An Overview of the American Community Survey

Overview

- What is the American Community Survey?
- Content
- Survey Methodology
- Data Products
- How is it different from Census 2000?

What is the American

Community Survey?



Decennial Census

In Census 2000, the census used 2 forms

- 1. "short" form asked for basic demographic and housing information, such as age, sex, race, how many people lived in the housing unit, and if the housing unit was owned or rented by the resident
- 2. "long" form collected the same information as the short form but also collected more in-depth information such as income, education, and language spoken at home

Only a small portion of the population, called a sample, received the long form.

2010 Census and American Community Survey

- 2010 Census will focus on counting the U.S. population
- The sample data are now collected in the ACS
- Puerto Rico is the <u>only</u> U.S. territory where the ACS is conducted
- 2010 Census will have a long form for U.S. territories such as Guam and U.S. Virgin Islands
- Same "short form" questions on the ACS

American Community Survey Content







American Community Survey Social Characteristics



- Education
- Marital Status
- Fertility
- Grandparent
 Caregivers
- Veterans
- Disability Status Affiliation

- Place of Birth
- Citizenship
 - Year of Entry
 - Language Spoken at Home
 - Ancestry / Tribal

American Community Survey Economic Characteristics

- Income
- Benefits
- Employment Status
- Occupation
- Industry
- Commuting to Work
- Place of Work



American Community Survey Housing Characteristics





- Tenure
- Occupancy & Structure
- Housing Value
- Taxes & Insurance
- Utilities
- Mortgage/Monthly Rent

American Community Survey Demographic Characteristics



- Sex
- Age
- Race
- Hispanic Origin

American Community Survey 2008 Content Changes

- Three new questions
 - Health Insurance Coverage
 - Veteran's Service-connected Disability
 - Marital History
- Deletion of one question
 - Time and main reason for staying at the address
- Changes in some wording and format

American Community Survey Methodology

- Sample includes about 3 million addresses each year
- Three modes of data collection
 - mail
 - phone
 - personal visit
- Data are collected continuously throughout the year

American Community Survey Target Population

- Resident population of the United States and Puerto Rico
 - Living in housing units and group quarters
- Current residents at the selected address
 - "Two month" rule

American Community Survey Group Quarters

- Place where people live or stay that is normally owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing or services for the residents.
- 2 categories of group quarters:
 - Institutional
 - Non-institutional

American Community Survey Period Estimates

- ACS estimates are period estimates, describing the average characteristics over a specified period
- Contrast with point-in-time estimates that describe the characteristics of an area on a specific date
- 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates will be released for geographic areas that meet specific population thresholds

American Community Survey Data Products Release Schedule

Data Product	Population Size	Data released in:							
	of Area	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1-Year Estimates for Data Collected in:	65,000+	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
3-Year Estimates for Data Collected in:	20,000+			2005-2007	2006-2008	2007-2009	2008-2010	2009-2011	2010-2012
5-Year Estimates for Data Collected in:	All Areas*					2005-2009	2006-2010	2007-2011	2008-2012

^{*} Five-year estimates will be available for areas as small as census tracts and block groups. Source: US Census Bureau

American Community Survey Data Products

Profiles

- Data Profiles
- Narrative Profiles
- Comparison Profiles
- Selected Population Profiles

Tables

- Detailed Tables
- Subject Tables
- Ranking Tables
- Geographic Comparison Tables

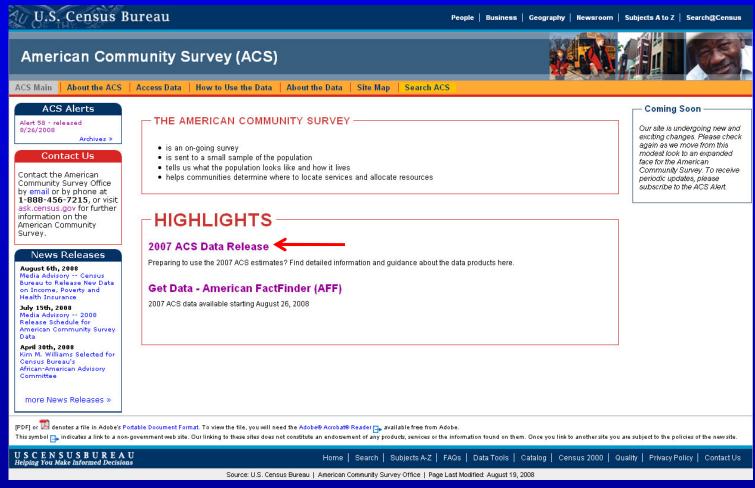
Thematic Maps

Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) Files

American Community Survey Learning More

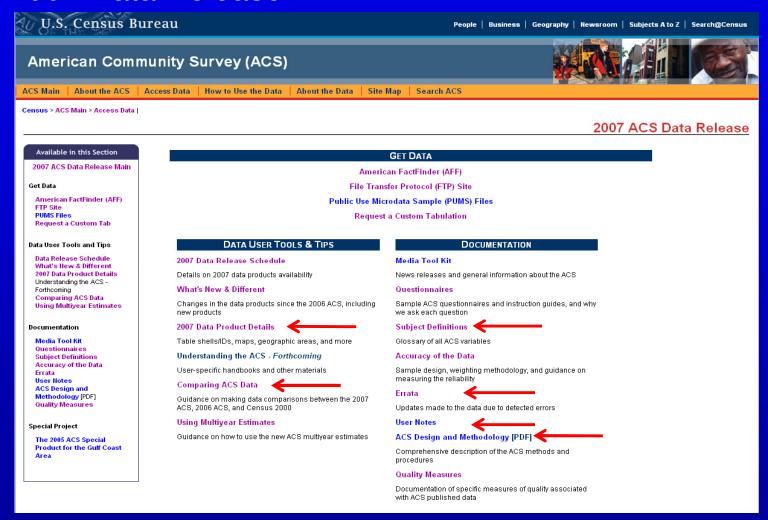
- ACS Main Page
- 2007 Data Product Details
- Subject Definitions
- Guidance on Comparing 2007 Data to Other Sources
- Design and Methodology Report
- The ACS Compass Products

American Community Survey ACS Main Page



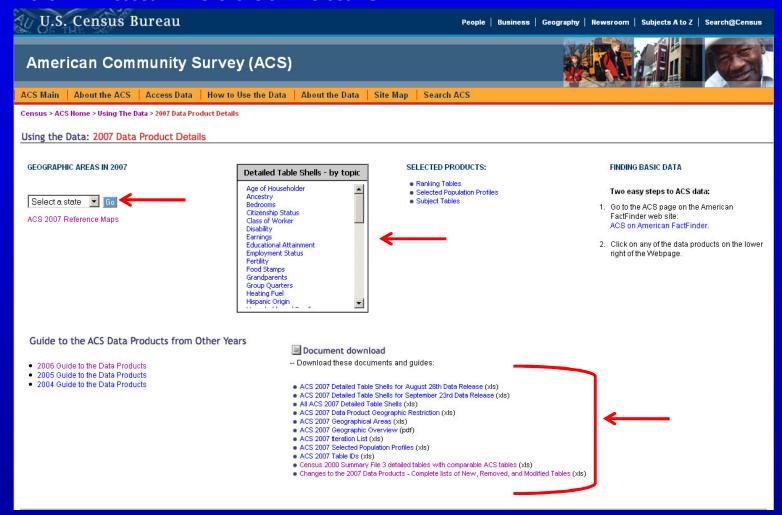
http://www.census.gov/acs/www

American Community Survey 2007 Data Release



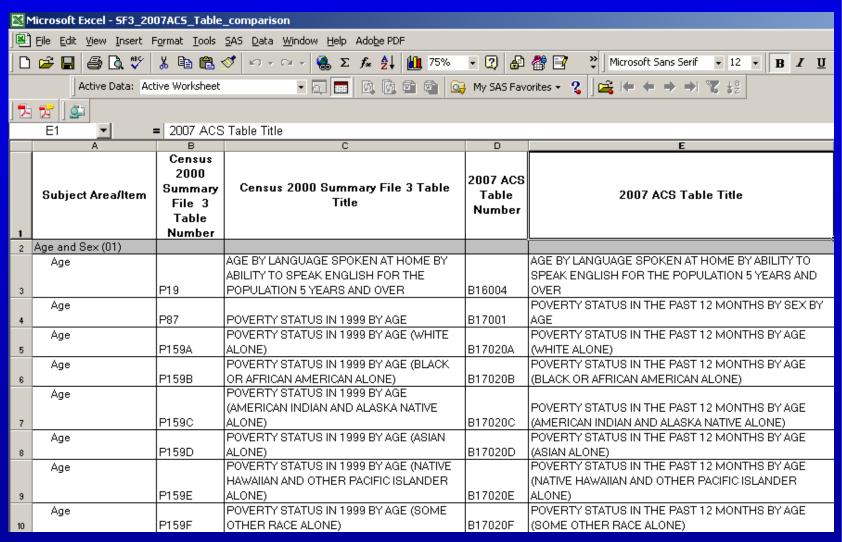
http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/

American Community Survey 2007 Data Product Details



http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/users_guide/

American Community Survey 2007 Data Product Details



American Community Survey Comparison Guidance

- Comparing 2007 ACS to 2006 ACS
 - Census Bureau supports comparisons made between 2006 and 2007 ACS data
- Comparing 2007 ACS to Census 2000
 - Differences between the 2007 ACS and Census 2000 include residence rules, universes, and reference periods.

American Community Survey Comparing Data

U.S. Census Burea	au	People	e Business	Geography	Newsroom	Subjects A to Z	Search@Census
American Commun							
ACS Main About the ACS Acces	ss Data How to Use the Data About the Data Site Map Search	ACS					
Census > ACS Main > How to Use the Data >	Comparing ACS Data to Other Sources How to Use the	Data	a: Comp	oaring /	ACS Dar	ta to Othe	r Sources
Subject Area/Item*	Comparing 2007 ACS with Census 2000			Compa	ring 2007 ACS	with 2006 ACS	
Children; Household Relationship (09)							
Relationship to Householder	Compare more table cross	••	mpare				more info
Grandparent; Grandchildren (10)							
Grandparents as Caregivers	Compare more table cross		mpare				more info
Household Type; Family Type; Subfamilies (11)							
Household/Family Type	Compare more table cross	e info Con swalk	npare				more info
Subfamilies	Compare with Caution more table cross	e info swalk	mpare				more info
Marital Status (12)							
Marital Status	Compare more table cross	e info Con swalk	npare				more info
Fertility (13)							
Fertility	Do Hot Compare mor No comparable detailed tables publ	e info lished	mpare				more info
School Enrollment (14)							
Type of School & School Enrollment	Compare more table cross	e info swalk	npare				more info
Educational Attainment (15)							
Educational Attainment	Compare more table cross		mpare				more info
Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak En							
Ability to Speak English	table cross						more info
Language Spoken at Home	Compare more	e info Con	mpare				more info

http://www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/compACS.htm

American Community Survey User Notes

U.S. Census Bureau

American Community Survey (ACS)

About the ACS | Access Data | How to Use the Data | About the Data

Search ACS

Census > ACS Main > How to Use the Data > User Hotes

How to Use the Data: User Notes

Available in this Section	
How to Use the Data Main	
ACS and Intercensal Populati Estimates	on
Comparing ACS Data to Other Sources	
Subject Definitions	
Accuracy of the Data	
Quality Measures	
Sample Size:	
Data	
Definitions	
Coverage Rates:	
Data	
Definitions	
Response Rates:	
Data	
Definitions	
Item Allocation Rates:	
Data	
Definitions	
ACS Group Quarters	
» 2006 GQ Data Products	
Errata	
» ACS 2000 Errata (11/7/02)	

» ACS 2000 Errata (3/25/02)

Year	American Community Survey User Note							
	Modification Made in 2007 ACS Weighting Methodology for Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes, LA							
2007	The review of the 2007 operational data discovered evidence that suggests a high incidence of misclassification of uninhabitable units as vacant units. The effect of misclassification was almost entirely removed through a modification in the weighting methodology for Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes. The effect of the weighting adjustment was to down-weight units that had the vacancy status of "Other Vacant". This modification resulted in more consistent and accurate ACS estimates of the number of vacant units and "persons per household" in these two parishes. This modification was also made to the 2006 ACS weighting methodology.							
2007	County Estimates of Group Quarters Population							
	The weighting for the group quarters population is controlled at the state level. For that reason, users should expect that the ACS estimate for the group quarters population to be consistent with the Population Estimates Program only at the state level. At the county level, the ACS estimate will typically be different from the Population Estimates Program due to sampling variability. Like estimates of total population, data users who require an estimate of the group quarters population at the county level should use the official estimates from the Population Estimates Program.							
	Year-to-year Change in the ACS Group Quarters Population Estimates at the Sub-State Level							
2007	The weighting for the group quarters (GQ) population is controlled at the state level, but not at sub-state levels. For this reason, users may observe greater fluctuations in year-to-year ACS estimates of the GQ population at sub-state levels than at state levels. The causes of these fluctuations typically are the result of either GQs that have closed or where the current population of the GQ is significantly different than the expected population as reflected on the sampling frame. Substantial changes in the ACS GQ estimates can impact ACS estimates of total population characteristics for areas where either the GQ population is a substantial proportion of the total population or where the GQ population may have very different characteristics than the total population as a whole. Users can assess the impact that year-to-year changes in sub-state GQ total population estimates have on the changes in total ACS population estimates by accessing Table B26001 on American Fact Finder. Users should also use their local knowledge to help determine whether the year-to-year change in the ACS estimate represents a real change in the GQ population or may be the result of the lack of adequate population controls for sub-state areas.							

