

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON BUSINESS DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

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QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR THE 4TH EUROPEAN COMPANY SURVEY

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Abstract

The European Company Survey

The [European Company Survey \(ECS\)](#) is a questionnaire-based survey among a stratified, random sample of establishments in Europe. The results of the ECS are published and disseminated widely. Traditionally, an overview report is produced, as well as secondary analyses focussing on themes of research and policy interest.

The survey has been carried out every four years since 2004 by the [Eurofound](#) and the fourth edition, which is currently in the preparation stage, is being commissioned jointly with the [European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training \(Cedefop\)](#), and will go to the field in early 2019. The target population for the ECS are establishments with 10 or more employees in all economic sectors (except NACE Rev. 2 categories A, O, P, Q, T and U) in the EU Member States and some candidate countries. Within the establishment the survey targets the most senior manager in charge of personnel and, where present, an official employee representative.

The [ECS 2019](#) will look at workplace practices in terms of work organisation, human resources management, skills strategies, digitalisation, employee participation and social dialogue. In a change from previous editions, which were administered by telephone, the ECS 2019 will use a push-to-web approach and will be the first large-scale, cross-national survey to apply such a method. Over 25,000 establishments across all EU Member States will be contacted via telephone to identify a management respondent, and, where possible, an employee representative respondent after which respondents will be asked to fill out the survey questionnaire online. This approach reduces the burden on respondents and is expected to improve the quality of responses. It is intended that moving the questionnaire administration fully online shall make the ECS well and truly future-proof.

Quality assurance, transparency and quality control

Considering its impact at EU, international and national levels, Eurofound has a strong commitment to quality assurance and improvement. It is important that data collected are sound, robust and of the highest quality and that information on data quality is made available

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to stakeholders and the research community. For the preparation and implementation of the ECS 2019, information will be gathered to assess it against a quality assurance framework based on the quality concept of the European Statistical System as developed by Eurostat¹, as well as other quality frameworks such as the Cross-Cultural Survey Guidelines² and the Total Survey Error Approach³. This information will be published in a report along with an external quality assessment report which will document the quality of the ECS 2019. Detailed methodological information will also be made to the public.

Sophia MacGoris will present the ECS 2019 with a focus on the approach to quality assurance and quality control. Feedback from participants on the presentation is encouraged.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/64157/4392716/ESS-QAF-V1-2final.pdf/bbf5970c-1adf-46c8-afc3-58ce177a0646>

² <http://ccsg.isr.umich.edu/index.php/chapters/survey-quality-chapter>

³ Cf. Herbert F. Weisberg (2005). *The Total Error Approach. A Guide to the New Science of Survey Research*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.