Deliverable Number:  D7.6
Deliverable Title: Costs of web panel recruitment and maintenance
Work Package: WP7 A survey future online

Deliverable type: Report
Dissemination status: Public

Submitted by: ESS ERIC
Authors: Elissa Sibley (HQ/City) and Elena Sommer (SHARE ERIC)
Date Submitted: 30 August 2019

Acknowledgements

With thanks to colleagues from the CRONOS team at ESS ERIC HQ (City) and SHARE, the National Coordinating teams of Estonia, Slovenia and the UK, and at the Norwegian Centre for Data Research (NSD), for their contributions to this deliverable: Rory Fitzgerald (ESS HQ), Gianmaria Bottoni (ESS HQ) and Curtis Jessop (ESS HQ); Mare Ainsaar and Indrek Soidla (University of Tartu); Slavko Kurdija, Tina Vovk and May Doušak (University of Ljubljana); Alun Humphries (NatCen); and, Knut Kalgraff Skjåk and Bodil Agasøster (NSD).

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 654221.
SERISS (Synergies for Europe's Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences) aims to exploit synergies, foster collaboration and develop shared standards between Europe’s social science infrastructures in order to better equip these infrastructures to play a major role in addressing Europe’s grand societal challenges and ensure that European policymaking is built on a solid base of the highest-quality socio-economic evidence.

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 of Health Ageing 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.

Please cite this deliverable as: Sibley, E. and Sommer, E. (2019). Costs of web panel recruitment and maintenance. Deliverable 7.6 of the SERISS project funded under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme GA No: 654221. Available at: www.seriss.eu/resources/deliverables
0. Executive summary

This deliverable describes the costs incurred during CRONOS (CROss-National Online Panel) – the world’s first cross-national, input-harmonised, probability-based web panel. We examine the costs from three main perspectives: (a) we discuss the distribution of costs for one of the participating countries, (b) we calculate the cost per interview minute (CPIM) for CRONOS and compare this with the CPIM for the parent survey (Round 8 of the European Social Survey), and (c) we estimate the equivalent CPIM ratio for a potential second iteration of CRONOS (CRONOS 2) for lower/medium-wealth and higher-wealth countries. The focus is on a panel recruited as a follow-up to a high quality, probability-based face-to-face survey and the conclusions would not immediately apply to a panel recruited directly.

We also discuss the features of CRONOS that may not present a favourable enough cost/benefit ratio (primarily where the cost of including particular subgroups of the population may have been disproportionately high compared to the value added in terms of the achieved sample), and we consider where recent developments in online survey tools (since the start of the SERISS project) may improve the cost-efficiency of future cross-national, input-harmonised, probability-based online panels.
1. Introduction

The CROIoss-National Online Survey (CRONOS) is a cross-national, input-harmonised, probability-based web panel that recruited panel members from participants in Round 8 of its parent survey, the European Social Survey (ESS). With three participating countries – Estonia, Slovenia and Great Britain – CRONOS investigated the feasibility of implementing such a web panel as a complement to an existing cross-national, face-to-face survey recruited using probability sampling methods.

During its first year, the costs of a web panel are not expected to be substantially lower than the costs associated with a face-to-face survey. This is due to the relatively high cost of setting up an infrastructure for cross-national web data collection (specifically the online panel management system and the online survey data collection tool). However, over time a web panel should see increasing cost-effectiveness as the initial set-up costs are diluted across more waves.

This deliverable is aimed towards survey practitioners and academic teams who may be considering developing a web panel on the back of an established face-to-face, probability-based survey in Europe. However, it is worth bearing in mind that CRONOS was set in a cross-national context, and other studies may have different experiences. Our aim is to provide information and reflections on the tasks and costs associated with a CRONOS-style panel, which may be a helpful resource to others when developing their own surveys. It should be noted that we do not consider costs that were borne by the parent survey (for example, the costs associated with sampling or the face-to-face ESS interviewing costs). In addition, in estimating the monetary costs of CRONOS, we consider only the costs that were borne by each participating country; we do not put a monetary value on the central costs (although we do describe the effort required, in person months).

We first describe the costs associated with setting up and implementing a CRONOS-style web panel. We then give an estimation of the distribution of costs for one of the participating countries, estimate the average cost per interview minute (CPIM) for CRONOS and compare this to the CPIM for the parent survey, and estimate the equivalent CPIM ratio for a potential second iteration of CRONOS (CRONOS 2). Finally, we reflect on the features of CRONOS that could potentially be improved in order to optimise costs in future.

2. The costs associated with a CRONOS-style web panel

In costing a CRONOS-style web panel, it should be borne in mind that while some costs are fixed, others will vary depending on factors such as the number of participating countries, panel sample size, and questionnaire length/complexity. Examples of fixed costs are things that will be approximately the same irrespective of the scale of the study, such as: designing the panel recruitment and maintenance strategy; setting up the central panel administration system; preparing interviewer training and generic helpline guidelines; and, designing and

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1 The information in this section has been compiled from several sources: the list of CRONOS tasks, compiled by Ana Villar and Elena Sommer (see Appendix 1); the CRONOS 2 estimates, prepared by Ana Villar (see Appendix 2); Villar et al. (2018c); the CRONOS webpages (www.europeansocialsurvey.org/cronos); and, the CRONOS pages (WP7) on https://seriss.eu.
programming the questionnaires and setting up experiments. Variable costs include: fieldwork monitoring; liaising with national teams; interviewer and respondent incentives; postal communication with respondents; provision for offliners (eligible sample members who do not have access to the internet for private use); testing the surveys; responding to translation queries; and, data processing and archiving.

