
Fact Sheet

Poverty Estimates for Baton Rouge and New Orleans, 2007

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The U.S. Bureau of the Census recently released new estimates of the population living in poverty during 2007. Scholars from CAPER, the Crime and Policy Evaluation Research group at Louisiana State University have analyzed these data to provide comparisons between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, the two largest cities in the state of Louisiana. Benchmark figures from both the 2000 and 1990 Census Bureau estimates are also provided as a way to discern trends over time in this critical indicator of the well-being of local populations.

Key Finding

The key findings from this analysis are telling, and are provided in Table 1. Initially in 1990, The percentage in poverty in New Orleans is nearly one-third of the population,

at 31.6%. This is more than 5% larger than the poverty population in Baton Rouge. By 2000 the figures for both cities have declined some and the gap between then has decreased slightly. ***Most dramatically though, between 2000 and 2007, the percentage living in poverty in New Orleans declined by roughly 8%, which is twice as large as the decline between 1990 and 2000.*** Thus by this time only about one-fifth of the New Orleans population lived in poverty. For Baton Rouge, the percent living in poverty went up by only 1% from 2000 to 2007, but Baton Rouge at this point surpassed New Orleans in its rate of poverty.

Table1: Individuals in Poverty: Baton Rouge and New Orleans			
	1990	2000	2007
Baton Rouge			
Percent of all persons in poverty	26.2%	24.0%	24.9%
New Orleans			
Percent of all persons in poverty	31.6%	27.9%	20.6%
United States			
Percent of all persons in poverty	13.1%	12.4%	13.0%

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