

Revised Response to the CSAC Recommendation (As of 09-10-14)

CSAC Recommendation:

Inclusion of Parental Birthplace Question in the ACS. CSAC recommends the inclusion of a parental birthplace question on the American Community Survey. This question is needed to identify second generation immigrants and assess their status and well-being in U.S. society. At present, a quarter of all Americans are first or second generation immigrants and this figure is projected to rise to 37% by 2050 when the second generation by itself will comprise nearly a fifth of the population. Although the future of the United States depends crucially on the successful integration of immigrants and their children, we currently lack the data necessary to assess generational progress adequately. The ACS, unlike the Current Population Survey, would provide sufficient sample size to develop estimates for most origin countries at the national level. Moreover, although careful assessment is needed, it would seem that ACS data on parental birthplace could also be used to generate reliable estimates for small geographic units. Accordingly, besides recommending inclusion of parental birthplace in the ACS, CSAC also respectfully requests that the Census Bureau undertake a multi-pronged study of the birthplace question, including feasibility of small-area estimates, assessment of effects on nonresponse and data quality (by domain), review of the parental birthplace question using the decision criteria for ACS content review presented at the September meeting, and review of the 2009 rationale for excluding the parental birthplace question from the ACS.

Census Bureau Response:

The Census Bureau recognizes the value of asking parental place of birth (PPOB) questions on the American Community Survey. In 2012, the ACS conducted a year long data collection operation to assess the reliability of the responses provided by the respondents. As part of the Content Reinterview Survey, we assessed the place of birth question ("*Where was this person born?*"). Overall, the response reliability of this question is very good (see link for the report).

http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/library/2014/2014_Murphy_01.pdf

The results of the 2010 ACS Content Test demonstrated that questions on parental place of birth are clearly understood by respondents and provide consistent and reliable data (see link for the report).

http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/library/2012/2012_Larsen_01.pdf

While we believe there is added value in collecting information about PPOB, some may feel that this topic is somewhat duplicative when collected in connection with existing survey questions on race, Hispanic origin, and ancestry. In addition, given the sample size, the ACS would be able to provide reliable estimates for small geographic areas and small population groups.

With respect to the recommendation of including PPOB in the ACS Content Review, the scope of the review is the current set of questions. Many of the evaluation criteria depends on production related information that is not available for the PPOB questions. While it was not possible to include PPOB in

the Content Review, the Census Bureau is seriously considering the inclusion of the PPOB questions in the ACS. We have reached out again to federal agencies to ensure there is a legislative need for this data and we are considering several alternative timelines for incorporating the questions into the questionnaire in possibly either January 2018 or January 2019. This timeline is based on the constraints associated with the ACS produce cycle, as well as research and operational activities associated with several large projects, including the ACS Content Test, the conclusion of the ACS Content Review, and the introduction of a new operational system.