

# General Crosswalk Construction Framework

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## 1 Notation formatting

- **Bold** = variable or set
- *Italic* = a single instance (= item in set)
- Non-italic = a set
- UPPER CASE = input parameter
- lower case = derived from input parameters

## 2 Goal specification

Generate a crosswalk  $\mathbf{X}_{\mathbf{ST}}$  ...

- From source zones  $\mathbf{S}$  (geographic level  $\mathbf{G}_{\mathbf{S}}$  in year  $\mathbf{Y}_{\mathbf{S}}$ )
- To target zones  $\mathbf{T}$  (geographic level  $\mathbf{G}_{\mathbf{T}}$  in year  $\mathbf{Y}_{\mathbf{T}}$ )
- Including exactly one record per atom  $\mathbf{st}$  (an intersection between source zone  $\mathbf{s}$  and target zone  $\mathbf{t}$ )
- With interpolation weights  $\mathbf{w}_{\mathbf{ST}}$ 
  - A single weight  $\mathbf{w}_{\mathbf{cst}}$  for each count variable  $\mathbf{c}$  in  $\mathbf{C}$ , for each atom  $\mathbf{st}$ 
    - \*  $\mathbf{w}_{\mathbf{cst}}$  = proportion of  $\mathbf{c}$  in  $\mathbf{s}$  (denominator) that is also in  $\mathbf{st}$  (numerator) =  $\frac{\mathbf{c}_{\mathbf{st}}}{\mathbf{c}_{\mathbf{s}}}$
    - \* All  $\mathbf{C}$  are count variables (e.g., population, housing units, etc.) that have been reported for a set of sub-zones  $\mathbf{S}'$  (blocks)
- Build from an existing crosswalk  $\mathbf{X}_{\mathbf{S}'\mathbf{T}'}$  ...
  - From source sub-zones  $\mathbf{S}'$ , which nest within  $\mathbf{S}$
  - To source sub-zones  $\mathbf{T}'$ , which nest within  $\mathbf{T}$
  - In our setting, we can assume:
    - \*  $\mathbf{G}_{\mathbf{S}'} = \mathbf{G}_{\mathbf{T}'} = \text{blocks}$
    - \*  $\mathbf{Y}_{\mathbf{S}'} = \mathbf{Y}_{\mathbf{S}}$  and  $\mathbf{Y}_{\mathbf{T}'} = \mathbf{Y}_{\mathbf{T}}$
  - Includes weights  $\mathbf{w}_{\mathbf{S}'\mathbf{T}'}$  indicating proportion of each source sub-zone's features (population & housing) in each sub-zone atom  $\mathbf{s}'\mathbf{t}'$ .
- Include every  $\mathbf{s}$  in  $\mathbf{S}$  and every  $\mathbf{t}$  in  $\mathbf{T}$ .
  - Atom records may have *null*  $\mathbf{s}$  where  $\mathbf{t}$  where a zone in one set lies beyond the spatial extent of the other set, or the intersection is outside the extent of  $\mathbf{X}_{\mathbf{S}'\mathbf{T}'}$ .
    - \* In our case,  $\mathbf{X}_{\mathbf{S}'\mathbf{T}'}$  is a block-to-block crosswalk based on NHGIS shapefiles, which are clipped at the coast. The 1990-2010 crosswalk omits “off-coast” 1990 blocks that are not in the shapefile. For crosswalks with 1990 source zones, we may have *null*  $\mathbf{t}$  for source zones that lie entirely off-coast.

### 3 Summary of key input parameters

- $G_S$  = source geographic level
- $Y_S$  = source year
- $G_T$  = target geographic level
- $Y_T$  = target year
- $C$  = set of count variables for which to derive separate weights

### 4 General steps

1. Obtain & load sub-zone crosswalk (blocks-to-blocks)  $X_{S'T'}$ .
2. Obtain & load data for source sub-zone counts (source-year block data)  $C_{S'}$ .
  - (a) Include any identifiers needed to associate  $S'$  with  $S$ .
3. Join base crosswalk  $X_{S'T'}$  to source sub-zone data  $C_{S'}$  on  $S'$  identifiers.
  - (a) Use a “left join” to ensure that all sub-zone atoms are included, even those without a matching record in the sub-zone data file (especially important for 1990 blocks).
4. For each sub-zone atom  $s't'$ , identify encompassing zones  $s$  and  $t$ :
  - (a) If possible, derive  $S$  and  $T$  identifiers from  $S'$  and  $T'$  identifiers (e.g., tract ID is in block ID).
  - (b) Else if possible, derive  $S$  identifiers from source sub-zone data from step 2.
  - (c) Else, obtain identifiers through other means...
    - i. 1990 block-group parts require some [special handling](#) because neither 4a nor 4b pertain to all BGPs.
    - ii. If we generate crosswalks for target zones that cannot be identified from block IDs (e.g., places, county subdivisions, etc.), we'll need to add a step to join block crosswalk to target-year block data that includes identifiers for the target zones.
  - (d) Where  $s'$  is *null* (= “”), omit these dummy sub-zone atoms from subsequent computations.
    - i. This may drop some valid  $t$  from the computations, but step 9 will re-add them if needed.
5. Compute counts for all weighting variables in each sub-zone atom:  $c_{S'T'} = w_{S'T'} * C_{S'}$ .
6. Compute counts for all weighting variables in each atom of interest:  $c_{ST} = \sum c_{S'T'}$  group by  $S, T$ .
  - (a) Steps 5 & 6 can be combined into single formula by substituting  $w_{S'T'} * C_{S'}$  for  $c_{S'T'}$  in step 6.
7. Compute counts for all weighting variables in each source zone:  $c_S = \sum c_{ST}$  group by  $S$ .
8. Compute all weights for all atoms of interest:  $w_{CST} = \frac{c_{st}}{c_S}$ .
  - (a) Where  $c_S = 0$ , set all  $w_{cst} = 0$ .
9. If  $w_{CST}$  is missing data for any  $s$  in  $S$  or  $t$  in  $T$ , add dummy atoms with *null*  $t$  for non-*null*  $s$  or *null*  $s$  for non-*null*  $t$ , and for these atoms set all  $w_{cst} = 0$ .
  - (a) As in step 4, it may not be possible to identify all  $s$  in  $S$  or  $t$  in  $T$  from the base sub-zone crosswalk.
    - i. e.g., for 1990 BGPs, obtain complete identifiers from 1990 STF1 BGP-level data.
10. Export clean, complete file for distribution.
  - (a) Exact specifications TBD.