Living Arrangements

The living arrangements of America’s older population are important indicators because they are linked to income, health status, and the availability of caregivers. Older people who live alone are more likely than older people who live with their spouses to be in poverty.

Older men were more likely to live with their spouse than were older women. In 2007, 73 percent of older men lived with their spouse while less than one-half (42 percent) of older women did. In contrast, older women were more than twice as likely as older men to live alone (39 percent and 19 percent, respectively).

Living arrangements of older people differed by race and Hispanic origin. Older black, Asian, and Hispanic women were more likely than non-Hispanic white women to live with relatives other than a spouse. For example, in 2007, 30 percent of older Asian women, 32 percent of older black women, and 33 percent of older Hispanic women, compared with only 14 percent of older non-Hispanic white women, lived with other relatives. Older non-Hispanic white women and black women were more likely than women of other races to live alone (about 48 percent each, compared with 20 percent for older Asian women and 26 percent for older Hispanic women). Older black men lived alone more than three times as often as older Asian men (29 percent compared with 8 percent). Older Hispanic men were more likely (17 percent) than men of other races and ethnicities to live with relatives other than a spouse.

All comparisons presented for this indicator are significant at 0.10 confidence level. Data for this indicator’s chart and bullets can be found in Tables 5a, 5b, and 7b on pages 79 and 82.