

3.14: Growth and Development Trends

44 CFR 201.4(c)(3)(i) – [The State risk assessment shall include an] overview and analysis of the State’s vulnerability to the hazards described in this paragraph (c)(2), based on estimates provided in local risk assessments as well as the State risk assessment. The State shall describe vulnerability in terms of the jurisdictions most threatened by the identified hazards, and most vulnerable to damage and loss associated with hazard events.

Update Requirement 201.4(d): The plan must be reviewed and revised to reflect changes in development.

As part of the plan update process, trends in growth and development were analyzed to determine how changing development and socioeconomic trends could influence loss and vulnerability, especially in Mississippi’s hazard-prone areas. Estimated and projected populations, population density, housing units, and housing unit density were studied at the state, regional, and county levels. Specific counties and regions of the state that experienced significant changes are discussed in this section, as well as the long-term effects of Hurricane Katrina on population and housing units. A special section on social vulnerability is also included. State-owned assets and locations are identified in **Section 3.2.1** and the appendices.

Population

Mississippi is a relatively sparsely populated state. According to the 2020 U. S. Census among the 50 states, Mississippi ranked 35th in population and housing density; 38th in population density; and 44th in the population growth rate between 2010 and 2020. The state has 46,906 square miles and a population of 2,240,057, according to the 2022 U.S. Census population estimates. Historic population figures from the decennial census illustrate Mississippi’s growth trends for the past six decades (see **Table 3.14.1**). **Table 3.14.2** presents certain “quick facts” about the demographics of the state.

Table 3.14.1
Mississippi’s Population Growth

Census	Total Population	Percent Change
2022 (Estimate)	2,940,057	-0.92%
2010	2,967,297	4.00%
2000	2,848,753	10.50%
1990	2,575,475	2.18%
1980	2,520,638	13.70%
1970	2,216,994	1.79%
1960	2,178,000	--

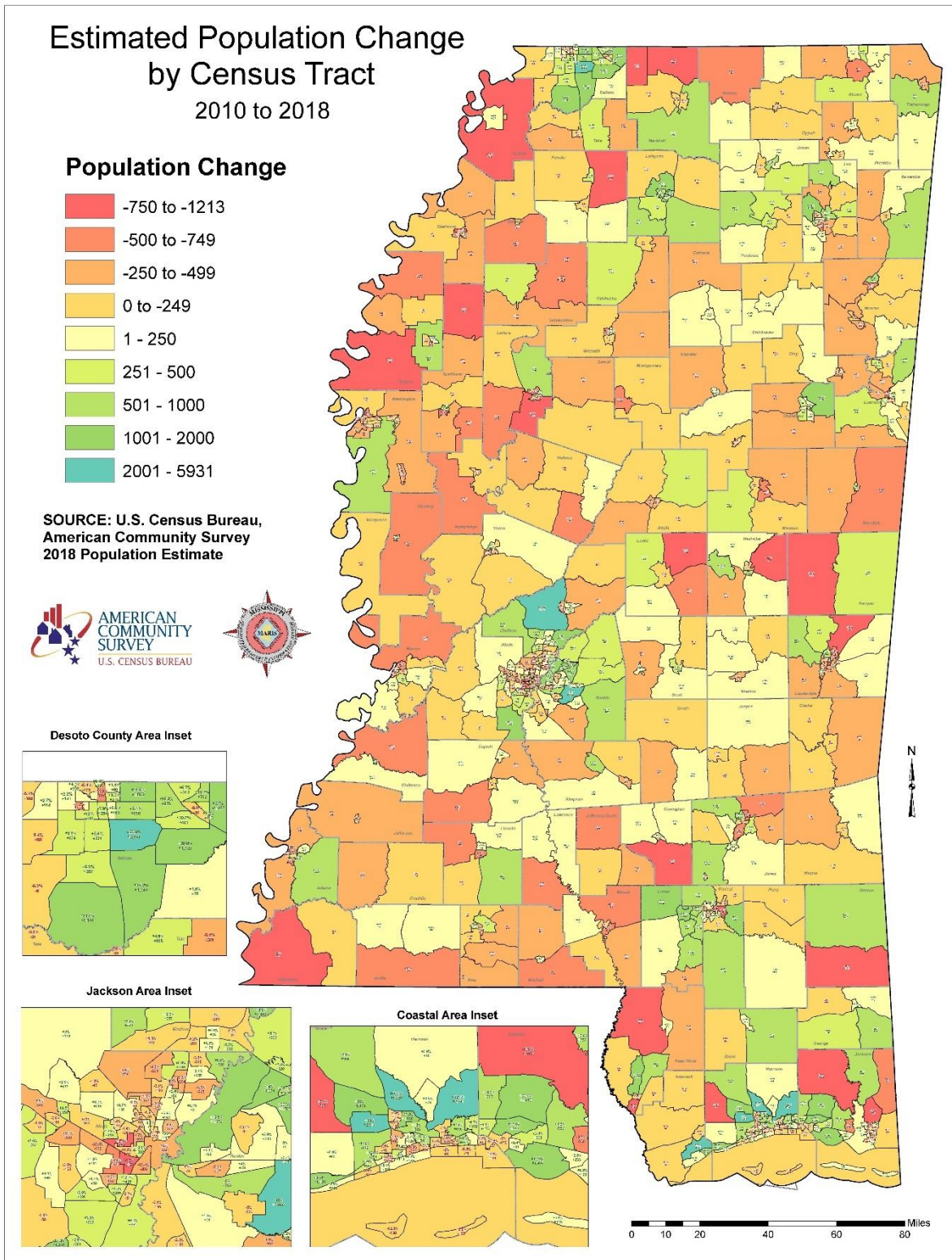
Table 3.14.2
Mississippi's Quick Facts

Population, 2022 estimates	2,940,057
Population, 2010	2,967,297
Population, percentage change, 2010-2022	-0.92%
Persons per square mile, 2020	63.1
Number of Incorporated Cities, Towns, and Villages	298
Number of Counties	82
Urban / Rural Population	49.4/50.6%
Counties with a Population of 100,000 or Greater	6
Counties with a Population of 50,000 – 99,000	9
Counties with a Population of 10,001 – 49,000	51
Counties with a Population of 10,00 or less	16

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

Between 2010 and 2020, 20 of Mississippi's 82 counties had an increase in population, and 8 of these increased by ten percent or more. This growth was concentrated primarily in four areas of the state. These growth areas included the Gulf Coast and Pine Belt Regions in the southeast, the Jackson Metro Region in central Mississippi, and DeSoto County in the extreme northwest corner of the State. The State also appears to be experiencing significant growth in the Lee County/Tupelo area. This growth is likely driven by an increase in industrial development in the region. **Figure 3.14.1** illustrates the growth by county in Mississippi from 2010-2018.

Figure 3.14.1
Mississippi Growth by County 2010-2018



Mississippi's ten most populated counties are listed in **Table 3.14.3** and the ten least populated counties are listed in **Table 3.14.4**. Counties declining or increasing in population are listed in **Table 3.14.5**; those increasing or declining by the greatest numbers and percentages are listed in **Tables 3.12.6** and illustrated in **Figure 3.14.1**. A demographic worksheet by county is provided in **Appendix 7.3.12-A** with complete information on all counties.

Table 3.14.3
Ten Most Populous Counties
2022 Census Estimates

Ranking/County		2022 Population	Ranking/County		2022 Population
1.	Hinds	217,730	6.	Madison	111,113
2.	Harrison	211,044	7.	Lee	82,959
3.	DeSoto	191,723	8.	Forrest	78,110
4.	Rankin	158,979	9.	Lauderdale	70,904
5.	Jackson	144,975	10.	Jones	66,569

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

Table 3.14.4
Ten Least Populous Counties
2020 Census

Ranking/County		2022 Population	Ranking/County		2022 Population
1.	Kemper	8,654	6.	Humphreys	7,333
2.	Wilkinson	8,143	7.	Jefferson	7,087
3.	Choctaw	8,037	8.	Quitman	5,701
4.	Franklin	7,642	9.	Sharkey	3,448
5.	Benton	7,550	10.	Issaquena	1,273

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

Sixty-five counties experienced a population decline between 2010 and 2020 and 16 counties experienced a double-digit decline. The Delta region of the state, located in the western portion of the state and extending to within fifty miles of Memphis, TN, was most affected by declining populations.

Table 3.14.5
Counties with the Greatest Population Loss/Gain
2010 - 2020

County	Population Loss 2010 - 2020
Covington	-1,217
Clarke	-1,193
Wayne	-1,192
Copiah	-1,153
Tunica	-1,035
Jasper	-1,016
Benton	-1,006
Lawrence	-1,000
Claiborne	-793
Perry	-732

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

County	Population Gain 2010 - 2020
DeSoto	30,599
Harrison	26,830
Rankin	18,508
Madison	17,158
Lamar	11,663
Lafayette	9,954
Jackson	6,170
Oktibbeha	5,259
Forrest	3,868
Hancock	3,645

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3.14.6
Mississippi's Population Growth 2010-2020
(Loss/Gain by Percentage)

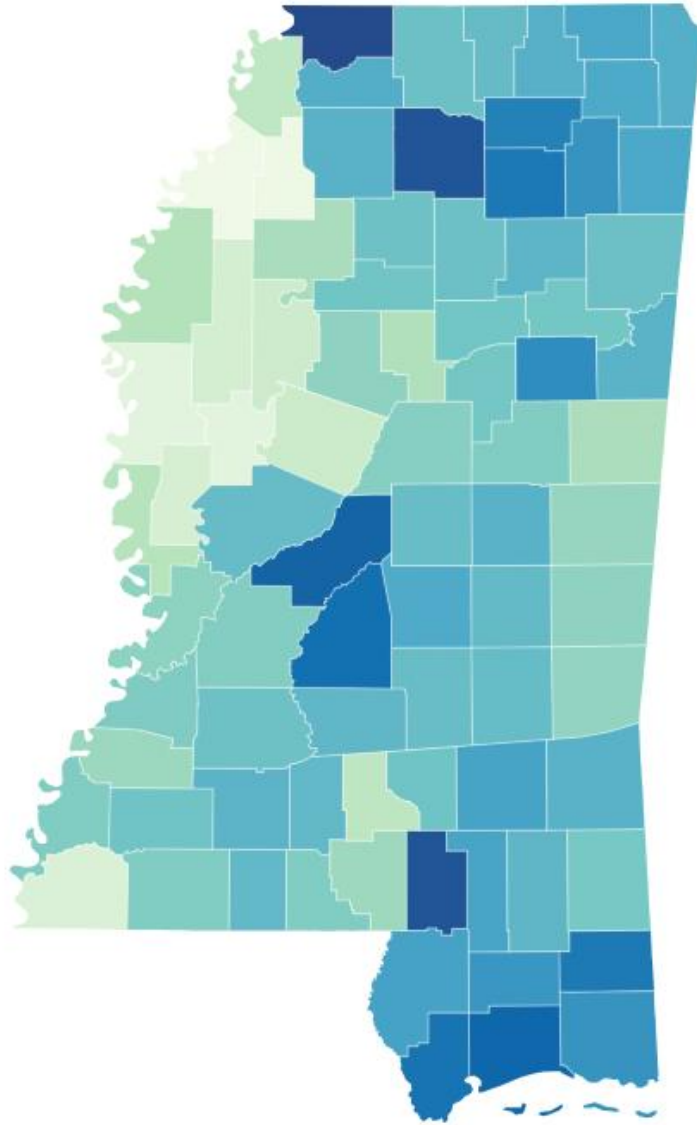
County	% Change	County	% Change
Coahoma	-17.41%	DeSoto	16.36%
Quitman	-17.08%	Lafayette	14.36%
Washington	-16.17%	Lamar	14.36%
Humphreys	-16.14%	Madison	11.85%
Wilkinson	-15.33%	Harrison	11.14%
Sharkey	-14.86%	Rankin	9.44%
Sunflower	-14.64%	Hancock	8.84%
Leflore	-14.08%	Pontotoc	8.01%
Holmes	-13.81%	George	7.82%
Tunica	-12.74%	Union	6.36%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 3.14.1
Counties Population Loss and Gain Percent 2000 – 2020

Population change by county, from 2010 to 2020

Mississippi's overall population decreased by 0.2% according to last year's decennial Census count.



Source: Census Population Estimates Program survey • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Table 3.14.7
Mississippi Population Projections
2025 - 2050

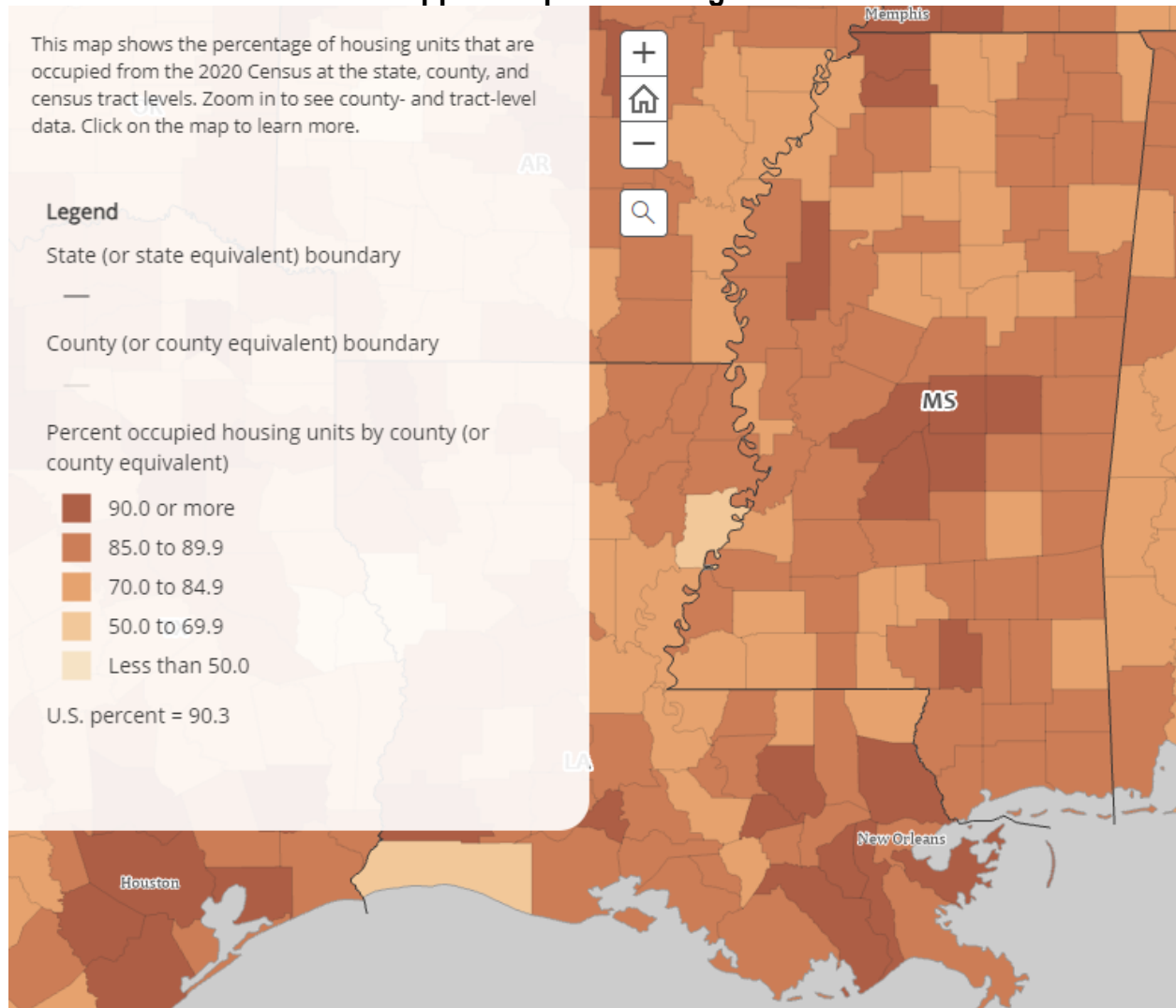
Year	Projected Population	Percent Change
2022 (Estimate)	2,940,057	-
2025	3,095,026	5.27%
2030	3,104,159	0.30%
2035	3,099,766	-0.14%
2040	3,082,567	-0.55%
2045	3,078,363	-0.14%
2050	3,064,588	-0.45%

Source: State Data Center of Mississippi: <https://sdc.olemiss.edu/population-projections/>

Housing Units

The total number of housing units is another indicator of growth or decline and helps identify the geographical location of new development occurring based on increases within discrete areas. Housing increases in Mississippi have been consistent with population growth patterns and have primarily occurred in the Coastal Region, the Pine Belt, the Jackson Metro Area, and the DeSoto County Region of the State.

Figure 3.14.5
Mississippi Occupied Housing Units 2020



Social Vulnerability

Social vulnerability refers to the negative effects on communities, families, and individuals caused by external stresses on human health. These stresses may include natural or human-caused hazards or disease outbreaks. Reducing social vulnerability has the potential to decrease both human suffering and economic loss in the aftermath of significant hazard events. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index uses 16 U.S. Census Bureau variables to help local officials identify communities that may need support before, during, or after disasters.

Variables included in the development of the Social Vulnerability Index include the following:

- Socioeconomic Status:
 - Below 150% poverty

- Unemployed
- Housing cost burden
- No high school diploma
- No health insurance
- Household Characteristics
 - Aged 65 or older
 - Aged 17 or younger
 - Persons with disabilities
 - Single-parent households
 - English language proficiency
- Racial and Ethnic Minority Status
- Housing Type and Transportation
 - Multi-unit structures
 - Mobile homes
 - Crowding
 - No vehicle
 - Group quarters

These variable are combined into a dataset viewable in map form (See **Figure 3.14.8**) that illustrate by county or by census tract those areas particularly susceptible to social vulnerabilities.

Social vulnerability is partially a product of social inequalities – those social factors and forces that create the susceptibility of various groups to harm, and in turn affect their ability to respond and bounce back (resilience) after the disaster, (Susan L. Cutter, Bryan J. Boruff, and W. Lynn Shirley, 2003. “Social Vulnerability to Environmental Hazards,” *Social Science Quarterly* 84(1):242-261.)

The raw data from the Social Vulnerability Index ranks communities on three values including their Risk Rating, their Social Vulnerability Index Rating, and their Resiliency Rating. The Risk Rating or Risk Value represents the average loss in dollars to buildings, population, and/or agriculture each year to a community based on the community’s Social Vulnerability and Community Resilience. The Social Vulnerability Index Rating is a consequence-enhancing risk component and community risk factor that represents the susceptibility of social groups to the adverse impacts of natural hazards, including disproportionate death, injury, loss, or disruption of livelihood. The Resilience Rating is a consequence reduction risk component and community risk factor that represents the ability of a community to prepare for anticipated natural hazards, adapt to changing conditions, and withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions. The following table provides a state-wide ranking by county based on these three rankings. Generally speaking, counties with a better overall Social Vulnerability Index rating will score low on the Risk Rating, low on the Social Vulnerability Rating, and high on the Resilience Rating. **Figure 3.14.8** illustrates each Mississippi County’s relative ranking on the Social Vulnerability Index.

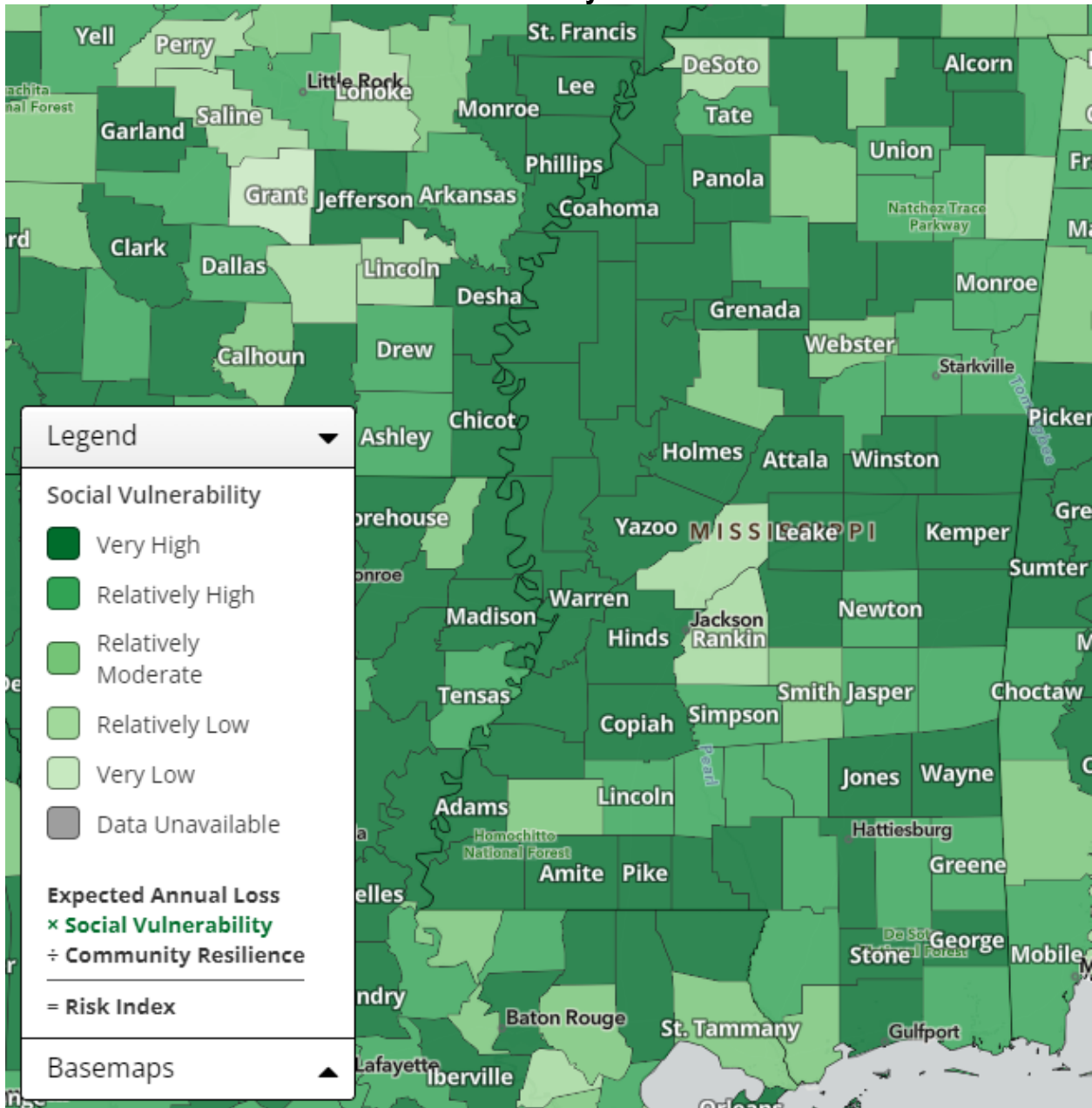
**Table 3.14.13
Social Vulnerability Index Rankings**

County	Risk Rating	Social Vulnerability Index Rating	Resilience Rating
Adams	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Alcorn	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Amite	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Attala	Very Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Benton	Very Low	Relatively Moderate	Very Low
Bolivar	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Calhoun	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Carroll	Very Low	Relatively Moderate	Relatively Low
Chickasaw	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Choctaw	Very Low	Relatively High	Very Low
Claiborne	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Clarke	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Clay	Very Low	Relatively High	Relatively Moderate
Coahoma	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Moderate
Copiah	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Covington	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Very Low
DeSoto	Relatively Moderate	Relatively Low	Relatively Moderate
Forrest	Relatively Moderate	Very High	Relatively Moderate
Franklin	Very Low	Relatively Moderate	Relatively Low
George	Relatively Moderate	Very High	Relatively Low
Greene	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Very Low
Grenada	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Moderate
Hancock	Relatively Moderate	Relatively Moderate	Relatively High
Harrison	Relatively High	Very High	Relatively High
Hinds	Relatively Moderate	Very High	Relatively High
Holmes	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Humphreys	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Issaquena	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Itawamba	Very Low	Relatively Low	Relatively Low
Jackson	Relatively High	Relatively High	Relatively High
Jasper	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Jefferson	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Jefferson Davis	Very Low	Relatively High	Very Low
Jones	Relatively Moderate	Very High	Relatively Low
Kemper	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Lafayette	Relatively Low	Relatively Moderate	Relatively High
Lamar	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Moderate
Lauderdale	Relatively Moderate	Very High	Relatively Moderate
Lawrence	Very Low	Relatively High	Very Low

