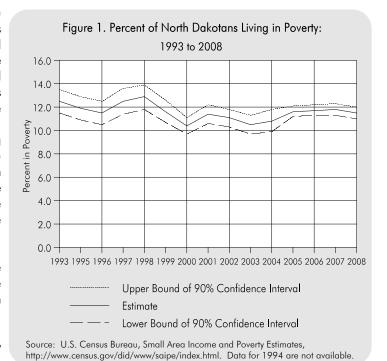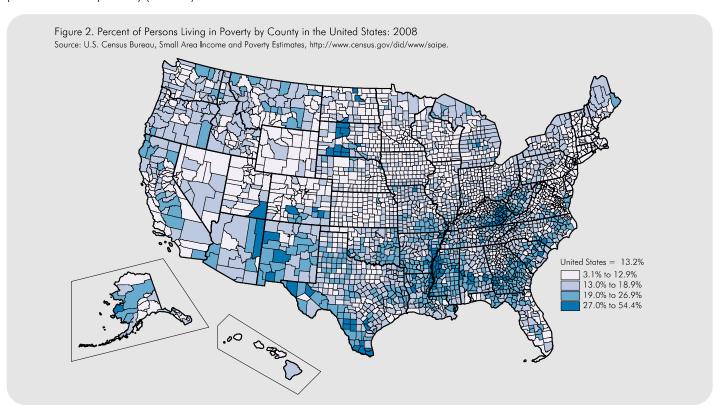## Poverty Estimates for North Dakota: 2008

The Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program, which is part of the U.S. Census Bureau, provides annual estimates of the number and percentage of total persons and children living in poverty. These estimates are based on a sample of households. Due to the small population base in North Dakota and the need to keep costs of data collection manageable, the sample sizes for the state are relatively small, which increases the likelihood of error. Confidence intervals are calculated to account for sampling error. For example, SAIPE estimates indicate that 11.5 percent of North Dakotans were living in poverty in 2008. In order to be 90 percent confident of the true poverty level, one should use a range from 11.0 percent to 12.0 percent (Table 1). Thus, when making important decisions based on these data, one needs to be mindful of the confidence intervals.

Poverty rates in North Dakota were notably higher in Native American reservation areas, with Sioux, Benson, and Rolette counties each having more than one in four persons living in poverty in 2008 (Figure 2).

Nationally, 13.2 percent of all persons were living in poverty in 2008 (the 90 percent confidence interval ranges from 13.1 percent to 13.3 percent) (Table 1).

Figure 1. Percent of North Dakotans Living in Poverty: 1993 to 2008

.... Upper Bound of 90% Confidence Interval
───── Estimate
─ ─ ─ Lower Bound of 90% Confidence Interval

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/index.html. Data for 1994 are not available.

Figure 2. Percent of Persons Living in Poverty by County in the United States: 2008
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe.

United States = 13.2%
3.1% to 12.9%
13.0% to 18.9%
19.0% to 26.9%
27.0% to 54.4%

Table 1. Income and Poverty Estimates for the United States, North Dakota, and North Dakota Counties: 2008

Note: To be 90 percent confident, the estimate may fall within a specified interval. The margin of error reflects the difference between the estimate and the upper and lower bounds of the 90 percent confidence interval. For an explanation of confidence intervals, visit http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/methods/statecounty/ci.html.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe.

