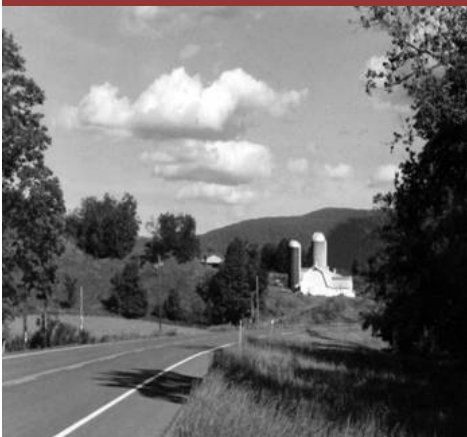


RURAL RESEARCH NOTE

THE HOUSING ASSISTANCE COUNCIL

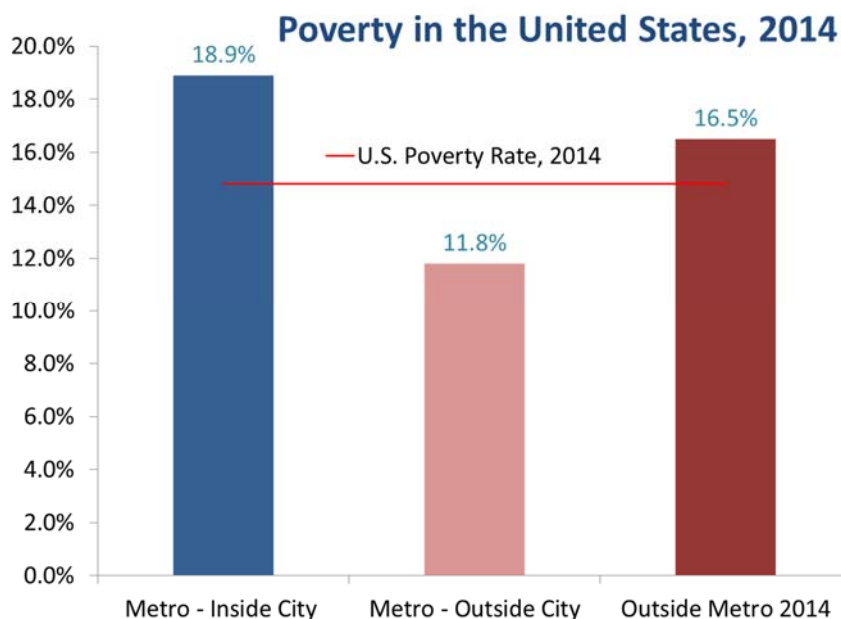
The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) is a national nonprofit organization that supports affordable housing efforts in rural areas of the United States. HAC provides technical housing services, seed money loans from a revolving fund, housing program and policy assistance, and research and information services. HAC is an equal opportunity lender.



September 16, 2015

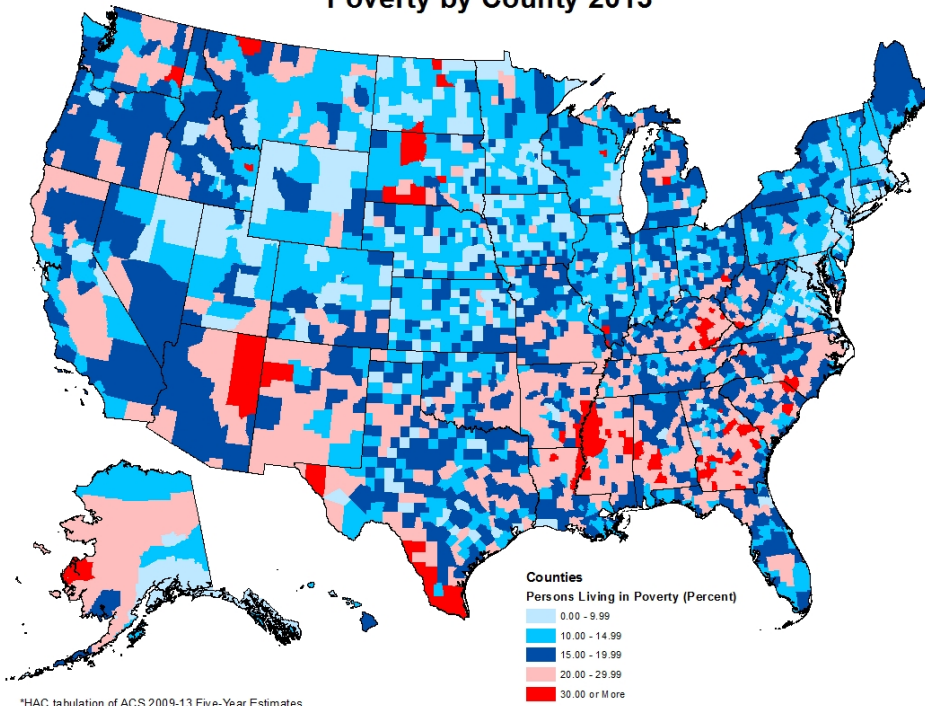
RURAL POVERTY RATE REMAINS UNCHANGED. INCOMES ALSO STAGNANT IN RURAL AREAS.

The number of rural Americans living in poverty has remained relatively unchanged, according to a [new report from the U.S. Census Bureau](#). Overall, the official poverty rate for the United States was 14.8 percent in 2014 – the same as in 2013. Released today, the U.S. Census Bureau’s annual report, *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014*, estimates that 46.7 million people had incomes below the poverty line in 2014, making this the fourth year without a statistically significant change in the number of people in poverty at the national level.



Source: Census Bureau

Poverty by County 2013*



The official poverty rate in rural areas (persons living outside of metropolitan areas) was 16.5 percent, more than 2 percentage points higher than the national level. The rural poverty rate also remained statistically unchanged from 17.3 percent in 2013. Overall, 8.24 million people outside metropolitan areas had incomes below the poverty line in 2014, a statistically insignificant decrease from the 2013 level of 8.28 million.

“The poverty rate continues to be higher in rural America, and we’re not seeing much improvement in reducing poverty or increasing income either. Stagnant incomes and poverty rates continue to hinder

millions of rural Americans’ access to quality and affordable housing,” commented Moises Loza, Executive Director of the Housing Assistance Council (HAC).

Rural Incomes Stagnate

The Census Bureau estimates the national household median income at \$53,657 in 2014 – not statistically different from the 2013 level. Rural incomes continue to lag behind those in the nation as a whole. The median income outside metropolitan areas in 2014 was \$45,482, also statistically unchanged from the 2013 level.

Rural Health Insurance Coverage Improves

The Census Bureau estimates a statistically significant decline in the number of people not covered by health insurance in 2014 compared to 2013. The national uninsured rate went from 13.3 percent in 2013 to 10.4 percent in 2014 – representing a decline in the uninsured population of 8.8 million. Outside metropolitan areas the pattern was similar – a statistically significant decline in uninsurance from 12.8 percent in 2013 to 10.7 percent in 2014. The drop represents almost 700,000 rural people who were not insured in 2013 but are now.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON POVERTY IN RURAL AMERICA

Download the Census Bureau’s Official Report on Poverty

For more information on poverty and income figures download the U.S. Census Bureau’s new report: *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014* at: <http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf>

Additional HAC Resources on Rural Poverty

Rural Voices magazine issue entitled *Revisiting Poverty in Rural America*, <http://www.ruralhome.org/sct-information/rural-voices/1022-rvwinter2014>

Taking Stock: Rural People, Poverty, and Housing in the 21st Century.

<http://www.ruralhome.org/component/content/article/587-taking-stock-2010>

Access data on poverty and income for your community at HAC's *Rural Data Portal*: www.ruraldataportal.org

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