



Introduction to the American Community Survey (ACS)

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Data Dissemination Branch



Presenter

"Numbers have an important story to tell.
They rely on you to give them a clear and convincing voice."

~ Stephen Few



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Outline

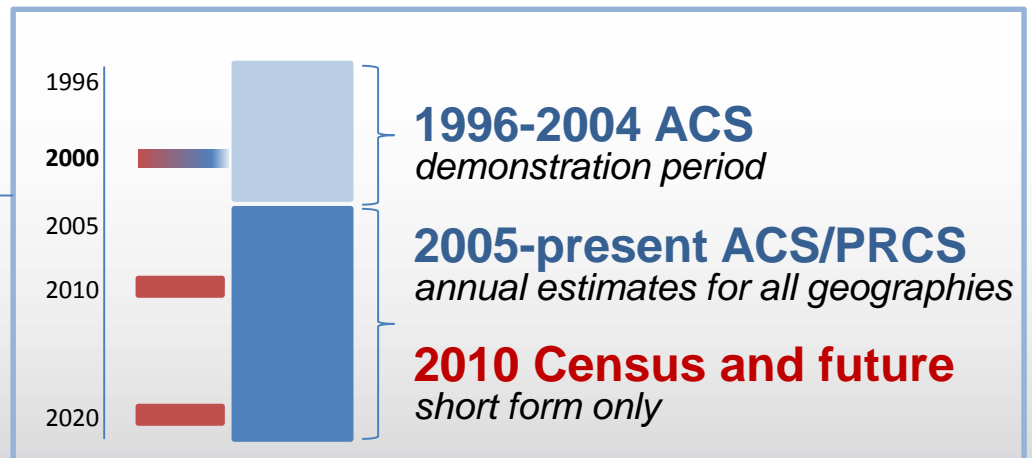
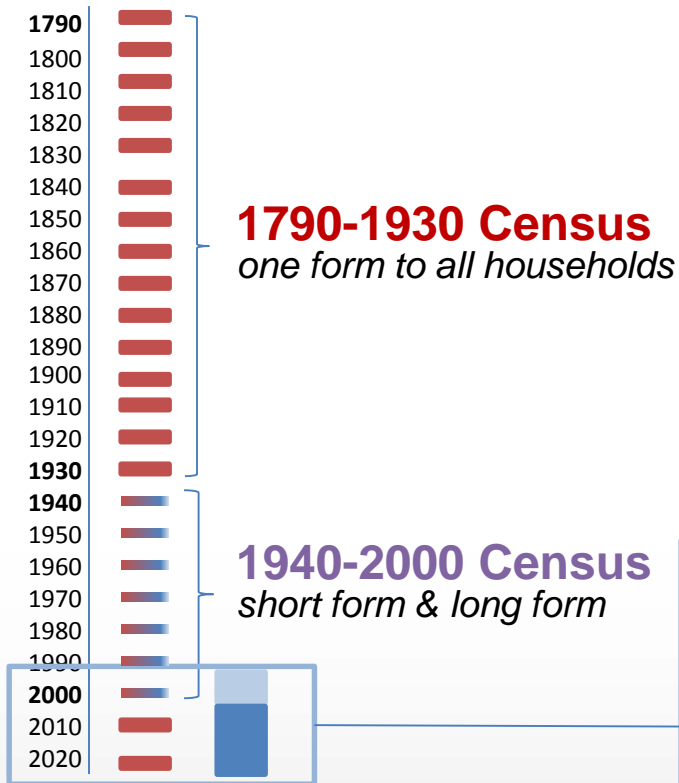
- American Community Survey (ACS) basics
- Resources for learning more
- Accessing ACS data products
- Stay in touch
- Questions/Exercises

ACS Basics

- Ongoing monthly survey sent to 3.5 million addresses per year to produce detailed population and housing estimates each year
 - Visit 20,000 Group Quarter facilities and sample approximately 194,000 residents each year
- Designed to produce *critical information on small areas and small population groups* previously collected on the decennial long form
- Covers 35+ topics and supports over 300 known Federal Government uses
- Data released twice annually
 - 1-year estimates (12 months of data)
 - 5-year estimates (60 months of data)

The image shows three overlapping documents. The top document is a 'Housing' questionnaire with questions about the type of dwelling, access to facilities, and household appliances. The middle document is a 'United States Census' form with a barcode and a 'Please Log In' section. The bottom document is a 'Welcome to the American Community Survey' page with instructions and a 'Please Log In' section.

Census & ACS



How is the ACS Different from a Census?

