

# County Income Patterns



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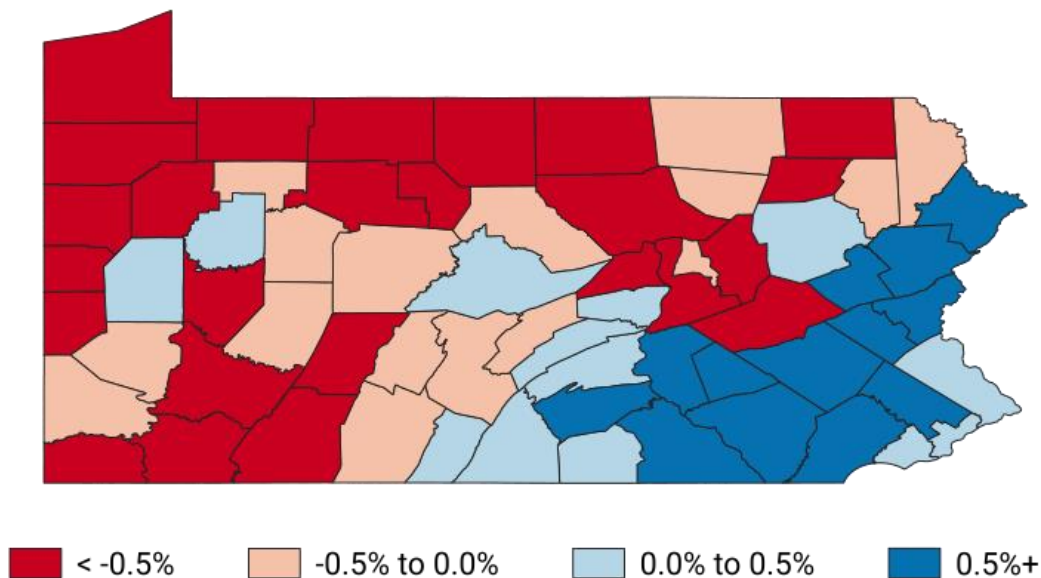
## Introduction

This research brief presents four maps that illustrate recent demographic and income trends at the county level. The brief starts with demographic trends, then presents income trends and finally combines the two metrics to analyze per capita income trends and levels for the latest two years that data are available. (See page 4 for data sources and page 6 for a reference map of county names.) Per capita income growth and levels provide policymakers with two informative and current measures of economic well-being at the county level. Although the metrics control for population, it should be noted that they do not control for cost of living, which varies widely across the state.

## Population Growth

From 2016 to 2018, Pennsylvania's population expanded at an average rate of 0.1 percent per annum. **Figure 1** displays general results for all counties. At the county level, population growth ranged from a high of 1.0 percent (Lebanon County) to a low of -2.3 percent (Cameron County). (See page 5 for specific county data.) While the northern and western regions of the state generally recorded contractions, the south central and eastern regions recorded moderate gains.

Figure 1  
Average Annual Population Growth: 2016 to 2018

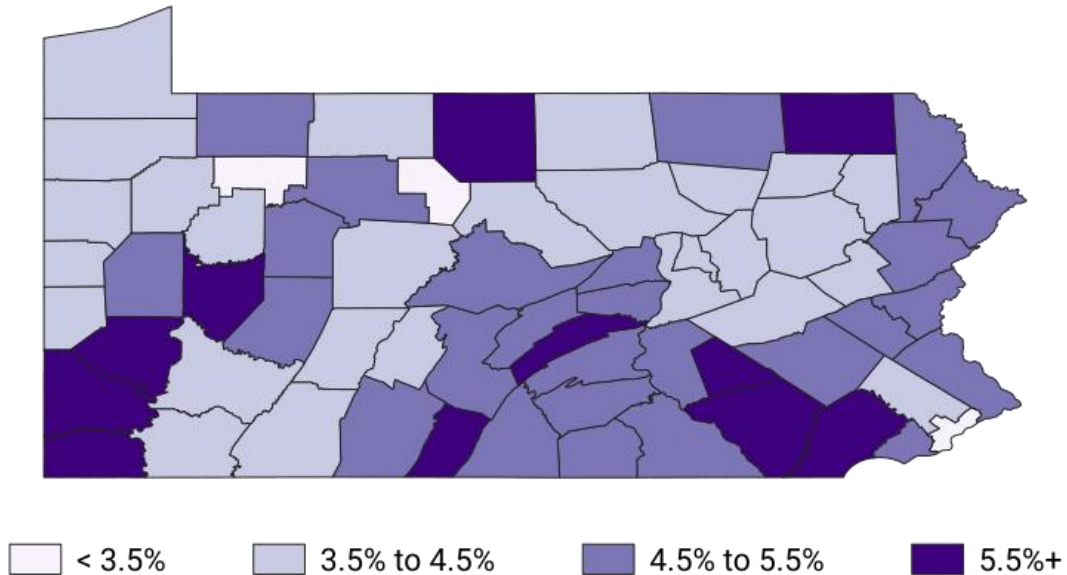


## Personal Income Growth

From 2016 to 2018, all Pennsylvania counties recorded personal income gains. Personal income includes all wages and salaries, interest, dividends, business income, rents, royalties, transfer receipts (e.g., SNAP and veteran’s benefits) and retirement income (e.g., Social Security and pension contributions). The measure is published by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and is the most comprehensive measure of income available. For example, the income measure is much broader than state taxable income because it includes Social Security income and employer contributions to pension accounts. However, it does not include capital gains income.

For the entire state, total personal income grew at a weighted average rate of 4.5 percent per annum, and ranged from 1.5 percent (Philadelphia County) to 7.4 percent (Juniata County). (See **Figure 2**.) The statewide average rate of 4.5 percent reflects strong growth in areas that are densely populated. As shown by Figure 2, 30 counties recorded an average growth rate under 4.5 percent. The average income gains significantly exceeded inflation (1.3 percent), which implies material real income gains for most counties. The weak growth for Philadelphia County is attributable to an unusual \$4.0 billion decline in proprietor income (i.e., partnerships, sole proprietors and independent contractors), which may be due to technical issues related to business location versus owner residence. Conversely, the strong growth for Juniata County was driven by robust growth of non-farm proprietor income (15.4 percent).

Figure 2  
Average Annual Personal Income Growth: 2016 to 2018

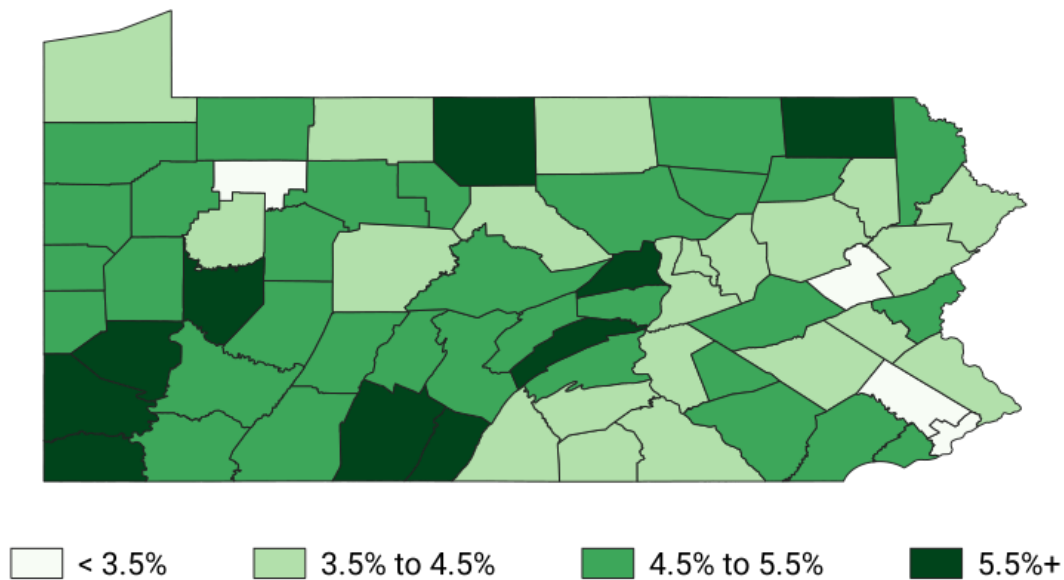


## Per Capita Personal Income Growth

Figure 2 does not control for county population gains or losses. **Figure 3** controls for population growth and displays per capita average income growth. Average per capita income growth for the state was 4.4 percent per annum. The top five counties were as follows: Greene (7.5 percent), Fulton (7.3 percent) Juniata (7.1 percent), Potter (7.1 percent) and Susquehanna (6.7 percent). The five lowest counties were: Philadelphia (1.2 percent), Forest (2.1 percent), Carbon (3.1 percent), Montgomery (3.4 percent) and Montour (3.9 percent).

Personal income can be decomposed into three categories: (1) resident earnings (wages, salaries and proprietor income), (2) dividends, interest and rent and (3) transfer receipts (e.g., Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, various income maintenance benefits). For the state, per capita average annual growth rates for these income sources were as follows: resident earnings (3.8 percent), dividends, interest and rent (7.3 percent), and transfer receipts (3.7 percent). The growth rate for the final category includes the following: Social Security (3.4 percent), Medicaid (5.5 percent), Medicare (4.4 percent) and miscellaneous income maintenance benefits (2.3 percent). For nearly all counties (except Sullivan, Venango and Forest Counties) resident earnings comprised more than half of personal income. For 2018, shares ranged from a high of 67.8 percent (Chester County) to a low of 29.4 percent (Forest County).

Figure 3  
Average Annual Per Capita Personal Income Growth: 2016 to 2018

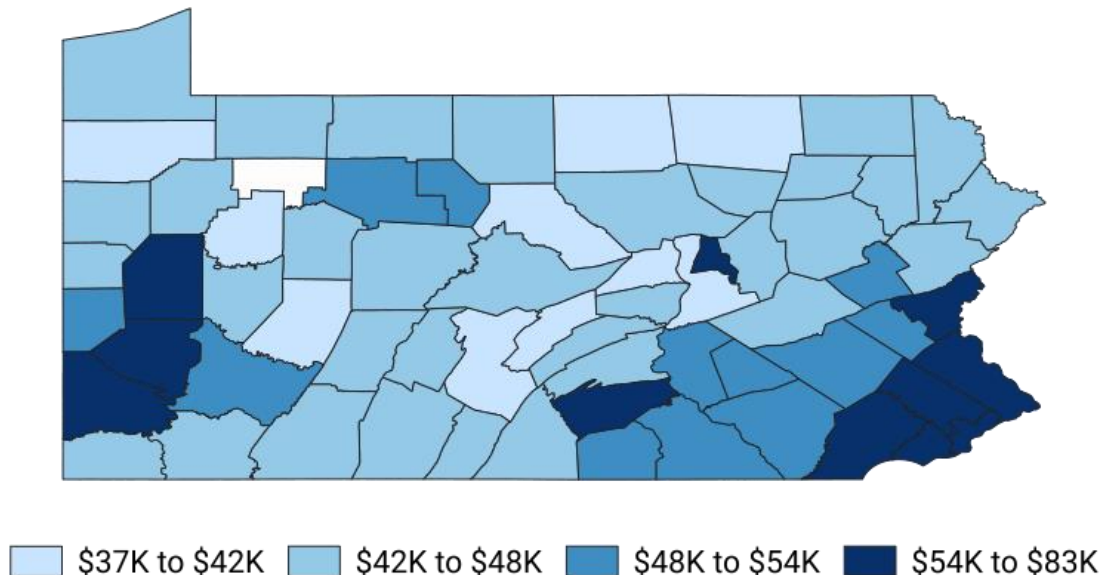


## Per Capita Personal Income Level for 2018

For 2018, statewide (i.e., weighted average) per capita personal income was \$56,200, and ranged from \$38,600 (Huntingdon County) to \$82,800 (Chester County). (See **Figure 4**.) The Philadelphia and Pittsburgh metro regions generally recorded the highest levels of per capita personal income, in excess of \$55,000. By contrast, five counties recorded per capita income levels below \$40,000.

Two counties deserve special note. First, Forest County (filled white) was excluded from the dataset because a significant proportion (approximately 40 percent) of the population was institutionalized, which produced artificially low per capita income levels. (Note: This analysis does not control for student, nursing home or institutionalized populations in other counties.) Second, Montour County is a relatively small county and the median income level is similar to statewide averages. However, the Census data reveal that the county has a somewhat higher proportion of families with incomes above \$200,000 (highest Census family income group). For a county with a small population, that characteristic is sufficient to move Montour County to the highest category in Figure 4, with a per capita or average income level of \$57,400 for 2018.

