

National Violence Index: Definitions and Sources

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Personal Violence Index

Interpersonal

1. Homicide* – “Criminal homicide” is defined as murder and non-negligent manslaughter: the willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another. This does not include justifiable homicides or manslaughter by negligence. *source:* Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports. *U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998. Found on page 402.*

2. Rape* – Rape includes “Forcible rape” and “Sex offenses.” Forcible rape is defined as the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will and includes attempts or assaults to rape. Sex offenses are defined as statutory rape and offenses against chastity, common decency, and morals, not including attempts. *source:* Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports. *U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998. Found on page 402 (forcible rape) and 402-403 (sex offenses).*

3. Battery* – combined count of “Aggravated assault” and “Other assaults,” all assaults and attempted assaults by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting bodily injury, severe or not, and with or without a weapon. *source:* Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports. *U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998. Found on page 402.*

4. Robbery* – “Robbery” is defined as the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence, and/or by putting the victim in fear. *source:* Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports. *U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998. Found on page 402.*

5. Reckless Behavior* – Includes “Weapons; carrying, possessing, etc.” and “Driving under the influence.” The former is comprised of all violations of regulations or statutes controlling the carrying, using, possessing, furnishing, and manufacturing of deadly weapons or silencers, including attempts. The latter is driving or operating any vehicle while drunk or under the influence of liquor or narcotics. *source:* Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports. *U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998. Found on pages 402 (weapons; carrying, possessing, etc.) and 403 (driving under the influence).*

Intrapersonal

6. Suicide/Self-Injury*– defined as suicides, injuries occurring during attempted suicide, and self-inflicted injuries reported as intentional. *source: Sum of the variables E950-E959 tabulated by the National Center for Health Statistics as reported on approximately page 232 of Table GMIII_10_xx (xx=year), found at <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/unpubd/mortabs/gmwkiii.htm>>.*

7. Substance Abuse Deaths* –

a.) Smoking – total numbers of deaths due to malignant neoplasms (cancer) of the trachea, lungs, or bronchus and selected chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (bronchitis, emphysema and other chronic airways obstruction) that are attributable to cigarette smoking. The U.S. Census Bureau calculates the percentages of these deaths that are caused directly by smoking. Thus we use 83% of deaths caused by these cancers plus 80% of deaths caused by these pulmonary diseases.

Source of percentages: SAMMEC software – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. SAMMEC 3.0 (Smoking-Attributable Mortality, Morbidity, and Economic Costs): Computer Software and Documentation, Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health, 1996. Source for Malignant Neoplasms of lungs, trachea, bronchus: Variable 162 tabulated by the National Center for Health Statistics as reported on approximately page 62 of Table GMIII_3_xx, found at <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/unpubd/mortabs/gmwkiii.htm>>

Source for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: Sum of variables 491 (chronic bronchitis), 490 (bronchitis - other), 492 (emphysema), and 496 (chronic airways obstruction - other) tabulated by the National Center for Health Statistics as reported on approximately pages 116, 98, 134, and 188, respectively, of Table GMIII_7_xx (xx=year), found at <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/unpubd/mortabs/gmwkiii.htm>>.

b.) Alcohol – defined as the sum of: i) deaths from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis and ii) alcohol-induced deaths (including deaths from dependent and non-dependent use of alcohol and also accidental poisoning by alcohol, but not including accidents, homicides, and other causes indirectly related to alcohol use as well as deaths due to fetal alcohol syndrome). *Source of i): Variable 571 from the National Center for Health Statistics as reported on approximately page 512 of Table GMIII_7_xx (xx=year), found at <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/unpubd/mortabs/gmwkiii.htm>>.*

Source of ii): National Center for Health Statistics - Table 21 (page 77) of National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 48, No. 11, July 24, 2000, found at <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvs48-11.pdf>>.

c.) Other Drugs – defined as the number of deaths from all drug-induced causes (legal and illegal drugs). *Source: National Center for Health Statistics - Table 20 (page 76) of National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 48, No. 11, July 24, 2000, found at <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvs48-11.pdf>>.*

