

An Analysis of the Births & Deaths in Lackawanna & Luzerne Counties and the Impact on Overall Population and Diversity

1990-2010

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The **INSTITUTE** for
Public Policy & Economic Development

A partnership among Keystone College, King's College, Luzerne County Community College, Marywood University, Misericordia University, Penn State Wilkes-Barre, The Commonwealth Medical College, University of Scranton, & Wilkes University

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Executive Summary

The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development (The “Institute”) has completed research on Lackawanna and Luzerne County birth and death rates. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the number of births and deaths, and determine whether the region’s population is increasing or decreasing. This study reviews birth and death records by gender and race for the years 1990-2010.

In Lackawanna County, from 1990 through 2010, there were 9,995 more deaths than births; births totaled 48,335, and deaths totaled 58,330. The county’s number of births ranged from 2,100 to 2,700 per year, while its number of deaths ranged from 2,600 to 3,000 per year. In no year did the number of births in Lackawanna County exceed the number of deaths.

Throughout the same time span, in Luzerne County, there were 21,608 more deaths than births. From 1990 to 2010, births totaled 68,097 and deaths totaled 89,705. The county’s number of births ranged from 2,900 to 3,800 per year, while its number of deaths ranged from 4,000 to 4,600 per year. In no year did the number of births in Luzerne County exceed the number of deaths.

Another factor in evaluating population is “people movement,” which refers to people moving into and out of a county. This is also referred to as in- and out- migration. The Institute has been tracking migration data for several years. Migration studies of both counties show that, since 2002, more people have been moving into the region rather than leaving it. Such data show movement by family (without specific demographics); it appears that more families are moving into the region, which results in the in-migration of more children. This in-migration brings with it a younger population, and the possibility that, in the near future, the number of births will exceed the number of deaths.

Research Methods & Limitations

Data used in this study were derived from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s Bureau of Health Statistics and Research.

Information on the gender of individuals born could not be obtained due to changes in data collection procedures made by The Bureau of Health Statistics and Research, Pennsylvania Department of Health.

For purposes of this study, only three race categories were included: Caucasian, African American and Other (incorporates all other races).

Lackawanna County

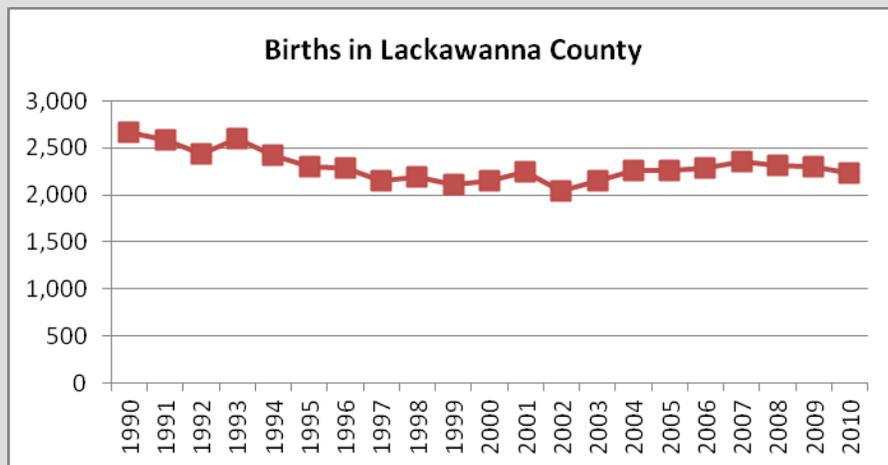
Lackawanna County's greatest population increase occurred between 1999 and 2000, when the population spiked from 206,520 to 213,295 –an increase of 6,775 people. During this fluctuation, the number of births increased by 31, while the number of deaths decreased by two. From 2002 to 2007, the county experienced a slight increase in its number of births and a slight decrease in its number of deaths.

From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County experienced an overall population decline. In 1990, the county's population totaled 219,018; by 2010, its population dropped to 214,437. From 2000 to 2010, the county experienced a population increase from 213,295 to 214,437.

From 1990 through 2010, Lackawanna County experienced more deaths than births. From 1996 to 1999, the county recorded its greatest decline in the number of births and its greatest increase in the number of deaths. The county's population corresponded directly with these fluctuations.

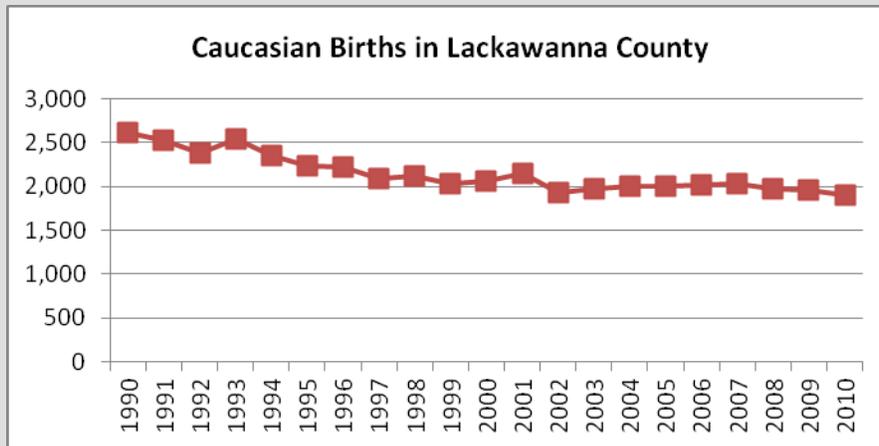
Lackawanna County Births

From 1990-2010, Lackawanna County recorded 48,335 births. After a period of consistent decline from 1990 and 2002, the county's number of births began to grow. In 2002, the county reported 2,043 births, compared with 2,238 in 2010.



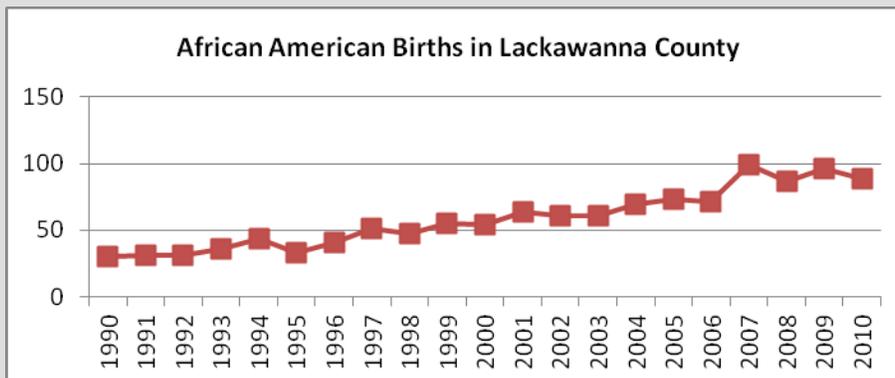
Caucasian Births

From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County recorded 45,092 Caucasian births. Despite some slight increases over the years, from 1990 to 2010, the county experienced an overall drop in its number of Caucasian births.



African-American Births

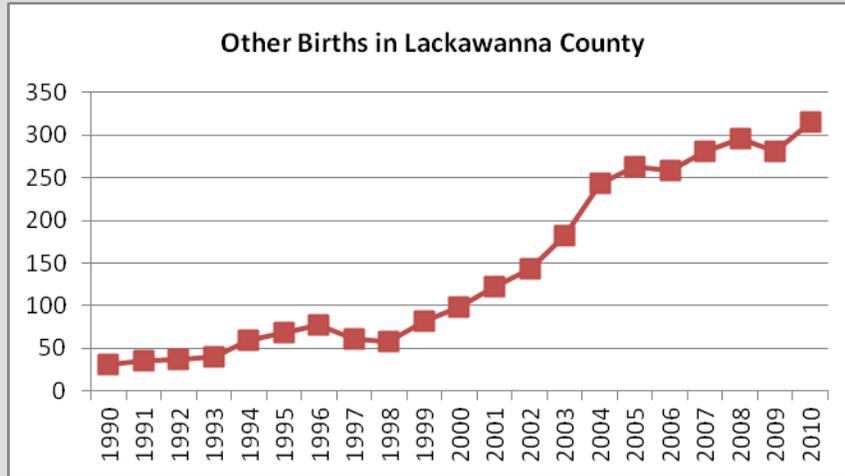
From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County recorded a total of 1,223 African American births; during this time period, there was a noticeable increase in the county’s number of African American births. In 1990, Lackawanna County recorded 30 African American births, compared with 89 in 2010. The county’s African American births peaked in 2007 at 99. The most significant increase in African American births occurred between 1998 and 2007. Although there have been periods of regression, overall, the county’s total number of African American births has increased. Even with aforementioned periods of regression, during no year examined has Lackawanna County’s number of African American births fallen below the 1990 rate.



Other Births

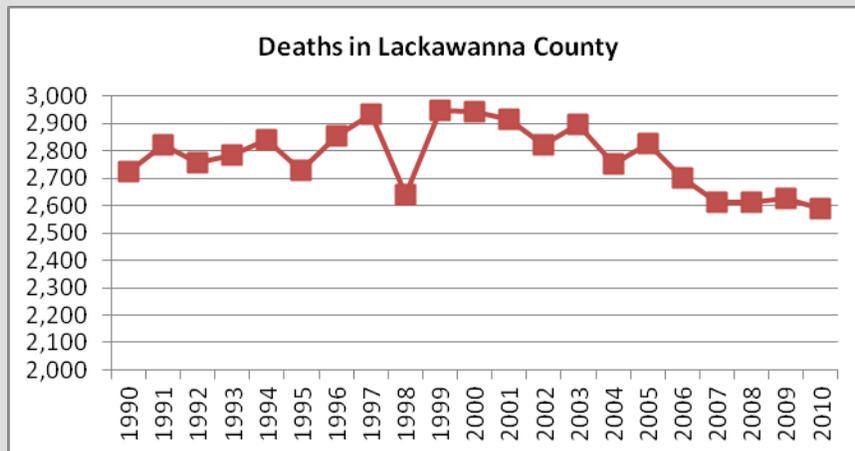
The “other” demographic includes all races that are not included in the Caucasian or African American categories. From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County recorded 3,032 Other births, as detailed in the following graph. In 2010, the county’s number of Other births was significantly higher those recorded in 1990. In 1990, the county reported 31 Other births, while in 2010, it recorded 316. The number of Other births jumped from 143 in 2002 to 243 in 2004, increasing to over 300 in 2010. Lackawanna County’s Other births were at their lowest of 31 and 35, respectively, in 1990 and 1991. In the 1990’s,

few races other than African Americans and Caucasians lived in Lackawanna County. Data after 2000 show different results, with Other births increasing at a rate much higher than the county's African American birth rate.



Lackawanna County Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County reported a total of 58,330 deaths. The county recorded a high of 2,946 deaths in 1999 and a low of 2,589 in 2010. Overall, trends indicate that the county's death rate is declining, while its birth rate is slightly increasing.

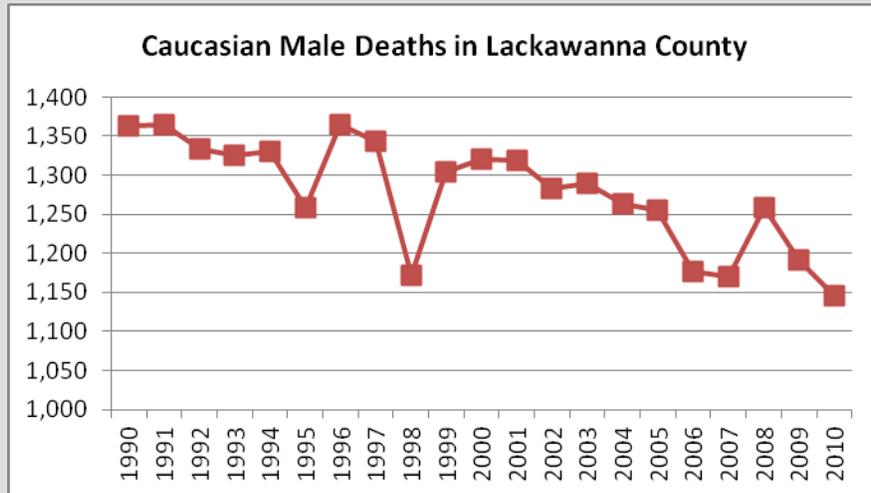


Caucasian Male Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County reported 26,834 Caucasian male deaths. The county reported a high of 1,365 Caucasian male deaths in 1996, and a low of 1,146 in 2010.

There was a significant drop in Caucasian male deaths between 1997 and 1998, which dropped from 1,343 to 1,172. Soon after this decline, the county's Caucasian male death rate increased to prior levels,

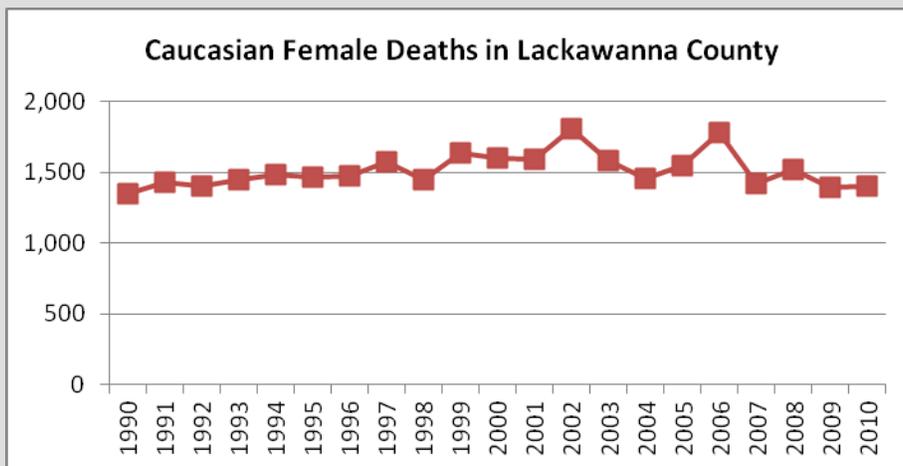
but continued to decline steadily. After the increase in 2008, 2009 brought another substantial drop in the Caucasian male death rate, which continued on a downward trend in 2010.



Caucasian Female Deaths

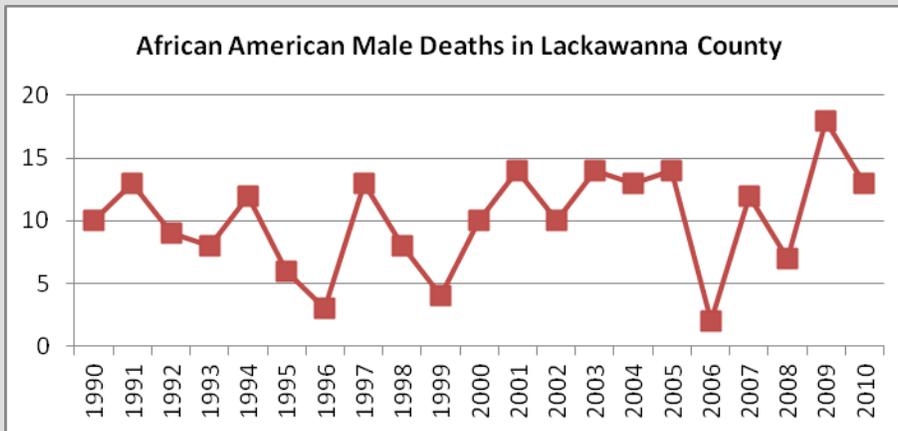
From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County reported 31,487 Caucasian female deaths, as detailed in the following graph. The highest number of Caucasian female deaths occurred in 1999, with 1,632 Caucasian female deaths, and the low was recorded in 1990, with 1,345 deaths.

Lackawanna County’s number of Caucasian female deaths has seen a nominal increase over the time period, with some periods of decline over the time span.



