



Demographer Available To Discuss New Census Data On Hispanics

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DURHAM N.H. – A leading demographer with the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire is available to discuss new U.S. Census data and trends in the growth of the Hispanic population nationwide. The new data will be released by the U.S. Census Thursday, Aug. 9, 2007.

Ken Johnson, Rural Fellow with the Carsey Institute and Visiting Professor at UNH, can be reached at 603-862-2205 and ken.johnson@unh.edu.

According to Johnson, Hispanics represented 12.5 percent of the U.S. population in 2000. Yet from 2000 to 2005, Hispanics contributed 49 percent of all the population growth in the country and 47 percent of all the natural increase. In metro areas, where they represented 14.1 percent of the population, they accounted for 50 percent of the total population increase and 46.6 percent of the all natural increase. Even more remarkable is the fact that Hispanics accounted for 45.5 percent of the overall population gain and 53.4 percent of all the natural increase in rural America. Yet, Hispanics represent only 5.4 percent of the nonmetropolitan population.

Between 2000 and 2005, 55 percent of the Hispanic population increase came from natural increase. The substantial Hispanic population gains from natural increase are a result of the extremely high U.S. birth-to-death ratio in the Hispanic population. Between 2000 and 2005, there were 5.7 births for every death in the Hispanic population in rural areas. This ratio was even higher at 7.8 births per death in metro areas. This ratio contrasts sharply with the overall birth-to-death ratio of 1.2 in nonmetro areas and 1.8 in metro areas.

“The pronounced difference between Hispanic and overall birth to death ratios results from the younger age of the Hispanic population, which means that there are more women of child-bearing age, and from the higher fertility levels of the Hispanic population,” Johnson said.

At the county level, the contribution of Hispanic population increase to overall growth or decline can be decisive, according to Johnson. Between 2000 and 2005, 221 counties experienced overall population increase because Hispanic population gains offset population decline in the non-Hispanic population. In another 1,100 counties, Hispanic population gains cushioned the overall loss of county population.

“In some cases, the dampening effects of Hispanic population gains were substantial. In Cook

County, Illinois, for example, a Hispanic population gain of 108,000 reduced the overall county population loss from 181,000 to 73,000. And Hispanic population growth, coupled with gains among the non-Hispanic population, fueled population gains in more than 1,600 counties," Johnson said.

"The impact of Hispanic population increase to the overall growth or decline of a county is not confined to a single geographic region of the country. Hispanic population gains are spatially diffuse, serving to cushion the overall decline of the population in large areas of the Great Plains and the East, while adding significantly to population gains in the Southeast and West," he said.

For more information about Ken Johnson, visit <http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/johnson.html>. Johnson is the author of the Carsey Institute report, "Demographic Trends in Rural and Small Town America," which can be downloaded at http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/documents/Demographics_complete_file.pdf.

The Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire conducts research and analysis on the challenges facing rural families and communities in New Hampshire, New England, and the nation. The Carsey Institute sponsors independent, interdisciplinary research that documents trends and conditions affecting families and communities, providing valuable information and analysis to policymakers, practitioners, the media, and the general public. Through this work, the Carsey Institute contributes to public dialogue on policies that encourage social mobility and sustain healthy, equitable communities. The Carsey Institute was established in May 2002 with a generous gift from UNH alumna and noted television producer Marcy Carsey. Visit us at <http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/>.

