Household Income for States: 2010 and 2011

American Community Survey Briefs

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INTRODUCTION

Estimates from the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2011 ACS show household income continues to decline. This report presents data on median household income at the national and state levels based on the 2010 and 2011 ACS.[1] The ACS provides detailed estimates of demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics for states, 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?"

In the 2011 ACS, information on income was collected between January and December 2011 and people were asked about income for the previous 12 months (the income reference period). This yielded a total income time span covering 23 months (January 2010 to November 2011). Therefore, adjacent ACS years have income reference months in common and comparisons of 2011 economic conditions with those in 2010 will not be precise.[2]

Household income: Includes income of the householder and all other people 15 years and older in the household, whether or not they are related to the householder.

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.

Gini Index: Summary measure of income inequality. The Gini Index varies from 0 to 1, with a 0 indicating perfect equality, where there is a proportional distribution of income. A 1 indicates perfect inequality, where one household has all the income and all others have no income.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Real median household income in the United States fell between the 2010 ACS and the 2011 ACS, decreasing by 1.3 percent from $51,144 to $50,502 (see Appendix Table 1).[3]

State estimates from the 2011 ACS ranged from $70,004 in Maryland to $36,919 in Mississippi (see Figure 1). Median household incomes were lower than the U.S. median in 27 states and higher in 19 states and the District of Columbia. Nebraska, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin had median household incomes which were not significantly different from the U.S. median.

Between the 2010 ACS and the 2011 ACS, Vermont was the only state that showed an increase in real median household income. The median household income in Vermont rose from $50,707 in the 2010 ACS to $52,776 in the 2011 ACS. No state had an increase

[1] The text of this report discusses data for the United States, including the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, collected with the Puerto Rico Community Survey, are shown in Appendix Table 1, Figure 1, and Figure 2.

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

[3] All income data from 2010 are inflation-adjusted to 2011 dollars. "Real" refers to income after adjusting for inflation.

U.S. Department of Commerce
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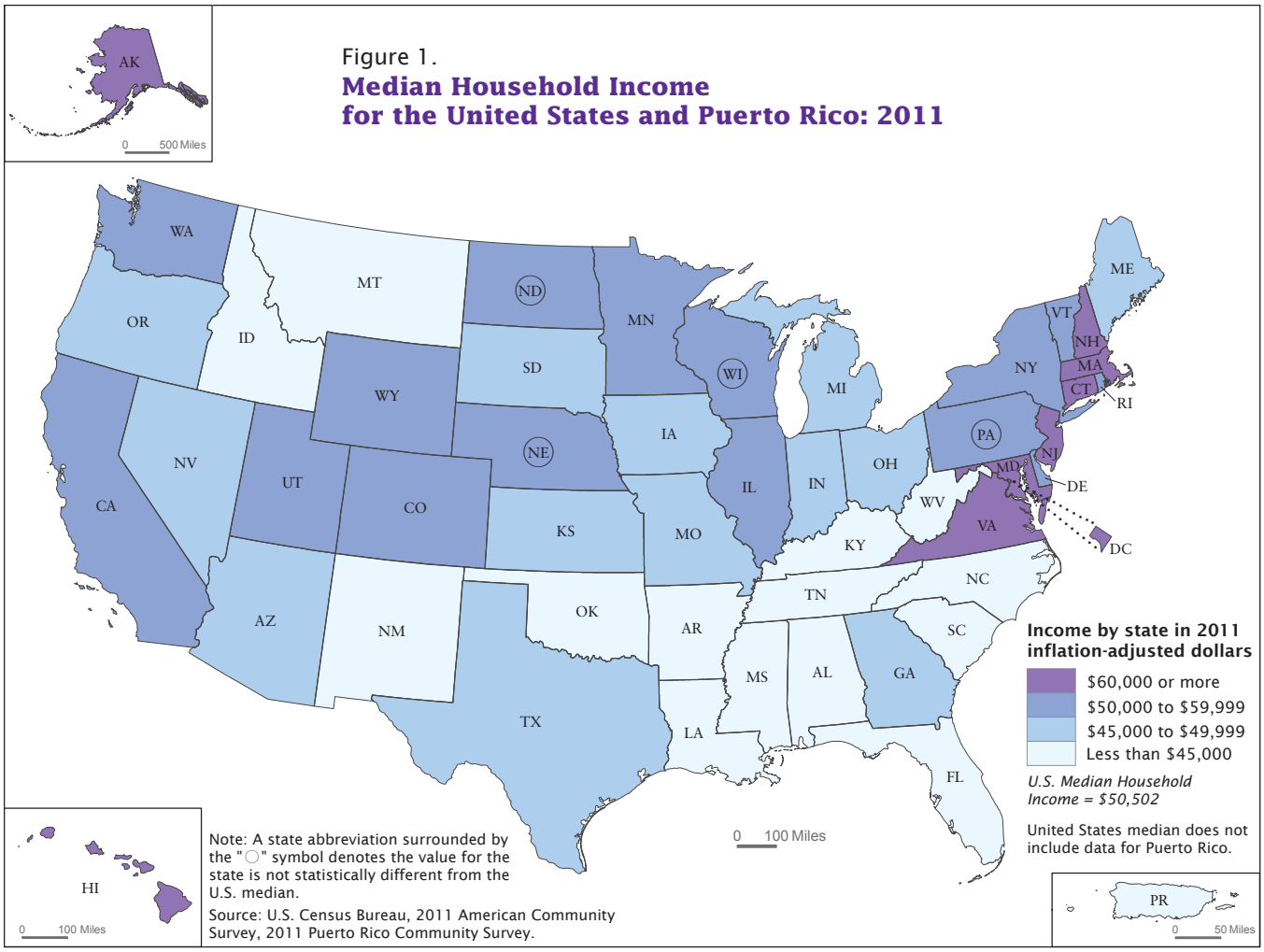
Figure 1.
Median Household Income for the United States and Puerto Rico: 2011



Note: A state abbreviation surrounded by the "○" symbol denotes the value for the state is not statistically different from the U.S. median.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey, 2011 Puerto Rico Community Survey.

between the 2009 ACS and 2010 ACS. Looking back to the 2008 and 2009 ACS, North Dakota was the only state to experience an increase in median household income (5.1 percent). Five states (Kansas, Louisiana, New York, New Jersey, and Texas) had increases between the 2007 ACS and the 2008 ACS, and between the 2006 ACS and 2007 ACS, 33 states had increases in median household income.

Real median household income decreased between the 2010 and 2011 ACS in 18 states. These decreases range from 1.1 percent (Ohio) to 6.0 percent (Nevada). Fewer states showed decreases between the 2010 ACS and 2011 ACS when compared with changes between the 2009 ACS and the 2010 ACS where 35 states showed decreases in median household income. Between the 2008 ACS and the 2009 ACS, 34 states experienced decreases and between the 2007 ACS and the 2008 ACS, five states had decreases.

For 31 states and the District of Columbia, real median household income in the 2011 ACS was not statistically different from that in the 2010 ACS.

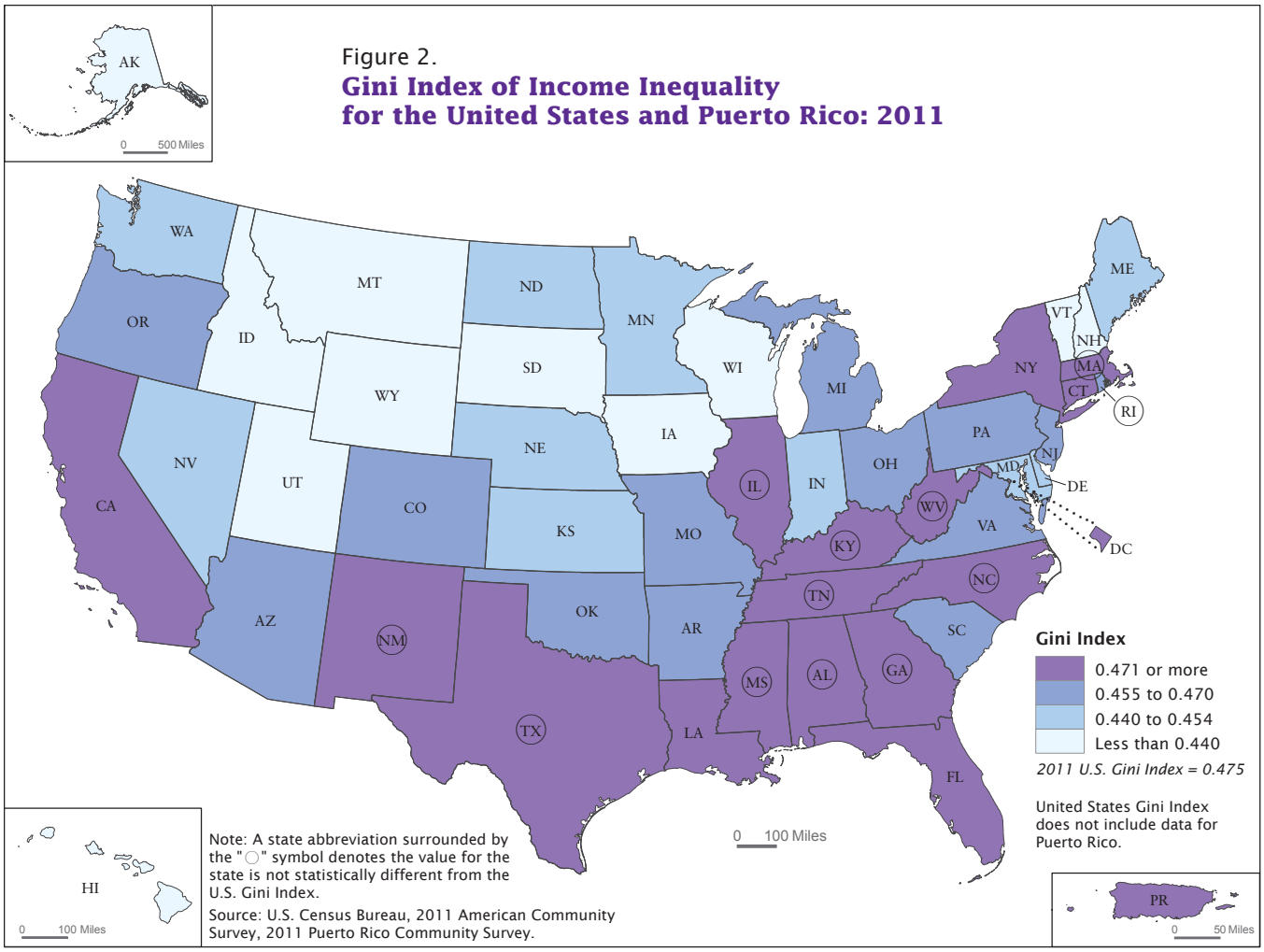
INCOME INEQUALITY

The Gini Index for the United States in the 2011 ACS (0.475) was significantly higher than in the 2010 ACS (0.469). This increase suggests more income inequality across the country. The Gini Index for the 2011 ACS increased in 20 states. The remaining 30 states and the District of Columbia showed no statistically significant change between the 2010 ACS and the 