



## **Appendix B: Data Source Descriptions**

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## Data Source Descriptions

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## Data Source Descriptions

### Aerometric Information Retrieval System

The Aerometric Information Retrieval System (AIRS) is a repository of information about airborne pollution in the United States and various World Health Organization (WHO) member countries. The system is administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS), Information Transfer and Program Integration Division (ITPID), located in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Data on criteria pollutants consist of air quality measurements collected by sensitive monitoring equipment at thousands of sites across the Nation operated by State and local environmental agencies. Each monitor measures the concentration of a particular pollutant in the air. Monitoring data indicate the average pollutant concentration during a time interval, usually 1 hour or 24 hours.

Information on the AIRS system is available online at <http://www.epa.gov/airs>.

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### American Housing Survey

This survey provides data necessary for evaluating progress made toward “a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family,” affirmed in 1949 and 1968 legislation. The data come from a Census Bureau nationwide sample survey in odd-numbered years for national, regional, and metropolitan/non-metropolitan data and from surveys in 47 metropolitan statistical areas over a multi-year cycle. These data detail the types, size, conditions, characteristics, housing costs and values, equipment, utilities, and dynamics of the housing inventory; describe the demographic, financial, and mobility characteristics of the occupants; and give as well some information on neighborhood conditions. In 1997, the survey was conducted using computer-assisted personal interviewing for the first time, and questions on rental assistance and physical problems were also changed. Therefore, 1997 data on assisted families, priority problems, and severe physical problems are not comparable to earlier data.

Information about the American Housing Survey is available online at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/ahs.html>.

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### Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals

The Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals (CSFII) is designed to measure what Americans eat and drink. Uses of the survey include monitoring the nutritional adequacy of American diets, measuring the impact of food fortification on nutrient intakes, developing dietary guidance and related programs, estimating exposure of population groups to food contaminants, evaluating the nutritional impact of food assistance programs, and assessing the need for agricultural products. The 1989-91 CSFII sample consisted of individuals residing in households and included oversampling of the low-income population. Individuals were asked to provide 3 consecutive days of dietary data. The 1994-96 CSFII also included individuals living in households and oversampling of the low-income population. In each of the 3 survey years, respondents were asked to provide, through in-person interviews, food intake data on 2 nonconsecutive days, with both days of intake collected by the 24-hour recall method. Intake data were provided for 3,937 children under 18 years of age in 1989-91 and 5,354 children in 1994-96.

For more information on the CSFII 1989-91, see Tippet, K.S., Mickle, S.J., Goldman, J.D., et al. (1995). *Food and nutrient intakes by individuals in the United States, 1 day, 1989-91* (NFS Rep. No. 91-2). U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service.

For more information on the CSFII 1994-96, see Tippet, K.S. and Cypel, Y.S. (Eds.). (1998). *Design and operation: The Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals and the Diet and Health Knowledge Survey, 1994-96* (NFS Rep. No. 96-1). U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service.

Information about the CSFII is available online at <http://www.barc.usda.gov/bhnrc/foodsurvey/home.htm>.

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## Current Population Survey

*Core Survey and Supplements.* The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a nationwide survey of about 50,000 households conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau. At present, there are 754 CPS sampling areas in the United States, with coverage in every State and the District of Columbia.

The CPS core survey is the primary source of information on the employment characteristics of the civilian noninstitutional population, ages 16 and older, including estimates of unemployment released every month by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In addition to the core survey, monthly CPS supplements provide additional demographic and social data. The March demographic supplement and the October school enrollment supplement provide information used to estimate the status and well-being of children. The March and October supplements have been administered every year since 1947. Every year, the October supplement to the CPS asks questions on school enrollment by grade and other school characteristics about each member of the household ages 3 and older. Data on the highest level of school completed or degree attained are derived from the March supplement to the CPS. The April food security supplement, introduced in 1995, is described in detail below.

In 1994, the CPS questionnaire was redesigned, and the computer-assisted personal interviewing method was implemented. In addition, the 1990 Census-based population controls, with adjustments for the estimated population undercount, were introduced. For more information regarding the CPS, its sampling structure, and estimation methodology, see U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (1997). Explanatory notes and estimates of error. *Employment and Earnings*, 44 (1), 225-242. A more comprehensive description of the CPS that will incorporate the revisions and methodological changes introduced in 1994 is currently in preparation.

*Food Security Supplement.* The food security supplement is a survey instrument developed through a long and rigorous process. The content of the supplement is based on material reported in prior research on hunger and food security. It was subjected to extensive testing by the U.S. Census Bureau. It reflects the consensus of nearly 100 experts at the 1994 Food Security and Measurement Conference convened jointly by the National Center for Health Statistics and the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The supplement was developed, tested, and refined further by the conferees, members of a Federal interagency working group, and survey methods specialists for the Census Bureau's Center for Survey

Methods Research. The survey contains a systematic set of questions validated as measures of severity of food insecurity on both a 12-month and a 30-day basis. Data presented in this report are 12-month data from the CPS food security supplements. The respondents completing the supplement included households at all income levels, both above and below the Federal poverty threshold. Special final supplement sample weights were computed to adjust for the demographic characteristics of supplement non-interviews.

Information about the CPS is available online at <http://www.bls.census.gov/CPS/CPSmain.htm>.

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## High School and Beyond

The High School and Beyond (HS&B) longitudinal survey was first administered in 1980 to a stratified, nationally representative sample of approximately 30,000 high school sophomores and 28,000 high school seniors from more than 1,000 high schools. Follow-up surveys were administered in 1982, 1984, 1986, and 1992. Approximately 30,000 individuals who were sophomores in 1980 participated in the First Follow-up in 1982. As a component of this survey, transcripts were collected, with a total of 15,941 transcripts obtained. 11,195 sophomores in 1980 had graduated in 1982 and had complete transcripts available in the file. Excluded students were students who dropped out of school, were still working for their diploma, or who did not have complete transcript data. For all transcripts and samples, a course identification code number, based on the Classification of Secondary School Courses (CSSC), was assigned to each course taken by a student. Courses were further classified into subject (e.g., math) and program (e.g., academic) areas using a 1998 revision of the CSSC (Bradby, D. and Hoachlander, E.G. (1999). *1998 Revision of the Secondary School Taxonomy*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics).

Information on the First Follow-up of HS&B can be found in:  
Jones, C., et al. (1983). *High School and Beyond, 1980 Sophomore Cohort, First Follow-up (1982), Data File User's Manual*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Information on the Transcript data files of HS&B can be found in:  
Jones, C., et al. (1984) *High School and Beyond Transcripts Survey (1982), Data File User's Manual*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

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## Monitoring the Future

The Monitoring the Future (MTF) Study is a continuing series of surveys intended to assess the changing lifestyles, values, and preferences of American youth. Each year since 1975, high school seniors from a representative sample of public and private high schools have participated in this study. The 2000 survey is the tenth to include comparable samples of eighth- and tenth-graders in addition to

seniors. The study is conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research (ISR) under a grant funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The survey design consists of a multistage random sample where the stages include the selection of geographic areas, selection of one or more schools in each selected area, and selection of a sample of students within each school. Data are collected in the spring of each year using questionnaires administered in the classroom by representatives from ISR. The 2000 survey included 13,286 high school seniors from 134 schools, 14,576 tenth-graders from 145 schools, and 17,311 eighth-graders from 156 schools (total of 45,173 students from 435 schools).

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## National Assessment of Educational Progress

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is mandated by Congress to monitor continuously the knowledge, skills, and performance of the Nation's children and youth. To measure long-term trends in educational performance, NAEP has periodically assessed students ages 9, 13, and 17 in reading, mathematics, and science since the early 1970s. To ensure accurate measurement of trends, items and procedures have remained the same in each assessment. A variation of matrix sampling is used so that the results from a large number of items can be generalized to an entire population. Nationally representative samples of approximately 15,000 students were assessed in each subject in 1996, the last year for which results were available as of this printing. An estimated 10 percent of the school population is classified as having a disability or limited English proficiency. Nearly half of these students have been included in assessments, although the percentages vary by grade and subject being assessed. In its short-term assessments described below, NAEP is starting to offer accommodations to disabled and limited English proficient students to remove barriers to their participation.

NAEP also conducts assessments in various academic subjects to measure short-term trends for periods of approximately 10 years. Data from many of these assessments are available for participating States as well as the Nation as a whole.

Students in public and nonpublic schools are sampled. A charter school could be sampled, since they are within the universe of public schools, but home-schoolers are not included.

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Information about NAEP is available online at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>.

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## National Assessment of Educational Progress High School Transcript Studies

Conducted in association with NAEP, the High School Transcript Study (HSTS) provides coursetaking and demographic information for a stratified, nationally representative sample of high school seniors. Sample sizes have ranged from approximately 21,000 to 34,000 students in approximately 300 schools. It provides the Department of Education and other educational policymakers with information regarding current course offerings and coursetaking patterns in the Nation's secondary schools. In addition, it provides information on the relationship of student coursetaking patterns to achievement as measured by NAEP. Excluded students were students who dropped out of school, were still working for their diploma, had not received a "regular" or "honors" diploma, or who did not have complete transcript data. For all transcripts and samples, a course identification code number, based on the Classification of Secondary School Courses (CSSC), was assigned to each course taken by a student. Courses were further classified into subject (e.g., math) and program (e.g., academic) areas using a 1998 revision of the CSSC (Bradby, D. and Hoachlander, E.G. (1999). *1998 Revision of the Secondary School Taxonomy*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics).

More information about NAEP HSTS can be found in: Legum, S., et al. (1998). *The 1994 High School Transcript Study Tabulations: Comparative Data on Credits Earned and Demographics for 1994, 1990, 1987, and 1982 High School Graduates (Revised)*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

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## National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988

The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) is a longitudinal study sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The

Base Year Survey was administered to about 24,000 8th-graders in more than 1,000 schools with an 8th-grade class. The First, Second, Third, and Fourth Follow-ups revisited the same sample of students in 1990, 1992, 1994, and 2000, when most of the 1988 8th-graders were in 10<sup>th</sup>-grade, 12<sup>th</sup>-grade, and then, 2 and 6 years after they graduated from high school. For each in-school follow-up the student sample was "freshened" to obtain a representative, cross-sectional grade-cohort sample (i.e. 10<sup>th</sup>-graders in 1990 and 12<sup>th</sup>-graders in 1992). In addition, as a part of the Second Follow-up Survey, high school transcripts were collected for the members of the 12<sup>th</sup>-grade cohort in the fall of 1992. Of 17,285 students in the transcript file, 13,506 were identified as high school graduates who had a complete set of transcripts. Excluded students were students who dropped out of school, were still working for their diploma, or who did not have complete transcript data. For all transcripts and samples, a course identification code number, based on the Classification of Secondary School Courses (CSSC), was assigned to each course taken by a student. Courses were further classified into subject (e.g., math) and program (e.g., academic) areas using a 1998 revision of the CSSC (Bradby, D. and Hoachlander, E.G. (1999). *1998 Revision of the Secondary School Taxonomy*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics).

Information on the Second Follow-up Survey of NELS:88 can be found in:  
Quinn, P. (1995) *User's Manual: NELS:88 Second Follow-up: Transcript Component Data File*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

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## National Crime Victimization Survey

The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is the Nation's primary source of information on criminal victimization. Each year, researchers obtained data from a nationally representative sample of roughly 49,000 households comprising more than 100,000 persons ages 12 and older on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization in the United States. In recent years, the sample size for the NCVS has been decreased. The sample for the most recent year, 1999, was 43,000 households and 80,000 persons ages 12 and older. The survey fully reports the likelihood of victimization by

rape, sexual assault, robbery, assault, theft, household burglary, and motor vehicle theft for the population as a whole, as well as for segments of the population such as adolescents over age 11, women, the elderly, members of various racial groups, city dwellers, and other groups. Victims are also asked whether they reported the incident to the police and, in the instances of personal violent crimes, they are asked about the characteristics of the perpetrator. The NCVS provides the largest national forum for victims to describe the impact of crime and the characteristics of violent offenders. It has been ongoing since 1973 and was redesigned in 1992.

Information about the NCVS is available online at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict.htm#Programs>.

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## National Health Interview Survey

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is a continuing nationwide sample survey of the civilian noninstitutionalized population in which data are collected by personal household interviews. Interviewers obtain information on personal and demographic characteristics, including race and ethnicity, by self-reporting or as reported by a member of the household. Investigators also collect data about illnesses, injuries, impairments, chronic conditions, activity limitation caused by chronic conditions, utilization of health services, and other health topics. Each year the survey is reviewed and special topics are added or deleted. For most health topics, the survey collects data over an entire year. Child health supplements in 1981 and 1988 were used to provide data for this year's special feature on asthma.

The NHIS sample includes an oversample of black and Hispanic persons and is designed to allow the development of national estimates of health conditions, health service utilization, and health problems of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population. The response rate for the ongoing part of the survey has been between 94 and 98 percent over the years. In 1997, the NHIS was redesigned, so estimates beginning in 1997 are likely to vary slightly from previous years. Interviewers collected information for the basic questionnaire on 98,785 persons in 1998, including 28,122 children.

Descriptions of the survey design, the methods used in estimation, and the general qualifications of the data are presented in:

Massey, J.T., Moore, T.F., Parsons, V.L., and Tadros, W. (1989). Design and estimation for the National

Health Interview Survey, 1985-1994. *Vital and Health Statistics*, 2 (110). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Botman, S.L., Moore, T.F., Moriarity, C.L., and Parsons, V.L. (2000). Design and estimation for the National Health Interview Survey, 1995-2004. *Vital and Health Statistics*, 2 (130). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Information about the NHIS is available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm>.

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## National Household Education Survey

The National Household Education Surveys program (NHES), conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), collects detailed information about education issues through a household-based survey using telephone interviews. The sample for the NHES is drawn from the noninstitutionalized civilian population in households having a telephone in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. In each survey, between 54,000 and 64,000 households are screened to identify persons eligible for one of the topics. Generally, each collection covers two topical surveys, and researchers conduct between 5,000 and 25,000 interviews for each survey. The data are weighted to permit nationally representative estimates of the population of interest. In addition, the NHES design samples minorities at a higher rate than nonminorities in order to increase the reliability of estimates for these groups.

The 1991 NHES contained a survey on early childhood program participation. Investigators screened approximately 60,000 households to identify a sample of about 14,000 children, ages 3 to 8. They interviewed parents of the children in order to collect information about the children's educational activities and the role of the family in the children's learning. In 1993, NCES fielded a school readiness survey in which parents of approximately 11,000 children age 3 through second grade were asked about their children's experiences in early childhood programs, developmental level, school adjustment and related problems, early primary school experiences, general health and nutrition status, home activities, and family

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characteristics, including family stability and economic risk factors. In 1995, NCES also fielded an early childhood program participation survey, similar to that of 1991. It entailed screening approximately 44,000 households and interviewing 14,000 parents of children from birth through third grade. In 1996, NCES fielded a parent and family involvement in education survey, interviewing nearly 21,000 parents of children from age 3 through 12th grade. About 8,000 youth in grades 6 through 12 were also interviewed about their community service and civic involvement. The 1999 NHES was designed to collect end-of-the-decade estimates of key indicators collected in previous NHES surveys and also collected data from children and their parents about plans for the child's education after high school. Interviews were conducted with 24,000 parents of children ranging from newborns through 12th-graders, approximately 8,000 students in grades 6 through 12 in the youth interview, and nearly 7,000 adults.

Information about the NHES is available online at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/nhes>.

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### National Immunization Survey

The National Immunization Survey (NIS) is a continuing nationwide telephone sample survey among families with children ages 19 to 35 months. Estimates of vaccine-specific coverage are available for the Nation, States, and 28 urban areas.

The NIS uses a two-stage sample design. First, a random-digit-dialing sample of telephone numbers is drawn. When households with age-eligible children (19-35 months) are contacted, the interviewer collects information on the vaccinations received by all age-eligible children. The interviewer also collects information on the vaccination providers. In the second phase, all vaccination providers are contacted by mail. Providers' responses are combined with information obtained from the households to render estimates of vaccination coverage levels more accurately. Final estimates are adjusted for non-coverage of households without telephones.

Information about the NIS is available online at <http://www.nisabt.org>.

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### National Linked File of Live Births and Infant Deaths

The National Linked File of Live Births and Infant Deaths is a data file for research on infant mortality. Beginning with the 1995 data, this file is produced in two formats. The file is first released as a period data file and then later released as a cohort file. In the birth cohort format, it comprises linked vital records for infants born in a given year who died in that calendar year or the next year before their first birthday. In the period format, the numerator consists of all infant deaths occurring in one year, with deaths linked to the corresponding birth certificates from that year or the previous year. The linked file includes all the variables on the national natality file, as well as medical information reported for the same infant on the death record and the age of the infant at death. The use of linked files avoids discrepancies in the reporting of race between the birth and infant death certificates. Although discrepancies are rare for white and black infants, they can be substantial for other races. National linked files are available starting with the birth cohort of 1983. No linked file was produced for 1992 through 1994 data years. Match completeness for each of the birth cohort files is about 98 percent.

For more information, see:

Prager, K. (1994). Infant mortality by birthweight and other characteristics: United States, 1985 birth cohort. *Vital and Health Statistics, 20* (24). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Mathews, T.J., Curtin, S.C., and MacDorman, M.F. (2000). Infant mortality statistics from the 1998 period linked birth/infant death data set. *National Vital Statistics Reports, 48* (12). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Information about the National Linked File of Live Births and Infant Deaths is available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/ibid/linked.htm>.

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### National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997

The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97) is sponsored and directed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. It is the newest survey in the National Longitudinal Surveys program. The NLSY97 consists of a nationally representative sample of 8,984 youths who were 12-16



years old as of December 31, 1996. Round 1 of the survey took place in 1997. The second round of annual interviews took place between November 1, 1998, and May 1, 1999.

Designed to document the transition from school to work and into adulthood, this survey collects extensive information about youths' labor market and educational experiences. The NLSY97 also contains detailed information on many other topics. Subject areas include: Youths' relationships with parents, contact with absent parents, marital and fertility histories, dating, sexual activity, onset of puberty, training, participation in government assistance programs, expectations, time use, criminal behavior, contact with the criminal justice system, and alcohol and drug use. Areas of the youth survey that are potentially sensitive, such as criminal behavior, comprise a self-administered portion of the interview.

Partial funding support for the survey is provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the Department of Justice, the National School to Work Office of the Departments of Education and Labor, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Information about the NLSY97 and all National Longitudinal Surveys is available online at <http://www.bls.gov/nlshome.htm>

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## National Vital Statistics System

Through the National Vital Statistics System, the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) collects and publishes data on births and deaths in the United States. NCHS obtains information on births and deaths from the registration offices of all States, New York City, and the District of Columbia.

Demographic information on birth certificates, such as race and ethnicity, is provided by the mother at the time of birth. Hospital records provide the base for information on prenatal care, while funeral directors and family members provide demographic information on death certificates. Medical certification of cause of death is provided by a physician, medical examiner, or coroner.

*Information on Hispanic Origin.* The number of States gathering information on births to parents of Hispanic origin has increased gradually since 1980-

81, when 22 States included this information on birth certificates. By 1993, the Hispanic origin of the mother was reported on birth certificates in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. Similarly, mortality data by Hispanic origin of decedent have become more complete over time. In 1997, there was complete reporting of deaths by Hispanic origin in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

*Preliminary Data.* A continuous receipt of statistical records by NCHS from the States' vital registration systems supplies preliminary data. Investigators weight individual records of births and deaths to independent counts of vital events registered in each State and reported to NCHS. These independent counts, aggregated for a 12-month period, serve as control totals, and are the basis for the individual unit record weights in the preliminary file. For selected variables, unknown or not-stated values are imputed. The percentage not stated is generally 1 percent or less, except for prenatal care, which was 2.8 percent in 1998.

For more information on national natality and mortality data, see National Center for Health Statistics. Technical Appendix. *Vital Statistics of the United States, I* (Natality) (1992), (DHHS Publication No. (PHS) 96-1100), and II (Mortality), Part A (1996) (DHHS Publication No. (PHS) 96-1101). Washington, DC: Public Health Service.

Information about the National Vital Statistics System is available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss.htm>.

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## Population Estimates

Decennial Census data serve as benchmarks for deriving national population estimates, which are also based on data from the following agencies: births and deaths (National Center for Health Statistics); immigrants (Immigration and Naturalization Service); Armed Forces (U.S. Department of Defense); net movement between Puerto Rico and the U.S. mainland (Puerto Rico Planning Board); and Federal employees abroad (Office of Personnel Management and U.S. Department of Defense). Similar data serve as the basis for State estimates, which are also derived from a variety of data series, including school statistics from State departments of education and parochial school systems. Current estimates are consistent with official Decennial Census figures and do not reflect estimated Decennial Census under-enumeration.

After decennial population censuses, intercensal population estimates for the preceding decade are prepared to replace postcensal estimates. Intercensal population estimates are more accurate than postcensal estimates, because they take into account the census of population at the beginning and end of the decade. Intercensal estimates have been repaired for the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s to correct the “error of closure”: the difference between the estimated population at the end of the decade and the Census count for that date. The error of closure at the national level was quite small during the 1960s (379,000). For the 1970s, however, it amounted to almost 5 million. In the 1980s, the error of closure dropped to 1.5 million.

For more information, see U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1992). U.S. population estimates by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin: 1980-1991. *Current Population Reports* (1095, Series P-25). Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Information about population estimates is available online at <http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/popest.html>.

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## Population Projections

National population projections begin with recent population estimates by age, race, and Hispanic origin. These statistics are then projected forward to 2050, based on assumptions about fertility, mortality, and international migration. Low, middle, and high growth assumptions are made for each of these components. The current middle series assumptions are that:

- Fertility will see little change over time, with levels for each race/ethnic group converging to about 2.1 children per woman in the long run.
- Mortality will continue to improve, with life expectancy for each race/ethnic group converging to about 90 years by 2100.
- Net international migration will decline somewhat in the near term, but increase after 2010, with a relatively larger portion from Asia and Africa, and a relatively smaller portion from Latin America.

For more information, see U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1996). *Population projections of the United States by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin* (1130, Series P25). Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Information about population projections is available online at <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/popproj.html>.

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## Survey of Income and Program Participation

*Core Survey and Topical Modules.* Implemented by the U.S. Census Bureau since 1984, the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) is a continuous series of national longitudinal panels, with a sample size ranging from approximately 14,000 to 36,700 interviewed households. The duration of each panel ranges from 2½ years to 4 years, with household interviews every 4 months.

The SIPP collects detailed information on income, labor force participation, participation in government assistance programs, and general demographic characteristics to measure the effectiveness of existing government programs, to estimate future costs and coverage of government programs, and to provide statistics on the distribution of income in America. In addition, topical modules provide detailed information on a variety of subjects, including health insurance, child care, adult and child well-being, marital and fertility history, and education and training. The U.S. Census Bureau releases cross-sectional, topical modules and longitudinal reports and data files.

In 1996, the SIPP questionnaire was redesigned to include a new 4-year panel sample design and the computer-assisted personal interviewing method.

Information about the SIPP is available online at <http://www.sipp.census.gov/sipp>.

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## Uniform Crime Reports

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) Program, which began in 1929, collects information on the following crimes reported to law enforcement authorities: homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. Arrests are reported for 21 additional crime categories.

The UCR data are compiled from monthly law enforcement reports or individual crime incident records transmitted directly to the FBI or to centralized State agencies that then report to the FBI. In 1997, law enforcement agencies active in the UCR Program represented approximately 254 million U.S. inhabitants—95 percent of the total population. The UCR Program provides crime counts for the Nation as a whole, as well as for regions, States, counties, cities, and towns. This permits studies among neighboring jurisdictions and among those with similar populations and other common characteristics.

UCR findings for each calendar year are published in a preliminary release in the spring, followed by a detailed annual report, *Crime in the United States*, issued in the following calendar year. In addition to crime counts and trends, this report includes data on crimes cleared, persons arrested (age, gender, and race), law enforcement personnel (including the number of sworn officers killed or assaulted), and the characteristics of homicides (including age, gender, and race of victims and offenders, victim-offender relationships, weapons used, and circumstances surrounding the homicides). Other special reports are also available from the UCR Program.

Information about the UCR is available online at <http://www.fbi.gov>.

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