



# Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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## **PaSDC Releases the *State of the Commonwealth: 2011* – A Comprehensive Look at the Keystone State's Demographics**

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The PaSDC has recently released a comprehensive summary of facts and figures about the Commonwealth. The *State of the Commonwealth: 2011* provides an overview of the most accurate, up-to-date information about Pennsylvania. This publication contains seven sections, each addressing an important issue for Pennsylvania and its residents: demographics and population change; social characteristics; the elderly; education; and income and poverty.

Drawing on the newest data available, from the 2009 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 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 323,696 persons since 2000, a 2.6 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 2009 population of Pennsylvania was 12,604,767. Only seven states grew slower than Pennsylvania since 2000.

The state's minority population (including the Hispanic population and all non-white race group populations) experienced a 24.5 percent increase between 2000 and 2009. In particular, the Hispanic or Latino population was the fastest-growing minority group, increasing by 64.1 percent since 2000. Meanwhile, the White alone, Non-Hispanic population declined 1.4 percent during the period.

### **Social Characteristics**

In 2009, Pennsylvania had 4,916,869 households, 65.0 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 1,721,037 non-family households in 2009, 84.1 percent were one-person households. The average size of a Pennsylvania household in 2009 was 2.47.

In 2009, 5.5 percent of Pennsylvania's population was foreign-born. Within that group of 691,242 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 90.4 percent in 2009.

## **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 2009, 15.4 percent of the total Pennsylvania population was 65 or older. The elderly population was less diverse than the overall population: 90.3 percent of persons 65 or older were White alone, Non-Hispanic (compared to 80.9 percent for the state as a whole). Over one quarter of all Pennsylvania households included one or more persons 65 or older.

## **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 18.1 percent in 2000 to only 12.1 percent in 2009. The number of Pennsylvanians 25 and over who earned a Bachelor's degree or higher rose from 22.4 percent in 2000 to 26.4 percent in 2009.

## **Income and Poverty**

The median income of all Pennsylvania households in 2009 was \$49,520. Nearly one-in-five households received retirement income in 2009. Pennsylvania had a smaller portion of its population in poverty than the national average: 12.5 percent compared to 14.3 percent nationwide.

*State of the Commonwealth: 2011* 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 <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: 2011*

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.