

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education
Committee on National Statistics

**WORKSHOP ON RESPONDENT BURDEN IN THE
AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY**

March 8-9, 2016

**The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
Keck Center, 500 Fifth Street, NW, Room 100
Washington, DC**

The U.S. Census Bureau desires to continually improve the American Community Survey (ACS) and, in particular, to respond to concerns of the public and Congress about the actual and perceived burden of the questionnaire and the communication and follow-up procedures with respondents. The Census Bureau has requested the assistance of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) in moving toward reduction of burden for the ACS by convening an expert steering committee to conduct a public workshop. The workshop is intended to shed light on ACS burden concerns and challenges and opportunities for addressing them through public discussion among a wide range of stakeholders. It will result in a written summary of the proceedings.

The four major topics on which the workshop will focus on are: 1) matrix sampling --- to reduce the number of individuals that various questions are posed to, 2) direct substitution of information from administrative records and therefore elimination of some questions on the ACS (at least for some respondents), 3) having a separate, reduced-size questionnaire that eliminates unreasonable questions for respondents living in group quarters, and 4) a communication and education strategy that focuses both on the respondent materials and request sequencing as well as materials for stakeholders, all with the goal to increase cooperation with the request to participate.

In the workshop, the Census Bureau staff will provide presentations on their work in each of these four domains. A number of experts on each of the major topics will discuss the work done and propose additional strategies and directions for research.

ACS Workshop Steering Committee Members

Linda Gage, *State of California (retired)* Co-Chair
Joe Salvo, *New York City Department of City Planning*, Co-Chair
David Dolson, *Statistics Canada*
John Eltinge, *Bureau of Labor Statistics*
Dave Hubble, *Westat*
Julia Lane, *New York University*
Nancy Mathiowetz, *University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (emeritus)*

AGENDA

Tuesday, March 8

8:30 am Welcome, Introductions

Connie Citro, Committee on National Statistics
John Thompson, Census Bureau

8:40-9:30 Session I: Understanding Respondent Burden in the American Community Survey

Moderator: Brian Harris-Kojetin, Committee on National Statistics

Framework and approach to respondent burden in this workshop
Joe Salvo, New York City Department of City Planning

Census Bureau overview of respondent burden issues in the American Community Survey
Deborah Stempowski, Census Bureau

Presentation on respondent perceptions of burden
Scott Fricker, Bureau of Labor Statistics

9:30-11:00 Session II: Communicating with Respondents: Materials and the Sequencing of those Materials

Moderator: Linda Gage, State of California (retired)

Census Bureau research on messages, sequencing, and materials
Elizabeth Poehler, Census Bureau

Discussion with:

- Don Dillman, Washington State University
- Andy Peytchev, University of Michigan
- Nancy Mathiowetz, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (emeritus)
- Andrew Reamer, George Washington University

11:00-11:15 BREAK

11:15-12:30 Session III: The American Community Survey: Communicating the Importance to the American Public

Moderator: Nancy Mathiowetz, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (emeritus)

Discussion with:

- Sandra Bauman, Bauman Research and Consulting
- Betty Lo, Nielsen
- George Terhanian, NPD Group

12:30-1:30 LUNCH

1:30-3:00 Session IV: Tailoring the Group Quarters Questionnaire

Moderator: David Dolson, Statistics Canada

Census Bureau research on the group quarters questionnaire
Judy Belton, Census Bureau

Discussion with:

- Barbara Anderson, University of Michigan
- Mike Brick, Westat
- Lauren Harris-Kojetin, National Center for Health Statistics
- Colm O’Muircheartaigh, University of Chicago/NORC
- Andy Peytchev, University of Michigan

3:00-3:15 BREAK

3:15-4:45 Session V: Use of Administrative Records to Reduce Burden and Improve Quality

Moderator: Julia Lane, New York University

Census Bureau research on administrative records to substitute for items in the ACS
Amy O’Hara, Census Bureau

Discussion with:

- Paul Biemer, RTI
- Mike Davern, NORC

4:45-5:15 Session VI: Discussion and wrap-up of issues from the day

Moderator: Linda Gage, State of California (retired)

5:15 pm Adjourn

Wednesday, March 9

9:00-10:30 Session VII: Matrix Sampling and Multi-Phase Sampling

Moderator: Dave Hubble, Westat

Census Bureau research on matrix sampling
Mark Asiala, Census Bureau

Additional presentations on matrix sampling and multi-phase sampling:

- Jeffrey Gonzalez, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Steve Heeringa, University of Michigan

Additional discussion by:

- Paul Biemer, RTI
- Mike Brick, Westat
- Colm O'Muircheartaigh, University of Chicago/NORC

10:30-10:45 BREAK

10:45-12:00 Session VIII: Modeling and Imputation

Moderator: John Eltinge, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Presentations on modeling and imputation:

- Mike Brick, Westat
- Paul Biemer, RTI

Additional discussion by:

- Jeffrey Gonzalez, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Steve Heeringa, University of Michigan
- Colm O'Muircheartaigh, University of Chicago/NORC

12:00-1:00 LUNCH

1:00-2:15 Session IX: Administrative Records and the ACS: Future Directions

Moderator: Linda Gage, State of California (retired)

Discussion with:

- Rayid Ghani, University of Chicago
- Frauke Kreuter, University of Maryland
- Julia Lane, New York University

2:15-3:00 **Discussion and wrap-up of issues from the day**
Moderator: Joe Salvo, New York City Department of City Planning

3:00 pm **Adjourn**