



# Research Brief

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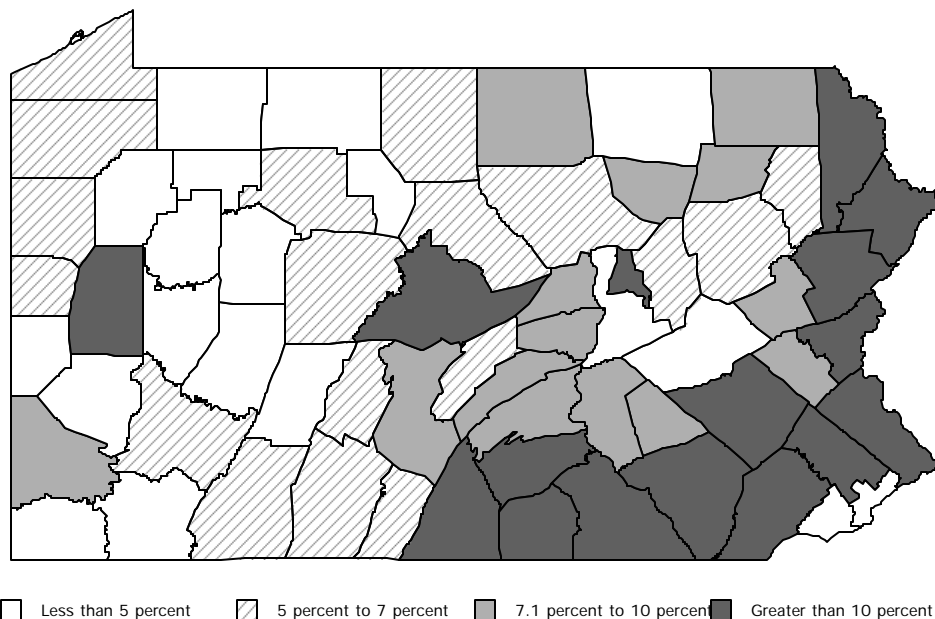
February 10, 2000

## Pennsylvania's New Housing Units and Median Values Increase

MIDDLETOWN, Pa—Pennsylvania had 4,938,140 housing units in 1990. This was a seven percent increase from 1980. From 1990 to 1998, there were 346,448 new housing units constructed in the Commonwealth resulting in an additional seven percent growth. Nationally, existing housing grew 11 percent from 1990 to 1998.

The Pennsylvania State Data Center at Penn State Harrisburg reports construction in the state was greatest in 1993 and 1998 with 41,741 and 41,616 units constructed, respectively. The fewest new homes were built in 1991 (35,956). Metropolitan counties saw the most new housing in terms of raw numbers.

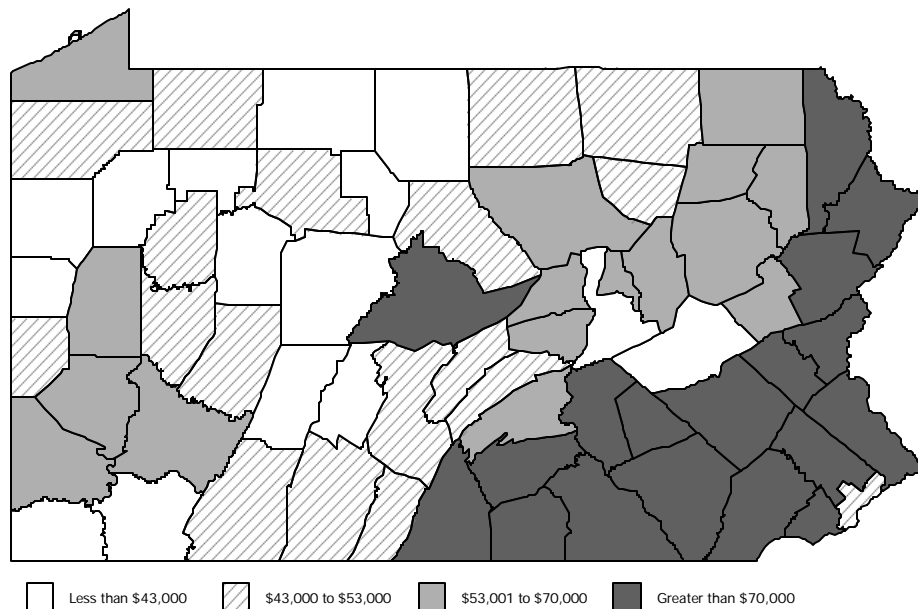
**New Pennsylvania Housing Units as Percent of 1990 Existing Units  
by County, 1990-1998**



Montgomery led the state with 28,219 units from 1990 through 1998. Bucks, Chester, Allegheny and Lancaster counties followed with more than 20,000 per county. The fewest new residential constructions took place in Cameron, Fulton, Forest and Sullivan, each with under 500. Amy Jonas of the Pennsylvania State Data Center states, “The growth in new housing construction in Pennsylvania counties mirrors the state’s population growth. The highest percent increases are in the areas surrounding the major cities of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and New York City, especially in Pike and Monroe counties in northeastern Pennsylvania.”

The average value of an owner-occupied housing unit in 1990 was \$87,166 while the median value was \$69,100. This is much lower than the national average of \$110,850 and median value of \$78,500. The 1980 median value of an owner-occupied, non-condominium housing unit in the Commonwealth was \$39,100. Adjusted to 1990 dollars, this figure equates to \$65,532. Consequently, real median value increased by five percent from 1980 to 1990. About 10 percent of Pennsylvanian units in 1990 were valued at less than \$25,000 and 9 percent were valued at more than \$175,000 in that year.

### Median Value of Pennsylvania Housing Units by County, 1990



The highest median values of owner-occupied homes were in the southeastern part of the state and in other areas of concentrated population. Chester County homes were valued at \$154,900, Montgomery at

\$142,400 and Bucks at \$139,000. The homes with the lowest median values were in rural areas such as Forest (\$35,800), McKean (\$37,600) and Schuylkill (\$37,900).

There were approximately 184,000 multi-family low income rental housing units provided in the state in 1998. Family general occupancy units made up 102,000 of these, while 73,000 were elderly and 9,000 were accessible for persons with disabilities. There are 22,045 project areas in the state including at least one in each county.

For more information on this topic, the Pennsylvania State Data Center's newly released report entitled *Pennsylvania Housing Trends* is available for purchase. To order, call 717-948-6336.

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the Commonwealth's official source of population and economic statistics and services. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau's national State Data Center Program.

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Editors: For additional data, contact Amy Jonas at the Data Center's State Capital Office, (717) 772-2710, or for faculty comment on this topic contact the Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office, (717) 948-6029.

Source of Information: U.S. Census Bureau  
Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency