

## Who uses our information?

- State, local, and tribal governments
- Congress
- Community and civic groups
- Businesses and industries
- Hospitals and churches
- Reporters
- Students and teachers
- People like you

All of the responses you provide to the Census Bureau are strictly confidential and are combined with all other responses to create statistical totals.



## Do you want to learn more about our demographic programs?

*Call or write –*

U.S. Census Bureau  
Public Information Office  
Washington, DC 20233-0900  
Phone: 301-457-3030  
Fax: 301-457-3670  
E-mail: [pio@census.gov](mailto:pio@census.gov)

or 1 of our 12 regional offices

Atlanta, GA	404-730-3833
Boston, MA	617-424-0510
Charlotte, NC	704-344-6144
Chicago, IL	708-562-1740
Dallas, TX	214-640-4422
Denver, CO	303-969-7750
Detroit, MI	313-259-1875
Kansas City, KS	913-551-6711
Los Angeles, CA	818-904-6339
New York, NY	212-264-4730
Philadelphia, PA	215-656-7578
Seattle, WA	206-553-5835



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

FLD/00-WMA

## We Measure America



*U.S. Census Bureau*

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROGRAMS

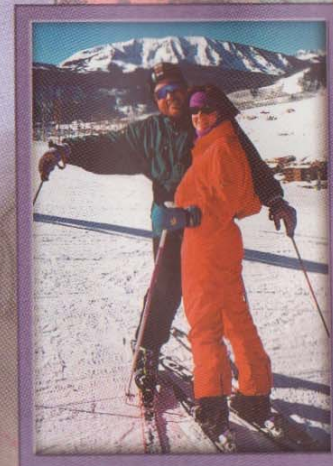


## USCENSUSBUREAU

*Helping You Make Informed Decisions*

## What does America look like?

Imagine a quilt — a mosaic of color, form, and texture. Now, look at our country. It, too, resembles an ever-growing, changing quilt made up of people, communities, and institutions. Each one of us has a place in the intricate patterns that create the framework of society.



## Why is demographic information important?

Demography is a science about people, and people are important. The Census Bureau's demographic programs help us find our places in the vast pattern of America to understand where we have been, where we are, and where we are headed.

The Census Bureau is the largest collector and disseminator of demographic information that is used to develop programs, create policies, and change lives in our country and our communities.

## How do we get this information?

We ask you! All Americans hear from us every 10 years during the population and housing census. In between, we contact millions of Americans for the hundreds of monthly, quarterly, and annual surveys we conduct by mail, by telephone, or in person. These surveys help to measure current and emerging trends at the national and state levels.

*Look inside for some examples of our demographic work.*

## The decennial census establishes the framework and creates the pieces...

Our first, largest, and most visible demographic program is the Census of Population and Housing that we conduct every 10 years. In 1787, delegates to the Constitutional Convention decided that representation in the House of Representatives would be based on the population in each state. So the first decennial census was conducted in 1790. We are now approaching the year 2000 and the 22<sup>nd</sup> census.

The decennial census is the only source of complete demographic information for small geographic areas, like counties, cities, towns, ZIP Codes, and neighborhoods.

The data that we gather are used to —

- Draw voting district boundaries
- Determine the numbers of Congressional representatives
- Help distribute federal and state funds
- Develop public and private programs, policies, and services
- Learn how society is changing and growing

*"If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it."*

Abraham Lincoln



## surveys rearrange the pieces as patterns change through the decade...

Our work doesn't stop between censuses. Every month, quarter, and year, we conduct nearly 100 surveys that update and add to information from the census and mirror the concerns of America.

Because we are the country's best at large data collection efforts, the Census Bureau conducts many national surveys for other government agencies and institutions, universities, and nonprofit organizations.

Using the latest data collection and geographic technologies, our network of interviewers in 12 regional offices and 3 telephone centers reaches every area of the country.

Information from our surveys supplies the vital statistics about issues affecting America today, such as —

- Jobs
- Marriage and family
- Housing
- Race and ethnicity
- Health
- Aging
- Crime
- Education
- Income and poverty
- Recreation
- Transportation and travel

*"The data that comes from the Census Bureau and particularly from the Current Population Survey is really the basis on which all the key decisions are made, on knowing where we are. ...There is no alternative; there is no other place one can get this data."*

Robert Greenstein  
Center on Budget  
and Policy Priorities

## and our other programs stitch our data together for current and future use.

There are other areas of demographic expertise at the Census Bureau:

- Our population estimates and projections programs supply current and future population numbers that tell us where we are and let us envision where we are going, well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Current estimates are used to allocate federal and state funds annually, while population projections help with national and local planning for new or evolving programs, such as housing and education.
- Our international programs extend beyond the U.S. borders. As one of the world's leading statistical agencies, our international programs center reaches out to other countries with training, guidance, and collaborative data collection programs.
- Our statistical methods and research programs are on the cutting edge. Our statisticians, demographers, economists, sociologists, and mathematicians are constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of our survey methods and sample design and share that research with professionals in other organizations.
- Our information programs include workshops, exhibits, press releases, and all types of data products, from printed publications to CD-ROMs. Much of the data from the Census Bureau are available at depository libraries nationwide. You can also find lots of census information on the Internet.

*"Good public policy demands good information. There may be disagreement about the wisdom of different federal programs, but there is little dispute over the need for adequate data to inform the debate."*

