

Make it easy to refuse

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Abstract

Statistics Denmark has implemented a refusal link in digital invitations to voluntary surveys. This ‘no-thanks’ option allows individuals invited via Digital Post to indicate that they do not wish to participate in the survey. This minimizes the burden on invitees by avoiding repeated unwanted contact. It also means we can streamline our efforts and avoid wasting resources chasing responses from those who are not interested. In this way, we can use resources to increase the response rate among those who potentially want to participate. When a respondent chooses ‘no thanks’ to participation, we inquire about why they choose to decline participation. By 2023, the ‘no-thanks’ option has been implemented on all surveys, and generally, the most common reasons for declining participation are that respondents receive too many requests to participate in surveys, they don’t have time, and ‘other,’ which covers statements like ‘I don’t feel like it’ and ‘I just don’t want to answer.’ Additionally, there is also an ‘other’ option where respondents can write other reasons. The responses provide insight into the reasons for non-participation, which we use as input to understand what prevents invitees from participating and therefore, what we can do differently in future surveys.