

Response Consistency between the Ancestry Question and the Detailed Race and Ethnicity Questions from the 2016 American Community Survey Content Test

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American Community Survey (ACS) Basics

- Conducted by US Census Bureau
- Samples 3.5 million addresses in 12 panels per year
 - Visit 20,000 Group Quarter facilities and sample approximately 194,000 residents each year
- Data previously collected on the decennial long form
- Estimates for small areas and small population groups for 35+ topics
- Two types of releases each year
 - 1-year estimates (12 months of data)
 - 5-year estimates (60 months of data)

The image displays three overlapping forms from the American Community Survey. The top form is titled 'Housing' and contains questions such as 'Which best describes this building?', 'How many acres is this house or mobile home on?', and 'Does this house, apartment, or mobile home have...'. The middle form is titled 'Start Here' and provides instructions for respondents. The bottom form is titled 'Welcome to the American Community Survey' and features a barcode, a 'Please Log In' section with a 'User ID' field, and a 'Log In' button. The bottom form also includes a warning about the confidentiality of the data.

Respondent Experience Concerns

Production Hispanic Origin/Ethnicity Question

5 Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – *Print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.* ↴

Production Ancestry Question

13 What is this person's ancestry or ethnic origin?

(For example: Italian, Jamaican, African Am., Cambodian, Cape Verdean, Norwegian, Dominican, French Canadian, Haitian, Korean, Lebanese, Polish, Nigerian, Mexican, Taiwanese, Ukrainian, and so on.)

Production Race Question

6 What is Person 1's race? Mark (X) one or more boxes.

- White
- Black or African Am.
- American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.* ↴

<input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/> Samoan
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian – <i>Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.</i> ↴		<input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander – <i>Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.</i> ↴

- Some other race – *Print race.* ↴

ACS Content Test Basics

- Tests changes to questions
- Occurs about every 5 years
- Split-sample, separate from production
- Nationally representative sample of 70,000 addresses
- ACS Content Test tested both separate and combined race/ethnicity questions
 - Presentation focuses on separate format, proposed for 2020

Respondent Experience Concerns

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- White
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<input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/> Samoan
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian – <i>Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander – <i>Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.</i>

Some other race – *Print race.*

Content Test Version

Content Test Hispanic Origin/Ethnicity Question

5 **Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?** Mark all boxes that apply **AND** print origins. Note, you may report more than one group.

- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – Print details, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc. ↴

Content Test Race Question

6 **What is Person 1's race?** Mark all boxes that apply **AND** print origins in the spaces below. Note, you may report more than one group.

- White** – Print details, for example, German, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc. ↴
- Black or African Am.** – Print details, for example, African American, Jamaican, Nigerian, etc. ↴
- American Indian or Alaska Native** – Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Mayan, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, etc. ↴
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Asian Indian
- Other Asian – Print details, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc. ↴
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Japanese
- Native Hawaiian
- Samoan
- Chamorro
- Other Pacific Islander – Print details, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc. ↴
- Some other race** – Print race(s) or origin(s). ↴

Content Test Ancestry Question

13 **What is this person's ancestry or ethnic origin?**

(For example: Italian, Jamaican, African Am., Cambodian, Cape Verdean, Norwegian, Dominican, French Canadian, Haitian, Korean, Lebanese, Polish, Nigerian, Mexican, Taiwanese, Ukrainian, and so on.)

Content Test Version

Content Test Hispanic Origin/Ethnicity Question

5 Is Person 1 of **Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?** Mark all boxes that apply **AND** print origins. Note, you may report more than one group.

- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – Print details, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, etc. ↴

Content Test Ancestry Question

13 What is this person's ancestry or ethnic origin?

(For example: Italian, Jamaican, African Am., Cambodian, Cape Verdean, Norwegian, Dominican, French Canadian, Haitian, Korean, Lebanese, Polish, Nigerian, Mexican, Taiwanese, Ukrainian, and so on.)

72% direct match rate

Content Test Race Question

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 Some other race – Print race(s) or origin(s). ↴

Main Limitations

- ACS CT data for Race and Ethnicity were unedited, and did not include weighting adjustments for seasonal variations in ACS response patterns, nonresponse bias, or undercoverage bias
- ACS CT was not carried out in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, or in Group Quarters
 - We excluded these groups from ACS Production estimates when making comparisons

Research Objectives

1. To examine differences between group estimates made from ancestry data compared with group estimates made from race and ethnicity data
2. To find out what percent of each group had:
 - (1) matching information in both race/ethnicity and ancestry responses,
 - (2) information provided in only the detailed race response, or
 - (3) information provided in only the ancestry response

Research Objective 1

To find out how different ancestry group estimates are from similar estimates made with detailed race/ethnicity data

Data: Compared 2016 ACS 1-year production national ancestry estimates to ACS CT estimates using detailed race/ethnicity data.

