

## Demographic Characteristics Across Arkansas

### Metropolitan Areas

Metropolitan statistical areas have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population and may include adjacent counties that have a minimum of 25 percent of workers commuting to the central counties of the metropolitan statistical area.<sup>2</sup> They are geographic areas defined by the U.S. Census Bureau according to standards created by the Office of Management and Budget.

There are eight MSAs within Arkansas; together, these MSAs include 20 counties in the state. The Arkansas MSAs are Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Fort Smith, Hot Springs, Jonesboro, Little Rock-North Little Rock, Memphis, Pine Bluff, and Texarkana. Four of these extend beyond the borders of Arkansas; for the purposes of this study, only the portions located within Arkansas are included in the analysis.

In 2000, the largest of the MSAs was the Little Rock-North Little Rock MSA, with 22.8% of the state’s population. The smallest was Texarkana, with 1.5% of the population. By 2020, Little Rock-North Little Rock is projected to have grown at an annualized rate of 1.46%, and will still remain the largest MSA at 22.8% of the population. Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers is projected to be the state’s fastest growing MSA, with an annualized growth rate of 3.1% and a share of the state’s population moving from 12.2% to 16.8%. At the other extreme, Arkansas share of Texarkana MSA (Miller County) will continue to remain the smallest MSA, at 1.3% of the state by 2020, and an annualized growth rate of 0.72%. The slowest growing MSA between 2020 is the Arkansas share of the Memphis TN-AR-MS MSA (Crittenden County), with an annualized growth of only 0.63%, accounting for only 1.6% of Arkansas’ people by 2020.

**Table 5**

| <b>Growth Rate and Percent Change, Metro Areas in Arkansas</b> |              |              |                |                               |
|--|--------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
|  | <b>Y2000</b> | <b>Y2020</b> | <b>%change</b> | <b>Annualized Growth Rate</b> |
| Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers                                 | 325,364      | 599,305      | 84%            | 3.10%                         |
| Fort Smith, AR-OK  | 186,089      | 262,574      | 41%            | 1.74%                         |
| Hot Springs, AR  | 88,068       | 126,151      | 43%            | 1.81%                         |
| Jonesboro, AR  | 107,762      | 150,616      | 40%            | 1.69%                         |
| Little Rock-North Little Rock, AR                              | 610,518      | 815,445      | 34%            | 1.46%                         |
| Memphis, TN-AR-MS  | 50,866       | 57,617       | 13%            | 0.63%                         |
| Pine Bluff, AR   | 107,341      | 122,642      | 14%            | 0.67%                         |
| Texarkana, TX-AR   | 40,443       | 46,654       | 15%            | 0.72%                         |

<sup>2</sup> Standards for Defining Metropolitan and Micropolitan Areas, Office of Management and Budget, Federal Register, Vol 65, No. 249. December 27, 2000, p. 32238.