

THE GEOGRAPHY OF JOB GAINS AND LOSSES

BY W. MICHAEL COX AND RICHARD ALM

Just being in Texas is one of Dallas-Fort Worth's biggest economic plusses. From January 2000 to June 2010, Texas had a net increase of nearly 1.1 million jobs—more than any other state by far. In fact, Texas' outsized gains eclipsed the total of the next five job-creating states: Florida, Arizona, Virginia, Utah, and Washington.

The District of Columbia and 18 other states also added employment over this 10-year span. However, 26 states suffered net job losses, led by Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and California. Combined, they saw payrolls shrink by more than 3.2 million jobs.

All told, a decade of employment creation and destruction left the nation with a net loss of 340,000 jobs. To a large extent, this disappointing result comes from taking a job market snapshot in the aftermath of a severe recession. But things would look a lot worse without Texas' positive contribution to overall U.S. employment.

These patterns of job growth reflect fundamental differences in the economic climates among the states. As the U.S. economy recovers in the next few years, Texas' advantages should keep it at the top of the heap in job creation.

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