



# Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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## **U.S. Census Bureau Releases 2012 County Population Estimates: Lehigh County is the Fastest Growing County Since 2010**

**PENN STATE HARRISBURG** – Lehigh County is Pennsylvania's fastest growing county, according to the 2012 County Population Estimates released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. From April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2012, Lehigh County's total population increased from 349,497 to 355,245 residents, a growth-rate of 1.6 percent. The Commonwealth also boasted three counties among the top 100 largest nationally in 2012: Philadelphia, 22<sup>nd</sup> (1,547,607), Allegheny, 31<sup>st</sup> (1,229,338) and Montgomery, 71<sup>st</sup> (808,460).

The county-level total population estimates show the estimated total population for all counties in the United States. The estimates are calculated using administrative records to estimate components of population change, such as births, deaths, domestic and international migration. The estimates reflect changes to the 2010 Census population resulting from legal boundary updates as of January 1 of the estimates year, other geographic program changes and Count Question Resolution (CQR) actions.

### **Percent Population Change**

Chester County (1.5 percent) followed Lehigh County in percent population increase since 2010. Cumberland, Lancaster, Philadelphia and Tioga counties followed with each increasing 1.4 percent between 2010 and 2012. Cameron (-2.9 percent), Greene, Wayne, and Warren (-1.6 percent each) counties experienced the largest percent loss during this period.

Seven of the top ten counties in percent population growth from 2010 to 2012 were located in south-central Pennsylvania or the metropolitan Philadelphia area. In contrast, eight of the top ten counties in percent population loss over the 2010-2012 time period were concentrated in the western part of the state. Thirty-three counties experienced population loss during the period.

### **Numeric Population Change**

Philadelphia County, which grew by 21,601 people, had the largest estimated gain in population between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2012 among Pennsylvania counties. Montgomery and Chester counties, located just outside of Philadelphia, followed with estimated population increases of 8,579 and 7,697, respectively. Taken together, these three counties accounted for 61.9 percent of

Pennsylvania's overall population increase of 61,157 during the period April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2012. Outside of southeastern Pennsylvania, Lancaster (7,375), Allegheny (5,990), Lehigh (5,748), and Cumberland (3,206) counties had the largest numeric population gains. The growth of population in Philadelphia and Allegheny counties marks a change from growth patterns of previous decades, when these counties experienced population decline.

More counties in Western Pennsylvania experienced population loss from 2010 to 2012. During the time period, Cambria County (-2,095) had the largest estimated population decrease, followed by Westmoreland (-1,775) and Lawrence (-1,237) counties. Schuylkill (-1,226) and Monroe (-1,045) counties were the two Eastern Pennsylvania counties to lose more than a thousand residents since 2000.

### **Births, Deaths and Migration in the Commonwealth**

There were an estimated 320,606 births in Pennsylvania between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2012. An estimated 283,295 deaths occurred during this time period resulting in a natural increase of 37,311 people. From April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2012, international migration into Pennsylvania outpaced domestic outmigration, resulting in a net gain of 26,819 persons.

Philadelphia, Allegheny, and Montgomery led all Pennsylvania counties in the number of births and deaths during the period. The number of births was higher than deaths in Philadelphia and Montgomery counties resulting in a natural increase of 19,940 and 4,261, respectively, while the number of deaths in Allegheny County outpaced the number of births by 1,307. Forest, Cameron and Sullivan counties had the lowest number of births and deaths between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2012. Births were outpaced by deaths in all three counties during the time period.

The largest net migration occurred in the counties of Allegheny (8,120), Montgomery (4,622), and Lehigh (3,359). Monroe County, which in previous decades experienced large population gains because of high migration rates from neighboring states, lost 1,371 residents to outmigration. This decline because of migration was the largest of any Pennsylvania county between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2012.

### **More about Population Estimates**

Today's release is the second county-level population estimates release from the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Division this decade. Population estimates for the total population are provided for every county in the United States. In May, total population estimates for sub-county areas (municipalities) will be released. In June, the Census Bureau is set to release 2012 county-level age, sex, race and ethnicity estimates, along with housing unit estimates for the state and counties.

**Table 1. Pennsylvania County Population Estimates and Population Change - April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2012**

County	July 1, 2012 Population Estimate	April 1, 2010 Population Estimates Base	Numeric Population Change	Percent Population Change	County	July 1, 2012 Population Estimate	April 1, 2010 Population Estimates Base	Numeric Population Change	Percent Population Change
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>12,763,536</b>	<b>12,702,379</b>	<b>61,157</b>	<b>0.5</b>	Juniata	24,904	24,638	266	1.1
Adams	101,482	101,407	75	0.1	Lackawanna	214,477	214,436	41	0.0
Allegheny	1,229,338	1,223,348	5,990	0.5	Lancaster	526,823	519,448	7,375	1.4
Armstrong	68,409	68,942	-533	-0.8	Lawrence	89,871	91,108	-1,237	-1.4
Beaver	170,245	170,539	-294	-0.2	Lebanon	135,251	133,573	1,678	1.3
Bedford	49,324	49,774	-450	-0.9	Lehigh	355,245	349,497	5,748	1.6
Berks	413,491	411,439	2,052	0.5	Luzerne	321,027	320,918	109	0.0
Blair	127,121	127,076	45	0.0	Lycoming	117,168	116,108	1,060	0.9
Bradford	62,792	62,622	170	0.3	McKean	43,127	43,450	-323	-0.7
Bucks	627,053	625,249	1,804	0.3	Mercer	115,655	116,638	-983	-0.8
Butler	184,970	183,862	1,108	0.6	Mifflin	46,773	46,683	90	0.2
Cambria	141,584	143,679	-2,095	-1.5	Monroe	168,798	169,842	-1,044	-0.6
Cameron	4,939	5,085	-146	-2.9	Montgomery	808,460	799,874	8,586	1.1
Carbon	65,006	65,249	-243	-0.4	Montour	18,356	18,267	89	0.5
Centre	155,171	153,985	1,186	0.8	Northampton	299,267	297,735	1,532	0.5
Chester	506,575	498,886	7,689	1.5	Northumberland	94,428	94,517	-89	-0.1
Clarion	39,646	39,988	-342	-0.9	Perry	45,701	45,967	-266	-0.6
Clearfield	81,184	81,645	-461	-0.6	Philadelphia	1,547,607	1,526,006	21,601	1.4
Clinton	39,517	39,241	276	0.7	Pike	56,899	57,367	-468	-0.8
Columbia	66,887	67,296	-409	-0.6	Potter	17,577	17,457	120	0.7
Crawford	87,598	88,765	-1,167	-1.3	Schuylkill	147,063	148,289	-1,226	-0.8
Cumberland	238,614	235,408	3,206	1.4	Snyder	39,672	39,702	-30	-0.1
Dauphin	269,665	268,100	1,565	0.6	Somerset	76,957	77,742	-785	-1.0
Delaware	561,098	558,979	2,119	0.4	Sullivan	6,461	6,428	33	0.5
Elk	31,550	31,946	-396	-1.2	Susquehanna	42,696	43,356	-660	-1.5
Erie	280,646	280,566	80	0.0	Tioga	42,577	41,981	596	1.4
Fayette	135,660	136,606	-946	-0.7	Union	44,952	44,949	3	0.0
Forest	7,667	7,716	-49	-0.6	Venango	54,272	54,984	-712	-1.3
Franklin	151,275	149,618	1,657	1.1	Warren	41,146	41,815	-669	-1.6
Fulton	14,772	14,845	-73	-0.5	Washington	208,716	207,820	896	0.4
Greene	38,085	38,686	-601	-1.6	Wayne	51,955	52,825	-870	-1.6
Huntingdon	45,943	45,914	29	0.1	Westmoreland	363,395	365,168	-1,773	-0.5
Indiana	88,218	88,886	-668	-0.8	Wyoming	28,125	28,276	-151	-0.5
Jefferson	44,764	45,196	-432	-1.0	York	437,846	434,972	2,874	0.7

Additional maps and tables may be view on the PaSDC website. 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](mailto:PaSDC@psu.edu).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Division

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.**