

Census Bureau Opt-In Research Panel Survey
Submitted Under Generic Clearance for Internet Nonprobability Panel Pretesting and
Qualitative Survey Methods Testing
(OMB #0607-0978)

Request: 1The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for Internet Nonprobability Panel Pretesting and Qualitative Survey Methods Testing (OMB #0607-0978). We are requesting to conduct a survey using our Opt-In Census Bureau Research Panel. Our primary interest is testing questionnaire design strategies to improve Census Bureau data collection programs.

Purpose: The purpose of conducting this survey is to test alternative questionnaire design strategies and investigate respondent behaviors. These experiments are aimed at improving survey methods for reducing the undercount of young children and supporting the modernization of Census Bureau surveys. The experiments include:

- Comparing alternative designs for questions collecting the age of children less than one year old;
- Testing the use of a “Don’t know” option during self and proxy reporting using questions about employment and tax filings;
- Comparing two ways of asking the respondent the retirement income for each person in their household to determine if one way has higher item missingness than the other;
- Investigating whether the placement and formatting of response option help text and examples affects time-on-task using a question about the reason people moved to their current home;
- Exploring how the interaction between question formats and number of branching questions affects the accuracy and efficiency with which respondents complete a survey using questions about appliances in their home;
- Testing response order for the sex question to evaluate distributions and clicks on the page.

Population of Interest: Residents of the United States.

Timeline: We intend to conduct this survey with the Census Bureau’s Opt-in Research Panel in May 2025. The survey will be open for up to two weeks after the first email invitation is sent.

Sample: The Opt-in Research Panel includes email addresses from individuals who previously agreed to participate in future Census Bureau surveys. We will contact approximately 74,000 who have opted-in to be contacted for future surveys during their response to the Household Pulse Survey Phase 4.1, Cycles 5 to 7 in April to July 2024.

Recruitment: Respondents will be invited to respond to the online survey via a series of emails containing a link to the survey (see Enclosure 1). For this study, each email address in the sample will receive a maximum of four emails.

Survey Administration: The questionnaire will be administered online using the survey platform Qualtrics. Respondents will receive an email invitation with a unique URL which will allow them to access the Qualtrics instrument.

Questionnaire: Respondents will be asked to complete a questionnaire containing standard demographic questions and test questions. The demographic questions are asked to determine eligibility for certain test questions as well as to collect data for future surveys from this sample. Enclosure 2 contains the questionnaire.

Race/ethnicity is captured in this study using the minimum categories only with examples (Figure 2 in “OMB’s 2024 Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Federal Race and Ethnicity Data Standards PRA Clearance Process Instructions for PRA Liaison”). Since these data are part of a nonprobability panel, there is no intention on releasing estimates for race/ethnicity. Using the detailed categories would create undue burden on the respondents and the agency in managing these data.

Informed Consent: We will inform participants that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be accessed only by employees involved in the research project. Additional required notices about confidentiality and privacy are included on the first page of the survey.

Incentive: Participants will not receive any payment for their participation in the survey.

Length of Interview: We estimate that the survey will take an average of 15 minutes for each complete response, including time to read emails. We will cap responses at 20,000 (~27% response rate).

Thus, **the maximum burden of this research is 5,000 hours** (20,000 responses X 15 minutes / 60 = 5,000 hours).

The following documents are included as attachments:

Enclosure 1 – Census Research Panel May 2025 Email Invitations

Enclosure 2 – Census Research Panel Survey May 2025 Questionnaire

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and the design of this research is listed below:

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