

Income: Current and Future Research

Chuck Nelson

Expert Meeting on Income, Poverty, and
Health Insurance

March 20, 2015

Agenda

- Plans for publishing 2014 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC) income and poverty results in September 2015
- Options for making comparisons between 2013 and 2014 income and poverty estimates
- Research on improving ASEC processing system to fully reflect the revised questions

Publication Plans

- Plans are to release estimates in mid-September 2015
- Similar to previous years: webinar, press release, reports, detailed tables, public use file
- Planning for same-day release of Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM)
- Calendar-year 2014 income and poverty estimates will be based on revised questions
- 2013 will be the bridge year (two sets of estimates, one consistent going backward and one consistent going forward)
- Main issue is which file should serve as bridge as we move forward

Options for 2013 to 2014 Comparisons

Use the Redesign file

- Wide standard errors
- Does not utilize any information from Traditional file

Use the Combined Income-Consistent file that incorporates the imputations as described earlier today

- Uses information from the Traditional file that is unaffected by the question revisions
- Uses imputed retirement, interest, and dividend income to match the distribution of responses based on the revised questions

Improvement Plans

- Common theme: often takes time for production processing to fully catch up with questionnaire changes
- Primarily impacts nonrespondents
- Measures of year-to-year change will be consistent
- Three primary areas: interest and dividend income, retirement income, and income ranges

Improvement Plans (Cont.)

Improve interest and dividend income imputations

- The current processing system does not take full advantage of the detailed information we collect on the ASEC on the types of assets owned
- Research will design and implement enhancements to the interest and dividend imputations that take full advantage of this new information

Improvement Plans (Cont.)

Improve retirement income imputations

- The current processing system does not take full advantage of the detailed information we collect on the ASEC on the type of retirement income
- Research will design and implement enhancements to the retirement imputations that take full advantage of this new information

Improvement Plans (Cont.)

Incorporate income ranges into processing system

- Income ranges were utilized on questionnaire redesign for those who did not report exact amounts
- Current processing system does not use these ranges
- Research will design and implement a way to use these ranges in production processing

Issues for Discussion

- Does it make sense to consider using the Combined Income-Consistent file as the basis for 2013 to 2014 income and poverty comparisons?
 - Which file will be “official” 2013 file?
 - Either way, both files will be available to the public.
 - Important to make this decision before the data are available internally.
- Advice from those who have worked on other income surveys on our proposed enhancements to the CPS processing system.

Contact Information

Chuck Nelson

charles.t.nelson@census.gov

301-763-3183