



# Research Brief

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## **PaSDC Releases the *State of the Commonwealth: 2009* – A Comprehensive Look at the Keystone State's Demographics**

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The PaSDC has released a new publication, a comprehensive summary of facts and figures about the Commonwealth. The *State of the Commonwealth: 2009*, provides an overview of the most accurate, up-to-date information about Pennsylvania. This publication contains eight sections, each addressing an important issue for Pennsylvania and its residents: demographics and population change; social characteristics; children and families; the elderly; education; employment and commuting; income and poverty; and housing characteristics.

Drawing on the newest data available, from the 2007 American Community Survey, the *State of the Commonwealth* is a compendium of reference information about the population of the Keystone state. You can find a selection of a few of the pieces of information from *State of the Commonwealth* below.

### **Demographics and Population Change**

Pennsylvania is a slow growing state – its population rose by 151,738 persons since 2000, a 1.2 percent increase – but it is the sixth most populous state in the country, representing 4.1 percent of the total U.S. population. The estimated 2007 population of Pennsylvania was 12,432,792. Since 2000, Pennsylvania grew faster than Ohio, Rhode Island, and West Virginia (as well as North Dakota and Louisiana, which each lost population since 2000).

The state's minority population (including the Hispanic population and all non-white race group populations) experienced a 17 percent increase between 2000 and 2007, while the White alone, Non-Hispanic population actually declined during that period. While females account for 51.3 percent of the total Pennsylvania population, they account for 59.2 percent of the population 65 and over.

### **Social Characteristics**

In 2007, Pennsylvania had 4,873,482 households, 65.6 percent of which are family households. Family households are defined as any group of people living in the same housing unit where at least two of the people are related to each other by birth, marriage or adoption. Of the 1,675,283 non-family households in 2007, 84.2 percent were one-person households. The average size of a Pennsylvania household in 2007 was 2.46.

In 2007, 5.4 percent of Pennsylvania's population was foreign-born. Within that group of 665,176 foreign born persons, just over one-half are naturalized citizens. The percentage of the

population five years and older that speaks only English at home fell from 91.6 percent in 2000 to 90.5 percent in 2007.

### **Children and Families**

In 2007, households with children under 18 years of age accounted for 44.6 percent of the 3,208,388 family households in Pennsylvania. Over all in Pennsylvania, the number of children under 18 has declined from 23.7 percent to 22.4 percent between 2000 and 2007. Most of the children in households in Pennsylvania (68.5 percent) were in a married-couple family household. About 1 in 6 children lived in households below the poverty level in 2007.

### **The Elderly**

Pennsylvania has one of the largest elderly populations among the states, and it represents a large share of the state's population. In 2007, 15.2 percent of the total Pennsylvania population was 65 or older. Within the 65 and older group, 52.6 percent were 75 or older. Over one quarter of all Pennsylvania households included one or more persons 65 or older. Pennsylvania's elderly were about twice as likely as the overall population to have less than a high-school education.

### **Education**

Pennsylvania's population has become better-educated overall since the last Decennial Census. The percent of Pennsylvanians 25 years of age or older with no high-school diploma fell from 29.5 percent in 2000 to only 13.2 percent in 2007. The number of Pennsylvanians 25 and over who earned a Bachelor's degree or higher rose from 17.0 percent in 2000 to 25.8 percent in 2007.

### **Employment and Commuting**

Nearly three-quarters of people between 16 and 64 in Pennsylvania were in the workforce in 2007, a rate very near the national average of 74.3 percent. More than half (54.3 percent) of married couple families included both spouses in the labor force. Nearly 77 percent of Pennsylvania workers drove to work alone in a car, truck, or van. Only 9.4 percent carpooled.

### **Income and Poverty**

The median income of all Pennsylvania households in 2007 was \$48,576. The median income of married-family households was much higher at \$70,379. Families at or below the poverty level represented 8.1 percent of all Pennsylvania families. The national rate was 9.5 percent.

### **Housing**

Pennsylvania's housing stock is among the nation's oldest with 28.9 percent of all units built before 1940, and only 1.7 percent built in 2005 or later. There were 5,478,158 housing units in Pennsylvania in 2007 and 89.0 percent of them were occupied. Of the occupied housing units, 71.6 percent were occupied by their owners.

*State of the Commonwealth: 2009* is an overview of the demographic and statistical trends that shape Pennsylvania, now and in the future. To order your copy today, visit our website at [PaSDC.hbg.psu.edu](http://PaSDC.hbg.psu.edu) and click "eStore," call 717.948.6336, or email [PaSDC@psu.edu](mailto:PaSDC@psu.edu). Available in hardcopy or on CD-ROM (PDF).

Source: *State of the Commonwealth: 2009*

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.

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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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