4	5	7	1	2
Source: Computations by IEA-UALR						

## Rural Counties

Table 5 lists the 37 rural counties of Arkansas. That is, counties that are neither classified as a MSA or a MICROA. Over the last three decennial censuses, the number of counties whose major minority has been people of Hispanic or Latino origin has slowly increased at a diminishing rate. As of the 2010 Census there was a near equality between the number of rural counties with a Black population major minority and counties with a Hispanic major minority. With the exception of Izard county, the transition of rural counties' minority status has been to a Hispanic majority from a Black majority. Izard County



was the only county to transition from a Hispanic major minority to a Black major minority in the 2000 Census. However, in the 2010 Census IZARD County transitioned back to a Hispanic major minority.

There is a geographical split between counties that had population with different minority status. People of Hispanic or Latino origin dominate in the counties in the northwest portion of the state. While in the counties in the southeast portion of the state the predominate minority population is Black or African American.

County	1990	2000	2010	Transition in 2000	Transition in 2010
Arkansas	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Ashley	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Bradley	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Carroll	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Chicot	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Clay	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Cleburne	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Conway	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Cross	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Dallas	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Desha	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Drew	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Fulton	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Hot Spring	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Howard	Black	Black	Black	-	-
IZARD	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic
Jackson	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Johnson	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-
Lafayette	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Lawrence	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-
Lee	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Little River	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Logan	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-
Marion	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Monroe	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Montgomery	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Pike	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-
Polk	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Prairie	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Randolph	Black	Black	Hispanic	-	Hispanic
Scott	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Searcy	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Sevier	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-
Sharp	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Stone	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Van Buren	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	-	-
Woodruff	Black	Black	Black	-	-
Totals of Counties					
Total Black	24	20	18	1	0
Total Hispanic	13	17	19	5	2

## Counties with a Majority-Minority Population and Race

Although people of Hispanic or Latino origin have gained a majority status in 13 counties in the last three censuses, they have not yet achieved a majority-minority population status in any county. However, people who identified themselves as Black or African American continued to maintain a majority-minority status in several counties. Table 6 lists the counties whose populations were characterized by a Black or African American (of any ethnicity) majority-minority during the last three Census enumerations or whose Black or African American population has transitioned to a majority-minority race during this period.

County	Urban-Rural	1990	2000	2010
Crittenden	Memphis (MSA)	No	No	Black
Jefferson	Pine Bluff (MSA)	No	No	Black
St. Francis	Forrest City (MICROA)	No	No	Black
Phillips	West Helena (MICROA)	Black	Black	Black
Chicot	Rural	Black	Black	Black
Lee	Rural	Black	Black	Black

Source: Computed By IEA\_UALR

## Counties' Minority Status Adjusted for People Who Are White and of Hispanic or Latino Origin

Thus far in this report, a county's predominate minority population was determined by comparing race and to an ethnic group that were not necessarily mutually exclusive. People who are White and of Hispanic or Latino origin are not members of a minority race. To identify a minority status of a county by race, people who are self-identified as White and of Hispanic or Latino origin must be excluded from the count. This was not done the previous analysis because that analysis focused on the geographical distribution counties as they transition from one major minority population to another.

When people who are White and of Hispanic or Latino origin are excluded from the count and only Non White Hispanics are counted, fewer counties had a change in their major minority status. Table 7 lists the twelve Arkansas counties where there was a change in the county's major minority race.

County	MSA	Micro	Rural	Hispanic (All Races)			Non White Hispanic (only)		
				1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
Sebastian	Fort Smith			Black	Black	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Grant	LR-NLR-Conway			Black	Black	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Perry	LR-NLR-Conway			Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Independence		Batesville, AR		Hispanic	Black	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Pope		Russellville, AR		Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Fulton			Rural	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	NWH only	Black	NWH only
Izard			Rural	Hispanic	Black	Hispanic	NWH only	Black	Black
Lawrence			Rural	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Logan			Rural	Black	Black	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Pike			Rural	Black	Black	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Randolph			Rural	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Black	Black	Black
Sharp			Rural	Black	Black	Hispanic	Black	Black	NWH only

Source: Computations by IEA-UALR

In all twelve cases, excluding the White Hispanic population resulted in the major minority population and race to change to a Black or African American instead of people of Hispanic origin. This reversed the transition to Hispanic major minority population in two counties in the LR-NLR-Conway MSA as well as in Sebastian County. Except for Sharp County, the transitions of the rural counties listed in the Table to a Hispanic major minority population were also nullified. Sharp County's transition was delayed from the 2000 Census until the 2010 Census.

