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

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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.

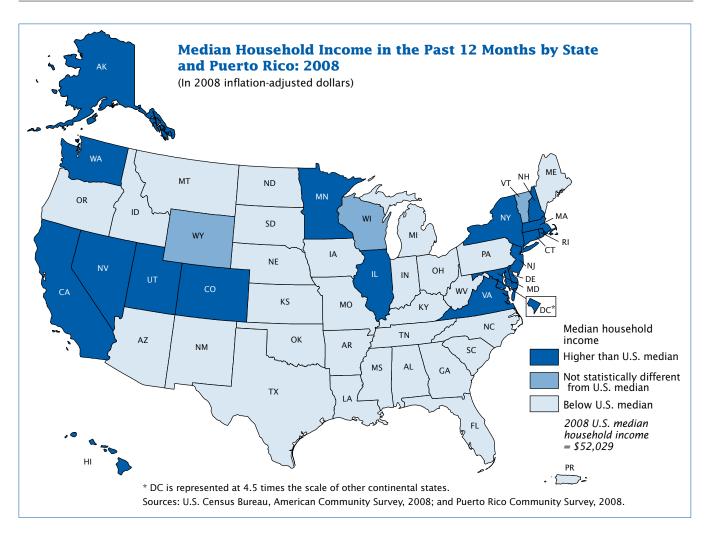
What Is the American Community Survey?

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>.

By Jessica Semega



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). 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.

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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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.

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.

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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)

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

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

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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.