Tested differences for 106 ancestry groups

Research Objective 1

1. To examine differences between group estimates made from ancestry data compared with group estimates made from race and ethnicity data

Mexican
Asian Indian
Jamaican
Chinese

Ancestry Data
2016 ACS Production

Race/Ethnicity Data
2016 ACS Content
Test

Mexican
Asian Indian
Jamaican
Chinese

Research Objective 1

To find out how different ancestry group estimates are from similar estimates made with detailed race/ethnicity data

AFF Table B04006. People Reporting Ancestry

19 Additional Groups, criteria-based selection

106 Total Ancestry Groups Tested for Differences

Research Objective 1

To find out how different ancestry group estimates are from similar estimates made with detailed race/ethnicity data

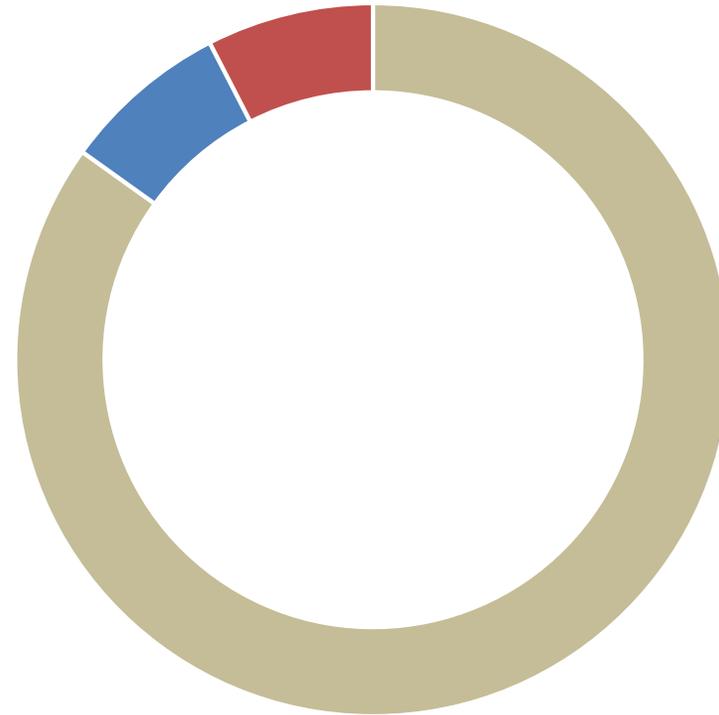
Ancestry: based on self-identification

- Ethnic origins, “roots,” or heritage

Examples: Polish, Egyptian, Pennsylvania Dutch, Cajun

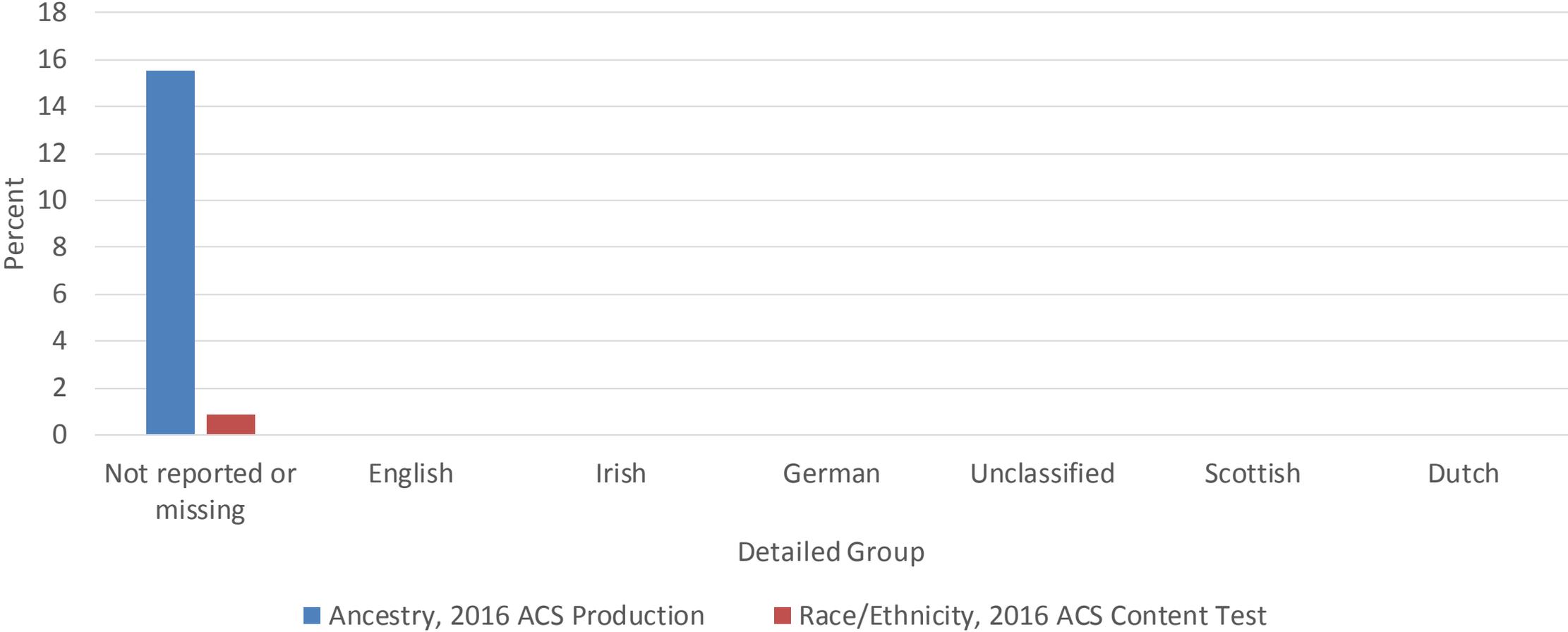
Differences in Detailed Group Estimates

Distribution of Estimates Comparisons between Race/Ethnicity and Ancestry (N=106)

