

Federal Statistics in the FY 2002 Budget

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OVERVIEW

Statistics produced by the federal government serve as a base for research in a broad spectrum of scientific disciplines. Population and vital statistics are central to the work of political scientists and demographers; employment, financial, and production data are essential for economists; and information on education and crime is used by sociologists and psychologists. Responsibility for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of federal statistics is spread throughout the departments and independent agencies of the executive branch; each of some 70 agencies and departmental units annually spends \$500,000 or more on statistical activities. Within this decentralized system that generates statistical information, a more limited number of agencies have the creation of statistics as their principal mission. It is these agencies that are responsible for producing statistics on major economic, demographic, and social developments and trends that are the focus of discussion in this chapter. In general, the funding levels for FY 2002 that have been proposed for the principal statistical agencies provide increases over the resources appropriated in FY 2001. The one major exception is for the Periodic Programs at the Census Bureau. For details of funding histories in fiscal years 2000 through 2002, please see Table 1.

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

The Bureau of the Census collects, compiles, and publishes a broad range of statistics on the population and the economy. Budget authority for the Census Bureau is provided in two appropriations: one covers current programs, including demographic surveys; international programs; and data on construction, manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade, services,

foreign trade, and state and local government finances and employment. The other covers periodic programs, including the decennial census of population, the quinquennial economic censuses and the census of governments.

Table 1. Principal Federal Statistical Agencies
(total direct funding in millions - Includes R&D and non-R&D components)

	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Estimate	FY 2002 Request
Bureau of the Census: Current Programs	\$140.0	\$157.2	\$168.6
Periodic Programs	4613.3	536.4	374.8
Survey of Program Dynamics	10.0	10.0	10.0
Children's Health Insurance Program	---	10.0	10.0
Bureau of Labor Statistics	413.2	450.9	476.0
Bureau of Economic Analysis	43.8	48.1	56.6
Statistics of Income, IRS	29.3	35.3	34.0
National Agricultural Statistics Service	82.8	85.6	88.4
Census of Agriculture	16.5	15.0	25.4
Economic Research Service, USDA	65.4	67.0	67.2
Energy Information Administration	72.4	75.5	75.5
National Center for Health Statistics 1/	105.0	115.6	127.0
National Center for Education Statistics 2/	68.0	80.0	85.0
Bureau of Justice Statistics 2/	25.5	29.0	30.5
Bureau of Transportation Statistics	31.0	31.0	43.8
Science Resources Studies, NSF	15.0	15.8	15.6

1/ Includes \$71.7 million in FY 2000, \$71.7 million in FY 2001, and \$127.0 million in FY 2002 from Public Health Service Evaluation Funds.

2/ Does not include Salaries and Expenses from other departmental sources.

For FY 2002, funding is requested for Census Bureau economic and demographic programs and Census 2010 planning. For economic and demographic programs, funding is requested for: (1) 2002 Economic Census planning and preparations; (2) 2002 Census of Governments planning, preparations, and initial data collection; (3) the Continuous Measurement Program, which includes the American Community Survey (ACS); and (4) redesigning samples for household surveys. For Census 2010 Planning, funding is requested to establish an early design and planning process that will enable the Census Bureau to test all major

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elements of a simplified, streamlined census to collect basic data. Funding is also requested to close out Census 2000.

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (BLS)

BLS, the principal fact-finding agency in the federal government in the field of labor economics, has a dual mission: to provide general purpose statistics that support the formulation of economic and social policy decisions, and to serve the program needs of the Department of Labor and other federal agencies. BLS collects, processes, analyzes, and disseminates data on employment and unemployment, prices and cost of living, consumer expenditures, wages and employee benefits, occupational injuries and illnesses, collective bargaining activities, productivity and technological change in U.S. industries, and projections of economic growth, the labor force, and employment by industry and occupation.

For FY 2002, funding is requested to fundamentally change the way the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is revised and updated. Historically, major revisions were undertaken about every ten years. BLS recently introduced a number of significant improvements to the CPI. These efforts are the first steps toward a process in which the index is revised and updated on a continuous basis. BLS will build on this process by providing for continuous outlet and item sample improvements and ongoing computer system enhancements. BLS also will evaluate whether the geographic area and housing unit samples can be included in the continuous revision or need to remain periodic. In addition, work will continue on a new American Time-Use Survey that will measure how Americans spend their time.

BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS (BEA)

BEA provides a picture of the U.S. economy through the preparation, development and interpretation of the economic accounts. These accounts consist of the national income and product accounts, summarized by the gross domestic product (GDP); the wealth accounts that show the business and other components of national wealth; the input-output accounts that trace interrelationships among industrial markets; State and regional income and product accounts; and the U.S. balance of payments and associated international investment accounts.

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For FY 2002, funding is requested to (1) fix long-standing measurement problems that are threatening the quality of GDP and related economic data, and (2) revamp information technology systems. GDP improvements include developing better measures of services and other key product-side components; better measures of compensation and key income-side components; new quality-adjusted price indexes and real GDP indexes for hard-to-measure components; new measures of the activities of not-for-profit institutions; and updated measures of saving, investment and wealth.

STATISTICS OF INCOME, INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (SOI)

The proposed FY 2002 funding for SOI provides for compilation of annual income, financial, and tax data from samples of tax returns filed by individuals, corporations, partnerships, sole proprietorships, and tax-exempt organizations. Major program changes and new activities planned for FY 2002 include: (1) continuing acquisition and installation of hardware that will provide the capability to load the SOI population files online to provide for longitudinal analysis for the individual income tax return SOI panel files; (2) the Year 2000 Controlled Foreign Partnership study will capture data for foreign partnerships controlled by U.S. taxpayers that are included in SOI's corporation and partnership samples; and (3) continued expansion of the amount of data available for electronic dissemination through the IRS Internet home page.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)

NASS has the responsibility for collecting and publishing current statistics on the nation's agriculture. NASS collects and reports data on a wide range of production, inventories, prices paid and received by farmers, costs of production, farm labor usage and wage rates, agricultural chemical use, and other agricultural statistics. NASS is also responsible for the Census of Agriculture, which provides comprehensive data every 5 years on all aspects of the agricultural economy.

For FY 2002, funding is requested to: (1) finalize preparations for data collection and processing for the 2002 Census of Agriculture and (2) establish a computer security architecture to increase protection of market-sensitive and confidential data from security threats.

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ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE (ERS)

ERS is a research-oriented statistical agency within USDA that provides economic and other social science information and analysis related to the supply, demand and performance of domestic and international food and agricultural markets; indicators of food and consumer issues; economic and environmental indicators of agriculture production and resource use; and socio-economic indicators of the farm sector and the rural economy.

For FY 2002, funding is requested for (1) costs associated with economic analysis and expert witness litigation and for (2) costs associated with The Mandatory Price Reporting Act of 1999 to publish information on retail purchases of representative meat products.

ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION (EIA)

EIA collects, analyzes, and disseminates information on energy resources, production, distribution, consumption, technology, and related international, economic, and financial matters. EIA produces reports with statistical time series, projections of future energy trends, analyses of topical energy issues, and supports the energy information requirements of the Department of Energy (DOE) and other federal agencies.

For FY 2002, EIA is requesting funding to maintain core energy data programs and forecasting systems essential to provide timely data, analysis, and forecasts during this period of high interest in energy issues. EIA will continue multi-year investments necessary to assure the long-term accuracy of data resulting from the restructuring of energy industries, demographic changes, and new fuel standards. This includes (1) updating 20-year old survey designs for residential and commercial building energy consumption based on the 2000 census and (2) redesigning natural gas and electricity surveys and processing systems.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS (NCHS)

NCHS monitors the nation's health and use of health services and explores the relationship between risk factors and disease. The mission of NCHS is to provide statistical information that will guide actions and policies to improve the health of the American people. Data from NCHS

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include the use of hospitals, nursing homes, physician services; financial and non-financial barriers to health care access; the health of racial and ethnic population groups; infant mortality and access to prenatal care; death from diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and HIV/AIDS; health insurance coverage; and immunization status.

For FY 2002, funding is requested to: (1) maintain the viability of the existing vital statistics system while working with states to move toward the development of next-generation electronic systems to improve timeliness and quality; (2) proceed with the sample redesign for the National Health Interview Survey, part of a government-wide redesign of household surveys following the decennial census; (3) continue the field operations for the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey; (4) make further improvements to surveys for monitoring the health care delivery system; (5) improve the underlying science base to ensure that quality, reliable statistics are obtained, and to address emerging data needs in the future; and (6) increase response rates in NCHS surveys through improved approaches to recruiting respondents.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS (NCES)

NCES collects, analyzes, and reports statistics on education in the U.S., and conducts studies on comparisons of international education statistics. For FY 2002, funding is requested for supporting the National Adult Literacy Study and the Decennial Census School District Project. In addition, funding is requested to: (1) redesign and implement the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System for a new web-based system; (2) improve dissemination of consumer information on college costs and prices; (3) continue the support for the Longitudinal Surveys Program, including the new Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002; (4) continue support for the Longitudinal Studies of the Early Childhood Program including the Birth and Kindergarten cohorts; (5) support Institutional Census Surveys for the Common Core of Data and Libraries programs; (6) improve the Statistics Research and Development Program; and (7) enhance the National Assessment of Educational Progress' research capabilities in Longitudinal Research and Exceptional Children Exclusion Research.

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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS (BJS)

BJS is responsible for the collection, analysis, and publication of statistical information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operations of justice systems at all levels of government and internationally. The BJS mission is to provide accurate and timely justice data and to support the emerging capacity of state and local governments in the use of these data for their justice programs.

For FY 2002, funding is requested to: (1) initiate the conversion of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) interviewing and data collection activities from primarily a paper operation to a fully computerized system and (2) develop a methodology and initiate preliminary testing of potential questions to be used to enhance the NCVS to measure victimization of the disabled population in the United States.

BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS (BTS)

The BTS legislative mandate covers four key areas: 1) compiling, analyzing, and publishing a comprehensive set of transportation statistics; 2) making statistics readily accessible; 3) implementing a long term data collection program; and 4) improving transportation data and advancing its effective use in public and private decision making. BTS was mandated by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1992. In 1998, BTS was re-authorized in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

The FY 2002 budget request is the first in which BTS seeks an increase above the \$31 million TEA-21 authorization level. The request includes two major new initiatives: implementing the Safety Data Action Plan and funding the Office of Airline Information (OAI) from the Airport and Airways Trust Fund as authorized by AIR-21. The Safety Data Action Plan was devised out of concern that without better information about accidents and risk factors, progress in improving transportation safety may come to a halt. BTS's Office of Airline Information is currently funded from the Highway Trust Fund; DOT proposes to fund it from an aviation trust fund, increase its base funding level, and focus more TEA-21 resources on surface transportation data collection and analysis. Other FY 2002 initiatives include: 1) expanding and improving mandated

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programs and reports such as the Intermodal Transportation Data Base (ITDB), National Transportation Library, National Transportation Atlas Database, and Transportation Statistics Annual Report; 2) issuing data collection, processing, presentation, and interpretation guidelines for all of DOT; and 3) building a staff of transportation experts who will collaborate with statisticians on focused studies.

NSF SCIENCE RESOURCES STUDIES (SRS)

The legislative mandate for SRS, as stated in the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, is “to provide a central clearinghouse for the collection, interpretation, and analysis of data on scientific and engineering resources and to provide a source of information for policy formulation by other agencies of the federal Government.” To meet this mandate, SRS provides data and analysis for making informed decisions about the nation’s science, engineering, and technology enterprise. The work of SRS involves survey development, data collection, analysis, information compilation, dissemination, and customer service to meet the statistical demands of a diverse user community.

Priorities for FY 2002 reflect efforts to implement, to the extent feasible, prior year efforts to improve the quality, relevance, and accessibility of SRS products, and to continue to redesign major components of SRS data collections. Every decade a redesign of the samples and surveys used to collect data on the scientific and engineering workforce is necessary to reflect the results of the Decennial Census. Extensive redesign activities were conducted in FY 2000 and FY 2001. In FY 2002 SRS will begin to redirect funds to implement significant components of the redesign. Major funding increases will be required in FY 2003 and FY 2004 to adequately complete implementation of the postcensal redesign. SRS will redirect funds from implementation in FY 2001 of a limited Science and Engineering Research Facilities Survey to the redesign of the survey to be administered in 2003. SRS will redesign the Survey of Public Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Science and Technology to enhance the relevance of the survey and improve the quality of the data.