

gesis

Leibniz-Institut
für Sozialwissenschaften

Executive Summary:
Recruitment for the GESIS Panel

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The GESIS Panel is a probability-based Omnibus Access Panel infrastructure located at GESIS – Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences in Mannheim, Germany. The project is supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The GESIS Panel offers the academic social science community a unique opportunity to collect survey data from a representative sample of the German population free of charge. Self-administered surveys (online and paper-and-pencil) of 20 minutes duration are conducted bi-monthly. Researchers can submit their proposals for cross-sectional and longitudinal studies.

The recruitment for the GESIS Panel was administered face-to-face by TNS Infratest Sozialforschung. This executive summary provides the key data about the recruitment process for the first cohort of the GESIS Panel (for details, see the report of TNS Infratest).

The study design had the following characteristics:

- The recruitment survey was based on a probability sample with a population registry serving as a sampling frame.
- First contact with the respondent was a personal contact and at least four contact attempts were undertaken by interviewers to maximize the contact and response propensity.
- Refusal conversion attempts were made by the interviewers.
- Respondents received monetary incentives for the completion of the recruitment interview and were informed by the interviewers about the incentives for the subsequent self-administered surveys.
- Documentation of the field phase, including contact documentation, paradata, and the study methodology.
- Transparency of the field processes.
- The main recruitment was preceded by a short technical pretest.

The main goal of the interview was to recruit respondents for the subsequent panel participation. Several further actions were performed in order to increase the likelihood of respondents' willingness to join the panel. These measures included, for example, the postal pre-notification letter with the announcement of the short survey duration, the selection and the training of interviewers. Table 1 provides an overview of the methodological characteristics and the outcomes of the recruitment interview.

In order to prevent panel attrition before the panel can start its full operation, respondents who had expressed willingness to join the panel, were invited to the welcome questionnaire and the following self-administered waves. Figure 1 provides the schematic representation of the recruitment process.

Table 1: Overview of the characteristics of the CAPI face-to-face recruitment interview

Project title	GESIS Gesellschaftsmonitor – recruitment of the first cohort of the GESIS Panel
Method	Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI)
Target population	German-speaking individuals aged 18-70 living in private households in Germany
Sample	Address random sample of individuals from population registers, stratified by regions
Sample points	270 sample points in 236 municipalities, 21870 address points
Number of complete interviews	7599
Response rates	AAPOR ¹ RR1=35.5%; AAPOR RR5=38.6%
Interview duration	Mean= 16 minutes; median=15 minutes
Fieldwork period	08.06.2013-01.12.2013
Pretest	117 interviews (April 2013)
Number of interviewers	267
Incentives	5 Euro for the CAPI interview and 5 Euro promised during the interview for all subsequent self-administered questionnaires
Recruited respondents	6210 potential panel members, 3997 (64.4%) online and 2213 (35.6%) offline
Started the first self-administered questionnaire	4961 respondents (79.89% of recruited)

¹ American Association for Public Opinion Research

Figure 1: Schematic representation of the recruitment process

