2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Comparison of Selected Socioeconomic Characteristics

The U.S. Census Bureau released the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) data for states, counties, and small areas in December 2023. The ACS is an annual survey that provides demographic, economic, housing, and social characteristics of the resident population.[1] These data are accessible via the Maryland State Data and Analysis Center website for the nation, state, Maryland's 24 jurisdictions (23 counties and Baltimore City), and smaller political and statistical geographies.

The report highlights selected characteristics (e.g., household type, poverty status, income, education, and home value) from the 2022 ACS. The 2017 ACS is compared over time and across jurisdictions.[2]

HOUSEHOLDS

According to the most recent ACS release, there are more than 2.3 million households in Maryland, an increase of 137,000 new households since 2017. This represents a 6.3 percent increase over the comparison period, slightly larger than the national increase of 5.8 percent in household growth. Across Maryland, the number of households increased in all but five jurisdictions (Allegany, Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset, and Talbot counties).

Prince George's County added the most households over the period (34,363 households - an increase of more than 11 percent), followed by Anne Arundel County which added 16,309 new households (7.9 percent increase), Montgomery County which added 16,042 households (4.3 percent increase), and Baltimore County, which added 15,752 new households (5.0 percent increase). Queen Anne's, Kent, and Garrett counties had the smallest increases with 1,356, 770, and 583 new households respectively.

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[1]The American Community Survey (ACS) is a household survey developed by the Census Bureau to replace the long form of the decennial census program. It is a large demographic survey with responses collected throughout the year from approximately 3.5 million addresses, nationally. In the state of Maryland, ACS surveys were collected from 53,920 households. The ACS produces estimates annually for areas with populations of 65,000 or greater. These estimates are referred to as its one-year estimates. The ACS also collects household survey data over five-year intervals for all geographies including smaller populations (e.g., census tracts and block groups). These are known as its five-year estimates. This document compares selected characteristics from the 2022 ACS 5-year Estimates (i.e., surveys collected from 2018 to 2022) with the 2017 ACS 5-year Estimates (i.e., surveys collected from 2013 to 2017).

[2] 2022 ACS is used here as an abbreviated form for the 2018 to 2022 ACS 5-year Estimates. Similarly, 2017 ACS refers to the 2013 to 2017 ACS 5-year Estimates. The terms current and prior period are also used to reference the comparison interval.

The average household size, statewide, has fallen slightly from 2.68 persons per household in 2017 to 2.6. Among the state's 24 jurisdictions, Kent County had the largest drop in average household size from 2.37 to 2.11 persons per household. Other jurisdictions with similar declines in household size include Baltimore City where the average household size dropped from 2.48 to 2.28, and Worcester County where household size fell from 2.4 to 2.22 persons per household.

Statistics on household relationships show that Maryland households with children (persons under the age of 18) comprise 31.2 percent of all households. This is a statistically significant decrease from 2017 when 32.7 percent of all households included children. Among the state's 24 jurisdictions, Howard County has the largest percentage of households with children (36.9 percent), followed by Charles (36.7 percent), St. Mary's (36.5 percent), and Frederick (35.7 percent) counties. Jurisdictions having the smallest percentage of households with children are Kent (19.8 percent) and Worcester (21.8 percent) counties and Baltimore City (23 percent).

Over the comparison period, households with children declined the most in four jurisdictions - Baltimore City, where the share of households with children declined from 25.7 percent in 2017 to 23 percent in 2022, Calvert County, where the share fell from 36.8 percent to 34.1 percent, Cecil County declined from 32.7 percent to 30.2 percent, and Prince George's County declined from 33.6 percent to 31.2 percent.

The 2022 ACS shows that those Maryland households with seniors (persons 65 years and over) comprise 30.3 percent of all households. This is a statistically significant increase from 2017 when 27.4 percent of all households included seniors.

Jurisdictions having a large percentage of households with persons 65 years and over include Talbot County (46.2 percent), Worcester County (44.3 percent), and Kent County (41.5 percent). Jurisdictions that have a smaller percentage of households with persons aged 65 and over include St. Mary's County (25 percent), Charles County (26.6 percent), Baltimore City (27.5 percent), and Howard County (27.8 percent).

