Share of income, by source and income level,1998

The share supplied by each income source differs greatly by income level

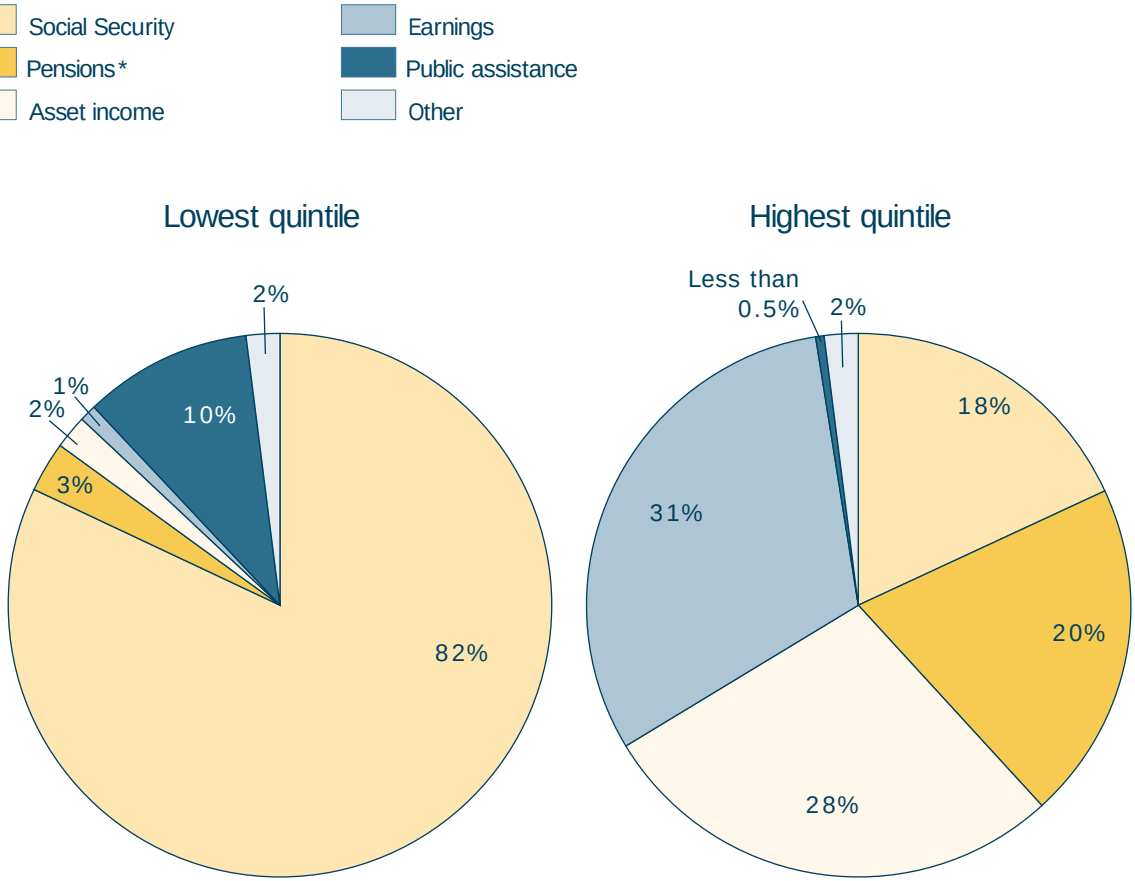
Aged units are ranked by total income and divided into five groups of equal size called quintiles. Persons in the lowest quintile have the largest share of total income from Social Security benefits (82%), and public assistance provides the second largest share (10%). For those in the highest income quintile, earnings provides the highest share of income (31%), income from assets is the next most important (28%), followed by pensions (20%) and Social Security (18%).

Shares of income, by quintiles of total income

Source	Lowest	Second	Third	Fourth	Highest
Total percent	100	100	100	100	100
Social Security	82	80	64	45	18
Pensions*	3	7	15	24	20
Asset income	2	6	10	14	28
Earnings	1	3	7	13	31
Public assistance	10	2	1	**	**
Other	2	2	3	3	2

* Includes private pensions and annuities, government employee pensions, Railroad Retirement, and IRA, Keogh, and 401(k) payments.
** Less than 0.5%.
Percents may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Shares of income for aged units in the lowest and highest income quintiles



* Includes private pensions and annuities, government employee pensions, Railroad Retirement, and IRA, Keogh, and 401(k) payments.