



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

May 14, 2009

New 2008 Census Estimates Include Age, Race and Ethnicity Data for Pennsylvania and its Counties

Pennsylvania is older and more diverse than ever before

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – Pennsylvania and its counties have become more diverse than ever before, according to 2008 U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, released today. The overall minority population has grown to 2,313,796 people in 2008, representing 18.6 percent of the state's population.

Today's release includes age, sex, race and Hispanic ethnicity detail for the state of Pennsylvania, as well as all 67 counties. The estimates are an update of the Census 2000 counts, created using records of births, deaths, and migration to account for yearly population changes since the last Decennial Census.

Pennsylvania's population continues to grow older, with the median age increasing to 39.9, up from 38.0 in 2000. The elderly population also continues to grow, with 15.3 percent of the state's population now aged 65 or older. That population now numbers 1,910,571, a slight decrease from 2000, but showing a consistent increase each year since 2005-2006.

Other state-level highlights from today's 2008 estimates release:

- The Hispanic or Latino population has increased by 50.7 percent since 2000, making it by far the fastest-growing population group in Pennsylvania.
- The White alone, non-Hispanic population makes up 81.4 percent of the state's population, but it has decreased by 2.0 percent since 2000, the only race or ethnicity subgroup to show population decline.
- Pennsylvania is ranked third in the nation in the percent of its population that is 65 or older, but 43rd in the percent that is under 18.
- The non-Hispanic population has decreased by 0.3 percent since 2000, but has increased slightly in the last three years (since 2005).
- Pennsylvania's population has grown slowly but consistently since the last Census: the state added 167,227 people, a 1.4 percent increase over 2000.
- Overall, the gender split in Pennsylvania was 48.7 percent male, 51.3 percent female.

County Demographics

Philadelphia County had the largest percent minority population among all of Pennsylvania's counties, with 61.0 percent, while Dauphin, Monroe and Delaware followed, each with more than one-quarter of their population from a minority group. Every county has seen population growth in its minority population since 2000.

The fastest-growing minority group in Pennsylvania was the Hispanic or Latino population: the county with the fastest-growing Hispanic or Latino population was Luzerne County, with 274.7 percent growth since 2000 (Forest County has the largest percent change in Hispanic population since 2000, but that 416.7 percent population increase is largely due to the construction of a state correctional institution). The largest Hispanic population is in Philadelphia County, with 163,406 people.

Other county-level highlights from today's 2008 estimates release:

- Sullivan County had the largest proportion of its population aged 65 or older in 2008, with 24.0 percent, while Centre County had the smallest elderly proportion: 11.4 percent.
- Elk County was the least diverse of Pennsylvania's counties in 2008, with 98.3 percent of its population White alone, and not Hispanic.
- Fifty-seven counties saw a decline in their population under 18 years of age. Lehigh County had the fastest-growing 'under 18' population, with a 6.4 percent increase since 2000. The county with the largest decline since 2000 in the 'under 18' population was Cameron County, with a 27.9 percent decline.
- Philadelphia County had the largest female-to-male ratio of Pennsylvania's counties, with 53.2 percent of the population being women. Forest County had the smallest proportion of women, with 34.9 percent of population being female, and 65.1 percent male (Forest County's demographics are affected by a state correctional institution.)

Many additional tables are available on the PaSDC web site: visit the Research Briefs page online at:

http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/pasdc/data_and_information/Briefscron_Current.html. For other data or information, call the Data Center at 717-772-2710 or email at: PaSDC@psu.edu.

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.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2008 Population Estimates

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