Presenter

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The Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) rate in 2017 was 13.9 percent. This is not statistically different from the 2016 SPM rate of 14.0 percent. The SPM rate for 2017 was 1.6 percentage points higher than the official poverty rate of 12.3 percent. There were 16 states plus the District of Columbia for which SPM rates were higher than official poverty rates, 18 states with lower rates, and 16 states for which the differences were not statistically significant.

Official and SPM Thresholds for Units with Two Adults and Two Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official poverty measure</th>
<th>Owners with a mortgage</th>
<th>Owners without a mortgage</th>
<th>Renters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$24,858</td>
<td>$27,085</td>
<td>$23,261</td>
<td>$27,005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison of SPM Poverty Estimates: 2016 and 2017
(In Percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All People</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18 years</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 64 years</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and older</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Comparison of SPM and Official Poverty Estimates: 2017

(In Percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>SPM</th>
<th>Official*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All People</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>13.2</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and older</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes unrelated individuals under age 15.

Difference in Poverty Rates by State Using the Official Measure and the SPM: 3-Year Average 2015 to 2017

1 Includes unrelated individuals under age 15.

Change in Number of People in Poverty After Including Each Element: 2017

Numbers in millions

Social Security: -27.0
Refundable tax credits: -8.3
SNAP: -3.4
SSI: -3.2
Housing subsidies: -2.9
Child support received: -1.0
School lunch: -1.2
TANF/general assistance: -0.5
Unemployment insurance: -0.5
LIHEAP: -0.2
Workers' compensation: -0.2
WIC: -0.3
Child support paid: 0.2
Federal income tax: 1.5
FICA: 4.7
Work expenses: 5.6
Medical expenses: 10.9

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- 18 to 64 years
- 65 years and over

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- Medical expenses: 5.6
- Total: 10.9

The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2017

Current Population Reports

INTRODUCTION

Even the publication of the first official U.S. poverty estimates, researchers and policy makers have continued to discuss the need for a more accurate measure of income and poverty in the United States. Beginning in 2011, the U.S. Census Bureau began publishing the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), which introduces the official poverty measure for taking account of why all of the government’s income transfers to avoid socioeconomic barriers and individuals that are not included in the official poverty measure. This is the eighth report describing the SPM, released by the Census Bureau, with support from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). This report presents updated estimates of the prevalence of poverty in the United States using the official measure, and the SPM (based on integrated panel collected in 2009 and earlier Current Population Survey annual social and Economic Supplement, CASA-AMC).

HIGHLIGHTS

• In 2017, the official poverty rate was 13.0 percent. This is not statistically different from the 2016 SPM rate of 13.2 (Figure 1).
• SPM rates were not statistically different for any of the major age categories in 2017 compared with 2016.
• SPM rates for children under age 18 were 15.6 percent, which is not statistically different than the 15.9 percent. In 2016 (Figure 7).

For more information:

• The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2017
• SPM Poverty Thresholds
• America Counts: Stories Behind the Numbers
  • “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Lifts 3.4 Million People Out of Poverty”
• 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.

• 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.

• The Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) rate in 2017 was 13.9 percent. This is not statistically different from the 2016 SPM rate of 14.0 percent.

• The percentage of people without health insurance coverage for the entire calendar year was 8.8 percent, or 28.5 million people. The uninsured rate and number of uninsured in 2017 were not statistically different from 2016.