



# Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

February 9, 2006

## ACS Tables Illustrate Aging, Poverty Status, and Other Characteristics of Pennsylvanians

MIDDLETOWN, Pa – Subject tables from the 2004 American Community Survey (ACS) detailing age, poverty, fertility, and other characteristics of Pennsylvanians are now available through the Pennsylvania State Data Center at Penn State Harrisburg. The American Community Survey, conducted annually by the U.S. Census Bureau, currently collects data at the state and selected county and municipal levels on population, socio-economic characteristics, and dozens of other topics. The 2004 subject tables combine specific characteristics of individuals, households, and families that would normally be found in separate tables to illustrate particular themes, such as poverty status, origin and language, education, or fertility.

The tables may be viewed on the PaSDC website at:

[http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/pasdc/PA\\_Stats/America\\_Community\\_Survey/2004/acssubject04.htm](http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/pasdc/PA_Stats/America_Community_Survey/2004/acssubject04.htm)

Examples of the data that can be obtained from the 2004 ACS subject tables:

### Aging

The elderly in Pennsylvania (65 years+) made up 14.7 percent of the population in 2004 and the median age of this group was 75.5 years. The commonwealth's elderly population was majority white (91.6 percent) and 41.3 percent were male, while 58.7 percent were female. Fifty-five percent of the elderly were married and 31.8 were widowed. In terms of educational attainment, 30.4 percent had less than a high school diploma, 42.6 percent graduated from high school, and just 13.4 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. More than one-quarter of the elderly are civilian veterans, and 38.6 percent of the population has a disability. The old age dependency ratio was 23.9 percent in 2004.

### Fertility

Birth rates among women ages 15-50 varied substantially by age group in Pennsylvania. Women ages 20-34 years had the highest birth rate in 2004, 110/1,000, followed by women ages 15-19 (32/1,000). Birth rates were also highest among women of Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race, 85/1,000), Blacks (64/1,000), and women of some other race (75/1,000).

Ninety-two percent of women ages 15-19 who had a birth in the previous 12 months were unmarried, in contrast to just 35.6 percent of women ages 20-34. Seventy percent of unmarried women who gave birth in the previous 12 months were in poverty, and 64.0 percent of those had less than a high-school education.

### Education

More than three-quarters of all Pennsylvania school children were enrolled in public schools in 2004, while just 22.8 percent attended private schools. Of persons 25 years or older, 85.7 percent were high school

graduates and 24.7 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. The median earnings in the previous 12 months for Pennsylvanians who did not graduate from high school were \$18,583, \$7,022 less than a high school graduate. The disparity between high school graduates and those with a bachelor's degree (\$17,351) was even greater. The poverty rate for those with no high school diploma was 21.0 percent, but fell to 9.8 percent for high school graduates.

### **Poverty**

Pennsylvania's poverty rate in 2004 was 11.7 percent, and the highest proportion of the impoverished could be found in those under 18 (16.8 percent). Poverty also disproportionately affected persons of Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race, 31.5 percent), Blacks (28.9 percent), and persons of some other race (31.4 percent).

Almost 9 percent of families lived below the poverty line, but just 3.9 percent were married-couple families. Female householders where no husband was present accounted for the largest percentage of this group (28.3 percent). Over 350,000 Pennsylvania households received food stamps in 2004.

### **Origin & Language**

Just 4.7 percent (565,065) of Pennsylvania's population in 2004 was born outside the U.S. Of those, 18.9 percent have entered the country since 2000. Nearly half of the commonwealth's foreign-born population was White, followed by Asians (31.9 percent) and persons of Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race, 16.4 percent). Fourteen percent of the foreign-born population lived below poverty.

Only 8.5 percent of Pennsylvanians spoke a language other than English at home. Thirty-eight percent of those spoke Spanish, 40.3 percent spoke other Indo-European languages, 16.7 percent spoke an Asian language, and 4.8 percent spoke some other language.

### **Transportation**

In 2004, the mean travel time to work in Pennsylvania was 25.1 minutes. Most Pennsylvanians (87.9 percent) drove a car, truck, or van to work, 9.4 percent carpooled, and just 5.0 percent used public transportation. Forty-four percent of workers 16 years or older in households had 2 or more vehicles available to them. The majority of Pennsylvanians worked in state (94.9 percent), and 23.8 percent commuted to other Pennsylvania counties to work.

### **American Community Survey (ACS)**

ACS, which has already begun a phased rollout, will replace the census long form currently collected every 10 years and provide yearly socio-economic data. The 2004 survey was confined to population areas of 250,000 or greater and did not include group quarters. Beginning in 2005, ACS will include group quarters and expand to areas of 65,000 or greater.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey

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.

