

SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE
Atlanta, Ga.

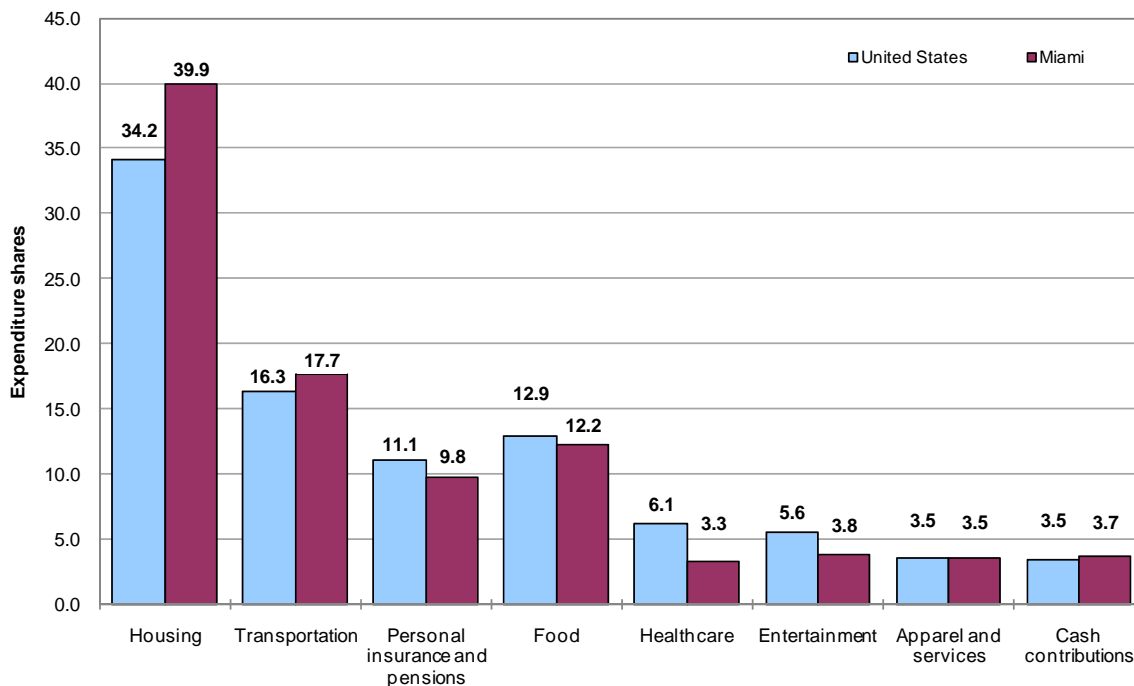
For release: Thursday, October 28, 2010

Technical information: (404) 893-4222 • BLSinfoAtlanta@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/ro4
Media contact: (404) 893-4220

CONSUMER EXPENDITURES FOR THE MIAMI AREA: 2008-09

Consumer units¹ in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, Florida metropolitan area spent an average of \$47,601 per year in 2008-09, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that this figure was about 4 percent lower than the \$49,778 average expenditure level for a typical household in the United States. Whereas households in the Miami area spent less than the U.S. average, they also allocated their dollars differently among the major categories, differing significantly in four of the eight. For example, expenditures for personal insurance and pensions, which comprised 9.8 percent of a typical Miami household budget, were significantly smaller than the national average of 11.1 percent. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Percent distribution of average annual expenditures for the eight major categories in the United States and Miami metropolitan area, 2008-09



¹ See the Additional Information section for the definition of a consumer unit. The terms consumer unit and household are used interchangeably throughout the text for convenience.

Housing in the Miami metropolitan area averaged \$19,016 annually and was the largest expenditure category, accounting for 39.9 percent of a Miami area household's total budget. This share was significantly different from the 34.2 percent national average. (See tables 1 and 2.) Overall, 10 of the 18 published metropolitan areas had expenditure shares for housing measurably above the U.S. average; only Houston had a lower-than-average share. (See chart 2.) Housing expenditures ranged from 41.3 percent in San Diego to 31.9 percent in Houston among the 18 areas. (See table 3.)

The majority of housing expenditures in Miami went toward shelter, 66.2 percent, which includes mortgage interest, property taxes, repairs, and rent, among other items; nationwide, 59.6 percent of the housing budget was allocated for shelter. (See table A.) Utilities, fuels, and public services expenses accounted for 19.7 percent of the housing budget locally; nationally, it made up 21.5 percent. The rate of home ownership in Miami, at 60 percent, was below the U.S. average of 66 percent.

Table A. Percent distribution of housing expenditures, United States and Miami, 2008-09

Category	United States	Miami
Total housing	100.0	100.0
Shelter	59.6	66.2
Utilities, fuels, and public services	21.5	19.7
Household operations	5.9	5.4
Housekeeping supplies	3.9	2.9
Household furnishings and equipment	9.2	5.7

Note: Columns may not add to 100 due to rounding.

At 17.7 percent of the total budget, transportation was the second-largest expenditure category in the Miami area, not significantly different than the national average of 16.3 percent. Among the 18 metropolitan areas nationwide, only Detroit (19.2 percent) had an above-average transportation share. (See chart 3.)

Of the \$8,427 in annual expenditures for transportation in Miami, 94.0 percent was spent buying and maintaining private vehicles; this compared to the national average of 93.9 percent. The remaining 6.0 percent of a Miami household's transportation budget was spent on public transit, which includes fares for taxis, buses, trains, and planes; this allocation was on par with the 6.1-percent average for the nation. (See table B.) Among the 18 metropolitan areas, shares of the transportation budget for public transit ranged from 13.6 percent in San Francisco to 3.9 percent in Detroit. The average number of vehicles per household in Miami (1.4) was below the national average (2.0).

Table B. Percent distribution of transportation expenditures, United States and Miami, 2008-09

Category	United States	Miami
Transportation	100.0	100.0
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	33.3	34.7
Gasoline and motor oil	28.9	31.8
Other vehicle expenses	31.7	27.5
Public transportation	6.1	6.0

Note: Columns may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The portion of a Miami consumer unit's budget spent on food, 12.2 percent, was not significantly different than the 12.9-percent U.S. average. However, among the 18 metropolitan areas, 10 had food expenditure shares that were not measurably different from the nationwide average. Boston was the only area with an expenditure share (13.8 percent) for food significantly above that for the nation.

Households in Miami spent a greater percentage of their food dollars on food at home (64.5 percent) as they did for food away from home (35.5 percent). Food away from home includes restaurant meals, carry-out, board at school, and catered affairs. In comparison, the typical U.S. household spent 58.5 percent of its food budget on food at home and 41.5 percent on food away from home.

As noted, Miami is 1 of 18 metropolitan areas nationwide for which Consumer Expenditure (CE) data are available. We encourage users interested in learning more about the Consumer Expenditure Survey to contact the Southeast Information Office at (404) 893-4222 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET. Metropolitan area CE data and that for the four geographic regions and the United States are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cex/tables.htm.

Additional Information

Data contained in this report are from the Consumer Expenditure Survey, which is collected on an ongoing basis by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The CE data were averaged over a two-year period, 2008 and 2009. CE data are available for the nation, the 4 geographic regions of the country, and 18 metropolitan areas. The metropolitan area discussed in this release is Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, Fla., which is comprised of Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties in Florida.

The survey consists of two components, a diary or recordkeeping survey, and an interview survey. The integrated data from the BLS Diary and Interview Surveys provide a complete accounting of consumer expenditures and income, which neither survey component alone is designed to do. Due to changes in the survey sample frame, metropolitan area data in this release are not directly comparable to those prior to 1996.

The expenditure data in this release should be interpreted with care. The expenditures are averages for consumer units with the specified characteristics, regardless of whether a specific unit incurred an expense for that item during the recording period. The average expenditure may be considerably lower than the expenditure by those consumer units that purchased the item. This study is not intended as a comparative cost of living survey, as neither the quantity nor the quality of goods and services has been held constant among areas. Differences may result from variations in demographic characteristics such as consumer unit size, age, preferences, income levels, etc. However, expenditure shares, or the percentage of a consumer unit's budget spent on a particular category, can be used to compare spending patterns across areas. Users should also keep in mind that prices for many goods and services have risen since the survey was conducted.

The CE significance tests in this release compare expenditure shares for selected expenditure categories in the United States to expenditure shares in selected metropolitan areas. (See table 3.) Expenditure shares for housing and transportation that are above or below that for the nation after testing for significance at the 95-percent confidence interval are also identified in charts 2 and 3 for the 18 metropolitan areas surveyed. It should be remembered that sample sizes for the metropolitan areas are much smaller than for the nation, so the U.S. estimates and year-to-year changes are more reliable than those for the metropolitan areas.

NOTE: A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with our ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the

size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Table 1. Percent distribution of average annual expenditures, United States and Miami, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2008-09

Category	United States	Miami
Average annual expenditures	\$49,778	\$47,601
Percent distribution:	100.0	100.0
Food	12.9	12.2
Alcoholic beverages	0.9	0.7
Housing	34.2	39.9 *
Apparel and services	3.5	3.5
Transportation	16.3	17.7
Healthcare	6.1	3.3 *
Entertainment	5.6	3.8 *
Personal care products and services	1.2	1.3
Reading	0.2	0.1 *
Education	2.1	1.2 *
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	0.7	0.3 *
Miscellaneous	1.7	2.5
Cash contributions	3.5	3.7
Personal insurance and pensions	11.1	9.8 *

* Statistically significant difference from the U.S. average at the 95-percent confidence level.
 Note: Columns may not add to 100 due to rounding

Table 2. Consumer unit characteristics and average annual expenditures, United States and Miami, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2008-09

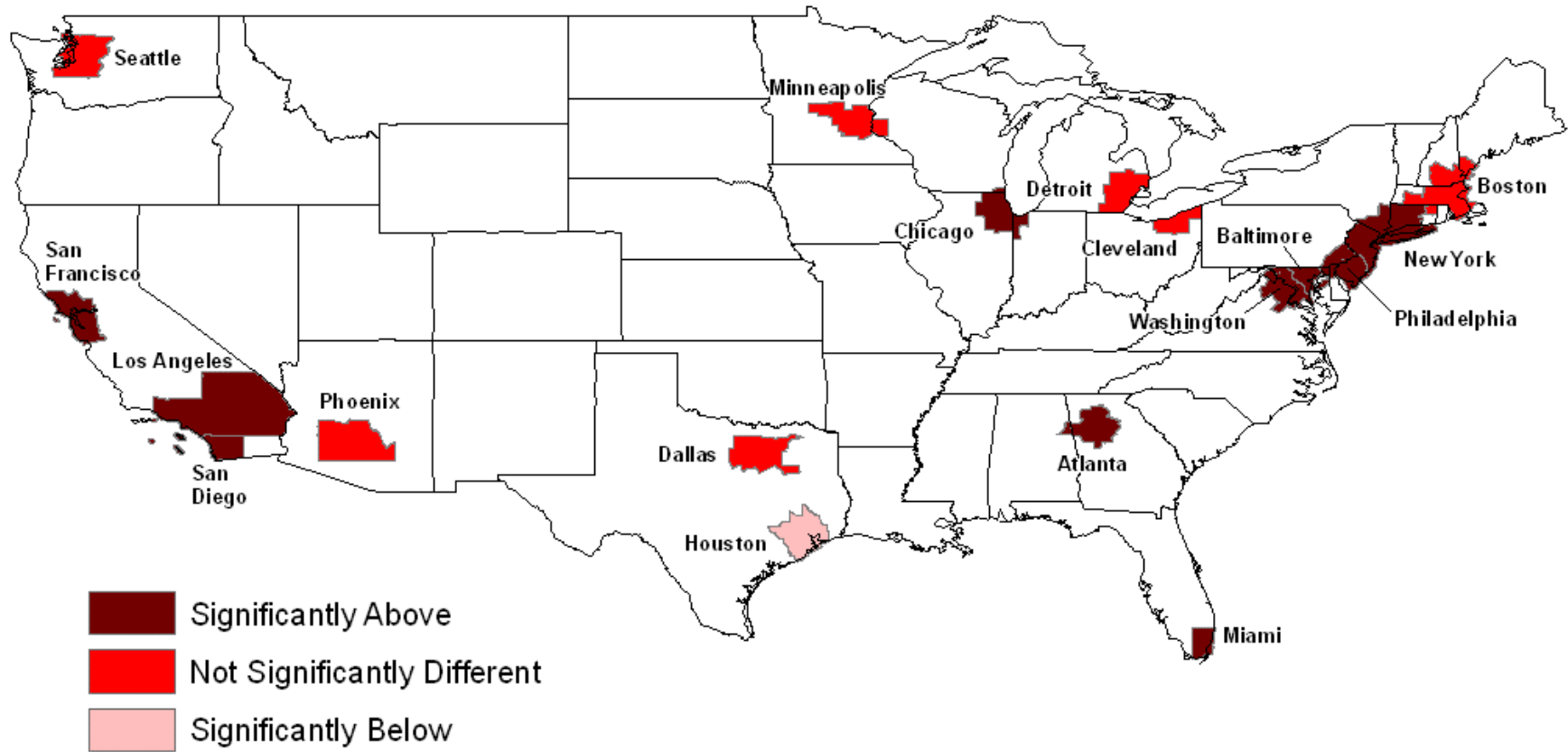
Category	United States	Miami
Consumer unit characteristics:		
Income before taxes	\$63,209	\$64,010
Age of reference person	49.2	48.2
Average number in consumer unit:		
Persons	2.5	2.6
Children under 18	0.6	0.6
Persons 65 and over	0.3	0.3
Earners	1.3	1.3
Vehicles	2.0	1.4
Percent homeowners	66	60
Average annual expenditures		
Food	\$49,778	\$47,601
Food at home	6,407	5,803
Cereals and bakery products	3,749	3,741
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	507	520
Dairy products	844	867
Fruits and vegetables	418	467
Other food at home	657	780
Food away from home	1,324	1,106
Alcoholic beverages	2,658	2,062
Housing	439	349
Shelter	17,002	19,016
Owned dwellings	10,129	12,592
Rented dwellings	6,651	7,115
Other lodging	2,792	4,442
Utilities, fuels, and public services	685	1,036
Household operations	3,647	3,740
Housekeeping supplies	1,004	1,035
Household furnishings and equipment	657	558
Apparel and services	1,565	1,091
Transportation	1,763	1,677
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	8,133	8,427
Gasoline and motor oil	2,706	2,921
Other vehicle expenses	2,351	2,680
Public transportation	2,580	2,318
Healthcare	496	508
Entertainment	3,051	1,565
Personal care products and services	2,764	1,807
Reading	606	623
Education	113	25
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	1,057	570
Miscellaneous	348	124
Cash contributions	828	1,183
Personal insurance and pensions	1,730	1,762
Life and other personal insurance	5,538	4,669
Pensions and Social Security	313	90
	5,225	4,578

Table 3. Percent share of average annual expenditures for housing, transportation, and food, United States and 18 metropolitan areas, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2008-09

Area	Housing	Transportation	Food
United States	34.2	16.3	12.9
Atlanta	37.2 *	14.7 *	11.7 *
Baltimore	39.6 *	12.6 *	11.3 *
Boston	35.1	14.5 *	13.8 *
Chicago	36.2 *	15.5	12.4
Cleveland	33.8	15.3	12.5
Dallas	33.8	16.1	12.5
Detroit	33.1	19.2 *	13.0
Houston	31.9 *	18.3	11.9 *
Los Angeles	38.6 *	15.5	13.3
Miami	39.9 *	17.7	12.2
Minneapolis	34.0	15.7	12.2
New York	39.2 *	14.1 *	12.3 *
Philadelphia	37.2 *	14.4 *	11.4 *
Phoenix	34.9	17.4	11.9
San Diego	41.3 *	13.3 *	12.2
San Francisco	38.5 *	14.1 *	11.7 *
Seattle	33.4	14.2 *	12.2
Washington	37.1 *	13.8 *	11.3 *

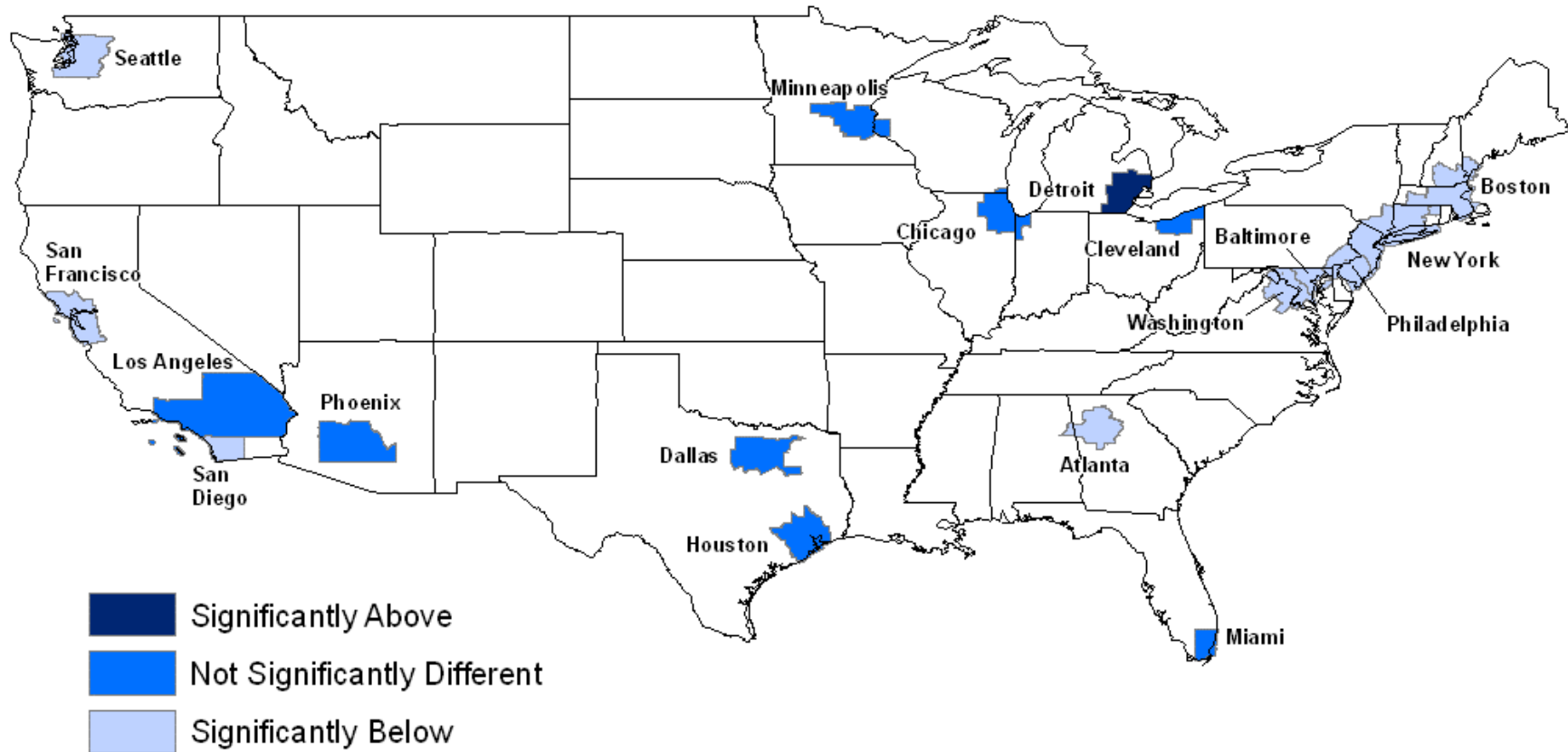
* Statistically significant difference from the U.S. average at the 95-percent confidence level.

Chart 2. Expenditure shares spent on housing in 18 metropolitan statistical areas compared to the U.S. average, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2008-09



Note: Statistical significance testing at the 95-percent confidence interval.

Chart 3. Expenditure shares spent on transportation in 18 metropolitan statistical areas compared to the U.S. average, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2008-09



Note: Statistical significance testing at the 95-percent confidence interval.