

Restoring Labour Force Survey Response Rates: The Canadian Experience

Presentation to Federal Economic Statistics Advisory Committee

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Overview of Canadian Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Monthly household survey with 6-month rotating panel design

- Sample of 70,000 dwellings (up 25% from pre-pandemic)

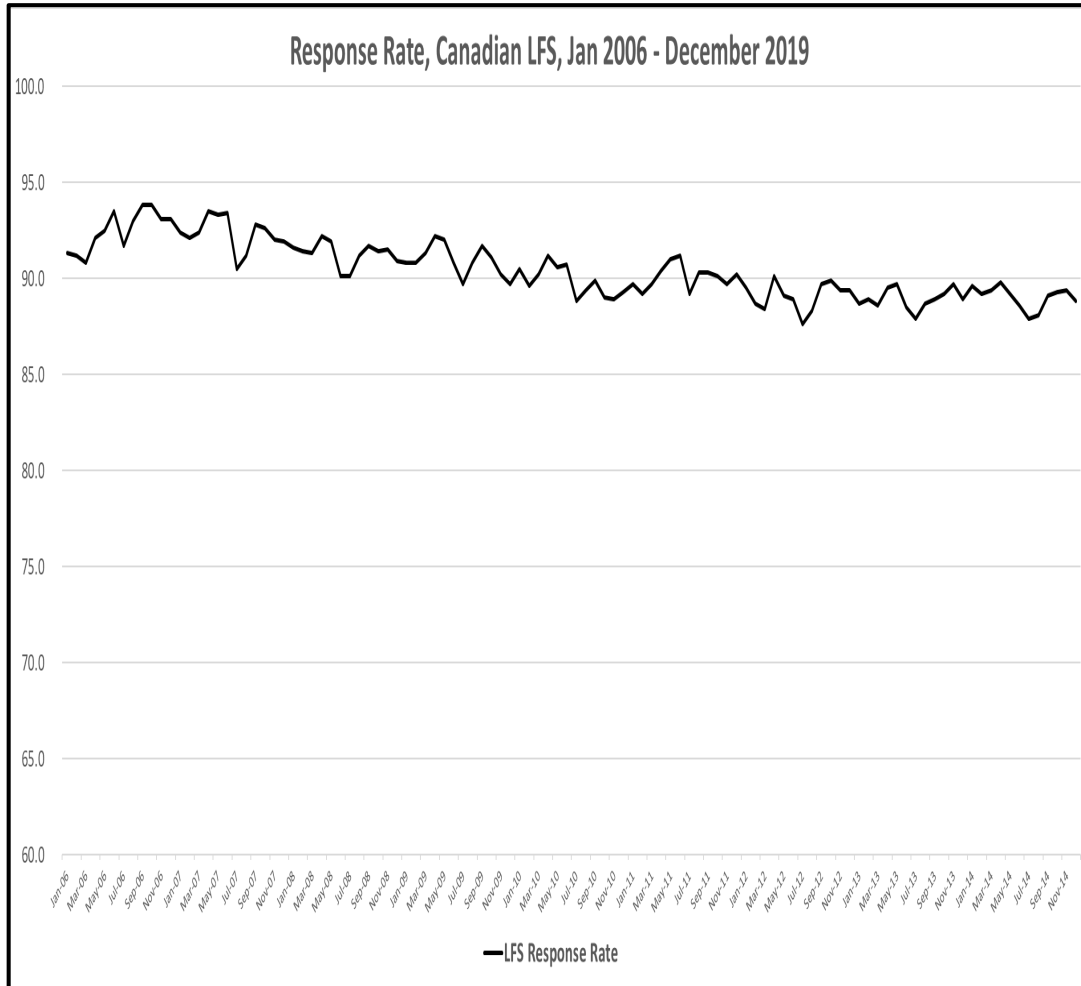
Mixed collection modes

- Birth interviews
 - Before pandemic – mix of in-person and telephone interviews
 - During pandemic – all in-person interviewing suspended and transferred to telephone
 - Since October 2024 – phased implementation of self-response (EQ)
- Subsequent-month interviews - approximately 40% self-response (EQ) / 60% telephone (since 2015)

LFS results are used in determination of Employment Insurance benefits → LFS is designated as 'mission essential' by Statistics Canada and Government of Canada



