Baseline Survey Census Research
Snyder 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.

Snyder 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 Rolling Green Park in Snyder County

Learn More:
Historic Resources Survey in Pennsylvania
PA SHPO's Baseline Survey Project
PA-SHARE

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Snyder County was founded on March 2, 1855 from portions of Union County. There are 21 municipalities in Snyder County and as of the 2010 federal census, the population was 39,702. The first federal population census in Snyder County was in 1860. In 1860, there were 15,000 White people, 23 Black people, and 12 Black and White mixed people, expressed in the "Other" column of the table below. Overall, the total population of Snyder County has been steadily increasing since its creation.

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) of Snyder County represent a smaller fraction of the population, having moderate numbers in the earliest records of the county, then dropping to nearly zero through the mid- to late-19th century to the 1940s. From the 1940's onward, the BIPOC population, predominantly Black Americans, grew exponentially.

The federal census did not identify any Native American residents in Snyder County until 1950 nor Asian residents until 1960. No people of Hispanic descent were recorded in Snyder County between 1860 to 1960.

	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	0	0	0	0	0	0
1830	0	0	0	0	0	0
1840	0	0	0	0	0	0
1850	0	0	0	0	0	0
1860	15,000	23	0	0	0	12
1870	15,564	44	0	0	0	0
1880	17,778	19	0	0	0	0
1890	17,646	5	0	0	0	0
1900	17,301	3	0	0	0	0
1910	16,798	4	0	0	0	0
1920	17,126	3	0	0	0	0
1930	18,834	2	0	0	0	0
1940	20,194	14	0	0	0	0
1950	22,856	53	3	0	0	0
1960	25,763	156	0	1	0	2

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

No data is available prior to 1860 because Columbia County was not yet established.

Snyder County
Founded
March 2, 1855

Thirteenth Amendement
Abolishes Slavery
January 31, 1865

First Great
Migration
1910-1930

Second Great
Migration
1941-1970