Background and objectives

Listening to its members in order to better serve them is an important priority for AARP. AARP administers the Member Opinion Survey (MOS) every few years to better understand of member needs, expectation, and experiences. The 2021 MOS covers topics such as: member experiences and views towards AARP, membership renewal factors, life events, responsibilities, and concerns, internet/technology behaviors, and more.

Methodology and Sampling

The 2021 MOS was conducted using a modified-Dillman methodology, consisting of multiple contacts by mail where members received an advance notification letter that included a URL and password offering the option to complete either a mailed questionnaire or to go online to complete the survey. Each subsequent communication contained the survey URL and a unique passcode allowing the option to complete the survey online. There were up to 6 contacts per member: advance notification letter, first questionnaire mailing, first reminder postcard, corrected reminder postcard, second questionnaire mailing, and second reminder postcard.

AARP contacted a stratified random sample of 171,805 AARP members in all 50 states and the District of Columbia from May 20 to August 18, 2021. Members were selected from the AARP Member Database. The database contains addresses of all households in which AARP members reside. The mailed surveys were available in both English and Spanish, while the online version also offered Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese language options. A targeted subsample (25,000) received all contacts while the remainder received three contacts, the advance notification and both questionnaire mailings.

Survey Response Rates

A total of 20,116 surveys were completed during the fielding period for an overall national AAPOR response rate of 12% (RR3) and a margin of error of + 0.7 percent. Among the subsample of members (25,000), who received all contacts, the response rate was 16%.

Weighting

Weighting of the MOS was carried out in two stages using administrative data and parameters from the AARP Member Database available for the sample. The first stage adjusted for the initial stratification done during the sampling phase while the second stage adjusted for nonresponse and post-stratified the final sample so as to provide a representative sample of AARP Members both nationally and within each state. Stage 1 of the weighting process utilized a traditional matrix weight to adjust for the initial stratification by state, age, and race/ethnicity. The second stage of the weighting process (Stage 2) employed RIM weighting for each state sub-sample that incorporated age, gender, times AARP Membership has been renewed, political ideology, population density, AARP product and service engagement, availability of an e-mail address, as well as age and affluence. This approach yielded a final weighted data set that very closely matches the AARP membership as represented by the AARP Membership Database on the items considered, as well as providing correction on other characteristics not directly included in the weighting.

More Information

A full methodology report can be found at www.aarp.org/research/MOS2021.

For more detailed information about the 2021 MOS please contact John Hagerty (jhagerty@aarp.org). AARP is the nation’s largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also produces the nation's largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org, www.aarp.org/espanol or follow @AARP, @AARPenEspanol and @AARPadvocates, @AliadosAdelante on social media.