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The 10-20-30 Provision: Defining Persistent Poverty Counties

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SUMMARY

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The 10-20-30 Provision: Defining Persistent Poverty Counties

Antipoverty interventions that provide resources to local communities, based on the characteristics of those communities, have been of interest to Congress. One such policy, dubbed the "10-20-30 provision," was implemented in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, P.L. 111-5). Title I, Section 105 of ARRA required the Secretary of Agriculture to allocate at least 10% of funds from three rural development program accounts to persistent poverty counties; that is, to counties that have had poverty rates of 20% or more for the past 30 years, as measured by the 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses. One notable characteristic of this provision is that it did not increase spending for the rural development programs addressed in ARRA, but rather targeted existing funds differently.

Research has suggested that areas for which the *poverty rate* (the percentage of the population that is below poverty) reaches 20% experience systemic problems that are more acute than in lower-poverty areas. Therefore, policy interventions at the community level (such as applying the 10-20-30 provision to other programs besides those cited in ARRA), and not only at the individual or family level, could continue to be of interest to Congress.

Poverty rates are computed using data from household surveys. The list of counties identified to be persistently poor may differ by roughly 60 to 100 counties in a particular year, depending on the surveys selected to compile the list and the rounding method used for the poverty rate estimates. Before the mid-1990s, the decennial census was the only source of county poverty estimates. However, currently, the only data sources that provide poverty estimates for all U.S. counties are the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates program (SAIPE). Therefore, to determine whether an area is "persistently" poor in a time span that ends after the year 2000, it must first be decided whether ACS or SAIPE poverty estimates will be used for the later part of that time span.

When determining the rounding method and data source to be used to compile a list of persistent poverty counties, the following may be relevant to consider:

- Characteristics of interest: SAIPE is suited for poverty or median income alone; ACS for other topics in addition to poverty and income.
- Geographic areas of interest: SAIPE is recommended for counties and school districts only; ACS produces estimates for other small geographic areas as well.
- Reference period of estimate: SAIPE for one year; ACS for a five-year span.
- Rounding method for poverty rates: rounding to 20.0% (one decimal place) yields a shorter list than rounding to 20% (whole number).
- Poverty status is not defined for all persons: foster children (unrelated individuals under age 15), institutionalized persons, and residents of college dormitories are excluded; the homeless are not targeted by household surveys; and areas with large numbers of students living off-campus may have high poverty rates.

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Introduction

Antipoverty interventions that provide resources to local communities, based on the characteristics of those communities, have been of interest to Congress. One such policy, dubbed the "10-20-30 provision," was implemented in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, P.L. 111-5). Title I, Section 105 of ARRA required the Secretary of Agriculture to allocate at least 10% of funds provided in that act from three rural development program accounts to persistent poverty counties; that is, to counties that have had poverty rates of 20% or more for the past 30 years, as measured by the 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses.[1]

One notable characteristic of this provision is that it did not increase spending for the rural development programs addressed in ARRA, but rather targeted existing funds differently. Given Congress's interest both in addressing poverty and being mindful about levels of federal spending, the past four Congresses included 10-20-30 language in multiple appropriations bills, some of which were enacted into law. However, the original language used in ARRA could not be used verbatim, because the data source used by ARRA to define persistent poverty—the decennial census—stopped collecting income information. As a consequence, the appropriations bills varied slightly in their definitions of "persistent poverty counties" as it was applied to various programs and departments, sometimes even within different sections of the same bill if the bill included language on different programs. In turn, because the definitions of "persistent poverty" differed, so did the lists of counties identified as persistently poor and subject to the 10-20-30 provision. The bills included legislation for rural development, public works and economic development, technological innovation, and brownfields site assessment and remediation. Most recently, in the 116th Congress, much of the language used in these previous bills was included in P.L. 116-6 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019), P.L. 116-93 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020), and P.L. 116-94 (Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020).[2]

This report discusses how data source selection, and the rounding of poverty estimates, can affect the list of counties identified as persistently poor. After briefly explaining why targeting funds to

[1] While the 1980-2000 period is actually 20 years, local communities have traditionally relied upon the decennial census data for small areas up to 10 years after their publication, hence the reference to "30 years." However, since the late 1990s newer data sources have become available for small communities at intervals shorter than 10 years, which has implications that will be discussed in this report.

[2] In the 116th Congress, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019 (P.L. 116-6) included 10-20-30 language in numerous sections: Section 752, in reference to loans and grants for rural housing, business and economic development, and utilities; Section 539, in reference to grants authorized by the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 and grants authorized by Section 27 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980; Division D, Title I, in reference to the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund Program Account; and Division E, Title II, in reference to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 and its role in authorizing funding for brownfields site assessment and remediation. The sections varied in the data sources used to define "persistent poverty counties," which means the sections varied in the lists of counties targeted for the funding set-aside. These same programs, with the addition of Transit Infrastructure Grants, were included in two appropriations acts for FY2020: the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-93; public works grants in Division B, Title V, Section 533, and CDFI in Division C, Title I), and the Further Consolidation Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94; rural programs in Division B, Title VII, Section 740; CERCLA in Division D, Title II; and Transit Infrastructure Grants in Division H, Title I). Additionally, the following bills referencing 10-20-30 had been introduced but not enacted into public law at the time of this report's release: H.R. 2055 and S. 1066 (An Act Targeting Resources to Communities in Need). Persistent poverty counties were referenced in the following bills, using policy tools other than the 10-20-30 provision: H.R. 3538 and S. 2028 (Rural Jobs Act), H.R. 186 and S. 2100 (Veterans Jobs Opportunity Act), H.R. 4808 and S. 2684 (Housing, Opportunity, Mobility, and Equity Act of 2019), H.R. 5495 (Federal Electronic Equipment Donation Act of 2019), and H.R. 2228 (to offer persistent poverty counties and political subdivisions of such counties the opportunity to have their rural development loans restructured).

persistent poverty counties might be of interest, this report explores how "persistent poverty" is defined and measured, and how different interpretations of the definition and different data source selections could yield different lists of counties identified as persistently poor. This report does not compare the 10-20-30 provision's advantages and disadvantages against other policy options, nor does it examine the range of programs or policy goals for which the 10-20-30 provision might be an appropriate policy tool.

Motivation for Targeting Funds to Persistent Poverty Counties

Research has suggested that areas for which the *poverty rate* (the percentage of the population that is below poverty) reaches 20% experience systemic problems that are more acute than in lower-poverty areas. The poverty rate of 20% as a critical point has been discussed in academic literature as relevant for examining social characteristics of high-poverty versus low-poverty areas.[3] For instance, property values in high-poverty areas do not yield as high a return on investment as in low-poverty areas, and that low return provides a financial disincentive for property owners to spend money on maintaining and improving property.[4] The ill effects of high poverty rates have been documented both for urban and rural areas.[5] Therefore, policy interventions at the community level, and not only at the individual or family level, have been and may continue to be of interest to Congress.[6]

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[3] For instance, George Galster of Wayne State University conducted a literature review that suggested "that the independent impacts of neighborhood poverty rates in encouraging negative outcomes for individuals like crime, school leaving, and duration of poverty spells appear to be nil unless the neighborhood exceeds about 20 percent poverty." Galster distinguishes the effects of living in a poor neighborhood from the effects of being poor oneself but not necessarily in a poor neighborhood. Cited in George C. Galster, "The Mechanism(s) of Neighborhood Effects: Theory, Evidence, and Policy Implications," presented at the Economic and Social Research Council Seminar, "Neighbourhood Effects: Theory & Evidence," St. Andrews University, Scotland, UK, February 2010.

Additionally, the Census Bureau has published a series of reports examining local areas (census tracts) with poverty rates of 20% or greater. See, for instance, Alemayehu Bishaw, "Changes in Areas With Concentrated Poverty: 2000 to 2010," U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Reports ACS-27, June 2014; and Leatha Lamison-White, "Poverty Areas," U.S. Census Bureau Statistical Brief, June 1995.

[4] The effects of poverty rates on property values are explored by George C. Galster, Jackie M. Cutsinger, and Ron Malega in "The Costs of Concentrated Poverty: Neighborhood Property Markets and the Dynamics of Decline," pp. 93-113 in N. Retsinas and E. Belsky, eds., *Revisiting Rental Housing: Policies, Programs, and Priorities* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2008). They indicate that "the relationship between changes in a neighborhood's poverty rate and maintenance choices by local residential property owners will be lumpy and non-linear. Substantial variations in poverty rates in the low-moderate range yield no deviations in the owner's decision to highly maintain the building.... Past some percentage of poverty, however, the owner will switch to an undermaintenance mode whereby net depreciation will occur."

[5] See, for instance, a 2008 report issued jointly by the Federal Reserve System and the Brookings Institution, "The Enduring Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America: Case Studies from Communities Across the U.S.," David Erickson et al., eds., 2008. Additional research into concentrated poverty in both rural and urban areas has been undertaken for decades; for example, educational attainment and health disability were discussed in a rural context by Calvin Beale in "Income and Poverty," chapter 11 in Glenn V. Fuguitt, David L. Brown, and Calvin L. Beale, eds., *Rural and Small Town America,* Russell Sage Foundation, 1988.

[6] In the 116th Congress, P.L. 116-6 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019), P.L. 116-93 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020), and P.L. 116-94 (Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020) used the 10-20-30 provision; see footnote 2 for details. Of the public laws passed by the 115th Congress, 10-20-30 language was included in P.L. 115-31 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017), P.L. 115-141 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018), and P.L. 115-334 (Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018). Multiple other bills were introduced but not enacted into public law. In the 114th Congress, no bills containing 10-20-30 language were enacted into public law, but 10-20-30 language was

Defining "Persistent Poverty" Counties

Persistent poverty counties are counties that have had poverty rates of 20% or greater for at least 30 years. The county poverty rates for 1999 and previous years are measured using decennial census data, and for more recent years, either the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) or the American Community Survey (ACS). The data sources used, and the level of precision of rounding for the poverty rate, affects the list of counties identified as persistent poverty counties, as will be described below.

Computing the Poverty Rate for an Area

Poverty rates are computed by the Census Bureau for the nation, states, and smaller geographic areas such as counties.[7] The official definition of poverty in the United States is based on the money income of families and unrelated individuals. Income from each family member (if family members are present) is added together and compared against a dollar amount called a *poverty threshold,* which represents a level of economic hardship and varies according to the size and characteristics of the family (ranging from one person to nine persons or more). Families (or unrelated individuals) whose income is less than their respective poverty threshold are considered to be in poverty.[8]

Every person in a family has the same poverty status. Thus, it is possible to compute a poverty rate based on counts of persons (dividing the number of persons below poverty within a county by the county's total population,[9] and multiplying by 100 to express as a percentage).

Data Sources Used in Identifying Persistent Poverty Counties

Poverty rates are computed using data from household surveys. Currently, the only data sources that provide poverty estimates for all U.S. counties are the ACS and SAIPE. Before the mid-1990s, the only poverty data available at the county level came from the Decennial Census of

included in H.R. 1360 (America's FOCUS Act of 2015), H.R. 5393 (Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017), H.R. 5054 (Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017), H.R. 5538 (Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017), and S. 3067 and H.R. 5485 (Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2017). However, the Consolidated Appropriations Acts for 2017, 2018, and 2019 used language analogous to the bills introduced in the 114th Congress, with some modification. Additionally, in the 113th Congress, H.R. 5571 (The 10-20-30 Act of 2014) was introduced and referred to committee but not passed.

[7] There are two definitions of poverty used in the United States: one for statistical purposes, which is used by the Census Bureau and described in Statistical Policy Directive 14 by the Office of Management and Budget; and the other for administrative purposes, which is used by the Department of Health and Human Services and is referred to in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981. Measuring the poverty rates of counties, which are in turn used in the 10-20-30 plan, is a statistical use of poverty data; thus, the statistical definition of poverty (used by the Census Bureau) applies.

[8] For further details about the official definition of poverty, see CRS Report R44780, *An Introduction to Poverty Measurement*, by Joseph Dalaker.

[9] Poverty rates are computed using adjusted population totals because there are some individuals whose poverty status is not determined. These include unrelated individuals under age 15, such as foster children, who are not asked income questions and who are not related to anyone else in their residence by birth, marriage, or adoption; persons living in military barracks; and persons in institutions such as nursing homes or prisons. Some surveys (such as those described in this report) do not compute poverty status for persons living in college dormitories. These persons are excluded from the total population when computing poverty rates. Furthermore, people who have no traditional housing and who do not live in shelters are typically not sampled in household surveys.

Population and Housing, which was only collected once every 10 years, and used to be the only source of estimates that could determine whether a county had persistently high poverty rates (ARRA referred explicitly to decennial census poverty estimates for that purpose). However, after Census 2000, the decennial census has no longer collected income information in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, and as a result cannot be used to compute poverty estimates.[10] Therefore, to determine whether an area is persistently poor in a time span that ends after 2000, it must first be decided whether ACS or SAIPE poverty estimates will be used for the later part of that time span.

The ACS and the SAIPE program serve different purposes. The ACS was developed to provide continuous measurement of a wide range of topics similar to that formerly provided by the decennial census long form, available down to the local community level. ACS data for all counties are available annually, but are based on responses over the previous five-year time span (e.g., 2013-2017). The SAIPE program was developed specifically for estimating poverty at the county level for school-age children and for the overall population, for use in funding allocations for the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-382). SAIPE data are also available annually, and reflect one calendar year, not five. However, unlike the ACS, SAIPE does not provide estimates for a wide array of topics. For further details about the data sources for county poverty estimates, see the **Appendix**.

Considerations When Identifying and Targeting Persistent Poverty Counties

Selecting the Data Source: Strengths and Limitations of ACS and SAIPE Poverty Data

Because poverty estimates can be obtained from multiple data sources, the Census Bureau has provided guidance on the most suitable data source to use for various purposes.[11]

Characteristics of Interest: SAIPE for Poverty Alone; ACS for Other Topics in Addition to Poverty

The Census Bureau recommends using SAIPE poverty estimates when estimates are needed at the county level, especially for counties with small populations, and when additional demographic and economic detail is not needed at that level.[12] When additional detail is required, such as for county-level poverty estimates by race and Hispanic origin, detailed age groups (aside

[10] The decennial census still collects income information in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Neither the ACS nor the SAIPE program is conducted for these island areas; decennial census data are the only small-area poverty data available for them. The 2020 Census questionnaire for these island areas are to cover the same topics as the ACS; see the Island Areas Censuses Operation Detailed Operational Plan at https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/planning-management/planning-docs/IAC-detailed-op-plan.html. For Puerto Rico, ACS estimates are still produced, but SAIPE estimates stopped being produced after 2003. For details see https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/technical-documentation/methodology/puerto-rico.html.

[11] This guidance is posted on the Census Bureau's website at https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/data-sources.html, and is reproduced in the **Appendix**.

[12] SAIPE county-level estimates are available for the poverty status of the total population, persons under age 18, and related children ages 5 to 17 living in families, and for median household income.

from the elementary and secondary school-age population), housing characteristics, or education level, the ACS is the data source recommended by the Census Bureau.

Geographic Area of Interest: SAIPE for Counties and School Districts Only; ACS for Other Small Areas

For counties (and school districts) of small population size, SAIPE data have an advantage over ACS data in that the SAIPE model uses administrative data to help reduce the uncertainty of the estimates. However, ACS estimates are available for a wider array of geographic levels, such as ZIP code tabulation areas, census tracts (subcounty areas of roughly 1,200 to 8,000 people), cities and towns, and greater metropolitan areas.

Reference Period of Estimate: SAIPE for One Year, ACS for a Five-Year Span

While the ACS has greater flexibility in the topics measured and the geographic areas provided, it can only provide estimates in five-year ranges for the smallest geographic areas. Five years of survey responses are needed to obtain a sample large enough to produce meaningful estimates for populations below 65,000 persons. In this sense the SAIPE data, because they are based on a single year, are more current than the data of the ACS. The distinction has to do with the reference period of the data—both data sources release data on an annual basis; the ACS estimates for small areas are based on the prior five years, not the prior year alone.

Other Considerations

Treatment of Special Populations in the Official Poverty Definition

Poverty status is not defined for persons in institutions, such as nursing homes or prisons, nor for persons residing in military barracks. These populations are excluded from totals when computing poverty statistics. Furthermore, the homeless population is not counted explicitly in poverty statistics. The ACS is a household survey, thus homeless individuals who are not in shelters are not counted. SAIPE estimates are partially based on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) administrative data and tax data, so the part of the homeless population that either filed tax returns or received SNAP benefits might be reflected in the estimates, but only implicitly.

In the decennial census, ACS, and SAIPE estimates, poverty status also is not defined for persons living in college dormitories.[13] However, students who live in off-campus housing are included. Because college students tend to have lower money income (which does not include school loans) than average, counties that have large populations of students living off-campus may exhibit higher poverty rates than one might expect given other economic measures for the area, such as the unemployment rate.[14]

[13] Details on the poverty universe in the ACS are available at https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/subject_definitions/2018_ACSSubjectDefinitions.pdf?#page=107 and for the SAIPE estimates at https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/guidance/model-input-data/denominators/poverty.html.

[14] For some counties, the percentage-point difference could be large when off-campus students are excluded. Using ACS data for 2009-2011, Whitman County, WA, experienced the largest poverty rate difference among all counties when off-campus students were excluded—its poverty rate fell by 16.5 percentage points. For the United States as a whole, the poverty rate fell from 15.2% to 14.5% when off-campus students were excluded (based on the same dataset). For details, see Alemayehu Bishaw, "Examining the Effect of Off-Campus College Students on Poverty Rates," Working Paper SEHSD 2013-17, U.S. Census Bureau, May 1, 2013.

Given the ways that the special populations above either are or are not reflected in poverty statistics, it may be worthwhile to consider whether counties that have large numbers of people in those populations would receive an equitable allocation of funds. Other economic measures may be of use, depending on the type of program for which funds are being targeted.

"Persistence" Versus Flexibility to Recent Situations

The 10-20-30 provision was developed to identify counties with persistently high poverty rates. Therefore, using that funding approach by itself would not allow flexibility to target counties that have recently experienced economic hardship, such as counties that had a large manufacturing plant close within the past three years. Other interventions besides the 10-20-30 provision may be more appropriate for counties that have had a recent spike in the poverty rate.

Effects of Rounding and Data Source Selection on Lists of Counties

In ARRA, persistent poverty counties were defined as "any county that has had 20 percent or more of its population living in poverty over the past 30 years, as measured by the 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses."[15] Poverty rates published by the Census Bureau are typically reported to one decimal place. The numeral used in the ARRA language was the whole number 20. Thus, for any collection of poverty data, there are two reasonable approaches to compiling a list of persistent poverty counties: using poverty rates of at least 20.0% in all three years, or using poverty rates that *round up* to the whole number 20% or greater in all three years (i.e., poverty rates of 19.5% or more in all three years). The former approach is more restrictive and results in a shorter list of counties; the latter approach is more inclusive.

Table 1 illustrates the number of counties identified as persistent poverty counties using the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses, and various ACS and SAIPE datasets for the last data point, under both rounding schemes. The rounding method and data source selection can each have large impacts on the number of counties listed. Approximately 25 to 30 more counties appear in SAIPE-based lists compared to ACS-based lists using the same rounding method. Compared to using 20.0% as the cutoff (rounded to one decimal place), rounding up to 20% from 19.5% adds approximately 50 to 60 counties to the list. Taking both the data source and the rounding method together, the list of persistent poverty counties could vary by roughly 60 to 100 counties in a given year depending on the method used.

Table 1. Number of Counties Identified as Persistently Poor, Using Different Datasets and Rounding Methods

Counties identified as having poverty rates of 20% or more (applying rounding methods as indicated below) in 1989 (from 1990 Census), 1999 (from Census 2000), and latest year from datasets indicated below.

Dataset	Rounded to One Decimal Place (20.0% or Greater)	Rounded to Whole Number (19.5% or Greater)	Difference Between Rounding Methods
ACS, 2007-2011	397	445	48
ACS, 2008-2012	404	456	52
ACS, 2009-2013	402	458	56

[15] P.L. 111-5, Section 105.

Dataset	Rounded to One Decimal Place (20.0% or Greater)	Rounded to Whole Number (19.5% or Greater)	Difference Between Rounding Methods
ACS, 2010-2014	401	456	55
ACS, 2011-2015	397	453	56
ACS, 2012-2016	392	446	54
ACS, 2013-2017[a]	386	436	50
ACS, 2014-2018 [a]	384	430	46
			Mean difference: 52.13
SAIPE, 2011	433	495	62
SAIPE, 2012	435	491	56
SAIPE, 2013	427	490	63
SAIPE, 2014	427	486	59
SAIPE, 2015	419	476	57
SAIPE, 2016	420	469	49
SAIPE, 2017	411	460	49
SAIPE, 2018	395	443	48
			Mean difference: 55.38
Differences between datasets released in same year			
Difference, SAIPE 2011 minus ACS 2007-2011	36	50	
Difference, SAIPE 2012 minus ACS 2008-2012	31	35	
Difference, SAIPE 2013 minus ACS 2009-2013	25	32	
Difference, SAIPE 2014 minus ACS 2010-2014	26	30	
Difference, SAIPE 2015 minus ACS 2011-2015	22	23	
Difference, SAIPE 2016 minus ACS 2012-2016	28	23	
Difference, SAIPE 2017 minus ACS 2013-2017	25	24	
Difference, SAIPE 2018 minus ACS 2014-2018	11	13	
Mean difference:	25.50	28.75	

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) tabulation of data from U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, Census 2000, 2012-2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for 2007-2011, 2008-2012, 2009-2013, 2010-2014, 2011-2015, 2012-2016, 2013-2017, and 2014-2018.

Notes: ACS: American Community Survey. SAIPE: Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates. Comparisons between ACS and SAIPE estimates are between datasets released in the same year (both are typically released in December of the year following the reference period). There are 3,143 county-type areas in the United States.

The selection of the data source and rounding method has a large effect on the number of counties identified as being in persistent poverty. The longest list of persistent poverty counties (SAIPE, 19.5% or greater, that is, rounded up to the whole number 20%) minus the shortest list of persistent poverty counties (ACS, 20.0% or

greater) yields the maximum difference. Comparing datasets that were released in the same year, the maximum differences in the lists of counties were:

SAIPE 2011, whole number - ACS, 2007-2011, one decimal = 98 counties
SAIPE 2012, whole number - ACS, 2008-2012, one decimal = 87
SAIPE 2013, whole number - ACS, 2009-2013, one decimal = 88
SAIPE 2014, whole number - ACS, 2010-2014, one decimal = 85
SAIPE 2015, whole number - ACS, 2011-2015, one decimal = 79
SAIPE 2016, whole number - ACS, 2012-2016, one decimal = 77
SAIPE 2017, whole number - ACS, 2013-2017, one decimal = 74
SAIPE 2018, whole number - ACS, 2014-2018, one decimal = 59

The lists of persistent poverty counties vary by about 81 counties on average (mean: 80.88), depending on which data source is used for the most recent poverty rate estimate, and which rounding method is applied to identify persistent poverty.

a. These counts include Rio Arriba County, NM, despite an ACS data collection error that occurred in that county in both 2017 and 2018. The Census Bureau detected the error after the five-year data for 2013-2017 had been released, but before the 2014-2018 data had been released. As a result, the 2014-2018 poverty rate for Rio Arriba County was not published, and the 2013-2017 poverty rate (formerly reported as 26.4%) was removed from the Census Bureau website. The 2012-2016 ACS poverty rate for Rio Arriba County was 23.4%, and the 2018 SAIPE poverty rate was 22.0%. Because the ACS poverty rate immediately before the error (2012-2016) and the SAIPE poverty rate were both above 20.0%, Rio Arriba County is included in this table's counts of persistent poverty counties. ACS five-year data are likely to be affected by the error for several subsequent years. For details, see https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/errata/125.html.

Example List of Persistent Poverty Counties

The list of persistent poverty counties below (**Table 2**) is based on data from the 1990 Census, Census 2000, and the 2018 SAIPE estimates, and included counties with poverty rates of 19.5% or greater (that is, counties with poverty rates that were at least 20% with rounding applied to the whole number). These same counties are mapped in **Figure 1**.

Table 2. List of Persistent Poverty Counties, Based on 1990 Census, Census 2000, and 2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE), Using Poverty Rates of 19.5% or Greater

Count	FIPS Geographic Identification Code	State	County	Congressional District(s) Representing the County[a]	Poverty Rate 1989 (1990 Census)	Poverty Rate 1999 (Census 2000)	Poverty Rate 2018, from SAIPE
1	01005	Alabama	Barbour	2	25.2	26.8	30.9
2	01007	Alabama	Bibb	6	21.2	20.6	21.8
3	01011	Alabama	Bullock	2	36.5	33.5	42.5
4	01013	Alabama	Butler	2	31.5	24.6	24.5
5	01023	Alabama	Choctaw	7	30.2	24.5	22.1
6	01025	Alabama	Clarke	1, 7	25.9	22.6	22.8
7	01035	Alabama	Conecuh	2	29.7	26.6	24.4
8	01041	Alabama	Crenshaw	2	24.3	22.1	19.5
9	01047	Alabama	Dallas	7	36.2	31.1	31.4
10	01053	Alabama	Escambia	1	28.1	20.9	23.6

