United Way's Research and Planning Partner

United Way of Greater Kansas City

Poverty Trends in the Kansas City Area, 2010
Johnson and Wyandotte Counties in KS and Cass, Clay, Jackson and Platte in MO

Highlights

- Over 225,000 people in the 6-county area lived in poverty in 2010.
- During the decade, the number of poor increased by 65%, nearly 90,000 people. One-half of the increase occurred since 2007.
- The suburban counties are now home to 1 in 3 of the areas poor.
- 1 in 5 children, youth and young adults (under age 25) is poor.
- Poverty for senior adults has remained steady.
- Families with children and headed by a female have a poverty rate four times higher than all families.

Poverty - Over 225,000 people in the 6-county area lived in poverty in 2010 – nearly 90,000 more than the beginning of the decade.

More than 225,000 people lived below the 2010 federal poverty threshold which ranged from about $11,000 for a single person household to $17,550 for three persons (parent and two children) to $32,500 for seven people (two parents and five children).

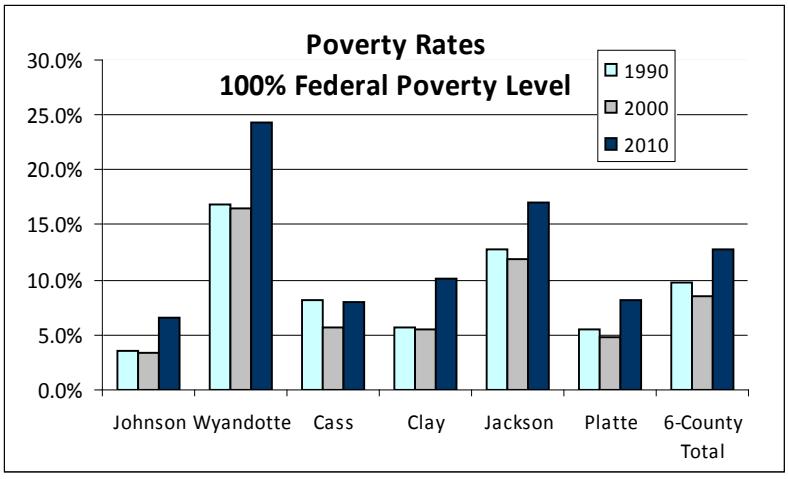
The federal poverty rate in the Kansas City Area (6 counties) increased from 8.6% of the population in 2000 to 12.7% in 2010. The area poverty rate, while lower than the U.S. rate of 15.3%, experienced a larger increase than the national rate during the 10-year period; the U.S. rate went up by 2.9 percentage point compared to the 6-county poverty rate increase of 4.1 percentage points.

	2010		2000		2000 - 2010 People Change	
Poverty	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	#	%
All Ages	225,200	12.7%	135,900	8.6%	89,300	66%
Children and Youth (0-17)	83,600	18.4%	48,500	11.6%	35,100	72%
Young Adults (18-24)	30,400	20.8%	20,400	15.2%	10,000	49%
Working Age (25-64)	97,200	10.0%	55,000	6.4%	42,200	77%
Seniors (65+)	13,900	6.9%	12,100	7.1%	1,800	15%

Number rounded to nearest 100

Overall, poverty rates did not vary much between 1990 and 2000. Between 2000 and 2010, poverty rates dramatically increased in every county. The majority of the growth occurred after 2007.

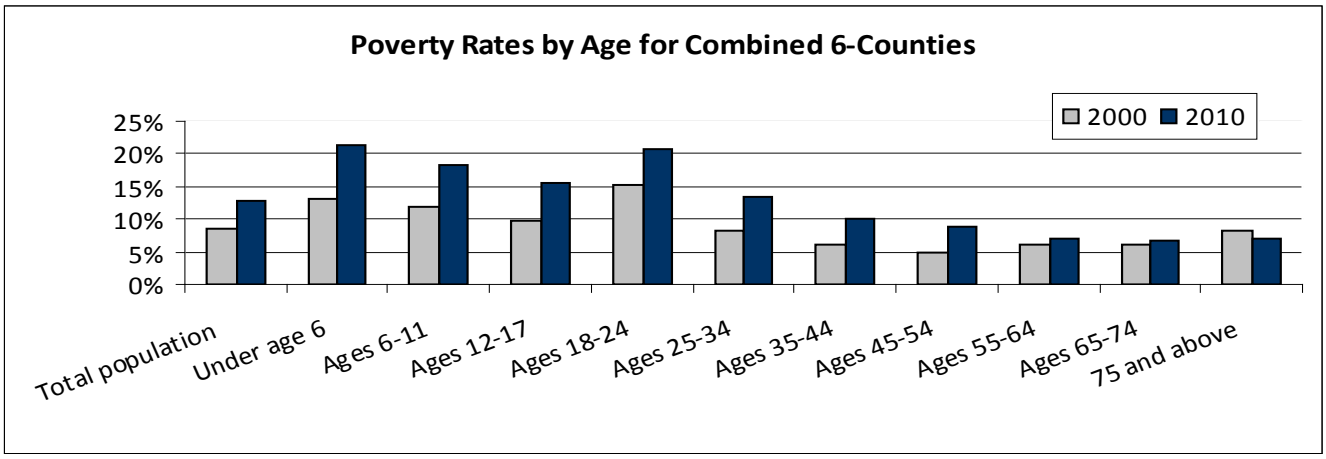
Poverty rates doubled, or nearly doubled, in suburban counties Johnson, Clay and Platte. By 2010, 1 in 3 area poor lived in the suburbs. Urban counties – Wyandotte and Jackson – continued to have the greatest percentage of their populations living in poverty.



Poverty by Age: Children, youth and young adults have the area's highest poverty rates.

Children, youth and young adults continue to be the area's poorest residents. For those under age 25, nearly 1 in 5 is poor. For those over 25, 1 in 10 is poor.

Between 2000 and 2010, every age group under age 35 experienced a 5 percentage point or greater increase in poverty rate. Ages 35-44 and 45-54 had a 4 percentage point increase. For those ages 55 and above, the poverty rate was stable, with a slight decline for the oldest age group (age 75 and above). In general, poverty rates by age follow this similar trend in every county.



Individuals and Families: More than 40,000 families, most with children, lived in poverty.

Of the 225,000 poor in the 6-county area, nearly 60,000 lived in non-family households. Slightly more than one-half of those living in non-family households lived alone. Individuals living in non-family households had a poverty rate of nearly 20%. Three in 4 of the area poor lived in family households – two or more people related by birth, marriage adoption.

FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS AND POVERTY

	Total	Below Poverty	Poverty Rate
All Families	447,819	41,068	9.2%
Families with Children	211,040	31,408	14.9%
Married Couples	140,694	7,350	5.2%
Headed by Female	51,146	20,191	39.5%
Headed by Male	19,200	3,867	20.1%
Families without Children	236,779	9,660	4.1%
Married Couples	193,451	4,044	2.1%
Headed by Female	31,782	4,343	13.7%
Headed by Male	11,546	1,273	11.0%

Six in10 households in the 6-county area in 2010 were family households. Slightly less than one-half of the family households included children under age 18.

In 2010, nearly 10% of the area's families were poor. Three in 4 poor families included children.

Single parent families with children accounted for nearly 60% of the area's poor families. Families with children and headed by a single mother had a poverty rate of nearly 40%. For single fathers, the poverty rate was 20%.

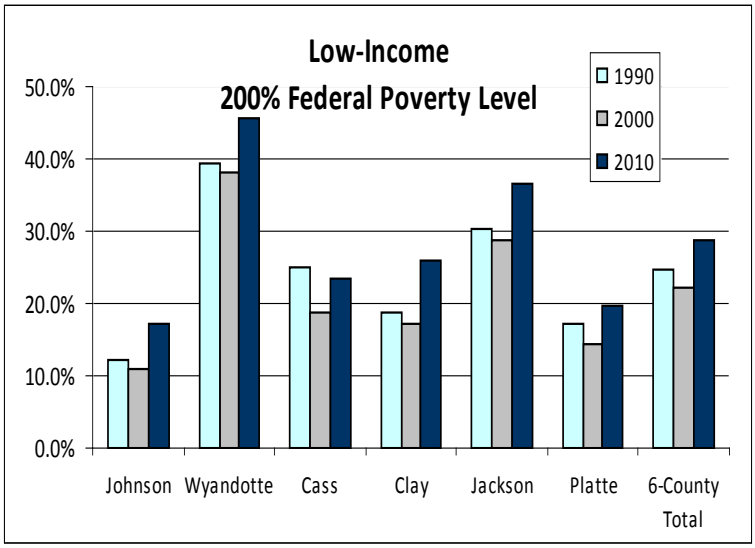
Source: American Community Survey, 2010 1-year estimate (C17023)

Low Income: More than 500,000 people lived at incomes twice the federal poverty level or below in 2010.

Nearly 3 in 10 area residents lived in economic hardship (low income) in 2010. Living with income that is below twice the federal poverty threshold is a measure of not having adequate income for basic needs such as housing, childcare, transportation, health care and food. The 2010 rate of 28.8% was up from 22.1% in 2000.

At the 200% of poverty threshold, the 2010 count was 510,000 people compared to 350,000 in 2000. This represents 160,000 more people, a 46% increase. During this same period the area's population grew by only 12%.

Source for poverty ratios: American Community Survey, 2010 1-year estimate (B17024)

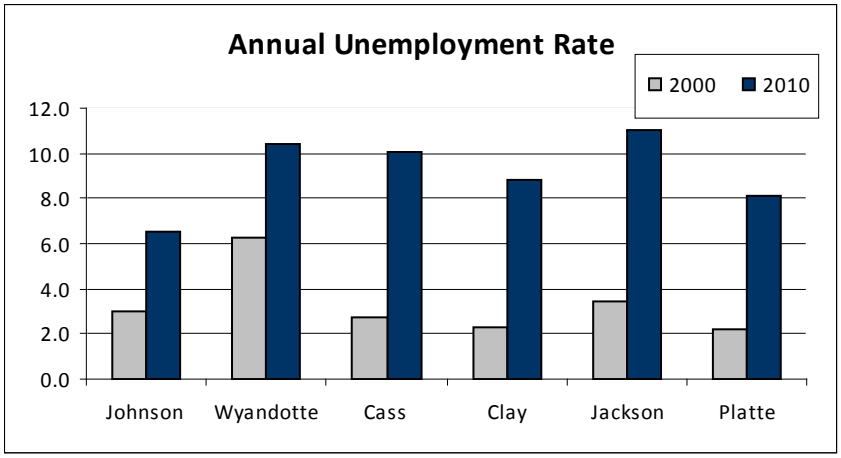


Income and Unemployment: Median household income declined and unemployment climbed.

During the decade, median household income declined in every county, when compared to inflation adjusted dollars. The decline ranged from $6,800 in Johnson County to $3,500 in Platte County.

	MEDIAN INCOME					
	Johnson	Wyandotte	Cass	Clay	Jackson	Platte
2010 Median Income	$71,008	$37,293	$57,100	$54,884	$44,502	$67,221
2000 Median Income-2010 Inflation Adjusted Dollars	$77,820	$42,780	$62,760	$61,222	$49,673	$70,721
Change	-$6,812	-$5,487	-$5,660	-$6,338	-$5,171	-$3,500

Source: 2000 Census; American Community Survey, 2010 1-year estimate (DP03)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Growth in unemployment is one factor contributing to the rise in poverty. The number of unemployed nearly tripled during the decade, climbing from 29,000 in 2000 to more than 83,000 in 2010.

The unemployment rate in 2010 ranged from 6.5% in Johnson County to 11.0% in Jackson County.

Geographic Differences

County-by-county poverty levels ranged from a high of 24.3% in Wyandotte County to a low of 6.6% in Johnson County. Poverty rates for the other counties were: Cass, 7.9%, Clay, 10.1%, Jackson 17.1% and Platte, 8.1%.

While poverty levels in the urban counties are higher, suburban poverty experienced the highest rate of growth, more than doubling the number of poor living in the suburbs during the decade. The most rapid growth occurred between 2007 and 2010. Between 2007 and 2010, the number of poor increased by more than 25,000 in the suburbs, compared to 21,000 in the urban counties. At the beginning of the decade 1 out of 4 of the area's poor lived in a suburban county, by 2010 it was 1 in 3.

Concentration of poverty is greatest in the urban counties. Urban counties experienced the largest increase in poverty rates between 2000 and 2010. Wyandotte County's poverty rate went up nearly 8 percentage points and Jackson County's up 5 percentage points.

Children and youth are the poorest residents of every county. In the urban counties of Wyandotte and Jackson, the number is more than 1 in 3 and 1 in 4, respectively.

2010	Johnson	Wyandotte	Cass	Clay	Jackson	Platte	Total
Number of People							
100% Poverty	35,792	38,149	7,753	22,213	114,047	7,232	225,186
100-200% Poverty	60,093	33,469	15,112	34,572	130,910	10,471	284,631
Total Population < 200% Poverty	95,885	71,618	22,865	56,785	244,957	17,703	509,817
Poverty Rate							
100% Poverty	6.6%	24.3%	7.9%	10.1%	17.1%	8.1%	12.7%
200% Poverty	17.1%	45.7%	23.3%	25.9%	36.7%	19.8%	28.8%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Decennial Census; 1-year estimates American Community Survey; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Some calculations by UCS.

For more information go to www.factfinder2.census.gov The American Community Survey is an annual data product based on a sample of the population and is therefore most useful when considered as a portrait of characteristics of a geographic area.