



# Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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## Pennsylvania's Oldest Baby Boomers Turn 60

MIDDLETOWN, Pa –The Pennsylvania State Data Center at Penn State Harrisburg reports that beginning in 2006, the oldest group of baby boomers will turn 60 years of age. Baby boomers, perhaps the most famous generation in the nation's history, are those people born between 1946 and 1964. The baby boomer generation began following World War II and was notable for increased birth rates and prosperity that continued for about 18 years.

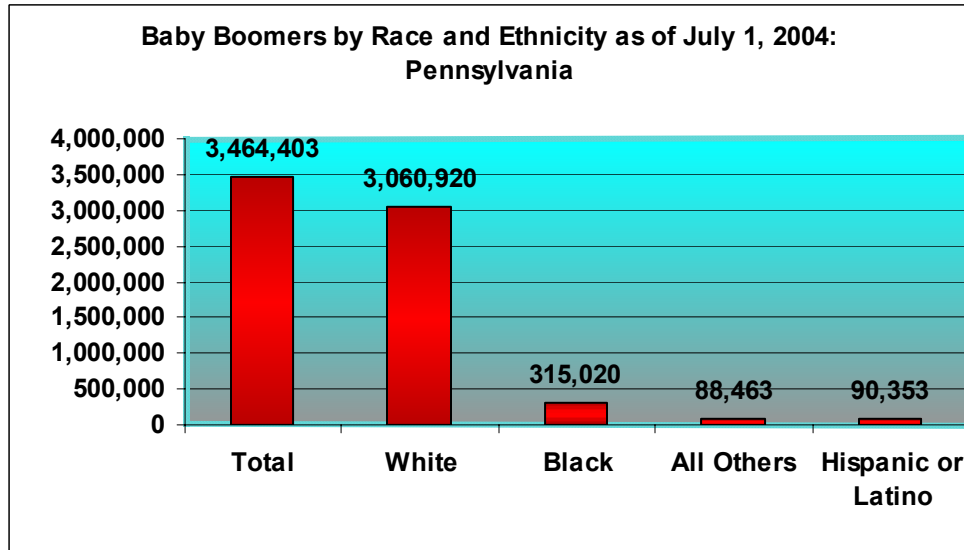
As of July 1, 2004 there were an estimated 3.46 million baby boomers in Pennsylvania, about 27.9 percent of the commonwealth's population of 12.4 million. Of those 3.46 million baby boomers, an estimated 124,000 (3.6 percent) are expected to turn 60 years of age in 2006. A look at selected age groupings shows that the largest number of baby boomers in Pennsylvania was born between 1955 and 1959. This age group, an estimated 989,000 persons, makes up 28.5 percent of Pennsylvania's baby boomer population.

**Table 1: July 1, 2004 Estimated Baby Boomer Population by Selected Age Groupings: Pennsylvania**

Year Born	Age Range as of 2006	Baby Boomer Population	Percent of Baby Boomer Generation	Percent of Pennsylvania
1960-64	42-46	973,217	28.1	7.8
1955-59	47-51	989,006	28.5	8.0
1950-54	52-56	879,660	25.4	7.1
1946-49	57-60	622,520	18.0	5.0
Total	-	3,464,403	100.0	27.9

The gender split in Pennsylvania shows that 49.1 percent of baby boomers are male and 50.9 percent are female. Of the 3.46 million baby boomers in Pennsylvania, about 3.1 million, or 88.4 percent are white, 315,000 are black or African American (9.1 percent) and about 90,000 consider themselves of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity (2.6 percent). People of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity may be of any race.





### **Pennsylvania’s Labor Force and Social Security**

As the baby boomers grow older, more and more will be eligible for social security. Pennsylvania data from the 2004 American Community Survey shows that the number of households receiving social security income was a little over 1.5 million, or 31.2 percent of households in the commonwealth. This represents a 3.8 percent increase in the number of households receiving social security in 2000 and a 6.0 percent increase from 1990.

Labor data from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry’s Center for Workforce Information and Analysis shows that over 5.9 million Pennsylvanians were in the labor force in 2004, a 1.6 percent increase over the 5.8 million in the labor force in 2000. That figure has increased by 7.6 percent since 1990, when the civilian labor force was slightly over 5.5 million.

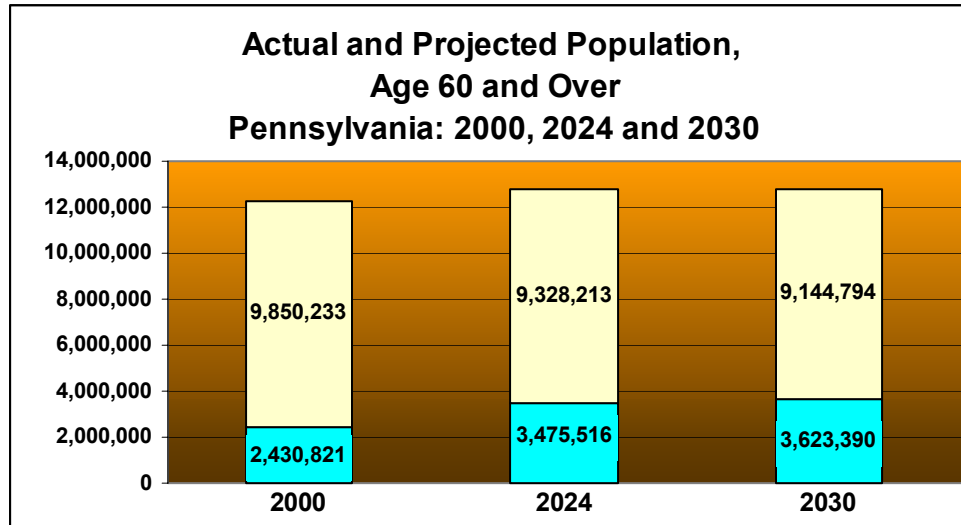
**Table 2: Social Security, Pennsylvania Households and Civilian Labor Force: 1990 to 2004**

Year	Households			Civilian Labor Force
	Total	Receiving Social Security	Percent	
1990	4,492,958	1,420,605	31.6	5,510,000
2000	4,779,186	1,451,386	30.4	5,832,000
2004	4,817,577	1,505,976	31.3	5,927,000

### **The Future**

The youngest of the baby boomers will turn 60 in 2024. At that time, Pennsylvania’s population is projected to be 12,803,729, its largest in history. After 2024, Pennsylvania’s population is expected to begin a slow decline, and by 2030 the population is projected to be 12,768,184. The number of people age 60 and over in 2024 is expected to increase to 3,475,516, or 27.1 percent of the total population of the commonwealth. In 2000, this age group was only 19.8 percent of Pennsylvania’s total population of 12,281,054. In 2030,

the population age 60 and over will grow to over 3.6 million people, 28.4 percent of the state's total population.



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: Census 2000, Population Estimates Branch and Population Projections Branch. Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, Center for Workforce Information and Analysis.

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.