



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

December 5, 2002

Census Bureau Gets Down To Business in Pennsylvania: Over 200,000 Pennsylvania Businesses To Be Counted in 2002 Economic Census

MIDDLETOWN, Pa –This December the U.S. Census Bureau will send questionnaires to more than 210,000 businesses in Pennsylvania, launching the 2002 Economic Census. The Economic Census, taken every five years in years ending in a two or seven, has been called “indispensable to understanding America’s economy” by Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan and “ensures the accuracy of the statistics we rely on for sound economic policy and for successful business planning.”

The Economic Census provides official measures of output for industries and geographic areas. Policy makers in federal, state and local governments use Economic Census data to project trends, guide economic development and assess the impact of economic policy. This data is also used to build the foundations for Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and other indicators of economic performance.

Businesses across the nation use Economic Census data for facility planning, market research and efficiency assessments. Economic Census statistics are also used to prepare business forecasts and educational materials. Educational institutions and media services also use the data for publication research. “The Economic Census produces our most widely used business statistics,” said Kathleen B. Cooper, Under Secretary of Commerce and Economic Affairs.

Completed forms are due at the Census Bureau by February 12th, 2003. Businesses that receive a form are required by law (Title 13, U.S. Code) to respond. All business responses are protected by law and will remain confidential. Several initiatives will be used to make it easier for Pennsylvania businesses to complete their census forms. For the first time, some businesses will be able to file their forms electronically. The Census Bureau will also provide an Internet help site at: www.census.gov/econhelp.

A toll-free “help line” (1.800.233.6136) will be available for questions and answered by Census Bureau employees during business hours (8 a.m. to 8 p.m., EST, Monday through Friday).

The Census Bureau does not send Economic Census forms to most very small firms. Forms go to all mid-sized and large businesses but to only a sample of the smallest. All forms are sent to a company's headquarters if the company has more than one location.

The Economic Census does not cover a few industries: agriculture, forestry and fisheries, schools and colleges as well as labor, political and religious organizations. Census forms vary based on the industry so that businesses may respond in terms most meaningful to them. The 2002 Economic Census covers nearly all of the U.S. economy in its basic collection of establishment statistics. There are also several related programs, including statistics on minority and women-owned businesses. Censuses of agriculture and governments are conducted at the same time. Some of the major industries that will have data available from the 2002 Economic Census include manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, transportation, information, finance, insurance and real estate, construction, utilities, educational services, and health care and social assistance.

2002 Economic Census To Feature Many "Firsts"

In keeping with changes in the nation's economy and new technologies, the 2002 Economic Census will feature many "firsts." This Economic Census will be the first to measure e-commerce statistics for all industries. New information will be available on changing business supply-chain functions. The first information on leased employees in businesses also will be available. The 2002 Economic Census marks the initial use of the North American Classification System for products in about 85 service industries. Expanded information on purchased services and classes of customers also will be available for the first time.

Data covering calendar year 2002 will be collected and processed during 2003, and the first data will be released beginning in early 2004. When completed, the Economic Census will yield over 1,600 data products, with information on more than 1,000 industries and over 50,000 geographic areas.

The Pennsylvania State Data Center and the 2002 Economic Census

The U.S. Census Bureau will issue on the Internet and on CD-ROM all census results over a 2-year period. As the commonwealth's official source for population and economic statistics, the PaSDC will have 2002 Economic Census data for Pennsylvania as soon as the data is available. The PaSDC also maintains data collected for Pennsylvania from the 1997 Economic Census.

The 2002 Economic Census for Pennsylvania Counties

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 210,000 questionnaires will be sent to Pennsylvania in December of 2002. At the county level, Allegheny County is estimated to receive the most questionnaires at 26,000. Philadelphia County is estimated to receive 20,000 questionnaires, followed by Montgomery County (19,000) and Bucks County

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(13,000). Cameron County (100), Forest County (100) and Sullivan County are estimated to receive the least number of questionnaires.

For additional information, please contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center's State Capital Office at 717.772.2710.

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the commonwealth's official source for population and economic statistics. 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.

Editors: For additional data, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center's State Capital Office at 717.772.2710 or for faculty comment on this topic, contact Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office at 717.948.6029.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

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