

GESIS Panel Wave Report

Report for GESIS Panel Special Survey on the Coronavirus SARS- CoV-2 Out-break in Germany

Related to ZA5664, ZA5665 and ZA5667
Wave hz (March 2020)

Version 37.0.0

Bernd Weiß, Ines Schaurer, Mirjan
Schulz, Kai Weyandt

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Content

Part I: About the GESIS Panel	1
1. General Overview	1
2. Data Collection Waves.....	1
2.1 Data Collection	1
2.2 Waves.....	2
3. Access to Data and Documentation.....	2
4. Bibliographic Citation and Notification of Publications.....	3
4.1 Bibliographic Citation	3
4.2 Notification of Publications	4
5. GESIS Panel Team	4
5.1 Core Team Members	4
5.2 Quality Assurance Board Members	4
6. Acknowledgements	5
Part II: GESIS Panel special survey on the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 outbreak, Wave hz (March 2020).....	6
1. Wave Preparation	6
1.1 Responsible GESIS Panel Team Members.....	6
1.2 Basic Information	6
1.3 Fielded Studies.....	6
1.4 Paradata	7
2. Fielding and Outcome Rates	7
2.1 Fielding Phase	7
2.2 Outcome Rates	7
3. Post-Processing	11
3.1 Data Cleaning and Quality Control.....	11
3.2 Handling of Ambiguous Cases in the Paper Questionnaire.....	11
3.3 Generated Variables.....	11
3.4 Variables not Available in the Standard Edition	12
Appendix.....	13
I. Documents.....	13
a. Invitation Email.....	13
b. First Email Reminder	14

e. Second Email Reminder	15
References	16

Part I: About the GESIS Panel

1. General Overview

The GESIS Panel provides a probability-based mixed-mode access panel infrastructure located at GESIS Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences in Mannheim, Germany. The project offers the social science community a unique opportunity to collect survey data with a random sample representative for the German population. Submitted study proposals are evaluated based on a scientific peer review process.

Panel members were initially recruited in 2013 in face-to-face interviews followed by a self-administered profile survey. Internet users could choose between an online and an offline mail mode. All participants of the profile survey are considered as members of the panel and invited to the regular waves every two months. The starting cohort encompassed 4888 panelists at the beginning of 2014 in wave ba.

In order to compensate for panel attrition, refreshment samples were drawn in 2016 and 2018, using the General Social Survey (ALLBUS) interview as vehicle. The initial 2013 cohort encompasses German speaking panelists aged between 18 and 70 years (at the time of recruitment) and permanently residing in Germany, whereas the second cohort includes panelists from the age of 18 without upper restriction. Design weights that enable the integration of two or multiple cohorts are provided in the data set. Further information on the design weights and their use can be found in the [GESIS Panel Data Manual](#). The recruitment cohort is indicated by the variable z000006a. For more details, please see the methods reports of the recruitment processes and the GESIS Panel reference paper (Bosnjak et al., 2017). A basic overview of the GESIS Panel can also be found on our [Cheatsheet](#).

2. Data Collection Waves

2.1 Data Collection

The data collection process employs two self-administered survey modes (online and offline). Data collection and panel maintenance is administered and organized by the GESIS Panel Team.

The GESIS Panel waves take place on a bi-monthly basis, each taking about 20 minutes. About two thirds of the panelists participate online (Web-based surveys), about one third of the panelists attend the surveys by mail.

Each survey wave consists of two major parts: About 15 minutes of survey time is reserved for the submitted studies. Fielded external studies have undergone a peer-review process. The second part of each survey wave (about five minutes of survey time) is reserved for GESIS Panel Longitudinal Core Studies developed by GESIS.

One aim of the Longitudinal Core Studies is to measure frequently demanded characteristics beyond demographics, such as personality and human values, political behavior and orientations, well-being and quality-of-life, environmental attitudes and behavior, and information/communication technology usage. Moreover, a second aim of

the GESIS Panel Longitudinal Core Studies is to assess and to control for data quality (i.e., different sources of survey errors) by measuring concepts such as survey participation evaluations, survey mode habits and preferences, and by including selected items from other benchmark surveys (e.g., German Microcensus, ESS, ALLBUS, ISSP).

Independently of the survey mode, all participants are invited by mail and receive an unconditional incentive of five Euros. The online version of the GESIS Panel questionnaires is implemented in the EFS Panel installation by Questback. In addition to the mail invitation, online participants receive an invitation and two reminders by email. The online data collection process is conducted by the GESIS Panel team. The field phase lasts about eight weeks.

