

What is a Focus Group?

Focus groups are a technique of interviewing more than one person at a time, usually 6-10 people over a 2 hour period. A trained researcher facilitates the group by asking open, in-depth and non-leading questions to all. The researcher manages the conversation by encouraging all to voice their opinion and explain their reasons for their answers.

The **purpose of the focus group** is to explore people's opinions on a topic - to understand what they think and why. Focus groups provide rich and insightful data on people's motivations, choices and feelings. They are very different to polls and surveys as they are only with a small sample/ group of the population and therefore they are not statistically significant (they do not represent the population as a whole unlike some surveys). However, who is invited to take part in the group is carefully selected to capture balanced responses and views. Focus groups are often run by YouGov alongside a survey/poll to add insight into why people said certain things in a survey.

YouGov specialise in online research methods and we regularly run online focus groups inviting people from our panel to participate. In this way we can include people in one group from all over the UK. Online focus groups allow us to show the respondents images, films and audio in a safe and confidential setting. Online focus groups are extremely powerful, easy to use and highly useful for exploring sensitive issues, as respondents do not have to include their full name or a photo.

YouGov follow the Data Protection Act, 1998 and the Market Research Society Code of Conduct. We tape record all of the focus groups and all online focus groups are fully transcribed.

For further information please contact:

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