

THE ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

HOUSTON



GREATER HOUSTON
PARTNERSHIP.

Making Houston Greater.

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METRO HOUSTON RACE AND ETHNICITY

	----- '19 -----		----- '10 -----	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Total	7,066,140	100.0	5,946,800	100.0
Hispanic	2,682,311	38.0	2,099,412	35.3
White/Anglo	2,481,188	35.1	2,360,472	39.7
Black	1,190,236	16.8	998,883	16.8
Asian	550,675	7.8	384,596	6.5
Amer Indian	14,943	0.2	13,944	0.2
Hawaiian/PI	3,229	<0.1	2,916	<0.1
Other	143,558	2.1	86,577	1.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

CHANGES OVER TIME

Every fall, the U.S. Census Bureau releases its American Community Survey (ACS), the bureau’s annual snapshot of social, economic, and demographic characteristics for the nation. However, the results of the '19 ACS were overlooked when released last September. The COVID pandemic and the upcoming Presidential elections had grabbed our attention instead.

This issue of *Glance* corrects that oversight. Using data from the '10 and '19 surveys, *Glance* explores shifts in Houston’s population over time, how Houston* compares to other U.S. metros today, and discusses some of the disparities within our region.

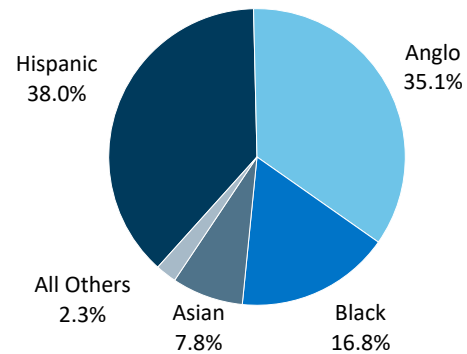
There’s one caveat. The '19 ACS reflects conditions during the final year of the longest economic expansion in U.S. history. Houston, though not booming, was doing relatively well. Data gathered during the pandemic will tell a different story, but it won’t be released until later this fall. We must wait another nine months for the ACS to show us how severely the Coronavirus impacted our population. In the meantime, what follows is the Partnership’s analysis of Houston’s social, economic and demographic characteristics in the waning days of the longest U.S. expansion on record.

Population, Race And Ethnicity

Houston added nearly 1.1 million residents from the start of the decade to the middle of '19. The bulk of the growth came from the Hispanic community (582,000 residents), followed by Blacks (191,000), Asians (166,000), and the White/Anglo population (120,000).

Houston’s Hispanic population surpassed the White/Anglo population in '17 and now represents our largest ethnic group. No race or ethnicity comprises a majority of the population, however. It’s been that way since the late '90s and is likely to remain that way for the next 30 years.

Metro Houston, Racial/Ethnic Composition



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Asians were the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the decade, their population up 43.2 percent, followed by Hispanics (27.8 percent), Blacks (19.1 percent), and Anglos (5.1 percent).

Houston has one of the most diverse and racially balanced populations of the nation’s major metros. [Among the nation’s 50 most populous metros, Houston has the fourth largest Hispanic, eighth largest Black, ninth largest Asian and twelfth largest Anglo communities.](#)

Foreign-Born

[Houston ranks fifth in foreign-born population, behind metro New York, Los Angeles, Miami and Chicago.](#) Over two-thirds (68.2 percent) of Houston’s Asian population, one-third (37.2 percent) of our Hispanic population, 10.0 percent of our Black population and 5.6 percent of the Anglo population was born outside the U.S. The share of foreign-born Houstonians has grown up from 22.3 percent in '10 to 23.4 percent in '19. The average for the nation’s 50 most populous metros is 14.5 percent.

ORIGINS OF METRO HOUSTON POPULATION

	Population		Change, '10 – '19	
	'19	'10	#	%
Native-Born	5,411,629	4,645,408	766,221	16.5
Foreign-Born	1,654,511	1,331,684	322,827	24.2
Total	7,066,140	5,977,092	1,089,048	18.2

Source: Partnership calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau data

International in-migration has been key to Houston’s growth in recent years. Early in the decade, when our economy boomed, domestic in-migration added 50,000 or more residents per year. But the fracking bust, Hurricane Harvey, and a weak job market now keeps people away. Metro Houston’s domestic in-migration has been negative for two of the last three years ('17 and '18) and negative for Harris County the last four ('16, '17, '18 and '19). International in-migration, however, has dipped only slightly.

