

American Community Survey

Travis County, Texas

2000-2003 Comparison

This update compares the results from the 2000 and 2003 American Community Surveys for Travis County. The American Community Survey is designed to replace the “long form” from the 10-year U.S. Census and collects information on an on-going basis rather than once every ten years. This modification reflects the reality of a fast-paced and rapidly changing society in which decision-makers, planners and residents need up to date information in order to understand and act upon current and emerging issues facing their communities (www.census.gov).

KEY FINDINGS: TRAVIS COUNTY COMPARISON 2000 AND 2003

- Between 2000 and 2003 the number of households in Travis County increased by 23,274, the majority of which (21,822 households) fell in the lowest three income brackets having an annual income of \$24,999 or less.
- While the number of residents with a college education did increase, the number of residents with less than a 9th grade education increased even more. There was also a significant increase in the number of residents who report speaking English less than “very well”.
- The number of individuals living in poverty, the number of unemployed residents, and the number of households facing affordable housing challenges (those spending more than 30% of annual income on housing) all increased in Travis County between 2000 and 2003.

Taken together, these key findings may indicate a demographic shift in the Travis County community, including an expanding immigrant population. **The population is continuing to grow, but growing poorer.** During the past four years, residents with low levels of education and income, as well as limited English proficiency are increasing in numbers faster than more highly educated, financially secure residents. Thus, it should not be surprising that **more Travis County households**

Trends in Travis County 2000 - 2003:

- **The population is continuing to grow, but growing poorer.**
- **The number of residents with less than a 9th grade education increased significantly.**
- **More households are facing challenges affording housing and finding employment.**

are facing challenges affording housing and finding employment, and that more individuals are falling below the poverty line. These trends will likely pose challenges for the community related to meeting the basic needs of our residents. While the economic downturn may be responsible for some of these conditions, a growing percentage of new Travis County residents, including the increasing numbers of residents with limited education, will likely continue to face financial insecurity, even as the economy begins to recover.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Population

The rate of population growth has started to level off in Travis County. While the population increased by 2.7% between 2000 and 2001 and by about 2.1% more in 2002, the total population in Travis County increased by less than 1% in 2003. The overall increase between 2000 (791,574) and 2003 (836,887) was about 5.7% or an estimated 45,313 additional residents.

Age

The overall age structure in Travis County stayed relatively stable, with the exception of an 18.6% decrease in the number of 20 to 24 year olds in the population, from 84,445 or 10.7% of the total population in 2000 to 68,699 or only 8.2% of the total population in 2003.

Race and Hispanic Origin

Between 2000 and 2003 both the number and percentage of Hispanic residents in Travis County increased while the percentage of the overall population identifying “white alone” as their racial background decreased (see Table 1 below). In each of the four surveys, African Americans comprised between 7.9% and 8.7% of the total Travis County population and Asians between 4.1% and 5%.¹

As of 2003 Texas became a ‘majority-minority’ state. This means that more than half (an estimated 50.5%) of the state’s population is made up of people other than single-race Anglos. Travis is one of two major metropolitan counties in Texas (the other is Tarrant) that continues to have a majority Anglo population. However, population trends over the past four years indicate that Travis County may be moving toward ‘majority-minority’ status.

Table 1: Growth in Hispanic Population

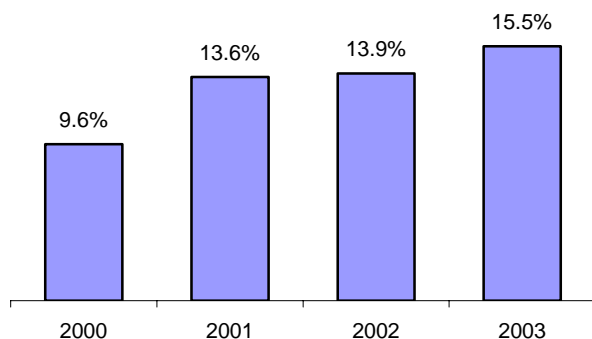
	Travis County				Texas
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2003
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	225,732	239,624	254,069	261,296	7,614,414
Hispanic as percent of total population	28.5%	29.5%	30.6%	31.2%	35.3%
White alone	444,194	451,413	454,193	449,441	10,664,159
White as percent of total population	56.1%	55.5%	54.7%	53.7%	49.5%

¹ These percentages reflect only those residents identifying “African American or Black alone” or “Asian alone” and do not include those who identify as being of more than one race or ethnicity.

