

Berks County Population Review, 2010 and 2020 Age Data



As part of the 2020 Decennial Census of Population and Housing, detailed information on age is collected and released. These data give valuable insight into one component of how Berks County is growing and changing, and the resultant implications on issues such as education, workforce development, and elder care, to name just a few. All data used in this report are derived from the 2010 Decennial Census (Summary File 1, Table PCT12) and the 2020 Decennial Census (DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics, Table P12).

Total Population and Major Age Groups

Berks County grew from 411,442 total persons in 2010 to 428,849 in 2020, for an increase of 17,407 (4.2%). This growth rate prior decade-to-decade growth rates of roughly 10 percent per decade and reflects a slowdown in housing growth in the County and possible lingering effects of the 2008 Recession. While overall growth was down (but still positive), how the County's population grew older is evident. Figure 1 shows a comparison of 5-year age intervals for 2010 (blue bar) and 2020 (green bar).

5-Year Age Groups, Berks County: 2010 & 2020 Decennial Censuses

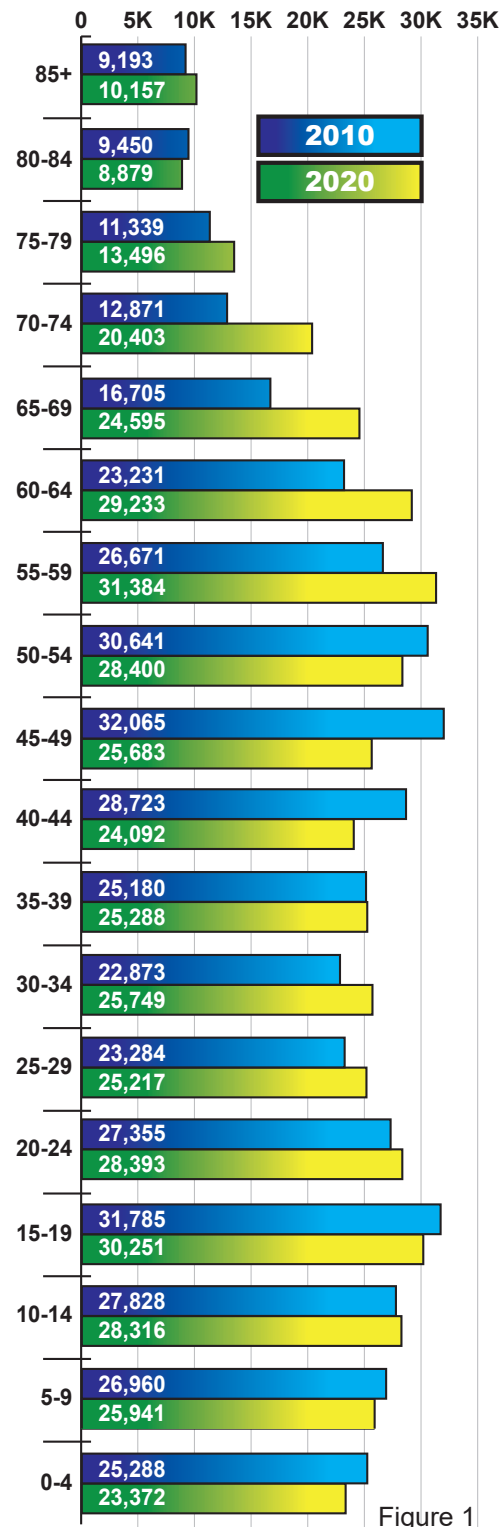


Figure 1

Individual Age Groupings:

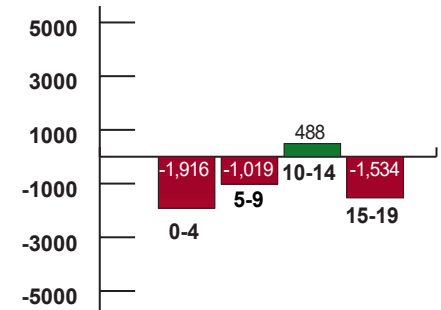
Youth



After reviewing the 2020 information against 2010, some notable differences and trends can be noted. One is at the very bottom of the pyramid, where there are persons in the 0-4 and 5-9 age groups. This is indicative of lower birth rates and, therefore, fewer persons to replace those who age into the 10-14 year and 15-19 year age groups (which also lost populations). Figures 2 and 3 show (respectively) the Numeric and Percentage Changes in individual age groups from 2010 to 2020. There was an overall decrease of 3,981 persons in the 0-19 year age groups. This has implications for the 19 school districts that serve Berks County, as many of them added facilities and staff in the 1990's and 2000's to handle (then) growth. Previous analysis completed using the PL 94-171 (Legislative Redistricting Data) now show that 13 of the 19 lost student-age (0-18 years) populations.

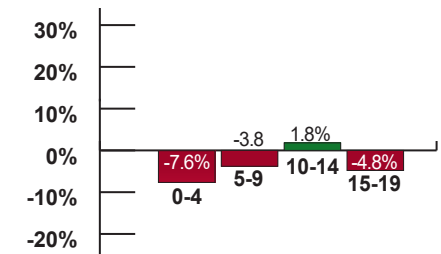
Number Change in 5-Year Age Groups, Berks County: 2010 & 2020 Decennial Censuses

Figure 2



Percentage Change in 5-Year Age Groups, Berks County: 2010 & 2020 Decennial Censuses

Figure 3



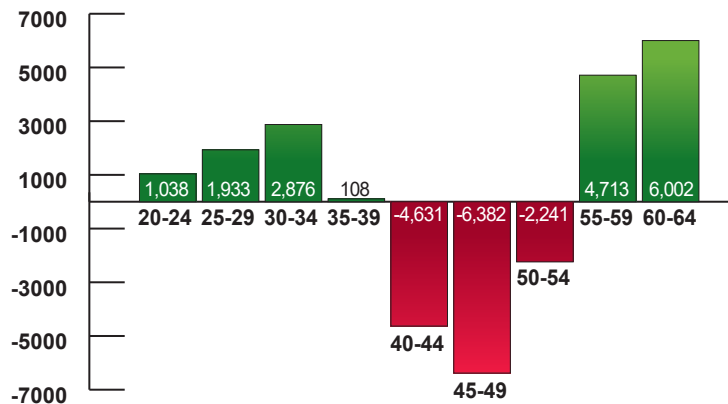


Workforce

The overall working population (20-64 years) grew by a modest 3,416 persons, or only 1.4 percent. Overall growth in this segment has economic benefits for the County. However, certain sub-segments need to be examined further. The 20-39 year age group, consisting of younger entrants into the workforce and those engaged in secondary education, grew by 5,955 persons (+6.0%) since 2010. These are the people who will sustain the workforce into the future and who will need skills training and experience. Unfortunately, this growth is offset by the loss of 13,254 (-14.5%) persons in the 40-54 year age group. These persons can be considered among the more experienced part of the workforce and should be depended on to replace recent and upcoming retirees along with mentoring the younger members of the workforce. The 55-64 year age group grew by 10,715 persons (+21.5%) between 2010 and 2020. While the large growth of the more 'senior' members of the workforce is positive, it also means that there are that many persons potentially leaving the workforce within the next five to 15 years as they retire.

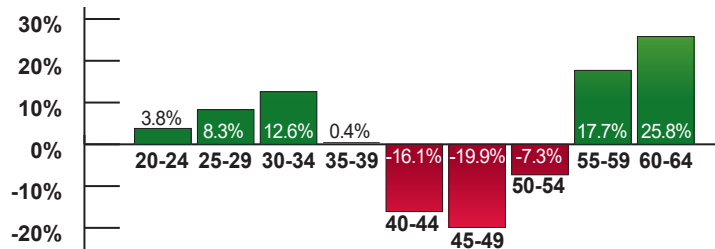
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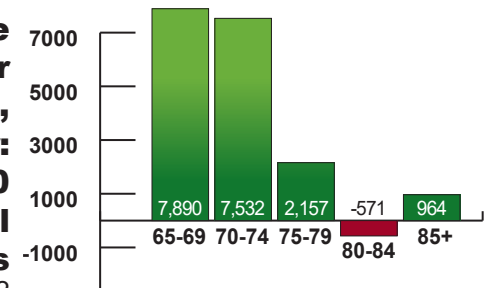


Retired

Berks County is growing increasingly older. 17,972 persons were added to the 65 and older age groups since 2010, an astounding 30.2% increase. Almost 18.1% of the County's population is aged 65 and older, up from 14.5% in 2010. The 'older' elderly population – ages 75 and over – grew by 2,550 persons. As this entire segment of the population continues to grow, they bring with them increased demands on elder living and care, transportation, and goods/services targeted specifically to the elderly.

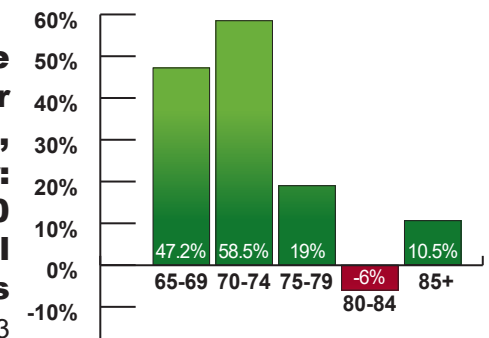
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Percentage Change in 5-Year Age Groups, Berks County: 2010 & 2020 Decennial Censuses

Figure 3





Conclusions

- **School Districts should be cognizant of lower numbers of youth and plan accordingly.**
- **Workforce development efforts should include increasing the number of persons able to work.**
- **Providers of services to the elderly will continue to have increasing demands for their services.**