

Negotiating the Terrain: The Challenges and Rewards of Rural Nursing



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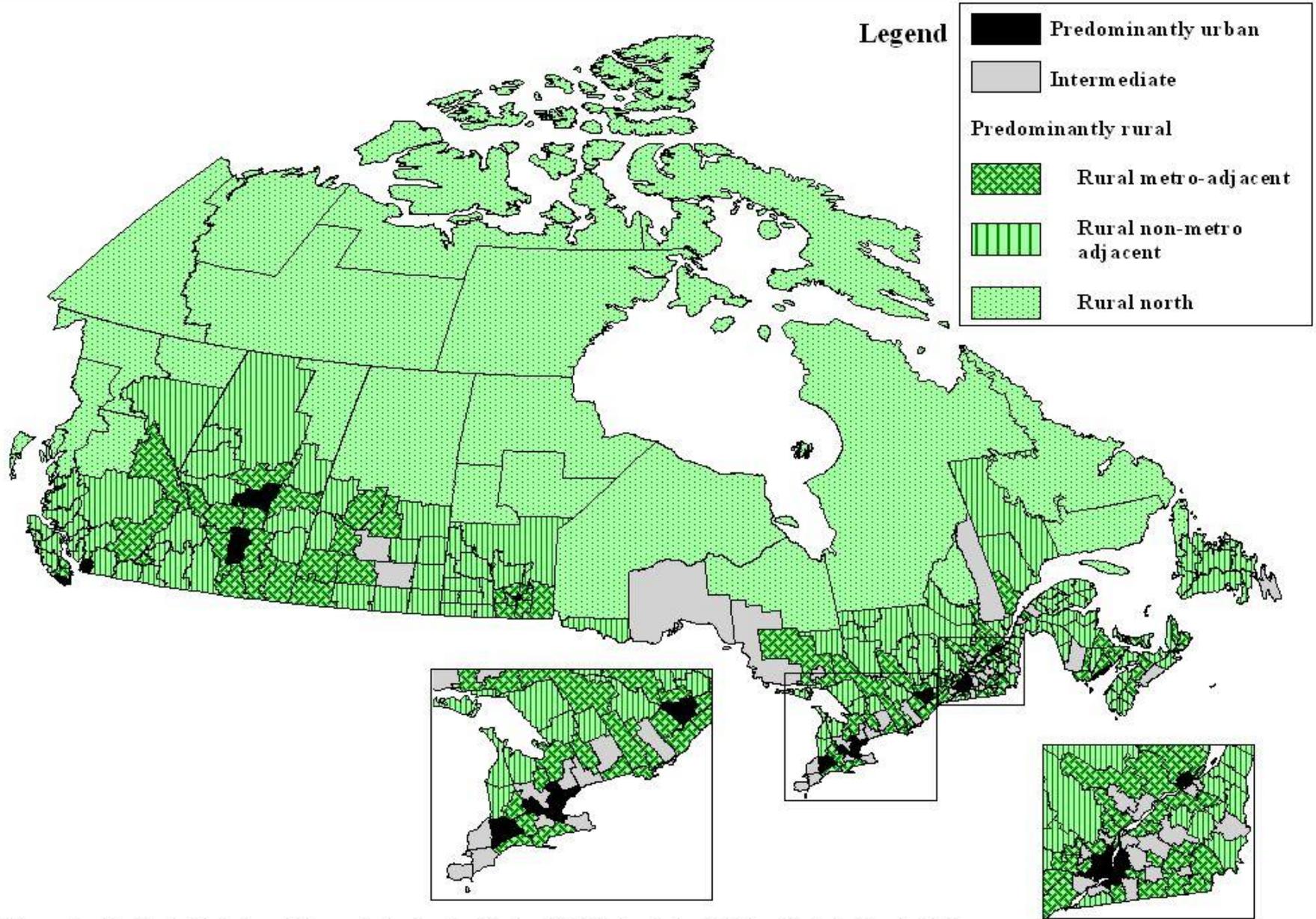
Increased Interest in “Rural”



What Is Rural?



Rural Canada: Geographic Areas



Geographic Building Blocks

* Census Subdivision (CSD) 5,984 CSD

* Census Division (CD) 288 CD

Predominantly Rural Region -

More than 50% of the population living in rural communities and population density <150 person/km²

Beshiri & Bollman (2001)

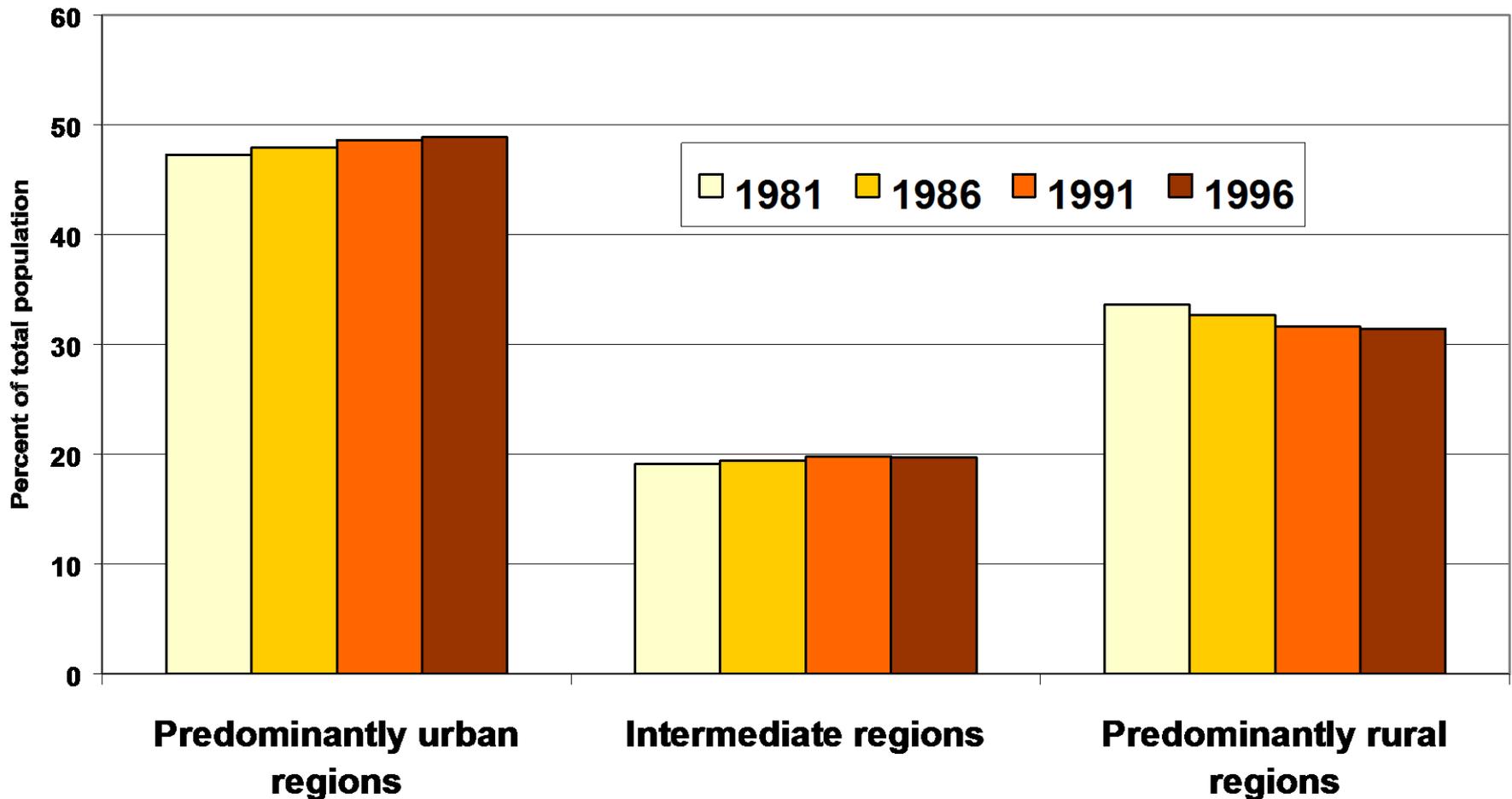
Rural and Small Town Canada: An Overview

Demography: **Population Structure**

- **31.4 percent of Canada's population lives in predominantly rural regions (in 1996)**
- **"predominantly rural regions" have over 50 percent of their population living in rural communities**

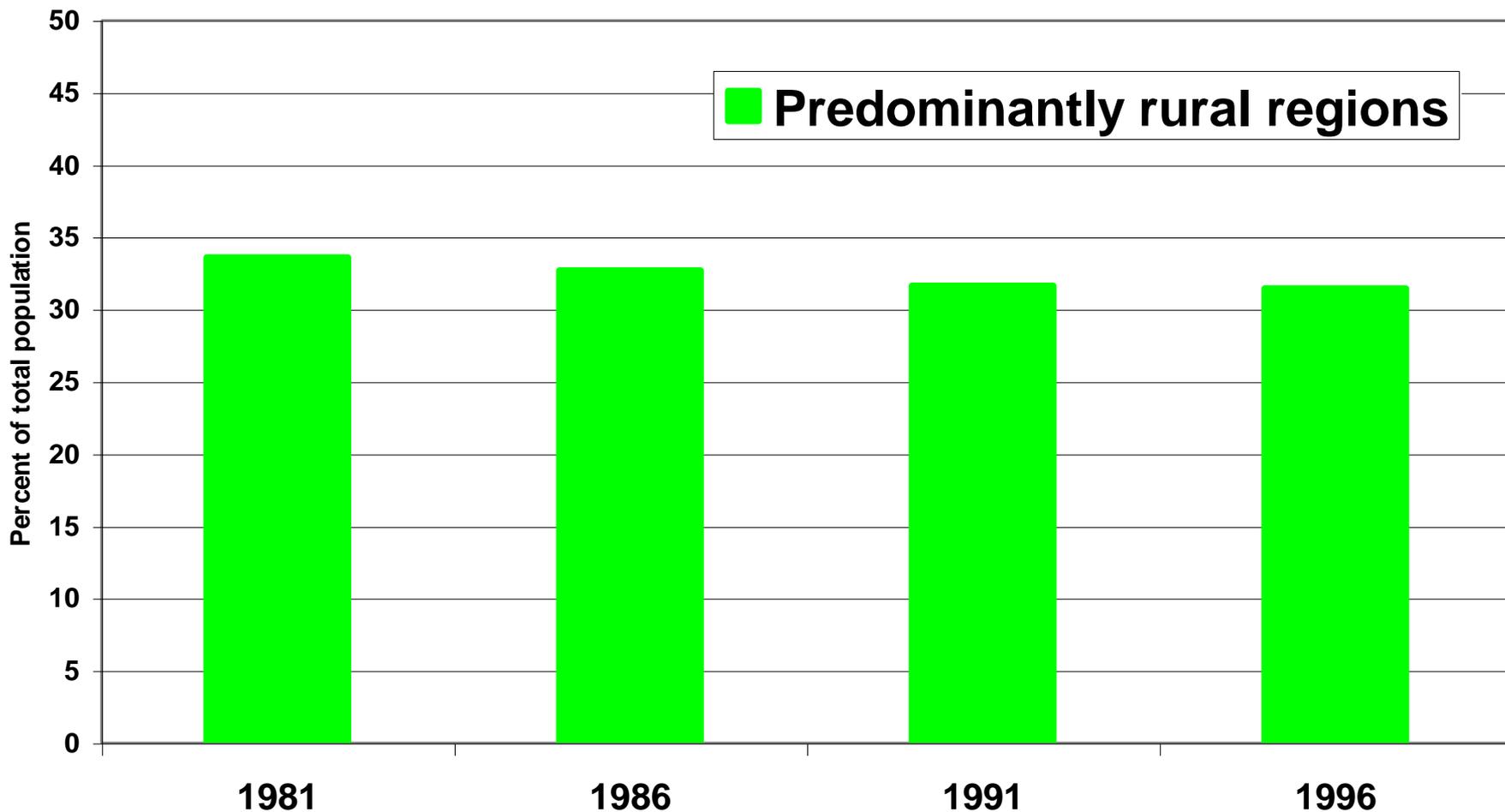
(A rural community is a census consolidated subdivision with less than 150 persons per square kilometer. Census divisions are used to delineate "regions", to facilitate comparisons with other OECD countries.)

In 1996, 31.4 percent of Canada's population lived in predominantly rural regions



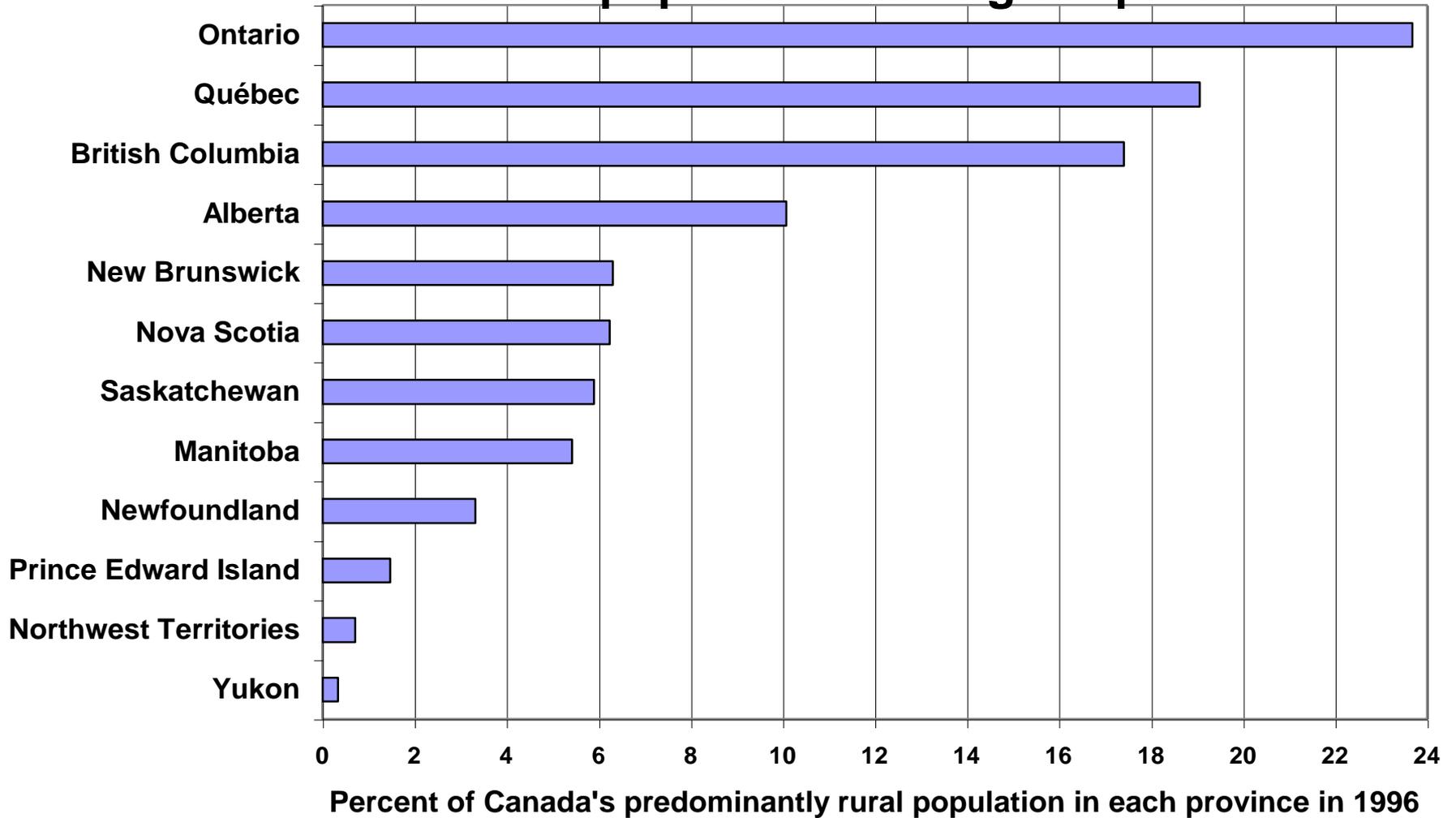
Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1981 - 1996. A predominantly rural region has over 50 percent of its population living in rural communities. An intermediate region has 15 to 49 percent living rural communities and a predominantly urban region has less than 15 percent of its population living in rural communities.

In 1996, 31.4 percent of Canada's population lived in predominantly rural regions



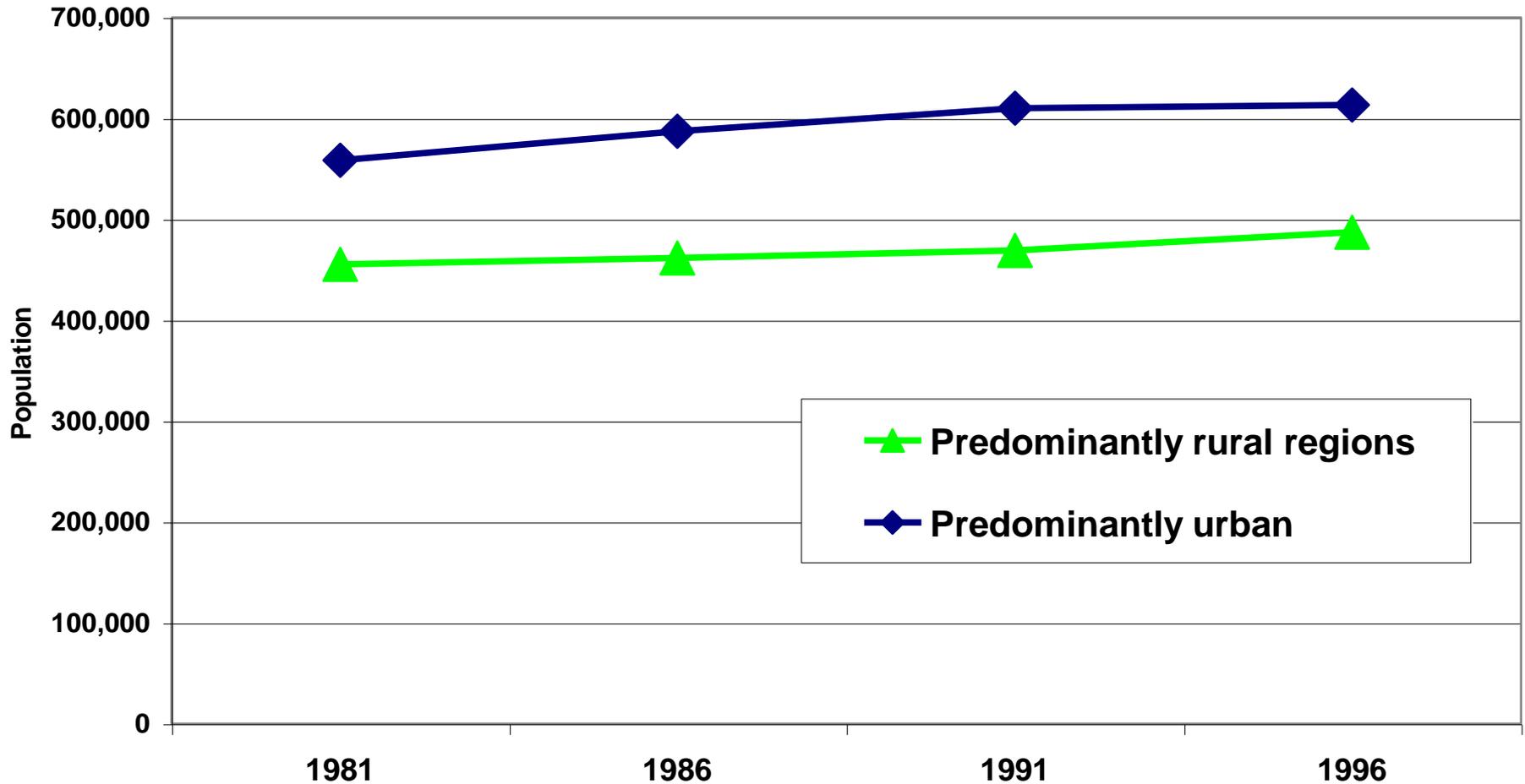
Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1981 - 1996. A predominantly rural region has over 50 percent of its population living in rural communities. An intermediate region has 15 to 49 percent living rural communities and a predominantly urban region has less than 15 percent of its population living in rural communities.

Percent distribution of Canada's predominantly rural population among the provinces



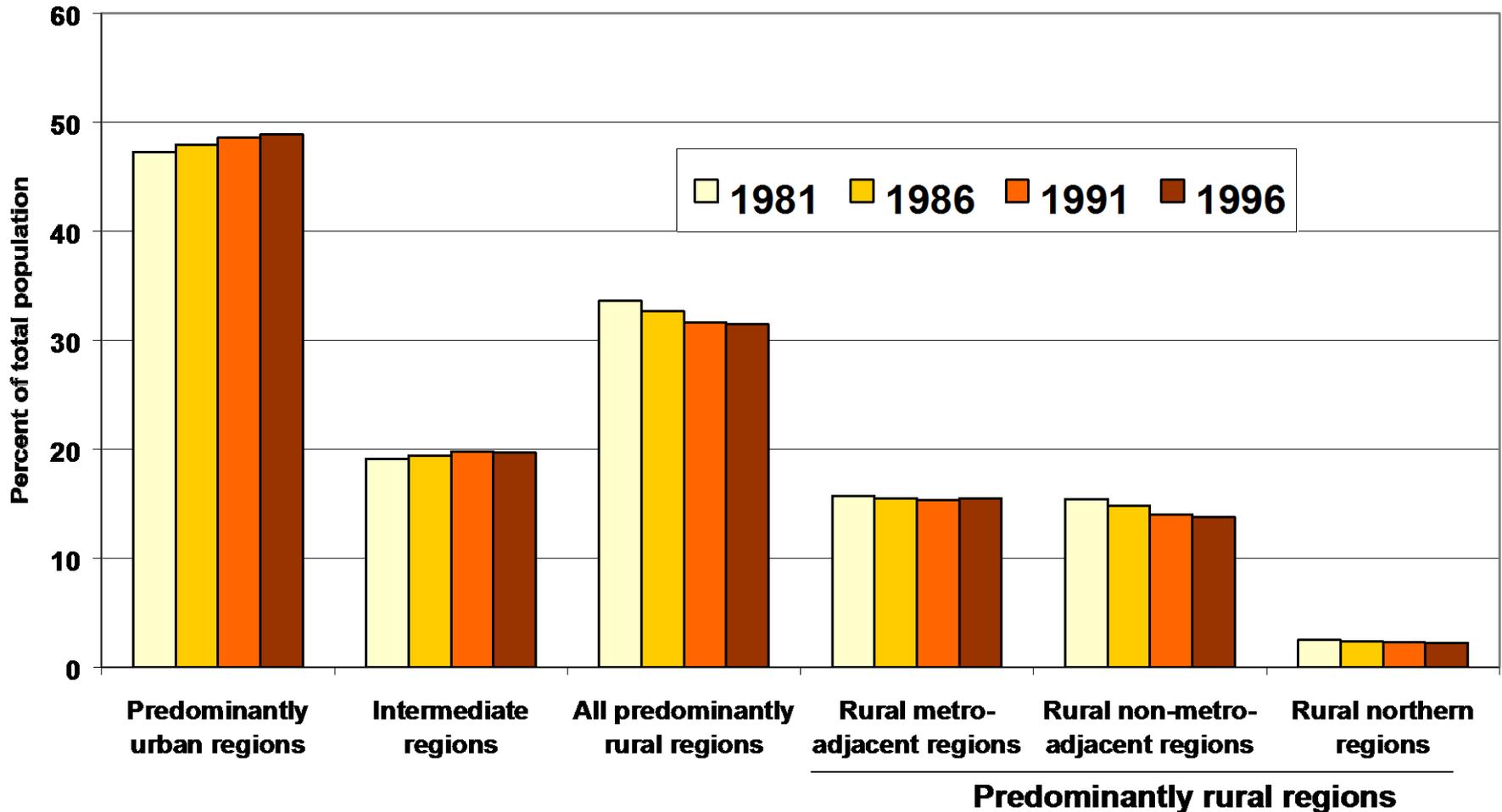
Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1996. A predominantly rural region has 50 percent or more of its population living in rural communities.

490 thousand Manitobans live in predominantly rural regions



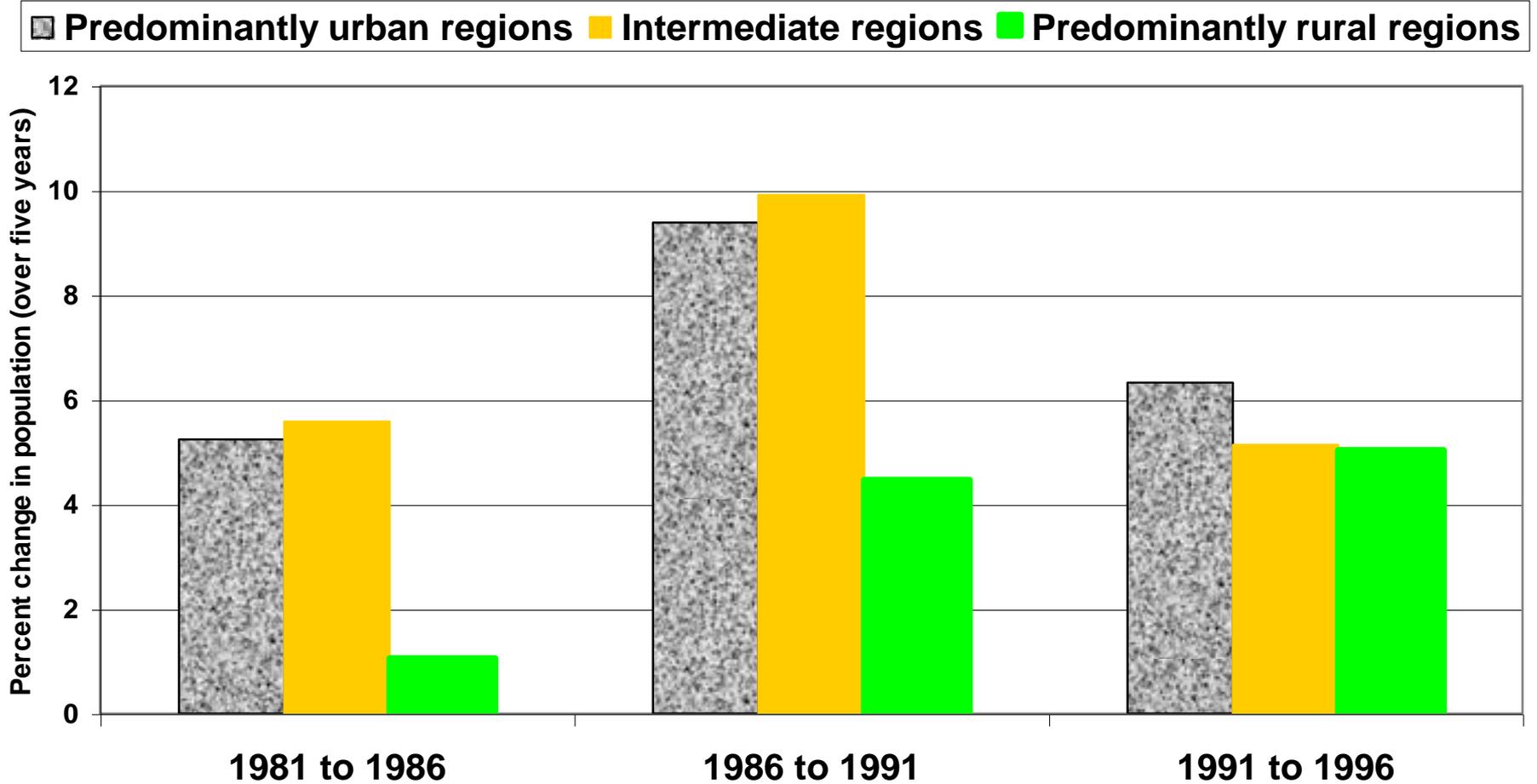
Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1981 - 1996. A predominantly rural region has over 50 percent of its population living in rural communities. An intermediate region has 15 to 49 percent living rural communities and a predominantly urban region has less than 15 percent of its population living in rural communities.

In 1996, 15 percent of Canada's population lived in rural metro-adjacent regions



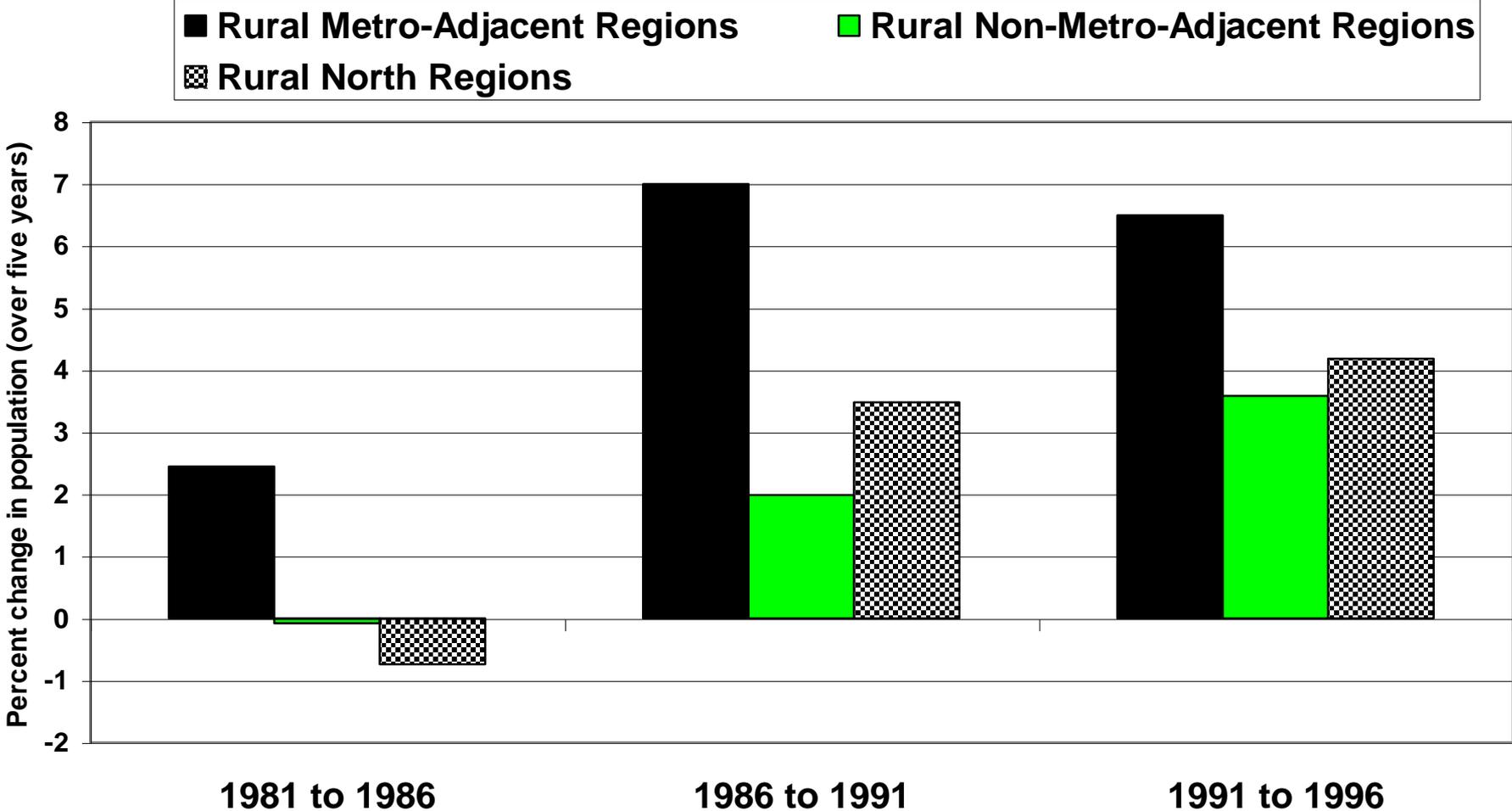
Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1981 - 1996. A predominantly rural region has over 50 percent of its population living in rural communities. An intermediate region has 15 to 49 percent living rural communities and a predominantly urban region has less than 15 percent of its population living in rural communities.

Population growth is smaller in predominantly rural regions



Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1981 - 1996. A predominantly rural region has over 50 percent of its population living in rural communities. An intermediate region has 15 to 49 percent living rural communities and a predominantly urban region has less than 15 percent of its population living in rural communities.

Population growth is larger in rural regions adjacent to metro centres



Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1981 - 1996.

Rural and Small Town

Outside the commuting zones of larger urban centres (with 10,000 or more)

duPlessis, Beshiri, & Bollman (2000)

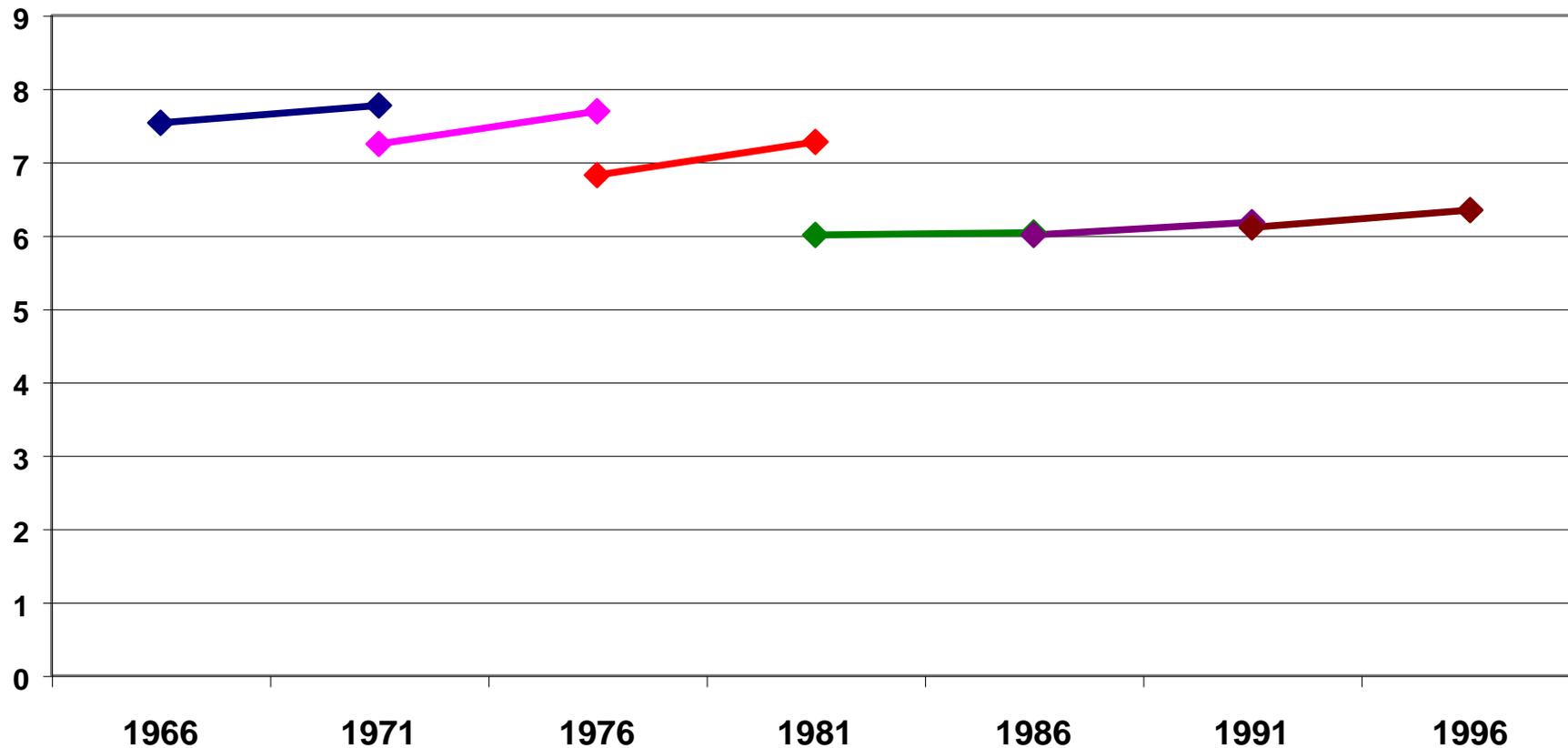
Rural and Small Town Canada: An Overview

