



Using American FactFinder and the DataFerrett to Download Data Collected by the U.S. Census Bureau

American FactFinder

We most commonly use American FactFinder to obtain data from the annual American Community Survey.

Note: As of July 1, 2019, Census Bureau data are available at <https://data.census.gov>. New data will no longer be released on American FactFinder.

Step 1. Go to <https://factfinder.census.gov>.

Step 2. Select Advanced Search or, to get results only from the American Community Survey, go down the page to “What We Provide” and then select the “get data” option next to the American Community Survey.

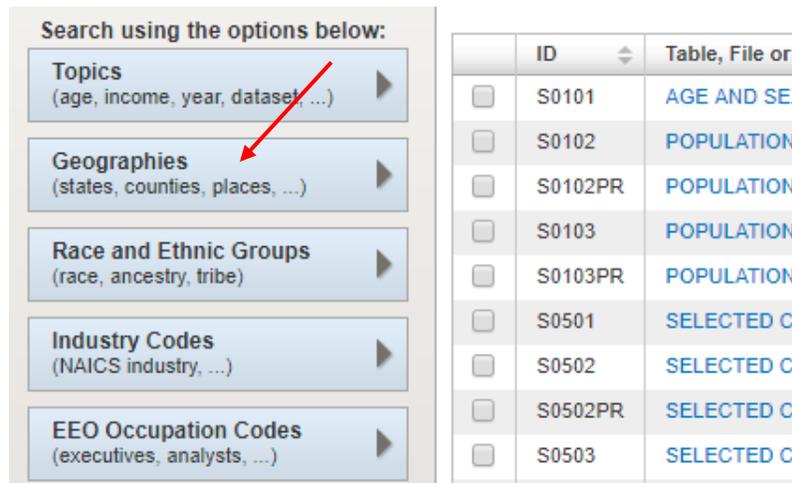
What We Provide

The following data are available on American FactFinder:

- American Community Survey [more »](#) | [get data »](#)
- American Housing Survey [more »](#) | [get data »](#)
- Annual Economic Surveys [more »](#)
- Annual Surveys of Governments [more »](#)
- Census of Governments [more »](#) | [get data »](#)
- Decennial Census [more »](#) | [get data »](#)
- Economic Census [more »](#) | [get data »](#)
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Tabulation [more »](#) | [get data »](#)
- Population Estimates Program [more »](#) | [get data »](#)
- Puerto Rico Community Survey [more »](#) | [get data »](#)

[more »](#)

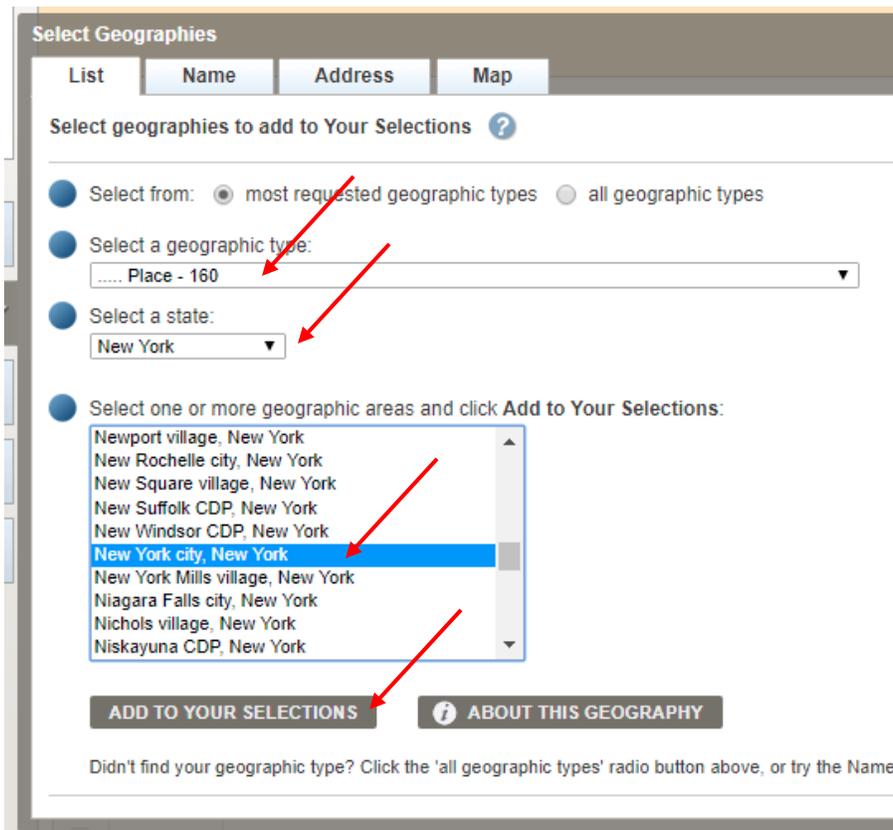
Step 3. Click on the Geographies option to the left of the screen.



The screenshot shows a search interface with a sidebar on the left and a table on the right. The sidebar is titled "Search using the options below:" and contains five categories: Topics (age, income, year, dataset, ...), Geographies (states, counties, places, ...), Race and Ethnic Groups (race, ancestry, tribe), Industry Codes (NAICS industry, ...), and EEO Occupation Codes (executives, analysts, ...). A red arrow points to the "Geographies" option. The table on the right has columns for "ID" and "Table, File or" and lists several entries with checkboxes in the first column.

