

Wisconsin Study
WPRI
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Methodology

This study comprised a representative sample of 615 Wisconsin Adults Age 18 and over conducted from November 15 to November 17 of 2010. The focus of the study was on policy and budget issues as well as attitudes on quality of life in Wisconsin, economic evaluations, and satisfaction with state government. The survey instrument also included a wide range of standard demographic measures. This survey conforms in full with the disclosure requirements of the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Code of Professional Ethics and Practice and the AAPOR Transparency Initiative.

The study was funded by the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute and was directed by Ken Goldstein. The field work for this survey was carried out by LHK Partners of, Newtown Square PA, using a dual-frame sample design covering both landline telephone and cell phone numbers, with samples produced by Genesys Sampling System. In total, 457 respondents were reached by landline and 158 were reached by cell phones.

Sampling

Increasing numbers of Americans and Wisconsinites are surrendering their land lines and only using their cell phones. A recent large scale federal study, the National Health Interview Survey <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201005.htm> showed that one in four adults only use a cell phone. In fact, the problem may be more complicated since there is evidence that many people with land lines rarely use their land line phones and instead use their mobile phone as their primary line. Accordingly, the approach in this study was not to view landline and wireless sampling frames as mutually exclusive. If cell phone “only” or cell phone “mostly” users differ demographically or by attitudes from land line users, significant measurement error will result. Cell phones are excluded from most state surveys and there have been no publicly released surveys in Wisconsin that have sampled respondents by cell phone. This study represents first publicly released study sampling cell phones in state of Wisconsin.

In the landline component of the study, a sample of landline households in the state of Wisconsin was selected by GSS via random digit dialing procedures, in which all landline telephone numbers -whether listed and unlisted -- have an equal probability of selection. In the cell phone component of the study, wireless telephone numbers in Wisconsin also had an equal probability of selection in the sample. Due to porting of numbers, cell phone respondents were screened to confirm residence in the state. In addition, all cell phone interviewers were manually dialed. The survey used first birthday selection for sampling within household. Cell phone interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone.

Interviewing

Interviews for the study were conducted via computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) by professional interviewers trained in interviewing practices, including techniques designed to achieve the highest possible respondent cooperation. Phone numbers were released for interviewing in replicates by region in Wisconsin to allow for proper sample control. Numbers were called multiple times during alternative times of the day during the field period to insure proper sample management. Up to 4 call-backs were conducted on a sampled number.

Weighting

For sampling and non-sampling deviations from known population values, data was weighted to the latest US Census' American Community Survey estimates for Wisconsin for age, sex, and education. In addition, for statewide results, the data were weighted so that each geographic area would correspond to its proper size proportion for the entire state. An iterative raking weight methodology, which has been demonstrated to achieve greater consistency, was utilized, and weights were examined to confirm that there were no unusually large weights.

Sampling Error

Because they rely on a sample of the full population, poll results may deviate from full population values. Sampling error can be calculated when probability sampling methods, such as those used in this study are employed, using the standard formula at the 95 percent confidence interval. The margin of error for the statewide adult sample in this study is plus or minus four percentage points. Since margin of error is largely a function of sample size, sampling error is higher for subgroups. There can be other sources of non-random error in polls, such as question wording and order, non-coverage, and non-response. This study employed best survey practice in sampling, interviewing, and questionnaire design to minimize any non-random error.