Response Rates – Jan 2006-Dec 2019



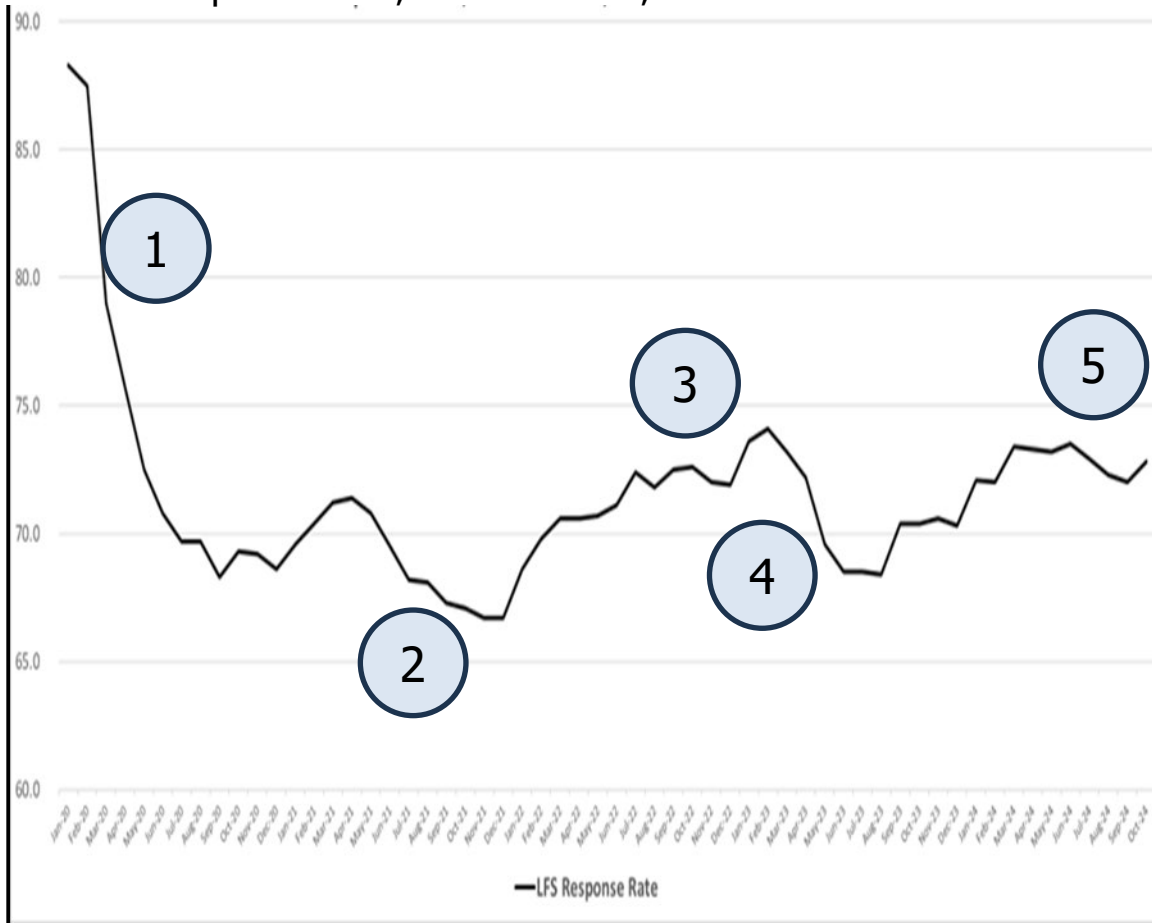
Gradual decline between 2006 (92.5%) and 2019 (87.9%)