Below, we outline the costs that were incurred at the preparation stage (before panellist recruitment began), and at the implementation stage (from panellist recruitment onwards). While some of the costs for CRONOS were covered by the central budget, others were covered by the budgets allocated to national teams (see Appendix 1 for the full list of central and country costs).²

2.1 Preparation stage

2.1.1 Liaison, training and meetings

In the preparation stage, liaison between the central team and National Coordinating (NC) teams, questionnaire design teams, data management team and experts in quality control is important to ensure materials and decision-making are, as far as possible, optimised for all participating countries. In CRONOS, this involved: liaison with NC teams regarding the plans for incentives, offline contacts with panellists, helpline set-up, interviewer training, translation of surveys and respondent materials, and scheduling of panellist communications; liaison with expert colleagues regarding the monitoring and evaluation of quality standards (for question design, panel maintenance strategies, sample composition and panellist behaviour; ESS ERIC, 2019); liaison with the questionnaire design teams of surveys that contributed items to the CRONOS questionnaires; and, liaison with the data management team regarding ethics, data protocols, database management, tool selection, questionnaire programming, etc.³

Training was provided to NC teams for programming their translated items into the web survey tool and testing their questionnaire. In addition, they received a generic interviewer manual that covered the recruitment procedures for the local interviewer training. Colleagues working centrally and in national teams attended training to prepare datasets for database management and trial the data deposit process, which helped to identify any issues with the format of the submitted variables.

Meetings with the CRONOS Advisory Board provided essential advice and support throughout the project. These activities were coordinated centrally.

2.1.2 Documents

During the preparation stage the CRONOS central team, in consultation with the national teams and partner organisations, developed a series of protocol documents. Some of these

² While the central and national teams held separate budgets, all costs were covered by the grant awarded for CRONOS under the SERISS project.
³ Some communications and activities were facilitated by the online project management platform Basecamp and the ESS Intranet (for depositing data) – resources were also spent on the set-up and management of these tools.
related to the more administrative preparations for the panel (such as the contracts for national teams, specification and terms of reference, the ethics form and the data handling agreement) and setting up the survey itself (for example, specifications for the database system for panel administration\(^4\) and the web survey tool\(^5\), and outlining the experiments that would be conducted during CRONOS). Other documents were more interviewer- or participant-facing: the participant consent form and participant information leaflet, the CRONOS interviewer manual and recruitment interview, and panellist communications – the wave pre-notifications, invitations and reminders (email, postal and SMS), and a ‘thank you’ note; the generic survey questionnaires (source questionnaires for translation by national teams); and, helpline guidelines for NCs with standardised solutions for how to deal with various panellist queries and concerns as well as how to update respondents’ contact information in the sample management system.

In addition, due to the provision of tablets to offliners, the central team prepared instructions for setting up email accounts and setting up tablets in a user-friendly way for panellists with little or no internet experience. They also prepared a manual to guide interviewers on how to approach device delivery, a manual to guide panellists in using the device, and a device receipt and agreement form.

Documents were distributed to NC teams for feedback and, once finalised, sent to NC teams for translation (Villar et al., 2018c). NC teams were also responsible for the printing and distribution of materials that were to be provided in hardcopy during recruitment. The fieldwork protocol documents are available in SERISS deliverable D7.4 (Villar & Sommer, 2016).

2.1.3 Set-up of the technical infrastructure

In addition to the specifications for the database system for panel administration, and the specifications for the web survey platform, in setting up the technical infrastructure the central team undertook the following tasks: evaluation of web survey tool providers, selection of the web survey tool provider, adjustment of the tool to the needs of CRONOS, and setting up the panel sample administration system.\(^6\)

2.1.4 National website for the panel

Prior to implementing the panel, each NC team set up a section on their institutional website to provide a general overview of the study, as well as contact details for their country’s panellists to use in the event of queries.

\(^4\) For information about the CRONOS sample management system, see SERISS deliverable D7.9 (Finnøy et al., 2017).

\(^5\) For information about the specification for the web survey platform, see SERISS deliverable D7.10 (Sommer et al., 2017).

\(^6\) The cost of the Questback license was funded from a different budget.
2.1.5 Incentives

The central team conducted a literature review during the preparation stage, to evaluate the evidence relating to the use of conditional vs. unconditional incentives and the effectiveness of incentives of different values. NC teams were heavily involved in sourcing incentive scheme providers and setting up systems to facilitate incentive delivery.

2.1.6 Provision for offliners

Panellists who did not have internet access for private use were offered a tablet computer and provided with an internet connection for 12 months if they agreed to join the panel (Villar et al., 2018c). These participants received training in how to use their tablet, and how to open and respond to the survey invitations. They were also given a leaflet containing this same information, and contact details for the helpline. In Great Britain and Slovenia, offliners were provided with email accounts for the receipt of messages containing hyperlinks to the surveys. Tablet recipients in Estonia received survey invitations by post, with a shortened URL and instructions for how to access the survey (Villar et al. 2018c).

In preparation for the recruitment of offliners, the central team developed training materials and sourced tablets. Potential internet service providers were evaluated, selected and contracted locally by NC teams.

2.1.7 Participant helpline

Each NC team was responsible for setting up a helpline for participants to contact in the event that they had a query. NC teams provided helpline staff with training and the relevant documents to ensure they would be able to respond to any questions.

2.1.8 Designing the experiments

Many experiments were conducted during CRONOS, including testing the effectiveness of an alternative incentive strategy in Great Britain, and in all three countries testing different contact modes and differently framed motivational messages. Many other methodological experiments were embedded within the design of the questionnaires, to test: different translation approaches, adjustments to item wording, question order effects, alternative response scales, the order of responses for binary and agree/disagree scale items, the inclusion of a ‘no opinion’ response option, and an acquiescence experiment.7 During the preparation stage, in addition to writing an outline detailing the experiments, literature reviews were conducted by the central team to investigate the evidence relating to motivational messages, contact modes and (as mentioned above) incentives.

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7 Details of all experiments can be found in Villar, Sommer, Berzelak & Bottoni (2018a), with further information in Villar, Sommer & Finney (2018b) and the CRONOS Codebooks (available at www.europeansocialsurvey.org/cronos).
2.1.9 Recruitment and sample management

During the preparation stage, NC teams set up procedures for sample management and upload. The central team researched potential ways to contact panellists who did not give an email address. Onliners who did not give an email address at recruitment were sent postal invitations with a shortened URL for the survey. In their questionnaires, these panellists were asked for an email address in order to remain in the panel. Onliners who had not provided an email address by Wave 3 were not contacted again by the CRONOS team.

