

2015 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY ANNUAL DATA ESTIMATES FOR THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA



February 2017

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Demographic Profile</i>	2
<i>Geographic Mobility</i>	3
<i>Race and Ethnicity</i>	3
<i>Economic Profile</i>	5
<i>Workforce</i>	5
<i>Commuting</i>	5
<i>Income and Poverty</i>	6
<i>Housing Profile</i>	6
<i>Additional Info</i>	6
<i>ACS Tables</i>	7-8

Included in this report:

- American Community Survey 2015 Data for Alexandria—with Comparisons to Northern Virginia Counties, the DC Metro Area and the United States



2015 DATA HINTS AT INCREASING DIVERSITY AND GROWTH IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

Introduction

The *American Community Survey* (ACS) is a survey the U.S. Census Bureau has conducted since 2005. The survey contains more detailed socioeconomic information than the decennial census and because it is conducted continuously, provides data that is more current. However, unlike the decennial census, the survey sample is very small (about 1 in 40 households), leading to wider margins of error and accuracy when analyzing small geographic areas. Annual estimates can vary up and down from year to year and should not be used to determine an actual count of a population. The primary use of ACS data is to understand socioeconomic characteristics and to gauge trends over time. It should also be noted that due to differing methodologies, comparisons with the decennial census should be made with caution.

The Census Bureau released the ACS 5-year 2015 Estimates on December 8, 2016. The data was collected continuously between 2011-2015 and provides the first non-overlapping 5-year dataset for comparison. This is worthy of study because overlapping datasets allow the comparison of estimates over time. Staff anticipates data for 2016 will be released in December of this year.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The observations below were made by comparing the 2010 5-Year and 2015 5-Year *American Community Surveys*, as they represent two distinct sample periods suitable for comparison. The datasets do not reveal any dramatic changes in Alexandria's population, but they do hint at some trends outlined below. Because of the small samples on which these findings are based, these indications should be viewed with caution until confirmed by additional years or other sources of data.

- ☐ The city's share of seniors in the population has not yet shown significant increase, but is expected to gain significantly by the end of this decade with the number of baby boomers reaching age 65 each year.
- ☐ Families and households with children under 18 seem to be increasing as a share of Alexandria's households, compared to the city's unusually low share over the past two decades.
- ☐ Household size appears to be increasing and is now estimated to be between 2.18 and 2.24 citywide.
- ☐ The citywide birth rate has increased, particularly among white women. More women are staying in or joining the workforce after childbirth than previously.
- ☐ Alexandria continues to become more ethnically and racially diverse.
- ☐ The Hispanic or Latino population continues to be the fastest growing population of the racial and ethnic groups identified on the survey.
- ☐ The foreign-born population shows signs of increase.
- ☐ Median household income has gained only marginally.
- ☐ The share of renter-occupied housing appears to be increasing and conversely, owner-occupied housing units decreasing.

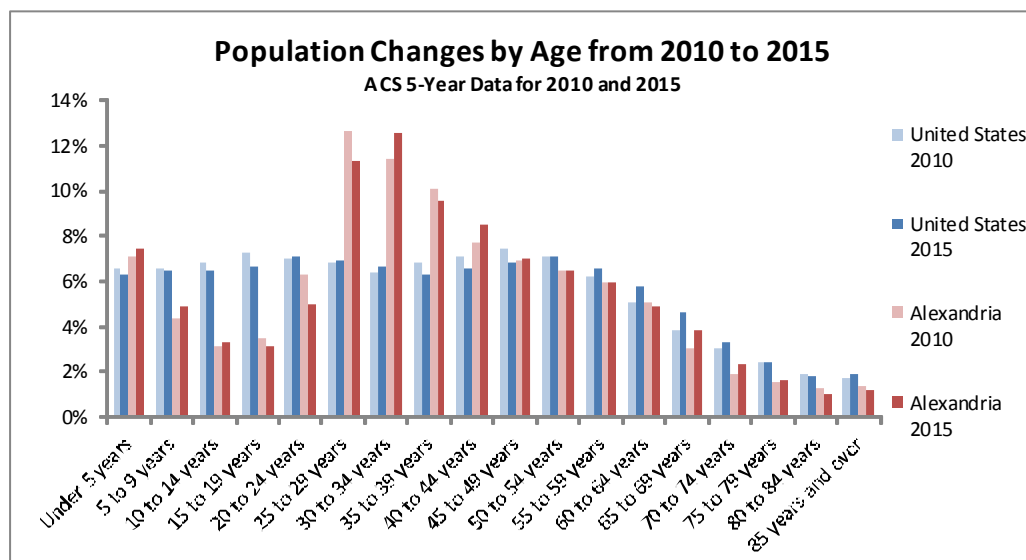


Family households and households with children both increased in Alexandria from their share in 2010.



DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

- **The Census Bureau estimates the total population of the city as 153,511 in 2015.** It has consistently been staff's observation that the annual population estimates released between decennial censuses are inflated due to their methodology. Other Northern Virginia jurisdictions have similar discrepancies, as the region is unique from other parts of the country in terms of its demographics. Staff estimates that the population in 2015 was 147,650. This is based on observations regarding household size and the quantity of housing units completed since the last census count in 2010, which showed a population of 139,966.
- **The median age of Alexandria's population is estimated to have risen to 36.0** from the 2010 median age of 35.7. This reflects the aging of the baby boomers, who are now between the ages of 53 and 71. The national median age was estimated at 37.6 in 2015, up from 36.9 in 2010.
- **The share of the population 65 and older showed a slight increase** from 9.2% in 2010 to 9.8% in 2015. The share in this age group continues to be low compared to other age groups in the city and to the national percentage, which has grown from 12.7% to 14.1% in the same timeframe. The low share compared to the national average is in part due to the relatively high cost of housing in the city and the competition from workers seeking housing close to employment centers. However, the senior age group is expected to continue growing in Alexandria over the next twenty years as the baby boomers enter this age group in greater numbers and if Alexandria remains an attractive location for retirement and aging in place.
- **The estimated share of the school age population increased** from 9.7% to 10.3% from 2010 to 2015. Nationally, the share of population in this age group remained stable at around 17%. Actual school enrollment is the most reliable predictor of future school enrollment in the short term, which has shown significant enrollment increase in the past 4 to 5 years. The city continues to work with ACPS to predict and forecast future school enrollment.



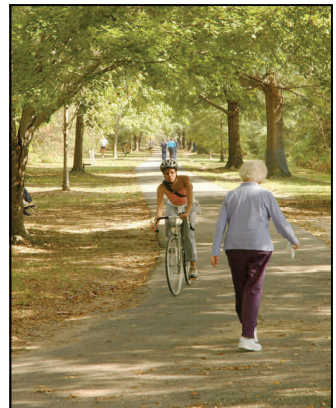
- **The birth rate appears to be slowing** from a peak of 19.0 births per 1,000 people in 2012 to 18.6 in 2014. **Fertility in Alexandria may be increasing**, as it went from 55 to 65 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 50 years old. The change is not statistically significant and should be used with caution. The city uses birth data from the Virginia Department of Health to track births as it is more accurate and timely than U.S. Census data.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE CONTINUED

- **Family households and households with children both increased in Alexandria** from their share in 2010. 48.4% of Alexandria's households were estimated to be family households in 2015, up from 45.5% in 2010. 22.7% of households included one or more people under the age of 18, up from 20.1% in 2010.
- **Children under 18 living in rental housing has increased** from 34.9% in 2010 to 39.9% in 2015. **Foreign-born population under 18 also increased** from 8.6% to 10.3%.



The share of the population 65 and older is estimated to be 9.8% in Alexandria in 2015.



GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY

Mobility is often seen as an economic indicator, showing that people have the financial means to move, rent, and buy property. Alexandrians are among the most mobile of communities in the U.S. An estimated 22.8% of Alexandrians had moved into their current home within the past year, compared to 15.2% for the region and 14.9% for the United States as a whole. This is a slight increase in mobility among Alexandrians since 2010, which showed 22% had moved into their house within the past year.