Offline data are collected by a mail service provider. They send out all paper questionnaires one day before the start of the online field phase. No reminders are sent out in the offline mode. In-coming paper questionnaires are processed by the mail provider until one day before the start of the next wave's field phase. The paper questionnaires are handled by an external field institute. The field institute scans all questionnaires and processes the answers automatically. They use optical character/mark recognition (OCR/OMR) technology to read the checkboxes automatically. Free text fields are captured using intelligent character recognition (ICR) technology. The data is stored in csv format.

During the data control, at least 10 percent of the checkboxes and all open answers are checked manually by two employees of the external field institute for correctness.

2.2 Waves

The GESIS Panel multi-topic survey waves take place every two months, starting with wave ba in August 2013. Each wave includes four to nine different internal and external studies. The first three waves in 2013 (waves aa, ab, ac) were part of the initial recruitment phase and therefore only included a subsample of panelists. The first wave of the GESIS Panel with the full sample was wave ba in February 2014.

The regular field phase lasts until the beginning of the next wave for both modes.

In contrast to other waves, the field period of the online part (21.08.2013 - 14.10.2013) in wave aa differed from the field period of the mail part. Further, the field period for panelists who were invited in the mail mode in wave fe was partly extended due to a web-push-experiment (more information about the web-push-experiment can be found in [GESIS Panel Wave Report fe](#)).

3. Access to Data and Documentation

The scientific use file of the GESIS Panel is accessible for scientific purposes via the [GESIS Data Archive in Cologne](#). Along with the dataset, all documents are stored centrally in the data catalog. The wave documentation comprises the wave reports, the questionnaires and a codebook that documents all variables in the dataset. Additional documents that document the recruitment in 2013 and 2016 and further descriptions of the data are also available.

It is intended to publish an updated edition of the master dataset that includes new data from the last wave as well as revisions from previous waves every second month. The revisions of earlier data releases are documented in the [errata document](#) that is accessible in the study entry of the GESIS Panel GESIS Data Archive. In general, data will be accessible about two months after the end of the field period.

We provide two editions of this cumulative data set: a scientific use file accessible for research purposes (GESIS Panel Standard Edition: ZA5665) and a secure scientific use file that is only available for on-site use at the Secure Data Center in Cologne (GESIS Panel Extended Edition: ZA5664). To [access](#) the scientific use file, users have to sign a user contract. Upon approval of the data use request, the data archive will provide researchers with access to the current scientific use file via secure FTP-download.

The integration of the second cohort and the increase of waves made a reorganization of the data set necessary. Initially, the GESIS Panel data were provided as one incremental increasing data set that contained all respondents and all waves. With the integration of the second cohort in the data release of *wave ec*, the data set will be delivered separated by years and cohorts. For a comprehensive overview of the structure of the GESIS Panel data, please refer to GESIS Panel Data manual.

Following the terms and conditions of the GESIS data use agreement, GESIS Panel data cannot be shared on a public repository for reproducible research. Scientific use files of the GESIS Panel are available for research purposes from GESIS. To acquire a copy of the data set, researchers can fill out the [agreement](#).

4. Bibliographic Citation and Notification of Publications

4.1 Bibliographic Citation

Each new data release has its own DOI. Although each release may include changes to older waves, replicability is guaranteed since every variable remains in the dataset and new editions of variables are added as new variables. We ask users to always pay attention that they use the correct DOI of the dataset they used for publications.

Researchers are required to cite the dataset they use in publications with the correct ZA version number and DOI as follows.

German:

GESIS (2020): GESIS Panel Erweiterte Edition. GESIS Datenarchiv, Köln. ZA5664 Datenfile Version 37.0.0, doi: 10.4232/1.13572

GESIS (2020): GESIS Panel Standard Edition. GESIS Datenarchiv, Köln. ZA5665 Datenfile Version 37.0.0, doi: 10.4232/1.13573

English:

GESIS (2020): GESIS Panel Extended Edition. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5664 Datafile Version 37.0.0, doi: 10.4232/1.13572

GESIS (2020): GESIS Panel Standard Edition. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5665 Datafile Version 37.0.0, doi: 10.4232/1.13573

Additionally, please refer to the GESIS Panel reference paper in publications that are based on the GESIS Panel dataset:

Bosnjak, M., Dannwolf, T., Enderle, T., Schauer, I., Struminskaya, B., Tanner, A., & Weyandt K. W. (2017). Establishing an open probability-based mixed-mode panel of the general population in Germany: The GESIS Panel. *Social Science Computer Review*, 36(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439317697949>

4.2 Notification of Publications

To get an overview of the actual usage of our data, researchers using the GESIS Panel data in their publication are asked to send a notification including bibliographic information and the data set's DOI to info@gesis-panel.de. In accordance with our user contract, we ask researchers to provide us with an electronic or paper copy of their publications. Publications that use GESIS Panel data are included in the official GESIS Panel bibliography on our homepage.

