

LABarometer

Panel Information

The LABarometer Panel

The LABarometer panel is an internet survey panel of approximately 1,800 individuals (as of December 10, 2019) residing throughout Los Angeles County. LABarometer is a subpanel of the Understanding America Study (UAS), a national internet panel managed by the USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research.

Following UAS procedures, LABarometer panel members are recruited through address-based sampling using postal codes. Eligible individuals are all non-institutionalized adults aged 18 and older living in a contacted household in Los Angeles County. Compared to convenience (“opt-in”) panels, LABarometer’s probability-based panel is more likely to accurately reflect our population of interest, Los Angeles County, and to reduce biases in our estimates. All LABarometer surveys include weights, which allow data users to generalize survey results to the larger population of Los Angeles County residents.

Below is a summary of the demographic composition of the LABarometer panel (as of December 10, 2019), alongside Los Angeles County population benchmarks for individuals aged 18 and older obtained from the 2016 American Community Survey.

LABarometer Panel Demographic Characteristics and Population Benchmarks (percentages)

Demographic Characteristics	LABarometer Panel (N = 1,821)	Los Angeles County (N = 7,832,110)
Female	63.5	50.7
Age		
18-34	36.9	33.5
35-44	22.0	17.8
45-54	16.0	17.6
55-64	13.1	14.9
65+	12.0	16.2
Race & Ethnicity		
NH White	28.6	26.5
NH Black	7.5	7.9
NH Other	16.7	17.2
Hispanic	47.2	48.4
Education		
Less than BA	58.5	69.2
BA or more	41.5	30.8
Foreign-born	25.6	34.3

The Understanding America Study

The Understanding America Study (UAS) is a national internet panel of approximately 8,500 non-institutionalized adults living in households throughout the United States. It includes special subpanels of California residents, Los Angeles County residents (the LABarometer panel), and Native Americans. The UAS started in 2014 and has been expanding since. Panel members are recruited in batches through a probability-based sampling design. As of September 30, 2019, there are 19 recruitment batches. The UAS draws from multiple sample frames (United States population, California, Los Angeles County, Native American population), but each batch is drawn from only one frame. The UAS uses an adaptive sampling approach to keep the subpanels representative of their target populations, even in the face of selective nonresponse and attrition. Nevertheless, sampling weights that adjust for imbalances in the distribution of demographics and socio-economic variables are provided with each survey. To ensure full coverage of the targeted populations, the UAS provides internet-connected tablets to individuals who do not have internet access.

Panel Recruitment and Retainment

Procedures for LABarometer panel recruitment and retainment follow UAS procedures. For a full description of UAS recruitment procedures, visit: <https://uasdata.usc.edu/page/Recruitment>. For a full description of UAS retainment procedures visit: <https://uasdata.usc.edu/page/Retainment>.

In line with the general UAS recruitment procedure, LABarometer panel members were recruited in batches. The bulk of the LABarometer panel (91%) belongs to batches specifically targeting Los Angeles County residents, namely LA County Batches 2 - 5.¹ The remainder of the sample is split between California Batches 1 and 2 targeting California residents, which account for 5% of the LABarometer sample, and the ASDE Nationally Representative Batch and MSG Nationally Representative Batches 1 and 4-8, accounting for another 4% of the sample. For a full description of response rates for each of these batches, visit: <https://uasdata.usc.edu/page/Response+And+Attrition>.

Attrition rates have not yet been calculated for the LABarometer panel. LABarometer attriters are defined as panel members who have not participated in a UAS survey in 10 months or who, according to the UAS quarterly household survey, no longer reside in Los Angeles County.

Survey Participation

LABarometer panel members take surveys specifically designed for Los Angeles County residents, as well as general UAS surveys, which allow for comparisons of outcomes between Los Angeles and other geographic areas in the country. Response rates for each LABarometer survey are provided with each survey's documentation. All surveys are distributed online in English and in

¹ UAS recruitment batch 4 is a simple random sample from a list of women who gave birth in Los Angeles County between 2009 and 2012 in zip codes around restaurants participating in a healthy menu options project. Because of the highly specific nature of this subsample, we do not include UAS members from batch 4 in the LABarometer sample.

Spanish and are mobile-friendly. To participate in a survey, panel members can use any computer, cell phone, or tablet with Internet access.

Standard Variables

Following UAS procedures, each LABarometer dataset contains a set of default survey and demographic variables. Default survey variables include individual, household, and batch identifiers, language indicator, time stamps, and respondents' rating of how much they liked the survey. The demographic variables provide background information on the respondent and household, including gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, marital status, work status, state of residence, family composition, and family income. Demographic variables are taken from the most recent MyHousehold survey, which elicits UAS members' basic demographic information every quarter. If at the time of a survey, the information in MyHousehold is more than three months old, a respondent is required to check and update the information before being able to take the survey. The complete list of standard variables included with each LABarometer (and UAS) dataset is available at <https://uasdata.usc.edu/page/Standard+Variables>.

Survey Weights

Each LABarometer dataset includes a set of survey weights. These weights allow data users to generalize survey results and statistics to the reference population. This is the Los Angeles County adult population, for Los Angeles County-specific surveys, or the U.S. adult population for general UAS surveys.² The weighting procedure consists of two steps. In the first step, we generate base weights that correct for unequal probabilities of selection in the sample. Due to selective nonresponse, the sample of actual respondents may have different characteristics than the population of interest, even after correcting for different sampling probabilities through the base weights. Hence, in the second step, we calculate post-stratification weights (using a raking algorithm) so that weighted distributions of specific socio-demographic variables in each survey sample match their population counterparts. The socio-demographic variables used in this second step of the weighting procedure are gender, race/ethnicity, age, and education. For post-stratification purposes, population benchmarks are obtained from the American Community Survey and the Current Population Survey. A full description of the general UAS weighting procedure can be found at <https://uasdata.usc.edu/page/Weights>.

² In national surveys relevant for the LABarometer project, separate weights for Los Angeles residents, California residents (excluding Los Angeles), and U.S. residents (excluding Los Angeles and California) are also provided.