2011 ACS. No state had a decrease in the Gini Index between the 2010 ACS and 2011 ACS. This increase in 20 states between 2010 ACS and 2011 ACS can be compared with the change between the 2009 ACS and 2010 ACS when there was an increase in Gini Indexes in nine states.

Gini Indexes from the 2011 ACS ranged from 0.534 in the District of Columbia to 0.408 in Wyoming (Figure 2).[4] Five states

[4] The Gini Indexes for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are not statistically different. The Gini Index for Wyoming was not statistically different from the Gini Index for Alaska.

Figure 2.
Gini Index of Income Inequality for the United States and Puerto Rico: 2011



Note: A state abbreviation surrounded by the "◯" symbol denotes the value for the state is not statistically different from the U.S. Gini Index.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey, 2011 Puerto Rico Community Survey.

and the District of Columbia had a Gini Index higher than that for the United States—California, Connecticut, Florida, Louisiana, and New York. There were 33 states with Gini Indexes lower than the U.S. Index. The remaining 12 states had a Gini Index which was not statistically different from the U.S. Index.

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 for the nation, states, congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities every year. It has an annual sample size of about 3.3 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters (e.g., nursing facilities and prisons). 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. For information on the ACS sample design and other topics, visit <www.census.gov/acs/www>.

SOURCE AND ACCURACY

The data presented in this report are based on the ACS sample interviewed in 2011. The estimates based on this sample approximate the actual values and represent the entire household and group quarter population. Sampling error is the difference between an estimate based in a sample and the corresponding value that would be obtained if the estimate were based on the entire population (as from a census). Measures of the sampling errors are provided in the form of margins of error for all estimates

included in this report. All comparative statements in this report have undergone statistical testing, and comparisons are significant at the 90 percent level unless otherwise noted. In addition to sampling error, nonsampling error may be introduced during any of the operations used to collect and process survey data such as editing, reviewing, or keying data from questionnaires. For more information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, please see the 2011 ACS Accuracy of the Data document located at <www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/Accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2011.pdf>.

Appendix Table 1.

Median Household Income and Gini Index in the Past 12 Months by State and Puerto Rico: 2010 and 2011

(In 2011 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/Downloads/data_documentation/Accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2011.pdf*)

Area	2010 ACS median household income (dollars)		2011 ACS median household income (dollars)		Change in median income		2010 ACS Gini coefficients		2011 ACS Gini coefficients		Change in Gini coefficients	
					Percent							
	Estimate	Margin of error (±)[1]	Estimate	Margin of error (±)[1]	Estimate	Margin of error (±)[1]	Estimate	Margin of error (±)[1]	Estimate	Margin of error (±)[1]	Estimate	Margin of error (±)[1]
United States	**51,144**	**65**	**50,502**	**73**	***–1.3**	**0.2**	**0.469**	**0.001**	**0.475**	**0.001**	***0.006**	**0.001**
Alabama	41,459	518	41,415	550	–0.1	1.8	0.472	0.004	0.474	0.004	0.002	0.006
Alaska	66,311	1952	67,825	1,948	2.3	4.2	0.422	0.010	0.410	0.012	–0.012	0.015
Arizona	48,108	635	46,709	554	*–2.9	1.7	0.455	0.004	0.460	0.005	0.005	0.006
Arkansas	39,375	576	38,758	761	–1.6	2.4	0.458	0.007	0.468	0.006	*0.010	0.009
California	59,540	328	57,287	279	*–3.8	0.7	0.471	0.002	0.481	0.002	*0.010	0.003
Colorado	55,580	703	55,387	605	–0.3	1.7	0.457	0.005	0.459	0.005	0.002	0.007
Connecticut	65,883	942	65,753	854	–0.2	1.9	0.486	0.006	0.486	0.005	–	0.008
Delaware	57,289	1592	58,814	1,586	2.7	4.0	0.440	0.010	0.440	0.011	0.001	0.015
District of Columbia	62,009	1713	63,124	2,407	1.8	4.8	0.532	0.011	0.534	0.015	0.002	0.019
Florida	45,609	285	44,299	406	*–2.9	1.1	0.474	0.003	0.481	0.004	*0.007	0.005
Georgia	47,659	563	46,007	454	*–3.5	1.5	0.468	0.003	0.477	0.005	*0.009	0.006
Hawaii	65,191	1514	61,821	1,035	*–5.2	2.7	0.433	0.008	0.430	0.008	–0.003	0.011
Idaho	44,867	997	43,341	1,320	–3.4	3.6	0.433	0.009	0.432	0.009	–0.001	0.012
Illinois	54,644	414	53,234	511	*–2.6	1.2	0.465	0.003	0.472	0.004	*0.007	0.004
Indiana	45,898	435	46,438	455	1.2	1.4	0.440	0.004	0.446	0.005	0.006	0.007
Iowa	49,401	577	49,427	693	0.1	1.8	0.427	0.005	0.434	0.005	0.007	0.007
Kansas	49,687	797	48,964	756	–1.5	2.2	0.445	0.004	0.444	0.006	–0.001	0.007
Kentucky	40,948	504	41,141	464	0.5	1.7	0.466	0.004	0.471	0.007	0.005	0.008
Louisiana	43,804	813	41,734	528	*–4.7	2.1	0.475	0.006	0.484	0.006	*0.009	0.008
Maine	47,069	1008	46,033	802	–2.2	2.7	0.437	0.007	0.451	0.009	*0.014	0.011
Maryland	70,976	934	70,004	804	–1.4	1.7	0.443	0.004	0.447	0.004	0.004	0.006
Massachusetts	63,967	550	62,859	902	*–1.7	1.6	0.475	0.004	0.477	0.003	0.002	0.005
Michigan	46,692	347	45,981	330	*–1.5	1.0	0.451	0.003	0.461	0.003	*0.010	0.004
Minnesota	56,936	512	56,954	488	–	1.2	0.440	0.005	0.444	0.004	0.004	0.006
Mississippi	37,838	824	36,919	583	–2.4	2.6	0.468	0.006	0.474	0.006	0.006	0.009
Missouri	45,600	489	45,247	529	–0.8	1.6	0.455	0.005	0.461	0.005	0.006	0.007
Montana	44,145	1131	44,222	1,078	0.2	3.5	0.435	0.008	0.435	0.009	–	0.013
Nebraska	49,770	755	50,296	687	1.1	2.1	0.432	0.007	0.447	0.009	*0.015	0.012
Nevada	52,045	901	48,927	1,020	*–6.0	2.5	0.448	0.007	0.453	0.009	0.005	0.012
New Hampshire	62,770	1360	62,647	1,415	–0.2	3.1	0.425	0.007	0.435	0.009	0.010	0.012
New Jersey	69,829	755	67,458	721	*–3.4	1.5	0.464	0.003	0.469	0.003	*0.005	0.005
New Mexico	43,326	1011	41,963	803	*–3.1	2.9	0.464	0.007	0.482	0.009	*0.018	0.012
New York	55,712	349	55,246	398	–0.8	0.9	0.499	0.003	0.503	0.003	*0.004	0.004
North Carolina	44,726	347	43,916	519	*–1.8	1.4	0.464	0.003	0.472	0.004	*0.008	0.005
North Dakota	50,026	1361	51,704	1,260	3.4	3.8	0.433	0.011	0.445	0.010	0.012	0.015
Ohio	46,275	301	45,749	319	*–1.1	0.9	0.452	0.003	0.459	0.003	*0.007	0.004
Oklahoma	43,239	541	43,225	607	–	1.9	0.454	0.005	0.461	0.004	*0.007	0.006
Oregon	47,989	621	46,816	711	*–2.4	1.9	0.449	0.005	0.459	0.007	*0.010	0.008
Pennsylvania	50,548	340	50,228	292	–0.6	0.9	0.461	0.003	0.461	0.002	–	0.004
Rhode Island	53,879	1441	53,636	1,699	–0.5	4.1	0.467	0.007	0.467	0.011	–	0.014
South Carolina	43,311	526	42,367	559	*–2.2	1.8	0.461	0.009	0.465	0.005	0.004	0.007
South Dakota	46,993	1261	48,321	1,598	2.8	4.4	0.442	0.005	0.432	0.010	–0.010	0.015
Tennessee	42,453	499	41,693	423	*–1.8	1.5	0.468	0.012	0.476	0.005	*0.008	0.006
Texas	50,010	281	49,392	391	*–1.2	1.0	0.469	0.004	0.477	0.003	*0.008	0.004
Utah	56,227	610	55,869	805	–0.6	1.2	0.419	0.002	0.425	0.007	0.006	0.010
Vermont	50,707	1405	52,776	1,420	*4.0	4.0	0.444	0.007	0.431	0.010	–0.013	0.013
Virginia	62,173	552	61,882	507	–0.5	1.2	0.459	0.009	0.463	0.004	0.004	0.005
Washington	57,201	542	56,835	569	–0.6	1.4	0.441	0.003	0.445	0.004	0.004	0.005
West Virginia	39,444	971	38,482	875	–2.4	3.3	0.451	0.004	0.472	0.009	*0.021	0.011
Wisconsin	50,293	394	50,395	428	0.2	1.2	0.430	0.007	0.437	0.004	*0.007	0.005
Wyoming	55,213	1785	56,322	1,890	2.0	4.7	0.423	0.004	0.408	0.012	–0.015	0.021
Puerto Rico	19,370	306	18,660	358	*–3.7	2.4	0.537	0.017	0.531	0.006	–0.006	0.009

– Represents or rounds to zero.

* 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. This number when added to and subtracted from the estimate forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2011 American Community Surveys, 2010 and 2011 Puerto Rico Community Surveys.