	ACS	2010 Census
<i>purpose</i>	Sample estimates	Official counts
<i>produces</i>	Population characteristics	Population totals
<i>new data every</i>	Year	10 years
<i>data reflect</i>	Period of time	Point in time

ACS Data Collection Process

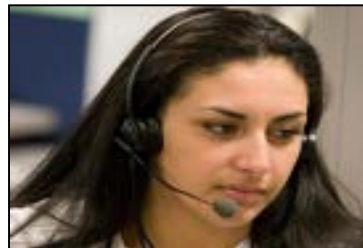
Online



Mail



Telephone



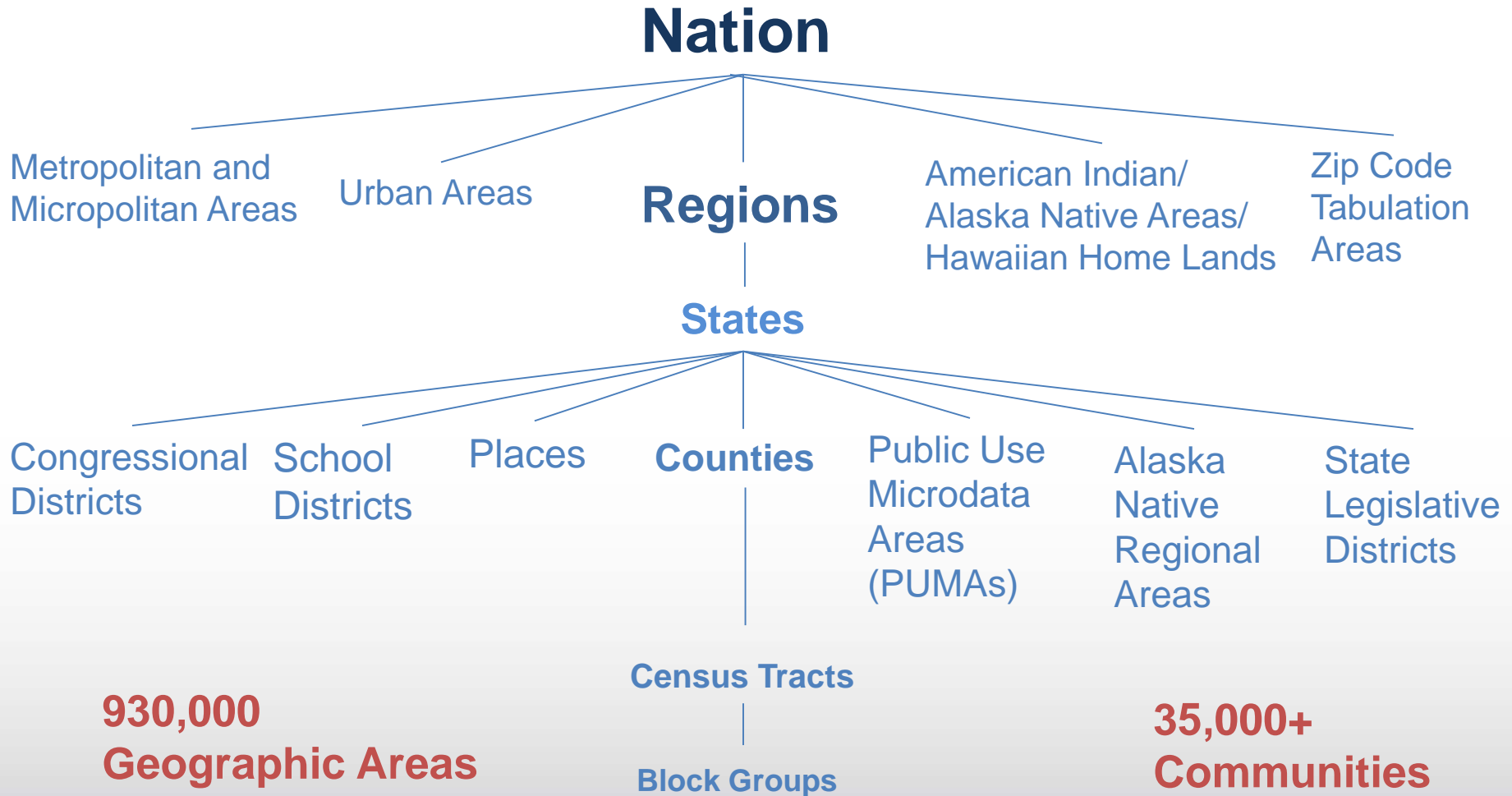
Personal Visit



Self-Response Modes

Non-Response Modes

Selected Census Geographic Concepts



ACS Content

Social

Ancestry
Citizenship
Disability
Educational Attainment
Fertility
Grandparents
Language
Marital Status
Migration
School Enrollment
Veterans

Demographic

Age
Hispanic Origin
Race
Relationship
Sex

Economic

Class of Worker
Commuting
Employment Status
Food Stamps (SNAP)
Health Insurance
Hours/Week,
Weeks/Year
Income
Industry & Occupation

