

# Getting Started Guide – United States Census Bureau American Community Survey

## ➤ Home page access

United States Census Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce | Blogs | Index A-Z | Glossary | FAQs


TOPICS: Population, Economy | GEOGRAPHY: Maps, Products | LIBRARY: Infographics, Publications | DATA: Tools, Developers | SURVEYS/PROGRAMS: Respond, Survey Data | NEWSROOM: News, Blogs | ABOUT US: Our Research

Search

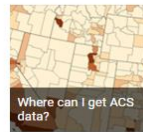
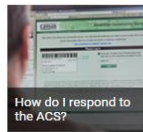
// Census.gov / Our Surveys & Programs / American Community Survey (ACS)

## American Community Survey (ACS)

- About the Survey
- Respond to the Survey
- News & Updates
- Data
- Guidance for Data Users
- Geography & ACS
- Technical Documentation
- Methodology
- Library
- Operations and Administration
- Contact Us

  
Respond to the ACS  
Learn how

The [American Community Survey \(ACS\)](#) helps local officials, community leaders, and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities. It is the premier source for detailed population and housing information about our nation.



→ Listing of additional resources and data repositories with data available for download based on user query

### Data

---

#### 2017 Data Release

Learn more about 2017 ACS data releases, including the latest release of new 2017 ACS 1-year estimates.

---

#### Data Tell Stories. Tell Us Yours!

Share the creative ways you use American Community Survey data to make decisions.

---

#### Preview County Profiles on data.census.gov

Search for your county on data.census.gov to explore a visual snapshot of statistics and provide feedback on this preview data dissemination platform.

---

→ Users may learn more about data release schedules, visual snapshots, and how to get ACS data

## ➤ Tables & Tools – overview of fields

# American Community Survey (ACS)

About the Survey  
Respond to the Survey  
News & Updates  
**Data**  
Guidance for Data Users  
Geography & ACS  
Technical Documentation  
Methodology  
Library  
Operations and Administration  
Contact Us

**Data Tables & Tools**  
Summary File Data  
PUMS Data  
Variance Replicate Tables  
Race/Ethnicity and American Indian & Alaska Native Data  
Custom Tables

The American Community Survey (ACS) helps local officials, community leaders, and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities. It is the premier source for detailed population and information about our nation.



 Respond to the ACS  
Learn how

How do I respond to the ACS?

Why do you ask each question?

Where can I get ACS data?

Data

## American Community Survey

About the Survey  
Respond to the Survey  
News & Updates  
**Data**  
**Data Tables & Tools**  
Data Profiles  
Narrative Profiles  
Subject Tables  
Ranking Tables  
American FactFinder  
Statistical Testing Tool  
My Congressional District  
Data via FTP  
Summary File Data  
PUMS Data  
Variance Replicate Tables  
Race/Ethnicity & AIAN Data  
Custom Tables  
Guidance for Data Users  
Geography & the ACS  
Technical Documentation  
Methodology  
Library  
Operations and Administration  
Contact Us

**Data Tables & Tools**

**Data Profiles Selector**  
Data Profiles consist of four tables (Social, Economic, Housing, Demographic) to give a broad statistical view of a particular geography. We provide an easy to use [Data Profiles geography selector](#) for the most popular geographies: state, county and place. Our full data website, [American FactFinder](#), provides additional geographies for this table type and many more.

**Narrative Profiles**  
The only place to find the current Narrative Profiles is right here on American Community Survey website. Narrative Profiles contain much of the same information found in the Data Profiles, except it is a text-based report with plenty of colorful graphs and charts. Use the map selector or the dropdown boxes to [generate a Narrative Profile](#) for your favorite place.

**Subject Tables**  
More interested in a particular topic than a particular geography? Check out our listing of ACS Subject Tables. Subject tables have both numbers and percentages making them the versatile choice for data seekers. You can search/filter the listing, and then link to American Factfinder (AFF) where you can change geographies and go back in time! [Choose your subject table here!](#)

**American FactFinder**  
American FactFinder (AFF) is by far the most popular of our data dissemination tools. FactFinder houses almost all of the ACS data tables (sometimes referred to as "data products") produced by the American Community Survey including some of the options listed above for all available geographies. To help you with your search on American FactFinder, review the ["data products" descriptions](#) and use the link with the product of your choice pre-selected.

**Wait, there's more!**  
[My Congressional District](#) - some basic statistics for your congressional district at your fingertips.

[Tell Us What You Think!](#)

➔ Choose to compile data based on: geography selection, narrative profiles, and subject/topic, or build datasets utilizing American Fact Finder (Getting Started Guide available)

➤ **Tables & Tools – example**

➔ Choose a data tool based on your query  
 ➔ In this example, we want to look at the Narrative Profile for Illinois from 2012 - 2016

**American Community Survey**

- About the Survey
- Respond to the Survey
- News & Updates
- Data**
- Data Tables & Tools**
- Data Profiles
- Narrative Profiles
- Subject Tables
- Ranking Tables
- American FactFinder
- Statistical Testing Tool
- My Congressional District
- Data via FTP

**Data Tables & Tools**

Tell Us What You Think!

**Data Profiles Selector**

Data Profiles consist of four tables (Social, Economic, Housing, Demographic) to give a broad statistical view of a particular geography. We provide an easy to use Data Profiles geography selector for the most popular geographies: state, county and place. Our full data website, [American FactFinder](#), provides additional geographies for this table type and many more.

**Narrative Profiles**

The only place to find the current Narrative Profiles is right here on American Community Survey website. Narrative Profiles contain much of the same information found in the Data Profiles, except it is a text-based report with plenty of colorful graphs and charts. Use the map selector or the dropdown boxes to generate a Narrative Profile for your favorite place.

- About the Survey
- Respond to the Survey
- News & Updates
- Data**
- Data Tables & Tools**
- Data Profiles
- Narrative Profiles**
- Subject Tables
- Ranking Tables
- Supplemental Tables
- American FactFinder
- More ACS Tools & Apps
- Data via FTP
- Summary File Data
- PUMS Data
- Variance Replicate Tables
- Race/Ethnicity & American Indian & Alaska Native Data
- Custom Tables
- Guidance for Data Users
- Geography & the ACS
- Technical Documentation
- Methodology
- Library
- Operations and Administration
- Contact Us

**Narrative Profiles**

Share Your ACS Data Story!

Narrative Profiles are short, analytic reports derived from the ACS 5-year estimates. Each Narrative Profile covers 15 different topic areas and provides text and bar charts to display highlights of selected social, economic, housing and demographic estimates for a selected geographic area.

2016    2015    2014    2013    2012

**2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Narrative Profiles**

**Step 1: Choose Search Method**

- Use Map
- Use Dropdown Menus

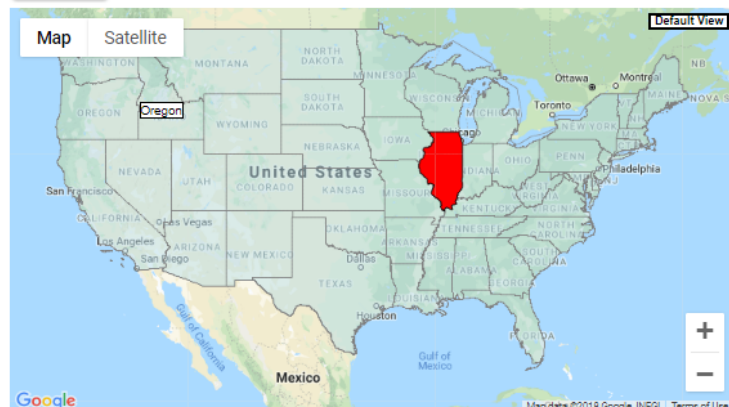
**Step 2: Select a Geography Level**

- Nation
- Census Tract
- State
- Metropolitan/Micropolitan Statistical Area
- County
- ZIP Code Tabulation Area
- Place
- American Indian Area/Alaska Native Area/Hawaiian Home Land

Step 3: Choose a geography, then click Get Profile button:

You have selected: **Illinois**

**Get Profile**



- ➔ Enter query by:
- 1) Search method
  - 2) Geographic level
  - 3) Specified location
  - 4) Select Get Profile

➔ In this example, we are looking at the narrative profile for the state of Illinois

➤ **Tables & Tools – example output**

**American Community Survey**

- About the Survey
- Respond to the Survey
- News & Updates
- Data
- Guidance for Data Users
- Geography & the ACS
- Technical Documentation
- Methodology
- Library
- Operations and Administration
- Contact Us

Population and Housing Narrative Profile  
2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Select a New Geography

While the ACS produces sample-based population group and housing estimates used in this report, the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program produces and disseminates official estimates of the population for the nation, states, counties, cities and towns, as well as estimates of housing units for states and counties. For more information see: [www.census.gov/ipeds/](http://www.census.gov/ipeds/)

Note that for small geographic areas, the sample used for the Narrative Profile may be small as well. Users are encouraged to examine the detailed tables on [American FactFinder](#) that are associated with the Narrative Profile text. These tables provide additional information on sampling variability associated with the estimates in this report.

Geography: Illinois

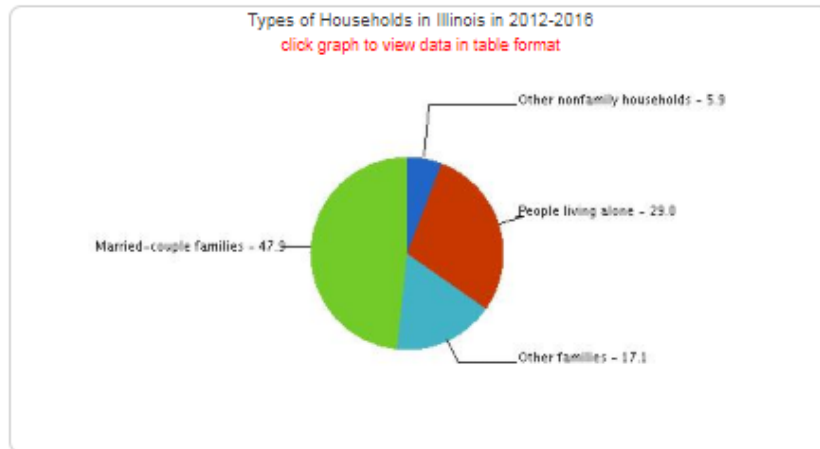
[Expand All Sections](#) [Collapse All Sections](#)

▶ **Households and Families**

In 2012-2016 there were 4.8 million households in Illinois. The average household size was 2.6 people.

Families made up 65 percent of the households in Illinois. This figure includes both married-couple families (48 percent) and other families (17 percent). Of other families, 7 percent are female householder families with no husband present and own children under 18 years. Nonfamily households made up 35 percent of all households in Illinois. Most of the nonfamily households were people living alone, but some were composed of people living in households in which no one was related to the householder.

In Illinois, 32 percent of all households have one or more people under the age of 18; 26 percent of all households have one or more people 65 years and over.



Among persons 15 and older, 50 percent of males and 46 percent of females are currently married.

Population 15 years and over	Males	Females
Never married	37.9	32.1
Now married, except separated	49.6	46.0
Separated	1.4	1.9
Widowed	2.5	9.0
Divorced	8.5	11.0

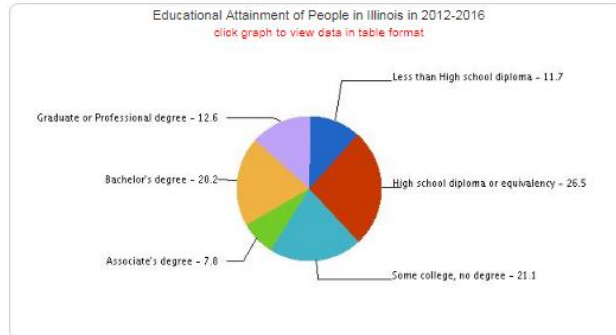
In Illinois, 270,100 grandparents lived with their grandchildren under 18 years old. Of those grandparents, 33 percent of them had financial responsibility for their grandchildren.

➔ Output includes breakdown by various topics including household and marital status

### Education

In 2012-2016, 88 percent of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school and 33 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. An estimated 12 percent did not complete high school.

The total school enrollment in Illinois was 3.4 million in 2012-2016. Nursery school and kindergarten enrollment was 396,700 and elementary or high school enrollment was 2 million children. College or graduate school enrollment was 940,200.



### Disability

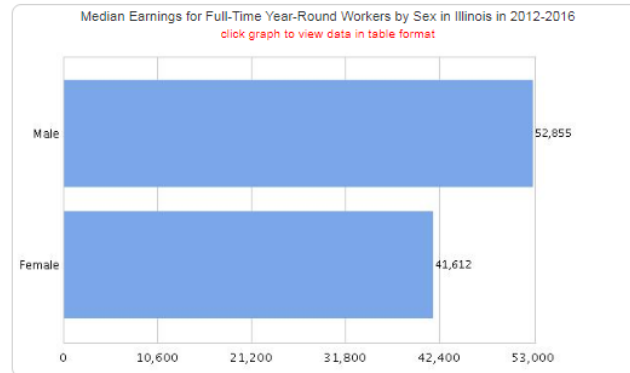
In Illinois, among the civilian noninstitutionalized population in 2012-2016, 11 percent reported a disability. The likelihood of having a disability varied by age - from 3 percent of people under 18 years old, to 9 percent of people 18 to 64 years old, and to 35 percent of those 65 and over.

→ Additional topics include breakdown of education, income, disability status, etc

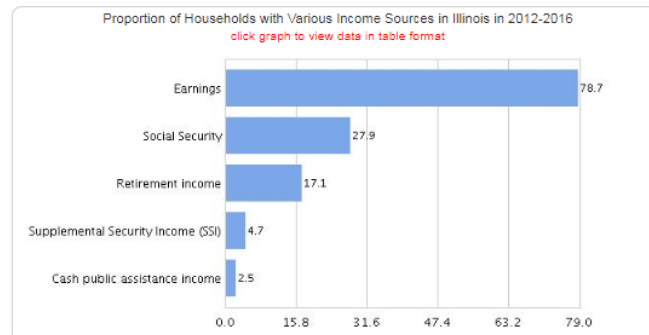
→ Data is presented in narratives, charts, tables, and figures

### Income

The median income of households in Illinois was \$59,196. An estimated 12 percent of households had income below \$15,000 a year and 12 percent had income over \$150,000 or more.



An estimated 79 percent of the households received earnings and 17 percent received retirement income other than Social Security. An estimated 28 percent of the households received Social Security. The average income from Social Security was \$18,313. These income sources are not mutually exclusive; that is, some households received income from more than one source.





➤ Summary File Data – overview of fields

# American Community Survey (ACS)

The American Community Survey (ACS) helps local officials, community leaders, and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities. It is the premier source for detailed population and information about our nation.

→ Users may download data that contains estimate, margin of error, and geography files for specified query and for 1- and 5-yr summaries

➤ Summary File Data – example

# American Community Survey (ACS)

Summary File Documentation

< Back to American Community Survey Data

## Summary File Data

The Summary File contains estimate, margin of error, and geography files for each release.

View instructions, guides, and example SAS programs on the [Summary File Technical Documentation](#) page.

- 2017
- 2016
- 2015
- 2014
- 2013
- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- MORE

## 2017

→ In this example, we want to examine and download 2017 1-year estimates for the state of Illinois via summary files

2017 ACS 1-year Estimates

2017 ACS 5-year Estimates

1-Year Summary File

5-Year Summary File






### Templates

Includes description of variables in each column for all sequence files and for the comma delimited version (.csv) of the geography file.
















1-year Templates [1.8 MB]

5-year Templates [1.5 MB]

→ In this example, we want 1-yr estimates for 2017

Name	Last modified	Size	Description
 Parent Directory		-	
 1_year_by_state/	17-Aug-2018 14:41	-	
 1_year_entire_sf/	17-Aug-2018 14:45	-	
 1_year_seq_by_state/	17-Aug-2018 15:26	-	
 2017_1yr_Summary_FileTemplates.zip	17-Aug-2018 16:15	1.9M	

### ➤ Summary File Data – example output

 Parent Directory		-	
 Alabama_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:39	5.5M	
 Alaska_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:39	1.5M	
 Arizona_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:38	8.6M	
 Arkansas_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:39	3.7M	
 California_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:39	47M	
 Colorado_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:38	6.9M	
 Connecticut_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:40	3.6M	
 Delaware_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:40	1.2M	
 DistrictofColumbia_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:41	485K	
 Florida_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:38	20M	
 Georgia_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:41	10M	
 Hawaii_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:40	1.8M	
 Idaho_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:40	2.6M	
 Illinois_All_Geographies.zip	17-Aug-2018 14:40	14M	

- Users can download zip files based on their query
- We selected zip files of all geographies for Illinois