Since 2017, jurisdictions experiencing a larger share of households with seniors include Talbot County, which increased by 4.5 percent from 41.7 to 46.2, Somerset County at 36.7 percent, an increase of 4.3 percent from 32.4 percent, Frederick County at 29.3 percent, increasing 4.1 percent over the prior 25.4 percent, and Prince George's County at 28.8 percent, increasing four percent over the previous 24.8 percent.

POVERTY

According to the 2022 ACS, the U.S. poverty rate (the percent of population below poverty) is 12.5 percent. Maryland has a lower poverty rate at 9.3 percent. There are larger differences among Maryland's jurisdictions ranging from a 19.8 percent poverty rate in Somerset County to a 4.3 percent poverty rate in Calvert County.

Counties with high rates of poverty in the state, in addition to Somerset County, include Baltimore City (19.6 percent), Caroline County (12.9 percent), Baltimore County (10.2 percent), and Kent County (9.5 percent). Jurisdictions or counties with lower rates of poverty include Worcester (8.2 percent), Frederick (6.2 percent), Charles (5.9 percent), Anne Arundel (5.8 percent), Howard (5.4 percent), and Carroll counties (5.1 percent).

Baltimore County is the only jurisdiction to experience a statistically significant increase in the poverty rate over the comparison period increasing from 9.1 to 10.2 percent. Poverty rates fell in Kent and Caroline counties with each falling by more than three percentage points - 13.1 percent to 9.5 percent, and 16.5 percent to 12.9 percent, respectively. In Baltimore City poverty rates fell by 2.8 percentage points, from 22.4 percent to 19.6 percent. Worcester County's poverty rate declined by 2.1 percent, from 10.3 percent to 8.2 percent. Calvert County's poverty rate declined by 1.3 percent from 5.7 percent to 4.3 percent. Frederick County's population below poverty declined by one percent, from 7.2 to 6.2 percent.

There are federal and state programs to help reduce poverty. Among these programs is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp program, helps supplement the wages of low-income persons (working people, senior citizens, disabled, unemployed, homeless, and others) so they may feed their families or households. All low-income and low-resource households, regardless of household characteristics, are eligible to participate in the program.

Nationally, 11.5 percent of households received SNAP benefits in 2022 compared to 12.6 percent in 2017. Among Maryland households, 10.8 percent received SNAP benefits in 2022 compared to 10.9 percent in 2017. Across Maryland jurisdictions, Somerset County has the largest share of households that receive SNAP benefits (25.7 percent). The smallest share of households (5.2 percent) receiving SNAP benefits is in Howard County. The share of households receiving SNAP benefits in Cecil County is 12.7 percent, an increase of 2.3 percentage points over the prior period. Households receiving payments in Calvert County decreased by a similar amount, dropping from 7.5 percent to 5.3 percent currently.

Children and the elderly are the most economically vulnerable populations. Nationally, the child poverty rate - poverty status of persons under 18 years of age related to the householder - is 16.3 percent in 2022, down from 20 percent in the previous period.

Maryland's child poverty rate is 11.6 percent compared to the 11.7 percent in 2017. Maryland jurisdictions with the highest child poverty rates are Somerset County (26.9 percent), Baltimore City (25.6 percent), and Dorchester County (24.4 percent). Jurisdictions with the lowest child poverty rates are Calvert (4.3 percent), Carroll (4.8 percent), and Howard (6.3 percent) counties.

Nationally, the 2022 poverty rate for seniors, persons 65 years and older, is ten percent. This is a statistically significant increase from 9.3 percent in 2017. Maryland's senior poverty rate is 8.5 percent, up from 7.8 percent in 2017.

Baltimore City has the state's highest senior poverty rate at 19.3 percent, up from 17.1 percent in 2017. Three other jurisdictions have elderly poverty rates that are greater than the state's - Dorchester (12.1 percent), Somerset (12 percent), and Allegany (10.8 percent) counties.

