



The State of Rural Virginia

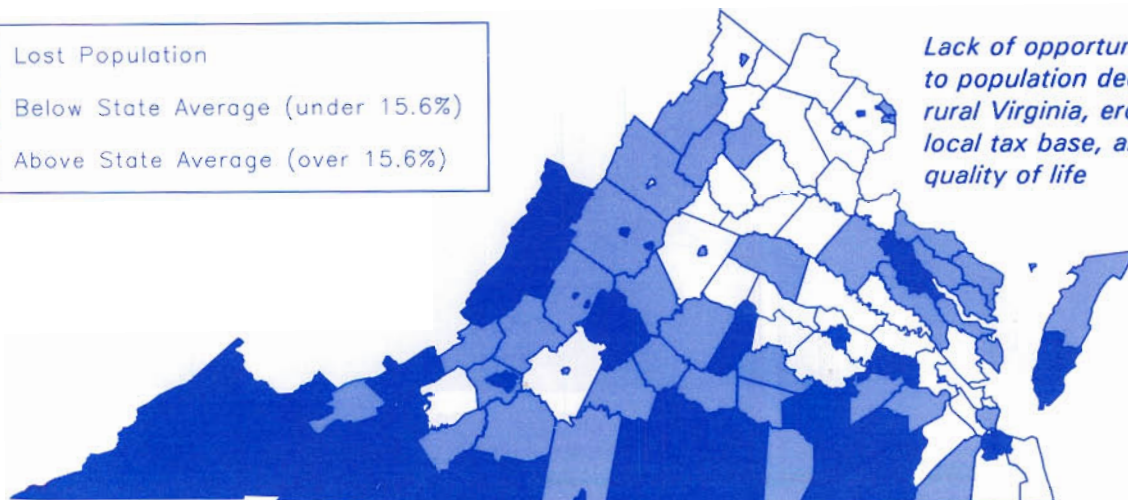
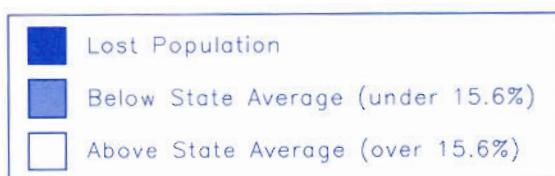
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Why a Series on "The State of Rural Virginia?"

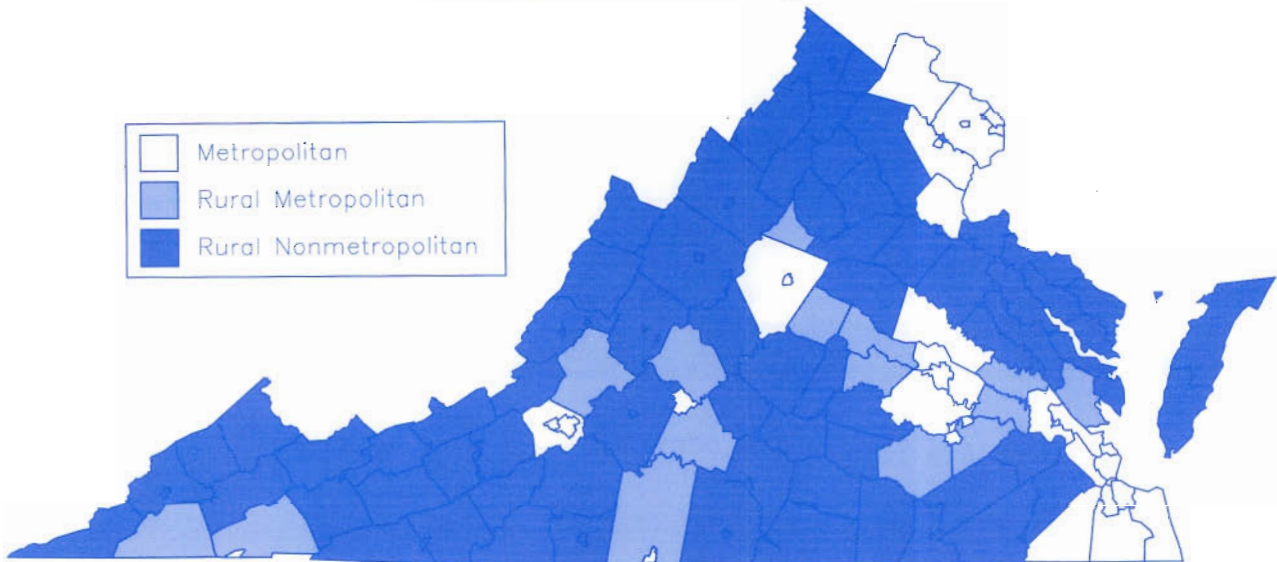
- By nearly all measures of the quality of life--income, health, employment, poverty, etc.--rural Virginians are worse off than urban Virginians.
- Declining employment and population reduces tax base and public services, inhibits new business investment.
- Loss of rural jobs causes many of the "best and brightest" to leave, reducing the community's ability to attract new business.
- Shrinking rural population reduces political influence and attention paid to rural problems.
- National and global economic trends place many rural areas at a competitive disadvantage.
- Goods and services produced in rural Virginia are vital to Virginia's economy. Agriculture alone accounts for 14 to 19 percent of total state product.

Population Change, 1980-1990



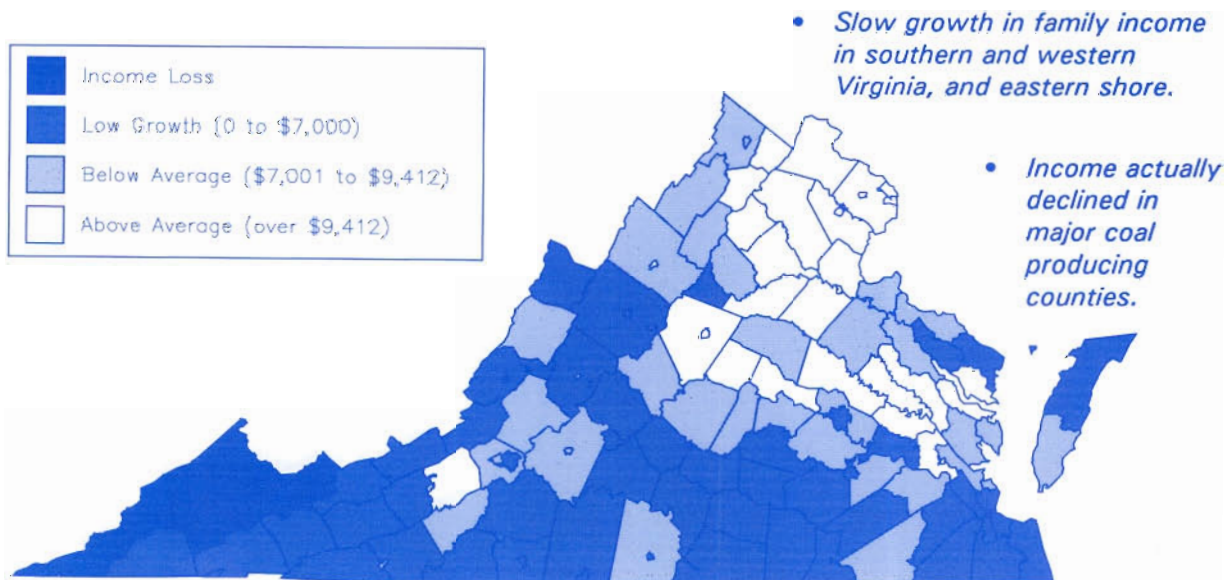
Lack of opportunity leads to population declines in rural Virginia, erosion of local tax base, and lower quality of life

Where is "rural Virginia?"



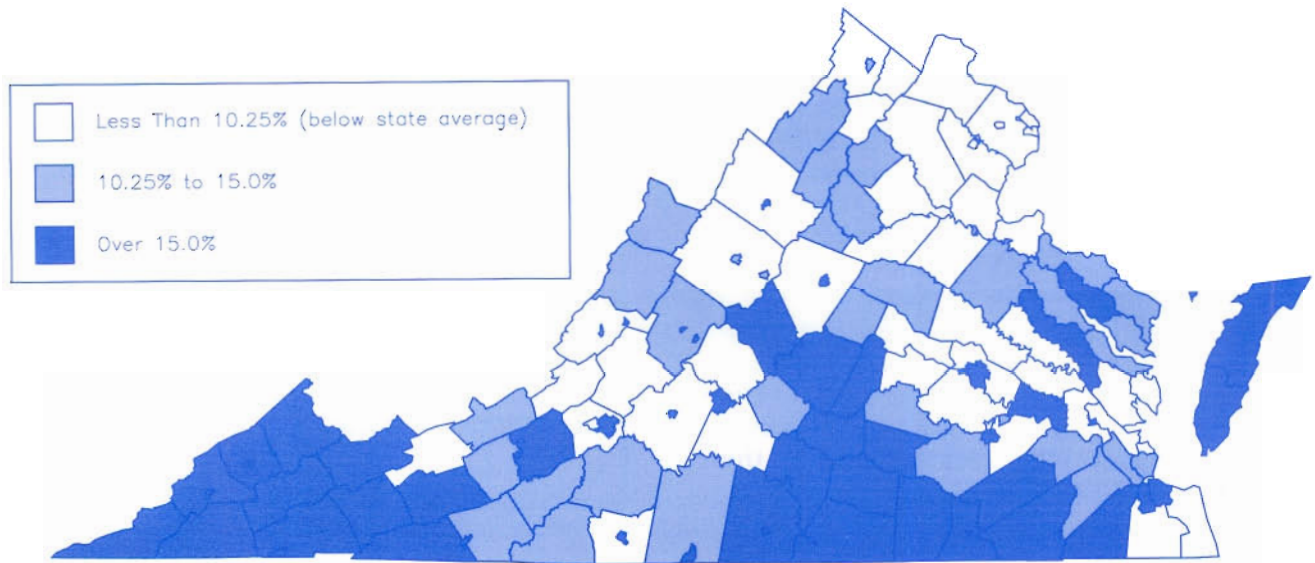
Based on the U.S. Census Bureau metro-nonmetro classification system. A county or city is considered metropolitan if the population is over 50,000 and it meets certain criteria with regard to population density and commuting patterns. Here, "rural nonmetro" defines those counties that are rural in character, but that are defined by the Census Bureau as being metro.

