

THE ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

HOUSTON



GREATER HOUSTON
PARTNERSHIP

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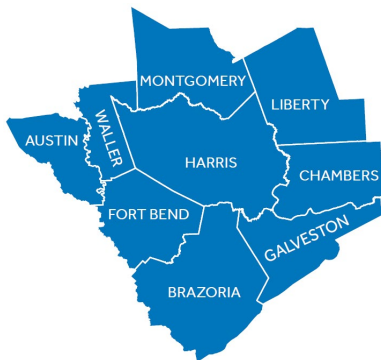
HOUSTON FACTS

On August 5th, the Greater Houston Partnership released its Houston Facts '26 report. The full report can be found at the Partnership's [website](#). Highlights from the report are found below:

Geography

Metro Houston (known formally as the Houston-Pasadena-The Woodlands Metropolitan Statistical Area by the U.S. Census Bureau) consists of the following 10 counties:

HOUSTON-PASADENA-THE WOODLANDS METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA



The region spans 8,839 square miles of land, making it larger than the U.S. states like Massachusetts, New Jersey and Hawaii. It includes 128 separate cities and 37 census-designated places.

Demographics

The region's population is even more impressive than its land mass. As of July '25, it is home to approximately 7.9 million people, making it the fifth-largest U.S. metro behind New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Dallas/Fort Worth. If it were an independent state, it would be the 14th largest in the country, with a population slightly

smaller than Washington but larger than Arizona, Tennessee, or Massachusetts.

POPULATION OF METRO HOUSTON COMPARED TO TOP U.S. STATES

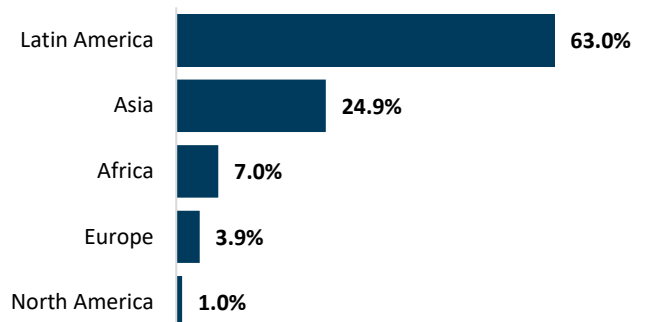
State	Million Res.	State	Million Res.
1 California	39.4	11 New Jersey	9.5
2 Texas	31.7	12 Virginia	8.9
3 Florida	23.5	13 Washington	8.0
4 New York	20.0	-- Metro Houston	7.9
5 Pennsylvania	13.1	14 Arizona	7.6
6 Illinois	12.7	15 Tennessee	7.3
7 Ohio	11.9	16 Massachusetts	7.2
8 Georgia	11.3	17 Indiana	7.0
9 North Carolina	11.2	18 Missouri	6.3
10 Michigan	10.1	19 Maryland	6.3

Source: Partnership analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data

The population has been growing rapidly, adding 754,400 new residents since the start of the decade (April '20 to July '25). International migration accounts for the majority (51.2 percent) of these new residents, while domestic migration and natural population change (i.e. the number of babies born minus the number of people who die) account for 18.4 and 30.4 percent, respectively.

Nearly 2.0 million Houstonians (or roughly one-in-four) were born outside the U.S. Since Houston is so close to Latin America, it should be no surprise that the majority (63.0 percent) were born in that region. But significant swaths were also born in Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America.

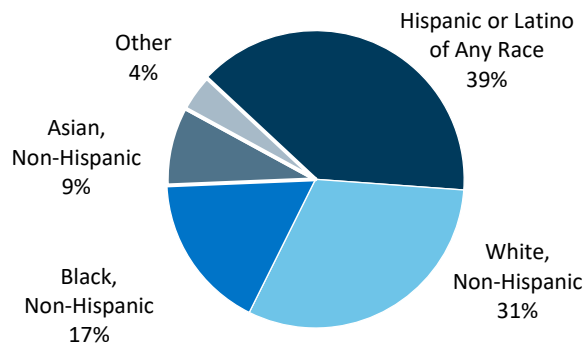
TOP REGIONS OF BIRTH FOR FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS



Source: Partnership analysis of U.S. Census Bureau ACS '24 data

Metro Houston is one of the most ethnically diverse places in the United States, with no single ethnic group representing a majority. The largest ethnic groups are Hispanics or Latinos of any race, White non-Hispanic, Black non-Hispanic, and Asian non-Hispanic.

METRO HOUSTON ETHNIC COMPOSITION



Source: Partnership analysis of U.S. Census Bureau ACS '24 data

Economy

Houston’s economy remains one of the largest and most diverse in the nation. The value of all goods and services produced in metro Houston was valued at \$758 billion in '24. That is more than the value produced by most countries across the globe. In fact, if the region were an independent country, it would have the 22nd most valuable economy in the world, behind Switzerland and Poland, but ahead of countries like Belgium, Argentina, Ireland, and Sweden.

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT OF METRO HOUSTON COMPARED TO TOP NATIONS

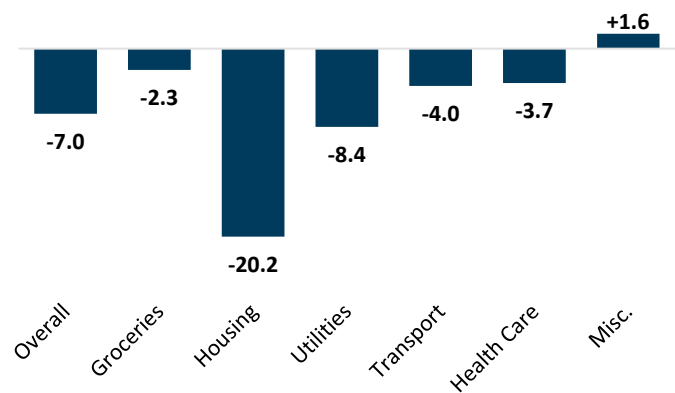
Country	GDP \$ Billion	Country	GDP \$ Billion
1 United States	28,751	14 Australia	1,757
2 China	18,744	15 Spain	1,726
3 Germany	4,686	16 Indonesia	1,396
4 Japan	4,028	17 Turkey	1,359
5 India	3,910	18 Saudi Arabia	1,240
6 U.K.	3,686	19 Netherlands	1,215
7 France	3,160	20 Switzerland	937
8 Italy	2,381	21 Poland	918
9 Canada	2,244	-- Metro Houston	758
10 Brazil	2,186	22 Belgium	671
11 Russia	2,174	23 Argentina	638
12 South Korea	2,875	24 Ireland	609
13 Mexico	2,856	25 Sweden	604

Source: Partnership analysis of World Bank and BEA '24 data

Per-capita personal income in the region was \$76,916 in '24, approximately \$3,712 higher than the national average. This suggests that the average Houstonian earns more than the average American - but that only tells part

of the story. Among the 20 most populous U.S. metros, Houston is the 3rd most affordable according to the '25 C2ER Cost of Living Index, with an overall cost of living that is 7.0 percent below the U.S. urban average. The region’s housing, utility, and transportation costs are also significantly lower than those found elsewhere in the country. This means that not only do Houstonians earn more, but their dollars go further.

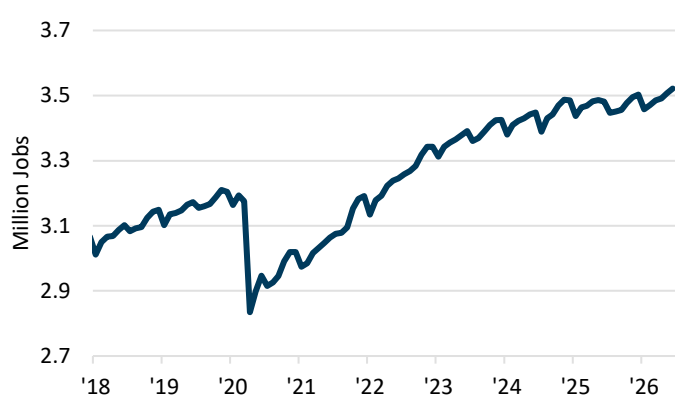
METRO HOUSTON COSTS OF LIVING, PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM U.S. URBAN AVERAGE



Source: Partnership analysis of C2ER Cost of Living Index '25 data

Since the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in April '20, the region has added 686,900 jobs. Employment growth has been supported by national economic momentum, strong global trade ties, rising corporate investment, and sustained population growth. As of June '26, total employment was just over 3.5 million jobs while the unemployment rate stood at 5.2 percent, within typical historical norms.

METRO HOUSTON NONFARM EMPLOYMENT



Source: Texas Workforce Commission

A total of 175,617 business establishments operate in the region. The largest sectors in terms of the number of establishments are professional, scientific, and technical services; health care and social assistance; retail trade; accommodations and food services; and construction.

Together, these five sectors represent the majority of business establishments in the region.

Twenty-seven companies on the Fortune 500 are headquartered in the Houston area. This makes Houston the second-highest ranking metro for Fortune 500 companies behind New York City (with 62) and tied with Chicago (also with 27). Fortune also designated Houston as the fourth best place to work in the country. The region is home to 70 companies that earned \$1 billion or more in revenue in '24, including 14 companies earning \$25 billion or more.

Key Industries

Houston Facts '26 goes into depth on key industries where Houston excels. These are sectors where Houston is on the cutting edge, innovating new methods and technologies that make its economy world-class. A summary of employment in these sectors is below:

METRO HOUSTON
EMPLOYMENT IN SELECT KEY INDUSTRIES

Industry	Jobs
Health Care & Social Assistance	443,370
Retail	319,021
Professional & Technical Services	260,691
Construction	257,620
Manufacturing	236,656
Select Energy & Related	221,947
Wholesale	164,418
Aerospace & Aviation	43,128
Life Science & Related	29,773

Source: Partnership analysis of Texas Workforce Commission data

Health care and social assistance employ 443,370 Houstonians, making it the region’s largest sector. It is anchored by the Texas Medical Center, the largest medical complex in the world, and supported by major medical hubs in surrounding areas such as Sugar Land and The Woodlands. Collectively, these centers offer a wide range of advanced care in fields such as oncology, cardiology, neurology, and organ transplantation.

Retail employs 319,021 Houstonians across 19,227 establishments, including 3,044 food and beverage stores, 2,753 gas stations, 2,245 motor vehicle and parts dealers, 1,531 clothing and accessory shops, and 1,349 general retailers. Retail sales in the region increased by 3.3 percent from \$ 163.1 billion in '24 to \$168.5 billion in '25.

Professional and technical services employ 260,691 Houstonians, including 76,346 in engineering and architecture services, 48,743 in management and technical consulting, and 36,474 in computer system

design services. Houston has a high concentration of engineers, which is 41.2 percent greater than the U.S. per capita average, with over 5,000 people each working as civil engineers, industrial engineers, mechanical engineers, and electrical engineers. It is also home to 109 Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)-insured banking institutions that handled \$348.4 billion in local deposits as of June '25.

Construction employs 257,620 Houstonians, with 123,155 employed in specialty trades (plumbing, electrical, site preparation, etc.), 62,451 employed in general building construction, and 72,014 employed in heavy and civil engineering construction projects. The value of construction permits in the City of Houston reached \$9.0 billion in '25.

Manufacturing employs 236,656 Houstonians with 24.5 percent in primary and fabricated metal products; 21.0 percent in chemicals, petroleum, and coal products; 16.4 percent in machinery; and 10.0 percent in computers, electronics, and electrical equipment; among others. This sector accounted for \$126.9 billion (or 16.7 percent) of the region’s gross domestic product in '24. Houston leads the nation in base petrochemical production, accounting for 41.1 percent of the nation’s overall capacity.

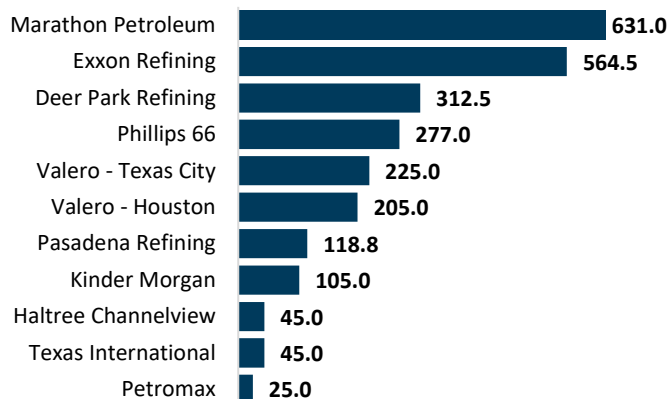
BASE PETROCHEMICAL PRODUCTION CAPACITY
IN METRO HOUSTON

Chemical	Select Major Uses	Metric Tons/Year	% of U.S. Total
Ethylene	Anesthetic, Antifreeze	18.6M	41.7
Propylene	Food Packaging, Fibers, Adhesives	14.0M	40.2
Xylenes	Paint Thinner, Lubricants	3.5M	38.4
Benzene	Detergents, Plastics, Pesticides	2.5M	40.5
Toluene	Paints, Disinfectants, Nail Products	2.1M	39.9
Butadiene	Tires, Carpet, Synthetic Turf	1.3M	60.8
TOTAL		42.1M	41.1

