

Poverty

1) What is the increase in the bankruptcy rate since 2000?

23%. From 2000–2002 the US had the highest rate of bankruptcies in its history.

Source: Administrative Office of the US Courts, “Judicial Business of the United States Courts: Annual Report of the Director, 2002,” <http://www.uscourts.gov/judbus2002/contents.html>
[use “Judicial Business” link to download PDF file]

2) What was the average rate of increase in requests for emergency shelter in 2002?

19%, which is the largest annual increase since 1990.

Source: US Conference of Mayors, “Hunger, Homelessness On the Rise in Major U.S. Cities,” Dec. 18, 2002, http://usmayors.org/uscm/news/press_releases/documents/hunger_121802.asp

3) From 1947–2001 which party holding the White House has produced the highest unemployment rate?

The Republicans. 5 GOP presidents produced an average unemployment rate of 6.3% whereas 5 Democratic presidents produced an average unemployment rate of 4.8%. Unemployment under Bush now averages 6.1% (an increase of 1.4% since 2001), approaching the average unemployment rate of Republican presidents.

Source: “GOP Always Falls Down on the Jobs,” Larry M. Bartels, Director of the Center for the Study of Democratic Politics at Princeton University, *Los Angeles Times* commentary, Sept. 26, 2003, www.latimes.com [type “Bartels” in Archive search]

4) What must a worker now earn to afford the average rent and utilities for a 2-bedroom apartment?

\$15.21 an hour. The federal minimum wage now stands at \$5.15 an hour.

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition, <http://www.nlihc.org/oor2003/introduction.htm>

5) In 2002 how many people in the US were living below the official poverty line (defined as \$18,244 for a family of 4 with 2 children)?

34.6 million (which is 12.1% of the population). This is an increase of 3.5 million from the year 2000 figure of 31.1 million (11.3% of the population). The year 2001 saw the first increase in the poverty rate since 1993.

Sources for questions 5-10:

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/poverty02/pov02hi.html>

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/poverty00/pov00hi.html>

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/income00/prs01asc.html>

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/p60-214.pdf> [see page 8]

6) What was the total number of children in the US living in poverty in 2002?

12.1 million children (16.7%) which is about 1 in 6 children, up from 11.6 million (16.1%) in 2000 — an increase of a million and a half children.

7) How many families were living in poverty in 2002?

7.2 million families (9.6%), up from 6.2 million families (8.6%) in 2000 — an increase of one million families.

8) How many married couple families were living in poverty in 2002?

3.1 million families (5.3%), up from 2.6 million (4.7%) in 2000 — an increase of half a million families.

9) How many single parent households headed by a woman were living in poverty in 2002?

3.6 million households (26.5%), up from 3.1 million (24.7%) in 2000 — an increase of half a million households.

10) How many people from the suburbs were living in poverty in 2002?

13.3 million people (8.9%), up from 12.1 million (7.8%) in 2000 — an increase of nearly a million and a quarter people.