

Documentation for CPS08 Data

Each month the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the U.S. Department of Labor conducts the “Current Population Survey” (CPS), which provides data on labor force characteristics of the population, including the level of employment, unemployment, and earnings. Approximately 65,000 randomly selected U.S. households are surveyed each month. The sample is chosen by randomly selecting addresses from a database comprised of addresses from the most recent decennial census augmented with data on new housing units constructed after the last census. The exact random sampling scheme is rather complicated (first small geographical areas are randomly selected, then housing units within these areas randomly selected); details can be found in the *Handbook of Labor Statistics* and is described on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website (www.bls.gov).

The survey conducted each March is more detailed than in other months and asks questions about earnings during the previous year. The file **CPS08** contains the data for 2008 (from the March 2009 survey). These data are for full-time workers, defined as workers employed more than 35 hours per week for at least 48 weeks in the previous year. Data are provided for workers whose highest educational achievement is (1) a high school diploma, and (2) a bachelor’s degree.

Series in Data Set:

FEMALE: 1 if female; 0 if male

YEAR: Year

AHE : Average Hourly Earnings

BACHELOR: 1 if worker has a bachelor’s degree; 0 if worker has a high school degree