

# Well-being in the US

The Human Development Index (HDI) is an indicator of well-being composed of lifespan, education, and income, and was originally developed by the United Nations. In the first analysis of its kind, IHME has adapted HDI to examine how well-being differs by race and ethnicity, sex, and location across the US. The analysis reveals stark disparities within the country and highlights the urgency of tackling deeply rooted structural inequalities through social programs.

On average, American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) individuals, and Black males, experience the lowest well-being in the nation, due to racism

Conversely, Asian American people and White females tend to experience the highest well-being.

## Human Development Index by race and ethnicity and sex

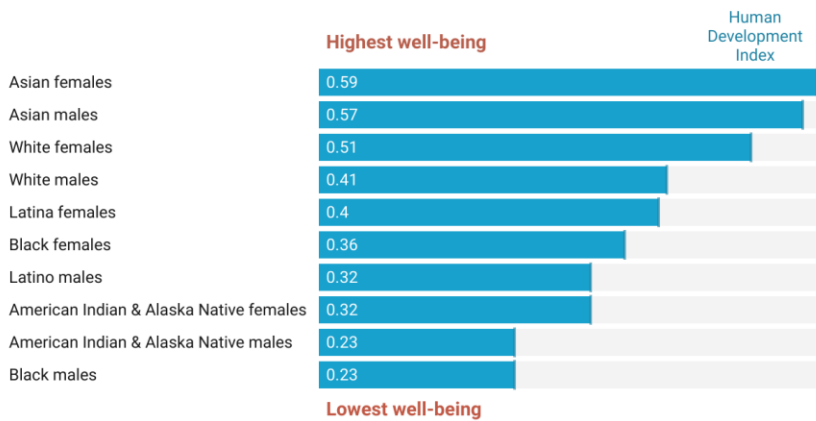
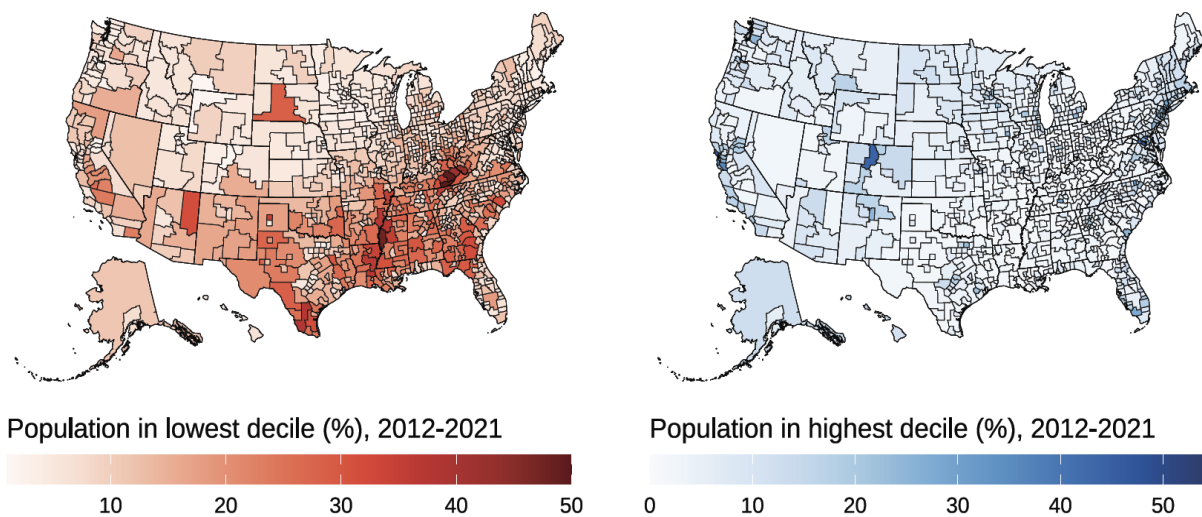


Chart reflects average Human Development Index measurement between 2008 and 2021.

## Well-being differs dramatically around the US

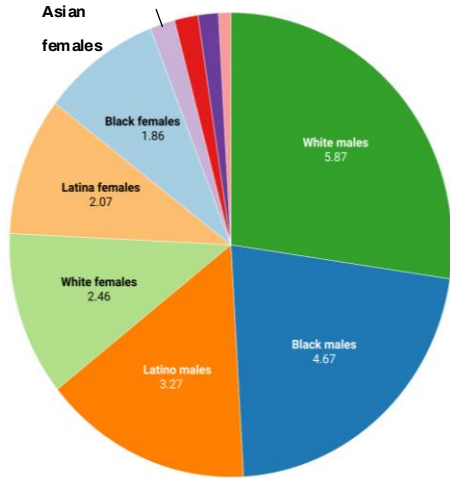
People with the lowest levels of well-being in the US are most likely to live in the Deep South, Appalachia, and the Rust Belt.



As White people are the most populous racial and ethnic group in the US, White males make up the largest portion of the worst-off HDI segment

Makeup of lowest well-being group (millions of people)

White males Black males Latino males White females Latina females  
Black females Asian females AIAN males Asian males AIAN females



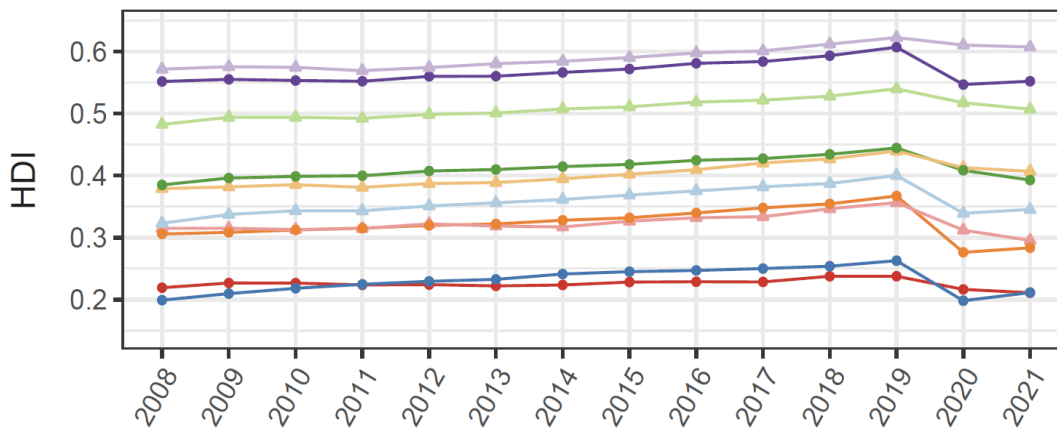
Numbers not shown include Asian females (0.39 million), AIAN males (0.37 million), Asian males (0.32 million), and AIAN females (0.19 million).

Still, Native American people and Black males are much more likely than White males to be in the worst-off HDI segment

Race and ethnicity and sex	Percentage in lowest HDI segment	Percentage in highest HDI segment
AIAN males	50%	3%
Black males	40%	<1%
AIAN females	23%	4%
Latino males	21%	3%
Black females	14%	3%
Latina females	13%	8%
White males	8%	6%
Asian females	6%	37%
Asian males	5%	30%
White females	3%	14%

## HDI increased for all groups until 2019, then dropped amid COVID-19 as lifespans decreased

The size of declines in HDI was notably larger in historically marginalized populations, probably due to their increased likelihood of performing essential work or living in higher-exposure conditions.



Race and ethnicity and sex: AIAN Males Black Males Latino Males White Males Asian Males AIAN Females Black Females Latina Females White Females Asian Females

## About IHME

The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation is an independent research organization at the University of Washington. Its mission is to deliver to the world timely, relevant, and scientifically valid evidence to improve health policy and practice. IHME carries out its mission through a range of projects within different research areas including the Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors (GBD); Future Health Scenarios; Cost Effectiveness and Efficiency; Resource Tracking; and Impact Evaluations.

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