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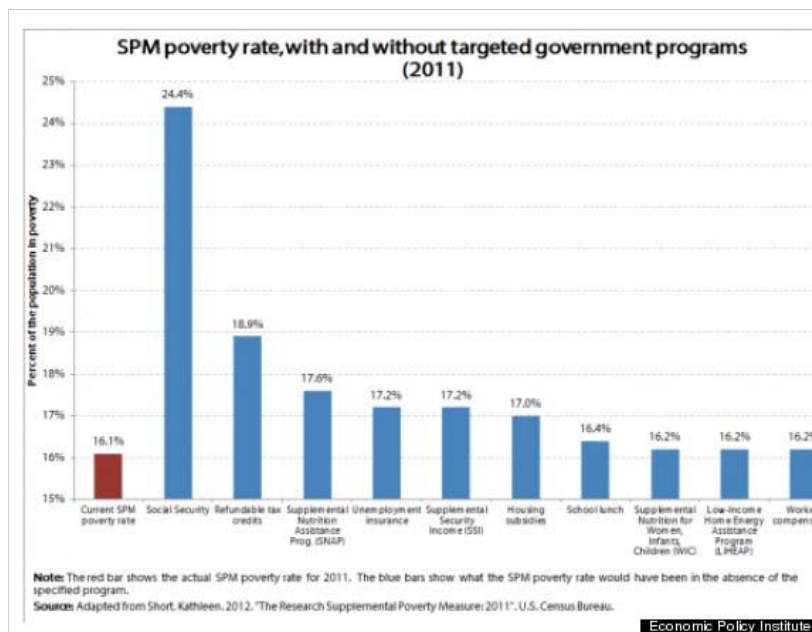
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Here's What Poverty Would Look Like If Social Security Didn't Exist

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The nation's poverty crisis would be a lot worse if it wasn't for safety net programs -- particularly Social Security, a new analysis finds.

If Social Security didn't exist, [about 25 million more Americans would be in poverty](#), according to an analysis of 2011 Census data from the Economic Policy Institute, a left-leaning think tank. That would push one measure of the poverty rate up from 16.1 percent to 24.4 percent, as the chart below illustrates.



"Even though there are a lot of people hurting right now -- with the unemployment rate still elevated and the labor market weak -- government programs are still providing substantial help to many Americans," Elise Gould, the author of the analysis told The Huffington Post.

The data is based on an alternate poverty threshold called [the Supplemental Poverty Measure](#), which takes into account factors like how much Americans receive from government benefit programs.

The findings come as the future of Social Security is in jeopardy. President Barack Obama [proposed cuts to the program](#) in his 2014 budget, much to the chagrin of some of his liberal supporters. The trust fund that supports the program is [projected to run out of money by 2033](#) if Congress does nothing to prevent this from happening.

Meanwhile, the population that relies most heavily on Social Security is increasingly struggling to get by. [One in seven seniors live in poverty](#), according to the Census Bureau. In addition, 4.8 million Americans over 60 are food insecure. That number

has more than doubled since 2001.