

Appendix C: Estimation Methodology for Employment in Chinatown

Conventional government and private employment data sources do not readily provide a comprehensive estimate of the private employment in Chinese-owned businesses in Chinatown. In the ES 202 file, the New York State Department of Labor only provides employment counts at the ZIP code level. However, Chinatown covers parts of four ZIP codes in Lower Manhattan. In its survey of private industry, American Business Incorporated (ABI) captures employment level data on a census block group level, which allows a closer approximation of businesses in Chinatown. However, a careful review of both ES 202 and ABI files shows that both surveys substantially understated garment shops and jobs when comparing with other data from the New York State Department of Labor's Apparel Industry Task Force garment shop registration file and UNITE Local 23-25's list of union shops in Chinatown by street address. One of the main reasons the ES 202 file understates the number of garment shops and garment workers in the Chinatown ZIP codes is that accountants for garment shops often report the employment and payroll for their business clients using the address of the accountant. Further, both surveys provide estimates of businesses and jobs in Chinatown without considering ethnicity. The focus of this study, however, is on Chinese-owned and -operated businesses and Chinese workers in Chinatown.

In light of this challenge, the research team estimated employment level in Chinatown using the following data sources:

- (1) A door-to-door survey of Chinatown businesses;
- (2) A Chinese business telephone directory;
- (3) Data on registered garment factories from the Apparel Industry Task Force at the New York State Department of Labor;
- (4) UNITE (Local 23-25) garment shop and union membership lists;
- (5) Private employment data from New York State Department of Labor (ES 202 file, based on administrative records compiled in conjunction with the unemployment insurance system); and
- (6) A private industry survey (American Business Incorporated file).

Then, the following procedure was used to estimate the baseline employment figure in Chinatown:

1. Based on an intensive door-to-door survey of Chinatown businesses in the study area, team members identified and counted businesses by industry in the community. Then, based on a reconciliation of data derived from the door-to-door survey with the business information listed in the major Chinese language business directory, the team estimated a total of 3,855 businesses in Chinatown.
2. Out of 3,855 businesses, there are 246 garment factories in Chinatown (according to the Labor Apparel Industry Task Force at the New York State Department of Labor). The balance of 3,609 represents non-garment businesses in Chinatown.

3. According to the 2000 ABI (American Business Incorporated) file, a major business propriety data file, 5.5 employees is the average number of workers in a non-garment firm in the 10002 ZIP code, the major ZIP code in Chinatown.
4. The team multiplied 3,609 non-garment businesses by 5.5 (the average number of employees per non-garment establishment from the ABI file) to obtain an estimated total of 19,850 non-garment workers.
5. According to the UNITE membership file and other garment industry sources, there are 13,808 garment workers (unionized and non-unionized).
6. Based on the above analysis, the estimated total private employment level for Chinese businesses in Chinatown is 33,658 (this figure is derived by combining 19,850 non-garment workers and 13,808 garment workers).