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INCOME OF PERSONS AND FAMILIES AT RECORD HIGH IN 1959

(Advance data, March 1960 sample survey. Figures for 1959 include Alaska and Hawaii)

The average incomes of persons and families reached record levels in 1959, according to estimates released today by the Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. The average (median) income of persons was $2,600 last year, a gain of $130, or 5 percent, over 1958. For families, the median reached $5,400; this was $330, or 6 percent higher than a year earlier. Most of the increase in cash income represented a gain in real purchasing power since the Consumer Price Index rose only about 1 percent between 1958 and 1959.

For men, last year's median income advanced to a high of $4,000, up $250 from the preceding year. An increased proportion of men was reported in the upper income range. Men with incomes of $5,000 or more accounted for about 37 percent of all male income recipients last year, as compared with 32 percent a year earlier. The income advances in 1959 stemmed in large part from increases in employment and wage rates, as the economy continued its recovery from the contraction of early 1958.

Women's incomes, which averaged $1,200 in 1959, remained about the same as in the two preceding years. This relatively low median income results in part from the sizable proportion of women working only part time or intermittently, or receiving small amounts from sources other than earnings. For year-round full-time women workers, incomes averaged $3,200 last year. For men who worked full time throughout the year, the corresponding average was $5,200.

The rise in family incomes last year continued the general upswing in income that has characterized most of the postwar period. Between 1947 and 1959, average (median) family money income has risen from $3,000 to $5,400, or about 80 percent. A good part of this advance reflected the rise that took place in consumer prices, but there was also a substantial increase in real purchasing power. In terms of constant (1959) dollars, average (median) family money income increased from about $4,000 in 1947 to $5,400 in 1959, a rise that averaged approximately $120 a year over this period.

The 1959 income statistics presented in this report were obtained from the Bureau's Current Population Survey of March 1960. Additional income data from the survey for persons and families will appear in a more detailed report to be issued later this year. Income statistics collected by the Bureau of the Census in the 1960 Decennial Census will not be available until next year. There will, of course, be some differences between data from the Current Population Survey and the Decennial Census, and later reports will discuss these in detail when the results become available.

Other data relating to the income received by the population are available from the personal income series of the Department of Commerce, the Department of Agriculture's farm income series, Federal individual income tax data, and Old-Age and Survivors Insurance wage record data. These sets of data are collected for different purposes and, therefore, differ in several important respects. A discussion of the comparability of these data may be found in Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 33, "Income of Families and Persons in the United States: 1958."

Information on income in 1959 was collected in the Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey from the civilian noninstitutional population and members of the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post in the United States. Since the estimates are based on a sample, they are subject to sampling variability. Particular care should be used in interpreting medians and other figures when based

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on relatively small numbers of cases, as well as small differences between figures. Moreover, as in all field surveys of income, the figures are subject to errors of response and nonreporting.

Income as defined in this report represents total money income, or the sum of money wages and salaries, net income from self-employment, and income other than earnings. Family income is the combined total received from these sources by all family members during the calendar year. The median income is the amount which divides an income distribution into two equal groups, one group having incomes above the median and the other having incomes below the median. Medians for persons are based on the income distribution of those who received some income during the calendar year.

This report covers money income only, prior to deductions for taxes. Nonmoney items of income, such as wages paid in kind and the value of goods produced and consumed on the farm, are excluded.

Table A.--DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER BY TOTAL MONEY INCOME, BY SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1947 AND 1957 TO 1959

Total money income	Both sexes				Male				Female			
	1959	1958	1957	1947	1959	1958	1957	1947	1959	1958	1957	1947
Total persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percent with income	71.1	71.6	71.4	63.6	91.0	91.7	91.8	88.9	53.5	52.9	52.6	39.2
Percent without income	28.9	28.4	28.6	36.4	9.0	8.3	8.2	11.1	46.5	47.1	47.4	60.8
INCOME RECIPIENTS												
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
$1 to $499 or loss	15.7	16.6	16.2	16.6	8.7	9.5	9.2	10.2	26.3	27.6	27.0	30.0
$500 to $999	12.0	11.8	12.3	13.8	7.5	7.4	8.1	11.1	18.9	18.7	18.7	19.5
$1,000 to $1,499	8.1	8.3	8.2	12.3	6.3	6.7	6.5	10.5	10.9	10.6	10.8	16.0
$1,500 to $1,999	6.5	6.7	6.7	12.7	5.4	5.6	5.2	11.3	8.1	8.5	9.1	15.6
$2,000 to $2,499	6.6	6.9	7.3	13.4	5.6	6.0	6.4	14.9	8.0	8.3	8.8	10.4
$2,500 to $2,999	5.3	5.5	5.6	8.9	4.8	5.2	5.2	11.3	6.0	5.9	6.1	3.8
$3,000 to $3,499	6.3	6.5	6.9	8.1	6.3	6.5	6.9	10.9	6.3	6.6	6.9	2.1
$3,500 to $3,999	5.2	5.6	5.9	4.3	5.5	6.5	6.8	5.9	4.8	4.4	4.4	0.9
$4,000 to $4,499	5.8	6.2	6.4	3.1	7.1	7.9	8.4	4.3	3.8	3.5	3.2	0.6
$4,500 to $4,999	4.6	4.8	4.9	1.5	6.2	6.6	6.9	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.7	0.3
$5,000 to $5,999	8.7	8.2	8.3	2.1	12.7	12.1	12.5	3.0	2.6	2.2	1.9	0.3
$6,000 to $6,999	5.5	5.0	4.5	2.1	8.5	7.6	7.0	3.0	1.1	1.0	0.7	0.3
$7,000 to $7,999	3.4	5.1	4.5		5.3	8.1	7.1		0.4	0.6	0.5	
$8,000 to $9,999	3.0				4.7				0.3			
$10,000 and over	3.5	2.7	2.4	1.2	5.4	4.4	3.7	1.6	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3
Median income	$2,606	$2,474	$2,452	$1,787	$3,996	$3,742	$3,684	$2,230	$1,222	$1,176	$1,199	$1,017
YEAR-ROUND-FULL-TIME WORKERS												
Percent of all income recipients	46.0	45.9	48.5	(1)	58.5	57.4	60.8	(1)	27.4	28.4	29.6	(1)
Median income	$4,596	$4,374	$4,203	(1)	$5,242	$4,948	$4,720	(1)	$3,205	$3,101	$3,006	(1)

[1] Not available.

Table B.--DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES BY TOTAL MONEY INCOME, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1947 AND 1953 TO 1959

Total money income	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1947
Number....thousands	45,062	44,202	43,714	43,445	42,843	41,934	41,202	37,237
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under $500	2.4	2.6	3.0	3.2	3.4	4.6	4.7	4.4
$500 to $999	2.7	3.0	3.4	3.3	4.3	4.2	3.9	6.4
$1,000 to $1,499	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.4	4.9	5.6	4.9	7.8
$1,500 to $1,999	4.3	4.8	4.5	4.5	4.9	5.4	5.0	8.8
$2,000 to $2,499	4.6	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.5	5.5	5.7	11.3
$2,500 to $2,999	4.7	4.7	4.4	5.1	5.5	6.4	6.0	10.7
$3,000 to $3,499	5.3	5.3	5.7	6.2	7.4	7.5	7.6	11.3
$3,500 to $3,999	4.8	5.9	6.1	6.3	7.2	7.9	8.2	8.4
$4,000 to $4,499	5.9	6.9	7.3	8.0	8.2	8.4	8.6	6.9
$4,500 to $4,999	5.8	6.5	6.8	6.9	7.3	7.2	7.3	4.7
$5,000 to $5,999	13.2	13.7	14.5	13.7	12.7	11.9	13.2	7.7
$6,000 to $6,999	11.0	10.7	10.3	9.8	9.5	8.5	8.1	8.9
$7,000 to $7,999	8.4	16.8	16.3	15.6	12.9	11.1	11.6	
$8,000 to $9,999	10.6							
$10,000 to $14,999	9.1	7.6	6.5	5.9	4.8	4.4	4.1	2.7
$15,000 to $24,999	2.4	1.9	1.4	1.5	0.9	1.0	1.0	
$25,000 and over	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3	
Median income	$5,417	$5,087	$4,971	$4,783	$4,421	$4,173	$4,233	$3,031

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