Societal Violence Index

Government

8. Social Negligence –

a.) Lack of Health Insurance – the percentage of people in the United States who were not covered by any type of health insurance during the entire calendar year. *source: U.S. Census Bureau: <<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hlthins.html>>.*

b.) Hunger – the mean percent increase in requests for emergency food for cities represented in The United States Conference of Mayors. *Source: page 94 of A Status Report on Hunger and Homeless in America's Cities, December, 1999, found at <<http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/homeless/hunger99.pdf>>.*

c.) Drop-out Rate – the high school dropout rate: the proportion of 15 to 24-year-olds in grades 10 through 12 who dropped out in the past year. *source: Dropout Rates in the United States: 1998, National Center for Education Statistics, 1999, found at <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2000/qrtlyspring/4elem/q4-4.html#h1>>.*

d.) Homelessness – the mean percent increase in requests for emergency shelter for cities represented in The United States Conference of Mayors. *Source: page 94 of A Status Report on Hunger and Homeless in America's Cities, December, 1999, found at <<http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/homeless/hunger99.pdf>>.*

9. Criminal Justice* –

a.) Capital Punishment – defined as the number of legal executions in the U.S. *Source: Death Penalty Information Center <<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/dpicexec.html>>.*

b.) Nonviolent Incarceration – the number of criminals incarcerated for nonviolent offenses. *Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Prisoners in 1998, pages 10 and 11; also found at <www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>.*

c.) Deaths by Police Intervention – defined as the number of fatal injuries inflicted by the police or other law-enforcing agents, including military on duty, in the course of arresting or attempting to arrest lawbreakers, suppressing disturbances, maintaining order, and other legal action. *Source: Sum of variables E970 through E977 tabulated by the National Center for Health Statistics as reported on approximately page 485 of Table GMIII-10-xx (xx=year) found on <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/unpubd/mortabs/gmwkiii.htm>>. (This does not include legal executions, which is variable E978.)*

10. Civil Rights Complaints Against the Government* – the number of civil rights complaints against government agencies (local, state, and federal) received by the Justice Department. *Source: U.S. Department of Justice, 1999 Congressional Authorization Budget Document, 1999.*

Corporate

11. Air Pollution – The three air pollution indicators are based on data collected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These variables relate to the six “criteria” pollutants the EPA has identified as creating a public health risk: carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter (ten micrometers or less in diameter) and sulfur dioxide.

a.) **People Experiencing Pollution*** – the number of people living in counties with air pollution concentrations that exceeded at least one of the NAAQS (National Ambient Air Quality Standard) levels for the six criteria pollutants. These are the NAAQS “primary” standards, set to protect against adverse effects to human health. (For ozone we use the value based on the original 1-hour criterion since the 8-hour criterion is not available prior to 1997.) *Source: EPA Air Quality Trends Report (years 1995 through 1998) Chapter 2, available at <<http://www.epa.gov/airtrends>>.*

b.) **Ambient Pollution Level** – the average of individual indices for the air concentration levels of the six criterion pollutants. Ambient levels are measured either in parts per million or micrograms per cubic meter. (For all variables, we use the “Arithmetic Mean”; for ozone we use the 1-hour criterion and for sulfur dioxide we use the annual mean criterion.) We do not adjust this measurement by the U.S. population since excessive levels of these pollutants present the same harm to an individual regardless of the population size. *Source: The EPA Air Quality Trends Report, 1998, Table A-1 of Appendix A, found at <<http://www.epa.gov/oar/aqtrnd98>>. (For all variables, we use the “Arithmetic Mean” found in the final row of each section.)*

c.) **Pollution Emitted*** – the total amount of the six criteria pollutants (in thousands of short tons) estimated to be emitted into the air. For emissions, the pollutants ozone and nitrogen dioxide are replaced by volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides; in combination with sunlight, these compounds produce ozone and nitrogen dioxide. These emissions are primarily from power generation, industrial processes and transportation. We choose to include pollution from transportation sources since i) much of the nation’s transportation is for corporate purposes, ii) manufacturers have significant control of the pollutants generated by the fuels and vehicles they produce, and iii) removal of the transportation pollutants did not significantly change the trend observed for this indicator. *Source: The EPA Air Quality Trends Report, 1998, Tables A-2 through A-6 and A-8 of Appendix A, found at <<http://www.epa.gov/oar/aqtrnd98>>.*

12. Consumers/Employees –

- a.) Product Injuries* – the number of injuries associated with the use of certain consumer products that were treated by hospital emergency rooms. *Source: National Injury Information Clearinghouse, United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, Annual Report to Congress, Appendix A, Table 2, found at <<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/reports/1998rpt1.pdf>>.*
- b.) Occupational Injury/Illness – the overall rate of injury or illness in private-industry workplaces per 100 full-time workers. *source: Workplace Injury and Illness Summary, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Safety and Health Statistics, <<http://stats.bls.gov/osshome.htm>>.*
- c.) Occupational Fatalities – the number of fatal work injuries per 100,000 full-time workers, age 16 and over in private industry. *source: Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries Summary, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Safety and Health Statistics, <<http://stats.bls.gov/osshome.htm>>.*

