

About This Report

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This biennial report presents detailed statistical information on the major sources and amounts of income for people aged 55 or older. The tabulations focus on the major sources of total income by age, sex, marital status, race, and Hispanic origin. Several tables describe the economic situation of the aged with varying levels of Social Security benefits. Their poverty status is presented in terms of the income of the families they live with.

Source of Data

Data for this series are from the March Current Population Survey (CPS) of the U.S. Census

Bureau.¹ The CPS samples a large cross section of households in the United States each year (approximately 98,000 in March 2007). The March supplement gathers detailed information on income and labor force participation of each person 15 years of age or older in the sample households. For this series, the Social Security Administration (SSA) creates a subsample of persons 55 or older arranged in aged

¹ For a detailed description of the basic CPS sample design, see U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey: Design and Methodology*, Technical Paper No. 63RV (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, March 2002).

units. A separate data record is made for each married couple living together—at least one of whom is 55 or older—and for each nonmarried person 55 or older. Married persons living apart are classified as nonmarried persons.

From time to time, changes have been made in the survey. Although the changes have improved the measurement of income and labor force participation, they have reduced the comparability of estimates made in different years.²

² These changes are discussed in some detail in U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Reports*, Series P60, various years.