METRO HOUSTON POPULATION (000s)

	Total Population	Com-bined	Net Change		
			Interna-tional	Dom-estic	Natural Increase
'10	5,947.2	26.7	5.6	7.1	14.0
'11	6,056.2	109.0	26.1	23.6	59.2
'12	6,183.5	127.3	30.1	39.1	57.8
'13	6,328.2	144.7	31.9	54.8	57.3
'14	6,500.2	172.0	42.9	67.1	60.9
'15	6,671.8	171.6	46.5	62.1	62.7
'16	6,806.5	134.7	44.5	27.1	63.1
'17	6,900.1	93.6	42.9	(9.5)	60.0
'18	6,976.1	76.1	32.4	(9.4)	52.9
'19	7,066.1	90.0	30.7	7.1	52.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

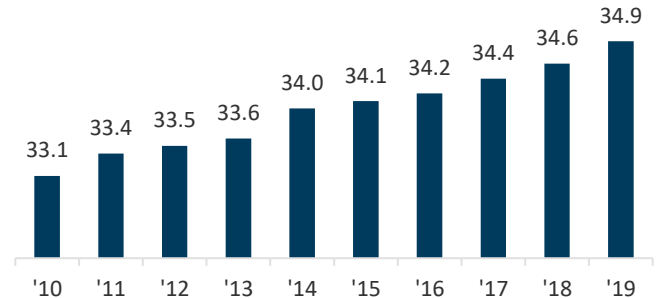
Age

Metro Houston has one of the youngest populations in the nation. The region’s median age is 34.9, compared to 38.5 for the U.S. overall. The average for the 50 most populous metros is 38.1. [Houston is second only to Salt Lake City \(33.2\) in median age.](#) (Note: the median is the point at

which half of the population falls below that age and half above it.)

During the past decade, Houston’s population has also grown older. In '10, the region’s median age was nearly two years younger than it is today.

MEDIAN AGE, METRO HOUSTON



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The increase reflects an expanding population of older residents which pulls the median age upward. “Seniors” (residents over 65) now account for 11.5 percent of Houston’s population, up from 8.6 percent in '10. “Minors” (residents under 18) are now 26.3 percent of the region’s population, down from 27.9 percent in '06. This older population tends to be Anglo, the younger population Hispanic or Black. For Hispanics, the median age is 28.1 years; for Blacks, 32.9; for Asians, 36.4; for Anglos, 41.9.

Also, one-third of Houston’s Hispanic population and one-fourth of the Black population is under 18, compared to one-fifth of the Anglo population. As a result, Houstonians entering the workforce over the next 10-20 years will represent a more diverse population than in the past.

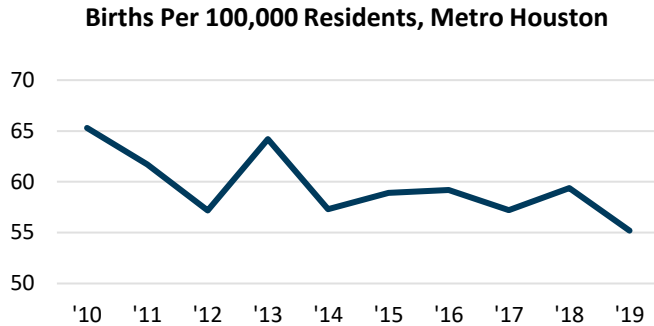
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF METRO HOUSTON POPULATION

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
0 to 17 Years				
Residents	503,681	299,939	113,990	874,433
% of Total	20.3	25.2	20.7	32.6
18 to 24 Years				
Residents	166,240	116,643	41,301	292,372
% of Total	6.7	9.8	7.5	10.9
25 to 54 Years				
Residents	987,513	514,182	262,672	1,142,664
% of Total	39.8	43.2	47.7	42.6
55 to 64 Years				
Residents	369,697	134,497	63,878	211,903
% of Total	14.9	11.3	11.6	7.9
65 Years and Older				
Residents	454,057	124,975	68,284	160,939
% of Total	18.3	10.5	12.4	6.0

Source: Partnership calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau data

Fertility

Houston’s fertility rate, *i.e.*, births per 1,000 women age 15 to 50, has slipped over the decade. In ’10, there were 65 births per 1,000 women. By ’19, that had decreased to 55. An aging population, the trend to smaller families, and women delaying childbirth until they’re established in their careers have contributed to the decline.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Over the decade, the fertility rate has slipped for Asians and Anglos, fallen dramatically among Hispanics, and risen for Blacks. Births per 1,000 have also dropped for women without a high school diploma, 59 to 35; for women receiving public assistance, from 144 to 123; and for women in their teens, from 47 to 11.

FERTILITY, METRO HOUSTON, WOMEN 15 TO 50

	Births Per 1,000 Women			
	Anglos	Blacks	Asians	Hispanics
'19	46.1	58.7	50.1	59.9
'10	51.5	50.9	59.4	87.6
% Change	-10.6	+15.3	-9.4	-31.7

Source: Partnership calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau data

[Houston ranks fourth in births per 1,000 women of childbearing age, behind Columbus, Oklahoma City, and Cleveland.](#) The metro average is 49.1. [Houston also ranks sixth in births to unmarried women, behind Columbus, Memphis, Cleveland, Las Vegas and San Antonio.](#) The metro average is 27.1 per 1,000 women.

Disabilities

More Houstonians suffer from a disability now than at the start of the decade. That’s a function of overall population growth plus a significant increase in residents over 65.

Population with a Disability, Metro Houston

	Total	Over 65
'19	656,853	253,273
'10	543,397	186,281
Difference	113,456	66,962

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Cognitive disabilities are the most common, but not only with the elderly. There are three times as many residents under 65 with a cognitive disability than those over 65.

According to the ACS, 28.3 percent of Houstonians with disabilities are employed, up from 26.4 percent in ’10. But their incomes tend to fall below the regional average and the poverty rate is substantially higher. Among the nation’s largest metros, Houston ranks 46th in percent of population with one or more disability. [New Orleans, Birmingham and Pittsburgh, in that order, rank as the top three.](#)

Percent Population by Age With a Disability, Metro Houston

Age	Hearing	Vision	Cognitive	Ambulatory	Self-care
Under 18	0.6	0.5	4.0	0.3	0.9
18 to 64	1.5	1.6	3.4	3.4	1.4
65 and over	12.1	6.2	8.3	21.1	7.2
Total Pop	2.5	1.9	4.1	5.0	2.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Language Spoken at Home

For Houston’s population five and older, English is the predominant language spoken in Anglo and Black households. In Houston’s Asian and Hispanic households, it’s likely to be a language other than English.

Roughly one-third of the region’s Asian and Hispanic populations speak English less than “very well.” That equates to about 1.1 million residents, or 16.7 percent of the population five and older. Houston ranks 5th among the nation’s 50 largest metros in percent of population that struggles with English. [The top three metros in this category are Miami, Los Angeles and San Jose.](#)

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME, METRO HOUSTON*

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
English only	92.9	90.7	20.9	21.4
Language other than English	7.1	9.3	79.1	78.6
Speak English less than "very well"	1.4	1.8	32.4	34.9

* Population five years old and over

Source: Partnership calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau data

Health Insurance Coverage

More Houstonians carry health insurance now. In ’10, only 74.7 percent of the population had insurance. In ’19, 80.3 percent did. While that suggests improvement, it’s down from ’17, when coverage peaked at 82.8 percent.

Nearly 1.4 million Houstonians lacked insurance in ’19. Given that three out of four Houstonians who have insurance have it through their work, and that 350,000 Houstonians lost their jobs during the pandemic, the uninsured population is likely much larger today.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE, METRO HOUSTON

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
With private insurance	76.8	59.1	75.7	42.9
With public coverage	24.7	31.6	17.3	27.2
No health insurance	9.6	15.9	11.4	32.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau data

[Houston ranked last among the nation's largest metros for population covered by health insurance.](#) The metro average was 91.5 percent. San Antonio and Dallas-Ft. Worth held the 48th and 49th spots.

Educational Attainment

Houstonians are better educated now than at the start of the decade, with more residents completing high school and attending college than 10 years ago. This bodes well for future economic growth. A well-educated workforce is a top criterion when corporations making decisions to relocate or expand operations.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, METRO HOUSTON*

	'19	'10	Difference
Less than high school	15.4	19.4	-4.0
High school diploma	23.5	23.9	-0.4
Some college/Assoc degree	27.8	28.3	-0.5
Bachelor's degree	21.3	18.6	2.7
Graduate degree	12.1	9.8	2.3
<i>High school or higher</i>	<i>84.6</i>	<i>80.6</i>	<i>4.0</i>
<i>Bachelor's or higher</i>	<i>33.3</i>	<i>28.4</i>	<i>4.9</i>

* Population 25 and over

Source: Partnership calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau data

There's also correlation between educational attainment, job security and income. During the early stages of the pandemic, the U.S. unemployment rate for workers without a high school diploma shot up to 20.9 percent. For those with some college, it peaked at 14.8 percent. For those with a bachelor's degree, it peaked at 8.2 percent. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics also shows that U.S. workers who completed high school on average earned 26.1 percent more in '19 than those who didn't, those with an Associate's degree earned 48.1 percent more, and those with at least a Bachelor's earned 110 percent more.

There are significant disparities among ethnic groups, however. One-third of all Hispanic adults have less than a high school education compared to less than five percent of all Anglos. Over half of Houston's Asian population and just under half of Anglos have graduated from college compared to less than 20 percent for Hispanics. The graduation rate for Blacks is generally higher than that for Hispanics but does not reach that of the Anglo and Asian populations.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, METRO HOUSTON*

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Less than high school	4.5	7.4	11.3	34.0
High school diploma	20.3	28.3	13.2	27.9
Some college/Assoc degree	30.8	35.8	19.0	21.9
Bachelor's degree	29.0	17.3	30.3	11.5
Graduate degree	15.4	11.2	26.2	4.7
<i>High school or higher</i>	<i>95.5</i>	<i>92.6</i>	<i>88.7</i>	<i>66.0</i>
<i>Bachelor's or higher</i>	<i>44.4</i>	<i>28.5</i>	<i>56.5</i>	<i>16.2</i>

