

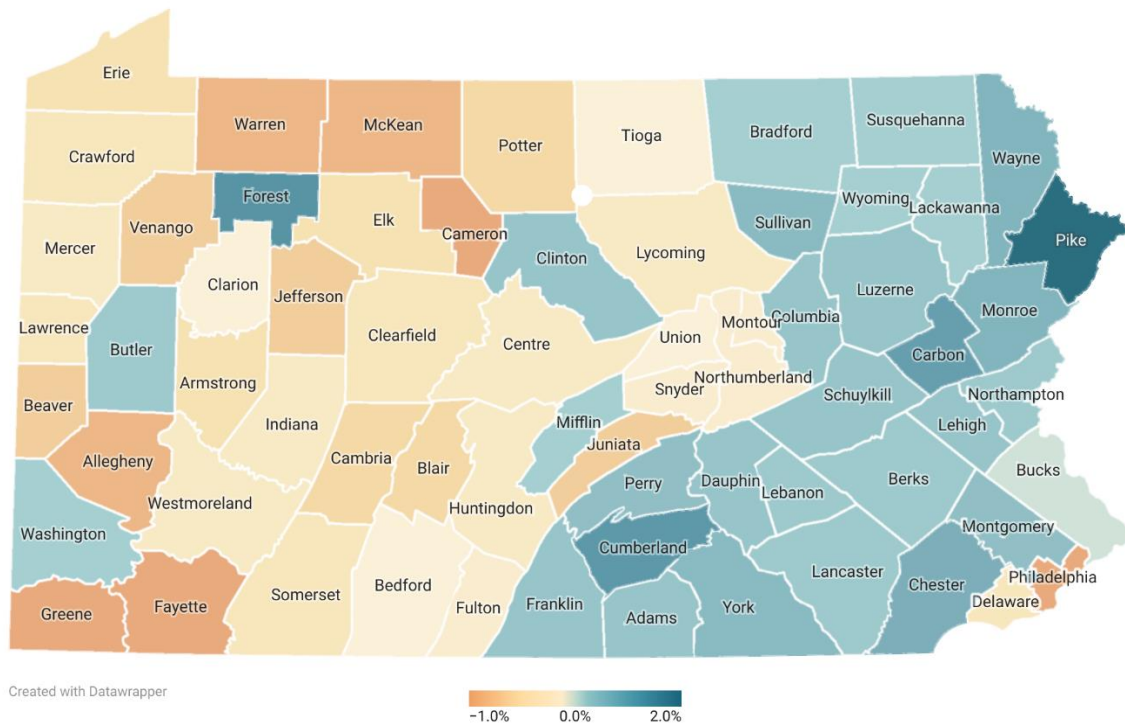
2021 County Total Population Estimates Released

HARRISBURG – The U.S. Census Bureau released today estimates of the total population as of July 1, 2021 at the county level. Population estimates are calculated using administrative records to estimate components of population change such as births, deaths, and migration.

Key Trends in 2021 Population Estimates Data

Sixty-two of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties experienced natural decrease in 2021, up from 55 in 2020 and 49 in 2019, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Vintage 2021 estimates of population and components of change released today. Natural decrease occurs when there are more deaths than births in a population over a given time period. In 2021, fewer births, an aging population, and increased mortality – intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic – contributed to a rise in natural decrease. The statistics released today include population estimates and components of change for the metropolitan statistical areas, micropolitan statistical areas and counties.

Pennsylvania experienced a population decline (-25,569) between 2020 and 2021 (-0.2%), the result of the natural decrease. More Pennsylvania counties experienced positive domestic migration between 2020 and 2021 contributing to many counties increasing in population. Thirty-one counties increased in population between 2020 and 2021 with the largest increase in Chester County (+4,004 or 0.7%). Chester was followed by Montgomery (+3,631), Cumberland (+2,923), York (+2,307) and Pike (+1,361) counties.



Thirty-six counties experienced population decline during this time period, the largest in Philadelphia County (-24,754 or -1.5%). Declines of more than 1,000 population were also seen in Allegheny (-10,627), Delaware (-2,539), Fayette (-1,462), Erie (-1,416) and Beaver (-1,108).

Philadelphia County experienced the largest natural increase (+1,694) but still declined in population between 2020 and 2021 due to negative domestic migration. The remaining counties with natural increases include Lancaster (+536), Lehigh (+130), Chester (+119) and Dauphin (+5). The largest natural decrease occurred in Allegheny County (-3,862). Six other counties had natural declines of 1,000 or more: Westmoreland (-2,536), Bucks (-2,013), Luzerne (-1,604), Montgomery (-1,309), Washington (-1,078), and Beaver (-1,017). Among these only Allegheny, Westmoreland, and Beaver experienced population loss between 2020 and 2021.

Of the 384 metro areas in the 50 states and District of Columbia, 213 (55.5%) experienced natural decrease in 2021, with Pittsburgh, PA (-10,838) experiencing the largest decline. The Pittsburgh metro area population declined 13,755 (-0.6%) between 2020 and 2021. The Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD metro area population declined 13,382 (-0.2%) with a natural decline of 3,185.

More Information

The Population Estimates Program uses current data on births, deaths and migration to calculate population change since the most recent decennial census and produce a time series of estimates of population, demographic components of change and housing units.

The annual time series of estimates begins with the most recent decennial census date and extends to the vintage year. This is the second release of population estimates data developed from a base population that [integrates the 2020 Census, Vintage 2020 estimates, and 2020 Demographic Analysis estimates](#). Comparisons to previous years are not recommended.

With each new release of annual estimates, the entire time series of estimates is revised for all years back to the last census. All previously published estimates (i.e., old vintages) are superseded and archived at:

<<https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/datasets/>>.

Information on the timing of specific population and housing unit estimates products is available at <<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/about/schedule.html>>.

The Vintage 2020 methodology statement and release notes are available at

<<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/technical-documentation/methodology.html>>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Division, 2021 County Population Estimates.

Questions? Contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center at 717.948.6336 or online at pasdc.hbg.psu.edu.

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