

# U.S. Census Bureau at a Glance

## How well do you know the 50 states?

The Census Bureau is the federal government's largest statistical agency. We are dedicated to providing current facts and figures about America's people, places, and economy. Federal law protects the confidentiality of all the information the Census Bureau collects.

## OUR STATISTICAL PROGRAMS

### Censuses

- The **Decennial Census** is the once-a-decade population and housing count of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Island Areas as required by the U.S. Constitution. The results of the decennial census determine the number of seats for each state in the U.S. House of Representatives and are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts and to distribute more than \$675 billion in federal funds each year.
- The **Economic Census** measures the nation's economy every five years, providing vital statistics for virtually every industry and geographic area in the country.
- The **Census of Governments** provides comprehensive data about the nearly 90,000 state and local governments in the nation every five years.

### Surveys

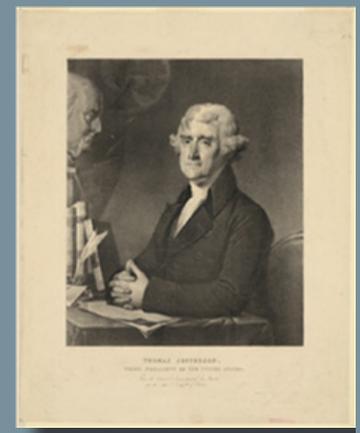
- The **American Community Survey** (ACS) is an ongoing annual survey that shows what the U.S. population looks like and how it lives. The ACS helps communities decide where to target services and resources.
- **Demographic surveys** measure income, poverty, education, health insurance coverage, housing quality, crime victimization, computer usage, and many other subjects.
- **Economic surveys** are conducted monthly, quarterly, and yearly. They cover selected sectors of the nation's economy and supplement the Economic Census with more-frequent information about the dynamic economy. These surveys yield more than 400 annual economic reports, including principal economic indicators.
- **Sponsored surveys** are demographic and economic surveys that we conduct for other government agencies. They include the Current Population Survey, the National Health Interview Survey, and the National Survey of College Graduates.

## Our Mission

The U.S. Census Bureau's mission is to serve as the leading source of quality data about the nation's people and economy.

We honor privacy, protect confidentiality, share our expertise globally, and conduct our work openly.

We are guided on this mission by scientific objectivity, our strong and capable workforce, our devotion to research-based innovation, and our abiding commitment to our customers.



## Our History

Thomas Jefferson directed the first census in 1790. As required by the U.S. Constitution, a census has been taken every 10 years thereafter. In 1840, the Census Act authorized the establishment of a centralized Census Office. In 1902, the Census Office became a permanent organization within the Department of Interior. A year later, it was renamed the Bureau of the Census and moved to the new Department of Commerce and Labor.

## Population Estimates and Projections

- Every year, the Census Bureau publishes population estimates and demographic components of change, such as births, deaths, and migration. This data can be sorted by characteristics such as age, sex, and race, as well as by national, state, and county location.
- The Census Bureau estimates population size and characteristics. Population projections are based on future demographic trends, including births, life expectancy, and migration patterns.

## Data Tools and Apps at census.gov

- **QuickFacts** provides easy access to facts about people, business, and geography.
- **American FactFinder** helps search a massive amount of data at multiple levels of geography over time periods.
- **My Congressional District** has key stats by Congressional district.

In addition, explore the **population clock**, **economic indicators**, topical **data visualizations**, and **infographics**.

Go to [census.gov/developers](https://www.census.gov/developers) for access to datasets via APIs. Developers should check out the **Discovery Tool**, sign up for e-mail newsletters and information exchanges, and make requests for features and data via the **Developer Forum**.

## Contact Us

There are many reasons you may want to contact the Census Bureau. Please see our list of contacts to help decide which is best for you.

**Call Center:** 301-763-INFO (4636) or 800-923-8282

**TDD:** TTY users can dial 1-800-877-8339 to use the Federal Relay Service.

**News Media:** 301-763-3030

**Mailing Address** via private carriers (FedEx, DHL, UPS, couriers and suppliers):

U.S. Census Bureau  
4600 Silver Hill Road  
Suitland, MD 20746

**Social Media:** Connect with the U.S. Census Bureau using social media.

**Follow Us** @uscensusbureau

Explore the U.S. Census Bureau's statistics about America's people, places, and economy at [census.gov](https://www.census.gov).

## Research

The Census Bureau engages in a range of scientific and statistical activities. We actively research survey and questionnaire design as well as different modes of data collection, processing, and dissemination.



## Geography

The Census Bureau maintains a nationwide geographic database that includes boundary information for legal, statistical, and administrative areas. We also track physical features such as streets and rivers for geographic area delineation.

The Census Bureau maintains a national address file to support censuses and surveys.



## International Stats

The Census Bureau produces international demographic data, estimates, projections, and reports. The Census Bureau also provides technical advisory services for foreign governments.

## Regional Offices

We have regional offices in Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, New York, and Philadelphia. For more information, visit [census.gov/regions](https://www.census.gov/regions).