

Using Food Stamp Identifiers in the CE Diary Survey: Opportunities and Challenges

Lisa Boily, Economist
Consumer Expenditure Microdata
User's Workshop
July 20, 2023



Meet the authors!



Lisa K. Boily

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Donka Mirtcheva, PhD

The College of New Jersey



Geoffrey Paulin, PhD

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Cynthia H. Gillham

Consumer Products
Safety Commission

Article

SNAP participation and food-at-home expenditures through the Great Recession: United States and the New York Area

Link

<https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2022/article/snap-participation-and-food-at-home-expenditures-through-the-great-recession-united-states-and-the-new-york-area.htm>

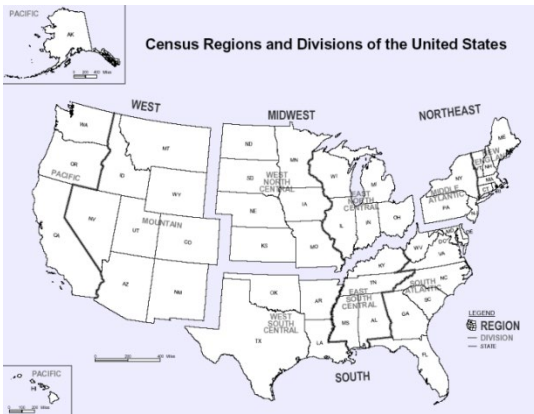
Research Questions

1. Did the Great Recession impact the characteristics of SNAP participants?
2. How were food expenditure patterns of SNAP participants and non-participants impacted by the Great Recession?
3. How did the New York area differ from the rest of the U.S.?



Challenges





Geography of CE data

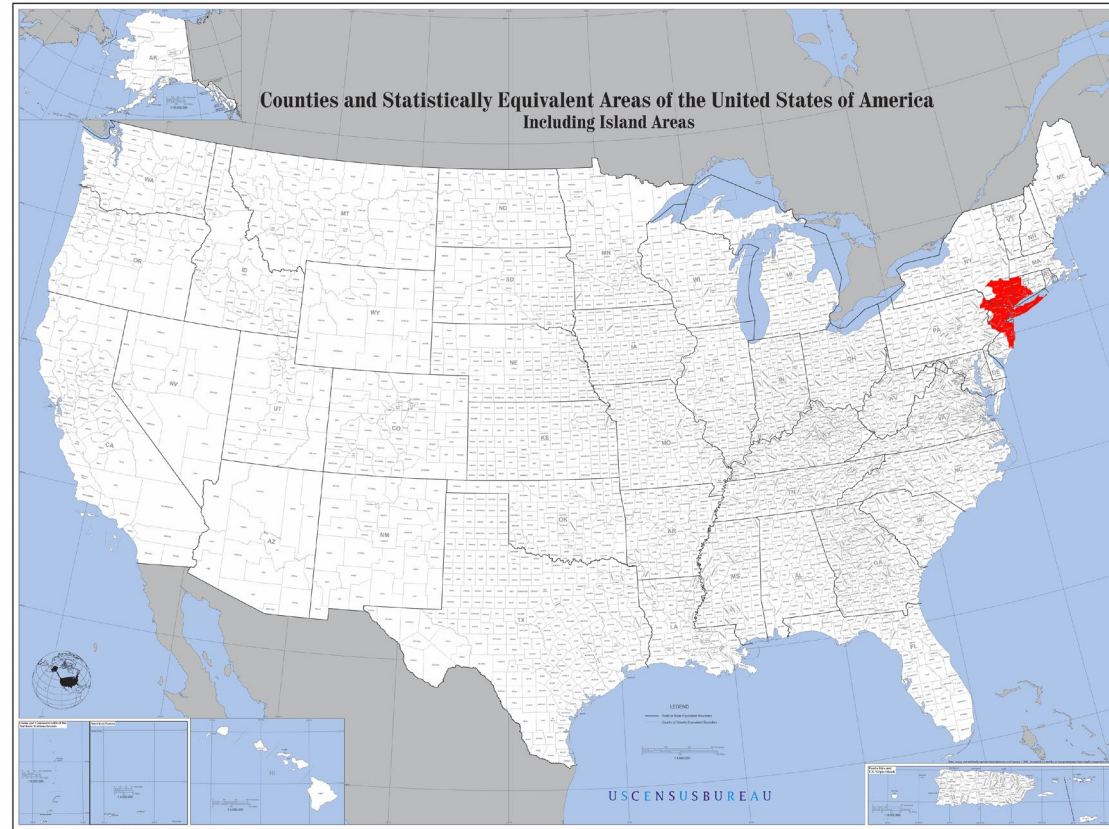


- National
- U.S. Census regions: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West
- Selected metropolitan areas



To weight or not to weight...

United States or rest of United States?



Working with variables as defined



MyPlate

Grains: any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley or another cereal grain. Examples include: bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits.

Defined for paper

Grains: cereal or cereal products, grain, and bakery product.

Note that bakery products, includes cakes and sweet rolls, in addition to bread.

Quality of Response

- FINCBEFX: Family income before taxes
- FINCAFTX: Family income after taxes
- How to handle negative income

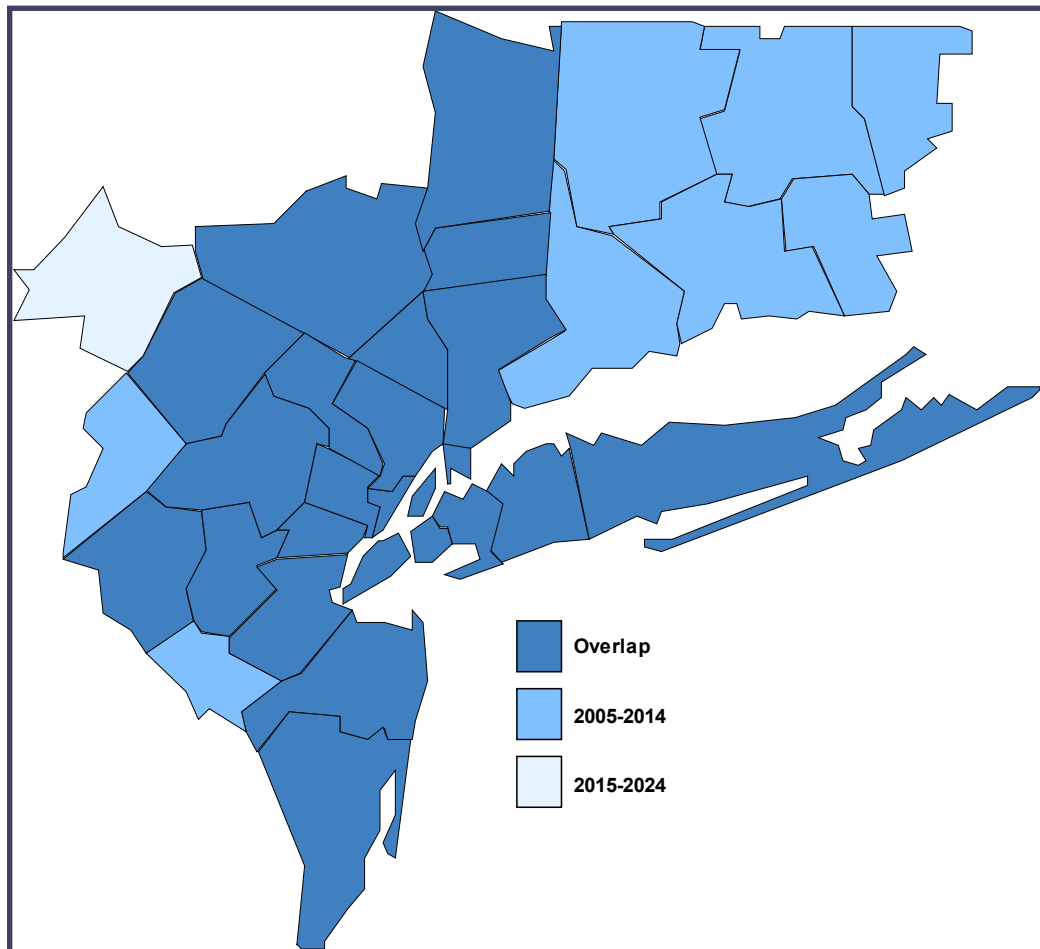
Check with a CE Expert



CE Survey is not a time series



Changing area definitions



The fix:



Use state identifiers to delete Connecticut and Pennsylvania observations to allow for maximum geographic continuity

Continuity of Variables

Variables HISP_REF/HISP2

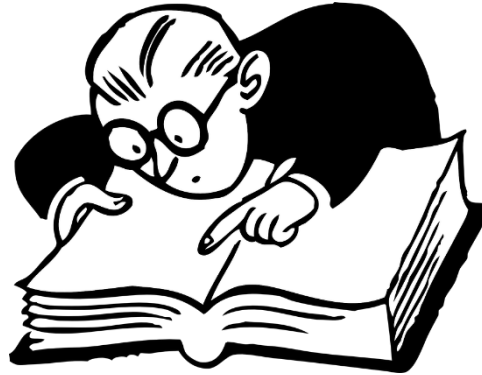
- Capture the Hispanic origin of the CU reference person and CU spouse.
- Introduced with 2009 data set; not available for earlier years

Workaround: Substitution



Use HORREF1/HORREF2 with data available from 2003 forward

Resource for Checking Variable Continuity



[Dictionary for Interview and Diary Survey \(XLSX\)](#)

Variables from 1996 forward:

www.bls.gov/cex/pumd_doc.htm



The CE Community



- Annual user's conference
- Expansion of professional network
- Source of expert advice on limitations and uses of CE data
- Opportunity for collaboration

Contact Information

Lisa Boily - Economist
Northeast Information Office
646-264-3619
boily.lisa@bls.gov