Figure 4  
Per Capita Personal Income for 2018



## Data Sources

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2016-18. ([Web](#))

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Income Summary, 2016-18. ([Web](#))

	Population (000s)				Personal Income (\$B)				Income Per Capita (\$000s)			
	2016	2018	AAGR	Rank	2016	2018	AAGR	Rank	2016	2018	AAGR	Rank
Adams	101.8	102.8	0.49%	14	\$4.6	\$5.1	4.65%	34	\$45.3	\$49.2	4.14%	58
Allegheny	1,226.7	1,218.5	-0.34	35	68.0	76.7	6.18	5	55.5	63.0	6.54	6
Armstrong	66.3	65.3	-0.78	57	2.7	3.0	5.67	11	40.1	45.5	6.51	7
Beaver	166.8	164.7	-0.61	49	7.4	8.0	4.24	42	44.3	48.8	4.88	26
Bedford	48.6	48.2	-0.43	38	1.9	2.1	5.19	15	38.4	42.9	5.64	9
Berks	415.7	420.2	0.53	8	19.1	21.0	4.91	23	45.9	49.9	4.36	49
Blair	123.7	122.5	-0.48	41	5.3	5.7	4.10	47	42.7	46.7	4.61	42
Bradford	61.1	60.8	-0.22	33	2.3	2.5	4.78	28	37.5	41.3	5.00	21
Bucks	625.9	628.2	0.18	22	42.2	46.1	4.61	35	67.4	73.4	4.42	45
Butler	186.2	187.9	0.44	15	10.0	11.1	5.26	13	53.7	58.9	4.80	31
Cambria	134.4	131.7	-1.00	65	5.3	5.7	3.59	61	39.7	43.4	4.64	40
Cameron	4.7	4.5	-2.34	67	0.2	0.2	2.50	65	44.2	48.7	4.96	24
Carbon	63.5	64.2	0.55	7	3.0	3.2	3.67	59	47.3	50.3	3.09	65
Centre	162.1	162.8	0.23	20	6.8	7.5	4.89	24	42.2	46.2	4.65	39
Chester	516.8	522.0	0.51	13	38.6	43.2	5.82	8	74.7	82.8	5.28	12
Clarion	38.6	38.8	0.24	19	1.5	1.6	4.44	39	38.4	41.7	4.19	54
Clearfield	80.2	79.4	-0.49	42	3.3	3.5	3.83	56	40.8	44.4	4.34	50
Clinton	39.0	38.7	-0.40	36	1.4	1.5	3.89	53	36.5	39.7	4.31	52
Columbia	66.2	65.5	-0.54	45	2.6	2.8	3.59	62	38.9	42.2	4.15	56
Crawford	86.3	85.1	-0.72	54	3.2	3.5	3.94	49	37.4	41.0	4.70	36
Cumberland	247.4	251.4	0.80	5	12.6	13.9	5.02	17	50.8	55.1	4.19	55
Dauphin	274.3	277.1	0.51	10	12.9	14.2	4.77	29	47.0	51.1	4.23	53
Delaware	563.5	564.8	0.11	23	34.1	37.6	5.09	16	60.5	66.6	4.97	23
Elk	30.5	30.2	-0.55	46	1.4	1.5	4.51	37	44.3	48.9	5.09	17
Erie	276.3	272.1	-0.77	56	11.4	12.2	3.65	60	41.2	44.9	4.45	44
Fayette	132.4	130.4	-0.73	55	5.2	5.6	3.91	51	38.9	42.6	4.67	38
Forest	7.3	7.3	-0.31	34	0.2	0.2	1.78	66	21.9	22.8	2.09	66
Franklin	153.8	154.8	0.35	16	6.5	7.2	4.74	30	42.6	46.4	4.37	48
Fulton	14.5	14.5	0.11	25	0.6	0.7	7.41	2	39.5	45.5	7.30	2
Greene	37.2	36.5	-0.95	63	1.4	1.6	6.50	3	38.7	44.8	7.53	1
Huntingdon	45.3	45.2	-0.19	32	1.6	1.7	5.20	14	34.7	38.6	5.40	11
Indiana	85.2	84.5	-0.41	37	3.1	3.4	4.65	33	36.2	39.9	5.08	18
Jefferson	44.0	43.6	-0.45	39	1.8	1.9	4.71	32	39.9	44.1	5.18	14
Juniata	24.6	24.7	0.30	17	1.0	1.1	7.45	1	39.5	45.3	7.13	3
