



Research Brief

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More Pennsylvanians Living in Renter-occupied Housing Units: State Sees Modest Increase in Homeownership

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The recently released 2010 Census figures show that the number of Pennsylvanians renting living space is on the rise. The number of Pennsylvanians living in renter-occupied housing units increased 13.6 percent between 2000 and 2010, an increase of 394,082 people. More than 3.3 million Pennsylvanians resided in renter-occupied housing units with an average household size of 2.16 persons per household in 2010.

The data on housing tenure originates from the 2010 Census Summary File 1 released in June, which contains summary statistics compiled from the questions asked of all people and about every housing unit in the nation. Tenure, according to U.S. Census Bureau definitions, refers to the status of an occupied housing unit as either owner-occupied or renter-occupied.

Pennsylvania Owner-occupied Housing Units 2010

The number of occupied housing units increased 5.1 percent since 2000 to a total of 5,018,904 units in 2010. Of the more than 5 million occupied housing units in the state, 69.6 percent were owner-occupied in 2010. Nearly two-thirds (65.0 percent) of the 3,491,722 owner-occupied homes were owned with a mortgage or a loan, while the remaining 35.0 percent were owned free and clear. The number of Pennsylvanians living in owner-occupied housing units exceeded 8.9 million, each with an average household size of 2.57 persons per household in 2010.

Change of Pennsylvania Housing Tenure

The tenure of Pennsylvania housing units has undergone a transition since the last decennial census in 2000. The number of renter-occupied housing units increased by 11.4 percent over the last ten years, an increase of 156,516 units. Renter-occupied housing units totaled 1,527,182 in 2010 and account for 30.4 percent of the Commonwealth's total occupied housing units up from 28.7 percent in 2000. During the same time period, the number of owner-occupied housing units in Pennsylvania increased at a much lower rate: 2.5 percent; an increase of 85,385 total units.

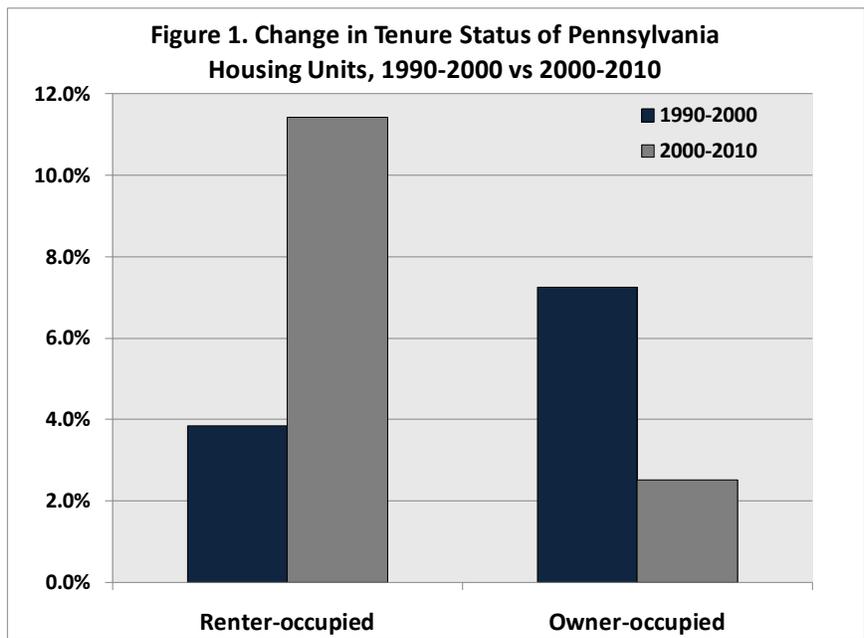
The changing tenure of Pennsylvania housing units over the past decade contrasts considerably with what was experienced during the 1990s. Between the period 1990 and 2000, the number of owner-occupied housing units in Pennsylvania increased 7.2 percent, while the number of renter-occupied housing units grew by only 3.9 percent statewide (see Figure 1.).

Change in Housing Tenure by County

Twenty-nine of Pennsylvania's 67 counties experienced a decline in the number of owner-occupied housing units between 2000 and 2010. Outside of Philadelphia County, which saw a 7.2 percent

decrease in owner-occupied housing units over the time period, the largest percent decreases in owner-occupied units occurred in western Pennsylvania counties. Cameron County led all Pennsylvania counties with a 9.1 percent decline in owner-occupied housing units in 2010, followed by Fayette (-8.3 percent), McKean (-6.1 percent), and Clarion (-5.0 percent) counties. Thirty Pennsylvania counties had an owner-occupied housing unit growth rate higher than the state's figure of 2.5 percent. Pike County saw the largest percent growth in owner-occupied housing units: between 2000 and 2010, owner-occupied units increased 27.3 percent. Forest (24.6 percent), Monroe (24.0 percent), Chester (15.7 percent) and Franklin (14.5 percent) also experienced considerable growth in owner-occupied housing units over the same time period.

Renter-occupied housing units are increasing throughout Pennsylvania. The largest percent increase between 2000 and 2010 can be found in Forest County (30.1 percent), which experience a large percent increase in population due to the construction of a state correctional facility in 2004. Monroe (22.0 percent), Union (21.6 percent), Centre (21.4 percent), Lancaster (20.9 percent) and Butler (20.7) counties followed Forest County, experiencing a growth rate of renter-occupied housing units of greater than 20 percent. Only three Pennsylvania counties saw a decrease in the number of renter-occupied housing units: Cameron (-4.0 percent), Fayette (-2.1 percent) and McKean (-0.4 percent) counties.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 and 2000 Summary File 1

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the Commonwealth's expert in demographics. To request custom Census 2010 data tables or maps, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center at 717.772.2710.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 & 2010 Summary File 1

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.