



Office of Research & Analysis
National Endowment for the Arts
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Arts Data Profile: State Estimates of the Arts' Economic Value and Employment: 2001-2015

Research Brief #2: 2015 Rural Summary

In 2015, arts and cultural production contributed \$67.5 billion to the economies of U.S. rural states—defined here as states in which 30 percent or more of the population lives in rural areas. Arts and cultural production in rural states employed nearly 628,500 workers.

The following narrative summarizes results from the Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), produced jointly by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and the National Endowment for the Arts. Supplementing data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the ACPSA can be used to identify the arts' contributions to rural state economies.

This release of the ACPSA includes state-level employment and compensation figures for salaried workers in arts and cultural industries, and, for the first time, estimates of arts and culture's value added to each state's economy. [State-level fact-sheets, data dashboards, and other resources are available on this NEA webpage.](#)

Rural States

For this analysis, "rural" is defined as geographic areas encompassing all population, housing, and territory not included in an "urban" area. In this research brief, "urban" refers to areas with 50,000 or more people, plus "urban clusters" with at least 2,500 people and fewer than 50,000.

The Census Bureau explains: "Generally, rural areas are sparsely populated with a low housing density, are not built up, and are at a distance from urban areas."¹

Although the Census Bureau does not define "rural" states, per se, the agency does identify states in which 30 percent or more of the population lives in rural areas.² They are: Alabama; Alaska; Arkansas; Iowa; Kentucky; Maine; Mississippi; Montana; New Hampshire; North Carolina; North Dakota; Oklahoma; South Carolina; South Dakota; Tennessee; Vermont; West Virginia; and Wyoming.

This brief summarizes arts and cultural production and employment in those 18 states.

Synopsis

The largest rural arts economies are in **North Carolina and Tennessee**. In 2015, the value added to the economy, in both states, exceeded \$13 billion. In North Carolina, employment for arts and cultural production topped 118,000 workers, and in Tennessee, the arts employed nearly 84,700.

The arts' value-added was roughly \$4 billion to \$5 billion in five rural states: **South Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Iowa**. Corresponding arts employment ranged from 40,000 to 50,000 workers in these states.

The arts contributed between \$2 billion and \$3 billion to the economies of: **Arkansas; Mississippi; New Hampshire; West Virginia; and Maine**. Arts employment in these states ranged from nearly 34,000 workers in Arkansas to just under 16,600 in Maine.

Meanwhile, arts and cultural value-added in 2015 was roughly \$1 billion in: **Montana; North Dakota; Alaska; South Dakota; Wyoming; and Vermont**. In producing arts and cultural goods and services, each of these states employed from 11,000 to 15,000 workers.

Additional Definitions

ACPSA industries: The ACPSA features 35 distinct industries that produce arts and cultural goods and services. As a satellite account, the ACPSA identifies the share of an industry's value-added that is associated with arts production. That share ranges from nearly 100 percent of value added by industries such as performing arts companies and motion picture production, to just 2 percent of value added by the computer systems design industry. (This ACPSA industry includes computer systems designs that support production of movies/films and sound recordings.)

Value added: Value-added consists of the gross output of an industry, less its intermediate inputs such as energy and raw materials. Value-added is the contribution of an industry to gross state product (GSP).

Arts and cultural value added and employment in U.S. Rural States: 2015

Rural state	Value added (thousands)	Employment
Total rural states	\$67,485,747	628,480
Alabama	\$4,727,244	47,477
Alaska	\$1,309,772	11,853
Arkansas	\$2,793,613	33,923
Iowa	\$3,784,338	41,337
Kentucky	\$4,712,880	51,386
Maine	\$1,479,780	16,577
Mississippi	\$2,558,082	26,077
Montana	\$1,382,486	15,180
New Hampshire	\$2,304,518	20,685
North Carolina	\$13,765,852	118,364
North Dakota	\$1,382,095	14,199
Oklahoma	\$4,272,095	42,767
South Carolina	\$4,935,090	50,850
South Dakota	\$1,199,335	14,067
Tennessee	\$13,328,497	84,663
Vermont	\$959,835	10,608
West Virginia	\$1,547,253	17,212
Wyoming	\$1,042,982	11,255

Data source: Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA),
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Endnotes

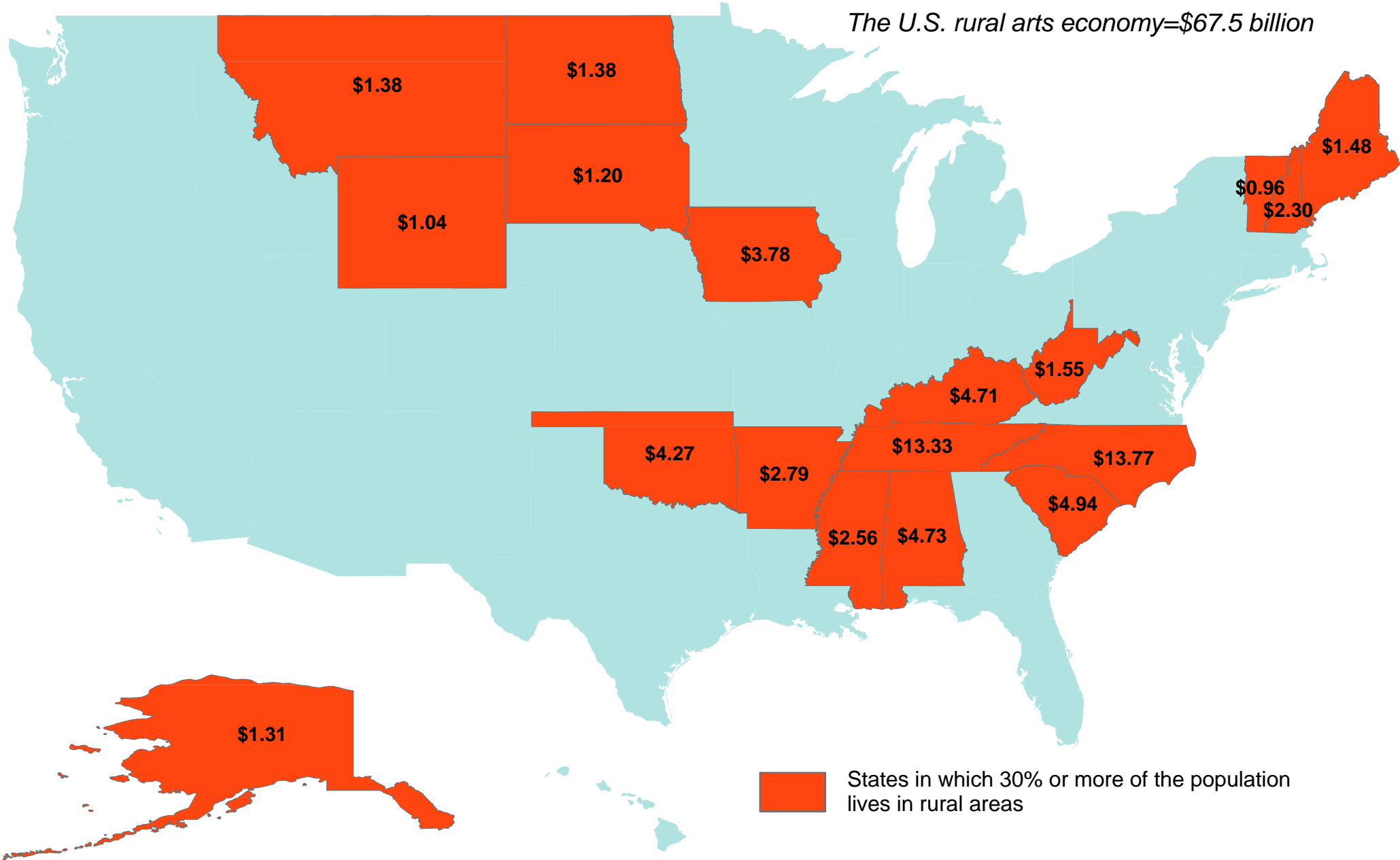
¹ See [Life Off the Highway: A Snapshot of Rural America](#)

² Ibid.

Arts and Cultural Value Added to U.S. Rural State Economies: 2015

(Billions)

The U.S. rural arts economy=\$67.5 billion



Data source: Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis