



American Community Survey (ACS) *Overview*

September 9, 2015

2015 Association of Small Business Development
Centers National Conference

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What is the American Community Survey?



ACS Basics

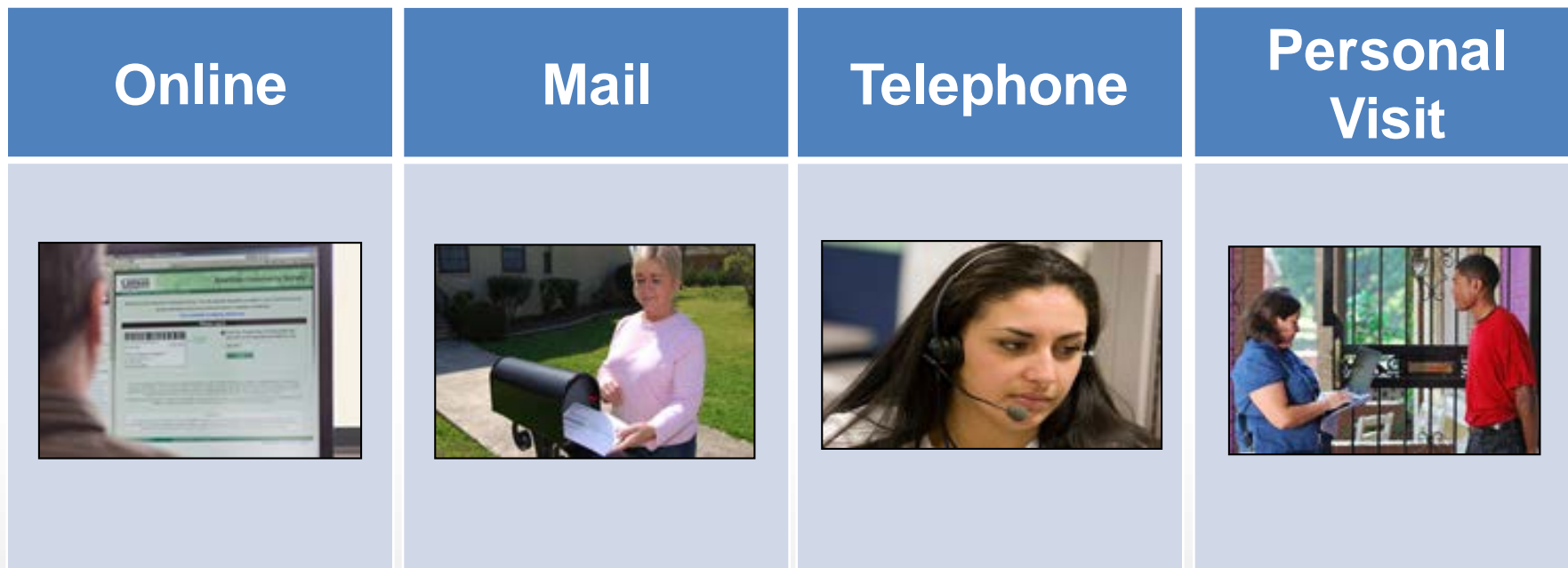
- Is an ongoing monthly survey sent to 3.5 million addresses per year to produce detailed population and housing
- Is designed to produce *critical information on small areas and small population groups* previously collected on the decennial long form
- Annually release data for 1-year and 5-year periods
- Covers 35 topics and supports over 300 known Federal Government uses
- Over 11 billion estimates for over 35,000 communities

The image displays three overlapping screenshots of the American Community Survey (ACS) materials. The top screenshot shows a 'Housing' section with questions about the type of housing, number of rooms, and presence of a business. The middle screenshot shows a 'Start Here' section with instructions on how to respond online or by mail. The bottom screenshot shows a 'Welcome to the American Community Survey' page with a barcode, a 'Please Log In' section, and a 'Login' button.

How is the ACS different from a census?

	ACS	Decennial 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



Self-Response Modes



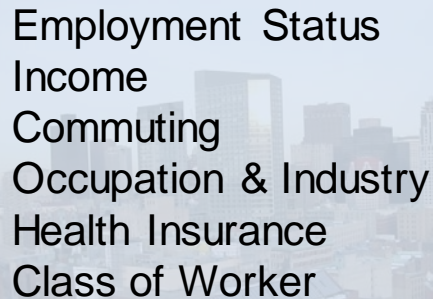
Non-Response Modes

ACS Content

Social

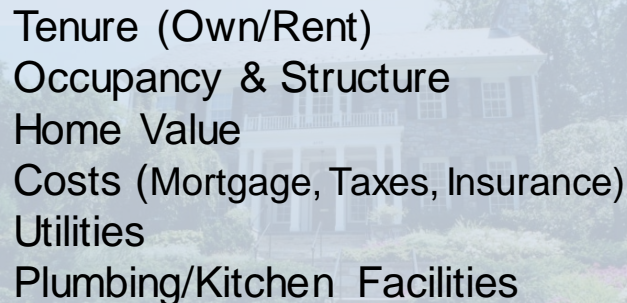


- Education
- Marital Status
- Fertility
- Veterans
- Disability
- Citizenship
- Language
- Migration




- Employment Status
- Income
- Commuting
- Occupation & Industry
- Health Insurance
- Class of Worker

Economic



- Tenure (Own/Rent)
- Occupancy & Structure
- Home Value
- Costs (Mortgage, Taxes, Insurance)
- Utilities
- Plumbing/Kitchen Facilities

Housing



- Sex
- Age
- Race
- Hispanic Origin
- Relationship

Demographic

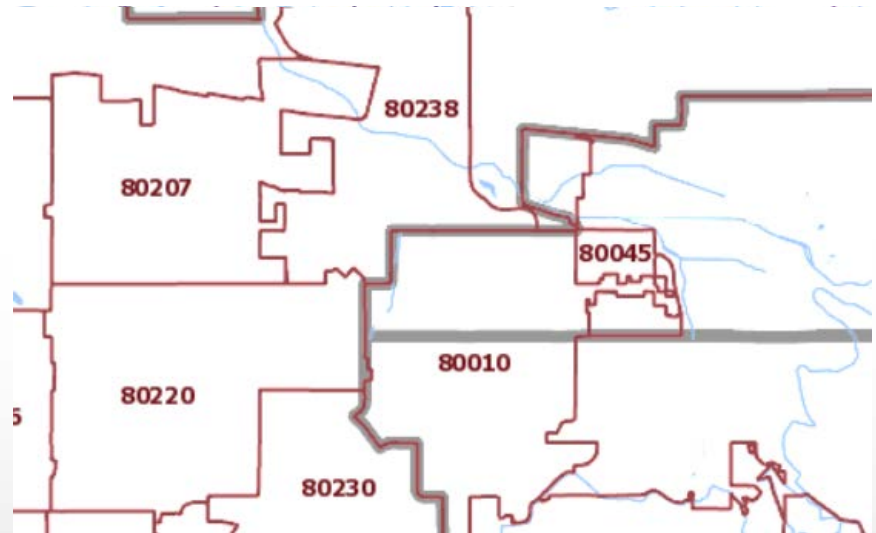
Availability of ACS Data Products

Estimated Population of Geographic Area	1-Year Estimates	3-Year Estimates*	5-Year Estimates
65,000 or more	X	X	X
20,000 to 64,999		X	X
Less than 20,000			X
Planned Release Date	September 2015	N/A	December 2015

* 3-Year discontinued beginning with data released in 2015

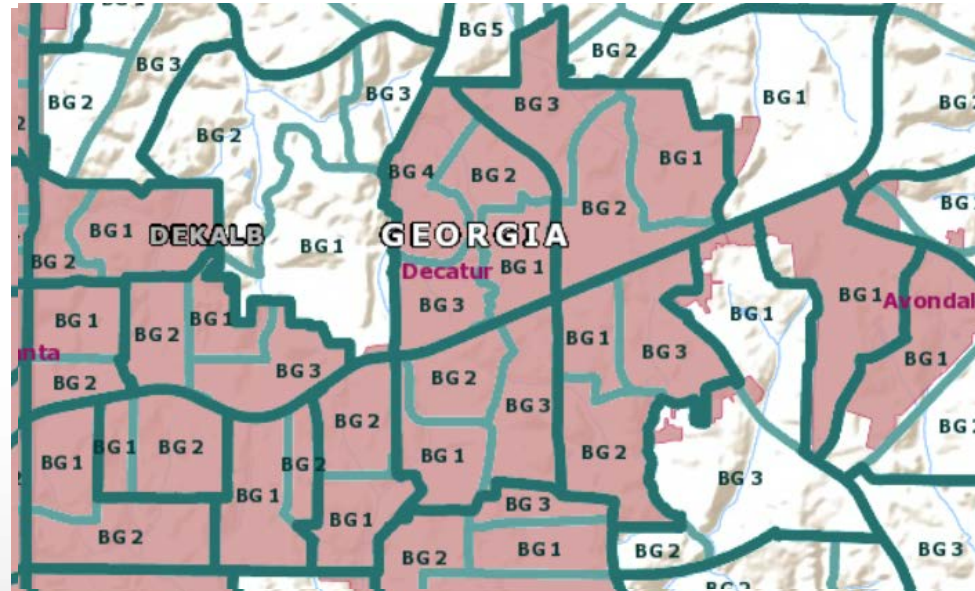
Selected Census Geographic Concepts—Legal Areas

- Nation
- States
- Counties
- Incorporated Places
- Minor Civil Divisions
- Congressional Districts
- School Districts
- Zip Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs)

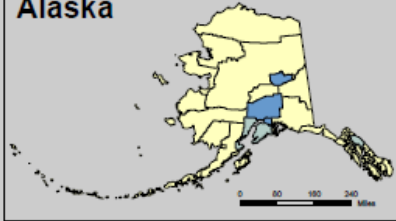


Selected Census Geographic Concepts—Statistical Areas

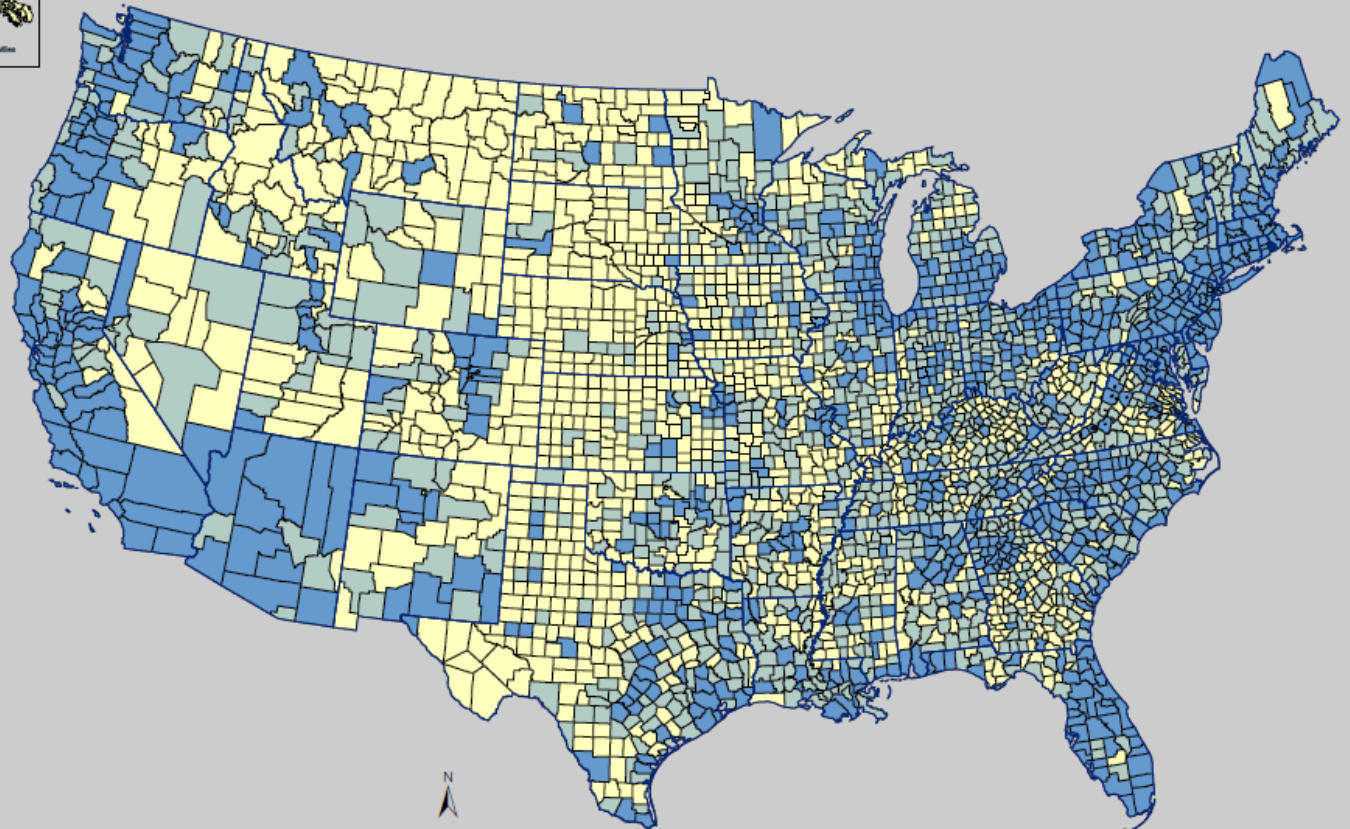
- Regions
- Divisions
- Census Designated Places
- Census County Divisions
- Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMA)
- Census Tracts
- Block Groups







Alaska



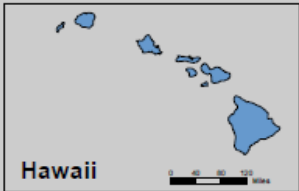
2013 ACS Estimate Type Availability by County



Legend

-  1, 3 and 5-Year Estimates
-  3 and 5-Year Estimates
-  5-Year Estimates Only
-  State Boundary

Hawaii



U.S. Census Bureau
American Community Survey Office
Geography Branch
August 2014

ACS for Business

Why should small business care about the ACS?



ACS for Business

ACS data can be a **critical** component of the information that businesses need to inform strategic decision-making.

- ✓ Identify potential markets/customers
- ✓ Meet customer needs
- ✓ Manage the business effectively

ACS for Business

- Businesses use ACS data to help grow and expand their business. Uses include:
 - Market/site evaluation
 - Customer segmentation
 - Targeting advertising or promotional opportunities
 - Enhancements to their own products/services
- Small businesses need market level data for very small areas, and ACS is the most authoritative source of small area data available.

Building a Business

When deciding to create a new business or expand an existing one, you can use the ACS to examine potential locations.



Demographic characteristics (age, gender, family structure)



Social characteristics (singles, home buyers, retirees, etc.)



Home size, age, and amenities (computer/Internet use)

Building a Business

ACS data is an integral part of incorporating demographic analysis into a business' marketing strategy.

- Age and Gender
- Families with Children
- Language spoken at home



Building a Business

Businesses can use ACS data to analyze and improve how they are running their business.



-  Labor force status (Employed/Unemployed, Full/Part Time)
-  Income and earnings (By Occupation and Industry)
-  Educational attainment (Including Field of Degree)

ACS for Business

The ACS is crucial to businesses because:



Accurate



Trusted



Comprehensive



Detailed



Timely



Comparable

And the data is available for

FREE!

How to Access Information & Data

- ACS Website
- QuickFacts
- EasyStats & My Congressional District
- Census Explorer
- American FactFinder
- DataFerrett
- Application Programming Interface (API)

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
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.



Respond to the Survey

News & Updates

Data

Guidance for Data Users

Geography & ACS

Technical Documentation

Methodology

Library

Operations and Administration

Contact Us



What is the ACS?



How do I respond to the ACS?



Where can I get ACS data?

Latest

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

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.



Respond to the ACS.
Learn how.

census.gov/acs



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QuickFacts

QuickFacts Beta

[Learn more about this application >](#)

[Tell us what you think >](#)

-- SELECT A FACT --

Enter state, county, city or town

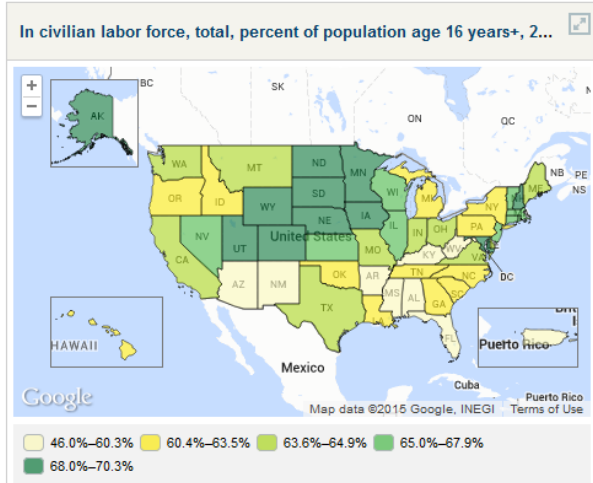
SET



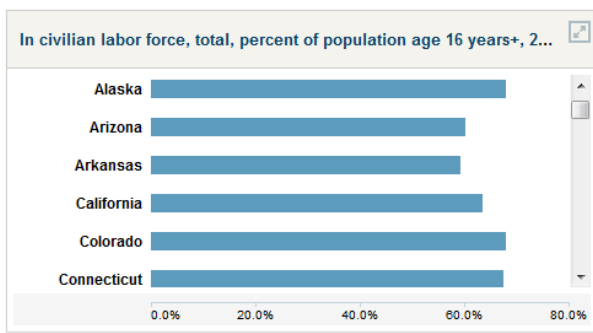
Table

Map

ALL TOPICS	UNITED STATES
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2009-2013	63.8%
In civilian labor force, female, percent of population age 16 years+, 2009-2013	59.0%
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2009-2013	25.5
Median household income (in 2013 dollars), 2009-2013	\$53,046
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2013 dollars), 2009-2013	\$28,155
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2009-2013	64.9%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2009-2013	\$176,700
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2009-2013	\$452
Median gross rent, 2009-2013	\$904
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	15.3%
Persons in poverty, percent	14.5%
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2009-2013	\$1,540
BUSINESSES	
Total employer establishments, 2012	7,431,808



Chart



When to use:
Find a fact fast. View selected estimates about social, economic, and housing characteristics for all states and counties, and for cities with more than 5,000 people.

census.gov/quickfacts

Easy Stats

<>

1 Select Geography



Optional:
Refine by
 County Place

2 Choose a topic:

 Financial  Jobs  Housing  People  Education

Current Table: None

3

[Get Results](#) [Clear Choices](#)

About Easy Stats

Easy Stats gives you quick and easy access to selected statistics collected by the U.S. Census Bureau through the American Community Survey. With the American Community Survey, detailed demographic and economic statistics are available every year for the nation's communities and their people.

This interactive tool provides the latest statistics about where you live. You can search different geographies including states, counties, incorporated places (towns/cities) and census designated places (CDP). With Easy Stats, you can view detailed racial, age and sex breakdowns and much more.

Powered by
The American Community Survey
and Census API

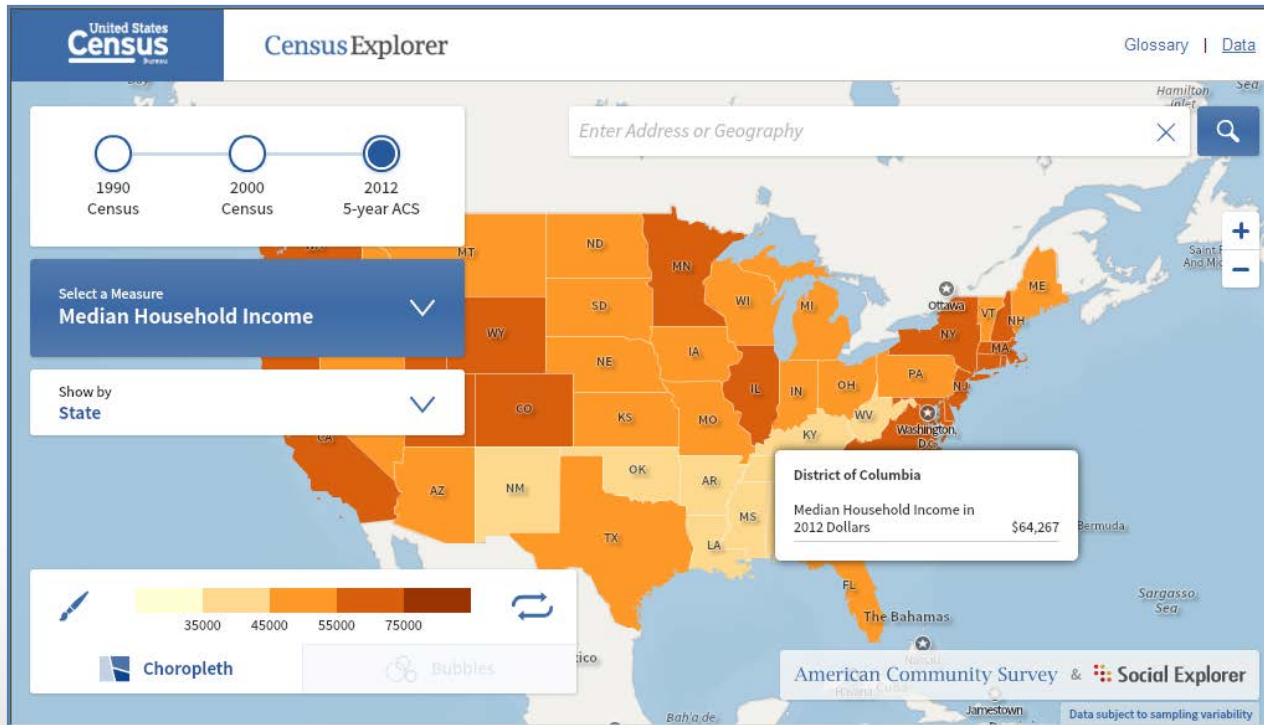


U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

When to use:
View selected tables about finances, jobs, housing, people, and education states, counties, and cities.

census.gov/easystats/

Census Explorer



When to use:
Explore selected estimates about people, education, income, and commuting in an interactive map to visualize how statistics change over time and across geographies.

census.gov/censusexplorer

American FactFinder

The screenshot shows the American FactFinder website. At the top, it features the U.S. Department of Commerce logo and the American FactFinder title. A navigation bar includes links for MAIN, COMMUNITY FACTS, GUIDED SEARCH, ADVANCED SEARCH, and DOWNLOAD CENTER. A search bar is visible with a magnifying glass icon. Below the navigation, a message states: "The U.S. Census Bureau's newly designed American Community Survey (ACS) website is now available." The main content area is divided into sections: "Community Facts" with a search input field (example: "Atlanta, GA") and a "GO" button; "Guided Search"; "Advanced Search"; and "Download Center". A large image of a smiling young woman is featured. Below this, there are "Popular Tables" categorized into "Population and Housing" (with links to Annual Population Estimates, Demographic and Housing Estimates, General Housing Characteristics, and General Demographic Characteristics) and "Poverty and Income" (with a link to General Economic Characteristics). Another category is "Age, Race, Sex and Education" (with links to Selected Social Characteristics and Educational Attainment). At the bottom, there is a "News and Notes" section with a "GET EMAIL UPDATES" button and a date of "June 02, 2015".

