



# Travis County Snapshot

from the American Community Survey 2014

2015



### **Acknowledgements**

This report was researched and written by the staff at the Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service, Research & Planning Division. Lead writer was Tara Carmean, with the support of other division staff, Lawrence Lyman (Division Director), and Sherri E. Fleming (County Executive for Travis County HHS/VS).

### **Questions or Comments?**

For questions or for more information, please contact the Research & Planning Division at [HHS\\_R&P@traviscountytexas.gov](mailto:HHS_R&P@traviscountytexas.gov).



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# About the Chartbook

## About the American Community Survey

The American Community Survey (ACS) is one of many surveys conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. It includes questions about social, housing, and economic characteristics. While many available data sources address these subjects, the Research & Planning Division has increasingly relied on the ACS as a primary resource to describe current demographics and local conditions. Compared to the more widely-known Decennial Census, which is conducted every 10 years, the ACS is conducted on an ongoing basis and releases data annually. Thus it can provide more up-to-date information, particularly for communities undergoing rapid demographic change. (For more on the ACS, please see the Methodology section at the end of this chartbook.)

## About the Chartbook

All of the information contained herein is publicly available via the U.S. Census Bureau's website. However, due to time constraints or technical limitations, it may sometimes be difficult for users to access, analyze, and interpret needed data. By selecting key variables from among the many available, analyzing the data for important relationships and trends, and presenting it in the chartbook in a clear, accessible visual format, our goal is to provide current information describing the Travis County community.

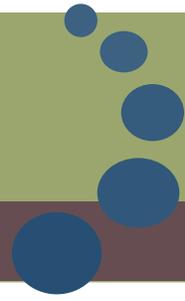
Because the data presented in the chartbook is representative of a sample and not the entire population, some of the smaller estimates are unreliable due to sampling error,<sup>2</sup> which generally increases as sample sizes decrease. Comparisons of indicators between geographies, subpopulations, or across time periods may appear significant, but may not be. Therefore, we perform testing of estimates that appear unreliable for reliability and any comparisons that are explicitly made between geographies, subpopulations, or across time periods for statistical significance at a 90% level of confidence. (For more information on statistical testing, see the Methodology section at the end of this chartbook.)

We hope this information is helpful in efforts to improve programs, plan community investments, and shape local policies. We encourage users to borrow and cite this material.

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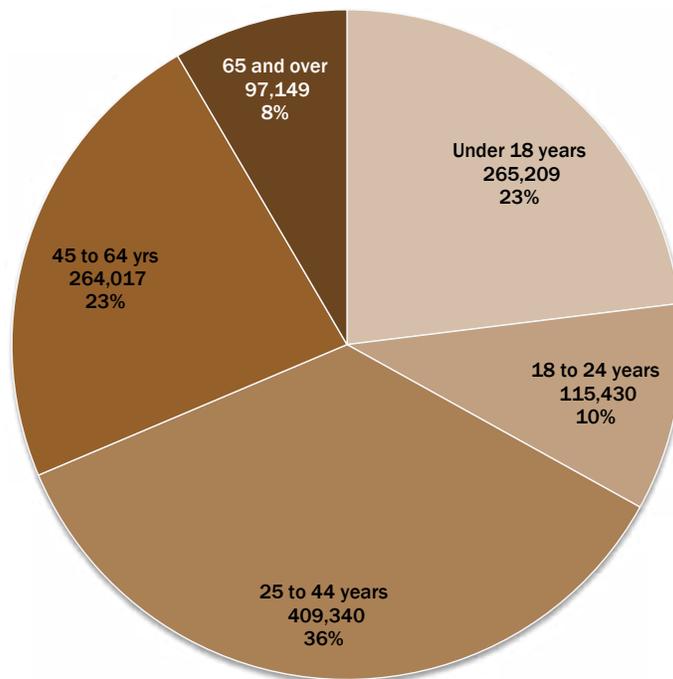
<sup>2</sup> Sampling error is the difference between the characteristics of a sample and the population from which it was drawn.

# Social Characteristics



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**Population by Age**  
Total population, Travis County, 2014  
(n = 1,151,145)



Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015  
Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B01001

**Age Distribution:** Age distribution in Travis County continues to be characterized by a large working age population (18-64). Working age adults comprise about 69% of the county's population. In comparison, the 18-64 year old age group comprises 62% of the Texas population and of the United States as a whole.

**Median Age:** The median age in Travis County is 33.4. This reflects a slightly younger population than that of Texas (34.3) and the U.S. population (37.7).

**Trends to Watch:** Since 2010, the Travis County total population has grown by 12%, compared to 7% statewide and 3% nationally.

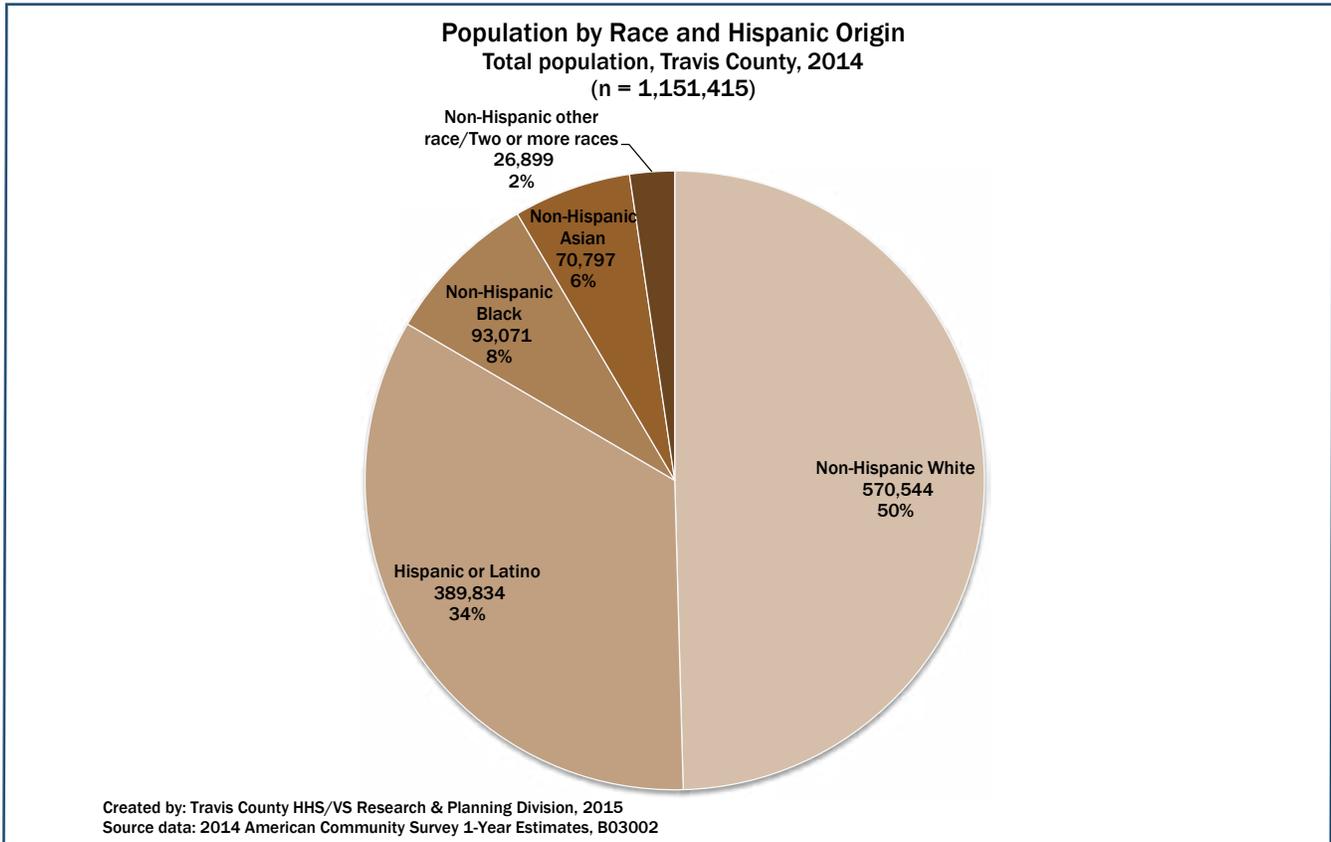
**Growth in Population by Age, Travis County, 2010-2014**

	2010	2014	Growth	Percent Change
Under 18	246,559	265,209	18,650	8%
18 to 24	130,489	115,430	-15,059	-12%
25 to 44	349,296	409,340	60,044	17%
45 to 64	229,000	264,017	35,017	15%
65 and over	75,462	97,149	21,687	29%
Total	1,030,806	1,151,145	120,339	12%

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015

Source data: 2010 & 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B01001

# Race and Hispanic Origin



**Race and Hispanic Origin:** Half of the Travis County population identifies as Non-Hispanic White (50%), followed by Hispanic or Latino (34%), Non-Hispanic Black (8%), and Non-Hispanic Asian (6%).

From 2010 to 2014, the proportion of Travis County's population by the above categories remained the same. From 2010 to 2014 the rate of growth for Non-Hispanic Blacks (10%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (10%) was slower than Hispanic or Latinos (12%), Non-Hispanic Asians (17%) and Non-Hispanic other race/Two or more races (35%).

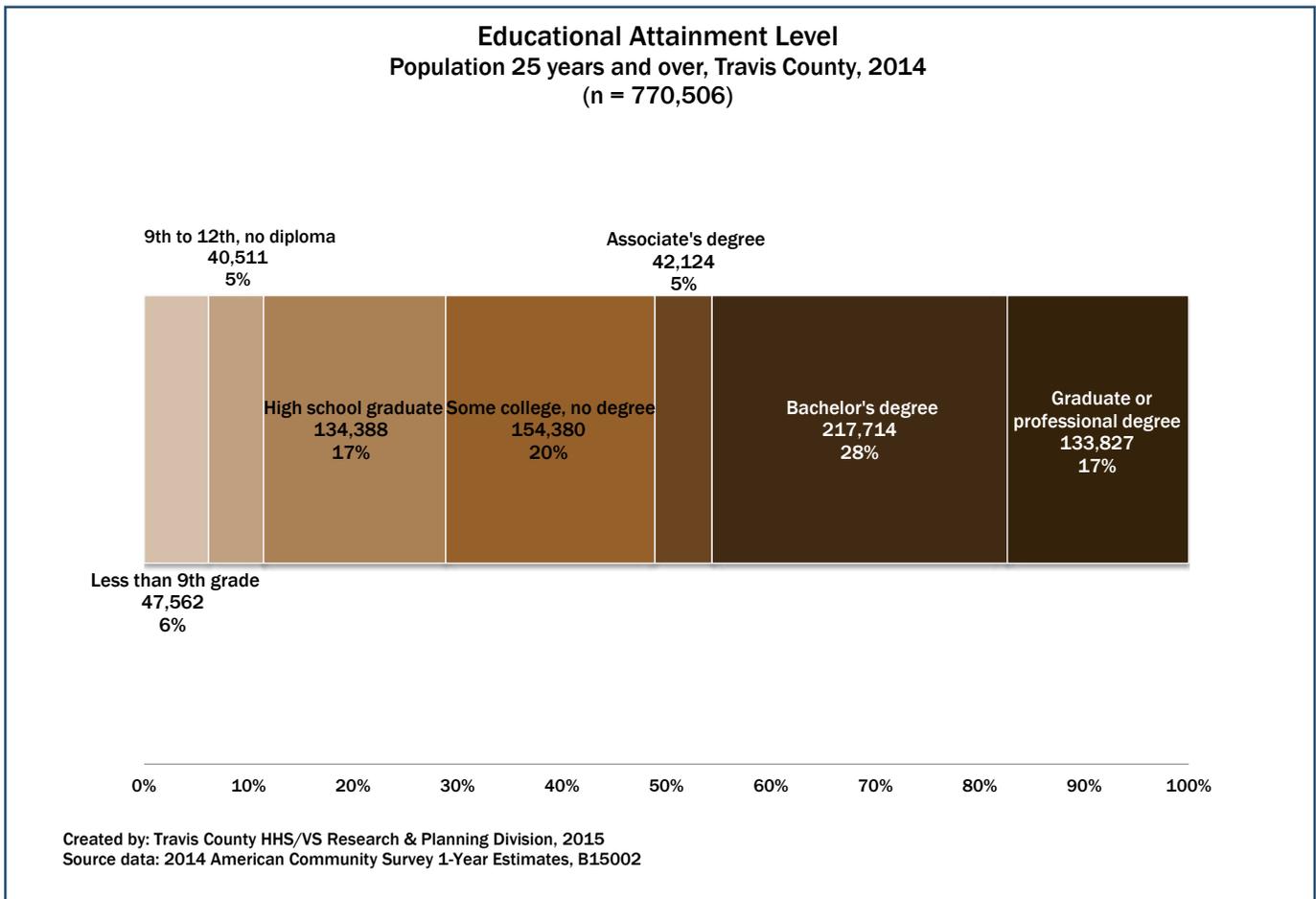
**Geographic comparison:** The table below provides a comparison of the racial and ethnic compositions of Travis County, Texas, and the U.S.

Population by Race and Hispanic Origin			
Travis County, Texas & U.S., 2014			
	Travis County	Texas	U.S.
Non-Hispanic White	50%	43%	62%
Hispanic or Latino	34%	39%	17%
Non-Hispanic Black	8%	12%	12%
Non-Hispanic Asian	6%	4%	5%
Non-Hispanic Other Race/Two or More Races	2%	2%	3%

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS, Research & Planning Division, 2015

Source: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B03002

# Educational Attainment



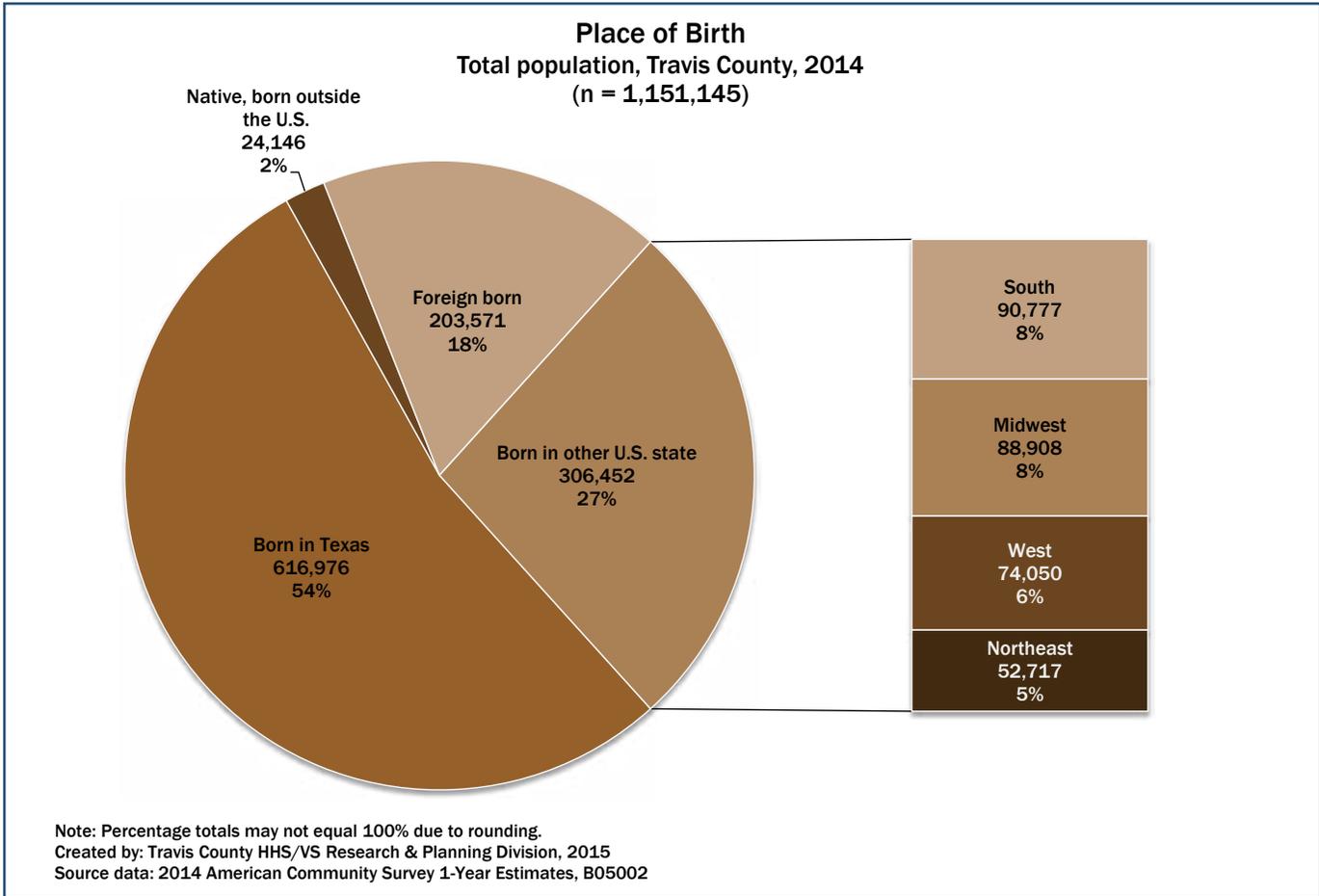
**Educational Attainment Level:** Travis County continues to have a highly educated population. In comparison to state and national figures, proportionately more Travis County residents have a college degree, and fewer lack a high school diploma.

- 46% of Travis County residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 28% of Texans and 30% of Americans.
- 11% of Travis County residents report having less than a high school diploma or equivalency, compared with 18% of Texans and 13% of Americans.

**College or Graduate School Enrollment:**<sup>2</sup> About 11% of Travis County's population is enrolled in college or graduate school. This compares with about 9% of the Texas population and 9% of the U.S. population.

<sup>2</sup> These statistics include individuals enrolled in school which advances a person toward a college, university or professional school (law or medicine) degree. They do not include people enrolled in vocational, technical, or business school (such as post secondary, trade, hospital school or on the job training). (American Community Survey and Puerto Rico Community Survey, 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 118.)

# Place of Birth



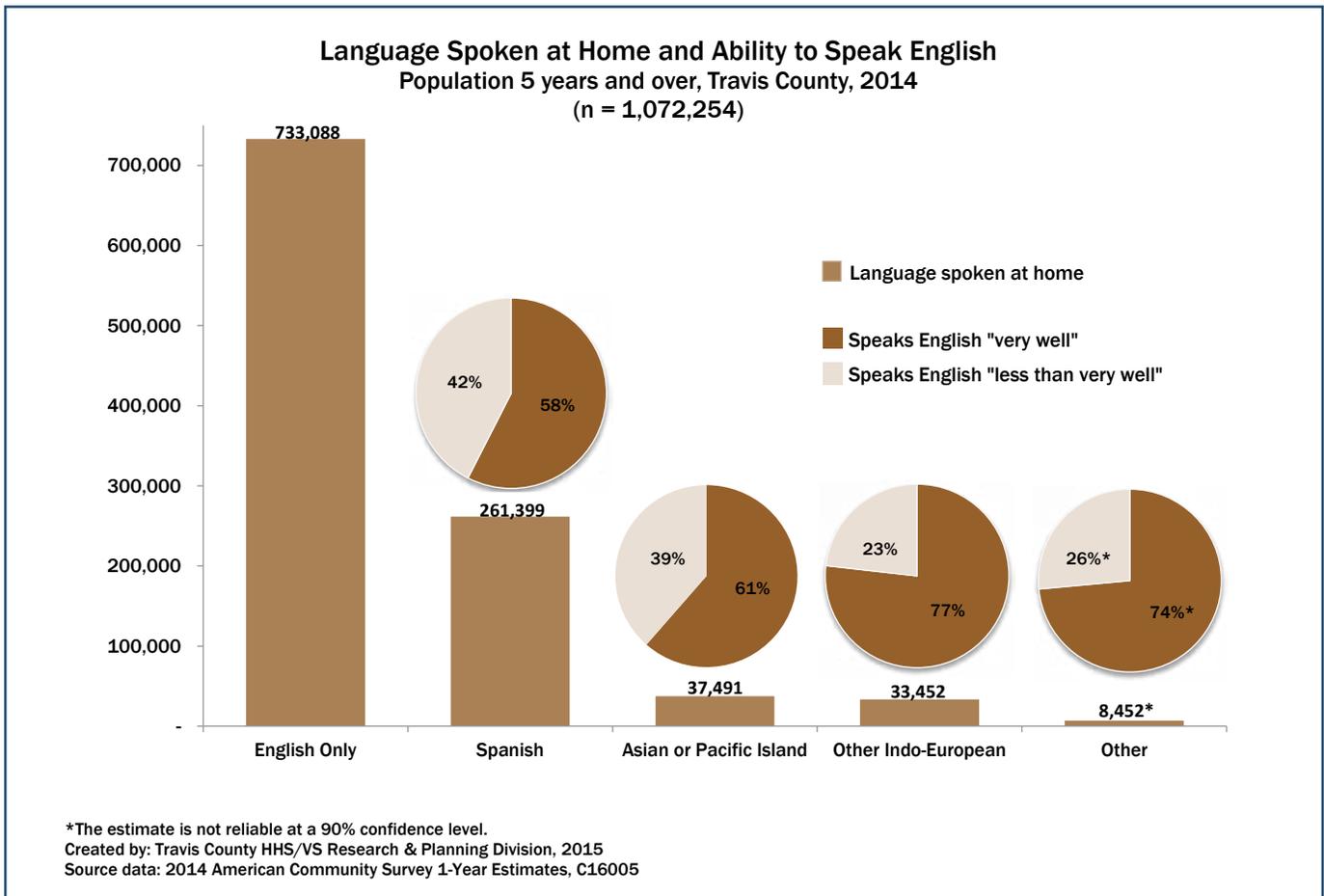
**Place of Birth for the Travis County Population:** About half of Travis County residents (54%) were born in Texas, slightly over one-quarter (27%) were born in another state, and about 18% of residents are foreign born.

**Geographic Comparison:** In comparison to state and national averages, Travis County residents are:

- *Less likely to have been born in their current state of residence.* 54% of Travis County residents were born in their state of residence compared with 60% of Texans and 59% of Americans.
- *More likely to be foreign born.* 18% of Travis County residents are foreign born compared with 17% of Texans and 13% of Americans. However, Travis County has a proportionately smaller foreign born population than both Harris and Dallas Counties, where immigrants comprise 26% and 24% of the population, respectively.<sup>3</sup>

**Trends to Watch:** Since 2010, the number of Travis County residents who were born in another state grew by 11%. During the same time, the number of residents who were born in Texas grew by 10%, and the number of residents who were foreign born grew by 14%.

<sup>3</sup> A statistical test for sampling variability was not appropriate for geographic comparison due to use of a controlled estimate. For more information on controlled estimates, please refer to [http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech\\_docs/accuracy/ACS\\_Accuracy\\_of\\_Data\\_2014.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2014.pdf).



**Languages Spoken at Home:** Almost one-third of the Travis County population (32% or 339,166 residents) speaks a language other than English at home. In comparison, 21% of U.S. residents and 36% of Texans speak a language other than English at home.

