Conducting the European Values Study in self-administered mixed-mode design: Insights from Germany

Tobias Gummer
@tobgummer

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Why self-administered mixed-modes?
F2F: Decreasing Response Rates


ALLBUS 2018: 32.3%
F2F: Increasing Survey Costs

How?
European Values Study 2017/2018

- EVS Methodology group sanctioned self-administered mixed-modes (mail, web) that
  - complemented a sample of face-to-face interviews
  - also used a probability-based sample
  - Participating countries in mixed-mode test:
    - Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, and Switzerland
    - for a detailed report see Luijkx et al. (2021)

- EVS Germany:
  - Comparison between face-to-face and self-administered mixed-mode
  - Evaluation of different design options for self-administered mixed-mode surveys:
    - incentive strategy
    - mode choice sequence
    - survey length
Design I

- Probability-based register sample was **randomly assigned** to different modes of data collection

European Values Study (EVS) gross sample

**Randomization**

- **Face-to-Face**
  (Full Length)
  *Interviews = 1,494*
  length ~60min

- **Self-administered Mixed-Mode**
  (Matrix Design)
  *Interviews = 3,274*
  length ~40min

- **Self-administered Mixed-Mode**
  (Full Length)
  *Interviews = 688*
  length ~60min
Design II

Randomization of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aged 18-59 years</th>
<th>Aged 60+ years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact mode: sequential (web-push) vs. simultaneous</td>
<td>Incentive: 5€ prepaid vs. 10€ postpaid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1: sequential prepaid</td>
<td>Group 5: simultaneous prepaid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group 2: sequential postpaid</td>
<td>Group 6: simultaneous postpaid</td>
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<td>Group 3: simultaneous prepaid</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Group 4: simultaneous postpaid</td>
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Evaluation

Evaluate experimental groups: response rate & sample balance & costs

Phase 2

Remaining sample surveyed with "best" design: simultaneous & prepaid
Selected Insights
Fieldwork Period

## Response Rate

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<tr>
<th>Survey design</th>
<th>Total costs</th>
<th>Share of web respondents</th>
<th>Response rate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>ref</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed-mode full survey (5€ prepaid, concurrent)</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
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<td>35.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed-mode matrix (5€ prepaid, sequential)**</td>
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Notes: Ref=reference category. Face-to-face incentives are described in section “Mixed-mode experiments in the European Values Study”. *Respondents aged 60 or older also receive a concurrent mode choice. All costs in percent, relative to the reference category. *Estimates are based on survey experiments implemented in phase one of the responsive mixed-mode matrix survey.

Share of web respondents

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## Costs

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Comparison between surveys

132 EVS items, rescaled to [0, 1], comparison between face-to-face survey and self-administered mixed-mode design (long, short)

Conclusion
Lessons learned (for Germany)

- More rapid data collection in self-administered modes compared to face-to-face
  - shorter field periods
- Cost savings are possible but
  - might be lower as expected and will vary between designs
  - hidden costs for transition from current mode to self-administered / mixed-mode need to be considered
- Mail mode will be used, if offered
  - implications for costs
  - questionnaire design (routing)
References


Thank you!

Tobias Gummer
GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences | Family Surveys
tobias.gummer@gesis.org
@tobgummer