

## Federal Statistics in the FY 2008 Budget

*Edward J. Spar,  
Council of Professional Associations  
on Federal Statistics*

### 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 funding levels for FY 2007 that have been proposed for the principal statistical agencies provide some increases over the resources appropriated in FY 2006—but not always. For details of the funding history in fiscal years 2006 through 2008 please see Table 1. The balance of this chapter provides further details on FY 2008 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 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; and 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 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Estimate	FY 2008 Request
Bureau of the Census: Current Programs	\$195.5	\$195.5	\$202.8
-Periodic Programs	606.4	694.1	1,027.4
Bureau of Labor Statistics	537.1	548.1	574.4
Bureau of Economic Analysis	75.3	75.7	81.4
Statistics of Income, IRS	36.6	41.3	40.9
National Agricultural Statistics Service	110.5	111.0	113.1
- Census of Agriculture	28.8	36.3	54.6
Economic Research Service, USDA	75.2	75.2	82.5
Energy Information Administration	85.3	90.7	105.1
National Center for Health Statistics 1/, 2/	109.0	109.0	109.9
National Center for Education Statistics 2/	90.9	90.0	119.0
Bureau of Justice Statistics	34.6	34.6	45.0
Bureau of Transportation Statistics	26.7	26.7	27.0
Science Resources Statistics, NSF	33.0	36.0	37.0

For FY 2008, funding is requested for the Census Bureau's ongoing economic and demographic programs and for a re-engineered 2010 Census. For the Census Bureau's economic and demographic programs, funding is requested to: (1) collect and process economic census returns for the 2007 Economic Census; (2) create the universe frame and develop organizational information for the 2007 Census of Governments, as well as collect and process data for the employment phase, and collect and process data from states and other sources for the finance phase; (3) undertake an initiative to close the current gap in service sector coverage; and (4) continue reengineering the Survey of Income and Program Participation. For the 2010 Census program, funding is requested to continue to: (1) conduct planning, testing, and development activities to support a re-engineered 2010 Census, including the 2008 Census Dress Rehearsal and early operations for the 2010 Census; (2) improve the accuracy of map feature locations for the remaining 367 counties of the total of 3,232 counties; and (3) continue to conduct the American Community Survey to provide socio-economic data on an ongoing basis rather than only once a decade.

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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 2008, funding is requested to support the production, dissemination, and improvement of BLS economic measures, including: (1) the introduction of continuous updating to the housing and geographic area samples in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which will improve the accuracy and timeliness of the CPI; (2) the continuation of efforts to modernize the computing systems for monthly processing of the Producer Price Index (PPI) and U.S. Import and Export Price Indexes (IPP); (3) the publication, for the first time, of local area Employment Cost Index (ECI) and Employer Costs for Employee Compensation (ECEC) series as deemed feasible as a result of testing completed in 2007; and (4) expand the coverage of services in the PPI by publishing new indexes for service sector outputs, such as computer training.

### **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 U.S. balance of payments and associated

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international investment accounts. These economic accounts 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 2008, funding is requested to: (1) extend the prototype Research & Development satellite account, funded by the National Science Foundation in 2006 and 2007, with annual updates and extensions to BEA's Gross Domestic Product and other estimates between 2008 and 2012, and full incorporation into the economic accounts in 2013; (2) complete BEA's five-year program to improve the accuracy and timeliness of the Nation's economic accounts by addressing data gaps and measurement problems, expanding integration with other accounts, and improving consistency with international standards; and (3) continue to improve the accuracy of statistics on services, profits, compensation, international trade in services, and off-shoring.

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

The Statistics of Income (SOI) Division 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 2008, funding is requested to: (1) maintain and modernize tax data collection systems, including developing interfaces with modern electronic tax return filing systems; (2) implement a data bank repository for SOI and IRS population file data to more efficiently build longitudinal databases and enable sub-national estimates; (3) examine means to more effectively mask individual records to minimize the possibility of identification in the Individual Public Use Sample files; and (4) modernize and expedite dissemination of data and publications, including enhancement of products and features on the [www.irs.gov/Taxstats](http://www.irs.gov/Taxstats) website.

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### **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 2008, funding is requested to support the cyclical activities associated with data collection and processing of the 2007 Census of Agriculture and pay costs. FY 2008 is the data collection year for the quinquennial Census of Agriculture. Cyclical funding increases will be used for the postage and outsourcing of functions associated with mailing out questionnaire packages, logging returned questionnaires, capturing reported data, and conducting telephone and personal follow-up to non-respondents. The questionnaires are scheduled to be mailed to the nation's agricultural producers in December 2007, with the results scheduled for release in February 2009.

### **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 2008, funding is requested to 1) strengthen the market analysis and outlook program to ensure the continuity and quality of current market analysis and enhance coverage of increasingly complex global markets for an expanding array of agricultural products and 2) strengthen ERS' research and modeling capacity in the areas of bioenergy to better

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understand the economics of bioenergy production, the demand for by-products, and the likely future adjustments in the crop and livestock sectors.

#### **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 2008, funding is requested to: 1) maintain critical energy data coverage, analysis, and forecasting; 2) improve data reliability and statistical accuracy through redesigning key petroleum and natural gas surveys whose data drive investment and trade decisions, improve energy market function, and lead to efficient pricing; 3) complete development and launch monthly ethanol and biofuels data collections as mandated in Section 1508 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005; 4) strengthen global oil and gas data and modeling capabilities; 5) improve the ability to assess and forecast supply, demand, and technology trends affecting U.S. and world energy markets by replacing the U.S. Energy Model; and 6) invest in cyber-security improvements.

#### **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 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

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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 2008 funding is requested to: (1) continue data collection, analysis, and dissemination for key national health data systems, including the National Vital Statistics System, National Health Interview Survey, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, and National Health Care Survey; (2) continue gains in timeliness by implementing systems improvements in data collection and processing; (3) continue efforts to develop survey data that address the health care delivery system; and (4) work collaboratively with States and other agencies on upgrading the technology for collecting data from State birth and death certificates.

### **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 2008, funding is requested to: (1) conduct the National Assessment of Educational Progress, including 12th grade reading and mathematics assessments in 2009; (2) plan for a new high school longitudinal study that will begin with a cohort of 9th graders in 2009 and follow them through postsecondary education and into the workforce; (3) analyze data from international studies such as the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and plan for new international assessments; (4) undertake a pilot study on the development of postsecondary unit records, an essential restructuring of several components of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System; (5) carry out the 2007–08 Schools and Staffing Survey to obtain information on public and private schools, principals, and teachers; and (6) conduct the Beginning Postsecondary Student Longitudinal Survey, which provides information on the progress of postsecondary students, as well as the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey. (For more on NCES, see Chapter 19.)

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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 2008, the budget request includes a base program increase to support the implementation of a redesign to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which will include major revisions to the survey methodology. A comprehensive review of the NCVS has been initiated by the Committee on National Statistics of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to address cost and design issues of the survey. Funds will also be used to develop a national recidivism statistical series, which will periodically follow samples of released prisoners. The series would provide baseline data, as well as representative data every 3 years, on the rates of re-arrest, reconviction, and re-incarceration among released State and Federal prisoners. These data are essential for evaluating the effectiveness of reentry programs, post-custody surveillance, and state policies related to parole revocation. In addition base funds will be used for the maintenance of BJS' core statistical programs, including: (1) criminal victimization statistics; (2) cybercrime 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. With available funding in FY 2008, BJS will continue implementing national surveys designed to describe the incidence and circumstances associated with sexual assault in adult and juvenile correctional institutions, as required under the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003.

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### **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 needs study by the National Research Council (due in 2007). BTS is now within the Research and Innovation Technology Administration (RITA) of the Department of Transportation (DOT).

For FY 2008, funding is requested to (1) validate and finalize the data collected in the Commodity Flow Survey, a major national benchmark survey of shippers; (2) release monthly trade statistics on the commodities and mode of transportation used with our largest trading partners; (3) produce a core set of economic data and indicators including the Transportation Satellite Accounts, Transportation Services Index, Air Travel Price Index, Government Transportation Financial Statistics, multi-factor productivity measures, and the State Transit Expenditure Survey; (4) produce and release the National Transportation Atlas Database, a compendium of national geospatial transportation data; (5) provide statistics in reference reports such as the Transportation Statistics Annual Report to Congress, the Pocket Guide to Transportation, and the National Transportations Statistics Report; and (6) begin data collection for the biennial update of the National Ferry Database.

### **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

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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*.

Funding is requested in FY 2008 for SRS' participation in the NSF initiative 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) is to enhance the comparability, scope and availability of data on the science and engineering enterprise. SRS efforts related to SciSIP and ACI will involve enhancements and additions to current SRS surveys of R&D and the S&E workforce, including improvements in international data related to the science and engineering (S&E) enterprise. SRS will coordinate its efforts with those of other nations and international agencies (such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) to deal with similar concerns and addressing the globalization of science and technology. As part of these efforts, SRS will implement efforts to collect better and more comprehensive data on those in postdoctoral positions, based on several years of efforts to design frames and data collection strategies. Data on post-doctorates, who play multiple roles within the U.S. research infrastructure, represent a major gap in NSF's data on science and engineering (S&E) personnel. SRS will also continue work with the Census Bureau and the Office of Management and Budget to add a field of degree item to the American Community Survey (ACS), which will facilitate use of the ACS as a sampling frame for the SRS' Survey of College Graduates, and provide valuable information for analysis of the college-educated workforce, in both S&E and non-S&E fields. Other improvement activities in FY 2008 include continuing activities related to the Survey of Graduate Students and Post-doctorates in Science and Engineering (GSS). In FY 2008 the second phase of the redesign will be implemented, after significant testing, in the survey, and evaluation of the success of the first phase of redesign, implemented in FY 2007. SRS will continue activities examining the present taxonomies in place for describing fields of study/science. (For more on NSF SRS, see Chapter 19.)