

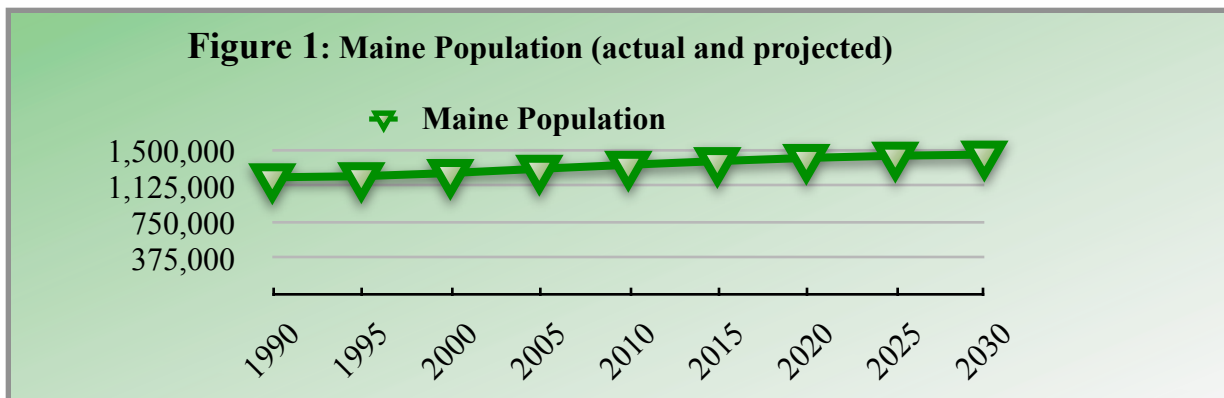
Outdoor Recreation Demand



1. General Population Trends

According to the US Census Bureau, Maine's 2006 population stands at 1,321,574. This is up from 1,274,923 in 2000 and 1,227,928 in 1990. Maine's population growth from 2000 to 2006 represents an increase of 3.7% (compared to the national rate of 6.4%). Future US Census Bureau projections predict Maine's population increasing 10.7% between 2000 and 2030. This growth places Maine 32nd nationally, based on estimates.

Population growth in Maine is expected to be driven primarily by immigration from (predominantly) interstate migration, with limited international immigration. Natural increase is not seen as the major force behind Maine's anticipated modest population growth. Maine's birth rate has been declining since the mid-1900s and has, since at least as far back as 1990, been below the national rate. Maine's rate of death per 1000 has been slightly above the national rate during that same time. Maine's recorded and projected population is depicted in **figure 1**.



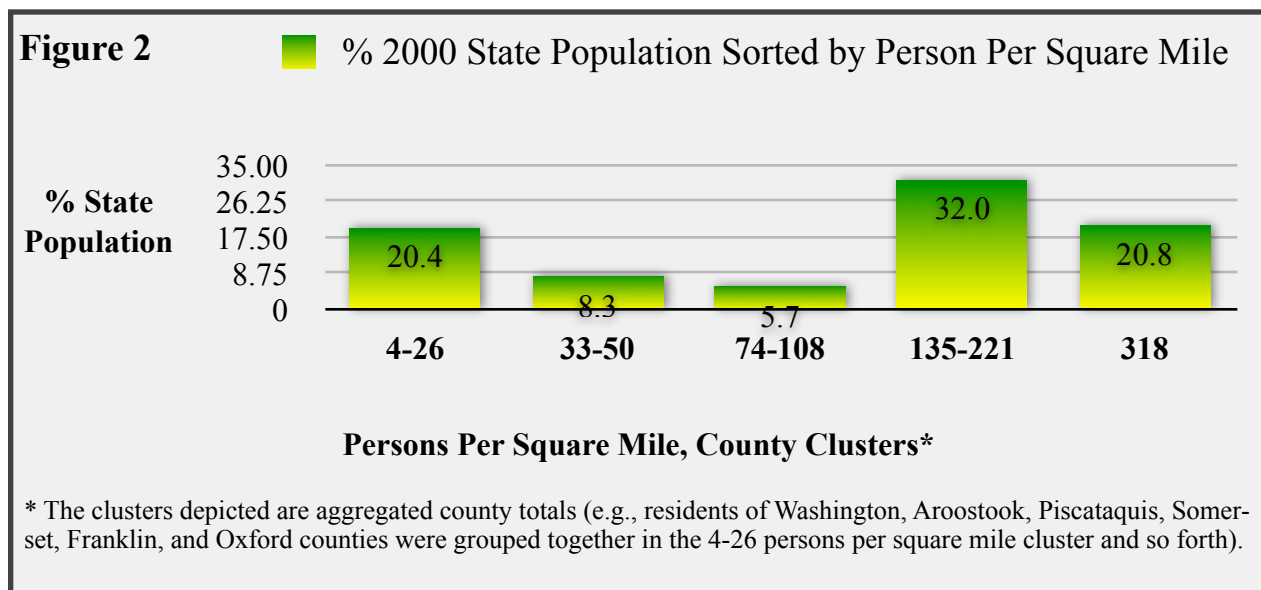
Published in 2006, The Brookings Institution's *Charting Maine's Future: an Action Plan for Promoting Sustainable Prosperity and Quality Places* explored, among other things, demographic and geographic patterns affecting Maine. In their report, the Brookings Institution highlights the idea that Maine has reversed course and is growing once again. The following excerpts from the report share this perspective:

- “Following on the state’s average net loss of 440 people per year in the 1990s, Maine gained an average of 8,200 net new residents per year between 2000 and 2004—7.5 times more than its average annual natural increase of 1,100 and the largest in-flow in over 50 years”
- “In fact, every one of Maine’s 16 counties is now experiencing net gains of people from *outside* the state” (i.e., immigration exceeded emigration).
- Maine moved up 20 places in its population growth rank since 2000. This turnaround from 46th to 26th was the biggest jump in the nation.
- Only Nevada, Arizona, Florida, and Idaho saw more domestic in-migration (from other states) than did Maine.

However, the period of time following the release of Charting Maine’s Future shows a reversal of the growth found from 1999 to 2004. Economist Charles Lawton wrote in the March 16, 2008 Portland Press Herald that, “In 2005, according to census estimates, our net in-migration fell to 2,400; in 2006, it dropped to zero, and in 2007 the inward movement turned to an outward movement of 5,400 people. In four years, that’s a net swing of over 15,000 people – from a net gain of over 10,000 in 2003 to a net loss of more than 5,000 in 2007”. This set of data points back up the US Census prediction of Maine being in the lower half of national growth rates.” Both Aroostook and Washington Counties saw total population decreases in the periods from 1990-2000 and 2000-2005.

2. Geographic Distribution

Maine is largely a rural state, especially by national standards. In 2000, Maine’s overall persons per square mile equaled 41.3 versus the national average of 79.6. Furthermore, just over 20% of Mainers live in a county with between 4 and 26 persons per square mile (see **Figure 2**). County populations as a percent of total state population are shown in **Figure 3**.



While Maine is a rural state, that is not to say that it is completely rural or that it is unchanging. Cumberland County has an approximate persons per square mile ratio of 318/mile versus the US average of 79.6. Cumberland County and York County (188.4 persons/mile) are Maine’s southernmost counties and are home to over 35% of Maine’s population while only laying claim to 6% of Maine’s land area. Furthermore, trends show the most rural counties in Maine (Oxford, Franklin, Somerset, Piscataquis, Aroostook, Washington, Hancock, and Waldo) falling from a 35% share of Maine’s population in 1960 to 27% in recent years (Brookings Institution, 2006). The Brookings Institution (2006) also noted that in that same period, the number of Maine residents living in a metropolitan or micropolitan area went from 121,000 (12.4% of state

population) to 860,000 (over 65% of state population).*

Population growth is not predicted to follow the same rate across the state. Rather, estimates from the Maine State Planning Office (2008) predict the sharpest growth in York County and losses in both Aroostook and Washington Counties. **Figure 4** shows county population trends and predictions in more detail.

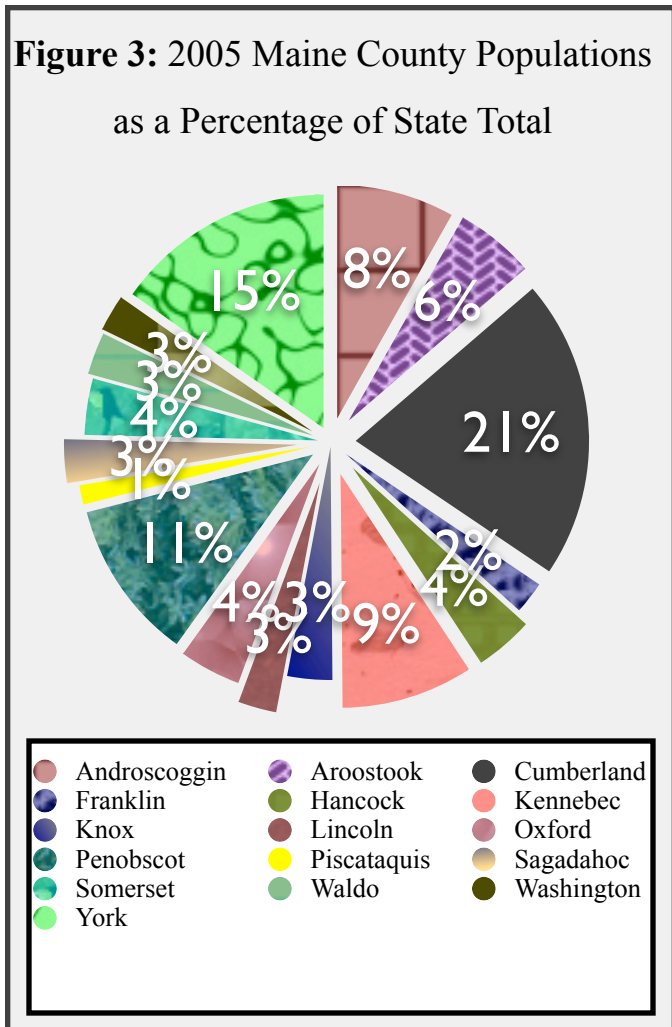
3. Development Patterns

Charting Maine's Future

(Brookings Institution, 2006) discusses Maine's patterns of population movement and development. The excerpts below are but a few points illustrating developments of significance.

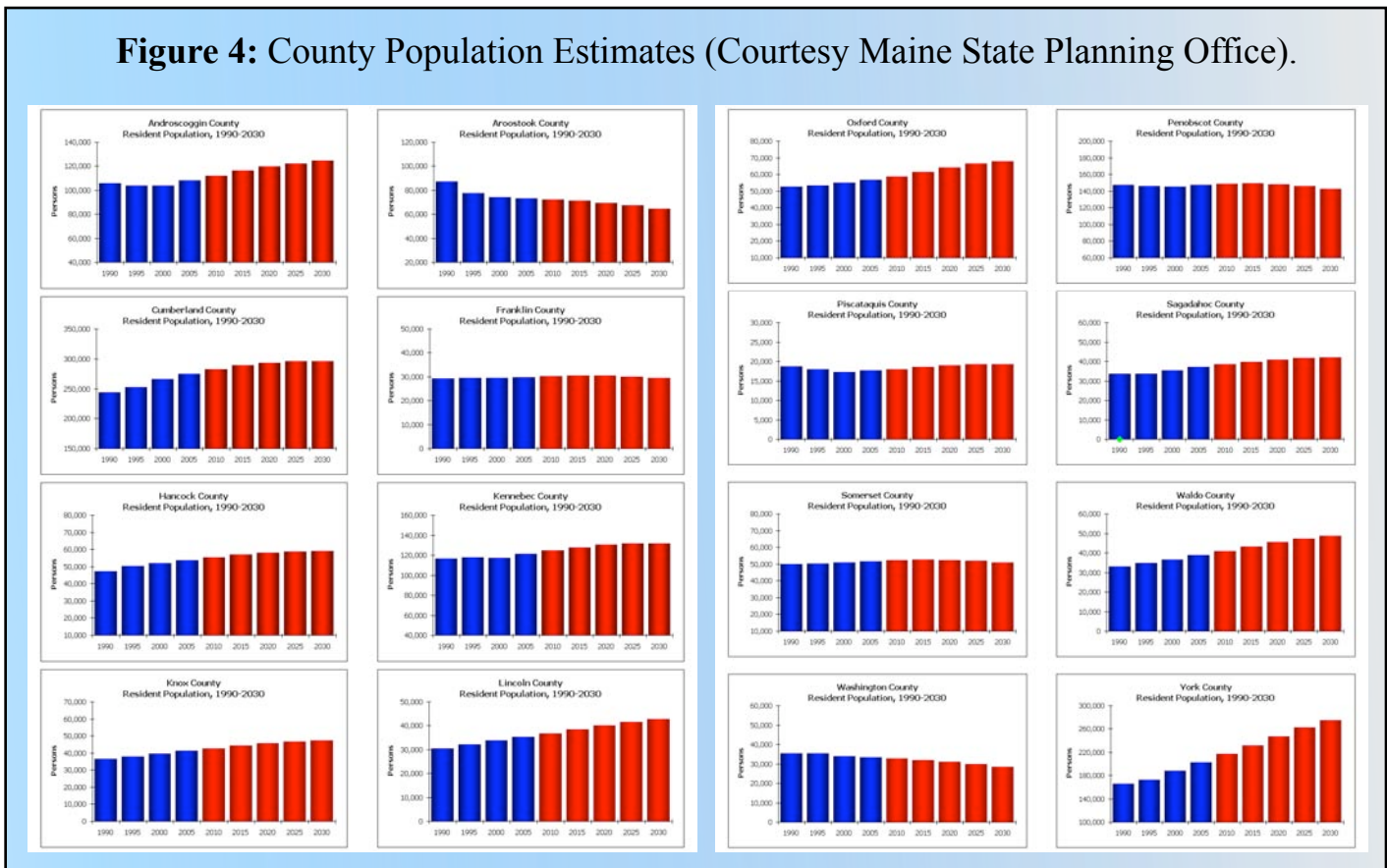
- In the period from 2000 to 2006, 77 percent of growth has taken place in surrounding towns, newer emerging towns, and rural areas distant from traditional centers. Sparsely populated rural towns are the most popular destinations.
- “Southern Maine saw home construction and other development change the character of 100,000 of its rural acres between 1980 and 2000—some 30 percent of its total. Cumberland County alone lost over 56,000 rural acres—a 39-percent reduction.” For more details, **Figure 5**.
- “While many Mainers continue to leave places like Aroostook County for other parts of the state— particularly the south—those from outside Maine are offsetting those internal relocations.”

Again, though, it should be noted that while various projections and data sources point to growth in Southern Maine, the Brookings Institution's finding of growth in all counties and in formerly shrinking regional hubs is not necessarily shared by other researchers and planners. What is clear is that the conservation and recreation



*The US Census Bureau states that “Each metropolitan statistical area must have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more inhabitants. Each micropolitan statistical area must have at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population”.

Figure 4: County Population Estimates (Courtesy Maine State Planning Office).



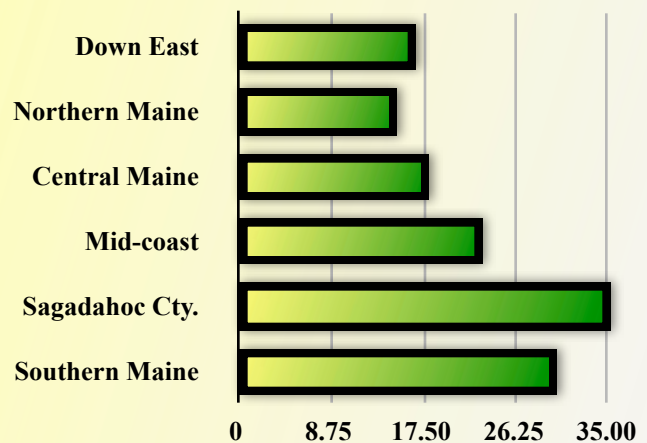
community in Maine is very cognizant that the loss of wildlife habitat, rural lands, and general open space is a vital issue requiring continual focus. As the Maine State Planning Office’s *Regional Landscape Conservation in Maine :Best Practices for Enhancing Quality of Place* (Richardson, 2008) starkly states, “Maine’s sprawling land use patterns threaten to transform many of the state’s rural areas into suburbs.”