Count	FIPS Geographic Identification Code	State	County	Congressional District(s) Representing the County[a]	Poverty Rate 1989 (1990 Census)	Poverty Rate 1999 (Census 2000)	Poverty Rate 2018, from SAIPE
11	01061	Alabama	Geneva	2	19.5	19.6	21.3
12	01063	Alabama	Greene	7	45.6	34.3	30.1
13	01065	Alabama	Hale	7	35.6	26.9	25.6
14	01085	Alabama	Lowndes	7	38.6	31.4	25.1
15	01087	Alabama	Macon	3	34.5	32.8	30.2
16	01091	Alabama	Marengo	7	30.0	25.9	24.0
17	01099	Alabama	Monroe	1	22.7	21.3	21.9
18	01105	Alabama	Perry	7	42.6	35.4	35.3
19	01107	Alabama	Pickens	7	28.9	24.9	23.1
20	01109	Alabama	Pike	2	27.2	23.1	23.6
21	01113	Alabama	Russell	3	20.4	19.9	21.7
22	01119	Alabama	Sumter	7	39.7	38.7	34.7
23	01131	Alabama	Wilcox	7	45.2	39.9	33.4
24	02050	Alaska	Bethel Census Area	at large	30.0	20.6	32.7
25	02070	Alaska	Dillingham Census Area	at large	24.6	21.4	22.0
26	02158	Alaska	Kusilvak Census Area[b]	at large	31.0	26.2	35.1
27	02290	Alaska	Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	at large	26.0	23.8	23.7
28	04001	Arizona	Apache	1	47.1	37.8	37.3
29	04009	Arizona	Graham	1	26.7	23.0	20.2
30	04012	Arizona	La Paz	4	28.2	19.6	23.7
31	04017	Arizona	Navajo	1	34.7	29.5	28.5
32	04023	Arizona	Santa Cruz	3	26.4	24.5	24.4
33	05011	Arkansas	Bradley	4	24.9	26.3	21.7
34	05017	Arkansas	Chicot	1	40.4	28.6	31.4
35	05027	Arkansas	Columbia	4	24.4	21.1	22.4
36	05041	Arkansas	Desha	1	34.0	28.9	24.3
37	05057	Arkansas	Hempstead	4	22.7	20.3	20.6
38	05069	Arkansas	Jefferson	1, 4	23.9	20.5	22.2
39	05073	Arkansas	Lafayette	4	34.7	23.2	22.8
40	05077	Arkansas	Lee	1	47.3	29.9	43.0
41	05079	Arkansas	Lincoln	1	26.2	19.5	27.5
42	05093	Arkansas	Mississippi	1	26.2	23.0	25.7
43	05095	Arkansas	Monroe	1	35.9	27.5	26.0

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44	05099	Arkansas	Nevada	4	20.3	22.8	21.3
45	05103	Arkansas	Ouachita	4	21.2	19.5	23.3
46	05107	Arkansas	Phillips	1	43.0	32.7	35.4
47	05111	Arkansas	Poinsett	1	25.6	21.2	23.7
48	05123	Arkansas	St. Francis	1	36.6	27.5	35.6
49	05129	Arkansas	Searcy	1, 3	29.9	23.8	24.3
50	05147	Arkansas	Woodruff	1	34.5	27.0	23.7
51	06019	California	Fresno	4, 16, 21, 22	21.4	22.9	21.3
52	06025	California	Imperial	51	23.8	22.6	21.4
53	06047	California	Merced	16	19.9	21.7	21.2
54	06107	California	Tulare	21, 22, 23	22.6	23.9	22.2
55	08011	Colorado	Bent	4	20.4	19.5	33.9
56	08021	Colorado	Conejos	3	33.9	23.0	21.4
57	08023	Colorado	Costilla	3	34.6	26.8	25.2
58	08099	Colorado	Prowers	4	21.0	19.5	21.6
59	08109	Colorado	Saguache	3	30.6	22.6	24.6
60	12001	Florida	Alachua	3	23.5	22.8	19.8
61	12039	Florida	Gadsden	5	28.0	19.9	23.6
62	12047	Florida	Hamilton	5	27.8	26.0	27.6
63	12049	Florida	Hardee	17	22.8	24.6	27.0
64	12079	Florida	Madison	5	25.9	23.1	22.8
65	13003	Georgia	Atkinson	8	26.0	23.0	26.1
66	13005	Georgia	Bacon	1	24.1	23.7	22.8
67	13007	Georgia	Baker	2	24.8	23.4	22.9
68	13017	Georgia	Ben Hill	8	22.0	22.3	26.2
69	13027	Georgia	Brooks	8	25.9	23.4	24.5
70	13031	Georgia	Bulloch	12	27.5	24.5	22.9
71	13033	Georgia	Burke	12	30.3	28.7	22.0
72	13037	Georgia	Calhoun	2	31.8	26.5	37.2
73	13043	Georgia	Candler	12	24.1	26.1	24.6
74	13059	Georgia	Clarke	9, 10	27.0	28.3	27.0
75	13061	Georgia	Clay	2	35.7	31.3	29.8
76	13065	Georgia	Clinch	1	26.4	23.4	25.8
77	13071	Georgia	Colquitt	8	22.8	19.8	23.9
78	13075	Georgia	Cook	8	22.4	20.7	24.5

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79	13081	Georgia	Crisp	2	29.0	29.3	27.4
80	13087	Georgia	Decatur	2	23.3	22.7	23.2
81	13093	Georgia	Dooly	2	32.9	22.1	29.1
82	13095	Georgia	Dougherty	2	24.4	24.8	29.5
83	13099	Georgia	Early	2	31.4	25.7	26.5
84	13107	Georgia	Emanuel	12	25.7	27.4	25.1
85	13109	Georgia	Evans	12	25.4	27.0	26.6
86	13131	Georgia	Grady	2	22.3	21.3	20.0
87	13141	Georgia	Hancock	10	30.1	29.4	30.7
88	13163	Georgia	Jefferson	10	31.3	23.0	22.3
89	13165	Georgia	Jenkins	12	27.8	28.4	31.8
90	13167	Georgia	Johnson	10	22.2	22.6	30.0
91	13193	Georgia	Macon	2	29.2	25.8	30.5
92	13197	Georgia	Marion	2	28.2	22.4	22.8
93	13201	Georgia	Miller	2	22.1	21.2	22.4
94	13205	Georgia	Mitchell	2	28.7	26.4	29.3
95	13209	Georgia	Montgomery	12	24.5	19.9	22.1
96	13225	Georgia	Peach	2	24.0	20.2	24.0
97	13239	Georgia	Quitman	2	33.0	21.9	25.5
98	13243	Georgia	Randolph	2	35.9	27.7	30.8
99	13251	Georgia	Screven	12	22.9	20.1	25.9
100	13253	Georgia	Seminole	2	29.1	23.2	25.4
101	13259	Georgia	Stewart	2	31.4	22.2	37.9
102	13261	Georgia	Sumter	2	24.8	21.4	25.7
103	13263	Georgia	Talbot	2	24.9	24.2	24.8
104	13265	Georgia	Taliaferro	10	31.9	23.4	24.6
105	13267	Georgia	Tattnall	12	21.9	23.9	25.6
106	13269	Georgia	Taylor	2	29.5	26.0	22.9
107	13271	Georgia	Telfair	8	27.3	21.2	31.9
108	13273	Georgia	Terrell	2	29.1	28.6	27.8
109	13277	Georgia	Tift	8	22.9	19.9	19.6
110	13279	Georgia	Toombs	12	24.0	23.9	24.9
111	13283	Georgia	Treutlen	12	27.1	26.3	26.3
112	13287	Georgia	Turner	8	31.3	26.7	27.9
113	13289	Georgia	Twiggs	8	26.0	19.7	21.3

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114	13299	Georgia	Ware	1	21.1	20.5	23.6
115	13301	Georgia	Warren	10	32.6	27.0	25.7
116	13303	Georgia	Washington	10	21.6	22.9	25.9
117	13309	Georgia	Wheeler	12	30.3	25.3	39.6
118	13315	Georgia	Wilcox	8	28.6	21.0	30.8
119	16065	Idaho	Madison	2	28.6	30.5	23.9
120	17003	Illinois	Alexander	12	32.2	26.1	27.6
121	17059	Illinois	Gallatin	15	21.4	20.7	20.5
122	17077	Illinois	Jackson	12	28.4	25.2	25.7
123	17153	Illinois	Pulaski	12	30.2	24.7	19.7
124	20161	Kansas	Riley	1	21.2	20.6	20.7
125	21001	Kentucky	Adair	1	25.1	24.0	23.8
126	21011	Kentucky	Bath	6	27.3	21.9	20.4
127	21013	Kentucky	Bell	5	36.2	31.1	31.3
128	21025	Kentucky	Breathitt	5	39.5	33.2	32.5
129	21043	Kentucky	Carter	5	26.8	22.3	31.1
130	21045	Kentucky	Casey	1	29.4	25.5	26.0
131	21051	Kentucky	Clay	5	40.2	39.7	38.2
132	21053	Kentucky	Clinton	1	38.1	25.8	25.7
133	21057	Kentucky	Cumberland	1	31.6	23.8	23.3
134	21063	Kentucky	Elliott	5	38.0	25.9	25.2
135	21065	Kentucky	Estill	6	29.0	26.4	25.3
136	21071	Kentucky	Floyd	5	31.2	30.3	34.2
137	21075	Kentucky	Fulton	1	30.3	23.1	30.2
138	21095	Kentucky	Harlan	5	33.1	32.5	33.4
139	21099	Kentucky	Hart	2	27.1	22.4	22.2
140	21109	Kentucky	Jackson	5	38.2	30.2	26.5
141	21115	Kentucky	Johnson	5	28.7	26.6	25.0
142	21119	Kentucky	Knott	5	40.4	31.1	32.1
143	21121	Kentucky	Knox	5	38.9	34.8	31.9
144	21125	Kentucky	Laurel	5	24.8	21.3	20.6
145	21127	Kentucky	Lawrence	5	36.0	30.7	25.5
146	21129	Kentucky	Lee	5	37.4	30.4	34.4
147	21131	Kentucky	Leslie	5	35.6	32.7	30.8
148	21133	Kentucky	Letcher	5	31.8	27.1	31.1

