Technical Information for Constructing Income Measures from the CPS Survey Data

The information provided here is intended to help users familiar with working with survey data to reproduce statistics in this publication or construct additional comparable measures. For questions regarding the survey variables themselves, please consult the technical documentation for the March 2005 CPS (http://www.census.gov/apsd/techdoc/cps/cpsmar05.pdf).

Assigning persons to aged units

An aged unit can be either a nonmarried person or a married couple. The person record is used for nonmarried persons (A-MARITL equals 3,4,5,6, or 7). To create a married couple, a person with A-MARITL equals 1 or 2 is assigned to his or her spouse by matching A-LINENO of one person to the A-SPOUSE of another person in the same household (PH-SEQ is the same for both persons).

Variables used to calculate income

These are the income variables for an individual. To obtain total income for an aged unit, sum amounts over the married couple or over the nonmarried person. To obtain family totals, sum over all family members (those with the same FH-SEQ and FFPOS).

Income category	CPS variable(s)	Condition(s)
Total income	PTOTVAL	
Earnings	PEARNVAL	
Wages and salaries	WSAL-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF=16
Self-employment	SEMP-VAL	
	FRSE-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF in {17,18}
Retirement benefits	Sum of Social Security, Railroad Retirement, government employee pensions, and private pensions or annuities	
Social Security	SS-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF=1
Benefits other than Social Security/Employer pernsion	Sum of Railroad Retirement, government employee pensions, and private pensions or annuities	
Other public pensions	Sum of Railroad Retirement and government employee pensions	
Railroad Retirement	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1=5
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2=5
	DIS-VAL1	DIS-SC1=6
	DIS-VAL2	DIS-SC2=6
	RET-VAL1	RET-SC1=5
	RET-VAL2	RET-SC2=5
Government pensions	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1 in {2,3,4}
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2 in {2,3,4}
	DIS-VAL1	DIS-SC1 in {3,4,5}
	DIS-VAL2	DIS-SC2 in {3,4,5}
	RET-VAL1	RET-SC1 in {2,3,4}
	RET-VAL2	RET-SC2 in {2,3,4}
Military pensions	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1=3
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2=3
	DIS-VAL1	DIS-SC1=4
	DIS-VAL2	DIS-SC2=4
	RET-VAL1	RET-SC1=3
	RET-VAL2	RET-SC2=3
Federal pensions	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1=2
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2=2
	DIS-VAL1	DIS-SC1=3
	DIS-VAL2	DIS-SC2=3
	RET-VAL1	RET-SC1=2
	RET-VAL2	RET-SC2=2

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Income category	CPS variable(s)	Condition(s)
State or local pensions	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1=4
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2=4
	DIS-VAL1	DIS-SC1=5
	DIS-VAL2	DIS-SC2=5
	RET-VAL1	RET-SC1=4
	RET-VAL2	RET-SC2=4
Private pensions or annuities	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1 in {1,9}
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2 in {1,9}
	DIS-VAL1	DIS-SC1=2
	DIS-VAL2	DIS-SC2=2
	RET-VAL1	RET-SC1 in {1,6,7}
	RET-VAL2	RET-SC2 in {1,6,7}
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF in {2,13}
Income from assets	INT-VAL	
	RNT-VAL	
	DIV-VAL	
	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1=8
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2=8
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF in {5,6,7,8}
Interest	INT-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF=5
Other income from assets	Sum of dividends, rent or royalties, and estates or trusts	
Dividends	DIV-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF=6
Rent or royalties	RNT-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF=7
Estates or trusts	OI-VAL	OI-OFF=8
	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1=8
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2=8
Unemployment compensation	UC-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF in {11,12}
Workers' Compensation	OI-VAL	OI-OFF=9
	SUR-VAL1	SUR-SC1=6
	SUR-VAL2	SUR-SC2=6
	DIS-VAL1	DIS-SC1=1
	DIS-VAL2	DIS-SC2=1
Cash public assistance	SSI-VAL	
	PAW-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF in {3,4}
Supplemental Security Income	SSI-VAL	
Other public assistance	PAW-VAL	
	OI-VAL	OI-OFF in {3,4}

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Income category	CPS variable(s)	Condition(s)
Personal contributions	CSP-VAL	
	ALM-VAL	
	FIN-VAL	
Indicators of receipt only		
Veterans' benefits	VET-YN=1	
Cash and noncash public assistance	Cash public assistance >0	
	Noncash public assistance=1	
Noncash public assistance	Food assistance=1 and/or	
	Energy assistance=1 and/or	
	Housing assistance=1	
Food assistance	HFOODSP=1	
Energy assistance	HENGAST=1	
Housing assistance	HPUBLIC=1 and/or	
	HLORENT=1 and/or	
	FHOUSSUB>0	
Aggregate income shares only		
Other	Total income-Retirement benefits-Earnings-Income from assets-Cash public assistance	

Demographic attributes

	Aged person	Aged unit		Family income of person
		Nonmarried person	Married couple	
Age	A-AGE	A-AGE	If husband A-AGE>=55, then husband's A-AGE	A-AGE
			Else if wife's A-AGE >= 55, wife's A-AGE	
			Otherwise not an aged unit	
Race	PRDTRACE	PRDTRACE	Husband's PRDTRACE	PRDTRACE
Hispanic origin	PEHSPNON	PEHSPNON	Husband's PEHSPNON	PEHSPNON
Beneficiary	(Beneficiary)	(Beneficiary unit)		(In beneficiary family)
	Individual's Social Security income>0	Individual's Social Security income>0	Sum of both spouses' Social Security income>0	Sum of Social Security income for all members of family>0