

Current Population Reports

Household Economic Studies

Health Insurance Coverage: 1995

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Who Goes Without Health Insurance?

An estimated 40.6 million people in the United States (15.4 percent) were without health insurance coverage during the entire 1995 calendar year; statistically, unchanged from the previous year.

Employment is the leading source of health insurance coverage.

Most people (70.3 percent) were covered by a private insurance plan for some or all of 1995. A private plan is one that was offered through employment (either one's own or a relative's) or privately purchased. Most private insurance was obtained through a current or former employer or union (employment-based) (see figure 1).

The remaining insured people had government coverage. This includes Medicare (13.1 percent), Medicaid (12.1 percent), and military health care (3.5 percent). Many people carry coverage from more than one plan.

The poor are more likely not to have coverage.

Despite the existence of programs such as Medicaid and Medicare, 30.2 percent of the poor (11.0 million) had no health insurance of any kind during 1995. This percentage—which was double the rate for all people—was statistically unchanged from the previous year. Poor people comprised 27.1 percent of all uninsured people.

Medicaid was the most widespread type of coverage

among the poor. About 46.4 percent of all poor people were covered by Medicaid at some time during the year.

Some are more likely than others to lack coverage.

There were several key factors that influenced the chances of lacking health insurance coverage (see figure 2). They included—

- Age – Young adults aged 18 to 24 were more likely than other age groups to lack coverage during all of 1995 (28.2 percent). Because of Medicare, the elderly were at the other extreme (only 0.9 percent lacked coverage). Among

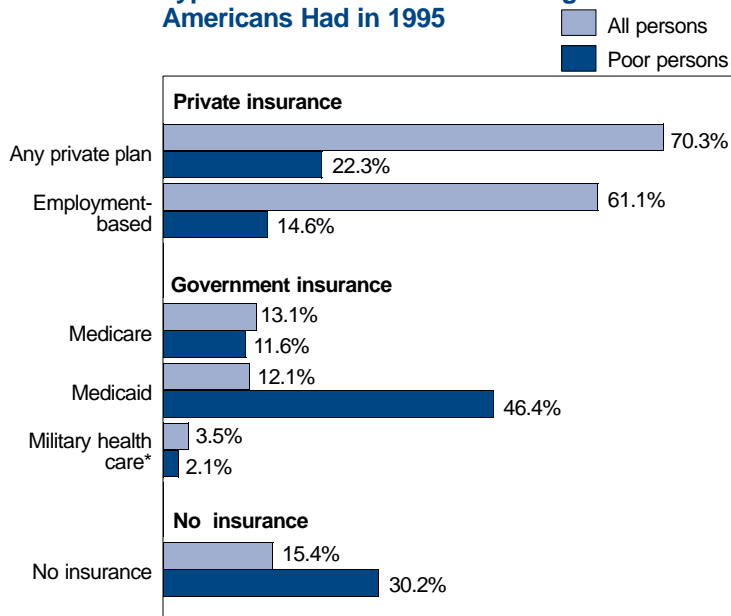
the poor, adults aged 18 to 64 had much higher noncoverage rates than either children or the elderly.

- Race and Hispanic origin – Among poor and all people alike, those of Hispanic origin had the highest chance of lacking coverage throughout 1995.

- Educational attainment – Among all adults, the likelihood of being uninsured declined as the level of education rose. Among those who were poor in 1995, however, there were no significant differences across the education groups.

Figure 1.