Family Income Growth During the 1980's Smaller in Rural Virginia

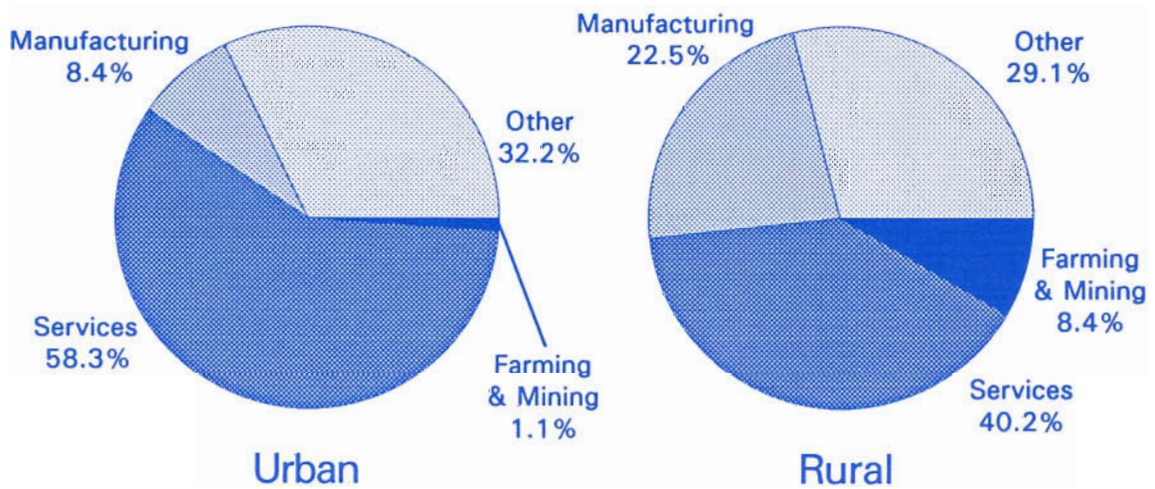


Change in Median Family Income From 1979 to 1989 in 1992 Dollars. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1980 and 1990.

Proportion of Population Living in Poverty, 1989



Employment by Industry in Virginia



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Statistics Administration, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, 1969-1990. Data are for 1989.

- Rural areas more dependent on manufacturing, agriculture, mining for employment, less on services.
- Rural areas vulnerable to job losses as manufacturing jobs move overseas and U. S. moves more and more to a service economy.
- Increased mechanization has reduced the need for farm, mining workers.

The purpose of the Rural Economic Analysis Program (REAP) at Virginia Tech is to provide research, analysis, and economic intelligence to the policy making process and to long-run strategic planning being conducted in Virginia's agricultural and rural sectors.

The State of Rural Virginia contributes to this overall objective by providing basic, primarily visual information on rural issues useful to the decision making process of public institutions, those considering business investments in the State, and the citizens of Virginia.

The Department of Agricultural Economics at Virginia Tech provides in-depth analyses and research on the types of issues discussed in *The State of Rural Virginia*. For information about available publications please contact the Department at (703) 231-9443.

Information

The State of Rural Virginia is a publication of REAP and the Department of Agricultural Economics at Virginia Tech. It is published at least four times per year and is available to the public free of charge. Orders may be placed by written request to: Extension Distribution Center, c/o Joe Gray, 112 Landsdowne St., Blacksburg, VA 24061-0512.

The charts, graphs, and maps displayed in this publication are available in 8.5 by 11 inch transparencies and 35mm slides for a nominal fee to cover processing. Contact the Department of Agricultural Economics at (703) 231-9443 for further information.

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Virginia Polytechnic Institute
& State University
Virginia Cooperative Extension
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0512

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