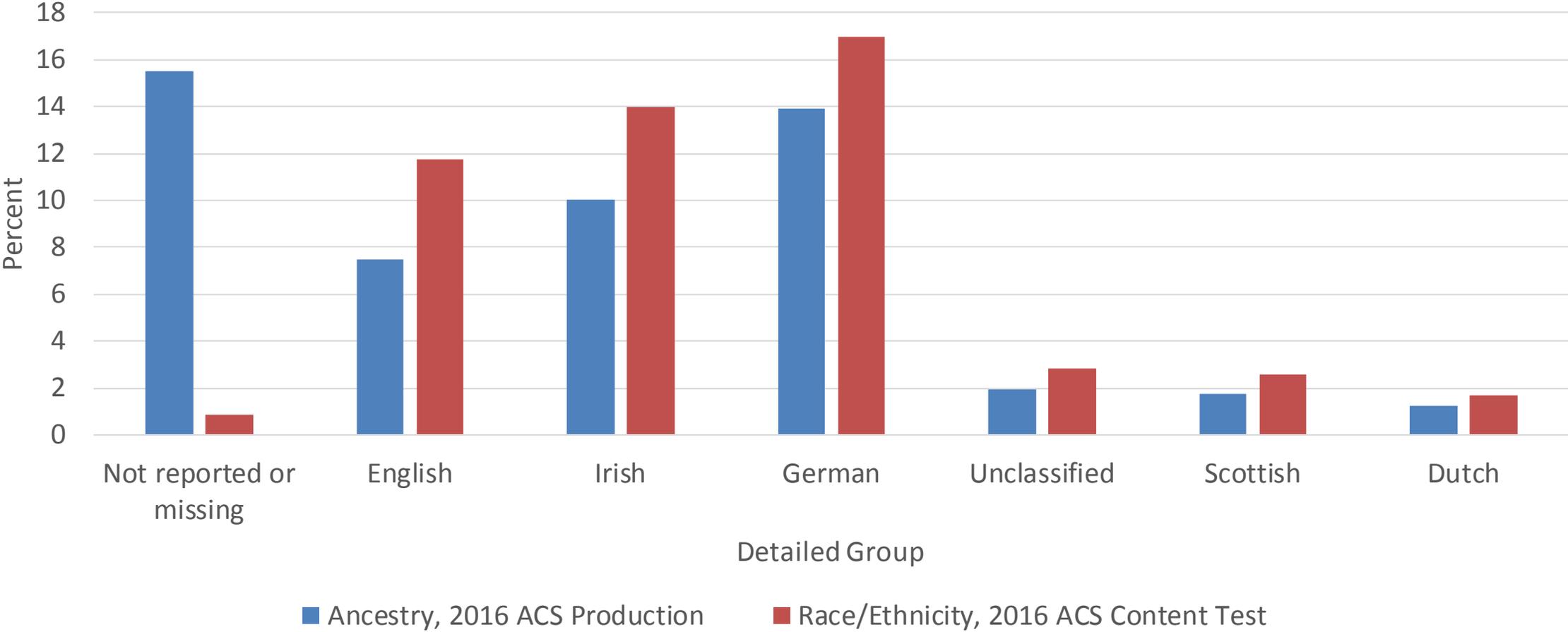


■ No Change ■ Increased ■ Decreased

Differences in Detailed Group Estimates



Differences in Detailed Group Estimates

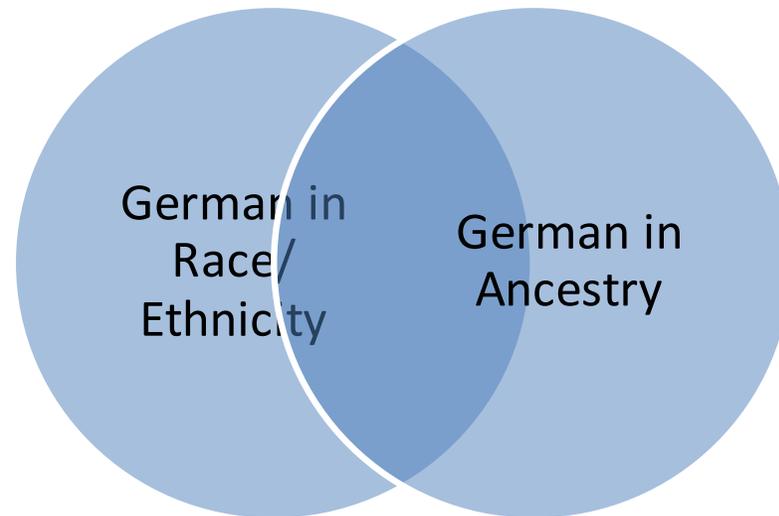


Differences in Detailed Reporting

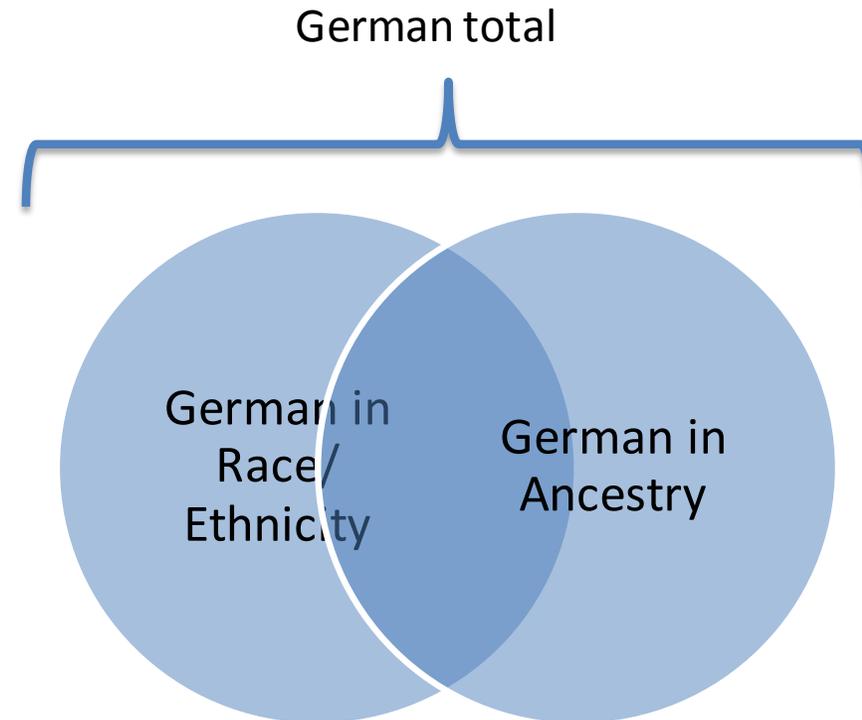
Differences in Detailed Reporting for Major OMB Race/Ethnicity Groups

Ancestry/Detailed Race Group	Ancestry Data, 2016 ACS Production	Race/Ethnicity Data, 2016 ACS Content Test	Difference	Adjusted P- Value
Detailed, overall	70.8	74.1	3.3	<0.01
White	42.1	44.7	2.5	<0.01
Black or African American	10.0	9.2	-0.8	0.42
Hispanic	14.3	16.0	1.7	0.01
Asian	5.4	6.7	1.4	<0.01
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.79
Some other race	1.3	1.6	0.3	0.19

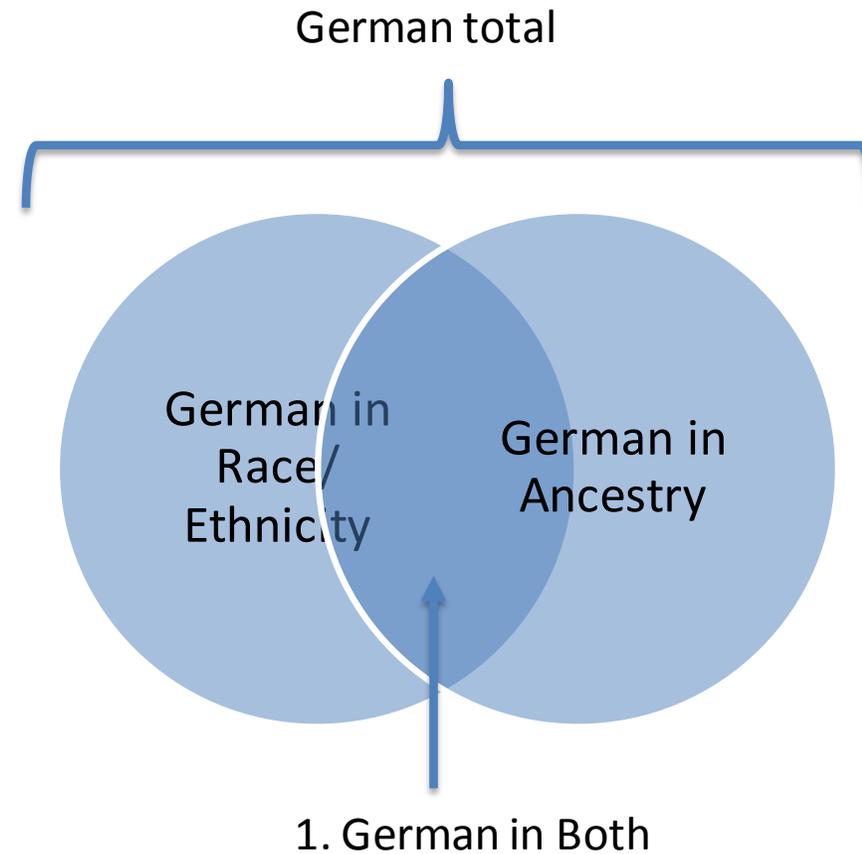
Research Objective 2: Measuring Response Consistency



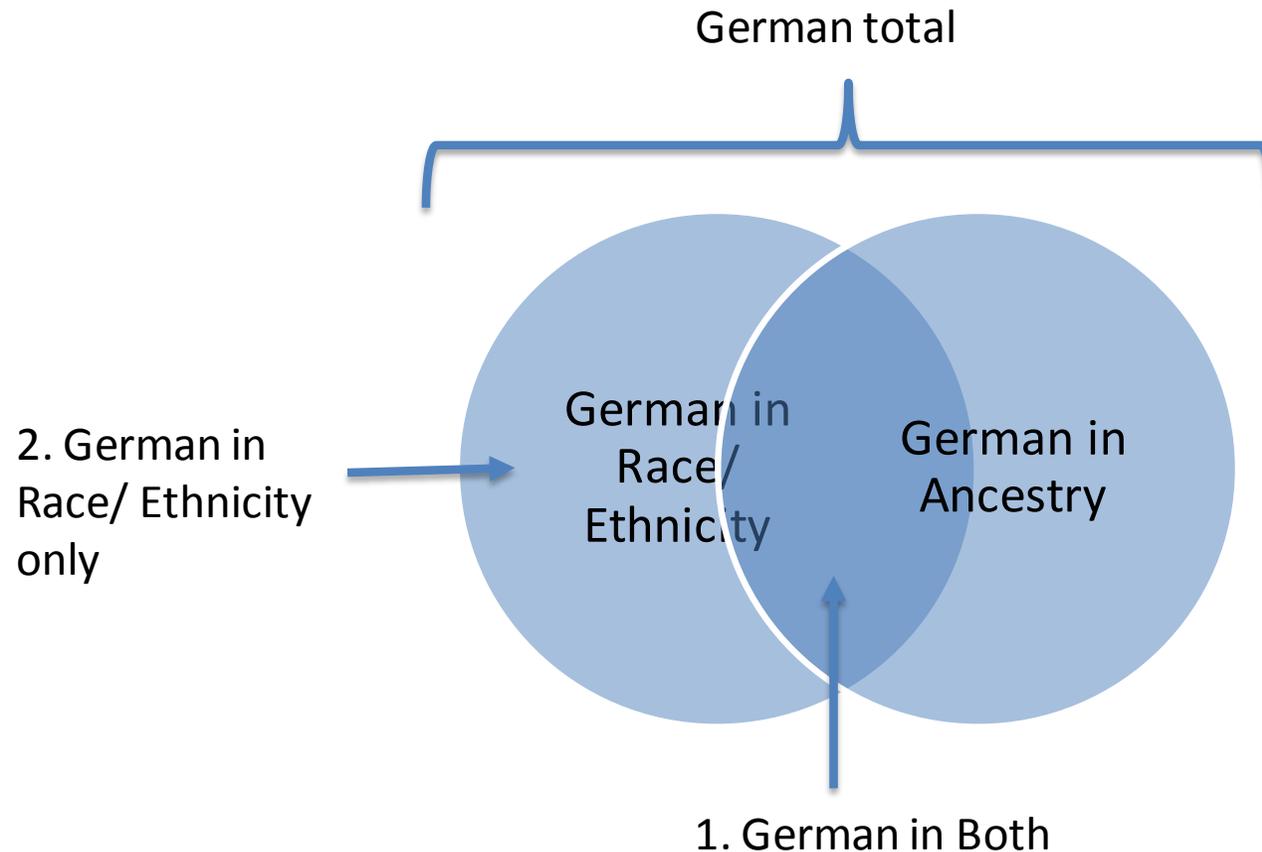
Research Objective 2: Measuring Response Consistency



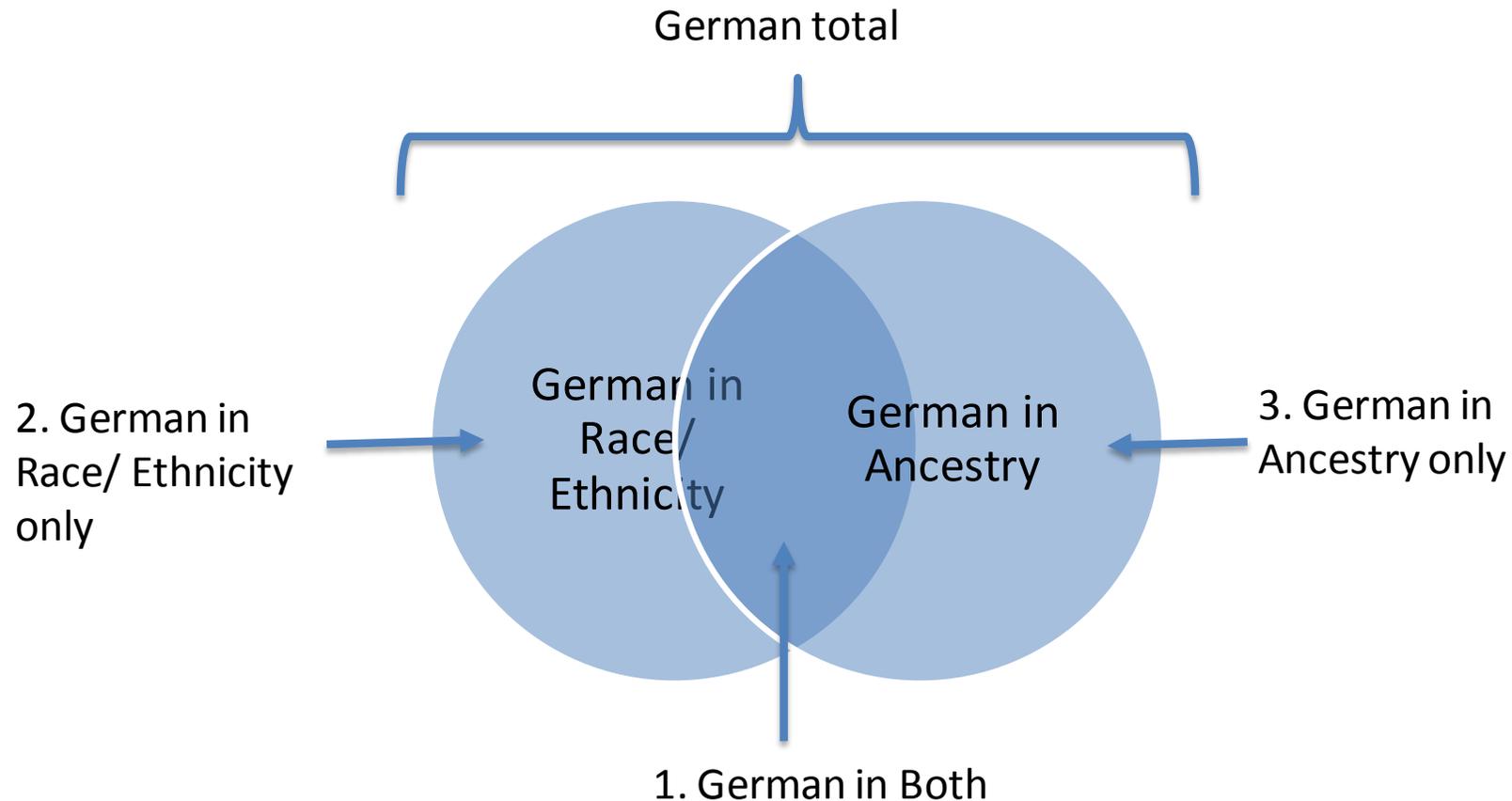
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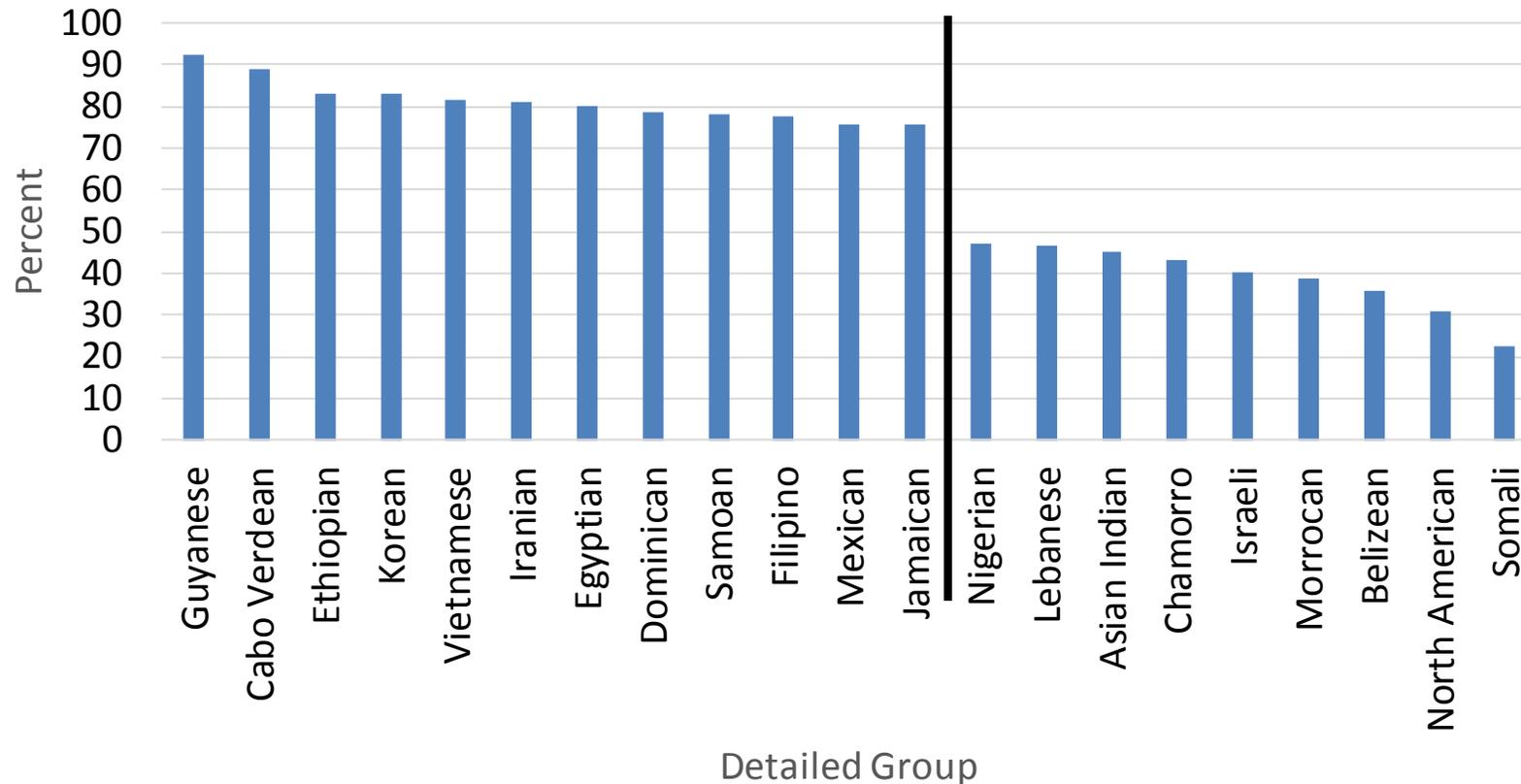
To find out what percent of each group had:

- (1) matching information in both race/ethnicity and ancestry responses,
- (2) information provided in only the detailed race/ethnicity response, or
- (3) information provided in only the ancestry response?

Data: Race/Ethnicity and Ancestry data from the 2016 ACS Content Test, 38 detailed groups compared

1. Reporting in Both Race/Ethnicity and Ancestry

Groups with response consistency above 75 percent or below 50 percent

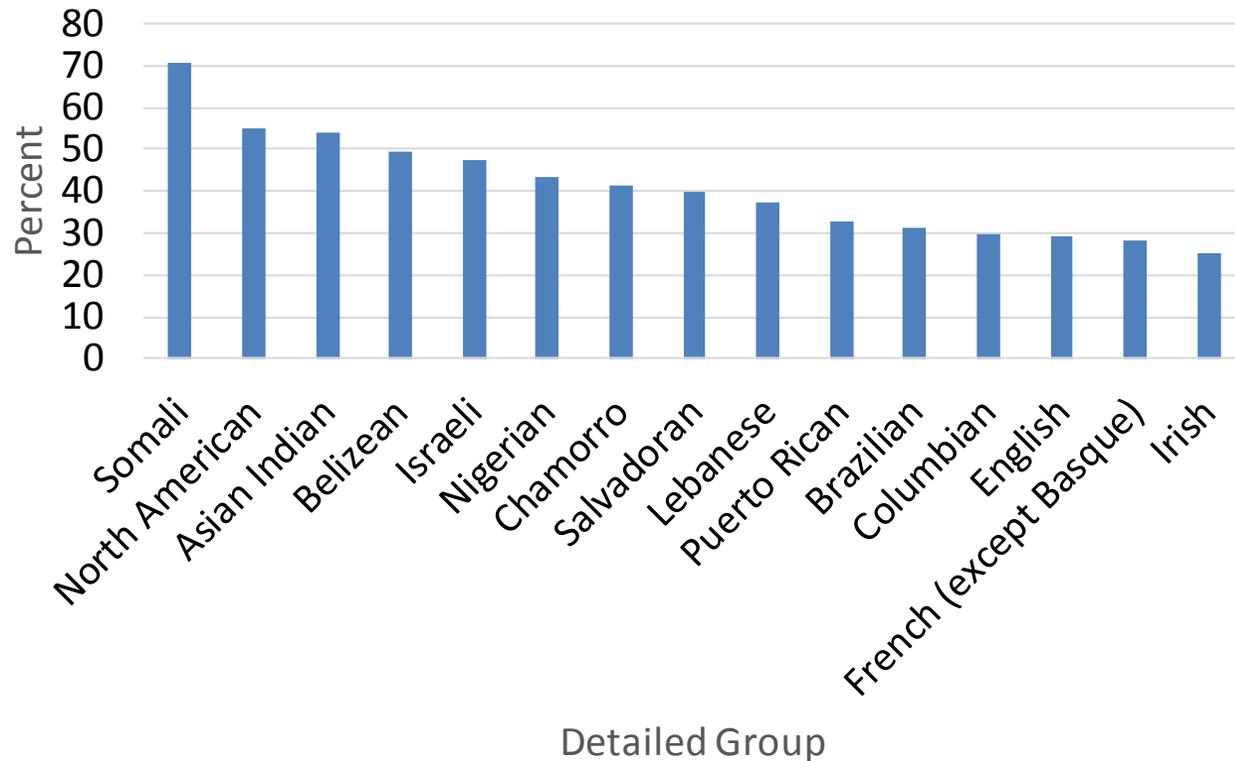


- Fair amount of response consistency
- Out of 38 groups:
- 12 with at least 75%
 - 9 with less than 50%

Source: 2016 ACS Content Test, Control Treatment.

2. Reporting in Only Race/Ethnicity

Groups that had at least 25 Percent Respond in Race/Ethnicity Only

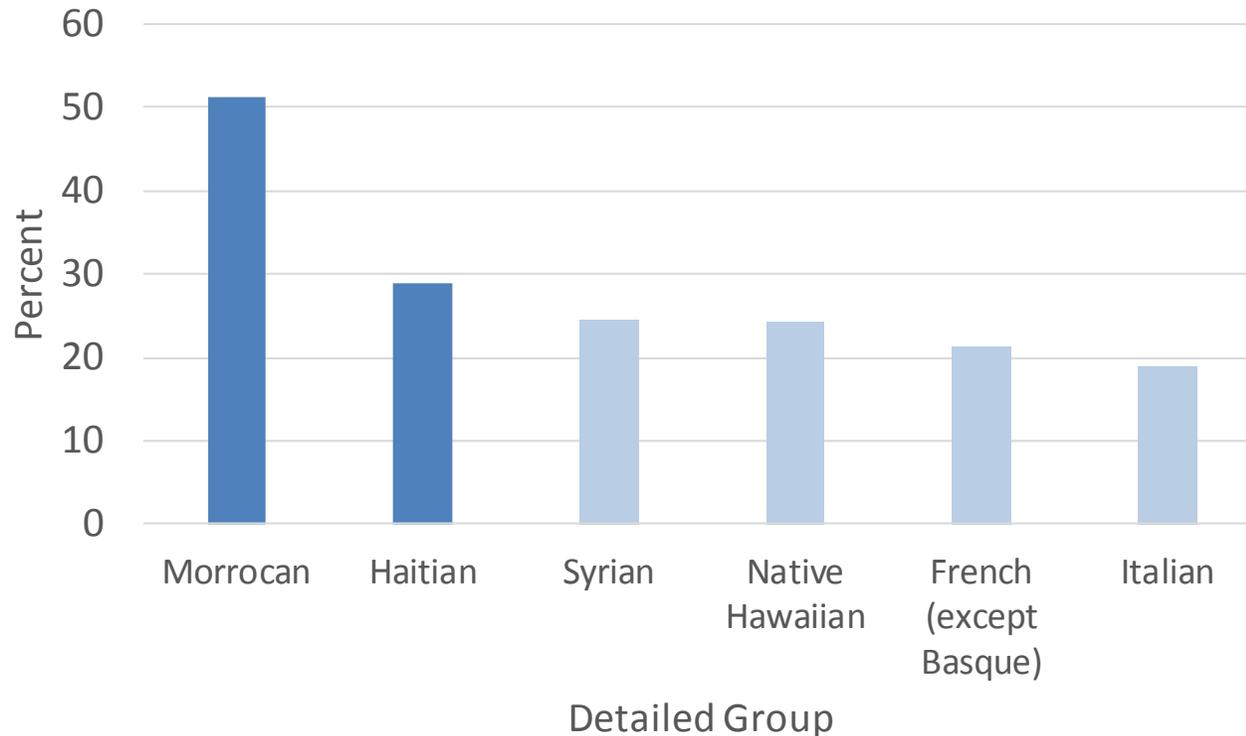


- 15 groups have at least 25%
- Wide geographic and size variation

Source: 2016 ACS Content Test, Control Treatment.

3. Reporting in Only Ancestry

Groups with Highest Percent Responding in Ancestry Only



- 2 groups have at least 25%
- Both groups classified as Black ancestries

Source: 2016 ACS Content Test, Control Treatment.

Summary

- Most groups showed little or no difference
- ACS CT race/ethnicity received more detailed responses overall
- Fair consistency in responses between race/ethnicity and ancestry
- When only one response, race/ethnicity more comprehensive for more groups
- On balance, detailed race/ethnicity data not vastly distinct from ancestry data

Potential Explanations

- Up to 10 write-ins per group in Race/Ethnicity, 2 in ancestry
- Some evidence of example group effects
- Location in the questionnaire
- Respondent burden from answering ethnicity, race, then ancestry

Next Steps

- Cognitive testing to more thoroughly understand relationship between race/ethnicity and ancestry responses
- Potential consideration of removal of the ancestry question would be an executive decision made in conjunction with needs of stakeholders

References

¹ Harth, Jacquelyn, Angela Buchanan, Derek Breese, Merarys Rios, Hyon B. Shin, Sarah K. Heimel, and Lindsay Longsine. (2017). “2016 American Community Survey Content Test Evaluation Report: Race and Hispanic Origin.” U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from:

https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2017/acs/2017_Harth_01.pdf

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