Lackawanna	211.1	210.8	-0.07	30	9.3	10.1	3.91	52	44.1	47.7	3.98	60
Lancaster	538.1	543.6	0.51	11	25.6	28.6	5.71	9	47.6	52.7	5.17	15
Lawrence	87.3	86.2	-0.66	53	3.5	3.8	4.12	46	40.0	43.9	4.81	30
Lebanon	138.5	141.3	1.02	1	6.1	6.8	5.69	10	44.2	48.4	4.62	41
Lehigh	362.2	368.1	0.81	4	18.0	19.7	4.73	31	49.7	53.6	3.88	62
Luzerne	317.0	317.6	0.10	26	13.3	14.4	3.99	48	41.9	45.2	3.89	61
Lycoming	114.8	113.7	-0.51	43	4.6	5.0	4.16	44	40.0	43.8	4.68	37
McKean	41.7	41.0	-0.86	61	1.7	1.9	3.56	63	41.5	45.3	4.46	43
Mercer	112.6	110.7	-0.86	60	4.4	4.8	4.14	45	39.0	43.0	5.04	20
Mifflin	46.3	46.2	-0.12	31	1.7	1.8	4.82	25	36.1	39.7	4.95	25
Monroe	166.4	169.5	0.92	2	6.6	7.2	4.95	21	39.5	42.7	3.99	59
Montgomery	820.1	828.6	0.52	9	61.9	66.8	3.91	50	75.4	80.6	3.37	64
Montour	18.2	18.2	-0.01	27	1.0	1.0	3.86	55	53.2	57.4	3.87	63
Northampton	301.4	304.8	0.57	6	15.0	16.7	5.43	12	49.9	54.9	4.83	28
Northumberland	92.3	91.1	-0.65	51	3.5	3.8	3.72	57	38.3	41.7	4.39	47
Perry	45.9	46.1	0.22	21	1.9	2.1	5.01	19	40.7	44.7	4.78	32
Philadelphia	1,576.4	1,584.1	0.25	18	85.8	88.3	1.47	67	54.4	55.7	1.22	67
Pike	55.0	55.9	0.82	3	2.4	2.7	5.00	20	44.1	47.9	4.14	57
Potter	17.0	16.6	-0.98	64	0.6	0.7	6.01	6	37.4	42.8	7.06	4
Schuylkill	143.5	142.1	-0.51	44	5.6	6.1	4.20	43	39.1	42.9	4.73	33
Snyder	40.5	40.5	0.11	24	1.6	1.7	4.82	26	38.7	42.4	4.70	35
Somerset	74.9	74.0	-0.63	50	2.9	3.1	4.48	38	38.2	42.2	5.14	16
Sullivan	6.1	6.1	-0.47	40	0.3	0.3	4.38	40	41.9	46.1	4.88	27
Susquehanna	41.3	40.6	-0.82	59	1.6	1.8	5.86	7	39.8	45.3	6.74	5
Tioga	41.3	40.8	-0.59	47	1.6	1.7	3.70	58	37.7	41.0	4.32	51
Union	45.5	44.8	-0.80	58	1.7	1.8	4.78	27	37.0	41.2	5.63	10
Venango	52.5	51.3	-1.16	66	2.0	2.2	3.50	64	38.5	42.2	4.72	34
Warren	40.0	39.5	-0.65	52	1.5	1.7	4.56	36	38.7	42.9	5.24	13
Washington	207.4	207.3	-0.02	28	10.9	12.4	6.33	4	52.7	59.6	6.35	8
Wayne	51.3	51.3	-0.05	29	2.0	2.3	5.02	18	39.8	44.0	5.08	19
Westmoreland	354.8	350.6	-0.59	48	16.8	18.3	4.36	41	47.4	52.2	4.98	22
Wyoming	27.5	27.0	-0.90	62	1.1	1.2	3.87	54	41.2	45.3	4.82	29
York	443.8	448.3	0.51	12	20.4	22.5	4.94	22	46.0	50.1	4.41	46

## Reference Map



### Staff Acknowledgements

Michaela Bowers and Kathleen Hall produced this research brief. Questions regarding this document can be directed to [mbowers@ifos.state.pa.us](mailto:mbowers@ifos.state.pa.us) or [khall@ifos.state.pa.us](mailto:khall@ifos.state.pa.us).

Office Phone: 717-230-8293

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