

Statistical Abstract

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The cooperation of the many contributors to this volume is gratefully acknowledged. The list of sources of tables (pp. 953-956) and the source note below each table credit the various government and private agencies which have collaborated in furnishing information for the *Statistical Abstract*.

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P R E F A C E

The *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, published annually since 1873, is the standard summary of statistics on the social, political, and economic organization of the United States. It is designed to fulfill two functions: First, to serve as a convenient volume for statistical reference; and second, to serve as a guide to other statistical publications and sources. The latter function is served by the introductory text to each section, the source notes appearing below each table, and the Bibliography of Sources (page 957).

This volume includes a selection of data from many important statistical publications, both governmental and private. The publications cited as sources usually contain additional statistical detail and a more complete discussion of relevant definitions and concepts than can be presented here. Where contributing agencies are cited as sources, without mention of publications, more detailed information frequently is available from their unpublished tabulations and records.

Emphasis in the *Statistical Abstract* is given primarily to national data. Data for regions and individual States are presented to a lesser extent. Statistics for Territories and possessions are included in the State tables whenever available and supplemented by specialized information for these areas in section 33. Statistics for cities or other relatively small geographic units appear only in a few instances. Unless otherwise noted, statistics for the United States relate to continental United States.

1958 edition.—This edition, the 79th annual issue, was compiled and published in 1958. It presents data for the most recent year or period available during the early part of 1958.

Each year, in addition to the normal bringing up to date of the over 1,200 tables and charts included, new tables containing pertinent data are introduced. Data that are less timely are eliminated and format and text changes are made where considered advisable.

This year special efforts were directed to furthering the development of a section of tables devoted to recreation. Although there is considerable interest in this subject, statistics about it are relatively difficult to obtain. Thirteen tables are now assembled as part of the Public Lands; Parks; and Recreation section. Of this number, four relating to parks have been presented before in the former Public Lands and Park Systems section; three others relating to hunting and fishing have been presented before in the Forests and Forest Products section; the remaining six are entirely new to the *Abstract*.

Important changes have also occurred in section 21, Transportation, Land and Air, and in section 15, State and Local Government Finances and Employment. The presentation of railways statistics in section 21 has been extensively revised by trimming subject and historical detail, by redesign of tables to include information consistent with the more current materials now available, and by inclusion of new tables. In section 15, results from the 1957 Census of Governments have contributed significant additions concerning assessed valuations of taxable property and long-term State and local government debt, and brought up to date the basic count of types of governmental units.

Among the new tables which are of particular current interest in this edition are a number reflecting trends in agriculture, technology, and housing. These include tables relating to the economic level of farms and farm families, the share and governmental support of U. S. agricultural exports in world markets, Federal government obligations for scientific research and development, measures of research and

development in the natural sciences, an inventory of housing units in 1956, and characteristics of home purchasers transacted under veterans loan guarantees.

A total of 62 new tables have been introduced in this edition. Following is a list of subjects covered by some of the new tables:

Personal consumption expenditures for recreation	National housing inventory
Number and facilities of municipal parks	Religious affiliation reported by the civilian population
Summary of selected recreational activities	Private expenditures for medical care
Operating revenues of different types of transport	Level of schooling completed for persons 25 years old and over
Fuel and power consumed by railways	Homicides and suicides
Assessed value of property subject to taxation	Value of military procurement actions
Long-term State and local government debt	Private pension plans
Average acreage per farm, by economic class	Child adoptions
Level-of-living indicators for farm-operator families	Political party composition of State legislatures
Prices received and parity prices for farm products	Commercial and industrial loans of banks, by size of borrowers' assets
Value of agricultural exports under government-financed programs	Characteristics of life insurance policyholders
Research and development in the natural sciences	Sales of books and pamphlets, by subject
	Motor-vehicle operators licenses issued
	United States contributions to international organizations

Among tables shown in the last edition, 50 were omitted from this issue. Major omissions occurred in the section on Transportation, Land and Air, affecting financial statistics of railways; in the Income, Expenditures, and Wealth section affecting discontinued series on income shares of upper and lower groups of the population, and net worth of spending units, and other figures on wage or salary income; in the Federal Government Finances and Employment section affecting data on Federal investment and operating expenditures, distribution by income classes of individual income tax returns, sales of U. S. savings bonds, and Federal employment in selected agencies; and in the Business Enterprise section affecting data on business failures and on firms surviving to specified ages. Some of the information in the omitted tables was absorbed in other tables still present.

Supplements to the Abstract.—The *Statistical Abstract*, as an annual one-volume publication, is of necessity limited in amount of detail shown. Businessmen, teachers, librarians, public officials, professional workers, market researchers, and others often require data for individual cities, counties, metropolitan areas, and other small areas as well as for States. Economists, teachers, social scientists, historians, students, and others frequently need more historical information. To meet such requests for more detail, a series of supplements to the *Abstract* have been issued.

The *County and City Data Book, 1956* is designed to help satisfy the need for sta

This edition is the fifth in the *County and City Data Book* series. Many of the statistics in this volume were obtained from the results of the 1954 Censuses of Agriculture, Business, and Manufactures. Other subjects covered include births, deaths, and marriages; population characteristics; dwelling units; city government finances and employment; hospitals; bank deposits; and other items of social and economic importance. This volume is on sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for \$4.50.

Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945, a historical supplement, was published in July 1949. This volume presents, in compact form, approximately 3,000 statistical time series (mostly on an annual basis) which cover various periods from 1789 to 1945. These time series reflect economic, social, and political aspects of the development of the Nation since the Federal Government was formally established. In the preparation of this supplement the Bureau of the Census had the cooperation of a special committee of the Social Science Research Council set up to advise the Director of the Census on a source book of historical statistics and of the Committee on Research in Economic History under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council. This volume is on sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for \$3.25.

Continuation to 1952 of Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945, issued

in May 1954, presents data for 1946 to 1952 for the current series shown in *Historical Statistics*, mentioned above. It also contains the latest revisions for many of the series in *Historical Statistics*. This publication is also on sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 55 cents.

Headnotes to the tables in the *Statistical Abstract* include cross-references to specific series in *Historical Statistics, 1789-1945*, and in its *Continuation to 1952* whenever the tables contain figures related to those series.

Preparation of a revised edition of *Historical Statistics* is presently underway. The new volume expected to be published in 1959 will greatly enlarge the scope of the present volume by adding much new material and by bringing the older material up to date.

Responsibility.—The contents of this volume are taken from a large number of sources, as indicated in the list of agencies furnishing material. (See pages 953-956.) The Bureau of the Census cannot accept the responsibility for the accuracy or limitations of the data presented here, other than for those which it collects. However, the responsibility for selection of the material and for proper presentation rests with the Bureau.

Many persons have written offering suggestions for improving the presentation of the material. These letters have been most helpful and users are urged to continue to make their needs known. All suggestions will be carefully considered in planning future editions.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON DATA PRESENTED

write to the agency indicated in the source note to the table which covers the desired subject.

SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS

should be sent to
The Director
Bureau of the Census
Washington 25, D. C.

STATISTICAL ABSTRACT SUPPLEMENTS

County and City Data Book, 1956. A compact presentation of 133 items of statistical data for each county in the United States, and 130 items of statistical data for each of 484 cities having 25,000 inhabitants or more in 1950. Information comparable to that for counties is also presented for geographic regions and divisions, States, and standard metropolitan areas. Items included based largely on results of 1954 Censuses of Agriculture, Business, and Manufactures. Includes 51 maps, explanatory and definitive text, and source notes. Issued 1957. Price \$4.50 (Buckram).

Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945. A supplement to the *Statistical Abstract*, prepared with the cooperation of the Social Science Research Council. A compilation of about 3,000 statistical time series, largely annual, extending back through time to the earliest year for which figures are available. Includes definitions of terms and descriptive text. Specific source notes provide a basic guide to original published sources for further reference and additional data. Detailed alphabetical subject index. 363 pages. Issued 1949. Fifth printing. Price \$3.25 (Buckram).

Continuation to 1952 of Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945. Carries forward and presents revisions of the statistical time series contained in *Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945*. Designed especially for use in conjunction with the *Historical Statistics* volume. 79 pages. Issued 1954. Price 55 cents.

Purchase orders should be addressed to the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.

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U.S., SHOWING CENSUS REGIONS AND DIVISIONS

