In Collaboration with the U.S. Census Bureau's Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division

Comparison of the Prevalence of Uninsured Persons From the National Health Interview Survey and the Current Population Survey, 2017 and 2018

The table below provides a side-by-side comparison of recent estimates of uninsurance from the National Center for Health Statistics' National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS). These two surveys are pillars of the federal statistical community's measurement approach to health insurance coverage. Since 2014, the Census Bureau is able to use CPS to produce estimates of the percentage of persons who lacked health insurance coverage at the time of survey interview. The table below includes the recently released estimates based on 2018 data as well as the previously released estimates based on 2017 data.

Although both NHIS and CPS now measure similar concepts, differences in survey data collection methods and time periods, sampling error, nonresponse, and data processing lead to minor differences in estimates. Detailed technical information about NHIS estimates is available from: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/insur201808.pdf. Detailed information about CPS is available from: https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2018/demo/p60-264.pdf.

Percentage (and standard error) of persons who lacked health insurance coverage at the time of interview, by age group, race/ethnicity (among persons aged 18–64), and survey data source: United States, 2017 and 2018

Selected characteristic	NHIS, January–March 2017[1]	CPS, February–April 2017[2]	2017 difference (percentage points)	NHIS, January–March 2018[1]	CPS, February–April 2018[2]	2018 difference (percentage points)
Age (years)						
All ages	8.8 (0.35)	9.6 (0.10)	*–0.8	8.8 (0.36)	9.6 (0.12)	*–0.8
Under 65	10.3 (0.41)	11.1 (0.12)	–0.8	10.3 (0.42)	11.1 (0.14)	–0.8
Under 18	5.3 (0.61)	6.2 (0.17)	–0.9	4.6 (0.44)	6.3 (0.19)	*–1.7
18–64	12.1 (0.43)	12.9 (0.14)	–0.8	12.5 (0.52)	12.9 (0.16)	–0.4
18–24	13.3 (0.93)	13.1 (0.33)	0.2	12.8 (0.89)	13.7 (0.40)	–0.9
19–25	14.9 (0.96)	14.3 (0.36)	0.6	13.7 (0.96)	14.7 (0.41)	–1.0
25–34	17.0 (0.76)	17.1 (0.35)	–0.1	16.2 (1.17)	16.7 (0.31)	–0.5
35–44	13.1 (0.82)	13.9 (0.30)	–0.8	13.7 (1.04)	14.1 (0.31)	–0.4
45–64	8.7 (0.63)	10.2 (0.19)	*–1.5	9.7 (0.47)	10.0 (0.21)	–0.3
65 and over	0.7 (0.15)	1.3 (0.09)	*–0.6	0.6 (0.15)	1.3 (0.08)	*–0.7
Race/ethnicity[3]						
Aged 18–64:						
Hispanic or Latino	24.1 (1.38)	22.9 (0.47)	1.2	24.2 (2.16)	22.7 (0.46)	1.5
Not Hispanic or Latino:						
White, single race	8.5 (0.49)	9.8 (0.16)	*–1.3	8.9 (0.43)	9.6 (0.18)	–0.7
Black, single race	14.2 (1.18)	15.3 (0.43)	–1.1	14.1 (1.46)	15.2 (0.42)	–1.1

*Significant difference between National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and Current Population Survey (CPS) estimates of the percentage who lacked health insurance coverage at the time of interview ($p < 0.05$).

[1]A person was defined as uninsured in NHIS if he or she did not have any private health insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), state-sponsored or other government-sponsored health plan, or military plan. A person was also defined as uninsured if he or she had only Indian Health Service coverage or had only a private plan that paid for one type of service, such as accidents or dental care.

[2]A person was defined as uninsured in CPS if he or she did not have any private health insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), state-sponsored or other government-sponsored health plan, or military plan. A person was also defined as uninsured if he or she had only Indian Health Service coverage.

[3]Estimates are not shown for adults who are not Hispanic or Latino and who are of multiple races or of single race other than white or black.

NOTES: Estimates from both NHIS and CPS are based on household interviews of a sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The estimates are based on a sample of the population and, therefore, are subject to sampling error. Standard errors are reported to indicate reliability of the estimates. Estimates with larger standard errors are less reliable and less precise than estimates with smaller standard errors. The NHIS health insurance estimates are being released prior to final data editing and final weighting to provide access to the most recent information. The resulting estimates for persons without health insurance are generally 0.1–0.3 percentage points lower than those based on the editing procedures used for the final data files. Occasionally, due to decisions made for the final data editing and weighting, estimates based on preliminary editing procedures may differ by more than 0.3 percentage points from estimates based on final files.

DATA SOURCES: CDC/NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2017 and 2018, Family Core component; U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2017 and 2018 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

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