

Quality Assurance for the European Company Survey 2019 (ECS 2019)

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Eurofound and Cedefop



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training



Eurofound

The two agencies

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions



Both tripartite agencies established in 1975 carrying out comparative socio-economic research

- Budget of ca. € 21m
- Ca. 100 people in Dublin and 3 in Brussels
- Areas of expertise: Working Conditions, Living Conditions, Industrial Relations and Collective Bargaining, Structural Change and Restructuring

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training



- Budget of ca. € 13m
- Ca. 90 people in Thessaloniki and 2 in Brussels
- Areas of expertise: Vocational Education, Lifelong Learning, Understanding Qualifications, Policy Analysis

European Company Surveys

Background and focus



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training



 Eurofound

European Company Survey

- Survey of HR managers and employee representatives in European establishments
 - Most senior person in charge of human resources in the establishment (MM)
 - Official employee representative (works council/trade union) (ER)
- Three editions so far and one in progress:
 - 2004/5: working time and work-life balance
 - 2009: flexibility practices and social dialogue
 - 2013: work organisation, human resource management, direct employee participation and social dialogue
 - 2019: (*in cooperation with Cedefop*), topics similar to 2013 but with more detail on skills utilisation, skills strategies and digitalisation. Issues will be linked to business strategy and performance

4th ECS Survey design



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Survey design

- Probability-based samples of establishments with at least 10 employees, carrying out market activities
- All EU Member States plus ME, MK, RS and TR
- Sample sizes range from 250 in Malta to 1,500 in Germany
- Push-to-web approach
 - Establishments contacted by telephone
 - Identifying both MM and ER respondent
 - Request to administer questionnaire online
- MM questionnaire in all establishments (ca. 120 items, 20 – 25 min.), ER questionnaire (ca. 90 items, 15 min.) in establishment where an ER is present and willing to participate.
- State-of-the-art procedures with regard to questionnaire translation, contact strategy, quality assurance, and quality monitoring.

Eurofound's Approach to Quality Assurance for Surveys (1)

- Alignment with the European Statistical System: relevance & timeliness, accuracy, accessibility, coherence
- Following Cross-Cultural Survey Guidelines
- Applying the Total Survey Error approach: coverage, sampling, non-response and measurement error
- Closely monitoring and comprehensively documenting the survey production process

European Statistical System Quality Criteria

- **Relevance & Timeliness**
 - relevance for users of the survey data reports, in terms of substance and timing of publication.
- **Accuracy**
 - validity and reliability of the survey data.
- **Accessibility**
 - Availability of outputs and transparency of processes.
- **Coherence & Comparability**
 - Consistency with other data sources
- **Punctuality**
 - adherence to the timeline as set at the start of the project.

European Statistical System quality criteria applied to all survey stages

		Relevance	Accuracy	Accessibility	Coherence & Comparability	Timeliness & Punctuality
Planning & Design						
Sampling & Weighting	Sampling					
	Weighting					
Questionnaire	Questionnaire					
	Translation					
Pre-Fieldwork	Fieldwork infrastructure					
	Scripting					
	Training of fieldwork managers and interviewers					
Fieldwork	Fieldwork organisation					
	Fieldwork monitoring and data validation					
Post-Fieldwork	Data processing					
	Micro data					
Analyses & Dissemination						

Survey stages (1)

- *Planning & Design*
 - Three sub-stages: survey planning, survey design, and procurement.
 - Carried out by Eurofound with the help of external experts and stakeholders
 - QA depends on fixing the survey mandate, and comprehensive documentation of all discussions and decisions
- *Sampling & Weighting*
 - Sampling and weighting are both related to the coverage of the population and are important for the validity of survey measurement
 - QA of sampling covers the extent to which all elements of the target population are covered
 - QA of weighting covers the extent to which weights are available for all data entries.
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Survey stages (2)

- Questionnaire
 - Includes questionnaire development and translation
 - Carried out by Eurofound with the help of external experts and stakeholders
 - QA for development covers the documentation of content details, time-line and roles of actors involved
 - QA for translation covers the connection between survey goals and survey measurement and the procedures that ensure a balance between coherence and linguistic and cultural appropriateness
- Pre-Fieldwork
 - Last stage in which quality measures can be taken without interfering with fieldwork
 - Includes data entry process, consistency checks, interviewer training, fieldwork manager training, fieldwork infrastructure

Survey stages (3)

- Fieldwork & Data
 - Data collection is conducted by the contractor
 - Monitoring quality indicators in real time enables Eurofound to take appropriate measures when necessary
- Post-Fieldwork
 - Includes data processing, coding and checking, resulting in a final micro data set, containing the questionnaire data, coded data, weights and paradata
- Analysis & Dissemination
 - The final stage concerns the analysis and dissemination of the survey data, which Eurofound carries or contracts out.

Quality assurance framework

Developed by Eurofound in 2013 and based on the quality concept of the European Statistical System, the Cross-Cultural Survey Guidelines and the Total Survey Error Approach.

3 elements:

- **Quality assurance:** planned procedures and activities to ensure that the survey meets quality requirements
- **Quality control:** planned system of process monitoring, verification and analysis of indicators of quality, and updates to quality assurance procedures, to ensure that quality assurance works
- **Quality indicators:** list of measurable indicators on the basis of which the quality of the survey processes and output will be monitored and assessed

Quality indicators and the Quality Assurance Plan (QAP)

Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) includes quality indicators which covers all aspects of the survey from beginning to end. Targets are set for both contractor and EF.

1. List of quality indicators provided to tenderers outlining
 - targets that **have to be** achieved (red)
 - targets that **are aimed to be** achieved
2. Tenderer confirms/proposes benchmark targets for non-red ones
3. EF and contractor agree benchmarks for non-red targets.
4. Indicators to be integrated into all aspects of the survey
4. Quality indicators file updated monthly by contractor
5. Final quality indicator list produced by contractor at end of project

We aim for a high quality ECS ...

QAP – Source Questionnaire

- Questionnaires are developed based on experts' and stakeholders' input

E&C	Questionnaire has been consulted with Eurofound and Cedefop's stakeholders	Y	Documentation of steering group meetings
E&C	Percentage of questionnaire items in the final source questionnaire that meet international methodological standards of question design (such as outlined in Saris & Gallhofer (2007))	100%	Documentation of expert consultation

- Advance translation and cognitive testing

E&C	Comprehensive documentation of the process of advance translation	Y	Documentation of advance translation (advance translation report)
E&C	Advance translation delivered to Ipsos at agreed date (date to be inserted here by client when agreed with client)	Y	Email from client sending results of advance translation to Ipsos
CT	A strategy for cognitive testing is agreed that that reflects current academic standards, as illustrated by academic references included in a document outlining the strategy for cognitive testing	Y	Cognitive test strategy
E&C	Number of questions for which 'major' issues are detected that are kept	0	Cognitive test report
CT	Cognitive test results delivered at the agreed date	Y	Email to client delivering cognitive test report

We aim for a high quality ECS ...

QAP - Translation

- State of the art translation process: translatability assessment, team translation methodology (TRAPD - Translation, Review, Adjudication, Pre-testing and Documentation)

CT	Percentage of translators and adjudicators that take part in translator training	100%	Attendance lists
CT	Translation materials (e.g. translator instructions, and translator and adjudicator training materials) are constructed using input from the cognitive test and advance translation and are provided to the translators	Y	Translation report (re input and provision) / Translation instructions and training materials, training sessions (re provision to translators)
E&C	<i>Translation materials are made publicly available.</i>	Y	<i>Availability on Eurofound website</i>
CT	Percentage of languages for which translation or adaptation follows the agreed process	100%	Translation report
CT	Percentage of languages, out of those for which translation is required, for which systematic documentation in English is provided about the process and results of adjudication	100%	Translation documentation
CT	Percentage of cross-national review sessions, in which adjudicators from each of the countries sharing the particular language participate	100%	Attendance lists
CT	Percentage of final translated questionnaire items that required editing (e.g. correcting typo's, copying and pasting errors, etc.)	<5%	Translation documentation

We aim for a high quality ECS ...

QAP – Sampling

- Detailed sampling plans are drawn up in close collaboration between EF/CF and the contractor; 12 out of 28 EU countries are using establishment registers

CT	A common sampling strategy is agreed that reflects current academic standards, as illustrated by academic references included in the sampling strategy document	Y	Sampling strategy
CT	Final sampling strategy delivered to client at the agreed date	Y	Email to client submitting final sampling strategy
CT	Percentage of countries where a sampling frame on the establishment level is used	43%	Sampling strategy
E&C	<i>Sampling plans approved by client at agreed date</i>	Y	<i>Email(s) from client approving final country-level sampling plans</i>

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QAP – Training

- Face to face seminar with national fieldwork partners

CT	Percentage of local project leaders/country coordinators attending the fieldwork manager instruction meeting	100 %	List of participants
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- Training of interviewers

CT	Interviewer training materials are comprehensive, fully covering the process for respondent selection and recruitment as well as for questionnaire administration.	Y	Interviewer training materials
CT	Interviewer training materials are translated into the working languages of all the country teams	Y	Interviewer training materials
CT	Percentage of interviewers that are trained before they participate in fieldwork	100 %	Attendance lists; email confirming the fact to client
CT	Percentage of staff in charge of online administration of interviews that are trained before they participate in fieldwork	100 %	Attendance lists; email confirmation to client

We aim for a high quality ECS ...

QAP – Fieldwork monitoring, training

- Weekly teleconferences with contractor (and more if necessary)
- Close fieldwork monitoring in place by contractor and followed by EF/CF; 10% of screener calls checked; detailed weekly reports to be provided

CT	An explicit, comprehensive and discriminative interviewer monitoring strategy is outlined	Y	Fieldwork strategy
CT	Percentage of countries where at least 10% of successful screening interviews are monitored	100%	Technical report; Weekly reporting; Contact data
CT	Percentage of countries where at least 10% of follow-up calls for CAWI completion are monitored	100%	Technical report; Weekly reporting; Contact data
CT	Percentage of countries covered in weekly monitoring data (in accordance with template)	100%	Weekly reporting
CT	Number of times that the weekly monitoring data for the preceding week is not delivered on Tuesday by the end of business, without prior agreement	0	Emails to client delivering weekly reports
E&C	<i>Number of times that the quantitative indicators in the weekly monitoring data and the progress and projections (of end date) are not checked by the following Thursday by the end of business, without prior agreement</i>	0	<i>Emails responding to weekly reports</i>
CT	Results from the data validation approach are integrated in the weekly fieldwork reports	Y	Weekly reporting

We aim for a high quality ECS...

- Data protection and ethics strategy in place for contractor, national partners and interviewers
- Extra efforts for high response (e.g. using best interviewers, targeted timing of calls, email and telephone follow-up, *customised report* offered to respondents)
- Independent quality assessment review to be commissioned following completion of the survey

Thank you for your attention!

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