

# Baseline Survey Census Research Huntingdon County

The Federal population census is an important tool for understanding the history of a community and how that community has changed over time. The census provides data that can help us to better understand Pennsylvania's diverse racial and ethnic populations (referred to as underrepresented communities for purposes of this Baseline Survey effort), where these populations settled historically, and how they left their mark on the Commonwealth's landscape.

Pennsylvania has a history of being ethnically diverse in both the urban areas of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and in the commonwealth's smaller cities and rural areas. Native Americans have called Pennsylvania's lands home for centuries. Dutch, Swedish, and Finnish settlers moved to Pennsylvania in the late 17th century, and were quickly followed by English, German and other Europeans by the turn of the 18th century. Both enslaved and free Africans and African Americans lived in Pennsylvania as early as 1690 and the commonwealth's Black communities grew exponentially with the First Great Migration in the early 20th century. By the mid-20th century, people from almost all racial and ethnic groups had settled in Pennsylvania.

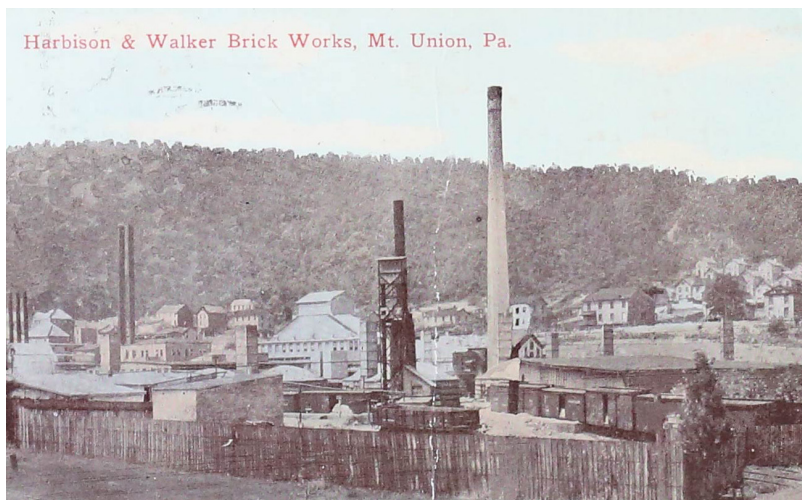
Pennsylvania's historical racial and ethnic diversity and the surviving older and historic places that embody that diversity is not well understood or well documented. By understanding what populations were present, when, and where they lived, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) can identify and document the older and historic places associated with these underrepresented communities through targeted survey work.

Once this information is collected and added to PA-SHARE, Pennsylvania's online database of older and historic places, this important information will be available to professionals and the public alike, providing everyone with data to support the need to tell broader and more inclusive stories.

It is important to note that census data is only one part of the extensive research that is necessary to understand Pennsylvania's varied and changing communities over the last four hundred years. The information collected, methods for collecting it, and categories and definitions changed from census taker to census taker and from year to year.

Huntingdon County is one of the fifty-two counties in Pennsylvania where PA SHPO and its contractors will be working over the next two years to collect information about historic places that are underrepresented in Pennsylvania's statewide historic inventory.

It is important that PA SHPO collects information about the older and historic places that Pennsylvanian's value in their communities. PA SHPO welcomes public recommendations for places that should be documented in this survey. If you would like to provide your feedback, please fill out this [short survey form](#).



Historic Postcard of a brick factory in Huntingdon County

## Learn More:

[Historic Resources Survey in Pennsylvania](#)  
[PA SHPO's Baseline Survey Project](#)  
[PA-SHARE](#)

# Baseline Survey Census Research

## Huntingdon County

Huntingdon County was founded on September 20, 1787. It is comprised of 47 municipalities and as of the 2010 federal census, the total population was 45,913. The first recorded federal population census in Huntingdon County occurred in 1790. A total of 7,565 inhabitants were documented, 43 of whom were enslaved Black people and 24 of whom were “Other Free Persons” of non-White race. From 1790 to 1840, Huntingdon County’s total population rose quickly, only to sharply decline between 1840 and 1850. The population in 1840 (35,494) would not be recovered until 1890 (35,751). From 1890 to 1940, population growth in Huntingdon County was gradual and did not enter a sustained period of decline again until 1950.

The Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) population of Huntingdon County represented 1% or less of the total population from 1790 to 1920. From 1920 to 1960, the percentage of BIPOC in Huntingdon County increased to 2% of the total population. The BIPOC population in Huntingdon County are predominantly Black.

Asians were documented as living in Huntingdon County from 1890 to 1930 and in 1960 and one person of Native American descent was recorded in 1930. No people of Hispanic descent were documented as living in Huntingdon County between 1790 and 1960. The “Other” category has been used to describe different groups through time. It is inconclusive whether “Other” includes only mixed-race people or people of Black, Native American, Asian, or Hispanic descent during any given decade.

	White	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	Other
<b>1790</b>	7498	43	0	0	0	24
<b>1800</b>	12876	100	0	0	0	32
<b>1810</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>1820</b>	19866	273	0	0	0	3
<b>1830</b>	0	8	0	0	0	0
<b>1840</b>	34977	517	0	0	0	0
<b>1850</b>	24451	335	0	0	0	0
<b>1860</b>	27810	290	0	0	0	0
<b>1870</b>	31644	300	0	0	0	0
<b>1880</b>	33674	280	0	0	0	0
<b>1890</b>	35435	315	0	1	0	0
<b>1900</b>	34296	352	0	2	0	0
<b>1910</b>	37997	305	0	2	0	0
<b>1920</b>	39130	717	0	1	0	0
<b>1930</b>	38089	930	1	1	0	0
<b>1940</b>	40796	1037	0	0	0	3
<b>1950</b>	39866	995	0	0	0	11
<b>1960</b>	38489	958	0	4	0	6

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This graph shows the relationship between BIPOC populations (right side axis) and total population (left side axis) in Huntingdon County from 1790 to 1960. Significant events that have a bearing on the population are included below the graph to show Huntingdon County’s total populations at these important points in time.

No data is available prior to 1790 as the first federal census had taken place in that year. The 1810 census is not digitized and therefore unavailable. The 1830 census only distinguished the total population by their status as “Free” or Black “Slave.” Eight enslaved Black people were living in Huntingdon County at the time but there is no reliable data to determine how many free Black residents were in Huntingdon County in 1830.

