History of the US Census

1790-2020

1790

#1

The population is estimated to be 3.9 million; residents are categorized as free white males 16 years or older, free white males under 16, free white females, all other free persons and slaves.

1820

Employment

More detailed employment information is gathered; ***a question about citizenship appears for the first time.***

1840

More Questions

Questions are added about education, vocation, & industry

1850

Social Statistics

Begin collecting information on taxes, schools, crime, & wages

1870

The Slavery Question

Census Bureau phases out its slave questionnaire; a tally machine is used to expedite the count.

1890

Technology

Electronic tabulation is used for the first time.

1931

Unemployment Census

In response to the Great Depression, an unemployment census is mandated to assess the severity of the crisis.

1950

Expatriates

Americans abroad are counted for the first time. ***Last time citizenship question is included on decennial census.***

1960

Mail En Masse

Census questionnaire is mailed out en masse for the time & computers process nearly all the data

1970

Latinos

The population of Hispanic individuals is counted for the first time.

1980

Race

Census begins obtaining information on race via self-identification.

1990

Homelessness

Census introduces a program to begin to count homeless individuals.

2000

The Internet

Census data is released on the internet for the first time.

2005

Annual Survey

Begins annual American Community Survey that lists demographic, economic, & housing characteristics for localities with populations >20,000

2010

Data released

First multiyear estimates based on the ACS data are released

2020

First time census will be primarily online

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