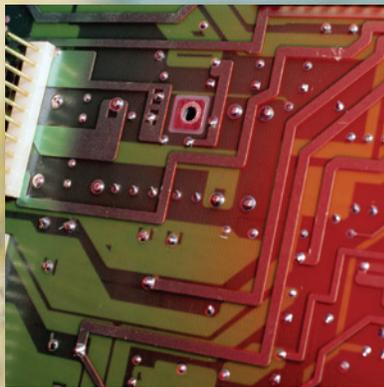
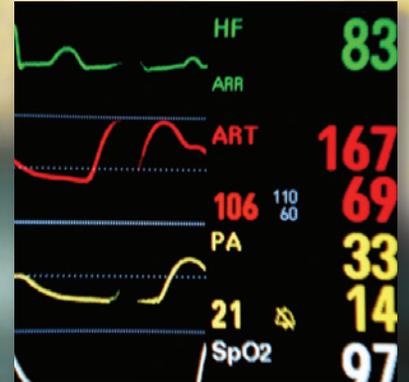
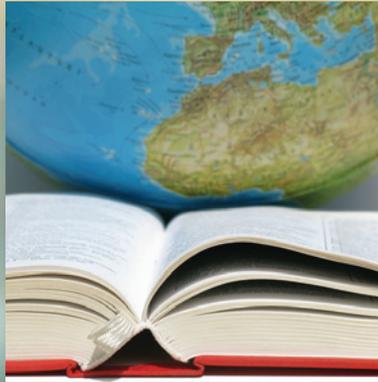


# 2021 Indicators Report

LACKAWANNA  
AND  
LUZERNE  
COUNTY



## The Institute

Turning Information into Insight

*A collaboration among Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Johnson College, Keystone College, King's College, Lackawanna College, Luzerne County Community College, Marywood University, Misericordia University, Penn State Scranton, Penn State Wilkes-Barre, The Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education, University of Scranton and Wilkes University*



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The Institute is a non-profit research organization dedicated to empowering business and community leaders with research based strategies for informed decision making. We conduct independent, non-biased research to identify the opportunities, issues and challenges unique to the region and find innovative solutions to help solve the problems facing our communities. The Institute also offers a wide array of research, consulting and support services to help organizations boost productivity, increase profitability and be successful in their missions.

## Research areas include:

- demographics
- economic development
- community development
- education
- energy
- government
- health & health care
- housing
- industry
- infrastructure
- land use
- planning
- public safety
- tourism and arts & culture
- transportation
- workforce development

## The Institute prepares the following products:

- Arts & Culture Studies
- Economic & Demographic Profiles
- Economic Development Strategies
- Economic and Tax Impact Studies
- Education Studies
- Feasibility and Market Studies
- Housing Studies
- Indicators – Indexes
- Industry Studies
- Needs Assessments
- Policy Analysis
- Program Evaluation Support
- Project Analyses and Monitoring
- Research Validation and Peer Review
- Tourism Strategic Plans
- Workforce Studies

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# Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge The Institute's Advisory Board for its time, effort, and commitment to this region:

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**Vice Chairman – Frank Joanlanne, Borton Lawson**

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**Tara Wilson**  
Power Engineering Corp.

*Thank you to outgoing Presidents Steven Scheinman, MD, Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Fr. John J. Ryan, King's College, and Kathleen Owens, Ph.D., Misericordia University for your ongoing guidance and support of The Institute. Fr. Scott Pilarz, S.J. University of Scranton, may he rest in peace.*

# The Institute

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## What We Believe

At The Institute, we believe that empowering leaders with the research-based strategies and solutions they need to make informed decisions will lead to a stronger regional economy and a better quality of life for residents. For over a decade, The Institute has worked behind the scenes to support initiatives that advance regional competitiveness and revitalize communities.

## Thank You to Our Generous Research Underwriters

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our generous stakeholders who share our vision for a better, stronger Northeastern Pennsylvania and whose financial support makes our community based research and events like The Indicators possible.

### Signature Underwriters

Andrew J. Sordoni Foundation  
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Penn State Wilkes-Barre  
The Wright Center  
for Graduate Medical Education  
University of Scranton  
Wilkes University



# Lackawanna and Luzerne County Indicators

## Northeastern Pennsylvania by the Numbers

### Population Trends

#### Population Change since 2000

Lackawanna: - 1.7%

Luzerne: - 0.6%

Statewide: + 4.2%

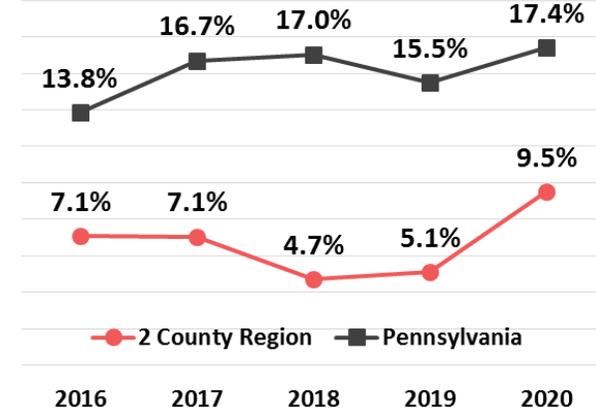
#### 10 Year Net Migration

Lackawanna: - 5,139

Luzerne: + 1,155

### Housing

#### % of Homeless Households Who Are Unsheltered



### Health & Environment

#### Regional General Hospital Beds: 2019

**1,564** (2% more than 5 years ago)

#### Percent Without Health Insurance: 2019

**5.8 %** (Compared with 10.8% in 2010)

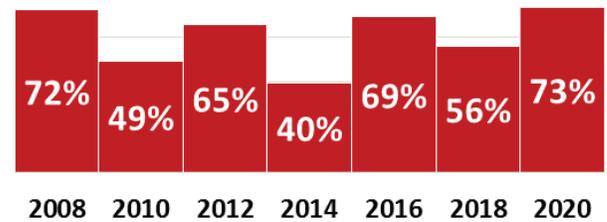


#### Regional Air Quality

**Zero** Unhealthy Air Quality Days Since 2010

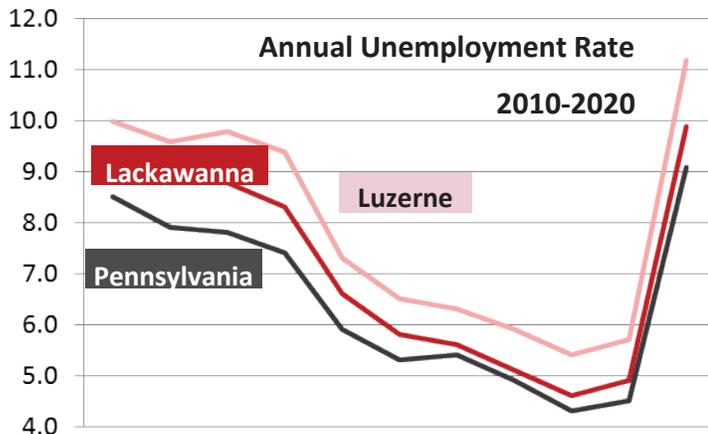
### Civic Engagement

#### Regional Voter Turnout for Select General Elections

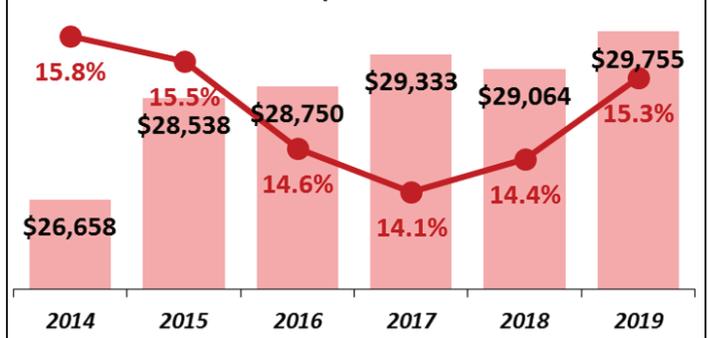


## The Regional Economy

Prior to March 2020, the region's economy was strong, with sustained GDP growth and relatively low unemployment. The 2020 annual average unemployment rate was 9.9 percent in Lackawanna and 11.2 percent in Luzerne, nearly double those of the prior year.



#### Overall Poverty Rate & Inflation-Adjusted Per Capita Income



#### Regional GDP: 2019

**\$29.8 Billion**

3.1% annual growth  
(3.3% statewide)



# Lackawanna and Luzerne County Indicators

## Institute Insights on COVID-19

In response to the unprecedented scope of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Institute embarked on The Institute Insights on COVID-19 research agenda in April 2020. This series of studies focused on the pandemic's impacts on the region. The studies highlighted on this page have been published in their entirety on <https://institutepa.org/covid.php>.

Due to the ongoing fluidity of the pandemic, follow-up study is planned for several of these topics. The Institute has also responded to the crisis with brief research articles in the Quarterly Economy Tracker and Policy Tracker and video and infographic updates shared on social media and YouTube.

### Impact of COVID-19 On Municipalities

This study explores factors that influence the vulnerability and resilience of the regional economy, and how reliance on elastic versus inelastic sources of revenue affect the region's cities. Overall, many revenue sources that municipal governments rely upon are subject to varying degrees of risk due to COVID-19 and the associated widespread economic distress.

### The Impact of COVID-19 on Social Services

This study included a survey disseminated to various nonprofit organizations throughout the region. Research findings included enhanced reliance on social service agencies to assist with essential needs, changes in service provision, staffing, and fundraising, varied impact across different types of organizations, and the evolving role of technology.

### Health Care Systems Analysis

This study reveals timely information and puts forth policy recommendations regarding preparedness of the regional

healthcare system to respond to the pandemic, impact and actions within nursing homes and long-term care facilities, challenges with health information technology infrastructure, effects on the health insurance market, testing and contact tracing, and funding issues.

### The Impact of COVID-19 on Business & Industry

This study explores the struggles of businesses throughout the region, and uses targeted economic data to detail the various types and severity of disruption they face. Additionally, the report offers recommendations for mitigating industry vulnerability and embracing resilience.

### Equity & COVID-19

This study sheds light on disparities in the pandemic's impacts across gender, age, racial, and other relevant demographic groups. Read about the intersection of inequity and COVID-19 as they pertain to COVID illnesses and deaths, health care, unemployment, income, and remote work opportunities.

### Workforce Development in the Face of COVID-19

This report includes an analysis of unemployment claim activity by industry and demographics, and identifies which categories of workers have been most impacted by recent job losses. Furthermore, this study describes likely post-pandemic workforce changes in regard to automation, skills gaps, and unstable industries. It explores how workers can reskill, upskill, and outskill to enter industries or occupations that have not been as affected as their own.

### Telehealth Services Study

This research reveals many challenges to the provision of telehealth services, which remain apparent despite the current waivers and special considerations. Recommended changes to these challenges can be tedious and potentially expensive, but telehealth is providing much needed help in a difficult time and, regardless of its drawbacks, will have the chance to grow and evolve as the field of medicine continues to make strides in the coming months and years.

### The Impact of COVID-19 on K-12 Education

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public school education is undoubtedly substantial, though the full extent and variety of the effects are yet to be determined.

The first part of this analysis examines the approaches used by school districts in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties to provide Continuity of Education following the mandated closure of all Pennsylvania schools beginning in mid-March. The second part of this analysis examines the approaches adopted by schools as they began the 2020-2021 academic year.

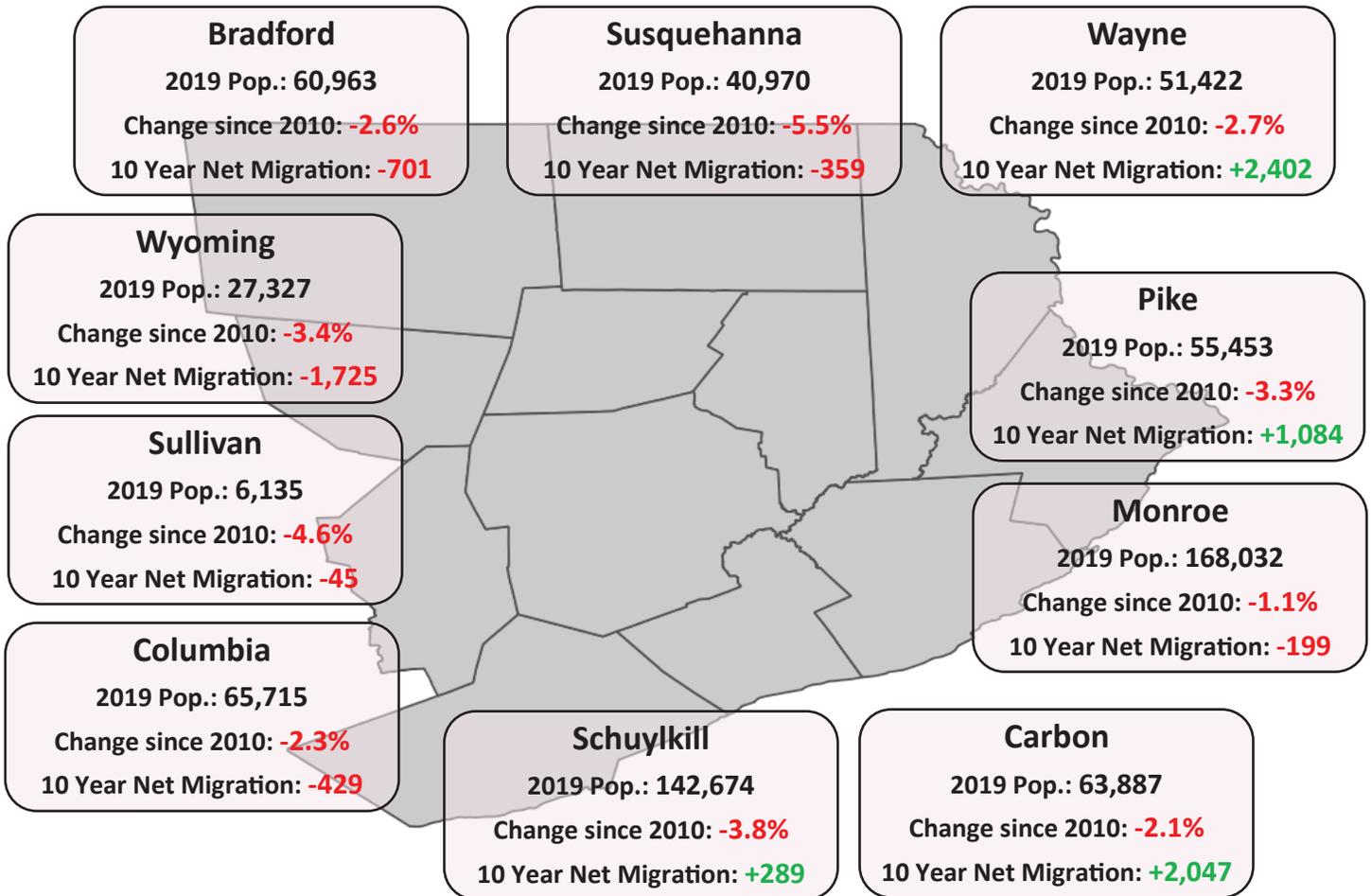
### Thank you to Institute Insights on COVID-19 Sponsors:



# Northeast Regional Dashboard

For 2021, The Institute has curated a selection of data for counties that neighbor Lackawanna and Luzerne, as well as statistics on cities within the two counties in order to provide critical information to stakeholders serving narrower or broader territories, show how trends vary between urban and rural communities, and highlight the interconnectedness and shared challenges and opportunities of the broader region.

## Population Trends



Each of the ten neighboring counties saw their total population fall since 2010. The largest percentage declines were in Susquehanna and Sullivan Counties. While most counties also saw a net loss through migration, several counties South and East of Lackawanna and Luzerne saw a net gain. Each county has also gotten older on average. The largest cities in the region have younger populations, and the median age in Scranton, Hazleton, and Pittston has gotten younger, defying the regional trend.

Median Age by City			
	2010	2019	
Carbondale	38.3	41.8	↑
Hazleton	40.9	35.8	↓
Nanticoke	41.8	42.9	↑
Pittston	40.0	34.5	↓
Scranton	38.3	37.2	↓
Wilkes-Barre	34.4	34.5	↑

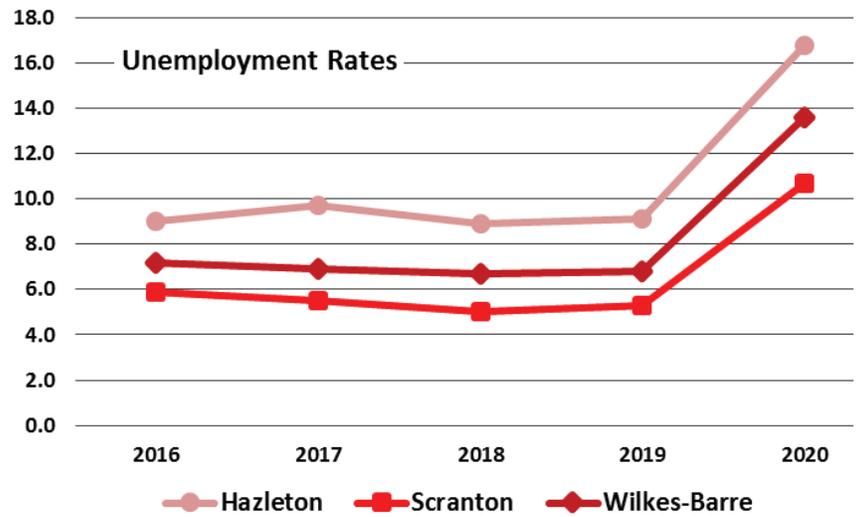
Median Age by County			
	2010	2019	
Bradford County	42.6	44.5	↑
Carbon County	43.1	46.2	↑
Columbia County	39.2	41.0	↑
Monroe County	39.3	42.9	↑
Pike County	41.9	48.2	↑
Schuylkill County	42.6	44.4	↑
Sullivan County	48.7	53.7	↑
Susquehanna County	44.1	48.4	↑
Wayne County	44.8	48.2	↑
Wyoming County	41.0	44.7	↑

Data Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimates

# Northeast Regional Dashboard

Unemployment Rates		
	2019	2020
Bradford County	4.5	7.5
Carbon County	5.5	9.8
Columbia County	4.9	8.1
Monroe County	5.5	11.5
Pike County	5.7	10.6
Schuylkill County	5.5	9.2
Sullivan County	5.3	8.5
Susquehanna County	4.4	7.3
Wayne County	4.8	9.2
Wyoming County	5.0	8.4

Data Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Unemployment in the region spiked in 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19. The three largest cities in the region have typically had unemployment rates higher than the region as a whole. The Pocono counties of Monroe, Pike, and Carbon saw the highest unemployment levels in 2020 among neighboring counties.

**Largest Industry by Employment by County**

Data Source: JobsEQ

**Health Care:** Bradford, Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Sullivan, Wayne

**Manufacturing:** Columbia, Schuylkill, Wyoming

**Retail:** Monroe, Susquehanna

**Accommodation & Food Service:** Pike

Educational attainment levels vary widely by county. Pike, Monroe, and Columbia have the largest share of adults with at least a bachelor's degree, while Schuylkill and Sullivan counties have the lowest. Nearly all counties and cities saw an increase in this share since 2010.

Poverty trends have varied in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Each of the cities have above average poverty rates relative to the region, and each saw an increase in the poverty rate since 2010.

	% of Adults with a Bachelor's Degree			% of People Below Poverty Line			
	2010	2019		2010	2019		
Bradford County	15.7%	18.7%	↑	Bradford County	13.6%	12.7%	⇐
Carbon County	14.6%	17.9%	↑	Carbon County	10.5%	11.7%	↑
Columbia County	18.3%	22.9%	↑	Columbia County	13.7%	15.0%	↑
Monroe County	23.8%	24.7%	⇐	Monroe County	10.4%	11.2%	⇐
Pike County	23.3%	26.8%	↑	Pike County	8.7%	9.5%	⇐
Schuylkill County	13.6%	16.6%	↑	Schuylkill County	11.9%	12.4%	⇐
Sullivan County	11.4%	17.2%	↑	Sullivan County	15.5%	13.2%	↓
Susquehanna County	15.4%	18.6%	↑	Susquehanna County	11.3%	12.0%	⇐
Wayne County	17.9%	20.4%	↑	Wayne County	10.9%	11.4%	⇐
Wyoming County	16.8%	19.6%	↑	Wyoming County	10.9%	10.4%	⇐

	% of Adults with a Bachelor's Degree			% of People Below Poverty Line			
	2010	2019		2010	2019		
Carbondale	12.6%	17.7%	↑	Carbondale	19.9%	23.2%	↑
Hazleton	11.8%	12.5%	⇐	Hazleton	20.1%	22.1%	↑
Nanticoke	13.2%	17.0%	↑	Nanticoke	16.4%	18.7%	↑
Pittston	15.6%	14.8%	⇐	Pittston	14.8%	25.2%	↑
Scranton	18.6%	22.2%	↑	Scranton	18.8%	23.2%	↑
Wilkes-Barre	14.5%	16.5%	↑	Wilkes-Barre	25.4%	26.6%	↑

Data Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimates

# Social Equity Dashboard

For many indicators presented in this report, there are disparities across various social groups, particularly those of race, ethnicity, and country of birth. The selection of data that follows shows continued inequities and differing trends across demographic groups. While the causes of these inequities are complex, they often include the influence of systemic and institutional racism. It is crucial to understand equity indicators in order to more comprehensively inform education, economic development, social services, and public policy.

Poverty Rate by Race, Ethnicity, Nativity									
	Lackawanna			Luzerne			Pennsylvania		
	2010	2019		2010	2019		2010	2019	
<b>Overall population</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	↑	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	↑	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	↔
White alone (not Hispanic or Latino)	11.4%	11.1%	↔	11.2%	10.6%	↔	9.0%	8.9%	↔
Black or African American	39.1%	32.3%	↓	46.5%	44.0%	↓	27.9%	26.0%	↓
American Indian and Alaska Native	11.4%	31.5%	↑	25.8%	42.9%	↑	24.3%	24.6%	↔
Asian	11.8%	19.1%	↑	12.4%	16.6%	↑	14.7%	13.9%	↔
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	17.5%	↑	0.0%	7.0%	↑	27.7%	24.5%	↓
Some other race	38.1%	23.8%	↓	35.7%	34.4%	↓	35.2%	31.4%	↓
Two or more races	38.0%	36.1%	↓	31.1%	36.4%	↑	26.0%	22.0%	↓
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	38.3%	45.0%	↑	40.5%	33.5%	↓	31.0%	28.1%	↓
Foreign born	16.0%	17.7%	↑	26.5%	21.1%	↓	15.3%	15.8%	↔
Native born	13.1%	14.5%	↑	13.1%	14.3%	↑	12.2%	12.2%	↔

Poverty and income varies widely across racial and ethnic groups. Black and Hispanic households in the region have incomes 47 and 38 percent lower than White households, respectively, though Asian households have the highest of any racial group. Nonwhite groups consistently have higher rates of poverty than White residents. Homeownership also lags significantly among Nonwhite groups in the region. While about 7 in 10 White households own their homes in the region, this is true for less than 2 in 10 Black households.

## Regional Median Household Income by Race (2019)

Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	<b>\$34,252</b>
Multiple Races	<b>\$31,767</b>
Asian	<b>\$76,637</b>
Black/African-American	<b>\$29,581</b>
White Non-Hispanic	<b>\$55,517</b>

Homeownership Rate by Race, Ethnicity, Nativity									
	Lackawanna			Luzerne			Pennsylvania		
	2010	2019		2010	2019		2010	2019	
<b>Overall Homeownership Rate</b>	<b>66.1%</b>	<b>64.3%</b>	↓	<b>69.9%</b>	<b>68.0%</b>	↓	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>68.9%</b>	↓
White alone (not Hispanic or Latino)	68.8%	68.8%	↔	72.2%	72.7%	↔	75.5%	74.5%	↓
Black or African American	21.4%	16.1%	↓	21.5%	20.3%	↓	47.4%	43.2%	↓
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.0%	54.4%	↑	0.0%	51.6%	↑	55.1%	52.3%	↓
Asian	50.8%	42.4%	↓	67.0%	65.0%	↓	57.3%	58.4%	↑
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	No Data			No Data			No Data		
Some other race	22.6%	36.8%	↑	41.4%	36.5%	↓	39.5%	39.4%	↔
Two or more races	41.5%	31.9%	↓	50.8%	30.9%	↓	49.5%	45.0%	↓
Hispanic or Latino origin	17.2%	20.8%	↑	36.1%	33.9%	↓	43.6%	41.2%	↓
Foreign born	47.4%	42.1%	↓	56.8%	45.0%	↓	59.3%	56.5%	↓
Native born	66.9%	65.5%	↓	70.5%	69.7%	↔	71.8%	69.9%	↓

Data Notes: For some racial groups, large variations may be explained by small sample sizes. "No Change" icons were used where 2010-2019 change was one percentage point or less and do not necessarily denote statistical significance.

Data Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimates

# Social Equity Dashboard

## Social Equity Dashboard

### Percent of Adults with Some College or Higher by Race, Ethnicity, Nativity

	Lackawanna			Luzerne			Pennsylvania		
	2010	2019		2010	2019		2010	2019	
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	48.2%	54.2%	▲	45.6%	50.8%	▲	49.6%	55.8%	▲
White alone ( not Hispanic or Latino)	48.2%	56.0%	▲	46.1%	52.6%	▲	50.5%	57.1%	▲
Black or African American	42.6%	37.4%	▼	36.4%	37.3%	▬	42.2%	49.0%	▲
American Indian and Alaska Native	63.8%	21.0%	▼	49.7%	33.2%	▼	48.3%	46.2%	▬
Asian	70.7%	47.8%	▼	80.2%	69.7%	▼	66.5%	69.1%	▬
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	70.9%	100.0%	▲	100.0%	34.4%	▼	51.7%	50.7%	▬
Some other race	29.1%	36.4%	▲	21.5%	31.9%	▲	28.1%	32.2%	▬
Two or more races	53.3%	50.2%	▬	46.5%	54.5%	▲	53.8%	59.8%	▲
Hispanic or Latino origin	36.3%	32.6%	▬	28.2%	34.1%	▲	34.1%	39.5%	▲
Foreign born	50.7%	44.0%	▼	40.4%	39.9%	▬	54.5%	57.6%	▬
Native born	48.1%	54.9%	▲	45.9%	51.7%	▲	49.3%	55.7%	▲

Data Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimates

The share of adults in the region and statewide with at least some college education has grown. However, several groups, including Black or Hispanic residents, have both lagged behind the overall population in this percentage and failed to see the same degree of increase over the last decade. Disparities also exist in health and public safety. Infant mortality, an important indicator of community health outcomes, is far higher among African Americans, who also have higher age-adjusted mortality rates for cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes. Homicide is also a disproportionately frequent cause of death for Black and Hispanic Pennsylvanians. The region also had 19 reported bias crime incidents since 2010, a rate lower than Pennsylvania's. COVID-19 has also had disproportionate impacts along racial lines, as reported in previous research from The Institute, and as of April, nonwhite residents in the region lagged in rates of COVID-19 vaccination.

### Statewide Mortality Rates for Selected Causes of Death, by Race (2015-2019)

	White	Black	Asian/Pacific Islander	Multiple Races	Hispanic
Cancer	156.9	189.1	78.6	89.1	104.8
Cardiovascular Diseases	217.7	286.6	103.0	130.0	149.2
Diabetes	19.6	31.0	11.0	11.7	22.1
Homicide	2.2	28.2	1.0	3.4	8.0
Suicide	15.6	7.2	6.1	4.6	7.1

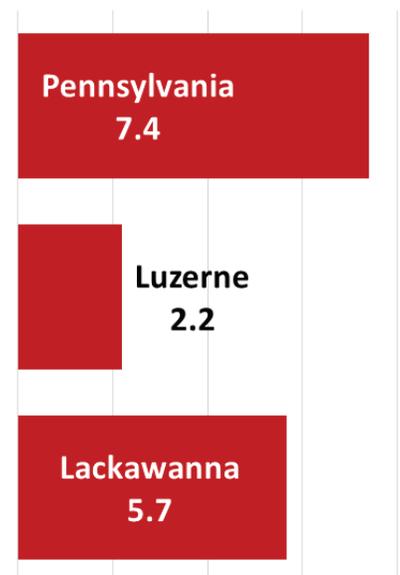
### Infant Mortality Rates by Race & Ethnicity

	Lackawanna			Luzerne		
	2009-2013	2014-2018	% Chng.	2009-2013	2014-2018	% Chng.
White	6.8	7.0	3%	6.7	4.3	-36%
Black	31.0	20.8	-33%	19.6	16.4	-16%
Asian American/Pacific Islander	No Data			No Data		
Multiple Races	No Data			No Data		
Hispanic	No Data			9.5	8.2	-14%

Data Source: PA Dept. of Health

### Hate Crimes per 100,000

2010-2020



Data Source: PA Uniform Crime Reporting System

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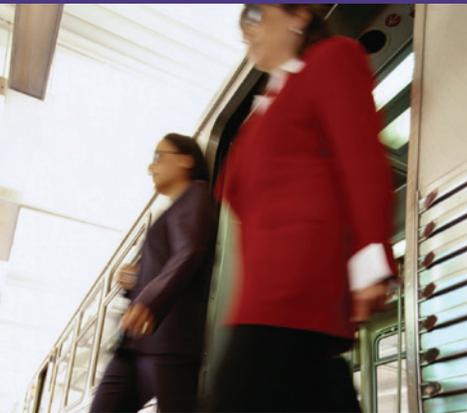
## Regional Dashboard

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Demographics

# Demographics



**“By 2019, each county experienced a small population decrease after slight growth the previous year.”**

## Demographics

The first section of the Indicators report covers demographics – the size and composition of the two counties’ populations, and the dynamics driving population change. The section reports on population, age distribution, birth rates, ethnic diversity, and the change in household size, as well as other important characteristics of the region’s demographic makeup.

The U.S. Census is the most accurate measure of population for a given geographic area. It is conducted once every ten years. The 2020 Census effort was completed last year amid very difficult conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some data is expected to be released later this year.

The recorded populations in both counties decreased from 1990 to 2000, but increased slightly from 2000 to 2010. For more current population data, the American Community Survey is used as an estimate of population. Both counties have seen slight declining trends since 2010, while Pennsylvania as a whole has seen slow but uneven population growth over the last decade.

There are three components of population change – births, deaths, and migration. According to the latest data, birth rates in both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have fluctuated from year to year but remain lower than in the Commonwealth as a whole. Migration data is sourced from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Though both counties experienced times of significant net inflow driven by migration into the region from neighboring states, this trend reversed around 2012. From 2012 to 2016, more residents left the region than entered, with higher outflow in Lackawanna County. Since 2017, the net outflow has slowed in both counties, and Luzerne County again recorded two straight years of net positive migration. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, increases have been observed in housing costs and real estate market activity, a sign of migration into the region. A nationwide trend of migration out of large, high cost of living metro areas has been observed, though the scale of this migration into the region, and whether it will be permanent or temporary, is uncertain.

The age distribution of the two counties generally mirrored statewide trends. Older adults comprise a larger share of the population locally compared with the Commonwealth and children make up a slightly smaller share. This pattern has not changed drastically over the last several years. The relatively low ratio of children to senior citizens indicates potential challenges to the region’s future workforce, because there will be fewer residents to fill jobs as a large number of baby boomers continue to exit the workforce. This, however, is a national challenge. Part time and remote employment of older adults need to be a consideration for businesses. Furthermore, the longer lifespans of many of today’s older adults means there will be an increased need for support services for older adults.

Although nearly 90 percent of Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties’ total population has been White/Caucasian over the past several years, the percentage of residents who are White/Caucasian alone has declined since 2000. Racial and ethnic diversity has been increasing in the two counties. The growth of the Hispanic/Latino population has been considerable, doubling over the last two decades and now near or greater than the statewide percentage in both counties. The percentage of Asian Americans and African Americans in both counties has also grown substantially since 2000.

Accurate statistics on population will continue to be significant when it comes to apportionment of legislative representation, allocation of state and federal funds, and remaining competitive as a region. The most recent decennial census was conducted in 2020, with results expected to be released soon.

# Population & Migration Birth Rates

## Population

By 2019, each county experienced a small decline in estimated population compared with the prior year. The populations in both geographies are estimated to have fallen from the 2010 census, which had shown increases from the previous census in 2000. From 2000 to 2019, Lackawanna County saw a decline of just over two percent and Luzerne County's population fell by about one percent, compared to a growth of just under one percent statewide.

Statewide, population has grown gradually, though there was a small drop from 2018 to 2019.



**“Birth rates rose in Lackawanna County, but dropped in Luzerne County as well as the state as a whole.”**

Population Overview				
	1990	2000	2010	2019
Lackawanna	219,039	213,295	214,437	209,674
Luzerne	328,149	319,250	320,918	317,417
Pennsylvania	11,881,643	12,281,054	12,702,379	12,801,989

*U.S. Census Bureau 1990,2000, and 2010 Census, 2018 American Community Survey*

Recent Population Trends								
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	214,477	213,931	212,719	211,917	211,321	210,761	210,793	209,674
Luzerne	321,027	320,103	318,829	318,449	316,383	317,343	317,646	317,417
Pennsylvania	12,763,536	12,773,801	12,787,209	12,802,503	12,784,227	12,805,537	12,807,060	12,801,989

*U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 1 year estimates*

Lackawanna County Migration			
Year/Total	Inflow	Outflow	Net Gain/Loss
2008-2009	5,276	5,549	-273
2009-2010	5,239	5,171	68
2010-2011	5,353	5,367	-14
2011-2012	6,440	7,127	-687
2012-2013	5,649	6,386	-737
2013-2014	5,411	6,198	-787
2014-2015	4,258	5,377	-1,119
2015-2016	5,203	6,238	-1,035
2016-2017	7,394	7,724	-330
2017-2018	5,980	6,205	-225
Total	56,203	61,342	-5,139

*Source: Internal Revenue Service*

## Migration

Over the last decade, Lackawanna County saw a negative net migration of over 5,000 residents. Luzerne County saw a net positive migration of over 1,100 residents, with the greatest inflow between 2008 and 2011. Both counties saw increasing rates of migration out of the county from 2011 to 2016. Since that time, migration into each county has begun to balance the outflow, turning the net population losses in Luzerne into net gains in the most recent two years, and narrowing the gap in Lackawanna County.

Luzerne County Migration			
Year/Total	Inflow	Outflow	Net Gain/Loss
2008-2009	8,568	7,564	1,004
2009-2010	7,590	7,039	551
2010-2011	8,198	7,644	554
2011-2012	9,475	9,213	262
2012-2013	8,976	9,160	-184
2013-2014	7,676	8,368	-692
2014-2015	6,212	6,355	-143
2015-2016	8,076	8,849	-773
2016-2017	11,381	11,118	263
2017-2018	9,419	9,106	313
Total	85,571	84,416	1,155

*Source: Internal Revenue Service*

## Birth Rates

Lackawanna County's birth rate has fluctuated; in 2018 it fell to its lowest level among recent years, before increasing in 2019. In Luzerne County, there were several gradual small increases in the birth rate, which was 20.7 in 2018 – before a drop to 20.3 in 2019. The statewide birth rate has declined each year since 2014, and has fallen by over ten percent since 2000.

Birth Rate Per 1,000 Female Residents						
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	19.1	20.1	20.5	19.0	18.7	19.1
Luzerne	18.2	19.7	20.0	20.5	20.7	20.3
Pennsylvania	23.0	21.5	21.4	21.1	20.8	20.6

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health*

# Age Distribution



**“The population of children under 10 years old has risen in Luzerne County and dropped in Lackawanna County since 2018.”**

## Age Distribution

Over the past five years, the largest age category in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and in Pennsylvania was generally 45 to 54 years. Statewide and regionally, however, the 25 to 34 age group has matched or exceeded this share of the population. In both counties and statewide, growth in the population aged 25 to 34 years reflects the relatively large size of the Millennial generation.

Across all three geographies, the share of population aged 60 or older has trended upward, especially when compared to the year 2000. This age group accounts for about 27 percent of the population in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and over 25 percent statewide. By comparison, the group was about 24 percent of the regional population in 2000, and less than 20 percent statewide.

Age Distribution: Pennsylvania						
Age	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Under 5	5.9%	5.6%	5.6%	5.5%	5.5%	5.4%
5 to 9	6.7%	5.9%	5.7%	5.5%	5.5%	5.6%
10 to 14	7.0%	5.8%	5.9%	6.1%	6.1%	6.0%
15 to 19	6.9%	6.6%	6.5%	6.4%	6.4%	6.3%
20 to 24	6.1%	6.6%	6.5%	6.5%	6.3%	6.2%
25 to 34	12.7%	12.9%	13.1%	13.2%	13.2%	13.3%
35 to 44	15.9%	11.7%	11.6%	11.6%	11.7%	11.9%
45 to 54	13.9%	13.9%	13.6%	13.3%	13.0%	12.5%
55 to 59	5.0%	7.4%	7.4%	7.2%	7.2%	7.0%
60 to 64	4.2%	6.6%	6.8%	6.9%	7.0%	7.1%
65 to 74	7.9%	9.4%	9.7%	10.0%	10.2%	10.6%
75 to 84	5.8%	5.1%	5.1%	5.2%	5.5%	5.5%
85 and over	1.9%	2.5%	2.6%	2.6%	2.4%	2.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Age Distribution: Lackawanna County						
Age	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Under 5	5.3%	5.1%	5.3%	5.1%	5.3%	5.2%
5 to 9	6.1%	5.7%	5.5%	5.7%	5.5%	5.3%
10 to 14	6.5%	5.9%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	6.5%
15 to 19	6.8%	6.6%	6.4%	6.3%	6.6%	6.2%
20 to 24	6.0%	6.3%	6.2%	6.6%	5.5%	5.3%
25 to 34	11.7%	12.0%	12.7%	11.9%	12.6%	12.9%
35 to 44	14.7%	11.1%	11.0%	11.7%	11.3%	11.8%
45 to 54	13.8%	14.0%	13.4%	13.0%	13.0%	12.4%
55 to 59	5.2%	7.2%	7.2%	6.9%	6.5%	6.8%
60 to 64	4.5%	7.1%	6.8%	7.3%	7.8%	7.4%
65 to 74	9.3%	10.2%	10.7%	10.7%	11.0%	11.5%
75 to 84	7.5%	5.7%	5.4%	5.8%	5.9%	6.2%
85 and over	2.7%	3.0%	3.5%	3.0%	3.0%	2.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Age Distribution: Luzerne County						
Age	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Under 5	5.0%	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%	5.3%
5 to 9	5.8%	5.0%	5.2%	5.4%	4.7%	6.2%
10 to 14	6.4%	6.0%	5.8%	5.6%	6.4%	4.8%
15 to 19	6.5%	6.3%	6.0%	5.9%	6.2%	6.0%
20 to 24	5.4%	6.4%	6.5%	6.5%	6.0%	6.2%
25 to 34	12.2%	12.1%	12.3%	12.8%	12.7%	12.7%
35 to 44	15.0%	11.7%	11.4%	11.3%	11.4%	11.9%
45 to 54	14.0%	14.2%	14.1%	13.8%	13.6%	12.8%
55 to 59	5.4%	7.2%	7.9%	6.9%	6.8%	7.3%
60 to 64	4.6%	7.0%	6.4%	7.2%	7.2%	7.1%
65 to 74	9.4%	10.1%	10.6%	10.9%	11.1%	11.0%
75 to 84	7.5%	5.4%	5.4%	5.5%	6.1%	6.2%
85 and over	2.7%	3.5%	3.4%	3.2%	2.7%	2.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

# Racial & Ethnic Diversity

## Racial & Ethnic Diversity

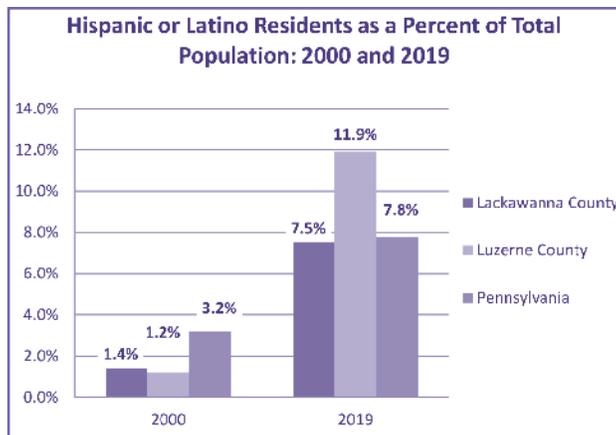
Ethnic diversity has increased in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties as well as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In all three geographic areas, the percentage of non-white residents has grown considerably over the last five years and compared to the 2000 census.

The percentage of Asian-American residents in Lackawanna County has quadrupled since 2000. Luzerne County saw its share of Asian-American residents rise. The proportion of African-American residents in Lackawanna County has grown from 1.3 percent in 2000 to 3.5 percent in 2019. African-Americans made up over seven percent of the Luzerne County population in 2019 – up from 1.7 percent in 2000, and a noticeable increase from the prior year’s estimate. Both counties have also experienced large increases in their percentages of multiracial residents compared with 2000.

The size of the Hispanic/Latino communities in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and Pennsylvania have also increased significantly since 2000. In Lackawanna County, Hispanic residents accounted for 1.4 percent of the total population in 2000; by 2019, that percentage increased to 7.5 percent. Luzerne County’s Hispanic/Latino population accounted for 1.2 percent of residents in 2000; by 2019, that percentage increased to 11.9 percent. From 2000 to 2019, the state’s Hispanic population increased at a slower but still substantial pace. While Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have historically been less diverse than the state as a whole, the percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents in both counties has been near or greater than that of the Commonwealth, particularly for Luzerne County.



**“Ethnic diversity has continued to flourish in both counties.”**



Race by County and State							
	Lackawanna	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
White/Caucasian		96.7%	92.3%	91.7%	91.8%	90.5%	89.8%
Black/African-American		1.3%	3.1%	2.8%	2.7%	2.1%	3.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native		0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Asian		0.8%	2.3%	2.5%	2.8%	2.9%	3.2%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Some other race		0.5%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	1.2%	1.6%
Two or more races		0.7%	1.7%	2.3%	2.1%	3.2%	1.7%
	Luzerne	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
White/Caucasian		96.6%	88.3%	90.2%	88.5%	87.4%	84.0%
Black/African-American		1.7%	4.4%	4.4%	4.9%	4.8%	7.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native		0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Asian		0.6%	1.2%	1.2%	1.4%	1.3%	1.0%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Some other race		0.4%	3.6%	2.2%	3.6%	4.0%	5.4%
Two or more races		0.6%	2.3%	1.8%	1.4%	2.2%	2.2%
	Pennsylvania	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
White/Caucasian		85.4%	81.1%	80.9%	80.7%	80.1%	79.6%
Black/African-American		10.0%	11.0%	11.0%	11.2%	11.2%	11.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native		0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Asian		1.8%	3.3%	3.3%	3.5%	3.6%	3.5%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race		1.5%	1.9%	2.1%	1.9%	2.4%	2.6%
Two or more races		1.2%	2.4%	2.5%	2.5%	2.6%	2.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

# Change in Household Size

## Single Parent Families



**“Average household sizes have continued to shrink in both counties and in the commonwealth.”**

### Household Size

The average household size has fluctuated for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, as well as for Pennsylvania. It has decreased every year since 2015 in Lackawanna County and since 2016 in Luzerne County, as has the state’s average household size. For both counties, the household size remains below the statewide average of 2.42.

Household Size						
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	2.38	2.45	2.36	2.35	2.30	2.29
Luzerne	2.34	2.40	2.45	2.41	2.38	2.33
Pennsylvania	2.48	2.50	2.50	2.47	2.44	2.42

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

### Single Parent Families

The share of all households that are single parent households with children under age 18 dropped in all three geographies in 2019. However, this is due to a data classification change (denoted by \*) that now excludes unmarried couples (for example, a mother or father who lives with their own children and an unmarried partner). The updated estimates provide a more accurate view of single parents raising children without another adult in the household.

Across the three geographies, at least three-fourths of single-parent households are headed by women, and Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have a higher share of single mother households than Pennsylvania as a whole.

Female Single Parent Households with Children Under 18						
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Lackawanna	5.6%	6.2%	5.4%	6.5%	7.2%	6.0%
Luzerne	5.4%	8.0%	7.8%	7.6%	6.7%	6.5%
Pennsylvania	6.2%	6.4%	6.0%	6.0%	5.9%	4.9%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

Male Single Parent Households with Children Under 18						
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Lackawanna	ND	2.3%	2.1%	2.2%	3.4%	1.7%
Luzerne	ND	2.6%	2.1%	1.8%	2.8%	0.8%
Pennsylvania	ND	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.3%	1.2%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

# Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Ratio of Children to Elders

## Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

While data for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties are difficult to analyze (due to many years of insufficient sample sizes for Lackawanna County), the number of grandparents raising grandchildren in Pennsylvania has fluctuated significantly over the period examined. Statewide, the number of grandparents raising grandchildren fell from 2013 to 2017, declining by over 18 percent in that period, but saw two straight years of increases in 2018 and 2019.

Luzerne County saw fluctuation in the number of grandparents raising grandchildren, averaging 2,458 over the last decade. The most recent two years represent the highest and third highest estimates of the ten years analyzed. Data for Lackawanna County is limited, but from 2016 to 2018, the estimated number of grandparents raising grandchildren averaged 1,312.



**“The statewide ratio of children to seniors has dropped at a greater rate than the ratios in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.”**

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	1,771	959	1,207	ND
Luzerne	2,182	2,927	2,406	2,183	2,398	2,311	2,280	2,117	3,204	2,572
Pennsylvania	86,968	80,521	91,564	92,964	91,531	88,495	81,884	76,005	81,392	82,556

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

## Ratio of Children to Seniors

The ratio of children to seniors is one measure of the population dynamics of a region. A ratio of children to seniors below 1.0 suggests that the replacement rate to maintain steady population is not being met (before accounting for the effects of migration). However, a falling ratio can also indicate that as adults live longer into advanced age, seniors simply represent a larger share of the population compared to other age cohorts. The ratio of children to seniors has shown a downward trend from 2015 to 2018, though the ratio grew slightly in 2019. The statewide ratio has also seen a generally downward trend since 2015.

Ratio of Children to Seniors					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna					
Children (14 and under)	35,277	35,334	35,346	35,492	35,432
Seniors (65 and older)	40,091	41,498	41,103	41,876	41,322
Ratio	0.88	0.85	0.86	0.85	0.86
Luzerne					
Children (14 and under)	50,951	50,977	50,913	51,419	51,506
Seniors (65 and older)	60,554	61,184	62,355	63,359	62,864
Ratio	0.84	0.83	0.82	0.81	0.82
Pennsylvania					
Children (14 and under)	2,212,787	2,198,623	2,194,100	2,184,406	2,173,913
Seniors (65 and older)	2,181,193	2,222,761	2,276,543	2,332,369	2,388,218
Ratio	1.01	0.99	0.96	0.94	0.91

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

# Seniors Living Alone



**“The numbers of senior citizens aged 65 years or older living alone have fluctuated in the two counties, but have risen steadily throughout the state.”**

## Seniors Living Alone

For all three areas, the number of senior citizens aged 65 years or older living alone fluctuated in the periods examined. Lackawanna County saw two straight years of decline after the estimate spiked in 2017. Luzerne County saw the second straight year of moderate growth in this statistic in 2019. In both counties combined, there have been over 31,000 seniors living alone in each of the past four years. Statewide, the number of seniors living alone has been steadily growing.

Seniors Living Alone						
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	13,529	11,503	11,958	13,620	12,504	11,953
Luzerne	20,846	18,352	19,512	18,605	19,130	19,260
Pennsylvania	555,374	603,167	610,955	642,359	650,681	660,578

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*



# Jobs & Economy

# Jobs & Economy



**“Many of these data points have changed dramatically due to the COVID-19 outbreak; as a result, they represent a baseline for future analysis on the impacts of the pandemic.”**

## Jobs & Economy

The Jobs and Economy section of this report summarizes important economic indicators in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and in Pennsylvania as a whole. The last decade or so has been an era of economic change, including the downturn of the housing market, subsequent ‘Great Recession,’ and the continuing economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. There has also been increased automation in many industries, as well as shifts toward transportation, distribution, and e-commerce. All these factors have impacted the region, so understanding economic indicators is of tremendous importance. The trends in the data tell a descriptive story.

This section includes data on unemployment rate and labor force, per capita and aggregate personal income, household income and income by source, percentage of individuals and families with children under age 18 years living below the poverty level, employment by occupation, number of employees, average annual pay, distribution of jobs by industry cluster, number of establishments, deed transactions, gross domestic product (GDP), exports, tourism spending, federal funding, and student loan debt.

At the time the 2021 Indicators Report was being prepared, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the worldwide economy and job market. The impact is anticipated to be severe and far-reaching. The Institute will continue to monitor this impact on the regional economy and workforce as data becomes available, and provide updated analyses in future Indicators Reports as well as other publications. Many of the data points that follow are expected to change dramatically due to this disruption; as a result, they represent a baseline for future analysis on the impacts of COVID-19. Data in this report will be one of the last Indicators reports in which current data reflects the time period before the pandemic affected the world.

In the wake of the Great Recession, Northeastern Pennsylvania was left with unemployment rates higher than national and statewide rates – along with relatively slow economic growth. As made evident by its consistently lower-than-average wages and higher unemployment levels, the economy of the Lackawanna County and Luzerne County region has historically lagged. The economic repercussions of the pandemic led to a spike in unemployment in April 2020, with double digit unemployment rates persisting for five months, and regional unemployment rates continue to surpass statewide rates.

The region has experienced some net job growth over the last few years, which reflected a falling unemployment rate and an increase in total jobs prior to the pandemic. Some higher wage employment sectors are showing growth, however, and consistent contributions from exports and tourism positively affect the economy. Tourism impact will likely show a dramatic drop for 2020 once those numbers are released. The aging population is also influencing these economic characteristics. The steady rate of workers leaving the workforce due to retirement has resulted in a smaller labor force, though labor force participation among those aged 18 to 64 years has increased in recent years (indicating a favorable environment for job seekers). Although workers have benefitted from steady wage growth in the region, regional growth rates have lagged behind the statewide rate recently.

The percentage of individuals living below the poverty level is another major issue impacting the region. Poverty levels are closely linked with unemployment and underemployment; when households lose their livelihood, people have difficulty providing their families with basic necessities. Additionally, low wage jobs contribute to both poverty and the number of households with income above the poverty line but insufficient as a living wage (the income required for a modest but dignified life). Thus, there is great demand on social services and charitable organizations that are themselves competing for limited government and philanthropic funding. Non-profits were able to receive some COVID funds in 2020 to support their activity, but the long-term impact is not yet determined. The region entered the last recession with poverty rates roughly on par with statewide rates. It seems to have been harder hit by the downturn, however, with poverty rates continuing to be higher than the statewide rates.

The pandemic has intensified preexisting strains on the economy as well as created new ones. Due to COVID, there was a significant decrease in the labor force population over the last year and unemployment rates nearly doubled in the region, but started to decline in late 2020 and into 2021.

# Unemployment Rate & Labor Force

## Unemployment Rate & Labor Force

In all years analyzed, Pennsylvania’s annual unemployment rate was lower than that of either county. Luzerne County’s rates were higher than Lackawanna County’s during this period. From 2010 to 2015, the Commonwealth experienced a gradually decreasing unemployment rate as the labor market recovered from the last recession. A slight increase in 2016 was followed by further decline before a slight uptick in 2019. In 2020, the unemployment rate spiked, doubling from the previous year as a result of the economic repercussions of the pandemic, including the statewide shutdown of non-life-sustaining businesses. After falling from a nine-percent unemployment rate in 2010 to a low of 4.6 percent in 2018, Lackawanna County recorded a 9.9 percent unemployment rate in 2020. Luzerne County followed a similar pattern, peaking from a low of 5.4 percent in 2018 to 11.2 in 2020. The unemployment rate in both counties exceeded the statewide unemployment rate, which doubled from 4.5 percent in 2019 to 9.1 percent in 2020.

In April 2020, all geographies experienced the highest monthly unemployment rate of the year. The region experienced higher rates than the state; Lackawanna County had a 17.2 percent unemployment rate, Luzerne County 18.5 percent, and Pennsylvania 15.9 percent. All geographies had rates in the double digits for five months, from April to August.

Estimates for January 2021 (not seasonally adjusted) are 8.9 and 10.3 respectively for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and 8.0 percent for Pennsylvania. These rates are at least three percent higher than they were in January 2020, signaling continuing negative economic effects of the pandemic on the labor force.

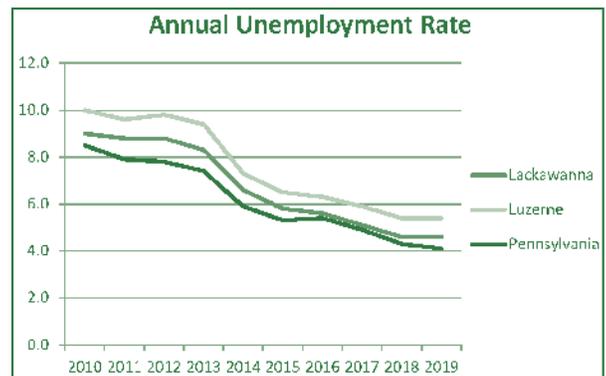
The labor forces in both counties have generally decreased since 2012. In 2020, Lackawanna County experienced a decrease of nearly 1,400 workers while Luzerne County’s labor force declined by more than 1,200 workers from 2019 to 2020. However, the labor force participation rate (the percentage of eligible working-age adults in the labor force) has shown improvement in most years between 2010 and 2019, largely due to declines in estimated population during that time.



**“The labor force participation rate (the percentage of eligible working-age adults in the labor force) has trended upward in the past decade.”**

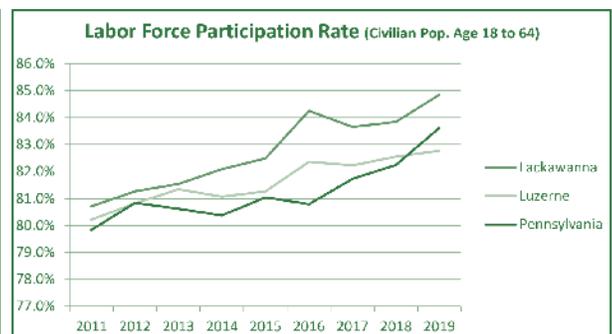
Annual Unemployment Rate			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2010	9.0	10.0	8.5
2011	8.8	9.6	7.9
2012	8.8	9.8	7.8
2013	8.3	9.4	7.4
2014	6.6	7.3	5.9
2015	5.8	6.5	5.3
2016	5.6	6.3	5.4
2017	5.1	5.9	4.9
2018	4.6	5.4	4.3
2019	4.9	5.7	4.5
2020	9.9	11.2	9.1

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Prior year figures have been revised.  
2020 rates are preliminary.*

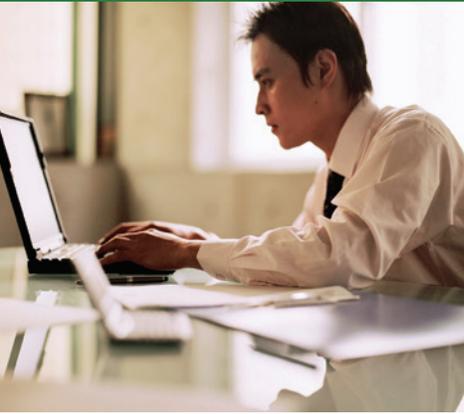


Annual Labor Force			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2011	107,016	159,444	6,381,749
2012	107,371	160,422	6,449,023
2013	107,214	160,094	6,419,837
2014	106,598	158,891	6,389,059
2015	106,458	158,870	6,423,155
2016	107,087	159,198	6,367,458
2017	105,883	158,501	6,421,994
2018	105,349	158,003	6,432,154
2019	105,266	158,500	6,496,785
2020	103,832	157,274	6,387,869

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Prior year figures have been revised*



# Household Income



**“In both counties, over 22 percent of households have incomes below \$25,000 per year.”**

## Household Income

In 2019, the largest percentages of Lackawanna County and Luzerne County residents fell into the household income category of \$50,000 to \$74,999. The same was true for Pennsylvania overall. In both counties, however, more than one in five households have incomes below \$25,000 per year; that share is less than one in five for all of Pennsylvania. The number of households with incomes over \$100,000 per year was about 20 percent and 22 percent in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties respectively, compared to nearly 30 percent statewide.

Household Income: Lackawanna County						
Income Amount	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Less than \$10,000	7.8%	6.8%	7.5%	7.5%	6.0%	5.6%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7.9%	7.8%	7.5%	6.8%	6.2%	5.8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	12.1%	12.6%	12.1%	11.3%	11.5%	11.2%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.2%	11.2%	11.0%	12.2%	9.1%	9.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	15.3%	13.1%	14.4%	13.0%	14.1%	14.1%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	17.0%	18.2%	16.6%	17.4%	21.6%	17.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.3%	11.1%	12.4%	10.7%	11.8%	14.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	10.5%	11.4%	11.4%	13.9%	13.3%	13.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2.6%	4.2%	4.7%	3.8%	3.3%	4.1%
\$200,000 or more	2.3%	3.7%	2.5%	3.4%	3.1%	4.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Household Income: Luzerne County						
Income Amount	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Less than \$10,000	8.6%	8.1%	7.4%	6.4%	7.5%	7.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7.0%	6.4%	6.3%	5.0%	5.9%	5.2%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	12.3%	10.7%	14.0%	12.0%	11.0%	9.9%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.0%	11.9%	10.8%	10.4%	9.4%	11.0%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	15.2%	12.7%	14.5%	14.8%	12.8%	13.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	16.7%	20.8%	16.4%	18.1%	19.0%	19.7%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	10.9%	11.9%	12.0%	13.8%	13.2%	13.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	11.9%	12.0%	11.5%	12.4%	13.6%	12.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3.5%	3.5%	4.1%	4.2%	4.4%	4.6%
\$200,000 or more	2.0%	2.1%	3.1%	3.0%	3.2%	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Household Income: Pennsylvania						
Income Amount	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Less than \$10,000	7.1%	6.7%	6.4%	7.2%	6.4%	6.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5.3%	4.9%	4.7%	4.5%	4.4%	4.1%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	10.6%	10.3%	10.1%	9.6%	9.3%	8.6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.1%	9.9%	9.6%	9.2%	9.3%	8.8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	13.7%	13.3%	13.1%	12.4%	12.3%	12.3%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18.4%	18.4%	18.3%	17.9%	17.8%	17.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.4%	12.8%	12.5%	12.9%	12.8%	13.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	13.0%	13.5%	14.2%	14.4%	15.1%	15.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4.8%	5.2%	5.5%	5.8%	6.2%	6.7%
\$200,000 or more	4.6%	5.1%	5.4%	6.1%	6.5%	7.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Income by Source

## Income by Source

In 2019, the income of more than 72 percent of households in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties was earned by working. It was the third consecutive year of growth for Lackawanna County while Luzerne County experienced a slight decrease from the previous year. Throughout the Commonwealth, the percentage of households with earnings remained above 75 percent in 2019, and continued to exceed the rates in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.

The number of households receiving Social Security income declined slightly in 2019 after a prolonged increase in Luzerne County, while remaining relatively stable in Lackawanna County and statewide. As baby boomers continue to retire, the number of regional households relying on Social Security remains high relative to the number in the Commonwealth as a whole.

In 2019, the mean earnings for households with earned income were \$72,726 in Lackawanna County and \$70,788 in Luzerne County. Both were lower than the \$90,297 mean earnings statewide. Lackawanna County's mean earnings increased by nearly \$4,000 in 2019, after falling nearly \$5,000 the year before, rebounding to exceed the mean earnings in Luzerne County once again.

Social Security and retirement incomes were much lower. In both counties, households with Social Security income received a mean of just over \$19,000 in that type of income. The mean amount of retirement income declined by about \$700 in Lackawanna County in 2019 following a significant increase the prior year, while increasing slightly in Luzerne County and statewide.



**“In both counties, nearly 40 percent of households rely on Social Security income.”**

Income by Source: Lackawanna County						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Percent of HH with earnings	69.4%	71.8%	71.2%	71.6%	73.4%	74.3%
Mean earnings	\$63,246	\$70,230	\$70,445	\$73,672	\$68,983	\$72,726
Percent of HH with Social Security income	39.8%	39.0%	40.7%	38.1%	39.9%	39.8%
Mean Social Security income	\$17,133	\$17,716	\$18,219	\$17,537	\$18,309	\$19,581
Percent of HH with retirement income	21.3%	21.0%	17.6%	20.5%	22.1%	25.3%
Mean retirement income	\$22,211	\$20,969	\$18,267	\$19,211	\$23,303	\$22,598
Percent of HH with cash assistance income	3.2%	2.6%	3.8%	3.0%	3.1%	3.5%
Mean cash assistance income	\$1,972	\$2,872	\$2,111	\$2,667	\$2,107	\$2,107

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Income by Source: Luzerne County						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Percent of HH with earnings	71.1%	72.8%	71.7%	72.9%	73.1%	72.3%
Mean earnings	\$62,850	\$64,717	\$69,051	\$68,697	\$71,706	\$70,788
Percent of HH with Social Security income	39.0%	38.7%	38.8%	39.3%	39.9%	38.9%
Mean Social Security income	\$17,546	\$17,499	\$17,400	\$18,324	\$18,006	\$18,804
Percent of HH with retirement income	22.0%	21.0%	22.8%	21.2%	21.8%	28.0%
Mean retirement income	\$17,809	\$20,992	\$17,940	\$23,052	\$21,970	\$22,155
Percent of HH with cash assistance income	3.1%	3.3%	3.5%	3.8%	4.9%	2.8%
Mean cash assistance income	\$1,309	\$1,592	\$1,716	\$2,241	\$2,717	\$2,184

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Income by Source: Pennsylvania						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Percent of HH with earnings	75.4%	75.5%	75.2%	74.5%	75.5%	75.3%
Mean earnings	\$76,368	\$78,877	\$81,479	\$85,817	\$87,353	\$90,297
Percent of HH with Social Security income	34.4%	34.8%	35.4%	34.9%	35.6%	35.4%
Mean Social Security income	\$18,311	\$18,803	\$19,145	\$19,497	\$19,624	\$20,241
Percent of HH with retirement income	20.3%	20.9%	21.2%	21.0%	21.1%	27.8%
Mean retirement income	\$20,704	\$21,263	\$21,682	\$22,939	\$23,577	\$24,257
Percent of HH with cash assistance income	3.4%	3.3%	3.2%	2.9%	3.1%	3.2%
Mean cash assistance income	\$2,602	\$2,356	\$2,268	\$2,363	\$2,136	\$2,074

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Per Capita Income Aggregate Personal Income



**“Aggregate personal income in both counties and the commonwealth has maintained a slight upward trajectory.”**

## Per Capita Income

Both counties and the Commonwealth reported increases in unadjusted per capita income of more than 60 percent from 2000 to 2019. Per capita income in both counties was lower than the statewide per capita income, however, and grew at a slightly slower pace during that time.

After accounting for inflation, this change amounts to an increase of about 10 percent in Lackawanna County, seven percent in Luzerne County, and 15 percent statewide. Much of the growth in inflation-adjusted income came between 2014 and 2015 in all three geographies.

Per Capita Income							
	2000	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	\$18,710	\$24,547	\$27,174	\$27,126	\$28,397	\$28,642	\$30,662
Luzerne	\$18,228	\$24,737	\$25,960	\$26,893	\$27,944	\$28,484	\$29,151
Pennsylvania	\$20,880	\$29,220	\$30,384	\$31,272	\$32,711	\$33,960	\$35,804

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

Per Capita Income (2019 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)							
	2000	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	\$27,854	\$26,534	\$29,324	\$28,899	\$29,616	\$29,161	\$30,662
Luzerne	\$27,137	\$26,740	\$28,014	\$28,651	\$29,144	\$29,000	\$29,151
Pennsylvania	\$31,085	\$31,586	\$32,788	\$33,316	\$34,115	\$34,575	\$35,804

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

## Aggregate Personal Income

Aggregate personal income is defined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis as “the income that is received by all persons from all sources.” Aggregate personal income has been slowly but steadily rising in both counties since 2015, after seeing stagnation and modest decline in the wake of the last recession. The Commonwealth as a whole has experienced a similar trend. From 2018 to 2019, both counties saw increases in nominal (unadjusted for inflation) aggregate personal income of around three percent, compared to nearly four percent statewide.

Aggregate Personal Income (in thousands of current-year dollars)					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	9,105,749	9,357,388	9,576,407	9,990,936	10,267,137
Luzerne	13,004,255	13,346,318	13,704,095	14,313,453	14,716,470
Pennsylvania	644,445,802	662,352,876	681,658,520	717,255,286	742,924,296

*Prior year data has been revised.*  
*Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis*

## Poverty

The rate of poverty in the area increased sharply with the increase in unemployment during the last recession. The poverty rate among all people in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties rose significantly between 2000 and 2014, before slowly declining until 2017. Since then, there has been a slight uptick in the poverty rate in Lackawanna County, while the poverty rate in Luzerne County increased by nearly two percentage points over the most recent two years reported to 15.7 percent. The statewide poverty rate has declined steadily for the last four years of data. In almost all years studied, both counties have consistently had poverty rates higher than Pennsylvania as a whole.

The poverty rate among families with children under the age of 18 has been higher than the rate of poverty among the general population. In this statistic, Pennsylvania has experienced a moderate increase over the last few years. Lackawanna County saw a sudden and significant increase of 5.8 percentage points in 2017, and although it fell the following year, it returned to the same rate in 2019. In Luzerne County, the poverty rate for families with children under 18 decreased slightly in 2019, although it still exceeds the rate statewide and in Lackawanna County.



**“Population-wide poverty levels in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have increased in recent years, while the state's rate has declined.”**

Poverty - All People						
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	10.6%	15.7%	14.2%	14.5%	14.5%	14.8%
Luzerne	11.1%	15.4%	14.8%	13.8%	14.4%	15.7%
Pennsylvania	11.0%	13.2%	12.9%	12.5%	12.2%	12.0%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

Poverty - Families with Children Under 18						
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	11.4%	18.8%	15.1%	20.9%	17.6%	20.9%
Luzerne	12.9%	20.4%	20.6%	20.1%	21.7%	21.4%
Pennsylvania	12.1%	15.8%	14.6%	13.5%	13.8%	14.3%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

# Employment by Occupation

## Average Annual Pay

**“Top regional occupation categories remain 1) management, business, science and arts occupations; and 2) sales and office occupations.”**

### Employment by Occupation

In 2019, Lackawanna County and Luzerne County residents again reported that their top two occupation categories were 1) management, business, science and arts occupations; and 2) sales and office occupations. Rounding out third place in Lackawanna County were service occupations. Production, transportation, and material moving occupations took third place in Luzerne County. These statistics have fluctuated from year to year in both geographies. Service occupations have experienced the most growth in Lackawanna County, increasing by 16 percent since 2015. In Luzerne County, there has been a 20-percent increase in residents employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations since 2015, making the number of employees in this category more than double compared to Lackawanna County.

Employment by Occupation										
Occupational Category	Lackawanna					Luzerne				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Management, Business, Science & Arts	37,262	34,611	34,810	35,152	35,170	45,579	45,472	47,641	44,850	49,780
Service Occupations	17,108	16,421	16,439	19,493	19,834	27,660	24,634	25,295	26,762	28,162
Sales and Office Occupations	24,242	24,433	23,372	23,879	21,445	38,495	38,833	38,932	34,736	32,007
Natural Resources, Construction & Maintenance	7,575	9,672	7,517	6,923	8,272	10,318	10,753	12,757	12,964	11,870
Production, Transportation & Material Moving	13,832	12,860	15,723	16,701	14,336	26,527	25,971	28,941	32,264	31,879
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,019</b>	<b>97,997</b>	<b>97,861</b>	<b>102,148</b>	<b>99,057</b>	<b>148,579</b>	<b>145,663</b>	<b>153,566</b>	<b>151,576</b>	<b>153,698</b>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

### Average Annual Pay

From 2009 through 2019, both counties and the state consistently reported steady increases in average annual pay. Through the period analyzed, Lackawanna County had an average growth of two percent per year and Luzerne County averaged 2.4 percent per year (not accounting for inflation). Pennsylvania also averaged 2.4 percent growth per year. Both counties reported average annual pay that was over \$12,000 less than the statewide average annual pay. From 2018 to 2019, the statewide average annual pay increased 3.4 percent, exceeding the growth in Lackawanna County of 1.8 percent and Luzerne County of 2.6 percent.

Average Annual Pay										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	\$35,680	\$36,155	\$36,764	\$37,228	\$38,478	\$39,515	\$40,285	\$41,232	\$42,356	\$43,120
Luzerne	\$36,147	\$36,843	\$37,855	\$38,335	\$39,483	\$40,885	\$41,324	\$42,343	\$43,934	\$45,073
Pennsylvania	\$45,733	\$47,035	\$48,397	\$49,077	\$50,567	\$52,187	\$52,460	\$54,000	\$55,628	\$57,497

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages*

# Job Growth to Population Growth

## Job Growth to Population Growth

Employment performance is measured as a ratio of employment growth compared to population growth. A rate of job growth higher than the rate of population growth is a potentially good sign for the economy. Otherwise, the population may be growing faster than the job market, which can lead to unemployment as jobs become scarce. A poor job growth to population growth ratio can also indicate that a place is becoming a bedroom community, where people come to live but work elsewhere. A job growth ratio that is too high could conversely be a sign of workforce shortage.

From 2010 to 2019, both the population and job availability declined in Lackawanna County, with the population declining at a faster rate. Luzerne County experienced a slight decline in population, but positive job growth of 6.5 percent. Job availability and population increased statewide and nationally, with job growth outpacing population growth.

More recently, job growth has overtaken population growth in all four geographies from 2015 to 2019. Job growth was slower in Northeastern Pennsylvania than state and national levels, but amid recent population declines, the ratio still points to a tight labor market.



**“County-level job growth has overtaken population growth since 2015 - mirroring statewide and national trends.”**

Job Growth to Population Growth Comparison: 2010 - 2019

	Job Growth	Population Growth	Employment 2010	Employment 2019	Population 2010	Population 2019
Lackawanna County	-0.3%	-2.2%	97,461	97,131	214,367	209,674
Luzerne County	6.5%	-1.1%	136,696	145,634	320,795	317,417
Pennsylvania	8.3%	0.7%	5,472,171	5,925,588	12,709,630	12,801,989
United States	15.9%	6.1%	127,820,442	148,105,092	309,349,689	328,239,523

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 1-year estimates, Bureau of Labor Statistics QCEW

Job Growth to Population Growth Comparison: 2015 - 2019

	Job Growth	Population Growth	Employment 2015	Employment 2019	Population 2015	Population 2019
Lackawanna County	0.3%	-1.1%	96,882	97,131	211,917	209,674
Luzerne County	2.3%	-0.3%	142,346	145,634	318,449	317,417
Pennsylvania	4.1%	0.0%	5,691,613	5,925,588	12,802,503	12,801,989
United States	6.2%	2.1%	139,491,699	148,105,092	321,418,821	328,239,523

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 1-year estimates, Bureau of Labor Statistics QCEW

# Distribution of Employment by Industry



## Distribution of Employment by Industry

The three industry groups (by rank) with the highest proportions of jobs in Lackawanna County were Education, Health Care and Social Assistance; Retail Trade; and Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services, in that order. In Luzerne County, the top industries were Education, Health Care and Social Assistance; Manufacturing; and Retail Trade, in that order. In 2019, the Education, Health Care and Social Assistance industry comprised approximately one fourth of all jobs in both counties, and the top three industries in each county comprised about half of all jobs in that county. Both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties' smallest shares of jobs were in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining industry and the Information industry.

Although the Information industry accounts for a small share of jobs in the region, it also experienced one of the highest growth rates from 2015 to 2019, increasing over 25 percent in both counties. Other fast growing industries in Lackawanna County during this time were Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities, with growth over 24 percent; and Finance and Insurance, and Real estate and Rental and Leasing, which saw a 22 percent increase in employment. Luzerne County saw significant growth in Other services, except Public Administration (38 percent), and Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities (25 percent).

In the same period, Lackawanna County logged the largest employment decreases in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining, and in Manufacturing. Luzerne County saw decreases in Wholesale trade and Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services. Overall, total employment in Lackawanna County declined one percent from 2015 to 2019 across all industries, while increasing over three percent in Luzerne County.

Industry	Distribution of Employment by Industry									
	Lackawanna					Luzerne				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	725	340	560	357	556	854	1,105	1,162	1,107	882
Construction	5,777	6,974	5,306	4,783	5,944	6,785	6,747	8,474	9,154	7,787
Manufacturing	11,237	9,810	10,963	11,905	8,818	19,681	18,718	21,918	22,237	22,388
Wholesale trade	4,106	3,189	2,973	2,253	3,893	5,339	4,257	3,946	5,082	4,256
Retail trade	11,239	12,587	11,302	12,858	11,680	20,848	20,953	18,879	18,663	20,261
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4,825	5,042	8,679	5,677	5,990	9,466	10,938	14,047	10,861	11,869
Information	1,823	1,705	1,587	1,510	2,294	1,909	2,540	2,112	2,713	2,438
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	5,315	6,913	6,523	6,435	6,467	7,395	8,473	10,091	7,548	8,004
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	8,840	6,724	7,173	7,895	9,581	13,179	12,294	12,349	12,864	11,761
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	28,366	26,094	25,855	28,099	25,990	36,653	35,724	36,111	34,711	35,035
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	8,680	8,832	7,287	9,870	8,943	13,447	11,370	11,718	13,054	14,373
Other services, except public administration	4,623	5,114	4,883	5,117	4,523	5,351	5,368	5,667	6,194	7,361
Public administration	4,463	4,673	4,770	5,389	4,378	7,672	7,176	7,092	7,388	7,283
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,019</b>	<b>97,997</b>	<b>97,861</b>	<b>102,148</b>	<b>99,057</b>	<b>148,579</b>	<b>145,663</b>	<b>153,566</b>	<b>151,576</b>	<b>153,698</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - ACS 1-year Estimates

# Number of Employees & Establishments

## Number of Employees

The last recession caused significant job losses in Northeastern Pennsylvania and nationally, with large drop-offs in employment following 2008. In the following years, the prevailing state of the economy was one of slow and uneven recovery. While Luzerne County has exceeded its pre-recession employment peak, Lackawanna County has yet to do so. After three years of sustained increases, Lackawanna County saw nearly 1,000 jobs lost in 2019 while Luzerne County and the state continued to experience employment growth. Since 2010, the number of employees increased by six percent in Luzerne County, compared to one percent growth in Lackawanna County, and two percent statewide.



Number of Employees										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	96,100	96,811	96,548	96,679	97,226	96,882	97,353	97,797	98,101	97,131
Luzerne	137,784	138,423	138,837	139,015	140,883	142,346	143,619	144,773	144,969	145,634
Pennsylvania	5,791,000	5,585,000	5,578,414	5,596,841	5,644,443	5,691,613	5,737,759	5,799,123	5,867,783	5,925,588

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

## Number of Establishments

The number of business establishments has fluctuated year to year from 2010 through 2019. Luzerne County experienced a slow downward trend, though the number grew between 2014 and 2015, and again between 2017 and 2019. Change was less noticeable in Lackawanna County until 2013, which marked the beginning of a steady downward trend in the number of establishments until 2019, when there was a slight uptick. Across the period analyzed, there has been a decline of over three percent in the number of establishments in the two counties, whereas there has been an increase of more than five percent throughout the Commonwealth.