Source: Analysis of CAS Registry data via IHS Markit, July '26

Selected energy and related industries are estimated to directly employ 221,947 people in the region. Houston is a global center for energy, serving as a hub for exploration and production, transmission, marketing, service, trading, supply, and offshore drilling and technology. Houston-area companies own the majority (55 percent) of U.S. gas pipeline mileage and almost half (48 percent) of U.S. oil pipeline milage. The region is home to 11 petroleum refineries with a combined refining capacity of 2.6 million barrels a day.

METRO HOUSTON PETROLEUM REFINERY CAPACITY, THOUSAND BARRELS PER DAY



Source: U.S. Energy Administration, Refinery Capacity Report Jan '26

In addition to its established strength in oil and natural gas, Houston plays a growing role in the energy transition, with increasing activity in carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS), battery storage, wind, solar, methane management and other low carbon technologies.

Wholesale trade employs 164,418 Houstonians, with the majority (62.5 percent) being durable goods merchants and the rest (37.5 percent) being non-durable good merchants. Average annual wages in the sector are \$114,816.

Aerospace and aviation employ an estimated 43,128 people in metro Houston. Houston has a foundational history of over a century in the aerospace and aviation industry and is where the future of aerospace and aviation is being built. The Houston region is home to NASA's Johnson Space Center, the FAA-licensed Houston Spaceport, a growing commercial space sector, and an aviation ecosystem, supported by talent, infrastructure, and industry partnerships. Adjacent to JSC, Exploration Park is being developed as a collaborative campus where industry, academia, and government accelerate innovation.

Biotech, life science, and related industries (including medical manufacturing) are estimated to employ 29,773 Houstonians. Universities across the metro area, which include several prestigious medical schools in the Texas Medical Center, received \$1.1 billion in National Institute of Health (NIH) funding in '25.

Government & Education

At the federal level, the region is represented by 11 members of the U.S. House and two Texas senators. At the local level, the Harris County government general fund budget for '26 is \$2.77 billion, while the City of Houston's general fund budget is \$3.17 billion.

Metro Houston is home to 104 traditional public school districts and charters. In '25, the percentage of high school graduates meeting state college, career, or military readiness (CCMR) standards ranged from 69 percent to 93 percent across the counties in the region.

Colleges and universities in the Houston area enrolled approximately 339,336 students across 25 academic institutions in fall '25, with more than half (214,442) enrolled in community colleges or other two-year institutions. After declining during the pandemic, enrollment numbers finally surpassed prepandemic levels in '25.

Infrastructure

The region is serviced by several utilities, including 283 competitive local exchange phone carriers, a municipal water system with access to 1.2 billion gallons of water per day, and an electric utility, CenterPoint Energy, that delivers power to 2.8 million customers across a 5,000 square mile area. CenterPoint anticipates electricity demand will increase by nearly 50 percent between '24 and '29.

There are almost 12,000 lane miles of freeways and expressways operating in the regions, serving vehicles that travel 107.4 million miles per day. The Texas Department of Transportation continues to invest in the region's roads and spent \$2.3 billion on construction and maintenance projects last year.

Metro Houston is home to four seaports carrying 268.9 million metric tons of international cargo in '25. Port Houston leads the nation in international cargo by weight, while the other three ports rank in the top 40.

RANKING AMONG U.S. SEAPORTS FOR INTERNATIONAL CARGO HANDLED IN '25

Rank	Port	Million Metric Tons	% of Region Total
1	Port Houston	213.1	79.3
13	Port Freeport	35.7	13.3
29	Port of Texas City	10.5	3.9
33	Port of Galveston	9.5	3.5
--	TOTAL	268.9	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Trade Division Data

The Houston Airport System received high honors at the Skytrax 2026 World Airport Awards ceremony, with William P. Hobby and George Bush Intercontinental being ranked the first and fourth-best U.S. airports. The system carried 62.1 million passengers last year alone.

For more interesting facts about Houston, please read the full report at the Partnership's [website](#).

HOUSTON MSA NONFARM PAYROLL EMPLOYMENT

	June '26	May '26	June '25	Change From		% Change From	
				May '26	June '25	May '26	June '25
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	3,521,500	3,507,100	3,481,800	14,400	39,700	0.4	1.1
Total Private	3,056,800	3,035,800	3,018,300	21,000	38,500	0.7	1.3
Goods Producing	584,500	580,500	571,400	4,000	13,100	0.7	2.3
Service Providing	2,937,000	2,926,600	2,910,400	10,400	26,600	0.4	0.9
Private Service Providing	2,472,300	2,455,300	2,446,900	17,000	25,400	0.7	1.0
Mining & Logging	73,500	73,700	74,800	-200	-1,300	-0.3	-1.7
Oil & Gas Extraction	35,500	35,400	36,600	100	-1,100	0.3	-3.0
Support Activities for Mining	36,500	36,600	36,700	-100	-200	-0.3	-0.5
Construction	269,500	266,900	254,500	2,600	15,000	1.0	5.9
Manufacturing	241,500	239,900	242,100	1,600	-600	0.7	-0.2
Durable Goods Manufacturing	153,900	153,000	151,100	900	2,800	0.6	1.9
Nondurable Goods Manufacturing	87,600	86,900	91,000	700	-3,400	0.8	-3.7
Wholesale Trade	178,400	177,400	178,600	1,000	-200	0.6	-0.1
Retail Trade	321,100	319,500	318,900	1,600	2,200	0.5	0.7
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	200,300	199,500	198,200	800	2,100	0.4	1.1
Utilities	25,400	25,300	24,300	100	1,100	0.4	4.5
Air Transportation	21,900	21,900	21,300	0	600	0.0	2.8
Truck Transportation	31,100	30,900	30,400	200	700	0.6	2.3
Pipeline Transportation	15,800	15,900	15,400	-100	400	-0.6	2.6
Information	27,400	27,300	28,900	100	-1,500	0.4	-5.2
Telecommunications	9,800	9,800	10,200	0	-400	0.0	-3.9
Finance & Insurance	114,000	113,200	115,900	800	-1,900	0.7	-1.6
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	62,600	62,500	63,200	100	-600	0.2	-0.9
Professional & Business Services	580,100	572,300	567,600	7,800	12,500	1.4	2.2
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	286,200	284,200	283,100	2,000	3,100	0.7	1.1
Legal Services	35,300	34,600	35,100	700	200	2.0	0.6
Accounting, Tax Preparation & Bookkeeping	26,300	26,200	27,500	100	-1,200	0.4	-4.4
Architectural, Engineering & Related Services	80,000	79,100	79,600	900	400	1.1	0.5
Computer Systems Design & Related Services	41,500	41,500	41,700	0	-200	0.0	-0.5
Admin & Support, Waste Mgt & Remediation	250,700	245,300	240,700	5,400	10,000	2.2	4.2
Administrative & Support Services	236,100	230,900	227,000	5,200	9,100	2.3	4.0
Employment Services	88,100	83,000	79,400	5,100	8,700	6.1	11.0
Private Educational Services	70,500	72,700	71,300	-2,200	-800	-3.0	-1.1
Health Care & Social Assistance	401,100	402,900	394,300	-1,800	6,800	-0.4	1.7
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	46,000	43,800	46,500	2,200	-500	5.0	-1.1
Accommodation & Food Services	334,900	330,500	330,500	4,400	4,400	1.3	1.3
Other Services	135,900	133,700	133,000	2,200	2,900	1.6	2.2
Government	464,700	471,300	463,500	-6,600	1,200	-1.4	0.3
Federal Government	35,100	35,100	37,100	0	-2,000	0.0	-5.4
State Government	104,000	104,500	101,200	-500	2,800	-0.5	2.8
State Government Educational Services	56,200	56,800	54,600	-600	1,600	-1.1	2.9
Local Government	325,600	331,700	325,200	-6,100	400	-1.8	0.1
Local Government Educational Services	221,400	227,900	221,200	-6,500	200	-2.9	0.1

Source: Texas Workforce Commission