

WASHINGTON COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Washington County has a reputation for being a growth-oriented, economically thriving, and increasingly urbanized area. From 1980 to 1985, a period in which Oregon's overall population growth was approximately 2%, Washington County's population increased from 245,808 to 266,500, a total of 8% (Source: Oregon and Its Counties 1980-2000, Center for Population Research and Census. PSU, June 1984.) Growth is anticipated to continue into the 1990's.

In addition to having an expanding population, Washington County is also an increasingly urbanized county. From 1970 to 1980 the county's rural population decreased 7.3%. By 1980 84.8% of county residents lived in urban areas. As a point of comparison, neighboring Multnomah County is 98% urban while Clackamas County is 63.1% urban. (Source: Northwest Oregon Health Systems Profile, January, 1986.)

The relative wealth of Washington County is reflected in family income. At \$24,820, Washington County has the highest median income of the six counties in Northwest Oregon. The county's average family income is \$28,008. (Source: Northwest Oregon Health Systems Profile, January, 1986.)

Minority populations and the elderly are groups that frequently are at risk of living in poverty or are in need of social services. Washington County's population age 65 and over increased from 8.3% in 1980 to 9.3% in 1985. During the same five-year period the 65 and over population of Oregon increased from 11.5% to 12.7%. Although compared to Oregon as a whole Washington County has a "younger population," the proportion of elderly in the county is increasing. (Source: Oregon and Its Counties 1980-2000, Center for Population research and Census. PSU, June 1984.)

The table below shows minority populations for Washington County and Oregon.

TABLE I: Populations by Race/Ethnicity for Wash. Co. and Oregon

	Wash. Co.	Oregon
White	230,339 (93.7%)	2,456,012 (93.3%)
Spanish speaking origin	6,419 (2.6%)	65,487 (2.5%)
Native American	839 (0.3%)	24,450 (0.9%)
Black & Asian	6,202 (2.5%)	71,297 (2.7%)
not known	2,009 (0.8%)	15,499 (0.6%)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, Census of Population and Housing, 1980.

Minorities make up approximately 6.2% of Washington County's population, with persons from Spanish speaking origins being the county's largest minority group. Indeed, proportionately there are more people of Spanish speaking origins in Washington County than in Oregon as a whole.

Infant mortality and lack of prenatal care are often indicators of poverty and need in communities. Although Washington County's annual birth rate is higher than Oregon's, (16.4 per 1,000 population compared to 15.9

per 1,000 population), the rate of neonatal deaths is lower, i.e., 5.6 deaths per 1,000 in Washington County versus 6.9 deaths per 1,000 for Oregon. According to Oregon Vital Statistics: 1978-1982, Washington County has the lowest rates of lack of prenatal care among its neighboring counties. (Source: Northwest Health Systems Profile, January 1986.)

Most available data for Washington County are based on 1980 census statistics. A four-county needs assessment conducted in 1986 by Robert C. Holloway, Ph.D. and Norman L. Wyers, D.S.W. for the Needs Assessment Coalition provides data that are not only more current, but also more specific to the low-income population served by Washington County Community Action Organization. The assessment in Washington County was based on a randomly selected sample of 836 households, a number which represents .32% of the county population.

According to the Needs Assessment Coalition report, 5.6% of Washington County households live at or below 125% of poverty. Table II shows the composition of families in those households, and juxtaposes Washington County information with statistics on low income families in the four Portland metropolitan area counties (i.e., Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, and Clark). The table suggests that compared with the four county area, Washington County has a lower proportion of single adults living in poverty, and greater proportions of poverty households with children.

TABLE II: Family Profile

	125% of Poverty	
	Washington Co. H.H.	4County H.H.
One adult only	35.6%	52.8%
Two adults	17.8%	16.0%
One adult plus child(ren)	15.6%	9.7%
Two adults plus child(ren)	31.1%	21.5%

Source: Needs Assessment Coalition data, 125% of poverty Washington County and 125% of poverty all counties, 1986.

Females make up 59.4% of heads of households in Washington County as a whole, but represent 64.6% of the heads of households in poverty. This information, when considered along with the family profile suggests that women with children probably make up a substantial segment of Washington County's households living in poverty. Elderly women living alone are another group at risk of living in poverty.

Although the population of elderly may be increasing in Washington County, households in poverty are more often headed by adults age 19-45. Compared to low income households in the four-county area, Washington County's households are younger. (see table III)

TABLE III: Age of Household Head in Poverty Households

	Wash Co. Poverty	Wash. Co. 125% of Pov.	4County area 125% of Pov.
1-18	0	0	1.1
19-30	32.4	31.3	29.8
31-45	32.4	31.3	26.1
46-59	8.8	10.4	12.5
60-96	26.5	27.1	30.5

Source: Needs Assessment Coalition data, 125% of poverty Washington County and 125% of poverty all counties, 1986.

The Needs Assessment Coalition found that of the households living at or below 125% of poverty in Washington County, 93.8% are white and 6.3% are non-white. Of total county households, 4.1% are non-white, but 8.6% of the non-white households live at or below 125% of poverty. Low income households are found in greater proportion among non-white households than among white households.

Table IV suggests that Washington County's low income households have a higher level of education than households in the four-county area.

TABLE IV: Education of Household for Poverty Households

	125% of Poverty	
	Washington Co.	4-County Area
Less than high school	16.7%	27.3%
High school, plus	70.8%	61.5%
College graduate, plus	10.4%	8.6%
Advanced degree	2.1%	2.7%

Source: Needs Assessment Coalition data, 125% of poverty Washington County and 125% of poverty all counties, 1986.

Also, compared to low income households in the four-county area, Washington County low income households are more likely to have an employed head and to be supported by wages, (see table V). Washington County households represent the working poor.

TABLE V: Support of Households for Poverty Households

	125% of Poverty	
	Washington Co.	4-County area
Household head employed	50.0%	35.9%
Household head not employed	50.0%	64.1%
Household supported by wages	58.3%	45.5%
Household supported by Public Assistance	14.6%	23.4%
Household supported by Social Security	27.1%	33.2%
Household supported by SSI	4.2%	13.0%
Household supported by alimony/ child support	8.3%	4.5%

Source: Needs Assessment Coalition data, 125% of poverty Washington County and 125% of poverty all counties, 1986.

More trend and demographic information.....

By the year 2000 as many as 20 million low-income Americans may not be able to obtain affordable housing. If current housing trends continue, 25% of today's supply of low-income housing will be removed from the national rental market.

* The number of people who need low-income housing will increase 44% during the next 16 years.

We now have more people over age 65 than teenagers.

People are living longer, the old old category (over 85) is the fastest growing age category.

Baby boomers (56 million) make up 45% of the adult population (ages 25 to 39).

70% of women in the baby boomer category work and only 4% are in traditional "families."

The sandwich generation, age 40-55, are facing care of their parents. And with more couples waiting until their 30's to have children, even more families will be faced with the sandwich of having to care for children and teenagers and care for aging parents.

In just five years, 34,000 nonprofits disappeared.

90% of all giving is by individuals. People who volunteer give 27% more than people who do not volunteer.

Donor saturation is getting worse, not better.

Four critical demographic factors are: the aging population, changing ethnic mix, more educated population, and the changing family. (Walter Bock)

Four critical sociological trends: the role of women, organizations becoming more human scaled, greater participation, healthier life styles. (W. Bock)

Nonprofits will be facing increasing competition for workers and volunteers if they continue to target "younger" individuals (20 to 30).