



2011 Briefing Book on the South

CENTER FOR A
betersouth

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PUBLICATION REQUEST: While the data in the *2011 Briefing Book of the South* is from public sources, we'd appreciate a credit if your organization or publication uses information found through the *Briefing Book*.

Introduction

The Center for a Better South's 2011 *Briefing Book on the South* is a unique resource to help policymakers, influential community leaders, academics and journalists better understand what's happening now throughout the South. Taken as a whole, the study's 36 indicators and more than 70 data points for each state from an array of sources paint a picture of the region that will give many a reason to pause and reflect.

As the data suggest, the South is a diverse economic engine that continues to face educational, environmental, poverty, health and other challenges brought on, in large part, by a long period of neglect following the Civil War. While today's South is far better off than the region just 50 years ago, it continues to play catch-up with the rest of America. As Southern states in recent years invested more and more to get on par with the rest of America, states in other regions did not sit idly by. They too invested. So as the South improved, other states did also, generally keeping Southern states where they don't want to be: at the bottom of national lists of rankings in multiple areas found throughout this *Briefing Book*. Today, some 150 years after shots were fired onto Fort Sumter in Charleston, the states of the American South still have a statistical hangover -- a Civil War hangover -- compared to other areas of the country.

We hope thinking Southern leaders will consider the data and redouble efforts to leapfrog our region away from the bottom through creative policy efforts that will improve education and health care, while reducing poverty and unemployment.

Organizational structure

Following this introduction, the *Briefing Book* is organized in three sections:

- A. **Snapshot of the South** -- a three-page summary that compares major data indicators in the South
- B. **State snapshots** -- page-long summaries of all of the data for each state found in Section C.
- C. **State data** -- Detailed descriptions of indicators with links to sources.

A note on the data

The Center collected data in the summer and fall of 2011 to complete this *Briefing Book*. We highly recommend that anyone who uses the data check with the online primary sources listed with each indicator. Not only is it possible that you'll get a more recent statistic, but you will be able to double-check any statistic you plan to use.

In advance, please accept our apologies for any transcription errors. If you find an error in this document, please let us know. Thank you.

-- Andy Brack, president, Center for a Better South
(brack@bettersouth.org)

Snapshot of the South

Here are some key results from the Center for a Better South's *2011 Briefing Book on the South*.

POPULATION

1 in 4 Americans live in the South

Of the 308 million people who call the United States home, about one in four lives in the 11 states of the American South, according to 2010 Census figures:

Alabama	4,779,736
Arkansas	2,915,918
Florida	18,801,310
Georgia	9,687,653
Kentucky	4,339,367
Louisiana	4,533,372
Mississippi	2,967,297
North Carolina	9,535,483
South Carolina	4,625,364
Tennessee	6,346,105
Virginia	8,001,024
TOTAL	76,532,629

INCOME

South has low median income

Ten Southern states are among the 13 with the lowest median household income in the country, according to 2010 Census figures. Virginia is the only state in the South that has an annual median income above the national average, which is \$49,445.

Household income: Lowest to highest

1. Mississippi (\$37,985)
2. Arkansas (\$38,571)
3. Tennessee (\$38,686)
4. Louisiana (\$39,443)
5. Alabama (\$40,976)
6. Kentucky (\$41,236)
8. South Carolina (\$41,709)
11. North Carolina (\$43,753)
12. Georgia (\$44,108)
13. Florida (\$44,243)
44. Virginia (\$60,363)

JOBS

South leads regions in unemployment

Take a look at the national rankings and rates for unemployment in the South. The region has higher rates than any other region. (*August 2011, Bureau of Labor Statistics.*)

Unemployment: Highest to lowest

4. South Carolina (11.1%)
5. Florida (10.7%)
7. North Carolina (10.4%)
8. Mississippi (10.3%)
9. Georgia (10.2%)
10. Alabama (9.9%)
12. Tennessee (9.7%)
14. Kentucky (9.5%)
25. Arkansas (8.3%)
37. Louisiana (7.2%)
40. Virginia (6.3%)

TAXES

South's tax burden typically low

The amount of state and local taxes paid by Southerners typically is lower than the rest of the country. Only Arkansans pay more than the national average of 9.8 percent, according to the Tax Foundation.

Tax burden: Highest to lowest (2009)

14. Arkansas (9.9%)
16. North Carolina (9.8%)
30. Kentucky (9.3%)
31. Florida (9.2%)
32. Georgia (9.1%)
32. Virginia (9.1%)
36. Mississippi (8.7%)
40. Alabama (8.5%)
42. Louisiana (8.2%)
43. South Carolina (8.1%)

ECONOMY**South split on growth**

Southern states have a wide range of rankings on the amount of economic growth they had in 2010 compared to 2009, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Real GDP change: Highest to lowest

6. Tennessee (3.5% growth)
8. North Carolina (3.4%)
9. Kentucky (3.2%)
19. Louisiana (2.6%)
20. Virginia (2.6%)
21. South Carolina (2.6%)
24. Arkansas (2.3%)
29. Alabama (2.0%)
40. Florida (1.4%)
41. Georgia (1.4%)
45. Mississippi (1.1%)

CHILDREN**Not the top place to grow up**

While many fondly recall a great childhood in the South, the region tends to be a tougher place for kids to grow up in than other areas of the country, according to the 2011 KidsCount survey. It shows seven of the worst places for children in the country are Southern states.

KidsCount rank: Best to worst

14. Virginia
36. Florida
38. North Carolina
39. Tennessee
41. Kentucky
42. Georgia
45. South Carolina
47. Arkansas
48. Alabama
49. Louisiana
50. Mississippi

POVERTY**South is chronically poor**

Seven Southern states are among the 10 with the highest percentage of residents at or below the poverty line, according to 2010 Census figures. See the full *Briefing Book* to find rates of poverty for children.

Poverty: Highest to lowest

1. Mississippi (22.7% in poverty)
2. Louisiana (21.6%)
3. Georgia (18.7%)
7. Kentucky (17.7%)
8. North Carolina (17.4%)
9. Alabama (17.3%)
10. South Carolina (17.0%)
12. Tennessee (16.7%)
17. Florida (16.0%)
19. Arkansas (15.5%)
41. Virginia (10.7%)

EDUCATION**Grad rates below average in South**

Rates of graduation from public high schools in the South tend to fall below the national graduation percentage of three in four students (74.7 percent), according to 2007-08 data from the National Center for Education Statistics.

Graduation: Highest to lowest

23. Virginia (77.0%)
25. Arkansas (76.4%)
31. Tennessee (74.9%)
32. Kentucky (74.4%)
36. North Carolina (72.8%)
43. Alabama (69.0%)
44. Florida (66.9%)
46. Georgia (65.4%)
47. Mississippi (63.8%)
48. Louisiana (63.5%)
49. South Carolina (62.2%)

ENVIRONMENT**South is less green**

Southern states rank in the middle and low end of Greenopia's 2011 multi-dimensional ranking of "green-friendly" states.

Green-friendly: Highest to lowest

16. Florida
21. Georgia
23. Arkansas
25. North Carolina
26. Virginia
34. South Carolina
35. Tennessee
41. Mississippi
42. Alabama
46. Kentucky
49. Louisiana

HEALTH CARE**South is most unhealthy region**

Southerners tend to be the country's most obese people and have among the top rates of diabetes, hypertension and infant mortality in the country. At least seven Southern states are in the top 10 highest for each category:

Health rankings (1=highest rate in the U.S.)

State	Diabetes	Obesity	Hypertension	Infant mortality
AL	1	2	3	3
AR	11	9	7	15
FL	10	29	15	24
GA	12	17	11	9
KY	6	6	7	28
LA	4	5	4	4
MS	3	1	1	2
NC	13	14	10	6
SC	8	8	9	5
TN	5	4	5	8
VA	29	30	25	13
# of So. states in top 10				
	7	7	8	7

SAFETY**South is most violent region**

Five Southern states are among the 10 in the nation with the highest crime rates, according to FBI data from 2010. While the Bureau cautions against ranking states, the comparisons are compelling:

Violent crime: Highest to lowest

3. Tennessee (613.3 crimes/100K people)
4. South Carolina (597.7)
7. Louisiana (549.0)
9. Florida (542.4)
10. Arkansas (505.3)
19. Georgia (403.3)
21. Alabama (377.8)
24. North Carolina (363.4)
35. Mississippi (269.7)
41. Kentucky (242.6)
45. Virginia (213.6)

CIVICS**South low in voter participation**

Eight states are among the 20 in the U.S. with the lowest participation in elections in 2008, according to the U.S. Elections Project:

Voting participation: Lowest to highest

3. Arkansas (52.6% of eligible voters)
8. Tennessee (57%)
9. Kentucky (57.9%)
14. Louisiana (61.1%)
16. Alabama (61.4%)
16. Mississippi (61.4%)
18. Georgia (61.5%)
30. North Carolina (66.1%)
35. Florida (66.9%)
41. Virginia (67.5%)

MORE INFO

To learn more about any of this data, please check out the full report, 2011 Briefing Book of the South, at www.BetterSouth.org.



Alabama Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.

General demographics

- Population:** 4,779,736 (23rd largest)
- White: 68.5% (3.6% growth)
 - Black: 26.2% (8.3% growth)
 - Hispanic: 3.9% (144.8% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 48 of 50 (3rd lowest)
- Median household income:** \$40,976 (5th lowest)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 9.9% (10th highest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 25th highest
- Tax burden:** 8.5% (11th lowest)
- Economic growth:** 2.0 percent (29th highest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 17.5% (6th highest)
- Child poverty:** 24% (5th highest)
- Food insecurity:** 17.8% (5th highest)
- TANF assistance:** 11.2 per 1,000 (21st highest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 69% (8th lowest)
- Expenditures:** \$10,496 per pupil (23rd highest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 18th highest
- College-going:** 66.7% (14th highest)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 42 of 50 (9th least green)
- Renewable capacity:** 3,863 mW (6th highest)
- Energy use:** 405 million BTUs (12th highest)
- Energy spending:** \$4,040/person (12th highest)
- Coal consumed:** 30 million tons (11th highest)
- CO² emissions:** 139 million tons (14th highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 12.2% (1st in nation)
- Adult obesity rate:** 32.3% (2nd highest)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 33.9% (3rd highest)
- Infant mortality:** 9.9/1,000 births (3rd highest)
- Premature births:** 15.7% (2nd highest)
- Teen pregnancy:** 53/1,000 births (12th highest)
- Adult smoking:** 22.5% (6th highest)
- Cigarette tax:** \$0.425/pack (4th lowest)
- Without health insurance:** 16.9 % (15th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 449.8/100K people (21st highest)
- Domestic violence:** 2.64/100K people (2nd highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 1.6 deaths per 100M miles
(6th highest rate, shared with NV)
- Freedom:** 19th highest
- Voter participation:** 61.4% (16th lowest)



Arkansas Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.