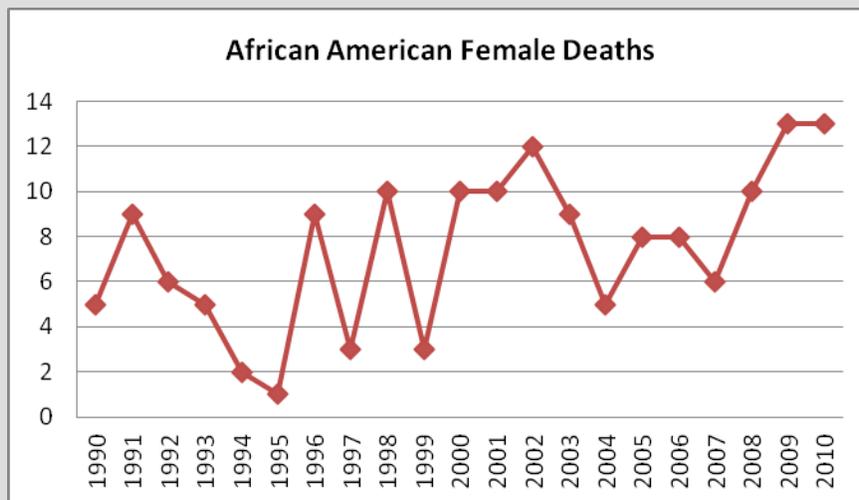
African American Male Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County reported 213 African American male deaths, as detailed in the following graph. The highest number of African American male deaths occurred in 2009, with eighteen total African American male deaths. The low occurred in 2006, with only two African American male deaths.



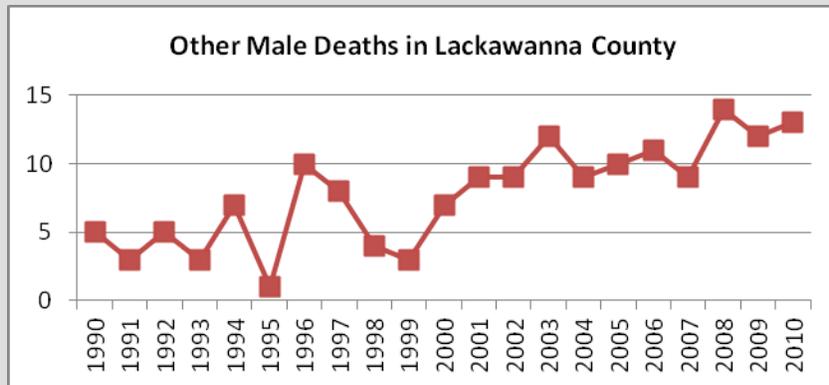
African-American Female Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County reported 157 African American female deaths. The highest number of African American female deaths occurred in 2009 and continued in 2010, with thirteen deaths; the low was recorded in 1995, with only one death. The greatest drop in African American female deaths occurred from 1991 to 1995, when African American female deaths dropped from nine to just one. The severity of the graph is due to demographic's rather small population size.



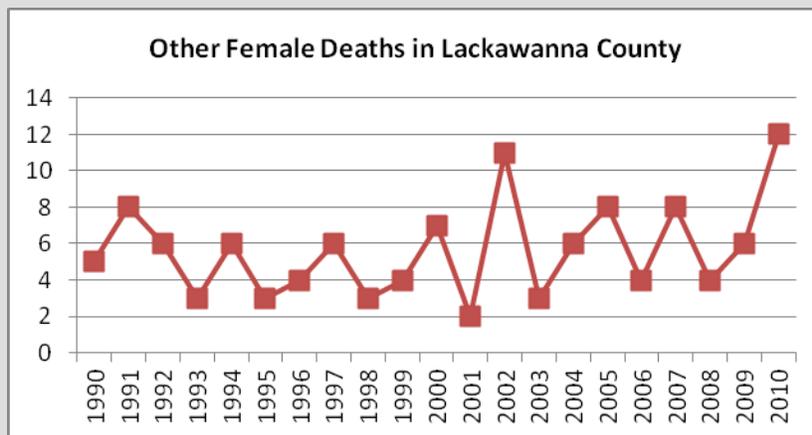
Other Male Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna County recorded 164 Other male deaths. The highest number of Other male deaths was fourteen, which was recorded in 2008; the lowest number of Other male deaths, which was one, was recorded in 1995. Overall, Lackawanna County's number of Other male deaths is quite low, and reached a record low of one in 1995. However, from 1995 to 1996, the number of Other male deaths spiked from one to ten. Although Lackawanna County experienced a decrease in its Other male death rate last year, its Other male death rate has increased over the time period examined. This is likely due to the growing population of those races included in the Other category over the time span.



Other Female Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Lackawanna reported 119 total Other female deaths. The highest number of Other female deaths was twelve in 2010, while the lowest of two occurred in 2001.



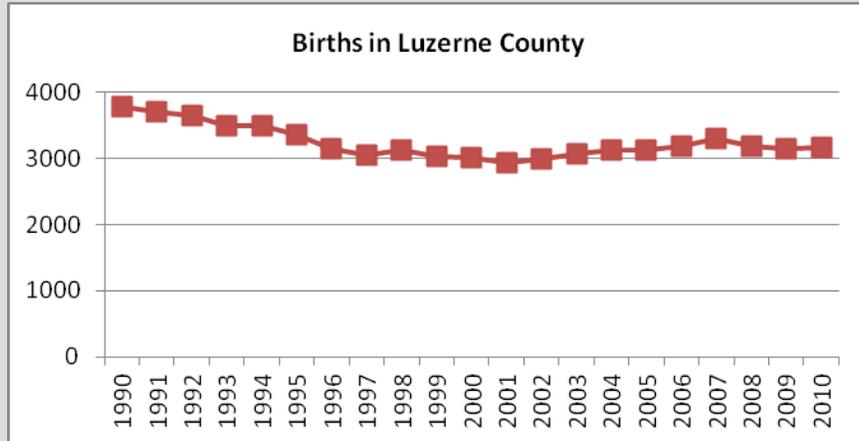
Luzerne County Population

Luzerne County’s population trends largely mirror Lackawanna County. From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County reported 20,817 more deaths than births. From 1993 to 2006, the county’s population declined, as births fluctuated, yet decreased overall since 1990. While total deaths also decreased, the death rate remains higher than the birth rate (although the gap seems to be closing slightly). In 1990, Luzerne County’s total population was 328,479, which dropped to 320,918 in 2010; this is likely due to continually higher death to birth ratio.

