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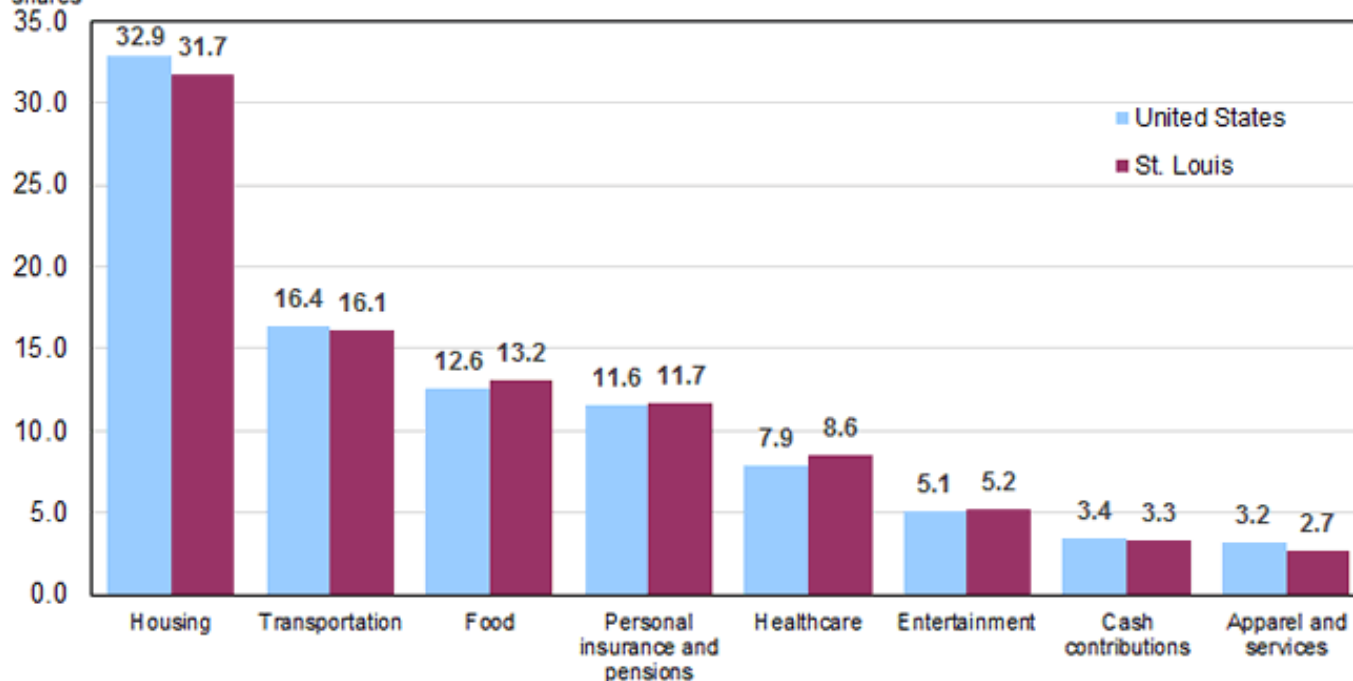
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Consumer Expenditures for the St. Louis metropolitan area: 2015-16

Households in the St. Louis, MO-IL., metropolitan area spent an average of \$57,774 per year in 2015–16, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that this figure was not significantly different from the \$56,648 average expenditure level for households in the United States. St. Louis-area households allocated their dollars similarly to the U.S. average for each of the eight major categories. For example, the share of expenditures for transportation, which accounted for 16.1 percent of the average household’s budget in the St. Louis area, was comparable to the national average of 16.4 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Percent distribution of average annual expenditures for eight major categories in the United States and St. Louis metropolitan area, 2015–16

Expenditure shares



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Highlights of the St. Louis area’s 2015–16 spending patterns:

- **Housing:** This was the largest expenditure category for St. Louis-area households and averaged \$18,325. Housing accounted for 31.7 percent of the area's household budget, and was not significantly different than the 32.9-percent U.S. average. (See [table 1.](#)) The share of housing expenditures among the published 22 metropolitan areas nationwide for which data were available ranged from 40.3 percent in San Francisco to 30.3 percent in Detroit. (See [table 2.](#))
- **Transportation:** St. Louis-area households spent 16.1 percent of their budgets on transportation, not significantly different from the national average of 16.4 percent. Of the \$9,328 in annual transportation expenditures in St. Louis, 92.9 percent was spent buying and maintaining private vehicles; this compared to the national average of 93.1 percent.
- **Food:** The portion of a St. Louis household's budget spent on food, 13.2 percent, not significantly different from the 12.6-percent U.S. average. St. Louis-area households spent \$4,236 (55.8 percent), of their food dollars on food at home and \$3,362 (44.2 percent) on food away from home. In comparison, the average U.S. household spent 56.7 percent of its food budget on food at home and 43.3 percent on food away from home.

Additional Information

Data in this release are from the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE), which the U.S. Census Bureau conducts for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The data in this release were averaged over a 2-year period, 2015 and 2016.

A household in the CE survey is defined as a consumer unit which include families, single persons living alone or sharing a household with others but who are financially independent, or two or more persons living together who share expenses. The terms household or consumer unit are used interchangeably for convenience.

Differences in spending among metropolitan areas may reflect differences in the cost of living, but they also may reflect other causes. Spending differences may result from different consumer preferences or variations in demographic characteristics, such as household size, age, or income levels. However, expenditure shares, or the percentage of a household's budget spent on a particular category, can be used to compare spending patterns across areas. Sample sizes for the metropolitan areas are much smaller than for the nation, so the U.S. estimates and year-to-year changes are more reliable than those for the metropolitan areas. Users should also keep in mind that prices for many goods and services have changed since the survey was conducted.

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with our ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. A large difference between two values may not be statistically significant, while a small difference could be significant; both the sample size and the variation among the values in the sample affect the relative error of the estimates.

For additional technical and related information, see www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch16.htm. Data for the nation, the four geographic regions of the U.S., and 22 metropolitan areas nationwide are available at www.bls.gov/cex/tables.htm. Metropolitan definitions used in the survey are available at www.bls.gov/cex/ce_msa_201516.htm. The metropolitan area discussed in this release is St. Louis, MO-IL Metropolitan Statistical Area which comprises Bond, Calhoun, Clinton, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison, Monroe, St. Clair

Counties in Illinois, and Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln, St. Charles, St. Louis, St. Louis City, Warren Counties in Missouri. Metropolitan area news releases for the Consumer Expenditure Survey are available at www.bls.gov/regions/subjects/consumer-spending.htm.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

Table 1. Average annual expenditures, characteristics, and percent distributions, United States and St. Louis metropolitan area, 2015–16

Category	United States	St. Louis
Consumer unit characteristics:		
Income before taxes	\$72,156	\$69,351
Age of reference person	50.7	50.4
Average number in consumer unit:		
People	2.5	2.3
Children under 18	0.6	0.6
Adults 65 and over	0.4	0.4
Earners	1.3	1.3
Vehicles	1.9	2.0
Percent homeowner	62	73
Average annual expenditures	\$56,648	\$57,774
Percent distribution		
Total	100.0	100.0
Food	12.6	13.2
Alcoholic beverages	0.9	1.1*
Housing	32.9	31.7
Apparel and services	3.2	2.7
Transportation	16.4	16.1
Healthcare	7.9	8.6
Entertainment	5.1	5.2
Personal care products and services	1.2	1.6
Reading	0.2	0.3
Education	2.3	1.4*
Tobacco products and smoking supplies	0.6	0.7
Miscellaneous	1.6	2.4
Cash contributions	3.4	3.3
Personal insurance and pensions	11.6	11.7

Note: An asterisk (*) represents a statistically significant difference from the U.S. average at the 95-percent confidence level.

Table 2. Percent share of average annual expenditures for housing, transportation, and food, United States and 22 metropolitan areas, 2015–16

Area	Housing	Transportation	Food
United States.....	32.9	16.4	12.6
Anchorage.....	31.7	19.1	11.8
Atlanta.....	34.1	18.3	10.2*
Baltimore.....	34.5	16.6	12.1
Boston.....	39.2*	12.4*	11.2*
Chicago.....	35.2*	14.5*	13.2
Dallas-Fort Worth.....	34.2	16.0	11.9
Denver.....	32.9	16.5	11.3*
Detroit.....	30.3*	16.4	12.9
Honolulu.....	36.3*	14.2	15.4*
Houston.....	31.8	21.0*	14.2*
Los Angeles.....	36.2*	15.6	12.4
Miami.....	36.4*	14.8	12.3
Minneapolis-St. Paul.....	30.9	15.4	11.0*
New York.....	38.8*	11.4*	10.7*
Philadelphia.....	33.8	14.4*	11.7
Phoenix.....	32.2	15.1	12.1
San Diego.....	35.1*	13.7*	11.4
San Francisco.....	40.3*	11.9*	11.5
Seattle.....	33.4	13.4*	13.6
St. Louis.....	31.7	16.1	13.2
Tampa.....	33.7	17.7	12.6
Washington, D.C.....	35.7*	12.8*	10.8*

Note: An asterisk (*) represents a statistically significant difference from the U.S. average at the 95-percent confidence level.