Menino Survey of Mayors
The Only Nationally Representative Survey of American Mayors
Menino Survey of Mayors

- Only nationally representative survey of American mayors

- Initiated in 2014 at Boston University under the direction of the late Mayor of Boston, Tom Menino

- Continues with the support of Citi and The Rockefeller Foundation

- New partnership with Community Solutions in 2021 to field a series of questions on homelessness

- Principal investigators: Katherine Levine Einstein, David Glick, and Maxwell Palmer

- Homelessness Report Authors: Katherine Levine Einstein (Boston University) and Charley E. Willison (Cornell University)
2021 Menino Survey

• Interviews with 126 mayors of cities > 75,000 residents

• Live interviews, conducted by phone (June-August 2021)

• Nationally representative sample

Findings available at: surveyofmayors.com
2021 Menino Survey Topics

Building Back Better
- Released November 2021
- Covid-19 & ARPA
- Federal Data Administration & Racial Equity
- Housing & Small Business

Mayors and America’s Homelessness Crisis
- January 2022 Release
- Accountability & Capacity
- Defining Success

Closing the Racial Wealth Gap
- March 2022 Release
Lessons Learned: How to Run a Large-Scale Elite Survey

• **Value of public engagement**
  • Policy reports
  • Public events
  • Special modules with policy groups (e.g., Community Solutions, Trust for Public Land, National League of Cities)

• **Tradeoffs with in-person/over-the-phone interviews**
  • More time intensive over-the-phone
  • Ensures that we’re speaking directly with mayors
  • Qualitative elaborations
  • Insights into policy expertise

• **Elite surveys are resource intensive!!**
**Partnering on Elite Surveys**

- **Why not just launch your own elite survey?**
  - Time intensive
  - Ethical issues and declining response rates due to survey fatigue

- **Our data are publicly available (free!!!) to researchers with university affiliations**
  - Analyses combining multiple years of data (e.g., research on climate change)
  - Could, for example, look at gender and mayoral attitudes across multiple years

- **Can use questions in other populations**
  - General public
  - Other political elites (e.g., ongoing research on housing groups)

- **Can be merged with administrative, political, and demographic data**
  - Census data
  - Finance data
  - Political context (e.g., state partisan context)
Limits to our Survey

• We don’t do survey experiments

• Sample universe is small (mayors of cities over 75,000) – limits ability to do lots of statistical analyses due to small sample size

• Mayors are important, but their expertise is limited and variable in some areas
For more information....

- [https://www.surveyofmayors.com](https://www.surveyofmayors.com)

- Feel free to reach out! [kleinst@bu.edu](mailto:kleinst@bu.edu)