

## The Population of Louisiana

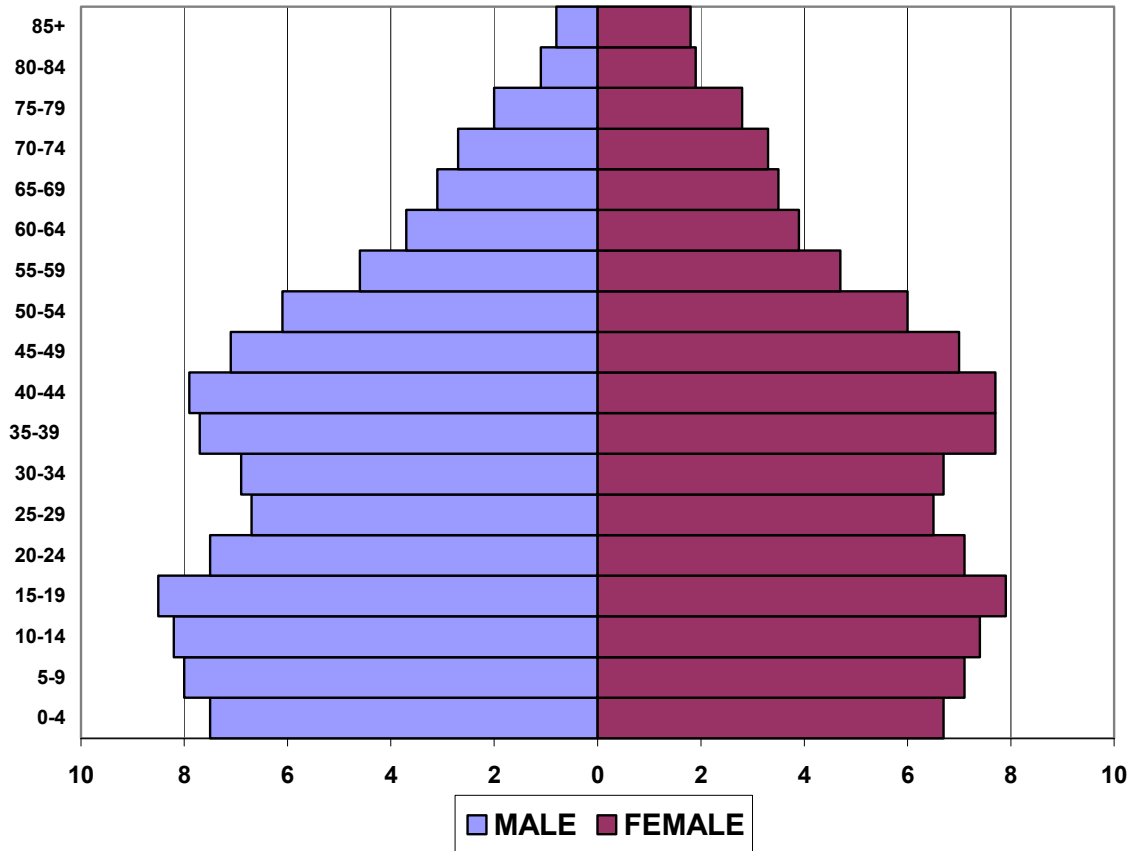
Erica DeHart

This report describes the population of Louisiana in 2000, using data from the 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing. It provides information on age and sex distributions, marital status, educational attainment, employment status, occupation, household income, poverty status, area of residence, and the foreign-born population. Data from the 2000 population census are compared to data from the 1990 population census to reveal changes that have occurred over the ten-year period. Louisiana statistics are then compared to aggregate statistics for the United States, even though the latter include the former. All figures can be found on the website of the United States Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov>).

