

Current Population Survey (CPS) Modernization Efforts Webinar Series

COMING UP:
LIVE WEBINAR

Topic: Introduction to CPS Modernization

October 24, 2023 | 2 p.m. EDT

Audio Access: 1-800-369-3157
Passcode: 3591837

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CPS Modernization Efforts Webinar

Host

Julie Iriondo

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U.S. Census Bureau

Presenters

Kyra Linse

Survey Director, Current Population Survey and
American Time Use Survey Team,
U.S. Census Bureau

Nicholas Johnson

Division Chief, Labor Force Statistics,
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

QUESTIONS?



Call 1-800-369-3157

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Press *1 to ask a question

Current Population Survey (CPS) Modernization

Kyra Linse, Survey Director, Current Population Survey and American Time
Use Survey Team, U.S. Census Bureau

Nicholas Johnson, Division Chief, Labor Force Statistics, Bureau of Labor
Statistics (BLS)

October 24, 2023

Agenda

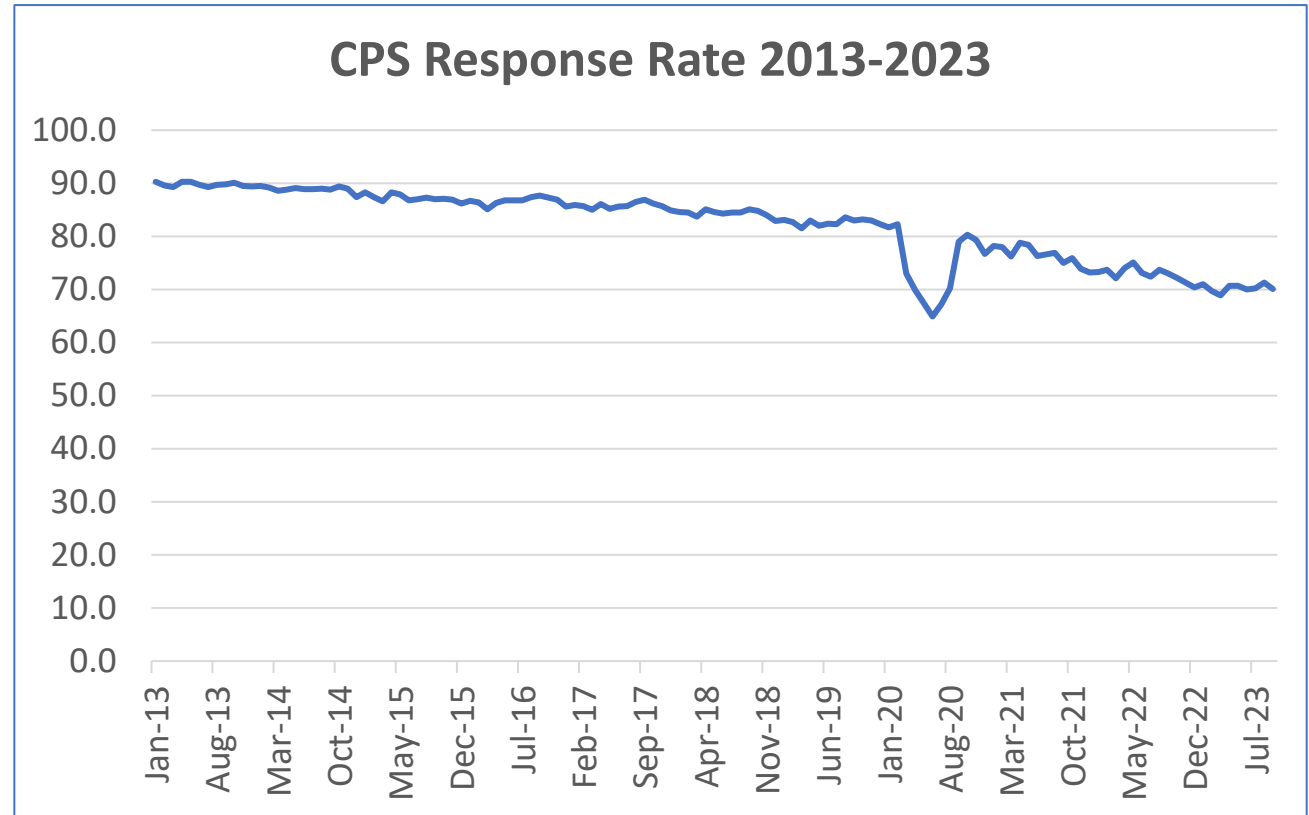
- CPS data-collection.
- Current data collection challenges/need for modernization.
- Developing a CPS web data collection instrument.
- Broader CPS modernization.

CPS Background

- Monthly survey jointly sponsored by the Census Bureau and BLS.
- Source for key labor force statistics, including the unemployment rate, labor force participation rate, and employment population ratio.
- 70,000 households a month (60,000 eligible cases).
- Initial interview typically in-person, follow-up interviews typically by telephone.
- 10- to 30-minute interview.
- Collected for 10 days every month.
- Longitudinal – collected for 8 months over a 16-month period.

Current Collection Challenges

- Declining response rates:
 - Slow decline for a little more than a decade.
 - Increased rate of decline post-pandemic.
 - Survey response rates are in decline globally.
- Increasing collection costs:
 - Labor costs.
 - Travel costs.
 - Increased number of contacts required/harder-to-reach respondents.



Need for Modernization

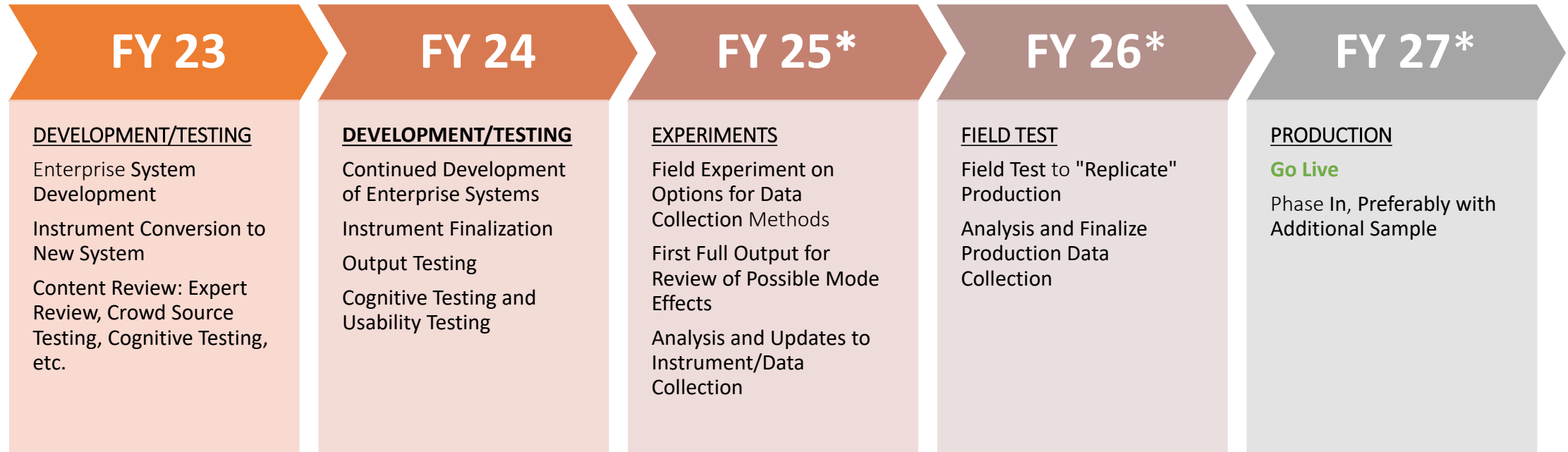
- Address the trend of declining response rates:
 - Lower respondent burden.
 - Reach respondents who are otherwise unwilling to report/hard to count.
- Manage survey costs:
 - Data collection costs continue to rise rapidly as response rates decline.
 - Need to reduce long-term costs to maintain sample size.
 - Improve operational efficiencies.

