

American Community Survey (ACS) Content Review

(As of 10/24/2014)

Background

The Census Bureau engaged in a comprehensive review of the content of the American Community Survey beginning in 2011. The review steps included:

- Examining and confirming the value of each question on the ACS
- Confirming and updating the statutory and regulatory authority for the questions on the ACS with federal agencies
- Gathering input from customers
- Analyzing data
- Developing recommendations for ACS content that will provide the most useful information with the least amount of burden to the public

Objectives and Scope

Objectives:

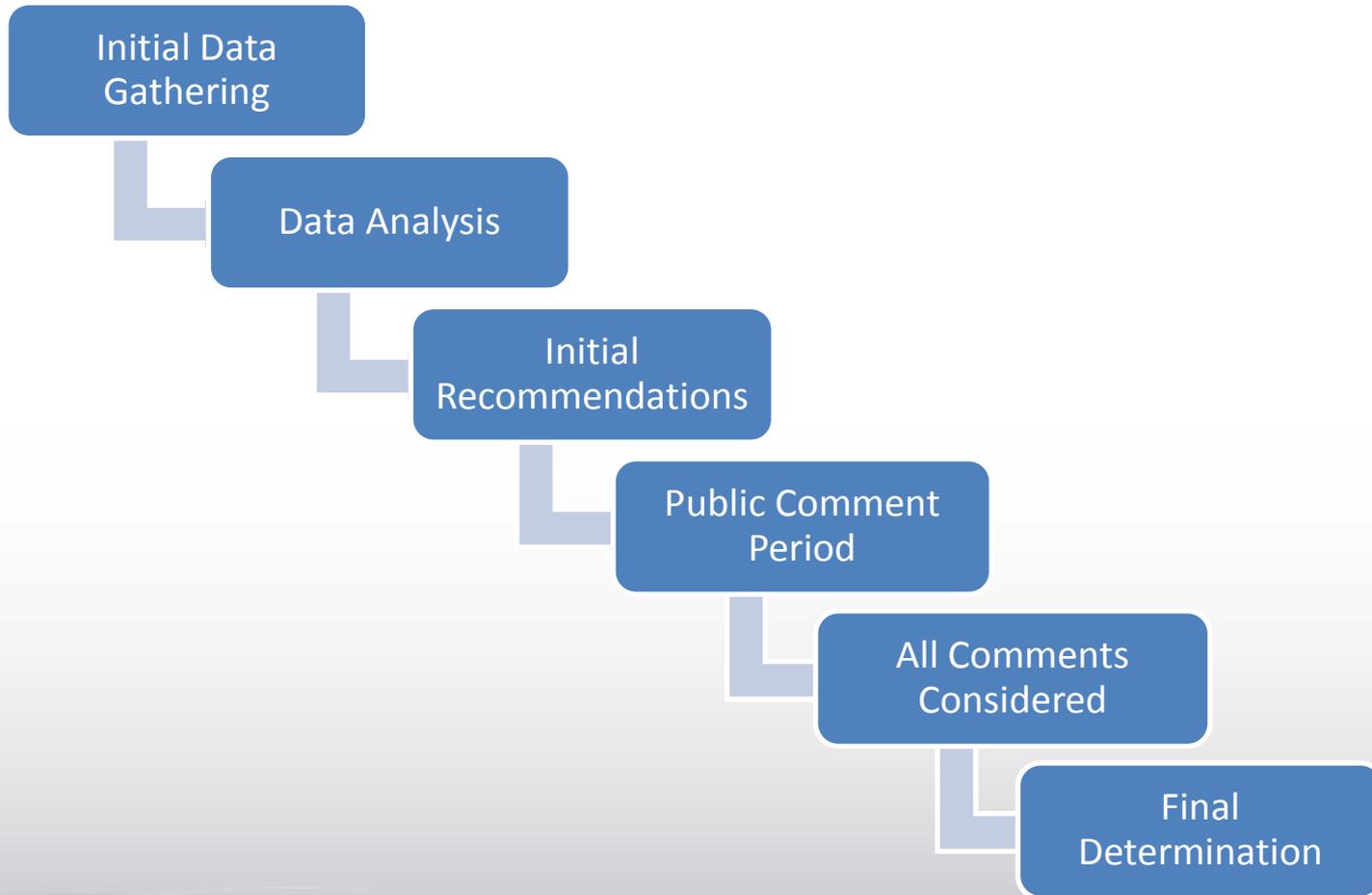
- Use pre-specified, unbiased criteria to identify potential questions for removal (Phase I)
- Obtain comprehensive understanding of ACS question uses, justification, and merit for potential revision or removal (Phases II & III)

Scope: All questions (and subparts) currently on the 2013 ACS Questionnaire

Project Phases

- **Phase I** – assess full survey content and identify questions for removal in 2016
- **Phase II** – assess availability of other sources
- **Phase III** – research modifications to existing questions

Phase 1 Process



Inputs

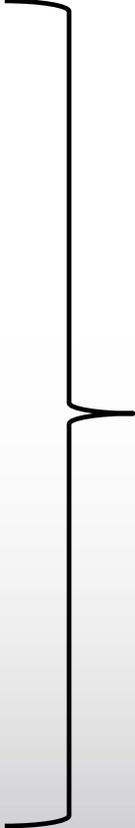
Federal Inputs	Other Inputs
Letter from the acting Deputy Secretary of Commerce to federal agencies informing them of Content Review	Survey of over 1,000 Field and Call Center Representatives
Department of Commerce Office of General Counsel (OGC) Letter to agency OGCs	Website tool to collect input on questions from non-federal customers
Spring Summit with 23 federal agencies to develop understanding of purpose, process, and desired outcomes for Content Review	National Advisory Committee Content Review Working Group provided input on data use and ACS questions
Dedicated extranet site to collect input on questions from all federal agencies	

What drives our analysis?

LEGAL

- Mandatory – a federal law explicitly calls for use of decennial census or ACS data on that question
- Required – a federal law (or implementing regulation) explicitly requires the use of data and the decennial or the ACS is the historical source; or the data are needed for case law requirements imposed by the U.S. federal court system
- Programmatic – the data are needed for program planning, implementation, or evaluation and there is no explicit mandate or requirement

