

Methodological Guidelines EVS2017

Related to the EVS 2017 integrated dataset ZA7500

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The document sets the Methodological requirements of EVS2017 and was assembled by the EVS Methodology Group. The document outlines the main guidelines concerning 1) Sampling; 2) Translation; 3) Modes of data collection; 4) Fieldwork; 5) Data Processing and Archiving.

Further guideline documents:

- App A1: Classifications
- App A2: Sampling
- App A3: Translation
- App A4: Mixed-Mode Strategy
- App A5: Fieldwork and Reporting
- App A6: Data Processing and Publication



EUROPEAN VALUES STUDY 2017

METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES

ALERT 1 (07/03/17): Please note that the definition of target population has been further specified (including only individuals residing within private households)

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SAMPLING

1. Specifications of survey sampling

The EVS Methodology Group (EVS-MG) assumes that the Program Director will appoint a **Sampling Director** (or accept the function by himself/herself) who will be operatively responsible for sample design and operative performance of sampling tasks and providing documentation on sampling procedures.

Sampling documentation consists of sampling plans, sampling frames and description of fieldwork procedures related to sampling, as well as data relevant for calculation of sampling weights.

The **Sampling Director** will consult the EVS-MG (evs2017mg@gmail.com) about the sampling plan and refer every deviation during data collection that might affect the probabilistic properties of the sample.

2. Sampling strategy

EVS-MG expects that each country proposes a sampling strategy that belongs to the class of probabilistic samples.

Substitutions of any kind (addresses or individuals) are not allowed

3. Target population

The target population is defined as: individuals aged 18 or older (with no upper age limit) that have address of residence (not residential) in [country] within private households at the date of beginning of fieldwork (or in the date of the first visit to the household, in case of random-route selection).

4. Sampling frame

The sampling frame should comply with the definition of target population and avoid non-coverage of territorial, ethnic or social groups or persons with special legal status (non-citizens). The use of population registers is encouraged, where available¹.

In case of multistage sampling, a sampling frame for each stage is expected. In case of field sampling, post-field documentation about choice probabilities of each respondent is expected.

5. Sample design

The national team can use sampling designs that are compatible with their endowments to select probabilistic samples from the target population.

¹ For an overview on availability and accessibility of population registers, see Scherpenzeel et al. (2016). Report on the use of sampling frames in European studies. Deliverable 2.1 of the SERISS project funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme GA No: 654221. Available at: www.seriss.eu/resources/deliverables



Single stage sampling is preferable, because of its low complexity and its relative higher statistical precision due to the absence of cluster effects.

Multistage sampling is acceptable but the national team must calculate appropriate average design effects on which bases the required number of individuals in the net sample can be calculated to obtain the required effective sample size.

It has to be possible for the Sampling Director to calculate or reasonably approximate the inclusion probabilities of the planned sampling design.

6. Sample size

Sample size is set as **effective** sample size:

- 1200 for countries with population over 2 million,
- 1000 for countries with population less than 2 million.

The **gross** sample size is planned in accordance to the sample design and the expected response rate.

7. Organizational issues

Sample design and other relevant information about sampling will be reviewed by the EVS-MG (evs2017mg@gmail.com) and approved prior to contracting of fieldwork agency or starting of data collection. In case of on-field sampling EVS-MG will propose necessary protocols for documentation of choice probabilities for each respondent.

The sampling has to be documented, using the Sampling Design Form (SDF) delivered by the national team. The SDF includes the description of the sampling frame and each sampling stage as well as the calculation of the planned gross and net sample size to achieve the required effective sample. The SDF will also include the analytical description of the inclusion probabilities of the sampling design that are used to calculate design weights. Based on this definition the Sampling Director has to collect the necessary data to calculate the inclusion probabilities.

The SDF template will be made available on the EVS Portal.

TRANSLATION

The observation of rigorous criteria during the translation process is fundamental to guarantee the comparability of the instrument between all the languages. The master questionnaire is provided in English and each PD must ensure that the questionnaire is translated into all the languages spoken by 5% or more of the population in the country. A central team will monitor the translation process, most likely by means of the Translation Management Tool (TMT), developed by CentERdata (Tilburg)². Further information on the translation process will be provided.

