



**April's issue of *Houston: The Economy at a Glance* focuses on population growth, the region's airports and an update on energy.**

Released this week, the April edition of the Greater Houston Partnership's *Houston: The Economy at a Glance*, highlights newly released Census figures for Houston's population, recent employment trends, the Houston Airport System's growth in international service and an energy industry update.

**A Growing Population:** "The Houston metro area led the nation in population growth last year, adding nearly 157,000 residents," wrote Patrick Jankowski, Partnership Senior Vice President of Research, in the report. "Based on recent trends, Houston's population will likely exceed 6.6 million by mid-2015." A number of factors have spurred Houston's recent population growth including a booming economy, corporate moves, robust job growth, a better image, and in situ growth.

**International Gateway:** Houston is a key global gateway destination with international passengers for both business and leisure. Since June 2010, 10 foreign-flag carriers launched 12 new international routes, including service to Istanbul, Stavanger, Santiago, Munich, and Punta Cana. The growth in international travel will continue through 2015 with five airlines announcing plans to launch operations from Houston: Volaris, Spirit Airways, Nippon Airways, EVA Airways, and WestJet. "The opening of the five-gate international concourse at Hobby Airport in October and the modernization of the Mickey Leland International Terminal at IAH should further bolster international travel," added Jankowski.

**Energy Update:** In its March 2015 Short-Term Energy Outlook, the U.S. Energy Information Administration forecasted WTI to average \$52.15 in 2015 and \$70.00 in 2016. "With the slowdown in activity, U.S. production should soon decline helping balance supply and demand and bring some stability to the industry," said Jankowski.

What's keeping Houston's economy going strong despite the energy slump? Thriving international trade activity. "Houston has led the nation in exports two years in a row, shipping more goods and commodities overseas than New York, Los Angeles or Chicago," according to the report.

*Houston: The Economy at a Glance* is a free monthly publication, which offers the latest data along with expert commentary on the Houston region's economy.