GEOGRAPHY



Block Group/Tract Level

Place/County/MSA Level

State/Nation Level

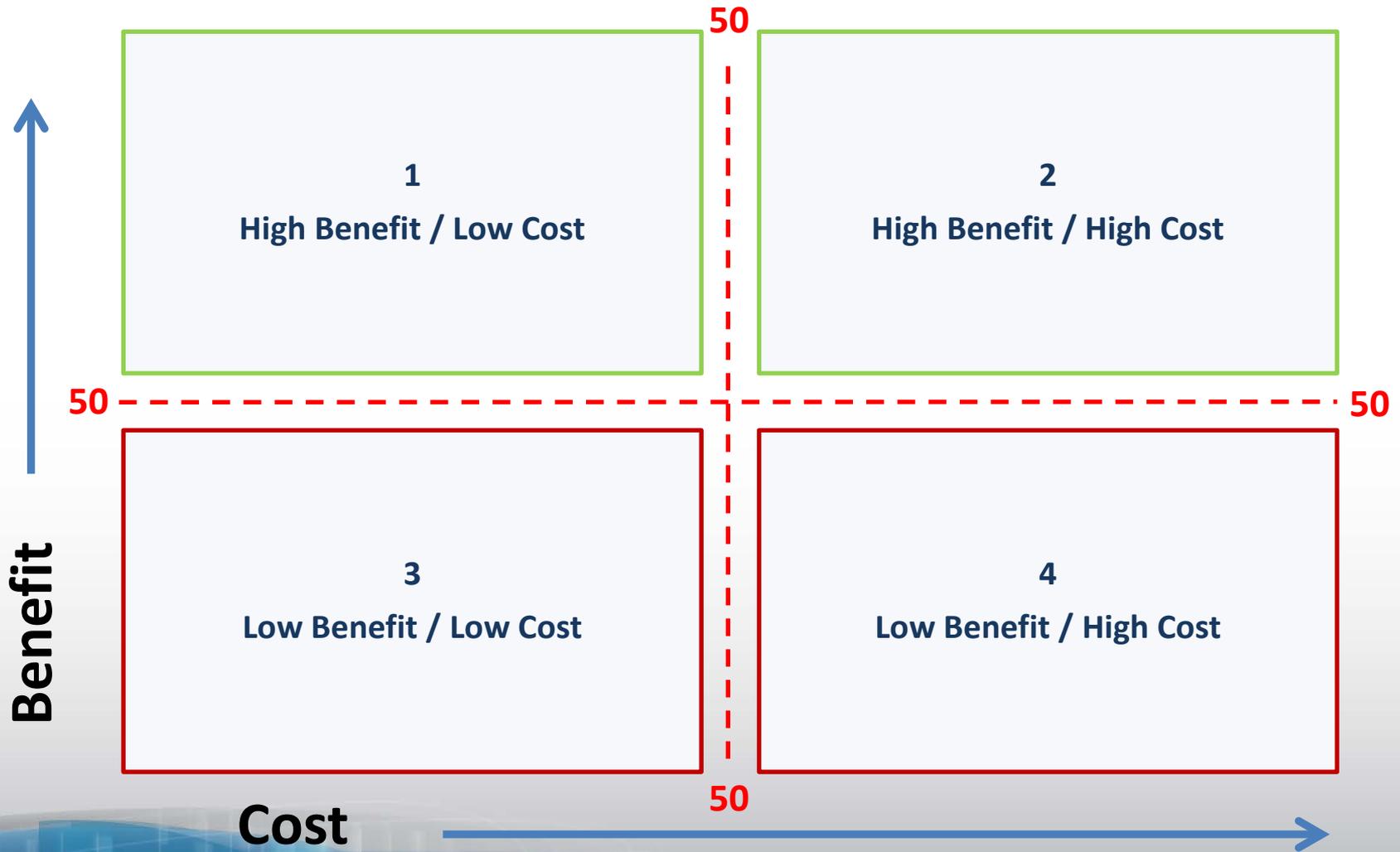
Examining Benefits

1. Uses at Block Group/Tract Level-Mandatory
2. Uses at Place/County/MSA Level-Mandatory
3. Uses at State/Nation Level-Mandatory
4. Uses at Block Group/Tract Level-Required
5. Uses at Place/County/MSA Level-Required
6. Uses at State/Nation Level-Required
7. Uses at Block Group/Tract Level-Programmatic
8. Uses at Place/County/MSA Level-Programmatic
9. Uses at State/Nation Level-Programmatic
10. County-Level Interquartile Range in Values
11. Used to Select Frame for a Federal Survey
12. Other Data Sources Exist
13. Median County-Level Coefficients of Variation

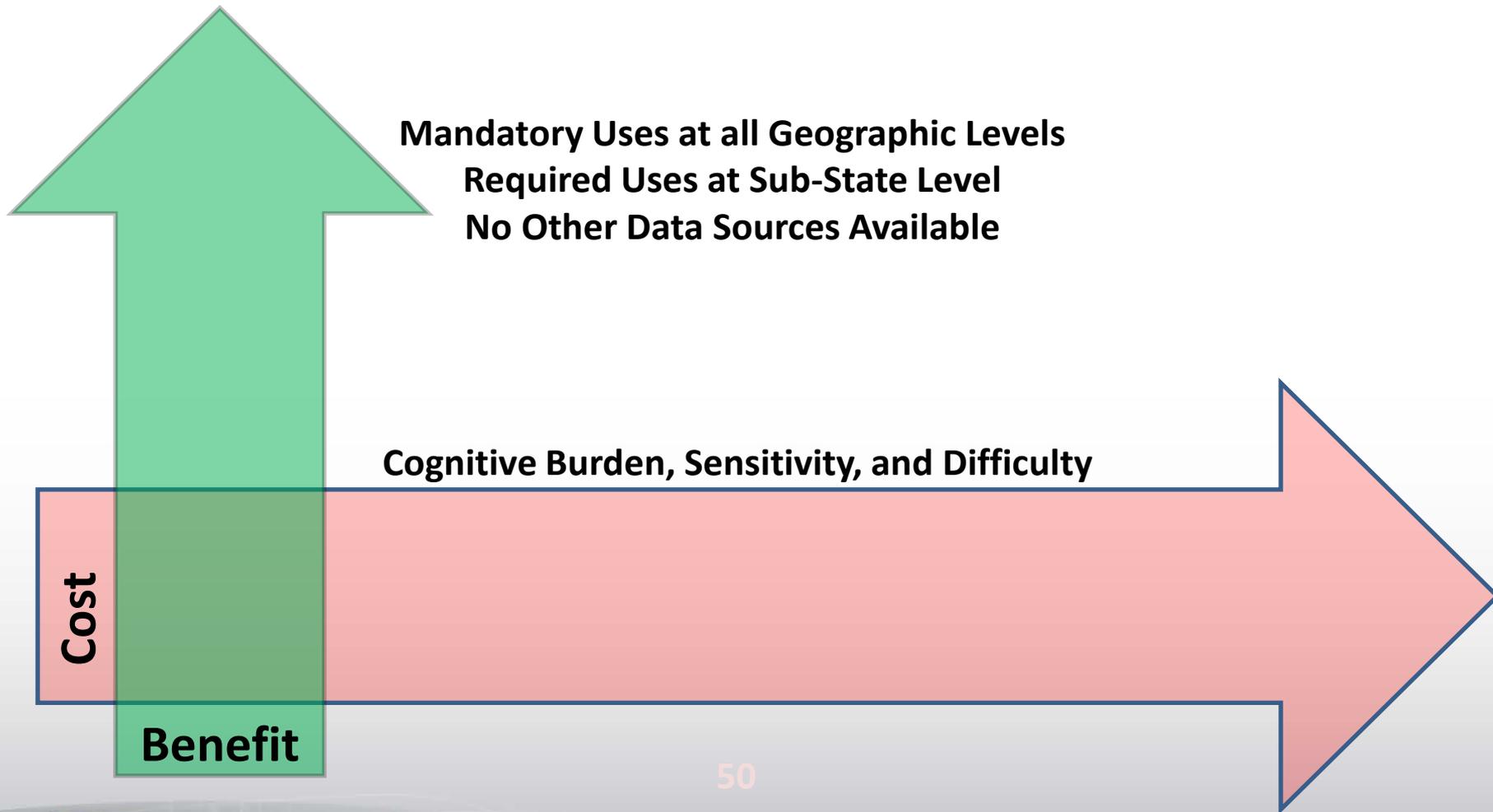
Examining Costs

1. Cognitive Burden Score
 2. Sensitivity Score
 3. Overall Difficulty Score
 4. Number of Complaints to Census Bureau HQ
 5. Median Seconds to Answer
 6. Median County-Level item Response Rate
- } Interviewer Survey

Quadrant Analysis



Driving Factor for Benefits and Costs



Phase 1

Action	Date
Communicate results to ICSP Sub-Committee	NLT 9/19/14
Provide immediate “heads-up” to Participating Agencies	NLT 9/22/14
Publish <i>Federal Register</i> Notice	NLT 10/15/14
Complete Phase I documentation	NLT 12/31/14
Assess comments received from <i>Federal Register</i> Notice	NLT 12/31/14
Submit proposed changes to OMB	NLT 4/1/15
OMB reviews proposed changes and issues <i>Federal Register</i> Notice with 30-day public comment period	4/1/15-6/1/15
BOC notified on final content decisions for CY 2016 ACS	NLT 6/1/15

Phases 2 & 3

Action	Date
Conduct full quadrant analysis for each question	NLT 12/15/14
Investigate other sources for questions	NLT 12/15/14
Develop research agenda	NLT 2/28/15
Begin research into administrative records and question modifications	NLT 4/30/15
Conduct 2016 Content Test	2016
Analyze Results of 2016 Content Test	2016 and beyond

Stay Involved!

- **View the ACS Content Review Web Page:**

http://www.census.gov/acs/www/about_the_survey/acs_content_review/

- **Sign up for GovDelivery ACS Subscriber Notices:**

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCENSUS/subscriber/new>

- **Review *Federal Register* Notices**