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As the Bay Area Struggles, Texas Booms

Houston, Dallas, and Austin are all adding more jobs than SF or San Jose

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San Francisco residents may like to turn up their nose at the Lone Star State's conservative politics and run-away sprawl, but recently released statistics from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau show the Texas cities of Dallas, Houston, and Austin are booming as the Bay Area struggles to recover from the Great Recession.

"If you could afford a bigger house with a lower mortgage rate and get paid a higher salary, the math of that is pretty hard to resist. And so you see that happening thousands and thousands of times over," said Lloyd Potter, head of the Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

While the Bay Area added about 85,000 new residents from April 2010 to July 2011, the Dallas-Forth Worth area added 155,000, making it the metropolitan region that showed the largest increase in population during that time, U.S. Census Bureau figures show.

Houston added 140,000 people, making it second on the top ten list of regions that added the most people.

Other major metropolitan areas with significant technology sectors — Washington, D.C., New York City, and Austin, Texas — were also on the list.

The Los Angeles/Long Beach area and Riverside/San Bernardino were the only regions in California listed among the top ten.

The reason Dallas and Houston are adding so many people is simple:

"It's because there are jobs there," said Eduardo Martinez, a senior economist at Moody's Analytics.

While the Bay Area's clean tech sector has been slow to add significant numbers of jobs, the spike in oil and gas prices has lead to a new flow of riches in Houston and Dallas, Martinez said.

From January 2011 to January 2012, the Houston area added 94,000 jobs, according to the most recent figures from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, while Dallas added 70,000 jobs.

Meantime, the San Francisco metropolitan region — which also includes Marin and San Mateo counties along with the East Bay — added just 26,000 jobs, while the South Bay added 24,000 jobs.

The unemployment rate in Texas — at 7.6 percent — is more than 3 percentage points lower than California's, which stands at 10.9 percent.

The Bay Area may be the home for tech companies' corporate headquarters, but increasingly firms are deciding to locate their back office operations elsewhere.

"Apple will always be in Cupertino," he said, "but you will start to see them

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Pulse of the Bay, Economy, Housing

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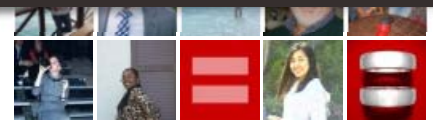
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👤 **J.E**   a year ago   Reply

While I appreciated reading these statistics, the title of this article is misleading. Population growth is not directly correlated with the prosperity or quality of life of a region. Texas' homes may be cheaper, but they are also experiencing one of the biggest droughts they've ever had. In fact, I was just reading this morning that 500 million trees have died in the State of Texas precisely because of the lack of water. As global warming increases, this problem will only get worse. Sure the Bay Area has our issues, but how many people would really choose to live in Houston rather than San Francisco or one of the other vibrant cities of the SF Bay Area?

👤 **Greg Schwartz**   a year ago   Reply

These numbers are totally distorted and I'll report why from my direct experience. I made the mistake of leaving unemployment in SF in 2008 to take a staff writer job with the San Antonio Current. I did some award-winning work there but was bored out of my mind living in San Antone, so it was a dead-end proposition. I moved to Austin thinking that could fix my Texas problem, drawn there by how it reminded me of the Bay Area with its progressive vibe and thriving music scene and with housing at half the cost. But the Austin job market is WAY overrated. I could not find full-time employment there in two years - unless you are in energy, IT or hospitality, the Texas job market is not all its cracked up to be. There is a huge propaganda campaign going on in Texas to pump up their economic numbers, "the Texas Miracle" as that ass-hat Rick Perry tried to say. But most of those jobs are minimum wage...

👤 **U Ragazzu**   a year ago   Reply

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no cultural life worth noting ... who on earth would want to live there. Add to that a poetical culture that is despicable; those idiotic governors, Bush and Perry represent the abysmal state of Texas political and cultural life. No, seriously, who would wish to move there from San Francisco or anywhere in the Bay Area ... Our local area wins out on all fronts. I have never met anyone who has ever expressed a desire to move to Texas.

john jean   a year ago   Reply

what an awful article! but let's get to some of the aspects: who in his right mind wants population growth in the bay area?? as it is we have already too many people in the bay area suburbs. i doubt putting up more people let's say in the livermore valley is a good idea. too much of open space had been and still is being destroyed at an astonishing rate since 1995. and, how much more population in s.f. proper is feasible? and, who wants a bigger house??? and, houston????? unless you have grown up in a suburb and spend all your petty life there, why would anyone with some intelligence and imagination move to one of those uniformed burbs/town/cities unless it is out of a desperate economic need? it almost looks like the article/author was sponsored by kb home or some other big developer. this is not journalism...

Jason Young   a year ago   Reply

There's so much wrong with this article that I don't know where to start. First, it's lazy journalism to post data comparing raw numbers across different regions without normalizing it. It may work out that Texas metro areas are adding more jobs PER CAPITA (which is the only way to accurately compare) but I would never be able to tell from this article. There's a lot of unsubstantiated commentary parading as fact without any supporting data. To wit: "The Bay Area may be the home for tech companies' corporate headquarters, but increasingly firms are deciding to locate their back office operations elsewhere." Ok. Apple is creating some jobs in Austin. Apple employees 12,000 people in Cupertino, nearly ten times the number in Austin. Dell (an Austin-based company) has over 6,000 employees in China and plans to add another 3,000. Maybe this article should be about how employers are abandoning the high cost of living in Austin for cheaper places like China? Another: "If you could afford a bigger house with a lower mortgage rate and get paid a higher salary, the math of that is pretty hard to resist. And so you see that happening thousands and thousands of times over." -Lloyd Potter, head of the Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio Ok, so how exactly does my bigger home in Texas come with a lower mortgage rate? Are they also on a different currency in Texas with a different Federal Reserve and/or banking system? And where are all these higher salaries? I moved to San Francisco in 1999 from Houston and my salary doubled. Since then, there has been no scenario under which me moving back to Texas would NOT involve me taking a significant pay cut. Well, maybe if I suddenly started being a petroleum engineer... It may have been worth asking, what kind of jobs are these? The bulk of

droves? I don't know but there must be "thousands" of them according to the article. While the article is comparing the Bay Area to metro areas in Texas, there's no mention of the 5.9% unemployment rate in Marin Co. or the sub-8% unemployment in San Francisco, both marks better than the national average and significantly lower than they were last year. It just points to the high state unemployment in CA, which is largely irrelevant to the title of this piece. I feel like I've read this same article every year or so for the last 12 years and this version, frankly, is one of the lazier comparisons that I can recall. I won't even bother getting into the quality of life issues, lest I be seen as "turning up my nose" at Texas, but I lived in Texas for nearly 20 years so I know it quite well. Texas has its merits and California is by no means perfect. But this article is not going to do much to settle the debate.

Aldo Moretti   a year ago   Reply

I know a few people who grew up in Texas and a few who grew up here and moved to Texas. Here are some of the things that they tell me. In many areas, there is heavy industry like oil refineries. The air pollution is way bad, much worse than the bay area here. Housing is cheaper, but due to the hot temperatures,enormous amounts of electricity are needed just to keep a house at 78 degrees. My friend has 2 air conditioning units, a 2 ton and a 3 ton, it costs her $800 per month for electricity to power those A/C units alone, and that is on top of other electrical costs like refrigeration, etc., etc. So, one can add the cooling costs to housing costs in the hot areas. It is so hot for so much of the year, wood trim on houses only lasts about 5 years ! My one friend who moved there is a "good red", so he loves the political climate there and sends me some good Texas jokes poking fun of California, but I think most people from here would not like the politics in Texas. Texas has sold out to multi national corporations. The state gave corporations their freeways to privatize and make into toll roads. The state of Texas gives away public property to private corporations without a concern for their citizens. Their electric utility corporations are very militaristic and aggressive about pushing SmartMeters, they say, it's my way or the highway, you have no freedom of choice. And, Texas is a "right to work for cheap state", meaning that unless you are high up in the oil industry, the jobs are mostly non union low wage jobs. And last summer, the combination of wild fires and the drought made life very miserable for many people in Texas, some are bailing out now or making plans to do so in the future. Texas sounds like a place that I never would want to even visit.

Jerry Rioux   a year ago   Reply

What a bunch of cr@p! The Texas shill claims "If you could afford a bigger house with a lower mortgage rate and get paid a higher salary, the math of that is pretty hard to resist." Higher salary??? Why doesn't Glantz report the differences in the incomes of the two areas? It's because the Bay Area pays far higher wages than Texas. Fannie Mae reports the following median incomes for the metro areas: San Jose metro area - $103,600 San Francisco-Oakland metro area - $95,400 Austin metro area - $74,900 Dallas-Fort

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Matt Genovese

a year ago   Reply

Cannot speak for the rest of Texas, but here in Austin we are
dealing with a critical shortage of software talent. Very high demand
for certain roles, and in fact we are holding a software job fair in
Austin in late June specifically for Java, .NET, Software QA, and
UI/UX developers: http://door64.com/painpoint As for the
comments about compensation, average (experience) software
development jobs here are generally 100K+ salaries.

Sup Stew

a year ago   Reply

Gee, there seems to be a lot of snobbery in the comments. Yes,
the Bay Area weather beats Texas heat hands down. Air
conditioning is small consolation for great weather but the heat can
be dealt with. Drought is over (maybe). Jobs, yes technology jobs in
Texas are available. Politicians, or just politics generally - I don't
think you really want to get into that do you? California is bankrupt
financially, and in some circles one might argue morally also. I
understand if you don't want to come to Texas, we don't even
particularly want you, and truth be told neither does most of the rest
of the country.

Anonymous For Now

11 months ago   Reply

I've also lived in Texas for 20 years. (In Austin the entire time.)
Californians, take heart. I'm only here for the job. I absolutely LOVE
visiting the Bay Area and points north. Housing prices are the only
reason I didn't pull up stakes long ago.

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