Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

May 23, 2013

Population Estimates Released for Pennsylvania Cities, Boroughs and Townships

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The U.S. Census Bureau today released July 1, 2012 population estimates for sub-county geographies, including Pennsylvania cities, boroughs and townships. Today's release provides the second municipal population estimates data to be released by the Census Bureau since the 2010 Census.

Population Change by Municipal Type

According to the data, nearly three-quarters (74.0 percent) of the growth in Pennsylvania's population since 2010 can be attributed to townships. From 2010 to 2012, the population of Pennsylvania's 1,547 townships grew from 7,098,888 to 7,143,594. Cities also experienced growth over the time period gaining 17,313 people (28.3 percent), while boroughs had a decline of 2.3 percent (see Table 1).

As of July 1, 2012, 56.0 percent of Pennsylvanians lived in townships, 24.3 percent lived in cities, and the remaining 19.7 percent lived in boroughs.

Table 1. Population Change by Municipality Type, 2010 to 2012					
Municipality Type	**July 1, 2012 Population Estimate**	**April 1, 2010 (Estimates Base)**	**Numeric Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012**	**Percent Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012**	**Percent of State's Growth**
Pennsylvania	**12,763,536**	**12,702,379**	**61,157**	**0.5%**	**-**
Cities	3,104,289	3,086,976	17,313	0.6%	28.3%
Boroughs	2,515,653	2,517,089	-1,436	-0.1%	-2.3%
Townships	7,143,594	7,098,314	45,280	0.6%	74.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Division, 2012 Subcounty Total Resident Population Estimates

Pennsylvania Cities

Philadelphia remains the fifth-largest city in the nation, with a population of 1.55 million. Philadelphia gained 21,601 residents between 2010 and 2012, representing a growth rate of 1.4 percent. Pennsylvania's second largest city, Pittsburgh (306,211), experienced a population gain of just 509 residents (0.2 percent) during the same time period.

Six of Pennsylvania's ten most populous cities experienced population growth since 2010. They include: Philadelphia (21,601), Pittsburgh (509), Allentown (942), Reading (22), Bethlehem (121) and Lancaster (38). The four losing population were: Erie (-739), Scranton (-280), Harrisburg (-249) and Altoona (-173).

Boroughs and Townships

Mount Joy borough in Lancaster County gained the largest number of new residents among Pennsylvania boroughs since the 2010 Census, according to the 2012 Population Estimates. Between 2010 and 2012, Mounty Joy added 438 people, growing at 5.9 percent. Since 2010, Bloomsburg town, in Columbia County, lost the greatest number of residents, declining by -222 people. Table 2 and Table 3 show the top 5 Pennsylvania Boroughs in terms of numeric population gain and loss between 2010 and 2012.

Table 2. Top 5 Numeric Population Increase, Pennsylvania Boroughs: 2010 - 2012					
Rank	Borough	July 1, 2012 Population Estimate	April 1, 2010 (Estimates Base)	Numeric Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012	Percent Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012
1	**Mount Joy borough (Lancaster)**	**7,848**	**7,410**	**438**	**5.9%**
2	Franklin Park borough (Allegheny)	13,900	13,470	430	3.2%
3	West Chester borough (Chester)	18,857	18,461	396	2.1%
4	Jefferson Hills borough (Allegheny)	10,990	10,619	371	3.5%
5	Plum borough (Allegheny)	27,395	27,126	269	1.0%

Table 3. Top 5 Numeric Population Decrease Pennsylvania Boroughs: 2010 - 2012					
Rank	Borough	July 1, 2012 Population Estimate	April 1, 2010 (Estimates Base)	Numeric Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012	Percent Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012
1	**Bloomsburg town (Columbia)**	**14,633**	**14,855**	**-222**	**-1.5%**
2	Cambridge Springs borough (Crawford)	2,433	2,595	-162	-6.2%
3	Ellwood City borough (Beaver/Lawrence)	7,780	7,921	-141	-1.8%
4	Honesdale borough (Wayne)	4,341	4,476	-135	-3.0%
5	Clarion borough (Clarion)	5,154	5,276	-122	-2.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Division, 2012 Subcounty Total Resident Population Estimates

Among Pennsylvania townships, Upper Macungie township in Lehigh County gained the most residents since 2010. The township increased by 1,486 people during the period. The Pennsylvania township to experience the largest numeric decrease in population since 2010 was Richland township in Cambria County. Between 2010 and 2010, the township lost 178 residents. Table 4 and Table show the top 5 Pennsylvania Townships in terms of numeric population gain and loss between 2010 and 2012.

Table 4. Top 5 Numeric Population Increase, Pennsylvania Townships: 2010 - 2012					
Rank	Borough	July 1, 2012 Population Estimate	April 1, 2010 (Estimates Base)	Numeric Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012	Percent Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012
1	Upper Macungie township (Lehigh)	21,549	20,063	1,486	7.4%
2	Ohio township (Allegheny)	5,609	4,757	852	17.9%
3	West Goshen township (Chester)	22,692	21,866	826	3.8%
4	Silver Spring township (Cumberland)	14,484	13,660	824	6.0%
5	New Hanover township (Montgomery)	11,703	10,939	764	7.0%

Table 5. Top 5 Numeric Population Decrease Pennsylvania Townships: 2010 - 2012					
Rank	Borough	July 1, 2012 Population Estimate	April 1, 2010 (Estimates Base)	Numeric Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012	Percent Change, Estimates Base to July 1, 2012
1	Richland township (Cambria)	12,636	12,814	-178	-1.4%
2	Chestnuthill township (Monroe)	16,981	17,156	-175	-1.0%
3	Stroud township (Monroe)	19,052	19,215	-163	-0.8%
4	Franklin township (Greene)	7,131	7,278	-147	-2.0%
5	Mount Pleasant township (Westmoreland)	10,784	10,911	-127	-1.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Division, 2012 Subcounty Total Resident Population Estimates

More on Municipal Population Estimates

The July 1, 2012 sub-county estimates for Pennsylvania include the state's cities, townships and boroughs. Please note that the April 1, 2010 estimates base population count was used in the estimation process. The estimates base count reflects changes based on the Count Question Resolution program, updates from the Boundary and Annexation Survey and geographic programs revisions.

Each new series of data (called vintages) incorporates the latest administrative record data, geographic boundaries, and methodology. Therefore, the entire time series of estimates beginning with the most recent decennial census is revised annually, and estimates from different vintages of data may not be consistent across time.

The sub-county areas consist of both incorporated places, such as cities, boroughs, and villages; and minor civil divisions such as towns and townships. Updated housing unit estimates are used to distribute county population to sub-county areas based on housing unit change. County population estimates are produced with a component of change population method, which updates the latest census population using data on births, deaths, and domestic and international migration. County-level total population estimates will be released next month.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Division, 2012 Subcounty Total Resident Population Estimates.

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.

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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