Luzerne County Births

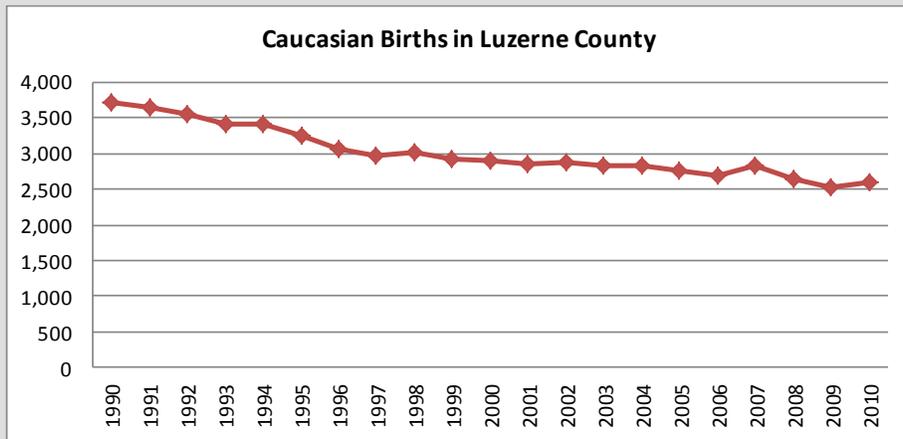
From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County’s total number of births totaled 68,097. The county’s number of births peaked at 3,793 in 1990 and hit a low of 2,936 in 2001.

After reaching that low in 2001, the county’s birth rate has been slowly increasing. In 2001, the county recorded 2,936 births, compared with 3,166 in 2010. Overall, the county’s total number of births declined from 3,793 births in 1990 to 3,166 in 2010—a total decrease of 627 births or 16.5%.



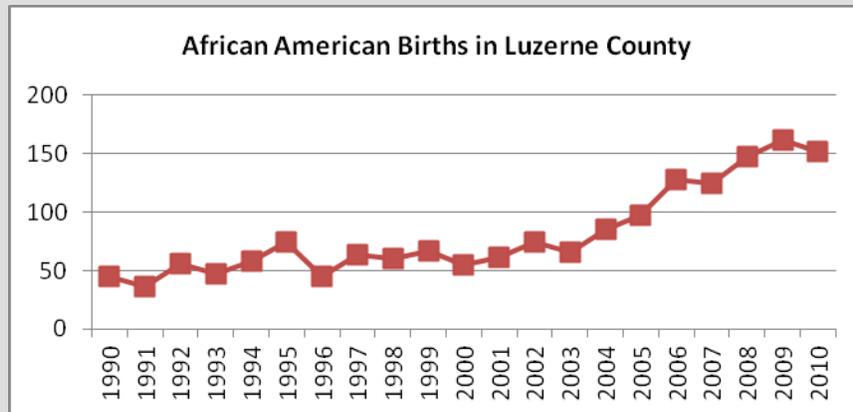
Caucasian Births

From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County recorded 63,298 total Caucasian births, as detailed in the following chart. Caucasian births peaked at 3,750 in 1990, but decreased to 2,590, or a 30.2% drop, in 2010.



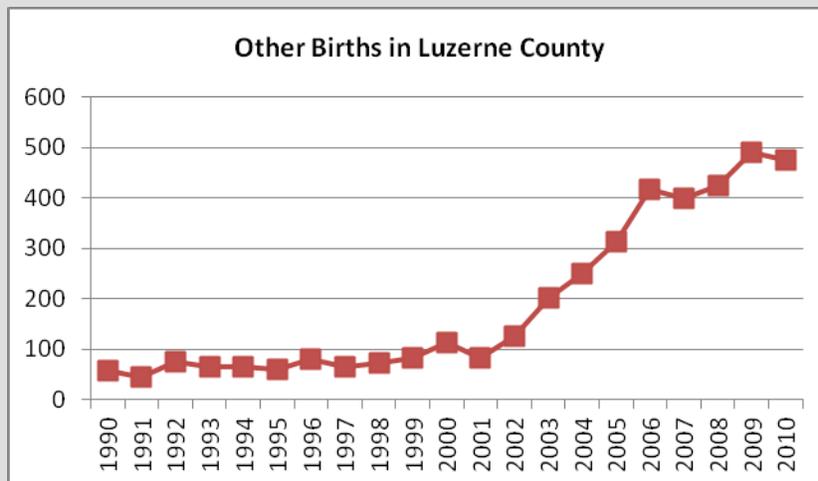
African-American Births

From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County reported 1,704 African American births. The county’s African American births peaked at 162 in 2009, which represented an increase over its low of 36 in 1991. Overall, the county experienced an increase in its total number of African American births throughout the time period examined. After 2003, Luzerne County experienced a substantial increase in African American births. Over the entire period, the African American birth rate grew by a whopping 260%.