**Ability to Speak English:** 60% of Travis County residents who speak a language other than English at home also speak the English language “very well,” and 40% speak English “less than very well.”

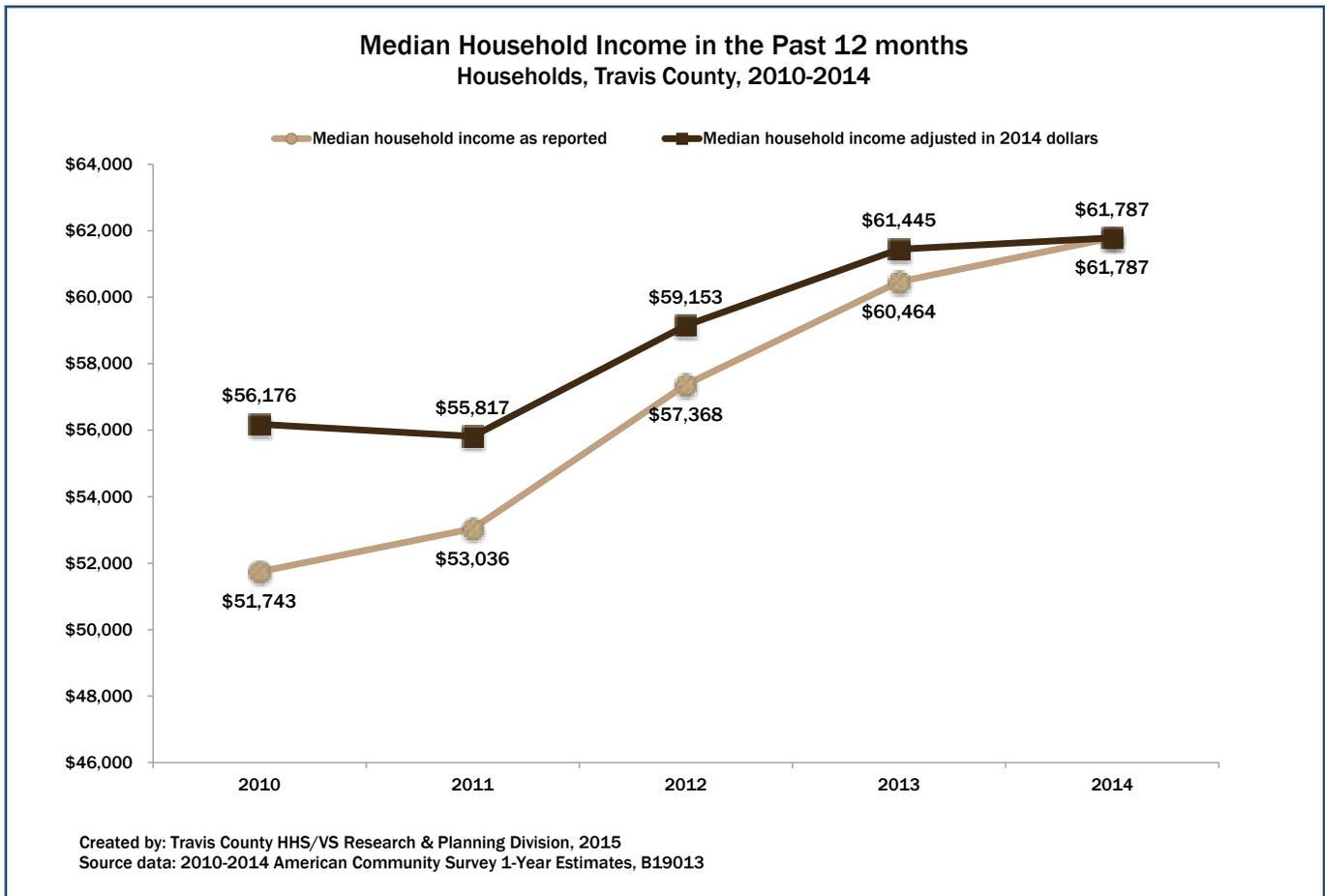
**Limited English Speaking Households:** 7% of all Travis County households (29,204 households) are limited English speaking households.<sup>4</sup> 82% of limited English speaking households speak Spanish (23,990 households) and 12% of limited English speaking households speak Asian and Pacific Island languages (3,477 households).

<sup>4</sup> A “limited English speaking household” is one in which no member 14 years old and over (1) speaks only English or (2) speaks a non-English language and speaks English “very well.” In other words, all members 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with the English language. (American Community Survey and Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 46.)

# Economic Characteristics

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# Median Household Income



**Median Household Income:**<sup>5</sup> The reported median income has been increasing. Between 2010 and 2014, the reported median income increased by \$10,044.

**Geographic Comparison:** Median household income is higher in Travis County than in the U.S. and Texas.

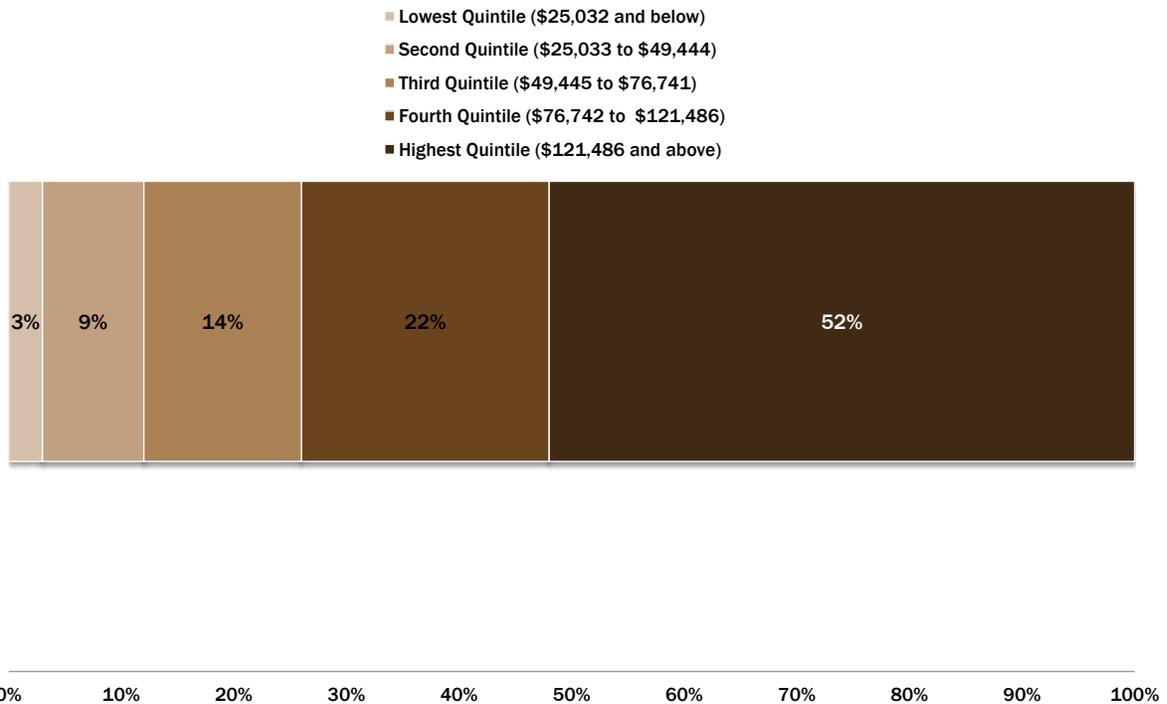
<b>Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months</b>			
<b>Households, Travis County, Texas and U.S., 2010 and 2014</b>			
	Travis County	Texas	U.S.
Median Household Income 2010 (in 2014 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)	\$56,176	\$52,780	\$54,333
Median Household Income 2014	\$61,787	\$53,035	\$53,657
Percent change between 2010 and 2014	10%	.48%	-1%

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015  
Source data: American Community Survey 2010 & 2014 1-Year Estimates, B19013, and the Consumer Price Index

<sup>5</sup> The ACS asks respondents how much was earned during the past 12 months. Consequently, a person answering the questions in December 2014 would respond based on income earned between December 2013 and November 2014.

# Household Income Distribution

**Distribution of Household Income  
Households, Travis County, 2014**



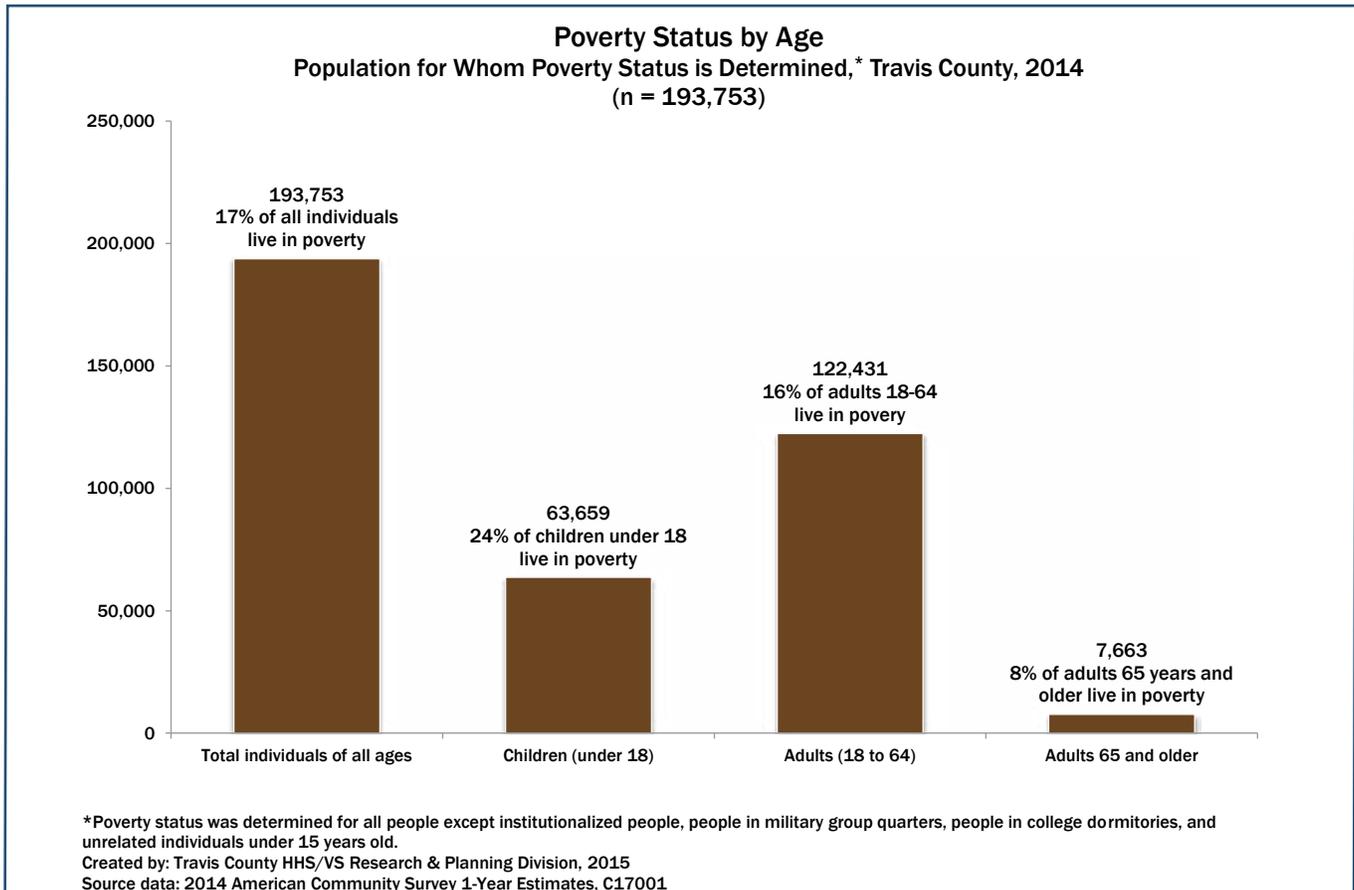
Note: This chart reflects households separated into quintiles, or five groups each representing 20% of households. The first quintile is comprised of the bottom 20% of incomes, the second quintile is comprised of the next 20% of incomes, and so on.