When to use:
Search all ACS data for
all geographies down to
the block group level

factfinder.census.gov

DataFerrett

The screenshot displays the DataFerrett application window. The main interface includes a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Options, Special, Help), a toolbar, and a central workspace. On the left, there is a 'Select Data Types' panel with options for MicroData, Aggregate Data, Longitudinal Data, and Time Series Data. Below this is a 'Select Dataset(s) to search:' panel with a tree view of datasets. The central workspace shows a 'Ferrett Tabulation' window with a table of data. The table has columns for Topic, C1, C2, C7, C8, C9, and C10. The rows represent different states and the District of Columbia, with columns for Total, Not a U.S. citizen, Total US Citizen, Pet Not Citizen, and Pet Citizen. A map of the United States is overlaid on the table, showing the percentage of citizens by state. The map is color-coded according to a legend: 05-07 (1) in light blue, 08-09 (2) in medium blue, 00-01 (4) in dark blue, 02-03 (10) in green, 04-05 (6) in dark green, 06-07 (15) in very dark green, and 08-09 (13) in black. The map also includes insets for Alaska and Hawaii.

Topic	C1	C2	C7	C8	C9	C10
R1	Total	301,461,533	21,425,851	280,035,682	7.11	92.89
R2	Total GEOG-101	301,461,533	21,425,851	280,035,682	7.11	92.89
R3	Alabama	4,633,360	93,120	4,540,240	2.01	97.99
R4	Alaska	683,142				
R5	Arizona	6,324,865				
R6	Arkansas	2,838,143				
R7	California	36,308,527	5,400,000	30,908,527	14.87	85.13
R8	Colorado	4,843,211				
R9	Connecticut	3,494,487				
R10	Delaware	863,832				
R11	District of Columbia	588,433				
R12	Florida	18,222,420	1,822,420	16,400,000	10.00	90.00
R13	Georgia	9,497,667				
R14	Hawaii	1,280,241				
R15	Idaho	1,492,573				
R16	Illinois	12,785,043				
R17	Indiana	6,342,469				
R18	Iowa	2,978,380				
R19	Kansas	2,777,835				
R20	Kentucky	4,252,000				
R21	Louisiana	4,411,546				
R22	Maine	1,316,380				
R23	Maryland	5,637,418				
R24	Massachusetts	6,511,176				
R25	Michigan	10,039,208				
R26	Minnesota	5,188,581				
R27	Mississippi	2,922,240				
R28	Missouri	5,904,382	1,200,774	4,703,608	23.00	77.00
R29	Montana	956,257	8,426	947,831	0.88	99.12
R30	Nebraska	1,772,124	66,938	1,705,186	3.78	96.22

When to use:
 Discover and analyze regularly updated data on people, housing, jobs, economics, health, education, and government to create dynamic tables, graphs, and maps for innovative websites and reports.

dataferrett.census.gov

<http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/pums/dataferrett.html>

Application Programming Interface (API)

Developers

API Forum

About this Section

App Gallery

Available APIs

Geography

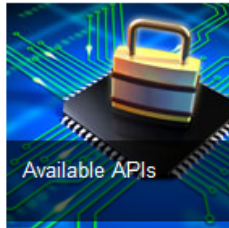
News

Terms of Service

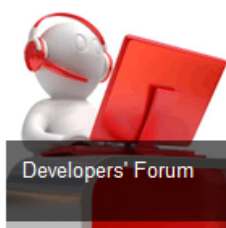
Updates

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](#)



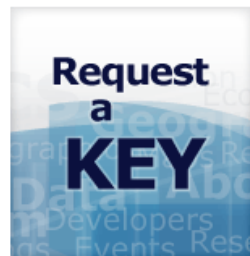
Available APIs



Developers' Forum



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Latest

[Available APIs](#)

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New ACS 5-Year Estimates: See How Young Adults Today Compare

December 04, 2014

Young adults today are more likely to be foreign born and speak a language other than English at home, compared with young adults in 1980.

census.gov/developers

Continue the Conversation



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[#ACSdata](#)



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Source us:

“U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey”

YYYY-YYYY American Community Survey 1/3/5-year estimates/statistics/data release

- *2013 American Community Survey 1-year estimates,*
- *2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year data release)*

Contact Information

Visit the ACS/PRCS website:
census.gov/acs

Contact by telephone:
1-800-923-8282

Submit a question:
<https://ask.census.gov>

Email updates:
[https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/
USCENSUS/subscriber/new](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCENSUS/subscriber/new)