

Table 8
Dependency Ratios in Urban and Rural Areas

	Year	Total MSA (urban) population	All Rural Counties
Median Age	2000	34.9	37.7
	2020	36.8	41.3
Age Dependency Ratio (Per 100)	2000	71.7	79.0
	2020	71.1	80.2
Youth Dependency Ratio (Per 100)	2000	47.1	50.3
	2020	45.7	44.8
Old Age Dependency Ratio (Per 100)	2000	24.6	28.7
	2020	25.4	35.4
Ratio of Aged Persons to Youth (Per 100)	2000	52.3	57.1
	2020	55.5	79.1
Dependency Ratio = (Age under 20 + Age 65 and over) / (Age 20-64) X 100 Youth dependency ratio = Age under 20 / Age 20- 64 X 100 Old age dependency ratio = Age 65 and over / Age 20 - 64 X100			

Emerging Urban Areas

Several substate regions were identified in the course of this study as emerging urban areas. The regions are areas of potential population growth in Arkansas. They were identified using combined Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Micropolitan Statistical Areas in Arkansas. A Micropolitan Statistical Area has at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population and may include adjacent counties that have a minimum of 25 percent of workers commuting to the central counties of the micropolitan statistical area.³ There are 14 Micropolitan Statistical Areas in Arkansas, four of which are multicounty areas.

Micropolitan statistical areas may be looked upon as emerging urban areas. Outside of these micropolitan and metropolitan areas, the population may be categorized demographically as rural, displaying the characteristics described above. Within the areas, the populations may be characterized as either urbanized and or emerging urban populations. There are six emerging urban areas including the Northwest Arkansas (NWAR), Southwest Arkansas (SWAR), Central Arkansas (CAR), MidNorth Arkansas (MidNorth), and White River.

³ Ibid., p. 82238.