

## Federal Statistics in the FY 2009 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. The proposed funding levels for fiscal year (FY) 2009 for the principal statistical agencies provide some increases over the resources appropriated in FY 2008—but not always. For details of the funding history in FYs 2007 through 2009 please see table 1. The balance of this chapter provides further details on FY 2009 programs.

### 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 is provided in two appropriations: one for 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; and the other for periodic programs, including the decennial census of population; and the quinquennial economic censuses and the census of governments.

**Table 1: Principal Federal Statistical Agencies**  
(total direct funding in millions)

	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Estimate	FY 2009 Request
Bureau of the Census: Current Programs	\$196.6	\$202.8	\$238.7
-Periodic Programs	696.4	1,027.4	2,365.9
Bureau of Labor Statistics	548.1	544.3	592.8
Bureau of Economic Analysis	75.7	77.5	87.0
Statistics of Income, IRS	37.2	41.3	42.3
National Agricultural Statistics Service	111.0	111.0	114.0
- Census of Agriculture	36.3	52.4	39.5
Economic Research Service, USDA	75.2	77.9	82.1
Energy Information Administration	90.7	95.5	110.6
National Center for Health Statistics	107.1	113.6	124.7
National Center for Education Statistics	90.7	95.5	110.6
Bureau of Justice Statistics	34.6	34.8	38.0
Bureau of Transportation Statistics	26.7	27.0	27.0
Science Resources Statistics, NSF	36.0	37.0	40.0

For FY 2009, funding is requested for the Census Bureau's ongoing economic and demographic programs and for a re-engineered 2010 Census. For the 2010 Census Program, funding is requested to: (1) conduct planning, testing, and development activities, including completion of dress rehearsal operations and assessments, and carry out several major operations for the 2010 Census, including Address Canvassing, while making final preparations for the remaining operations; (2) update the road network to a more recent vintage that includes new streets and roads constructed in counties that were aligned very early in the program; and (3) continue to conduct the American Community Survey to provide socioeconomic data on an ongoing basis rather than waiting for once-a-decade censuses, including releasing data for all places with a population of 20,000 or larger. For the Census Bureau's other economic and demographic programs, funding is requested to: (1) process returns for the 2007 Economic Census and conduct more than 100 annual, quarterly, and monthly surveys that provide key national economic statistics; (2) create Internet and printed reports containing government counts, employment levels, and finance data for the 2007 Census of Governments; (3) operate the Survey of Income and Program Participation at the traditional sample size and incorporate improvements; and (4) maintain the accuracy and relevance of Current Population Survey data.

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### **BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (BLS)**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (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 in the business and labor communities, in legislation, and other programs affecting labor; and to serve the program needs of the Department of Labor and other federal agencies that use the BLS data and research findings to administer and evaluate on-going programs, develop legislative proposals, and analyze economic and social problems. To meet these objectives, BLS collects, processes, analyzes, and disseminates data on employment and unemployment, projections of economic growth, the labor force, and employment by industry and occupation, prices and cost of living, consumer expenditures, wages and employee benefits, occupational injuries and illnesses, collective bargaining activities, and productivity and technological change in U.S. industries.

For FY 2009, funding is requested to maintain BLS' core programs, and to: 1) address the rising costs of the Current Population Survey (CPS) and avoid a reduction in the accuracy of CPS estimates both by requesting an additional appropriation and by reallocating funds within BLS through the elimination of lower-priority programs, such as the American Time Use Survey, that do not directly support Principal Federal Economic Indicators; (2) initiate continuous updating of the housing and geographic area samples in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which will improve the accuracy and timeliness of the CPI; and (3) modernize the computing systems for monthly processing of the Producer Price Index and U.S. Import and Export Price Indexes.

### **BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS (BEA)**

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) provides a picture of the United States 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 United States balance of payments and associated international investment accounts. These economic accounts

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provide key information on economic growth, regional development, and the nation's position in the world economy. These data are vital ingredients in major decisions affecting such areas as monetary and fiscal policy, social security projections, and business planning and investment.

For FY 2009, funding is requested to continue BEA's core programs, and to: (1) extend the prototype R&D satellite account, funded by the National Science Foundation in 2006 and 2007, with annual updates and extensions to BEA's GDP and other estimates and eventual full incorporation into the economic accounts; (2) develop a more accurate measure of the health care sector in GDP and create a supplemental, satellite account that provides detailed and specific information on the expenditures of the health care industry and the costs of treating specific diseases; and (3) ensure the continued improvement of the accuracy and relevance of BEA's economic accounts data.

#### **STATISTICS OF INCOME, INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS)**

The Statistics of Income Division (SOI) program provides for compilation of annual income, financial, and tax data from samples of tax returns filed by individuals, corporations, partnerships, sole proprietors and tax-exempt organizations. SOI also provides periodic data based on other returns, such as those filed by estates, for estimating the wealth of the living top wealth holders, as well as on various other tax and information returns and schedules, for producing such estimates as U.S. investments abroad, foreign investments in the United States, and gains or losses from sales of capital assets.

For FY 2009, funding is requested to continue SOI's core programs, and to: (1) continue to modernize tax data collection systems, particularly to more efficiently assimilate into SOI systems data captured from the electronic filing of tax and information returns; (2) examine means to better mask individual records to minimize the risk of re-identification in the Individual Public Use cross-section file; (3) undertake a feasibility study to develop an Individual Public Use panel data file; (4) develop statistical techniques to identify outliers and edit data in IRS administrative population files; and (5) modernize and expedite dissemination of data products and reports on the [www.irs.gov/TaxStats](http://www.irs.gov/TaxStats) website; continue to acquire and install 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;

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modify SOI processing to accommodate increased availability of data from electronically filed business and exempt organization returns.

### **NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture published its first crop report in 1863, and further strengthened this responsibility in 1905 by creating the Crop Reporting Board (now the Agricultural Statistics Board). The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has the responsibility for collecting and publishing current national, state and county agricultural statistics. 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. Beginning in FY 1997, NASS is responsible for the census of agriculture program, which provides comprehensive data every 5 years on all aspects of the agricultural economy down to the county level.

For FY 2009, funding is requested to continue NASS core programs and to: (1) enhance the quality, precision, and detail of NASS State, regional, and national estimates to help ensure that they meet customer needs; (2) provide a data series on bio-energy production and utilization, (3) measure energy production and use on farms through the Census of Agriculture; (4) reduce the cyclical fluctuations of annual funding needs for the Census of Agriculture; (5) summarize and publish the 2007 Census of Agriculture, to be released in February 2009, and (6) begin preparation of numerous census follow-on studies, including a revamped Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey to evaluate current access to reuse water, quantities of water used, and costs associated with various water delivery systems.

### **ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE (ERS)**

The Economic Research Service (ERS) is a research-oriented statistical agency 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 status and performance of the farm sector and the rural economy. For FY 2009, funding is requested to continue ERS' core programs, and to: (1)

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strengthen and enhance the ERS market analysis and outlook program to provide timely analyses of global agricultural product markets; and (2) analyze the regional impacts of bioenergy production and evaluate issues related to transportation networks, feedstock storage, marketing channels, and shifts in commodity production. (For more on ERS, see Chapter 10.)

#### **ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION (EIA)**

The Energy Information Administration (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. The primary customers of EIA services are public policy makers in DOE and the Congress. Other customers include other federal agencies, state and local governments, the energy industry, educational institutions, the news media, and the public.

For FY 2009, funding is requested to continue ongoing EIA operations to maintain critical energy data coverage, analysis, and forecasting, and to: (1) enhance petroleum and natural gas data reliability and statistical accuracy; (2) complete development and begin initiating monthly ethanol and biofuels data collections on a national and regional basis as mandated in Section 1508 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005; (3) combine the environmental data previously collected by the Steam-Electric Plant Operation and Design Report into two existing electric power surveys; (4) resume development and testing of the next generation National Energy Model to replace the existing National Energy Modeling System; and (5) enhance EIA's global oil, gas, and coal analysis and forecasting capabilities; (6) enhance cybersecurity.

#### **NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS (NCHS)**

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) monitors the Nation's health and use of health services and explores the relationship between risk factors and disease. Data sources include the Nation's vital statistics system and surveys involving personal interviews, physical examinations and laboratory testing, and information from health care providers. The

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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 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, access to prenatal care; death from diseases such as cancer, heart disease, HIV/AIDS; health insurance coverage, immunization status, and other measures used to help design and monitor the impact of programs and policies that affect health and the health care system.

For FY 2009, funding is requested to continue data collection, analysis, and dissemination activities for key national health data systems, including the National Vital Statistics System, National Health Interview Survey, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), and National Health Care Survey; and to: (1) further gains in timeliness by implementing systems improvements in data collection and processing; (2) work on the creation and use of new data access tools and tutorials to ensure data are available in easily accessible forms; (3) use birth and death data from the States for tracking priority health initiatives in prevention, cancer control, out of wedlock births, and teenage pregnancy; (4) transition from International Classification of Diseases (ICD) 9-CM to ICD-10-CM code sets to improve comparability between mortality and morbidity data in the U.S. and internationally; (5) ensure availability of NHANES data on diet and nutrition, blood pressure, and other health indicators; and (6) allow the National Health Interview Survey to return to its designed sample of 100,000, permitting estimates for smaller populations to be published.

#### **NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS (NCES)**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collects, analyzes and reports statistics on education in the United States, and conducts studies on comparisons of international education statistics. NCES also provides leadership in developing and promoting the use of standardized terminology and definitions for the collection of education statistics.

In FY 2009, funding is requested to continue NCES' core programs and to: (1) conduct in 2009 the National Assessment of Educational Progress, including voluntary 12th grade reading and mathematics assessments; (2) conduct a new high school longitudinal study that will begin with a cohort of 9th graders in 2009 and follow them through postsecondary

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education and into the workforce; (3) conduct surveys and analyze data from international studies such as the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment and plan for new international assessments; (4) analyze data from the 2007–08 Schools and Staffing Survey and collect data for the Teacher Follow-up Study; and (5) conduct the Beginning Postsecondary Student Longitudinal Survey, which provides information on the progress of postsecondary students. (For more on NCES, see Chapter 19.)

### **BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS (BJS)**

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (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 mission of the Bureau 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 2009, funding is requested for the maintenance of BJS' core statistical programs, including: (1) criminal victimization statistics; (2) cyber crime data on the incidence, magnitude, and consequences of electronic and computer crime to households and businesses; (3) law enforcement data from over 3,000 agencies on the organization and administration of police and sheriffs' departments; (4) nationally representative prosecution data on resources, policies, and practices of local prosecutors; (5) court and sentencing statistics, including Federal and State case processing data; and (6) data on correctional populations and facilities from Federal, State, and local governments. Funds will also be used to support the implementation of a redesign to the National Crime Victimization Survey.

### **BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS (BTS)**

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) legislative mandate covers: 1) The Intermodal Transportation Database; 2) The National Transportation Atlas Database; 3) The National Ferry Database; 4) The National Transportation Library; 5) The Transportation Statistics Annual Report; 6) Statistical guidelines, standards, and research; 7) The Advisory Council on Transportation Statistics; and 8) An information

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needs study by the National Research Council (due in 2007). BTS is now within the Research and Innovation Technology Administration.

For FY 2009, funding is requested to develop measures of congestion and for the maintenance of BTS' core statistical programs, including: (1) production of data products from the 2007 Commodity Flow Survey, a major national benchmark survey of shippers; (2) release of monthly statistics on the commodities and mode of transportation used in trading with the United States' largest partners; (3) production of a core set of economic data and indicators including the Transportation Services Index, multi-factor productivity measures, the State Transit Expenditure Survey, and the Air Travel Price Index; (4) release of the National Transportation Atlas Data Base, a compendium of national geo-spatial transportation data; and (5) dissemination of the Transportation Statistics Annual Report and other key publications on the national transportation system.

#### **SCIENCES RESOURCE STATISTICS, NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

The legislative mandate for Science Resource Statistics (SRS), as stated in the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended, 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 policymakers, researchers and other decision makers with high quality 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, as well as preparation of the biennial reports *Science and Engineering Indicators* and *Women and Minorities and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering*.

In FY 2009 SRS will continue research and methodological activities to improve the relevance and quality of data collected on the conduct of research and development (R&D). In early 2009, SRS will launch a full-scale pilot of the redesigned survey of R&D conducted in the for-profit sector, the survey being renamed from the Survey of Industrial Research and Development to the Business Research and Development Survey. Redesign activities underway for the Survey of Academic R&D, begun

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in FY07, will involve pretesting a significantly redesigned survey. In addition, SRS will explore ways in which data on innovation could be gathered, such as through modules on existing surveys or a small scale focused survey, as well as gathering data on R&D conducted/funded by non-profit organizations.

Funding is requested in FY 2009 for SRS's participation in the NSF initiative, the Science of Science and Innovation Policy (SciSIP), which will develop the data, tools, and knowledge needed to develop a new science of science policy. SRS' contribution to this initiative and the American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI)/America Competes Act is to enhance the comparability, scope and availability of data on the science and engineering enterprise.

SRS worked closely with the Census Bureau and the Office of Management and Budget to develop and test a field of degree (FOD) item for addition to the American Community Survey (ACS). The Census Bureau tested and evaluated two versions of a FOD item in FY 2007 and FY 2008. The outcome of the test was successful and in FY 2008 SRS/Census will request that OMB approve addition of an open-ended FOD item to the ACS beginning in 2009.

Other improvement activities in FY 2009 will include continuing activities related to the redesign of the Survey of Graduate Students and Post-doctorates in Science and Engineering (GSS). In FY09 efforts will continue to redesign the survey, and evaluate the results of implementing the first phase of a GSS redesign in FY08. SRS will continue activities examining the present taxonomies for describing fields of study/research in science and engineering. Of major concern are developing crosswalks between existing taxonomies and any potential new taxonomy, developing methods to better include cross-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary fields. SRS will continue to collect and disseminate breakthrough data on the characteristics of cyber-infrastructure in the nation's academic and biomedical facilities. In FY 2009 SRS will also support analytical and statistical activities related to increasing the value of SRS-collected data by exploring ways to link SRS collected data with externally available data, such as publications and patent data, for individuals in SRS personnel surveys. (For more on NSF SRS, see Chapter 19.)