



KANSAS HEALTH INSTITUTE

# Setting the Stage: The Landscape of Rural America

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January 25, 2024

Topeka, Kansas

Food is Medicine Research Action Plan  
– Midwest Convening



# Who We Are

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- Nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization based in Topeka.
- Established in 1995 with a multi-year grant by the Kansas Health Foundation.
- Committed to convening meaningful conversations around tough topics related to health.



# What Rural Isn't

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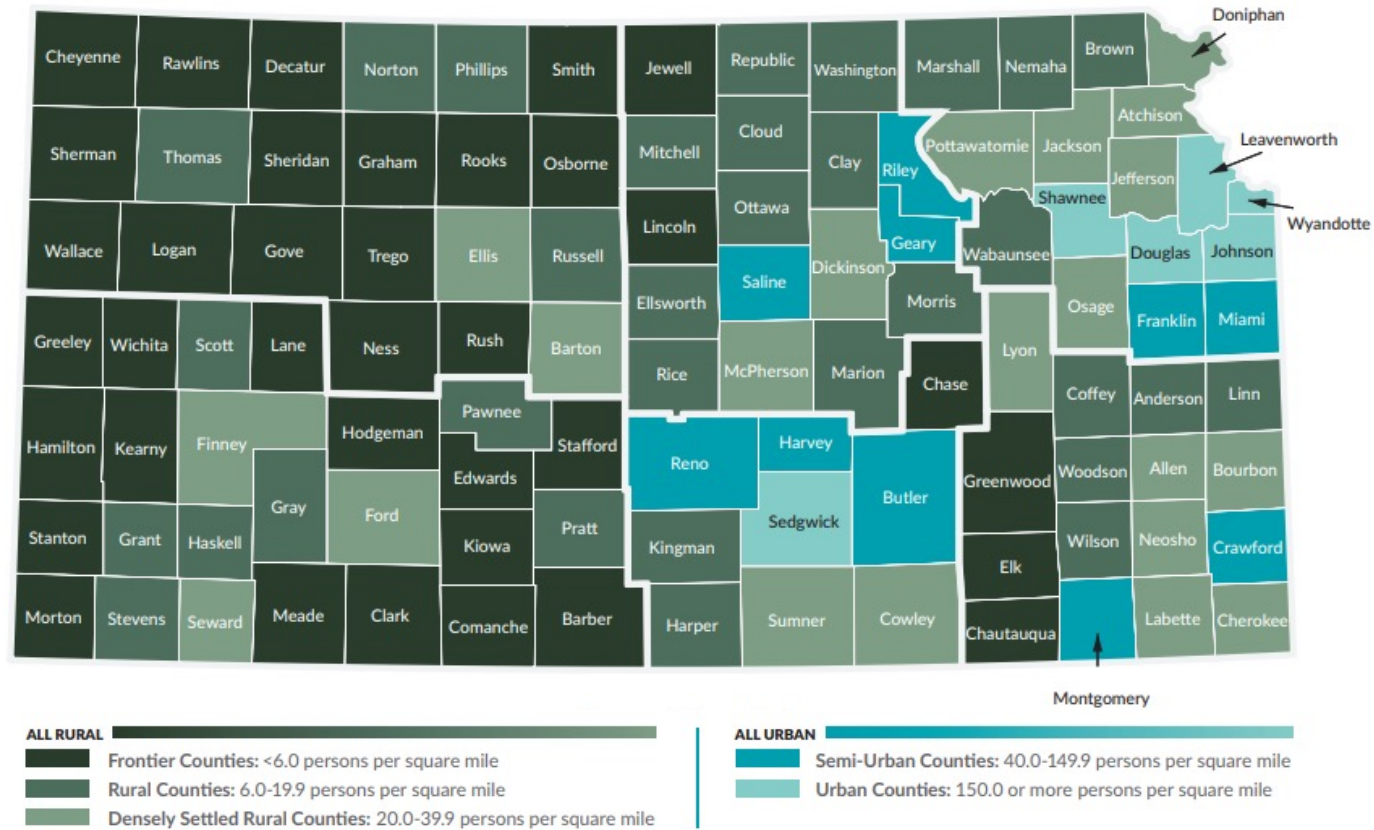
Urban, but Smaller



Uniform



# How Rural Is Rural?



Source: Kansas Health Institute presentation of KDHE county peer groups by population density.