Source: Declining Response Rates in Federal Surveys, <www.hhts.gov>.

Development of CPS Web Collection Mode

- Census and BLS are working to add a web-collection mode to existing in-person and telephone collection.
- Goals of new mode:
 - Reduce respondent burden.
 - Reach respondents unwilling to report by other methods.
 - Limit the growth of collection costs.
 - Re-direct field-collection resources to harder-to-collect cases.
 - Improve response rates.
- Target introduction of web mode in 2027.

Preliminary High-Level Timeline of Internet Mode Implementation (Basic CPS)



*FY 25-FY 27 items are contingent on securing sufficient funding.

Development and Testing

- Goals:
 - Accuracy of data.
 - Minimize/identify mode effects.
 - Determine best way to encourage uptake of mode.
- Questionnaire:
 - Minor survey redesign required to accommodate change to self-reporting.
 - Determine how to handle questions currently interviewer coded (i.e., job search activity).
 - Ensure questions/instructions are easily understood without interviewer help.

Types of Testing

- Testing the questionnaire (survey wording):
 - Expert Reviews.
 - Comparison to Standards.
 - Crowd Sourcing.
 - Cognitive Testing.
 - Focus groups with the interviewers.

Types of Testing

Testing new mode

- Usability testing:
 - Efficient and Accurate.
 - Identify Barriers to Answering.
 - Test New Mode Security Messages for Ease of Use and Protections.

Types of Testing

Testing new data collection

- Field tests:
 - Experiments:
 - Contact Strategies.
 - Wording/Screen Options.
 - Mode Interaction Options.
 - Replicate “Production”:
 - Test Production Plan on a Shortened Timeline.
- Phase In Production:
 - Mitigate risk.

Effects on ASEC and Supplements

- CPS will also need to convert all supplemental surveys to internet, which greatly expands the effort of this transition.
- Supplemental questionnaires will need to be reviewed and transitioned to the web instrument.
- This includes the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC), a major undertaking:
 - Review of Respondent Burden as part of transition.

Challenges to Introduce Web Mode

- Minimizing (and identifying) mode effects:
 - May require substantial resources to test, identify, and minimize mode effects.
- Operating within appropriated funds, which may impact scope and schedule.
- System development:
 - Census enterprise level development.
- Updating collection process:
 - Need to incorporate web in short collection period.
 - How best to promote web reporting.

Modernization Beyond Internet

- While web and other data-collection changes are a key starting point for modernization, both agencies are cooperating to identify other areas to ensure the long-term sustainability of CPS.
- Continuing Research for the future of CPS:
 - Adaptive Design.
 - Sampling and Weighting Design.
 - Other sources of Data as Support.

Feedback

More information is available at:

Census Bureau:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/about/modernization.html>

BLS: https://www.bls.gov/cps/methods/response_rates.htm

Please provide feedback and questions to DEMO.CPS@census.gov

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CPS Modernization Efforts Resources

- **Release Resources:**

- Slide deck.
- Video of today's webinar.
- News release.
- Transcript (coming soon).
- Background links.

www.census.gov

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Upcoming Census Bureau Releases

- **November 9, 2023** – Population projections:
 - Embargo starts Nov. 7 for qualified media.
 - Comprehensive analysis of nation’s projected population through 2100.
 - Data available at national level.
- **December 7, 2023** – American Community Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates:
 - Embargo starts Dec. 5 for qualified media.
 - Provide a wide range of statistics about people and housing for every community across the nation.
 - Data available down to block-group level.

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For Further Information

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