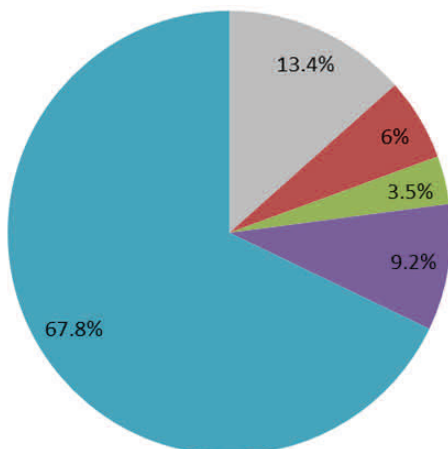
While a number of Alexandrians moved from another home within the city or within Virginia, 9.9% moved here from a different state or abroad in the past year, compared to 5.4% for the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and only 2.9% for the U.S. as a whole. An estimated 27.9% of Alexandrians were foreign born in 2015, compared to 24.4% in 2010, a statistically significant increase that appears to reverse a trend of slight decline in foreign-born share of residents from 2000 to 2010. For the U.S. as a whole, foreign-born population rose to an estimated 13.2% in 2015 from 12.7% in 2010, a statistically significant increase.

Foreign-born Alexandrians come from all regions of the world, however since 2010 there has been a significant decrease in the number of foreign-born individuals who were born in Africa while there is an increase in the population born in Asia. This is consistent with the region as a whole. Other world regions of birth have not shown any significant trend locally.



RACE AND ETHNICITY

The Hispanic share of the population rose slightly in the 2015 estimates, while the African American population decreased. The Hispanic share of the population rose to an estimated 16.6% of the population from 15% in 2010. The estimated Black or African American share dropped to 20.9% in 2015 from 21.3% in 2010. The estimated non-Hispanic white share of the population fell to 52.4% in 2015 from 54.9% in 2010. Nationwide, the non-Hispanic white share of population fell to 62.3% of the population from 64.7% in 2010.



Languages Spoken at Home Alexandria, VA

2011-2015 ACS 5 Year Data

- Spanish
- Other Indo-European Languages
- Asian and Pacific Island Languages
- Other Languages
- English

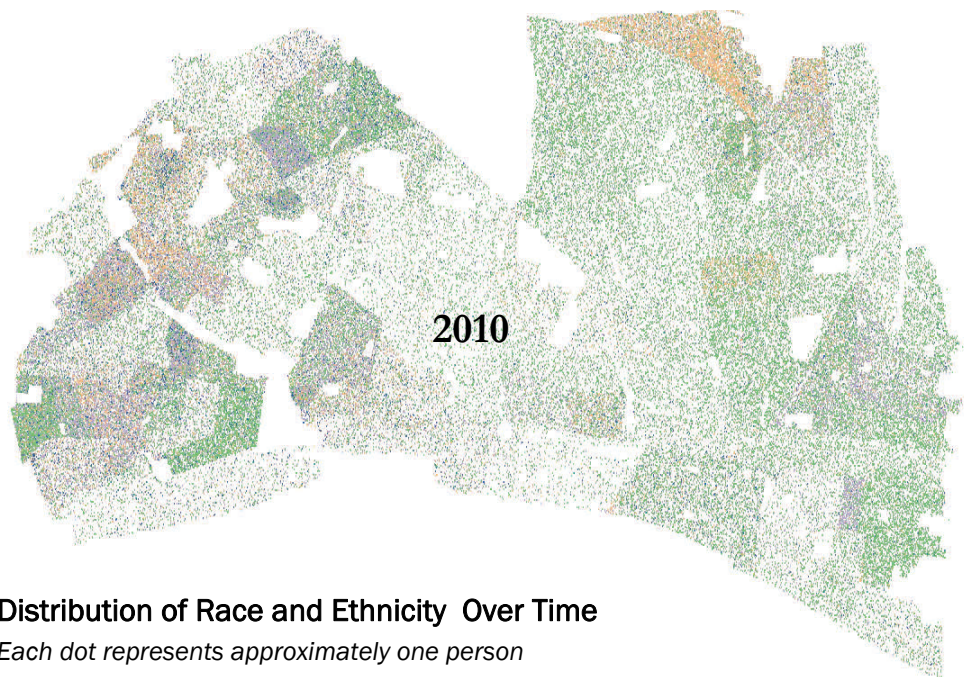
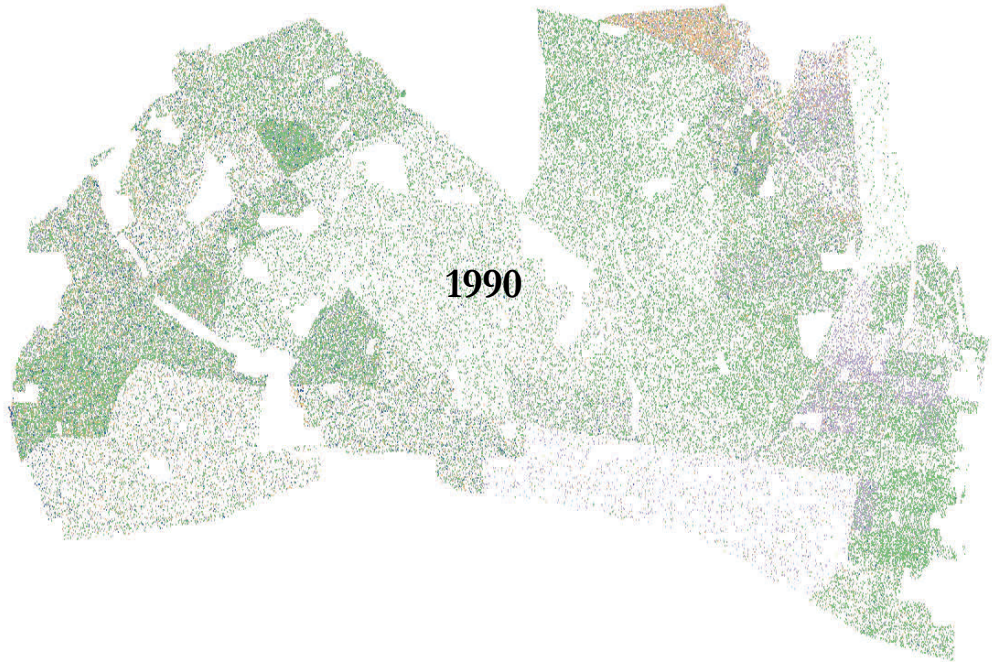


36% of firms in Alexandria are minority-owned.



RACE AND ETHNICITY CONTINUED

Not only do the maps below show the areas of relatively recent residential development and population growth, such as the Eisenhower East neighborhood, but they show decreasing racial and ethnic diversity in the Braddock Road, Old Town, and Arlandria neighborhoods and increasing diversity in the western portion of Alexandria. It should be noted that during this timeframe, the U.S. Census Bureau added another racial/ethnic group to the decennial census and that is "two or more". This means that individuals who previously identified as one of their racial or ethnic heritages might now identify as two or more beginning the 2000 decennial census.



Distribution of Race and Ethnicity Over Time

Each dot represents approximately one person

- | | |
|---|--|
| ● Asian or Pacific Islander | ● Hispanic |
| ● African American | ● White |

Source: Decennial Census Data

ECONOMIC PROFILE

Labor force participation of Alexandria's population aged 16 years and over was estimated at 79.5% in 2015, and continues to be very high compared to the national level of 63.7%. Unemployment as measured by the American Community Survey (ACS) has risen to an estimated 4.5% compared to 3.9% in 2010. The national unemployment rate in 2015 was 8.3% according to the ACS.

WORKFORCE

ACS data shows little change in the breakdown of occupations held by Alexandria residents. Just over half of the employed population works in a "management, business, science and arts occupation" and around 15% work in the service industry. Another 17.4% work in sales or office occupations. The only industry that has seen significant growth according to the ACS is "educational services, health care and social assistance". Other industries, such as information, manufacturing, finance and insurance, and real estate appear to be declining in their employment share of the local population.

COMMUTING



Slightly more individuals work from home in Alexandria than at the national average. Working at home has shown to be an increasing trend, with an estimated 5% working at home compared with just 3.6% in 2010. Commuting by public transportation by workers living in Alexandria has remained stable, at 21.7% in 2015, down from 22.3% in 2010. Nationally, 5.1% take public transportation to work. Those biking to work showed a small uptick from 0.9% to 1.2% in

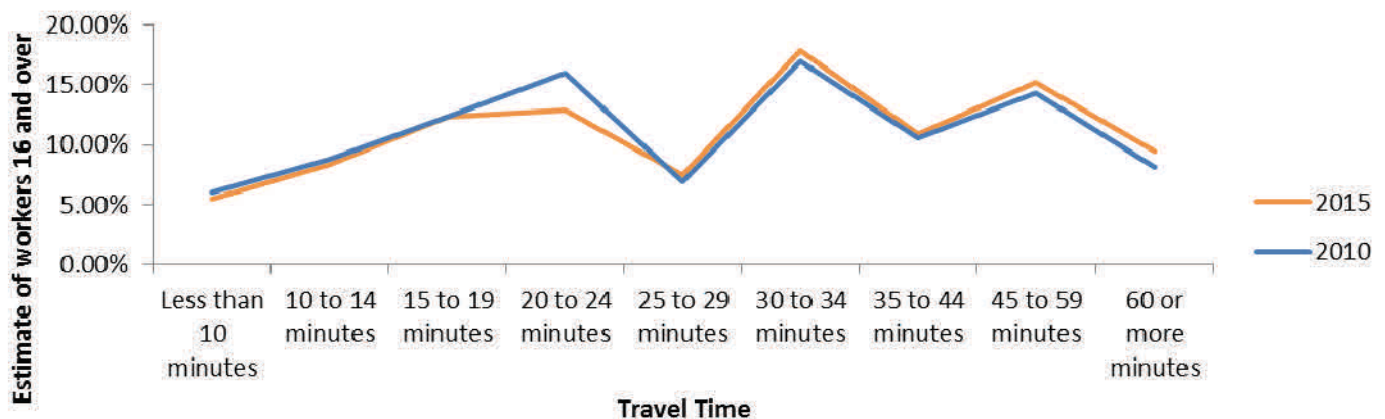
2015 as did those taking taxi, motorcycle or other means which rose from 0.9% in 2010 to 1.3% in 2015. Travel times to work are shifting, and the mean travel time to work in 2015 for Alexandrians was 30.8 minutes compared 29.6 minutes in 2010. The national average is 25.9 minutes.



The average travel time to work is 30.8 minutes for Alexandrians.



Travel Time to Work in Alexandria, VA





Over 3,000 multi-family units have been constructed in the last five years.



INCOME AND POVERTY

The city's estimated median household income rose in 2015 to \$89,134 from \$87,877 in 2010 (adjusted for inflation to 2015 dollars). Median household income for the region was down from \$93,109 in 2010 to \$92,324 in 2015. The nation's median household income was estimated to be \$53,889 in 2015.

The percentage of families with related children with incomes below the poverty line was estimated at 10.7% for 2015, up from 9.8% in 2010. These differences from year to year are within the range of sampling variation and do not indicate a significant change or trend. The share of families with children in poverty is estimated at 8.5% for the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area as a whole and 18% for the nation.

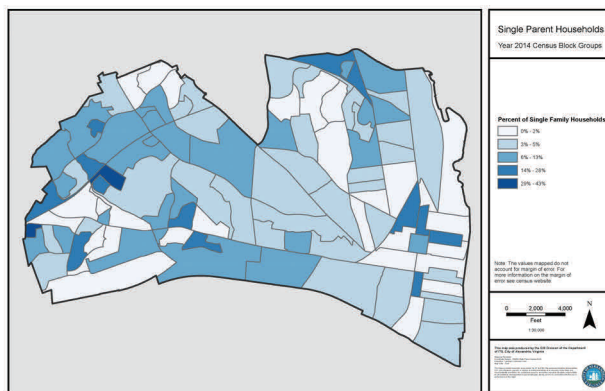
HOUSING PROFILE

Median monthly housing costs have increased since 2010, even when adjusted for inflation. In 2010, the median monthly housing cost was \$1650 (in 2015 dollars); as of 2015 it has risen to \$1706. The bulk of this increase can be attributed to renter-occupied housing, which has increased in median monthly costs from \$1,446 in 2010 to \$1,555 in 2015. Owner-occupied housing, on the other hand, has seen a decrease in its median monthly costs, from \$2380 in 2010 to \$2,217 in 2015. All values are adjusted for inflation to reflect dollar values in 2015.

The American Community Survey shows an estimated owner housing vacancy rate of 0.5% for Alexandria in 2015, down from 1.7% in 2010. The current rate is an extremely low vacancy rate and shows a tight market for ownership housing. The rental housing vacancy rate is estimated at 3.9% in 2015, down from 5.1% in 2010. Rental vacancy in Alexandria's shows a strong demand for rental housing, even among the thousands of units delivered in the past few years and the rising rents. Both vacancy rates are lower than the Washington metro area average.

42.5% of occupied housing units are estimated to be owner-occupied in 2015, down sharply from 45.7% in 2010. 57.5% are renter-occupied, compared to 54.3% in 2010. This change since 2000 reflects new construction and changes in the number of investor-owned single-family units and condominiums that are rented. Both ownership and rental housing continue to be constructed in the city.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



The Department of Planning & Zoning has updated its Demographics page. The updated page includes new maps that display population characteristics by census block group (see example, left) as well as annual population and employment estimates. Estimates such as these are part of Alexandria's role in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOG) co-operative forecast. Check out the updated webpage here:

www.alexandriava.gov/demographics

For questions or additional information about the data provided in this memorandum, please contact Mary Catherine Collins, Urban Planner, at 703.746.3832.



AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2015 ANNUAL DATA FOR ALEXANDRIA—WITH COMPARISONS TO NORTHERN VIRGINIA COUNTIES, THE DC METRO AREA AND THE UNITED STATES

Demographics, Geographic Mobility, National Origin	Alexandria 2015	Alexandria 2010	Change from 2010	Arlington County	Fairfax County	Prince Wm County	DC Metro Area	United States
Total Population ¹	149,315	133,647		223,945	1,128,722	437,271	5,949,403	316,515,021
Age 0-4	7.5%	7.1%	+0.4%	6.0%	6.8%	7.9%	6.7%	6.3%
Age 5-17	10.3%	9.7%	+0.6%	10.7%	17.3%	20.2%	16.7%	17.0%
Age 65+	9.8%	9.2%	+0.6%	9.1%	11.1%	7.9%	11.0%	14.1%
Median Age	36.0	35.7		33.9	37.4	34.0	36.3	37.6
Births per 1000 women age 15 to 50	62	55	+7	53	53	69	53	53
Households ²	66,879	63,738	+3,141	98,441	392,355	136,794	2,135,657	116,926,305
Single-person Households	41.9%	45.3%	-3.4%	39.8%	22.4%	18.0%	27.1%	27.6%
Average Household Size	2.21	2.08	+0.13	2.24	2.85	3.17	2.74	2.64
Family Households	48.4%	45.5%	+2.9%	46.5%	71.4%	77.4%	66.0%	66.1%
Families with Own Children Under 18	21.3%	18.5%	+2.8%	20.2%	34.8%	42.3%	31.5%	28.9%
Average family size	3.05	2.96	+0.09	3.05	3.37	3.60	3.35	3.24
Residence one year ago for population 1 year old and older								
Same house	77.2%	77.9%	-0.7%	78.6%	85.3%	85.5%	84.8%	85.1%
Different house in the U.S.	19.9%	20.3%	-0.4%	21.5%	13%	13.6%	14.0%	14.9%
Same county	6.5%	6.2%	+0.3%	7.6%	6.8%	6.3%	7.2%	8.8%
Different county	13.4%	14.1%	-0.7%	11.7%	6.2%	7.3%	6.8%	5.5%
Same state	6.4%	5.8%	+0.6%	4.2%	2.7%	4.1%	2.7%	3.2%
Different state	7.0%	8.3%	-1.3%	7.5%	3.5%	3.2%	4.1%	2.3%
Abroad	2.9%	1.8%	+1.1%	2.1%	1.7%	0.9%	1.3%	0.6%
Place of Birth								
Native	70.5%	72.4%	-2.6%	78.6%	70.0%	77.2%	78.0%	86.9%
Born in United States	68.1%	70.0%	-2.7%	74.3%	67.5%	74.5%	76.0%	85.5%
Born in state of residence	20.8%	22.0%	-5.5%	19.4%	27.1%	35.4%	31.6%	58.8%
Different state	47.4%	48.0%	-1.3%	54.9%	40.4%	39.1%	44.4%	26.7%
Puerto Rico, U.S. Islands, abroad to American parent(s)	2.3%	2.4%	-4.2%	2.4%	2.5%	2.7%	2.0%	1.4%
Foreign born	29.5%	27.6%	+6.9%	23.3%	30.0%	22.8%	22.0%	13.1%
Race and Ethnicity								
People identifying with one race	95.4%	96.9%	-1.5%	97.0%	95.4%	94.7%	96.2%	97.0%
White alone	64.1%	63.4%	+0.7%	72.1%	62.9%	61.4%	55.5%	73.6%
Black or African American alone	21.4%	22.0%	-0.6%	8.5%	9.4%	20.5%	25.4%	12.6%
Asian alone	6.6%	5.9%	+0.7%	9.9%	18.4%	7.8%	9.7%	5.1%
All others	3.4%	5.6%	-2.2%	6.3%	4.8%	5.1%	5.7%	4.8%
More than one race	4.6%	3.1%	+1.5%	3.0%	4.6%	5.3%	3.8%	3.0%
Hispanic (of any race)	16.6%	15.0%	+1.6%	15.5%	16.1%	21.5%	14.7%	17.1%
Non-Hispanic white	52.4%	49.5%	+2.9%	63.0%	52.6%	46.3%	47.3%	62.3%

