About the Multiyear Estimates Study

In preparation for the release of the first official 3-year estimates in 2008 using data collected in 2005 through 2007, the Census Bureau decided to conduct this Multiyear Estimates Study. The goal of the study is two-fold: to test production methods that are planned for the 2008 release and to help data users begin to understand the characteristics of multiyear estimates.

The production methods for standard products, including thresholds and data release rules were used to determine the final set of products. The data use the same disclosure limitation methodology as the original 1-year data. The confidentiality edit was previously applied to the raw data files when they were created to produce the 1-year estimates and these same data files with the original confidentiality edit were used to produce the 3-year and 5-year estimates.

In addition, data profiles for tabulation areas that contained only a small number of households are not being released. In order to prevent the disclosure of the data for these areas through subtracting estimates from nested geographic areas, some additional tabulation areas are also not being released. We are researching alternative options to address disclosure risks for these types of areas for the production of our first 5-year data product in 2010.

Data profiles that include demographic characteristics such as age and sex; social characteristics such as educational attainment and marital status; economic characteristics such as employment status and income; and housing characteristics such as housing occupancy and housing values were produced for a broad set of geographic areas in 34 of the 36 ACS test counties (excludes Fort Bend and Harris counties). The data profiles display the estimated totals and estimated percentages along with their associated margins of error for each single and multiyear estimate.

The types of geographic areas for which data are available are listed below:
(A Complete list of Multiyear Estimates published geographies [Excel 1.3Mb])

Geographic Type	Estimates Available
County	1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates
Place Part	1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates
Minor Civil Division (MCD)	1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates
School District:	
Secondary	1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates
Unified	1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates
Elementary	3-year and 5-year estimates
Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA)	1-year, 3-year, and 5-year estimates
American Indian Area	5-year estimates
Zip Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA)	5-year estimates
Tract	5-year estimates
Block Group	5-year estimates

The 34 test counties were selected based on a set of pre-specified criteria. One such factor is the sampling rates for these counties are roughly comparable to the sampling rates used in the full ACS production sample, which began in 2005. Other factors include: the size of the county's population, the proportion of the population in areas classified as hard to enumerate (based on mail response rates in the 1990 census), and the growth or decline in the population since 1990. In addition, the counties selected varied along important dimensions such as racial/Hispanic origin distribution, large numbers of non-city style addresses and presence of American Indian reservations. The 34 ACS test counties are listed below:

Pima County, Arizona	Lake County, Montana
Jefferson County, Arkansas	Douglas County, Nebraska
San Francisco, California	Otero County, New Mexico
Tulare County, California	Bronx County, New York
Broward County, Florida	Rockland County, New York
Upson County, Georgia	Franklin County, Ohio
Lake County, Illinois	Multnomah County, Oregon
Miami County, Indiana	Fulton County, Pennsylvania
Black Hawk County, Iowa	Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania
De Soto Parish, Louisiana	Sevier County, Tennessee

Calvert County, Maryland	Starr County, Texas
Hampden County, Massachusetts	Zapata County, Texas
Madison County, Mississippi	Petersburg City, Virginia
Iron County, Missouri	Yakima County, Washington
Reynolds County, Missouri	Ohio County, West Virginia
Washington County, Missouri	Oneida County, Wisconsin
Flathead County, Montana	Vilas County, Wisconsin

A total of 14 data sets were created using data from 1999 to 2005; three 5-year estimates, five 3-year estimates, and six 1-year estimates. Data profiles for the 5-year estimates are available for all geographic areas listed above, including tracts and block groups. For the 3-year estimates, data profiles are available for those geographic areas with a population of 20,000 or more and for the 1-year estimates, those geographic areas with a population of 65,000 or more. The data sets available are listed below:

5-Year Estimates:	3-Year Estimates:	1-Year Estimates:
2001-2005	2003-2005	2005
2000-2004	2002-2004	2004
1999-2003	2001-2003	2003
2	000-2002	2002
1	999-2001	2001
		2000

Overview

This overview provides:

- an important note for users about the data included in this study
- background on the ACS plans to release multiyear estimates
- a summary of the multiyear estimates study
- a list of the 34 counties included in the study universe
- a summary of the single-year and multiyear data sets produced for this study
- information on how to access online and downloadable data profiles
- links to methodology, quality measures, and other supporting documentation

Note for users

The Multiyear Estimates Study data are being released for research purposes only. The Census Bureau has produced these data to test production methods and is releasing these data publicly for users with an interest in learning more about the characteristics of multiyear estimates. The Census Bureau released the first official multiyear estimates for the entire country in 2008 as 3-year estimates covering 2005 - 2007. In 2010 the Census Bureau will release the first official set of 5-year estimates covering 2005 - 2009. By providing these research data, users are getting a valuable "advance" preview. The same disclosure avoidance procedures that are used for the standard ACS data products have been applied to these data.

It is important to recognize that the estimates included in these data profiles have not undergone the subject matter and technical review required for standard ACS data releases. For this reason these estimates are not official estimates. We strongly suggest that users consult with Census Bureau staff before drawing conclusions or taking actions based on these data.

The Census Bureau is conducting a series of evaluations using these data. If you have questions, comments, or identify any areas of concern, we would like to hear from you. Please contact us by email at acso.web.staff.list@census.gov.

Background

Beginning in the summer of 2006, the Census Bureau released data from the American Community Survey (ACS) for the nation and for states, counties, and other geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. These data were based on a single year of data collection and are therefore 1-year estimates. In the summer of 2008 the Census Bureau will release the first set of multiyear estimates for the nation. These 3-year estimates will be based on data collected in 2005 - 2007 and will include geographic areas with populations of 20,000 and greater. In 2010, 5-year estimates will be released for the smallest of geographic areas based on data collected in 2005 - 2009.

Multiyear Estimates Study

In preparation for the 2008 release of multiyear estimates and to help data users begin to understand the characteristics of multiyear estimates, the Census Bureau conducted this Multiyear Estimates Study. Data profiles that include demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics were produced for a broad set of geographic areas in 34 counties. Data products are available for counties, place parts, MCDs, school districts, Public Use Microdata Areas, ZipCode Tabulation Areas, American Indian areas, tracts, and block groups. Details on this study, including a full inventory of the geographic areas and products available can be found at About the Multiyear Estimates Study.

Study Universe

The 34 counties included in this study are a subset of the ACS test counties that have been used in the past for special evaluations of the ACS. They are listed below.

County	State	County	State
Pima County	Arizona	Lake County	Montana
Jefferson County	Arkansas	Douglas County	Nebraska
San Francisco County	California	Otero County	New Mexico
Tulare County	California	Bronx County	New York
Broward County	Florida	Rockland County	New York
Upson County	Georgia	Franklin County	Ohio
Lake County	Illinois	Multnomah County	Oregon
Miami County	Indiana	Fulton County	Pennsylvania
Black Hawk County	Iowa	Schuylkill County	Pennsylvania
De Soto Parish	Louisiana	Sevier County	Tennessee
Calvert County	Maryland	Starr County	Texas
Hampden County	Massachusetts	Zapata County	Texas
Madison County	Mississippi	Petersburg City	Virginia
Iron County	Missouri	Yakima County	Washington
Reynolds County	Missouri	Ohio County	West Virginia
Washington County	Missouri	Oneida County	Wisconsin
Flathead County	Montana	Vilas County	Wisconsin

Data Sets

A total of 14 data sets were created including:

- 1-year estimates for 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005;
- 3-year estimates for 1999-2001, 2000-2002, 2001-2003, 2002-2004, and 2003-2005;
- 5-year estimates for 1999-2003, 2000-2004, and 2001-2005.

How to Access Data

This web site provides access to the Multiyear Estimates Study data profiles. To begin reviewing the data, please go to Online Data. You will be prompted to select a specific data set, a test county, and then a specific geographic area. The data profile includes the period estimates and their associated margins of error. Both estimated totals and estimated percentages are displayed.

Supporting Documentation

This website also provides background and reference materials for your review. If you go to Statistical Methodology you will find a description of the methods that were used to produce these estimates and information about sampling and nonsampling errors associated with these data. A set of questions and answers about the methods, evaluations, and limitations of these data are also available at Questions & Answers.