National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

August 2021-August 2023 Data Documentation, Codebook, and Frequencies

Income (INQ_L)

Data File: INQ_L.xpt

First Published: September 2024

Last Revised: NA

Component Description

The income questionnaire (variable name prefix INQ) section provides family level information on monthly income and family cash assets. Information on family's annual income was also collected in this section and was released as part of the Demographics file (DEMO_L).

Eligible Sample

All participants were eligible.

Interview Setting and Mode of Administration

These questions were asked as part of the NHANES Family Questionnaire, by trained interviewers using the Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) system in the participant's home or by telephone. Hand cards showing response categories were used for some questions. One respondent in each family answered these questions.

The NHANES August 2021-August 2023 income questionnaires are available on the NHANES website.

Quality Assurance & Quality Control

The CAPI system is programmed with built-in consistency checks to reduce data entry errors and online help screens to assist interviewers in defining key terms. All of the data was reviewed by the NHANES field office staff for accuracy and completeness.

Data Processing and Editing

Frequency counts were checked, "skip" patterns were verified, and the plausibility of question responses was reviewed. Edits were made to some variables to ensure the completeness, consistency, and analytic usefulness of the data. Edits were also made to address data disclosure concerns.

INDFMMPI (Family monthly poverty level index)

The respondent was asked to report total family income, received last month in dollars, for themselves and the other members of their family. This variable is an index for the ratio of reported monthly income to poverty. The Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS)

poverty guidelines were used as the poverty measure to calculate this index. These guidelines are issued annually in the Federal Register, and are used to determine financial eligibility for certain federal programs, such as Head Start, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly Food Stamp Program), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the National School Lunch Program. The variable INDFMMPI was calculated by dividing family income by the poverty guidelines, specific to family size, as well as the appropriate year and state. Values at or above 5.00 were coded as 5.00 or more because of disclosure concerns. The values were not computed if the family income data was missing.

INDFMMPC (Family monthly poverty level index category)

For respondents who reported their family monthly income in dollar amounts, we calculated their family monthly poverty level index (INDFMMPI) as described above. The index was then grouped into three categories (i.e., INDFMMPI ≤ 1.30, 1.30 < INDFMMPI ≤ 1.85, INDFMMPI >1.85) and reported in this variable. These categories were chosen because they represented commonly used percentages of the poverty guidelines (i.e., 130 percent and 185 percent of the guidelines), by federal programs, in determining eligibility.

When the respondent refused to answer the family monthly income question or did not know the total combined family income, a monthly income screener question was asked (question INQ238) to query whether the monthly family income was below 185% of the HHS poverty guidelines. If the response was positive, a follow-up question (INQ241) was asked to see whether the family's monthly income was more or less than 130% of the HHS poverty guidelines. For these respondents, answers to INQ238 and INQ241 were used to derive variable INDFMMPC.

Analytic Notes

The income questions were asked as part of household interview, therefore, the interview sample weights may be used in the analysis for data in this section. However, if the data is joined with other data from the Mobile Examination Center (MEC), the MEC exam weights should be used for analyses.

Please refer to the NHANES Analytic Guidelines and the on-line NHANES Tutorial for further details on the use of sample weights and other analytic issues. Both of these are available on the NHANES website.

Disclosure risks and issues pertaining to confidentiality protection prevent NCHS from releasing all of the NHANES demographic or income variables publicly. Additional information and instructions for requesting use of these data are available through the NCHS RDC.

References

- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Poverty Guidelines, Research, and Measurement. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references

Codebook and Frequencies

SEQN - Respondent sequence number

Variable Name:	SEQN
SAS Label:	Respondent sequence number
English Text:	Respondent sequence number.
Target:	Both males and females 0 YEARS - 150 YEARS

INDFMMPI - Family monthly poverty level index

Variable Name: INDFMMPI

SAS Label: Family monthly poverty level index

English Text: Family monthly poverty level index, a ratio of monthly family income to the HHS poverty guidelines specific to family size.

Target: Both males and females 0 YEARS - 150 YEARS

Code or Value	Value Description	Count	Cumulative	Skip to Item
0 to 4.94	Range of Values	7419	7419	
5	Value greater than or equal to 5.00	1570	8989	
.	Missing	2944	11933	

INDFMMPC - Family monthly poverty level category

Variable Name: INDFMMPC

SAS Label: Family monthly poverty level category

English Text: Family monthly poverty level index categories.

Target: Both males and females 0 YEARS - 150 YEARS

Code or Value	Value Description	Count	Cumulative	Skip to Item
1	Monthly poverty level index <= 1.30	2996	2996	
2	1.30 < Monthly poverty level index <= 1.85	1539	4535	
3	Monthly poverty level index >1.85	5660	10195	
7	Refused	79	10274	
9	Don't know	190	10464	
.	Missing	1469	11933	

INQ300 - Family has savings more than $20,000

Variable Name:	INQ300
SAS Label:	Family has savings more than $20,000
English Text:	Do {you/NAMES OF OTHER FAMILY/you and NAMES OF FAMILY MEMBERS} have more than $5,000 in savings at this time? Please include money in your checking accounts.
English Instructions:	INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: INCLUDE CASH, SAVINGS OR CHECKING ACCOUNTS, STOCKS, BONDS, MUTUAL FUNDS, RETIREMENT FUNDS (SUCH AS PENSIONS, IRAS, 401KS, ETC), AND CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT. CAPI INSTRUCTION: DISPLAY "you" for single-person family; DISPLAY "the members of your family" for multi-persons family.
Target:	Both males and females 0 YEARS - 150 YEARS

Code or Value	Value Description	Count	Cumulative	Skip to Item
1	Yes	4424	4424	End of Section
2	No	5650	10074	
7	Refused	234	10308	End of Section
9	Don't know	160	10468	End of Section
.	Missing	1465	11933	

IND310 - Total savings/cash assets for the family

Variable Name:	IND310
SAS Label:	Total savings/cash assets for the family
English Text:	Total savings or cash assets at this time for {you/NAMES OF OTHER FAMILY/your family}.
English Instructions:	HAND CARD INQ3. ENTER LETTER.
Target:	Both males and females 0 YEARS - 150 YEARS

Code or Value	Value Description	Count	Cumulative	Skip to Item
1	Less than $3000	3950	3950	
2	$3001- $5000	579	4529	
3	$5001-$10000	485	5014	
4	$10001-$15000	338	5352	
5	$15001-$20000	167	5519	
77	Refused	61	5580	
99	Don't know	70	5650	
.	Missing	6283	11933	