

Monetary Transfers Behavior in the United States: Analyzing Nativity, Place of Birth, and Hispanic Origin Using the Current Population Survey's 2008 Migration Supplement

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Abstract

In August 2008, the U.S. Census Bureau fielded a supplement to the monthly Current Population Survey's base questionnaire. The Migration Supplement included questions on remittances (monetary transfers) and four additional topics – citizenship, year of entry, residence one year ago, and residents and emigrants abroad. The questions on monetary transfers include: 1) whether or not the household sent and/or received money; 2) how often the household sent and/or received money; and 3) the amount of money sent and/or received. The monetary transfers section is noteworthy because it represents the first time questions on both the giving and receiving of transfers were included on a large, federally sponsored survey. It is also noteworthy because the transfers questions were administered to all households, both native and foreign born. The Migration Supplement data offer researchers a unique opportunity to analyze differences in the remittance behavior of various social groups. This paper will analyze households who reported sending or receiving monetary transfers by nativity, place of birth, and Hispanic origin. Of specific interest will be differences in the propensity to send/receive and the frequency and amount of money transferred. As will be shown through the analyses of this paper, the various nativity, place of birth, and Hispanic origin groups in the United States exhibit differences in their household remittance behavior.

Extended Abstract

In August of 2008, the U.S. Census Bureau fielded a migration supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS) that included five sections: (1) Citizenship, (2) Year of Entry, (3) Residence One Year Ago, (4) Residence and Emigrants Abroad and (5) Monetary Transfers. The aim of the 2008 Migration Supplement was to aid the Census Bureau in its understanding of the foreign-born population by improving data collected on this population living in the United States. While the Migration Supplement collected data on several areas of research, this paper will concentrate on the monetary transfers section—specifically whether monetary transfers were sent or received and the frequency and amount of those transfers. One of the advantages of the CPS Migration Supplement is that, along with these special migration-related questions, information is available on various characteristics of both the respondents and their households. This paper will show some results of the monetary transfers section based on the place of birth, nativity and citizenship status and Hispanic origin of households included in the survey and discuss differences in the remitting behavior of households based on these characteristics.

This paper will analyze households that reported sending or receiving monetary transfers by nativity, citizenship status, Hispanic origin, and place of birth. Since the monetary transfer data are household level data, certain definitions must be made to analyze the remitting behavior by the selected demographic characteristics:

- Households will be defined as foreign born if the household contains at least one adult member (age 18 and older) who is foreign born.
- Households will be considered Hispanic if the household consists of at least one adult member who identifies as Hispanic.
- To analyze the citizenship status of foreign-born households—naturalized and noncitizens, households where all the foreign-born adult members are noncitizens will be considered noncitizen households and households where all the foreign-born adult members are naturalized citizens will be considered naturalized households. In order to make sure that there is no overlap in the citizenship status of a household, those households with two or more foreign-born adults where at least one is a noncitizen and at least one is a naturalized citizen will be categorized as “mixed citizenship status” households. These “mixed citizenship” households will be compared to all naturalized and all noncitizen households.

- To analyze remitting behavior by country of birth, households will be categorized based on the countries of birth of its adult members. A household will be considered to belong to a particular country of birth category if all of its foreign-born adult members are from that country. For example, if all the foreign-born adult members of a household are from Mexico, this household will be analyzed as a ‘foreign-born Mexican’ household. Households with two or more adult members from different countries will be placed together in a single group as households of “mixed country of birth.” This will ensure that there is no overlap in the country of birth categorizations in the comparisons conducted in this paper.
- The ability to perform these comparisons will depend on the sample size of these households after the categorizations are made.

Expected Analyses

- This paper will describe the remitting behavior of native and foreign-born households based on that household’s citizenship status. Households will be categorized by their nativity status and foreign-born households will be further divided into naturalized, noncitizen, and mixed citizenship status households. If differences are observed in the remitting behavior between citizen, noncitizen, and mixed citizenship status households, then analyses will look at the frequency and amount of monetary transfers sent by these types of households.
- This paper will also show the Hispanic origin of households by nativity that sent/received monetary transfers. The differences in the occurrence, frequency and amount of transfers sent and/or received will likely vary. If there are differences in the remitting behavior between Hispanic and non-Hispanic households, this paper will include information on the frequency and amount of remittances sent and received.
- Lastly, this paper will examine the country of birth of those households that sent and/or received remittances. Comparisons will be made between: single country of birth foreign-born households, multiple country of birth foreign-born households and all other remaining single country of birth households. The analysis will include a minimum of four categories: Total, China, Mexico, all other single country of birth households, and all multiple country of birth households.

Expected Results to be Shown



