

Census Bureau releases annual data on income and poverty: re-emerging patterns of inequality

On Wednesday, the Census Bureau released its annual data on income and poverty in the U.S. Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of the data shows that household income growth slowed markedly in 2017—with median income increasing only 1.8%, to \$61,372—and that growth was stronger for those at the top than for those at the middle. And, 10 years after the start of the Great Recession in 2008, black and Asian households have yet to recover lost income.

EPI also found that poverty declined modestly in 2017 and that government programs, such as Social Security and food stamps, kept millions out of poverty.

In 2015 and 2016, income growth was stronger for black and Hispanic households than for white households, but that trend has not continued.

Today's release shows that while in 2017, growth in Hispanic median household income continued to outpace that of white non-Hispanics, resulting in a slight narrowing of the Hispanic-white income gap, income growth stalled for median black households, reversing recent progress in closing the black-white income gap.

The national poverty rate, as measured by the ACS, fell 0.6 percentage points to 13.4 percent. This is 0.4 percentage points above the ACS poverty rate for the country in 2007, and 1.2 percentage points above the rate from 2000.

Indiana Poverty rate, 2017 13.5%

- Indiana Change in poverty rate, 2000 to 2017: +3.4%
- Change 2007 to 2017: +1.2%
- Change in poverty rate, 2016 to 2017: -0.6%
- 2017 poverty rate relative to national average: 0.1%

<https://www.epi.org/blog/poverty-declines-in-most-states-in-2017/>

Real Median Household Income: 1967 to 2017

Median household income was \$61,400 in 2017, an increase in real terms of 1.8 percent from the 2016 median of \$60,300. This is the third consecutive annual increase in median household income.

Poverty Rate and Number in Poverty: 1959 to 2017

The official poverty rate in 2017 was 12.3 percent, down 0.4 percentage points from 2016. In 2017, there were 39.7 million people in poverty, not statistically different from the number in poverty in 2016.

- **By the Numbers: Income and Poverty, 2017**
- **Household income growth slowed markedly in 2017 and was stronger for those at the top, while earnings declined slightly**
- **Black workers have made no progress in closing earnings gaps with white men since 2000**
- **Government programs kept tens of millions out of poverty in 2017**
- **Household incomes in 2017 stayed on existing trends in most states; incomes in 21 states are still below their pre-recession levels**
- **Poverty declined in most states in 2017**

This issue of the SEWCTF Newsletter is a compilation of ideas and quotes from “Well worn patterns of inequality re-emerge on census data for 2017. <https://www.epi.org/press/well-worn-patterns-of-inequality-reemerge-in-census-data-for-2017/>