



Texas and Texans: Young and Growing Population Fuels Economic Growth



Karl Eschbach
State Demographer

Texas is a state on the move, growing and attracting new residents from all over the nation, says Karl Eschbach, official demographer for the state of Texas.

“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 our consumer markets. Texas’ labor force is among the nation’s fastest growing and led the nation in net expansion over the 2000-2006 period.

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

Texas: The Demographic Advantage

Texas is blessed 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 2007, Texas’ population grew at more than double the national rate—14.6 percent versus 7.2 percent.
- Dallas-Fort Worth led all other U.S. metro areas in its numerical population gain between 2006 and 2007, adding more than 162,000 residents. The Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, Austin-Round Rock and San Antonio metro areas also were in the top ten for numerical growth.
- Five of the 10 U.S. counties registering the highest numerical growth between 2006 and 2007 are located in Texas. Eleven Texas counties were among the 25 U.S. counties with the highest numerical growth.
- According to the 2006 Census data, the median age of the Texas population is 33.1 years, versus 36.4 years for the nation as a whole. Texas has the youngest median population by far among the 10 most populous states.
- Texas has the fifth-youngest work force in the nation, with a median age of 39.4 years, according to the University of Texas at San Antonio’s Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research.
- The Texas labor force experienced the largest net growth of any state between 2000 and 2006. Texas accounted for nearly 13 percent of the net increase in U.S. workers over that period.
- Three Texas cities—Frisco, Cedar Park and McKinney—ranked first, second and third, respectively, in U.S. labor force growth between 2000 and 2005.
- Texas is attracting many of the nation’s college-educated workers who choose to relocate within the U.S. In 2006, more than 42,000 college-educated workers moved from other states to join the Texas labor force. Texas ranked second only to California by this measure, and well ahead of California when the new arrivals are considered as a share of the total work force.
- Nearly twice as many Texans are fully bilingual as the national average.

“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 workforce of any state in the country. Our workers represent the diversity of the population of the U.S. more than any other state.”

Texas: National Growth Leader

Five of the 10 U.S. counties experiencing the most growth between 2006 and 2007 are in Texas.

U.S. Counties with the Largest Numeric Increase in Population between July 1, 2006 and July 1, 2007

| Rank | County | State | Population Estimates | | Change, 2006 to 2007 | |
|------|-----------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------|
| | | | July 1, 2007 | July 1, 2006 | Number | Percent |
| 1 | Maricopa County | Arizona | 3,880,181 | 3,778,598 | 101,583 | 2.7 |
| 2 | Riverside County | California | 2,073,571 | 2,007,206 | 66,365 | 3.3 |
| 3 | Harris County | Texas | 3,935,855 | 3,876,306 | 59,549 | 1.5 |
| 4 | Clark County | Nevada | 1,836,333 | 1,777,168 | 59,165 | 3.3 |
| 5 | Tarrant County | Texas | 1,717,435 | 1,668,541 | 48,894 | 2.9 |
| 6 | Bexar County | Texas | 1,594,493 | 1,555,192 | 39,301 | 2.5 |
| 7 | Wake County | North Carolina | 832,970 | 794,129 | 38,841 | 4.9 |
| 8 | Collin County | Texas | 730,690 | 696,383 | 34,307 | 4.9 |
| 9 | Travis County | Texas | 974,365 | 941,577 | 32,788 | 3.5 |
| 10 | Mecklenburg County | North Carolina | 867,067 | 835,328 | 31,739 | 3.8 |

Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau.

A Young and Vital State

Texas has one of the youngest populations in the nation.

Median Age, Ten Most Populous States, 2006

| Population Rank | State | Median Age of Residents |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 4 | Florida | 39.6% |
| 6 | Pennsylvania | 39.5 |
| 7 | Ohio | 37.6 |
| 3 | New York | 37.3 |
| 8 | Michigan | 37.2 |
| 10 | North Carolina | 36.6 |
| | U.S. Average | 36.4 |
| 5 | Illinois | 35.7 |
| 9 | Georgia | 34.6 |
| 1 | California | 34.4 |
| 2 | Texas | 33.1 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.



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