

Poverty and Labor Force Statistics in the United States

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Selected Sources that Provide Poverty and Labor Force Statistics

- Current Population Survey (CPS)
- CPS - Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC)
- Supplemental Poverty Measure
- Women in America Report

The Current Population Survey

- The Current Population Survey (CPS) is sponsored jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- The CPS is the primary source of labor force statistics for the U.S. population.
- The CPS collects extensive demographic data that complement and enhance our understanding of labor market conditions in the nation overall.
- Demographic characteristics include age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, and household relationship.

The Current Population Survey

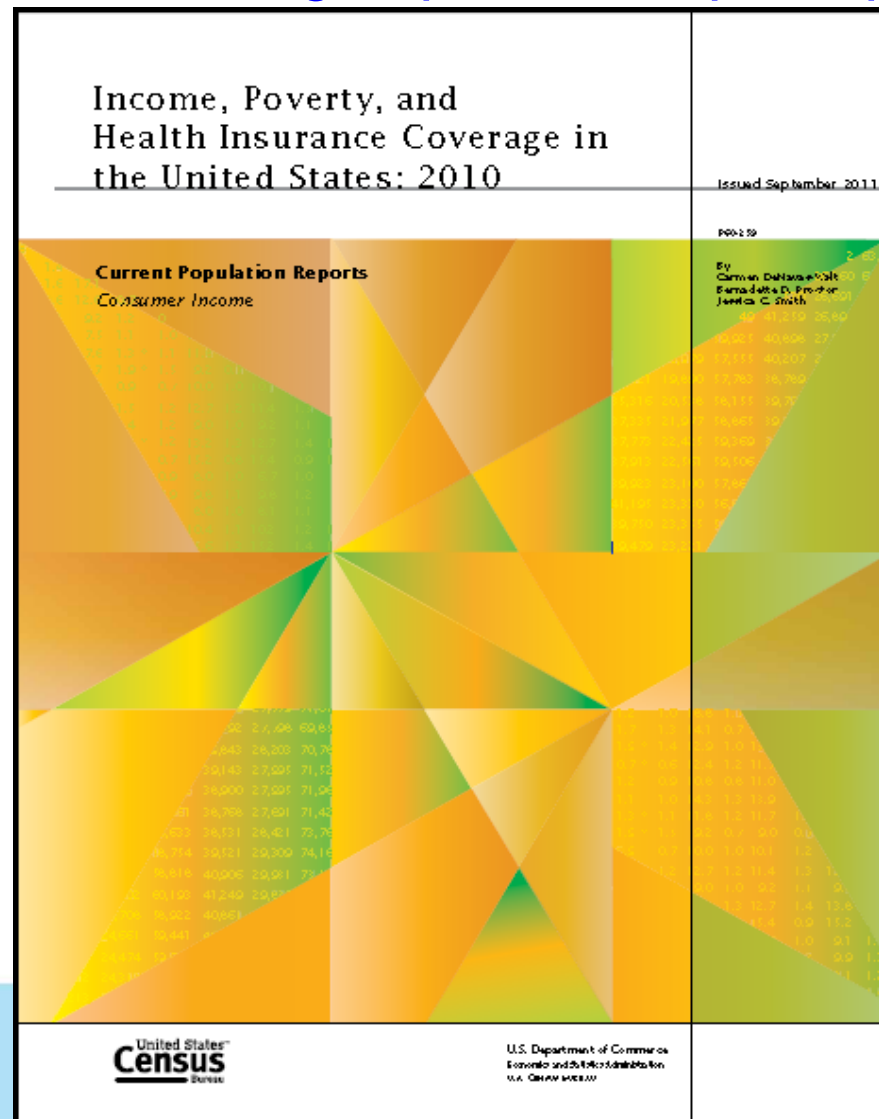
- The CPS is a nationally representative survey that has been conducted monthly for over 50 years.
- Approximately 57,000 households are interviewed monthly. They are scientifically selected on the basis of area of residence to represent the nation as a whole, individual states, and other specified areas.
- Each household is interviewed once a month for four consecutive months one year, and again for the corresponding time period a year later.

The Current Population Survey *Annual Social & Economic Supplement*

- The Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the Current Population Survey (CPS) is the source of official national poverty estimates.
- The Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition (adults and children) to determine who is in poverty.
- In terms of measurement, if a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty.
- The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps).
- Data are available by age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, and household relationship.

Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/p60-239.pdf>




Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2010

- The current official poverty measure, developed in the early 1960s, has undergone only minor changes.
- However, concerns about the adequacy of the official measure have increased during the past decade, resulting in a congressional appropriation in 1990 for an independent scientific study of the concepts, measurement methods, and information needs for a poverty measure.
- The National Academy of Sciences established the Panel on Poverty and Family Assistance, which released its report titled *Measuring Poverty: A New Approach* in the spring of 1995, (Citro and Michael, 1995).
- The primary goal was to produce a measure of poverty explicitly accounting for governmental non-cash benefits (for example, food stamps and the earned income tax credit).

Supplemental Poverty Measure

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/povmeas/index.html>

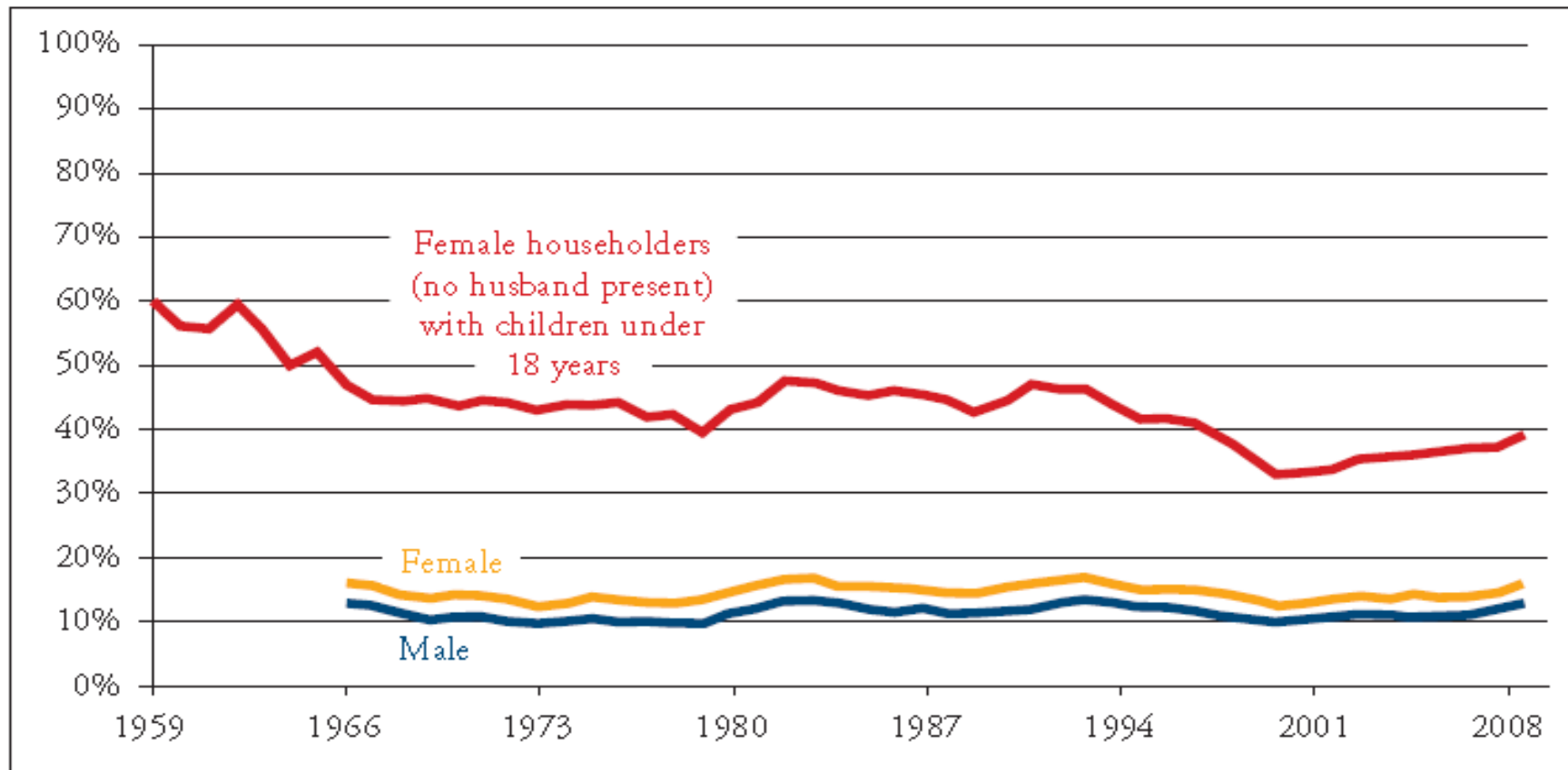
<h2>The Research SUPPLEMENTAL POVERTY MEASURE: 2010</h2>		<p>Issued November 2011</p>
<p><i>Consumer Income</i></p>		<p>PO 211</p>
<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>The current official poverty measure was developed in the early 1960s, and only a few minor changes have been implemented since it was first adopted in 1963 (Orshansky, 1963, 1965a, 1965b; Fisher, 1992). This measure consists of a set of thresholds for families of different sizes and compositions that are compared to before-tax cash income to determine a family's poverty status. At the time they were developed, the official poverty thresholds represented the cost of a minimum diet multiplied by three (to allow for expenditures on other goods and services).</p> <p>Concerns about the adequacy of the official measure have increased during the past decade (Buggles, 1990), culminating in a congressional appropriation in 1990 for an independent scientific study of the concepts, measurement methods, and information needs for a poverty measure. In response, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) established the Panel on Poverty and Family Assistance, which released its report titled <i>Measuring Poverty: A New Approach</i> in the spring of 1995 (Citró and Michael, 1995). Based on its assessment of the weaknesses of the current poverty measure, this NAS panel of experts recommended having a measure that better reflects contemporary social and economic realities and government policy. In their report, the NAS panel identified several major weaknesses of the current poverty measure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current income measure does not reflect the effects of key government 	<p>policies that alter the disposable income available to families and, hence, their poverty status. Examples include payroll taxes, which reduce disposable income, and in-kind public benefit programs such as the Food Stamp Program/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that free up resources to spend on nonfood items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current poverty thresholds do not adjust for rising levels and standards of living that have occurred since 1965. The official thresholds were approximately equal to half of median income in 1963-64. By 1992, one-half median income had increased to more than 120 percent of the official threshold. • The current measure does not take into account variation in expenses that are necessary to hold a job and to earn income—expenses that reduce disposable income. These expenses include transportation costs for getting to work and the increasing costs of child care for working families resulting from increased labor force participation of mothers. • The current measure does not take into account variation in medical costs across population groups depending on differences in health status and insurance coverage and does not account for rising health care costs as a share of family budgets. • The current poverty thresholds use family size adjustments that are 	<p>Current Population Reports</p> <p>By Kathleen Short</p>
		<p>U.S. Department of Commerce Economic and Statistics Administration www.census.gov</p>

Women in America Report

- The Women in American Report was prepared by the White House Council on Women and Girls, created by President Barak Obama.
- The Council's mission was to provide a coordinated Federal response to the challenges confronted by women and girls and to ensure that all agencies consider how their policies and programs impact women and families.
- The report includes information from across the Federal statistical agencies and portrays how women are faring in the United States today and how trends have changed over time.
- The report provides information on poverty, labor force participation, unemployment, earnings, and occupation, usually comparing women to their male counterparts.

Percent in Poverty

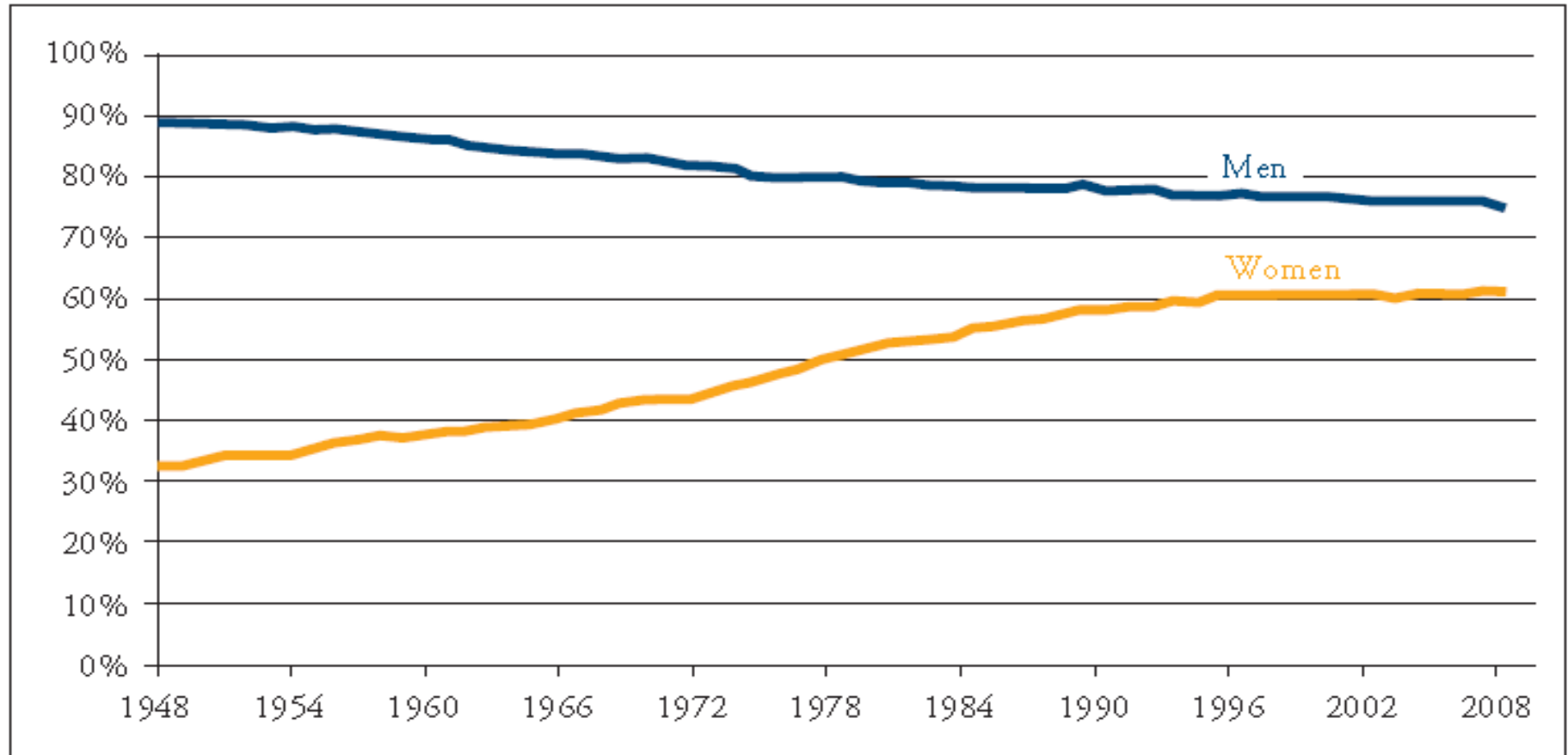
(Percent of Each Group with Income Below Poverty Line, 1959-2009)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Labor Force Participation

(Percent of Persons Age 20 and Older, 1948-2009)

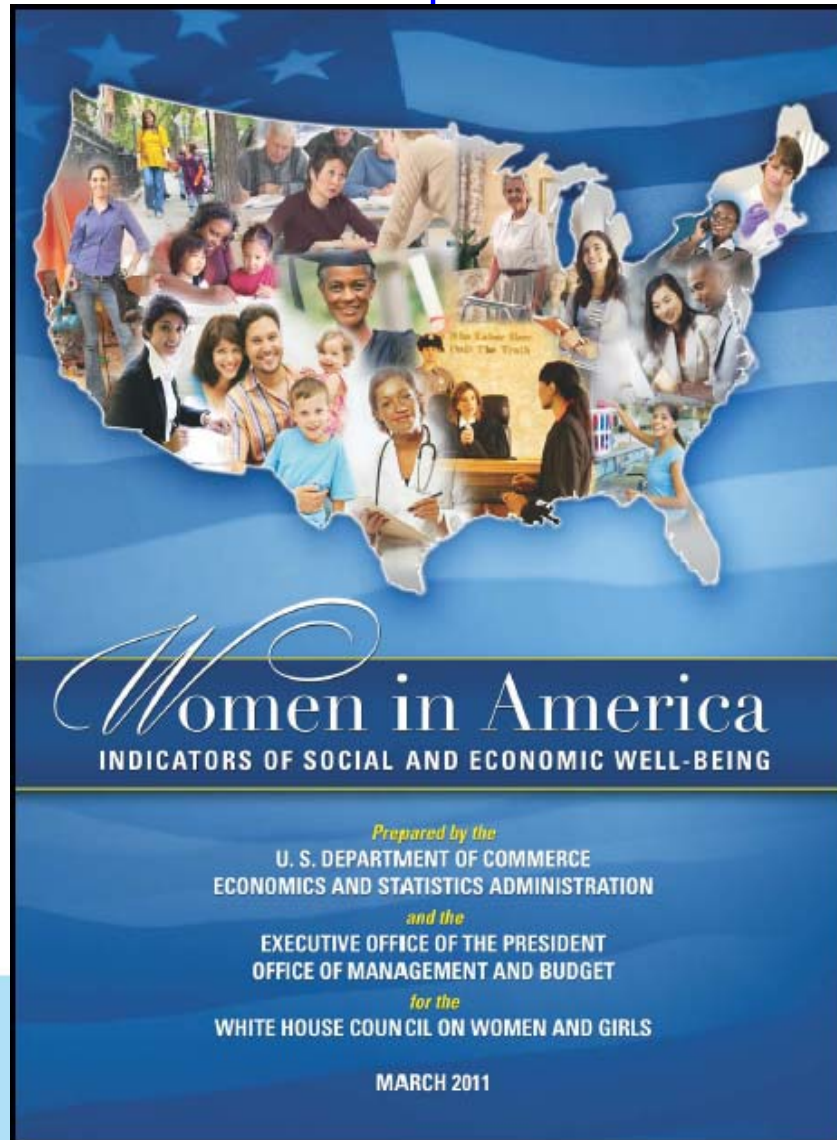


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf

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For Additional Information

U.S. Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/>

Current Population Survey (CPS): <http://www.census.gov/cps/>

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS): <http://www.bls.gov/>

Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women in America.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf)

The Supplemental Poverty Measure

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/povmeas/methodology/supplemental/research.html>