1. American Community Survey intercensal estimates of total population for Alexandria are different from City estimates of population. The Census Bureau recommends that the American Community Survey be used as an estimate of the percent share of various components of population, not numbers of people.
2. Definitions and methods of measurement differ between the American Community Survey and the 2010 Decennial Census. Comparison of Decennial Census data to American Community Survey data on some population characteristics including housing occupancy and household size can be misleading.

AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2015 CONTINUED

Technology, Labor and Economy, Housing	Alexandria 2015	Alexandria 2010	Change from 2010	Arlington County	Fairfax County	Prince Wm County	DC Metro Area	United States
Worker Data by Place of Residence								
Civilian Labor Force Unemployed	3.5%	3.5%	+0.5%	2.8%	3.5%	3.9%	4.5%	5.2%
Commuting by Single-Occupant Vehicle	58.7%	60.6%	-1.9%	54.2%	71.7%	74.1%	65.9%	76.4%
Commuting by Public Transportation	21.7%	22.3%	-0.6%	26.4%	9.8%	5.8%	14.3%	5.1%
Worked at Home	5.0%	3.6%	+1.4%	5.8%	5.8%	3.8%	5.0%	4.1%
Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)	30.8	29.6	4.1%	28.1	32.0	39.6	34.3	25.9
Worker Data by Place of Employment								
Workers 16 years of age and older	99,181	94,700	4.7%	190,029	614,465	137,413	3,277,908	159,913,288
Commuting by Single-Occupant Vehicle	66.3%	69%	-2.7%	56.8%	79.5%	77.6%	n/a	n/a
Commuting by Public Transportation	12.9%	12.7%	+0.2%	22.5%	3.3%	1.7%	n/a	n/a
Median Household Income ³	\$89,134	\$87,877	+1.4%	\$105,763	\$112,552	\$98,657	\$92,324	\$53,889
Median Family Income ³	\$109,175	\$102,017	+7.0%	\$140,838	\$129,805	\$107,304	\$108,141	\$66,011
Percent of Population in Poverty	8.3%	7.8%	+0.5%	9.0%	6.0%	6.7%	8.3%	15.5%
Percent of Families with Children in Poverty	10.7%	9.8%	+0.9%	9.1%	6.0%	7.3%	8.5%	18.0%
Percent of Under-18 in Poverty	12.8%	n/a	n/a	11.4%	7.6%	9.8%	10.6%	21.7%
Owners with mortgage paying 30% or more of income	25.4%	33.3%	-7.9%	23.8%	26.8%	28.4%	30.2%	32.5%
Median Rent ³	\$1,555	\$1,569	-0.9%	\$1,827	\$1,747	\$1,547	\$1,498	\$928
Renters paying 30% or more of income	43.8%	41.1%	+2.7%	39.6%	45.0%	52.1%	48.6%	51.8%
Percent Owner –Occupied Households	42.5%	45.7%	+3.2%	44.4%	67.7%	71.5%	63.3%	63.9%
Percent Renter –Occupied Households	57.5%	54.3%	+3.2%	55.6%	32.3%	28.5%	36.7%	36.1%
Ownership vacancy rate	0.5%	1.7%	-1.2%	0.6%	0.9%	1.1%	1.2%	1.9%
Rental vacancy rate	3.9%	5.1%	-1.2%	5.5%	3.4%	3.7%	4.8%	6.4%

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2. Definitions and methods of measurement differ between the American Community Survey and the 2010 Decennial Census. Comparison of Decennial Census data to American Community Survey data on some population characteristics including housing occupancy and household size can be misleading.
3. Dollar values for earlier years are adjusted to 2015 dollars.