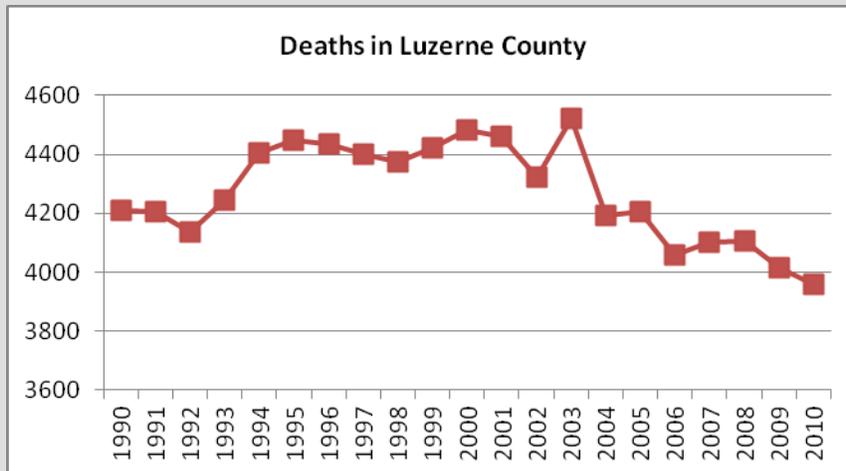
Other Births

From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County reported 3,968 Other births. This demographic’s birth rate peaked at 490 in 2009, and hit a low of 44 in 1991. From 2001 to 2010, Luzerne County experienced a dramatic increase in the number of Other births, jumping from 82 in 2001 to 490 in 2009 – or by an incredible 479%. This demographic is reflective of the exponential growth of Other races in Luzerne County, a trend which is expected to continue into the future.



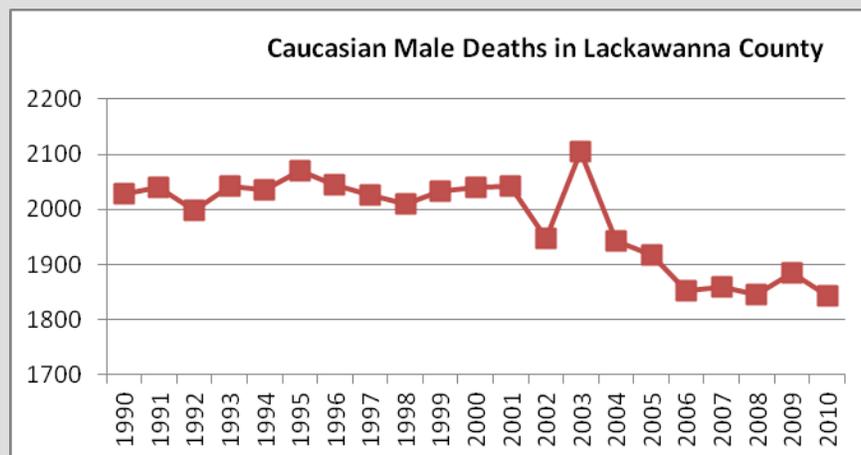
Luzerne County Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County recorded 89,705 deaths. The county’s death rate peaked at 4,522 in 2003, and hit a low of 3,957 in 2010.



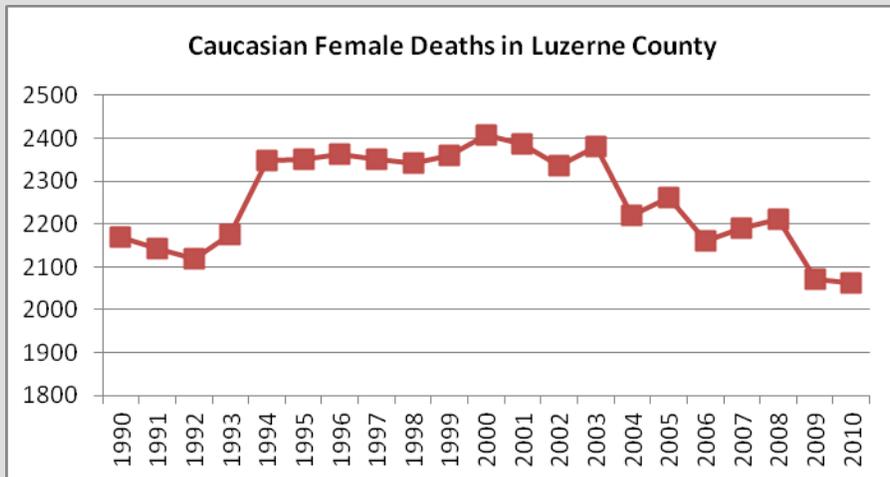
Caucasian Male Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County reported 41,607 Caucasian male deaths. Its Caucasian male death rate peaked at 2,105 in 2003, and reached a low of 1,844 in 2010. Overall, the county’s Caucasian male death rate has declined. In 1990, the county’s total number of Caucasian male deaths was 2,028; in 2010, it was 1,844. Until 2003, Luzerne County’s Caucasian male death rate showed a consistent trend. After 2003, the county recorded a fairly steady decline in its Caucasian male death rate. The graph below shows that Lackawanna County’s Caucasian male death rate is consistent with Luzerne County trends.



Caucasian Female Deaths

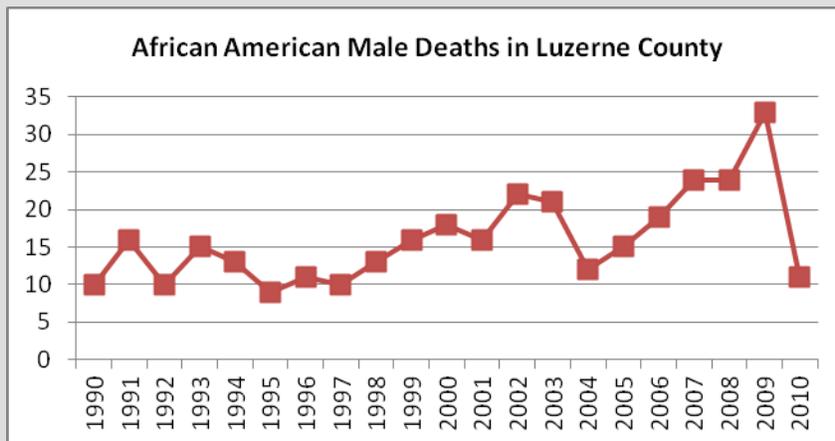
From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County reported 47,409 Caucasian female deaths, as detailed in the following chart. In 2000, Luzerne County reported its greatest number of Caucasian female deaths at 2,408, and its lowest number of Caucasian female deaths at 2,062 in 2010. Like its Caucasian male death rate, the county’s Caucasian female death rate declined since 2003. Overall, Luzerne County experienced a slight drop in its total number of Caucasian female deaths.



African American Male Deaths

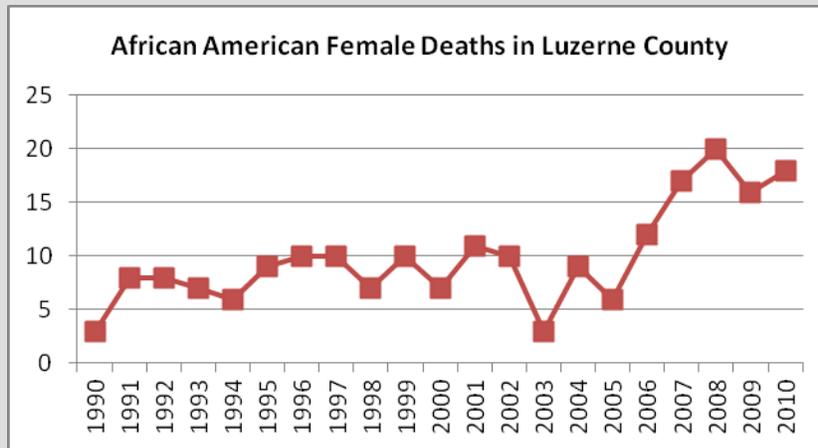
From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County reported 328 African American male deaths. The county experienced a high of 33 African American male deaths in 2009, and a low of nine in 1995.

From 1990 to 2010, the county reported an overall increase in the number of African American male deaths.



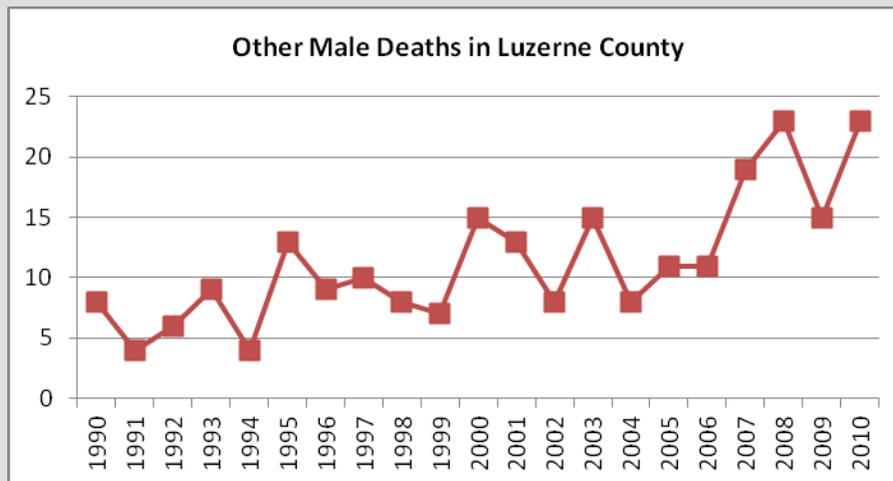
African American Female Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County reported 207 African American female deaths. The county experienced a high of 20 African American female deaths in 2008, and a low of three – recorded in both 1990 and 2003. From 1990 to 2008, Luzerne County’s overall number of African American female deaths grew.



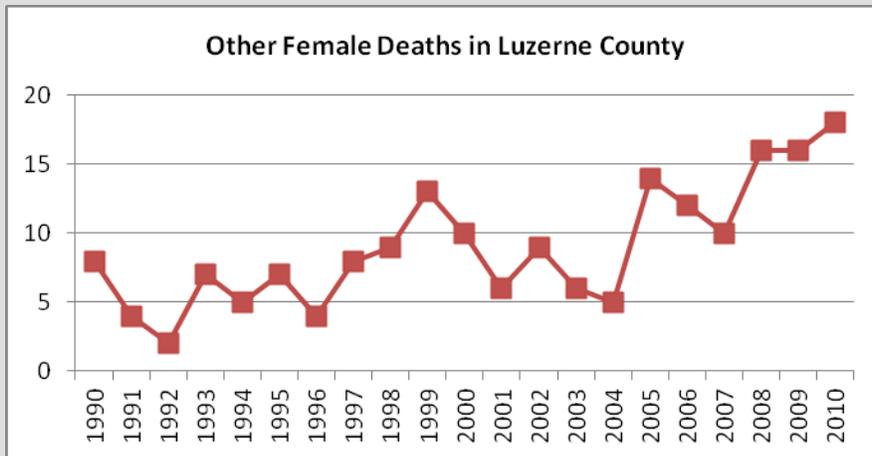
Other Male Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County reported 239 Other male deaths. The county recorded a high of 23 Other male deaths in 2008 and a low of four in 1991. This demographic’s death rate has remained fairly steady over the period examined, despite the graph’s spikes, which look significant due to the small overall population.



