

NCTCOG Demographic Forecast Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is the purpose of the Demographic Forecast?

A. The NCTCOG Demographic Forecast is developed to provide a single source for infrastructure planning and resource allocations in the Metropolitan Planning Area. It was approved by the NCTCOG Executive Board on February 24, 2011.

Q. Why are only some of the counties in the NCTCOG region included in the forecast?

A. The twelve counties included in the forecast are those that are part of the metropolitan area as defined for regional transportation planning. Together, these twelve counties—Collin, Denton, Dallas, Ellis, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, Wise—make up the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). An expansion to all 16 counties in the NCTCOG region is proposed for future forecasting work.

Q. Why are NCTCOG's forecasts sometimes different from forecasts produced by other organizations?

A. Differences in forecasts can result from differences in methodology or differences in data inputs. When comparing NCTCOG forecasts with forecasts from other sources, methodology and data inputs for the various sources need to be compared as well. In addition, close attention must be paid to definitions. For example, not all definitions of employment are the same. Exactly what is meant by each item being forecast must be well understood.

Q. Where does NCTCOG get the data used in the Demographic Forecast?

A. The data comes from a variety of internal and external sources including the Census Bureau and other federal, state, and local sources. Some of the data, such as land use, are prepared by NCTCOG staff. Zone-to-zone travel times are provided by NCTCOG's Transportation Department. Some of the inputs, like the regional control totals, are prepared by independent consultants specifically for use by NCTCOG.

Q. Why is household population different from total population?

A. A household is any group of people, related or unrelated, that occupy a housing unit. A household can also consist of just one person. Thus, household population includes only persons living in housing units. This is in contrast to persons living in group quarters such as dormitories, correctional facilities, group home, and other similar facilities. Total population includes both household population *and* group quarters population.

Q. What is the difference between NCTCOG's Annual Population Estimates and Demographic Forecast?

A. The annual population figure is an estimate, which is an approximation of the past based on observed data. The forecast figure is a projection, which is an anticipation based on various assumptions about future trends.

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Q. What are the plans for production of the next Demographic Forecast?

A. NCTCOG is continually improving its forecasting program including both models and methodology. Future forecasting efforts will be designed to meet a broader range of planning needs while continuing to meet existing ones. Of particular interest is the ability to perform scenario modeling to assist the region in the assessment of potential policy questions. While forecasting work is ongoing, new forecasts are scheduled to be released no earlier than 2012 and no later than 2014.