County	Risk Rating	Social Vulnerability Index Rating	Resilience Rating
Leake	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Lee	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively High
Leflore	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Lincoln	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Lowndes	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Moderate
Madison	Relatively Moderate	Relatively Low	Very High
Marion	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Marshall	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Monroe	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Moderate
Montgomery	Very Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Neshoba	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Newton	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Noxubee	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Oktibbeha	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Moderate
Panola	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Pearl River	Relatively Moderate	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Perry	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Very Low
Pike	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Pontotoc	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Prentiss	Very Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Quitman	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Rankin	Relatively Moderate	Relatively Low	Relatively High
Scott	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Sharkey	Very Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Simpson	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Smith	Relatively Low	Relatively Moderate	Very Low
Stone	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Sunflower	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Tallahatchie	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Tate	Relatively Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Tippah	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low
Tishomingo	Very Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Tunica	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Moderate
Union	Very Low	Relatively High	Relatively Moderate
Walthall	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Warren	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively High
Washington	Relatively Moderate	Very High	Relatively Low
Wayne	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low
Webster	Very Low	Relatively Moderate	Relatively Low
Wilkinson	Very Low	Very High	Very Low
Winston	Relatively Low	Very High	Relatively Low

County	Risk Rating	Social Vulnerability Index Rating	Resilience Rating
Yalobusha	Very Low	Relatively High	Relatively Low
Yazoo	Relatively Low	Very High	Very Low

Figure 3.14.8
Social Vulnerability Index 2014



Source: FEMA National Risk Index: <https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/map#>

Summary

Mississippi is a relatively sparsely populated state. According to the 2020 U. S. Census among the 50 states, Mississippi ranked 35th in population and housing density; 38th in population density; and 44th in the population growth rate between 2010 and 2020. The state has 46,906 square miles and a population of 2,240,057, according to the 2022 U.S. Census population estimates.

Growth patterns in Mississippi are similar to those in other states with the most pronounced growth being in counties close to major cities or within Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Examples include Rankin and Madison counties within the Jackson MSA, adjacent to the capital city, and DeSoto County within the Memphis MSA. Areas located close to universities such as Lamar County (University of Southern Mississippi) and Lafayette County (Mississippi State University) also show significant growth. Coastal counties including Pearl River, Stone, Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson also experienced positive population growth. Population growth is often concentrated along economically desirable coastal areas that are at high risk of coastal flooding or storm surge.

Between 2010 and 2020, 20 of Mississippi's 82 counties had an increase in population, and 8 of these increased by ten percent or more. This growth was concentrated primarily in four areas of the state. These growth areas included the Gulf Coast and Pine Belt Regions in the southeast, the Jackson Metro Region in central Mississippi, and DeSoto County in the extreme northwest corner of the State. The State also appears to be experiencing significant growth in the Lee County/Tupelo area. This growth is likely driven by an increase in industrial development in the region. Counties that experienced a loss of population are primarily located in the Mississippi Delta region where the economic base has historically been heavily reliant on agriculture.

Recent natural disasters heightened interest in consistent building codes, flood control, stormwater control, and the protection of wetlands. Concepts related to community resilience and sustainable development, especially in the most populous counties, gained momentum. FEMA recently completed new flood maps for Mississippi and all six gulf coast counties adopted building codes including hurricane-resistant construction standards. Manufactured homes, mobile homes, and recreational vehicle areas are considered vulnerable. There are also concentrations of older homes that remain a concern.

Future growth is expected to be modest at a rate of about 0.72% annually through 2050. It is expected areas that have experienced the most significant growth during the first decade of this century will continue to lead the state with some "spill-over" into adjacent areas.