I Love Census Data Conversation Series
This series is provided by the City to bring together community members, City staff, data professionals, and community leaders to learn about Census data, connect the data to the lived experiences of people in Seattle, and work together to share this information to inform action. The series is a collaborative effort between the Department of Neighborhoods (DON); the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD*)* and the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

For more information about this series, contact Elsa Batres-Boni in the *Department of Neighborhoods: elsa.batres-boni@seattle.gov, office: 206-256-6198 or cell: 206-735-6219.*

What's In this Handout

We're providing this document to help community members find more resources online related to the topics covered in the I Love Census Data sessions. This includes resources from the City, the Census Bureau itself, and other sources. The last section in this document provides answers to selected questions received during the sessions.

Resources on the City of Seattle 's Website

Seattle Population and Demographics (OPCD)
Provides access to data on demographics, socioeconomic conditions, and housing data from the U.S. Census Bureau and other data sources. This includes a webpage on Race and Ethnicity, the Exploring the Patterns of People mapping app with American Community Survey maps and profiles at the neighborhood level, and a guide for finding disaggregated data for detailed racial and ethnic groups.

Additional resources include:
- Racial and Social Equity Index and Map—Combines three sub-indices to identify where RSJI-priority populations, including people of color and other marginalized populations, make up relatively large proportions of residents.
- Equitable Development Monitoring Program—An ongoing source of data to inform work by the City and community-based organizations to reduce race-based disparities in well-being and combat displacement. Includes :
    - Community Indicators to gauge progress on housing affordability, neighborhood livability, transportation, and education and economic opportunity.
    - Indicators of Heightened Displacement Risk, and
    - Interactive maps and charts on Neighborhood Changes in racial composition based on census data.

***For additional help finding data, contact Diana Canzoneri, City Demographer** in the Office of Planning & Community Development, diana.canzoneri@seattle.gov, office phone (forwards to cell during the pandemic): 206-615-1269.*

Race and Social Justice Initiative (OCR)
OCR coordinates the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) which is aimed at ending institutionalized racism in City government.
- This includes providing guidance on centering racial equity and helping colleagues across the City to access Racially Equitable Decision-Making Data Tools for COVID-19 Responses.
- Racial Equity Lab is a public facing website that will improve City of Seattle's internal coordination of equity work, and at the same time, increase transparency of initiatives and outcomes to the BIPOC

communities so the communities can hold the government accountable. The first phase of the Racial Equity Lab will be launched in summer 2021.

For more information, contact Dr. Shuxuan Zhou, RSJI Senior Researcher, Seattle Office for Civil Rights, shuxuan.zhou@seattle.gov, cell phone: (206) 476-4716.

Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA)
Links to a wealth of data, including information Seattle's Immigrant and Refugee communities and guidance and data on languages spoken in Seattle.

Neighborhoods and Council Districts (DON)
- Provides links to Neighborhood Snapshots showing statistics about racial composition and other demographic characteristics as well as information about community resources available within the city's neighborhoods.

- Check back by clicking the link above on DON's website or by going to the City Clerk's webpage on Council Districts to see information on the redistricting process, which will consider population estimates and estimates on racial and ethnicity from the 2020 Census.

Additional Resources:

U.S. Census Bureau Data
Two Census Bureau programs—the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey—provide the most commonly used demographic data available at a community and neighborhood level.

- The Decennial Census is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau every 10 years to provide a full count of the U.S. population. The Decennial Census questionnaire goes to all households and gather basic information on population, household, and housing characteristics. The main purpose of the Decennial Census is to reapportion the seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and draw congressional and state legislative districts, but it also is used in local redistricting efforts including redistricting for the Seattle City Council. The Decennial Census also gives local communities the most complete and geographically detailed picture of their population and its basic characteristics.

  Topics covered include counts of population, households, and housing units; basic demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino origin); household composition, and tenure (whether homes are owner-occupied or renter-occupied).

  (See next page for more info.)

- The American Community Survey (ACS) is a continuous, sample-based survey that produces estimates on a broad set of population, social, economic, and housing characteristics. In addition to the race, ethnicity and other basic demographic characteristics on the Decennial Census, the ACS also covers language spoken at home, place of birth, education, employment, income, vehicle availability, monthly housing costs, and more. Because it is a sample-based survey, the ACS estimates carry margins of error. ACS estimates can be unreliable for small population groups and neighborhoods.

Access the most recent five-year [ACS Demographic Data Profile](#) with race/ethnicity estimates for King County and Seattle.

The Census Bureau provides a [short video](#) and a longer [recorded webinar](#) to help people learn how to access race data on the [data.census.gov](#) portal.

[COVID-19 Vulnerable Communities Data Tool](#) (Communities Count; Public Health—Seattle & King County)
This data and mapping tool includes data on race and ethnic communities as well as information on older populations, high-risk health conditions and pregnancy, healthcare access and social conditions, and children and families. Also links to the [COVID-19 Race & Ethnicity Dashboard](#) maintained by Public Health—Seattle & King County.)

[National Equity Atlas](#) (PolicyLink and the USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity)
A handy source for obtaining charts showing estimates for population characteristics and indicators of wellbeing by race and ethnicity for the U.S. as a whole, the Seattle metro area, and the city of Seattle. Includes detailed disaggregation to reveal disparities between racial/ethnic subgroups by ancestry and nativity.

> ### 2020 Census
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> *Although the Decennial Census is designed to count the entire population, some populations including populations of color, children, and immigrants are vulnerable to being undercounted. This was illustrated by the Urban Institute in an interactive feature it published in 2019 on ["Who's At Risk of Being Miscounted?](#) in the 2020 Census. The arrival of the pandemic during census data collection, heightened fear among immigrant communities created by the anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric from the Trump Administration, and the administration of the census using a new online option have combined to place the accuracy of the 2020 Census Count at heightened risk.*
>
> *Another factor that will impact the accuracy and available detail in the publicly released 2020 Census estimates [is a new method for injecting statistical noise](#) into the estimates to better protect privacy.*
>
> *With the partnership of multiple community partners working across the city, [Seattle achieved one of the highest 2020 Census response rates among large cities](#). However, due to heightened challenges with the 2020 Census, communities will need to work extra hard to assess the accuracy of the data and will need to use the data carefully.*
>
> ***When Seattle will start getting data from the 2020 Census:*** *The Census Bureau will begin releasing [redistricting data](#) be the second half of August 2021. This will include population counts by basic race categories and by Hispanic or Latino origin for the total population, adult population, and child population. Basic data on housing units will also be included.*
>
> ***OPCD will post summary tabulations for the city as a whole and for Seattle neighborhoods beginning in late August or early September on our*** *[Seattle Population and Demographics website.](#)*

List of resources compiled by Diana Canzoneri, City of Seattle Demographer, diana.canzoneri@seattle.gov. Last updated 5/4/2021.

Answers to Selected Questions from the I Love Census Data Sessions:

This section includes answers to selected questions received during the sessions.

Question: How does the Census the Bureau include data on people experiencing homelessness?

> **Answer from the City Demographer:** Both the Decennial Census and the ACS include some persons without homes. The 2020 Census included an enumeration process for counting persons in shelters, at places such as soup kitchens where meals are regularly offered, and in targeted, non-sheltered outdoor locations. The ACS includes data to represent persons served by shelters for people experiencing homelessness, but generally does not include other homeless persons. More details can be found in the end notes.[i]

Data besides those from the Census Bureau are available on the local population experiencing homelessness in Seattle and King County. These sources include:

- the annual "Count Us In" report that describes findings from the annual Point-in-Time count and

- data from the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) about persons in the homelessness services system.

As described in this [press release from King County](#), the 2020 point-in-time count conducted in January found 11,751 people experiencing homelessness countywide; that included 6,173 sheltered persons and 5,578 unsheltered persons. The [King County Regional Homelessness Authority](#)'s website provides the "Count Us In" report and includes statistics from the HMIS.

Question: Does the Decennial Census or American Community Survey include local population data for detailed racial and ethnic groups?

Answer from the City Demographer: Both the Decennial Census and the ACS provide estimates for detailed racial and ethnic groups. The City's Population and Demographics webpages maintained by OPCD include a guide for finding [disaggregated data for detailed racial and ethnic groups](#).

There are several aspects of Census Bureau data that are helpful to be aware of when looking for data on detailed population groups.

