



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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New Information from U.S. Census Bureau Provides Educational Attainment Data for Pennsylvania

Middletown, PA – The Pennsylvania State Data Center at Penn State Harrisburg reports that data released today for the year 2004 by the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that 86.5 percent of Pennsylvania's population age 25 years and over are high school graduates or higher and that 25.3 percent of this same population have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. Both of these numbers are increases from 2003 when 86.0 percent of the population age 25 years and over had at least a high school diploma and 24.8 percent obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. A comparison to data collected from Census 2000 also supports this positive trend in educational attainment in Pennsylvania. The data released today were collected in the Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). As in all surveys, the CPS data are subject to sampling variability and other sources of error.

This data also reinforces the value of a college education. Workers 18 and over with a bachelor's degree earn an average of \$51,206 a year, while those with a high school diploma earn \$27,915. Workers with an advanced degree make an average of \$74,602, and those without a high school diploma average \$18,734. This data is available only at the national level.

The data on educational trends and attainment levels are shown by characteristics such as age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, marital status, occupation, industry, nativity and, if foreign-born, when they entered the country. The national level tables also describe the relationship between earnings and educational attainment. There are several statistics provided at the state level. This Research Brief focuses on these state level tables with a particular focus on Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania's educational attainment level of 86.5 percent for people with a high school diploma or higher currently ranks Pennsylvania 31st among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Pennsylvania's education attainment level of 25.3 percent for bachelor's degrees or higher ranks Pennsylvania 29th nationally. (see Table 1)

Table 1: Educational Attainment of the Population 25 Years and Over, by State, Including Ranking: 2004

State	Population Age 25 Years and Over	High school graduate or higher Percent	High school graduate or higher Percent, Ranking	Bachelor's degree or higher Percent	Bachelor's degree or higher Percent, Ranking
United States	186,877,000	85.2	-	27.7	-
Alabama	2,891,000	82.4	43	22.3	46
Alaska	387,000	90.2	8	25.5	27
Arizona	3,510,000	84.4	38	28.0	17
Arkansas	1,763,000	79.2	49	18.8	50
California	22,096,000	81.3	45	31.7	11
Colorado	2,856,000	88.3	16	35.5	3
Connecticut	2,254,000	88.8	13	34.5	7
Delaware	536,000	86.5	30	26.9	21
District of Columbia	397,000	86.4	32	45.7	1
Florida	11,489,000	85.9	34	26.0	23
Georgia	5,525,000	85.2	36	27.6	18
Hawaii	823,000	88.0	18	26.6	22
Idaho	852,000	87.9	19	23.8	41
Illinois	8,090,000	86.8	29	27.4	19
Indiana	4,010,000	87.2	26	21.1	47
Iowa	1,923,000	89.8	9	24.3	38
Kansas	1,717,000	89.6	11	30.0	14
Kentucky	2,754,000	81.8	44	21.0	48
Louisiana	2,758,000	78.7	50	22.4	45
Maine	881,000	87.1	27	24.2	40
Maryland	3,609,000	87.4	24	35.2	5
Massachusetts	4,344,000	86.9	28	36.7	2
Michigan	6,444,000	87.9	20	24.4	37
Minnesota	3,337,000	92.3	1	32.5	10
Mississippi	1,786,000	83.0	40	20.1	49
Missouri	3,698,000	87.9	21	28.1	16
Montana	623,000	91.9	2	25.5	26
Nebraska	1,103,000	91.3	4	24.8	33
Nevada	1,464,000	86.3	33	24.5	35
New Hampshire	828,000	90.8	6	35.4	4
New Jersey	5,655,000	87.6	22	34.6	6
New Mexico	1,181,000	82.9	41	25.1	31
New York	12,508,000	85.4	35	30.6	13
North Carolina	5,313,000	80.9	47	23.4	42
North Dakota	414,000	89.5	12	25.2	30
Ohio	7,362,000	88.1	17	24.6	34
Oklahoma	2,164,000	85.2	37	22.9	43
Oregon	2,428,000	87.4	25	25.9	24
Pennsylvania	8,272,000	86.5	31	25.3	29
Rhode Island	709,000	81.1	46	27.2	20
South Carolina	2,636,000	83.6	39	24.9	32

