1 Sample Description

The CPS sample is based on the civilian non-institutionalized population of the United States. The sample is located in 792 sample areas comprising 2,007 counties and independent cities with coverage in every state and in the District of Columbia. In all, some 72,000 housing units or other living quarters are assigned for interview each month; about 57,000 of them contain approximately 31,000 children 0-14 years old and 450 Armed Forces members living with civilians either on or off base within these households. The remainder of the assigned housing units are found to be vacant, converted to nonresidential use, contain persons with residences elsewhere, or are not interviewed because the residents are not found at home after repeated calls, are temporarily absent, or are unavailable for other reasons. Approximately 16,000 non-interview households are present each month. The resulting file size is approximately 160,000 records. Each year in the Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) supplement, data are collected for members of the Armed Forces residing with their families in civilian housing units or on a military base. The Armed Forces members, however, are not asked the monthly labor force questions. In addition, the ASEC is supplemented with a sample of Hispanic households identified the previous November. This results in the addition of about 4,500 households (4,000 interviewed). The inclusion of the additional sample of Hispanic households began in 1976.

In 2002, the ASEC incorporated a significant sample expansion. The sample was expanded primarily to improve state estimates of children's health insurance coverage. This sample expansion, known as the CHIP sample, has three components: 1) Asking the ASEC supplement questions of one-quarter of the February and April CPS samples, that is, of the households not also included in the March sample; 2) Interviewing selected sample households from the preceding November CPS sample during the February-April period using the ASEC supplement; and 3) Increasing the monthly CPS sample in states with high sampling errors for uninsured children. This sample increase results through the addition of about 34,500 households to the ASEC. Adding together the regular sample (60,000), plus the Hispanic sample (4,500), plus the CHIP sample (34,500), we arrive at the total sample size for the ASEC of about 99,000 households.

http://cps.ipums.org/cps/codebooks.shtml

Also of interest is the inclusion of a *new* parent "pointer" in the CPS data. This "pointer" was added to help users identify whether a child was living with both their mother and father. For more information please see: Kreider, Rose M. (2008). Improvements to demographic household data in the Current Population Survey: 2007. Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division Working Paper.

2 Project Websites

- CPS at the Census Bureau
- CPS at the Bureau of Labor Statistics

3 Years covered

1962-2009

4 Longitudinal

Yes

5 Publically available

- File Transfer Protocol (FTP) Server
- Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)
  *Users must belong to a member institution to access these data. Data are available in ASCII, Delimited, SAS, SPSS, and Stata formats.
- Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) CPS
  *Users must register and complete a license agreement to access these data from the IPUMS CPS website.
Web-accessible analysis
Yes. There is more than one option for on-line analysis of CPS data:
• Data Ferrett
• IPUMS Online Data Analysis System

FAQ page
• U.S. Census Bureau Answers, CPS
• BLS CPS FAQ
• IPUMS CPS FAQ

Data specific bibliography
• IPUMS (Minnesota Population Center) Bibliography Search
• ICPSR Citation Search for CPS

Data Citation (IPUMS CPS)
*If data are acquired from ICPSR, there are also specific bibliographic citations that should be used depending on the specific CPS data the user is analyzing.

List serve/user group/help line
You can submit a CPS specific question to the U.S. Census support team at:
https://ask.census.gov/app/ask
Or, you can chat online with a member of their support team at:
https://ask.census.gov/app/chat/chat_launch

The BLS also has economists available to assist users with CPS data (Mon-Fri 8:00AM-4:30PM ET)
E-mail the BLS
Or, call (202)691-6378
Click for BLS contact information

Last updated: 06/2011

This project was supported with a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, grant number 5 UOI AEO00001-04. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the author(s) and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the Federal government.

National Center for Family & Marriage Research
website: http://ncfmr.bgsu.edu
e-mail: ncfmr@bgsu.edu