General demographics

- Population:** 2,915,918 (32nd largest)
- White: 77% (5% growth)
 - Black: 15.4% (7.4 growth)
 - Hispanic: 6.4% (114.2% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 47 of 50 (4th lowest)
- Median household income:** \$38,571 (2nd lowest)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 8.3% (25th highest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 32nd highest
- Tax burden:** 9.9% (14th highest)
- Economic growth:** 2.3 percent (24th highest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 18.8% (2nd highest)
- Child poverty:** 27% (2nd highest)
- Food insecurity:** 17.8% (5th highest)
- TANF assistance:** 6.6 per 1,000 (12th lowest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 76.4% (25th highest)
- Expenditures:** \$10,541 per pupil (25th highest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 2nd highest
- College-going:** 62.5% (28th highest)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 23 of 50 (23rd greenest)
- Renewable capacity:** 1,659 mW (18th highest)
- Energy use:** 365 million BTUs (17th highest)
- Energy spending:** \$3,655/person (24th highest)
- Coal consumed:** 15.3 million tons (27th highest)
- CO² emissions:** 64.8 million tons (33rd highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 9.8% (11th in nation)
- Adult obesity rate:** 30.6% (9th highest)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 31.6% (7th highest)
- Infant mortality:** 7.6/1,000 births (15th highest)
- Premature births:** 13.5% (10th highest)
- Teen pregnancy:** 62/1,000 births (4th highest)
- Adult smoking:** 21.5% (11th highest)
- Cigarette tax:** \$1.15/pack (29th highest)
- Without health insurance:** 19.2 % (8th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 505.3/100K people (10th highest)
- Domestic violence:** 1.09/100K people (27th highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 1.8 deaths per 100M miles
(4th highest rate, shared with MS and WV)
- Freedom:** 28th highest
- Voter participation:** 52.6% (3rd lowest)



Florida Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.

General demographics

Population: 18.8 million (4th largest)

- White: 75.0% (13.2% growth)
- Black: 16.0% (28.4% growth)
- Hispanic: 22.5% (57.4% growth)
- Asian: 2.4% (70.8% growth)

Kids' well-being: 36 of 50 (15th lowest)

Median household income: \$44,243 (13th lowest)

Economy

Unemployment: 10.7% (5th highest, Aug. 2011)

Business climate: 26th highest

Tax burden: 9.2% (20th lowest)

Economic growth: 1.4 percent (40th highest)

Poverty

Poverty rate: 14.9% (18th highest)

Child poverty: 21% (17th highest)

Food insecurity: 17.1% (11th highest)

TANF assistance: 5.6 per 1,000 (9th lowest)

Education

Graduation rate: 66.9% (6th lowest)

Expenditures: \$9,810 per pupil (13th highest)

Teacher climate/quality: 4th highest

College-going: 58.8% (38th highest)

Environment and energy

Greenest: 16th greenest

Renewable capacity: 1,093 mW (29th highest)

Energy use: 232 million BTUs (9th lowest)

Energy spending: \$2,947/person (6th lowest)

Coal consumed: 24 million tons (17th highest)

CO² emissions: 240 million tons (6th highest)

Health care

Adult diabetes rate: 9.9% (10th highest)

Adult obesity rate: 26.1% (29th highest)

Adult hypertension rate: 29% (15th highest)

Infant mortality: 7.1/1,000 births (24th highest)

Premature births: 13.8% (6th highest)

Teen pregnancy: 42.5/1,000 births (30th highest)

Adult smoking: 17.1% (17th lowest)

Cigarette tax: \$1.339/pack (26th highest)

Without health insurance: 22.4 % (2nd highest)

Safety and freedom

Violent crime: 542.4/100K people (9th highest)

Domestic violence: Info not available

Traffic fatalities: 1.5 deaths per 100M miles
(7th highest rate, shared with AZ, ID, OK, TN)

Freedom: 11th highest

Voter participation: 66.9% (16th highest)



Georgia Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.

General demographics

- Population:** 9,687,653 (9th largest)
- White: 59.7% (8.6% growth)
 - Black: 30.5% (25.6% growth)
 - Hispanic: 8.8% (96.1% growth)
 - Asian: 3.2% (81.6% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 42 of 50 (9th lowest)
- Median household income:** \$44,108 (12th lowest)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 10.2% (9th highest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 8th highest
- Tax burden:** 9.1% (19th lowest)
- Economic growth:** 1.4 percent (10th lowest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 17.5% (11th highest)
- Child poverty:** 22% (11th highest)
- Food insecurity:** 17.8% (5th highest)
- TANF assistance:** 3.9 per 1,000 (3rd lowest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 65.4% (5th lowest)
- Expenditures:** \$9,897 per pupil (16th lowest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 8th highest
- College-going:** 69.6% (7th highest)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 21st greenest
- Renewable capacity:** 2,648 mW (12th highest)
- Energy use:** 300.5 million BTUs (29th highest)
- Energy spending:** \$3,281/person (15th lowest)
- Coal consumed:** 33 million tons (9th highest)
- CO² emissions:** 174.4 million tons (11th highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 9.7% (12th highest)
- Adult obesity rate:** 28.7% (17th highest)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 29.5% (11th highest)
- Infant mortality:** 8/1,000 births (9th highest)
- Premature births:** 13.4% (12th highest)
- Teen pregnancy:** 51.8/1,000 births (13th highest)
- Adult smoking:** 17.7% (23rd lowest)
- Cigarette tax:** \$0.37/pack (3rd lowest)
- Without health insurance:** 20.5 % (5th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 403.3/100K people (19th highest)
- Domestic violence:** 1.80/100K people (6th highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 1.5 deaths per 100M miles
(8th highest rate with 6 other states)
- Freedom:** 15th highest
- Voter participation:** 61.5% (18th lowest)

Kentucky Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.



General demographics

- Population:** 4,339,367 (26th largest)
- White: 87.8% (4.6% growth)
 - Black: 7.8% (14% growth)
 - Hispanic: 3.1% (122% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 41 of 50 (10th worst)
- Median household income:** \$41,236 (6th lowest)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 9.5% (14th highest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 31st best
- Tax burden:** 9.3% (21st lowest)
- Economic growth:** 3.2 percent (9th highest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 18.6% (7rd highest)
- Child poverty:** 25% (4th highest)
- Food insecurity:** 16.8% (15th highest)
- TANF assistance:** 14.3 per 1,000 (15th highest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 74.4% (32nd highest)
- Expenditures:** \$9,893 per pupil (15th lowest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 15th highest
- College-going:** 60.9% (32nd highest)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 46 of 50 (5th least green)
- Renewable capacity:** 893 mW (31st highest)
- Energy use:** 435.2 million BTUs (8th highest)
- Energy spending:** \$4,053/person (11th highest)
- Coal consumed:** 41.5 million tons (7th highest)
- CO² emissions:** 154.9 million tons (12th highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 10.5% (6th in nation)
- Adult obesity rate:** 31.5% (6th highest)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 31.6% (7th highest)
- Infant mortality:** 6.7/1,000 births (28th highest)
- Premature births:** 14.0% (5th highest)
- Teen pregnancy:** 55.6/1,000 births (7th highest)
- Adult smoking:** 25.6% (Highest in the nation)
- Cigarette tax:** \$0.60/pack (11th lowest)
- Without health insurance:** 16.2 % (16th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 242.6/100K people (10th lowest)
- Domestic violence:** 1.64/100K people (12th highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 1.7 deaths per 100M miles (5th highest rate with WY)
- Freedom:** 32nd highest
- Voter participation:** 57.9% (9th lowest)



Louisiana Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.

General demographics

- Population:** 4,533,372 (25th largest)
- White: 62.6% (down 0.7%)
 - Black: 32% (0% growth)
 - Hispanic: 4.2% (78% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 49 of 50 (2nd worst)
- Median household income:** \$39,443 (4th lowest)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 7.2% (13th lowest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 7th worst
- Tax burden:** 8.2% (9th lowest)
- Economic growth:** 2.6 percent (19th highest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 17.3% (7th highest)
- Child poverty:** 24% (5th highest)
- Food insecurity:** 14.6% (27th highest)
- TANF assistance:** 5.2 per 1,000 (7th lowest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 63.5% (3rd lowest)
- Expenditures:** \$11,540 per pupil (20th highest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 3rd highest
- College-going:** 65.3% (21st highest)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 49 of 50 (2nd least green)
- Renewable capacity:** 579 mW (38th highest)
- Energy use:** 749.6 million BTUs (3rd highest)
- Energy spending:** \$5,390/person (4th highest)
- Coal consumed:** 16 million tons (26th highest)
- CO² emissions:** 174.8 million tons (10th highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 10.7% (4th highest)
- Adult obesity rate:** 31.6% (5th highest)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 32.5% (4th highest)
- Infant mortality:** 9.2/1,000 births (4th highest)
- Premature births:** 15.4% (3rd highest)
- Teen pregnancy:** 54.1/1,000 births (9th highest)
- Adult smoking:** 22.1% (7th highest)
- Cigarette tax:** \$0.36/pack (2nd lowest)
- Without health insurance:** 17.6 % (13th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 549/100K people (7th highest)
- Domestic violence:** 1.99/100K people (3rd highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 2 deaths per 100M miles
(2nd highest rate in U.S.)
- Freedom:** 35th highest
- Voter participation:** 61.1% (14th lowest)

Mississippi Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.



General demographics

- Population:** 2,967,297 (31st largest)
- White: 59.1% (0.5% growth)
 - Black: 37% (6.2% growth)
 - Hispanic: 2.7% (106% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 50 of 50 (Lowest in U.S.)
- Median household income:** \$37,985 (Lowest)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 10.3% (8th highest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 48 of 50 (3rd worst)
- Tax burden:** 8.7% (15th lowest)
- Economic growth:** 1.1 percent (6th lowest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 21.9% (Highest in U.S.)
- Child poverty:** 30% (Highest in U.S.)
- Food insecurity:** 19.9% (Highest in U.S.)
- TANF assistance:** 8.5 per 1,000 (15th lowest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 63.9% (4th lowest)
- Expenditures:** \$9,498 per pupil (11th lowest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 8th worst
- College-going:** 77.4% (Highest in U.S.)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 41 of 50 (10th least green)
- Renewable capacity:** 229 mW (10th lowest)
- Energy use:** 386 million BTUs (15th highest)
- Energy spending:** \$3,878/person (17th highest)
- Coal consumed:** 10 million tons (33rd highest)
- CO² emissions:** 63.7 million tons (34th highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 11.8% (3rd highest)
- Adult obesity rate:** 34.4% (Highest in U.S.)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 34.8% (Highest in U.S.)
- Infant mortality:** 10/1,000 births (2nd highest)
- Premature births:** 18.5% (Highest in U.S.)
- Teen pregnancy:** 65.7/1,000 births (Highest in U.S.)
- Adult smoking:** 23.3% (3rd highest)
- Cigarette tax:** \$0.68/pack (14th lowest)
- Without health insurance:** 17.6% (13th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 269.7/100K people (35th highest)
- Domestic violence:** 1.51/100K people (16th highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 1.8 deaths per 100M miles
(4th highest rate, shared with AR and WV)
- Freedom:** 24th highest
- Voter participation:** 61.4% (16th lowest)



North Carolina Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.

General demographics

- Population:** 9,535,483 (10th largest)
- White: 68.5% (12.5% growth)
 - Black: 21.5% (17.9% growth)
 - Hispanic: 8.4% (111% growth)
 - Asian: 2.2% (83.8% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 33 of 50 (13th worst)
- Median household income:** \$43,753 (11th lowest)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 10.4% (7th highest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 3rd best
- Tax burden:** 9.8% (15th lowest)
- Economic growth:** 3.4 percent (8th highest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 17.4% (8th highest)
- Child poverty:** 22% (13th highest)
- Food insecurity:** 18.2% (3rd highest)
- TANF assistance:** 4.8 per 1,000 (5th lowest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 72.8% (14th lowest)
- Expenditures:** \$8,261 per pupil (3rd lowest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 6th best
- College-going:** 66% (16th highest)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 25 of 50 (25th greenest)
- Renewable capacity:** 2,294 mW (13th highest)
- Energy use:** 272 million BTUs (37th highest)
- Energy spending:** \$3,100/person (6th lowest)
- Coal consumed:** 27.9 million tons (13th highest)
- CO² emissions:** 150.1 million tons (13th highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 9.6% (13th highest)
- Adult obesity rate:** 29.4% (14th highest)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 29.9% (10th highest)
- Infant mortality:** 8.5/1,000 births (6th highest)
- Premature births:** 12.9% (15th highest)
- Teen pregnancy:** 49.4/1,000 births (14th highest)
- Adult smoking:** 20.3% (14th highest)
- Cigarette tax:** \$0.45/pack (6th lowest)
- Without health insurance:** 18% (10th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 363.4/100K people (24th highest)
- Domestic violence:** 1.27/100K people (23rd highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 1.4 deaths per 100M miles (8th highest rate, shared with 6 other states)
- Freedom:** 18th highest
- Voter participation:** 66.1% (21st highest)

South Carolina Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.



General demographics

Population: 4,625,364 (24rd largest)

- White: 66.2% (13.5% growth)
- Black: 27.9% (8.9% growth)
- Hispanic: 5.1% (147.8% growth)

Kids' well-being: 45 of 50 (6th worst)

Median household income: \$41,709 (8th lowest)

Economy

Unemployment: 11.1% (4th highest, Aug. 2011)

Business climate: 34th highest

Tax burden: 8.1% (8th lowest)

Economic growth: 2.6 percent (21st highest)

Poverty

Poverty rate: 17.0% (10th highest)

Child poverty: 24% (5th highest)

Food insecurity: 17.8% (5th highest)

TANF assistance: 9.5 per 1,000 (21st lowest)

Education

Graduation rate: 62.2% (2nd lowest)

Expenditures: \$10,051 per pupil (19th lowest)

Teacher climate/quality: Highest in the U.S.

College-going: 70.1% (6th highest)

Environment and energy

Greenest: 34 of 50 (34th greenest)

Renewable capacity: 1,580 mW (23rd highest)

Energy use: 347.1 million BTUs (18th highest)

Energy spending: \$3,635/person (26th highest)

Coal consumed: 15 million tons (28th highest)

CO² emissions: 86 million tons (26th highest)

Health care

Adult diabetes rate: 10.4% (8th highest)

Adult obesity rate: 30.9% (8th highest)

Adult hypertension rate: 31.5% (9th highest)

Infant mortality: 8.6/1,000 births (5th highest)

Premature births: 14.3% (4th highest)

Teen pregnancy: 53.1/1,000 births (11th highest)

Adult smoking: 20.4% (12th highest)

Cigarette tax: \$0.57/pack (9th lowest)

Without health insurance: 17 % (14th highest)

Safety and freedom

Violent crime: 597.7/100K people (5th highest)

Domestic violence: 1.79/100K people (7th highest)

Traffic fatalities: 1.9 deaths per 100M miles
(3rd highest rate in U.S.)

Freedom: 26th highest

Voter participation: 58.5% (11th lowest)

Tennessee Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.



General demographics

- Population:** 6,346,105 (17th largest)
- White: 77.6% (7.9% growth)
 - Black: 16.7% (13.3% growth)
 - Hispanic: 4.8% (134.2% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 39 of 50 (12th lowest)
- Median household income:** \$38,686 (3rd lowest)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 9.7% (12th highest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 22nd highest
- Tax burden:** 7.6% (4th lowest)
- Economic growth:** 3.5 percent (6th highest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 16.7% (12th highest)
- Child poverty:** 23% (9th highest)
- Food insecurity:** 17.3% (10th highest)
- TANF assistance:** 24.8 per 1,000 (3rd highest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 74.9% (Above U.S. average)
- Expenditures:** \$8,507 per pupil (6th lowest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 19th highest
- College-going:** 61.6% (30th highest)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 35 of 50 (35th greenest)
- Renewable capacity:** 2,817 mW (11th highest)
- Energy use:** 339.5 million BTUs (20th highest)
- Energy spending:** \$3,639/person (25th highest)
- Coal consumed:** 23 million tons (18th highest)
- CO² emissions:** 120.1 million tons (17th highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 10.6% (5th highest)
- Adult obesity rate:** 31.9% (4th highest)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 32.2% (5th highest)
- Infant mortality:** 8.3/1,000 births (8th highest)
- Premature births:** 13.5% (8th highest)
- Teen pregnancy:** 55.6/1,000 births (7th highest)
- Adult smoking:** 22% (9th highest)
- Cigarette tax:** \$0.62/pack (11th lowest)
- Without health insurance:** 15.4 % (20th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 613.3/100K people (4th highest)
- Domestic violence:** 1.83/100K people (5th highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 1.5 deaths per 100M miles
(7th highest rate, shared with 4 other states)
- Freedom:** 16th highest
- Voter participation:** 57% (8th lowest)

Virginia Snapshot

A note about our numbers: The statistics below are summaries of our 2011 Briefing Book. While we were careful, there may be transcription errors. We encourage you to check the Briefing Book, which offers a direct link to each source.



General demographics

- Population:** 8,001,024 (12th largest)
- White: 68.6% (7.2% growth)
 - Black: 19.4% (11.6 growth)
 - Hispanic: 7.9% (91.7% growth)
 - Asian: 5.5% (68.5% growth)
- Kids' well-being:** 14 of 50 (14th best)
- Median household income:** \$60,363 (7th highest; Highest in the South)

Economy

- Unemployment:** 6.3% (10th lowest, Aug. 2011)
- Business climate:** 2nd highest ranking
- Tax burden:** 9.1% (18th lowest)
- Economic growth:** 2.6 percent (20th highest)

Poverty

- Poverty rate:** 10.7% (10th lowest)
- Child poverty:** 14% (11th lowest)
- Food insecurity:** 11.8% (8th lowest)
- TANF assistance:** 9.9 per 1,000 (24th lowest)

Education

- Graduation rate:** 77% (23rd highest)
- Expenditures:** \$9,851 per pupil (14th lowest)
- Teacher climate/quality:** 13th highest
- College-going:** 68.7% (9th highest)

Environment and energy

- Greenest:** 26 of 50 (26th greenest)
- Renewable capacity:** 1,403 mW (26th highest)
- Energy use:** 303.4 million BTUs (29th highest)
- Energy spending:** \$3,401/person (33rd highest)
- Coal consumed:** 13 million tons (30th highest)
- CO² emissions:** 118 million tons (18th highest)

Health care

- Adult diabetes rate:** 8.3% (29th highest)
- Adult obesity rate:** 25.9% (30th highest)
- Adult hypertension rate:** 27.2% (25th highest)
- Infant mortality:** 7.8/1,000 births (13th highest)
- Premature births:** 11.3% (18th highest)
- Teen pregnancy:** 33.5/1,000 births (15th lowest)
- Adult smoking:** 22.5% (33rd highest)
- Cigarette tax:** \$0.30/pack (Lowest in the U.S.)
- Without health insurance:** 13 % (36th highest)

Safety and freedom

- Violent crime:** 213.6/100K people (6th lowest)
- Domestic violence:** 1.57/100K people (14th highest)
- Traffic fatalities:** 1.0 deaths per 100M miles (4th lowest rate, tied with 4 other states)
- Freedom:** 9th highest
- Voter participation:** 67.5% (10th lowest)

Alabama

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

23rd most populated state. Some 4,779,736 people lived in Alabama in 2010, making it the 23rd largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/01000.html>

Population changing. While Hispanics make up just 3.9 percent of Alabama's population, the numbers of Hispanics in the state rose 144.8 percent from 2000 to 2010, according to the latest Census results. Whites make up 68.5 percent of the population; blacks comprise 26.2 percent of the population.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

Third worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, Alabama is currently ranked as the third worst state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

Fifth lowest income. The median household income in Alabama in 2010 was \$40,976, the fifth lowest level in the country.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

10th highest in unemployment. Alabama was tied in August 2011 with Illinois for having the nation's 10th highest unemployment rate of 9.9 percent -- almost a point above the national average of 9.1 percent

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

25th best state for business. *Forbes* Magazine rated Alabama as the 25th best state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Relatively low tax burden for Alabamians.

Residents faced the 11th lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 8.5 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

29th in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, Alabama's real gross domestic product grew by 2.0 percent, ranking it 29th best in economic growth.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

Ninth highest poverty rate. Alabama had the nation's ninth highest poverty rate at 17.3 percent, according to the 2010 Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpv21.xls>

Fifth highest poverty in children. Alabama is tied with Louisiana for having the nation's fifth highest poverty rate (24 percent) for children under 18, according to 2009 Census figures..

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

Fifth highest in food insecurity. Some 17.8 percent of people in Alabama struggle to eat as the state is tied with Arkansas, Georgia and Texas for having the fifth highest food insecurity in the country, according to Feeding America.

Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at: <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Below U.S. average on federal assistance.

Some 11.2 out of every 1,000 Alabamians receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. The

state ranks 21st highest out of 50. The federal average is 14.3 per 1,000 people.

Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

Low graduation rate. Just over two-thirds of Alabama's public high school students (69 percent) graduated on time, the eighth lowest rank in the country, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

23rd highest in per-pupil expenditures.

Alabama spent \$10,496 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

18th in teacher climate. Alabama ranked 18th highest nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine.

<http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

14th most college-going. Some 66.7 percent of Alabama's high school graduates -- the 14th highest rate in the country -- go to college directly after graduating from high school.

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

42nd greenest state. Alabama ranks ninth worst on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. While better than average on water quality, the site said it could use significant improvement on its recycling rate as well as reducing emissions, energy use and water use.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=44

Sixth best renewable capacity. Alabama had the nation's sixth best renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 3,863 megawatts of net

summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

12th highest energy consumption. Alabamians consumed 405 million btus of energy from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

12th highest expenditure on energy.

Alabamians paid \$4,040 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain_html/rank_pr.html

11th in coal consumption. Alabama burned 30 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

14th highest CO2 emissions. Alabama emitted more 139 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

Highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's highest rate of adult diabetes (12.2 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.")

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AL>

Second highest obesity rate. Some 32.3 percent of Alabamians are obese, the second-highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AL>

Third highest in hypertension. Alabamians had the nation's third highest hypertension rate with 33.9 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AL>

Third highest in infant mortality. Some 9.9 out of every 1,000 live births in Alabama result in

infant death, the third highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AL>

Second highest in premature births. Some 15.7 percent of births in Alabama in 2008 were premature, the second-highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?typ=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

High births to teen mothers. Some 53 of every 1,000 babies born in Alabama were to teen mothers, the 12th highest rate in the country, according to CDC data for 2008.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

Smoking prevalent in Alabama. A 2010 report ranked Alabama as having the sixth highest adult smoking rate. Some 22.5 percent of Alabamians smoke.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Low cigarette tax. Alabama has the nation's fourth lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.425 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Nearly 17 percent are uninsured. Some 16.9 percent of Alabamians had no health insurance, the 15th highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AL>

Safety and freedom

21st highest in violent crime. Alabama has the nation's 21st highest rate of violent crime with 377.8 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

Second highest domestic violence rate.

Alabama had the second highest rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 2.64 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

Sixth highest rate of traffic fatalities. Alabama and Nevada shared the sixth highest rate of traffic deaths in 2008 with 1.6 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

19th in freedom. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Alabama ranks 19th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

16th lowest in voter participation. Some 61.4 percent of Alabamians participated in the 2008 general election, the 16th lowest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

Arkansas

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

32nd most populated state. Some 2,915,918 people lived in Arkansas in 2010, making it the 32nd largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/05000.html>

Population changing. While Hispanics make up just 6.4 percent of Arkansas's population, the numbers of Hispanics in the state rose 114.2 percent from 2000 to 2010, according to the latest Census results. Whites make up 77 percent of the population; blacks comprise 15.4 percent of the population.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

Fourth worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, Arkansas is currently ranked as the fourth worst state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

Second lowest income. The median household income in Arkansas in 2010 was \$38,571, the second lowest level in the country.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

Below national average in joblessness.

While Arkansas had the nation's 25th highest unemployment rate at 8.3 percent in August 2011, its rate is almost a full percentage point below the national 9.1 percent rate.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

32nd best state for business. *Forbes* Magazine rated Arkansas as the 32nd best state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Average tax burden for Arkansans.

Residents faced the 14th highest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 9.9 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation. The national average was 9.8 percent.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

24th in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, Arkansas's real gross domestic product grew by 2.3 percent, ranking it 24th best in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

19th highest poverty rate. Arkansas had the nation's second highest poverty rate at 15.5 percent, according to the 2010 Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

Second highest poverty in children.

Arkansas had the nation's second highest poverty rate (27 percent) for children under 18, according to 2009 Census figures..

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

Fifth highest in food insecurity. Some 17.8 percent of people in Arkansas struggle to eat as the state is tied with Alabama, Georgia and Texas for having the fifth highest food insecurity in the country, according to Feeding America. Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at:

<http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Below U.S. average on federal assistance.

Some 6.6 out of every 1,000 Arkansans receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. The state ranks 12th lowest in the U.S. The federal average is 14.3 per 1,000 people.

Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education**Above average graduation rate.**

Although ranked 25th nationally in graduation rate, some 76.4 percent of Arkansas's public high school students graduated on time -- almost two points above the national 74.7 percent rate, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

25th highest in per-pupil expenditures.

Arkansas spent \$10,541 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

Second highest in teacher climate.

Arkansas ranked second highest nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine.

<http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

28th most college-going. Some 62.5 percent of Arkansas's high school graduates -- the 28th highest rate in the country -- go to college directly after graduating from high school.

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

23rd greenest state. Arkansas rank 23rd best on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. While

the state has "very good" air quality, "extremely clean" waterways and a solid recycling rate, it struggles with emissions, water consumption and energy usage, the organization says.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=29

18th best renewable capacity. Arkansas had the nation's 18th best renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 1,659 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

17th highest energy consumption.

Arkansans consumed 365 million btus of energy from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

24th highest expenditure on energy.

Arkansans paid \$3,655 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

27th highest in coal consumption. Arkansas burned 15.3 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

33rd highest CO2 emissions. Arkansas emitted 64.8 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

11th highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's 11th highest rate of adult diabetes (9.8 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.")

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AR>

Ninth highest obesity rate. Some 30.6 percent of Arkansans are obese, the ninth-

highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AL>

Seventh highest in hypertension.

Arkansans had the nation's seventh highest hypertension rate with 31.6 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AR>

15th highest in infant mortality. Some 7.6 out of every 1,000 live births in Arkansas result in infant death, the 15th highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AR>

High in premature births. Some 13.5 percent of births in Arkansas in 2008 were premature, the 10th-highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?typ=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

High births to teen mothers. Some 62 of every 1,000 babies born in Arkansas were to teen mothers, the fourth highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

Smoking prevalent in Arkansas. A 2010 report ranked Arkansas as having the 11th highest adult smoking rate. Some 21.5 percent of Arkansans smoke.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Moderate cigarette tax. Arkansas has the nation's 29th highest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$1.15 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Nearly 20 percent are uninsured. Some 19.2 percent of Arkansans had no health insurance, the eighth highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AR>

Safety and freedom

10th highest in violent crime. Arkansas has the nation's 10th highest rate of violent crime with 505.3 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

27th highest domestic violence rate.

Arkansas is tied for the 27th highest rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.09 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

Fourth highest rate of traffic fatalities.

Arkansas and Mississippi shared the fourth highest rank in traffic deaths with 1.8 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

28th in freedom. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Arkansas ranks 28th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

Third lowest in voter participation. Some 52.6 percent of Arkansans participated in the 2008 general election, the third lowest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html



Florida

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.

General demographics

Fourth most populated state. Some 18.8 million people lived in Florida in 2010, making it the 4th largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/12000.html>

Population shifting. Hispanics make up 22.5 percent of Florida's population, an increase of 57.4 percent from 2000 to 2010, according to the latest Census results. Whites make up 75 percent of the population; blacks comprise 16 percent of the population.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

15th worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, Florida is currently ranked as the 15th worst state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

13th lowest income. The median household income in Florida in 2010 was \$44,243, the 13th lowest level in the country.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

Fifth highest in joblessness. The unemployment rate in Florida in August 2011 was 10.7 percent. The national rate was 9.1 percent for the same month.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

26th best state for business. *Forbes* Magazine rated Florida as the 26th best state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Average tax burden for Floridians.

Residents faced the 20th lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 9.2 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation. The national average was 9.8 percent.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

40th in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, Florida's real gross domestic product grew by 1.4 percent, ranking it 40 out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

16th highest poverty rate. Florida had the nation's 16th highest poverty rate at 16.0 percent, according to a 2010 Census report.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

Average in child poverty. Some 21 percent of Florida's children under 18 lived in poverty – the same percentage as the national average, according to 2009 Census figures. The state ranked 17th highest.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

11th highest in food insecurity. Some 17.1 percent of people in Florida – more than 3.1 million people – struggle to eat as the state is tied with three other states for having the 11th highest food insecurity in the country, according to Feeding America. Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at:

<http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Below U.S. average on federal assistance.

Some 5.6 out of every 1,000 Floridians receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. The

state ranks ninth lowest in the U.S. The federal average is 14.3 per 1,000 people.

Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

Below average graduation rate. Some 66.9 percent of Florida's public high school students graduated on time, the nation's sixth lowest rank, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

13th lowest in per-pupil expenditures.

Florida spent \$9,810 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

Fourth highest in teacher climate. Florida ranked fourth highest nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine.

<http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

38th most college-going. Some 58.8 percent of Florida's high school graduates -- the 38th highest rate in the country -- go to college directly after graduating from high school.

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

16th greenest state. Florida ranks 16th best on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. The state "very clean" air, an above average recycling rate. It scores well on water and energy consumption. But it is worse than average in water quality and lost points on its renewable energy usage, the organization says.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=29

29th on renewable capacity. Florida had the nation's 29th highest renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 1,093 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

Ninth lowest in energy consumption.

Floridians consumed 232 million btus of energy from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

Sixth lowest in energy spending. Floridians paid \$2,947 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

17th highest in coal consumption. Florida burned 24 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

Sixth highest in CO2 emissions. Florida emitted more than 240 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

10th highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's 10th highest rate of adult diabetes (9.9 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.") <http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AR>

29th highest obesity rate. Some 26.1 percent of Floridians are obese, the 29th highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AL>

15th highest in hypertension. Floridians had the nation's 15th highest hypertension rate with 29 percent of adults with the

condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AR>

24th highest in infant mortality. Some 7.1 out of every 1,000 live births in Florida result in infant death, the 24th highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AR>

High in premature births. Some 13.8 percent of births in Florida in 2008 were premature, the sixth-highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?typ=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

30th in births to teen mothers. Some 42.5 of every 1,000 babies born in Florida were to teen mothers, the 30th highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

Smoking below average in Florida. A 2010 report ranked Florida as having the 17th lowest adult smoking rate. Some 17.1 percent of Floridians smoke.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Moderate cigarette tax. Florida has the nation's 26th highest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$1.339 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Second highest in uninsured adults. Some 22.4 percent of Floridians had no health insurance, the second highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=AR>

Safety and freedom

Ninth highest in violent crime. Florida has the nation's ninth highest rate of violent crime with 542.4 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

Domestic violence rate.

Data on Florida's domestic violence rate was not available, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

7th highest rate of traffic fatalities. Florida and four other states shared the seventh highest rate in traffic deaths in 2008 with 1.5 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

11th most free. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Florida ranks 11th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

16th highest in voter participation. Some 66.9 percent of Floridians participated in the 2008 general election, the 16th highest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

Georgia

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

Ninth most populated state. Some 9,687,653 people lived in Georgia in 2010, making it the ninth largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13000.html>

Population shifting. Less than 60 percent of Georgians (59.7 percent) are white, outpaced by larger percentage increases in minority populations. Hispanics, which comprise 8.8 percent of Georgians increased 96.1 percent from 2000 to 2010, according to the latest Census results.

Blacks, who make up 30.5 percent of Georgians, increased 25.6 percent.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

Ninth worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, Georgia is currently ranked as the ninth worst state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

12th lowest income. The median household income in Georgia in 2010 was \$44,108, the 12th lowest level in the country.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

Ninth highest in joblessness. The unemployment rate in Georgia in August 2011 was 10.2 percent, the nation's ninth highest. The national rate was 9.1 percent for the same month.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

Eighth best state for business. *Forbes* Magazine rated Georgia as the eighth best state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Average tax burden for Georgians.

Residents faced the 19th lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 9.1 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation. The national average was 9.8 percent.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

41st in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, Georgia's real gross domestic product grew by 1.4 percent, ranking it 41st out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

Third highest poverty rate. Georgia had the nation's third highest poverty rate at 18.7 percent, according to the 2010 Census. More than 1.8 million people lived at or below the poverty level.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

Average in child poverty. Some 22 percent of Georgia's children under 18 lived in poverty – slightly above the national average, according to 2009 Census figures. The state was tied for the 11th highest rate.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

Fifth highest in food insecurity. Some 17.8 percent of people in Georgia – just under 1.7 million people – struggle to eat as the state is tied with three other states for

having the fifth highest food insecurity in the country, according to Feeding America.

Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at: <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Third lowest on federal assistance. Some 3.9 out of every 1,000 Georgians receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. The state ranks third lowest in the U.S. The federal average is 14.3 per 1,000 people.

Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

Below average graduation rate. Some 65.4 percent of Georgia's public high school students graduated on time, the nation's fifth lowest rank, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

16th lowest in per-pupil expenditures.

Georgia spent \$9,897 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

Eighth in teacher climate. Georgia ranked eighth highest nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine.

<http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

Seventh most college-going. Some 69.6 percent of Georgia's high school graduates - the nation's seventh highest rate -- go to college directly after graduating.

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

21st greenest state. Georgia rank 21st best on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia. The state has

better than average water quality, an average recycling rate and performs very well on per capita emissions and water consumption. But it does not fare too well in air quality measures and does not use renewable energy well, the organization says.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=29

12th on renewable capacity. Georgia had the nation's 12th best renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 2,648 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

Average in energy consumption. Georgians consumed 300.5 million btus of energy (29th highest in the country) from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

15th lowest in energy spending. Georgians paid \$3,281 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

Ninth highest coal consumption. Georgia burned 33 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

11th highest in CO2 emissions. Georgia emitted more than 174.4 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

12th highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's 12th highest rate of adult diabetes (9.7 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.")

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=ga>

17th highest obesity rate. Some 28.7 percent of Georgians are obese, the 17th

highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=ga>

11th highest in hypertension. Georgians had the nation's 11th highest hypertension rate with 29.5 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=ga>

Ninth highest in infant mortality. Some eight out of every 1,000 live births in Georgia result in infant death, the ninth highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=ga>

High in premature births. Some 13.4 percent of births in Georgia in 2008 were premature, the 12th highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ty=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

13th highest in births to teen mothers. Some 51.8 of every 1,000 babies born in Georgia were to teen mothers, the 13th highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

Smoking is average in Georgia. A 2010 report ranked Georgia as having the 23rd lowest adult smoking rate. Some 17.7 percent of Georgians smoke.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Third lowest cigarette tax. Georgia has the nation's third lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.37 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Fifth highest in uninsured adults. Some 20.5 percent of Georgians had no health insurance, the fifth highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust. <http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=ga>

Safety and freedom

19th highest in violent crime. Georgia has the nation's 19th highest rate of violent crime with 403.3 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

Sixth highest domestic violence rate.

Georgia had the nation's sixth highest rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.8 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

8th highest rate in traffic fatalities. Georgia and six other states shared the eighth highest rate of traffic deaths in 2008 with 1.45 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

15th most free. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Georgia ranks 15th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

Average in voter participation. Some 61.5 percent of Georgians participated in the 2008 general election, the 18th lowest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

Kentucky

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

26th most populated state. Some 4,339,367 people lived in Kentucky in 2010, making it the 26th largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/21000.html>

Population shifting. While Kentucky has the highest percentage of white people of states in the South (87.8 percent), the percentage of people of Hispanic origin rose 122 percent to 3.1 percent of Kentuckians, according to the 2010 Census. Blacks made up 7.8 percent of Kentucky.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

10th worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, Kentucky is currently ranked as the 10th worst state for children in the U.S.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

Sixth lowest income. The median household income in Kentucky in 2010 was \$41,236, the sixth lowest level in the country.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

14th highest in joblessness. The unemployment rate in Kentucky in August 2011 was 9.5 percent, slightly over the national rate of 9.1 percent.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

In the middle on business. *Forbes* Magazine rated Kentucky as the 31st best state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Average tax burden for Kentuckians.

Residents faced the 21st lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 9.3 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation. The national average was 9.8 percent.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

Ninth highest in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, Kentucky's real gross domestic product grew by 3.2 percent, ranking it ninth out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

Seventh highest poverty rate. More than 758,000 Kentuckians -- 18.6 percent -- were below the poverty rate in 2009, making the state have the nation's seventh highest poverty rate, according to the 2010 Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

Fourth in child poverty. Some 25 percent of Kentucky's children under 18 lived in poverty, making the state have the nation's fourth highest rate of child poverty, according to 2009 Census figures..

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

15th highest in food insecurity. Some 16.8 percent of people in Kentucky -- just over 716,000 people -- struggle to eat as the state is tied with Missouri and Oregon for having the 15th highest food insecurity in the country, according to Feeding America.

Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at: <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Average on federal assistance. Some 14.3 out of every 1,000 Kentuckians receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. That's the 15th highest rate in the country, but also the U.S. average.

Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

32nd highest graduation rate. Some 74.4 percent of Kentucky's public high school students graduated on time, just a third of a point below the U.S. average, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

15th lowest in per-pupil expenditures.

Kentucky spent \$9,893 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

15th in teacher climate. Kentucky ranked 15th highest nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine.

<http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

32nd most college-going. Some 60.9 percent of Kentucky's high school graduates -- the nation's 32nd highest rate -- go to college directly after graduating.

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

Fifth least green state. Kentucky ranked 46th out of 50 on a measure of best states on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. While it has better than average air quality, water quality and recycling rates, the organization said Kentucky struggled with per capital energy consumption and emissions. It also

doesn't score well on green businesses or uses of renewable alternatives.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=39

31st on renewable capacity. Kentucky ranked 31st from the top in its renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 893 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

Eighth highest in energy consumption.

Kentuckians consumed 435.2 million btus of energy (8th highest in the country) from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

11th highest in energy spending.

Kentuckians paid \$4,053 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

Seventh highest coal consumption.

Kentucky burned 41.5 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

12th highest in CO2 emissions. Kentucky emitted more than 154.9 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

Sixth highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's sixth highest rate of adult diabetes (10.5 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.")

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=KY>

Sixth highest obesity rate. Some 31.5 percent of Kentuckians are obese, the sixth highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=KY>

Seventh highest in hypertension.

Kentuckians had the nation's seventh highest hypertension rate with 31.6 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=KY>

28th highest in infant mortality. Some 6.7 out of every 1,000 live births in Kentucky result in infant death, the 28th highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=KY>

Fifth highest in premature births. Some 14 percent of births in Kentucky in 2008 were premature, the fifth highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?tp=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

Seventh highest in births to teen mothers.

Some 55.6 of every 1,000 babies born in Kentucky were to teen mothers, yielding the state tied with Tennessee for the 7th highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

Highest in adult smoking. A 2010 report ranked Kentucky as having the nation's highest adult smoking rate. Some 25.6 percent of Kentuckians smoke, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

11th lowest cigarette tax. Kentucky has the nation's 11th lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.60 per pack. The national average is \$1.45 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

16th highest in uninsured adults. Some 16.2 percent of Kentuckians had no health insurance, the 16th highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust. <http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=KY>

Safety and freedom

10th lowest in violent crime. Kentucky has the nation's 10th lowest rate of violent crime with 242.6 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

12th highest domestic violence rate.

Kentucky had the nation's 12th highest rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.64 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

Fifth highest rate of traffic fatalities.

Kentucky and Wyoming shared the fifth highest rate of traffic deaths with 1.7 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

32nd most free. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Kentucky ranks 32nd out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

Low in voter participation. Some 57.9 percent of Kentuckians participated in the 2008 general election, the ninth lowest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

Louisiana

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

25th most populated state. Some 4,533,372 people lived in Louisiana in 2010, making it the 25th largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/22000.html>

Population shifting. Over the last 10 years, Louisiana's white population went down by 0.7 percent to 62.6 percent of the total of the state. Black population remained at 32 percent, while the Hispanic population grew by 78 percent to 4.2 percent of the total, according to the 2010 Census.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

Second worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, Louisiana is currently ranked as the second worst state for children in the U.S.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

Fourth lowest income. The median household income in Louisiana in 2010 was \$39,443, the fourth lowest level in the country.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

13th lowest in joblessness. Louisiana was tied in August 2011 with Minnesota for the nation's 13th lowest unemployment rate at 7.2 percent -- almost two points lower than the national rate of 9.1 percent.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

At the bottom for business. *Forbes* Magazine rated Louisiana as the seventh worst state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Low tax burden for Louisianans. Residents faced the ninth lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 8.2 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation. The national average was 9.8 percent.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

19th highest in growth. From 2009 to 2010, Louisiana's real gross domestic product grew by 2.6 percent, ranking it 19th out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

Second highest poverty rate. More than 958,000 Louisianans (21.6 percent) were below the poverty rate in 2010, making the state have the nation's second highest poverty rate, according to the U.S. Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

Fifth in child poverty. Some 24 percent of Louisiana's children under 18 lived in poverty, making the state have the nation's fifth highest rate of child poverty, according to 2009 Census figures. It tied with Alabama, South Carolina and Texas.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

In the middle in food insecurity. Some 14.6 percent of people in Louisiana -- just over 644,000 people -- struggle to eat. That's the nation's 27th highest food insecurity rate, according to Feeding America. Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at:

<http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Low on federal assistance. Some 5.2 out of every 1,000 Louisianans receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance

for Needy Families program. That's the seventh lowest rate in the country, but also the U.S. average.

Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

Low graduation rate. Some 63.5 percent of Louisiana's public high school students graduated on time, the third lowest rate in the country, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

20th highest in per-pupil expenditures.

Louisiana spent \$11,540 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

Third highest in teacher climate. Louisiana ranked third best nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine.

<http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

21st most college-going. Some 65.3 percent of Louisiana's high school graduates -- the nation's 21st highest rate -- go to college directly after graduating.

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

Second least green state. Louisiana ranked 49th out of 50 on a measure of best states on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. While average in green business density, the state was below average in air quality, water quality and renewable energy utilization. The study ranked it among the worst states in per capita energy use, water consumption and emissions.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=50

38th on renewable capacity. Louisiana ranked 38th from the top in its renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 579 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

Third highest in energy consumption.

Louisianans consumed 749.6 million btus of energy (3rd highest in the country) from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

Fourth highest in energy spending.

Louisianans paid \$5,390 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

26th highest coal consumption. Louisiana burned 16 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

10th highest in CO2 emissions. Louisiana emitted more than 174.8 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

Fourth highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's fourth highest rate of adult diabetes (10.7 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.")

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=LA>

Fifth highest obesity rate. Some 31.6 percent of Louisianans are obese, the fifth highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=LA>

Fifth highest in hypertension. Louisianans had the nation's fourth highest

hypertension rate with 32.5 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=LA>

Fourth highest in infant mortality. Some 9.2 out of every 1,000 live births in Louisiana result in infant death, the fourth highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=LA>

Third highest in premature births. Some 15.4 percent of births in Louisiana in 2008 were premature, the third highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?typ=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

Ninth highest in births to teen mothers.

Some 54.1 of every 1,000 babies born in Louisiana were to teen mothers. That's the ninth highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

Seventh highest in adult smoking. A 2010 report ranked Louisiana with the nation's seventh highest adult smoking rate. Some 22.1 percent of Louisianans smoke, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Second lowest cigarette tax. Louisiana has the nation's second lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.36 per pack. The national average is \$1.45 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

13th highest in uninsured adults. Some 17.6 percent of Louisianans had no health insurance, the 13th highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=LA>

Safety and freedom

Seventh highest in violent crime. Louisiana has the nation's seventh highest rate of violent crime with 549 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

Third highest domestic violence rate.

Louisiana had the nation's third highest rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.99 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

Second highest rate of in traffic fatalities.

Louisiana had the second highest rate of traffic deaths in 2008 with 2.0 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

35th most free. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Louisiana ranks 35th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

Low in voter participation. Some 61.1 percent of Louisianans participated in the 2008 general election, the 14th lowest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html



Mississippi

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.

General demographics

31st most populated state. Some 2,967,297 people lived in Mississippi in 2010, making it the 31st largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/28000.html>

Population shifting. Over the last 10 years, Mississippi's white population dropped to 59.1 percent of the state's total. Black population grew to 37 percent while the Hispanic population grew by 106 percent to 2.7 percent of the total, according to the 2010 Census.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

Worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, Mississippi is currently ranked as the worst state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

Lowest median income. The median household income in Mississippi in 2010 was \$37,985, the lowest level in the country, according to the Census.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

8th highest in joblessness. The unemployment rate in Mississippi in August 2011 was 10.3 percent, some 1.2 points above the national rate of 9.1 percent.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

At the bottom for business. *Forbes* Magazine rated Mississippi as the third worst state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Relatively low tax burden for

Mississippians. Residents faced the 15th lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 8.7 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation. The national average was 9.8 percent.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

Low in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, Mississippi's real gross domestic product grew by 1.1 percent, ranking it 45th out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

Highest poverty rate. More than 664,000 Mississippians (22.7 percent) were below the poverty rate in 2010, making the state have the nation's highest poverty rate, according to the U.S. Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

First in child poverty. Some 30 percent of Mississippi's children under 18 lived in poverty, making the state have the nation's highest rate of child poverty, according to 2009 Census figures.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

Most food insecure. Some 19.9 percent of people in Mississippi – just over 582,000 people – struggle to eat. That's the nation's highest food insecurity rate, according to Feeding America. Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at:

<http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

In the middle on federal assistance. Some 8.5 out of every 1,000 Mississippians receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

That's the 15th lowest rate in the country, and below the U.S. average of 14 people per thousand.

Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

Low graduation rate. Some 63.9 percent of Mississippi's public high school students graduated on time, the fourth lowest rate in the country, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

11th lowest in per-pupil expenditures.

Mississippi spent \$9,498 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

43th in teacher climate. Mississippi ranked 43th best nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine.

<http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

Most college-going. Some 77.4 percent of Mississippi's high school graduates -- the nation's highest rate -- go to college directly after graduating.

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

10th least green state. Mississippi ranked 41st out of 50 on a measure of best states on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. The state has very good air quality, water consumption and waste generation rates, according to the group. But it is low on water quality, recycling, emissions, use of renewable energy and energy consumption.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=41

41st on renewable capacity. Mississippi ranked 41st from the top in its renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 229 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

15th highest in energy consumption.

Mississippians consumed 386 million btus of energy (15th highest in the country) from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

17th highest in energy spending.

Mississippians paid \$3,878 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

33rd highest coal consumption. Mississippi burned 10 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

34th highest in CO2 emissions. Mississippi emitted more than 63.7 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

Third highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's third highest rate of adult diabetes (11.8 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.")

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=MS>

Highest obesity rate. Some 34.4 percent of Mississippians are obese, the highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=MS>

Highest in hypertension. Mississippians had the nation's highest hypertension rate

with 34.8 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=MS>

Second highest in infant mortality. Ten out of every 1,000 live births in Mississippi result in infant death, the second highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=MS>

Highest in premature births. Some 18.5 percent of births in Mississippi in 2008 were premature, the third highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemtable.jsp?tyt=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

Highest in births to teen mothers. Some 65.7 of every 1,000 babies born in Mississippi were to teen mothers. That's the highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemtable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

Third highest in adult smoking. A 2010 report ranked Mississippi with the nation's third highest adult smoking rate. Some 23.3 percent of Mississippians smoke, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Low cigarette tax. Mississippi has the nation's 14th lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.68 per pack. The national average is \$1.45 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

13th highest in uninsured adults. Some 17.6 percent of Mississippians had no health insurance, the 13th highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=MS>

Safety and freedom

35th in violent crime. Mississippi has the nation's 35th highest rate of violent crime with 269.7 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

16th in domestic violence rate.

Mississippi was tied for the 16th highest rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.51 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

Fourth highest rate of traffic fatalities.

Mississippi, Arkansas and West Virginia shared the fourth highest rate of traffic deaths in 2008 with 1.8 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

In the middle on freedom. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Mississippi ranks 24th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

Low in voter participation. Some 61.4 percent of Mississippians participated in the 2008 general election, a percentage that tied it with Alabama for the 16th lowest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

North Carolina

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

10th most populated state. Some 9,535,483 people lived in North Carolina in 2010, making it the 10th largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37000.html>

Population shifting. North Carolina's white population is 68.5 percent; blacks make up 21.5 percent of the population. Both grew less than 20 percent. But Hispanics and Asians have grown rapidly respectively to 8.4 percent of the population (111 percent growth) and 2.2 percent of population (84 percent growth), according to the 2010 Census.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

13th worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, North Carolina is currently ranked as the 13th worst state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

11th lowest median income. The median household income in North Carolina in 2010 was \$43,753, the 11th lowest level in the country, according to the Census.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

Seventh highest in joblessness. N.C.'s unemployment rate in August 2011 was 10.4 percent, more than a full point above the national rate of 9.1 percent.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

Among the best for business. *Forbes* magazine rated North Carolina as the third best state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Average tax burden for North Carolinians.

