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The impact of ongoing technical developments on the entire data production – from concepts, programming to testing and data collection

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Abstract

In the past, mixed-mode data collection in official statistics was mainly discussed using modes like CAPI, CATI, CAWI, and PAP and by the perspective of data quality, mode-effects, cost constraints and case-management systems. In this context, the project “Data Collection in Social Surveys Using Multiple Modes” (briefly: ESSnet DCSS) was initiated by Eurostat and was conducted from 2012 to 2014.

Due to ongoing technical development, the original perspective regarding CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing) on PCs and Laptops is too limited as smartphones and tablets are additional devices by which respondents may reply online. Thus, the methodological challenges that NSIs are faced with is even broader than in the past. Consequently, the Federal Statistical Office Germany (Destatis) is considering how to meet these challenges. Moreover, the latest developments not only make it necessary to identify the suitable design on smartphone screens, but also influences the entire data production process: The question is if we can still conduct surveys with the current amount of and design of questions and how the entire communication with respondents can be conducted.

In this context, the presentation will indicate the different data processing steps which need to be adapted or scrutinized due to these circumstances: (a) impacts on the entire conceptual design of future questionnaires, (b) testing strategies to develop and test questionnaire designs on smartphones, (c) requirements of an adequate software package to provide questionnaires for different modes, (d) contact and mode-strategies. As we are still developing and defining these different impacts on processing, the audience is highly requested to give feedback on the approaches and steps so far.