
Chapter 4

Response rates

The target response rate for the 2014-15 English Housing Survey (EHS) was 60%. This chapter provides details of the final response rates and information on action taken to maximise response.

Overview

- 4.1 The target response rate for the EHS is set by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It is monitored closely by NatCen through analysis of electronic data reports and direct contact between interviewers and their team leader. NatCen sets and monitors targets for coverage within each wave and monitors response at an area and interviewer level. When response rates fall below the target, remedial action is taken.

Interview survey

- 4.2 In 2014-15, interviews were achieved at 13,174 households. This represents a response rate of 54.5%. More details on the response rate to the EHS interview survey in 2014-15 are provided in Table 4.1.
- 4.3 Of these 13,174 interviews, 80% were conducted with the household reference person (HRP), 19% with the HRP's partner and 1% with a proxy respondent, Annex Table 4.3.

Table 4.1: Interview survey response rate, 2014-15

<i>All issued households</i>			
	Number (N)	Issued cases (%)	In-scope cases (%)
Total issued addresses	25,980		
Not yet built/under construction ¹	30	0.1	
Demolished/derelict ¹	59	0.2	
Vacant/empty or derelict housing unit	958	3.7	
Non-residential address ¹	421	1.6	
Address occupied - no resident household ¹	199	0.8	
Communal establishment/institution ¹	48	0.2	
Other ineligible ¹	73	0.3	
total ineligible addresses	1,788	6.9	
Total in-scope addresses	24,192	93.1	
Not issued			
Issued, but not attempted	9	0.0	0.0
Inaccessible	19	0.1	0.1
Unable to locate address ¹	77	0.3	0.3
Unknown whether residential: Info refused	4	0.0	0.0
Unknown whether residential: no contact	50	0.2	0.2
Residential but unknown eligibility : info refused	7	0.0	0.0
Residential but unknown eligibility : no contact	93	0.4	0.4
Other unknown eligibility	31	0.1	0.1
Info refused about whether address is residential	2	0.0	0.0
Contact but no confirm if address is residential	4	0.0	0.0
Info refused whether resident(s) are eligible	15	0.1	0.1
Eligibility not confirmed: language barrier	15	0.1	0.1
Other unknown eligibility	32	0.1	0.1
Total unknown eligibility	358	1.4	1.5
Refusals			
Office refusal	676	2.6	2.8
Information refused on no. of dwellings	135	0.5	0.6
Information refused on no. of households	119	0.5	0.5
Can't identify target respondent(s): info refused	251	1.0	1.0
Refusal before interview: by selected respondent	5,421	20.9	22.4
Proxy refusal	122	0.5	0.5
Refusal during interview (unproductive partial)	37	0.1	0.2
Broken appointment, no re-contact	1,044	4.0	4.3
Total refusals	7,805	30.0	32.3
Non-contact			
No contact with anyone at address	1,533	5.9	6.3
Multi dwellings - No contact made with selected dwelling	13	0.1	0.1
No contact with responsible adult	228	0.9	0.9
Contact made at dwelling, but not from selected household	81	0.3	0.3
Total non-contact	1,855	7.1	7.7
Unproductive			
Ill at home during survey period: Head Office	13	0.1	0.1
Ill at home during survey period: Interviewer	186	0.7	0.8
Away or in hospital all survey period: Head Office	31	0.1	0.1
Away or in hospital all survey period: Interviewer	265	1.0	1.1
Physically/mentally unable/incomp: Head Office	28	0.1	0.1
Physically/mentally unable/incomp: Interviewer	262	1.0	1.1
Language difficulties: Head Office	12	0.0	0.0
Language difficulties: Interviewer	153	0.6	0.6
Lost productive	3	0.0	0.0
Interview achieved but resp requested data deleted	6	0.0	0.0
Other unproductive	41	0.2	0.2
Total other unproductive	1,000	3.8	4.1
Full interview	13,169	50.7	54.4
Partial interview	5	0.0	0.0
Total interviews	13,174	50.71	54.5

notes:

1) For the purposes of sampling, these cases are considered out of scope of the EHS.

