

# Using ACS and Census Data

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# American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2010 Census

The 2010 Census shows the *number* of people who live in the U.S. and the American Community Survey shows *how* people live.

ACS *estimates* demographics, social and economic characteristics of people.

- Annual

2010 Census *counts* people and housing units

- Decennial



## **Why is there an American Community Survey?**

**To provide more timely information than the decennial census**



# American Community Survey

**American Community Survey collects and releases data each year for geographic areas that meet specific population thresholds. Multiple years of data collection are required for small population geographies.**

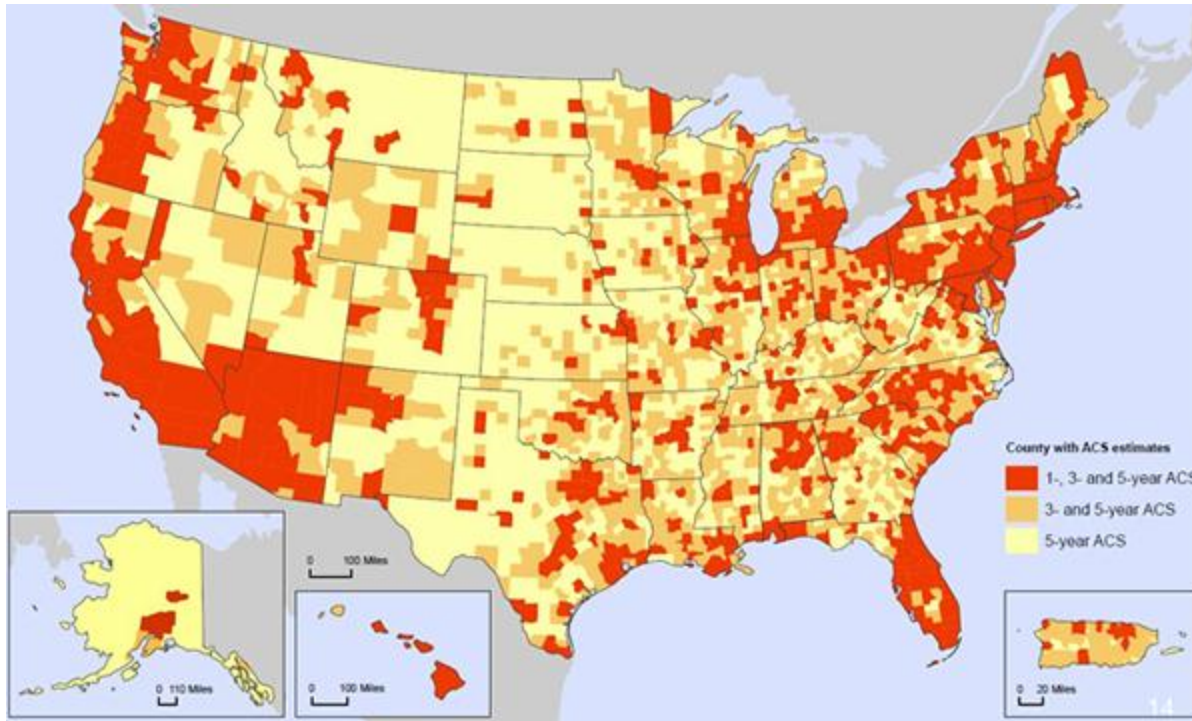
Data collected between...	Data pooled to produce	Data published for areas with
January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009	2009 ACS 1-year estimates	populations of 65,000+
January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2009	2007-2009 ACS 3-year estimates	populations of 20,000+
January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2009	2005-2009 ACS 5-year estimates	populations of almost any size



# American Community Survey

**Because of population thresholds, 1- and 3-Year data are available for limited areas, but 5-Year data are available for all areas**

## 2009 ACS Availability by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### 1-Year

52 States (100%)

818 Counties (25%)

555 Places (2%)

### 3-Year

52 States (100%)

1,908 Counties (59%)

2,118 Places (7%)

### 5-Year

52 States (100%)

3,221 Counties (100%)

29,514 (100%)



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## Notable items about the American Community Survey:

- Multiple year estimates are collected over multiple years(!)
- Only about 2.5% of households receive the survey each year (less respond)
- Releases through 2009 based on 2000 Census, 2010 and after on 2010 Census
- Percents, rates, means and medians are better than counts
- Some values are not provided (“jamming”)
- Cannot compare 1-Year, 3-Year and 5-Year data
- Not always comparable to decennial Census data
- 21,362 data elements released for up to 33 geographies (704,946 maps)
- CIM provides access to grouped “overviews” of the ACS data.



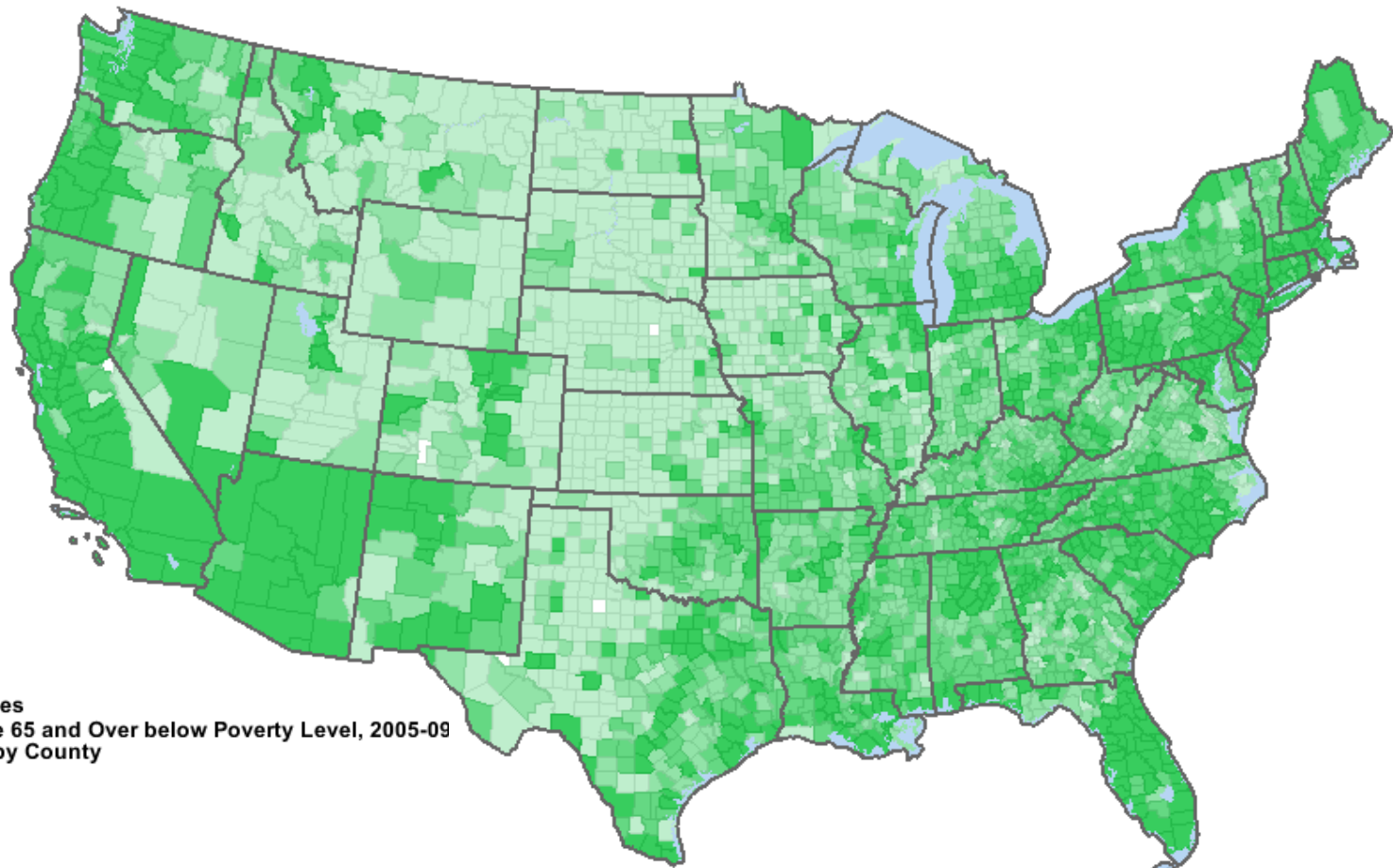
**CIM presents ACS data in an “overview” format, combining individual data fields to provide more usable information.**

Mapped ACS data	Fields Combined
Population Age 65 and Over below Poverty Level	males age 65 to 74 below poverty + males age 75 and over below poverty + females age 65 to 74 below poverty + females age 75 and over below poverty
Population Age 65 and Over below Poverty Level, Percent	$\frac{(\text{males age 65 to 74 below poverty} + \text{males age 75 and over below poverty} + \text{females age 65 to 74 below poverty} + \text{females age 75 and over below poverty})}{(\text{males age 65 to 74 below poverty} + \text{males age 75 and over below poverty} + \text{females age 65 to 74 below poverty} + \text{females age 75 and over below poverty} + \text{males age 65 to 74 at or above poverty} + \text{males 75 and over at or above poverty} + \text{females age 65 to 74 at or above poverty} + \text{females age 75 and over at or above poverty})} * 100$





## Population Age 65 and Over Below Poverty Level (2009 5-Year data)

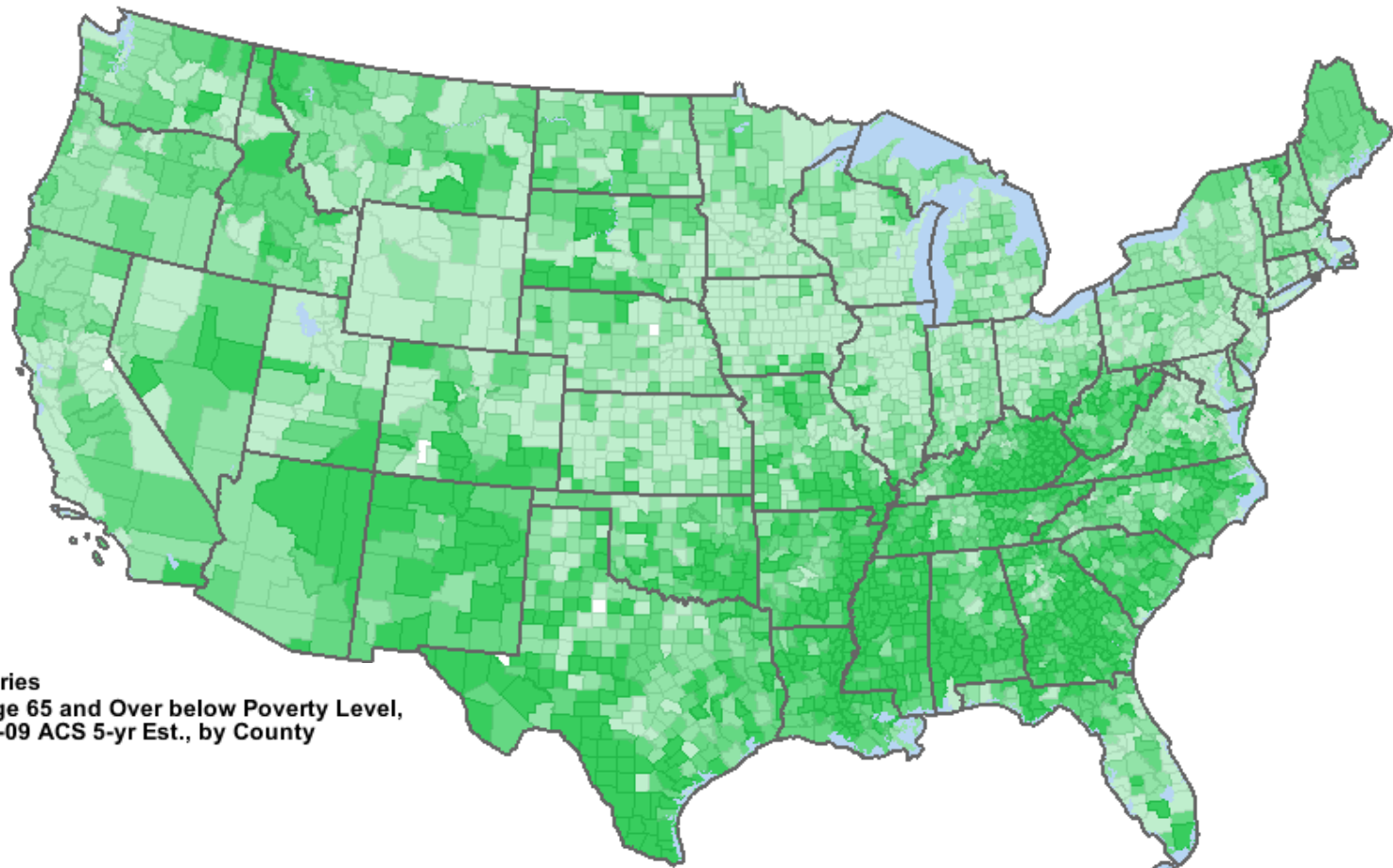


□ State Boundaries  
Population Age 65 and Over below Poverty Level, 2005-09  
ACS 5-yr Est., by County

■ 1,010 or more  
■ 460 - 1,010  
■ 190 - 460  
■ Less than 190  
■ 0 or No Data

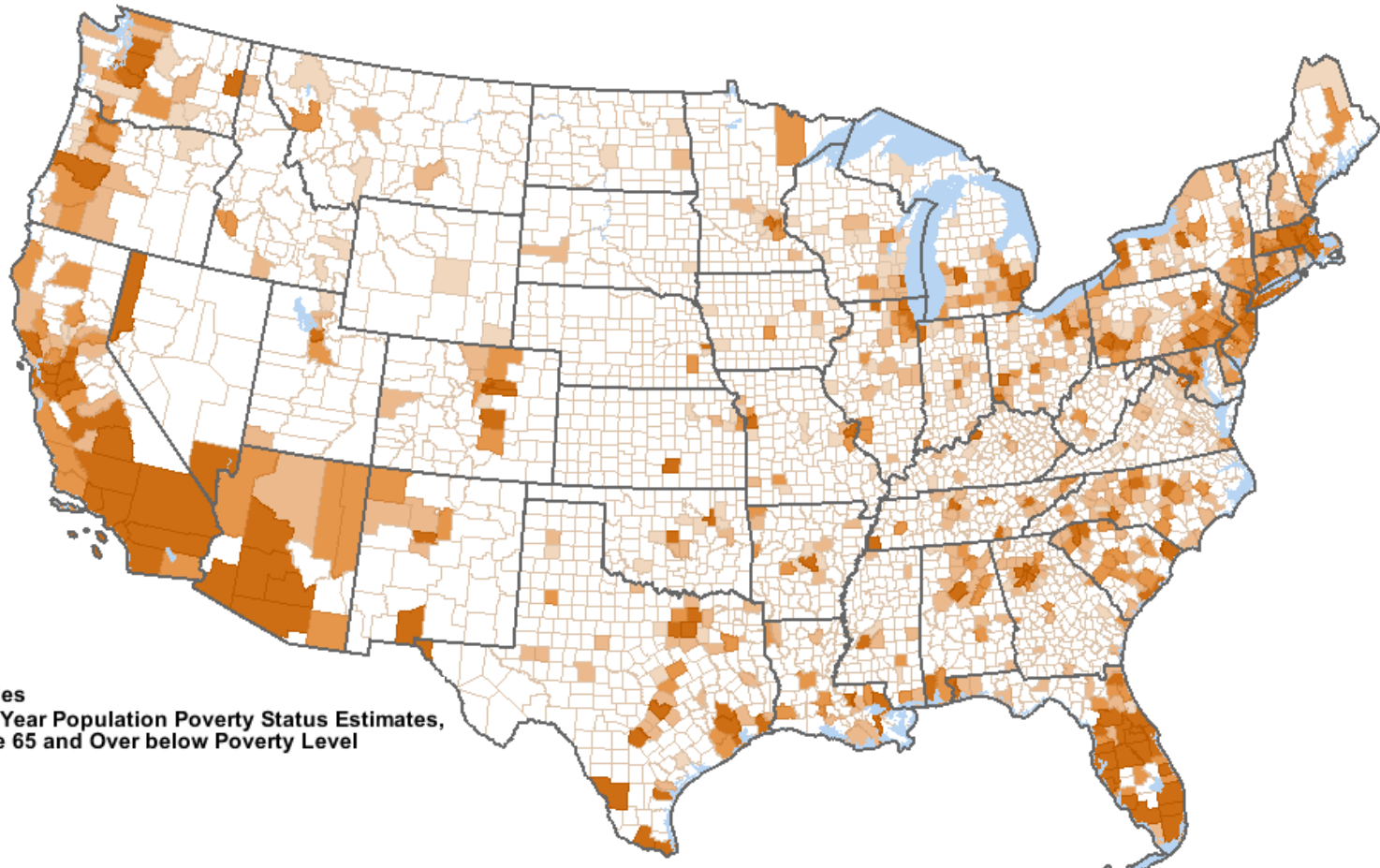
Map Scale = 1:22432154  
0 310mi

## Percent of Population Age 65 and Over Below Poverty Level (2009 5-Year data)



Map Scale = 1:22432154  
0 310mi

## Population Age 65 and Over Below Poverty Level (2009 1-Year data)



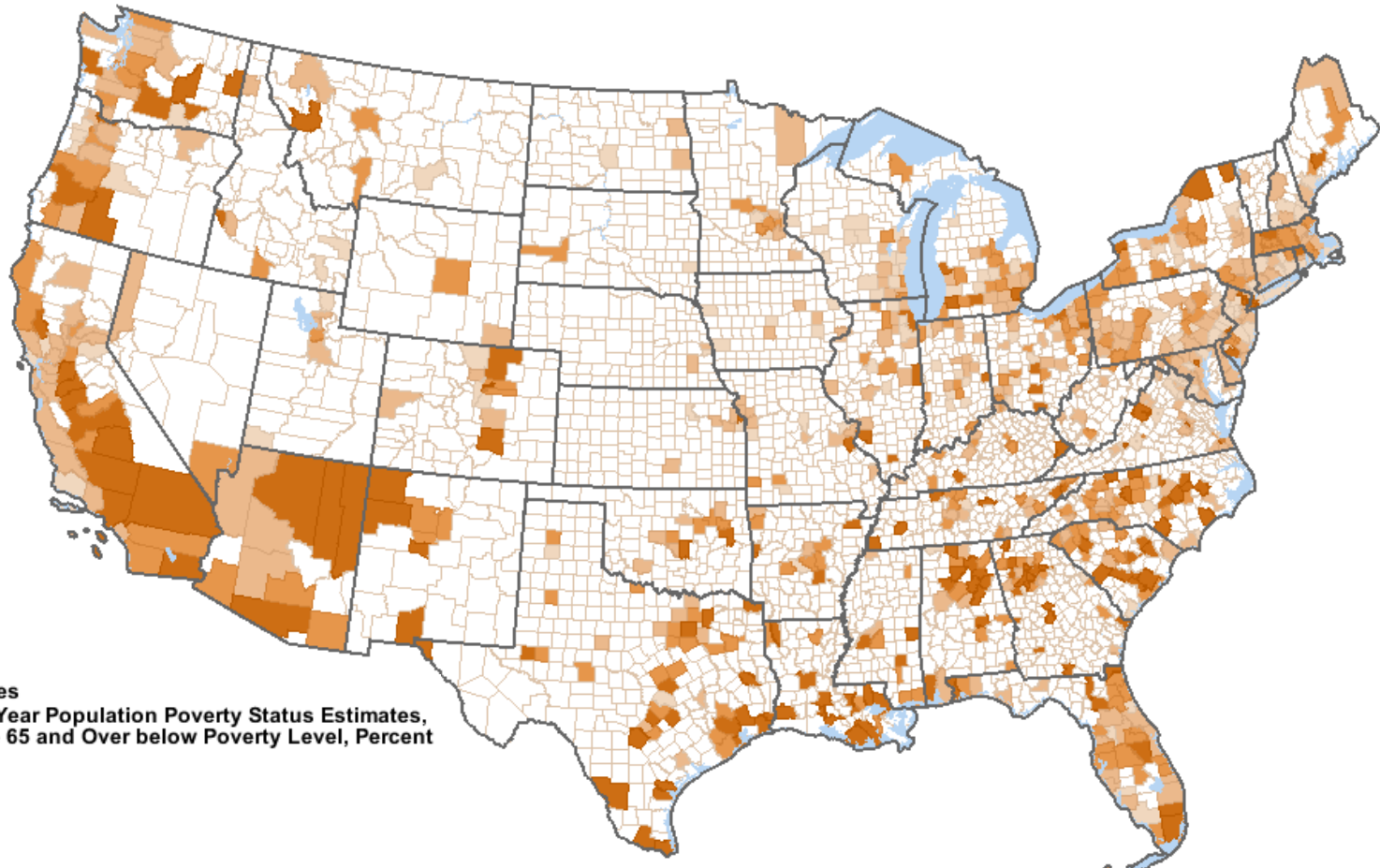
□ State Boundaries  
ACS 2009 One Year Population Poverty Status Estimates,  
Population Age 65 and Over below Poverty Level

■ 4,000 or More  
■ 2,000 - 4,000  
■ 1,000 - 2,000  
■ Less Than 1,000  
□ 0 or No data

Map Scale = 1:19580202  
0 328mi



## Percent of Population Age 65 and Over Below Poverty Level (2009 1-Year data)



Map Scale = 1:19580202  
0 328mi

## **All ACS data are survey *estimates*.**

To help you interpret the reliability of the estimate, the Census Bureau publishes a margin of error (MOE) for every ACS estimate.

Because CIM groups data into overviews, the MOE data is lost – but might be recalculated.



## American Community Survey in CARES Data (5-Year Data)

- **Geographies**

- **State**
- **County**
- **County Subdivision**
- **Tract**
- **Block Group**
- **Place**
- **Metropolitan/Micropolitan Statistical Area**
- **Combined Statistical Area**
- **Urban Area**
- **Congressional District**
- **State Senate District**
- **State House District**
- **Public Use Micro Area (PUMA)**
- **School District (Elementary)**
- **School District (Secondary)**

- **Overviews**

- **Age**
- **Basic Counts (population/housing)**
- **Educational Attainment**
- **Family Income**
- **Gender**
- **Hispanic Origin**
- **Household Income**
- **Income (Individual)**
- **Poverty Status**
- **Race**
- **School Enrollment**



## American Community Survey in CARES Data(1-Year Data)

- **Geographies**

- **State**
- **County**

- **Overviews**

- **Age**
- **Basic Counts (population/housing)**
- **Educational Attainment**
- **Family Income**
- **Gender**
- **Hispanic Origin**
- **Household Income**
- **Income (Individual)**
- **Poverty Status**
- **Race**
- **School Enrollment**



## Future ACS Releases

Data will generally be released by the Census Bureau in the fall (Sept. - Dec.)

2010 releases:

1-Year: September 22, 2011 (today)

3-Year: October, 2011

5-Year: December, 2011



**The 2010 Census counts every resident in the United States, and is the latest iteration of the decennial census dating back to 1790.**

Provides a snapshot of the nation

The information collected is limited to gender, age, race, ethnicity, and basic housing characteristics

Information is released down to the block level



## Releases

### Demographic Profile

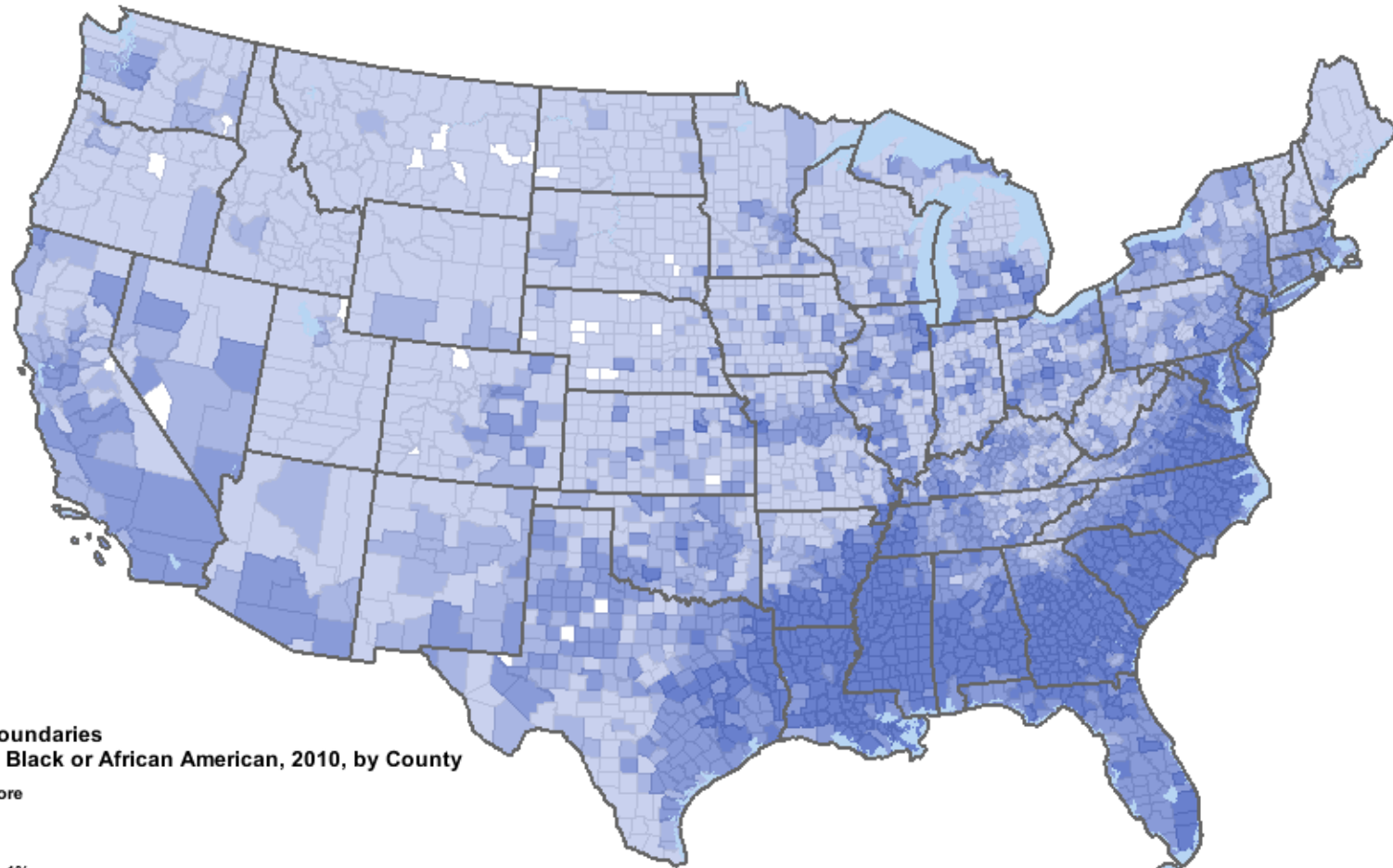
- May 26, 2011
- Limited population and housing information, for State, County, Place, Congressional District, State Senate District, and State House District

### Summary File 1

- August 25, 2011
- 8,912 variables for most Census geographies down to Census Block
- November 2011 – addition of American Indian Areas
- October 2012 – addition of rural/urban counts and urban clusters
- 2013 – Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs)



## 2010 Census: Percent Black or African American



□ State Boundaries  
Percent Black or African American, 2010, by County

- 15% or more
- 3% - 15%
- 1% - 3%
- Less than 1%
- 0 or No Data

Map Scale = 1:22432154  
0 310mi



# American Community Survey vs. 2010 Census

## In Summary:

	ACS	Decennial Census
What is it?	Continuous demographic survey	Count of the population
Data	Average characteristics OVER TIME	Counts characteristics for a SPECIFIC DATE
How Often	Every 1 year (more timely)	Every 10 years (less timely)
Households	11 million households over 5 years	18 million households in 1 year
Sampling Error	Higher Error	Lower Error
Accuracy	Less Accurate	More Accurate

