

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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## CENSUS BUREAU REPORTS ON RESIDENTIAL VACANCIES AND HOMEOWNERSHIP

National vacancy rates in the third quarter 2009 were 11.1 ( $\pm 0.4$ ) percent for rental housing and 2.6 ( $\pm 0.1$ ) percent for homeowner housing, the Department of Commerce's Census Bureau announced today. The Census Bureau said the rental vacancy rate was higher than the third quarter 2008 rate (9.9 percent) and higher than the rate last quarter (10.6 percent). For homeowner vacancies, the current rate was lower than the third quarter 2008 rate (2.8 percent), but was not statistically different from the rate last quarter (2.5 percent). The homeownership rate at 67.6 ( $\pm 0.5$ ) percent for the current quarter was not statistically different from the third quarter 2008 rate (67.9 percent) or from last quarter's rate (67.4 percent).

Table 1. **Rental and Homeowner Vacancy Rates for the United States: 1996 to 2009** (in percent)

	Rental vacancy rate				Homeowner vacancy rate			
Year	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2009....	10.1	10.6	↓ 11.1		2.7	2.5	↓ 2.6	
2008....	10.1	10.0	9.9	10.1	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.9
2007....	10.1	9.5	9.8	9.6	2.8	2.6	2.7	2.8
2006....	9.5	9.6	9.9	9.8	2.1	2.2	2.5	2.7
2005....	10.1	9.8	9.9	9.6	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.0
2004....	10.4	10.2	10.1	10.0	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8
2003....	9.4	9.6	9.9	10.2	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.8
2002 <sup>a</sup> ..	9.1	8.4	9.0	9.3	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
2002....	9.1	8.5	9.1	9.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
2001....	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.8	1.5	1.8	1.9	1.8
2000.....	7.9	8.0	8.2	7.8	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6
1999.....	8.2	8.1	8.2	7.9	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6
1998.....	7.7	8.0	8.2	7.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8
1997.....	7.5	7.9	7.9	7.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.7
1996.....	7.9	7.8	8.0	7.7	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.7

<sup>a</sup>Revised in 2002 to incorporate information collected in Census 2000.

NOTE: The estimates in this report are based on responses from a sample of the population and may differ from actual values because of sampling variability or other factors. As a result, apparent differences between the estimates for two or more groups may not be statistically significant. All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing, and when significant, they are significant at the 90-percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. The data in this report are from the monthly samples of the Housing Vacancy Survey, which is a supplement to the Current Population Survey. The populations represented (the population universe) are all housing units (vacancy rates) and the civilian non-institutional population of the United States (homeownership rate). For an explanation of how the rates are calculated, please see pages 11-12.

For rental housing by area, the third quarter 2009 vacancy rates inside principal cities (11.2 percent), in the suburbs (11.2 percent), and outside Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA's), 10.6 percent were not statistically different from each other. The rental vacancy rates inside principal cities and in the suburbs were higher than the corresponding rates one year ago, while the rate outside MSA's showed no statistical change from the third quarter 2008 rate.

The homeowner vacancy rate in principal cities (3.0 percent) was higher than in the suburbs (2.3 percent) and outside MSA's (2.5 percent). The rates outside MSA's and in the suburbs were not statistically different from each other. The homeowner vacancy rates in principal cities and in the suburbs were lower than their respective rates a year ago, while the rate outside MSA's was not statistically different from last year's rate.

Among regions, the rental vacancy rate was highest in the South (14.2 percent) and lowest in the Northeast (7.5 percent). When compared to third quarter 2008, the rental vacancy rates were higher in the Northeast, the South, and the West, while the rate in the Midwest was not statistically different from a year ago.

For third quarter 2009, the regional homeowner vacancy rate in the South (2.8 percent) was higher than in the West (2.4 percent), while the lowest rate was in the Northeast (2.0 percent). The homeowner vacancy rates in the Midwest and the West were lower than a year ago, while rates for the Northeast and the South were not statistically different from their respective rates last year.

**Table 2. Rental and Homeowner Vacancy Rates by Area and Region: Third Quarter 2008 and 2009**  
(in percent)

Area/Region	Rental vacancy rates				Homeowner vacancy rates			
	Third Quarter 2008	Third Quarter 2009	90-Percent Confidence Interval ( $\pm$ ) <sup>a</sup>		Third Quarter 2008	Third Quarter 2009	90-Percent Confidence Interval ( $\pm$ ) <sup>a</sup>	
			of 2009 rate	of difference			of 2009 rate	of difference
United States.....	9.9	11.1	0.4	0.5	2.8	2.6	0.1	0.2
Inside Metropolitan Statistical Areas.....	9.8	11.2	0.5	0.5	2.9	2.6	0.2	0.2
In principal cities.....	10.4	11.2	0.6	0.6	3.5	3.0	0.3	0.4
Not in principal cities (suburbs).....	9.1	11.2	0.7	0.7	2.6	2.3	0.2	0.2
Outside Metropolitan Statistical Areas.....	10.4	10.6	1.5	1.6	2.4	2.5	0.3	0.4
Northeast.....	6.7	7.5	0.7	0.8	2.1	2.0	0.3	0.4
Midwest.....	10.3	10.9	0.8	0.9	2.9	2.6	0.3	0.3
South.....	13.0	14.2	0.9	1.0	3.1	2.8	0.2	0.3
West.....	7.6	9.6	0.8	0.9	2.8	2.4	0.3	0.4

<sup>a</sup>A 90-percent confidence interval is a measure of an estimate's reliability. The larger the confidence interval is, in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. For more information, see page 10.

NOTE: Metropolitan Statistical Area data for 2005 and later are not comparable to earlier data. Beginning in first quarter 2005, the Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey is using the new metropolitan and micropolitan statistical definitions that were announced by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in June 2003, and were based on the application of the 2000 standards to Census 2000 data. The OMB announced updates as of December 2003, based on application of the 2000 standards to more recent Census Bureau estimates. In this report, outside Metropolitan Statistical Areas includes micropolitan and non-metropolitan statistical areas. The December 2003 definitions are available at: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/metrodef.html> and <http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/aboutmetro.html>.

Approximately 85.5 percent of the housing units in the United States in the third quarter 2009 were occupied and 14.5 percent were vacant. The owner-occupied housing units were 57.8 percent of total housing units and renter-occupied units made up 27.7 percent of total housing units in third quarter 2009. Vacant housing units comprised 14.5 percent of total housing units, including 10.9 percent for year-round use, and 3.5 percent for seasonal use. Approximately 3.5 percent of the total units were for rent, 1.5 percent were for sale only, and 5.9 percent were vacant for a variety of other reasons.

**Table 3. Estimates of the Total Housing Inventory for the United States:  
Third Quarter 2008 and 2009**

(Estimates are in thousands and may not add to total, due to rounding)

Type	Third Quarter 2008/r	Third Quarter 2009	90-Percent Confidence Interval ( $\pm$ ) <sup>a</sup>		Percent of total (2009)
			of 2009 estimate	of difference	
All housing units.....	129,160	130,302	(X)	(X)	100
Occupied.....	110,712	111,459	295	267	85.5
Owner.....	75,202	75,339	629	429	57.8
Renter.....	35,509	36,119	546	421	27.7
Vacant.....	18,448	18,843	379	335	14.5
Year-round.....	13,707	14,227	372	319	10.9
For rent.....	3,975	4,588	189	205	3.5
For sale only.....	2,206	1,985	107	138	1.5
Other.....	7,526	7,654	278	245	5.9
Seasonal.....	4,741	4,616	246	217	3.5

<sup>a</sup>A 90-percent confidence interval is a measure of an estimate's reliability. The larger the confidence interval is, in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. For more information, see page 10.

(X) Not Applicable. Since the number of housing units is set equal to an independent national measure, there is no sampling error, and hence no confidence interval.

r/Revised using Vintage 2008 housing unit controls. See note below.

NOTE: Since first quarter 2003, the Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey (CPS/HVS) estimates have been controlled to an independent set of housing unit estimates produced annually by the Population Division from Census 2000 and updated using building permit data, estimates of housing loss, and other administrative record data. Doing so makes the CPS/HVS estimates of housing units more comparable to other Census Bureau housing surveys controlled to these census-based estimates. The housing unit controls affect the estimate of vacant units in the sense that the estimates of total occupied and vacant units sum to the control total. Vacancy *rates* and homeownership *rates* are not affected by this change.

