

HEALTH AND RETIREMENT STUDY

1996 Exit (Final Release)

September 2003

Data Description and Usage

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1. Overview

The 1996 HRS Exit (Final, Version 1.0) data release includes data obtained as part of the Health and Retirement Study (HRS). Funding for the HRS was provided by the National Institute on Aging at NIH (U01 AGO9740), with supplemental support from the Social Security Administration. The HRS was conducted by the Institute for Social Research Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan.

The HRS survey was designed to follow a representative sample of persons born between 1931 and 1941, in order to provide data on the dynamics of economic, health, marital, and family transitions, and the impact of those transitions on economic resources, claims on structured programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and informal assistance and transfers to and from family members. The 1996 HRS Exit data were obtained by doing interviews with proxy respondents for respondents who were interviewed in 1992 and/or 1994, and died between 1992 and 1996.

By receiving the data files, you agree to use them for research and statistical purposes only and to make no effort to identify respondents. In addition, you agree to send the HRS a copy of any publications you produce based on the data. See Obtaining the Data (at the end of this document) for additional details.

1A. The Sample Interviewed in 1996

The HRS sample was first interviewed in 1992. The 1996 HRS sample consists of people born between 1931 and 1941 and their spouses or partners at the time of the initial interview (n=10964). The 1996 HRS Exit sample consists of everyone from the 1992 HRS and 1994 HRS who died in the interim between the interviews of 1992 and 1996 (n=234). Interviews were conducted with proxy reporters in November 1996 through June 1997. Proxy reporters were generally spouses, partners, or children of the deceased respondents.

1B. Topical Areas Included in the 1996 HRS Exit (Final, Version 1.0).

The 1996 HRS Exit data collection instrument or questionnaire contains the following sections.

Section PR	Preload
Section CS	Cover Screen
Section A	Demographics
Section B	Health
Section PC	Proxy Cognition
Section D	Family Structure and Transfers
Section E	Health Care Services and Costs
Section G	Employment
Section N	Estate
Section R	Insurance
Section MD	Modules

1C. Levels of Files

In the 1996 HRS Exit data collection instrument, the proxy respondent served as both the financial respondent and the family respondent. The 1996 HRS Exit data (Final, Version 1.0) contains files at five different levels: respondent, household-member-and-child, transfer-to-child, transfer-from child, and helper.

1C1. Respondent-Level Files

Respondent-level files contain questions that were asked of all proxy respondents on behalf of deceased respondents. Respondent level files contain one record for each respondent or Exit proxy who gave an interview in the 1996 HRS Exit.

1C2. Household-Member-and-Child-level Files

These files contain information about each household member, child of the deceased respondent, or child of the deceased respondent's spouse or partner. The files contain one record for each household member and/or child.

1C3. Transfer-to-Child/Grandchild-Level File

This file contains information about transfers of money to children or grandchildren. The file contains one record for each transfer to a child or grandchild.

1C4. Transfer-from-Child/Grandchild-Level File

This file contains information about transfers of money from children or grandchildren to respondents. The file contains one record for each transfer to a child or grandchild.

1C5. Helper-Level File

This file contains information about helpers other than the respondent's spouse or partner. A helper may be a person or organization that was reported by the proxy respondent as providing help to the deceased with ADLs or IADLs. If the helper is a child, the record contains information about the child and also about the child's spouse or partner, if any. The file contains one record for each helper or, if the helper is a married or partnered child, one record for the helping couple.

