Household Finances

Assets and Debts

AGS
APPLIED GEOGRAPHIC SOLUTIONS
Powering Smarter Market Decisions™

Version

2022B

Release Introduction

This database provides a unique glimpse into household finances – the type and amounts of household assets, the types and amounts of household debts, and the distribution of net worth by neighborhood. The data are derived from a statistical and geographic analysis of a Census Bureau survey known as the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF).

The current survey release is the 2019 Survey of Consumer Finances.

For assets (e.g. transaction accounts, life insurance with cash value, primary residence value) and debts (e.g. mortgage, credit card), separate tabulations are available for:

- • Number of households with each asset or debt type
- • Percentage of households with each asset or debt type
- • Aggregate value of assets and debts
- • Average value of assets and debts

A total of fifteen separate asset types are included, as well as six debt types. Net worth (effectively, the difference between a household's assets and its debts) is reported as either average (per household) or aggregate.

Content

Consists of several tables, for households:

- • Households with assets by type
- • % of Households with assets by type
- • Households with debts by type
- • % of Households with debts by type
- • Aggregate value of assets and debts
- • Average value of assets and debts
- • Average and aggregate net worth

Methodology

The primary source of this database is the 2019 Survey of Consumer Finances, issued by the Census Bureau.

In order to take account of the substantial regional differences in average housing values and mortgage amounts, we utilized housing price data from our "ACS-Estimates Expanded" database which relies on the 2020 1-Year

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American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2016-2020 5-Year ACS balanced to our 2022 Estimates.

AGS believes that the revised dataset is superior to the previous one because of the incorporation of greater local and regional variation and recent housing price changes. Comparisons between previous versions and this latest release should be avoided.

The survey includes a wide range of demographic attributes related to "consuming units" (generally households), which have been modeled separately for each discrete expenditure category. The older surveys were first inflated to current price levels using the detailed consumer price index series. For each individual expenditure category in the survey, summary statistics were calculated for each separate element in the list below. In several cases, it was possible to utilize cross tabulation data (e.g. income by age of head of household). These variables are listed below:

- percentile of household income (<20%, 20-40%, 40-60%, 60-80%, 80-90%, 90%+)
- housing tenure (owner or renter)
- age of head of household (<35 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 55-64 years, 65-74 years, and 75+ years)
- geographic region (Northeast, South, Midwest, West)

For each item, a series of adjustment factors were derived for each unique demographic attribute. These adjustment factors were then applied to the block group level using the same demographic variables in order to create estimates at the local level, which are consistent with local characteristics. Consistency checks were undertaken in order to ensure that the results at the block group level were consistent in the aggregate with overall published estimates.

Sources

Federal Reserve Board, Survey of Consumer Finances, 2019
Applied Geographic Solutions demographic estimates, 2022
2020 1-Year American Community Survey
2016-2020 5-Year American Community Survey

Further Information

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