data.census.gov
Q&A
December 5, 2019

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Center for Enterprise Dissemination (CED)
U.S. Census Bureau
Why can’t I use the Single Search and the Advanced Search together?
Example: Searching for poverty in San Antonio, TX by using the Single Search bar.
Example: Searching for poverty in San Antonio, TX by using Advanced Search - Filter Search

1. Type in poverty, and select “Poverty.”
2. Type in San Antonio, and select “San Antonio city, Texas.”
3. Make sure all your filters are selected.
Click on “SEARCH,” then your result will show up.
Why are the topics different from AFF?
What data are available in data.census.gov?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table Type</th>
<th>2010</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: ACS Data will not be available prior to 2010. All ACS data, including 2005 to 2009 data, are available in the Census Data API.
What pseudo geographies have already been added?
Pseudo geographies found in data.census.gov right now:

- All States in the United States
- All Counties within the United States and all States
- All Places within the United States and all States
- All Congressional Districts for the 111th through 116th Congresses in the United States and within States
- All Congressional Districts for the 106th through 116th Congresses within States
- All American Indian Areas / Alaska Native Areas / Hawaiian Home Lands (AIA/ANA/HHL) within the United States and by State
- All ZIP Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs) in the United States and by State
- All ZIP Code Tabulation Area (ZCTAs) fully/partially within State
- All State Legislative Districts, Upper Chamber within State
- All State Legislative Districts, Lower Chamber within State
- All County Subdivisions within State and County
- All Urban Areas within the United States
- All Metropolitan-Micropolitan Statistical Areas within the United States and within States
- All Census Tracts within State and County
- All School Districts (Elementary, Secondary, and Unified) within States
- All Block Groups within Counties, and Tracts
- All Combined Statistical Areas within the United States
- All Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) within the United States and all States
How else can I access the pseudo geographies?
Example: Searching for all congressional districts in California. Visit census.gov/developers, and click “Available APIs.”
Click on “American Community Survey 1 – Year Data (2011-2018).”
It defaults to the most recent year available – 2018. Scroll down to the Data Profiles section, and click on “Examples and Supported Geography.”
Click on “examples.”
Scroll down to “state > congressional district,” and click on the second link.
Click into the address bar and replace state:* with state:06.
Right click the page and select “Save as…”
- Name the file “All CDs in CA.csv” You must include “.csv” at the end.
- Click the drop down menu where it says “JSON” and change it to “All Files.”
- Then click Save.
Download, Export and Copy:

What does the output actually look like for each of these?

Who is each geared towards? Who will find it useful?

Why does the downloaded table include the question marks/exclamation marks in the headers?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>GEO_ID</td>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>B27001_001E</td>
<td>B27001_001M</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>id</td>
<td>Geographic Area Name</td>
<td>Estimate!!Total!!Margin of Error!!Total!!Estimate!!Total!!Margin of Error!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>01000000U</td>
<td>United States</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Total:</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Total: Male:</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Total: Male: Under 6 years:</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Total: Male: Under 6 years: With health insurance coverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Total: Male: Under 6 years: No health insurance coverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Total: Male: 6 to 18 years:</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Total: Male: 6 to 18 years: With health insurance coverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Total: Male: 6 to 18 years: No health insurance coverage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Total: Male: 18 to 25 years:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
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<td>6 to 18 years:</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>With health insurance coverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>What is it best used for?</td>
<td>Major Limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download</td>
<td>• Best for users who are manipulating the data</td>
<td>• Output does not resemble the table view on the screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Only option available for large tables</td>
<td>• Includes exclamation points and question marks in headers to make it machine readable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export</td>
<td>• When you want to view the table in Excel</td>
<td>• Not available in conjunction with large tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Small tables (less than 400 rows by 400 columns) that are being shared or displayed</td>
<td>• Row headers are not always nested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• May require manual work before sharing or displaying the output</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy</td>
<td>• Small tables or parts of a table that are being shared or displayed</td>
<td>• Not available in conjunction with large tables</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Download, Export and Copy:

Which of these will keep customizations?