2.1.10 Budget management

Budget management was carried out by the central team. This included reviewing, revising and approving draft budgets that had been submitted by the NC teams and project partners.

2.2 Implementation stage

Tasks conducted during the implementation phase of the CRONOS web panel related to either recruiting panel members or developing and supporting the different waves of the survey. Responsibility for the different activities was again split between the central team and the national teams.

2.2.1 Recruitment

The face-to-face Round 8 ESS interview was used as the recruitment interview for the CRONOS web panel, with eligible respondents (aged 18 years and above, resident in Estonia, Slovenia or Great Britain) invited to join the panel at the end of the ESS interview (see SERISS deliverable D7.4 for more details; Villar & Sommer, 2016). The costs discussed in Section 3 include the time that was added at the end of the ESS interview for questions related to panel recruitment.

During the implementation phase, the central team: participated in the interviewer training in Great Britain; monitored recruitment; corresponded with country teams regarding the upload of recruitment data (this liaison was handled by the data management team); and, selected and purchased tablet computers. National teams: helped to design the recruitment leaflet and arrange printing, etc.; provided specific training on recruitment as part of the main ESS briefing; provided supervision and support to interviewers; monitored recruitment; uploaded the recruitment data on a weekly basis; organised telephone workshops with all interviewers part-way through the fieldwork period, to discuss recruitment progress and to share tips/best practices; organised internet provision for offlineers; provided separate training for the interviewers who would be delivering tablets; and, set up and delivered the tablets.

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8 Estonia and Slovenia sent summary reports to the central team, whereas in Great Britain representatives of the central team participated directly in the interviewers’ telephone debriefings.
2.2.2 Wave-related work

The CRONOS questionnaires mainly fielded items from existing surveys, such as the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), European Social Survey (ESS), European Values Study (EVS), Generations and Gender Programme (GGP), International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) and World Values Survey (WVS). This meant that questionnaire development costs were lower than if new items had been used. However, the questionnaires were used to test new items for Round 9 of the ESS and, as mentioned above, implemented a wide range of methodological experiments (for information about the source of the items in each wave see Villar, Sommer & Finnøy, 2018b).

For each wave of the CRONOS web survey, the central team: designed the questionnaire; responded to translation queries; programmed the source questionnaire into the web panel platform (in consultation with programming experts); tested the source questionnaire; monitored participation; and, ensured harmonised data protocol and data processing (e.g. variable and value labelling). The central team also managed the experiments. Meanwhile, national teams: provided feedback to the central team regarding the appropriateness of questionnaire items for cross-national use; translated questionnaires (except for items from other cross-national surveys where the translation already existed)9; entered translated items into the web survey platform10 and tested these; maintained their national helpline (see Appendix 1 for details); conducted the translation, programming, typesetting/design, and printing and testing of messages to participants (pre-notifications, invitations, reminders and ‘thank you’ notes); purchased and distributed incentives; and, prepared the hardcopy mailings, and organised their printing and postage. In addition, the NC team for Great Britain had to source a replacement incentive following negative feedback about the initial choice (Amazon vouchers).

All panellists were offered unconditional incentives to the value of €5/£5 per wave. National teams identified appropriate incentives in terms of voucher provider (unconditional cash incentives were not feasible for various reasons), whether to use electronic or postal delivery, and the optimal timing for delivering incentives. The panellist incentive strategy varied between countries. In Estonia, panellists received a €10 voucher for a large retail group with their email invitations in alternate waves (offliners were sent postal vouchers), while in Slovenia panellists received a €10 voucher for a supermarket chain (sent with postal pre-notifications) – also to cover two waves. In Great Britain, a £5 Amazon e-voucher was issued with the email invitation to the Welcome survey, but from wave 1 onwards vouchers valid at high street retailers were sent with the postal pre-notifications.11 Also, an incentive experiment that aimed to compare wave-by-wave vs. one-off incentives was implemented in Great Britain. The sample was randomly split into two halves, with half of panellists receiving a £5 high-street voucher at each wave and the other half receiving one £30 voucher for six waves upfront in wave 1 (Villar et al., 2018c).

9 See Appendix 1 for details of the steps involved in the translation process and Villar et al.,(2018b) for a list of the items in each wave.
10 For information about the web survey platform, see SERISS deliverable D7.10 (Sommer et al., 2017).
11 The switch to vouchers for high street retailers was made following receipt of negative comments from panellists regarding the use of Amazon vouchers.
The participant helpline in each country was available during office hours for the duration of the project (24 months). From when the first panellists were recruited, until the end of the wave 6 fieldwork period, CRONOS lasted 15 months. Helpline contact rate figures for Slovenia and Great Britain during the first 12 months suggest that, across the full 15 months, one query was received for every five panellists.

Participant communications via post and SMS were sent out by national teams, while email communications were sent out centrally. Where possible, communications were sent in parallel across all countries – at the same time on the same day. Details of the content of these messages can be found in ESS ERIC (2018), and see Villar et al. (2018c) for details of the schedule for sending them.

2.3 Reporting

2.3.1 Central reporting

During CRONOS, the central team produced: 4 project reports per year; 12 periodic reports (to the various strategic and advisory boards that are associated with the project or the ESS, as well as other meeting groups); 12 presentations per year (to these same meeting groups, amongst others); 2 newsletter articles per year; and, content for the CRONOS website. In addition to the time taken to prepare these materials, transport costs and the costs of travel time were also incurred.

2.3.2 Reporting by national teams

Each national team submitted reports discussing their interviewer briefing, recruitment to the panel, and their helpline, and gave presentations at meetings of the ESS NC Forum.

2.4 Generating technical documentation

Following the CRONOS web panel implementation stage, the central team produced technical documentation to accompany the CRONOS datasets. This documentation advises data users regarding the data that are available, how they were created and how to use them. These documents include: the user guide, questionnaires, codebooks, fieldwork documents, and a description of the experiments that were conducted during CRONOS.