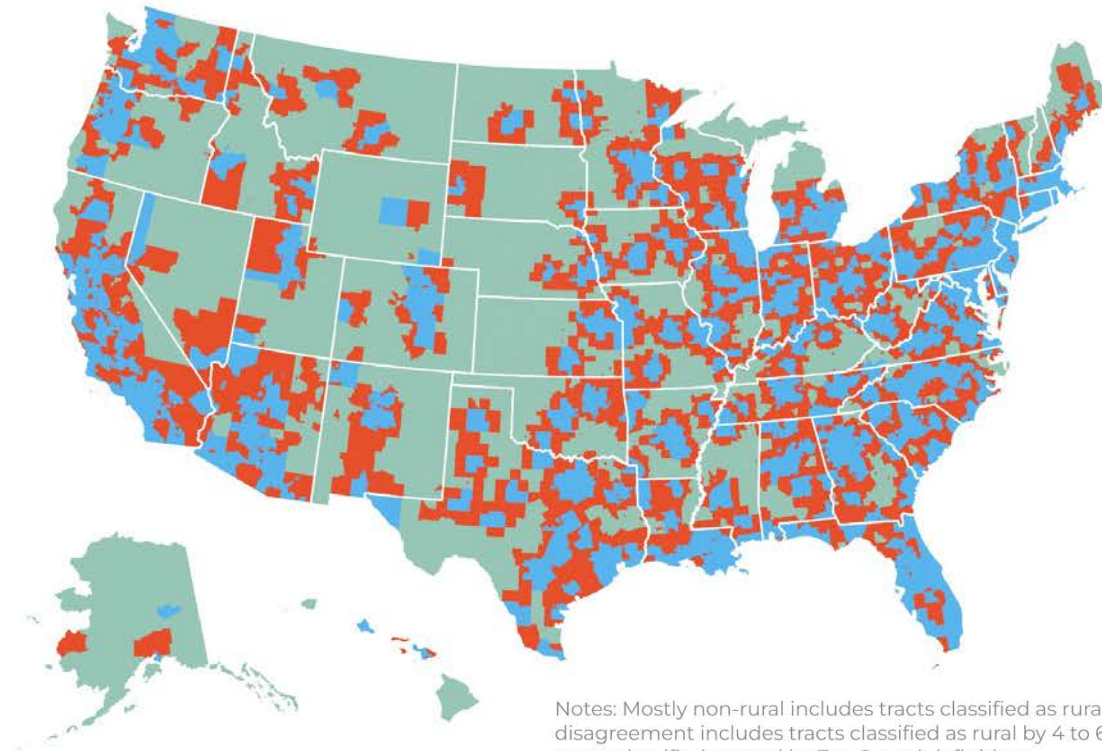
# A Farm Near Dispatch



# Rural Definitions

Agreement by census tract across 9 rural definitions

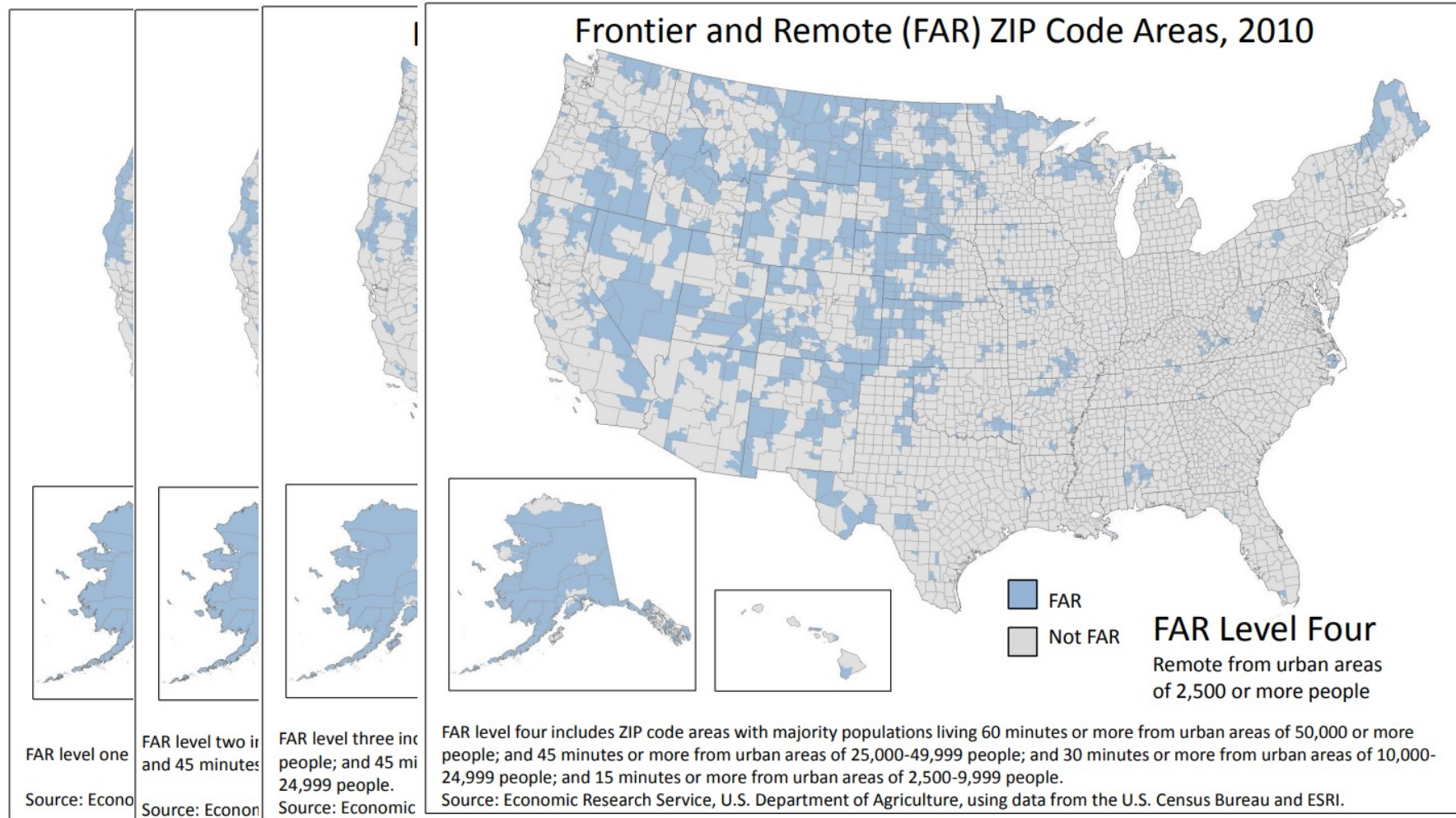
■ Mostly non-rural ■ Most disagreement ■ Mostly rural



Notes: Mostly non-rural includes tracts classified as rural by 1 to 3 rural definitions. Most disagreement includes tracts classified as rural by 4 to 6 rural definitions. Mostly rural includes tracts classified as rural by 7 to 9 rural definitions.



