

Overview of the American Community Survey

Preston Jay Waite
Associate Director for Decennial Census

Brookings Briefing on the Census
Washington, DC
June 23, 2006

Topics to be Covered

- What is the ACS?
- Purpose of the ACS
- History of the ACS
- Update on ACS Data Collection Operations
- Type of ACS Data Collected

What is the American Community Survey?

- Replacement for the old census long form
- More current and consistent than the long form

Purpose of the ACS

- Collect Detailed Decennial Census Sample Data Every Month Instead of Only Once Each Decade
- Release Tabulations of These Data on a Yearly Basis

Purpose of the ACS

- Restructure and Simplify the 2010 Census
 - Improve the accuracy of Census coverage
 - Improve the relevance and timeliness of detailed data
 - Reduce operational risk
 - Contain cost

Why is the ACS important?

- Many federal agencies set policy at the national and state levels using census data
- The ACS allows federal agencies to respond to trends in a timely manner by providing up to date data for use in allocation formulas

Information collected in the ACS



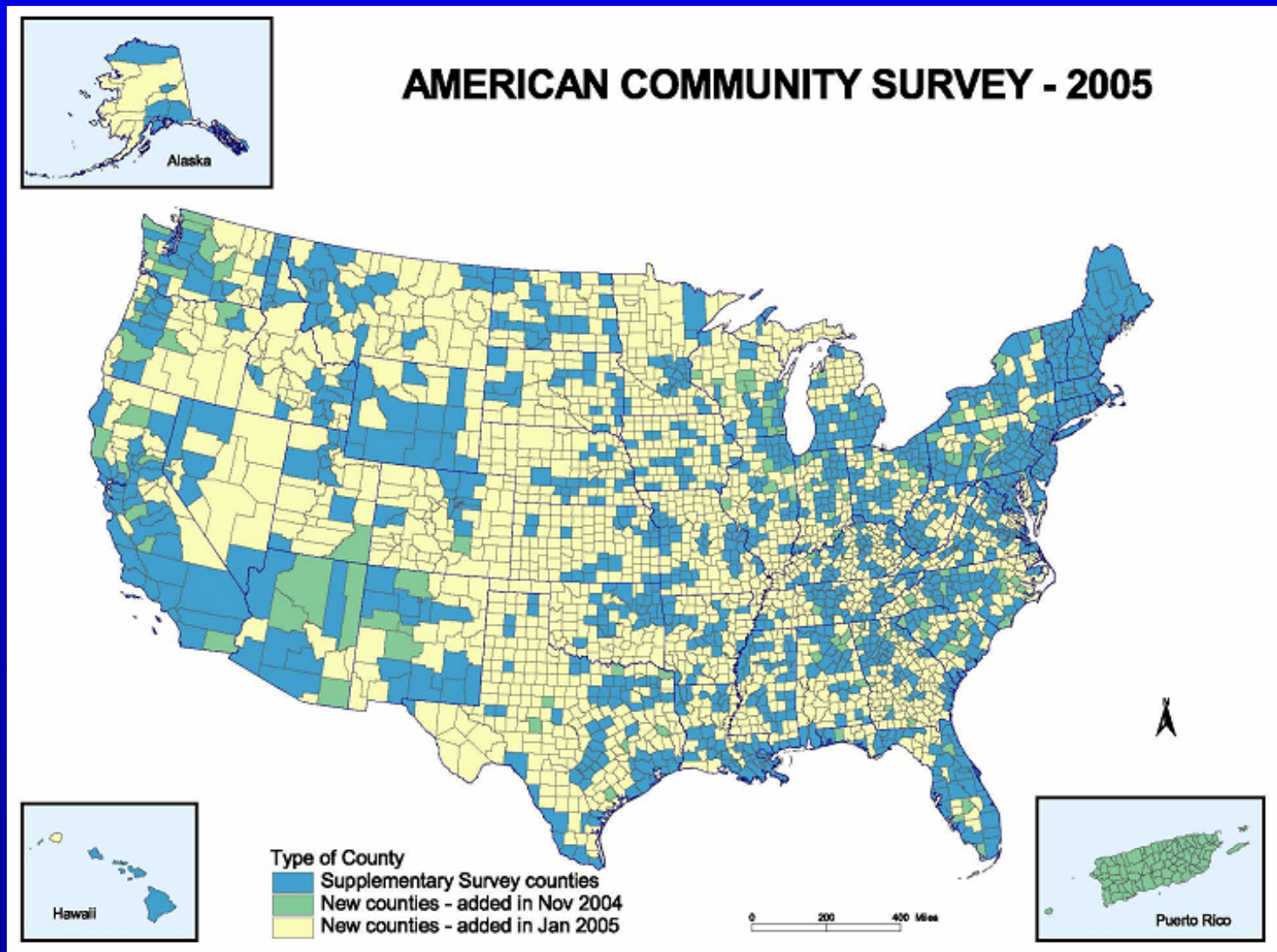
History of the ACS

- 1980s: Recognized need for continuous measurement
- Early 1990s: Research proposal with 3 prototypes for surveys developed
- Mid-1990s: Several design elements identified as foundation of the survey

History of the ACS

- ACS Demonstration Period: 1996-2004
 - 1990-1993: Design and early proposals of the continuous measurement concept
 - 1994-1999: Development of early prototypes
 - 2000-2004: Large-scale, nationwide surveys

Update on ACS Operations

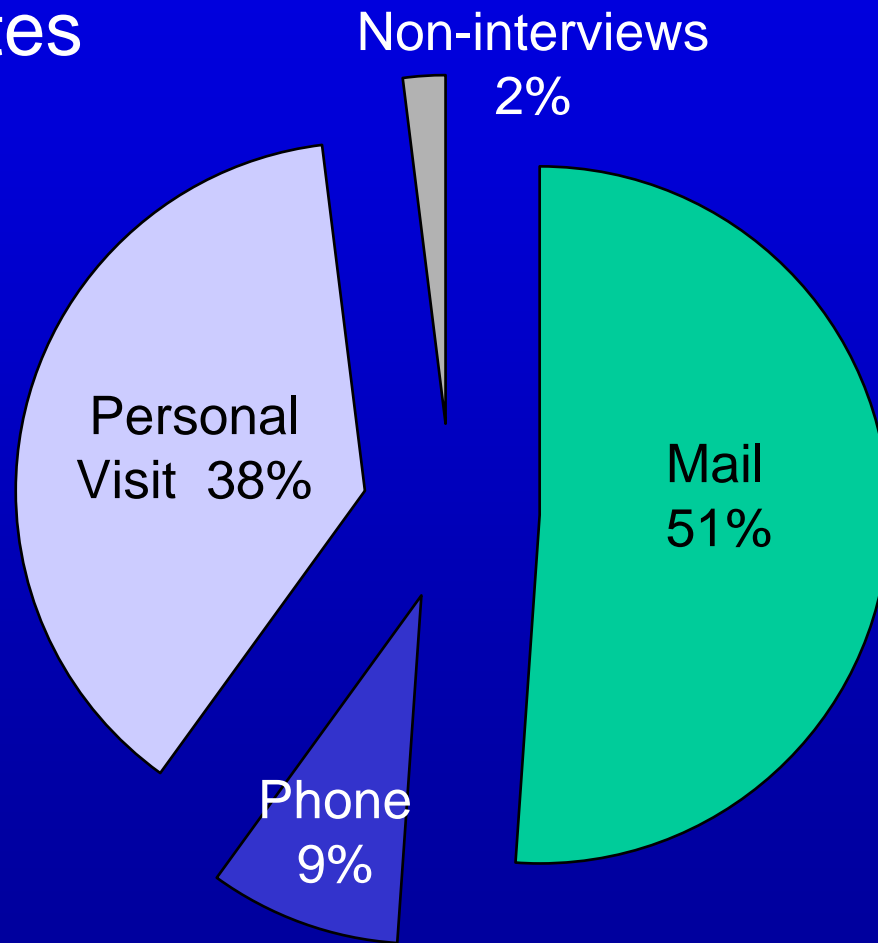


Update on ACS Operations

- Three month data collection period
- Three modes of data collection
 - Mail
 - Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI)
 - Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI)
- Data is confidential

Update on ACS Operations

Response Rates
by Mode



Update on ACS Operations

Your Guide for

THE American Community Survey

Group Quarters

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economic and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

USCENSUSBUREAU ACS-2010

Bringing you data every year about ...

Education, Children, Families, Employment, Income, Immigration, Race and Hispanic Origin, Housing, Group Quarters, Rural Life, Commuting Patterns, and Military Service.



How do I get more information about the American Community Survey?

For more information about the American Community Survey data or to obtain survey results, we encourage you to visit our Web site at:

www.census.gov/acs/www

You may also contact us by mail at the following address:

American Community Survey
U.S. Census Bureau
4700 Silver Hill Rd., Room 1657/3
Washington, DC 20233-7500

You can also telephone the Census Bureau's Regional Office nearest you as listed below:

Census Bureau Regional Offices

Atlanta, GA	1-800-424-6974
Boston, MA	1-800-562-5721
Charlotte, NC	1-800-331-7360
Chicago, IL	1-800-865-6384
Dallas, TX	1-800-835-9752
Denver, CO	1-800-852-6159
Detroit, MI	1-800-432-1495
Kansas City, KS	1-800-728-4748
Los Angeles, CA	1-800-992-3530
New York, NY	1-800-991-2520
Philadelphia, PA	1-866-238-1374
Seattle, WA	1-800-233-3308

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Issued September 2005
ACS-21WQ2

USCENSUSBUREAU
Helping You Make Informed Decisions

United States
Census
2010

Questions and Answers

American Community Survey
Group Quarters



USCENSUSBUREAU
You Make Informed Decisions

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

United States
Census
2010

Demographic Characteristics



- Sex
- Age
- Race
- Hispanic Origin

Social Characteristics



- Education
- Marital Status
- Fertility
- Grandparents
- Veterans
- Disability Status
- Place of Birth
- Citizenship
- Year of Entry
- Language Spoken at Home
- Ancestry/Tribal Affiliation

Economic Characteristics

- Income
- Benefits
- Employment Status
- Occupation
- Industry
- Commuting to Work
- Place of Work



Housing Characteristics



- Tenure
- Occupancy & Structure
- Housing Value
- Taxes & Insurance
- Utilities
- Mortgage/Monthly Rent