

# ALLENTOWN 2000

**Profile of Economic, Housing,  
and Social Characteristics  
from Census 2000**

**Allentown, Pennsylvania**

United States  
**Census  
2000**



City of Allentown, Pennsylvania  
Department of Community & Economic Development  
Bureau of Planning & Zoning

This report is the second in a series of publications that present and analyze data from the 2000 Census. This report highlights detailed social, economic and housing characteristics for the City of Allentown. The information in this report is based on sample data collected from a 1-in-6 sample and weighted to represent the total population.

## ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

### Employment Status

In 2000, there were 49,709 persons age 16 and over in the City's labor force, representing 60% of the 82,784 total persons over age 16. The labor force consisted of 51.5% males and 48.6% females. 66.3% of all males and 54.6% of all females 16 years and over were in the labor force.

In 2000, 34.9% of working women had children 17 years or younger, and 70.1% of women who had children 17 years or younger were working. 16,011 children, or 65.5% of all children, aged 17 years or younger lived in households where both parents worked or the only parent in the household worked.

In 2000, 7.2% of persons in the labor force were unemployed, however the rate varied by race and ethnicity. For white and Asian workers, the unemployment rate was 5.8%, while for black and other minority workers, the rate was 12.8%. Hispanic workers (of any race) had an unemployment rate of 13.8%. Unemployment was highest in Center City, at 10.4%, and lowest in the West End, at 4.6%.

#### Unemployment Rate, by Area, 2000

| <u>Area</u>      | <u>Rate</u> |
|------------------|-------------|
| <b>City Wide</b> | <b>7.2%</b> |
| East Side        | 6.6%        |
| Center City      | 10.4%       |
| Mid City         | 8.5%        |
| West End         | 4.6%        |
| South Side       | 5.3%        |

#### Understanding the Census

- The labor force consists of all persons who were employed or unemployed and actively looking for work.
- Persons were classified as unemployed if they (1) were neither "at work" nor "with a job but not at work", (2) were actively looking for work, and (3) were available to accept a job. Also included as unemployed are civilians who were waiting to be called back to a job from which they had been laid off, and were available for work except for temporary illness.

### Industry and Occupation

In 2000, for the employed population 16 years and older, the leading industries in Allentown were educational, health, and social services, 19.8%; manufacturing, 19.5%; and retail trade, 12.1%. Among the most common occupations were: sales and office occupations, 27.6%; management, professional, and related occupations, 24.8%; production, transportation, and material moving occupations, 21.3%; and service occupations, 18%. 87.1% of the people employed were private wage and salary workers; 8.6% were government workers; and 4.1% were self-employed.

#### Occupation of Workers, 2000 (Employed civilian population 16 years and over)

| <u>Occupation</u>   | <u>Allentown</u> | <u>Pennsylvania</u> |
|---|------------------|---------------------|
| Sales and office occupations                                | 27.6%            | 27.0%               |
| Management, professional and related occupations            | 24.8%            | 32.6%               |
| Production, transportation, and material moving occupations | 21.3%            | 16.3%               |
| Service occupations   | 18.0%            | 14.8%               |
| Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations       | 8.1%             | 8.9%                |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations                  | 0.2%             | 0.5%                |

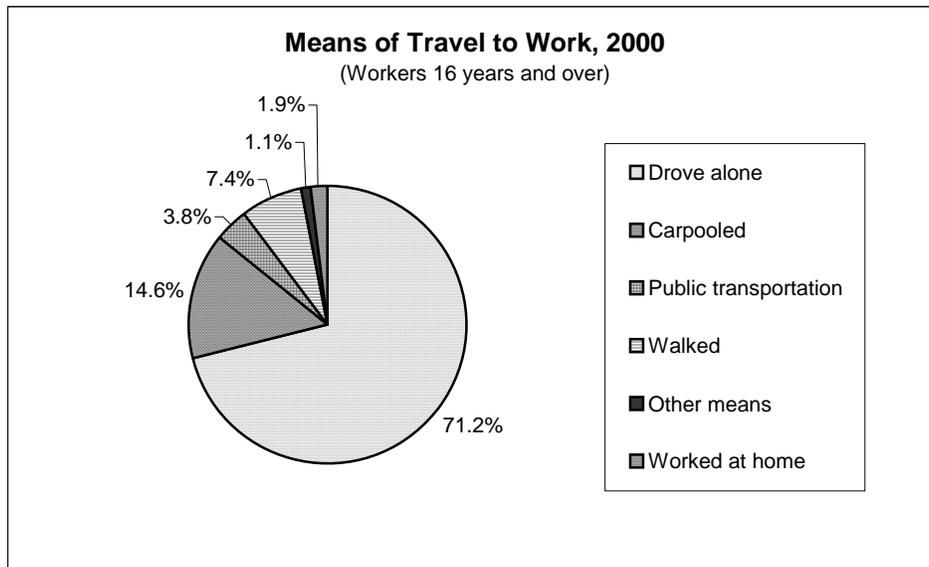
**Industry of Workers, 2000**  
(Employed civilian population 16 years and over)

| Industry  | Allentown | Pennsylvania |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Educational, health and social services   | 19.8%     | 21.9%        |
| Manufacturing   | 19.5%     | 16.0%        |
| Retail trade  | 12.1%     | 12.1%        |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services                    | 8.6%      | 7.0%         |
| Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services | 8.0%      | 8.5%         |
| Other services (except public administration)                                       | 6.4%      | 4.8%         |
| Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing                             | 5.6%      | 6.6%         |
| Construction  | 5.3%      | 6.0%         |
| Transportation and warehousing, and utilities                                       | 4.6%      | 5.4%         |
| Wholesale trade   | 3.8%      | 3.6%         |
| Information   | 3.1%      | 2.6%         |
| Public administration   | 2.9%      | 4.2%         |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining                              | 0.3%      | 1.3%         |

**Travel to Work**

41.5% of employed City residents worked within Allentown in 2000. Another 36.9% worked outside the City but within Lehigh County. 18.9% worked outside Lehigh County but within Pennsylvania. 2.7% of employed Allentown residents worked outside the state.

71.2% of Allentown workers drove to work alone in 2000, 14.6% carpooled, 7.4% walked, 3.8% took public transportation, and 1.1% used other means. The remaining 1.9% worked at home. Among those who commuted to work, it took them on average 21.4 minutes to get to work.



## Income

The median income of households in Allentown in 1999 was \$32,016; the average household income was \$40,216. The per capita income was \$16,282.

74.9% of the households in Allentown received earnings income; 18.1% received retirement income other than Social Security; and 30.3% of the households received Social Security income. The average income from Social Security was \$11,002. These income sources are not mutually exclusive; that is, some households may have received income from more than one source.

### Understanding the Census

- All income data is what respondents reported as their total income from all sources for the calendar year 1999.
- Household income includes the income of all people over 15 years of age living in the household, whether or not they are related to the householder.
- The average household income was determined by dividing the total aggregate income for all households and dividing by the number of households.
- Median income divides the income distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median, the other having incomes below the median.

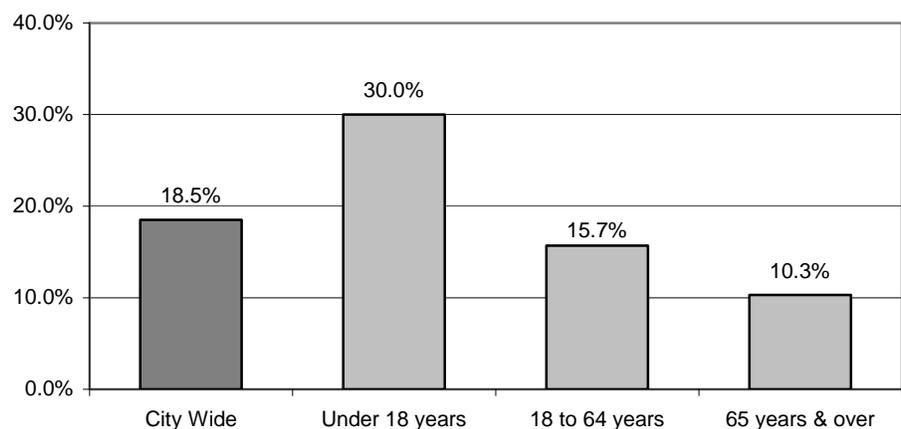
## Poverty

In 1999, 18.5% of people in Allentown were living in poverty. 29.4% of children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 10.3% of people 65 years old and over. Poverty was most prevalent in Center City, where 30.9% of the population was below the poverty level. The poverty rate was lowest in the West End, at only 7.3%.

### Poverty Rate, by Area, 1999

| <u>Area</u>      | <u>Rate</u>  |
|------------------|--------------|
| <b>City Wide</b> | <b>18.5%</b> |
| East Side        | 16.9%        |
| Center City      | 30.9%        |
| Mid City         | 14.7%        |
| West End         | 7.3%         |
| South Side       | 12.0%        |

### Percent Under Poverty Level, by Age, 2000



Poverty was more prevalent in single parent families. 14.6% of all families in Allentown had incomes below the poverty level, however, only 6.5% of married parent families were below the poverty level, while 15.6% of father-only families and 35.8% of mother-only families were below the poverty level.

**Understanding the Census**

- Poverty status is determined by using a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition (such as the presence and number of children). If the total income for a family or unrelated individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family or unrelated individual is classified as being "below the poverty level." Poverty status is determined for all persons not in institutions, military group quarters, or college dormitories.

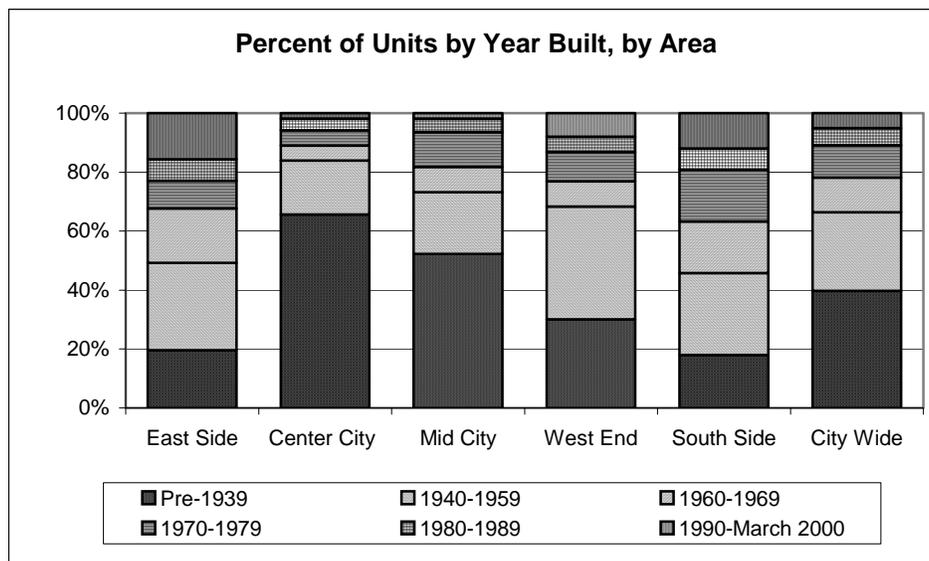
# HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

## Housing Units

In 2000, Allentown had a total of 45,960 housing units, 8.5% of which were vacant. Of the total housing units, 60.6% were in single-unit structures, 39.1% were in multi-unit structures, and 0.3% were mobile homes.

41% of the housing units were built before 1940, while 2.2% of the housing units were built since 1990. 986 housing units were added to the City's housing stock during the 1990's. The greatest number of new units added during the decade were in the South Side, at 305. The median year of construction City-wide was 1949. The earliest median years of construction were found in Center City and Mid City, while the latest median years of construction were found in the East Side and South Side.

Rental units in the City were, on average, newer than owner-occupied units. 44.2% of rental units were built after 1960 while only 33.6% were built before 1939. By contrast, only 21.7% of owner-occupied units were built after 1960, while 45.2% were built before 1939.



## Physical Characteristics

In 2000, almost all of Allentown's housing units were adequately served in terms of plumbing, kitchens and utilities. Only 2.1% of the housing units did not have telephone service, only 0.7% lacked complete plumbing facilities and only 0.6% lacked complete kitchen facilities. 38.1% of housing units were heated by utility gas, 32.6% were heated by fuel oil or kerosene, and 26.7% were heated by electricity. 18.8% of the households did not have access to a car, truck, or van for private use, while 42.3% had one vehicle, 29.9% had two vehicles and 9% had three or more.

## Occupancy

In 2000, Allentown had 42,032 occupied housing units - 22,284, or 53%, owner-occupied and 19,748, or 47%, renter-occupied. In 2000, 62.1% of Allentown householders had moved into their housing unit in the previous 10 years. 15.5% of householders had lived in their housing unit for 30 years or more. The median number of rooms per housing unit was 5.4. 95.7% of housing units had 1 or fewer occupants per room.

Older householders were more likely than younger householders to own their own homes. Citywide, 64.1% of householders over 45 years old owned their own housing units. In contrast, the home ownership rate for householders 15 to 44 was 39.6%.

## Housing Costs

The percentage of homeowners with mortgages in 2000 was 62.6%. The median amount spent monthly toward housing costs for owner-occupied units was \$887 if there was a mortgage and \$333 if there was not a mortgage. 23.2% of homeowners in Allentown spent 30% or more of their household income on housing costs.

The median property value for owner-occupied units was \$76,900. The highest median values were in the West End, while the lowest median values were in Center City.

The median gross monthly rent in 2000 was \$541. The highest rents were in the West End, while the lowest rents were in Center City and Mid City. 38.7% of renters in Allentown spent 30% or more of their household income on housing costs.

|                 | <u>&lt;25%</u> | <u>25-29%</u> | <u>&gt;30%</u> | <u>Not Available</u> |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Owner Occupied  | 66.5%          | 9.4%          | 23.2%          | 0.8%                 |
| Renter Occupied | 44.2%          | 13.1%         | 38.7%          | 4.0%                 |

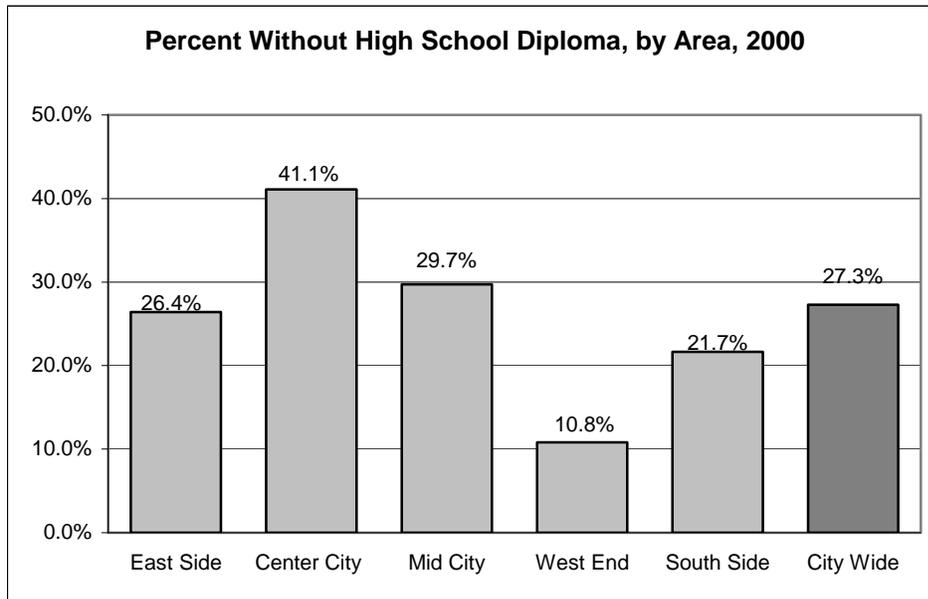
# SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

## Education

In 2000, 27.3% of adults in the City did not have a high school diploma or equivalent. Lack of education was most prevalent in Center City, where 41.1% of adults did not have a high school diploma.

Citywide, 15.4% of people 25 years and over in Allentown had a bachelor's degree or higher. The highest rate of advanced education was in the West End, where 34.3% of the population had advanced degrees.

| Highest level completed           | Allentown | Pennsylvania |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Less than 9th grade               | 9.1%      | 5.5%         |
| 9th to 12th grade, no diploma     | 18.2%     | 12.6%        |
| High school diploma or equivalent | 36.5%     | 38.1%        |
| Some college                      | 15.5%     | 15.5%        |
| Associates degree                 | 5.4%      | 5.9%         |
| Bachelors degree                  | 10.1%     | 14.0%        |
| Graduate or professional degree   | 5.3%      | 8.4%         |



The total school enrollment in Allentown was 27,373 in 2000. Preprimary school enrollment (including kindergarten) was 3,062 and elementary or high school enrollment was 18,131 children. College enrollment was 6,180.

## Disability Status

In Allentown, among people at least five years old in 2000, 22.3% reported a disability. The likelihood of having a disability varied by age - from 10.2% of people 5 to 20 years old, to 22.9% of people 21 to 64 years old, and to 39.3% of those 65 and older.

## **Geographic Mobility**

In 2000, 49.8% of the people 5 years and older living in Allentown were living in the same residence five years earlier; 28.7% had moved during the past 5 years from another residence in Lehigh County, 8.6% from another county in Pennsylvania, 8.6% from another state, and 4.3% from another country.

## **Nativity and Language**

90.4% of the people living in Allentown in 2000 were native born, including 64% who were born in Pennsylvania. 9.6% of the population were foreign born, of which 45.7% were from Latin America, 36.2% were from Asia, 14.3% were from Europe, 2.6% were from Africa and 1.2% were from elsewhere in North America.

Among people at least five years old living in Allentown in 2000, 27.8% spoke a language other than English at home. Of those speaking a language other than English at home, 71.4% spoke Spanish and 28.6% percent spoke some other language. 42% reported that they did not speak English "very well."