Table 1: Educational Attainment of the Population 25 Years and Over, by State, Including Ranking: 2004, continued

State	Population Age 25 Years and Over	High school graduate or higher Percent	High school graduate or higher Percent, Ranking	Bachelor's degree or higher Percent	Bachelor's degree or higher Percent, Ranking
South Dakota	459,000	87.5	23	25.5	28
Tennessee	3,972,000	82.9	42	24.3	39
Texas	13,356,000	78.3	51	24.5	36
Utah	1,291,000	91.0	5	30.8	12
Vermont	416,000	90.8	7	34.2	8
Virginia	4,865,000	88.4	15	33.1	9
Washington	4,029,000	89.7	10	29.9	15
West Virginia	1,237,000	80.9	48	15.3	51
Wisconsin	3,540,000	88.8	14	25.6	25
Wyoming	317,000	91.9	3	22.5	44

Educational Attainment in Pennsylvania by Age

As of 2004, of the 9.3 million people in Pennsylvania age 18 and over, 85.7 percent are a high school graduate or higher and 23.6 percent earned a bachelor's degree or higher. In a ranking of the nation's 25 largest states, Pennsylvania ranked 12th in percent of people who graduated high school or higher and 14th in the percent of people with a bachelor's degree or higher. The population age 25 to 44, roughly 3 million people, ranked 6th and 8th, respectively among the 25 largest states in educational attainment. Table 2 provides additional information on Pennsylvania's educational attainment by age and where we ranked in comparison to the nation's 25 largest states.

Table 2: Educational Attainment by Age, and Ranking with Nation's 25 Largest States, Pennsylvania: 2004

Age	Population	High school graduate or higher Percent	High school graduate or higher Percent, Ranking	Bachelor's degree or higher Percent	Bachelor's degree or higher Percent
18 years and over	9,302,000	85.7	12	23.6	14
18 to 24 years	1,030,000	79.4	9	10.6	7
25 to 44 years	3,359,000	91.3	6	33.0	8
45 to 64 years	3,037,000	90.7	10	24.5	20
65 years and over	1,877,000	71.3	17	12.6	24

Educational Attainment by Race and Sex in Pennsylvania

As of 2004, the percent of males in Pennsylvania slightly exceeded the percent of females who are a high school graduate or higher in 2004. The percent of males was 86.7 while the percent of females was 86.4. The difference widens when you look at the percent of those completing a bachelor's degrees or higher. The percent of males in Pennsylvania was 27.9 while the percent of females was 22.9. Table 3 provides additional information

on educational attainment by race and sex and how Pennsylvania ranked in comparison to the nation's 25 largest states. A look at race and ethnicity in Pennsylvania shows that both Asians and people of Hispanic ethnicity (of any race) did very well when compared with the nation's 25 largest states. Asians in Pennsylvania ranked 9th in persons with a high school diploma or higher and 8th for people with a bachelor's degree or higher. Hispanics ranked 3rd in high school diplomas or higher and 11th in bachelor's degree or higher. To review the complete tables for Pennsylvania, visit our Web site at: <http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/>, click on PA STATS and then Educational Attainment (CPS).

Table 3: Educational Attainment by Sex and Race for the Population Age 25 Years and Over and Ranking with Nation's 25 Largest States, Pennsylvania: 2004

Characteristic	Population	High school graduate or higher Percent	High school graduate or higher Percent, Ranking	Bachelor's degree or higher Percent	Bachelor's degree or higher Percent
25 years and over	8,272,000	86.5	14	25.3	16
Male	3,892,000	86.7	12	27.9	14
Female	4,380,000	86.4	13	22.9	17
White alone	7,380,000	87.3	14	25.8	17
Black alone	693,000	79.1	18	14.9	19
Asian alone	140,000	89.1	9	55.2	8
Hispanic (of any race)	233,000	70.8	3	13.2	11
Non-Hispanic White alone	7,174,000	87.7	19	26.1	18

For additional information, please contact the PaSDC 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.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey