

Health Insurance Coverage Estimates from the American Community Survey

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Overview

- Health insurance coverage question added to the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS)
- First set of single-year estimates released in September 2009 for areas with populations of 65,000 or more
- 3-year estimates will be released in 2011 (based on 2008-2010)
- 5-year estimates will be released in 2013 (based on 2008-2012)

American Community Survey (ACS)

- Designed to collect and produce economic, social, demographic, and housing information
- About three million housing unit addresses sampled annually; about two million responses
- Separate housing unit (HU) and group quarters (GQ) samples
- Three modes of data collection (mail, telephone, personal visit)



15 Is this person **CURRENTLY** covered by any of the following types of health insurance or health coverage plans? Mark "Yes" or "No" for EACH type of coverage in items a – h.

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Insurance through a current or former employer or union (of this person or another family member) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Insurance purchased directly from an insurance company (by this person or another family member) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Medicare, for people 65 and older, or people with certain disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Medicaid, Medical Assistance, or any kind of government-assistance plan for those with low incomes or a disability | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. TRICARE or other military health care | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. VA (including those who have ever used or enrolled for VA health care) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Indian Health Service | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Any other type of health insurance or health coverage plan – <i>Specify</i> ↘ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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Item Nonresponse and Allocation Rates for Health Insurance Coverage: 2008

Universe: U.S. Population, all people who responded to a 2008 questionnaire

	All Modes	HU - Mail	HU - CATI/CAPI	GQ
All People (number in thousands)	300,349	153,826	138,276	8,247
Before Editing				
Percentage with Complete Item Response	73.0	51.8	96.1	81.0
Percentage with at least One but not All Response	23.2	43.8	1.2	7.1
Percentage with No Complete Items (All Nonresponse)	3.8	4.4	2.7	11.8
After Editing				
Percentage with at least One Health Insurance Type Allocated	9.7	14.7	3.8	15.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey



Health Insurance Coverage

- Private Coverage
 - Employer- or union-based plan
 - Private plan purchased directly
 - TRICARE or other military health care

- Public Coverage
 - Medicare
 - Medicaid or other public
 - VA



Comparisons to Other National Surveys

- Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS ASEC)
 - Approximately 76,200 households
- National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)
 - Slightly less than 35,000 households

Survey Feature Comparisons

Survey Features	ACS	CPS ASEC	NHIS
Geography	Nation, states, congressional districts, counties, Census tracts	Nation, states	Nation
Mode	Mail, phone, in-person	Phone and in-person	In-person
Population studied	U.S. (including group quarters)	Civilian Non-institutionalized	Civilian Non-institutionalized
Uninsured measure	Point-in-time	All year uninsured	Point-in-time, part-year, all year
Verification question	No	Yes	Yes
State specific health insurance program names	No	Yes	Yes

Health Insurance Coverage by Survey: 2008

Universe: U.S. Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population

	ACS Estimate	CPS ASEC Estimate	ACS-CPS Difference	NHIS Estimate	ACS-NHIS Difference
ANY COVERAGE					
Insured	84.9	84.6	*	85.2	
Uninsured	15.1	15.4	*	14.8	
COVERAGE TYPE					
Employer Sponsored	58.7	58.5		56.3	*
Direct Purchase	14.2	8.9	*	6.6	*
Medicare	13.5	14.3	*	13.9	
Medicaid	13.4	14.1	*	13.9	
TRICARE/Military Health Care	2.5	2.7	*	2.1	*
VA	2.1	1.2	*	1.0	*
Indian Health Service	0.5	0.3	*	0.3	*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey and the 2009 Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey; 2008 National Health Interview Survey public use files.

Uninsured by Selected Characteristics: 2008

Universe: U.S. Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population

	ACS Estimate	CPS ASEC Estimate	ACS-CPS Difference	NHIS Estimate	ACS-NHIS Difference
Percentage of Uninsured	15.1	15.4	*	14.8	
Age					
Under 6 years	8.6	8.7		7.6	
6 to 18 years	11.2	11.0		10.5	
19 to 64 years	19.9	20.3	*	20.0	
65 years and over	1.4	1.7	*	0.6	*
Sex					
Male	16.6	17.0	*	16.4	
Female	13.6	13.8		13.3	
Race and Hispanic Origin					
White Alone	10.6	10.8		10.6	
Black or African American Alone	18.0	19.0	*	16.4	*
Asian Alone	14.6	17.6	*	12.4	*
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	31.5	30.7		31.6	

Source: Lynch et al (2010), Applying and Evaluating Logical Coverage Edits to Health Insurance Coverage in the American Community Survey; 2008 National Health Interview Survey public use files.

Data Processing

- Logical coverage edits in the ACS
- SHADAC-Enhanced CPS ASEC

ACS Coverage Edits

- Implemented beginning with the 2009 ACS
- Derived from edits used in the CPS ASEC and recommendations from a Technical Advisory Group
- Assign coverage to Medicare, Medicaid, and Tricare/Military Health Care

SHADAC-Enhanced CPS ASEC

- Harmonize CPS ASEC health insurance coverage over time
- Weighting enhancements
- Health insurance coverage enhancements

ACS with Coverage Edits Applied and SHADAC-Enhanced CPS ASEC: 2008

Universe: U.S. Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population

	ACS Estimate (coverage edits)	SHADAC-Enhanced CPS ASEC Estimate	ACS-CPS Difference	NHIS Estimate	ACS-NHIS Difference
Percentage of Uninsured	14.6	14.8		14.8	
Age					
Under 6 years	8.0	7.8		7.6	
6 to 18 years	10.6	10.3		10.5	
19 to 64 years	19.5	19.8		20.0	
65 years and over	0.9	1.7	*	0.6	*
Sex					
Male	16.1	16.7	*	16.4	
Female	13.2	13.1		13.3	
Race and Hispanic Origin					
White Alone	10.3	10.1		10.6	
Black or African American Alone	17.2	18.5	*	16.4	
Asian Alone	14.2	16.8	*	12.4	*
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	30.7	31.0		31.6	

Conclusions

- ACS estimates of health insurance coverage look reasonable
 - With ACS logical coverage edits we expect to see smaller differences between surveys in future years
- More analysis on sub-groups and smaller geographic areas
- Highly relevant, well used data source

Data Dissemination

- American FactFinder
 - <http://factfinder.census.gov/>
- ACS Main Page
 - <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>
- Health Insurance Main Page
 - <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hlthins/hlthins.html>

Data Dissemination (2)

- SHADAC Data Center
 - <http://www.shadac.org/datacenter>
- Minnesota Population Centers Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)
 - <http://usa.ipums.org/usa>

Contact Information

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