

Demographics Analysis for Polk County

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Population

Polk County outpaced the state and nation in population growth between the July 2021 and April 2020 estimates, growing 3.90% as compared to 1.10% and 0.10% for the state and nation, respectively. Within the larger cities (populations greater than 5,000), growth is being led by Davenport, Haines City, and Auburndale, with all more than 8% estimated growth over the period. The fast growth experienced in the county is a stark contrast to the national growth which remained nearly flat during COVID-19 as birth rates remained low and immigration fell. Most of the growth experienced in pockets of the country were driven by relocations as workers found new flexibility brought on by work from home allowances. As some normalcy returns to labor markets, it is yet to be seen if the population shifts will hold in the long run.

Population Proportion by City

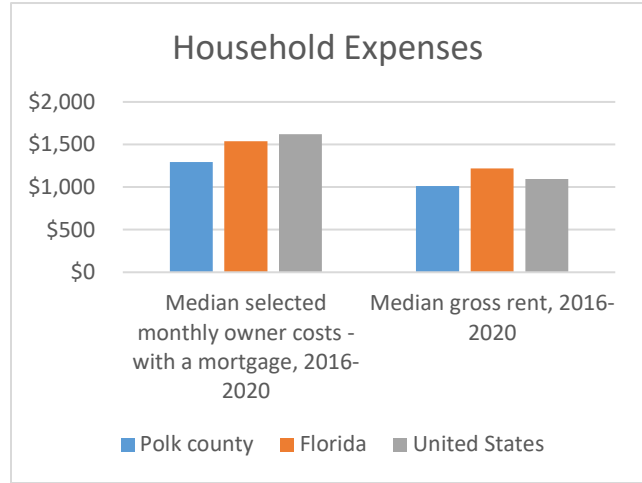
	2021	2020
Auburndale	2.31%	2.16%
Bartow	2.58%	2.66%
Davenport	1.45%	1.28%
Fort Meade	0.68%	0.71%
Haines City	3.86%	3.69%
Lake Alfred	0.86%	0.88%
Lakeland	15.32%	15.43%
Lake Wales	2.21%	2.26%
Winter Haven	7.00%	6.93%
Other	63.72%	64.01%

Age

The county's age distribution reflects a larger portion of younger people (22.1%, under 18) than the state (19.7%) and a larger population of older people (19.8%, 65 and over) than the nation (16.8%). Both Florida (21.1%) and the Polk County have older populations than the national average, and while this had been a growing portion of the population in prior years, that trend reversed during COVID-19 as older populations were disproportionately impacted. The larger portions of younger and older people negatively impact our economy as it results in a smaller population of working age people, as reflected in the smaller labor force population (55.3%, 58.6% and 63.0% for the county, state and nation based on 2016 – 2020 data, respectively). The long-run trend of an aging population will be partly responsible for the increasing strain on social security, other social services, and the medical system. It should be noted that we saw a decline in expected longevity over the past two years, reversing years of increasing longevity. This will likely stabilize and begin increasing again in the coming years. Amongst the higher growth cities, Auburndale, Davenport and Haines City have the lowest portion of 65+ population, with 16.8%, 11.7% and 15.6%, respectively. This is likely due to the growth being driven by younger families moving to the area, and should contribute positively to economic growth.

Households

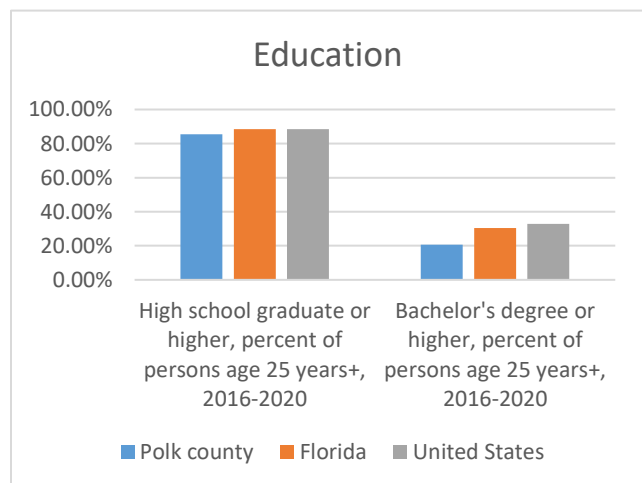
Polk County continues to have higher than average homeowner occupancy (69.5%, 66.2% and 64.4% for the county, state, and nation, respectively) and lower than average costs for both homeowners and renters. The lower property values during the survey years (2016 – 2020) reflect the relative affordability of ownership in Polk County, but do not yet reflect the large increasing in property values experienced during 2021. There is a wide range in average home values across the county during the period with a low of \$92,900 in Fort Meade to a high of \$191,000 in Auburndale, in comparison to median values for the county, state and county of \$162,400, \$232,000, and \$229,800, respectively.



Polk County has also seen meaningful growth in taxable property values, with total value increasing from \$43.6B in 2021 to \$51.4B in 2022, with over \$2.2B of that attributable to new construction. While the largest dollar value growth comes from Lakeland, the largest percentage growth comes from Davenport (40.3%) and Haines City (29.4.0%). The large increase in taxable value should provide a meaningful revenue increase for the county to alleviate the growing costs that come with the population growth the county has experienced.

Education

Polk County continues to trail the state and nation in both high school and college degrees. The portion of the population with bachelor's degrees or higher increased (0.4%) to 20.6% while the state has 30.5% (up 0.6%) and the nation has 32.9% (up 0.8%). Part of this is driven by the larger portion of older population, but there remains a meaningful deficit. There is variation across the cities, with several at or below 15% and Lakeland just under 26%. Continued efforts to address education, both formal and career training, will be critical for maintaining a productive workforce in the county.



Medical

Both Polk County (16.0%) and the state (15.1%) trail the nation (9.8%) in the percentage of people without health insurance. The rates improved across all three geographies and the gap between the county and nation has closed somewhat since 2021. The size of the gap is partly driven by state policy to not expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act as other states have and the state's lower income. The improvements are likely a combination of workers returning to work and increased benefit eligibility during 2021 due to COVID-19 rules. The level of uninsured people in the county may drive up future medical costs and possible bad debts for local hospitals as many people cope with ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and other serious health conditions.

Business/Economy

As previously mentioned, Polk County lags the state and nation in labor force participation, partially due to a larger portion of older population, but partially due other factors, including education. Per capita retail expenditures are roughly proportional to per capita income, as compared to national averages, albeit with lower per capita income. Polk County also has higher than average poverty, with 14.4% (up 0.4%) of the population living in poverty, as compared to 13.1% (up 0.4%) and 11.6% (up 0.2%) in the state and nation, respectively. There is wide variation among the cities as well, with poverty reaching a high of 19.8% in Haines City and low of 7.1% in Davenport. The economic stimulus and enhanced unemployment benefits of the past 2 year have contributed to some of the changes in poverty levels as households still retain a higher level of savings than 2019, however, increased inflation during 2021/2022 is straining household budgets and will likely burn through that additional cushion. Federal Reserve action to slow down inflation will take time to directly improve household budgets and may lead to other negative economic impacts should they act too aggressively.

Summary

Overall, Polk County, like much of the nation, is feeling the ripple effects of the economics actions taken during COVID-19. The Federal stimulus which kept many households going underwater during the 2020 shutdowns lead to an excess of cash circulating in the economy, combined with a heavily disrupted global supply chain leading to underproduction of goods over the past two years have led to the highest inflation numbers in decades. As the Federal Reserve tries to slow down inflation without causing a massive recession, we are still experiencing very tight labor markets, which puts pressure on employers to increase wages, driving up production costs, further driving up prices and inflation. We should expect this cycle to continue for at least the next few months as the largest jumps in inflation from the past year cycle out of the data and we rebalance at a new normal for prices and wages.

Census QuickFacts 2022

	Polk county	Florida	United States	Auburndale	Bartow	Davenport	Fort Meade	Haines City	Lake Alfred	Lakeland	Lake Wales	Winter Haven
Population												
Population Estimates, July 1, 2021, (V2021)	753,520	21,781,128	331,893,745	17,412	19,447	10,953	5,148	29,070	6,507	115,425	16,684	52,710
Population estimates base, April 1, 2020, (V2021)	725,046	21,538,187	331,449,281	15,656	19,263	9,299	5,117	26,750	6,391	111,881	16,369	50,247
Population, percent change - April 1, 2020 (estimates base) to July 1, 2021, (V2021)	3.90%	1.10%	0.10%	11.20%	1.00%	17.80%	0.60%	8.70%	3.20%	3.20%	1.90%	4.90%
Population, Census, April 1, 2020	725,046	21,538,187	331,449,281	15,616	19,309	9,043	5,100	26,669	6,374	112,641	16,361	49,219
Age												
Persons under 5 years, percent	5.60%	5.10%	5.70%	7.30%	7.30%	6.80%	8.10%	6.10%	6.20%	5.60%	6.60%	6.20%
Persons under 18 years, percent	22.10%	19.70%	22.20%	25.00%	23.70%	27.90%	24.00%	25.30%	23.40%	19.50%	22.80%	20.70%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	19.80%	21.10%	16.80%	16.80%	15.00%	11.70%	22.90%	15.60%	18.40%	22.20%	24.00%	25.50%
Gender, Race, Military and Foreign Born												
Female persons, percent	50.70%	50.80%	50.50%	52.50%	50.40%	55.70%	48.70%	52.90%	56.70%	51.80%	54.20%	52.70%
White alone, percent	78.00%	76.90%	75.80%	81.60%	66.70%	70.40%	73.40%	60.10%	60.00%	70.90%	62.60%	64.50%
Black or African American alone, percent	16.80%	17.00%	13.60%	14.30%	19.90%	23.00%	16.80%	25.90%	24.60%	19.40%	23.80%	23.80%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	0.70%	0.50%	1.30%	0.20%	0.30%	0.00%	0.80%	0.20%	0.00%	0.40%	0.10%	0.20%
Asian alone, percent	1.90%	3.00%	6.10%	0.90%	3.50%	1.30%	0.10%	0.50%	8.70%	2.00%	2.40%	2.40%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.10%	0.10%	0.30%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%	0.10%
Two or More Races, percent	2.50%	2.40%	2.90%	1.40%	5.90%	3.00%	1.70%	8.10%	3.90%	4.80%	8.70%	5.60%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	27.40%	26.80%	18.90%	17.10%	17.90%	45.00%	32.40%	42.70%	13.70%	16.30%	23.80%	19.50%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	53.90%	52.70%	59.30%	67.00%	56.20%	30.80%	49.50%	30.50%	49.10%	59.90%	51.00%	52.40%
Veterans, 2016-2020	47,663	1,416,472	17,835,456	772	1,364	114	396	1,005	668	8,372	1,612	3,658
Foreign born persons, percent, 2016-2020	10.50%	20.80%	13.50%	8.60%	6.90%	17.50%	9.60%	19.00%	17.30%	11.10%	8.20%	8.30%
Households												
Housing units, July 1, 2021, (V2021)	327,799	10,054,457	142,153,010	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2016-2020	69.50%	65.30%	64.40%	64.00%	64.00%	92.10%	73.40%	64.40%	66.10%	54.80%	64.00%	60.20%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2016-2020	\$162,400	\$229,800	\$191,000	\$191,000	\$157,300	\$201,300	\$92,900	\$160,500	\$135,400	\$160,400	\$80,700	\$162,400
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2016-2020	\$1,295	\$1,539	\$1,621	\$1,355	\$1,297	\$1,385	\$1,149	\$1,359	\$1,382	\$1,294	\$1,282	\$1,314
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2016-2020	\$432	\$513	\$509	\$358	\$383	\$367	\$369	\$343	\$472	\$493	\$433	\$433
Median gross rent, 2016-2020	\$1,014	\$1,218	\$1,096	\$836	\$848	\$1,435	\$772	\$1,023	\$963	\$1,056	\$883	\$946
Building permits, 2021	13,071	213,494	1,736,982	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Households, 2016-2020	240,879	7,991,313	122,354,219	5,141	6,546	1,503	2,164	7,640	2,218	41,750	6,363	15,423
Persons per household, 2016-2020	2.88	2.62	2.6	3.13	3.17	3.57	2.84	3.27	2.69	2.52	2.74	2.74
Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2016-2020	85.10%	84.90%	86.20%	87.70%	85.80%	86.00%	80.10%	86.30%	87.90%	89.20%	84.00%	81.40%
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2016-2020	22.90%	29.40%	21.50%	17.80%	16.50%	54.60%	27.00%	47.30%	24.60%	17.30%	19.90%	20.70%
Education												
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2016-2020	85.40%	88.50%	88.50%	82.40%	89.70%	84.90%	76.80%	80.40%	80.20%	89.50%	84.10%	87.50%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2016-2020	20.60%	30.50%	32.90%	20.30%	22.00%	22.60%	13.30%	13.70%	16.50%	25.80%	18.40%	19.40%
Medical												
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2016-2020	10.70%	8.70%	8.70%	9.60%	12.80%	15.40%	14.10%	7.30%	13.80%	10.40%	9.90%	11.00%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	16.00%	15.10%	9.80%	15.90%	12.10%	12.00%	23.90%	21.50%	12.00%	13.40%	13.70%	18.50%
Business/Economy												
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2016-2020	55.30%	58.60%	63.00%	58.70%	63.10%	63.50%	51.70%	56.00%	61.40%	55.10%	52.20%	51.20%
In civilian labor force, female, percent of population age 16 years+, 2016-2020	50.60%	54.40%	51.20%	51.20%	59.30%	54.20%	45.50%	48.50%	67.00%	49.70%	51.60%	45.60%
