

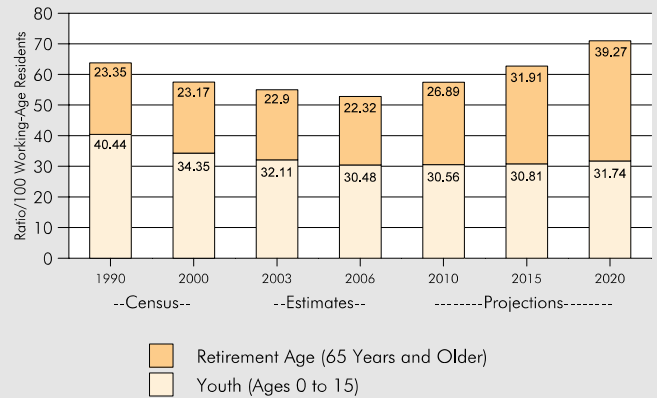
## Dependency Ratios in North Dakota

The total dependency ratio measures the dependence that non-working age people have on working-age people. It indicates the economic responsibility of those who are economically active in providing for those who are not. The dependency ratio combines the proportion of people who are not of working age, either because they are less than 16 years (youth) or because they are 65 years or older (retirement age), and compares this total with the proportion of people who are of working age (16 to 64 years).

According to 2006 population estimates from the Census Bureau, for every 100 working-age residents in North Dakota, there were approximately 53 non working-age residents (Table 1). Due to baby boomers aging out of the workforce, 2020 projections indicate that this ratio will rise to 71 non working-age residents for every 100 residents of working age. In addition, 18 counties throughout the state are projected to have more dependents than workers by 2020.

As the dependency ratio increases, so does potential for concern among communities faced with an older non-working population. In 1990, the majority of non working-age residents in North Dakota were youth less than 16 years (Figure 1). By 2020, retirement-age residents 65 years and older will capture the majority of non working-age residents in the state. This shift in age structure will impact the types of decisions needed to provide services to an older non-working population.

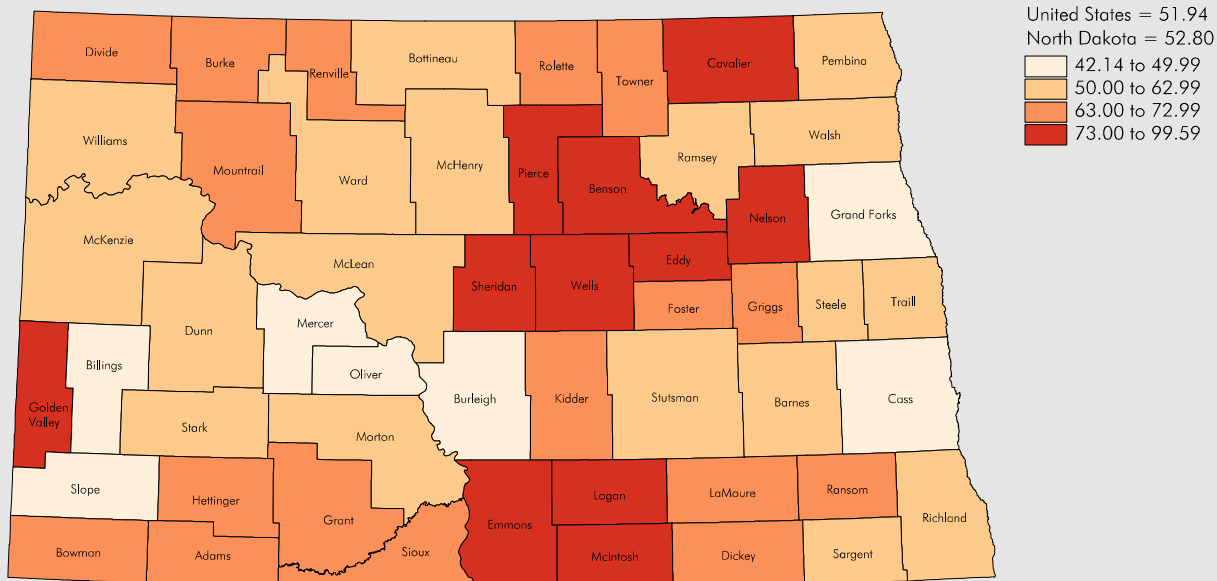
Figure 1. Dependency Ratios by Age in North Dakota, 1990 to 2020



Note: In 2006, there were 52.80 non working-age residents in North Dakota for every 100 working-age residents.  
Source: Age-distribution base data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) and the North Dakota State Data Center at [www.ndsu.edu/sdc/data/projections.htm](http://www.ndsu.edu/sdc/data/projections.htm).  
Dependency ratios calculated by the North Dakota State Data Center.

Figure 2. Total Dependency Ratios in North Dakota by County: 2006

Note: Dependency Ratio equals the number of non working-age residents (ages 0 to 15 plus ages 65 and older) per 100 working-age residents ages 16 to 64.  
Source: Age-distribution base data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Branch, CC-EST2006-AGESEX-38: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Selected Age Groups and Sex for Counties in North Dakota: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006, [www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php](http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php).  
Dependency ratios calculated by the North Dakota State Data Center.



**Table 1. Total Dependency Ratios in North Dakota by County: 1990 and 2000 Census; 2003 and 2006 Estimates; and 2010, 2015, and 2020 Projections**

Note: Dependency ratio equals the number of non working-age residents (ages 0 to 15 plus 65 and older) per 100 working-age residents ages 16 to 64.

Source: Age-distribution base data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) and the North Dakota State Data Center at [www.ndsu.edu/sdc/data/projections.htm](http://www.ndsu.edu/sdc/data/projections.htm). Dependency ratios calculated by the North Dakota State Data Center.

Area	Non working-age residents per 100 working-age residents						
	Census		Estimates		Projections		
	1990	2000	2003	2006	2010	2015	2020
North Dakota	63.79	57.52	55.01	52.80	57.45	62.72	71.01
Adams	79.83	77.85	76.51	71.60	78.09	91.60	114.63
Barnes	75.50	63.81	62.60	58.45	66.52	77.17	97.39
Benson	89.27	82.97	79.51	74.05	78.58	85.66	94.54
Billings	68.13	55.79	46.11	43.92	48.07	61.84	83.32
Bottineau	77.08	67.07	62.45	58.75	69.23	82.82	102.67
Bowman	75.07	73.18	67.89	63.62	65.30	70.71	84.34
Burke	80.84	73.40	68.27	65.84	65.37	80.16	90.25
Burleigh	55.59	51.63	48.80	47.34	50.27	53.06	58.73
Cass	47.94	43.89	42.80	42.33	46.78	51.62	58.86
Cavalier	77.83	78.79	76.72	73.98	79.52	92.23	110.61
Dickey	77.17	72.62	72.78	71.91	76.35	84.95	98.70
Divide	93.52	86.06	75.92	66.83	91.76	116.80	145.08
Dunn	80.24	68.70	60.68	55.79	74.02	82.28	102.50
Eddy	87.72	82.10	79.16	75.95	84.00	93.65	117.54
Emmons	79.15	88.47	87.30	83.63	96.02	106.60	121.65
Foster	81.21	78.91	74.28	68.37	77.60	85.44	95.64
Golden Valley	90.42	78.81	76.62	77.07	78.25	82.83	98.42
Grand Forks	48.27	44.30	43.63	42.14	44.16	46.89	50.40
Grant	80.79	79.36	69.61	68.27	90.69	109.44	131.45
Griggs	88.74	80.59	72.35	68.91	84.41	97.07	119.29
Hettinger	83.15	80.88	77.80	67.80	89.91	112.37	145.55
Kidder	79.04	75.57	72.46	65.07	84.20	91.68	109.91
LaMoure	85.81	77.53	73.44	70.82	76.73	85.73	102.18
Logan	79.62	87.79	90.75	86.82	105.82	110.26	115.13
McHenry	80.98	72.34	66.85	61.63	74.67	83.04	93.85
McIntosh	94.63	104.09	101.58	99.59	122.10	135.36	148.30
McKenzie	77.11	72.59	63.89	57.37	70.52	82.29	100.95
McLean	82.18	67.46	62.62	58.85	74.88	88.69	112.92
Mercer	72.71	63.37	54.13	48.31	59.05	72.42	90.90
Morton	67.01	60.75	57.27	53.15	57.84	62.21	71.44
Mountrail	80.86	72.73	68.52	64.76	68.74	75.55	87.90
Nelson	90.58	83.10	79.73	75.88	83.83	96.65	113.14
Oliver	72.04	58.72	51.48	49.55	59.80	72.36	90.37
Pembina	77.01	68.23	63.26	58.15	62.84	70.99	84.85
Pierce	86.70	80.15	77.04	75.36	78.21	78.96	87.72
Ramsey	72.41	67.77	64.58	62.05	64.36	71.20	81.47
Ransom	80.90	75.14	68.40	63.65	78.48	84.38	98.37
Renville	78.23	70.48	63.83	63.41	69.55	79.94	92.43
Richland	69.05	57.85	54.46	53.10	58.36	62.39	72.94
Rolette	82.46	72.33	67.09	64.84	65.65	72.12	81.96
Sargent	71.27	67.15	63.72	62.27	68.03	74.27	86.13
Sheridan	80.05	81.14	76.74	73.40	77.06	84.44	98.83
Sioux	82.93	70.42	67.74	66.23	62.27	62.83	64.45
Slope	65.21	61.47	54.45	48.85	58.01	67.98	89.18
Stark	66.26	60.36	58.46	55.86	58.09	65.54	76.12
Steele	77.42	74.63	68.40	60.18	70.61	72.55	82.06
Stutsman	65.59	59.83	56.32	53.79	65.87	73.35	81.85
Towner	87.64	78.30	68.45	65.10	72.79	76.00	90.10
Traill	76.42	68.73	64.49	57.60	68.98	71.67	78.58
Walsh	77.50	68.47	65.22	61.23	65.46	71.87	81.86
Ward	57.80	55.25	57.73	59.36	57.64	63.58	70.76
Wells	84.40	82.87	78.96	76.36	81.71	89.44	104.15
Williams	70.70	63.26	59.38	55.82	63.34	70.61	82.76

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## North Dakota Dependency Ratio Expected to Increase

According to 2006 population estimates released from the Census Bureau, for every 100 working-age residents in North Dakota, there were approximately 53 non working-age residents. In other words, there were approximately two workers providing for every one dependent. If the current age distribution patterns continue, 2020 projections indicate that this ratio will rise to 71 non working-age residents for every 100 residents of working age. In addition, 18 counties throughout the state are projected to have more dependents than workers by 2020. "This is a situation that should raise concern among policy-makers. We have a limited window of opportunity to position ourselves for this reality, and I think the time to start planning is now," said Richard Rathge, Director of the State Data Center.

This month's "Population Bulletin," a monthly publication from the North Dakota State Data Center at North Dakota State University, focuses on North Dakota's dependency ratio which measures the dependence that non working-age people have on working-age people. It indicates the economic responsibility of those who are economically active in providing for those who are not. The dependency ratio combines the proportion of people who are not of working age, either because they are less than 16 years (youth) or because they are 65 years or older (retirement age), and compares this total with the proportion of people who are of working age (16 to 64 years).

A decline in North Dakota's youth over the past couple decades combined with the bulk of baby boomers moving through the prime labor force has resulted in a declining dependency ratio (fewer dependents per worker). The dependency ratio, which was 64 non working-age residents per 100 working-age residents in 1990 (64:100) declined to 58:100 in 2000, 55:100 in 2003, and 53:100 in 2006. However, baby boomers will soon be leaving the labor force and entering retirement. In fact, the leading edge of the baby boom (those born between 1946 and 1964) turned 60 in 2006. These changes in North Dakota's age distribution are expected to produce a dependency ratio near 71:100 by 2020, with many counties having more dependents than workers.

As the dependency ratio increases, so does potential for concern among communities faced with an older non-working population. In 1990, the majority of non working-age residents in North Dakota were youth less than 16 years. By 2020, retirement-age residents 65 years and older will capture the majority of non working-age residents in the state. This shift in age structure will impact the types of decisions needed to provide services to an older non-working population.

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