Furthermore, the lack of establishment growth despite some employment gains in recent years suggests that hiring in existing businesses may be driving job growth to a greater degree than new startups or businesses relocating to the region.

Number of Establishments										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	5,809	5,813	5,826	5,825	5,808	5,784	5,731	5,654	5,576	5,610
Luzerne	7,668	7,688	7,611	7,459	7,458	7,492	7,458	7,373	7,378	7,401
Pennsylvania	341,667	348,678	349,014	343,993	347,496	351,689	353,122	353,949	356,086	359,117

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 4th Quarter

# Deed Transactions Gross Domestic Product (GDP)



**“GDP for the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre-Hazleton Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) increased more than three percent from 2018 to 2019, and nearly 18 percent since 2014.”**

## Deed Transactions

Deed transactions measure activity in the real estate market, regarding residential, commercial, and industrial property. Both counties saw sharp declines in deed transactions between 2008 and 2010, coinciding with the collapse of the real estate market nationally and the beginning of the Great Recession. Luzerne County had recorded gradual growth in deed transactions since then, but the number of transactions fluctuated following a significant drop after 2015. In Lackawanna County, the considerable increase recorded from 2011 to 2012 was followed by several years of fluctuation, with mostly positive growth since 2014. Both counties recorded the largest increase in deed transactions in 2020 over the past several years— since 2016 in Lackawanna County and since 2013 in Luzerne County. Overall, the number of transactions have increased by one-third in Lackawanna County since 2011, while falling by 27 percent in Luzerne County.

Deed Transactions										
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	4,138	5,220	4,735	4,564	4,715	5,047	5,183	5,152	5,205	5,508
Luzerne	9,087	9,148	9,652	9,532	9,864	7,006	6,689	6,770	6,365	6,611

*2017 Data for Luzerne County has been revised.  
Source(s): Lackawanna & Luzerne Counties' Records of Deeds*

## Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

GDP for the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre-Hazleton Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) increased just over three percent from 2018 to 2019, which was similar to the statewide growth in GDP. There has been GDP growth in all years analyzed.

Since 2010, the region's GDP growth has amounted to 31.4 percent (not adjusted for inflation), compared to 34.9 percent statewide. Since 2014, the region's growth was 17.7 percent, compared to 17 percent statewide.

GDP (in millions of current-year dollars)										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Scranton-Wilkes-Barre	\$22,678	\$23,095	\$23,558	\$24,277	\$25,330	\$26,144	\$26,658	\$27,469	\$28,912	\$29,808
Pennsylvania	\$599,313	\$618,988	\$641,317	\$663,991	\$691,188	\$711,205	\$726,163	\$744,290	\$783,168	\$808,738

*Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis.  
All prior year figures have been revised.*

GDP Growth (Not Adjusted for Inflation)			
	2009 - 2019	2014 - 2019	2018-2019
Scranton-Wilkes-Barre	31.4%	17.7%	3.1%
Pennsylvania	34.9%	17.0%	3.3%

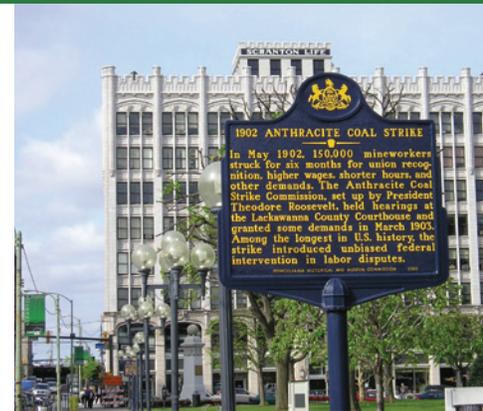
*Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

# Exports by Industry

## Exports by Industry

Numerous firms in the region contribute to the economy by exporting their goods overseas. Chemical manufacturing has been the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre MSA's largest goods export category for each of the last several years, with approximately \$543 million in exports in 2019. This is less than the prior year by \$12M or two percent but is still 56 percent higher than 2017. Food manufacturing was the only industry that saw positive growth in 2019. There was a seven percent decrease in all industry exports in the region, or \$118M loss and the residual industries suffered the greatest decline at just over seven percent. All industries not shown account for nearly \$495 million in exports, which collectively amount to over \$1.6 billion for the region. Export sales in the region have increased by over one-fifth since 2015.

Nearly one third of the region's exports were to Asian countries, and another third went to Canada and Mexico. The European Union was the region's third largest global export destination, which accounted for another 15 percent of exports. Since 2015, exports to other destinations have increased the most (71 percent), followed by exports to Africa (50 percent), and Asia (28 percent).



**“Chemical Manufacturing and Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing have exhibited the most industry growth throughout the region since 2015.”**

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre/Hazleton Metropolitan Area Exports by Industry

Exports Industry	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Chemical Manufacturing	\$345,272,932	\$320,013,102	\$349,497,168	\$555,550,505	\$543,429,990
Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	\$168,129,912	\$215,380,841	\$219,873,249	\$228,465,058	\$225,785,664
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	NA	\$118,656,658	\$132,988,975	\$168,803,641	NA
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	\$116,356,927	\$134,778,947	\$129,917,050	\$127,854,455	\$123,925,580
Food Manufacturing	\$116,515,838	\$124,077,469	\$126,405,862	\$120,036,338	\$122,253,044
Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	\$94,951,070	NA	NA	NA	\$105,461,007
Machinery Manufacturing	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Primary Metal Manufacturing	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
All Others (Residual)	\$480,760,575	\$533,799,525	\$548,240,201	\$533,074,744	\$494,836,941
All Products	\$1,321,987,254	\$1,446,706,542	\$1,506,922,505	\$1,733,784,741	\$1,615,692,226

Source: International Trade Administration

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre/Hazleton Metropolitan Area Exports by Destination

Export Destination	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Mexico & Canada	\$443,218,508	\$417,750,781	\$441,627,204	\$502,229,823	\$500,641,148
Asia	\$412,268,950	\$555,437,745	\$531,975,460	\$646,007,197	\$527,818,677
European Union	\$193,358,897	\$224,905,720	\$249,205,343	\$263,938,919	\$239,817,251
South America	\$171,065,696	\$114,470,192	\$120,609,888	\$142,333,277	\$176,282,763
Africa	\$15,082,133	\$16,826,865	\$16,261,717	\$16,610,757	\$22,602,000
Other Destinations	\$86,993,070	\$117,315,239	\$147,242,893	\$162,664,768	\$148,530,387
Total	\$1,321,987,254	\$1,446,706,542	\$1,506,922,505	\$1,733,784,741	\$1,615,692,226

Source: International Trade Administration

# Tourism Spending



**“Tourism spending in Lackawanna County has increased at an average rate of two percent each year since 2014, and Luzerne County's visitor spending has increased at an average rate of three percent in that time.”**

## Tourism Spending

In 2019, the most recent year for which data is available, tourism spending increased three percent in the two-county region to more than \$1.7 billion. This continues a steady increase in tourism spending in the region as a whole, which has grown by 13 percent since 2014. In Lackawanna County, tourism spending has increased steadily following a substantial increase in 2017. Visitor spending increased more consistently in Luzerne County. From 2014 to 2019, Lackawanna County's visitor spending increased by nearly nine percent, while Luzerne County's trended upward by over 16 percent. With the advent of COVID-19, there will likely be a large drop in visitor spending in 2020.

Tourism Visitor Spending (in millions)						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	\$633.3	\$618.4	\$605.8	\$649.9	\$667.2	\$689.1
Luzerne	\$875.1	\$889.7	\$913.9	\$965.3	\$989.0	\$1,015.7
Regional Total	\$1,508	\$1,508	\$1,520	\$1,615	\$1,656	\$1,705

*Source: Pennsylvania Tourism Office*

## Student Loan Debt

An average of approximately 21 percent of the two-county region’s population has student loan debt, with Lackawanna County at 23 percent and Luzerne County at 19 percent. Twenty percent of the Commonwealth’s population also has student loan debt. Both counties’ and Pennsylvania’s shares are higher than the nationwide share of 16 percent. The percentage of student loan holders with student loan debt in default is nine percent in Luzerne County, which is lower than the rate of ten percent in Lackawanna County, statewide, and nationally. From data available in 2019 to the current data, the share of borrowers with student loan debt in default fell in each geography analyzed.

Of all analyzed areas, Lackawanna County has the highest median student loan debt (at \$22,393), followed by Pennsylvania, and the United States. Luzerne County has the lowest median student loan debt of \$19,639. The median monthly payment is highest in Lackawanna County (\$190 per month), followed by Pennsylvania (\$174), the United States (\$160) and Luzerne County (\$157). The median debt amount approximately correlates with college educational attainment; the share of student debtholders and median loan amount increases with the share of population holding a bachelor’s degree or higher.



Student Loan Debt: 2021					
	Share of population with student loan debt	Share of student loan holders with student loan debt in default	Median student loan debt	Median student loan debt in default	Median monthly payment
Lackawanna	23%	10%	\$22,393	\$9,669	\$190
Luzerne	19%	9%	\$19,639	\$10,920	\$157
Pennsylvania	20%	10%	\$21,772	\$11,339	\$174
United States	16%	10%	\$19,825	\$11,646	\$160

*Source: Urban Institute, last updated 3/31/2021*

# Federal Funding



**“The two counties together received nearly \$1.1 billion in federal contracts and over four billion in grants, loans, and other financial assistance.”**

## Federal Funding

This indicator tracks federal funding in the forms of grants and prime contracts (including defense) for the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Some other forms of federal funding or awards, such as insurances, are not included. The two counties together received nearly \$1.1 billion in federal contracts and over four billion in grants, loans, and other financial assistance. The largest portion of this total consists of federal prime contracts.

Federal Awards 2019			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
<b>Contracts</b>			
Number	544	17,281	536,135
Amount (Thousands)	\$490,776,581	\$583,087,995	\$113,611,028,570
<b>Grants</b>			
Number	186	207	16,863
Amount (Thousands)	\$271,549,082	\$184,430,766	\$93,322,465,449
<b>Other Financial Assistance</b>			
Number	4,116	5,413	273,917
Amount (Thousands)	\$1,189,332,496	\$1,699,785,448	\$143,040,836,165
<b>Loans</b>			
Number	4,705	6,680	342,978
Amount (Thousands)	\$440,783,360	\$540,708,170	\$46,635,502,345
<i>www.usaspending.gov</i>			



Education



**“In the face of socioeconomic diversity that impacts academic performance, it is important that schools continue to aim upward and guide students along pathways to higher education and workforce success.”**

## Education

The Education section of this report identifies important education indicators, including high school graduation rates, career and technical education, SAT scores, dropout rates, educational attainment, degree completions, special education, and student-teacher ratios. By examining indicators such as these, it is possible to assess education and future economic development in terms of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to prepare the tomorrow’s workforce for employment in the region’s business and industry.

As a result of the onset of the ongoing pandemic, some indicators included in this section were not collected in 2020 including assessments on industry-based learning for those enrolled in CTC institutions and individual student growth as measured by the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System. These data are normally collected during the second half of the school year. Due to the statewide shutdown, which included school closures, they were unable to be collected. Additionally, data from 2020 is not comparable to previous years in terms of understanding how education has progressed due to the pandemic. Data from here forward will show how these indicators were affected by the pandemic as well as how, and if, they recover to data from prior to the global pandemic.

The quality of a region’s education system, and the level of the education and training received by residents and workers, directly correlate with the success of that region’s economy. Pay level often links to high-skill jobs, which in turn link to level of education, so higher educational attainment and enhanced training can lead to reduced poverty and a more competitive workforce. Similarly, higher educational attainment opens workers up to new types of jobs: remote work. A recent study showed that industries with a more educated workforce also showed higher levels of remote work. Relatively large shares of the workforce in both counties have an associate’s degree level of attainment, but their rates of population age 25 years and older with a Bachelor’s degree or higher continue to fall short of the state average.

Emerging industries and occupations demand a diverse range of education and training opportunities, including apprenticeship programs, associate degree or trade school programs, on-the-job training, certificates, credentials, and college and university degrees. In 2019, nearly 8,391 degrees were awarded in the two-county region – many of them in key fields like health care and business. This is a slight increase from the previous year (2017-2018), during which 8,383 awards were granted, and continued an upward trend from the year prior in which 8,639 degrees were given out to graduates in the region. Northeastern Pennsylvania’s impressive and varied group of higher education institutions will continue to be an asset in preparing students for success in the workforce.

Career and technical education at the high school level is another path to gaining the job skills that translate to economic opportunity. Between the two counties, over 2,800 students were enrolled in Career and Technology Centers (CTCs) in 2020. In addition to CTC programs, Advanced Placement (AP) coursework helps students after graduation. Some districts recorded AP/IB (International Baccalaureate) course participation as high as 46 percent of students, and many districts saw large shares of students complete college coursework as well.

Among the many indicators of school performance, including attendance, dropouts, and standardized test and SAT scores, the most notable trend is the significant variation from district to district and school to school. In order for more students to pursue higher education and succeed in the workforce, it is important that the schools struggling in measures of academic performance continue to strive for improvement despite the differing socioeconomic contexts

of the communities they serve. These efforts must be complemented by work to improve those socioeconomic contexts – ensuring that children come to school ready to learn by alleviating poverty, food insecurity, housing insecurity, and physical and mental health challenges.

The four-year high school graduation rate (the percentage of students graduating four years after starting high school) has fluctuated in both counties since 2014-2015, although they continue to outperform the Commonwealth as a whole. The number of public school dropouts spiked over the 2016-2017 academic year, but declined over the past couple years, registering eight-percent and seven-percent declines in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, respectively, in 2018-2019.

Public school assessment has undergone a significant period of transition. The Keystone Exams have replaced the PSSA exams for 11th grade students, and the PSSA exam content changed between the 2013-2014 school year and the 2014-2015 school year to reflect Common Core material. As a result, this report uses PVAAS – the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System. This tool measures students’ growth over time and accounts for changes in standardized tests over time, along with variability among the student population. In 2019, the PVAAS growth index showed positive results in several subject areas, including 11th grade Literature and Biology. Countywide average scores for 4th through 8th grade students showed room for improvement, although results varied significantly by district. No data is available for 2020 as a result of school closures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pre-K programs are significant in that they provide a basis to help children with early literacy. Students are four times likelier to drop out of school if they are not proficient readers by the third grade. Following new highs in participation in publicly funded Pre-K enrollments in 2016-2017 in both counties– at 43 and 24 percent, respectively, Luzerne County participation continued to grow, while Lackawanna appeared to fall; however, there are discrepancies between data sources in the number of students served by school district Pre-K programs.

National Bureau of Economic Research. 2020. [‘What Jobs Are Being Done at Home During the Covid-19 Crisis? Evidence from Firm-Level Surveys.’](#) Working Paper 27422.



**“Alleviating poverty, reducing food and housing insecurity, and minimizing barriers to physical and mental well-being will ensure that children arrive at school ready to learn.”**

# Four Year Cohort Graduation Rates



**“The region's average graduation rate exceeds 88 percent.”**

## Four Year Cohort Graduation Rates

The four-year graduation rate measures the proportion of students who enter 9th grade and successfully graduate four years later. Hence, this is a different measure than high school dropout rate because it measures only students who graduate within four years and excludes those who graduate in five or six years. Adjustments are made to account for students moving in and out of each school district.

The statewide four-year graduation rate rebounded in 2018-2019 to 86.5 percent after declining in the prior period following several years of consecutive growth. This rate includes all conventional public high schools, as well as career and technology centers (CTCs).

Luzerne County's graduation rate also improved in 2018-2019 to 88.1 percent following three consecutive periods of declining rates from its peak of 90 percent in 2015-2016. Lackawanna County's average has remained relatively stable since 2016-2017, reaching 88.4 percent in the most current period. Both counties have matched or outperformed the Commonwealth as a whole in all years analyzed. Across the region, district-level graduation rates in 2018-2019 ranged from 75 percent to just about 97 percent.

4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate					
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Lackawanna	85.7%	86.7%	88.9%	88.2%	88.4%
Luzerne	89.2%	90.0%	88.6%	86.8%	88.1%
Pennsylvania	84.7%	86.1%	86.6%	85.9%	86.5%

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education*

4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate: Lackawanna County					
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Abington Heights	94.0%	95.5%	97.3%	94.3%	96.4%
Carbondale Area	87.2%	84.6%	88.8%	91.6%	88.5%
Dunmore	90.3%	85.8%	89.5%	89.8%	93.2%
Lakeland	80.9%	81.2%	89.5%	90.2%	83.2%
Mid Valley	92.6%	88.3%	93.5%	88.6%	90.8%
North Pocono	88.7%	95.7%	95.4%	91.6%	96.8%
Old Forge	92.1%	95.4%	91.4%	90.2%	88.7%
Riverside	81.7%	88.7%	85.0%	81.7%	75.0%
Scranton	70.7%	72.8%	78.8%	76.8%	79.2%
West Scranton	70.7%	72.8%	78.8%	84.8%	85.1%
Valley View	93.7%	92.7%	90.2%	90.7%	95.1%
<b>County Average</b>	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>86.7%</b>	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>88.2%</b>	<b>88.4%</b>

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education*

4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate: Luzerne County					
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Crestwood	96.4%	96.8%	97.6%	93.5%	94.7%
Dallas	95.9%	94.2%	93.0%	93.5%	92.1%
Greater Nanticoke Area	92.1%	88.9%	84.0%	79.0%	84.3%
Hanover Area	89.0%	87.7%	84.2%	85.9%	88.0%
Harleton Area	80.9%	78.3%	76.6%	76.8%	78.1%
Lake-Lehman	92.3%	95.0%	94.0%	92.0%	92.2%
Northwest Area	90.8%	89.5%	90.9%	84.9%	90.3%
Pittston Area	81.3%	89.1%	91.1%	87.5%	93.2%
Elmer L Meyers JSHS	89.4%	91.2%	86.3%	89.7%	87.8%
G A R Memorial JSHS	89.1%	86.3%	83.1%	76.1%	82.4%
James M Coughlin JSHS	90.0%	89.4%	84.3%	87.1%	85.2%
Wyoming Area	87.1%	91.0%	89.0%	87.8%	89.3%
Wyoming Valley West	88.8%	91.8%	89.5%	89.0%	87.8%
<b>County Average</b>	<b>89.5%</b>	<b>89.9%</b>	<b>88.0%</b>	<b>86.4%</b>	<b>88.1%</b>

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education*

# School Enrollment

## School Enrollment

The total public school enrollment in both counties is higher than the comparison school year of 2000-2001, yet enrollment across the state has dropped by 4.3 percent since that time. Between the 2015-2016 and 2019-2020 school years, however, enrollment in both counties has fluctuated on a smaller scale. Luzerne County's public school enrollment has increased by less than one percent over the past five years while Lackawanna County's dropped by almost one percent since the 2015-2016 school year.

The percentages of students enrolled in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties' nonpublic schools have been lower than the state's percentage for each year analyzed. However, Luzerne County's proportion of nonpublic school enrolled students has been slowly but steadily increasing from 8.7 percent in 2015-2016 to nearly 10 percent in 2019-2020. After following a generally decreasing trajectory in nonpublic school enrollment since 2015-2016, Lackawanna County experienced an increase to 10.7 percent enrollment in 2019-2020, reaching its highest level over the period analyzed.



**“Public school enrollment in Lackawanna County is slightly lower than it was five years ago, and enrollment in Luzerne County has slightly increased during that time.”**

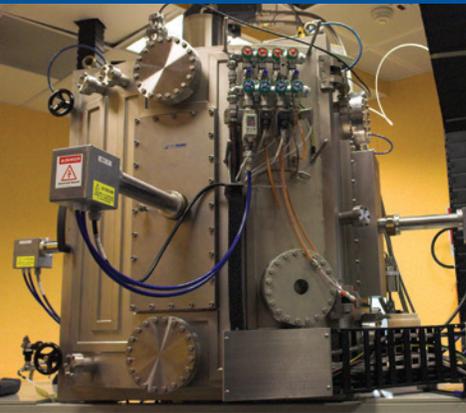
Public and Private/Non-Public School Enrollment											
	2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		
	Public	Nonpublic									
Lackawanna	90.5%	9.5%	90.8%	9.2%	91.0%	9.0%	90.9%	9.1%	89.3%	10.7%	
Luzerne	91.3%	8.7%	91.1%	8.9%	91.0%	9.0%	90.9%	9.1%	90.3%	9.7%	
Pennsylvania	88.3%	11.7%	88.4%	11.6%	88.5%	11.5%	87.8%	12.2%	88.1%	11.9%	

Source : Pennsylvania Department of Education

Public School Enrollment						
	2000-2001	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Lackawanna	27,351	28,367	28,270	28,304	28,172	28,101
Luzerne	39,916	42,456	42,151	42,300	42,245	42,535
Pennsylvania	1,801,860	1,731,588	1,722,514	1,719,336	1,722,461	1,724,454

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education

# Career and Technical Education



**“CTC programs offer education in high-demand areas, such as health care, information systems, and more.”**

## Career and Technical Education

An important role of education is to equip students with the practical skills that will help them excel in their careers. Career and Technology Centers (CTCs) present an opportunity for students to study career-based curriculums. CTC programs can include traditional trades as well as health care, information systems, cosmetology, and more. These tables show the numbers of high school students enrolled, by sending school district, in programs at partnering Career and Technology Centers. As of 2020, there were 754 students from Lackawanna County school districts and 2,093 students from Luzerne County school districts participating in CTC programs. Both counties experienced growth in enrollment from the prior year. Lackawanna County’s CTC student enrollment grew by six percent and Luzerne County’s by five percent. Hazleton Area School District has the largest number of students in CTC programs, followed by Wilkes-Barre Area, Wyoming Valley West, and Scranton. In Luzerne County, Wyoming Area CTC’s enrollment has increased 50 percent since 2016, while Pittston Area experienced a 26 percent decline. Riverside recorded the largest percentage decline in Lackawanna County CTC enrollment since 2016, with a decrease of 35 percent from 63 to 41 students. Carbondale Area had the highest growth rate in the county, with enrollment increasing by more than one-quarter during this time.

For this year’s report, CTC outcomes were tracked in alignment with Future Ready PA Index standards. This data was not yet available at the time of printing for 2021 Indicators but all previous year’s data are detailed here. Data included were the percentages of students at each regional Career & Technical Center scoring competent or advanced on NOCTI/NIMS, a set of standardized assessments for secondary education career competency, the percentages who earned industry-recognized credentials, and the percentages who completed a work-based learning experience.

Competency on the NOCTI assessment for the 2019-2020 school year ranged from 50 to 80 percent among the region’s CTCs, while the percentage earning industry credentials ranged from 50 to 88

percent. An even greater range was seen in the percentage completing work-based learning experiences, from 13.6 percent in Hazleton Area to 99 percent at West Side CTC. These statistics may be subject to fluctuation in part due to variations in the types of career programs offered by the CTCs, and relatively small population sizes of students.

**CTE/CTC Competency Assessments: 2019**

	Lackawanna	Hazleton Area	West Side	Wilkes-Barre Area
Percent Scoring Competent or Advanced on NOCTI/NIMS	80.0%	74.4%	65.4%	50.4%
Percent Earned Industry-Recognized Credential	71.1%	73.3%	87.9%	50.7%
Percent Completed Work-Based Learning Experience	29.5%	13.6%	99.1%	17.8%

Source : Future Ready PA Index

**CTC Enrollment: Lackawanna County**

Sending District	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Abington Heights	33	34	32	31	24
Carbondale Area	47	45	50	59	59
Dunmore	44	36	33	30	40
Lakeland	53	49	48	59	56
Mid Valley	62	41	57	63	72
North Pocono	85	75	81	88	95
Old Forge	52	55	53	57	48
Riverside	63	62	59	51	41
Scranton	244	232	250	234	252
Valley View	79	65	43	40	67
<b>County Total</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>754</b>

Source : Future Ready PA Index

**CTC Enrollment: Luzerne County**

Sending District	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Crestwood	87	80	62	70	88
Dallas	44	39	50	48	45
Greater Nanticoke Area	93	97	102	76	84
Hanover Area	143	128	146	161	147
Hazleton Area	759	667	644	667	734
Lake-Lehman	44	35	37	44	42
Northwest Area	55	55	49	52	53
Pittston Area	125	112	118	90	92
Wilkes-Barre Area	409	383	369	362	360
Wyoming Area	62	64	60	78	93
Wyoming Valley West	340	345	346	353	355
<b>County Total</b>	<b>2,161</b>	<b>2,005</b>	<b>1,983</b>	<b>2,001</b>	<b>2,093</b>

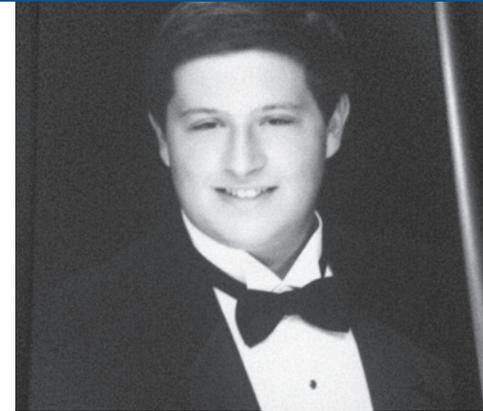
Source : Future Ready PA Index

# Rigorous Courses of Study Charter Schools

## Rigorous Courses of Study

In accordance with Future Ready PA standards, participation in rigorous courses was measured by the percentage of students participating in AP/IB coursework, and the percentage of students enrolling in college coursework during high school. Like CTC outcomes data, this data was not yet available at the time of printing for 2021 Indicators but all previous years' data are detailed here. Though comparable data is not available for prior years, AP/IB course participation during the 2019-2020 school year ranged from zero to over 45 percent in several districts. The average among all districts in the region was around 29 percent.

College course enrollment ranged from zero to over 80 percent in several districts. The Luzerne County district average was 11.5 percent; the average among Lackawanna County districts was 37.9 percent.



**“Nearly 29 percent of students in both counties participate in advanced courses of study.”**

Rigorous Courses of Study: Lackawanna County		
High School	AP/IB Participation	College Course Enrollment
Abington Heights	45.8%	85.1%
Carbondale Area	36.1%	0.0%
Dunmore	41.7%	80.0%
Lakeland	37.3%	52.5%
Mid Valley	15.8%	62.3%
North Pocono	43.0%	59.8%
Old Forge	0.0%	27.9%
Riverside	18.3%	13.9%
Scranton	20.5%	4.6%
West Scranton	29.8%	8.7%
Valley View	25.0%	22.3%
<b>County Average</b>	<b>28.5%</b>	<b>37.9%</b>

Source : Future Ready PA Index

Rigorous Courses of Study: Luzerne County		
High School	AP/IB Participation	College Course Enrollment
Crestwood	25.7%	57.8%
Dallas	44.2%	10.7%
Greater Nanticoke Area	18.8%	9.4%
Hanover Area	15.1%	14.4%
Hazleton Area	28.6%	5.1%
Lake-Lehman	45.5%	0.0%
Northwest Area	34.4%	1.6%
Pittston Area	36.0%	0.0%
Wilkes-Barre - Coughlin	21.1%	8.1%
Wilkes-Barre - G.A.R.	17.8%	21.1%
Wilkes-Barre - Meyers	17.5%	8.0%
Wyoming Area	40.5%	11.9%
Wyoming Valley West	30.5%	0.9%
<b>County Average</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>

Source : Future Ready PA Index

## Charter Schools

In 2020, there were 1,155 students enrolled in Lackawanna County charter schools and 1,523 in Luzerne County charter schools. Compared with the previous year, this was an increase of approximately four percent in Lackawanna County and an increase of over two percent in Luzerne County. Charter school enrollments in both counties are substantially higher than they were five years ago. Lackawanna County exhibiting the more substantial growth in that time with a nearly 30 percent increase in enrollment. Luzerne County experienced a 12 percent increase in charter school enrollment. Wilkes-Barre Area, Scranton, and Hazleton Area school districts had the largest numbers of students enrolled in charter schools.

Charter School Enrollment: Lackawanna County					
School District	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Abington Heights	64	63	77	86	62
Carbondale Area	186	178	165	148	154
Dunmore	26	24	28	30	36
Lakeland	63	68	55	62	65
Mid Valley	51	57	71	71	76
North Pocono	71	68	69	72	80
Old Forge	17	10	22	16	30
Riverside	34	41	53	43	43
Scranton	345	389	422	517	554
Valley View	39	32	48	71	55
<b>County Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>1,155</b>

Source : Future Ready PA Index

Charter School Enrollment: Luzerne County					
School District	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Crestwood	74	66	50	58	53
Dallas	30	37	40	38	40
Greater Nanticoke Area	67	67	55	72	71
Hanover Area	57	84	81	86	99
Hazleton Area	222	220	239	277	285
Lake-Lehman	42	38	46	56	37
Northwest Area	45	41	37	46	44
Pittston Area	80	80	76	68	78
Wilkes-Barre Area	525	555	575	591	625
Wyoming Area	52	33	41	51	42
Wyoming Valley West	160	122	144	146	149
<b>County Total</b>	<b>1,354</b>	<b>1,343</b>	<b>1,384</b>	<b>1,489</b>	<b>1,523</b>

Source : Future Ready PA Index

# School Assessment



## School Assessment

Individual student growth is measured using PVAAS – the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System. The Average Growth Index (AGI) is a measure of students’ improvement in scores on the PSSA and Keystone Exams. Higher AGI values indicate higher levels of confidence that student growth meets or exceeds state standards. Unlike examining achievement scores, the growth scores show to what degree individual students’ progress over time, rather than how well students perform on a test in a particular year. Like other indicators in this report, this data was not collected for 2020 as a result of school closures precipitated by the pandemic. The following data is from the most recent year available.

Lackawanna County’s 2018 averages were positive in all five categories (Grades 4-8 Math and Reading and Grade 11 Biology, Algebra, and Literature). Both math and reading scores were negative in 2019, however, suggesting that the statewide growth standard was not achieved in those areas. The highest values were in Grade 11 Algebra and Biology. Growth in the countywide average index was lowest in Grades 4-8 Math.

In Luzerne County, Grade 11 Literature was the only growth index score that showed a positive value. Grade 11 Biology stood at zero whereas all others showed negative values. Each of these areas represented setbacks from 2018 scores – except for Grade 11 Algebra which improved from -0.85 to -0.75.

PVAAS Average Growth Index: Lackawanna County					
District	2019				
	Math 4-8	Reading 4-8	Literature 11	Algebra 11	Biology 11
Abington Heights	2.16	2.34	5.72	8.89	10.92
Carbondale Area	-4.66	-0.74	2.42	0.68	3.91
Dunmore	-0.52	-0.99	-2.37	-0.21	-8.95
Lakeland	-1.31	-1.40	0.31	-3.04	1.03
Mid Valley	4.73	-0.44	2.55	0.60	1.27
North Pocono	-3.67	-6.60	-4.54	-0.24	1.22
Old Forge	1.43	0.59	-0.10	3.90	-0.55
Riverside	1.11	4.91	-2.30	0.65	-1.45
Scranton	-0.56	4.31	-1.02	3.99	-2.13
Valley View	-6.60	-5.15	8.37	2.44	12.36
<b>County Average</b>	<b>-0.79</b>	<b>-0.32</b>	<b>0.90</b>	<b>1.77</b>	<b>1.76</b>

Source: PVAAS

PVAAS Average Growth Index: Luzerne County					
District	2019				
	Math 4-8	Reading 4-8	Literature 11	Algebra 11	Biology 11
Crestwood	4.27	-1.98	2.08	-1.84	1.05
Dallas	-3.04	-0.94	1.30	-0.74	-0.53
Greater Nanticoke Area	-4.28	-1.81	3.11	-5.37	-1.90
Hanover Area	1.96	1.79	0.79	-1.27	-2.33
Hazleton Area	9.79	4.15	1.00	3.35	4.37
Lake-Lehman	-3.93	-1.07	-0.72	3.81	4.66
Northwest Area	-0.36	-1.22	-7.83	-2.05	-3.62
Pittston Area	-0.50	-2.72	4.17	0.54	5.92
Wilkes-Barre Area	-3.03	-0.77	7.80	-0.60	-5.30
Wyoming Area	-4.41	-5.82	0.29	-4.29	0.49
Wyoming Valley West	3.40	2.28	-2.00	0.24	-2.76
<b>County Average</b>	<b>-0.01</b>	<b>-0.74</b>	<b>0.91</b>	<b>-0.75</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Source: PVAAS

PVAAS Average Growth Index					
	2019				
	Math 4-8	Reading 4-8	Literature 11	Algebra 11	Biology 11
Lackawanna County	-0.79	-0.32	0.90	1.77	1.76
Luzerne County	-0.01	-0.74	0.91	-0.75	0.00
	2018				
	Math 4-8	Reading 4-8	Literature 11	Algebra 11	Biology 11
Lackawanna County	0.37	1.22	1.02	0.27	1.15
Luzerne County	0.44	0.70	1.04	-0.85	0.28

Source: PVAAS

# Education Employment

## Education Employment

In the 2019-2020 school year, public school districts in Lackawanna County employed 2,251 professional personnel, and Luzerne County districts employed 3,098. About 86 percent of professional personnel in both counties were classroom teachers. Relatively small increases and decreases in staff were seen in either county from the 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 school year. Lackawanna County experienced an overall decline of four classroom teachers, while Luzerne County added six classroom teachers. Lackawanna County has lost classroom teachers each year since 2016-2017 while Luzerne County has maintained or gained teachers over the same time period.



**“Approximately 85 percent of professional personnel in both counties are classroom teachers.”**

Education Employment: Lackawanna County					
Full & Part Time Staff	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Professional Personnel	2,263	2,296	2,289	2,257	2,251
Administrators	102	104	105	106	113
Classroom Teachers	1,938	1,961	1,954	1,935	1,931
Coordinator/Support	223	222	223	206	204
Other Staff	14	20	18	20	20

*Source : Pennsylvania Department of Education*

Education Employment: Luzerne County					
Full & Part Time Staff	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Professional Personnel	3,140	3,077	3,069	3,092	3,098
Administrators	128	125	126	128	135
Classroom Teachers	2,688	2,650	2,650	2,672	2,678
Coordinator/Support	302	283	275	281	275
Other Staff	51	53	46	43	39

*Source : Pennsylvania Department of Education*

# Special Education Public School Dropouts



## Special Education

Special education data is collected at the Intermediate Unit Level. The Northeastern Educational Intermediate Unit 19 includes Lackawanna, Susquehanna, and Wayne Counties. The Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 includes Luzerne and Wyoming Counties.

Both intermediate units had significantly higher overall numbers of students enrolled in special education compared with the 2001-2002 school year. Furthermore, both areas have generally experienced increasing trends in special education enrollments in recent years. Enrollment in NEIU19 has increased 29 percent since 2001-2002, while growing 78 percent in Luzerne IU 18. Enrollment in both areas declined in the 2015-2016 school year, but in the most recent data has resumed a growth trajectory.

Specific learning disabilities, other health impairments, and speech or language impairments remain the largest shares of special education enrollments in the counties. The numbers of students in the categories for autism spectrum disorders exhibited growth for the seventh consecutive year, with an eight-percent increase in NIEU 19 and a 10-percent increase in Luzerne IU 18 compared to the prior year. Additionally, special education enrollment for other health impairments rose by six percent in NEIU 18 and seven percent in Luzerne IU 19 compared with the prior year.

Disability	Special Education Enrollments											
	2001-2002		2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020	
	NEIU 19	Luz. IU 18	NEIU 19	Luz. IU 18	NEIU 19	Luz. IU 18	NEIU 19	Luz. IU 18	NEIU 19	Luz. IU 18	NEIU 19	Luz. IU 18
Intellectual Disabilities	961	832	451	654	446	652	442	652	448	614	465	628
Deafness or Hearing Impairment	66	76	58	52	54	49	53	56	61	51	68	52
Speech or Language Impairment	1,485	979	1,098	1,012	1,132	1,011	1,117	1,043	1,185	1,058	1,239	1,189
Blind or Visual Impairment	36	48	38	36	33	39	27	32	26	29	32	29
Serious Emotional Disturbance	500	314	643	588	692	649	668	684	669	744	663	751
Orthopedic Impairment	5	66	*	21	*	16	*	*	14	*	*	*
Other Health Impairment	71	22	1,057	1,187	1,139	1,347	1,263	1,457	1,338	1,532	1,436	1,628
Specific Learning Disability	3,643	2,686	3,161	3,052	3,190	3,132	3,211	3,176	3,291	3,376	3,340	3,384
Deaf-Blind	0	0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Multiple Disabilities	48	70	81	93	84	89	103	87	108	92	114	96
Autism	76	72	567	522	623	587	687	664	718	707	774	777
Traumatic Brain Injury	3	11	*	*	14	*	14	14	*	12	12	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,894</b>	<b>5,176</b>	<b>7,154</b>	<b>7,217</b>	<b>8,028</b>	<b>8,128</b>	<b>8,221</b>	<b>8,491</b>	<b>8,520</b>	<b>8,867</b>	<b>8,874</b>	<b>9,198</b>

Source : Pennsylvania Department of Education. Prior year totals have been revised.

Data is for Northeastern Educational Intermediate Unit 19 (Lackawanna, Susquehanna, and Wayne counties) and Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 (Luzerne and Wyoming counties).

\* School Districts reporting less than or equal to 10. These numbers are not reported individually for the counties but are included in the total.

## Public School Dropouts

The number of dropouts in the region has fluctuated considerably over the last decade. Following a peak in the number of dropouts in both counties in 2016-2017, totals have continued to decline for the past two periods. Despite the most recent decline of eight percent in Lackawanna County, and seven percent in Luzerne County, the totals still exceed the ten-year averages for each county.

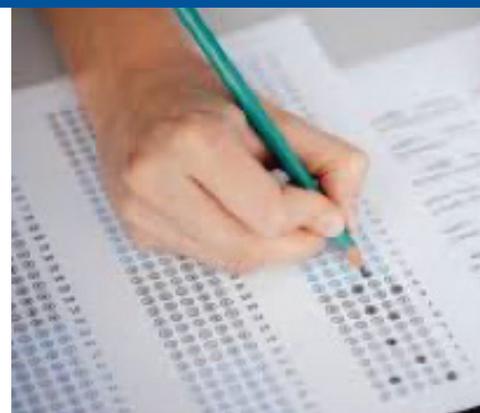
	Public School Dropouts										
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	
Lackawanna County	146	85	175	139	123	163	116	228	197	181	
Luzerne County	343	340	374	309	261	294	347	454	437	407	

Source : PA Department of Education

## SAT Scores

The College Board altered the SAT format and scoring system in March 2016. Therefore, scores reported here since 2017 reflect the new SAT testing. Each section is scored on a scale from 200 to 800. Prior year scores are not readily comparable due to the significant changes in the test.

The averages among all school districts in Lackawanna County, Luzerne County, and statewide have remained relatively stable since 2017 (in both subject areas). Lackawanna County saw an uptick in scores between 2017 and 2018, and the average reading and writing score in Lackawanna County is higher than the statewide average. Luzerne County is slightly below the statewide average in both subjects.



**“Since changes to test content in 2017, SAT scores have declined slightly in Luzerne County and risen slightly in Lackawanna County.”**

Lackawanna County: SAT Scores								
District	2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Reading + Writing	Math						
Abington Heights	581	559	591	586	571	563	560	555
Carbondale Area	519	504	527	508	543	523	543	523
Dunmore	537	512	552	514	522	499	522	499
Lakeland	528	505	523	496	544	498	544	498
Mid Valley	513	509	534	509	529	526	529	526
North Pocono	548	535	565	544	550	531	550	531
Old Forge	505	472	531	507	528	490	528	490
Riverside	512	494	505	507	515	524	515	524
Scranton	507	488	511	495	511	496	511	496
West Scranton	502	499	504	494	531	514	531	514
Valley View	537	517	509	495	521	489	521	489
<b>County Average</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>513</b>

Source: PA Department of Education

Luzerne County: SAT Scores								
District	2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Reading + Writing	Math						
Crestwood	552	530	554	540	548	553	548	553
Dallas	555	567	563	567	549	561	549	561
Greater Nanticoke Area	516	485	531	508	514	475	514	475
Hanover Area	513	502	525	487	526	493	526	493
Hazleton Area	507	490	509	496	510	489	510	489
Lake-Lehman	559	541	555	545	551	550	551	550
Northwest Area	539	519	533	484	535	490	535	490
Pittston Area	540	523	547	515	537	525	537	525
Wilkes-Barre Area - Meyers	485	468	505	484	493	469	493	469
Wilkes-Barre Area - G.A.R.	483	465	468	450	464	449	464	449
Wilkes-Barre Area - Coughlin	522	509	523	504	506	490	506	490
Wyoming Area	524	520	528	522	529	517	529	517
Wyoming Valley West	524	504	524	509	523	498	523	498
<b>County Average</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>504</b>

Source: PA Department of Education

SAT Scores								
	2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Reading + Writing	Math						
Lackawanna County	526	509	532	514	533	514	532	513
Luzerne County	525	509	528	509	522	505	522	504
Pennsylvania	521	511	529	518	527	515	526	515

Source: PA Department of Education

# Higher Education Attainment Degree Completions



## Higher Education Attainment

### Associate's Degree

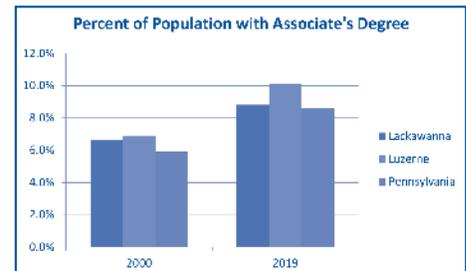
In 2019, the percentage of residents age 25 and older with an associate's degree as their highest level of educational attainment was 8.8 percent for Lackawanna County and 10.1 percent for Luzerne County. There has been significant growth in associate's degree holders since 2000, with 2018 being the highest year analyzed for Lackawanna County at 10.6 percent. The percentage of Pennsylvanians with an associate's degree has kept a gradual upward pace, now at 8.6 percent. Traditionally, both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have higher proportions of associate's degree holders than the rest of Pennsylvania.

### Bachelor's Degree or Higher

In both counties, the percentage of the population holding a bachelor's degree or higher has increased significantly from 2000, although the rate in Luzerne County has declined for the past two years. Pennsylvania has also seen growth in this area, rising from 22.4 percent in 2000 to 32.3 percent in 2019. In contrast to those with associate's degrees, the proportion of adults with bachelor's degrees is lower in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties than in Pennsylvania as a whole. In Lackawanna County, this gap has narrowed slightly compared with 2000 – the bachelor's degree attainment rates was 90 percent of the statewide rate in 2019, compared with 88 in 2000. Conversely, Luzerne County's attainment rate has declined from 73 percent of the statewide rate in 2000 to 67 percent in 2019.

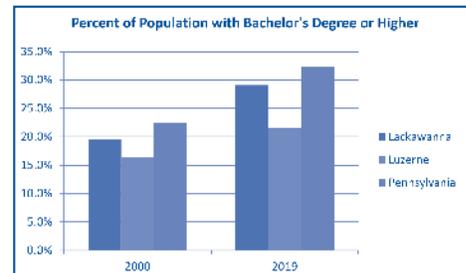
Percent of Population 25 Years and Over: Associate's Degree								
	2000	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	6.6%	8.7%	9.2%	9.0%	9.2%	8.2%	10.6%	8.8%
Luzerne	6.9%	9.2%	9.2%	9.8%	10.9%	9.7%	9.5%	10.1%
Pennsylvania	5.9%	7.9%	7.9%	8.3%	8.2%	8.3%	8.6%	8.6%

Source : U.S. Census Bureau



Percent of Population 25 Years and Over: Bachelor's Degree or Higher								
	2000	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	19.6%	26.3%	25.8%	26.2%	27.0%	29.2%	28.8%	29.1%
Luzerne	16.4%	22.4%	22.7%	22.1%	23.1%	23.8%	23.6%	21.6%
Pennsylvania	22.4%	28.7%	29.0%	29.7%	30.8%	31.4%	31.8%	32.3%

Source : U.S. Census Bureau



## Degree Completions

In the 2018-2019 school year, institutions in Lackawanna County awarded fewer degrees (3,937) than those in Luzerne County (4,454). These numbers represent a small decrease in Lackawanna County (22) and a similarly sized increase in Luzerne County (30). The cumulative total of degrees awarded in both counties consequently amounted to 8,391. The greatest number of total degree completions in Lackawanna County were for Accounting (214 completions), Business Administration and Management (188 completions), Registered Nursing (126 completions), Social Work (124 completions), and Biology/ Biological Science (104 completions). In Luzerne County, the largest two categories of degree completions also included Registered Nursing and Business Administration and Management – with 427 and 255 degrees awarded, respectively. However, the third largest category was Teacher Education and Professional Development: Specific Subject Areas (at 242 completions). JobsEQ (Chmura Economics) is the source of degree completions data.

# Student-Teacher Ratio

## Student-Teacher Ratio

The student-teacher ratio is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled in a district by the number of teachers employed in the district. The ratio can correlate with a district's performance; research has shown that students in schools with smaller class sizes receive more individualized attention and therefore tend to perform better on average. However, it is not an ideal predictor of educational quality or outcomes.

In Lackawanna County, 2018-2019 student-teacher ratios ranged from 13.5 in Valley View to 15.4 in the Abington Heights School District. In Luzerne County, ratios for that year ranged from 13.3 in Lake-Lehman to 18.5 in the Greater Nanticoke Area School District. Lackawanna County's average student-teacher ratio among school districts has continued to gradually decline, while Luzerne County has been relatively flat, with small fluctuations from year to year.



**“Lackawanna County’s average student-teacher ratio among school districts has followed a gradual declining trend, while Luzerne County has been relatively flat, with small fluctuations from year to year.”**

Lackawanna County Student - Teacher Ratios					
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Abington Heights	14.5	14.6	15.0	15.4	15.4
Carbondale	16.5	16.6	17.0	15.7	15.0
Dunmore	16.0	15.5	15.9	15.5	14.7
Lakeland	16.1	15.8	14.0	14.7	14.2
Mid Valley	17.9	15.6	15.0	14.9	14.9
North Pocono	15.0	14.5	14.3	14.2	14.3
Old Forge	14.3	14.4	14.2	14.3	14.0
Riverside	14.3	13.4	13.7	13.5	13.9
Scranton	13.6	13.9	13.6	13.9	14.3
Valley View	15.1	14.4	14.2	13.8	13.5
<b>County Average</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>14.4</b>

*Source: National Center for Education Statistics*

Luzerne County Student - Teacher Ratios					
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Crestwood	18.1	17.9	18.1	18.7	18.1
Dallas	16.5	17.0	16.7	16.3	15.7
Greater Nanticoke Area	17.6	17.6	17.6	17.9	18.5
Hanover Area	17.4	17.5	17.3	17.4	16.5
Hazleton Area	16.0	15.8	16.6	16.3	16.0
Lake-Lehman	14.1	13.7	13.7	13.2	13.3
Northwest Area	13.0	13.1	14.3	14.5	13.8
Pittston	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.2	18.0
Wilkes-Barre Area	13.9	14.0	15.0	15.6	15.7
Wyoming Area	16.2	15.8	16.1	16.1	15.2
Wyoming Valley West	15.0	14.5	14.4	14.1	14.4
<b>County Average</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>15.9</b>

*Source: National Center for Education Statistics*

# Pre-K Enrollment



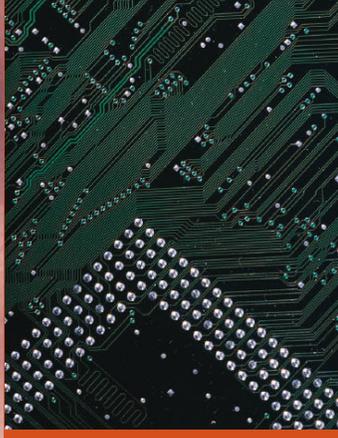
**“As of the 2018-2019 school year, more than one quarter of children aged three and four years were served by the publicly-funded early childhood education programs listed.”**

## Pre-K Enrollment

No data on enrollment in publicly-funded Pre-K for 2017-2018 was available for inclusion in the report, but 2018-2019 data was compiled. As of the 2018-2019 school year, in each of the two counties 26 percent of children aged three or four were served by the publicly-funded early childhood education programs listed. In Luzerne County, participation in publicly-funded Pre-K was at the highest level on record. This trend was driven by growth in Pre-K Counts, Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program, and Child Care Works programs. Lackawanna County suffered an apparent 40 percent decrease in the percent of children served since the last year data was collected. This is due to a near complete elimination of school district pre-K enrollment according to data published by KidsCount Data Center. However, data from Pennsylvania Department of Education for the 2018-2019 school year reported 473 children served by school district pre-K in Lackawanna County, consistent with totals seen in past years.

Publicly Funded Pre-K Enrollments - Children Ages 3-4 Served					
Year	Head Start	PKC, HSSAP, CCW in STAR 3/4	School District Pre-K	Total Children Served	% of Children Served
<b>Lackawanna County</b>					
2013-2014	615	610	651	1,876	39.7%
2014-2015	645	531	572	1,748	37.0%
2015-2016	542	778	505	1,825	38.6%
2016-2017	830	768	435	2,033	43.4%
2018-2019	492	701	3*	1,219	25.8%
<b>Luzerne County</b>					
2013-2014	676	664	20	1,360	20.1%
2014-2015	676	649	20	1,345	19.9%
2015-2016	655	907	0	1,562	23.1%
2016-2017	672	1,018	0	1,690	23.7%
2018-2019	516	1,164	6	1,739	25.7%

\* PA Department of Education report 473 students served.  
Source: Kids Count Data Center



**Technology & Innovation**

# Technology & Innovation



**“There is great potential for innovation to spark regional economic growth.”**

## Technology and Innovation

The Technology and Innovation section of this report identifies important indicators in Pennsylvania and Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, including technology and innovation-related occupations and industries, funding from federal programs supporting innovation (such as Small Business and Innovation Research Awards (SBIR), Small Business Technology Transfer Awards (STTR), and National Science Foundation (NSF) funding), clinical trials, venture capital investments, and patents. Each of these indicators measures some aspect of technological development or innovation.

Innovation in regional businesses, healthcare, and educational institutions is difficult to measure directly, however. Several datasets presented here are limited, and many innovations in processes or practices occur without being counted. It is incumbent on regional leaders to continue to promote a culture of innovation and creativity. Through entrepreneurship and creative thinking, new ideas can be introduced, applied to real-world problems, and brought into the global marketplace. Major areas of technology and innovation include research and development, scientific research, medical and pharmaceutical research, and information technology. According to the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics’ most recent data, R&D contributes 2.15 percent to Pennsylvania’s GDP, placing it in the second quartile of all U.S. states.

Globally, economic activity is shifting more toward knowledge-based jobs and industries like education, healthcare, and finance. Even traditional industries such as manufacturing and extraction are increasingly reliant on automation and other new technologies to stay competitive, and thereby reliant on STEM workers. In this year’s report, three STEM occupation categories are examined – computer and mathematical occupations; life, physical, and social science occupations; and architecture and engineering occupations. Industries with high concentrations of these jobs are analyzed as well. In 2020, employment in architecture and engineering occupations and computer and mathematical occupations fell in both counties, while life, physical, and social science occupations grew despite the pandemic. Total STEM employment in both counties remains relatively stable at over 9,300 jobs. STEM jobs are key components of several industries that are prominent in the regional economy. The area’s strength in STEM industries lies not only in engineering, higher education, and research, but also in manufacturing, energy, business, and health care. The latter are the often overlooked laboratories of technology and innovation.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) is a competitive grant program run by the U.S. Small Business Administration to support research and development with the potential for commercialization. The Small Business Administration also coordinates the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program, which encourages joint ventures between small businesses and nonprofit research institutions. Allocations for SBIR and STTR awards in Pennsylvania fell slightly in 2019 compared with the prior year, but remained higher than most prior years analyzed. The statewide number of patents issued also grew in 2019.

The amount of multi-stage venture capital investments and angel fund investments in the region also highlight how much innovation is occurring in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Though there is no single, systematic source for data on venture capital investment, several sources reported over \$1 million in investment in local companies in 2020. Only known investments were counted, so this number is likely an underrepresentation of actual venture capital funding that supports innovation and entrepreneurship in the area.

## STEM Occupations

Data for three STEM occupation categories were analyzed. In 2020, employment in architecture and engineering occupations shrank in both counties, continuing a trend from the prior year. Luzerne County saw a larger drop at 5.2 percent compared to 3.8 percent for Lackawanna County. This occupation category employs just over 3,000 workers across both areas.

Life, physical, and social science employment has been generally stable in the region since 2013, though Lackawanna County has seen a declining trend that accelerated from 2016 to 2019. In 2020, however, both counties saw employment growth in these jobs, with Lackawanna County employment growing by 7.7 percent and Luzerne County gaining 9.4 percent.

Computer and mathematical occupations have varied from year to year. Both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties experienced declines in 2018, but followed up with increases of 17.7 and 16.2 percent, respectively, in 2019. This was followed by declines of 1.1 and 0.5 percent, respectively. The total number of regional workers in these occupations has ranged from just under 4,200 to over 5,100 over the period analyzed, and most recently stood at 4,866.

Wages in all three of these STEM occupation groups were higher than wages in the region as a whole. In the two counties, architecture and engineering jobs have a median wage of \$72,000 per year, and science occupations have median wage of \$60,300 per year. Computer and mathematical occupations

have a median wage of \$71,000 per year. The regional median wage for all jobs is \$36,200 per year. The wage gap between STEM and non-STEM workers is apparent across different experience levels for workers.

Architecture & Engineering Occupations								
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	1,325	1,307	1,277	1,252	1,351	1,326	1,250	1,203
Luzerne	1,700	1,665	1,709	1,724	1,890	1,914	1,902	1,804

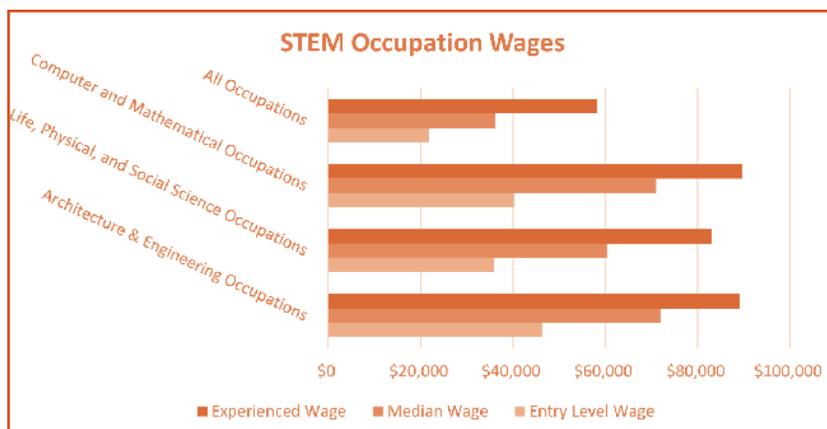
Source: JobsEQ (Chimura Economics)

Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations								
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	634	636	636	630	603	584	548	590
Luzerne	711	712	719	730	782	793	799	874

Source: JobsEQ (Chimura Economics)

Computer and Mathematical Occupations								
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	1,897	1,923	1,933	1,872	1,610	1,529	1,801	1,782
Luzerne	2,969	3,028	3,186	3,276	2,666	2,665	3,099	3,084

Source: Chimura Economics



**“Life, physical, and social science occupations in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have increased since 2018.”**

# STEM-Based Industries



**“Regional industries with large proportions of STEM employment include architectural, engineering, and related services as well as computer systems design and related services.”**

## STEM-Based Industries

The table below shows the industries with the largest numbers of employees in the three STEM occupation categories discussed previously. Over 58 percent of the region’s STEM jobs fall into one of the 15 industries listed here.

Architectural, engineering, and related services had the highest number of STEM jobs as well as the highest percentage of its workforce (62 percent) in STEM occupations. The computer systems design and related services industry reported 614 of its workforce in STEM occupations – 59 percent of that industry’s total workforce. Data processing, hosting, and related services constitute the third largest STEM-employing industry in the region (584 STEM jobs; 41 percent of the industry workforce). Insurance carriers, management of companies, colleges and universities, hospitals, and various other industries also host large numbers of STEM workers. Several heavy industries, such as electricity generation, transmission, and distribution, medical equipment manufacturing, and plastics manufacturing are also represented.

Lackawanna and Luzerne County Employment in STEM-Focused Industries: 2020			
Industry	STEM Job Employment	Total Employment	Percent STEM Employment
Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	935	1,511	62%
Computer Systems Design and Related Services	614	1,036	59%
Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services	584	1,417	41%
Insurance Carriers	443	3,497	13%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	434	2,738	16%
Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution	409	1,377	30%
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	395	5,604	7%
Employment Services	352	6,286	6%
Executive, Legislative, and Other General Government Support	227	5,326	4%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	206	8,446	2%
Depository Credit Intermediation	192	3,069	6%
Plastics Product Manufacturing	178	3,654	5%
Medical Equipment and Supplies Manufacturing	173	1,496	12%
Wired and Wireless Telecommunications Carriers	169	834	20%
Justice, Public Order, and Safety Activities	146	1,867	8%

Source: Chmura Economics

# SBIR & STTR Awards National Science Foundation

## SBIR & STTR Awards

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program awards grants to small businesses throughout the nation in order to promote federal innovation research and development. In 2019, firms in Pennsylvania received over \$106 million in SBIR awards. This represents a decrease from the prior year's revised total, but still the second highest total of all years analyzed. The total number of awards grew to the highest level among all years analyzed – 223 awardees statewide.

The Small Business Technology Transfer program (STTR) is similar to the SBIR program, with an emphasis on joint venture opportunities between small businesses and nonprofit research institutions. Pennsylvania's 2019 award total was over \$15.7 million – slightly lower than in 2018 but higher any year prior to 2016. The total number of STTR grants fell slightly from 38 to 36.



Pennsylvania STTR Award Amounts			
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Total
2012	\$1,968,973	\$5,818,469	\$7,787,442
2013	\$3,633,890	\$2,728,555	\$6,362,445
2014	\$2,726,404	\$6,373,029	\$9,099,433
2015	\$5,039,277	\$5,056,772	\$10,096,049
2016	\$6,794,645	\$10,267,448	\$17,062,093
2017	\$5,282,259	\$4,947,031	\$10,229,290
2018	\$6,496,934	\$10,101,195	\$16,598,129
2019	\$5,517,731	\$10,240,209	\$15,757,940

*Prior year data has been updated*  
Source: U.S. Small Business Administration

Pennsylvania SBIR Award Amounts			
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Total
2012	\$21,522,922	\$61,865,753	\$83,388,675
2013	\$17,566,923	\$46,049,969	\$63,616,892
2014	\$22,042,448	\$60,450,760	\$82,493,208
2015	\$20,802,645	\$64,208,614	\$85,011,259
2016	\$21,754,620	\$64,305,506	\$86,060,126
2017	\$18,745,644	\$68,825,672	\$87,571,316
2018	\$23,543,897	\$93,634,883	\$117,178,780
2019	\$25,719,240	\$80,662,420	\$106,381,660

*Prior year data has been updated*  
Source: U.S. Small Business Administration

Pennsylvania STTR Awards			
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Total
2012	13	5	18
2013	19	4	23
2014	15	8	23
2015	30	7	37
2016	29	10	39
2017	30	2	32
2018	28	10	38
2019	28	8	36

*Prior year data has been updated*  
Source: U.S. Small Business Administration

Pennsylvania SBIR Awards			
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Total
2012	123	69	192
2013	101	46	147
2014	135	60	195
2015	121	64	185
2016	104	62	166
2017	112	73	185
2018	125	74	199
2019	143	80	223

*Prior year data has been updated*  
Source: U.S. Small Business Administration

## National Science Foundation (NSF)

The total amount of statewide NSF funding has generally remained consistent, averaging around \$273 million per year from 2015 to 2018. In 2019, however, the state saw a nearly 20 percent jump to over \$313 million, followed by nearly \$439 million in 2020, another 40 increase compared with the prior year.

While grantees in both counties have received NSF funds in recent years, in 2020, \$792,674 was awarded to Lackawanna County grantees in 2020, the second highest regional total of all years analyzed.

National Science Foundation						
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$847,000	\$30,526	\$792,674
Luzerne	\$26,975	\$144,384	\$0	\$0	\$486,615	\$0
Pennsylvania	\$292,041,000	\$275,033,000	\$262,773,000	\$261,353,000	\$313,292,000	\$438,758,106

Source: USAspending.gov, National Science Foundation

# Clinical Trials Venture Capital Investments/Patents Issued



**“There has been a decline in active clinical trial sites since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.”**

## Clinical Trials

The number of active clinical trials shown here is a point-in-time snapshot of trials in the recruiting phase. These totals identified in the last two years are considerably higher than those appearing in previous Indicators reports. The statistics currently available may represent all active trial sites, which involves some duplication of trials underway at multiple hospitals within a health system, for example.

The number of ongoing trials in the region relate to critical areas of health research, and the total number of clinical trials counted in this manner was 170 between the two counties, lower than in early 2020.

Active Clinical Trial Sites			
	2018	Q1 2020	Q2 2021
Lackawanna	65	58	51
Luzerne	88	149	119

*Source: Centerwatch*

## Multi-Stage Venture Capital Investments

It is difficult to capture venture capital investment data from a single source, and this problem is compounded by the lack of non-proprietary data available. Due to these challenges, venture capital measured here likely underestimates actual investments. This list includes multi-stage venture capital investments and angel fund investments made by public and private sources over the past ten years, and which have been made public or provided to The Institute.

Venture Capital Investments Reported to The Institute		
Year	Area	Amount (Millions)
2010	Luzerne	\$30.0
2011	Regionally	\$0.5
2012	Regionally	\$8.2
2013	Regionally	\$0.6
2014	Regionally	\$0.7
2015	Regionally	\$0.6
2016	Regionally	\$0.7
2017	Regionally	\$0.7
2018	Regionally	\$0.8
2019	Regionally	\$15.2

*Source: Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Private Funders*

In 2019, over \$15.2 million was invested directly by organizations reporting data to The Institute – including Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania in addition to private sources. In 2020, over \$1 million in investments were identified, higher than most years analyzed. Known recipients include manufacturers and technology companies in both counties.

## Patents Issued

Patents are filed by their inventors and classified according to the inventors’ residential addresses. Patents may be individually owned or owned by organizations inside or outside the region. Since 2015, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office no longer regularly tabulates patent data at a county or regional level. In 2015, 40 patents were issued to inventors in the two counties. Both counties saw a decrease of one from the prior year. In total, 487 patents have been issued over the ten years analyzed.

Patents Issued		
Year	Lackawanna	Luzerne
2006	30	20
2007	28	26
2008	32	27
2009	25	26
2010	22	26
2011	16	32
2012	13	32
2013	11	39
2014	11	31
2015	10	30

*Source: USPTO*

Statewide, there have been an average of just over 4,000 utility patents per year, and about 4,500 total patents per year. In 2019, there were above average patents issued to Pennsylvania inventors, though the statewide share as a percent of the nationwide total fell to 2.5 percent.

Statewide Patents Issued						
Year	Utility	Design	Plant	Reissue	Total	% of US Total
2015	3,825	384	7	9	4,225	2.7%
2016	3,864	436	18	1	4,319	2.7%
2017	4,246	519	11	8	4,784	2.8%
2018	3,950	482	18	6	4,456	2.8%
2019	4,233	482	9	13	4,737	2.5%

*Source: USPTO*



# Housing

# Housing



**“The region continues to grapple with an aging housing stock, most of which was built prior to 1980, with a substantial amount erected prior to 1939.”**

## Housing

The Housing section of this report covers indicators that measure Northeastern Pennsylvania’s housing market, including demand, building permits, occupancy, housing affordability, rental affordability, housing density, market conditions, and homelessness.

In 2018, there were over 251,000 housing units in the two counties. The region’s housing stock is predominantly older, and about two-thirds of housing units are owner-occupied. About 56 percent of homes in the two counties were built prior to 1960, compared to just 47 percent statewide. Conversely, the region has a smaller proportion of homes built since 2000 – about eight percent, compared to 12 percent across the Commonwealth.

Since the housing market crash, signs of recovery in the region have been mixed. However, more recent data show some increasing price points. Median home value, tracked by the Census Bureau, increased in Lackawanna County and decreased in Luzerne County. Furthermore, median listing price – a more immediate indicator of market activity – grew in both counties and at the state level. For-sale inventory dropped in the two-county region, remaining well below levels recorded five years ago. Together, these signs point to tightening housing market conditions even before the pandemic, a trend that appears to have been accelerating over the last year. Current monthly data from Zillow’s Home Value Index for 2020 and 2021, as well as reports from local real estate professionals, has also indicated rising prices and a strong seller’s market in the region’s housing market.

Housing affordability has not changed significantly over time. The median monthly ownership costs (including mortgage payment, property taxes, and other costs of homeownership) as a percentage of median household income were calculated for owner-occupied households, along with gross rent as a percent of household income. In 2019, monthly homeownership costs as a percentage of median household income for both counties decreased, and were notably lower than 2010 proportions. Rent costs as a percentage of the median household income for renters have increased in Lackawanna County and decreased in Luzerne County in 2019. However, the strong trends in the real estate market and possibility of a new uptick in migration into the region due to the pandemic could have significant implications on the need for new efforts to ensure access to affordable housing.

Finally, homelessness remains a challenge in this region, as with virtually all communities in the United States. In early 2020, before the start of the pandemic in our region, 358 unhoused individuals were counted in the two counties, eight more than the prior year. More than one in four were children. Across the Commonwealth, more than 17 percent of all homeless households counted in 2019 were unsheltered, compared to just under ten percent in the region.

# Demand for New Homes Building Permits & Construction Costs

## Demand for New Homes

As of 2019, Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties were somewhat behind the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in terms of recent building. Statewide, 2.5 percent of homes were built in 2014 or later, compared to 1.5 percent in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. Both counties also have smaller percentages of housing stock built between 2000 and 2013 than Pennsylvania's 9.4 percent; Lackawanna County sits at 6.4 percent and Luzerne County is at 6.0 percent. This indicates that the nationwide housing construction boom of the early 2000s was less apparent in this region. Furthermore, compared to Pennsylvania, a much higher percentage of the region's housing stock was built prior to 1940.

Homes by Year Built - 2019						
Year Built	Lackawanna		Luzerne		Pennsylvania	
Built 2014 or later	1,500	1.5%	2,263	1.5%	141,920	2.5%
Built 2010 - 2013	968	1.0%	844	0.6%	83,586	1.5%
Built 2000 - 2009	4,999	5.0%	8,699	5.8%	450,113	7.9%
Built 1990 - 1999	7,375	7.3%	10,853	7.2%	538,561	9.4%
Built 1980 - 1989	7,872	7.8%	12,075	8.0%	554,398	9.7%
Built 1970 - 1979	12,670	12.6%	20,585	13.7%	717,365	12.5%
Built 1960 - 1969	8,271	8.2%	12,834	8.5%	579,742	10.1%
Built 1950 - 1959	9,086	9.0%	16,099	10.7%	776,501	13.5%
Built 1940 - 1949	7,422	7.4%	12,855	8.5%	404,166	7.1%
Built 1939 or earlier	40,685	40.3%	53,396	35.5%	1,486,228	25.9%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey*

## Building Permits & Construction Costs

The number of building permits issued in Luzerne County has largely matched or exceeded levels seen before the last recession. In Luzerne County, 331 building permits covering 357 housing units were issued in 2008; 552 permits for 624 units were reported in 2018 – the highest totals of all years analyzed. In 2019, the total number of buildings and units fell, but remained higher than the activity seen in the post-recession years of 2011 to 2016.

In Lackawanna County, similar low levels of permitting activity were seen from 2011 through 2013. An anomalous spike in 2014 was followed by several years of more active permitting, before dropping off in 2019.

Construction costs have generally correlated with permitting activity in both counties.

Recent Building - 2019					
	Total Housing Units	Homes Built 2014 or later	Percent Built 2014 or later	Homes Built 2000-2013	Percent Built 2000-2013
Lackawanna	100,848	1,500	1.5%	5,967	5.9%
Luzerne	150,503	2,263	1.5%	9,543	6.3%
Pennsylvania	5,732,580	141,920	2.5%	533,699	9.3%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey*

Construction Costs		
Year Built	Lackawanna	Luzerne
2008	\$59,704,463	\$68,570,221
2009	\$47,604,288	\$58,614,297
2010	\$40,130,859	\$64,527,572
2011	\$31,602,774	\$37,605,797
2012	\$40,884,721	\$48,593,324
2013	\$43,555,762	\$40,593,255
2014	\$405,944,745	\$46,019,067
2015	\$133,851,085	\$44,264,238
2016	\$144,530,035	\$64,315,078
2017	\$93,556,722	\$97,273,706
2018	\$90,776,171	\$135,042,946
2019	\$44,682,889	\$64,466,400

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permits Survey*

Building Permits				
	Buildings		Units	
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne
2008	276	331	282	357
2009	259	288	269	325
2010	205	349	217	350
2011	152	189	167	195
2012	156	254	161	262
2013	182	180	213	224
2014	1898	198	2009	236
2015	579	195	593	204
2016	608	227	617	375
2017	303	387	433	463
2018	391	552	421	624
2019	174	252	177	315

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permits Survey*

# Occupancy & Vacancy Housing Tenure



**“The percentage of occupied housing units in Lackawanna County remained steady in 2019, while those in Luzerne County increased to 87.0 percent.”**

## Occupancy & Vacancy

In 2019, 87.4 percent of all housing units in Lackawanna County were occupied – in line with rates seen in prior years. The percentage in Luzerne County increased for the third year in a row, from 83.9 percent in 2016 to 87 percent in 2019. The Commonwealth’s occupancy rate increased slightly in 2019, and remains higher than either county rate.

	Occupancy & Vacancy									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Occupied	Vacant	Occupied	Vacant	Occupied	Vacant	Occupied	Vacant	Occupied	Vacant
Lackawanna	84.4%	15.6%	87.3%	12.7%	85.8%	14.2%	87.6%	12.4%	87.4%	12.6%
Luzerne	86.0%	14.0%	83.9%	16.1%	84.5%	15.5%	85.4%	14.6%	87.0%	13.0%
Pennsylvania	88.5%	11.5%	88.0%	12.0%	88.0%	12.0%	88.8%	11.2%	89.3%	10.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

## Housing Tenure

Housing tenure refers to the of those who own their homes versus those who rent. From 2015 to 2019, there was some breakdown fluctuation in the ratios of those who own to those who rent in Lackawanna County, Luzerne County, and Pennsylvania. The ratio of owners to renters has been approximately 2:1 in both counties. There have been year-to-year changes in both counties, with the percentages of renters ranging from about 31 percent to around 37 percent most years. As of 2019, Lackawanna County had the largest share of renters, at 36.6 percent of the county’s households.

	Housing Tenure: Owner to Renter Comparison									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter	Owner	Renter
Lackawanna	66.8%	33.2%	63.2%	36.8%	62.8%	37.2%	63.9%	36.1%	63.4%	36.6%
Luzerne	67.2%	32.8%	68.1%	31.9%	67.1%	32.9%	69.0%	31.0%	67.4%	32.6%
Pennsylvania	68.7%	31.3%	68.5%	31.5%	68.3%	31.7%	68.6%	31.4%	68.4%	31.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

# Housing & Rental Affordability

## Housing & Rental Affordability

For owner-occupied housing, affordability is measured by monthly cost of ownership. Selected Monthly Owner Costs (SMOC), as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, include mortgage payment, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees. Only owner-occupied units with mortgages are included in this dataset.

From 2015 to 2019, Lackawanna County's median SMOC was mostly between 22.9 and 25 percent of the median household income for homeowners. Ratios in Lackawanna County have been lower over the last several years than the comparison year of 2010, indicating that on average, homeowners have become somewhat less burdened by housing costs over time. Because this statistic is a ratio of homeownership costs to median income, there is no need to adjust for inflation.

Luzerne County's SMOC as a percentage of homeowner median income was 21 percent in 2019. This percentage represents a small decrease from the prior year, and the lowest of the past five years. Pennsylvania's ratio decreased to 22.5 percent, continuing a downward trend.



**“The two counties have generally had median rents and rent-to-income ratios slightly lower than Pennsylvania’s overall.”**

Housing Affordability						
	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Lackawanna</b>						
Median Income for Owner Households	\$55,817	\$60,353	\$62,444	\$68,053	\$66,126	\$72,317
Median Monthly Owner Costs	\$1,304	\$1,259	\$1,276	\$1,300	\$1,273	\$1,381
% of Income for Owner Costs	28.0%	25.0%	24.5%	22.9%	23.1%	22.9%
<b>Luzerne</b>						
Median Income for Owner Households	\$53,706	\$61,948	\$61,847	\$64,927	\$66,528	\$65,020
Median Monthly Owner Costs	\$1,160	\$1,185	\$1,187	\$1,193	\$1,232	\$1,138
% of Income for Owner Costs	25.9%	23.0%	23.0%	22.0%	22.2%	21.0%
<b>Pennsylvania</b>						
Median Income for Owner Households	\$60,996	\$69,281	\$70,785	\$73,966	\$75,309	\$78,866
Median Monthly Owner Costs	\$1,390	\$1,414	\$1,416	\$1,438	\$1,451	\$1,477
% of Income for Owner Costs	27.3%	24.5%	24.0%	23.3%	23.1%	22.5%

Monthly Owner Costs (SMOC) includes mortgage payment, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees. Includes only housing units with a mortgage.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

A similar calculation was used for rental housing. The median rent as a percentage of median renter household income for all three geographic areas has fluctuated for the past several years, usually staying close to or under 30 percent. The ratio of median rent to median income increased marginally to 28.5 percent in Lackawanna County and decreased to 29.1 percent in Luzerne County. The statewide ratio fell to 30.2 percent.

A household is considered cost-burdened when housing-related spending exceeds 30 percent of its income, meaning that it may struggle to afford other necessities.

The two counties have generally had median rents and rent-to-income ratios that were comparable to or slightly lower than Pennsylvania's overall.

Rental Affordability						
	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Lackawanna</b>						
Median Income for Renter Households	\$28,054	\$28,284	\$28,559	\$28,093	\$33,789	\$33,364
Median Rent	\$664	\$761	\$720	\$771	\$797	\$792
% of Income for Rent	28.4%	32.3%	30.3%	32.9%	28.3%	28.5%
<b>Luzerne</b>						
Median Income for Renter Households	\$22,250	\$29,151	\$26,410	\$33,042	\$30,971	\$33,425
Median Rent	\$617	\$746	\$701	\$749	\$789	\$810
% of Income for Rent	33.3%	30.7%	31.9%	27.2%	30.6%	29.1%
<b>Pennsylvania</b>						
Median Income for Renter Households	\$27,110	\$32,141	\$34,357	\$33,193	\$35,600	\$37,761
Median Rent	\$763	\$868	\$881	\$893	\$927	\$951
% of Income for Rent	33.8%	32.4%	30.8%	32.3%	31.2%	30.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

# Housing Value



## Housing Value

Lackawanna County's 2019 median housing value increased from the prior year, which at \$158,000 is the highest of all years studied. Luzerne County had experienced a substantial jump of about \$8,000 in 2018, and an equivalent drop between 2018 and 2019.

Prior to the significant increase in 2019, median home values in Lackawanna County had not shown a clear trend; there had been small increases and decreases annually. Luzerne County had shown an upward trajectory from 2015 to 2018. The median value of Lackawanna County homes has been an average of about 20 percent lower than the statewide median over the last five years; in Luzerne County, the median value has been about 43 percent lower than the statewide median on average.

In 2019, 36.7 percent of homes in Luzerne County were valued at less than \$100,000, and another 39.4 percent were valued between \$100,000 and \$200,000. Similarly, in Lackawanna County, the largest share of homes (39.8 percent) was valued between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and another 26 percent were valued at less than \$100,000. In both counties, the percentages of homes valued above \$200,000 and the percentages of homes valued above \$300,000 were much lower than those percentages in Pennsylvania overall.

Housing Value Comparison: Lackawanna							
	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Owner-occupied units	47,906	55,442	55,469	54,480	54,165	56,371	55,854
Less than \$50,000	8.0%	0.0%	5.4%	5.2%	5.7%	6.9%	5.9%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	49.0%	18.8%	25.0%	21.6%	19.7%	21.4%	20.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	25.8%	24.7%	21.2%	22.1%	23.1%	22.5%	20.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	10.1%	22.4%	18.0%	20.4%	21.5%	16.7%	19.8%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	5.4%	19.4%	18.3%	19.5%	17.3%	20.5%	20.0%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	0.0%	7.2%	8.8%	7.9%	9.4%	9.5%	10.9%
\$500,000 or more	0.3%	3.6%	3.3%	3.3%	3.4%	2.5%	3.3%
Median Value	\$93,400	\$154,100	\$145,600	\$152,000	\$153,100	\$147,900	\$158,000

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Housing Value Comparison: Luzerne							
	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Owner-occupied units	78,799	88,973	85,575	84,510	85,043	88,539	88,275
Less than \$50,000	15.0%	5.7%	8.5%	8.8%	8.8%	11.0%	8.4%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	50.0%	29.7%	30.4%	28.6%	29.4%	24.1%	28.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	21.9%	23.5%	21.6%	22.2%	20.4%	22.4%	22.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	7.7%	17.4%	18.0%	16.6%	17.2%	19.0%	16.9%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	3.6%	15.7%	14.3%	14.0%	15.1%	15.1%	14.8%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	1.3%	6.2%	5.8%	8.4%	6.9%	6.9%	7.2%
\$500,000 or more	0.4%	1.8%	1.3%	1.4%	2.2%	1.6%	1.8%
Median Value	\$84,800	\$131,200	\$123,100	\$123,400	\$125,700	\$133,600	\$125,700

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Housing Value Comparison: Pennsylvania							
	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Owner-occupied units	2,889,484	3,461,678	3,405,756	3,382,514	3,421,017	3,478,645	3,501,824
Less than \$50,000	15.0%	5.0%	7.6%	7.4%	7.0%	6.9%	6.6%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	37.0%	15.7%	16.6%	16.0%	14.6%	14.1%	13.7%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	24.3%	17.2%	17.4%	16.8%	16.4%	15.7%	14.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	11.9%	17.3%	17.5%	17.3%	17.4%	17.5%	17.1%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	7.4%	22.7%	20.4%	20.9%	21.5%	21.7%	22.4%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	2.9%	16.1%	14.5%	15.1%	16.2%	16.8%	17.7%
\$500,000 or more	1.0%	6.0%	6.0%	6.4%	7.0%	7.2%	7.7%
Median Value	\$97,000	\$182,100	\$170,600	\$174,100	\$181,200	\$186,000	\$192,600

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

# Housing Density

## Housing Density

Housing density data for both counties and Pennsylvania showed small increases in homes per square mile between 2018 and 2019, in accordance with small increases in the estimated number of housing units in both counties. In Lackawanna County, Luzerne County, and Pennsylvania, the number of homes per square mile in 2019 were 216.9, 166.1, and 124.5 respectively, indicating that the two counties have higher housing densities than the Commonwealth as a whole.



	Total Square Miles	Housing Density Comparison									
		2000		2016		2017		2018		2019	
		Housing Units	Homes per square mile	Housing Units	Homes per square mile	Housing Units	Homes per square mile	Housing Units	Homes per square mile	Housing Units	Homes per square
Lackawanna	464.9	95,362	205.1	98,711	212.3	100,511	216.2	100707	216.6	100,848	216.9
Luzerne	906.3	144,686	159.7	147,888	163.3	150,114	165.6	150280	165.8	150,503	166.1
Pennsylvania	46,054.3	5,249,750	114.0	5,611,995	121.9	5,694,402	123.6	5713136	124.1	5,732,580	124.5

*Source U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey*

# Mortgage Activity



## Mortgage Activity

Generally, between 53 percent and 56 percent of owner-occupied homes in Lackawanna County have mortgages from 2015 - 2018. Luzerne County experiences more fluctuation; the share of homes with mortgages ranges from about 52 percent to 58 percent. In 2019, this share rose slightly in both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties compared with the year before, while the statewide percentage saw a small decline.

Median monthly owner costs, which include mortgage payments as well as real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees, decreased in Luzerne County but increased in Lackawanna County and statewide. The median monthly owner costs in both counties have remained substantially lower than those at the state level.

Mortgage Activity Comparison: Lackawanna

	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Owner Occupied Homes	47,906	55,442	55,469	54,480	54,165	56,371	55,854
% with Mortgage	55.2%	58.6%	53.9%	53.9%	55.6%	52.8%	54.4%
Median Monthly Owner Costs	\$939	\$1,304	\$1,259	\$1,276	\$1,300	\$1,273	\$1,381

Monthly Owner Costs (SMOC) includes mortgage payment, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Mortgage Activity Comparison: Luzerne

	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Owner Occupied Homes	78,799	88,973	85,575	84,510	85,043	88,539	88,275
% with Mortgage	54.1%	57.7%	57.6%	55.5%	52.1%	51.8%	53.3%
Median Monthly Owner Costs	\$865	\$1,160	\$1,185	\$1,187	\$1,193	\$1,232	\$1,138

Monthly Owner Costs (SMOC) includes mortgage payment, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Mortgage Activity Comparison: Pennsylvania

	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Owner Occupied Homes	2,889,484	3,461,678	3,405,756	3,382,514	3,421,017	3,478,645	3,501,824
% with Mortgage	62.2%	62.7%	60.6%	60.3%	60.3%	59.7%	59.1%
Median Monthly Owner Costs	\$1,010	\$1,390	\$1,414	\$1,416	\$1,438	\$1,451	\$1,477

Monthly Owner Costs (SMOC) includes mortgage payment, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

# Market Conditions

## Foreclosure Rate

### Market Conditions

The tables presented here show market conditions through 2019. Multi-year trends indicated an upturn in market activity, as evidenced by shrinking inventory and rising list prices in both counties and statewide.

Current monthly data for 2020 and 2021, as well as reports from local real estate professionals, has also indicated a strong seller's market in the region's housing market.

For-Sale Inventory					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	1,564	1,252	1,063	1,011	840
Luzerne	2,009	1,974	1,539	1,319	1,161
Pennsylvania	71,511	61,365	54,577	49,451	44,198

*Numbers are for the month of December for each year.  
Source: Zillow Research*

Median Listing Price					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	\$133,000	\$129,500	\$130,000	\$143,500	\$145,900
Luzerne	\$114,900	\$115,000	\$116,000	\$129,900	\$136,200
Pennsylvania	\$174,900	\$178,500	\$189,900	\$199,900	\$212,500

*Median price for the month of December for each year.  
Source: Zillow Research*



**“There has been a steady decrease in Lackawanna County foreclosures throughout the last five years, and a steady increase in Luzerne County foreclosures during that same period.”**

### Foreclosure Rate

The number of foreclosures in the two counties and statewide was highest in 2012 and 2013, representing a peak in foreclosures associated with the last recession. In Lackawanna County, foreclosures have continued to trend down, reaching the lowest year of those analyzed in 2019, while Luzerne County's foreclosure total has begun to trend upward since 2016. The 636 foreclosures in Luzerne County in 2019 is the highest number since 2014. Statewide, the 20,143 foreclosures in 2019 was the lowest number of all years analyzed.

Foreclosures								
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	552	607	537	541	584	448	420	395
Luzerne	1,067	1,058	890	693	218	482	571	636
Pennsylvania	34,372	33,632	28,905	27,494	25,429	24,449	22,678	20,143

*Source: The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania*

# Homelessness



## Homelessness

Homelessness data is tracked annually via point-in-time counts reported to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In 2016, 411 homeless individuals were counted in the two counties. This trended downward to 324 in 2018, and then gradually increased to 358 in the most recent count, conducted before the pandemic in 2020. The statewide homeless population grew slightly in 2020.

As of 2020, the percent of households in the two counties that were unsheltered increased, particularly in Lackawanna County. In the combined region, 9.5 percent of homeless households were unsheltered, nearly twice the share of the last two years and the highest share of all years analyzed. Nonetheless, this is a smaller share of unsheltered households compared with Pennsylvania as a whole.

The share of the region's unhoused population consisting of children declined from 32 percent in 2017 to 19 percent in 2019, then rose to nearly 28 percent in 2020.

Homelessness: Lackawanna County					
	Sheltered Households			Individuals	
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered Households	Total	Children
Jan. 2016	54	90	11	242	84
Jan. 2017	47	69	14	197	63
Jan. 2018	58	52	5	159	38
Jan. 2019	91	57	7	186	24
Jan. 2020	59	59	16	177	38

*Source: US Department of Housing & Urban Development*

Homelessness: Luzerne County					
	Sheltered Households			Individuals	
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered Households	Total	Children
Jan. 2016	65	53	9	169	34
Jan. 2017	55	53	3	174	56
Jan. 2018	66	47	6	165	46
Jan. 2019	60	51	7	164	43
Jan. 2020	61	50	8	181	61

*Source: US Department of Housing & Urban Development*

Homelessness: Pennsylvania					
	Sheltered Households			Individuals	
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered Households	Total	Children
Jan. 2016	5,554	3,563	1,464	15,339	4,269
Jan. 2017	5,363	2,979	1,673	14,138	3,693
Jan. 2018	5,558	2,562	1,667	13,512	3,422
Jan. 2019	5,899	2,417	1,524	13,199	2,980
Jan. 2020	5,989	2,174	1,721	13,375	3,048

*Source: US Department of Housing & Urban Development*



## Social Services

# Social Services



**“The ongoing need for social services to assist the area's residents in their daily lives has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.”**

## Social Services

The Social Services section of the report describes important indicators related to social service programs within Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The indicators tracked cover the Keystone STARS program, children living in poverty, children in foster care, households receiving food stamps, individuals receiving cash assistance, medical assistance and children's health insurance programs, the population of seniors 65 years and older, the number of senior centers, the population of individuals with disabilities, and certain tax credits. Social services include government-funded services usually provided to those in need of essentials, such as health care, food, etc.

Numerous individuals throughout Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties and the Commonwealth face physical, economic, or social challenges. There is an ongoing need for social services to assist these citizens in their daily lives. The recipients of social services are often older individuals, those with mental and physical health challenges or disabilities, and lower-income families. A large portion of the population has faced the consequences of an uneven economy since the recession in 2008, and despite generalized economic growth in recent years, there remains a persistent demand for government-funded services as well as assistance from charitable and faith-based organizations. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a spike in the acute need for support for families facing income loss. The pandemic has also appeared to widen already existing economic inequalities across gender, age, and race.

Poverty is one issue behind the region's continued need for social services. Child poverty rates in both counties have generally been higher than the statewide average. Furthermore, the percentage of households receiving SNAP benefits (often referred to as food stamps) was far higher in 2019 than it was prior to the last recession, at 17.6 percent regionally.

Pennsylvania has expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act to cover adults under 65 years with incomes up to 133 percent of the Federal Poverty Level as of January 1, 2015. As a result, a greater number of individuals are eligible for Medical Assistance, plateauing in 2018 and 2019 at about 27 percent in Lackawanna County and 28 percent in Luzerne. However, these shares increased further in 2020 amid the global pandemic. Statewide and regionally, enrollment in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) has typically grown for the last several years, but fell in 2020 as more families shifted to Medicaid due to changes in family income.

Older Pennsylvanians also possess a particular need for social support. Many senior citizens live on fixed incomes and face significant health care issues. Within the two-county region, the percent of the total population aged 65 and older remains higher than the statewide percentage, and the total number of seniors in the region is over 105,000. The number of individuals in the region with a disability has remained relatively steady, indicating a continued need for support for a variety of disabilities.

There are also several federal income tax credits that work in ways similar to social assistance programming. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) can provide significant income, in the form of an income tax refund, to lower income households. Regionally, about 18 percent of tax returns received the EITC as of 2018. The share of households receiving Child Tax Credits, and the average amount of the credit per return, grew due to expansion of that credit under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Further tax credits and direct payments made in 2020 and 2021 also have an important impact on the financial situation of families.

# Early Childhood Education Children Living in Poverty

## Early Childhood Education

Keystone STARS is an initiative of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL). It was developed to improve, support, and recognize the continuous quality improvement efforts of early learning programs in Pennsylvania. Participating childcare and early learning programs are rated from one to four stars on several factors, such as teacher quality and adherence to safety regulations.

There has been significant year-to-year fluctuation in the number of participating centers. Both counties reached their highest levels in 2018, with 83 facilities in Lackawanna and 126 in Luzerne. Between 2018 and 2020, Luzerne County saw a decrease of ten STARS centers, and Lackawanna recorded a decline of three centers with at least 1 STAR. The number of 4-STAR (i.e. highest quality) centers has trended upward, however, and remained unchanged between 2019 and 2020 in both counties.

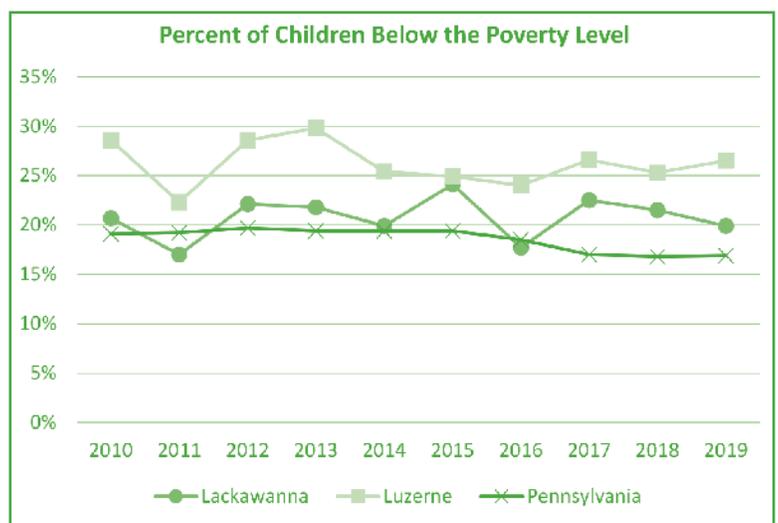


Keystone STARS Child Care Facilities										
Category	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Lackawanna	Luzerne								
Total Star Facilities	51	82	79	123	83	126	83	122	80	116
Star 1	11	34	37	72	33	66	35	62	33	58
Star 2	14	29	15	29	23	32	20	31	19	29
Star 3	8	10	10	13	9	16	5	14	5	14
Star 4	18	9	17	9	18	12	23	15	23	15

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Human Services OCDEL.

## Children Living in Poverty

The statewide childhood poverty rate has shown a declining trend over the last few years, from 19.4 percent in 2015 to 16.8 percent in 2018, before marginally increasing to 16.9 percent in 2019. In most years, both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have had child poverty rates above the statewide rate. Both counties saw a jump in the childhood poverty rates between 2016 and 2017, and since then Luzerne County has seen a roughly level trend while Lackawanna County's rate has fallen under 20 percent for the first time since 2016.



Percent of Children Under 18 Living Below the Poverty Level										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	20.7%	17.0%	22.1%	21.8%	19.9%	24.1%	17.7%	22.5%	21.5%	19.9%
Luzerne	28.6%	22.3%	28.6%	29.8%	25.4%	24.9%	24.0%	26.6%	25.3%	26.5%
Pennsylvania	19.1%	19.2%	19.7%	19.4%	19.4%	19.4%	18.5%	17.0%	16.8%	16.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year Estimates

# Children in Foster Care Food Stamps/SNAP



**“Both statewide and in the two-county region, the numbers of households receiving SNAP benefits have increased since 2010.”**

## Children in Foster Care

Data from Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children (via the Annie E. Casey Foundation) was not available in time to update this year’s report. However, the most recent data available estimates a total of 1,045 children were served by foster care in the two counties in the 12 months ending September 2018. This total includes all individuals ages 0 to 20 in foster care, and represents less than one percent of all children in the two-county region. This population has declined over the time period analyzed. Statewide, 25,441 children (0.8 percent) were in foster care from October 2017 to September 2018 – an increase of 60 children from the previous year.

Both statewide and in the two-county region, racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented in the foster care population. Statewide, nonwhite or Hispanic individuals comprise about one-third of the total population of individuals younger than age 20, but account for 56 percent of the foster care population. In Lackawanna County, it is about 40 percent and in Luzerne, 37 percent.

	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018	
	Number	Percent								
Lackawanna	406	0.8%	379	0.8%	343	0.7%	297	0.6%	248	0.5%
Luzerne	941	1.3%	804	1.1%	812	1.2%	807	1.1%	797	1.1%
Pennsylvania	22,510	0.7%	22,980	0.8%	24,513	0.8%	25,381	0.8%	25,441	0.8%

Each one-year period begins in October and ends in September.  
Source: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children via the Annie E. Casey Foundation.  
Number includes all children served in foster care ages 0-20. Percent is out of total population ages 0-19.

	Pennsylvania		Lackawanna		Luzerne	
	% Total Population (0-19 years)	% Foster Care Population	% Total Population (0-19 years)	% Foster Care Population	% Total Population (0-19 years)	% Foster Care Population
Hispanic or Latino	12.3%	13.0%	15.6%	10.1%	23.3%	15.4%
Non-Hispanic Black or African American	13.0%	33.9%	4.4%	9.7%	5.7%	10.5%
Non-Hispanic Other Race	0.3%	2.3%	0.1%	9.7%	0.1%	0.9%
Non-Hispanic Two or More Races	3.8%	7.1%	3.4%	10.5%	3.3%	10.4%
Non-Hispanic White	66.8%	43.7%	72.8%	60.1%	66.1%	62.7%

Each one-year period begins in October and ends in September.  
Source: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children via the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

## Food Stamps/SNAP

The last decade has generally brought with it a marked increase in the number of households receiving assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also called food stamps), both regionally and across Pennsylvania. A period of growth occurred from 2010 to 2014, coinciding with changes to program eligibility at the federal level. Further growth in the number of households receiving SNAP was seen from 2015 to 2018, but was more pronounced regionally than statewide.

In 2019, the statewide total rose again, though small dips in the share of households receiving SNAP

were seen in both counties, with the total number of households regionally numbering over 38,000. Other statewide indicators of SNAP indicated that a spike in enrollment was seen in 2020, coinciding with the pandemic.

	Lackawanna			Luzerne			Pennsylvania		
	Total Households	Food Stamps Recipients	% Receiving Food Stamps	Total Households	Food Stamps Recipients	% Receiving Food Stamps	Total Households	Food Stamps Recipients	% Receiving Food Stamps
2010	84,662	10,157	12.0%	129,884	17,988	13.8%	4,936,030	564,362	11.4%
2011	86,343	11,498	13.3%	130,170	20,588	15.8%	4,952,566	627,156	12.7%
2012	85,491	11,748	14.0%	129,158	21,311	17.0%	4,958,249	650,665	13.0%
2013	83,709	11,512	13.8%	128,597	21,235	16.5%	4,938,894	618,259	12.5%
2014	84,280	13,642	16.2%	125,235	21,560	17.2%	4,945,972	644,930	13.0%
2015	83,054	11,895	14.3%	127,408	19,860	15.6%	4,956,037	658,303	13.3%
2016	86,203	14,635	17.0%	124,118	21,821	17.6%	4,937,771	660,314	13.4%
2017	86,213	15,218	17.7%	126,811	20,788	16.4%	5,008,751	646,413	12.9%
2018	88,268	15,164	17.2%	128,301	23,612	18.4%	5,070,931	679,656	13.4%
2019	88,154	14,783	16.8%	130,890	23,968	18.3%	5,119,249	693,470	13.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year Estimates

# Cash Assistance Medical Assistance & CHIP

## Cash Assistance

Cash assistance programs, such as Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), provide additional income assistance to those who cannot work and to households that do not earn enough from work to support themselves. Lackawanna County's total number and share of households receiving cash assistance has fluctuated, but in 2019 reached the highest total seen since 2016 and the second highest since 2013. In Luzerne County, the number of cash assistance recipients increased year-over-year from 3.1 percent in 2014 to 4.9 percent in 2018, before falling in 2019 to the lowest levels seen in the last decade.

	Households Receiving Cash Assistance					
	Lackawanna		Luzerne		Pennsylvania	
	# of Households	% of Households	# of Households	% of Households	# of Households	% of Households
2010	2,509	3.0%	3,902	3.0%	180,404	3.7%
2011	2,504	2.9%	4,725	3.6%	184,989	3.7%
2012	2,456	2.9%	4,880	3.8%	184,003	3.7%
2013	3,099	3.7%	4,102	3.2%	163,462	3.3%
2014	2,738	3.2%	3,885	3.1%	168,621	3.4%
2015	2,124	2.6%	4,211	3.3%	162,502	3.3%
2016	3,288	3.8%	4,337	3.5%	159,489	3.2%
2017	2,548	3.0%	4,873	3.8%	146,108	2.9%
2018	2,710	3.1%	6,274	4.9%	158,875	3.1%
2019	3,073	3.5%	3,707	2.8%	161,961	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year Estimates

## Medical Assistance & CHIP

Since 2011, there has been a substantial increase in the number of individuals eligible for Medical Assistance in the two counties. The percent of the population and total number of people eligible for Medical Assistance rose between 2013 and 2018, reaching nearly 27 percent of Lackawanna County residents and over 28 percent of Luzerne County residents. Rates of Medical Assistance eligibility have increased in recent years due to Pennsylvania's expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. After the share of eligible individuals in the region plateaued in 2019, by July 2020, thousands more had become eligible amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Statewide enrollment in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) grew significantly from 2017 to 2020. However, CHIP enrollment dropped in both counties and statewide in January 2021. It was reported that this shift is due to more families moving from CHIP into Medicaid due to changes in family income.

	Total Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance					
	Lackawanna		Luzerne		Pennsylvania	
	# of Individuals	% of Population	# of Individuals	% of Population	# of Individuals	% of Population
July 2012	38,893	18.1%	62,694	19.5%	2,200,775	17.2%
July 2013	39,644	18.5%	63,414	19.8%	2,203,479	17.2%
July 2014	41,873	19.7%	65,352	20.5%	2,257,071	17.7%
July 2015	48,369	22.8%	75,255	23.6%	2,592,693	20.3%
July 2016	52,831	25.0%	82,982	26.2%	2,779,675	21.7%
July 2017	54,900	26.0%	87,411	27.6%	2,852,494	22.3%
July 2018	56,402	26.8%	89,278	28.1%	2,894,860	22.6%
July 2019	56,376	26.7%	89,268	28.1%	2,860,494	22.3%
July 2020	59,606	28.4%	94,815	29.9%	3,009,756	23.5%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Percent of Population calculated using previous year's population estimates from US Census Bureau. Prior years' data has been updated.

	Children's Health Insurance (CHIP) Enrollment				
	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021
Lackawanna	2,390	2,438	2,522	2,690	2,369
Luzerne	4,122	4,272	4,377	4,758	3,976
Pennsylvania	170,502	180,999	179,241	185,959	170,124

Due to ACA changes and technical difficulties, older data is not comparable.  
Source: Pennsylvania Department of Human Services

# Programs for Seniors



**“The statewide senior population has trended upward - in 2019, 18.7 percent of the state population was at least 65 years old.”**

## Programs for Seniors (Population 65 or older)

The share of seniors (age 65 or older) among the Lackawanna County population rose from 19.5 percent in 2000 to 20.4 percent in 2019. This change was driven by both an increase in the county’s senior population and a decrease in its total population. As of 2019, seniors comprised 19.8 percent of the population in Luzerne County as well; this is a slightly smaller share of the county’s population than in 2000, but it has trended upward over the last several years. The statewide senior population has similarly trended upward – in 2019, 18.7 percent of the state population was at least 65 years old (up from 15.6 percent in 2000).

In 2019 and in 2020, there were ten senior centers in Lackawanna County. The number of senior centers in Luzerne County has also remained consistent at 15. In both counties, there are about 2.3 to 2.4 senior centers per 10,000 residents aged 65 years or older.

	Population 65 Years and Older								
	Lackawanna			Luzerne			Pennsylvania		
	Total Population	65 Years +	% 65 Years +	Total Population	65 Years +	% 65 Years +	Total Population	65 Years +	% 65 Years +
2000	213,295	41,542	19.5%	310,295	62,740	20.2%	12,281,054	1,919,165	15.6%
2015	211,917	40,091	18.9%	318,449	60,554	19.0%	12,802,503	2,181,193	17.0%
2016	211,321	41,498	19.6%	316,383	61,184	19.3%	12,784,227	2,221,761	17.4%
2017	210,761	41,103	19.5%	317,343	62,355	19.6%	12,805,537	2,276,543	17.8%
2018	210,793	41,876	19.9%	317,646	63,359	19.9%	12,807,060	2,332,369	18.2%
2019	209,674	42,709	20.4%	317,417	62,864	19.8%	12,801,989	2,388,218	18.7%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1 Year Estimates*

	Number of Senior Centers	
	Per 1000 Residents	
	2020	Age 65+
Lackawanna	10	2.34
Luzerne	15	2.39

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Aging*

# Individuals with Disabilities

## Individuals with Disabilities

In both geographies, the percentage of individuals with a disability has fluctuated over the past five years. In Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, the percentage of the population that has at least one disability has been consistently higher than the percentage in the Commonwealth – both counties averaged about 16 percent over the past five years, compared to the statewide five-year average of approximately 14 percent.

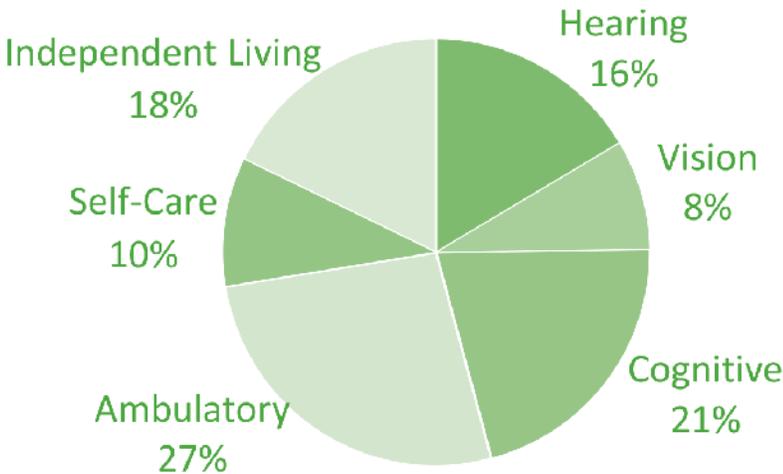
Of all disabilities reported in the two-county region, 27 percent were ambulatory disabilities, and another 21 percent were cognitive disabilities. Outside those, independent living disabilities were most frequently reported. Hearing, vision, and self-care disabilities each comprise smaller but still substantial amounts of all disabilities reported in the region. This breakdown has changed minimally over the past several years.



	Population with a Disability								
	Lackawanna			Luzerne			Pennsylvania		
	Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	With a Disability	%	Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	With a Disability	%	Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	With a Disability	%
2015	208,091	29,591	14.2%	310,611	50,946	16.4%	12,599,417	1,746,764	13.9%
2016	207,544	33,471	16.1%	308,401	50,021	16.2%	12,579,422	1,792,479	14.2%
2017	206,732	32,103	15.5%	309,654	48,088	15.5%	12,602,472	1,774,646	14.1%
2018	206,943	33,478	16.2%	310,069	49,068	15.8%	12,604,311	1,774,575	14.1%
2019	205,870	33,256	16.2%	309,750	51,643	16.7%	12,593,136	1,769,125	14.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year Estimates

## Disability by Type for 2019 Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties



# Tax Credits



**“When received as refunds, earned income and child tax credits significantly impact the financial stability of households.”**

## Tax Credits

Certain tax credits function as a form of social aid to low- and middle-income families and individuals and play a large role in poverty alleviation. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a federal income tax credit that assists lower-income working households. It was received on nearly one in five Luzerne County tax returns in 2018. In that year, 16.7 percent of returns filed in Lackawanna County received the EITC. This is somewhat higher than the statewide rate of 14.5 percent. The average amount of the credit is around \$2,300 in the region and statewide. Credits of this amount, when received as tax refunds, can make a significant impact on the financial stability of households. In both counties, the average size of the credit per return has generally grown in the past five years.

The Child Tax Credit was claimed by about 22 percent of households in both counties in 2018, a substantial increase over the last year but a slightly smaller percentage than in Pennsylvania as a whole. The significant increase in households claiming Child Tax Credits, and growth in the average size of the amount, are a result of expansion of the credit in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Tax Credits - Lackawanna							
Total Tax Returns	Returns Receiving EITC	Percent Receiving EITC	Average EITC amount per return	Returns Receiving Child Tax Credit	Percent Receiving Child Tax Credit	Average Child Tax Credit Amount per Return	
2014	102,910	17,820	17.3%	\$2,176	13,270	12.9%	\$1,235
2015	102,950	17,800	17.3%	\$2,171	13,190	12.8%	\$1,238
2016	102,590	17,560	17.1%	\$2,179	13,060	12.7%	\$1,212
2017	103,130	17,320	16.8%	\$2,245	13,150	12.8%	\$1,220
2018	103,150	17,190	16.7%	\$2,285	22,540	21.9%	\$2,009

*Prior year data has been revised.  
Source: Internal Revenue Service*

Tax Credits - Luzerne							
Total Tax Returns	Returns Receiving EITC	Percent Receiving EITC	Average EITC amount per return	Returns Receiving Child Tax Credit	Percent Receiving Child Tax Credit	Average Child Tax Credit Amount per Return	
2014	156,410	29,310	18.7%	\$2,211	20,150	12.9%	\$1,181
2015	156,990	29,320	18.7%	\$2,284	19,980	12.7%	\$1,171
2016	157,090	29,810	19.0%	\$2,287	19,900	12.7%	\$1,149
2017	158,080	29,980	19.0%	\$2,327	19,780	12.5%	\$1,150
2018	158,210	29,840	18.9%	\$2,366	34,580	21.9%	\$1,836

*Prior year data has been revised.  
Source: Internal Revenue Service*

Tax Credits - Pennsylvania							
Total Tax Returns	Returns Receiving EITC	Percent Receiving EITC	Average EITC amount per return	Returns Receiving Child Tax Credit	Percent Receiving Child Tax Credit	Average Child Tax Credit Amount per Return	
2014	6,168,840	969,830	15.7%	\$2,201	849,160	13.8%	\$1,255
2015	6,200,330	961,580	15.5%	\$2,236	840,090	13.5%	\$1,249
2016	6,188,330	949,840	15.3%	\$2,230	827,260	13.4%	\$1,245
2017	6,236,490	930,470	14.9%	\$2,253	823,380	13.2%	\$1,243
2018	6,259,700	906,990	14.5%	\$2,278	1,453,120	23.2%	\$2,161

*Source: Internal Revenue Service*



## Health & Health Care

# Health & Health Care



## Health and Health Care

The Health and Health Care section of this report identifies important health indicators in Pennsylvania and Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. These indicators include death from health conditions such as cancer and heart disease, death by suicide, infant and child mortality, childhood lead exposure, teen pregnancy, unhealthy behaviors such as cigarette smoking and excessive drinking, health insurance status, obesity, and the availability of health care facilities such as hospitals and nursing homes.

The rate of death from cancer is an indicator affected by behavior (such as smoking, which is known to cause various types of cancer) and by health care (cancer death rates decline as access to the latest treatments improve). Demographics also complicate these statistics; cancer is more prevalent among older individuals, for instance. While the cancer death rates have fluctuated in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties in recent years, the annual average number of deaths in both counties from 2011 to 2019 exceeds the statewide average.

The age-adjusted rate of death by heart disease – another leading cause of death in the U.S. – is similarly impacted by health-related behaviors and access to health care. The rate of death by heart disease was lower in 2019 than it was in 2011, for both counties and Pennsylvania. Although the rate of heart disease deaths declined in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties in 2019 following an increase the prior two years, the rate in both counties is significantly higher than in the Commonwealth as a whole.

Positive test results for elevated childhood lead levels, as identified in screenings of children younger than 72 months, is more common in Lackawanna County than in Luzerne County and Pennsylvania as a whole. Screening for childhood lead exposure is not mandated. Testing rates in Luzerne County have followed statewide trends, with nearly 20 percent of children in this age group tested in 2019. The percentage tested in Lackawanna County has consistently lagged behind the statewide rate, with 16 percent tested in 2019.

Personal behavior impacts many health conditions, including but not limited to heart disease and cancer. Making healthy lifestyle choices is extremely important. However, eating healthy can be costly and access to healthy food can be limited. At a time when many area residents are living with low or moderate incomes, healthy choices are not always top priorities. Issues of social determinants and the existence of food deserts in the region also complicate efforts to improve population health. The adult obesity rate has stood at around 30 percent regionally and statewide in recent years. In two key health-related behaviors, this area has performed worse in recent years than the state as a whole. Cigarette smoking has been more prevalent in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties than in Pennsylvania, and the rate of excessive drinking has exceeded statewide levels in the past few years.

Drug overdose deaths declined in both counties in 2019, and are lower in comparison to rates in 2015, while the statewide rate of drug overdose deaths has increased by one-third during this time. The rate of opioid prescriptions have decreased annually in all three regions. Fentanyl is a major factor in persistent deaths from drug overdoses. The prevalence of these high-risk behaviors is a significant public health concern.

Health insurance coverage of area residents has improved between 2010 and 2019, although the insured rates have stabilized or declined slightly in more recent years. A considerably larger proportion of individuals had coverage in 2019 than in 2010, largely due to an increase in people covered by public health insurance. There has indeed been a strong increase in public health insurance regionally, while the percent of the population covered by private health coverage has been slowly declining regionally and statewide. Enrollment in federal marketplace plans has continued to decline in both counties and in Pennsylvania overall.

Finally, the cost of health care is an important concern. Though Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties are homes to multiple health care resources and the number of beds available in hospitals has not declined significantly, cost could impede access for those who are underinsured or uninsured. Between 2013 and 2019, for example, the daily private hospital room rate has increased by 52 percent in Lackawanna County and by 62 percent in Luzerne County. Between 2018 and 2019 alone, the room rate increased 17 percent in Lackawanna County. The semi-private daily room rate for nursing home facilities has also grown, increasing three percent in Lackawanna County and at least 17 percent in Luzerne County and statewide. Both counties have more nursing home beds per 1,000 seniors compared to the statewide rate. However, the number of beds is lower regionally and statewide compared with rates in 2016.2017. With the senior population continuing to grow and increasing life expectancy, demand will grow for long-term care.

# Cancer & Heart Disease Obesity

## Cancer

Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have reported fluctuating cancer death rates in recent years, while the cancer death rate in Pennsylvania has been steadily declining. Over the years analyzed, the annual average number of deaths by cancer has been 176.6 in Lackawanna County and 173.3 in Luzerne County, exceeding the annual average rate of 165.5 in the Commonwealth. There was a sharp decline in the cancer death rate in Lackawanna County in 2019 to 152.4, making it lower than the statewide rate for the first time in recent years. Luzerne County experienced a slight increase in the cancer death rate in 2019 following a decline the previous year.

Cancer Deaths (Age Adjusted Rate per 100,000)									
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	183.7	177.0	180.9	177.8	173.3	179.4	179.9	184.8	152.4
Luzerne	174.5	179.6	189.3	185.6	175.2	166.2	172.6	150.2	166.4
Pennsylvania	176.4	173.8	170.1	168.8	166.2	164.0	160.6	156.4	153.2

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health



**“Rates of heart disease deaths have declined in both counties since 2018.**

## Heart Disease

Pennsylvania’s age-adjusted rate of death by heart disease has seen a generally declining trend, while Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have reported fluctuating rates of death by heart disease in more recent years. The statewide heart disease death rate was six percent lower in 2019 than it was in 2011. The heart disease death rate declined in both counties in 2019, following two years of growth. Despite this decline, both geographies continue to be significantly above the state rate of death by heart disease.

Heart Disease Deaths (Age Adjusted Rate per 100,000)									
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	225.2	236.5	209.4	210.8	224.9	201.5	221.3	230.4	211.8
Luzerne	218.6	196.0	222.3	195.6	202.1	192.5	203.0	213.3	186.1
Pennsylvania	184.1	175.2	178.4	174.7	176.8	175.8	175.7	175.8	172.7

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

**The adult obesity rate declined slightly in the region encompassing Lackawanna, Luzerne and Wyoming Counties, and it has increased slightly in Pennsylvania overall.”**

## Obesity

There was a slight decline in the adult obesity rate to 29 percent in the region encompassing Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming Counties, while the rate in Pennsylvania has continued to gradually increase to a rate of 32 percent for the period 2017 to 2019. Over the entire time period analyzed, the average adult obesity rate is 30 percent regionally and 31 percent statewide.

