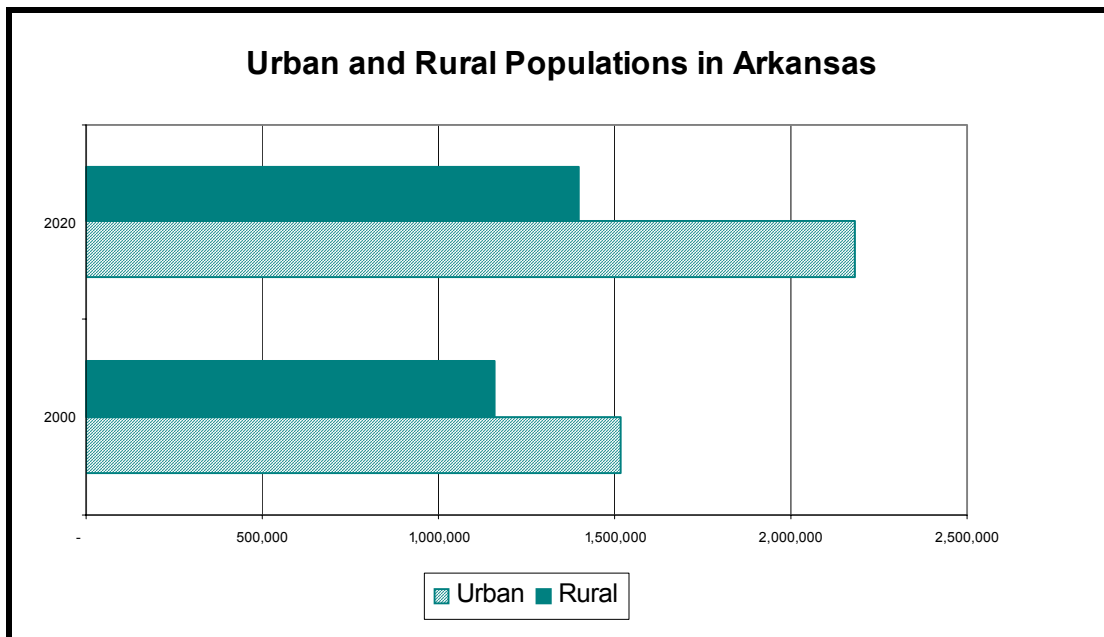


**Table 7
Growth Rates in Urban and Rural Areas**

Growth Rate and Percent Change				
	2000	2020	% Change	Annualized Growth Rate
Urban	1,516,451	2,181,005	44%	1.83%
Rural	1,156,949	1,396,242	21%	0.94%

Figure 6



Urban dwellers tend to be younger, with a median age of 34.9 years, versus 37.7 years in rural counties. This difference will be a bit more distinct in 2020, when urbanites are projected to have a median age of 36.8 and rural residents have a median of 41.3 years of age.

In terms of dependency ratios, the rural area of Arkansas had an age dependency ratio of 79.0 in 2000; that is expected to increase slightly to 80.2 in 2020. The age dependency ratio of urban residents is projected to remain the same in 2020 as it was in 2000, that is, 71.7. The difference between the urban and rural age dependency ratios may have implications for economic development, as a higher age dependency ratio is associated with a smaller total workforce. The child dependency ratio in rural Arkansas was 50.3 in 2000, and is projected to decline to 44.8 in 2020, while the ratio in urban areas is projected to drop to 45.7 from its 2000 level of 47.1. The rural old age dependency ratio was 28.7 in 2000, and is projected to increase to 35.4 in 2020. The old age dependency ratio in urban areas is expected to increase, but only slightly, from its 2000 level of 24.6 to 25.4 in 2020.

The 2000 ratio of aged persons to children was 57.1 in rural areas, and is expected to increase considerably by 2020, to 79.1. This points to an aging population within rural areas of the state. In urban areas, the ratio of aged persons to children is expected to move only slightly upward, from 52.3 in 2000 to 55.5 in 2020.