Language

Between 2000 and 2003 the number of Travis County residents who reported speaking a language other than English at home increased by 21% or 41,932 people (from 197,956 to 239,888). The number of residents who speak English less than “very well” increased by 71% (49,278 people) from an estimated 69,860 residents in 2000 to 119,138 residents by 2003. Chart 1 to the right depicts the growth in the total percentage of Travis County residents who speak English less than “very well”.

Chart 1: Percent of Travis County population 5+ that speak English less than "very well"



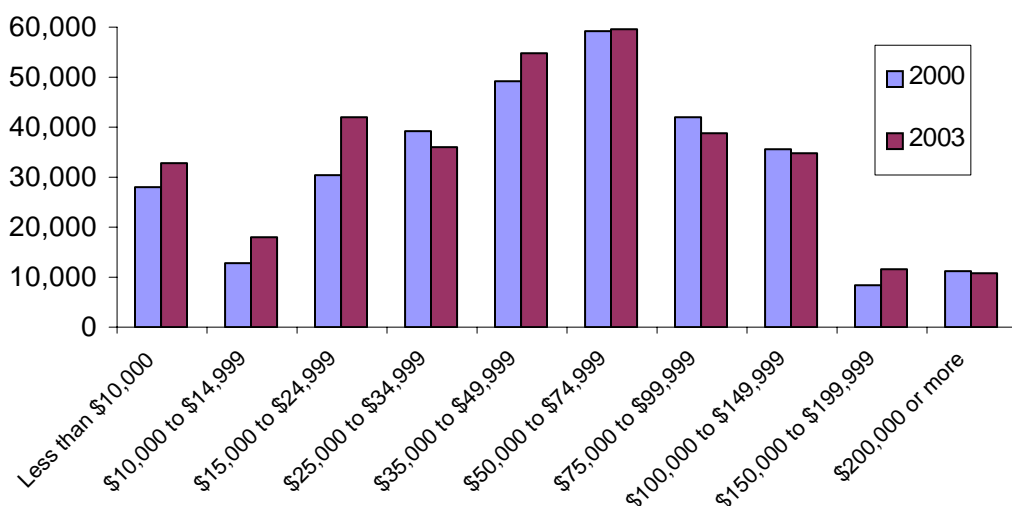
In 2003, 25% of Texas residents five years of age or older reported speaking Spanish at home. Texas ranks first in the nation for percent of people speaking Spanish at home (tied with New Mexico). Twenty-five percent of the Travis County population 5 years of age or older speak Spanish at home.

INCOME AND POVERTY

Income

The 2003 median household² income for Travis County, estimated at \$45,612, was higher than both the state (\$40,674) and national (\$43,564) averages. However the 2003 figure reflects a decrease from the 2000-2002 Travis County estimates averaging \$49,000 in inflation-adjusted dollars.