Adult Obesity Rate (BMI > 30.0)					
	2013-2015	2014-2016	2015-2017	2016-2018	2017-2019
Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming	30%	30%	30%	30%	29%
Pennsylvania	30%	30%	31%	31%	32%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

# Infant Mortality Death Rate of Children Under Five

**“The death rates of children under five years in both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have decreased since 2015.”**

## Infant Mortality

Although the infant mortality rate has fluctuated somewhat over the last decade, the rates for both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties were similar to the statewide rate in the most recent period. The statewide infant mortality rate (measured per 1,000 live births) has declined slowly since 2012, and has remained stable at the most recent rate of 6.1 since 2014. The Lackawanna County infant mortality rate declined to 6.2 in 2016-2018, reaching the lowest point over the time period analyzed. The infant mortality rate in Luzerne County has been steadily increasing since 2013 to 6.3 in the most recent period. The fluctuation in the infant mortality rates does not indicate a specific trend upward or downward in the two-county region.

Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 Live Births)					
	2012-2014	2013 - 2015	2014 - 2016	2015 - 2017	2016 - 2018
Lackawanna	6.6	7.3	7.8	7.7	6.2
Luzerne	7.1	5.6	5.7	6.2	6.3
Pennsylvania	6.6	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.1

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health*

## Death Rate of Children Under Five

As with the infant mortality rate, the death rate of children under five years has been slowly declining statewide, and reached its lowest point over the past decade with the current rate of 130.2 in 2019. The rates in both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have fluctuated over the period from 2010 to 2019, with rates in both counties declining from last year.

Rate of Death of Children Younger Than 5										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	216.3	200.3	156.3	115.4	162.3	196.4	180.2	134.9	132.5	127.2
Luzerne	145.2	123.4	229.9	142.2	81.4	162.2	138.2	124.1	146.4	131.9
Pennsylvania	159.3	146.8	157.0	147.2	136.5	139.5	141.1	134.0	132.4	130.2

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health*

# Childhood Lead Screening Suicide Rate

## Childhood Lead Screening

Pennsylvania does not require universal testing of children for elevated lead levels; tests are only mandated for children covered by Medicaid. In 2019, the number of children younger than 72 months with tested blood lead levels (BLL) higher than five micrograms per deciliter totaled 397 for both counties combined. Nearly 20 percent of children in this age group were tested statewide. The percent of children tested in Luzerne County has followed statewide trends since 2017. Lackawanna County continues to trail statewide and Luzerne County testing rates, with 16 percent of children in this age group tested in 2019.

The share of tested children with elevated BLL in Lackawanna County (8.0 percent) has declined since 2017, although it continues to exceed the rates in Luzerne County (5.8 percent) and statewide (4.6 percent).



Childhood Lead Levels: 2019			
	% of Population Age 0-71 Months Tested	Number Tested with Elevated BLL (> 5 µg/dL)	% of Tested with Elevated BLL
Lackawanna	16.0%	171	8.0%
Luzerne	19.5%	226	5.8%
Pennsylvania	19.9%	7,545	4.6%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

Percent Tested (Age 0-71 Months)			
	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	15.8%	15.6%	16.0%
Luzerne	17.3%	19.2%	19.5%
Pennsylvania	17.8%	19.0%	19.9%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

Percent of Tested with Elevated BLL			
	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	10.4%	9.2%	8.0%
Luzerne	5.7%	6.6%	5.8%
Pennsylvania	6.2%	5.5%	4.6%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

## Suicide Rate

In 2019, the age-adjusted suicide rate in Lackawanna County declined to 14.3, after reaching a peak of 25.0 the previous year. The rate in Luzerne County has declined slightly since 2017 to the most recent rate of 18.4. There has been a large degree of fluctuation in rates for both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. The rate in Luzerne County has exceeded the statewide rate for all years analyzed, while Lackawanna County's rate is in line with the statewide rate in the most recent period, following sharp fluctuations in prior years.

**“Suicide deaths have decreased in both counties as well as the state since 2018.”**

Suicide Deaths (Age Adjusted Rate per 100,000)									
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	12.1	14.6	15.4	14.4	21.1	17.9	12.8	25.0	14.3
Luzerne	18.3	15.6	15.3	15.8	21.8	16.6	21.2	19.2	18.4
Pennsylvania	12.9	12.1	13.3	13.2	13.9	14.6	15.0	14.9	14.0

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

# Alcohol and Tobacco Opioid Overdose Deaths



## Alcohol and Tobacco

Many chronic health conditions are linked with related health factors such as behaviors and lifestyles. Smoking and alcohol use are associated with heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure – among other issues. Both factors analyzed here have been more prevalent in the three-county area (Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming Counties) than in the Commonwealth as a whole for the majority of periods.

The rate of cigarette smoking in the region increased slightly to 24 percent in 2017-2019, following a decline in the prior period. The region has consistently had a higher proportion of adult cigarette smokers compared with the Commonwealth as a whole, with the average rate four percentage points higher than the statewide average – 23 percent compared with 19 percent – over the period from 2013-2019.

The percentage of adults engaging in excessive drinking in the region (9 percent) continues to exceed the statewide rate of 6 percent, following a sharp increase in 2016-2018. The statewide rate has consistently stood at six percent in each of the years analyzed. The regional share has exceeded this statewide rate

for three of the five time periods analyzed. Excessive drinking is defined as two or more alcoholic drinks daily on average for men and one or more alcoholic drinks daily on average for women.

Adult Tobacco Smoking					
	2013 - 2015	2014- 2016	2015- 2017	2016- 2018	2017- 2019
Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming	23%	22%	25%	23%	24%
Pennsylvania	20%	19%	18%	18%	18%

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health*

Adult Excessive Drinking					
	2013 - 2015	2014 - 2016	2015- 2017	2016- 2018	2017- 2019
Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Wyoming	7%	6%	6%	9%	9%
Pennsylvania	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health*

## Opioid Overdose Deaths

The rates of drug overdose deaths (per 100,000 people) have declined in both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties since 2015 while increasing in Pennsylvania by just over one-third during the same period. Luzerne County has consistently had the highest overdose death rate of the three areas, although its rate of drug overdose deaths has declined since 2017. The drug overdose death rate in Lackawanna County declined sharply in 2019, reaching its lowest point over the past five years.

Drug Overdose Death Rate (per 100,000 people)						
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2015-19 Change
Lackawanna	34	40	42	46	27	-21%
Luzerne	45	44	50	49	40	-10%
Pennsylvania	26	36	43	35	35	34%

*Source: DFA & University of Pittsburgh Analysis of data from County Coroners & Medical Examiners. "Drug-Related Overdose Deaths in Pennsylvania" Sept. 2019*

Opioid Prescribing Rate (per 100 people)						
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2015-19 Change
Lackawanna	117.3	112.1	97.3	83.7	72.9	-38%
Luzerne	92.1	85.7	70.8	61.5	51	-45%
Pennsylvania	75.5	69.5	57.7	49.9	47	-38%

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Fentanyl was the drug most commonly associated with overdose deaths in Pennsylvania in 2018, having been reported in 70 percent of cases – up from 67 percent the year before. It was followed by heroin (identified in 35 percent of overdose deaths), cocaine (33 percent), and benzodiazepines (28 percent).

Abuse of opioid drugs such as fentanyl and heroin sometimes begins with abuse of prescription opioids. In recent years, the rate of opioid prescription has decreased annually in all three regions. The prescription rate fell by 38 percent in Pennsylvania and Lackawanna County from 2015 to 2019, while declining 45 percent in Luzerne County. Despite a declining trend in the prescription

rate in Lackawanna County, the rate of opioid prescription (72.9) was the fourth highest in the state, and continues to exceed the state average. The declining trend in the prescription rate in Luzerne County has mirrored the statewide trend since 2015, and the most recent rate of 51 is now more in line with the statewide average of 47.

# Hospitals Long-Term Care Facilities

## Hospitals

Hospital data in 2016 through 2019 differs from previous years due to changes in reporting by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and a transition from fiscal year to calendar year reporting.

There are 12 hospitals in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, including general hospitals, specialty hospitals, and federal hospitals. Among them, the daily room rate for a private room is \$2,273 in Lackawanna County and \$2,050 in Luzerne County. In both areas, the rate has grown substantially over the years analyzed. This includes an increase of 17 percent in daily rate for a private room in Lackawanna County from 2018 to 2019.

The number of general hospital beds in proportion to the population has remained relatively consistent in both counties, with 3.3 beds per 1,000 residents in Lackawanna County and 2.7 beds per 1,000 residents in Luzerne County.

Emergency room visits declined slightly in Lackawanna County in 2019, following steady growth since 2013-2014. Conversely, emergency room visits in Luzerne County increased six percent in 2019 after declining slightly since 2014-2015. In the years analyzed, the percentage of visits resulting in inpatient admission has fallen by 3.5 percentage points in Lackawanna County and 2.4 percentage points in Luzerne County. Though this rate is not an exact indicator of ER overutilization, this trend may suggest that ER visits for non-emergent cases is an ongoing and perhaps still growing issue in the region.

Hospitals: Lackawanna County						
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Hospitals	5	5	5	5	5	5
Daily Room Rate (Private Room)	\$1,499	\$1,605	\$1,581	\$1,891	\$1,940	\$2,273
General Hospital Beds	697	693	692	692	692	692
Beds per 1,000	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
Emergency Room Visits	107,063	111,006	118,567	121,838	124,752	123,474
ER Inpatient Admission Rate	19.0%	18.4%	16.9%	16.5%	16.4%	15.5%

*Total hospitals and daily room rate includes general hospitals, specialty hospitals, and federal hospitals. Licensed beds, beds per 1,000, and ER visit data includes only general acute care hospitals.*

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

Hospitals: Luzerne County						
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Hospitals	6	7	7	7	7	7
Daily Room Rate (Private Room)	\$1,264	\$1,318	\$1,715	\$1,932	\$1,993	\$2,050
General Hospital Beds	836	837	838	847	828	872
Beds per 1,000	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.7
Emergency Room Visits	149,015	151,544	151,477	150,218	147,981	157,503
ER Inpatient Admission Rate	18.7%	17.9%	17.4%	17.9%	16.2%	16.3%

*Total hospitals and daily room rate includes general hospitals, specialty hospitals, and federal hospitals. Licensed beds, beds per 1,000, and ER visit data includes only general acute care hospitals.*

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

## Long-Term Care Facilities

The number of nursing homes in Pennsylvania has shown a slow decreasing trend since 2016, while remaining stable in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. The number of beds per 1,000 residents aged 65 years and older has declined in both Luzerne County and statewide in the most recent period, while increasing in Lackawanna County. Both counties have more beds per 1,000 seniors than the state overall.

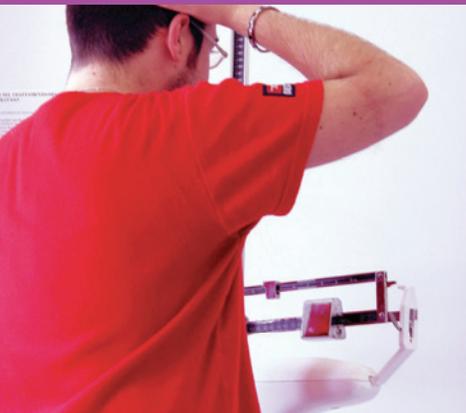
The daily room rates at long-term care facilities in Lackawanna County are lower than rates statewide and in Luzerne County. In addition, the rates in Lackawanna County have increased at a slower overall rate of 3 percent since 2016-2017, compared to an increase of 17 percent in Lackawanna County and 18 percent statewide.

Long Term Care Facilities												
	2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020		
	Nursing Homes	Beds Per 1,000	Daily Room Rate	Nursing Homes	Beds Per 1,000	Daily Room Rate	Nursing Homes	Beds Per 1,000	Daily Room Rate	Nursing Homes	Beds Per 1,000	Daily Room Rate
Lackawanna	19	58.3	\$302	18	59.7	\$301	18	52.9	No Data	18	55.6	\$312
Luzerne	25	45.2	\$312	25	45.4	\$322	25	46.8	No Data	25	43.6	\$367
Pennsylvania	702	39.7	\$308	697	40.3	\$343	697	37.7	No Data	692	36.7	\$365

*Daily Room Rate is for Semi-Private Room.*

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health

# Teen Pregnancy Health Insurance Coverage



**“As of 2019 more than 94.0 percent of people in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, as well as Pennsylvania overall, had health insurance coverage.”**

## Teen Pregnancy

Data for 2019 was not released by Pennsylvania Department of Health in time for inclusion in this year’s Indicators report. Over the decade analyzed, Pennsylvania reported generally decreasing rates of teen pregnancies. Teen pregnancies are defined here as pregnancies among females aged 15 to 17 years.

Both counties experienced significant improvement from 2009 to 2018 – a 57.5 percent drop in the rate of teen pregnancy in Lackawanna County and a 39 percent drop in Luzerne County.

The statewide rate has declined as well since 2009. In recent years, Luzerne County has frequently had a teen pregnancy rate significantly higher than the statewide rate.

	Teen Pregnancy Rate (crude rate per 1,000)										
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	15.3	16.8	14.6	17.6	11.6	11.7	12.5	9.6	7.7	6.5	
Luzerne	22.1	19.2	17.4	15.7	14.7	11.9	15.6	13.4	13.7	13.5	
Pennsylvania	22.0	21.2	19.3	17.4	14.3	13.3	12.4	10.6	9.5	9.6	

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health*

## Health Insurance Coverage

The percentage of the population with health insurance coverage in Pennsylvania has remained relatively stable since 2016, following steady increases in coverage since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. In both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and statewide, just over 94 percent of the population was covered by health insurance in 2019. There was a slight decline in coverage in Lackawanna County from 96.3 percent in 2017. While the percentage of the population with private health insurance has been slowly declining since 2016, the amount with public health insurance coverage has increased regionally and statewide. In Lackawanna County, 42.8 percent of the population reported having public health insurance coverage in 2019. The rate was slightly higher in Luzerne County, reaching 44.7 percent in 2019. Both counties exceed the statewide rate of 37.6 percent. Those

	Health Insurance Coverage											
	Lackawanna						Luzerne					
	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
With Health Insurance	89.6%	94.3%	96.3%	96.3%	95.4%	94.3%	89.0%	94.0%	95.4%	95.1%	95.4%	94.1%
Private Health Insurance	71.4%	73.2%	72.7%	71.5%	70.1%	68.3%	69.2%	71.6%	71.6%	70.8%	68.9%	65.4%
Public Health Insurance	32.0%	36.8%	39.4%	41.2%	43.1%	42.8%	35.9%	38.3%	40.5%	41.0%	43.1%	44.7%
No Health Insurance Coverage	10.4%	5.7%	3.7%	3.7%	4.6%	5.7%	11.0%	6.0%	4.6%	4.9%	4.6%	5.9%
No Health Insurance Coverage - Under 18	5.3%	1.6%	2.4%	0.3%	1.6%	3.3%	6.8%	3.1%	1.7%	3.2%	2.7%	3.1%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

with public health insurance coverage increased nearly 11 percentage points in Lackawanna County from 2010, and almost nine percentage

	Health Insurance Coverage: Pennsylvania						
	Pennsylvania						
	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
With Health Insurance	89.8%	93.6%	94.4%	94.5%	94.5%	94.2%	
Private Health Insurance	72.9%	73.5%	72.9%	72.5%	72.4%	71.9%	
Public Health Insurance	31.3%	34.7%	36.4%	36.8%	37.4%	37.6%	
No Health Insurance Coverage	10.2%	6.4%	5.6%	5.5%	5.5%	5.8%	
No Health Insurance Coverage - Under 18	5.2%	4.1%	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%	4.6%	

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

points in Luzerne County. In both counties, the percent of residents without health insurance coverage increased in 2019, reaching 5.7 percent in Lackawanna County and 5.9 percent in Luzerne County, which is similar to the statewide rate of 5.8 percent. Regionally, the uninsured rate for children under age 18 continues to be lower than the statewide rate of 4.6 percent, although the rate increased in both counties in 2019.

	Health Choices Enrollment			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	43,320	43,556	43,971	49,262
Luzerne	70,927	70,738	71,414	81,013
Pennsylvania	2,305,217	2,284,179	2,236,594	2,517,302

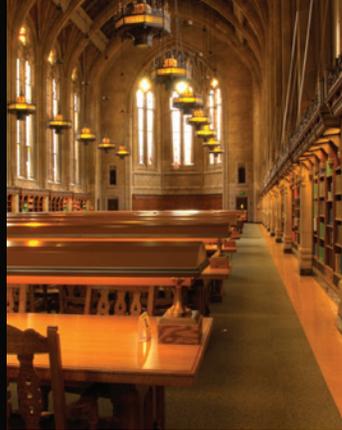
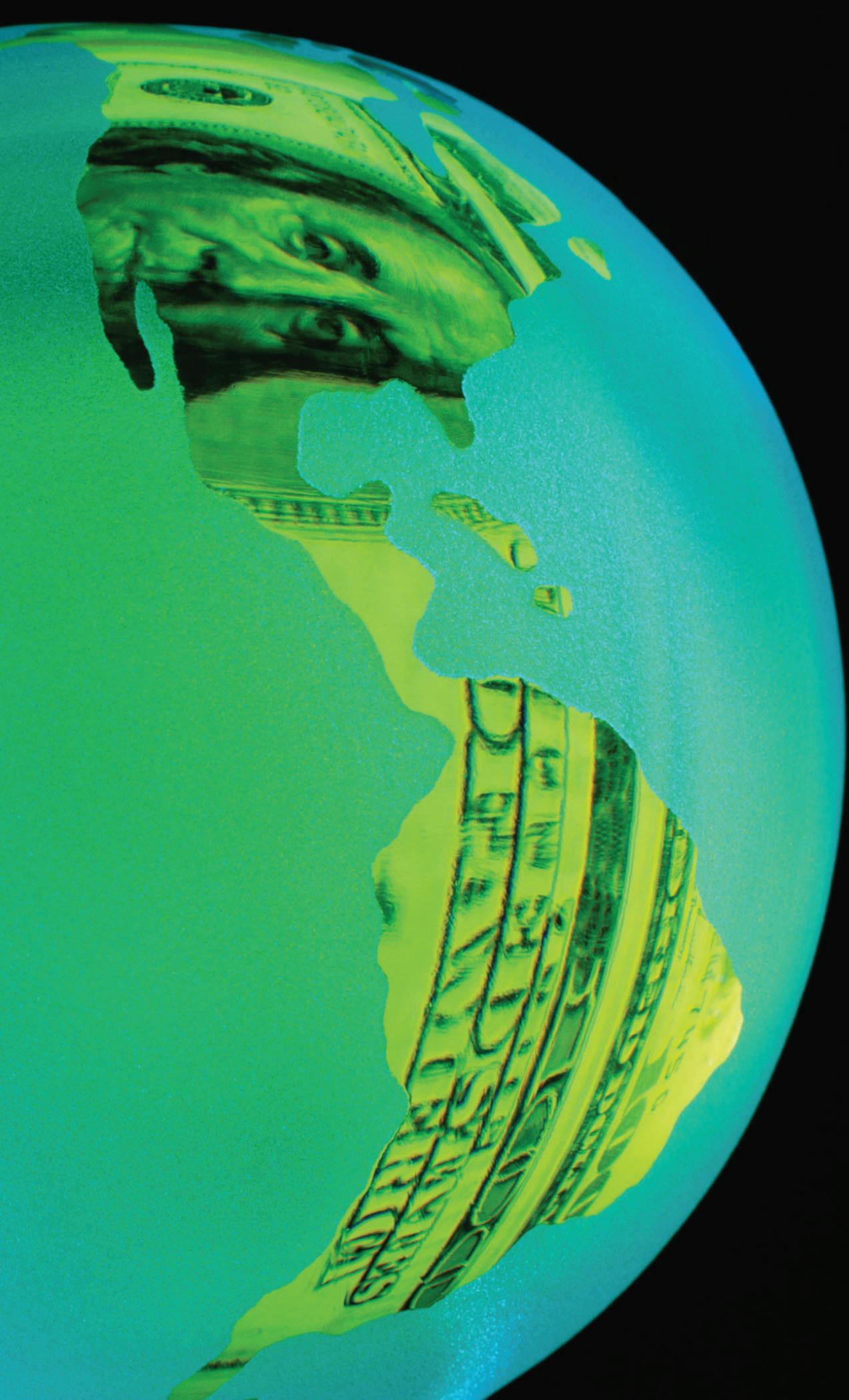
*Data taken from November of each year  
Source: Pennsylvania Department of Human Services*

Enrollment in health plans offered through the Healthcare.gov marketplace have continued to decline regionally and statewide. In Lackawanna County, the number of enrollees has declined by 18 percent since 2017, while declining 22 percent in Luzerne County and statewide. In 2020, there were about 13,500 total enrollees in the two counties, compared to nearly 17,000 in 2017.

	Marketplace Plan Enrollment			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	7,120	6,235	6,087	5,856
Luzerne	9,701	8,515	8,272	7,613
Pennsylvania	426,059	389,081	365,888	331,825

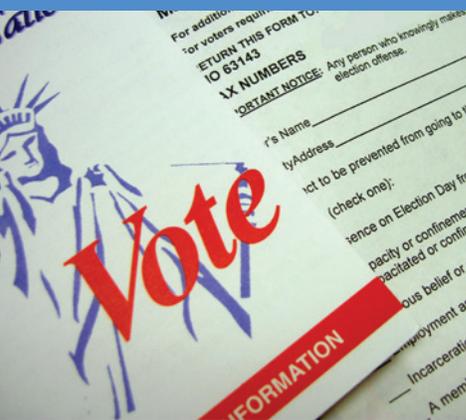
*Source: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services*

The number of people enrolled in HealthChoices, the managed care program for Pennsylvania’s Medical Assistance program, has increased 9 percent statewide since 2017, and 14 percent in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. There were over 130,000 enrollees in HealthChoices in both counties combined, representing five percent of the statewide enrollment.



# Civic Engagement

# Civic Engagement



**“Civic engagement helps form the foundation upon which communities thrive.”**

## Civic Engagement

The Civic Engagement section of the report identifies important indicators in Lackawanna County, Luzerne County, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – including nonprofit organizations, library circulation, voter turnout, and veterans.

The state of nonprofit organizations is a key indicator of regional civic engagement and community ties. The Institute calculated statistics on nonprofit organizations from the IRS Master File, accessed through the Urban Institute’s National Center for Charitable Statistics. The number of nonprofits in the region declined slightly in 2020, reaching its lowest level in the past four years in Lackawanna County. There were 2,073 tax-exempt organizations in the region as of 2020. These organizations span a variety of activity areas, including arts, culture and humanities, education, environment, health, human services, and religion. Health organizations are the only type of nonprofit groups that have experienced growth since 2017.

Libraries are nonprofit organizations that serve a particularly important role in the community. Additionally, library data is useful in determining the availability and utilization of resources. The numbers of libraries in the region has remained stable at 19 over the past decade. Total circulation has declined in both counties compared to 2017, including a 23 percent decline in Luzerne County. Circulation per capita in both counties has primarily followed a downward trend, and remained at a low point of 1.67 in Luzerne County compared to 4.5 in Lackawanna County. Recent declines in statewide circulation may reflect shifts in the role that libraries play in communities, with less emphasis on lending of physical items and increased focus on areas such as arts and culture, children’s programming, and technology services. In the most recent data, the total number of registered patrons has continued to decline in Lackawanna County, and was 24 percent lower in 2019 compared to 2009, compared to a three percent decline for Pennsylvania over the same period. The number of patrons in Luzerne County has fluctuated over the past 3 years reported, including a slight decline in 2019. Data prior to 2017 is not comparable for this region due to a change in reporting for one location.

Voter turnout is another important indicator of civic engagement. This report tracks the total number of registered voters eligible to vote in the November election of each year, along with the voter turnout for those elections. Despite challenges to voter registration and in-person voting caused by the pandemic, the 2020 election resulted in record voter registration and participation both regionally and statewide. Between 2019 and 2020, voter registration increased six percent in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, and seven percent statewide. Luzerne County’s 2020 voter registration rose to its highest level recorded since 2004. In the 2020 election, voter turnout reached historic levels, with at least seven in ten registered voters participating regionally and statewide.

The number of military veterans in a community can be telling of the community’s success in caring for veterans and making them feel comfortable. Additionally, measuring the veteran population demonstrates the need for social services, health care, and housing directed toward their unique needs. The region remains home to a larger percentage of military veterans than the Commonwealth as a whole, including a significantly higher share in Luzerne County. In both counties and statewide, over half of veterans are age 65 or older.

# Non-Profit Organizations

## Non-Profit Organizations

The total number of not-for-profit organizations declined slightly in both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and statewide in 2020. In both counties, the total number of nonprofits decreased to 2,073, and reached its lowest level in the past four years in Lackawanna County. The master file used for this analysis may have missing data on some organizations, so it is difficult to determine the degree to which the trend is driven by dissolution of existing nonprofits versus decreased reporting or other data quality issues.

Public charities comprise the majority of nonprofits in the region, accounting for 59 percent of charities in Lackawanna County and 56 percent in Luzerne County. These shares have remained relatively stable in both counties since 2017. Private foundations comprise a relatively small share of all nonprofits, continuing to account for five percent of Lackawanna County nonprofits and four percent of Luzerne County nonprofits.



**“The total numbers of nonprofits in both counties have decreased since 2017.”**

### Total Non-Profit Organizations

	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2020	903	1,170	62,047
2019	911	1,184	62,432
2018	905	1,167	61,051
2017	929	1,219	61,973

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics IRS Master File

### Lackawanna County Non-Profits by Category

	Public Charity	Private Foundation	Other
2020	533	49	321
2019	537	50	324
2018	542	50	313
2017	547	52	330

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics IRS Master File

### Luzerne County Non-Profits by Category

	Public Charity	Private Foundation	Other
2020	654	50	466
2019	659	50	475
2018	665	47	455
2017	680	51	488

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics IRS Master File

# Non-Profit Organizations by Activity Type

**“The majority of regional nonprofits are classified as human services, and another large proportion are classified as public and social benefit.”**

## Non-Profit Organizations by Activity Type

The following tables show nonprofits broken down among major activity types. Categories with small numbers of nonprofits are not shown. The region’s largest share of nonprofits is classified as human services, followed by public and social benefit. Although the number of organizations in these two categories declined regionally from 2019, they still account for nearly half the nonprofit organizations in the two counties.

Health organizations were the only type of nonprofit groups in both counties that have experienced growth in their number since 2017. The number of health nonprofits have increased by six percent in Lackawanna County and eight percent in Luzerne County. They account for 153 of the region’s total nonprofits – up from 143 in 2017.

All other nonprofit groups remained stable or declined slightly in number from 2017.

Environmental groups experienced the largest decline of ten percent in Luzerne County, followed by Human services organizations with a six-percent decline. In Lackawanna County, Public and Social Benefit groups declined by five percent since 2017.

	Lackawanna	Luzerne
Arts, culture, and humanities	122	101
Education	120	111
Environment	28	52
Health	71	72
Human services	250	362
Mutual benefit	56	83
Public and social benefit	174	243
Religion	89	174

*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics IRS Master File*

	Lackawanna	Luzerne
Arts, culture, and humanities	114	83
Education	117	110
Environment	28	49
Health	70	66
Human services	250	351
Mutual benefit	55	79
Public and social benefit	164	238
Religion	87	170

*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics IRS Master File*

	Lackawanna	Luzerne
Arts, culture, and humanities	117	101
Education	120	110
Environment	28	47
Health	75	78
Human services	250	342
Mutual benefit	55	79
Public and social benefit	165	232
Religion	87	173

*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics IRS Master File*

	Lackawanna	Luzerne
Arts, culture, and humanities	122	100
Education	120	111
Environment	28	48
Health	78	78
Human services	247	348
Mutual benefit	56	79
Public and social benefit	166	240
Religion	88	172

*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics IRS Master File*

	Lackawanna	Luzerne
Total Nonprofits	-3%	-4%
Public Charities	-3%	-4%
Private Foundations	-6%	-2%
Arts, culture, and humanities	-4%	0%
Education	0%	-1%
Environment	0%	-10%
Health	6%	8%
Human services	0%	-6%
Mutual benefit	-2%	-5%
Public and social benefit	-5%	-5%
Religion	-2%	-1%

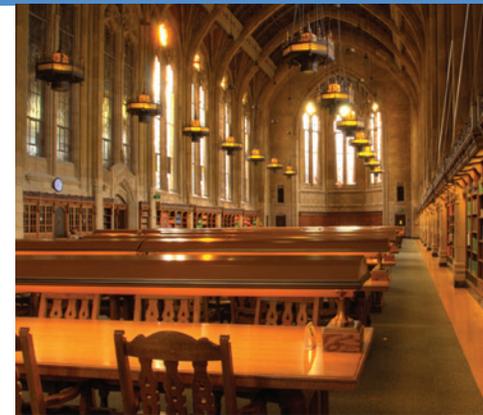
*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics IRS Master File*

# Library Registration & Circulation

## Library Registration & Circulation

The total number of libraries in Pennsylvania receiving state funding increased slightly in 2019 to 470 following a decline the previous year. The totals remained unchanged in both counties, holding stable at 19 public libraries in the two counties for the duration of the data analyzed. The number of registered patrons among statewide libraries has improved since 2017, however, it is three percent lower than in 2009. In Lackawanna County, the number of registered patrons has steadily declined with the exception of a slight uptick in 2015. Overall, registered patrons have declined 24 percent in the county since 2009, including a decrease of 5.3 percent in 2019. The number of registered patrons in Luzerne County increased dramatically in 2017 following a change in the reported total of registered patrons for the Osterhout Free Library. This may be due to a change in reporting methodology, and should not be compared to prior year totals.

The region's libraries circulated over 1.5 million items in 2019. Although activity increased slightly in Lackawanna County from the previous year, total circulations have been declining historically, and are 25 percent lower than in 2009. In Luzerne County, activity has fluctuated over the timeframe analyzed, including a 23 percent decline in total circulations between 2017 and 2018. Since 2009, total circulations have declined 35 percent in the Luzerne County, with circulation per capita remaining at the lowest level of 1.67 across all years analyzed.



**“With some fluctuation over the years, library registration has generally declined in Lackawanna County and increased in Luzerne County throughout the past decade.”**

	Library Circulation					
	Pennsylvania		Lackawanna		Luzerne	
	Total Circulation	Circulation Per Capita	Total Circulation	Circulation Per Capita	Total Circulation	Circulation Per Capita
2009	71,973,962	6.00	1,292,159	6.06	842,929	2.57
2010	69,355,114	5.78	1,205,339	5.65	928,989	2.83
2011	68,674,018	5.53	1,255,482	5.85	873,816	2.65
2012	68,692,140	5.56	1,222,667	5.70	821,395	2.49
2013	68,155,060	5.49	1,161,506	5.42	781,659	2.37
2014	66,140,364	5.33	1,147,873	5.35	791,461	2.40
2015	64,534,566	5.20	1,051,572	4.90	684,279	2.07
2016*	64,534,566	5.20	1,051,572	4.90	684,279	2.07
2017	61,841,879	4.98	1,005,946	4.69	715,801	2.17
2018	62,077,482	5.00	957,745	4.47	551,186	1.67
2019	63,942,921	5.15	964,814	4.50	550,546	1.67

\* Data reported by the State Library in 2016 exactly matched the data reported in 2015.  
Source: Pennsylvania State Library

	Library Registration					
	Pennsylvania		Lackawanna		Luzerne	
	Number of Libraries	Registration	Number of Libraries	Registration	Number of Libraries	Registration
2009	472	5,504,327	8	58,122	11	133,009
2010	475	5,551,574	8	57,240	11	127,311
2011	474	5,527,252	8	55,193	11	130,036
2012	474	5,357,818	8	52,906	11	120,857
2013	474	5,229,111	8	51,779	11	134,408
2014	474	5,295,583	8	50,092	11	138,665
2015	474	5,416,096	8	52,090	11	131,494
2016*	474	5,416,096	8	52,090	11	131,494
2017*	474	5,324,185	8	50,208	11	233,035
2018	467	5,330,741	8	46,520	11	239,568
2019	470	5,361,183	8	44,056	11	237,323

\* Data reported by the State Library in 2016 exactly matched the data reported in 2015. Registration data prior to 2017 for Luzerne County is not comparable due to a change in reporting for one location.  
Source: Pennsylvania State Library

# Voter Registration & Participation

## Voter Registration & Participation

The number of registered voters on both the state and regional levels has followed a predictable and stable trend since 2000, rising significantly during presidential election years, and rising by smaller amounts during midterm federal election years. Registration often decreases following presidential elections.

The COVID-19 pandemic created logistical challenges to voter registration and in-person voting. Despite these challenges, the 2020 election resulted in record voter registration and participation both regionally and statewide. Between 2019 and 2020, voter registration increased six percent in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, and seven percent statewide. There was an increase of over 9,000 registered voters in Lackawanna County in 2020, reaching a total of more than 149,000 registered voters, which was on par with the 2012 election. The number of registered voters in Luzerne County increased by nearly 12,000 in 2020 to almost 221,000 registered voters – the highest point across all years analyzed. Since 2001, Luzerne County has shown stronger growth in voter registration, increasing 12 percent from 2001 to 2020, compared to one percent growth in Lackawanna County.

Voter turnout for the 2020 election reached historic levels, with at least seven in ten registered voters participating regionally and statewide. In Lackawanna County, 78 of registered voters participated, while 70 percent participated in Luzerne County. Across the Commonwealth, 76 percent of registered voters participated.

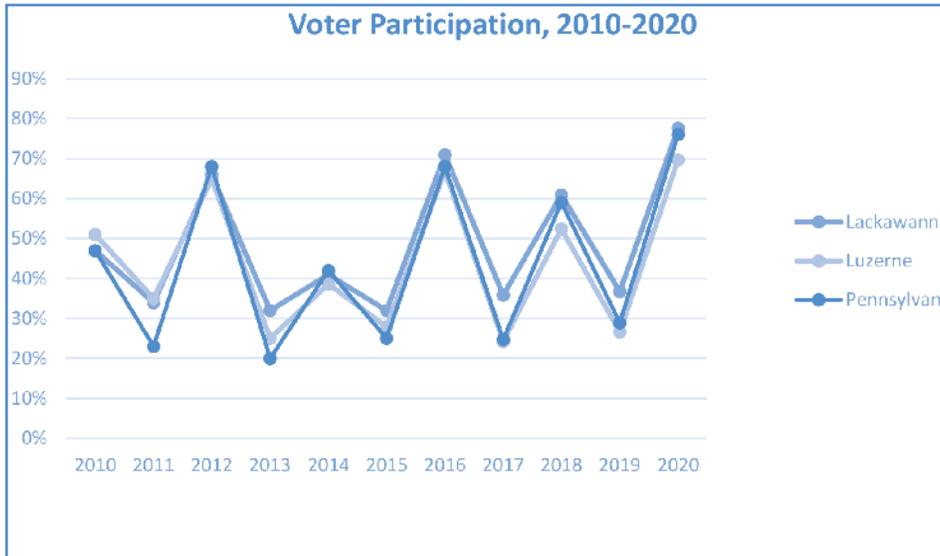
Voting: Lackawanna											
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Registered Voters	150,577	146,723	149,471	146,614	146,655	139,796	148,104	141,516	143,610	140,320	149,389
Total Votes	70,549	49,788	98,775	47,344	60,489	44,209	104,991	50,735	84,502	51,544	116,003
% of Voter Turnout	47%	34%	66%	32%	41%	32%	71%	36%	61%	37%	78%
<i>Prior year data has been revised</i>											
<i>Source: Pennsylvania Department of State, Lackawanna County Department of Elections</i>											

Voting: Luzerne											
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Registered Voters	188,091	188,591	194,137	194,991	196,129	190,659	205,332	204,757	207,513	208,965	220,888
Total Votes	96,656	66,517	125,619	49,344	75,692	53,312	137,549	49,654	109,024	55,676	154,134
% of Voter Turnout	51%	35%	65%	25%	39%	28%	67%	24%	52%	27%	70%
<i>Prior year data has been revised</i>											

Voting: Pennsylvania											
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Registered Voters	8,478,509	8,168,254	8,508,015	8,223,473	8,251,050	8,073,175	8,722,977	8,430,988	8,609,880	8,530,983	9,090,962
Total Votes	3,987,551	1,889,488	5,742,040	1,651,441	3,495,866	2,006,393	5,918,847	2,086,025	5,012,555	2,463,876	6,915,283
% of Voter Turnout	47%	23%	68%	20%	42%	25%	68%	25%	59%	29%	76%
<i>Source: Pennsylvania Department of State</i>											

Percent Voter Turnout											
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	47%	34%	66%	32%	41%	32%	71%	36%	61%	37%	78%
Luzerne	51%	35%	65%	25%	39%	28%	67%	24%	52%	27%	70%
Pennsylvania	47%	23%	68%	20%	42%	25%	68%	25%	59%	29%	76%

# Voter Registration & Participation



**“Voter turnout for the 2020 election reached historic levels, with at least seven in ten registered voters participating regionally and statewide.”**

	Registered Voters		
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2001	147,197	197,813	7,773,541
2002	146,129	198,062	7,835,775
2003	147,144	203,276	7,688,295
2004	154,464	213,296	8,366,663
2005	148,551	211,845	8,073,337
2006	148,283	196,775	8,182,876
2007	148,975	173,344	8,112,998
2008	157,326	187,844	8,755,588
2009	149,632	191,108	8,473,823
2010	150,577	188,091	8,478,509
2011	146,723	188,591	8,168,254
2012	149,474	194,137	8,508,015
2013	146,614	194,991	8,223,473
2014	146,655	196,129	8,251,050
2015	139,796	190,659	8,073,175
2016	148,104	205,332	8,722,977
2017	141,516	204,757	8,430,988
2018	143,610	207,513	8,609,880
2019	140,320	208,965	8,530,983
2020	149,389	220,888	9,090,962

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of State*

# Veterans



## Veterans

The estimated number of veterans in Pennsylvania decreased in 2019 to seven percent of the population. Lackawanna County followed a similar trend, with the number of veterans decreasing from 7.7 percent to 7.5 percent of the population. After declining for several years, the number of veterans in Luzerne County increased in 2019, growing from 8.0 percent to 8.6 percent of the population. There are more than 34,000 veterans in the two-county region, and Luzerne County's share is significantly higher than the Commonwealth's share.

