

# Rural by the Numbers 2007

A Look at Pennsylvania's Rural Population



July 2007



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## About Rural by the Numbers

To better understand the circumstances that affect the lives of rural and urban residents, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania conducted its third annual Rural Pennsylvania Current Population Survey, or RuralPA-CPS, from January to March 2007.

The RuralPA-CPS is modeled after the March Supplement of the federal Current Population Survey (CPS).

The first RuralPA-CPS, conducted in 2005, surveyed more than 2,000 rural households. In both 2006 and 2007, the Center expanded the survey to include 1,000 urban households.

For the RuralPA-CPS, the Center asked a sample of rural and urban residents questions about their families, home, income, employment, educational attainment and health insurance.

This year's report focuses on a combined analysis of the 2006 and 2007 survey results. The combined results offer a more statistically valid and reliable picture of rural and urban Pennsylvania.

The report focuses on rural and urban similarities and differences among demographic characteristics, income, health insurance, education, employment, and housing.

A summary of the RuralPA-CPS methodology, data limitations and definitions are included in the appendices along with rural and urban household data comparisons.

The Center trusts that as you read through the report, you will take a new step toward understanding Pennsylvania's rural residents.

# Rural Demographics

## Households

The typical rural household has an average of 2.5 persons. However, households in rural eastern Pennsylvania are slightly larger than households in rural western Pennsylvania (2.7 persons and 2.5 persons, respectively). There is no significant difference between rural and urban areas in the number of persons in households.

A married couple heads 66 percent of rural households and 63 percent of urban households. Unmarried couples living together make up 6 percent of households in both rural and urban areas. The second most common type of household in both rural and urban areas is a single person living alone. In rural areas, 19 percent of households are made up of single persons who are typically female (67 percent), and, on average, 64 years old. In urban areas, 21 percent of households are made up of single persons, 69 percent of whom are female and, on average, 63 years old.

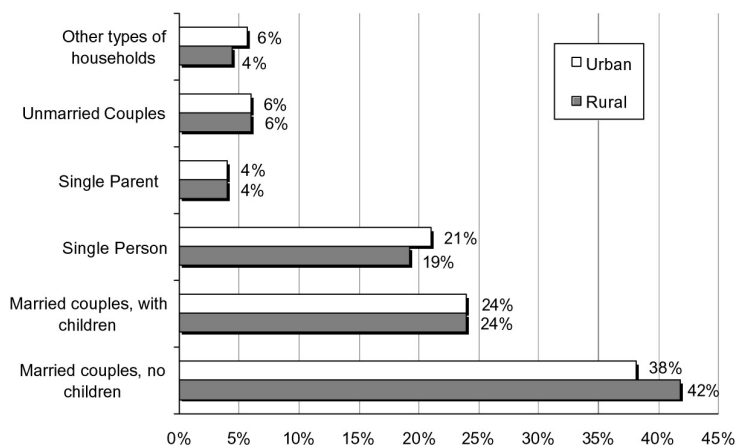
Other types of rural households include: single parent households (4 percent); female-headed households, no husband or children present, (3 percent); and male-headed households, no wife or children present (1 percent.)

## Children

Children make up 22 percent of the rural and 23 percent of the urban population. Rural and urban households with children have an average of 1.8 children per household. About 80 percent of rural and urban children live in married couple households, about 13 percent live with a single parent, and 7 percent live in a household comprised of two unmarried persons. The average rural and urban child is nine years old.

Among households with children, there is only one child in 43 percent of rural households and 41 percent of urban households. In 57 percent of

**RURAL AND URBAN HOUSEHOLD TYPES**



rural households and 59 percent of urban households, there are two or more children. In both rural and urban areas, 4 percent of children live in a household with an adult who is 65 years old and older.

Another similarity between rural and urban households with children is the percent of adults who are employed. In 54 percent of rural households with children, and 56 percent of urban households with children, two or more adults are employed.

In rural areas, 14 percent of children live in households with incomes at or below poverty, and in urban areas, 12 percent of children live in such poverty households.

One striking difference between rural and urban children is the percent eligible for the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program, as 36 percent of rural school-age children and 23 percent of urban school-age children are eligible.

A small rural-urban difference among children is the percentage of teenagers with jobs. In rural areas, 35 percent of rural teenagers between the ages of 16 and 18 are employed compared to 38 percent of teenagers in urban areas. In both rural and urban areas, more than 91 percent of these teenagers are employed part-time.

## Senior Citizens

For the analysis, a senior citizen is defined as someone who is 65 years old and older.

Like children, there are many demographic similarities between rural and urban senior citizens. For example, 17 percent of the rural population and 18 percent of the urban population are senior citizens. In both rural and urban areas, 64 percent of rural and urban senior citizens live with a spouse, 23 percent live alone, and the remaining 13 percent live in some other type of household arrangement. The majority of rural and urban senior citizens (88 and 85 percent, respectively) live in their own home, and more than 84 percent of these seniors do not have monthly mortgage payments. Among those seniors who rent their home, the median monthly rent in rural areas is \$400 while in urban areas the median is \$600.

Another rural-urban similarity is in employment. Approximately 11 percent of rural seniors and 12 percent of urban seniors are currently working. Among those who are employed, 38 percent of rural seniors and 44 percent of urban seniors work full-time.

One significant difference between rural and urban senior households is income. In rural households headed by a senior citizen, the median monthly income is \$29,000. In urban senior households, the median is \$38,400, a difference of \$9,400. Despite

the lower income, fewer rural senior citizens live in poverty as the rural poverty rate for seniors is 8 percent and the urban rate for seniors is 9 percent.

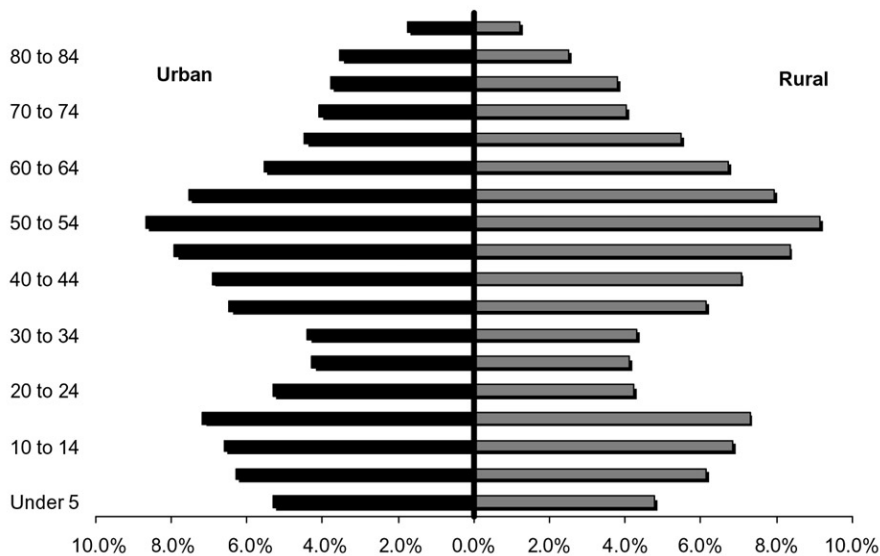
Another rural-urban difference is in computer and Internet access. In rural areas, 48 percent of senior-headed households do not have a computer. Among urban senior-headed households, 43 percent do not have a computer. Among the 52 percent of rural senior-headed households with a computer, the majority has Internet access (83 percent). Fifty-six percent of these rural seniors connect to the Internet through a broadband connection (cable modem or DSL) and 44 percent use a dial-up modem. In urban areas, 57 percent of senior-headed households have a computer. Among these households, 88 percent have Internet access: 63 percent connect through a broadband connection and 37 percent connect through a dial-up modem.

## Women

Females make up 52 percent of Pennsylvania's rural population and 53 percent of the urban population. In rural and urban areas, the average female is about 42 years old, which is roughly two years older than the average male. Among rural adult women (18 years old and older), 65 percent are married, 12 percent are widowed, 14 percent have never been married, and 9 percent are divorced or separated. In urban areas, 60 percent of adult women are married, 11 percent are widowed, 19 percent have never been married, and the remaining 10 percent are divorced or separated.

As for educational attainment, there is no significant difference between rural adult females and males. The same percentages of adult females and males have a bachelor's degree or higher (21 percent) and roughly the same

**RURAL AND URBAN AGE COHORTS**



# Rural Demographics *(continued)*

percentages have a high school diploma (42 percent for females and 44 percent for males.). There is a similar pattern among urban adult females and males, except for those with a bachelor's degree or higher, as 33 percent of females have a degree compared to 37 percent of males.

Rural females are less likely than rural males to be employed. Fifty-one percent of adult rural females are employed compared to 63 percent of adult males. Sixty-six percent of rural females who are employed work full-time compared to 83 percent of rural males. The top four industries in which rural females are employed are: health services, 24 percent; retail, 19 percent; food services, 13 percent; and manufacturing, 12 percent. The unemployment rate for rural adult females is 8 percent and for males the rate is 7 percent.

Rural females are more likely to live in poverty than rural males. Eleven percent of rural females live in households with incomes at or below the poverty level compared to 8 percent of rural males. There is, however, little difference between

females and males living in high-income households as 12 percent of females and 13 percent of males live in households with incomes over \$100,000.

## Minorities

In rural areas, minorities make up 4 percent of the population. In urban areas, minorities comprise nearly 15 percent of the population. Fifty-two percent of rural minority households have four or more members. Among white, non-Hispanic households, less than 40 percent have four or more members. Nearly 66 percent of rural minority households have children compared to 47 percent of white, non-Hispanic households. Rural minorities are, on average, 10 years younger than the rest of the rural population.

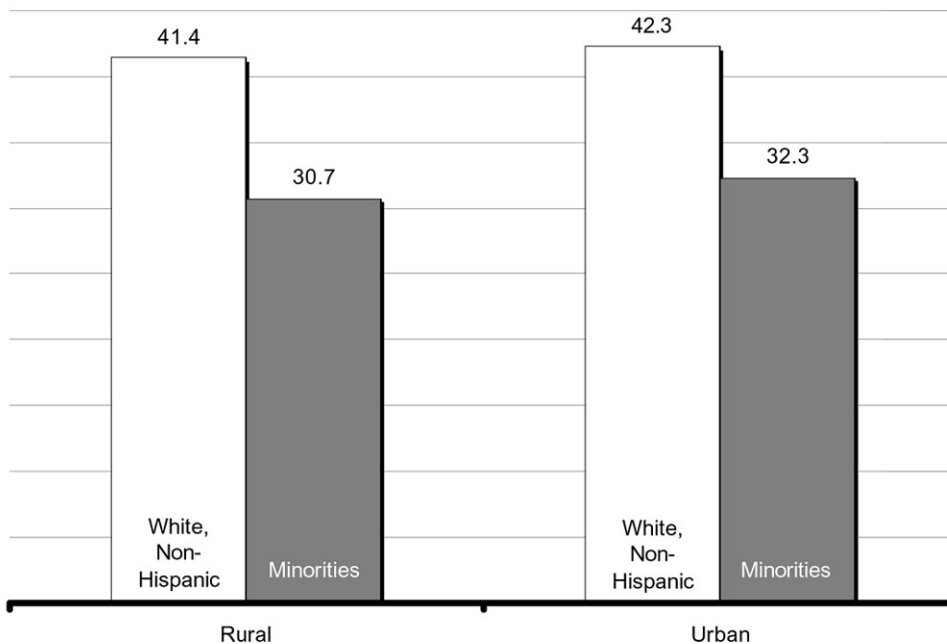
The median income in a rural, minority-headed household is \$40,000. In urban areas, the median is \$45,000, or \$5,000 higher than in rural households. For white, non-Hispanic rural households, the median income is \$50,000 and in urban areas it is \$70,000. In addition, 21 percent of rural minority households are at or below the poverty level, compared to 8

percent of white, non-Hispanic households. In urban areas, 14 percent of minority households are in poverty.

Rural minorities and white, non-Hispanic adults generally have the same level of educational attainment. For example, 20 percent of adult minorities have a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 21 percent of white, non-Hispanic adults.

In addition, 62 percent of rural adult minorities and white, non-Hispanic adults are working. However, the unemployment rate is higher for minorities than it is for white, non-Hispanics (13 percent and 8 percent, respectively).

**AVERAGE AGE OF RURAL AND URBAN MINORITIES AND WHITE, NON-HISPANIC RESIDENTS**



# Rural Income

## Poverty Households

In 2007, a family of three with a total income of less than \$17,170 is living in poverty.

Ten percent of rural households and 9 percent of urban households are in poverty. The typical rural household in poverty has fewer members than non-poverty households. Those living in rural poverty households are also younger than those living in non-poverty households (average age 35 and 40 years old, respectively). Poverty households are more likely to have more females (58 percent vs. 51 percent for non-poverty households) than males (42 percent vs. 49 percent, respectively.)

Of the rural households in poverty, a single person heads 35 percent, married couples head 34 percent and single parents head 18 percent of households. Seven percent of rural poverty households are comprised of unmarried couples and the remaining 6 percent are made up of male- or female-headed householders with no children.

Forty percent of rural households in poverty have children. Among all rural children in poverty households, 44 percent live in married couple households, 42 percent are in single parent households, and 14 percent are in unmarried couple households.

In urban areas, 40 percent of households in poverty have children. Among all urban children in poverty households, 48 percent live in married couple households, 38 percent live in single parent households, and 14 percent live in unmarried couple households.

In rural areas, 52 percent of households in poverty own their own home and 48 percent rent. In urban areas, 42 percent of households in poverty own their home and 58 percent rent. Among renters, the median monthly rent is \$300 in rural areas and \$450 in urban areas.

Compared to urban households in poverty, those in rural areas are less likely to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), as 8 percent of urban households received TANF payments compared to 5 percent in rural areas. However, rural households are more likely to receive food stamps (51 percent rural vs. 44 percent urban); Supplemental Security Income (SSI) (27 percent vs. 16 percent); and unemployment compensation payments (9 percent vs. 7 percent).

Forty-one percent of rural adults and 46 percent of urban adults in poverty are in the labor force. Of these adults, 30 percent in rural areas and 24 percent in urban areas are unemployed. Among the adults who are employed, 61 percent in rural areas are employed full-time compared to 50 percent in urban areas.

Twenty-eight percent of rural adults in poverty and 25 percent of urban adults in poverty do not have a high school diploma. Fourteen percent of rural adults in poverty have an associate's degree or higher, and in urban areas, 15 percent have an associate's degree or higher.

## Affluent Households

The total income among rural and urban households was evenly divided into five groups. At the upper end of this range are households with incomes over \$84,000, which are considered "affluent" in this analysis.

Approximately 15 percent of rural households and 29 percent of urban households are affluent.

Eighty-six percent of rural and urban affluent households are comprised of married couples with children. The average age of all persons living in rural and urban affluent households is 36 years old, and more than 92 percent of rural and urban affluent householders own their own home.

In both rural and urban areas, 81 percent of adults in affluent households are in the labor force. Sixty-eight percent of these households have two or more persons who are employed. The top four industries in which rural affluent householders work are: manufacturing, 16 percent; retail, 14 percent; health care, 12 percent; and professional and scientific industries, 12 percent.

Forty-six percent of rural adults and 56 percent of urban adults living in affluent households have a bachelor's degree or higher.

# Rural Health Insurance

## Uninsured

Eight percent of rural residents and 6 percent of urban residents do not have health insurance. In both rural and urban areas, the average age of an uninsured person is 38 years old. Approximately 3 percent of the rural uninsured are children under 18 years old, and, in urban areas, 2 percent of the uninsured are children. About 11 percent of rural adults and 9 percent of urban adults between the ages of 18 and 64 do not have health insurance.

In terms of households, 4 percent of rural households and 3 percent of urban households have no members with health care insurance. Ten percent of rural households and 9 percent of urban households are mixed, in which one member may have health insurance and the other member(s) does not. The median household income for rural individuals without health care insurance is \$32,500. In urban areas, the median household income is \$36,250.

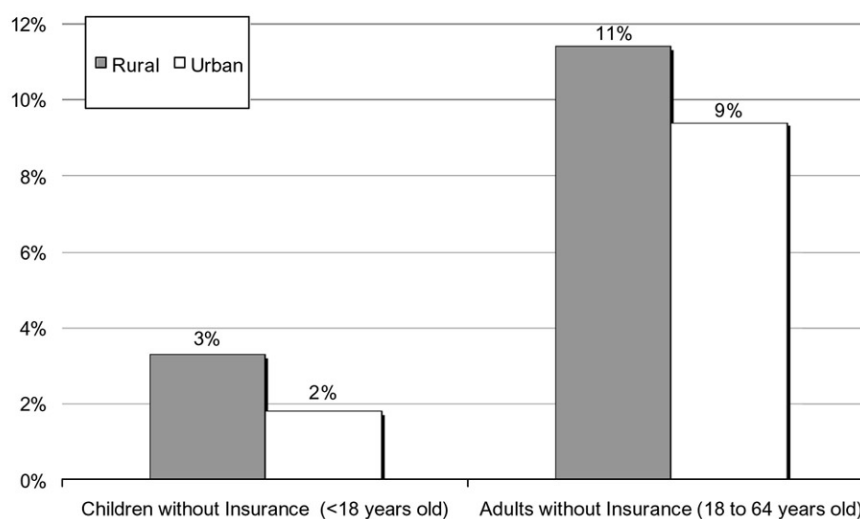
Eighteen percent of the rural uninsured and 20 percent of the urban uninsured live in poverty.

Seventy-five percent of uninsured rural adults are in the labor force. However, 24 percent of these individuals are unemployed. These percentages are nearly identical to those in urban areas. Among those who are employed and uninsured, the top four rural employment industries are: retail, 21 percent; food service, 14 percent; manufacturing, 11 percent; and transportation and warehousing, 11 percent.

## Medical Assistance (Medicaid) Health Insurance

The Pennsylvania Medicaid program is known as Medical Assistance, or MA. This program provides health care insurance for very-low-income individuals. In 2007, 8 percent of rural Pennsylvanians and 6 percent of urban Pennsylvanians were insured through MA.

**RURAL AND URBAN UNINSURED BY SELECTED AGE COHORTS**



Fifty-nine percent of rural MA recipients are under 18 years old. The typical MA recipient lives in a household with an average of four members and the household is headed by a married couple (57 percent). Eighty percent of MA households have children and the total income for this typical household is \$20,000. In addition to receiving MA health insurance, this household also receives food stamps (61 percent).

Twenty-six percent of rural MA households receive SSI, and 9 percent receive TANF payments.

In urban areas, 40 percent of MA recipients are minorities, and, in rural areas, 10 percent are minorities. Fifty-four percent of rural MA recipients and 46 percent of urban MA recipients are homeowners.

Among rural adults receiving MA, 33 percent are employed or looking for work and 45 percent are disabled and not looking for work. The remaining 22 percent are retired or not working for other reasons. In urban areas, 47 percent of adults receiving MA are employed or looking for work, 31 percent are disabled and not looking for work, and 22 percent are retired or not working for other reasons.

Seventy-one percent of rural MA adults have a high school diploma. In urban areas, 80 percent of MA adults have a high school diploma. Eighteen percent of urban MA adults are enrolled in school compared to 11 percent of rural MA adults.

# Rural Education

## College Graduates

For the analysis, a college graduate is 25 years old and older and has at least a bachelor's degree.

In rural areas, 23 percent of persons 25 years old and older have a bachelor's degree. Among those with a bachelor's degree, 38 percent also have a graduate degree. In urban areas, 38 percent of persons 25 years old and older have a bachelor's degree and 43 percent have a graduate degree.

Rural households with college graduates are nearly evenly split between those where all adult members have a bachelor's degree or higher (49 percent) and those where some of the members have a degree and others do not (51 percent). Among urban households with college graduates, 62 percent of all household members have a bachelor's degree or higher and 38 percent have only some members with a degree.

The typical rural college graduate is 50 years old, married (78 percent) and employed (70 percent) in a management, professional, or educational occupation (66 percent). This typical person is white, non-Hispanic (96 percent) and has health insurance (97 percent).

The typical rural college graduate household is comprised of a married couple (77 percent). Thirty-eight percent of rural college-graduate households have children. In urban areas, 82 percent of college-graduate households are made up of married couples. Forty percent of these urban households have children.

The median income for rural college graduate

households is \$70,000. For urban college graduate households the median is \$87,500. However, not all adults with bachelor's degrees have high incomes. In rural areas, 17 percent of college graduates have incomes under \$37,500; in urban areas, 11 percent of these households have incomes under \$37,500.

## Students

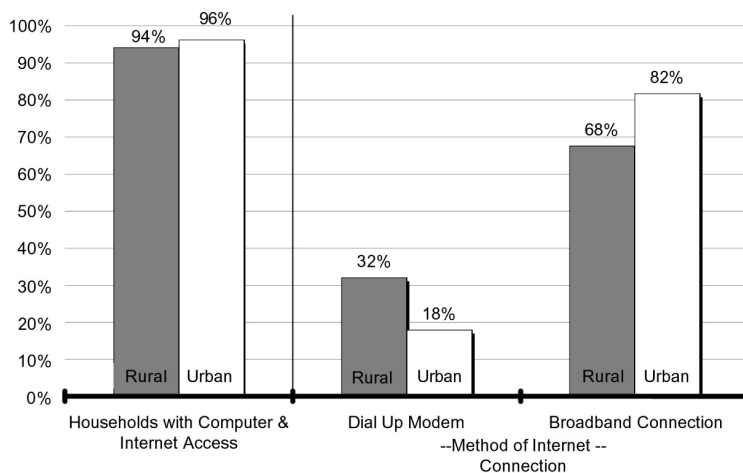
In rural areas, 25 percent of the population over 4 years old is enrolled in a formal education program. The average age of rural students is 16 years old; however, 11 percent of students are 25 years old and older. In urban areas, 14 percent of the population that is over 4 years old is enrolled in school. The average age of an urban student is 17 years old, however, 13 percent of students are 25 years old and older.

Seventy-seven percent of rural students are pursuing a high school diploma, 18 percent are pursuing an associate's or bachelor's degree, and 6 percent are taking classes for a post-bachelor's degree. In urban areas, 72 percent are in school to obtain a high school diploma, 20 percent are pursuing an associate's or bachelor's degree, and 8 percent a post-bachelor's degree.

Among those rural adult students 18 years old and older, 63 percent are also employed. Fifty-five percent of these students are employed part-time, 40 percent are employed full-time, and approximately 5 percent had both a full-time and part-time job. In terms of employment, there was no significant difference between rural and urban students.

In rural and urban households with students, 93 percent have a computer. Among these households, 94 percent in rural and 96 percent in urban areas have access to the Internet. The most significant difference between rural and urban households, however, is the method used to connect to the Internet. In rural areas, 32 percent of households with students and computer Internet access connect through dial-up modems and 68 percent through a broadband connection. In urban areas, 18 percent of similar households connect through a dial-up modem and 82 percent through a broadband connection.

**HOUSEHOLDS WITH STUDENTS WITH COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCESS AND TYPE OF INTERNET CONNECTION**



# Rural Employment

## Unemployment

The unemployment rate in rural areas is 8 percent and in urban areas it is 6 percent. These rates include all adults who are not employed but looking for work. At the household level, 9 percent of rural households have one or more unemployed person. In urban areas, 7 percent of households have at least one person who is unemployed.

The average age of an unemployed person in rural Pennsylvania is 37 years old. A slightly higher percentage of females than males is unemployed (51 percent and 49 percent, respectively).

Forty-four percent of the rural unemployed are married, another 44 percent have never been married, and the remaining 12 percent are divorced, separated, or widowed. Fifty-five percent of the rural unemployed have a high school diploma, 7 percent have an associate's degree and 11 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. Fifteen percent of the rural unemployed do not have a high school diploma. Sixty-one percent of the rural unemployed have health care insurance, and 39 percent do not.

Some of the significant differences between the rural and urban unemployed include: the percent who are minorities (25 percent in urban areas vs. 6 percent in rural areas); and educational attainment (20 percent of the urban unemployed have a bachelor's degree or higher vs. 11 percent of the rural unemployed.)

Forty-seven percent of rural households with an unemployed person have children, and a single parent heads 17 percent of these households. In urban areas, a similar percent of households with an unemployed person have children (46 percent) but 22 percent of these households are headed by a single parent.

The typical rural household with an unemployed person has a total median income of \$40,000; in urban areas the median is \$47,500.

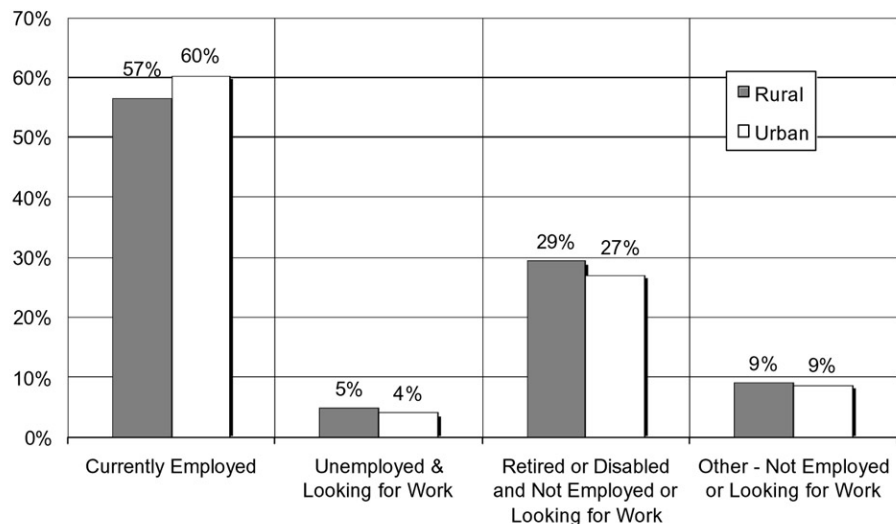
In rural areas 20 percent of the households with an unemployed person are in poverty, and in urban areas, the rate is 17 percent. Among these households, 15 percent of rural and 17 percent of urban receive food stamps. Three percent of rural households with an unemployed person receive TANF and 11 percent receive SSI payments. In urban areas, 7 percent of these households receive TANF payments and 9 percent receive SSI.

## Working Poor

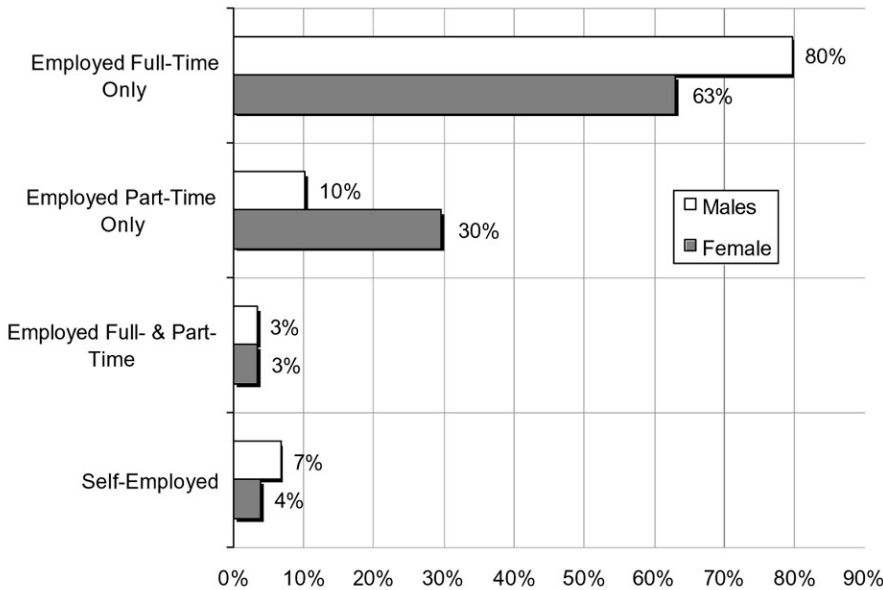
Seventeen percent of rural Pennsylvania workers may be classified as "working poor." This group includes adults who are employed but whose total household income is 200 percent of poverty or less. In 2007, a family of three would be considered "working poor" if its income was less than \$34,340.

The top three industries employing the rural working poor are retail, manufacturing, and food services. In urban areas, the top three industries employing the working poor are retail, transportation and warehousing, and health services. Sixty-five percent of the rural working poor, and 61 percent of the urban working poor are employed full-time.

**ADULT LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY RURAL AND URBAN**



## RURAL FEMALE AND MALE ADULTS BY EMPLOYMENT



The average age of a rural individual among the working poor is 40 years old. In urban areas, this person is 38 years old. In rural areas, the working poor are 50 percent male and 50 percent female. In urban areas, there are more females among the working poor than males (55 percent and 45 percent, respectively). In terms of educational attainment, 49 percent of both rural and urban individuals in this category have a high school diploma.

Four percent of the rural working poor and 28 percent of the urban working poor are minorities.

Among rural and urban working poor households, 66 percent have children. In rural areas, 73 percent of these households are comprised of married couples, 15 percent are single parent, and 12 percent are unmarried couples. In urban areas, married couples head 58 percent of the households with children, single parents head 27 percent and unmarried couples head 15 percent.

Nineteen percent of rural working poor households receive heating assistance, 17 percent receive food stamps, and 8 percent receive SSI payments. Seventy-three percent of rural school children in working poor

households are eligible for the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program. Less than 2 percent of working poor households receive TANF.

Seventy-eight percent of rural and urban working poor households have computers. Among those with a computer and Internet access, 54 percent of rural households and 37 percent of urban households connect through a dial-up modem.

# Rural Housing

## Homeownership

The rural homeownership rate is 85 percent, or 5 percentage points higher than the urban homeownership rate. The typical rural homeowner is 54 years old, married (83 percent), and does not have any children living at home (67 percent). This typical rural homeowner is white, non-Hispanic (97 percent) and has only a high school diploma (44 percent). Except for educational attainment, the typical urban homeowner is nearly identical to the typical rural homeowner. Sixty-four percent of urban homeowners have an education beyond a high school diploma.

Ninety-four percent of rural homeowners live in a house and 6 percent live in a mobile home. In urban areas, 2 percent of homeowners live in a mobile home and 98 percent live in a house.

Fifty-two percent of rural homeowners do not have a monthly mortgage payment; the average age of these homeowners is 62 years old. Among the 48 percent of rural homeowners with a monthly mortgage, the median payment is \$640, or approximately 14 percent of their total household income. In urban areas, 48 percent of homeowners do not have a monthly mortgage payment; their average age is 64 years old. For the 52 percent of urban homeowners with a mortgage, the median monthly payment is \$1,000, or 15 percent of their total income.

In rural areas, a higher percentage of younger adults are homeowners. Among rural persons under 35 years old, 70 percent are homeowners; in urban areas 59 percent are homeowners. For homeowners under 35 years old, the median monthly mortgage payment is \$700, while for those 35 years old and older, the median monthly mortgage payment is \$630, or \$70 lower. In urban areas, there was no difference in median monthly mortgage payments by age of homeowner.

## Affordable Housing

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing as affordable if householders pays no more than 30

percent of their annual income for housing. Using this criterion, 14 percent of rural households live in unaffordable housing. Fifty-one percent of these householders are homeowners and 49 percent are renters. In urban areas, 16 percent of the households live in homes where monthly costs are 30 percent or more of income. Fifty-eight percent of these urban householders are renters and 42 percent own their own home.

In rural areas, homeowners paying 30 percent or more of income for housing have a median income of \$23,500. Their median monthly mortgage payment is \$800. Among rural renters, median household income is \$10,200 and median monthly rent is \$425.

In urban areas, homeowners paying 30 percent or more of income for housing have a median income of \$35,000 and a median monthly mortgage payment of \$1,200. For urban renters, median household income is \$13,000 and median monthly rent is \$600.

The typical rural householder living in a home that does not meet HUD's criteria of affordable is 49 years old and employed (40 percent). A higher percentage of these householders are female than male (61 percent female vs. 39 percent male) and 43 percent have a high school diploma.

Some demographic differences between rural and urban householders who pay 30 percent or more of income for housing include the following: 21 percent of those living in this type of home in urban areas and 9 percent in rural areas are minorities; 49 percent of households in urban areas and 36 percent in rural areas have children; and 28 percent of the householders in urban areas and 11 percent in rural areas have a bachelor's degree or higher.

The poverty rate among rural householders who pay 30 percent or more of income for housing is 47 percent. In urban areas, the poverty rate among this group is 33 percent. Thirty-two percent of these rural households receive food stamps, 27 percent receive heating assistance, and 20 percent receive SSI payments. Among these urban households, 24 percent receive food stamps, 19 percent receive heating assistance, and 12 percent receive SSI payments.

# Conclusion

## Similar Demographic Characteristics

When it comes to age, gender, household type, and other demographic characteristics, rural and urban Pennsylvanians are similar. On the surface, these similarities suggest that rural areas are not unique from urban areas as residents have similar needs for goods and services. It also suggests that rural and urban Pennsylvania may be affected by national demographic trends such as a shrinking workforce, an increase in the number of senior citizens, smaller households, and a declining youth population over the next 10 to 15 years.

From a program perspective, however, the demographic similarities between rural and urban Pennsylvania do not necessarily mean that a “one-size fits all” approach will work. Although rural families and urban families may look alike statistically, those living in rural areas face the additional challenges of geographic isolation and dealing with additional economic and financial disadvantages.

## Income Gap

There is a significant income gap between rural and urban households. The median income in rural households is \$10,000 lower than the median income in urban households. Among affluent households, there is a \$14,500 rural-urban income gap. While this income gap is not new, data from the RuralPA-CPS document other significant financial differences between rural and urban residents in the areas of

health care insurance, unemployment rates, and educational attainment. However, rural households generally have a lower participation rate in government assistance programs than urban households.

The one area in which rural residents are faring well is housing. In general, more rural residents are homeowners and more rural residents live in affordable homes than urban residents. While there is no single solution to closing the rural-urban income gap, the data suggest that increased educational attainment is important to the financial well being of rural households.

## Rural Workforce is Lagging Behind

In a side-by-side comparison, the rural workforce lags behind the urban workforce in the areas of participation, educational attainment and wages. A larger percentage of the rural workforce is employed in traditional industries.

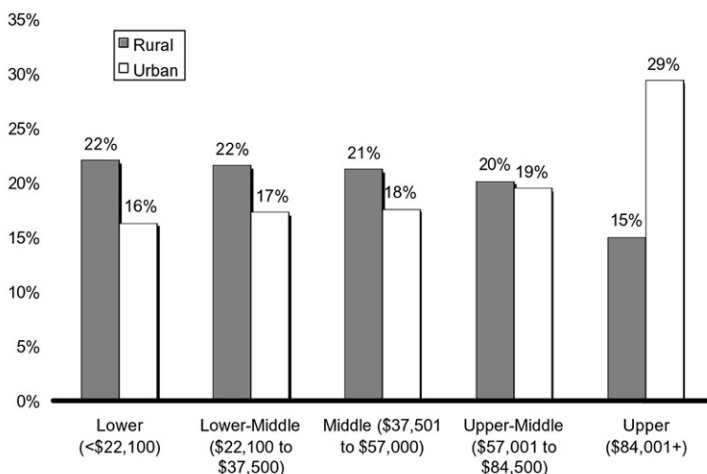
Because of these work-related indicators, rural areas may be more susceptible to higher unemployment rates and income loss during a recession or economic downturn. It could also mean that businesses may find it more difficult to find qualified employees to work in specialized trades or industries.

## New Digital Divide

In both rural and urban areas, more than 73 percent of households have a computer. What separates households with and without computers is age. Generally, the older the householder, the less likely he or she is to have a computer.

What separates rural and urban computer users, however, is the method used to connect to the Internet. Among rural households, 38 percent use dial-up modems and 62 percent use a broadband connection. In urban households, 26 percent use dial-up modems and 74 percent use a broadband connection. Increasingly, for a region to be economically competitive, access to the Internet through a broadband connection is important. For businesses and communities, a high speed Internet connection could be a major determining factor for economic growth.

**RURAL AND URBAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**



# Appendix 1: Methodology

The RuralPA-CPS is a joint project of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania and Penn State Harrisburg's Center for Survey Research (CSR). The Center and CSR collaborated on the design of the survey instrument, which was closely modeled after the March Supplement of the federal Current Population Survey (CPS).

The federal CPS model represents a comprehensive approach on the part of the federal government to gather demographic data about the nation's households. In March of each year, the CPS collects additional socio-economic data such as employment, income, education, and health insurance coverage. This enhanced dataset is referred to as the CPS March Supplement. This data is collected through mail and personal interviews.

While the RuralPA-CPS was designed to function as a CPS March Supplement for Pennsylvania, the research team made some changes. First, the RuralPA-CPS was designed to be a telephone survey, not a mail survey or personal interview. Second, some questions were eliminated or restructured to fit within a standard 20-minute telephone survey. And third, the RuralPA-CPS was targeted to over-sample households in rural Pennsylvania. These changes affected both the structure and comparability of the results with the federal CPS March Supplement.

Data presented in this report are from the 2006 and 2007 RuralPA-CPS surveys.

## Data collection

Telephone interviewers collected data for both surveys. Data collection for the 2006 survey began on January 3, 2006 and ended on April 10, 2006. For the 2007 survey, data collection began on January 3, 2007 and ended on March 12, 2007. Standard callback methods were used to increase the response rate.

## Sample design

The sample consisted of telephone numbers selected at random from the 48 counties that the Center for Rural Pennsylvania has designated as rural. A county is considered rural when the population density of the county is less than the statewide population density of 274 persons per square land mile. According to U.S. Census Bureau 2006 population estimates, the Commonwealth's 48 rural counties had a total population of 3.4 million residents. In 2006 and 2007, the survey was also conducted in 19 urban counties. These counties had an estimated population of 8.9 million.

The random-digit-dialing (RDD) telephone sample

frame was purchased from a marketing firm. The sampling methodology ensured that every household with a telephone in rural and urban Pennsylvania had an equal chance of selection. This procedure is a rigorous methodology that plays a key role in producing sample estimates that accurately reflect true population values.

Interviewers asked for survey participation from a household member who was 18 years of age or older and best qualified to answer detailed questions about his/her household and its members.

## Response rate

Interviews were conducted from the offices of the Center for Survey Research at Penn State Harrisburg until 3,156 interviews had been completed in 2006 (3,028 completed interviews plus 128 partially completed interviews) and 3,158 interviews had been completed in 2007 (3,037 complete surveys and 121 partially completed interviews). The goal was to complete full interviews with at least 2,000 rural households and 1,000 urban households.

In 2006, the overall cooperation rate for the survey was 53 percent and in 2007 the rate was 59 percent. This rate is calculated by the total number of completed interviews divided by the sum of the completed interviews, partially completed interviews and refusals.

In 2006, based on the 3,028 completed interviews, the confidence level achieved is 95 percent with a sampling error of plus or minus 1.6 percentage points. In 2007, based on the 3,037 completed interviews, the confidence level achieved is 95 percent with a sampling error of plus or minus 1.6 percentage points. This means that if the survey were conducted 100 times, the resulting data would be within 1.6 percentage points of the percentage reported in 95 of the 100 surveys.

## Combination of 2006 and 2007 data

To increase the level of statistical confidence and validity, the 2006 and 2007 RuralPA-CPS were combined and analyzed as a single year. As a result, the rate of change from one year to another was not calculated.

### SURVEY COOPERATION RATES, 2006 & 2007

	2006	2007
Number of completed interviews	3,028	3,037
Number of partial interviews	121	121
Number of refusals	2,099	1,368
Number who hung up during the interview	447	603
Cooperation rate	53.0%	59.0%
Margin of error	1.6%	1.6%

# Appendix 2: Data Limitations and Definitions

As in any survey, there are a number of limitations that may affect the reliability and validity of the results. The most significant limitations to this survey are as follow:

## Limited comparability with the federal CPS

There are two aspects of this comparability issue. First, some questions used in the RuralPA-CPS were modified to fit a telephone survey format. This process included rewording or eliminating some questions that are found in the federal CPS. As a result, a direct comparison with certain federal CPS questions is not possible.

Comparability may also be limited because of the way in which data was collected: again, the federal CPS uses a mail survey and personal interviews while the RuralPA-CPS uses a telephone survey. The difference in the two formats may have resulted in questions being answered differently.

## Undersampling of renters

According to the 2006 and 2007 RuralPA-CPS, 85 percent of households were in owner-occupied units and 15 percent lived in rental units. The percentage of households in rental units is low when compared to the Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey, where approximately 25 percent of households were renters and 75 percent were homeowners. While only a few years have passed since the American Community Survey, it is very unlikely that there was a 10-percentage point decline in households living in rental units. Consequently, readers should recognize that renters, who generally have lower incomes, are underrepresented in the RuralPA-CPS.

## Does not report on non-household aspects of rural communities

A community is comprised of households and individuals, but also of businesses, hospitals, schools, and social and service clubs. The RuralPA-CPS provides detailed information on households and their members, but data from other sources is needed to obtain a complete picture of conditions in Pennsylvania's rural communities.

## Poverty estimates

In 2006 and 2007, respondents were asked for their household income: 61 and 54 percent provided the exact dollar amounts; 13 percent and 22 percent

used a range to report income. (The remaining 26 percent and 24 percent either refused or did not know.) For the 61 and 54 percent that provided a dollar amount, poverty status was determined by using the 2006 and 2007 U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's (HHS) Poverty Guidelines. For the 13 and 22 percent that used a range to report their income, poverty status was estimated based on whether the top of the range was at or below HHS Guidelines. The use of income ranges limits the ability to precisely identify the percent of households in poverty.

## Definitions

The terms below were used by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania to identify and describe rural residents.

**Adults:** Persons 18 years old and older.

**Children:** Persons under 18 years old.

**Educational attainment:** Highest level of education attained for persons 25 years old and older.

**Household income:** Income of all household members from all sources, such as salaries, interest, and businesses.

**Households with children:** Households that have one or more persons under 18 years old.

**Labor force:** Persons 18 years old and older who are either employed or are not working and looking for work.

**Minorities:** Persons who are non-White and Hispanic or Latino.

**Poverty rate:** The percent of households with incomes at or below the poverty level.

**Rural respondents:** Households and persons who live in a county with a population density below the statewide average of 274 persons per square mile.

**Senior Citizens:** Persons 65 years old and older.

**Unemployment rate:** Persons 18 years old and older who are not working, but looking for work divided by the labor force.

**Urban respondents:** Households and persons who live in a county with a population density at or above the statewide average of 274 persons per square mile.

**Work force:** Persons 18 years old and older who are employed.

**Working poor:** Employed persons whose total household income is below 200 percent of poverty.

# Appendix 3: Profile of Rural and Urban Households

	Rural	Urban
<b>NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD</b>		
1 Person	19%	21%
2 Persons	41%	37%
3 Persons	17%	17%
4 persons	15%	15%
5+ Persons	8%	10%
Average # persons in household	2.5	2.6
<b>TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD</b>		
Married couples with no children	42%	38%
Married couples with children	24%	25%
Unmarried couples, no children	4%	4%
Unmarried couples with children	2%	2%
Living alone	19%	21%
Female-headed households, no husband present, no children	3%	4%
Female-headed households, no husband present, with children	3%	4%
Male-headed households, no wife present, no children	1%	2%
Male-headed households, no wife present, with children	1%	<1%
Group quarters	1%	1%
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN</b> <i>(Persons under 18 years old)</i>		
Married couples	79%	78%
Unmarried couples	7%	8%
Single parents	14%	14%
<b>HOMEOWNERSHIP</b>		
Owned or being bought by a household member	85%	80%
Rented for cash	13%	19%
Occupied without payment of cash rent	2%	1%
<b>RENTAL COSTS</b>		
Less than \$250 per month	17%	9%
\$250 to \$499 per month	53%	23%
\$500 to \$749 per month	23%	38%
\$750 to \$999 per month	4%	15%
\$1,000+ per month	3%	15%
Median monthly rent	\$400	\$600
<b>MONTHLY RENT AS PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>		
Less than 10%	15%	9%
10% to 19%	30%	31%
20% to 29%	24%	28%
30% to 39%	13%	10%
40% to 49%	7%	7%
50%+	12%	15%
Median monthly rent as percent of total household income	21%	23%

# Appendix 3: Profile of Rural and Urban Households

	Rural	Urban
<b>RANGE OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>		
Lower income (Less than \$22,100)	22%	16%
Lower-Middle Income (\$22,100 to \$37,500)	22%	17%
Middle-Income (37,501 to \$57,000)	21%	18%
Upper-Middle Income (\$57,001 to \$84,500)	20%	20%
Upper-Income (\$84,001+)	15%	29%
Median household Income	\$45,000	\$55,000
<b>HOUSEHOLDS IN POVERTY</b>		
Households in poverty	10%	9%
Households not in poverty	90%	91%
<b>HOUSEHOLDS THAT RECEIVED INCOME FROM ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCES*</b>		
Unemployment compensation	11%	7%
Workers compensation	3%	2%
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	5%	4%
Temporary Assistance for Need Families (TANF)	1%	1%
Food Stamps	7%	6%
Heating assistance	7%	5%
<small>*Total do not add up to 100 percent due to multiple responses</small>		
<b>GENDER</b>		
Males	48%	47%
Females	52%	53%
<b>AGE COHORTS</b>		
Under 18 years old	22%	23%
18 to 64 years old	61%	53%
65 Years old and older	17%	18%
Average age	41.1	40.8
<b>RACE</b>		
White, only	97%	88%
Black only	2%	9%
Other and two or more races	2%	3%
<b>HISPANIC OR LATINO</b>		
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origins	2%	3%
Persons Not of Hispanic or Latino origins	98%	97%
<b>HEALTH INSURANCE</b>		
Persons with health insurance	92%	94%
Persons without health insurance	8%	6%
<b>HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS</b>		
All year	88%	90%
Part of the year	7%	5%
No coverage at all	6%	5%

(continued on next page)

# Appendix 3: Profile of Rural and Urban Households

	Rural	Urban
<b>TYPES OF HEALTH INSURANCE</b>		
Employer provide only	61%	63%
Medicare only	5%	6%
Government provided coverage (CHIP, Medicaid, etc.) only	9%	8%
Military health care only	1%	1%
Purchased health insurance only	7%	7%
Other type of coverage	2%	1%
Two or more of the above coverage	15%	14%
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b> <i>(Persons 18+ years old)</i>		
Currently working	57%	60%
Currently not working, but looking for work	5%	4%
Retired- not working or looking for work	24%	23%
Disabled- not working or looking for work	6%	5%
Other- not working or looking for work	9%	9%
<b>LABOR FORCE STATUS</b> <i>(Persons 18+ years old)</i>		
Percent of persons in labor force	62%	64%
Percent of person labor force currently working	92%	94%
Percent of person in labor force currently not working but looking for work	8%	6%
<b>EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY</b> <i>(Persons 18+ years old)</i>		
Agriculture & Mining	5%	1%
Construction	8%	6%
Financial Services	5%	8%
Food Services	7%	7%
Health Services	13%	11%
Manufacturing	19%	13%
Professional, Scientific, and Professional Services	5%	11%
Retail Trade	15%	14%
Services	10%	13%
Transportation and Warehousing	8%	7%
Other	7%	8%
<b>HIGHEST LEVEL OF ADULT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</b> <i>(Persons 25+ years old)</i>		
No high school diploma	10%	5%
High school diploma or equivalent	44%	34%
Some college, no degree	14%	15%
Associate degree	10%	9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	23%	38%



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