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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
COMMONWEALTH *of* PENNSYLVANIA

*House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing*  
Economic Impact of Immigration

Wednesday, November 13, 2024 | 9:00 a.m.

Representative Danilo Burgos

**OPENING REMARKS**

9:00 a.m.

Rep. Danilo Burgos (D-Philadelphia), Chair  
*Pennsylvania Legislative Latino Caucus*

**PANEL ONE**

9:05 a.m.

Julio Rodriguez, Political Director  
*Pennsylvania Immigration & Citizenship Coalition*

*Q & A with Legislators*

**PANEL TWO**

9:35 a.m.

Kyle Kopko, Ph.D., Executive Director  
*Center for Rural Pennsylvanians*

Cathryn Miller-Wilson, Esq., Executive Director  
*HIAS Pennsylvania*

*Q & A with Legislators*

**PANEL THREE**

10:05 a.m.

Julissa Morales, Mobilization and Tactics Coordinator  
*Movement of Immigrant Leaders in Pennsylvania*

Jenna Baron, Executive Director  
*ARYSE*

*Q & A with Legislators*



To: Pennsylvania Democratic House Policy Committee

From: Julio Rodriguez

Subject: Pennsylvania Immigration Coalition (PIC), Economic Impact of Immigration Policy  
Committee Written Testimony

Date: 11/13/24

Good morning, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I'm Julio Rodriguez, and I am the Political Director for the Pennsylvania Immigration Coalition, known as PIC. We are a statewide immigration coalition advocating for immigrants, migrants, and refugees across Pennsylvania. Our coalition includes sixty member organizations working in twenty-seven counties throughout Pennsylvania.

Let me begin by sharing a bit of my personal background. I am humbled to be here today as the son of immigrants who originally came to the U.S. undocumented but received adjustment of status after the 1986 Immigration and Control Act. My parents were lucky—they found themselves in the right place at the right time. My parents are now retired and living in their home, a testament to the opportunities that many immigrants come here seeking. I share this personal story because it reflects the journey of countless immigrants, irrespective of their immigration status.

Now, turning to our work at PIC, our report, "Immigrants Grow Our Communities," outlines the powerful impact of immigrants in addressing population decline, contributing economically through taxes and purchasing power, creating jobs as entrepreneurs and filling essential roles in Pennsylvania's workforce across key sectors like manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare and STEM. In addition, the report sheds light on the importance of welcoming policies and the potential consequences of anti-immigrant legislation.

Throughout today's session, you'll hear from experts who will delve into specific findings from the report as it relates to their respective fields. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the next administration's immigration plan; it has been laid out clearly, detention and deportations are coming. Now, more than ever it is critical for this legislature to not only pass welcoming legislation but to also fight back against these proposals as removing immigrants from the US will only further increase population decline, and Pennsylvania ranks 4th in the nation with population loss.

To set the stage for these discussions, I will start with an overview of the immigrant population in Pennsylvania, providing top-line statistics on the contributions of foreign-born residents of the state, which includes naturalized citizens, lawful residents, and undocumented immigrants.

Before we dive into the numbers, though, I want to clarify a few terms that will be helpful for today's discussion:

First, "Foreign-born" includes any individual born outside of the U.S. who later moved here.

Secondly, naturalized citizens are immigrants who have become citizens and are therefore eligible to vote and receive public benefits.

Next, we have lawful residents, who can be categorized as:

- Temporary lawful residents, who have work authorization and access to credit and driver's licenses. This group includes individuals under DACA, Temporary Protected Status, and other designations with renewal terms of 1-3 years.
- Permanent residents, or green card holders, who are eligible to live and work here permanently and may have obtained this status through paths like asylum or refugee programs.

Finally, undocumented immigrants are individuals who do not have work authorization.

Now, let's take a look at some numbers. Pennsylvania is home to nearly one million foreign-born individuals, with 978,000 immigrants residing in the state as of the latest data from Migration Policy Institute (MPI) tabulation of data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2023 American Community Surveys (ACS), and 1990 and 2000 Decennial Census. Using disaggregated data, below is a breakdown of immigrants in PA:

- 490,000, (50%) are naturalized citizens
- 317,000, (32%) are lawful permanent residents eligible for naturalization
- 4,480, (0.45%) are DACA-eligible residents
- And 160,000, (16%) are undocumented immigrants

To highlight a current legislative success, I'll note that non-citizen immigrant teachers with work authorization were recently made eligible to get state teacher certification, which will help address the teacher shortage in Pennsylvania. There are currently 2,100 teaching position vacancies in PA with almost a quarter of those spots filled not with full-time teachers, but with long-term substitutes. Nationally, as of November 2024, DACA recipients are also eligible for

health insurance and ACA subsidies, which will benefit Pennsylvania’s healthcare system by reducing stress on emergency care.

Moving on to demographics and population trends, Pennsylvania’s foreign-born population grew by 60.5%, which is 277,061 new Pennsylvania immigrant residents, from 2010 to 2020—which is a stark contrast to the state’s overall population growth of just 0.6% over the same period. To illustrate the impact of this growth, I’d like to share a snapshot of how migration offsets the state’s population losses on an annual basis.

Foreign-Born Population / Population Loss in Pennsylvania

<b>Natural Birth</b>	<b>Natural Birth</b>
2021-2022	2022-2023
-23,462	-11,079
<b>Net migration</b>	<b>Net migration</b>
2021-2022	2022-2023
25,721	25,776

As we consider the rural-urban divide, it’s clear that population decline is and will continue to hit rural communities especially hard. According to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, who you will hear from shortly, the rural county population is projected to decline by 5.8% over the next 30 years. This trend is compounded by limited job opportunities and a shortage of affordable childcare, which have led many to relocate outside the state.

Looking at the political landscape, there are 490,000 naturalized voters in Pennsylvania. For context, that is larger than the population of Pittsburgh, underscoring the importance of this voting bloc in our state’s elections.

In the 2020 redistricting process Pennsylvania lost a congressional seat due to population decline. Without immigration it would have been two seats. And without continued immigration, Pennsylvania risks losing another congressional seat by 2030, which would reduce federal funding. The George Washington Institute of Public Policy estimates Pennsylvania lost \$1,746 per person due to census undercounting, a significant financial impact.

**Pennsylvania Immigrant Workforce**

Now, let’s examine how immigrants contribute to Pennsylvania’s workforce. There are only 60 employees available for every 100 job openings, immigrants play a critical role in filling labor shortages. One farmer shared with the challenges they face finding a reliable workforce: “The



need is urgent ... we're having issues with hiring domestic workers; it's not a reliable source of labor."

An area where consumers have most recently felt inflation locally in Pennsylvania is the rise of grocery costs, whereby groceries have risen 8.2% in the Commonwealth between November 2022-November 2023, which is far higher than our neighboring states of New Jersey (6.8%), Maryland (7%), and West Virginia (6.9%).

The foreign-born population has a workforce share of 77.7%. In contrast, Pennsylvania native-born population has a workforce population share of 58.8%.

It's not just agricultural work that benefits from immigration, however. Immigrants represent 7.7% of Pennsylvania's nurses, 14% of health aides, and 16.7% of STEM professionals. The service and manufacturing sectors, in particular, have high representation from immigrant labor. For example, in Erie County, immigrant labor has helped save 500 manufacturing jobs, while immigrants make up 8.2% of the STEM workforce.

#### **Spending power:**

According to the American Immigration Council, immigrants in Pennsylvania in 2021 had an annual spending power of \$30.1 billion and paid \$11.5 billion in taxes, with 65,841 immigrant entrepreneurs supporting economic development by generating \$1.9 billion in income.

Specifically undocumented immigrants who, contrary to popular belief, pay nearly \$135 million in state and local taxes—are saving the state nearly \$6.4 billion in lost gross domestic product output through their participation in specific sectors in the workforce.

#### **Proposals in the Legislature**

Currently, Pennsylvania has the fourth highest population loss, which has caused the state to lose \$106 billion in income from domestic out migration from 1992 to 2019. Anti-immigrant legislation proposed in this session will create financial burdens for local law enforcement and state agencies by requiring them to contact and cooperate with ICE. Doing so means that, instead of serving the constituents they were hired to serve, law enforcement and state agencies will instead have additional responsibilities and taxpayers will pay more money via allocation for ICE's use.

Furthermore, anti-immigrant legislation not only leads to an outmigration of immigrants but it is also set to cost the state of Florida 12.6 billion in its economy after it passed SB1718 in 2023, which places strict penalties for the employment of immigrants.

**Pro-immigrant proposals the legislature-** When you think of immigrants, I want you to think of the following: agriculture workers, health workers, doctors, teachers, college graduates, and the 40 workers who can fill the empty positions that remain unfilled. These are the roles immigrants play and the roles they can fill through welcoming policies. Without welcoming policies, PA will continue on a downward population spiral, not only affecting its economy but also diminishing critical services such as health care and education. Broadly speaking, without an expanded property tax base, the burden will be shifted to those who remain in the state and it will eventually become unaffordable to live in PA. A simple analogy: if 10 of us split a \$100 restaurant bill, we each pay \$10, with less people if that same bill is split among 4 people, we each pay \$25. Tax relief programs such as expanded homeowner exemptions can only go so far, we need more people in PA to support our economy.

Welcoming policies like these do the critical work of attracting more immigrants. Take states like New Jersey and New York, where undocumented immigrants can legally obtain driver's licenses. In New Jersey specifically, the attorney general issued a directive to end agreements with ICE that resulted in protections that prevent law enforcement from cooperating with ICE officials. These welcoming policies have resulted in immigrants comprising 20-23% of the state's population, while Pennsylvania's immigrant population comprises less than 10%.

States like New Jersey and New York have shown that welcoming policies attract immigrants and bolster local economies. New York, for instance, has revitalized cities like Rochester and Syracuse through population and economic growth driven by immigrants.

1. [HB 1548](#) - An Act limiting cooperation between certain law enforcement agencies and Federal immigration authorities. It prohibits certain acts by law enforcement agencies and postsecondary institutions, and provides for policies that limit assistance with immigration enforcement.
2. [HB 466](#) - An Act prohibiting the construction and operation of private correctional institutions and immigration detention centers in the Commonwealth.
3. [HB 1371](#) - An Act providing for the duties of certifying officials and certifying agencies in the processing of certification form petitions (U VISA bill).
4. [HB 1630](#) - An Act establishing the Office of New Pennsylvanians and providing for its powers and duties. It also establishes the Advisory Committee to the Office of New Pennsylvanians and provides for its powers, duties, and membership.
5. [HB 769](#) - An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes in the licensing of drivers, further providing for application of driver's licenses or learner's permits, for issuance and content of driver's licenses, and expiration and renewal of driver's licenses.

6. [HB 1672](#) - An Act providing for the J-1 Visa Waiver Primary Care Physician Grant Program and making an appropriation.
7. [HB 956](#) - An act providing for in-state tuition rates for undocumented students.
8. [HB 1067](#) - An act amending what is known as the Public School Code of 1949, further providing for qualifications and, in certification of teachers, further providing for State certificates to non-citizens who have DACA.
9. [HB 1141](#) - An Act known as the Seasonal Farm Labor Act, providing definitions; in wages and hours, for the employment of minors and rules and regulations of farm workers in housing, and creating a framework for contracts and subsequent enforcement, as well as civil penalties for these violations.

As the state navigates the merger of municipalities due to population loss, and grapples with the diminishment of key services such as hospitals in rural areas closing, and the under utilization of schools due to low enrollment, things will not improve without increased immigration.

As Pennsylvania looks ahead to 2025, the choice is clear: we can either embrace our immigrant communities and foster population and economic growth, or we can ignore their contributions and face the consequences of population decline and economic loss.

For a stronger, more vibrant Pennsylvania, supporting immigrant communities is the common-sense choice. Thank you.



**Testimony Before the Pennsylvania House of Cathryn Miller-Wilson  
Executive Director of HIAS Pennsylvania  
November 13, 2024**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>I.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Some Immigration Law and Policy Context</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>The 1924 National Origins Act – Definitions and Impacts</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>What Immigrants Bring, Regardless of Legal Status</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>A. Net Positive - Taxes and Consumerism</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>B. Entrepreneurship</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>C. Innovation</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>Myths vs. Facts</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>A. Do Immigrants Steal Jobs?</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>B. Do Immigrants Suppress Wages?</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>C. What about Crime?</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>11</b>

## I. Introduction

My name is Cathryn Miller-Wilson. I am the Executive Director of HIAS Pennsylvania. HIAS stands for Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. HIAS Pennsylvania was founded in 1882 by Jews to rescue Jews from terrorist attacks in Eastern Europe. At our founding, our intention was to provide what today would be called “settlement services”, i.e., temporary housing, English Language lessons, employment assistance and as much cultural acclimatization as possible before the newcomer left the temporary shelter and began his or her new American life. But 1882 coincidentally was a big year in immigration. It was the year that the Chinese Exclusion Act became law – the very first immigration law to be passed in the United States – and it was the year that the original public charge rule was introduced into Congress. That rule, which still exists today, required immigrants to prove that they had sufficient income and assets to be able to support themselves and not risk becoming a “public charge” before they were permitted entry. As Jews were, in 1882, one of the largest groups of impoverished immigrants trying to enter at the time, our founder, a Philadelphia lawyer named Louis Levy, rallied all of the fledgling organization’s supporters to try to stop the public charge rule from being passed. He failed, however, and quickly, our organization began to include advocacy in its list of services for Jews seeking to enter the country.

We continued that mission, increasing our advocacy as anti-immigrant sentiment increase and a third anti-immigrant law – the 1924 National Origins Act – was passed. As you can imagine, our advocacy grew louder and sharper as Jews tried desperately to escape Nazi German. While many current supporters cry when they meet me, telling me the story of their grandparent or great-aunt and uncle who we rescued from that hell, the fact remains that we were only able to help a relative handful of people. Our work continued and we persevered, World War II ended, the Geneva convention was passed, and the international definition of refugee was created.

Then Vietnam happened, and Cambodia. The United States, trying to save and resettle those who had been displaced, approached a national agency - created in 1881 in New York with a similar mission to ours but more national and international in scope than we were – and asked would they consider helping Vietnamese and Cambodians to resettle here. They, and we, although separate entities, but for the same reasons, began helping people of all faiths and backgrounds. The Torah commands us to welcome the stranger 36 times. It is the most repeated commandment in the Torah. So, while a significant decision, it was not a difficult one.

In 1980, Ronald Regan signed the Refugee Resettlement Act into law and that law created the structure for refugee resettlement that still exists today. At the time, the resettlement that our agency was engaged in was more informal, not supported by government funding and not in accordance with the dictates of the program. And in addition to informal resettlement, our advocacy work grew. In the early 2000s, we were able to successfully litigate a precedent

setting case that made a huge difference for immigrants suffering from domestic violence. Our emphasis on immigration law grew as did our legal team.

In 2008, we formally began resettling refugees pursuant to the dictates of the government program. We began small, resettling only 100 refugees per year but our work grew steadily. Simultaneously, our legal work and our reputation as immigration legal experts grew. We began serving about 2000 immigrants and refugees per year and we maintained roughly this number of clients for about a decade and a half.

Then, in 2017, in response to the anti-immigrant policies that came fast and furious from our 45<sup>th</sup> President, we received a great deal of public support for our work and were able to grow. Today, we are one of the largest immigration legal services providers in Pennsylvania, providing services to close to 6,000 immigrants per year. We provide specialized immigration legal services working with extremely vulnerable populations – legal services to immigrant youth, immigrant survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking, immigrant survivors of crime, those seeking asylum and needing defense from deportation and services to those who have received asylum or refugee status as well as crisis and humanitarian response services to those who are fleeing crisis but who aren't eligible for asylum and citizenship and family unification services to those who are eligible.

So, for 142 years we have served immigrants, witnessing not only their trauma upon arrival but their extreme hope – for themselves, for their children and for their families. We have walked with them as they have moved from foreigner to neighbor, to business owner, to homeowner; as they have moved from isolated to community member, to family member. And we have witnessed the continuous cycle of an open-armed America to a fearful xenophobic America, an America filled with the possibilities of a constantly evolving nation to an America on the brink of self-destruction because of policies based on fear rather than evidence.

We are, clearly, on the brink of self-destruction again. So, I am deeply honored, humbled and grateful to share with you the evidence that I hope will enable you to persuade your colleagues to pull themselves back from the brink and reckon with their own unfounded fears.

## **II. Some Immigration Law and Policy Context**

“The only thing you have to fear is fear itself - nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.” Those famous words were spoken by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt during his inaugural address. Taking office during the great depression, he spoke these words in an effort to both encourage the American people and brace them for radical changes to come: the advent of social security, the New Deal and the filling of the highest court of the land with persons who were like-minded and therefore likely to uphold his policies. So why start testimony regarding our immigration system with this quote? Because our entire immigration system is based on fear. And like all policies based on fear rather than evidence, it's ineffective and counterproductive to a successful American society. How do I know this? Because we have more than a century of immigration policies, and

their impact on our country, that have been studied by experts from every field - economists, political scientists, engineers, labor specialists, even artists and cultural studies persons – and lived by our own Agency over its long history. All these experts have concluded, repeatedly, and our own experiences confirm, that immigrants are critical to not just our country but in fact to any society's survival and progression.

As mentioned in my introduction, the first immigration law to be passed by the United States was one of exclusion - the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This law, like all the others that came after it, was passed in response to fears about Chinese immigrants that grew as Chinese immigrants came, because of our country's negotiated treaty with China to send them here to build the railroad. The American outreach in search of workers was enormously successful. Chinese immigrants came in droves and built the American railroad that connected our West Coast to our East Coast, allowing, for the first time, for trade and business to grow all along the railroad, growing towns and cities, growing innovations, and growing the American economy by leaps and bounds. But in 1882, fear of the other won out and suddenly Chinese workers who had been living and working, raising families and settling successfully into American life were facing hostility, violence and in some cases deportation away from family or, in the case of one famous plaintiff, permanent separation from family.<sup>1</sup>

The case of Chae Chan Ping is famous for establishing that “[t]he jurisdiction of a nation within its own territory is necessarily exclusive and absolute.” It should be infamous for failing to consider the fact that this holding meant that there were no guardrails on the federal government as they dictated immigration laws and policies, regardless of how many people, both American and non-American, were impacted and regardless of how adverse the impact was to both American and non-American citizens. Because make no mistake, Americans were adversely impacted: the American children of Mr. Ping who lost their father, the railroad companies who lost their labor and the American economy which lost, in one broad-sweeping misguided law an entire community of investors, innovators and cultural contributors.

Despite this, the negative impacts remained largely unnoticed as shiploads of immigrants from Eastern Europe and Russia continued to be permitted to pour, albeit only after having to prove that they would not become a public charge, into our country. They were able, for the most part, to make up for the losses of the Chinese community until the backlash and fear fell on them. When it did, there was a tried-and-true mechanism in place for enacting legislation based on fear rather than evidence. The 1924 National Origins Act was passed, slamming the door on immigrants from most of the world for the next 40 years simply because of fear of the other, fears of “stealing jobs”, and fears of non-assimilation into American society. The result was long lasting economic, innovation and cultural standstill that had ripple effects

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<sup>1</sup> Chae Chan Ping v. U.S., 130 U.S. 581 (1889). In this case, a Chinese worker left the US, before the 1882 law was passed, to return to China to care for his sick father. The law was passed while he was away and as a result, he was barred from returning to his wife and children after his father passed away.

felt all the way up to the 1970's and 1980's. And, leading up to and during World War Two, the result was also the murder of more than 6 million people that the United States turned away.

Deliberately published on the 100-year anniversary of the 1924 National Origins Act, "The Truth About Immigration: Why Successful Societies Welcome Newcomers", written by Wharton Professor Zeke Hernandez contains "compelling evidence that the 1924 law decimated America's capacity for innovation, investment and job creation. It also impoverished the nation's cultural vitality, produced unintended national security risks, and led to many of the border problems that still plague us."<sup>2</sup>

And as Professor Hernandez goes on to warn us:

"We're at risk of repeating the same mistake, with all of the same costs, if we fail to grasp what the evidence so clearly shows.

We need an entirely new system based on . . . [facts] . . . rather than unfounded fear. As the facts . . . [presented in this book] . . . prove over and over again, successful societies welcome newcomers."<sup>3</sup>

### III. The 1924 National Origins Act - Definitions and Impacts

The 1924 Act banned immigration from Asia completely and limited European immigrants to 165,000 per year (from 1900 to 1915, 15 million European immigrants had arrived). Interestingly, the Act was silent about immigration from the Americas because, at the time, Latin Americans weren't coming to the US. As a direct result of the passage of the Act, numbers plummeted from "15 percent of US residents born abroad in 1910 to an historical low of 4.7 percent in 1970."<sup>4</sup>

So, what was the effect of this? Here are just a few, cited in Hernandez' book:

- American scientists experienced a permanent decline of 68 percent in the rate at which they produced patents compared to the pre-1924 period.<sup>5</sup>
- Communities that would have received more immigrants but for the 1924 law have fewer investment ties to the rest of the world even to this day.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> "The Truth About Immigration: Why Successful Societies Welcome Newcomers", Zeke Hernandez MacMillan Press, 2024), pg. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pgs. 7-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* at pg. 19.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* (citing Petra Moser and Shmuel San, "Immigration, Science, and Invention: Lessons from the Quota Acts, SSRN Scholarly Paper, March 21, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3558718>).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* (citing Konrad B. Burchardi, Thomas Chaney, and Tarek A. Hassan, "Migrants, Ancestors, and Foreign Investments," *Review of Economic Studies* 86, no. 4 (July 1, 2019): 1448-86, <https://doi.org/10.1093/restud/rdy044>).



- Excluding immigrants failed to create new jobs for American workers and in many cases, Americans lost jobs as a result of shutting the door to new immigrants.<sup>7</sup>
- An influx of new ideas in the arts, sciences and cuisine were limited.<sup>8</sup>
- Unintended national security threats were created by missing technologies that could have helped us better protect ourselves against our enemies.<sup>9</sup>

In short, there is plenty of research and plenty of evidence that tells us exactly what bad things happen when you significantly curtail immigration. But more than proving the negative, there is also even more evidence, given the immigration increases before the 1882 and 1924 acts and in the 2000's when immigrants again surged into the US, of the numerous positives that immigrants bring to our country. And these positives go well beyond paying taxes and consuming goods, there is also evidence that definitively proves that immigrants don't steal jobs they create them, that they don't increase crime they make communities safer, that up-front costs to help newcomers adjust are far outweighed by the dollars they bring, that immigrants don't only invest their hard earned income into the communities in which they live but that they also bring foreign investment into the communities in which they reside and that deporting immigrants actually shrinks the economy almost immediately by causing business disruption, loss of American jobs and creation of Americans dependent on taxpayer support.

#### **IV. What Immigrants Bring, Regardless of Legal Status**

##### **A. Net Positive - Taxes and Consumerism**

It is well known that a legal immigrant who is working pays taxes and, of course, uses his or her income to buy things - from groceries, to furniture, to houses, to cars. And these contributions alone are quite significant. 2019 data shows that immigrants have about \$1.3 trillion in spending power after taxes.<sup>10</sup> In Pennsylvania, 2021 data shows that immigrants bring \$30.1 billion dollars in spending power and pay \$11.5 billion in taxes.<sup>11</sup> These benefits far outweigh the tax dollars that are invested in integrating refugees the first 90 days that they are in the country as well as the tax dollars that are spent on Medicaid, food stamps and cash assistance for refugees and other legally eligible immigrants for the first year that they arrive

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<sup>7</sup> *Id.* (citing Jongkwan Lee, Giovanni Peri, and Vasil Yaesnov, "The Labor Market Effects of Mexican Repatriations: Longitudinal Evidence from the 1930s", *Journal of Public Economics* 205 (January 1, 2022):104558, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2021.104558>).

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* (citing Charles Hirschman, "The Contributions of Immigrants to American Culture," *Daedalus* 142, no. 3 (2013):26-47, [https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED\\_a\\_00217](https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_00217)).

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* (citing Petra Moser, Alessandra Voena, and Fabian Waldinger, "German Jewish Emigres and US Invention," *American Economic Review* 104, no. 10 (October 2014): 3222-55, <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.104.10.3222>).

<sup>10</sup> Hernandez at p. 50 (citing J. Merritt Melancon, "Thirty Years of Change: Consumer Buying Power is More Diverse than Ever," *UGA Today* (blog), August 11, 2021, <https://news.uga.edu/selig-multicultural-economy-report-2021/>).

<sup>11</sup> See Julio Rodriguez, MPA, Jasmine M. Rivera, Stephanie Rivera-Kumar, MS, MPA, Kate Firestone, Phd, "Report: Immigrants Grow Communities", April 2024, <https://www.paimmigrant.org/immigrants-grow-communities-report> at p. 34.

when they are finding their way and looking for work. They also outweigh any federal monies spent on English language learning, temporary housing, housing assistance in general which is generally limited to one time housing assistance and monies spent on providing resources to schools and providing resources to legal immigrants seeking job training certification.<sup>12</sup>

What is less well known, however, is that even undocumented immigrants are contributing close to the same amounts, while costing the government far less money, than legal immigrants. Undocumented persons are ineligible for public benefits, for housing assistance, for integration assistance in the form of case management or even for government funded immigration legal services. The only integration costs from the undocumented are to public school districts, hospital emergency rooms and Federally Qualified Health Centers. Meanwhile, though undocumented, these immigrants still pay taxes on any earned income using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, as undocumented persons are NOT eligible for any public assistance, all of their income is private dollars which they are spending on the same things as documented persons. Their spending power is large and as important to our economy as their tax contributions.

## **B. Entrepreneurship**

But contributions, as we know from our lessons learned about what we lost because of the 1924 National Origins Act, go much farther than tax dollars and consumer spending. Immigrants, whether documented or not, are far more likely to create businesses than Americans. In study after study, it is clear that immigrants far outstrip Americans in creating businesses.<sup>14</sup> With businesses come business taxes, jobs and business purchases. Businesses also attract investment which, when it occurs, results in more taxes, more jobs and more business purchases. Note, as well, that you do not have to be documented to create a business, to employ others, to pay business taxes or to make business purchases. You also don't have to be documented for your business to benefit from investment. So, the significant economic benefits that immigrants bring, as entrepreneurs, are realized by all of us regardless of whether that immigrant business creator is documented.

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<sup>12</sup> There is a 2017 analysis by the National Academies of Science which states that "the average immigrant makes a net positive contribution of \$259,000 to public coffers over a period of 75 years." Hernandez at p. 70, in referring to this analysis, states that "[n]et positive' here means the difference between taxes paid and public services consumed" (citing National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, *The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration* (Washington, DC, National Academies Press, 2017)).

<sup>13</sup> Hernandez at p. 78.

<sup>14</sup> "Immigrants are 80 percent more likely to start firms than native born individuals." Hernandez at p. 58 (citing Pierre Azoulay, Benjamin F. Jones, J. Daniel Kim, and Javier Miranda, "Immigration and Entrepreneurship in the United States," *American Economic Review: Insights* 4, no. 1 (March 2022): 71-88, <https://doi.org/10.1257/aeri.20200588>. See also, Julio Rodriguez, MPA, Jasmine M. Rivera, Stephanie Rivera-Kumar, MS, MPA, Kate Firestone, Phd, "Report: Immigrants Grow Communities", April 2024, <https://www.paimmigrant.org/immigrants-grow-communities-report> (stating that, in Pennsylvania, "Immigrants are job creators, with 65,841 immigrant entrepreneurs generating \$1.9 billion in income in 2021 (citing *Take a Look: How Immigrants Drive the Economy in Pennsylvania* (n.d.) American Immigration Council <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/pennsylvania/>).

In addition, these businesses contribute to the well-being of the communities in which they reside - adding florists, restaurants, banks, auto shops, grocery stores, cleaning services and the list goes on and on. Whether or not the entrepreneur is documented is not relevant to the significant economic impact that immigrant entrepreneurs have. Given this, it is also clear how devastating to the American economy deportation is since it means that undocumented business owners - who are employing Americans, paying business taxes as well as personal taxes, supporting dependents who are often American citizen children and consuming goods both for their businesses and for themselves - could be suddenly taken away, leaving their businesses to close, their employees without a job, their dependents without financial support and their communities without a treasured business and a reliable customer.

### C. Innovation

Finally, in addition to the net positive financial contributions immigrants make, there is also compelling research that shows that immigrants, bringing their different cultural perspectives to the table, bring innovation and invention to American society. Our history is littered with stories of innovations that have become an integral part of everyday American life. A few examples, taken from Zeke Hernandez' book:

- It is a common misconception that salsa music comes from Latin America. In fact, salsa was the invention of immigrant and American musicians in New York City, enjoying a jam session with one another. Together, they combined their sounds to make what today is called salsa music.<sup>15</sup>
- Celiac disease was discovered by an Italian immigrant who came to the U.S. in part because he had, while practicing medicine in his homeland, treated so many people who adversely reacted to gluten that he became curious as to why he hadn't heard of persons from other countries suffering from this. Upon coming to the U.S., he discovered that the issue wasn't that Americans didn't suffer from adverse reactions to gluten but rather that American medical practitioners erroneously thought that this was a rather rare condition. Dr. Fassano, upon coming here, began testing individuals and ultimately ran a study involving 40,000 participants. The results were staggering - 1 in 133 Americans were likely suffering from undiagnosed Celiac disease. It was Dr. Fassano's knowledge of the prevalence and treatment in Italy that led him to research and share his findings with American doctors which ultimately enabled millions of Americans suffering from the disease to obtain a diagnosis and treatment.
- Foods - as Hernandez pointed out, there are so many foods that we all buy every week in our grocery stores - tortillas, Greek yogurt, pizza, salad wraps, pretzels and the list

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<sup>15</sup> Hernandez at pgs. 53-54 (citing MasterClass, "Guide to Salsa Music: A Brief History of the Salsa Genre", MasterClass accessed August 16, 2023, <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/guide-to-salsa-music>"; "Larry Harlow (Musician)," Wikipedia, accessed August 7, 2023, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Larry\\_Harlow\\_\(musician\)&oldid=1169217824](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Larry_Harlow_(musician)&oldid=1169217824); and Charles Waring, "Fania Records: How a New York Label Took Salsa to the World," UDiscover Music, January 13, 2023, <https://www.udiscovermusic.com/stories/fania-records-story/>.)

goes on and on. These are all foods that were originally brought to us by immigrants but which we have adopted and adapted into our daily diets.<sup>16</sup>

These are just three of endless examples and the reasons aren't surprising. Immigrants, coming, by definition, from different cultures, bring with them their foods, their way of life, their perspective on how things can be done. Often, all of those things are different from our foods, our way of life and our own perspectives on how things can be done. So, when immigrants come to this country and begin learning about our foods, our way of life and our perspectives, it is easy for them to see what is different from their own - and natural for them to introduce foods and perspectives and ideas that they think might be well suited to American appetites and to solving American problems. But without a constant stream of difference, Americans will remain stuck within their own perspective - as they were after passage of the 1924 National Origin Act. As already indicated above, from 1924 until the Immigration Act of 1965 (and several years beyond 1965 since reducing restrictions didn't suddenly mean that hundreds of thousands of immigrants entered the country) there was a 68 percent decline in patents and an uncountable decline in new unpatented products.<sup>17</sup>

The cost of both deporting immigrants and curtailing immigration is exorbitant. Doing so would result in a catastrophic loss of businesses, jobs, taxpayer dollars and consumer spending. We would also lose the kind of innovation mentioned above. As so many deportable immigrants are in what are known as "mixed status families" - spouses and/or children that are American citizens - deporting an immigrant breadwinner also will result in large numbers of Pennsylvania residents suddenly needing public assistance to replace the lost earnings of the deported family member. There are also many Pennsylvania residents with close family members abroad. Curtailing immigration will result in permanent separation for these PA residents from their close family members as well as, in the case of many, deepening anxiety and worry about the safety of those family members left behind in war zones like Ukraine, Israel, Syria, Sudan, the Congo or places overtaken by violence and government neglect such as Haiti, Afghanistan, Guatemala, Ecuador and Nicaragua. Deportation and the curtailing of immigration have real and significant adverse economic consequences for all Pennsylvania residents.

## **V. Myths vs. Facts**

### **A. Do Immigrants Steal Jobs?**

The tired old trope that won't seem to go away, despite tons of research to the contrary, is that immigrants steal jobs. But as Zeke Hernandez points out, this assumes that all workers are the same. But of course, workers are individuals with individual talents, skills, likes and dislikes. How do we know this? From the numerous instances, right up to and including the present day, where there have been labor shortages. A well-known instance of this occurred when, in a fit of trying to assist the American worker during the Great Depression, Mexican farm

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<sup>16</sup> Hernandez at pgs. 48-49.

<sup>17</sup> See Footnote 5, *supra*.

workers were deported. The theory behind this policy was that it would open tons of jobs for Americans to fill. But that's not what happened. Instead, what happened was that there were even fewer jobs for American workers as farmers were forced to shrink the available jobs once it became clear that they were unable to obtain the help that they needed, despite tons of Americans looking for work.<sup>18</sup>

In a more recent example, we can look at the H-2B visa lottery. This is a lottery for businesses which, after swearing that they have been unable to find an American worker to fulfill their needs, can obtain an immigrant worker through the application and subsequent awarding of an H-2B visa. But there is a limit on how many of these visas are awarded by year so, even if you can successfully prove your need, you can only get an immigrant visa through this process if you win the lottery. In 2021, a study was done on businesses that lost the lottery. Not only did the study reveal that these businesses did not, because of losing the lottery, hire American workers. It also revealed that these businesses, on average, hired fewer workers in rural areas, shrinking their businesses, selling less and investing less.<sup>19</sup> Hernandez says it best,

“I could keep piling on the evidence, but the point is clear. Whether far in the past or right now, under boom or bust conditions, efforts to keep immigrants out of the labor force - even supposedly undesirable low-skill foreigners - produce consistently negative effects on. . . [American] . . . workers and businesses.”<sup>20</sup>

## **B. Do Immigrants Suppress Wages?**

As with concerns about stealing jobs, concerns about suppressing wages are without merit. Countless studies have been done, studying both surges in immigration that happened because of world events (i.e. the Mariel boatlift) and the more or less orderly influx of immigrants that happens in American towns and cities every year. Both kinds of immigration and the subsequent effects on the labor market have been studied and the studies point to the conclusion that influxes of immigrants do not suppress wages and often increase wages for Americans.<sup>21</sup>

## **C. What about Crime?**

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<sup>18</sup> Hernandez at p. 98 (citing Jongkwan Lee, Giovanni Peri, and Vasil Yaesenov, “The Labor Market Effects of Mexican Repatriation: Longitudinal Evidence from the 1930’s, *Journal of Public Economics* 205 (January 1, 2022): 104558, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2021.104558>).

<sup>19</sup> Hernandez at p. 100 (citing Michael A. Clemens and Ethan G. Lewis, “The Effect of Low-Skill Immigration Restrictions on US Firms and Workers: Evidence from a Randomized Lottery.” Working Paper 30589, National Bureau of Economic Research, October 22, <https://doi.org/10.3386/w30589>.)

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> Hernandez at pgs. 90-91 (citing National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2017)). See also, Hernandez at pgs. 90-91 (citing Konrad Buchardi, Thomas Chaney, Tarek A. Hassan, Lisa Tarquinio, and Stephen Terry, “Immigration, Innovation, and Growth,” SSRN Scholarly Paper, May 2023, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3582182>.)

That immigrants either cause or increase crime is perhaps the biggest myth there is. Study after study shows that immigrants, both documented and undocumented, do not increase crime and in fact reduce it. One study shows decreased incarceration rates for undocumented immigrants (33% lower than the rate for Americans) and documented immigrants are 66% less likely to be incarcerated than Americans. In addition, “increases in undocumented immigration in any given state have no impact on the rate of violent crimes or property crimes.” And the same is true for increases in legal immigration.<sup>22</sup> And, perhaps more importantly, pulling together all of the studies that have been done between 1870 and 2020, immigrants have never had a higher rate of imprisonment than Americans.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, immigrants are most often victims of crime but they have incentives to cooperate with police as they investigate and hopefully prosecute the criminals. U-visas and T-visas are immigration benefits that permit those who have been victims of crime, or in the case of T-visas, trafficking. U-visa and T-visa holders can obtain work authorization and are legally here in the US. But to obtain those visas, they must submit a signed certification by law enforcement that they have cooperated with law enforcement’s efforts to find and prosecute the perpetrators. There is no parallel incentive for an American victim of crime to cooperate with law enforcement and all too often, as a result of the inability to obtain witnesses, testimony and other evidence from the victims, crimes against Americans are not solved and the criminal continues perpetrating their crimes.

So, immigrants are significantly less likely to commit crimes so having them in your neighborhood likely means that your neighborhood is safer. And immigrants who are crime victims work closely with law enforcement to catch and prosecute the perpetrator thereby reducing crime in their neighborhoods. Anyway you look at it, immigrants bring safety to our country, not criminality.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The data and evidence overwhelmingly support the need for immigrants and immigration for our country and for Pennsylvania. But I intentionally presented the data in a more general way, to show not only the net positive effect of immigration on the economy but also the myriad ways in which immigration matters to all of us by expanding our tax base, our jobs base, our consumer spending, our ability to innovate and our diversity of goods and services. And I showed that the myths about any negatives - job stealing, wage suppression and crime - are just that, myths. I did not mention, however, the reality of our country’s demographic needs at this moment. What the data suggests is that any society seeking to grow and prosper should

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<sup>22</sup> Hernandez at p. 164 (citing Christian Gunadi, “On the Association Between Undocumented Immigration and Crime in the United States,” *Oxford Economic Papers*, 73 no. 1 (January 1, 2021) 200-224, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oep/gpz057>.)

<sup>23</sup> Hernandez at p. 165 (citing Ran Abramitzky, Leah Platt Boustan, Elisa Iacome, Santiago Perez, and Juan David Torres, “Law Abiding Immigrants: The Incarceration Gap between Immigrants and the US Born, 1850-2020,” Working Paper 31440, National Bureau of Economic Research, July 2023, <https://doi.org/10.3386/w31440>.)

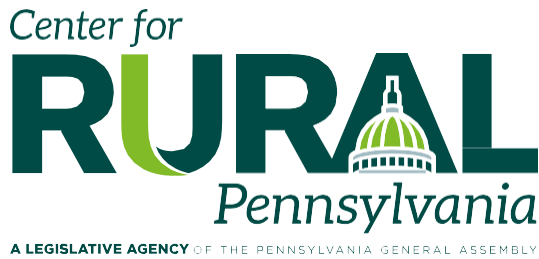
have welcoming policies at any time. But as the PICC report and countless news articles over the last two years have demonstrated, this moment is a moment when our own population is shrinking. Birth rates have declined for twenty years, mortality rates have increased, staffing shortages exist in every single industry - from health care, to manufacturing, to hospitality. The truth is that businesses and small towns and large cities across the country are hurting because there are insufficient numbers of Americans and insufficient numbers of work authorized immigrants to meet our needs.

Needing immigrants to solve a demographic crisis is also something that other countries are grappling with. In the last year, delegations from two different countries – South Korea and Germany – asked to meet with me to ask about our immigration system. While they were well aware of the anti-immigrant sentiment currently fueling American politics, they wanted to know how we successfully integrate immigrants because they, at least, see the current sentiment as misguided and likely short-lived. They see our country as a nation of immigrants and see that we are an economic powerhouse because of this.

It's long past time to make policy based on facts rather than fear. While our federal government has the authority to enact broad-based immigration laws, our State has the authority to create more welcoming policies, and we should do so if we want to save Sullivan County, Luzerne County, Lebanon County and Erie County, Berks and Reading, Bucks and York. Rural counties are hurting the most, but the truth is, all 67 counties need immigrants. We can create policies that expedite the work authorization process, we can advocate for more not fewer legal pathways, we can ensure that immigrants can obtain driver's licenses, that immigrants with pending legal applications obtain work authorization immediately and automatically, that those who have certifying authority regarding U-visas are obligated to certify when an immigrant who has been a crime victim has met the criteria justifying such certification.

Given the election results and clear anti-immigrant stance of the winning party, Pennsylvania's enactment of welcoming policies is more critical than ever. We are on the brink of financial collapse caused by the threatened mass deportation of immigrants and arresting of legal immigration to this country. Our State must do everything it can to prevent these anticipated actions from impacting Pennsylvanians - whether these Pennsylvanians are documented, undocumented immigrants or are American citizens - all of us will be significantly negatively impacted, as history and research has shown, if we allow our immigrant community to disappear.





**Written Testimony of Dr. Kyle C. Kopko**  
**Executive Director of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania**  
**House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing**  
**November 13, 2024**

Thank you, Chairman Bizarro, and all the members of the Policy Committee for inviting me to speak today on this important topic. My name is Dr. Kyle C. Kopko, and I am the Executive Director of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, which is a legislative agency of the General Assembly. Per our enabling legislation, the Center has two overarching mandates. First, the Center provides research grants to faculty at state universities to conduct applied policy research to support the policymaking efforts of the General Assembly and rural stakeholders. Second, the Center maintains a comprehensive database of statistical indicators tracking a variety of data trends in both rural and urban Pennsylvania. The data that I present during today's hearing is compiled from this database. Along with this written testimony, I have included a slide deck that provides far more detail on Pennsylvania's demographic trends than what I have prepared in this written testimony.

I should also note that I have the privilege of serving as the inaugural Chairman of the Pennsylvania Rural Population Revitalization Commission (the Commission). Established by Act 21 of 2024, the Commission is a first-of-its-kind, 15-member body that seeks to mitigate the negative effects of population change in rural communities. The Commission will do so by recommending new legislation, regulatory change, and/or community best practices to ensure the resilience of our rural areas.

Last year, the Center partnered with the Pennsylvania State Data Center at Penn State Harrisburg to release population projections for every county in Pennsylvania through 2050. Those data suggest that rural counties will experience a nearly 6% decline in population by 2050. The Commonwealth, overall, was expected to grow at a meager 1.6% rate during this same time period. The composition of our population will also change. We can expect that a greater

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portion of our population will consist of senior citizens, and overall, Pennsylvania will have fewer young people.

However, based upon recent Census data, there is evidence that Pennsylvania's population may now be in a period of overall decline in the post-pandemic era. Census estimates suggest that between 2020 and 2023, Pennsylvania's overall population declined by 0.3%. In rural counties, this amounted to a decline of 0.7%, and in urban counties, this amounted to a decline of 0.2%. These findings are discussed in the Center for Rural Pennsylvania fact sheet, entitled "Pennsylvania's Population is Declining Faster Than Expected." I have included a copy of that fact sheet with this testimony. It is no exaggeration to say that population change affects virtually all aspects of public policy, including, but not limited to, workforce availability, healthcare, housing, transportation, and other important policy issues.

While the data trends may seem bleak, there are reasons for optimism. I would like to note that, according to Census data, between 2020 and 2023, more people moved into Pennsylvania than moved out. Rural counties, on average, have also experienced a net gain in new residents during this time. Therefore, as we assess how to adapt to our changing demographics, it will be increasingly important to consider the potential of in-migration, both domestic and international. When examining trends between 2020 and 2023, it is clear that Pennsylvania's net-positive migration was due to international residents. If not for this group of new residents, Pennsylvania's migration patterns would have been negative.

To further emphasize the importance of international residents in rural communities, the Center received a U.S. State Department grant to host a one-day symposium on this issue in March 2024. I encourage members of the Committee to review the materials and presentations given at that meeting, which are available for download on our website at [www.rural.pa.gov](http://www.rural.pa.gov).

In conclusion, please know that the Center for Rural Pennsylvania is happy to serve as a resource to assist members of the Committee in the policymaking process. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak before you today, and I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that you may have.

**November 13, 2024**

**Written Testimony – Economic Impact of Immigration**

**Jenna Baron, Executive Director**

**Alliance for Refugee Youth Support and Education**

**Pittsburgh, PA – Allegheny County**

Good morning, everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

I'm one of the founders and the executive director of ARYSE, which stands for the Alliance for Refugee Youth Support and Education. Our organization, based in Allegheny County, is dedicated to supporting over 150 immigrant and refugee youth with backgrounds of forced displacement each year. We do this through out-of-school-time programming and advocacy that affirm their identities, uplift their stories, and help them actualize their visions for their futures. Our students at ARYSE represent over 15 countries of origin, with the majority from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, and Syria.

To give you a sense of the impact immigrant communities have in Allegheny County, let's look at some data from 2018. At that time, there were roughly 70,000 immigrants living in the region, representing about 5.7% of the population. While I'm confident those numbers have since grown, even then, the economic impact was significant: they paid \$931.7 million in taxes and had a spending power of \$2.1 billion. This underscores the powerful contributions immigrant communities make to our local economy and society.

ARYSE youth face numerous challenges in their journeys to thriving in the U.S. Many have had their education interrupted due to forced displacement. When they arrive, they're eager and motivated to learn but often struggle to meet academic milestones. Unfortunately, schools frequently lack adequate English language resources, leaving these students without the support they need to excel. Many dream of pursuing higher education, but as first-generation college hopefuls, they encounter complicated systems that demand personalized and sustained guidance—something many schools simply don't have the capacity to provide.

But it's not just educational challenges these youth face. There is also a need for facilitating social connectivity and emotional healing. The process of migration and adapting to a new home can be deeply re-traumatizing. Language barriers, discrimination, and unfamiliarity with new cultural norms often lead to social isolation and a sense of being misunderstood. These obstacles can prevent them from feeling a true sense of belonging or accessing the networks and information they need to achieve economic stability.

This is where our work at ARYSE comes in. We focus on strengths-based, culturally sustaining programs. For example, thanks to funding from the three-year Refugee School Impact Grant from the PA Department of Education, we provided individualized and programmatic support to over 60 Afghan refugee youth resettled in Pittsburgh after the Taliban takeover of Kabul in 2021. Through conversations and post-program surveys, participants shared that the program offered a vital space to relieve stress, build community, form friendships, experience joy, and access critical information related to their post-secondary goals. As an example, one student who participated in the program learned about technical schools in the region and received

individualized support from our program manager to apply and navigate the challenging enrollment process. This spring, he will graduate from a collision repair technical school, has already entered the industry, and plans to open his own dealership. He is one of many refugee youth in our state who are contributing to regional economic growth and community impact.

It's important to remember that immigrant communities are a driving force in the U.S. economy. They create businesses, fill essential roles, and bring innovation across countless fields. By investing in the next generation of immigrant and refugee youth, we are investing in a future that benefits everyone. These young people bring resilience, talent, and unique perspectives that can propel our society and economy forward.

Today, I want to emphasize how critical welcoming policies are for the future of our communities. Take, for example, House Bill 1060, which amends the Public School Code of 1949 to further qualify non-citizens, including those with DACA status, for state teaching certificates. Having K-12 educators with immigrant backgrounds is vital because they bring lived experience, cultural understanding, and often multilingual skills that resonate deeply with immigrant and refugee students. These teachers serve as relatable role models, demonstrating what is possible through perseverance and connection. But beyond that, foreign-born teachers also enrich learning for all students, fostering empathy, global awareness, and cross-cultural appreciation—essential traits for thriving in today's diverse world.

Finally, let's recognize that migration has always been a part of the human experience. Throughout history, people have moved in search of safety, opportunity, and a better life. Today, more than 117 million people worldwide are displaced from their home countries. This global reality presents both an economic and a moral imperative: we need to ensure our policies and resources make our communities more accessible, supportive, and welcoming. When we create environments where immigrant and refugee communities can truly thrive, we all benefit—from stronger economies and more inclusive societies to richer cultural landscapes.

Thank you for your time. I'm happy to answer any questions.



**PICC**

20 YEARS OF  
IMMIGRANT  
RIGHTS

**April  
2024**

The background of the page features a blue-tinted photograph of the Pennsylvania State Capitol building, focusing on its large, ornate dome topped with a statue. The building's classical architecture, including columns and arches, is visible.

**IMMIGRANTS  
GROW OUR  
COMMUNITIES:  
THE IMPACT OF  
IMMIGRANTS AND  
IMMIGRATION IN  
PENNSYLVANIA**

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Jasmine M. Rivera

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Kate Firestone, PhD

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# Executive Summary

One of the most pressing issues facing Pennsylvanians in 2024 is the concerning decline in population size, as median age surpasses the national average. Labor shortages are worsening and the cost of living is increasing as a result, leaving residents across the Commonwealth in a state of career and financial uncertainty. Although the decline and its consequences are dire, they also present a unique opportunity for our leaders to take action on meaningful policies that will positively impact all residents. How we address this issue will have ripple effects for generations to come. It is thus imperative that we pursue humane, common sense solutions that will transform the state landscape into a place where all are welcome and valued.

It has long been the case that immigrants are the economic engine of the nation, in many instances quite literally building up the communities they reside in. This is also true for Pennsylvania, which has significantly benefited from immigration to the state over the last 20 years. As of 2021, there are 45 million foreign-born individuals living in the United States, according to the U.S. Census American Community Survey.<sup>1</sup> In Pennsylvania, the foreign-born population is on the brink of nearly a million people with a count of 978,000 residents according to 2021 data.<sup>2</sup> Given their indispensable contributions and the state's current population decline, it is clear that Pennsylvania needs more immigrants.

- 1. Pennsylvania's population is declining and aging. Immigration-driven growth in certain racial demographics has deterred the worst of the decline, but more immigration is needed given this trend.** The foreign-born population has an older population share<sup>3</sup> of 15.8% and a workforce population<sup>4</sup> share of 77.7%. In contrast, Pennsylvania native-born population has a workforce population share of 58.8%.<sup>5</sup> Population growth for foreign-born individuals increased by 60.5% from 2010-2020, far exceeding the state average of 0.6% since 2010<sup>6</sup> and resulting in 277,061 new Pennsylvania residents.

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<sup>1</sup>*The Foreign-Born population, the U.S. economy, and the federal budget.* (2023, April 5). Congressional Budget Office. <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58939>

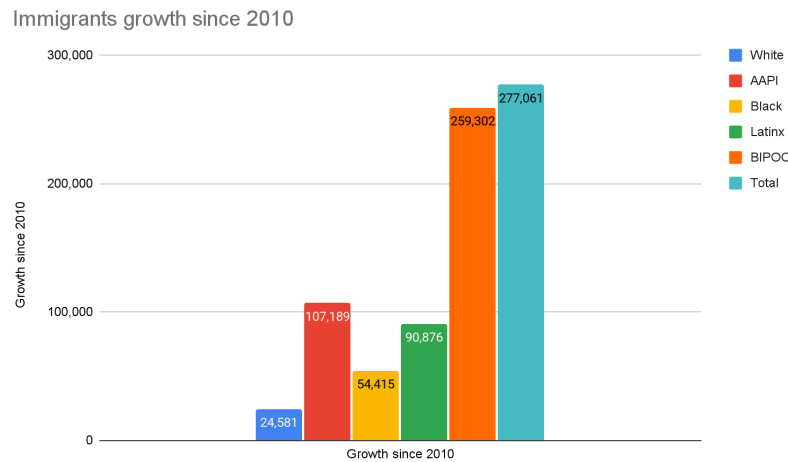
<sup>2</sup>*Immigrant population by state, 1990-Present.* (2023, October 16). migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/immigrant-population-state-1990-present?width=1000&height=850&iframe=true>

<sup>3</sup> "Older population" is defined as 65 and older

<sup>4</sup> "Workforce population" defined as 18 to 64 years-old

<sup>5</sup>*State Demographics Data - PA.* (n.d.). migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/PA>

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*



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2. **Population decline is impacting every part of the state, especially rural areas.** The Center for Rural Progress (CRP) reported that the population of Pennsylvania’s rural counties is projected to decline by 5.8% over the next 30 years, while the population of the state’s urban areas is projected to grow by 1.6%.<sup>8</sup>

The industries with a high representation of immigrant labor in Pennsylvania are agriculture, service, construction, and manufacturing; with service and manufacturing sectors being the top two.<sup>9</sup> Undocumented immigrants in particular helped Pennsylvania save \$6.4 billion in productivity loss in gross domestic product through their workforce participation in various sectors.<sup>10</sup> The agricultural would be impacted the most as it is one of the most prominent industries in rural areas by further population decline.

3. **The state economy is dependent on immigrants as workers, taxpayers, consumers, and entrepreneurs.** Immigrants in Pennsylvania had a spending power of \$30.1 billion and paid \$11.5 billion in taxes in 2021.<sup>11</sup> Immigrants are also job creators, with 65,841 immigrant entrepreneurs generating \$1.9 billion in income in 2021.<sup>12</sup> Due to labor shortages in the state, there are 60 unemployed workers for every 100 available jobs, meaning 40 jobs on average remain unfilled due to worker shortage.<sup>13</sup> Put simply, the state will lose billions of dollars in revenue through labor shortages and higher costs of goods

<sup>7</sup>Lawful permanent residents and naturalized citizens. Data gathered from 2017-2021 ACS.

<sup>8</sup>Pennsylvania Senate, Kopko, K. C., & Center for Rural Pennsylvania. (2021). *Pennsylvania Senate State Government Committee hearing*. <https://stategovernment.pasenate.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2021/05/CRP-Rural-Demographics-May-2021.pdf>

<sup>9</sup>2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; Data acquired with R and tidycensus

<sup>10</sup> Murtaza, M. M., Stephanie Frank, Kirstin Snow, Erica Freeman, Diana Polson, Claire Kovach, CASA, Make the Road PA, PICC, David Kallick, & New York Fiscal Policy Institute. (2021). *The economic contributions of Pennsylvania’s immigrants*. [https://keystoneresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/20210516\\_ImmigrantContributionsReport.pdf](https://keystoneresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/20210516_ImmigrantContributionsReport.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> *Take a look: How immigrants drive the economy in Pennsylvania*. (n.d.). American Immigration Council. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/pennsylvania/#>

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>Porter, E., & Zhou, Y. (2024, February 14). Here’s which states could benefit most from migrant labor. *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/02/14/migrants-states-labor-work-permit/>

and services without the growth of foreign-born workers.

4. **Pennsylvania has one of the largest voting blocs of naturalized citizens in the country, and it will only keep growing. The needs of these voters must be centered.**

According to the New Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), “Pennsylvania is home to 85,083 citizens naturalized between 2016 and 2020.<sup>14</sup> This number exceeds the state’s 80,555 vote margin in the November 2020 presidential election.”<sup>15</sup> As a whole, there are 490,000 naturalized citizens in Pennsylvania,<sup>16</sup> which is 1.5 times bigger than the population in Pittsburgh, the second biggest city in the Commonwealth.

**The bottomline is clear: to effectively address increasing population decline, Pennsylvania must implement welcoming policies that attract immigrants.** Welcoming policies like tuition equity, a teacher certification for individuals with DACA, and a doctor visa bill all have the potential to bring income into the state and generate revenue in the form of taxes. These initiatives can further fill critical labor shortages in teaching and medicine.

**Immigrants will continue to play a critical role in elevating Pennsylvania as a leader in entrepreneurship and in economic revitalization.**

Policies that welcome immigrants—such as sanctuary city policies—not only help reduce crime for all Pennsylvania residents,<sup>17</sup> but also result in increased economic development in cities struggling with economic stagnation.

Welcoming policies can also ensure Pennsylvania remains competitive with other states. Without welcoming policies, immigrants will continue to choose neighboring states like New Jersey and New York to live and work in, as these states already have many of these policies in place. Welcoming immigrants will ensure our state’s future success for generations to come.

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<sup>14</sup>Wong, T. K., Maya Lu, Lilly Amirjavadi, Nancy Flores, Deputy Director at the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), Diego Iñiguez-López, Associate Director of Policy and Campaigns at NPNA, Nicole Melaku, Executive Director at NPNA, Alexander Graphics, Diego Iñiguez-López, Abdelnasser Rashid, Tides Foundation, SEIU, USIPC, APIAVote, & National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA). (2022). *NEW AMERICAN VOTERS 2022: Harnessing the power of Naturalized Citizens*.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Forman, B., & Forman, B. (2023, February 6). *For newly naturalized citizens, voting in Pa. turns fear into political power*. Billy Penn at WHY. <https://billypenn.com/2022/11/10/new-citizens-pennsylvania-voting-assistance-language-access/>

<sup>17</sup> Kortsha, M. (2022, August 25). *Sanctuary practices lower counties’ crime rates*. UT News.

<https://news.utexas.edu/2022/06/13/sanctuary-practices-lower-counties-crime-rates/#:~:text=Counties%20that%20don%27t%20cooperate,University%20of%20Texas%20at%20Austin>



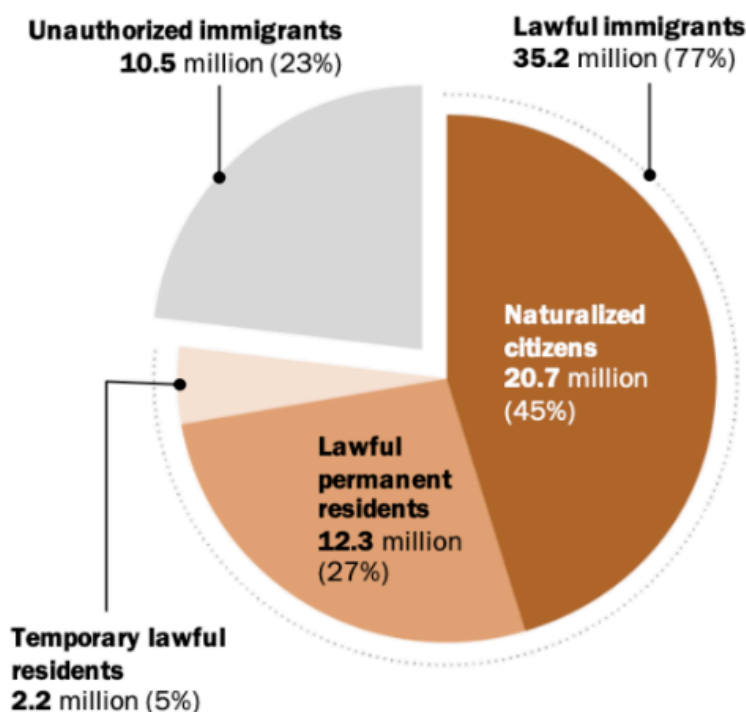
# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>National</b>	<b>5</b>
Background: Who are immigrants?	5
Immigration statuses	6
Immigration Population	8
Immigrants' contributions to population growth	9
Population in rural and suburban areas	11
Immigrants and the economy	11
Diversity and Workforce Sustainability	12
Entrepreneurship and Job Creation	12
Labor shortage	13
Immigrant Voting Power	14
<b>Commonwealth of Pennsylvania</b>	<b>15</b>
Demographics and Population Changes in Pennsylvania	15
Foreign-Born Population	16
Population loss in Pennsylvania	18
Pennsylvania Immigrant Political Power	22
Pennsylvania Naturalized Citizen Voters	22
<b>Pennsylvania Immigrant Workforce</b>	<b>23</b>
Pennsylvania Labor Shortage Gap	24
Pennsylvania Immigrant Workforce	25
Spending Power of Immigrants in Pennsylvania	26
<b>Welcoming Legislation</b>	<b>28</b>
Pro-immigrant proposals the legislature	29
<b>Anti-Immigration Legislation</b>	<b>31</b>
Anti-immigrant proposals in the legislature	31
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>34</b>

## National

### Background: Who are immigrants?

In the United States, immigrants are individuals who were not born in America and are commonly referred to as foreign-born individuals. This group encompasses naturalized U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents (i.e., green card holders), refugees and asylees, people on certain temporary visas, and the undocumented. There were 45 million foreign-born individuals living in the United States in 2021.<sup>18</sup> Immigrants in the U.S. primarily come from Mexico (25%), Asia (28%), Europe, Canada and Greater North America (13%), the Caribbean (10%), and the Middle East and North Africa (4%).<sup>19</sup> According 2017 estimates by the Pew Research Center,<sup>20</sup> 45% of all immigrants residing in the U.S. are naturalized citizens, 27% are lawful permanent residents, 5% are temporary lawful residents, and 23% are undocumented.



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<sup>18</sup>The Foreign-Born population, the U.S. economy, and the federal budget. (2023, April 5). Congressional Budget Office. <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58939>

<sup>19</sup>Pew Research Center. (2023, November 21). *Key findings about U.S. immigrants* | Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/>

<sup>20</sup>Pew Research Center. (2020, August 19). *Unauthorized immigrants are almost a quarter of U.S. foreign-born population* | Pew Research Center. [https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/ft\\_2020-08-20\\_immigrants\\_02/](https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/ft_2020-08-20_immigrants_02/)

<sup>21</sup>Ibid

Various immigration statuses are utilized throughout this paper to capture the wide spectrum of immigrants in the U.S. These distinctions are listed below and provide background on the limitations and affordances of these statuses, such as who can and cannot work legally and what additional barriers immigrants face due to immigration status.

### ***Immigration statuses***

- **A naturalized citizen** “is [one who has gone through] the process by which U.S. citizenship is granted to a lawful permanent resident after meeting the requirements established by Congress in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).”<sup>22</sup> Naturalized citizens are the only foreign-born individuals who can vote in U.S. elections.
- **Lawful permanent residents** “are foreign nationals who have been granted the right to reside permanently in the United States. LPRs are often referred to simply as ‘immigrants,’ but they are also known as ‘permanent resident aliens,’ and ‘green card holders.’”<sup>23</sup>
- **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)** is a designation from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that prohibits removal from the U.S. and allows the individual to apply for employment authorization. TPS is “granted due to conditions in the country that temporarily prevent the country’s nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where the country is unable to adequately handle the return of its nationals. USCIS may grant TPS to eligible nationals of certain countries (or parts of countries) who are already in the United States.”<sup>24</sup>
- **Asylum Petitioners** are foreign-born individuals seeking protection in the U.S. because they have suffered persecution or fear they will suffer persecution due to race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Applications for asylum may only be filed if one is physically present in the United States and not a U.S. citizen. After 180 days of asylum application, the applicant may apply for work authorization and a successful asylum application can lead to permanent residency.<sup>25</sup>
- **A Refugee** is someone located outside America, who is of special humanitarian concern to the United States and who demonstrates that they were persecuted or

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<sup>22</sup> *Citizenship and Naturalization* | USCIS. (2020, July 5). USCIS.

<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learn-about-citizenship/citizenship-and-naturalization>

<sup>23</sup> *Profiles on Lawful Permanent Residents* | *Homeland Security*. (n.d.). U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

<https://www.dhs.gov/ohss/topics/immigration/lpr/profiles>

<sup>24</sup> *Temporary Protected Status* | USCIS. (2024, February 8). USCIS. <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>

<sup>25</sup> *Asylum* | USCIS. (2024, February 12). USCIS. <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-and-asylum/asylum>

fear persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. They are also not firmly resettled in another country, are admissible to the United States, and can begin working as soon as they arrive in the U.S.<sup>26</sup>

- **Deferred Action Childhood Arrival (DACA)** is a designation from DHS for certain people who came to the United States as children and who meet several guidelines that allow them to request consideration of deferred action for a period of 2 years, subject to renewal. They are also eligible to request work authorization. Deferred action is an exercise of prosecutorial discretion to defer removal action against an individual for a certain period. Deferred action does not provide lawful status.<sup>27</sup> At the time this report was created, the legality of DACA was under review in federal court and DHS was not taking new DACA applications.
- **Undocumented Immigrants** are immigrants who reside in the United States without legal status.<sup>28</sup>
- **Student Visa Holders** are foreign-born students who have been approved to study full-time in the U.S. The most common visa type under this designation is the F1, which allows the individual to study at an accredited college, university, seminary, conservatory, academic high school, elementary school, or other academic institution or language training program that culminates in a degree, diploma, or certificate. The educational institution must be authorized by the U.S. government to accept international students.<sup>29</sup>
- **HB1 Visa Holders** are foreign-born individuals who are granted employment authorization to “help employers who cannot otherwise obtain needed business skills and abilities from the U.S. workforce by authorizing the temporary employment of qualified individuals who are not otherwise authorized to work in the United States.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Refugees | USCIS. (2024, March 12). USCIS. <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-and-asylum/refugees>

<sup>27</sup>Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) | USCIS. (2023, September 18). USCIS. <https://www.uscis.gov/DACA>

<sup>28</sup>Defining undocumented. (n.d.). IMMIGRANTS RISING. <https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/defining-undocumented/>

<sup>29</sup>Students and Employment | USCIS. (2023, March 31). USCIS.

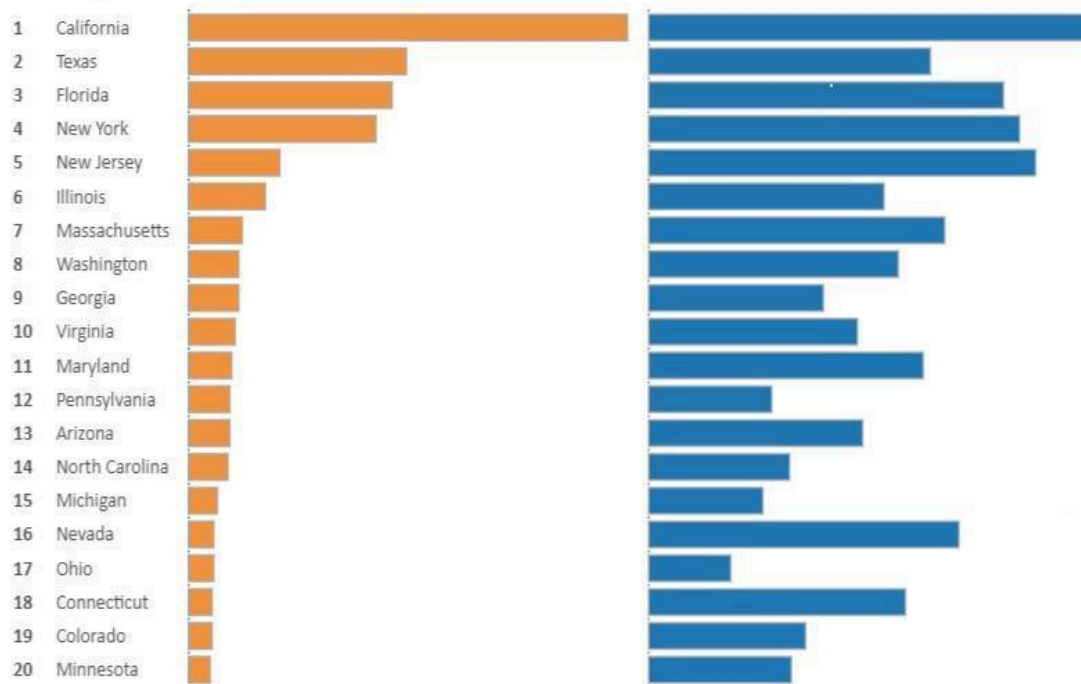
<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment>

<sup>30</sup>H-1B program. (n.d.). DOL. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/immigration/h1b>

## Immigration Population

Distribution of the immigrant population is widespread across the U.S. Pennsylvania ranks 7th in the nation of states with the fastest immigrant population growth.<sup>31</sup> Pennsylvania also ranks 12th among the top 20 states with the highest total immigrant population.<sup>32</sup>

**Immigrant Population and Share of Total Population by U.S. State, 2022**



Migration Policy Institute (2022)<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup>Batalova, J. B. J. (2024, March 22). *Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the*. migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states>

<sup>32</sup>*Immigrant population by state, 1990-Present*. (2023, October 16). migrationpolicy.org.

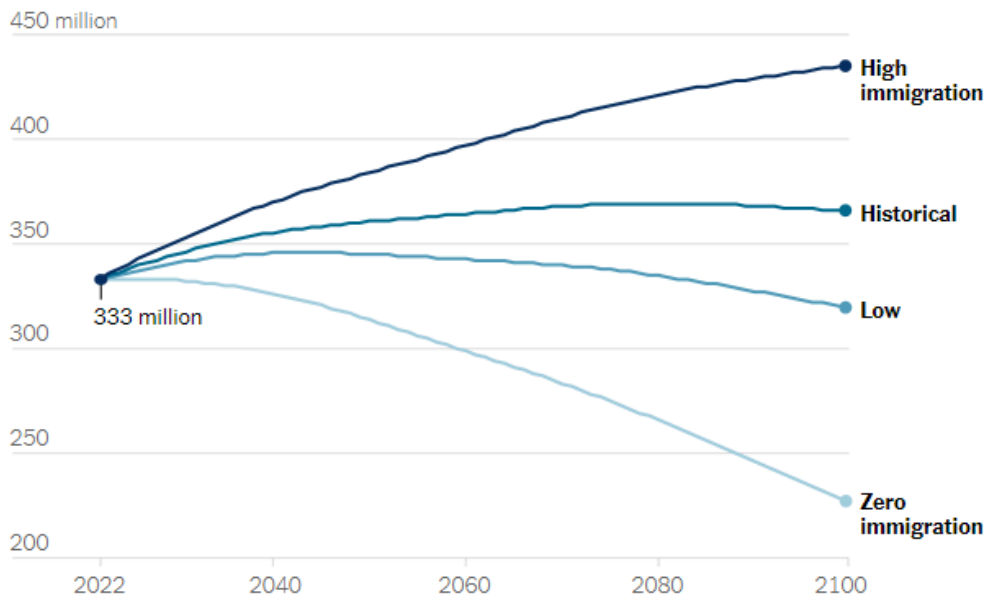
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/immigrant-population-state-1990-present?width=1000&height=850&iframe=true>

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

## Immigrants' contributions to population growth

In March of 2024, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that “the latest census figures have unveiled a promising trend for America’s largest metropolitan areas, showcasing a significant uptick in population growth driven by a 15% increase in immigration in 2023.”<sup>34</sup> According to the Brookings Institute, the U.S. is projected to lose nearly 100 million people between 2022 and 2100 if there were to be zero immigration in the U.S.—a projection driven by the current low birth rate and the existing death rate.<sup>35</sup>

### Projected U.S. population size by immigration scenarios



Source: William H. Frey, Brookings • By The New York Times

New York Times (2024)<sup>36</sup>

Growing at less than 1%, U.S. population growth has been stagnant since 2009 and would be far lower if not for immigration.<sup>37</sup> An immediate negative consequence of population decline is labor shortages that in turn result in lower income taxes and less revenue for

<sup>34</sup>Overberg, P., & Hackman, M. (2024, March 15). *Immigration drove America's postpandemic urban growth*. *Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved March 22, 2024, from <https://www.wsj.com/us-news/us-census-immigration-population-growth-cities-db007d64>

<sup>35</sup>Lopez, G. (2024, March 20). *An American slowdown*. *The New York Times*.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/20/briefing/american-population-slowdown-immigration.html>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

<sup>37</sup> Frey, W. H. (2023, January 4). *New census estimates show a tepid rise in U.S. population growth, buoyed by immigration*. *Brookings*. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/new-census-estimates-show-a-tepid-rise-in-u-s-population-growth-buoyed-by-immigration/>

municipal budgets to fund critical services.<sup>38</sup> Labor shortages also typically result in a rise in inflation. Increased inflation and a smaller workforce especially affect the spending power of those who rely on social security income and for the solvency of social security as a whole.<sup>39</sup> In such cases, social security recipients find themselves in vulnerable situations of not being able to afford the basic necessities to live.

National immigration rates and the number of immigrants in the U.S. are greatly determined by policies set by the federal government. According to the Brookings Institute, immigration growth experienced a slowdown under President Trump due to restrictions put in place by the administration.<sup>40</sup> The graph below breaks down population growth from 1900 to 2022. However, local government policies also play a role in where immigrant communities ultimately settle and grow, which will be reviewed in-depth later in the report.

FIGURE 1  
**US annual population growth, 1900-01 to 2021-22\***



\*July 1 to July 1 of each year

Source: William H. Frey analysis of U.S. Census Bureau historical population estimates, including 2020-22 annual estimates released December 22, 2022



<sup>38</sup>Trusts, P. C. (2022, December 5). *The Long-Term decline in fertility—and what it means for state budgets*. The Pew Charitable Trusts. <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2022/12/the-long-term-decline-in-fertility-and-what-it-means-for-state-budgets>

<sup>39</sup>*Inflation Is Making Social Security’s Solvency Problem Worse*. (2022, October 13). Bipartisan Policy Center. Retrieved March 27, 2024, from <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/inflation-solvency-problem/>

<sup>40</sup> Frey, W. H. (2023, January 4). New census estimates show a tepid rise in U.S. population growth, buoyed by immigration. *Brookings*. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/new-census-estimates-show-a-tepid-rise-in-u-s-population-growth-buoyed-by-immigration/>.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

## ***Population in rural and suburban areas***

More than three-quarters (77%) of U.S. rural counties have fewer working-age people (ages 15 to 64) than 20 years ago.<sup>42</sup> Immigration has been shown to help reverse population loss in nearly two-thirds (62%) of rural counties nationwide and would ensure larger working-age populations in 2040 than in 2000 if just 100 new immigrants settled in these counties each year.<sup>43</sup> This share would rise to nearly three-quarters (71%) of counties if 200 new immigrants were welcomed each year.<sup>44</sup>

## **Immigrants and the economy**

According to the Department of Labor in 2022, the foreign-born population accounted for 18.1% of the U.S. civilian labor force, up from 17.4% in 2021.<sup>45</sup> Of employed foreign-born men, the industry with the largest share of immigrant workers was in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations, with 22.6% of foreign born men working in the industry compared to 14.4% native-born workers.<sup>46</sup> In the service industry, 30% of foreign-born women worked in this sector compared to 17.5% of native-born women.<sup>47</sup>

In a 2023 interview with NPR, Zeke Hernandez, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania Wharton Business School, shared the following statistics regarding the share of immigrants in the labor force and their makeup in specific sectors. Immigrants are 18% of the labor force but they constitute large portions of the following sectors:<sup>48</sup>

- 45% of workers in household services
- 36% of workers in clothing manufacturing
- 33% of workers in agriculture
- 32% of workers in hospitality
- 29% of workers in food production
- 27% of workers in electronics manufacturing

The Migration Policy Institute, an independent, nonpartisan think tank that works to improve immigration and integration policies, reported that specialized skilled foreign-born

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<sup>42</sup> *Immigration can reverse rural population decline*. (n.d.). FWD.us. <https://www.fwd.us/news/rural-decline/#citation1>

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> *FOREIGN-BORN WORKERS: LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS — 2022*. (2023, May 18). Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved March 22, 2024, from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/forbrn.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ben-Achour, S., & Schroeder, A. (2023, December 19). *What immigration actually does to jobs, wages and more*. Marketplace. <https://www.marketplace.org/2023/12/12/what-immigration-actually-does-to-jobs-wages-and-more/>



workers accounted for approximately 29% of physicians in the U.S. and 23.1% of direct care workers, including nursing assistants.<sup>49</sup> The American Immigration Council further found 23.1% of all workers in STEM fields are foreign-born individuals.<sup>50</sup>

### ***Diversity and Workforce Sustainability***

Immigrants are racially diverse and comprise a higher percentage of adult-aged workers than native-born individuals. According to the New American Economy, “by age, the proportion of the foreign-born labor force made up of 25- to 54-year-olds (71.1%) was higher than for the native-born labor force (62.2%).<sup>51</sup> From a diversity standpoint, almost half (48%) of the foreign-born labor force is Latino, while one-quarter (25%) is Asian, 10% is Black, and 16% is White.<sup>52</sup>

### ***Entrepreneurship and Job Creation***

According to the American Immigration Council, immigrants have a spending power of \$1.4 trillion (2021) and pay \$458.7 billion in annual state, local, and federal taxes.<sup>53</sup> Immigrants notably play a major role in entrepreneurship, accounting for 3.5 million business owners in the U.S.<sup>54</sup> Various studies found immigrants in the U.S. workforce to be substantial job creators, with an 80% higher entrance rate into entrepreneurship compared to native-born individuals.<sup>55</sup> Contributions to the tech and patent sector by foreign-born individuals are also significant, as 36% of all patents produced in the U.S. are by immigrants,<sup>56</sup> 25% of all

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<sup>49</sup>Gelatt, J. (2020, October 29). *Immigrant workers: vital to the U.S. COVID-19 response*. migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigrant-workers-us-covid-19-response>

<sup>50</sup>*Foreign-Born STEM workers in the United States*. (2022, June). American Immigration Council. Retrieved March 22, 2024, from [https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/foreign-born\\_stem\\_workers\\_in\\_the\\_united\\_states\\_final\\_0.pdf](https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/foreign-born_stem_workers_in_the_united_states_final_0.pdf)

<sup>51</sup>Admin. (2019, March 12). *New data shows Immigrant-Owned businesses employed 8 million Americans; immigrants wield \$1.1 trillion in spending power - new American economy*. New American Economy.

<https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/uncategorized/new-data-shows-immigrant-owned-businesses-employed-8-million-americans-immigrants-wield-1-1-trillion-in-spending-power/>

<sup>52</sup>*Immigrants Are Vital to the U.S. Economy*. (n.d.). Joint Economic Committee- Senate. Retrieved March 22, 2024, from [https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/\\_cache/files/6750b0f0-c851-4fee-9619-295582fd44e8/immigrants-are-vital-to-the-us-economy-final.pdf](https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/6750b0f0-c851-4fee-9619-295582fd44e8/immigrants-are-vital-to-the-us-economy-final.pdf)

<sup>53</sup>*Take a look: How immigrants drive the economy in United States of America*. (n.d.). American Immigration Council. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/national>

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>55</sup> Iacurci, G. (2024, March 2). Immigration is “taking pressure off” the job market and U.S. economy, expert says. *CNBC*. <https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/02/immigration-taking-pressure-off-the-job-market-us-economy-expert.html>

<sup>56</sup> Anderson, S. (2023, January 16). Highly skilled immigrants drive U.S. innovation, report shows. *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/stuartanderson/2023/01/12/highly-inventive-immigrants-also-make-natives-more-innovative/?sh=2b241963324b>

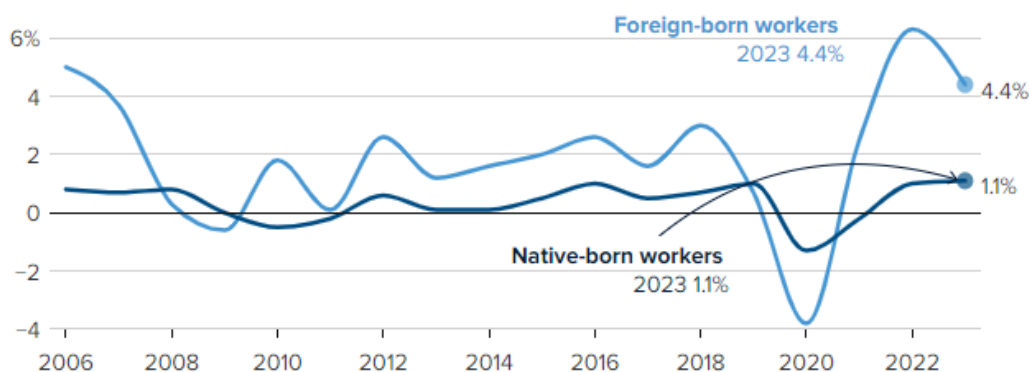
startup founders are immigrants,<sup>57</sup> and over 50% of all high-tech, high-growth startups that achieve a valuation of a billion dollars or more are by foreign-born immigrants.<sup>58</sup>

## Labor shortage

According to the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#), the U.S. labor participation rate is 62.5%.<sup>59</sup> Contrary to the false narrative of immigrants taking jobs, immigration can play a key role in [increasing labor participation](#) and reducing unemployment, given immigrant workers take jobs in a variety of sectors and open new businesses.<sup>60</sup> Current immigration trends have demonstrated that immigrants have a higher percentage change in the number of workers entering the U.S. labor workforce, with native-born workers at 1.1% and foreign-born workers at 4.4%.<sup>61</sup>

### Foreign-born vs. Native-born workers from 2006 to 2023

Annual percent change of workers in the U.S. labor force.



Note: Data represents annual averages

Chart: Ana Teresa Solá

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and FRED



US Bureau of Labor Statistics and FRED (CNBC)<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> *Entrepreneurship: How immigration plays a critical role.* (n.d.). New American Economy.

<https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/entrepreneurship/#:~:text=Immigrants%20start%20more%20than%202025,1%20and%20high%20tech%20firms>.

<sup>58</sup> Anderson, S. (2022, July 27). Most Billion-Dollar startups in the U.S. founded by immigrants. *Forbes*.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stuartanderson/2022/07/26/most-us-billion-dollar-startups-have-an-immigrant-founder/?sh=47285b366f3a>

<sup>59</sup> Ferguson, S. (2024, March 8). *Understanding America's labor shortage*. U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

<https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/understanding-americas-labor-shortage>

<sup>60</sup> Anderson, S. (2023b, May 23). New immigration data point to larger U.S. workforce issues. *Forbes*.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stuartanderson/2023/05/22/new-immigration-data-point-to-larger-us-workforce-issues/?sh=12da99061a91>

<sup>61</sup> Iacurci, G. (2024c, March 2). Immigration is "taking pressure off" the job market and U.S. economy, expert says. *CNBC*.

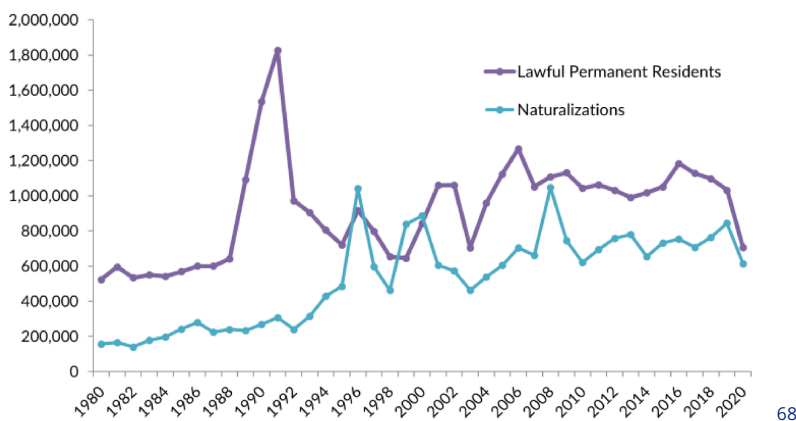
<https://www.cnbc.com/2024/03/02/immigration-taking-pressure-off-the-job-market-us-economy-expert.html>

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the U.S. labor force will grow by 5.2 million people from 2023 to 2034, largely due to an increase in immigration that began in 2022 and will continue through 2026.<sup>63</sup> As a result, gross domestic product will be about \$7 trillion higher and revenues \$1 trillion larger than they would have been otherwise.<sup>64</sup>

## Immigrant Voting Power

According to the Migration Policy Institute, there were 23.2 million naturalized U.S. citizens in the United States in 2019, making up 52% of the total immigrant population.<sup>65</sup> Between 1996 and 2020, annual naturalizations have been steady at 400,000.<sup>66</sup> The Census Bureau has shown naturalized citizens' voter turnout is not far behind that of native-born individuals. The National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, reported there were nearly 5.19 million citizens naturalized between 2016 and 2022 alone.<sup>67</sup>



<sup>63</sup>Director's Statement on the Budget and Economic Outlook for 2024 to 2034. (n.d.). Congressional Budget Office. <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/59933>

<sup>64</sup>Iacurci, G. (2024b, March 2). Immigration is "taking pressure off" the job market and U.S. economy, expert says. *CNBC*. <https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/02/immigration-taking-pressure-off-the-job-market-us-economy-expert.html#:~:text=Immigration%20is%20%27taking%20pressure%20off,and%20U.S.%20economy%2C%20expert%20says&text=Foreign%2Dborn%20workers%20made%20up,the%20U.S.%20economy%2C%20economists%20say>.

<sup>65</sup>Batalova, J. B. M. G. S. a. J. (2021, November 11). *Naturalized citizens in the United States*. migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/naturalization-trends-united-states>

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Wong, T. K., Maya Lu, Lilly Amirjavadi, Nancy Flores, Deputy Director at the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), Diego Iñiguez-López, Associate Director of Policy and Campaigns at NPNA, Nicole Melaku, Executive Director at NPNA, Alexander Graphics, Diego Iñiguez-López, Abdelnasser Rashid, Tides Foundation, SEIU, USIPC, APIAVote, & National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA). (2022). *NEW AMERICAN VOTERS 2022: Harnessing the power of Naturalized Citizens*. [https://newamericanvoters.org/assets/2022/07/NPNA\\_2022-New-American-Voters-Report.pdf](https://newamericanvoters.org/assets/2022/07/NPNA_2022-New-American-Voters-Report.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

# Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

## Demographics and Population Changes in Pennsylvania

There are nearly 13 million residents in Pennsylvania, with the Census Bureau reporting 74.5% as White Non-Hispanic, 12.2% as Black, 8.6% as Hispanic, and 4.2% as Asian American or Pacific Islander, according to the 2021 American Community Survey.<sup>69</sup> From 2010 to 2020, the population of Black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other races, commonly referred to as BIPOC (an umbrella term for all people of color),<sup>70</sup> grew by 565,359, while the white population fell by 484,996.<sup>71</sup>

**Table 1.** Pennsylvania's population by race/ethnicity\* in 2010 and 2020 and numeric and percent change.

Race/Ethnicity	Population		Change	
	2010	2020	Numeric	Percent
<i>White</i>	10,109,256	9,624,260	-484,996	-4.8%
<i>Black</i>	1,333,574	1,391,696	58,122	4.4%
<i>Hispanic</i>	719,696	1,032,627	312,931	43.5%
<i>Asian</i>	351,465	482,931	131,466	37.4%
<i>Two or More</i>	168,817	228,962	60,145	35.6%
<i>Other</i>	20,083	22,778	2,695	13.4%
<i>Total</i>	12,702,891	12,783,254	80,363	0.6%

Pennsylvania State Data Center<sup>72</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *Quick Facts, Pennsylvania*. (n.d.). US Census. Retrieved March 26, 2024, from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/PA/PST045223>

<sup>70</sup> BIPOC. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/BIPOC>

<sup>71</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). State and county detailed population estimates. In Pennsylvania State Data Center, *Pennsylvania State Data Center Research Brief* (pp. 1–2) [Research brief]. Pennsylvania State Data Center.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

## Foreign-Born Population

The foreign-born population makes up 7.3% of Pennsylvania's total population<sup>73</sup> at a grand total of 978,000 people.<sup>74</sup> For the immigrant community, the Census Bureau ACS dataset for 2017-2021 reported racial demographics to be 25.85% White, 14% Black, 24.07% Hispanic, and 34.37% Asian American or Pacific Islander, which is a dramatically different population share percentage compared to the total population.<sup>75</sup>

## Population growth for foreign-born individuals increased by 60.5% from 2010-2020, far exceeding the state average of 0.6% since 2010.<sup>76</sup>

It is important to note that immigration has been the top driver of overall BIPOC population growth in the state. This growth equated to 277,061 new residents from 2010 to 2020 (see below) who are regular contributors to the tax base. The BIPOC immigrant population is grouped on its own to represent the large size of this bloc.

From a percentage basis, growth by race from 2010 to 2020 for foreign-born individuals in Pennsylvania was led by Black immigrants, followed by Latinx, and AAPI.

- Black: 72.52%
- Latinx: 69.01%
- BIPOC: 60.83%
- AAPI: 50.9%
- White: 11.5%<sup>77</sup>

Geographically, the counties with the largest total population of immigrant communities are as follows:

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<sup>73</sup>Quick Facts, Pennsylvania. (n.d.). US Census. Retrieved March 26, 2024, from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/PA/PST045223>

<sup>74</sup>Immigrant population by state, 1990-Present. (2023b, October 16). migrationpolicy.org.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/immigrant-population-state-1990-present?width=1000&height=850&iframe=true>

<sup>75</sup>Lawful permanent residents and naturalized citizens. Data gathered from 2017-2021 ACS.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

County	# of Immigrants	County	#of Immigrants
Philadelphia	228,809	Delaware	61,813
Montgomery	93,829	Chester	50,710
Alleghany	76,384	Lehigh	46,815
Bucks	63,664	Berks	33,509

2017-2021 ACS<sup>78</sup>

Counties that saw immigrant populations increase by over 10,000 individuals and where the percentage increase exceeded 42% from 2010-2020 are as follows:<sup>79</sup>

County	Percentage Increase	# of new Foreign-Born Individuals
Luzerne	121.8%	13,975
Dauphin	76.6%	10,150
Lehigh	65.3%	18,500
Lancaster	56.8%	11,021
Alleghany	49%	25,121
Delaware	44.9%	19,152
Philadelphia	42.7%	68,502

Several Mayors in Pennsylvania have publicly turned to immigration to reverse population loss. Mayor of Erie City, Joe Schember, and Pittsburgh Mayor, Ed Gainey, have openly called for immigrants to choose their cities as their arrival destinations.<sup>80</sup> According to City and State Pennsylvania, both Schember and Gainey signed a letter from six Democratic Pennsylvania mayors to Biden in August 2023 asking him to extend legal protections to undocumented immigrants.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Immigrants: Lawful permanent residents and naturalized citizens. Data gathered from 2017-2021 ACS.

<sup>80</sup> Prose, J. (2024, January 4). Amid heated national debate, two Pa. mayors are asking immigrants to help reinvigorate their cities. *Pennlive*. <https://www.pennlive.com/news/2024/01/amid-heated-national-debate-two-pa-mayors-are-asking-immigrants-to-help-reinvigorate-their-cities.html>

<sup>81</sup> Sweitzer, J. (2023, August 24). *In letter to Biden, PA mayors push president to act on immigration*. City & State PA. <https://www.cityandstatepa.com/politics/2023/08/letter-biden-pa-mayors-push-president-act-immigration/389681/>

## Population loss in Pennsylvania

One of the most significant challenges Pennsylvania faces is population loss, as the population grew by only 0.6% between 2010 to 2020.<sup>82</sup> Specifically, from 2010 to 2020, the Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other races, commonly referred to as BIPOC (an umbrella term for all people of color),<sup>83</sup> grew by 565,359, while the White population fell by 484,996.<sup>84</sup>

It is important to note BIPOC individuals outpace population loss for non-Hispanic White people. For every 10 non-Hispanic White people lost in Pennsylvania from 2010 to 2020, the state gained roughly 12 persons of color, with the most substantial growth occurring in the Hispanic/Latino population of any race (43.5%) and the non-Hispanic Asian population (37.4%).<sup>85</sup> Additionally, on the national level, 19% of Black foreign-born individuals accounted for population growth between 1980-2019, with the Philadelphia metro area alone being home to 120,000 black immigrants from Liberia, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Ghana.<sup>86</sup>

Immigration to Pennsylvania, including migration from Puerto Rico, has helped curb further population loss, with the biggest contributor to population loss being the birth rate, as evidenced below.<sup>87</sup>

Natural Increase (Births minus Deaths)				
2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
830	-9,543	-25,416	-23,462	-11,079
Net International Migration				
2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
14,722	14,523	10,199	25,721	25,776

Population loss is important to highlight here, as it can lead to a reduction of services and a loss of wealth for homeowners. Smaller tax bases typically mean there are not as many property occupancies. Given municipalities' over-reliance on property taxes, smaller tax bases caused by population loss result in a loss of value due to vacancies and/or high

<sup>82</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). State and county detailed population estimates. In Pennsylvania State Data Center, *Pennsylvania State Data Center Research Brief* (pp. 1–2) [Research brief]. Pennsylvania State Data Center.

<sup>83</sup> BIPOC. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/BIPOC>

<sup>84</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). State and county detailed population estimates. In Pennsylvania State Data Center, *Pennsylvania State Data Center Research Brief* (pp. 1–2) [Research brief]. Pennsylvania State Data Center. [https://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/sdc/pasdc\\_files/researchbriefs/June\\_2021.pdf](https://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/sdc/pasdc_files/researchbriefs/June_2021.pdf)

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Edi, E., & Thompson, L. (2023, February 28). More detentions, deportations, abuse: The challenges Black immigrants face. <https://www.inquirer.com/opinion/commentary/black-history-month-immigrants-philadelphia-20230228.html#loaded>

<sup>87</sup>Frey, W. H. (2024, January 4). Immigration is driving the nation's modest post-pandemic population growth, new census data shows. *Brookings*. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/immigration-is-driving-the-nations-modest-post-pandemic-population-growth-new-census-data-shows/>

property taxes, especially when other taxes, such as income and sales taxes, are not coming in.<sup>88</sup>

Moreover, Pennsylvania is an aging state, with 19.9% of residents being 65 years or older,<sup>89</sup> compared to the U.S. average of 17.3%.<sup>90</sup> Foreign-born residents notably have a lower older population (ages 65 and above), with a rate of 15.8%. The immigrant population in Pennsylvania also has an overall younger workforce (ages 18 to 64 years), with 77.7% in the workforce, contrasted with 58.8% of native-born individuals in Pennsylvania.<sup>91</sup> These are important numbers to keep in mind, given the contributions of a larger workforce can curb labor shortages and bolster safety net programs, such as Social Security and Medicare.

PA Native Born <sup>92</sup>	PA Foreign Born <sup>93</sup>	U.S. Average <sup>94</sup>
40.5 Median Age	44.1 Median Age	39.9 Median Age
18 to 64 years of age: 58.8%	18 to 64 years of age: 77.7%	-
65 years or older: 19.9%	65 years or older: 15.8%	65 years or older: 17.3%

Pennsylvania’s population decline is significantly impacting rural areas. According to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania (CRP), 3.4 million rural residents represent almost 27% of the state’s population. Geographically, rural Pennsylvania comprises 75% of the state’s land area, making it the third largest rural population in the nation.<sup>95</sup> The CRP further reported Pennsylvania’s rural county population is projected to decline by 5.8% over the next 30 years, with the state projected to grow by 1.6 % based on increases in urban populations.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>88</sup>Cfp, K. D. (2023, August 22). 5 cities with the highest property tax rates. Here’s why rates can vary so much from place to place. *CNBC*. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/22/heres-why-property-taxes-vary-so-much-from-city-to-city.html>

<sup>89</sup> *State Demographics Data - PA*. (n.d.). migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/PA>

<sup>90</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Explore Census data*. <https://data.census.gov/profile/Pennsylvania?g=040XX00US42#populations-and-people>

<sup>91</sup>*State Demographics Data - PA*. (n.d.). migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/PA>

<sup>92</sup> *State Demographics Data - PA*. (n.d.). migrationpolicy.org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/PA>

<sup>93</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>94</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Explore Census data*. <https://data.census.gov/profile/Pennsylvania?g=040XX00US42#populations-and-people>

<sup>95</sup>Pennsylvania Senate, Kopko, K. C., & Center for Rural Pennsylvania. (2021). *Pennsylvania Senate State Government Committee hearing*. <https://stategovernment.pasenate.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2021/05/CRP-Rural-Demographics-May-2021.pdf>

<sup>96</sup>Miller, C. (2023, October 4). *Population projections highlight need for long-term solutions to sustain rural Pa.* • *Pennsylvania Capital-Star*. Pennsylvania Capital-Star. <https://pennacapital-star.com/briefs/population-projections-highlight-need-for-long-term-solutions-to-sustain-rural-pa/#:~:text=The%20population%20of%20Pennsylvania's%20rural,Dr>



## A large part of population decline in rural areas is due to a lack of affordable and accessible average salaries, as well as issues with childcare, all of which are causing individuals to move out of state.<sup>97</sup>

The CRP also stated population growth will likely continue to concentrate in the southeast part of the Commonwealth, with northern and western counties experiencing more population decline.<sup>98</sup> The following counties are expected to see the highest population loss between 2020 and 2050:<sup>99</sup>

- Westmoreland: loss of 56,857 residents
- Washington: loss of 21,028 residents
- Schuylkill: loss of 15,069 residents
- Cambria: loss of 12,310 residents
- Northumberland: loss of 7,716 residents

At the national level, federal policies like Title 42 and immigration restrictions under President Trump led to major immigration declines. During 2020 and 2023, the U.S. government implemented Title 42, an emergency federal use of health law restricting asylum to stop the spread of COVID-19. Overall, Title 42 resulted in the turning away of 2.8 million asylum seekers.<sup>100</sup> During the periods of 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, annual gains in immigration were 203k and 204k, respectively, which is significantly lower than previous years, when they were 787k (2016-2017) and 449k (2015-2016).<sup>101</sup> More recently, major cities like Philadelphia have begun to experience population loss as well, losing nearly 54,000 residents between the period of April 2020 to December 2023. Such loss continues to reverberate throughout the state, with the number of counties experiencing population loss exceeding those that have experienced gains.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>Danahy, A. (2023, May 30). As rural Pennsylvania ages and population shrinks, in-migration could bring growth. *WPSU*. <https://radio.wpsu.org/2023-05-30/rural-pennsylvania-ages-population-shrinks-in-migration-could-bring-growth>

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

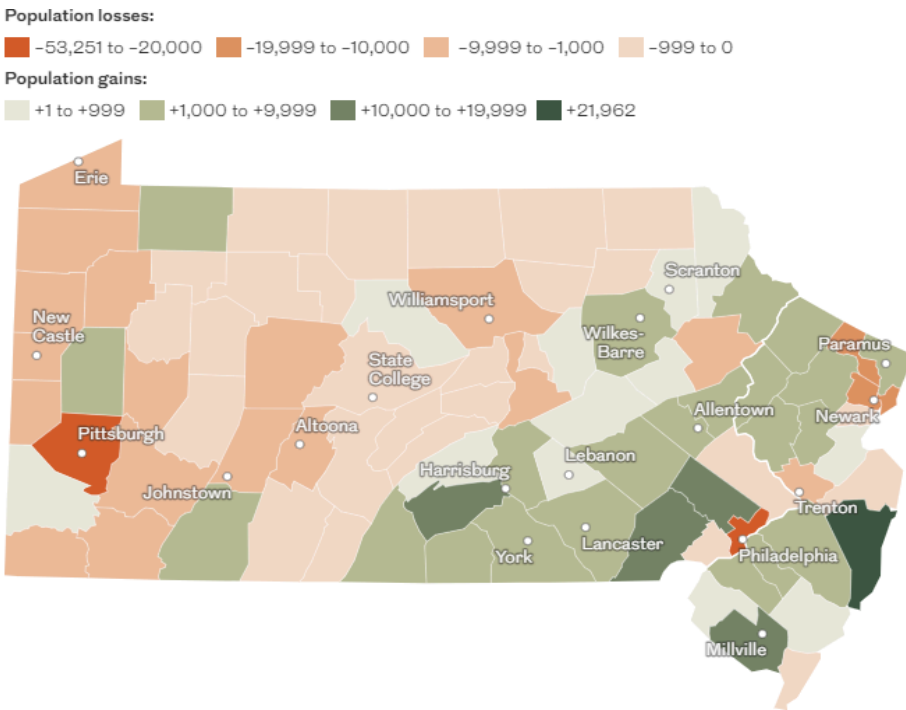
<sup>99</sup>*Pennsylvania Population Projections 2050: A First Look*. (2023, October). Center for Rural Pennsylvania. Retrieved March 22, 2024, from [https://www.rural.pa.gov/getfile.cfm?file=Resources/PDFs/Access%20PASS%20Final%20Population%20Projections%20Fact%20Sheet\\_.pdf&view=true](https://www.rural.pa.gov/getfile.cfm?file=Resources/PDFs/Access%20PASS%20Final%20Population%20Projections%20Fact%20Sheet_.pdf&view=true)

<sup>100</sup> Long, C. (2023, June 23). What is Title 42 and how has the US used it to curb migration? | AP News. *AP News*. <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-biden-border-title-42-mexico-asylum-be4e0b15b27adb9bede87b9bbefb798d>

<sup>101</sup> Frey, W. H. (2020, September 28). The past decade's foreign-born population gains will be the smallest since the 1970s. *Brookings*. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-past-decades-foreign-born-population-gains-will-be-the-smallest-since-the-1970s/>

<sup>102</sup> Vadala, N., & Duchneskie, J. (2024, March 14). Philadelphia lost more than 50,000 residents during the pandemic, census data show. <https://www.inquirer.com>.

[https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia/census-philadelphia-population-data-2023-pennsylvania-counties-20240314.html?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=mn1\\_3\\_13\\_2024&clickText=53-000-lost-residents-according-to-the-latest-census-data&clickHeader=what-you-should-know-today&int\\_promo=newsletter&utm\\_term=Morning%20Newsletter](https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia/census-philadelphia-population-data-2023-pennsylvania-counties-20240314.html?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mn1_3_13_2024&clickText=53-000-lost-residents-according-to-the-latest-census-data&clickHeader=what-you-should-know-today&int_promo=newsletter&utm_term=Morning%20Newsletter)



Map: John Duchneskie / Staff Artist • Source: U.S. Census Bureau

A key factor in assessing Philadelphia’s recent population decline is the lack of competitive welcoming policies in Pennsylvania, especially compared to neighboring states. New Jersey and New York, for example, have successfully implemented driver’s licenses<sup>104</sup> for undocumented residents, in-state tuition equity for undocumented college students, and banned private immigrant detention centers. Pennsylvania’s minimum wage of \$7.25 is also one of the lowest salaries of every adjacent state, which has resulted in fewer people choosing the Commonwealth as a viable place to live.<sup>105</sup>

In addition, anti-immigration legislation introduced in Harrisburg seeks to further curb immigration through proposed E-Verify legislation and unnecessary requirements for government officials to collaborate with ICE (a full list of these bills is provided later in this section). Not only do these bills risk tearing families apart and placing them into detention, but they also create a hostile environment for immigrants that stands in harsh contrast to

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> *States offering driver’s licenses to immigrants.* (2024, January 23).

<https://www.ncsl.org/immigration/states-offering-drivers-licenses-to-immigrants>

<sup>105</sup> *State minimum wage laws.* (n.d.). DOL. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/state>

states like New Jersey, New York, and Delaware, all of which have successfully passed welcoming policies.

## **Pennsylvania Immigrant Political Power**

The immigrant population in Pennsylvania has grown 60.5% from 2010 to 2020, with 85,000 of those immigrants becoming naturalized citizens. Both existing and new immigrant voters are thus having a larger impact on national and local elections. In the 2022 mid-term election, there were 387,389 Hispanic voters who voted in Pennsylvania.<sup>106</sup> While not all Hispanic voters are foreign-born, oftentimes one or both parents are immigrants, with 3.6% of U.S.-born residents' parents being foreign-born.<sup>107</sup> As immigration becomes more and more of a central issue for voters—given more voters are children, spouses, or neighbors to immigrants—representing the needs of immigrant communities is more crucial than ever before.

Without continued immigration, Pennsylvania is on track to lose another seat in 2030 due to continued population decline. This is after Pennsylvania already lost a congressional seat after the 2020/21 redistricting process, which resulted in a diminished presence in the Federal House. PoliticsPA, a media company focusing on political analysis at the federal and state levels, predicts Pennsylvania will lose another congressional seat, from 17 seats to 16, if population decline continues through 2030.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, population loss has severe financial implications for all Pennsylvanians, as federal funds are appropriated based on population. A report by the GW Institute of Public Policy found “Pennsylvania lost \$1,746 per person due to census undercounting.”<sup>109</sup> The state is thus dependent on continued immigration to make sure population loss does not result in two more lost seats come 2030.

## **Pennsylvania Naturalized Citizen Voters**

According to the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), “Pennsylvania is home to 85,083 citizens naturalized between 2016 and 2020. This number exceeds the state’s 80,555 vote margin in the November 2020 presidential election. Newly naturalized citizens

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<sup>106</sup> *Top stories of 2023: Fast-growing segment of Latino voters shapes up as key target for 2024 elections* | WITF. (2023, December 21). WITF. <https://www.witf.org/2023/12/20/top-stories-of-2023-fast-growing-segment-of-latino-voters-shapes-up-as-key-target-for-2024-elections/>

<sup>107</sup> *Take a look: How immigrants drive the economy in Pennsylvania*. (n.d.). American Immigration Council. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/pennsylvania/>

<sup>108</sup> *Is Pennsylvania on pace to lose another congressional seat in 2030?* (2023, December 20). PoliticsPA. <https://www.politicspa.com/is-pennsylvania-on-pace-to-lose-another-congressional-seat-in-2030/129075/>

<sup>109</sup> Hirsch, A., & Gray, C. (2022, March 24). 4 ways that census undercounting could impact the health of Pennsylvanians | Opinion. <https://www.inquirer.com>. <https://www.inquirer.com/opinion/census-data-pennsylvania-2020-undercounting-health-20220324.html>

in Pennsylvania, like the state's overall immigrant population, are racially and ethnically diverse, with 45% from Asia, 27% from the Americas, 15% from the African continent, and 13% from Europe.”<sup>110</sup> Statewide, there are 490,000 naturalized citizens in Pennsylvania, which is larger than Pittsburgh, the second biggest city in Pennsylvania.<sup>111</sup>

## Pennsylvania Immigrant Workforce

**Immigrants help fill labor shortages.** They pay local and federal taxes and support the economy by spending the money they've earned locally.<sup>112</sup> While the national unemployment rate was 3.5% in 2023, labor shortages exist in a range of sectors, from healthcare to restaurants, and immigrants can help fill these roles.<sup>113</sup> Labor shortages affect inflation, such that when there aren't labor shortages, inflation is curbed and prices are kept in check, with immigrant workers often filling these gaps.<sup>114</sup> An area where consumers have most recently felt inflation locally in Pennsylvania is the rise of grocery costs, whereby the cost of groceries has risen 8.2% in the Commonwealth between November 2022-November 2023, which is far higher than our neighboring states of New Jersey (6.8%), Maryland (7%), and West Virginia (6.9%).<sup>115</sup>

According to local farmers, one reason for the rise in price increases is the labor shortages that prohibit farmers from meeting supply demands they would with a full workforce. Lisa Graybeal, owner of Graywood Farms, stated: “We're not finding labor and it's trickling down to the supply chain, not having enough product, not being able to get produce and things out of the field into the grocery store.”<sup>116</sup> Lisa and other farmers in Lancaster County,

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<sup>110</sup>Wong, T. K., Maya Lu, Lilly Amirjavadi, Nancy Flores, Deputy Director at the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), Diego Iñiguez-López, Associate Director of Policy and Campaigns at NPNA, Nicole Melaku, Executive Director at NPNA, Alexander Graphics, Diego Iñiguez-López, Abdelnasser Rashid, Tides Foundation, SEIU, USIPC, APIAVote, & National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA). (2022). *NEW AMERICAN VOTERS 2022: Harnessing the power of Naturalized Citizens*.

[https://newamericanvoters.org/assets/2022/07/NPNA\\_2022-New-American-Voters-Report.pdf](https://newamericanvoters.org/assets/2022/07/NPNA_2022-New-American-Voters-Report.pdf)

<sup>111</sup> Forman, B., & Forman, B. (2023, February 6). *For newly naturalized citizens, voting in Pa. turns fear into political power*. Billy Penn at WHY. <https://billypenn.com/2022/11/10/new-citizens-pennsylvania-voting-assistance-language-access/>

<sup>112</sup>Miller-Wilson, C. (2024, January 23). Guest commentary: Need workers? Hire a migrant. *The Philadelphia Citizen*. <https://thephiladelphiacitizen.org/guest-commentary-need-workers-hire-a-migrant/>

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup>*The U.S. economy is surpassing expectations. Immigration is one reason*. (2024, February 29). *New York Times*. Retrieved March 28, 2024, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/29/business/economy/immigrants-labor.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>

<sup>115</sup>Tom Riese, WVIA News. (2024, January 4). Pa. sees high grocery price inflation. Economists, senator weigh in. *WVIA Public Media*. <https://www.wvia.org/news/local/2023-12-26/pa-sees-high-grocery-price-inflation-economists-senator-weigh-in>

<sup>116</sup>*Agriculture leaders, lawmakers look at role immigration could play in fixing the farming labor shortage*. (2022, October 5). *Fox 43*. Retrieved March 28, 2024, from <https://www.fox43.com/article/money/economy/agriculture-immigration-farming-labor-shortage-graywood-farms/521-a1deda70-046a-43cb-8704-47a55d1225c5>

Pennsylvania met to discuss supporting the Farm Workforce Modernization Act (FWMA) that would bring more legal workers to south-central Pennsylvania farms while streamlining the application process and stabilizing wages.<sup>117</sup>

The farmers who met to discuss the FWMA explained the following regarding worker shortages:

***“The need is urgent and has been urgent for a while to secure a stable and reliable workforce... we’re having issues over the years with hiring domestic workers, it is not a reliable source of labor for the dairy industry, [we need] people who are going to stay beyond six months...by having a reliable seasonal workforce, it allows farmers to be efficient and could help bring down cost of agricultural products.”***<sup>118</sup>

## **Pennsylvania Labor Shortage Gap**

Labor shortages are on the rise throughout the Commonwealth. According to the Pennsylvania Independent Fiscal Office, near-term demographic trends suggest labor market conditions will remain tight through 2025.<sup>119</sup> In Pennsylvania, there are 60 unemployed workers for every 100 available jobs, meaning there are 40 jobs on average that remain unfilled because there aren’t enough workers.<sup>120</sup> The federal government contributes to this job shortage via strict immigration policies that only admit 10 nonagricultural temporary workers in Pennsylvania for every 100 workers, which leaves a 90-worker gap for every 100 jobs available in the state.<sup>121</sup>

The pandemic and strict immigration restrictions set by the Trump administration have resulted in a one million immigrant worker shortage, of which the U.S. is still feeling the effects.<sup>122</sup> Despite this, the immigration workforce has rebounded more than that of the U.S.-born labor force, rising 17% between 2020 and 2024 in the number of workers in the

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> O’Reilly, R. (2023, April 15). *Many businesses dealing with staff shortages, exploring immigrant employment*. Yahoo. Retrieved March 28, 2024, from <https://www.yahoo.com/news/many-businesses-dealing-staff-shortages-115100537.html>

<sup>120</sup> Porter, E., & Zhou, Y. (2024, February 14). Here’s which states could benefit most from migrant labor. *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/02/14/migrants-states-labor-work-permit/>

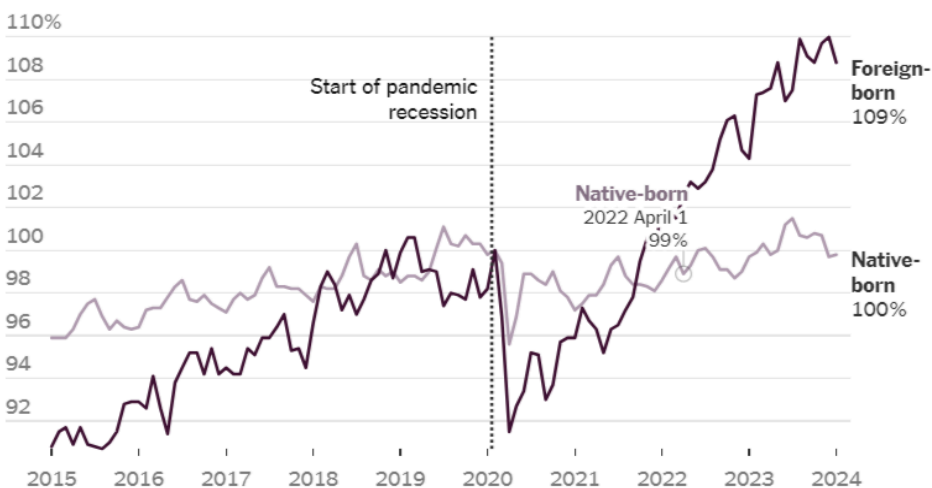
<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Rose, J. (2021, December 22). Fewer immigrant workers are coming to fill key jobs. That has slowed the U.S. economy. *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/2021/12/22/1063104262/immigrant-workers-us-economy-key-jobs>

United States as a share of how many there were in February 2020 by worker origin, in contrast to the 4% native-born growth during the same period.<sup>123</sup>

### The foreign-born labor force has rebounded strongly

The number of workers in the United States as a share of how many there were in February 2020, by worker origin



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics • By The New York Times

124

At the local level, in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, small business owner George Milkie is short a quarter of his staffing needs due to staff retirements and the struggling labor market. Milkie is thus working with two law firms to petition for foreign-born workers through work visas.<sup>125</sup> Erie County, which has been a welcoming place for immigrants, has also reaped the benefits of leveraging immigration to diminish labor shortages, resulting in the saving of 500 manufacturing jobs and the meeting of rising labor demands in the STEM sector by immigrants, accounting for 8.2% of their STEM workforce.<sup>126</sup>

## Pennsylvania Immigrant Workforce

The industries with high representations of immigrant labor in Pennsylvania are agriculture, service, construction, and manufacturing.<sup>127</sup> The top two sectors in

<sup>123</sup>The U.S. economy is surpassing expectations. Immigration is one reason. (2024, February 29). New York Times. Retrieved March 28, 2024, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/29/business/economy/immigrants-labor.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>

<sup>124</sup>Ibid.

<sup>125</sup>O'Reilly, R. (2023, April 15). Many businesses dealing with staff shortages, exploring immigrant employment. Yahoo. Retrieved March 28, 2024, from <https://www.yahoo.com/news/many-businesses-dealing-staff-shortages-115100537.html>

<sup>126</sup>New Research Shows Immigrants in Erie are Playing an Outsize Role in Several Key Industries, including 8.2 Percent of STEM, 6.8 Percent of Professional Services, and 6.3 Percent of Manufacturing - New American Economy. (2021, June 17). New American Economy. <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/press-release/new-research-shows-immigrants-in-erie-are-playing-an-outsize-role-in-several-key-industries-including-8-2-percent-of-stem-6-8-percent-of-professional-services-and-6-3-percent-of-manufacturing/>

<sup>127</sup>Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; Data acquired with R and tidycensus

Pennsylvania with a high representation of immigration labor are the service and manufacturing sectors.<sup>128</sup> The top industries with the highest share of immigrant workers are as follows.<sup>129</sup>

- Taxi and limousine services: 56.10% (service)
- Nail salons and other personal care services: 37.80% (service)
- Animal slaughtering and processing: 26.90% (manufacturing)
- Warehousing and storage: 19.00% (manufacturing)

Immigrants play a unique role in specialized workforces, making up 7.7% of nurses, 14% of health aides, and 16.7% of STEM workers.<sup>130</sup> Immigrants in Pennsylvania—specifically undocumented immigrants who, contrary to popular belief, pay nearly \$135 million in state and local taxes—are saving the state nearly \$6.4 billion in lost gross domestic product output through their participation in specific sectors in the workforce.<sup>131</sup> In simple terms, immigrants play critical roles in sustaining the workforce in various sectors. Without them, the state would lose billions of dollars in revenue through labor shortages, which would in turn result in a higher cost of goods and services for all. It therefore comes as no surprise that the Shapiro administration recently created a new position dedicated to the recruitment and integration of immigrants in the Pennsylvania workforce.<sup>132</sup>

## Spending Power of Immigrants in Pennsylvania

According to the American Immigration Council, immigrants in Pennsylvania had an annual spending power of \$30.1 billion and paid \$11.5 billion in taxes, with 65,841 immigrant entrepreneurs supporting economic development by generating \$1.9 billion in income.<sup>133</sup> At the local level, immigrants in Lancaster County paid \$182.2 million in taxes and had a spending power of \$499.8 million in 2018,<sup>134</sup> both of which were major contributors to the

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<sup>128</sup>Ibid.

<sup>129</sup>*Take a look: How immigrants drive the economy in Pennsylvania.* (n.d.). American Immigration Council. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/pennsylvania/#>

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup>Murtaza, M. M., Stephanie Frank, Kirstin Snow, Erica Freeman, Diana Polson, Claire Kovach, CASA, Make the Road PA, PICC, David Kallick, & New York Fiscal Policy Institute. (2021). *The economic contributions of Pennsylvania's immigrants.* [https://keystoneresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/20210516\\_ImmigrantContributionsReport.pdf](https://keystoneresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/20210516_ImmigrantContributionsReport.pdf)

<sup>132</sup> *ComMonwealth of PA - Opportunities for all Job Seekers | Find your passion for public service!* (n.d.). <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/pabureau/jobs/4270044/assistant-deputy-secretary-on-immigrant-and-re-entry-affairs-assistant-deputy-se?keywords=Assistant%20Deputy%20Secretary%20for%20Immigrant%20and%20Re-Entry%20Affairs&pagetype=jobOpportunitiesJobs>

<sup>133</sup>*Take a look: How immigrants drive the economy in Pennsylvania.* (n.d.). American Immigration Council. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/pennsylvania/#>

<sup>134</sup>Stuhldreher, T. (2023, August 15). *Forum: Immigrants' role in local economy continues to grow.* One United Lancaster. <https://oneunitedlanaster.com/community/forum-immigrants-role-in-local-economy-continues-to-grow/>



county's \$306 million budget.<sup>135</sup> In Erie County, immigrants paid \$261 million in taxes and possessed a spending power of \$192 million in 2019, according to a report released by the county that states:<sup>136</sup>

***"Immigrants' spending power has helped revitalize local businesses. Immigrants punch above their weight when it comes to their power as consumers. In 2019, they held \$192.3 million in disposable income that can go towards buying homes, supporting small businesses, and reinvigorating the local economy. At the city level, immigrants held \$88.3 million in spending power, making up 6 percent of all spending power in the city."***<sup>137</sup>

Similar to how cities across the U.S. have been affected by workers not returning to downtown business corridors due to remote work and hybrid work-from-home options, a reduction in spending power due to the loss of immigrants in cities can also result in property vacancies, reduce land and property value, and decrease or pause further development. Overall, this results in a loss of revenue, which in turn places additional strain on state and municipal budgets.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup>George Stockburger. (2023, December 21). *Lancaster County passes budget; will there be a tax increase?* ABC 27. Retrieved March 28, 2024, from <https://www.abc27.com/local-news/lancaster-county-passes-budget-will-there-be-a-tax-increase/>

<sup>136</sup>Loncki, A. (2021, June 17). *New Research Shows Immigrants in Erie are Playing an Outsize Role in Several Key Industries, including 8.2 Percent of STEM, 6.8 Percent of Professional Services, and 6.3 Percent of Manufacturing.* Erie, PA.

<https://cityof.erie.pa.us/2021/06/17/new-research-shows-immigrants-in-erie-are-playing-an-outsize-role-in-several-key-industries-including-8-2-percent-of-stem-6-8-percent-of-professional-services-and-6-3-percent-of-manufacturing/>

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup>Wheat, C. (n.d.). *Downtown downturn: The Covid shock to Brick-and-Mortar retail.*

<https://www.jporganchase.com/institute/research/cities-local-communities/downtown-downturn-covid-shock-to-brick-and-mortar>



## Welcoming Legislation

A total of nine welcoming state-level policies have been proposed in Harrisburg. If passed, these policies will address labor shortages in education and health, and will support immigrant communities by increasing education opportunities for undocumented students via in-state college tuition and scholarship eligibility.

These bills further foster safety for immigrant and non-immigrant Pennsylvanians by creating a pathway for non-citizens to obtain a driver's license so they can safely commute to and from work, school, medical appointments, and the grocery store. Another bill supporting safer communities is the U-Visa bill, which will help victims of crime come forward to support police investigations and the prosecutions of those who have committed crimes. The U-Visa bill will give these victims a pathway to work and live safely through their participation in these proceedings.

Welcoming policies like these do the critical work of attracting more immigrants. Take states like New Jersey and New York, where undocumented immigrants can legally obtain driver's licenses. In New Jersey specifically, the attorney general also issued a directive to end agreements with ICE that resulted in protections that prevent law enforcement from cooperating with ICE officials.<sup>139</sup> These welcoming policies have resulted in immigrants comprising 20-23% of the state's population, while Pennsylvania's immigrant population comprises less than 10%.<sup>140</sup>

As previously mentioned, immigrants play a critical role in filling labor shortages and reversing population decline. In New York, for example, immigrants have helped revitalize the cities of Rochester, Syracuse, and Utica through population and economic growth.<sup>141</sup> In Pennsylvania, the cities with welcoming policies for immigrants are not witnessing population loss at the rate of cities whose representatives are supporting or crafting anti-immigrant legislation. Two cities, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, have "sanctuary city" policies that ban the enforcement of ICE holds, a nonbinding request to local police to cooperate with ICE. Sanctuary policies foster an environment for immigrants to not only seek services, employment, and access to care, but also to ensure immigrants can go to the

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<sup>139</sup>Hernandez, J. (2019, September 28). Grewal blocks two N.J. counties from having immigration enforcement agreements with ICE. *WHYY*. <https://whyy.org/articles/cape-may-monmouth-ice-enforcement-agreements-blocked-whyy/>

<sup>140</sup> Catherine E. Shoichet. (2023, April 15). *Where immigrants come from and where they go after reaching the US*. CNN.

<sup>141</sup>Brouk, S., & May, R. (2023, October 2). *Opinion: How immigrants sparked an upstate resurgence*. City & State NY.

<https://www.cityandstateny.com/opinion/2023/10/opinion-how-immigrants-sparked-upstate-resurgence/390858/>

police as victims or witnesses without being arrested by ICE. These policies thereby result in more immigrants choosing cities with welcoming policies as their destinations when migrating.<sup>142</sup>

Contrary to popular belief, immigrants and sanctuary city policies make all communities safer. According to a California State University publication, research has found immigration to be associated with lower crime rates, as immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than native-born individuals.<sup>143</sup> Another research study found counties with sanctuary policies, as opposed to those without sanctuary policies, experienced decreases in property and violent crime after 2014, when many such policies were first implemented.<sup>144</sup>

## Pro-immigrant proposals the legislature

1. **[HB 1548](#)** - An Act limiting cooperation between certain law enforcement agencies and Federal immigration authorities. It prohibits certain acts by law enforcement agencies and postsecondary institutions, and provides for policies that limit assistance with immigration enforcement.
2. **[HB 1371](#)** - An Act providing for the duties of certifying officials and certifying agencies in the processing of certification form petitions (U-Visa bill).
3. **[HB 466](#)** - An Act prohibiting the construction and operation of private correctional institutions and immigration detention centers in the Commonwealth.
4. **[HB 1630](#)** - An Act establishing the Office of New Pennsylvanians and providing for its powers and duties. It also establishes the Advisory Committee to the Office of New Pennsylvanians and provides for its powers, duties, and membership.
5. **[HB 769](#)** - An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes in the licensing of drivers, further providing for application of driver's licenses or learner's permits, for issuance and content of driver's licenses, and expiration and renewal of driver's licenses.
6. **[HB 1672](#)** - An Act providing for the J-1 Visa Waiver Primary Care Physician Grant Program and making an appropriation.

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<sup>142</sup>Kortsha, M. (2022, August 25). *Sanctuary practices lower counties' crime rates*. UT News.

<https://news.utexas.edu/2022/06/13/sanctuary-practices-lower-counties-crime-rates/#:~:text=Counties%20that%20don%27t%20cooperate,University%20of%20Texas%20at%20Austin>

<sup>143</sup>Bassam Alsmadi, I. (2019). The Criminal Immigrant Myth: The Role of Conservative Media in the Immigration Industrial Complex. *Pro Quest LLC*, <https://www.proquest.com/openview/a9e31709bfb90bee7024221f3a8c93a2/1.pdf?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750 & diss=y>.

<sup>144</sup>Kortsha, M. (2022, August 25). *Sanctuary practices lower counties' crime rates*. UT News. <https://news.utexas.edu/2022/06/13/sanctuary-practices-lower-counties-crime-rates/#:~:text=Counties%20that%20don%27t%20cooperate,University%20of%20Texas%20at%20Austin>

7. [\*\*HB 956\*\*](#) - An act providing for in-state tuition rates for undocumented students.
8. [\*\*HB 1067\*\*](#) - An act amending what is known as the Public School Code of 1949, further providing for qualifications and further providing for State certificates to non-citizen teachers with DACA.
9. [\*\*HB 1141\*\*](#) - An Act known as the Seasonal Farm Labor Act, providing definitions; in wages and hours, for the employment of minors and rules and regulations of farm workers in housing, and creating a framework for contracts and subsequent enforcement, as well as civil penalties for these violations.

## Anti-Immigration Legislation

Anti-immigrant rhetoric at the national level has made its way to Pennsylvania in the form of nine anti-immigrant bills and resolutions currently at play in Harrisburg, with another on the horizon. These proposed policies are serious attacks on the immigrant community and threaten to put people's rights on the line in our Commonwealth.

Not welcoming immigrants by way of these proposed bills will further population loss and thereby result in increased worker shortages, loss of gross domestic product (GDP), and a further reduction in political representation in Congress. Currently, Pennsylvania has the fourth highest population loss, which has caused the state to lose \$106 billion in income from domestic outmigration from 1992 to 2019.<sup>145</sup> This population loss resulted in the state's GDP falling to 3.63% from 4.02% between 2010-2023 and the loss of one congressional seat.<sup>146</sup> The laws listed below will also create more financial burdens for local law enforcement and state agencies by requiring them to contact and cooperate with ICE. Doing so means that, instead of serving the constituents they were hired to serve, law enforcement and state agencies will have additional responsibilities and taxpayers will pay more money via allocation for ICE's use. Furthermore, anti-immigrant legislation not only leads to an outmigration of immigrants, but is also set to cost the state of Florida 12.6 billion in its economy after the passage of SB 18 in 2023, which places strict penalties for the employment of immigrants.<sup>147</sup>

### Anti-immigrant proposals in the legislature

1. **HB 1840** - An Act that seeks to ban sanctuary city designations, challenging local governments' desire to foster safe and inclusive communities for all residents, regardless of immigration status. To be clear, sanctuary city policies are about ensuring local police don't do free work for ICE because it's not the police's job to enforce federal laws. Stripping these policies away will deter immigrants from engaging with law enforcement due to fear of deportation and thereby undermine community safety and trust.

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<sup>145</sup>Express-Times guest columnist & Express-Times Guest, lehighvalleylive@express-times.com. (2023, January 23). Pa.'s population loss 4th highest in nation. The reasons why and the solution. | Opinion. *Lehighvalleylive*.  
[https://www.lehighvalleylive.com/opinion/2023/01/pas-population-loss-4th-highest-in-nation-the-reasons-why-and-the-solution-opinion.html#:~:text=Internal%20Revenue%20Service%20\(IRS\)%20data,between%202019%20and%202020%20alone](https://www.lehighvalleylive.com/opinion/2023/01/pas-population-loss-4th-highest-in-nation-the-reasons-why-and-the-solution-opinion.html#:~:text=Internal%20Revenue%20Service%20(IRS)%20data,between%202019%20and%202020%20alone).

<sup>146</sup>D'Onofrio, M., & Avilucea, I. (2023, July 24). Pennsylvania's economic engine shrinks as people move out. *Axios*.  
<https://www.axios.com/local/philadelphia/2023/07/11/pennsylvania-economy-population-decline>

<sup>147</sup>Vilchez, A. (2023, June 25). "They don't want us here": Florida immigrants leave over DeSantis law. *NBC News*.  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/florida-immigrants-leave-state-desantis-immigration-law-rcna90839>

2. [\*\*HB 274\*\*](#) - An Act that will mandate E-Verify for all contractors to keep businesses from employing undocumented immigrants. This imposes unrealistic burdens on businesses and exacerbates labor shortages, particularly in sectors heavily reliant on immigrant labor.
3. [\*\*HB 1066\*\*](#) - An Act that will require law enforcement to notify ICE if an undocumented individual attempts to purchase a firearm. However, as it's already illegal to sell a gun to an undocumented immigrant, this bill does nothing to keep guns off the streets and instead further attacks immigrants and separates families.
4. [\*\*HB 1714\*\*](#) - An Act known as Protecting Vulnerable Children from Exploitation. Despite its name, this bill will hurt more than it will help. It proposes contacting federal agencies about undocumented unaccompanied minors exploited for labor. This could lead to the movement of children to detention and deter vulnerable populations from seeking help in addressing labor violations.
5. [\*\*HB 1883\*\*](#) - An Act that will require the Pennsylvania judicial system to report jurors ineligible to serve on county election boards due to immigration status. It attempts to further attack immigrants when local governments mistakenly list a non-citizen as a juror.
6. [\*\*HB 1890\*\*](#) - An Act that attempts to disenfranchise voters by prohibiting noncitizens from voting in any election, despite the fact that many cities now allow non-citizens to vote in local elections. In Philadelphia alone, 15% of the population are immigrants. This bill will remove the ability for local governments to decide for themselves who has a say in local elections.
7. [\*\*HB 294\*\*](#) - A Resolution related to "Ghost Flights," a false narrative pushed by conservative outlets that claims immigrants are being secretly flown into the U.S. in cases where unaccompanied minors are flown to other parts of the country to be cared for until they are reunited with their parents or sponsor.
8. The Senate passed a Resolution called "Supporting the State of Texas in Protecting the Border" and now a similar resolution, "Supporting the Governor of Texas," is in the House. Both resolutions don't affect Pennsylvania residents and fall well outside the scope and attention of Pennsylvania state legislators. Nevertheless, it's important to mention here because it evidences a national coordinated effort to further scapegoat immigrants.
9. [\*\*SB 1127\*\*](#) - This legislation will require the reporting of any non-citizen to ICE by the AG/DA for an alleged crime. This reporting requirement creates unnecessary interactions with ICE.

Collectively, these proposals signal a hardline stance against immigration. It is crucial to consider the long-term implications of such policies on community relations, economic vitality, and the state’s values as a welcoming place for all. Effective immigration reform requires comprehensive federal action that balances enforcement with pathways to legalization and integration and that respects human rights and the contributions of immigrants to our society.

These anti-immigrant bills pose serious danger to counties in Pennsylvania whose industries rely heavily on immigrant labor. The proportions of foreign-born immigrants, for example, make up nearly the entire manufacturing workforce in the following counties.<sup>148</sup>

County	Foreign-Born Population Living in County	Industry Population	Quantity of Foreign-Born Workers in Industry	Percentage of Foreign-Born Workers in Industry
<b>Armstrong</b>	401	4,932	4,928	1,229%
<b>Elk</b>	281	5,531	5,530	1,968%
<b>Fulton</b>	113	1,546	1,545	1,368%
<b>Jefferson</b>	201	3,796	3796	1,889%
<b>Mifflin</b>	360	4,381	4,381	1,217%

Each bill, while varied in its specific focus, collectively reflects an intention to attack and ostracize the immigrant community, which goes directly against our societal values of inclusivity, fairness, and respect for human rights.

<sup>148</sup>Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; Data acquired with R and tidycensus

## Conclusion

In no uncertain terms, Pennsylvania is in need of more immigration. This is especially apparent given the last two decades of population trends and the resulting economic impacts. The state's total population has declined and is rapidly aging. We've seen time and time again that where there has been population growth, immigration has been the largest driver of that growth, thereby deterring the worst of the decline. However, more immigration to the Commonwealth is needed given the median age of the statewide population and the need for workforce-age labor. This is the trend throughout the state, especially in rural areas, where low wages and a lack of affordable housing and childcare are stunting population growth. Moreover, due to a lack of federal legislation enabling immigrants to work in agriculture, jobs remain unavailable and therefore unfilled.

The positive impact immigrants have on the state economy cannot be overstated. Immigrants in Pennsylvania had a spending power of \$30.1 billion and paid \$11.5 billion in taxes in 2021<sup>149</sup> and 65,841 immigrant entrepreneurs generated \$1.9 billion in income in 2021.<sup>150</sup> Furthermore, as the immigrant community continues to grow and drive positive economic change, their influence as a voting block grows as well. Pennsylvania has one of the largest populations of naturalized citizens in the country and as these new members of the electorate are added to the voting rolls, the needs of these voters must be listened to.

Pennsylvania faces a key decision in 2024: on one hand, it can continue to ignore immigrants' contributions to the state and accept the looming population cliff and the economic losses that come with it, or the Commonwealth can embrace the immigrant community and champion welcoming legislation that will bring much-needed population and economic growth to the state. For a brighter future and stronger state, welcoming immigrants to Pennsylvania is the common sense choice.

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<sup>149</sup>Take a look: *How immigrants drive the economy in Pennsylvania*. (n.d.). American Immigration Council. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/pennsylvania/#>

<sup>150</sup>Take a look: *How immigrants drive the economy in Pennsylvania*. (n.d.). American Immigration Council. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/pennsylvania/#>

# Support PICC's efforts to ensure immigrant rights are upheld in Pennsylvania.

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## Contact



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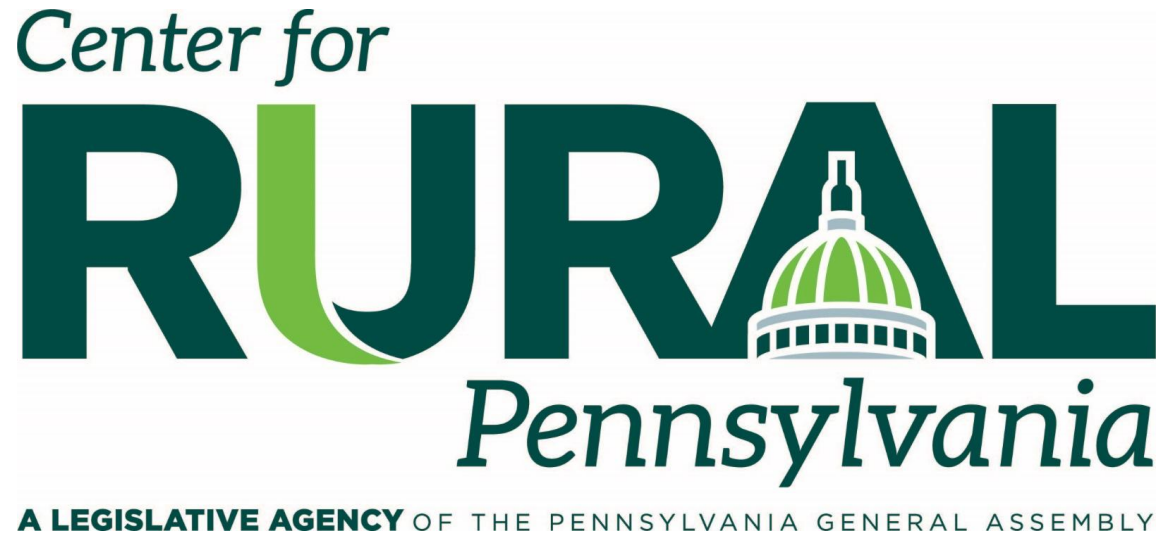


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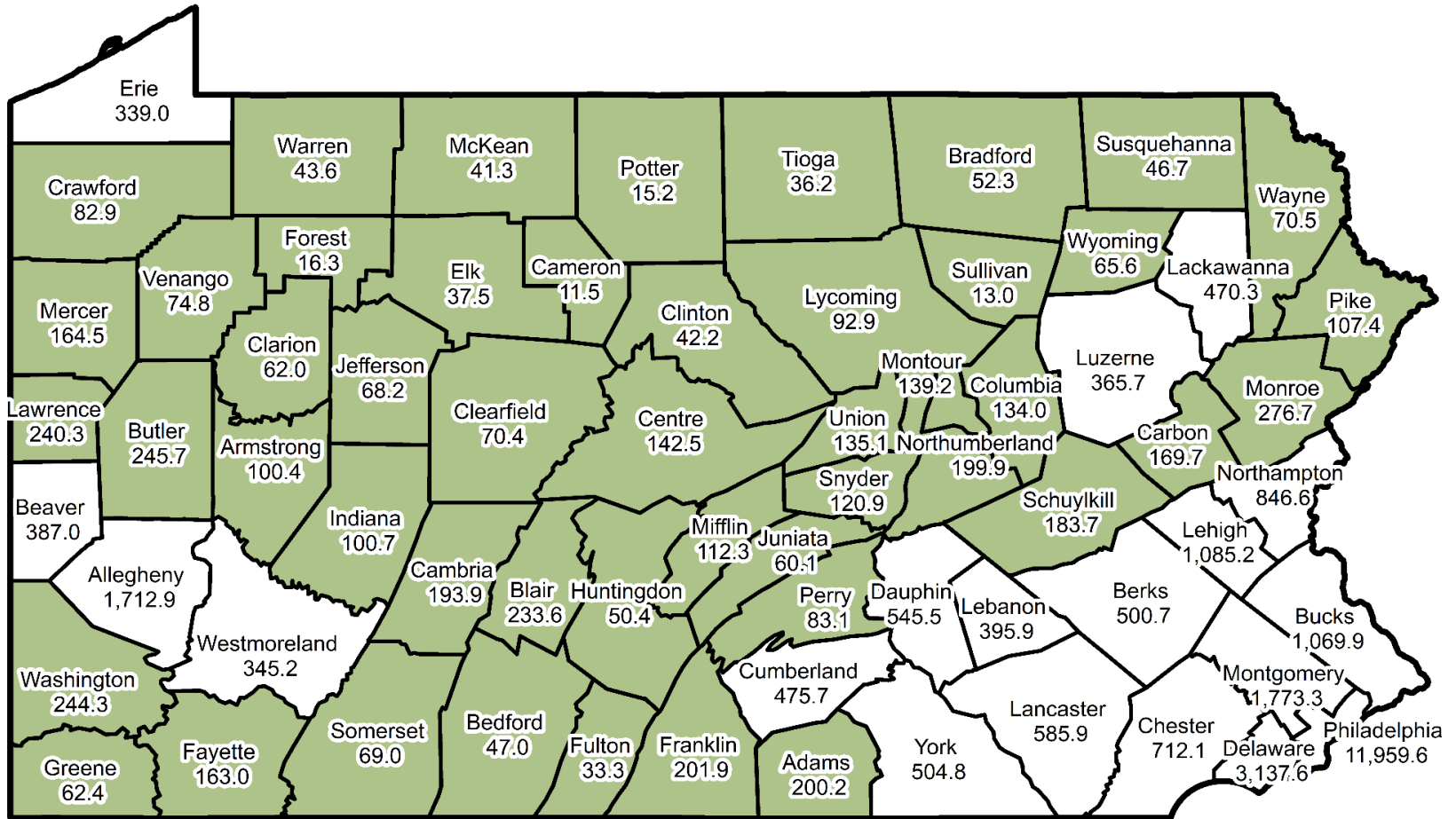


# House Democratic Policy Committee

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November 13, 2024  
Dr. Kyle C. Kopko  
Executive Director | Center for Rural Pennsylvania  
[www.rural.pa.gov](http://www.rural.pa.gov)

# Pennsylvania Rural and Urban Counties, 2020



**Statewide Population Density = 291 Persons per Square Land Mile, 2020**

- 19 Urban Counties - Population Density At or Above Statewide Rate
- 48 Rural Counties - Population Density Below Statewide Rate

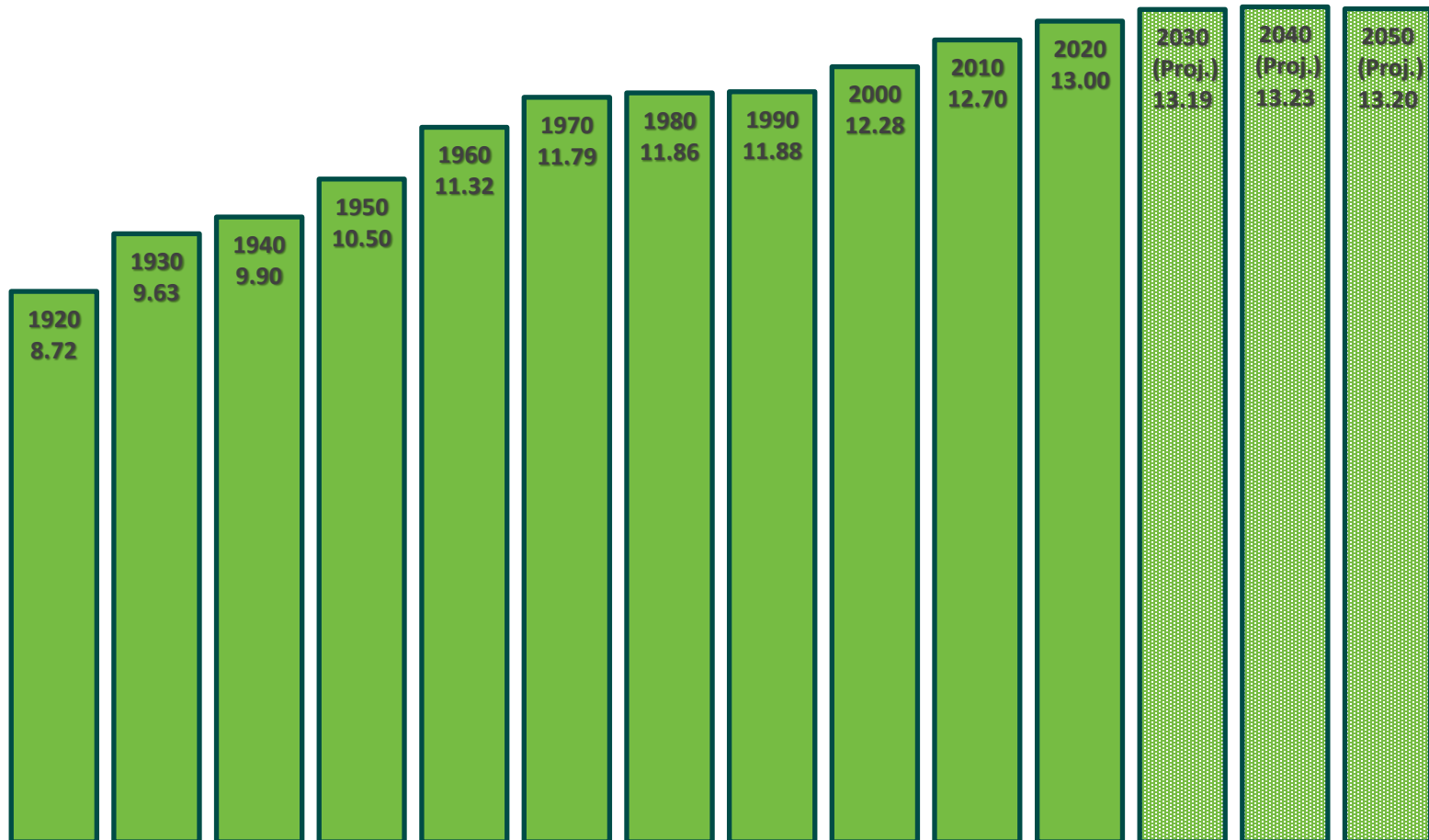
# Four Demographic Trends Shaping Pennsylvania

- Slow population growth
- Aging and more diverse population
- Inability to grow naturally
- International residents and immigration

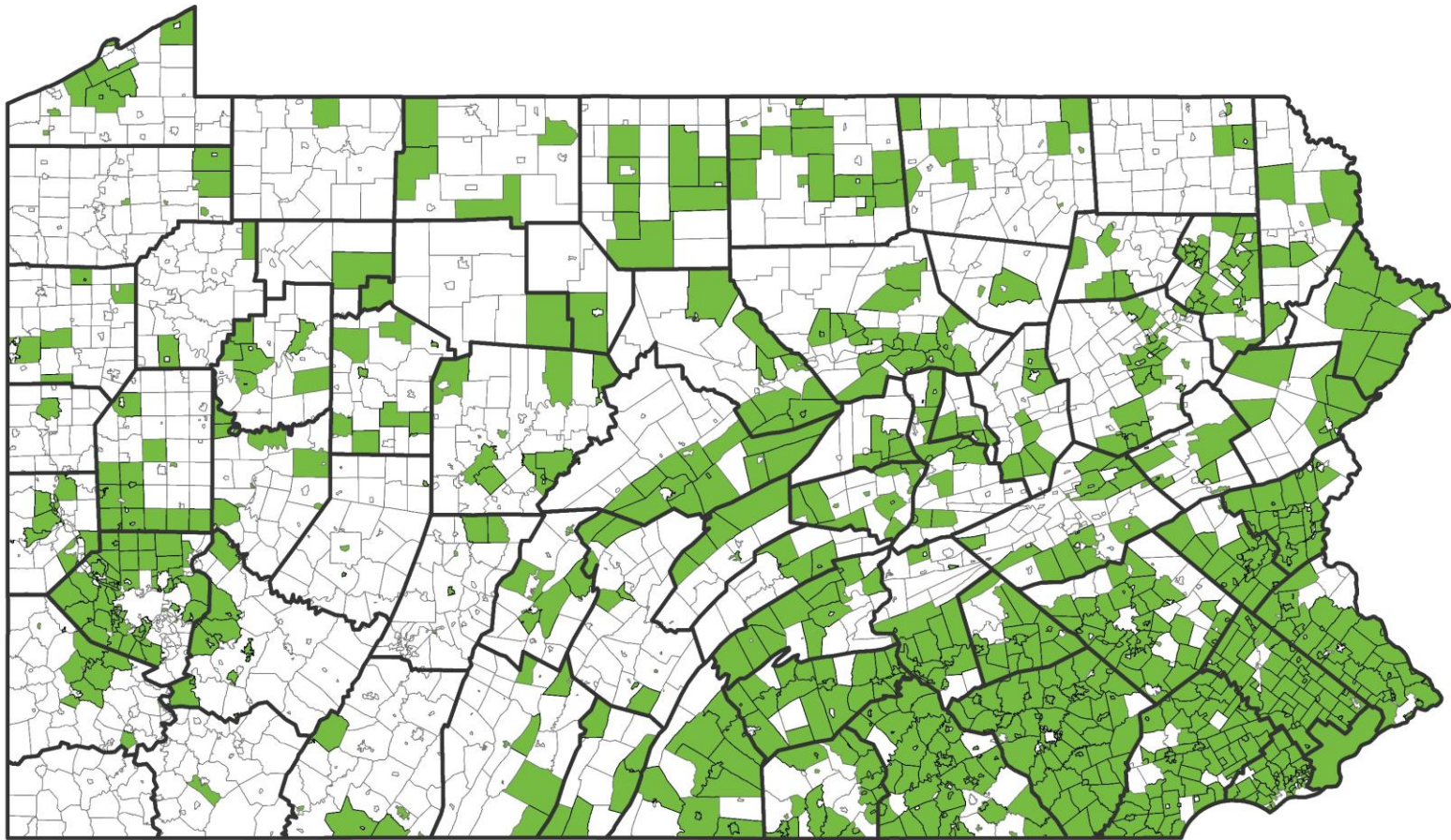
# Slow Population Change

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# Stagnant Population Change, 1920 to 2050 (Projected) (In Millions)



# Population Change by Municipality, 2010 to 2020

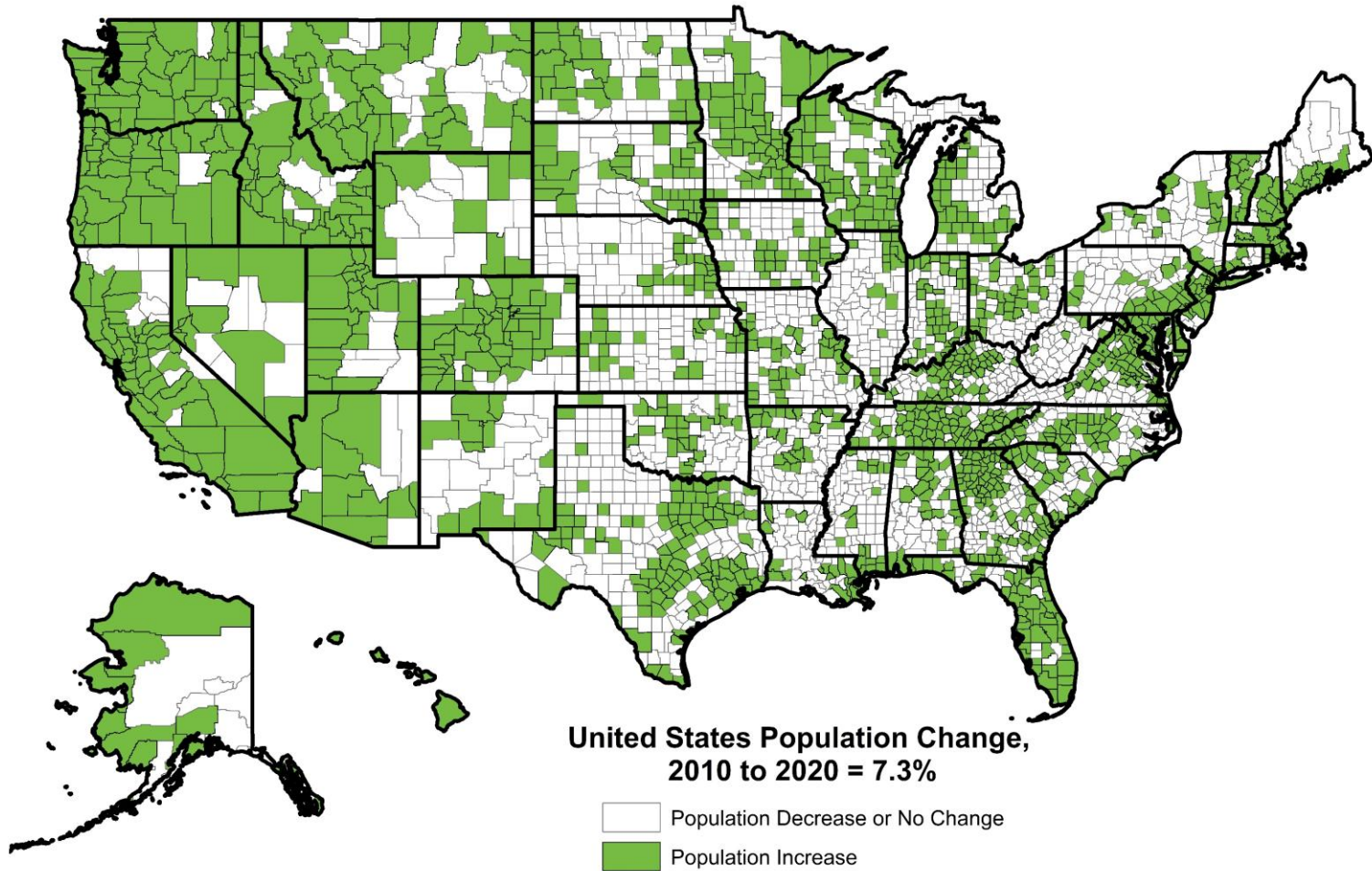


**Pennsylvania Population Change, 2010-2020 = 2.4%**

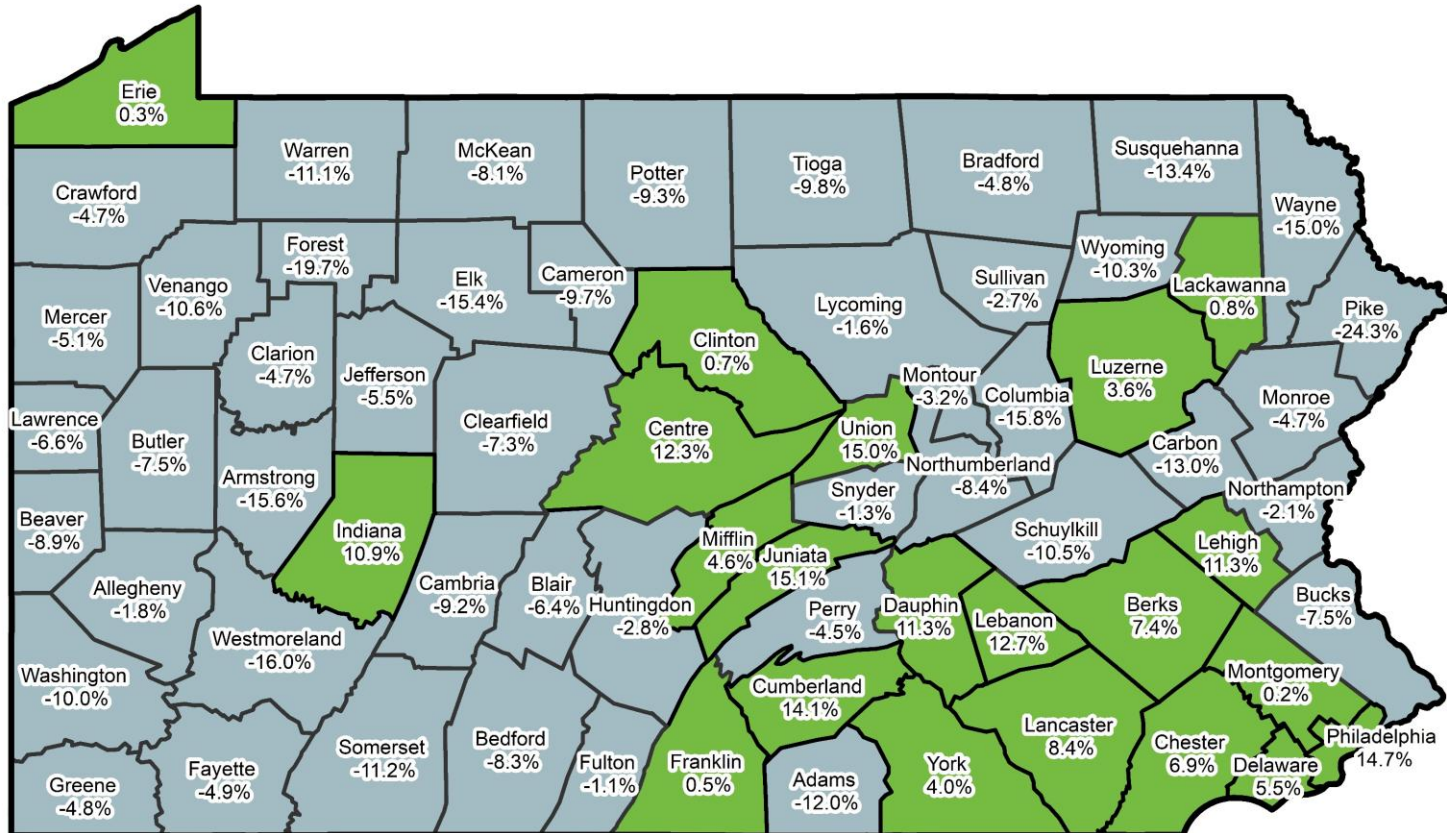
-  Population Decrease or No Change
-  Population Increase



# Population Change by County, 2010 to 2020



# Projected Population Change, 2020 to 2050



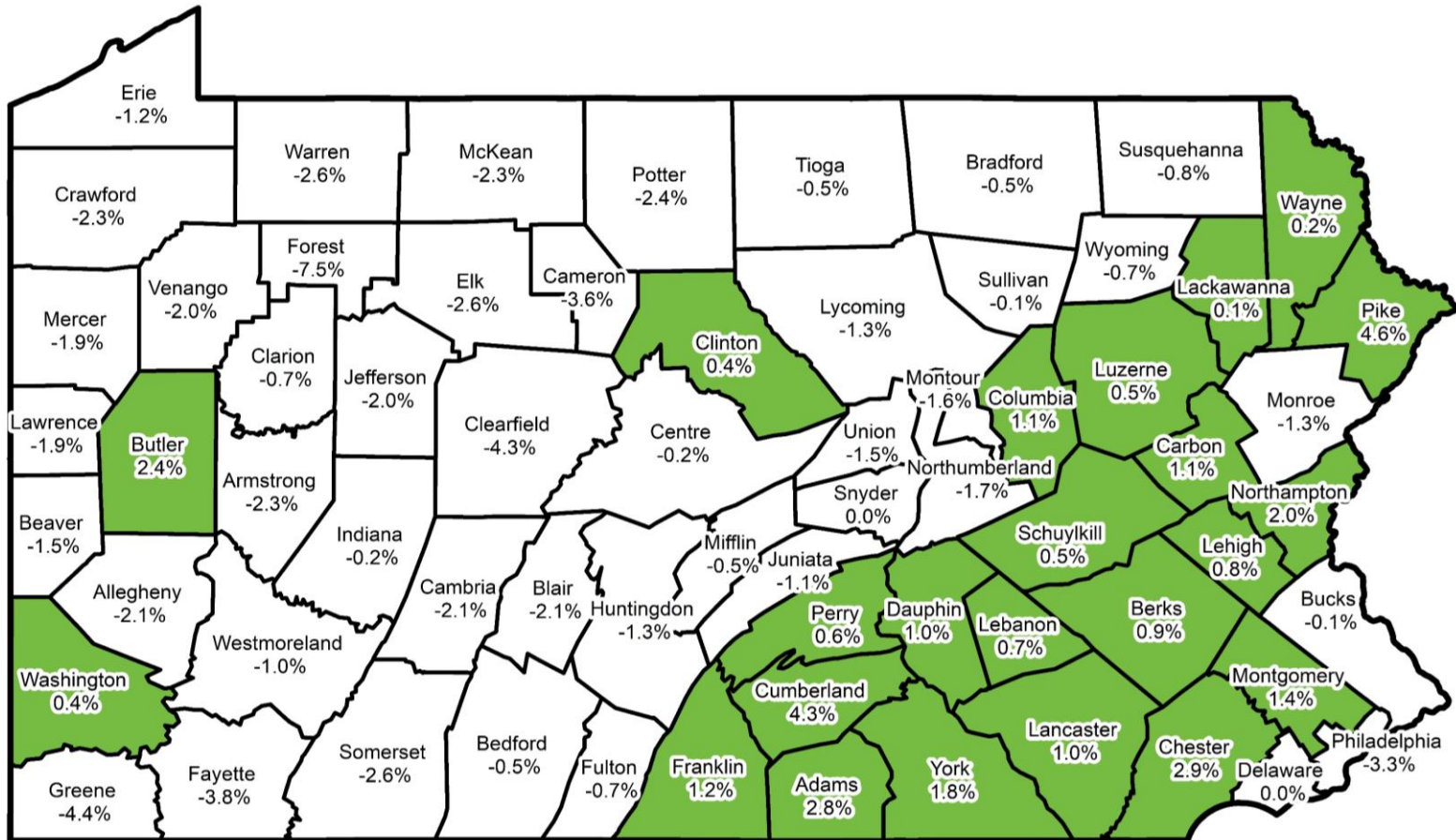
Statewide Population Change, 2020 to 2050 (Proj.) = 1.6%

- Population Decrease or No Change
- Population Increase



# Population Change by County, 2020 to 2023

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau.  
Prepared by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.



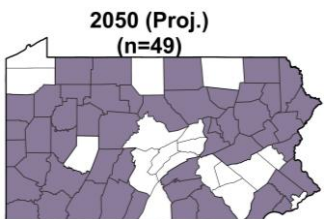
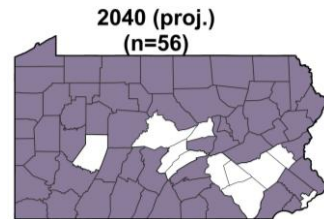
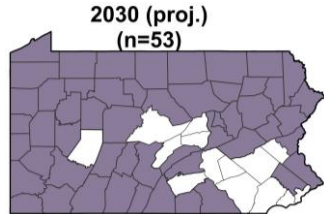
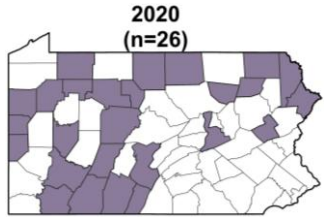
Pennsylvania Population Change, 2020-2023 = -0.3%

□ Population Decrease or No Change    ■ Population Increase

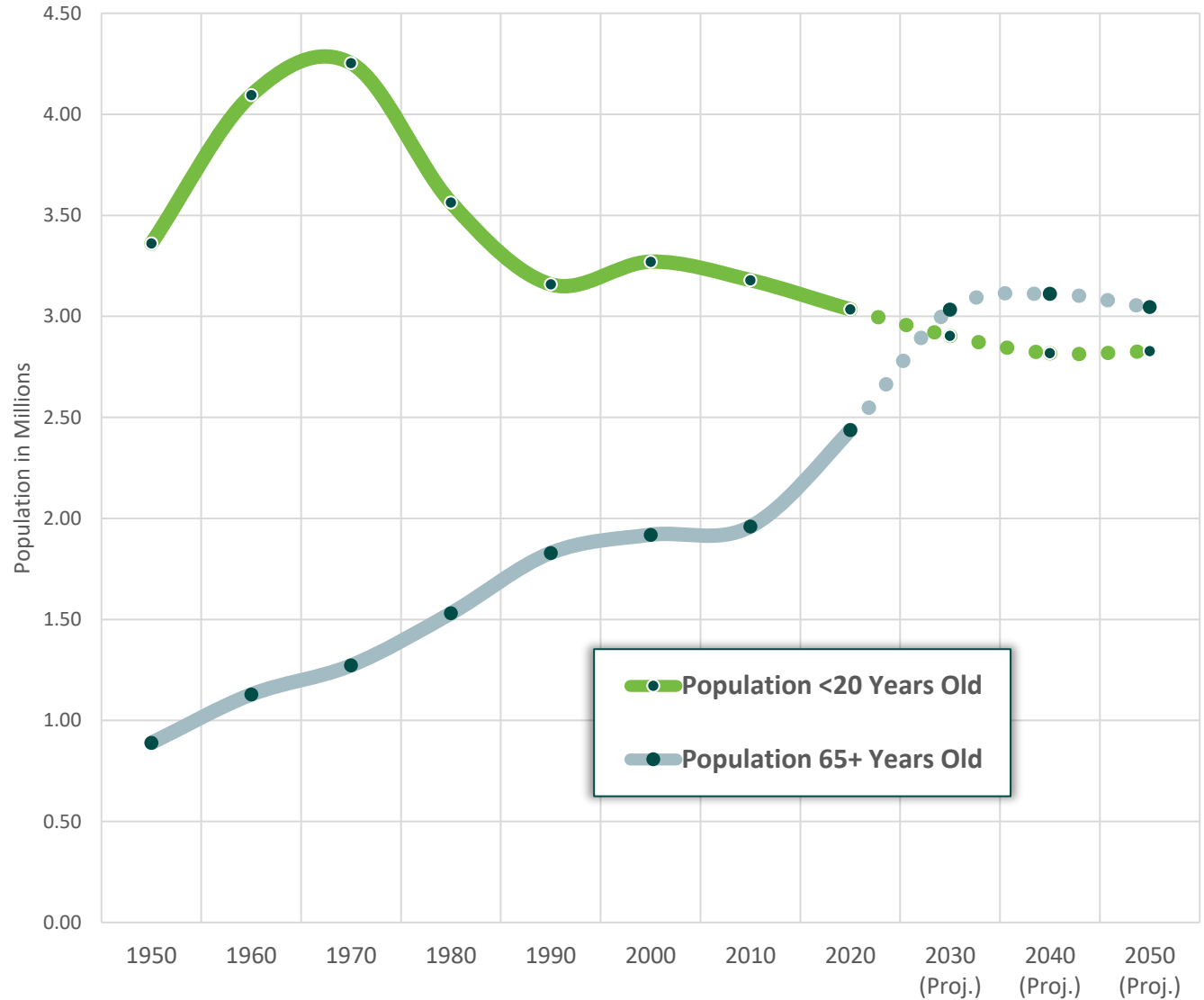
# **Older and More Diverse Population**

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Shaded counties have more people 65+ than people <20 years old

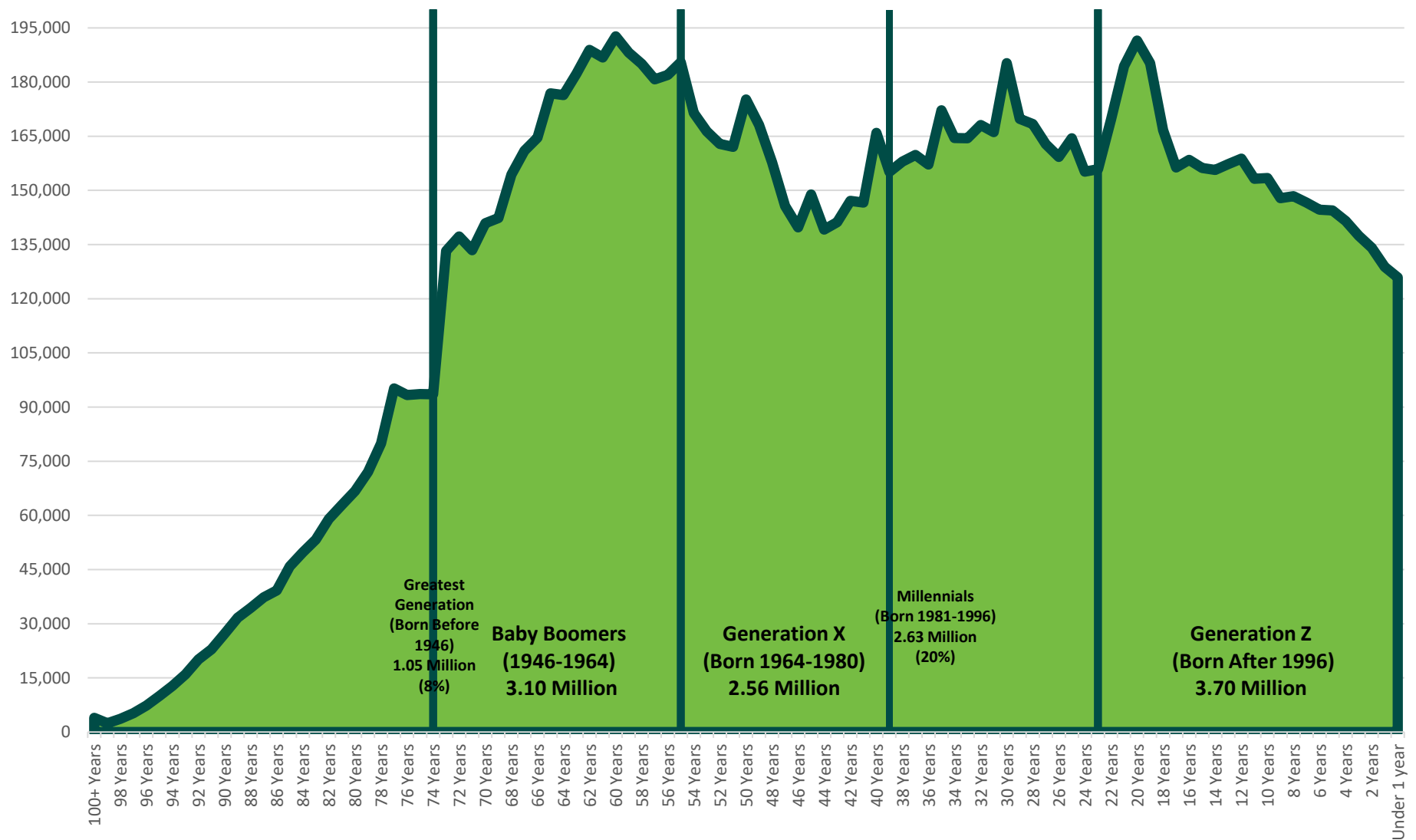


## Number of Youth and Senior Citizens in Pennsylvania, 1950 to 2050 (Projected)



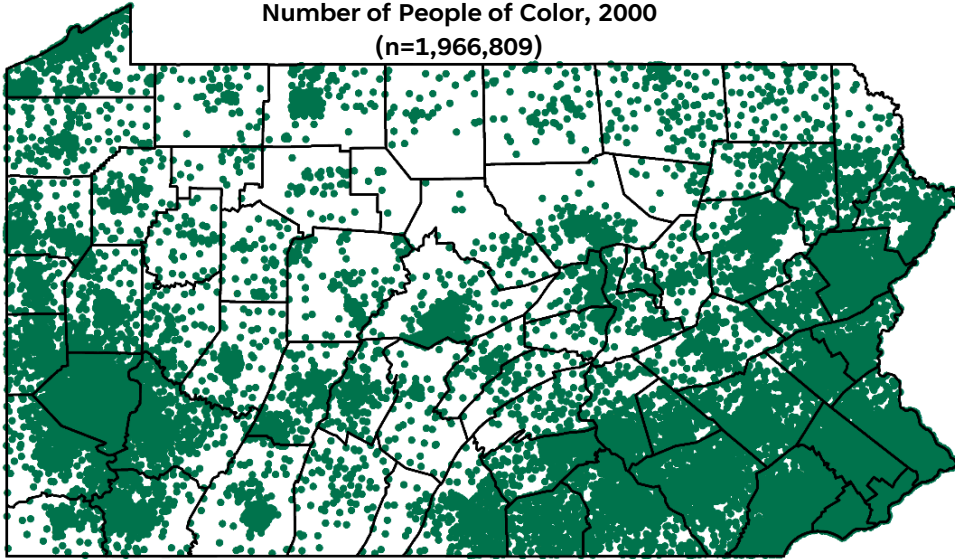
# Generational Cohorts in Pennsylvania, 2020

Generation Defined Pew Research. Data source: 2020 Census, U.S. Census Bureau.



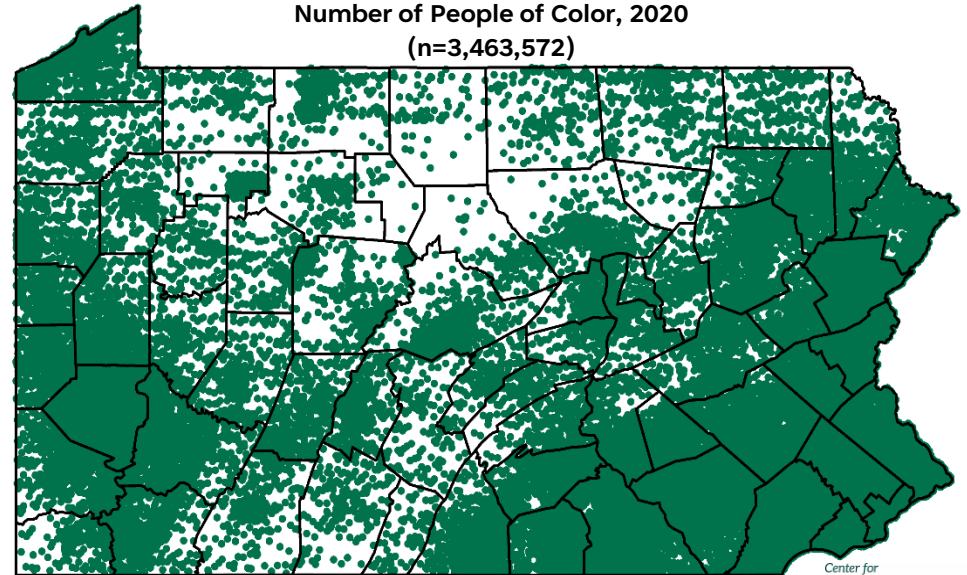
# Number of People of Color by Municipality, 2000 and 2020

Number of People of Color, 2000  
(n=1,966,809)



1 Dot = 10 People

Number of People of Color, 2020  
(n=3,463,572)



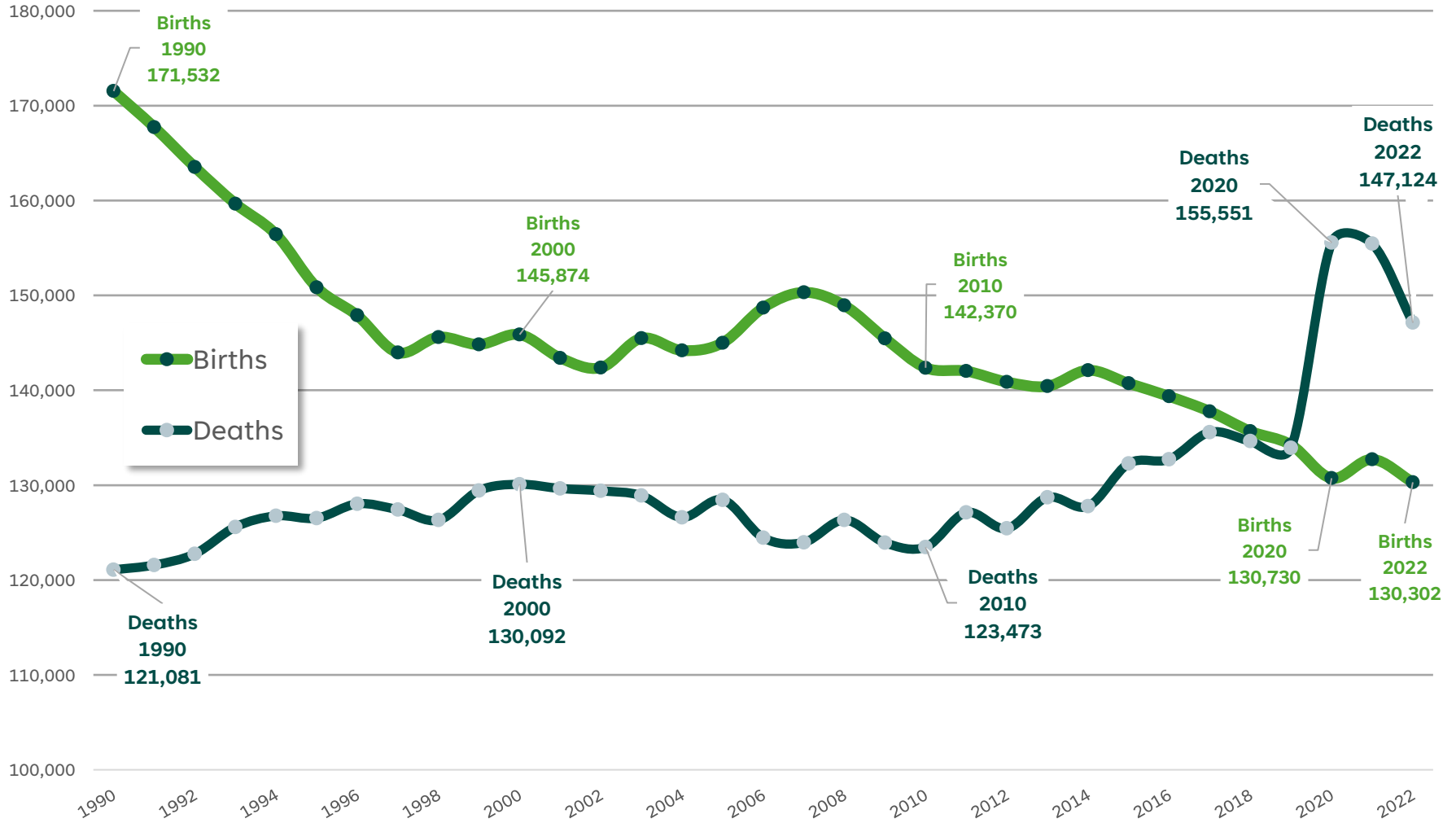
People of color include all people who are not non-Hispanic whites. Data sources: 2000 Census, and 2020 Census, U.S. Census Bureau.

**Unlikely to Grow  
on Our Own**

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# Number of Births and Deaths in Pennsylvania, 1990 to 2022

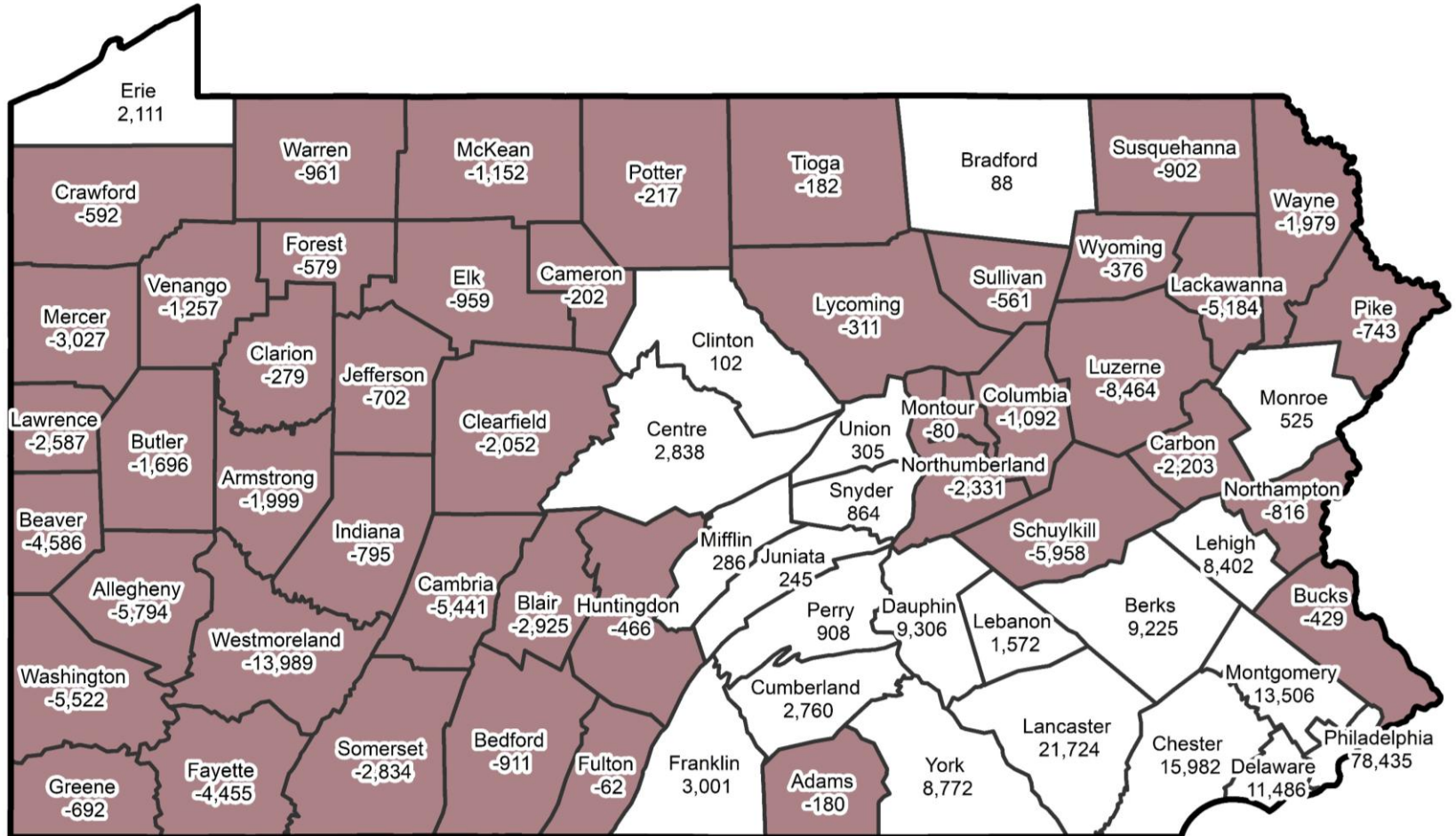
Data source: Pennsylvania Department of Health.





# Natural Population Change (Births Minus Deaths) by County, 2010 to 2019

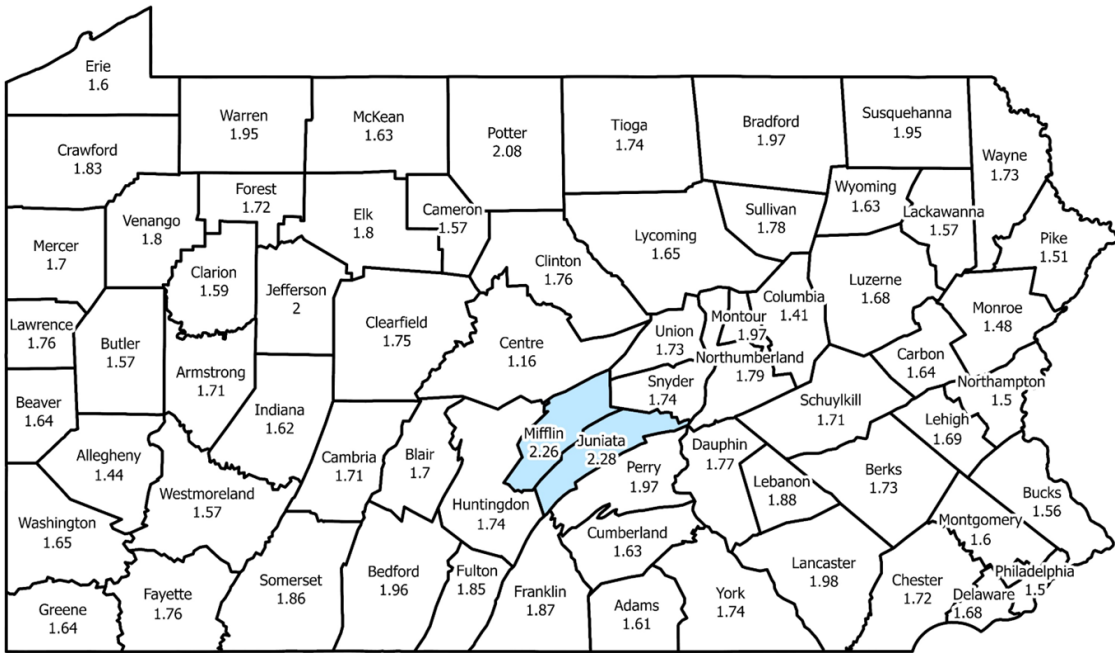
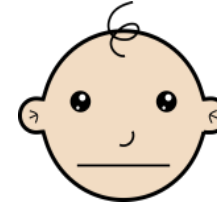
Data source: Pennsylvania Department of Health.



- More Deaths than Births (Neg. Natural Change)
- More Births than Deaths (Pos. Natural Change)

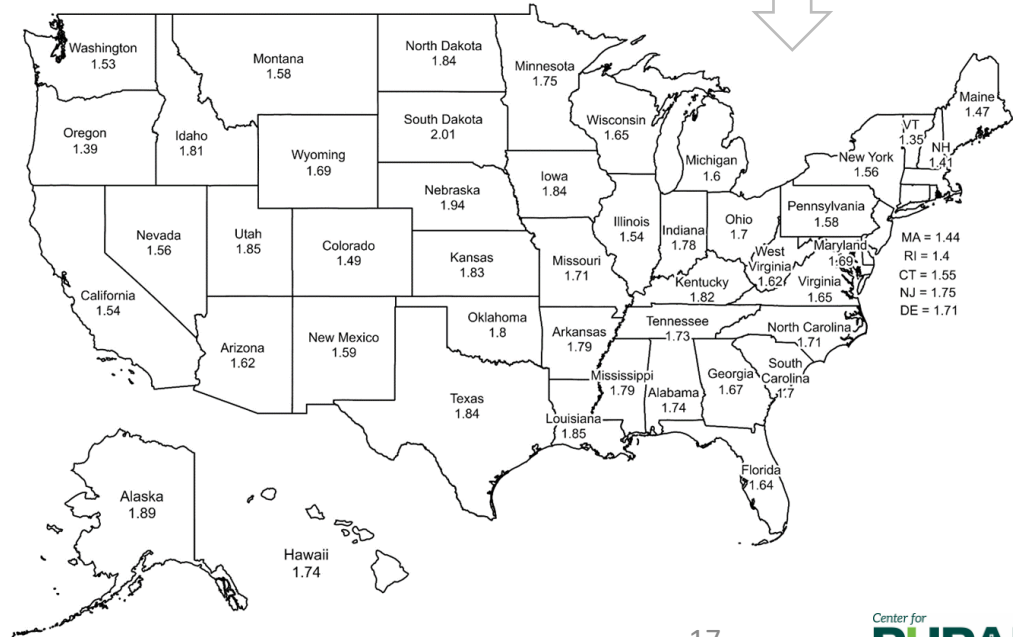


# Total Fertility Rates in Pennsylvania and United States



Total Fertility Rates for United States, 2022

Total Fertility Rates for Pennsylvania, 2018 to 2022

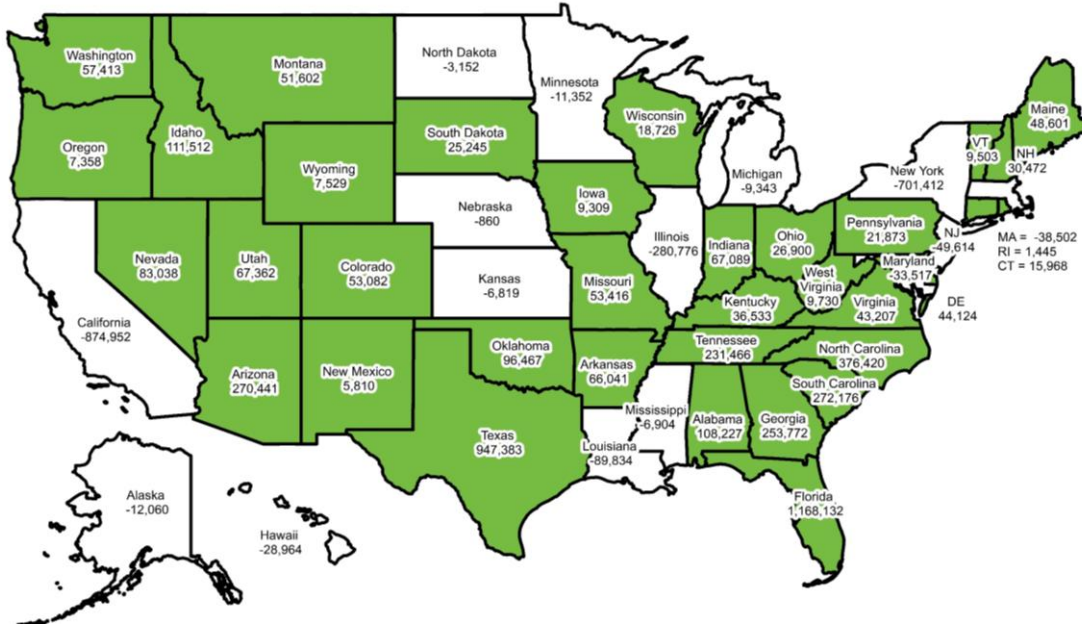


Total Fertility Rate Replacement Rate = 2.10+

- Below Replacement Rate
- At or Above Replacement Rate

According to the CDC, the total fertility rate (TFR) estimates the number of births that a hypothetical group of women would have over their lifetimes, based on age-specific birth rates in a given year. Replacement level for the TFR is the level at which a given generation can exactly replace itself (generally considered to be 2.1 births per woman). Data sources: Pennsylvania Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## Net Migration by State, 2020 to 2023

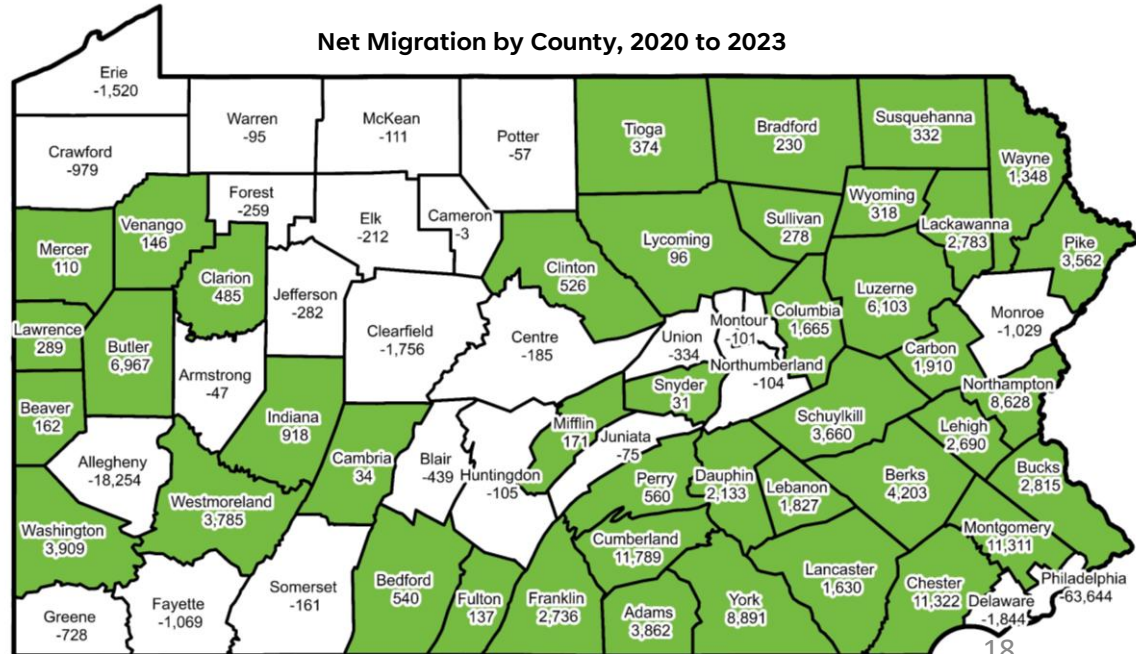


Negative Net Migration  
 Positive Net Migration

# Net Migration, 2020 to 2023

Data source: 2022, Population and Housing Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

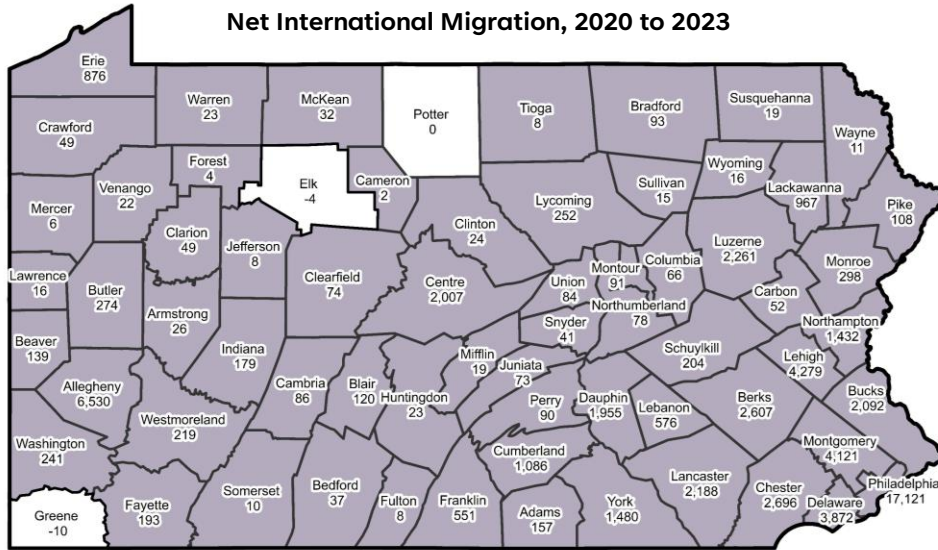
## Net Migration by County, 2020 to 2023



# **International Residents and Immigration**

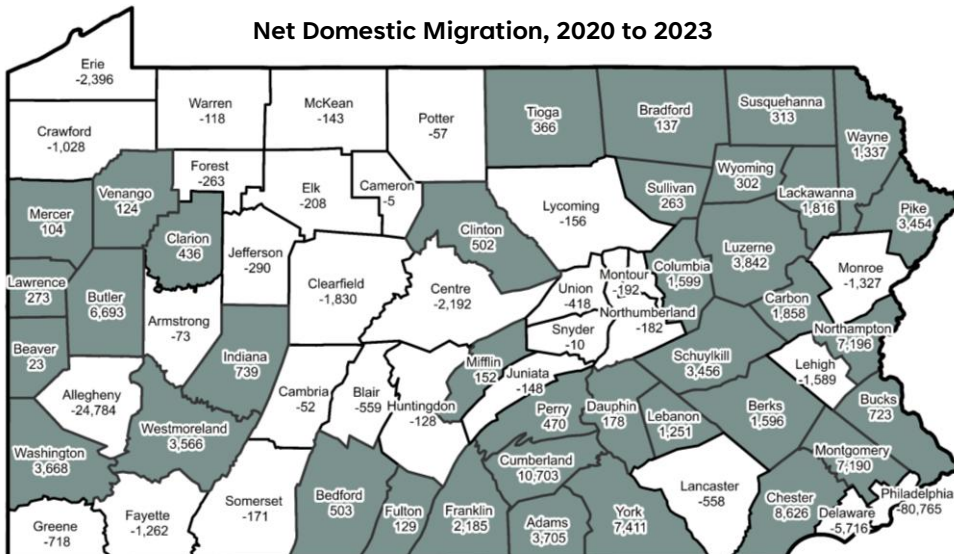
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### Net International Migration, 2020 to 2023



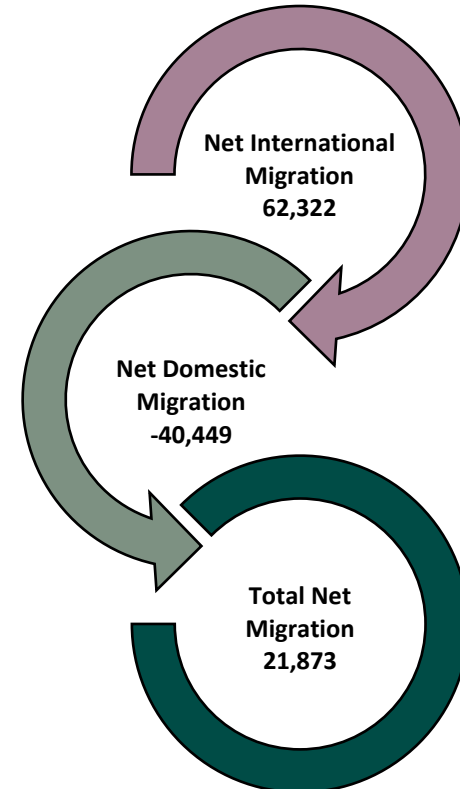
Shaded Counties Have Positive Net Migration

### Net Domestic Migration, 2020 to 2023



## Net International and Domestic Migration, 2020 to 2023

Data source: 2023, Population and Housing Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

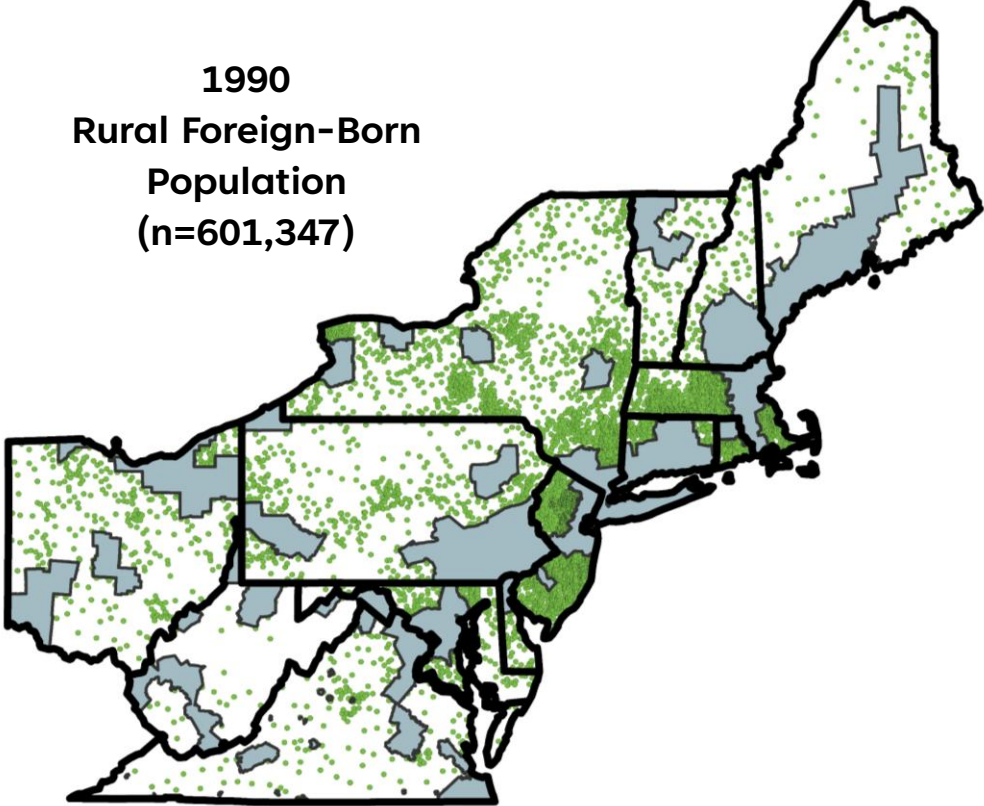




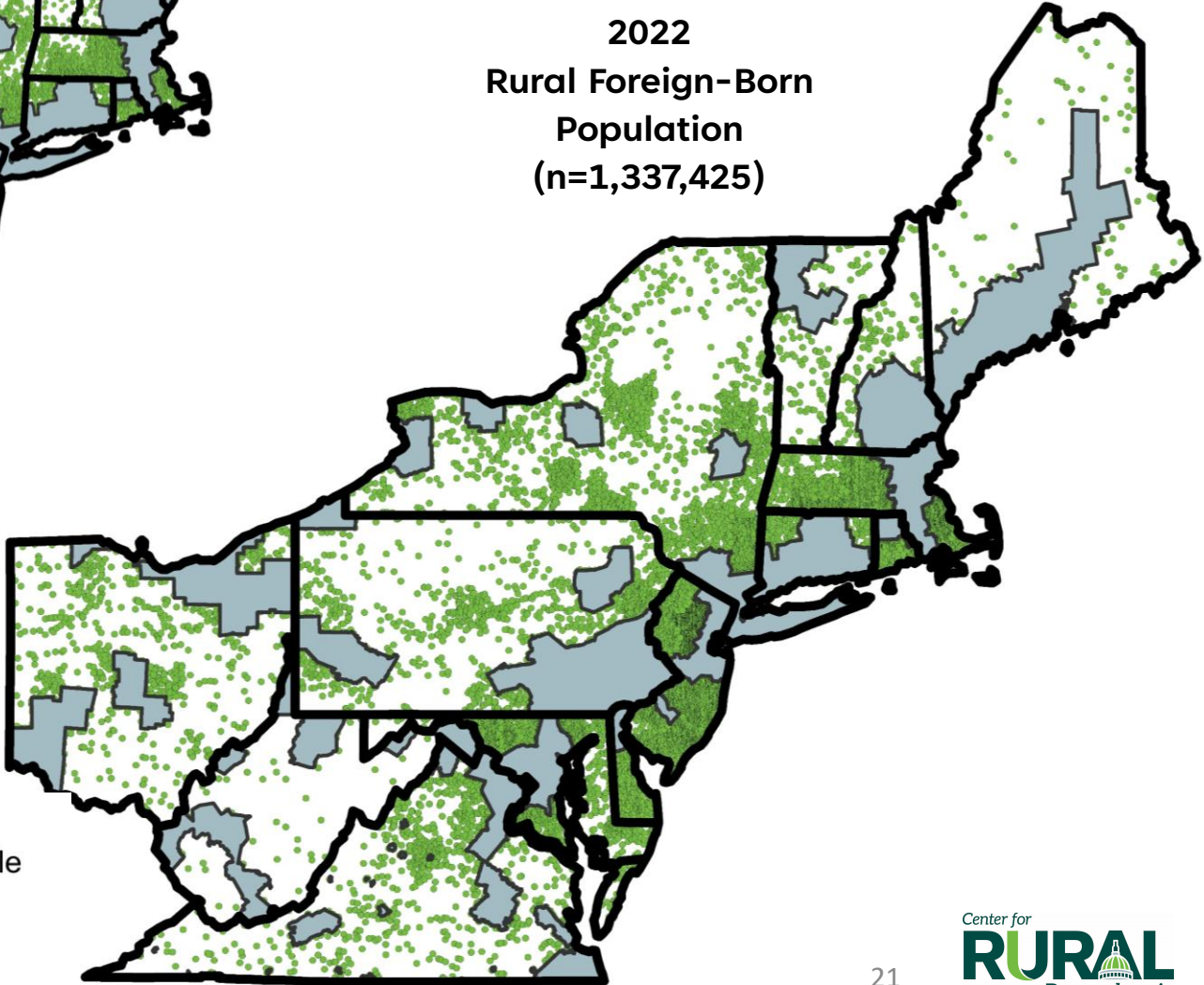
# Rural Foreign-Born Population, 1990 and 2022

Data source: IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota, [www.nhgis.org](http://www.nhgis.org).

1990  
Rural Foreign-Born  
Population  
(n=601,347)



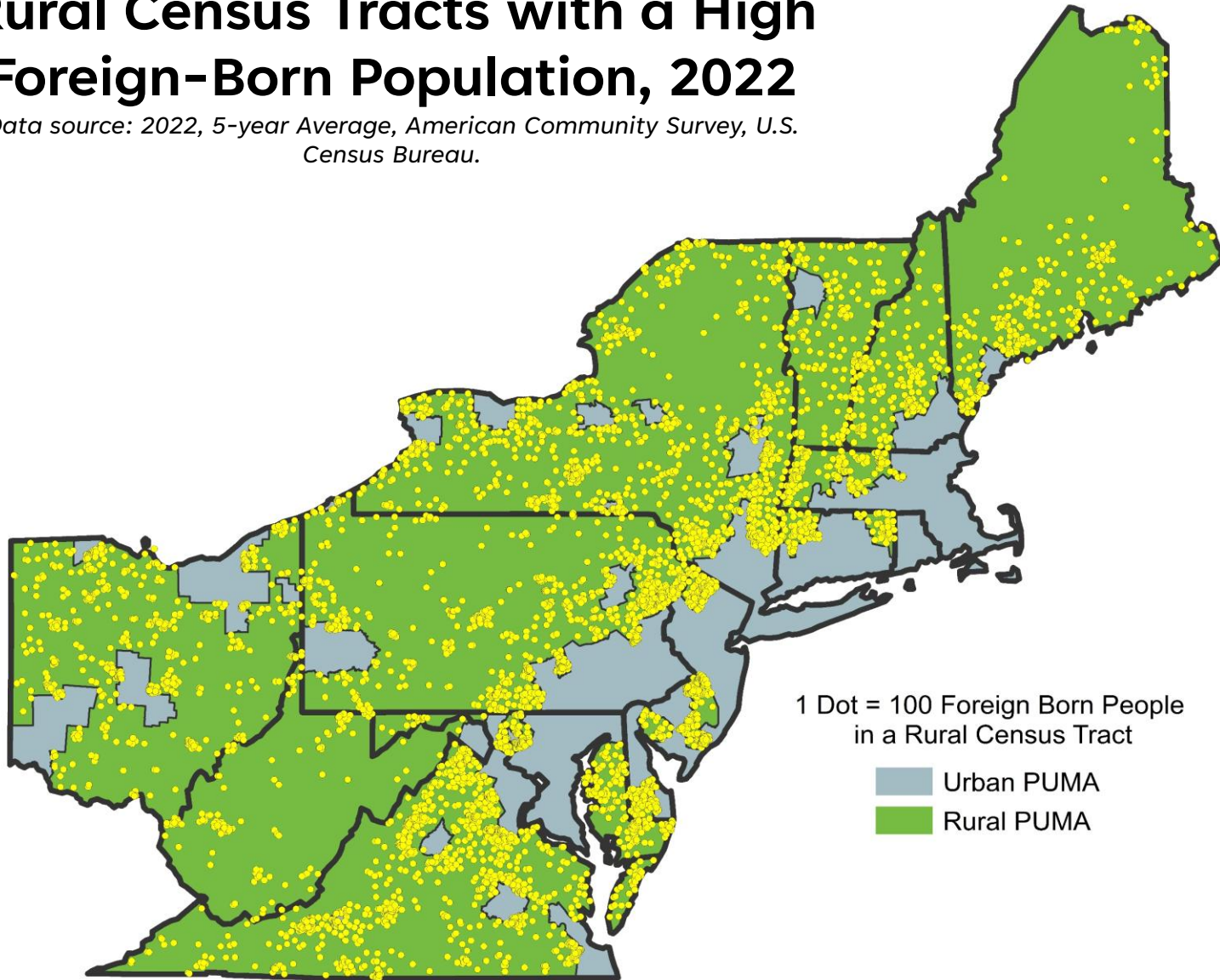
2022  
Rural Foreign-Born  
Population  
(n=1,337,425)



1 Dot = 100 Rural Foreign-Born People  
Urban Counties

# Rural Census Tracts with a High Foreign-Born Population, 2022

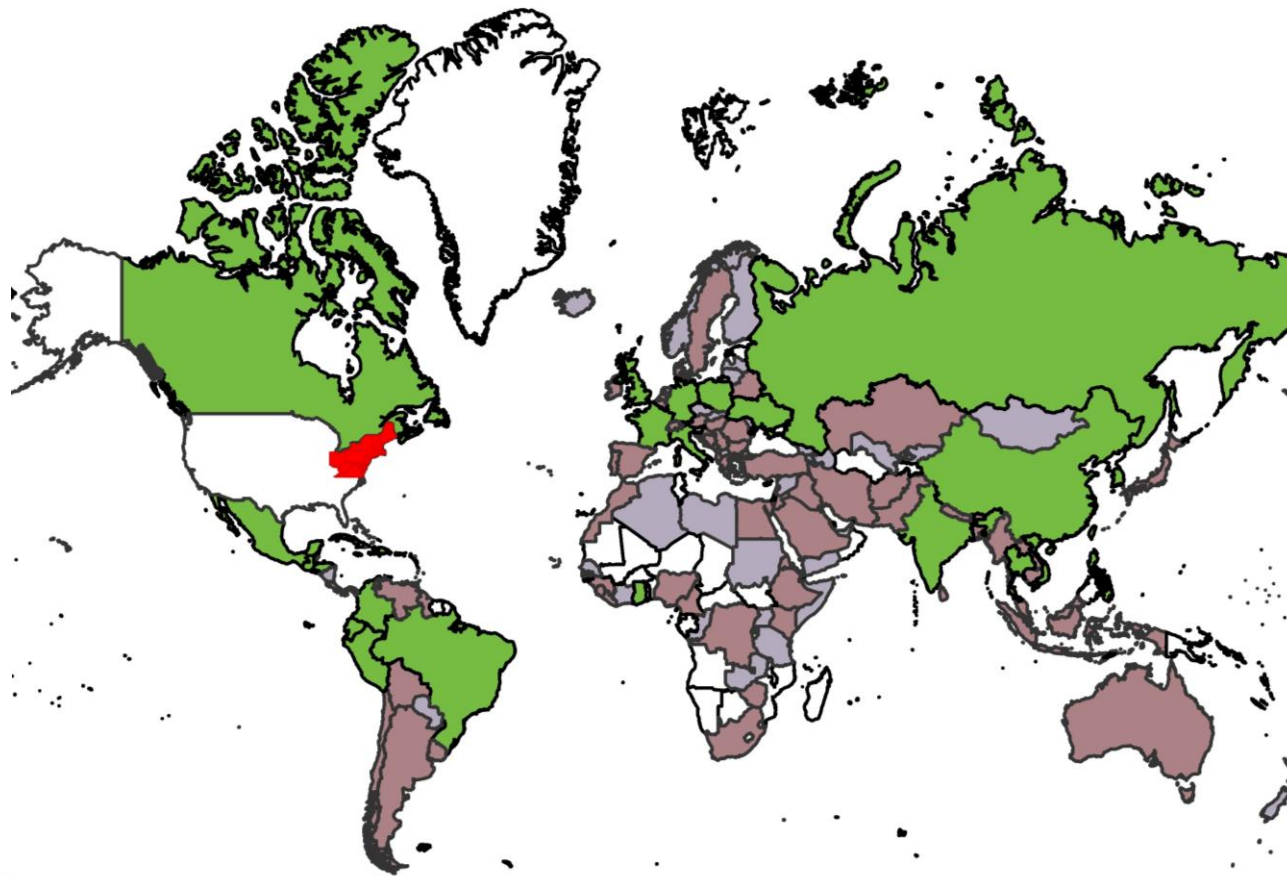
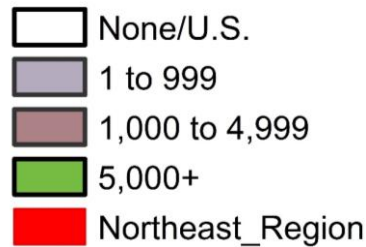
Data source: 2022, 5-year Average, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.



1 Dot = 100 Foreign Born People  
in a Rural Census Tract

- Urban PUMA
- Rural PUMA

# Birth Country of Foreign-Born People Living in Rural Northeast United States, 2022\*

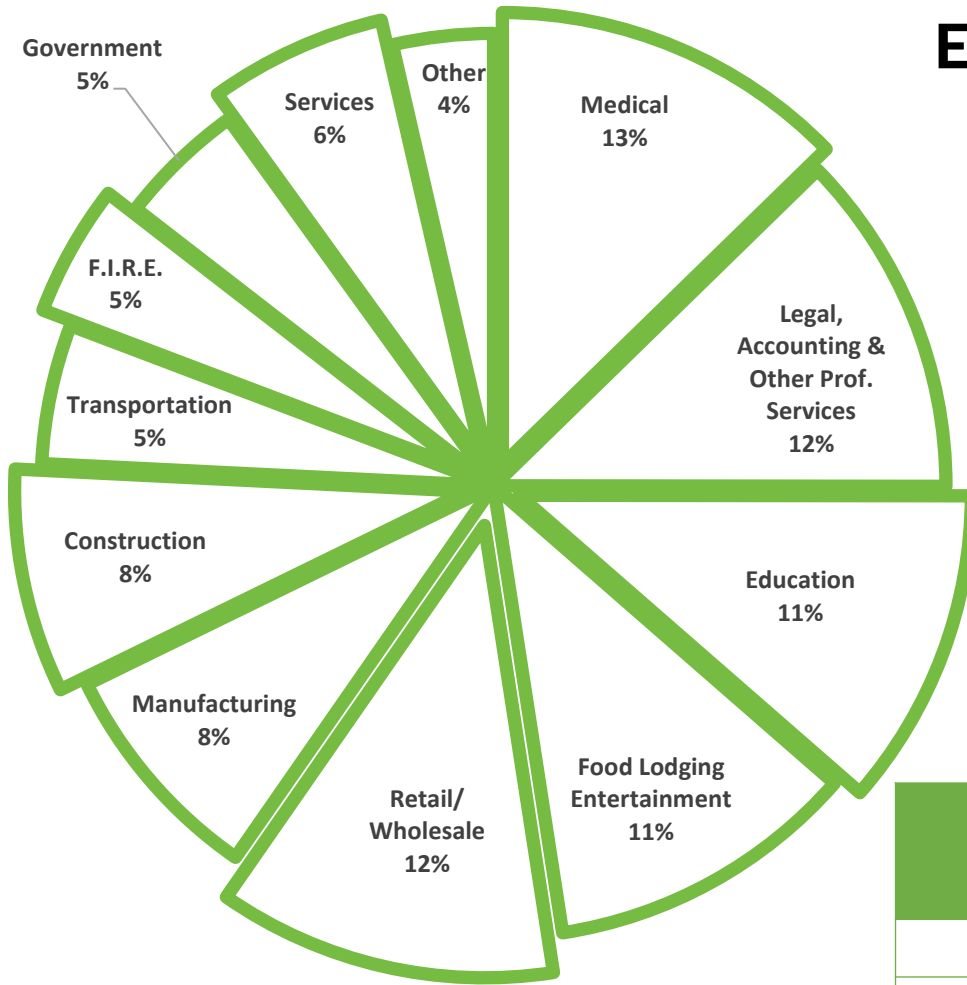


	Rural Northeast	Rural United States
# Foreign-Born People	0.63 Million	6.0 Million
% Entered the U.S. Between 2012 and 2022	27%	24%
% U.S. Citizen by Naturalization	57%	48%
% Speaks Another Language at Home	70%	80%
% Speaks English Not Well or Not at All (Includes only persons who speak another language at home.)	20%	32%

\*2% of the responses could not be geocoded.  
 Data source: 2022, 1-year Average, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, U.S. Census Bureau.



## Employment by Industry for Rural Northeast Foreign-Born Workers, 2022



## Employment Profile

**Avg. Earnings for Full-Time / Year-Round Employees, 2022**



	Rural Northeast Foreign-Born	Rural Northeast Native-Born
# Employed	0.38 Million	8.69 Million
Labor Force Participation Rate	66%	61%
% with College Degree	39%	31%
% Employed Full-Time / Year-Round	74%	73%
% Self-Employed	12%	10%
Avg. Commute Time	27.2 min.	26.0 min.

*F.I.R.E. = Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate. Data source: 2022, 1-year Average, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, U.S. Census Bureau.*





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**Thank You**

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**Population Continues to Decrease**

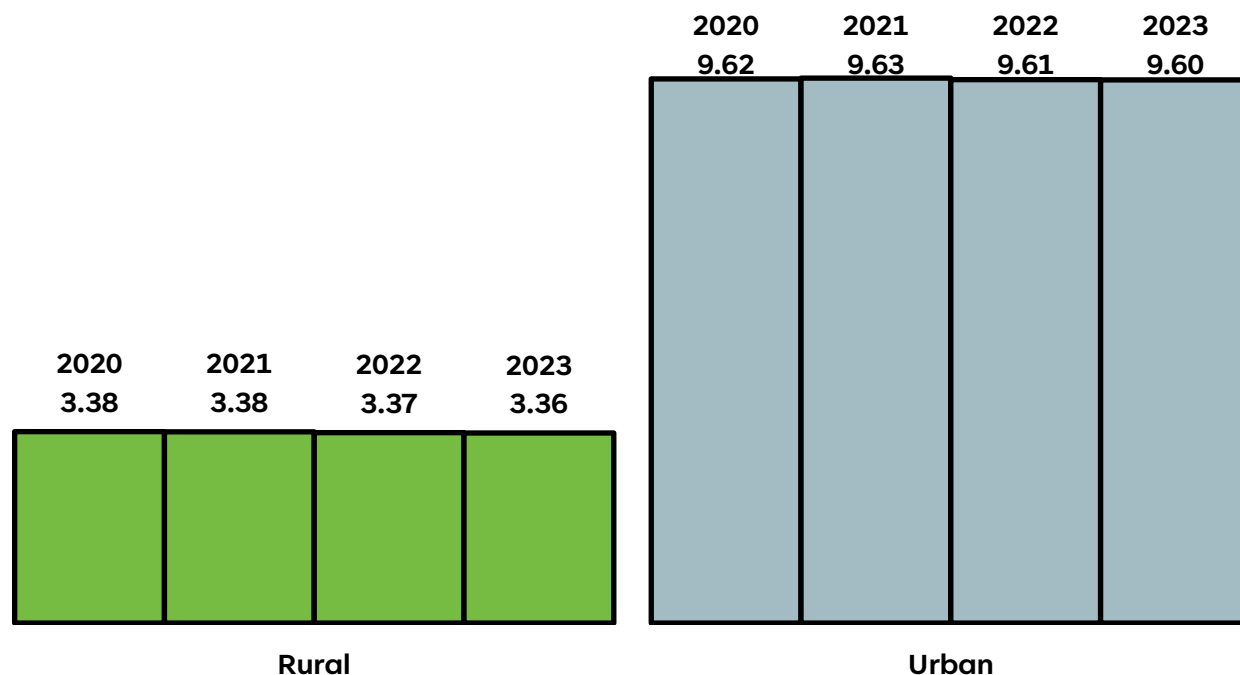
The U.S. Census Bureau recently released its U.S. County Population Estimates from 2020 to 2023. Zeroing in on rural and urban Pennsylvania, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania analyzed these data and found the following:

- Census Bureau population estimates show that Pennsylvania's rural and urban populations declined between 2020 and 2023.
- Pennsylvania's population is declining at a rate faster than projected.
- Within Pennsylvania, most of the population growth is concentrated in the east. Most of western Pennsylvania experienced a population decrease.
- Seven of Pennsylvania's 67 counties had positive natural changes (more births than deaths) between 2020 and 2023.
- Forty-two of Pennsylvania's 67 counties had an increase in net migration (more people moved in than out).
- Pennsylvania is not alone in these trends. Across the United States, 47 percent of all counties had a population decrease between 2020 and 2023. Most of the counties that lost population (82 percent) were rural.

**Population Change**

In 2023, an estimated 3.36 million people lived in rural Pennsylvania. This is a 0.7 percent decrease from 2020. The same year, an estimated 9.60 million people lived in urban Pennsylvania, or a 0.2 percent decrease from 2020.

**Figure 1: Pennsylvania Rural and Urban Population Estimates, 2020 to 2023**  
*(Population in Millions)*

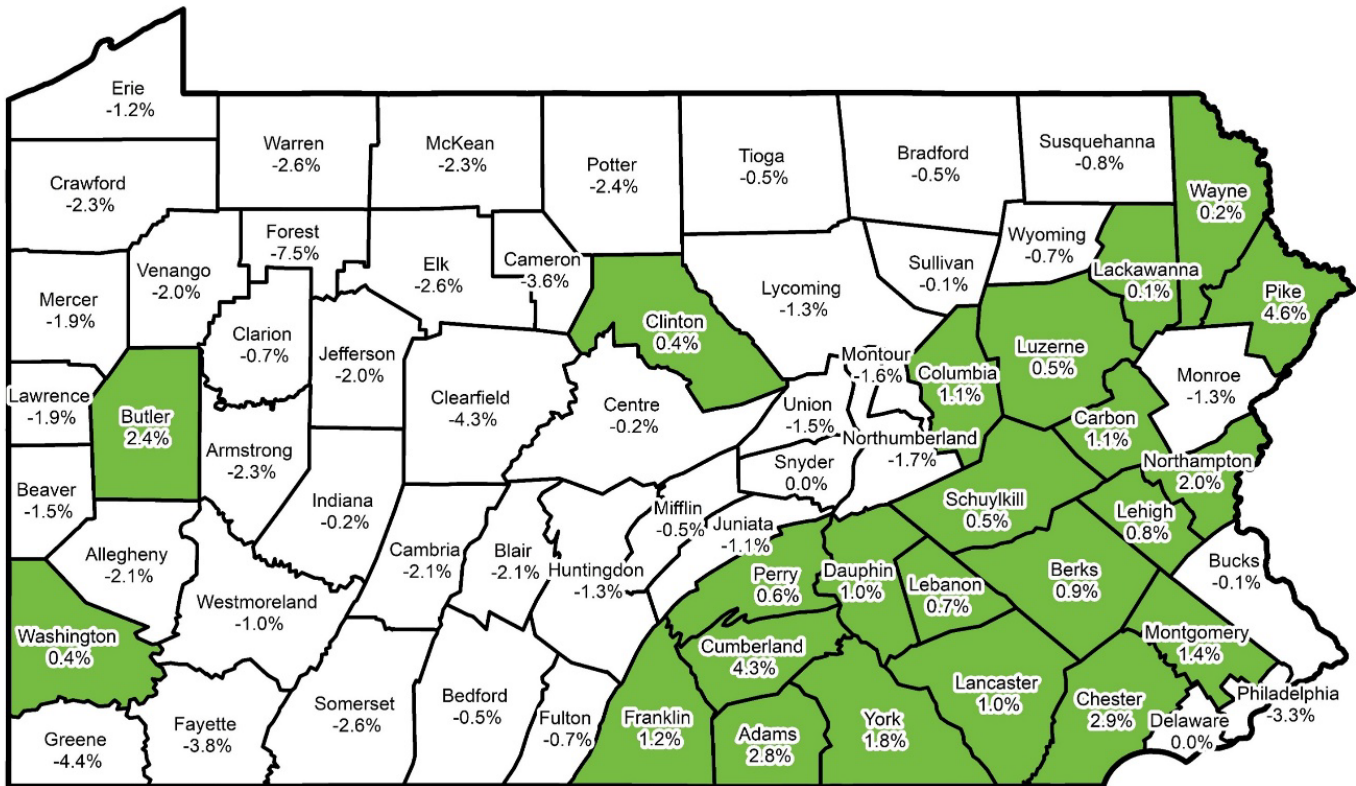


Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

## Pennsylvania County Population Change

As Figure 2 shows, Pennsylvania’s rural and urban population changes followed an east/west pattern. With some exceptions, counties in eastern Pennsylvania saw modest population increases (0.2 percent, on average), while those in the west saw population decreases (1.5 percent, on average). At the county level, the three fastest-growing counties between 2020 to 2023 were: Pike (5 percent), Cumberland (4 percent), and Chester (3 percent). The three counties with the steepest decreases were: Forest (7 percent), Greene (4 percent), and Clearfield (4 percent).

**Figure 2: Percent Change in Pennsylvania Population Estimates, 2020 to 2023**



**Pennsylvania Population Change, 2020-2023 = -0.3%**

□ Population Decrease or No Change    ■ Population Increase

Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

## Population Change Attributable to Natural Change

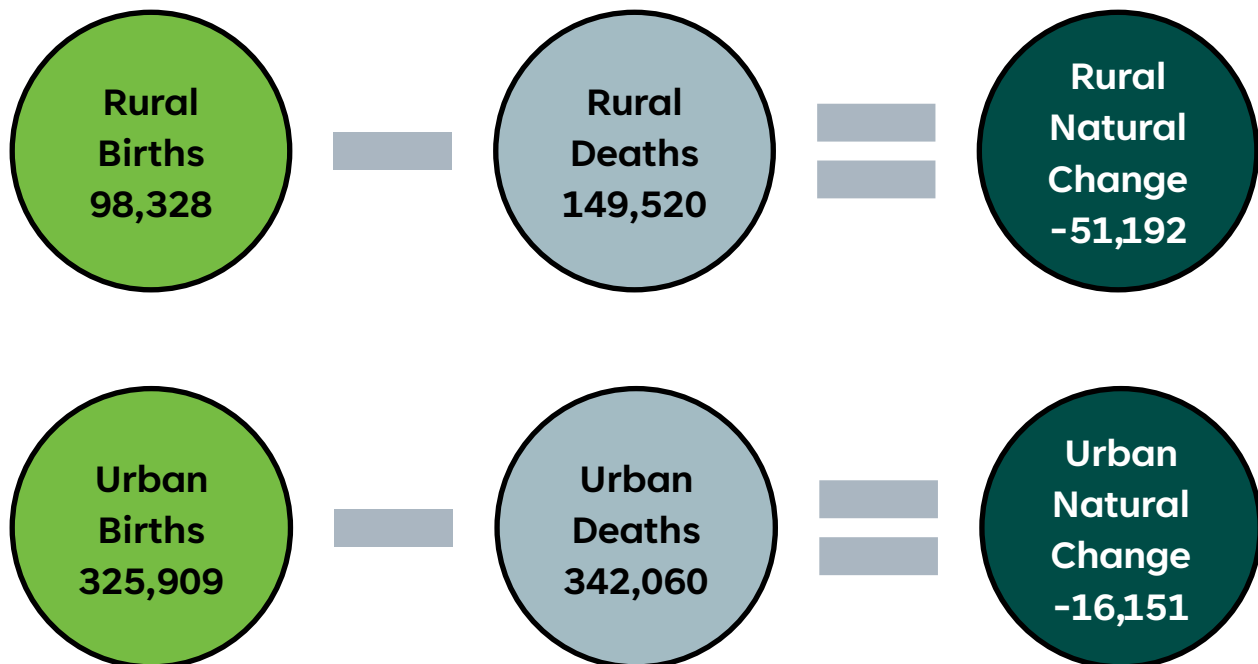
One way a population can grow or shrink is through births and deaths. As Figure 3 shows, both rural and urban Pennsylvania had a negative natural change between 2020 and 2023. That is, there were more deaths than births.

Having more deaths than births is not a new phenomenon in rural Pennsylvania. According to data from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, deaths have outpaced births in rural Pennsylvania every year since 2008.

In rural Pennsylvania, the negative natural change can be attributed to two factors:

- **Lower Birth Rate:** From 2020 to 2023, rural Pennsylvania had 7.3 births per 1,000 population, while urban had 8.5 births per 1,000 population. The lower rural birth rate can be attributed to many factors. One factor is the smaller percentage of women in their prime child-producing years (age 15 to 44). According to the most current data for the calendar year 2022, 34 percent of rural women were between the ages of 15 to 44 years old compared to 38 percent of urban women.
- **Higher Death Rate:** From 2020 to 2023, rural Pennsylvania had 11.1 deaths per 1,000 population, while urban had 8.9 deaths per 1,000 population. The higher rural death rate can be attributed to many factors. Two of these factors could be COVID-related deaths and an older population. From 2020 to 2023, Pennsylvania Department of Health data show that rural Pennsylvania had 1.3 COVID deaths per 1,000 population, while urban had 0.9 per 1,000 population. Rural Pennsylvania also has an aging population. In 2022, 21 percent of the rural population was 65 years old and older. In urban Pennsylvania, 18 percent of the population was 65 years old and older. An aging population could lead to a higher death rate.

**Figure 3: Pennsylvania Rural and Urban Natural Change, 2020 to 2023**



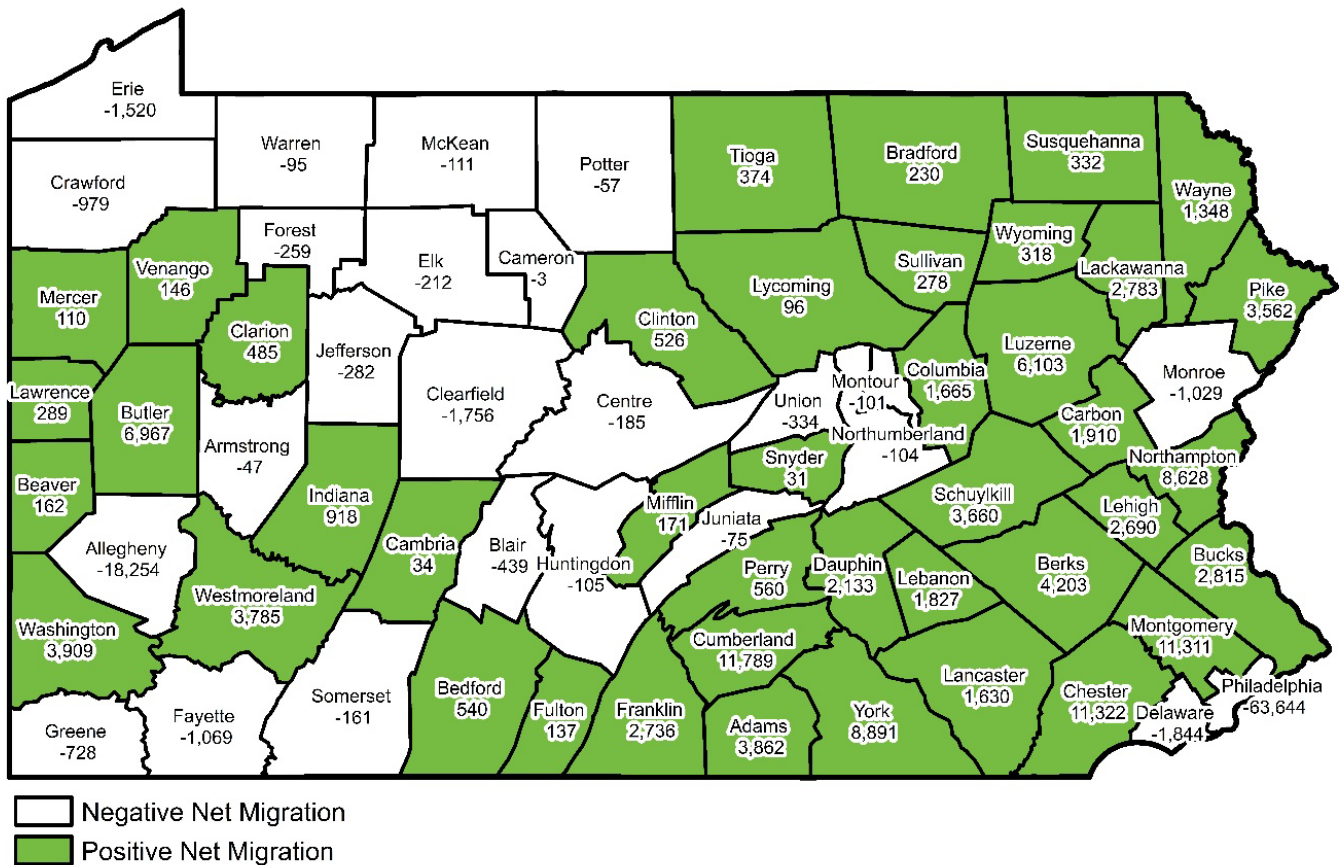
Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

### Population Change Attributable to Total Net Migration

The second factor causing population change is net migration, or the number of people who moved into an area subtracted from the number of people who moved out. From 2020 to 2023, rural Pennsylvania had positive net migration (more people moved in than moved out), while urban Pennsylvania had negative net migration (more people moved out than moved in).

At the county level, 42 counties had positive net migration. The three counties with the highest net migrations were Cumberland (11,789), Chester (11,322), and Montgomery (11,311). Among the 25 counties with negative net migration, the three largest net decreases occurred in Philadelphia (-63,644), Allegheny (-18,254), and Delaware (-1,844).

**Figure 4: Total Net Migration by Pennsylvania County, 2020 to 2023**



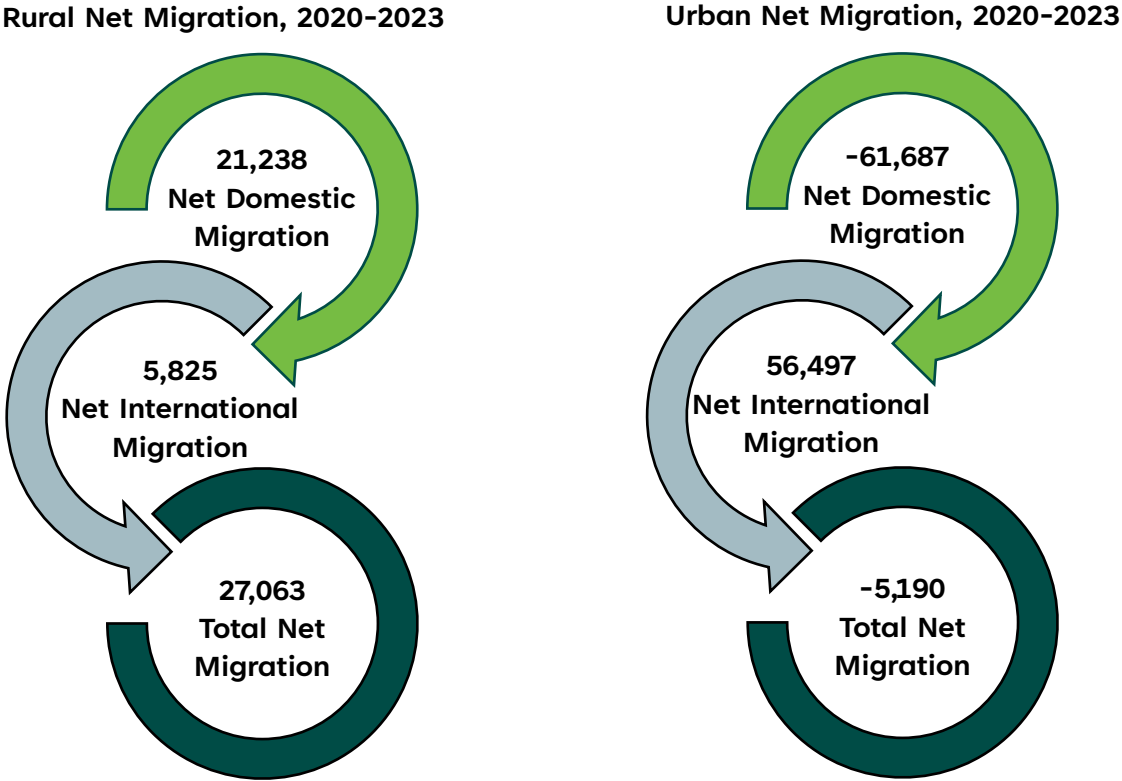
Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

### Types of Net Migration

The Census Bureau reports two types of net migration: domestic (people who move from one state or county to another) and international (people who move to the United States from another country).

As Figure 5 shows, rural Pennsylvania had both positive international and domestic migration from 2020 to 2023. Urban Pennsylvania had positive international net migration but negative domestic net migration.

**Figure 5: Net Domestic and International Migration in Rural and Urban Pennsylvania, 2020 to 2023**



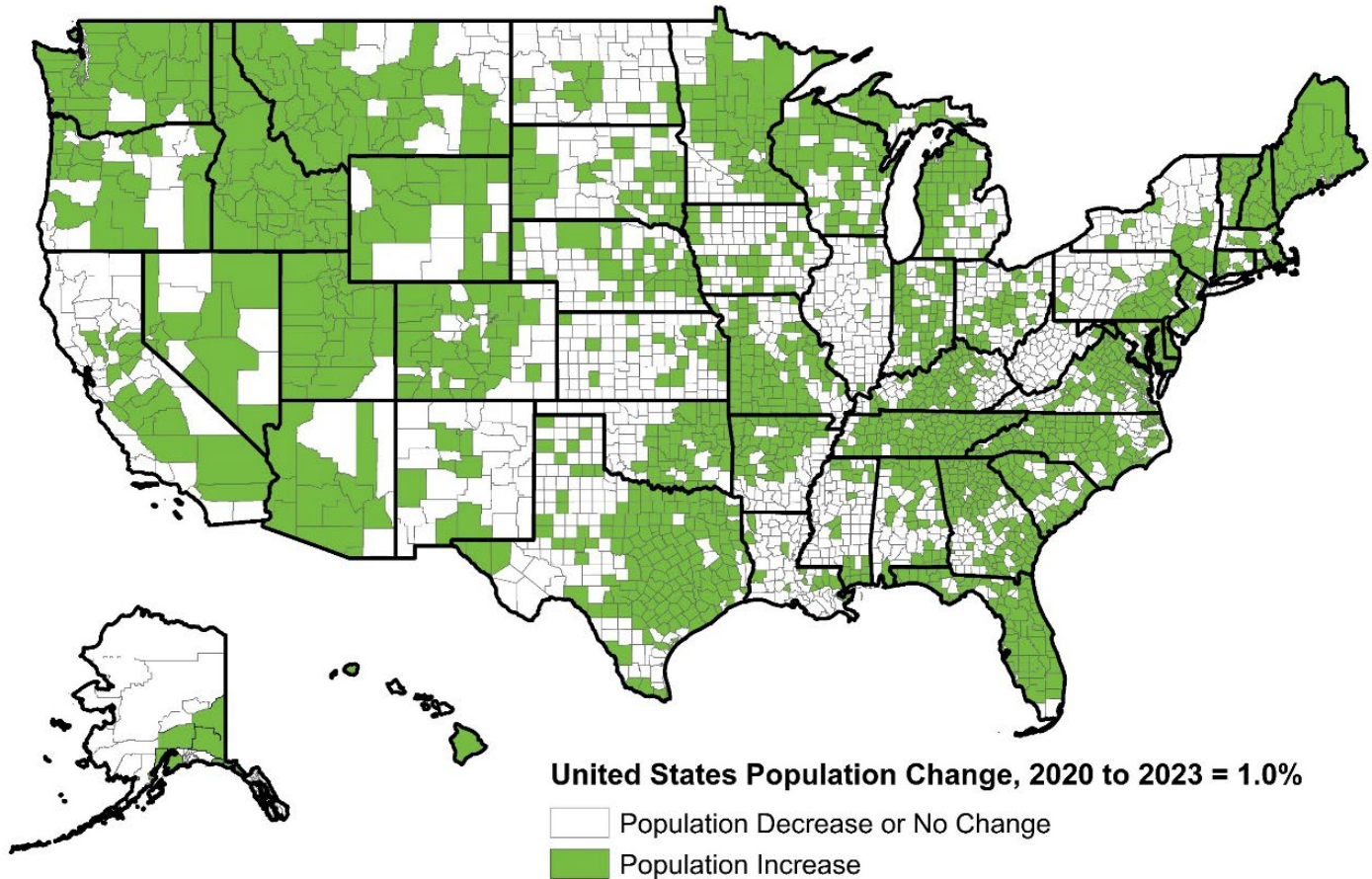
Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.



## United States Population Change

The United States grew from nearly 331.5 million in 2020 to 334.9 million in 2023. This 1 percent increase, however, was not evenly distributed. As Figure 6 shows, 47 percent of the 3,144 counties in the United States lost population between 2020 and 2023.

**Figure 6: Counties with a Population Increase and Decrease, 2020 to 2023**



*Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.*

### Why Did Some Counties Gain Population and Others Lose Population?

A closer analysis of the data shows that 49 percent of U.S. counties that had a decrease in population between 2020 and 2023 had both negative natural change and negative net migration. Counties that gained population during this period did so through positive net migration and were less reliant on positive natural change.

**Figure 7: Components of Population Change in U.S. Counties, 2020 to 2023**

	<b>Counties with Population Decrease (n=1,465)</b>	<b>Counties with Population Increase (n=1,679)</b>
<b>Negative Natural Change / Negative Net Migration</b>	49%	0%
<b>Negative Natural Change / Positive Net Migration</b>	32%	67%
<b>Positive Natural Change / Negative Net Migration</b>	19%	6%
<b>Positive Natural Change / Positive Net Migration</b>	0%	27%

*Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.*

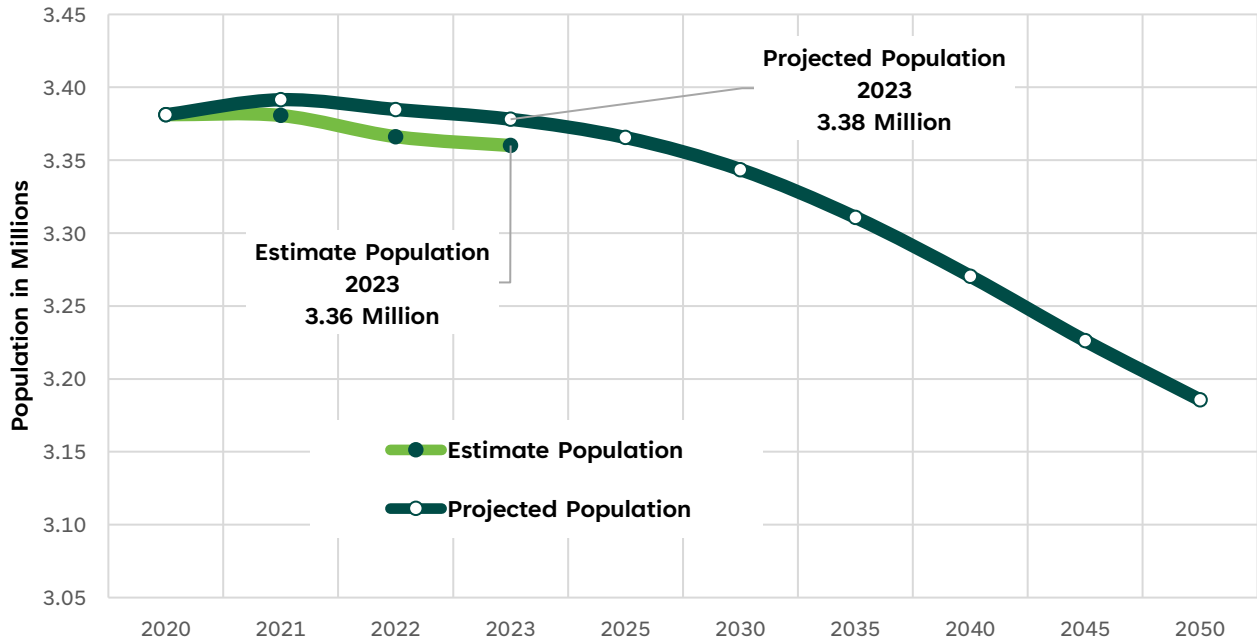
### **Population Estimates and Population Projections**

In October 2023, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania published the 2020 to 2050 population projections. Developed by the Pennsylvania State Data Center, these projections used statistical models to predict Pennsylvania’s population in 2050. A comparison of the projections to the Census Bureau’s estimates suggests that post-pandemic births, deaths, and migration patterns indicate a sharper population drop than what was expected.

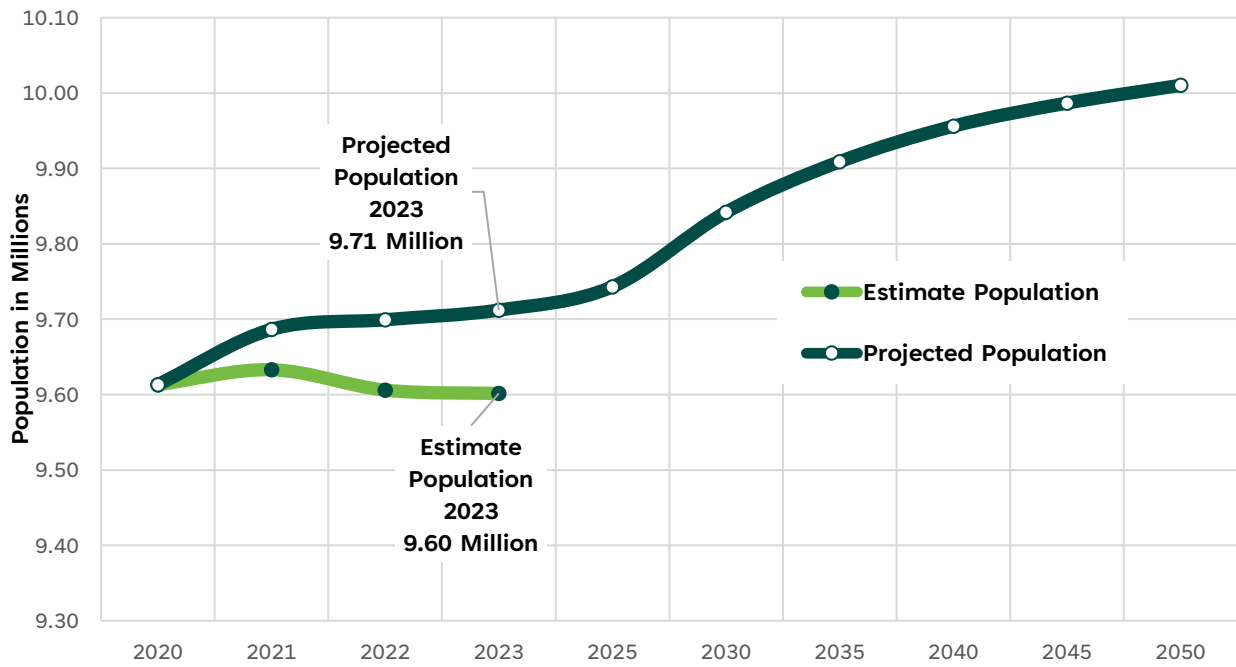
Figure 8 shows that the rural population projections for Pennsylvania were higher than the population estimates. However, the overall downward trend in population was similar. Figure 9 shows that the urban population was projected to grow. However, the estimates showed that the urban population remained essentially flat.



**Figure 8: Pennsylvania Rural Population Estimates and Projections, 2020 to 2023, and 2050**



**Figure 9: Pennsylvania Urban Population Estimates and Projections, 2020 to 2023, and 2050**



Data sources: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau and the Pennsylvania State Data Center.

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## Conclusions

The 2023 population estimates are no surprise to rural Pennsylvania. They show the continuation of long-term population decline in rural counties. The causes of this decline are attributable to a declining birth rate and increasing death rate. Still, net migration into rural Pennsylvania has, in many counties, remained positive.

For urban Pennsylvania, there are some surprises. Urban population change has stagnated. Many urban counties have been hit with both negative natural change and negative net migration.

For both rural and urban Pennsylvania, it is too soon to say whether the population change from 2020 to 2023 is the start of a long-term trend or merely a momentary blip, particularly because this time frame includes the COVID-19 emergency. However, the population projections do indicate that Pennsylvania is likely to see very modest growth, if any, in the coming decades.

In rural Pennsylvania, moving the demographic needle from negative to positive will not be easy, but it is possible to mitigate these changes. To begin this process, the legislature recently passed Act 21 of 2024, which establishes the Rural Population Revitalization Commission. This Commission is responsible for identifying solutions and best practices to make rural Pennsylvania sustainable by attracting new residents, retaining its existing residents, and managing population change. With advanced planning, information, and resources, rural communities will be better positioned to address these changes.

## Methodology

### Data Sources:

2020 to 2050 Pennsylvania Population Projections: Released in October 2023, the population projections were developed by the Pennsylvania State Data Center with support from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania. The projections contained county population projections in five-year increments by age and gender. Projections were based on the demographic cohort model. Readers who want more information about the model, data input, and base assumptions should visit the Center for Rural Pennsylvania website: [www.rural.pa.gov](http://www.rural.pa.gov).

2023 Population Estimates: Released by the U.S. Census Bureau in March 2024, the estimates contained the population for July 1 of 2020 to 2023 and the components of population changes (births, deaths, and net migration).

### Definitions

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, projections and estimates may appear similar. However, there are some distinct differences between the two measures. Estimates are for the past and present, while projections are based on assumptions about future demographic trends.

- Population Estimates: use 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 data and extends to the new series of estimates or vintage year.
- Population Projections: are predictions of the population for future dates. Projections illustrate possible courses of population change based on assumptions about future births, deaths, net international migration, and domestic migration.

### **Calculating the 2023 Population Projections**

The 2020 to 2050 Population Projections report population in five-year increments. The Center interpolated the annual population from 2021 to 2023 using Excel's Forecast formula.

**Figure 10: Population and Components of Population Change, 2020 to 2023**

	Population, 2023 (Est.)	% Change in Population, 2020 to 2023	# Births, 2020 to 2023	# Deaths, 2020 to 2023	Natural Change (Births-Deaths), 2020 to 2023	Net Migration, 2020 to 2023
<b>United States</b>	<b>334,914,895</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>11,811,192</b>	<b>10,895,395</b>	<b>915,797</b>	<b>2,534,150</b>
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>12,961,683</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>	<b>424,237</b>	<b>491,580</b>	<b>-67,343</b>	<b>21,873</b>
Adams (Rural)	106,748	2.8%	3,047	3,904	-857	3,862
Allegheny (Urban)	1,224,825	-2.1%	39,584	48,078	-8,494	-18,254
Armstrong (Rural)	64,074	-2.3%	1,746	3,205	-1,459	-47
Beaver (Urban)	165,631	-1.5%	4,874	7,669	-2,795	162
Bedford (Rural)	47,350	-0.5%	1,523	2,288	-765	540
Berks (Urban)	432,821	0.9%	14,628	15,101	-473	4,203
Blair (Rural)	120,273	-2.1%	3,703	5,911	-2,208	-439
Bradford (Rural)	59,695	-0.5%	2,069	2,583	-514	230
Bucks (Urban)	645,984	-0.1%	18,271	22,000	-3,729	2,815
Butler (Rural)	198,413	2.4%	5,405	7,589	-2,184	6,967
Cambria (Rural)	130,668	-2.1%	3,751	6,585	-2,834	34
Cameron (Rural)	4,380	-3.6%	92	247	-155	-3
Carbon (Rural)	65,458	1.1%	1,932	3,110	-1,178	1,910
Centre (Rural)	157,795	-0.2%	3,589	3,933	-344	-185
Chester (Urban)	549,784	2.9%	18,059	14,136	3,923	11,322
Clarion (Rural)	36,970	-0.7%	1,145	1,880	-735	485
Clearfield (Rural)	77,090	-4.3%	2,173	3,760	-1,587	-1,756
Clinton (Rural)	37,607	0.4%	1,217	1,542	-325	526
Columbia (Rural)	65,439	1.1%	1,744	2,735	-991	1,665
Crawford (Rural)	82,001	-2.3%	2,820	3,798	-978	-979
Cumberland (Urban)	270,738	4.3%	8,401	8,753	-352	11,789
Dauphin (Urban)	289,234	1.0%	10,525	9,923	602	2,133
Delaware (Urban)	576,720	0.0%	20,623	19,389	1,234	-1,844
Elk (Rural)	30,198	-2.6%	825	1,422	-597	-212
Erie (Urban)	267,571	-1.2%	8,771	10,628	-1,857	-1,520
Fayette (Rural)	123,915	-3.8%	3,237	7,103	-3,866	-1,069
Forest (Rural)	6,449	-7.5%	80	368	-288	-259
Franklin (Rural)	157,854	1.2%	5,497	6,366	-869	2,736
Fulton (Rural)	14,468	-0.7%	452	694	-242	137
Greene (Rural)	34,357	-4.4%	802	1,684	-882	-728
Huntingdon (Rural)	43,514	-1.3%	1,347	1,873	-526	-105
Indiana (Rural)	83,094	-0.2%	2,443	3,512	-1,069	918
Jefferson (Rural)	43,612	-2.0%	1,465	2,086	-621	-282
Juniata (Rural)	23,243	-1.1%	924	1,115	-191	-75
Lackawanna (Urban)	216,123	0.1%	6,797	9,397	-2,600	2,783

Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

**Figure 10: Population and Components of Population Change, 2020 to 2023 (Cont.)**

	Population, 2023 (Est.)	% Change in Population, 2020 to 2023	# Births, 2020 to 2023	# Deaths, 2020 to 2023	Natural Change (Births-Deaths), 2020 to 2023	Net Migration, 2020 to 2023
Lancaster (Urban)	558,589	1.0%	22,471	18,724	3,747	1,630
Lawrence (Rural)	84,472	-1.9%	2,568	4,482	-1,914	289
Lebanon (Urban)	144,252	0.7%	5,081	5,938	-857	1,827
Lehigh (Urban)	377,754	0.8%	12,936	12,696	240	2,690
Luzerne (Urban)	327,388	0.5%	10,321	14,702	-4,381	6,103
Lycoming (Rural)	112,724	-1.3%	3,394	4,974	-1,580	96
McKean (Rural)	39,519	-2.3%	1,108	1,921	-813	-111
Mercer (Rural)	108,503	-1.9%	3,302	5,588	-2,286	110
Mifflin (Rural)	45,922	-0.5%	1,768	2,160	-392	171
Monroe (Rural)	166,053	-1.3%	4,472	5,812	-1,340	-1,029
Montgomery (Urban)	868,742	1.4%	27,946	27,207	739	11,311
Montour (Rural)	17,860	-1.6%	629	815	-186	-101
Northampton (Urban)	319,091	2.0%	9,098	11,325	-2,227	8,628
Northumberland (Rural)	90,120	-1.7%	2,872	4,346	-1,474	-104
Perry (Rural)	46,083	0.6%	1,497	1,817	-320	560
Philadelphia (Urban)	1,550,542	-3.3%	62,792	53,497	9,295	-63,644
Pike (Rural)	61,247	4.6%	1,328	2,133	-805	3,562
Potter (Rural)	15,999	-2.4%	544	883	-339	-57
Schuylkill (Rural)	143,786	0.5%	3,932	6,872	-2,940	3,660
Snyder (Rural)	39,717	0.0%	1,332	1,403	-71	31
Somerset (Rural)	72,197	-2.6%	1,930	3,696	-1,766	-161
Sullivan (Rural)	5,834	-0.1%	137	418	-281	278
Susquehanna (Rural)	38,109	-0.8%	1,158	1,806	-648	332
Tioga (Rural)	40,840	-0.5%	1,265	1,836	-571	374
Union (Rural)	42,042	-1.5%	1,184	1,530	-346	-334
Venango (Rural)	49,431	-2.0%	1,487	2,668	-1,181	146
Warren (Rural)	37,572	-2.6%	1,153	2,065	-912	-95
Washington (Rural)	210,232	0.4%	6,150	9,195	-3,045	3,909
Wayne (Rural)	51,262	0.2%	1,312	2,546	-1,234	1,348
Westmoreland (Urban)	351,163	-1.0%	9,185	16,492	-7,307	3,785
Wyoming (Rural)	25,902	-0.7%	778	1,261	-483	318
York (Urban)	464,640	1.8%	15,546	16,405	-859	8,891

Data source: 2023 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

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