

# Poverty in America, 2016: A Catholic Response

Michael O'Rourke, Policy Advisor

*Office of Domestic Social Development, USCCB*

Andrew Bostjancic, Policy and Research Analyst

*Catholic Charities USA*

Barbara McPherson

*St. Vincent de Paul Society*

# Pope Francis on Poverty



# Pope Francis on Poverty

- ▶ The economic system that has the god of money at its center, and that sometimes acts with the brutality of the robbers in the parable [of the Good Samaritan], inflicts injuries that to a criminal degree have remained neglected. Globalized society frequently looks the other way with the pretense of innocence. Under the guise of what is politically correct or ideologically fashionable, one looks at those who suffer without touching them. But they are televised live; they are talked about in euphemisms and with apparent tolerance, but nothing is done systematically to heal the social wounds or to confront the structures that leave so many brothers and sisters by the wayside.
  - Message of Pope Francis on the Occasion of the World Meeting of Popular Movements in Modesto, CA, Feb. 10, 2017



# Pope Francis on Poverty

- ▶ “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him” (*Ps* 34:6). The Church has always understood the importance of this cry. We possess an outstanding testimony to this in the very first pages of the Acts of the Apostles, where Peter asks that seven men, “full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (6:3), be chosen for the ministry of caring for the poor. This is certainly one of the first signs of the entrance of the Christian community upon the world’s stage: the service of the poor. The earliest community realized that being a disciple of Jesus meant demonstrating fraternity and solidarity, in obedience to the Master’s proclamation that the poor are *blessed* and *heirs* to the Kingdom of heaven (cf. *Mt* 5:3).
  - Pope Francis, Message to the First World Day of the Poor, Nov 19, 2017



# Catholic Social Teaching: Poverty

▶ The 2016 Powerpoint:

- <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/poverty/domestic/upload/new-poverty-stats-webinar-2016.pdf>



# Headlines

- ▶ Median Household Income is Up and Poverty is Down By Significant Amounts for the second year in a row
- ▶ Government Programs Succeed in Raising Many Families Out of Poverty
- ▶ Many Families Rely on Programs to Stay Out of Poverty
- ▶ Many Families Who Are Above the Poverty Line are Still Close – Almost 1 in 3 report family household income below 200% of threshold



# Where are the Data From?

- ▶ Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC)
  - Survey of 95k households
  - Controlled to independent national population estimates of age, sex, and race for March 2016
  - Conducted every month
  - Primary source of poverty data for the US Government
  - Used for the Office of Management and Budget policy calculations
  - Has most detailed questions on economics and poverty



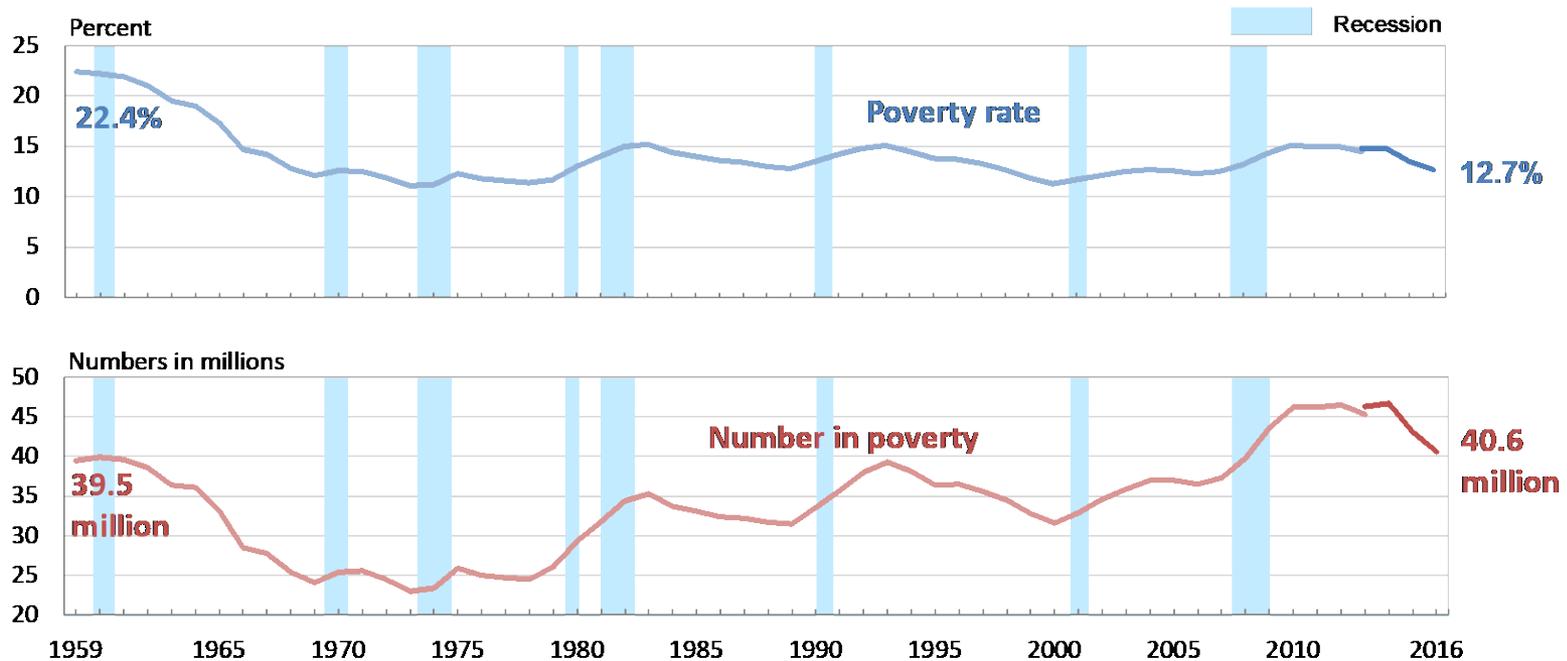
# Poverty Threshold for 2016 CPS

Size of Family Unit	Weighted Average Poverty Thresholds	No Children	One Child	Two	Three	Four
1	\$12,228					
2 (hh < 65)	\$16,151	\$16,072	\$16,543			
2 (hh > 65)	\$14,522	\$14,507	\$16,480			
3	\$19,105	\$18,774	\$19,318	\$19,337		
4	\$24,563	\$24,755	\$25,160	\$24,339	\$24,424	
5	\$29,111	\$29,854	\$30,288	\$29,360	\$28,643	\$28,205



# Poverty Rate for 2016

## Poverty Rate and Number in Poverty: 1959 to 2016



# Changes in the Poverty Rate

## ▶ The Poverty Rate is Down

- 12.7% in 2016, down 0.8% from 2015, 2.1% since 2014.
- 40.6 M in poverty, down 2.5M from 2015, and 6.0M from 2014
- The Pre-Recession poverty rate in 2007 was 12.5%
  - 11.3% in 2000.
- Children: 18%, down from 19.7% in 2015
  - 13.3M, down from 14.5M in 2015.
- 65+: 9.3%, not statistically different from 2015
  - Only age group to increase in number: 4.2 to 4.6M



# Poverty Rate for Families

- ▶ Poverty rate for families was 9.8% or 8.1M families, down from 10.4% and 8.6M in 2015.
- ▶ For married couple families, the poverty rate did not show statistically significant change: 5.1%, representing 3.1M families, down from 5.4%, representing 3.2M families in 2015.
- ▶ For families with a female householder, the poverty rate was 26.6%, representing 4.1M families, down from 28.2%, representing 4.4M families in 2015.
- ▶ Families with a male householder had a poverty rate of 13.1%, representing 847k families, down from 14.9%, representing 939k families in 2015.
- ▶ To leave poverty, families needed on avg \$10,505 in 2016, slightly higher than \$10,246 in 2015.



# Poverty Rate for Children Based on Family Composition

- ▶ Poverty Rate for children related to the householder is 17.6%, representing 12.8M children down from 19.2%, representing 14 M children in 2015.
- ▶ For children in married couple families, the poverty rate is 8.4%, representing 4.2M children, down from 9.8%, representing 4.8 M in 2015.
- ▶ For related children in families with a female householder, the poverty rate for children is 42.1%, representing 7.6M children, not statistically different from the rate of 42.6%, representing 7.9M children, in 2015.



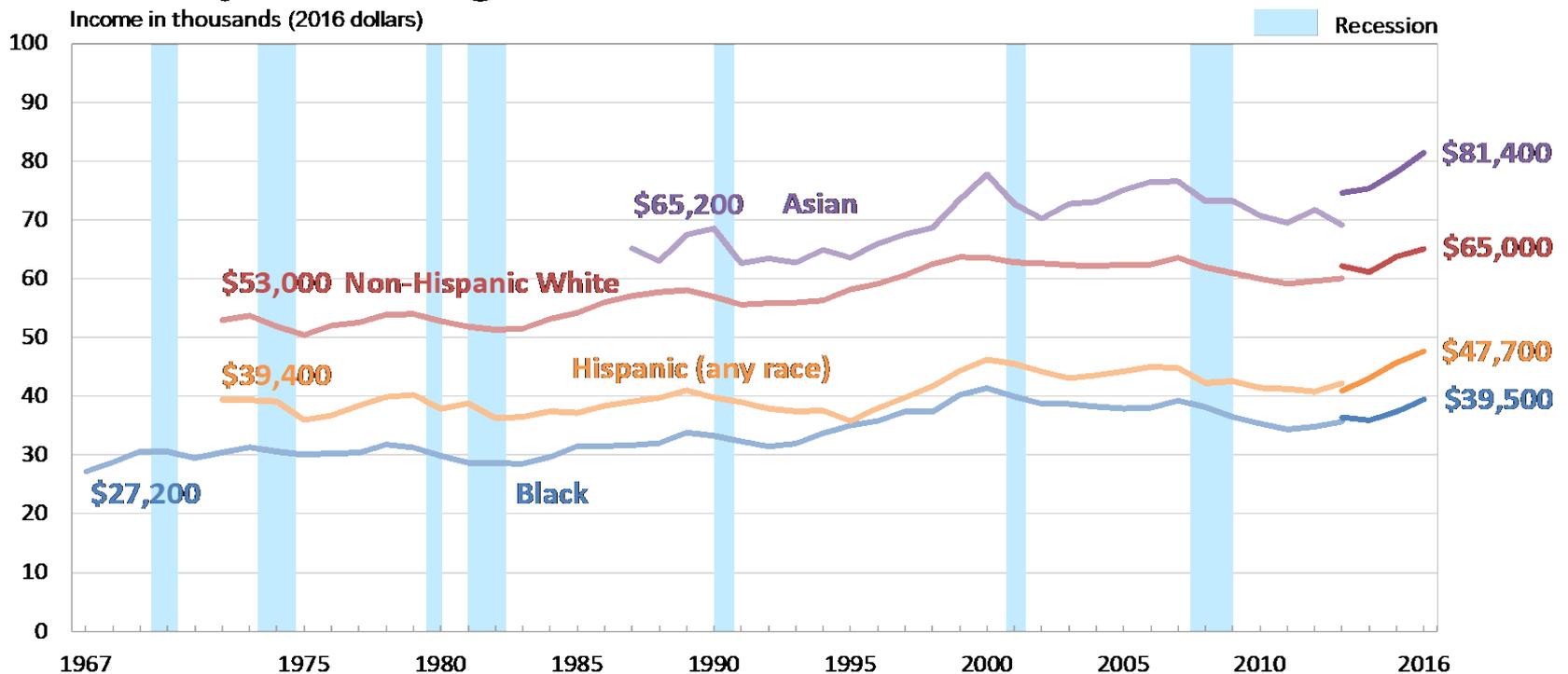
# Families Close to the Poverty Line

- ▶ 17% of all individuals had family income below 125% of their poverty threshold
- ▶ 21.2% are below 150% of the threshold
- ▶ 29.8% are below 200% of the threshold
  
- ▶ In other words, nearly 1/3 of all individuals are in a family whose household income is less than twice the poverty line.
- ▶ For a family of four with two children, that would be a household income less than \$48,678.



# Racial Disparities in Income

## Real Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin of Householder: 1967 to 2016



# Ad Hoc Committee on Racism

- ▶ “Through Jesus’ example of love and mercy, we are called to be a better people than what we have witnessed over the past weeks and months as a nation. Through listening, prayer and meaningful collaboration, I’m hopeful we can find lasting solutions and common ground where racism will no longer find a place in our society.”
  - Bishop George V. Murray, SJ, Chairman of the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee on Racism
- ▶ <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/index.cfm>

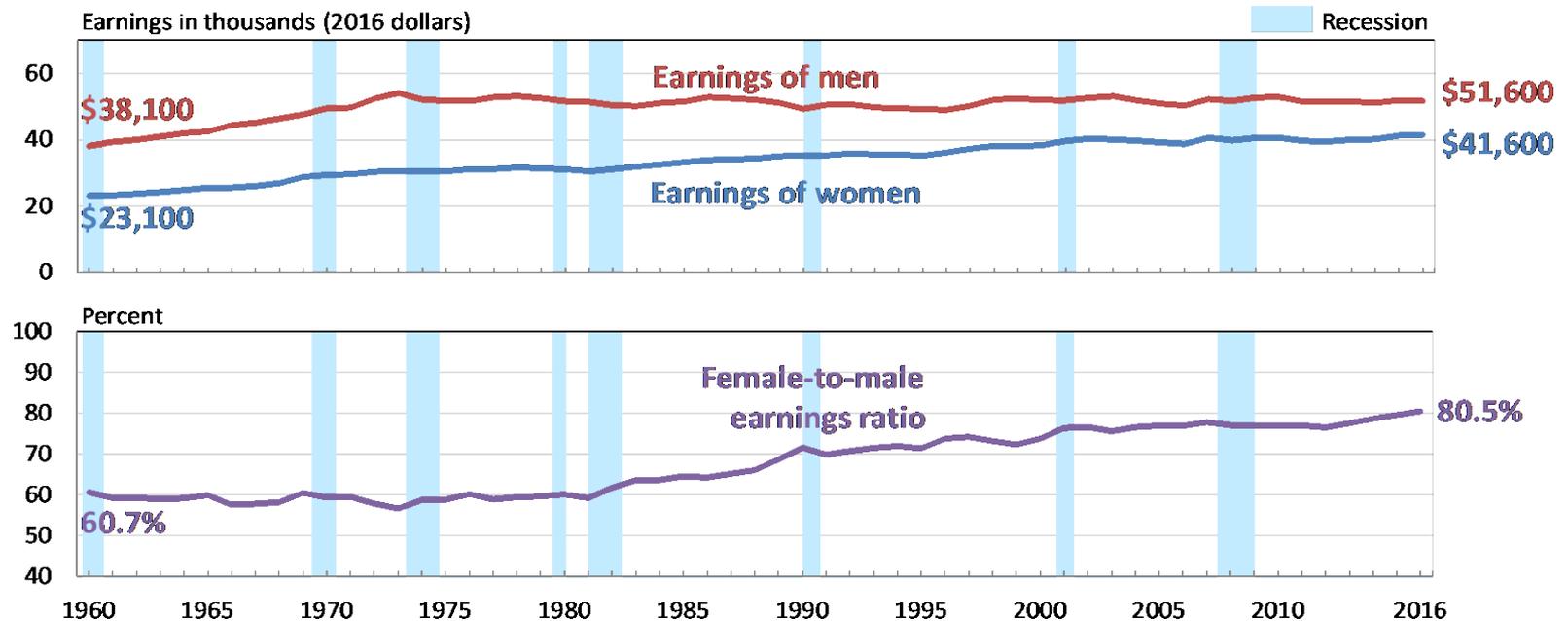


# Gender Disparities in Income

## Real Median Earnings and Female-to-Male Earnings

### Ratio: 1960 to 2016

(Full-time, year-round workers, aged 15 and older)



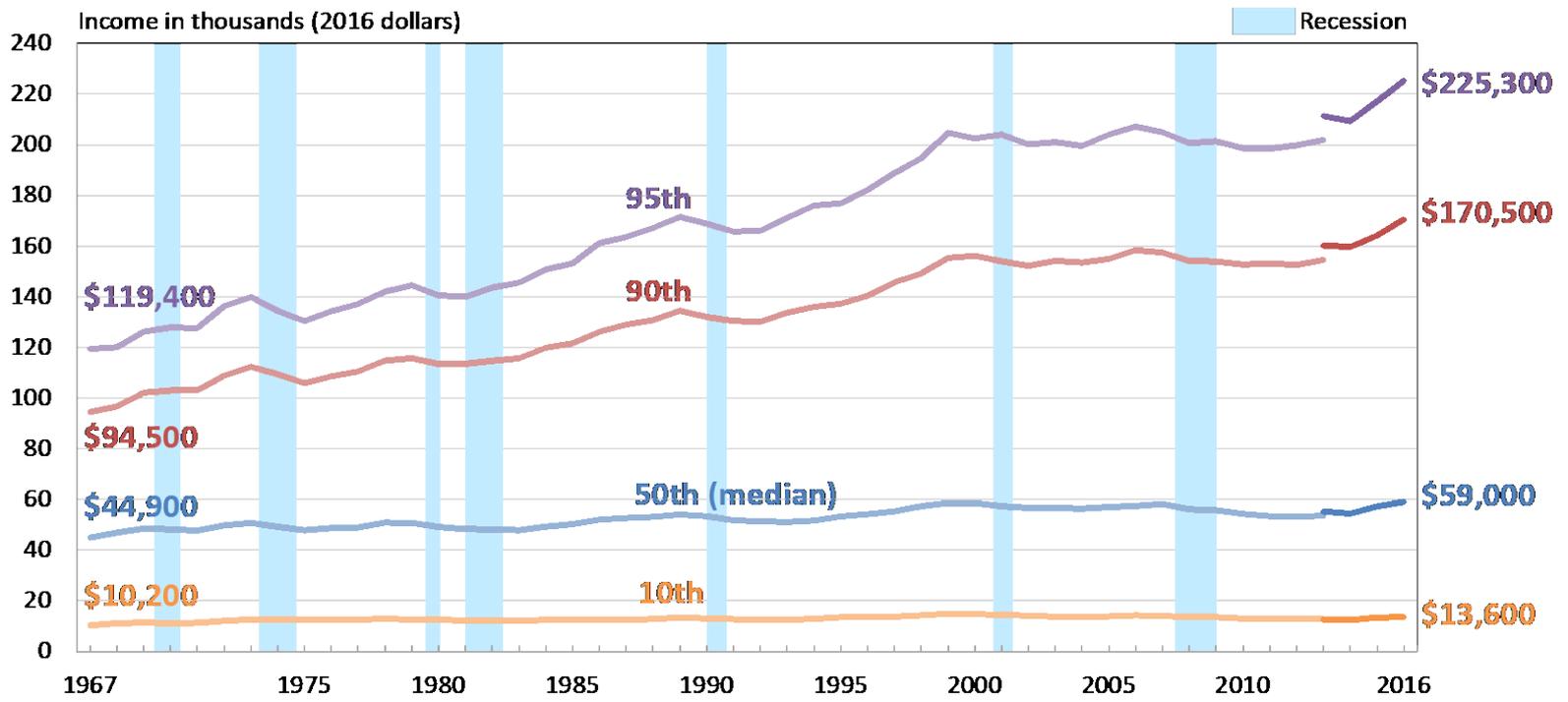
# Decreases in Deep Poverty

- ▶ 18.5M were in deep poverty in 2016, down from 19.4M in 2015
- ▶ Deep Poverty Rate was 5.8%, down from 6.1% 2015, which accounted for 45.6% of all people in poverty, slightly higher than 45.1% in 2015.
- ▶ 6.0M Children in deep poverty in 2016, down from 6.5M Children in 2015, representing 32.6% of all persons in families living in deep poverty, down 1% from 2015.



# Growing Income Disparity

## Real Household Income at Selected Percentiles: 1967 to 2016



Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions. Income rounded to nearest \$100.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.



U.S. Department of Commerce  
 Economics and Statistics Administration  
 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](http://census.gov)



# Median Income Up

- ▶ \$59,039 in 2016, up 3.2% from the 2015 median of \$57,320.
- ▶ This surpasses the pre-recession median of \$58,149 in 2007
- ▶ It also surpasses the previous high in 1999 of \$58,655.
- ▶ The 8.5% jump in income in the last two years is the largest on record since data begins in the 60s.
- ▶ However, bottom quintile and bottom 10% is actually down over the last decade, as well as compared to 1999.



# In 2015, Income Showed Percentage Growth at Bottom of Income Spectrum

- ▶ Income in 2015 grew by 7.9% for households at the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile
- ▶ Grew by 5.2% for households at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile
- ▶ Grew by 2.9% at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile
- ▶ Grew by 3.7% at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile
  
- ▶ State minimum wage and employment increases likely factors



# Income Increased at the Top in 2016

- ▶ Income in 2016 grew by 1.3% at the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- ▶ Grew by 3.2% at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- ▶ Grew by 3.8% at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- ▶ Grew by 3.7% at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile.



# Labor Day Statement

- ▶ <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/labor-employment/labor-day-statement-2017.cfm>



# Supplemental Poverty Measure

## Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM)

**The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2016**  
**Current Population Reports**

By Liana Fox  
 Issued September 2017  
 HHS-2017-001

**INTRODUCTION**

Since the publication of the first official U.S. poverty estimates, researchers and policymakers have continued to discuss the best approach to measure income and poverty in the United States. Beginning in 2011, the U.S. Census Bureau began publishing the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), which extends the official poverty measure by taking account of many of the government programs designed to assist low-income families and individuals that are not included in the official poverty measure. This is the seventh 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 information collected in 2017 and earlier Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC).

**HIGHLIGHTS**

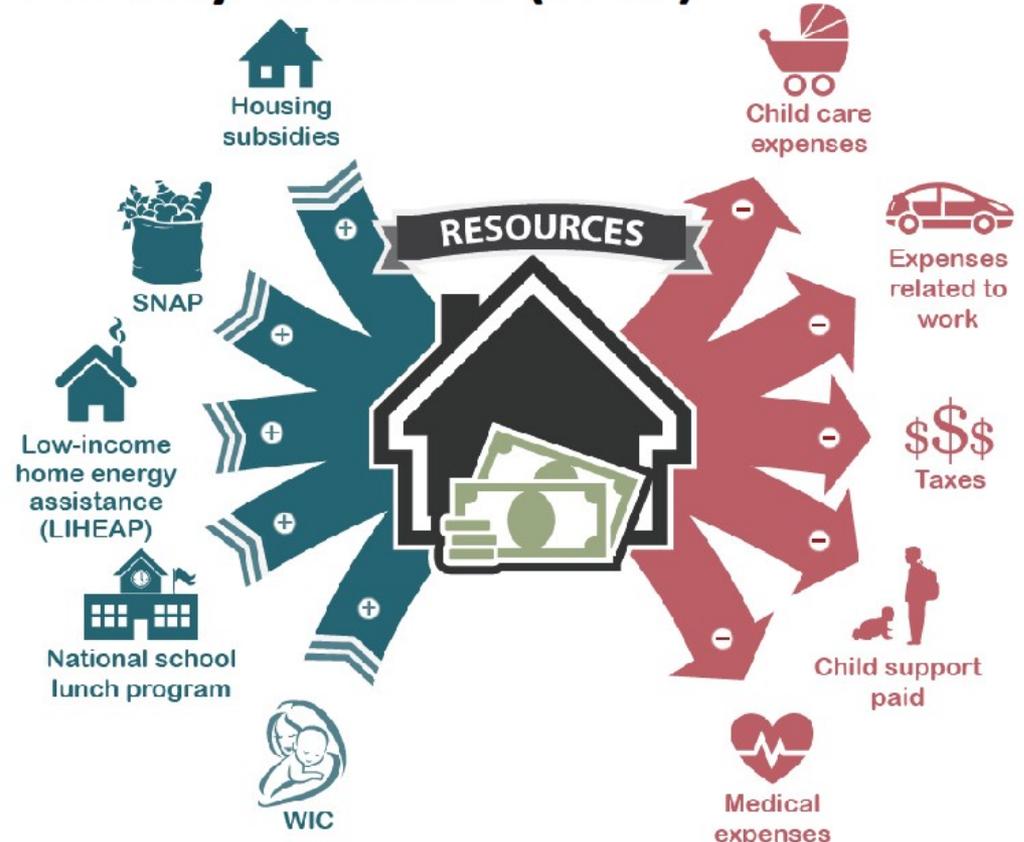
- In 2016, the overall SPM rate was 13.9 percent. This was 0.6 percentage points lower than the 2015 SPM rate of 14.5 (Figure 1 and Figure 2).
- The SPM rate for 2016 was 1.2 percentage points higher than the official poverty rate of 12.7 percent (Figure 3).
- The percentage of individuals aged 65 and older with SPM resources below half their SPM threshold increased from 4.5 percent in 2015 to 5.2 percent in 2016 (Figure 6 and Appendix Table A-4).
- There were 13 states plus the District of Columbia for which SPM rates were higher than official poverty rates, 20 states with lower rates, and 17 states for

**Figure 1. SPM Poverty Rates for Total Population and by Age Group, 2015 and 2016 (in percent)**

Age Group	2015 (%)	2016 (%)
All people	14.5	13.9
Under 18 years	16.2	15.1
18 to 64 years	14.1	13.3
65 years and over	13.7	14.5

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and other information, see [www2.census.gov/programs/survey/cps/briefers/cpsbr01.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/programs/survey/cps/briefers/cpsbr01.pdf). Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2016-2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

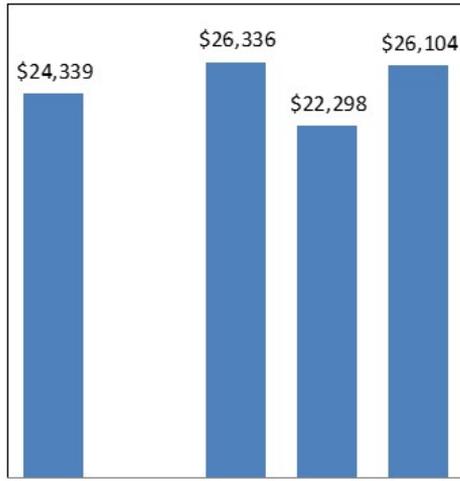
**United States Census Bureau**  
 U.S. Department of Commerce  
 Economics and Statistics Administration  
 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](http://census.gov)



# SPM Threshold for 2016

## Official and SPM Thresholds for Units with Two Adults and Two Children: 2016

2016 Dollars



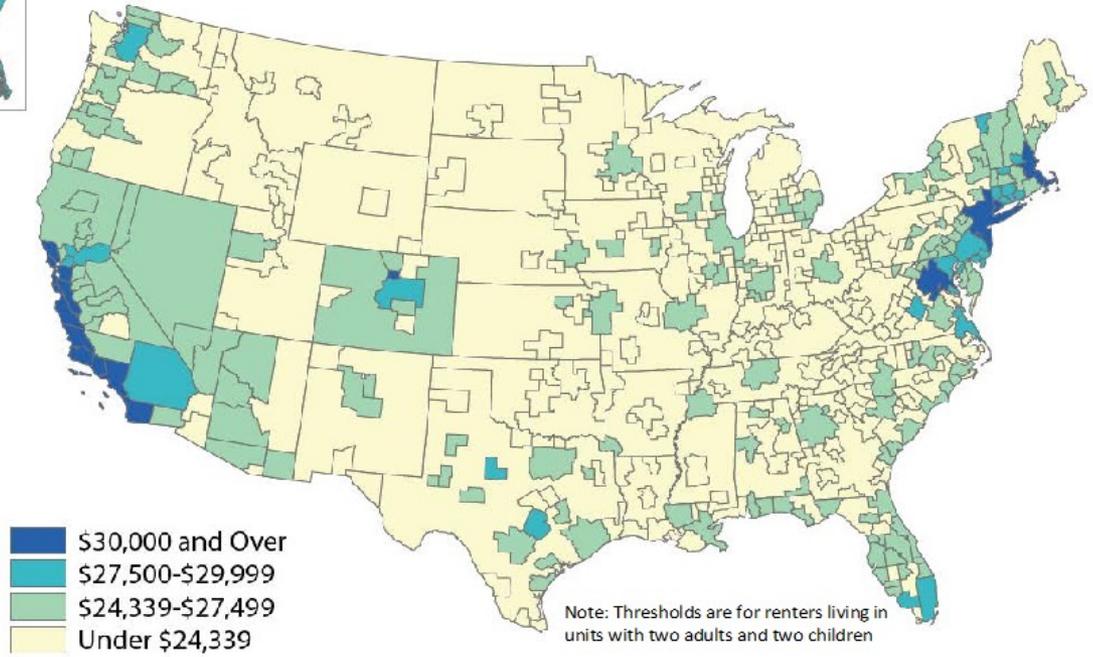
Official poverty measure

Owners with a mortgage

Owners without a mortgage

Renters

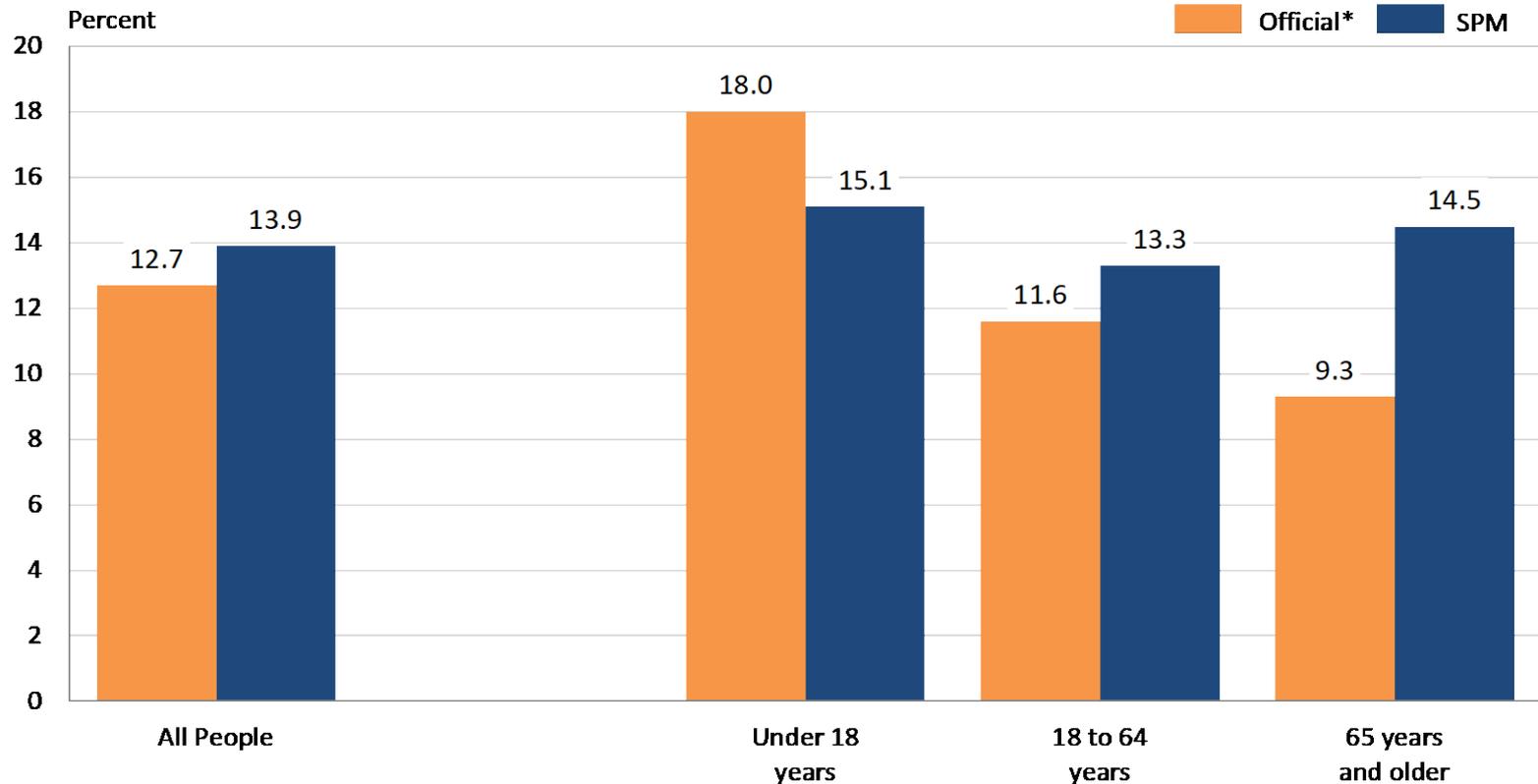
Supplemental Poverty Measure Thresholds



Note: Thresholds are for renters living in units with two adults and two children

