

LAEDC

*Economic Vitality,
Trade & Jobs*

SAN DIEGO COUNTY PROFILE

- **San Diego County** covers 4,526 square miles, and had a July 1, 2005 population of 3,057,000; an increase of 552,100 persons since 1990. The County's population would make it slightly larger than Nassau-Suffolk, NY MSA.
- A quick **demographic profile** of San Diego County indicates that: 26.7% of the population is Hispanic, 54.9% white non-Hispanic, and 5.4% black. 83% of the population have a high school diploma or more, while 30% have a bachelor's degree or more. (2000 Census)
- There is a diverse **economic base** in San Diego County (based on the concept of "export" of goods or services) using 2005 average employment as a measure. The leading industries were: 1.) tourism with 116,100 jobs; 2.) technology with 94,700; 3.) business & professional services with 48,300; 4.) direct international trade with 45,000; and 4.) wholesale trade with 36,600. The military is also a major force in the County's economy.
- The "**new economy**" of San Diego County often is technology driven, and would include bio-med, communications, and computer science. This builds on the vibrant technological research capabilities of the County's business base and UC San Diego.
- San Diego is a large **manufacturing center** in the U.S., with 104,200 workers in these activities in 2005. The largest components were computer & electronic products with 26,400 jobs and transportation products with 13,900. San Diego also has the only large shipbuilding industry on the West Coast.
- **International trade** is a major component of the area's economy. The "San Diego Customs District" is a major channel for U.S.-Mexico trade. In 2005, total two-way trade at the customs district reached \$43.4 billion, with Mexico accounting for \$36.7 billion or 84.5%.
- **Tourism** is a major source of income for San Diego County. Besides its own tourist attractions such as the SeaWorld, San Diego Zoo (and Wild Animal Park), and Legoland California, San Diego also benefits economically from travelers going to and from Mexico. Several cruise ships also set sail or make port calls at San Diego.
- **Higher and specialized education** is a strength of San Diego County, with 49 college and university campuses, including University of California, San Diego (UCSD). UCSD is credited as a major driving force behind the region's technology industry. San Diego State University also makes a significant contribution.
- **Transportation** service in San Diego County is extensive. There is a major commercial airport -- the San Diego International Airport (a.k.a. Lindbergh Field) -- with domestic services and international flights to Canada and Mexico. Besides the extensive freeway system, there is also heavy rail services including Amtrak, Metrolink (connecting Oceanside with Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties), and the "Coaster" (between Oceanside and San Diego). Rail freight service is provided by BNSF.
- San Diego County is also home to several **military bases**, including Camp Pendleton (Marines), Miramar (Marines Corp aviation), and several naval stations for ships, submarines, and naval aviation. San Diego is also the home port of the U.S. Third Fleet, which covers the Eastern Pacific Ocean. Direct DoD spending accounts for 13% of San Diego's economy.
- **Quality of life** options in San Diego County are numerous. These range from professional sports to personal recreation at beaches, marinas, and mountain resorts. The 1,200-acre Balboa Park, a large urban park in the heart of San Diego, is home to several museums and the San Diego Zoo. The SeaWorld and the San Diego Zoo (and Wild Animal Park) attract visitors from near and afar, and Legoland California is a perennial favorite among children. There is a growing array of fine and performing arts activities, as well as Indian gaming.

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