

**Current Population Survey
August 2008 Migration Supplement
PAA Abstract
U.S. Census Bureau**

Patricia de la Cruz and Cassandra Logan
Population Division, Immigration Statistics Staff (ISS)

Short Abstract

The U.S. Census Bureau fielded a new migration supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS) basic monthly questionnaire in August 2008. As part of the mandate to collect data and provide timely information on migration, the Immigration Statistics Staff, a branch of the Census Bureau's Population Division, coordinated with other Census Bureau divisions to develop this supplement. The supplement is the only comprehensive, nationally representative source of data on multiple years of entry to the United States, time outside the United States since coming to the United States, emigration, and monetary remittances.

This poster will summarize the process used to develop and field the CPS August 2008 Migration Supplement. It will present information on question development, cognitive testing and results, the goals of each section of the supplement, observations from the field, and results from post-collection debriefings of field representatives and telephone interviewers.

Extended Abstract

I. Introduction

Can naturalization rates be derived by looking at those who have naturalized during a survey? What are the characteristics of those who recently naturalized? Do the responses to a year of entry question vary within a household over time? What do measures of time spent in the United States tell us about the quality of the data generated from other questions on year of entry? How do different estimates of time spent in the United States influence what we conclude about economic attainment/assimilation/adaptation? Do people who report being abroad one year ago report a most recent year of entry that is in agreement with their residence one year ago response? What proportion of households in the United States send/receive money to/from friends or family overseas?

The U.S. Census Bureau has sponsored a new supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS) that will attempt to answer these and other research questions. The aim of the CPS August 2008 Migration Supplement is not only to aid in the mission of understanding the foreign-born population in the United States generally, but also to increase the Census Bureau's analytical capabilities in providing accurate and reliable data on the foreign born. Through the information gathered from the additional questions, the Census Bureau will address five specific areas: 1) citizenship status and rates of naturalization, 2) year of entry, 3) residence one year ago, 4) emigration, and 5) remittances/monetary transfers.

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II. Objectives

The goals for each of the five sections in the CPS August 2008 Migration Supplement: Citizenship, Year of Entry, Residence One Year Ago, Residents and Emigrants Abroad, and Monetary Transfers are briefly discussed below.

CITIZENSHIP

Goal 1: To determine the current citizenship status of individuals who may have naturalized while participating in the survey.

YEAR OF ENTRY

Goal 1: To examine the quality of the current measure of year of entry, asked as "year came to live," through comparisons with information provided by questions on year of first entry and year of most recent entry.

Goal 2: To assess various measures of time spent in the United States.

Goal 3: To examine the variability of responses to the year of entry question within a household over time.

RESIDENCE ONE YEAR AGO

Goal 1: To provide an estimate of immigration to the United States.

Goal 2: To assess agreement between responses to the residence one year ago question and the various measures of year of entry, particularly most recent year of entry.

RESIDENTS AND EMIGRANTS ABROAD

Goal 1: To obtain a one-year international emigration estimate, for both the native and foreign-born populations.

Goal 2: To examine the characteristics of emigrants and households with emigrants for future work with estimating emigration.

TRANSFERS

Goal 1: To collect data on the frequency and amount of monetary transfers in and out of the United States by both native and foreign-born populations.

III. Methodology

The Migration Supplement was designed, developed and cognitively tested by the Population Division and the Survey Research Division (SRD) at the Census Bureau in the fall of 2007. Further questionnaire and survey instrument development was coordinated with the Demographic Surveys Division (DSD). The supplement was fielded in mid-August 2008. Immediately following the administration of the supplement, the Immigration Statistics Staff conducted focus group debriefings with CPS interviewers at three regional offices (Los Angeles, Detroit, and New York) and two telephone centers (Tucson, AZ and Hagerstown, MD). Field and telephone observations were conducted as well.

The proposed poster will summarize the process used to develop and field the CPS August 2008 Migration Supplement. It will present information on question development, cognitive testing and results, the goals of each section of the supplement, observations from the field, and results from post-collection debriefings of field representatives and telephone interviewers.