**Example of tables now available on the PaSDC Website at:**

[http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/pasdc/PA\\_Stats/America\\_Community\\_Survey/2004/acsubject04.htm](http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/pasdc/PA_Stats/America_Community_Survey/2004/acsubject04.htm)

**S1801: Disability Characteristics  
Data Set: 2004 American Community Survey  
Geographic Area: Pennsylvania**

NOTE. Data are limited to the household population and exclude the population living in institutions, college dormitories, and other group quarters. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see Survey Methodology.

Subject	Percent of total	MOE	Percent of male	MOE	Percent of female	MOE
Population 5 years and over	11,229,014	+/-6728	5,397,737	+/-10840	5,831,277	+/-8528
Without any disability	84.1	+/-0.4	85.0	+/-0.5	83.4	+/-0.5
With one type of disability	7.3	+/-0.2	7.4	+/-0.3	7.3	+/-0.3
With two or more types of disabilities	8.5	+/-0.3	7.6	+/-0.3	9.4	+/-0.4
Population 5 to 15 years	1,774,593	+/-10706	906,159	+/-10044	868,434	+/-9449
Without any disability	7.4	+/-0.6	8.9	+/-0.8	6.0	+/-0.8
With a sensory disability	0.9	+/-0.2	0.8	+/-0.2	1.0	+/-0.3
With a physical disability	1.2	+/-0.2	1.3	+/-0.3	1.1	+/-0.4
With a mental disability	6.3	+/-0.5	7.9	+/-0.8	4.6	+/-0.7
With a self-care disability	0.8	+/-0.2	0.9	+/-0.3	0.7	+/-0.3
Population 16 to 64 years	7,691,408	+/-11517	3,763,215	+/-11907	3,928,193	+/-10050
Without any disability	12.6	+/-0.4	12.6	+/-0.5	12.6	+/-0.6
With a sensory disability	2.4	+/-0.2	2.6	+/-0.3	2.2	+/-0.3
With a physical disability	7.6	+/-0.3	7.2	+/-0.4	8.0	+/-0.4
With a mental disability	4.6	+/-0.3	4.5	+/-0.3	4.6	+/-0.4
With a self-care disability	2.2	+/-0.2	2.0	+/-0.2	2.3	+/-0.2
With a go-outside-home disability	3.1	+/-0.2	2.7	+/-0.3	3.6	+/-0.3
With an employment disability	7.6	+/-0.4	7.5	+/-0.5	7.7	+/-0.5
Population 65 years and over	1,763,013	+/-6214	728,363	+/-3646	1,034,650	+/-4730
Without any disability	38.6	+/-1.0	35.2	+/-1.4	41.0	+/-1.3
With a sensory disability	14.8	+/-0.6	15.6	+/-0.9	14.3	+/-0.8
With a physical disability	28.8	+/-0.9	24.6	+/-1.3	31.7	+/-1.2
With a mental disability	10.1	+/-0.6	9.0	+/-0.9	10.8	+/-0.8
With a self-care disability	8.4	+/-0.6	6.7	+/-0.7	9.6	+/-0.9
With a go-outside-home disability	16.4	+/-0.8	11.4	+/-0.8	20.0	+/-1.3
<b>SCHOOL ENROLLMENT</b>						
Population 18 to 34 years	2,407,310	+/-13925	1,194,041	+/-9064	1,213,269	+/-8764
Without any disability	180,992	+/-14465	98,226	+/-9015	82,766	+/-10215
Enrolled in college or graduate school	8.6	+/-2.5	8.1	+/-3.9	9.2	+/-3.0
Not enrolled and without a bachelor's degree or higher	78.4	+/-3.1	80.9	+/-5.9	75.4	+/-4.7
With a sensory disability	29,346	+/-5949	15,788	+/-3800	13,558	+/-4481
Enrolled in college or graduate school	8.2	+/-4.1	7.7	+/-6.2	8.8	+/-6.4
Not enrolled and without a bachelor's degree or higher	75.1	+/-7.6	78.7	+/-10.4	70.9	+/-11.5
With a physical disability	67,933	+/-7755	32,458	+/-4669	35,475	+/-6458
Enrolled in college or graduate school	6.5	+/-3.3	7.3	+/-4.9	5.7	+/-4.3
Not enrolled and without a bachelor's degree or higher	81.0	+/-4.6	85.3	+/-6.3	77.0	+/-6.6
With a mental disability	93,539	+/-8713	52,444	+/-6306	41,095	+/-5663
Enrolled in college or graduate school	7.1	+/-3.1	7.8	+/-4.5	6.1	+/-4.1
Not enrolled and without a bachelor's degree or higher	76.8	+/-4.1	78.8	+/-7.7	74.4	+/-6.9
No disability	2,226,318	+/-23520	1,095,815	+/-12629	1,130,503	+/-15862
Enrolled in college or graduate school	19.6	+/-0.7	18.0	+/-1.0	21.2	+/-1.0

Subject	Percent of total	MOE	Percent of male	MOE	Percent of female	MOE
Not enrolled and without a bachelor's degree or higher	54.9	+/-1.0	58.0	+/-1.4	51.9	+/-1.4
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>						
Population 16 to 64 years	7,691,408	+/-11517	3,763,215	+/-11907	3,928,193	+/-10050
With any disability	967,383	+/-32876	473,212	+/-18895	494,171	+/-21894
Employed	34.5	+/-1.4	36.1	+/-2.0	32.9	+/-1.9
With a sensory disability	182,055	+/-17041	96,732	+/-10137	85,323	+/-10918
Employed	47.5	+/-3.7	54.1	+/-4.8	40.1	+/-5.0
With a physical disability	582,329	+/-23707	269,589	+/-15343	312,740	+/-15024
Employed	29.9	+/-2.0	28.3	+/-2.7	31.3	+/-2.7
With a mental disability	350,680	+/-20693	170,993	+/-11752	179,687	+/-15564
Employed	26.6	+/-1.9	28.7	+/-3.0	24.6	+/-3.0
No disability	6,724,025	+/-35109	3,290,003	+/-23581	3,434,022	+/-23918
Employed	75.2	+/-0.5	81.3	+/-0.7	69.3	+/-0.7
<b>POVERTY STATUS</b>						
Population 5 years and over	11,198,588	+/-8374	5,384,708	+/-10648	5,813,880	+/-9669
With any disability	1,777,054	+/-42468	807,841	+/-25021	969,213	+/-29523
Below poverty level	19.9	+/-1.1	18.1	+/-1.3	21.3	+/-1.4
With a sensory disability	459,542	+/-20959	217,694	+/-13528	241,848	+/-13253
Below poverty level	14.6	+/-1.1	10.6	+/-1.8	18.2	+/-1.8
With a physical disability	1,111,481	+/-31238	461,167	+/-19214	650,314	+/-21490
Below poverty level	19.6	+/-1.2	18.4	+/-1.7	20.4	+/-1.7
With a mental disability	635,953	+/-29465	305,977	+/-15325	329,976	+/-19114
Below poverty level	26.4	+/-2.0	25.0	+/-2.5	27.8	+/-2.8
No disability	9,421,534	+/-43062	4,576,867	+/-28368	4,844,667	+/-30102
Below poverty level	9.4	+/-0.5	7.9	+/-0.5	10.9	+/-0.6
<b>PERCENT IMPUTED</b>						
With any disability	4.9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
With a sensory disability	2.6	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
With a physical disability	3.5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
With a mental disability	2.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
With a self-care disability	2.3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
With a go-outside-home disability	2.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
With an employment disability	2.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey

Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error. The margin of error can be interpreted roughly as providing a 90 percent probability that the interval defined by the estimate minus the margin of error and the estimate plus the margin of error (the lower and upper confidence bounds) contains the true value. In addition to sampling variability, the ACS estimates are subject to nonsampling error (for a discussion of nonsampling variability, see [Accuracy of the Data](#)). The effect of nonsampling error is not represented in these tables.

**Explanation of Symbols:**

1. An '\*' entry in the margin of error column indicates that too few sample observations were available to compute a standard error and thus the margin of error. A statistical test is not appropriate.
2. An '\*\*' entry in the margin of error column indicates that no sample observations were available to compute a standard error and thus the margin of error. A statistical test is not appropriate.
3. An '-' entry in the estimate column indicates that no sample observations were available to compute an estimate, or a ratio of medians cannot be calculated because one or both of the median estimates falls in the lowest interval or upper interval of an open-ended distribution.
4. An '-' following a median estimate means the median falls in the lowest interval of an open-ended distribution.
5. An '+' following a median estimate means the median falls in the upper interval of an open-ended distribution.
6. An '\*\*\*' entry in the margin of error column indicates that the median falls in the lowest interval or upper interval of an open-ended distribution. A statistical test is not appropriate.
7. An '\*\*\*\*\*' entry in the margin of error column indicates that the estimate is controlled. A statistical test for sampling variability is not appropriate.
8. An 'N' entry in the estimate and margin of error columns indicates that data for this geographic area cannot be displayed because the number of sample cases is too small.
9. An '(X)' means that the estimate is not applicable or not available.

**Prepared By: The Pennsylvania State Data Center 02/1/2006**

PENNSTATE



Harrisburg

Institute of State and Regional Affairs