

Income Distribution and Poverty Trends

Overview

Utah's Census 2000 economic indicators confirm that the 1990s was a decade of significant economic growth for the state. Many of the state's indicators surpass even those of the nation, attesting to its remarkable economic success during that period. Although these measures demonstrate economic growth for Utah as a whole, they tell us little about whether or not the economic expansion of the 1990s benefited all sectors within the state. Income distribution and poverty trends show that, although not ideal, Utah's economic growth was more equitable than the nation's, as well as most states. Significant income growth occurred in all of Utah's income groups, with the state's lowest-fifth households reflecting the second highest income growth between 1989 and 1999. Utah ranked highest¹ among all states in its proportion of households with "middle range" incomes, a strong testimony to its substantive middle class. The state's poverty data further demonstrates that the trend of increasing economic disparity that characterized most of the 1980s, slowed down in the 1990s. The proportion of "severely poor," "near poor," and "officially non-poor, but needy" Utahns declined, as did the state's overall poverty rate. Various poverty measures place the state at much lower rankings than a majority of other states, since the 1990 census. Utah fares especially well in the alleviation of poverty among its most vulnerable populations -- children, the elderly, as well as female-headed households.

Standard Census Economic Measures - How Has Utah Fared?

Census 2000 income and poverty data reveal several notable trends on Utah's economic growth that confirm the state's success vis-à-vis other states as well as the nation. While Utah's median household income was 15th among all states in 1999, it ranked 4th in terms of growth since 1989. Comparisons with the national average placed Utah's median household income below the United States in 1989 (98% of the national median household income) and superseding it (102% of the national median household income) a decade later. Utah's median family income (\$51,022) also superseded the national average (\$50,046), reflecting an increase of 14.2%, 4th highest in growth, since 1989. While Utah ranked 40th in per capita income in the 2000 census, it ranked first among all states in terms of growth in per capita income since the 1990 census.² Poverty rates among all categories -- individuals (9.4%), families (6.5%), and female-headed households (22.1%) -- also declined since 1989, placing Utah among the 13 lowest states in poverty.

Measuring Economic Equality

While changes in these standard census measures help us gauge a region's overall economic growth over any given period of time,³ they tell us little about whether or not this growth was holistic in nature. That is, did it benefit all of the income groups within the state, or only a few? Did it result in greater income disparity or equality between groups? In order to answer these questions, we need to take a closer look at Utah's income distribution trends over the past two censuses. Two methods have been used to assess Utah's income distribution trends between the 1990 and 2000 censuses,⁴ as well as to compare Utah's trends with those of the nation. One approach is to compare the 1989 and 1999 aggregate shares

of income received by each fifth of Utah's households, as a proportion of Utah's total aggregate income. In this method, households are ranked from lowest to highest on the basis of income and then divided into equal groups of fifths, or quintiles. The average income of each -- lowest-fifth, second-fifth, third-fifth, fourth-fifth, and highest fifth -- quintile is then derived, and aggregate incomes of each of the quintiles are calculated on the basis of these derived incomes. An ideal income distribution trend (reflecting 100% equality) occurs when each quintile (20% or fifth) of households receives a quintile (20% or fifth) share of the aggregate income. The closer the distribution pattern to this ideal, the more equitable the income distribution. The purpose of this approach is to see whether income distribution trends have become closer, or further apart from this ideal over time. Another method is to compare the growth rate of the average income of each of the quintiles over time.⁵ Did the average income of each of the quintiles grow at more or less the same rate, or were there significant differences? Comparisons of income distribution trends between states have been made by computing the following income categories of households as a proportion of the total number of households in the state: "low," "middle-range," and "high."

Income Distribution Trends in Utah

Income distribution data over the past two censuses show that, although not ideal, Utah's economic growth was more equal than that of the nation, as well as most states. Significant income growth occurred in all of Utah's income groups, with Utah's lowest fifth households reflecting the second highest income growth between 1989 and 1999. In 1999, only five other states had a smaller proportion of "low-income" households (with incomes less than \$25,000) than Utah. Moreover, Utah's lower income households averaged significantly higher incomes than their national counterparts. Utah's income distribution trends in 1989⁶ and 1999 also reflect the presence of a substantive middle-class. The state ranked first in the proportion of households with "middle range" incomes in both years.

Utah's 1999 Income Distribution More Equal Than the Nation.

Utah's income distribution is more equitable than that of the United States. Utah's lowest-fifth, second-fifth, as well as the middle-fifth households demonstrated higher proportions of the state aggregate income (8.0%, 13.4%, and 19.5%, respectively), than did their national counterparts (6.4%, 11.9%, and 18.6% of national aggregate income, respectively). These trends were reversed for the higher household quintiles, where the state's fourth-fifth and highest-fifth households had lower proportions of the aggregate income (28.0% and 31.1%, and respectively) than their national counterparts (28.7% and 34.4% respectively). Utah's greater equality across the different income groups is further demonstrated when we compare the average incomes of each of Utah's household quintiles to those of the nation's. In 1999, the average income of Utah's lowest-fifth households was 124% of the nation's lowest-fifth households. In fact, in each of the three lower household quintiles, Utah's average incomes (\$22,756, \$38,218, and \$55,616) were higher than those of their national counterparts (\$18,328,

¹ State rankings throughout this chapter include the District of Columbia.

² Utah's low per capita income ranking can be attributed to the fact that the state has the highest number of children per household. Per capita income is a poor measure for comparing incomes between places, or over time, when there are major differences in the number of children per household. This indicator makes the places with more children look poorer.

³ All analyses of income growth rates are based on inflation-adjusted data.

⁴ Income data collected in the 1990 and 2000 censuses are for the years 1989 and 1999.

⁵ In some instances, trends among the top 5% of households have also been analyzed.

⁶ For the 1989 analysis, see Hachman, Frank. 1993. Utah is Not a State of Low-Income Households: It is a State With Relatively Few High Income Households." Utah Economic and Business Review. Vol. 53. No. 1. pp. 1-12.

\$33,842, and \$52,552 respectively). In the fourth and highest household quintiles, these trends are reversed, with Utah's incomes (\$80,293 and \$81,167) averaging lower than those of their national counterparts (\$88,336 and \$97,418 respectively).

Has Utah Become More, or Less Equal Over the Years? An analysis of the distribution of Utah's aggregate income in 1989 and 1999 reveals that income distribution trends across the state's household quintiles have more or less remained the same over time. With the exception of the highest fifth households (that showed an increase of 1.2%, from 29.9% to 31.1% of the total state aggregate income), changes in the proportion of the state aggregate income across each of the household quintiles were less than 1%. While these figures don't show a narrowing of the income gap, they do demonstrate that the trend towards growing income inequality that characterized much of the 1980s leveled off during the 1990s.

