



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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New Census Bureau Estimates Show Philadelphia Remains Nation's 5th Largest City

MIDDLETOWN, Pa – New population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau show that Philadelphia remains the nation's 5th largest city. This data, from today's release of sub-county population estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau, shows that Philadelphia, with a population of approximately 1.5 million, still ranks ahead of Phoenix, Arizona by approximately 120,000 persons in the list of the nation's ten largest cities. The estimates show no change in the rankings of the ten largest cities since Census 2000 (see Table 1).

The estimates are based on Census 2000 and were updated using administrative records. The sub-county estimates for Pennsylvania include minor civil divisions (MCDs) that, for Pennsylvania, are its cities, townships and boroughs. Please note that due to changes based on the count resolution program, updates from the Boundary and Annexation Survey and geographic programs revisions, an April 1, 2000 estimates base was used in the estimating process.

Table 1: Ten Largest U.S. Cities: July 1, 2002

Rank	Place	Estimate July 1, 2002	April 1, 2000	Numerical Change	Percentage Change
1	New York, N.Y.	8,084,316	8,008,278	76,038	0.9
2	Los Angeles, Calif.	3,798,981	3,694,742	104,239	2.8
3	Chicago, Ill.	2,886,251	2,896,047	-9,796	-0.3
4	Houston, Texas	2,009,834	1,953,633	56,201	2.9
5	Philadelphia, Pa.	1,492,231	1,517,550	-25,319	-1.7
6	Phoenix, Ariz.	1,371,960	1,321,190	50,770	3.8
7	San Diego, Calif.	1,259,532	1,223,416	36,116	3.0
8	Dallas, Texas	1,211,467	1,188,589	22,878	1.9
9	San Antonio, Texas	1,194,222	1,151,268	42,954	3.7
10	Detroit, Mich.	925,051	951,270	-26,219	-2.8



Pennsylvania's Top Ten Cities

Of Pennsylvania's ten largest cities, only Bethlehem showed an increase in population since 2000. Bethlehem's population of 71,749 was an increase of 420 since 2000. There were no major changes to Pennsylvania's ten largest cities list. However, Harrisburg and Altoona swapped rankings with the state capital now the state's ninth largest city (see Table 2).

Table 2: Pennsylvania's Ten Largest Cities: July 1, 2002

City	Estimated Population: July 1, 2002	April 1, 2000 Population Estimates Base	Population: April 1, 2000	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Philadelphia	1,492,231	1,517,550	1,517,550	-25,319	-1.7
Pittsburgh	327,898	334,563	334,563	-6,665	-2.0
Allentown	106,105	106,632	106,632	-527	-0.5
Erie	102,122	103,717	103,717	-1,595	-1.5
Reading	80,494	81,207	81,207	-713	-0.9
Scranton	74,712	76,415	76,415	-1,703	-2.2
Bethlehem	71,749	71,329	71,329	420	0.6
Lancaster	55,628	56,356	56,348	-728	-1.3
Harrisburg	48,540	48,950	48,950	-410	-0.8
Altoona	48,490	49,523	49,523	-1,033	-2.1

Forks Township, Northampton County, is Pennsylvania's Fastest Growing Community

With an estimated population increase of 28.2 percent since April 1, 2000, Forks Township in Northampton County is Pennsylvania's fastest growing municipality. Penn Township and East Nottingham Township, both in Chester County, ranked second with a population percent increase of 24.6 percent. Concord Township in Delaware County ranked fourth with a percent increase of 22.3 percent. Completing the top five was Charleston Township, Chester County, with a population increase of 21.2 percent. Table 3 shows the ten fastest growing municipalities in Pennsylvania.

Table 3: Pennsylvania's Ten Fastest Growing Municipalities: July 1, 2002

Name	County	Estimated Population: July 1, 2002	April 1, 2000 Population Estimates Base	Population: April 1, 2000	Percent Change
Forks township	Northampton	10,792	8,419	8,419	28.2
Penn township	Chester	3,504	2,812	2,812	24.6
East Nottingham township	Chester	6,873	5,516	5,516	24.6
Concord township	Delaware	13,741	11,239	9,933	22.3
Charlestown township	Chester	4,911	4,051	4,051	21.2
Caernarvon township	Berks	2,802	2,312	2,312	21.2
Warren township	Franklin	403	334	334	20.7
Howe township	Forest	500	417	417	19.9
Bethel township	Delaware	7,611	6,421	6,421	18.5
Seven Fields borough	Columbia	2,334	1,986	1,986	17.5

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Pennsylvania's Incorporated Places of 10,000 or More

As of July 1, 2002, Pennsylvania had 72 incorporated places with a population greater than 10,000 persons. Fifteen of those places experienced a population increase since the April 1, 2000 decennial census. Bethlehem City, with a population increase of 420 was the largest growing municipality with a population of over 10,000. The City of Coatesville, with a population of 11,115 was the second largest growing municipality with an increase of 277. The cities of Philadelphia (-25,319) and Pittsburgh (-6,665) had the largest decreases in population since 2000. Completing the top five in population loss were Scranton (-1,703), Erie (-1,595) and Wilkes-Barre (-1,102).

Overall in Pennsylvania, there were six municipalities that had a population increase of over 2,000 persons. Concord Township had the largest increase in population, 2,502. There were also six municipalities that lost more than 1,000 persons.

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, Population Estimates Division

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