

Responding to the New Geography of Poverty: Metropolitan Trends in the Earned Income Tax Credit

Elizabeth Kneebone and Emily Garr

As the low-income population grew and suburbanized in the 2000s, the EITC responded effectively to economic trends and the changing geography of the working poor

Findings

This report assesses the changing geographic distribution of the low-income population compared to recipients of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) between 1999 and 2007, focusing on trends in the nation's 100 largest metro areas. The analysis finds that:

- **Changes in EITC receipt have tracked closely with the growing and shifting geography of working poverty.** From 1999 to 2007, major metropolitan suburbs accounted for roughly half of the nation's net growth in low-income residents (4.8 million) and EITC recipients (2.5 million), outpacing other types of communities. By 2007, these suburbs were home to more than one-third of all low-income Americans and EITC recipients.
- **Between 1999 and 2007, all 69 large metro areas that experienced significant growth rates in their low-income populations saw EITC receipt increase in response.** Southern metro areas like Raleigh, Charlotte, and Atlanta that had the greatest increases in low-income population also saw the greatest upticks in EITC receipt as a result.
- **Low-income workers claimed \$47.5 billion through the EITC in 2007—a real increase of 25 percent over 1999—with 60 percent of EITC dollars going to residents of the 100 largest metro areas.** Suburban filers claimed one-third of all EITC funds and accounted for half the net increase in EITC dollars claimed. In the 10 metro areas experiencing the greatest increases in low-income population, EITC claims increased by almost \$1 billion.

In the wake of the first recession of the 2000s and the slow recovery that followed, the number of low-income Americans increased significantly, especially in suburban communities.¹ As that population grew and suburbanized over the decade, the EITC responded effectively both to economic trends—offering critical support to help working families weather downturns in the economic cycle—and to the changing geography of the working poor.

I. Introduction

During the 2000s—a decade in which two economic recessions bookended a period of jobless growth—the typical American family saw its income decline in real terms as wages stagnated or fell. Over the course of the decade, middle- and low-wage workers in particular saw their wages drop by 5 and 8 percent, respectively. As a result, the size of the middle class shrank and the country’s poor population grew to a historic high, surpassing 42 million by 2009.²

As an increasing number of Americans struggle to get by with less, federal supports like the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)—a refundable tax credit for taxpayers who work but earn low incomes—prove critical for workers and their families. Since its inception in 1975, the EITC has played an increasingly important role in supplementing the wages of low-income workers, especially those with children, and is currently the largest anti-poverty program administered through the tax code. Not only does the EITC act as a buffer to prevent workers and their families from sliding into poverty during difficult economic times, but it also lifts millions of people out of poverty each year—as many as 6.6 million people in 2009, including 3.3 million children.³ Additionally, the EITC contributes to the broader health of the economy. Roughly two-thirds of EITC recipients spend the bulk of their refunds on immediate expenses, stimulating local economies by generating economic activity in the communities where they live.⁴

The economic challenges of the past decade were not felt equally throughout the country. Similarly, changes in the size and distribution of the low-income population have not been uniform across all places.⁵ The EITC delivers billions of dollars in work supports each year, but as communities have struggled in recent years with recession and its aftereffects, has the credit responded effectively?

This analysis explores the connections between shifts in the low-income population—those with incomes below twice the poverty line—and changes in EITC receipt between 1999 and 2007—the most recent year for which complete tax data are available. In doing so, it captures the impact of the first downturn of the decade as well as the jobless recovery that followed, but stops short of the Great Recession due to limitations in data availability. By analyzing the extent to which EITC receipt has tracked changes in the low-income population across large cities, their surrounding suburbs, small metropolitan areas, and non-metropolitan communities, this report demonstrates the responsiveness of the EITC as a policy tool, and its ability to adapt to changes in both the economic cycle and the geography of working poverty. The paper ends with a discussion of developments since 2007 and the likely impact of the recent downturn on these trends over the next several years.

II. Methodology

This analysis uses U.S. Census Bureau and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) data to assess the changing spatial distribution of the country’s low-income population and its EITC recipients between 1999 and 2007.

Data

To track changes in the size and location of the country’s low-income population,

we use Census 2000 and 2007 American Community Survey (ACS) data. Because data reported in Census 2000 represent income as of calendar year 1999, we refer to 1999 rather than 2000 throughout the analysis. We use 2007 ACS to align with EITC receipt in tax year 2007, the most recent year for which complete tax data are available.⁶

Annual tax return data come from IRS' Stakeholder Partnerships, Education, and Communications (SPEC) division, which tabulates data on individual income tax filers, including those claiming the EITC, and EITC dollar amounts claimed at the ZIP code level. We allocate the ZIP code data to align with city and county boundaries and aggregate accordingly.⁷ We use tax year 1999 data for comparability with income data reported in Census 2000. Statistics on the EITC described in this report reflect the federal credit only, and do not account for EITC credits or dollars claimed through tax codes in 23 states and the District of Columbia.

Income

Throughout this analysis, low-income individuals are defined as those living in families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty line. We choose twice the poverty line as the cutoff both because research suggests this threshold may more accurately reflect the segment of the population facing economic hardship, and to take into account EITC income eligibility parameters.⁸

The EITC's income eligibility thresholds are determined by the taxpayer's marital status and number of qualifying children, and are structured to phase in with the first dollar of earnings. The EITC increases in value as income grows, reaches a plateau at the maximum value of the credit, and eventually phases out to zero as income continues to rise (Figure 1). In tax year 2007, the income cutoff ranged

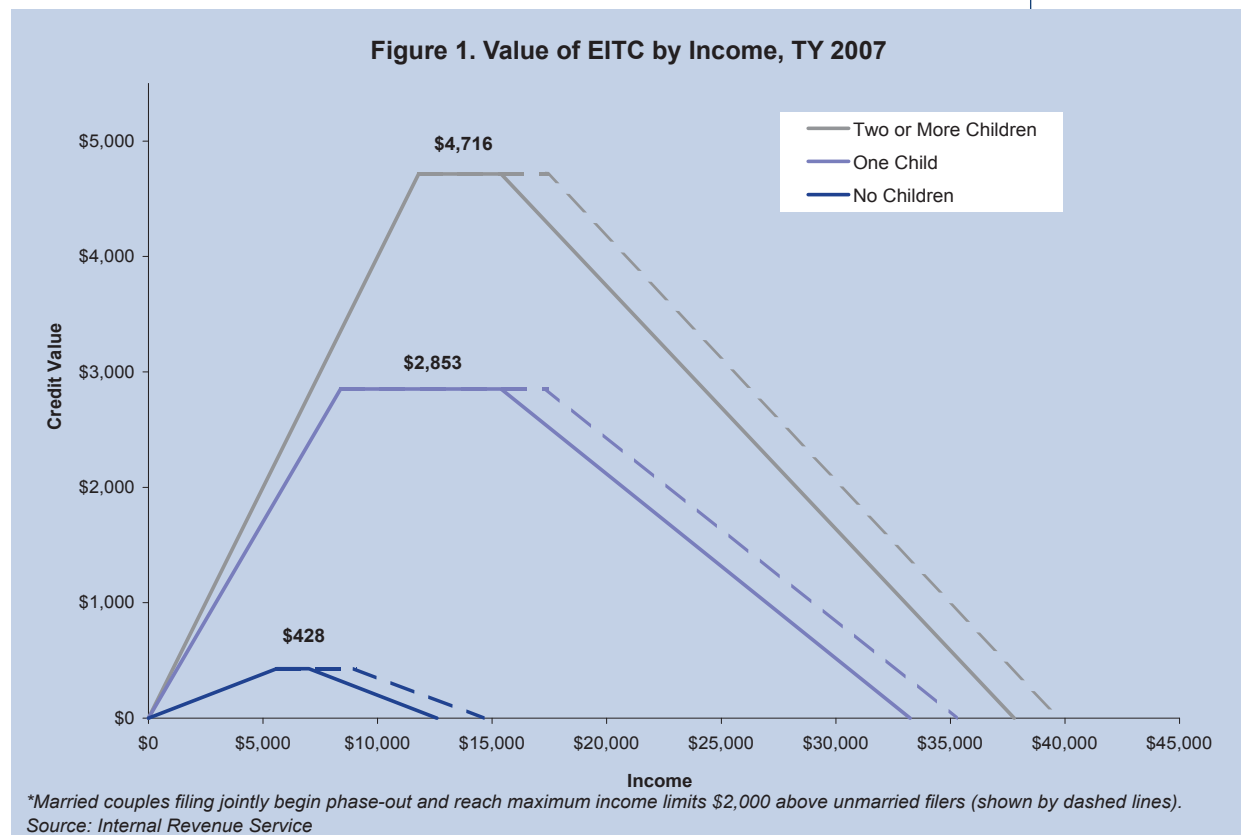


Table 1. Federal Poverty Thresholds and EITC Income Limits*, 2007

	100% of Poverty		200% of Poverty		EITC Limit	
	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married
No Children	\$10,787	\$13,884	\$21,574	\$27,768	\$12,590	\$14,590
One Child	\$14,291	\$16,689	\$28,582	\$33,378	\$33,241	\$35,241
Two Children	\$16,705	\$21,027	\$33,410	\$42,406	\$37,783	\$39,783

**Income amounts are in 2007 dollars; poverty thresholds apply to households where the householder is under 65 years of age
Source: Brookings Institution analysis of Internal Revenue Service and 2007 ACS data*

up to roughly 230 percent of the poverty line for an unmarried filer with one or two children (Table 1).

Universe

The Census and tax return data presented in this analysis represent distinct universes in two respects. First, the ACS data report poverty status for individuals; however, EITC data are reported for tax units, which may represent individuals or families. Second, as noted above, the income thresholds for each universe are not perfectly aligned. In practice this means that the EITC data may capture some tax units with incomes above 200 percent of the poverty line. At the same time, the census low-income estimates will capture some individuals who do not file taxes (because they earn too little) and some who are not eligible for the EITC (either because they do not work or because they do not meet residency, family, or age requirements). The net result is that counts of the low-income population (i.e., individuals) tend to be larger than counts of the EITC population (i.e., tax units). The large overlap in the two groups, however, suggests that trends in EITC receipt should track with those for the low-income population.⁹

Geographic Definitions

We analyze trends in the low-income population and in EITC receipt across cities and suburbs of the largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), small metropolitan areas, and non-metropolitan communities. Cities include the 132 primary cities identified in the 95 largest MSAs for which there are comparable data.¹⁰ Suburbs represent the remainder of the MSA outside of the primary city or cities. Small metro areas are the remaining 266 MSAs outside of the 95 largest, and non-metropolitan areas are counties that are not part of an MSA.¹¹ In 2007, 20 percent of the nation’s population lived in primary cities, 44 percent in suburbs, 19 percent in small metro areas, and 16 percent lived in non-metropolitan communities.

III. Findings

A. Changes in EITC receipt have tracked closely with the growing and shifting geography of working poverty.

In 2007, 90.1 million people lived below 200 percent of the federal poverty line in the United States. In that same year, 23.8 million low-income tax filers claimed \$47.5 billion through the EITC to help supplement their wages and boost their take home pay. These figures reveal both the significant number of Americans struggling to get by on lower incomes and the degree of investment that the

federal government has made to support work among low-income taxpayers and their families. How well does this investment reach those in need, especially in communities where the low-income population is newly growing?

From 1999 to 2007, the low-income population in the United States swelled by 11.0 percent—or 8.9 million people—outpacing the growth rate of the population as a whole of just over 7 percent (Table 2). This group grew fastest in suburbs, at 18.6 percent—more than 5 percentage points above the growth rate in smaller metropolitan areas and almost four times the rate of growth in cities and non-metropolitan communities. Put differently, suburbs accounted for over half (54.2 percent) of the nationwide increase in low-income individuals.

Table 2. Change in Low-Income Population and EITC Filers by Community Type, 1999 to 2007

	Population That is Low Income			Filers Who Received the EITC		
	1999	2007	Percent Change	1999	2007	Percent Change
Nation	81,194,609	90,134,363	11.0%	18,578,647	23,789,038	28.0%
Primary Cities	21,769,741	22,873,574	5.1%	4,963,145	5,867,366	18.2%
Suburbs	26,096,120	30,940,736	18.6%	6,161,843	8,674,789	40.8%
Small Metro Areas	16,076,458	18,206,632	13.3%	3,663,663	4,726,209	29.0%
Non-metro Areas	17,252,290	18,113,421	5.0%	3,789,996	4,520,674	19.3%

Source: Brookings Institution analysis of Internal Revenue Service, Census 2000, and 2007 ACS data

Depending on the region, a number of factors could have contributed to the pace of growth in the suburban low-income population, including the faster rate of total population growth in the suburbs, the decentralization of lower-wage jobs or affordable housing options, immigration and migration dynamics, and disparate rates of economic growth across and within metropolitan areas.

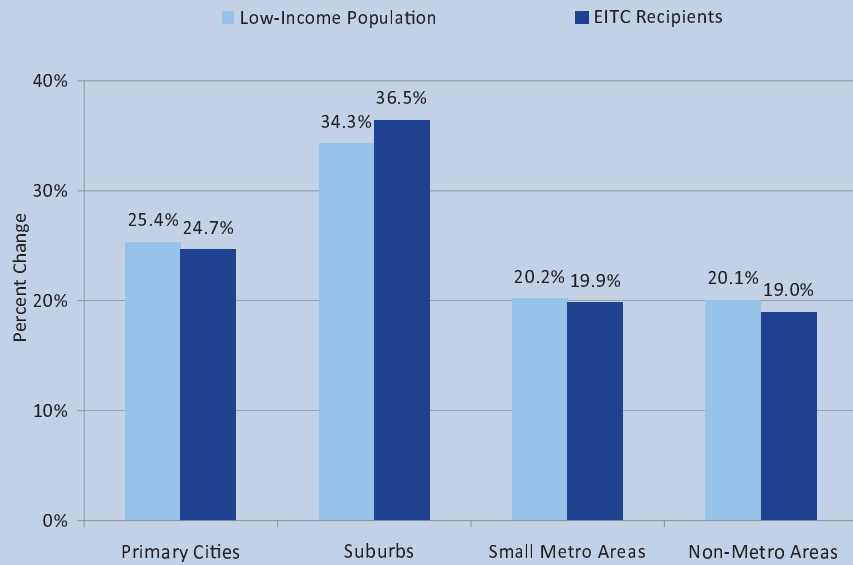
The EITC proved responsive to these changes in both the size and location of the low-income population. EITC receipt grew faster in suburbs (40.8 percent) than in all other types of communities, and accounted for almost half (48.2 percent) of the nation’s total increase. By 2007, the geographic distribution of EITC recipients was strikingly similar to that of the low-income population (Figure 2). The suburbs accounted for the largest share—over one-third—of both low-income residents and EITC filers, compared to one-quarter in primary cities and roughly 20 percent in both small metro and non-metro areas.

B. Between 1999 and 2007, all 69 large metro areas that experienced significant growth rates in their low-income populations saw EITC receipt increase in response.

Changes in EITC receipt occurring in the nation’s largest metro areas in recent years related closely to changes in their low-income populations (Figure 3).¹² Figure 3 displays, for each of the 100 largest metro areas from 1999 to 2007, its change in low-income population plotted against its change in EITC recipients.

Examining individual metropolitan area trends demonstrates the important role of regional economic health in influencing these outcomes. Many of the metro areas clustered to the top right of Figure 3 are located in the South—like Raleigh, Charlotte, Atlanta, and Cape Coral—and placed in the top ten for both increases

Figure 2. Distribution of EITC Recipients and Low-Income Individuals by Community Type, 2007



Source: Brookings Institution analysis of Internal Revenue Service and 2007 ACS data

Figure 3. Change in Low-Income Individuals in Relation to EITC Recipients in 69 Metro Areas*, TY 1999-TY 2007



*Represents only metropolitan areas with a statistically significant rate of change in their low-income population.
 Source: Brookings Institution analysis of Internal Revenue Service, Census 2000, and 2007 ACS data

Table 3. Metro Areas Ranked by Rate of Change in Low-Income Population* with Corresponding Changes in EITC Receipt, 1999 to 2007

Rank	Metro Area	Percent Change in Low-Income Population	Percent Change in EITC Filers
1	Raleigh-Cary, NC	50.7%	69.5%
2	Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord, NC-SC	48.0%	56.7%
3	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	46.7%	62.6%
4	Austin-Round Rock, TX	42.6%	51.6%
5	Denver-Aurora, CO	40.0%	37.0%
6	Greensboro-High Point, NC	36.8%	38.6%
7	Boise City-Nampa, ID	36.0%	60.1%
8	Grand Rapids-Wyoming, MI	35.7%	49.6%
9	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	35.3%	44.8%
10	Cape Coral-Fort Myers, FL	34.9%	69.6%
...
60	Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH	10.7%	26.3%
61	El Paso, TX	10.3%	20.0%
62	Sacramento--Arden-Arcade--Roseville, CA	9.8%	33.4%
63	San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	9.3%	21.9%
64	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	7.6%	25.4%
65	Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH	6.5%	29.2%
66	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL	6.1%	35.7%
67	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA	-3.7%	8.4%
68	San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, CA	-5.3%	17.1%
69	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA	-28.7%	-14.0%

*69 of the 100 largest metropolitan areas experienced a significant rate of change in their low-income population. Changes are significant at the 90 percent level
 Source: Brookings Institution analysis of Internal Revenue Service, Census 2000, and 2007 ACS data

in the low-income population and increases in EITC receipt (Table 3). In each of these areas, suburbs captured more than half the net growth in both low-income residents and EITC recipients. These trends reflect not only stagnating wages for many workers during this time period, but also the fact that Southern metro areas like these grew more quickly overall than other parts of the nation, adding to their stock of lower-wage jobs in the process.

The other end of the spectrum (those to the lower-left of Figure 3) is more heavily populated by metro areas in California—Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego—and the Northeast—Boston and Philadelphia—that performed relatively better during and after the first downturn of the decade. Not only did these metro areas experience slow growth rates in their low-income populations (and—in the case of Los Angeles and San Diego—declines), they also saw EITC receipt grow at below-average rates. In these areas, there are a number of reasons why EITC receipt might have increased at a faster pace than the low-income population (or while the low-income population declined). Increased awareness of the credit may have caused more low-income workers

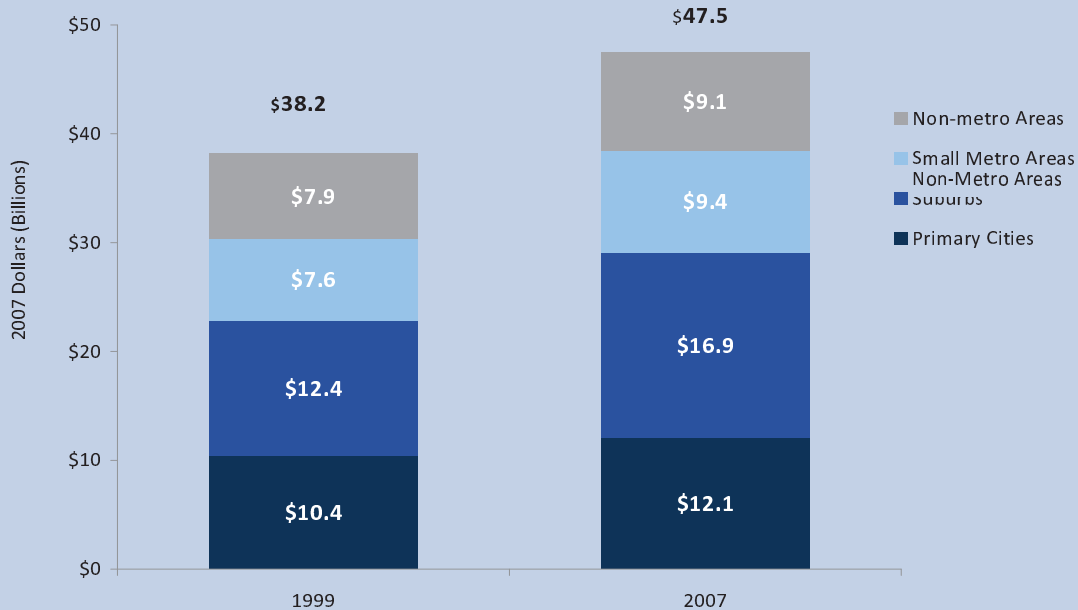
to file, changes in family composition or residency may have affected eligibility, or a tighter labor market might have brought more low-income residents into the workforce, and thus made them eligible to claim the credit.¹³

C. Low-income workers claimed \$47.5 billion through the EITC in 2007—a real increase of 24.5 percent over 1999—with 60 percent of EITC dollars going to residents of the 100 largest metro areas.

The fact that EITC trends and coverage track so closely with changes in the low-income population demonstrates that the credit responded effectively to a growing and shifting low-income working population across the country, particularly amid a national economic downturn and sluggish recovery. But changes in filer counts alone do not demonstrate the full impact this credit has on the economic well-being of its recipients and the communities in which they live.

In tax year 2007, low-income workers claimed \$47.5 billion dollars through the federal EITC—a real increase of 24.5 percent over 1999—for an average credit of \$1,999 per filer.¹⁴ The largest portion of EITC dollars went to suburban recipients, who took home \$16.9 billion in that year—\$4.6 billion more than at the start of the decade. Though EITC claims in cities grew at less than half the pace of suburban claims over the decade, in 2007 city residents earned \$12.1 billion from the credit, meaning the nation’s largest metropolitan areas received over 60 percent of all EITC dollars that year. Small metro areas and non-metropolitan communities split the remaining funds roughly evenly, claiming \$9.4 and \$9.1 billion each in 2007. Overall, the distribution of EITC funds mirrored the distribution of the nation’s low-income residents across community types (Figure 4).

Figure 4 EITC Dollars Received by Community Type, 1999 and 2007



Source: Brookings Institution analysis of Internal Revenue Service data

For metro areas experiencing the largest increases in low-income residents over this period, the accompanying upticks in EITC receipt meant a much needed economic boost for working families and communities struggling with falling wages and incomes even in advance of the Great Recession. Across the 10 metro areas with the largest growth in their low-income populations, EITC claims were nearly \$1 billion greater in 2007 than 1999 (after adjusting for inflation). Three of these metro areas experienced increases in EITC funds of more than \$100 million over this time period, including Atlanta (\$405 million), Charlotte (\$111 million), and Phoenix (\$138 million).¹⁵

IV. Discussion and Conclusion

This analysis provides insight into how closely EITC receipt hewed to trends in the low-income population over much of the 2000s, suggesting that it is a highly effective tool for helping these workers and families regardless of their location. However, the analysis misses an essential segment of the decade: the Great Recession. The years from 2008 through 2010 not only exacerbated the hardships faced by the typical American over the decade, but also had far-reaching implications for lower-income workers, many of whom are (or were) disproportionately clustered in vulnerable industries such as manufacturing, construction, retail, and leisure and hospitality. Just as the EITC helped workers and their families weather the earlier—albeit much milder—recession of the decade and the jobless recovery that followed, evidence suggests that it continues to play an important role in ameliorating the effects of the most recent downturn.¹⁶

Preliminary data show that nationally, the number of EITC recipients trended upward between 2007 and 2008, matched by an increase of about 5 percent in EITC dollars received.¹⁷ This growth in EITC receipt likely reflects the effects of the recession's first year, in which many workers faced reduced wages and hours.¹⁸ By 2009, a spell of unemployment for the typical worker was 15.5 weeks—almost double what it was in 2007 (8.5 weeks)—and the underemployment rate reached 16.2 percent.¹⁹ As the recession deepened and spread in its second year, partial data on 2009 tax returns reveal an increase of as much as \$10 billion over 2007 in EITC dollars claimed.²⁰

The increase in EITC filers and dollars in 2009 partly reflects changes in the EITC's eligibility parameters. Passed in February of 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) temporarily expanded eligibility and increased benefits for targeted groups of working families, specifically married couples filing jointly and families with three or more children. That means hundreds of thousands of families who were not previously eligible for the credit could qualify for the credit in tax years 2009 and 2010.²¹ Tax legislation adopted in late 2010 preserved those expanded benefits for 2011 as well. This means that more Americans will be able to benefit from the economic buffer the EITC provides as the economy struggles to find a firmer footing in a thus-far weak employment recovery.

In addition, the EITC will continue to be a particularly important policy tool given the spatial distribution of its impact. More so than previous recessions, suburbs have borne the brunt of the Great Recession alongside cities, and the latest downturn has continued the longer-running trend toward the suburbanization of poverty.²² The 2000s showed that as suburbs experienced rapid growth in low-income residents, the EITC responded in kind. While it can be difficult for

low-income suburban residents to take advantage of “place-based” services like workforce training or job matching programs—whether due to lack of such services in their community, distance, or limited transportation options—delivering the EITC through the tax code makes it a source of support that is highly accessible for low-income workers and families.²³

In short, the growth and shifting geography of the low-income population within and across metropolitan America underscores the continued importance of the EITC as a policy tool to alleviate poverty and ameliorate the effects of a devastating recession.²⁴

Endnotes

1. Elizabeth Kneebone and Emily Garr, "The Suburbanization of Poverty: Trends in Metropolitan America 2000 to 2008" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2006).
2. Brookings Institution, *The State of Metropolitan America: On the Front Lines of Demographic Change* (Washington: 2010). Elizabeth Kneebone, "The Great Recession and Poverty in Metropolitan America" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2010).
3. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "Policy Basics: The Earned Income Tax Credit." (Washington: 2010). In addition to the federal EITC, some form of the credit has been adopted in 23 states and the District of Columbia, Montgomery County, MD, New York City, and San Francisco.
4. Steve Holt, "The Earned Income Tax Credit at Age 30: What We Know" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2006); Alan Berube, "Using the Earned Income Tax Credit to Stimulate Local Economies" (New York: Living Cities, 2006).
5. Howard Wial and Richard Shearer, "Metro Monitor: Tracking Economic Recession and Recovery in America's 100 Largest Metro Areas" (Washington: Brookings Institution, June 2010); Elizabeth Kneebone and Emily Garr, "The Landscape of Recession: Unemployment and Safety Net Services Across Urban and Suburban America" (Washington: Brookings Institution, March 2010).
6. In contrast to the decennial census, the ACS is administered monthly and asks the respondent to report his or her income "in the past 12 months." The results from each month's surveys are then adjusted for inflation and combined to create an annual estimate. Thus income data from the 2007 ACS reflect respondents' incomes over a 24-month period between 2006 and 2007. (For example, a respondent in February of 2007 would report income back to February 2006.)
7. To assign ZIP codes to cities and counties, we used Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and statistical software to identify where ZIP codes were located. For ZIP codes that cross city and/or county boundaries, we used Census 2000 block-level data to calculate the proportion of the ZIP code's households that lie within each geography.
8. See e.g., The Working Poor Families Project, "Still Working Hard, Still Falling Short: New Findings on the Challenges Confronting America's Working Families" (Washington, 2008); Sylvia Allegretto, "Basic Family Budgets: Working Families' Budgets Often Fail to Meet Living Expenses Around the U.S." (Washington: Economic Policy Institute, 2005); Gregory Acs and Pamela Loprest, "Who Are Low-Income Working Families?" (Washington: Urban Institute Press, 2005).
9. It should be noted that the take up of the EITC—that is the share of eligible filers who actually claim the credit—has remained fairly steady over the years at around 75 percent. See Dean Plueger and Amy O'Hara, "Earned Income Tax Credit: TY2005 Taxpayer Participation Rate" [<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-soi/09resconlowincome.pdf>, accessed October 2010]. Therefore, any identified changes in EITC receipt—while they may reflect changes in economic status, employment patterns, demographics, or family dynamics—are unlikely to be the result of significant changes in program participation over the time period analyzed.
10. The report uses metropolitan areas defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget in 2007, and identifies primary cities and suburbs within the 100 most populous MSAs based on 2007 data from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program. Primary cities are cities that: 1) appear first in the official metropolitan area name, or 2) are listed second or third in the official name and contain a population of at least 100,000. We consider Newark, NJ to be the primary city for the "Northern New Jersey" segment of the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA Metro Area. For purposes of data comparison over time, and to be consistent with other analyses, we also substitute Jefferson County, KY for Louisville-Jefferson County consolidated government and Richmond County, GA for the Augusta-Richmond County consolidated government for each year of analysis.
11. For this paper, we restrict the analysis to 361 (of 363) MSAs because of ACS data availability. The two small metro areas that do not meet ACS reporting standards, Carson City, NC and Lewiston, ID-WA, are included in the non-metro estimates. Additionally, the following five metro areas are reclassified as small metro areas due to lack of data at the city level: Portland, ME; Poughkeepsie, NY; Greenville, SC; Harrisburg, PA; and Bradenton, FL.