Physical survey

- 4.4 Not everyone who takes part in the interview survey is eligible to take part in the physical survey. Cases eligible⁹ for the physical survey are identified by the computer-assisted personal interviewing program as part of the interview survey. Interviewers are then responsible for securing the consent of the householder to a physical survey. The interviewer explains the purpose of the survey and describes briefly what it will involve. If the respondent is willing, the interviewer arranges a fixed appointment for the physical survey. The interviewer is provided with the times the surveyor is available on their laptop computer to help make the appointment.
- 4.5 Of the 9,512 interviewed households eligible for the physical survey, 74% agreed to have a physical survey, which is below the target of 80%.
- 4.6 In 2014-15, 6,103 physical surveys were achieved. Of these, 5,901 were surveys in occupied properties. This represents 84% of households which agreed to a physical survey at the interview. This response missed the 85% conversion rate target.
- 4.7 The remaining 202 surveys were conducted at vacant or derelict addresses. This represents 28% of the vacant addresses eligible for a physical survey. This is below the target of 30% conversion rate for such properties. More details on the response rate to the physical survey for the EHS in 2014-15 are provided in Table 4.2.

⁹ See Chapter 1 on sub-sampling for more information on how addresses are deemed eligible for the physical survey.

Table 4.2: Physical survey response rate, 2014-15

<i>all addresses eligible for physical survey</i>			
	Number (N)	Cases eligible for PS (%)	(Cases agreed to PS at IS (%))
Occupied addresses			
Total occupied addresses eligible for physical survey	9,512		
Eligible but refused appointment at interview	2,460	25.9	
Eligible and agreed appointment at interview	7,052	74.1	
Total unproductive	1,151	12.2	16.3
Incomplete survey	2	.0	0.0
Refusal on doorstep	277	2.9	3.9
Refusal to HQ	632	6.6	9.0
Household missed appointment	23	.2	0.3
Not referred for PS- eligible but non/late transmission	3	.1	0.0
Speculative call - no contact	199	2.1	2.8
Other reason for non-survey	15	.2	0.2
Full survey (paired cases)	5,901	62.0	83.7
Vacant/derelict addresses			
Total vacant/derelict addresses eligible for physical survey	722		
Eligible but refused appointment at interview	42	8.2	
Total unproductive	474	65.7	69.7
Incomplete survey	2	.4	0.3
Refusal on doorstep	138	27.0	20.3
Refusal to HQ	41	8.0	6.0
Household missed appointment	4	.8	0.6
Surveyor missed appointment	~	~	~
Spec call no contact	236	46.1	34.7
Address untraceable	1	.2	0.1
Other reasons for non survey	52	9.4	7.6
Survey achieved (vacant)	198		
Survey achieved (derelict)	4		
Total vacant/derelict physical surveys achieved	202	28.0	29.7
Total physical surveys achieved	6,103	59.6	78.9

Notes:

1) for the occupied addresses the cases eligible for a physical survey is the total occupied addresses eligible for the physical survey; and the cases agreed to a physical survey at interview survey is the total occupied addresses who agreed to have a physical survey at the interview.

2) for the vacant addresses the cases eligible for a physical survey is the total vacant addresses eligible for the physical survey; and the final column is the percentage out of all the eligible occupied addresses excluding those who refused an appointment at the interview stage (not all the vacant addresses were contacted at the interview stage so did not have the chance to refuse).

3) the cases eligible for a physical survey is all the occupied and vacant addresses eligible for the physical survey; and the cases agreed to a physical survey at the interview survey is all the occupied and vacant addresses who did not refuse to have a physical survey at the interview stage

4) A small number of unproductive cases in categories 'no longer usable as dwelling', 'dwelling demolished' and 'dwelling derelict' have been added to the 'other reasons for non survey' category.