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015

Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B19082 & B19080

To assess household income distribution, we look at households separated into quintiles<sup>6</sup> (five groups, each representing 20% of households). The bottom 20% of households represent about 3% of the county's income, while the top 20% of households represent over half of the county's income (52%).

<sup>6</sup> For shares of household income by quintiles, negative incomes are converted to zero. These measures are the aggregate household income in each quintile as a percentage of the total aggregate income. (American Community Survey/Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 84.)



About one-sixth of all Travis County residents (17%) are living in poverty. From 2010 to 2014, the individual poverty rate has slightly decreased. Although the 2014 estimate for individuals in poverty is higher than the 2013 estimate, the difference is not statistically significant at a 90% confidence level. Almost one-quarter (24%) of children under 18 are living in poverty in Travis County.<sup>7</sup>

<b>Poverty Status by Age</b>					
<b>Population for Whom Poverty Status is Determined, Travis County, 2010-2014</b>					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Individuals in Poverty	194,156	192,436	197,657	176,920*	193,753*
Individual Poverty Rate	19%	18%	18%	16%*	17%*
Children (under 18) in Poverty	62,168	63,680	67,791	55,554	63,659
Child Poverty Rate	25%	25%	26%	22%	24%

\*The difference between the 2013 and 2014 estimates is not statistically significant.

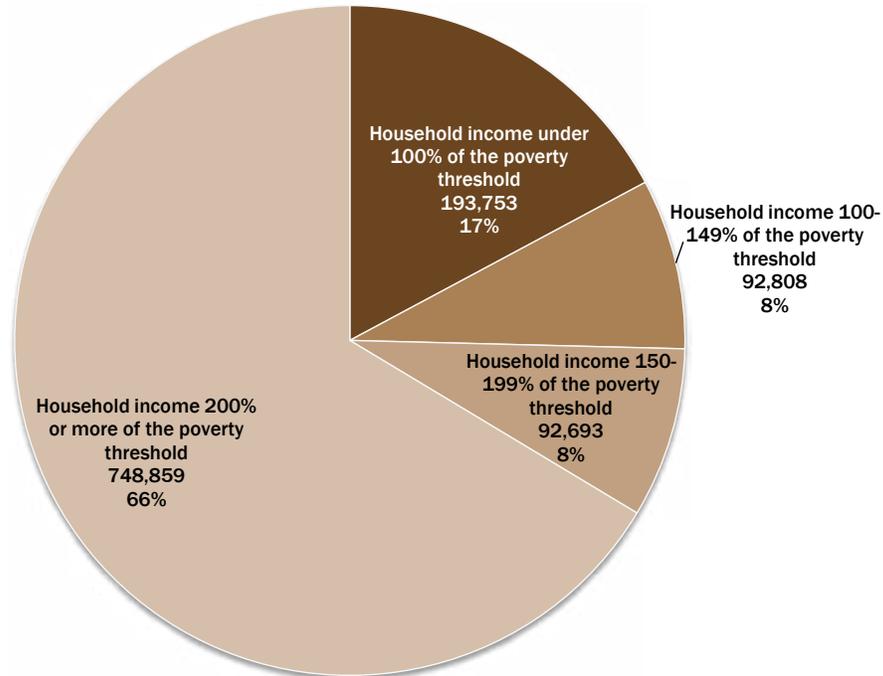
Created by: Travis County HHS/VS, Research & Planning Division, 2015 Source data: American Community Survey 2010-2014 1-Year Estimates, C17001

**Geographic Comparison:** The proportion of persons of all ages living in poverty is the same in Travis County and Texas (17%) and slightly lower for the United States as a whole (16%). The proportion of children under 18 years old in Travis County (24%) is slightly higher than the United States (22%) and slightly lower than the state of Texas (25%).

<sup>7</sup> 2014 poverty thresholds define poverty for an individual under the age of 65 at \$12,316 in annual income and for a family of four including two children under 18 at \$24,008 in annual income. The Census Bureau uses poverty thresholds as denoted in the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive 14 as described on the Census Bureau's website at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/overview/measure.html>. The thresholds consider family size and composition when determining whether an individual is living in poverty and can be found at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/index.html>.

# Income to Poverty Ratio

**Ratio of Income to the Poverty Threshold in the past 12 months**  
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined,\* Travis County, 2014



2014 Poverty Threshold for one person under age 65:

100%: \$12,316  
150%: \$18,474  
200%: \$24,632

2014 Poverty Threshold for a family of four, including two related children under 18:

100%: \$24,008  
150%: \$36,012  
200%: \$48,016

Note: Totals do not equal 100% due to rounding.

\*Poverty status was determined for all people except institutionalized people, people in military group quarters, people in college dormitories, and unrelated individuals under 15 years old.

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015

Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, C17002

In Travis County an estimated 193,753 individuals (17% of the total population) live in households with incomes below the poverty threshold.<sup>8</sup> One-third (34%) of Travis County residents, or nearly 379,254 individuals, live at or below 200% of the poverty threshold.

**Geographic Comparison:** The table below shows the ratios of income to poverty in Travis County, Texas, and the nation as a whole.

**Ratio of Income to the Poverty Level in the Past 12 months**

**Population for Whom Poverty Status is Determined, Travis County, Texas, and U.S., 2014**

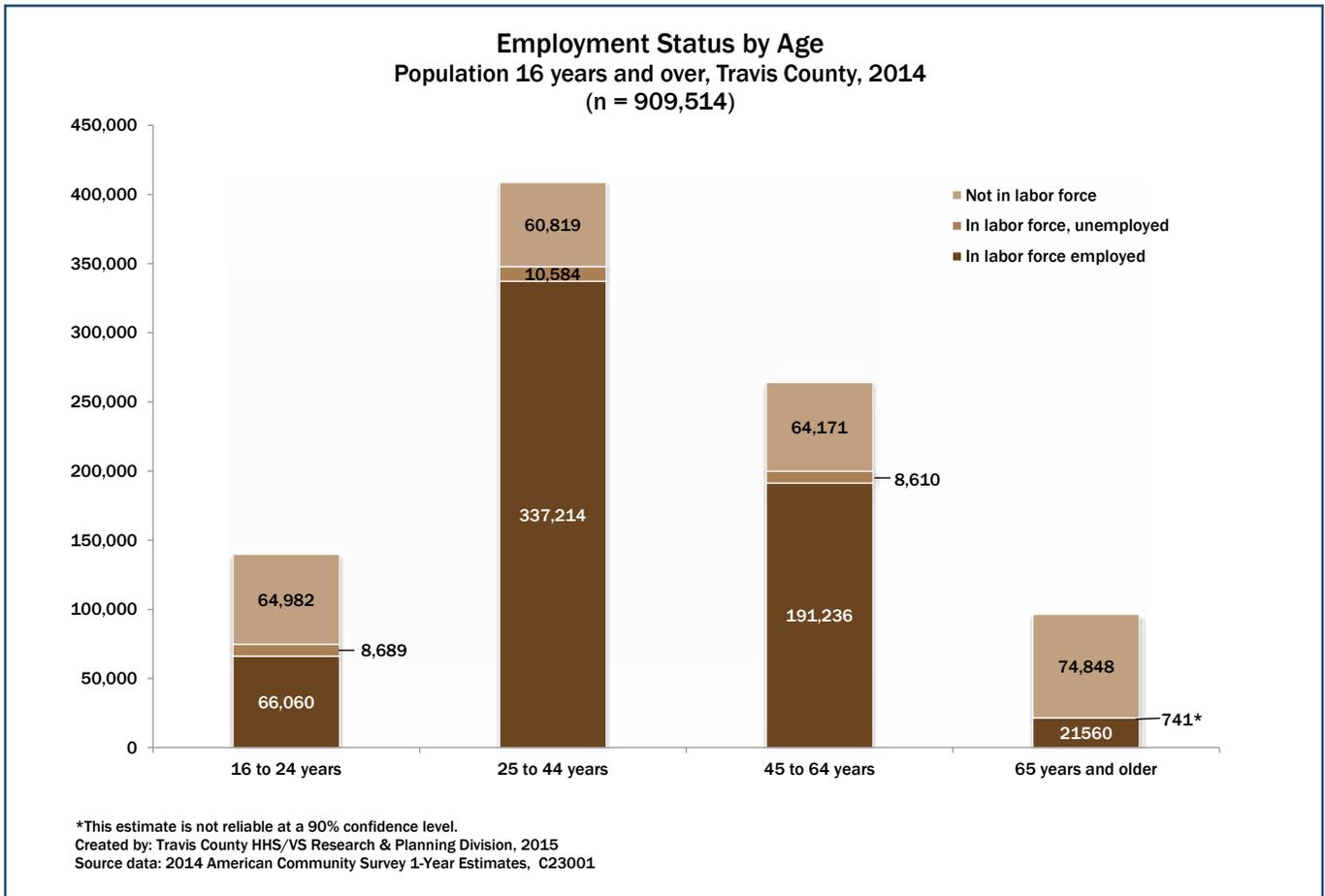
	Travis County	Texas	U.S.
Income < 100% of the poverty threshold	17%	17%	16%
Income 100%-199% of the poverty threshold	16%	21%	19%
Income 200% or more of the poverty threshold	66%	62%	66%

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS, Research & Planning Division, 2015

Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B17002

<sup>8</sup> The Census Bureau uses poverty thresholds as denoted in the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive 14 as described on the Census Bureau's website at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/overview/measure.html>. The thresholds consider family size and composition when determining whether an individual is living in poverty and can be found at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/index.html>.

# Employment and Age



**Travis County's Labor Force:** In total, 71% of Travis County's population age 16 and over (about 645,000 people) is in the labor force. Approximately 29,000 of them were unemployed in 2014.

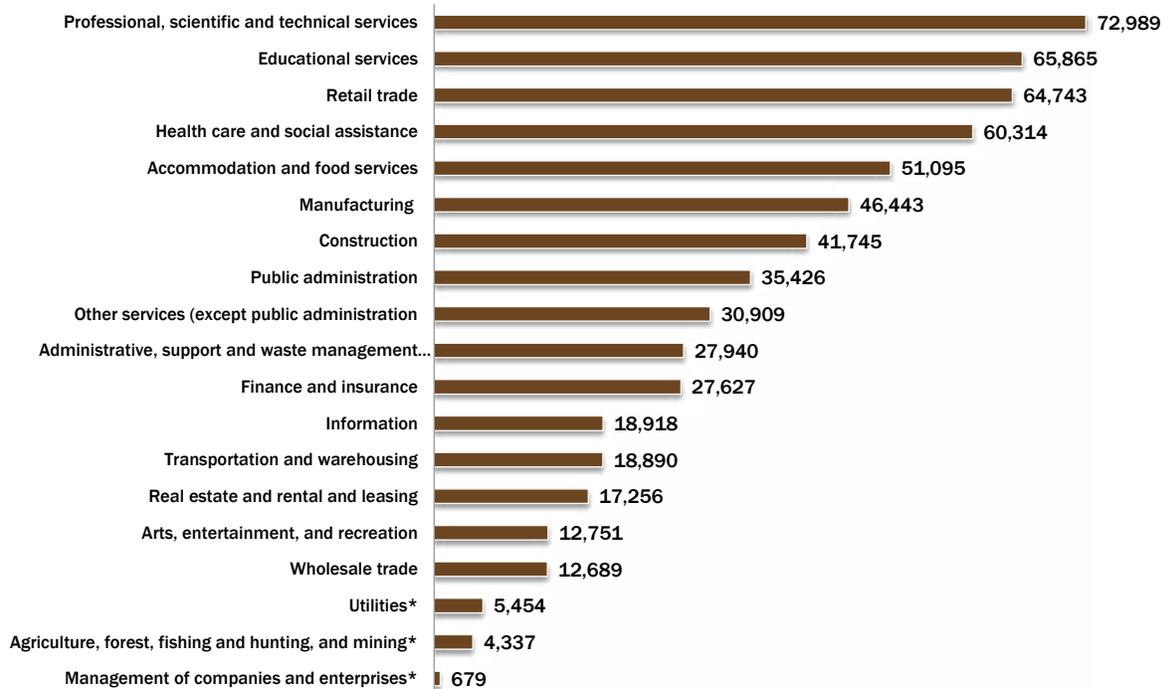
**Labor Force by Age:** Individuals between the ages of 25 and 44 constitute the majority (45%) of Travis County's labor force. The 45 to 64 age group comprises 29% of the labor force, followed by the 16 to 24 age group (15%), and finally those 65 years and older (11%).