### **Sex and Age**

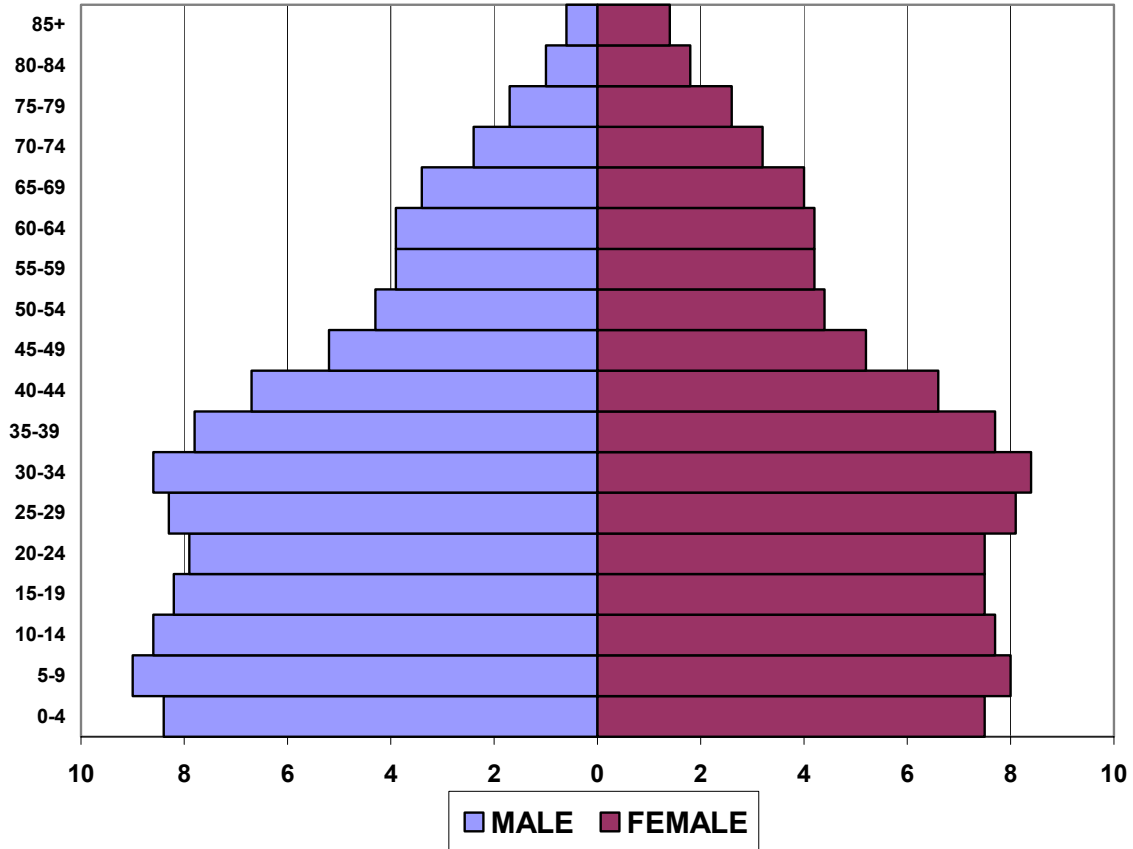
In 2000, Louisiana's population consisted of 48.4 percent males and 51.6 percent females, which was not a significant change since 1990. The United States showed a somewhat different distribution: 49.1 percent males and 50.9 percent females. In other words, in the year 2000 there were 106.6 women per 100 men in Louisiana, while there were 103.7 women per 100 men in the nation as a whole.

**Figure 1a**  
**Louisiana Population by Age and Sex, 2000**  
 (in percent)



Figures 1a, 1b, and 1c present three population pyramids: Louisiana in 2000, Louisiana in 1990, and the United States in 2000. By comparing the two pyramids that show Louisiana's population distribution in 1990 and 2000, one can see the aging of the baby boom generation. Other than that, there has been little change. By comparing Louisiana's population to the United States' in 2000, one can see that Louisiana's share of population age 0 to 19 was larger than the nation's population of the same age.

