Update from the American Community Survey

Workers per Household in the Washington Metro Area

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There has been much discussion about the effects of the Great Recession on the number of people and families who have combined their households. An expected outcome of this trend would be an increase in the number of working people living in each household; these figures are examined here.
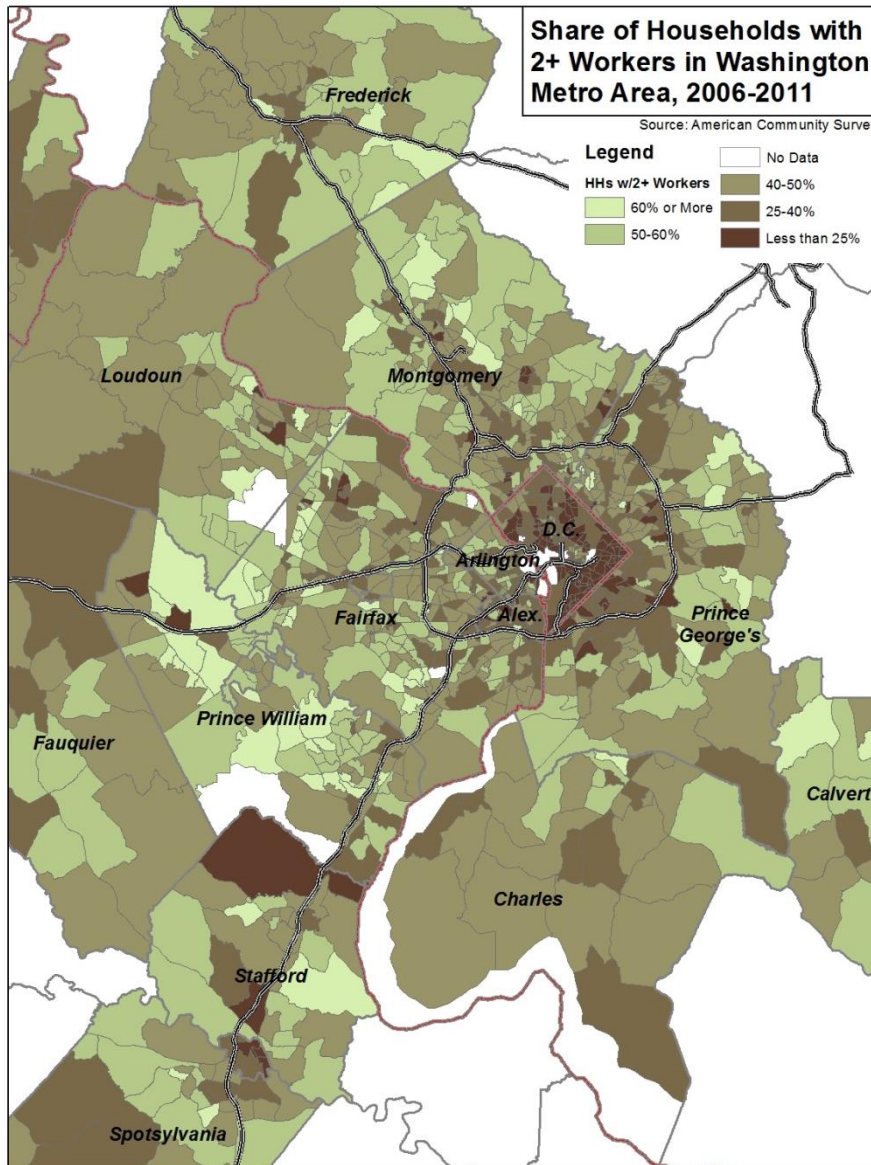
Table 1: Percent of Households with 2+ Workers, Select Jurisdictions in Washington Metro Area

	Jurisdiction	Number of Households			Share With 2+ Workers	
		2005	2011	% Change	2005	2011
DC	District of Columbia	248,213	268,670	8.2%	22.9%	25.6%
	Calvert	29,539	30,113	1.9%	50.4%	44.2%
	Charles	48,230	51,832	7.5%	44.2%	37.9%
MD	Frederick	79,478	87,441	10.0%	46.1%	43.9%
	Montgomery	344,038	359,496	4.5%	41.4%	42.2%
	Prince George's	296,960	301,754	1.6%	39.2%	39.0%
	Arlington	84,133	91,386	8.6%	33.6%	37.8%
	Alexandria	64,054	64,723	1.0%	29.2%	33.4%
	Fairfax	366,906	391,386	6.7%	43.5%	44.4%
VA	Loudoun	88,042	106,492	21.0%	46.6%	46.8%
	Prince William	120,789	131,840	9.1%	49.0%	50.6%
	Spotsylvania	39,938	42,896	7.4%	40.6%	48.0%
	Stafford	37,656	42,033	11.6%	47.6%	45.4%
	Metro Total	**1,944,465**	**2,071,390**	**6.5%**	**39.5%**	**40.5%**

Source: American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates. Table does not include all jurisdictions, so individual figures do not add to metro totals.

The share of households with two or more workers in the region increased slightly from its 2005 (pre-recession) level of 39.5 percent to 40.5 in 2011. There were significant shifts within certain jurisdictions, particularly those in outlying sections of the region. Three counties—Calvert, Charles, and Spotsylvania—actually experienced sharp declines in their shares of multiple-worker households. In all three of these counties the total number of households increased at slower rates than in other suburban areas, and there were significant increases in the number of one-person households.   The percentages of households with multiple workers increased in each of the region's three core jurisdictions (DC, Arlington, and Alexandria), though this trend could be attributed to the growing appeal of these areas to families, and not just to combining households.

The map below displays the concentration of households with two or more workers for all Census tracts in the Washington Metro Area. The portions of the region with the greatest shares of multiple-worker households tend to be located in suburban areas with predominantly single-family housing such as Clarksburg (Montgomery County), Bowie (Prince George's), Dunkirk (Calvert), Gainesville (Prince William), Aquia (Stafford), and Urbana (Frederick). Locations with the lowest shares of multiple-worker households tend to fall into one of three categories: areas with high concentrations of renters (DC, Wheaton, Germantown, College Park, Sterling, etc.), areas with mostly affluent residents living on large lots (Great Falls, Poolesville, western Loudoun, southern Charles, Fauquier), or areas on or around military installations (Fort Belvoir, Joint Base Andrews, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Fort Detrick).

Share of Households with 2+ Workers in Washington Metro Area, 2006-2011

Source: American Community Survey

Legend
HHs w/2+ Workers
- No Data
- 60% or More
- 50-60%
- 40-50%
- 25-40%
- Less than 25%

GMU Center for Regional Analysis

CRA provides research and analytical services to local governments, businesses and other stakeholders focusing on economic, demographic, transportation, housing and fiscal trends and forecasts.

The Center for Regional Analysis has become the "go-to" organization for economic, demographic and housing data and analysis in the Washington and Baltimore regions and is regularly cited as the source of information for the media, research scholars, and investors interested in understanding the regional economy. CRA posts research reports, presentations, data and other information on our website at cra.gmu.edu.

Updates from the 2010 Census and American Community Survey

The Center for Regional Analysis issue periodic reports on demographic and economic topics based on newly released data from the 2010 Census and the American Community Survey. The American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing survey that provides detailed data every year about states, metropolitan areas, counties and cities. More information about the 2010 Census and the ACS can be found at www.census.gov.