	ID	Table, File or
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0101	AGE AND SE
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0102	POPULATION
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0102PR	POPULATION
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0103	POPULATION
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0103PR	POPULATION
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0501	SELECTED C
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0502	SELECTED C
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0502PR	SELECTED C
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0503	SELECTED C

Step 4. If you want to download information for your city, select "Place" as your geographic type and then select your state and city. Once you have done so, click "Add to your selections" (you can do this as many times as needed if you want additional localities) and then click in the top right to close the window.



The screenshot shows the "Select Geographies" dialog box. It has tabs for "List", "Name", "Address", and "Map". Below the tabs is a heading "Select geographies to add to Your Selections" with a help icon. There are four main sections: 1) "Select from:" with radio buttons for "most requested geographic types" (selected) and "all geographic types". 2) "Select a geographic type:" with a dropdown menu showing "..... Place - 160". 3) "Select a state:" with a dropdown menu showing "New York". 4) "Select one or more geographic areas and click Add to Your Selections:" with a list of geographic areas in New York, including "Newport village, New York", "New Rochelle city, New York", "New Square village, New York", "New Suffolk CDP, New York", "New Windsor CDP, New York", "New York city, New York" (highlighted in blue), "New York Mills village, New York", "Niagara Falls city, New York", "Nichols village, New York", and "Niskayuna CDP, New York". At the bottom, there are two buttons: "ADD TO YOUR SELECTIONS" and "ABOUT THIS GEOGRAPHY". A footer note says "Didn't find your geographic type? Click the 'all geographic types' radio button above, or try the Name."

If you want to download information by census tract, select “Census Tract” as your geographic type and then select your state and county (or counties). It will probably be easiest to simply download all of the census tracts for the county (or counties) and then sort through them later than to try to select them in advance. To do so, just click on the first option to add all census tracts in the relevant county, add it to your selection, and close the window. When you download the data, it will be disaggregated by census tract, and you can simply remove the census tracts not located with the boundaries of the city. If you are not able to find a list of the relevant tracts online, it may make sense to consult your planning department or a local expert, particularly as sometimes census tracts do not map neatly onto city or neighborhood boundaries.

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Select Geographies" with four tabs: "List", "Name", "Address", and "Map". Below the tabs is a heading "Select geographies to add to Your Selections" with a help icon. The interface includes several selection steps:

- Select from:** Two radio buttons: "most requested geographic types" (selected) and "all geographic types".
- Select a geographic type:** A dropdown menu showing "..... Census Tract - 140".
- Select a state:** A dropdown menu showing "New York".
- Select a county:** A dropdown menu showing "New York".
- Select one or more geographic areas and click Add to Your Selections:** A list of options including "All Census Tracts within New York County, New York" and "All fully/partially Urban Census Tracts within New York County, New York", followed by individual census tracts (1, 2.01, 2.02, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9).

At the bottom, there are two buttons: "ADD TO YOUR SELECTIONS" and "ABOUT THIS GEOGRAPHY". A footer note reads: "Didn't find your geographic type? Click the 'all geographic types' radio button above, or try the Name".

At the bottom of the page, the text "S0801 COMMUTING CHARACTERISTICS BY SEX" is visible.

Step 5. Once you have selected your geography, you can either browse tables or select additional options on the left to narrow the list of tables.

Your Selections

Search using...
 Program: American Community Survey
 Place within State: New York city, New York

clear all selections and start a new search
 load search | save search

Search using the options below:

- Topics (age, income, year, dataset, ...)
- Geographies (states, counties, places, ...)
- Race and Ethnic Groups (race, ancestry, tribe)
- Industry Codes (NAICS industry, ...)
- EEO Occupation Codes (executives, analysts, ...)

Search Results: 1-25 of 32,574 tables and other products match 'Your Selections'

Refine your search results: topic or table name state, county or place (optional) GO ?

topics race/ancestry industries occupations

Selected: View Download Compare Clear All Reset Sort ?

ID	Table, File or Document Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0101 AGE AND SEX
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0102 POPULATION 60 YEARS AND OVER IN THE UNITED STATES
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0103 POPULATION 65 YEARS AND OVER IN THE UNITED STATES
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0501 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NATIVE AND FOREIGN-BORN POPULATIONS
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0502 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION BY PERIOD OF ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0503 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION BY REGION OF BIRTH: EUROPE
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0504 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION BY REGION OF BIRTH: AFRICA, NORTHERN AMERICA, AND OCEANIA
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0505 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION BY REGION OF BIRTH: ASIA
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0506 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION BY REGION OF BIRTH: LATIN AMERICA
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0601 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TOTAL AND NATIVE POPULATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0701 GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS IN THE UNITED STATES
<input type="checkbox"/>	S0801 COMMUTING CHARACTERISTICS BY SEX

Step 6. Select the table you're interested in, and you will get information only for your selected geographic area. If you have selected a city, it will be for the whole city. If you have selected census tracts, you will get data for each of the census tracts you have selected. At that point, you can download the data to an Excel sheet, change geographies, print the table, or simply record the relevant information. If you have selected multiple geographies (or an option covering multiple geographies, such as census tracts), you can also create a map.

Table View

Actions: Modify Table | Add/Remove Geographies | Bookmark/Save | Print | Download | Create a Map

DataFerrett

DataFerrett (Ferrett = Federated Electronic Research Review Extraction and Tabulation Tool) can be used to download curated datasets from the American Community Survey, Current Population Survey (and its supplements), and a range of other sources.

Step 1. Go to <https://dataferrett.census.gov/>. You will need to use Internet Explorer. You will also need to have Java installed and allow popups for the site. The site will alert you if you don't meet any of these criteria so that you can adjust accordingly (there will be a red X to the left of the item instead of a check mark). Once you meet all of the criteria, select "Launch DataFerrett."

DataFerrett

DataFerrett only works with **Microsoft Internet Explorer**. DataFerrett does not work with Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome or Firefox.

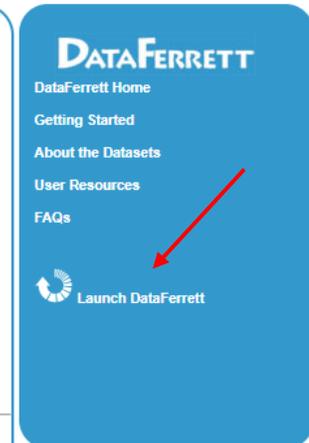
Due to increased Census Bureau internet security standards, your Java Policy settings will need to be changed. The steps below describe how to make this change which is necessary to run DataFerrett:

1. Update Java to latest version from java.com
2. Go to where java is installed (usually C:/Program Files)
3. Navigate through jre1.8.0_51 > lib > security > policy > unlimited
4. Copy local_policy.jar and US_export_policy.jar from this folder
5. Paste these .jar files into the "limited" folder located under the "policy" folder. (you can save a copy of the existing "limited" .jar files elsewhere if you want to restore them later)

DataFerrett is a data analysis and extraction tool to customize federal, state, and local data to suit your requirements. Using DataFerrett, you can develop an unlimited array of customized spreadsheets that are as versatile and complex as your usage demands then turn those spreadsheets into graphs and maps without any additional software.

What you should check before getting started:

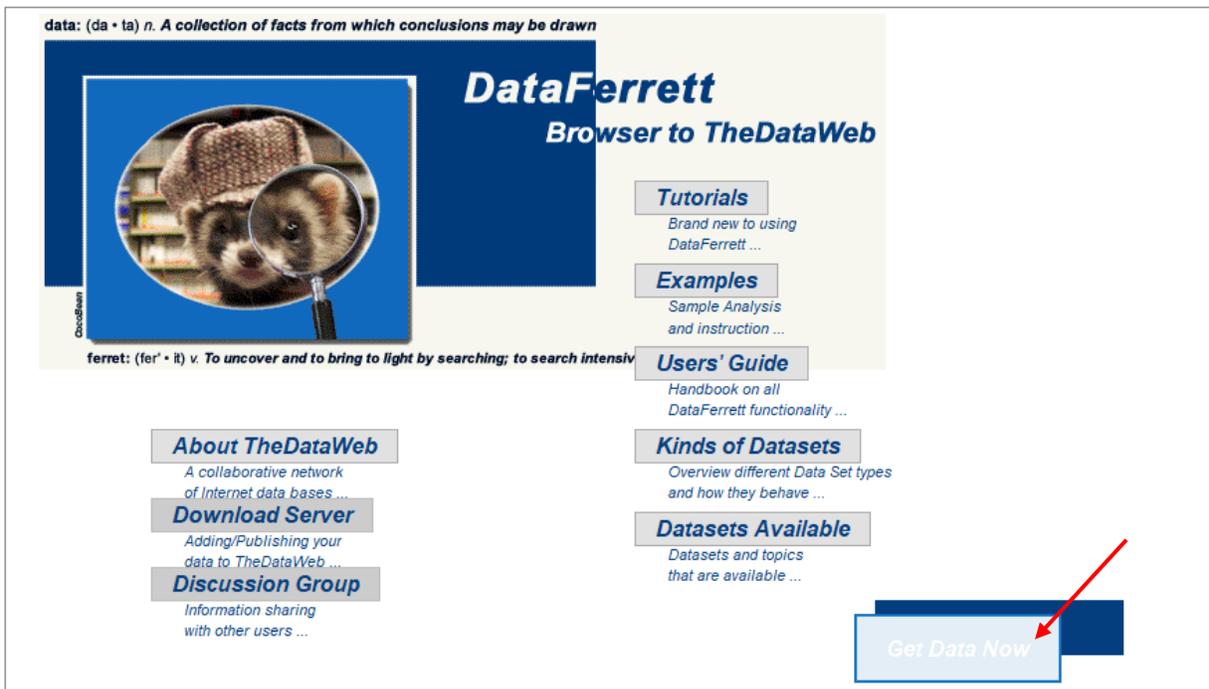
- ✓ Java Installed: [Check your version](#) or [Download the latest version](#)
- ✓ Allow Pop-ups
- ✓ Run in IE/Firefox



Step 2. An application launch window will come up, and then DataFerrett will launch. Enter your email address when prompted, as the data may later need to be emailed to you (see Step 16). Leave “public use data only” checked.

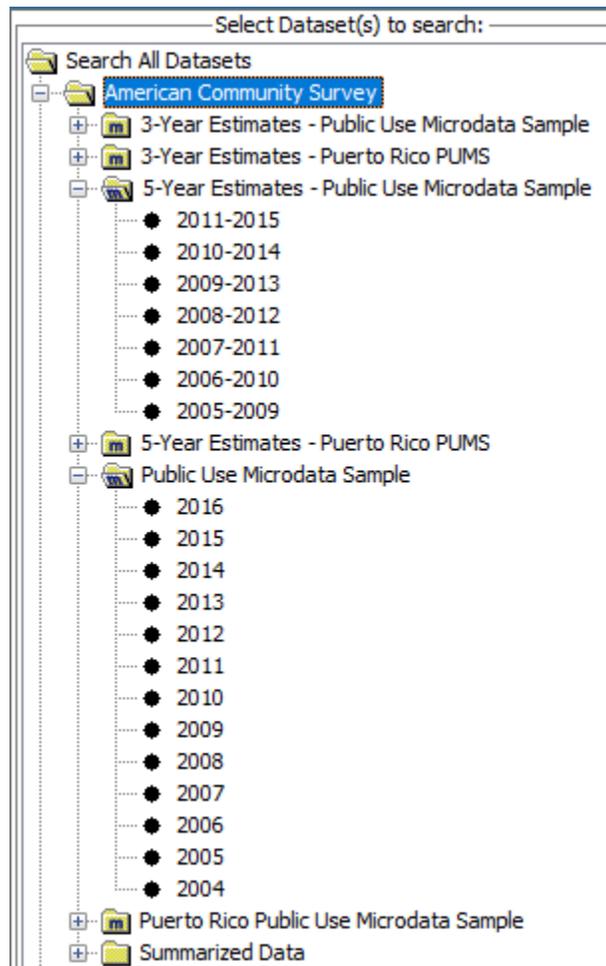


Step 3. You can look at relevant information (including tutorials and a users’ guide with additional information on DataFerrett), or simply click on “Get Data Now” to start selecting data.

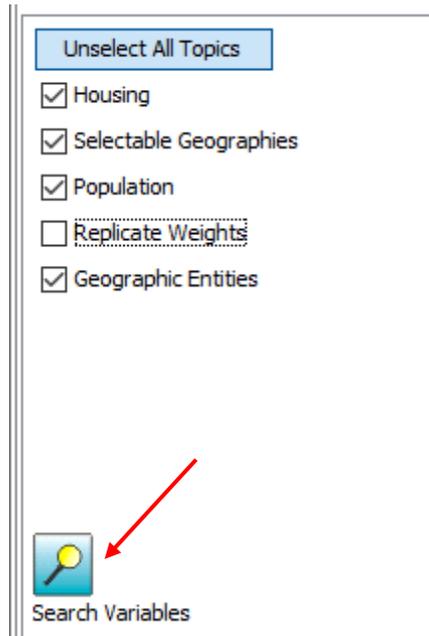


Step 4. Double-click on the relevant survey and the different subsets of the survey will pop up. If you are looking for current annually-collected data, you will be using either the **American Community Survey** or one of the supplements from the **Current Population Survey**. (For the **Current Population Survey**, see p. 14 below.)

The **American Community Survey** has both one-year (Public Use Microdata Sample) and 5-year estimates (5-Year Estimates – Public Use Microdata Sample), both of which will give you information at the Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) level, which can often be used as a way to get city-level data (see Step 9). (The 3-Year Estimates are also listed, but they are archival only – they were discontinued after the 2013 release.) Select (i.e., double-click) the version you want, click on the time period for which you want data and then select “View Variables.”



Step 5. Select all topics (although you may want to leave “Replicate Weights” unchecked), and then click on “Search Variables.”

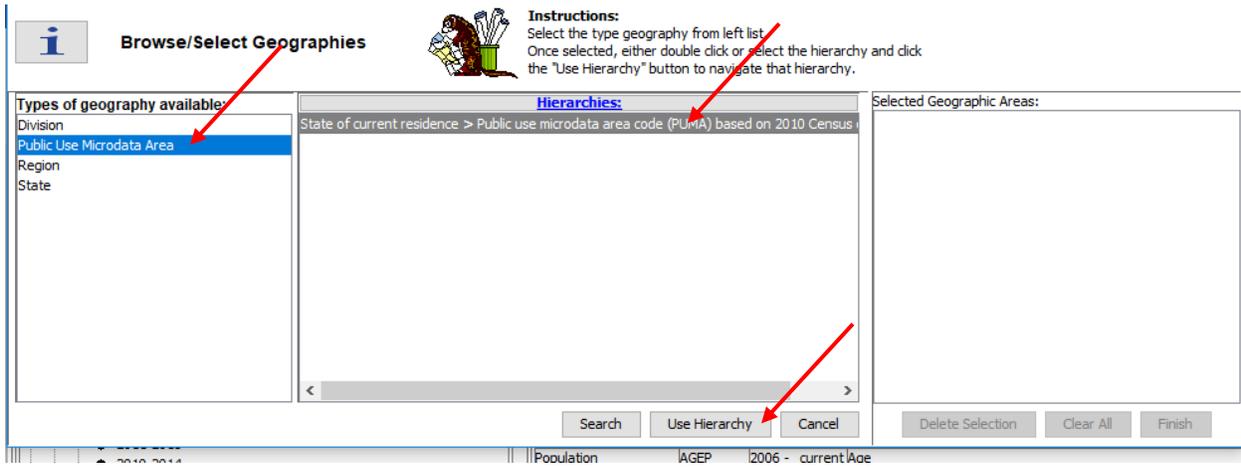


Step 6. Unless you want data for the whole country, the first thing to do is to find and double-click on the variable called “selectable geographies.”

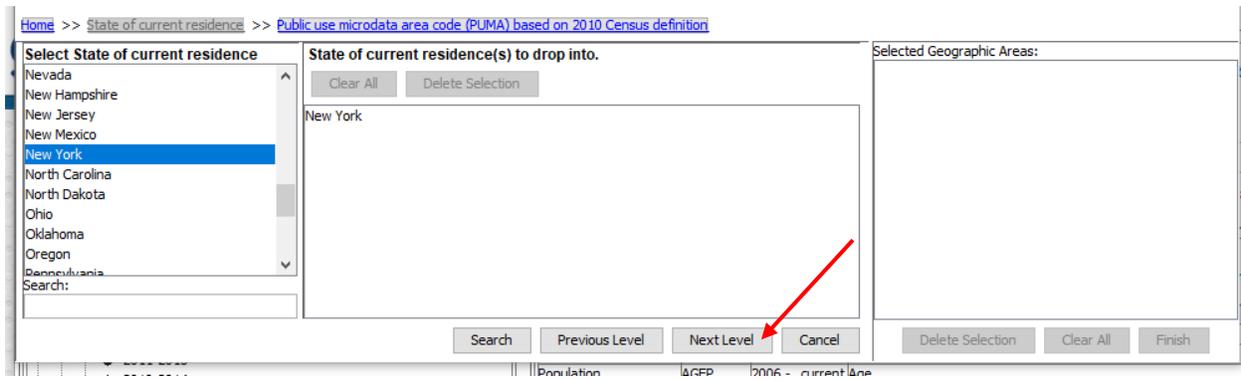
219 Variables ret

Topic	Name	Availability	Variable Label
Housing	WGTP	2006 - current	Housing Weight
Population	PWGTP	2006 - current	PUMS person weight
Population	AGEP	2006 - current	Age
Population	ANC	2006 - current	Ancestry categorization
Population	DECADE	2006 - current	Decade of entry
Selectable Geographies	Geography	2006 - current	Geographic Items
Population	DRIVESP	2006 - current	Number of vehicles calculated from JWRI
Housing	ELEP	2006 - current	Electricity (monthly cost)
Housing	FES	2006 - current	Family type and employment status
Housing	FPARC	2006 - current	Presence, age of related children
Housing	FULP	2006 - current	Fuel cost (yearly cost for fuels other than gas and electricity)
Housing	GASP	2006 - current	Gas (monthly cost)
Housing	GRNTP	2006 - current	Gross rent (monthly amount)
Housing	GRPIP	2006 - current	Gross rent as a percentage of household income past 12 months

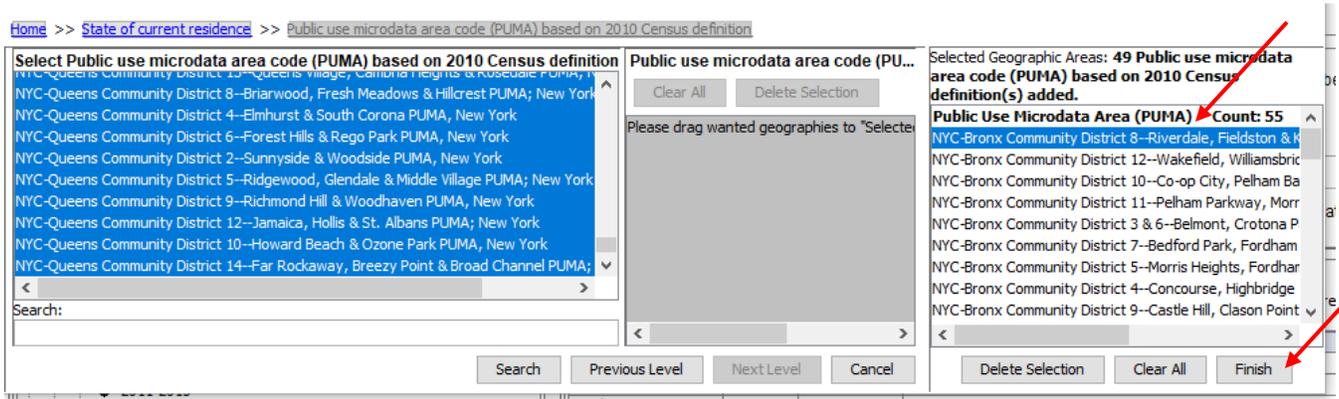
Step 7. A new window will pop up. Select “Public Use Microdata Area,” select “State of current residence...,” and then select “Use Hierarchy.”



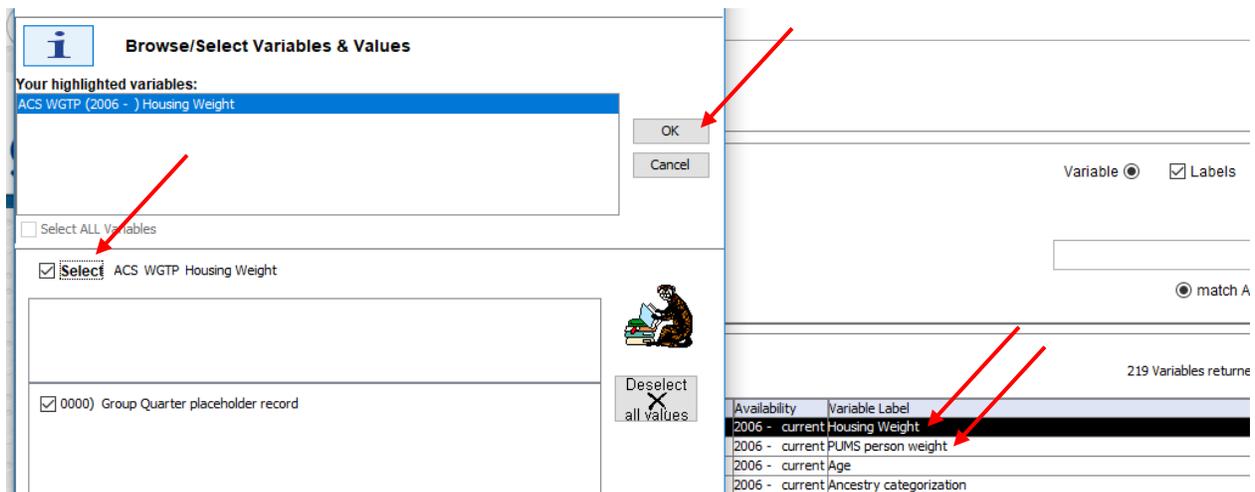
Step 8. Double-click or drag the relevant state into the middle box and then click “Next Level.”



Step 9. A list of relevant Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) for the state will appear. PUMAs are geographic divisions used by the Census that are smaller than a city but larger than a census tract. For the American Community Survey, the way to obtain data for the city is to select the PUMAs located within the city. Scroll to find the relevant PUMAs for the city (they all have descriptions, so finding the right ones should be fairly straightforward), and then double-click or drag them over to the box on the right. When you're finished, double-check the top of the list to make sure that it starts with "Public Use Microdata Area." If you have accidentally clicked on the state (which is fairly easy to do), it will be listed at the top and you can just delete it from your selection (just click on it so that it's highlighted and press "Delete Selection"). Once you have selected all of the relevant PUMAs (and removed anything you don't want to include), select "Finish" and you will be taken back to the variable screen. Now, when you download the data, it will be only for the selected PUMAs (i.e., only for the relevant city).



Step 10. Next, you will want to select the correct weights. If you will be using person-level variables, you will need the "PUMS person weight." If you will be using household-level variables, you will need the "Housing Weight." Selecting these will not weight the variables for you, they will just give you the option to weight them appropriately when using the data later, so it's fine to select both options. When you double-click on each of them, a new box will appear, and you will have to click the "Select" box and then press "OK" to add the variable to the dataset. A box will pop up letting you know that you have added it to your DataBasket (which just means your dataset).



Step 11. Once you've added the appropriate weights, you can go through and select any relevant variables of interest in the same way that you selected the weights. This will include both the variables that you would like to use to disaggregate the data (e.g., race, gender, disability status) and your outcomes of interest. A few things to note:

- You will have to select race and ethnicity variables separately. If you want a variable containing both, you will have to recode it later.
- If you want to look at person-level and household-level variables simultaneously (e.g., race and homeownership), you will need to select the RELP or "Relationship" variable. This variable allows you to identify the person-level characteristics of the householder in each household (RELP = 0 or "Reference person").
- If you want additional information about the variable, you'll notice that when you double-click, you'll be able to see the details about how it is coded. If it is a continuous variable (e.g., age), you can see information like whether there is a cut-off (e.g., 0 means under 1 year, while 99 means 99 or older – the variable is "top-coded") or a code for missing values. For categorical variables (e.g., race), you can also see what the different categories are. There may be multiple similar variables, so you can look to see which one will best suit your needs.