Family

13. Domestic Violence* – “offenses against family and children: nonsupport, neglect, desertion or abuse of family or children.” (This variable includes only criminal offenses, whereas Variable 14 - Child Abuse includes civil cases handled administratively.) *source: Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998. Found on page 403.*

14. Child Abuse/Negligence* – includes neglect, medical neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional maltreatment, and other or additional types of maltreatment, including abandonment, threats of harm to the child, and congenital drug addiction. *Source: <<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/stats/ncands98/98ndsrpt/e32.htm>>. (Total number of child subjects of CPS investigations, either “Substantiated,” Col. A or “Indicated,” Col. B.)*

Structural

15. Infant Mortality/Life Expectancy –

- a.) Infant Mortality – the number of deaths of babies under the age of one, per 1,000 live births. *Source: National Center for Health Statistics - Table 27 (page 87) of National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 48, No. 11, July 24, 2000, found at <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvs48-11.pdf>>.*
- b.) Life Expectancy – equals $100 - \text{Life Expectancy}$ (in years), for those born in the current year. This variable will decrease as life expectancy rises. 100 is used as an estimate for the average lifetime that might be expected with attainable improvements in health care and reductions in accidents and environmental pollutants. *Source: National Center for Health Statistics - Table 6 (page 22) of National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 48, No. 11, July 24, 2000, found at <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvs48-11.pdf>>.*

16. Hate Crimes* – the total number of victims of bias-motivated criminal incidents. The term “criminal incidents” includes the following: murder and non-negligent manslaughter; forcible rape; aggravated assault, simple assault, and intimidation; robbery; burglary; larceny-theft; motor vehicle theft; arson; and destruction, damage, or vandalism of property. The term “victim” may refer to a person, business, institution, or society as a whole. Hate crimes are not separate crimes, but rather traditional offenses motivated by the offender’s bias; therefore they are also collected under the traditional criminal reporting of the UCR. In 1997, the FBI added a new form of bias to their hate crime collecting: mental and physical disability. Since these numbers were a small percentage of the total hate crimes, they do not have a significant impact on the 1997 Index. *Source: Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998, page 57. Also in FBI UCR annual report Hate Crime Statistics, found at <<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr.htm>>.*

17. Employment Discrimination* – the total number of charges of employment discrimination filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Types of discrimination include: race, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, and equal pay act. *source: The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, <<http://www.eeoc.gov/stats/charges.html>>.*

18. Poverty Disparity

a.) Class – the ratio of the 95th percentile of household income to the 10th percentile. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Surveys, Income Inequality, Table IE-4 “Household Income Limits by Percentile.” <<http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/histinc/ineqtoc.html>>*

b.) Race – the ratio of the poverty rate for Blacks, Asian and Pacific Islanders and those of Hispanic origin compared to the poverty rate for Whites, not of Hispanic origin. *source: U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Poverty Tables - People, Table 2 “Poverty Status, by Family Relationship, Race, and Hispanic Origin.” <<http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/histinc/histpovtb.html>>*

c.) Gender – the ratio of the poverty rate for females compared to the rate for males. *source: U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Poverty Tables - People, Table 7 “Poverty, by Sex.” <<http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/histinc/histpovtb.html>>*

d.) Age – the ratio of the poverty rate for those under 18 compared to the rate for those 18 years and over. (Note: Prior to 1984, those age 65 and over had higher poverty rates than adults 18 to 64. Since that time there has been no significant difference between adults above and below 65.) *source: U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Poverty Tables - People, Table 3 “Poverty Status, by Age, Race and Hispanic Origin.” <<http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/histinc/histpovtb.html>>*

19. Gang Membership* – defined as the number of participants in groups of youths or young adults that law enforcement or other community agents classify as a “gang.” Motorcycle gangs, hate or ideology groups, prison gangs, and exclusively adult gangs are excluded. *Source:* The *National Youth Gang Survey* conducted by the National Youth Gang Center. Available on the National Criminal Justice Reference Service web site <www.ncjrs.org>, by selecting “Juvenile Justice,” then “Gangs.”

(*) adjusted per U.S. resident population as estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau on July 1st of each year. *Source:* <<http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/nation/popclockest.txt>>.