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The four-year project (2015-19) is a collaboration between the three leading European Research Infrastructures in the social sciences – the European Social Survey (ESS ERIC), the Survey for Health Aging and Retirement in Europe (SHARE ERIC) and the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA AS) – and organisations representing the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP), European Values Study (EVS) and the WageIndicator Survey.

Work focuses on three key areas: Addressing key challenges for cross-national data collection, breaking down barriers between social science infrastructures and embracing the future of the social sciences.

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D7.1 Summary of existing web panel strategies

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Introduction

The goal of this document is to summarise panel recruitment and maintenance strategies as well as lessons learned from selected existing probability-based web panels in Europe and the USA and to outline feasible strategies for the CRONOS (CROss-National Online Survey) panel to be fielded as part of the SERISS (Synergies for Europe's Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences) project.

Only general population, probability-based web panels were considered for this summary report. In total, seven general population probability-based web panels were selected to represent established projects with available documentation of applied panel recruitment and maintenance strategies: LISS (Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social sciences, The Netherlands)¹, GIP (German Internet Panel, Germany)², GESIS Panel (Germany)³, ELIPSS (Étude Longitudinale par Internet Pour les Sciences Sociales, France)⁴, NCP (Norwegian Citizen Panel, Norway)⁵, ATP (American Trends Panel, USA)⁶ and FFRISP (Face-to-Face Recruited Internet Survey Platform, USA)⁷.

Although CRONOS can greatly benefit from the evidence gathered by the mentioned panels (especially in terms of web panel recruitment and maintenance strategies), it should be kept in mind when outlining feasible strategies for CRONOS that none of them is a cross-national panel, and strategies that may work well in a single-country setting may not be appropriate for a cross-national project. Until now, there are no existing cross-national probability-based web panels and the main empirical evidence we are relying on is gained from 'one-country' projects.

A further challenge for CRONOS is the circumstance that the participants will be recruited on the back of the ESS (European Social Survey) after an almost one hour-long interview.

¹ www.lissdata.nl

² http://reforms.uni-mannheim.de/internet_panel/home/

³ <http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data-collection/gesis-panel/>

⁴ <http://quanti.dime-shs.sciences-po.fr/en/>

⁵ <http://www.uib.no/en/citizen>

⁶ <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/american-trends-panel/>

⁷ No website, project finished (2008-2009)

Although all of the selected web panels used a different mode for online panel recruitment (face-to-face, telephone or mail) than the internet, only the ATP panel was recruited on the back of an existing telephone survey while all the other panels recruited a sample selected solely for the panel recruitment.

A short overview of selected probability-based web panels

The **LISS** (Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social sciences) panel was established in 2007 in the Netherlands and is led by CentERdata at Tilburg University. Refreshment samples followed in 2009, 2011 and 2013. It is a large household panel (ca. 5,000 households/8,000 persons). The national population register is used as the sample frame. An advance letter with a project brochure is sent to a household but addressed to a person selected from the population register with €10 unconditional incentive. After that, the households are recruited via telephone (if phone number is available) or face-to-face recruitment interviews. All household members older than 16 are invited to participate in the panel, but only one household member is selected to provide the household data and to update it regularly. All original household members are followed when a household splits up and new members entering an existing household or household members who become age eligible are asked to join the panel. It is a monthly survey with an average duration of 30 minutes. Offline households willing to participate are provided with an internet connection and devices.

The **GIP** (German Internet Panel) panel was established in 2012 at the University of Mannheim. A refreshment sample followed in 2014. An area-based probability sample with separate listing of households was used as the applied sampling frame (Blom et al. 2015). It is a panel of individuals (ca. 4,300 persons) but all the eligible household members are invited to join the panel. Contrary to the LISS panel, only those persons who were part of sample at the time of recruitment are followed. New household members or children reaching eligible age after original recruitment are not asked to join the panel. Advance letters with a project leaflet and either €5 unconditional incentive or promising €10 conditional incentive after completion of the face-to-face recruitment interview are used for the panellists' recruitment. Surveys are conducted at a two months interval and each wave takes on average 20-25 minutes. Offline households willing to participate are provided with an internet connection and devices.

The **GESIS Panel** is led by GESIS – Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences. The current sample of approximately 4,900 individuals was recruited in 2013-2014 using the German municipal population registers. An advance letter including a project leaflet and €5 unconditional incentive was followed by a face-to-face recruitment interview. The GESIS Panel is a mixed-mode panel with

about 35% of panellist choosing mail mode for data collection. The survey is run every two months and takes on average 20-25 minutes.

The **ELIPSS** (Étude Longitudinale par Internet Pour les Sciences Sociales) is led by Science Po. A large-scale pilot study (ca. 1,000 panellists) was recruited in 2012. The main sample was recruited in 2016 extending the sample to approximately 3,500 panellists. The list of housing units from the rotating census is used to draw a sample, whereby one randomly selected household member is invited to join the panel. Recruitment in the pilot was performed using an advance letter with a project leaflet and an invitation letter with €10 unconditional incentive for half of the sample, followed by telephone or face-to-face interviews. As the pilot recruitment efficiency proved to be highest via face-to-face, recruitment for the main study is based on personal visits by professional interviewers. Aiming for maximum measurement equivalence and single stimulus for all respondents, all panel members are provided with the same tablet and 3G internet connection. Interviews are conducted through a special ELIPSS app installed on each tablet, thus eliminating differences in the online display of questions across different types of computer systems.

The **NCP** (Norwegian Citizen Panel) is a collaboration between several institutes at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Bergen and University Rökkansenteret. It started in 2013 (with a refreshment sample in 2014) and 4 rounds have been conducted by April 2015. It consists of about 10,000 panel members. The sample was drawn from the Norwegian National Population Registry. The selected individuals received a mail letter with project information and log-in details for the survey. The offline population was excluded from the panel. However, there are a high internet penetration in Norway and a very small number of individuals without internet access.

The **ATP** (American Trends Panel) has been run by Pew Research Centre since 2014. The survey was conducted monthly in 2014 and every 2-3 months since 2015. It takes on average 15-20 minutes. Panel members (N=5,338) were recruited via RDD (landline and mobile random digital dial) telephone recruitment on the back of Pew's Political Polarisation and Typology survey. They were invited to join the web panel after the telephone interview. In total, 54% of telephone interview respondents agreed to join the web panel. Offline panellists (about 11%) are offered mail or telephone modes of data collection. The ATP is a bilingual (English & Spanish) panel.

The **FFRISP** (Face-to-Face Recruited Internet Survey Panel) was a web panel project run in 2008-2009 by researchers at Stanford University and Abt SRBI. Respondents were recruited using a multi-stage procedure based on address lists via face-to-face recruitment interviews over a period of 5 months. All potential panellists were offered a laptop (worth \$500) or \$200 cash upfront and \$25 per complete survey (if they did not need or want a laptop) as well as high-speed internet. Surveys were administered monthly for a period of 12 months with duration of about 25-30

minutes. After the termination of the project in September 2009, FFRISP panellists were offered to join the American Life Panel (ALP) on the same conditions: 457 (out of 1,000) panellists agreed.

The **CRONOS** (Cross-National Online Survey) panel is an attempt to run the first cross-national probability-based web panel. It will be fielded in three countries: UK, Slovenia, and Estonia. This project is part of Synergies for Europe’s Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences (SERISS), and is led by the European Social Survey (ESS ERIC). The CRONOS panel will be recruited between September 2016 and January 2017, when respondents to the face-to-face ESS interview will be invited to complete additional surveys online. The first wave is scheduled to be fielded in February 2017. There will be 6 waves in total over a period of 12 months (approximately every two months), and each survey will take about 20 minutes to complete. In addition to the 6 waves, panellists recruited between September and November 2016 will be also asked to complete a shorter Welcome survey in December 2016. ESS respondents who do not have access to the internet will be offered a tablet and mobile internet connection.

Target population

Age eligibility

The target population in all panels in this review are residents of the country where the panel is fielded. The ATP is, however, restricted to respondents of Pew’s Political Polarisation and Typology telephone survey. The panels differ with regard to age eligibility as summarised in the following table:

Table 1: Age eligibility in online panels

	LISS	GIP	GESIS	ELIPSS	NCP	ATP	FFRISP
Age eligibility	16+	16-75	18-70	18-75	18-95	18+	18+

Source: Blom et al. (2015) for LISS, GIP, GESIS & ELIPSS; NSD for NCP; website for ATP; Villar et al. (2010) for FFRISP.

The CRONOS panel will be recruited after ESS face-to-face interviews. The target population of the main ESS is residents of participating countries aged 15 or older (see <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/methodology/sampling.html>). However, when surveying 15 year old individuals, parental consent is requested. Testing parental consent to complete online surveys and the possible implications of providing an internet device to minors are not key goals for this feasibility exercise, especially when the number of ESS participants per country in this age category is quite low per round. For this reason, undertaking the extra administrative burden and ethical requirements to make participation of 15-year olds possible was not considered a priority.

We decided that 15 to 17 year-old ESS respondents would not be invited to participate in CRONOS.

The CRONOS target population is therefore defined as 'residents of the UK, Estonia and Slovenia over 18 years old'. ESS respondents are used as a sampling frame for recruitment of panellists.

Offline population

All panels except the NCP (due to very high internet penetration in Norway) include the offline population in their sample either by providing them with an internet connection and devices, or by using a mail (GESIS), or mail and telephone modes (ATP). The LISS, the GIP and the ELIPSS include 7-10% of panel members who were previously offline. The proportion of the population offline in these countries was, however, typically twice as high at the time of panel recruitment (Blom et al. 2015). Thus, the number of respondents without internet access for personal use who agree to participate in web panels is still relatively low (Revilla et al. 2015). However, as shown by the analyses conducted using data from the LISS (Eckman 2015), the GIP (Blom et al. 2015b) and the ELIPSS (Revilla et al. 2015), their inclusion can still contribute to the better representativeness of the panel.

While the ELIPSS provides every respondent with the same tablet and an internet connection (FFRISP used a similar strategy) which is regarded as an incentive for the panel participation, the LISS and the GIP only provide offline respondents/households with devices and internet connection. In both cases, the offline population is asked to participate online and becomes a 'previously offline' part of the sample. Apart from the need for the contracts for the devices and internet, providing appropriate training to previously offline or technophobe respondents and convincing them to use this technology is a potential challenge of this strategy. It also requires a supporting hotline for panel members experiencing technical problems. The ELIPSS currently hires three fulltime staff members for this task. Volume of calls increases with the age of devices and related technical issues. The LISS is subcontracting two freelance IT specialists who visit households with technical problems across the Netherlands. In terms of financial resources, due to lacking documentation, it is not clear which of the models is most efficient.

Different strategies of providing computer equipment and internet connection to panel members have different and complex cost implications. The ELIPSS's approach of providing a tablet and internet connection to all panel members – rather than just offline respondents – seems to be an expensive enterprise at first glance. However, if we consider that no further incentives are paid and less effort is required for invitations and reminders as they are done via an app developed

especially for the ELIPSS, the differences in the overall invested costs are probably less marked. The GESIS Panel uses a different strategy and tries to cover the offline population using the mail mode. About 35% of all GESIS Panel respondents (also some that have internet access) prefer this mode, which leads to very high project costs as mentioned by Michael Bosnjak (GESIS Panel PI) at the CRONOS Advisory Board meeting in February 2016. The costs further increase because invitations with the unconditional incentives and the reminders are sent via mail to all panellists (including online panellists) for every wave. Apart from that, two questionnaire versions need to be produced and printing and mailing of paper questionnaires is relatively expensive.

The CRONOS panel will follow the strategy applied by the LISS and the GIP by providing offline respondents willing to join the panel with tablets and an internet connection. Tablets will be set up by National Coordinator (NC) teams in advance by removing unnecessary applications and simplifying the user interface as much as feasible. A dedicated email account will be set up for each panel member receiving the tablet to enable delivery of survey invitations by email. Professional interviewers (UK) and research staff (Slovenia and Estonia) trained for this task will visit panellists who need internet access at their homes shortly before the start of the first wave to instruct them how to use the technology, open email invitations and fill in the survey. Offline respondents will be asked to complete a short welcome survey (about 10 minutes) in the presence of the interviewer as a practice exercise to make sure that there is someone to guide them in case they have technical or other questions. National Coordinators teams in the participating countries will prepare contracts for devices and internet provision in their languages and will offer free hotline support for panel members on specified days of the week (or specified hours).

Recruitment

All the reviewed panels used 'offline' modes to recruit the panel. As long as a considerable proportion of the population remains offline, online recruitment could be subject to coverage error, given that those individuals would have zero probability of being part of the population. Even in countries where internet coverage rates are high, the lack of 'online' sampling frames make offline recruitment necessary to obtain probabilistic samples of the general population. Future technological and societal developments may create conditions where online recruitment (for example via email or social networks) is possible, but the current situation calls for offline recruitment.

In most panels, a pre-notification letter was sent to the selected sample units with information about the panel and, sometimes, a small unconditional incentive. Panels that conducted recruitment incentives experiments (e.g., GIP – €5 unconditional vs. €10 promised for joining; ELIPSS – €10 unconditional vs. no incentive) show that incentives significantly increase

the chance of participation in the panel (see Blom et al. 2015). At the same time the experiments in the LISS panel show that the response rate increases with the increasing amount of incentives but only up to the level of €10 and incentives above the €10 level don't significantly increase participation rates beyond those at the €10 level (Scherpenzeel & Toepoel 2012).

After the initial contact of the potential panel members via mail, face-to-face or telephone interview, panels used different channels for re-approaching them. Modes of first contact and consequent contacts vary across panels reflecting cross-national differences in survey climate (Blom et al. 2015). The recruitment rates also vary across panels and depend on various factors (e.g., contact modes, incentives, survey climate in a given country, whether it is a new recruitment or recruitment among respondents of an already existing survey, etc.). The following table is an overview of recruitment rates:

Table 2. Recruitment rates at panel registration

LISS (Household)	GIP	GESIS	ELIPSS (Pilot)	FFRISP	NCP (Round 1)
48.3%	18.1%	25.1%	27.3%	41%	20%*
(AAPOR RR3)	(AAPOR RR4)	(AAPOR RR3)	(AAPOR RR5)	(AAPOR RR4)	

Source: Blom et al. (2015) for LISS, GIP, GESIS & ELIPSS; NSD for NCP; Villar et al. (2010) for FFRISP.

Note: *NCP - Percentage of respondents who registered as panel members by providing their emails from a random sample of 25,000 individuals invited by mail excluding ineligible.

ATP is not included in the table due to missing information on exact gross sample number.

CRONOS panellists will be recruited at the end of the ESS face-to-face interview. They will not be offered any additional incentives for joining the online panel or providing their contact details. They will be informed by the interviewers that they will receive £5 in the UK and €5 in Slovenia and Estonia with every survey invitation. Respondents will also be provided with a leaflet summarising conditions of their participation in the panel and information on how their data will be used. This will also serve as informed consent for panel participation. Respondents that were unsure at the end of the ESS interview whether they would like to join the CRONOS panel or needed more time to think about it will receive survey invitations if they provided their contact details. If they do not participate in the first two waves, they will not be contacted further.

Panel maintenance

Participation incentives

The panels use various strategies to guarantee stable panel maintenance. Participation incentives are used to encourage survey completion among the panellists. Most panels offer conditional or unconditional (GESIS Panel) monetary incentives, with the exceptions of ELIPSS and the NCP. The former uses internet and tablet provision as the only incentive without additional participation incentives, while the latter only offers the respondents participation in a lottery draw where they can win a travel gift card worth 25,000 NOK (€2,600) if they complete the survey.

The LISS is paying €15 per hour of interview via a bank transfer quarter-yearly. The 'sleepers' (members who have not participated for 3 or more consecutive months) are offered an additional conditional incentive of €10 if they participate again. The GIP pays €4 per completed interview plus a yearly bonus for regular participation - €10 (all waves) or 5€ (all but one wave). The incentives are paid half-yearly via bank transfer, Amazon voucher or charitable donation. The GESIS Panel sends all panellists (both those who complete online and offline) a €5 unconditional cash incentive by postal mail for each wave. The ATP generally pays \$5 per completed survey and \$10 for the hard-to-reach groups (Hispanics and 18-25 year olds). The FFRISP was paying \$5 per completed survey to the respondents who were provided with laptops and internet connection and \$25 per survey to the respondents who preferred cash equivalent over the laptop.

Retention rates in the first year are highly similar across the four European panels (LISS, GIP, GESIS, ELIPSS) and are above 90%. The NCP, however, documented more steeply declining participation rates: only 73.5% of Round 1 respondents participated in Round 2 and over 4 rounds of the survey the participation dropped to 60%. This can possibly be partly attributed to an 'unattractive' lottery incentive.

In the case of the CRONOS panel it will not be possible to send out pre-notification advance letters informing individuals about the panel before the interviewer contacts sampled units and they carry out the ESS survey interview. The ESS standard protocols need to be preserved, and the overall comparability of the standard ESS across time should not be compromised by the addition of the web panel component. Advance letters informing about the ESS face-to-face interviews are normally sent out to the selected addresses but they should not mention the CRONOS panel in order to prevent a possible effect on the participation rate in the main ESS. Therefore, it is also problematic to implement the unconditional recruitment incentive for the CRONOS panel recruitment.

After the ESS face-to-face interview, respondents will be informed by the interviewer about the CRONOS panel and interviewers will hand over a project leaflet with all essential information to the respondents. The respondents will be invited to join the panel by the interviewer directly. We

should bear in mind that the respondents will be invited to join the panel after a one hour interview on relatively difficult topics (welfare and climate change). The respondents should be given an opportunity to join the panel even if they first decide against it but change their mind after the interviewer leaves. A project leaflet with contact details and key information (length, frequency, incentives, data protection etc.) handed over by interviewers after the ESS interview could be helpful for this matter. Further, the 'unsure' respondents will be offered the opportunity to provide their emails to receive an invitation to the survey with an option to ignore it if they decide that they do not want to participate. Given a relatively large gap between the start of recruitment (September 2016) and the start of the web survey (February 2017), we intend to send a shorter 'welcome wave' (about 10 minutes) in December 2016 to the early recruited panellists to keep them engaged.

The CRONOS panel offers £5 per survey in the UK and €5 per survey in Estonia and Slovenia. Although there is evidence from empirical studies (e.g. Birnholtz et al. 2004, Millar and Dillman 2011, van Veen et al. 2016) that prepaid cash incentives are more effective than prepaid vouchers, prepaid cash incentives are associated with higher costs as they need to be sent via post. An additional advantage of vouchers is that providers often only charge for the vouchers that are redeemed. Given additional required resources for mailing cash incentives and limited resources for the CRONOS pilot, prepaid vouchers were considered as an acceptable alternative for unconditional incentives. To raise the attractiveness of vouchers, the providers were selected according to their appeal and familiarity among different age groups of the general population as well as the ease of redeeming the voucher (wide range of products and possibilities of redeeming the voucher in different geographical areas of the country).

High-street vouchers will be mailed with the pre-notifications to the panellists in the UK. An incentives experiment will be implemented in the UK whereby 50% of the panellists will receive £30 incentive for all six upcoming surveys upfront with the mailed pre-notification for Wave 1, and the other 50% of the sample will receive £5 with mailed pre-notifications for each of the six upcoming survey waves. Estonia will use €5 vouchers for a large supermarket chain with each new survey invitation sent either via email for online panellists and via post for panellists receiving a tablet. Slovenia will also use vouchers for a large supermarket chain but they will be sent via mail directly from the supermarket chain to all respondents. The minimum amount for voucher purchase of that supermarket chain is €7. Therefore, Slovenian panellists will receive their unconditional incentives for two waves at the same time (€10 for participation in two surveys).

Invitations and reminders

All panels send email invitations for each wave to their online members including previously offline respondents. The ELIPSS sends additional message through the ELIPSS app. GESIS Panel online members get a mail invitation including the €5 unconditional incentive in addition to the email including the individual survey link. The ATP sends out postcards informing the panellists about the email containing the survey link.

All panels attempt to increase survey participation by sending reminders (usually two) to non-respondents. Modes of reminders, however, vary across the panels. The LISS and the GIP send two email reminders and panel members who have not participated for at least two consecutive waves receive a phone call asking about reasons for not participating. The ELIPSS sends two reminders via messages on the ELIPSS app, email or text message. GESIS Panel members receive two mail reminders. The FFRISP sent three email reminders and if there was no reaction by the respondent, a letter and phone calls followed. The NCP sends the first reminder by email and the second reminder via SMS. The NCP, introduced SMS text messages as a new mode for the second invitation reminder in Round 3 (refreshment recruitment) which resulted in an additional increase of the recruitment rate by 3.7%. A wider range of contacting channels might be effective in reaching different sub-groups (e.g. specific age groups prefer certain contacting modes to others).

The CRONOS will send invitations via emails with an individual survey link followed by two email reminders. Mailed pre-notifications will be used in the UK (each wave) and Slovenia (every two waves) to deliver incentives and to inform the panellists about the upcoming survey. Panellists provided with a tablet will receive a mailed pre-notification in all three countries.

Possible contact strategy experiments (e.g. effect of offline pre-notifications and reminders on response rate and retention) are currently being considered.

Communication with the panellists

Communication and engagement with the panellists can be important for panel maintenance. All the panels offer a telephone and email helpline for the respondents. Some of the panels also send birthday or season's greeting cards to the panellists. Newsletters or presentations of findings on the project's website are used to inform the respondents about the results. Most panels offer a feedback possibility at the end of the questionnaire.