Demography: **Population Growth**

- **At the Canada level, the rural and small town population is increasing.**
- **In Newfoundland and Saskatchewan, the rural and small town population has been **decreasing** for decades.**
- **In the other provinces, the rural and small town population is increasing only in areas where individuals can commute to cities or where individuals wish to retire.**

Rural and Small Town Population, Canada, 1966 to 1996

Population (millions)

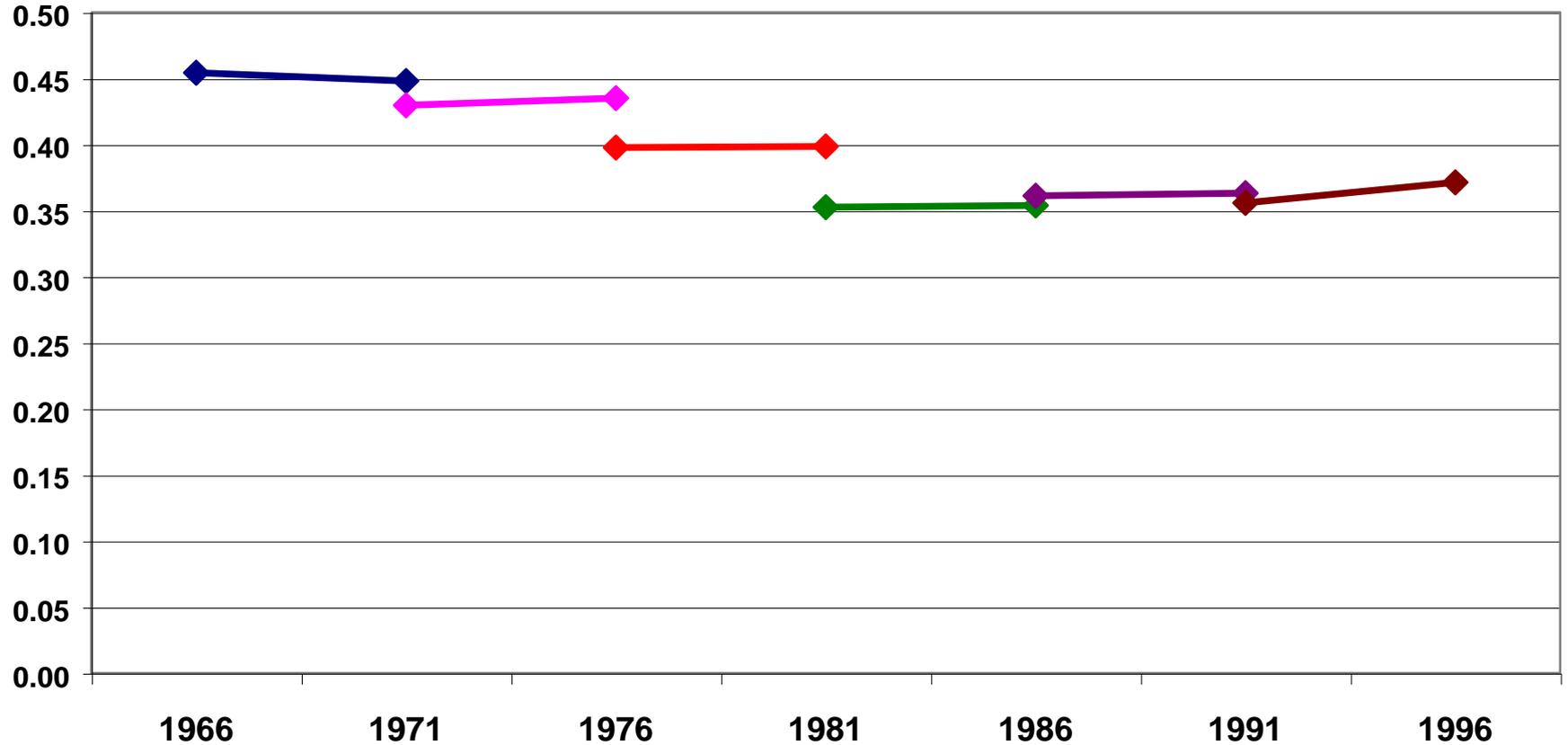


Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1966 to 1996.

Rural and small town refers to the population outside Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and outside Census Agglomerations (Cas).

Rural and Small Town Population, Manitoba, 1966 to 1996

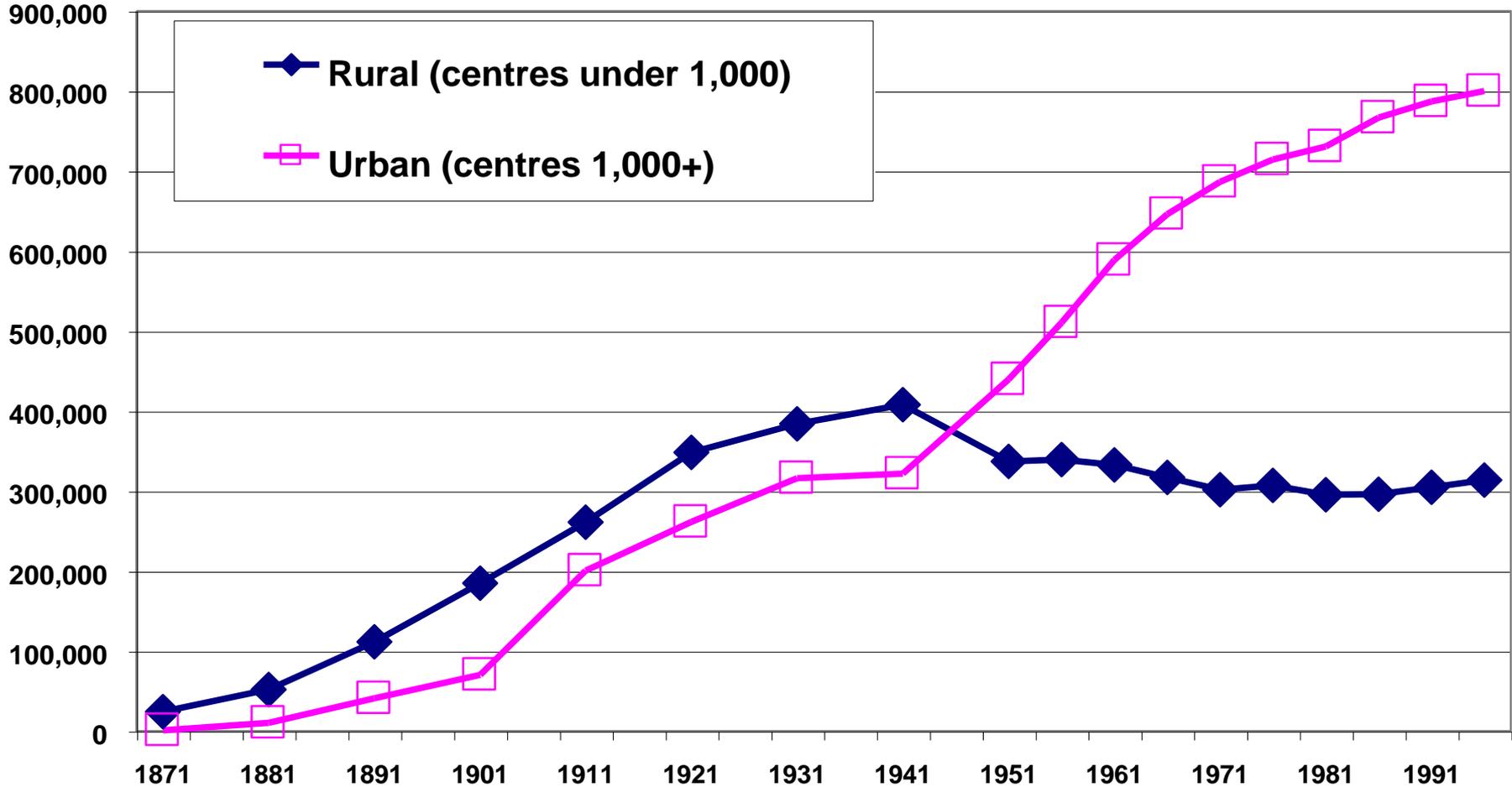
Population (millions)



Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1966 to 1996.

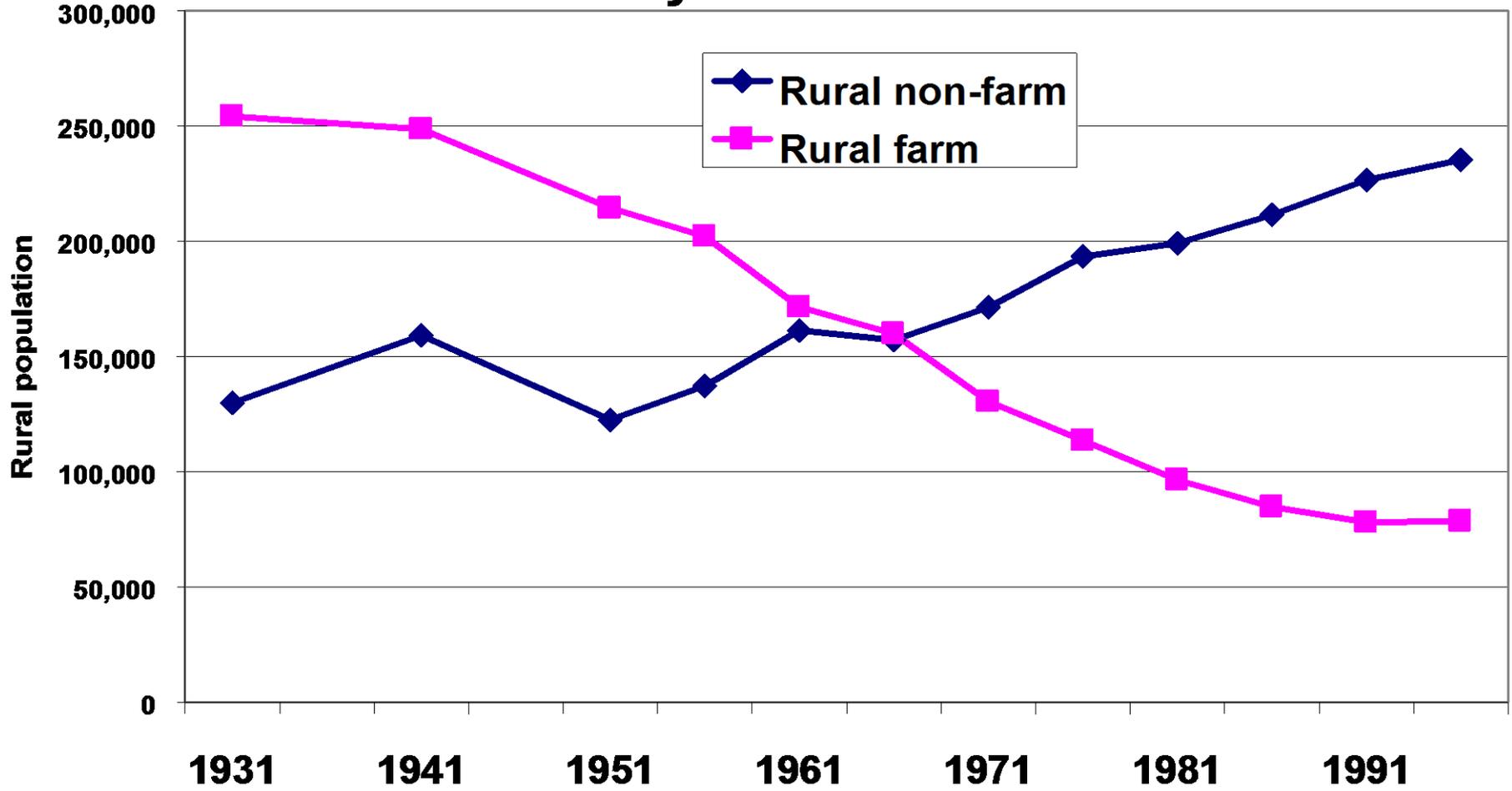
Rural and small town refers to the population outside Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and outside Census Agglomerations (CAs).

Population trends: Rural minority in Manitoba in 1951



Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1851 - 1996.

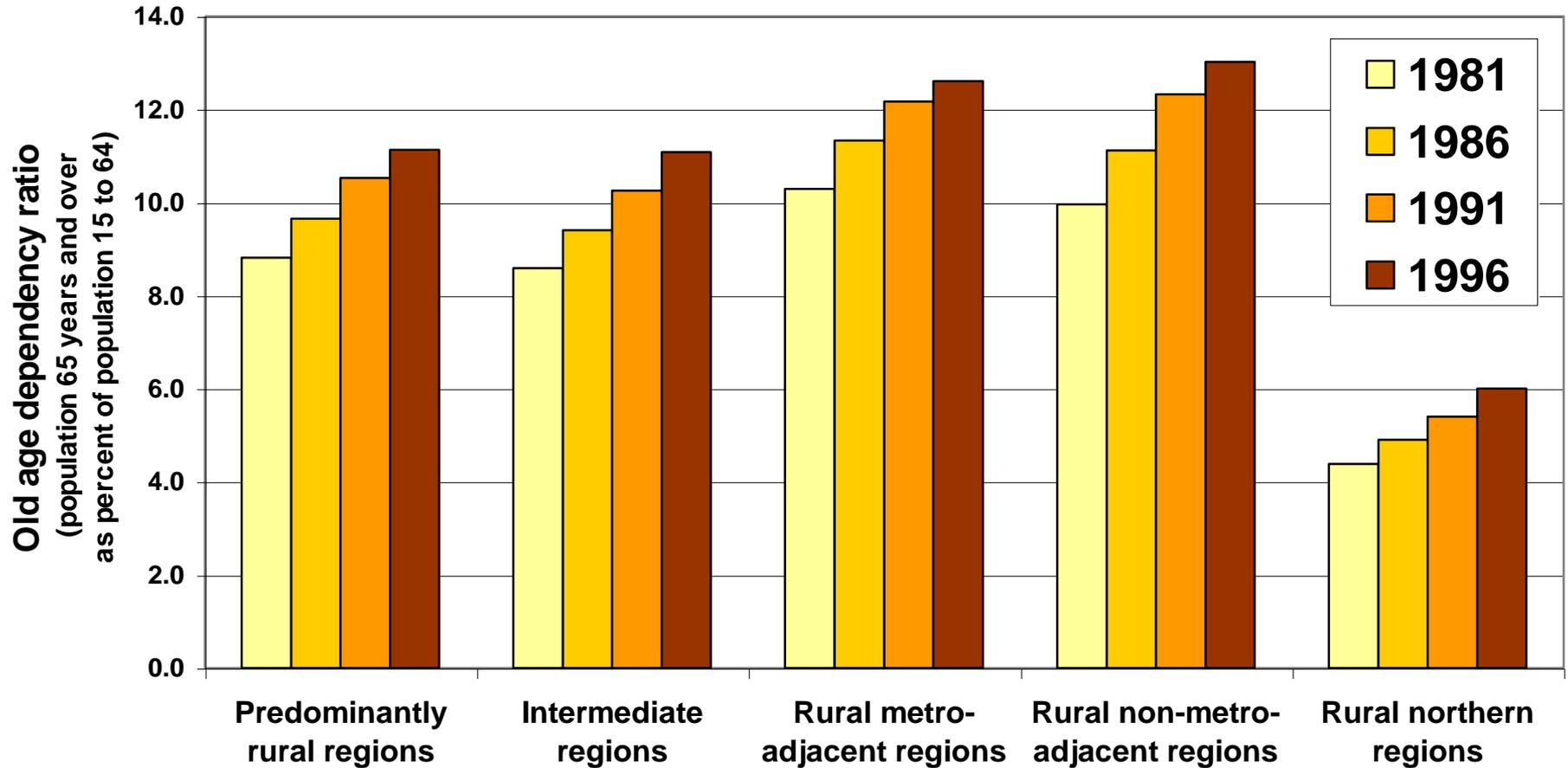
Rural population: Farmer minority in rural Manitoba since 1971



Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1931 - 1996.

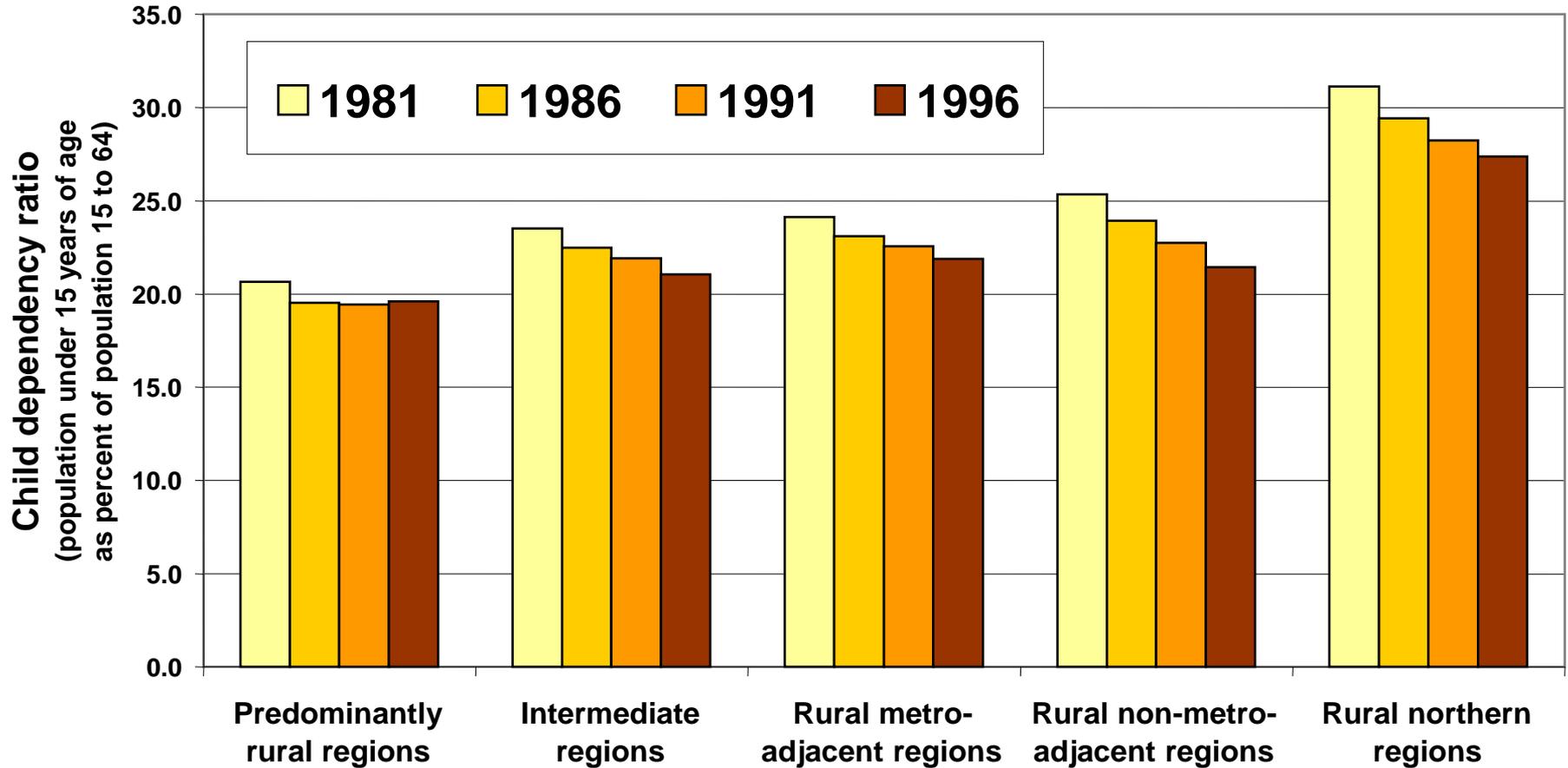
Old Age Dependency Ratio:

> is highest in rural non-metro-adjacent regions
> is increasing everywhere



Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1981 to 1996. A predominantly rural region has over 50 percent of its population living in rural communities. An intermediate region has 15 to 49 percent and a predominantly urban region has less than 15 percent.

Child Dependency Ratio: > is highest in rural northern regions > is declining everywhere



Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 1981 to 1996. A predominantly rural region has over 50 percent of its population living in rural communities. An intermediate region has 15 to 49 percent and a predominantly urban region has less than 15 percent.

Health Status of Rural Canadians



largely ignored

Geographic Setting

- **Deterioration of health status**
- **Impact of place**



Employment Patterns

- Lung cancer rates higher in mining areas (Pong, et al., 1999)
- Emphysema & asthma among farmers (Fair, 1992)
- Decline in lung function among swine workers & grain farmers (Kirychuk, S.P., Senthilson, A., Dosman, J.A., et al., 1998)



Unique Populations

- **First Nations**
- **Ethnic Groups**
- **Women**



Health Services & Health Professionals

- Fewer physicians in rural areas
- Rural and remote nursing practice – poorly studied



The Nature of Nursing Practice in Rural and Remote Canada

PIs: Dr. M. Macleod, UNBC
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Dr. N. Stewart, U of S
Dr. R. Pitblado, Laurentian



<http://ruralnursing.unbc.ca>

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Funding Partners

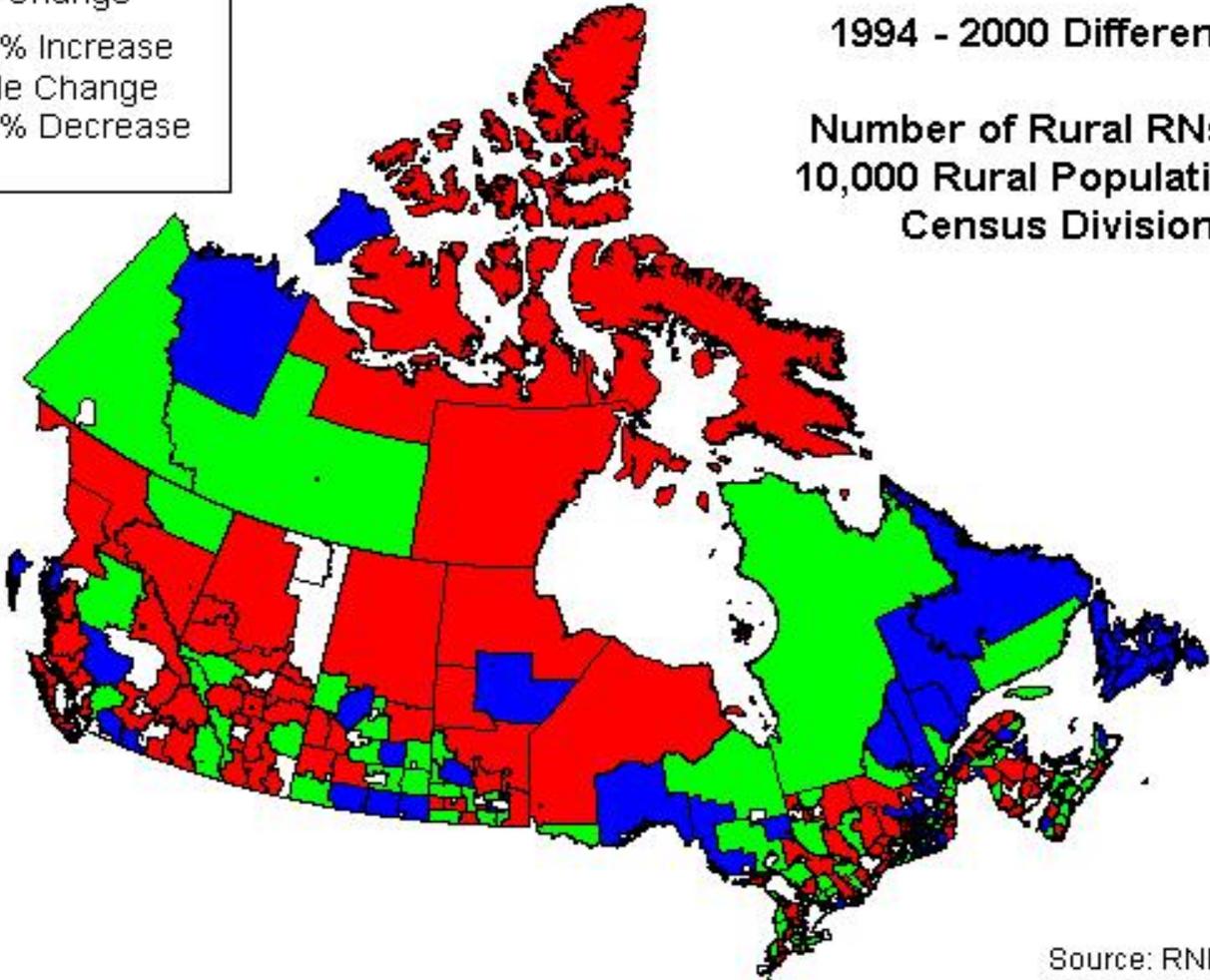


- Canadian Health Services Research Foundation
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Nursing Research Fund
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research
- Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research
- Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation
- British Columbia Rural and Remote Health Research Institute
- Saskatchewan Economic and Cooperative Development
- Provincial and Territorial Nurses Associations
- Government of Nunavut
- Canadian Institute for Health Information