Your highlighted variables:

ACS RAC1P (2012 -) Recoded detailed race code

Select ALL Variables

Select ACS RAC1P Recoded detailed race code

1) White alone

2) Black or African American alone

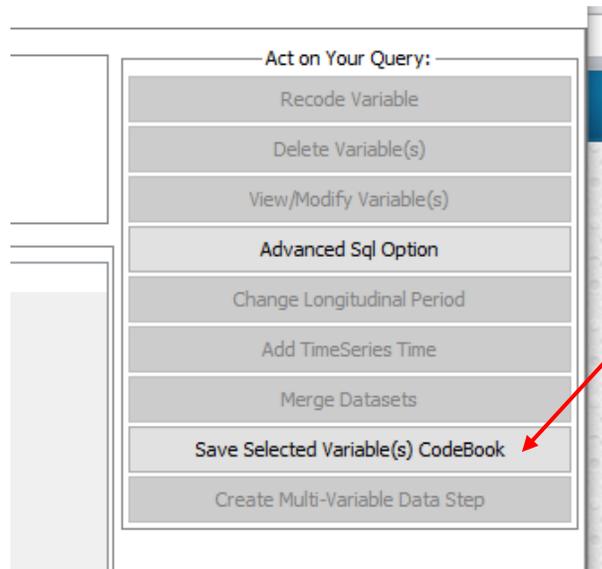
3) American Indian alone

Desel
all valt

Step 12. Once you have selected all relevant variables of interest, click on Step 2 on the top of the screen.

The screenshot shows a navigation bar with three buttons: "Introduction" (with a monkey icon), "Step1 : Select Dataset & Variable", and "Step2 : DataBasket/Download/Make A Table". A red arrow points to the "Step2" button. Below the navigation bar, there is a "Select Data Types:" section with a checked box for "MicroData". To the right of this section, there is a text box defining "Microdata" as data where every record is at the unit of analysis level and all records must be added up to get the totals for each data item.

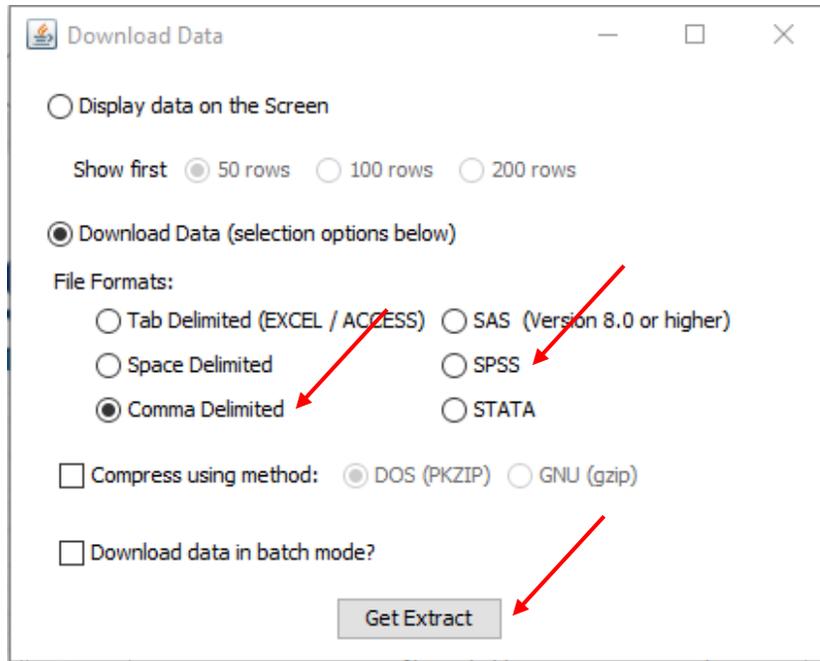
Step 13. The variables you have selected will all be listed. If anything is missing, you can go back to Step 1, select additional variables, and then return to Step 2. Once you have all of your variables, the first thing you should do is select “Save Selected Variable(s) CodeBook” to the right of the screen. This way you will be able to save a text code book that has the variable and value labels for all of the variables you are downloading (e.g., in “Recoded detailed race code,” what does a 1 mean?). You may not end up needing this information later if you are able to download the data in SPSS, Stata, or SAS, but it’s always safer to download it right away (as sometimes these options do not work or you may only have access to Excel).



Step 14. Finally, you’re ready to download your data. Click on “Download.”



Step 15. A number of options will pop up. If you only have Excel, select “Comma Delimited,” while if you have SPSS, Stata, or SAS, one of those is preferable as you will receive syntax that will code and label all of the variables and values for you. Once you’ve selected the file format, select “Get Extract.”



Step 16. If everything is working correctly, a new browser page will pop up where you can download the relevant file(s). For a comma-delimited file, there will be only one link. For SPSS, Stata, and SAS, there will be two links, one to a comma-delimited file and one to a syntax file that you will need to run to load the data into the relevant program. If things are not working correctly, a new browser window will not pop up, the processing box will disappear, and you'll be returned to the download options. Alternatively, a browser window might pop up, but with an error message. If either happens, check the box to "Download data in batch mode" and click on "Get Extract" again. At that point, a link to the download browser page will be emailed to you directly and the (and the link page may also pop up).

Download Data

Display data on the Screen

Show first 50 rows 100 rows 200 rows

Download Data (selection options below)

File Formats:

Tab Delimited (EXCEL / ACCESS) SAS (Version 8.0 or higher)

Space Delimited SPSS

Comma Delimited STATA

Compress using method: DOS (PKZIP) GNU (gzip)

Download data in batch mode?

Get Extract

Step 17. Download the relevant file(s) by right-clicking and selecting "save as" (or "save link as").



Extract Request for: victoria.lawson@islg.cuny.edu

Caution NOTE: Use the right mouse button on the file link(s) to "Save Target As:/ Save Link As:", which will allow you to download your file(s) to your computer.

