CLARK COUNTY PROFILE

Clark County, the largest county in Nevada and home to Las Vegas, is a land of contrasts. Visitors and residents alike enjoy the stunning natural beauty of Red Rock Canyon and the Valley of Fire as well as the awe-inspiring Hoover Dam and the fast-paced Las Vegas Strip, one of the world’s premier tourist meccas. Clark County is bordered by California on the southwest, Arizona on the southeast, Utah on the northeast, Nye County on the west, and Lincoln County on the north. Clark County has five cities, Boulder City, Henderson, Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, and Mesquite, along with large unincorporated rural and urban areas.

Population

Rapid growth was the rule until the Great Recession of December 2007, after which growth slowed considerably.

Clark County accounts for 72.0% of Nevada’s population. The other population center, Washoe County, home to Reno and Sparks, accounts for 15.4%. The rest of the population is located in the state’s capital, Carson City, and in smaller towns generally located along Interstate 80 in the north, or in small rural communities spread throughout the state, accounting for 12.6% of the population.
Clark County’s population in 2009 peaked at just over 2 million residents and is distributed between five incorporated cities, Boulder City, Henderson, Las Vegas, Mesquite, and North Las Vegas, and unincorporated urban and rural areas. With a population of 832,310, unincorporated Clark County outstrips Las Vegas, whose population is 607,876. Boulder City is the smallest city with a population of 16,511.

Clark County’s population grew rapidly between 2000 and 2007, averaging 5.2% annual growth during the economic boom. The county experienced negative growth in 2008 (-0.5%) and very slow growth in 2009 (1.0%) as a result of the recession, real estate bust, and record high unemployment.

Rapid population growth among the cities of Clark County had been the rule during the past decade through 2007. North Las Vegas was the fastest growing with an 8.9% annual growth rate between 2000 and 2007. Annual growth rates in the other cities ranged between 6.6% in Mesquite to 0.4% in Boulder City. Growth slowed considerably in all areas of Clark County during 2008 and 2009 with the exception of Mesquite, which grew at a 6.6% annual rate in 2009.

Twenty-two of the 74 zip codes within Clark County experienced negative population growth during the recessionary period between 2008 and 2009. Especially hard hit were already economically distressed central-city neighborhoods as defined by zip codes 89109, 89104, and 89119, which declined by 15.4, 14.8 and 7.5 percent, respectively. The zip codes in question roughly correspond with the area located between Las Vegas Blvd. on the west, Russell on the south, Pecos on the east and Charleston on the north. A large majority of residents in 89109 and 89119 are apartment and town home dwellers. Although a slight majority of residents in 89104 live in houses, 47% live in apartments, condominiums, or mobile homes. Median household incomes in the three areas are quite low. For example, the median income of the 89104 zip code is $30,350, which is at the 9th percentile among zip codes in the region. Median incomes for the 89119 and 89109 are $32,484 (13th percentile) and $40,585 (22nd percentile), respectively.
Age, Race, and Ethnic Profile

Clark County’s population is aging and becoming more ethnically and racially diverse.

The fastest-growing age category in the population is the ‘85+’ group, which grew at an average annual rate of 10.8% per year over the last decade (from 7,518 in 1999 to 19,765 in 2009). The rest of the population groups grew between 5.3% and 3.1% per year according to rebased 2007 Age, Sex, Race, & Hispanic Origin (ASRHO) proportions to actual population estimates.

In 2009, 54.7% of county residents were white, 8.9% were African American; 8.6% were Native American, Eskimo, or Aleut (AEA non-Hispanic); or Asian/Pacific Islander (API non-Hispanic); and 27.9% were Hispanic.

Over the decade between 1999 and 2009, the population share of whites fell dramatically from 62.7% to 54.7%, while that of Hispanics increased significantly from 21.0% to 27.9%.

During the preceding decade, the Hispanic population grew at annual average rate of 7.4%, which is more than twice the rate of the non-Hispanic white population. The African American population grew at an average annual rate of 4.2%, which is roughly a percentage point higher than the non-Hispanic white population growth rate of 3.2%.
As the growth statistics would indicate, newcomers in the county were disproportionately Hispanic, Asian, and African American.

### Housing

Two-thirds of Clark County residents own their own homes, and single-family dwellings are preferred to other dwelling choices.

A majority of Clark County residents (66.8%) own their homes, compared to 33.2% who rent.

A majority of residents (60.3%) live in single-family homes, compared to apartments (21.7%) and condos (13.8%). Very few residents live in mobile homes (2.8%) or in duplexes (0.9%).

The recession and accompanying deflation in the housing market have struck Nevada particularly severely. Corelogic figures show that in Nevada 68% of mortgaged properties have negative equity (commonly referred to as “underwater”). Arizona (50%), Florida (46%), Michigan (38%), and California (33%) were the next four states in terms of percent of mortgages underwater.

To further illustrate the severity of the problem in Nevada relative to other states, consider that the overall loan-to-value ratio of mortgages in Nevada was 120% in August 2010, compared to Arizona (94%), Florida (90%), Michigan (80%), and California (70%).
Characteristics and composition of households: Median household income in Clark County exceeds that of the nation. Like in the nation as a whole, roughly half of the adult population is married.

Median household income in 2009 was $54,273 according to the local survey conducted by the CBER, which is substantially higher than the national average of $49,777 as reported by the census. Estimates using census data on household income were substantially smaller for Nevada at $51,434.


Slightly more than 13% of households reported income of less than $20,000 per year. On the other end of the income scale, 8.9% enjoyed incomes of more than $125,000 per year.

According to the local survey conducted by CBER, 36.8% of the Clark County residents have a college degree, 31.5% have some college, 22% have a high school degree, and 9.5% have less than a high school degree. The percent with a graduate degree, 14.0, is high compared to the census' American Community Survey which reports 7.2% of Clark County residents 25 years and over having a graduate or professional degree in 2009 (U.S. Census, American Fact Finder, “Clark County, Nevada Selected Social Characteristics in the United State: 2009”).

Modal household size in Clark County was two persons (36.9%). Almost 30% of households report a single person. Just over 20% of households have four or more members.

Current marital status: 50.3% of respondents reported being married, which roughly mirrors the national average of 50.7% being currently married <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2009.html>.

A large majority of households have no children (70.6%), whereas only 3.2% have four or more children. Roughly 22.5% of households have one or two children.

Just over 35% of Clark County’s households have a retiree.
Almost one-third of residents have lived in Southern Nevada for 20 or more years, followed by 27.0% with 11 to 20 years of tenure as a resident. Only 3.3% reported less than a year of residence.

**Origin of New Residents (5 or fewer years of residence):** Most new residents have migrated to Clark County from California and surrounding states in the Southwest.

According to data on redeemed drivers’ licenses, new residents migrated primarily from California (31.9%), but there is also migration from surrounding states, such as Arizona (6.6%) and Utah (3.5%), and larger states, such as Texas (4.6%), Florida (5.8%), Illinois (3.4%), and New York (3.4%).

From a regional perspective, newcomers are most likely to migrate to Clark County from California, Alaska, or Hawaii (35.0%). The Southwest and Northeast contribute roughly equal percentages of newcomers 18.8% and 18.4%, respectively.