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149	21135	Kentucky	Lewis	4	30.7	28.5	25.2
150	21137	Kentucky	Lincoln	5	27.2	21.1	20.6
151	21147	Kentucky	McCreary	5	45.5	32.2	33.7
152	21153	Kentucky	Magoffin	5	42.5	36.6	28.4
153	21159	Kentucky	Martin	5	35.4	37.0	39.1
154	21165	Kentucky	Menifee	6	35.0	29.6	26.4
155	21169	Kentucky	Metcalfe	1	27.9	23.6	23.3
156	21171	Kentucky	Monroe	1	26.9	23.4	23.0
157	21175	Kentucky	Morgan	5	38.8	27.2	27.3
158	21189	Kentucky	Owsley	5	52.1	45.4	39.2
159	21193	Kentucky	Perry	5	32.1	29.1	28.9
160	21195	Kentucky	Pike	5	25.4	23.4	23.8
161	21197	Kentucky	Powell	6	26.2	23.5	22.0
162	21203	Kentucky	Rockcastle	5	30.7	23.1	22.8
163	21205	Kentucky	Rowan	5	28.9	21.3	22.7
164	21207	Kentucky	Russell	1	25.6	24.3	21.6
165	21231	Kentucky	Wayne	5	37.3	29.4	28.1
166	21235	Kentucky	Whitley	5	33.0	26.4	25.7
167	21237	Kentucky	Wolfe	6	44.3	35.9	31.4
168	22001	Louisiana	Acadia Parish	3	30.5	24.5	25.2
169	22003	Louisiana	Allen Parish	4	29.9	19.9	19.6
170	22007	Louisiana	Assumption Parish	2, 6	28.2	21.8	20.7
171	22009	Louisiana	Avoyelles Parish	5	37.1	25.9	27.4
172	22013	Louisiana	Bienville Parish	4	31.2	26.1	26.9
173	22017	Louisiana	Caddo Parish	4	24.0	21.1	22.4
174	22021	Louisiana	Caldwell Parish	5	28.8	21.2	20.8
175	22025	Louisiana	Catahoula Parish	5	36.8	28.1	26.0
176	22027	Louisiana	Claiborne Parish	4	32.0	26.5	32.7
177	22029	Louisiana	Concordia Parish	5	30.6	29.1	27.2
178	22035	Louisiana	East Carroll Parish	5	56.8	40.5	45.7
179	22037	Louisiana	East Feliciana Parish	5, 6	25.0	23.0	19.6
180	22039	Louisiana	Evangeline Parish	4	35.1	32.2	27.3
181	22041	Louisiana	Franklin Parish	5	34.5	28.4	27.3
182	22043	Louisiana	Grant Parish	5	25.5	21.5	20.0
183	22045	Louisiana	Iberia Parish	3	25.8	23.6	24.1

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184	22047	Louisiana	Iberville Parish	2, 6	28.0	23.1	23.8
185	22049	Louisiana	Jackson Parish	5	23.9	19.8	21.6
186	22061	Louisiana	Lincoln Parish	5	26.6	26.5	25.8
187	22065	Louisiana	Madison Parish	5	44.6	36.7	41.7
188	22067	Louisiana	Morehouse Parish	5	31.0	26.8	27.4
189	22069	Louisiana	Natchitoches Parish	4	33.9	26.5	32.8
190	22071	Louisiana	Orleans Parish	1, 2	31.6	27.9	23.8
191	22073	Louisiana	Ouachita Parish	5	24.7	20.7	21.3
192	22077	Louisiana	Pointe Coupee Parish	6	30.3	23.1	20.3
193	22081	Louisiana	Red River Parish	4	35.1	29.9	23.1
194	22083	Louisiana	Richland Parish	5	33.2	27.9	26.2
195	22085	Louisiana	Sabine Parish	4	27.1	21.5	23.1
196	22091	Louisiana	St. Helena Parish	5, 6	34.4	26.8	19.6
197	22097	Louisiana	St. Landry Parish	3, 4, 5	36.3	29.3	32.7
198	22101	Louisiana	St. Mary Parish	3	27.0	23.6	21.0
199	22107	Louisiana	Tensas Parish	5	46.3	36.3	31.6
200	22117	Louisiana	Washington Parish	5	31.6	24.7	24.6
201	22119	Louisiana	Webster Parish	4	25.1	20.2	26.0
202	22123	Louisiana	West Carroll Parish	5	27.4	23.4	23.3
203	22125	Louisiana	West Feliciana Parish	5	33.8	19.9	24.4
204	22127	Louisiana	Winn Parish	5	27.5	21.5	22.8
205	26073	Michigan	Isabella	4	24.9	20.4	23.4
206	28001	Mississippi	Adams	3	30.5	25.9	29.4
207	28005	Mississippi	Amite	3	30.9	22.6	22.2
208	28007	Mississippi	Attala	2	30.2	21.8	23.7
209	28009	Mississippi	Benton	1	29.7	23.2	22.1
210	28011	Mississippi	Bolivar	2	42.9	33.3	29.4
211	28017	Mississippi	Chickasaw	1	21.3	20.0	20.3
212	28019	Mississippi	Choctaw	1	25.0	24.7	20.4
213	28021	Mississippi	Claiborne	2	43.6	32.4	36.3
214	28023	Mississippi	Clarke	3, 4	23.4	23.0	21.6
215	28025	Mississippi	Clay	1	25.9	23.5	21.9
216	28027	Mississippi	Coahoma	2	45.5	35.9	35.9
217	28029	Mississippi	Copiah	2	32.0	25.1	26.5
218	28031	Mississippi	Covington	3	31.2	23.5	26.5

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219	28035	Mississippi	Forrest	4	27.5	22.5	24.0
220	28037	Mississippi	Franklin	3	33.3	24.1	20.1
221	28041	Mississippi	Greene	4	26.8	19.6	22.6
222	28043	Mississippi	Grenada	2	22.3	20.9	22.3
223	28051	Mississippi	Holmes	2	53.2	41.1	33.2
224	28053	Mississippi	Humphreys	2	45.9	38.2	37.0
225	28055	Mississippi	Issaquena	2	49.3	33.2	40.5
226	28063	Mississippi	Jefferson	2	46.9	36.0	35.5
227	28065	Mississippi	Jefferson Davis	3	33.3	28.2	26.0
228	28067	Mississippi	Jones	4	22.7	19.8	19.9
229	28069	Mississippi	Kemper	3	35.1	26.0	27.5
230	28075	Mississippi	Lauderdale	3	22.8	20.8	25.5
231	28079	Mississippi	Leake	2	29.6	23.3	25.4
232	28083	Mississippi	Leflore	2	38.9	34.8	35.1
233	28087	Mississippi	Lowndes	1	22.1	21.3	23.1
234	28091	Mississippi	Marion	4	29.6	24.8	27.2
235	28093	Mississippi	Marshall	1	30.0	21.9	20.9
236	28097	Mississippi	Montgomery	2	34.0	24.3	22.9
237	28099	Mississippi	Neshoba	3	26.6	21.0	26.9
238	28101	Mississippi	Newton	3	20.9	19.9	21.2
239	28103	Mississippi	Noxubee	3	41.4	32.8	29.0
240	28105	Mississippi	Oktibbeha	1, 3	30.1	28.2	27.3
241	28107	Mississippi	Panola	2	33.8	25.3	21.8
242	28111	Mississippi	Perry	4	29.1	22.0	22.0
243	28113	Mississippi	Pike	3	32.9	25.3	30.6
244	28119	Mississippi	Quitman	2	41.6	33.1	37.6
245	28123	Mississippi	Scott	3	27.4	20.7	25.5
246	28125	Mississippi	Sharkey	2	47.5	38.3	33.6
247	28127	Mississippi	Simpson	3	22.7	21.6	19.8
248	28133	Mississippi	Sunflower	2	41.8	30.0	32.6
249	28135	Mississippi	Tallahatchie	2	41.9	32.2	33.4
250	28143	Mississippi	Tunica	2	56.8	33.1	26.5
251	28147	Mississippi	Walthall	3	35.9	27.8	23.4
252	28151	Mississippi	Washington	2	33.8	29.2	32.6
253	28153	Mississippi	Wayne	4	29.5	25.4	21.4

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254	28157	Mississippi	Wilkinson	3	42.2	37.7	30.3
255	28159	Mississippi	Winston	1	26.6	23.7	21.0
256	28163	Mississippi	Yazoo	2	39.2	31.9	37.1
257	29001	Missouri	Adair	6	24.9	23.3	23.9
258	29035	Missouri	Carter	8	27.6	25.2	22.6
259	29069	Missouri	Dunklin	8	29.9	24.5	26.1
260	29133	Missouri	Mississippi	8	29.7	23.7	26.8
261	29149	Missouri	Oregon	8	27.4	22.0	23.8
262	29153	Missouri	Ozark	8	22.1	21.6	22.0
263	29155	Missouri	Pemiscot	8	35.8	30.4	29.1
264	29179	Missouri	Reynolds	8	24.2	20.1	20.3
265	29181	Missouri	Ripley	8	31.5	22.0	23.5
266	29203	Missouri	Shannon	8	24.1	26.9	22.6
267	29215	Missouri	Texas	8	22.9	21.4	24.6
268	29221	Missouri	Washington	8	27.2	20.8	21.7
269	29223	Missouri	Wayne	8	29.0	21.9	23.3
270	29229	Missouri	Wright	8	25.3	21.7	23.9
271	29510	Missouri	St. Louis city	1	24.6	24.6	22.8
272	30003	Montana	Big Horn	at large	35.3	29.2	25.6
273	30005	Montana	Blaine	at large	27.7	28.1	20.8
274	30035	Montana	Glacier	at large	35.7	27.3	27.0
275	30085	Montana	Roosevelt	at large	27.7	32.4	25.4
276	31173	Nebraska	Thurston	1	30.9	25.6	23.9
277	35003	New Mexico	Catron	2	25.6	24.5	23.3
278	35006	New Mexico	Cibola	2	33.6	24.8	28.6
279	35013	New Mexico	Doña Ana	2	26.5	25.4	24.9
280	35019	New Mexico	Guadalupe	2	38.5	21.6	24.3
281	35023	New Mexico	Hidalgo	2	20.7	27.3	25.7
282	35029	New Mexico	Luna	2	31.5	32.9	27.2
283	35031	New Mexico	McKinley	2, 3	43.5	36.1	32.3
284	35033	New Mexico	Mora	3	36.2	25.4	23.5
285	35037	New Mexico	Quay	3	25.1	20.9	24.1
286	35039	New Mexico	Rio Arriba	3	27.5	20.3	22.0
287	35041	New Mexico	Roosevelt	2, 3	26.9	22.7	22.6
288	35045	New Mexico	San Juan	3	28.3	21.5	23.1

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289	35047	New Mexico	San Miguel	3	30.2	24.4	28.2
290	35051	New Mexico	Sierra	2	19.6	20.9	25.7
291	35053	New Mexico	Socorro	2	29.9	31.7	29.6
292	35055	New Mexico	Taos	3	27.5	20.9	21.4
293	36005	New York	Bronx	13, 14, 15, 16	28.7	30.7	27.3
294	37015	North Carolina	Bertie	1	25.9	23.5	23.5
295	37017	North Carolina	Bladen	7, 9	21.9	21.0	29.1
296	37047	North Carolina	Columbus	7	24.0	22.7	25.3
297	37065	North Carolina	Edgecombe	1	20.9	19.6	22.9
298	37083	North Carolina	Halifax	1	25.6	23.9	22.0
299	37117	North Carolina	Martin	1	22.3	20.2	20.3
300	37131	North Carolina	Northampton	1	23.6	21.3	21.4
301	37147	North Carolina	Pitt	1, 3	22.1	20.3	23.2
302	37155	North Carolina	Robeson	9	24.1	22.8	24.5
303	37177	North Carolina	Tyrrell	3	25.0	23.3	25.2
304	37181	North Carolina	Vance	1	19.6	20.5	26.3
305	37187	North Carolina	Washington	1	20.4	21.8	21.1
306	38005	North Dakota	Benson	at large	31.7	29.1	30.8
307	38079	North Dakota	Rolette	at large	40.7	31.0	24.7
308	38085	North Dakota	Sioux	at large	47.4	39.2	32.9
309	39009	Ohio	Athens	6, 15	28.7	27.4	30.7
310	40001	Oklahoma	Adair	2	26.7	23.2	24.6
311	40005	Oklahoma	Atoka	2	31.1	19.8	20.8
312	40015	Oklahoma	Caddo	3	27.8	21.7	19.5
313	40021	Oklahoma	Cherokee	2	28.8	22.9	21.0
314	40023	Oklahoma	Choctaw	2	32.7	24.3	23.0
315	40029	Oklahoma	Coal	2	27.4	23.1	22.6
316	40055	Oklahoma	Greer	3	23.4	19.6	26.0
317	40057	Oklahoma	Harmon	3	34.2	29.7	23.9
318	40061	Oklahoma	Haskell	2	27.1	20.5	23.3
319	40063	Oklahoma	Hughes	2	26.9	21.9	24.6
320	40069	Oklahoma	Johnston	2	28.5	22.0	19.5
321	40089	Oklahoma	McCurtain	2	30.2	24.7	21.1
322	40107	Oklahoma	Okfuskee	2	29.4	23.0	26.1
323	40119	Oklahoma	Payne	3	21.7	20.3	22.8

Count	FIPS Geographic Identification Code	State	County	Congressional District(s) Representing the County[a]	Poverty Rate 1989 (1990 Census)	Poverty Rate 1999 (Census 2000)	Poverty Rate 2018, from SAIPE
324	40127	Oklahoma	Pushmataha	2	30.2	23.2	19.7
325	40141	Oklahoma	Tillman	4	22.9	21.9	21.1
326	42101	Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	2, 3, 5	20.3	22.9	24.3
327	45005	South Carolina	Allendale	6	35.8	34.5	37.3
328	45009	South Carolina	Bamberg	6	28.2	27.8	26.7
329	45011	South Carolina	Barnwell	2	21.8	20.9	22.4
330	45027	South Carolina	Clarendon	6	29.0	23.1	26.4
331	45029	South Carolina	Colleton	1, 6	23.4	21.1	20.0
332	45031	South Carolina	Darlington	7	19.9	20.3	23.5
333	45033	South Carolina	Dillon	7	28.1	24.2	32.1
334	45039	South Carolina	Fairfield	5	20.6	19.6	23.7
335	45049	South Carolina	Hampton	6	27.7	21.8	25.8
336	45061	South Carolina	Lee	5	29.6	21.8	28.1
337	45067	South Carolina	Marion	7	28.6	23.2	25.5
338	45069	South Carolina	Marlboro	7	26.6	21.7	30.0
339	45075	South Carolina	Orangeburg	2, 6	24.9	21.4	25.9
340	45089	South Carolina	Williamsburg	6	28.7	27.9	26.0
341	46007	South Dakota	Bennett	at large	37.6	39.2	32.5
342	46017	South Dakota	Buffalo	at large	45.1	56.9	45.7
343	46023	South Dakota	Charles Mix	at large	31.4	26.9	20.9
344	46027	South Dakota	Clay	at large	24.6	21.2	19.5
345	46031	South Dakota	Corson	at large	42.5	41.0	33.6
346	46041	South Dakota	Dewey	at large	44.4	33.6	25.8
347	46071	South Dakota	Jackson	at large	38.8	36.5	32.7
348	46085	South Dakota	Lyman	at large	24.7	24.3	21.1
349	46095	South Dakota	Mellette	at large	41.3	35.8	35.2
350	46102	South Dakota	Oglala Lakota[c]	at large	63.1	52.3	54.0
351	46109	South Dakota	Roberts	at large	26.4	22.1	21.3
352	46121	South Dakota	Todd	at large	50.2	48.3	48.4
353	46123	South Dakota	Tripp	at large	20.6	19.9	19.9
354	46137	South Dakota	Ziebach	at large	51.1	49.9	43.9
355	47013	Tennessee	Campbell	2, 3	26.8	22.8	21.6
356	47025	Tennessee	Claiborne	2	25.7	22.6	23.4
357	47029	Tennessee	Cocke	1	25.3	22.5	22.5
358	47049	Tennessee	Fentress	6	32.3	23.1	20.6

Count	FIPS Geographic Identification Code	State	County	Congressional District(s) Representing the County[a]	Poverty Rate 1989 (1990 Census)	Poverty Rate 1999 (Census 2000)	Poverty Rate 2018, from SAIPE
359	47061	Tennessee	Grundy	4	23.9	25.8	21.2
360	47067	Tennessee	Hancock	1	40.0	29.4	29.9
361	47069	Tennessee	Hardeman	7	23.3	19.7	23.5
362	47075	Tennessee	Haywood	8	27.5	19.5	20.5
363	47091	Tennessee	Johnson	1	28.5	22.6	20.7
364	47095	Tennessee	Lake	8	27.5	23.6	36.5
365	47151	Tennessee	Scott	3	27.8	20.2	21.2
366	47173	Tennessee	Union	3	21.3	19.6	19.8
367	48007	Texas	Aransas	27	25.2	19.9	19.9
368	48025	Texas	Bee	34	27.4	24.0	26.7
369	48041	Texas	Brazos	17	26.7	26.9	23.2
370	48047	Texas	Brooks	15	36.8	40.2	31.0
371	48061	Texas	Cameron	34	39.7	33.1	27.9
372	48079	Texas	Cochran	19	28.3	27.0	21.9
373	48107	Texas	Crosby	19	29.5	28.1	23.7
374	48109	Texas	Culberson	23	29.8	25.1	20.3
375	48115	Texas	Dawson	11	30.5	19.7	22.9
376	48127	Texas	Dimmit	23	48.9	33.2	24.6
377	48131	Texas	Duval	15	39.0	27.2	25.5
378	48137	Texas	Edwards	23	41.7	31.6	22.1
379	48141	Texas	El Paso	16, 23	26.8	23.8	20.5
380	48145	Texas	Falls	17	27.5	22.6	21.7
381	48153	Texas	Floyd	13, 19	27.1	21.5	21.0
382	48163	Texas	Frio	23	39.1	29.0	27.5
383	48169	Texas	Garza	19	23.1	22.3	24.6
384	48191	Texas	Hall	13	29.1	26.3	24.1
385	48207	Texas	Haskell	19	20.8	22.8	23.1
386	48215	Texas	Hidalgo	15, 28, 34	41.9	35.9	30.0
387	48225	Texas	Houston	8	25.6	21.0	26.1
388	48247	Texas	Jim Hogg	15	35.3	25.9	25.2
389	48249	Texas	Jim Wells	34	30.3	24.1	21.2
390	48255	Texas	Karnes	15	36.5	21.9	21.8
391	48271	Texas	Kinney	23	28.6	24.0	21.1
392	48273	Texas	Kleberg	34	27.4	26.7	25.0
393	48275	Texas	Knox	13	23.6	22.9	20.4

Count	FIPS Geographic Identification Code	State	County	Congressional District(s) Representing the County[a]	Poverty Rate 1989 (1990 Census)	Poverty Rate 1999 (Census 2000)	Poverty Rate 2018, from SAIPE
394	48279	Texas	Lamb	19	27.1	20.9	20.0
395	48283	Texas	La Salle	23, 28	37.0	29.8	29.6
396	48315	Texas	Marion	4	60.6	22.4	21.9
397	48323	Texas	Maverick	23	50.4	34.8	25.9
398	48327	Texas	Menard	11	31.1	25.8	21.6
399	48347	Texas	Nacogdoches	1	25.2	23.3	21.6
400	48371	Texas	Pecos	23	29.6	20.4	19.5
401	48377	Texas	Presidio	23	48.1	36.4	22.4
402	48389	Texas	Reeves	23	28.8	28.9	21.5
403	48405	Texas	San Augustine	1	29.7	21.2	22.2
404	48427	Texas	Starr	28	60.0	50.9	33.2
405	48445	Texas	Terry	19	25.5	23.3	22.4
406	48463	Texas	Uvalde	23	31.1	24.3	22.9
407	48479	Texas	Webb	28	38.2	31.2	25.7
408	48489	Texas	Willacy	34	44.5	33.2	35.0
409	48505	Texas	Zapata	28	41.0	35.8	32.1
410	48507	Texas	Zavala	23	50.4	41.8	32.0
411	49037	Utah	San Juan	3	36.4	31.4	22.6
412	51027	Virginia	Buchanan	9	21.9	23.2	27.6
413	51029	Virginia	Buckingham	5	19.5	20.0	20.2
414	51051	Virginia	Dickenson	9	25.9	21.3	25.2
415	51105	Virginia	Lee	9	28.7	23.9	24.8
416	51121	Virginia	Montgomery	9	22.1	23.2	24.1
417	51195	Virginia	Wise	9	21.6	20.0	25.4
418	51540	Virginia	Charlottesville city	5	23.7	25.9	23.1
419	51660	Virginia	Harrisonburg city	6	21.5	30.1	28.0
420	51720	Virginia	Norton city	9	26.7	22.8	20.8
421	51730	Virginia	Petersburg city	4	20.3	19.6	24.1
422	51750	Virginia	Radford city	9	32.2	31.4	30.4
423	51760	Virginia	Richmond city	4	20.9	21.4	22.3
424	53075	Washington	Whitman	5	24.2	25.6	25.4
425	54001	West Virginia	Barbour	1	28.5	22.6	20.0
426	54005	West Virginia	Boone	3	27.0	22.0	22.5
427	54007	West Virginia	Braxton	2	25.8	22.0	21.6
428	54013	West Virginia	Calhoun	2	32.0	25.1	22.8

Count	FIPS Geographic Identification Code	State	County	Congressional District(s) Representing the County[a]	Poverty Rate 1989 (1990 Census)	Poverty Rate 1999 (Census 2000)	Poverty Rate 2018, from SAIPE
429	54015	West Virginia	Clay	2	39.2	27.5	25.1
430	54019	West Virginia	Fayette	3	24.4	21.7	22.5
431	54021	West Virginia	Gilmer	1	33.5	25.9	24.8
432	54043	West Virginia	Lincoln	3	33.8	27.9	23.3
433	54045	West Virginia	Logan	3	27.7	24.1	24.6
434	54047	West Virginia	McDowell	3	37.7	37.7	35.4
435	54055	West Virginia	Mercer	3	20.4	19.7	22.7
436	54059	West Virginia	Mingo	3	30.9	29.7	27.0
437	54087	West Virginia	Roane	2	28.1	22.6	22.1
438	54089	West Virginia	Summers	3	24.5	24.4	26.9
439	54099	West Virginia	Wayne	3	21.8	19.6	20.9
440	54101	West Virginia	Webster	3	34.8	31.8	23.0
441	54109	West Virginia	Wyoming	3	27.9	25.1	24.1
442	55078	Wisconsin	Menominee	8	48.7	28.8	26.5
443	56001	Wyoming	Albany	at large	19.8	21.0	20.4

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) tabulation of data from U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, Census 2000, 2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, and Nation-Based Relationship File for Congressional Districts and Counties (116th Congress).

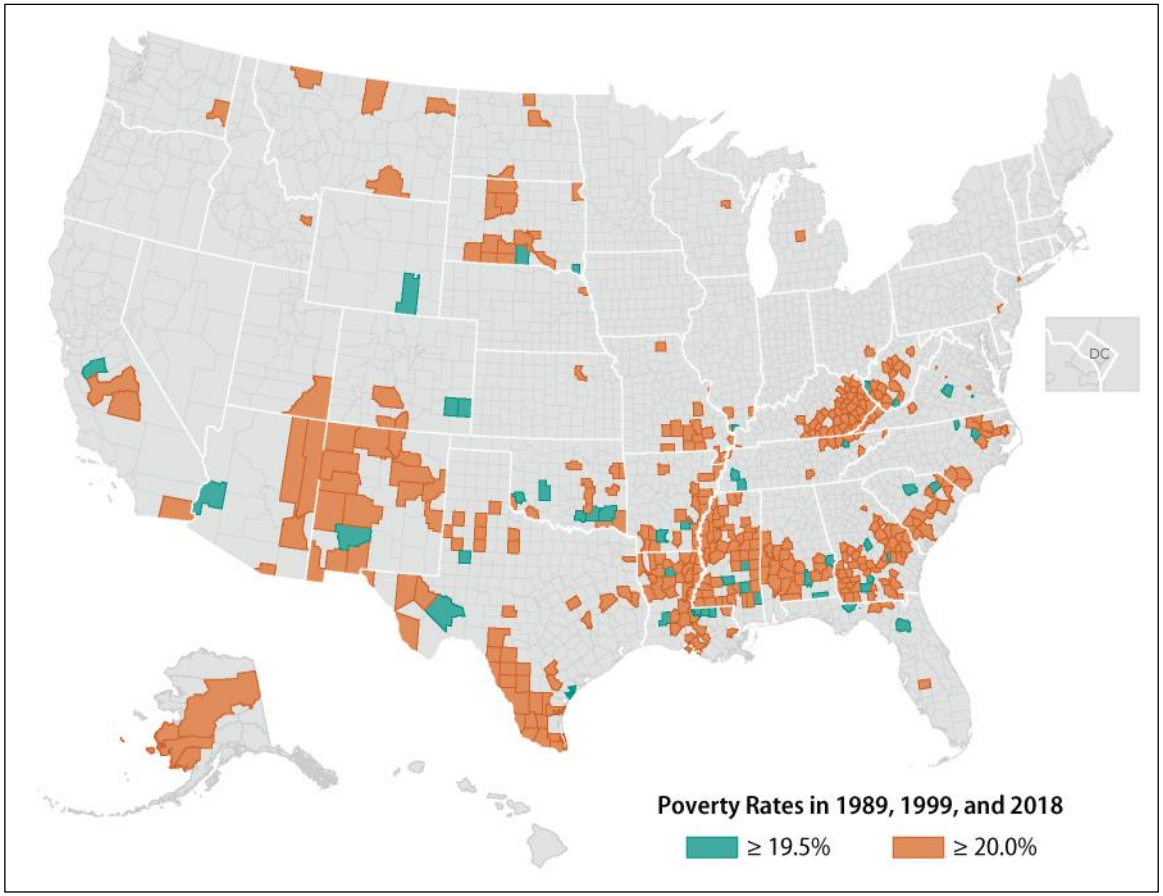
Notes: FIPS: Federal Information Processing Standard.

a. Numbers are ordinal, referring to the name of the congressional district(s) present in the county. For example, Barbour County, AL, is represented by Alabama's 2nd Congressional District (indicated by the 2). A congressional district may span multiple counties; conversely, a single county may be split among multiple congressional districts. Part of Clarke County, AL, for example, is represented by Alabama's 1st Congressional District (indicated by the 1) and part by the 7th Congressional District (indicated by the 7). Counties labeled "at large" are located in states that have only one member of the House of Representatives for the entire state.

b. Changed name and geographic code effective July 1, 2015, from Wade Hampton Census Area (02270) to Kusilvak Census Area (02158).

c. Changed name and geographic code effective May 1, 2015, from Shannon County (46113) to Oglala Lakota County (46102).

Figure 1. Persistent Poverty Counties Using Two Rounding Methods, Based on 1990 Census, Census 2000, and 2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates



Source: Created by Congressional Research Service (CRS) using data from U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, Census 2000, and 2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

Appendix. Details on the Data Sources

Decennial Census of Population and Housing, "Long Form"

Poverty estimates are computed using data from household surveys, which are based on a sample of households. In order to obtain meaningful estimates for any geographic area, the sample has to include enough responses from that area so that selecting a different sample of households from that area would not likely result in a dramatically different estimate. If estimates for smaller geographic areas are desired, a larger sample size is needed. A national-level survey, for instance, could produce reliable estimates for the United States without obtaining any responses from many counties, particularly counties with small populations. In order to produce estimates for all 3,143 county areas in the nation, however, not only are responses needed from every county, but those responses have to be plentiful enough from each county so that the estimates are meaningful (i.e., their margins of error are not unhelpfully wide).

Before the mid-1990s, the only data source with a sample size large enough to provide meaningful estimates at the county level (and for other small geographic areas) was the decennial census. The other household surveys available prior to that time did not have a sample size large enough to produce meaningful estimates for small areas such as counties. Income questions were asked on the census long form, which was sent to one-sixth of all U.S. households; the rest received the census short form, which did not ask about income. While technically still a sample, one-sixth of all households was a large enough sample to provide poverty estimates for every county in the nation, and even for smaller areas such as small towns. The long form was discontinued after Census 2000, and therefore poverty data are no longer available from the decennial census for the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.[16] Beginning in the mid-1990s, however, two additional data sources were developed to ensure that poverty estimates for small areas such as counties would still be available: the American Community Survey (ACS), and the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates program (SAIPE).

American Community Survey (ACS)

The ACS replaced the decennial census long form. It was developed to accommodate the needs of local government officials and other stakeholders who needed detailed information on small communities on a more frequent basis than once every 10 years. To that end, the ACS questionnaire was designed to reflect the same topics asked in the census long form.

In order to produce meaningful estimates for small communities, however, the ACS needs to collect a number of responses comparable to what was collected in the decennial census.[17] In order to collect that many responses while providing information more currently than once every 10 years, the ACS collects information from respondents continuously, in every month, as opposed to at one time of the year, and responses over time are pooled to provide estimates at varying geographic levels. To obtain estimates for geographic areas of 65,000 or more persons,

[16] Poverty estimates from the decennial census continue to be produced for American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. SAIPE and ACS estimates are not. See footnote 10.

[17] A sample of approximately 18.3 million households received the Census 2000 long form. Scott Boggess and Nikki L. Graf, "Measuring Education: A Comparison of the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey," presented at Joint Statistical Meetings, San Francisco, CA, August 7, 2003. http://census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2003/acs/2003_Boggess_01_doc.pdf.
From 2014 to 2018, 17.7 million housing unit addresses were sampled in the ACS. http://www.census.gov/acs/www/methodology/sample-size-and-data-quality/sample-size/index.php.

one year's worth of responses are pooled—these are the ACS one-year estimates. For the smallest geographic levels, which include the complete set of U.S. counties, five years of monthly responses are needed: these are the ACS five-year estimates. Even though data collection is ongoing, the publication of the data takes place only once every year, both for the one-year estimates and the estimates that represent the previous five-year span.

Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)

The SAIPE program was developed in the 1990s in order to provide state and local government officials with poverty estimates for local areas in between the decennial census years. In the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (IASA, P.L. 103-382), which amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), Congress recognized that providing funding for children in disadvantaged communities created a need for poverty data for those communities that were more current than the once-a-decade census. In the IASA, Congress provided for the development and evaluation of the SAIPE program for its use in Title I-A funding allocations.[18]

SAIPE estimates are model-based, meaning they use a mathematical procedure to compute estimates using both survey data (ACS one-year data) and administrative data (from tax returns and numbers of participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP). The modeling procedure produces estimates with less variability than estimates computed from survey data alone, especially for counties with small populations.

Guidance from the U.S. Census Bureau, "Which Data Source to Use"[19]

> The CPS ASEC[20] provides the most timely and accurate national data on income and is the source of official national poverty estimates, hence it is the preferred source for national analysis. Because of its large sample size, the ACS is preferred for subnational data on income and poverty by detailed demographic characteristics. The Census Bureau recommends using the ACS for 1-year estimates of income and poverty at the state level. Users looking for consistent, state-level trends should use CPS ASEC 2-year averages and CPS ASEC 3-year averages for state to state comparisons.
>
> For substate areas, like counties, users should consider their specific needs when picking the appropriate data source. The SAIPE program produces overall poverty and household income 1-year estimates with standard errors usually smaller than direct survey estimates. Users looking to compare estimates of the number and percentage of people in poverty for counties or school districts or the median household income for counties should use SAIPE, especially if the population is less than 65,000. Users who need other characteristics such as poverty among Hispanics or median earnings, should use the ACS, where and when available.

[18] Details about the origins of the SAIPE project are available on the Census Bureau's website at https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe/about/origins.html.

[19] Downloaded from http://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/data-sources.html, November 29, 2016.

[20] *Author's note:* CPS ASEC: Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

The SIPP[21] is the only Census Bureau source of longitudinal poverty data. As SIPP collects monthly income over 2.5 to 5 year panels, it is also a source of poverty estimates for time periods more or less than one year, including monthly poverty rates.

Table A-1 below reproduces the Census Bureau's recommendations, summarized for various geographic levels:

Table A-1. U.S. Census Bureau's Guidance on Poverty Data Sources by Geographic Level and Type of Estimate

Geographic Level	Cross-Sectional Estimates			Longitudinal Estimates
	Income/Poverty Rate	Detailed Characteristics	Year-to-Year Change	
United States	CPS ASEC	CPS ASEC/ ACS 1-year estimates for detailed race groups	CPS ASEC	SIPP
States	ACS 1-year estimates CPS ASEC 3-year averages	ACS 1-year estimates	ACS 1-year estimates	
Substate (areas with populations of 65,000 or more)	ACS 1-year estimates/ SAIPE for counties and school districts	ACS 1-year estimates	ACS 1-year estimates / SAIPE for counties and school districts	None
Substate (areas with populations less than 20,000)[a]	SAIPE for counties and school districts/ ACS using 5-year period estimates for all other geographic entities/ Decennial Census 2000 and prior	ACS 5-year estimates/ Decennial Census 2000 and prior	SAIPE for counties and school districts/ ACS using 5-year period estimates for all other geographic entities[b]	None
State-to-Nation comparison	CPS ASEC	CPS ASEC	CPS ASEC	

Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) formatted reproduction of table by U.S. Census Bureau, with an expansion to the notes. Original table downloaded from http://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/data-sources.html, January 16, 2020.

Notes:

ACS: American Community Survey.

CPS ASEC: Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

SAIPE: Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

SIPP: Survey of Income and Program Participation.

a. *Author's note:* Data for areas with populations of 20,000 to 65,000 persons previously had been produced using ACS three-year estimates, but are now only produced using the ACS five-year estimates. ACS three-year estimates are no longer produced (with 2011-2013 data as the last in the series). For details, see https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance/estimates.html.

b. Use non-overlapping periods for ACS trend analysis with multiyear estimates. For example, comparing 2006-2010 ACS five-year estimates with 2011-2015 ACS five-year estimates is preferred for identifying change.

[21] *Author's note:* SIPP: Survey of Income and Program Participation; mentioned here only as part of a quotation.

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