Total accommodation and food services sales, 2017 (\$1,000)	1,019,024	67,950,386	938,237,077	34,633	41,685	39,784	4,309	58,708	3,127	146,485	52,655	130,979
Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2017 (\$1,000)	3,505,936	155,283,578	2,527,903,275	23,326	248,147	32,335	D	256,582	D	1,897,206	145,007	644,431
Total transportation and warehousing receipts/revenue, 2017 (\$1,000)	1,329,471	68,145,959	895,225,411	13,754	92,435	37,153	3,186	48,331	495	232,078	326,411	34,100
Total retail sales, 2017 (\$1,000)	8,333,421	333,134,553	4,949,601,481	376,520	286,724	385,229	74,737	355,299	119,265	3,221,360	1,082,853	1,082,853
Total retail sales per capita, 2017	12,152	15,881	15,224	23,718	14,722	85,322	12,252	14,795	20,482	29,894	36,259	26,472
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2016-2020	\$28	\$28	\$27	\$33	\$22	\$39	\$31	\$32	\$26	\$23	\$24	\$24
Median household income (in 2020 dollars), 2016-2020	\$15,335	\$17,703	\$49,994	\$46,338	\$48,227	\$35,866	\$38,728	\$42,559	\$47,714	\$50,136	\$48,145	\$48,560
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2020 dollars), 2016-2020	\$25,820	\$32,848	\$35,384	\$24,586	\$24,357	\$24,805	\$22,643	\$21,528	\$24,252	\$29,398	\$24,086	\$26,158
Persons in poverty, percent	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Total employer establishments, 2020	1240100.00%	59104600.00%	800017800.00%	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total employment, 2020	203,461	9,084,079	134,163,349	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total annual payroll, 2020 (\$1,000)	8,888,624	440,383,035	7,564,809,878	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total employment, percent change, 2019-2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total nonemployer establishments, 2019	5466500.00%	250855200.00%	2710400600.00%	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
All employer firms, Reference year 2017	9,105	438,491	5,744,643	307	464	308	82	407	120	2524	318	1075
Men-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	5,502	261,671	3,480,438	5	254	153	5	5	50	1,446	160	633
Women-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	1,392	93,163	1,134,549	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	146
Minority-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	1,465	102,627	1,014,958	5	5	5	5	123	41	267	5	147
Nonminority-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	6,638	309,451	4,371,152	5	251	147	5	5	72	1,750	178	713
Veteran-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	591	28,391	351,237	5	5	5	5	5	134	5	5	5
Nonveteran-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	7,431	382,527	4,968,606	5	335	253	5	5	102	1867	199	748
Geography												
Population per square mile, 2020	403.3	401.4	93.8	1151.8	416.7	2417.9	623.2	1422	688.5	1702.7	868.2	1515.3
Land area in square miles, 2020	1797.76	53652.17	3533038.28	13.56	46.34	3.74	8.18	18.75	9.26	66.15	18.85	32.48
FIPS Code	"12105"	"12"	"1"	"1202550"	"1203675"	"1216450"	"1224100"	"1228400"	"1237525"	"1238250"	"1238950"	"1278275"
FIPS Code	"12105"	"12"	"1"	"1202550"	"1203675"	"1216450"	"1224100"	"1228400"	"1237525"	"1238250"	"1238950"	"1278275"

Value Notes

⚠ This geographic level of poverty and health estimates is not comparable to other geographic levels of these estimates

Some estimates presented here come from sample data, and thus have sampling errors that may render some apparent differences between geographies statistically indistinguishable. Click the Quick Info icon to the left of each row in TABLE view to learn about sampling error.

The vintage year (e.g., V2016) refers to the final year of the series (2010 thru 2016). Different vintage years of estimates are not comparable.

Fact Notes

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race
 (b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories
 (c) Economic Census - Puerto Rico data are not comparable to U.S. Economic Census data

Value Flags

- Either no or too few sample observations were available to compute an estimate, or a ratio of medians cannot be calculated because one or both of the median estimates falls in the lowest or upper interval of an open ended distribution.
 D Suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information
 F Fewer than 25 firms
 FN Footnote on this item in place of data
 NA Not available
 S Suppressed; does not meet publication standards
 X Not applicable
 Z Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown

QuickFacts data are derived from: Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, Current Population Survey, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits.