



# **NORTHEAST ALBERTA INFORMATION HUB LTD.: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROFILE**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## A. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide an economic and social profile of the Alberta HUB. By providing such background information on the HUB, the report complements a study that is currently being conducted on urban-rural interdependence in the region. The report presents and analyzes 2006 Census data using two geographical systems: with a urban / rural dichotomy and with a more refined rural categorization called Metropolitan Influence Zone (MIZ).

## B. URBAN-RURAL ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE

The three measures of urban-rural interdependency suggest that rural HUB is neither strongly interdependent on urban HUB nor is the HUB as a whole strongly linked to other large urban centres outside of HUB. The MIZ designations indicate that only a small minority (1.2%) of all rural residents live in communities in which at least 30% of the population are commuting to work in large urban centres located outside of HUB (*Strong MIZ*). Within the HUB, the rural population is not only more mobile than the urban population, but both urban and rural residents are more likely to access jobs in rural communities. It is also noteworthy that while rural HUB does not rely heavily on urban HUB for jobs, urban HUB is an important source of labour for rural HUB.

## C. POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

Though population growth in rural HUB has been somewhat lower than in rural Alberta, it is comparable to the growth that has occurred in rural Canada. Compared to the rest of the province, the HUB population is more likely to be married and urban HUB is home to a much smaller proportion of minorities and immigrants. Though there are a few differences between rural HUB and rural Alberta, the most noteworthy are found in *No MIZ*, which has larger proportions of older, male, divorced and widowed populations and a smaller proportion of Aboriginal identity residents.

## D. SOCIAL INDICATORS

When compared to the province, the population of the Alberta HUB is characterized by lower levels of educational attainment. A larger proportion of homes in the Alberta HUB are owned, but they are less costly, older and more likely to require major repair than in the province.

## E. ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Compared to urban Alberta, urban HUB has a higher LFP rate, average income and lower unemployment rates, and lower incidents of government transfer payments and low economic status. Though the same cannot be said when comparing rural HUB and rural Alberta, the differences between these two geographies are not really very great. Within the HUB, urban-rural differences follow the provincial patterns whereby urban centres demonstrate a more positive economic situation than found in rural municipalities and *No MIZ* communities exhibit the weakest economic indicators of all geographies.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

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The purpose of this report is to provide an economic and social profile of the Northeast Alberta Information HUB Ltd. (hereafter referred to as “Alberta HUB” or the “HUB”). By providing such background information on the HUB, the report provides contextual and benchmarking information that will complement a larger study currently being conducted on urban-rural interdependencies.

The overall objective of the larger study is to explore the nature of urban-rural interdependencies related to economic, social, and environmental sustainability and to determine their impact on the well-being and prosperity of regions. The HUB is one of three Alberta case-study economic regions comprising the study. Similar profile reports have been developed for the other two case-study regions of Alberta Southwest and Calgary Regional Partnership (and for a pilot study of the Flagstaff region).

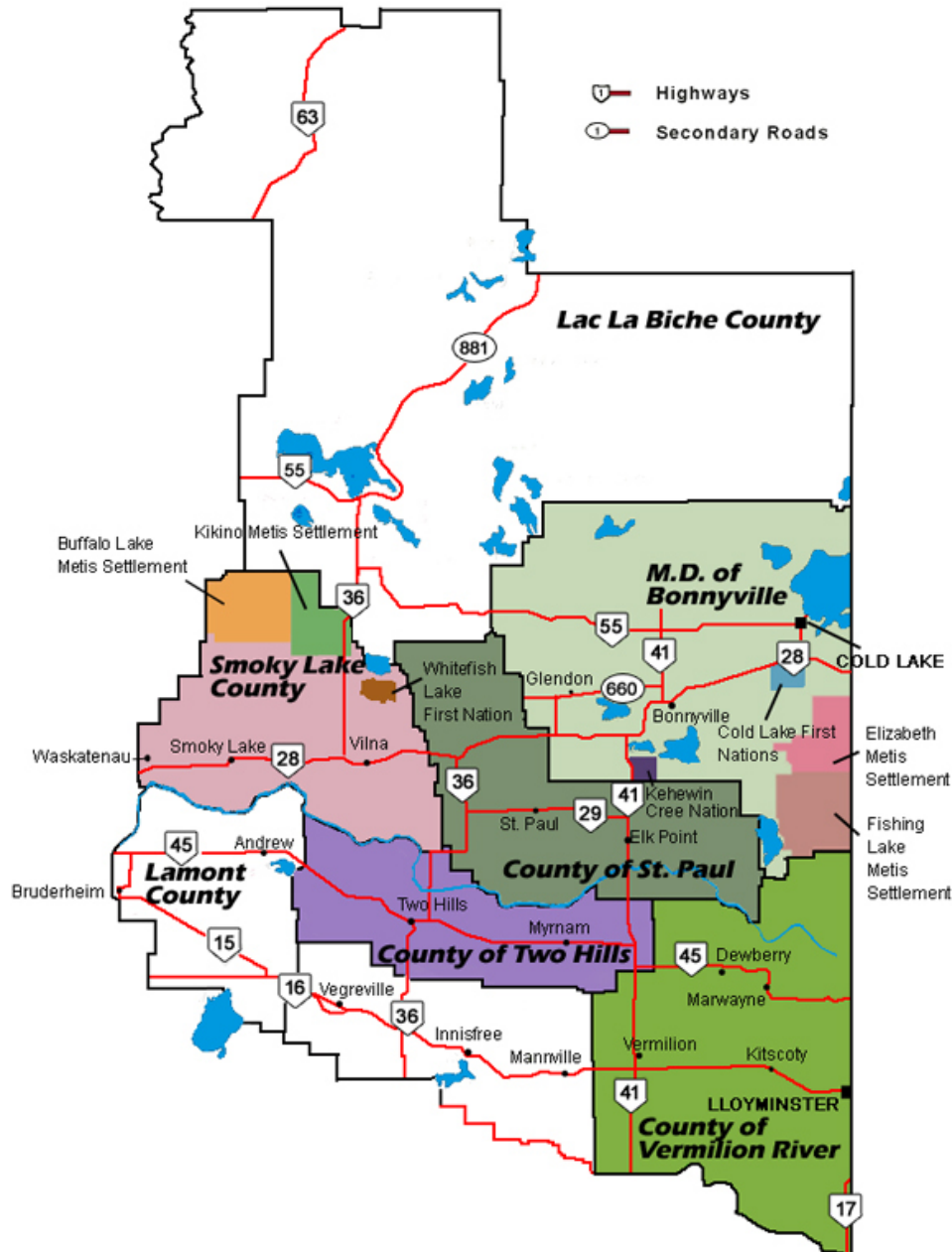
We begin the report by examining the economic interdependence in the HUB in Section B, followed by a presentation of population / demographic, social, and economic indicators in Sections C, D, and E, respectively. Each section of the report begins with highlights of the key findings and concludes with a brief summary that ties the key findings together.

### **About the Alberta HUB**

The Alberta HUB is one of 13 Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) in the Province of Alberta. REDAs are autonomous self-selected organizations that are supported by the Alberta government and that include over 250 communities in the province. More information on the province’s REDAs can be found at <http://albertacanada.com/regionaldev/1218.html>.

Located northeast of Edmonton, the Alberta HUB refers to the geographical area comprised of 34 communities, including 2 cities, 8 towns, 10 villages, 5 counties, 2 municipal districts, 4 Métis Settlements, and 3 First Nations/Cree Nations reserves. (See map below).

The HUB was established in 2000 to “promote and facilitate economic development that supports business and enhances the quality of life and environment of its member communities.” HUB is currently pursuing growth opportunities in the energy, defense, transportation, agriculture, and tourism sectors. Further information on Alberta HUB can be obtained at [www.albertahub.com](http://www.albertahub.com).



Source: [http://www.albertahub.com/d\\_file/map\\_2.jpg](http://www.albertahub.com/d_file/map_2.jpg)

The main source of data for this report was Statistics Canada's 2006 and 2001 Censuses of Population.<sup>1</sup> Two major classification systems form the core analysis in this report. First, a basic comparison between urban centres and rural/small town zones is presented to capture overall differences between the two geographies of the HUB. Second, the Metropolitan Influenced Zone (MIZ) system, developed by McNiven et al. (2000), is used to make distinctions

<sup>1</sup> Discrepancies between the figures presented in this report and other Statistics Canada 2006 Census data is primarily due to the use of 20% sample data for most of the 2006 Census in the current report. These data have been weighted, are subject to rounding, and exclude institutional residents.

within rural and small town municipalities of the HUB. The four MIZ categories are *Strong*, *Moderate*, *Weak*, and *No MIZ*, with each reflecting progressively greater rurality and less influence by urban centres. When available, comparative data have been provided for Alberta using the same two classification schemes.

## **B. URBAN-RURAL ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE**

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### **Key Findings**

#### **B.1 Introduction**

- Fully 71.2% of the HUB population resides in rural areas (compared to 21.2% of the provincial population).

#### **B.2 Urban-Rural Proximity**

- Roughly half of all 34 HUB municipalities meet the definition of “urban-periphery” to the City of Edmonton and no municipalities are within the urban periphery of Fort McMurray.

#### **B.3 Geographic Zone Designation**

- Just two of the municipalities are included in the *Strong MIZ* category with most communities designated as *Moderately* and *Weakly* influenced by their urban neighbors.
- Based on the MIZ designations, it is concluded that rural HUB is not strongly integrated with urban centres, though there are a few exceptions to this pattern.

#### **B.4 Commuting Flows and Patterns**

- Not only is the working population in rural HUB is much more likely to work outside of their own municipality (especially those living in *Strong* and *No MIZ* areas), but they are more likely to work in jobs located in rural regions.
- Compared to the urban population, the rural population of the HUB is much more mobile, commuters are a more important source of labour, and they are more likely to commute to other rural communities.
- Rural HUB is not dependent on urban HUB for jobs; though it is somewhat dependent on urban communities as a source of labour.

### **Summary**

Though some of the results are mixed, the three measures of urban-rural interdependency suggest that rural HUB is neither strongly interdependent with urban HUB or on other large urban centres outside of HUB.



## B.1 Introduction

The 34 municipalities in the Alberta HUB can be classified into urban and rural designations. According to Statistics Canada's geographical definition of 'Rural and Small Town' (see box at right), fully 71.2% of the HUB population is rural. This compares to 21.2% of all Alberta municipalities that are defined as rural and small town.

**Definition of Rural and Small Town:** Regions that have a population of less than 10,000 and where less than 50% of employed individuals commute to a Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) or Census Agglomeration (CA) (Statistics Canada, 1999a).

The urban/rural breakdown of the HUB has implications for urban-rural interdependency and therefore the economic well-being of the entire region. With more than 7 in 10 of HUB residents residing in rural locations, it is important to understand the many ways that these rural communities can benefit economically from their interdependency with urban communities. For example, rural areas can gain economically from HUB's urban centres by having access to diverse employment opportunities, to large end markets for rural production, to resources for public and private investment in rural enterprise, to vibrant environments for knowledge creation and transfer, and to transportation hubs (Dabson, 2007; Core Cities, 2003; Slack et al., 2003).

Urban centres can also benefit from their interdependency with rural communities. Rural areas can provide to urban centres food, energy, a labour force, stewardship, waste management, congestion relief, and uniquely rural experiences, as well as specialty agriculture, hospitality and tourism, second and retirement homes, the outsourcing of services, and alleviation of urban labour shortages (Stauber, 2001; Porter et al, 2004; Partridge, 2005).<sup>2</sup>

The extent to which these reciprocal benefits are realized depends on a number of factors, with the most perceptible and widely researched being proximity to urban centres. Though research has demonstrated that the greatest economic advantages accrue to rural communities within the urban periphery (Dabson, 2007; Partridge et al., 2007; Wensley and Stabler, 1998), it stands to reason that the reverse must also be true; that proximity to rural areas increases the opportunities for urban centres to capitalize on the benefits of their interdependency with rural areas. Yet, for both rural and urban communities to take advantage of the benefits and to avoid the costs, rural and urban interdependency must be first be acknowledged and then urban-rural partnerships can be formed around these interdependencies. Hence, this portion of the report attempts to draw out the degree of urban-rural interdependence in the HUB.

We assess the regional economic interdependence by examining the level of economic integration among our geographical region of interest using a number of techniques. We begin by examining the proximity of each HUB municipality to two of the closest large urban centres

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<sup>2</sup> This is not to say that there aren't potential for costs as well as benefits. Costs effects of increasing interdependence include diminishing rural landscapes, environmental degradation, rural out-migration (for jobs and amenities), and loss of rural employment opportunities as firms locate in urban areas to take advantage of agglomeration benefits (Partridge et al., 2005).

outside of the HUB (the Cities of Edmonton and Fort McMurray), which as noted above, bears on the extent to which rural communities can capitalize on the benefits of urban centres. Subsequent sections draw upon various measures of commuting flow data as indicators of the interaction of people between localities within the HUB (B.2).<sup>3</sup> Commuting flows are more than just a measure of home to work journeys and access to labour markets since people tend to use services provided in the same regions where they work. Accordingly, our examination of commuting flows reflect both the economic and social connections between communities.

This assessment is done first by drawing upon the Metropolitan Influence Zone (MIZ) system which exacts a more granular categorization of rural communities and, mostly notably, accounts for commuting flows from rural communities to the urban core (B.3). The MIZ categorization system also forms the core basis of analysis for all subsequent sections in the report. The final and central analysis entails an evaluation of place of work data and of work commuting patterns between urban and rural (and MIZ) communities in the HUB (B.4). Hence, this final section moves the investigation from a simple one-directional commuting flow analysis to urban centres, towards a much more robust delineation of two-directional flows between a wider range of communities.

## **B.2 Urban-Rural Proximity**

Due to the small size of the two cities in the HUB (Lloydminster; 27,023 and Cold Lake; 11,991), this examination of urban-rural proximity looks at distance to the Cities of Edmonton and Fort McMurray, which are two major external markets for the region.<sup>4</sup> An examination of the proximity of HUB municipalities to these cities has implications for the degree to which the conditions are set for interdependency between the HUB and the closest large urban centres. The population of each community and their respective distances to Edmonton and Fort McMurray are presented in Table 1 below.

The first observation of note from Table 1 is that 18 of the 34 municipalities listed are considered to be inside the urban periphery of the City of Edmonton (which is typically considered to be a 200 kilometer radius: see Partridge et al., 2007; Wensley and Stabler, 1998; or within a 90-minute commute: see Dabson, 2007). Notably, however, just 3 of the 7 Métis Settlements and First Nations' Reserves are inside of the urban periphery of Edmonton.

Conversely, all of the municipalities would be considered to be outside the urban periphery of Fort McMurray and by a fairly large margin (the closest community is 300 kilometers from Fort McMurray). Hence, the distance table suggests that, at least as far as proximity is concerned, Alberta HUB municipalities are more likely to benefit from their close proximity to Edmonton than to Fort McMurray. With many of the communities within the HUB located on the only

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<sup>3</sup> Other ways of understanding urban-rural interdependency including examining the flows of goods, flows of wastes; and sectoral interactions (e.g. urban farming, rural manufacturing) (Tacoli, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> HUB's relationship with Edmonton has been formalized under the Rural Metro Accord, which serves as a platform for increased collaboration and shared services and resources (e.g., the City of Edmonton shares its training opportunities with HUB members)(Alberta HUB, 2008).

southern access route to Fort McMurray, however, these communities will likely benefit, perhaps especially as oil service and support centres, despite that they are hundreds of kilometers away from Alberta's major oil industry. These population and proximity data are important to keep in mind when examining the factors that go into determining MIZ classification in the next section.

<b>Table 1: Population and Urban Proximity Alberta HUB</b>			
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2006 Population</b>	<b>Distance to Edmonton (kms)</b>	<b>Distance to Fort McMurray (kms)</b>
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>100,305</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>
Bruderheim	1,215	61	400
Lamont County	3,925	91	387
Waskatenau	278	93	350
Vegreville	5,519	101	449
Smoky Lake Town	1,010	116	372
Andrew	465	116	402
Smoky Lake County	3,357	134	399
Innisfree	233	142	485
Vilna	274	152	377
Two Hills	1,047	155	440
Two Hills County	2801	155	440
Mannville	782	170	514
Kikino Métis Settlement <sup>1</sup>	--	185	339
Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement <sup>2</sup>	1,382	190	300
Myrnam	362	191	488
Vermilion River County	7,467	193	536
Vermillion Town	4,036	193	536
White Fish Lake First Nations	1,237	196	363
Bonnyville MD	10,194	215	433
St. Paul County	5,925	215	433
St. Paul Town	5,106	217	434
Lac La Biche County <sup>3</sup>	9,123	218	298
Kitscoty	709	227	570
Dewberry	196	241	527
Lloydminster	27,023	248	592
Marwayne	516	248	547
Glendon	421	252	403
Elk Point	1,487	254	469

Table 1 Cont'd

**Table 1: Population and Urban Proximity (Cont'd)  
Alberta HUB**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2006 Population</b>	<b>Distance to Edmonton (kms)</b>	<b>Distance to Fort McMurray (kms)</b>
Kehewin Cree Nation <sup>4</sup>	1,007	254+	469+
Bonnyville Town	5,832	306	426
Cold Lake First Nations	592	347	448
Cold Lake	11,991	356	443
Elizabeth Métis Settlement <sup>2</sup>	996	364	476
Fishing Lake Métis Settlement <sup>2</sup>	N/A	309	509

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Population, AlbertaFirst and Travel Alberta Distance Calculator (<http://www1.travelalberta.com/en-us/index.cfm?pageid=2155>)

<sup>1</sup> The population count for Kikino Métis Settlement is unknown but is included in Smoky Lake (Part A) and Lac La Biche Counties (Part B).

<sup>2</sup> Population counts for Buffalo Lake, Elizabeth, and Fishing Lake Métis Settlements are also included in the population counts presented for the Municipal Districts of Smoky Lake and Bonnyville.

<sup>3</sup> Lac La Biche County includes the recently amalgamated Town of Lac La Biche and Lakeland County.

<sup>4</sup> Kehewin Cree Nation is not listed at the Travel Alberta Website. The distances provided are based on Elk Point.

### **B.3 Geographic Zone Designation**

Rural municipalities can be further categorized into a system that captures varying degrees of ‘rurality’ called “Census Metropolitan Area and Census Agglomeration Influenced Zones” (MIZ). The MIZ allocation of municipalities is a good indicator of urban-rural economic interdependency as it captures the flows of rural populations to urban populations for work. Under the MIZ system, rural communities are classified into four MIZ categories based on the proportion of the population commuting to large urban centres; *Strong, Moderate, Weak, and No MIZ*.

Urban communities can also be distinguished by population size and include municipalities that exceed a 50% commuting threshold. The CMA / CA and MIZ definitions and the classifications of the 34 municipalities in the Alberta HUB are displayed in Table 2.

Of initial note is the fact that the municipality located most closely to the City of Edmonton (Bruderheim; see Table 1) comprises the CMA of Edmonton. This community is thus highly interdependent simply by virtue of the fact that it is included in the CMA of Edmonton and exceeds the 50% commuting threshold. The other urban category, CA or Census Agglomeration, includes the Cities of Lloydminster and Cold Lake.

Just two of the municipalities are included in the *Strong MIZ* category with most communities designated as *Moderately* and *Weakly* influenced by their urban neighbors. At the other end of the distance and commuting spectrum are four communities, none of which have a population that commutes to a large urban centre.

Overall, the data presented in Tables 1 and 2 suggest that the majority of rural HUB is not strongly integrated with urban centres, though there are a few exceptions to this pattern. We conclude that though there is variation with the Region, most of the municipalities are relatively weakly economically dependent on urban centres.<sup>5</sup>

The respective urban/rural and MIZ classifications of the HUB municipalities are important to keep in mind when interpreting the results presented in this report. As demonstrated across the country, not only do urban and rural communities depart significantly along a number of dimensions, but the further distinction brought by MIZ zone classifications is a strong determinant of the population, demographic, social, and economic characteristics of any rural community (Sorensen and de Peuter, 2006).

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<sup>5</sup> These urban centres may be inside or outside the Alberta HUB boundaries.

**Table 2: Geographic Zone Designation by Municipality  
Alberta HUB**

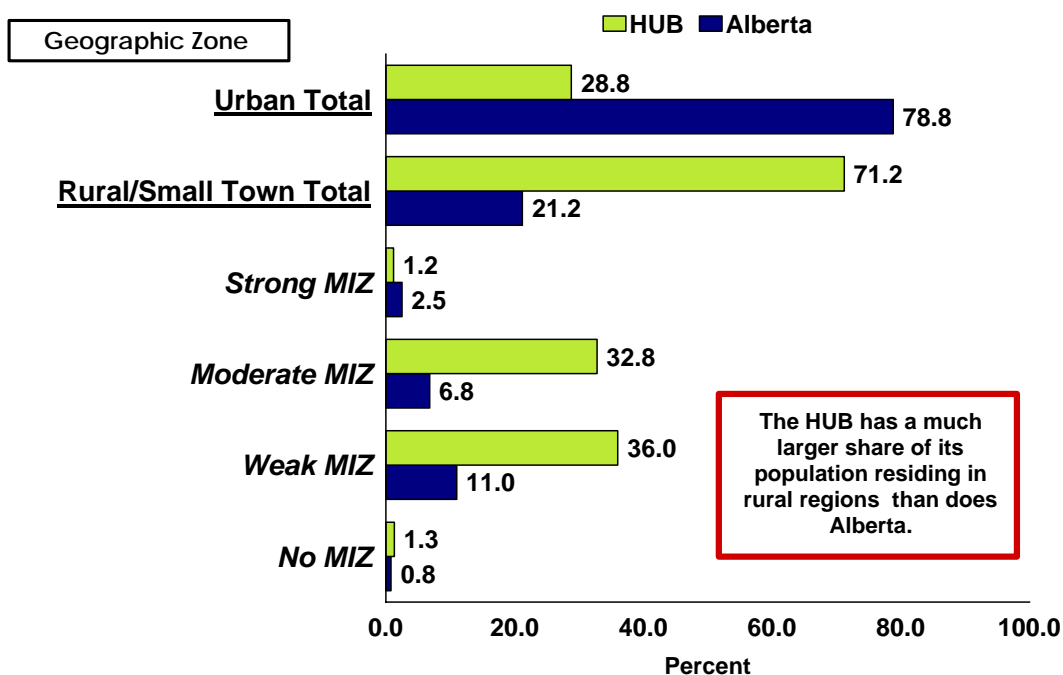
<b>Geographical Designation</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>URBAN</b>		
CMA	Bruderheim <sup>1</sup>	CMAs have an urban core population of at least 100,000 and include all neighboring municipalities where 50% or more of the labour force commutes into the urban core.
CA	Lloydminster, Cold Lake	CAs have an urban core population between 10,000 and 99,999 and abide by the same commuting rules as CMAs (Statistics Canada, 1999a).
<b>RURAL</b>		
Strong Influence	Kitscoty, Andrew	Between 30% and 49% of the employed workforce commutes to the urban core of any large urban centre, suggesting that this population is <u>strongly</u> integrated with the urban economy.
Moderate Influence	Innisfree, Vermillion River County, Marwayne, Two Hills Town, Lamont County, Bonnyville MD, Bonnyville Town, Smoky Lake County, Vilna, Elizabeth Métis Settlement, Fishing Lake Métis Settlement, Kikino Métis Settlement (Part A), Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement, Cold Lake First Nations (Cold Lake City 149)	At least 5% but less than 30% of the employed workforce commutes to the urban core of any large urban centre, suggesting that this population is <i>moderately</i> integrated with the urban economy.
Weak Influence	Vegreville, Mannville, Vermillion Town, Two Hills County, Lac La Biche County, St. Paul County, Elk Point, St. Paul Town, Smoky Lake Town, White Fish Lake, Kikino Métis Settlement (Part B),	More than 0% but less than 5% of the employed workforce commutes to the urban core of any large urban centre, suggesting that this population is <i>weakly</i> integrated with the urban economy.
No Influence	Dewberry, Myrnam, Glendon, Waskatenau, Cold Lake First Nations (Cold Lake 149a and 149b)	0% of the employed workforce commutes to the urban core of any large urban centre (plus any CSD that has less than 40 people in its employed labour force), suggesting that this population is <i>not at all</i> integrated with the urban economy.

Source: Statistics Canada Population, 2006

<sup>1</sup> Bruderheim is part of the Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area.

Figure 1 shows the population distribution between the urban and rural and MIZ designations for the HUB and for the province of Alberta. In addition to illustrating the much larger rural component of the HUB compared to the province (71.2% compared to 21.2%), the figure shows that the difference is largely due to the relatively highly populated *Moderate* and *Weak MIZ* areas in the HUB. Hence, the HUB not only has a larger rural population than does the province, but in all but two of its rural communities, less than 30% of its population are commuting to work in larger urban centres.

**Figure 1: Population Distribution by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB and Alberta, 2006**



Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census

#### B.4 Commuting Flows and Patterns

Table 3 presents place of work (commuting) data which has important ramifications for the urban / rural interdependence of municipalities within the HUB.

The main observation to note is the relatively large proportion of HUB residents working outside their own municipality, including those working within the same Census Division, within the province, or outside of Canada (32.1%). These figures, however, are somewhat higher for the

rural population (37.7%) and especially for those residing in *Strong* and *No MIZ* zones, less than 3% of whom work in the same municipality as they reside. For *Strong MIZ* residents, nearly half (47.8%) are working in another municipality within their census division, while for the population in *No MIZ*, the largest proportion are working at “no fixed work address” which typically includes truck drivers, construction workers, and cleaners. Thus, the rural population is much more geographically mobile than the urban population with respect to place of work.

**Table 3: Place of Work by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB, 2006**

Place of Work	Percent						
	HUB TOTAL	Urban Total	Rural & Small Town				
			Total	Strong MIZ	Moderate MIZ	Weak MIZ	No MIZ
No fixed work address <sup>1</sup>	54,800 <b>16.2</b>	16,755 16.4	38,045 <b>16.2</b>	575 17.4	18,115 15.8	18,690 15.7	665 40.6
Work at home	<b>14.3</b>	4.4	<b>18.6</b>	11.3	22.3	15.8	3.0
Work in same municipality as residence	<b>37.3</b>	58.8	<b>27.9</b>	2.6	18.7	38.5	2.3
Work in same Census Division <sup>2</sup>	<b>21.1</b>	5.0	<b>28.2</b>	47.8	32.9	23.1	29.3
Work elsewhere in Alberta or Canada	<b>10.9</b>	15.3	<b>9.0</b>	20.9	10.3	6.7	24.8
Work elsewhere in the world	<b>0.1</b>	0.1	<b>0.1</b>	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census (numbers may not add up due to rounding and area suppression)

<sup>1</sup> Includes “persons who do not go from home to the same workplace location at the beginning of each shift.” In Canada, these persons are most likely to be truck drivers, construction workers (especially carpenters), cleaners, and landscape and grounds maintenance labourers (see [http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/pow/10\\_construction.cfm](http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/pow/10_construction.cfm)).

<sup>2</sup> There are 2 Census Divisions represented by the HUB, including Camrose-Lloydminster and St. Paul.



We are not able to tell from these data, however, whether rural residents are primarily commuting to urban centres or to other rural regions. Table 4 provides the details of out- and in-commuting patterns for the total commuting population of the HUB, for urban and rural, and for the three MIZ geographies.

The table demonstrates that commuters are more likely to be from rural regions and that most commuting is done to rural communities. While just 4.4% of the local urban population is leaving their municipality to work elsewhere and in-commuting to urban centres contributes just 17.1% to the local labour force, the same figures for rural commuting are 27.3% and 26.6%.

**Rural Commuting Patterns in Canada:** Recent Canadian research supports the findings for the HUB: In rural areas with weaker linkages with urban centres, strong rural-to-rural economic linkages were found. In these areas, most rural commuters travelled to the same type of rural area as where they lived (Harris et al, 2008).

Furthermore, virtually all (99.6%) of urban commuters are working in rural areas of the HUB. This latter finding is somewhat unusual as an urban-rural commuting pattern and suggests that urban communities in the HUB stand to benefit economically more so from their rural neighbors than the other way around.

These data also clearly show that, proportionally speaking, rural workers are much more likely to travel outside their municipality to access jobs. This is especially so for the labour force in *Strong MIZ* areas, more than half (51.3%) of whom are leaving for work elsewhere in the HUB. Rural commuters are also much more likely to access jobs in other rural HUB communities, irrespective of MIZ region, though it is notable that none of the *No MIZ* commuters are working in urban centres.

Finally, net commuting (that is, the difference between the number of people coming to work in a municipality and the number of people leaving to work elsewhere in the HUB) is much higher in urban centres (58%) than in rural areas (-9.2%), though there is great variation within rural HUB. *Strong* and *No MIZ* are shown to experience the greatest net loss of -47.5% and -64.5%, respectively, whereas *Weak MIZ* has 12.4% more people coming to work in their municipalities than are leaving to work elsewhere.

Residents of the HUB who commute to urban centres (in roughly equal numbers to Lloydminster and Cold Lake) for work are most likely to come from the Town of Bonnyville and Vermillion River County to access jobs in mining oil, and gas and retail industries (results not shown in table or figure). Conversely, the commuting population is accessing jobs in rural areas primarily to work in retail (15%), followed by health care and social assistance (13%), and education (12%), all three primarily in the towns of St. Paul, Lac La Biche, and Bonnyville. In contrast to what we might expect, only a small portion of job commuters are traveling to rural areas to work in the agriculture (5%).

**Table 4: Work Commuting Patterns by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB<sup>1</sup>, 2006**

	Geographic Zone						
	HUB Total	Urban Total	Rural & Small Town				
			Total	Strong MIZ	Moderate MIZ	Weak MIZ	No MIZ
<b>Out-Commuters</b> (leaving municipality to work elsewhere)							
# of Commuters	11,115	730	10,385	295	5,625	4,210	255
% of local employed population	20.3%	4.4%	27.3%	51.3%	31.0%	22.5%	38.1%
% Commuting to Urban Municipalities	24.7%	0.4%	29.7%	47.6%	42.5%	3.3%	15.7%
<b>In-Commuters</b> (coming into municipality to work)							
# of Commuters	11,115	2,750	8,640	105	3,080	5,400	55
% Commuting from Urban Centres	6.6%	1.4%	6.9%	5.1%	11.1%	1.9%	0.0%
% Contribution to Local Labour Force <sup>2</sup>	23.0%	17.1%	26.6%	36.8%	23.0%	29.2%	15.3%
<b>Net Commuting Rate<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>58.0%</b>	<b>-9.2%</b>	<b>-47.5%</b>	<b>-29.2%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>-64.5%</b>

Source: 2006 Census Statistics Canada: Table 97-561-XCB2006008; Commuting Flow Census Subdivisions: Industry - North American Industry Classification System 2002 (21) for the Employed Labour Force 15 Years and Over.

<sup>1</sup> Excludes data for Cold Lake First Nations.

<sup>2</sup> Calculations are based on the ratio of in-commuters from Table 4 to those working at home, at no fixed address, and in the same municipality (from Table 3), plus in-commuters from Table 4. Though we have no way of knowing if those working "at no fixed address" are working locally (e.g., within the same municipality as their place of residence) and therefore, have no information to base a decision on whether or not to include them in the calculations, we have chosen to include them in these calculations. As such, the local labour force size data presented in this table should be viewed as over-estimates of the actual size of the local labour force for each geographic point. This, in turn, means that the percentage of commuters comprising the local labour force is likely under-estimates.

<sup>3</sup> The Net Commuting Rate is the difference between in- and out-commuting divided by the sum of in- and -out-commuting.

Overall, the commuting patterns presented in Table 4 indicate that compared to the urban population, the rural population of the HUB is much more mobile, commuters are a more important source of labour, and they are more likely to commute to other rural communities. The results suggest that, in contrast to much of the literature on urban-rural interdependencies, rural HUB is not dependent on urban HUB for jobs; though it is somewhat dependent on urban communities as a source of labour. These conclusions, however, must be tempered by keeping in mind that though commuting patterns provide a good indication of urban-rural interdependencies, a more fulsome examination of interdependence would also include examining the economic relationships and partnerships within the region.

## Summary

With more than 7 in 10 HUB residents living in rural areas and small towns, an examination of urban-rural interdependency is of elevated importance given the large rural population that stands to benefit economically from their urban neighbors. Though some of the results are mixed, the three measures of urban-rural interdependency suggest that rural HUB is neither strongly interdependent on urban HUB or on other large urban centres outside of HUB.

First, roughly half of the municipalities are considered to be within the urban-periphery of the City of Edmonton, thereby meeting the basic necessary conditions deemed by researchers that will lead to the greatest economic advantages (Dabson, 2007; Partridge et al., 2007; Wensley and Stabler, 1998). Second, the MIZ designations indicate that only a small minority (1.2%) of all rural residents live in communities in which at least 30% of the population are commuting to work in large urban centres located outside of HUB (*Strong MIZ*). Thus, though the conditions are set for rural HUB to access the Edmonton labour market, this opportunity does not appear to be happening as much as it could. Within our geographic region of interest, however, the results indicate that, compared to the urban population, the rural population is not only more mobile but that both urban and rural residents are more likely to access jobs in rural communities.

## C. POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

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### KEY FINDINGS

#### C.1 Population Change

- Between 1996 and 2006, the population growth of the HUB was less than half that of the province.
- Population growth in rural HUB is less than that observed in rural Alberta but comparable to the growth in rural Canada.

#### C.2 Population Age Structure

- As a whole, the age distribution of the HUB population does not differ significantly from that of Alberta.
- *No MIZ* stands out as having a significantly older age profile than any other comparison group.

#### C.3 Minority Status

- Compared to all other comparison groups, *No MIZ* populations are the least likely to be female.
- Aboriginal representation in HUB is comparable to that of the province, except in *No MIZ* which is much lower than observed in Alberta *No MIZ*.
- Both minorities and immigrants are much less likely to reside in urban HUB than in urban Alberta.

#### C.4 Marital Status and Family Structure

- Compared to the province, the total HUB population is more likely to be married and rural HUB residents are more likely to be widowed
- *No MIZ* residents have a significantly smaller single population and somewhat larger proportions of divorced and widowed residents when compared to all other geographic groups.

#### Summary

Compared to the rest of the province, the HUB population has grown at a slower rate and is more likely to be married. Urban HUB is home to a much smaller proportion of minorities and immigrants than urban Alberta. Though there are a few differences between rural HUB and rural Alberta, the most noteworthy are found in *No MIZ* which has larger proportions of older residents, males, divorced and widowed populations and a smaller proportion of Aboriginals.

## C.1 Population Change

Table 5 presents population percentage change between 1996 and 2006 for the HUB (See Appendix Table for total population figures for each community, geographic zone, and census year). The figure demonstrates a significant difference in population growth between the HUB and Alberta (which was the province to experience the largest population growth between 2001 and 2006). For the full 10-year inter-census period (between 1996 and 2006), the HUB population increased by 11,125 for a total percentage change of 11.1%, while the provincial population grew by 20.9%. Population growth differences between rural HUB and rural Alberta are also evident (4.1% compared to 9.3% for Alberta). *Strong MIZ*, especially, has experienced much slower population growth than has occurred in the same geographic zone of the province (4.2% compared to 25.6%).

The table also shows that much of this population increase occurred in urban HUB, especially in the earliest inter-census period.<sup>6</sup> Within rural HUB, population growth is most evident in *No MIZ* (10.7% for the full 10-year period), followed by *Weak MIZ* (6.1%).

### **HUB Compared to Rural and Small Town Canada and Alberta:**

Population change in rural and small town HUB communities is comparable to that of the 2001-2006 rural and small town population change observed in Canada (1.0%) and slightly lower than that of Alberta, which experienced the fastest-growing rural population of all provinces during the same period of +3.8%.

Rural population change in Canada, however, varies greatly by proximity to urban centres; rural communities close to urban centres, in fact, experienced population increases between 2001 and 2006. Due to a net migration loss, more remote rural communities experienced population reductions during this most recent inter-census period (Statistics Canada, 2008).

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<sup>6</sup> A more detailed examination of population change in urban HUB revealed that the vast majority of growth (97%) occurred in Lloydminster.

**Table 5: Population Change by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2006**

Geographic Zone	2001-2006 (5-year)		1996-2006 (10-year)	
	Population Count Change	% Change	Population Count Change	% Change
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>4,465</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>11,125</b>	<b>11.1%</b>
Urban	<b>3,543</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>8,287</b>	<b>25.9%</b>
Rural & Small Town Total	<b>922</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>2,838</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
Strong MIZ	18	1.6%	47	4.2%
Moderate MIZ	-515	-1.5%	596	1.8%
Weak MIZ	1,389	4.0%	2058	6.1%
No MIZ	20	2.2%	137	10.7%
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>315,543</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>593,524</b>	<b>20.9%</b>
Urban	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural & Small Town Total <sup>2</sup>	n/a	<b>3.8%</b>	n/a	<b>9.3%</b>
Strong MIZ	n/a	12.9%	n/a	25.6%
Moderate MIZ	n/a	3.4%	n/a	9.3%
Weak MIZ	n/a	1.6%	n/a	3.4%
No MIZ	n/a	14.1%	n/a	32.0%

Source: Statistics Canada 2006, 2001 and 1996 Census of Population

<sup>1</sup> Population change for the province is not available for the 20% Census samples for 2001 and 1996. Population percentage changes for Alberta are from published data in Table 2 of [www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/21-006-x/2007007/t/6000469-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/21-006-x/2007007/t/6000469-eng.htm).

## C.2 Population Age Structure

Though the age structure of the total HUB population does not depart significantly from that of total Alberta, there are some noteworthy differences when comparing urban and rural HUB. With smaller proportions of mature adults and seniors, the population of urban HUB is somewhat younger than rural HUB,. Within rural and small town HUB, *No MIZ* stands out as having a significantly older age profile than any other comparison group: More than half (53.7%) of *No MIZ* HUB residents are 45 years of age and older. These age distributions have implications for the demand for services targeted to seniors, especially in *No MIZ* areas of the HUB.

**Table 6: Age Distribution by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2006**

Geographic Zone	Percent Distribution					
	TOTAL	Children (0 to 14)	Youth (15 to 24)	Young Adults (25 to 44)	Mature Adults (45 to 64)	Seniors (65+)
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>11.9</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>7.6</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>13.6</b>
Strong MIZ	100.0	22.3	10.3	24.1	29.0	14.3
Moderate MIZ	100.0	21.5	13.7	25.6	27.0	12.2
Weak MIZ	100.0	21.8	13.7	25.0	24.9	14.7
No MIZ	100.0	16.5	12.2	17.6	35.7	18.0
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>10.2</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>9.8</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>11.8</b>
Strong MIZ	100.0	20.5	13.3	26.5	29.6	10.2
Moderate MIZ	100.0	20.9	13.3	24.6	27.9	13.3
Weak MIZ	100.0	22.6	14.7	26.7	24.8	11.3
No MIZ	100.0	27.2	14.0	24.6	23.2	11.0

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census (numbers may not add up due to rounding and area suppression)



### C.3 Minority Status

Table 7 presents 2006 Census data on gender, Aboriginal identity, visible minority status, and immigrant status. Gender parity is more or less observed for all geographic zones except *No MIZ*, in which just 46.4% of the population are female. Aboriginal representation is greater within HUB than in Alberta in all zones, again except in *No MIZ* (17.4% compared to 43.2%). Otherwise, minority representation is significantly lower in urban HUB than in urban Alberta (2.8% compared to 17.2%). Similarly, immigrants are much less likely to choose to reside in urban HUB than urban Alberta (4.3% compared to 18.9%).

Interestingly, however, visible minority and immigrant representation is roughly equal in urban and rural HUB, a finding that contradicts the typical pattern of choice location in Canada (see box above).

#### Rural HUB and Immigration

**Rates:** With similar proportions of immigrants residing in urban and rural HUB, this finding contradicts a long-standing Canadian pattern of immigrants choosing to reside in urban over rural centres. In 2006, just 2.8% of recent immigrants to Canada lived outside a census metropolitan area or a census agglomeration (Statistics Canada, 2008).

<b>Table 7: Minority Status<sup>1</sup> by Geographic Zone Alberta HUB &amp; Alberta, 2006</b>				
<b>Geographic Zone</b>	<b>Percent</b>			
	<b>Female</b>	<b>Aboriginal Identity</b>	<b>Visible Minority</b>	<b>Immigrant</b>
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>4.6</b>
Strong MIZ	49.8	4.8	2.2	4.3
Moderate MIZ	48.9	12.5	1.2	3.8
Weak MIZ	50.0	15.2	2.4	5.3
No MIZ	46.4	17.4	1.8	3.3
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>16.2</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>18.9</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>49.3</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>
Strong MIZ	49.2	3.2	1.6	6.7
Moderate MIZ	49.6	6.1	1.9	6.4
Weak MIZ	49.0	15.1	2.2	5.9
No MIZ	50.1	43.2	1.4	2.8

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census

<sup>1</sup> Aboriginal Includes individuals identifying with at least one Aboriginal group including North American Indian, Métis or Inuit, and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian and/or those who reported they were members of an Indian band or First Nation. Visible Minority is defined as persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.

## C.4 Marital Status and Family Structure

The HUB population is more likely to be married than the provincial population (57.2% compared to 53.0%). Noteworthy differences by geographic zone include the observation that rural HUB residents are more likely than rural Albertans to be widowed, due to the older population of the HUB (see table 6). Once again, however, when compared to all other geographic groups, *No MIZ* stands out for having a significantly smaller single population and somewhat larger proportions of divorced and widowed residents. This finding can also be explained by their less youthful age profile. Furthermore, the incidence of single parent families in *No MIZ* regions is, while higher than elsewhere in HUB, significantly lower than in *No MIZ* regions of Alberta (13.7% compared to 20.6%).

<b>Table 8: Marital<sup>1</sup> and Family Status<sup>2</sup> by Geographic Zone Alberta HUB &amp; Alberta, 2006</b>					
<b>Geographic Zone</b>	<b>Percent</b>				<b>Single Parent Family</b>
	<b>Single</b>	<b>Married</b>	<b>Divorced</b>	<b>Widowed</b>	
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>30.5</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>9.7</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>56.2</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>11.1</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>9.1</b>
Strong MIZ	28.9	58.3	6.1	6.7	8.3
Moderate MIZ	29.2	59.6	6.3	4.9	9.0
Weak MIZ	30.2	56.0	6.6	6.9	9.2
No MIZ	25.5	49.5	13.2	12.7	13.7
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>14.4</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>52.9</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>15.0</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>30.2</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>12.2</b>
Strong MIZ	26.4	62.3	7.8	3.5	9.6
Moderate MIZ	26.7	61.0	7.2	5.1	10.9
Weak MIZ	32.7	55.6	6.5	5.2	13.1
No MIZ	39.7	47.5	7.4	5.4	20.6

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census (numbers may not add up due to rounding and area suppression)

<sup>1</sup> Expressed as a percentage of all individuals greater than 15 years of age.

<sup>2</sup> Expressed as a percentage of all census families.

## **Summary**

Though population growth in rural HUB has been somewhat lower than in rural Alberta, it is comparable to the growth that has occurred in rural Canada. Compared to the rest of the province, the HUB population is more likely to be married and urban HUB is home to a much smaller proportion of minorities and immigrants. Though there are a few differences between rural HUB and rural Alberta, the most noteworthy are found in *No MIZ*, which has larger proportions of older, male, divorced and widowed populations and a smaller proportion of Aboriginal identity residents.

## D. SOCIAL INDICATORS

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### Key Findings

#### D.1 Educational Attainment

- The population of the Alberta HUB is characterized by lower levels of educational attainment when compared with the province.

#### D.2 Housing Indicators

- A larger proportion of homes in the Alberta HUB are owned, yet they are less costly, older, and more likely to require major repair than homes in the province.
- Homes located in *Strong MIZ* are older and, on average, less costly than those found in *Moderate* and *Weak MIZ* regions of the HUB.

### Summary

Both the education and housing indicators reviewed in this section were lower for the HUB than for the province.

## D.1 Educational Attainment

The population of the Alberta HUB has, on average, a somewhat lower level of educational attainment than the province. As depicted in Table 9, nearly one-third (32%) of HUB residents had not attained any educational credential, compared to 23.4% of the provincial population. The HUB also contains a smaller proportion of residents with a postsecondary credential (43.7% compared to 50.4% for the province). These findings, however, apply primarily to urban HUB, especially when comparing attainment of a university degree; 11.2% for urban HUB versus 19.8% for urban Alberta. Conversely, somewhat equal proportions of rural Hub residents and rural Albertans have earned a postsecondary diploma, certificate, or degree. Indeed, residents of *Weak* and *No MIZ* HUB are more likely than their provincial counterparts to have earned a university degree (9.0% compared to 7.7% for *Weak MIZ* and 9.2% compared to 5.9% for *No MIZ*).

**Rural Education in Canada:** "Rural Alberta has one of the highest rates of high school drop-outs in the country at about 25%, presumably spurred by the promise of attractive pay for relatively unskilled work. However, this leaves these youths ill-prepared to deal with the consequences of a slump in the industry" (Cross and Bowlby, 2006: 3.11).

As is the pattern province-wide, rural and small town residents of the HUB have lower levels of educational attainment than do urban HUB residents, with credential earning decreasing as rurality increases. With most post-secondary institutions requiring a high school diploma for admittance, developing initiatives designed to increase high school completion rates in rural HUB is an important first step towards increasing education levels, perhaps especially in *No MIZ* regions.

**Table 9: Educational Attainment<sup>1</sup> by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2006**

Geographic Zone	Percent Distribution					Total
	Less than High School	High School	Any Post-secondary	Certificate Diploma	Degree	
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Urban	23.6	26.6	49.8	38.6	11.2	100.0
Rural & Small Town Total	35.4	23.8	40.8	32.7	8.1	100.0
Strong MIZ	30.2	24.7	46.7	38.5	6.6	100.0
Moderate MIZ	34.5	24.1	41.5	34.3	7.2	100.0
Weak MIZ	35.4	23.5	41.0	32.0	9.0	100.0
No MIZ	48.9	17.9	31.2	24.0	9.2	100.0
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Urban	20.8	26.3	52.9	33.1	19.8	100.0
Rural & Small Town Total	33.6	25.9	40.5	32.3	8.2	100.0
Strong MIZ	25.4	28.0	46.6	35.9	10.7	100.0
Moderate MIZ	31.7	26.4	41.9	33.6	8.3	100.0
Weak MIZ	35.6	25.6	38.8	31.1	7.7	100.0
No MIZ	47.5	19.4	33.1	27.2	5.9	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census (numbers may not add up due to rounding and area suppression)

<sup>1</sup> Educational attainment is for the population 15 years of age and older.

## D.2 Housing Indicators

Tables 10a and 10b present information on housing for the HUB and for Alberta. Beginning with the first column in Table 10a, it is clear that home ownership is slightly more prevalent in the HUB than in the province, with 76.7% of houses owned compared to 73.1% in Alberta. Though the difference is not large, this pattern holds for all geographic zones except *Strong MIZ*, in which only 74.5% of houses are owned compared to 86.4% in the same geographic zone of the province. Housing prices and rental costs are higher in the province, on average, than in the HUB for every geographic zone. Price differences are again most notable in *Strong MIZ* (\$111,995 compared to \$345,563). In fact, all *Strong MIZ* housing indicators in the table depart from the typical pattern for this zone in which their indicators most closely resemble the more robust conditions in urban centres.

**Rural HUB Compared to Rural and Small Town Canada:**

Ownership is the predominant form of tenure in rural Canada (82 per cent in rural vs. 64 per cent in urban areas), however, the stock of housing in rural areas is older, on average, than it is in urban areas (CMHC, 2003).

The period of housing construction provides an indication of economic and population growth. The greater the percentage of houses constructed more recently in a region, the greater the likelihood that communities in those zones have experienced economic and population growth. Given the slow population growth in the HUB (Table 5), it is not surprising that homes in this part of the province are older and more likely to require major repair than those in the province (Table 10b). Homes in *Weak MIZ*, however, are an exception to this pattern (61.5% versus 68.9% constructed before 1986 and 11.9% versus 12.2% requiring major repair).

**Table 10a: Housing Characteristics by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2006**

Geographic Zone	OWNED HOUSES			RENTED HOUSES	
	% Owned	Average Value (\$)	Average Monthly Payments (\$) <sup>1</sup>	% Rented	Median Rent (\$)
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>76.7</b>	<b>\$194,165</b>	<b>\$872</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>\$692</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>69.4</b>	<b>\$225,976</b>	<b>\$1,090</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>\$775</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>79.6</b>	<b>\$181,966</b>	<b>\$787</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>\$636</b>
Strong MIZ	74.5	\$111,995	\$643	25.5	\$649
Moderate MIZ	83.4	\$202,548	\$809	16.6	\$657
Weak MIZ	76.7	\$170,486	\$786	23.3	\$624
No MIZ	74.5	\$93,433	\$506	25.5	\$644
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA</b>	<b>73.1</b>	<b>\$293,811</b>	<b>\$1,063</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>\$804</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>71.7</b>	<b>\$313,451</b>	<b>\$1,112</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>\$1,669</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>78.7</b>	<b>\$215,808</b>	<b>\$866</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>\$673</b>
Strong MIZ	86.4	\$345,563	\$1,085	13.5	\$770
Moderate MIZ	82.8	\$214,382	\$857	16.5	\$664
Weak MIZ	75.5	\$187,633	\$827	21.2	\$669
No MIZ	63.1	\$140,809	\$670	16.1	\$560

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census (numbers may not add up due to rounding and area suppression)

<sup>1</sup> Includes average monthly total of all shelter expenses paid by households that own their dwelling. The owner's major payments include, for example, the mortgage payment and the costs of electricity, heat and municipal services.



**Table 10b: Housing Characteristics by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2006**

Geographic Zone	Percent	
	Dwellings Constructed Before 1986	Dwellings Requiring Major Repair
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>75.2</b>	<b>10.9</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>61.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>80.6</b>	<b>12.6</b>
Strong MIZ	80.6	11.3
Moderate MIZ	67.4	13.1
Weak MIZ	61.5	11.9
No MIZ	89.3	20.7
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>6.7</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>61.6</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>66.0</b>	<b>11.6</b>
Strong MIZ	53.6	7.1
Moderate MIZ	65.6	11.1
Weak MIZ	68.9	12.2
No MIZ	66.0	20.9

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census (numbers may not add up due to rounding and area suppression)

### Summary

Both the education and housing indicators reviewed in this section were lower for the HUB than for the province. Educational attainment was found to be especially lower in urban HUB than in urban Alberta. Though home ownership is slightly more prevalent in the HUB than in the province, housing prices and rental rates are lower. These HUB – provincial differences were the most notable in *Strong MIZ*, which also had lower housing-related costs than all other HUB zones except *No MIZ*.

## E. ECONOMIC INDICATORS

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### Key Findings

#### E.1 Labour Market Indicators

- Urban HUB has a higher labour force participation (LFP) rate and lower unemployment rate than urban Alberta.
- *No MIZ* regions of the HUB have the weakest labour market conditions.

#### E.2 Industry Employment Distribution

- Compared to the province, HUB employment is more heavily weighted towards the goods-producing sector, especially in oil and gas.
- Both the HUB and the province's workforce are most likely to be in the service sector with the retail trade and health and social services sectors employing the two largest proportions of workers.

#### E.3 Income Indicators

- Compared to elsewhere in the province, rural HUB exhibits lower average incomes, is more likely to garner its income from government sources, and has a higher incidence of low-income families.
- Conversely, compared to urban Alberta, urban HUB has higher incomes, is less likely to garner its income from government sources and has a lower incidence of low-income families.

### Summary

Compared to urban Alberta, urban HUB has a higher LFP rate and average income and lower unemployment rate, reliance on government transfer payments, and low economic status. Though the same cannot be said when comparing rural HUB and rural Alberta, the differences between these two geographies are not really very great. Within the HUB, *No MIZ* communities can be characterized as having the weakest economic indicators of all geographies.

## E.1 Labour Market Indicators

The labour market indicators presented in Table 11 are mixed. HUB has a slightly lower labour force participation (LFP) rate and a slightly lower unemployment rate than observed for the province. While unemployment rates are consistently lower in the HUB compared to Alberta for all geographic zones, the urban LFP rate is higher for urban HUB than for urban Alberta (77.9% compared to 74.5%). Conversely, the rural HUB rate is lower than the provincial rural rate (70.6% compared to 72.3%). Following the provincial pattern, the least favourable labour market conditions in the Alberta HUB are found in *No MIZ* regions.

**UPDATE: Alberta Labour Market:** “Employment fell in several provinces in March, with the largest declines in British Columbia (-23,000), Alberta (-15,000), and Ontario (-11,000). Since October, these three provinces also had the fastest rate of employment decreases . . . . Following a large decline in February, employment in Alberta fell a further 15,000 in March, pushing the unemployment rate up to 5.8%. Since October, employment losses have totalled 48,000 (-2.4%), mainly in the goods-producing sector.” (Statistics Canada, The Daily, April 9, 2009).

**Table 11: Labour Force Activity by Geographic Zone and by Gender**  
Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2006

Geographic Zone	Labour Force Participation Rate <sup>1</sup>			Unemployment Rate <sup>2</sup>		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>72.8</b>	<b>80.2</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>77.9</b>	<b>85.1</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>70.6</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>62.8</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>4.6</b>
Strong MIZ	64.6	75.6	53.3	0.0	0.0	4.2
Moderate MIZ	72.8	80.2	65.1	4.2	3.9	4.7
Weak MIZ	69.1	76.7	61.6	4.3	4.0	4.5
No MIZ	62.2	70.9	51.8	5.6	6.0	3.4
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA</b>	<b>74.0</b>	<b>80.3</b>	<b>67.7</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>80.6</b>	<b>68.5</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>72.3</b>	<b>79.4</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.5</b>
Strong MIZ	75.6	82.3	68.7	3.2	2.9	3.5
Moderate MIZ	71.9	79.1	64.7	3.7	3.6	3.8
Weak MIZ	72.5	79.7	65.0	4.8	4.8	4.9
No MIZ	62.0	68.8	54.9	9.7	10.5	8.6

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Population

<sup>1</sup> The Labour Force Participation Rate is the ratio of individuals who are currently employed or who are out of work (but looking for work) to the total number of individuals in the population who are over the age of 15.

<sup>2</sup> The Unemployment Rate is based on the ratio of individuals who are currently unemployed to those who are in the labour force.

## E.2 Industry Employment Distribution

More than one-third (35.4%) of the Alberta HUB population works in the goods-producing sector, with jobs most likely to be found in mining, oil & gas extraction (12.2%), agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting (10.4%), and the construction industry (8.6%)(Table 12). Goods sector jobs are more prevalent in HUB than in the province (35.4% compared to 27.8%). Though rural HUB and rural Alberta have equal proportions of jobs in agriculture (14.5%), HUB has a larger population employed in the mining, oil, and gas sector (12.2% compared to 7.0%), especially in urban (14.4%, primarily in Lloydminster) and *Moderate MIZ* communities (13.7%). *Moderate MIZ* is also home to the largest proportion of agricultural works (18.4%) of any geographical zone.

**Employment in Agriculture in Canada:** In Canada, employment in agriculture declined by slightly more than 4.2% between 2001 and 2006 with most of the decline occurring in 2001/02. Since then, employment in the industry has grown, but it remains below its 2000/01 level (HRSDC, 2007).

Though the population in the HUB is most likely to work in the service sector (64.5%), employment in the services is lower than in Alberta (72.2%), with the largest difference occurring in what are typically high-end professional, scientific, and technical service occupations (3.2% compared to 7.5%). Otherwise, the HUB patterns after the province's top two service sectors; retail trade (11.2%) and health and social services (9.1%). Notably, employment in the education sector is more prevalent in HUB than in the province (7.2% compared to 6.2%), and this is especially the case for *No MIZ* (12.8%).

**Table 12: Industry Employment Distribution by Geographic Zone**  
**Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2006**

	Alberta HUB							Alberta						
	Total	Urban	Rural & Small Town	Strong MIZ	Mod. MIZ	Weak MIZ	No MIZ	Total	Urban	Rural & Small Town	Strong MIZ	Mod. MIZ	Weak MIZ	No MIZ
<b>Total Goods Sector</b>	<b>35.4%</b>	<b>28.4%</b>	<b>38.5%</b>	<b>27.4%</b>	<b>44.9%</b>	<b>32.9%</b>	<b>34.4%</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>39.5</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>38.8</b>	<b>34.4</b>
Agri. forestry, fishing, & hunting	10.4%	1.0%	14.5%	5.1%	18.4%	11.4%	2.4%	3.9%	1.3%	14.5%	11.3%	17.5%	13.8%	7.7%
Mining, oil & gas extraction	12.2%	14.4%	11.3%	5.1%	13.7%	9.3%	8.8%	7.0%	6.2%	10.1%	9.8%	8.7%	10.9%	12.5%
Utilities	0.7%	0.5%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	0.9%	0.0%	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	0.7%
Construction	8.6%	8.7%	8.6%	6.8%	9.0%	8.0%	16.8%	8.8%	8.8%	8.6%	11.0%	8.9%	7.8%	9.9%
Manufacturing	3.5%	3.8%	3.4%	10.3%	2.9%	3.5%	6.4%	7.2%	7.6%	5.6%	6.7%	5.8%	5.3%	3.6%
<b>Total Services Sector</b>	<b>64.5</b>	<b>71.6%</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>70.1%</b>	<b>55.2%</b>	<b>67.1%</b>	<b>65.6%</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>75.1</b>	<b>60.4</b>	<b>60.5</b>	<b>58.4</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>65.6</b>
Wholesale trade	2.7%	2.6%	2.7%	0.0%	3.0%	2.5%	3.2%	4.4%	4.8%	3.2%	4.2%	3.3%	2.9%	3.0%
Retail trade	11.2%	12.6%	10.6%	13.7%	9.3%	11.8%	9.6%	10.7%	11.0%	9.5%	8.8%	8.8%	10.0%	9.0%
Transportation & Warehousing	4.6%	3.1%	5.2%	9.4%	4.8%	5.5%	6.4%	5.1%	5.1%	5.3%	4.8%	5.1%	5.6%	5.2%
Information & Cultural Ind.	0.9%	1.2%	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%	0.8%	0.0%	1.9%	2.1%	0.8%	1.2%	0.8%	0.7%	0.9%
Finance & Insurance	2.2%	2.8%	2.0%	2.6%	1.6%	2.4%	1.6%	3.1%	3.4%	2.0%	2.7%	2.0%	1.8%	1.5%

CONT'D

**Table 12: Industry Employment Distribution by Geographic Zone (Cont'd)**  
**Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2006**

	Alberta HUB							Alberta						
	Total	Urban	Rural & Small Town	Strong MIZ	Mod. MIZ	Weak MIZ	No MIZ	Total	Urban	Rural & Small Town	Strong MIZ	Mod. MIZ	Weak MIZ	No MIZ
<b>Service Sector Cont'd</b>														
Real Estate & Rental / Leasing	1.3%	2.1%	0.9%	0.0%	1.1%	0.8%	1.6%	2.0%	2.1%	1.3%	1.7%	1.1%	1.4%	0.5%
Prof. sci. & tech.	3.2%	3.9%	2.9%	6.8%	3.2%	2.5%	1.6%	7.5%	8.5%	3.6%	5.9%	3.6%	3.0%	2.6%
Mngmt. of Companies & Enterprises	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Admin. / support, waste mngmt. & remediation serv.	2.2%	2.7%	2.0%	3.4%	2.3%	1.7%	0.0%	3.7%	4.0%	2.6%	2.8%	2.7%	2.5%	3.3%
Educational serv.	7.2%	6.5%	7.5%	7.7%	6.3%	8.5%	12.8%	6.2%	6.3%	6.0%	5.0%	6.0%	6.1%	8.5%
Health & social serv.	9.1%	7.1%	9.9%	8.5%	8.1%	11.8%	8.8%	9.1%	9.3%	8.4%	7.4%	8.6%	8.4%	9.4%
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	0.0%	1.0%	1.2%	1.6%	1.9%	2.0%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%	1.2%
Accommodation & food serv.	5.0%	6.4%	4.3%	9.4%	4.0%	4.4%	7.2%	6.6%	6.7%	6.3%	4.9%	5.3%	7.3%	5.4%
Public Admin.	5.5%	5.6%	5.5%	3.4%	5.0%	6.1%	4.0%	4.7%	4.7%	4.5%	3.5%	3.9%	4.8%	10.6%
Other Services	8.4%	13.9%	6.0%	5.1%	4.8%	7.1%	7.2%	5.1%	5.1%	5.3%	5.8%	5.5%	5.2%	4.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census (numbers may not add up due to rounding and area suppression).

### E.3 Income Indicators

Three income indicators for the HUB and Alberta are presented in Table 13. Compared to the total province, Alberta HUB exhibits lower incomes. This finding, however, applies only to rural and small town HUB (\$23,555 compared to \$24,775), with income differences particularly acute in *Strong MIZ* (\$23,777 compared to \$30,003). Otherwise, the pattern within rural HUB (and rural Alberta) is that incomes tend to decrease as urban influence decreases.

**Earnings and Education in Canada:** As for all previous censuses, the 2006 Census reaffirmed that higher education is a gateway to higher earnings (Statistics Canada, 2008)

Table 13 also presents two measures of income insecurity. Government transfer income refers to the proportion of economic families receiving such transfer payments as old age security, Canada Pension Plan installments, employment insurance, and child tax credits. If a group of people derives a relatively greater percentage of income from social transfer payments, as opposed to employment income or personal investments, this suggests greater economic dependency for members of that group. The second measure used to illustrate the relative economic well-being of residents within each geographic zone of the HUB is the share of the population with low incomes (as measured by the percent of the population living in households with incomes below the low-income cut-offs (LICOs)). This indicator refers to the proportion of individuals with incomes below the cost of basic necessities including food, shelter, and clothing.<sup>7</sup>

A similar pattern as was found for income is observed for government transfer income: urban residents of the HUB are less likely than their provincial counterparts to be relying on government income while the reverse is true of the population residing in rural HUB. With the exception of *Moderate MIZ* (perhaps, in part, because of their relatively small senior population which is entitled to receive Old Age Security and Pension Plan income), reliance on government transfer payments is more prevalent in all metropolitan influence zones of the HUB than in the province.

Lastly, low-income families are less prevalent in the HUB than in the province. In contrast to the province in which urban families are more likely to be defined as low income (typically due to the higher cost of living in the city), however, urban HUB families are notably less likely than rural HUB families to be considered low-income (3.8% compared to 7.0%). Conversely, the low cost of living in *No MIZ* communities of the HUB (as reflected by their relatively low housing costs shown in Table 10a) likely explains the small proportion of low-income families in this zone (5.6%).

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<sup>7</sup> Along with family size, level of urbanization is factored into the estimated costs of necessities for each census individual, thereby determining the low-income cut-off value. The indicator assumes, quite rightly, that a higher cost of living amount coincides with a higher level of integration with urban centres. LICOs are, by Statistics Canada's admission, not a measure of poverty. There is also considerable debate about whether LICOs are a valid measurement of low income (see, for example, Webber (1998)).



**Table 13: Income Indicators<sup>1</sup> by Geographic Zone  
Alberta HUB & Alberta, 2005**

<b>Geographic Zone</b>	<b>Median Individual Income<sup>2</sup> (\$)</b>	<b>Government Transfer Income<sup>3</sup> (% of Economic Families)</b>	<b>Low Income<sup>4</sup> (% of Economic Families)</b>
<b>TOTAL HUB</b>	<b>\$26,345</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>6.1</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>\$34,258</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>\$23,555</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>7.0</b>
Strong MIZ	\$23,777	12.7	6.3
Moderate MIZ	\$23,967	9.3	7.0
Weak MIZ	\$23,354	12.3	7.1
No MIZ	\$19,063	20.1	5.6
<b>TOTAL ALBERTA</b>	<b>\$28,896</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>8.7</b>
<b>Urban</b>	<b>\$29,919</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>9.2</b>
<b>Rural &amp; Small Town Total</b>	<b>\$24,775</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>6.7</b>
Strong MIZ	\$30,003	5.1	5.1
Moderate MIZ	\$24,204	9.9	7.0
Weak MIZ	\$24,505	9.4	6.8
No MIZ	\$20,172	14.0	6.7

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census of Population

<sup>1</sup>Income refers to total income received by persons 15 years and over during the calendar year 2005 as wages and salaries, net income from a non-farm unincorporated business and/or professional practice, and/or net farm self-employment income.

<sup>2</sup> Median income is used because, unlike mean income values, median measures are not as unduly influenced by extreme values, whether high or low.

<sup>3</sup> Government transfer income refers to all government transfer payments to individuals including Old Age Security, Canada/Quebec Pension Plans, Employment Insurance and Child Tax Credits and is expressed as a ratio of the amount of government transfer payments to the total average income among the population 15 years and over.

<sup>4</sup> The incidence of low income is calculated as the number of individuals living in a household with an income below the low-income cut-offs (LICOs) divided by the total number of individuals.

## Summary

The economic indicators reviewed in this section of the report suggest that urban HUB has greater economic strength than urban Alberta. Compared to urban Alberta, urban HUB has a higher LFP rate and average income and a lower unemployment rate, rate of reliance on government transfer payments, and proportion of families with low economic status. Though the same cannot be said when comparing rural HUB and rural Alberta, the differences between these two geographies are not really very great. Within the HUB, urban-rural differences follow the provincial pattern whereby urban centres demonstrate a more positive economic situation than found in rural HUB. Also in line with the provincial pattern, *No MIZ* communities can be characterized as having the weakest economic indicators of all geographies. Comparisons of these economic indicators between rural HUB geographies should be made with caution, however, given the relatively large proportion of the population working outside their own municipality of residence (62%; see Table 3).

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## APPENDIX: SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE

<b>Appendix Table: Population Counts 2006, 2001 &amp; 1996 Alberta HUB</b>				
<b>Community</b>	<b>Geographic Zone</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>1996</b>
Bruderheim	Urban	1,215	1,202	1,198
Lloydminster	Urban	27,023	23,964	18,953
Cold Lake	Urban	11,991	11,520	11,791
Kitscoty	Strong MIZ	709	671	643
Andrew	Strong MIZ	465	485	484
Bonnyville Town	Moderate MIZ	5,832	5,709	5,100
Bonnyville MD <sup>1</sup>	Moderate MIZ	10,194	9,473	8,977
Lamont County	Moderate MIZ	3,925	4,162	4,212
Marwayne	Moderate MIZ	516	495	449
Smoky Lake County <sup>2</sup>	Moderate MIZ	3,357	4,417	4,302
Two Hills Town	Moderate MIZ	1,047	1,091	1,040
Innisfree	Moderate MIZ	233	219	238
Vermillion	Moderate MIZ	7,467	7,524	7,553
Vilna	Moderate MIZ	274	269	274
Cold Lake First Nations (149)	Moderate	438	439	542
Mannville	Weak MIZ	782	722	758
Lac La Biche County <sup>2</sup>	Weak MIZ	9,123	8,078	7,453
Smoky Lake Town	Weak MIZ	1,010	1,011	1087
St. Paul Town	Weak MIZ	5,106	5,061	4,880
St. Paul County	Weak MIZ	5,925	6145	6316
Elk Point	Weak MIZ	1,487	1,445	1,403
Two Hills County	Weak MIZ	2,801	2,614	2,753
Vegreville	Weak MIZ	5,519	5,376	5,337
Vermillion Town	Weak MIZ	4,036	3,948	3,744
Glendon	No MIZ	421	459	418
Waskatenau	No MIZ	278	252	237
Cold Lake First Nations (149a & 149b)	No MIZ	155	149	141
Dewberry	No MIZ	196	200	185
Myrnam	No MIZ	362	322	294

Source: Statistics Canada 1996, 2001, and 2006 Censuses

<sup>1</sup> Population counts for, Elizabeth and Fishing Lake Métis Settlements and for Kewhewin and White Fish Lake First Nations are included in the population counts presented for the Municipal District of Bonnyville.

<sup>2</sup> The population count for Kikino Métis Settlement is included in Smoky Lake (Part A) and Lac La Biche Counties (Part B). Also, the population count for Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement is included in the Municipal District of Smoky Lake.