

**For immediate release**

**27 October 2009**

**YouGov enters election 'close' period**

There have been reports in parts of the blogosphere that certain YouGov members have been attempting to recruit BNP members to the YouGov panel, in order to influence the results of polls and generate revenue for the BNP. Here is YouGov's response to these reports.

YouGov actively recruits the majority of our panel using a variety of techniques, although self-signup and referrals from other members are also possible. We constantly monitor the profile of new panel members, and track differences in survey results, to ensure that our panel is representative, and to protect the quality and integrity of our data. Moreover, YouGov's sampling methods ensure that new members who sign themselves up cannot have a statistically significant impact on any YouGov polling results.

As a further test, YouGov has examined the results of the survey conducted after BBC Question Time poll. The survey, of 1314 electors, included 156 who had joined our panel since May 2009. This covers the period when, it is claimed, BNP bloggers advised party members to join our panel. Of these 156, just one respondent said they would vote BNP in a general election. Any attempts to infiltrate YouGov's panel with the aim of increasing the BNP's reported support have plainly failed. We are not surprised: the number and characteristics of people joining the panel since May have been no different from normal.

Nevertheless, to put the issue beyond doubt, and in line with our practice at the last general election, we had already started a "close" period, during which no new self-signups or member referrals to YouGov will be invited to take part in political polls. This "close" period started on September 1 and will last until after the election.

Any panel member who acts, or entices others to act, in a way that seeks to distort our data violates our rules. We apply various techniques to detect such actions and remove offenders from our panel. In practice the impact of this is statistically insignificant; but we consider it vital to take all possible steps to protect the quality and integrity of our data, and so maintain our record as Britain's most accurate survey research agency.

**Notes to editors**

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