

Using Surveys and Polling Data in your journalism: QUICK GUIDE

A wide variety of news stories incorporate or are even based on market and social results. If you want to cover such results, here is a quick check list of what you should do to ensure your reporting is accurate...

DO

- **Include** the sample size, dates of data collection and methodology (e.g. internet survey), the company who did the research (are they regulated?) and the commissioning organisation.
- **Refer** to the margin of error; so, for a margin of error +/- 4% for each figure: Conservatives 30 | Labour 30 could also be Conservative 34 | Labour 26 or Labour 34 | Conservative 26
- **Report** the % of "don't know/wouldn't say" responses

DON'T

- Refer to changes which are within the **margin of error** as if they are real changes; e.g. don't use a headline "party lead soars", if they are performing 1% better than in the same polling company's previous poll
- Compare polls if they are not like for like, particularly if you have **not evaluated the differences** between them
- Report on research where the sample size is **too small** to be accurate or are **not representative**



#HighQualityReporting