Chart 2: Number of Travis County Households by Income Level



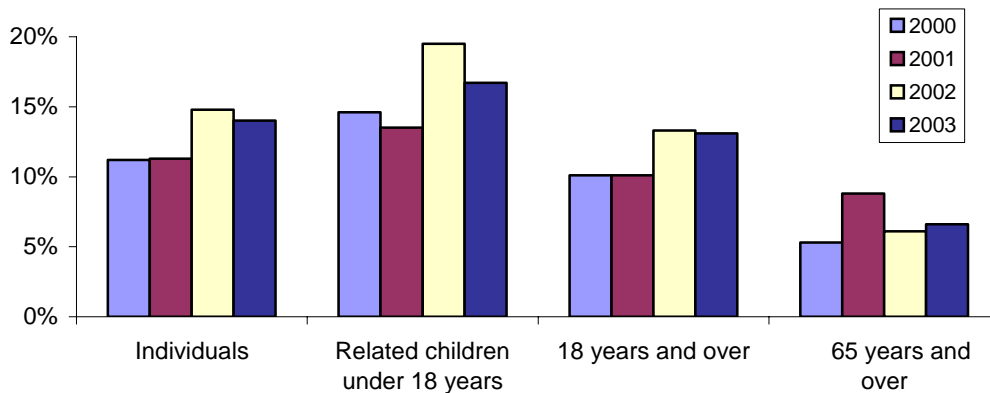
² Household income is defined as the combined annual income of all persons (over the age of 15) living in a household. Because many households consist of only one person, average household income is usually less than average family income. More information about American Community Survey subject definitions can be found at <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/Def.htm>.

Chart 2 above shows the number of Travis County households at each income bracket for 2000 and 2003. **The number of households in the lowest three brackets (those making less than \$24,999) increased by 21,822 households between 2000 and 2003** while the total number of those in the middle five brackets remained relatively constant (225,036 in 2000 and 223,683 in 2003).

Poverty

An estimated **14% of the Travis County population or 116,231 residents were living in poverty in the 2003 survey**. While this is slightly lower than the 122,607 residents in 2002, it reflects an increase from 2000 and 2001, when an estimated 11.2% of individuals lived below the poverty level. Nationally, the percentage of individuals living in poverty during 2003 was 12.7%. **With 16.3% of the state's population living in poverty, Texas is ranked as having the 8th highest poverty rate in the nation**. The chart below compares the percentage of Travis County residents by age group living in poverty and also shows an overall increase in poverty rate since 2000.³

Chart 3: Percentage of People Living in Poverty



EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Education

When compared with the 2003 national average of 26.5% and the Texas average of 24.5%, **Travis County has a high percentage of residents 25 years or older who have completed a Bachelor's degree (40.6%)**. However, this percentage has decreased from 42.1% in 2000 and 43.1% in 2001. Additionally, both the **number and the percentage of Travis County residents 25 years or older who have less than a 9th grade education appears to be steadily increasing** (see Table 2).

Table 2: Residents Age 25+ with less than a 9th Grade Education

	2000	2001	2002	2003
Number of Residents	26,697	32,098	39,793	45,281
Percentage of Total Population	5.5%	6.4%	7.5%	8.4%

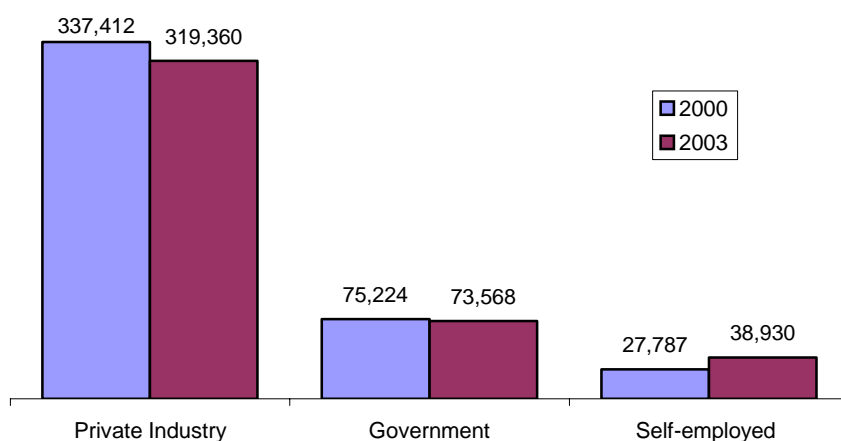
³ The poverty category: "Related children under 18 years" includes all children living in families with incomes below the federal poverty income guidelines who are related to the householder by birth, marriage or adoption.

