

Baseline Survey Census Research

Susquehanna 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.

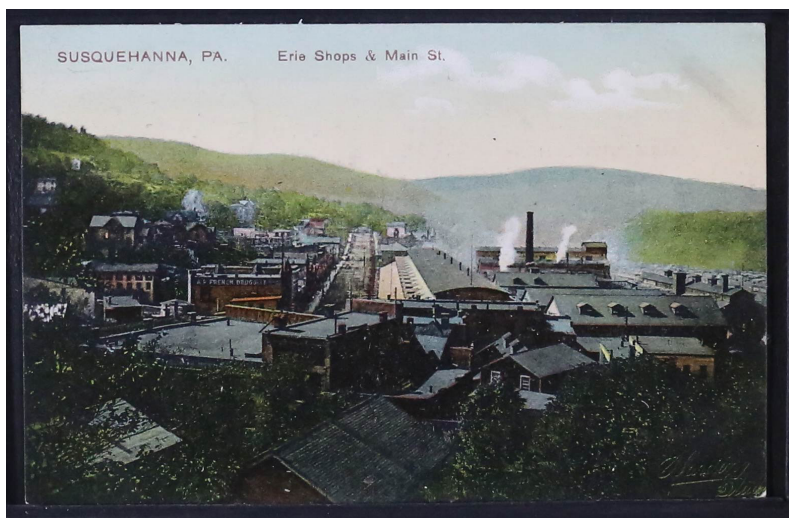
Pennsylvania's historical racial and ethnic diversity and the surviving older and historic places that embody that diversity is not well understood or well documented. By understanding what populations were present, when, and where they lived, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) 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.

Susquehanna County is one of the fifty-two counties in Pennsylvania where PA SHPO and its contractors will be working over the next three 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 Susquehanna Depot

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

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Susquehanna County was created on February 21, 1810 from portions of Luzerne County. There are 44 municipalities in Susquehanna County and the population as of the 2010 federal census is 43,356, the highest the population has ever been. Susquehanna County's population saw exponential growth from the early to mid-nineteenth century, peaking at 40,354 residents in 1880. The population then slowly declined, plateauing in the 30,000s in the early to mid-twentieth century. The population of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) of Susquehanna County has fluctuated throughout the entirety of Susquehanna County's history, peaking in 1870

The first federal population census for Susquehanna was in 1820 and counted 9,960 people in the county: 9910 White people and 50 Black people, none of which were enslaved. As the table below shows, Susquehanna's White and Black populations grew steadily decade after decade until 1890. While Susquehanna's white population began to plateau around 30,000 in the early 20th century, Susquehanna's Black population steadily decreased.

Native American and Hispanic people in Susquehanna County were not detected via the federal census until 1960. An individual of Chinese descent lived in Susquehanna County in 1890 and 1900.

	White	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	Other
1790	0	0	0	0	0	0
1800	0	0	0	0	0	0
1810	0	0	0	0	0	0
1820	9910	50	0	0	0	0
1830	16787	0	0	0	0	0
1840	21098	97	0	0	0	0
1850	28528	160	0	0	0	0
1860	36058	142	0	0	0	67
1870	37274	249	0	0	0	0
1880	40135	219	0	0	0	0
1890	39930	162	0	1	0	0
1900	39901	141	0	1	0	2
1910	37632	107	0	0	0	7
1920	34707	87	0	0	0	0
1930	33705	101	0	0	0	0
1940	33808	85	0	0	0	0
1950	31878	88	0	0	0	4
1960	33067	62	4	0	4	0

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

No data is available prior to 1820 because Susquehanna County was not yet established.

