

POPULATION: Texas Top Destination for Cross-State Moves

Texas was the No. 1 destination for domestic migrants from July 2011 to July 2012, according to Census Bureau estimates of net population movements.

Over two-thirds of people relocating to Texas were from elsewhere in the U.S. rather than outside the country, a switch from the early 2000s, when 80 percent of net in-migration was international. Total migration in the 2011–12 period accounted for roughly half of the 400,000 increase in Texas' population, which totals 26 million. (Net births accounted for the rest.)

California and New York were the top two originating states for Texas arrivals, according to the 2011 American Community Survey. Nearly 22,000 more people moved from California to Texas than went the other direction. The figure was 17,000 more from New York.

Many of these migrants relocated to growing Texas cities. Dallas was again the No. 1 destination city for domestic migrants in the U.S. Houston was second and Austin fourth, with San Antonio eighth.

The energy boom helped speed population growth in Texas and other areas, particularly across the Great Plains. On a percentage basis, Midland was the nation's fastest-growing metropolitan area (4.6 percent), while adjacent Odessa ranked fifth (3.4 percent).

—Christina Daly



NATURAL GAS: Mexican Imports from U.S. Reach Record High

Mexico imported a record amount of natural gas from the United States in 2012, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). The 1.7 billion cubic feet per day (Bcf/d) was 24 percent more than the prior year and the highest since the EIA began collecting the data on Mexico in 1973. Energy analytics firm Bentek Energy expects imports from the U.S. to reach 3 Bcf/d by year-end 2015.

Mexico's natural gas imports are expected to continue rising on the strength of growing electricity demand. Mexican natural gas consumption rose an average of 6 percent annually from 2000 to 2011, while production increased 4 percent per year, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA). Imports overall accounted for almost 30 percent of Mexico's natural gas supply in 2011.

Greater Mexican production could be supported by development of shale gas, mainly in northeast and east-central parts of the country, the EIA said. Mexico potentially has one of the world's most significant shale gas resources, but development is encumbered by environmental, financial and other obstacles.

The U.S. provided 80 percent of Mexico's gas imports last year. Natural gas from Texas—transported via pipeline—accounted for about 75 percent of those imports. Most imports likely came from the Eagle Ford formation of south central Texas, the EIA said.

—Amy Jordan



BIRTH RATES: Texas Leads U.S. in Teens Having Multiple Children

Texas, whose teenage birth rate ranked fifth in the U.S. in 2011, has the highest share of “repeat births” to mothers under age 20 of any state, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Repeat births—a second child or more—occurred in 22 percent of all teen births in Texas.

Having multiple children at such a young age generally leads to lower educational attainment and, with that, lower earnings potential, economists say.

Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma were also among eight states with rates of 20 percent or greater. The national low was 10 percent in New Hampshire. Of 66,800 repeat births nationally in 2010, 86 percent were second children, 13 percent third children and 2 percent fourth or more.

Hispanics experienced one of the highest rates nationally, 20.9 percent, followed by non-Hispanic blacks at 20.4 percent. Non-Hispanic whites had the lowest rate (14.8 percent).

Some studies have surmised that teenage pregnancy, rather than a cause of lower incomes, reflects an implicit economic assessment by many young mothers that they would face limited financial prospects even in the absence of early parenthood and that costs of childrearing are relatively low.

—Michael Weiss

