

NATIONAL  
ACADEMIES

*Sciences  
Engineering  
Medicine*

Committee on National Statistics

# CONTRIBUTIONS & CAPABILITIES

Serving the Statistical Community Since 1972

# OUR MISSION

The mission of CNSTAT is to provide advice to the federal government and the nation grounded in the current best scientific knowledge and practice that will lead to improved statistical methods and information upon which to base public policy. CNSTAT seeks to **advance** the quality of statistical information, **contribute** to the statistical policies and coordinating activities of the federal government, and **help** provide a forward-looking vision for the federal statistical system and national statistics more broadly in service of the public good. CNSTAT carries out its mission by convening panels of volunteer experts to conduct studies on data and methods needed to improve understanding on topics related to the economy, public health, crime, education, immigration, poverty, welfare, transportation, terrorism, and other public policy issues.

*The National Academies are uniquely positioned to take on cross-cutting, multidisciplinary challenges through our power to convene the top experts from across the science, engineering, and health sectors.*

# CAPABILITIES, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES

## Provide Consensus Advice

The National Academies' consensus activities are considered the "gold standard" of our products. We appoint a balanced, independent committee of experts to address a study's statement of task and document the evidence-based consensus.

The resulting reports typically include findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on information gathered by the committee and the committee's deliberations. Each report is subject to a rigorous and independent peer-review process, and it represents the position of the National Academies on the statement of task.

### Consensus studies can help sponsors:

- Move forward using evidence-based conclusions and recommendations
- Establish a research agenda
- Inform policy and practice
- Guide grant making and development of RFPs

## Convene Experts

We convene carefully selected experts to engage in a focused discussion about issues important to our sponsors. Depending on the needs of the sponsor, convening activities can range from a one-day meeting of a small group, to an iterative process that takes place over time, to large public workshops.

### Convening activities help sponsors:

- Interact with experts on a specific topic
- Engage in ongoing dialogue with stakeholders
- Be part of a community of practice
- Take action with others operating from a common knowledge base

## Collaborative Studies

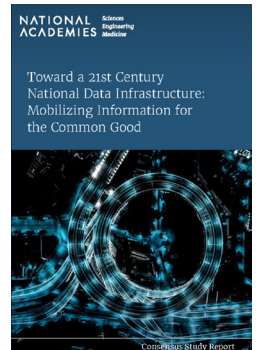
CNSTAT frequently collaborates across the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to bring expertise in health, computer science, transportation, law, agriculture, and other areas to our studies.

## BUILDING *a Vision for a New Data Infrastructure*

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS AND STUDY TOPICS

The U.S. federal statistical system provides extraordinarily important information for public- and private-sector decision making, academic research, and public understanding. CNSTAT is focused on assisting federal agencies innovate and adapt to an ever-changing environment drawing on the best scientific expertise from academia, industry, nonprofit, and government sectors. Much of our work in recent years focuses on the following priority areas:

The current and long-standing federal data infrastructure, which relies heavily on survey collection, is under threat with declining public cooperation, increasing collection costs, inflexible survey designs, and growing privacy concerns. At the same time, there has been an explosion of digital data from federal program agencies, state and local governments, businesses, social media, sensors, and other sources. A new national data infrastructure is necessary to overcome these challenges. This requires a vision that capitalizes on new opportunities and incorporates a wide range of policy, technical, cultural, and organizational perspectives.

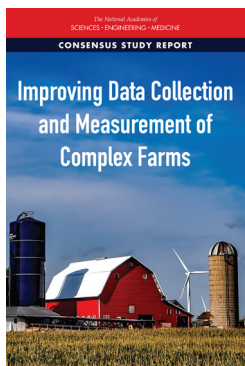
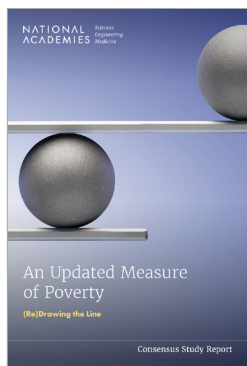


## CURRENT AND RECENT SPONSORS

CNSTAT has published over 300 reports for approximately 50 sponsor agencies. Sponsors have included statistical agencies as well as research and program agencies of the federal government and private foundations. Current and recent study sponsors include the following:

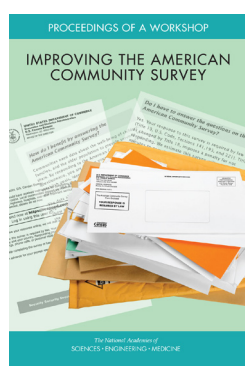
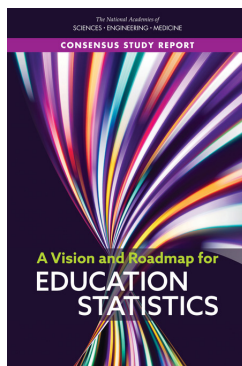
## IMPROVING *Economic and Social Measurement*

CNSTAT seeks to improve economic and social measurement and the crucial data sources required for these measures. CNSTAT has conducted numerous studies on measurement of important indicators such as gross domestic product, the consumer price index, poverty, as well as demographic characteristics and other social and economic constructs. CNSTAT studies have also examined the unique data issues involved when businesses or firms are the unit of measurement.



## REVIEWING AND EVALUATING *Major Statistical Programs and Surveys*

CNSTAT panels evaluate federal household and business surveys and consider ways to improve them. Panels address topics ranging from methods to increase the efficiency of data collection operations to enhancing the usability of the data.

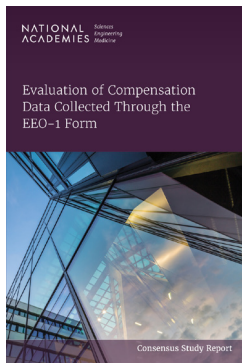
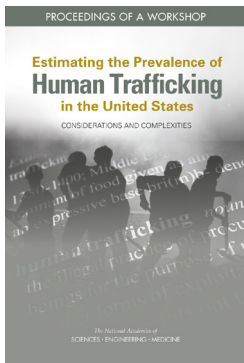


- The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
- Gates Foundation
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor
- Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce

- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Hewlett Foundation
- National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education

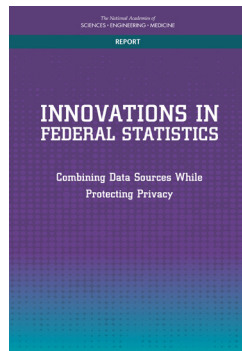
## IMPROVING *Statistical Methods and Estimates for Policy Use*

CNSTAT studies and convenings improve statistical methods and estimates for use in policymaking and implementation.



## ADDRESSING *Cross-Cutting Data Policy Issues*

The recommendations and lessons learned from individual panel studies are frequently pertinent to multiple agencies, and the Committee strives to convene activities on methodological and operational problems that may be difficult for individual agencies to address on their own, including extensive work on the continual challenge of expanding data user access and ensuring data utility while protecting confidentiality of individual records.



- National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- National Science Foundation

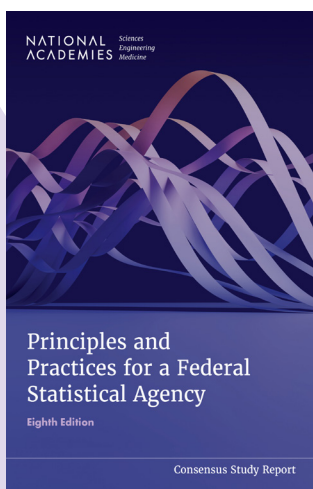
- Omidyar Network
- Spiegel Family Foundation
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

# WHO WE ARE

The Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) was established in 1972 at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to provide an independent, objective review of federal statistical activities. CNSTAT, through its studies, workshops, seminars, and the quadrennial publication of *Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency*, helps serve as a centralizing and sustaining influence for the system as a whole.

The committee members include experts in statistical and computational methods, survey research, economic, social, and demographic measurement and other relevant fields, who serve pro bono for 3-year terms. A consortium of federal agencies supports CNSTAT's core activities; agencies and foundations support specific studies.

## Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency



*Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency*, which is often simply referred to as "P&P" or the "purple book" by statistical agencies, highlights for the executive and legislative branches of government the important public good provided by strong federal statistical agencies. It also provides a code of ethics for the agencies that underlies their culture and missions. The Committee on National Statistics first issued P&P in 1992 and since 2001 it has updated "P&P" every four years to coincide with a new presidential administration or second term. The eighth edition of P&P was released in 2024.

## MEMBERS

- **Katharine G. Abraham**  
(Chair)  
University of Maryland,  
College Park
- **Mick P. Couper**  
University of Michigan
- **William "Sandy" Darity**  
Duke University
- **Robert Goerge**  
NORC at University of Chicago
- **Erica Groshen**  
Cornell University, School of  
Industrial and Labor Relations
- **Roe Gutman**  
Brown University
- **Colleen M. Heflin**  
Syracuse University
- **Daniel Ho**  
Stanford University
- **Hilary Hoynes**  
University of California, Berkeley
- **H.V. Jagadish**  
University of Michigan
- **Sharon Lohr**  
Arizona State University, *Emerita*
- **Lloyd Potter**  
University of Texas at San  
Antonio
- **Nela Richardson**  
ADP Research Institute
- **Elizabeth A. Stuart**  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg  
School of Public Health
- **Florencia Torche**  
Princeton University
- **Salil Vadhan**  
Harvard University

## 2024 CORE SPONSORS

CNSTAT is fortunate to receive core support from a large group of statistical, policy, and research agencies. This support is critically important, enabling CNSTAT to address cross-cutting topics and issues that cannot be resolved by one-time efforts, produce P&P, and conduct other public-good activities such as public seminars. Consensus studies and workshops are separately funded.

National Science Foundation: Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics Program; National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics | Social Security Administration: Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics | U.S. Department of Agriculture: Economic Research Service, National Agricultural Statistics Service | U.S. Department of Commerce: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Census Bureau | U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics | U.S. Department of Energy: Energy Information Administration | U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, National Center for Health Statistics, National Institute on Aging | U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: Office of Policy Development and Research | U.S. Department of Justice: Bureau of Justice Statistics | U.S. Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics | U.S. Department of Transportation: Bureau of Transportation Statistics | U.S. Department of the Treasury: Statistics of Income Division, Internal Revenue Service

For more information please contact:

**Melissa Chiu,**  
*Director*  
mchiu@nas.edu  
202-334-2018

**Connie Citro,**  
*Senior Scholar*  
ccitro@nas.edu

**Rebecca Krone,**  
*Administrative Coordinator*  
rkrone@nas.edu