
Implementing an Adaptive Survey Design (ASD) for the Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS)

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Abstract

The UK Office for National Statistics are transforming their social surveys. At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic an online-only Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) was launched. An encouraging response rate was achieved. However, as expected from a voluntary online-only survey, differential non-response bias was a problem. As the effects of the pandemic lessened, the natural next step for the TLFS was to introduce face-to-face interviewers. Rather than spending the most expensive survey element on all respondents, we implemented an Adaptive Survey Design (ASD) and Knock-to-Nudge (KtN) aimed at historically hard-to-reach groups. The objective is to improve response and representativeness of the data.

Following methodology developed by Statistics Netherlands, our ASD is based on a response propensity model. A logistic regression model was applied to historical TLFS data to identify auxiliary variables strongly associated with response to formulate the ASD strata. Face-to-face interviewers are targeted at under-represented strata to reduce variation in response propensities. Moving away from a traditional focus on response rates, we assess various data quality indicators to inform future development of the ASD. Equally important, we monitor the operational aspect of the design to optimise field processes.

This presentation will explore results from the first ASD iteration.