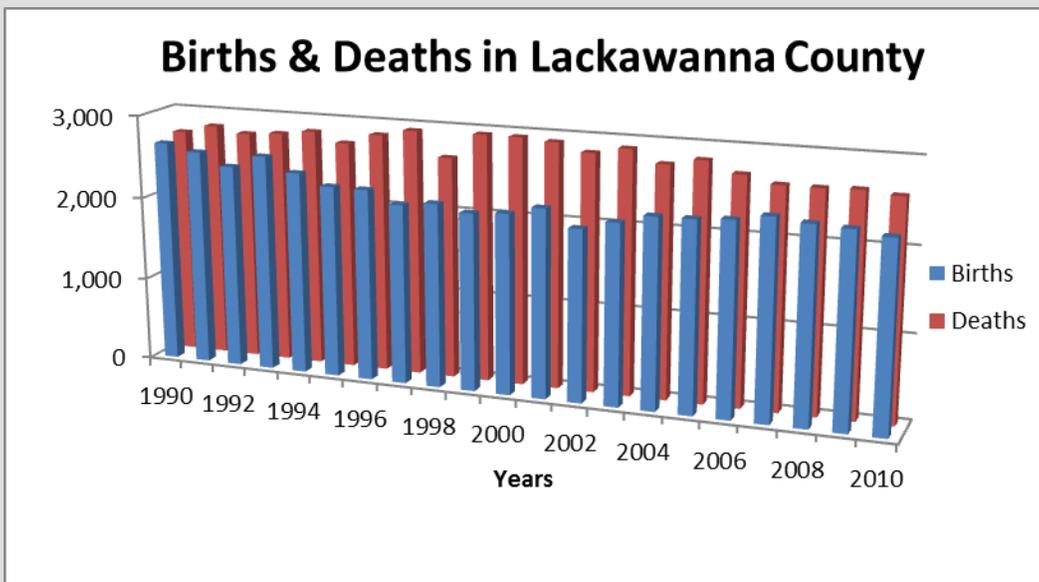
Other Female Deaths

From 1990 to 2010, Luzerne County recorded 189 Other female deaths. The county reported its greatest number of Other female deaths in 2010, and its lowest of just two in 1992. Overall, Luzerne County’s Other female deaths increased over the time period examined. In 1990, the county reported eight Other female deaths, compared with eighteen in 2010.

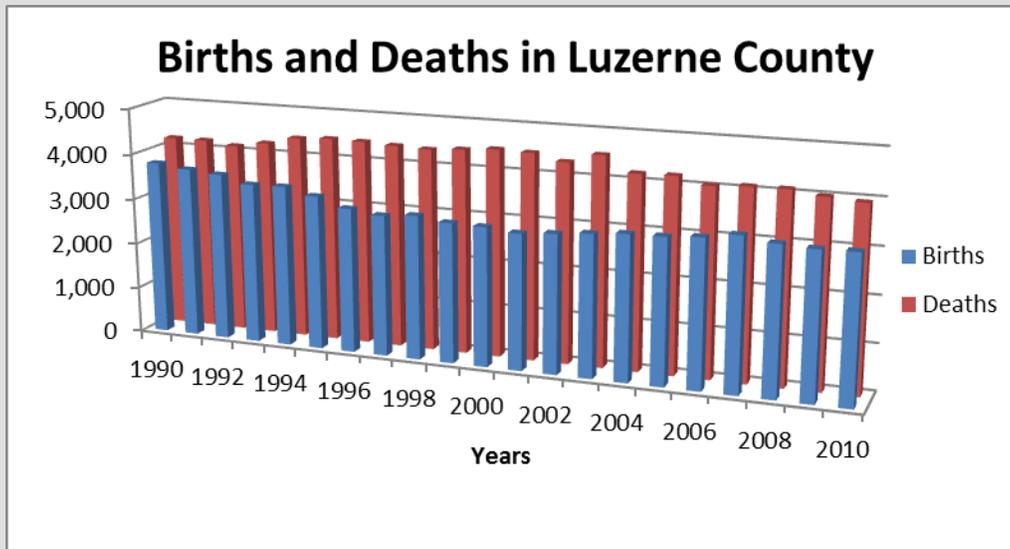


Conclusion

Until the 2010 U.S. Census, Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties' populations steadily declined for over 50 years. The increases while small are actually due to migration (people moving in and out of each county), rather than an increase in the birth rate and a decline in the death rate. As can be determined from the following two charts, the number of deaths exceeded the number of births in both counties for the entire study period. In Lackawanna County, in 1990 the difference between births and deaths was 61, by 1999 the difference grew to 830 and as of 2010 decreased to 351.



A similar pattern can be found in Luzerne County, however in larger proportions due to its larger population. The smallest difference was in 1991 with the number of deaths exceeding births by 418. The difference increased to 1,525 by 2001 and as of 2010, the difference decreased to 791.



The data does point to increasing diversity and in the non-Caucasian population – births are considerably exceeding deaths. The African American population and the “Other” population (comprised mainly of the Hispanic/Latino residents) shows that the overall births are higher than deaths, thereby increasing the diversity of the region and offsetting a portion of the number of deaths exceeding the number of births present in the Caucasian population.

Since 2002, more people have moved into Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties than have left. Data point to families with children moving into the region. As in-migration continues, the region is likely to see births increase. This will also eventually impact the region’s median age. Given that Baby Boomers are the region’s and the country’s largest demographic, it is unlikely that Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties will see dramatic drops in its recorded deaths. The data also present increasing diversity and a declining Caucasian population; the most significant racial/ethnic population increases occurred after 2000.