LEP Data Resources and Instructions Guide

Methods for Determining the Concentration and Characteristics of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Communities

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LEP Committee, Title VI Interagency Working Group
Summary

This data resources and instructions guide delineates three methods for locating demographic data for LEP communities in the United States. Special attention is paid to designing multi-variable models and utilizing different geographical data sets in order to formulate a more precise representation of groups.
Resource Sheet for Data.census.gov

Data.census.gov allows users to search massive amounts of data at multiple levels of geography over time. The American Community Survey (ACS) collects demographic variables such as: age, race, national origin, gender, marital status, ancestry, and language.

This resource sheet is designed to help Federal agencies and other service providers determine the concentration of individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) in a given geographic area using data.census.gov. Knowing the languages spoken by LEP individuals in an area may help agencies understand the communities that they serve and allow them to leverage resources to meet the language needs of the LEP public.

How to access Demographic Data using Data.census.gov

1. Go to data.census.gov. (For more information on the ACS, visit census.gov/programs-surveys/acs.)

2. The best way to get to the right data is to type “B16001” into the prompt. This will lead to Table B16001, which tabulates English proficiency numbers by language spoken at home for those age 5 or more. (Those who “speak English less than ‘very well’” and speak a language other than English at home are considered LEP.) The data is available in both 1-year and 5-year ACS estimates for different years, using the menu directly under the table title. Note that 1-year data is more current, but 5-year data is more reliable. https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance/estimates.html.

3. You can find additional language data by clicking on the “Search” bar at the top of the page, then selecting the “Advanced Search” from the drop-down list.

   a. Search using selection options.

      i. Selecting Language Spoken at Home: Using the menu on the left called “Browse Filters,” select “Topics.” Then select “Populations & People.” On the new menu, click “Language Spoken at Home,” and you will see the selected filter appear at the bottom of the window. Then click “Search” at the bottom of the page. (See screen shot)
iii. From there, scroll down the left menu bar down to the data set you prefer. Again, we suggest the table titled “Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over (Table B16001).” Once you have the correct table, click “customize table” to set the geographic area for your data, or to create a map.

iv. Customizing a table gives you a variety of options, but we are going to focus on setting a smaller geographic area than the default for the entire United States. Before you click the Geo (Geographies) button in the header, you can select from 1-year and 5-year ACS data sets (not all geographic areas are available in the more accurate 5-year ACS).

v. Once you select “Geos” in the menu bar, you can refine your search by clicking on the “Show Summary Levels” switch. Here, we selected “040 – State,” and chose “Utah” from the next list. Click “Close” and you will have your table of LEP populations in Utah. 
   1) From there you can download this data (by clicking the “Download” button), or apply it to a map (by selecting the “Map” button) The mapping function, though limited, allows you to examine and compare geographical areas.
   2) Helpful Geography searches include “040 – State,” “330 – Combined Statistical Area,” “500 – Congressional District,” and “795 – Public Use Microdata Area.” Definitions are provided below.
   3) Please note that the tables include people who “Speak only English” and people who “Speak English very well.”

b. Here are a few examples of tables that can be made with the B16001 data set that illustrate the different geographic areas that can be studied.

Definitions of Geographic Terms:
330 – Combined Statistical Area: a combination of adjacent metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas that reflect social and economic connection.
795 – Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA): a statistical geographic area that contains at least 100,000 people and is usually geographically contiguous.

Example #1:

Variables: Topic (language) and Geography/Table: Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over (B16001)

Congressional District: Congressional District 2 (116th Congress), Utah
Product: 2018 ACS 5-year estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Speak only English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Speak English “very well”</th>
<th>Speak English “less than very well”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>696,581</td>
<td>580,615</td>
<td>80,076</td>
<td>52,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>28,072</td>
<td>1,885</td>
<td>1,620</td>
<td>748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>226</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example #2:

Variables: Topic (language) and Geography/Table: Language Spoken at Home for the Population 5 Years and Over (B16001)

PUMA: Salt Lake County (Northeast) – Salt Lake City (East) PUMA, Utah
Product: 2018 ACS 5-year estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Speak only English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Speak English “very well”</th>
<th>Speak English “less than very well”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>226</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example #3:

Variables: Topic (language) and Geography/Table: Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over (B16001)

Combined Statistical Area: Salt Lake City-Provo-Orem, Utah
Product: 2018 ACS 5-year estimates
Resource Sheet for the DOJ Language Map App

The U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division’s Language Map App is available on www.LEP.gov. The Map App is an interactive mapping tool that helps users find out the concentration of, and languages spoken by, LEP individuals in a community. It uses a standard definition of LEP individuals for those who self-identify as speaking English "less than very well" for the population five years or older. The total LEP population equals the sum of all individuals who speak a language other than English and speak English less than "very well." The Map App calculates the share of LEP individuals by tabulating LEP populations as a percentage of the total population of the statistical area.

To see the underlying data, including margins of error, go to U.S. Census Bureau - ACS 2015 Table: B16001 5-Year Estimate Language Spoken At Home By Ability To Speak English For The Population 5 Years And Over. The Margin of Error information is also downloadable from the Map App website and using the "Download State/County Level Data" buttons. The Margin of Error fields are indicated by the symbol: ±.

How to access LEP Data through the Language Map APP:

1. Go to www.LEP.gov/maps. Scroll down to this content:

   Language Map App
   The Civil Rights Division’s Language Map App is an interactive mapping tool that helps users find out the concentration of and languages spoken by LEP individuals in a community. Click on your state or county to identify the number or percentage of LEP persons, download language data, or visually display LEP maps for presentations. We encourage users to test the features of the Language Map App and provide feedback to help us improve functionality.

   - 2015 Map App
   - 2015 Accessible Version with Downloadable Data
   - Language Map Apps for 2014-2012

2. Under the top heading of the page, labelled “Language Map App,” there are two ways to view the data: (a) the “Map App” version and (b) the “Accessible Version with Downloadable Data.” There are multiple years to choose from, but using the 2015 data will provide the most updated information.
   a. To use the Language Map App, click on the box labelled “2015 Map App.”

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1 U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate data.

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iii. Or, select “Switch to Table Mode” beneath the pie chart for the breakdown of LEP individuals in the state by language.

iv. To see the concentration of LEP individuals by number, instead of percentile, click on the “%” indicator on the right.

v. To see the concentration of LEP individuals in a county, click “zoom to” below the pie chart, then click on a county to view the chart and table for that county.

vi. Hit the home button to return to the national map view.

b. To use the accessible version, click on the box labelled “2015 Accessible Version with Downloadable Data.”

**Language Map App**

The Civil Rights Division’s Language Map App is an interactive mapping tool that helps users find out the concentration of and languages spoken by LEP individuals in a community. Click on your state or county to identify the number or percentage of LEP persons, download language data, or visually display LEP maps for presentations. We encourage users to test the features of the Language Map App and provide feedback to help us improve functionality.

- 2015 Map App
- 2015 Accessible Version with Downloadable Data
- Language Map Apps for 2014-2012
i. To see state-level data, select the state in the dropdown menu at the top of the page and then hit the button labelled “Populate Grid Data.”

ii. This will display both the state and county-level data, in a table on the right. Simply scroll to the right to view the data by language, or click and drag the column headings to compare two languages, or rearrange them for another purpose.

iii. To make better use of the side table, click on “Switch to Data Only Mode” button in the blue banner above the table to only view the table.

iv. To download the different data sets, in a manageable spreadsheet, click on the corresponding button for either state-level or county-level data.
EPA EJ Screen Resource Sheet

The EPA Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN) allows users to access high-resolution environmental and demographic information, including linguistic information, for locations in the United States. The EJSCREEN and Mapping Tool enables users to compare their selected areas to the rest of the state or the country. It is a screening tool that examines some of the relevant issues related to environmental justice, subject to important limitations as to what data is included and its accuracy². The information contained in the map is currently pulled from the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS).

There are six demographic indicators available, each expressed as a percentage: low-income, minority, less than a high school education, people in a block group under the age of 5, people in a block group over the age of 64, and people in a block group living in linguistically isolated households (meaning those in which all members age 14 years and up and are LEP).

How to access Demographic Data using EJSCREEN:

1. Go to www.epa.gov/ejscreen
2. Click on the “Explore EPA’s environmental justice screening and mapping tool” link to launch EJSCREEN or enter a location in the search box and click “search.”

3. If you did not search from the landing page, use the “Find address or place” search function on the menu bar to identify the location for which you are seeking language data (e.g., Salt Lake County, Utah).

² For an explanation of the limitations on the data, see https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen/limitations-and-caveats-using-ejscreen.
ii. Natural break classes are based on natural groupings inherent in the data. Class breaks are identified that best group similar values and that maximize the differences between classes. The features are divided into classes whose boundaries are set where there are relatively big differences in the data values.

iii. Equal interval divides the range of attribute values into equal-sized subranges. Equal interval is best applied to familiar data ranges, such as percentages and temperature. This method emphasizes the amount of an attribute value relative to other values.

Pick Equal Interval to follow the example below.

4. Again, using the “Add Maps” dropdown menu on the tool bar, select the “More Demographics” option.

Category: Language

5. Using the “Category” dropdown menu in the Map Demographics pop-up window, select “Language.” Select a language variable that meets your needs (e.g., Pct. Persons who Speak English less than Very Well). Then click the “Add to Map” button.
Variable: Spanish: Speak English less than “very well”

6. Using the “Variable” dropdown menu, select Spanish: Speak English less than “very well.”

Multiple Variable: Spanish: Speak English less than “very well” AND Total Persons Age 5 and Above

8. To compare multiple variables, simply click on a county, and the numerical data will display. You can cycle through categories using the arrows.

Multiple Variable: Spanish: Speak English less than “very well” AND Total Persons Age 5 and Above

7. Using the “Variable” dropdown menu, select Total Persons Age 5 and Above without closing the prior map. Both will appear in an overlay.
Additional Sources of LEP Data

- The U.S. Department of Education Consolidated State Reports (www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.htm). The Consolidated State Report is a required annual reporting tool for state departments of education to assess if schools are meeting performance goals. The Report collects fairly comprehensive data regarding EL (English learner) students, including the 5 most commonly spoken languages other than English in that state. The data was most recently published in 2016-17 and each states’ data can be downloaded as PDFs.

- Multiple states have their own detailed data sets. The best example of this is California’s Education Data Partnership (https://www.ed-data.org/). They collect extensive data regarding LEP students in the California education system. Their search engine allows a user to search by county, district, and school, and also provides the number of English learners and the languages of English learners by year from 2013-18. The data is accessible via downloadable bar charts or line graphs.

Feedback?

We hope you found this information helpful. Please let us know if you have feedback by directing your email to the attention of the LEP Committee at LEP@usdoj.gov.

The LEP Committee is part of the federal Title VI Interagency Working Group and seeks to strengthen federal efforts to ensure compliance with Title VI language access requirements. Federal employees interested in joining the LEP Committee may send requests to join the committee through LEP@usdoj.gov.