

SURVEY TITLE: U.S. Census

ACRONYM: US CENSUS

SPONSOR: United States Department of Commerce, United States Census Bureau.

SURVEY PURPOSE: The United States Constitutional mandate is to enumerate the population of the United States for the purpose of Congressional apportionment. Additionally, census collects demographic and economic information designed to inform the distribution of public funds and evaluate public programs and emerging needs.

LOCATION SAMPLED: United States (technically not a sample, the goal is to collect data on the universe of people living in the United States).

YEARS SEXUAL ORIENTATION DATA COLLECTED: 1990, 2000.

SAMPLE SIZE: Year 2000: 281,421,906.

METHOD OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION DATA COLLECTION: For most people, self-completed mail questionnaires collected at the household level. Usually one person in the household provides responses for all members. All U.S. households receive a "short form" with only a few questions. One in five households receives a "long form" that includes significantly more detail.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION QUESTIONS:

Sexual orientation is not directly assessed. However, the census can be used to identify same-sex couples. The questionnaire asks for head of household information first, coding gender of the head of household; it then asks for information on all other persons in the household, coding gender for each of these persons. For the other members of the household, the form asks how they are related to the head of household.

Short & Long Form: Person 2, Q2: "How is this person related to Person 1?"

Same-sex unmarried partner households include a person aged 15 or older who is the same sex as the person who filled out the form and is identified as either a "Husband/wife" or an "Unmarried Partner." Households with a same-sex "husband/wife" are edited by the Census Bureau such that the spouse is changed to an "unmarried partner." This change is considered a consistency edit by the Census Bureau and is not flagged in any publicly released data.