Residents faced the nation's average state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 9.8 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation. N.C. was tied for the 15th highest tax burden in the country.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

Eighth in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, North Carolina's real gross domestic product grew by 3.4 percent, ranking it eighth out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

Eighth highest poverty rate. More than 1.6 million of North Carolinians (17.4 percent) lived in poverty in 2010, making the Tarheel State have the eighth highest poverty rate in the U.S., according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

13th in child poverty. Some 22 percent of Tarheel children under 18 lived in poverty, tying the state with Georgia, Michigan and Ohio for the nation's 13th highest rate of child poverty, according to the Census.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

High in food insecurity. North Carolina tied with Michigan for the third highest rate of food insecurity in the country. Some 18.2 percent of North Carolinians – more than

1.6 million people – struggle to eat, according to Feeding America. Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at: <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Low on rate of federal assistance. Some 4.8 out of every 1,000 North Carolinians receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. That's the fifth lowest rate in the country. Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

In the middle on graduations. Some 72.8 percent of North Carolina's public high school students graduated on time, 14th lowest in the country but just slightly below the national average, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. (2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

Third lowest in per-pupil expenditures. North Carolina spent \$8,261 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount. <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

Sixth in teacher climate. North Carolina ranked sixth best nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine. <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

16th most college-going. Some 66 percent of North Carolina's high school graduates -- the nation's 16th highest rate -- go to college directly after graduating. <http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

25th greenest state. North Carolina ranked 25th out of 50 on a measure of best states on environmental issues according to the

2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. The state has average air and water quality and better than average in per capita energy and water consumption. But it is below average on recycling and using greener energy, the study said. http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=41

13th on renewable capacity. North Carolina ranked 13th from the top in its renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 2,294 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

37th highest in energy consumption. North Carolinians consumed 272 million btus of energy (37th highest in the country) from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA. <http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

Sixth lowest in energy spending. North Carolinians paid \$3,100 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA. http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

13th highest coal consumption. North Carolina burned 27.9 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data. http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

13th highest in CO2 emissions. North Carolina emitted more than 150.1 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA. www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

13rd highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's 13th highest rate of adult diabetes (9.6 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.") <http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=NC>

14th highest obesity rate. Some 29.4 percent of North Carolinians are obese, the 14th highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=NC>

10th highest in hypertension. North Carolinians had the nation's 10th highest hypertension rate with 29.9 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=NC>

Sixth highest in infant mortality. Some 8.5 out of every 1,000 live births in North Carolina result in infant death, the sixth highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=NC>

15th highest in premature births. Some 12.9 percent of births in North Carolina in 2008 were premature, which ties the state for the 13th highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?typ=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

14th highest in births to teen mothers.

Some 49.4 of every 1,000 babies born in North Carolina were to teen mothers. That's the 14th highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

14th highest in adult smoking. A 2010 report ranked North Carolina with the nation's 14th highest adult smoking rate. Some 20.3 percent of North Carolinians smoke, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Low cigarette tax. North Carolina has the nation's 6th lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.45 per pack. The national average is \$1.45 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

10th highest in uninsured adults. Some 18 percent of North Carolinians had no health insurance, the 10th highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=NC>

Safety and freedom

24th in violent crime. North Carolina has the nation's 24th highest rate of violent crime with 363.4 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

23rd highest in domestic violence. North Carolina was tied with Kansas for having the 23rd highest rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.27 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

7th highest rate of traffic fatalities. North Carolina and six other states shared the seventh highest rate of traffic deaths in 2008 with 1.4 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

18th on freedom. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, North Carolina ranks 18th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

In the middle in voter participation. Some 66.1 percent of North Carolinians participated in the 2008 general election, a percentage that tied it with Alabama for the 21st highest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

South Carolina

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

24th most populated state. Some 4,625,364 people lived in South Carolina in 2010, making it the 24th largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/45000.html>

Population shifting. South Carolina's white population is 66.2 percent; blacks make up 27.9 percent of the population, Both grew less than 14 percent. But Hispanics have grown rapidly to 5.1 percent of the population -- a 148 percent growth rate over the last 10 years, according to the 2010 Census.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

Sixth worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, South Carolina is currently ranked as the sixth worst state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

Eighth lowest median income. The median household income in South Carolina in 2010 was \$41,709, the eighth lowest level in the country, according to the Census.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

Fourth highest in joblessness. S.C.'s unemployment rate in August 2011 was 11.1 percent, two points above the national rate of 9.1 percent.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

In the middle for business. *Forbes* magazine rated South Carolina's business climate as 34th highest in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Eighth lowest tax burden. South Carolinians faced the nation's eighth lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 8.1 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

21st in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, South Carolina's real gross domestic product grew by 2.6 percent, ranking it 21st out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

10th highest poverty rate. More than 767,000 South Carolinians (17 percent) lived in poverty in 2010, making the state have the nation's 10th highest poverty rate, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

Fifth in child poverty. Some 24 percent of Palmetto State children under 18 lived in poverty in 2009, tying the state with Alabama, Louisiana and Texas for the nation's fifth highest rate of child poverty, according to the Census.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

Second highest in food insecurity. South Carolina had the nation's second highest rate of food insecurity in the U.S. in 2009. Some 18.3 percent of South Carolinians – more than 807,000 people – struggle to eat, according to Feeding America. Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at:

<http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Low on rate of federal assistance. Some 9.5 out of every 1,000 South Carolinians receive help through the federal Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families program. That's the 21st lowest rate in the country. Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

At the bottom on graduations. Some 62.2 percent of South Carolina's public high school students -- the second lowest rate in the nation -- graduated on time, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

19th lowest in per-pupil expenditures. South Carolina spent \$10,051 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount. <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

Highest in teacher climate. S.C. ranked the nation's highest state in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine. <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

Sixth most college-going. Some 70.1 percent of South Carolina's high school graduates -- the nation's sixth highest rate - - go to college directly after graduating. <http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

34th greenest state. South Carolina ranked 34th out of 50 on a measure of best states on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. The state has very good air quality, average per capita emissions and better than average in per capita waste generation. But it is below average in water quality, recycling rate, and consumption of water and energy, the study said. http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=41

23rd on renewable capacity. South Carolina ranked 23rd from the top in its renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 1,580 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

18th highest in energy consumption. South Carolinians consumed 347.1 million btus of energy (18th highest in the country) from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA. <http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

26th highest in energy spending. South Carolinians paid \$3,635 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA. http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

28th highest coal consumption. South Carolina burned 15 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data. http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

26th highest in CO² emissions. South Carolina emitted more than 86 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA. www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

Eighth highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's eighth highest rate of adult diabetes (10.4 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.") <http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=SC>

Eighth highest obesity rate. Some 30.9 percent of South Carolinians are obese, the eighth highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust. <http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=SC>

Ninth highest in hypertension. South Carolinians had the nation's ninth highest

hypertension rate with 31.5 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust for America's Health.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=SC>

Fifth highest in infant mortality. Some 8.6 out of every 1,000 live births in South Carolina result in infant death, the fifth highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=SC>

Fourth highest in premature births. Some 14.3 percent of births in S.C. in 2008 were premature, which was the fourth highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?typ=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

11th highest in births to teen mothers.

Some 53.1 of every 1,000 babies born in South Carolina were to teen mothers. That's the 11th highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

12th highest in adult smoking. A 2010 report ranked South Carolina with the nation's 12th highest adult smoking rate. Some 20.4 percent of South Carolinians smoke, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Low cigarette tax. South Carolina has the nation's ninth lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.57 per pack. The national average is \$1.45 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

14th highest in uninsured adults. Some 17 percent of South Carolinians had no health insurance, the 14th highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=SC>

Safety and freedom

Fifth in violent crime. South Carolina has the nation's fifth highest rate of violent crime with 597.7 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

Seventh highest in domestic violence.

South Carolina had the nation's seventh highest in the rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.79 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

Third highest rate in traffic fatalities. In 2008, South Carolina had the third highest rate of traffic deaths with 1.9 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

26th on freedom. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, South Carolina ranks 26th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

11th lowest in voter participation. Some 58.5 percent of South Carolinians participated in the 2008 general election, the 11th lowest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

Tennessee

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

17th most populated state. Some 6,346,105 people lived in Tennessee in 2010, making it the 17th largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/47000.html>

Population shifting slightly. Tennessee's white population is 77.6 percent; blacks make up 16.7 percent of the population. Both grew less than 14 percent over the last 10 years. But Hispanics grew to 4.8 percent of the population -- a 134 percent growth rate over the last 10 years, according to the 2010 Census.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

12th worst place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 survey, Tennessee is currently ranked as the 12th worst state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

Third lowest median income. The median household income in Tennessee in 2010 was \$38,686, the third lowest level in the country, according to the Census.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

12th highest in joblessness. Tennessee's unemployment rate in August 2011 was 9.7 percent, just above the national rate of 9.1 percent.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

In the middle for business. *Forbes* magazine rated Tennessee as 22nd highest for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

Fourth lowest tax burden. Tennesseans faced the nation's fourth lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 7.6 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

Sixth in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, Tennessee's real gross domestic product grew by 3.5 percent, ranking it sixth out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

12th highest poverty rate. More than 1 million Tennesseans (16.7 percent) lived below in poverty in 2010, making it have the nation's 12th highest poverty rate, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

Ninth in child poverty. Some 23 percent of Tennessee's children under 18 lived in poverty in 2009, tying the state with West Virginia, Oklahoma and Arizona for the nation's ninth highest rate of child poverty, according to the Census.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

10th highest in food insecurity. Tennessee had the nation's 10th highest rate of food insecurity in the U.S. in 2009. Some 17.3 percent of Tennesseans – more than 1 million people – struggle to eat, according to Feeding America. Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at: <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

High rate of federal assistance. Some 24.8 out of every 1,000 Tennesseans receive help through the federal Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families program. That's the 3rd highest rate in the country.

Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

Above average on graduations. Some 74.9 percent of Tennessee's public high school students graduated on time, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

Sixth lowest in per-pupil expenditures.

Tennessee spent \$8,507 per pupil, according to 2011 data by Kids Count.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

19th in teacher climate. Tennessee ranked 19th best nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine.

<http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

30th most college-going. Some 61.6 percent of Tennessee's high school graduates, almost two points below the national average, go to college directly after graduating.

<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

35th greenest state. Tennessee ranked 35th out of 50 on a measure of best states on environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. The state has average air quality, good water quality and a better than average recycling rate.

But it is below average in per capita energy emissions and consumption, the study said.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=27

11th on renewable capacity. Tennessee ranked 11th best in its renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 2,817 megawatts of

net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

20th highest in energy consumption.

Tennesseans consumed 339.5 million btus of energy (20th highest in the country) from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

25th highest in energy spending.

Tennesseans paid \$3,639 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

18th highest coal consumption. Tennessee burned 23 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

17th highest in CO² emissions. Tennessee emitted more than 120.1 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

Fifth highest in diabetes. The state had the nation's fifth highest rate of adult diabetes (10.6 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.")

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=TN>

Fourth highest obesity rate. Some 31.9 percent of Tennesseans are obese, the fourth highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=TN>

Fifth highest in hypertension. Tennesseans had the nation's fifth highest hypertension rate with 32.2 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=TN>

Eighth highest in infant mortality. Some 8.3 out of every 1,000 live births in Tennessee result in infant death, the eighth highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust for America's Health. <http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=TN>

Eighth highest in premature births. Some 13.5 percent of births in Tennessee in 2008 were premature, which was tied for the eighth highest rate in the U.S., according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemtable.jsp?typ=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

Seventh highest in births to teen mothers. Some 55.6 of every 1,000 babies born in Tennessee were to teen mothers. That's the seventh highest rate in the country, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemtable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

Ninth highest in adult smoking. A 2010 report ranked Tennessee with the nation's ninth highest adult smoking rate. Some 22 percent of Tennesseans smoke, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Low cigarette tax. Tennessee has the nation's 11th lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.62 per pack. The national average is \$1.45 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

20th highest in uninsured adults. Some 15.4 percent of Tennesseans had no health insurance, the 20th highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=TN>

Safety and freedom

Fourth in violent crime. Tennessee has the nation's fourth highest rate of violent crime with 613.3 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 data by the FBI.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

Fifth highest in domestic violence.

Tennessee had the nation's fifth highest in the rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.83 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

11th highest in traffic fatalities. In 2008, Tennessee and four other states shared the seventh highest rate of traffic deaths with 1.5 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

16th on freedom. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Tennessee ranks 16th out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

Eighth lowest in voter participation. Some 57 percent of Tennesseans participated in the 2008 general election, the eighth lowest rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

Virginia

The data were compiled in the summer and fall of 2011. Please use the links below to find helpful information.



General demographics

12th most populated state. Some 8,001,024 people lived in Virginia in 2010, making it the 12th largest state in the U.S. by population.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/51000.html>

Population shifting. Virginia's white population is 68.6 percent; blacks make up 19.4 percent of the population. Both grew less than 12 percent. But Hispanics have grown to 7.9 percent and Asians to 5.5 percent of the population -- growth of 92 percent and 69 percent respectively over the decade, according to the 2010 Census.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>

14th best place for children. According to the Kids Count 2011 annual survey, Virginia is currently ranked as the 14th best state for children in the United States.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=137>

High median income. The median household income in Virginia in 2010 was \$60,363, the seventh highest level in the country and highest in the South, according to the Census.

http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/H08_2010.xls

Economy

Tenth lowest in joblessness. Virginia's unemployment rate in August 2011 was 6.3 percent, the lowest in the South and almost three points below the national rate of 9.1 percent.

<http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm>

Great for business. *Forbes* magazine rated Virginia as the second best state for business in 2010.

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/13/best-states-for-business-business-beltway-best-states-table.html>

18th lowest tax burden. Virginians faced the nation's 18th lowest state-local tax burden in the country in 2009 at 9.1 percent of personal income, according to the Tax Foundation.

<http://taxfoundation.org/files/sr189.pdf>

20th in economic growth. From 2009 to 2010, Virginia's real gross domestic product grew by 2.6 percent, ranking it 20th out of 50 in economic growth, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_state/2011/pdf/gsp0611.pdf

Poverty

10th lowest poverty rate. More than 832,000 Virginians (10.7 percent) lived in poverty in 2010, making the state have the nation's 10th lowest poverty rate, according to the Census.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/hstpov21.xls>

11th lowest in child poverty. Some 14 percent of Virginia's children under 18 lived in poverty in 2009. With the 11th lowest rate in the nation, Virginia has the South's lowest child poverty rate -- and only one below the national average.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>

Eighth lowest in food insecurity. Virginia had the nation's eighth lowest rate of food insecurity in the U.S. in 2009. Some 11.8

percent of Virginians – more than 912,000 people – struggle to eat, according to Feeding America. Ranking data provided by Feeding America; other info online at: <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

In the middle on federal assistance. Some 9.9 out of every 1,000 Virginians receive help through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. That's the 24th lowest rate in the country. Better South analysis of 2010 data from the Census and this source: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/data-reports/caseload/caseload_current.htm

Education

23rd highest on graduations. Some 77 percent of Virginia's public high school students -- more than two points above the national average -- graduated on time, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

(2011 report based on 2008 data; see Table A-19-1: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011033.pdf>)

14th lowest in per-pupil expenditures. Virginia spent \$9,851 per pupil, according to 2011 data by KidsCount. <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?ind=5199>

13th in teacher climate. Virginia ranked 13th highest nationally in teacher climate and performance, according to a 2010 report by *Education Week* magazine. <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2010/17sos.h29.teaching.pdf>

Ninth most college-going. Some 68.7 percent of Virginia's high school graduates - the nation's sixth highest rate -- go to college directly after graduating. <http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>

Environment and energy

26th greenest state. Virginia ranked 26th out of 50 on a measure of best states on

environmental issues according to the 2011 state ranking by Greenopia.org. The state has good water quality and better than average on recycling and per capita emissions. But it has worse than average levels of air quality and per capita power generation, the study said.

http://www.greenopia.com/usa/state_listing.aspx?ID=41

26th on renewable capacity. Virginia ranked 26th from the top in its renewable energy capacity in 2009 with 1,403 megawatts of net summer capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/state_profiles/r_profiles_sum.html

29th highest in energy consumption. Virginians consumed 303.4 million btus of energy (29th highest in the country) from coal, natural gas, petroleum and electricity per capita in 2009, according to the EIA.

<http://www.eia.gov/state/state-energy-rankings.cfm?keyid=60&orderid=1>

33rd highest in energy spending. Virginians paid \$3,401 per person in 2009 on energy, according to the U.S. EIA.

http://www.eia.gov/state/seds/hf.jsp?incfile=sep_sum/plain.html/rank_pr.html

30th highest coal consumption. Virginia burned 13 million tons of coal for energy in 2009, according to EIA data.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/c_use_state.pdf

18th highest in CO2 emissions. Virginia emitted more than 118 million tons of carbon dioxide in 2008, according to the EIA.

www.eia.gov/oiaf/1605/ggrrpt/excel/tbl_statetotal.xls

Health care

29th in diabetes. The state had the nation's 29th highest rate of adult diabetes (8.3 percent), based on 2008-10 data from the Trust for America's Health (the "Trust.")

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=va>

30th highest obesity rate. Some 25.9 percent of Virginians are obese, the highest rate in the country, according to 2008-2010 data by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=va>

25th highest in hypertension. Virginians had the nation's 25th highest hypertension rate with 27.2 percent of adults with the condition, according to recent data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=va>

13th highest in infant mortality. Some 7.8 out of every 1,000 live births in Virginia result in infant death, the 13th highest level in the country, according to a 2011 report by the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=va>

18th highest in premature births. Some 11.3 percent of births in Virginia in 2008 were premature, which was the 18th highest rate in the country, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ty=2&ind=39&cat=2&sub=11&sortc=1&o=a>

15th lowest in births to teen mothers.

Some 33.5 of every 1,000 babies born in Virginia were to teen mothers. That's the 15th lowest rate in the country and the only one in the South below the national average, according to 2008 CDC data.

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=37&cat=2>

33rd highest in adult smoking. A 2010 report ranked Virginia with the nation's 33rd highest adult smoking rate. Some 19 percent of Virginians smoke, according to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Lowest cigarette tax. Virginia has the nation's lowest tax per pack of cigarettes at \$0.30 per pack. The national average is \$1.45 per pack.

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

36th in uninsured adults. Some 13 percent of Virginians had no health insurance, the 36th highest level in the country, according to 2009 data from the Trust.

<http://healthyamericans.org/states/?stateid=va>

Safety and freedom

Sixth lowest in violent crime. Virginia has the nation's sixth lowest rate of violent crime with 213.6 instances per 100,000 people, according to 2010 FBI data.

<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/tables/10tbl05.xls>

14th highest in domestic violence. Virginia had the nation's 14th highest in the rate of women murdered by males in 2009 with 1.57 homicides per 100,000 people, according to the Violence Policy Center.

<http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2011.pdf>

Low in traffic fatalities. In 2008, Virginia and four other states had the fourth lowest rate of traffic deaths with 1.0 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, according to the Census. Virginia was the only Southern state with a fatality rate less than the national average (1.3 deaths/100mvm).

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2011/tables/11s1103.pdf>

Ninth on freedom. According to an index of personal and economic freedom offered by the conservative Mercatus Center, Virginia ranks ninth out of 50 in public policies impacting individual freedom.

<http://mercatus.org/freedom-50-states-2011>

10th highest in voter participation. Some 67.5 percent of Virginians participated in the 2008 general election, tying the state with Oregon for the 10th best rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Elections Project.

http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html

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To learn more about the Center, go online to:

www.BetterSouth.org

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