A Here and Now Approach

*How Arizona Compares* is organized around 10 public policy topics, each of which is enormous, complex, and riddled with controversy. This publication seeks not to present comprehensive coverage of each topic but to offer concise sketches in a handy long-term reference. Most of all, *How Arizona Compares* is intended to spark new ways of thinking of and responding to current and emerging issues – and how they relate to one another. *How Arizona Compares* brings together data and ideas that may not often be considered at the same time. Described as “a new sense of the state” in the previous section, the data and policy choices featured relate to what is top of mind in Arizona and what is happening “here and now.” Each section highlights state comparisons on 3 “hot topics” and then presents an overview of the issue, basic facts and figures, some of the policy choices in the news, and a “metro focus.” The book’s primary coverage is the state as a whole, but metropolitan Phoenix and Tucson are also featured because what happens in these two growing regions affects the entire state.
Limited space makes it impossible to present data for 50 states for each item. Tables and graphics usually present the “top” and “bottom” states, in addition to Arizona. Western states and metros or other specific groupings are often used as well. Data on all 50 states for all measures included in How Arizona Compares are available at www.morrisoninstitute.org.

Selection Criteria and Data Caveats

Morrison Institute for Public Policy selected the data in How Arizona Compares from solid secondary sources. Every effort was made to ensure that what appears here is the most recent, accurate, and reliable data available. To that end, Morrison Institute enlisted the aid of experts and consultants in all 10 of the areas studied. (See Acknowledgements for a list of those who participated.) They participated both at the beginning of the process, to help choose what to measure and which sources to use, and at the end, to review the text and data. The intention is – to the extent possible given the limitations of sources, statistics, and research – to provide “real numbers.” However, it is a given that no source is without flaws. Explanations of sources appear as notes with tables and graphics or as Data Notes at the end of sections.

The U.S. Census Bureau is probably the most often used source here because of its myriad programs and respected reputation. Among Census Bureau products, the decennial census is considered the most reliable, and thus is frequently cited here even when more recent estimates are available. However, information products of many other federal institutions, state agencies, foundations, private publishers, and associations have been used. Considering the multitude of sources, schedules, and purposes for the information, it is unavoidable that data from various years appear in the same section.

The information in How Arizona Compares generally comes from three types of methodologies:

> Actual counts, such as FBI tallies of reported crimes or vital statistics
> Samples, such as public opinion surveys
> Indexes that statistically combine many sources of information to develop a comparative ranking

Some producers of information products combine these and other techniques. Many state rankings in a variety of sources include the District of Columbia; this publication omits D.C. from state rankings (unless otherwise noted), but includes it, when appropriate, in metropolitan rankings. Rankings are presented in the order that is used in the source. What is “best” or “worst” is presented in the notes. The terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” are used interchangeably and refer to persons of any race. Figures generally have been rounded to one decimal place or whole numbers. Where there are ties among entries, the tied states or metros are listed in alphabetical order.

Rating states or metro areas by a single indicator (water use, mortality rate, etc.) may oversimplify an issue. In addition, a place’s exact rank may be of little actual significance because differences between the states or cities may be very small. Often, rankings cluster around an average. Thus, it may appear that a state or city is far behind others when the real difference is negligible. The focus is on the 50 states, rather than global comparisons.

When using this publication, it is important to remember that:

> Not everything the public and policy makers want to know is counted or collected, especially when seeking comparative data. Often proxies must be accepted. In addition, a lot of information is collected regularly, but not annually. Data may be several years old, but still up to date.
> Numbers usually look backward, offering a static picture of a dynamic issue in an ever-changing world.
> Nearly all facts and figures are subject to errors and omissions in the development process. Sampling error is an issue to be aware of in many surveys and large-scale sources.
> The number calculated for any statistic depends on the definitions and assumptions used to produce it. Various public and private sources, thus, can provide different answers to the same question, though the differences may be minor.
> Lists can be a shortcut to understanding and discussing issues. In some cases, “raw data” counts are used to provide a different perspective or when other data are not available.
> New data are released continually. No publication can be 100% “current.” This underlines the importance of a state’s relative standing.

Phoenix-based Behavior Research Center conducted the How Arizona Compares survey, between July 1 and July 8, 2004 as part of the ongoing ConsumerTrack statewide study. Telephone interviews with 701 randomly selected adult heads of household throughout Arizona were held during a cross-section of daytime, evening, and weekend hours. The overall sampling error for the study is approximately +/- 4% at a 95% confidence level. The margin of error is somewhat higher for data on only metro Phoenix or Tucson or other subsets of respondents.
Arizona’s Land and People

Arizona was once known as the “baby state” because, until Alaska and Hawaii, it was the last to join the union. In many ways Arizona is a far different place than it was in 1912, though the topography and extreme climate of this “great dry land” have remained constant.

Arizona’s Land

“One has only to look down from above to see that Arizona is a deeply wrinkled old land of interminable mountains, river valleys, and desert plains. The sight of running water is rare. Dryness is obvious.” The words of author Lawrence Clark Powell capture the essence of the nation’s 6th-largest state. The aridity of the land is similar to that of most of the West, as is the dominance of public land ownership. More than 80% of Arizona is owned by federal, state, and tribal governments.

Arizona’s People

Population growth and urbanization have been Arizona’s biggest stories for the past 50 years. And more people — many more people — are expected. But Arizona is not just getting bigger, it is becoming more diverse.

Now, Arizona is:

> 18th in population according to the 2003 Census Bureau estimates, a move from 20th in 2000
> the 8th most urban state
A Great Dry Land: Arizona’s Topography

Proof of an Arid Place: Average Annual Rainfall in the West 100th Meridian

More Public Than Private: Land Ownership in Arizona

Urban and Rural Proportions — Arizona

Arizona Population Growth

Arizona and U.S. Ages | 2000

HOW ARIZONA COMPARES: REAL NUMBERS AND HOT TOPICS
> 6th in the percentage of residents who speak a language other than English at home

> Younger than the nation as a whole with a median age of 34.2 compared to 35.3. This difference will continue, as Arizona’s birthrate (16.1 per 1,000 population) outstrips the nation’s (13.9).

> 5th highest in “dependency ratio,” meaning the number of (typically “dependent”) youth under age 20 and the number of seniors age 65 and over for every 100 people in between.

## Arizona’s Livelhood

Arizona’s economy has changed dramatically from the days when agriculture and mining reigned supreme. Today, the economy is much broader, though some say still not diverse enough. Total employment is nearly 3 million with services accounting for the most jobs.

### Population Across the Nation:

#### Population Rankings | 2000* and 2003**

*Source: CensusScope.org, Social Science Data Analysis Network, University of Michigan.

### Income Distribution:

#### Arizona Income Distribution | 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Percent Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000+</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: US Census Bureau.

### Growth is a Given:

#### Percent Population Change | 1990-2000

*Source: Censusscope.org, Social Science Data Analysis Network, University of Michigan.

---

**Industrial Divisions, Arizona | 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Division</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>70%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>90%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCPL*</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIRE**</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phoenix and Tucson are often noted for how they differ, but they share certain traits as well. The 2 desert metros are located in river valleys: Salt River Valley and the Santa Cruz River. Both have a long history of indigenous inhabitants including the Hohokam, Pima, Maricopa, and Tohono O’odham. Both have been capitols of the territory or state at one time. However, modern Phoenix can be traced to about 1868, while the City of Tucson came into being 1775 with the establishment of the Tucson Presidio. Today each name denotes both a large city and a larger metropolitan area where the rivers that originally attracted people are being reinvented as amenities for residents and visitors through the Rio Salado project in metro Phoenix and Rio Nuevo in Tucson. The Phoenix metropolitan region is younger than the Tucson region. The median ages are 33.2 and 35.7 years respectively.

The Tucson region is more diverse racially and ethnically than the Phoenix region. The Non-Hispanic White population is 66% and 62% respectively. The African American populations of the regions nearly match with 3.7% in the Phoenix region and 3.0% in Tucson. American Indian population is similar – Tucson has 3.2%, while Phoenix shows 2.2%. However, the number of American Indian residents in Phoenix (70,740) outpaces Tucson (27,178).

The State of Arizona Registered Voters showed 1,451,620 Maricopa County voters in time for the primary election of 2004. Pima County counted 401,105. In Maricopa County 44% of registered voters are Republican, 31% are Democratic, 25% are “Other” (read Independent), and less than 1% are Libertarian. In Pima County, the mix is different: Republican 33%; Democratic 41%; 26% Independent; less than 1% Libertarian.

In the Phoenix metropolitan area, 12% of individuals lived below the poverty line in 1999. The proportion for the Tucson region stood at 14.7%, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.