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Karl Eschbach
Demographer

Young and Growing Population Fuels Economic Growth

Texas is a state on the move, growing and attracting new residents from all over the nation, says Karl Eschbach, director of Population Research at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. “They’re coming here for jobs and affordable living,” Eschbach says.

Furthermore, Texas’ expanding economy, including its burgeoning tech sector, is attracting high-caliber employees. “Texas is among the most popular destinations for college educated workers who relocate between states,” Eschbach says.

The growing population, in turn, is further strengthening the state’s economy, creating a “virtuous circle” in which growth expands both our labor force and consumer markets. Texas’ labor force is among the nation’s fastest growing and led the nation in net expansion over the 2000-06 period.

Another advantage lies in the state’s relative youth. “The work force in Texas

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Demographic Advantage Young State, Solid Growth

Texas stands strong in rocky times with a solid economy, abundant natural resources and some of the nation’s best infrastructure. But its biggest asset may be its dynamic and growing population.

- Between 2000 and 2009, Texas’ population grew at more than double the national rate — 18.8 percent versus 9.1 percent.
- The Census Bureau reports that Texas gained 478,000 residents between July 1, 2008, and July 1, 2009, more than any other state.
- Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington led all other U.S. metro areas in its numerical population gain between 2008 and 2009, adding 146,530 residents. Houston-Sugarland-Baytown was second, with 140,784 additional residents.
- The Austin-Round Rock metro area ranked fourth nationwide in its rate of growth between 2008 and 2009, expanding by 3.1 percent in that year, while McAllen-Edinburg-Mission and Odessa ranked eighth and ninth, respectively.
- In addition, five Texas counties were among the 20 fastest-growing in the nation between 2000 and 2009.
- According to the Census Bureau, the median age of the Texas population is 33.2 years, versus 36.8 years for the nation as a whole. Texas has the second-youngest median population among the states.
- The Texas State Data Center reports that Texas had the nation’s second-youngest work force in 2009, with a median age of 40.3 years.
- Texas has led all other states in domestic in-migration since 2006. Workers and jobseekers from all across the U.S. have voted with their feet, believing Texas to hold the best employment opportunities even during the recent recession.
- An average of more than 171,900 college graduates moved into Texas each year between 2006 and 2008, placing the state second in the nation by this measure. Of these, about 85 percent joined the Texas work force.

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is among the youngest in the nation,” Eschbach says, and that’s a real plus in an era when the aging of the work force has become a serious concern in many industries.

“The need to replace workers is a critical problem other states are going to face,” he says, noting that the number of Americans available to move into entry-level jobs is expected to begin declining within a few years. In Texas, though, employers will find the new workers they need to succeed. A younger work force, moreover, is more flexible and better able to obtain the training needed to fill today’s increasingly complex jobs.

Finally, Eschbach notes that Texas is a thoroughly multicultural state whose workers offer real advantages in today’s global economy, including large numbers of bilingual workers who can be crucial in international trade.

“The diversity of Texas’ work force makes it an attractive place to do business for investors and entrepreneurs from all continents,” Eschbach says. “Texas is home to the second-largest Hispanic, third-largest non-Hispanic white and Asian-origin and fourth-largest African American work force of any state in the country. Our workers represent the diversity of the population of the U.S. more than any other state.”



Find more economic development resources for your Texas enterprise at www.TexasAhead.org or www.TexasEdge.org for detailed economic data.

A Young and Vital State

Texas has one of the youngest populations among the states.

Median Age, Ten Most Populous States, 2008

Rank	State	Median Age of Residents
4	Florida	40.2%
6	Pennsylvania	39.9
14	Ohio	38.1
16	New York	38.0 (tie)
16	Michigan	38.0 (tie)
32	North Carolina	36.9
	U.S. Average	36.8
38	Illinois	36.0
45	Georgia	34.9
46	California	34.8
49	Texas	33.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Moving? Try Texas

Texas has led the nation in domestic in-migration — that is, persons moving to Texas from another state — since 2006. And in-migration increased during the recession.

Leading States for Domestic In-Migration, 2006 - 2009

July 2006 - July 2007:

Rank	State	Net In-Migrants
1	Texas	129,966
2	North Carolina	120,063
3	Georgia	93,094
4	Arizona	79,763
5	South Carolina	52,884

July 2007 - July 2008:

Rank	State	Net In-Migrants
1	Texas	131,171
2	North Carolina	104,228
3	Arizona	55,468
4	Georgia	54,636
5	South Carolina	49,720

July 2008 - July 2009:

Rank	State	Net In-Migrants
1	Texas	143,423
2	North Carolina	59,108
3	Washington	38,201
4	Colorado	35,591
5	South Carolina	31,480

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.