

Montgomery County
Pennsylvania

PEOPLE AND POPULATION

BACKGROUND AND TRENDS

MONTCO

A Comprehensive Plan for a Changing World

People and Population

Existing Land Use

Transportation

Preservation and Recreation

Environmental Systems

Infrastructure and Utilities

Economic Development

Housing

Health

Government and Community Facilities

Montgomery County is home to 856,553 people living in 62 municipalities. While experiencing modest growth (7 percent each decade) over the first part of the twenty-first century, many changes within the population are taking place. The county continues to become more racially and ethnically diverse, residents are generally growing older, and there are more seniors living alone. As the county's population continues to grow to a forecast of 942,944 by 2050, we need to understand how the changing characteristics of our population will impact the delivery of governmental services and continued economic development.

GROWTH THROUGH MIGRATION

Montgomery County's population continues to grow, but the source of that growth has changed over time. From 2000 to 2010, births outpaced deaths and population was growing primarily through new births. However, births slowed after 2010, and the number of deaths and births were nearly identical in 2020. Our population growth of 56,670 people between 2010 and 2020 was driven by people moving to the county from other areas of the United States as well as international migration.

Population growth through in-migration is motivated by people wanting to move to Montgomery County for employment and appealing communities, including amenities such as successful schools and great parks and trails. In-migration was primarily domestic (from the United States) until recently. In 2021 and 2022, international migration to Montgomery County exceeded domestic in-migration. Considering the trends, in-migration is how the county is likely to maintain population growth for the foreseeable future. We rely upon in-migration to grow communities, support businesses and industries, and to remain competitive.

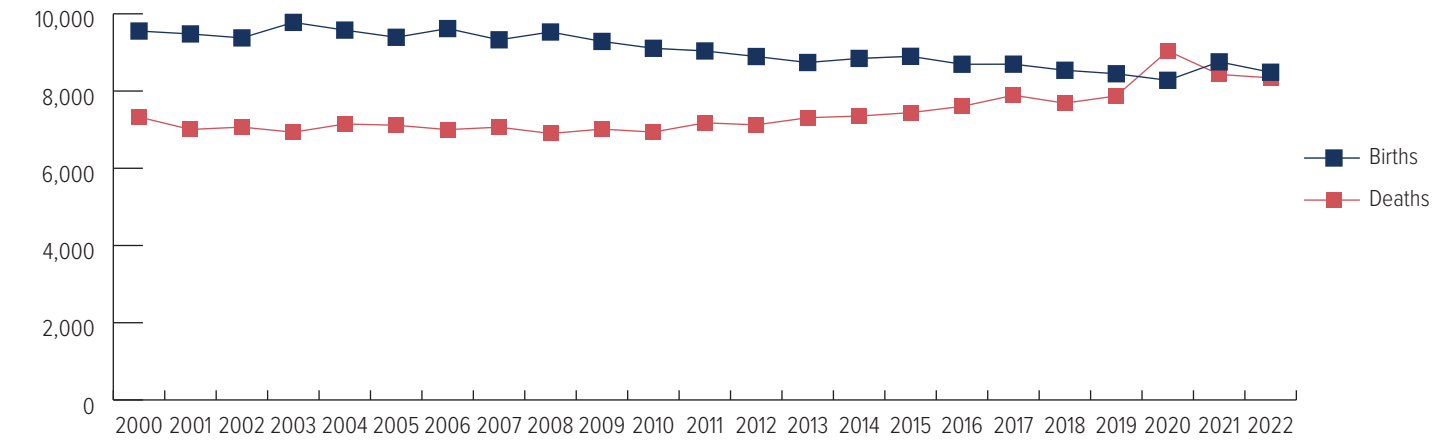
WORKER INFLOW/OUTFLOW

Worker inflow/outflow tracks the movement of workers into and out of the county. Inflow workers come from elsewhere to work in the county, while outflow workers are the people that live here and travel outside the county to their jobs. There are also workers that both live and work in the county.

Between 2000 and 2019, there was a 29 percent increase in the number of people

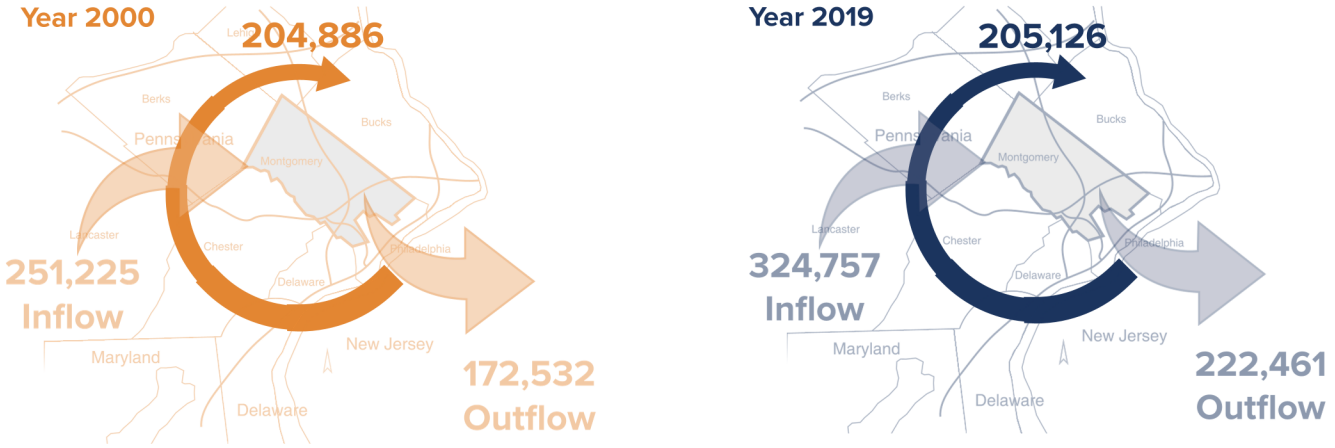
Births and Deaths in Montgomery County, 2000–2021

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health



Worker Inflow/Outflow

Source: U.S.Census Bureau, On The Map, 2000 and 2019



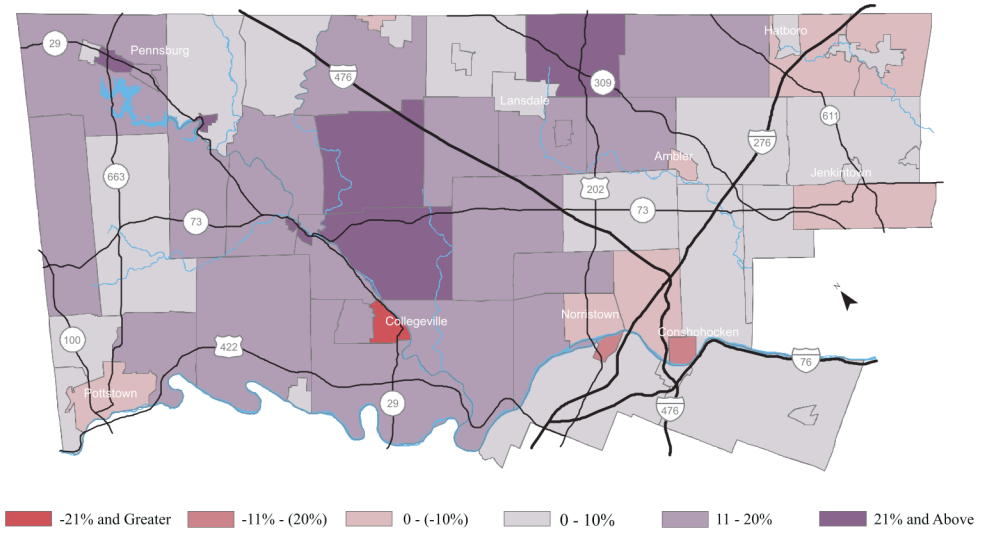
coming into the county to work. There has been similar growth (29 percent) in the number of people living in the county and leaving for work. There are various reasons why people choose where they live, but it is notable that so many people choose to commute into the county for work. It's possible this may be due to higher housing costs in the county and that workers live in more affordable areas and commute to jobs in Montgomery County. The county has a diverse economy with numerous job opportunities, giving us a competitive advantage for capturing high-quality employees.

MEDIAN AGE

We are getting older as a county, increasing from a median age of 40 years in 2000 to 41.3 years in 2020. However, distribution of median age is not the same across the county. Six communities (Green Lane, Lower Salford, Montgomery, Pennsburg, Schwenksville, and Skippack) had an increase in median age greater than 21 percent. Another 46 communities had an increase in median age between 1 percent and 20 percent. Interestingly, in ten communities, the median age actually decreased. Whether a municipality's population is aging or getting younger, there's a need to assess the services (such as library and recreation programming) and amenities (park facilities and accessibility) being offered to be sure this changing population is being served.

Median Age Change 2000–2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000, and 2020



INCREASED DIVERSITY

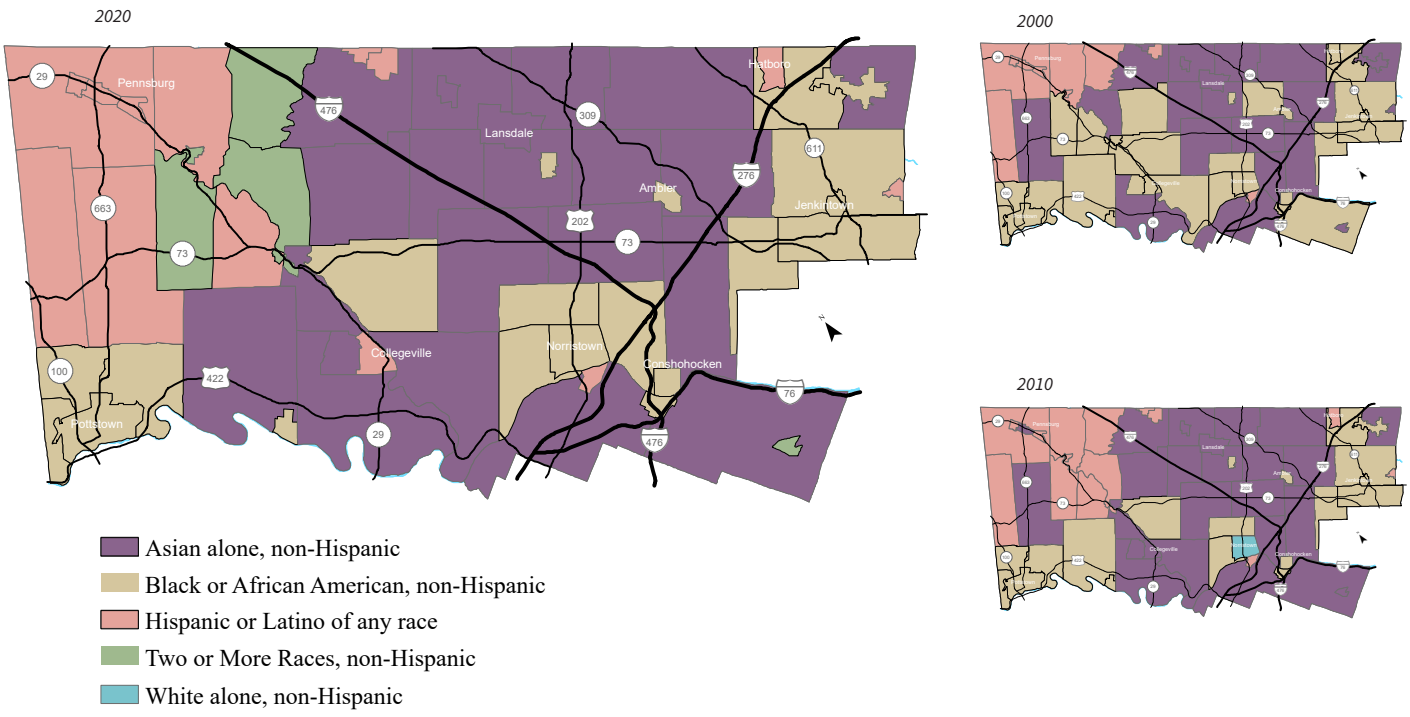
Since the turn of the century, the county has been growing more diverse in terms of race and ethnicity. While the county remains predominantly Caucasian (72 percent white, non-Hispanic), diversity across the county has been growing. Between 2010 and 2020, the Hispanic population grew 59 percent, the Asian population increased 32 percent, and the Black or African American population expanded by 18 percent. The largest percentage change was an increase of 150 percent for people identifying as multiracial (31,732 people in 2020).

The second most represented racial or ethnic group in each municipality has shifted significantly over the past several decades. The most represented group was White or Caucasian in all municipalities in 2000, 2010, and 2020, except Norristown. The most represented racial or ethnic group in Norristown was White or Caucasian in 2000, Black or African American in 2010, and Hispanic or Latino in 2020. In 2000, residents who identified as multiracial (representing two or more races) were not even present on the map showing the second most represented race or ethnicity. However, by 2020, multiracial individuals were the second most represented race or ethnicity in six municipalities.

Second Most Represented Race/Ethnicity by Municipality

White or Caucasian (non-Hispanic) populations are the most represented group in all municipalities except Norristown.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000, 2010, and 2020



HOUSEHOLD SIZE

One in four households (26 percent) in Montgomery County are comprised of a single person. This has been consistent over the past 20 years, but an increasing number of these households are seniors living alone. In 2020, nearly half of single-person households were a person age 65 or older (39,517 households). Single-person households are also disproportionately female (59 percent), with single-person senior households even higher (73 percent female).

