Census Bureau Data on Vision Difficulty

Matthew W. Brault

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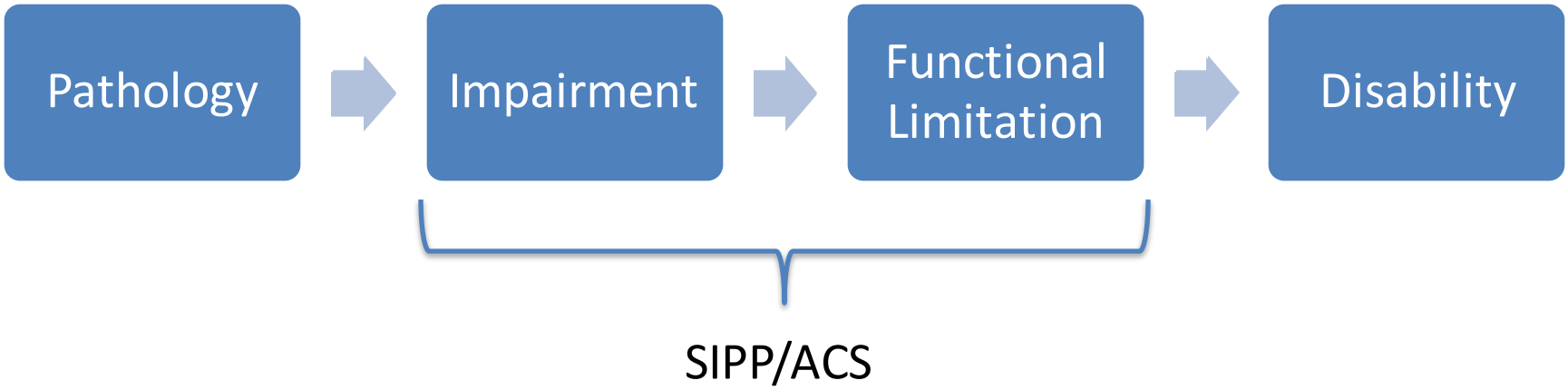
June 18, 2013

The views and opinions expressed are my own and do not necessarily represent those of the U.S. Census Bureau

Census Bureau's Role

- The Census Bureau serves as the leading source of quality data about the nation's **people and economy**. (from the *U.S. Census Bureau Mission Statement*)
  - Not health-focused
  - Does not *do* public health surveillance
- Does collect some disability information
  - Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)
  - American Community Survey (ACS)

Conceptual Framework
(Nagi model)



Survey Questions on Vision Difficulty

- Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

  "Does … have difficulty seeing the words and letters in ordinary newspaper print even when wearing glasses or contact lenses if … usually wear them?

  [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Person is blind

  "Is … able to see the words and letters in ordinary newspaper print at all?"

  [ ] Yes [ ] No

Survey Questions on Vision Difficulty

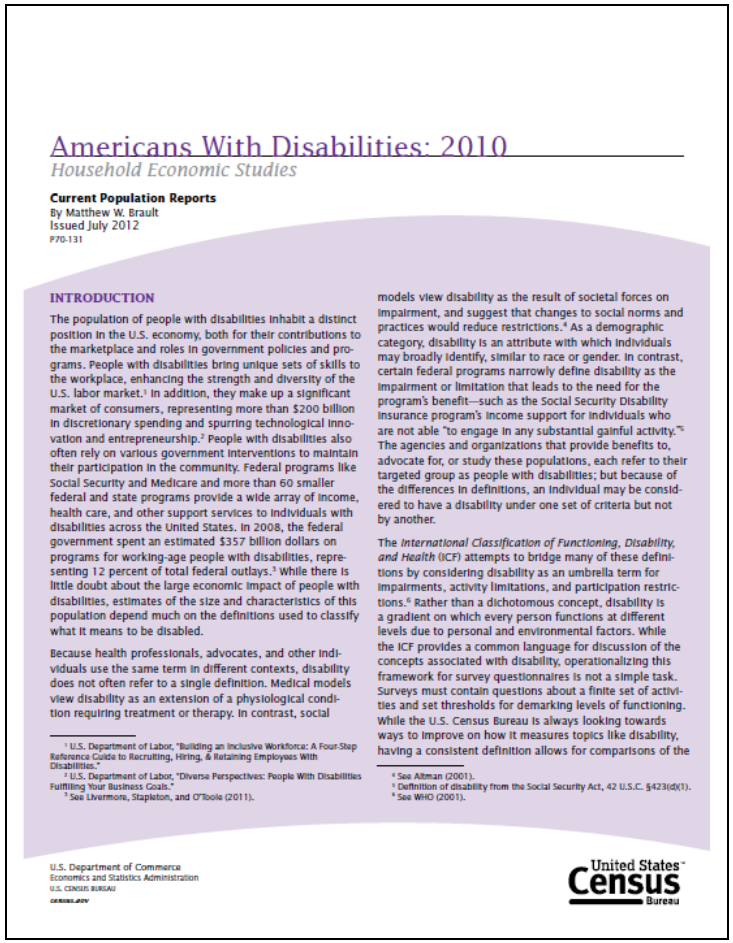
- American Community Survey (ACS)

  "Is … blind or does … have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses?"

  [ ] Yes

  [ ] No

Americans with Disabilities: 2010



Americans With Disabilities: 2010

Household Economic Studies

Current Population Reports

By Matthew W. Brault

Issued July 2012

P70-131

INTRODUCTION

The population of people with disabilities inhabit a distinct position in the U.S. economy, both for their contributions to the marketplace and roles in government policies and programs. People with disabilities bring unique sets of skills to the workplace, enhancing the strength and diversity of the U.S. labor market.[1] In addition, they make up a significant market of consumers, representing more than $200 billion in discretionary spending and spurring technological innovation and entrepreneurship.[2] People with disabilities also often rely on various government interventions to maintain their participation in the community. Federal programs like Social Security and Medicare and more than 60 smaller federal and state programs provide a wide array of income, health care, and other support services to individuals with disabilities across the United States. In 2008, the federal government spent an estimated $357 billion dollars on programs for working-age people with disabilities, representing 12 percent of total federal outlays.[3] While there is little doubt about the large economic impact of people with disabilities, estimates of the size and characteristics of this population depend much on the definitions used to classify what it means to be disabled.

Because health professionals, advocates, and other individuals use the same term in different contexts, disability does not often refer to a single definition. Medical models view disability as an extension of a physiological condition requiring treatment or therapy. In contrast, social models view disability as the result of societal forces on impairment, and suggest that changes to social norms and practices would reduce restrictions.[4] As a demographic category, disability is an attribute with which individuals may broadly identify, similar to race or gender. In contrast, certain federal programs narrowly define disability as the impairment or limitation that leads to the need for the program's benefit—such as the Social Security Disability Insurance program's income support for individuals who are not able "to engage in any substantial gainful activity."[5] The agencies and organizations that provide benefits to, advocate for, or study these populations, each refer to their targeted group as people with disabilities; but because of the differences in definitions, an individual may be considered to have a disability under one set of criteria but not by another.

The *International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health* (ICF) attempts to bridge many of these definitions by considering disability as an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions.[6] Rather than a dichotomous concept, disability is a gradient on which every person functions at different levels due to personal and environmental factors. While the ICF provides a common language for discussion of the concepts associated with disability, operationalizing this framework for survey questionnaires is not a simple task. Surveys must contain questions about a finite set of activities and set thresholds for demarking levels of functioning. While the U.S. Census Bureau is always looking towards ways to improve on how it measures topics like disability, having a consistent definition allows for comparisons of the

[1] U.S. Department of Labor, "Building an Inclusive Workforce: A Four-Step Reference Guide to Recruiting, Hiring, & Retaining Employees With Disabilities."
[2] U.S. Department of Labor, "Diverse Perspectives: People With Disabilities Fulfilling Your Business Goals."
[3] See Livermore, Stapleton, and O'Toole (2011).
[4] See Altman (2001).
[5] Definition of disability from the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. §423(d)(1).
[6] See WHO (2001).

