

Fieldwork and Results

The results on the following page are for PAMCo January – December 2017 and are based on interviews carried out between 16 December 2016 and 3 January 2018. Fieldwork results are shown for original and replacement addresses separately (first and second columns) and for all addresses in total (final column).

Fully trained interviewers were used on the survey and a very high standard of accuracy and reliability was set. This was maintained by a comprehensive editing procedure and constant supervision. Every questionnaire failing to come up to the standard required, for reasons of omissions or inconsistencies, was rejected.

Known to be away temporarily means that the interviewer found that the person to be interviewed would be away from home for the whole of the interviewing period in that area.

Out, 5 or more calls means that the person to be interviewed was known to be 'in residence' but was out on each of the five or more occasions that the interviewer called.

Refused includes all refusals both by and on behalf of the person to be interviewed.

Interview not possible means that the person to be interviewed was incapable of giving a satisfactory interview because of sickness, infirmity, deafness or other such incapacity, or inability to speak English.

Other Reasons include any other reasons not included in the above descriptions.

PAMCo Response Rates

The response rate shows the proportion of the target sample who were actually interviewed. It is an indication of quality and how representative the sample is.

Very few surveys provide a full calculation of response rate. Sometimes what is referred to as a response rate is in fact a 'return' rate, e.g. the proportion of people approached to complete a panel or postal survey who return a questionnaire.

The PAMCo response rate is a complete response rate because it reflects **both** of the following:

- The proportion of the sample that is successfully contacted in the first place (78% in 2017)
- The proportion of identified participants who complete an interview (60% in 2017).

Multiplied together, these two elements provide the **overall** response rate, which in 2017 was 46%.

We believe that the single most important factor in maximising the response rate is the use of face-to-face interviewers, who establish a rapport with participants and encourage their cooperation.

A great deal of effort goes into maximising response rates, e.g.:

- Fieldwork is structured over different days and times of day (7 days a week, including evenings)
- Interviewers make numerous call-backs if necessary
- Explanatory letters and information about the survey are available
- PAMCo response rates at a national level have been very consistent over the past seven years.

Particular attention has been paid to London and the South East, where response rates have been increased. This was most notably due to the introduction of participant incentives to London in 2006 and to the South East in 2012.

A more detailed breakdown of the response rate and response rate trends from 1992 to 2017 can be seen [here](#).