http://www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/usernotes.htm

American Community Survey Errata Notes

U.S. Census Bureau

People | Business | Geography | Newsroom | Subjects A to Z | Search@Census

American Community Survey (ACS)



ACS Main

About the ACS | Access Data

How to Use the Data | About the Data | Site Map

Census > ACS Main > How to Use the Data > Errata

How to Use the Data: Errata

Available in this Section

How to Use the Data Main

ACS and Intercensal Population **Estimates**

Comparing ACS Data to Other Sources

Subject Definitions

Accuracy of the Data

Quality Measures

Sample Size:

Data

Definitions

Coverage Rates:

Data

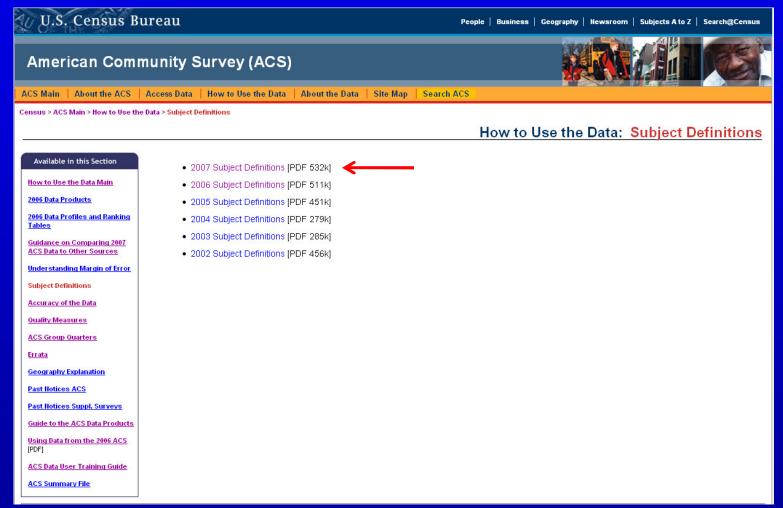
Definitions

Response Rates:

Note	Subject	Revised Date
46	Subject Table S2101 and Base Table B21002 for years prior to 2007, period of military service Due to an editing error, veteran's period of service (VPS) was being incorrectly assigned for some individuals. The majority of the errors misclassified some people who reported only serving during the Vietnam Era as having served in the category "Gulf War and Vietnam Era." The remainder of the errors misclassified some people who reported only serving between the Vietnam Era and Gulf War as having served in the category "Gulf War." These errors have been resolved for the 2007 tabulations.	September 23, 2008
45	Hanford CA and San Francisco-Oakland CA Urban Areas During the processing of data products for the urban areas we discovered the geographic boundaries were incorrect for two of these areas, Hanford CA (code 36703) and San Francisco-Oakland CA (code 78904). Therefore, we are unable to release data products for these urban areas at this time. We are correcting the geographic boundaries in our data files now, and will release the data products as soon as possible.	August 26, 2008

http://www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/Errata.htm

American Community Survey Subject Definitions



http://www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/Def.htm

American Community Survey Subject Definitions

Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English

Language Spoken at Home Data on language spoken at home were derived from answers to the 2007 American Community Survey Questions 13a and 13b. These questions were asked only of persons 5 years of age and older. Instructions mailed with the American Community Survey questionnaire instructed respondents to mark "Yes" on Question 13a if they sometimes or always spoke a language other than English at home, and "No" if a language was spoken only at school – or if speaking was limited to a few expressions or slang. For Question 13b, respondents printed the name of the non-English language they spoke at home. If the person spoke more than one non-English language, they reported the language spoken most often. If the language spoken most frequently could not be determined, the respondent reported the language learned first.

Questions 13a and 13b referred to languages spoken at home in an effort to measure the current use of languages other than English. This category excluded respondents who spoke a language other than English exclusively outside of the home.

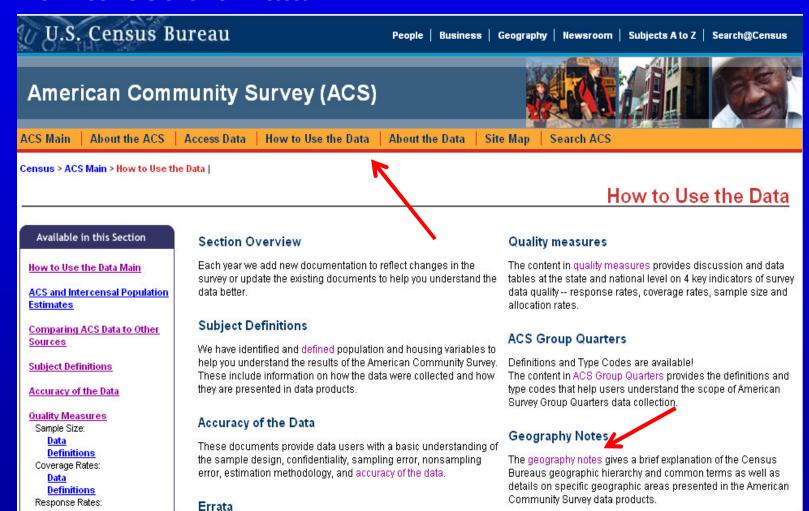
American Community Survey Design and Methodology Report



Important reference document covering methods used in producing ACS data

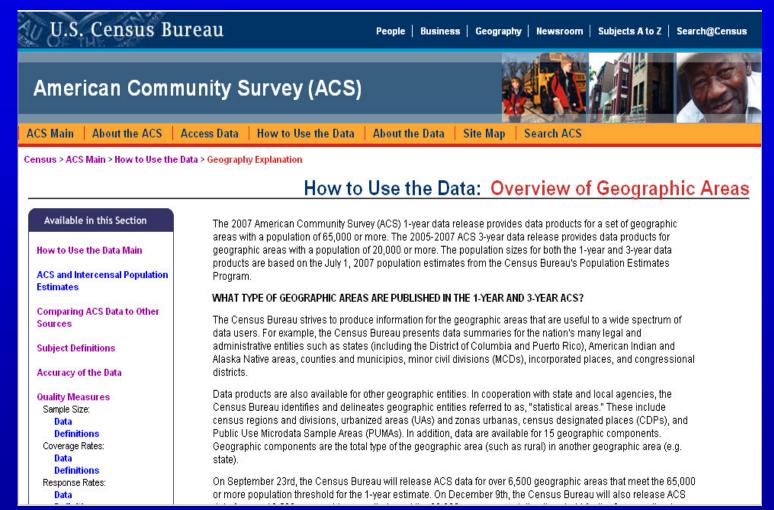
Available at http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/tp67.pdf

American Community Survey How to Use the Data



http://www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData.htm USCENSUSBUREAU

American Community Survey Geography Notes



http://www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/geo.htm

American Community Survey The ACS Compass Products

- Set of educational handbooks aimed at specific audiences
- Presentation slides on important ACS topics
- E-learning tutorial

American Community Survey Similarities with Census 2000

- Same questions and many of the same basic statistics
- 5-year estimates will be produced for same broad set of geographic areas including census tracts and block groups

American Community Survey Key Differences from Census 2000

- Beginning in 2010, data for small geographic areas will be produced every year versus once every 10 years
- Data for larger areas are available now and data for mid sized area will be available in December 2008
- Census 2000 data described the population and housing as of April 1, 2000 while ACS data describe a period of time and require data for 12 months, 36 months, or 60 months

American Community Survey Key Differences from Census 2000

- The goal of ACS is to produce data comparable to the Census 2000 long form data
- These estimates will cover the same small areas as Census 2000 but with smaller sample sizes
- Smaller sample sizes for 5-year ACS estimates results in reductions in the reliability of estimates

For more information

Subscribe to "ACS Alert"

http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Special/Alerts.htm

Visit the ACS/PRCS website:

http://www.census.gov/acs/www

Contact by telephone: 1-800-923-8282

Contact by email:

acso.users.support@census.gov