

Chapter on Demographics

Erie County Community Health Needs Assessment, 2018

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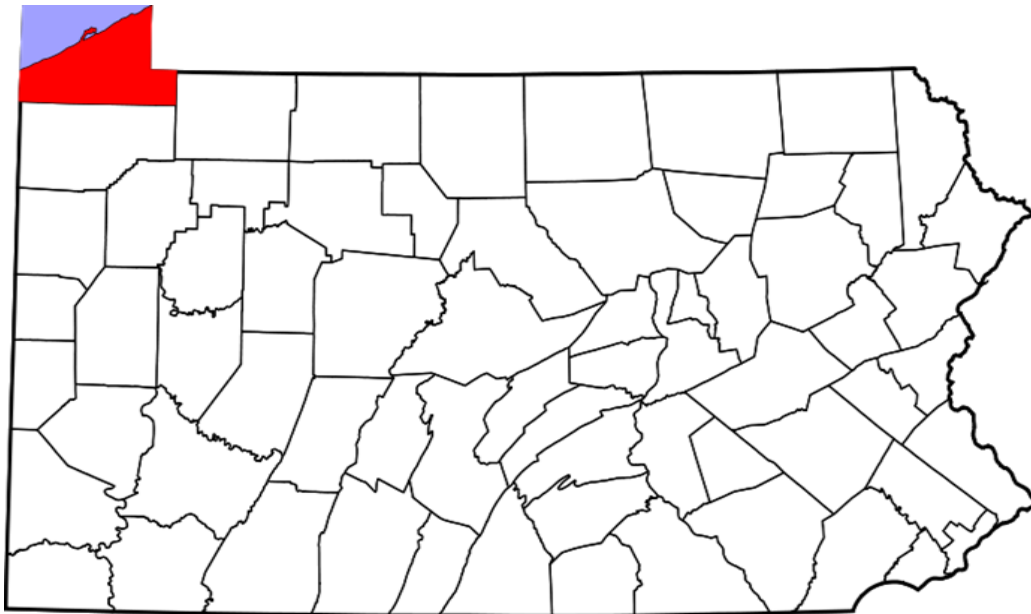


Erie County and Its Municipalities

Erie County is located in northwestern Pennsylvania on the south shore of Lake Erie (Figure 1). Established in 1800, it is the Commonwealth's lone link to the Great Lakes. Erie County is bordered on the north by Lake Erie and the province of Ontario, Canada, on the south by Crawford County, Pennsylvania, on the west by Ashtabula County, Ohio, and on the east by Chautauqua County, New York and Warren County, Pennsylvania.

Including land and water areas, Erie is the largest of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, with a total area of 1,558.2 square miles. Overall, 799.2 square miles are land (1.8% of Pennsylvania's total land area), and 759.0 square miles are water (57.9% of Pennsylvania's total water area).

Figure 1. Erie County, Pennsylvania

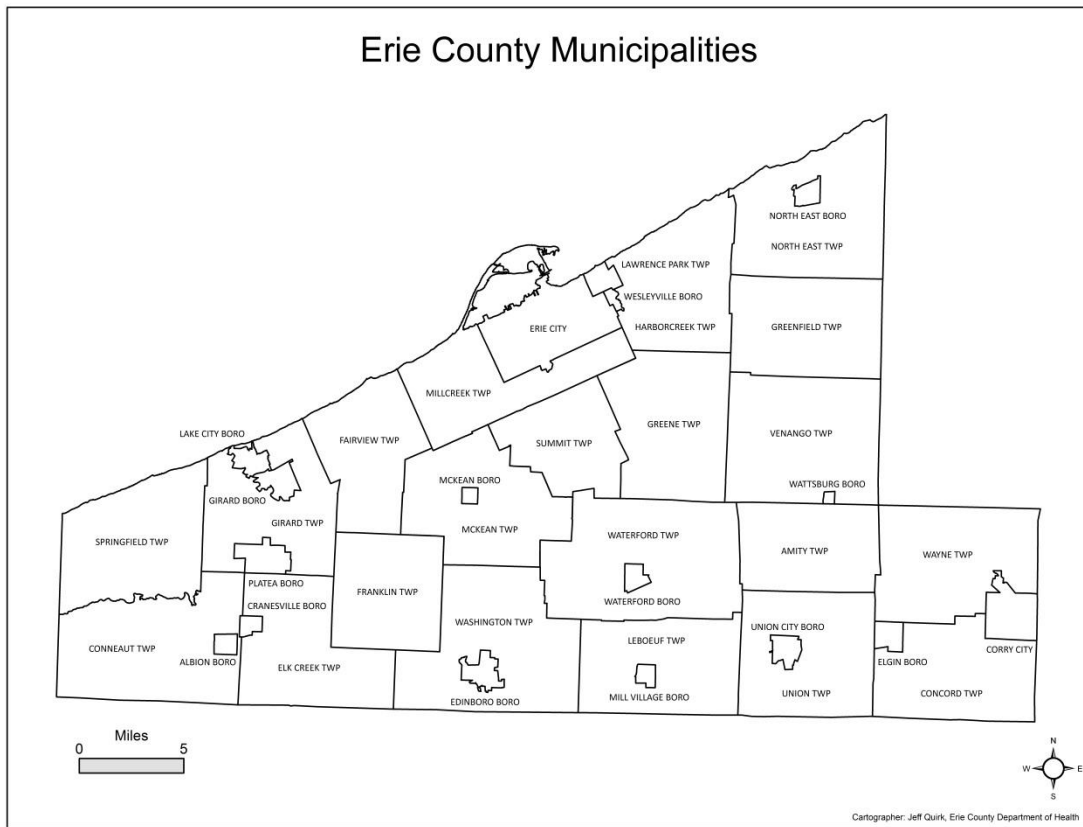


Erie County's population totaled 276,207 residents in 2016. This amounted to 2.2% of Pennsylvania's population of 12,702,379 and placed Erie as the 14th most populous county in the Commonwealth. The county population was 80.0% urban and 20.0% rural according to the 2010 Census.

The 38 municipalities of Erie County are comprised of 2 cities, 14 boroughs, and 22 townships (Figure 2). The county seat is located in the City of Erie, which is currently the fourth most populous municipality in the state, behind Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Allentown.

Erie County's 38 municipalities vary greatly in total population, size (land area), and population density (Table 1). In 2016, municipality populations ranged from a low of 213 residents in Elgin Borough to a high of 98,593 in the City of Erie, land areas ranged from a low of 0.3 square miles in Wattsburg Borough to a high of 50.0 in Waterford Township, and population densities ranged from a low of 37.8 persons per square mile in Amity Township to a high of 6,026.4 in Wesleyville Borough. The overall population density of Erie County was 345.6 persons per square mile.

Figure 2. The 38 Municipalities of Erie County



The ten largest county municipalities in 2016 were the City of Erie (98,593), Millcreek Township (53,773), Harborcreek Township (17,517), Fairview Township (10,150), Summit Township (6,916), the City of Corry (6,360), North East Township (6,269), Edinboro Borough (6,236), Girard Township (4,941), and Greene Township (4,608). Taken together, these municipalities accounted for more than three-quarters (78.0%) of the total county population.

Since 1980, Erie County's population has remained relatively level at approximately 280,000 residents. However, during the period 1980 to 2016, the population in the City of Erie declined from 119,123 to 98,593, a loss of 20,530 residents. This population loss of 17.2% was largely due to resident out-migration to the nearby municipalities of Millcreek Township, Harborcreek Township, and Summit Township. From 1980 to 2016, Millcreek Township grew by 9,470 residents (from 44,303 to 53,773, +21.4%), Harborcreek Township grew by 2,873 residents (from 14,644 to 17,517, +19.6%), and Summit Township grew by 1,535 residents (from 5,381 to 6,916, +28.5%).

