

README FILE FOR "TRACKING THE PURPOSES OF GOVERNMENT"
Fiscal Years 1947-2006

GENERAL: This project tracks national government spending according to the purpose the spending was meant to serve. Its results are available on-line in the following three parts:

1. CHARTS: An Excel spreadsheet with charts of actual spending data for selected major purposes (functions) of the national government from fiscal year (FY) 1947 through FY 2006.

2. DATA: An Excel spreadsheet that consistently records 60 years of government outlays (expenditures) for all modern budget subfunctions. Subfunctions include purposes such as "Food and Nutrition Assistance", "Pollution Control and Abatement", and "Atomic Energy Defense Activities". The details are given both in current year (nominal) figures and in constant FY 2006 figures that have controlled the effects of inflation.

3. CODEBOOK: And an MSWord codebook that accomplishes three tasks. It describes each function and subfunction of the government and the analytical adjustments necessary to create comparable data series across the entire period). It explains the data sources used. And it explains both the budget terminology used by the national government and the analytical details of the project. The codebook is organized by function and may be searched for words relating to the research topic of interest to the reader.

MAJOR FUNCTIONS CHARTED IN THIS PROJECT

Government activities that have similar purposes and that address an important and continuing national need have been categorized as major functions. The accompanying spreadsheet provides charts for these functions:

- National Defense
- Natural Resources and Environment
- Transportation
- Agriculture
- General Science, Space, and Technology
- Development and Disaster Relief
- Education and Social Services
- Health & Medicare
- Welfare and Income Security
- Social Security
- General Government

These functions as well as the other government functions and all of their subfunctions are discussed in detail in the accompanying codebook, "Tracking the Purposes of Government". Some information on spending for homeland security can be found under *Homeland Security Spending* in Part III of the codebook.