Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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2009 Pennsylvania County Population Estimates and
Metro and Micro Area Population Estimates Released

PENN STATE HARRISBURG — The U.S. Census Bureau today released the 2009 Pennsylvania County Population Estimates and the 2009 Metro and Micro Area Population Estimates.

2009 Pennsylvania County Population Estimates

Chester County is Pennsylvania's fastest-growing county, according to the 2009 county population estimates released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. As of July 1, 2009, Chester County's population was 498,894, and has grown 1.1 percent or 5,613 people since July 1, 2008. Chester County grew by 15.1 percent or 65,393 persons since April 1, 2000. Though several counties saw strong growth during that time period, no Pennsylvania county ranks in the national top 100 for growth rate since 2000. From 2000-2009, Forest County had the largest cumulative percent population increase (37.0); that increase is largely due to the construction of a state correctional institution in 2004. The commonwealth also boasted four counties among the top 100 largest nationally in 2009: Philadelphia, 21st (1,547,297), Allegheny, 30th (1,218,494), Montgomery, 72nd (782,339) and Bucks, 98th (626,015). (See Table 2.)

The county population estimates are calculated using administrative records to estimate components of population change, such as births, deaths, domestic and international migration.

Percent Population Change
Following Chester County's growth, Cumberland, Lebanon, and Pike counties led the state in percent population increase from 2008-2009, all with 0.9 percent population increases. Cameron (-2.0 percent), Potter (-0.9 percent), and Armstrong (-0.9 percent) counties experienced the largest percent loss of population during this period. Other than Forest County, the top ten counties with the highest population percent growth from 2000–2009 are in the south-central and eastern part of the state, bordering New York, New Jersey and Maryland. In contrast, most of the counties with the highest percent population loss over the 2000-2009 time period were concentrated in the western and north-central part of the state. Thirty-eight counties experienced population loss between 2000 and 2009, led by Cameron (-13.6 percent), Elk (-8.8 percent) and Potter (-7.6 percent) counties. Allegheny (-4.9 percent) also experienced high population loss between 2000 and 2009, but gained population since 2008.

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Numeric Population Change
As stated above, Philadelphia, Allegheny and Montgomery County are the most populous counties in the state. Cameron (5,163), Sullivan (6,140) and Forest (6,775) have the smallest populations. In addition, Cameron (-104), Sullivan (-11) and Forest (-33) counties all lost population from 2008-2009.

From 2008-2009, Philadelphia (+6,946), Chester (+5,613), and Lancaster (+3,959) counties gained the most population, while Beaver (-723), Fayette (-684) and Armstrong (-598) counties experienced the greatest population decreases. Since 2000, Chester (+65,393), York (+47,184) and Lancaster (+37,106) counties have gained the most population while Allegheny (-63,171), Beaver (-9,739) and Cambria (-8,632) counties have experienced the largest numeric population decrease since 2000.

Components of Population Change: Births, Deaths and Migration
Natural increase is the population change resulting from births (increase) and deaths (decrease). Thirty-two Pennsylvania counties experienced negative natural increase (deaths outpaced births) since 2000. Allegheny (-12,316), Luzerne (-10,387) and Westmoreland (-8,783) had the most significant negative natural population change during that time period. Philadelphia (+56,121), Chester (+25,138) and Lancaster (+25,138) counties experience the largest natural increase from 2000 to 2009.

Since 2000, the largest total net in-migration (people moving into an area) has occurred in the counties of Chester (+42,959), York (+35,276), and Northampton (+27,186). Philadelphia (-108,206), Allegheny (-42,936), and Erie (-9,146) led the state in population lost to out-migration (people moving to a different area).

2009 Metro and Micro Area Population Estimates

The Lebanon Metropolitan Statistical Area is the fastest-growing metro area in Pennsylvania, according to 2009 Population Estimates for Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas, also released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. Although none of the metro areas in Pennsylvania were among the 100 fastest-growing, Lebanon was the 149th fastest-growing metro area in the nation, increasing 0.9 percent from 129,302 in 2008 to 130,506 people on July 1, 2009. Since 2000, the Lebanon metro area has increased by 8.5 percent.

Metropolitan Statistical Areas in Pennsylvania
Five metro areas in Pennsylvania rank among the nation's 100 largest: Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington (including portions of New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland) was ranked fifth-largest, Pittsburgh was ranked 22nd, Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton (including portions of New Jersey) was ranked 62nd, Scranton-Wilkes-Barre was ranked 92nd and the Harrisburg-Carlisle area was ranked 96th. (See Table 1)

One of Pennsylvania's metro areas ranked among the nation's top 100 in numeric population gain from 2008 to 2009: the Philadelphia metro area ranked 23rd with a gain of 27,756. The Philadelphia metro area includes Philadelphia County as well as Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties, and counties in New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware.

Table 1. Estimates of Population Change for Metropolitan Statistical Areas: July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2009				
Metropolitan statistical area	July 1, 2009 Estimate	July 1, 2008 Estimate	Change, 2008 to 2009	
			Number	Percent
Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA-NJ	816,012	811,669	4,343	0.5
Altoona, PA	126,122	125,923	199	0.2
Erie, PA	280,291	279,647	644	0.2
Harrisburg-Carlisle, PA	536,919	533,802	3,117	0.6
Johnstown, PA	143,998	144,488	-490	-0.3
Lancaster, PA	507,766	503,807	3,959	0.8
Lebanon, PA	130,506	129,302	1,204	0.9
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	5,968,252	5,940,496	27,756	0.5
Pittsburgh, PA	2,354,957	2,355,391	-434	0.0
Reading, PA	407,125	404,771	2,354	0.6
Scranton--Wilkes-Barre, PA	549,454	549,321	133	0.0
State College, PA	146,212	145,550	662	0.5
Williamsport, PA	116,840	116,666	174	0.1
York-Hanover, PA	428,937	425,766	3,171	0.7

Micropolitan Areas in Pennsylvania

Two micropolitan areas in Pennsylvania, Chambersburg and East Stroudsburg, were ranked nationally in terms of their numeric population gain from 2008 to 2009. Chambersburg, ranked 28th, added 1,207 people for a 2009 total of 144,994. East Stroudsburg was ranked 60th, increasing by 815 to 166,355 in 2009. The New Castle micropolitan area was ranked 25th in the nation in terms of numeric population loss, declining 395 to a 2009 total population of 90,160. Somerset was ranked at 32nd, with a population loss of -349, for a 2009 total of 76,953.

The Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas, collectively known as core-based statistical areas (CBSAs), are one or more counties that contain a core urban area, and any adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration. Metro areas contain at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more people, while the micropolitan areas contain at least one urban cluster of 10,000 to 50,000 people. The estimates are calculated using administrative records to estimate components of population change, like births, death, and domestic and international migration.

Population Estimates and Census 2010

This year's population estimates will be the last released by the U.S. Census Bureau this decade. Population counts for 2010 will come from the 2010 Decennial Census. The next major Population Estimates Program county release will cover the year 2011. Later this year, the Census Bureau will release 2009 county-level age, sex, race and ethnicity estimates; total population estimates for subcounty areas (municipalities); and housing unit estimates for the state and counties.

Geographic Area	Population Estimates		Change, 2000 to 2009		State Ranking of Counties			
					Population Estimates		Change, 2000 to 2009	
	July 1, 2009	April 1, 2000 Estimates Base	Number	Percent	July 1, 2009	April 1, 2000 Estimates Base	Number	Percent
Pennsylvania	**12,604,767**	**12,281,071**	**323,696**	**2.6**	**(X)**	**(X)**	**(X)**	**(X)**
Adams	102,323	91,292	11,031	12.1	31	33	14	7
Allegheny	1,218,494	1,281,665	-63,171	-4.9	2	2	67	56
Armstrong	67,851	72,392	-4,541	-6.3	38	38	61	62
Beaver	171,673	181,412	-9,739	-5.4	20	19	66	57
Bedford	49,579	49,976	-397	-0.8	45	43	32	32
Berks	407,125	373,638	33,487	9.0	9	9	4	10
Blair	126,122	129,144	-3,022	-2.3	28	27	50	42
Bradford	61,131	62,761	-1,630	-2.6	41	40	45	44
Bucks	626,015	597,632	28,383	4.7	4	4	9	18
Butler	184,694	174,083	10,611	6.1	19	20	15	17
Cambria	143,998	152,630	-8,632	-5.7	25	21	65	59
Cameron	5,163	5,974	-811	-13.6	67	66	38	67
Carbon	63,865	58,795	5,070	8.6	40	41	20	12
Centre	146,212	135,762	10,450	7.7	23	25	16	15
Chester	498,894	433,501	65,393	15.1	7	7	1	4
Clarion	39,479	41,765	-2,286	-5.5	55	53	48	58
Clearfield	82,324	83,380	-1,056	-1.3	36	36	39	36
Clinton	36,797	37,910	-1,113	-2.9	58	57	40	48
Columbia	65,111	64,148	963	1.5	39	39	27	27
Crawford	88,521	90,377	-1,856	-2.1	34	34	46	38
Cumberland	232,483	213,670	18,813	8.8	16	16	11	11
Dauphin	258,934	251,805	7,129	2.8	15	15	18	23
Delaware	558,028	551,976	6,052	1.1	5	5	19	29
Elk	32,011	35,111	-3,100	-8.8	59	59	52	66
Erie	280,291	280,845	-554	-0.2	14	13	37	30
Fayette	142,605	148,644	-6,039	-4.1	26	23	62	54
Forest	6,775	4,946	1,829	37.0	65	67	25	1
Franklin	144,994	129,308	15,686	12.1	24	26	12	6
Fulton	14,852	14,261	591	4.1	64	64	28	22
Greene	39,245	40,672	-1,427	-3.5	56	56	43	50
Huntingdon	45,395	45,584	-189	-0.4	48	49	30	31
Indiana	87,450	89,605	-2,155	-2.4	35	35	47	43
Jefferson	44,634	45,932	-1,298	-2.8	49	48	41	46
Juniata	23,118	22,821	297	1.3	61	61	29	28
Lackawanna	208,801	213,296	-4,495	-2.1	17	17	60	40
Lancaster	507,766	470,660	37,106	7.9	6	6	3	14
Lawrence	90,160	94,639	-4,479	-4.7	33	31	59	55
Lebanon	130,506	120,326	10,180	8.5	27	28	17	13
Lehigh	343,519	312,090	31,429	10.1	11	12	7	9

Geographic Area	Population Estimates		Change, 2000 to 2009		State Ranking of Counties			
					Population Estimates		Change, 2000 to 2009	
	July 1, 2009	April 1, 2000 Estimates Base	Number	Percent	July 1, 2009 Estimate	April 1, 2000 Estimates Base	Number	Percent
Luzerne	312,845	319,260	-6,415	-2.0	12	11	63	37
Lycoming	116,840	120,048	-3,208	-2.7	29	30	53	45
McKean	43,196	45,936	-2,740	-6.0	51	47	49	61
Mercer	116,071	120,307	-4,236	-3.5	30	29	58	51
Mifflin	45,937	46,486	-549	-1.2	46	45	36	34
Monroe	166,355	138,690	27,665	19.9	21	24	10	3
Montgomery	782,339	748,987	33,352	4.5	3	3	5	20
Montour	17,715	18,239	-524	-2.9	62	62	35	47
Northampton	298,990	267,077	31,913	11.9	13	14	6	8
Northumberland	91,311	94,556	-3,245	-3.4	32	32	55	49
Perry	45,502	43,609	1,893	4.3	47	51	24	21
Philadelphia	1,547,297	1,517,542	29,755	2.0	1	1	8	26
Pike	60,529	46,303	14,226	30.7	42	46	13	2
Potter	16,714	18,080	-1,366	-7.6	63	63	42	65
Schuylkill	146,952	150,337	-3,385	-2.3	22	22	57	41
Snyder	38,519	37,546	973	2.6	57	58	26	24
Somerset	76,953	79,991	-3,038	-3.8	37	37	51	53
Sullivan	6,140	6,556	-416	-6.3	66	65	33	63
Susquehanna	40,646	42,238	-1,592	-3.8	53	52	44	52
Tioga	40,875	41,372	-497	-1.2	52	55	34	35
Union	43,560	41,624	1,936	4.7	50	54	23	19
Venango	54,183	57,555	-3,372	-5.9	43	42	56	60
Warren	40,638	43,863	-3,225	-7.4	54	50	54	64
Washington	207,389	202,897	4,492	2.2	18	18	21	25
Wayne	51,337	47,718	3,619	7.6	44	44	22	16
Westmoreland	362,251	369,993	-7,742	-2.1	10	10	64	39
Wyoming	27,808	28,080	-272	-1.0	60	60	31	33
York	428,937	381,753	47,184	12.4	8	8	2	5

Additional maps and tables may be view on the PaSDC website at:
http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/pasdc/PA_Stats/estimates_and_projections/estimates.html
Customized tables showing Pennsylvania's population by county may be obtained by contacting the Pennsylvania State Data Center at 717.948.6336 or by emailing 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.
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