

Note Worthy

QUOTABLE: “Encouraging signs are present in manufacturing and services, with a marked pickup in temp employment and initial signs that direct hiring is on the upswing.”

—Jason Saving, Senior Research Economist and Advisor

NEW TEXANS: Other States Provide One-Third of Arrivals After 2005

Texas' population stands at 25.1 million, a gain of 4.3 million, or 20.6 percent, in the past 10 years, according to the 2010 census. In terms of people, Texas had the most growth of any state, and by percentage, it ranked fifth, trailing Nevada, Arizona, Utah and Idaho.

In the first half of the decade, international migration accounted for a larger portion of Texas' growth than domestic movement. In the latter half, the reverse was true. Net migration from other states (including Hurricane Katrina arrivals) made up roughly one-third of the growth and international inflows about one-fifth. Net births were responsible for the rest.

People are relocating from other states, in part, because of Texas' economic strength and ability to attract businesses.

Site Selection magazine's business climate rankings have placed Texas near the top over the past decade; the state was third in 2010. CNBC picked Texas as the top state for business in 2010, while *Forbes* named Texas the seventh-best state for business and careers.

In 2010, the Milken Institute's rankings of best U.S. metros by job creation and economic growth placed five Texas cities in the top 10 among large metros. Military-dominated Killeen–Temple–Fort Hood (No. 1) and El Paso were on the list, as were Austin–Round Rock, McAllen–Edinburg–Mission and Houston–Sugar Land–Baytown. College Station–Bryan and Tyler were among the 10 best small metros.

—Yingda Bi

MEXICAN POPULATION: Decennial Census Reveals Surprising Growth

Mexico's resident population increased 15.2 percent to 112.3 million in 2010, up from 97.5 million 10 years earlier, the nation's census shows.

Surprisingly, Mexico's head count was 3.9 million higher than previously estimated. Reasons cited by the Mexican statistical agency Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) include decreased emigration in the second half of decade—most likely due to the U.S. recession—and a higher-than-expected fertility rate.

U.S. construction, a destination industry for many migrant workers, suffered during the recession. Construction employment is 27 percent below its 2006 peak. In addition, the fertility rate came in at 2.2 children per woman. The projected rate was 2.04, authorities said.

INEGI released the first results from its decennial census late last year. The data showed that women are in the majority in the country at 57.5 million, compared with 54.8 million men.

In terms of population size, Mexico is the 11th-largest nation in the world. It ranks third in the Western Hemisphere, trailing the United States (308.7 million) and Brazil (190.7 million).

The four Mexican states bordering Texas—Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas—represent 12.5 percent of the nation's population. Mexico is predominantly urban, with 76.9 percent of the population living in cities.

—Jesus Cañas

HIGHER EDUCATION: Texans Return to Classroom as Employment Lags

It's not unusual for people to go back to school when the economy falters and jobs are hard to find. Texas payroll employment fell 2.8 percent in 2009—and public higher-education enrollment soared in the state.

Community colleges posted a year-over-year increase of 12.2 percent, compared with 3.4 percent average growth since 1994, and four-year university enrollment expanded 4.5 percent, above the 1.9 percent historic rate.

The last recession generated a similar spike, beginning in 2001 and peaking in 2002, when community colleges saw an increase of about half their recent gain and four-year schools matched their current performance. As employment sagged in 2008, enrollment jumped again. When jobs began

to reappear last year, preliminary data suggest, community college enrollment growth remained high, but slowed. Four-year university enrollment continued unabated.

Greater pursuit of higher education in times of lower employment stands to benefit the Texas economy in years to come, though an enrollment increase doesn't necessarily translate into a greater proportion of degrees granted.

According to 2008 data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 21.7 percent of students in Texas two-year colleges receive an associate's degree within three years, while 49 percent of the state's four-year university students earn a bachelor's degree within six years.

—Adam Swadley