5. GESIS Panel Team

5.1 Core Team Members

Table 1 provides an overview of the active members of the GESIS Panel project.

Table 1 Members of the Team GESIS Panel

Team Leader	Bernd Weiß
Survey Project Management	David Bretschi Isabella Minderop Mirjan Schulz
Survey Statistics and Data Quality Management	Jan-Philipp Kolb Ines Schaurer Kai Weyandt
Panel Management	Gabriele Wahlig
Software Adjustment and Maintenance	Kai Böge

5.2 Quality Assurance Board Members

The members of the GESIS Panel Scientific Quality Assurance Board are Prof. Dr. Jörg Blasius (University of Bonn), Prof. Dr. Annelies Blom (University of Mannheim), Dr. Mario Callegaro, Prof. Dr. Mick Couper (University of Michigan), Prof. Dr. Marcel Das (CentERdata and Tilburg University), Prof. Dr. Don Dillman (Washington State University), Prof Dr. Marek Fuchs (Technical University Darmstadt), Prof. Dr. Arie Kapteyn (University of Southern California),

Prof. Dr. Jon Krosnick (Stanford University), Prof. Dr. Peter Lynn (University of Essex), Prof. Dr. Norbert Schwarz (University of Southern California), Ass.-Prof. Dr. Bella Struminskaya (Utrecht University) and Ass.-Prof. Dr. Vera Toepoel (Utrecht University).

6. Acknowledgements

The GESIS Panel thanks the researchers submitting proposals to and fielding studies in the GESIS Panel. We are very grateful to the many anonymous reviewers that provide valuable feedback to the submitted studies.

Part II: GESIS Panel special survey on the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 outbreak, Wave hz (March 2020)

1. Wave Preparation

1.1 Responsible GESIS Panel Team Members

Survey project management:	Ines Schaurer & Mirjan Schulz
Data management:	Kai Weyandt
Data archiving:	Kai Weyandt
Panel management:	Gabriele Wahlig

1.2 Basic Information

The GESIS Panel special survey on the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 outbreak is a survey that was fielded in addition to the regular panel waves. Its aim was to collect timely data on various coronavirus-related topics. The survey was special compared to regular ways in various aspects. 1) Due to the necessity of timely data collection, only the GESIS Panel subsample of online respondents was invited. Thus, the data cannot be generalized on the German population. 2) The survey focused exclusively on the topic of the coronavirus outbreak in Germany. 3) It was announced as lasting 10 minutes, which is short compared to regular waves. 4) In contrast to regular survey waves, the participants were only invited by email and did not receive a (prepaid) incentive.

Overall, 3765 active panelists of the online sample were invited to participate in *the GESIS Panel special survey on the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 outbreak*.

1.3 Fielded Studies

The GESIS Panel special survey on the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 outbreak consisted exclusively of corona-related questions that are indicated as *study cy*. The study includes questions on respondents' risk perception, their measures to minimize their risk, evaluation of political measures and compliance, trust in politics and institutions, changed employment situation, childcare duties and media consumption.

For a detailed description of the study, please refer to the study description, the online and offline questionnaire documentation, and the codebook that can be accessed via the study entry in the [GESIS Data Archive](#).

1.4 Paradata

Paradata can be easily identified in the dataset by the third and fourth digit in the variable name. The letters “zr” indicate information on relative time stamps, collected by the online survey software, “zs” indicate client-side paradata, and “zp” are additional paradata collected by the online software. In general, more paradata are available for respondents of the online mode.

Relative time stamps (variables hzzr001a to hzzr019a) for each page are available. These time variables report the time difference in seconds between pressing the forward button of the respective page and the absolute time stamp. The absolute time stamp variable (hzzp207a) signifies the time in seconds which is past since 01.01.1970 when loading the first page of the survey.

The connected page id is mentioned in the label. The page id for each question can be found in the codebook or on the screenshots of the online questionnaire. For technical details about the logic of the provided time stamp variables please see the EFS manual.

Client-side based paradata were not collected in this survey.

For detailed information, please see the separate paradata documentation (ZA5664-65_Online-Paradata.pdf).

2. Fielding and Outcome Rates

2.1 Fielding Phase

The invitation was sent out by email on 17 March 2020. The fieldwork for *The GESIS Panel special survey on the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 outbreak* ended on 29 March 2020.

Overall, 3765 active members of the GESIS Panel online sample were invited, 2000 are members of the first recruitment cohort, 805 are members of the second recruitment cohort, and 960 members of the third cohort. The online participants who have not participated in the survey received two reminders on 20 March 2020 and 27 March 2020. The text of the invitation email and the email reminder can be found in the Appendix.

2.2 Outcome Rates

The response rates calculation for the recruitment process of the GESIS Panel are based on Final Disposition Codes for In-Person Household Surveys (American Association for Public Opinion Research, 2016) and are adapted for register-based samples in Germany.

The wave-specific response metrics are presented separately for the three recruitment cohorts.

GP2013 indicates the first cohort that was recruited in 2013, GP2016 indicates the second cohort that was recruited in 2016, and GP2018 the third cohort that was recruited in 2018.

The completion rate (COMR) is the proportion of those who completed or partially completed the survey over eligible panel members who were invited to the survey.

All active panel members are eligible for the wave. Active panel members are those who do not sign off from the panel. The eligibility for the wave surveys is defined as the returned profile questionnaire: all invited panelists who returned the profile questionnaire and did not sign off from the panel afterwards, were invited to the wave.

$$\text{Completion Rate COMR} = \frac{\text{Interview} + \text{Partial}}{\text{Interview} + \text{Partial} + \text{Refusal} + \text{Noncontact} + \text{Other}}$$

COMR Online	
GP2013	$(1680+2)/(1680+2+44+0+274) = 84.10\%$
GP2016	$(689+1)/(689+1+18+0+97) = 85.71\%$
GP2018	$(800+0)/(800+0+24+0+136) = 83.33\%$

The absorption rate indicates the quality of address lists of active panel members. This estimate is a proportion of non-contacts among the active panelists.

$$\text{Absorption Rate} = \frac{\text{Invitations Sent} - \text{Undeliverable Invitations}}{\text{Invitations Sent}}$$

Absorption Rate Online	
GP2013	$(2000-0)/2000 = 100.00\%$
GP2016	$(805-0)/805 = 100.00\%$
GP2018	$(960-0)/960 = 100.00\%$

The cumulative response rate 1 (CUMR1) is obtained by multiplication of the recruitment rate, profile rate, and the completion rate for each wave. For detailed information about the calculation of the recruitment rate and the profile rate see the recruitment reports of the respective cohorts.

$$\text{Cumulative Response Rate 1 (CUMR1)} = \text{RECR} \times \text{PROR} \times \text{COMR}$$

	CUMR1 Wave hz Online
GP2013	$0.2898 \times 0.7878 \times 0.8410 = 19.20\%$
GP2016	$0.2022 \times 0.8059 \times 0.8571 = 13.97\%$
GP2018	$0.1830 \times 0.7784 \times 0.8333 = 11.87\%$

The cumulative response rate 2 (CUMR2) takes the retention rate (RETR) into account, that is, the number of active panel members at the time of this wave out of all active panel members (i.e., the panelists who returned the profile survey). It is advisable to report this indicator when using the data from a single wave.

$$\text{Retention Rate} = \frac{\text{Overall Active Panel@Wave}}{\text{Overall Active Panel@Profile Survey}}$$

	Retention Rate Online
GP2013	$2000/3068 = 65.19\%$
GP2016	$805/1095 = 73.52\%$
GP2018	$960/1060 = 90.57\%$

Cumulative Response Rate 2 (CUMR2) = RECR × PROR × COMR × RETR

	CUMR2 Wave hz Online
GP2013	$0.2898 \times 0.7878 \times 0.8410 \times 0.6519 = 12.52\%$
GP2016	$0.2022 \times 0.8059 \times 0.8571 \times 0.7352 = 10.27\%$
GP2018	$0.1830 \times 0.7784 \times 0.8333 \times 0.9057 = 10.75\%$

The break-off rate is a proportion of those who answered less than 50% of the substantial questions over those who started the interview (answered at least one question).

$$\text{Break-Off rate} = \frac{\text{Break-Off}}{\text{Interview+Partial+Break-Off}}$$

	Break-off rate Online
GP2013	$8/(1680+2+8) = 0.47\%$
GP2016	$5/(689+1+5) = 0.72\%$
GP2018	$7/(800+0+7) = 0.87\%$

The attrition rate in this wave report is defined as the proportion of the panel members who drop out between the profile survey that was the first self-administered survey of the GESIS Panel and the current wave. According to the definition of the active panel (returned the questionnaire of the profile survey), the active panel after the profile survey was 4938 panel members. During the recruitment phase, 50 panel members have signed off from the panel.

Attrition can occur voluntarily and involuntarily (DiSogra and Callegaro, 2016). In the GESIS Panel, voluntary attrition is a result of panel members contacting the GESIS Panel and requesting to be removed from the panel. Cases in which inability to participate due to health reasons or death of a panel member were communicated to the GESIS Panel by other persons (such as panel members' relatives) were treated as voluntarily attrition and removed from the panel.

If panel members do not respond to three consecutive waves or cannot be reached for three consecutive waves, they are excluded from the GESIS Panel (involuntary attrition). Removal of panel members due to prolonged nonresponse or prolonged noncontact was done before wave bd for the first time and is done before each wave. The attrition rate reported below includes cases for which a request has been made to be removed as well as cases removed by the GESIS Panel.

$$\text{Attrition rate} = \frac{\text{Overall Active Panel@Welcome Survey} - \text{Overall Active Panel@Wave}}{\text{Overall Active Panel@Profile Survey}}$$

	Attrition rate Online
GP2013	$(3068-2000)/3068 = 34.81\%$
GP2016	$(1095-805)/1095 = 26.48\%$
GP2018	$(1095-960)/1060 = 9.43\%$

3. Post-Processing

In this section, we provide a brief overview of measures of data cleaning and quality control (see section 3.1) and peculiarities of the paper mode (section 3.2.). In section 3.3, variables that are generated in the process of data preparation are listed. Section 3.4 provides an overview of variables that are exclusively available in the Extended Edition of the data set.

3.1 Data Cleaning and Quality Control

During the data preparation process, the data undergo several steps of data preparation and validation. The recoding is in line with the GESIS Panel missing value scheme. The GESIS Panel disseminates the data in a quite raw format. This means the data are not validated with respect to previous statements of the respondents within the questionnaire (e.g., filter questions) or within data collection waves (e.g., differences in demographic variables). Usually, this becomes apparent in the offline mode, where respondents can ignore routing and fill in filtered questions anyway.

Due to data privacy, specific variables undergo an anonymization process and are either categorized (see 3.3) or are only accessible in the GESIS Panel Extended Edition (see 3.4). This is primarily the case for demographic variables but also relates to sensitive topics as well as spatial information.

The panel itself is subject to cleaning processes. Panelists are removed from the panel after three subsequent waves of non-response or non-contact.

3.2 Handling of Ambiguous Cases in the Paper Questionnaire

Not applicable

3.3 Generated Variables

Table 4 lists the variables that were generated in the process of data preparation. In *wave hz* four variables had to be generated due to privacy reasons. The text responses with comments about the questionnaire in variable *hzzq016a* are not published. Only a variable indicating whether the respondent left comments on the survey or not (*hzzq016a*) is published. Generated variables that are published in a later release of the data set are listed in the errata document that is accessible in the study entry of the [GESIS Panel in the GESIS Data Archive](#).

Table 2 Overview of Generated Variables in Wave hz

Variable	Variable Label
hzc017b	Getroffene Maßnahmen: Sonstiges, zusammengefasst aus o.A.
hzc082b	Kinderbetreuung: Sonstiges, zusammengefasst aus o.A.
hzc094b	Medienkonsum zu Corona: Sonstiges, zusammengefasst aus o.A., Mehrfachnennung
hzc094c	Medienkonsum zu Corona: Sonstiges, zusammengefasst aus o.A., Mehrfachnennung
hzzq016b	Comment, dichotomous

Note: English labels can be found in the codebook.

3.4 Variables not Available in the Standard Edition

In order to secure the anonymity of the panel members, not all variables are available in the standard edition as they were collected. Answers to open-ended questions, for instance, are not included in the Standard Edition. They are available in the Extended Edition. Table 3 gives an overview on the variables that are additionally available in the Extended Edition.