**Figure 1b**  
**Louisiana Population by Age and Sex, 1990**  
 (in percent)

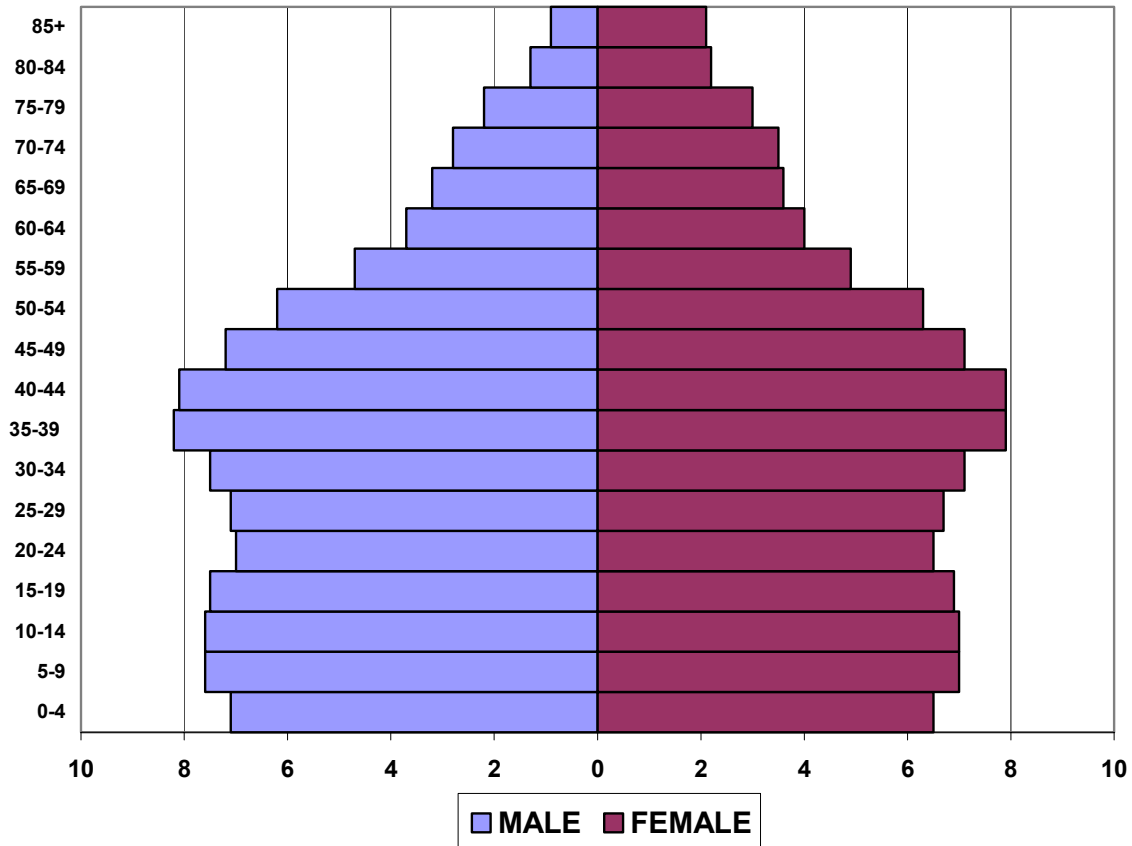


**Marital Status**

In 2000, 71.4 percent of Louisiana’s population 15 years and older had been married at some point in their lifetime; this number represents a slight decrease from 1990 (72.6 percent). There has been a decrease in three marital-status categories within the ten-year period: now married, not separated (from 53.0 percent in 1990 to 51.2 percent in 2000); separated (from 3.5 percent in 1990 to 2.6 percent in 2000); and widowed (from 8.1 percent in 1990 to 7.4 percent in 2000). The percent of divorced

persons has increased from 8.0 in 1990 to 10.2 in 2000.

**Figure 1c**  
**United States Population by Age and Sex, 2000**  
 (in percent)

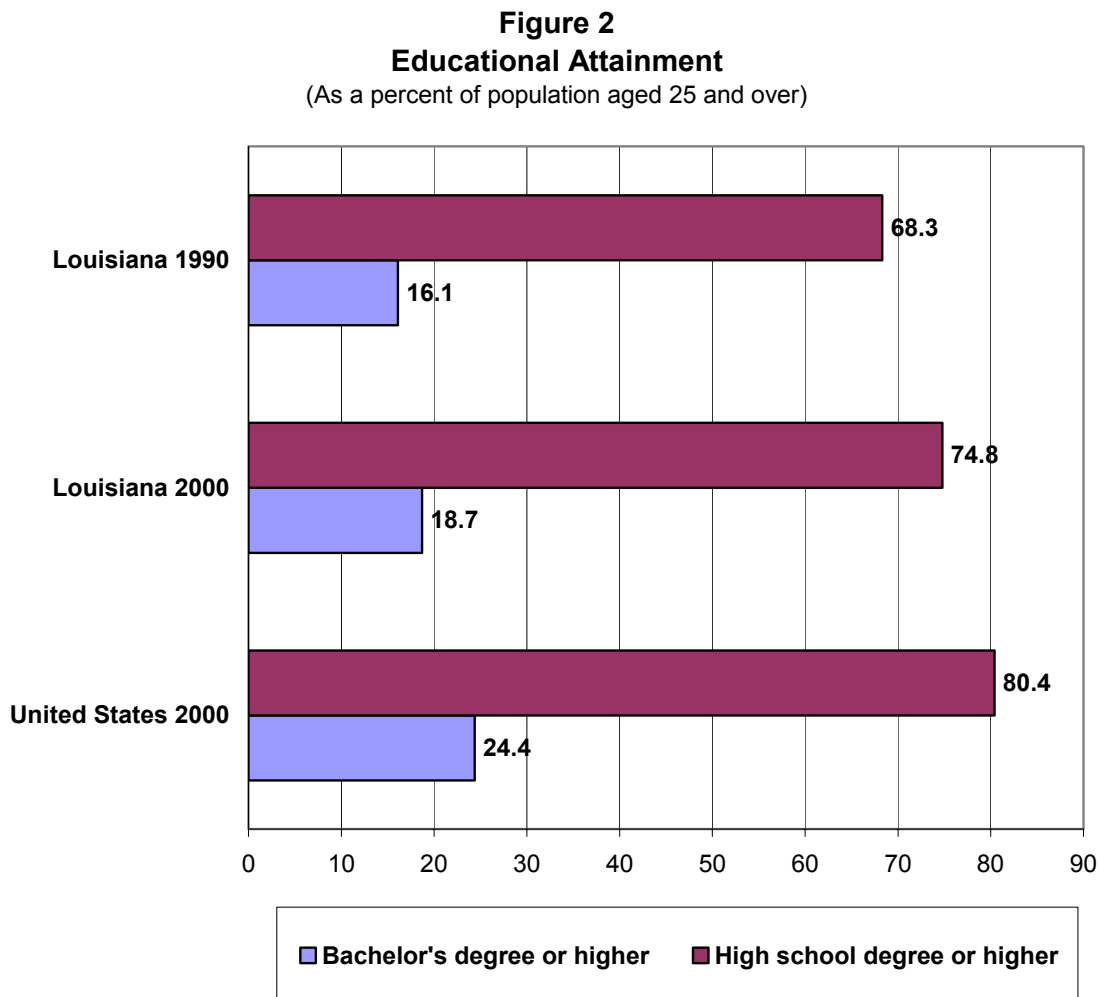


As of the 2000 population census, most residents of Louisiana and the United States as a whole were married; in the United States that percentage is larger (54.4 versus 51.4). When comparing Louisiana to the United States, one sees that a larger percent of Louisiana residents had never been married (28.6 percent) than United States residents (27.1 percent). Also, a larger proportion of Louisiana residents reported to be separated (2.6 percent), widowed (7.4 percent), or divorced (10.2 percent)

compared to the United States (2.2 percent, 6.6 percent, and 9.7 percent, respectively).

## Educational Attainment

Just less than three quarters (74.8 percent) of Louisiana's 2000 population age 25 years and older secured at least a high school diploma, while less than one quarter (18.7 percent) of the population earned at least a bachelor's degree. The state's population in 1990 consisted of 68.3 percent with at least a high school diploma and 16.1



percent with at least a bachelor's degree. Thus, educational attainment levels have risen for the population of the state.

Educational attainment in Louisiana lags behind that of the United States population. In the United States, 80.4 percent of people had at least a high school diploma in 2000, compared to 74.8 percent in Louisiana; a higher percentage of people had obtained at least a bachelor's degree in the United States (24.4 percent) than in Louisiana (only 18.7 percent). Figure 2 displays the educational attainment of the population of Louisiana in 1990 and 2000 and the population of the United States in 2000.

## **ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Labor Force and Occupation**

In 2000, Louisiana's unemployment rate was 7.2 percent, below the 9.7 percent recorded in 1990. The unemployment rate in 2000 for the United States was 5.8 percent, which is lower than Louisiana's in the same year.

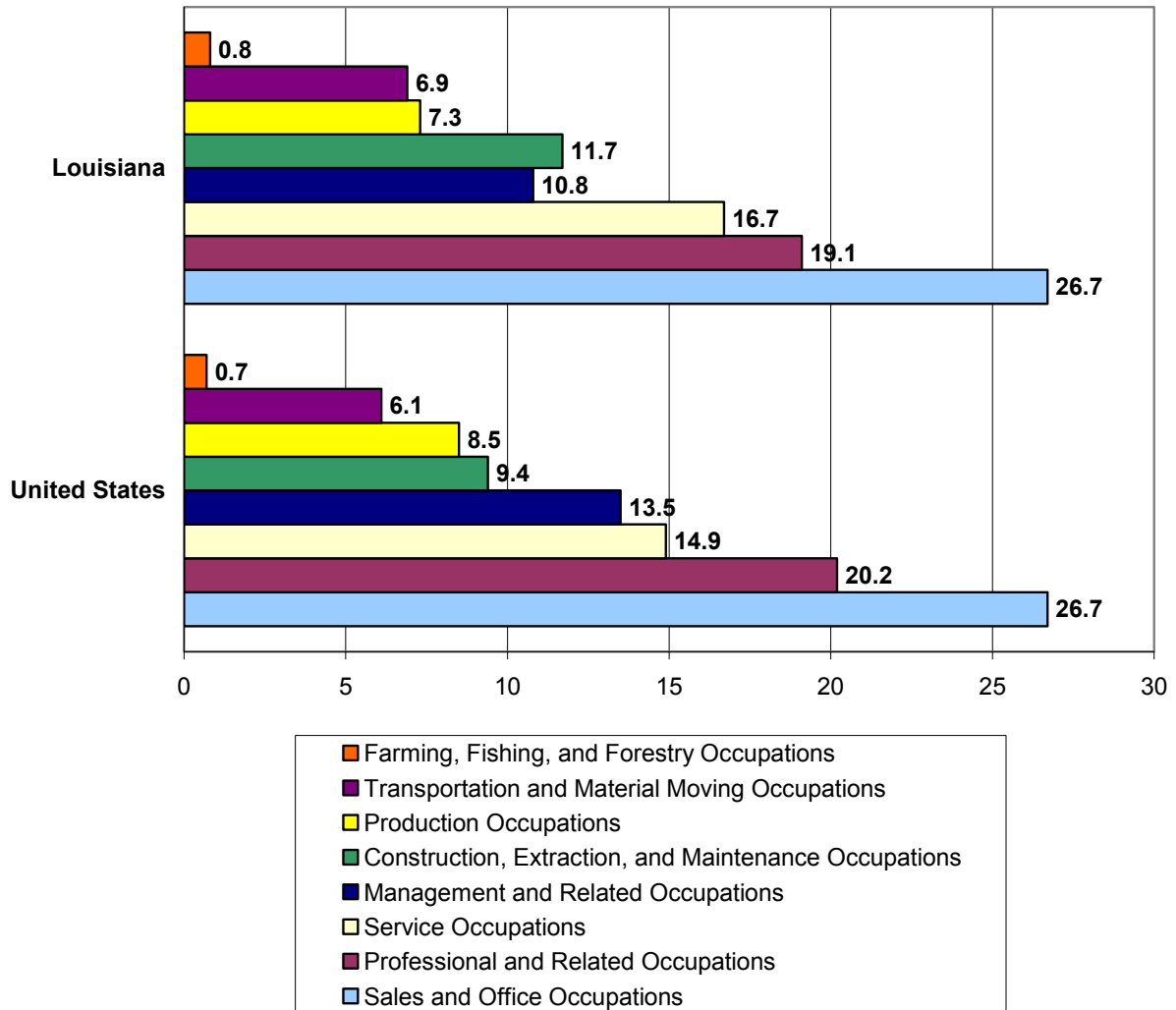
The labor force participation rate<sup>1</sup> for Louisiana in 2000 was 65.3 percent for men, which is a decrease from the 1990 rate of 67.7 percent. The labor force participation rate for women in 2000 was 53.1 percent: an increase from 50.0 percent recorded by the 1990 census.

The labor force participation rate for the United States in 2000 was 69.8 percent for men and 57.4 percent for women. The United States' labor force participation rates

---

<sup>1</sup> The Labor Force Participation Rate is defined as the percentage of the working-age population (age 16+) who are members of the labor force.

**Figure 3**  
**Occupations in 2000, United States and Louisiana**  
 (As a percent of the employed civilian population)



were higher for both men and women when compared to Louisiana's rates.

Figure 3 compares Louisiana to the United States in the percent of civilians employed in each occupation category in 2000. Sales and office occupations concentrate the largest share of workers: slightly over one-fourth of employed civilians in

both Louisiana and the United States. Figure 3 shows that Louisiana had a higher percentage of employees than the United States working in the following categories: transportation and material moving; construction, extraction, and maintenance; farming, fishing, and forestry; and service occupations. The United States had a higher percentage of employees than did Louisiana in the management and professional as well as production occupations.

**Figure 4**  
**Louisiana's Occupations in 1990**  
 (As a percent of employed civilian population)

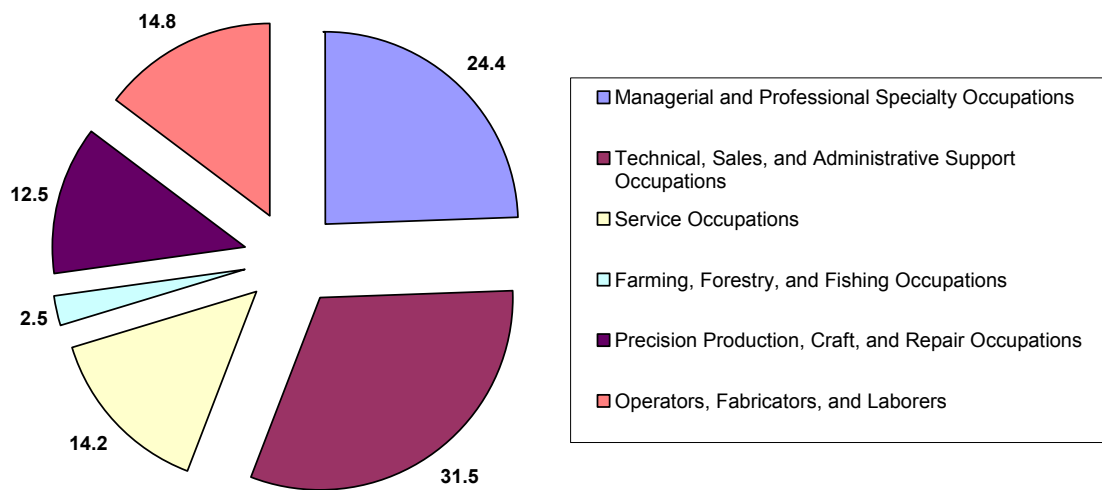


Figure 4 displays Louisiana's occupation distribution for 1990. The categories shown here differ from the categories in Figure 3 (Louisiana and United States in 2000) because the U.S. Census Bureau classified the occupations differently. Therefore, comparisons between the two years cannot be made, except for two occupational categories: service occupations, and farming, forestry, and fishing occupations. In 2000, Louisiana had 16.7 percent of its civilian employees working in service

occupations: an increase from 14.2 percent in 1990. In 2000, 0.8 percent of Louisiana employees worked in the farming, fishing, and forestry occupations: a sharp decrease since 1990 (2.5 percent).

### **Income and Poverty**

Data on income refer to the calendar year before the census—the 2000 census recorded data from the year 1999, and the 1990 census recorded data from the year 1989. The United States' median household income exceeded Louisiana's median household income in both years. The United States' median household income in 1999 was \$41,994, while Louisiana's was \$32,566. The United States' median household income in 1989 was \$30,056, while Louisiana's was only \$21,949. While the figures show Louisiana's households below the national median in both years, the lag has decreased in relative terms, with Louisiana's median household income growing from 63 percent of the national figure in 1990 to 71 percent in 2000.

To compare Louisiana's and the United States' values for income between the years of 1989 and 1999, the numbers for 1989 are adjusted for inflation to 1999 dollars. In constant 1999 dollars, the median income of Louisiana households increased from \$29,490 in 1989 to \$32,566 in 1999. The median income of United States households in 1999 was \$41,994, while it was only \$40,382 (1999 dollars) in 1989. Therefore, the median household income increased in both Louisiana and the United States, but more so in Louisiana in both absolute terms and as a percentage.

**Figure 5**  
**Household Income Distribution**  
(In percent)

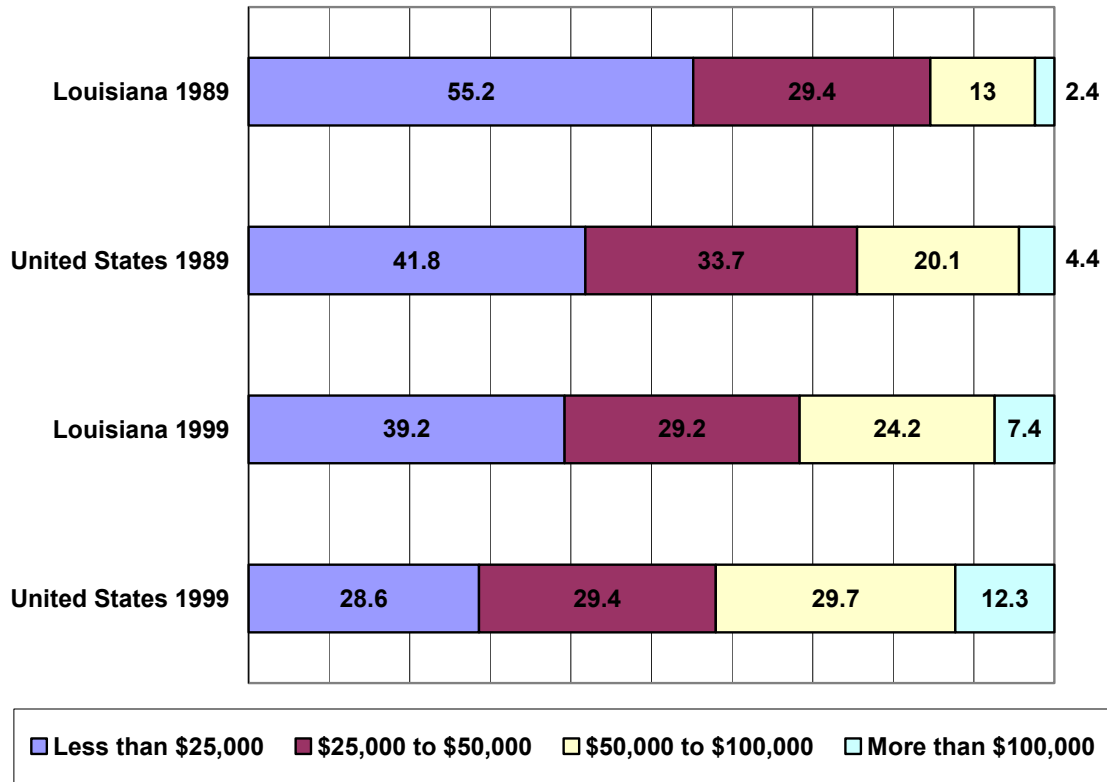


Figure 5 displays the total household income distributions for Louisiana and the United States in 1989 and 1999. One can see that the households in Louisiana trailed the households of the United States: Louisiana had a larger share of households making less than \$25,000 and a smaller share of households making \$50,000 or more in both 1989 and 1999.

In 2000, 19.6 percent of Louisiana's population was living below the poverty level: a 4 percent decrease from 1990, when 23.6 percent of Louisiana's population was

in the same situation. In terms of population, this represented 851,113 individuals living below the poverty level in 2000 and 967,002 individuals living below the poverty level in 1990. In 2000, a smaller share of the United States population was living below the poverty level (12.4 percent) when compared to Louisiana.

### **Cities and Parishes**

The ten most populated cities in 2000 were (in order of most populated to least populated) New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Kenner, Bossier City, Monroe, Alexandria, and New Iberia. At this time, 30.2 percent of Louisiana's total population lived in these ten cities. With the exception of New Iberia (which replaced Houma), these were the ten most populated cities in 1990 as well, albeit in a different order. In 1990, 31.7 percent of Louisiana's total population lived in one of ten most populated cities.

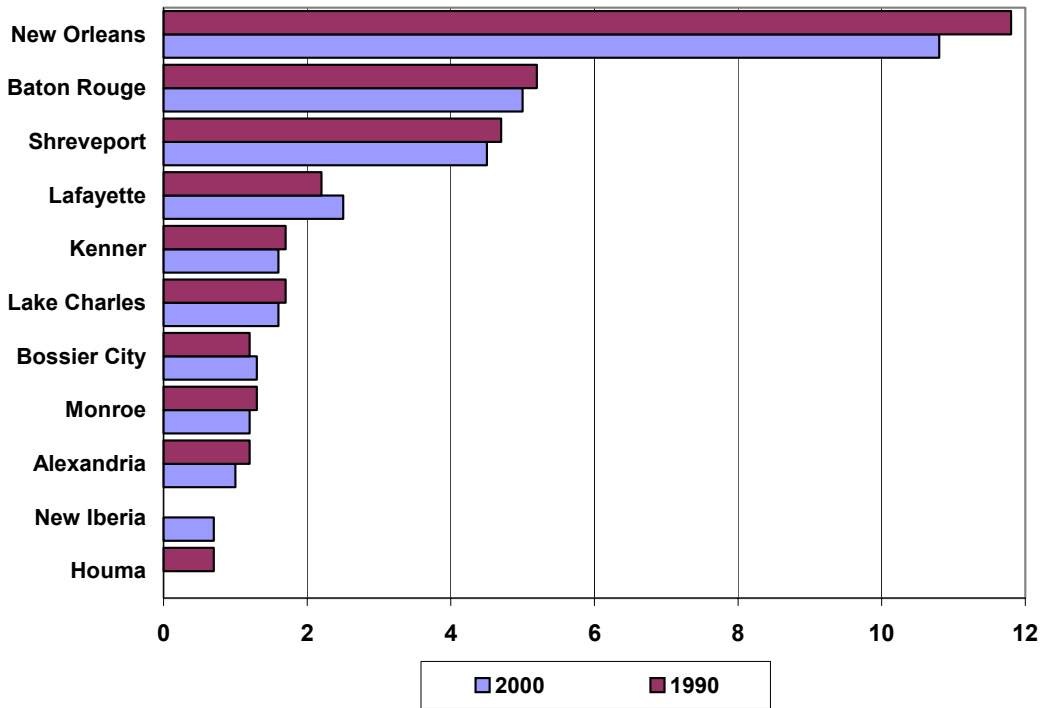
The ten most populated parishes<sup>2</sup> are the same for 1990 and 2000: Orleans, Jefferson, East Baton Rouge, Caddo, St. Tammany, Lafayette, Calcasieu, Ouachita, Rapides, and Terrebonne. In 2000, 56.9 percent of Louisiana's total population lived in these ten parishes: a slight decrease from 57.4 percent in 1990.

Figures 6a and 6b present the percentage of Louisiana's population living in the ten most populated cities and parishes in 1990 and 2000. Numerous maps of Louisiana's population distribution can be found at <http://www.state.la.us/popmaps.htm>.

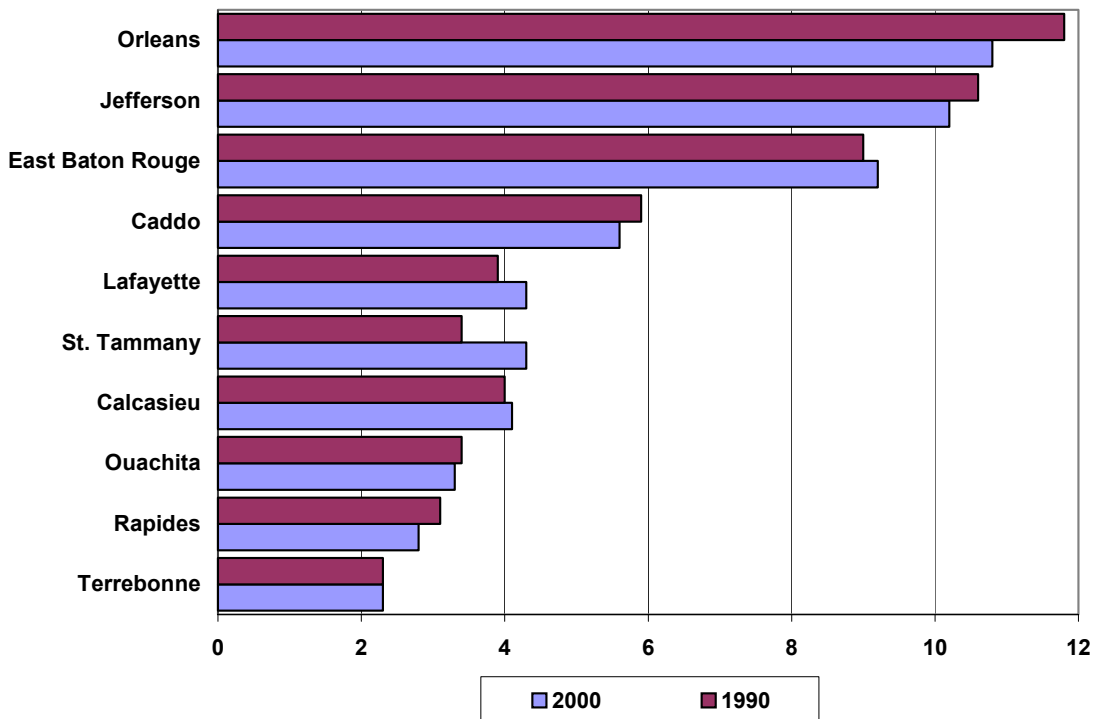
---

<sup>2</sup> Counties are called parishes in Louisiana.

**Figure 6a**  
**Ten Most Populated Cities in Louisiana, 1990 and 2000**  
 (As a percent of state's population)



**Figure 6b**  
**Ten Most Populated Parishes in Louisiana, 1990 and 2000**  
 (As a percent of state's population)



## **Foreign-born Population**

According to the Census Bureau definitions, the foreign born are those who were not United States citizens at birth. U.S. born are those who were born in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, or were born abroad of at least one parent who was a United States citizen.

In 2000, 2.6 percent of Louisiana's population was foreign born. Among Louisiana's foreign-born population, 48.4 percent were naturalized citizens. In 1990, the percent of foreign born within Louisiana (2.1 percent) was slightly smaller than that in 2000.

In 2000, 11.1 percent of the United States population was composed of foreign-born individuals, 40.3 percent of whom were naturalized citizens. Although the percentage of foreign born in Louisiana was much lower than in the United States, the state had a higher rate of naturalization.

Over half of the foreign-born population of the United States (51.7 percent) and about 40 percent (40.2) of the foreign-born population of Louisiana were from Latin America. Among the foreign-born, 26.4 percent in the United States and 37.5 percent in Louisiana were of Asian origin. Fewer were from Europe: 15.8 percent of the United States foreign-born population and 15.6 percent among the foreign-born in Louisiana. The remaining 6.1 percent of the United States foreign-born population and 6.8 percent of Louisiana's foreign-born population were from other regions of the world: Africa, Oceania, and Northern America.

Of the United States' foreign-born population, 42.4 percent arrived between 1990 and March 2000, compared to the 37.0 percent arriving in Louisiana at the same time. Between 1980 and 1989, 27.2 percent of the nation's foreign-born population arrived in the United States, while 25.1 percent of Louisiana's population arrived during that period. Finally, 30.4 percent of the nation's and 37.9 percent of Louisiana's foreign-born population arrived before 1980.