Other Measures in Population Change Analysis

Settlement, economic base, and poverty measures are used in the analysis both as control measures and as means of assessing the relative importance of amenities for county population change. The main settlement measure used is the urban influence code developed by Ghelfi and Parker (1997), an adaptation of a scale originally developed by Hines, Brown, and Zimmer (1976) and Butler and Beale (1994). The urban influence code comprises two aspects of the urban-rural continuum: proximity to urban areas and size of largest settlement within the county.

In general, the share of population has been decreasing in rural counties that are remote from metropolitan areas and increasing in rural counties adjacent to major metropolitan areas, although the strength of this population shift has varied from decade to decade. As a supplement, to reflect possible lower inmigration to very densely settled areas and net outmigration from sparsely settled areas, the density of population in 1990 and its square were also used in the analysis.

Another set of measures used is county economic base—whether a county specializes in agriculture, mining, or manufacturing. The residual group either specializes in services or has a mixed economic base. This set is drawn from the ERS economic typology and has been used frequently in its reports on socio-economic change, in *Rural Conditions and Trends* (1997), for instance. Finally, whether a county has had persistent poverty, also drawn from the ERS typology, is used to reflect economic opportunities.