

Census Data Analysis and Compilation

Census data is one of the major elements of any redistricting process and forms the heart of what Election Data Services, Inc calls the “datacube.” With regard to demographic information and race, both the 2010 and 2020 Census asked each individual two major questions.

First, they asked whether the person was Hispanic or not (the Census Bureau has not considered Hispanic as being a race). The actual

Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – *Print, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

Figure 1

What is this person's race?
Mark one or more boxes **AND** print origins.

- White – *Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.*
- Black or African Am. – *Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.*
- American Indian or Alaska Native – *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.*
- Chinese
- Vietnamese
- Native Hawaiian
- Filipino
- Korean
- Samoan
- Asian Indian
- Japanese
- Chamorro
- Other Asian – *Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*
- Other Pacific Islander – *Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.*
- Some other race – *Print race or origin.*

Figure 2

Hispanic question in the questionnaire for 2020 appeared as noted in Figure 1, to the right.

Second, they asked the person’s race. This is show in Figure 2, to the left. This two-part question format has been used since Hispanic origin was first asked of every individual in 1980.

Since 1980 the Census Bureau has taken the results of the race question and created counts of five major racial groups along with a catch-all of “some other race”. The five major racial groups were “white”, “black or African-American”, “American American Indian or Alaska Native”, “Asian” (which combined the answers of Asian American Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Other Asian), and “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander” (which combined the

answers of Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, Guamanian or Chamorro, Samoan, and Other Pacific Islander). Traditionally, these five major racial groups, along with “some other race” would add to 100% of the total population reported by the census. The 2020 Census allowed more space for individuals to include ancestry answers as write-ins as a way of clarifying their race, but the data on ancestry will not be released until later in the decade, long after redistricting. However, the Bureau did incorporate the information in fill-in boxes into part of their processing steps for the purposes of generating counts for the PL files, which probably contributed to the increased growth of the multi-race categories and “some other race” categories in the PL file.

The results of just the race questions are shown in the tables that are identified with just a number, such as Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. In these tables there is no consideration of answers to the Hispanic/non-Hispanic question,

The Census Bureau also asked individuals whether they were of Hispanic origin. Because the Census Bureau and the federal government for each of the last four censuses have concluded that “Hispanic Origin” is not a racial category (anyone of any race can also be Hispanic), the Census Bureau provides cross-tabulations in its PL 94-171 data tables. Utilizing these cross-tabulations, Election Data Services, Inc. has traditionally developed its datasets by showing Hispanic Origin as if it were a race, and then removing Hispanics from the individual racial data. As such, we report Non-Hispanic White, instead of White; Non-Hispanic Black, instead of Blacks; Non-Hispanic Asian; instead of Asians; and so-forth. When the racial data and Hispanic Origin are reported in this manner, the groups add to 100 percent of the population. All of the tables that have an “A” in their designation (such as 1A, 2A, etc.) are tables where Hispanics are taken out of the race categories and treated as if Hispanics were a race itself.

Post census studies have shown that Hispanics have tended to divide their racial designation mainly between “Some other race” and “white” in roughly equal proportions. As a result, when we take out Hispanics from their relative racial groups in order to treat Hispanic as if it was a race, then the largest decreases occur in both the “White” and the “Some Other Race” categories.

The 2000, 2010 and 2020 censuses were a marked departure from earlier censuses on the reporting of racial data. In previous decades, individuals answering the Census were supposed to mark only one racial category. However, beginning with the 2000 Census, individuals could mark any number of racial categories (as many as all six), mainly due to the growth of multi-racial families in American society. This produced unique data issues concerning racial breakdowns and how they were reported. As one of the very few organizations involved in redistricting around the nation, Election Data Services, Inc. was closely involved

with census personnel in researching and understanding the ramifications of the new data structures.

There are three basic ways to calculate the racial breakdowns for the 2000, 2010 and 2020 censuses. The first is to exclude any individuals who have marked more than one racial category from the basic racial definitions and put these individuals into a separate “multiple-race” category. This tends to create a bottom level of racial categorization for individual race groups, but one that is more compatible with the numbers that were reported in previous censuses. Election Data Services, Inc. designated these categories as “*Race-Alone*” and they occupy tab or table 1 in many of our reports.

The second method of calculation is to include in the individual race groups any individual who marked that race group alone, plus any individual who marked that race group in combination with any other racial group(s). This produces the maximum number of individuals in each racial group, but it also means that the totals of all racial groups added together will result in more than 100 percent of the population being reported. Election Data Services designated these categories as “*Combo*” or “*Max*” and they occupy tab or table 2 in many of our reports

The third method of calculation was recommended by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB). In a Federal Register notice published in March 2000 (at the tail end of the Clinton administration), OMB laid out how federal agencies should use racial data from the 2000 Census (no fundamental change was made in this directive for the 2010 nor 2020 Census). In essence, the OMB recommended that any individuals who marked themselves as both “White” and some other minority race, should be counted as part of that other minority race. This increased the numbers reported for the racial groups above the “race-alone” categories, but actually excluded individuals who marked themselves as being in two different minority groups. We have found in our research that this method of calculation tends to fall in between the other two methods. Election Data Services, Inc. designates these categories as “*OMB*” and they occupy tab or table 3 in many of our data reports.

Election Data Services’ standard dataset incorporates all three methods of calculating racial data from the 2000 and 2010 censuses. This will continue for the 2020 Census, as the Census Bureau announced two years ago that the same basic data will be used when they published the PL file for 2020. Producing and reporting population counts based on all three calculation methods allows us to compare the different methods and how district configurations are affected over three decades.

Tabs 1, 2 and 3 all deal with total population. Voting age population (those 18 years old and older) is shown in tabs 4, 5, and 6, following the same **Alone**, **Combo**, and **OMB** patterned from the initial datasets noted above.