Income Growth Trends Among Utah's Households. All of Utah's household quintiles experienced significant income growth between 1989 and 1999. Income growth ranged from a low of 17% (for Utah's second-fifth households) to a high of 26% (Utah's highest-fifth households), after adjusting for inflation. Utah's lowest-fifth households saw the second highest growth (22%). The economic expansion of the 1990s benefited all of Utah's income groups, with Utah's poorest fifth households experiencing significant gains when compared to the other income groups. However, the highest income growth did occur among Utah's richest households. Utah's top 5% of households show an even higher income growth rate of 27%. Inequality in income growth rates can primarily be attributed to the growth in wage inequality. Research demonstrates that wages at the lower and middle range of the wage scale have not grown as rapidly as those at the higher end.⁷

How Does Utah Compare to Other States? Utah is more equal than most other states when we compare their income and poverty data. The state's income distribution data reveals a substantive "middle class," as well as significantly smaller "low-income," "very high," and "highest" household income groups. Utah has the highest proportion of households with "middle-range" incomes among all states. It ranks first (54.8% of all households) in the proportion of households that fall under the broad "middle-range" (\$25,000-\$74,999) income category, as well as in the high "middle range" (\$35,000-\$74,999) income category (41.6% of all households). Furthermore, Utah has a relatively lower proportion of households in the "low" income category (income less than \$25,000). The state ranks sixth lowest in the nation in its proportion (22.7%) of low-income households, and ranks among the lower half of states in its proportion of households that fall under "very high" and "highest" income categories.

⁷ Bernstein, J., et. al. 2002. "Pulling Apart. A State-by-State Analysis of Income Trends." Washington D.C., Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Economic Policy Institute.

⁸ The U.S. Census Bureau uses established federal guidelines to determine the official measure of poverty in any given year. The federal poverty thresholds for any year are based on certain money income levels and vary by the size and composition of a family. "If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual within it is considered poor. Official poverty thresholds do not vary by geography, but they are updated annually for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition counts money income before taxes and does not include capital gains, and non-cash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps). While the thresholds in some sense represent families' needs, the official poverty measure should be interpreted as a statistical yardstick rather than as a complete description of what people and families need to live." (Poverty in the United States: 2001. U.S. Census Bureau. Current Population Reports. September, 2002).

Poverty Data - Measuring Changes in the Depth of Income Inequality

Census poverty data is another source for analyzing changing trends in income inequality. Standard census poverty rates are based on the official federal poverty threshold in any year, and depict the proportion of those officially 'poor' vs. 'non-poor' in any region.⁸ While the poverty rate provides us with some measure of the degree of income inequality and economic well-being, in reality the income situations of people fall into a much broader spectrum of economic need. The Census Bureau's ratio of income-to-poverty level data are a more comprehensive measure of the distribution of a region's economic growth. This data compares a family's income to its poverty threshold, and provides a more detailed picture of the composition of the low-income population, in terms of relative economic need. The most commonly used ratios of income-to-poverty are 50% of FPL (families with incomes less than half of their Federal Poverty Level), 125% of FPL (families with incomes at or above their poverty threshold, but below 125% of their FPL) and 200% of FPL (families with incomes at or above their poverty threshold, but below 200% of their FPL). These determine the "severely poor," "near poor" and "officially non-poor, but needy" population respectively.

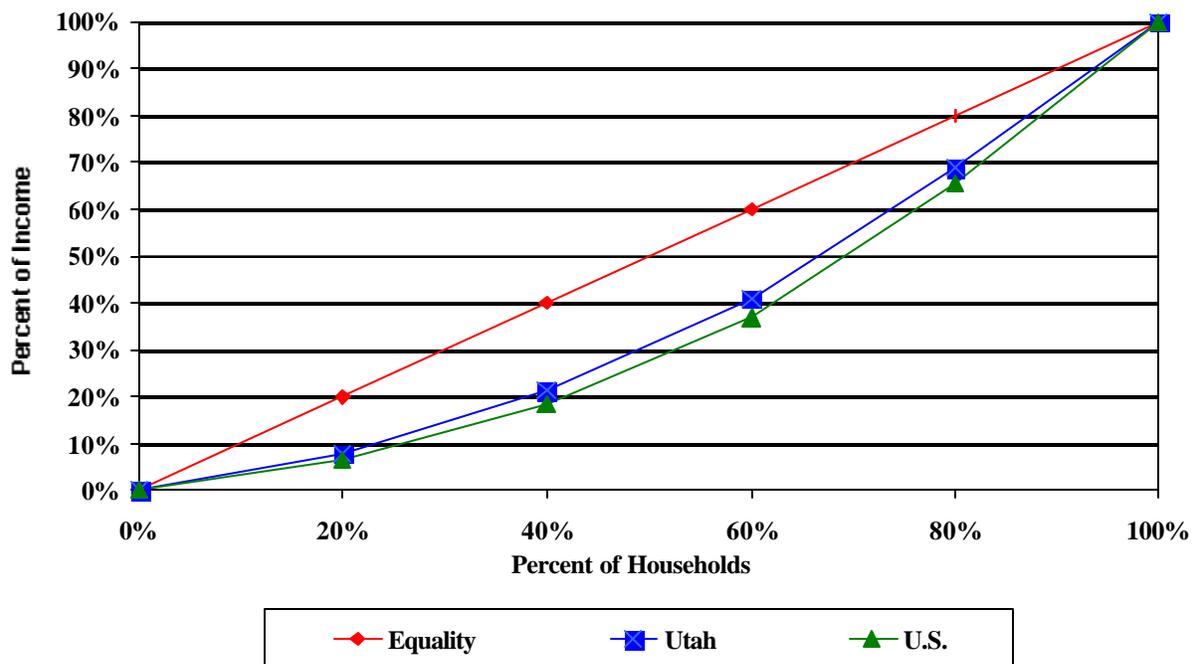
Poverty Rates Decline Among All of Utah's Poor. Utah's "severely poor," "near poor" and "officially non-poor, but needy" populations showed across-the-board declines between 1989 and 1999. The percentage of "severely poor" Utahns (50% of FPL) dropped from 4.6% to 3.9%, making Utah the seventh lowest state in this category. Utah's "near poor" (125% of FPL) population declined from 16.2% to 13.1%. Between these years, Utah's ranking for its proportion of the "near poor" dropped from 28th to 39th. Utah ranked third highest among all states in the decrease of its "officially non-poor, but needy" population. The percentage of Utahns below the 200% FPL dropped from 34.6% to 27.7%, reflecting a -6.9% absolute change.

Finally, Utah has fared especially well in the alleviation of poverty among its most vulnerable populations -- children, the elderly, as well as female-headed households. Poverty among the elderly declined from 8.8% in 1989 to 5.8% in 1999, making Utah the lowest among all states in this category. Utah's poverty rates for the 0-17 year age group dropped from 12.5% in 1989 to 10.1% in 1999, making Utah the third lowest state in child poverty. Among female-headed households, a group that is considered to be especially vulnerable to poverty, Utah's poverty rate dropped from 30.3% to 22.1%, reflecting the ninth largest decrease among all states for this category.

Conclusion

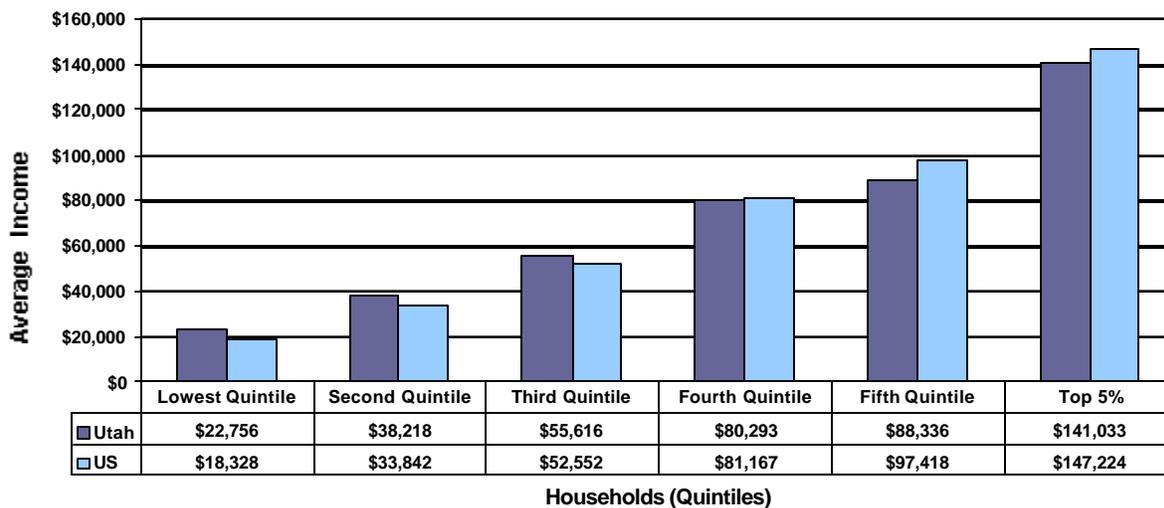
Utah's economic growth of the 1990s was more equitable than the nation's, as well as most states. There has been significant income growth in all of Utah's income groups, with the state's lowest-fifth households showing impressive economic gains in the 1990s. Persistent low unemployment, increase in the minimum wage, and a healthy growth in productivity have resulted in some real wage gains at the bottom end of the wage scale. However, the income gap between the state's richest and poorest households continued to exist. Some factors that possibly contribute to this are an increasing global economy resulting in a competitive wage market, expansion of the low-wage service sector, as well as rapidly increasing wages at the higher end of the wage scale. Overall, the 1990s witnessed a slowing down of the increasing economic gap that characterized much of the 1980s.

Figure 67
1999 Income Distribution Estimates in Utah and the U.S.



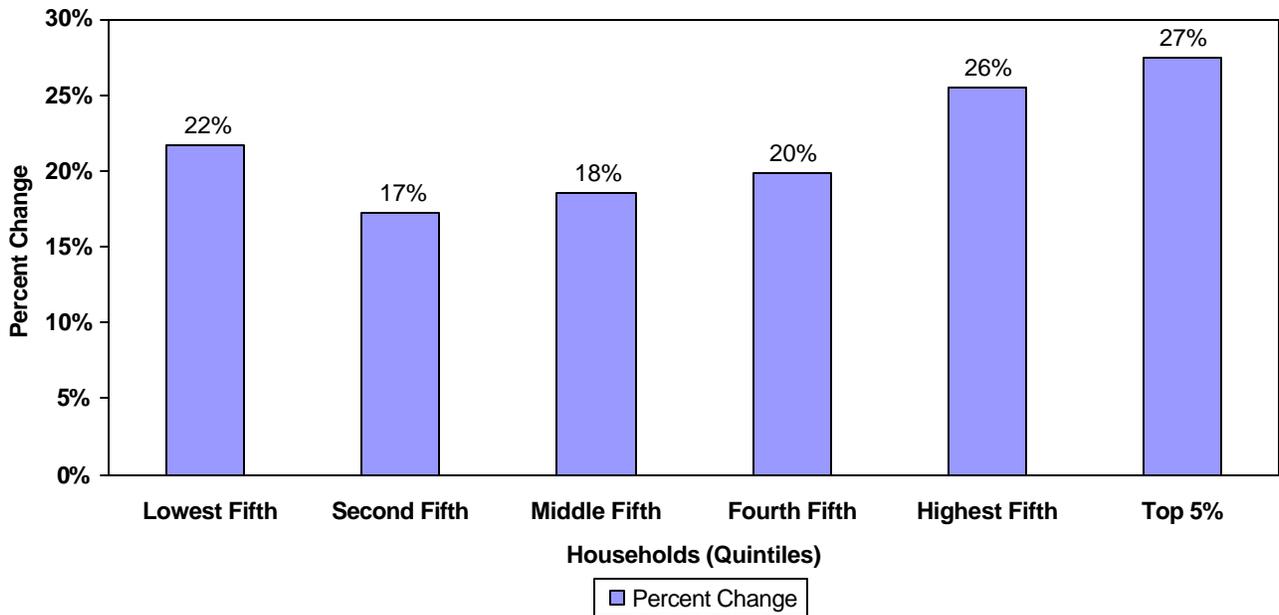
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

Figure 68
1999 Average Income in Lowest to Highest Fifths and Top 5% of Households in the U.S. and Utah



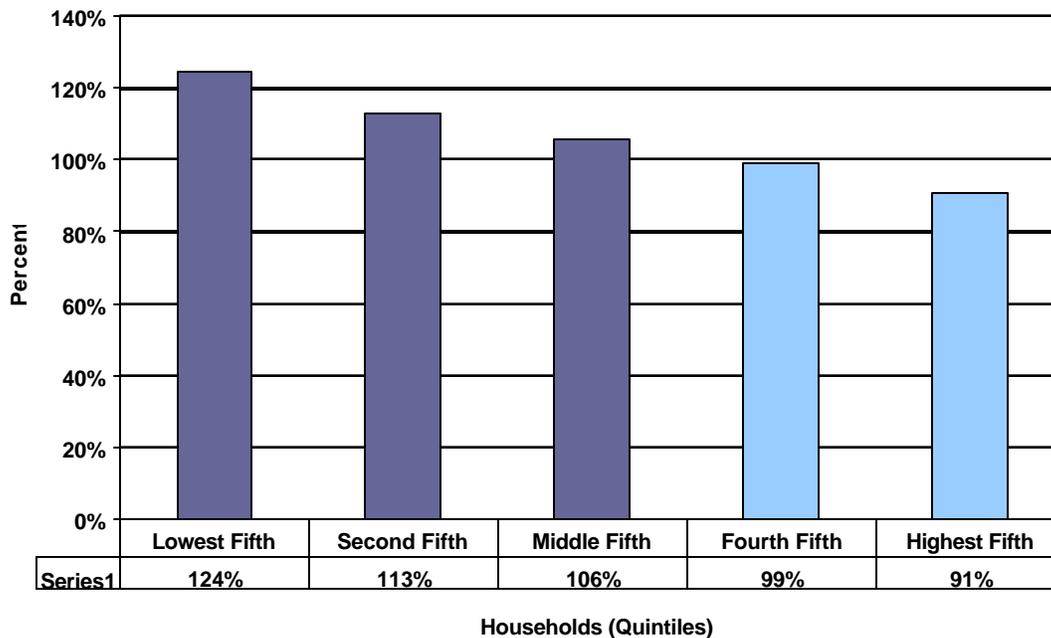
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

Figure 69
Growth Rates of Utah's Average Incomes between 1989 and 1999



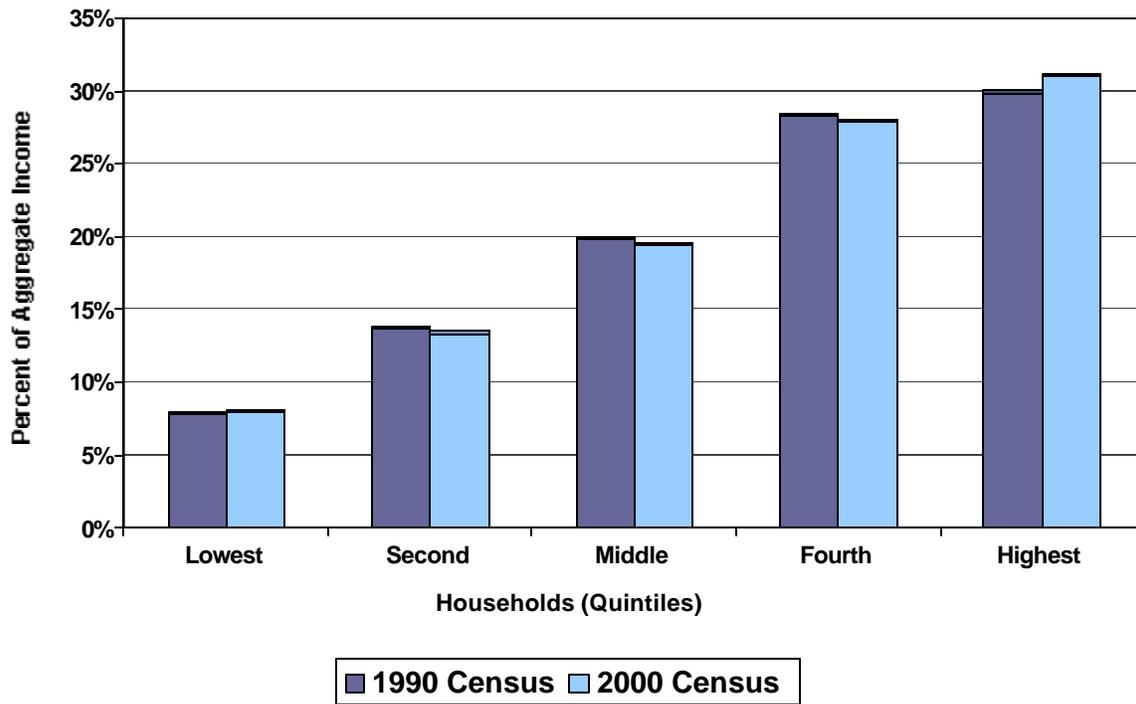
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

Figure 70
Utah's 1999 Incomes As a Percent of U.S. Incomes



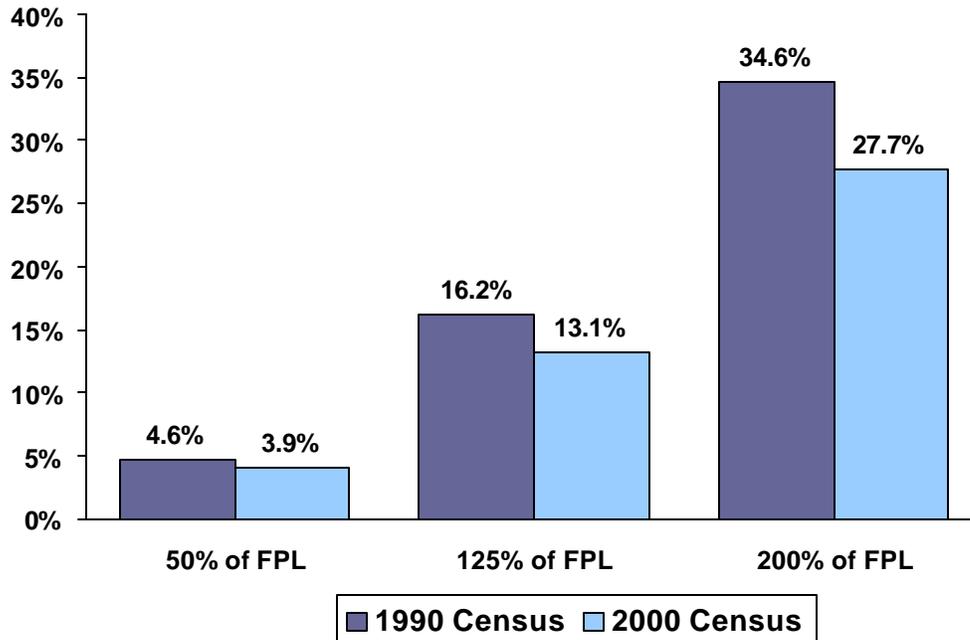
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

Figure 71
Utah's Income Distribution Trends: 1990 and 2000 Census



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

Figure 72
Utah's Ratio of Income-to-Poverty Levels: 1989-1999



FPL: Federal Poverty Level
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 - Summary File 3

Table 86
Selected Income Distributions for All States With Rankings (Households)

| Geographic Level | "Low" Under \$25,000 | | "Middle Range" (Low) (\$25,000-\$49,999) | | "Middle Range" (High) (\$35,000-\$74,999) | | "Middle Range" (Broad) (\$25,000-\$74,999) | | "High" Over \$75,000 | | "Very High" Over \$100,000 | | "Highest" Over \$150,000 | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------|--|------|---|------|--|------|-------------------------|------|-------------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|
| | Percent | Rank | Percent | Rank | Percent | Rank | Percent | Rank | Percent | Rank | Percent | Rank | Percent | Rank |
| United States | 28.7% | (X) | 29.3% | (X) | 36.0% | (X) | 48.8% | (X) | 27.1% | (X) | 16.9% | (X) | 4.6% | (X) |
| Alabama | 37.3% | 6 | 30.1% | 30 | 33.7% | 45 | 47.3% | 42 | 18.1% | 40 | 10.3% | 37 | 2.7% | 36 |
| Alaska | 20.9% | 50 | 27.3% | 43 | 38.1% | 16 | 49.3% | 30 | 34.4% | 7 | 20.7% | 10 | 4.6% | 13 |
| Arizona | 28.8% | 28 | 31.5% | 21 | 36.7% | 27 | 50.7% | 23 | 24.4% | 23 | 14.7% | 23 | 3.9% | 21 |
| Arkansas | 38.7% | 4 | 32.6% | 7 | 33.9% | 43 | 48.9% | 34 | 14.6% | 48 | 8.2% | 46 | 2.2% | 46 |
| California | 25.5% | 36 | 26.6% | 45 | 34.3% | 40 | 45.7% | 46 | 35.7% | 5 | 24.2% | 6 | 6.9% | 4 |
| Colorado | 23.1% | 44 | 29.6% | 33 | 38.2% | 15 | 50.8% | 21 | 31.3% | 12 | 19.4% | 12 | 5.2% | 11 |
| Connecticut | 21.7% | 47 | 24.5% | 50 | 34.8% | 38 | 44.9% | 48 | 41.9% | 2 | 28.6% | 2 | 8.5% | 2 |
| Delaware | 23.5% | 43 | 29.1% | 37 | 38.2% | 14 | 50.4% | 24 | 30.7% | 14 | 18.6% | 13 | 4.6% | 14 |
| Dist. of Columbia | 32.2% | 15 | 26.5% | 46 | 30.1% | 51 | 42.4% | 51 | 33.4% | 8 | 24.4% | 5 | 8.0% | 3 |
| Florida | 30.8% | 19 | 31.6% | 16 | 35.9% | 33 | 50.1% | 26 | 23.3% | 26 | 14.5% | 24 | 4.1% | 19 |
| Georgia | 28.3% | 32 | 29.3% | 35 | 36.4% | 29 | 49.0% | 32 | 27.3% | 18 | 16.9% | 16 | 4.6% | 15 |
| Hawaii | 23.0% | 45 | 27.2% | 44 | 36.3% | 32 | 47.8% | 38 | 34.7% | 6 | 22.0% | 7 | 5.4% | 9 |
| Idaho | 31.1% | 18 | 34.0% | 2 | 38.3% | 13 | 53.3% | 5 | 18.1% | 38 | 9.8% | 40 | 2.5% | 41 |
| Illinois | 25.1% | 37 | 28.1% | 41 | 37.0% | 25 | 48.9% | 35 | 31.4% | 11 | 19.8% | 11 | 5.4% | 10 |
| Indiana | 27.8% | 33 | 31.5% | 19 | 39.2% | 8 | 52.9% | 7 | 22.1% | 29 | 12.0% | 31 | 2.8% | 34 |
| Iowa | 29.2% | 26 | 33.6% | 4 | 40.0% | 4 | 54.7% | 2 | 18.5% | 37 | 9.7% | 42 | 2.4% | 43 |
| Kansas | 28.7% | 29 | 32.1% | 13 | 38.4% | 12 | 52.4% | 12 | 22.1% | 30 | 12.5% | 29 | 3.2% | 29 |
| Kentucky | 37.7% | 5 | 30.3% | 28 | 33.7% | 44 | 47.5% | 41 | 17.4% | 44 | 9.7% | 41 | 2.6% | 40 |
| Louisiana | 39.1% | 3 | 29.2% | 36 | 32.3% | 49 | 45.8% | 45 | 17.7% | 43 | 10.0% | 39 | 2.6% | 39 |
| Maine | 32.6% | 14 | 32.5% | 10 | 37.7% | 19 | 51.9% | 14 | 17.9% | 41 | 9.6% | 43 | 2.4% | 42 |
| Maryland | 20.6% | 51 | 26.1% | 48 | 37.0% | 24 | 47.7% | 40 | 38.2% | 3 | 24.6% | 3 | 6.5% | 6 |
| Massachusetts | 24.5% | 41 | 24.9% | 49 | 34.6% | 39 | 45.0% | 47 | 37.2% | 4 | 24.4% | 4 | 6.8% | 5 |
| Michigan | 26.5% | 34 | 28.9% | 38 | 37.0% | 23 | 49.4% | 29 | 28.2% | 17 | 16.8% | 18 | 4.1% | 20 |
| Minnesota | 23.5% | 42 | 29.4% | 34 | 39.4% | 6 | 51.8% | 16 | 29.1% | 15 | 17.0% | 15 | 4.4% | 16 |
| Mississippi | 40.7% | 2 | 30.5% | 27 | 32.4% | 48 | 46.6% | 43 | 14.9% | 47 | 8.2% | 47 | 2.2% | 47 |
| Missouri | 31.7% | 16 | 31.9% | 14 | 36.5% | 28 | 50.8% | 20 | 20.6% | 33 | 11.8% | 32 | 3.0% | 31 |
| Montana | 37.3% | 7 | 33.6% | 5 | 35.3% | 36 | 50.7% | 22 | 13.9% | 50 | 7.5% | 50 | 1.9% | 49 |
| Nebraska | 29.7% | 24 | 33.1% | 6 | 38.8% | 9 | 53.5% | 4 | 19.5% | 35 | 10.7% | 36 | 2.6% | 37 |
| Nevada | 24.7% | 38 | 31.2% | 24 | 39.8% | 5 | 52.9% | 8 | 26.3% | 19 | 15.2% | 21 | 3.9% | 22 |
| New Hampshire | 21.6% | 48 | 28.9% | 39 | 40.3% | 3 | 51.9% | 13 | 31.1% | 13 | 18.5% | 14 | 4.7% | 12 |
| New Jersey | 21.1% | 49 | 24.2% | 51 | 34.1% | 42 | 44.1% | 50 | 43.4% | 1 | 29.9% | 1 | 8.6% | 1 |
| New Mexico | 36.7% | 9 | 31.4% | 22 | 33.5% | 46 | 47.9% | 37 | 18.1% | 39 | 10.2% | 38 | 2.6% | 38 |
| New York | 29.5% | 25 | 26.3% | 47 | 33.2% | 47 | 44.6% | 49 | 32.0% | 10 | 21.5% | 8 | 6.2% | 7 |
| North Carolina | 30.7% | 20 | 31.6% | 18 | 37.1% | 21 | 51.0% | 19 | 21.7% | 31 | 12.8% | 28 | 3.4% | 27 |
| North Dakota | 35.1% | 10 | 34.0% | 3 | 37.1% | 22 | 52.5% | 11 | 14.3% | 49 | 7.5% | 49 | 1.9% | 50 |
| Ohio | 28.9% | 27 | 30.9% | 26 | 37.7% | 18 | 51.3% | 17 | 23.1% | 28 | 13.1% | 27 | 3.3% | 28 |
| Oklahoma | 37.0% | 8 | 32.1% | 12 | 34.1% | 41 | 49.1% | 31 | 16.2% | 45 | 9.0% | 44 | 2.3% | 44 |
| Oregon | 28.5% | 30 | 31.6% | 17 | 37.9% | 17 | 51.8% | 15 | 23.1% | 27 | 13.4% | 26 | 3.5% | 26 |
| Pennsylvania | 30.5% | 22 | 30.2% | 29 | 36.4% | 31 | 49.7% | 28 | 23.5% | 24 | 14.0% | 25 | 3.7% | 24 |
| Rhode Island | 30.1% | 23 | 27.5% | 42 | 35.9% | 34 | 47.7% | 39 | 26.1% | 21 | 15.4% | 20 | 3.9% | 23 |
| South Carolina | 33.1% | 13 | 31.5% | 20 | 36.4% | 30 | 50.3% | 25 | 19.3% | 36 | 10.9% | 35 | 2.8% | 35 |
| South Dakota | 34.5% | 11 | 34.1% | 1 | 37.5% | 20 | 52.6% | 10 | 15.0% | 46 | 8.0% | 48 | 2.1% | 48 |
| Tennessee | 33.8% | 12 | 31.7% | 15 | 35.5% | 35 | 49.8% | 27 | 19.5% | 34 | 11.4% | 34 | 3.1% | 30 |
| Texas | 30.6% | 21 | 30.0% | 31 | 34.9% | 37 | 48.3% | 36 | 25.4% | 22 | 15.8% | 19 | 4.3% | 17 |
| Utah | 22.7% | 46 | 32.3% | 11 | 41.6% | 1 | 54.8% | 1 | 26.2% | 20 | 14.8% | 22 | 3.7% | 25 |
| Vermont | 28.5% | 31 | 32.5% | 9 | 39.3% | 7 | 53.2% | 6 | 21.3% | 32 | 11.7% | 33 | 3.0% | 33 |
| Virginia | 24.6% | 40 | 28.6% | 40 | 36.8% | 26 | 48.9% | 33 | 32.1% | 9 | 20.8% | 9 | 5.7% | 8 |
| Washington | 24.7% | 39 | 29.7% | 32 | 38.5% | 10 | 51.1% | 18 | 28.5% | 16 | 16.8% | 17 | 4.3% | 18 |
| West Virginia | 42.8% | 1 | 31.0% | 25 | 31.5% | 50 | 46.1% | 44 | 12.8% | 51 | 6.8% | 51 | 1.8% | 51 |
| Wisconsin | 25.7% | 35 | 31.3% | 23 | 40.8% | 2 | 54.1% | 3 | 23.3% | 25 | 12.4% | 30 | 3.0% | 32 |
| Wyoming | 31.6% | 17 | 32.6% | 8 | 38.4% | 11 | 52.7% | 9 | 17.9% | 42 | 8.9% | 45 | 2.2% | 45 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 - Summary File 3, calculations by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

Table 87

Ratios of Income-to-Poverty Level: 1990 and 2000 Census

| Geographic Level | 1990 Census | | | Census 2000 | | | 1990-2000 Absolute Percent Change | | |
|-------------------|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|
| | Percent of Persons Below 50% Poverty Level Ratio | Percent of Persons Below 125% Poverty Level Ratio | Percent of Persons Below 200% Poverty Level Ratio | Persons Below 50% Poverty Level Ratio | Percent of Persons Below 125% Poverty Level Ratio | Percent of Persons Below 200% Poverty Level Ratio | Percent of Persons Below 50% Poverty Level Ratio | Percent of Persons Below 125% Poverty Level Ratio | Percent of Persons Below 200% Poverty Level Ratio |
| United States | 5.8% | 17.5% | 31.0% | 5.8% | 16.5% | 29.8% | -0.2% | -1.0% | -1.3% |
| Alabama | 8.0% | 23.9% | 40.2% | 7.3% | 21.1% | 36.1% | -0.7% | -2.8% | -4.1% |
| Alaska | 3.9% | 12.3% | 20.8% | 4.0% | 13.1% | 25.6% | 0.1% | 0.8% | 1.8% |
| Arizona | 7.5% | 20.8% | 35.8% | 6.2% | 18.7% | 30.5% | -1.3% | -2.1% | -2.0% |
| Arkansas | 7.8% | 25.8% | 44.4% | 6.8% | 21.4% | 38.8% | -1.0% | -4.2% | -5.8% |
| California | 5.2% | 17.1% | 30.1% | 6.3% | 19.2% | 33.1% | 1.1% | 2.1% | 2.9% |
| Colorado | 5.1% | 15.9% | 29.3% | 4.1% | 12.8% | 24.2% | -1.0% | -3.7% | -5.1% |
| Connecticut | 2.9% | 8.9% | 16.3% | 3.9% | 10.4% | 19.3% | 1.0% | 1.5% | 3.0% |
| Delaware | 3.8% | 11.9% | 23.0% | 4.4% | 12.3% | 22.2% | 0.6% | 0.4% | 0.2% |
| Dist. of Columbia | 9.5% | 20.9% | 32.4% | 11.8% | 24.4% | 35.9% | 2.3% | 3.4% | 3.5% |
| Florida | 5.8% | 17.4% | 32.0% | 5.7% | 16.9% | 31.1% | 0.1% | -0.3% | -0.8% |
| Georgia | 6.8% | 19.2% | 33.0% | 6.1% | 17.2% | 30.5% | -0.3% | -2.1% | -2.8% |
| Hawaii | 3.3% | 11.4% | 22.7% | 5.0% | 14.1% | 25.9% | 1.7% | 2.8% | 3.2% |
| Hawaii | 4.9% | 19.1% | 33.8% | 4.8% | 14.1% | 25.9% | -0.2% | -2.3% | -4.9% |
| Illinois | 6.0% | 15.4% | 30.2% | 5.1% | 14.1% | 25.4% | -0.9% | -1.3% | -1.7% |
| Indiana | 4.8% | 14.8% | 29.0% | 4.2% | 13.0% | 25.8% | -0.6% | -1.8% | -2.2% |
| Iowa | 4.8% | 16.0% | 31.7% | 3.8% | 12.7% | 26.3% | -0.8% | -3.3% | -5.4% |
| Kansas | 4.8% | 16.0% | 31.2% | 4.1% | 13.6% | 27.2% | -0.7% | -2.3% | -4.0% |
| Kentucky | 8.5% | 24.8% | 41.1% | 6.8% | 19.8% | 35.9% | -1.9% | -4.0% | -5.2% |
| Louisiana | 11.8% | 29.8% | 45.7% | 9.4% | 25.0% | 40.4% | -2.4% | -4.6% | -5.3% |
| Maine | 3.5% | 15.3% | 30.5% | 4.1% | 15.3% | 29.5% | 0.6% | 0.0% | -0.9% |
| Maryland | 4.1% | 10.8% | 20.1% | 4.2% | 11.2% | 20.6% | 0.1% | 0.3% | 0.5% |
| Massachusetts | 3.8% | 12.0% | 21.0% | 4.4% | 12.3% | 21.7% | 0.6% | 0.3% | 0.8% |
| Michigan | 5.8% | 16.9% | 28.9% | 4.8% | 14.0% | 25.4% | -0.8% | -2.9% | -3.5% |
| Minnesota | 3.4% | 13.9% | 26.5% | 3.2% | 10.9% | 21.8% | -0.1% | -3.0% | -4.9% |
| Mississippi | 11.3% | 32.1% | 49.8% | 9.1% | 25.8% | 42.7% | -2.2% | -6.3% | -7.1% |
| Missouri | 5.7% | 18.0% | 30.1% | 5.1% | 15.9% | 30.0% | -0.6% | -2.1% | -3.2% |
| Montana | 6.7% | 21.9% | 39.9% | 5.8% | 19.9% | 37.1% | -0.9% | -2.0% | -2.8% |
| Nebraska | 4.2% | 15.9% | 32.7% | 4.0% | 13.6% | 27.8% | -0.3% | -2.4% | -4.9% |
| Nevada | 4.8% | 14.2% | 28.0% | 4.9% | 14.4% | 27.7% | 0.1% | 0.1% | -0.3% |
| New Hampshire | 2.8% | 9.1% | 19.3% | 2.8% | 9.2% | 19.0% | 0.2% | 0.0% | -0.3% |
| New Jersey | 3.8% | 10.0% | 18.5% | 4.2% | 11.2% | 20.4% | 0.4% | 1.2% | 1.9% |
| New Mexico | 9.2% | 26.8% | 44.2% | 7.8% | 24.5% | 41.4% | -1.4% | -2.3% | -2.8% |
| New York | 6.3% | 18.7% | 32.9% | 7.4% | 18.6% | 33.3% | 1.0% | 1.9% | 2.7% |
| North Carolina | 5.2% | 17.8% | 30.2% | 5.5% | 16.5% | 30.5% | 0.3% | -1.3% | -2.7% |
| North Dakota | 5.8% | 19.9% | 37.8% | 4.9% | 16.2% | 31.3% | -0.7% | -3.7% | -6.3% |
| Ohio | 6.2% | 18.4% | 29.5% | 4.8% | 14.1% | 28.4% | -1.4% | -2.3% | -3.1% |
| Oklahoma | 7.0% | 22.3% | 39.4% | 6.1% | 20.1% | 36.9% | -0.8% | -2.4% | -3.5% |
| Oregon | 5.0% | 17.0% | 32.2% | 5.0% | 15.7% | 29.6% | 0.0% | -1.3% | -2.6% |
| Pennsylvania | 5.1% | 14.9% | 28.2% | 5.1% | 14.6% | 29.4% | 0.0% | -0.2% | -0.8% |
| Rhode Island | 3.4% | 12.9% | 24.0% | 5.4% | 15.5% | 28.9% | 2.0% | 2.6% | 2.7% |
| South Carolina | 6.5% | 20.8% | 36.9% | 6.5% | 18.7% | 33.3% | -0.1% | -2.0% | -2.7% |
| South Dakota | 21.7% | 58.9% | 77.5% | 17.9% | 53.8% | 72.7% | -1.2% | -3.8% | -7.8% |
| Tennessee | 6.5% | 18.1% | 32.0% | 5.8% | 17.1% | 32.7% | -0.7% | -3.4% | -4.3% |
| Texas | 8.2% | 20.8% | 39.0% | 6.7% | 18.1% | 36.0% | -1.5% | -3.0% | -4.0% |
| Texas | 4.6% | 16.2% | 34.6% | 3.9% | 13.1% | 27.7% | -0.7% | -3.2% | -4.9% |
| Vermont | 3.0% | 14.1% | 28.2% | 3.8% | 13.0% | 26.7% | 0.8% | -0.9% | -1.5% |
| Virginia | 4.5% | 13.9% | 26.2% | 4.3% | 13.0% | 24.7% | -0.2% | -0.9% | -1.3% |
| Washington | 4.0% | 14.8% | 27.5% | 4.8% | 14.1% | 25.9% | 0.8% | -0.7% | -1.8% |
| West Virginia | 8.8% | 25.8% | 43.3% | 7.8% | 23.5% | 40.3% | -1.2% | -2.3% | -3.0% |
| Wisconsin | 3.8% | 14.7% | 28.1% | 3.8% | 11.8% | 23.3% | -0.1% | -2.9% | -4.8% |
| Wyoming | 5.0% | 16.7% | 30.3% | 4.5% | 15.8% | 30.7% | -0.3% | -0.9% | -2.7% |

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990 census - Summary Tape File 3, and Census 2000 - Summary File 3

