





## A guide to assign aggregated demographic information with a specific address



Credit: https://givingcompass.org/article/why-demographic-data-is-important-for-funding-purposes

Equity relevant issues such as access equity to critical infrastructures, facilities, groceries and medical centers, etc., are receiving increasing attention form both academia and other public institutions. According to these issues, research questions like which point of interest (POI)s such as a grocery and hospital mainly serve which group of people in terms of their demographic characters need to be resolved. With that, assigning aggregated (e.g., county-, city-, ZIP code-, census tract- and census block group-level) demographic information with a specific point of interest (POI) such as a

grocery and hospital becomes necessary. Here, I am sharing with you a method I developed to assign a specific address with its corresponding aggregated demographic information, including 1) how to stream different demographic variables at different aggregation levels from US Census Database; 2) how to geocode an address and get its geo-coordinate; and 3) how to create a shapefile with geo-coordinates, check the coordinate reference systems (CRSs) of different shapefiles, and do the spatial join of different shapefiles.

Increasing studies in equity relevant issues such as equity of access to critical infrastructures and facilities, healthy food and environment, and medical centers, etc., have brought more attention to the aggregated demographic data. With such aggregated demographic data, researchers can investigate the distribution of critical facilities within a region such as a **ZIP Code Tabulation Area** (ZCTA), census tract (CT), and census block group (CBG), and further explore the impacts of their demographic information on such distributions.

More specifically, given a scenario, where addresses of a set of point of interests (POIs) like grocery stores are known and we want to know which group of people (in terms of their demographic characters) are mainly served by these grocery stores, what shall we do? The first step is to define which aggregation-level demographic data will be used such as ZCTA, CT, or CBG. Secondly, we need to stream the demographic data from census database with our defined aggregated levels. Thirdly, each grocery address will be assigned with a region ID (i.e., GEOIDs as defined by the US Census Data) such as ZIP code, CT GEOID or CBG GEOID. The last step is to join grocery store data with their aggregated demographic data through their region GEOIDs, and perform the analysis.

This tutorial will guide you to assign the aggregated demographic data with a specific address through the following steps. This tutorial mainly serves for researchers who are interested in using US census data from U.S. Census Bureau.

## Step 1. Defining aggregated level

U.S. Census Bureau provides aggregated demographic data across country, state, county, city, ZCTA, CT, and CBG. Each level has its own GEOIDs. This tutorial takes a

fine spatial resolution level, CBG, as an example. More details about GEOIDs for different levels can be referred from <u>U.S. Census Bureau</u>.

# Step 2. Streaming aggregated-level demographic data from US Census Bureau Database



Figure 1 shows a screenshot of the table head. Red frame highlights the variable name 'B01001\_002E' and its label as 'total male'. With this table, users can select to stream the demographic variables per their interests.



Figure 1. Screenshot of variable dictionary

2) Census data API: This <u>table</u> illustrates the request link structure of different aggregation levels including the input of GEOIDs of state, county, census tract and census block group, and variable names per users' interests. Figure 2 presents the example request URLs at different aggregation levels. Red frame highlights the URL examples of CBG level, which includes the input of GEOIDs of state, county, tract, and block group, as well as the variable names.



Figure 2. Example request URLs provided by US census database

More details of URL structure components of CBG level were illustrated in Figure 3.

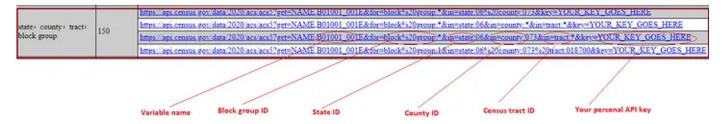


Figure 3. Explanations of CBG URL structure

Here, users need to apply and get their own API keys from the US census website.

2.2 Use case of streaming demographic data

```
In [1]: import pandas as pd
       from urllib import request
       import json
In [2]: ### Read cbg geoids for City of Boston
       CBGs = pd.read_csv('Updated_Boston_CBGs.csv')
       CBGs_head = CBGs.head(10)
       CBGs_sel = CBGs_head[['bos_cbgid','STATE','COUNTY','TRACT','BLKGRP']]
Out[2]:
            bos_cbgid STATE COUNTY TRACT BLKGRP
       0 250250001011 25 25 101
        1 250250001012
        2 250250001021 25 25 102
        3 250250001022 25
                             25
                                   102
        4 250250002011 25 25 201
        5 250250002012
                      25
                              25
                                   201
        6 250250002013 25 25 201
        7 250250002014 25 25 201
        8 250250002021 25 25
                                   202
        9 250250002022 25
                              25
                                   202
```

Figure 4. Loading Python libraries and CBGs of Boston

With CBGs of Boston, this tutorial takes ten of them for demonstration. The US Census Bureau provides the CBG GEOIDs in terms of various data formats like <u>shapefiles</u>. Figure 5 defined the URL structure for these ten CBGs of Boston with the variable 'B01001\_002E' (total male). 'census\_api\_key' refers to your personal API key which you can request from US Census Database.

```
In [3]: ### Build the request URL structure at CBG level

## Base URL
url_base = 'https://api.census.gov/data/2020/acs/acs5?get=NAME,'

## Varibae list
### Here we take 'B01001_002E' total male count as an example
demovar_list = ['B01001_002E']

## Use your API key
census_api_key = '.

### Set IDs for state, county, census tract and block group
url_cbg_id = '%for=block%20group:'
url_state_id = '&in=state:'
url_county_id = '%20county:'
url_censustract_id = '%20tract:'

### Set your APU key
url_key = '&key='
```

Figure 5. Request URL structure at CBG level

```
In [4]: for demo_var in demovar_list:
             CBGs_sel[demo_var] = ""
             print('Streaming variable: ' +demo_var)
             for i in range(len(CBGs_sel)):
                 if len(str(CBGs_sel['STATE'][i])) ==2:
                     state_fip = str(CBGs_sel['STATE'][i])
                 elif len(str(CBGs_sel['STATE'][i])) <2:
                     state_fip = str(0) + str(CBGs_sel['STATE'][i])
                 if len(str(CBGs_sel['COUNTY'][i])) == 3:
                 county_fip = str(CBGs_sel['COUNTY'][i])
elif len(str(CBGs_sel['COUNTY'][i])) == 2:
                     county_fip = str(0) + str(CBGs_sel['COUNTY'][i])
                 elif len(str(CBGs_sel['COUNTY'][i])) == 1:
                     county_fip = str(0) + str(0) + str(CBGs_sel['COUNTY'][i])
                 if len(str(CBGs_sel['TRACT'][i])) == 6:
                     census_tract_fip = str(CBGs_sel['TRACT'][i])
                 elif len(str(CBGs_sel['TRACT'][i])) == 5:
                 census_tract_fip = str(θ) + str(CBGs_sel['TRACT'][i])
elif len(str(CBGs_sel['TRACT'][i])) == 4;
                     census_tract_fip = str(0) + str(0) + str(CBGs_sel['TRACT'][i])
                 elif len(str(CBGs_sel['TRACT'][i])) == 3:
                     census_tract_fip = str(0) + str(0) + str(0) + str(CBGs_sel['TRACT'][i])
                 block_group_fip = str(CBGs_sel['BLKGRP'][i])
                 url_str_ele = url_base + demo_var + url_cbg_id+block_group_fip +url_state_id+state_fip +url_county_id+county_fip
                 +url_censustract_id+census_tract_fip +url_key +census_api_key
                 response_ele = request.urlopen(url_str_ele)
                 html_str_ele = response_ele.read().decode("utf-8")
                 if (html_str_ele):
                     json_data_ele = json.loads(html_str_ele)
                     CBGs_sel[demo_var][i] = json_data_ele[1][1]
             print('Streaming variable: ' +demo_var +'is completed')
```

Figure 6. Streaming variable information with user defined URL structure

		bos_cbgid	STATE	COUNTY	TRACT	BLKGRP	B01001_002E
	0	250250001011	25	25	101	1	414
	1 3	250250001012	25	25	101	2	513
1	2 :	250250001021	25	25	102	1	644
	3 ;	250250001022	25	25	102	2	900
	4	250250002011	25	25	201	1	444
	5	250250002012	25	25	201	2	425
	5	250250002013	25	25	201	3	805
-	7	250250002014	25	25	201	4	416
	8 :	250250002021	25	25	202	1	364
	9 :	250250002022	25	25	202	2	431

Figure 7. Results check of variable 'B01001\_002E'

## Step 3. Assign an address with a GEOID

#### 3.1 Geocode addresses into coordinates

To assign an address with a CBG GEOID, we will start with geocoding such address. There are many APIs for geocoding addresses such as ESRI, Google, Microsoft, etc., where you can start with free trials with certain count of free geocoding addresses

requests and later make subscriptions for further use. Here, I take GeoPy, a free Python package, to do the geocoding of addresses, though its efficiency may not be good compared with those paid API services. Figure 8 shows how GeoPy was used to geocode five randomly selected addresses of hospitals and groceries in Massachusetts.

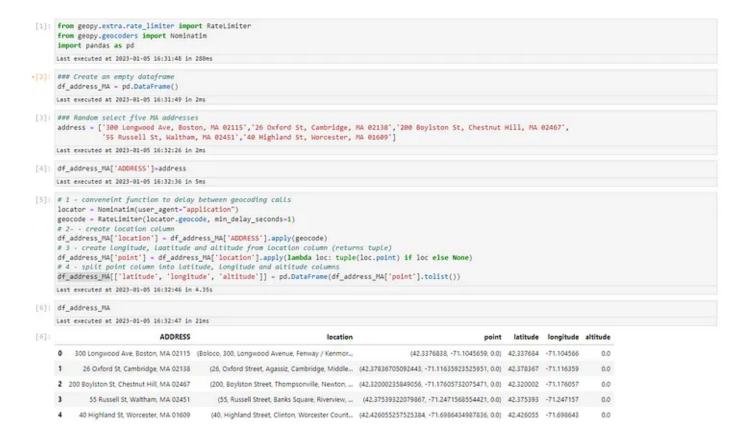


Figure 8. GeoPy for geocoding addresses

## 3.2 Creating a shapefile with geocoded coordinates

With the geocoded addresses, I will show you how we can create a point shapefile for further spatial join with the CBG shapefile. Figure 9 shows the reading of the geocoded addresses and their coordinates.



#### Figure 9. Reading geocoded sample addresses

Figure 10 starts with presenting how I defined the schema to create the point shapefile, then creating a fiona object where I specified the shapefile name as 'geocodedAddressPoints.shp', driver, and CRS, and finally writing out each geocoded addresses as a point within the point shapefile.

Figure 10. Creating point shapefile with geocoded addresses

## 3.3 Spatial joining geocoded addresses with CBG shapefiles

This section joins the point shapefile of geocoded addresses and the shapefile (polygon) of Masschusstes at CBG level, and finally assigns the CBG GEOID with each specific address.

Figure 11. Reading shapefiles of geocoded addresses and Mass

Figure 12 shows the maps of Mass at CBG level and sample geocoded addresses.

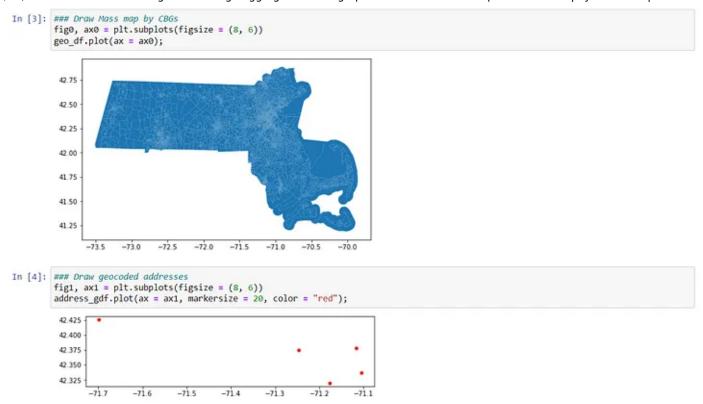


Figure 12. Drawing maps of Mass at CBG level and geocoded sample addresses

Figure 13 illustrates how to check the Coordinate Reference Systems (CRSs) of both shapefiles before joining them. More details of CRSs can be referred from <a href="here">here</a>. When two shapefiles have different CRSs, here I converted the CRS of the geocoded address shapefile into the CRS of the Mass shapefile. With that, I draw them into one map. Red nodes denote the locations of my geocoded address samples.

```
In [5]: ### Check the CRS systems for both shapefiles
        crs1 = address_gdf.crs
        crs2 = geo_df.crs
         print(crs1)
        print(crs2)
         epsg:4326
         epsg:4269
In [6]: ### Make CRSs of both shapefles consistent
        address gdf con = address gdf.to crs(crs2)
In [7]: ## Draw geocoded addresses with Mass map
         fig, ax = plt.subplots(figsize = (8, 6))
         address_gdf_con.plot(ax = ax, markersize = 25, color = "red")
        geo_df.plot(ax = ax)
Out[7]: <AxesSubplot:>
          42.25
          42.00
          41.75
          41.50
          41.25
                -73.5
                       -73.0
                               -72.5
                                       -72.0
                                              -71.5
                                                      -71.0
                                                              -70.5
```

Figure 13. Checking CRSs of both shapefiles and making them consistent

From Figure 13, we can see their CRSs are consistent so that spatial join of them can be performed. Figure 14 shows how I did the spatial join. As a result, you can see each sample address has a CBG's GEOID.



Figure 14. Spatial join of geocoded address sample with Mass shapefile

## Final Step. Join address sample with demographic data

For better visualization in Figure 15, I selected the GEOIDs relevant information from the 'address\_cbg' data frame in Figure 14. Following that, I read the 'B01001\_002E' variable table saved from Step 2 (Figure 7). Lastly, I joined sample addresses table with the CBG-level demographic data through their CBGs' GEOIDs. 'NaN' denotes the situation where varibale 'B01001\_002E' for that CBG is not avilable.



#### Figure 15. Final join of sample address with CBG-level demographic data

### **Summary**

This tutorial shows you a process flow of how to assign the aggregated demographic information with a specific address. There are other methods to achieve this. Here I provided you one of them. Any comments and suggestions on this and other methods are warmly welcome!

Geospatial Data Science

Data Science

Demographics





## Written by Faxi Yuan

222 Followers

Data Scientist @ MAPFRE; All views are my own. Linkedln: https://www.linkedin.com/in/faxi-yuan-bb2167104

More from Faxi Yuan