

AmericasBarometer 2018/19: U.S.

Technical Information

Country	Year	Sample Size	Weighted/Unweighted	Fieldwork dates
United States	2019	1,500	Weighted	July 11 th –July 16 th 2019

LAPOP's AmericasBarometer 2018/19 Survey Round

LAPOP is a pioneer in survey research methods. LAPOP's AmericasBarometer is a unique tool for assessing the public's experiences with democratic governance. The AmericasBarometer permits valid comparisons across individuals, regions, countries, and time, via a common core questionnaire and standardized methods.

The 2018/19 AmericasBarometer represents the 8th round of this project. Fieldwork for this round began in late 2018 and continued into the summer of 2019. A total of 20 countries were included in this wave. The full dataset for this round includes 31,050 interviews, conducted based on national sample designs and implemented with the assistance of partners across the region. LAPOP makes all country datasets and reports available for download for free from its website at www.LapopSurveys.org.

In the 2018/19 round of the AmericasBarometer, LAPOP has continued a tradition of innovation, with improvements in monitoring interview quality on a daily basis during the course of fieldwork. Handheld devices for data collection were used in 100% of face-to-face interviews. As in prior rounds of the AmericasBarometer, the U.S. and Canada studies were conducted online, while all other interviews were conducted face-to-face. In the 2018/19 round, face-to-face interviews were conducted using the SurveyToGo® (STG) software, running on Android tablets and phones.

As per the sample design, for the face-to-face surveys in the Latin America and Caribbean region, the 2018/19 round of the AmericasBarometer continues to use the sample strategy introduced for the first time in the 2012 round of the surveys and also employed in the 2014 and 2016/17 rounds. This sample design continues to use, in almost all cases, the same stratification employed since 2004, making adjustments where necessary when census information is updated. The samples are designed to be representative at the primary stratum level, urban/rural areas and by size of the

municipalities. The current design (implemented since 2012) stabilized the primary sampling unit (PSU) and cluster sizes, with the selection of each PSU based on PPS (Probability Proportional to Size). Within PSUs, clusters are also standardized (typically 6 interviews) to minimize intra-class correlation while taking advantage of economies of fieldwork that simple random selection of interviews within the entire PSU would not make possible.

The remaining pages of this technical note describe the sample design of the 2018/19 AmericasBarometer survey in the United States.

2018/19 AmericasBarometer: United States

This survey was carried out between July 11th and July 16th of 2019, as part of LAPOP's AmericasBarometer 2016/17 wave of surveys. It is a follow up to the national surveys of 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2017 carried out by the Latin America Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). The 2019 survey fieldwork was carried out by YouGov on behalf of LAPOP. Key funding came from the Vanderbilt University.

YouGov Polimetrix United States sample is drawn using sample matching. Sample matching is a relatively newly developed methodology for selection of "representative" samples from non-randomly selected pools of respondents. Sample matching starts with an enumeration of the target population¹. In the case of LAPOP AmericasBarometer Survey, the target population is the voting-age adult general population of the United States. Polimetrix interviewed a larger pool of opt-in panelists who were then matched to a sample of 1,500 to produce the final dataset. The respondents were matched on gender, age, race, education, party identification and political interest. Polimetrix then weighted the matched set of survey respondents to known marginals for the general population of the United States from the 2006 American Community Survey.

Table 1 shows the unweighted sample size in each of the four regions (strata) and by demographic characteristics.

¹ In other LAPOP surveys, this would be the sampling frame. Unlike conventional sampling, web-based surveys are not drawn from a sampling frame, so it is necessary to define and enumerate the target population as a first step.

Table 1: Sample sizes by Strata and demographic characteristics in the 2018/19 AmericasBarometer Survey in the United States

	Unweighted Sample Size
Strata	
West	321
Midwest	297
Northeast	277
South	605
Total	1,500
Age	
19-25	150
26-35	246
36-45	264
46-55	227
56-65	324
66+	289
Total	1,500
Gender	
Male	709
Female	791
Total	1,500
Race	
White	1,047
Black	163
Other	290
Total	1,500

Weighting of the United States datasets

The dataset contains a variable called “wt” which is the “country weight” variable. Since in the case of the United States the sample is not self-weighted, the weight factor (“wt”) should be used to produce cross-time comparisons. When using this dataset for cross-country comparisons, in order to give each country in the study an identical weight in the pooled sample, LAPOP reweights each country data set in the merged files so that each country has an N of 1,500. The weight variable for cross-country comparisons is called “weight1500.” In SPSS, this is done via the “weight” command. Weights are already activated in SPSS datasets. In Stata, one should use the svyset command to weight the data and declare the sampling information to correctly compute standard errors that take into account the design effects. The command for single country, single year studies is: **svyset upm [pw=wt], strata(estratopri)**. For cross-country and/or cross-time studies, the command is: **svyset upm [pw=weight1500], strata(strata)**. These declarations have been made in Stata datasets. However, you must use the svy prefix with estimation commands to compute the weighted statistics and correct standard errors (see help svy_estimation within Stata for more information).

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