Housing

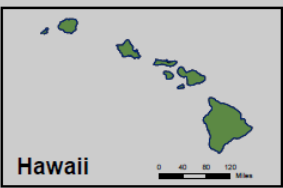
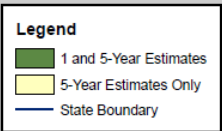
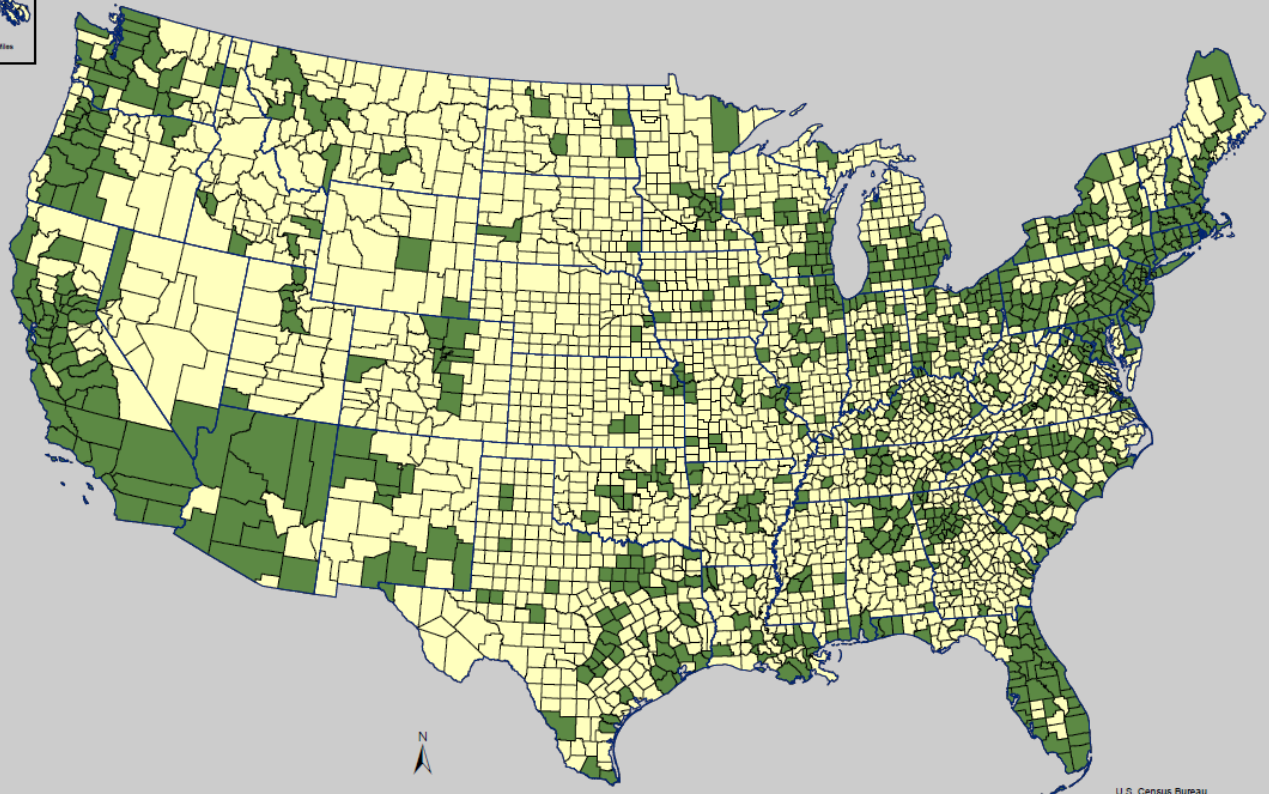
Computer & Internet Use
Costs (Mortgage, Taxes, Insurance)
Heating Fuel
Home Value
Occupancy
Plumbing/Kitchen Facilities
Structure
Tenure (Own/Rent)
Utilities
Vehicles
Year Built/ Year Moved In

35+ Topics → **1000+ Tables** → **11 Billion Estimates**

Availability of ACS Data Products

Estimated Population of Geographic Area	1-Year Estimates	5-Year Estimates
65,000 or more	X	X
Less than 65,000		X
Release Date	September	December

2014 ACS Estimate Type Availability by County



U.S. Census Bureau
American Community Survey Office
Geography Branch
August 2015

ACS Main Page



[Topics](#) Population, Economy [Geography](#) Maps, Geographic Data [Library](#) Infographics, Publications [Data](#) Tools, Developers [About the Bureau](#) Research, Surveys [Newsroom](#) News, Events, Blogs

American Community Survey (ACS)

- About the Survey
- Respond to the Survey
- News & Updates
- Data
- Guidance for Data Users
- Geography & ACS
- Technical Documentation
- Methodology
- Library
- Operations and Administration
- Contact Us

The American Community Survey helps local officials, community leaders and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities. It is the premier source for detailed information about the American people and workforce.



What is the ACS? How do I respond to the ACS? Where can I get ACS data?



Latest

[Data](#) [News](#) [Events](#) [Library](#)



Respond to the ACS. Learn how.

Data Tables & Tools

The ACS provides data tables including Comparison and Selected Population Profiles, and Subject, Detailed, Ranking, and Geographic Comparison Tables.

Summary File Data

The ACS Summary File is a set of comma-delimited text files that contain all of the detailed tables for the ACS.

census.gov/acs

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Receipt for Households: 2000–2013

American Community Survey Briefs

By Tracy A. Lovelless
Issued March 2015
acsbr13-16

INTRODUCTION

This report presents data on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) receipt at the national and state levels based on the annual American Community Survey (ACS) from 2000 to 2013. In addition, this report discusses the current SNAP receipt rates for metropolitan statistical areas with large populations. The ACS question about SNAP identifies households in which one or more current members received SNAP during the past 12 months. Data reflect households, not individuals, if any person living at the sample address at the time of the interview received SNAP in the past 12 months, then the household is included in the estimate of SNAP participation.

SNAP RECEIPT: 2012 TO 2013

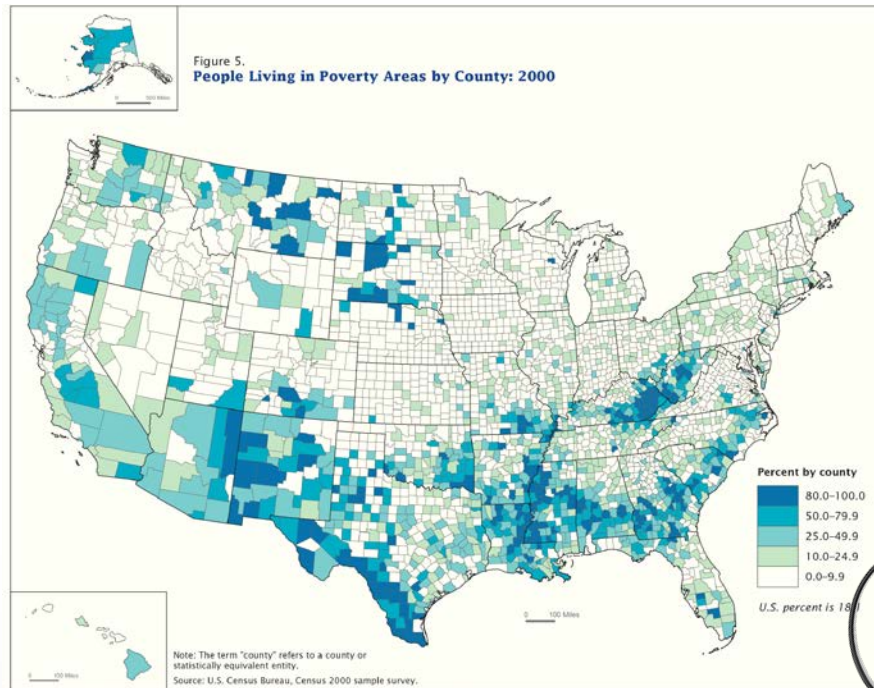
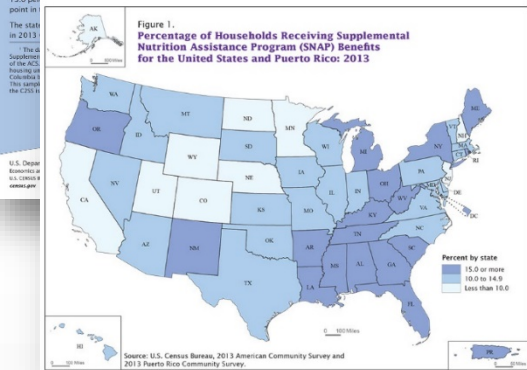
Table 1 shows that the number and percentage of American households receiving SNAP benefits in 2013 increased significantly from the previous year. In the 2013 ACS, 15.7 million households, or 13.5 percent of all households, received SNAP at some point in the previous 12 months. In 2012, 15.8 million households, or 13.6 percent of all households, received SNAP at some point in the previous 12 months.

(19.4 percent). There was not a statistically significant difference in participation rates between these states. The state with the lowest SNAP participation rate was Wyoming (5.9 percent).

SNAP participation was higher in 22 states and the District of Columbia than the national rate of 13.5 percent in the 2013 ACS. Many of these states were concentrated in the South (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia).

SNAP participation was lower in 22 states than the national rate of 13.5 percent in the 2013 ACS. Many of these states were concentrated in the Midwest (Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) and the West (Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming).

California, Illinois, and South Dakota were the only states to have significant increases in SNAP receipt between 2012 and 2013. These states had significant increases in SNAP receipt between 2012 and 2013.



ACS Data Briefs

Selected Ways to Access

- [QuickFacts](#)
- [Census Explorer](#)
- [OnTheMap for Emergency Management](#)
- [Census Business Builder](#)
- [Narrative Profiles](#)
- [American FactFinder](#)
- [Application Programming Interface \(API\)](#)

Census Explorer



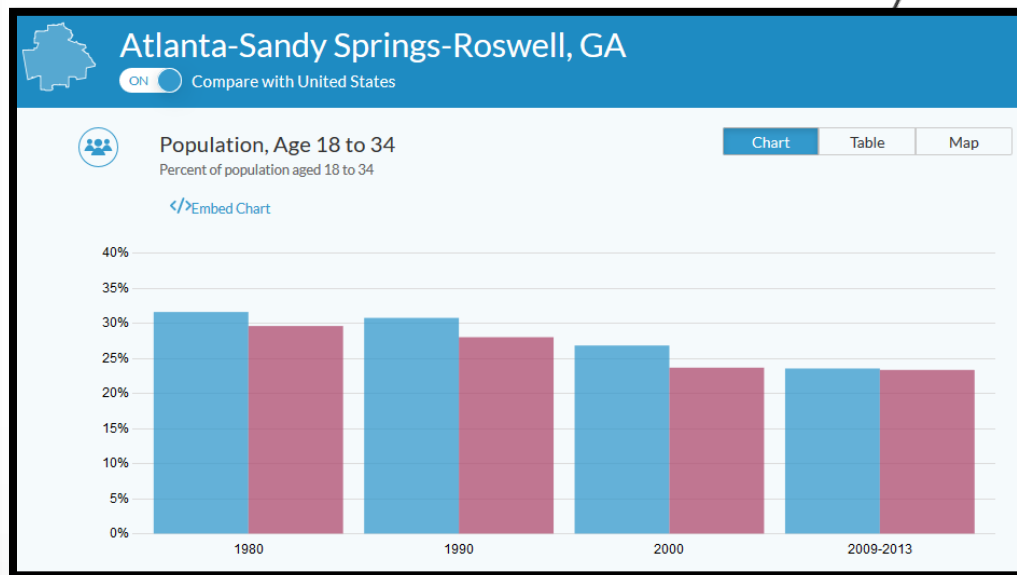
United States
Census

Compare Young Adults Across the Decades with Census Explorer

- Population Age 18 to 34
- Median Earnings for Full Time Workers, Age 18 to 34
- Living With a Parent, Age 18 to 34
- Living in Poverty, Age 18 to 34
- Never Married, Age 18 to 34
- Bachelor's Degree, Age 18 to 34
- White, Non-Hispanic, Age 18 to 34
- Minority, Age 18 to 34
- Foreign Born, Age 18 to 34
- Drove Car, Truck, Van or Carpoled to work, Age 18 to 34
- Language Other than English Spoken at Home, Age 18 to 34
- Veterans, Age 18 to 34
- Employed Population, Age 18 to 34
- Living Alone, Age 18 to 34

