



METROPOLITAN POLICY PROGRAM
THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

**Committing to Prosperity:
Moving Forward on the Agenda to Renew Pennsylvania**

**Metro Profile: State College
March 2007**

This profile provides key economic and demographic trend information on the State College metropolitan area relating to “Committing to Prosperity,” an update of the 2003 Brookings Institution report, “Back to Prosperity.” To read the entire report, other regional summaries, and a rural policy brief, see www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/committingtoprosperity.htm. For any questions or comments, please contact Rebecca Sohmer at the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program (rsohmer@brookings.edu / 202-797-6085).

The Trend: The State College metropolitan area continues to grow

State College continued to grow after 2000

In 2005, the State College (consisting of Centre County) metropolitan area had a population of 140,600—almost 4,800 (3.5 percent) more people than in 2000. This represents a slight slowing of the rate of population growth versus the 1990s. Between 1990 and 2000, the metro’s population grew rapidly at an annualized rate of 0.93 percent per year; since 2000, it slowed to 0.70 percent per year.

The State College metro area’s population is becoming more diverse due to minority gains

Metropolitan State College, like the rest of the state, saw its population become more diverse between 2000 and 2005. While the metro grew by 3.5 percent, State College’s minority population grew by 18.5 percent (2,300). About one-fifth of that increase owed its gains to the Latino population, which grew 21.5 percent between 2000 and 2005.

State College’s migration patterns remained constant

According to IRS county-to-county migration data, about as many people moved in to the metro as moved out between 1994 and 2005. The metro had a net out-migration of about 170 people in that time period.

Metro Area	Annualized population growth rate, 2000–2005
York	1.38%
Reading	1.33%
Allentown	1.29%
Lancaster	0.83%
State College	0.70%
Harrisburg	0.57%
Philadelphia	0.21%
Erie	-0.03%
Sharon	-0.12%
Williamsport	-0.28%
Scrán./W.B./Haz.	-0.30%
Altoona	-0.37%
Pittsburgh	-0.37%
Johnstown	-0.49%
Pennsylvania	0.24%
United States	1.05%

The Trend: The State College metro area is still spreading out—and hollowing out

Metropolitan State College's older communities are still hollowing out

Between 1990 and 2000, metro State College's boroughs lost population. The trend continued between 2000 and 2005, but at a slower rate of loss: the metro's boroughs went from an annualized decline of 0.13 percent per year to 0.05 annually. Metro State College's second-class townships, meanwhile, grew 1.70 percent per year in the 1990s, but slowed to 1.18 percent per year between 2000 and 2005.

The vast majority of State College's housing permits are still issued in second-class townships

Housing data shows that State College's residential building activity continues to occur mainly in second-class townships. Between 1995 and 1999, 344 permits were issued in the metro's boroughs, while 3,247 were issued in second-class townships. Between 2000 and 2004, the number of permits issued in boroughs decreased to 309, but permits issued to second-class townships rose to 3,833.

State College's population trends coincide with a loss of rural land

In the 1990s, the State College metro area experienced a loss of nearly 39,500 acres of rural land. And between 1980 and 2000, the loss was much greater: State College lost 67,500 rural acres in this time, a 20.0 percent loss. Whereas metropolitan State College's total developable land was 69.6 percent rural in 1980, by 2000 that share had fallen to 55.7 percent.

The Trend: Metropolitan State College's job growth outpaces the state

State College's job growth has slowed since 2000, but far exceeds the state rate

Metropolitan State College's 1.51 percent annualized rate of job growth in the 1990s far outpaced the 0.96 percent state rate during that time. Between 2000 and 2006, employment growth slowed, but State College's 0.82 percent annualized growth rate far exceeded Pennsylvania's 0.18 percent rate. And of the 3,500 jobs created in metropolitan State College since 2000, 2,400 were added between 2003 and 2006.

State College continues to lose manufacturing jobs but shows strong growth in a number of industries

Like the rest of the state, metropolitan State College continues to lose manufacturing jobs, and its 42.0 percent decline in this sector between 2000 and 2006 was nearly double the state's 22.2 percent drop. The State College metropolitan area experienced its largest percentage gains in the educational and health services and professional and business services sectors, with 27.1 and 23.5 percent gains, respectively—far exceeding state performance in these industries.