Dorchester county's senior poverty rate rose by 5.7 percentage points, from 6.4 percent in 2017 to 12.1 percent in 2022, the largest increase in the state. Calvert County has relatively little senior poverty at 2.5 percent down from 6.2 percent in 2017.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME[3]

Maryland is considered one of the country's more affluent states, ranking second in median household income ($98,461) after the District of Columbia ($101,722). Maryland's median household income is 31 percent higher ($23,000 more) than the national median household income of $75,149.

As reported in the 2022 ACS, fifteen Maryland counties have higher median household incomes than the nation and state including Howard ($140,971), Calvert ($128,078), Montgomery ($125,583), Charles ($116,882), Anne Arundel ($116,009), Frederick ($115,724), St. Mary's ($113,668), Carroll ($111,672), and Queen Anne's ($108,332) counties.

Nine Maryland jurisdictions have median household incomes less than the nation's, including these three that rank near the bottom - Baltimore City ($58,349) and Dorchester ($57,490) and Allegany ($55,248) counties. Somerset County has the lowest median household income in the state at $52,149.

Changes in median income suggest several trends including the aging of the population, differences in education, employment and living arrangements as well as long- and short-term trends in the economy. As the Baby Boom generation leaves the labor force, median incomes should decline.

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[3] Median household income is a key measure that is commonly used to describe a household's economic status or to track economic trends. It represents a way of understanding income distribution.

Americans' median household incomes rose $6,104 or by almost nine percent from the $69,045 reported in the 2017 ACS. Likewise, median household incomes rose across Maryland increasing by $3,951 or more than four percent from $94,510 in 2017.

Incomes increased in 23 of the state's 24 jurisdictions. St. Mary's County had the largest net increase in median household income climbing by $10,065 between 2017 ($103,603) and 2022 ($113,668). Also experiencing significant gains in median household incomes are Frederick County with a net increase of $9,733, Calvert County ($7,897), Garrett County ($6,754), and Harford County ($6,482).

The only jurisdiction not showing an increase is Dorchester County as its current income level is not statistically different from the prior period. Other counties that are not statistically different from their prior (2017) income level are Talbot, Somerset, Queen Anne's, Kent, Howard, Dorchester, Cecil, Carroll, and Caroline counties.

Jurisdictions with statistically significant percent growth in median household income include Garrett which rose 11.7 percent to $64,447, St. Mary's County (9.7 percent), Frederick County (9.2 percent), Allegany County (7.7 percent), Calvert County (6.6 percent), Harford County (6.5 percent), and Wicomico County (6.4 percent).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Maryland is home to or within commuting distance of many federal facilities as well as renowned educational and medical institutions all contributing to a large concentration of well-educated residents. Educational attainment is generally correlated with elevated incomes.

According to data presented in the 2022 ACS five-year estimates, 34.3 percent of U.S. residents 25 years and older have a bachelor's or advanced degree. In Maryland, that share is nearly eight percentage points higher at 42.2 percent.

Fourteen Maryland jurisdictions report persons attaining a bachelor's degree or higher at levels greater than the national average, with four higher than the state average. The rise in the share of college-educated adults might be a function of increased educational attainment among existing residents of those counties or it could be influenced by migration patterns which are yielding net gains in college-educated residents.

Jurisdictions with the largest share of persons 25 years and older attaining a bachelor's degree or higher are Howard County (64 percent), Montgomery County (60 percent), Anne Arundel County (44.1 percent) and Frederick County (43.6 percent). The highest gains in educational attainment were in Calvert County which increased 5.5 percentage points from the 30.1 percent share in 2017. Garrett County, which gained five percentage points from 19.6 percent, and St. Mary's County and Baltimore City both increased their relative shares of educated residents by 4.5 percentage points.

In six Maryland jurisdictions, less than a quarter of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. These jurisdictions are Garrett (24.6 percent), Washington (23 percent), Allegany (20.8 percent), Dorchester (19.2 percent), Caroline (17.7 percent), and Somerset (16.8 percent) counties.

Six of 24 jurisdictions were found not to be statistically significant as there is no statistical difference between the share of the population with a bachelor's or advanced degree in 2022 vs. 2017. This includes Caroline, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties.

MEDIAN VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS

Home values increased substantially in the United States since 2017. According to the 2022 American Community Survey, the median value of an owner-occupied housing unit is $281,900, an increase of $50,200 (about 21.7 percent) from the $231,700 value reported in 2017. In Maryland, the relatively high value for single family homes ($355,100 in 2017) increased more than seven percent to $380,500 by 2022.

Nine Maryland jurisdictions report median home values greater than the state median. Six of these have median home values greater than $400,000. The state's highest valued homes are in Montgomery ($588,900), Howard ($551,300), Anne Arundel ($432,000), and Queen Anne's ($421,900) counties.

Eight jurisdictions report median home values less than the national median. Except for Baltimore City ($202,900), these counties are located on the Eastern Shore and in Western Maryland. Allegany County ($143,300) and Somerset County ($157,200) have the state's lowest median values for owner–occupied housing units. Counties more affordable than the rest of the state are Garrett ($220,100), Dorchester ($226,000), Wicomico ($226,900) Caroline ($258,800) and Washington ($262,400) counties.

Fourteen Maryland jurisdictions experienced significant net increases in home value from 2017 to 2022. Prince George's County had the largest net change, increasing by $53,700 to $380,500. Frederick County follows with an increase of $34,800 to $412,500. Area median home values rose by $30,700 in Charles County bringing the value up to $382,800. Montgomery County values rose $29,000. Home values gained $27,800 in St. Mary's County, bringing the value up to $376,900.

Median home values in the state increased by nearly 7.2 percent between 2017 and 2022. Jurisdictions with larger increases are in Prince George's County (16.4 percent), Baltimore City (10.6 percent), Wicomico County (10.3 percent), and Garrett County (10 percent).

Ten jurisdictions reported no statistically significant change or difference in median home values. These jurisdictions and their 2022 reported values are Queen Anne's ($421,900), Calvert

($418,900), Carroll ($390,200), Talbot ($382,000), Worcester ($310, 300), Cecil ($292,500), Kent ($291,900), Dorchester ($226,000), Somerset ($157,200), and Allegany ($143,300) counties.

WORK FROM HOME

The share of the workforce that works from home (teleworking) has increased nationwide. In the United States, nearly 12 percent of workers teleworked compared to 4.7 percent in 2017. Census researchers who analyzed Household Pulse Survey data found that persons with a bachelor's or advanced degree were more likely to telework.

In Maryland, 14.7 percent of the population 16 years and older worked from home compared to 4.5 percent in the prior period - a 10.2 percentage point increase. Among the state's 24 jurisdictions, Montgomery and Howard counties had the highest shares of teleworkers.

More than one-fifth of Montgomery County workers (21.9 percent) work from home. Howard County's share of teleworkers is 19.3 percent. In Frederick county about 16.3 percent of the jurisdiction's labor force works from home.

A more dramatic change in how we work since the pre-pandemic period is found in Montgomery County where the share of the labor force that teleworks increased by 16 percentage points, from 5.9 percent to 21.9 percent. Those who telework in Howard County rose by 7.9 percentage points, from 5.7 percent to 13.6 percent. Teleworking in Prince George's County increased by 10.5 percentage points from 2.8 percent to 13.3 percent. Statewide, the number of teleworkers increased 10.2 percentage points from 4.5 to 14.7 percent, and nationally teleworking increased seven percentage points from 4.7 percent to 11.7 percent.

Not only have jurisdictions in the central part of the state but counties in other regions have seen an uptick in telecommuting. The Lower Eastern Shore region saw 9.7 percent of workers in Worcester County work from home. In the Upper Eastern Shore region, 14.1 percent of Talbot County workers work from home, an eight-percentage point increase from the 6.3 percent in 2017. In Western Maryland, Garrett and Washington counties each have about 9.9 percent of the workforce telecommuting.

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