

WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2016 (PC2016), 2018 (PC2018), and 2020 (PC2020)

Client: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

Overview

The goal of this 6-year contract is to collect and compile data on participant and program characteristics to support the management, evaluation, and improvement of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). WIC provides supplemental nutritious foods, nutrition education, and breastfeeding promotion and support, as well as referrals to other services for low-income, nutritionally at-risk pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women; infants up to age 1; and children up to age 5.

The study has three key components:

- Collect, evaluate, clean, and compile data generated from state WIC Management Information Systems.
- Create a nationally descriptive datafile on a census of WIC participants from the 90 WIC state agencies,¹ which represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia, 5 territories, and 34 Indian tribal organizations.
- Analyze data and produce summary reports of participant characteristics and food packages.

WIC Participant and Program Characteristics (PC) 2016, 2018, and 2020 continue the compilation of WIC PC data that began in 1984 and became biennial starting in 1988, making these the latest such reports to help the Food and Nutrition Service address the need for program information on WIC. These reports are based on a complete census of all individuals certified to participate in WIC during April of the reference year. The reports address the topics of demographic, income, and nutritional risk characteristics of WIC participants; anthropometric and hematological data, national estimates of breastfeeding initiation and duration for infants; and food package data. The PC2018 and PC2020 reports on food package data will include estimated WIC food package costs.

WIC PC data and analyses help inform budget estimation, research needs, and reporting requirements; help drive

¹ For the 2020 study, 89 state agencies administered WIC: the 50 states, the District of Columbia, 5 territories, and 33 Indian tribal organizations.



policy and procedural changes over time; and assist researchers and policymakers addressing the needs of women, infants, and children under WIC.

Products

- *WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2016*, available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-participant-and-program-characteristics-2016>
- *WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2016, Food Package Report*, available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-participant-and-program-characteristics-2016-food-package-report>
- *WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2016: Public Use National Sample Data file*, available at <https://data.nal.usda.gov/dataset/wic-participant-and-program-characteristics-2016>
- *WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2018*, available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-participant-and-program-characteristics-2018>
- *WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2018: Food Packages and Costs*, available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/participant-program-characteristics-2018-food-packages-costs-report>
- *WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2020* (expected Fall 2021)
- *WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2020: Food Packages and Costs* (expected Spring 2022)