

Counting Colorado's Uninsured: The Latest Estimates

American Community Survey (ACS)

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Census Bureau on September 22, 2011, released the annual estimates from the **American Community Survey (ACS)** of the number and percentage of Americans who lacked health insurance coverage in calendar year 2010.

UNINSURED: THE OVERALL NUMBERS

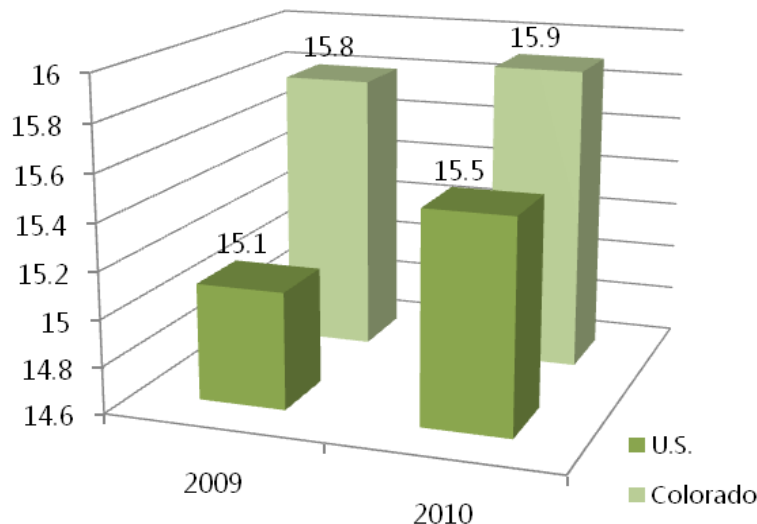
United States

- ◆ Nationally, an estimated 47.2 million Americans, or 15.5 percent of the population, were uninsured in 2010. That's up a bit from the 45.6 million, or 15.1 percent of the population, who were uninsured in 2009.

Colorado

- ◆ An estimated 789,000 Coloradans, or 15.9 percent of the population, were uninsured in 2010. That's not a statistically significant change from the 778,000 Coloradans, or 15.8 percent of the population, who were uninsured in 2009.

Graph 1. Annual Uninsured Rates: Colorado and the U.S.



THE UNINSURED: BREAKING IT DOWN BY COUNTY

While Colorado's uninsurance rate remained virtually unchanged from 2009 to 2010, the news was different in a number of Colorado's largest counties. The number of uninsured increased by 32 percent in Mesa County, followed by nearly 14 percent in Jefferson County and nearly 9 percent in Adams County. Larimer County showed the biggest percentage decline at 10 percent, followed by Boulder County at about 8 percent.

Table 1. Uninsured Numbers and Percentages by U.S., Colorado and Colorado's 11 Largest Counties, 2009 and 2010ⁱ

	2009	Percentage	2010	Percentage	Percentage change ('09-'10)
U.S.	45,664,741	15.1	47,208,222	15.5	3.4
Colorado	777,794	15.8	789,109	15.9	1.5
Adams	90,936	20.7	98,880	22.5	8.7
Arapahoe	90,612	16.2	94,509	16.6	4.3
Boulder	36,821	12.3	33,770	11.5	-8.3
Denver	118,786	19.7	109,965	18.4	-7.4
Douglas	15,399	5.4	15,019	5.2	-2.5
El Paso	76,743	13.4	82,267	14.9	7.2
Jefferson	62,132	11.7	70,686	13.3	13.8
Larimer	41,396	14	37,116	12.4	-10.3
Mesa	23,681	16.5	31,287	21.8	32.1
Pueblo	25,131	16.4	26,628	16.9	6
Weld	41,021	16.2	40,401	16.1	-1.5

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey with an annual sample size of about 3 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico. It is conducted in every U.S. county and every Puerto Rican municipality. Health insurance estimates are extrapolated from the survey results based on the number and percentage of individuals who reported being uninsured at the time of the 2010 survey. The Census Bureau has collected health insurance data since 2008. Only single-year health insurance estimates have been available for places with populations of 65,000 or more. Additional health insurance estimates for areas with a population of at least 20,000 will become available later this year with the collection of three years of data.

OTHER ESTIMATES OF THE UNINSURED

- ◆ The U.S. Census Bureau released annual estimates from the Current Population Survey (CPS) on September 13, 2011, showing an estimated 656,000 Coloradans, or 13 percent, were uninsured in calendar year 2010, a decline of 1.5 percentage points from 14.5 percent in 2009. Read CHI's report on those estimates here: <http://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/~media/Documents/sn/3CPSUninsuredUpdatedSept15.ashx>.
- ◆ The 2011 Colorado Household Survey (a new name will be unveiled soon by The Colorado Trust) will include estimates of Colorado's uninsured later this year.

ⁱ Year-over-year changes have not been tested for statistical significance.