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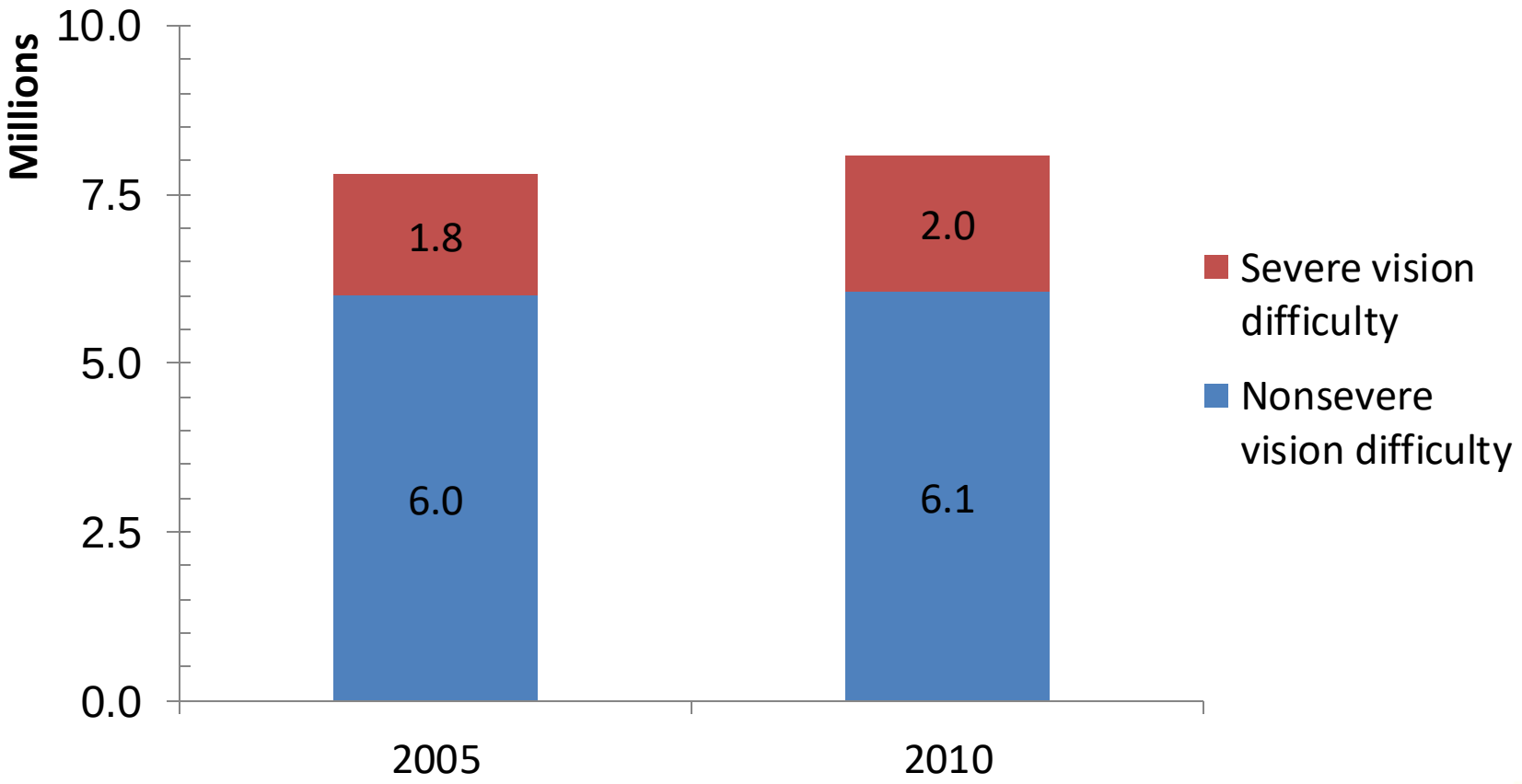
- Highlights
  - 56.7 million people (18.7 percent) with disabilities in U.S.
- Characteristics for individual types of disability

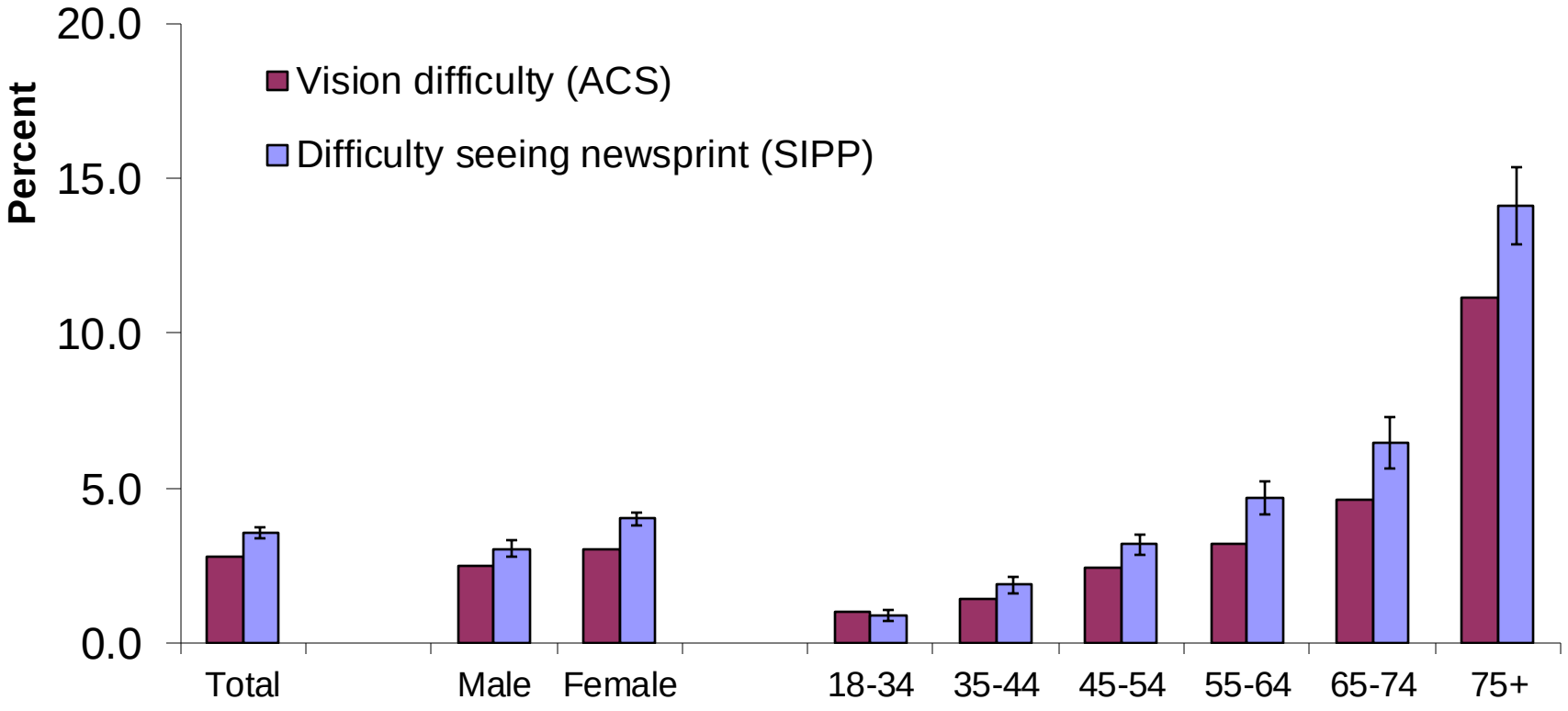
Vision difficulty prevalence

(Civilian noninstitutionalized population 15 years and older)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6 Adult Functional Limitations Topical Module

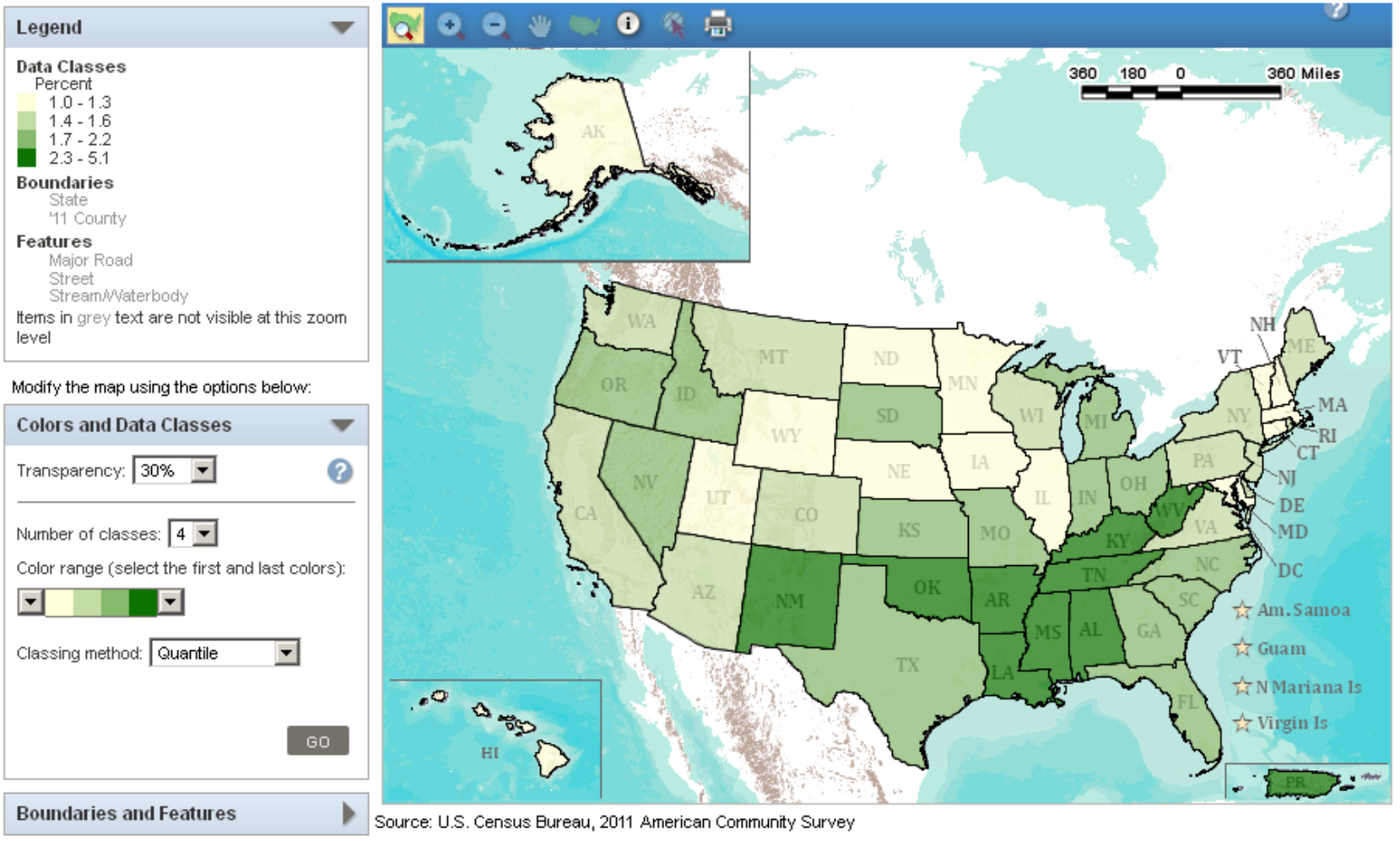
ACS and SIPP estimates of vision difficulty



From *Review of Changes to the Measurement of Disability in the 2008 American Community Survey* (www.census.gov/people/disability/files/2008ACS_disability.pdf)

State Estimates of Vision Difficulty

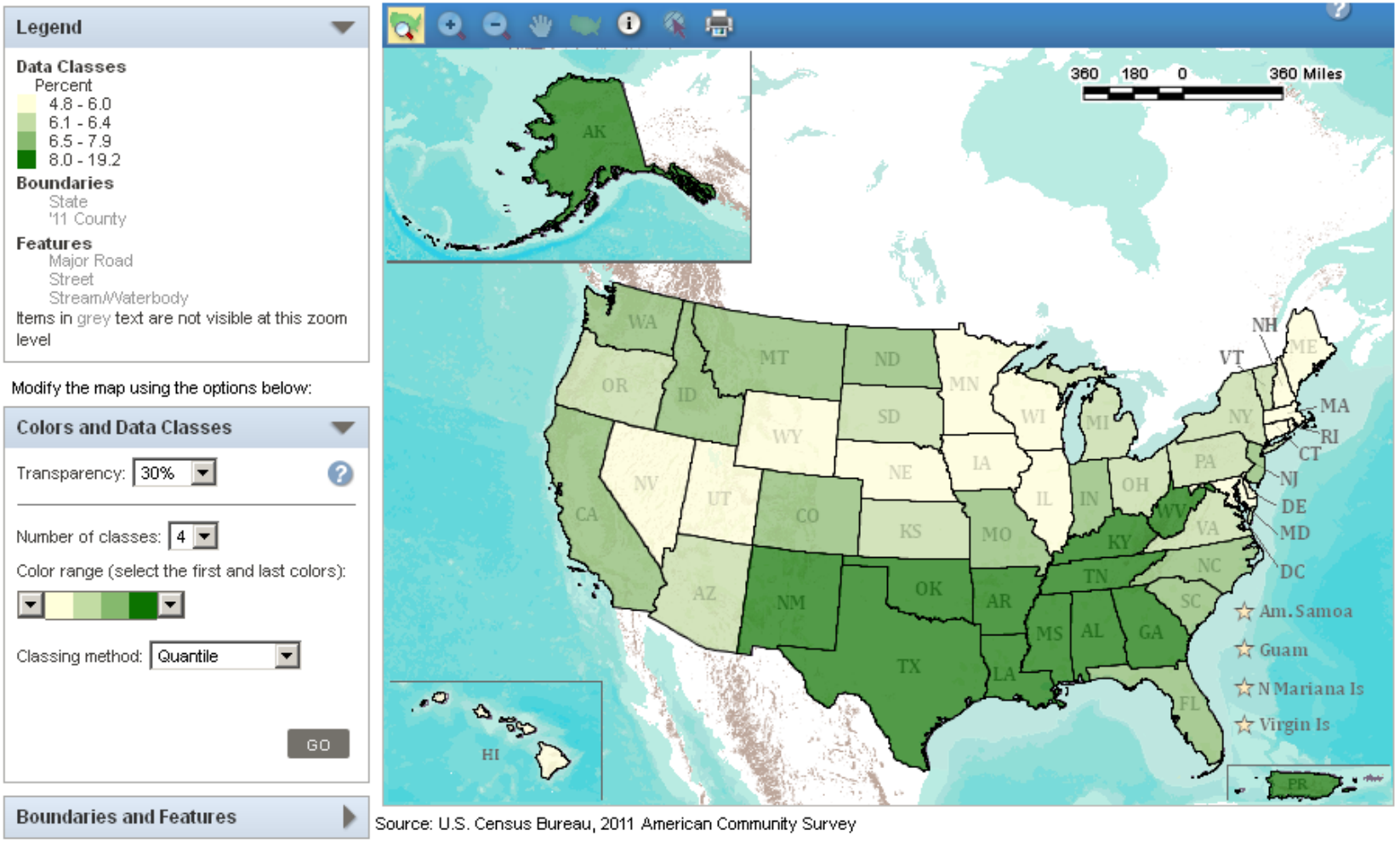
(Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population 18 to 64 years)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey

State Estimates of Vision Difficulty

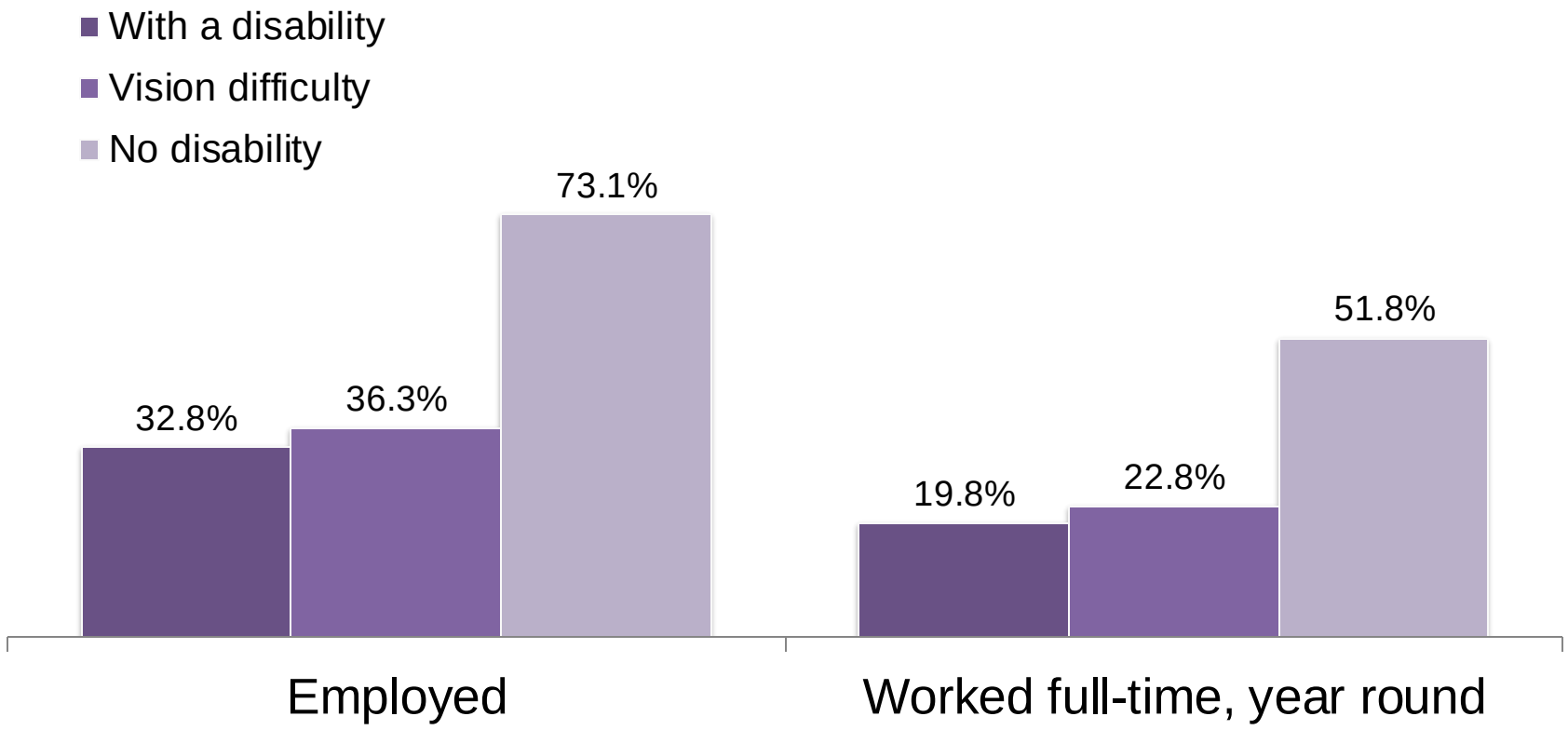
(Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population 65 years and older)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey

Employment and Work Experience by Disability Status

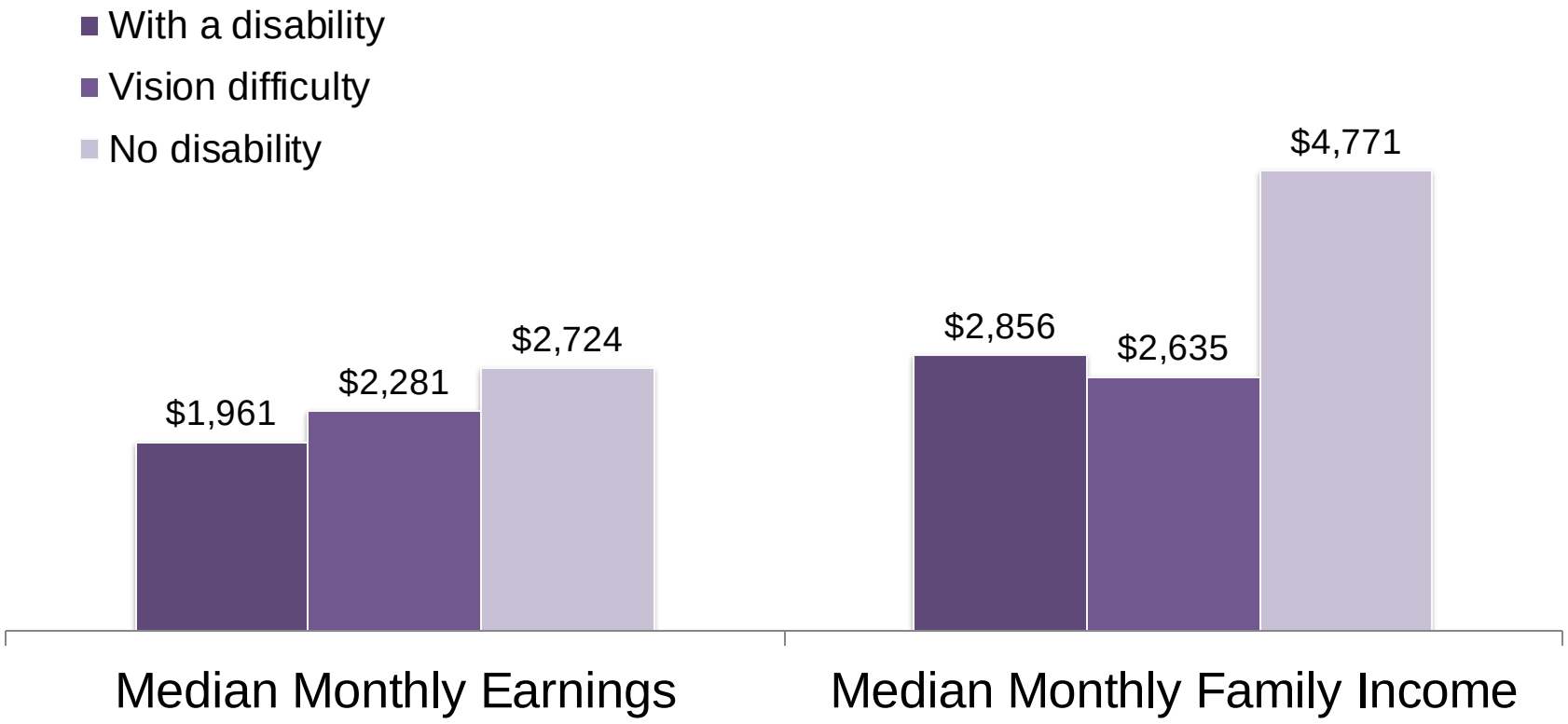
Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population 18 to 64 years old



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey, Tables B18130 and B18131

Median Monthly Earnings and Family Income by Disability Status

Civilian noninstitutionalized population 21 to 64 years old



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2008 Panel, Wave 6 Adult Functional Limitations Topical Module

Disability

- ACS Disability Definitions
- American FactFinder: Disability
- SIPP Disability Report [PDF - 630.71KB]
- CPS Work Disability Tables

Disability

The Census Bureau collects data on disability primarily through the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The definitions of disability are not always alike so caution should be taken when making comparisons across surveys. Generally, the SIPP estimates of disability prevalence are broader and encompass a greater number of activities on which disability status is assessed. The ACS has a more narrow definition but is capable of producing estimates for states, counties, and metropolitan areas. Because the ACS has replaced the decennial long-form as the source for small area statistics, there is no disability data in the 2010 Census.

