

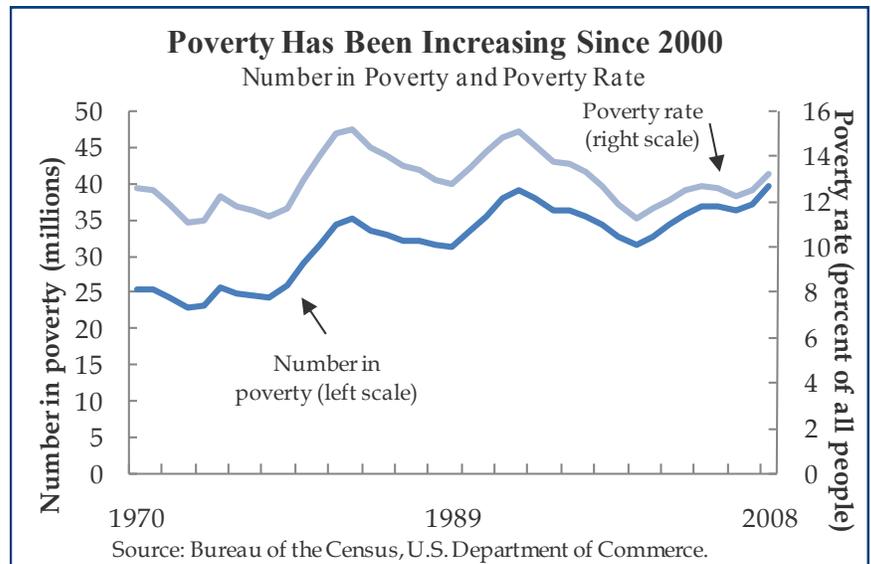
RECORD NUMBER LIVING IN POVERTY IN 2008, 8.2 MILLION ADDED TO POVERTY ROLLS UNDER THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING 2.5 MILLION CHILDREN

American families are experiencing very difficult economic times – the toughest in terms of stagnant incomes since World War II. Over the 2000-2008 period, the economic policies pursued during the previous administration left most families behind and ill-prepared to weather the severity of the current recession. During the Bush administration, the number of Americans living in poverty increased by 8.2 million; and instead of growing, incomes for families in the bottom 40 percent of the income distribution ladder actually fell. One out of every eight Americans was living below the federal poverty line in 2008. Household incomes were lower in 2008 than at the end of the 1990s and income inequality rose sharply over the period. The new direction of policies being pursued by Congress and the Obama Administration will work to counter these trends and improve the well-being of families across the country.

National:

The number of Americans living in poverty increased by 8.2 million from 2000 to 2008. The number of Americans living in poverty was 39.8 million in 2008. The official poverty line for a couple with two children is \$21,834.

The national poverty rate was almost two percentage points higher in 2008 than in 2000. The poverty rate in 2008 was 13.2 percent, increasing significantly from its level of 12.5 percent in 2007. The poverty rate increased for four straight years from 2001 to 2004, and again in 2007 and 2008. In 2008, the poverty rate was 1.9 percentage points higher than it was in 2000 (See Chart).

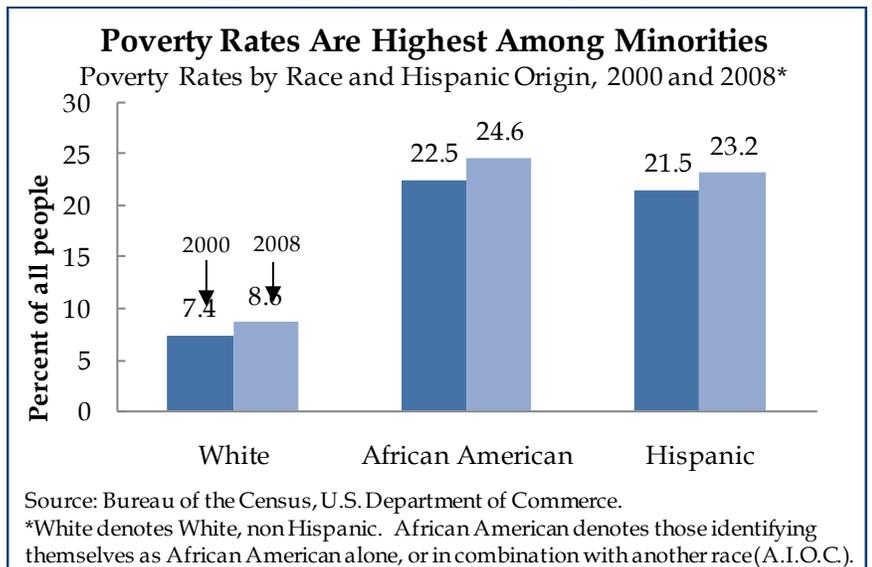


Almost one in five children lived in poverty last year. The poverty rate for all children under 18 years of age was 19.0 percent in 2008, increasing from its level of 18.0 percent in 2007. In 2008, approximately 750,000 more children under 18 lived in poverty than in 2007. Since 2000, the number of children living in poverty has increased by 2.5 million, with the child poverty rate rising from 16.2 to 19.0 percent.

FACT SHEET: POVERTY IN 2008

The poverty rate for African Americans and Hispanics increased significantly between 2000 – 2008. In 2008, the poverty rate was 24.6 percent for African Americans and 23.2 percent for Hispanics. The recent increase in the poverty rate among Hispanics is significant. Since 2000, the poverty rate among African Americans also increased significantly, rising by over 2 percentage points (See Chart). The poverty rates among African American and Hispanic children were even higher, at 33.9 percent and 30.6 percent, respectively.

Federal spending cuts from 2000-2008 hurt families: Poverty has increased not only because of the relatively weak labor market, but also because income support programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are helping fewer individuals. While the number of children living in poverty has increased by nearly 3 percentage points since 2000, the number of children receiving TANF has moved in the opposite direction. TANF served 240,000 fewer children in 2008 compared to just two years earlier. By way of comparison, reports of mass layoffs among adult employees rose by 779,412 between 2006 and 2008.



States:

The number of people in poverty rose by 23 percent or more in the Midwest and the South between 1999-2000 and 2007-2008. The number of poor people in the Midwest region of the country increased by 26 percent while its total population increased by only 3 percent since 2000. In the South, poverty levels increased by 23 percent, or 3 million people. No region escaped, with the number in poverty rising by 10 percent in the Northeast and almost 16 percent in the West.

Twelve states saw significant increases in the poverty rate in the last 8 years. In four of these states, the poverty rate increased by at least 4 percentage points between 1999-2000 and 2007-2008. No state experienced a significant decline in its poverty rate. The rate in the remaining 38 states plus the District of Columbia was essentially unchanged.

The number of poor people increased significantly in 23 states and the District of Columbia. Twenty-three states and the District of Columbia experienced significant increases in the number of poor people between 1999-2000 and 2007-2008 (See Table). In sixteen of these states, the increase was at least 25 percent.

FACT SHEET: POVERTY IN 2008

Number and Percent of People Living in Poverty, By State, 1999-2000 and 2007-2008

State	2-year average (1999-2000)		2-year average (2007-2008)		Change (2007-2008 average less 1999-2000 average) ¹	
	Thousands	(Rate)	Thousands	(Rate)	Thousands	(Rate)
United States	32,186	11.6	38,552	12.9	6,366 *	1.3 *
Alabama	626	14.3	669	14.4	43	0.1
Alaska	48	7.6	53	7.9	6	0.3
Arizona	612	11.9	1,042	16.1	431 *	4.2 *
Arkansas	410	15.6	409	14.5	-1	-1.0
California	4,513	13.4	4,966	13.6	453 *	0.3
Colorado	395	9.1	509	10.4	114 *	1.3
Connecticut	252	7.4	293	8.5	40	1.0
Delaware	73	9.4	81	9.4	9	0.0
District of Columbia	82	15	101	17.3	19 *	2.3
Florida	1,846	11.7	2,310	12.8	464 *	1.1
Georgia	997	12.5	1,386	14.6	389 *	2.1 *
Hawaii	119	9.9	110	8.7	-10	-1.2
Idaho	168	13.3	167	11.1	-1	-2.2
Illinois	1,261	10.3	1,413	11.1	152	0.9
Indiana	455	7.6	821	13.1	366 *	5.5 *
Iowa	224	7.8	274	9.2	51	1.4
Kansas	267	10.1	332	12.2	66	2.1
Kentucky	485	12.3	689	16.3	204 *	4.0 *
Louisiana	786	18.2	731	17.1	-56	-1.0
Maine	131	10.3	150	11.4	19	1.1
Maryland	377	7.3	486	8.8	109 *	1.4
Massachusetts	678	10.8	717	11.2	39	0.4
Michigan	972	9.8	1,174	11.9	202 *	2.1 *
Minnesota	315	6.5	494	9.6	179 *	3.1 *
Mississippi	432	15.6	590	20.4	158 *	4.8 *
Missouri	576	10.4	761	13.1	185 *	2.6 *
Montana	133	15	123	12.9	-10	-2.1
Nebraska	165	9.8	181	10.3	16	0.5
Nevada	205	10	264	10.3	59 *	0.2
New Hampshire	76	6.1	84	6.4	8	0.3
New Jersey	629	7.6	764	9.0	136 *	1.4
New Mexico	348	19.2	326	16.6	-21	-2.6
New York	2,640	14	2,746	14.3	106	0.3
North Carolina	1,034	13.1	1,354	14.7	320 *	1.6
North Dakota	73	11.7	65	10.5	-8	-1.2
Ohio	1,230	11	1,502	13.2	271 *	2.3 *
Oklahoma	463	13.9	480	13.5	17	-0.4
Oregon	401	11.7	442	11.7	41	0.0
Pennsylvania	1,075	9	1,304	10.7	229 *	1.7 *
Rhode Island	105	10.1	116	11.1	11	1.0
South Carolina	443	11.4	620	14.0	178 *	2.6 *
South Dakota	67	9.2	89	11.2	22 *	2.0
Tennessee	710	12.7	915	14.9	204 *	2.2
Texas	3,138	15.4	3,869	16.2	731 *	0.8
Utah	148	6.7	232	8.6	84 *	1.9 *
Vermont	59	9.8	58	9.4	-1	-0.4
Virginia	557	8.1	731	9.5	175 *	1.4
Washington	589	10.2	670	10.3	81	0.1
West Virginia	266	15.2	263	14.6	-4	-0.6
Wisconsin	479	8.9	573	10.4	93	1.5
Wyoming	54	11.2	55	10.5	1	-0.7

Notes: Following Census guidance on how to utilize and compare state-level data, this report compares the two-year average for 1999-2000 (the last years of the Clinton Administration), with the two-year average for 2007-2008 (the last years of the Bush Administration), in order to gauge poverty trends during President Bush's two terms.

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

¹Details may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey.