

# Dynamics of Economic Well-Being: Movements in the U.S. Income Distribution, 1996-1999

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*Household Economic Studies*

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## Current Population Reports

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As measured by the most recent income data available from the Current Population Survey (CPS), between 1996 and 2002 median household income increased 4.7 percent more than inflation. That statistic compares a "snapshot" of households in 1996 with another "snapshot" in 2002. It is not a picture of what happened to the same households over that time period. Medians, like those from the CPS, can conceal an enormous amount of movement in the income of individual households. This report uses the most recent longitudinal data available from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), to examine movements in the incomes of the same households within the income distribution during the first part of this period - 1996 to 1999 (see Text Box: *Household Income*).<sup>1</sup>

Income quintiles were constructed for each year — 1996 through 1999 — (see Text Box: *Constructing Income Quintiles*) using data collected in the SIPP. Using longitudinal data it is possible to identify and discuss factors that result in the rise and fall in the incomes for the same U.S. households (see Text Box: *What Makes SIPP a Longitudinal Survey?*).

### HIGHLIGHTS<sup>2</sup>

- Of U.S. households, 66 percent in the top quintile and 62 percent in the bottom quintile were in the same

### Household Income

The Survey of Income and Program Participation collects detailed monthly information from individuals age 15 years and older on wages and salaries earned; pension benefits; cash and in-kind benefits received from social welfare program participation; and income generated from returns on property, assets, and holdings. The individual-level data are aggregated up to monthly total household information, which can be aggregated by calendar year to produce annual total household income. Total household income consists of earned income from employment, as well as pension benefits, property and asset income, and means-tested cash transfer income received by household members. A complete description of the type and sources of income collected in the 1996 SIPP panel is available through the SIPP homepage at: <[www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/core\\_content/1996/1996.html](http://www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/core_content/1996/1996.html)>.

quintile 3 years later (see Figure 1).

- Between 41 percent and 47 percent of households in the middle three quintiles were in the same quintile 3 years later (see Figure 1).

<sup>1</sup> The population represented is the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States. See the "Source of the Data" section for more details.

<sup>2</sup> The estimates in this report are based on responses from a sample of the population. As with

all surveys, estimates may vary from the actual values because of sampling variation or other factors. All statements made in this report have undergone statistical testing and pass Census Bureau standards for statistical accuracy.

- Of U.S. households, 13 million (13 percent) experienced changes in their annual income between 1996 and 1999 that resulted in their moving either up or down two or more quintiles in the income distribution (see Table 3).
- Of these 13 million households, the 34 percent (4.3 million) in the bottom and the second quintiles experienced the largest percentage gain in annual household income between 1996 and 1999, and the 11 percent (1.5 million) that started in the middle quintile experienced the largest absolute gain in annual household income (see Table 3).
- Of these 13 million households, 22 percent (2.9 million) of those that started in the top quintile experienced a decline of two or more quintiles between 1996 and 1999 (see Table 3).
- Householders with lower levels of education were more likely to remain in or move into a lower quintile compared with householders with higher levels of education (see Figure 2).
- Householders who were widowed were more likely to remain in or move into a lower quintile compared with householders who were not widows or widowers (see Figure 3).
- Householders under age 45 were more likely to move into a higher quintile than older householders, while householders age 55 and over were more likely to move into a lower quintile than younger householders (see Figure 4).

### **Constructing Income Quintiles**

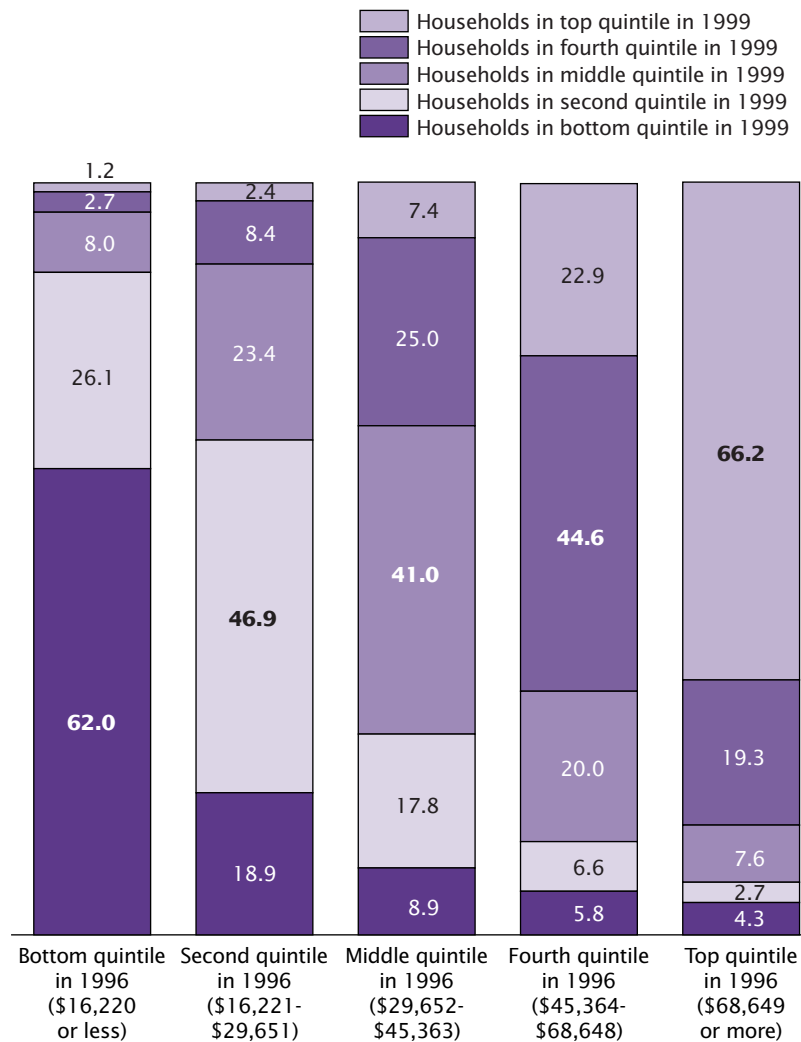
A quintile represents a 20 percent group of data from a frequency distribution. For example, the first quintile ends at a point in the distribution where 20 percent of the data are below that point and 80 percent are above it. Similarly, the middle quintile is represented by two points on a distribution, defined so that 40 percent of the data in the distribution is below the lower point and 40 percent of the data is above the higher point. Constructing income quintiles for the years 1996 and 1999 required summing the final panel sampling weights for each householder who was interviewed for all twelve waves of the 1996 SIPP panel. As noted in the text, longitudinal data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation are needed to understand changes in economic well-being over time for the same households. Unfortunately, not all households responded to the survey for all twelve interviews that are needed to create the full picture over 4 years. Income levels defining the quintiles are affected by this nonresponse and also by the failure to include immigrants who entered the U.S. after the survey began. Thus, quintile estimates after 1996 from the SIPP are not representative of the incomes of all households in the U.S.

Data from the Current Population Survey are recommended when looking at changes in the overall income distribution, but are not useful for looking at changes for the same households over time, as there is no attempt to follow households if they move, nor are any households in the CPS for more than two consecutive years.

### **What Makes SIPP a Longitudinal Survey?**

A longitudinal survey captures changes for the same individuals over a period of time. The 1996 SIPP panel is a longitudinal survey that tried to interview 36,700 households 12 times at 4-month intervals from April 1996 through March 2000, following all members of the original sample household. Demographic and economic characteristics for the same households, families, and individuals were gathered during each interview, whereas special topics varied from interview to interview. The SIPP collects more detailed data than any other national survey on general income sources and amounts; program eligibility, access and participation; transfer income; and in-kind benefits. More information on SIPP can be found at [www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/](http://www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/).

Figure 1.  
**Percent Distribution of Households by  
 Income Quintile: 1996 and 1999**



Note: All incomes are adjusted to 1999 dollars using the CPI-U-RS. Bolded numbers indicate the percentage of households that remained in the same income quintile.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

## METHODOLOGY

While no measure of economic well-being is all encompassing, income is the measure most commonly used because it affects the goods and services a household can buy. Household income can change with a strong or weak economy, as well as with

life events, such as completion of education, marriage, divorce or separation, or spousal death. Fluctuations in income change the relative positions of households (referred to as income mobility). The estimates in this report are based on a sample of U.S. households that were interviewed for all 12 waves of the 1996 SIPP panel

and represent nearly 100 million households. This report focuses on their ranked household income by quintiles in calendar years 1996 and 1999 and the householder's demographic characteristics.<sup>3</sup>

## QUINTILE MOVEMENTS OVER TIME: 1996-1999

Out of 100 million U.S. households, those in the top and the bottom quintiles of the income distribution experienced the most stability from 1996 through 1999. Sixty-six percent of households (13 million) starting in the top quintile and 62 percent of households (12 million) starting in the bottom quintile in 1996 remained in these respective quintiles in 1999. In comparison, more than half of the households that started in the second, middle, and fourth quintiles experienced considerable movement across the income distribution by 1999, with only 41 percent to 47 percent remaining in their original quintile (see Figure 1).

<sup>3</sup> Householder refers to that person in whose name the home is owned or rented. If a married couple owns the home jointly, either the husband or wife may be listed as the householder. If a sample member moves to a new address, attempts are made to locate them and continue to interview them every 4 months. However, failure to successfully interview individuals who left a household because of a divorce or separation after the beginning of the panel will produce a shortfall compared with the true number of vital events that occurred during the life of the panel. If an individual left a household because of divorce or separation later in the panel, a longitudinal weight was not assigned to that individual for any interview period in the panel, thus limiting their usefulness in a longitudinal analysis. In an attempt to take full advantage of the longitudinal nature of the SIPP panel, the population universe of this analysis is all householders interviewed in all 12 waves of the panel. A more complete and detailed explanation of SIPP's procedures for attempting to follow sample members who move and create new households is available online in the SIPP Users' Guide at <[www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/](http://www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/)>.

Table 1.  
**Percent Distribution of All Households by Income Quintiles: 1996 and 1999**

1996 and 1999	Bottom quintile (\$13,728 or less)	90-percent confidence interval	Second quintile (\$13,729-\$28,700)	90-percent confidence interval	Middle quintile (\$28,701-\$46,309)	90-percent confidence interval	Fourth quintile (\$46,310-\$71,081)	90-percent confidence interval	Top quintile (\$71,082 or more)	90-percent confidence interval
Bottom quintile (\$16,220 or less) . . .	12.4	(12.1-12.7)	5.2	(5.0-5.4)	1.6	(1.4-1.8)	0.6	(0.4-0.8)	0.2	(0.2-0.2)
Second quintile (\$16,221-\$29,651) . .	3.8	(3.6-4.0)	9.4	(9.1-9.7)	4.7	(4.5-4.9)	1.7	(1.5-1.9)	0.5	(0.5-0.5)
Middle quintile (\$29,652-\$45,363) . .	1.8	(1.6-2.0)	3.6	(3.4-3.8)	8.2	(7.9-8.5)	5.0	(4.8-5.2)	1.5	(1.3-1.7)
Fourth quintile (\$45,364-\$68,648) . .	1.2	(1.0-1.4)	1.3	(1.1-1.5)	4.0	(3.8-4.2)	8.9	(8.6-9.2)	4.6	(4.4-4.8)
Top quintile (\$68,649 or more) . .	0.9	(0.7-1.1)	0.5	(0.5-0.5)	1.5	(1.3-1.7)	3.9	(3.7-4.1)	13.2	(12.9-13.5)

Note: Total number of households: 99,552,000. All incomes are adjusted to 1999 dollars using the CPI-U-RS.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

Table 2.  
**Percent Distribution of All Households by Income Quintiles Using 2-Year Averages: 1996-1997 and 1998-1999**

1996-97 and 1998-99	Bottom quintile (\$15,049 or less)	90-percent confidence interval	Second quintile (\$15,050-\$29,993)	90-percent confidence interval	Middle quintile (\$29,994-\$47,100)	90-percent confidence interval	Fourth quintile (\$47,101-\$71,306)	90-percent confidence interval	Top quintile (\$71,307 or more)	90-percent confidence interval
Bottom quintile (\$16,705 or less) . . .	14.6	(14.3-14.9)	4.4	(4.2-4.6)	0.8	(0.6-1.0)	0.2	(0.2-0.2)	0.7	(0.5-0.9)
Second quintile (\$16,706-\$30,202) . .	3.2	(3.0-3.4)	11.1	(10.8-11.4)	4.5	(4.3-4.7)	1.0	(0.8-1.2)	0.2	(0.2-0.2)
Middle quintile (\$30,203-\$45,984) . .	1.1	(0.9-1.3)	3.4	(3.2-3.6)	10.1	(9.8-10.4)	4.6	(4.4-4.8)	0.9	(0.7-1.1)
Fourth quintile (\$45,985-\$69,001) . .	0.7	(0.5-0.9)	0.9	(0.7-1.1)	3.8	(3.6-4.0)	10.7	(10.4-11.0)	3.9	(3.7-4.1)
Top quintile (\$69,002 or more) . .	0.4	(0.4-0.4)	0.3	(0.3-0.3)	0.9	(0.7-1.1)	3.5	(3.3-3.7)	14.9	(14.6-15.2)

Note: Total number of households: 99,552,000. All incomes were adjusted to 1999 dollars using the CPI-U-RS.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

From 1996 through 1999, 34 percent of households (6.6 million) that started in the second income quintile moved up to a higher quintile, while 19 percent experienced a drop to a lower quintile. From the middle quintile, 32 percent of households (6.4 million) moved up and 27 percent of households (5.3 million) moved down. For households that started in the fourth quintile in 1996, 23 percent (4.6 million) saw their income rise to the top quintile, while 32 percent (6.5 million) experienced a decline in their quintile position (see Figure 1).

Overall, 52 percent of households (52 million) remained in the same quintile from 1996 through 1999 (see Table 1).

During this time, more households experienced an upward movement in the income distribution than a downward movement (26 percent compared with 22 percent). To better assess the year-to-year volatility in income, 2-year averages for household income were computed (see Table 2).

The movements across the income quintiles using these 2-year averages are comparable to, but naturally of a smaller magnitude

than, those observed from the year-to-year comparisons. On the other hand, comparing the diagonal entries in Tables 1 and 2, the 2-year averages indicate more stability in the income quintiles, resulting in proportions that are larger than, and significantly different from, the year-to-year estimates.

### CHANGES OF TWO OR MORE QUINTILES: 1996 - 1999

In 1996, about 40 million U.S. households with an annual income greater than \$45,363 comprised the top two quintiles of the income distribution, while about 40 million U.S. households with an annual

Table 3.  
**Households That Moved Two or More Income Quintiles: 1996 to 1999**

Quintile in 1996 (Income in 1999 dollars)	Households (in thousands)	Percent of households in 1996 quintile	Average household income (1999 dollars)		
			1996	1999	Percentage change from 1996 to 1999
<b>Moved up two or more quintiles</b>					
Bottom quintile (\$16,220 or less) .....	2,373 (2,209-2,537)	11.9 (11.1-12.7)	\$10,818 (\$10,536-\$11,109)	\$49,079 (\$46,243-\$51,915)	353.7 (326.9-380.5)
Second quintile (\$16,221-\$29,651) .....	2,141 (1,977-2,305)	10.8 (10.0-11.6)	\$23,566 (\$23,380-\$23,854)	\$64,883 (\$63,058-\$66,708)	175.3 (164.9-185.7)
Middle quintile (\$29,652-\$45,363) .....	1,470 (1,339-1,601)	7.4 (6.7-8.1)	\$37,896 (\$37,505-\$38,287)	\$98,052 (\$93,357-\$102,747)	158.7 (145.4-172.1)
<b>Moved down two or more quintiles</b>					
Middle quintile (\$29,652-\$45,363) .....	1,779 (1,648-1,910)	8.9 (8.2-9.6)	\$36,554 (\$36,189-\$36,919)	\$3,658 (\$3,261-\$4,055)	-90.0 (-91.2 - -88.8)
Fourth quintile (\$45,364-\$68,648) .....	2,471 (2,307-2,635)	12.4 (11.6-13.2)	\$54,753 (\$54,302-\$55,203)	\$13,330 (\$12,583-\$14,077)	-75.6 (-77.1 - -74.2)
Top quintile (\$68,649 or more) .....	2,897 (2,733-3,061)	14.6 (13.8-15.4)	\$108,420 (\$103,347-\$113,493)	\$24,600 (\$23,531-\$25,669)	-77.3 (-78.8 - -75.8)

Note: Number of Households: 99,552,000. All incomes are adjusted to 1999 dollars using the CPI-U-RS, 90-percent confidence intervals are reported in parentheses.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

income of less than \$29,652 comprised the bottom two quintiles.<sup>4</sup> The largest percentage gains in annual income from 1996 through 1999 occurred for the 4.5 million households that moved up two or more quintiles from the lower end of the income distribution.

In the bottom quintile, 2.4 million households (12 percent of the quintile count) experienced, on average, a three-and-a-half fold (354 percent) increase in annual income, from \$10,818 in 1996 to \$49,079 in 1999. Similarly, the 2.1 million households (11 percent) in the second quintile experienced, on average, nearly a two-fold increase (175 percent) in their annual income, from \$23,566 in 1996 to \$64,883 in 1999 (see Table 3).

The largest absolute gain in annual income occurred for the 1.5 million households (7.4 percent) that started in the middle quintile of the

<sup>4</sup> All household incomes are adjusted to 1999 dollars using the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers Research Series (CPI-U-RS).

income distribution in 1996 and ended in the top quintile. These households experienced, on average, a \$60,156 increase in income by 1999. On the other hand, the 1.8 million households (8.9 percent) that started in the middle quintile in 1996 and ended in the bottom quintile in 1999 experienced a drop in income of \$32,896, on average (see Table 3).

Of households in the fourth and the top quintiles of the income distribution in 1996, 14 percent experienced a decline in income that resulted in moving down two or more quintiles between 1996 and 1999. On average, the 2.5 million households (12 percent) that started in the fourth quintile in 1996 experienced a \$41,423 decline in income by 1999. Similarly, the 2.9 million households (15 percent) that started in the top quintile in 1996, on average, experienced an \$83,820 drop in income by 1999 (see Table 3).

A substantial change in household income was observed for

householders who remained in the top quintile. Among the 7.9 million households that started in the top income quintile in 1996 and remained there in 1999, 1.4 million (18 percent) experienced an increase in household income greater than 50 percent; their incomes increased, on average, from \$110,036 in 1996 to \$232,990 in 1999.<sup>5</sup>

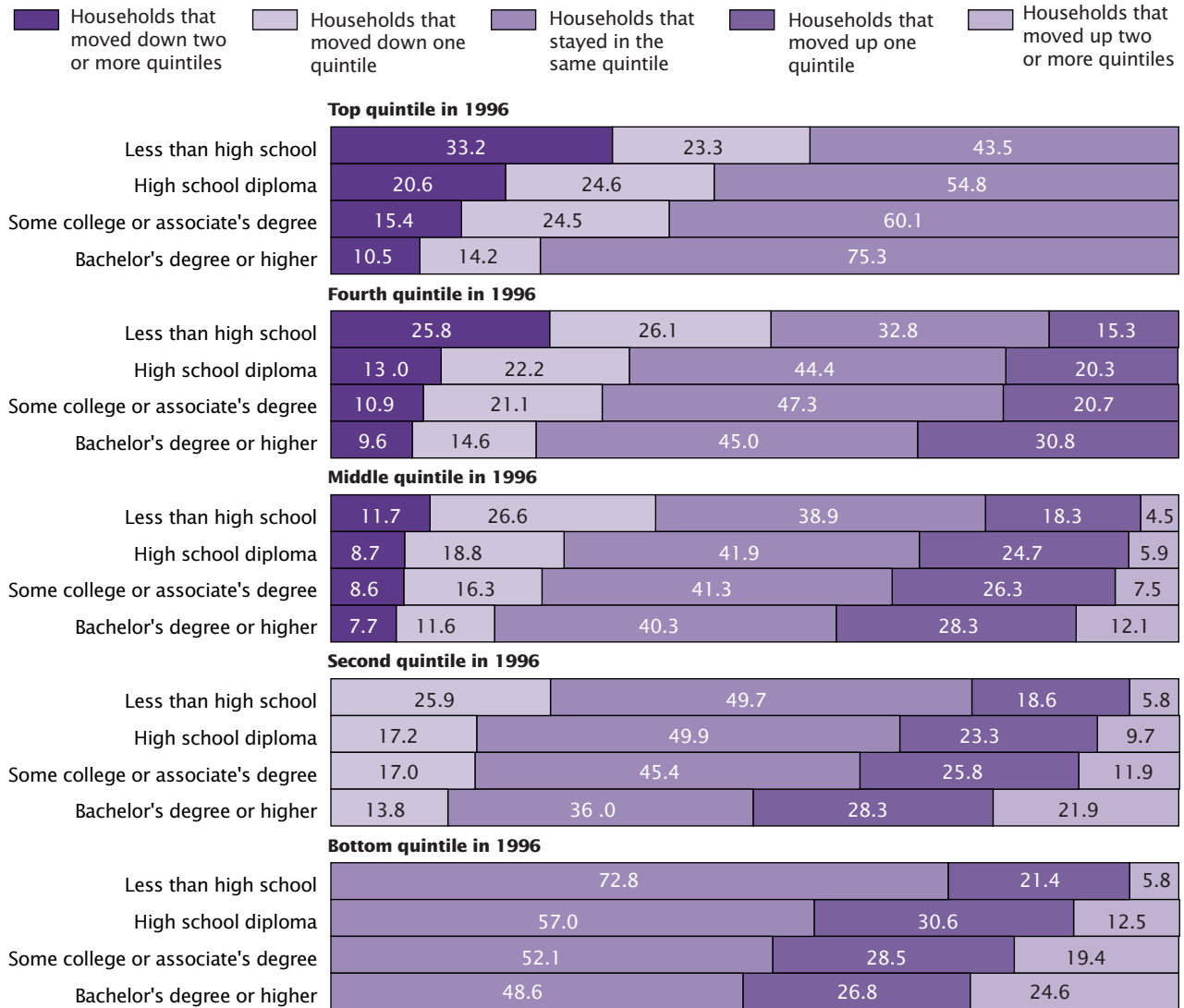
## HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The previous analysis focused on households' movement among the income quintiles. The following discussion compares households that remained in the same quintile with those that moved up or down one or more quintiles between 1996 and 1999. Comparisons within and across quintiles were done using characteristics collected in the survey's first interview –

<sup>5</sup> This information is based on a separate analysis of only those households that remained in the top income quintile in both 1996 and 1999 and was done because there is no upper bound on the top income quintile.

Figure 2.

**Percent Distribution of Household Movement Across Quintiles Between 1996 and 1999 by Highest Level of Educational Attainment of Householder**



Note: Householder level of educational attainment in 1996. Information on the base population for Figures 2 through 5 is discussed in the note for Table A-2.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

the householder's educational attainment, marital status, age, and race and ethnicity.<sup>6</sup>

The percentages in Figures 2 through 5 are based on the total

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 4 for the definition of householder.

number of households in each quintile in 1996 and their relative status in 1999. For example, of all householders in the top quintile with less than a high school education in 1996, 33.2 percent lived in households that moved down two quintiles in 1999, 23.2 percent

lived in households that moved down one quintile in 1999, and 43.5 percent lived in households that stayed in the same quintile.

Factors that affect household income mobility include changes in level of educational attainment,

### How Changes in Educational Attainment Affect Household Income

Between 1996 and 1999, 8.8 percent of householders experienced an increase in their level of educational attainment, which could be associated with an increase in household income. Individuals with higher levels of educational attainment are, on average, paid higher wages and salaries. The first and last months of the 1996 SIPP panel were compared to see how a change in the level of educational attainment affected household income and the household's movement in the income distribution. Changes expected to increase household income include movement from having some college education or an associate's degree to earning a bachelor's degree, as well as going from having a bachelor's degree to earning a postgraduate degree. Householders (8.9 percent) who moved up two or more quintiles from the bottom, second, or middle quintiles experienced a change in educational level from 1996 through 1999. People who moved up at least two quintiles from the bottom quintile experienced the largest change in educational attainment in percentage terms, with 7.9 percent moving from the category some college or an associate's degree to earning a bachelor's degree and 2.4 percent moving from having a bachelor's degree to having a postgraduate degree.

marital status, and perhaps age as a proxy for work experience.<sup>7</sup>

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

As one might expect, householders with lower levels of education were less likely to move to a higher income quintile but were more likely to move to a lower income quintile than householders who had higher levels of education (see Figure 2 and Text Box: *How Changes in Educational Attainment Affect Household Income*). The most notable differences within quintiles from 1996 through 1999 were for householders with less than a high school education and

those with a bachelor's degree or higher. For example, householders with less than a high school education who began in the fourth and top quintiles were three times as likely (26 percent and 33 percent and 9.6 percent and 11 percent, respectively) to experience a decline in income that moved them down two or more quintiles as householders with at least a bachelor's degree. Similarly, householders with at least a bachelor's degree who began in the bottom and second quintiles were four times as likely (5.8 percent compared with 22 percent and 25 percent, respectively) to improve their household income by two or more quintiles as householders with less than a high school education. By contrast, householders with a high school diploma and those with some college or an associate's degree experienced only small differences in movement between their 1996 quintiles and their 1999 quintiles.

The most striking finding, however, arises when looking at householders in the bottom and top quintiles. In the bottom quintile, those with less than a high school education had the most stable income: 73 percent stayed in the bottom quintile. With remarkable symmetry, in the top quintile, those with at least a bachelor's degree had the most stable income: 75 percent stayed in the top quintile.

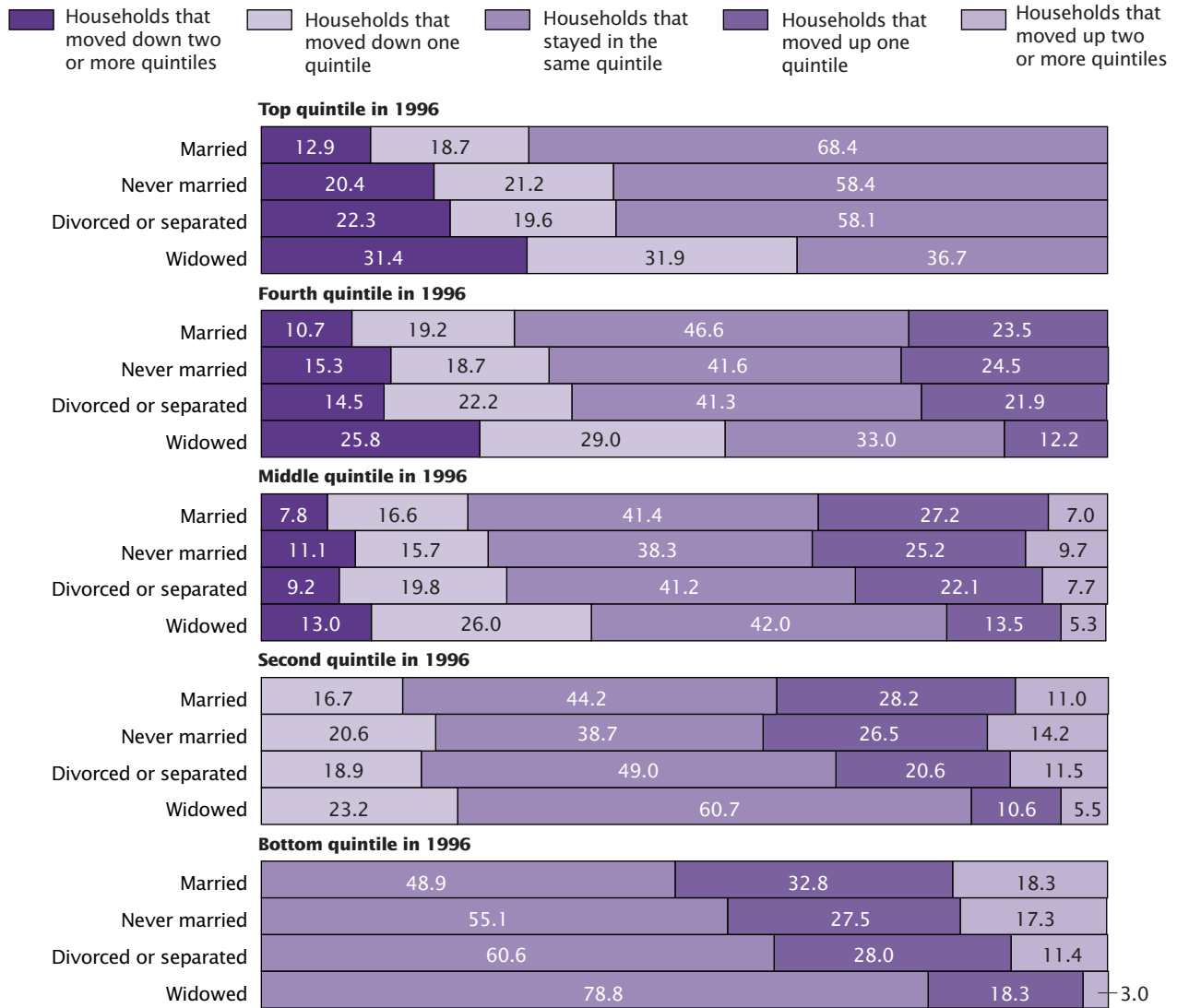
### MARITAL STATUS

Being a widow or widower had a notable impact on household income. Widowed householders tended to remain in the same quintile or move down compared with householders who were not widows or widowers (see Figure 3). For example, 79 percent and 61 percent of widowers remained from 1996 to 1999 in the bottom and second quintiles. These proportions are much higher relative to the other marital status categories for these quintiles. Compared with their nonwidowed counterparts, widows and widowers in the middle quintile were more likely to move down one quintile and less likely to move up one quintile. Similar trends are observed in the fourth and top quintiles, where widowed householders were nearly two-and-a-half times as likely as their married counterparts to move down two quintiles: 26 percent compared with 11 percent in the fourth quintile and 31 percent compared with 13 percent in the top quintile (see Figure 3 and Text Box: *How Changes in Marital Status Affect Household Income*).

A few across-quintile differences distinguished householders who moved in the income distribution from 1996 through 1999. Nearly 1 in 5 married householders in the bottom quintile moved up two or

<sup>7</sup> Changes in level of educational attainment, marital status, and increased work experience are the most common factors used to analyze household income mobility. Other less obvious factors can also affect household income mobility, such as changes in household composition. This could include adult children moving out or back into their parents' household, parents moving in or out of their adult children's household, and unrelated people moving into or out of a household.

Figure 3.  
**Percent Distribution of Household Movement Across Quintiles Between 1996 and 1999 by Marital Status of Householder**



Note: Marital status of householder in 1996.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

more quintiles, while about 1 in 10 of those in the second and middle quintiles did (18 percent compared with 11 percent and 7.0 percent, respectively).

A number of across-quintile differences appeared by marital status

category for householders who remained in the same quintile. As with educational attainment, the most striking differences occurred between the bottom and top quintiles. While over 3 in 4 householders who remained in the bottom quintile were widows or

widowers, only 1 in 3 stayed in the top quintile (79 percent compared with 37 percent). By comparison, while 1 in 2 married householders remained in the bottom quintile, more than 2 in 3 remained in the top quintile (49 percent compared with 68 percent).



### How Changes in Marital Status Affect Household Income

Between 1996 and 1999, 17 percent of householders experienced a change in marital status, which could either increase or decrease household income. For example, if two working adults marry, their household income becomes the combined total of the two individual incomes. Alternatively, when a spouse dies, the household income may be reduced by the amount of pension, social security income, and or earned income attributable to the deceased spouse. To see how changes in marital status affect household income, marital status in the first and last months of the 1996 SIPP panel was examined for those who experienced a change in income. Of householders who moved up two or more quintiles from the bottom, second, or middle quintile, 8.6 percent were never married in 1996 but were married in 1999. Changes expected to decrease household income, particularly for women, include going from married to divorced, separated, or widowed. Nearly 5 percent of householders who moved down at least two quintiles in income from the top, fourth, or middle quintiles were married in 1996 and divorced or separated by 1999, while 2.1 percent were married in 1996 and widowed by 1999.

### AGE

Growing older is commonly associated with increased maturity, domestic stability, and labor force experience, which often result in higher income.<sup>8</sup> Younger householders experienced greater volatility in income between 1996 and 1999: they were both more likely to move up from a lower income quintile and more likely to move down from the top income quintile (see Figure 4). For example, over one-half of all householders under age 45 in the bottom quintile experienced increases in income that moved them up one or more quintiles by 1999. Similarly, more householders under age 45

in the second quintile experienced increases rather than declines in their income, which moved them up one or more quintiles by 1999. This same pattern was observed for younger householders in the middle quintile as well. At the other end of the income spectrum, in the fourth and top quintiles, younger householders were more likely to remain in the top quintile or move up from the fourth quintile than older householders. Also, younger householders were more likely than older householders to move down from the top quintile.

For householders aged 55 and older, income volatility was more often downward. One possible reason could be that householders in this age category were moving into retirement or had already retired, resulting in a stable or declining quintile status by 1999. For example, in the bottom and the second quintiles, a significantly larger proportion of older householders remained in the same quintile compared with all other householders.

In the fourth and top quintiles, these older householders were more likely to experience a decline in their income, leading to a larger proportion moving down one or more quintiles by 1999. Even in the middle quintile, which experienced considerable income volatility between 1996 and 1999, older householders were more likely to see their incomes decline, with a subsequently larger proportion moving down one or more quintiles by 1999.

### RACE AND ETHNICITY

Few within-quintile differences arose by the race and ethnicity of the householder (see Figure 5). Non-Hispanic Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics (of any race) had similar propensities to remain in the same quintile and to move to lower or higher quintiles. However, Black householders in the bottom quintile were more likely than Hispanic householders to remain there (65 percent compared with 59 percent), while Black householders in the second quintile were more likely to move down one quintile than non-Hispanic Whites (25 percent compared to 17 percent). Beyond these two comparisons, no statistical differences in income mobility by race and ethnicity were found.

### SOURCE OF THE DATA

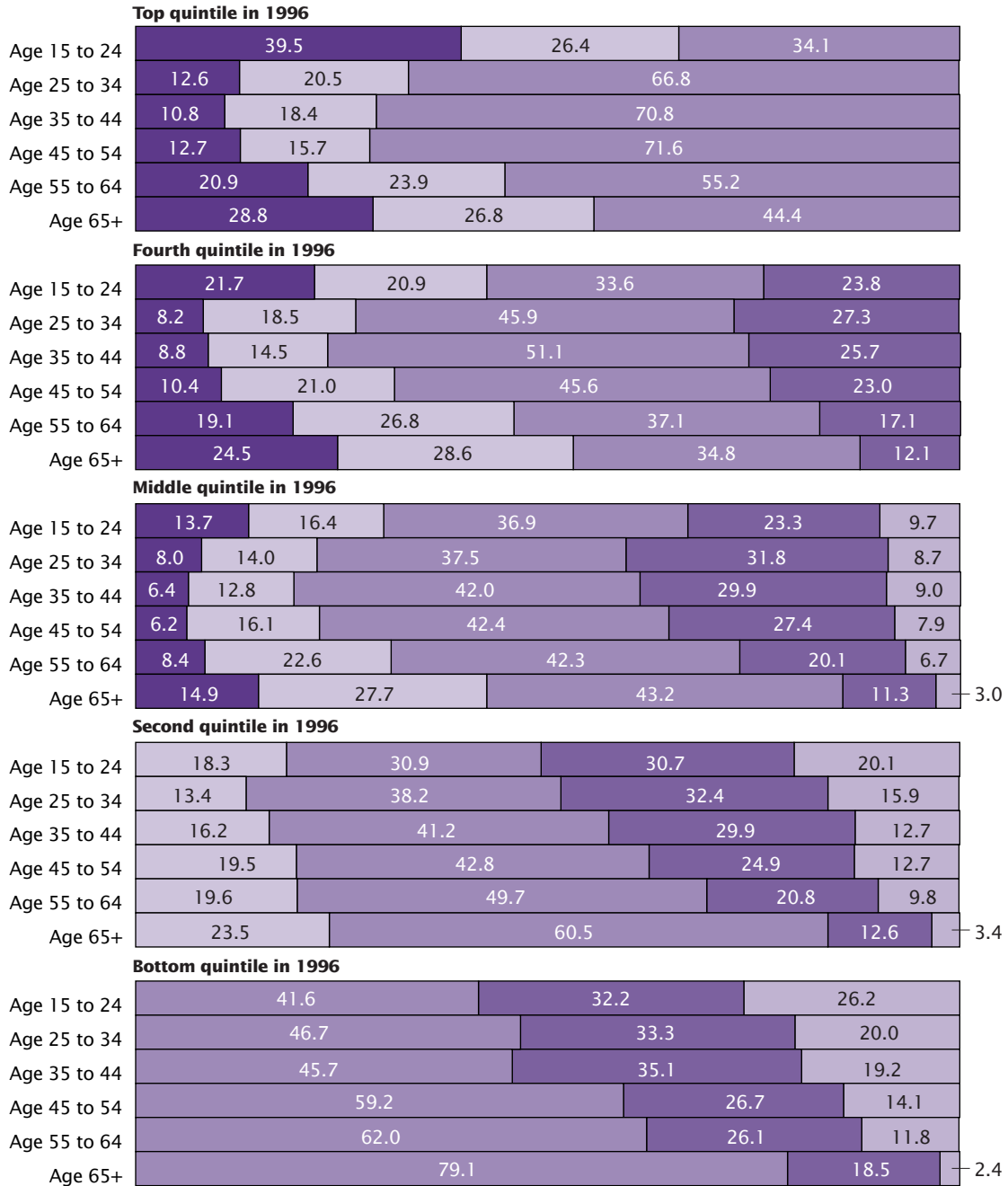
The population represented is the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States from the 1996 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The SIPP is conducted at 4-month intervals. The data were collected from April 1996 until March 2000. The institutionalized population, which is excluded from the population universe, is composed primarily of the population in correctional institutions and nursing homes.

<sup>8</sup> A good review of this life-cycle hypothesis and its empirical validation can be found in Murphy, Kevin and Finis Welch (1990), "Empirical Age-Earnings Profiles," *Journal of Labor Economics*, 8, pp. 202-29; Medoff, James L and Katharine G. Abraham (1980), "Experience, Performance, and Earnings," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 95, No. 4, pp. 703-36; and Klevmarken, Anders and John M. Quigley (1976), "Age, Experience, and Investments in Human Capital," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 84, No. 1, pp. 47-72.

Figure 4.

**Percent Distribution of Household Movement Across Quintiles Between 1996 and 1999 by Age of Householder**

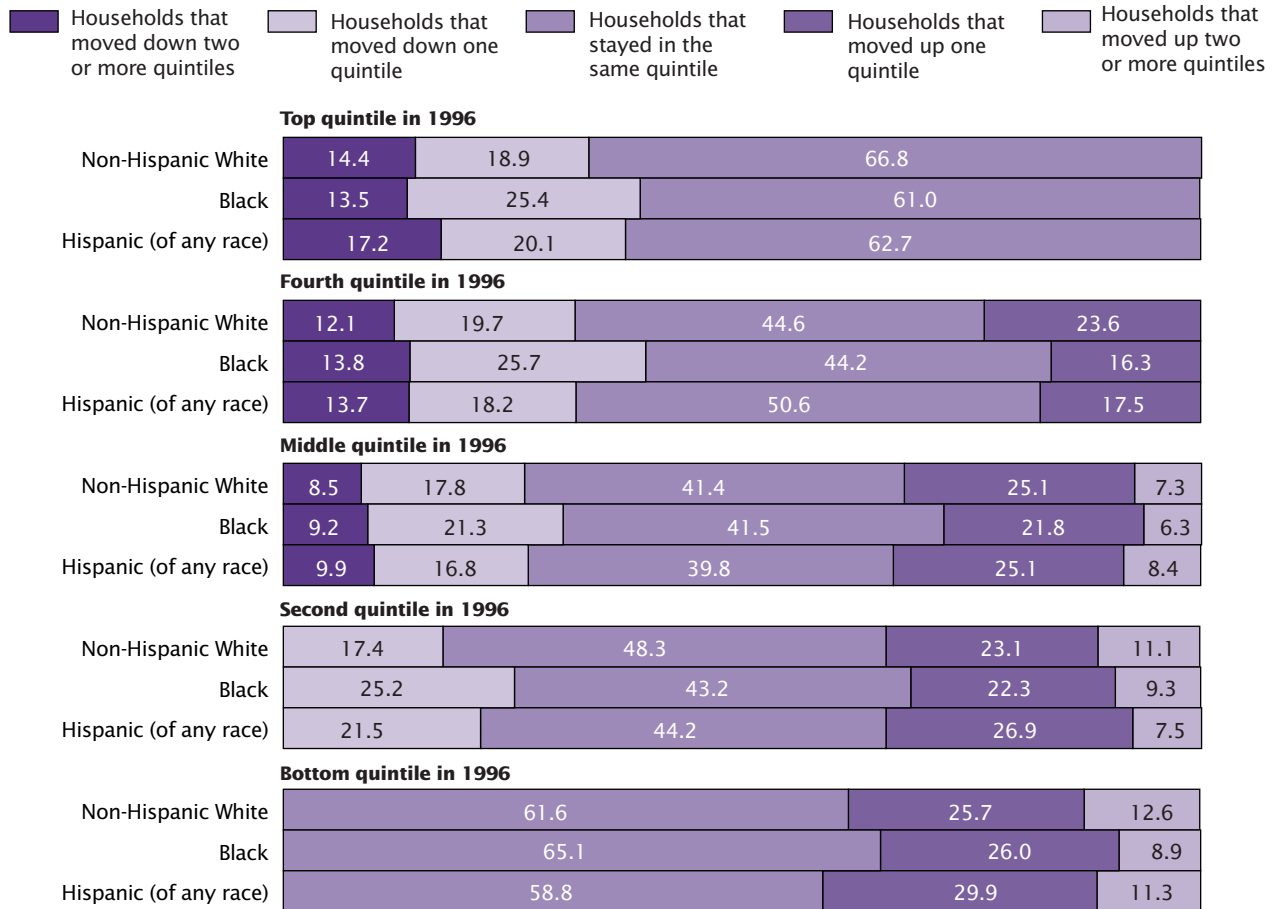
Households that moved down two or more quintiles
  Households that moved down one quintile
  Households that stayed in the same quintile
  Households that moved up one quintile
  Households that moved up two or more quintiles



Note: Age of householder in 1996.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

Figure 5.

**Percent Distribution of Household Movement Across Quintiles Between 1996 and 1999 by Race and Ethnicity of Householder**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

**ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES**

Statistics from surveys are subject to sampling and nonsampling error. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90-percent confidence level. This means the 90-percent confidence interval for the difference between the estimates being compared does not include zero. Nonsampling errors in surveys may be attributed to a variety of

sources, such as how the survey was designed, how respondents interpret questions, how able and willing respondents are to provide correct answers, and how accurately the answers are coded and classified. The Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the production process including the overall design of surveys, the wording of questions, review of the work of interviewers and coders, and statistical review of reports to minimize these errors. The Survey of Income and Program

Participation weighting procedure uses ratio estimation, whereby sample estimates are adjusted to independent estimates of the national population by age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. This weighting partially corrects for bias due to undercoverage, but biases may still be present when people who are missed by the survey differ from those interviewed in ways other than the age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. How this weighting procedure affects other variables in the survey is not precisely known.

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All of these considerations affect comparisons across different surveys or data sources.

For further information on the source of the data and accuracy of the estimates including standard

errors and confidence intervals, go to [www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/sourceac/s%96\\_040501.pdf](http://www.sipp.census.gov/sipp/sourceac/s%96_040501.pdf) or contact Charles Dennis Sissel of the Census Bureau's Demographic Statistical Methods Division on the Internet at [charles.d.sissel@census.gov](mailto:charles.d.sissel@census.gov). For information on

the content of the report contact John J. Hisnanick, Chief, Longitudinal Income Statistics Branch, on the Internet at [john.j.hisnanick@census.gov](mailto:john.j.hisnanick@census.gov) or at 301-763-6685.

**APPENDIX A.  
DETAILED TABLES**

**Table A-1.  
Households by Income Quintile: 1996-1999**

(Numbers in thousands)

In 1996	In 1999						
	Total number of households In 1996	Bottom quintile (\$13,728 or less)	Second quintile (\$13,729-\$28,700)	Middle quintile (\$28,701-\$46,309)	Fourth quintile (\$46,310-\$71,081)	Top quintile (\$71,082 or more)	Sub-total: moved two or more quintiles
Bottom quintile (\$16,220 or less) . . . . .	19,901 (19,409-20,392)	12,340 (12,111-12,537)	5,192 (4,996-5,388)	1,594 (1,463-1,725)	544 (479-609)	235 (170-300)	2,373 (2,209-2,537)
Second quintile (\$16,221-\$29,651) . . . . .	19,917 (19,426-20,408)	3,770 (3,573-3,901)	9,342 (9,113-9,571)	4,663 (4,466-4,860)	1,673 (1,542-1,804)	468 (403-533)	2,141 (1,977-2,305)
Middle quintile (\$29,652-\$45,363) . . . . .	19,911 (19,420-20,402)	1,779 (1,648-1,877)	3,533 (3,336-3,730)	8,159 (7,930-8,388)	4,971 (4,774-5,168)	1,470 (1,339-1,601)	3,249 (3,085-3,413)
Fourth quintile (\$45,364-\$68,648) . . . . .	19,912 (19,421-20,403)	1,163 (1,065-1,261)	1,308 (1,177-1,439)	3,987 (3,790-4,184)	8,888 (8,659-9,117)	4,566 (4,369-4,763)	2,471 (2,307-2,635)
Top quintile (\$68,649 or more) . . . . .	19,911 (19,420-20,402)	863 (765-863)	528 (463-593)	1,506 (1,375-1,637)	3,841 (3,644-4,038)	13,170 (12,941-13,399)	2,897 (2,733-3,061)
<b>Percent distribution</b>							
Bottom quintile . . . . .	100.0	62.0 (60.8-63.2)	26.1 (25.1-27.1)	8.0 (7.3-8.7)	2.7 (2.4-3.0)	1.2 (0.9-1.5)	11.9 (11.1-12.7)
Second quintile . . . . .	100.0	18.9 (18.8-20.8)	46.9 (45.7-48.1)	23.4 (22.4-24.4)	8.4 (7.7-9.1)	2.4 (2.1-2.7)	10.8 (10.0-11.6)
Middle quintile . . . . .	100.0	8.9 (8.2-9.6)	17.8 (16.8-18.8)	41.0 (39.8-42.2)	25.0 (24.0-26.0)	7.4 (6.7-8.1)	16.3 (15.5-17.1)
Fourth quintile . . . . .	100.0	5.8 (5.3-6.3)	6.6 (5.9-7.3)	20.0 (19.0-21.0)	44.6 (43.4-45.6)	22.9 (21.9-23.9)	12.4 (11.6-13.2)
Top quintile . . . . .	100.0	4.3 (3.8-4.8)	2.7 (2.4-3.0)	7.6 (6.9-8.3)	19.3 (18.3-20.3)	66.2 (65.0-67.4)	14.6 (13.8-15.4)

Note: Number of households: 99,552,000. All incomes are adjusted to 1999 dollars using the CPI-U-RS, 90-percent confidence intervals are reported in parentheses.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

Table A-2.

**Demographic Characteristics for Households in the Bottom Income Quintile in 1996**

Characteristics of householder	Bottom quintile in 1999		Second quintile in 1999		Middle, fourth, or top quintile in 1999	
	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval
<b>Total (thousand)</b> .....	<b>12,336</b>		<b>5,192</b>		<b>2,372</b>	
<b>Age</b>						
15-24 .....	6.1	(4.9-7.3)	11.2	(8.7-13.7)	19.9	(15.3-24.5)
25-34 .....	11.6	(10.0-13.2)	19.6	(16.5-22.7)	25.8	(20.7-30.9)
35-44 .....	10.4	(8.9-11.9)	18.9	(15.8-22.0)	22.6	(17.8-27.4)
45-54 .....	10.0	(8.5-11.5)	10.8	(8.4-13.2)	12.5	(8.7-16.3)
55-64 .....	11.6	(10.0-13.2)	11.6	(9.1-14.1)	11.5	(7.8-15.2)
65 and over .....	50.4	(47.9-52.9)	28.0	(24.5-31.5)	7.9	(4.8-11.0)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>						
White .....	74.3	(72.1-76.5)	76.2	(72.9-79.5)	79.7	(75.0-84.4)
Non-Hispanic .....	64.8	(62.4-67.2)	64.3	(60.6-68.0)	68.9	(63.5-74.3)
Black .....	21.1	(19.0-23.2)	20.0	(16.9-23.1)	15.0	(10.9-19.1)
Asian or Pacific Islander .....	3.1	(2.2-4.0)	2.7	(1.4-4.0)	4.0	(1.7-6.3)
American Indian or Alaska Native .....	1.4	(0.8-2.0)	1.0	(0.2-1.8)	1.3	(0.0-2.6)
Hispanic (any race) .....	10.8	(9.2-12.4)	13.1	(10.5-15.7)	10.9	(7.3-14.5)
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Married, spouse present .....	14.4	(12.6-16.2)	24.9	(21.5-28.3)	30.4	(25.1-35.7)
Married, spouse absent .....	2.6	(1.8-3.4)	2.1	(1.0-3.2)	2.6	(0.8-4.4)
Never Married .....	22.1	(20.0-24.2)	26.2	(22.8-29.6)	36.1	(30.5-41.7)
Divorced .....	18.1	(16.1-20.1)	19.5	(16.4-22.6)	18.0	(13.6-22.4)
Separated .....	6.1	(4.9-7.3)	7.1	(5.1-9.1)	5.7	(3.0-8.4)
Widowed .....	36.8	(34.4-39.2)	20.2	(17.1-23.3)	7.2	(4.2-10.2)
<b>Education</b>						
8 years or less .....	27.4	(25.1-29.7)	16.6	(13.7-19.5)	9.4	(6.0-12.8)
Some high school .....	21.1	(19.0-23.2)	17.2	(14.2-20.2)	10.7	(7.1-14.3)
High school diploma (includes GED) .....	29.2	(26.9-31.5)	37.3	(33.5-41.1)	33.2	(27.7-38.7)
Some college (no degree) .....	15.0	(13.2-16.8)	18.3	(15.3-21.3)	28.8	(23.6-34.0)
Associate's degree .....	1.9	(1.2-2.6)	3.6	(2.1-5.1)	3.9	(1.7-6.1)
Bachelor's degree or higher .....	5.4	(4.3-6.5)	7.0	(5.0-9.0)	14.0	(10.0-18.0)

Note: Householder characteristics measured during the first interview. The percentages presented in Tables A-2 through A-6 are based on 1996 data but are categorized by the quintile status of households in 1999. For example, all households in the bottom quintile in 1996 were divided into three groups based on their quintile status in 1999: stayed in the bottom quintile, moved up one quintile, or moved up to the middle, fourth, or top quintiles. The percentages in Figures 2 through 5, however, were computed differently using percent distributions. The calculation of the first bar in Figure 2 is explained below. The percent distribution was calculated by dividing the number of householders in each quintile status group in 1999 (moved down to the bottom, second, or middle quintiles, moved down to the fourth quintile, and remained in the top quintile) by the total number of householders with less than a high school education in the top quintile in 1996.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

Table A-3.

**Demographic Characteristics for Households in the Second Income Quintile in 1996**

Characteristics of householder	Bottom quintile in 1999		Second quintile in 1999		Middle quintile in 1999		Fourth or top quintile in 1999	
	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval
<b>Total (thousands) .....</b>	<b>3,770</b>		<b>9,342</b>		<b>4,663</b>		<b>2,142</b>	
<b>Age</b>								
15-24 .....	8.2	(5.7-10.7)	5.6	(4.3-6.9)	11.1	(8.5-13.7)	15.9	(11.4-20.4)
25-34 .....	13.7	(10.5-16.9)	15.7	(13.6-17.8)	26.7	(23.0-30.4)	28.5	(23.0-34.0)
35-44 .....	14.6	(11.4-17.8)	14.9	(12.8-17.0)	21.7	(18.3-25.1)	20.1	(15.2-25.0)
45-54 .....	13.0	(9.9-16.1)	11.5	(9.6-13.4)	13.4	(10.6-16.2)	14.9	(10.6-19.2)
55-64 .....	12.5	(9.5-15.5)	12.8	(10.9-14.7)	10.7	(8.1-13.3)	11.0	(7.2-14.8)
65 and over .....	38.1	(33.6-42.6)	39.6	(36.7-42.5)	16.5	(13.4-19.6)	9.7	(6.1-13.3)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>								
White .....	79.2	(75.5-82.9)	86.3	(84.3-88.3)	85.0	(82.1-87.9)	84.8	(80.4-89.2)
Non-Hispanic .....	69.2	(65.0-73.4)	77.7	(75.3-80.1)	74.5	(70.9-78.1)	78.1	(73.1-83.1)
Black .....	16.7	(13.3-20.1)	11.6	(9.7-13.5)	11.9	(9.2-14.6)	10.8	(7.0-14.6)
Asian or Pacific Islander .....	2.3	(0.9-3.7)	1.3	(0.6-2.0)	2.4	(1.1-3.7)	2.9	(0.9-4.9)
American Indian or Alaska Native .....	1.8	(0.6-3.0)	0.8	(0.3-1.3)	0.7	(0.0-1.4)	1.5	(0.0-3.0)
Hispanic (any race) .....	11.1	(8.2-14.0)	9.3	(7.6-11.0)	11.3	(8.7-13.9)	6.8	(3.7-9.9)
<b>Marital Status</b>								
Married, spouse present .....	36.2	(31.8-40.6)	40.7	(37.8-43.6)	52.0	(47.9-56.1)	43.5	(37.5-49.5)
Married, spouse absent .....	2.8	(1.3-4.3)	1.1	(0.5-1.7)	1.5	(0.5-2.5)	1.7	(0.1-3.3)
Never Married .....	20.0	(16.3-23.7)	15.1	(13.0-17.2)	20.8	(17.4-24.2)	24.2	(19.0-29.4)
Divorced .....	15.4	(12.1-18.7)	17.8	(15.6-20.0)	14.3	(11.4-17.2)	17.1	(12.5-21.7)
Separated .....	5.1	(3.1-7.1)	3.7	(2.6-4.8)	3.8	(2.2-5.4)	5.0	(2.3-7.7)
Widowed .....	20.4	(16.7-24.1)	21.6	(19.2-24.0)	7.6	(5.4-9.8)	8.5	(5.1-11.9)
<b>Education</b>								
8 years or less .....	18.2	(14.7-21.7)	11.6	(9.7-13.5)	7.0	(4.9-9.1)	4.8	(2.2-7.4)
Some high school .....	16.2	(12.8-19.6)	15.0	(12.9-17.1)	13.0	(10.2-15.8)	8.7	(5.3-12.1)
High school diploma (includes GED) .....	31.3	(27.0-35.6)	36.7	(33.9-39.5)	34.3	(30.4-38.2)	31.0	(25.4-36.6)
Some college (no degree) .....	21.7	(17.9-25.5)	22.7	(20.3-25.1)	24.6	(21.0-28.2)	23.7	(18.5-28.9)
Associate's degree .....	3.9	(2.1-5.7)	5.0	(3.7-6.3)	6.9	(4.8-9.0)	7.8	(4.5-11.1)
Bachelor's degree or higher .....	8.6	(6.0-11.2)	9.0	(7.3-10.7)	14.3	(11.4-17.2)	24.0	(18.8-29.2)

Note: Householder characteristics measured during the first interview.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

Table A-4.  
**Demographic Characteristics for Households in the Middle Income Quintile in 1996**

Characteristics of householder	Bottom quintile in 1999		Second quintile in 1999		Middle quintile in 1999		Fourth quintile in 1999		Top quintile in 1999	
	Per-cent	90-percent confidence interval	Per-cent	90-percent confidence interval	Per-cent	90-percent confidence interval	Per-cent	90-percent confidence interval	Per-cent	90-percent confidence interval
<b>Total (thousands)</b> .....	<b>1,779</b>		<b>3,533</b>		<b>8,159</b>		<b>4,971</b>		<b>1,470</b>	
<b>Age</b>										
15-24 .....	8.5	(4.8-12.2)	5.1	(3.0-7.2)	4.9	(3.6-6.2)	5.1	(3.3-6.9)	7.2	(3.4-11.0)
25-34 .....	21.0	(15.6-26.4)	18.4	(14.7-22.1)	21.4	(18.8-24.0)	29.8	(26.1-33.5)	27.4	(20.8-4.0)
35-44 .....	17.1	(12.1-22.1)	17.2	(13.6-20.8)	24.5	(21.8-27.2)	28.6	(25.0-32.2)	29.1	(22.4-35.8)
45-54 .....	11.5	(7.2-15.8)	15.1	(11.7-18.5)	17.3	(14.9-19.7)	18.3	(15.2-21.4)	17.8	(12.2-23.4)
55-64 .....	11.5	(7.2-15.8)	15.7	(12.2-19.2)	12.7	(10.6-14.8)	9.9	(7.5-12.3)	11.1	(6.5-15.7)
65 and over .....	30.4	(24.3-36.5)	28.5	(24.2-32.8)	19.2	(16.7-21.7)	8.2	(6.0-10.4)	7.3	(3.5-11.1)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>										
White .....	83.8	(78.9-88.7)	85.5	(82.2-88.8)	86.2	(84.0-88.4)	86.9	(84.2-89.6)	86.8	(81.1-91.8)
Non-Hispanic .....	74.9	(69.1-80.7)	78.7	(74.8-82.6)	79.4	(76.9-81.9)	79.2	(76.0-82.4)	77.5	(71.4-83.6)
Black .....	10.9	(6.7-15.1)	12.8	(9.6-16.0)	10.8	(8.9-12.7)	9.3	(7.0-11.6)	9.1	(4.9-13.3)
Asian or Pacific Islander .....	4.4	(1.7-7.1)	1.2	(0.2-2.2)	1.8	(1.0-2.6)	3.2	(1.8-4.6)	3.5	(0.8-6.2)
American Indian or Alaska Native .....	0.9	(-0.4-2.2)	0.6	(-0.1-1.3)	1.2	(0.5-1.9)	0.7	(0.0-1.4)	0.6	(-0.5-1.7)
Hispanic (any race) .....	8.9	(5.1-12.7)	7.7	(5.2-10.2)	7.9	(6.2-9.6)	8.2	(6.0-10.4)	9.3	(5.0-13.6)
<b>Marital Status</b>										
Married, spouse present .....	48.7	(42.0-55.4)	54.7	(50.0-59.4)	59.6	(56.5-62.7)	64.0	(60.2-67.8)	54.9	(47.6-2.2)
Married, spouse absent .....	3.2	(0.8-5.6)	1.1	(0.1-2.1)	0.8	(0.2-1.4)	1.1	(0.3-1.9)	1.5	(-0.3-3.3)
Never Married .....	18.9	(13.7-24.1)	13.5	(10.3-16.7)	8.0	(6.3-9.7)	15.4	(12.5-18.3)	20.1	(14.2-6.0)
Divorced .....	13.6	(9.0-18.2)	15.6	(12.2-19.0)	14.7	(12.5-16.9)	13.3	(10.6-16.0)	15.2	(9.9-20.5)
Separated .....	4.2	(1.5-6.9)	3.6	(1.8-5.4)	2.7	(1.7-3.7)	2.0	(0.9-3.1)	2.9	(0.4-5.4)
Widowed .....	11.3	(7.1-15.5)	11.3	(8.3-14.3)	14.3	(12.1-16.5)	4.2	(2.6-5.8)	5.5	(2.1-8.9)
<b>Education</b>										
8 years or less .....	10.4	(6.3-14.5)	9.8	(8.2-11.4)	4.0	(2.8-5.2)	3.7	(2.2-5.2)	2.2	(0.0-4.4)
Some high school .....	8.7	(4.9-12.5)	12.0	(10.2-14.0)	9.8	(7.9-11.7)	7.0	(5.0-9.0)	6.7	(3.0-10.4)
High school diploma (includes GED) ...	33.2	(26.9-39.5)	36.0	(33.2-39.0)	34.7	(31.7-37.7)	33.6	(29.8-37.4)	27.2	(20.7-33.7)
Some college (no degree) .....	25.4	(19.6-31.2)	23.4	(21.0-26.0)	26.0	(23.3-28.7)	27.1	(23.5-30.7)	26.8	(20.3-33.3)
Associate's degree .....	5.9	(2.8-9.0)	6.4	(5.0-8.0)	6.7	(5.1-8.3)	7.1	(5.0-9.2)	6.0	(5.2-67.2)
Bachelor's degree or higher .....	16.4	(11.5-21.3)	12.4	(10.4-14.4)	18.7	(16.3-21.1)	21.6	(18.3-24.9)	31.1	(24.3-37.9)

Note: Householder characteristics measured during the first interview.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.



Table A-5.

**Demographic Characteristics for Households in the Fourth Income Quintile in 1996**

Characteristics of householder	Bottom or second quintile in 1999		Middle quintile in 1999		Fourth quintile in 1999		Top quintile in 1999	
	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval
<b>Total (thousands) .....</b>	<b>2,471</b>		<b>3,987</b>		<b>8,888</b>		<b>4,566</b>	
<b>Age</b>								
15-24 .....	6.2	(3.5-8.9)	3.7	(2.0-5.4)	2.7	(1.7-3.7)	3.7	(2.1-5.3)
25-34 .....	15.6	(11.5-19.7)	21.7	(18.0-25.4)	24.1	(21.5-26.7)	28.0	(24.3-31.7)
35-44 .....	20.7	(16.1-25.3)	21.0	(17.4-24.6)	33.3	(30.5-36.1)	32.6	(28.7-36.5)
45-54 .....	17.6	(13.3-21.9)	22.0	(18.3-25.7)	21.4	(18.9-23.9)	21.1	(17.7-24.5)
55-64 .....	18.7	(14.3-23.1)	16.2	(12.9-19.5)	10.1	(8.3-11.9)	9.0	(6.6-11.4)
65 and over .....	21.2	(16.6-25.8)	15.3	(12.1-18.5)	8.4	(6.7-10.1)	5.7	(3.8-7.6)
<b>Race /Ethnicity</b>								
White .....	86.0	(82.1-89.9)	85.6	(82.5-88.7)	88.0	(86.1-89.9)	88.1	(85.4-90.8)
Non-Hispanic .....	79.3	(74.7-83.9)	80.0	(76.4-83.6)	81.2	(78.9-83.5)	83.5	(80.4-86.6)
Black .....	9.6	(6.3-12.9)	11.1	(8.3-13.9)	8.6	(6.9-10.3)	6.2	(4.2-8.2)
Asian or Pacific Islander .....	3.6	(1.5-5.7)	2.6	(1.2-4.0)	2.4	(1.5-3.3)	5.3	(3.4-7.2)
American Indian or Alaska Native .....	0.8	(-0.2-1.8)	0.7	(0.0-1.4)	1.0	(0.4-1.6)	0.4	(-0.1-0.9)
Hispanic (any race) .....	7.1	(4.2-10.0)	5.8	(3.7-7.9)	7.2	(5.7-8.7)	4.9	(3.1-6.7)
<b>Marital Status</b>								
Married, spouse present .....	58.9	(53.3-64.5)	66.2	(62.0-70.4)	72.3	(69.6-75.0)	70.6	(66.8-74.4)
Married, spouse absent .....	1.0	(-0.1-2.1)	0.8	(0.0-1.6)	0.4	(0.0-0.8)	0.9	(0.1-1.7)
Never Married .....	14.3	(10.3-18.3)	10.9	(8.1-13.7)	10.8	(8.9-12.7)	12.5	(9.7-15.3)
Divorced .....	13.1	(9.3-16.9)	13.7	(10.6-16.8)	11.7	(9.8-13.6)	11.7	(9.0-14.4)
Separated .....	3.7	(1.6-5.8)	2.2	(0.9-3.5)	1.6	(0.8-2.4)	2.0	(0.8-3.2)
Widowed .....	9.0	(5.8-12.2)	6.3	(4.1-8.5)	3.2	(2.1-4.3)	2.3	(1.0-3.6)
<b>Education</b>								
8 years or less .....	7.9	(4.8-11.0)	3.7	(2.0-5.4)	1.5	(0.8-2.2)	1.6	(0.6-2.6)
Some high school .....	9.2	(5.9-12.5)	7.0	(4.7-9.3)	4.5	(3.3-5.7)	3.9	(2.3-5.5)
High school diploma (includes GED) .....	30.7	(25.5-35.9)	32.5	(28.3-36.7)	29.1	(26.4-31.8)	25.9	(22.2-29.6)
Some college (no degree) .....	25.0	(20.1-29.9)	27.9	(23.9-31.9)	27.0	(24.3-29.7)	22.9	(19.4-26.4)
Associate's degree .....	5.8	(3.1-8.5)	8.7	(6.2-11.2)	9.9	(8.1-11.7)	8.6	(6.3-10.9)
Bachelor's degree or higher .....	21.4	(16.7-26.1)	20.1	(16.5-23.7)	27.9	(25.2-30.6)	37.2	(33.2-41.2)

Note: Householder characteristics measured during the first interview.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.

Table A-6.  
**Demographic Characteristics for Households in the Top Income Quintile in 1996**

Characteristics of householder	Bottom, second, or middle quintile in 1999		Fourth quintile in 1999		Top quintile in 1999	
	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval	Percent	90-percent confidence interval
<b>Total (thousands) .....</b>	<b>2,896</b>		<b>3,840</b>		<b>13,174</b>	
<b>Age</b>						
15-24 .....	3.0	(1.2-4.8)	1.5	(0.4-2.6)	0.6	(0.2-1.0)
25-34 .....	14.7	(11.0-18.4)	18.0	(14.5-21.5)	17.1	(15.3-18.9)
35-44 .....	24.0	(19.5-28.5)	30.7	(26.5-34.9)	34.6	(32.3-36.9)
45-54 .....	26.4	(21.8-31.0)	24.5	(20.6-28.4)	32.6	(30.3-34.9)
55-64 .....	18.0	(14.0-22.0)	15.5	(12.2-18.8)	10.4	(8.9-11.9)
65 and over .....	14.0	(10.4-17.6)	9.8	(7.1-12.5)	4.7	(3.7-5.7)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>						
White .....	89.3	(86.1-92.5)	87.9	(84.9-90.9)	90.3	(88.8-91.8)
Non-Hispanic .....	84.7	(80.9-88.5)	83.9	(80.6-87.2)	86.6	(84.9-88.3)
Black .....	5.5	(3.1-7.9)	7.9	(5.4-10.4)	5.5	(4.4-6.6)
Asian or Pacific Islander .....	4.2	(2.1-6.3)	4.1	(2.3-5.9)	3.9	(2.9-4.9)
American Indian or Alaska Native .....	1.0	(0.0-2.0)	0.2	(-0.2-0.6)	0.3	(0.0-0.6)
Hispanic (any race) .....	4.8	(2.6-7.0)	4.2	(2.4-6.0)	3.9	(2.9-4.9)
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Married, spouse present .....	73.2	(68.6-77.8)	80.4	(76.8-84.0)	85.4	(83.7-87.1)
Married, spouse absent .....	0.4	(-0.3-1.1)	0.4	(-0.2-1.0)	0.7	(0.3-1.1)
Never Married .....	9.2	(6.2-12.2)	7.3	(4.9-9.7)	5.8	(4.7-6.9)
Divorced .....	10.1	(6.9-13.3)	6.1	(3.9-8.3)	5.6	(4.5-6.7)
Separated .....	1.5	(0.2-2.8)	1.6	(0.5-2.7)	1.0	(0.5-1.5)
Widowed .....	5.5	(3.1-7.9)	4.2	(2.4-6.0)	1.4	(0.8-2.0)
<b>Education</b>						
8 years or less .....	2.0	(0.5-3.5)	1.8	(0.6-3.0)	0.8	(0.4-1.2)
Some high school .....	6.5	(3.9-9.1)	2.7	(1.2-4.2)	1.6	(1.0-2.2)
High school diploma (includes GED) .....	25.6	(21.0-30.2)	23.1	(19.3-26.9)	15.0	(13.2-16.8)
Some college (no degree) .....	24.2	(19.7-28.7)	26.4	(22.4-30.4)	18.2	(16.3-20.1)
Associate's degree .....	5.3	(3.0-7.6)	8.9	(6.3-11.5)	7.1	(5.8-8.4)
Bachelor's degree or higher .....	36.2	(31.2-41.2)	37.1	(32.7-41.5)	57.3	(54.9-59.7)

Note: Householder characteristics measured during the first interview.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 1996 panel.



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