

## From the Institute for Women's Policy Research: The Status of Women in Pennsylvania, 2002: Highlights

Pennsylvania reflects both the advances and limited progress achieved by women in the United States. Women in Pennsylvania and the United States as a whole are seeing important changes in their lives and in their access to political, economic, and social rights. However, they by no means enjoy equality with men, and they still lack many of the legal guarantees that would allow them to achieve that equality. Women in Pennsylvania and the nation would benefit from stronger enforcement of equal opportunity laws, better political representation, adequate and affordable childcare, and other policies that would help improve their status.

<b>Chart 1: How Pennsylvania Ranks on Key Indicators</b>			
<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Nat'l Rank*</b>	<b>Regional Rank*</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Composite Political Participation Index</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>D-</b>
Women's Voter Registration, 1998 and 2000 (62.3%)	42	2	
Women's Voter Turnout, 1998 and 2000 (47.3%)	38	2	
Women in Elected Office Composite Index, 2002	46	3	
Women's Institutional Resources, 2002	16	2	
<b>Composite Employment and Earnings Index</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>C-</b>
Women's Median Annual Earnings, 1999 (\$26,884)	18	3	
Ratio of Women's to Men's Earnings, 1999 (70.1%)	37	2	
Women's Labor Force Participation, 2000 (57.1%)	43	2	
Women in Managerial and Professional Occupations, 1999 (30.6%)	29	3	

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Nat'l Rank*</b>	<b>Regional Rank*</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Composite Social and Economic Autonomy Index</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>C-</b>
Percent with Health Insurance Among Nonelderly Women, 2000 (89.9%)	6	1	
Educational Attainment: Percent of Women with Four or More Years of College, 1990 (15.3%)	34	3	
Percent of Businesses that are Women-Owned 1997 (23.2%)	35	2	
Percent of Women Above the Poverty Level, 1999 (89.5%)	21	2	
<b>Composite Reproductive Rights Index</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Composite Health and Well-Being Index</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>C</b>

See Appendix II in *The Status of Women in the States* for a detailed description of the methodology and sources used for the indices presented

here.

- The national rankings are of a possible 51, referring to the 50 states and the District of Columbia, except for the Political Participation indicators, which do not include the District of Columbia. The regional rankings are of a maximum of three and refer to the states in the Middle Atlantic region (NJ, NY, and PA).

Calculated by the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

**From the Conference Board of Canada:**

"[Diversity] elevates the board's strategic thinking and its ability to anticipate and manage risk."

**From the Center for Women's Business Research, 2003:**

Women are a prime engine of U.S. economic and business growth...

Nationwide, women are starting businesses at a rate 1.5 times faster than men. Women-owned firms are also creating jobs at a rate four times faster than other firms.

...but our region is missing out.

Between 1997 and 2002, Pittsburgh ranked 47<sup>th</sup> out of 50 major metropolitan areas in the number, employment and sales of women-owned firms.

**From Business Week, May 26, 2003:**

Women will constitute an increasing share of vital "knowledge capital."

...In every state, every income bracket, every racial and ethnic group, the most industrialized Western nations, women reign, earning an average 57% of all bachelor's degrees and 58% of all master's degrees in the United States alone.

**Excerpts from an article in *American Demographics* by Peter Francese  
"Brains & Gender"**

In 2003, there was virtually the same number of men as women ages 25 to 34 (19.56 million men versus 19.68 million women, a difference of about 115,000 or 0.6 percent), the Census Bureau reveals.

But, 25 percent more men in that age group than women never got a high school diploma, a difference of 560,000. There was also a greater number of men than women (660,000 or 12 percent more) who did not pursue higher education after graduating from high school.

The gender gap for college degrees is also widening. At the two-year college level, 24 percent more women than men ages 25 to 34 have earned an associate's degree, a difference of about 360,000. More women in that age cohort also have bachelor's degrees as well: 14 percent more, a difference of about 580,000. Less than 10 percent of men or women this age have graduate degrees, but women with advanced degrees exceed men by 21 percent, a difference of about 280,000.

In all, over 2 million men ages 25 to 34 could have earned a high school diploma, two-year, four-year or graduate degree if they had elected to stay in school as women did. About 42 percent of women in this age cohort have a college degree, for example, compared with less than 36 percent of men. According to the Census Bureau report, this gender gap in higher education did not exist 10 years ago.