



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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U.S. Census Bureau Releases New 2010 Census Urban Area Definitions: Pennsylvania's Urban Population Increased 5.6 Percent Since 2000

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The number of Pennsylvanians living in urban areas increased 5.6 percent between 2000 and 2010, according to the new urban-rural classification data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. Nearly eight-in-ten (78.7 percent) Pennsylvania residents lived in urban area in 2010. Today's release marks the first set of data to be generated using the new 2010 Census urban/rural classifications and is the first data set addressing this topic since the 2000 Census. Data released in the file shows the number of people residing in urban areas, urban clusters and rural areas.

The Census Bureau's urban areas represent densely developed territory and encompass residential, commercial, and other nonresidential urban land uses that meet minimum population density requirements. The Census Bureau identifies two types of urban areas: "urbanized areas" of 50,000 or more people and "urban clusters" of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people. "Rural" encompasses all population, housing and territory not included within an urban area

According to the data, Pennsylvania is becoming increasingly urbanized. In 2010, the Commonwealth's urban population was 9,991,287, with 70.7 percent inside urbanized areas and 8.0 percent inside urban clusters. While, in 2000, a total of 9,464,101 Pennsylvania residents lived in an urban area, with 66.9 percent in urbanized areas and 10.2 percent of the population inside urban clusters (see Table 1.)

Table 1. Total and Percent Population Urban and Rural, Pennsylvania 2000 and 2010

Area	Number of 2010 Urban Areas	Population		Percentage of Total Population	
		2010	2000	2010	2000
Pennsylvania		12,702,379	12,281,054	100.0%	100.0%
Urban	137	9,991,287	9,464,101	78.7%	77.1%
Urbanized Areas	27	8,977,537	8,210,985	70.7%	66.9%
Urban Cluster	110	1,013,750	1,253,116	8.0%	10.2%
Rural		2,711,092	2,816,953	21.3%	22.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Urban-Rural Classification



New Urbanized Areas

As a result of the new 2010 classification, Pennsylvania gained four additional urbanized areas – the most of any state. The newly qualified urbanized areas include:

- Bloomsburg – Berwick, PA (53,618)
- Chambersburg, PA (50,887)
- East Stroudsburg, PA – NJ (54,067)
- Hanover, PA (66,301)

Pennsylvanian Counties

Of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, only one, Philadelphia, had no rural residents in 2010. Four counties had no urban populations: Forest, Fulton, Potter and Sullivan. The remaining 62 counties have both urban and rural components, with 30 counties having greater than 50 percent or more rural population.

For more data on urban and rural geographic components for Pennsylvania counties visit the Data Center's website at <http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu>, click on Census 2010. Click [here](#) to view a map showing the percent of the population living in urban areas for Pennsylvania counties.

More about the Census Bureau's Urban/Rural Classification

The urban and rural classifications released today for the 2010 Census only incorporate total population figures. In October, the Census Bureau will release data from Summary File 1 tabulated to urban and rural geographic components.

The Census Bureau's urban and rural classification provides an important baseline for analyzing changes in the distribution and characteristics of urban and rural populations. The Census Bureau's urban areas also form the cores of metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget, and are used in other agencies' and organization's urban and rural classifications.

More information about the Census Bureau's Urban-Rural Classification, including the criteria used to delineate urban areas, lists of urbanized areas and urban clusters, maps and files providing relationships with other geographic areas can be found on the Census Bureau's website at <http://www.census.gov/geo/www/ua/2010urbanruralclass.html>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Urban and Rural Classification and Urban Area Criteria

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.

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