Data

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There are several categories of restricted-use data from the Census Bureau and other agencies on which qualified researchers may perform statistical analysis inside the secure KCRDC.

The Census Bureau and other agencies offer several categories of restricted-use data. The current list of available data can be found here.

Public-use Census data are not directly available at the KCRDC. However, pending approval from CES, outside data sets may be brought in and matched to nonpublic Census microdata.

Data Categories

Census Bureau Data

Economic data pertain to censuses and surveys of business establishments and firms. With very few exceptions, no public-use files exist for these surveys, including trade and transactions data.

- List of economic datasets in the RDCs

Demographic data come from censuses and surveys of households and individuals. Most of these datasets are released as public-use files, but the versions in the secure RDC are not the public-use versions. These restricted RDC versions include a more complete geography (in some cases down to the block). Also, items such as income are often not top-coded. Individual identifiers such as name, address, and social security number have been removed.

- List of demographic datasets in the RDCs

Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data use unemployment insurance records to match employer data with employee data.

- List of LEHD datasets available in the RDCs
- Abowd et al. paper on LEHD

UMETRICS data comprise microdata on research grants and projects linked to census data on employment and employers.

- Dataset information

Bureau of Labor Statistics Data

All BLS restricted data available to researchers are based on released data.

- Datasets Information
- Fees

Bureau of Economic Analysis Data

BEA collects company data about international transactions, foreign direct investment, the activities of multinational enterprises, and trade in services.

- Datasets Information
- BEA Special Sworn Data overview
- Fees

Health Data

KCRDC provides access to restricted the National Center for Health Statistics and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality datasets for approved proposals. To obtain approval, submit a proposal to the appropriate agency.

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS):

- NCHS datasets available in the RDC
- NCHS RDC home

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality:

- Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS)

Historical Data

- Recovered Census Data

- Recovered Historical Business Data
- Recovered Historical Demographic Data

RDC Datasets Available by Topic

Additional information on the following datasets, can be found in the lists of Economic Datasets or Demographic Datasets.

Crime and Criminal Justice

The National Crime Victimization Survey collects information from individuals on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization.

The Criminal Justice Administrative Records System is a nationally integrated repository of data following individuals through the criminal justice system.

The American Housing Survey collects respondents' perceptions of neighborhood crime and vandalism.

In topical modules, the Survey of Income and Program Participation collects respondents' perceptions of neighborhood crime and children's safety and preventive measures taken.

If a household moved in last year, the Current Population Survey collects information on the reason for the move and whether "better neighborhood/less crime" is one of the survey responses.

The 1992 Characteristics of Business Owners asks business owners how crime affected the profitability of their business.

Housing/Population

The American Housing Survey collects detailed information on housing topics, such as size and quality of housing stock and occupants' characteristics.

The American Community Survey collects information on physical and financial characteristics of respondents' housing.

Decennial Surveys (1950–2010) collect information on the physical and financial characteristics of respondents' housing from the long-form census.

In topical modules, the Survey of Income and Program Participation collects information on the financial characteristics of respondents' housing and other real estate they own.

The Current Population Survey collects information on financial characteristics of respondents' housing.

The Survey of Business Owners (1982-2012) asks business owners if their business was started or expanded with home equity loan and whether the business operated from the home.

Small Business/Self Employment

The Integrated Longitudinal Business Database is a database containing both employers and nonemployers (that is, businesses with no employees). It tracks businesses as they transition from nonemployer to employer status.

The Survey of Business Owners/Characteristics of Business Owners looks at economic and demographic characteristics of business owners. It contains questions on firm history, business conditions, and source of financing, and it covers businesses with and without employees.

The Longitudinal Business Database is a time series tracking firm entries and exits starting in 1976. It contains data on firm size and age and can be merged with other census data.

An internal version of the Kauffman Firm Survey can be linked to restricted census economic datasets. The panel survey comprises 4,928 businesses and was founded in 2004.

Data Access Fees

Researchers affiliated with an KCRDC member institution will incur no individual out-of-pocket fee except as assessed and administered by some agencies (such as NCHS, BLS, and BEA) for access to their data.

For details of fees charged to unaffiliated researchers, contact Jason Brown, KCRDC executive director, at Jason.Brown@kc.frb.org.

Project Development

Steps for Developing a Proposal Using Restricted Census Data

1 Identify the datasets needed by visiting ResearchDataGov (https://www.researchdatagov.org/) or the FSRDC webpage (https://www.census.gov/topics/research/guidance/restricted-use-microdata.html). Additional guidance can be sought from a metadata file containing data sets used in recent project (https://www.census.gov/about/adrm/fsrdc/about/ongoing-projects.html).

2 Send a brief email to the Kansas City FSRDC administrator describing the research question and which datasets you anticipate needing for your project. The FSRDC administrator can provide additional guidance on proposal development and information on potential project fees.

3 Work with the FSRDC administrator during several months to develop a proposal according to the requirements of the US Census Bureau. For additional information about this process, visit

https://www.census.gov/topics/research/guidance/restricted-use-microdata/standard-application-process.html. Generally, each proposal is required to demonstrate:

- Potential to benefit Census Bureau data programs
- Scientific merit
- Evidence of feasibility
- Clear need for nonpublic data
- Minimal risk of disclosure

1 Obtain Special Sworn Status (SSS), which involves a detailed background clearance. To be eligible to apply for SSS, a researcher must be a US citizen or foreign national with three of the past five years residency in the United States and currently live in the United States and have an affiliation with a US institution. The process takes several months. SSS application materials will be provided after the proposal has been approved.

2 Work in the RDC lab to complete research. Research projects generally have a timeline of about two to five years.

3 Submit results for disclosure avoidance review. Cleared results will be emailed to the researcher by the US Census Bureau.

Steps for Developing a Proposal using Partner Agencies' Restricted Data

1 Visit the FSRDC webpage (https://www.census.gov/about/adrm/fsrdc/partner-and-collaborating-agencies.html) for a list of partner and collaborating agencies that make their restricted data available through the FSRDC network.

2 Follow the links on the webpage for proposal development instructions and fees for the respective partner agency.

3 Send a brief email to the Kansas City FSRDC administrator inquiring about any lab fees that might be involved in using the partner agencies' data in the FSRDC.

4 Submit a proposal to the partner agency for review.

5 Once approved, obtain Special Sworn Status (SSS), which involves a detailed background clearance. To be eligible to apply for SSS, a researcher must be a US citizen or foreign national with three of the past five years residency in the United States and currently live in the United States and have an affiliation with a US institution. The process takes several months.

6 Work in the RDC lab to complete research.

7 Submit results for disclosure avoidance review. Cleared results will be emailed to the researcher by the partner agency.

Project Metadata

This link provides information about active and completed projects in which researchers use restricted-access microdata to address important research questions.

Related Links and Resources

External Resources

- **US Census Bureau**
- **CES Dissertation Mentorships**
    - The Center for Economic Studies wants to assist doctoral candidates who are actively engaged in dissertation research in economics or a related field using Census Bureau microdata at a Research Data Center. For more information, click here.
- **FSRDC Presentation Series**
    - This is a series of online presentations of researchers' findings using Census Bureau data.
- **Related Links:**
- Researcher Packet (PDF)
- Federal Statistical Research Data Centers (FSRDC)