

# Census 2000 Update--The Next Steps

In September, the Census Bureau released the final mail response rates for counties, cities and towns, townships and census tracts for Indiana. Since the end of April, Indiana's response rate improved from 67 percent to 69 percent, but still fell below its 1990 rate of 72 percent.

Among Indiana's counties, 52 counties matched Indiana's overall rate or exceeded it:

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Response Rate (%)	Counties
79	Dubois
78	Adams
77	Wells
76	Warrick, Whitley
75	Dekalb, Hamilton, Hancock, Porter, Posey
74	St. Joseph
73	Allen, Blackford, Decatur, Elkhart, Floyd, Huntington, Jay, Randolph, Spencer, Tipton, Vanderburgh, Wabash
72	Bartholomew, Benton, Franklin, Gibson, Howard, Montgomery, Perry, Tippecanoe
71	Daviess, Fayette, Henry, Jackson, Jasper, Johnson, Wayne
70	Boone, Clark, Dearborn, Harrison, Lake, Rush, Shelby, Vermillion
69	Delaware, Lagrange, Newton, Pike, Warren, Washington

What does the mail response rate tell us? It shows the proportion of forms returned of those mailed. Over the past summer, the Bureau deployed a series of non-response follow up programs geared to elicit response from the reluctant households in our communities. We do not know what the success of those programs has been, but the proof will show up in results to the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (ACE) survey conducted this summer to determine the extent of under or over counting.

It ain't over 'til it's over and as in baseball so it is with the decennial Census. But the work of the Census that was so visible to the public just a few short months ago is certainly over. No more door knocking, no more toll-free hotlines, and no more temporary jobs for many thousands of people.

The US Census Bureau is now working totally indoors tabulating the questionnaires. For the first time in its history, the Census Bureau is allowing independent State demographers to come into the Bureau to review the counts. Of course, legal oaths have been taken and these demographers are sworn

to secrecy. But every state that is participating (including Indiana) has a unique opportunity with this Census to have some potential feedback on whether the results look appropriate or not.

In Indiana, the Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC) at Indiana University is the State of Indiana's official representative to the Census Bureau for population issues.

### Where's the Data?

Many of our readers are interested in actual results from the Census. We will learn by the end of this year what the state total population figures are to be used in apportioning the number of representatives per state. By April 2001, Indiana will receive census data to be used in the actual drawing of congressional districts, as well as those for the General Assembly. By summer 2002, we will have the data most valued – education, commuting, income, poverty, household ownership and more. These pages will reflect the transition from collecting the data to publishing it.