2. File Naming Conventions

In the 1996 HRS Exit (Final, Version 1.0), files are named beginning with "X96" for Exit 1996. The next one or two letters designate the questionnaire section ("X96CS"), and a separator ("_") followed by one or two letters indicates the level of each file. For example, x95cs_r refers to the 1996 HRS Exit Cover Screen file at the respondent level. The abbreviations for the file levels are as follows:

R	Respondent
MC	Household Member and Child

HP	Helper
TC	Transfer to Child/Grandchild
FC	Transfer from Child/Grandchild

The following extensions are used for the 1996 Exit Final release files:

.DA	data files
.SAS	SAS program statements
.SPS	SPSS program statements
.DO	Stata DO statements
.DCT	Stata dictionary statements
.TXT	codebook files

3. Data Files

The 1996 HRS Exit (Final, Version 1.0) data release contains 18 files. The files are listed below along with the name of the file, number of cases (N), and number of variables (NV). The 1996 HRS Exit data are provided in ASCII format, with fixed-length records. The records in the data files are sorted in order by the primary identifiers. You'll want to use associated SAS, SPSS, or Stata program statements to read the data into the analysis package of your choice.

Section	Description	File Name	N	NV
PR	Preload	x96pr_r	234	108
PR	Preload	x96pr_mc	976	16
CS	Cover Screen	x96cs_r	234	127
CS	Cover Screen	x96cs_mc	72	11
A	Demographics	x96a_r	234	59
B	Health Status	x96b_r	234	56
PC	Proxy Cognition	x96pc_r	234	69
D	Family Structure	x96d_r	234	30
D	Transfers to Kids	x96d_tc	9	16
D	Transfers from Kids	x96d_fc	2	16
E	Health Services	x96e_r	234	201
E	Helpers	x96e_hp	109	26
G	Employment and Earnings	x96g_r	234	66
N	Estate	x96n_r	234	313
R	Insurance	x96r_r	234	67
EV	Event History	x96ev_r	234	12
MD	Living Wills (Module)	x96md_r	234	77
T	Thumbnails and Timestamps	x96t_r	234	29

4. Identification Variables

Identification variables are stored in character format and are used to link files within and across waves of data.

4A. Primary identification variables include HHID, PSUBHH, PN and OPN.

The HHID, or Household Identifier, is six digits, and is stable across waves of data collection. The HHID uniquely identifies an original household and any household derived from the original household in subsequent waves of data collection.

The PSUBHH, or 1996 HRS Exit Sub-household Identifier, identifies households within a HHID at the time of the 1996 Exit interview. Sub-household identifiers can be different at each wave due to dissolution or reconstitution of a household (e.g., divorce, separation, marriage, or death). The PSUBHH ID in the 1996 HRS Exit data has a value of 3 or 4.

The PN, or Person Number, is three digits, and uniquely identifies a respondent within an original household (HHID). The PN does not change across waves.

The OPN, or Other Person Number, is used to identify household residents (not including the respondents), children, and helpers. OPNs are unique within a sub-household (PSUBHH in the 1996 Exit).

Additional information about ID variables can be found in the data description associated with the Tracker file and/or the 1996 HRS Core, Final Version 4.0.

4B. Secondary Identification Variables

Secondary identification variables include CSUBHH and PPN_SP. The secondary identification variables can be used to link the 1996 Exit data with Core data from HRS 1992 or HRS 1994, or to link a deceased respondent with data from their surviving spouse or partner (in 1992, 1994, or 1996).

5. Distribution Files and Directory Structure

5A. Distribution Files

The distribution files are packaged for download from our Web site in one large .ZIP file, X96EXIT.ZIP, which contains six smaller .ZIP files and this data description document, in .pdf and .txt format, X96DD.PDF and X96DD.TXT.

Data files

X96DA.ZIP data files.

Program statement files

X96SAS.ZIP SAS data descriptors.

X96SPS.ZIP SPSS data descriptors.

X96STA.ZIP Stata data descriptors.

Documentation files

X96CB.ZIP codebook.

X96SPC.ZIP Surveycraft programming specifications.

You'll typically want to un-zip at least the data files, one set of program statement files, and the codebook files. The codebook files are also available on our Web site in an HTML format which provides an index for each section. The 1996 HRS Exit data are stored in ASCII format, with fixed-length records. Use the associated SAS, SPSS, or Stata program statements to read the data into the analysis package of your choice.

5B. Directory Structure

While a particular setup is not required for using the 1996 HRS Exit files, if the following directory structure is used, then no changes to the path name in the data descriptor files is necessary. If you use a different structure, change the directory references in the distribution files.

Directory	Contents
c:\x1996	Files downloaded from HRS Web site
c:\x1996\codebook\	Unzipped files from x96cb.zip
c:\x1996\data\	Unzipped files from x96da.zip
c:\x1996\sas\	Unzipped files from x96sas.zip
c:\x1996\spss\	Unzipped files from x96sps.zip
c:\x1996\stata\	Unzipped files from x96sta.zip
c:\x1996\scraft\	Unzipped files from x96spc.zip

6. Program Statements

Each data file comes with associated SPSS, SAS, or Stata program statements to read the data. Files containing SPSS statements are named with an .SPS extension, those with SAS statements with a .SAS extension, and those with Stata statements with .DO and .DCT extensions. The statement files are named beginning with the same prefix as the corresponding data file. For example, SAS statements in the file X96A_R.SAS go with the X96A_R.DA data file.

6A. Using the Files with SAS

To build a SAS file for a particular dataset, two file types must be present for that dataset: SAS program statement files and .DA data files. To create a SAS system file, load the *.SAS file into the SAS Program Editor. If the *.SAS file is located in "c:\x1996\sas" and the data file is located in "c:\x1996\DATA", you can run the file as is. A SAS system file (*.SAS7BDAT or *.SD2) will be saved to directory "c:\x1996\sas". If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the *.SAS file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

6B. Using the Files with SPSS

To build an SPSS file for a particular dataset, two file types must be present for that dataset: .SPS program statement files and .DA data files. To create an SPSS system file, open the *.SPS file in SPSS as an SPSS Syntax File. If the *.SPS file is located in "c:\x1996\spss" and the data file is located in "c:\x1996\DATA", you can run the file as is. An SPSS system file (*.SAV) will be saved to directory "c:\x1996\spss". If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the *.SPS file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

6C. Using the Files with Stata.

To use Stata with a particular dataset, the following three file types must be present for the Stata dataset: .DCT files, .DO files, and .DA data files. Files with the suffix "DA" contain the raw data for Stata to read. Files with the suffix "DCT" are Stata dictionaries used to describe the data. Files with the suffix "DO" are short Stata programs ("do files") which you may use to read in the data. Load the .DO file into Stata and then submit it. If the *.DO and .DCT files are located in "c:\x1996\stata" and the data file is located in "c:\x1996\DATA", you can run the .DO file as is. If the files are not located in these directories, you must edit the *.DO and *.DCT files to reflect the proper path names before you run the files.

7. Documentation

7A. Masked Variables

In order to protect the confidentiality of respondents, a number of variables have been masked, or are not included in public release datasets. Some of these variables, in their original form, may be made available to analysts as restricted data. See the HRS Web site for details about gaining [access to restricted data](#). Respondent names, addresses, days of birth, information on geographical relocation, and similar variables are not included in publicly released files.

For public releases, geographical locations are recoded to a level no more detailed than U.S. Census Region and Division. Data on the highest educational degree earned and health conditions have been grouped. Industry and occupation codes have been recoded from the original three digit U.S. Census code into a limited number of categories.

The names of variables that were masked for confidentiality end in the letter "M". For example, variable "P658M" (State Born) is the masked version of variable "P658". The following masked variables are included in the 1996 HRS Exit data:

name	label
P36M	HH1 1ST ADDRESS STATE - MASKED
P39M	HH1 2ND ADDRESS STATE - MASKED
P227M	CS2dx.LOCATION - DIE - MASKED
P229M	CS2fx.LOCATION - CERTIFICATE - MASKED
P234M1M	CS2kx.CAUSE OF DEATH - MASKED
P234M2M	CS2kx.CAUSE OF DEATH - MASKED
P419M	CS25b.FACILITY WHERE LIVE - MASKED