Area	Median Household Income ($)		All Ages - Percent in Poverty		Ages 0 to 17 - Percent in Poverty		Ages 5 to 17 in Families - Percent in Poverty	
	Dollars	Margin of Error (+/-)	Percent	Margin of Error (+/-)	Percent	Margin of Error (+/-)	Percent	Margin of Error (+/-)
United States	52,029	73	13.2	0.1	18.2	0.2	16.5	0.1
North Dakota	45,996	925	11.5	0.5	14.2	1.1	11.9	1.4
Adams	36,856	3,580	11.1	2.3	14.2	3.4	12.0	3.1
Barnes	43,490	3,986	11.7	2.2	11.7	2.7	9.4	2.5
Benson	33,194	3,335	27.9	5.3	38.7	8.6	34.8	8.9
Billings	44,715	4,596	11.4	2.3	20.0	4.1	16.8	4.7
Bottineau	45,271	4,551	11.6	2.3	13.8	3.2	11.5	3.1
Bowman	48,621	4,934	8.2	1.7	11.5	2.7	10.9	2.9
Burke	43,693	4,209	10.4	2.2	13.4	3.3	11.4	3.1
Burleigh	54,040	3,159	8.9	1.5	11.0	2.2	8.7	2.2
Cass	46,942	2,298	10.0	1.5	9.8	2.1	8.0	2.1
Cavalier	45,182	4,291	10.9	2.3	16.2	4.0	13.9	3.7
Dickey	41,557	3,692	12.9	2.7	15.7	3.5	13.7	3.6
Divide	43,711	4,483	11.6	2.5	15.8	3.7	14.6	4.1
Dunn	40,801	4,133	12.2	2.5	19.1	4.4	15.7	4.1
Eddy	38,119	3,832	13.1	2.6	16.4	3.9	13.5	3.5
Emmons	34,498	3,428	13.3	2.7	21.6	5.3	17.9	4.8
Foster	44,090	4,112	9.0	1.9	10.0	2.3	8.6	2.4
Golden Valley	39,109	3,953	13.2	2.7	22.2	5.3	17.9	4.7
Grand Forks	47,636	3,083	15.2	2.3	15.0	3.0	11.9	2.9
Grant	35,062	2,953	17.1	3.5	35.5	8.3	29.0	7.7
Griggs	40,517	4,038	10.6	2.3	13.4	3.0	10.6	2.9
Hettinger	41,195	3,634	13.1	2.7	16.2	3.9	13.5	3.5
Kidder	31,560	2,608	14.3	3.0	23.4	5.5	21.5	5.9
LaMoure	46,843	4,416	11.3	2.3	15.0	3.5	13.4	3.5
Logan	35,718	3,575	13.0	2.7	19.8	4.9	16.9	4.8
McHenry	37,710	3,686	13.7	2.6	19.5	4.5	17.0	4.5
McIntosh	36,523	2,906	13.1	2.7	18.4	4.1	16.4	4.4
McKenzie	44,704	3,674	14.4	3.0	21.1	4.8	17.7	4.7
McLean	46,131	4,062	11.1	2.1	16.4	3.8	14.2	3.8
Mercer	63,570	5,274	7.2	1.4	8.2	1.9	6.5	1.7
Morton	50,812	3,869	9.5	1.9	13.2	3.1	11.3	2.9
Mountrail	41,551	3,963	14.0	2.9	20.5	4.8	18.9	4.9
Nelson	36,457	3,598	10.3	2.1	15.2	3.6	12.7	3.3
Oliver	50,353	5,198	10.2	2.2	16.7	3.9	14.2	3.8
Pembina	47,188	4,502	8.4	1.7	11.4	2.7	9.5	2.6
Pierce	36,065	3,706	12.3	2.6	17.5	4.1	14.1	3.7
Ramsey	43,813	4,200	12.6	2.5	18.2	4.2	15.3	4.0
Ransom	49,093	4,808	9.6	2.0	12.3	2.8	9.7	2.6
Renville	47,264	4,125	8.8	1.9	10.4	2.3	8.5	2.3
Richland	47,623	3,974	9.3	1.8	9.9	2.2	8.1	2.1
Rolette	32,393	2,983	27.9	5.0	34.5	7.4	31.2	7.8
Sargent	51,521	4,692	7.1	1.5	7.5	1.7	6.1	1.6
Sheridan	32,549	3,292	17.9	3.7	27.5	6.6	22.1	6.2
Sioux	29,137	2,971	37.8	6.9	53.3	10.5	50.7	12.2
Slope	38,040	3,957	11.6	2.3	12.7	2.6	9.0	3.0
Stark	47,189	3,808	10.2	2.0	12.1	2.8	10.7	2.8
Steele	53,242	5,286	7.4	1.6	11.9	2.7	9.2	2.5
Stutsman	45,307	2,522	11.6	2.3	13.7	3.1	11.5	3.0
Towner	48,023	3,812	10.0	2.0	14.2	3.4	11.2	2.8
Traill	48,646	4,061	8.6	1.8	9.0	2.1	7.5	1.9
Walsh	47,145	2,611	11.0	2.3	13.9	3.1	11.9	3.1
Ward	45,544	2,688	9.8	1.8	13.1	2.7	10.7	2.7
Wells	40,631	3,517	12.3	2.6	14.1	3.2	11.4	2.9
Williams	50,303	4,580	9.9	1.9	12.8	3.0	11.3	3.0

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North Dakota's Poverty Rate Unchanged

An estimated 11.5 percent of North Dakotans were living in poverty in 2008, a rate which has remained relatively unchanged for the past 10 years.

This proportion is equivalent to approximately 71,000 people in North Dakota who were impoverished in 2008.

"It is unfortunate that although our state's economy is very robust due to energy development activity, we have not been able to reduce poverty within the state over the past 10 years," said Richard Rathge, Director of the State Data Center. "Although 11.5 percent, or 71,000 impoverished North Dakotans, may not sound like many to some, one may think differently if I told you this number is larger than the second largest city in North Dakota, which is Bismarck with at least 60,000 people," said Rathge.

Poverty thresholds are updated annually by the U.S. Census Bureau and vary by family size and number of children. In 2008, the poverty threshold for one person was $10,991 and $21,834 for a family of four with two children under the age of 18.

This month's "Population Bulletin," a monthly publication from the North Dakota State Data Center at North Dakota State University, focuses on poverty estimates released from the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program through the U.S. Census Bureau. SAIPE provides annual estimates of the number and percentage of total persons and children living in poverty. These estimates are based on a sample of households.

Due to the relatively small population base in North Dakota and the need to keep costs of data collection manageable, the sample sizes for the state are relatively small, which increases the likelihood of error. Confidence intervals are calculated to account for this sampling error. For example, SAIPE estimates indicate that 11.5 percent of all North Dakotans were living in poverty in 2008. However, if one wants to be 90 percent confident of the true poverty level, one should use a range from 11.0 percent to 12.0 percent.

Certain populations in North Dakota continue to struggle with higher than average poverty rates. Children have a greater likelihood of living in poverty than the general public. The percentage of North Dakota children ages 0 to 17 living in poverty was estimated at 14.2 percent in 2008, the percentage of children ages 0 to 4 living in poverty was 18.2 percent, and the percentage of children ages 5 to 17 living in families below poverty was 11.9 percent. In addition, poverty rates in North Dakota were notably higher in Native American reservation areas, with Sioux, Benson, and Rolette counties having more than one in four persons living in poverty in 2008.

When making important decisions based on these data, one needs to be mindful of the confidence intervals (13.1percent to 15.3 percent for North Dakota children ages 0 to 17, 16.4 percent to 19.9 percent for children ages 0 to 4, and 10.5 percent to 13.3 percent for children ages 5 to 17).

Nationally, 13.2 percent of all persons were living in poverty in 2008, 18.2 percent of children ages 0 to 17 were living in poverty, and 21.2 percent of children ages 0 to 4 were living in poverty (90 percent confidence intervals are 13.1 percent to 13.3 percent, 18.0 percent to 18.4 percent, and 20.9 percent to 21.5 percent, respectively).

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