

Household Race and Ethnicity

Land Use Technical Advisory Committee Meeting – January 20, 2026



Puget Sound Regional Council



We are leaders in the region to realize equity for all. Diversity, racial equity and inclusion are integrated into how we carry out all our work.

psrc.org/equity

Overview

- Context
- Data Exploration
- Preliminary Findings
- Next Steps
- Discussion



Data about Individuals and Households

Socio-demographic data is often collected at the **individual** (e.g., age, race/ethnicity) and **household** (e.g., income, housing tenure) levels

An important source is the US Census Bureau, which conducts the Decennial Census and the **American Community Survey (ACS)**



Describing Households with Individual-level Data



Sometimes it is useful to describe **households** by the characteristics of their **individual** members

For example, categorize **households** by age or by race/ethnicity

The Census Bureau does this by applying **individual** characteristics of the *householder* to the **household**



The Census Bureau Definition of Householder

The Census Bureau defines a “householder” as:

- The person, or one of the people, in whose name the home is owned, being bought, or rented
- If there is no such person present, any household member 15 years old and over



Limitations with the Householder Method



Householder method does not recognize households co-led by multiple adults

For race/ethnicity, it does not consider the identities of other household members and does not recognize multirace households (350,000 in our region)

These limitations motivated PSRC to explore other methods



Data Exploration

Using 2023 5-Year ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), we compare three household categorization methods:

- **PRACE**: Race of the householder (Census Bureau approach)
- **ARACE**: Race of all adults in household ([Harvard JCHS approach](#))
- **HRACE**: Race of all household members



Recognizing Multirace Households



All Multirace Households

Multirace incl. Asian
Multirace incl. Asian & white
Multirace incl. white
Multirace not incl. Asian or white

To better understand nuances within multirace households, **we created additional breakouts for ARACE and HRACE methods**

The detailed breakouts may help **reveal differences due to income and other characteristics**, while keeping data sample sizes large enough for statistical analyses

NOTE: Individuals that identify as two or more races are included as a multirace household for our analysis. The Harvard JCHS approach defines these households as single race.



A photograph of a traditional Chinese lion dance performance. In the foreground, a large, ornate lion head with a red and orange fur mane and a colorful, patterned body is visible. A young girl in a purple puffer jacket is reaching out towards the lion. In the background, a diverse crowd of people, including men, women, and children, are watching the performance. Some are taking photos with their smartphones. The scene is set outdoors on a city street with buildings in the background.

Metric 1: Household Count

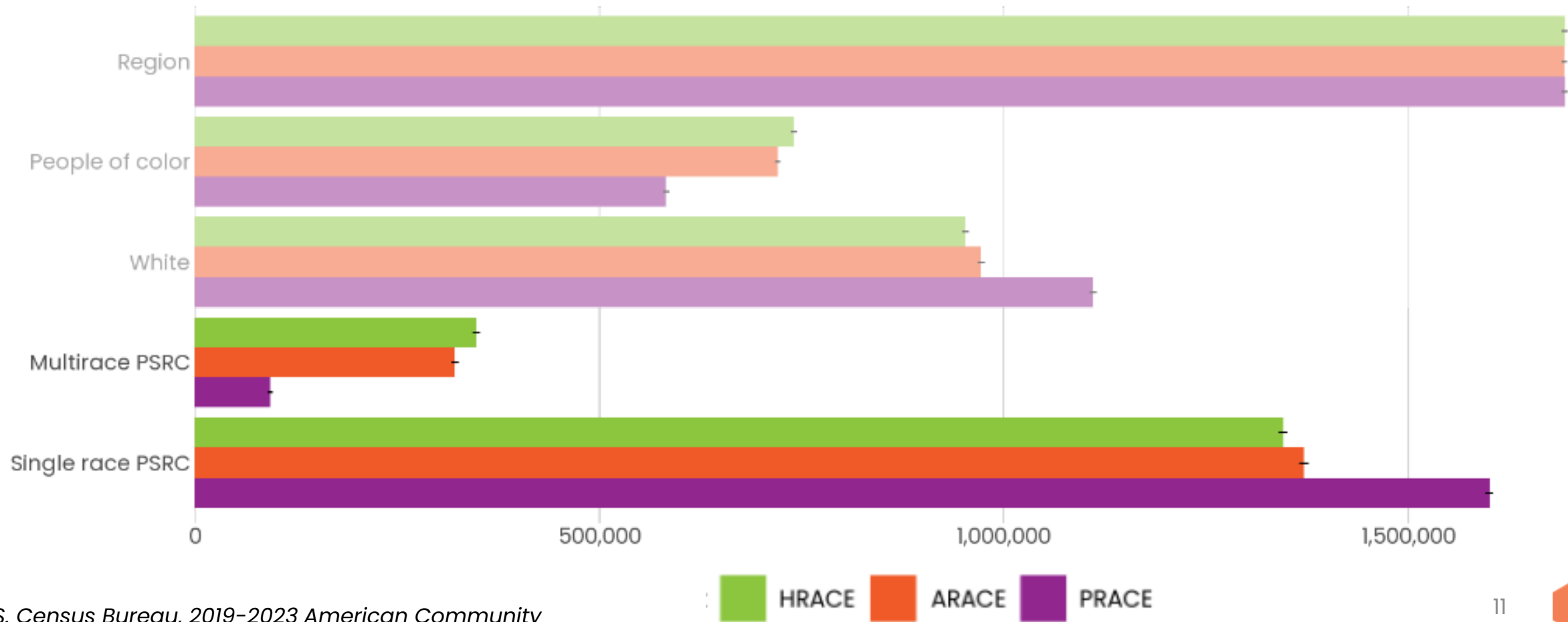
Household Count – Summary Categories

Household counts shift depending on the categorization method applied



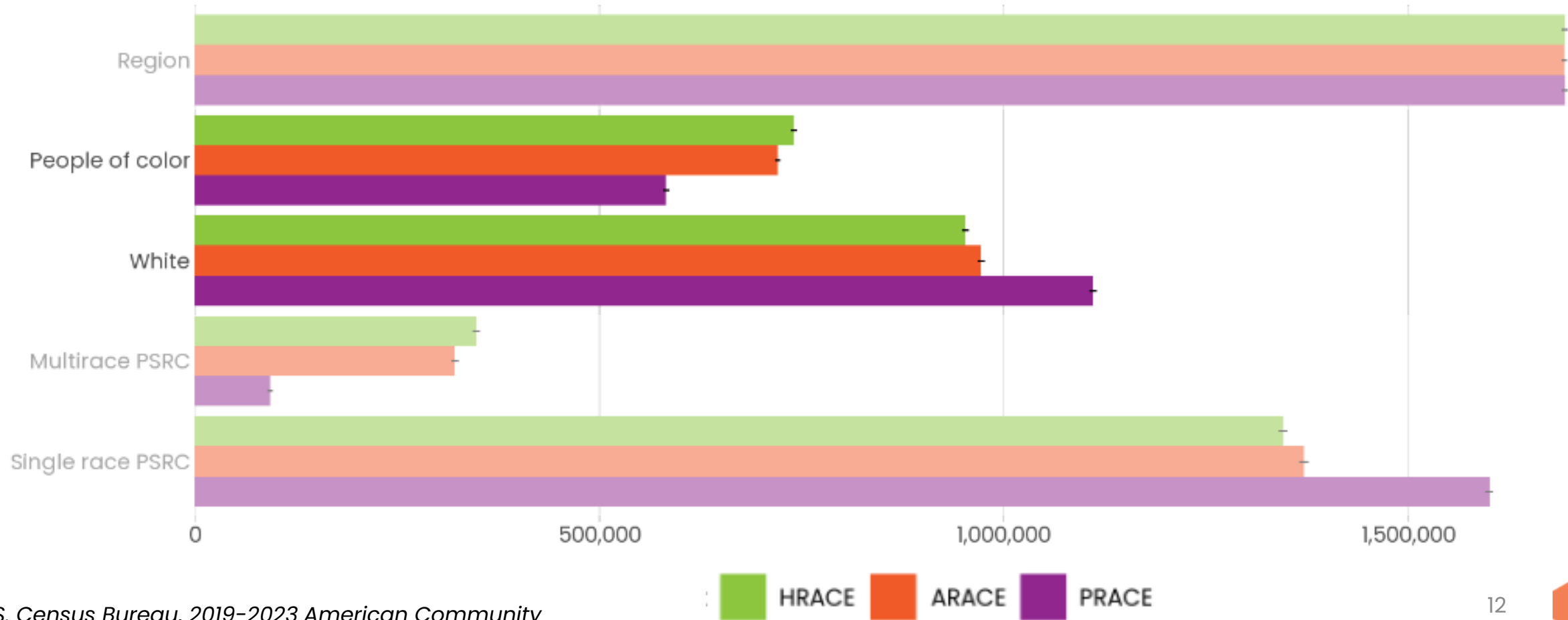
Household Count – Summary Categories

HRACE and **ARACE** methods identify significantly more multirace households than **PRACE**