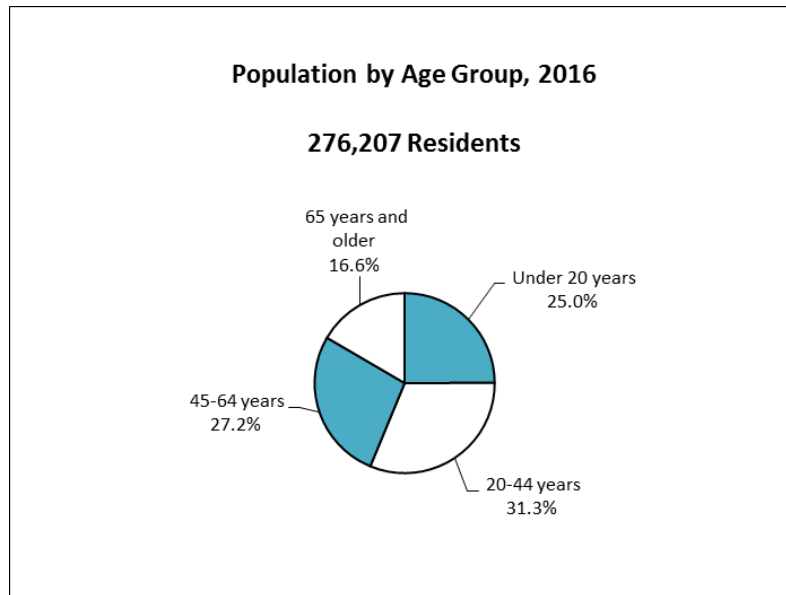
Table 1. Population, Land Area, and Population Density of Erie County Municipalities, 2016

<u>Place</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Land Area (Square Miles)</u>	<u>Persons per Square Mile</u>
Pennsylvania	12,702,379	44,742.70	283.9
Erie County	276,207	799.15	345.6
Albion Borough	1,465	1.08	1,356.5
Amity Township	1,060	28.02	37.8
Concord Township	1,297	33.11	39.2
Conneaut Township	4,350	43.07	101.0
City of Corry	6,360	5.99	1,061.8
Cranesville Borough	608	0.94	646.8
Edinboro Borough	6,236	2.29	2,723.1
Elgin Borough	213	1.47	144.9
Elk Creek Township	1,760	34.74	50.7
City of Erie	98,593	19.08	5,167.3
Fairview Township	10,150	28.97	350.4
Franklin Township	1,627	28.66	56.8
Girard Borough	2,996	2.34	1,280.3
Girard Township	4,941	31.50	156.9
Greene Township	4,608	37.39	123.2
Greenfield Township	1,917	33.77	56.8
Harborcreek Township	17,517	34.09	513.8
Lake City Borough	2,938	1.80	1,632.2
Lawrence Park Township	3,819	1.84	2,075.5
LeBoeuf Township	1,655	33.47	49.4
McKean Borough	381	0.57	668.4
McKean Township	4,378	36.80	119.0
Millcreek Township	53,773	32.07	1,676.7
Mill Village Borough	387	0.92	420.7
North East Borough	4,135	1.30	3,180.8
North East Township	6,269	42.15	148.7
Platea Borough	406	3.34	121.6
Springfield Township	3,324	37.38	88.9
Summit Township	6,916	24.05	287.6
Union Township	1,618	36.47	44.4
Union City Borough	3,188	1.83	1,742.1
Venango Township	2,293	43.42	52.8
Washington Township	4,484	45.16	99.3
Waterford Borough	1,523	1.23	1,238.2
Waterford Township	3,841	49.95	76.9
Wattsburg Borough	382	0.30	1,273.3
Wayne Township	1,605	38.07	42.2
Wesleyville Borough	3,194	0.53	6,026.4

Population by Age and Sex

Of the 276,207 people residing in Erie County in 2016, 139,704 (50.6%) were female and 136,503 (49.4%) were male. With respect to age, 68,936 (25.0%) were under 20 years, 86,325 (31.3%) were ages 20 to 44 years, 75,058 (27.2%) were ages 45 to 64 years, and 45,888 (16.6%) were 65 years and older (Figure 3, Table 2).

Figure 3. Erie County's Population by Age Group, 2016



Since the year 2000, Erie County's population has experienced an interesting transition. The number of residents under 45 years of age decreased from 177,932 to 155,261 (a drop of 12.7%), while the number of residents 45 years and older increased from 102,871 to 120,946 (an increase of 17.6%). The population of Erie County is aging. The median age in Erie County increased to a new high of 39.3 years in 2016, up from 36.2 years in 2000, and 32.9 years in 1990. The median ages for males and females were 37.7 and 40.9 years, respectively. The aging of the baby boom generation (people born between 1946 and 1964) into older age groups, declining birth rates, and improved mortality are some of the key contributors to the observed increase in median age.

Population by Race and Hispanic Origin

Of the 276,207 people residing in Erie County in 2016, 243,008 (88.0%) were White, 21,334 (7.7%) were Black or African American, 4,635 (1.7%) were Asian, 732 (0.3%) were American Indian or Alaska Native, 128 (0.05%) were Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 6,370 (2.3%) were classified as Two or More Races. A total of 11,340 (4.1%) residents were Hispanic, of any race (Table 3).

Table 2. Erie County's Population by Age and Sex, 2016

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Erie County</u>	<u>Erie County Males</u>	<u>Erie County Females</u>
All ages	276,207	136,503	139,704
< 20	68,936	35,373	33,563
20 - 44	86,325	43,878	42,447
45 - 64	75,058	37,059	37,999
65 and older	45,888	20,193	25,695
< 5	15,676	7,976	7,700
5 - 9	16,559	8,458	8,101
10 - 14	16,852	8,752	8,100
15 - 19	19,849	10,187	9,662
20 - 24	19,007	9,769	9,238
25 - 29	19,735	10,119	9,616
30 - 34	16,936	8,641	8,295
35 - 39	15,688	7,913	7,775
40 - 44	14,959	7,436	7,523
45 - 49	17,249	8,575	8,674
50 - 54	18,516	9,175	9,341
55 - 59	20,249	10,016	10,233
60 - 64	19,044	9,293	9,751
65 - 69	15,543	7,465	8,078
70 - 74	10,383	4,836	5,547
75 - 79	7,558	3,367	4,191
80 - 84	5,457	2,239	3,218
85 and older	6,947	2,286	4,661

Table 3. Erie County's Population by Race and Hispanic Origin

<u>Race or Hispanic Origin</u>	<u>July 1, 2000</u>	<u>July 1, 2016</u>
All Races	280,803	276,207
White	257,904	243,008
Black or African American	17,625	21,334
Asian	1,979	4,635
American Indian or Alaska Native	476	734
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	75	128
Two or More Races	2,744	6,370
Hispanic, of any race	6,170	11,340

Erie County continues to grow more diverse as the number of Whites decreased by 5.8%, Blacks increased by 21.0%, Asians increased by 134.2%, and Hispanics rose by 83.8%.

Native and Foreign-Born Residents, 2012-2016

Of the 279,133 Erie County residents in 2012-2016, 266,508 (95.5%) were native residents of the United States and 12,625 (4.5%) were foreign-born. Overall, 218,834 (78.4%) county residents were born in Pennsylvania.

Of the 12,625 foreign-born residents, 5,683 (45.0%) were naturalized U.S. citizens. The world regions of birth for the foreign-born population were as follows: Asia (39.5%), Europe (33.5%), Latin America (11.7%), Africa (11.2%), North America (3.2%), and Oceania (0.8%).

Household Characteristics, 2012-2016

There were 110,047 households in Erie County in 2012-2016, with an average household size of 2.4 persons. Overall, there were 69,521 (63.2%) family households, with an average size of 3.0 persons, and 40,526 (36.8%) nonfamily households, with an average size of 1.3 persons. Selected household characteristics are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Erie County Household Characteristics, 2012-2016

<u>Household Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of All Households</u>
Total households	110,047	100.0
Family households	69,521	63.2
With own children under 18 years	28,822	26.2
Married couple family	50,033	45.5
With own children under 18 years	17,260	15.7
Female householder, no husband present	14,473	13.2
With own children under 18 years	8,840	8.0
Male householder, no wife present	5,015	4.6
With own children under 18 years	2,722	2.5
Nonfamily households	40,526	36.8
Householder living alone	33,055	30.0

Income, 2012-2016

In 2012-2016, Erie County household income distribution levels differed substantially for family and nonfamily households (Table 5). Overall, 26.0% of all households had income in the past 12 months below \$25,000 and 16.6% had income above \$100,000. Nearly half (46.4%) of nonfamily households had income below \$25,000. The median household income was \$47,094, the median family household income was \$60,552, and the median nonfamily household income was \$26,906. Median family and nonfamily household incomes were substantially higher for White versus Black and Hispanic householders.

