SSA’s Office of Research, Evaluation & Statistics (ORES)

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Discussion Topics for Today

How we are dealing with…

1. COVID-19
2. Staffing
3. Disseminating Agency Reports
4. Budget
ORES Overview

‘Strengthening Social Security Through Objective Research’

I serve as the SSA designated Statistical Official under the Evidence Based Policy Act. We create a body of evidence, and adhere to Federal Statistical Agency principles and practices. We:

- Perform targeted Research and Evaluation by internal and external analysts
- Develop Data and Statistics to support research
- Maintain Microsimulation capability to model effects of proposed Social Security changes
- Disseminate our work via web publications and public meetings
During the COVID-19 Pandemic

ORES Research and Statistics Work Continues

• Develop research datasets, perform most of our research, and produce all statistical publications (available at www.ssa.gov/policy)

• Monitor impact on arrangements that require restricted research data at secure research data centers. Assess if those arrangements can be renegotiated to:
  – allow data to be copied into SSA’s secure environment for remote access; or
  – adjust completion dates, and add any necessary no cost extensions to agreements
Continued…

During the COVID-19 Pandemic

ORES Research and Statistics Work Continues

• Respond to requests for research, data, and statistics related to COVID-19
  – Assist with analysis, statistics, and data production or exchange, including new responsibilities and adjustments in response to COVID
  – Adjust our research plan to anticipate a new focus on the economic and demographic impacts from COVID-19

• https://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus/
Staffing

Challenge
ORES is a small statistical unit, with our employees spread across a number of specialty roles:

– Researchers (Economist/Social Science Research Analyst)
– Social Insurance Program Specialists
– Information Technology Specialists/Data Developers
– Math Statistician
– Editor/Print Production Specialists
– Program and Management Analysts (technical/administrative)

Response
We also have extramural research and contractor support to supplement capacity
Dissemination—We continue to disseminate our research and statistics electronically via the Internet www.ssa.gov/policy

- Research in the Social Security Bulletin (published since 1938) and other products such as Policy Briefs and research summaries
- Statistical publications providing tables on programs and beneficiaries (e.g., Annual Statistical Report on the Social Security Disability Insurance Program)
- Other resources such as Facts & Figures About Social Security, International Update, program explainers, population profiles, and public-use data files
- Presentations of research in public forums—RDRC Conference and other professional conferences (virtually when that is an option during COVID-19 Pandemic)
Budget...

- ORES employee salaries are funded through SSA’s Limitation on Administrative Expenses budget.

- We also have a separate research budget that we use to fund:
  - Our extramural research grant program
  - Blanket Purchase Agreement for research and analysis (supporting evidence-based decision-making)
  - Data processing modernization for research and statistics
  - Inter-agency survey data collections and other collaborations
  - Simulation model development
  - Other contract support services
ORES Resources

We invite you to…

– Follow our research and statistics webpage for the latest publications

– Track our extramural research outcomes
Questions?