* Population 25 and over

Source: Partnership calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau data

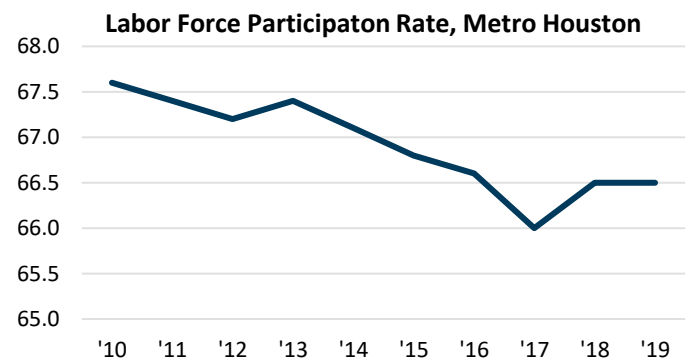
Among the nation's most populous metros, Houston ranks:

- 48th in adult population with a high school diploma or GED. [Pittsburg, Minneapolis and Buffalo are the top three.](#) The metro average is 89.9 percent.
- 32nd in adult population with a bachelor's degree or higher. [Pittsburg, Minneapolis and Buffalo hold the top three spots.](#) The metro average is 37.1 percent.

Labor Force Participation

The labor force participation rate is the share of the working age population who are either currently employed or those who are unemployed but actively seeking work. The U.S. rate peaked at 67.3 percent in early '00 and has trended downward since. In April, it had fallen to 60.2 percent. It has since marginally recovered and in December stood at 61.5 percent.

Houston's rate peaked at 69.4 percent in '08 and has also declined over time. In '19, Houston's labor force participation rate was 66.5 percent. The local rate for '20 won't be released until the next set of ACS data is released in September, but it has likely followed national trends.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Why should a lower rate be a concern? It's associated with slower economic growth and lower tax revenues. Those not in the workforce are also more likely to require publicly funded social services. They are also more likely to have lower incomes than those working or seeking employment.

LABOR FORCE, METRO HOUSTON

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Participation Rate - %	64.0	67.4	68.1	67.9
Unemployment Rate - %	3.9	7.8	2.9	4.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau data

According to the ACS, Houston’s labor force participation rate ranked 21st among the nation’s largest metros, with [Salt Lake City, Minneapolis and Austin ranking first through third](#). The average labor force participation rate for the 50 largest metros was 65.8 percent in ’19.

Travel to Work

Houstonians are spending more time in traffic. The average travel time to work was 30.7 minutes in ’19, up from 27.7 minutes in ’10. While that represents the average, the data show an increasing share of Houston commuters spending 45 minutes or more driving to work each day.

Additional insights:

- The majority of workers (80.8 percent) drive to work alone, up from 79.4 percent in ’10.
- One in nine workers carpool, down from one in eleven at the start of the decade.
- Only 2.0 percent of all work commutes involved public transit in ’19, down from 2.3 percent in ’10.
- 5.1 percent of all Houstonians worked from home in ’19, up from 3.4 percent in ’10. The percent working from home in ’20 won’t be known until the next set of ACS data is released.
- The share of Houstonians who work outside their county of residence jumped from 20.8 in ’10 to 23.2 percent in ’19.
- [Houston ranked 12th in travel time to work, with residents of New York, Washington, DC and San Francisco have the longest commutes in the country.](#) The average commute among the nation’s top 50 metros was 28.1 minutes.

Marital Status

Only a minor shift has occurred in Houstonians’ inclination to marriage. In ’10, 50.2 percent of all residents over the age of 15 were married. In ’19, 49.6 were married. However, there’s a significant difference of marriage rates within the population, with the data showing Asians more likely to be in a married relationship and Blacks less likely to be in one.

MARITAL STATUS, POPULATION 15 AND OLDER, METRO HOUSTON

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Married	56.2	33.4	64.9	47.0
Widowed	5.7	5.2	3.9	2.9
Divorced	11.6	12.3	5.0	7.4
Separated	1.2	3.3	1.2	3.1
Never married	25.3	45.8	25.0	39.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau data

Income

Local incomes have grown, but not by much. Median household income for Houston was \$69,193 in ’19, meaning half of all households earned more than that and half earned less. The median household income for Houston was \$62,661 in ’10, adjusted for inflation. That’s a 10.4 percent real increase over the decade.

ANNUAL INCOME - ’19, METRO HOUSTON

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Median household income - \$	92,978	48,923	92,731	54,810
% w/Social Security income	30.4	23.2	18.1	13.1
% w/cash public assistance	0.8	2.2	2.1	0.9
% w/Food Stamp/SNAP benefits	4.4	19.0	5.9	13.0
Median family income - \$	115,928	61,028	105,943	57,826
Per capita income - \$	53,107	26,496	44,046	21,174

Source: U.S. Census Bureau data

Houston ranked 27th among the nation’s top 50 metros in household income. [San Jose, San Francisco and Washington, DC held the top three spots](#). According to the Council for Community and Economic Research, these are also three of the most expensive U.S. cities in which to live.