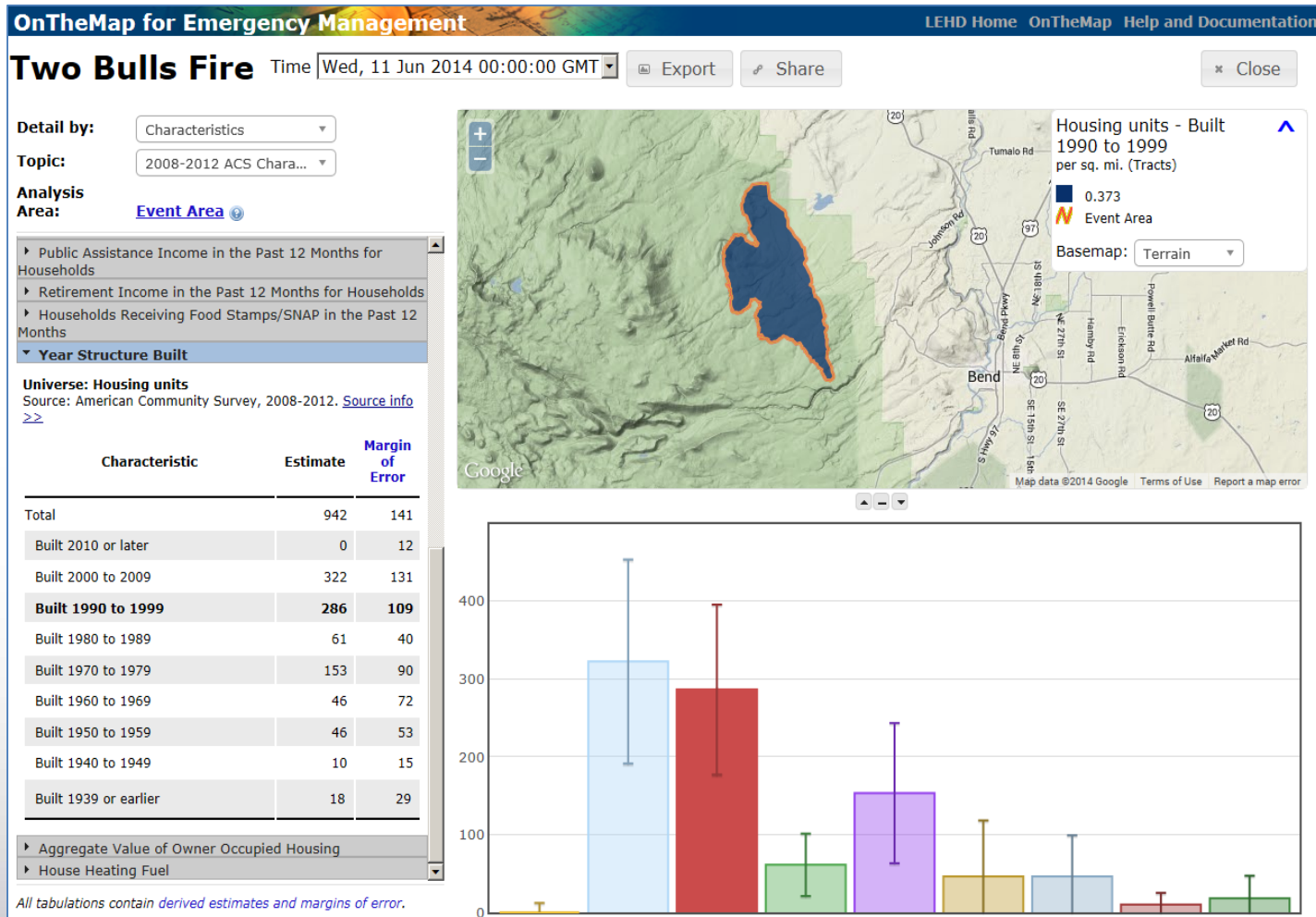
Young Adults Then And Now
<http://www.census.gov/censusexplorer>

Source: American Community Survey, 2009-2013



More Census Explorer Editions

OnTheMap for Emergency Management



onthemap.ces.census.gov/em

Data Product Types

Profiles

- Data Profiles (DP)
- Narrative Profiles (NP)
- Comparison Profiles (CP)
- Selected Population Profiles (S0201)

Tables

- Detailed Tables (B or C)
- Subject Tables (S)
- Ranking Tables (R)
- Geographic Comparison Tables (GCT)

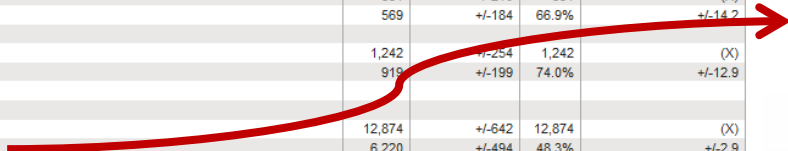
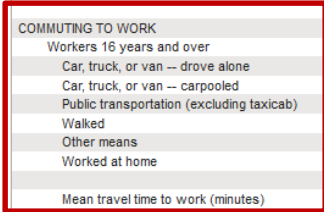
Table/Profile Numbering

B 06004A PR

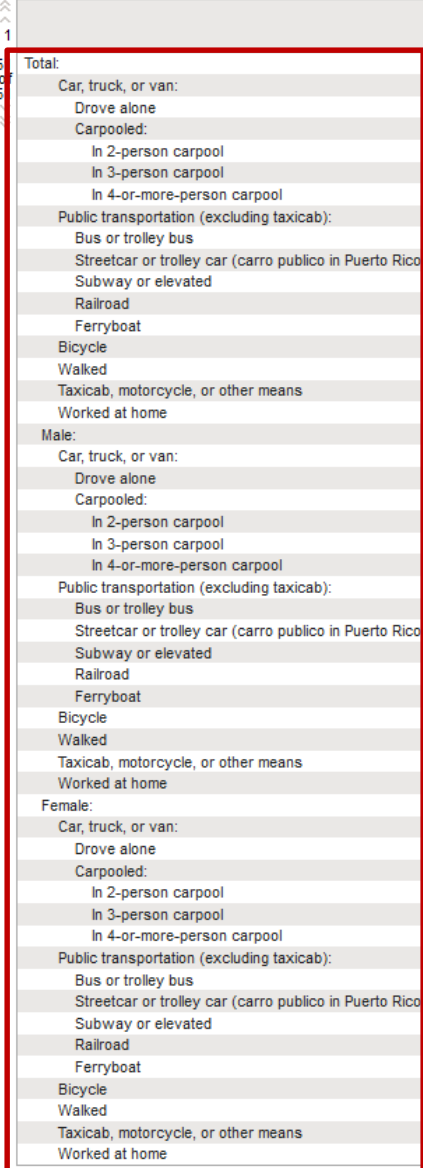
- B=Data Product Type (Base Table)
- 06=Subject (Place of Birth)
- 004=Sequential Number (2 or 3 digits)
- A=Race/Hispanic Origin (White Alone)
- PR=For Puerto Rico Geographies Only

Data Profile vs Detailed Table

Subject	College Park city, Maryland			
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percent	Percent Margin of Error
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Population 16 years and over	28,690	+/-368	28,690	(X)
In labor force	14,997	+/-559	52.3%	+/-1.9
Civilian labor force	14,938	+/-557	52.1%	+/-1.9
Employed	13,243	+/-619	46.2%	+/-2.1
Unemployed	1,695	+/-313	5.9%	+/-1.1
Armed Forces	59	+/-47	0.2%	+/-0.2
Not in labor force	13,693	+/-601	47.7%	+/-1.9
Civilian labor force	14,938	+/-557	14,938	(X)
Percent Unemployed	(X)	(X)	11.3%	+/-2.1
Females 16 years and over	13,697	+/-462	13,697	(X)
In labor force	6,982	+/-400	51.0%	+/-2.7
Civilian labor force	6,971	+/-401	50.9%	+/-2.7
Employed	6,429	+/-429	46.9%	+/-3.0
Own children under 6 years	851	+/-210	851	(X)
All parents in family in labor force	569	+/-184	66.9%	+/-14.2
Own children 6 to 17 years	1,242	+/-254	1,242	(X)
All parents in family in labor force	919	+/-199	74.0%	+/-12.9
COMMUTING TO WORK				
Workers 16 years and over	12,874	+/-642	12,874	(X)
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	6,220	+/-494	48.3%	+/-2.9
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	1,162	+/-277	9.0%	+/-2.2
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	1,686	+/-306	13.1%	+/-2.2
Walked	2,670	+/-304	20.7%	+/-2.2
Other means	433	+/-138	3.4%	+/-1.0
Worked at home	703	+/-210	5.5%	+/-1.6
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	26.7	+/-1.3	(X)	(X)
OCCUPATION				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	13,243	+/-619	13,243	(X)
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	6,203	+/-536	46.8%	+/-3.5
Service occupations	2,456	+/-382	18.5%	+/-2.6
Sales and office occupations	3,309	+/-373	25.0%	+/-2.7
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	709	+/-201	5.4%	+/-1.5
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	566	+/-126	4.3%	+/-0.9
INDUSTRY				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	13,243	+/-619	13,243	(X)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	6	+/-9	0.0%	+/-0.1
Construction	502	+/-172	3.8%	+/-1.3



	College Park city, Maryland	
	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total:	12,874	+/-642
Car, truck, or van:	7,382	+/-525
Drove alone	6,220	+/-494
Carpooled:	1,162	+/-277
In 2-person carpool	973	+/-235
In 3-person carpool	77	+/-56
In 4-or-more-person carpool	112	+/-93
Public transportation (excluding taxicab):	1,686	+/-306
Bus or trolley bus	596	+/-174
Streetcar or trolley car (carro publico in Puerto Rico)	0	+/-26
Subway or elevated	935	+/-201
Railroad	155	+/-89
Ferryboat	0	+/-26
Bicycle	350	+/-123
Walked	2,670	+/-304
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	83	+/-59
Worked at home	703	+/-210
Male:	6,548	+/-460
Car, truck, or van:	3,699	+/-387
Drove alone	3,134	+/-377
Carpooled:	565	+/-166
In 2-person carpool	461	+/-143
In 3-person carpool	49	+/-43
In 4-or-more-person carpool	55	+/-51
Public transportation (excluding taxicab):	1,050	+/-238
Bus or trolley bus	362	+/-140
Streetcar or trolley car (carro publico in Puerto Rico)	0	+/-26
Subway or elevated	576	+/-151
Railroad	112	+/-81
Ferryboat	0	+/-26
Bicycle	229	+/-93
Walked	1,163	+/-191
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	59	+/-49
Worked at home	348	+/-168
Female:	6,326	+/-439
Car, truck, or van:	3,683	+/-409
Drove alone	3,086	+/-380
Carpooled:	597	+/-171
In 2-person carpool	512	+/-147
In 3-person carpool	28	+/-37
In 4-or-more-person carpool	57	+/-55
Public transportation (excluding taxicab):	636	+/-154
Bus or trolley bus	234	+/-104
Streetcar or trolley car (carro publico in Puerto Rico)	0	+/-26
Subway or elevated	359	+/-103
Railroad	43	+/-44
Ferryboat	0	+/-26
Bicycle	121	+/-69
Walked	1,507	+/-208
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	24	+/-29
Worked at home	355	+/-99



Application Programming Interface (API)

Developers

[API Forum](#)

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The Census Bureau has begun rolling out our datasets via APIs. Check out our [Discovery Tool](#). Sign up for our [newsletter](#) to get the latest updates and newest dataset addition. We also invite you to make requests for features / data via our forum.

[Read More](#)

CITY SDK



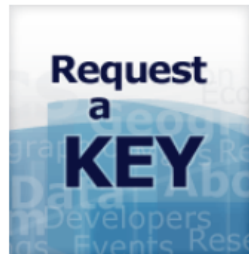
NEW: JavaScript Toolkit!



Developers' Forum



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Latest

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Annual Survey of Manufactures

August 18, 2015

Sample estimates of statistics for all manufacturing establishments with one or more paid employee.

census.gov/developers

Source Us!

U.S. Census Bureau's [YYYY-YYYY] American Community Survey [1/3/5]-year [estimates/statistics/data release]



College Destinations: How We Rank Them
American Institute for Economic Research - Apr 7, 2014
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2011
American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B01003;
using ...



NMSU Valencia County Extension providing youth develo...
New Mexico State University NewsCenter - Apr 14, 2015
... Mexico and \$53,046 for the United States, according to the U.S.
Census Bureau's 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year
Estimate.



Census Estimates Show Progress Toward ACA Coverag...
Health Affairs (blog) - Sep 28, 2015
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 and 2014 American
Community Survey 1-year estimates from Table S2701 in American
Fact Finder.

Continue the Conversation

#ACSdata



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youtube.com/user/uscensusbureau



instagram.com/uscensusbureau



pinterest.com/uscensusbureau

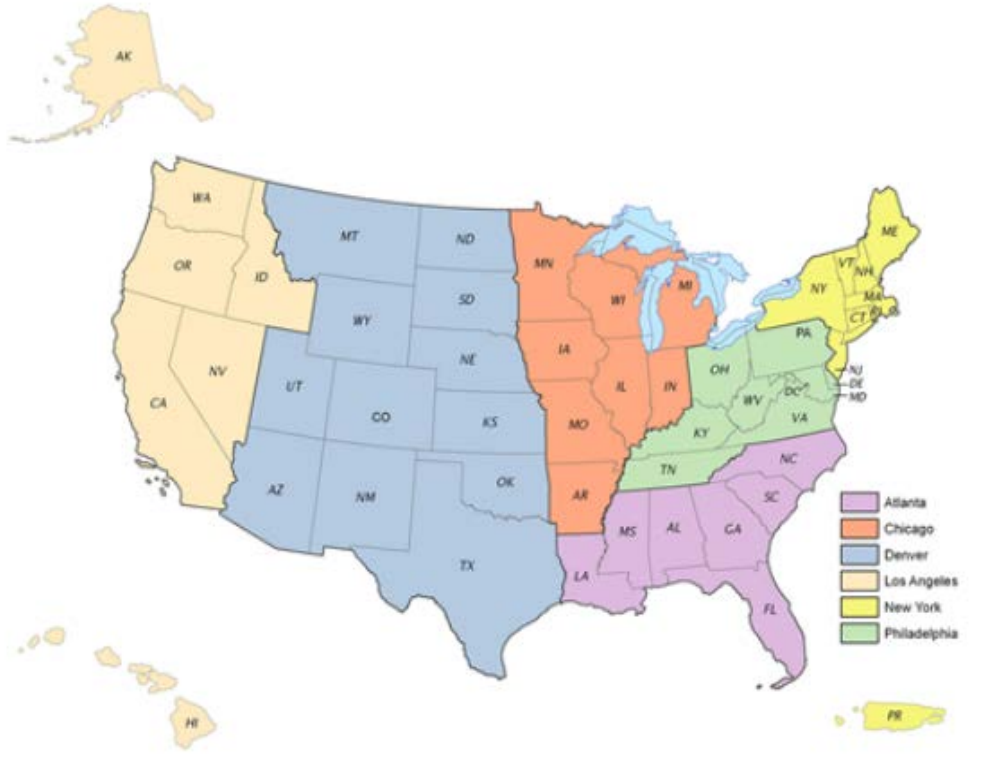


AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY DATA USERS GROUP

- Purpose:
 - Improve understanding of the value and utility of ACS data.
 - Promote information sharing among data users about key ACS data issues and applications
- Membership is free and open to all interested ACS data users
- Webinars and special sessions at professional meetings planned
- Users group website and online community

<http://www.acsdatausers.org/>

Need Local Stats?



Assistance Near You!

Our data staff can help you access local statistics from the ACS or offer training to help build your skills.

Contact us at the following address: pio@census.gov

Questions?

“ Data are just summaries of thousands of stories – tell a few of those stories to help make the data meaningful.

— Chip & Dan Heath, Authors of Made to Stick, Switch

“ A point of view can be a dangerous luxury when substituted for insight and understanding.

— Marshall McLuhan, Canadian Communications Professor

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