

**Survey on the Display of Sampling Error  
in American Community Survey (ACS) Data Products  
March 2008**

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The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting a study for two purposes:

To obtain information about the use of the measure of sampling error we present with American Community Survey (ACS) estimates

To gain insight into ACS data users' preference, if any, for a particular measure of sampling error

The results of this survey will aid the Census Bureau in determining the measure(s) of sampling error to provide with the ACS data tables.

We estimate that the survey should require 10 minutes of your time. Your answers will only be used to help us make informed decisions about possible revisions to the way we display sampling error. Your responses are voluntary, and we ensure your confidentiality under the provision of Title 13 USC Section 9.

We will report findings in summary form only. Findings will be posted when available on the U.S. Census Bureau's Web site at:  
<http://www.census.gov/mso/www/npr/mktbrfs.html>.

The Office of Management and Budget approval number for this survey is 0607-0760. Without this number we could not conduct this survey or ask for your participation. Approval expires November 30, 2010.

Start

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**1. In what capacity do you use American Community Survey (ACS) data? (Check all that apply).**

- State/local government employee
- Census Bureau employee
- Other federal employee
- Contractor
- Student
- Journalist
- Businessperson
- Academic researcher
- Other, please specify:

**2. How often do you use ACS data products? (Select only one).**

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less than once a month

**3. Which ACS data products do you use? (Check all that apply).**

- Data Profiles
- Selected Population Profiles
- Ranking Tables
- Subject Tables
- Detailed Tables
- Geographic Comparison Tables
- Thematic Maps
- Other, please specify:

**4. What level of statistics courses have you completed?**

- No statistics course(s) completed
- Introductory statistics course(s) only
- Advanced undergraduate/beginning graduate level statistics courses only
- Advanced graduate level statistics courses

**5. Please rate your level of expertise with statistics.**

- Novice (just beginning to use statistics or rarely use them)
- Intermediate (moderate experience with statistics)
- Expert (a great deal of experience with and/or frequent use of statistics)

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**Estimates of sampling error, such as the margin of error and confidence intervals, are provided with all published ACS data.**

**6. For what purposes do you use estimates of sampling error? (Check all that apply).**

- Do not use sampling error
- To get a general sense of the data
- To make comparisons
- To look for statistically significant differences
- To publish sampling error
- Other, please specify:

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Imagine that for **your job** you are writing a report about young people and find two relevant ACS Data Tables.

Table 1:		
Prince George's County, Maryland		
Age Group	Estimated Total	90 % Margin of Error
Under 5	66,183	+/- 422
5-9	57,917	+/- 3,624
10-14	65,199	+/- 3,624
15-19	57,851	+/- 946

Table 2:			
State of Wyoming			
Age Group	Estimated Total	90% Confidence Interval	
		Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Under 5	31,029	30,125	31,933
5-9	28,392	26,293	30,491
10-14	32,677	30,668	34,686
15-19	33,123	31,876	34,370

7. Which of these tables did you find easier to use for your job?

- Table 1 (with margin of error displayed)
- Table 2 (with confidence intervals displayed)

8. Why do you find this table easier to use?

9. Is there any other information that would be useful to you?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please elaborate.

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10. For your job, which measures of sampling error are useful to you when working with ACS data? (Check all that apply).

- Confidence limits
- Margin of error
- Standard error
- Coefficient of variation
- Other, please specify:

11. Based on your experience using ACS products, please give any other comments you have about how sampling error is presented?

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Thank you for taking the time to help us in completing this survey!

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