

## Census Bureau Data More Than \$400 Billion in Federal Program Funding

A new Census Bureau report analyzing the use of census statistics in 140 federal grant and direct assistance programs concludes that over \$400 billion in total grant funding was allocated in Fiscal Year 2007 (FY2007) based in whole or in part on data from the agency's decennial census (which includes the on-going American Community Survey), annual population estimates, and other Census Bureau statistical programs.

The research report, "Uses of Population and Income Statistics in Federal Funds Distribution -- With a Focus on Census Bureau Data," summarizes the distribution of funds by program. It is available on the agency's web site at <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/govern.html>

## The Population Counts

Many of the Federal funding formulas used to allocate grants rely upon measures of population. Grant formula allocations use census population counts and characteristics, population estimates, and current survey data. Some examples of Federal programs using Census Bureau data include:

- Health Services
- Housing and Community Development
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
- Head Start
- Special Programs for the Elderly
- Programs for Veterans
- Nutrition for the Elderly
- Indian and Native American Employment
- Community Action Programs
- Law Enforcement Assistance
- Rural Development
- Title 1 Funding for Schools
- State Children's Health Insurance Program



2010 CENSUS: **IT'S IN OUR HANDS**

## It's Important!

Population-based data drawn from the census, estimates and surveys play a critical role in the conduct of community development programs undertaken by Federal, state, and local governments. Such data are central to the conduct of the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG), the federal government's 13th largest formula grant program with \$4 billion in obligations in fiscal year 2007. Since 1974, this program has provided \$120 billion to help communities address a host of urban problems ranging from poverty and deteriorating housing to population loss and social isolation. Given the breadth of the program's objectives and the diversity of the nation's communities, CDBG employs four formulas to allocate funds among 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 1,080 local governments. These formulas depend on census data, including total population, individuals in poverty, lagging population growth, households in overcrowded homes, as well as the number of pre-1940 homes.

### American Community Survey (ACS)

The American Community Survey (ACS), provides detailed socioeconomic characteristics for the nation's communities.

Currently, the ACS provides information on communities with populations over 20,000. Data from the ACS are also used to allocate federal funds, such as determining fair market rent levels used in the Section 8 housing voucher program. Because the ACS is to replace 2010 census long form socioeconomic data, it is expected that ACS data will be used more extensively in other federal assistance programs in the future.

Beginning in 2010, 5-year estimates will be available for areas to the smallest block groups, census tracts, small towns, and rural areas.

Beyond their use by the federal government, the population counts and estimates are also used extensively by state and local governments, businesses, nonprofits, and research institutions.

On the one hand is the once every ten years Census.

On the other hand we have Surveys and Estimates.



The census provides population counts once every ten years, but the Bureau also estimates the population for the years between censuses. Because these population estimates are more current than the census population counts, the distribution formulas for federal grants often use these data. For example, the allocation formula for the Social Services Block Grants uses the most recent population estimates to distribute funds.

While census and estimates provide annual data, the Current Population Survey provides monthly data. The survey is primarily designed to generate detailed information about the American labor force, such as the number of people unemployed. Data from this survey are also used to allocate funds for programs, for instance programs under the Workforce Investment Act.

### American Community Survey Alert

On September 22, 2009, the Census Bureau will release the 2008 ACS 1-year estimates. Similar to last year's release, the 2008 ACS will include 1-year estimates available for the nation, 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, every congressional district and all counties, places and metropolitan areas with populations of 65,000 or more.

Read more about this release and other news, events, data releases, congressional action, and other developments associated with the American Community Survey (ACS) at: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Special/Alerts/Alert68p.html>

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