

Micropolitan America

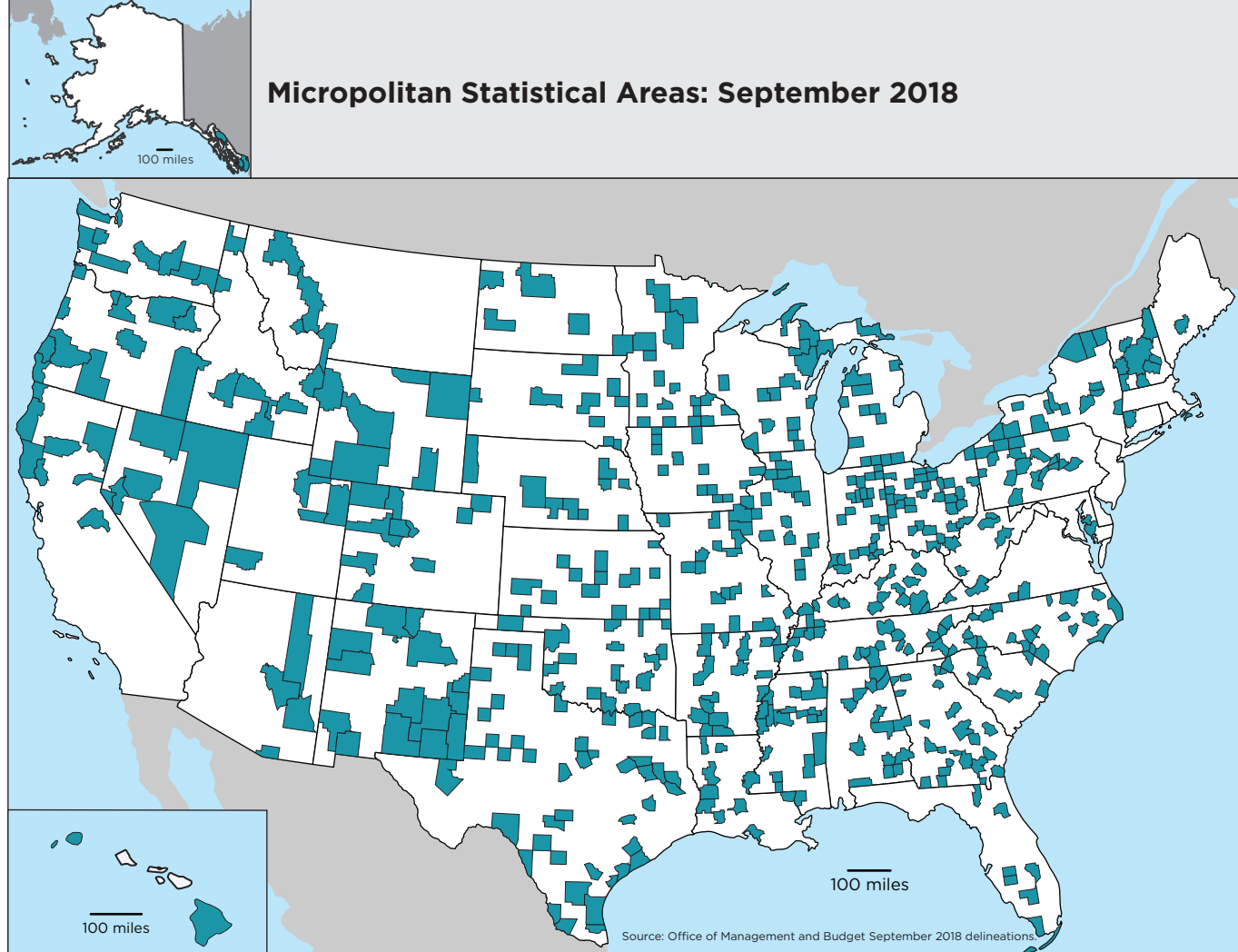
July 2019

Micropolitan statistical areas—or “micros”—are core based statistical areas (CBSAs) that provide a lens on small-town America. Micros are delineated for use in collecting and publishing comparable statistical data across federal agencies. These areas must contain a population concentration, or core, of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 (while metropolitan statistical areas must contain a population core of at least 50,000), and consist of the county or counties containing the core plus any other counties with strong commuting ties to the core counties. Taken together, these requirements typically translate into a small town and its surroundings.



Micropolitan America

As of September 2018, there were 542 micros in the United States, encompassing 660 counties. Forty-seven of the fifty states contained at least one micro. Delaware, New Jersey, and Rhode Island were completely within metropolitan statistical areas and, thus, had no micros. Texas contained 46 micros, the most of any state.



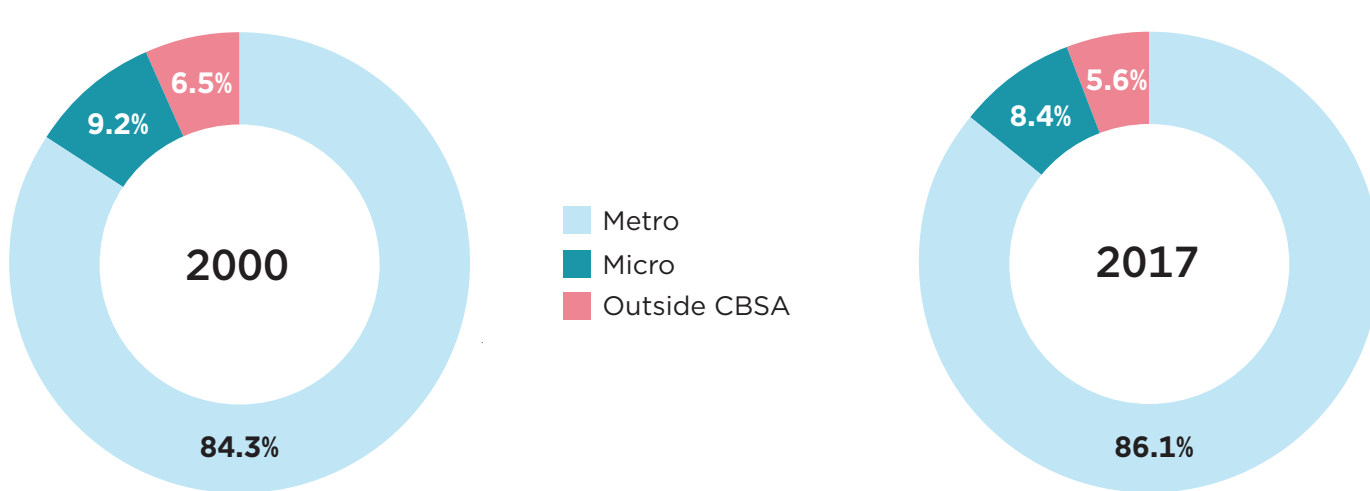
September 2018 delineation
542
 Micros
660
 Counties

■ Micropolitan Statistical Area

Population Distribution

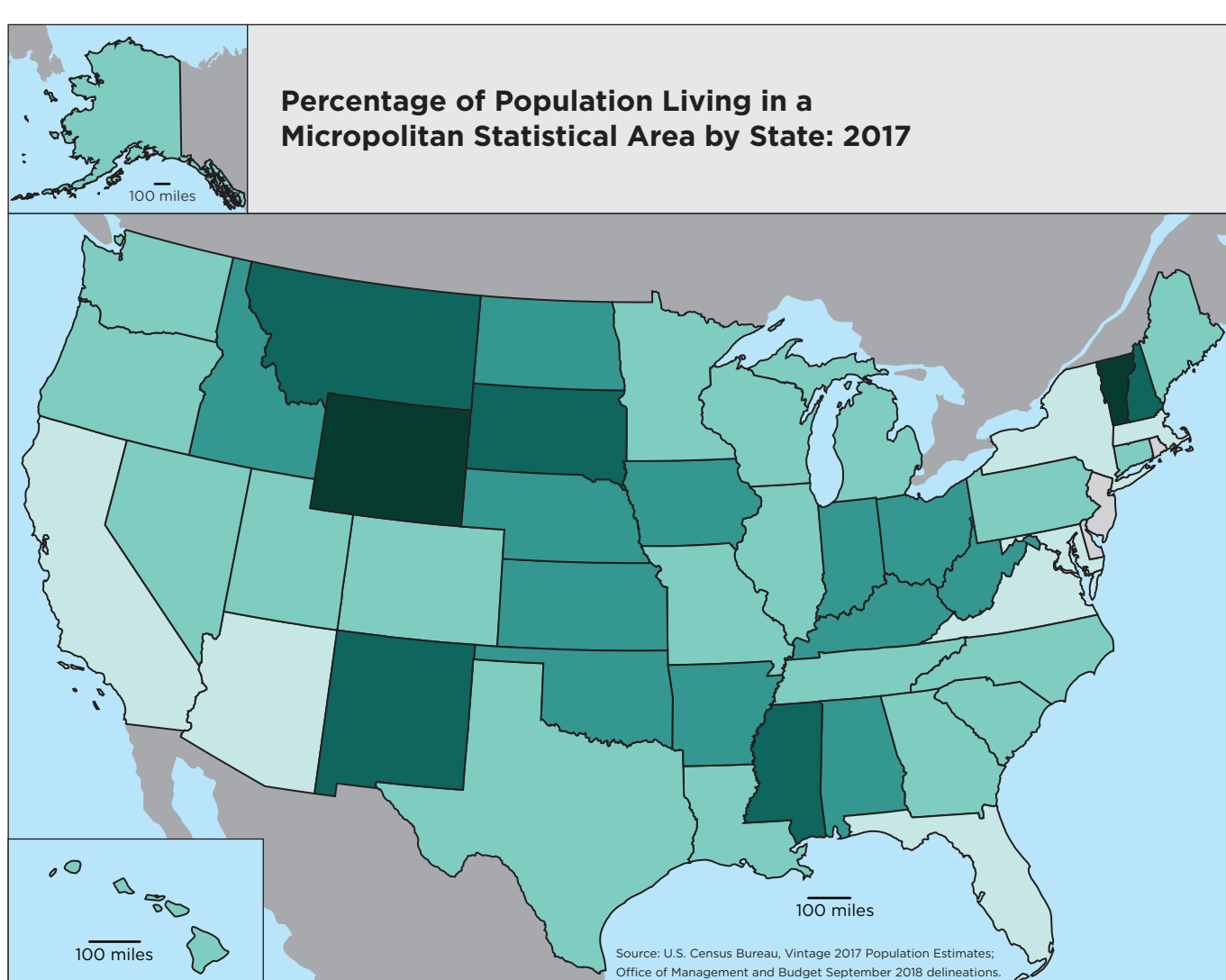
In 2017, there were 27.2 million people living in micros in the United States, accounting for approximately 8.4 percent of the total population. This was a slightly lower share than in 2000, when the micro population was approximately 9.2 percent of the country. During that same period, the population living in a metro grew from 84.3 percent to 86.1 percent of the total U.S. population, while the population living outside of a metro or a micro fell from 6.5 percent to 5.6 percent.

Population of the United States by Core Based Statistical Area Status: 2000 and 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000–2010 Intercensal Population Estimates and Vintage 2017 Population Estimates; Office of Management and Budget September 2018 delineations.

The proportion of a state’s population living in a micro varies considerably throughout the United States. In 2017, the state with the highest share of its population living in a micro was Wyoming, with 44.2 percent. Excluding those states without micros, the state with the lowest percentage of its population living in a micro was Massachusetts, with 0.25 percent.

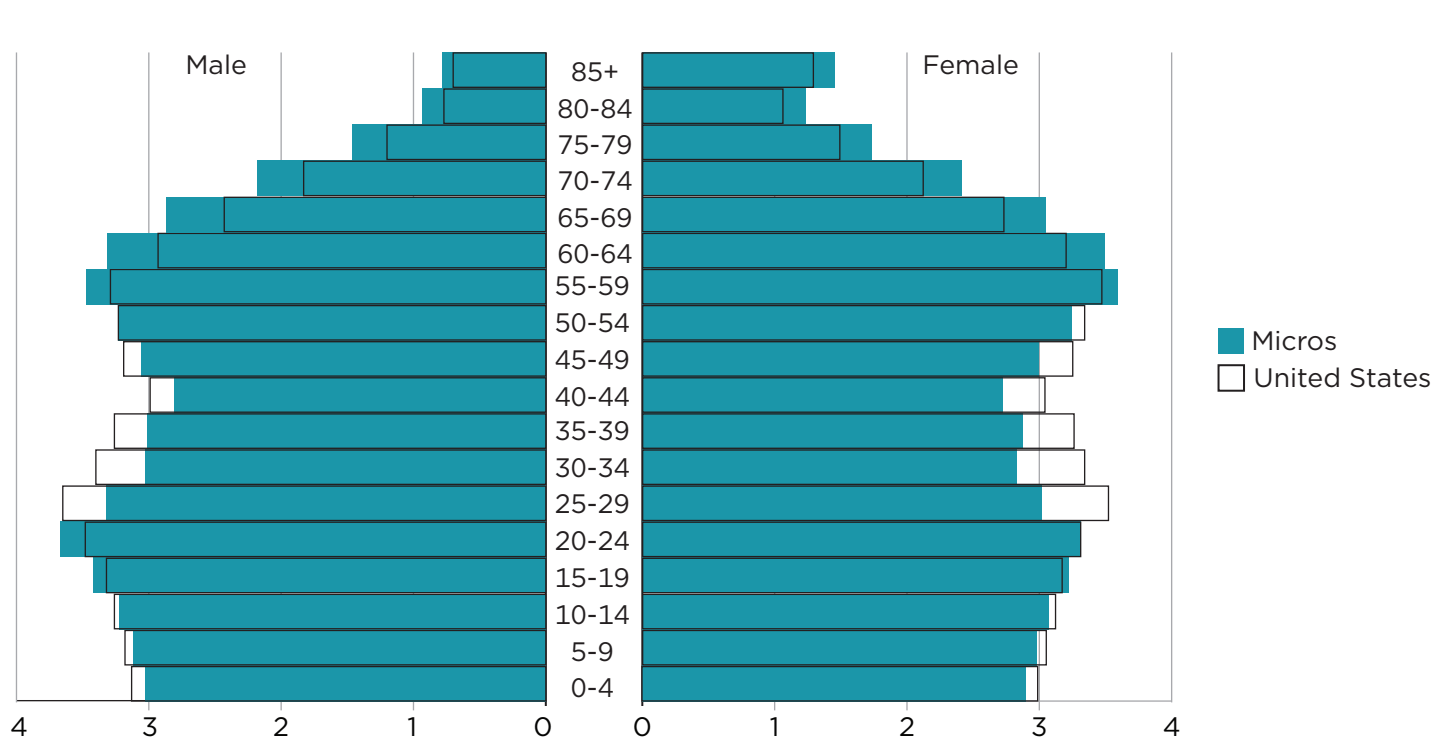


Percent change
 ■ 35.0–44.2
 ■ 25.0–34.9
 ■ 15.0–24.9
 ■ 5.0–14.9
 ■ Less than 5.0
 ■ No Micros

Age and Sex

The population living in micros in 2017 skewed older than that of the United States as a whole, with higher proportions of the micro population falling in age groups of 55 and over. The United States had higher proportions of its population in the cohorts between ages 25 and 49.

Percentage of Total Population of Micropolitan Statistical Areas and United States by Age and Sex: 2017

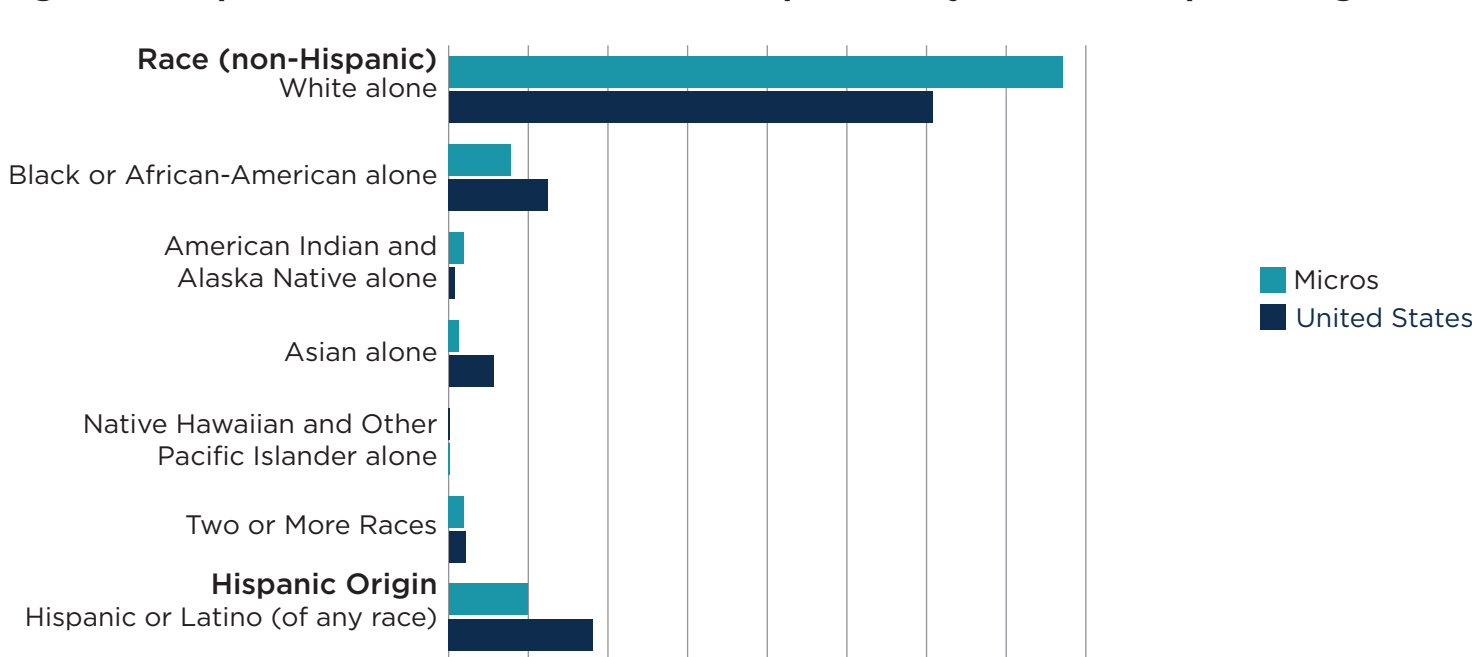


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates; Office of Management and Budget September 2018 delineations.

Race and Ethnicity

In 2017, the non-Hispanic White population accounted for 77.1 percent of the total micro population, while making up 60.7 percent of the total U.S. population. Meanwhile, the Black alone, Asian alone, and Hispanic populations accounted for higher proportions of the U.S. population than those of micros.

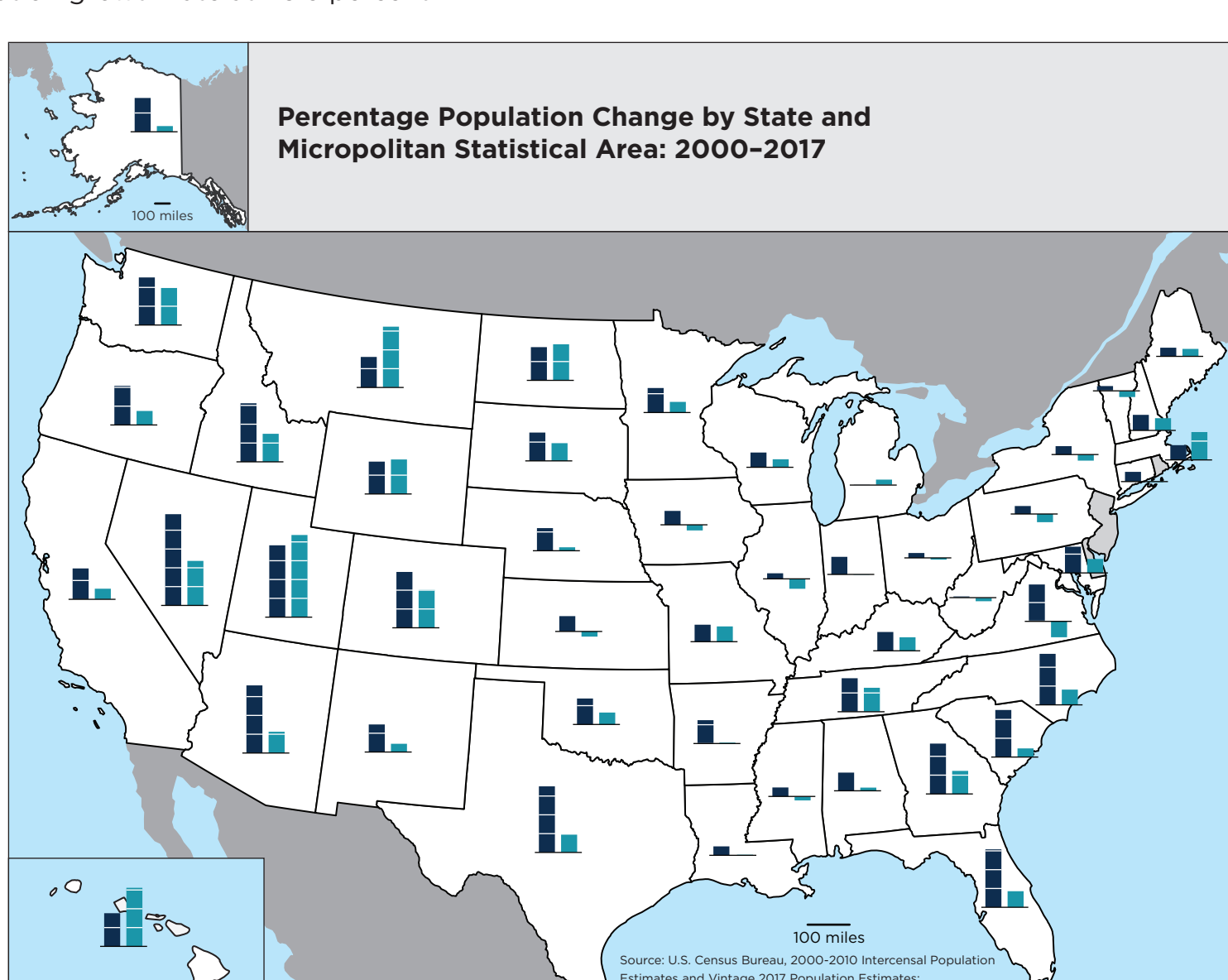
Percentage of Micropolitan Statistical Area and U.S. Population by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates; Office of Management and Budget September 2018 delineations.