Table 8 summarizes the majority status of the minority races and ethnic groups in Arkansas for the last three Censuses. The exclusion of Whites of Hispanic or Latino Origin reduced the number of counties that had minority status changed, but the exclusion did not eliminate the transitions. Hence, race and ethnicity of the population makes a difference in classifying a county's predominant minority population and opposed the predominant minority race. Regardless of these differences in counts due to race and ethnicity, the predominate minority population in many Arkansas counties is changing to one of people of Hispanic or of Latino ethnicity.

<b>Table 8</b>			
<b>Arkansas' Counties Dominate Minority Races and Ethnic Groups</b>			
<b>Summary of Census Counts</b>			
<b>1990-2010</b>			
	1990	2000	2010
Black and African American Dominate Minority Race	54	47	41
Hispanic or of Latino Orgin Dominate Minority	21	28	34
Non White Hispanic Dominate Minority Group	17	22	29
Black and Afican American Majority-Minority Race	3	3	6

### **Degree of Racial and Ethnic Separation and Spatial Isolation in Arkansas**

In the final two tables of this report, the results from the computations for two indices of segregation for different racial populations and ethnic groups are reported. In both computations, a county's population group is the subunit and the comparison is to the state's counterpart population unit. In the case, the index of dissimilarity measures the percentage of the county's population group that must move in order to achieve an even distribution throughout the state.<sup>5</sup> The index of isolation measures the probability that a randomly chosen person of a population group would meet someone of the same population group in the state.

The values for index of dissimilarity indicate mixed patterns of segregation changes over the three censuses. Between the 1990 Census and the 2000 Census the dissimilarity index rose for most population groups indicating greater segregation. However, between the 2000 Census and 2010 Census their values declined across all the population groups. The exception to this mixed finding is the values of the Black to All Other Races which declined throughout the three censuses indicating a reduction in segregation.

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<sup>5</sup> Siegel, Jacob and David Swanson. *The Methods and Materials of Demography*. Elsevier Academic Press, San Diego, CA. 2004: pages 117-123.

Table 9 Index of Dissimilarity				
Population Groups		1990	2000	2010
White	All Other Races	48.1%	60.0%	59.9%
Black	All Other Races	52.7%	48.8%	41.3%
Other Races	White + Black	25.7%	49.1%	42.0%
Hispanic	Rest of Population	19.8%	37.5%	37.2%
Non-White Hispanic	Rest of Population	23.5%	38.1%	35.1%
Percent of one group that would have to change residence in order to produce an even distribution between the two groups. Values range from 0 meaning the absence of segregation to unity indicating complete segregation.				

The index of isolation also indicates mixed patterns of segregation among the population groups, but in several incidences this pattern contradicts the findings of the index of similarity. The value of the white's index of isolation falls for the three censuses indicating declining segregation contrary to the previous findings. The index of isolation for Blacks changes very little while the values of this index for non-White Hispanic increase contrary to the previous findings. The contradictions in the findings become even more prevalent when the finds from the 2000 and 2010 Censuses are compared.

Table 10 Index of Isolation			
Population Groups	1990	2000	2010
White	0.856	0.831	0.803
Black	0.314	0.334	0.340
Other Races	0.023	0.064	0.110
Hispanic	0.011	0.060	0.106
Non-White Hispanic	0.007	0.037	0.069
Probability that a random member of one group will meet another member of the same group. Values range from 0 meaning no segregation to unity indicating complete segregation.			