12. The correlation coefficient between change in the low-income population and change in EITC recipients was 0.815 over this time period in the top 100 metro areas.
13. It should also be noted that New Orleans was the only metro area to see the number of EITC recipients decline alongside its low-income population, but this largely reflects the impacts of Hurricane Katrina on the region and the general population loss following the storm.
14. Because this analysis focuses on the federal EITC, it analyzes the spatial impact of increases in federal EITC dollars, but does not capture the related economic boost that would occur due to state and local refundable EITCs that are pegged to the federal credit. For more information on state and local EITCs visit: <http://www.taxcreditsforworkingfamilies.org>.
15. For detailed information on EITC dollars claimed in specific communities, along with additional tax data on EITC filers, visit the EITC Interactive at <http://www.brookings.edu/projects/eitc.aspx>
16. For research on EITC trends following the 2001 recession, see Elizabeth Kneebone, "A Local Ladder for Low-Income Workers: Recent Trends in the Earned Income Tax Credit" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2007); Alan Berube, "The New Safety Net: How the Tax Code Helped Low-Income Working Families During the Early 2000s" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2006).
17. Based on part-year SPEC data, which reflect tax returns filed through June 30th of 2008 and 2009 respectively, and generally represent 95 to 97 percent of final filer counts in a given year.
18. Between 2007 and 2008, the median annual wage for American workers declined 0.7 percent, and unemployment spells lengthened. Analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data.
19. The underemployment measure includes all unemployed people in addition to those marginally attached to the labor force (people who are neither working nor looking for work but indicate that they want and are available for a job and have looked for work sometime in the past 12 months), and those working part-time for economic reasons (i.e., people who want but are unable to work full time).
20. See "EITC State Statistics at-a-Glance for Tax Year 2009" [<http://www.eitc.irs.gov/central/eitcstats/>, accessed December 2010].
21. Brookings analysis of IRS data. See Elizabeth Kneebone, "Economic Recovery and the Earned Income Tax Credit" [http://www.brookings.edu/speeches/2009/1021_eitc_kneebone.aspx, accessed October 2010].
22. The number of unemployed in the suburbs continues to increase at a faster rate than unemployed in cities and other community types. By 2010, the number of unemployed in suburbs outnumbered the unemployed in the cities by more than 2 to 1. See Kneebone and Garr, "The Landscape of Recession". Kneebone, "The Great Recession and Poverty in Metropolitan America."
23. See e.g., Scott Allard and Benjamin Roth, "Strained Suburbs: The Social Service Challenges of Rising Suburban Poverty" (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2010).
24. Wial and Shearer, "Metro Monitor."

Acknowledgments

The authors thank Alan Berube, Scott Allard, Chuck Marr, Beth Mattingly, and John Wancheck for their thoughtful comments on a draft of this paper. The Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings thanks the Ford Foundation for its generous support of the program's research on city and suburban poverty, the Annie E. Casey Foundation for its support of the program's research on low-income working families, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the F.B. Heron Foundation and the Heinz Endowments for their general support of the program, as well as members of the Metropolitan Leadership Council.

For More Information

Elizabeth Kneebone
Senior Research Associate
Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings
(202) 797-6108
e ekneebone@brookings.edu

For General Information

Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings
(202) 797-6139
www.brookings.edu/metro

About the Brookings Metropolitan Opportunity Series

Launched in 2009, the Metropolitan Opportunity Series documents the changing geography of poverty and opportunity in metropolitan America, analyzes its drivers and implications, and offers policy recommendations to enhance the well-being of lower-income families and communities in both cities and suburbs. This study and other publications, speeches, presentations, and commentary in the series are available at: www.brookings.edu/metro/Metropolitan-Opportunity.asp

In the Series

- *Strained Suburbs: The Social Service Challenges of Rising Suburban Poverty*
- *The Great Recession and Poverty in Metropolitan America*

Forthcoming

- *Philanthropic Response to the Suburbanization of Poverty*
- *Evidence on Concentrated Poverty in the 2000s*
- *Immigration and Shifting Metropolitan Poverty*

BROOKINGS

1775 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20036-2188
telephone 202.797.6000
website www.brookings.edu

Metropolitan Policy Program

at BROOKINGS

telephone 202.797.6139
fax 202.797.2965
website www.brookings.edu/metro