The General Social Survey GSS

NORC at the University of Chicago

America's Research Project Since 1972

Updated: March 25th, 2025

Log of Suspected Issues under Investigation in the GSS Cumulative File, Panel Datafiles, and Data Explorer

Curation of GSS survey data is an ongoing activity, and we rely on the user community to help us report possible issues with the data. Users are encouraged to report potential data issues to gss@norc.org. Making the data available to the community in a timely manner is a foundational principle for our work. For example, the GSS team holds no data embargos.

The GSS team corrects suspected errors as soon as possible but we do not have the resources to send out a notification each time one is confirmed and corrected. Therefore, we plan to release updated data about twice a year (Spring and Fall). However, if you have a question about a specific question and you believe you may have discovered an error or want to check in on one you notified us about, please get in touch with us directly so we can discuss it.

Current known errors that are scheduled to be fixed in the cumulative datafile, panel datafiles, and single-year datafiles are listed below, along with notes about anticipated corrections for the data.

This list will be constantly updated. Once the issues have been addressed and updated data has been released, the item will be removed from this list, and corrections will be included in the Release Notes. Details on the actual updates will be provided in the GSS data documentation.

Exports using the GSSDE-generated .dat file

Years affected: All years

Datasets affected: GSS Data Explorer

GSS Data Explorer utilizes negative values to denote missing values (e.g., don't know, inapplicable), but many statistical software packages (e.g., SAS, Stata, SPSS) do not recognize these values as missing. Users may need to recode these negative values to missing, according to their chosen package's specifications, to exclude these cases from analysis.

In addition, the associated syntax files generated for Stata try to assign decimal values a label, even when the value is just a number. Stata does not allow decimal values to be assigned labels and the associated syntax will produce an error.

The GSS team is actively working to find a fix for these issues.

Expected release: Spring 2025

PRESTG105PLUS, SEI10EDUC, SEI10INC, SPPRES105PLUS, SPSEI10EDUC, SPSEI10INC, PAPRES105PLUS, PASEI10EDUC, PASEI10INC, MAPRES105PLUS, MASEI10EDUC, MASEI10INC, MAJOR1, RESPNUM

Years affected: 2021

Datasets affected: 1972-2022 Cumulative File, 2021 Individual Year File

A number of cases for each of these variables are denoted as .y "Not available in this year" when they should be .i "Not applicable."

Expected release: Spring 2025

HHTYPE

Years affected: 2021

Datasets affected: 1972-2022 Cumulative File, 2021 Individual Year File

The counts for categories 11 "2adlts,ntmar,rel,0kid" and 12 "2adlts,ntmar,rel,1+kid" are abnormally lower than other years.

The team is investigating if this is due to a programming error or if it may be related to the increased number of .n “No Answer” responses.

Expected release: Spring 2025

HOMPOP

Years affected: 2021

Datasets affected: 1972-2022 Cumulative File, 2021 Individual Year File

203 cases have a household size of 0 listed. The team is investigating if this is due to a programming error or if these cases should be coded as a reserve code (e.g., .n “No Answer”).

Expected release: Spring 2025

GENDER8-GENDER14, OLD8-OLD14, MAR6-MAR14, RELATE8-RELATE14, RELHH8-RELHH14, RELHHD8-RELHHD14, RELSP8-RELSP14, AWAY1-AWAY14, WHERE1-WHERE14

Years affected: Multiple

Datasets affected: GSS Data Explorer

Certain Household Composition items are shown as only being available on select ballots for select years. This error is due to small sample sizes on certain ballot-years for households, typically with a larger number of persons.

Expected release: Spring 2025

BIBLE, COURTS, DIVLAW, FEPOL, GRASS, POSTLIFE, PRAYER, RACOPEN, RELITEN, USWARY

Years affected: 2022

Datasets affected: GSS Data Explorer Key Trends

In 2022, an experiment was conducted to test a volunteered response option for web respondents. Due to the experiment, only responses from face-to-face and telephone interviews were used to estimate the Key Trends reported for the above variables (i.e., web interviews are excluded) as of November 26, 2024. At this time, we do recommend analyzing these variables with the standard GSS weights, as they are not designed to accommodate mode-specific subsamples of the data. For more details on the web volunteered response experiment, please see GSS Methodological Report #141. The team is working to develop recommendations on how to analyze items impacted by this experiment.

Expected release: Spring 2025

PAIDLV

Years affected: 2012, 2022

Datasets affected: 1972-2022 Cumulative File, 2012 & 2022 Individual Year Files, GSS Data Explorer

The current category labels for PAIDLV are an artifact of an older version of PAIDLV. In Release 1 of the 1972-2022 Cumulative File, GSS combined the variables PAIDLV and PAIDLV1 into a single variable to be more efficient. With this change, category 0 should have been labeled as “No, there should be no paid leave” with the remaining categories representing the number of months of paid leave they felt a new parent should get. Currently, category 2 is still listed consistent with the old version of PAIDLV (“No, there should be no paid leave”). The team is working to update these labels.

Expected release: Spring 2025

COJEW

Years affected: 2022

Datasets affected: GSS Data Explorer

There is no response label for category 5. It should be “Other.”

Expected release: Spring 2025

CHNGTME

Years affected: 2018

Datasets affected: 1972-2022 Cumulative File, 2018 Individual Year File

Data for this variable was never released for 2018. The team is working to make this data available.

Thanks to Dr. Reynolds (Purdue University) for bringing this issue to our attention.

Expected release: Spring 2025

CHNGTME, CHNGTIME

Years affected: 2022

Datasets affected: 1972-2022 Cumulative File, 2022 Individual Year File

The variable name for CHNGTME was changed in 2022 to CHNGTIME to be consistent with the variable name in the questionnaire. Given no changes in the question wording or response options were implemented in association with this change, the team intends to integrate CHNGTIME back into CHNGTME to increase ease of analysis of this variable over time.

Thanks to Dr. Reynolds (Purdue University) for bringing this issue to our attention.

Expected release: Spring 2025

AMERISPEAK ASIAN OVERSAMPLE

Years affected: 2022

Datasets affected: 2022 Individual Year File, 2022 Codebook, GSS Methodological Report 138

Previous documentation on the demographic oversamples conducted in the 2022 GSS using the AmeriSpeak panel described one of these oversampled groups as “Asian”; however, this was an oversample of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) population. The team is working to update relevant materials to include a better description as well as investigating any potential marginal impact on the weighting for the AmeriSpeak oversample (i.e., WTSSPS_AS, WTSSNRPS_AS) given both Asian and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander cases had a chance of selection for the AmeriSpeak sample.

Expected release: Spring 2025

VIGVERSN

Years affected: 1996, 2006, 2018

Datasets affected: 1972-2022 Cumulative File, 2018 Individual Year File

VIGVERSION has used multiple different frames over the four rounds of the GSS where it has been administered. 1996 and 2006 utilize the sequence found in the 1972-2018 codebook, while 2018 utilized an alternative sequence that grouped demographic characteristics rather than vignette topics. This alternative sequence was also used in the 2024 GSS. Both 2018 and 2024 will be standardized to the 1996/2006 VIGVERSN sequence.

Expected release: Spring 2025

NMBRKIDS

Years affected: 2022

Datasets affected: 1972-2022 Cumulative File, 2022 Individual Year File

An error exporting the “None” check box responses unexpectedly incorporated a value of 1 into the numeric field for this variable. The team is working on recovering the approximately 409 “None” responses.

Thanks to Dr. Whaley (Southern Illinois University) for bringing this issue to our attention.

Expected release: Spring 2025

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Call Us	Email Us	Visit Us Online
(888) 837-8988	GSS@NORC.org	http://gss.norc.org