

Transparency Initiative Disclosure Elements (revised May 2015)

Participation in AAPOR's Transparency Initiative involves willingness to provide the items listed below in any reports of survey research results that are publicly released, or to make them publicly available, preferably on the organization's web site, immediately upon release of that report. These items correspond to the first part of Section III.A of AAPOR's Code of Professional Ethics and Practices, which was revised in May 2015. This document provides several annotated examples of methodological reporting that includes each of these elements:

- Item 1: Who sponsored the research study and who conducted it. If different from the sponsor, the original sources of funding will also be disclosed.
- Item 2: The exact wording and presentation of questions and response options whose results are reported. This includes preceding interviewer or respondent instructions and any preceding questions that might reasonably be expected to influence responses to the reported results.
- Item 3: A definition of the population under study and its geographic location.
- Item 4: Dates of data collection.
- Item 5: A description of the sampling frame(s) and its coverage of the target population, including mention of any segment of the target population that is not covered by the design. This may include, for example, exclusion of Alaska and Hawaii in U.S. surveys; exclusion of specific provinces or rural areas in international surveys; and exclusion of non-panel members in panel surveys. If possible the estimated size of non-covered segments will be provided. If a size estimate cannot be provided, this will be explained. If no frame or list was utilized, this will be indicated.
- Item 6: The name of the sample supplier, if the sampling frame and/or the sample itself was provided by a third party.
- Item 7: The methods used to recruit the panel or participants, if the sample was drawn from a pre-recruited panel or pool of respondents.
- Item 8: A description of the sample design, giving a clear indication of the method by which the respondents were selected, recruited, intercepted or otherwise contacted or encountered, along with any eligibility requirements and/or oversampling. If quotas were used, the variables defining the quotas will be reported. If a within-household selection procedure was used, this will be described. The description of the sampling frame and sample design will include sufficient detail to determine whether the respondents were selected using probability or non-probability methods.
- Item 9: Method(s) and mode(s) used to administer the survey (e.g., CATI, CAPI, ACASI, IVR, mail survey, web survey) and the language(s) offered.

Item 10: Sample sizes (by sampling frame if more than one was used) and a discussion of the precision of the findings. For probability samples, the estimates of sampling error will be reported, and the discussion will state whether or not the reported margins of sampling error or statistical analyses have been adjusted for the design effect due to weighting, clustering, or other factors. Disclosure requirements for non-probability samples are different because the precision of estimates from such samples is a model-based measure (rather than the average deviation from the population value over all possible samples). Reports of non-probability samples will only provide measures of precision if they are accompanied by a detailed description of how the underlying model was specified, its assumptions validated and the measure(s) calculated. To avoid confusion, it is best to avoid using the term “margin of error” or “margin of sampling error” in conjunction with non-probability samples.

Item 11: A description of how the weights were calculated, including the variables used and the sources of weighting parameters, if weighted estimates are reported.

Item 12: Contact for obtaining more information about the study.

Section III.D of the AAPOR Code is also applicable:

Item 13: If the results reported are based on multiple samples or multiple modes, the preceding items will be disclosed for each.

In addition, other items included in the second part of Section III.A of the AAPOR Code are to be released within 30 days of any request for those materials, and Sections III.E-F are also to be observed.

Finally, the revised AAPOR Code also includes disclosure standards for qualitative research and for content analysis, in Sections III.B and III.C, respectively. These are considered in separate documents.

The examples provided below are intended to emphasize the fact that an infinite variety of formats can be employed to successfully report these disclosure elements and comply with Transparency Initiative requirements.