Table 88
Poverty by Age: 1989 and 1999

| Geographic Level | Poverty Among Senior Citizens (65 Years and Over) | | | | | | Poverty Among Children (0-17 Years) | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--|------|--|------|--|------|--|------|--|-----|
| | 1989 Percent Below Poverty Level | | 1999 Percent Below Poverty Level | | 1989-1999 Absolute Percent Change | | 1989 Percent Below Poverty Level | | 1999 Percent Below Poverty Level | | 1989-1999 Absolute Percent Change | |
| | Rank | Rank | Rank | Rank | Rank | Rank | Rank | Rank | Rank | Rank | Rank | |
| United States | 12.8% | (X) | 9.9% | (X) | -2.9% | (X) | 18.3% | (X) | 16.6% | (X) | -1.7% | (X) |
| Alabama | 24.0% | 3 | 15.5% | 4 | -8.4% | 49 | 24.2% | 9 | 21.5% | 7 | -2.7% | 34 |
| Alaska | 7.6% | 50 | 6.8% | 50 | -0.8% | 7 | 11.4% | 47 | 11.8% | 41 | 0.4% | 7 |
| Arizona | 10.8% | 32 | 8.4% | 29 | -2.4% | 18 | 22.0% | 10 | 19.3% | 13 | -2.8% | 36 |
| Arkansas | 22.9% | 4 | 13.8% | 7 | -9.1% | 50 | 25.3% | 6 | 21.8% | 6 | -3.5% | 44 |
| California | 7.6% | 49 | 8.1% | 36 | 0.4% | 1 | 18.2% | 20 | 19.5% | 12 | 1.2% | 4 |
| Colorado | 11.0% | 29 | 7.4% | 44 | -3.6% | 30 | 15.3% | 29 | 11.3% | 43 | -4.0% | 48 |
| Connecticut | 7.2% | 51 | 7.0% | 49 | -0.2% | 2 | 10.7% | 50 | 10.4% | 48 | -0.3% | 13 |
| Delaware | 10.1% | 41 | 7.9% | 38 | -2.2% | 16 | 12.0% | 45 | 12.3% | 37 | 0.3% | 9 |
| District of Columbia | 17.2% | 12 | 16.4% | 3 | -0.9% | 8 | 25.5% | 5 | 31.7% | 1 | 6.2% | 1 |
| Florida | 10.8% | 31 | 9.1% | 23 | -1.7% | 13 | 18.7% | 18 | 17.6% | 17 | -1.1% | 20 |
| Georgia | 20.4% | 8 | 13.5% | 8 | -6.8% | 46 | 20.1% | 16 | 17.1% | 19 | -3.0% | 37 |
| Hawaii | 8.0% | 48 | 7.4% | 46 | -0.6% | 5 | 11.6% | 46 | 14.1% | 29 | 2.5% | 3 |
| Idaho | 11.5% | 27 | 8.3% | 31 | -3.2% | 26 | 16.2% | 26 | 14.3% | 28 | -1.9% | 26 |
| Illinois | 10.7% | 34 | 8.3% | 30 | -2.4% | 17 | 17.0% | 25 | 14.3% | 27 | -2.7% | 33 |
| Indiana | 10.8% | 33 | 7.7% | 41 | -3.1% | 25 | 14.2% | 35 | 12.2% | 38 | -2.0% | 28 |
| Iowa | 11.2% | 28 | 7.7% | 40 | -3.5% | 27 | 14.3% | 33 | 11.0% | 46 | -3.3% | 42 |
| Kansas | 12.0% | 24 | 8.1% | 35 | -3.9% | 34 | 14.3% | 34 | 12.0% | 40 | -2.3% | 31 |
| Kentucky | 20.6% | 6 | 14.2% | 5 | -6.5% | 43 | 24.8% | 7 | 20.8% | 8 | -4.0% | 47 |
| Louisiana | 24.1% | 2 | 16.7% | 2 | -7.4% | 47 | 31.4% | 2 | 26.6% | 3 | -4.8% | 50 |
| Maine | 14.0% | 19 | 10.2% | 19 | -3.8% | 32 | 13.8% | 37 | 13.7% | 34 | -0.1% | 11 |
| Maryland | 10.5% | 38 | 8.5% | 27 | -2.0% | 15 | 11.3% | 49 | 10.7% | 47 | -0.6% | 14 |
| Massachusetts | 9.4% | 43 | 8.9% | 26 | -0.6% | 4 | 13.2% | 41 | 12.0% | 39 | -1.2% | 22 |
| Michigan | 10.8% | 30 | 8.2% | 32 | -2.6% | 22 | 18.6% | 19 | 13.9% | 32 | -4.7% | 49 |
| Minnesota | 12.1% | 23 | 8.2% | 33 | -3.9% | 35 | 12.7% | 42 | 9.6% | 50 | -3.1% | 39 |
| Mississippi | 29.4% | 1 | 18.8% | 1 | -10.6% | 51 | 33.6% | 1 | 27.0% | 2 | -6.6% | 51 |
| Missouri | 14.8% | 16 | 9.9% | 20 | -4.9% | 40 | 17.7% | 22 | 15.7% | 22 | -2.0% | 27 |
| Montana | 12.5% | 20 | 9.1% | 24 | -3.5% | 28 | 20.5% | 14 | 19.0% | 14 | -1.4% | 23 |
| Nebraska | 12.2% | 22 | 8.0% | 37 | -4.2% | 36 | 13.8% | 38 | 12.3% | 35 | -1.5% | 24 |
| Nevada | 9.6% | 42 | 7.1% | 48 | -2.5% | 19 | 13.3% | 40 | 14.0% | 30 | 0.7% | 6 |
| New Hampshire | 10.2% | 39 | 7.2% | 47 | -3.0% | 23 | 7.4% | 51 | 7.8% | 51 | 0.3% | 8 |
| New Jersey | 8.5% | 47 | 7.8% | 39 | -0.7% | 6 | 11.3% | 48 | 11.1% | 45 | -0.2% | 12 |
| New Mexico | 16.5% | 14 | 12.8% | 11 | -3.7% | 31 | 27.8% | 3 | 25.0% | 4 | -2.8% | 35 |
| New York | 11.9% | 25 | 11.3% | 14 | -0.5% | 3 | 19.1% | 17 | 20.0% | 10 | 0.9% | 5 |
| North Carolina | 19.5% | 9 | 13.2% | 10 | -6.3% | 42 | 17.2% | 23 | 16.1% | 21 | -1.1% | 21 |
| North Dakota | 14.6% | 17 | 11.1% | 16 | -3.5% | 29 | 17.1% | 24 | 14.0% | 31 | -3.2% | 40 |
| Ohio | 10.7% | 36 | 8.1% | 34 | -2.5% | 20 | 17.8% | 21 | 14.4% | 26 | -3.4% | 43 |
| Oklahoma | 17.9% | 11 | 11.1% | 17 | -6.8% | 45 | 21.7% | 11 | 19.6% | 11 | -2.1% | 29 |
| Oregon | 10.1% | 40 | 7.6% | 42 | -2.5% | 21 | 15.8% | 27 | 14.7% | 23 | -1.0% | 18 |
| Pennsylvania | 10.6% | 37 | 9.1% | 22 | -1.5% | 10 | 15.7% | 28 | 14.7% | 24 | -1.0% | 17 |
| Rhode Island | 11.6% | 26 | 10.6% | 18 | -1.0% | 9 | 13.8% | 36 | 16.9% | 20 | 3.1% | 2 |
| South Carolina | 20.5% | 7 | 13.9% | 6 | -6.7% | 44 | 21.0% | 12 | 18.8% | 15 | -2.1% | 30 |
| South Dakota | 15.5% | 15 | 11.1% | 15 | -4.3% | 37 | 20.4% | 15 | 17.2% | 18 | -3.2% | 41 |
| Tennessee | 20.9% | 5 | 13.5% | 9 | -7.5% | 48 | 21.0% | 13 | 18.0% | 16 | -3.0% | 38 |
| Texas | 18.4% | 10 | 12.8% | 12 | -5.6% | 41 | 24.3% | 8 | 20.5% | 9 | -3.8% | 46 |
| Utah | 8.8% | 46 | 5.8% | 51 | -3.0% | 24 | 12.5% | 43 | 10.1% | 49 | -2.4% | 32 |
| Vermont | 12.4% | 21 | 8.5% | 28 | -3.9% | 33 | 12.0% | 44 | 11.4% | 42 | -0.6% | 15 |
| Virginia | 14.1% | 18 | 9.5% | 21 | -4.6% | 38 | 13.3% | 39 | 12.3% | 36 | -1.1% | 19 |
| Washington | 9.1% | 44 | 7.5% | 43 | -1.6% | 11 | 14.5% | 31 | 13.7% | 33 | -0.9% | 16 |
| West Virginia | 16.7% | 13 | 11.9% | 13 | -4.9% | 39 | 26.2% | 4 | 24.3% | 5 | -1.9% | 25 |
| Wisconsin | 9.1% | 45 | 7.4% | 45 | -1.6% | 12 | 14.9% | 30 | 11.2% | 44 | -3.7% | 45 |
| Wyoming | 10.7% | 35 | 8.9% | 25 | -1.8% | 14 | 14.4% | 32 | 14.5% | 25 | 0.1% | 10 |

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990 census - Summary Tape File 3, and Census 2000 - Summary File 3