Table 5. Erie County Income Levels in the Past 12 Months, 2012-2016

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Households</u>	<u>Family Households</u>	<u>Nonfamily Households</u>
Total number with income	110,049	69,521	40,526
Less than \$25,000	26.0%	16.0%	46.4%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	26.4%	24.2%	30.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18.9%	21.7%	13.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.0%	15.4%	5.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	10.8%	14.7%	3.3%
\$150,000 or more	5.8%	8.2%	1.3%
Median income	\$47,904	\$60,552	\$26,906
White householder	\$49,598	\$63,235	\$28,349
Black householder	\$24,073	\$28,814	\$16,585
Hispanic householder	\$21,211	\$24,704	\$9,679

Poverty, 2012-2016

In 2012-2016, 16.7% of Erie County residents and 24.5% of children under 18 years lived below the poverty level in the past 12 months (Table 6). Poverty rates were markedly higher for minority groups compared to Whites. Among families with related children under 18 years of age, female single parent families (33.8%) had a much higher rate compared to married couple families (8.4%).

Overall, 2012-2016 poverty rates varied greatly among Erie County's 38 municipalities (Figure 4, Table 7). The highest poverty rates were observed in the City of Erie (26.4%), Edinboro Borough (26.3%), and the City of Corry (21.6%), while the lowest rates were observed in Elgin Borough (2.2%) and Summit Township (3.6%). The municipalities with the largest number of people living below the poverty level were the City of Erie (25,261 residents, 56.8% of the total) and Millcreek Township (5,225 residents, 11.7% of the total).

Table 6. Erie County Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months, 2012-2016

Topic	Population For Whom		
	Status Determined	Number Below Poverty	Percent Below Poverty
Total population	266,271	44,452	16.7
Male	130,292	19,940	15.3
Female	136,429	24,512	18.0
Under 18 years	60,148	14,744	24.5
18 - 64 years	164,405	26,111	15.9
65 years and older	42,168	3,597	8.5
White	234,301	32,974	14.1
Black or African American	17,856	6,884	38.6
Asian	4,036	1,048	26.0
Two or more races	7,446	2,696	36.2
Hispanic, of any race	10,215	4,449	43.6
All families	68,521	8,134	11.7
With related children under 18 years	31,551	6,626	21.0
Married couple family	50,033	2,502	5.0
With related children under 18 years	18,559	1,559	8.4
Female single parent family	14,473	4,892	33.8
With related children under 18 years	9,934	4,490	45.2

Figure 4. Erie County Municipality Poverty Rates, 2012-2016

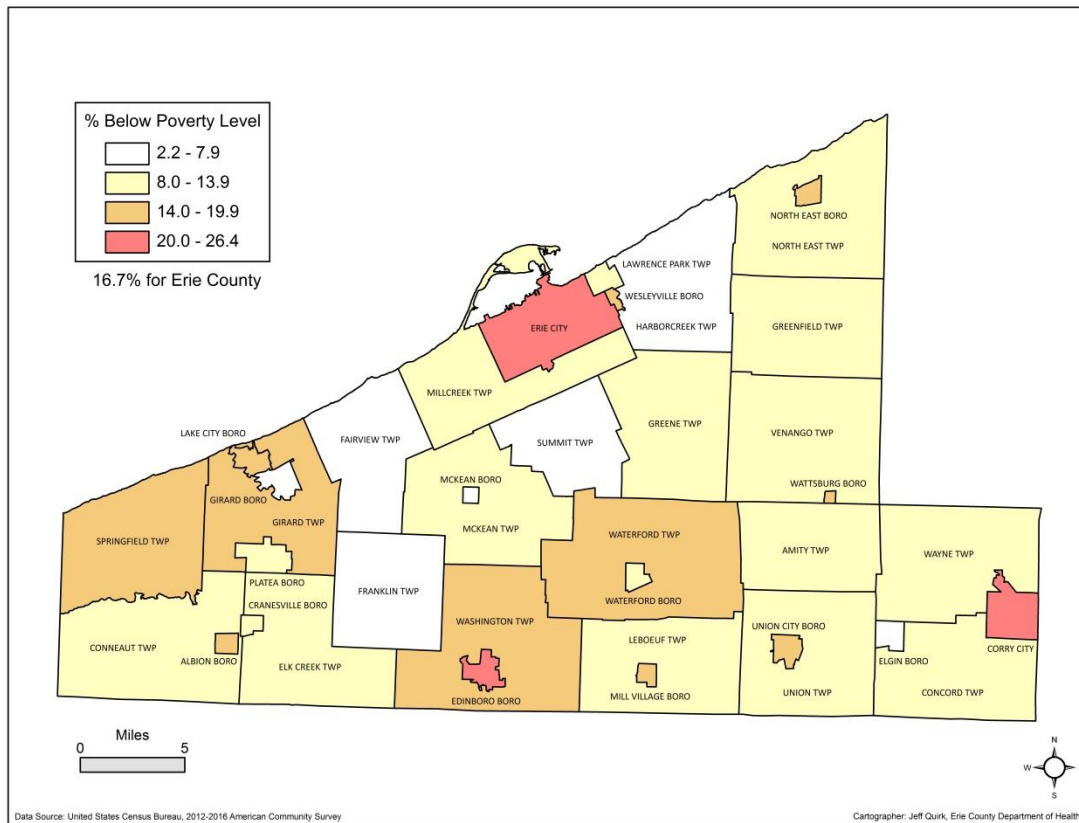


Table 7. Erie County Municipality Poverty Status, 2012-2016

<u>Place</u>	<u>Population For Whom Status Determined</u>	<u>Number Below Poverty</u>	<u>Percent Below Poverty</u>
Erie County	266,271	44,452	16.7
Albion Borough	1,523	256	16.8
Amity Township	967	97	10.0
Concord Township	1,177	99	8.4
Conneaut Township	1,978	272	13.8
City of Corry	6,365	1,375	21.6
Cranesville Borough	559	66	11.8
Edinboro Borough	4,840	1,271	26.3
Elgin Borough	185	4	2.2
Elk Creek Township	1,762	166	9.4
City of Erie	95,625	25,261	26.4
Fairview Township	9,744	522	5.4
Franklin Township	1,578	95	6.0
Girard Borough	3,001	217	7.2
Girard Township	4,989	846	17.0
Greene Township	4,654	429	9.2
Greenfield Township	2,007	164	8.2
Harborcreek Township	15,631	1,201	7.7
Lake City Borough	2,977	419	14.1
Lawrence Park Township	3,753	306	8.2
LeBoeuf Township	1,798	229	12.7
McKean Borough	438	29	6.6
McKean Township	4,378	397	9.1
Millcreek Township	53,324	5,225	9.8
Mill Village Borough	441	75	17.0
North East Borough	4,126	702	17.0
North East Township	6,083	560	9.2
Platea Borough	383	52	13.6
Springfield Township	3,374	564	16.7
Summit Township	6,740	242	3.6
Union Township	1,661	174	10.5
Union City Borough	3,229	638	19.8
Venango Township	2,196	175	8.0
Washington Township	4,398	635	14.4
Waterford Borough	1,418	137	9.7
Waterford Township	3,881	678	17.5
Wattsburg Borough	519	76	14.6
Wayne Township	1,777	161	9.1
Wesleyville Borough	3,242	637	19.6

Education, 2012-2016

The total estimated school enrollment for the Erie County population 3 years and over was 70,047 students in 2012-2016. Overall, 7,536 (10.8%) of students were in nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten, 27,507 (39.3%) were in elementary school grades 1 to 8, 14,105 (20.1%) were in high school grades 9 to 12, 17,269 (24.7%) were in college, and 3,630 (5.2%) were in graduate or professional school.

In 2012-2016, 91.1% of Erie County residents 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school, and 27.0% had a bachelor's degree or higher (graduate or professional degree). Striking differences were observed for high school and college educational attainment by race and Hispanic origin (Table 8).

Table 8. Erie County Educational Attainment, 2012-2016

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Both Sexes</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Less than high school diploma for population 25 years and over			
All races	8.9%	9.5%	8.4%
White	7.7%	8.3%	7.1%
Black or African American	19.8%	19.0%	20.7%
Hispanic, of any race	26.6%	29.6%	23.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher for population 25 years and over			
All races	27.0%	26.4%	27.5%
White	27.8%	27.3%	28.2%
Black or African American	13.8%	10.9%	17.0%
Hispanic, of any race	10.7%	9.3%	12.1%

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