



How to Use Premise for App-Based Opt-In Panel Surveys



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App-based opt-in panel surveys are the most common type of survey at Premise. They are used and trusted by commercial customers like Serta Simmons, international development partners like the [World Health Organization](#), research institutions like the [Vaccine Confidence Project](#) at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and media organizations like [The Economist](#). In this guide we'll answer the most frequently asked questions about how to use Premise for app-based opt-in panel surveys.

What are app-based opt-in panel surveys?

App-based opt-in panel surveys are the most common type of survey at Premise. Let's start by defining two key terms:

- App-based surveys – A type of online survey that uses an app instead of a website. This is the most popular type of survey in the world because the process of collecting survey data is fully digital and easy to manage.
- Opt-in panels – Panels where respondents have signed up or were recruited to take surveys in exchange for money or other rewards. Opt-in panels have become extremely common in polling and market research because they make data collection fast, panelists provide their demographic data in advance, and research has shown that they are as reliable as [telephone surveys](#).

App-based opt-in panel surveys have become very popular with pollsters in recent years. Pew Research has shown that this methodology provides [results consistent with probability-based surveys over time](#), and YouGov uses this approach as its [primary methodology](#). This growth is primarily due to their [low cost and the increase in global internet coverage](#). Traditional panel providers—e.g. [Dynata](#)—do not have opt-in panels in low- and middle-income countries because of a perceived lack of demand in the market research industry. Premise, by building an offering that caters to both the private and public sectors, has generated enough demand to warrant building opt-in panels.

Can I really use app-based opt-in panel surveys to collect representative data in low- and middle-income countries?

We are often asked, “can app-based opt-in panels be used to collect representative data in low- and middle-income countries?”, and the answer is “yes”. Premise has a network of over five million app users who, for the purpose of surveys, serve as an opt-in panel of respondents. These panelists can be sampled—probabilistically or using quotas—and targeted based on the country's age, gender, and geographic makeup.

In most countries where Premise is available, there are sufficient panelists on our app to achieve gender, age, and geographic parity that accurately represents the national population of those countries. Premise typically uses Worldpop modeled census data to calculate sample frames that reflect the age, gender, and geographic breakdowns of countries where an updated or reliable census does not exist. Premise can help you use different census data if required—e.g. if you work with a national government that requires that you use their census (even if it's old)—or if you're working in a country with lots of recent migration. Premise can also help you adjust these samples based on the statistical inferences you wish to make.

All Premise app users, whom Premise calls “Contributors”, opt in to our panel by downloading the Premise app. After downloading the app, all new Contributors—now panelists—complete an onboarding survey that captures 14 demographic attributes and socio-economic indicators such as age, gender, financial situation, and number of individuals in the household.

Surveys are then targeted directly to panelists who have the appropriate demographic profiles based on the sample. In countries with large panels this targeting can be randomized while in others a quota allocation is used.

Standard Contributor Demographic Information

- Age
- Country of origin
- Education
- Employment status
- Ethnicity
- Financial situation
- Gender
- Geography
- Language
- Living situation
- Marital status
- Religion

Can I survey sub-national populations?

You can also use app-based opt-in panel surveys to collect data from sub-national populations, e.g. mothers of children under five years old, parents of secondary school children, or residents of geographic areas with shared livelihood strategies. All of these populations have been surveyed by our customers using Premise's app-based opt-in panel surveys.

Customers with target populations like this can work with Premise staff to build a sampling strategy fit for their objectives. Once the demographic requirements are decided, Premise will help the customer evaluate the existing panelists that meet their criteria and select a sample.

Niche subpopulations like those just mentioned will likely be surveyed using a non-probability quota sample or a convenience sample. National surveys can often be sampled probabilistically. In many instances, Premise's Network Growth Team can increase the number of panelists who fall within the target population to help you hit your quota or maximize the size of your convenience sample.

How are respondents selected?

When Premise recruits Contributors onto our app (and by definition into our panel) we brand ourselves as a lifestyle app that allows participants to make money providing data that helps their community. We recruit more Contributors onto our app through advertising in social and traditional media, paid referral programs, and partnerships with local businesses and NGOs. Local business partnerships have played a significant role in the growth of our networks in rural parts of Sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Premise's Network Growth Team maintains a broad view of Premise customers' survey requirements and continuously seeks to add respondents to our panel based on their requests.

While Contributors are not recruited randomly, they can be sampled randomly in countries where Premise has a large enough network (examples include Colombia, Ukraine, and the Philippines.) Once on the app, Contributors are able to respond to surveys targeted directly to them. These surveys are available to them based on their demographic profile and the quotas behind those surveys, so it is impossible for customers to oversample for any of their strata.

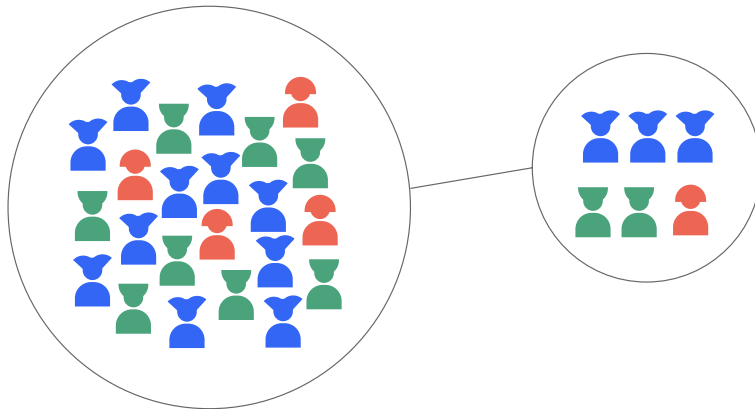
If you'd like to explore our panels, get in touch with us.

What are my sampling options?

Premise offers three sampling options:

- Stratified random samples from within our panel – Premise recommends random samples from within our panel for surveys whenever our network is large enough to support it. Under this option, only a random selection of panelists from within the target strata are offered the survey. Strata are selected to represent the population in question— usually by age, gender, and geography for national surveys.
- Quota samples from within our panel – Premise recommends quota sampling in countries where our panel isn't large enough to support stratified random sampling. This is usually because there are not enough panelists over 45 on the app, but is sometimes because there are too few panelists in certain geographies. Quota samples are used frequently by a range of organizations spanning election pollsters to aid organizations - and research now shows that non-probability samples perform well in election polling in particular.
- Convenience samples from within our panel – Premise only recommends convenience samples in a few situations. If your survey targets a small sub-population, e.g. residents of villages in Burkina Faso where illegal road checkpoints are likely to occur (a real Premise customer example), then convenience sampling is likely to be your only option because there will not be enough panelists in these strata to support quota sampling. Convenience samples also work well when you need data quickly, such as a survey about a protest happening on a specific day.

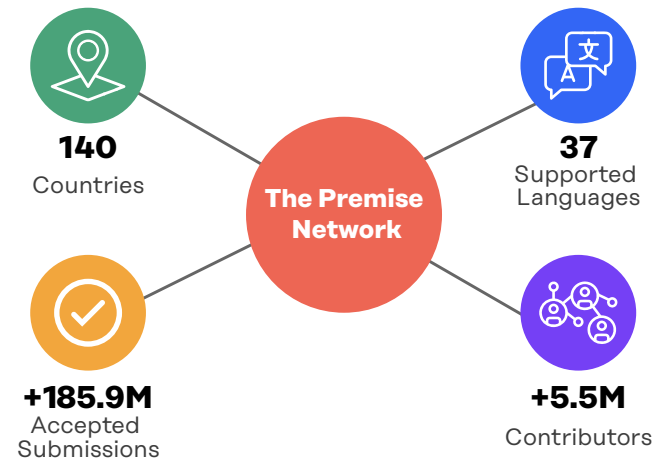
Stratified random sampling



Is it okay to do a non-probability sample using Premise instead of face-to-face surveys that can be stratified and random?

