

## Higher Uninsured Rates in Smaller Cities, Rural Pa., Census Data Show

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Urban centers and rural communities are home to some of the highest uninsured rates in Pennsylvania, according to data released by the Census Bureau today.

For the first time, the Census released local and regional data on health insurance coverage as part of its American Community Survey. Data was released today only for counties and municipalities with populations of at least 65,000.

Among the state's largest cities, Reading and Allentown had the highest uninsured rates – even higher than Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. In terms of sheer numbers, Philadelphia was home to the largest number of uninsured people in the state – with one in six uninsured Pennsylvanians coming from the city.

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Uninsured</b>	<b>% Uninsured</b>	<b>Host County</b>	<b>Uninsured</b>	<b>% Uninsured</b>
<b>Allentown</b>	19,229	17.1%	Lehigh	36,272	10.9%
<b>Erie</b>	13,141	13.4%	Erie	27,280	10.0%
<b>Philadelphia</b>	200,243	14.1%	Philadelphia	200,243	14.1%
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	30,127	10.3%	Allegheny	92,384	7.7%
<b>Reading</b>	14,020	17.5%	Berks	32,276	8.1%
<b>Scranton</b>	8,153	11.7%	Lackawanna	17,833	8.7%
<b>Upper Darby Township</b>	11,084	13.8%	Delaware	43,615	8.0%

Source. U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2008

Among the 39 counties in Pennsylvania for which data was released, several rural communities saw high uninsured rates, as well. Crawford, Lawrence and Lancaster counties were home to some of the highest uninsured rates in 2008 – after Philadelphia County – while suburban Bucks, Montgomery, Butler and Northampton counties had among the lowest rates.

County	Uninsured	% Uninsured
<b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>	<b>1,151,611</b>	<b>9.4%</b>
Adams	8,842	8.9%
Allegheny	92,384	7.7%
Armstrong	7,124	10.5%
Beaver	13,532	7.9%
Berks	32,276	8.1%
Blair	10,235	8.4%
Bucks	36,354	5.9%
Butler	11,935	6.6%
Cambria	12,179	8.7%
Centre	9,837	7.0%
Chester	33,838	7.0%
Clearfield	9,457	12.3%
Columbia	6,349	9.8%
Crawford	12,425	14.4%
Cumberland	18,018	8.1%
Dauphin	24,238	9.6%
Delaware	43,615	8.0%
Erie	27,280	10.0%
Fayette	17,233	12.4%
Franklin	16,867	12.1%
Indiana	8,676	10.1%
Lackawanna	17,833	8.7%
Lancaster	65,138	13.1%
Lawrence	11,521	13.0%
Lebanon	12,145	9.6%
Lehigh	36,272	10.9%
Luzerne	26,089	8.5%
Lycoming	9,301	8.2%
Mercer	10,291	9.1%
Monroe	19,016	11.6%
Montgomery	48,247	6.3%
Northampton	19,743	6.8%
Northumberland	9,268	10.6%
Philadelphia	200,243	14.1%
Schuylkill	11,939	8.5%
Somerset	8,376	11.3%
Washington	18,944	9.3%
Westmoreland	28,655	8.2%
York	37,545	9.0%

Source. US Census, American Community Survey, 2008

The numbers underscore the failure of our health insurance system and the urgent need for Congress to enact health care reform.

Statewide, 1.15 million Pennsylvanians, or 9.4% of the population, lacked health insurance in 2008, according to the data. The state has a smaller share of uninsured people than the Northeastern United States (10.2%) and the nation as a whole (15.1%).

One reason Pennsylvania does better than the nation and the region is because the state is home to a large population of senior citizens who receive health coverage through Medicare. Pennsylvania's comprehensive Children's Health Insurance Program also provides a health care option for children from low- and middle-income families who might go uninsured in other states.

Additionally, Pennsylvania has a high rate of employer-provided health insurance, although the rate has been steadily declining over the past decade. Pennsylvania's long history of unionization has made it more likely that workers will get good health benefits here compared to similar jobs in other states.

Today's Census release provided data for Pennsylvania's 39 largest counties and the seven largest municipalities. Data on health insurance are also available by congressional district and metropolitan statistical area, among other geographies. Additional data for cities and counties with populations less than 65,000 will be released on October 27.

Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center (September 23, 2009)