Median Household Income for States: 2007 and 2008 American Community Surveys

American Community Survey Reports

By
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Introduction

This report is one of a series produced to highlight results from the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS), focusing on changes between the 2007 ACS and the 2008 ACS. The report series is designed to cover a variety of economic topics, such as poverty, occupation, home values, and labor force participation. This series provides information about the changing economic characteristics of the nation and states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The ACS also provides detailed estimates of demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics for congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities every year. A description of the ACS is provided in the text box "What Is the American Community Survey?"

This report presents data on household income at the national and state levels based on the 2007 ACS and 2008 ACS. Household income includes the income of the householder and all other people 15 years and older in the household, whether or not they are related to the householder. For comparisons of household income, this report focuses on the median—the point that divides the household income distribution into halves, one half with income above the median and the other with income below the median. The median is based on the income distribution of all households, including those with no income.

What Is the American Community Survey?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely demographic, social, economic, and housing data every year. It has an annual sample size of about 3 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters. The ACS is conducted in every county throughout the nation and every municipio in Puerto Rico, where it is called the Puerto Rico Community Survey.

Beginning in 2006, ACS data for 2005 were released for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. In 2008, the first set of multiyear estimates was released for data collected between January 2005 and December 2007. These 3-year estimates were published for geographic areas with populations of 20,000 and greater. The U.S. Census Bureau is planning to release the first 5-year estimates in late 2010 for the smallest geographic areas based on data collected between January 2005 and December 2009.
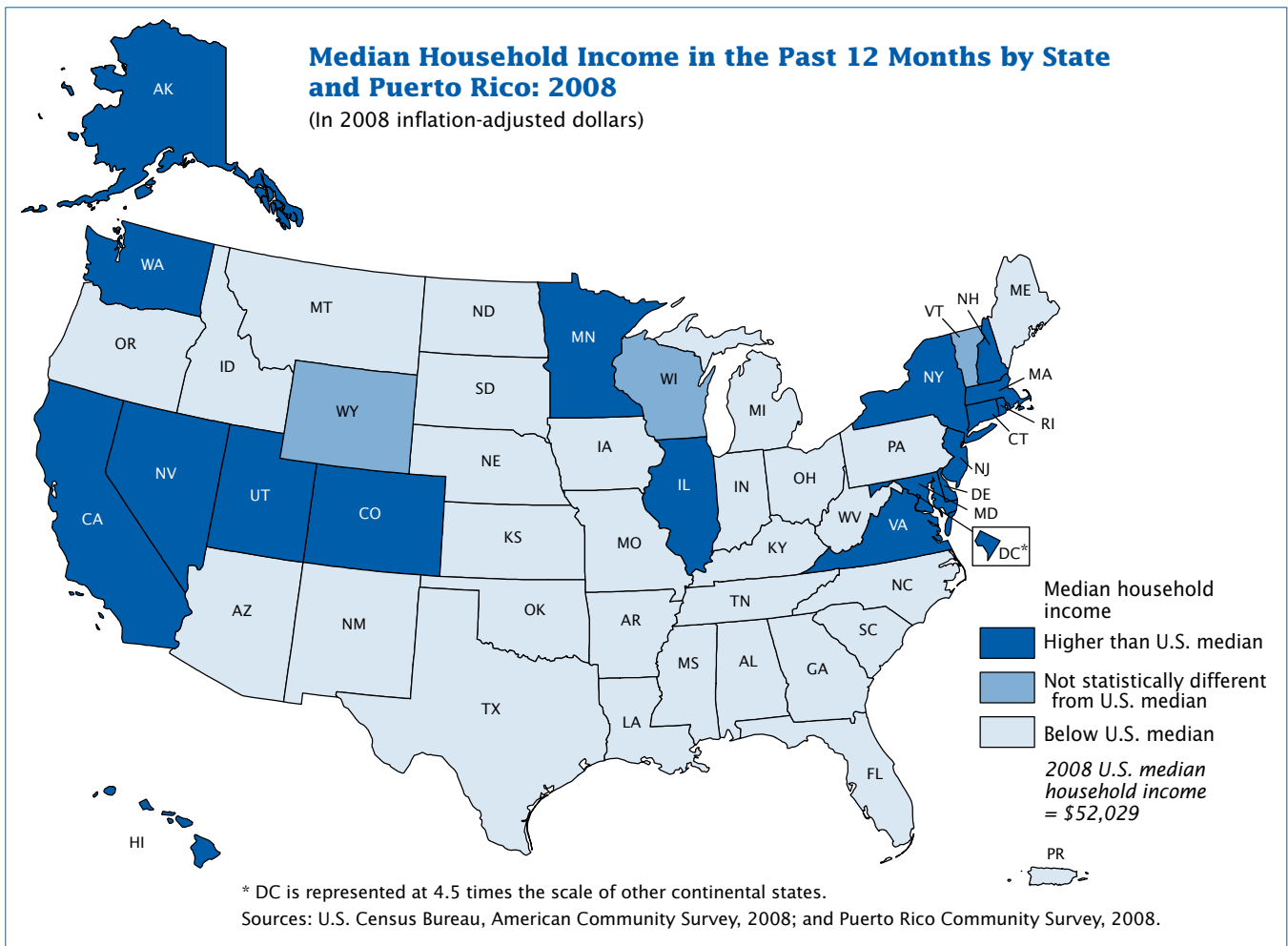
The data contained in this report are based on the ACS sample interviewed in 2007 and 2008. For information on the ACS sample design and other topics, visit <www.census.gov/acs/www>.

Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months by State and Puerto Rico: 2008

(In 2008 inflation-adjusted dollars)

Median household income

- Higher than U.S. median
- Not statistically different from U.S. median
- Below U.S. median

2008 U.S. median household income = $52,029

* DC is represented at 4.5 times the scale of other continental states.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008; and Puerto Rico Community Survey, 2008.

In the 2008 ACS, information on income was collected between January and December 2008, and people were asked about income for the previous 12 months (the income reference period), yielding a total income time span covering 23 months (January 2007 to November 2008).[1] Therefore, adjacent ACS years have income reference months in common, and comparing the 2008 ACS with the 2007 ACS estimates is not an exact comparison of the economic conditions in 2008 with those in 2007.[2]

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[1] All income data are inflation-adjusted to 2008 dollars.

[2] For a discussion of overlapping reference periods and related issues, see Hogan, Howard, "Measuring Population Change Using the American Community Survey," *Applied Demography in the 21st Century*, eds. Steven H. Murdock and David A. Swanson. Springer Netherlands, 2008.

The data contained in this report are based on ACS samples that were selected for interview in 2007 and 2008 and are estimates of the actual figures that could have been obtained by interviewing the entire population using the same methodology. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless noted otherwise. Due to rounding, some details may not sum to totals. For information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, please see the "2008 ACS Accuracy of the Data" document located at <www.census.gov/acs/www /Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008 .pdf>.

Household Income

Real median household income in the United States fell between the 2007 ACS and the 2008 ACS. Household income decreased 1.2 percent, from $52,673 to $52,029.[3]

The median household income estimates in the 2008 ACS ranged from a median of $70,545 for Maryland to $37,790 for Mississippi.[4]

Real median household income rose between the 2007 ACS and the 2008 ACS in 5 states compared to 33 states that showed an increase between the 2006 ACS and the

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[3] Income in 2008 dollars.

[4] The median household income for Maryland was not statistically different from the median household income for New Jersey. The median household income for Mississippi was not statistically different from the median household income for West Virginia.

2007 ACS. For the states that experienced increases, two states were in the South, Louisiana and Texas; two were in the Northeast, New York and New Jersey; and one was in the Midwest, Kansas.

Real median household income decreased between the 2007 ACS and 2008 ACS in five states—Arizona, Indiana, Michigan, California, and Florida—compared to only one state, Michigan, which experienced a decline between the 2006 ACS and the 2007 ACS.

In 40 states and the District of Columbia, real median household income in the 2008 ACS was not statistically different from that in the 2007 ACS.

Median household incomes in 18 states and the District of Columbia were above the U.S. median, while 29 state medians were below it. Three states had median household incomes that were not statistically different from the U.S. median.

Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months by State and Puerto Rico: 2007 and 2008

(In 2008 inflation-adjusted dollars. Data are limited to the household population and exclude the population living in institutions, college dormitories, and other group quarters. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/acs/www*)

Area	2007 median household income (dollars)		2008 median household income (dollars)		Change in median income (2008 less 2007)			
					Dollars		Percent	
	Estimate	Margin of error[1] (±)	Estimate	Margin of error[1] (±)	Estimate	Margin of error[1] (±)	Estimate	Margin of error[1] (±)
United States	**52,673**	**85**	**52,029**	**73**	**−644**	**112**	***−1.2**	**0.2**
Alabama	41,889	465	42,666	682	777	825	1.8	2.0
Alaska	66,831	1,603	68,460	1,917	1,629	2,499	2.4	3.7
Arizona	51,726	515	50,958	511	−768	726	*−1.5	1.4
Arkansas	39,650	705	38,815	702	−835	994	−2.1	2.5
California	62,280	345	61,021	236	−1,259	418	*−2.0	0.7
Colorado	57,393	741	56,993	623	−400	968	−0.7	1.7
Connecticut	68,489	859	68,595	1,131	106	1,420	0.2	2.1
Delaware	56,870	1,643	57,989	1,601	1,119	2,294	1.9	4.0
District of Columbia	56,170	2,171	57,936	2,402	1,766	3,237	3.1	5.7
Florida	49,696	323	47,778	351	−1,918	477	*−3.9	1.0
Georgia	51,006	430	50,861	410	−145	595	−0.3	1.2
Hawaii	66,179	2,005	67,214	1,868	1,035	2,740	1.6	4.1
Idaho	48,035	826	47,576	961	−459	1,267	−1.0	2.7
Illinois.	56,187	381	56,235	363	48	526	0.1	0.9
Indiana.	49,330	414	47,966	539	−1,364	680	*−2.8	1.4
Iowa.	49,205	617	48,980	643	−225	891	−0.5	1.8
Kansas.	49,347	660	50,177	478	830	815	*1.7	1.6
Kentucky	41,615	524	41,538	446	−77	689	−0.2	1.7
Louisiana	42,135	481	43,733	631	1,598	794	*3.7	1.8
Maine.	47,765	805	46,581	892	−1,184	1,201	−2.5	2.5
Maryland	70,759	761	70,545	622	−214	983	−0.3	1.4
Massachusetts.	64,815	502	65,401	597	586	780	0.9	1.2
Michigan	49,807	375	48,591	421	−1,216	563	*−2.5	1.1
Minnesota	57,990	623	57,288	520	−702	812	−1.2	1.4
Mississippi	37,515	784	37,790	676	275	1,035	0.7	2.7
Missouri.	46,766	485	46,867	373	101	612	0.2	1.3
Montana.	44,998	1,033	43,654	1,263	−1,344	1,632	−3.0	3.7
Nebraska	48,942	761	49,693	811	751	1,112	1.5	2.3
Nevada	57,114	1,035	56,361	793	−753	1,304	−1.3	2.3
New Hampshire	64,797	1,111	63,731	1,642	−1,066	1,983	−1.7	3.1
New Jersey	69,585	595	70,378	516	793	787	*1.1	1.1
New Mexico	42,710	877	43,508	912	798	1,266	1.9	2.9
New York	55,476	382	56,033	380	557	539	*1.0	1.0
North Carolina	46,193	454	46,549	423	356	620	0.8	1.3
North Dakota	45,475	1,162	45,685	974	210	1,516	0.5	3.3
Ohio.	48,385	374	47,988	317	−397	490	−0.8	1.0
Oklahoma	43,005	460	42,822	713	−183	849	−0.4	2.0
Oregon.	50,642	598	50,169	523	−473	795	−0.9	1.6
Pennsylvania	50,457	288	50,713	260	256	388	0.5	0.8
Rhode Island	55,414	1,432	55,701	1,791	287	2,293	0.5	4.1
South Carolina.	44,866	613	44,625	633	−241	882	−0.5	2.0
South Dakota.	44,958	934	46,032	1,172	1,074	1,499	2.4	3.3
Tennessee	43,991	392	43,614	425	−377	578	−0.9	1.3
Texas	49,420	325	50,043	220	623	392	*1.3	0.8
Utah.	57,224	839	56,633	705	−591	1,096	−1.0	1.9
Vermont	51,741	1,293	52,104	980	363	1,623	0.7	3.1
Virginia.	61,885	617	61,233	435	−652	754	−1.1	1.2
Washington	57,791	529	58,078	575	287	782	0.5	1.3
West Virginia	38,387	810	37,989	1,016	−398	1,300	−1.0	3.4
Wisconsin	52,519	409	52,094	357	−425	543	−0.8	1.0
Wyoming	53,664	1,626	53,207	1,992	−457	2,572	−0.9	4.8
Puerto Rico	18,487	376	18,401	316	−86	492	−0.5	2.7

* Statistically different from zero at the 90 percent confidence level.

[1] Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007 and 2008; and Puerto Rico Community Survey, 2007 and 2008.