Current Population Survey (CPS) & Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

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Outline

• Current Population Survey (CPS)
  – Background
  – Design
  – Supplements
  – Examples

• Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)
  – Background
  – Design
  – Topical Modules
  – Examples

• Survey Comparison (CPS vs. SIPP)

• Overview of Census Bureau Products

• Exercises
Current Population Survey (CPS): Background

• 1930s – The Great Depression
  – No data to gauge severity
  – Needed to track trends and assess policy

• Early 1940s: Monthly National Labor Force Survey initiated jointly with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Census Bureau

• Foundation for the CPS, still run jointly with the Census Bureau and BLS
Current Population Survey (CPS): Design

- General web page: [www.census.gov/cps](http://www.census.gov/cps)
- National, cross-sectional, monthly survey
  - Sample consists of about 60,000 households
  - Universe: Civilian, noninstitutionalized population
    - Excludes people in the military and those in jail, hospitals, etc.
- Consists of two parts:
  - Basic interview
  - Supplements
- Basic interview
  - Poverty and labor force characteristics
  - Source of the official statistics on (un)employment

- Most topics asked annually
- Others asked less frequently
- Survey usually includes one supplement per month
- Examples:
  - Fertility
  - Tobacco use
  - Voter participation
  - School enrollment
  - Food security
  - Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC)
Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC)

- Provides supplemental data on:
  - Work experience
  - Income
  - Non-cash benefits
  - Migration
  - Education
  - Child support

- Takes place annually in the spring
  - Formerly called the March Supplement

- Provides national poverty and health insurance estimates
Figure 2. Female-to-Male Earnings Ratio and Median Earnings of Full-Time, Year-Round Workers 15 Years and Older by Sex: 1960 to 2010

Earnings in thousands (2010 dollars), ratio in percent

- Female-to-male earnings ratio
- Earnings of men: $47,715
- Earnings of women: $36,931

Note: Data on earnings of full-time, year-round workers are not readily available before 1960. For information on recessions, see Appendix A. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1961 to 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.
Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2008

(P20-562)

Issued May 2010
School Enrollment in the United States: 2008

(P20-564)
Issued June 2011

Figure 2.
Nursery School Enrollment of 3- and 4-Year-Olds: 1998 to 2008

Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP): Background

• Longitudinal survey that follows respondents over time
  – First panel started in 1984
  – Current panel started in 2008

• SIPP was designed to study:
  – Labor market dynamics
  – Social welfare program participation and dynamics
  – Aspects of family change
Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP): Design

• General web page: www.census.gov/sipp/

• National panel survey
  – Panels range from 2½ years to 4 years
    • 3 interviews a year, each interview is a wave
  – Current sample of 37,000 households
  – Universe: Civilian, noninstitutionalized population
    • Excludes people in the military and those in jail, hospitals, etc.

• Consists of two parts:
  – Core interview, every wave/interview
  – Topical modules

• Core interview
  – Monthly data for 3-4 year periods
  – Covers work, income, assets, programs, health insurance
Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP): Topical Modules

- Most topics asked once per panel
- Others asked annually
- Usually includes several topical modules per wave
- Examples:
  - Fertility history
  - Marital history
  - Migration history
  - Work schedule
SIPP Child Well-Being Topical Module

A Child’s Day: 2009

(P70-118)

Issued August 2011

Percent of Children Read to 7 or More Times Per Week by Poverty Status and Age: 1998-2009

What It’s Worth: Field of Training and Economic Status in 2009

(P70-129) Issued February 2012

### Educational Attainment by Occupational Groups: 2009
(In percent. Employed population aged 18 and older.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Group</th>
<th>High school or less</th>
<th>Some college, no bachelor’s</th>
<th>Bachelor’s or higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CPS vs. SIPP

• Current Population Survey (CPS)
  – Cross-sectional: continually refreshed sample
  – Historical comparisons

• Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)
  – Longitudinal: tracks same person over time
  – Detailed data on family and economic dynamics

Data from CPS and SIPP are confidential and protected by Title 13 of the United States Code.
CPS vs. SIPP Example

• Poverty rate is 14% for 2 consecutive years. What can CPS and SIPP tell us about this?

- CPS
  - What are the characteristics of the population in poverty in each year?
  - How does it compare historically?

- SIPP
  - Were the same people in poverty both years?
  - How long were spells of poverty?
  - Associated with change in jobs, family, education?
Dynamics of Economic Well-Being: Poverty, 2004-2006

(P70-123)

Issued March 2011
Survey Products: Reports and Table Packages

• Provide current information about specific topics
  – Reports written for general audience
    • Limited number of hard copies published
    • Available online in PDF form
  – Table packages provide reference material for many audiences
    • Online release only

• Best way to find reports and table packages:
  – Start at main Census website (www.census.gov)
  – Use ‘Subjects A to Z’ or ‘Search’ to find specific subject area web pages
Survey Products: Data Files

- Publicly available
  - DataFerrett - data mining tool available as web-based Java applet
  - FTP download page allows you to download the datasets for statistical purposes
- If you need access to restricted data, you can apply through Research Data Centers (RDCs)
- User groups, technical documentation, and other support also available
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- Demographic Call Center Staff
  - (301) 763-2422
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