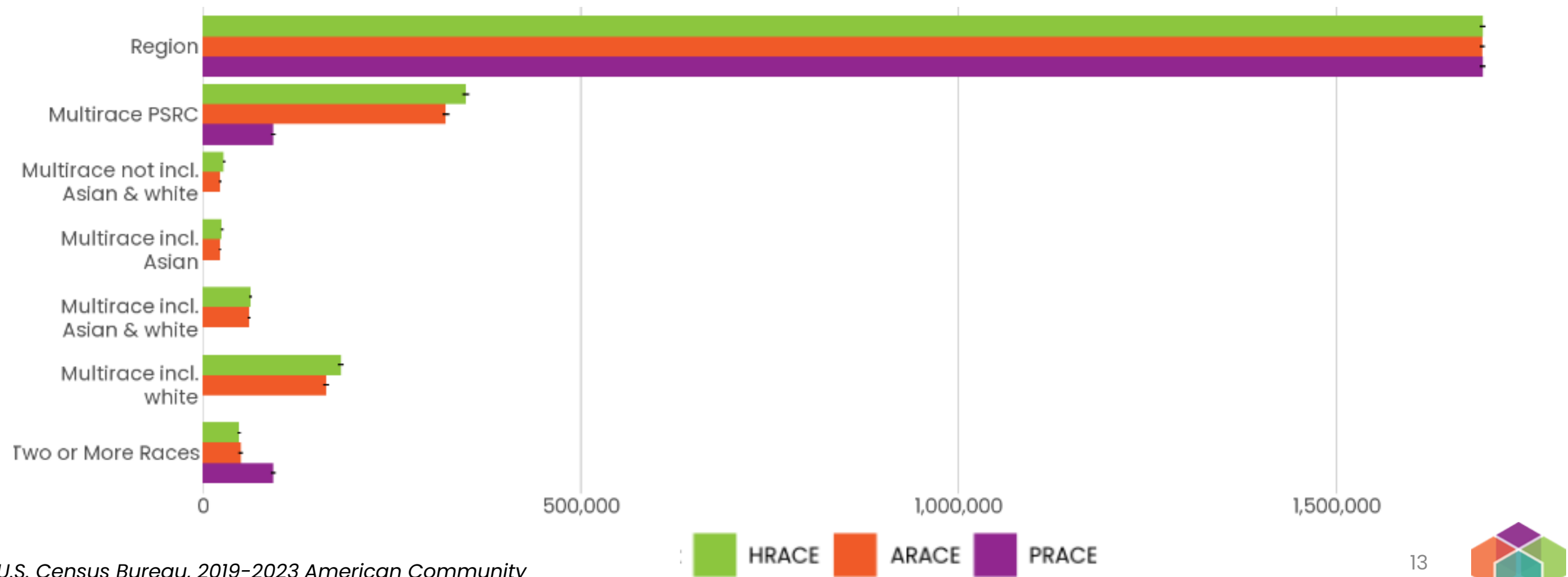
Household Count – Summary Categories

HRACE and **ARACE** methods identify ~140,000 more households of color than the **PRACE** method



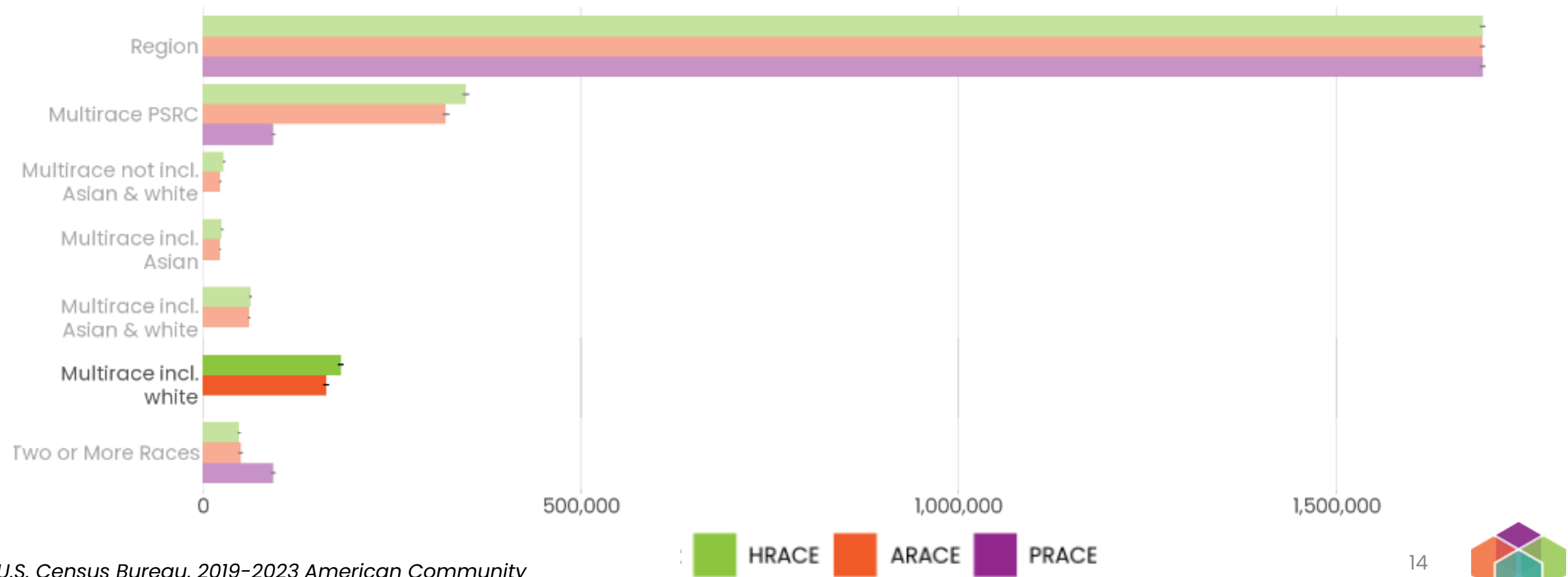
Household Count – Multirace

Over 228,000 additional households are identified as multirace via **HRACE** and **ARACE** methods



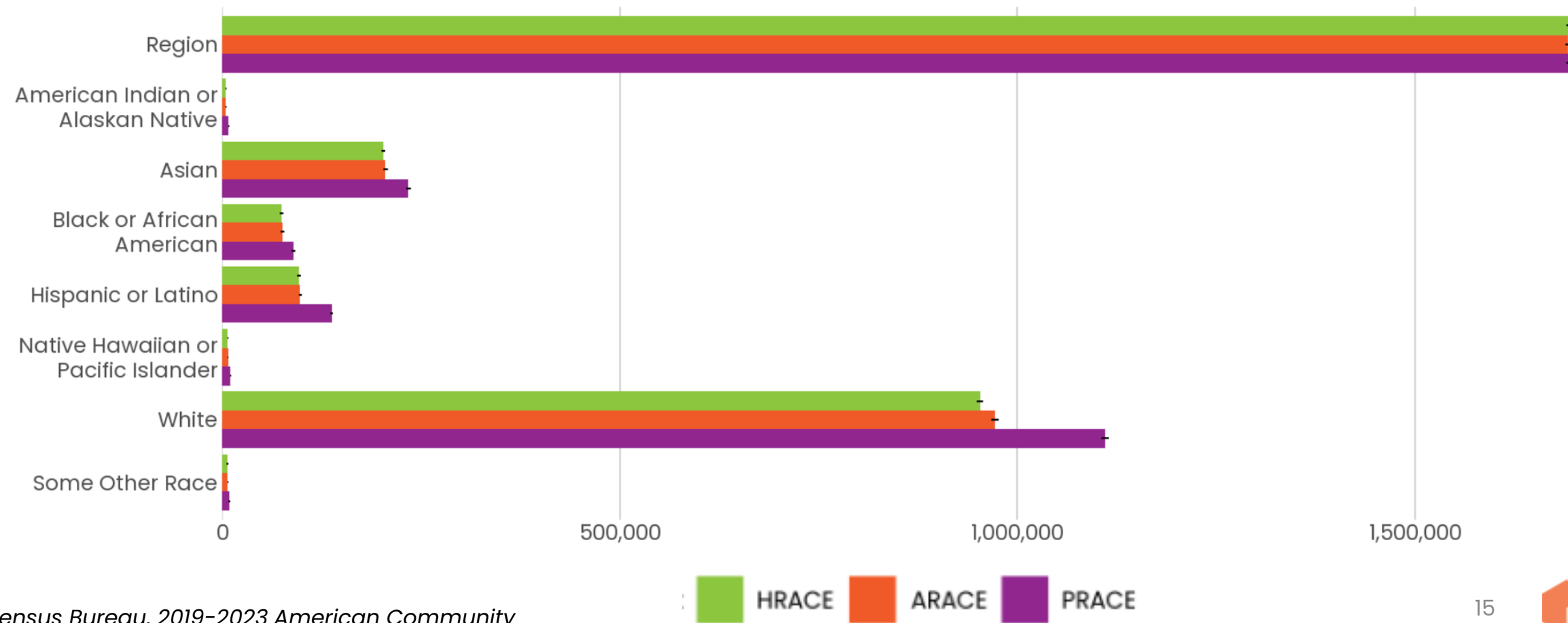
Household Count – Multirace

Over 50% of multirace households include at least one white member



Household Count – Single Race

Households recognized as multirace by **HRACE** and **ARACE** methods are retained in single race categories under **PRACE**

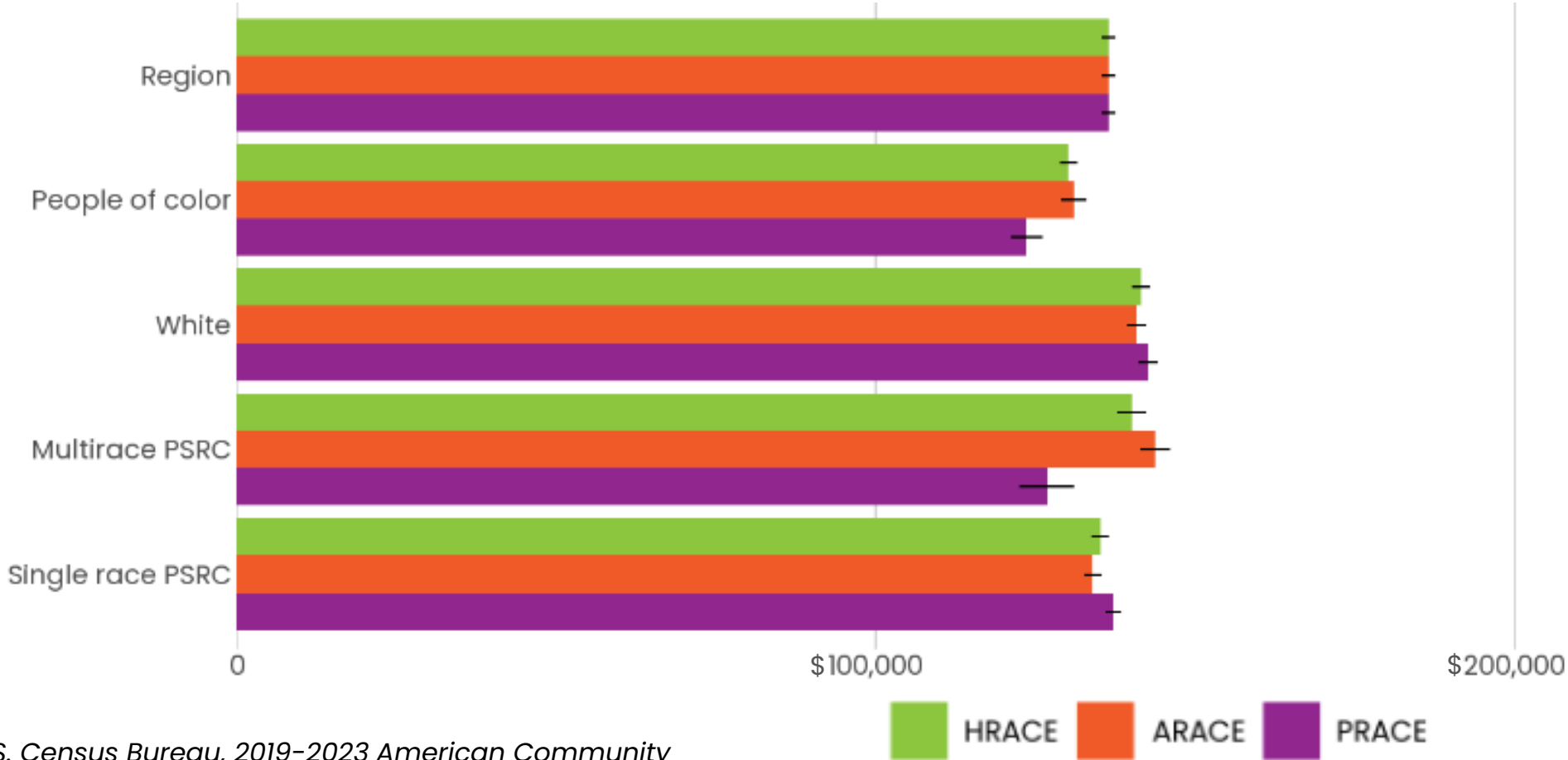


A photograph of a ferry deck. In the foreground, there's a green metal railing. A black dog is standing on the deck. Several people are walking or sitting on green benches. In the background, there's a body of water and mountains under a clear blue sky. A semi-transparent white box with black text is overlaid in the center.

Metric 2: Median Household Income

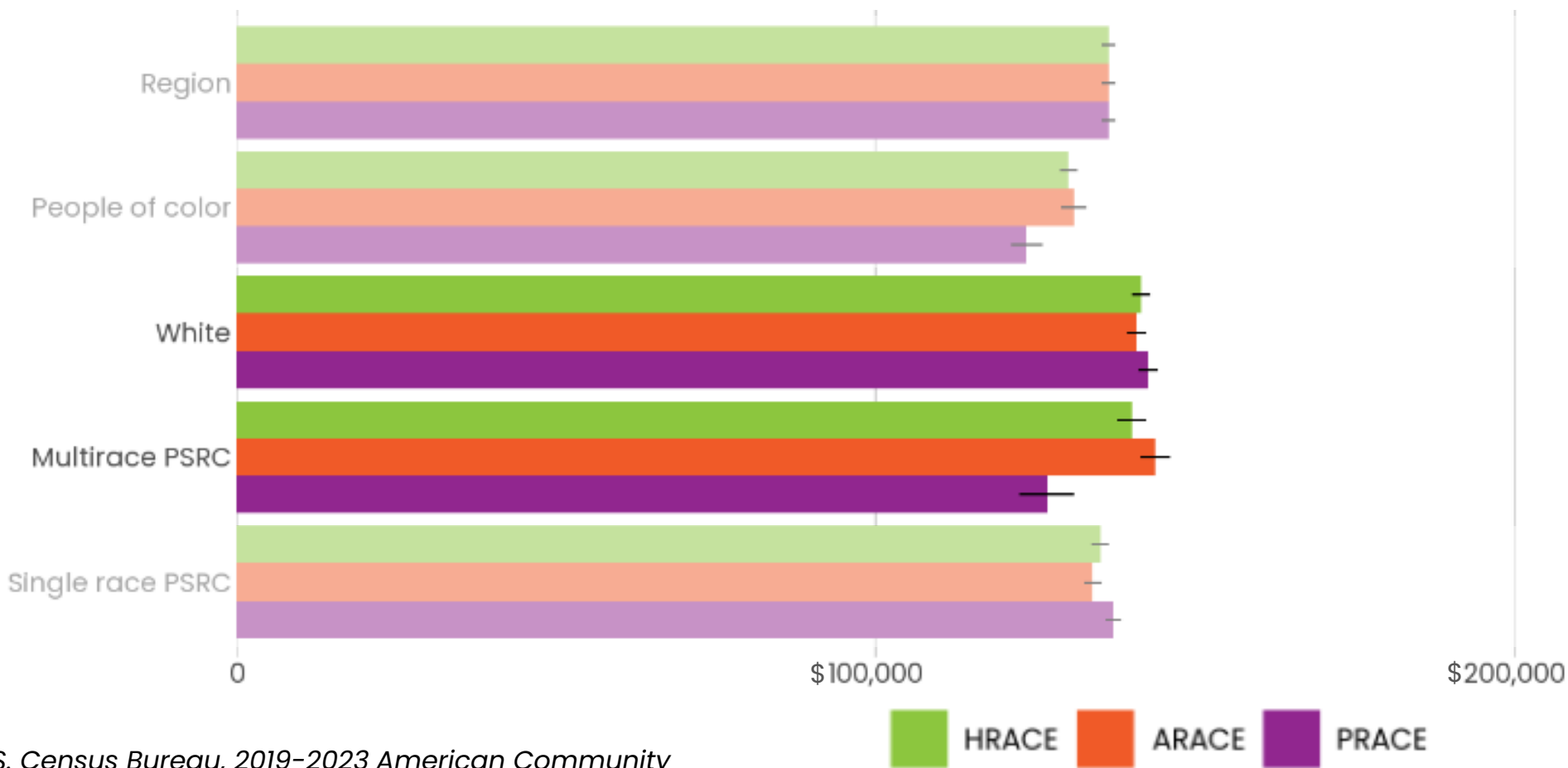
Median Household Income – Summary Categories

For median household income, we focus our analysis on multiperson households to facilitate direct comparisons



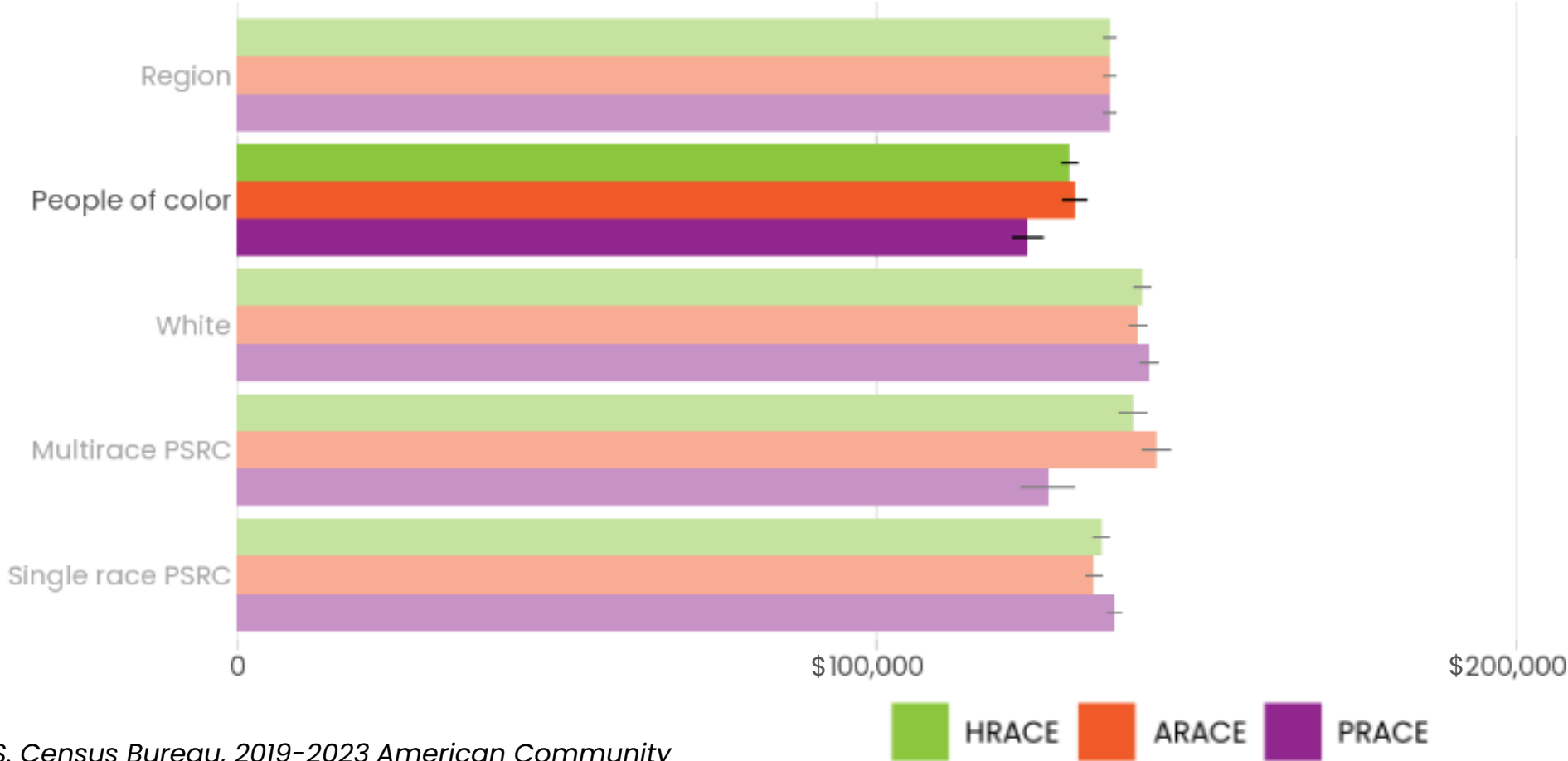
Median Household Income – Summary Categories

When grouped together, multirace households have median incomes similar to white households via **HRACE** and **ARACE** methods



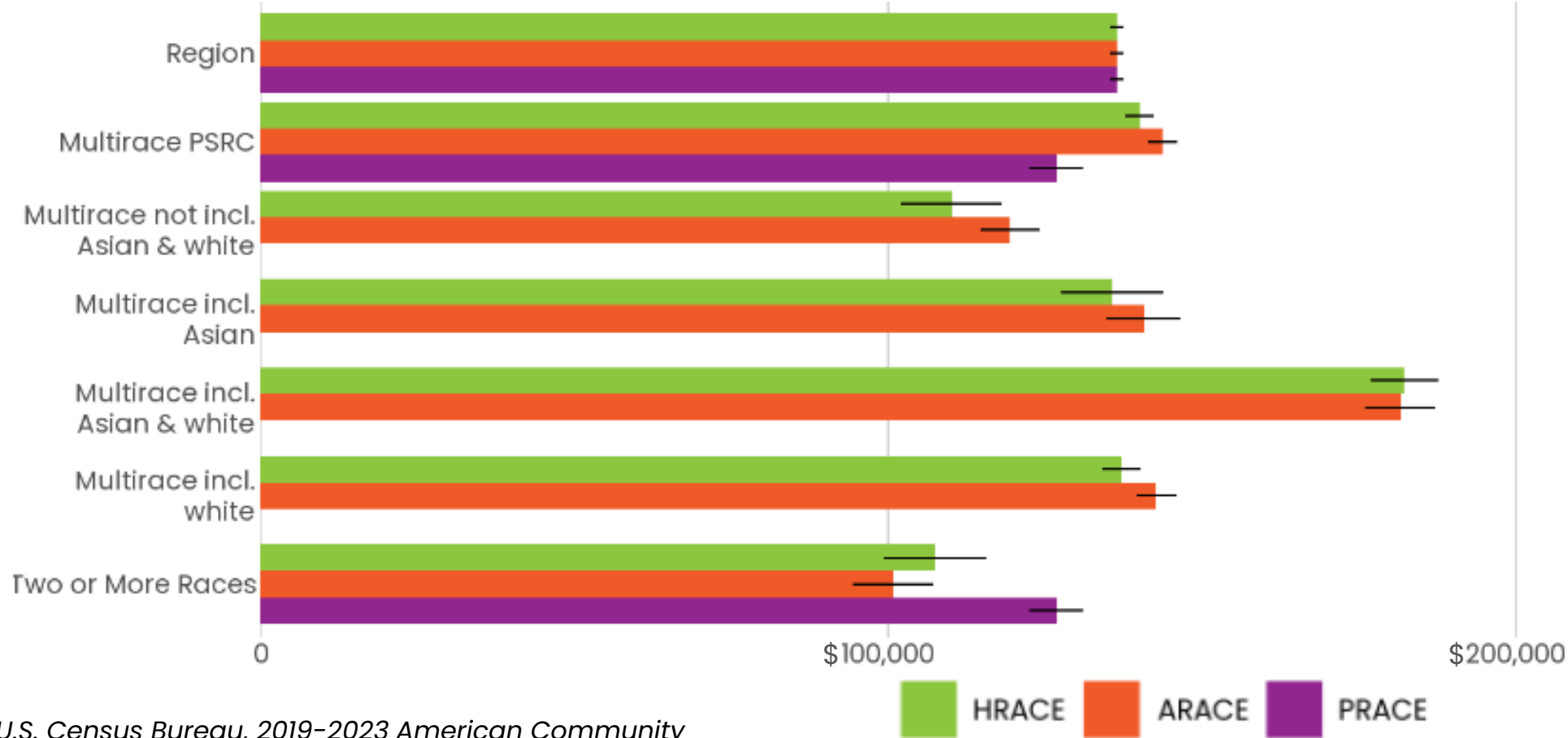
Median Household Income – Summary Categories

Median household income for households of color is higher via **HRACE** and **ARACE** methods



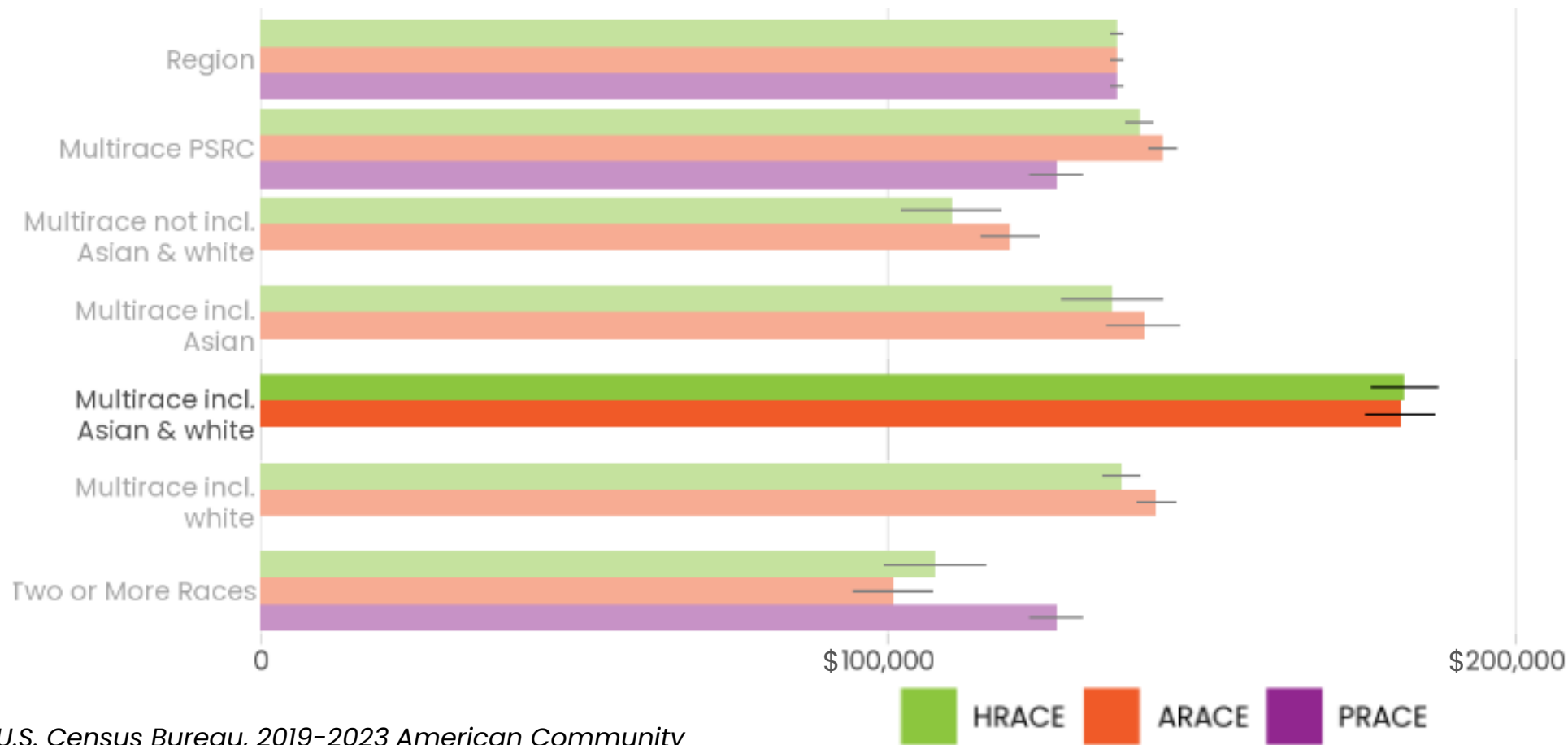
Median Household Income - Multirace

There are significant differences when exploring the racial and ethnic composition of multirace households



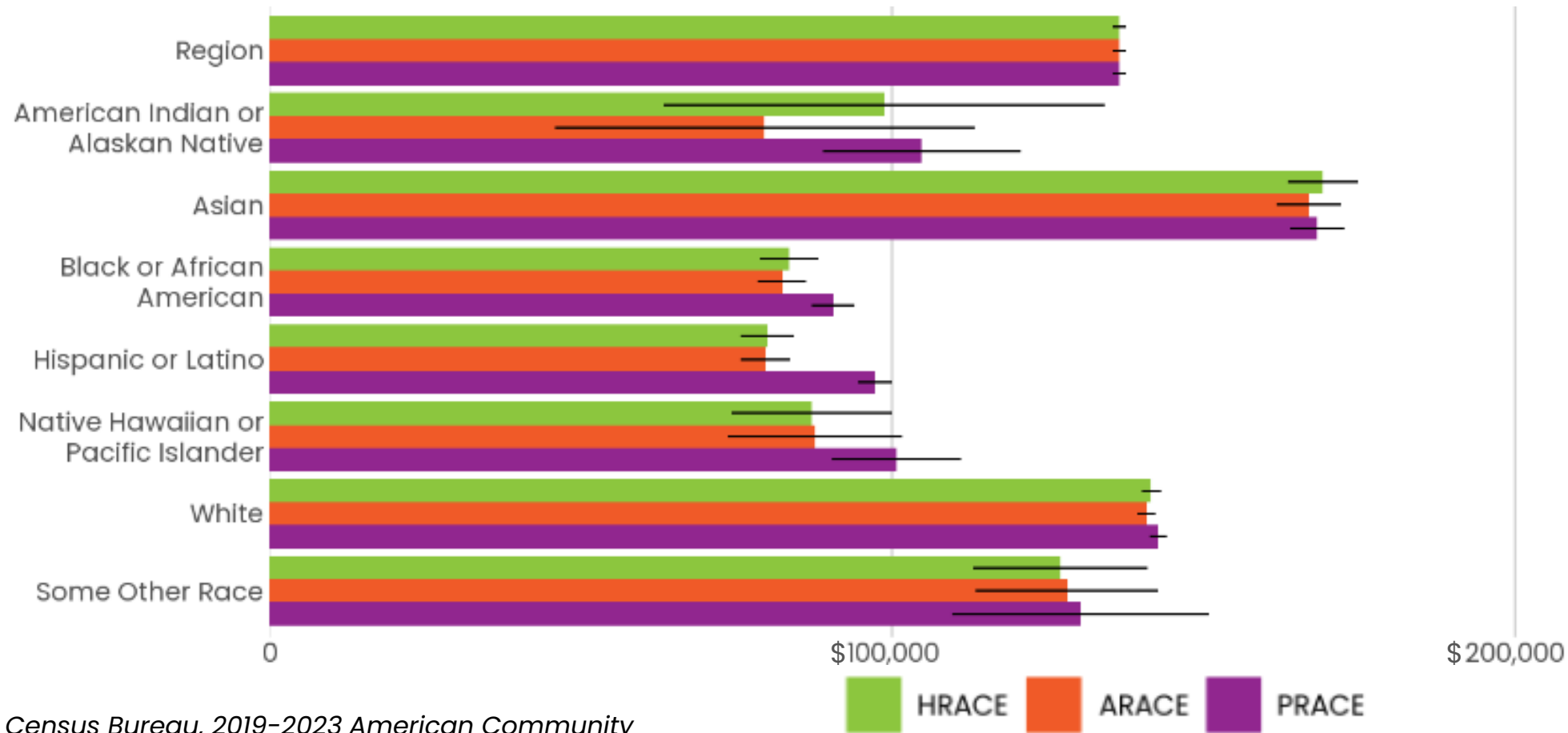
Median Household Income - Multirace

Multirace households with both white and Asian members have the highest household income of all groups



Median Household Income – Single Race

Significant disparities exist between single race and ethnicity categories

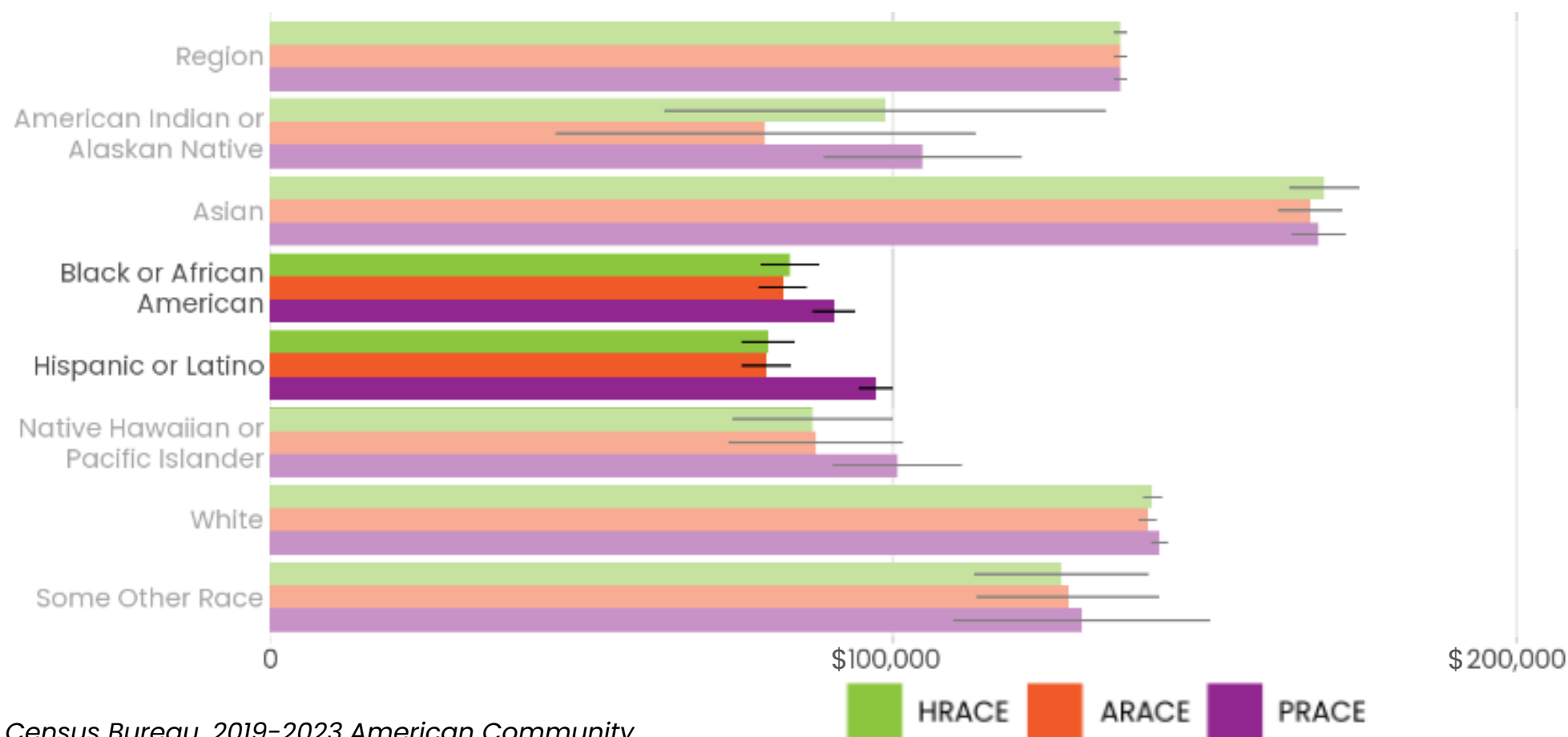


U.S. Census Bureau, 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample



Median Household Income – Single Race

PRACE overstates median household income for Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino households

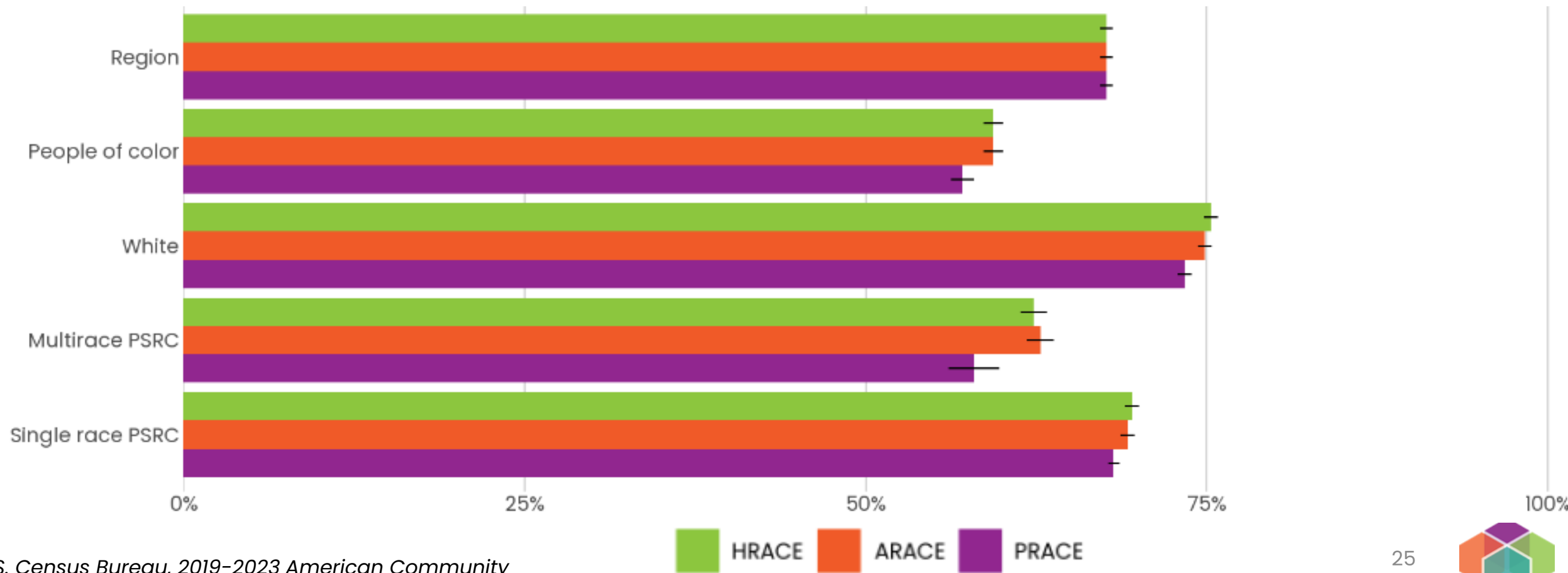


A photograph of a suburban neighborhood during autumn. In the foreground, there are single-story houses with red and yellow siding, surrounded by trees with vibrant orange and red leaves. In the background, a larger, multi-story apartment complex with blue and white siding is visible. A semi-transparent grey rectangular box is overlaid in the center of the image, containing the text "Metric 3: Homeownership Rates".

Metric 3: Homeownership Rates

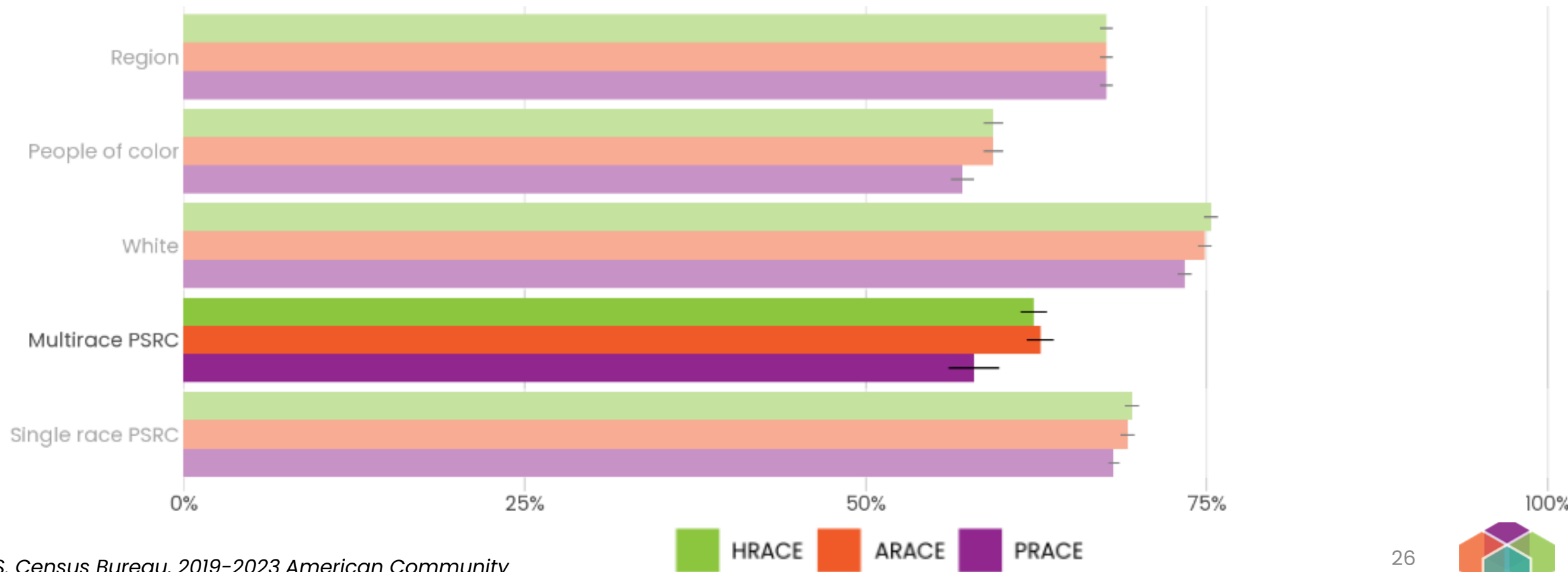
Homeownership Rates – Summary Categories

Multirace homeownership rates are higher via **HRACE** and **ARACE** methods



Homeownership Rates – Summary Categories

Multirace households, despite having incomes similar to the regional median, have lower homeownership rates than the region



Homeownership Rates – Single Race

Homeownership varies dramatically between single race and ethnicity categories

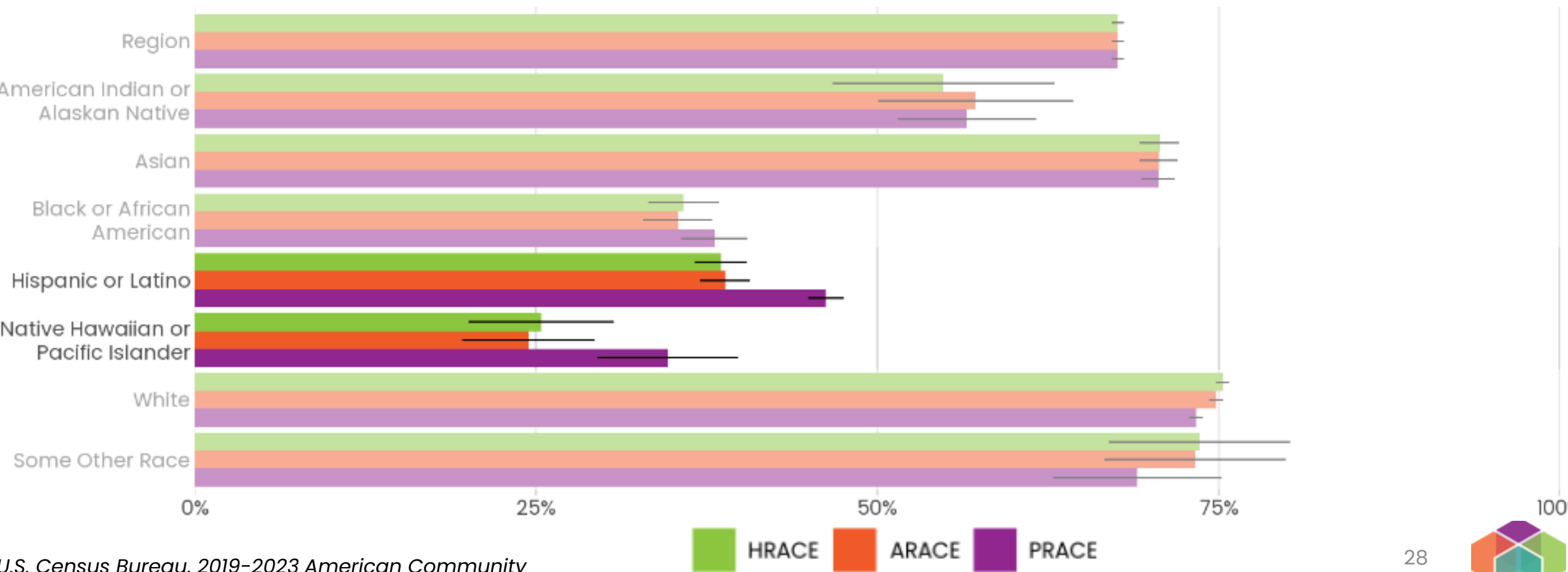


U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample



Homeownership Rates – Single Race

PRACE method overstates homeownership rates for Hispanic/Latino and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander households



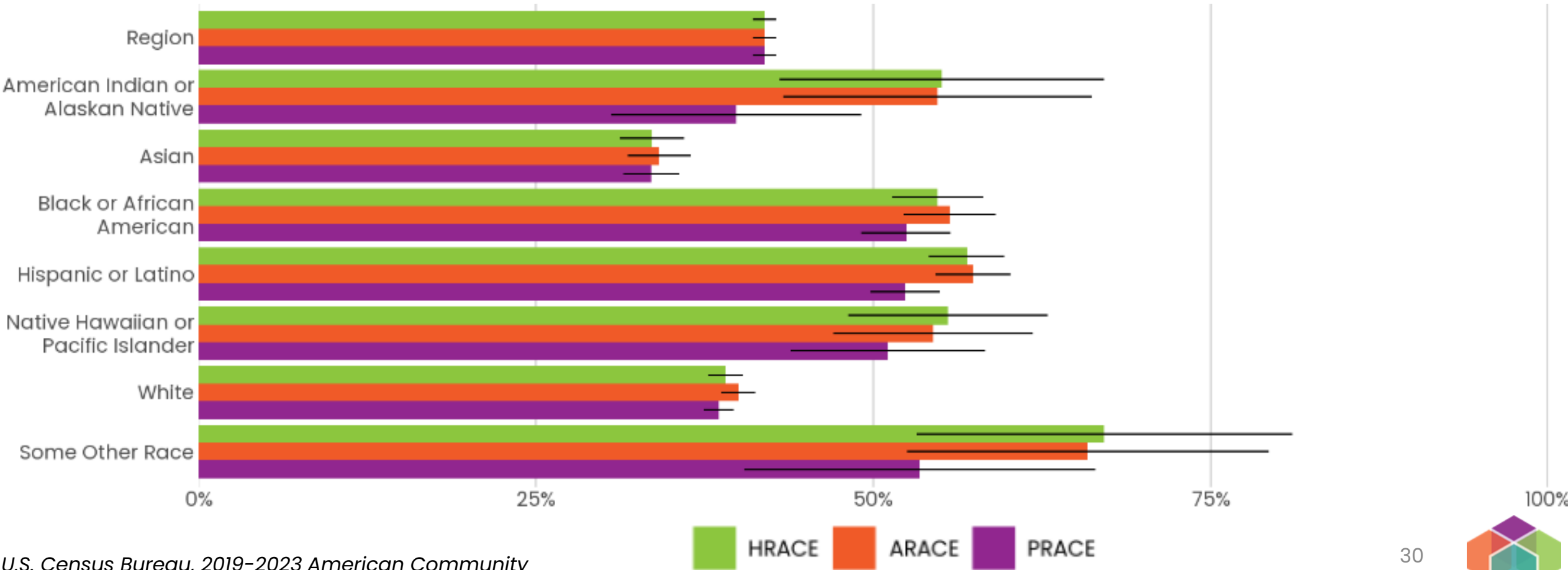
U.S. Census Bureau, 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample



Metric 4: Renter Cost Burden Rates

Renter Cost Burden Rates – Single Race

Disparities seem to exist between single race and ethnicity categories, but small sample sizes limit conclusions

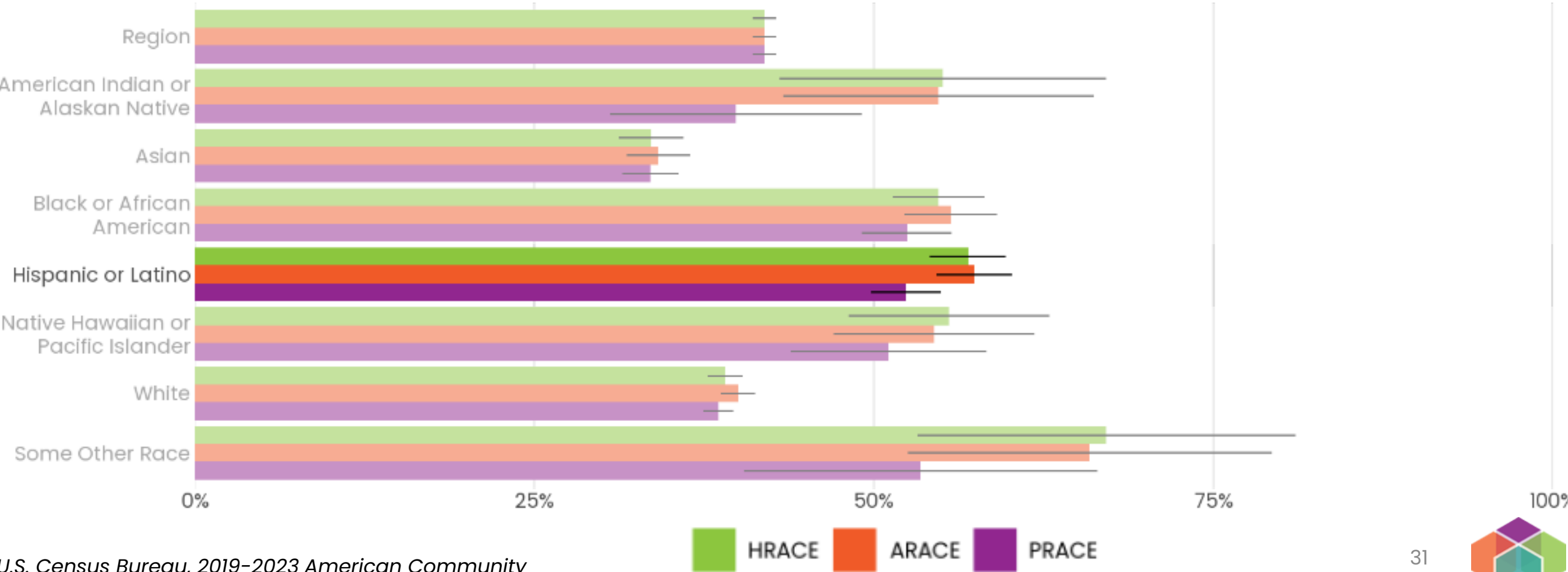


U.S. Census Bureau, 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample



Renter Cost Burden Rates – Single Race

HRACE and **ARACE** methods suggest higher renter cost burden rates for Hispanic/Latino households



U.S. Census Bureau, 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample



Preliminary Conclusions



Aggregation methods matter. The Census method results in under-estimating racial disparities for key POC populations

ARACE/**HRACE** methods promote recognition and a better understanding of multirace households

Leaning towards the most inclusive method: considering all household members (**HRACE**)



Challenges and Lessons Learned

Limitations of ACS PUMS

- Limited sample sizes and reporting geographies (mostly applicable to the region, counties, and a few large cities)

Including margins of error (MOE) and coefficient of variation (CV) is helpful for knowing when differences are statistically valid



Next Steps and Goals

Explore additional category breakdowns and aggregations for reporting data

Share preliminary findings with Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) Subcommittee, solicit feedback

Finalize recommendation to shift (or not shift) our current practices



Future Data Exploration Opportunities

Explore other individual characteristics applied to households (age, education)

Explore distinctions between Black/African and Hispanic/Latino sub-populations



Discussion



The Proposed Shift

- Include all household members (**HRACE**) when defining a household's race/ethnicity

Discussion

- What issues/opportunities do you see with such a shift?
- How would this affect your work?
- Implications for local/regional planning?



Thank You!

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Puget Sound Regional Council

Data Exploration

Compare three household categorization methods by race/ethnicity:

Household Race and Ethnicity	PRACE R/E of householder	ARACE R/E of adult members	HRACE R/E of all members
American Indian and Alaska Native	X	X	X
Asian	X	X	X
Black or African American	X	X	X
Hispanic or Latinx	X	X	X
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	X	X	X
Some other race	X	X	X
Two or more races	X	X	X
White	X	X	X
Multirace	N/A	X	X

