

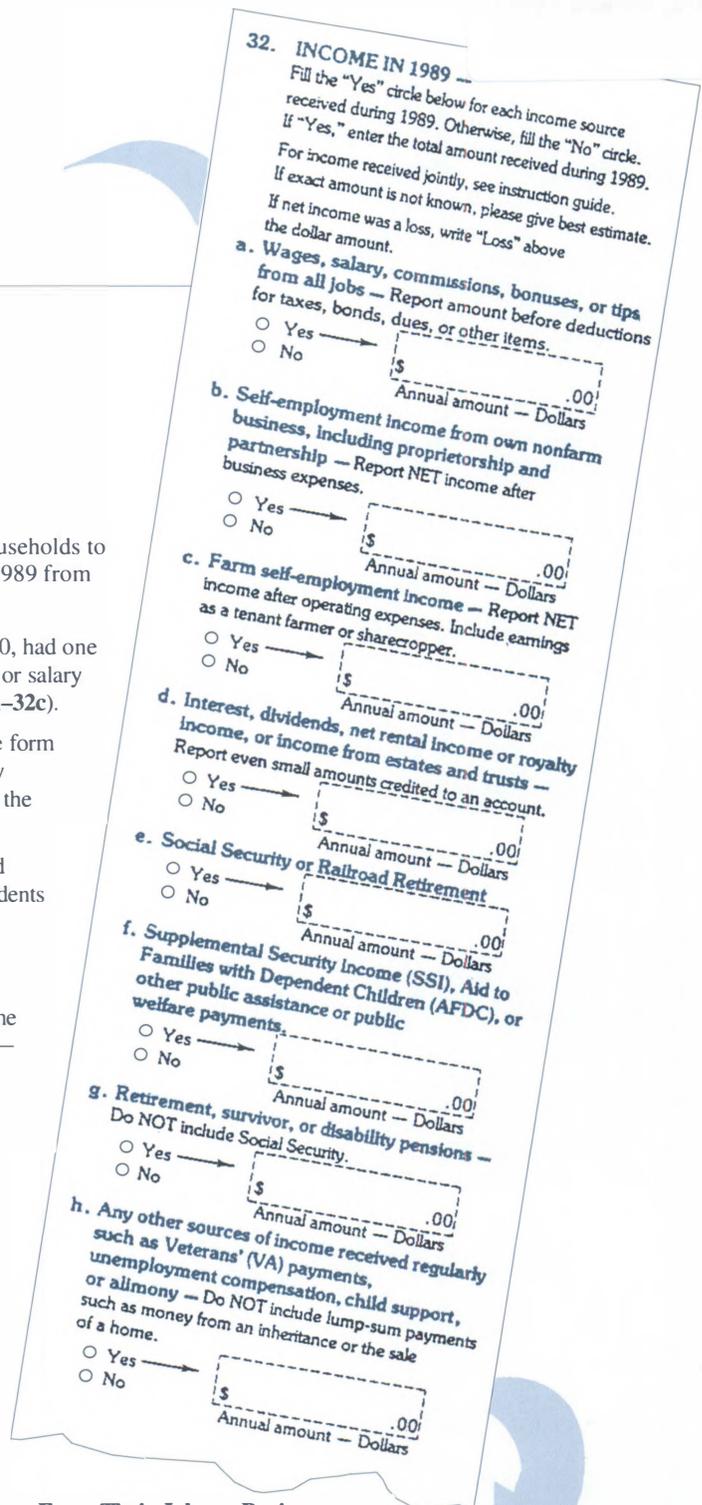
We asked... You told us Income in 1989

The Census Bureau conducts a census of population and housing every 10 years. This bulletin is one of a series that shows the questions asked in the 1990 census and the answers that you, the American people, gave. Each bulletin focuses on a question or group of questions appearing on the 1990 census questionnaires.

Sources of Cash Income

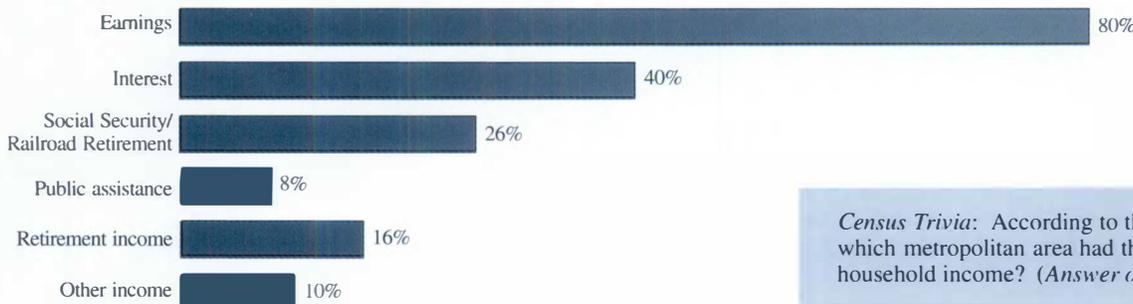
In questions 32a-h on the 1990 census forms, we asked people in households to report the amount of cash income they received in the calendar year 1989 from different sources. From what you told us, we learned that:

- As the chart below shows, the vast majority of households, 8 out of 10, had one or more members receiving work-related income in 1989—as wages or salary from an employer or as self-employment earnings (question parts 32a–32c).
- About 40 percent of households reported they received income in the form of interest, dividends, or rent (part 32d). This income was most likely from savings accounts, checking accounts, certificates of deposit, and the like, or from the rental of land or buildings.
- Around 26 percent of households received Social Security or Railroad Retirement income, which may be received by retired persons, dependents of persons who have died, or long-term disabled workers (part 32e).
- What percentage of households do you think received some sort of cash public assistance or welfare in 1989? 25 percent? 40 percent? Actually, it was the least likely type to be received of the major income sources. Only 8 percent of households received this form of income—from such sources as Supplemental Security Income, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or other forms of cash welfare (part 32f).
- Retirement income was received by about 16 percent of households. Companies, unions, and governments provided these benefits (part 32g).
- Lastly, 10 percent of households received income from other sources than the above-mentioned ones. These included workers' compensation, child support, and other miscellaneous income (part 32h).
- Many households received income from more than one income source. How can you tell this from the chart? (Hint: If each household received only one source, the sum of the six sources would equal 100 percent.)



Households Were Most Likely to Receive Their Income From Earnings From Their Jobs or Businesses

Percent of Households Receiving Income, by Income Source: 1989



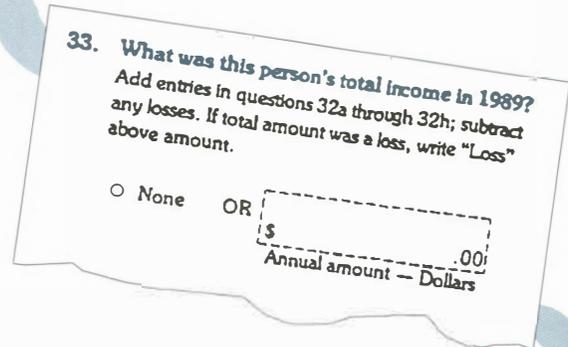
Census Trivia: According to the 1990 census, which metropolitan area had the highest median household income? (Answer on reverse.)

Total Income

In question 33, we asked people to add up the income amounts they reported in question parts 32a-h and report the total income they made in calendar year 1989.

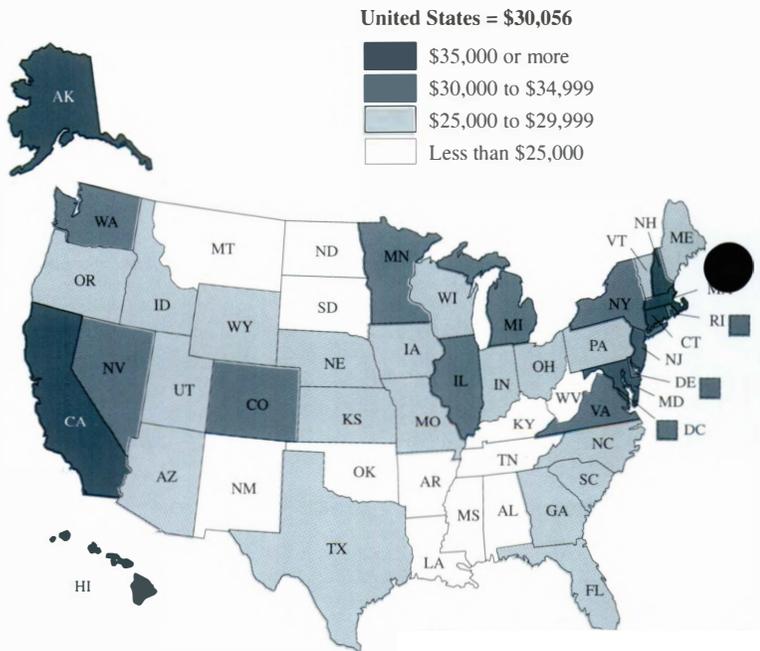
- You told us that the Nation's median household money income in 1989 was \$30,056. (Median means half the households had incomes more than this figure and half had less.) This was a "real" gain of \$1,836, or 7 percent, over the 1979 figure, after adjusting for the increase in the cost of living (inflation) during this time. Between 1969 and 1979, median household income showed a real gain of 6 percent.
- Among regions, the Northeast had the highest median household income (\$33,826) in 1989, followed by the West, with \$32,270. The Midwest lagged further behind (\$29,334), and the South ranked last (\$26,832).
- The map shows that median household income varied markedly across the United States. Connecticut led the States, with a median household income of \$41,721. Mississippi had the lowest median household income, with \$20,136.
- Households in metropolitan areas¹ had a substantially higher median income (\$32,086) than those outside metropolitan areas (\$23,075). Within metro areas, median income was even greater for households in the suburbs (\$36,314) than for those in the central cities (\$26,727).

¹Generally, a **metropolitan area** consists of a sizable central city (or cities) and the surrounding suburbs, with a total population of at least 100,000. Metropolitan areas are defined in terms of counties (cities and towns in New England). **Central cities** include the largest city in each metropolitan area as well as other cities that meet population size and commuting requirements.



Most of the High-Income States Were Located in the Northeast and West

Median Household Income: 1989



Who Uses This Information?

Just a few examples:

- Governments at all levels to develop measures to assess the economic well-being of the Nation, States, and local communities
- Federal agencies to identify communities needing grants to stimulate economic recovery and to receive housing assistance and set up job training programs
- Private companies and businesses to pinpoint areas to gauge potential markets for locating new stores, plants, or warehouses

Want to Know More?

Consult the series of 1990 census reports, CP-2, *Social and Economic Characteristics*, at a large public or university library. Also for sale by Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). Or call:

- Customer Services at the Census Bureau, **301-457-4100**, for ordering information about the GPO reports listed above or to order copies of CQC bulletins or other Census Bureau products
- Kirby Posey or Lydia Scoon-Rogers, **301-763-8577**, for more information on this bulletin or on income data
- Karen Mills, **301-457-3953**, for general information on CQC bulletins

Trivia Answer: The Stamford and Norwalk metropolitan areas, both in Connecticut, had the highest median household income in 1989 (\$57,876 and \$57,822, respectively).



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BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Note: Data on income are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability.