



Census Data: Where to Find It & How to Learn More

Regional Staff Committee– October 20, 2022



Puget Sound Regional Council

Today's Conversation

Census Bureau Data Products

Accessing the Data

Caveats and Limitations

Available Resources, Trainings, Webinars



Census Bureau Data Products

Census publishes 130+ data products

Commonly Used Data in Local Planning

- Decennial Census
- American Community Survey (ACS)



2020 Decennial Census Data Products – Redistricting Data

Redistricting Data:

- Information states need to redraw/redistrict their legislative boundaries
- Redistricting data includes block-level counts of the population by:
 - Race
 - Ethnicity (Hispanic or Latino origin)
 - Voting age
 - Housing occupancy status
 - Group quarters population

Timelines:

- Redistricting data files released on September 2021
- Official corrections & other data to be released mid-2023

The ACS and the Decennial Census

How are they different?

| | ACS | Decennial Census |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <i>Purpose</i> | Sample estimates | Official counts |
| <i>Collects</i> | Detailed social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics | Basic demographics |
| <i>Produces</i> | Population and housing characteristics – Trends and comparisons | Population and housing totals |
| <i>New Data Every</i> | Year | 10 years |
| <i>Data Reflect</i> | Period of time 1 year* and 5 years | Point in time |

The American Community Survey (ACS)

Content Overview

| POPULATION | | HOUSING |
|---|--|---|
| SOCIAL Ancestry Citizenship Citizen Voting Age Population Disability Educational Attainment Fertility Grandparents Language Marital Status Migration School Enrollment Veterans | DEMOGRAPHIC Age Hispanic Origin Race Relationship Sex | Computer & Internet Use Costs (Mortgage, Rent, Taxes, Insurance) Heating Fuel Home Value Occupancy Plumbing/Kitchen Facilities Structure Tenure (Own/Rent) Utilities Vehicles Year Built/ Year Moved In |
| | ECONOMIC Class of Worker Commuting Employment Status Food Stamps (SNAP) Health Insurance Hours/Week, Weeks/Year Income Industry & Occupation | |

Types of ACS Tables

Data Profiles

- Most frequently requested social, economic, housing, and demographic data

Subject/Detailed Tables

- Dive deeper to answer more complex questions
 - e.g., Poverty status in the last 12 months

What if I can't find what I need?

- Consider using either the 1-Year or 5-Year vintage of ACS
- Larger jurisdictions could consider PUMS (Public Use Microdata Sample)

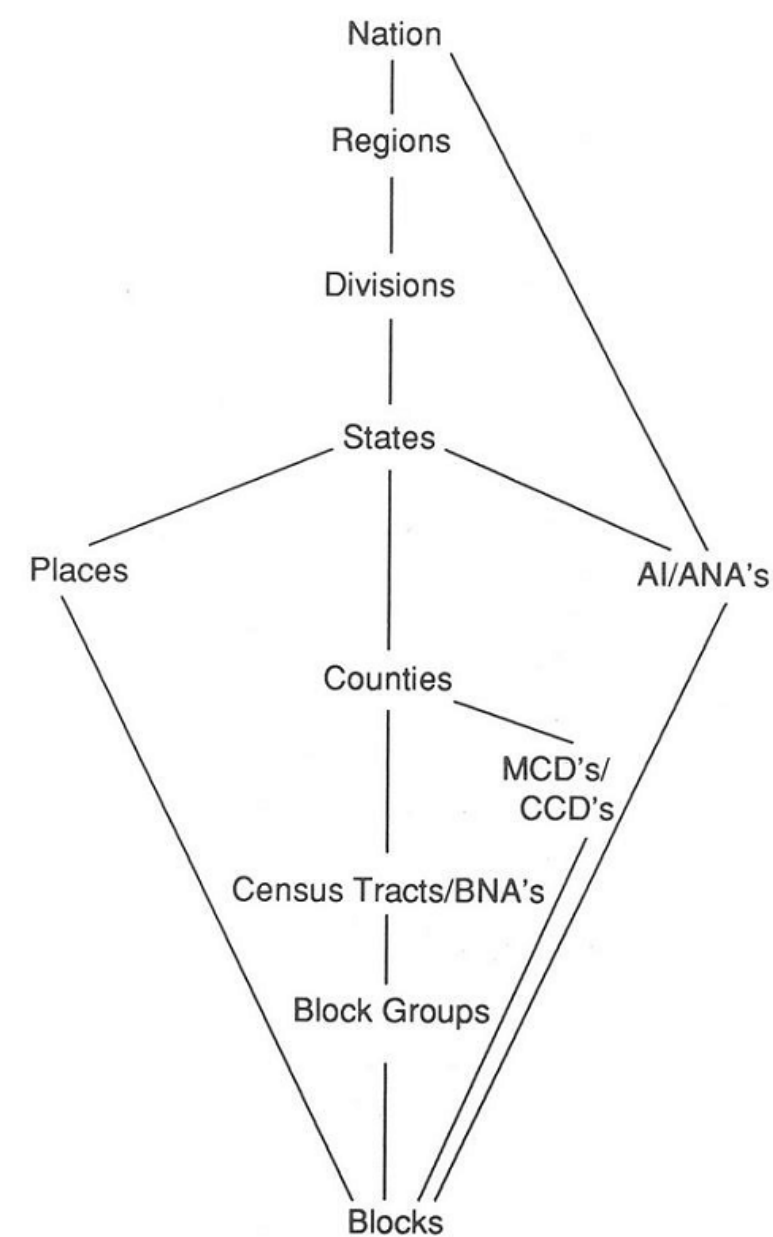


Census Geographies

Commonly used geographies and where to find them

| Geography (Largest to smallest) | ACS | Decennial Census |
|---------------------------------------|------|------------------|
| Counties | Yes | Yes |
| Places | Yes* | Yes |
| Tracts | Yes* | Yes |
| Block Groups | Yes* | Yes |
| Blocks | No | Yes |

*May require the 5YR ACS



Source: Castagneri, J. (2019). United States Census Data. *The Geographic Information Science & Technology Body of Knowledge* (1st Quarter 2019 Edition), John P. Wilson (Ed.). DOI: [10.22224/gistbok/2019.1.8](https://doi.org/10.22224/gistbok/2019.1.8)

United States
Census
Bureau

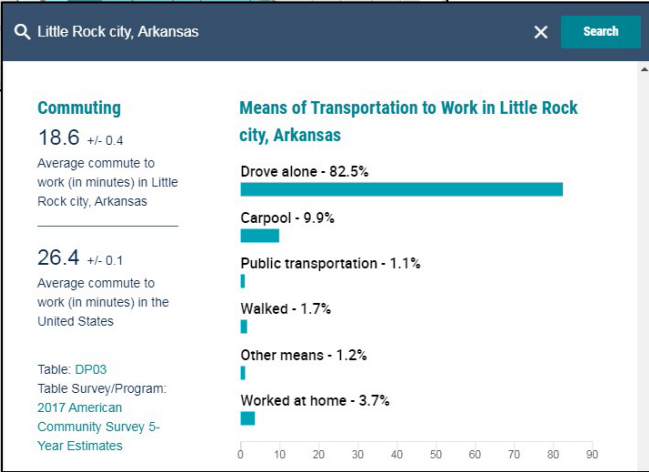
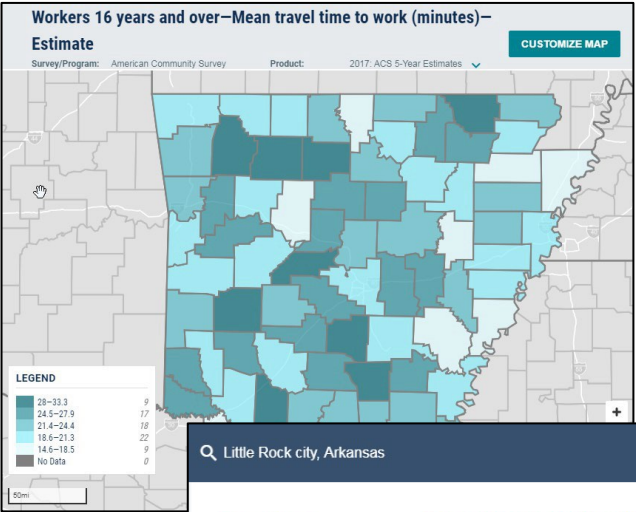
TablesMapsPages

Explore Census Data

The Census Bureau is the leading source of quality data about the nation's people and economy.

Find Tables, Maps, and more ...

Advanced SearchHelpFeedback



census.gov/data/what-is-data-census-gov.html



PSRC Data Tools

Recently Launched Data Portal:

- Collection of Decennial and ACS Data Profiles (and many other data sources!)
- <https://psrc-psregcncl.hub.arcgis.com/>

New Community Profiles Portal:

- <https://psrcwa.shinyapps.io/community-profiles/>



Data Limitations & Caveats

ACS and margins of error, particularly for smaller geographies

Impact of pandemic on data collection and reliability

Differential Privacy – 2020 Decennial Census

- Smaller geographies are likely impacted



Census Bureau Resources, Trainings, and Webinars

Within Library

[ACS Data Stories](#)

[ACS Flyers](#)

[ACS Information Guide](#)

[Handbooks](#)

[Infographics & Visualizations](#)

[Publications and Working Papers](#)

[Videos](#)

Understanding and Using American Community Survey Data: What State and Local Government Users Need to Know

August 2020

Share [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#)



A primary mission of state and local governments is to deliver efficient and effective services and enact policies that advance public safety and economic growth. For more than a decade, the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) has provided data to help governments meet the needs of their constituents. The ACS provides a dynamic picture of the population and housing attributes of states, counties, and municipalities, large and small.

This guide provides a brief overview of how state and local governments are using ACS data to



[Download Understand and Using American Community Survey Data: What State and Local Government Users Need to Know \[PDF - 6.7 MB\]](#)

Related Information

[American Community Survey Handbooks for Data Users](#)

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/library/handbooks/state-local.html>





Thank you.

Eric Clute

Assistant Planner – Data Applications

Puget Sound Regional Council

eclute@psrc.org



Puget Sound Regional Council