² See Dorer, B. (2016). Report on Testing specifications for real-time testing of Translation Management Tool (TMT) in ESS Round 8. . Deliverable 4.3 of the SERISS project funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme GA No: 654221. Available at: www.seriss.eu/resources/deliverables



MODES

1 Basis

The main mode is face to face. An alternative self-administrated form is possible to consider but this is a parallel mixed mode, i.e. there is no choice for the respondent between modes: either s/he is assigned to face to face, either s/he is assigned to web or web/mail format. This is what is meant in this text by “mixed-mode”: a parallel mixed mode strategy between interviewer-administrated and self-administrated conditions in the realization of the survey in one particular country.

2 Mixed Modes

In the case of mixed modes, the main alternative mode to face to face will be web (or web and mail as in many countries the coverage of web is not complete and/or respondents do not like to answer on screen). The software to be used for the web component must take into account that:

- a) A similar software will be used as far as possible in the different countries, in order to avoid uncontrolled effects of the format and presentation on the answers possibilities. This is also valid in case of mail in complement to web. Telephone survey is excluded.
- b) It is expected to have the half of the required size of sample in face to face in order to be able to compare the possible modes effects. It is recommended that the web/mail format use a size bigger than the minimal requirements, even more if a particular design is used. In any case this has to be fixed with the methodological committee before the field.

3 Practical path in case of mixed mode

For the practical realization, the proposed sequence is the following. Of course, in some countries, some alternatives can be proposed but the idea is to stay close of a “Tailored Design Model” as proposed by Dillman³. □

1. send⁴ the link to the questionnaire, ideally with an unconditional cash incentive; □
2. send a recall with once again the link □
3. send a paper questionnaire with a prepaid response envelope; □
4. send a last recall. □

4 Sampling

The sampling must be the same as for the main face to face survey: the ideal is of course a sample of names but we can consider a sample of addresses or households as long as a rules are fixed in order to select the respondent. In such a case, we have

³ Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: the tailored design method. John Wiley & Sons.

⁴ In most countries, there is no sampling frame related to emails. That means that a contact by letter is probably optimal. A handwritten envelope, even more with an unconditional cash incentive, is probably also more “remarkable” than an email lost between many other emails. The identity and the visibility of the sponsor is probably part of the story in order to higher response rates. This is however to the countries to adapt the best strategies according their local conditions. □



to take into account that the effective sample size will decrease.

5 Matrix design in Web survey

A long questionnaire will be difficult to administer in one step. That means that a matrix design is a solution to envisage, multiplying the number of units to obtain.

In any case, a mixed mode design is to be discussed with the EVS-MG (evs2017mg@gmail.com) before implementation and as soon as possible.

6 Delivery of data and quality checks

The data collected with a mixed mode strategy must be distributed as the data collected in face to face but the mode must be tagged in the dataset.

FIELDWORK

1. Specifications for the survey organisation

The **Program Director** is the main interlocutor to the EVS Methodology Group (EVS-MG).

The **Program Director** commits to conduct a national probability based survey according to the sampling and fieldwork guidelines produced by the EVS.

The **Program Director** has to complete a checklist developed by the Methodology Group before agreeing/signing off the fieldwork contract; the sampling team (of the MG) signs off the sampling plan. The checklist will be made available on the EVS Portal.

The **Fieldwork Director** signs a contract based on the Fieldwork Specifications and the Sampling Plan

The **Program Director** ensures that the **Fieldwork Director** is carrying out the fieldwork according to the contract and informs the EVS-MG immediately when deviations are being observed. This information should be given in time so that the EVD-MG is able to support the Program Director to find a proper solution.

2. Survey modes

The options concerning the use of mixed modes will be part of the sampling plan. So, before signing off the sampling plan with the sampling team the **Program Director** establishes the mode or modes in which the survey will be conducted and the percentage of each mode in the total number of interviews

3. Interviewer selection and training

Interviewers should receive training on interviewing techniques in general and the EVS questionnaire in particular. The EVS-MG will provide General Guidelines for interviewers' training, which will be made available on the EVS Portal.

The **Program Director** or someone from the research team appointed by him/her should be actively involved in the Training process.



4. Fieldwork: response rates, refusals and non-contacts

In order to achieve samples that are representative of the country's population countries must achieve high response rates and ensure that the non-contacts are relatively few. This implies that strong efforts should be made by the Fieldwork Organisation to contact the selected individual or household (depending on the sampling frame).

When there is no individuals' lists available and random-route procedure is the only solution for sampling selection, this task must be done prior to the interviewing process and by a different person, i.e., selection and interview are two separate steps.

Different contact attempts should be made in order to guarantee that all possibilities of finding someone at home were used. So, a minimum of 4 visits is requested, being one of them after 6pm and one during the weekend. The first contact has to be personal; following contacts can be made by phone, for instance to make appointments with the selected respondent.

5. Fieldwork: fieldwork projections and fieldwork reports

Before signing the contract with the Fieldwork Organisation, the **Program Director** delivers to the EVS-MG the Fieldwork Scenario with the expected number of interviews by week.

Based on the Fieldwork Scenario the **Program Director** delivers to the EVS-MG a weekly report with an update of the fieldwork. This report should include information such as: number of interviewers working; number of interviews conducted; number of refusals; number of non-contacts. The final format of the Fieldwork Report, in excel format, will be provided by the EVS-MG and made available on the EVS Portal.

6. Fieldwork: contact forms

In order to monitor the progress of fieldwork, interviewers must fill in contact forms for all sample units. All attempts of contact, independently of the outcome (non-contact, refusal, interview, address non-eligible, etc), should be registered in the contact forms. There will be contact forms available for different fieldwork modes.

7. Fieldwork: Monitoring

The Fieldwork Director must ensure that 10% of the interviews are back-checked, covering all interviewers. When a fraud is detected (substitution of household or respondent, for instance, without any explanation from the interviewer) the whole work of the interviewer must be back-checked before taking a decision on the validity of his/her work. The **Program Director** must agree with the **Fieldwork Director**, before fieldwork starts, upon the consequences of back-checks. This should be part of the Fieldwork Contract. Refusals and non-contacts must also be object of back-checks

Back-checks will be done either in person or by phone.



DATA PROCESSING AND ARCHIVING

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The **EVS Data Archive** is responsible for integrating all EVS 2017 country data files and corresponding documentation into an international analysis file.

The **Program Director** has the full and exclusive responsibility to provide national data and documentation for inclusion in the EVS 2017 integrated data file.

The **Program Director** commits to follow the data processing and depositing guidelines for EVS national data sets that have been agreed by the EVS Methodology Group, and to deposit the national data set with all specified documentation to the EVS Archive within the set schedule.

Failure to meet deadlines or EVS quality criteria may lead to the exclusion of national data sets from the international analysis file, after appraisal through the EVS Methodology Group.

The processing and depositing guidelines, to be prepared in various more detailed documents, will cover the following areas, to be detailed below:

- 2. Data publication concept, including property rights and usage licences for national and integrated EVS 2017 data
- 3. Anonymization of data to achieve compliance with national and EU data protection regulations
- 4. Data processing and cleaning
- 5. Data and methods documentation (List of deliverables)

2. Data Publication

Data publication for EVS 2017 is foreseen to be conducted for the following distinct data products:

1. The integrated international analysis file of EVS 2017 plus full documentation (IDS), in the **Off-site Scientific-Use File** (all potentially disclosive information removed). To be available for unrestricted download from EVS Data Archive after registration. Two or three, increasingly complete releases planned.
2. File as described above, plus more detailed demographic information (IDS+), as a **contracted Off-site Scientific-Use File**, or **On-site Scientific-Use File** to be accessed through the Secure Data Center at GESIS. Only the final release to be disseminated in this way.
3. Unprocessed national 'raw' data files for all EVS 2017 countries (ODS), with lower anonymization degree, for On-Site Scientific-Use at the Secure Data Center at GESIS.
4. Optionally, at the discretion of individual Program Directors, they may disseminate their respective national data files through their own channels, provided that this is not done before the official release of the IDS.
5. Anonymized contact and interviewer data shall be provided in an EVS 2017 para data file (PDS).
6. Longitudinal EVS files (across wave-cumulations) and integrations EVS-WVS will be prepared last, with lower priority and depending on capacity.

All international integrated data for open Off-Site use will be made available free of charge, for all non-commercial academic and research uses.



The EVS Group is the producer of the various integrated international data files resulting from the EVS 2017 survey. The Program Directors grant the EVS Group the right to include the national data sets and documentation into the international analysis files for public dissemination. They agree that all dissemination of the international data files is exclusively handled as agreed between EVS Group and EVS Data Archive.

The dissemination rights for national data files remain with the respective Program Directors, with the exemption of a non-exclusive dissemination right for the EVS Archive.

3. Anonymization

For EVS 2017, an explicit strategy will be employed to grant compliance with privacy protection regulations. This will require active participation of Program Directors, who will be responsible for meeting any national privacy protection regulations pertaining to their national data.

Cornerstones will be the use of explicit consent forms for respondents (and interviewers, for the production of para data), the ex ante-decision of demographic details to be included in openly available dataset versions, and the provision of protected analysis conditions for dataset versions with remaining disclosure risks (see above: Data Publication). Direct identifiers (names, addresses...) must never be transferred to the EVS Archive. Specific guidelines and templates for consent forms and anonymization steps are currently being drafted.

The main difference between public and restricted-access versions of integrated files will be in the degree of detail for a) regional identifiers, specifically NUTS3-codes to be reserved for restricted files, b) occupational titles, specifically ISCO being available in full resolution only in restricted files, c) possibly, coarsened municipality-size information.

4. Data Processing and Cleaning

Program Directors will be required to deposit both a 'raw' data file (as close to the direct result from the fieldwork as possible), a pre-processed data file, with lower anonymization degree, and the anonymization concept, adapted, if necessary, to national data protection requirements to the EVS archive. Guidelines and standardization templates will be provided in order to facilitate data cleaning, editing, and harmonization.

Some questions in the field questionnaire require country specific variables to be bridged into international standards or EVS coding frames. Information on classifications for harmonization of variables has to be supplied to EVS. Coding standards and coding frames will be provided by the EVS.

The EVS archive will check on national cleaning outcomes, conduct further harmonization where required, technically integrate all available national files into the international analysis files, and initiate ultimate quality checks.

5. Data and Methods Documentation

Any deposit of national data to the EVS Archive will need to be fully documented, i.e. documentation is regarded to be an integral part of the data deposit.



The current draft list (to be supplemented as required by Methodology Group):

Data files

- a. Original survey dataset (ODS) with the uncorrected raw data including all variables
- b. Modified survey dataset (MDS1) with the cleaned and edited data, SPSS syntax file, and data quality report documenting all data checks and modifications
- c. Contact data (cleaned and edited)
- d. Interviewer data (cleaned and edited)

Documents

- a. Field questionnaire(s) and show cards for all languages used
 - If CAPI: provide a listing of the CAPI-programme
 - If PAPI: provide a pdf-file (please use “embedded fonts”)
 - If ... [To be determined]
 - Field questionnaires in XML-format exported from a translation system [To be determined]
 - Comments/discussions on translations enabling tracking of question modifications [To be determined]
- b. Contact form
- c. Interviewer information form
- d. If there are deviations from the master questionnaire also provide
 - Translation of deviating question wordings
 - If CAPI: provide a listing of the CAPI-programme with deviations highlighted
 - If PAPI: provide a pdf-file with deviations highlighted
 - If ... [To be clarified]
- e. Methodological Questionnaire with appendices (education, income, political parties, ...)
- f. Mapping information for harmonized variables (education, occupation, region, income, political parties, ...)
- g. Interviewer and fieldwork instructions
- h. Final sampling design description including information needed for weighting
- i. Population statistics
- e. National anonymization concept (based on the common anonymization concept)