Table 3 Overview of Variables only Available in the Extended Edition

Variable	Variable Label
hzc017a	Getroffene Maßnahmen: Sonstiges - offen
hzc082a	Kinderbetreuung: Sonstiges - offen
hzc094a	Medienkonsum zu Corona: Sonstiges - offen

Note: English labels can be found in the codebook.

Appendix

I. Documents

a. Invitation Email

GESIS GesellschaftsMonitor: Sonderbefragung zum Coronavirus

Sehr geehrte Frau ...,

heute möchten wir Ihnen die Gelegenheit geben, an einer kurzen Befragung zum aktuellen Ausbruch des Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) teilzunehmen, das die Krankheit COVID-19 auslöst. Die Befragung wird höchstens 10 Minuten dauern. Über diesen Link kommen Sie direkt zur Umfrage:

<https://www.gesis-gesellschaftsmonitor.de/...>

Da es sich um eine Sonderbefragung handelt, können wir Ihnen nicht wie gewohnt ein finanzielles Dankeschön zukommen lassen. Für Ihre Teilnahme möchten wir uns mit einem ersten Ergebnisbericht bedanken, den wir Ihnen wenige Wochen nach dieser Befragung per E-Mail zuschicken werden. Die Befragung ist wie immer freiwillig und es entstehen Ihnen keine Nachteile, wenn Sie nicht teilnehmen. Über Ihre Teilnahme bis einschließlich Sonntag, den 29. März, würden wir uns sehr freuen!

Herzlichen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme am GESIS GesellschaftsMonitor.

Bei Rückfragen erreichen Sie uns per E-Mail an info@gesis-gesellschaftsmonitor.de. Wir freuen uns über Ihr Interesse und beantworten gerne alle Fragen.

Mit herzlichen Grüßen aus Mannheim,

Ihr GESIS GesellschaftsMonitor Team

Hinweis zum Datenschutz:

In keinem Fall werden Daten weitergegeben, die Ihre Person erkennen lassen. Niemand kann aus den Auswertungen der Daten Rückschlüsse darauf ziehen, von welcher Person die Angaben gemacht worden sind. Weitere Informationen zum Datenschutz finden Sie hier:

https://www.gesis-gesellschaftsmonitor.de/privacy_policy.php

b. First Email Reminder

Erinnerung: Sonderbefragung zum Coronavirus

Sehr geehrte Frau ...,

wir haben Sie Anfang dieser Woche zur Teilnahme an unserer Sonderbefragung zum Coronavirus eingeladen und würden uns sehr freuen, wenn auch Sie teilnehmen.

Über den folgenden Link können Sie direkt teilnehmen:

<https://www.gesis-gesellschaftsmonitor.de/...>

Da es sich um eine Sonderbefragung handelt, können wir Ihnen nicht wie gewohnt ein finanzielles Dankeschön zukommen lassen. Für Ihre Teilnahme möchten wir uns mit einem ersten Ergebnisbericht bedanken, den wir Ihnen wenige Wochen nach dieser Befragung per E-Mail zuschicken werden.

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https://www.gesis-gesellschaftsmonitor.de/privacy_policy.php

e. Second Email Reminder

Erinnerung: Sonderbefragung zum Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2)

Sehr geehrte Frau ...,

noch bis Sonntag haben Sie die Möglichkeit an unserer Sonderbefragung zum Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) teilzunehmen:

<https://www.gesis-gesellschaftsmonitor.de/...>

Über Ihre Teilnahme würden wir uns sehr freuen!

Da es sich um eine Sonderbefragung handelt, können wir Ihnen nicht wie gewohnt ein finanzielles Dankeschön zukommen lassen. Für Ihre Teilnahme möchten wir uns mit einem ersten Ergebnisbericht bedanken, den wir Ihnen wenige Wochen nach dieser Befragung per E-Mail zuschicken werden.

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Bleiben Sie gesund!

Mit herzlichen Grüßen aus Mannheim,
Ihr GESIS GesellschaftsMonitor Team

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https://www.gesis-gesellschaftsmonitor.de/privacy_policy.php

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GESIS Panel Wave Report

GESIS – Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften
Survey Design and Methodology
GESIS Panel
Postfach 12 21 55
68072 Mannheim
E-Mail: gesis-panel@gesis.org
www.gesis.org/gesis-panel