

Poverty

In the previous issue of Miami-Dade At a Glance the topic presented was income inequality. It indicated that income within the County is less evenly distributed than within the country as a whole. One possible consequence of this higher income inequality is a greater proportion of people living below the poverty level. These people are the subject of this issue.

Who is poor? According to the Office of Management and Budget definition for 2005, a person is considered "Poor" if he lives alone and has an income below \$9,973 or in a household with combined income of \$9,973 plus approximately \$3,000 for each additional member.

What has been the trend in the poverty rate? In 1960, the poverty rate for the County was similar to the U.S. poverty rate of 22.3 percent. During the ensuing decade, the County experienced a dramatic decrease to 14.2 percent. This paralleled the trend at the national level. During the 1970s and 1980s, those living below the poverty threshold increased steadily to 15 percent in 1980 and almost 18 percent in 1990. This was in contrast to the national figure that shows a modest decline. During the 1990s and the first five years of the next decade, the percent living in poverty rate remained mostly unchanged. (See Chart.)

How many people are poor? According to the Census Bureau's annual American Community Survey, Miami-Dade County in 2006 had 385,841 people living below the poverty level. This represents 16.4 percent of the total population, a number that is 3.1 percentage points higher than the national poverty rate of 13.3 percent. Another index used to gauge the economic condition of low income individuals is the percent of persons with income up to twice the poverty

level. This number is 39.6 percent in Miami-Dade County, while for the U.S. this figure is considerably lower at 31.2 percent.

What are the characteristics of those in poverty? By race and ethnic composition, the percent persons in poverty

are 10.2 percent for non-Hispanic Whites, 15.7 percent for Hispanics and a much higher rate of 25.6 percent for Blacks. In terms of education, 28.3 percent of the population with less than a high school diploma are poor. This stands in sharp contrast to those persons with a Bachelors degree or higher. The poverty rate for persons with this level of educational attainment is 7.8 percent. Turning to the foreign born population, we find that the percent of persons in poverty is 16.6 percent. This figure is quite similar to that of the total population. At the national level, the poverty rate for foreign born persons is almost identical to that in Miami-Dade. However, while in

the County poverty rate for both foreign born and the total population are similar, at the national level the percent of foreign born persons is 25 percent higher than the overall rate for the nation.

Finally, the segment of the population with the highest level of poverty is female-headed households at 25.3 percent. This rate rises to 35.3 percent when only Black female-headed households are included.

Where are the poor? For localized analysis of poverty rate the latest information available is from the 2000 Census. As can be seen in the map, the highest concentration of poor households in 2000 were located in the North Central Dade area and in South Dade along the US 1 corridor.

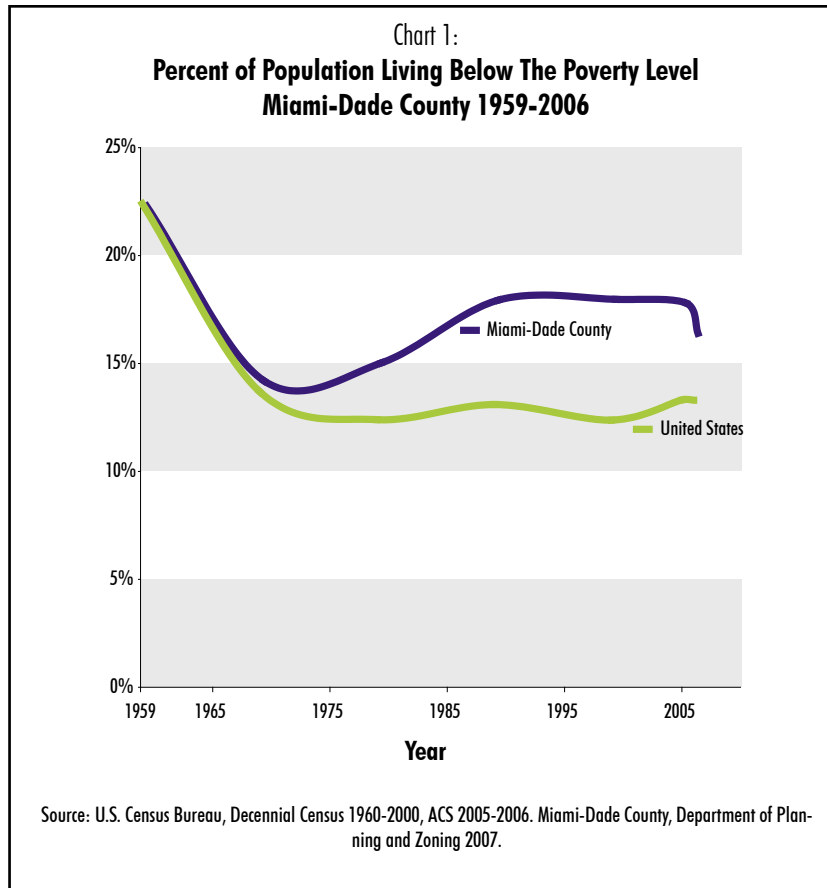


Table 1: **Poverty Levels for Selected Groups in Miami-Dade County 2006**

	Total	Below poverty level	Percent below poverty level
Population for whom poverty status is determined	2,352,220	385,841	16.4
AGE			
Under 18 years	564,243	110,640	19.6
Related children under 18 years	560,865	107,815	19.2
18 to 64 years	1,453,859	199,483	13.7
65 years and over	334,118	75,718	22.7
SEX			
Male	1,130,003	168,181	14.9
Female	1,222,217	217,660	17.8
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN			
White	1,688,956	237,864	14.1
Black or African American	453,980	116,381	25.6
Asian	35,506	3,897	11
Some other race	130,647	21,395	16.4
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	1,451,540	227,873	15.7
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	419,192	42,759	10.2
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			
Population 25 years and over	1,564,272	233,954	15
Less than high school graduate	366,033	103,662	28.3
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	430,410	67,222	15.6
Some college, associate's degree	347,927	30,413	8.7
Bachelor's degree or higher	419,902	32,657	7.8
EMPLOYMENT STATUS			
Civilian labor force 16 years and over	1,167,246	94,241	8.1
Employed	1,099,532	73,321	6.7
Male	590,083	32,892	5.6
Female	509,449	40,429	7.9
Unemployed	67,714	20,920	30.9
Male	31,371	7,993	25.5
Female	36,343	12,927	35.6
WORK EXPERIENCE			
Population 16 years and over	1,851,239	287,237	15.5
Worked full-time, year-round in the past 12 months	784,345	26,402	3.4
Worked part-time or part-year in the past 12 months	431,811	68,043	15.8
Did not work	635,083	192,792	30.4
All Individuals below:			
50 percent of poverty level	139,043	(X)	(X)
125 percent of poverty level	531,244	(X)	(X)
150 percent of poverty level	670,845	(X)	(X)
185 percent of poverty level	849,819	(X)	(X)
200 percent of poverty level	932,094	(X)	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006.

Note: The American Community Survey is based on a sample and is subject to sampling variability.

(X) does not apply