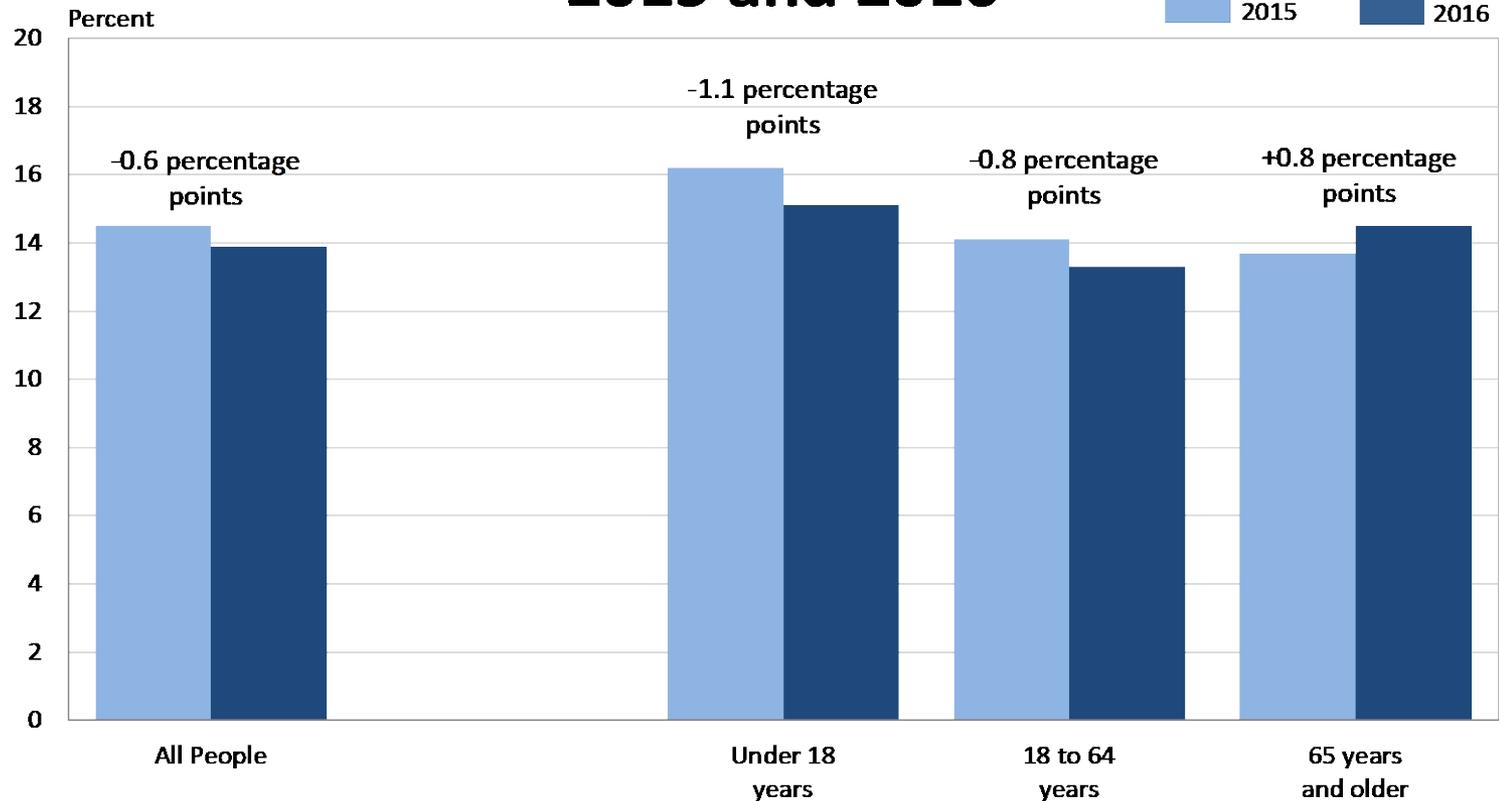
# Child Poverty Less Under SPM

## Comparison of SPM and Official Poverty Estimates: 2016



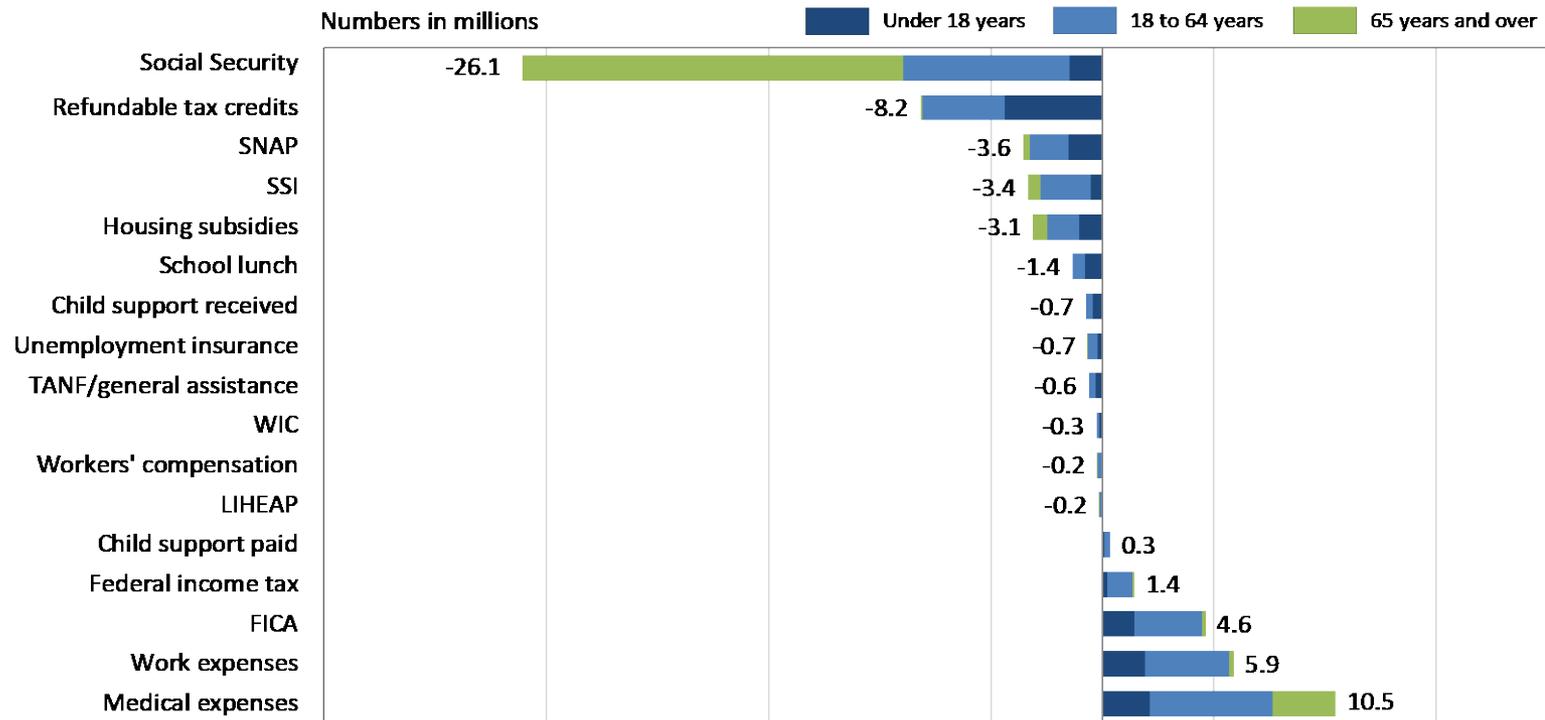
# SPM: Child Poverty Down, 65+ Up

## Comparison of SPM Poverty Estimates: 2015 and 2016



# Effectiveness of Government Programs

## Change in Number of People in Poverty After Including Each Element: 2016



# PovertyUSA.org (New Soon!)



## THE STATE OF POVERTY

- [Poverty Map](#)
- [Poverty USA Tour](#)
- [Poverty Facts](#)
- [Snapshots of Poverty](#)

SEARCH

Home > The State of Poverty > Poverty Map

## Poverty Map

This map can help bring to life the statistics and scope of Poverty USA. Use the **National Overview** to compare poverty levels of states. Use the **County Level View** for detailed info at a local level. The County Level View also shows places of hope where people are making a difference with the help of CCHD grants.

**National Overview**
**County Level View**

PRINT THE MAP

**CLICK ON A STATE FOR:**

State's poverty ranking	Senior poverty rate
Overall poverty rate	Young Adult poverty rate
Deep poverty rate	Disabled poverty rate
Child poverty rate	Poverty by gender

Map data source: Current Population Survey (CPS), 2014 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

**POVERTY RATE**

Below 11%
11-13%
13-15%
15-17%
Above 17%

Switch views to see: Poverty rate info by county, throughout the US.

Info on CCHD-funded organizations that are helping to fight domestic poverty.

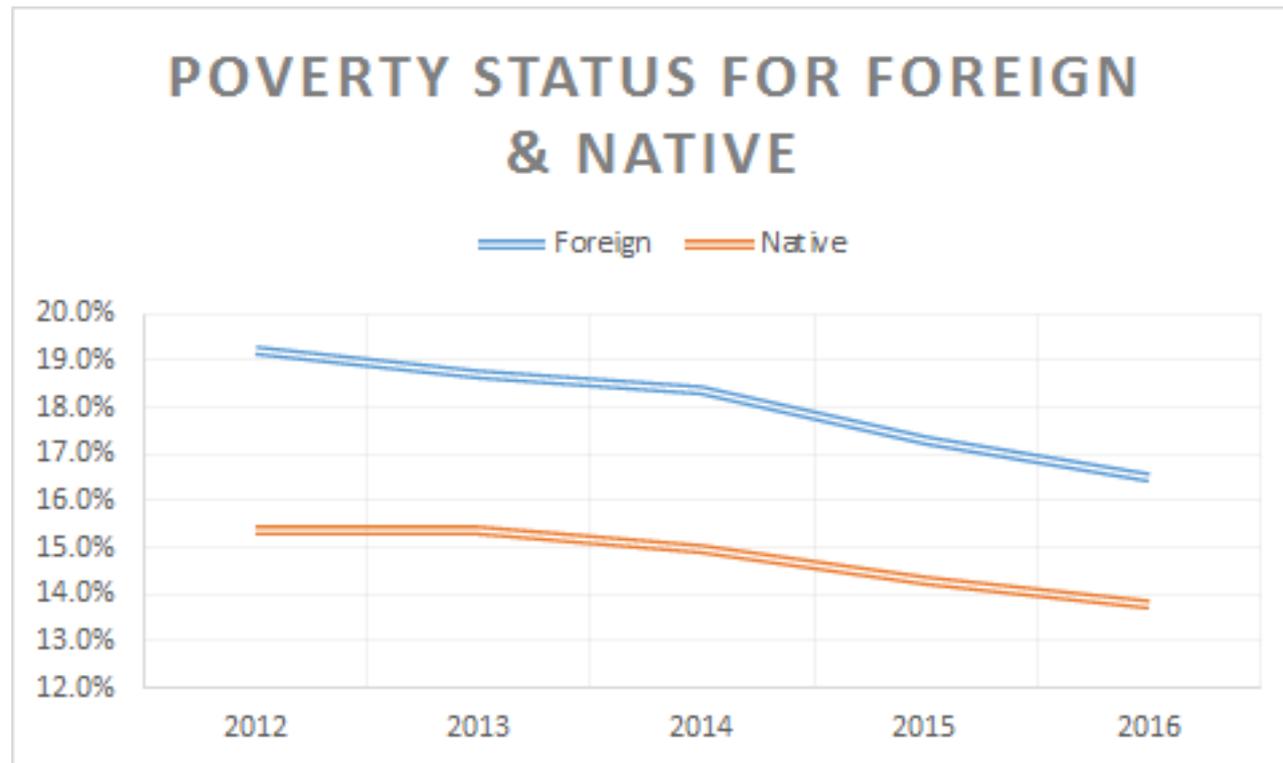


# Trend Analysis: Poverty for Foreigners



Catholic  
Charities  
USA®

*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*



# Catholic Charities Refugee Services



*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*

- **Clients Receiving Refugee Services**
  - **63,120** refugees served during and post-resettlement
  - **14,193** refugees obtained employment
  - **10,733** achieved English proficiency
- **Unaccompanied Children**
  - **Legal Services** 21,788

A photograph showing several hands of different skin tones clasped together in a supportive grip. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

*welcoming newcomers*

"Behind these statistics [on migrants and refugees] are people, each of them with a name, a face, a story, an inalienable dignity which is theirs as a child of God." Pope Francis, Address to the Jesuit Refugee Service, 14 Nov 2015

# Catholic Charities Ministry At Work



*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*



CATHOLIC CHARITIES AND AMERICORPS:

# GETTING THINGS DONE

▶ FOR NEW AMERICANS

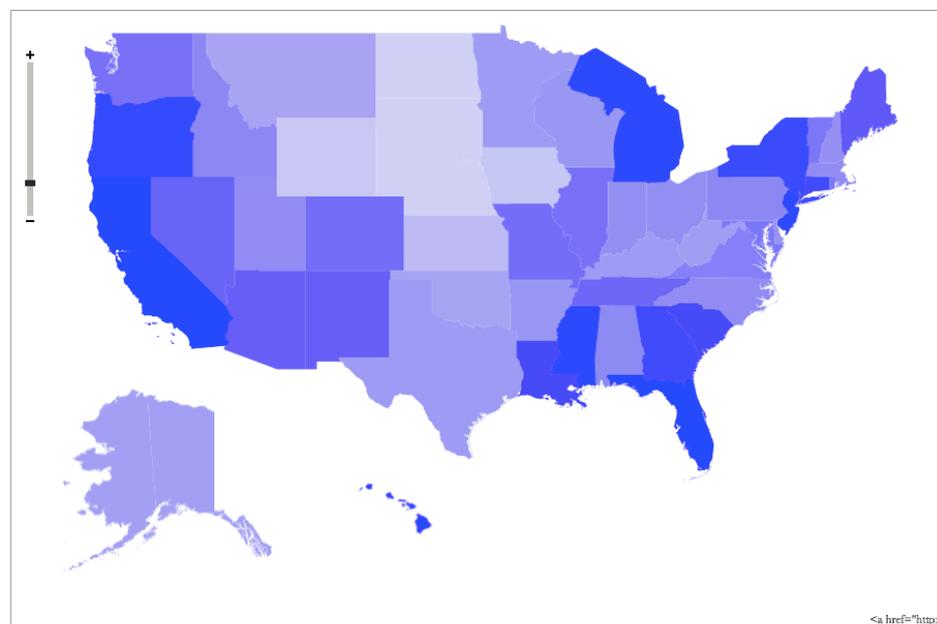
# Heat Map: Rental Burden



Working to Reduce Poverty in America.

## Rent As A Percentage of Income: 2012

OPENHEATMAP

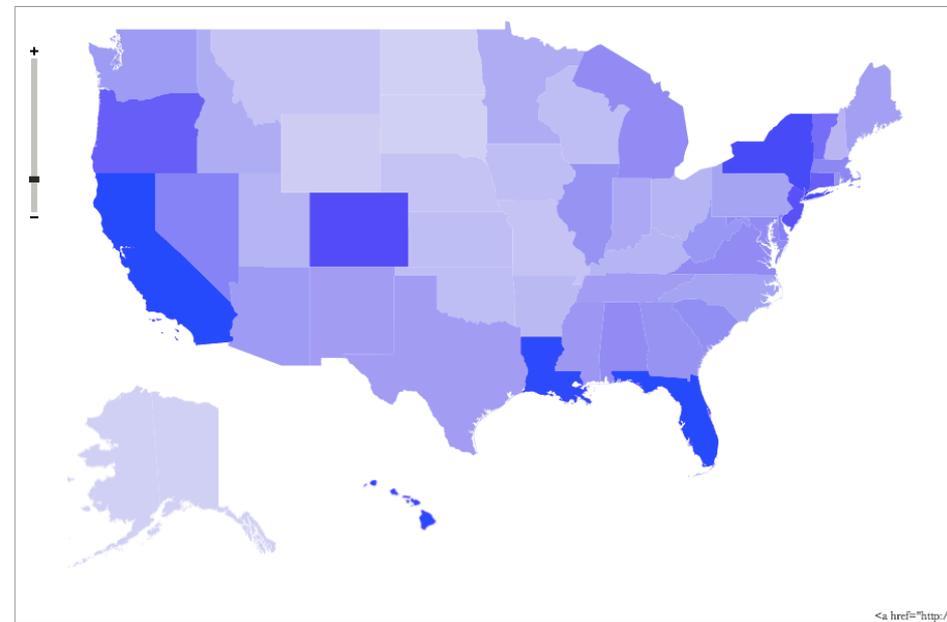


[http://](#)

Value 27.1 29.9 32.7

## Rent As A Percentage of Income: 2016

OPENHEATMAP



[http://](#)

Value 26.7 29.8 32.8

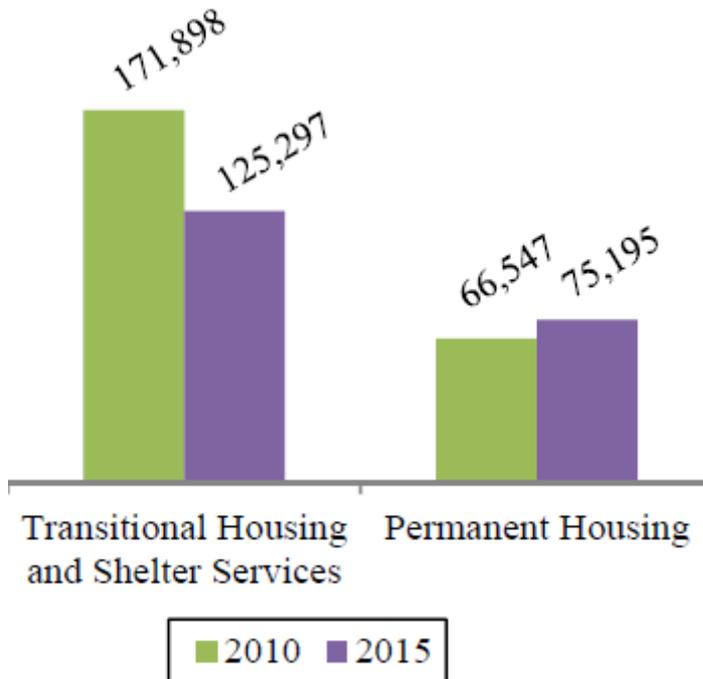
# Catholic Charities Housing



Working to Reduce Poverty in America.

## 553,102

### Clients Receiving Housing Services



HOMELESS ASSISTANCE SERVICES



**215,408**  
TOTAL CLIENTS



**11,593**  
SHELTER BEDS

SUPERVISED LIVING



**36,569**  
FOSTER CARE



**13,863**  
FOSTER CARE CLIENTS

PERMANENT HOUSING



**73,104**  
TOTAL CLIENTS



**1,923**  
ADDITIONAL UNITS IN DEVELOPMENT



**37,086**  
UNITS OF PERMANENT HOUSING

# Catholic Charities Ministry At Work



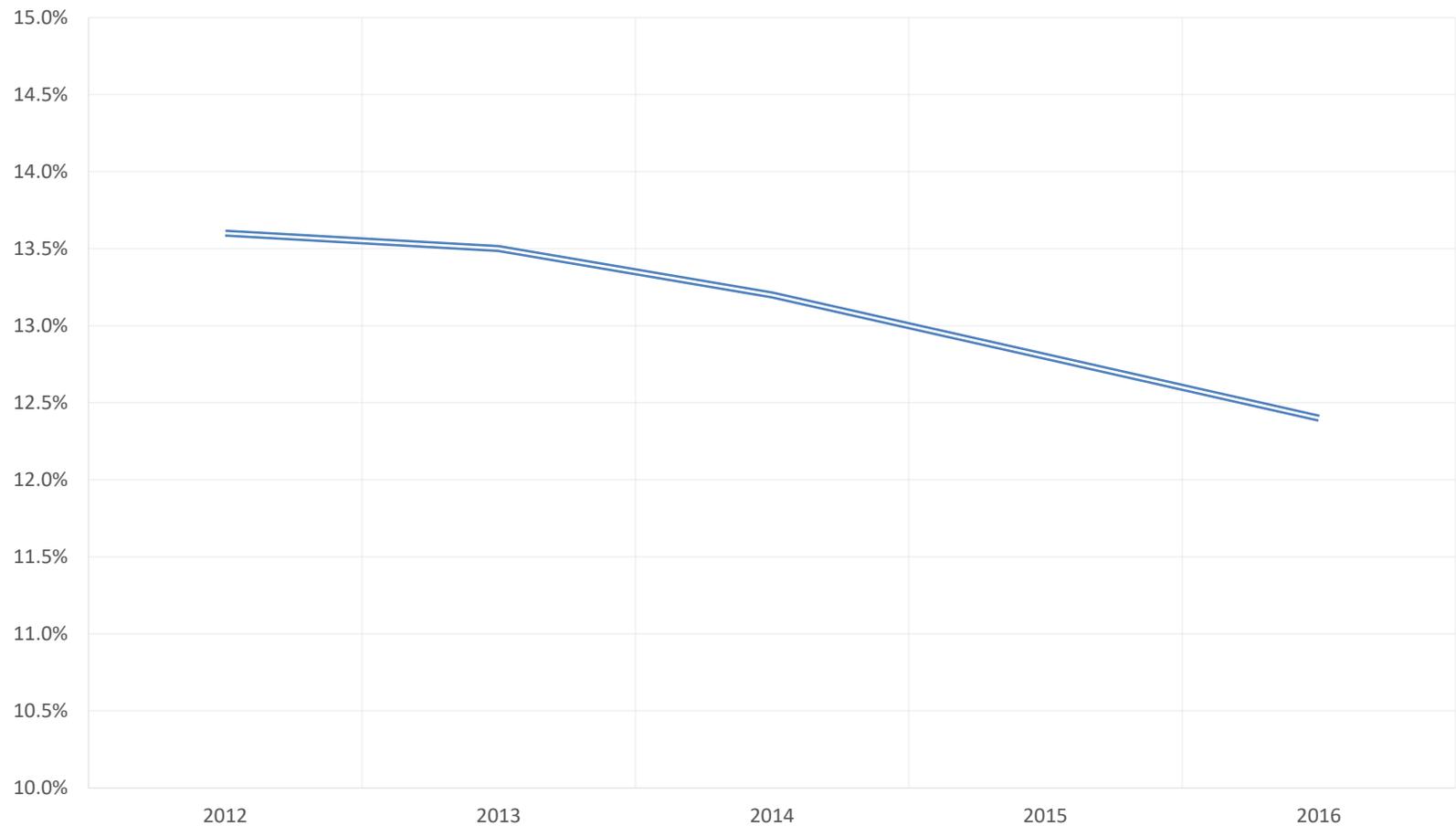
*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*



**AN OVERVIEW OF BROOKLYN AND QUEENS' HOUSING PROGRAM**

# Trend Analysis: SNAP

## HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING SNAP PERCENTAGE



# Catholic Charities Nutrition



Working to Reduce Poverty in America.

# 5,006,354

## Clients Receiving Distributed Food Services

### FOOD DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

6,279 food distribution sites

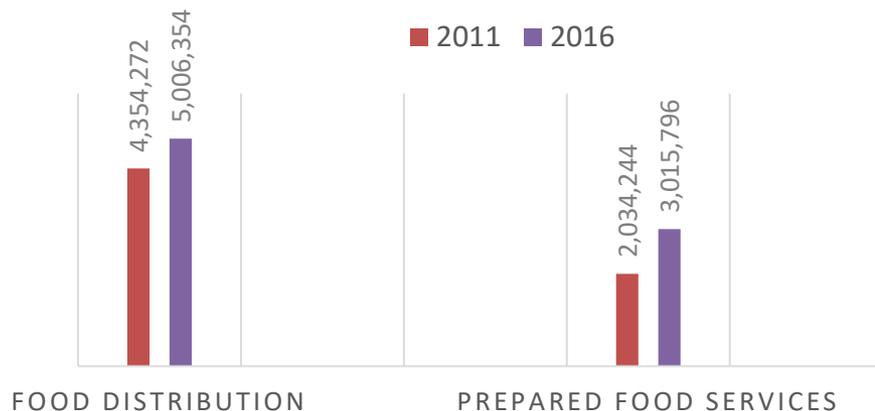
- 17 million food bags or boxes
- 143 million pounds of food

### PREPARED FOOD SERVICES

793 congregate dining sites

- 16.4 million meals
- 3 million clients

5 YEAR CHANGE IN CLIENTS RECEIVING HUNGER SERVICES



# Catholic Charities Ministry At Work



*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*



CATHOLIC CHARITIES WEST VIRGINIA:

**HEALTHY EATING  
AND LIVING**

Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
*Vincentian Reentry Organizing  
Project*



# Who is SVdP?

- \* Catholic lay spiritual organization
- \* Our Vision: To End Poverty Through Systemic Change
- \* 100,000 volunteers and members in 154 dioceses
- \* Served about 14.1 million people
- \* Rooted in Home Visits – walking in pairs to respond to those in need, to offer prayer, to offer support and hope, to grow relationships and community.
- \* We visit you in your homes, in jails and prisons, hospitals, eldercare, even under bridges.

# VROP

- \* Uniting formerly incarcerated men and women with Vincentians to join local and state efforts to remove barriers to reentry and dramatically shrink our prison system.
- \* Currently operate in six states: Ohio, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Florida, Idaho, and Iowa

# Cincinnati, OH



# Orlando, FL



407-630-0023  
Mykal Tairu, Program Coordinator  
mykal@svdporlando.org



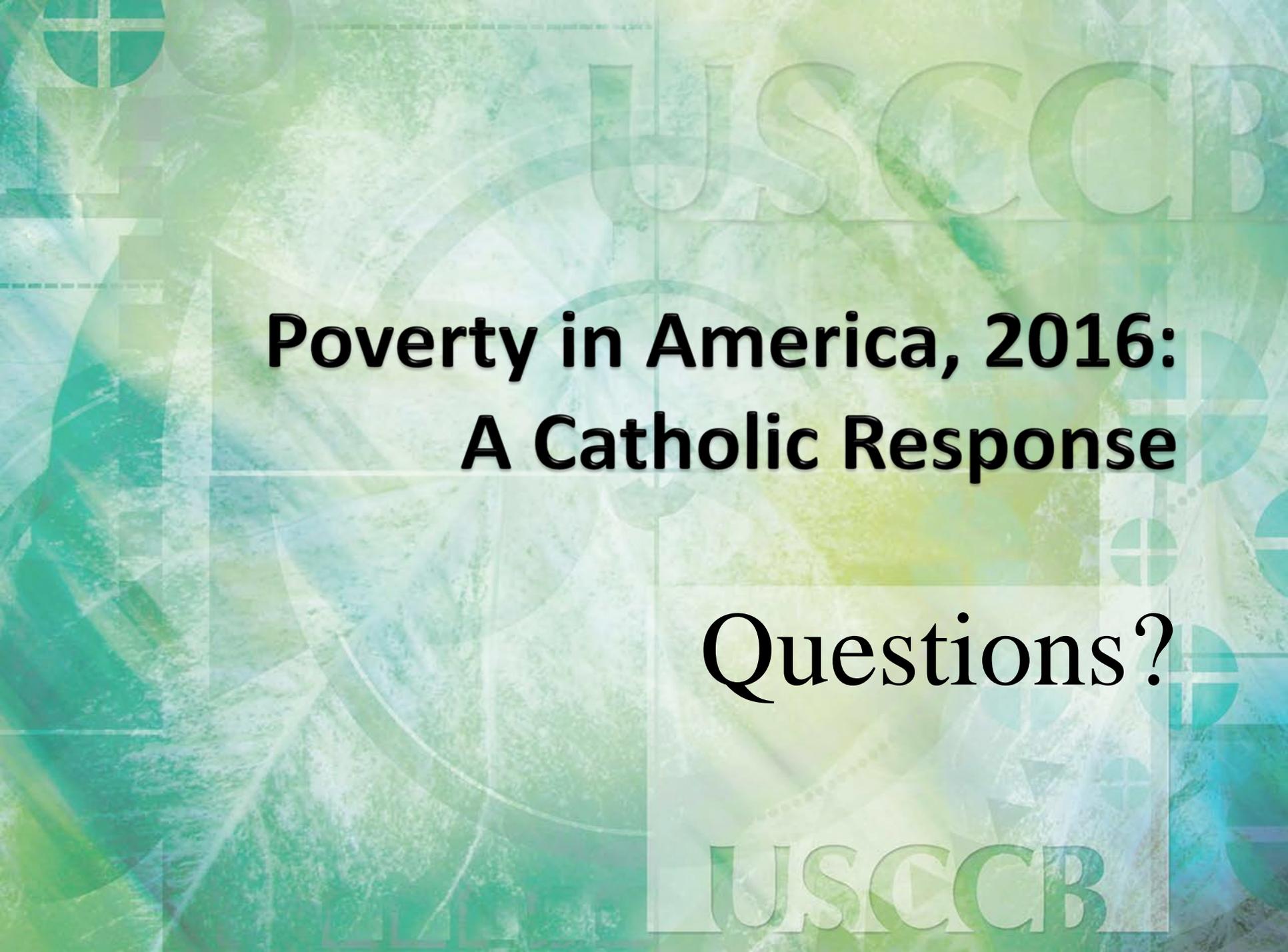
JOIN US TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BAN THE BOX FLORIDA AND HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN CHANGING THE LIVES OF OUR FORMERLY INCARCERATED COMMUNITY MEMBERS. REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED!

**WEDNESDAY**  
**FEBRUARY 1ST, 2017**  
**5PM-7PM**

COLLECTIVE CHURCH  
111 SOUTH ALABAMA AVE  
DELAND, FL 32724

AN ESTIMATED 70 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES HAVE A PRIOR ARREST OR CONVICTION RECORD, OR NEARLY 1 IN 3 ADULTS. IT'S TIME FOR BOLD SOLUTIONS. TO ADOPT FAIR-CHANCE EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT GIVE PEOPLE WITH RECORDS ACCESS TO JOBS.



The background features a large, faint USCCCB logo at the top and bottom. The text is centered and presented in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional, with a focus on the organization's name and the specific report title.

**Poverty in America, 2016:  
A Catholic Response**

Questions?