Methodology

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

Overview

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn from ATP Wave 144, conducted from Mar. 18 to Mar. 24, 2024, among a sample of U.S adults who previously reported using the internet. It includes an oversample of non-Hispanic Asian adults, non-Hispanic Black men, and Hispanic men in order to provide more precise estimates of the opinions and experiences of these smaller demographic subgroups. These oversampled groups are weighted back to reflect their correct proportions in the population. A total of 10,287 panelists responded out of 11,152 who were sampled, for a response rate of 92%. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 3%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is less than 1%.

In addition to the 10,287 internet users who completed the survey, the demographic and profile variables for all 167 active ATP members who do not use the internet were also included in the final dataset used in the analysis. This was done so that the dataset and survey weights would represent the population of all U.S. adults, and brings the size of the full analytic sample to 10,454.

The margin of sampling error for the full analytic sample of 10,454 cases is plus or minus 1.5 percentage points.

Panel recruitment

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 9,942 (50%) agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based sampling (ABS) recruitment. A study cover letter and a pre-incentive are mailed to a stratified, random sample of households

selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. This Postal Service file has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.[1] Within each sampled household, the adult with the next

birthday is asked to participate. Other details of the ABS recruitment protocol have changed over time but are available upon request.[2]

American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	1,390
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	831
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	404
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS	9,396	8,778	3,845
Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019	ABS	5,900	4,720	1,386
June 1 to July 19, 2020; Feb. 10 to March 31, 2021	ABS	3,197	2,812	1,438
May 29 to July 7, 2021; Sept. 16 to Nov. 1, 2021	ABS	1,329	1,162	731
May 24 to Sept. 29, 2022	ABS	3,354	2,869	1,449
April 17 to May 30, 2023	ABS	686	576	433
	Total	**43,580**	**30,859**	**11,907**

Note: RDD is random-digit dial; ABS is address-based sampling. Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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We have recruited a national sample of U.S. adults to the ATP approximately once per year since 2014. In some years, the recruitment has included additional efforts (known as an "oversample") to boost sample size with underrepresented groups. For example, Hispanic adults, Black adults and Asian adults were oversampled in 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Across the six address-based recruitments, a total of 23,862 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 20,917 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 30,859 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 11,907 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

Sample design

[1] AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling."
[2] Email pewsurveys@pewresearch.org.

The overall target population for this survey was noninstitutionalized internet users ages 18 and older living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii. It featured a stratified random sample from the ATP in which Hispanic men, non-Hispanic Black men and non-Hispanic Asian adults were selected with certainty. The remaining panelists were sampled at rates designed to ensure that the share of respondents in each stratum is proportional to its share of the U.S. adult population to the greatest extent possible. Respondent weights are adjusted to account for differential probabilities of selection as described in the Weighting section below.

Although non-internet users were not invited to participate in the survey, the demographic and profile variables for all active non-internet panelists were appended to those for the survey respondents. This was done so that the final analytic dataset would be representative of all noninstitutionalized U.S. adults, including those who do not use the internet.

Questionnaire development and testing

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with Ipsos. The web program was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the Ipsos project management team and Pew Research Center researchers. The Ipsos project management team also populated test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

Incentives

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or a gift code to Amazon.com or could choose to decline the incentive. Incentive amounts ranged from $5 to $20 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was Mar. 18 to Mar. 24, 2024. Postcard notifications were mailed to a subset of ATP panelists[3] with a known residential address on Mar. 18.

Invitations were sent out in two separate launches: soft launch and full launch. Sixty panelists were included in the soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on Mar. 18. The ATP

[3] Postcard notifications are sent to 1) panelists who have been provided with a tablet to take ATP surveys, 2) panelists who were recruited within the last two years, and 3) panelists recruited prior to the last two years who opt to continue receiving postcard notifications.

panelists chosen for the initial soft launch were known responders who had completed previous ATP surveys within one day of receiving their invitation. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Mar. 19.

All panelists with an email address received an email invitation and up to two email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. All ATP panelists who consented to SMS messages received an SMS invitation and up to two SMS reminders.

Invitation and reminder dates, ATP Wave 144

	Soft launch	Full launch
Initial invitation	March 18, 2024	March 19, 2024
First reminder	March 21, 2024	March 21, 2024
Final reminder	March 23, 2024	March 23, 2024

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Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, the Center's researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing clear patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for whether respondents left questions blank at very high rates or always selected the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, no ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

Weighting

The ATP data is weighted in a multistep process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of selection for their initial recruitment survey. These weights are then rescaled and adjusted to account for changes in the design of ATP recruitment surveys from year to year. Finally, the weights are calibrated to align with the population benchmarks in the accompanying table to correct for nonresponse to recruitment surveys and panel attrition. If only a subsample of panelists was invited to participate in the wave, this weight is adjusted to account for any differential probabilities of selection.

Among the panelists in the final analytic dataset (comprised of internet users who completed the survey and non-internet users who were not sampled), this weight is then calibrated again to align with the population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table and trimmed at the 2nd and

98th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. This trimming is performed separately among non-Hispanic Black, non-Hispanic Asian, Hispanic and all other respondents.

In this wave, panelists who reported using all four social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X/Twitter) were randomly assigned to be asked about either Facebook or Instagram but not both. For the analysis of these questions, the weights for these respondents were further adjusted to account for their probability of having been assigned to the platform that they were asked about.

Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

American Trends Panel weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Age (detailed) Age x Gender Education x Gender Education x Age Race/Ethnicity x Education Black (alone or in combination) x Hispanic Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans Years lived in the U.S. Census region x Metropolitan status	2022 American Community Survey (ACS)
Volunteerism	2021 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement
Party affiliation x Voter registration	2022 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation x Race/Ethnicity Frequency of internet use Religious affiliation	2023 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on noninstitutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population.

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The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey.

Sample sizes and margins of error, ATP Wave 144

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
All adults[4]	10,454	1.5 percentage points
Internet users	10,287	1.5 percentage points

Note: This survey includes oversamples of non-Hispanic Asian adults, non-Hispanic Black men, and Hispanic men. Unweighted sample sizes do not account for the sample design or weighting and do not describe a group's contribution to weighted estimates. See the Sample design and Weighting sections above for details.

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Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

[4] Note that this dataset comprises of internet users who completed the survey and non-internet users who were not sampled.

Dispositions and response rates

Final dispositions, ATP Wave 144

	AAPOR code	Total
Completed interview	1.1	10,287
Logged on to survey; broke off	2.12	49
Logged on to survey; did not complete any items	2.1121	40
Never logged on (implicit refusal)	2.11	775
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	1
Completed interview but was removed for data quality		0
Screened out		0
Total panelists sampled for the survey		**11,152**
Completed interviews	I	10,287
Partial interviews	P	0
Refusals	R	864
Non-contact	NC	1
Other	O	0
Unknown household	UH	0
Unknown other	UO	0
Not eligible	NE	0
Total		**11,152**
AAPOR RR1 = I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)		92%

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Cumulative response rate as of ATP Wave 144

	Total
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	11%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	71%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 144	45%
Response rate to Wave 144 survey	92%
Cumulative response rate	**3%**

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