3. The costs of CRONOS

In this section, we discuss the costs faced by NC teams in terms of the proportion of the total NC team monetary costs, and the effort per task as a proportion of the total person months. We also compare for each country an estimate of the cost per minute of a CRONOS interview, with the estimated cost per minute of the ESS Round 8 interview. Following this, we estimate
the equivalent cost per interview minute (CPIM) ratio for CRONOS 2 – the costings for which were based upon experience in CRONOS. Finally, we note the number of person months budgeted for the central team in CRONOS and CRONOS 2.

With costs such as sampling having been shouldered by the parent survey, the costs considered here relate only to panel set-up and maintenance, survey administration, and web data collection and management.

3.1 The CRONOS costs covered by NC team budgets

One national team managed to record many of the costs that they incurred during CRONOS\textsuperscript{12} and where actual costs were unavailable good estimates were gathered. Here, we discuss the monetary costs as a proportion of the total cost, and the labour required for each task as a proportion of the total person months. These figures do not include any costs that were covered by the central team, for example, the cost of tablets and internet provision for the offliners. It is important to note that these figures are estimates, and that the balance of costs may vary between countries.

In Table 1, we can see under ‘% total monetary costs’ that the incentives were the most costly aspect and absorbed 42% of the total country costs of CRONOS. Work relating to the waves (such as translating questionnaires and communication protocols, and translating, programming and testing panellist communications) was the second most costly, accounting for 18% of the total cost. The preparation of documents (including translation, print and distribution) required 14% of the total cost, activities relating to recruitment used 9%, and provision for offliners used 7%. Recruitment activities included interviewer supervision and support, recruitment monitoring, and uploading recruitment data.

Considering the labour costs in terms of person months, 26% of the NC team’s total person months were spent on activities relating to recruitment, 23% on wave-related work, 17% on the preparation of documents, 7% on reporting, and 6% on each of the following: setting up the helpline locally, translating questionnaires, respondent online communications, and provision for offliners.

\textsuperscript{12} For the other two NC teams, it was not possible to separate out most of the costs of CRONOS from the costs of the main ESS.
Table 1: NC team costs as a proportion of the total country costs (total monetary cost, and total person months)\(^\text{13}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>% total monetary cost (labour and non-labour)</th>
<th>% total person months (labour only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation stage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison, training and meetings</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting up helpline locally</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find suitable incentive</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruitment</strong> (including interviewer supervision and support, recruitment monitoring, and uploading recruitment data)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implementation stage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave-related work</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating questionnaires</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering translations into the web survey tool</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent online communications</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data processing for open-ended questions</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of postal invitations/reminders</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of SMS contact mode</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional equipment</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase and distribution of incentives(^a)</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of incentives</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of incentives</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for offliners</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining helpline</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Unconditional incentive sent to all panellists\(^\text{14}\), for all 7 waves

### 3.2 The costs of CRONOS vs. Round 8 of the ESS

Here we compare the estimated CPIM for CRONOS with that for ESS Round 8. For both surveys, these estimates include just the fieldwork costs and the costs of the NC team. Although a web panel should offer increasing value for money as time progresses (noting possible declining quality with attrition), high set-up costs mean that it is likely to cost more during its first year than in subsequent years. We compare just the country level costs for both

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\(^\text{13}\) Where costs are broken down, these might not add up to the reported total due to rounding of the percentages.

\(^\text{14}\) By ‘panellists’, we mean all recruited sample members who had agreed to join the CRONOS web panel.
surveys, although due to set-up costs these too are likely to be higher in the first year (for example, developing documentation, setting up the helpline and national website, etc.).

The figures in Table 2 show the estimated CPIM for CRONOS relative to the CPIM for ESS Round 8. To obtain these figures, we estimated the CPIM for each survey and then divided the CPIM for CRONOS by the CPIM for the ESS. While this provides a tangible measure on which to discuss the cost of CRONOS and compare this with the cost of the face-to-face parent survey, it should be noted that these are just estimates and the figures should be treated as indicative.

Table 2: The CPIM of CRONOS relative to Round 8 of the ESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>CRONOS:ESS8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>1.01:1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>0.29:1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>0.46:1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We see in Table 2 that in Estonia, the cost of CRONOS was approximately equal to the cost of the ESS, while in Slovenia and Great Britain the CPIM for CRONOS was substantially lower than the CPIM for Round 8 of the ESS. This difference is partly driven by the difference in the cost of face-to-face fieldwork in the three countries. The CPIM for ESS Round 8 was lowest in Estonia and highest in Great Britain, while the CPIM for CRONOS was lowest in Slovenia and highest in Great Britain.

3.3 The estimated costs for CRONOS 2 in lower/medium- and higher-wealth countries

Based on the costs of the CRONOS web panel, the central team calculated estimates for the cost of CRONOS 2 for each of the 12 countries that would be interested in joining this second iteration of the web panel. Having classified these nations into lower/medium- and higher-wealth countries, we calculated estimates of the average country cost for CRONOS 2 for these two groups. Similarly to those discussed above, these figures include only the costs for the country’s participation in the project and do not include the costs that would be met by the budget of the central team.

The estimated CPIM ratios for CRONOS 2 (vs. ESS Round 8) are given in Table 3 below and account for the country costs at the preparation and implementation stages, as well as reporting activities. At the preparation stage, the costs accounted for include: liaison (for contracts, specification and terms of reference); providing feedback on the ethics form and agreeing to adhere to procedures; translation (of the ethics procedure sheet, the respondent

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15 For Great Britain, the CPIM calculation divided the total costs claimed by the total number of interviews across all 7 waves (to give the cost per interview), and then divided this by the mean expected interview duration (20 minutes). For Estonia and Slovenia, the total estimated cost was used in place of the ‘total costs claimed’ The CPIM calculation for ESS Round 8 used the following equation: estimated NC team costs plus fieldwork costs, divided by the number of respondents (to give the cost per interview), and divided by the mean expected interview duration (60 minutes).

16 We ordered the CRONOS 2 countries according to Eurostat’s 2018 figures for GDP per capita (Eurostat, 2019). The CPIM figures showed a clear division at the point where there was a slightly larger gap in GDP than between most of the other countries (at GDP of around €30,000).
leaflet and consent form, interviewer manual, recruitment interview and effort summary questions, and guidance for the respondent helpline; reading and signing the data handling agreement; preparing the national website for the panel; printing and distributing documents; attending training (to prepare the dataset for database management and test-run the data deposit procedure to check for/fix issues with the format of the submitted variables, to enter their translations into the programming tools and carry out tests, and to programme and distribute their own waves – plus testing time); attending the training session for recruitment and helpline procedures, revising their materials and getting ready for local training; revising and commenting on the schedule for respondent communication; setting up the helpline locally; and, planning the incentive strategy.

Tasks at the implementation stage include: interviewer supervision and support; recruitment monitoring (assumes 20 weeks); uploading recruitment data every week (assumes 20 weeks); providing feedback to research teams about the appropriateness of questions for cross-national use; translation to ESS standards (for one language); entering (and testing) the translations in the web survey tool; data processing for any open-ended questions; maintaining the helpline; translation, programming and testing of respondent communications; and, planning and designing content for the national wave.

Table 3: Estimated CRONOS 2:ESS Round 8\textsuperscript{a} CPIM ratios for lower/medium- and higher-wealth countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRONOS 2:ESS8 ratio</th>
<th>Lower/medium-wealth</th>
<th>Higher-wealth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.22:1.00</td>
<td>0.28:1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a} The estimated CPIM for CRONOS 2 is based on a sample size of 800 cases per country in each of 7 waves, with a mean survey duration of 20 minutes. This estimate excludes any special provision for offliners. Costs that would be covered by the central team or by the parent survey are also excluded.

\textsuperscript{b} Due to lack of available data, the estimate for lower/medium-wealth countries is based on one country. The estimate for higher-wealth countries is based on four countries.

As noted in Table 3, the estimated CRONOS 2:ESS8 ratio for lower/medium-wealth countries is 0.22:1.00, and for higher-wealth countries it is 0.28:1.00. This indicates that CRONOS 2 may be substantially more economical (relative to the ESS) than CRONOS, and CRONOS 2 is expected to represent good value as a follow-up to the face-to-face ESS.\textsuperscript{17} This difference in cost between CRONOS and CRONOS 2 may be due to the lack of provision for offliners in CRONOS 2. Although the costs of the tablets and internet service were covered by the central team, the inclusion of offliners added substantial costs due to the associated training, set-up and delivery as well as the increase in calls to the helpline. However this clearly comes at a cost in terms of completeness in terms of coverage. CRONOS 2 excludes off-liners and aims instead to be a capacity building exercise for future web panel surveys.

3.4 The costs of CRONOS vs. the NatCen Panel\textsuperscript{18}

The NatCen Panel is a highly successful, push-to-web survey that currently has approximately 8,000 panellists across Great Britain who have been recruited off the back of the face-to-face British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey. As a web panel with a similar piggy-backing design to CRONOS, it is interesting to compare the cost of these two surveys, using the NatCen Panel

\textsuperscript{17} With limited data available, the estimate for higher-wealth countries is based on four countries and the estimate for lower/medium-wealth countries is based on one country.

\textsuperscript{18} Discussed in personal communication with the NatCen Panel team.
– which has been running since 2015 – as a benchmark for whether the costs of CRONOS are reasonable and in line with what might be expected.

A fixed, quantitative comparison of CPIM between CRONOS and the NatCen Panel is not possible – partly because the costs of the NatCen Panel vary between surveys, and the costs included in NatCen’s CPIM would vary from those of CRONOS (for example, it would include tasks that in CRONOS are covered by the central team). In addition, the NatCen Panel uses a slightly different fieldwork design, including mixed-mode (web/telephone) fieldwork, and conditional (rather than unconditional) incentives. However, the anticipated CPIM for CRONOS 2 higher-wealth countries is broadly similar to that for the NatCen Panel.

3.5 Person months budgeted for the central team

For CRONOS, the central team were awarded 80.5 person months, while for CRONOS 2 the labour costs are estimated at just under 353 person months. The higher number of person months for CRONOS 2 is largely due to the higher number of countries; while only three countries were involved in CRONOS, for CRONOS 2 there are an estimated 12 participating countries. In addition CRONOS 2 includes the operation of a single sample management system.

4. Reflections on the costs of CRONOS

We have seen that in comparison to the estimated CPIM of a face-to-face ESS interview, CRONOS appears to be of a similar cost in Estonia but more economical in Great Britain and particularly economical in Slovenia. Here we identify the tasks in CRONOS that were either particularly costly or unexpectedly costly, and reflect on any underestimates in the original costings. We also discuss the online survey tools that are now in development, and that might reduce the costs for future cross-national web panels.

4.1. The use of a commercial web survey tool

The central team person months that were required for data collection (including preparing for data collection, and post-collection work to make the data suitable for distribution and analysis) were underestimated by around 100%. Unfortunately, the web survey platform, Questback, did not meet the expectations and requirements to handle multiple samples in a discrete manner. As a result of this, the data management team had to spend time on compensatory tasks, including: typing the questionnaire items into the web survey interface; separately programming “don’t know”/“refusal” response options in order to meet ESS standards; dealing with the complexity of communication with subsamples of panellists; and, producing templates for postal contacts.

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19 Discussed in personal communication with the data management team at NSD.
The methodological experiments conducted in CRONOS were an additional challenge within Questback, which had not been designed to cope with some of the complexity involved. As a result, the data obtained required more cleaning than expected and further time investment was needed from the data management team in order to clean the data so it could be distributed and analysed. Since in total CRONOS had seven waves of data collection, the team wrote scripts that would clean the data automatically; although time-consuming, this was quicker than cleaning the data manually for each wave.

4.2 Provision for offliners

The provision of tablets to offliners was particularly costly. This involved the purchase of tablets and internet service, setting up email accounts, the set-up and delivery of the tablets, developing documentation to support the use of these devices, and providing additional training to interviewers and helpline staff. In addition, it was necessary to estimate how many tablets would be needed, and too many were ordered; this meant that some costs were incurred without any return in terms of respondent numbers.

As shown in Table 4 below, of the eligible ESS sample who reported ‘never’ using the internet only 9% in Estonia, 12% in Slovenia and 20% in Great Britain accepted a tablet and joined the web panel. In Table 5, we see that in Estonia, 35 members (5%) of the achieved CRONOS wave 1 sample were offliners, as were 47 panellists in Slovenia and 38 in Great Britain (approximately 7% in both). As noted in Section 3.1, provision for offliners accounted for 7% of the monetary cost of the country’s participation (excluding the cost of the tablets and internet service, which were funded by the budget of the central team). This means that the CPIM for offliners was higher than for the rest of the panellists and yet their inclusion does not appear to substantially improve the quality.

Table 4: Willingness of offliners to accept a tablet computer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estonia</th>
<th>Slovenia</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of ESS respondents who report being offliners</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of offliners who initially agreed to accept a tablet</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of tablets delivered</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet take-up rate</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For future panels, careful consideration should be given to whether to include offliners in the panel and, if so, via which mode. If seeking to recruit offliners into web mode, additional efforts would be needed to engage those who are reluctant.

---

20 ESS respondents who responded ‘never’ to the question “People can use the internet on different devices such as computers, tablets and smartphones. How often do you use the internet on these or any other devices, whether for work or personal use?”.
Table 5: Sample sizes for ESS Round 8 and CRONOS wave 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estonia</th>
<th>Slovenia</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESS Round 8 (net)</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1256</td>
<td>1825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRONOS wave 1 (net)</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRONOS wave 1 onliners</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRONOS wave 1 offliners</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Retaining panellists who had not given an email address or who were hesitant at recruitment

An unexpectedly high cost was the sending of postal invitations to panellists who had not provided an email address during the recruitment interview. Separate from the offliners, this group were onliners who did not give an email address. To invite these participants, the URLs for the web survey had to be shortened and manually entered into the letters (that were then delivered by post). With each panellist requiring a unique URL to access the survey, this was a time-consuming process. In addition to the costs of preparing and sending the postal invitations this group were, like the other panellists, also receiving unconditional incentives (until wave 3, as mentioned in Section 2).

The results of analyses on the Slovenian panellists indicate a low response rate amongst this group. Comparing onliners who did and did not give an email address, in Table 6 it can be seen that onliners who did not give an email address are far more likely to be nonrespondents (52.9%) than those who did give an email address (8.2%), and far less likely to respond to 5 or more waves (17.6% vs. 62.5%, respectively). It appears, therefore, that in many cases not providing an email address at recruitment is equivalent to a ‘soft refusal’ to join the panel (Doušak & Kurdija, 2019).

Table 6: Responding behaviour of panellists in Slovenia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nonresponse</th>
<th>Attraction</th>
<th>Full response</th>
<th>5+ waves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRONOS panel (All)</td>
<td>N = 778</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% = 100.0</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onliner, no email given</td>
<td>N = 68</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% = 100.0</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onliner, email given</td>
<td>N = 658</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% = 100.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet recipient</td>
<td>N = 52</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% = 100.0</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: adapted from Doušak & Kurdija (2019)

In addition, panellists who initially declined to join the panel but then agreed to do so also showed poorer response rates than those who had agreed to join the panel when first invited. In Table 7, we see that ‘converted’ respondents were substantially more likely to be nonrespondents, and substantially less likely to participate in 5 or more waves of the web
panel, than those who had initially agreed to join. This is particularly the case for offliners and for onliners who did not provide an email address at recruitment: of the 16 offliners in the ‘converted’ group, 12 were nonrespondents (compared to none of the 36 tablet recipients in the initial sample), and 2/12 completed 5 or more waves (compared to 32/36 offliners in the initial sample). Looking at the onliners who had not provided an email address at recruitment: of the 33 ‘converted’ respondents, 22 were nonrespondents (compared to 14 of the 35 in the initial sample), and 4/33 completed 5 or more waves (compared to 9/35 of those in the initial sample). A similar pattern is seen in the onliners who provided an email address: of the 50 ‘converted’ respondents, 14 were nonrespondents (compared to 40 of the 608 in the initial sample), and 20/50 completed 5 or more waves (compared to 390/608 in the initial sample). While many of these panellists could be invited via email, they were still in receipt of an unconditional incentive for each wave; with such low participation rates, further investigation is warranted to determine whether this expenditure generated enough added value to be worthwhile.

Table 7: Responding behaviour of panellists in Slovenia who had initially agreed to participate (initial sample), and those who had initially declined but whose ‘no’ was converted to an ‘unsure’ or a ‘yes’ (‘converted’ respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nonresponse</th>
<th>Attrition</th>
<th>Full response</th>
<th>5+ waves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial sample</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onliner, email given</td>
<td>N 608</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 100.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet recipient</td>
<td>N 36</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onliner, no email given</td>
<td>N 35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 100.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>‘Converted’ respondents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onliner, email given</td>
<td>N 50</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 100.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet recipient</td>
<td>N 16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 100.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onliner, no email given</td>
<td>N 33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 100.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: adapted from Doušak & Kurdija (2019)

And finally, it would also be worth investigating whether eligible sample members who are ‘unsure’ at recruitment should be recruited to the panel. Potential panel members could respond to the invitation with ‘yes’, ‘unsure’ or ‘no’. Those who responded ‘yes’ or ‘unsure’ were asked for their contact details and recruited to the panel. However, as shown in Table 8, few in each country responded with ‘unsure’. Further analysis should be undertaken to establish whether these panellists participated in the panel and whether they are similar to the other panellists, or if they are an unusual group. It may be good to remove this response option in future to leave only ‘yes’ and ‘no’.
### Table 8: Panellists’ responses to invitation to join the web panel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49.4%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>1135</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61.55%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56.25%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2804</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>1827</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.4 Potential opportunities to improve cost-effectiveness in future

As indicated above, the initial evidence indicates that it might be possible to gain cost efficiencies by removing the option for potential panellists to give a hesitant response at recruitment, without a substantial impact on quality. This would mean allowing only ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers and training interviewers for refusal conversion. Similarly, cost efficiencies could be gained by excluding onliners who do not give an email address for receipt of survey communications. Finally, while we support the inclusion of offliners in web panels, following our experience with CRONOS we would not recommend offering a tablet computer to enable them to participate. Participation in another mode would in theory be possible, however, the additional costs (and potential impact of mode effects) would need to be evaluated (and of course then it would not be a web panel).

Also clear from the discussion above, is that substantial savings would have been made if there had already been in existence a web survey platform and linked sample management system designed to cope with complex, cross-national academic surveys. A cross-national sample management system is being developed under a new project, Social Sciences and Humanities Open Cloud (SSHOC; GA No 823782). This new sample management system is designed to manage the complex data protection and language needs of cross-national surveys. The availability of a tool designed by project partners will also mean greater flexibility to tailor the tool to the needs of future web panels, and reduce reliance on commercial tools for the sample management function. This should result in efficiencies for future projects.

In addition, it would have been useful to have had an app for sending survey invitations and reminders. This would have helped enormously when setting up provision for offliners, as it could have been installed on the tablets and the surveys accessed directly through the app. This would have eliminated the need to create email accounts. Although such an app did exist at the time, the budget for CRONOS was not sufficient to allow its use.

The use of tools that have been developed in the SERISS project should also help to make running future cross-national web panels more cost-effective. The Questionnaire Design and Development Tool (QDDT), the Translation Management Tool (TMT), and the Question and
Variable Database (QVDB)\textsuperscript{21} could help to reduce the costs/increase the efficiency with which the associated tasks can be undertaken. For example, without these online tools the task of translating seven questionnaires into twelve languages and manually entering these into the web survey platform would use substantially more resources than doing this same task for three languages. With the tools developed under SERISS, we are hoping it will be possible to automate the process of translating and uploading questionnaire items to build surveys in as many languages as needed (within the language capabilities of the tools). However at the time of writing it is not known if they are compatible with the survey programs likely to be used for the data collection itself.

5. Conclusions

The CRONOS web panel has provided proof of concept for piggy-backing on an established cross-national, face-to-face survey as a method for recruiting to a cross-national, probability-based web-panel. With the goal of a CRONOS-style survey being to augment the on-going face-to-face data collection processes of the parent survey, excessively high costs could be prohibitive.

CRONOS has also demonstrated that for a relatively modest additional cost, significant extra fieldwork could be provided that builds on the face-to-face survey. However, in Section 3, we established that the value for money offered by a CRONOS-style web panel may differ substantially by country. This is due – at least in part – to the differing costs of face-to-face interviewing: in Estonia, a CRONOS interview minute costs a similar amount to an ESS interview minute, while in Slovenia and Great Britain CRONOS was more economical than the ESS. However, the CPIM for CRONOS 2 does fall within the expected region when compared to the NatCen Panel – a GB-wide, push-to-web panel whose sample was also recruited off the back of a face-to-face survey.

There may, however, be some savings that could be made by future cross-national web panels. Future investigations should determine whether the behaviours discussed above: onliners not providing an email address; being ‘converted’ to ‘yes’ or ‘unsure’ response after initially having declined to join; and, responding ‘unsure’ to the initial recruitment question should in fact be regarded as forms of soft refusal. This may then inform the development of a recruitment protocol for future panels that eliminates known forms of soft refusal and thus saves on costs (such as sending unconditional incentives to panellists who will not participate in the survey). In addition, costs may be saved by using the online survey tools that will become available in the near future.

\textsuperscript{21} For further information about the tools developed under SERISS, see \url{www.seriss.eu} (WP4).
References


Appendix 1

CRONOS PANEL COSTS22
Ana Villar & Elena Sommer

This document outlines all the tasks involved in carrying out CRONOS. Other tasks that were not carried out but are advisable have been added and marked as "NEW".

1. CENTRAL COSTS

PREPARATION STAGE

Documents

- Contracts, specification, terms of reference
- Ethics form
- Consent form and respondent leaflet
- Data handling agreement – includes Data protocol for panel administration database with specified access rights for different roles
- NEW: Ethic procedures sheet for all members of the NC team who will be involved to sign
- NEW: NC Manual for preparation of deposit for the database management system
- CRONOS interviewer manual
- Recruitment interview
- Recruitment effort summary questions
- Specifications for database management
- Specifications for web survey tool
- Instructions for set-up of devices (anti-virus software, installation of app for invitations, online browser, keyboard function etc)
- Interviewer manual for device delivery
- Respondent manual on how to use the device
- Device receipt and agreement form
- Guidance for respondent helpline
- Experiments outline
- Wave pre-notifications
- Wave email invitations
- Wave reminders for email, post, and SMS
- Respondent thank you note
- NEW: open call for proposals of questionnaire content
  o Decide schedule for call release and proposal submission deadline
  o Liaise with SAB to see whether they would like to serve as committee
  o Write the call
  o Publish the call
  o Respond to queries about the call
  o Organise decision process mechanism with SAB: are they going to do this during a regular meeting, over email, via conference call…? Or are we getting just one review per proposal?
  o Check which proposals meet minimum requirements
  o Collate and send proposals to SAB members
  o Communicate decisions to research teams
  o Question quality control and liaison with research team and national teams
  o Sign off question wording with research teams

22 This overview relates to tasks of the central and national teams. The costs relating to the purchase, set-up, maintenance, etc. of a web survey platform are not included here.
Liaison, training, and meetings

- Advisory board meetings
- NEW: Train NC teams to prepare dataset for database management, test runs of data deposit to fix issues with the format of the variables countries submit
- NEW: Train programmers to use the programming tools
- Train NC teams to enter their translations into the programming tools, and to test
- NEW: Train NC teams on interviewer training and helpline training
- Questionnaire design teams: EVS, EQLS, GGP, ESS, GESIS
- Liaise with NSD for ethics, data protocols, database management, tool selection, set-up of the panel sample management system, adjustment of the web data collection tool and questionnaire programming.
- Liaise with NCs regarding incentive plans
- Liaise with UPF for task 7.7 Set up and manage Basecamp
- Set up and manage Redmine
- Set up and manage ESS intranet for data deposit
- Scheduling: email local teams and all partners before each respondent communication

Other

- Manage budget
- Procuring tablets and internet (see appendix for details)
- Literature reviews for experimental work: 2 experiments on motivating careful responding implemented 3 times each; 2 contact mode experiments, 1 incentive experiment
- Investigating solutions to contact respondents without an email address

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

Recruitment

- Interviewer training supervision
- Recruitment monitoring (to be planned in advance)
- NSD liaise with countries when uploading recruitment data
- Select and buy devices
- Select internet provider and organise contracts
- Organise and monitor delivery of devices

Wave-related work

- Questionnaire design
- Translation queries
- Programming source questionnaire—will take longer the first two waves. Liaise with programming experts
- Testing source questionnaire
- Monitor participation
- Data protocol and data processing (variable labels, value labels, experiment variables…)
- Managing experiments
REPORTING (THROUGHOUT)

- Deliverables: 4 per year
- Periodic reporting: 12 per year. Includes reports for the CST (4), MAB (2), GRANT (3), CRONOS advisory board (1), other meetings (2). Consider travel time when costing.
- Presentations: 12 per year. Includes CRONOS advisory board, CST, MAB, NC forum, conferences, possibly grant review meetings, other meetings
- Newsletter pieces: 2 per year
- Website: write up content and set up

2. NATIONAL COORDINATING TEAMS: COSTS

PREPARATION STAGE

Documents

- Liaison for contracts, specification, terms of reference
- Feedback on ethics form, agreement to adhere to follow procedures
- Translation of ethic procedures sheet for all members of the NC team to sign
- Translation of consent form and respondent leaflet
- Data handling agreement – careful reading and signature
- Translation of CRONOS interviewer manual
- Translation of Recruitment interview
- Translation of Recruitment effort summary questions
- Translation of guidance for respondent helpline
- Preparation of national website for country panel
- Design and layout of letters, leaflets, etc.
- Printing and distribution of documents

Liaison, training and meetings

- Attend training to prepare dataset for database management, test runs of data deposit to fix issues with the format of the variables countries submit
- Attend training to enter their translations into the programming tools and carry out tests
- Attend training to program and distribute their own waves. Plus testing time
- Attend train the trainer session for recruitment and helpline procedures, revise materials and get ready for local training
- Revise and comment on schedule for respondent communication
- Setting up helpline locally  train staff, who should read ethics documents, interviewer manual, recruitment interview and other relevant documents to be able to answer any questions ESS respondents may have

Other

- Find suitable incentives: electronic deliverable initially preferred option, but alternatives were needed, and two countries settled for postal delivery 2-3 days before the email invitations were sent
- Buy and distribute incentives by post (email in Estonia)
IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

Recruitment

- Interviewer training for recruitment
- Design and delivery of training for interviewers who will deliver tablets to panellists
- Interviewer supervision and support
- Telephone workshop for interviewers (part way through main ESS fieldwork)
- Recruitment monitoring
- Uploading recruitment data every week

Wave-related work

- Feedback to research teams about appropriateness of questions for cross-national use
- Translation of questionnaires using team translation as in ESS. This budget will depend on how many questions need translating. We planned for 400 questions for the 6 waves of CRONOS, and used existing questions for the rest. Includes:
  - Finding and hiring translators
  - Arranging schedules with translators and reviewers
  - Attend review meetings
  - Carry out adjudication
  - Edit and format the agreed final translations
  - Double check for inadvertent mistakes
- Enter translations on web survey tool
- Test translation on web survey tool
- Data processing for open-ended questions
- Advise on data disclosure issues
- Maintain helpline (available during office hours while the project is live)
- Translation, programming and testing of respondent communications:
  - Translate invitations and reminders
  - Liaise with central programmers
  - Test invitations
- Translation, programming and testing of respondent final thank you note
- Sending respondent communications:
  - Design letters
  - Arrange printing and postage
- NEW: Plan and design content for national wave → 1 wave per year. NCs should estimate how long this will take them. Depending on the web survey tool and how programming is arranged, they may need to translate their questions into English for the central team to programme.

REPORTING (THROUGHOUT)

- Interviewer briefing report. 5 pages
- Recruitment report. 5 pages
- Helpline report. 5 pages
- Presentations: NC forum
## Appendix 2

Table A2: Estimated person months for the country tasks associated with CRONOS 23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Stage</th>
<th>Person months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liaison for contracts, specification, terms of reference</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback on ethics form, agreement to adhere to follow procedures.</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of ethic procedures sheet for all members of the NC team to sign</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of consent form and respondent leaflet</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data handling agreement – careful reading and signature</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of CRONOS interviewer manual</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of Recruitment interview</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of Recruitment effort summary questions</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of guidance for respondent helpline</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of national website for country panel</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and distribution of documents</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend training to prepare dataset for database management, test runs of data deposit to fix issues with the format of the variables countries submit</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend training to enter their translations into the programming tools and carry out tests</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend training to program and distribute their own waves. Plus testing time.</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend train the trainer session for recruitment and helpline procedures, revise materials and get ready for local training</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise and comment on schedule for respondent communication</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting up helpline locally</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive planning</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Stage</th>
<th>Person months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer supervision and support</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment monitoring (assumes 20 weeks)</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploading recruitment data every week (assumes 20 weeks)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback to research teams about appropriateness of questions for cross-national use</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation to ESS standards (for one language)</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enter translations on web survey tool</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test translation on web survey tool</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data processing for open-ended questions</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain helpline</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation, programming and testing of respondent communications</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation, programming and testing of respondent final thank you note</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan and design content for national wave</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting</th>
<th>Person months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Person months (assumes 21 working days per month)** 18.6

23 Estimates devised by Ana Villar.