Geographic Areas and Concepts for the American Community Survey

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Overview of Session

- Basic Census Bureau geography

- Geographic areas for which ACS data are available
    - 2007 1-year estimates
    - 2005-2007 3-year estimates

- Geographic area concept and definition issues to be aware of when using ACS data

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What is not covered?

- Small geographic areas that will only appear in 5-year products
    - Block groups and census tracts

- Geography products, such as maps, shapefiles, and relationship files

- Geographic entity codes, such as FIPS codes

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Census Geographic Concepts
Legal/Administrative and Statistical Areas

| Legal/Administrative Areas	Statistical Areas
Nation	Regions
States	Divisions
Counties	Census County Divisions
Minor Civil Divisions	Census Designated Places
Incorporated Places	Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas
Congressional Districts	Urban / Rural Areas
School Districts	Census Tracts
Voting Districts	Block Groups
	Public Use Microdata Areas
	ZIP Code Tabulation Areas

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ACS Geographic Area Types
U.S. and Puerto Rico

Type of Geographic Area	Total Number of Areas	Percent of Areas with a Population of 65,000 or more	Percent of Areas with a Population of 20,000 or more
States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico	52	100.0	100.0
Congressional Districts	435	100.0	100.0
Public Use Microdata Areas	2,071	99.9	100.0
Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas	952	53.6	96.8
Urban Areas	3,646	10.8	23.4

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ACS Geographic Area Types
Puerto Rico

Type of Geographic Area	Total Number of Areas	Percent of Areas with a Population of 65,000 or more	Percent of Areas with a Population of 20,000 or more
Puerto Rico	1	100.0	100.0
Public Use Microdata Areas	30	100.0	100.0
Metropolitan Statistical Areas	8	100.0	100.0
Micropolitan Statistical Areas	5	0.0	60.0
Urban Areas	18	55.6	72.3

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Hierarchy of Census Geographic Entities
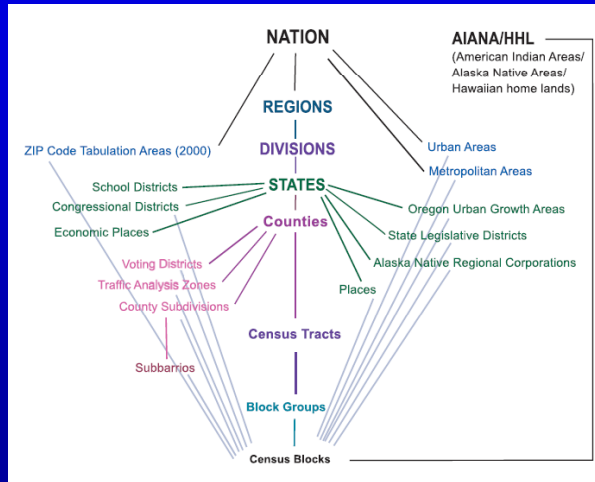
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# Hierarchy of Puerto Rico Geographic Entities

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County Subdivisions
Minor Civil Divisions and Census County Divisions

- Minor Civil Divisions (MCDs)
  - Legally bounded entity
  - Sub-county entities in 28 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
  - May have a formal government with elected officials

- Census County Divisions (CCDs)
  - Statistical entity
  - Sub-county units that have stable boundaries and recognizable names in 22 states
  - No minimum or maximum population guidelines
  - Not included in ACS single year data products

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County Subdivisions
Distribution Map of MCDs and CCDs

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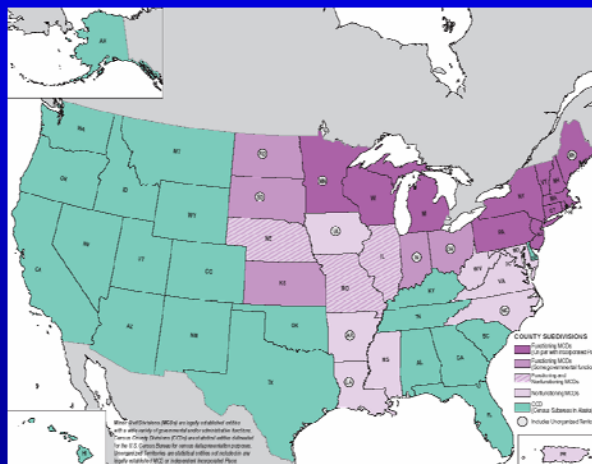
Places
Incorporated Places and Census Designated Places

- Incorporated Places
  - Legally bounded entity
  - Referred to as cities, boroughs, towns, or villages, depending on the state

- Census Designated Places (CDPs)
  - Statistical entity
  - Created to present census data for an area with a concentration of population, housing, and commercial structures that is identifiable by name, but not within an incorporated place
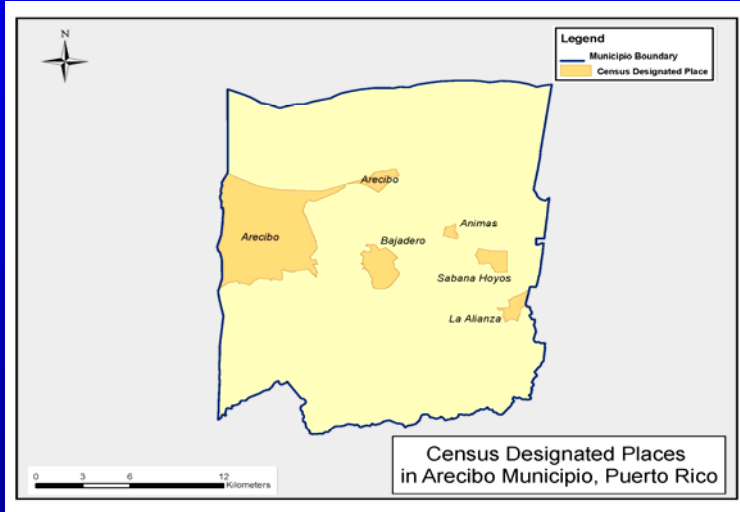 - Example: Columbia, MD; Paradise, NV

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Places
Salem County, New Jersey

Places in Salem County, New Jersey

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Places
Puerto Rico

Census Designated Places
in Arecibo Municipio, Puerto Rico
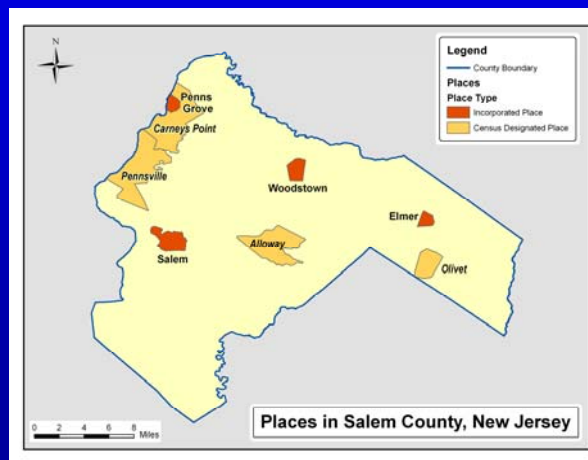
Places
Doña Ana County, New Mexico

La Mesa

Some unincorporated communities
are not defined as CDPs
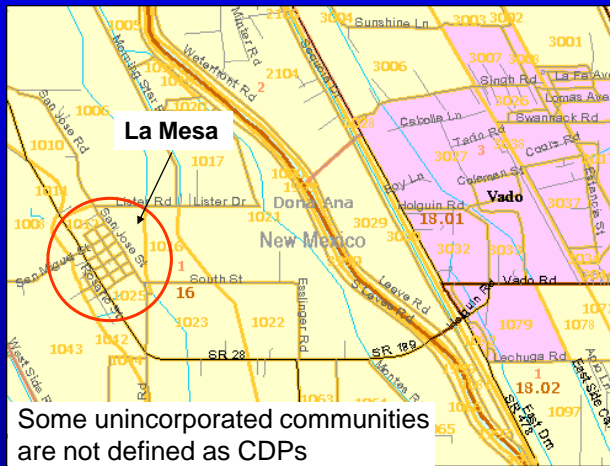
Urban Areas
Urbanized Areas and Urban Clusters

- Urbanized Areas
  - 50,000 or more people

- Urban Clusters
  - 2,500 up to 50,000 people

- Both defined after each decennial census

- Current urban area boundaries do not reflect urbanization occurring after Census 2000

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Rural Areas

- All territory not within an urban area

- Cuts across other hierarchies

- Can be in metropolitan or non-metropolitan areas

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Urban Areas
Urbanized Areas and Urban Clusters in Tennessee
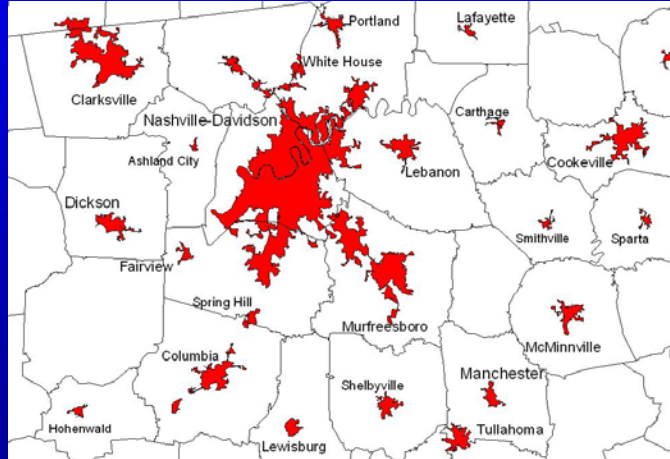
Urban Areas
Urbanized Areas
and Urban Clusters in Puerto Rico
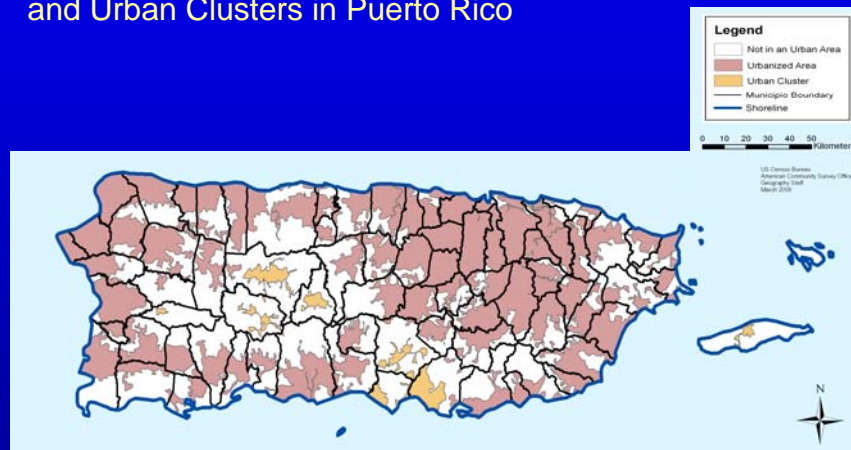
Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas

- Defined by U.S. Office of Management and Budget

- Metropolitan Statistical Areas
  - Contains core Urban Area of 50,000 or more population
  - Its own County, and
  - Surrounding counties with heavy commuting patterns

- Micropolitan Statistical Areas
  - Contains urban core between 10,000 – 49,999 population
  - Only small percentage have population 65,000 or more

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Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas

Metropolitan Statistical Area
Micropolitan Statistical Area
Territory Outside Core Based Statistical Areas

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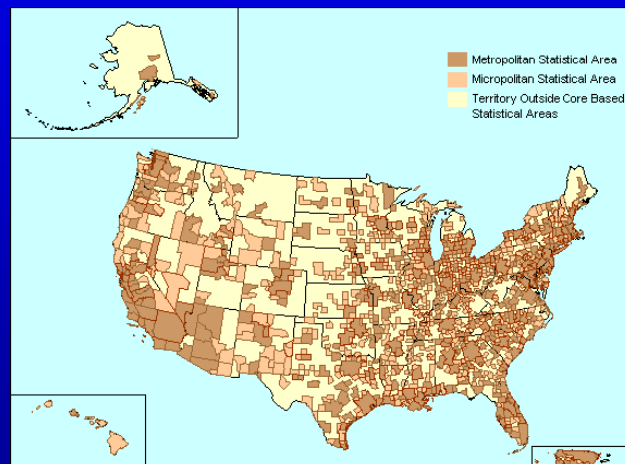
Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas in Puerto Rico
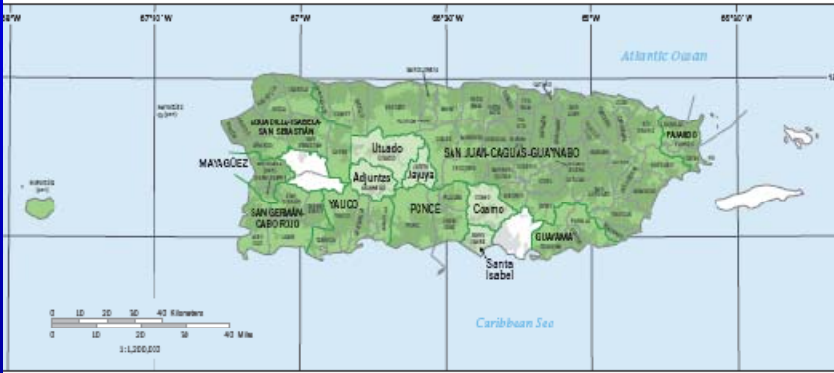
Partial Map of Virginia
Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Urban Areas, Places

Partial Map of Puerto Rico
Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Urbanized Areas

Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs)

- Minimum population of 100,000
- Cannot cross state boundaries
- Composed of:
    - Census tracts
    - Places
    - One or more Counties
    - Combination of Tracts and Counties

Public Use Microdata Areas

Census 2000 Sample Based PUMAs in West Virginia
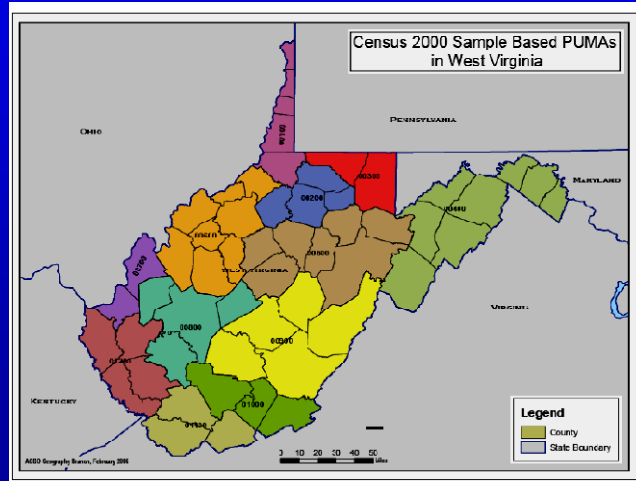
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Public Use Microdata Areas
Puerto Rico
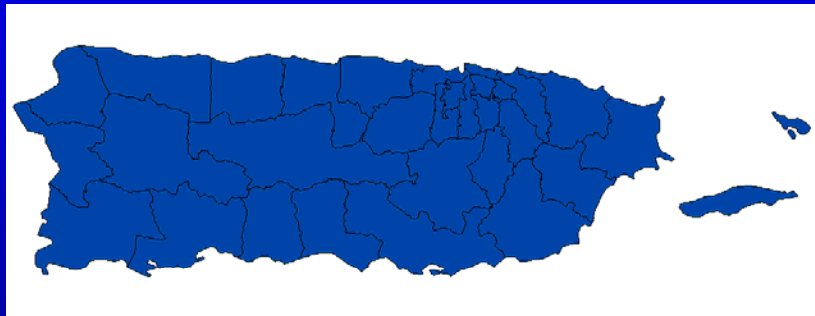
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ACS Geographic Area Types
U.S. and Puerto Rico

Type of Geographic Area	Total Number of Areas	Number of Areas with a Population of 65,000 or more	Number of Areas with a Population of 20,000 or more
County	3,219	800	1,882
County Subdivision	21,171	187	999
Place	25,292	520	2,081
Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas	952	510	922
Urban Areas	3,646	394	854

ACS Geographic Area Types
Puerto Rico

Type of Geographic Area	Total Number of Areas	Number of Areas with a Population of 65,000 or more	Number of Areas with a Population of 20,000 or more
Municipios	78	12	53
Metropolitan Statistical Areas	8	8	0
Micropolitan Statistical Areas	5	0	0
Urban Areas	18	10	3
Places (Zonas Urbanas, Comunidades)	225	7	10

2007 Data Product Details
State Search Results

2007 Data Product Details
## Puerto Rico Search Results

Geographic Boundaries

- Multiyear estimates are based on geographic boundaries as of January 1 of the last year in the multiyear period

- Boundary Annexation Survey collects boundary changes

- Boundaries of other statistical areas will be updated every decade in conjunction with the decennial census

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Geographic Boundaries
Amarillo city, TX

Boundary Changes - Amarillo City, TX (2005 -2006)
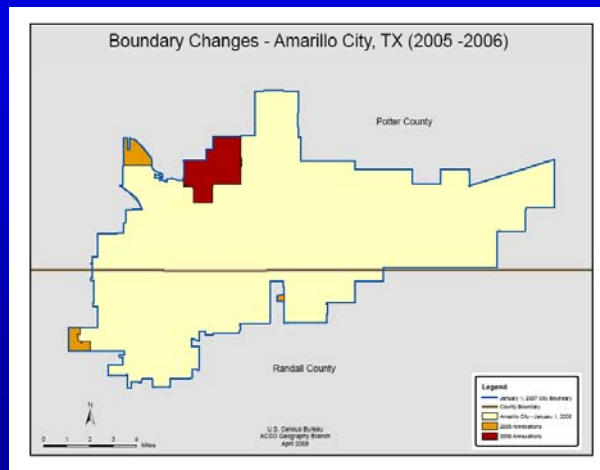
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Boundary and Annexation Survey

- Annual survey
- Primary source of information about
  - Legal boundaries
  - Boundary changes
  - Names of governments
  - Legal status
  - Types of governmental units
  - New or dissolved governmental units
  - Higher-level geographic relationships

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Master Address File (MAF)

- Official inventory of all known housing units in the U.S. and Puerto Rico

- Updated using information from
  - U.S. Postal Service
  - local governments
  - Census field operations

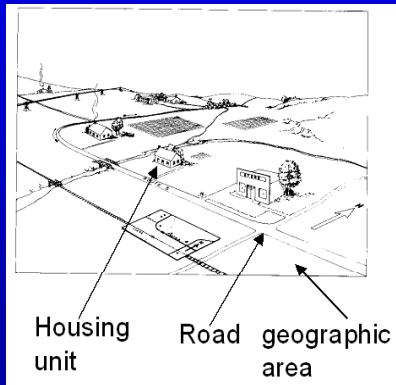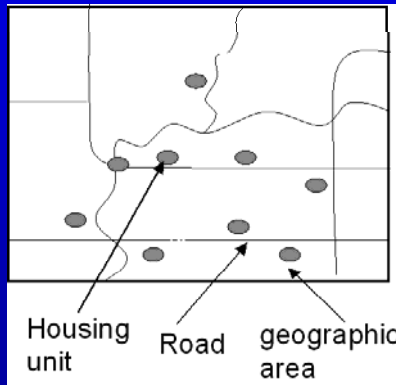- The ACS sample is drawn from the MAF

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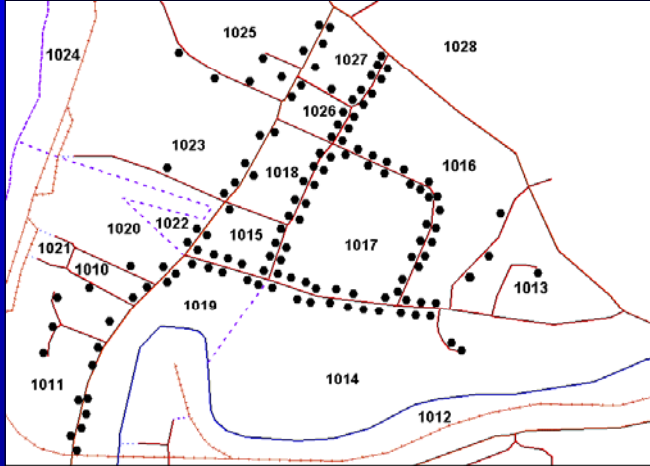
MAF/TIGER Database

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MAF/TIGER Database
Digital representation of Geographic Features

Housing unit   Road   geographic area

Housing unit   Road   geographic area

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For more information …

Subscribe to "ACS Alert"
http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Special/Alerts.htm

Visit the ACS/PRCS website:
http://www.census.gov/acs/www

Contact by telephone:
General ACS Questions: 1-800-923-8282
ACS Geographic Area Questions: 301-763-3056

Contact by email:
acso.users.support@census.gov

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