

Financial Times/Harris Poll: The Economy

Client commissioning the survey: The Financial Times

Fieldwork dates: 25th February – 3rd March for GB, 25th February – 2nd March for the US, 26th February – 2nd March for Italy, 26th February – 3rd March for Spain, 26th February – 2nd March for Germany and 26th February – 2nd March February for France.

Interview Method: Online via the Harris Interactive Online panel

Universe effectively represented: All adults aged 16-64 in France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and the US, and adults 18-64 in Italy.

Sample size: France 1,067; Germany 1,060; Great Britain 1,226; Italy 1,030; Spain 1,098 and US 1,057.

Sampling method: Harris Interactive drew a stratified random sample from the Harris Poll Online database based on census bureau proportions for age and gender. These proportions are also modified to account for differential response rates. E-mail invitations were sent to selected respondents for click through to online survey.

Data: Attitudes and behaviour towards the economy

Weighting method:

Demographic weighting

Data were weighted to census bureau targets for all adults aged 16-64 in France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and US and 18-64 in Italy. European data were weighted by age, sex, education, region and Internet usage where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. U.S. data were weighted by age, sex, education, race/ethnicity, region, and household income.

Propensity score matching

Harris Interactive also incorporates a technique called “propensity score matching” into the weighting process. This technique allows us to virtually eliminate the selection bias associated with Internet based surveys on key dimensions. If parallel telephone and online studies are conducted, information about what differentiates online and telephone respondents can be used to build a model that estimates the probability that a respondent is in the telephone survey. Using advanced statistical techniques, the estimated probability of being in the telephone survey, based solely on one’s characteristics, is used to weight data up or down, in addition to the standard weights, in order to balance the responses between the online and telephone survey. By constructing a model using our knowledge of differences that exist between the two groups, we can give more weight to those that are underrepresented in our sample in ways other than demographically in order to make our online results consistent with the results derived from telephone studies. We know that in surveys of large sample sizes, the distribution of characteristics between the two groups will be equal. In addition, we also know that once a propensity model is developed, it can be used to weight future online surveys to the general characteristics of the general population without a corresponding parallel phone survey.

The unweighted and weighted bases for all variables used to weight the data are shown in the “Weighting Variables” section of the main data set.

Questions: The computer tables in the main data set show all published questions, in full, in the order they were presented to respondents, all response codes, and the weighted and unweighted bases for all published demographics.

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