Introducing an electronic Fieldwork Management System in the European Social Survey

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Overview

• The problem: Monitoring decentralised fieldwork cross-nationally
• The solution: Fieldwork Management System (x 2)
• Experience in ESS Round 9
• Next steps
The problem

• ESS involves survey data collection in 30+ countries

• Careful monitoring during fieldwork is important
  – Achieve target number of interviews
  – Minimise error (e.g. unit non-response) whilst data collection still in progress
  – Ensure adherence to ESS standards and cross-country comparability

• But not straightforward
  – Data collection is decentralized and involves multiple stakeholders operating in different national contexts
  – Lack of real time information. Contact Form dataset available only at end of fieldwork
The solution

• Introduce new electronic Fieldwork Management System to:
  – Provide timely monitoring data during fieldwork
  – Standardise fieldwork monitoring across countries
  – Streamline communication between stakeholders
The solution

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  - Provide timely monitoring data during fieldwork
  - Standardise fieldwork monitoring across countries
  - Streamline communication between stakeholders

With thanks to:

Centerdata: Iggy van der Wielen, Lennard Kuijten
ESS: Niccolo Ghirelli, Yvette Prestage, Elena Sommer, Sally Widdop
Roberto Briceno Rojas
FMS (1) – CASE/SAMPLE CTRL

Uploaded data shared via the central Fieldwork Management System (FMS) – SURVEY CTRL
- Web-based
- Accessible to National Teams and Central Team

Based on SHARE’s existing Sample Management System (SD-SMS)

Contact data from mobile app (CASE CTRL)

Data transmitted to/from a local case management system (SAMPLE CTRL)
FMS app (CASE CTRL)

Case 101561

Result of the visit:

- 1 Completed interview
- 2 Partial interview
- 3 Contact with someone, don’t know if target respondent
- 4 Contact with target respondent, but NO interview
- 5 Contact with somebody other than target respondent
- 6 No contact at all
- 7 Address is not valid (unoccupied, demolished, institutional)
- 8 Other information about sample unit

Back Next

Back to case

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 654221.
### Central case management system (SAMPLE CTRL)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case ID</th>
<th>Interlocutor ID</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Last outcome</th>
<th>Contest attempts</th>
<th>Date last contact</th>
<th>Appointment date</th>
<th>Unavailable until</th>
<th>Refusal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>South west, England</td>
<td>Complained interview</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>05-09-2017 01:00</td>
<td>Appoint 01:00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>South east, England</td>
<td>Appointment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>06-09-2017 01:00</td>
<td>Appoint 01:00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>South east, England</td>
<td>No contact at all</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>07-09-2017 01:00</td>
<td>Appoint 01:00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>South east, England</td>
<td>Address is not valid</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>08-09-2017 01:00</td>
<td>Appoint 01:00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implementation challenges

Scoping study with ESS fieldwork agencies and NCs (2016)

• **Cross-national variation:** Sample frames, IT infrastructure, in-house systems, survey culture, legal framework

• **Data security:** Transfer of personal data to a central server accessible by third party

• **Technology:** Availability of mobile devices, lack of local IT support, interviewers reluctant to adopt new technology?

• **Agency resistance:** have own in-house systems, loss of autonomy, perceived lack of trust
FMS (2) – Upload portal

Contact data from agency in-house systems

Agency uploads case level data using a pre-defined template

Uploaded data shared via the central Fieldwork Management System (FMS) – SURVEY CTRL
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Contact data from mobile app (CASE CTRL)

Data transmitted to/from a local case management system (SAMPLE CTRL)

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Common set of summary reports across countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome batch 1</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases in field</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No contact attempted yet</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A.1) completed interview</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A.2) partial interview</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B.1) (new) appointment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B.2) refusal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B.3) refusal by proxy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B.4) household refusal (before selection)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Contact</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No contact at address after 4+ contact attempts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No contact at address (&lt; 4 contact attempts)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B.5) R unavailable/not at home until…</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B.6) Mentally/physically unable/ill/sick (short term)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B.7) Mentally/physically unable/ill/sick (long term)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of interviews achieved cumulative/projections

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## Comparing different approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ESS Rounds 1-8</th>
<th>FMS Upload Portal</th>
<th>CASE CTRL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of aggregation</strong></td>
<td>Country–level</td>
<td>Country-level</td>
<td>Country-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Regional, by interviewer)</td>
<td>Case-level</td>
<td>Case-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interviewer-level</td>
<td>Contact-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Interviewer-level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(by gender, age)</td>
<td>Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(by gender, age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeliness</strong></td>
<td>Fortnightly/Weekly</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistency in data collection</strong></td>
<td>(Standardised) contact form</td>
<td>(Standardised) contact form</td>
<td>Shared contact form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PAPI/CAPI</td>
<td>PAPI/CAPI</td>
<td>Common data collection App</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistency in reporting</strong></td>
<td>Nationally generated word/excel file</td>
<td>Centrally generated online reports</td>
<td>Centrally generated online reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility</strong></td>
<td>Updates via email from national teams</td>
<td>Manual upload to shared portal</td>
<td>Automatic data sync</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FMS in ESS Round 9

- **FMS APP (CASE CTRL)** in use in five countries (SE, NO, DK, RS, SK)

- **UPLOAD PORTAL** in use in remaining countries – 20 and counting
Portal implementation

- Some countries had initial problems with formatting of upload files

- Once fieldwork underway (nearly) all countries able to make weekly uploads as required
  - Uploads being made regularly i.e. on same, pre-agreed day each week
  - Data files are generally complete and records up to date
  - Christmas break caused a few issues

- Highlights importance of CAPI Contact Forms and regular transmission of all info back to fieldwork agency
FMS benefits for central fieldwork monitoring

- For most countries, FMS provides more detail than previously e.g. full breakdown of different outcome codes, numbers of contact attempts, regional comparisons etc.

- Charts and tables in SURVEY CTRL – and central calculation of response rates etc. – provide easy way to compare performance across countries/over time

- More information on interviewer capacity than previously

- Move to standardised monitoring has prompted valuable discussion about definitions e.g. what constitutes a contact attempt, use of “other” outcome code

- Stimulated joined-up discussions with NC team and fieldwork agency

- Access to case-level records make additional analysis possible
Further improvements possible

• Summary reports in SURVEY CTRL may benefit from including additional indicators, especially at start of fieldwork
  - e.g. Calculating response rate for “cases with at least 1 contact attempt” vs. full sample

• Possible to further streamline feedback loop between stakeholders
  - e.g. with use of “notes” field in upload portal

• Further work to be done exploring full analytic potential of case-level data.
  - Set up automatic flags for potentially problematic countries, cases, interviewers
Conclusions

• Use of electronic centralized fieldwork management system can assist central monitoring by providing data which is more comprehensive, timely, consistent and accessible

• More than one approach to providing a central fieldwork management system
  - Possible to accommodate cross-national variation

• FMS is just the beginning
  - Stakeholder communication
  - Effective use of data
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