

Census: Intercensal and Postcensal Data

(Used for Indicators E1, E2, E3, E7, E8, E12, H3)

Brief description of the data set	The U.S. Census Bureau collects detailed population data for the entire United States every 10 years. These data are combined with birth, death, migration, and net international immigration data to estimate populations for the years between (intercensal) or after (postcensal) censuses.
Who provides the data set?	U.S. Census Bureau.
How are the data gathered?	The decennial census collects detailed population information for the entire United States every 10 years using a mail survey and/or personal interviews. Intercensal data estimate populations between censuses by combining the decennial census data from the two censuses with birth, death, migration, and net international immigration data. Postcensal data estimate populations after a census by combining the decennial census data from the previous census with birth, death, migration, and net international immigration data. For the 2000s, bridged race estimates of populations in four single race categories were calculated using a statistical regression model with person-level and county-level covariates to estimate the proportion of people in a given detailed multiple race category that would select each single race category.
What documentation is available describing data collection procedures?	http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm (US census populations with bridged race categories) http://www.census.gov/popest/data/historical/index.html
What types of data relevant for children’s environmental health indicators are available from this database?	Relevant data include populations by year, county, race, ethnicity, age, and sex.
What is the spatial representation of the database (national or other)?	National.
Are raw data (individual measurements or survey responses) available?	Not publicly released.
How are database files obtained?	http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/bridged_race.htm (US census populations with bridged race categories) http://www.census.gov/popest/data/historical/index.html (population estimates)
Are there any known data quality or data analysis concerns?	Due to the uncertainties in the statistical methods used to estimate intercensal and postcensal populations, the population counts at the more detailed geographical or demographic stratification levels are less precise.
What documentation is available describing quality assurance procedures?	http://www.census.gov/popest/methodology/2009-stco-char-meth.pdf (methods for bridged race categories including consistency with other population estimates).
For what years are data available?	1977–present.
What is the frequency of data collection?	Varies.
What is the frequency of data release?	Monthly, quarterly, or annually.

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Are the data comparable across time and space?	Postcensal data for each calendar year between the census and the current year are updated annually using information on the components of population change. Since the components of population change data are revised (e.g., a preliminary natality file is replaced with a final natality file), and since estimation methodologies are improved, population estimates from different annual updates are not comparable. For example, the year 2007 population estimates from the 2008 and 2009 series are not the same because the population change estimates for the years 2001 to 2007 used in the 2008 series were updated for the 2009 series, and the estimation methodologies were also revised (e.g., for international migration and for the effects of hurricanes Katrina and Rita). Race data for different decades may not be comparable due to changing race group definitions.
Can the data be stratified by race/ethnicity, income, and location (region, state, county or other geographic unit)?	Data can be stratified by race, ethnicity, and location (region, state, county). Income data are available from the American Community Survey (2005 and later) and from the 1990 and 2000 censuses.