- Comma Delimited ASCII File for 2015 [victoria_lawsonj8xjen291.asc](#)
- SPSS Command File for 2015 [victoria_lawsonj8xjen291.sps](#)

The Data File is a flat ASCII file that will be converted into a SPSS dataset when you submit the SPSS Command File.

Also note, the Record Layout File is not a substitute for a codebook. To obtain a codebook which contains variable descriptions and value labels, return to DataFerrett - Step 2
 Length of time: 0.0 minutes.
 Created: Oct 18, 2017 5:15:56 PM

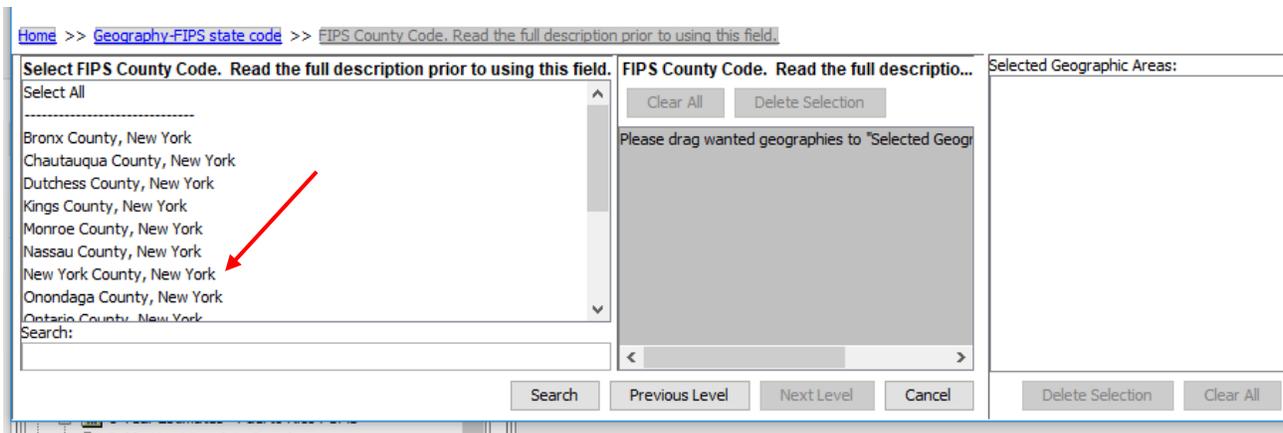
Contact Information:
 E-mail: dsd.ferrett@census.gov

DataWeb Help Desk
 Toll Free: 866-437-0171

Note: If you are working with the **Current Population Survey**, the steps will be the same, but the geographies—and how to get to them—vary depending on the supplement, as do the names of the weights. The Current Population Survey has a number of different supplements, but only a subset is collected annually: Food Security, March Annual Social and Economic Supplement (which used to be called just the March Supplement), School Enrollment, and Veterans.



With the exception of the March Annual Social and Economic Supplement, data can generally be selected at the county level using selectable geographies, but it should be noted that not all counties are available. To select the county, you will go through the same process as with selecting PUMAs, but instead will select “County” before going to “Use Hierarchy.” You will then be able to select the state and the relevant county from the list when you go to “Next Level.”



For the March Annual Social and Economic Supplement, you will only be able to select the county (or, in some cases, the principal city in the metropolitan area), *after* you have downloaded the file. When you go to selectable geographies, you will only be able to select the state. You should still select the state, but in addition to doing so, you will want to include three geographic variables in your dataset: GTCO (the FIPS County Code), GTCBSA (the Metropolitan Statistical Area FIPS Code), and GTINDVPC (the Individual Central City Code). The latter two will only be useful if you are downloading data for the central city in the metropolitan area, however.

Household Variables	GEREG	Mar 2014 - current	Region
Household Variables	GTCBSA	Mar 2014 - current	Metropolitan Statistical Area FIPS Code
Household Variables	GTCBSAST	Mar 2014 - current	Principal City/Balance Status
Household Variables	GTCBSASZ	Mar 2014 - current	Metropolitan Statistical Area Size
Household Variables	GTCO	Mar 2014 - current	FIPS County Code. Read the full description prior to using this field.
Household Variables	GTCSA	Mar 2014 - current	Combined Statistical Area FIPS Code
Household Variables	GTINDVPC	Mar 2014 - current	Individual Central City Code
Household Variables	GTMETSTA	Mar 2014 - current	Metropolitan Status
Selectable Geographies	Geography	Mar 2014 - current	Geographic Items
Household Variables	HCHAMP	Mar 2014 - current	Health ins.Anyone in hhld cover by CHAMPUS.VA. or Military h

FIPS county codes are available here: <https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-files/2018/demo/popest/2018-fips.html>.

To see if your county and city are included in the March Annual and Social Economic Supplement and to find the corresponding FIPS codes, you can view the technical documentation for the supplement at this link: <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar18.pdf> (all geographic information is in Appendix E).

While the names of the weighting variables will vary depending on the supplement, you will still be able to get a person-level and a household-level weight. The household weight will always be labeled as household, while the person weight may be labeled as a final or composited final weight.