



NEWS & VIEWS



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Rio Grande Valley: Vital Statistics

Texas began collecting birth records in 1903, since then other data such as death rates and marriage rates, is included in vital statistics for the state. Live births in the state during 1996 were 2.3 percent higher than in 1995. The birth rate in Texas has fluctuated between 17.3 and 18.6 births per 1,000 residents during the last ten years. Total births in Texas and the Rio Grande Valley counties are presented in the table on page 2.

The leading cause of death in Texas in 1996 was “diseases of the heart” followed by “cancer”, “cerebro vascular diseases”, and then “accidents”. The rate of deaths due to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection was 14.8 per 100,000 in 1995; it went down to 10.9 in 1996, making HIV the ninth leading cause of death in the state of Texas. Figures on death in Texas and the Rio Grande Valley counties are presented in the table on page 2.

In 1996, 178,659 marriages were reported to the Texas Bureau of Vital Statistics, an increase of 1,078 compared to 1995 in which there were 177,581 marriages reported. The marriage rate decreased from 9.5 marriages per 1,000 residents in 1995, as compared to 9.4 in 1996.

There was a decrease in the number of divorces reported to the Texas Bureau of Vital Statistics in 1996. There were 95,185 divorces reported in 1996 compared to 97,183 divorces in 1995. The divorce rate of 5.0 divorces per 1,000 residents is down from the rate of 5.2 reported in 1995.

	1996		1995	
	Marriages*	Divorces**	Marriages*	Divorces**
Texas	178,659	95,185	177,581	97,183
Cameron	3,326	1,012	3,129	1,100
Hidalgo	4,961	54	4,843	2***
Starr	713	43	680	42
Willacy	169	39	160	64

* Marriages by county of marriage license application.

**Divorces by county in which divorce decree was granted.

***Under enumerated due to missing data

Source: Texas Vital Statistics, Texas Department of Health, Austin, TX.

	Births 1996			Deaths 1996		
	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
TEXAS	330,238	168,614	161,624	139,678	71,862	67,816
CAMERON	7,737	3,953	3,784	1,663	924	739
BROWNSVILLE	4,287	2,187	2,100	620	333	287
HARLINGEN	1,204	626	578	467	248	219
LA FERIA	84	41	43	42	26	16
PORT ISABEL	135	64	71	32	23	9
SAN BENITO	608	307	301	161	81	80
BALANCE OF COUNTY	1,419	728	691	341	213	128
HIDALGO	13,039	6,631	6,408	2,494	1,382	1,112
ALAMO	464	256	208	91	55	36
ALTON	3	1	2	2	2	0
DONNA	471	242	229	108	64	44
EDCOUCH	141	75	66	33	17	16
EDINBURG	1,163	607	556	200	121	79
ELSA	178	86	92	32	13	19
HIDALGO	222	114	108	25	16	9
LAJOYA	78	38	40	13	10	3
MCALLEN	2,182	1,086	1,096	552	279	273
MERCEDES	344	163	181	88	39	49
MISSION	1,289	660	629	272	148	124
PHARR	1,060	526	534	216	127	89
SAN JUAN	590	281	309	81	43	38
WESLACO	786	384	402	228	118	110
BALANCE OF COUNTY	4,068	2,112	1,956	553	330	223
STARR	1,396	712	684	187	110	77
RIO GRANDE CITY	434	229	205	75	45	30
ROMA-LOS SAENZ	216	113	103	82	47	35
BALANCE OF COUNTY	746	370	376	30	18	12
WILLACY	406	215	191	130	64	66
RAYMONDVILLE	210	109	101	69	32	37
BALANCE OF COUNTY	196	106	90	61	32	29

Source: 1996 Texas Vital Statistics, Texas Department of Health, Austin, TX

Retail Sales in the Rio Grande Valley OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

The Rio Grande Valley is made up of two Metropolitan Statistical Areas (Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito MSA and McAllen-Edinburg-Mission MSA) and two rural counties (Starr and Willacy). The service sector employs the largest number of people in the Rio Grande Valley, followed by the trade sector.

Before the devaluation of the peso in 1994, trade activity was on the upswing as indicated by an increase in the area's retail sales figures (see table below).

Consumer spending in retail trade supports the industry's employment growth. Thousands of Winter Texans come to the Rio Grande Valley each year, boosting the area's retail establishments.

	Cameron	Hidalgo	Starr	Willacy
1987	\$ 1,162,199,944	\$ 1,701,984,225	\$ 95,638,062	\$ 49,763,807
1988	1,353,775,744	2,164,888,262	115,208,122	58,686,492
1989	1,454,067,707	2,388,955,176	137,793,832	58,062,799
1990	1,564,885,706	2,569,406,074	142,693,225	55,651,921
1991	1,675,812,670	2,847,751,473	141,806,741	53,052,792
1992	1,797,360,288	3,067,655,652	156,690,151	60,687,247
1993	1,947,832,315	3,284,024,097	182,643,557	62,226,550
1994	2,076,615,065	3,497,066,784	217,943,352	59,335,225
1995	1,921,880,068	3,154,312,420	202,567,777	59,738,106
1996	2,013,481,235	3,423,508,023	221,027,076	63,328,966

Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, Austin, TX.



Data & Information Systems Center (DISC)

DISC, at The University of Texas - Pan American, is a State Data Center Affiliate and a Member of the Texas Centers for Border Economic and Enterprise Development

Service Area:

Southernmost 19 counties of Texas: Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Cameron, Duval, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, McMullen, Nueces, Refugio, San Patricio, Starr, Webb, Willacy, and Zapata.

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- County Business Patterns
- Employment and Unemployment Data by County
- Census Tract Factbook for the Rio Grande Valley
- Street Index by Census Tract for Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy Counties
- Geographic Information System (GIS) Services
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