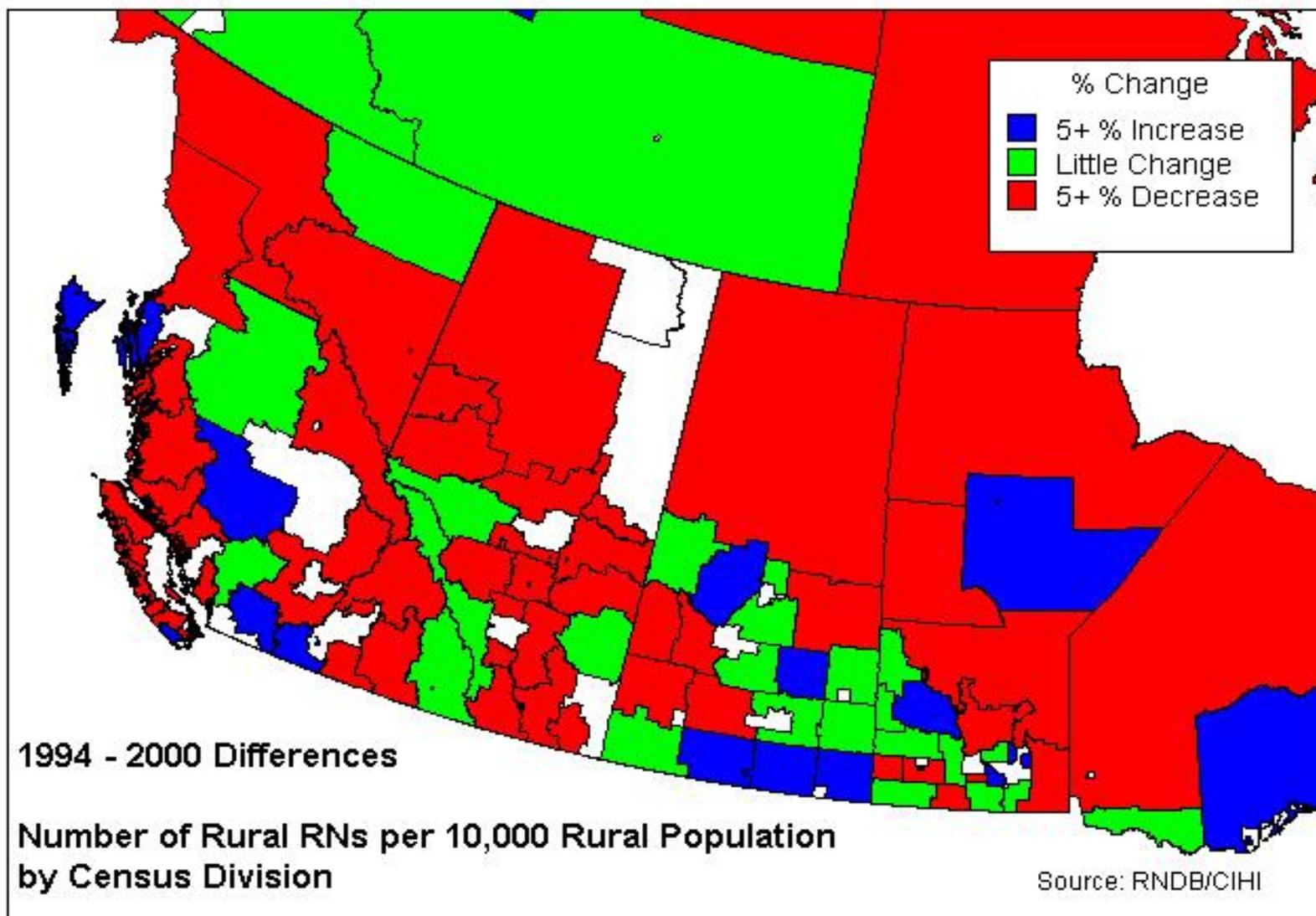


1994 - 2000 Differences

**Number of Rural RNs per
10,000 Rural Population by
Census Division**

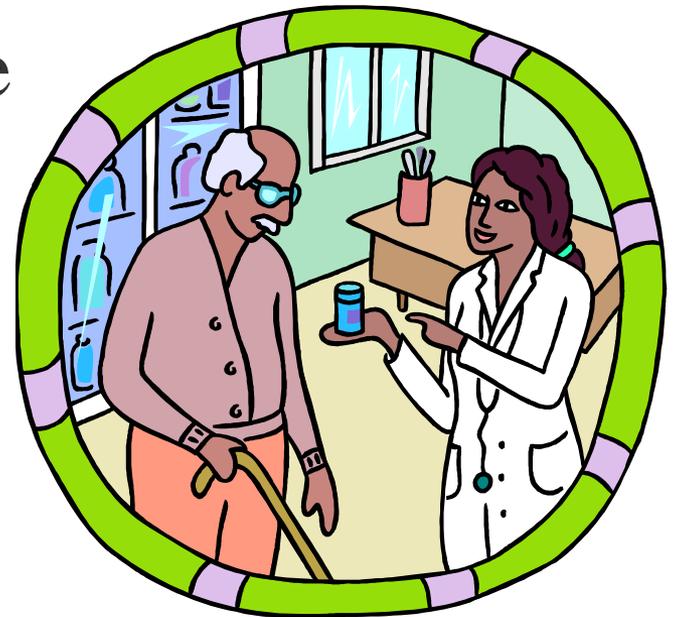


Source: RNDB/CIHI



Rewards of Rural Nursing Practice

- Provide care to unique populations
- Contribute to rural sustainability
- Pursuit of a specific lifestyle



Challenges of Rural Nursing Practice



Broader but unclear scope



Misunderstandings and lack of understanding



Lack of Resources

Recruitment and Retention

* **Satisfaction with job and community**



Rural Health Research & Training Lack of Education

n = 14

UNBC

Athabasca

University of Lethbridge

University of Alberta

University of Calgary

Dalhousie University

Univ. of New Brunswick

University of Manitoba

University of Saskatchewan

Sask. Indian Federated College

University of Ottawa

University of Toronto

Univ. of Western Ontario

Memorial University

(Minore, Kulig, Stewart, & Mack, 2001)

Less than half offered courses in rural health

- **64% of the students chose a rural health focus**
- **7 of the programs indicated that their faculty conducted rural health research**

(Minore, Kulig, Stewart, & Mack, 2001)

Inappropriate Policies



The Future of Rural Nursing Practice



Evidence Based Practice

- Rural nurse researchers
- Use of knowledge
- Preparing future rural nurses

New Models for Health Care Delivery

Nurse Responder

RN First Call Program

“Nurse Practitioners”

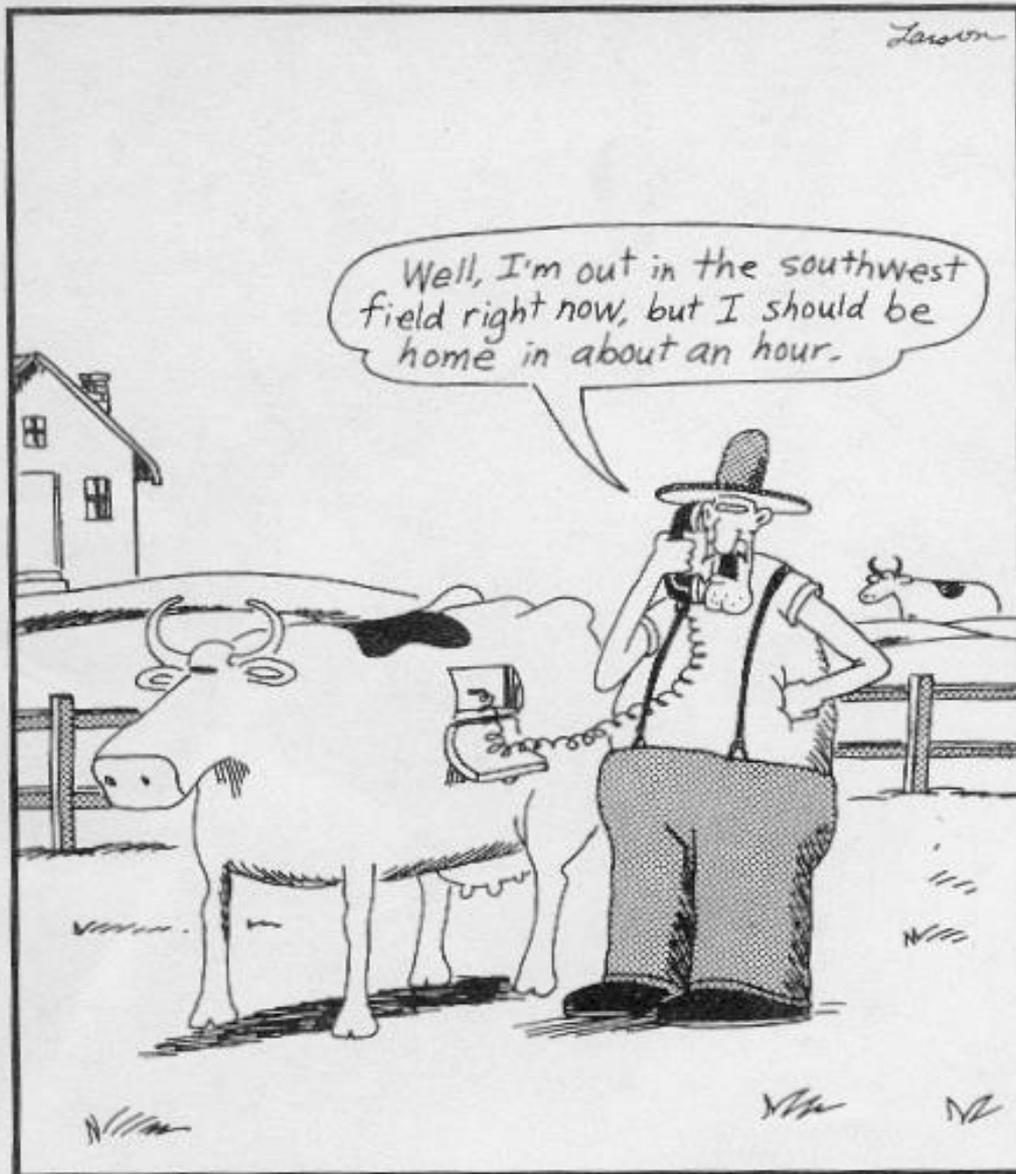
Using Technology

Telecommunications infrastructure

FNIHB Pilot Project

Telehealth





The rural professional and his cowphone

