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Majority of persons in shelters in Nebraska are males over 18 years of age

In September 2012, the U.S. Census Bureau released a 2010 special report, *The Emergency and Transitional Shelter Population: 2010* (ESTP:2010). The ETSP:2010 provides information on the numbers, demographic characteristics and geographic distribution of persons at emergency and transitional shelters. Shelters are defined as places where people who are experiencing homelessness stay overnight.

Information on this group may be valuable to federal, state, and local agencies for a variety reasons, such as program planning and implementation.

This report looks at the data on the emergency and transitional shelter population in Nebraska and compares it to the shelter population for the United States.

As shown on Table 1, for both the U.S. and Nebraska, the group most likely enumerated in shelters was males over 18 years of age. In the U.S., 62.1% of the shelter population was male; and 51.9% of the shelter population was male over 18 years. In Nebraska, 70.4% was male; and 62.7% was male over 18 years.

For the shelter population under 18 years, males and females represented nearly equal percentages for both the U.S. and Nebraska.

Table 1. Sex and age of shelter population, for Nebraska and the United States, 2010

| | United States | | | Nebraska | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|--------|----------|------|--------|
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| Total | | 62.1 | 37.9 | | 70.4 | 29.6 |
| Under 18 years | 20.2 | 10.2 | 10.0 | 15.8 | 7.7 | 8.1 |
| 18 years or older | 79.8 | 51.9 | 27.9 | 84.2 | 62.7 | 21.5 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *The Emergency and Transitional Shelter Population: 2010*, September 2012
 Prepared by: Center for Public Affairs Research, University of Nebraska at Omaha, October 2012

As shown on Table 2, Nebraska had about the same percent of persons in shelters as the U.S. (0.08% versus 0.07%). However, Nebraska had a higher percent of males in shelters (0.12 % versus 0.09%) and a higher percent of persons 18 years or older in shelters (0.07% versus 0.10%).

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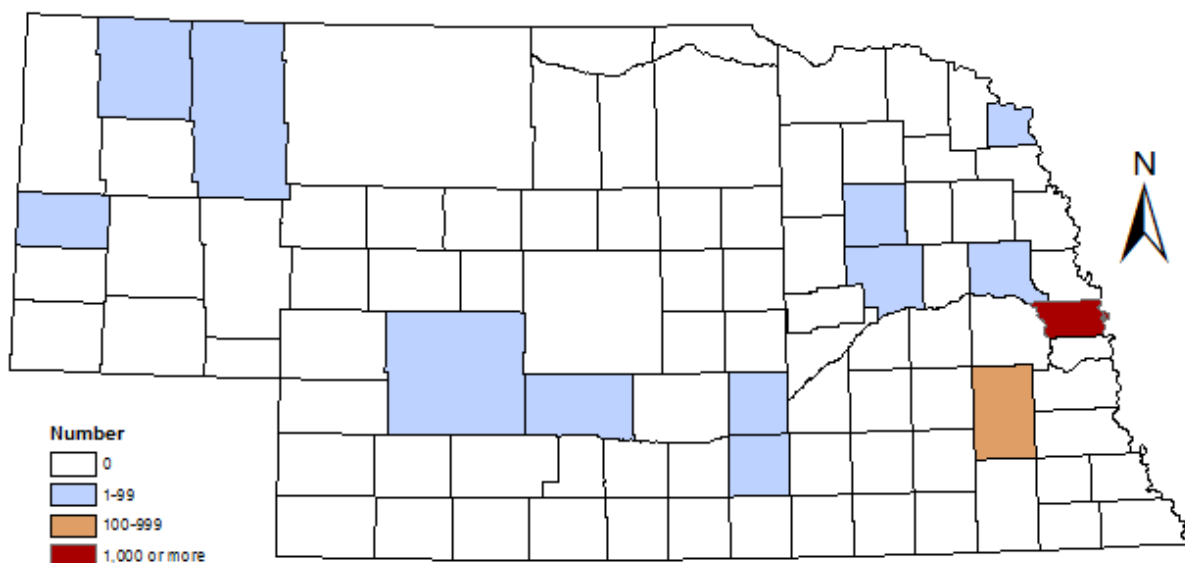
Table 2. Number and percent of persons in shelters, for Nebraska and the United States, 2010

| | United States | | | Nebraska | | | |
|---|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| | Total Population | Shelter Population | | Total Population | Shelter Population | | |
| | | Number | Percent of U.S. | | Number | Percent of Nebraska | Percent of U.S. |
| Total | 308,745,538 | 209,325 | 0.07 | 1,826,341 | 1,543 | 0.08 | 0.7 |
| Male | 151,781,326 | 129,969 | 0.09 | 906,296 | 1,087 | 0.12 | 0.8 |
| Female | 156,964,212 | 79,356 | 0.05 | 920,045 | 456 | 0.05 | 0.6 |
| Under 18 years 18 years or older | 74,181,467 | 42,290 | 0.06 | 459,221 | 244 | 0.05 | 0.6 |
| | 234,564,071 | 167,035 | 0.07 | 1,367,120 | 1,299 | 0.10 | 0.8 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *The Emergency and Transitional Shelter Population: 2010*, September 2012
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The ESTP: 2010 found only 13 counties in Nebraska with an emergency and transitional shelter population. It is unknown whether no shelters exist in the other 80 counties or whether there were no persons using the shelters that do exist. Figure 1 shows number of persons in shelters for Nebraska counties.

Figure 1. The Emergency and Transitional Shelter Population for Nebraska counties, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *The Emergency and Transitional Shelter Population: 2010*, September 2012
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It is not surprising that most of the counties with the highest shelter population are the many of the counties with the largest populations. Eleven of the 13 counties found to have some shelter population are in the top 15 most populous counties. The remaining 2 counties ranked lower in population: Dawes ranked 30th and Sheridan ranked 53rd. The high shelter population counts relative to the total population

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for these counties is probably a factor of the high rate of homeless though to be on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Table 3 lists the counties, their population and rank.

Table 3. Population and Ranking of Nebraska counties with shelter population, 2010

| County | Population | County Rank | Shelter Population |
|--------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Douglas | 517,110 | 1 | 1,000 or more |
| Lancaster | 285,407 | 2 | 100 – 999 |
| Hall | 58,607 | 4 | 1 – 99 |
| Scotts Bluff | 36,970 | 6 | 1 – 99 |
| Dodge | 36,691 | 7 | 1 – 99 |
| Lincoln | 36,288 | 8 | 1 – 99 |
| Madison | 34,876 | 9 | 1 – 99 |
| Platte | 32,237 | 10 | 1 – 99 |
| Adams | 31,364 | 11 | 1 – 99 |
| Dawson | 24,326 | 13 | 1 – 99 |
| Dakota | 21,006 | 15 | 1 – 99 |
| Dawes | 3,182 | 30 | 1 – 99 |
| Sheridan | 5,469 | 53 | 1 – 99 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *2010 Census of Population and Housing*

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About the Data

Persons in emergency and transitional shelters were enumerated on March 29, 2010 as part of the Census Bureau's Service-Based Enumeration Operation which also included enumeration at soup kitchens, mobile food vans and outdoor locations. The complete report is located at <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/reports/c2010sr-02.pdf>.

In the 2010 Census, emergency and transitional shelters were defined as places where people experiencing homelessness stay overnight. The emergency and transitional shelter population is one of many types that make up the total group quarters population.

The Census Bureau stresses that this special report presents statistics for people enumerated at emergency and transitional shelters only, and should not be misconstrued as a count of the entire population experiencing homelessness. The Census Bureau does not produce or publish a total count of the homeless population. Further, it is important to recognize that there is no standard or agreed upon definition of what constitutes homelessness. Also, people experiencing homelessness can be counted and included in the census through various operations, but those operations do not separately identify, or even collect information to separately identify, people who might be experiencing homelessness.

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