Beginning in the third quarter 2009, the housing inventory estimates are based on vintage 2008 housing unit controls that are projected forward through 2009. The third quarter 2008 housing inventory estimates shown above have been revised, also based on vintage 2008 housing unit controls. The CPS/HVS historical table series from second quarter 2000 through the second quarter 2009 has also been revised based on vintage 2008 housing unit controls. These revised estimates and additional information on terms and definitions can be found at: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/hvs/historic/index.html>

For the methodology used in developing the housing unit estimates used for controls in the CPS/HVS, please see Population Division's website: <http://www.census.gov/popest/topics/methodology/2008-hu-meth.pdf>

The homeownership rate (67.6 percent) for the current quarter was not statistically different from the rate in third quarter 2008 (67.9 percent), or from the rate in second quarter 2009 (67.4 percent).

Table 4. **Homeownership Rates for the United States: 1982 to 2009** (in percent)

Year	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>			
	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
			↓	
2009.....	67.3	67.4	67.6	
2008.....	67.8	68.1	67.9	67.5
2007.....	68.4	68.2	68.2	67.8
2006.....	68.5	68.7	69.0	68.9
2005.....	69.1	68.6	68.8	69.0
2004.....	68.6	69.2	69.0	69.2
2003.....	68.0	68.0	68.4	68.6
2002 <sup>b</sup> .....	67.8	67.6	68.0	68.3
2002.....	67.8	67.6	68.0	68.3
2001.....	67.5	67.7	68.1	68.0
2000.....	67.1	67.2	67.7	67.5
1999.....	66.7	66.6	67.0	66.9
1998.....	65.9	66.0	66.8	66.4
1997.....	65.4	65.7	66.0	65.7
1996.....	65.1	65.4	65.6	65.4
1995.....	64.2	64.7	65.0	65.1
1994.....	63.8	63.8	64.1	64.2
1993 <sup>b</sup> .....	63.7	63.9	64.2	64.2
1993.....	64.2	64.4	64.7	64.6
1992.....	64.0	63.9	64.3	64.4
1991.....	63.9	63.9	64.2	64.2
1990.....	64.0	63.7	64.0	64.1
1989 <sup>c</sup> .....	63.9	63.8	64.1	63.8
1989.....	63.9	63.9	64.0	63.8
1988.....	63.7	63.7	64.0	63.8
1987.....	63.8	63.8	64.2	64.1
1986.....	63.6	63.8	63.8	63.9
1985.....	64.1	64.1	63.9	63.5
1984.....	64.6	64.6	64.6	64.1
1983.....	64.7	64.7	64.8	64.4
1982.....	64.8	64.9	64.9	64.5

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates for the United States generally are 0.3 percent.

<sup>b</sup>Revised in 2002 to incorporate information collected in Census 2000, and in 1993 to reflect the results of the 1990 decennial census.

<sup>c</sup>Revised to reflect edit changes implemented in 1990.

Table 4SA shows the seasonally adjusted homeownership rates for the United States, from 1982 to the present. (Research has shown that seasonality for homeownership rates is present.) When adjusted for seasonal variation, the current homeownership rate (67.4 percent) was not statistically different from the rate in the third quarter 2008 (67.7 percent), or the rate last quarter (67.4 percent).

**Table 4SA. Homeownership Rates for the United States: 1982 to 2009**  
**Seasonally Adjusted** (in percent)

Year	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup> (Seasonally Adjusted)			
	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2009.....	67.5 <sup>d</sup>	67.4 <sup>d</sup>	↓ 67.4	
2008.....	68.0	68.1 <sup>d</sup>	67.7 <sup>d</sup>	67.6
2007.....	68.6 <sup>d</sup>	68.2	68.0	67.8
2006.....	68.6	68.8	68.9	68.8
2005.....	69.2	68.8	68.7	68.9
2004.....	68.7	69.4	68.9	69.0 <sup>d</sup>
2003.....	68.1	68.2	68.3	68.5
2002 <sup>b</sup> .....	67.9	67.8	67.9	68.2
2001.....	67.6	67.9	67.9	67.9
2000.....	67.1	67.3	67.5	67.5
1999.....	66.7	66.7	66.8	66.9
1998.....	66.0	66.1	66.6	66.5
1997.....	65.5	65.7	65.8	65.8
1996.....	65.3	65.4	65.4	65.4
1995.....	64.4	64.7	64.8	65.1
1994.....	64.0	63.9	63.9	64.1
1993 <sup>b</sup> .....	63.9	64.0	64.0	64.1
1992.....	64.1	64.1	64.1	64.3
1991.....	64.0	64.1	64.1	64.1
1990.....	64.1	63.9	63.9	64.0
1989 <sup>c</sup> .....	64.0	63.9	63.9	63.7
1988.....	63.8	63.8	63.8	63.8
1987.....	63.9	63.9	64.1	64.1
1986.....	63.7	63.8	63.7	63.9
1985.....	64.1	64.1	63.8	63.6
1984.....	64.6	64.6	64.5	64.3
1983.....	64.7	64.7	64.6	64.6
1982.....	64.8	65.0	64.7	64.7

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates for the United States generally are 0.3 percent.

<sup>b</sup>Revised in 2002 to incorporate information collected in Census 2000, and in 1993 to reflect the results of the 1990 decennial census.

<sup>c</sup>Revised to reflect edit changes implemented in 1990.

<sup>d</sup>Revised as a result of seasonality computation for this quarter.

For third quarter 2009, the Midwest (71.6 percent) had the highest homeownership rate. The South was second with a homeownership rate of 69.7 percent. The homeownership rates were lowest in the Northeast (64.0 percent) and West (62.7 percent), although the 64.0 percent and the 62.7 percent were not statistically different from each other. When compared to third quarter 2008, the regional homeownership rates were not statistically different from their corresponding rates last year.

**Table 5. Homeownership Rates for the United States and Regions: 2004 to 2009 (in percent)**

	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>				
Year/Quarter	United States	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
2009					
Third Quarter.....	67.6	64.0	71.6	69.7	62.7
Second Quarter.....	67.4	64.3	70.5	70.0	62.5
First Quarter.....	67.3	63.7	70.7	69.6	62.8
2008					
Fourth Quarter.....	67.5	64.0	71.4	69.8	62.7
Third Quarter.....	67.9	64.4	71.9	69.9	63.5
Second Quarter.....	68.1	65.3	71.7	70.2	63.0
First Quarter.....	67.8	64.7	72.0	69.7	62.8
2007					
Fourth Quarter.....	67.8	64.6	71.7	70.0	62.7
Third Quarter.....	68.2	65.2	71.9	70.1	63.5
Second Quarter.....	68.2	65.4	71.8	69.9	64.1
First Quarter.....	68.4	64.8	72.2	70.6	63.6
2006					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.9	65.3	73.0	70.8	64.5
Third Quarter.....	69.0	65.5	72.8	70.6	65.3
Second Quarter.....	68.7	65.4	72.5	70.4	64.7
First Quarter.....	68.5	64.7	72.5	70.4	64.4
2005					
Fourth Quarter.....	69.0	65.4	72.8	71.1	64.6
Third Quarter.....	68.8	65.1	73.3	70.6	64.2
Second Quarter.....	68.6	64.7	73.4	70.4	63.8
First Quarter.....	69.1	65.4	73.1	71.1	64.9
2004					
Fourth Quarter.....	69.2	65.2	73.7	71.5	63.9
Third Quarter.....	69.0	64.4	73.8	71.0	64.7
Second Quarter.....	69.2	65.4	74.2	70.9	64.5
First Quarter.....	68.6	65.1	73.5	70.3	63.7

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by region generally are 0.6 percent.

The homeownership rate by age of householder for third quarter 2009 was highest for those age 65 years and over (80.9 percent) and lowest for the under 35 years of age group (39.8 percent). The rate for the under 35 group was lower than a year ago and the rate for 65 years and over was higher than last year, while rates for the other age groups were not statistically different from their corresponding rates in third quarter 2008.

**Table 6. Homeownership Rates by Age of Householder: 2004 to 2009** (in percent)

Year/Quarter	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>					
	United States	Under 35 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	55 to 64 years	65 years and over
2009						
Third Quarter.....	67.6	39.8	66.5	74.5	79.4	80.9
Second Quarter....	67.4	39.0	66.8	74.5	79.9	80.4
First Quarter.....	67.3	39.8	65.7	74.6	79.8	80.4
2008						
Fourth Quarter.....	67.5	40.3	66.6	74.5	79.7	80.4
Third Quarter.....	67.9	41.0	67.2	75.2	80.0	80.1
Second Quarter....	68.1	41.2	67.6	75.4	80.1	80.2
First Quarter.....	67.8	41.3	66.7	75.0	80.4	79.9
2007						
Fourth Quarter.....	67.8	41.0	67.2	75.1	80.4	80.3
Third Quarter.....	68.2	42.0	68.1	75.2	81.1	79.9
Second Quarter....	68.2	41.9	67.6	75.5	80.6	80.5
First Quarter.....	68.4	41.7	68.3	75.8	80.4	80.9
2006						
Fourth Quarter.....	68.9	42.8	68.9	76.4	80.7	81.2
Third Quarter.....	69.0	43.0	68.8	76.4	80.7	81.5
Second Quarter....	68.7	42.4	68.9	76.3	81.0	80.6
First Quarter.....	68.5	42.3	68.9	75.8	81.2	80.3
2005						
Fourth Quarter.....	69.0	43.1	69.7	76.7	80.6	80.6
Third Quarter.....	68.8	43.0	68.6	76.7	80.9	80.6
Second Quarter....	68.6	42.8	68.7	76.3	81.3	80.3
First Quarter.....	69.1	43.3	70.1	76.5	81.8	80.8
2004						
Fourth Quarter.....	69.2	43.3	70.0	77.4	81.6	80.5
Third Quarter.....	69.0	43.1	68.6	77.4	81.2	81.8
Second Quarter....	69.2	43.6	69.4	77.0	82.4	81.1
First Quarter.....	68.6	42.3	68.8	77.0	81.7	80.7

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by age of householder generally are 0.5 percent.

For the racial categories shown below, the homeownership rate for third quarter 2009 for non-Hispanic White householders reporting a single race was highest at 75.0 percent. The rate for All Other Races householders was second at 57.8 percent, and single-race Black householders was lowest with a rate of 46.4 percent. When compared to their respective rates a year ago, the homeownership rate for single-race Black householders was lower, while the rates for non-Hispanic White householders and for All Other Races householders were not statistically different. The rate for Hispanic householders (who can be of any race), at 48.7 percent, was not statistically different from the rate shown a year ago.

**Table 7. Homeownership Rates by Race and Ethnicity of Householder: 2006 to 2009** (in percent)

Year/Quarter	Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>				
	U.S.	Non-Hispanic White alone	Black Alone <sup>b</sup>	All Other Races <sup>c</sup>	Hispanic (of any race)
2009					
Third Quarter.....	67.6	75.0	46.4	57.8	48.7
Second Quarter....	67.4	74.9	46.5	57.6	48.1
First Quarter.....	67.3	74.7	46.1	57.4	48.6
2008					
Fourth Quarter....	67.5	74.8	46.8	58.3	48.6
Third Quarter.....	67.9	75.1	47.8	59.0	49.5
Second Quarter....	68.1	75.2	47.8	58.4	49.6
First Quarter.....	67.8	75.0	47.1	58.1	48.9
2007					
Fourth Quarter....	67.8	74.9	47.7	58.6	48.5
Third Quarter.....	68.2	75.3	46.7	60.1	50.1
Second Quarter....	68.2	75.4	46.3	59.4	50.0
First Quarter.....	68.4	75.3	48.0	58.6	50.1
2006					
Fourth Quarter.....	68.9	76.0	48.2	60.0	49.5
Third Quarter.....	69.0	76.0	48.6	60.6	49.7
Second Quarter.....	68.7	75.9	47.2	59.3	50.0
First Quarter.....	68.5	75.5	47.3	59.6	49.4

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by race and ethnicity of householder generally are 0.3 percent for non-Hispanic White (single race) householders, 0.6 percent for Black (single race) householders, 0.7 percent for All Other Races householders, and 0.6 percent for Hispanic householders.

<sup>b</sup>The homeownership rate for third quarter 2009 for householders who reported Black whether or not they reported any other race was 46.2 percent.

<sup>c</sup>Includes people who reported Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or American Indian or Alaska Native regardless of whether they reported any other race, as well as all other combinations of two or more races.

NOTE: Beginning in 2003, the question on race on the CPS was modified to comply with the revised standards for federal statistical agencies. Respondents may now report more than one race, but small sample sizes preclude showing all race categories. The question on Hispanic origin is asked separately, and is asked before the question on race. For further information on each major race group and the Two or More Races populations, see reports from the Census 2000 Brief series (C2KBR/01), available on the Census 2000 Web site at <http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/briefs.html>.

In third quarter 2009 the homeownership rate for households with family incomes greater than or equal to the median family income (81.9 percent) was lower than a year ago, while the rate for those with family incomes less than the median family income (51.7 percent) was not statistically different from the rate shown for third quarter 2008.

**Table 8. Homeownership Rates by Family Income: 2004 to 2009** (in percent)

Homeownership Rates <sup>a</sup>			
Year/Quarter	United States	Households with family income greater than or equal to the median family income <sup>b</sup>	Households with family income less than the median family income
2009			
Third Quarter.....	67.6	81.9	51.7
Second Quarter.....	67.4	82.2	51.5
First Quarter.....	67.3	82.4	51.0
2008			
Fourth Quarter.....	67.5	82.9	51.2
Third Quarter.....	67.9	83.0	52.0
Second Quarter.....	68.1	83.5	51.8
First Quarter.....	67.8	82.8	51.2
2007			
Fourth Quarter.....	67.8	83.0	50.9
Third Quarter.....	68.2	83.7	51.9
Second Quarter.....	68.2	83.4	52.0
First Quarter.....	68.4	83.3	52.1
2006			
Fourth Quarter.....	68.9	84.5	52.9
Third Quarter.....	69.0	84.4	53.0
Second Quarter.....	68.7	84.1	52.6
First Quarter.....	68.5	83.7	52.4
2005			
Fourth Quarter.....	69.0	84.3	53.1
Third Quarter.....	68.8	83.7	52.8
Second Quarter.....	68.6	84.0	52.7
First Quarter.....	69.1	84.5	53.0
2004			
Fourth Quarter.....	69.2	84.6	52.5
Third Quarter.....	69.0	84.0	52.7
Second Quarter.....	69.2	83.9	53.1
First Quarter.....	68.6	83.8	51.5

<sup>a</sup>Standard errors for quarterly homeownership rates by family income generally are 0.3 percent.

<sup>b</sup>Based on families or primary individuals reporting income.

Note: This press release, along with more detailed data, is available on the Internet. Our Internet address is: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/hvs/hvs.html>

The estimates in this release are based on a sample survey and therefore are subject to both sampling and non-sampling error. Sampling error is a result of not surveying the entire population. Non-sampling error occurs because accurate information cannot always be obtained.

The sample estimate and its standard error enable one to construct a confidence interval. A confidence interval is a measure of an estimate's reliability. The larger a confidence interval is in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. For example, the standard error on the estimated rental vacancy rate of 11.1 percent is 0.268 percentage points. Then the 90-percent confidence interval is calculated as  $11.1 \pm (1.645 \times 0.268)$  percent, or  $11.1 \pm 0.4$  percent, or from 10.7 percent to 11.5 percent. If all possible samples were surveyed under essentially the same general conditions and the same sample design, and an estimate calculated from each sample, then 90 percent of the estimates would fall within the 90 percent confidence interval, in this case, from 10.7 percent to 11.5 percent.

Since the first quarter 2003, the Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey (CPS/HVS) housing inventory estimates have been controlled to independent housing unit estimates based upon Census 2000 and updated with building permit data, estimates of housing loss, and other administrative records data. In January of each year, the CPS/HVS formerly used updated housing unit controls (based on the independent estimates issued by the Population Division in August of the preceding year) that were projected forward through the current year. For example, the first and second quarter 2009 housing inventory estimates were based on the Vintage 2007 independent estimates time series and projected forward. In August 2009, Population Division released the latest series of independent housing unit estimates, the [vintage 2008](#) time series. Now that this more up-to-date data are available and in order for the CPS/HVS to provide the most up-to-date information possible, effective in the third quarter 2009, the housing inventory estimates are revised. Previous CPS/HVS estimates have been revised back to the second quarter 2000 and are shown in the CPS/HVS historical table series. Housing inventory estimates, prior to the second quarter 2000, have not been revised. The 2009 estimates in the CPS/HVS housing inventory data series are now based on the independently produced Vintage 2008 housing unit estimates that are projected forward through 2009.

Looking forward to 2010, the vintage 2009 independent housing estimates time series will be issued by Population Division and will be available to use as housing controls for the CPS/HVS housing inventory estimates. When these new independent estimates become available, the CPS/HVS quarterly and annual housing inventory estimates for all quarters of 2010, which have been published (using vintage 2008 independent housing estimates data), and for previous years back to 2000 will again be revised. The same general procedure will be followed each year in revising housing inventory estimates with the most up-to-date data available.

For an explanation of the methodology used in producing the housing inventory independent estimates, see the site: <http://www.census.gov/popest/topics/methodology/2008-hu-meth.pdf>

The housing estimates produced by the Population Division using Census 2000 as a base and updated with building permit data, estimates of housing loss, and other administrative record data to produce the Vintage 2008 estimates are at: <http://www.census.gov/popest/housing/index.html>.

Note: This time series is by the latest "vintage" year. For example, vintage 2008 means that all of the estimates in this time series are identified as belonging to "vintage 2008." The 2000 data are from the 2008 vintage, the 2001 data are from the 2008 vintage, and so on.

The CPS/HVS also began computing first-stage factors (used for weighting purposes) based on year-round and seasonal counts of housing units from Census 2000 for the first quarter 2003. From 1980 to 2002, the CPS/HVS first-stage factors were based on year-round estimates only. The effect on the data is slight and the change should improve the counts of year-round and seasonal units. For more information on the effects of these changes, please see Source and Accuracy Statement at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hvs.html>.

The question on race on the CPS was modified beginning in the first quarter 2003 to comply with new standards for federal statistical agencies. Respondents are now asked to report one or more races. The question on Hispanic origin is asked separately, and is asked before the question on race.

First stage factors for year-round vacant units have been corrected as of the second quarter 2004. Research has shown that this correction had no significant effect on the vacancy rates or homeownership rates.

The rental vacancy rate is the proportion of the rental inventory that is vacant for rent. In tables 1 and 2, the rates are computed using the following formula.

$$\text{Rental Vacancy Rate (\%)} = \left[ \frac{\text{Vacant year-round units for rent}}{\left( \text{Renter occupied units} \right) + \left( \text{Vacant year-round units rented but awaiting occupancy} \right) + \left( \text{Vacant year-round units for rent} \right)} \right] * 100$$

The homeowner vacancy rate is the proportion of the homeowner inventory that is vacant for sale. In tables 1 and 2 the rates are computed using the following formula.

$$\text{Homeowner Vacancy Rate (\%)} = \left[ \frac{\text{Vacant year-round units for sale only}}{\left( \text{Owner occupied units} \right) + \left( \text{Vacant year-round units sold but awaiting occupancy} \right) + \left( \text{Vacant year-round units for sale only} \right)} \right] * 100$$

The homeownership rate is the proportion of households that is owner-occupied. It is computed by dividing the number of households that are occupied by owners by the total number of occupied households (tables 4, 4SA, and 5).

$$\text{Homeownership Rate (\%)} = \left[ \frac{\text{Owner occupied housing units}}{\text{Total occupied housing units}} \right] * 100$$

For the homeownership rate for a specific characteristic (tables 6-8), use the owner and total number of units for that characteristic. For example, for the West region,

$$\text{Homeownership Rate (West) (\%)} = \left[ \frac{\text{Owner occupied housing units (West)}}{\text{Total occupied housing units (West)}} \right] * 100$$