Population Change

The overall growth rates of micros varied across states between 2000 and 2017. Some states experienced population growth at the state level, but loss in their micro populations (e.g., Iowa, Kansas, Pennsylvania, and Virginia). In other states, there was growth in micro populations, but below overall state growth (e.g., Florida, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, and Texas). There were seven states with a micro population growth rate higher than that of the state overall: Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. Utah had the highest micro population growth rate at 43.6 percent.

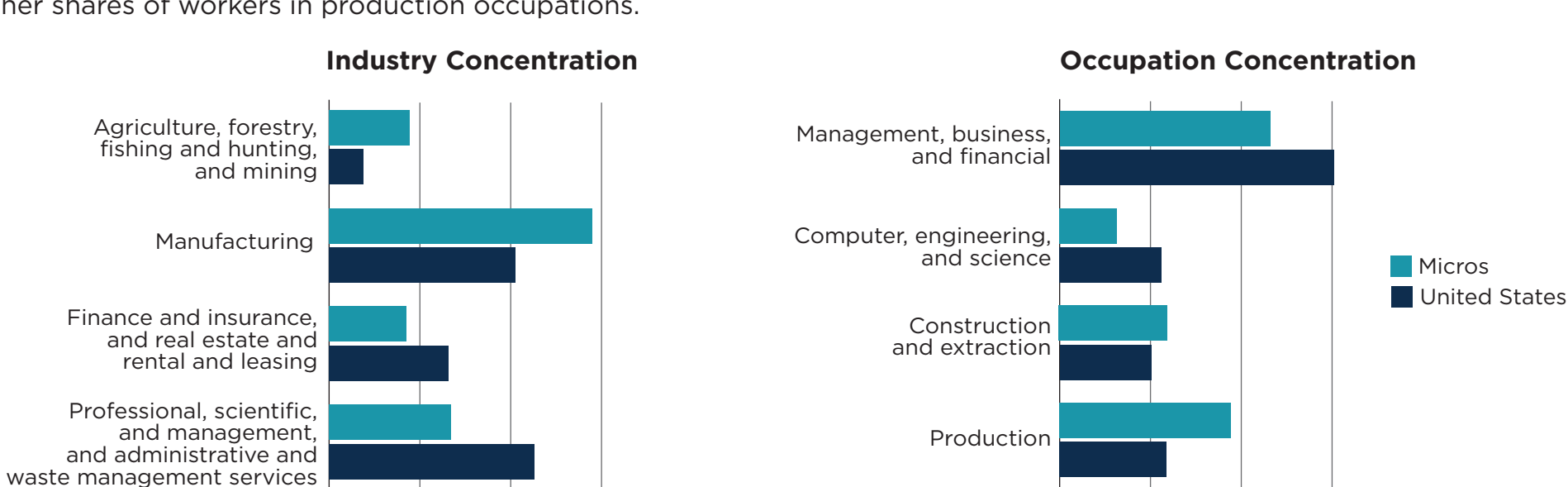


2000–2017 percent change
 ■ 50
 ■ 40
 ■ 30
 ■ 20
 ■ 10
 ■ 0
 ■ -10
 State Micros

■ No Micros

Industry and Occupation

Over the 2013–2017 period, micros had a higher share of workers employed in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining, and manufacturing industries, while the United States as a whole had a higher share employed in the finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing, and professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services. Looking at occupations, the country overall had higher shares of workers in management, business, and financial, and computer, engineering, and science occupations, while micros had higher shares of workers in production occupations.



Note: Percent distribution of the civilian employed population age 16 and older. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonresponse error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates; Office of Management and Budget September 2018 delineations.