Home Ownership

The region has seen a drop in homeownership over the years. In ’19, barely three out of every five (60.1 percent) of all housing units in the region were “owner-occupied.” That’s down from 62.8 percent in ’10. By comparison, the national average was 67.4 percent in Q3/20.

HOME OWNERSHIP, METRO HOUSTON

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Homeowners - %	72.0	40.1	69.6	53.6
Median Value - \$	257,200	185,400	278,400	161,100
Renters - %	28.0	59.9	30.4	46.4
Median Rent - \$	1,324	1,091	1,285	1,038

Source: U.S. Census Bureau data

Poverty

Houston has gained ground in the war on poverty. Nearly one in eight (12.9 percent) Houston families lived in poverty in ’19, down from one in six (16.5 percent) in ’10.

In '10, Houston was coming out of the Great Recession, a downturn where 120,000 Houstonians lost their jobs, so poverty rates were unusually high. In '19, Houston was on the tail end of the longest economic expansion in the nation's history, so poverty rates were unusually low back then. Over 350,000 Houstonians lost their jobs in the recent pandemic, so local poverty rates will likely be elevated when the ACS data for '20 is released.

Additional details:

- In families where the head of household works full time, the poverty rate is 4.3 percent.
- Where the head of household lacks a GED or high school diploma, the rate is 23.1 percent.
- For families with children under 18 and no spouse present, the rate jumps to 36.5 percent.
- Where the head of household lacks a GED or high school diploma and no spouse is present, the rate jumps to 51.6 percent.

POVERTY RATES, % POPULATION, METRO HOUSTON

	Anglo	Black	Asian	Hispanic
<i>All families</i>	3.7	14.9	6.3	16.5
With children under 18	5.8	20.3	6.9	21.4
With children under 5	7.2	16.2	N	20.7
<i>Female householder, no spouse present</i>	15.4	25.5	13.6	38.7
With children under 18	22.9	31.8	28.6	47.3
With children under 5	25.5	25.2	-	44.4
<i>All people</i>	5.9	17.6	8.4	18.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau data

Houston ranks fourth in percent of families living in poverty. [Memphis, New Orleans and San Antonio have higher poverty rates](#). The average for the nation's 50 most populous metros was 7.5 percent, compared to 10.2 percent for Houston.

2021 EMPLOYMENT FORECAST

The Partnership's employment forecast calls for Houston to add 35,000 to 52,000 jobs in '21, with most of the growth occurring in the second half of the year. Every sector will register job growth except energy and retail. The sectors creating the most jobs will be administrative support services, health care and social assistance, manufacturing and professional services.

If WTI reaches \$50 per barrel in the spring, real GDP growth exceeds 4.5 percent (annualized), and new COVID infections fall below 40,000 per day in Q1, gains will be at the high end of the range.

If oil remains mired in the mid-\$40s, GDP growth slips below 3.0 percent, COVID cases remain above 40,000, and elected officials issue new stay-at-home orders, growth will be at the low end of the range.

Other factors possibly lifting Houston's job growth above what's forecasted: an additional U.S. stimulus package, several local multi-billion infrastructure projects, a significant expansion of health care coverage, and OPEC pulling another two to three million barrels per day of production off the market. But all recovery scenarios assume a successful rollout of the vaccine, with enough of the population getting inoculated to reach herd immunity by summer. Until that occurs, the economy will muddle along. The full forecast document can be found at www.houston.org.

NOVEMBER EMPLOYMENT UPDATE

Metro Houston added 25,800 jobs in November. That brings total jobs recovered since April to 202,500, or 57.8 percent of all jobs lost in March and April. Houston remains 147,700 jobs short of its pre-pandemic employment level.

Historically, Houston always adds jobs in November. Over the past two decades, November job gains have ranged anywhere from 300 in '15 (the depth of the fracking bust) to 21,600 in '19 (the last November prior to the pandemic). Factor out the booms and busts of the past 20 years and November typically adds 16,000 to 20,000 jobs. That suggests November's job gains, a combination of seasonal gains and COVID-19 recovery, were better than average.

Five sectors have recouped all jobs shed in March and April and their employment now exceeds pre-pandemic levels. Those sectors are transportation/warehousing; utilities; finance/insurance; professional/scientific/technical services; and retail. Retail's gains reflect seasonal hiring as stores take on additional help for the surge in holiday shopping. Many of those workers will be released in January. The same goes for transportation and warehousing as courier companies hire additional warehouse workers and truck drivers to deliver holiday packages. Many of them will also be released soon.

Several sectors registered jobs losses in November, with the largest losses occurring in the federal government (-4,000); fabricated metal product manufacturing (-1,100); arts, entertainment and recreation (-600); and hardware/building materials stores (-500). The losses at the federal level resulted from the final round of layoffs for workers hired to handle the 2020 Census.

**Note: The nine-county Census designated metropolitan statistical area of Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX.*

KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS



Aviation — The Houston Airport System (HAS) handled 2.1 million passengers in November '20, a 55.5 percent decline from the 4.8 million passengers handled during November '19. Though a drop from last year's volume, November reflects an increase in air travel since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Building Permits — City of Houston building permits totaled \$6.7 billion for the 12 months ending September '20, down 8.1 percent from \$7.2 billion for the same period in '19.



Crude Oil — The closing spot price for West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the U.S. benchmark for light, sweet crude, averaged \$47.73 per barrel during the last week of December '20, down 22.1 percent from \$61.26 for the same period in '19.



Foreign Trade — The Houston-Galveston Customs District handled 254.5 million metric tons of goods and commodities in the first nine months of '20, a 3.4 percent increase over the comparable period in '19. These shipments were valued at \$145.1 billion, down 16.9 percent from '19.



Home Sales — Houston-area realtors sold 9,652 single-family homes in December '20, up 25.5 percent from the same month last year. Year-end sales totaled 96,151 single-family homes, up 10.5 percent compared to '19. Sales of all property types totaled 115,523 homes in '20, up 11.6 percent from '19.



Inflation — The cost of consumer goods and services as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) rose 1.4 percent nationwide from December '19 to December '20, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Core inflation (all items less the volatile food and energy categories) increased 1.6 percent since December '19.



Natural Gas — During the first week of January '21, Henry Hub natural gas spot prices averaged \$2.38 per million British thermal units (MMBtu). In December '20, monthly natural gas prices averaged \$2.04 per MMBtu, down 20.6 percent from \$2.57 in September last year.



Purchasing Managers Index — The PMI, which sunk to 34.6 in April, has inched up in recent months, topping out at 49.5 in June before contracting slightly in July amid an escalation of COVID-19

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The Key Economic Indicators table is **updated whenever any data change** — typically, six or so times per month. If you would like to receive these updates by e-mail, usually accompanied by commentary, click [here](#).

cases. The December PMI of 51.5 reflects the fifth consecutive reading above 50 and the seventh above 45. Readings above 45 correlate with expansion of the overall economy, below 45 a contraction. For Houston's goods producing sectors, however, the PMI needs to top 50 to signal expansion.



Rig Count — Baker Hughes reports 351 drilling rigs were working in the U.S. during the first week of January '21. That's down from 796 rigs the same week in January last year. The rig count has inched up steadily since bottoming at 244 in mid-August. However, it remains well below its recent peak of 1,083 in late December '18.



Sales Tax — Sales and use tax collections for the 12 most populous Houston-area cities totaled \$962.6 million in the 12 months ending November '20, down 3.4 percent from \$996.5 million for the same period in '19. Collections for the month of November totaled \$77.3 million, down 2.4 percent from \$79.2 million in November '19.

Unemployment — The unemployment rate for metro Houston was 8.9 percent in November '20, up from 7.7 percent in October. The Texas rate was 8.0 percent, up from 6.7 percent in October. The U.S. rate was 6.4 percent, down from 6.6 percent in October. The rates are not seasonally adjusted.

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HOUSTON ECONOMIC INDICATORS

A Service of the Greater Houston Partnership

1/15/2021

	Month	MONTHLY DATA			YEAR-TO-DATE TOTAL or YTD AVERAGE*			
		Most Recent	Year Earlier	% Change	Most Recent	Year Earlier	% Change	
ENERGY								
U.S. Active Rotary Rigs	Jan '21	N	360	781	-53.9	356 *	789 *	-54.9
Spot Crude Oil Price (\$/bbl, West Texas Intermediate)	Dec '20	N	47.02	59.88	-21.5	39.22 *	56.98 *	-31.2
Spot Natural Gas (\$/MMBtu, Henry Hub)	Dec '20	N	2.59	2.22	16.7	2.04 *	2.57 *	-20.6
UTILITIES AND PRODUCTION								
Houston Purchasing Managers Index	Dec '20	N	53.4	53.5	9.8	46.8 *	55.0 *	-9.7
Top 12 Houston Cities' Sales and Use Tax Collections	Nov '20	N	77,253,824	79,188,280	-2.4	855,501,884	897,399,488	-4.7
Nonresidential Electric Current Sales (Mwh, CNP Service Area)	May '20		5,026,183	5,447,859	-7.7	24,381,649	24,207,598	0.7
CONSTRUCTION								
Total Building Contracts (\$, Houston MSA)	Apr '20		1,597,259,000	1,640,963,000	-2.7	6,676,217,000	6,450,605,000	3.5
Nonresidential	Apr '20		660,591,000	580,974,000	13.7	2,981,752,000	2,580,554,000	15.5
Residential	Apr '20		936,668,000	1,059,989,000	-11.6	3,694,465,000	3,870,051,000	-4.5
Building Permits (\$, City of Houston)	Sep '20		744,274,696	720,561,429	3.3	5,145,119,243	5,745,886,197	-10.5
Nonresidential	Sep '20		509,889,787	364,736,399	39.8	3,063,942,773	3,561,092,825	-14.0
<i>New Nonresidential</i>	Sep '20		322,233,928	110,921,735	190.5	1,362,993,089	1,528,106,140	-10.8
<i>Nonresidential Additions/Alterations/Conversions</i>	Sep '20		187,655,859	253,814,664	-26.1	1,700,949,684	2,032,986,685	-16.3
Residential	Sep '20		234,384,909	355,825,030	-34.1	2,081,176,470	2,184,793,372	-4.7
<i>New Residential</i>	Sep '20		206,402,570	329,457,756	-37.4	1,814,646,406	1,867,655,293	-2.8
<i>Residential Additions/Alterations/Conversions</i>	Sep '20		27,982,339	26,367,274	6.1	266,530,064	317,138,079	-16.0
HOME SALES								
Property Sales	Dec '20	N	9,652	7,689	25.5	96,151	86,996	10.5
Median Sales Price (Single-Family Detached)	Dec '20	N	273,443	251,600	8.7	259,011 *	243,521 *	6.4
Active Listings	Dec '20	N	26,821	37,574	-28.6	35,727 *	41,549 *	-14.0
EMPLOYMENT (Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA)								
Nonfarm Payroll Employment	Oct '20		3,030,300	3,181,900	-4.8	3,028,150 *	3,146,170 *	-3.8
Goods Producing (Natural Resources/Mining/Const/Mfg)	Oct '20		498,800	553,300	-9.8	511,820 *	552,090 *	-7.3
Service Providing	Oct '20		2,531,500	2,628,600	-3.7	2,516,330 *	2,594,080 *	-3.0
Unemployment Rate (%) - Not Seasonally Adjusted								
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown MSA	Oct '20		7.7	3.6		8.6 *	3.8 *	
Texas	Oct '20		6.7	3.3		7.7 *	3.6 *	
U.S.	Oct '20		6.6	3.3		8.4 *	3.7 *	
FOREIGN TRADE (Houston-Galveston Customs District)								
Total Trade (\$000,000)	Sep '20		14,941	19,011	-21.4	145,149	174,692	-16.9
Exports (\$000,000)	Sep '20		9,687	12,527	-22.7	94,824	108,939	-13.0
Imports (\$000,000)	Sep '20		5,254	6,484	-19.0	50,325	65,753	-23.5
TRANSPORTATION								
Port of Houston Authority Shipments (Short Tons)	Feb '20		3,670,961	3,348,160	9.6	7,673,732	7,339,092	4.6
Air Passengers (Houston Airport System)	Nov '20	N	2,140,599	4,814,800	-55.5	22,301,232	49,513,361	-55.0
Domestic Passengers	Nov '20	N	1,853,778	3,859,549	-52.0	18,762,346	43,471,986	-56.8
International Passengers	Nov '20	N	286,821	955,251	-70.0	3,538,886	10,856,175	-67.4
Air Freight (metric tons)	Nov '20	N	40,334	48,134	-16.2	79,657	78,454	-13.0
CONSUMERS								
New Car and Truck Sales (Units, Houston MSA)	Nov '20		22,226	21,963	1.2	226,484	269,210	-15.9
Cars	Nov '20		6,139	6,060	1.3	55,457	75,266	-26.3
Trucks/SUVs	Nov '20		16,087	15,903	1.2	171,027	193,944	-11.8
Total Retail Sales (\$000,000, Houston MSA, NAICS Basis)	Q2/20		26,543.2	30,762.9	-13.7	54,708.6	59,528.9	-8.1
Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers ('82-'84=100)								
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria CMSA	Dec '20	N	230.4	228.8	0.7	229.0 *	228.8 *	0.1
United States	Dec '20	N	260.5	257.0	1.4	258.8 *	255.7 *	1.2
Hotel Performance (Houston MSA)								
Occupancy (%)	Q3/19		60.9	59.8		64.6 *	63.3 *	
Average Room Rate (\$)	Q3/19		100.40	110.12	-1.7	103.82 *	106.19 *	-2.2
Revenue Per Available Room (\$)	Q3/19		61.19	79.83	2.3	65.80 *	68.92 *	-4.5

N = New Since Previous Issue

R = Revised

SOURCES

- Rig Count Baker Hughes, a GE company
- Spot WTI, Spot Natural Gas U.S. Energy Information Administration
- Houston Purchasing Managers Index Institute for Supply Management - Houston, Inc.
- Electricity CenterPoint Energy
- Building Construction Contracts Dodge Data and Analytics
- City of Houston Building Permits Building Permit Department, City of Houston
- MLS Data Houston Association of Realtors
- Employment Texas Labor Market Information
- Foreign Trade U.S. Census Bureau
- Aviation Houston Airport System
- New Car and Truck Sales TexAuto Facts Report, InfoNation, Inc., Sugar Land TX
- Retail Sales State Comptroller's Office
- Consumer Price Index U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Hotels CBRE Hotels



HOUSTON MSA NONFARM PAYROLL EMPLOYMENT (000)

	Nov '20	Oct '20	Nov '19	Change from		% Change from	
				Oct '20	Nov '19	Oct '20	Nov '19
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	3,056.2	3,030.4	3,203.5	25.8	-147.3	0.9	-4.6
Total Private	2,636.7	2,616.3	2,777.1	20.4	-140.4	0.8	-5.1
Goods Producing	495.6	498.1	557.0	-2.5	-61.4	-0.5	-11.0
Service Providing	2,560.6	2,532.3	2,646.5	28.3	-85.9	1.1	-3.2
Private Service Providing	2,141.1	2,118.2	2,220.1	22.9	-79.0	1.1	-3.6
Mining and Logging	63.9	64.0	78.9	-0.1	-15.0	-0.2	-19.0
Oil & Gas Extraction	34.6	34.2	37.4	0.4	-2.8	1.2	-7.5
Support Activities for Mining	28.0	28.7	40.2	-0.7	-12.2	-2.4	-30.3
Construction	220.0	219.8	242.5	0.2	-22.5	0.1	-9.3
Manufacturing	211.7	214.3	235.6	-2.6	-23.9	-1.2	-10.1
Durable Goods Manufacturing	128.0	131.3	150.9	-3.3	-22.9	-2.5	-15.2
Nondurable Goods Manufacturing	83.7	83.0	84.7	0.7	-1.0	0.8	-1.2
Wholesale Trade	159.0	158.4	176.1	0.6	-17.1	0.4	-9.7
Retail Trade	308.0	298.7	311.5	9.3	-3.5	3.1	-1.1
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	164.9	158.9	158.2	6.0	6.7	3.8	4.2
Utilities	17.3	17.2	17.1	0.1	0.2	0.6	1.2
Air Transportation	17.9	17.9	20.3	0.0	-2.4	0.0	-11.8
Truck Transportation	28.3	28.0	28.2	0.3	0.1	1.1	0.4
Pipeline Transportation	11.7	11.9	12.1	-0.2	-0.4	-1.7	-3.3
Information	29.9	29.1	32.5	0.8	-2.6	2.7	-8.0
Telecommunications	12.9	12.3	13.9	0.6	-1.0	4.9	-7.2
Finance & Insurance	105.9	104.7	103.4	1.2	2.5	1.1	2.4
Real Estate & Rental and Leasing	59.1	59.6	64.6	-0.5	-5.5	-0.8	-8.5
Professional & Business Services	515.4	516.2	514.8	-0.8	0.6	-0.2	0.1
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	253.3	254.1	246.0	-0.8	7.3	-0.3	3.0
Legal Services	27.8	28.7	27.2	-0.9	0.6	-3.1	2.2
Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping	29.2	28.4	26.9	0.8	2.3	2.8	8.6
Architectural, Engineering & Related Services	74.0	76.0	76.0	-2.0	-2.0	-2.6	-2.6
Computer Systems Design & Related Services	34.1	34.0	35.4	0.1	-1.3	0.3	-3.7
Admin & Support/Waste Mgt & Remediation	217.6	217.6	222.1	0.0	-4.5	0.0	-2.0
Administrative & Support Services	204.0	204.2	210.5	-0.2	-6.5	-0.1	-3.1
Employment Services	70.5	68.5	79.3	2.0	-8.8	2.9	-11.1
Educational Services	64.7	64.1	64.7	0.6	0.0	0.9	0.0
Health Care & Social Assistance	339.7	335.3	347.1	4.4	-7.4	1.3	-2.1
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	24.3	24.7	37.0	-0.4	-12.7	-1.6	-34.3
Accommodation & Food Services	266.4	265.4	293.7	1.0	-27.3	0.4	-9.3
Other Services	103.8	103.1	116.5	0.7	-12.7	0.7	-10.9
Government	419.5	414.1	426.4	5.4	-6.9	1.3	-1.6
Federal Government	31.2	32.4	30.9	-1.2	0.3	-3.7	1.0
State Government	84.8	84.7	88.6	0.1	-3.8	0.1	-4.3
State Government Educational Services	47.2	46.9	51.3	0.3	-4.1	0.6	-8.0
Local Government	303.5	297.0	306.9	6.5	-3.4	2.2	-1.1
Local Government Educational Services	208.0	203.2	214.7	4.8	-6.7	2.4	-3.1

SOURCE: Texas Workforce Commission