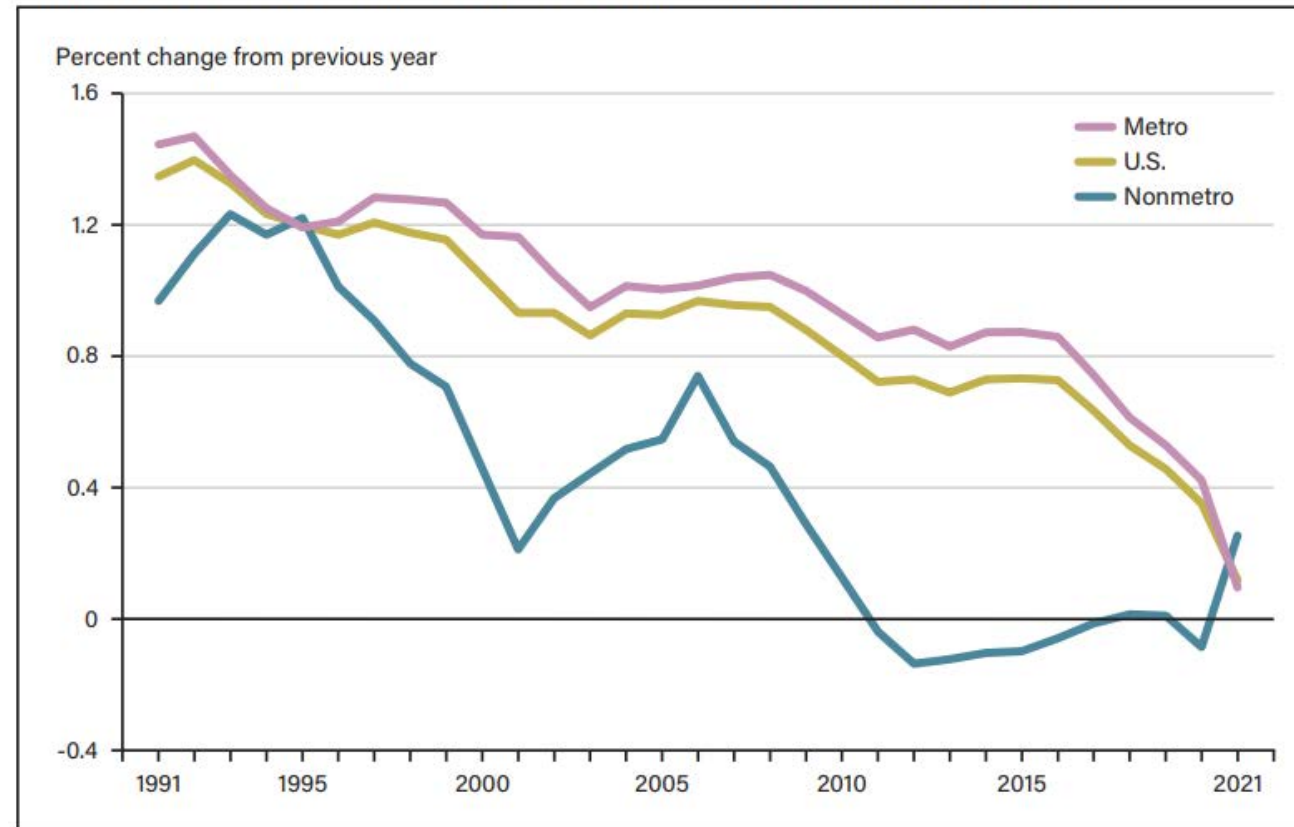
# How Far is FAR?



Frontier  
 and  
 Remote  
 (FAR) ZIP  
 Code Areas

# Nonmetro Population Declined in 2010-2020

The period 2010-20 was the first decade of overall nonmetropolitan population decline



Note: The metropolitan status changes for some counties in 2000 and 2010.

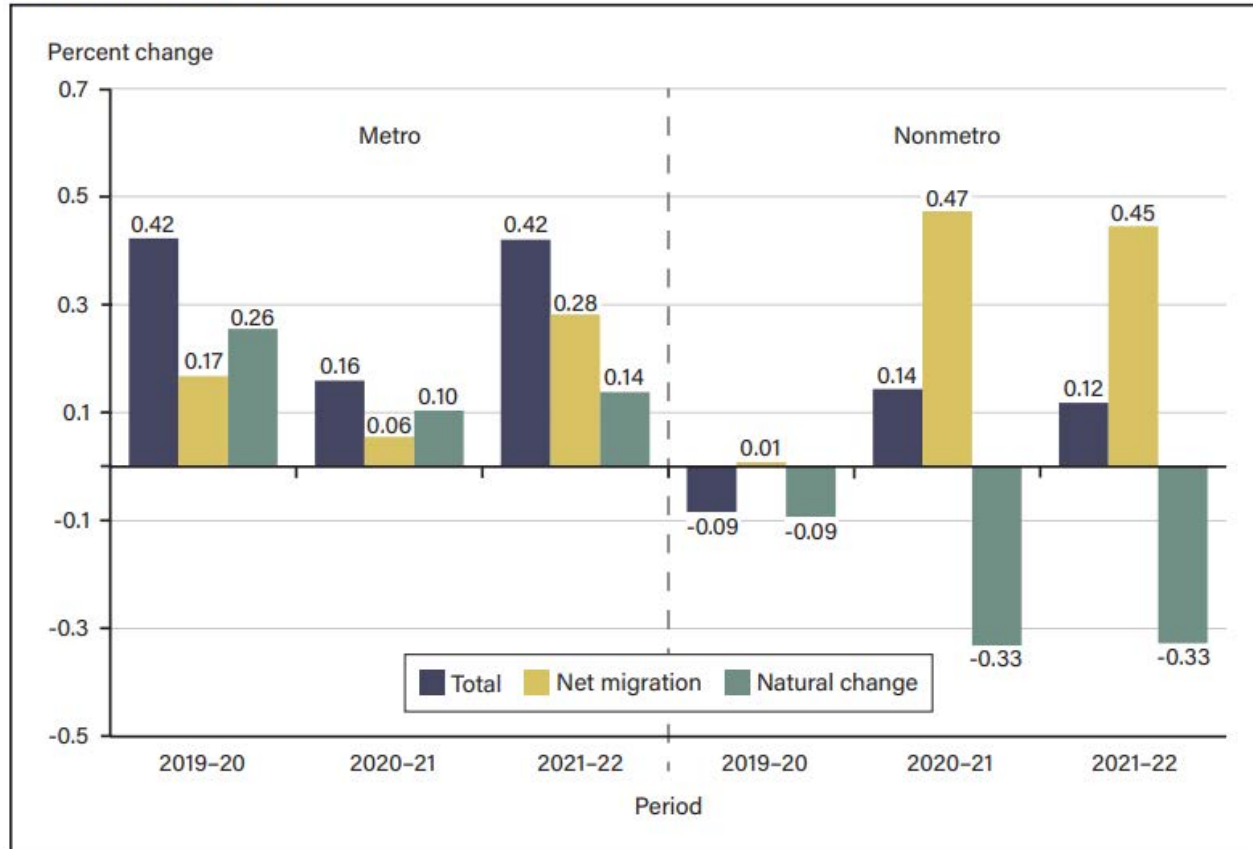
Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census data.





# Something Changed in 2021

Population change and components of change, metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22



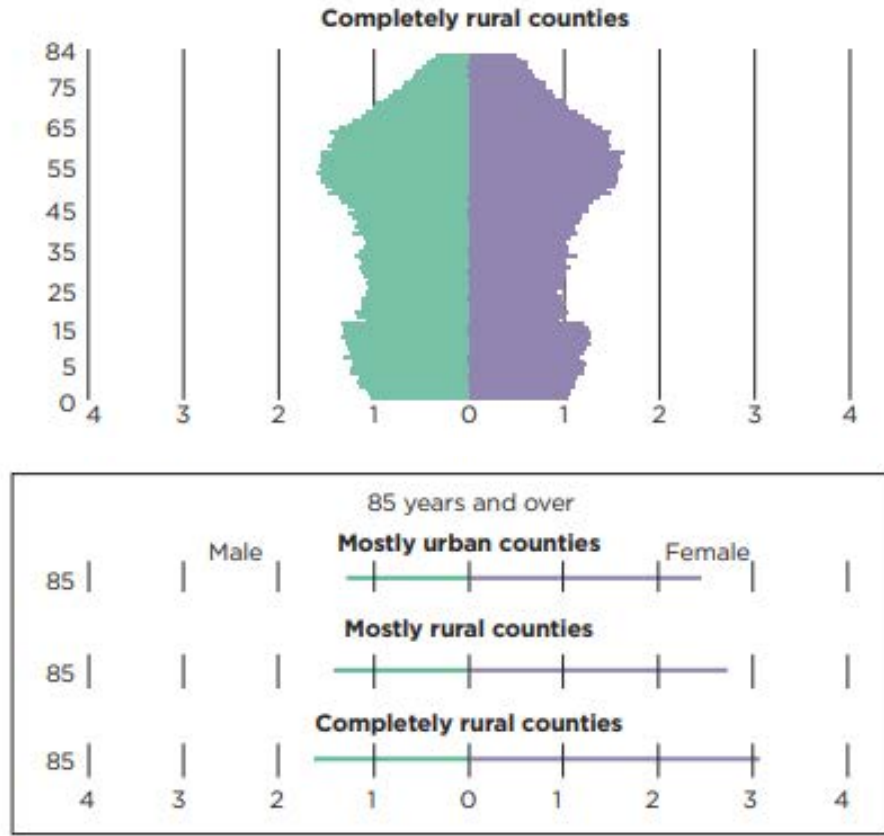
Note: The 1-year periods comprise July through June.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

- Driven by net migration in 2020-21 and 2021-22, nonmetro areas grew approximately a quarter percent from 2020 to 2022.
- But overall natural decrease that began in 2017 accelerated in 2020-21.



