

# Sharing a Household: Household Composition and Economic Well-Being: 2007–2010

## Consumer Income

### Current Population Report

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#### INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

This report analyzes and describes “household sharing,” a process by which people join or combine households. Data from the Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS ASEC) were used to compare living arrangements, both prior to and following the most recent recession.<sup>2</sup> Although reasons for household sharing were not discernible from the CPS ASEC data, results from the current analysis suggest that adults and families coped with challenging economic circumstances over the course of the recession by joining households or combining households with other individuals or families. This analysis shows that adults shared households in greater numbers and in higher proportions in early 2010 than in early 2007. Poverty rates in 2007 and 2010 for adults in shared households were also examined. Estimates based on individual income suggest

personal poverty rates are higher among adults residing in shared households.<sup>3</sup>

#### Shared Households Increased Between 2007 and 2010

This research defines a shared household as a household with at least one resident adult who is not enrolled in school and who is neither the householder, nor the spouse or cohabiting partner of the householder.<sup>4</sup> In spring 2007, there were 19.7 million shared households. By spring 2010, the number of shared households had increased by 11.4 percent, while all households increased by only 1.3 percent (Table 1). In 2010, shared households accounted for 18.7 percent of all households, up from 17.0 percent in 2007 (Figure 1).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This report presents the results of research and analysis undertaken by U.S. Census Bureau staff. It was released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. Any views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>2</sup> Household sharing reflects household composition at the time of the survey. The CPS ASEC is conducted each year from February through April. The 2007 CPS ASEC was conducted before the recession began in December 2007 and the 2010 ASEC was collected after the end of the recession in June 2009. The estimates in this report are based on responses from a sample of the population. As with all surveys, estimates may vary from the actual values because of sampling variation and other factors. All comparisons made in this report have undergone statistical testing and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <[www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf)>.

<sup>3</sup> The official poverty rate is based on a comparison of total family income to a threshold based on family size and composition. For householders, personal poverty rates were derived by comparing the sum of the personal income of the householder and their spouse or cohabiting partner, if any, to the poverty threshold for a single person (if the householder had no spouse or cohabiting partner) or two people. For additional adults who were part of subfamilies, personal poverty status was calculated by comparing total subfamily income to the poverty threshold based on the size and composition of the subfamily. For additional adults who were not part of subfamilies, personal poverty status was calculated by comparing personal income to the poverty threshold for a single person (\$11,344 for adults younger than 65 years in 2010; \$10,458 for adults aged 65 and older in 2010).

<sup>4</sup> The CPS ASEC sample includes the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. This universe includes civilians in households, persons in noninstitutional group quarters (other than military barracks), and military in households living off post or with their families on post (as long as at least one household member is a civilian adult). Because this research focuses on persons residing in households, the estimates exclude persons living in group quarters. Note also that school enrollment questions are only asked of persons under 25 years of age.

<sup>5</sup> As shown in Appendix Table A-2, the change in the number of shared households between 2010 and 2011 was not significant. However, the proportion of shared households declined by 0.4 percent.

## Defining Shared Households

This report classifies a shared household as a household which includes at least one “additional adult,” a person aged 18 or older who is not enrolled in school and who is neither the householder, the spouse, nor the cohabiting partner of the householder. By defining shared households based on the relationship to the householder, the analysis allows both family and nonfamily households to be classified as shared.

The definition in this analysis is only one way to measure household sharing. For example, households may also be classified by the number of families in residence. Multifamily households are those which include more than one family unit or a related or unrelated subfamily.<sup>1</sup> A subfamily is a married couple with or without children, or a lone parent with one or more children under 18 years of age.

While classifying shared households according to the number of families in residence is straightforward, it is an imprecise method of gauging the extent to which households are shared. An example illustrates this point. Two adult siblings living together constitute a multifamily household if the sibling who is not the householder has a child or a spouse in the household. On the other hand, if the sibling is single and childless, the siblings are counted as one family.

Multifamily households nonetheless provide an alternative measure of shared households. As shown in Appendix Table A-1, between 2007 and 2010, the number of **multifamily** households rose by 1.9 million, representing an increase of 1.5 percentage points. By 2010, multifamily households accounted for 13.2 percent of all households. In contrast, there was no change in the number of single-family households over the period.

<sup>1</sup> A family household is a group of two or more people residing together (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption; all persons in a family (including related subfamily members) are considered members of one primary family. A subfamily is a married couple with or without children, or one parent with one or more own children under 18 years old who live in a household but are not householders. Subfamily members may be related or not related to the householder. In addition, “unrelated individuals” are people of any age who are not members of families or subfamilies.

## Persons Living in Shared Households Increased Between 2007 and 2010

Table 2 presents the number of persons who resided in shared households in 2007 and 2010 by age and relationship to householder. Among adults, 27.7 percent resided in shared households in spring 2007. By spring 2010, 30.1 percent of all adults lived in shared households.

Shared households are occupied by both primary adults and additional adults. Primary adults are householders and their spouses or cohabiting partners. The number of primary adults who shared their households increased by 12.1 percent between 2007 and 2010. In contrast, the number of primary adults not living in shared households fell 0.9 percent over this period.

A subset of persons in shared households is “additional adults.” Additional adults are persons aged 18 and older not enrolled in school who are not householders, the spouses, nor the cohabiting partners of householders. Additional adults may be relatives or nonrelatives of the householder. Additional adults include adult children who live with their parents, as well as

Table 1.  
**Households by Shared Household Status, Based on Presence of Additional Adults<sup>1</sup> Residing in Household: 2007 and 2010**

(Numbers in thousands. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding)

Characteristic	2007				2010				2010–2007 change			
	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total Households</b> . . . . .	<b>116,011</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	–	<b>117,538</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>	–	<b>*1,527</b>	<b>364</b>	–	–
Shared households . . . . .	19,747	179	17.0	0.2	22,000	195	18.7	0.2	*2,253	257	*1.7	0.2
Not shared households . . . . .	96,264	343	83.0	0.2	95,538	387	81.3	0.2	–726	475	*–1.7	0.2

– Represents or rounds to zero.

\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

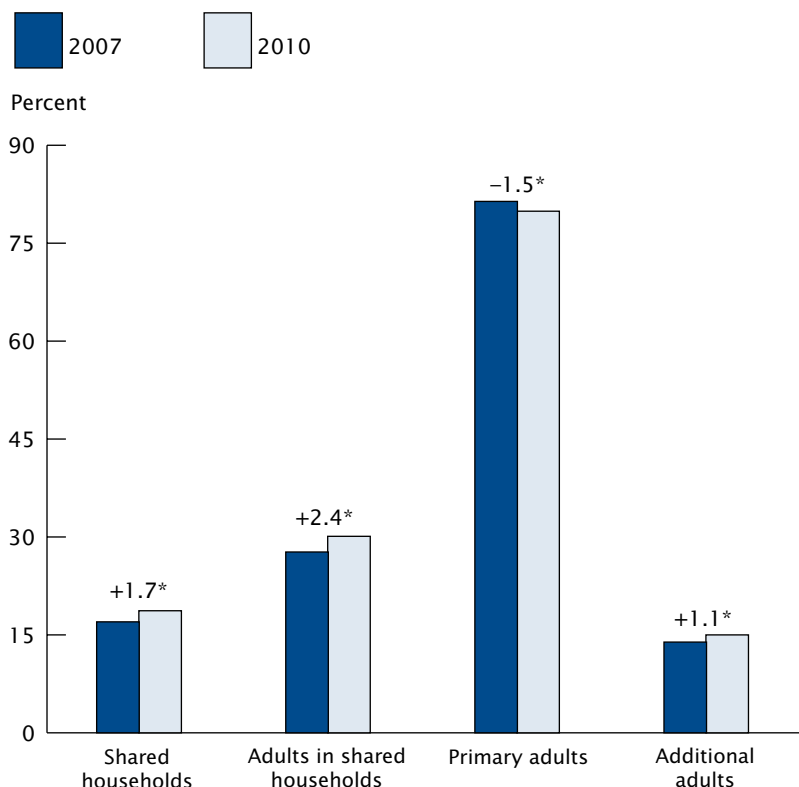
<sup>1</sup> “Additional adults” are defined as persons aged 18 and older not enrolled in school who are not householders, the spouses, nor the cohabiting partners of householders.

<sup>2</sup> SE—Standard error.

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see <[www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar07.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar07.pdf)> and <[www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar10.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar10.pdf)>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2007 and 2010.

Figure 1.  
**Percentage of Shared Households, All Adults in Shared Households, and Additional Adults<sup>1</sup>: 2007 and 2010**



\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.  
<sup>1</sup> "Additional adults" are defined as persons aged 18 and older not enrolled in school who are not householders, the spouses, nor the cohabiting partners of householders.  
 Source: Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2007 and 2010.

parents who live in their children's households. The definition of additional adults also includes roommates, housemates, or boarders.

Additional adults accounted for 13.9 percent of all adults in spring 2007. By spring 2010, the share of additional adults increased to 15.0 percent of adults (Figure 1). The adult population increased by 2.9 percent, while the number of additional adults increased by 11.1 percent over the 2007 to 2010 period.

Being an additional adult in someone else's household was a common living arrangement in 2010 among those aged 18 to 24. Some young adults lived with their parents, while others shared dwellings

with one or more roommates. The number of additional adults among those aged 18 to 24 increased by 5.9 percent between 2007 and 2010.

Household sharing was not limited to the youngest adults. The number of adults aged 25 to 34 who lived in someone else's household increased by 18.1 percent, while the number aged 35 to 64 increased by 9.7 percent between 2007 and 2010. The 1.5 million increase in the number of additional adults aged 25 to 34 accounted for about 45 percent

of the total increase in additional adults during the period.<sup>6</sup>

As shown in Table 2, the number of children residing in shared households increased by 17.5 percent between 2007 and 2010 while the number of children living in other households declined. By spring 2010, the number of children under age 18 who lived in shared households totaled 19.5 percent of all children.

### **Additional Adults Residing in Shared Households Were More Likely to Reside With Relatives**

In both 2007 and 2010, additional adults were more likely to live with relatives than with nonrelatives. In 2010, additional adults related to the householder accounted for 81.8 percent of all additional adults. As shown in Table 3, additional adults related to the householder rose by 2.4 million, a number accounting for 68 percent of the increase in additional adults. Additional adults not related to the householder, i.e., roommates, housemates, or boarders, increased by 910,000 between 2007 and 2010.<sup>7</sup>

In 2010, adult children accounted for 46 percent of additional adults. Parents of the householder accounted for 13 percent of additional adults. While less than 3 percent of additional adults were the grandchildren of a householder, siblings made up about 8 percent, and other relatives accounted for about 12 percent of additional adults. About 18 percent of additional adults were not relatives of the householder.

<sup>6</sup> In 2010, 31.4 percent of young adults aged 18 to 24 were additional adults and 48.0 percent were enrolled in school. Among young adults 25 to 34 years of age, 24.5 percent were additional adults. Ten percent of adults aged 35 to 64 and 8.2 percent of adults aged 65 and older were additional adults in 2010.

<sup>7</sup> As shown in Appendix Table A-3, the change in the number and percent of additional adults between 2010 and 2011 was not significant.

Table 2.

### Total Persons by Shared Household Status and Relationship to Householder, and Total Children by Shared Household Status and Age: 2007 and 2010

(Numbers in thousands. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding)

Characteristic	2007				2010				2010–2007 change			
	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total Adults, Aged 18 and Older . . .</b>	<b>222,557</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>	–	<b>229,120</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>	–	<b>*6,563</b>	<b>129</b>	–	–
Adults in shared households . . . . .	61,700	530	27.7	0.2	69,042	587	30.1	0.3	*7,342	759	*2.4	0.3
Primary adults . . . . .	28,213	274	12.7	0.1	31,613	298	13.8	0.1	*3,400	411	*1.1	0.2
Additional adult <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	31,016	368	13.9	0.2	34,463	396	15.0	0.2	*3,447	501	*1.1	0.2
18 to 24 years . . . . .	8,695	147	3.9	0.1	9,212	142	4.0	0.1	*516	205	0.1	0.1
25 to 34 years . . . . .	8,533	190	3.8	0.1	10,073	205	4.4	0.1	*1,540	259	*0.6	0.1
35 to 64 years . . . . .	10,946	287	4.9	0.1	12,008	294	5.2	0.1	*1,063	399	*0.3	0.2
65 years and older . . . . .	2,842	145	1.3	0.1	3,170	149	1.4	0.1	328	204	0.1	0.1
In school . . . . .	2,472	72	1.1	–	2,966	85	1.3	–	*494	108	*0.2	–
Not in shared households . . . . .	160,857	533	72.3	0.2	160,078	595	69.9	0.3	–779	754	*–2.4	0.3
Primary adults . . . . .	152,939	496	68.7	0.2	151,523	549	66.1	0.2	*–1,416	704	*–2.6	0.3
In school . . . . .	7,918	134	3.6	0.1	8,555	161	3.7	0.1	*637	206	*0.2	0.1
<b>Total Children, Aged 0 to 17 . . . . .</b>	<b>74,066</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100.0</b>	–	<b>75,011</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0</b>	–	<b>*945</b>	<b>124</b>	–	–
In shared households . . . . .	12,475	206	16.8	0.3	14,657	254	19.5	0.3	*2,182	274	*2.7	0.4
Not in shared households . . . . .	61,591	217	83.2	0.3	60,354	271	80.5	0.3	*–1,237	297	*–2.7	0.4

– Represents or rounds to zero.

\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

<sup>1</sup> “Additional adults” are defined as persons aged 18 and older not enrolled in school who are not householders, the spouses, nor the cohabiting partners of householders.<sup>2</sup> SE—Standard error.

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see &lt;www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar07.pdf&gt; and &lt;www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar10.pdf&gt;.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2007 and 2010.

Table 3.

### Persons Aged 18 and Older by Relationship to Householder: 2007 and 2010

(Numbers in thousands. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding)

Characteristic	2007				2010				2010–2007 change			
	Number	SE <sup>1</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>1</sup>	Number	SE <sup>1</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>1</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>1</sup>	Percent (±)	SE <sup>1</sup>
<b>Persons, Aged 18 and Older . . .</b>	<b>222,557</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>	–	<b>229,120</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100.0</b>	–	<b>*6,563</b>	<b>129</b>	–	–
Householder . . . . .	115,780	272	52.0	0.1	117,332	300	51.2	0.1	*1,552	363	*–0.8	0.2
Spouse . . . . .	58,938	238	26.5	0.1	58,396	243	25.5	0.1	*–543	300	*–1.0	0.1
Cohabiting partner . . . . .	6,434	126	2.9	0.1	7,408	116	3.2	0.1	*974	151	*0.3	0.1
In school . . . . .	10,390	138	4.7	0.1	11,521	154	5.0	0.1	*1,131	197	*0.4	0.1
Additional adults . . . . .	31,016	368	13.9	0.2	34,463	396	15.0	0.2	*3,447	501	*1.1	0.2
Relatives . . . . .	25,668	338	11.5	0.2	28,205	358	12.3	0.2	*2,357	458	*0.8	0.2
Child of householder . . . . .	14,618	255	6.6	0.1	15,840	264	6.9	0.1	*1,222	312	*0.3	0.1
18 to 24 years . . . . .	5,873	131	2.6	0.1	6,178	125	2.7	0.1	*305	170	0.1	0.1
25 to 34 years . . . . .	4,698	156	2.1	0.1	5,521	149	2.4	0.1	*823	195	*0.3	0.1
Sibling of householder . . . . .	2,779	99	1.2	–	2,901	88	1.3	–	122	130	–	0.1
Parent of householder . . . . .	3,931	112	1.8	0.1	4,507	119	2.0	0.1	*575	161	*0.2	0.1
Grandchild of householder . . . . .	634	47	0.3	–	824	50	0.4	–	*190	66	*0.1	–
Other relative of householder . . . . .	3,705	104	1.7	–	4,134	103	1.8	–	*429	150	*0.1	0.1
Nonrelative of householder . . . . .	5,347	146	2.4	0.1	6,257	180	2.7	0.1	*910	210	*0.3	0.1

– Represents or rounds to zero.

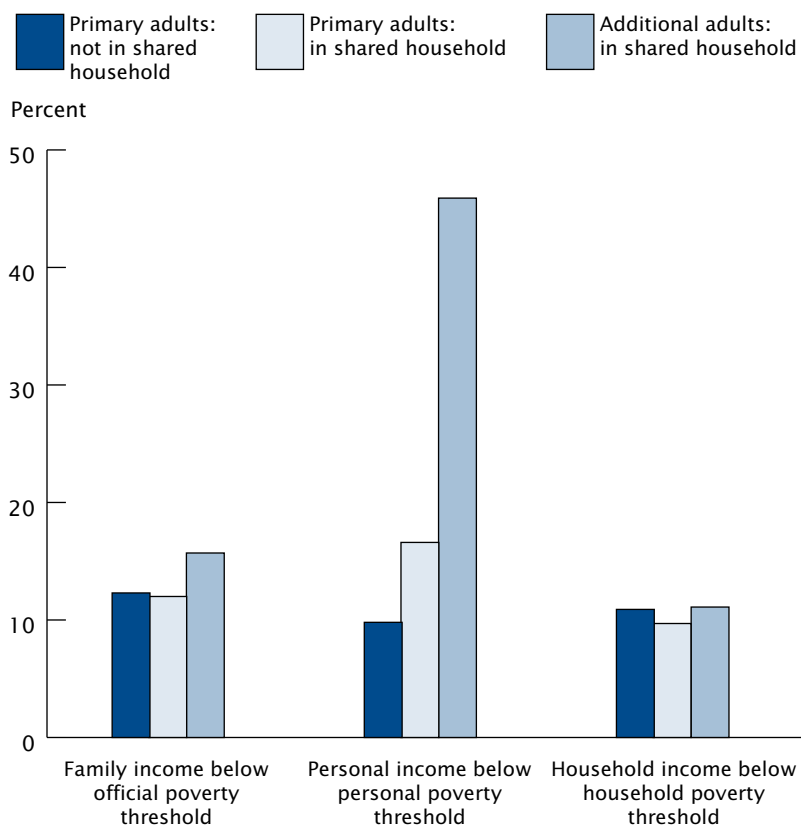
\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

<sup>1</sup> SE—Standard error.

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see &lt;www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar07.pdf&gt; and &lt;www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar10.pdf&gt;.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2007 and 2010.

Figure 2.  
**Official, Personal, and Household Poverty Status for Adults by Shared Household Status: 2010**



Source: Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2011.

Between 2007 and 2010, the number of adult children who resided in their parents' households increased by 1.2 million. Those aged 25 to 34 accounted for two-thirds of the increase (823,000) in adult children of householders between 2007 and 2010. The number of parents, grandchildren, and other relatives living in shared households also increased over the period, as did the number of nonrelatives.<sup>8</sup>

As a share of all adults, householders and spouses decreased over the time period by 0.8 and 1.0 percentage points, respectively. In contrast, between 2007 and 2010, the number of adults identified

<sup>8</sup> There was no change in the number or proportion of adults who resided in a siblings' household between 2007 and 2011.

as the householder's cohabiting partner increased by 15.1 percent. By 2010, 7.4 million adults were identified as the cohabiting partner of a householder, compared to 6.4 million in 2007. Although cohabiting households might be considered shared households, they are excluded here in order to present a conservative measure of shared households.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Some would argue that cohabiting couple households are in fact shared households. However, excluding these households from estimates of shared households and these individuals from estimates of additional adults creates a lower bound estimate of shared households and adults. If cohabiting partners of householders were classified as additional adults, estimates of shared households and additional adults would have been considerably larger (see also Kreider 2010 for discussion of the increase in unmarried partner households in recent years).

### Official Poverty Rates Did Not Reflect the Greater Economic Hardship Among Householders Sharing Households and Additional Adults Compared to Their Counterparts<sup>10</sup>

It is difficult to assess the precise impact of household sharing on economic well-being, but the constructed measures of poverty based on personal income and total household income provide some evidence.

#### Constructing Household and Personal Poverty Status Measures

"Household poverty status" was calculated by comparing the total income of all household members to the poverty threshold based on the number of persons and the age of the householder. Householders' personal poverty status was based on the sum of their own personal income and the personal income of their spouse or cohabiting partner. For additional adults, "personal poverty status" was based on the adult's own personal income. However, for additional adults in subfamilies, "personal poverty status" was based on the subfamily's total income. (Official poverty assigns the rate of the householder's family to any related subfamily.)

Figure 2 compares family or official poverty rates with the constructed poverty measures. Table 4 presents estimated changes in poverty rates between 2007 and 2010 and uses constructed poverty measures to summarize the effects of household

<sup>10</sup> The Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement measures poverty status based on income in the previous calendar year. Therefore, the 2008 CPS ASEC refers to poverty status in 2007 and the 2011 CPS ASEC refers to poverty status in 2010.

Table 4.

**Poverty Status for Primary<sup>1</sup> and Additional Adults<sup>2</sup>: 2007 and 2010**

(Details may not sum to totals due to rounding)

Characteristic	Poverty status in 2007						Poverty status in 2010						Percentage change 2010–2007						
	Family income below poverty		Personal income below poverty		Household income below poverty		Family income below poverty		Personal income below poverty		Household income below poverty		Family income below poverty		Personal income below poverty		Household income below poverty		
	Per-cent	SE <sup>3</sup>	Per-cent	SE <sup>3</sup>	Per-cent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Per-cent	SE <sup>3</sup>	Per-cent	SE <sup>3</sup>	Per-cent	SE <sup>3</sup>	Per-cent (±)	SE <sup>3</sup>	Per-cent (±)	SE <sup>3</sup>	Per-cent (±)	SE <sup>3</sup>	
<b>Primary Adults<sup>1</sup></b>																			
In shared households . . . . .	9.8	0.3	14.5	0.3	7.8	0.3	12.0	0.3	16.6	0.3	9.7	0.3	*2.3	0.4	*2.1	0.5	*1.9	0.4	
Not in shared households . . . . .	10.4	0.2	8.5	0.1	9.3	0.2	12.3	0.2	9.8	0.1	10.9	0.1	*1.9	0.2	*1.3	0.2	*1.7	0.2	
<b>Householders</b>																			
In shared households . . . . .	11.0	0.3	19.3	0.4	8.9	0.3	13.1	0.3	21.7	0.4	10.8	0.3	*2.1	0.5	*2.4	0.5	*1.9	0.5	
Not in shared households . . . . .	12.5	0.2	12.0	0.2	11.5	0.2	14.3	0.2	13.5	0.2	13.3	0.2	*1.9	0.2	*1.5	0.3	*1.7	0.2	
<b>Adults</b>																			
Additional adults																			
Aged 18 and older . . . . .	12.6	0.4	39.7	0.4	8.9	0.3	15.7	0.4	45.9	0.5	11.1	0.3	*3.1	0.5	*6.3	0.6	*2.3	0.5	
Aged 25 and older . . . . .	11.9	0.4	35.7	0.5	8.3	0.3	14.6	0.4	40.7	0.5	10.1	0.3	*2.7	0.6	*5.1	0.7	*1.8	0.5	
Primary adults <sup>1</sup>																			
Aged 18 and older . . . . .	10.3	0.1	9.4	0.1	9.0	0.1	12.2	0.1	10.9	0.1	10.7	0.1	*1.9	0.2	*1.5	0.2	*1.7	0.2	
Aged 25 and older . . . . .	9.4	0.1	8.7	0.1	8.5	0.1	11.1	0.1	9.9	0.1	9.9	0.1	*1.7	0.2	*1.2	0.2	*1.5	0.2	

\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

<sup>1</sup> Primary adults are householders or the spouse or cohabiting partner of the householder. Adults aged 18 to 24 years who are enrolled in school are not included as additional adults.<sup>2</sup> "Additional adults" are defined as persons aged 18 and older not enrolled in school who are not householders, the spouses, nor the cohabiting partners of householders.<sup>3</sup> SE—Standard error.

Note: Official poverty is based on family income. For householders, "personal poverty status" is based on the sum of their personal income and the personal income of their spouse or cohabiting partner; for additional adults, "personal poverty status" is based on the adult's personal income. For additional adults in subfamilies, "personal poverty status" is based on total subfamily income. "Household poverty status" is based on total household income. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see <[www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar08.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar08.pdf)> and <[www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf)>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2008 and 2011.

sharing on economic well-being over the period.

For householders heading shared households, both official and household poverty rates for 2010 were lower than for other householders. This contrasts with personal poverty rates. Personal poverty was higher for householders in shared households than for householders who were not in shared households (8.2 percentage points higher in 2010). Higher personal poverty rates for those heading shared households suggests

that this group has fewer individual resources than their counterparts. However, lower official and household poverty rates among householders heading shared households suggest that household sharing lessened economic strain.

Additional adults aged 25 and older had an official poverty rate of 14.6 percent in 2010. Had poverty status been determined by personal income, 40.7 percent of additional adults aged 25 and older

would have been poor in 2010.<sup>11</sup> In addition, the official poverty rate for young adults aged 25 to 34 living with parents was 8.4 percent in 2010, but if poverty status was determined by personal income, 45.3 percent would have been in poverty.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Personal income here refers to total personal income for individuals who are not members of a subfamily, and to subfamily income for additional adults who are subfamily members.

<sup>12</sup> The poverty threshold for an individual under age 65 in 2010 was \$11,344. For two young adults it was \$14,676.

Table 5.

## Comparison of Official and Personal Poverty Status of Additional Adults<sup>1</sup> Residing in Shared Households: 2007 and 2010

(Numbers in thousands. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding)

Characteristic	Additional adults <sup>1</sup> , aged 18 and older				Additional adults <sup>1</sup> , aged 25 and older			
	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>
Income below personal poverty threshold 2007 . . . .	12,739	215	39.7	0.4	8,416	193	35.7	0.5
Income below official poverty threshold 2007 . . . . .	4,049	131	12.6	0.4	2,804	107	11.9	0.4
"Reduction" in poverty for additional adults 2007 . . .	*8,690	170	*27.1	0.4	*5,612	153	*23.8	0.5
Income below personal poverty threshold 2010 . . . .	15,986	236	45.9	0.5	10,495	203	40.7	0.5
Income below official poverty threshold 2010 . . . . .	5,478	150	15.7	0.4	3,754	123	14.6	0.4
"Reduction" in poverty for additional adults 2010 . . .	*10,508	173	*30.2	0.4	*6,740	143	*26.1	0.4

\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

<sup>1</sup> "Additional adults" are household residents aged 18 and older who are not enrolled in school and who are not the householder, nor the spouse or cohabiting partner of the householder.

<sup>2</sup> SE—Standard error.

Note: Official poverty is based on family income. For householders, "personal poverty status" is based on the sum of their personal income and their personal income of their spouse or cohabiting partner; for additional adults, "personal poverty status" is based on the adult's personal income. For additional adults in subfamilies, "personal poverty status" is based on total subfamily income. "Household poverty status" is based on total household income. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see <[www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar08.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar08.pdf)> and <[www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf)>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2008 and 2011.

Consistent with the understanding of household sharing as a strategy to pool resources, additional adults had higher personal poverty rates compared with primary adults in both 2007 and 2010.<sup>13</sup> Official poverty rates were also higher among additional adults than among primary adults in both years. However, household poverty rates were not significantly different between additional and primary adults in either year.

In addition, among persons aged 25 and older, there was no statistically difference in household poverty rates between primary adults, compared with additional adults. However, official poverty rates and personal poverty rates were higher among additional adults than for primary adults aged 25 and older.

Official poverty rates and personal poverty rates increased for members of both shared and nonshared households between the pre- and post-recession years. However, the magnitude of the increase in official poverty rates and in personal

poverty rates did not differ significantly among householders in shared households and householders who did not share their households.<sup>14</sup> In contrast, family and personal poverty rates increased to a greater degree for additional adults than for primary adults. For example, among additional adults aged 25 and older, the personal poverty rate increased 5.1 percentage points between 2007 and 2010, compared with 1.2 percentage points for primary adults. However, the change in *household poverty rates* between 2007 and 2010 was not significantly different for primary adults and additional adults.

Table 5 compares the number of additional adults with income below official poverty (12.6 percent in 2007; 15.7 percent in 2010) to the number of those with incomes below personal poverty (39.7 percent in 2007; 45.9 percent in 2010). Household sharing reduced the total number of additional adults who would be have been classified as poor except for the

income of other family members in the household. A total of 8.7 million persons in 2007, and 10.5 million persons in 2010, would have been classified as poor solely on the basis of individual income. Looking only at additional adults aged 25 and older, household sharing reduced the number who would have been classified as poor based on their own resources by 5.6 million in 2007 and 6.7 million in 2010.

## CONCLUSION

In the United States, the number and percentage of shared households and the number and percentage of adults in shared households increased over the course of the recession which began in December of 2007 and ended in June 2009. By 2010, 22.0 million residences were shared, 18.7 percent of all households.

Consistent with the increase in shared households from 2007 to 2010, the number of persons living in shared households also increased. Additional adults in shared households (not householders, their spouses, or cohabiting

<sup>13</sup> Primary adults were householders or the spouses or cohabiting partners of householders.

<sup>14</sup> Changes in household poverty between 2007 and 2010 were not significantly different for householders sharing households and other householders.

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partners) increased and accounted for 15.0 percent of all adults by 2010. More than one-half of additional adults were young (under age 35). Yet nearly one-half of the increase in the number of additional adults over the course of the recession (45 percent) occurred among those aged 25 to 34. Additional adults were more likely to live with relatives than unrelated householders. More than 45 percent of all additional adults in 2010 lived with their parents.

Most importantly, official poverty and the constructed household poverty measure were lower among householders in shared households. This suggests bringing additional adults into the household may have been a strategy to mitigate challenging economic circumstances. Results also suggest economically vulnerable householders were more likely to share households than their more advantaged counterparts. Personal poverty rates were higher for householders heading shared households

than for other householders. The outcome counters the notion that economically stable householders typically take in more economically strapped family and friends.

Household sharing seems to be a means of alleviating economic strain at the household level. When resources were combined across members, household poverty rates were lower for shared households than for other households.<sup>15</sup> Although the recession reduced income and increased poverty for many adults, the effects were generally worse for additional adults in someone else's household than for others. Compared to householders and their spouses or partners, additional adults were more economically vulnerable with higher official and personal poverty rates.

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<sup>15</sup> Although adults in shared households occupy the same living quarters, the current research cannot determine the extent to which coresidents share other resources or basic living expenses, such as food and utilities. For this reason, the results of the analysis, with respect to household poverty, should be interpreted with care.

The Census Bureau welcomes the comments and advice of data and report users. If you have suggestions or comments, please write to:

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Appendix Table A-1.

**Households by Multifamily Household<sup>1</sup> Status: 2007 and 2010**

(Numbers in thousands. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding)

Item	2007				2010				2010–2007 change			
	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Per- cent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Per- cent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Per- cent (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total Households</b> . . . . .	<b>116,011</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100</b>	–	<b>117,538</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	–	<b>*1,527</b>	<b>364</b>	–	–
Single-family households . . . . .	102,417	305	88.3	0.1	102,051	318	86.8	0.1	–366	409	*–1.5	0.2
Single-person households . . . . .	31,132	296	26.8	0.2	31,399	308	26.7	0.2	267	380	–0.1	0.3
Multifamily households <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	13,595	166	11.7	0.1	15,487	175	13.2	0.1	*1,893	200	*1.5	0.2
Two-family households . . . . .	12,057	163	10.4	0.1	13,302	159	11.3	0.1	1,244*	194	*0.9	0.2
Three- or more family households . . .	1,537	52	1.3	–	2,185	68	1.9	0.1	*648	78	*0.5	0.1

– Represents or rounds to zero.

\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

<sup>1</sup> Multifamily households are defined as households which include more than one family group or include a subfamily.<sup>2</sup> SE—Standard error.Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see <[www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar07.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar07.pdf)> and <[www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar10.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar10.pdf)>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2007 and 2010.

Appendix Table A-2.

**Number and Percentage of Shared Households<sup>1</sup>: 2007–2011**

(Numbers in thousands. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding)

Year	Total households		Shared households <sup>1</sup>				Year-to-year change in households		Year-to-year change in shared households <sup>1</sup>			
	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>
2007 . . . . .	116,011	272	19,747	179	17.0	0.2	–	–	–	–	–	–
2008 . . . . .	116,783	291	19,956	167	17.1	0.2	772*	297	209	210	0.1	0.2
2009 . . . . .	117,181	291	20,683	180	17.7	0.2	397	295	727*	206	0.6*	0.2
2010 . . . . .	117,538	300	22,000	195	18.7	0.2	357	309	1,317*	210	1.1*	0.2
2011 . . . . .	118,682	306	21,766	189	18.3	0.2	1,144*	345	–234	228	–0.4*	0.2

– Represents or rounds to zero.

\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

<sup>1</sup> “Shared Households” include at least one additional adult. “Additional adults” are defined as adults ages 18 and older residing in a household who are not the householder, nor the spouse or cohabiting partner of the householder and who are not enrolled in school.<sup>2</sup> SE Standard errorNote: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see <[www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apspd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf)>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2007–2011.

Appendix Table A-3.

**Number and Percentage of All Adults in Shared Households<sup>1</sup>: 2007–2011**

(Numbers in thousands. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding)

Year	Total adults		Adults in shared households <sup>1</sup>				Additional adults				Year-to-year change										
											Adults		Adults in shared households <sup>1</sup>			Additional adults					
	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Number (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	Percent (±)	SE <sup>2</sup>	
2007. . .	222,557	106	61,700	530	27.7	0.2	31,016	368	13.9	0.2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2008. . .	224,548	109	63,177	521	28.1	0.2	32,115	392	14.3	0.2	1,991*	127	1,477*	602	0.4	0.3	1,099*	423	0.4*	0.2	
2009. . .	226,862	125	65,620	573	28.9	0.3	33,208	418	14.6	0.2	2,314*	128	2,443*	622	0.8*	0.3	1,093*	445	0.3*	0.2	
2010. . .	229,120	106	69,042	587	30.1	0.3	34,463	396	15.0	0.2	2,257*	130	3,422*	686	1.2*	0.3	1,254*	491	0.4*	0.2	
2011. . .	231,098	106	69,224	581	30.0	0.2	34,804	446	15.1	0.2	1,979*	133	182	731	–0.2	0.3	342	523	–	0.2	

– Represents or rounds to zero.

\* Estimate is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

<sup>1</sup> “Shared households” include at least one additional adult. Adults in shared households include any adult residing in a shared household. “Additional adults” are defined as adults ages 18 and older residing in a household who are not the householder, nor the spouse or cohabiting partner of the householder and who are not enrolled in school.

<sup>2</sup> SE Standard error.

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions see <[www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf](http://www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar11.pdf)>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 2007–2011.