

# National and State-Level Estimates of WIC Eligibles and WIC Program Reach

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

## Overview

This 5-year contract is designed to help the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) measure program performance of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). WIC provides supplemental nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, and 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.

FNS uses participation statistics for general reporting and budgeting, tracking program performance, and other purposes. However, participation counts alone do not facilitate a complete assessment of program performance. As a result, FNS estimates how many individuals are eligible for program benefits to better understand the program's reach and unmet nutrition assistance needs, particularly at state and participant levels. Over the past 5 years, Insight has developed estimates of WIC eligibility for FNS.

Insight estimates WIC eligibility by participant category (infants; children aged 1–4; pregnant women; and breastfeeding and nonbreastfeeding postpartum women), racial and ethnic group, and at the national, regional, and state level (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) using the methodology recommended by the Committee on National Statistics of the National Research Council. Three types of estimates follow:



- **National estimates.** Use data from the Current Population Survey's Annual Social and Economic Supplement to create a national estimate of infants and children eligible for WIC and the average monthly number of infants, children, and pregnant and postpartum women eligible for WIC.
- **State estimates.** Use data from the American Community Survey (ACS) data and each state's share of the ACS-based estimates.
- **Territorial estimates.** Use Puerto Rico Community Survey data and Census Bureau International Database to estimate WIC eligibility in Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories, respectively.

## Products

Analysis plans, final reports, interactive graphics

Trippe, C., Tadler, C., Johnson, P., Giannarelli, L., & Betson, D. (2018). *National- and state-level estimates of WIC eligibles and program reach in 2015*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/national-and-state-level-estimates-2015>

Trippe, C., Tadler, C., Johnson, P., Giannarelli, L., & Betson, D. (2019). *National- and state-level estimates of WIC eligibles and program reach in 2016*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/national-and-state-level-estimates-wic-eligibility-and-wic-program-reach-2016>

Gray, K., Trippe, C., Tadler, C., Johnson, P., & Betson, D. (2019). *National- and state-level estimates of WIC eligibility and WIC program reach in 2017*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/national-and-state-level-estimates-wic-eligibility-and-wic-program-reach-2017>

Gray, K., Meyers, M., Johnson, P., & Giannarelli, L. (forthcoming). *National- and state-level estimates of WIC eligibility and WIC program reach in 2018 with updated estimates for 2016 and 2017*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.