Veterans: Lackawanna County					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Number of Veterans	14,679	13,648	12,002	12,959	12,479
Percent of Civilian Population 18+	8.7%	8.1%	7.2%	7.7%	7.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year estimates

Veterans: Luzerne County					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Number of Veterans	21,214	23,637	20,934	20,325	21,891
Percent of Civilian Population 18+	8.3%	9.3%	8.2%	8.0%	8.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year estimates

Veterans: Pennsylvania					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Number of Veterans	802,586	791,295	742,199	745,909	710,375
Percent of Civilian Population 18+	7.9%	7.8%	7.3%	7.3%	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 1-year estimates



# Government

# Government Lackawanna County Fiscal Snapshot



## Government

This section of the report deals primarily with county government fiscal affairs. Tables consist of county and state data such as revenue, expenditures, debt, taxes, and aid to communities. The indicators reflect governmental size, scope, and financial health. Sources of information include the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and data procured directly from the two counties' annual financial reports, which are filed with DCED. No new county financial data for 2019 was available for Lackawanna or Luzerne Counties, though 2018 data for Lackawanna County, which was unavailable for last year's Indicators Report, has been added.

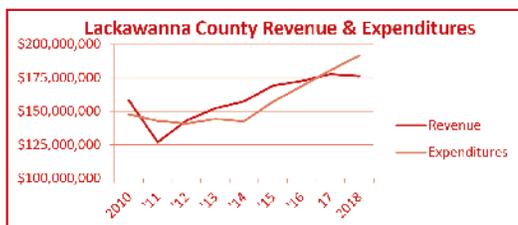
The statistics presented here are government-wide, meaning that the data is inclusive of each county's component parts. They contain details from each county's general fund as well as all other major and minor funds for which the county is responsible.

## Lackawanna County Fiscal Snapshot

In 2018, the county's total revenues exceeded \$176 million – a small decline from the prior year but the second highest of any year analyzed. Expenditures grew by six percent in 2018, following a seven percent growth in 2017. For the second straight year, expenditures were greater than revenues. Lackawanna County's long-term debt fell by just under \$3 million from 2016 to 2017, but rose by three percent or over \$7 million from 2018 to 2019.

Lackawanna County				
Year	Revenue		Total	Expenditures
	Total Revenue	Per Capita	Expenditures	Per Capita
2009	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data
2010	\$158,157,859	\$738	\$147,727,646	\$689
2011	\$126,985,143	\$593	\$142,878,817	\$667
2012	\$143,137,091	\$667	\$140,883,575	\$657
2013	\$152,203,107	\$711	\$144,354,993	\$675
2014	\$157,464,861	\$740	\$142,586,340	\$670
2015	\$169,058,332	\$798	\$157,031,357	\$741
2016	\$172,642,884	\$817	\$168,733,731	\$798
2017	\$177,746,961	\$843	\$180,627,796	\$857
2018	\$176,218,890	\$836	\$191,539,314	\$909

Source: Lackawanna County



County revenue consists primarily of taxes and intergovernmental funds.

Intergovernmental funds come from federal, state, and local sources. They include grants, reimbursements for services, and the like. The majority of intergovernmental funds received by both counties support health and human services. Tax revenue, on the other hand, includes all taxes levied by the county government (predominantly property taxes). In Lackawanna County, intergovernmental revenue increased by less than 1 percent between 2017 and 2018, following more dramatic growth in prior years. Tax revenue grew by just over 4 percent from 2016 to 2017 and decreased by .04 percent in 2018. The greatest spike in tax revenue, however, came between 2011 and 2012. This coincides with a 15.002 mill increase in the county's property tax rate. Revenues per capita and taxes per capita decreased by nominal amounts in 2018 deviating from prior year trends. Expenditures per capita increased from 2016 to 2017 (by 7 percent) and again in 2018 (by 6 percent) in Lackawanna County, keeping with prior year trends.

In Lackawanna County, intergovernmental revenue grew substantially between 2012 and 2017, and increased by a smaller margin in 2018. Tax revenue, which had also been following an increasing trajectory, fell by just under one half of

one percent in 2018.

Taxes revenues per capita remained at just under \$400, marginally lower than the prior year.

Lackawanna County Revenue			
Year	Total Taxes	Taxes per Capita	Intergovernmental Revenue
	2009	\$55,327,413	\$265
2010	\$54,237,593	\$253	\$53,511,663
2011	\$55,512,405	\$259	\$47,578,152
2012	\$72,892,209	\$340	\$44,598,547
2013	\$77,732,981	\$363	\$46,413,441
2014	\$79,066,461	\$372	\$44,797,841
2015	\$79,902,327	\$377	\$55,923,290
2016	\$80,814,918	\$382	\$60,316,175
2017	\$84,141,605	\$399	\$61,330,478
2018	\$83,809,729	\$398	\$61,371,273

Source: Lackawanna County

Year	Lackawanna County		Luzerne County	
	Total Debt	Debt Per Capita	Total Debt	Debt Per Capita
2008	\$213,373,652	\$1,019	\$298,894,776	\$958
2009	No Data	-	\$318,200,000	\$1,017
2010	\$218,509,597	\$1,019	\$308,100,000	\$960
2011	\$240,221,204	\$1,122	\$288,160,000	\$899
2012	\$233,435,714	\$1,088	\$286,515,419	\$892
2013	\$229,145,438	\$1,071	\$273,750,005	\$855
2014	\$229,065,212	\$1,077	\$253,676,089	\$796
2015	\$222,348,986	\$1,049	\$262,076,601	\$823
2016	\$217,234,408	\$1,028	\$247,687,351	\$783
2017	\$214,570,970	\$1,018	\$256,800,530	\$809
2018	\$221,732,958	\$1,052	\$232,439,629	\$732

Source: Lackawanna & Luzerne Counties

# Luzerne County Fiscal Snapshot

## Property Tax Rates

### Luzerne County Fiscal Snapshot

In 2018, Luzerne County's total revenues surpassed \$240.7 million – a small decline from the previous year, but still considerably higher than any year prior to 2017. It represents a 0.6 percent decrease in total revenue compared with the prior year, but a growth of nearly 37 percent from the ten-year low seen in 2011 (before adjusting for inflation). Expenditures totaled over \$232 million – four percent higher than the prior year. County expenditures amounted to 96.6 percent of total revenue.

Luzerne County's intergovernmental revenue (which includes transfers from other federal, state, and local sources such as grants and reimbursements for services) has increased slowly since 2016, following years of larger fluctuations. The \$99 million in intergovernmental revenue from 2018 was the highest total among years analyzed. The majority of intergovernmental funds received by both counties support health and human services. Tax revenue for the county increased slightly as well, from \$120.7 million to \$121.2 million – also the highest total among years analyzed.

Luzerne County has experienced a generally declining trend in long-term debt. Most recently, total debt has fallen by 9.5 percent from the prior year and is down 27 percent compared with 2009, when county debt reached a peak of \$318 million.

Luzerne County				
Year	Total Revenue	Revenue Per Capita	Total Expenditure	Expenditures Per Capita
2009	\$178,253,912	\$570	\$225,863,970	\$722
2010	\$182,009,525	\$567	\$219,533,037	\$684
2011	\$175,979,319	\$549	\$188,925,651	\$589
2012	\$214,029,856	\$667	\$230,354,909	\$718
2013	\$208,595,158	\$652	\$217,338,270	\$679
2014	\$214,028,831	\$671	\$211,946,527	\$665
2015	\$208,561,765	\$655	\$205,828,005	\$646
2016	\$233,872,953	\$739	\$227,919,956	\$720
2017	\$242,335,123	\$764	\$222,829,957	\$702
2018	\$240,771,606	\$758	\$232,647,665	\$732

Source: Luzerne County

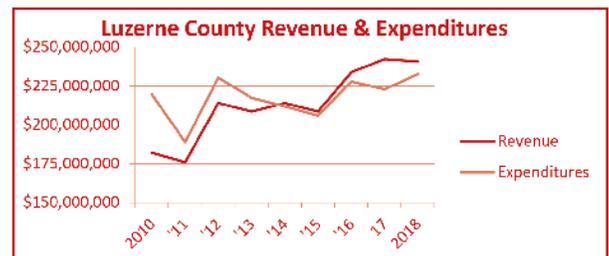
Luzerne County Revenue			
Year	Total Taxes	Taxes per Capita	Intergovernmental Revenue
2009	\$ 77,914,708	\$249	\$66,274,110
2010	\$ 91,264,521	\$284	\$59,832,413
2011	\$ 92,272,209	\$288	\$66,725,348
2012	\$ 98,407,858	\$307	\$96,930,033
2013	\$ 102,350,859	\$320	\$88,192,000
2014	\$ 109,634,691	\$344	\$85,031,817
2015	\$ 114,447,790	\$359	\$94,156,605
2016	\$ 117,000,854	\$370	\$98,420,897
2017	\$ 120,726,394	\$380	\$99,024,827
2018	\$ 121,205,717	\$382	\$99,158,886

Source: Luzerne County

### Property Tax Rates

In 2021, total property tax rates in both counties remain unchanged from the prior year. The most recent adjustment, effective in January 2020, was an 11 percent increase in the total real estate millage rate in Lackawanna County.

Lackawanna County's property tax rate is significantly higher than Luzerne County's rate. For several reasons, however, this does not necessarily reflect actual property tax costs incurred by property owners. First, there are differences in how and when properties in the two counties were assessed. This means the two counties' ratios of assessed value for tax purposes to actual market value are different. Furthermore, tax rates included in this report do not include school taxes, which typically comprise the largest portions of all property owners' tax bills.



2019 Tax Rates		
	Lackawanna County Tax Rates (mills)	Luzerne County Tax Rates (mills)
Real Estate - General Purpose	41.6000	1.2358
Debt Service	12.0000	1.1836
Library	2.8200	0.0459
Culture and Education Fund	1.0000	
Community Colleges		0.3240
Roads & Bridges		0.1070
Criminal Justice		1.9977
Human Services		0.4260
Hotel Room Rental (Percent)	7%	5%
Real Estate Total	57.4200	5.3200

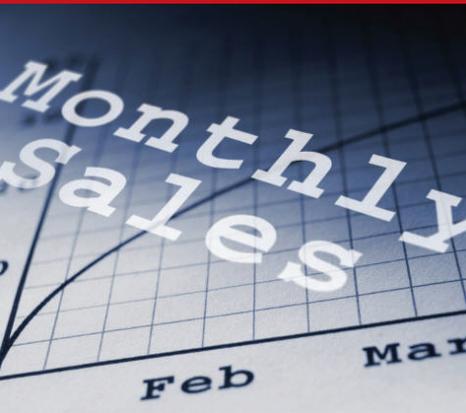
Source: PA Department of Community & Economic Development

2020 - 2021 Tax Rates		
	Lackawanna County Tax Rates (mills)	Luzerne County Tax Rates (mills)
Real Estate - General Purpose	47.6000	1.2358
Debt Service	12.5000	1.1836
Library	2.8200	0.0459
Culture and Education Fund	1.0000	
Community Colleges		0.3240
Roads & Bridges		0.1070
Criminal Justice		1.9977
Human Services		0.4260
Hotel Room Rental (Percent)	7%	5%
Real Estate Total	63.9200	5.3200

Source: PA Department of Community & Economic Development

# Sales Tax

## Government Employment



### Sales Tax

Sales tax remittance in both counties and statewide grew for two consecutive years from 2016 through 2019. From the 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 years, Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties saw sales tax remittance grow by 9.2 and 0.9 percent, respectively. From 2017-2018 to 2018-2019, Lackawanna County's remittance grew by another 5.3 percent, and Luzerne County's grew by 2.1 percent. The Commonwealth as a whole saw nearly seven percent year-over-year growth during this period.

In 2019-2020, sales tax remittance dropped in all three geographies, likely affected by disruptions in commerce caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Luzerne County saw the lowest total among all years analyzed. The year-over-year declines in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, 6.8 and 5.8 percent, respectively, were larger than the statewide decline of 2.5 percent.

Sales Tax Remittance			
Year	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2013-2014	\$73,515,000	\$93,822,000	\$9,129,621,000
2014-2015	\$73,899,000	\$138,985,000	\$9,493,107,000
2015-2016	\$77,625,000	\$142,636,000	\$9,795,189,000
2016-2017	\$73,920,000	\$76,717,000	\$10,004,459,000
2017-2018	\$80,700,000	\$77,404,000	\$10,381,360,000
2018-2019	\$85,000,000	\$79,000,000	\$11,099,600,000
2019-2020	\$79,200,000	\$74,400,000	\$10,817,800,000

*County totals exclude motor vehicles*  
*Source: PA Department of Revenue.*

### Government Employment

Government employment presented in the table includes staff of federal, state, and local government entities. In the two counties, government sector activity supported over 27,000 jobs in 2019.

Between 2015 and 2019, government employment fell by about four percent in Lackawanna County, while Luzerne County and Pennsylvania saw very small increases of .24 percent and .02 percent, respectively.

Government Employment			
Year	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2015	10,511	17,287	675,745
2016	10,329	17,305	675,118
2017	10,167	17,257	674,695
2018	10,063	17,249	673,822
2019	10,053	17,329	675,876

*Source: Chmura Economics via JobsEQ*



Public Safety

# Public Safety



**“A low crime rate is a sign of community health, and appeals to potential residents and businesses.”**

## Public Safety

Public Safety indicators in this section identify important statistics for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, as well as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. These statistics are used to evaluate the health and efficiency of safety services. They include crime rates, drug-related offenses, vehicle crashes, Driving Under the Influence (DUI) offenses, alcohol-induced crashes, domestic violence offenses, and police officer and fire department statistics.

Generally, this section of the report includes indicators which help measure the quality of life in Pennsylvania as well as in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. A low crime rate typically makes an area attractive to potential residents and businesses. Additionally, it is an indicator of the social well-being of a community, because crime is interrelated with other social, economic, and public health problems such as unemployment, poverty, and substance abuse. Breaking the cycle of poverty and crime requires tremendous effort. However, this effort can be rewarding in terms of quality of life and economic success. Strong public safety, social service, educational, and health care infrastructure working together with government and community members are integral.

Northeastern Pennsylvania generally remains a safe area for a region with its size and socioeconomic characteristics, and by some measures it is getting safer. In both counties, property crimes have dropped to the lowest levels in the past decade, driven largely by falling numbers of burglaries and larceny theft

offenses. Property crime like burglary and theft are often associated with drug addiction. Drug abuse offenses, however, have primarily risen in recent years as the region deals with the fallout of substance abuse disorders – particularly those specific to heroin, fentanyl, and methamphetamine.

Violent crime statistics have been uneven in recent years. In 2019 preliminary data, Luzerne County saw the total number of violent crimes fall to the lowest it has been in a decade, declining for a second consecutive year. Violent crime has consistently increased in Lackawanna County year-over-year since 2013, including a considerable increase in 2018 driven by a sharp uptick in aggravated assault offenses.

Although domestic violence is unfortunately still prevalent within the study region, the total number of offenses declined in 2019. This is a difficult phenomenon to measure; in this report, it is defined as the total number of family offenses as noted in the Uniform Crime Reporting System. Offenses against children and family include abuse and cruelty to spouses, children, and other family members; child and spousal neglect and desertion; and nonpayment of child support and alimony. Statistics for 2019 showed decreases in both counties, and a statewide decline in the number of reported family offenses for the first time since 2014. Despite this recent decline, total offenses across the Commonwealth have primarily trended upward, increasing 89 percent since 2010. This could reflect an increase in the occurrence of these offenses, an increase in the reporting of domestic violence, or both.

There are over 1,100 municipal police officers employed in the two counties, including a larger share of part-time officers compared to Pennsylvania as a whole. However, about one fourth of the municipalities in the region utilize State Police coverage rather than using a municipal police force, and several other federal, state, and local agencies have an active role in law enforcement in the region.

Motor vehicle crashes can unfortunately result in fatalities and injuries. In Luzerne County, the share of crashes resulting in fatalities or injuries has remained stable from the prior year, although the total number of crashes involving fatalities increased slightly from 18 in 2018 to 30 in 2019. Lackawanna County had a decline in the number and share of crashes involving fatalities or injuries. For the first time over the time period analyzed, there were no alcohol-related crash deaths reported in Lackawanna County in 2019, while Luzerne County's total number of alcohol-related crash deaths reported more than doubled from four in 2018 to ten in 2019, the highest level since 2015. The number of pedestrian crash fatalities remained relatively stable in the region, accounting for five percent of the statewide total. While motor vehicle accidents may be nearly impossible to completely eliminate, improved education, enforcement, and infrastructure can significantly improve public safety.

There were 104 fire departments in the two-county region as of early 2020. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some fire departments in Pennsylvania are experiencing difficulties recruiting and retaining volunteers. There were 3,142 volunteer firefighters in the two-county region in 2020, comprising about 86 percent of the area's total firefighting force.

# Property Crime

## Property Crime

In 2019, Lackawanna County's total number of property crimes continued a seven-year downward trend – standing at 2,196 (down from 2,835 the year before). Property crimes decreased by 23 percent in the county from 2018 to reach their lowest level in a decade, with declines in all property crime categories. Since 2010, property crime totals in Lackawanna County have been reduced by nearly half.

Luzerne County's total property crime figures entered a sixth year of decline in 2019, at 4,315 total crimes reported – the lowest in over a decade. Property crimes decreased four percent overall from 2018, with small declines in larceny theft and arson. There was a slight uptick in the number of burglaries, while motor vehicle thefts remained unchanged. Overall, property crimes have declined 43 percent in Luzerne County since 2010.

The Commonwealth shows similar improvement trends in the preliminary data for 2019, with property crimes declining for the eighth consecutive year. Property crimes have fallen four percent overall from 2018, and 33 percent since 2010. There were slight declines in the rates of larceny theft and motor vehicle theft from the prior year, and totals for these categories of crimes are at least one quarter lower than ten years ago. Rates of burglary and arson offenses have declined by 13 percent from 2018, and totals for these categories of crimes have fallen by nearly one half or more from 2010.



Property Crime: Lackawanna										
Crime	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Burglary	1,063	994	1,023	885	733	663	632	615	549	372
Larceny Theft	3,069	3,311	3,352	2,982	2,967	2,762	2,568	2,509	2,094	1,676
Motor Vehicle Theft	187	230	187	191	212	181	164	217	143	119
Arson	57	59	47	57	31	47	37	30	49	29
Total	4,376	4,594	4,609	4,115	3,943	3,653	3,401	3,371	2,835	2,196

Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System.  
\*2019 figures are preliminary. 2018 figures have been updated.

Property Crime: Luzerne										
Crime	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Burglary	1,405	1,486	1,661	1,655	1,383	1,045	985	871	706	713
Larceny Theft	5,748	5,732	5,895	5,950	5,588	5,081	4,571	4,099	3,528	3,357
Motor Vehicle Theft	348	402	354	318	268	234	190	197	214	214
Arson	92	62	55	77	81	98	70	51	35	31
Total	7,593	7,682	7,965	8,000	7,320	6,458	5,816	5,218	4,483	4,315

Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System.  
\*2019 figures are preliminary. 2018 figures have been updated.

Property Crime: Pennsylvania										
Crime	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Burglary	54,892	57,675	57,017	51,860	45,659	39,420	35,085	32,051	27,093	23,704
Larceny Theft	202,912	207,398	204,381	196,877	187,918	179,397	173,507	166,036	150,213	146,700
Motor Vehicle Theft	16,643	16,812	14,940	13,742	13,036	12,061	13,044	12,986	13,120	12,503
Arson	2,296	1,775	1,741	1,684	1,924	1,816	1,833	1,455	1,439	1,247
Total	276,743	285,671	278,079	264,163	248,537	232,694	223,469	212,528	191,865	184,154

Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System.  
\*2019 figures are preliminary. 2018 figures have been updated.

# Violent Crime



**“Aggravated assaults comprise majority portions of violent crimes in both counties and the state.”**

## Violent Crime

Lackawanna County experienced year-over-year increases in the number of violent crimes reported from 2013 to 2019, including a 31 increase in the most recent period. There was a significant increase in violent crimes in 2018, driven by a sharp uptick in aggravated assault offenses, which nearly tripled between 2017 and 2018. This category of violent crime offenses continued to increase in 2019, with preliminary data showing an increase of 37 percent from 925 to 1,269, the highest level in the last decade. All other categories of violent crimes declined in 2019.

Luzerne County reported 698 total violent crimes in 2019 – a 13 percent decrease from the prior year, and the lowest level reported in the last decade. All categories of violent crimes declined in the county from 2018, with a 29 percent decrease in the incidence of reported rape, 26 percent decline in robberies, and 41 percent decline in the number of murders. The total number of robberies and aggravated assault offenses reached their lowest level in over the past ten years.

There was a slight increase in violent crime across the Commonwealth in 2019, following two consecutive years of declines. In 2019, total violent crime in Pennsylvania increased one percent to 39,574, due to an uptick in aggravated assault and robbery offenses. The murder rate declined ten percent from 2018, while the reported incidence of rape remained stable. Overall, violent crimes are more than 21 lower than totals reported in 2010, driven by a substantial decrease in robbery and fewer aggravated assault offenses, although aggravated assault has increased statewide more recently.

Violent Crime: Lackawanna										
Crime	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Murder	1	5	0	5	6	0	3	3	4	1
Rape	34	48	35	31	39	72	56	50	76	70
Robbery	125	117	165	97	94	91	88	118	82	79
Aggravated Assault	319	307	296	274	275	289	327	313	925	1,269
Total	479	477	496	407	414	452	474	484	1,087	1,419

*Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System.  
\*2019 figures are preliminary. 2018 figures have been updated.*

Violent Crime: Luzerne										
Crime	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Murder	11	12	17	18	8	23	14	17	17	10
Rape	69	55	88	70	60	66	82	63	117	83
Robbery	216	273	233	223	253	269	222	218	167	124
Aggravated Assault	547	683	562	511	521	503	517	627	499	481
Total	843	1,023	900	822	842	861	835	925	800	698

*Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System.  
\*2019 figures are preliminary. 2018 figures have been updated.*

Violent Crime: Pennsylvania										
Crime	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Murder	687	638	706	611	611	661	673	744	783	702
Rape	3,393	3,320	3,366	3,781	3,828	4,266	4,444	3,862	4,466	4,466
Robbery	19,993	16,117	15,732	14,716	13,534	12,934	12,296	11,794	9,835	9,921
Aggravated Assault	26,324	25,892	25,589	23,646	22,277	22,325	22,939	23,398	24,052	24,485
Total	50,397	45,967	45,393	42,754	40,250	40,186	40,352	39,798	39,136	39,574

*Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System.  
\*2019 figures are preliminary. 2018 figures have been updated.*

# Drug Abuse Offenses

## Drug Abuse Offenses

Drug abuse offenses include the manufacture, sale, and possession of drugs. Since 2012, the number of drug offenses in Lackawanna County has increased each year except for a small drop in 2017, reaching 1,168 in 2019. The county has seen a 67 percent increase since its low in 2012.

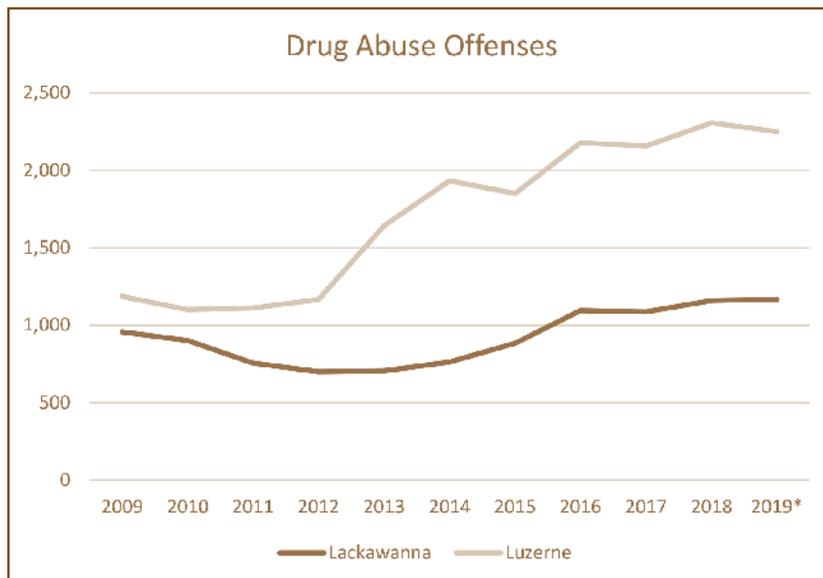
Despite a slight decline of three percent in drug abuse offenses in 2019, Luzerne County has experienced significant growth in drug abuse offenses in recent years. There were 2,249 total offenses reported in 2019, more than twice the lowest level reported in 2010. Though the total dropped slightly in 2015 and again in 2017, there has been a general upward trend. Although the number of offenses across the Commonwealth has declined slightly since 2017, there was an upward trend from 2011 to 2017. Statewide drug offenses have increased 19 percent since 2011.



**“Drug abuse offenses in Lackawanna County have increased slightly since 2017, and drug abuse offenses in Luzerne County have fluctuated during that time.”**

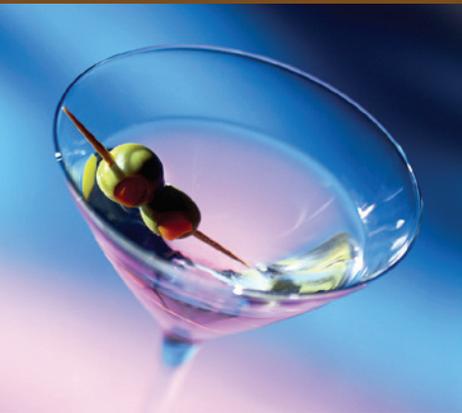
Drug Abuse Offenses			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2009	957	1,187	52,565
2010	902	1,101	52,196
2011	756	1,111	52,013
2012	700	1,167	52,857
2013	705	1,642	56,555
2014	763	1,933	56,814
2015	884	1,850	55,879
2016	1,095	2,178	59,017
2017	1,086	2,158	63,984
2018	1,159	2,307	63,055
2019*	1,168	2,249	61,853

*Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System  
\*2019 data is preliminary. 2018 data has been updated.*



# DUI Offenses

## Alcohol Related Crash Deaths



**“DUI offenses in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have consistently accounted for about four percent of all DUI offenses in Pennsylvania.”**

### DUI Offenses

Lackawanna County’s total number of DUI offenses has fluctuated over the last decade, but decreased noticeably since 2010, and has been trending downward since 2016. After declining six percent since 2018, the number of DUI offenses in the county reached 636, the lowest level recorded over the past decade.

The number of DUI offenses in Luzerne County has declined 11 percent from its peak of 1,325 in 2017 to 1,175 in 2019. This is below the county average of 1,224 DUI offenses per year since 2009, and the lowest point since 2011.

Statewide, the total number of DUI offenses entered its tenth consecutive year of decline – a 21 percent drop since 2009. DUI offenses in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have consistently accounted for about four percent of all DUI offenses in Pennsylvania.

Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Offenses											
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Lackawanna	1,106	1,181	858	726	710	759	687	733	678	680	636
Luzerne	1,275	1,160	1,175	1,230	1,181	1,172	1,303	1,242	1,325	1,221	1,175
Pennsylvania	56,060	53,997	52,944	52,222	49,714	49,264	48,896	48,805	47,762	45,435	44,394

*Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System. \*2019 data is preliminary. 2018 data has been updated.*

Percentage of Statewide DUI Offenses by County											
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Lackawanna	2.0%	2.2%	1.6%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%
Luzerne	2.3%	2.1%	2.2%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.7%	2.5%	2.8%	2.7%	2.6%

*Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System. \*2019 data is preliminary. 2018 data has been updated.*

### Alcohol Related Crash Deaths

For the first time over the time period analyzed, there were no alcohol-related crash deaths reported in Lackawanna County in 2019. Over the past decade, Lackawanna County has averaged five alcohol-related crash deaths per year. Luzerne County’s average number of alcohol-related crash deaths per year has been 10.8 over the last ten years. Luzerne County’s total number of deaths reported more than doubled from four in 2018 to ten in 2019, the highest level since 2015. Statewide, the number of alcohol-related crash deaths has followed a downward trend for most of the decade. Total statewide deaths declined ten percent in 2019, and are 35 percent lower than the peak in 2010.

Alcohol Related Crash Deaths										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	4	5	5	7	5	5	9	4	6	0
Luzerne	7	13	13	13	17	18	8	5	4	10
Pennsylvania	459	428	404	381	333	345	297	293	331	299

*Source : Pennsylvania Department of Transportation*

# Motor Vehicle Crashes

## Motor Vehicle Crashes

In 2019, motor vehicle crashes in Lackawanna County declined for the second consecutive year to 2,531. Motor vehicle crashes also declined in Luzerne County, decreasing by five percent from 2018 to 3,418. In both counties, the number of crashes was at the lowest level since 2015. The Commonwealth total also declined slightly, reaching 125,267 crashes. All three regions still recorded fewer crashes compared with the comparison year of 2000.

Statewide, the number of crashes resulting in injuries has fallen significantly, and the number resulting in fatalities fell to 990, the lowest level in the last five years. A larger number of crashes have resulted in property damage only. This trend extends to both counties as well. Between 2000 and 2019, the percentage of crashes involving only property damage (no injuries or fatalities) increased from about 40 percent to around 55 percent in both the region and statewide. The significant decline in crashes with fatalities and/or injuries is likely attributable in part to safety innovations in vehicles (though the number of fatalities in Luzerne County did increase in the last year, from 18 in 2018 to 30 in 2019).

In 2019, there were eight pedestrian crash deaths in the two counties combined, and 154 statewide. The two counties have ranged from six to ten pedestrian crash deaths per year for the years analyzed, with no clear upward or downward trend. The 42 pedestrian deaths since 2015 represent about five percent of all statewide pedestrian deaths in that period, though the region represents only about four percent of the Commonwealth's total population.



**“Rates of motor vehicle accidents causing death and injury have fluctuated in recent years, though they have declined more than 30 percent since 2000.”**

Lackawanna County: Total Crashes

Type of Crash	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Fatal	16	19	15	20	28	10
Injury	1,620	1,197	1,238	1,157	1,197	1,123
Property Damage Only	1,171	1,371	1,437	1,535	1,462	1,398
Total	2,807	2,587	2,690	2,712	2,687	2,531

Source : Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Luzerne County: Total Crashes

Type of Crash	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Fatal	43	33	31	25	18	30
Injury	2,444	1,730	1,641	1,585	1,560	1,487
Property Damage Only	1,525	1,927	2,008	1,994	2,034	1,901
Total	4,012	3,690	3,680	3,604	3,612	3,418

Source : Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Pennsylvania Total Crashes

Type of Crash	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Fatal	1,396	1,102	1,088	1,083	1,103	990
Injury	88,108	59,287	59,856	58,183	56,745	55,552
Property Damage Only	57,749	66,738	68,451	68,922	70,572	68,725
Total	147,253	127,127	129,395	128,188	128,420	125,267

Source : Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Pedestrian Crash Deaths

	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna County	3	4	5	4	4	4
Luzerne County	6	6	4	2	5	4
Pennsylvania	172	153	172	150	201	154

Source : Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

# Offenses Against Children & Families



**“Despite some fluctuation, offenses against families and children have dropped 21 percent since 2010.”**

## Offenses Against Children & Families

Offenses against families and children include abuse of spouses and children, child neglect, and nonpayment of child support and alimony. Although there has been some fluctuation in the number of these offenses reported in the two counties, the total declined 18 percent in 2019 to 433 offenses combined.

In Lackawanna County, offenses against families and children dropped to 173 in 2019, after three previous years of consecutive increases. There was a similar trend in Luzerne County, with total offenses decreasing 17 percent to 260 following four years of steady increases in children and family offenses between 2015 and 2018. Statewide, the number of offenses declined for the first time since 2014. There has been an upward trend statewide since 2010, including a substantial increase in 2014. Total offenses across the Commonwealth have increased 89 percent since 2010.

Offenses Against Family & Children										
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Lackawanna	385	299	373	296	182	160	192	200	217	173
Luzerne	160	189	254	345	311	225	259	295	312	260
Pennsylvania	4,670	5,176	5,415	5,770	5,660	7,185	7,961	8,394	9,157	8,821

*Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System.  
\*2019 figures are preliminary. 2018 figures have been updated.*

# Police Personnel & Fire Departments

## Police Personnel

Municipal police forces in the two counties employ over 1,100 officers as of early 2021. This accounts for about five percent of the statewide total, though in the two counties, there are a larger share of part-time officers compared to Pennsylvania as a whole. In Lackawanna and Luzerne, over 40 percent of municipal police officers are part-time, while the share is only about 18 percent statewide.

These municipal police statistics exclude personnel from several other law enforcement agencies that serve the region, including Pennsylvania State Police. In the two counties, 71 of 116 municipalities (61 percent) have their own municipal police force, while 15 (13 percent) contract with another municipality for police protection. Another 30 municipalities utilize State Police only.



**“As of early 2021, there were 487 municipal police officers employed in Lackawanna County and 648 municipal police officers employed in Luzerne County.”**

Municipal Police Officers: 2021		
	Full Time	Part Time
Lackawanna County	277	210
Luzerne County	383	265
Pennsylvania	18,453	4,138

*Source: PA Department of Community & Economic Development*

Municipal Police Coverage: 2021					
	Total Municipalities	With Own Municipal Police Force	Contracts with Another Municipality	State Police Coverage Only	Regional Police Service
Lackawanna County	40	25	9	6	0
Luzerne County	76	46	6	24	0

*Source: PA Department of Community & Economic Development*

## Fire Departments

As of early 2020, there were 36 fire departments in Lackawanna County and 68 fire departments in Luzerne County. There were 3,666 active firefighters between the two counties. Approximately 86 percent of them were volunteers.

Lackawanna County Fire Departments	
	2020
Number of Departments	36
Active Firefighters	1,374
Volunteer	1,174
Paid per Call	34
Career	166
Non-Firefighting Volunteers	651

*Source: U.S. Fire Administration National Fire Department Registry*

Luzerne County Fire Departments	
	2020
Number of Departments	68
Active Firefighters	2,292
Volunteer	1,968
Paid per Call	142
Career	182
Non-Firefighting Members	954

*Source: U.S. Fire Administration National Fire Department Registry*

Pennsylvania Fire Departments	
	2020
Number of Departments	1,796
Active Firefighters	64,633
Volunteer	58,098
Paid per Call	1,025
Career	5,510
Non-Firefighting Volunteers	30,636

*Source: U.S. Fire Administration National Fire Department Registry*

# School Safety Juvenile Arrests



**“In 2019, there were 433 juvenile arrests in Lackawanna County and 696 in Luzerne County.”**

## School Safety

School safety incidents include a range of misconduct. A large share of incidents involved fights, disorderly conduct, minor altercations, other harassment or intimidation, bullying, and possession or use of tobacco or controlled substances. The number of reported incidents declined in both counties and statewide in the 2019-2020 school year, following a peak in activity across all three regions the previous year. In Lackawanna County, there were 625 documented school misconduct incidents and 823 in Luzerne County. This represents a 14-percent decrease from the previous year for Lackawanna County, and a 35-percent decrease for Luzerne County. Statewide, school misconduct incidents decreased by 21 percent.

School Misconduct Incidents						
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Lackawanna	618	517	441	543	728	625
Luzerne	676	1,059	829	829	1,260	823
Pennsylvania	42,922	42,965	43,330	49,076	58,426	46,095

*Source : PA Department of Education Safe Schools*

Incidents per 1,000 Enrolled Students						
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Lackawanna	22.3	18.6	15.9	19.5	26.3	22.6
Luzerne	16.5	25.9	20.2	20.2	30.7	19.8
Pennsylvania	24.6	24.8	25.2	28.5	32.9	26.8

*Source : PA Department of Education Safe Schools*

Juvenile Arrests			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2009	876	1,200	89,941
2010	1,012	1,279	83,042
2011	964	1,186	72,287
2012	738	983	69,289
2013	610	944	64,850
2014	644	852	57,889
2015	621	881	51,452
2016	508	893	43,914
2017	603	917	44,827
2018	501	701	37,083
2019	433	696	34,782

*Includes all UCR crime codes except runaways*  
*Source : Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System*

## Juvenile Arrests

Juvenile arrests shown here pertain to arrests made for several categories of crimes included in the Uniform Crime Report, such as violent crimes, liquor law, drug possession, and many others. Juvenile runaways are excluded.

In 2019, the number of juvenile arrests declined statewide and in both counties for a second consecutive year, although at a slower rate. Total arrests declined 16 percent in Lackawanna County to 433, while falling one percent in Luzerne County to 696. Statewide, juvenile arrests declined seven percent in 2019. Across all three regions, there has primarily been a downward trend in juvenile arrests since 2011, and reaching the lowest levels in a decade in 2019. Both counties have seen declines of over 40 percent compared with 2009, and the Commonwealth registered a 61-percent drop during that time.



# Environment

# Environment Recycling



**“The region continues to overcome the lingering environment effects of coal mining and other heavy industries.”**

## Environment

The Environment section of the report focuses on several key indicators, including recycling, waste management, mining impacts, and air and water quality.

The amount of waste generated in both counties has generally followed a generally increasing trend, despite a drop in 2020 in Luzerne County. Luzerne County generated over 306,000 tons of waste, while Lackawanna County generated nearly 323,000 tons – an increase from the prior year. Municipal waste was the largest component of all waste generated in both counties. Statewide data on recycled materials has been tabulated inconsistently, and the most recent data is from 2017. However, in that year, the two counties accounted for over 65,000 pounds of residential single-stream, plastic, metal, glass, and organics recyclable material, a decline from the prior year’s total of over 72,000 regionally.