The CRONOS panel will offer its respondents a telephone and email hotline. The National Coordinator teams will be responsible for the communication with the respondents in their

countries. The National Coordinator teams will add information about the CRONOS panel to their institutions' websites.

There will be no feedback option in the form of an open question at the end of the questionnaire in the CRONOS panel. Experience from other web panels show that this text field is sometimes used by respondents for communication purposes with the project team (e.g., to inform them that they did not receive an incentive or that they do not want to participate in the panel anymore). CRONOS will be fielded in four different languages and text fields will need to be extracted from the database and sent to the National Coordinator teams asking for their translation. It would be more time efficient if the respondents send their feedback directly to the National Coordinator teams. Respondents can be reminded at the end of the questionnaire that their feedback is welcome and can be sent via email with provided contact details. Further, there will be several standardised questions at the end of each survey asking respondents to evaluate their survey completion experience, which can be used by the research team as feedback about the survey.

Mobile completion

With the recent increased spread of smartphones, the proportion of web surveys completed on them has been rapidly growing. Programming of certain types of questions (e.g., horizontal scales or batteries of questions) is still challenging for smartphones. The GESIS Panel study by Struminskaya et al. (2015) shows that completion on smartphones is associated with lower data quality in terms of measurement and non-response error that cannot be attributed to the respondent characteristics but rather to device effects. The NCP introduced a smartphone questionnaire version in Round 3 (2014). Although they are routed away from certain elements in the questionnaire that demanded larger screens, mobile users are still more likely to leave the questionnaire before completion. Of all survey respondents in the NCP Round 3 and 4 that opened the questionnaire, 13% used a smartphone but 27% of them did not complete the questionnaire, and only 17% of those answered enough questions to be included in the dataset. Only 8% of panellists using other devices did not complete the questionnaire.

Smartphone completion varies across panels, ranging between 0% in the ELIPSS (as panellists can only complete the survey on the ELIPSS tablet) to 26% in the ATP (Wave 9, November-December 2014). Smartphone completion is lower in both German panels (6% in the GIP in 2013 and 8% in the GESIS Panel in 2015) and in the LISS (11% in 2013) than in Norway and the USA, but the available numbers are outdated (except the GESIS Panel) and the actual current proportion might be higher.

Given the increasing use of smartphones for various online tasks, the CRONOS Panel will be designed to allow survey completion on smartphones. This will include smartphone friendly

visual design of the response categories and flexible adaptation for various operational systems and screen sizes.

Conclusion

The goal of this overview was to summarise panel recruitment and maintenance strategies from various established probability based web panels in Europe and the USA and to outline feasible strategies for the CRONOS panel. Based on the review of best practices of seven selected probability-based panels, the following strategies were developed for the CRONOS panel:

- Inclusion of the offline population by providing tablet computers and mobile internet connection
- Setting up a helpline for panellists
- Providing CRONOS recruitment training for the ESS interviewers
- Providing panellists with project leaflets containing all relevant information
- Length of the survey of approximately 20 minutes
- Surveys conducted every two months
- Unconditional incentives of £5/€5 with every survey invitation
- Smartphone-friendly visual design

All of the seven reviewed probability-based web panels are 'one-country' projects, while CRONOS is a cross-national web panel. Simultaneous fielding in three countries is associated with additional challenges that are not addressed by other existing probability-based web panels. Among such challenges are, for example, setting up and administering a central panel database and survey software, defining data access rights for various roles in participating countries, getting panellists' consent for their personal data to be transferred abroad for the purposes of panel administration, different country-specific regulations regarding incentives, providing participating countries with tablets as well as producing and programming frequent surveys in several languages. Being the first attempt to implement a probability-based online panel in several countries, CRONOS is a pilot project aiming at analysing feasibility and challenges of cross-national implementation. The evidence gained from this feasibility study will be made publicly available to the wider research and survey methodology community and can be used to inform decisions about the implementation of future cross-national online panels.

CRONOS Project Management – Responsibilities:

Questionnaire development (ESS HQ/City)

Questionnaire translation (NCs)

Questionnaire programming (NSD)

Questionnaire testing (ESS HQ/City & NCs)

Data protocol (CentERdata)

Management & maintenance of panel members (NCs, NSD & ESS HQ/City)

Telephone and email hotline (NCs)

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