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## Preface

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The *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, published since 1878, is a comprehensive collection of statistics on the social, political, and economic organization of the United States. It is designed to serve as a convenient volume for statistical reference and as a guide to other statistical publications and sources. The latter function is served by the introductory text to each section, the source note appearing below each table, and Appendix I, which is comprised of the *Guide to Sources of Statistics*, the *Guide to State Statistical Abstracts*, and the *Guide to Foreign Statistical Abstracts*.

This volume includes a selection of data from many statistical sources, both government and private. Publications cited as sources usually contain additional statistical detail and more comprehensive discussions of definitions and concepts. Data not available in publications issued by the contributing agency, but obtained from the Internet or unpublished records are identified in the source notes. More information on the subjects covered in the tables may generally be obtained from the source.

Except as indicated, figures are for the United States as presently constituted. Although emphasis in the *Statistical Abstract* is primarily given to national data, many tables present data for regions and individual states and a smaller number for metropolitan areas and cities. Appendix II, Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas: Concepts, Components, and Population, presents explanatory text, a complete current listing, and population data for metropolitan and micropolitan areas defined as of November 2009. Statistics for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and for island areas of the United States are included in many state tables and are supplemented by information in Section 29. Additional information for states, cities, counties, metropolitan areas, and other small units, as well as more historical data, are available in various

supplements to the *Statistical Abstract* (see inside back cover).

Statistics in this edition are generally for the most recent year or period available by early June 2011. Each year over 1,400 tables and charts are reviewed and evaluated; new tables and charts of current interest are added, continuing series are updated, and less timely data are condensed or eliminated. Text notes and appendices are revised as appropriate. In addition two special features USA Statistics in Brief, and State Rankings can be found on our Web site:

<<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>.

**Changes in this edition**—This year we have introduced 27 new tables covering a wide range of subject areas. These include new data from the 2010 Decennial Census, and the Survey of Business Owners, as well as changes to the organization and presentation of national health expenditures data from the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. In addition, we have introduced new material on a wide variety of topics, such as, migration of college freshmen, hate crimes, judicial caseloads, hurricanes, suicides, congressional apportionment, minority-owned businesses, family farms, and horticulture sales. For a complete list of new tables, see “New Tables,” p. xi.

**Statistical Abstract on other media**—The *Abstract* is available on the Internet and on CD-ROM. Both versions contain the same material as the book, except for a few copyrighted tables for which we did not receive permission to release in these formats. Our Internet site <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>> contains this 2012 edition plus selected earlier editions in Adobe Acrobat .pdf format. The CD-ROM version and internet site also include spreadsheet files for each table in the book.

**Statistics for states and metropolitan areas**—Extensive data for the states and metropolitan areas of the United States can be found in the *State and Metropolitan Area Data Book: 2010*. This publication, as well as, selected rankings of the states and metropolitan areas, is also available on our Internet site at <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/smadb>>.

**Statistics for counties and cities**—Extensive data for counties can be found in the County and City Data Book: 2007. It features items covering everything from age and agriculture to retail trade and water use for all states and counties with U.S. totals for comparison. This publication is available on our Internet site at <[www.census.gov/compendia/ccdb](http://www.census.gov/compendia/ccdb)>.

The database for USA Counties features over 6,000 items. Files include data published for 2009 population estimates (latest) and many items from the 2000 and 2010 Census of Population and Housing, the American Community Survey 2005–2009, the 1990 census, the 1980 census and the 2007, 2002, 1997, 1992, 1987, 1982 and 1977 economic censuses.

Information in USA Counties is derived from the following general topics: Accommodation and Food Services, Age, Agriculture, Ancestry, Banking, Building Permits, Business, Civilian Labor Force, Crime, Earnings, Education, Elections, Employment, Government, Health, Households, Housing, Income, Manufacturing, Population, Poverty, Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin, Retail Trade, Social Programs, Taxes, Veterans, Vital Statistics, Water Use, and Wholesale Trade.

Files contain a collection of data from the U.S. Census Bureau and other federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Bureau of Labor Statistics,

the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Social Security Administration.

For further information on the USA Counties database, please see <<http://censtats.census.gov/usa/usa.shtml>>.

**Limitations of the data**—The contents of this volume were taken from many sources. All data from censuses, surveys, and from administrative records are subject to error arising from a number of factors: Sampling variability (for statistics based on samples), reporting errors in the data for individual units, incomplete coverage, nonresponse, imputations, and processing error. (See also Appendix III, p. 919). The Census Bureau cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy or limitations of the data presented here, other than for those for which it collects. The responsibility for selection of the material and for proper presentation, however, rests with the Census Bureau.

**For additional information on data presented**—Please consult the source publications available in local libraries, on the Internet, or contact the agency indicated in the source notes. Contact the Census Bureau only if it is cited as the source.

**Suggestions and comments**—Users of the Statistical Abstract and its supplements (see inside back cover) are urged to make their data needs known for consideration in planning future editions. Suggestions and comments for improving coverage and presentation of data should be sent to the Director, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233; or e-mail us at <[ACSD.US.Data@census.gov](mailto:ACSD.US.Data@census.gov)> or visit <[ask.census.gov](http://ask.census.gov)> for further information on the Abstract.