



DATAPOST

# Median Household Income

## Life in the Middle

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Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco  
Education & Outreach

# Quick Start – U.S. Median Household Income

Midpoint of U.S. household incomes, ranked from bottom to top



Measured annually



Considered an important indicator of economic well-being



Median Household Income

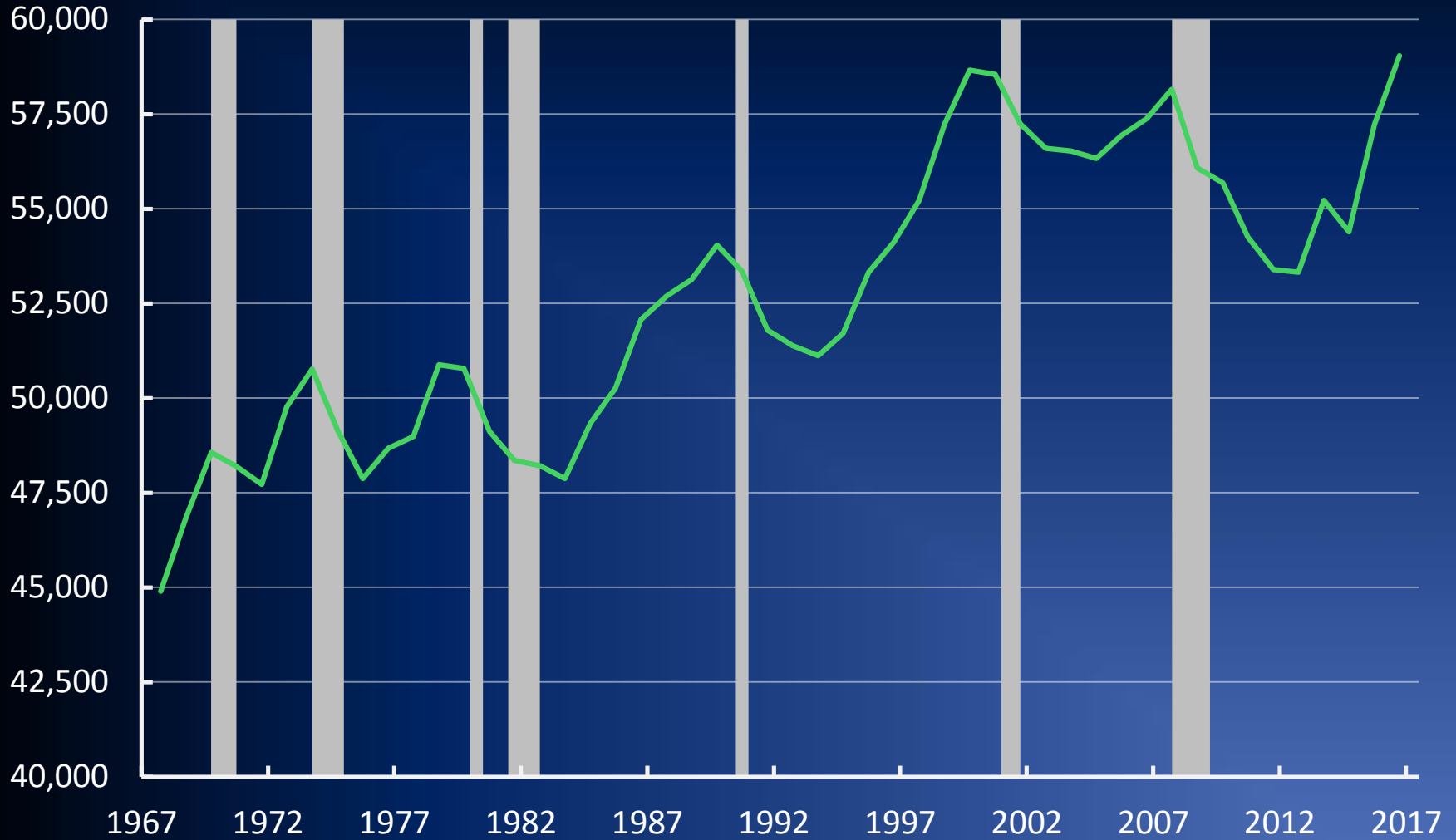
**\$59,039** in 2016

**\$57,379** in 2006

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, pre-tax/transfer HH income

# Annual Median Household Income

## Real 2016 Dollars (1967-2016)



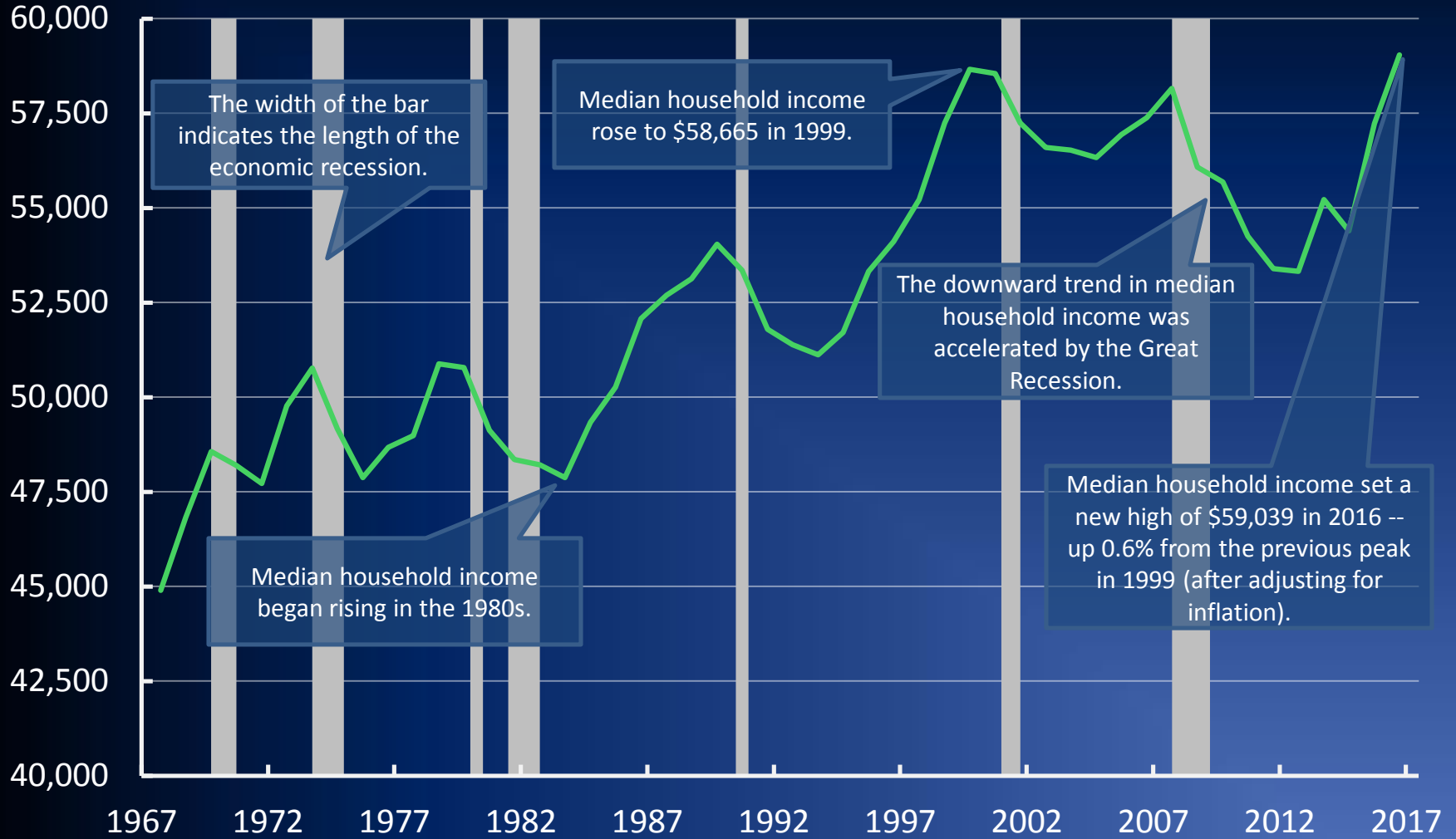
Note: Inflation adjusted using the 2016 BLS CPI-U-RS series. Gray bars denote NBER recession dates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, pre-tax/transfer HH income

# Annotated Chart Notes

## Annual Median Household Income Real 2016 Dollars (1967-2016)

Inflation-adjusted



Note: Inflation adjusted using the 2016 BLS CPI-U-RS series. Gray bars denote NBER recession dates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, pre-tax/transfer HH income

# What are the Facts?

1. Why do you think household income is a more commonly used measure than family income? (See slide 2)
2. What percentage of households is above the median household income level? (See slide 2)
3. What was the median household income in 2007? How much higher is the median in 2016? (See slide 4)
4. How many recessions have occurred since you were born? (See slide 3)
5. How would you describe the pattern of household income right before the beginning of an economic recession? (See slide 3)
6. Based on the pattern of median household income following a recession, what direction do you expect household income to head in the future?

View an [in-depth talk about income inequality](#) on our [YouTube Channel](#)