Many of the region’s critical environmental challenges relate to its industrial past. The lingering effects of coal mining and other heavy industries include contaminated brownfield sites, coal refuse sites, mine subsidence, mine fires, and acid mine drainage. Some of these issues are difficult to quantify or measure. In 2021, 33 sites in the region were designated under either the statewide (HSCA) or federal (CERCLA) programs for remediation. Cleanup of these sensitive sites, which often involve bankrupt owners, abandoned facilities, or facilities where hazardous materials have been improperly disposed, is an important step in preventing further harm and facilitating return to productive use. The region is also home to seven percent of Pennsylvania’s abandoned mine land sites and 32 percent of its anthracite coal refuse-producing sites.

Indicators have been positive in terms of the region’s air and water ecosystem quality. Air Quality Index (AQI) scores are generally good, and annual monitoring of the Susquehanna River by the Chesapeake Bay Project shows normal results in several metrics of stream water quality.

## Recycling

The most recent statewide statistics on recycled materials is from 2017. At that time, recycled tonnage varied significantly in both counties. The total tonnage of Lackawanna County’s recycled material, as a percentage of the statewide total, spiked in 2014 and remained disproportionately high in the years since, accounting for about 30 percent of all recycled materials statewide in 2015 and 2016, and 11 percent in 2017. In 2014, DEP attributed this anomaly to large amounts of materials recycled from the University of Scranton’s demolition of the former YWCA building and construction of Leahy Hall. Luzerne County has accounted for an average of two to three percent of the total statewide tonnage, roughly approximating its share of the statewide population.

Among common categories of residential recycled materials, both counties and the Commonwealth as a whole increased the amount of single-stream recycled materials generated between 2015 and 2016. Both counties also saw increases in metals recycled. In 2017, single stream recycling continued to grow in both counties while leveling off statewide. In Lackawanna County, there was a significant drop in recycled plastics and metals, while Luzerne County saw a decline in organic materials. Statewide, there were also declines in residential recycling of plastics, metals, glass, and organics.

Residential Recycling for Selected Materials: 2017			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
Residential Single Stream	12,588	18,493	597,012
Plastics	0	0	6,870
Metals	1,942	92	120,001
Glass	573	39	10,073
Organics	10,978	70,838	539,973
<b>Total from Select Categories</b>	<b>26,081</b>	<b>39,462</b>	<b>1,273,930</b>

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Residential Recycling for Selected Materials: 2016			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
Residential Single Stream	11,553	17,198	597,557
Plastics	510	0	7,071
Metals	6,523	89	136,880
Glass	573	45	36,329
Organics	10,940	24,766	595,358
<b>Total from Select Categories</b>	<b>30,100</b>	<b>42,099</b>	<b>1,373,196</b>

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Total Recycled Materials (% of Statewide Total)		
Year	Lackawanna	Luzerne
2017	11.05%	2.14%
2016	29.81%	2.05%
2015	30.91%	2.13%
2014	59.38%	1.14%
2013	1.07%	3.03%
2012	0.64%	2.26%
2011	0.97%	3.00%

Includes Residential & Commercial

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

# Waste Facilities Brownfields

## Waste Facilities

Lackawanna County generated nearly 323,000 tons of waste in 2020 – an increase of just under six percent from the prior year. Luzerne County generated over 306,000 tons – a decline of about 11 percent from the prior year. For the third straight year, Lackawanna County saw an increase in construction waste. Municipal waste, the largest share of waste generated in both counties, declined in both counties in 2020.

Both counties reversed trends seen between 2018 and 2019, and both have seen growth in waste tonnage since 2016. Lackawanna County saw a large increase in tonnage compared with the year 2000, while Luzerne County’s 2020 total is slightly lower than in 2000.



**“Municipal waste remains the most substantial component of all waste generated in both counties.”**

Total Waste (In Tons)						
	2000	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	274,696	294,660	295,450	326,397	305,291	322,971
Luzerne	313,859	274,015	281,851	304,611	345,225	306,404

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection*

Total Waste by Type: 2019 (In Tons)							
	Municipal	Sewage					Total
		Residual	Sludge	Medical	Construction	Other	
Lackawanna	225,249	14,951	22,051	800	41,930	312	305,291
Luzerne	255,591	48,503	31,616	261	8,427	828	345,225
Regional Total	480,839	63,455	53,666	1,061	50,356	1,139	650,516

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection*

Total Waste by Type: 2020 (In Tons)							
	Municipal	Sewage					Total
		Residual	Sludge	Medical	Construction	Other	
Lackawanna	216,330	14,288	19,769	794	71,452	338	322,971
Luzerne	229,886	49,932	21,966	227	4,106	288	306,404
Regional Total	446,217	64,219	41,734	1,021	75,559	626	629,375

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection*

## Brownfields

Six Lackawanna County sites were listed in Pennsylvania DEP’s Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act (HSCA). Five additional Lackawanna County sites are listed under the federal CERCLA program – the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (commonly known as Superfund). Luzerne County had 16 HSCA sites and six federal Superfund sites as of early 2021. Both counties’ total number of sites were unchanged from last year. According to DEP, most of these sites involve facilities with bankrupt owners, abandoned facilities, and facilities where hazardous materials have been improperly disposed.

Environmental Cleanup and Brownfield Sites: Lackawanna County		
	HSCA	Superfund
2018	6	5
2019	6	5
2020	6	5
2021	6	5

*Source: PA Department of Environmental Protection*

Environmental Cleanup and Brownfield Sites: Luzerne County		
	HSCA	Superfund
2018	15	6
2019	15	4
2020	16	6
2021	16	6

*Source: PA Department of Environmental Protection*

# Abandoned Mine Lands



## Abandoned Mine Lands

Abandoned mine lands (AMLs) refer to any of the 250,000 acres of mine lands left abandoned across Pennsylvania. There are AMLs in 43 of the Commonwealth's 67 counties. Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties together are home to seven percent of the state's 5,617 abandoned mine lands, with a total of 412 between the two counties. As of the most recent report in 2013, there were 165 sites in Lackawanna County and 247 in Luzerne County.

The Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Economic Development Pilot Program provides U.S. treasury funds to each of the three Appalachian state AML programs, including Pennsylvania. The funds are used for the reclamation of AML in conjunction with economic and community development and reuse goals. The sites could be former mines, coal refuse areas, areas with acid mine drainage, and more. Congress approved continued funding for fiscal years 2017 and 2018. In 2016, Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties each had one pilot program site. The following year, Lackawanna County had two AML revitalization sites and Luzerne County had four. In 2018, each county had reverted to one site each. No sites were reported in available documents in either county in 2019, and the statewide number of pilot projects dropped from 15 to 11.

Coal refuse refers to any waste coal or other materials (such as shale, clay, or rock) that are brought above ground or removed from coal mines during mining activities. The term also refers to the leftover materials separated from coal during cleaning operations. Coal refuse sites are areas where such materials are disposed. There are 13 reported refuse sites in Luzerne County. This number has increased over the years, from seven sites in 2013. Lackawanna County has four refuse sites, also an increase. There are a total of 53 coal refuse sites in Pennsylvania. From 2014 to 2019 the percentage of statewide sites between the two counties has slowly grown. It most recently stood at 32 percent.

Anthracite Coal Refuse Producing Sites			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2013	2	7	41
2014	0	8	39
2015	2	8	42
2016	1	8	39
2017	2	10	42
2018	2	11	48
2019	4	13	53

Source: PA Department of Environmental Protection

Number of AML Sites		
Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
165	247	5,617

Source: PA Department of Environmental Protection

AML Revitalization Pilot Projects				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lackawanna	1	2	1	0
Luzerne	1	4	1	0
Pennsylvania	14	13	15	11

Source: OSMRE and PA Department of Environmental Protection

## Air Quality

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is used to measure air quality. AQI reads five different pollutants to assess the safety of the nation’s air quality. They are ground level ozone (smog), particle pollution, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. The overall AQI is the highest AQI of any of the five individual pollutants. Scores of 0 to 50 are considered good air quality, 51 to 100 are considered moderate, 101 to 150 are considered unhealthy to sensitive groups, 151 to 200 are considered unhealthy to everyone, 201 to 300 are considered very unhealthy, and scores above 301 are considered hazardous for all people.

Monitoring stations in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have generally reported AQI ratings in the ‘Good’ range. AQI data changes daily and is available in real time from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection’s Bureau of Air Quality. Annual data, including the number of unhealthy air quality days and the median AQI for the calendar year, is collected from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Over the past several years, Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have reported no unhealthy AQI days. The 2020 median AQI for Lackawanna County was 38, and 31 for Luzerne County. This represents a slight decline in quality for Lackawanna County and a small improvement for Luzerne County. Though they have remained in the ‘Good’ range for all years analyzed, AQI has improved by about 14 percent in Lackawanna County since 2000 and Luzerne County has improved by over 30 percent.



**“Over the past several years, Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have reported no unhealthy AQI days.”**

Air Quality Index (AQI): Number of Unhealthy Days

	2000	2010	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Luzerne	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: US Environmental Protection Agency Air Data

Air Quality Index (AQI): Median

	2000	2010	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Lackawanna	44	41	41	40	33	35	38
Luzerne	45	29	34	33	31	34	31

Source: US Environmental Protection Agency Air Data

# Water Quality



## Water Quality

Water quality monitoring is conducted at several sites in the region. One site – the Susquehanna River at Wilkes-Barre, which is monitored by the Chesapeake Bay Program – has consistent and regular data necessary for inclusion in this report. Two key parameters of water quality (pH, which is commonly used to measure acidity in water, and total dissolved solids) were analyzed. The vast majority of Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties are within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

A pH of seven represents a neutral measurement. A value greater than seven indicates basic or alkaline conditions, and values less than seven indicate acidic conditions. The pH of natural waters is between 6.0 and 8.5. Any values less than 4.5 and above 9.5 tend to be severely damaging to ecosystems. The Susquehanna River tested at an average of 7.69 pH in the most recent year, or slightly more alkaline than neutral water. The average in 2019 is an increase from the previous year's average.

The concentration of total dissolved solids (TDS) is a measure of the amount of dissolved materials in water. These materials include sodium, calcium, magnesium, and others. Fresh water usually has TDS levels between 0 and 1,000 mg/L, dependent on the geography and attributing factors in the region. Values over 500 mg/L are considered elevated and can be unsuitable for drinking or household use. Although TDS is not considered a primary pollutant, water with a high TDS concentration may indicate elevated levels of ions such as aluminum, arsenic, copper, lead, nitrate, and others that do pose health concerns. Since 2013, TDS levels in the Susquehanna River have consistently been below 200 mg/L, though in 2019 the average level was the highest since 2016.

Water Quality - Susquehanna River		
	pH (Corrected for Temperature)	Total Dissolved Solids (mg/L)
2013	7.58	134.3
2014	7.64	151.3
2015	7.81	179.2
2016	7.87	174.0
2017	7.42	138.5
2018	7.32	136.3
2019	7.69	155.7

*Source: Chesapeake Bay Program*



# Infrastructure

# Infrastructure



**“Driving alone remains the most common way to commute throughout the region, though more than ten percent of households have no vehicle available.”**

## Infrastructure

The Infrastructure section of this report contains data that identifies patterns and trends in commuting, transportation infrastructure, motor vehicles, home heating fuels, energy prices, and home internet access.

Understanding the public’s means of transportation reveals insight into a region’s environmental impact, as well as the impact of its employment dynamics. Similar to those in the rest of the state, a significant majority of workers in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties commute to work by driving alone. The proportion of commuters using alternative forms of transportation has fluctuated a bit, but does not appear much different in 2019 than it was in 2000, though average commute times have trended gradually higher.

The number of motor vehicle registrations is an indicator of traffic trends. More vehicles registered typically means more vehicle miles traveled, which can result in traffic congestion. Vehicle registrations can also indicate economic activity. Lackawanna County has generally experienced an increase in registered cars compared with 2000. Luzerne County has experienced little sustained growth in passenger car registrations, with a one percent overall decline from 2000 to 2020. Registrations for large trucks, however, have grown significantly in both counties and statewide.

Increasing trends in traffic volume were observed prior to the pandemic. On Interstate 81 in Luzerne County, traffic counts have grown by about five percent in the past five years. Similarly, daily vehicle miles traveled on major highways in the region grew by about one percent between 2018 and 2019. Furthermore, daily vehicle miles traveled per linear mile of highway were higher in Luzerne County than statewide. Data for 2020 will almost certainly show a significant drop in highway traffic due to the effects of COVID-19. In 2019, the total number of airport passengers and number of departures grew to the highest levels in recent years, before dropping precipitously in 2020 due to travel restrictions. The volume of freight and mail reported through Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport also fell significantly.

In 2020, there were notable declines in the cost of heating oil and propane, and a smaller drop in the cost of electricity coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. The cost of natural gas increased in 2020, but it continued to have the lowest cost per million BTU of all energy sources analyzed and has remained the most-used home heating fuel over the past decade. The use of fuel oil has declined since 2000, in favor of electricity and natural gas.

Broadband access remained critical to each county’s economic growth, as it is essential for economic development. Technology gaps were particularly meaningful in 2020, with more workers utilizing the internet for remote work and many students attending school virtually. Widespread access to the newest and most essential technologies makes any location a more attractive place to locate a business in addition to its importance in education, health care, and access to social services. Increased social distancing during this year’s COVID-19 global pandemic further underscores the need for equitable access to the internet. The two-county region enjoys nearly universal access to wireless technology and other broadband services, but it is not always affordable. Household-level internet usage has also increased quickly, reaching 84 and 87 percent of households in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties respectively in 2019. Increasing availability of internet at home has been particularly rapid among lower-income households, though these households still lag behind overall rates of access. Smartphone adoption is widespread as well, reaching about four-fifths of households.

# Transportation Mobility

## Transportation Mobility

Despite some slight shifts from year to year, driving alone remains the most common way to commute in both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. Nearly four fifths of the region's workers do so. By 2019, this percentage fell in both counties but remained higher than the statewide rate of 75.2 percent. Among alternative modes of transportation, carpooling remains the most frequently utilized. Public transportation usage has generally fluctuated around or just under one percent of workers in the region, well below the statewide share of over five percent.

From 2000 to 2019, the average travel time to work increased by over two minutes in Lackawanna County (reaching 22 minutes) and by over three minutes in Luzerne County (reaching 24.3 minutes). Both counties reached new highs for commute time in 2019 for the second straight year. However, the mean travel time to work is lower in both counties than in the Commonwealth as a whole, which grew to 27.8 minutes in 2019 – over 2.5 minutes longer than in 2000.

The estimated share of households with no vehicles available has fluctuated in both counties, averaging just over ten percent throughout the past several years – lower than the statewide rate. In the most recent data, the total number and percent of zero-vehicle households fell in Luzerne County, while Lackawanna County saw its share increase to 11.2 percent, the highest in recent years and above the statewide rate. Across the region, over 23,000 households do not have a vehicle.



	Commuting to Work											
	2000		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne
Workers 16 years and over	94,532	141,168	98,527	145,140	96,521	143,022	96,223	151,228	100,519	148,353	97,335	151,602
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	80.5%	81.9%	80.7%	81.5%	79.0%	81.3%	82.2%	79.8%	78.4%	81.4%	76.3%	81.1%
Car, truck, or van -- carpool'd	12.2%	11.1%	11.7%	10.4%	11.4%	9.7%	9.9%	11.8%	10.8%	9.0%	11.2%	11.1%
Public transportation (excluding taxi)	0.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.4%	0.6%	1.1%	0.8%	1.4%	1.2%	0.9%	1.3%	0.7%
Walked	3.7%	3.2%	2.6%	2.5%	4.6%	2.9%	2.2%	2.6%	3.5%	2.3%	2.5%	2.7%
Other means	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	1.6%	2.0%	1.3%	0.9%
Worked at home	2.0%	2.1%	3.5%	3.4%	3.6%	4.2%	4.4%	3.8%	4.5%	4.4%	7.4%	3.4%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	19.8	21.2	20.6	22	21.6	22.5	21.2	22.0	21.9	22.7	22.0	24.3

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey

	Pennsylvania Commuting to Work					
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Workers 16 years and over	5,556,311	5,977,629	5,977,351	6,056,160	6,136,003	6,179,069
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	76.5%	76.3%	76.1%	76.2%	75.6%	75.2%
Car, truck, or van -- carpool'd	10.4%	8.5%	8.4%	8.5%	8.5%	8.4%
Public transportation (excluding taxi)	5.2%	5.7%	5.6%	5.3%	5.8%	5.7%
Walked	4.1%	3.9%	3.6%	3.5%	3.5%	3.6%
Other means	0.8%	1.3%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.2%
Worked at home	3.0%	4.2%	4.8%	5.0%	5.1%	5.4%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	25.2	26.8	26.9	27.1	27.2	27.8

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey

	Households with No Vehicle Available					
	Lackawanna		Luzerne		Pennsylvania	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2015	7,116	8.6%	13,849	10.9%	551,449	11.1%
2016	8,765	10.2%	10,526	8.5%	533,856	10.8%
2017	9,227	10.7%	13,593	10.7%	559,312	11.2%
2018	7,215	8.2%	14,743	11.5%	562,300	11.1%
2019	9,882	11.2%	13,465	10.3%	563,183	11.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

# Traffic Counts Bridges



**“Daily traffic on Interstate 81 has increased five percent since 2015.”**

## Traffic Counts

In Lackawanna County, there are over 143 linear miles of highway that are part of the National Highway System. In Luzerne County, there are about 178 miles in the National Highway System, which includes interstate highways and certain other critical highways. Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel (DVMT, the total number of miles driven by all vehicles per day) on the National Highway System in the two counties is over 7.5 million – about 4.7 percent of the statewide DVMT.

The DVMT per mile of highway, a measure of average traffic volume, is lower in Lackawanna County but higher in Luzerne County than the statewide average. Between 2018 and 2019, DVMT in the two counties grew by just over one percent.

The two counties have several permanent traffic count sites that measure traffic volume and speed data on a continuous basis. The local sites include Interstate 81 in Wilkes-Barre Township, Interstate 80 in Foster Township, and State Route 307 in Newton Township. No data since 2016 was available for the Foster Township location. Traffic counts are conducted less frequently in other locations within the two counties, so that data is not reported here.

The past five years saw significant growth in traffic volume in both I-81 in Wilkes-Barre Township and I-80 in Foster Township (to the extent to which data is available). Average daily traffic on Interstate 81 in Wilkes-Barre Township has risen five percent between 2015 and 2019.

	DVMT	National Highway Linear Miles	DVMT per Linear Mile
Lackawanna County	3,132,096	143.7	21,796.1
Luzerne County	4,371,283	177.8	24,585.4
Pennsylvania	158,011,598	7,170.0	22,037.9

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation*

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2015 - 2019 % Change
I-81 in Wilkes-Barre Township	59,023	60,176	61,228	62,938	61,955	5.0%
I-80 in Foster Township	24,347	24,880	ND	ND	ND	-
PA-307 in Newton Township	4,952	ND	ND	4,949	4,912	-0.8%

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation*

## Bridges

In 2018, the Federal Highway Administration’s National Bridge Inventory changed its procedures for bridge evaluation and no longer reports the number of structurally deficient bridges. Instead, bridges are categorized as good, fair, or poor.

	Lackawanna		Luzerne		Pennsylvania	
	Total Bridges	% in Poor Condition	Total Bridges	% in Poor Condition	Total Bridges	% in Poor Condition
2016	347	20.2%	432	26.2%	22,791	19.4%
2017	346	20.2%	430	25.8%	22,779	18.2%
2018	343	18.7%	436	26.6%	22,737	16.6%
2019	348	21.0%	441	26.5%	22,911	15.3%
2020	349	20.9%	443	26.2%	22,965	14.6%

*Source: Federal Highway Administration National Bridge Inventory*

Between Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, 792 bridges were counted in the 2020 National Bridge Inventory. Of those bridges, 20.9 percent and 26.2 percent of bridges were classified as poor in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, respectively. For both counties, this is a marginal decrease from the prior year. Statewide, there has been a more marked decreasing trend in the share of bridges rated in poor condition.

# Motor Vehicle Registrations

## Motor Vehicle Registrations

Lackawanna County passenger vehicle registrations have increased considerably compared with those in 2000. However, the county total of 121,595 registered passenger vehicles represents a notable decline since 2016. Luzerne County passenger car registrations have fluctuated, and in 2020 rose to the highest level since 2016 but still about one percent lower than in 2000. Overall, the two-county region has seen a 1.7 percent increase in passenger car registrations from 2000 to 2020, with a year-over-year growth of nearly one percent from 2019 to 2020. Statewide, there has been more consistent growth in passenger car registrations since 2000, though there have been declines in the total for the past two years.

Both counties and the state have seen a generally increasing trend in the number of registered trucks over 5,000 pounds. The number of registered trucks under 5,000 pounds continued to decrease in both counties and across the state, and it appears as though these trucks are being replaced by larger trucks in higher weight classifications. Since 2000, the number of registered trucks over 5,000 pounds has increased by 147 percent in the two county region. During the same time period, the statewide number of registrations of trucks over 5,000 pounds grew by 125 percent.



Motor Vehicle Registrations: Lackawanna County							2000 - 2020
Vehicle Type	2000	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change
Passenger Vehicles	114,361	125,016	120,646	121,147	120,612	121,595	6%
Motorcycles	2,948	5,466	5,167	5,136	4,952	5,123	74%
Buses	783	943	886	915	900	856	9%
Trailers	11,981	19,083	19,027	19,203	19,496	19,866	66%
Truck - 5,000 lbs. or less	13,867	6,525	6,022	5,607	5,274	5,004	-64%
Truck - 5,000 lbs. to 9,000 lbs.	5,129	14,326	14,188	14,905	15,427	16,247	217%
Truck - 9,000 lbs. to 21,000 lbs.	1,847	3,435	3,441	3,614	6,648	6,939	276%
Truck - over 21,000 lbs.	2,643	3,040	2,972	3,047	3,053	3,075	16%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Bureau of Motor Vehicles

Motor Vehicle Registrations: Luzerne County							2000 - 2020
Vehicle Type	2000	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change
Passenger Vehicles	194,739	194,463	189,399	191,729	190,804	192,667	-1%
Motorcycles	5,302	9,258	8,836	8,776	8,467	8,591	62%
Buses	1,140	1,178	1,094	1,111	1,092	1,036	-9%
Trailers	21,373	32,030	31,872	31,915	31,782	31,988	50%
Truck - 5,000 lbs. or less	27,392	14,059	12,847	12,128	11,369	10,747	-61%
Truck - 5,000 lbs. to 9,000 lbs.	10,632	24,468	24,712	25,563	26,461	27,297	157%
Truck - 9,000 lbs. to 21,000 lbs.	3,675	6,190	6,238	6,389	11,172	11,478	212%
Truck - over 21,000 lbs.	4,315	4,872	4,694	4,762	4,862	4,709	9%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Bureau of Motor Vehicles

Motor Vehicle Registrations: Pennsylvania							2000 - 2020
Vehicle Type	2000	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change
Passenger Vehicles	7,166,668	8,268,394	8,084,151	8,219,631	8,168,045	8,118,635	13%
Motorcycles	210,788	392,233	373,635	374,300	366,244	372,375	77%
Buses	47,182	55,926	55,633	56,217	56,163	54,410	15%
Trailers	812,620	1,268,189	1,268,804	1,286,503	1,294,685	1,307,324	61%
Truck - 5,000 lbs. or less	987,230	490,367	449,840	424,570	395,212	374,323	-62%
Truck - 5,000 lbs. to 9,000 lbs.	472,508	1,071,604	1,081,441	1,134,573	1,166,485	1,194,519	153%
Truck - 9,000 lbs. to 21,000 lbs.	142,004	254,979	258,087	272,767	526,803	537,182	278%
Truck - over 21,000 lbs.	240,504	190,803	188,832	196,146	198,810	195,886	-19%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Bureau of Motor Vehicles

Motor Vehicle Registrations: 2 County Region			
	Registered in 2020	Change Since 2019	Change Since 2000
Cars	314,262	0.9%	1.7%
Motorcycles	13,714	2.2%	66.2%
Trucks < 5k lbs.	15,751	-5.4%	-61.8%
Trucks > 5k lbs.	69,745	3.1%	147.0%
Trailers	51,854	1.1%	55.5%

# Home Heating Fuels



## Home Heating Fuels

Utility gas has remained the most widespread method of home heating fuel in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties from 2000 to 2019. Natural gas remains the heating fuel for over half the homes in Luzerne County and over two-thirds of homes in Lackawanna County.

Since 2000, electricity has eclipsed fuel oil as the second largest home heating source. However, the share of homes heated by electricity declined in both counties in 2019.

Other energy sources, including coal and propane, comprise much smaller shares. Statewide trends have been similar, with a slower shift toward natural gas and electricity amid generally declining use of fuel oil.

**“Natural gas remains the most prevalent heating fuel for more than half the homes in the region.”**

	Home Heating Fuel											
	2000		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Lackawanna	Luzerne
Occupied housing units	86,218	130,687	83,054	127,408	86,203	124,118	86,213	126,811	88,268	128,301	88,154	130,890
Utility gas	61.0%	45.9%	64.7%	50.8%	65.3%	48.2%	63.7%	48.9%	63.8%	49.4%	67.1%	50.6%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	3.8%	3.2%	5.7%	4.8%	5.4%	4.9%	5.5%	5.4%	6.9%	4.4%	5.4%	5.1%
Electricity	12.9%	17.2%	16.6%	20.9%	16.9%	22.2%	17.6%	23.4%	17.2%	22.9%	16.0%	22.1%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	19.0%	28.9%	9.7%	17.7%	9.0%	18.7%	9.8%	17.0%	9.0%	17.0%	8.9%	17.2%
Coal or coke	2.0%	3.7%	1.4%	3.2%	1.6%	3.5%	1.2%	3.3%	0.8%	3.8%	0.8%	2.6%
Other fuel	0.8%	0.9%	1.7%	2.6%	1.6%	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	1.5%	2.3%
No fuel used	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey

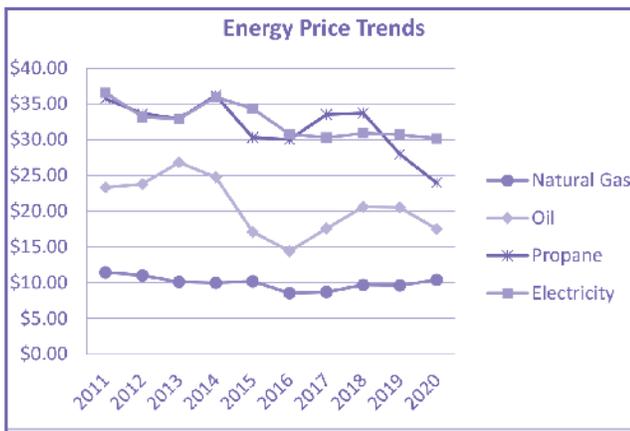
	Pennsylvania Home Heating Fuel					
	2000	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Occupied housing units	4,777,003	4,956,037	4,937,771	5,008,751	5,070,931	5,119,249
Utility gas	51.3%	51.4%	51.7%	51.9%	51.1%	51.5%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	3.0%	4.1%	4.2%	4.4%	4.4%	4.6%
Electricity	16.5%	22.3%	23.0%	23.1%	23.6%	23.9%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	25.5%	16.9%	16.3%	15.8%	15.9%	15.5%
Coal or coke	1.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%
Other fuel	2.0%	3.7%	3.2%	3.3%	3.2%	3.1%
No fuel used	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey

# Energy Price Trends Airport

## Energy Price Trends

In 2020, several sources of heating energy fell in price. Oil and propane costs both fell by over 14 percent between 2019 and 2020. Electricity prices fell by a small margin, while natural gas costs grew by eight percent. Despite this increase, natural gas has remained the lowest cost energy source of the four analyzed during each year since 2010. Propane and electricity have been the highest cost energy sources, though propane costs have declined considerably in the past two years.



	Natural Gas	Oil	Propane	Electricity
2011	\$11.46	\$23.32	\$35.73	\$36.57
2012	\$11.01	\$23.81	\$33.65	\$33.18
2013	\$10.13	\$26.81	\$32.93	\$32.92
2014	\$10.00	\$24.77	\$36.19	\$35.97
2015	\$10.20	\$17.12	\$30.29	\$34.36
2016	\$8.56	\$14.42	\$30.04	\$30.78
2017	\$8.68	\$17.58	\$33.52	\$30.31
2018	\$9.70	\$20.60	\$33.72	\$30.90
2019	\$9.62	\$20.52	\$27.99	\$30.70
2020	\$10.39	\$17.51	\$23.96	\$30.18

Source: UGI Utilities

## Airport

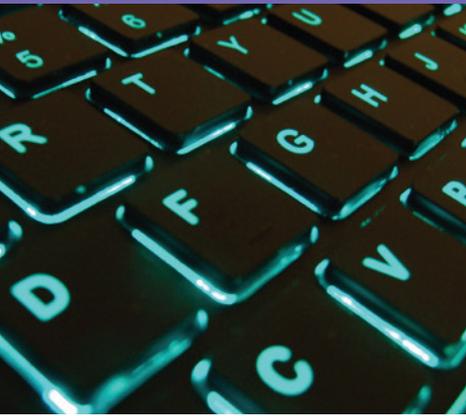
In 2019, the last full year before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted travel, the total number of passengers traveling through Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport grew to the largest number among all years analyzed, and nearly 40 percent higher than the passenger count recorded in 2013. In 2020, the passenger count fell by over 60 percent. Nonetheless, the airport served over 221,000 passengers on 2,877 scheduled flights. On-time performance, which has generally been on par with or slightly better than larger airports in the Mid-Atlantic region, changed only minimally, though there was a sharp increase in the share of flights that were cancelled.

Data reported by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics also indicated a sharp decline in freight and mail volume at the airport.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Passengers	424,638	422,343	434,127	462,999	531,854	527,928	590,044	221,781
Outbound Flights	5,637	4,647	4,781	4,823	4,822	5,557	6,051	2,877
Freight/Mail (lbs.)	387k	492k	351k	369k	340k	403k	238k	3k
Carriers	13	14	10	13	12	13	12	10
% On Time								
Departure	86%	80%	84%	87%	83%	81%	84%	82%
Arrival	71%	71%	75%	83%	81%	77%	79%	81%
Average Delay (minutes)								
Departure	78.45	87.79	84.26	93.64	126.15	88.49	92.95	99.32
Arrival	64.36	60.98	55.66	65.73	71.44	62.89	64.26	65.93
% Cancelled	3%	5%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	7%
# of Carriers Reporting	3	2	2	3	3	7	6	7

Source: Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport and Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

# Broadband Access



**“The proportions of households with internet subscriptions and smartphones continue to rise.”**

## Broadband Access

The share of households with any internet subscription has been growing since detailed data has been kept by the Census Bureau (2015). As of 2019, about 85 percent of the region’s households have internet subscriptions (compared with 86 percent statewide). About 81 percent of households in the region have smartphones – a proportion that grew considerably from 66 percent in 2016. While internet access is less widespread among lower income households, nearly 69 percent of regional and statewide households with annual income under \$20,000 have internet access. Over the last five years, the share of low income households with internet access has grown at a faster pace than among all households.

Households with Any Internet Subscription			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2019	87.3%	83.9%	85.9%
2018	84.1%	82.1%	84.5%
2017	80.8%	79.6%	82.0%
2016	75.9%	74.9%	81.0%
2015	73.8%	70.0%	76.5%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

Households with a Smartphone			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2019	82.7%	79.8%	82.4%
2018	79.0%	77.0%	79.7%
2017	73.3%	72.2%	75.8%
2016	66.4%	66.4%	70.8%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*

Households with Any Internet Subscription: Household Income Less than \$20,000			
	Lackawanna	Luzerne	Pennsylvania
2019	75.6%	63.9%	64.7%
2018	63.3%	58.0%	61.8%
2017	56.3%	55.4%	54.8%
2016	52.1%	46.7%	54.0%
2015	47.2%	41.6%	48.3%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey*



The Institute was founded on the belief that good decisions are driven by good data. Our mission is to provide empirical, objective information that drives discussion and informs decisions.

Institute research on a wide range of topics helps policymakers, and community leaders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors understand and address some of the region’s most challenging problems.

For the past 17 years, underwriting donations from our generous partners have produced research initiatives that have improved the region and changed people’s lives in tangible ways and have supported student stipends for research interns from our 13 member higher education consortium.

The following pages are profiles from our most current research underwriters. The Institute would also like to thank the Sordoni Family Foundation and the Andrew J. Sordoni Foundation for their generosity. Both foundations provided the seed capital to start The Institute and have provided annual support since its inception.

If you would like to ensure that regional data and research continues to support informed choices leading to greater economic vitality for business, residents and the region as a whole, please consider research underwriting support to The Institute.

Best Regards,

Teri, Andrew, Megan, Sarah, Kara, and Jill





## A Great Place to Live, Work and Play!

Luzerne County is an exciting and growing community in Northeastern Pennsylvania. This picturesque region, with its rolling mountains, vast valleys and plentiful waterways, is home to approximately 350,000 residents. Once fueled by the anthracite coal industry, Luzerne County is experiencing a rebirth as a variety of businesses, both large and small, discover the benefits of the area. The evidence of this is seen every day as more big-name corporations, tech companies, restaurants and shops choose to settle in Luzerne County. An exceptional collection of colleges can also be found here, attracting students to the area from around the country and the globe.

Seventy-six municipal jurisdictions, including four cities: Hazleton, Nanticoke, Pittston and Wilkes-Barre, make up Luzerne County under the direction of County Council and County Manager, David Pedri. Collaboration among the local governments and private and public organizations contribute to the success of the region.

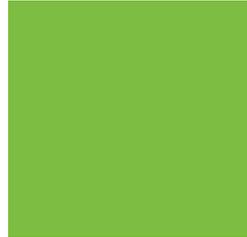
Those living throughout Luzerne County enjoy the natural beauty of the area, including four state parks, a thriving arts community with local theater and big stage performances, along with sporting events from the Wilkes-Barre/ Scranton Penguins, AHL affiliate of the Pittsburgh Penguins, and the Scranton/ Wilkes-Barre RailRiders, Triple-A affiliate of the New York Yankees.

Countless opportunities, a strong sense of community and plenty to see and do make Luzerne County a great place to live, work and play!

# 100



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# Geisinger



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Navient is a leader in education loan management and business processing solutions for education, healthcare, and government clients at the federal, state, and local levels.

Headquartered in Wilmington, Delaware, Navient employs more than 5,900 team members across 10 states, including 800 in northeastern Pennsylvania.

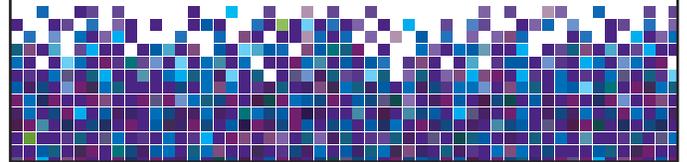
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For more than 45 years, The Wright Center has been committed to providing non-discriminatory, high-quality, safety-net health services to the region's most vulnerable populations while creating the primary care workforce pipeline America needs.

This mission is carried out in two complementary entities: **The Wright Center for Community Health**, a Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike with a growing network of community health centers throughout Lackawanna, Luzerne and Wayne counties, and **The Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education**, recognized as the largest national Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Consortium dedicated to training compassionate, highly skilled primary care physicians.

By mission and design, our physician-led nonprofit is community-based and patient-directed. We exist to serve those who have limited access to healthcare, with a vision to integrate patient care delivery, workforce development and innovation to be the leading model of primary healthcare in America.

**TheWrightCenter.org**



Since 1956, CAN DO, Inc. has been working to improve the economy and quality of life in the Greater Hazleton Area through the development of business and industry as well as the attraction of quality jobs. Over the past 65 years of working toward that mission, CAN DO has attracted nearly 30,000 new jobs to the community.

Today, CAN DO has expanded its economic development efforts to include financing assistance for business of all sizes, industrial and commercial rental properties, public utilities, workforce development facilitation, entrepreneurial assistance including a business incubator, and community development projects within downtown Hazleton. All of which has been achieved while remaining a strong advocate and partner for regionalism.

For more information on how CAN DO can assist your business, call 570-455-1508 or visit [hazletoncando.com](http://hazletoncando.com).



*Here for good.™*

The Luzerne Foundation works to enhance the lives of Luzerne County residents by evaluating and addressing community needs through strategic grantmaking, promoting responsible philanthropy, and connecting donors to causes that matter to them.

[www.luzfdn.org](http://www.luzfdn.org)

# M&T Bank

Founded in 1856 in Buffalo, N.Y., M&T is a community bank serving New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Connecticut, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington, D.C. and Florida. We offer advice, guidance, expertise and solutions across the entire financial spectrum, combining M&T's traditional banking services with the wealth management and institutional capabilities offered by Wilmington Trust.

We're headquartered in Buffalo, N.Y., and we are organized around 19 community bank regions led by local regional presidents. This means decisions about loans and community activities are made locally, by the people in the bank who know the community best.

#### **Fast Facts**

- One of the 20 largest U.S.-based commercial banks
- 142.6 billion in assets as of December 31, 2020
- 4.1 million customers
- 17,000+ team members
- 700+ domestic full-service branches
- 1,700+ ATMs
- Online and mobile services, built for both personal and business customers

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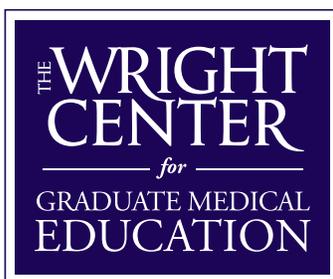
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