# Population by Age, Sex and Rurality



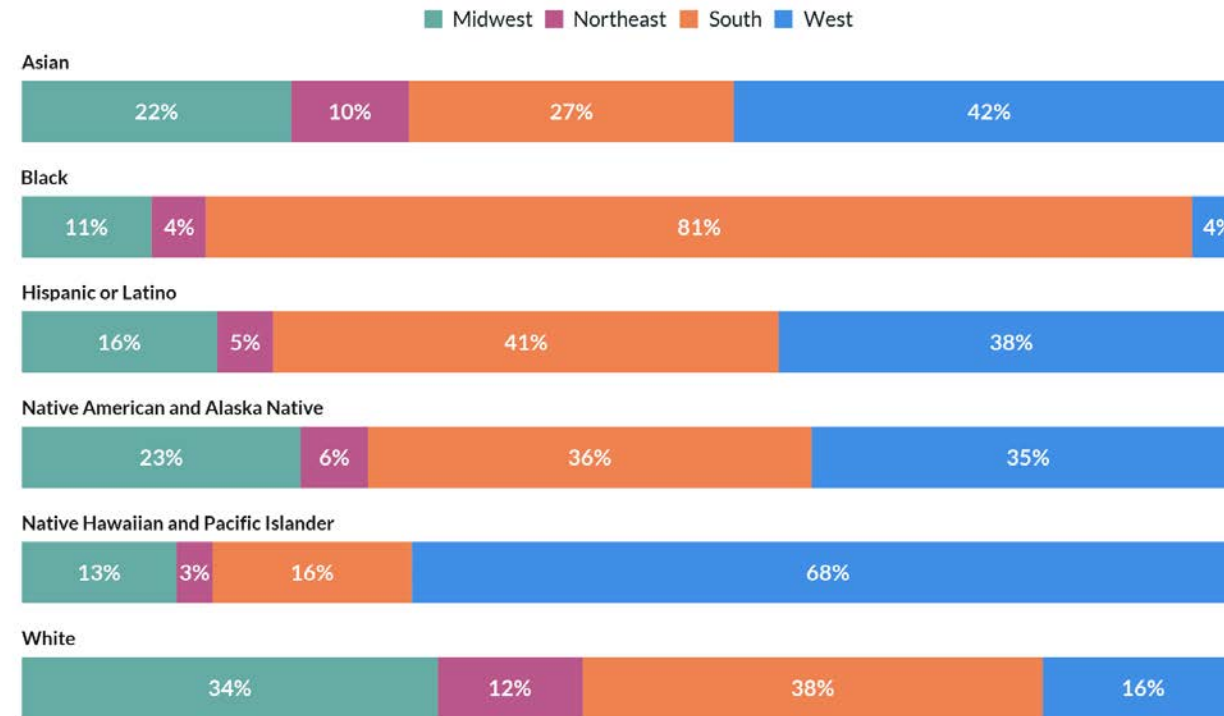
Note: The age category 85 years and over is aggregated due to data disclosure. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <[www.census.gov/acs](http://www.census.gov/acs)>.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.

# Increasing Diversity

## Racial and ethnic diversity in rural places is regionally concentrated



Share of racial or ethnic group that lives in a region, 2020

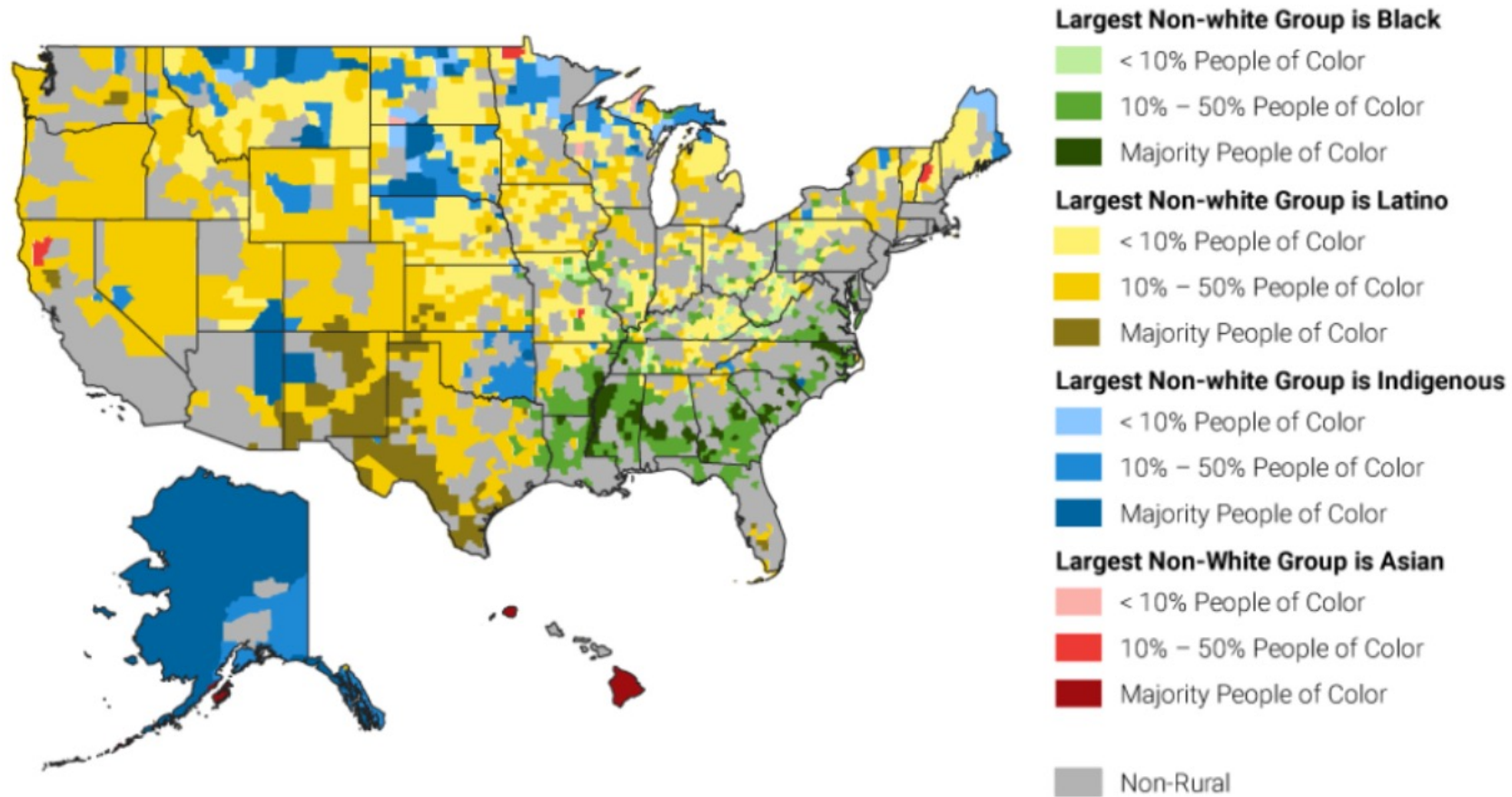


Source: 2020 census

Notes: "Rural" refers to the "nonmetro plus" definition, which includes all nonmetro counties and all tracts classified as RUCA 4 or higher. "Native American" refers to those who self-identify as "American Indian" in the census. Racial population counts include those who selected multiple races.



# Diversity in Rural America



Source: Brookings analysis of 2020 U.S. Census data



# Indicators as Issues

People in rural areas **live 3 fewer years** than people in urban areas, with **rural areas having higher death rates for heart disease and stroke.**



**Rural women face higher maternal mortality rates**

Rural residents face **higher rates of tobacco use, physical inactivity, obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure**



Rural populations face greater challenges with **mental and behavioral health** and have **limited access to mental health care.**

**Rural hospitals are closing or facing the possibility of closing**

**+**

**Increasing shortages of clinicians**



**Long distances and lack of transportation make it difficult to access emergency, specialty and preventive care.**

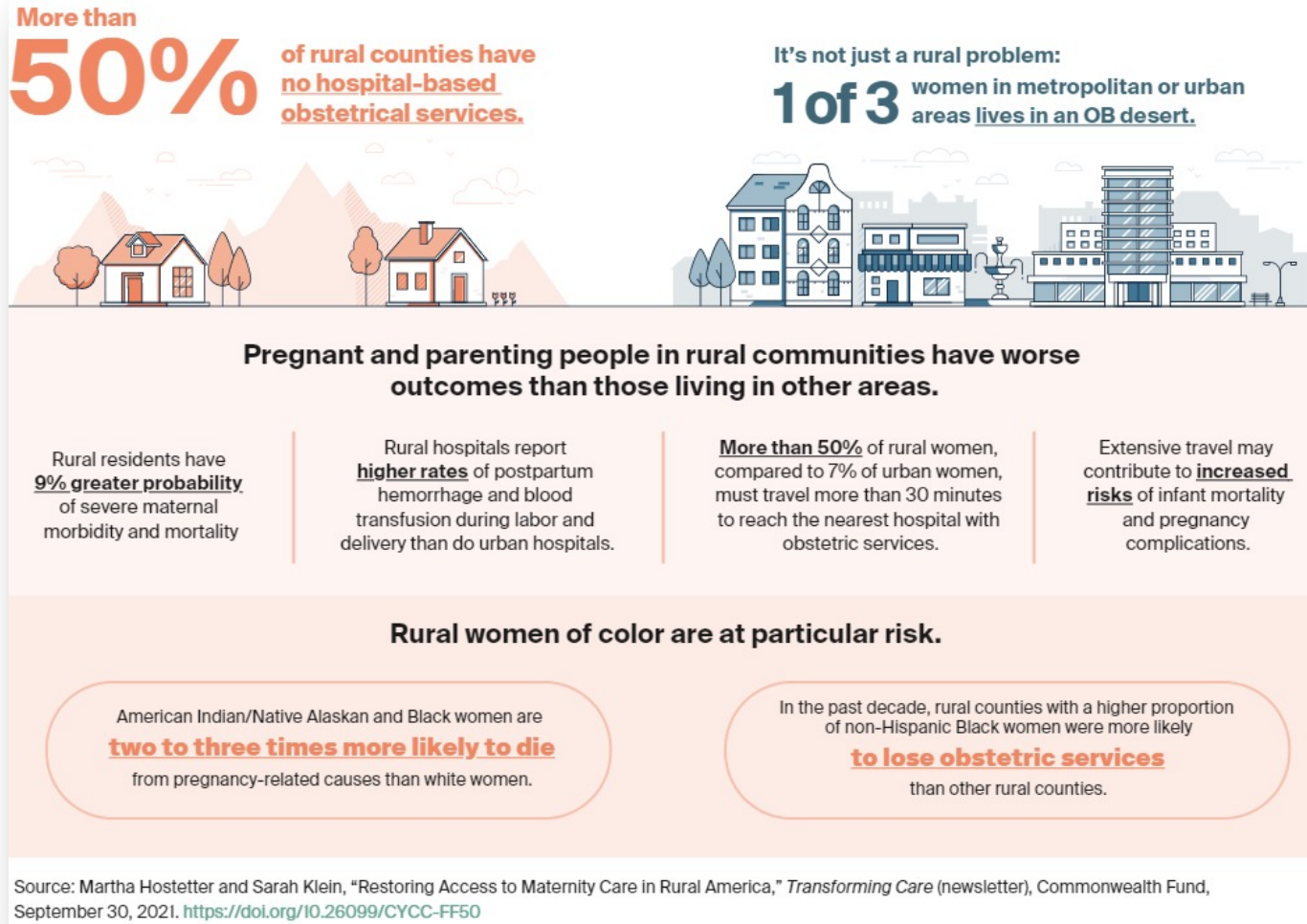


Rural populations are more likely to be **uninsured and have fewer affordable health insurance options** than in suburban and urban areas.

Source: Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, Health Resources & Services Administration, 2022.

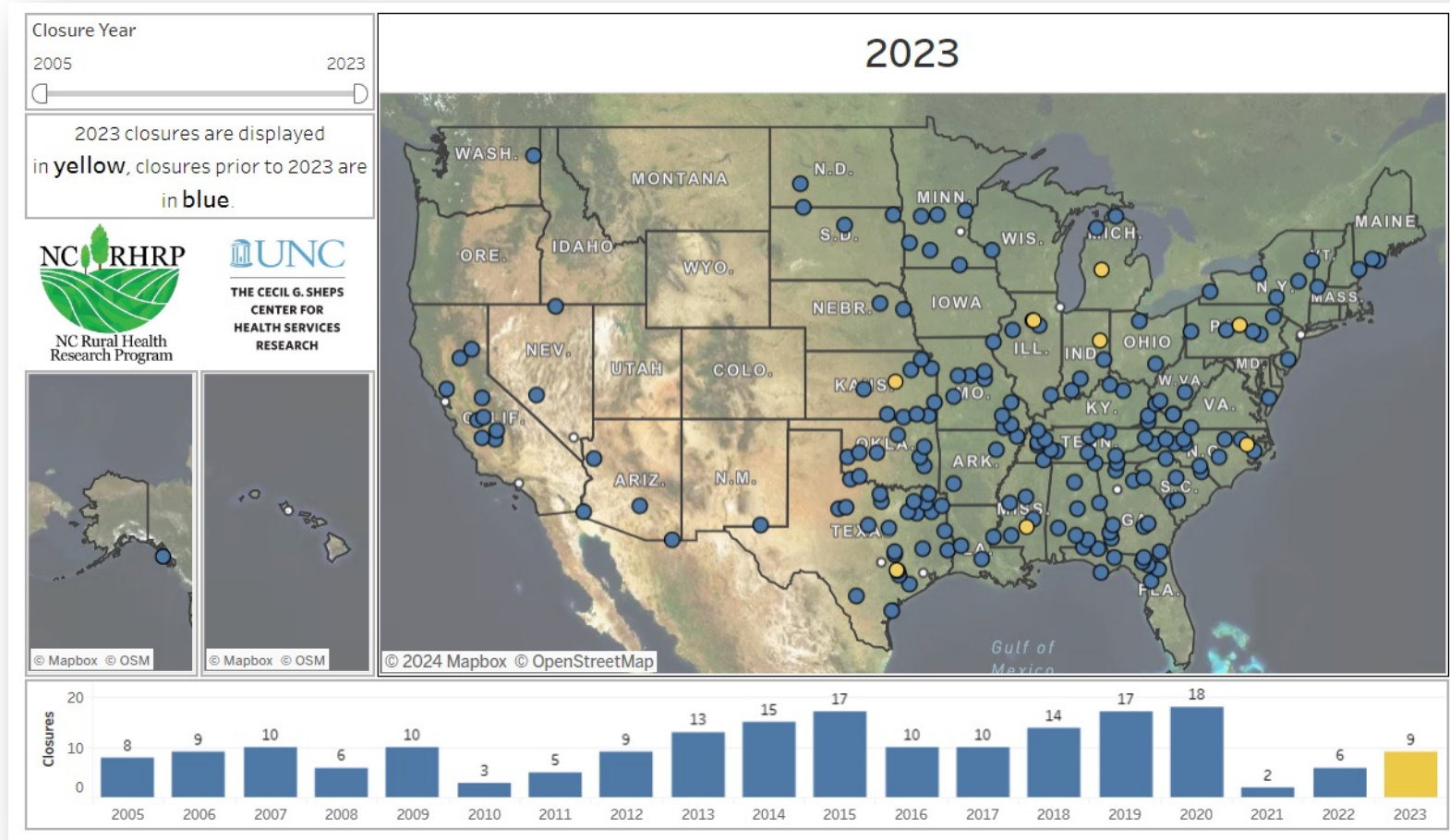


# Maternity Care



# Hospital Closures: After Pause, Trend Resumes

191 rural hospital closures or conversions since 2005



# Rural Health Workforce

Primary Care

MD, DO

- Rural = 52.0/100,000 People
- Urban = 80.5/100,000 People

All Primary Care (MD, DO, NP, PA)

- Rural = 153.3/100,000 People
- Urban = 213.9/100,000 People

Note: Rural and urban defined as nonmetropolitan and metropolitan, respectively  
 Source: HRSA Area Health Resource File, 2020-2021 (2019 data)

Behavioral Health

U.S. Counties without Behavioral Health Providers by Urban Influence Category

	Counties without a Psychiatrist (Percent)	Counties without a Psychologist (Percent)	Counties without a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (Percent)	Counties without a Social Worker (Percent)	Counties without a Counselor (Percent)	Counties without any Behavioral Health Provider (Percent)
<b>U.S. (3135 counties)</b>	1699 (54.2)	1076 (34.3)	1711 (54.6)	487 (15.5)	404 (12.9)	241 (7.7)
<b>Metropolitan (1164 counties)</b>	316 (27.1)	183 (15.7)	360 (30.9)	62 (5.3)	50 (4.3)	25 (2.1)
<b>Non-Metro (1971 counties)</b>	1383 (70.2)	893 (45.3)	1351 (68.5)	425 (21.6)	354 (18.0)	216 (11.0)
Adjacent to metro (1023 counties)	653 (63.8)	377 (36.9)	651 (63.6)	145 (14.2)	112 (10.9)	60 (5.9)
Micro nonadjacent to metro (269 counties)	137 (50.9)	74 (27.5)	123 (45.7)	38 (14.1)	30 (11.2)	21 (7.8)
Noncore adjacent to metro (373 counties)	337 (90.3)	254 (68.1)	319 (85.5)	135 (36.2)	114 (30.6)	70 (18.8)
Noncore nonadjacent to metro or micro (306 counties)	256 (83.7)	188 (61.4)	258 (84.3)	107 (35.0)	98 (32.0)	65 (21.2)

Data Sources: Psychiatrists (2019) - Area Health Resource File (AHRF), 2020-2021, Psychologists and psychiatric nurse practitioners (July 2021), social workers, and counselors (January 2022) - National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES) National Provider Identifier (NPI) data, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service (ERS) Urban Influence Codes, 2013.

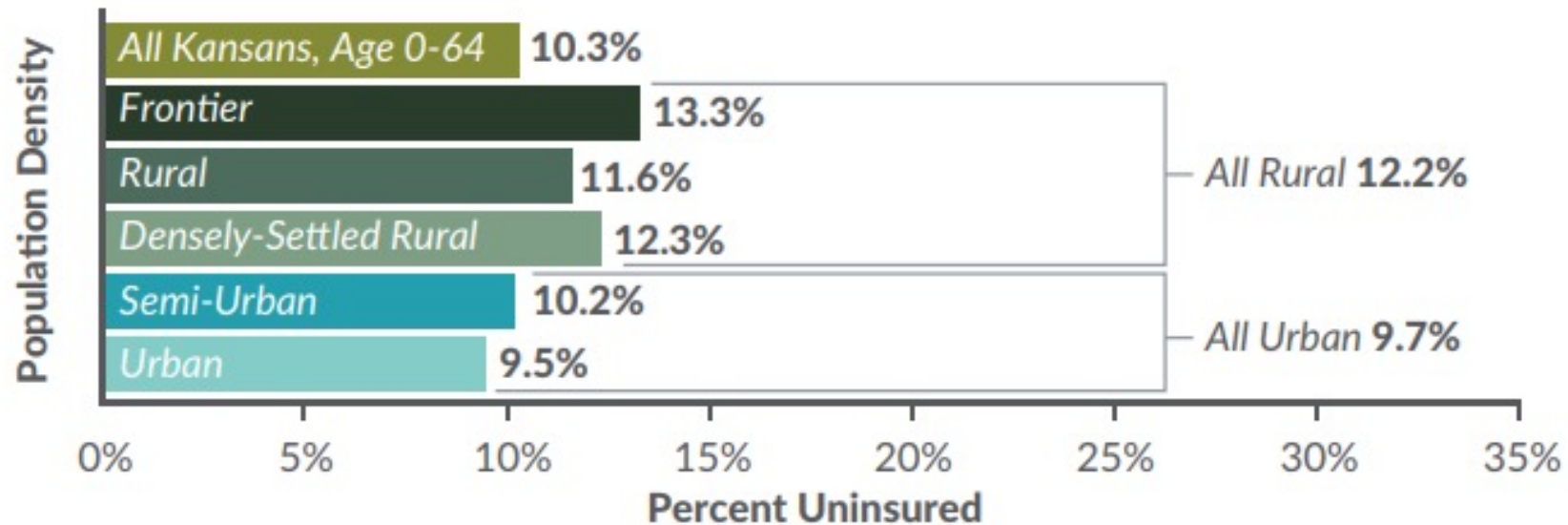




# Health Insurance Coverage

## Kansans Age 0-64 Living in Frontier Counties Most Likely to be Uninsured

Figure 5.5b Kansans Age 0-64: Uninsured Rate by County Urban-Rural Classification, 2020



Note: Uninsured Kansans age 0-64 (not in institutions) = 2,363,952. The uninsured rate for Kansans age 0-64 was calculated by taking the number of uninsured Kansans age 0-64 and dividing by the total number of Kansans age 0-64. Peer groups are designated using the Kansas Department of Health and Environment County Peer Groups by population density.

Source: Kansas Health Institute analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Small Area Health Insurance Estimates.



# Building on Rural Assets

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Social connectedness



Lessons from the  
COVID-19 pandemic



Innovative models



# Opportunities for Authentic Engagement

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- Building trust
- Empowering communities
- Supporting community-led solutions



# Connect With Us

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