EQ option (subject to some restrictions) introduced in 2015

Field listing operations discontinued in 2016

Response Rates – 2020-Present

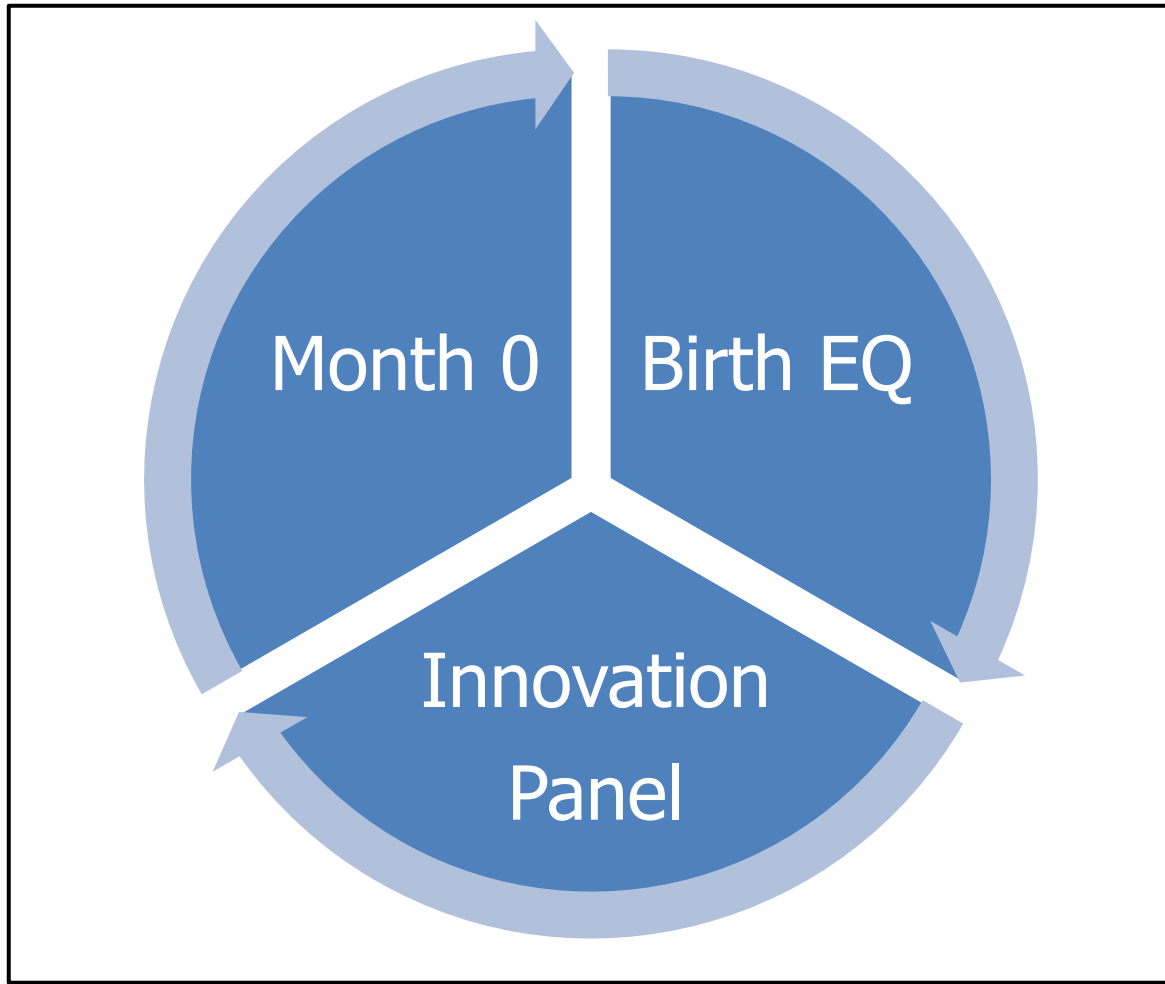
Response Rate, Canadian LFS, Jan. 2020-Oct. 2024



(Transition to new collection platform in March 2020)

1. Initial decline associated with suspension of in-person interviewing
2. Public health restrictions associated with Omicron
3. Re-introduction of in-person interviewing
4. Transition to new sampling frame/statistical building register
5. Implementation of 'Beyond 80'

LFS 'Beyond 80'



Month 0

- 1) Prior to first-month interview, selected dwellings are contacted by letter and encouraged to provide email address
- 2) Field operation to identify out-of-scope units 'in advance'

Self response (EQ) option for birth interviews

- 1) Frees in-person and telephone capacity for harder-to-persuade respondents
- 2) For some respondents, meets 'user experience' expectation

Innovation Panel

Small subset of Month 0 respondents receive alternative communication, 'nudging' them to register for Month 1 EQ – over time, Month 0 procedures and communications will be refined based on 'what works'



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