4. Age

According to the Maine State Planning Office’s Dr. Henry Renski “the aging of Maine’s population is the driving force behind demographic change in every county. Maine’s population is steadily aging” (Renski, 2008). In 2000, Maine was the 12th oldest state in the nation, based on percent of population at or over 65 years old. By 2010, Maine is expected to move to third oldest (with 15.6% of the population 65 or

Figure 5

■ % of Rural Acreage Lost 1980-2000



Data Sourced From: *Charting Maine’s Future* (Brookings Institution, 2006)

older). In 2030, only Florida is projected to have a higher percentage of senior citizens. In 2030, Maine is projected to have 26.5% of its population in the 65 or older category.

Not only is Maine’s percentage of older citizens expected to rise, its number of younger citizens is expected to dip. **Figure 5**, provided by the Maine Department of Labor, shows the decrease in young workers in Maine. This reflects the observation made by the Brookings Institution (2006) that 417,000 boomers (composed of those aged 41 to 60 in 2006) live and work in Maine, as opposed to 331,000 Gen Xers (aged 21 to 40). For additional perspective on youth and senior population trends in Maine, see **Figure 6**

Figure 5: Maine Workforce by Age Group: 1996 to 2004 (Maine Department of Labor)

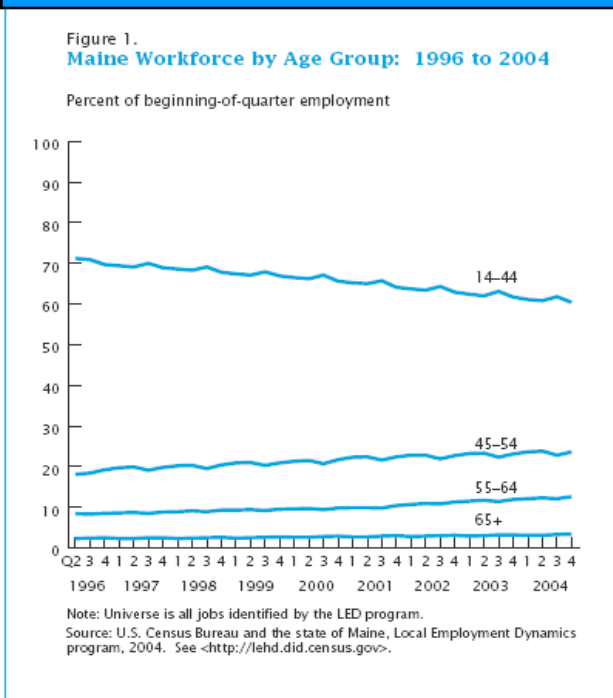
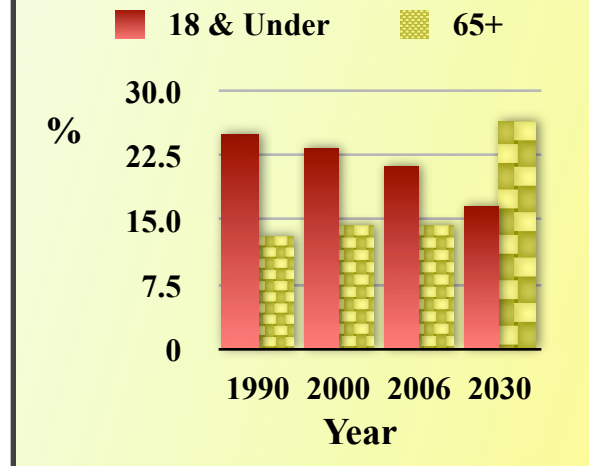


