

URBAN TEXAS



Migration could become the most important phenomenon shaping Texas in the 21st century

Included in this Brief:

- By 2010, 84.7 percent of Texans lived in urban areas.
- At present growth rates, the Texas urban population will double in 40 years.
- Urban areas are projected to have more than 90 percent of the state's 2010-2050 total population growth.

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The Texas Demographic Center is responsible for interpreting and communicating information on demographic and socioeconomic issues for the State of Texas to the public and the legislature.

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In recent years, the majority of the state's population growth has been from migration. Along with births and deaths, migration is a primary component of population growth. Moreover, migration is associated with innovation and, thus, can be a catalyst for social change. In the early twenty-first century, Texas has become a leading destination for both international and domestic migrants. Together, these migration flows are adding around 250,000 new residents to Texas each year. In addition to the quarter of a million new Texans, close to a million resident Texans move within the state each year.

A continuation of these recent migration patterns could have significant implications for the size, composition, and distribution of the future Texas population. With this, migration could become the most important phenomenon shaping Texas in the twenty-first century.

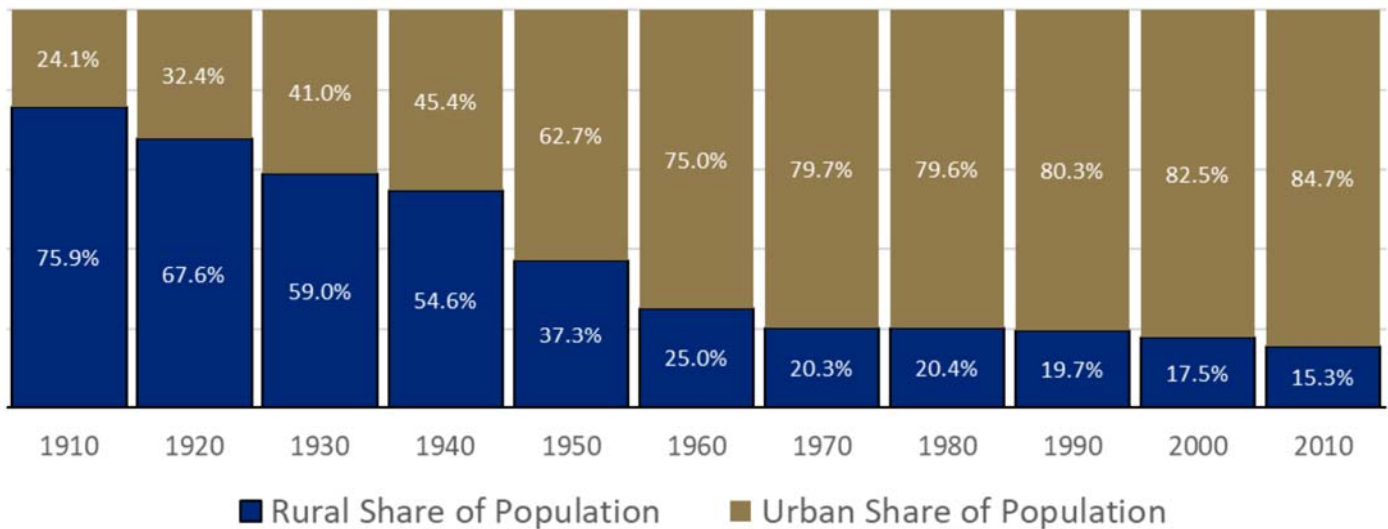
Population growth and urbanization are becoming synonymous

In today's world, population growth and urbanization are becoming synonymous (U.N. 2015). Texas is no exception. In 1910, 24.1 percent of the Texas population resided in urban areas. By 2010, the urban share of Texas population had risen to 84.7 percent. Conversely, in 1910, 75.9 percent of Texans lived in rural areas compared to 15.3 percent in 2010. Thus, as Figure 1 shows, in 100 years, the urban-rural shares of the Texas population have undergone a complete reversal.

Based on current trends, the metropolitan population in Texas will double in 40 years.

Texas presently has 82 metropolitan or urban counties with the remaining 172 counties classified as non-metropolitan or rural [1]. Please refer to Appendix A for a map of Texas metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties. If the recent annual growth rate of 1.7 percent in the urban counties continues, the metropolitan population will double in 40 years. For the rural counties, with a growth rate of 0.3 percent, it would take 218 years to double their population. Based on population projections from the Texas Demographic Center's, 94.6 percent of the state's 2010-2050 population growth will occur in the 82 metropolitan counties while the 172 non-metropolitan counties will account for only 5.4 percent of this growth (Texas Demographic Center 2014). Thus, the future Texas population will increasingly be located in or around its cities.

Figure 1: Texas Urban-Rural Population Shares, 1910 through 2010



Texas' population is increasingly concentrated in a handful of metropolitan areas.

The historical shift toward urban residence has led to increasing population concentrations in the state's cities. Currently, Texas has 25 areas designated as Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). As of the 2010 Census, six of these 25 MSAs had populations of 500,000 or more.

Table 1 presents historical growth data for these six MSAs and the State of Texas. From this table, it is apparent:

- (1) Texas experienced a century of tremendous population growth and,
- (2) Growth rates in the six largest MSAs outpaced that for the state as a whole.

Figure 2 shows that, as a group, these six MSAs held 32.0 percent of the state's population in 1910 and this increased to 70.7 percent in 2010. During this time period, 77.8 percent of Texas population growth is attributable to these six MSAs. Just two MSAs, Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington and Houston-The Woodlands-Sugarland, accounted for more than half (54.3 percent) of the 1910-2010 total population growth in Texas.

Thus, while 100 years of urban population growth has generated 25 MSAs in Texas, most of this growth has been concentrated in a handful of the state's urbanized areas. The primary engines of

urban growth have been the Dallas and Houston metro areas. More recently, this pattern of ever-increasing population concentration has been occurring in the Austin and San Antonio metro areas.

What about the future?

In contemporary Texas, the vast majority of population growth occurs in metropolitan areas. With every decennial census since 1850, the state's population share in what are today's metropolitan counties has increased while the population share of the non-metropolitan counties has declined. If current trends continue, 95 percent of the state's future growth will occur in metropolitan counties.

Some have questioned the state's capacity to sustain this amount of population growth. Population concentration from this ongoing urbanization will create both opportunities and challenges.

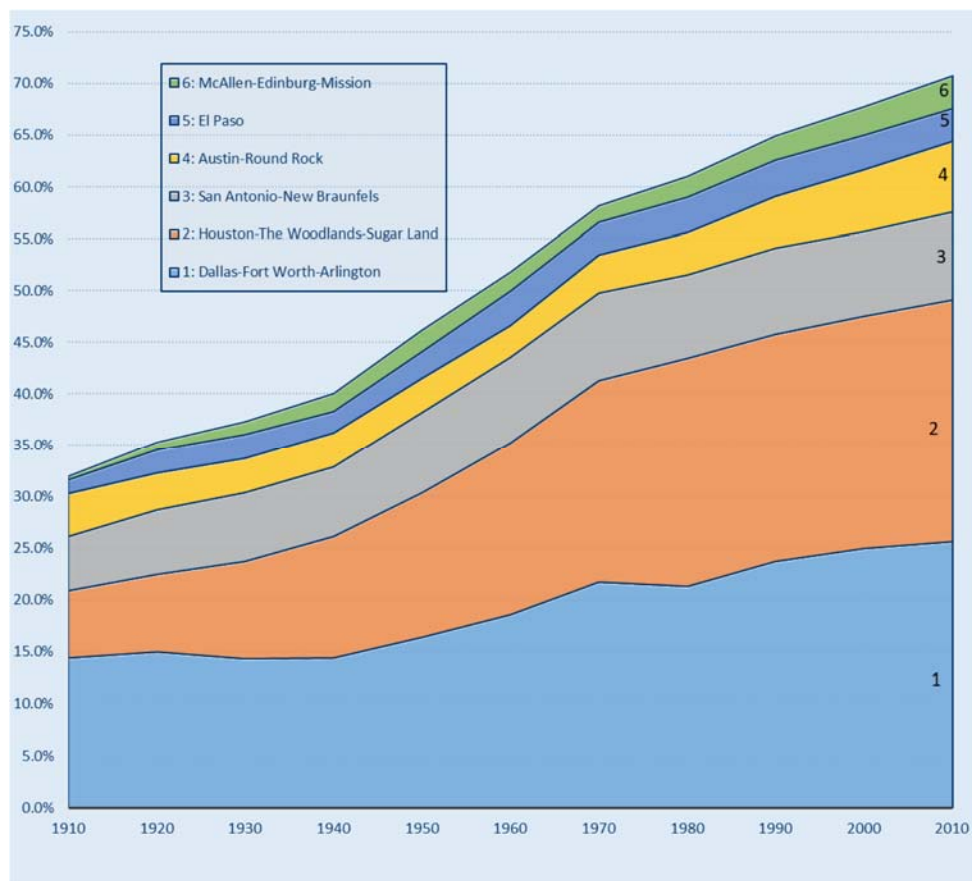
With continuing urban growth, the state's major metropolitan areas can expect better employment prospects and greater access to a wider variety of goods and services. At the same time, though, urbanization will produce greater pressures on an MSA's education, housing, and transportation infrastructures. Finding a balance will require strategies that adapt to higher population densities while minimizing negative outcomes in the urban environment.

Table 1: Historical Growth of the Six Largest 2010 MSAs in Texas, 1910-2010

Year	Austin-Round Rock	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	El Paso	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land	McAllen-Edinburg-Mission	San Antonio-New Braunfels	State of Texas
1910	162,947	560,919	52,599	252,075	13,728	202,946	3,896,542
1920	168,279	700,585	102,839	348,661	38,110	289,089	4,663,228
1930	192,123	834,810	135,325	545,541	77,004	389,445	5,824,715
1940	214,603	926,503	134,216	752,937	106,059	437,854	6,414,824
1950	256,645	1,264,699	199,266	1,083,100	160,446	603,775	7,711,194
1960	301,261	1,779,936	317,413	1,594,914	180,904	796,792	9,579,677
1970	398,938	2,428,720	361,683	2,195,146	181,535	951,876	11,196,730
1980	584,813	3,034,280	482,627	3,137,554	283,229	1,154,648	14,229,191
1990	846,227	4,018,778	594,525	3,750,963	383,545	1,407,745	16,986,335
2000	1,249,763	5,204,126	682,966	4,693,161	569,463	1,711,703	20,851,820
2010	1,716,289	6,426,214	804,123	5,920,416	774,769	2,142,508	25,145,561
<i>1910-2010 Growth</i>	<i>1,553,342</i>	<i>5,865,295</i>	<i>751,524</i>	<i>5,668,341</i>	<i>761,041</i>	<i>1,939,562</i>	<i>21,249,019</i>
<i>1910-2010 % Change</i>	<i>953.3%</i>	<i>1,045.7%</i>	<i>1,428.8%</i>	<i>2,248.7%</i>	<i>5,543.7%</i>	<i>955.7%</i>	<i>545.3%</i>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1910-2010

Figure 2: MSA Population Percent Share of Total Texas Population for the Six Largest 2010 MSAs in Texas, 1910-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1910-2010

About This Report

Urban Texas is the first in a series of reports that examine the relationships between population change and urban development in Texas. This first report presents a broad overview of urbanization trends in Texas. It highlights basic differences in the population growth patterns of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas.

Subsequent urbanization reports in the series include Components of Population Growth; Recent Metropolitan Migration Patterns in Texas; Metropolitan Immigration in Texas; Migration within Texas MSAs; and, Urban Futures in Texas.

The Texas Demographic Center produced this report. The report's authors are Steve White, Lloyd B. Potter, Helen You, Lila Valencia, Jeffrey A. Jordan, Beverly Pecotte, and Sara Robinson.

Endnotes

1] This report uses the terms urban and metropolitan interchangeably. Technically, these are similar but distinct concepts. While both are based on population size thresholds, urban areas also have density thresholds. In this report, metropolitan refers to Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). MSAs have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more people. In terms of geography, urban areas are based on Census tracts and Census blocks. For MSAs, the primary geography is the county.

This report also uses rural and non-metropolitan interchangeably. Again, these are similar but distinct. Rural refers to all territory that is not in an urban area (as defined above) and non-metropolitan refers to all counties not classified as MSAs.

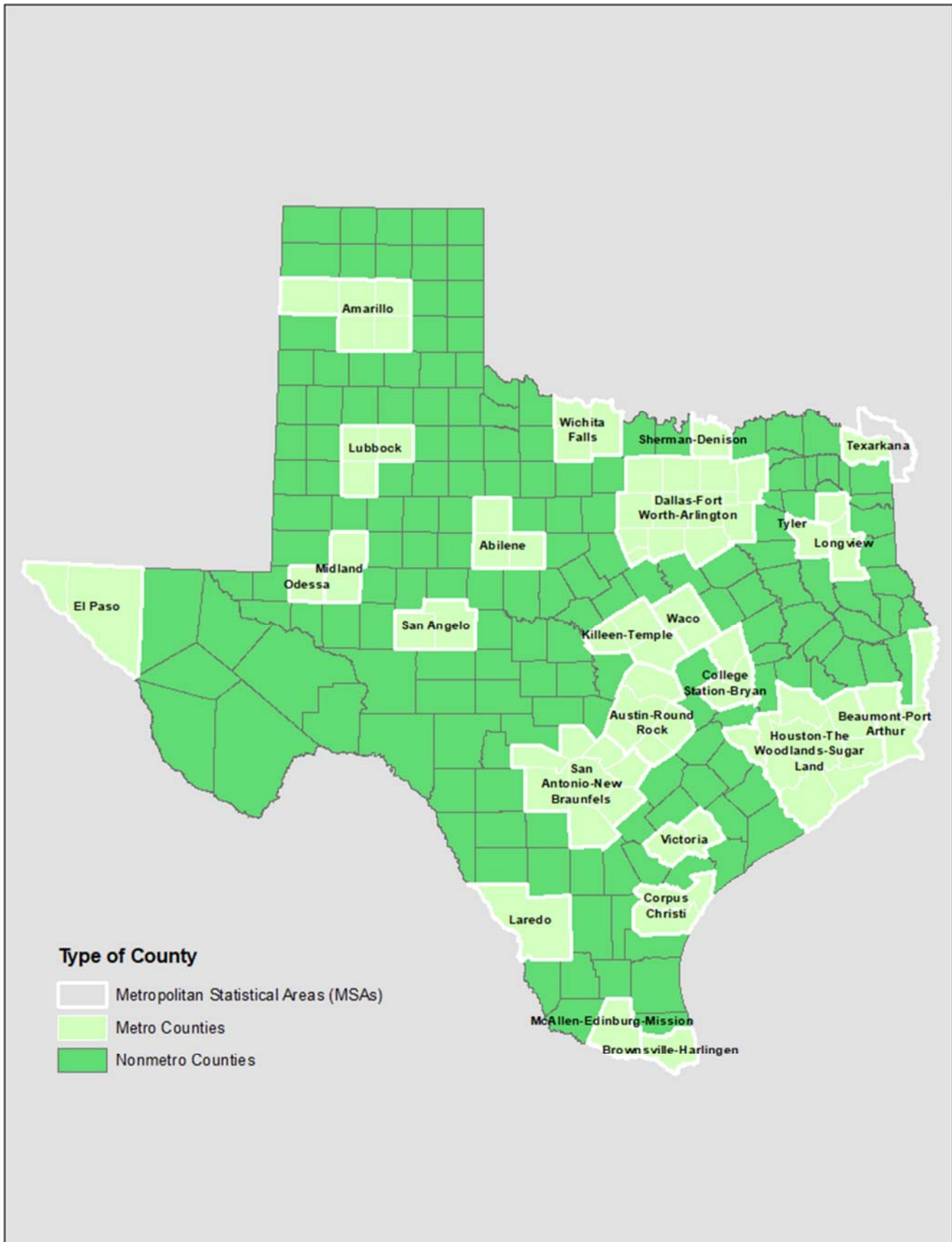
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Appendix A: Metropolitan and Non-Metropolitan Counties in Texas





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