Type of Health Insurance Coverage Americans Had in 1995



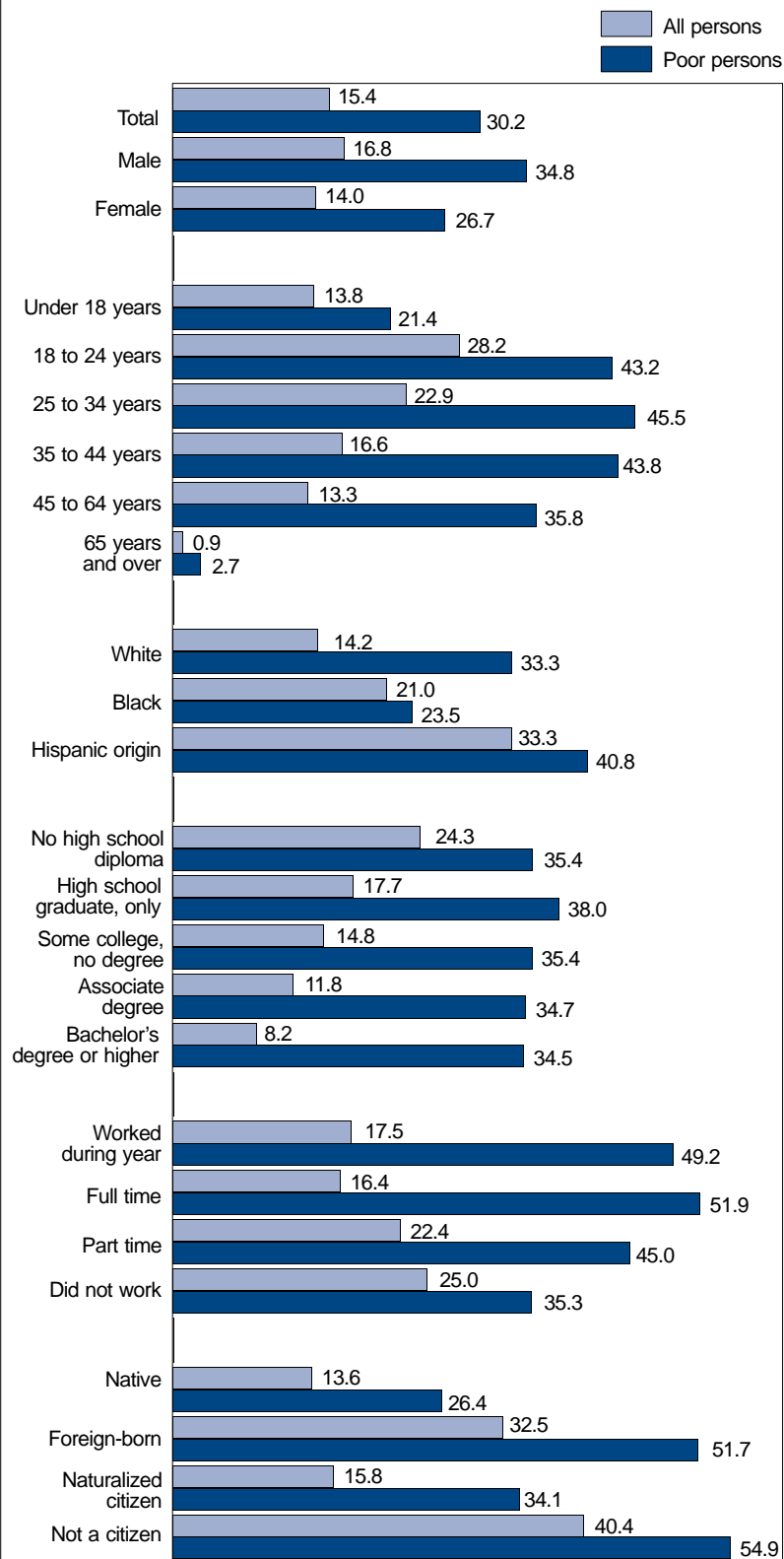
*Military health care includes CHAMPUS (Comprehensive Health and Medical Plan for Uniformed Services), CHAMPVA (Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veteran's Affairs), Veteran's and military health care.

Note: The percentages by type of coverage are not mutually exclusive; in other words, persons can be covered by more than one type of health insurance during the year.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1996 Current Population Survey.

Figure 2.
Who Lacked Coverage?

Percent of all persons (and poor persons) never covered by health insurance during the year, by selected characteristics.



Note: Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1996 Current Population Survey.

■ **Work experience** – Of those 18-64 years old who worked, part-time workers had the highest noncoverage rate, 22.4 percent. The rate for full-time workers was 16.4 percent.¹ Among the general population 18-64, workers (full- and part-time) were less likely to be uninsured than nonworkers, but among the poor, workers had a higher uninsured rate than nonworkers.

■ **Foreign-born** – In 1995, a higher proportion of the foreign-born population in the United States was without health insurance (32.5 percent), compared with natives² (13.6 percent). Of the foreign-born, noncitizens had a noncoverage rate more than twice as high as naturalized citizens; 40.4 percent versus 15.8 percent. Poor immigrants were even worse off; over one-half of them (51.7 percent) were without health insurance.

Income and firm size play important roles.

Noncoverage rates fall as household income rises. In 1995, the percent of persons without health insurance ranged from 6.7 percent (among those in households with incomes of \$75,000 or more) to 23.9 percent (among those in households with incomes under \$25,000), as shown in figure 3.

Of the 140.3 million workers, 53.2 percent had employment-based health insurance policies in their own name. The propor-

¹ Workers were classified as part-time if they worked less than 35 hours per week in the majority of the weeks they worked in 1995.

² "Natives" are persons born in the United States, Puerto Rico, or an outlying area of the U.S., such as Guam or the U.S. Virgin Islands, and persons who were born in a foreign country but who had at least one parent who was a U.S. citizen. All other persons born outside the U.S. are "foreign-born".

tion varied by size of employer, with workers employed by small firms (less than 25 people) being least likely to have employment-based health insurance policies in their own name (see figure 4). These estimates do not reflect the fact that some workers are covered by employment-based coverage through another family member.

States show differences in noncoverage rates.

Percentages of people without health insurance coverage ranged from 7.3 percent in Wisconsin to 25.6 percent in New Mexico, as shown in table 1. However, we advise against using these estimates to rank the States. Results from different samples could easily show different estimates and rankings because of small sample sizes. For example, the high noncoverage rate for New Mexico was not statistically different from that in Texas (24.5 percent), while the rates for Minnesota, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Connecticut, and Hawaii were not statistically different from Wisconsin.

Between 1994 and 1995, noncoverage rates changed by statistically significant amounts in three states: The noncoverage rate fell in Alabama and rose in Tennessee and Vermont.

This report presents data on the health insurance coverage of people in the United States during the 1995 calendar year. The data, which are shown by selected demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, as well as by State, were collected by the March 1996 Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS).

Figure 3.

As Income Rises, Chances of Having No Insurance Generally Decline

Percent of all persons never covered by health insurance during the year, by household income: 1995

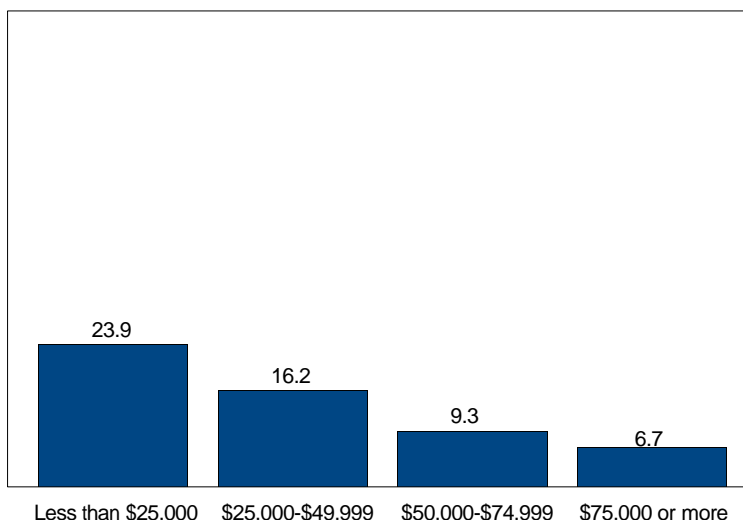
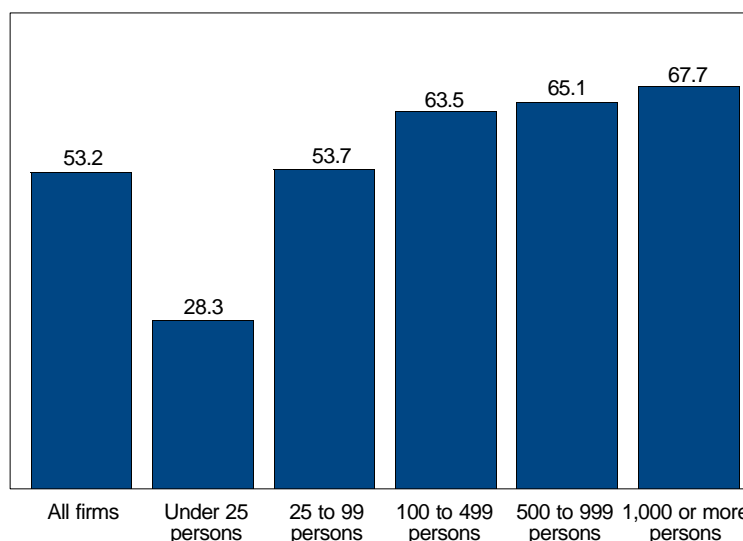


Figure 4.

Workers in Large Firms Are the Most Likely to Have Employment-Based Insurance

Percent of workers (aged 15 and over) with employment-based health insurance policies in their own name, by size of firm they worked for: 1995



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1996 Current Population Survey.

Accuracy of the Estimates

All statistics are subject to sampling error, as well as nonsampling error such as survey design flaws, respondent classification and reporting errors, data processing mistakes and undercoverage.

The Census Bureau has taken steps to minimize errors in the form of quality control and edit procedures to reduce errors made by respondents, coders, and interviewers. Ratio estimation to independent age-race-sex-Hispanic population

controls partially corrects for bias attributable to survey undercoverage. However, biases exist in the estimates when missed people have characteristics different from those of interviewed people in the same age-race-sex-Hispanic group.

Analytical statements in this report have been tested and meet statistical standards. However, because of methodological differences, use caution when comparing these data with data from other sources. Contact Andrew Zbikowski, Demographic Statistical Methods Division, at 301-457-4220 or on the Internet at azbikows@census.gov for information on (1) the source of the data, (2) the accuracy of the estimates, (3) the use of standard errors, and (4) the computation of standard errors.