Figure 6: Maine Population Trends for Youth and Senior Populations



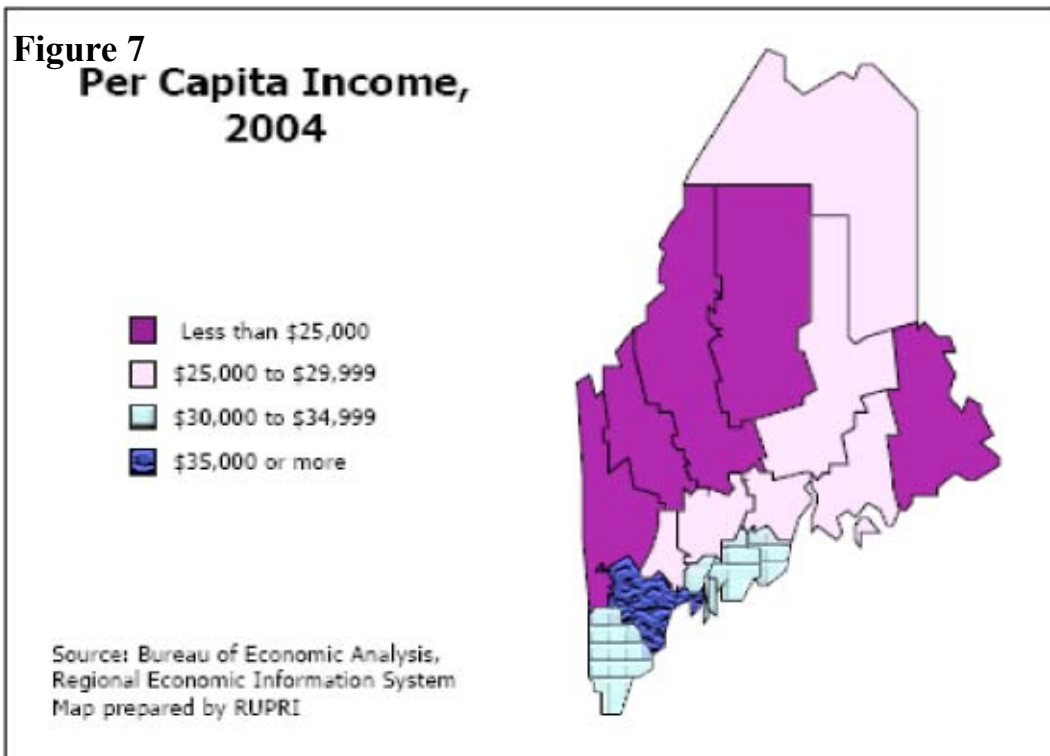
Despite views to the contrary, US census data shows quite similar percentages of young adults across Maine’s 16 counties. As noted, these percentages are on a decline, but the declines appear to be somewhat consistent across regions. In short, all across Maine, older residents are becoming a more and more significant group and younger generations are reducing in proportionate significance.

5. Income and Education

While the trends in population paint a rather similar picture across Maine, economic and education data do not. The USDA Economic Research Service lists Cumberland County, with a median household income in 2007 of \$54,992, as having a

median income level 120% that of Maine’s rate (\$45,832). Conversely, Washington County, at a median income level of \$32,624, only represents 71.2% of median state household income. Variation in regional income is also depicted in **figure 7** (provided by the Rural Policy Research Institute, 2006).

As with income, educational attainment has geographic variation in Maine. The Brookings Institution (2006), reported that “25.6 percent of Maine’s population over age 25 possesses a Bachelor’s degree. This achievement now ranks the state 25th in the nation, up from 44th in 1970 and 27th as recently as 2000”. In fact, based upon the US Census Bureau’s 2005-2007 American Community Survey, 15 of the 16 counties in Maine saw an increase in the percentage of its population having a bachelors degree or higher (2005-2007 data was unavailable for Piscataquis County). **Table 1** lists bachelor’s degree or higher attainment for Maine counties.



6. Disability

19% of Maine’s 2007 population over the age of 5 has some type of disability. The proportion of people 65 and older with disabilities is significantly higher than other age groups. Over 40% of Maine residents 65 years and over have at least one disability as compared to 16.3% of the 16-64 cohort and 10.0% for 5-15 year-olds. This higher proportion of people with disabilities among the older population will become increasingly important as the number and relative proportion of older people in Maine increases. Select, recreation-relevant types of disabilities and percentages of the Maine public with those disabilities are shown in **Figure 8**.

Table 1: Educational Attainment by County

County	% 25 or older with B.S. Degree or higher (2007)
Androscoggin	17.2%
Aroostook	16.1%
Cumberland	38.9%
Franklin	26.7%
Hancock	28.7%
Kennebec	25.3%
Knox	25.4%
Lincoln	30.1%
Penobscot	22.9%
Piscataquis	13.3% (2000 data)
Oxford	16.2%
Sagadahoc	26.2%
Somerset	15.1%
Waldo	20.2%
Washington	18.6%
York	26.2%

7. Racial/Ethnic Diversity

The US population is increasingly diverse. Black/African Americans and people of Hispanic/Latino origins together accounted for more than one quarter of the country's 2005-2007 population. Native Americans, Asian Americans and "other" racial/ethnic groups comprise additional segments of the population. Maine, by comparison, is about 97% white. Maine racial/ethnic groups comprising 0.5% or more of the state's 2005-2007 population include: people of 2 or more races (1.6%); people of Hispanic/Latino origins (1.1%); Asians (1.0%); Native Americans (0.5%); and Black/African Americans (1.1%).

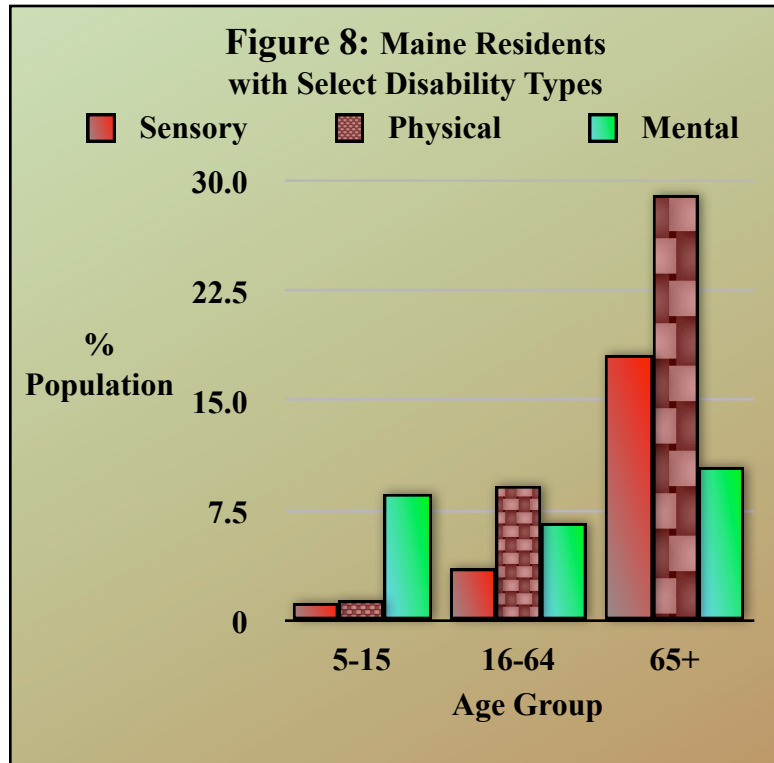
8. Other Characteristic of the Maine Population

As noted above, by comparison with the United States, Maine has an older, more rural and less ethnically diverse population. Other notable departures from national characteristics include: somewhat smaller average household and family sizes; a higher percentage of owner occupied housing; a higher proportion of high school graduates and a somewhat lower proportion of college graduates; and a higher percentage of veterans. Economically, Maine has a slightly higher proportion of people in the labor force; a higher proportion employed in education, health, and social services and retail trade; a lower proportion employed in professional, scientific, management administrative services; a lower percentage of private wage and salary workers

and a higher percentage self-employed in their own businesses. Maine's median household and family incomes and its per capita income are all below national levels. A greater proportion of Maine households have social security and retirement incomes, consistent with its older population. Maine has a smaller percentage of families and individuals below the poverty level.

One of the most notable departures from national characteristics is Maine's high proportion of housing units that are vacant and for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use – the highest rate in the country. Proximity to large population centers in the

Northeast is a factor these high percentages of seasonal homes. Of the 16 counties in Maine, York County has the largest number of vacation homes, but Piscataquis and Franklin Counties have the highest proportions of seasonal homes. Areas around Penobscot Bay and Mount Desert Island have some of the highest concentrations of seasonal homes. In some small coastal communities, vacation homes account for more than one-third of all the housing.



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