- As previously described, the ACS collects data not only on race and ethnicity but also on languages spoken, ancestry, and place of birth. Data for one's group of interest may be available under one or more of these subjects.
- ACS estimates are based on a sample and that ACS estimates for small population groups commonly carry substantial margins of error. Given this, it is often necessary (when data are suppressed) or wise (when margins of error are too high given the level of reliability needed) to expand the geography one is examining.

More details responding to the audience member's question about accessing data specifically for the Khmer population is provided in the end notes for this document.[ii, iii]

Includes Q&A items last added on 5/4/2021.

*We will update this information periodically throughout the series. **If we didn't get to your questions during the sessions or haven't answered your questions here, please feel free to reach out to session organizers using the contact information on the 1st page of the handout.***

Additional Details Responding to Audience Members' Questions

[i] **More details about how the Census the Bureau includes data on people experiencing homelessness —**The Census Bureau categorizes people as either living as a part of a household living in a housing unit *or* as living in "group quarters." The Bureau categorizes persons experiencing homelessness as living in group quarters. (The larger category of group quarters encompasses a wide variety of "places where people live or stay in a group living arrangement" such as skilled nursing facilities, dormitories, military quarters, and group homes.) The scope for covering homeless persons and others in "group quarters" is more extensive in the Decennial Census than in the American Community Survey.

- **In the 2020 Census:** The Census Bureau's website describes how the 2020 Census aimed to count people experiencing homelessness, explaining that this includes devoting three days to counting this population, and noting that "these steps follow months of outreach and coordination with local census offices, partners, shelter directors, service providers, and others." That three-day effort includes counting people who are in shelters, people at locations such as soup kitchens and mobile food vans, and people in targeted non-sheltered places like wooded locations, encampments, and sidewalks. In July 2020, the Census Bureau released a press-release, noting the beginning of the "group quarters" enumeration then in September, released another press release describing the revision in schedule, due to the pandemic, for counting persons experiencing homelessness.

- **In the American Community Survey (ACS):** The ACS data collection process includes sampling to include persons in shelters serving persons experiencing homelessness. This is per the most recent version of the "Understanding and Using American Community Survey Data: What All Data Users Need to Know" handbook, which the Census Bureau issued in September 2020. The handbook states that the exclusion of some types of group quarters "may result in a small bias in some ACS estimates to the extent that the excluded population is different from the included population" and "the ACS estimate of the GQ [group quarters] population may vary from the count from the decennial census."

A note about populations in transitory or unconventional housing: Both the Decennial Census and ACS aim to include people living in locations such as RV parks, marinas, and similar locations that typically require payment for residing there. These persons are considered to be household population. Unconventional places such as these are considered housing units if they are occupied as someone's current place of residence (in the ACS) or usual place of residence (in the Decennial Census). (More information is available in the 2020 Census story on counting people living in unconventional places and in p. ACS 2019 Subject Definitions).

[ii] See the description of the Khmer population on the website of Khmer Health Board, which serves this population locally in Seattle and King County.

[iii] **Response to audience member's question about accessing data on the Khmer population**—While the Census Bureau does not categorize Khmer as a race (or an ethnicity), it does include Cambodian as one of many detailed Asian race categories and provides estimates of persons who are of Cambodian race from both the ACS and Decennial Census. In addition, the ACS includes data on persons speaking the Khmer language and persons who immigrated from Cambodia. The ACS 5-Year data tables for residents of Seattle provide an estimate of 1,822 persons of Cambodian race (Detailed Table B02015) and 1,113 persons who were born in Cambodia (Detailed Table B05006). The ACS 1-year estimates for 2019 show 1,278 residents of Seattle age 5 and older speaking Khmer at home (Detailed Table B16001; note: this table is no longer published as part of 5-year ACS datasets). The estimates cited for Seattle for these groups of persons all carry substantial margins of error. Estimates at the county level or metro area level are more reliable and can also be accessed by clicking the links provided for tables.

For tips on accessing estimates regarding the characteristics of persons within detailed racial, ethnic, and origin categories, refer to OPCD's guide on locating disaggregated data for detailed racial and ethnic groups or contact the City Demographer by emailing diana.canzoneri@seattle.gov.