INCOME AND POVERTY

Federal poverty status in the county, currently 5.9 percent, has not changed significantly over the last ten years. However, this measure of poverty does not fully take into account a household's essential expenses. Another measure of residents who are Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed (or ALICE) better captures those who are struggling to meet basic expenses. United Way calculates a Household Survival Budget which is a minimum average income that a household needs to afford housing, food, transportation, health care, child care, and

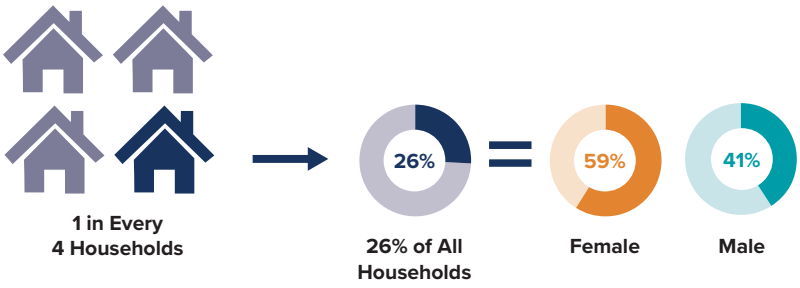
Race and Ethnicity of Montgomery County Residents

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census 2010 and 2020

RACE AND ETHNICITY	2010	2020
White alone	79.0%	72.2%
Black or African American alone	8.4%	9.3%
Asian alone	6.4%	7.9%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	4.3%	6.4%
Two or more races	1.6%	3.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.1%	0.1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander alone	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	0.2%	0.5%

Single Person Households

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2016-2020



a basic smartphone plan, plus taxes. In Pennsylvania, the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for a family of four was $26,500 in 2021. However, the minimum household income as calculated by United Way to meet basic needs for a family of four was $65,796 in Pennsylvania in 2021. Households below the ALICE threshold are all those who have a household income less than what is needed to meet basic needs.

In Montgomery County, 29 percent of households qualify as either ALICE households or FPL households. That means 97,222 Montgomery County households likely struggle to pay for essential household expenses. The occupations with the most ALICE households in Pennsylvania are personal care aides, who make a median hourly wage of $13.65, fast food and counter workers ($10.82), and cashiers ($11.03).

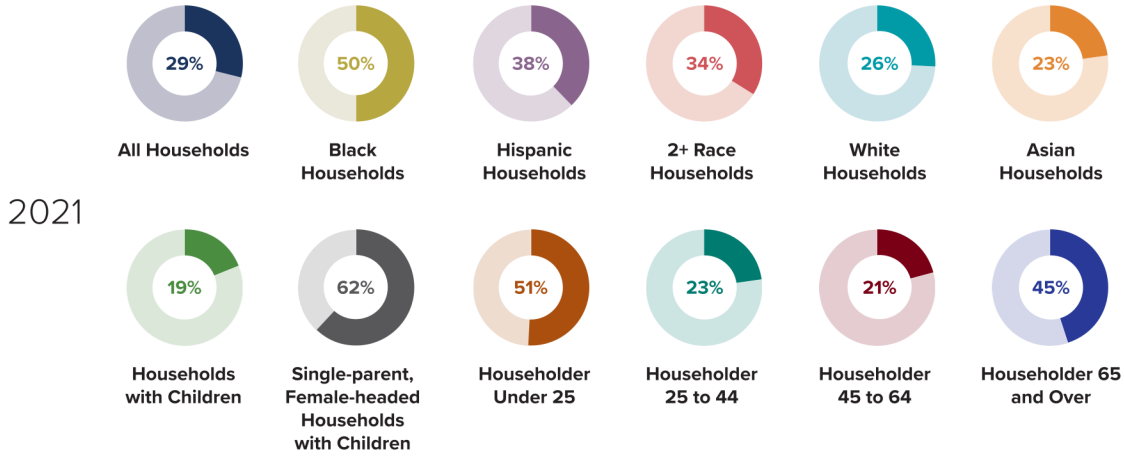
Data that expand upon different races, ethnicities, and ages show variation in terms of which households have trouble making ends meet. Although 29 percent of Montgomery County households are below the ALICE threshold, that number is 50 percent of black households, 51 percent of households where the householder is under 25 years old, 45 percent of households where the householder is 65 or older, and 62 percent of single-parent, female-headed households. Local data on ALICE households is not available for people with disabilities, but in Pennsylvania 50 percent of people with disabilities have incomes below the ALICE threshold.

CONSIDERATIONS

Understanding how our population is changing is key to thoughtfully assessing our current county policies and developing new ones to deal with emerging trends. For example, an increasingly diverse population will require that we better understand how residents of various races and ethnicities have different needs for parks, transit, community facilities, and housing. An aging and more independent population will require a greater variety of affordable living arrangements and community services. Being prepared for these changes will not only better serve all our residents, but it will ensure we remain a county where people want to live and work, ensuring continued community vitality and economic growth for the decades to come.

Percent of Households Below the ALICE Threshold

Source: ALICE Threshold, United Way, 2021; Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2017-2021



Montgomery County government departments and boards play a role in furthering the county's comprehensive planning work. The Department of Health and Human Services provides a wide variety of services and support to the people of Montgomery County. That department's Community Connections Office is a first stop for residents who may need information or support from Montgomery County.

Additional maps and data are available at:
https://montco-2050-1-montcopa.hub.arcgis.com

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Prepared by:
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