

Men's and Women's Earnings by State: 2008 American Community Survey

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Introduction

This report is one of a series produced to highlight results from the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS). The report series is designed to cover a variety of economic topics, such as poverty, occupation, home values, and labor force participation. This series provides information about the changing economic characteristics of the nation and states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The ACS also provides detailed estimates of demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics for congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities every year. A description of the ACS is provided in the text box "What Is the American Community Survey?"

This report presents data on men's and women's earnings at the national and state levels based on the 2008 ACS. "Earnings" are the sum of wage and salary income and self-employment income. Earnings are often the largest part of overall income. The 2008 ACS showed that 81 percent of aggregate income came from earnings. Estimates are restricted to full-time, year-round workers 16 years or older, unless noted otherwise in this report. "Year-round" means an individual worked 50 or more weeks in the past 12 months, including paid time off for sick leave or vacation. "Full-time" means that the individual usually worked 35 or more hours per week.

What Is the American Community Survey?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely demographic, social, economic, and housing data every year. It has an annual sample size of about 3 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters. The ACS is conducted in every county throughout the nation and every municipio in Puerto Rico, where it is called the Puerto Rico Community Survey.

Beginning in 2006, ACS data for 2005 were released for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. In 2008, the first set of multiyear estimates was released for data collected between January 2005 and December 2007. These 3-year estimates were published for geographic areas with populations of 20,000 and greater. The U.S. Census Bureau is planning to release the first 5-year estimates in late 2010 for the smallest geographic areas based on data collected between January 2005 and December 2009.

The data contained in this report are based on the ACS sample interviewed in 2008. For information on the ACS sample design and other topics, visit www.census.gov/acs/www.

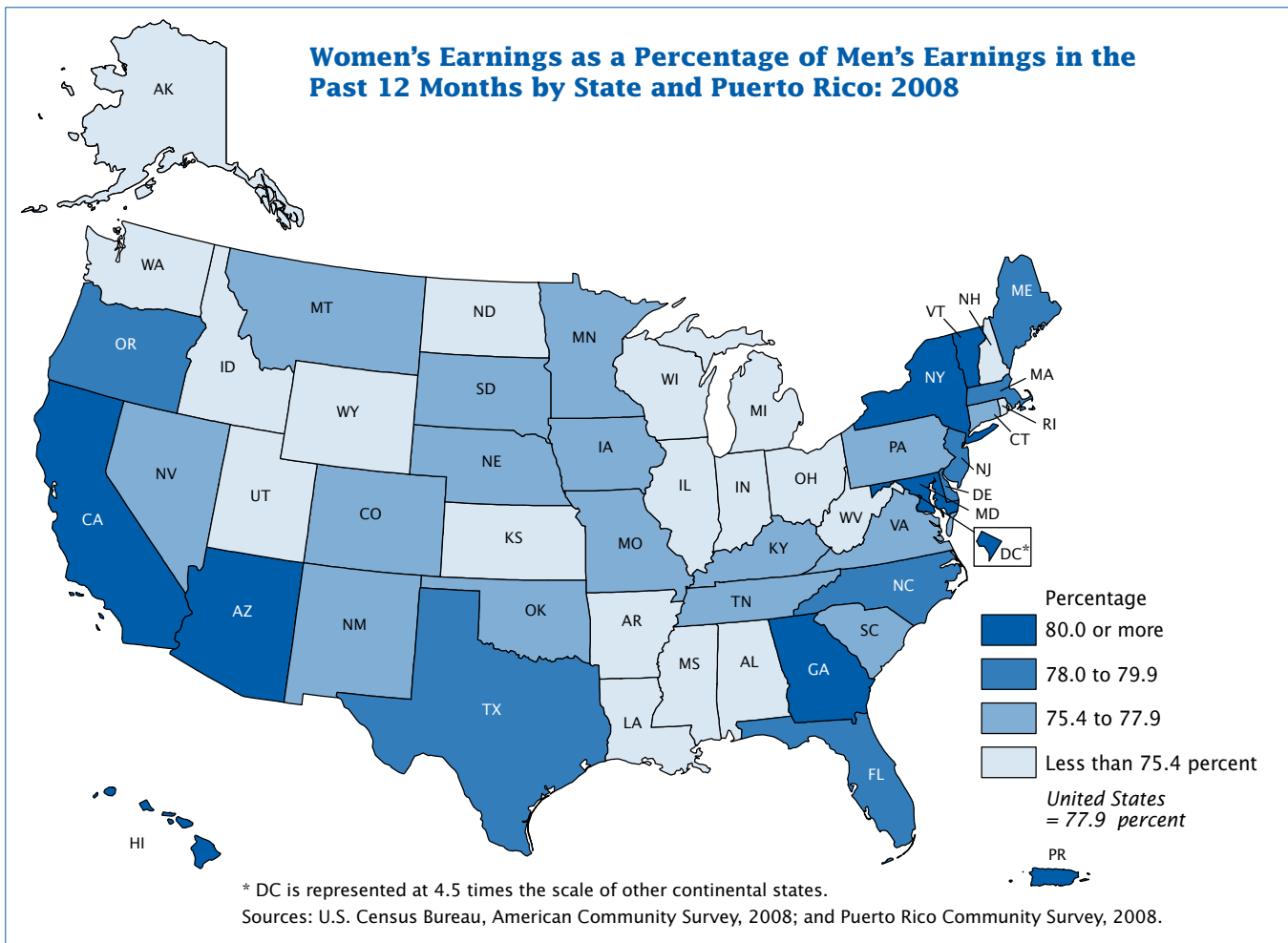
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Women's Earnings as a Percentage of Men's Earnings in the Past 12 Months by State and Puerto Rico: 2008



In the 2008 ACS, information on income was collected between January and December 2008, and people were asked about income for the previous 12 months (the income reference period), yielding a total income time span covering 23 months (January 2007 to November 2008).¹ The Census Bureau recommends using caution when making labor force data comparisons from 2008 or later with data from prior years. The Census Bureau introduced an improved sequence of labor force questions in the 2008 ACS questionnaire.

¹ All income data are inflation-adjusted to 2008 dollars.

This impacted the number of full-time, year-round workers.²

The data contained in this report are based on an ACS sample that was selected for interview in 2008 and are estimates of the actual figures that could have been obtained by interviewing the entire population using the same methodology. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level

² For more information on these questions and their evaluation in the 2006 ACS Content Test, see the "Evaluation Report Covering Employment Status" at <www.census.gov/acs/www/AdvMeth/content_test/P6a_Employment_Status.pdf> and the "Evaluation Report Covering Weeks Worked" at <www.census.gov/acs/www/AdvMeth/content_test/P6b_Weeks_Worked_Final_Report.pdf>. Additional information also can be found at <www.census.gov/hhes/www/laborforce/laborforce.html>.

unless noted otherwise. Due to rounding, some details may not sum to totals. For information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, please see the "2008 ACS Accuracy of the Data" document located at <www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf>.

Earnings of Men and Women

The 2008 ACS median earnings of men in the United States who worked full-time, year-round were \$45,556. For women, the median earnings were \$35,471, or 77.9 percent of men's earnings.

In each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, women's median earnings were less than men's median earnings.

Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, Alaska, Washington, and the District of Columbia had median earnings for men above \$50,000.³ No state had median earnings for women above \$50,000, but in the District of Columbia there was no significant

³ The median earnings for men in Virginia, Illinois, Rhode Island, and Wyoming were not statistically different from \$50,000.

difference between women's earnings and \$50,000.

Nine states—California, Arizona, Maryland, New York, Vermont, Georgia, Hawaii, Florida, and North Carolina—and the District of Columbia all had women's-to-men's earnings ratios higher than the national ratio, 77.9.⁴

Women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings in California,

⁴ The ratio of women's earnings to men's earnings was highest at 101.1 percent for Puerto Rico. The ratio of women's earnings to men's earnings for the District of Columbia was not statistically different from those for California, Arizona, Maryland, New York, Vermont, Georgia, and Hawaii.

Arizona, Maryland, New York, Vermont, Georgia, Hawaii, and the District of Columbia were in the highest category—80.0 percent or more.

The District of Columbia had the highest ratio of women's-to-men's earnings (88.0 percent) while Wyoming had the lowest ratio at 64.3 percent.⁵

⁵ The ratio of women's earnings to men's earnings for the District of Columbia was not statistically different from those for California, Arizona, Maryland, New York, Vermont, Georgia, and Hawaii. The ratio of women's earnings to men's earnings for Wyoming was not statistically different from those for Louisiana and West Virginia.

Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months of Full-Time, Year-Round Workers Aged 16 and Older by Sex and Women's Earnings as a Percentage of Men's Earnings by State and Puerto Rico: 2008

(In 2008 inflation-adjusted dollars. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)

Area	Median earnings (dollars)				Women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings	
	Men		Women		Estimate	Margin of error ¹ (±)
	Estimate	Margin of error ¹ (±)	Estimate	Margin of error ¹ (±)		
United States	45,556	73	35,471	58	77.9	0.2
Alabama	41,411	378	30,681	359	74.1	1.1
Alaska	51,500	1,091	37,861	1,836	73.5	3.9
Arizona	41,524	414	34,556	558	83.2	1.6
Arkansas	36,839	522	27,487	611	74.6	2.0
California	47,758	415	40,521	181	84.9	0.8
Colorado	47,270	549	36,618	360	77.5	1.2
Connecticut	58,838	1,630	44,625	620	75.9	2.4
Delaware	46,898	1,107	37,049	1,072	79.0	2.9
District of Columbia	57,393	4,725	50,519	1,325	88.0	7.6
Florida	40,672	195	32,506	310	79.9	0.9
Georgia	42,391	344	34,513	531	81.4	1.4
Hawaii	45,577	956	36,709	662	80.5	2.2
Idaho	41,461	621	29,730	863	71.7	2.3
Illinois	50,022	365	36,968	257	73.9	0.8
Indiana	44,906	597	31,935	297	71.1	1.2
Iowa	41,677	317	31,903	303	76.5	0.9
Kansas	43,346	1,000	32,066	409	74.0	1.9
Kentucky	40,977	312	31,089	333	75.9	1.0
Louisiana	43,326	1,071	29,147	661	67.3	2.3
Maine	40,908	503	32,613	721	79.7	2.0
Maryland	53,189	943	44,188	644	83.0	1.9
Massachusetts	55,555	675	43,452	593	78.2	1.4
Michigan	48,720	660	35,260	303	72.4	1.2
Minnesota	48,637	618	37,281	276	76.7	1.1
Mississippi	37,436	963	27,697	676	74.0	2.6
Missouri	42,106	305	31,820	246	75.6	0.8
Montana	38,440	1,823	29,634	1,001	77.1	4.5
Nebraska	40,860	474	30,885	312	75.6	1.2
Nevada	45,178	928	34,724	759	76.9	2.3
New Hampshire	51,655	699	36,946	755	71.5	1.8
New Jersey	55,980	631	44,343	666	79.2	1.5
New Mexico	40,359	605	30,623	674	75.9	2.0
New York	48,882	567	40,490	241	82.8	1.1
North Carolina	40,875	297	32,397	254	79.3	0.8
North Dakota	41,249	716	29,589	834	71.7	2.4
Ohio	45,214	334	33,628	334	74.4	0.9
Oklahoma	39,860	664	30,123	341	75.6	1.5
Oregon	43,226	935	33,959	646	78.6	2.3
Pennsylvania	46,455	250	35,265	227	75.9	0.6
Rhode Island	49,265	1,740	36,536	1,075	74.2	3.4
South Carolina	40,998	321	31,063	349	75.8	1.0
South Dakota	37,493	1,384	28,431	899	75.8	3.7
Tennessee	40,458	347	31,091	228	76.8	0.9
Texas	41,539	174	32,530	314	78.3	0.8
Utah	45,028	718	31,183	448	69.3	1.5
Vermont	41,778	544	34,424	1,509	82.4	3.8
Virginia	50,203	250	37,859	560	75.4	1.2
Washington	51,272	285	37,932	635	74.0	1.3
West Virginia	40,941	671	27,472	754	67.1	2.1
Wisconsin	45,266	361	33,640	445	74.3	1.1
Wyoming	48,555	1,831	31,204	839	64.3	3.0
Puerto Rico	19,942	357	20,165	429	101.1	2.8

¹ Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008; and Puerto Rico Community Survey, 2008.