P430M	CS33.CURRENT RESIDENCE – MASKED
P434M	CS35.OTH RESIDENCE CITY/STATE MASKED
P658M	A2a.STATE BORN – MASKED
P662M	A2b.COUNTRY BORN – MASKED
P670M	A3c.R HIGH DEGREE – MASKED
P683M1M	A7a.TYPE HISPANIC – MASKED
P683M2M	A7a.TYPE HISPANIC – MASKED
P685M	A8.R RACE – MASKED
P733M	A27.WHERE LIVE WHEN IN SCHOOL – MASKED
P751M	A36a.DENOMINATION – MASKED
P2009M	N72bx.STATE PROBATED – MASKED

7B. Changes in Data Resulting from Respondent Comments

Interviewers recorded comments made by respondents during the course of the interview. HRS staff reviewed these comments for selected questions. The coded answer was changed if it was determined that the comment changed the substance of the recorded answer.

Occasionally additional codes were added to an existing codeframe. The text of added codeframes appears in the codebook in upper and lower case. When a change was made as a result of the comment review process, inconsistencies with subsequent variables may result. A limited number of changes for consistency were made to immediately subsequent variables within the section. The INAP text in the codebook does not include codeframes added in the comment review process. No consistency changes were made to variables in other sections. If any comment change affected a subsequent branch-point, the branch-point was not changed.

Interviewers were able to record comments at any point within the 1996 HRS Exit online instrument. Therefore, some variables contain codeframes that may at first glance appear odd. For example, users will see “volunteered response” in addition to code categories such as “yes” and “no”. Usually the comments were recoded into a standard category (“yes” or “no”), but this was not always the case.

8. Obtaining the Data

8A. Registering and Downloading the Data

In order to obtain public release data, [you must register](#) at the HRS Web site and get a username and password. Your username and password are required to download data files.

8B. Conditions of Use

By registering, you agree to the Conditions of Use governing access to HRS public release data. We register users in order to document for our sponsors the size and diversity of our user community. Registered users receive user support, publication lists, and information related to errors in the data, future releases, and workshops. The information you provide will not be used for any commercial use, and will not be redistributed to third parties. For more information

concerning privacy issues and conditions of use, please read “Conditions of Use for Public Data Files” and “Privacy and Security Notice” at the Public File Download Area of the HRS Web site.

8C. Publications Based on Data

As part of the data registration process, you agree to inform HRS of your papers, publications, or presentations based on HRS data. Please send a copy of publications based on HRS data, with a bibliographical reference, if appropriate, to the following address:

Health and Retirement Study
Attn: Papers and Publications
The Institute for Social Research, Room 3050
P.O. Box 1248
Ann Arbor, MI (USA) 48106-1248

Alternately, you may contact us by e-mail at <mailto:hrequest@isr.umich.edu> with “Attn: Papers and Publications” in the subject line.

9. If You Need to Know More

This document is intended to serve as a brief outline and to provide an approach for using the 1996 HRS Exit (Final, Version 1.0) data. If you have questions or concerns that are not adequately covered here or on our Web site, or if you have any comments, please contact us. We will do our best to provide answers.

9A. HRS Internet Site

Health and Retirement Study public release data and additional information about the HRS studies are available through the Internet. To access the data and other relevant information, point your Web browser to the HRS Web site: <http://hrsonline.isr.umich.edu/>.

9B. Contact Information

If you need to contact us, you may do so by one of the methods listed below.

E-mail: hrequest@isr.umich.edu

Postal service:

Health and Retirement Study
The Institute for Social Research, Room 3050
The University of Michigan
P.O. Box 1248
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248

FAX: (734) 647-1186

10. Appendix

Many research efforts require analysis of variables that appear in separate files, either within a given dataset, or across two datasets. Below are examples of merging files within the 1996 Exit Final release, and merging the 1996 Exit data with the 1994 Core data.

10A. Respondent-level Merge using 1996 Exit data

To create a respondent-level file with data from two or more respondent-level files, merge the respondent-level files using HHID and PN. This is a one-to-one match. Each input file contains 775 records. A respondent-level output file with 775 respondent records results.

10A1. SAS Example of Respondent to Respondent Merge

```
libname in 'C:\x1996\sas\';
proc sort
data=in.x96a_r
out=x96a_r(keep=hhid pn p672 p673);
by hhid pn;
run;
proc sort
data=in.x96b_r
out=x96b_r(keep=hhid pn p800 p801);
by hhid pn;
run;
proc sort
data=in.x96pc_r
out=x96pc_r(keep=hhid pn p950 p951);
by hhid pn;
run;
data resp;
merge x96a_r x96b_r x96pc_r;
by hhid pn;
run;
```

10A2. Stata Example of Respondent to Respondent Merge

```
set prefix "x1996"
* This is an optional statement
* Make sure all the data files are in directory "x1996"
use HHID PN p800 p801 using x96b_r
sort HHID PN
save tmp1, replace
use HHID PN p950 p951 using x96pc_r
sort HHID PN
save tmp2, replace
use HHID PN p672 p673 using x96a_r
sort HHID PN
merge HHID PN using tmp1
drop _m
sort HHID PN
merge HHID PN using tmp2
drop _m
sort HHID PN
```

save resp, replace

10B. Cross-Wave Merge Examples

10B1. SAS: Merge 1994 HRS Core with 1996 HRS Exit Respondent Level File

```
libname x96dat " C:\x1996x\sas\";
libname a94dat " C:\hrs\wave2\sas\";

proc sort data=x96dat.x96a_r(keep=hhid pn p672)
          out=x96a;
          by hhid pn;
run;
data a94a(keep=hhid pn w49);
  set a94dat.W2A(rename=(hhid=hhidn pn=pnn));
  length hhid $6. pn $3.;
  hhidx=hhidn+1000000;
  pnx=pnn+1000;
  hhid=substr(left(hhidx),2); /* Generate Character IDs for the merge*/
  pn=substr(left(pnx),2);
proc sort;
  by hhid pn;
run;
data newdata;
  merge x96a(in=a) a94a(in=b);
  by hhid pn;
  /*"if a "or "if b" or "a and b" (based on users' need)*/
run;
```

10B. SPSS: Merge 1994 HRS Core with 1996 HRS Exit Respondent Level File

```
*change path of file to appropriate file name.

GET FILE "c:/temp/x96a_r.sav"
  /keep hhid pn p672.
SORT CASES BY hhid pn.
execute.
save outfile='C:/temp/x96a.sav'.

*change path of file to appropriate file name.
GET FILE "c:/temp/W2A.sav"
  /keep hhid pn w49.
*converting HRS 1994 ID Variables from Character to Numeric Format.

rename variables HHID = HHIDold.
rename variables PN = PNold.
string hhid (A6).
string pnc (A4).
string pn (A3).
compute hhid = string(hhidold,F6.2).
compute PNold = 1000+PNold.
compute pnc = string(pnold,F4.0).
```

```

compute pn = substr(pnc,2,3).
sort cases by hhid pn.
execute.
save outfile='C:/temp/a94a.sav'.

*change path of file to appropriate file name.
get file "C:/temp/a94a.sav"
    /drop hhidold pnold pnc.
save outfile ="C:/temp/a94a.sav".

*change path of file to appropriate file name.
MATCH FILES /FILE="C:/temp/x96a.sav"
    /IN=h
    /FILE='C:\temp\a94a.sav'
    /BY hhid pn.
select if h=1.
EXECUTE.

save outfile='c:/temp/newdata.sav'.

*change path of file to appropriate file name.
get file='c:/temp/newdata.sav'
    /drop h.
save outfile='c:/temp/newdata.sav'.

```

NOTE: Check to see if the ID variables in your files are stored in numeric or character. If they are character, then the steps in the above command that convert from numeric to character can be deleted.