People with Disabilities: A Texas Profile

2016 Update



he Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) prepared this updated report to detail the demographic characteristics of individuals with disabilities in Texas. While there is much comparative national data in the full report, this document focuses primarily on the data and analysis devoted to people with disabilities in

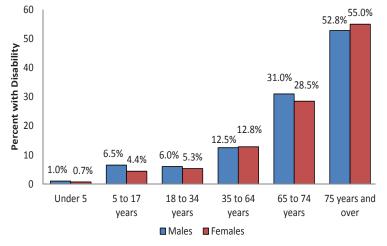
Individuals with disabilities experience numerous challenges associated with participation in the labor force. Their unemployment rate is higher, they are more likely to work part time and, on average, they earn less than individuals without disabilities at every level of educational attainment. However, individuals with disabilities enhance workforce diversity and can offer employers unique skill sets and perspectives. People with disabilities must think creatively about how to solve problems and accomplish daily tasks. This resourcefulness can translate into innovative thinking, new ideas, and alternative approaches to dealing with business challenges. Because people with these attributes have the potential to strengthen the Texas labor market, individuals with

disabilities are a valuable resource for Texas employers and the Texas economy. The Texas workforce system must support employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the public and private sectors and ensure that employers have access to every available skilled worker to maintain economic growth.

Individuals with Disabilities in Texas

Texas has the second largest number of individuals with disabilities of all the states. The percentage of individuals with disabilities relative to the entire Texas population has remained stable over the past four years (11.7 percent), although the Texas population has grown considerably over that same period of time. Approximately 55 percent of Texans 75 and older had a disability. Overall, 11.9 percent of females (1,603,277 individuals) and 11.5 percent of males (1,497,762 individuals) reported having a disability.

Percent of Individuals with Disabilities by Age and Gender in Texas



2014 ACS microdata. Percentages indicate the portion of men and women in each age category reporting a disability.

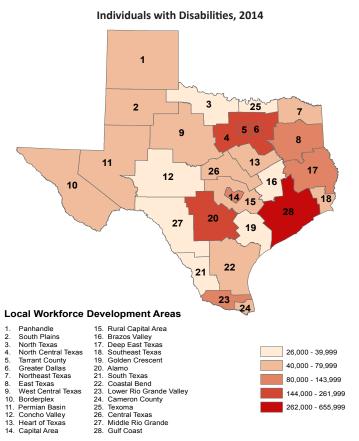
The population of individuals with disabilities in Texas is not evenly distributed across the state. Almost half (48.6 percent) of Texas' population of individuals with disabilities resided in these 10 counties: Harris, Dallas, Tarrant, Bexar, Travis, Hidalgo, El Paso, Cameron, Montgomery, and Fort Bend. The map at right shows the number of individuals with disabilities by local workforce development area.

Labor Force Characteristics

In 2014, almost 820,564 individuals (6.2 percent) of the total civilian labor force 16 and older in Texas (13,220,312 individuals) had a disability. Approximately 55 percent of labor force participants with disabilities in Texas (447,269 individuals) were male, and approximately 45 percent (373,295 individuals) were female.

Differences between individuals with and without disabilities can be observed when considering the individuals' level of educational attainment. Approximately 26 percent of individuals 25 years of age and older with less than a high school diploma or equivalency had a disability. Only nine percent of individuals

with a bachelor degree or higher had a disability.



Source: Estimates developed by the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services.

The average age of a labor force participant with a disability was 50.4 years of age. Individuals between the ages of 25 to 64 made up the largest group of labor force participants with disabilities and accounted for 5.9 percent of labor force participants in that age range.

Employment of Individuals with Disabilities

Labor force participants with disabilities held various jobs in industries throughout Texas. Approximately six percent of the employees of private, for-profit companies and seven percent of federal, state, or local government employees had a disability.

Texas Labor Force Participants with and without Disabilities by Age Category

Age Categories	Total Number Of Labor Force Participants in Each Age Category	Labor Force I with a Di	•	Labor Force Participants without a Disability	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
16 to 24 years	1,965,780	79,910	4.1%	1,885,870	95.9%
25 to 64 years	10,673,572	629,579	5.9%	10,043,993	94.1%
65 to 74 years	492,272	84,595	17.2%	407,677	82.8%
75 years and over	88,688	26,480	29.9%	62,208	70.1%
Total	13,220,312	820,564	6.2%	12,399,748	93.8%

2014 ACS microdata

Construction was the industry that employed the largest number of labor force participants with disabilities (64,632, or 7.9 percent of all Texas labor force participants with disabilities). Approximately six percent of Texas labor force participants with disabilities (49,209 individuals) worked in elementary and secondary schools. The third largest employer of labor force participants with disabilities (48,669 individuals) was the restaurants and other food services industry.

Texas labor force participants with disabilities who worked full time earned an average salary of \$32,620 (inflation adjusted for 2014) compared to \$45,623 for labor force participants without disabilities. Labor force participants with disabilities who worked part time earned an average salary of \$10,855. Salary differences also exist within the population of labor force participants with disabilities based on numerous demographic factors. On average, male labor force participants with disabilities earned \$39,426, whereas female participants earned \$23,952. Additionally, salaries varied depending on level of educational attainment. At every educational level,

Types of Disabilities Reported by Individuals Age 16 and over by Labor Force Participation

Disability	Full-Time Workers		Part-Time Workers		Not in Labor Force	
Disability	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ambulatory difficulty	227,202	37.7%	109,985	50.3%	1,398,536	65.4%
Independent living difficulty	62,451	10.4%	41,301	18.9%	1,028,168	48.1%
Cognitive difficulty	124,718	20.7%	75,600	34.6%	845,129	39.5%
Hearing difficulty	192,680	32.0%	61,392	28.1%	637,812	29.8%
Self-care difficulty	32,722	5.4%	17,610	8.1%	595,168	27.8%
Vision difficulty	136,394	22.7%	45,901	21.0%	467,294	21.9%

2014 ACS microdata. The same individual may report multiple disabilities.

the average salaries of individuals with disabilities were lower than the salaries for individuals without disabilities, and the differences between salaries were larger as educational levels increased.

Approximately 38 percent of individuals with disabilities who worked full time and 50.3 percent of individuals with disabilities who worked part time reported ambulatory difficulty—the difficulty most frequently reported.

Observations

Individuals with disabilities enhance workforce diversity and offer employers the skills, knowledge, and experience that Texas businesses need to thrive. These individuals can strengthen the current and future Texas economy and are a valuable resource for Texas employers. The Texas workforce system must ensure that employers have access to every potential skilled worker. Private and public sector workplaces that support integrated employment opportunities, as well as greater use of assistive technologies in the workplace, can provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to gain and maintain employment.

This overview of individuals with disabilities is meant to inform policy makers and program planners to help determine program and service needs. This study supports policy recommendations made by the Committee on People with Disabilities (2015) regarding individuals with disabilities in the labor force. In order to support full employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, the committee's labor force recommendations focused on:

- enhancing existing state services
- exploring ways to maximize employment opportunities in the most integrated and inclusive setting possible
- supporting an inclusive business climate
- leveling the playing field through accessible workplace technology
- responding quickly to emerging trends, including the aging of the workforce

The Texas Workforce Investment Council was created in 1993 by the 73rd Texas Legislature. As an advisory body to the Governor and the Legislature, the development of an integrated strategic plan for the workforce system is one of the Council's primary responsibilities. Because all Texans are part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023* includes action plans targeted for increased employment outcomes for populations with disabilities. Detailed demographic analyses and maps are available at www.gov.texas.gov/twic/.