Race & Ethnicity

The U.S. Census Bureau considers race and ethnicity to be two separate and distinct concepts.

What is race?
The Census Bureau defines race as a person’s self-identification with one or more social groups. An individual can report as White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, or some other race. Survey respondents may report multiple races.

What is ethnicity?
Ethnicity determines whether a person is of Hispanic origin or not. For this reason, ethnicity is broken out in two categories, Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino. Hispanics may report as any race.

Can the information be used to enforce immigration laws on me or my family?
No. The Census Bureau adheres to strict confidentiality laws that prohibit sharing of respondent information. We do not share respondent answers with immigration, law enforcement, tax collection agencies or any other organization.

What region of origin does Census consider for each race category?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black or African American</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaska Native</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>North America</td>
<td>Far East</td>
<td>Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>South America</td>
<td></td>
<td>Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Guam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa</td>
<td>Central America</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Samoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pacific Islands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asian American-Owned Businesses in the U.S.
(Sectors With at Least 20,000 Businesses)

January 2017
About the Data

How are race and ethnicity data collected?
We collect these data through survey respondents' answers from the completed Decennial Census and the American Community Survey.

Why do we collect this data?
Race and ethnicity data are critical to policy makers who use the information to make funding decisions that affect educational opportunities, assess equal employment practices, and ensure equal access to health care for everyone.

How can I use this information?
Race and ethnicity data can be used for:
- Developing business plans
- Understanding disparities in housing, employment, income and poverty
- Completing grants

Where can I find race and ethnicity data?
Various data tools are available on census.gov. To access the data tools go to: www.census.gov/data/data-tools.html

Data on race can also be found through these various programs:
- American Community Survey
- Estimates and Projections
- Decennial Census
- Economic Census
- Current Population Survey

How does the Census Bureau release race and ethnicity data?
These data are available in tables through the various tools, publications, working papers, and through infographics as well as new releases.

![Population by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2012 and 2060](image)

For more information about education and training go to: www.census.gov/ mse/www/training/.