2. HOW IS THE PRCS DIFFERENT FROM THE ACS?

The data collected in the Puerto Rico Community Survey (PRCS) are similar to those collected in the American Community Survey (ACS) for the 50 states and the District of Columbia, but there are also some important differences between the two surveys.

With the ACS, the initial mailings sent to U.S. addresses are printed in English and residents can receive Spanishlanguage materials upon request. By comparison, Puerto Rico addresses initially receive PRCS mailings that are printed in Spanish, although residents can request English-language materials. English and Spanish versions of sample PRCS questionnaires are available on the U.S. Census Bureau's Web site.¹⁰

The PRCS form includes several questions that are modified from those on the ACS to account for cultural and geographic differences between Puerto Rico and the U.S. mainland.¹¹ For example, Question 4 in the Housing section asks the amount of land that a house, apartment, or mobile home occupies. Whereas the acre is the unit of measurement in the ACS, the cuerda (or "Spanish acre," equal to .971 acres) is the measurement unit in the PRCS (see Figure 2.1).¹²

Figure 2.1. ACS and PRCS Questions on Property Size						
2016 ACS Questionnaire 2	2016 PRCS Questionnaire					
4 How many acres is this house or mobile home on?	4 How many cuerdas is this house or mobile home on?					
Less than 1 acre \rightarrow SKIP to question 6a	□ Less than 1 cuerda \rightarrow SKIP to question 6a					
1 to 9.9 acres	1 to 9.9 cuerdas					
10 or more acres	10 or more cuerdas					
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS and PRCS Questionnaires, <www.census.gov acs="" methodology<br="" programs-surveys="">/questionnaire-archive.2016.html>.</www.census.gov>						

While the ACS asks if respondents have "hot and cold running water," the PRCS asks if they have "running water" and "a water heater," as it is less common to have hot water heaters in Puerto Rico (see Figure 2.2).

2016 ACS Questionnaire			2016 PRCS Questionnaire			
Does this house, apartment, or mobile		le	7 Does this house, apartment, or mobile			
home have -	Yes	No	home have -	Yes	No	
a. hot and cold running water?			a. running water?			
b. a bathtub or shower?			b. a water heater?			
c. a sink with a faucet?d. a stove or range?e. a refrigerator?			c. a bathtub or shower?			
	-		d. a sink with a faucet?			
			e. a stove or range?			
			f. a refrigerator?			
f. telephone service from which you can both make and receive calls? <i>Include</i>			g. telephone service from which you can both make			

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS and PRCS Questionnaires, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology /questionnaire-archive.2016.html>.

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), Questionnaire Archive, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology /questionnaire-archive.html>.

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Design and Methodology Report (January 2014), p. 56, https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology/design_and_methodology/acs_design_methodology_report_2014.pdf.

¹² U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS and PRCS Questionnaires, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology/questionnaire-archive.2016 .html>.

In the ACS, Question 14 asks whether anyone in the household received benefits through the Food Stamp Program or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (see Figure 2.3). Puerto Rico operates a "Nutritional Assistance Program" in place of SNAP, and eligibility requirements and benefit amounts are determined by Puerto Rico, rather than the federal government.

Figure 2.3. ACS and PRCS Questions on Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits					
2016 ACS Questionnaire	2016 PRCS Questionnaire				
 IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, did you or any member of this household receive benefits from the Food Stamp Program or SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)? Do NOT include WIC, the School Lunch Program, or assistance from food banks. Yes No 	 IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, did you or any member of this household receive benefits from the Nutritional Assistance Program? Do NOT include WIC, the School Lunch Program, or assistance from food banks. Yes No 				
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS and PRCS Questio	nnaires, <www.census.gov acs="" methodology<="" programs-surveys="" td=""></www.census.gov>				

Figure 2.4 shows additional PRCS modifications to the questions on birthplace (nativity), citizenship, and year of entry. For these questions, the differences are in the geographic areas emphasized in the question wording or response options. For example, the "year of entry" question in the ACS asks when a respondent came to live in the United States. In the PRCS, that same question asks when someone came to live in Puerto Rico.

Where was this person born?	Where was this person born?
In the United States – Print name of state.	In the United States – Print name of state.
Outside the United States – Print name of foreign country, or Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.	 Outside the United States – Print Puerto Rico or name of foreign country, or U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, etc.
Is this person a citizen of the United States? Yes, born in the United States → SKIP to question 10a	 8 Is this person a citizen of the United States? ☐ Yes, born in Puerto Rico → SKIP to question 10a
Yes, born in Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Northern Marianas	Yes, born in a U.S. state, District of Columbia, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Northern Marianas
Yes, born abroad of U.S. citizen parent or parents	Vers, born abroad of U.S. citizen parent or parents
Yes, U.S. citizen by naturalization – <i>Print year</i> of naturalization	Yes, U.S. citizen by naturalization – Print year of naturalization
No, not a U.S. citizen	No, not a U.S. citizen
When did this person come to live in the United States? If this person came to live in the United States more than once, print latest year. Year	When did this person come to live in Puerto Rico? If this person came to live in Puerto Rico more than once, print latest year. Year

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS and PRCS Questionnaires, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology/questionnaire-archive.2016.html>.

Similarly, questions on migration and place of residence 1 year ago differ slightly between the two surveys (see Figure 2.5).

016 A	CS Questionnaire		2016 PRCS Questionnaire
	l this person live in this ho ear ago?	ouse or apartment	a. Did this person live in this house or apartment 1 year ago?
	 Person is under 1 year old → SKIP to question 16 Yes, this house → SKIP to question 16 No, outside the United States and Puerto Rico - Print name of foreign cour or U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, etc., below then SKIP to question 16 No, different house in the United States Puerto Rico Where did this person live 1 year ago? Address (Number and street name) 		 Person is under 1 year old → SKIP to question 16 Yes, this house → SKIP to question 16 No, outside Puerto Rico and the United States - Print name of foreign country, or U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, etc., below; then SKIP to question 16. No, different house in Puerto Rico or the United States b. Where did this person live 1 year ago? Address Development or condominium name
			Number and street name
Na	me of city, town, or post (office	Number and street name Name of city, town, or post office
Na	me of city, town, or post o me of U.S. county or nicipio in Puerto Rico	office	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS and PRCS Questionnaires, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology /questionnaire-archive.2016.html>.

The "place of work" question in the ACS asks the respondent to name the county and state of their work location, while the same question in the PRCS asks the person to name the Puerto Rico municipio as the first option, while listing the U.S. county and state as an alternative (see Figure 2.6).¹³

2016 ACS Questionnaire	2016 PRCS Questionnaire
At what location did this person work LAST WEEK? If this person worked at more than one location, print where he or she worked most last week. a. Address (Number and street name)	 At what location did this person work LAST WEEK? If this person worked at more than one location, print where he or she worked most last week. a. Address Development or condominium name Number and street name
If the exact address is not known, give a description of the location such as the building name or the nearest street or intersection. b. Name of city, town, or post office	If the exact address is not known, give a description of the location such as the building name or the nearest street or intersection. b. Name of city, town, or post office
 c. Is the work location inside the limits of that city or town? Yes No, outside the city/town limits d. Name of county 	c. Is the work location inside the limits of tha city or town? Yes No, outside the city/town limits d. Name of municipio in Puerto Rico or U.S. county
e. Name of U.S. state or foreign country	e. Enter Puerto Rico or name of U.S. state or foreign country
f. ZIP Code	f. ZIP Code

¹³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), Questionnaire Archive, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology /questionnaire-archive.html>.

There are also differences in the ACS and PRCS questions on the means of transportation to work. The ACS includes an option for "Streetcar or trolley car" while "Carro público," or "public car" is included in the list of options in the PRCS (see Figure 2.7).

2016 ACS Questionna	ire	2016	PRCS Questionnai	re	
How did this person usually WEEK? If this person usually method of transportation duri the box of the one used for m	used more than one ng the trip, mark (X)	WE	w did this person usual EK? If this person usually thod of transportation dur box of the one used for n	used	more than one e trip, mark (X)
Car, truck, or van	Motorcycle		Car, truck, or van		Motorcycle
Bus or trolley bus	Bicycle		Bus or trolley bus		Bicycle
Streetcar or trolley car	Walked		Carro público		Walked
Subway or elevated	Worked at home → SKIP		Subway or elevated		Worked at
Railroad	to question 39a		Railroad		home → SKIP to question 39a
Ferryboat	Other method		Ferryboat		Other method
Taxicab			Taxicab		etter method

Finally, Figure 2.8 shows a minor difference in the ACS and PRCS questions on class of worker. The ACS questionnaire includes "county" as an example of a local government employee, while the PRCS questionnaire refers to both "county" and "municipio" employees.

Figure 2.8. ACS and PRCS Questions on Class of Worker								
2	2016 ACS Questionnaire			2016 PRCS Questionnaire				
•	Was this person – Mark (X) ONE box.		Was this person - Mark (X) ONE box.					
		an employee of a PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT company or business, or of an individual, for wages, salary, or commissions?			an employee of a PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT company or business, or of an individual, for wages, salary, or commissions?			
		an employee of a PRIVATE NOT-FOR-PROFIT, tax-exempt, or charitable organization?			an employee of a PRIVATE NOT-FOR-PROFIT, tax-exempt, or charitable organization?			
		a local GOVERNMENT employee (city, county, etc.)?			a local GOVERNMENT employee (city, county, municipio, etc.)?			
		a state GOVERNMENT employee?			a state GOVERNMENT employee?			
		a Federal GOVERNMENT employee?			a Federal GOVERNMENT employee?			
		SELF-EMPLOYED in own NOT INCORPORATED business, professional practice, or farm?			SELF-EMPLOYED in own NOT INCORPORATED business, professional practice, or farm?			
		SELF-EMPLOYED in own INCORPORATED business, professional practice, or farm?			SELF-EMPLOYED in own INCORPORATED business, professional practice, or farm?			
		working WITHOUT PAY in family business or farm?			working WITHOUT PAY in family business or farm?			

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS and PRCS Questionnaires, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology /questionnaire-archive.2016.html>.

Differences in Data Collection Methods and Population Controls

Unlike the ACS, the PRCS does not have an Internet response option. As a result, the Census Bureau uses a different mail strategy to encourage households to complete the PRCS. About 4 days before the initial mail package, addresses selected for the PRCS receive a prenotice letter, which addresses selected for the ACS do not receive. The initial mail package for the PRCS contains the full questionnaire, rather than an instruction card for completing the survey online, as is the case for the ACS mailing. In both cases, the replacement mail package for nonrespondents is sent approximately 3 weeks after the initial mailing. In addition, the Census Bureau sends only two reminder postcards for the PRCS, compared with three reminders for the ACS (two pressure seal letters and one postcard).

As with most household surveys, the PRCS data are controlled so that the number of people in certain categories agree with the Census Bureau's official estimates. The PRCS, like the ACS, uses a weighting method to ensure that estimates are consistent with official Census Bureau population control totals. However, there are minor differences in the controls used in the ACS and the PRCS. ACS estimates are controlled to the Census Bureau's July 1 population estimate totals by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin, while PRCS estimates are controlled to population estimates by age and sex only. Additionally, while both ACS and PRCS estimates are controlled to the population at the county (or municipio) level, they are not controlled to the sub-county level in Puerto Rico—unlike in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.¹⁴

Housing unit totals in the ACS are controlled to the Census Bureau's mid-year totals, but there are currently no housing unit controls available for Puerto Rico.¹⁵ This is because the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program only produces July 1 housing unit estimates for the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

More information about PRCS and ACS methods is available in the Census Bureau's Design and Methodology Report.¹⁶

¹⁴ Starting with the 2009 surveys, ACS estimates of the total population of incorporated places (self-governing cities, towns, or villages) and minor civil divisions (such as county precincts) are also adjusted so that they are consistent with official population estimates.

¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Design and Methodology Report (January 2014), pp. 153–154, <www.census.gov/programs -surveys/acs/methodology/design-and-methodology.html>.

¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Design and Methodology Report (January 2014), <www.census.gov/programs-surveys /acs/methodology/design-and-methodology.html>.