In addition to these recent data sources, the Census Bureau has also produced disability estimates from the 2000 Census, and the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC). Other Federal agencies also collect and report disability statistics. Depending on your needs, one survey may be more suitable than another.

Latest Releases

Disability Employment Tabulation

Disability Characteristics of Income-Based Government Assistance Recipients in the United States: 2011 [PDF - 4.30MB] (ACSBR/11-12)

Americans with Disabilities: 2010

- Report [PDF - 630.71KB] (P70-130)
- Tables and Figures
- C-SPAN Presentation

School-Aged Children With Disabilities in U.S. Metropolitan Statistical Areas: 2010 [PDF - 4.30MB] (ACSBR/10-12)

Disability Among the Working Age Population: 2008 and 2009 [PDF - 534.16] (ACSBR/09-12)

Related Sites

- Veterans of the Armed Forces
- Aging
- Health Insurance
- American Community Survey

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Enter a state, county, city, town, or zip code:

e.g., Atlanta, GA GO

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American FactFinder provides access to data about the United States, Puerto Rico and the Island Areas. The data in American FactFinder come from several censuses and surveys. For more information see Using FactFinder and What We Provide.

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Learn about American FactFinder's functions and features.

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The following data are available on American FactFinder:

- American Community Survey more » | get data »
- American Housing Survey more » | get data »
- Annual Surveys of Governments more » | get data »
- Census of Governments more » | get data »
- Annual Economic Surveys more »
- Decennial Census more » | get data »
- Economic Census more » | get data »

News and Notes

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May 16, 2013

2011 County Business Patterns data are now available!...

view all news, release schedules, and more »

Address Search

Find Census data by entering a street address.

Reference Maps

Reference Maps show selected geographic boundaries for an area along with orienting features, such as roads.

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- **EEO Occupation Codes** (executives, analysts, ...)

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1 Enter search terms and an optional geography and click **GO**

topic or table name: Vision

state, county or place (optional):

GO

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- these are added to 'Your Selections'
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2 Next, select **Geographies** (states, counties, cities, towns, etc.)

- these are added to 'Your Selections'
- the Search Results are updated

3 Select one or more Search Results and click **View**

Search - Use the options on the left (topics, geographies, ...) to narrow your search results

Your Selections

Search using...
Search:
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clear all selections and start a new search

Search using the options below:

- **Topics** (age, income, year, dataset, ...)
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Search Results: *1-25* of *51* tables and other products match 'Your Selections' per page:

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

topics | race/ancestry | industries | occupations

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1 2 3

	ID	Table, File or Document Title	Dataset	About
☐	B18103	SEX BY AGE BY VISION DIFFICULTY	2011 ACS 1-year estimates	
☐	B18103	SEX BY AGE BY VISION DIFFICULTY	2011 ACS 3-year estimates	
☐	B99183	IMPUTATION OF VISION DIFFICULTY FOR THE CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION	2011 ACS 1-year estimates	
☐	B99183	IMPUTATION OF VISION DIFFICULTY FOR THE CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION	2011 ACS 3-year estimates	
☐	C18103	SEX BY AGE BY VISION DIFFICULTY	2011 ACS 1-year estimates	
☐	C18103	SEX BY AGE BY VISION DIFFICULTY	2011 ACS 3-year estimates	
☐	B18103	SEX BY AGE BY VISION DIFFICULTY	2010 ACS 1-year estimates	
☐	B18103	SEX BY AGE BY VISION DIFFICULTY	2010 ACS 3-year estimates	
☐	B99183	IMPUTATION OF VISION DIFFICULTY FOR THE CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION	2010 ACS 1-year estimates	
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☐	C18103	SEX BY AGE BY VISION DIFFICULTY	2008 ACS 1-year estimates	
☐	S1810	DISABILITY CHARACTERISTICS	2011 ACS 1-year estimates	
☐	S1810	DISABILITY CHARACTERISTICS	2011 ACS 3-year estimates	
☐	B18108	AGE BY NUMBER OF DISABILITIES	2011 ACS 1-year estimates	
☐	B18108	AGE BY NUMBER OF DISABILITIES	2011 ACS 3-year estimates	
☐	B18120	EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY DISABILITY STATUS AND TYPE	2011 ACS 1-year estimates	
☐	B18120	EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY DISABILITY STATUS AND TYPE	2011 ACS 3-year estimates	

Links

- Disability Page
  - http://www.census.gov/people/disability/
- American FactFinder:
  - http://factfinder2.census.gov/

Contact Info

Matthew Brault

U.S. Census Bureau

(301) 763-5637

matthew.w.brault@census.gov

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