Yes! Despite their disadvantaged generalizability relative to stratified random samples, non-probability quota or convenience samples are extremely common in polling — especially in international development. While opt-in panel surveys can be quite representative in most middle income countries, strong representation is still be difficult to achieve when the population is more narrow than nation-wide or if smartphone ownership is low (like in many low income countries).

Peer reviewed studies have shown that, when probability sampling is not possible or impractical, homogeneous convenience samples have clearer generalizability relative to conventional convenience samples. Premise’s panel is homogenous in that all respondents opted in to our panel and have a common interest in making money by offering their opinions and collecting data in their community. Additionally, recurring or longitudinal survey data from homogenous convenience samples still produce high quality inferences because the bias in your sample is consistent across survey periods. Many Premise customers who wish to target specific populations survey them on a recurring basis because of this. While convenience samples are not ideal, they are still an improvement on the use of key informants — which remains very common in international development and humanitarian assistance sectors.



How does data quality control work?

Quality control for app-based opt-in panel surveys at Premise is completely automated. Contributors who fail one of these checks are not paid for the survey and their responses never show up in your dataset. The following three checks make up this quality control process.

- Time spent check – Surveys are rejected if the median time spent per survey question is less than 2.5 seconds.
- Straight lining check – Surveys are rejected if the same response option is selected for more than 90% of the questions in the survey.
- Lat/long check – Surveys are rejected if it is completed within a tenth of a meter of another submission of the same survey on a different account within one hour. This behavior is typical of bots.

What are my options for weighting?

Weighting can be used in the case that a country has a large enough network to support stratified or quota sampling but responses fall short of the desired sample size. While this happens less than with CATI, SMS, or IVR because we are able to target based on demographic and geographic profiles, it does still happen. There are two options to address this:

- Developing weighting schemes—specifically through post-stratification weighting—to calibrate for response rates that may under-represent specific groups within a study. For example, if we knew that 5% of a country's population were males between the ages of 26 and 35, but only 2% of our responses were from this segment, we might weight those responses with a coefficient that adjusts for the response rate and more accurately reflects the population of interest.
- Using a mix of app-based opt-in panel surveys and face-to-face surveys—what we call mixed-mode. Mixed-mode surveys work well for populations where smartphone ownership is high enough to make up more than 50% of a representative sample but not high enough to apply weights. Check our full guide on [How to Use Premise for Mixed Methodology Surveys](#).

Advantages and Limitations App-Based Opt-In Panel Surveys at Premise

Advantages	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Added Features. Our app allows for a variety of question types, enables conditional logic, supports embedded audiovisual content, and contains automated quality control.▪ Convenient. No enumerators, no travel requirements, no need for training, no call centers, no incomplete surveys, and data delivered in real-time.▪ Existing Demographic Profiles. Surveys can be targeted directly to panelists that meet your sampling frames. No need to worry about response rates, and you'll use less post-correction weights.▪ Two-way Anonymity. Respondents are more likely to answer sensitive questions honestly when they know they're anonymous. Surveys do not need to identify the sponsor.▪ Economical. App-based opt-in surveys are the most affordable survey option at Premise, as with any other provider.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Smartphone Ownership. Countries with low smartphone ownership (particularly certain Sub-Saharan Africa countries) are better suited to mixed-mode surveys.▪ Beneficiary Surveys. While panel surveys are a great solution for national or large subpopulations, they aren't the best solution for direct beneficiary interviews because the app will need to be promoted to beneficiaries.



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Premise is a crowdsourced insights company. Our technology mobilizes communities of global smartphone users to source actionable data in real-time, cost-effectively and with the visibility you need. In more than 125 countries and 37 languages, we find Data for Every Decision™.

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