

# Survey Non-Response: A Progress Report from BEA

*Federal Economic Statistics Advisory Committee, December 9, 2022*



# Where do the data come from?

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- BEA produces its economic statistics using multiple data sources
  - Notably the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau
- BEA also collects data directly via business surveys
  - International trade in services
  - Direct investment and activities of multinational enterprises
- Data are collected via mandatory benchmark, annual, and quarterly surveys
  - Enterprise-level reporting

- Benchmark surveys
  - Census-type surveys
  - Conducted every 5 years
  - No exemption thresholds
  - Basis of the universe for annual and quarterly surveys
- Quarterly and annual surveys
  - Sample surveys – size cutoff samples
  - Non-sample estimated based on prior reporting (benchmark) and current trends in the reported data

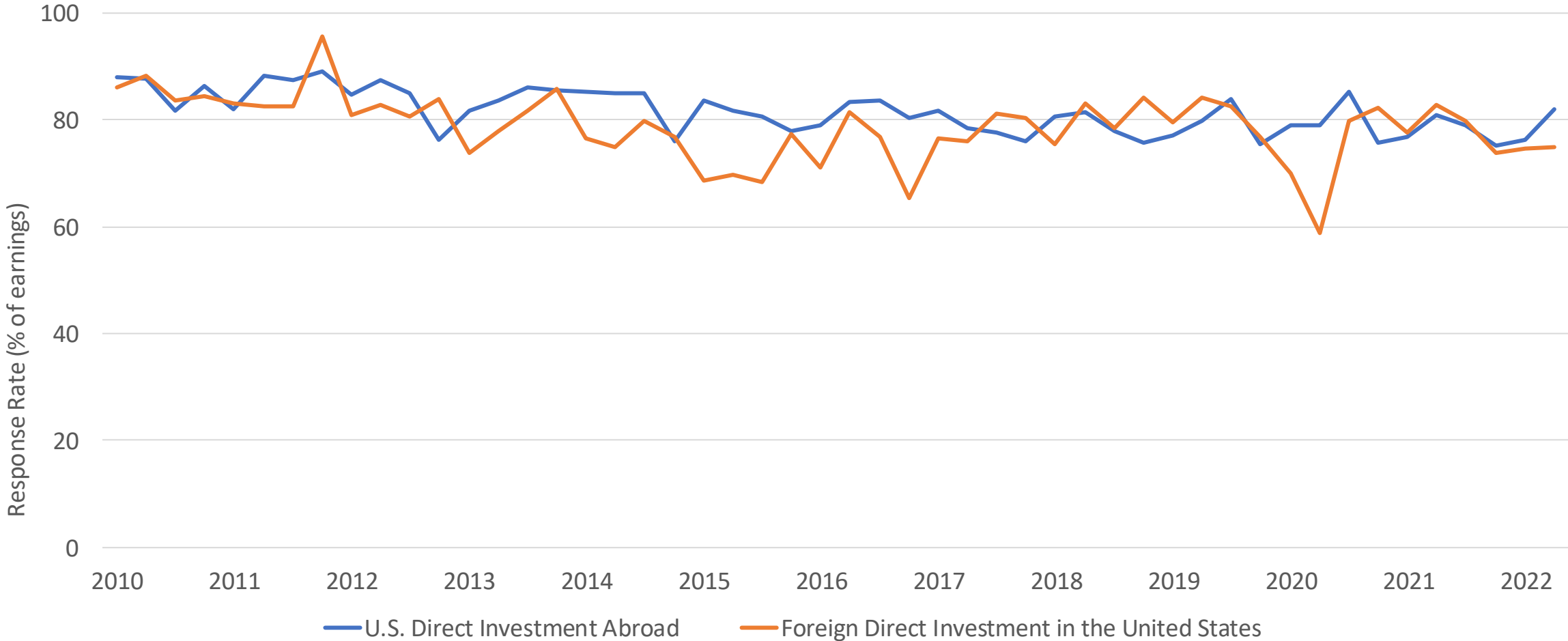
# Response Rates

- Response rates are calculated as the percent of a certain metric (depending on the survey) accounted for by companies that reported

	Number of companies	Percent of companies	Percent of assets
<b>Universe</b>	33,200	100%	100%
<b>Total sample</b>	6,100	18%	95%
<b>Total nonsample</b>	27,100	82%	5%
<b>Expected response rate</b>			92%

- There have been many challenges
  - Empty offices
  - “Great resignation”
- Solutions
  - Prioritize resources
  - Capitalize on integrated survey processing system
  - COVID-related language in respondent notification materials
- Response rates have been relatively stable over time
  - Mandatory nature
  - Long-standing participation

# Quarterly Direct Investment Survey Response Rates (Earnings)\*



\*Response rate at the first revised vintage, response rates typically continue to increase with later vintages

- Continue periodic outreach to respondent population
  - Work with trade groups
  - Webinars
  - Step-by-step guidance documents and FAQs
- Currently exploring new electronic filing system that would improve user experience
- Collaborate with colleagues at other Federal statistical agencies to exchange experiences