



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

August 12, 2015

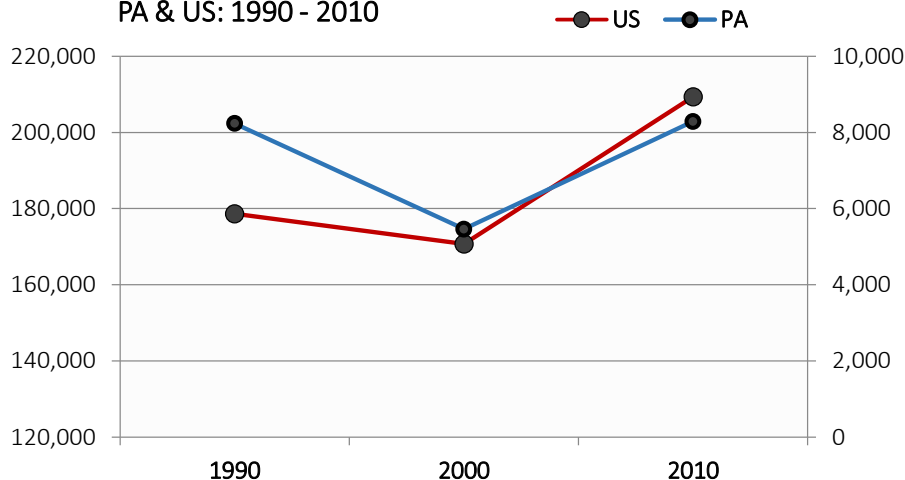
Population in Emergency and Transitional Shelters Rise

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The population of persons in emergency and transitional shelters in Pennsylvania rose by 51.7 percent from 2000 to 2010, according to the US Census Bureau's 2010 Census Emergency and Transitional Shelter Population Report. In 2010, there was a total of 8,287 persons in emergency and transitional shelters, up from 5,463 in 2000. Interestingly, after declining between 1990 and 2000, the emergency/transitional shelter population in 2010 is just 50 persons higher than 1990 figure of 8,237 (see Figure 1).

Nationally, the number of persons in emergency and transitional shelters increased 22.6 percent from 170,706 in 2000 to 209,325 in 2010. The national data also reveals a decline between 1990 and 2000; however, it also shows a more distinct increase over the twenty-year period 1990 to 2010: 17.2 percent nationally versus 0.6 percent for Pennsylvania. Among the states, Pennsylvania ranked 5th with 4.0 percent of the nation's total emergency/transitional shelter population (see Table 1).

Table 1. Top Ten States - Population in Emergency/Transitional Shelters		
Area	Number	Percent of Total
United States	209,325	100.0%
New York	36,254	17.3%
California	27,655	13.2%
Florida	12,714	6.1%
Texas	10,841	5.2%
Pennsylvania	8,287	4.0%
Illinois	7,623	3.6%
Washington	6,425	3.1%
Massachusetts	6,368	3.0%
New Jersey	6,078	2.9%
Ohio	5,970	2.9%

Figure 1. Population in Emergency/Transitional Shelters, PA & US: 1990 - 2010

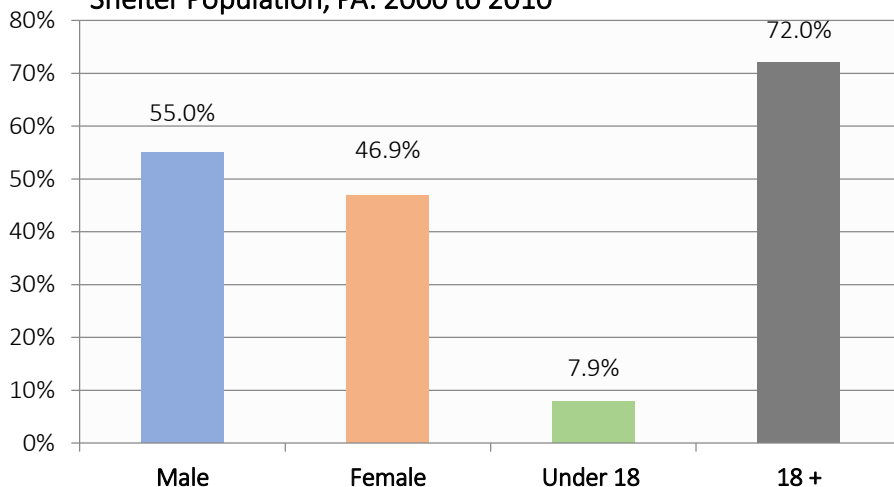


Emergency/Transitional Shelter Population by Age and Sex

The report shows that of the total emergency and transitional shelter population in Pennsylvania, children under the age of 18 years made up 22.6 percent of the population. Males and females under 18 years were basically even at 11.0 percent and 11.6 percent, respectively. However, the population of girls under the age of 18 years in emergency and transitional shelters was disproportionately large, compared to the boys of the same age group. Nearly thirty percent of females in emergency and transitional shelters were under the age of 18 years, compared to 18.1 percent of males. The male/female breakout skewed more heavily toward males among the adults aged 18 years and over in emergency/transitional shelters (49.8 percent male versus 27.7 percent female). Overall, there was 60/40 split among males and females in this population in 2010.

The number of males and females in emergency/transitional shelters increased 55.0 percent and 46.9 percent, respectively since 2000 (see Figure 2). The population above 18 years in these shelters grew much more rapidly than those under 18 years over the time period (72.0 percent compared to 7.9 percent).

Figure 2. Percent Increase in Emergency/Transitional Shelter Population, PA: 2000 to 2010



More about the 2010 Census Emergency and Transitional Shelter Population Report

The Census Bureau stresses that this special report presents statistics for people enumerated at emergency and transitional shelters only, and should not be misconstrued as a count of the entire population experiencing homelessness. The Census Bureau does not produce or publish a total count of the homeless population.

Emergency and transitional shelters were defined as places where people experiencing homelessness stay overnight. Examples include missions; hotels and motels used to shelter people experiencing homelessness; shelters for children who are runaways, neglected or experiencing homelessness; and similar places known to shelter people experiencing homelessness.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 1990, 2000, 2010 Census Emergency and Transitional Shelter Population Report

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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