

THE 2005 BES YOUNGOV INTERNET SURVEY: RECRUITMENT AND WEIGHTING

How is the British YouGov Panel Recruited?

British-based members of the YouGov panel are recruited through a variety of different methods, but essentially there are three major 'streams' of recruitment.

1) Via the main YouGov site

Potential respondents visit www.YouGov.com and elect to join the panel. Once they have taken part in the full registration process they are added to the panel.

2) Through one of the ongoing initiatives with specialist recruiters

YouGov works with a series of professional third-party recruiters. These have been used both to boost overall numbers generally and also to target specific socio-demographic groups. Examples of this type of recruitment include our use of the specialist recruiters Win4Now.

3) Through ad-hoc strategic alliances

Often YouGov will be asked to work with a third party to provide some form of research solution. In many cases such an initiative also can be used as a useful recruitment process for us. During the 2004 European Football Championships, for example, YouGov partnered with Channel 4 to provide a research solution for the broadcaster to find 'England's Dream Team'. The system was powered by YouGov but branded and promoted by Channel 4. All respondents were subsequently invited to join the YouGov panel.

Due to the fluid nature of these relationships, the precise proportion of new members recruited at any one time by any one stream will vary.

The degree to which YouGov is actively mentioned during third party recruitment also varies. For example, on the Channel 4 football survey it was not obvious that respondents were taking part in a 'YouGov survey'.

What is the size of the British YouGov panel?

As of April 2006, the size of the YouGov GB panel is 115,000. At the time of the General Election in May 2005 the panel size was 89,000.

This figure refers to the number of active panellists. Active panellists are defined as those registered adults, with valid UK postcodes, who have registered within the last year or have registered before this and taken part in at least one survey within the last year.

How were the BES respondents selected from the master panel?

For all nationally representative surveys YouGov uses *Active Sampling*. That is when a targeted subsection of the total panel is contacted and invited to take part in a particular survey, with controls to ensure that only those people contacted are allowed to take part.

All respondents from the panel are divided into their subsections based on a variety of interconnecting variables. The correct proportions of individual respondents are then randomly select from each of these subsections. Finally respondents from particular, more targeted, subsections are added to the overall sample or removed.

For the BES, respondents were initially placed in individual subsections based on their age, gender, vote in the 2001 General Election and newspaper readership.

Additionally, some respondents were added to ensure a sufficient number of low income, politically inactive or 'red top' reading individuals were present. The sample was balanced by the removal of some other politically active or 'blue top' reading respondents.

How were the Data Weighted?

The data for the BES were weighted based on individual respondent's age and gender (interlocked), social class, region and past vote from the 2001 General Election.

For the purely demographic variables the target weights were derived from the 2001 Census data from the Office of National Statistics.

The past vote target weights were developed based on YouGov estimates. These are derived from an analysis of more than 40,000 responses to YouGov surveys investigating false memory.

The remaining targets were taken from the National Readership Survey, a random probability survey comprising 34,000 random face-to-face interviews conducted annually.