

Using the American Community Survey for the Annual Measurement of Migration and Immigration

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With the expansion of the American Community Survey (ACS) to full size in the last three years, its potential as an instrument to measure migration and immigration flows on an annual basis can be assessed. Despite problems of coverage, the effects of survey controls, and concerns about the accuracy of responses, the basic measures of migration and immigration are comparable to other sources. More importantly, they have the advantage of combining for the first time the rich data on demographic, social, and economic characteristics with the annual measurement of domestic and international migration flows. This paper looks at measurements of both types of flows from the last three years of the ACS and chronicles where they are similar and where they differ from other data sources and from migration data available from earlier censuses and surveys.