

Web Panels for Official Statistics?

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New developments in computer technology, but also new challenges in society like increasing nonresponse rates, decreasing budgets, or demands for reducing the response burden, may lead to changes in survey methodology for official statistics. In this paper, the use of a web panel for high quality statistics about the general population is explored. Such a panel needs to be based on a probability sample. A web panel can be used for either longitudinal or cross-sectional studies. Depending on the type of panel, a number of choices for the implementation need to be made. These involve decisions on survey topics and questionnaire, the recruitment strategy, maintenance of the panel and how to deal with the various types of nonresponse. These methodological issues are discussed in more detail. Also an overview of the issues and corresponding suggestions is given that need further examination to identify the most desirable web panel practices for official statistics

Key Words: Panel recruitment, nonresponse, panel attrition, panel maintenance