Employment

The number of Travis County residents (age 16 years or older) in the labor force increased 3.7% between 2000 and 2003 from 458,963 to 475,847. However, the number of people in the workforce increased at a lesser rate than the total population aged 16 years or older, which increased 4.7% from 616,678 to 645,897. During the same period, **the number of unemployed residents more than doubled from 17,507 to 41,789, as did the percent unemployed, estimated at 8.8% in 2003 compared to 3.8% in 2000.**

When looking at employment by sector, the number of people working for private industry decreased while the number of self-employed workers increased between 2000 and 2003. The number of government workers was roughly the same in 2000 and 2003. Chart 4 below shows employment by sector.

Chart 4: Employment Changes by Sector

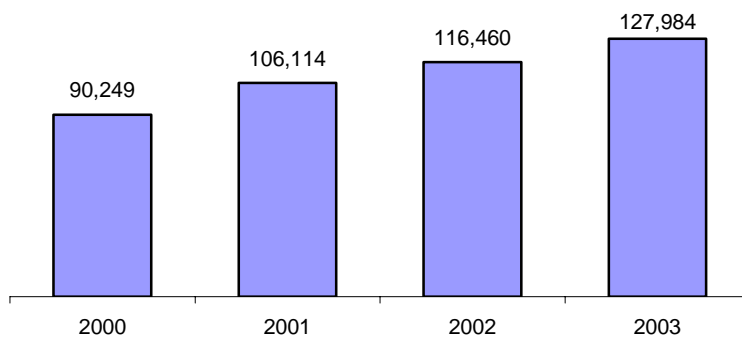


HOUSING

The estimated number of housing units in Travis County increased by 37,543 (11.2%) to 373,424 between 2000 and 2003. Occupation rates decreased from 94% to 91% leaving the number of unoccupied homes at 46,646. The median home value increased by 15.8% to \$167,015.

Forty-one percent of Travis County households (127,984) spent more than 30% of their annual income on housing costs during 2003.⁴ As Chart 5 shows, the number of households facing affordable housing challenges has increased since 2000.

Chart 5: Travis County Households Spending more than 30% on Housing Costs



⁴ The generally accepted definition of affordability is that a household pays no more than 30% of its annual income on housing (www.hud.gov).

SURVEY DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

All statistics found in this report are based on the U.S. Census Bureau's Supplemental Surveys from 2000 and 2001 and American Community Surveys from 2002 and 2003 unless otherwise noted. The two surveys use the same survey questionnaire and methodology, however the Supplemental Survey has a smaller sample size. It was designed to provide a bridge of information for a permanent American Community Survey. According to the U.S. Census, the American Community Survey is:

“a nationwide survey designed to provide communities a fresh look at how they are changing. It is a critical element in the Census Bureau's reengineered 2010 Census and a way to provide the data communities need every year instead of one in ten years. It is an ongoing survey that the Census Bureau plans will replace the long form in the 2010 Census. Data are collected from a sample by mail, phone, and personal interview.” (www.census.gov).⁵

Data are collected from about one-twelfth of the sample households each month, and are then extrapolated to provide estimates for community-wide demographic, housing, social, and economic characteristics. Because of the nature of estimates, American Community Survey data may differ slightly from other sets of population statistics. For example, while ACS data indicate that Texas has already reached 'minority-majority' status, other estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau show that Texas is edging toward, but has not quite reached this point. For purposes of consistency, all information in this document is based solely on data from the American Community Survey.

While the Census Bureau provides calculations of statistical significance for multi-year profile data on the state and metropolitan statistical area levels as well as for the largest counties and test sites, it does not provide calculations of statistical significance for the Travis County multi-year profile data.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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⁵ There are ongoing discussions regarding the pros and cons of permanently replacing the long form of the decennial census with the American Community Survey.