



INEQUALITY

5 Charts That Show How the Middle Class Is Disappearing

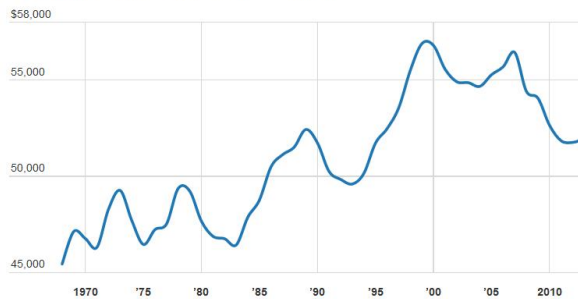
January 26, 2015
by Katie Rose Quandt
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Already the richest country in the world, the United States reached its **highest cumulative wealth ever** in 2013. It ranked fourth in the world **in wealth per person**, with \$348,000 for every American adult.

But the average American wouldn't know it. Thanks to economic policies that favor the super-rich and fuel inequality, the typical US adult's **total wealth is \$31,688** — not even close to \$348,000. And things aren't poised to change: The median household brought in **\$51,939 in 2013**, a real dollar increase of just \$180 from 2012. This recent income stagnation came in the wake of a steep drop from 2007-2011 (mouse over the graph to see data):

Median Household Income Remains Stagnant

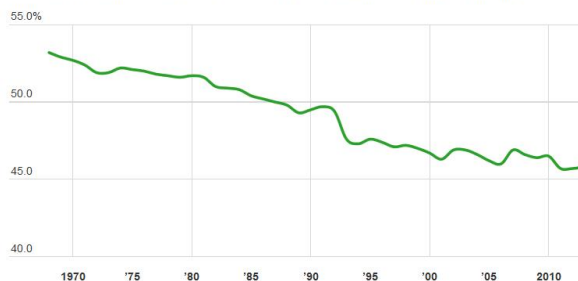
After falling sharply from 2007-2011, incomes have yet to recover.

Source: [US Census Bureau Get the data](#)

Middle class Americans are feeling this income squeeze. One way to see how the middle class is faring is to break out the middle 60 percent of the population. The share of total national income going to this chunk of the population has decreased steadily since the 1960s and currently stands well below 50 percent:

The Middle Class Is Getting a Smaller and Smaller Share

The middle 60 percent of Americans used to earn over half the national income. They got 45.8 percent in 2013.

Source: [US Census Bureau Get the data](#)

As the middle class share dwindles, it's harder for typical Americans to put anything aside. Remember how the United States ranks fourth in the world in wealth per-person? When the same report ranked each country by its median wealth, the US **dropped to #21**. Which means middle-of-the pack Americans have far less to their names than middle-of-the pack Australians (or Japanese, or Canadians, or Spanish, or Austrians...)

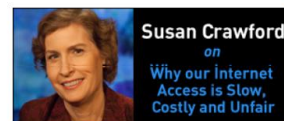
The US Middle Class Lags Behind Much of the World

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