**Unemployment by Age:** Travis County's overall unemployment rate (which is the percent unemployed of those in the labor force) was 4% in 2014, down from 6% in 2013, and 7% in 2012. By age, the unemployment rate is highest for those 16 to 24 years old (12%), and lowest at 3% for those 25 to 44 years old and those 65 years and older.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Due to sampling error, the unemployment rate of those in the "65 years and over" category, reported at 3% in 2013, is unreliable at a 90% confidence level.

# Employment by Industry

**Employment by Industry**  
Civilian employed population 16 years and over, Travis County, 2014



Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015  
Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, C24030

Slightly more than half (51%) of Travis County's civilian employed population age 16 and over was employed in the following five industries: professional/scientific/technical services, educational services, retail trade, health care and social assistance, and accommodation and food services.

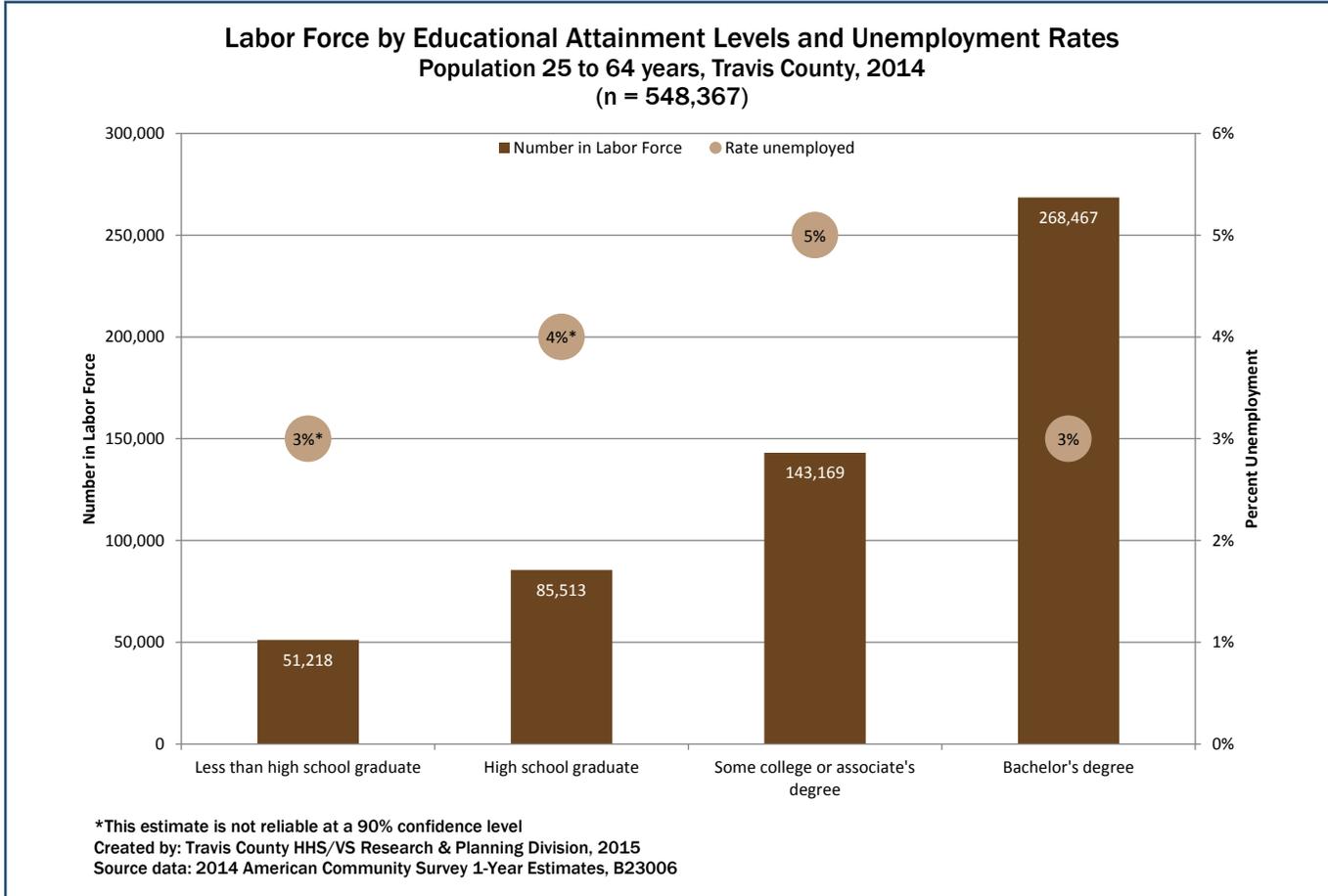
**Geographic Comparison:** Travis County had a higher proportion of workers in professional/scientific and technical services than Texas as a whole, and the nation.

**Employment in the top five industries**  
Travis County, Texas & U.S., 2014

Travis County		Texas		United States	
Professional/scientific/technical	12%	Health care & social assistance	12%	Health care & social assistance	14%
Educational services	11%	Retail trade	11%	Retail trade	12%
Retail trade	11%	Educational services	10%	Manufacturing	10%
Health care & social assistance	10%	Manufacturing	9%	Educational services	9%
Accommodation & food services	8%	Construction	8%	Accommodation & food services	8%

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS, Research & Planning Division, 2015 Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, C24030

# Employment and Education

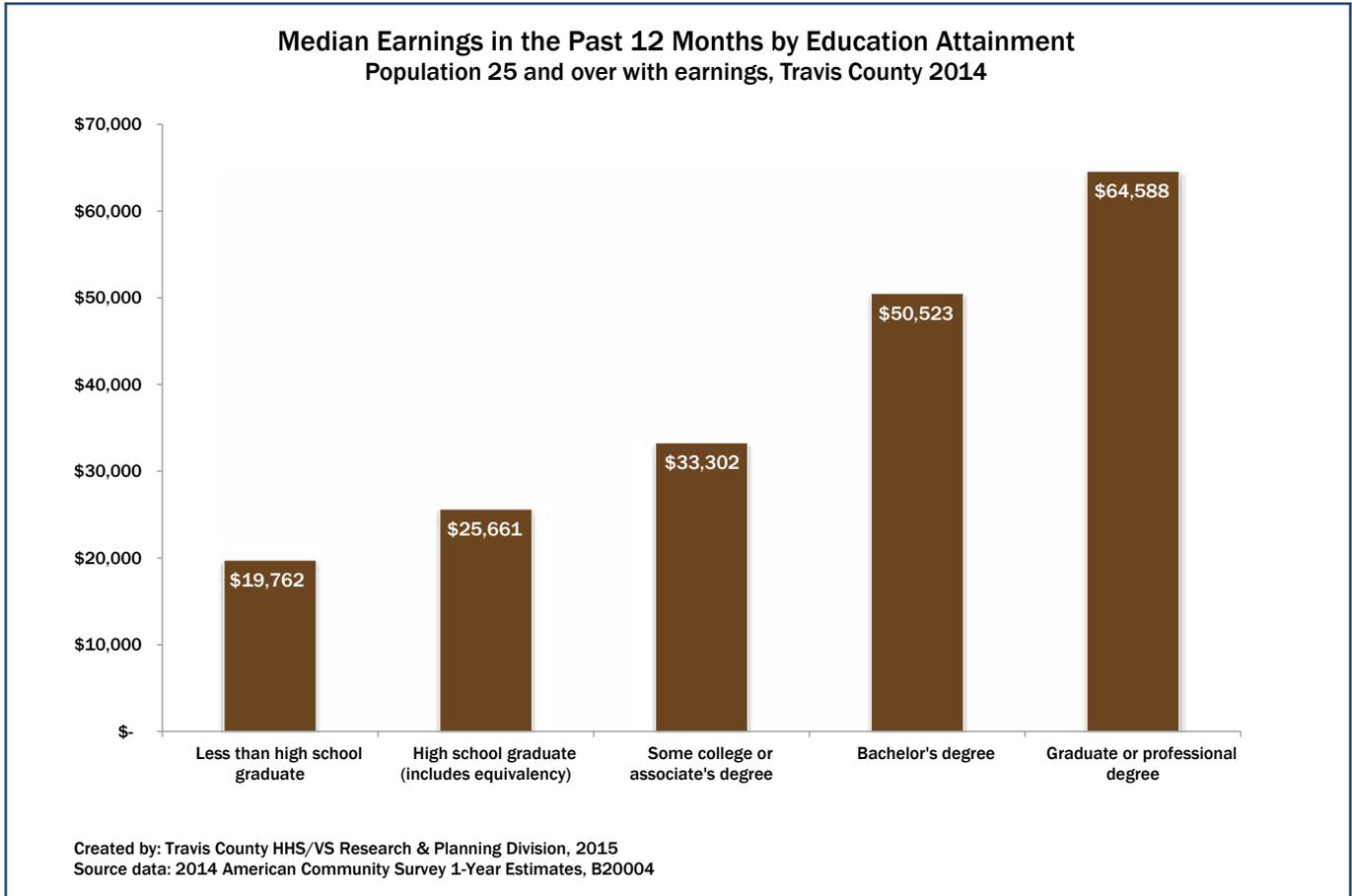


**Educational Attainment in the Labor Force:** Among Travis County persons in the labor force between the ages of 25 and 64, almost one-half (49%) have a bachelor's degree or higher, and another one-quarter (26%) have some college or an associate's degree. High school graduates comprise 16% of the labor force, and the remaining 9% have less than a high school degree.

**Educational Attainment and Employment Rates:** Persons in the labor force with the highest educational attainment levels in Travis County have low unemployment (3% unemployment for those with a bachelor's degree or higher). Although persons with less than a high school degree or with a high school degree are shown with low unemployment rates (3% and 4%, respectively) these statistics are not reliable at a 90% confidence level.

**Geographical Comparison:** In comparison to Texas and the U.S., Travis County has a more educated workforce. In Travis County, 49% of workers age 25 to 64 have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 32% for Texas and 35% for the U.S. at large.

# Earnings and Education



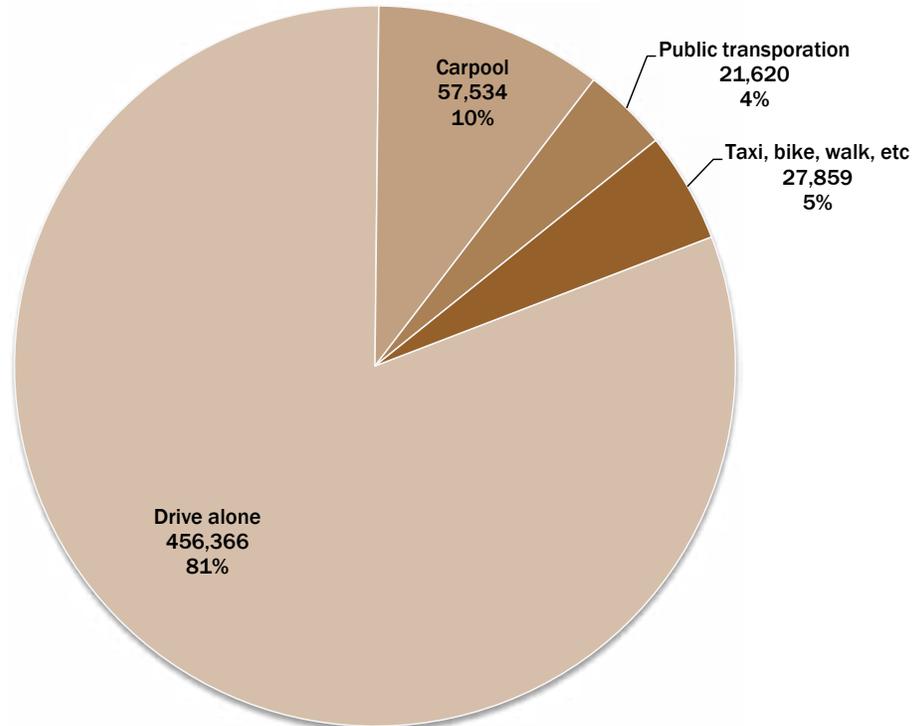
**Educational Attainment and Earnings:** Educational attainment level and earnings are directly related: As education level increases, earnings also rise. In 2014, median earnings<sup>10</sup> rose with each incremental increase in education level. In particular, the median earnings for persons with a bachelor's degree were 53% more than for those persons who have some college or an associate's degree. The median earnings for those with a high school diploma or an equivalency were 30% higher than for those who did not graduate high school. The median earnings for those with a graduate or professional degree were 28% higher than for those who have a bachelor's degree.

**Median Earnings and Gender:** For Travis County overall, 2014 median earnings are \$38,230. However, median earnings for men (\$43,255) are 33% higher than those for women (\$32,430).

**Geographic Comparison:** Travis County's 2014 overall median earnings (\$38,230) was 8% higher than the state of Texas (\$35,506) and 6% higher than the U.S. (\$36,129).

<sup>10</sup> The median divides the earnings distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median and one-half above the median. Median earnings is restricted to individuals 16 years old and over with earnings and is computed on the basis of a standard distribution. (American Community Survey/Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 84.)

**Means of Transportation to Work**  
**Workers 16 years and over who did not work at home, Travis County, 2014**



Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015  
 Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, C08134

**Means of Transportation to Work:** The vast majority of Travis County workers aged 16 and older drive to work alone (81% or about 456,366 people). While 10% (approximately 57,534) carpool, only 5% (about 27,859) use other means of transportation, including: taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, or walking. The remaining 4% (about 21,620) use public transportation.

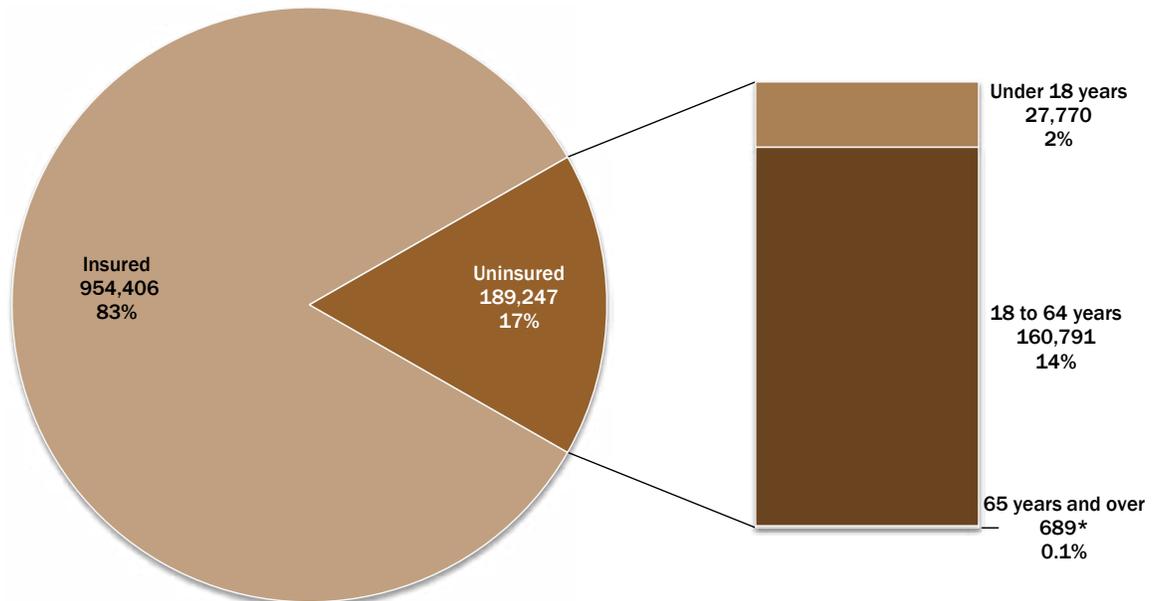
Most commuters (65%) travel under 30 minutes to get to work, while almost one-third (29%) spend between 30 minutes and an hour traveling to work. A small percentage of workers (6%) spend an hour or more traveling to work, although this estimate is not reliable at a 90% confidence level.

**Geographic Comparison of Means of Transportation to Work:** The proportion of Travis County workers who drive to work alone (81%) is lower than the state (84%) but is on par with that of the nation (80%). In other major metropolitan counties of Texas, the proportion of commuters who drive to work alone hovers between 81% and 87%.<sup>11</sup> The proportion of commuters using public transportation to get to work in Travis County is slightly lower than the nation (5%) and slightly higher than the state of Texas (2%). The proportion of commuters in most other major metropolitan counties Texas range from 1% and 4%.

<sup>11</sup> Comparison counties include Bexar, Dallas, El Paso, Harris and Tarrant.

# Health Insurance

**Health Insurance Coverage Status by Age**  
 Civilian non-institutionalized population, Travis County, 2014  
 (n = 1,143,653)



\*This estimate is not reliable at a 90% confidence level.  
 Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015  
 Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, C27001

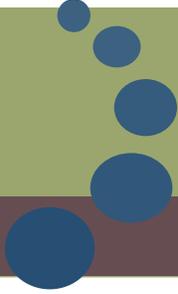
In Travis County, 17% of residents do not have health insurance.<sup>12</sup> Of these 189,247 uninsured individuals, the majority (about 160,800 people) are adults between the ages of 18 and 64. Another 27,770 individuals are uninsured and under the age of 18. Nearly 690 people age 65 and over are living without health insurance.<sup>13</sup>

**Geographic Comparison:** Travis County's proportion of uninsured residents (17%) is higher than that of the U.S. (12%) but lower than that of Texas (19%). Travis County has a higher rate of uninsured residents than Bexar County (16%) but a lower rate of uninsured residents among other major metropolitan counties in Texas, including Tarrant County (18%), Harris County (22%), and Dallas County (23%).

12 The Census Bureau defines coverage to include plans and programs that provide comprehensive health coverage. People are considered insured if they report having at least one of the following: private health insurance or public coverage. Private health insurance is a plan provided through an employer or union, a plan purchased by an individual from a private company, or TRICARE or other military health care. Public health coverage includes the federal programs Medicare, Medicaid, and VA Health Care (provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs); the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); and individual state health plans. People who had no reported health coverage, or those whose only health coverage was Indian Health Service, are considered uninsured. (American Community Survey/Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 69-72.)

13 This estimate is not reliable at a 90% confidence interval.

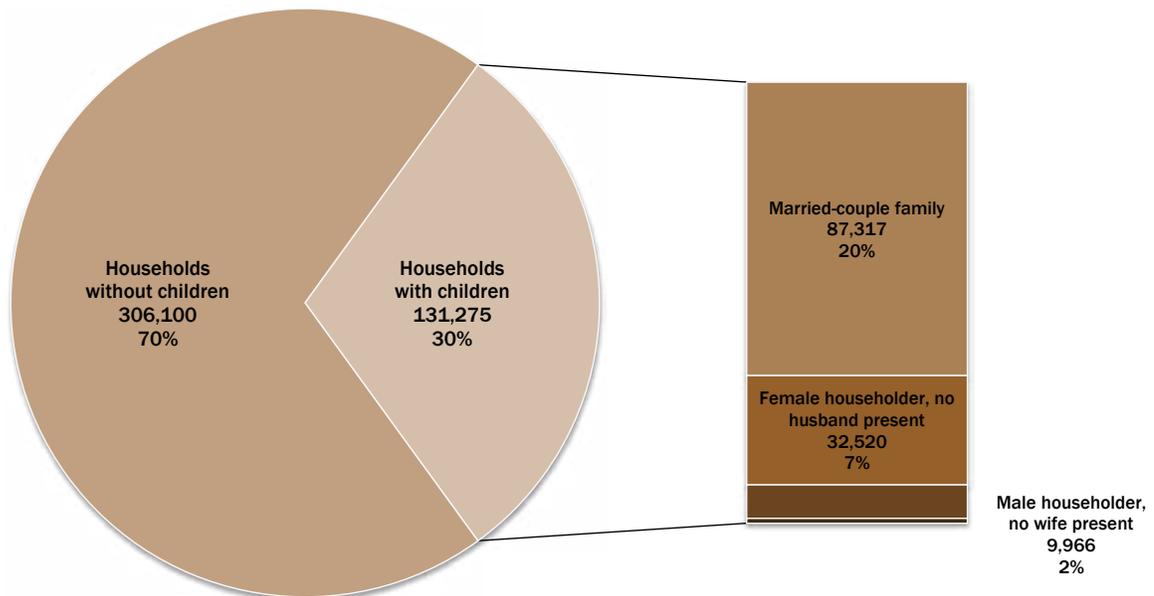
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# Household Type

**Households by Presence of Children by Household Type**  
Households, Travis County, 2014  
(n = 437,375)



Note: Nonfamily households with children account for 0.34% of all households with children and are included in "households with children" (131,275) at the left, but they are not included in the bar at the right.

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015

Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B11005

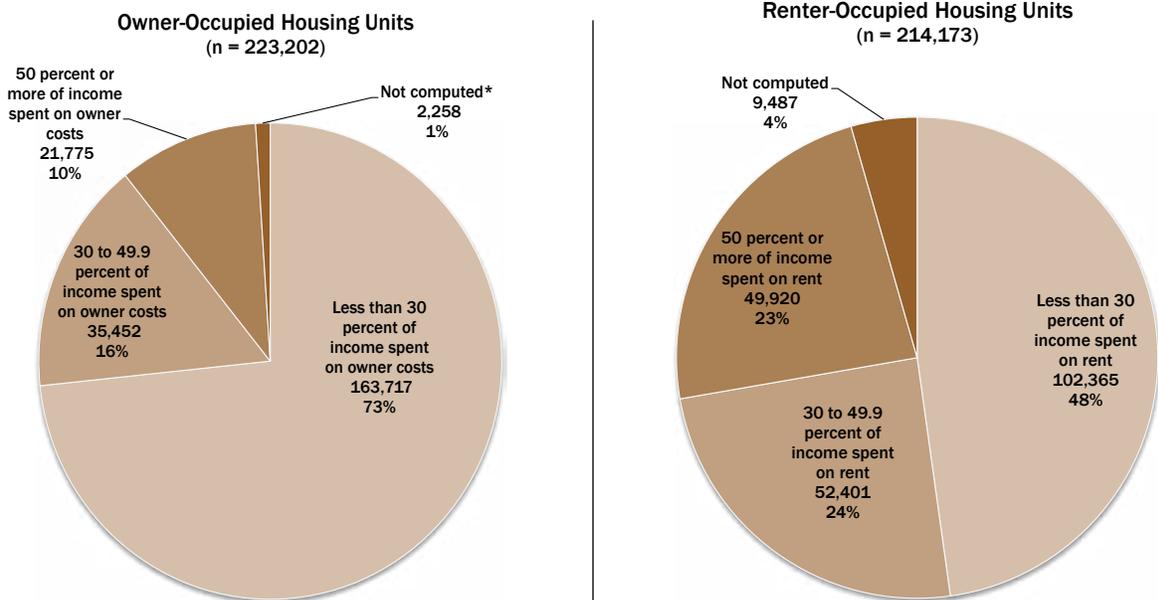
## Households by Presence of Children:

- Two-thirds (70%) of Travis County households have no children.
- Of those households with children (30%), the majority are married-couple families. Over 43,000 have only one householder (majority female) with no spouse present.

## Geographic Comparison:

- In comparison to state and national averages, Travis County households are less likely to include children (37% of Texas households and 32% of U.S. households include children).
- Regarding single householders with children with no spouse present, there is no significant difference between Travis County's proportions and those of the state and the nation.

## Percent of Household Income Spent on Housing Costs Travis County, 2014



\*The estimate for this category is not reliable at a 90% confidence level.

Note: Households spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs have a cost burden; those spending 50% or more on housing costs have a severe cost burden. Percentage totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Created by: Travis County HHS/VS, Research & Planning Division, 2015

Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B25070 & B25091

**Cost Burden:** In Travis County, 51% of occupied housing is owner-occupied and 49% is renter-occupied. A large percentage of both renters and owners in Travis County experience a housing cost burden, which is defined as spending 30% or more of household income on housing costs.<sup>14</sup> However, the percent of households that are cost burdened is much higher among renters than owners. About one-half (48%)<sup>15</sup> of renter households spend 30% or more of their income on rent, and almost one-quarter (23%) of renter households experience a severe cost burden, spending at least one-half of their income on rent. Comparatively, 26% of owner households spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs and 10% spend at least one-half.

### Geographic Comparison:

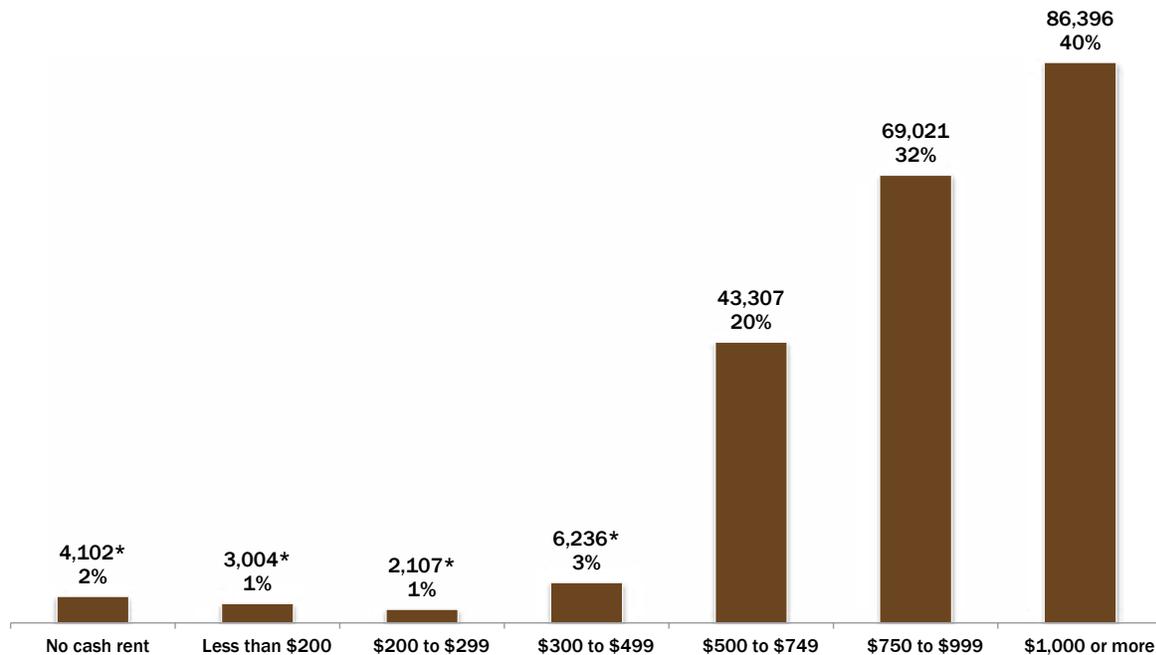
- The proportion of Travis County renter households who are cost burdened is the same as that of the nation (48%) but is slightly higher than that of Texas (45%), although the difference is not statistically significant.
- The proportion of owner households experiencing a cost burden in Travis County (26%) is higher than Texas (21%) and the nation as a whole (25%). Among other Texas metropolitan counties,<sup>16</sup> the proportion of cost-burdened owner households is slightly lower, ranging from 22% to 25%.

<sup>14</sup> See U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/affordablehousing/](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/).

<sup>15</sup> The two categories displayed in the chart combine to 47% due to rounding, but the true total of the estimate is 48%.

<sup>16</sup> Comparison counties include Bexar, Dallas, El Paso, Harris and Tarrant.

**Rental Units by Contract Rent Amount**  
**Renter-Occupied Housing Units, Travis County, 2014**  
 (n = 214,173)



\*This estimate is not reliable at a 90% confidence level.  
 Created by: Travis County HHS/VS Research & Planning Division, 2015  
 Source data: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, C25065

**Contract Rent<sup>17</sup> Distribution:** Almost three-quarters (73%)<sup>18</sup> of Travis County’s occupied rental units have rents at or above \$750. Five percent of occupied rental units have rents below \$500 (not including 2% with no rent paid).<sup>19</sup>

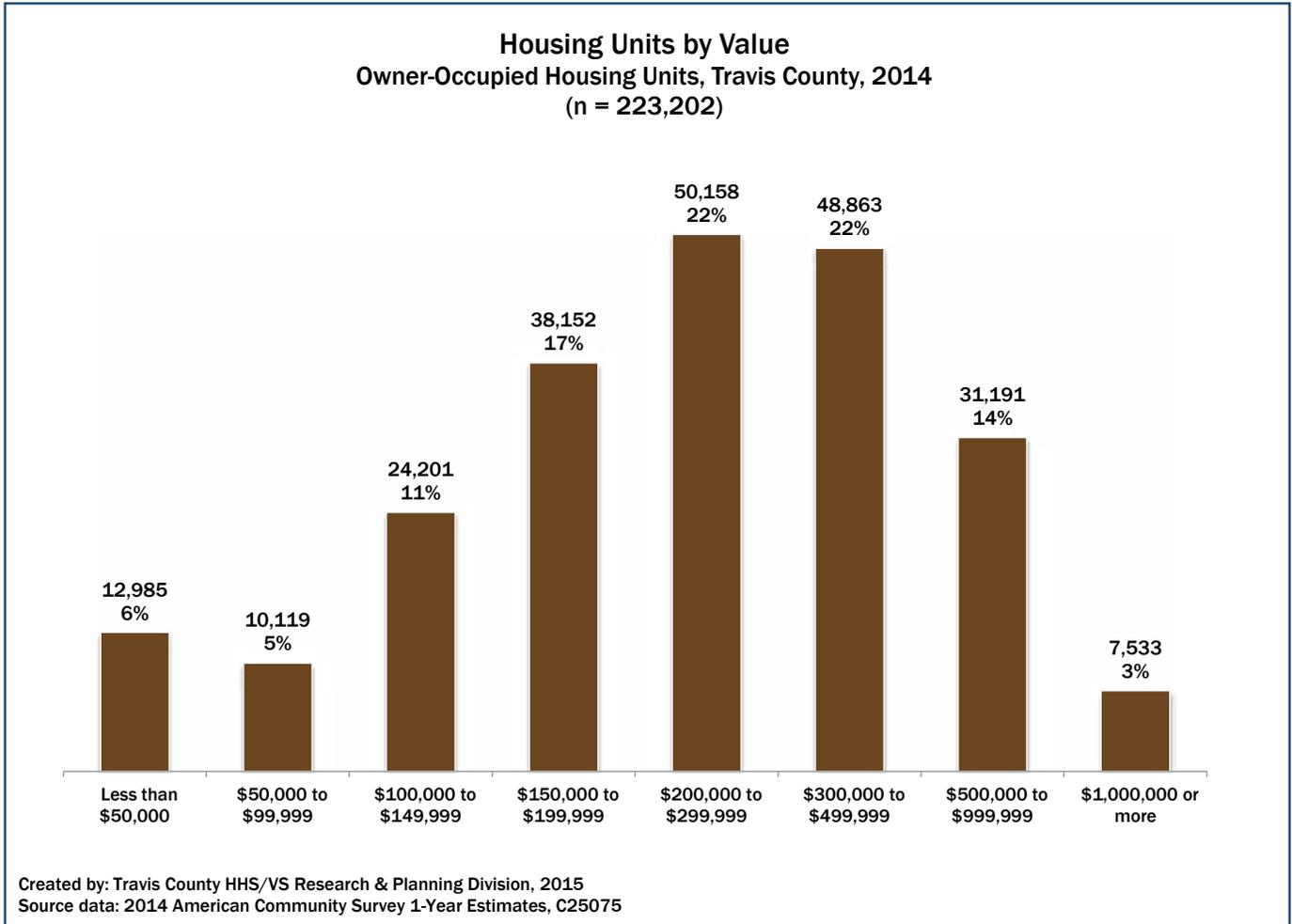
From 2010 to 2014, the greatest growth occurred in the highest rent categories. The number of renter-occupied units with rent \$1,000 or more rose by 86%, from 46,433 to 86,396 units. During the same time, the number of units with rent between \$750 and \$999 rose by 30%, from 53,126 to 69,021 units.

**Median Contract Rent:** The 2014 median contract rent in Travis County was \$919, compared to \$735 in Texas and \$786 in the U.S. Between 2010 and 2014, the median contract rent rose by 21% in Travis County, compared to 14% in the state of Texas and 10% in the United States.

17 Contract rent is the monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included. (American Community Survey and Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 16.)

18 The two categories displayed in the chart combine to 72% due to rounding, but the true total of the estimate is 73%.

19 “No rent paid” refers to housing units that are renter occupied without payment of rent. The unit may be owned by friends or relatives who live elsewhere and who allow occupancy without charge. Rent-free houses or apartments may also be provided to compensate caretakers, ministers, tenant farmers, sharecroppers, or others. (American Community Survey and Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 16.)



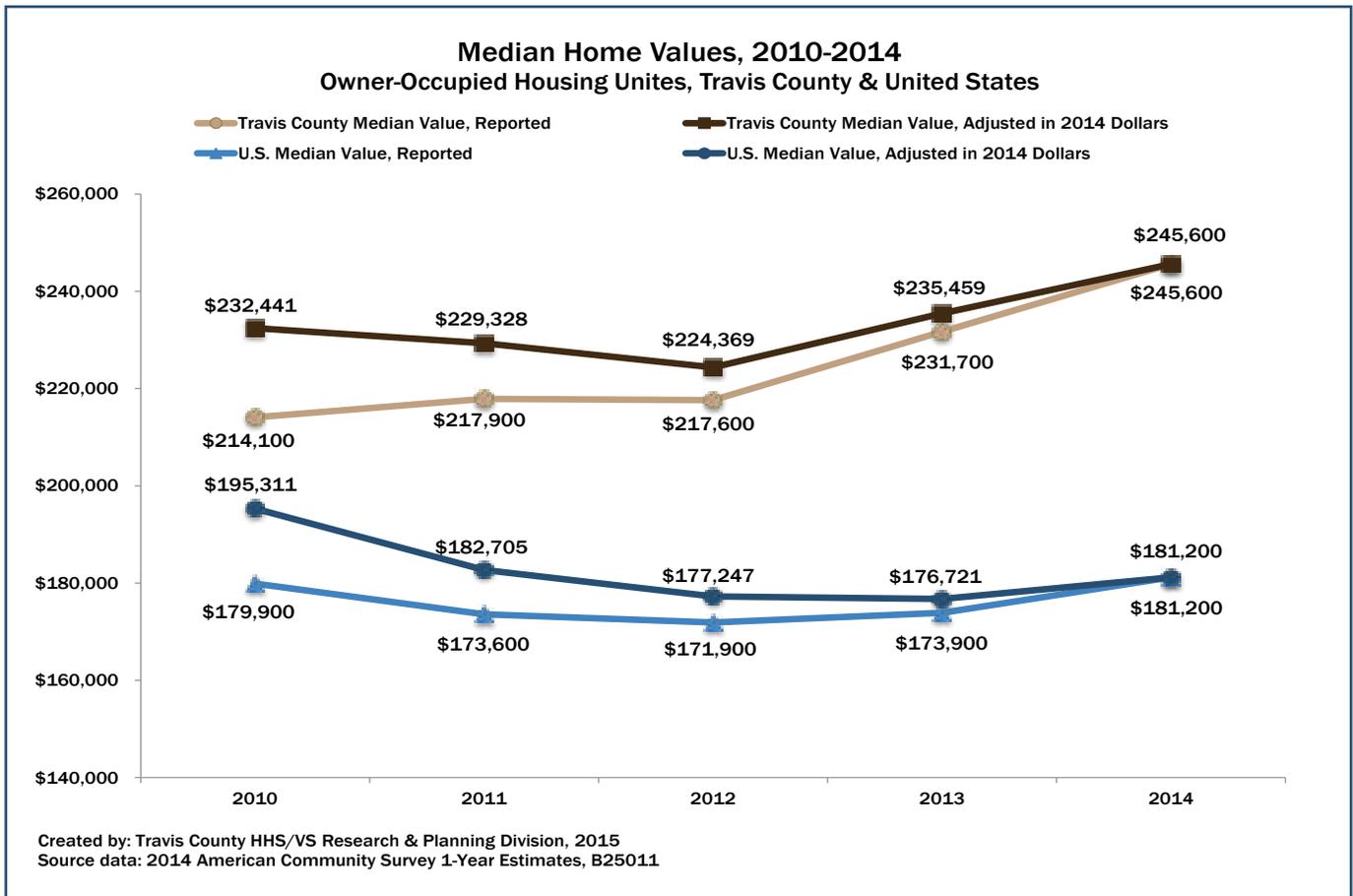
**Housing Value<sup>20</sup> Distribution:** About one-fifth (21%) of Travis County owner-occupied homes are valued under \$150,000 (approximately 47,300). The majority (62%) of owner-occupied homes are valued at or over \$200,000.

From 2010 to 2014, there were statistically significant increases in the proportion of owner-occupied homes valued between \$200,000 to \$299,999, \$300,000 to \$499,999, and \$500,000 to \$999,999, which rose by 12%, 14% and 69%, respectively.

**Median Housing Value:** The median housing value in 2014 in Travis County was \$245,600. This is higher than that of the U.S. (\$181,200), and Texas (\$139,600).

<sup>20</sup> Value is the respondent's estimate of how much the property (house and lot, mobile home and lot, or condominium unit) would sell for if it were for sale. For vacant units, value was the price asked for the property. (American Community Survey and Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 42.)

# Median Housing Value



From 2010 to 2014, the reported median value of owner-occupied housing units in Travis County rose by 15% from \$214,100 to \$245,600. When adjusted for inflation,<sup>21</sup> during the same time period median home values rose by 6%.

National reported median home values moved on a gradual downward trend between 2010 and 2012, but started to increase slightly in 2013. From 2010 to 2014, the inflation-adjusted median values of U.S. homes dropped by 7% (more than \$14,000.)

<sup>21</sup> Inflation adjustment calculation based on Consumer Price Index at: <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/tables.htm>.

# Methodology

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) is the primary data source for this chart-book. Data from the 2010-2013 ACS are also referenced for trend analyses.

## About the American Community Survey

The American Community Survey (ACS) replaced the long form of the 10-year U.S. Census or Decennial Census and collects information on an ongoing basis rather than once every ten years. The survey includes questions about housing, social, and economic characteristics.<sup>22</sup> The ACS employs continuous data collection, with annual results produced at the national, state, city, and county levels as well as smaller geographic areas with a population of 65,000 or greater. In 2008, data based on a 3-year sample became available for all areas of 20,000 or more, although in 2014, 3-year estimates were discontinued. In 2011, data based on a 5-year sample became available for many small areas (state, county, city, town, place, census tracts and block groups). Also in 2011, changes in sampling design were made that have increased the reliability of small tract estimates.<sup>23</sup>

## ACS Methodology

The ACS is conducted every month on independent samples of housing unit<sup>24</sup> addresses (whether vacant or occupied) and persons in group quarters<sup>25</sup> facilities, and produces annual estimates of the total residential population. Each year, approximately 3.5 million housing unit addresses in the United States and approximately 207,000 residents in group quarters facilities are selected.<sup>26</sup> Surveys are collected from 1/12 of the sample each month. An address will not be included in the ACS survey more than once in a five-year period.<sup>27</sup>

For Travis County, the original 2014 (entire 12 month) sample of initial addresses selected was 9,482, and the final number of housing unit interviews (actual sample used to produce results) was 6,364.<sup>28</sup> The group quarters population sample is not available at the county level, but for the entire state of Texas, the initial sample selected was 13,300 and the final number of group quarters actual interviews was 10,868.<sup>29</sup>

The ACS is conducted primarily through self-response. The ACS employs two distinct data collection methodologies: one for individuals residing in housing units and another for those residing in group quarters. For those residing in housing units, four modes of data collection are used: the internet, a mailout/mailback, Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) and a Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI). The general

22 A copy of the 2014 questionnaire can be found at: <http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology/questionnaires/2014/quest14.pdf>.

23 For more information on 2011 reliability improvements, go to [http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech\\_docs/accuracy/MultiyearACSAccuracyofData2011.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/accuracy/MultiyearACSAccuracyofData2011.pdf).

24 A housing unit may be a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms or a single room that is occupied (or, if vacant, intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters. Both occupied and vacant housing units are included in the housing unit inventory. Boats, recreational vehicles (RVs), vans, tents, railroad cars, and the like are included only if they are occupied as someone's current place of residence. (American Community Survey/Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 7.)

25 A group quarters is a place where people live or stay, in a group living arrangement that is owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the residents. Group quarters include such places as college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities, and workers' dormitories. (American Community Survey/Puerto Rico Community Survey 2014 Subject Definitions, pg. 8-10.)

26 U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1 Year Estimates, Tables B98001 and B98002.

27 American Community Survey Sample Size Definitions, available at: [http://www.census.gov/acs/www/methodology/sample\\_size\\_definitions/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/methodology/sample_size_definitions/)

28 U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B98001.

29 American Community Survey Sample Size Definitions, available at: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/methodology/sample-size-and-data-quality/sample-size/index.php>

# Methodology

timing of data collection is completed within three months. During Month 1, addresses in the sample are sent an initial mailing package, which contains information for completing the ACS questionnaire on the internet. If an online response is not received after two weeks, then a second mailing package is sent. This package contains a paper questionnaire and the housing unit has the option of which mode to use to complete the interview. During Month 2, all mail non-responding addresses with an available phone number are sent to the CATI. During Month 3, a sample of mail non-responses without a phone number, CATI non-responses, and unmailable addresses are selected and sent to CAPI. For participants residing in Group Quarters, field representatives use several options, including completing the questionnaire while speaking to the resident in person or over the telephone, conducting a personal interview with a proxy, such as a relative or guardian, or leaving paper questionnaires for residents to complete for themselves and then pick them up later. This last option is used for data collection in Federal prisons.<sup>30</sup>

## Limitations

Because the findings are based on a sample rather than entire populations, the results would differ slightly if another sample were drawn or if the entire population were surveyed. This reduces the reliability of the results. A certain amount of variability (also called sampling error) is associated with any estimate based on a sample. In general, the larger the sample, the smaller the sampling error will be.<sup>31</sup> ACS estimates highlighted in this publication with relatively small sample sizes and therefore relatively large margins of error have been tested for reliability at a 90% level of confidence.<sup>32</sup> When direct comparisons are made (for example, between geographic areas or over time), tests have been performed for statistical significance at a 90% confidence level. Estimates with coefficients of variation<sup>33</sup> of more than 15% were either excluded or footnoted as being unreliable. Note that testing was not conducted on every possible permutation of comparisons between visible figures in this report's charts and tables, so inferences about statistics and trends should be interpreted with caution.

For more information and instruction on testing for reliability and statistical significance, as well as general guidance on how to use American Community Survey data, please see the Compass guides published by the U.S. Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance.html>.

Non-response error: If certain individuals do not respond to the survey, the strength of the findings will be diminished. Additionally, those who respond to the survey may possess certain traits that skew the results differently than if everyone in the sample responds (this is known as selection bias). However, while surveys are often voluntary, response to the ACS is required by law (Section 221 of Title 13, Chapter 7, United States Code),

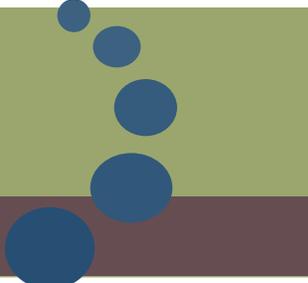
30 American Community Survey Accuracy of the Data (2014), available at: [http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech\\_docs/accuracy/ACS\\_Accuracy\\_of\\_Data\\_2014.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2014.pdf).

31 U.S. Census Bureau, A Compass for Understanding and Using American Community Survey Data: What General Data Users Need to Know. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 2008. Available at: <http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2009/acs/ACSstateLocal.pdf>.

32 A confidence level or interval is a range of values that describes the uncertainty surrounding an estimate. The "90%" in the confidence interval listed above represents a level of certainty about our estimate. If we were to repeatedly make new estimates using exactly the same procedure (by drawing a new sample, conducting new interviews, calculating new estimates and new confidence intervals), the confidence intervals would contain the average of all the estimates 90% of the time. We have therefore produced a single estimate in a way that, if repeated indefinitely, would result in 90% of the confidence intervals formed containing the true value. (From the US Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates website, <http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/methods/statecounty/ci.html>, accessed 11/24/15.)

33 Coefficient of variation is a measure used to discern the level of reliability of an estimate. It is calculated using the estimate and its standard error. For more information on calculating and using coefficients of variation, see: A Compass for Understanding and Using American Community Survey Data: What General Data Users Need to Know, available at <http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2008/acs/ACSGeneralHandbook.pdf>.

# Methodology



and those who refuse or willfully neglect to respond to the survey are subject to a fine of up to \$100 and those willfully gives any false answers are subject to a fine up to \$500.<sup>34</sup> The response rate for the ACS is high (the 2014 response rate for Texas was 95% for housing units and 92% for group quarters).<sup>35</sup>

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34 American Community Survey: Why Were You Selected? available at: <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/about/why-was-i-selected.html>

35 Response rate information is available on the Census Bureau's American Community Survey website at: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/methodology/sample-size-and-data-quality/response-rates/>