



Falling Response Rates to Social Surveys: Challenges, Implications and Solutions for Policy and Business

*Congressional sponsors: Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.),
Representative Charles Dent (R-Pa.) and Representative Chaka Fattah (D-Pa.)*
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Federally sponsored surveys such as the American Community Survey, the National Survey of Child Health and the Panel Study of Income Dynamics tell us who we are as a nation. They help policymakers and business owners make informed decisions every day. Unfortunately, response rates to such surveys have been declining, putting the validity of survey research into question. This briefing will review the state of survey research and its role in the federal statistical system, assess the nonresponse challenge to major social surveys, discuss alternate approaches for providing more reliable data at less cost and review ways Congress can help address this problem.

The American Academy of Political and Social Science is pleased to host this important discussion around surveys and their recent report, *The Nonresponse Challenge to Surveys and Statistics*.

Moderator: **Clarence Page**, columnist and editorial writer, The Chicago Tribune

Presenters: **Douglas Massey**, President, American Academy of Political and Social Science
and Princeton University Professor
Roger Tourangeau, Vice President, Westat

Mr. Massey and Mr. Tourangeau will review the state of survey research nationally, and the nonresponse threat to survey validity.

Discussants: **Kenneth Prewitt**, Columbia School of International and Public Affairs Professor,
and Former Director, U.S. Census Bureau

Mr. Prewitt will discuss implications at the federal level, including the integrity of the federal statistical system and the ways in which federal survey data affects policy decisions.

Paul Emrath, Vice President, Survey and Housing Policy Research,
National Association of Home Builders

Mr. Emrath will illuminate the many ways in which businesses relies on federal statistics, social research and other data in their decision-making.

David McMillen, Former Professional Staff for both the House and Senate Committees
overseeing the federal statistical system

Mr. McMillen will illustrate the various ways Congress can find solutions to the response rate problem.

The briefing is sponsored by the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the National Academies' Committee on National Statistics, Sage Publications and the Russell Sage Foundation