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Subject: Re: SPA Missing Data - "Don't know" answers  
Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Thu, 22 Jul 2021 18:54:19 GMT  
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Following is a response from DHS Research & Data Analysis Director, Tom Pullum:

In general, DHS keeps "don't know" or other indeterminate responses in the denominator when calculating the percent "Yes" or "No" (as generic labels). If you threw those cases out, you would in effect be re-allocating them proportionately to the "Yes" and "No" categories. Think about a political poll, for example. Say you have 1000 people in the poll; 400 support candidate A, 300 support candidate B, and 300 are undecided. If you ignored the 300 undecided cases, you would have a majority, rather than a plurality, supporting candidate A. This would clearly be a misrepresentation of the data.

I haven't checked whether DHS always retains the indeterminate responses in the denominator, but I believe that's the general practice in all the surveys and variables.