

Understanding American Community Survey Data Chat Log

Lorelei Sensabaugh:

Please put your questions in the chat and send to "Everyone."

Mary Martin:

Where is the key to this system?

Amanda Carter:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/data-tables/table-ids-explained.html#accordion-889eff65b1-item-6ba717fd62>

Mary Martin:

Thank you!

Trina Magi:

If I wanted to say something about data coming from the five-year estimate, how would I most accurately phrase it? Would I say "Over the last five years, the average number of males in Maryland was ____" or "At the end of the last five-year period, the number of males in Maryland was.____" or something else?

Caleb Hopler:

Hi Trina, ACS 5-year estimates are period estimates representing characteristics across a 60-month duration as a single unified dataset. They are combined, not averaged, and its own weights applied. I recommend saying (using latest 5-year data set as an example), "Over the last five years, 2020-2024, the number of males in Maryland was..." Similar to your first guess, but notice that I removed the word "average"

Peter Thayer:

This is an excellent review of the ACS. Thank you!

Amanda Carter:

I agree, Peter. This is very informative and helpful! I definitely appreciate the overviews and walkthrough of examples.

Trina Magi:

Thanks, Caleb, through it sounds like Ryan is saying NOT to use ACS data for population totals at all.

Caleb Hopler:

Hi Trina, using decennial census population totals, and Population Estimates Program (PEP) estimates for intercensal years, are better to use for larger geographies. Smaller geographies may require using ACS estimates where PEP are unavailable.

Trina Magi:

This was extremely helpful, and I would love a copy of the presentation slides. Can you say again exactly how to get them?

Bernadette Johnson:

Thank you, Ryan for this very informative webinar!

Carol Spector:

This was an excellent presentation! Thanks so much!

Lorelei Sensabaugh:

Trina, the slides will be available with the recording.

Lorelei Sensabaugh:

The recording will be posted here: <https://www.fdlp.gov/training> when it is available.

Trina Magi:

Thanks, Lorelei.

Trina Magi:

I'm afraid I still don't fully understand what a five-year estimate means about