What are the future plans for improving these features?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>What customizations will carry over to the output?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Download | • No customizations will carry over to the downloaded table  
           • Best to download the table first and then apply any desired customizations |
| Export  | • Any estimates hidden using custom filters will not appear in the exported table  
        • Transposed table will appear as transposed in the exported table |
| Copy    | • Hidden columns will not appear in the copied table  
        • Margins of error columns that are removed will not appear in the copied table  
        • Any estimates hidden using custom filters will not appear in the copied table  
        • Transposed table will appear as transposed in the copied table |
What are the future plans for improving these features?

We would like to use a software integrated into data.census.gov to allow for download and print features. We’ll keep everyone updated on this.
Why is the sort order incorrect in some of the downloaded tables?

Due to a technical change that we had to make for the API, the prescribed sort order functionality that we had before was lost. We are looking into other ways to force a prescribed sort order, but we’re concerned with how it may affect performance.
I need a PDF of a table to print and share. What can I do?
Once you have selected a table, hit the Ctrl + P keys to produce a printable PDF of the table.
Chrome is the preferred browser. What happens if I use a different browser?

What should I do if it doesn't work in Chrome?
We recommend Chrome, as our testing has shown that performance is best in Chrome. Since most of our users use data.census.gov with Chrome, it makes sense for us to focus our efforts on working within this browser.

If data.census.gov won’t work in Chrome or something isn’t coming up, we suggest that you try clearing the cache.
Steps for clearing your cache in Chrome:

1) In the top right corner of the Chrome browse, click on the “three dots.”

2) Click “More tools,” and click on “Clear browsing data...”

3) Select “Cached images and files,” and click “Clear data” button.
What should I do if I run into intermittent responses?
We have worked hard to make sure hardware is increased and inefficiencies on our end have been addressed. If you experience any problems, we recommend that you ensure you are working in Chrome, clear the cache, and restart the browser, if necessary. The latest fixes that we have released should have corrected existing problems. However, if you are still experiencing any issues, please email the steps that you took and screenshots to cedsci.feedback@census.gov so we can investigate the problem.
Why did we decide to switch from AFF to data.census.gov when we don't have all of the major functionality built into it yet?
The intention behind moving from AFF to data.census.gov is to allow more flexibility with our data. Users can access single estimates with the Census API. Not only does the Census API drive data.census.gov, but it also drives other applications. Third parties can use our data to create their own dashboards and visualizations.

FactFinder was over ten years old and it was getting old and outdated. The Census Bureau is actively moving away from single tools with static tables to something flexible that allows the data to be used in more diverse ways.

If you have any questions or comments about data.census.gov, please email us at cedsci.feedback@census.gov so we can assist you.
American FactFinder is scheduled to be taken offline in March 2020.

What happens if the data and functionality isn’t available in data.census.gov by that time?
American FactFinder was retired earlier this year and no new data has been released on it. It is expected to be taken offline in March 2020. We will ensure that all data is still accessible in some way, whether it is through data.census.gov, the Census API, or an FTP page.

We already have some similar functionality available through data.census.gov. We will keep you updated on the progress of adding additional functionality.
Will early American Community Survey data available in AFF be moved to data.census.gov before it is taken offline?
Even with AFF being taken online, we won’t leave you without access to the data. Although some data has already been migrated to data.census.gov, other data may only be available through the Census API.

Due to limited resources of the Census Bureau and our data providers, we decided to make data prior to 2010 available only through the Census API, and not through data.census.gov.

We know that some of our users would still like access to this data through data.census.gov, so please email these concerns to cedsci.feedback@census.gov so we can forward them to our data providers.
Will older data found through the FTP site, but not in AFF, be available on data.census.gov?
We can’t provide a definitive answer to this, as it is based on the resources of the individual programs and surveys. At this point, we don’t believe this will occur, as it would require the data to be redelivered to our Census API. Redeliveries could mean a considerable amount of work in order to get the data API-ready.

We are not aware of any plans to take data off the FTP sites.

If anything changes in regards to this, we’ll let everyone know.
What is the Census API?

How is it related to data.census.gov?

https://www.census.gov/developers/
The Census API is the basis for everything we do. It is the underlying source that not only feeds data.census.gov, but also feeds third-party dashboards, tools, and data visualizations. The API is a service that disseminates raw, unformatted data to applications. Users can then use this raw data for their own purposes.

Data.census.gov ingests the API data and disseminates it the same way that a third party does. If the API isn’t functioning properly, data.census.gov will not be able to pull any estimates.
Are there any plans to create a tool that accesses the data without needing to query the API?

There are no plans to create a tool that does this.
If I don't want tabulated tables, like those found in data.census.gov, what are my other options?
One way is to access the PUMS files. Go to data.census.gov and search for “PUMS” using the single search bar. Scroll down to the Page results.
Another way is to access the PUMS files through Microdata Access. [https://data.census.gov/mdat](https://data.census.gov/mdat)

This is the replacement tool for DataFerrett.

Why can't I find the scroll bar?
To locate the bottom scroll bar, go to the Customize Table view and scroll down to the bottom of the table.
How do I access data by race, Hispanic Origin, ancestry, or country of birth?
Example: Accessing data for a basic race group
Example: Accessing data for a detailed race groups (Japanese alone)
Example: Accessing data for Hispanic origin
Example: Accessing data for a detailed population groups (ancestry - Romanian)
Example: Accessing data for a detailed population group (country of birth – China)
When will data from the 2020 Census be available through data.census.gov?

We anticipate that data from the 2020 Census will be available through data.census.gov in 2021. No specific date is available yet.
Some tables return a generic “Data Not Available” message. How can I tell if the data is not publicly available or just not available through data.census.gov?
There’s often two different reasons for receiving this message. The first is if, when data.census.gov went to pull from the API, there was a failure. In these cases, if you try again, it will usually work.

The other reason is that there could be a data quality concern. The methodology differs according to the survey, program, and dataset.

We know that it can be difficult to tell the reason for why the message occurred. In the coming months, we will continue to work on improving our messaging.
How can I do an address lookup?
Census Geocoder Address Lookup

Find the block group and census tract for an address:

• Click **Address** under “Find Geographies Using...”

• Enter street address (example: **2300 Empire Ave, Burbank, CA 91504**)

• Click **Find**

geocoding.geo.census.gov/geocoder
Census Geocoder Address Lookup (continued)

Edit URL to get results for block group (8), census tract (10) and county (86)

• Add &layers=8,10,86 to the end of the URL
• Press enter

Tips:

• Find codes for your geographic layers of interest: https://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/arcgis/rest/services/TIGERweb/tigerWMS_Current/MapServer

• The Census Geocoder shows results for state, county, census tract, and block by default but you can manually specify many other types of geographies by editing the URL
Census Geocoder Address Lookup (continued)

- View the **NAME** section under the headings for **Census Block Groups**, **Census Tracts**, and **Counties**
- The street address falls within **Block Group 1**, **Census Tract 3105.01**, Los Angeles County

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geocoding.geo.census.gov/geocoder/geographies/address?street=2300+Empire+Ave&city=Burbank&state=CA&zip=91504&benchmark=4&vintage=4&layers=8,10,86
Can my AFF URL redirect me to a data.census.gov URL?

We are working on creating redirects right now, but we’re not there yet. We’ll let everyone know when it’s available.

In the meantime, it is a good practice to update URLs as you work within data.census.gov
Where can I find a geographic comparison table (GCT) in data.census.gov?
Once you have a map of the data, click on the CUSTOMIZE MAP button in the upper right corner.
Generate the table from the map view by clicking on the VIEW TABLE button.
To view the full table that the estimates are extracted from, click on the GO TO FULL TABLE button.
Where can I find training and resources on using data.census.gov and Microdata Access?

**data.census.gov Resources page**
https://census.gov/data/what-is-data-census-gov.html

**Release Notes & FAQs:**
data.census.gov/assets/releasenotes/faqs-release-notes.pdf
Feedback

Email your comments to
cedsci.feedback@census.gov

Learn More and Share

data.census.gov Resources:
https://census.gov/data/what-is-data-census-gov.html

Webinars:

Tutorials/Data Gems:
census.gov/data/academy/data-gems.html

Release Notes & FAQs:
data.census.gov/assets/release-notes/faqs-release-notes.pdf

Stay in Touch

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