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Table 1.

Percent of Persons Without Health Insurance Coverage Throughout the Year, by State: 1994 and 1995

	1995		1994		Average 1994-1995		1994-1995
		Stand- ard error		Stand- ard error		Stand- ard error	
State	Percent		Percent		Percent		Percent change
Alabama	13.5	1.1	19.2	1.4	16.4	1.0	* -5.7
Alaska	12.5	1.1	13.3	1.1	12.9	0.9	-0.8
Arizona	20.4	1.3	20.2	1.4	20.3	1.1	0.2
Arkansas	17.9	1.3	17.4	1.4	17.7	1.1	0.5
California	20.6	0.6	21.1	0.6	20.9	0.5	-0.5
Colorado	14.8	1.2	12.4	1.2	13.6	1.0	2.4
Connecticut	8.8	1.1	10.4	1.3	9.6	1.0	-1.6
Delaware	15.7	1.4	13.5	1.4	14.6	1.1	2.2
D.C.	17.3	1.4	16.4	1.6	16.9	1.2	0.9
Florida	18.3	0.7	17.2	0.7	17.8	0.6	1.1
Georgia	17.9	1.2	16.2	1.3	17.1	1.0	1.7
Hawaii	8.9	1.1	9.2	1.1	9.1	0.9	-0.3
Idaho	14.0	1.2	14.0	1.1	14.0	0.9	0
Illinois	11.0	0.6	11.4	0.6	11.2	0.5	-0.4
Indiana	12.6	1.1	10.5	1.1	11.6	0.9	2.1
Iowa	11.3	1.1	9.7	1.1	10.5	0.9	1.6
Kansas	12.4	1.2	12.9	1.2	12.7	1.0	-0.5
Kentucky	14.6	1.2	15.2	1.3	14.9	1.0	-0.6
Louisiana	20.5	1.3	19.2	1.5	19.9	1.1	1.3
Maine	13.5	1.3	13.1	1.3	13.3	1.0	0.4
Maryland	15.3	1.3	12.6	1.3	14.0	1.0	2.7
Massachusetts	11.1	0.8	12.5	0.7	11.8	0.6	-1.4
Michigan	9.7	0.6	10.8	0.6	10.3	0.5	-1.1
Minnesota	8.0	0.9	9.5	1.1	8.8	0.8	-1.5
Mississippi	19.7	1.3	17.8	1.3	18.8	1.0	1.9
Missouri	14.6	1.3	12.2	1.3	13.4	1.0	2.4
Montana	12.7	1.1	13.6	1.2	13.2	0.9	-0.9
Nebraska	9.0	1.0	10.7	1.1	9.9	0.8	-1.7
Nevada	18.7	1.4	15.7	1.2	17.2	1.0	3
New Hampshire	10.0	1.2	11.9	1.4	11.0	1.0	-1.9
New Jersey	14.2	0.8	13.0	0.6	13.6	0.6	1.2
New Mexico	25.6	1.4	23.1	1.4	24.4	1.1	2.5
New York	15.2	0.5	16.0	0.5	15.6	0.4	-0.8
North Carolina	14.3	0.9	13.3	0.6	13.8	0.6	1
North Dakota	8.3	1.0	8.4	1.0	8.4	0.8	-0.1
Ohio	11.9	0.7	11.0	0.6	11.5	0.5	0.9
Oklahoma	19.2	1.3	17.8	1.4	18.5	1.1	1.4
Oregon	12.5	1.2	13.1	1.3	12.8	1.0	-0.6
Pennsylvania	9.9	0.6	10.6	0.6	10.3	0.5	-0.7
Rhode Island	12.9	1.3	11.5	1.3	12.2	1.0	1.4
South Carolina	14.6	1.3	14.2	1.1	14.4	1.0	0.4
South Dakota	9.4	1.0	10.0	1.0	9.7	0.8	-0.6
Tennessee	14.8	1.2	10.2	1.0	12.5	0.9	* 4.6
Texas	24.5	0.8	24.2	0.8	24.4	0.6	0.3
Utah	11.7	1.0	11.5	1.1	11.6	0.8	0.2
Vermont	13.2	1.3	8.6	1.1	10.9	1.0	* 4.6
Virginia	13.5	1.1	12.0	1.0	12.8	0.8	1.5
Washington	12.4	1.2	12.7	1.2	12.6	1.0	-0.3
West Virginia	15.3	1.2	16.2	1.4	15.8	1.0	-0.9
Wisconsin	7.3	0.9	8.9	1.0	8.1	0.8	-1.6
Wyoming	15.9	1.3	15.4	1.5	15.7	1.1	0.5

*Statistically significant change at the 90-percent confidence level.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey.