

European Social Survey, European Research Infrastructure Consortium
Round 9
1 June 2017

Round 9 Survey Specification for ESS ERIC Member, Observer and Guest Countries

v3
24 July 2018

These specifications have been developed by the European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ESS ERIC) Director, in collaboration with the Core Scientific Team (CST).

They outline the national requirements for each ESS ERIC Member (or Observer or Guest) participating in the ninth round of the ESS, in accordance with Article 5.c.i in the ESS ERIC Statutes (or the procedure for Guest countries), and drawing on experience from the previous rounds of the ESS.

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v3 of the Specification, released 24 July 2018, no longer includes quality control back-checks on noncontacts and refusals as a requirement. Back-checks on interviews and ineligibles are still required. It is also required to mention back-checks during the interviewer briefings. The re-issue of (soft) refusals and non-contacts is still highly recommended, but this is separate from the back-check procedure. See section 10.6 and section 10.7.3 for more information.

v2 of the Specification, released 12 April 2018, no longer includes media coding as a requirement. This task has been dropped for the current round. Work to develop a possible new methodology to measure media context in the European Social Survey is underway and will be completed in advance of ESS Round 10.

1. Introduction

The European Social Survey (ESS) is a biennial cross-national survey run by the ESS European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ESS ERIC).

The ESS ERIC Headquarters are located at City, University of London, UK where the Director is located. The ESS ERIC has a Core Scientific Team (CST) that comprises Headquarters and other institutions in Europe.

The institutions in the CST are listed on the ESS website
http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/structure_and_governance.html

Headquarters and the seven CST institutions will henceforward be referred to as the CST.

According to the Statutes of ESS ERIC¹ its principal object and tasks are to establish and operate a research infrastructure with the following main objectives:

- a) assembling, interpreting and disseminating via the European Social Survey or otherwise rigorous data on Europe's social condition, including the shifting attitudes, values, perceptions and behaviour patterns among citizens in different countries;
- b) providing free and timely access to its accumulated data to professional users and members of the public;
- c) furthering the advancement of methods of quantitative social measurements and analysis in Europe and beyond.

The present document, called *the Specifications* for short, outlines the tasks and responsibilities of the ESS ERIC Members, Observers and Guests regarding the implementation of the ninth round of the European Social Survey (ESS Round 9).

The ESS ERIC subscribes to the Declaration on Ethics of the International Statistical Institute (ISI)², to which the Survey Agencies that conduct the data collection will be asked to adhere, in addition to any co-existing national obligations that they may have. ESS ERIC undertakes to ensure that ESS Round 9 is conducted in a manner that is fully compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU 2016/679). As the Data Controller for ESS Round 9 ESS ERIC requires that all Members, Observers and Guests comply fully with the GDPR.

2. Changes over time

2.1. Major changes compared to Round 8

Although the structure of the Specifications have changed in Round 9, the design of the survey (and thus also the costs) has remained largely the same as in Round 8. There are four major changes, two of which were already announced in the Specifications for Round 8.

First, interviewing will be conducted by Computer Assisted Interviewing (CAPI) only. This means that as of Round 9, Paper and Pencil Interviewing (PAPI) will no longer be allowed. Comparisons have shown that CAPI interviewing results in a more standardised interview process, as evidenced by lower interviewer effects, lower item nonresponse, and higher data quality (see De Leuw 2008 'The effect of computer-assisted interviewing

¹ www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/about/ERIC-ESS-OJ-30-November-2013.pdf

² www.isi-web.org/index.php/activities/professional-ethics/isi-declaration

on data quality: a review of the evidence³. In addition, using CAPI makes it easier to monitor the flow of the interview and allows collection of paradata, or process data, such as time stamps that allow analysing and optimising the interviewing process.

A second change is that as of Round 9 fieldwork progress updates will have to be provided to the CST at least weekly. In addition fieldwork progress information will need to be provided at a case level rather than at an aggregate level and using a pre-defined standard template. This will facilitate more timely and detailed monitoring that will allow for a more harmonised monitoring of fieldwork across the different ESS countries and, if necessary, adaptations of the fieldwork design and strategies. We are testing a new Fieldwork Management and Monitoring System (FMMS) as part of the Round 9 pilot (in Autumn 2017). Depending on the outcome of the pilot in one country, other countries will either be asked to upload data to the FMMS data portal or to provide weekly datasets to the CST using safe file transfer.

A third change is that the supplementary questionnaire will always be administered in the same mode as the main questionnaire (i.e. face-to-face). This improves consistency between the answers to questions in both parts. Thus, as of Round 9, the (original) supplementary questionnaire is now a part of the main questionnaire. The test questions are incorporated earlier in the questionnaire to allow a fully crossed three group design to be implemented eliminating order potential order effects in these experiments compared to the past (where the first items asked were asked to all respondents on the same format). As such therefore there is no longer an ESS supplementary questionnaire.

A fourth major change, which was not foreseen in the previous Specifications, is a consequence of the coming into force of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018⁴. This requires that harmonised information is provided to respondents, data handling agreements are signed between the data controller (ESS ERIC represented by the Director) and the data processors (fieldwork agencies and national coordinators). Updated procedures will also apply to data transfer and data protection and each data processor will need to assess whether a Data Protection Officer (DPO) is required (section 9.3 and section 12).

There are also a number of smaller changes:

- More time should be reserved for the verification and SQP coding process (section 7.2). Experiences from Round 8 showed that the time allowed in earlier rounds was too short.
- While the ESS still aims for a minimum target response rate of 70%, it is more clearly acknowledged that this may not be feasible in every country, and that striving for a response rate higher than in the previous round is a more realistic target (section 10.5.1).
- The CST strongly recommends collecting Contact Form data in a digital format, rather than on paper. This will facilitate closer monitoring of fieldwork progress by NCs and the CST and will make it possible to respond more promptly when necessary than in the past. The ESS Methods Advisory Board sees this as a particularly important development. ***

2.2. *Changes foreseen in Round 10*

There are already a small number of changes foreseen for the future.

First, it is foreseen that as of Round 10 all Contact Form data should be collected in a digital format, rather than on paper. This could be implemented by either using the FMMS app (see 10.5.2), or a tool developed by the survey agency or any other contact history information system. It is hoped that platforms to allow the CST to receive this data centrally will have been built and NCs and fieldwork agencies may be asked to

³ www.researchgate.net/publication/44132207_The_effect_of_computer-assisted_interviewing_on_data_quality_a_review_of_the_evidence

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/reform/files/regulation_oj_en.pdf

facilitate that transfer. A pilot is taking place in Round 9 and NCs will be kept fully briefed on progress.

Second, it is foreseen that as of Round 10 a Translation Management Tool, originally developed by SHARE and adapted for ESS under SERISS (www.seriss.eu) will be available for all countries. This tool should make it much easier to manage and document the translation process.

Third, consideration is being given to asking NCs to perform back-checks to complement those being conducted by the survey agency. No final decision has been made about this yet.

Fourth, there may be further development of the CRONOS panel implemented under the SERISS project (www.seriss.eu). Subject to European Commission support being secured under H2020 during 2017 countries may be invited to conduct recruitment to a new phase of the panel following Round 10 face to face interviews. Invitations will reflect suitability and technical capacity as well as the resources available. More information will be shared with the General Assembly and National Coordinators during 2017-2019.

3. Key information on the survey

The European Social Survey (ESS) is an academically driven cross-national survey, founded in 2001. Since 2013 the ESS has been legally established as a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). The Director of the ESS ERIC is Dr Rory Fitzgerald and the ESS ERIC Headquarters (HQ) are at City, University of London. The Core Scientific Team (CST, section 0) comprises HQ and seven other institutions.

Survey data are collected biennially (every 2nd year). The survey aims for optimal comparability, standardised approaches across countries and requires detailed documentation. Key characteristics of the survey are:

- Rigorous probability sampling procedures (section 8) and high target response rates (section 10.5.1) ensuring that the target population is adequately represented.
- Innovative and extensive questionnaire design and translation procedures followed by thorough assessment, aiming for optimal comparability across countries (section 7).
- Standardised fieldwork approaches with a high emphasis on training and briefing of interviewers, and extensive monitoring of fieldwork progress, thus ensuring optimal comparability across countries (sections 9 and 10).
- Face-to-face computer assisted survey administration ensuring that (almost) everybody can participate, and allowing a broad country coverage.
- Detailed documentation of survey processes, fieldwork, and outcomes, disseminated freely via the ESS ERIC website.
- Provision of support to NCs through expert teams and country contacts.
- Adherence to international quality and ethical procedures.
- Rigorous processing of data and metadata and adherence to national and European data protection regulations including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Free and equal access to data and metadata for non-commercial use.
- Provision of top-line summary booklets of the data to encourage non-academic interest in the findings.

The ESS ERIC Director will assign each country a 'Country Contact' (CC) to support National Coordinators through the monitoring of progress of each step of the survey life cycle and the provision of assistance (where necessary). Country Contacts have a global view of each country's achievements and challenges, and can identify areas where comparability across rounds and between countries might be failing. They also facilitate round-to-round improvements in each country.

4. Information for the General Assembly

Members, Observers and Guests of ESS ERIC have to ensure that the national costs for Round 9 can be fully met. This is an obligation for all groups of participating countries. In particular, Members, Observers and Guests note the following:

The tasks of the National Coordinator (sections 5, 7, 8, 9 and 11):

- Communicating with the CST and attending biannual NC Forum meetings.
- Selecting and liaising with the Survey Agency.
- Participating in questionnaire development, translation and pre-testing.
- Discussing available sampling frames and sampling procedures with the Sampling and Weighting Expert Panel (SWEP).
- Providing a sampling frame.
- Preparing and monitoring fieldwork in collaboration with the CST.
- Depositing data and other deliverables to the ESS Archive, and communicating with the ESS Archive.
- Ensuring data protection, anonymity and confidentiality and full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Adherence to national and institutional ethical procedures.
- Disseminating ESS findings and methodological outcomes.

The tasks of the Survey Agency (sections 9, 10 and 11):

- Conducting the national pre-test.
- Programming the questionnaire and preparing other survey materials (e.g., showcards).
- Attending a Field Directors' Meeting.
- Briefing and training interviewers.
- Preparing for, planning, and monitoring fieldwork.
- Conducting fieldwork resulting in a sufficient (effective) sample size and an agreed upon response rate.
- Preparing deliverables (see 11.1).

For some sections there is overlap between the responsibilities of the NC and the Survey Agency. Both parties should conduct their activities within the timeframe outlined in this document.

In the next sections Members, Observers and Guests of ESS ERIC will be referred to as ESS ERIC Members, given that Observers and Guests have exactly the same obligations as Members with regard to fieldwork and data delivery.

5. National Coordinators

5.1. Introduction

According to the Statutes of the ESS ERIC (art. 13.6), each Member shall appoint and finance a National Coordinator (NC). The selection process of the National Coordinator will vary between countries according to local circumstances, conventions and requirements. The CST can advise on or assist in the selection process if required but must be consulted with sufficient time to ensure that the appointments comply with the ESS ERIC timetable.

The National Coordinator will:

- be a person of standing within the social science community of their country,
- be familiar at first hand with survey methodology and procedures,
- be knowledgeable about past national or sub-national studies of a similar nature,
- be fluent in spoken and written English,

- be willing to oversee the work of the survey organisation including the progress of fieldwork,
- have experience of cross-national research,
- be accepting of the ESS Specifications,
- act as a data processor in full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

Although most of the work will have to be done after March 2018, the NC should be appointed in time for them to make a general planning of the survey, (to help) to select the Survey Agency, and to comment on the question module design process between November 2017 and March 2018. The NC should not have any other key role within the ESS ERIC organisational structure.

In many countries there will be a National Coordinating team. As the NC is ultimately responsible for overseeing and coordinating the activities we will simply refer to 'NC' in the following text.

The NC MUST ensure that national data (including summary outcomes and overviews) are not published or reported in any way before the release of the harmonised data file comprising their national data (sections 11.3 and 12.3).

5.2. NC workload and time budget

The workload of the NC will vary over the period of the survey. From previous rounds, it is clear that the bulk of the work is likely to take place during four periods for Round 9:

- 1) preparation of fieldwork and country questionnaires including translation (March – August 2018),
- 2) start of fieldwork and fieldwork monitoring (September – December 2018),
- 3) data preparation and processing (January – October 2019),
- 4) dissemination of results (November 2019 onwards).

The number of person-months required by an NC will depend on national conditions, such as the number of languages to be fielded, tasks delegated to the Survey Agency, and the experience of the Survey Agency with random sampling, face-to-face interviewing, and fieldwork monitoring. It will also depend on the individuals' previous experience in conducting the ESS.

It is anticipated that an NC will need to spend about 6 months full-time equivalent on their tasks in one round (over 24 months), if they were involved in previous rounds. New NCs will require considerably more time; countries that participate for the first time – or after missing one or more rounds – will need approximately 10 months full-time equivalent to perform their tasks.

5.3. NC Activities

A detailed overview of NC activities before, during and after fieldwork is given in the next sections. The key roles of the NC are to coordinate activities of the ESS ERIC at a national level and assure national compliance with the ESS specifications for that round. In addition, they are expected to contribute to strategic discussions about the ESS methodology and detailed discussions on ESS questionnaire design. The list of activities below is not intended to be exhaustive but provides a summary of the main tasks and responsibilities of the NC when preparing and overseeing implementation of the ESS in each country.

Communication

The CST country contacts (CCs, section 3) will oversee and monitor the progress of each step of the survey life cycle and support NCs as necessary. NCs will liaise directly with the different CST work packages, but also with CCs on cross-cutting issues. CCs should be copied into all correspondence between the NC and CST work packages.

The NC will:

- serve as the link between the national ESS ERIC Member, the national Survey Agency, and the CST,
- be the primary point of contact with the CST/CC on all aspects of the ESS in their country for the current round for which they are appointed as well as for previous rounds in which their country participated,
- attend meetings of the ESS ERIC NC Forum (expected to take place in November 2017, April 2018, (possibly November 2018), and April 2019),
- possibly represent the NC Forum in other committees (e.g., CST, GA).

Implementation

The NC will ultimately be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the rigorous, standardised set of procedures and methods according to the pre-specified design and timetable outlined throughout this document. Certain tasks will be carried out by the NC, independent of the Survey Agency, whilst others can be carried out in cooperation with the Survey Agency. NCs key tasks will include (but are not limited to):

Main questionnaire design (section 7.1)

- meet with and advise the ESS question module design teams (QDTs) on question content and construction and provide detailed comments on two or more drafts of the question modules,
- liaise with the CST on question adaptation and consultation processes as required (e.g. on measures of partnership status, education, religion, income and ancestry).

Production country questionnaires (sections 7.2 and 7.3)

- translate the English source questionnaires according to the ESS procedures,
- follow translation assessment steps:
 - 1) team review and adjudication,
 - 2) external assessment (verification),
 - 3) consideration of the harmonisation of formal characteristics of the questions, using SQP coding within a functional equivalence framework, and
 - 4) co-ordination and interpretation of national pre-tests to check the country questionnaire, CAPI programming and routing **before fieldwork** starts,
- discuss possible changes to existing translations, queries about new translations and possible adaptations with the ESS translation team,
- after formal sign-off of the translations, provide the CST with the final Translation and Verification Follow-Up Form (T)VFF, including information on follow-ups and documentation,
- deposit the final questionnaire(s) and showcards to the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet right before fieldwork starts.

Sampling (section 8)

- discuss with and advise their assigned expert from the ESS SWEP on appropriate local procedures to comply with ESS sampling requirements, including maximising the effective sample size and ensuring that the sampling design is formally signed off by the ESS sampling panel **before fieldwork starts**,
- secure the best available sampling frame,
- deposit the Sample Design Data File (SDDF) to the ESS Archive at NSD so that the design weights can be produced and the national data can be included in the combined dataset,
- provide national population estimates for demographic variables so that the post-stratification weights can be produced, and liaise with the CST when issues arise preparing those.

Fieldwork preparation (sections 9 and 10)

- Select the Survey Agency (if necessary),
- Explain and discuss ESS procedures and their rationale with the Survey Agency (including the completion and use of the Contact Forms),

- Complete an online Fieldwork Questionnaire (FWQ) and discuss matters arising with the Fieldwork Team; ensuring sign-off at least **two weeks before fieldwork** starts,
- Send fieldwork projections to the Fieldwork Team at least **two weeks before fieldwork** is planned to start,
- Play a key role in the design and the delivery of face-to-face fieldwork briefings for interviewers, focusing on respondent recruitment, the conducting of the interview and recording of contact attempts.

Fieldwork monitoring (section 10.7.1)

- Monitor fieldwork to ensure contract compliance and optimum response,
- Ensure that the Fieldwork Team receives at least **weekly** updates of fieldwork progress in the format specified by the CST,
- Ensure interviewers collect data about all contact attempts during fieldwork and record and transmit complete Contact Form data in a timely manner.

Data preparation & deposit (section 11)

- Monitor data preparation activities,
- Check the data files as specified in the ESS Data Protocol, preparation for public use and quality control analysis aimed at improving ESS data collection in future rounds. Use of the national data for analytical purposes is not allowed until the first official release,
- Liaise as necessary with the SWEP about the calculation of post-stratification weights.
- Provide the CST with all electronic deliverables (including data and documentation) as specified in the ESS Data Protocol, and listed in section 11.1,
- Provide the name and email address of a contact person at the Survey Agency to the CC and NSD. This person will only be included in correspondence directly related to deliverables and processing of data and documentation,
- Liaise as necessary with the ESS Archive about data deposit and data processing queries, including advising on post-stratification of national data and any weighting required,
- Act as the first national point of contact for queries relating to earlier waves of ESS data collection regardless of whether they were the NC at that time.

Data protection and ethics (section 12)

- Sign a data handling agreement in their capacity as a Data Processor with the ESS ERIC Director (Data Controller) and ensure compliance within the NC team and by the survey agency with the GDPR.
- Ensure compliance by the national team, and survey agency with the General Data Protection Regulation including documentation of all data breaches with that relevant parties are informed of any breaches.
- Ensure that institutional ethical approval for the ESS is obtained where required.

Dissemination

The NC will be responsible for promoting the use of ESS data within their country and reporting to the CST on these activities. National and international dissemination activities will contribute to the ESS ERIC's ultimate goal to make the ESS (and its data) as widely used among academics, policy makers and other relevant communities as possible. Dissemination activities can be related to national websites, national launch events, booklets, national top-line⁵ reports, etc. The ESS ERIC Media and Communications Officer at HQ can assist NCs with those tasks.

⁵ www.europeansocialsurvey.org/findings/topline.html

6. Timetable of ESS activities and overview of key documents

6.1. Overview of actions required before, during and after fieldwork

Table 1: ESS Round 9 Project Timetable (May 2017-October 2019)

Month/Date	Action	Section
May '17	ESS ERIC Round 9 Specifications issued to General Assembly (Members, Observers and Guests), NCs and Survey agencies	0
May-Dec '17	ESS Round 9 pre-testing of questions for items from rotating modules in the main questionnaire – including quantitative testing (organised by ESS ERIC HQ) and cognitive interviewing (in a small number of selected countries)	7
Sep '17- March '18	Appointment of NCs and Survey Agencies	5, 9
Nov '17	Advance Translation (a small number of selected countries) (rotating modules) Pilot Fieldwork (2 countries) (rotating modules)	7
Feb '18	Penultimate draft main questionnaire sent to NCs for comment; NCs asked to highlight possible translation problems	7
Feb-June '18	Sample design plans discussed between NCs and assigned sample panel member & signed off by the Sampling and Weighting Expert Panel (SWEPP)	8
March '18	Link to Fieldwork Questionnaire (FWQ) sent to NCs	10
March-July '18	FWQ completed by NCs and signed off by ESS Fieldwork Team	10
March '18	ESS Round 9 NC Intranet area opens for NCs ESS Round 9 Source Questionnaires distributed	7
April-Aug '18	Question adaptation and consultations with CST	7
April-Aug '18	Translation, Team review and adjudication, External assessment (Verification), Harmonisation of formal characteristics of the questions using SQP Coding, and national pre-tests ⁶	7
June '18	ESS Round 9 2018 Data Protocol and dictionaries distributed	10
July '18	Fieldwork projections to be sent to the Fieldwork Team	10
August '18	Interviewer Briefings	10
Sep '18	National Technical Summary (NTS) made available ESS Round 9 Fieldwork starts	11
Sep-Dec '18	Monitor fieldwork Send weekly fieldwork progress information to the Fieldwork Team	10
31 Dec '18	ESS Round 9 Fieldwork ends	10
28 Feb '19	Data delivery to the ESS Archive	11
March-Oct '19	Data processing and Archiving ⁷ Preparation of Sample design data file (SDDF)	8, 11
Oct '19	1st data release expected	

The flow diagrams below illustrate the ESS life cycle; the different tasks and primary responsibilities of the CST are indicated by pink boxes and those of NCs are indicated by blue boxes.

⁶ Note that the timing for translation, translation verification, SQP coding, country pre-testing of translations, interviewer briefing, fieldwork, etc. will vary depending on individual country timetables.

⁷ The ESS Archive at NSD will check and merge the national datasets into a combined multi-nation dataset that will be released publicly as soon as it is signed off by the CST. This initial release may, however, have to exclude any national dataset that arrives after the deadline of 28 February 2019, or for which the data and/or technical documentation is late or incomplete. A final release will be made after all countries that have met the requirements in section 11 have submitted data and documentation.

Figure 1 – ESS life cycle

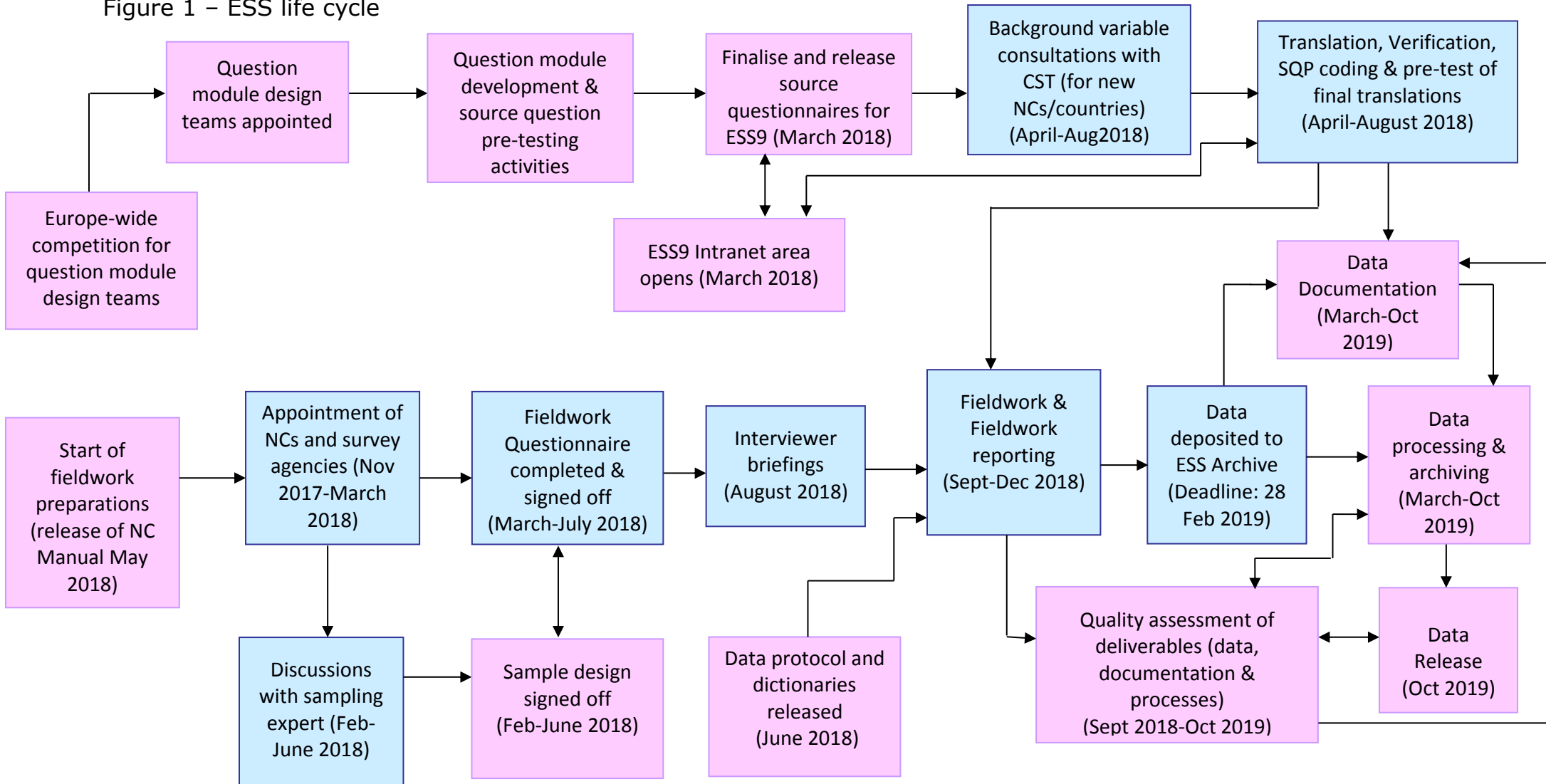


Figure 2 – Source questionnaire Development and Pre-testing

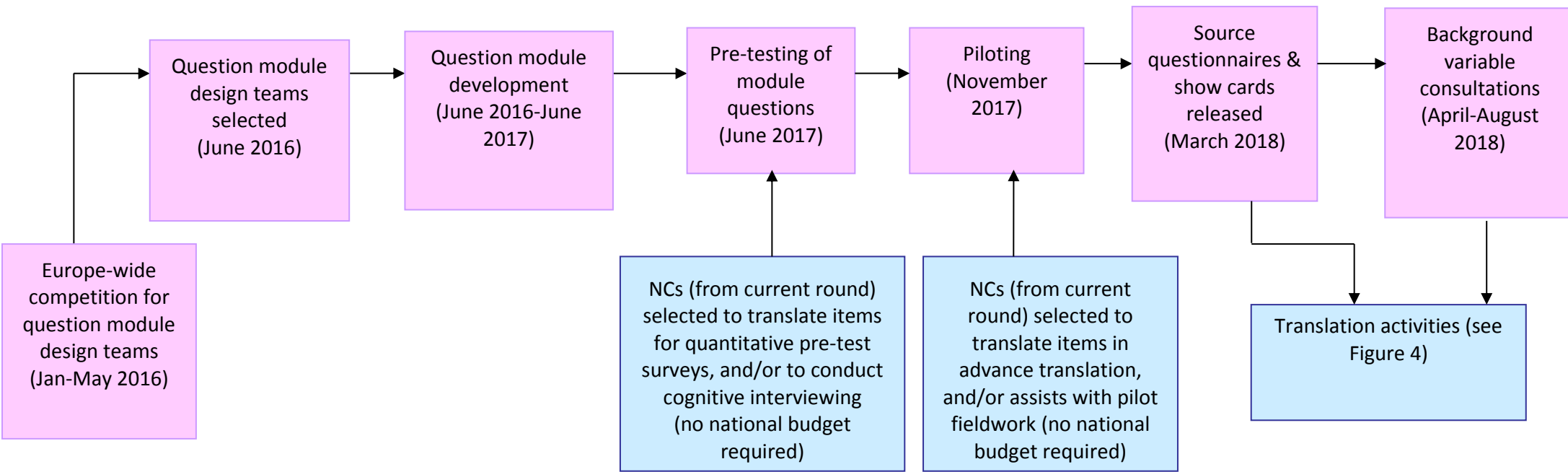


Figure 3 - Sampling and Fieldwork

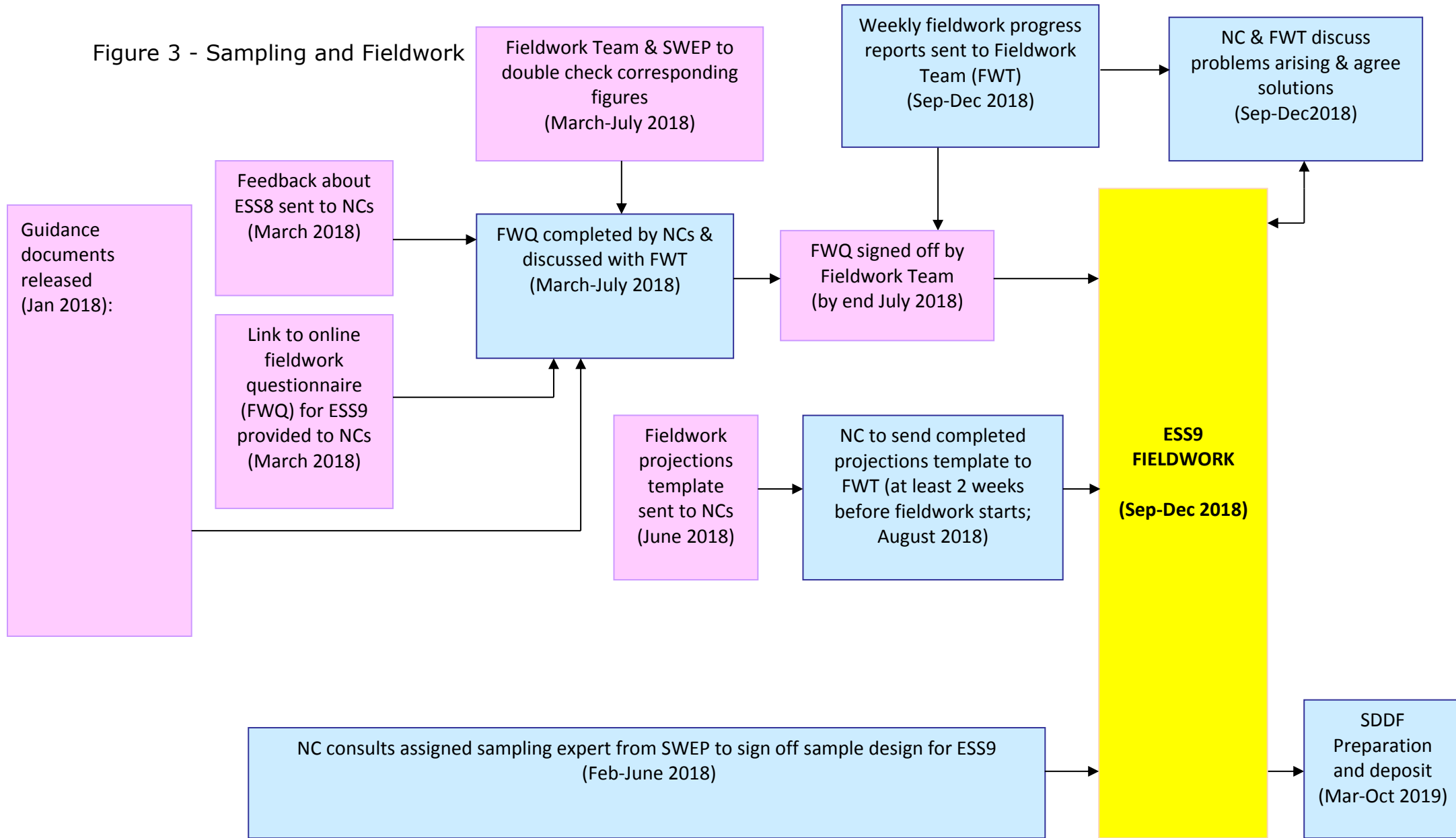


Figure 4 - Producing Country Questionnaires: Translation, External Assessment, Harmonisation of formal characteristics of the questions and Pre-testing

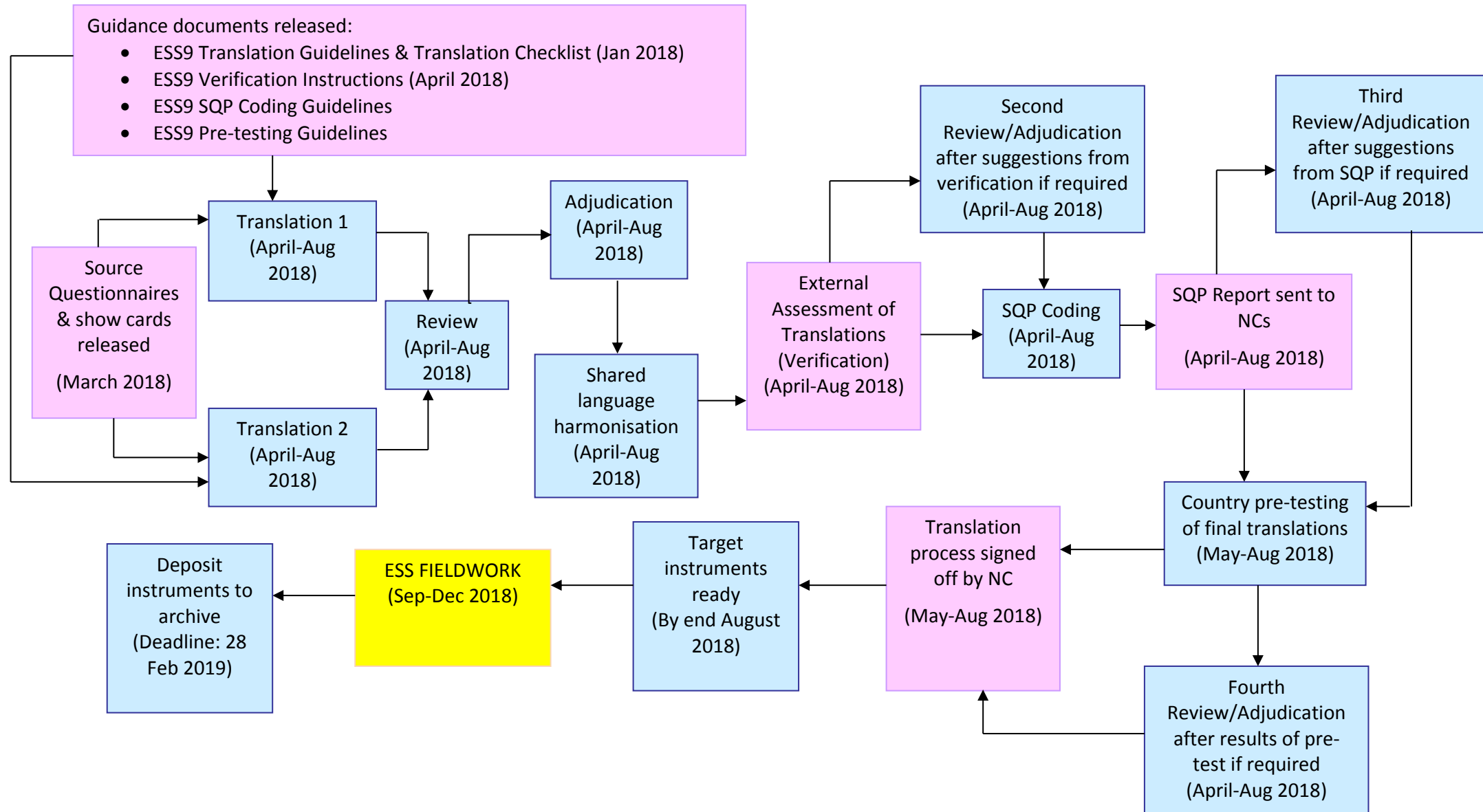
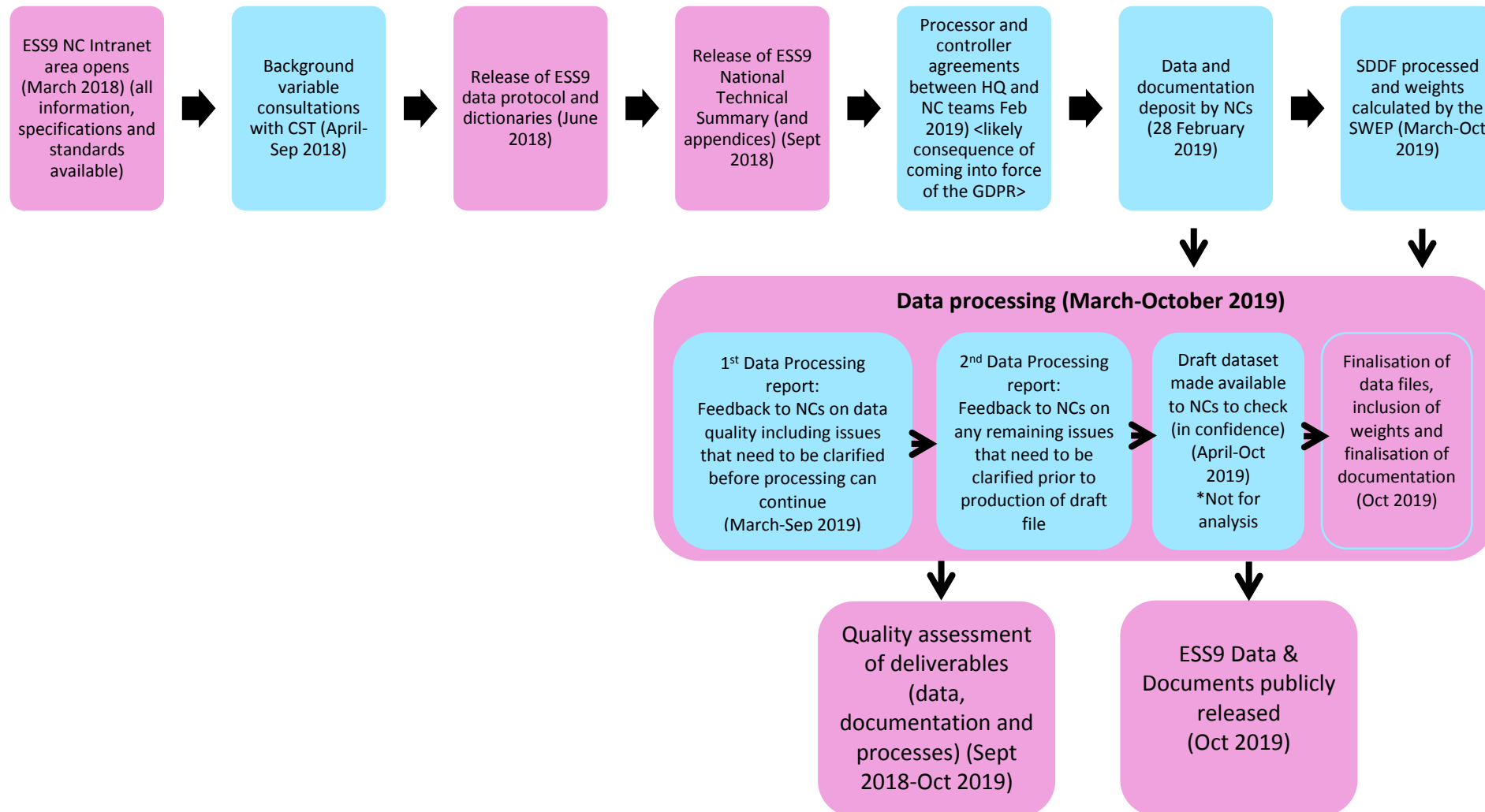


Figure 5 - Data Preparation, Processing and Archiving



6.2. Key documents

All Round 8 versions of the documents listed below are included in the zipped file ('ESS Manual') that accompanies the Specifications⁸. The Round 9 versions will be made available on the dates specified below. The username and password for the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet will be provided to all NCs when it opens in March 2018.

Table 2: Key documents

<i>Document name</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Round 9 Publication date (2018)</i>	<i>Source⁹</i>
Sampling Guidelines	8	January	By email, then ESS9NC-intra
Guidelines for enhancing response rates and minimising nonresponse bias	10	January	By email, then ESS9NC-intra
Guidelines on fieldwork progress reporting	10	(April)	ESS9NC-intra
Fieldwork questionnaire (FWQ)	10	March	Link to online FWQ will be sent to NCs by email
Source Questionnaire and showcards	7	March (end)	ESS9NC-intra
Translation Guidelines Translation Quality Checklist	7	January	ESS9NC-intra
SQP Coding Guidelines and SQP User Manual	7	April	ESS9NC-intra
Pre-testing Guidelines	7	April	ESS9NC-intra
(Translation and) Verification Follow-up Form (T)VFF Verification Instructions	7	April	ESS9NC-intra
Example Contact Form	10	April	Available on request from HQ (different versions depending on the sample design)
NC Manual (including Interviewer Briefings)	10	May	ESS9NC-intra
Fieldwork Projections Template	10	June	ESS9NC-intra
ESS Data Protocol and dictionaries	10	June	ESS9NC-intra
National Technical Summary & appendices	11	September	ESS9NC-intra

⁸ See www.europeansocialsurvey.org/methodology/ess_methodology/survey_specifications.html

⁹ Almost all documents will be available via the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet (ESS9NC-intra, for short). Some are available on request, or will be sent by email.

7. Preparing the questionnaires

7.1. The ESS source questionnaire

The ESS source questionnaire is the original British-English questionnaire that needs to be translated to the target languages in the participating countries. It consists of two parts:

- Main questionnaire (core module and rotating modules as well as the MTMM test questions which were previously included in a supplementary questionnaire),
- Interviewer questionnaire (to be completed by the interviewer after each interview),

An Overview of the ESS Main Questionnaire Design

The ESS questionnaire is the responsibility of the CST. Rotating modules are developed in conjunction with the Question Module Design Teams (QDTs).

NCs are expected to

- meet with and advise QDTs on question content and development, providing detailed comments on two or more drafts of the question modules,
- liaise with the CST on question consultation processes as required (e.g. on measures of partnership status, education, religion, income and ancestry).

NCs are also responsible for

- production and assessment of the national (translated) questionnaire according to the procedures outlined by the CST including:
 - translation of the English source questionnaires
 - team review and adjudication
 - external assessment (verification – note costs covered by the CST) and harmonisation of formal characteristics of the questions using SQP coding (note NCs need to conduct the SQP coding)
 - coordination and interpretation of national pre-tests, CAPI programming and routing.

All these procedures are to be completed and signed off by the CST before fieldwork starts.

NCs may add country-specific questions to the questionnaire, but only after discussion and sign-off by the CST. By signing off the country-specific questions ESS ERIC will undertake to define the scope and purpose of the items to ensure it can act as Data Controller for those items too.

The ESS main questionnaire is administered to all respondents using face-to-face computer-assisted interviewing (CAPI).

The total interviewing time in British English will take an average of 55-60 minutes (excluding optional country-specific questions, the interviewer questions, and general administration of the contact procedures). Please note that interview lengths in other languages may vary and will sometimes take significantly longer than in British English. **Funders should ensure that a reasonably reliable prediction of interview length is made based upon earlier rounds of ESS or if participating for the first time based upon involvement in other cross-national projects.**

7.1.1. The main source questionnaire

The ESS main questionnaire contains a 'core' module, which largely remains the same each round¹⁰. In each round, there are also two short 'rotating' modules, which are developed by competitively-selected, multinational questionnaire design teams in collaboration with the CST. In Round 9 these modules focus on:

- Justice and Fairness (*new*)
- Timing of Life (*repeat module with all items also fielded in the Round 3 module*)

The final Round 9 main questionnaire and showcards will be available to NCs at the end of March 2018.

7.1.2. The test questions (MTMM experiments)

The ESS previously had a supplementary questionnaire that included the test questions. However in order to improve the quality of the experiments these items are now embedded in the main questionnaire. The first set of items appear about half way through the questionnaire with the repeat items fielded at the very end of the questionnaire. The repeat measures are based on the first set of test questions but are asked at the end in a slightly modified form to facilitate quality assessment. Repetition is necessary in order to determine measurement errors and the reliability of the items. In order to allow sufficient questions to be tested in this way without overburdening respondents, the sample is split into subgroups, each group getting a different set of questions.

7.1.3. The interviewer source questionnaire

Interviewers are asked to code information about how each interview went for the respondent and whether or not anyone else was present during the interview. This would normally be completed by the interviewer after the end of the interview but before packing up and thanking the respondent. Or it may be completed once the interviewer has left the household but soon enough that the interviewer can remember all of the relevant details.

Note that interviewers need to be informed how this data will be handled and stored in the same way as for respondent data. Interviewers should be informed that the survey agency would be able to identify the answers they give to these questions. Note that interviewer numbers deposited to the archive should not be the numbers interviewers which are actually used in the field.

7.1.4. Showcards

Showcards should reflect the translation used in the source questionnaire. Occasionally there is additional text on the showcards which should be translated according to ESS procedures. The visual appearance of the showcards should reflect that of the source showcards and should not be altered.

Risks of Adding Questions to the ESS Questionnaire

- The questionnaire may become too long.
- The additional questions may clash with content of the questionnaire, be sensitive or be intruding.

Therefore, the number, duration and content of any additional questions must be discussed in advance with the CST to ensure that the inclusion of additional questions does not compromise the conduct of the interview and overall response rates.

¹⁰ See www.europeansocialsurvey.org/methodology/ess_methodology/source_questionnaire/

7.1.5. Adding country-specific questions

Country-specific questions must be inserted after the ESS questionnaire. NCs must consult with the CST before each round if adding country-specific questions. The CST will then decide whether to approve the inclusion of the items. Once this approval is given the Director will then *de facto* be the Data Controller for those items. The CST reserves the right to refuse a request if the length or topic are detrimental to cross-national quality or the reputation of the survey.

7.2. Producing country questionnaires

Producing country questionnaires that are comparable (functionally equivalent) to the source questionnaire is of great importance. A key to achieving this is to carry out careful translation and adaptation procedures. The ESS translation procedures have been developed to optimise comparability across languages, to minimise the probability of errors, and to maximise the chances that concepts in the source questionnaire will be the same in every language after translation.

Languages and Target Population

The ESS target population includes all residents in each country, regardless of whether they can speak the main language(s) comfortably. Therefore, to ensure that the populations of the participating countries are optimally covered given constrained budgets, translations are required for each language used as first language by 5% or more of the population.

NCs may wish to consider producing ESS questionnaires in languages used as a first language by less than 5% of the population in order to be inclusive, increase representativeness and boost response rates. Note that all language versions must be produced according to the ESS committee approach for translation (see the guidance documents) although a localisation scheme can be used in some instances. Implementation issues must be discussed with the CST fieldwork and translation teams.

The translation protocol requires the following steps – based on the TRAPD process:

- questionnaire translation using a committee or team approach ('TRA' in TRAPD), including shared language harmonisation if applicable;
- external translation assessment by linguistic experts of all translated language versions; for Round 9, this will be carried out in the form of 'translation verification' by the external service provider cApStAn (www.capstan.be) and the costs of this part are met by the CST;
- harmonisation of formal characteristics of the questions using SQP coding to compare formal characteristics of the translated questions with those in the source language;
- national pre-testing ('P' within the TRAPD scheme).
- sign-off on translations and documentation of the translation process ('D' in TRAPD).

Guidance Documents for Translation Procedures

Detailed descriptions of the translation procedures and requirements, harmonisation across shared languages, verification, and the choice of suitable personnel referred to in section 7.2 are available in the ESS Translation Guidelines (ESS-TG)

Other steps to be followed are outlined in the following documents:

- ESS Round 9 Translation Quality Check List
- ESS Round 9 Verification Instructions
- ESS Round 9 (Translation and) Verification Follow-up Form (T)VFF
- ESS Round 9 SQP Coding Guidelines
- ESS Round 9 SQP Codebook
- ESS Round 9 Pre-testing Guidelines
- Guidance for translation in languages spoken by less than 5%

In addition, please also consult the following document:

- ESS Round 9 Translation Queries and Answers (available in summer 2018 only)

7.2.1. Translation procedures (TRA in TRAPD)

Each country translates the source questionnaire into those languages spoken by 5% or more of the population. NCs are required to find suitable individuals to fulfil the three key roles in the approach: translators, reviewer, and adjudicator.

Consistency Across Rounds

One of the aims of the ESS ERIC is to chart changes in attitudes over time. This will be difficult if question texts change over time. For this reason, changes to question wording should be avoided if possible. Countries that have participated in previous rounds of the ESS should note that **changes to their translations of questions in the core module of the ESS questionnaire and of repeated questions from repeat rotating modules must not be implemented without approval from the ESS translation team at GESIS and ESS ERIC HQ.**

One advantage of pursuing consistency is that, for countries that participated in earlier rounds, a substantial part of the translation work will already have been carried out.

If applicable, countries should engage in shared language harmonisation (for example, for French in Belgium, France, and Switzerland). Each country will prepare their own draft version and will then consult each other about appropriate translation and possible harmonisation of question wording. However, each country is responsible for ensuring the functional equivalence of its own translation(s). The different options recommended for this 'shared language harmonisation' step are outlined in the ESS Translation Guidelines.

7.2.2. Expert evaluations

All translated language versions are subject to two expert evaluation procedures: a linguistic, pragmatic and semantic quality assessment (verification) by the external service provider cApStAn, and harmonisation of formal characteristics of the questions to detect inconsistencies as compared to the source questionnaire and eliminate these where possible.

NCs should set aside approximately **6-8** weeks for the entire translation verification process. Translation verification is described in more detail in the ESS Translation Guidelines and in the Verification Instructions.

NCs will be asked to participate in an evaluation of 'formal differences' between their national language versions and the source version for a sample of items. Using the coding system implemented in the Survey Quality Prediction (SQP) platform, NCs will assign codes to describe the item characteristics. CST members will have completed coding of these items in the source version, and will compare the resulting codes to those submitted by the NC in each participating country. The CST will then send a report to the NC providing information and suggestions for harmonisation that are meant to help improve the comparability across all ESS country versions in Round 9 and in the future.

SQP Coding by the NC may take **2-4** days in total.

Harmonisation of formal characteristics of the questions using SQP

The objective of this process is to prevent unnecessary deviations between the source questionnaire and the country versions by comparing a number of formal characteristics of the items. SQP coding is also meant to improve language versions by making NCs more aware of the choices that are made in translation, and the impact these choices can have on comparability, validity, and reliability of the questions.

7.2.3. National Pre-testing (P in TRAPD)

All translated questionnaires must be pre-tested following the completion of external assessment (verification) and SQP Coding. The key aims of the pre-test are to check the lay-out of CAPI programming and routing, and to check whether questions and answer scales are clear, complete and correct. The pre-test is not an opportunity to amend the source questionnaire but it may lead to changes to the translations, which should be discussed with the Translation Team.

Pre-testing Techniques

In the pre-test time stamps could be added in the questionnaire, making it possible to analyse the duration of questions blocks and identify problem areas.

In addition to the regular pre-test, countries are strongly encouraged to tape record interviews, conduct respondent and/or interviewer debriefs and use cognitive interviews during the pre-test. This will provide additional information on the understandability of the translated questions and their equivalence to the source questionnaire.

As part of the TRAPD scheme, pre-tests have an important function for testing whether translations are correctly and easily understood by the target populations. From Round 9 on, this step should be set up and analysed more systematically, given its importance for the translation process. More details about suggestions for improving the national pre-tests will be circulated in 2017.

In Round 9 the CST may ask for volunteering countries that are willing to carry out extended pre-tests; candidate teams may be those that have already participated in Cognitive Interviewing within the questionnaire design phase for the ESS source questionnaire in past rounds, or other teams that have the staff and infrastructure in their national teams for carrying out and analysing such qualitative pre-tests and are willing to do this additional step. These volunteering countries should also ask their survey agencies about any experience carrying out cognitive interviews or qualitative interviews.

All countries however MUST cost to pre-test 30 items in a standard field test with interviewer debrief.

The pre-test is to be conducted by the **Survey Agency** that will conduct the fieldwork. A quota-controlled, demographically-balanced sample of at least 30 people should be used.

7.3. Translation sign-off and documentation (D in TRAPD)***

After completion of all translation steps, external assessment (verification), harmonisation of formal characteristics of questions using SQP, and pre-testing, NCs are asked to submit their translations for sign-off and to document the process of producing the country questionnaire(s).

After formal sign-off of the translations, NCs are asked to provide the CST with the final (T)VFF including:

- follow-up on the verification results,
- follow-up on SQP Coding results,
- follow-up on shared languages reconciliation, if applicable,
- follow-up on pre-testing results, if applicable,
- any changes made to existing translations, and
- documentation of the role and qualifications of the different people involved in the translation, review and adjudication process: translator 1, translator 2, reviewer, adjudicator, and any other people involved, if applicable.

The final, fieldwork-ready country versions of the questionnaire and showcards must be uploaded to the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet right before fieldwork starts.

To make documentation available to data users, analysts and other researchers who wish to learn about the ESS procedures, the final (T)VFF, the final country questionnaires and the showcards will be uploaded to the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet and later shared on the ESS website.

8. Sampling

8.1. Sampling principles and procedures

High quality probability based sampling is the core of survey representativeness. Scientific sampling procedures will ensure that every member of the population under study has a known probability greater than zero to be part of the survey. Effective sampling will ensure that fieldwork efficiency is maximised.

Every country will be assigned a contact person from the ESS Sampling and Weighting Expert Panel (SWEP). The NC, the sampling expert, and possibly a representative of the Survey Agency will provide the optimum sampling design for each participating country.

The ESS will be representative of all persons aged 15 and over (no upper age limit) resident within private households in each country, regardless of their nationality, citizenship or language. Potential under-coverage of certain areas, because of sampling frame deficiencies or for any other reason, must be discussed with the SWEP/contact person at SWEP prior to deciding on the final sampling method, so that the problem can be remedied if at all possible.

The sample is to be selected by strict random probability methods at every stage. The relative selection probabilities of every sample member must be known and recorded.

Quota sampling is not permitted at any stage, nor is substitution of non-responding households or individuals (whether 'refusals', 'non-contacts', 'not able' or 'ineligibles').

Oversampling

Oversampling of geographic areas within countries, e.g., Northern Ireland or Eastern Germany, is allowed to be able to analyse small groups. Appropriate weighting procedures will adjust for unequal inclusion probabilities.

Oversampling of potential low response groups is not recommended, however. Oversampling of potentially underrepresented groups will result in a larger sample size and a larger precision, but not necessarily in increased accuracy due to potential bias as a result of increased nonresponse rates. Instead of oversampling it is recommended to make additional efforts in low response areas.

The SWEP strongly recommends using stratification - at least of primary sampling units (PSUs). This is expected to increase the effective sample size.

Sampling frames

Where a sampling frame of individuals is not available, or lacks sufficient coverage, countries may use a sampling frame of households or of addresses. In these cases, procedures for selecting a household from a multi-household address (where appropriate), and an individual within a household, will be specified and agreed in advance with the sampling panel.

If an area sample based on a random-route procedure is applied, it must be ensured that a pre-listing of at least twice as many addresses as needed for the gross sample is performed from which the required number of addresses will need to be selected by the Survey Agency. The person who produces the pre-listing (the enumerator) **should under no circumstances be the same person as the interviewer**. Enumeration should take place and be fully completed before the start of fieldwork.

Non-coverage, that is, specific groups being excluded from the sampling frame, should be discussed with the SWEP well in advance of fieldwork.

8.2. Effective sample size

The minimum 'effective achieved sample size' (n_{eff}) must be 1,500, or 800 in countries with ESS populations (aged 15+) of less than 2 million after discounting for design effects. With the help of the SWEP, each country should determine the appropriate size of its initial issued sample by taking into account the realistic predicted impact of clustering, variation in inclusion probabilities (if applicable), eligibility rates (where appropriate), and response rate. The SWEP will assist in the calculation of the gross sample size required in order to achieve an effective sample size of 1,500 (800) interviews. Note that in some cases (e.g. complex multi-stage sampling design, low expected response rate, etc.) this might require a larger gross sample and this needs to be considered when setting the budget for the survey. After the SWEP has agreed on and signed off a sampling design, the number of cases in the gross sample must be issued without amendment.

Where a country fails to meet the effective sample size requirement in the most recent round of fieldwork, efforts must be made to meet this in the next round and the cost implications should be considered by the funder.

8.3. Documentation of sampling procedures

The precise sampling procedures to be employed in each country, and their implications for representativeness, must be documented in full and submitted in advance of fieldwork to the SWEP for 'signing off'. This form must subsequently be sent to the CST for future reference. This precaution is to ensure that all countries within the ESS have

defensible (and equivalent) national probability samples of their resident (aged 15 and over) populations.

A sample design data file (SDDF) must be produced by each country and delivered to the CST. It must contain all information about the sample design, such as inclusion probabilities at each stage, information on clustering and stratification. A full and detailed specification of the SDDF is provided in the ESS Data Protocol. Failure to deliver the sample design data file (SDDF) will be considered an irreparable compromise to quality (see section 12.2).

Sampling information required

The following details will be required before the SWEP can 'sign off' a country's sample design:

- a description of the target population and of any systematic exclusions due to frame imperfections;
- a description of the sampling frame and of the units it comprises at all stages of the design (including information on units that might be used either to stratify the sample or to vary probabilities of selection for certain subgroups, and estimates of any likely under-coverage, over-coverage and ineligibles);
- for those using multi-stage samples: a description of how the units at each stage will be selected to result in a random sample of individuals, plus the inclusion probabilities of units at each stage of selection;
- details of whether and how the sample is to be clustered geographically, and how the initial clusters are to be selected;
- full details of any stratification to be employed;
- the calculations on which the predicted effective sample size has been based;
- realistic and reliable predictions of design effects (due to clustering and due to unequal inclusion probabilities), response rates, the rate of ineligibles and the required number of interviews as well as the required number of elements to draw the initial sample (gross).

The final sample design will also be fully documented by each NC. This documentation will be translated into one or more variables within the national data file to indicate the relative selection probabilities of cases and to enable appropriate weighting strategies. See 12.1 for information about data protection assured by the ESS Archive at NSD.

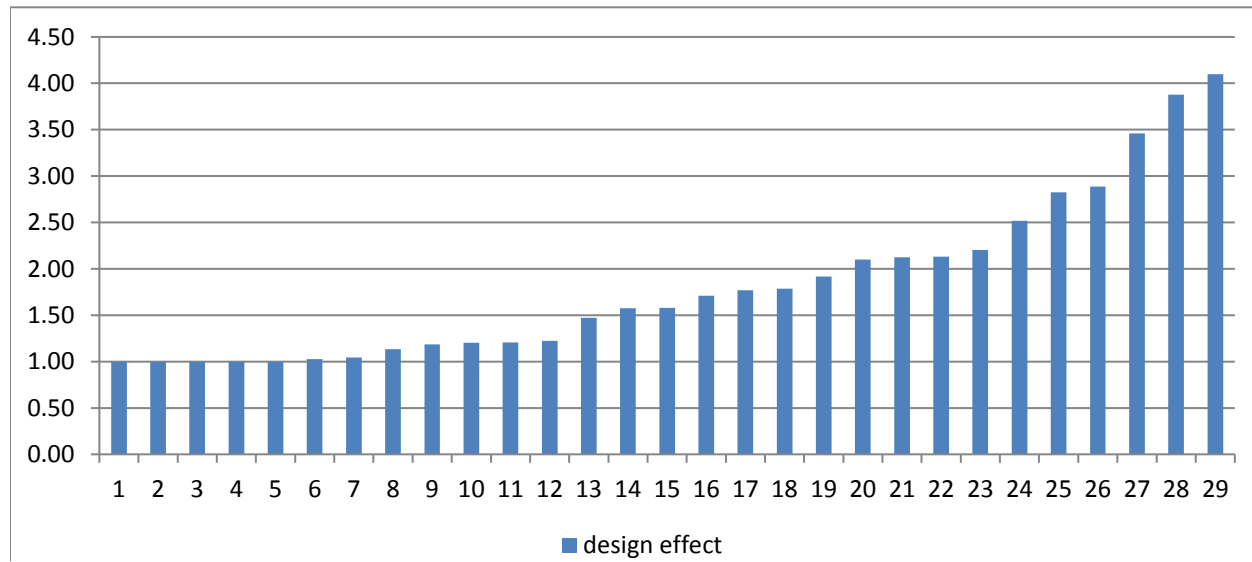
Number of interviews and effective sample size

The effective sample size is a function of the number of interviews, a correction for household size (for samples of households and addresses), a correction for other possible differences in selection probabilities, and a correction for intra-class correlation within Primary Sampling Units (PSUs). Information from ESS Round 6 (see graph below) shows that in a number of countries the design effect is 1. This means that 1,500 interviews result in an effective sample size of 1,500. In other countries the design effect is close to 4. This means that 1,500 interviews results in an effective sample size of 375, or – alternatively – that 6,000 persons have to be interviewed to achieve an effective sample size of 1,500.

There are four ways to minimise the design effect:

- if possible, move to an individual sampling frame;
- increase the number of PSUs, and thus decrease the number of units within a PSU;
- deploy different interviewers within the same PSU;
- improve interviewer training and briefing to decrease interviewer effects.

See the Sampling Guidelines at the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet.



9. Specification for Survey Agency

9.1. Requirements and key tasks

The Survey Agency appointed in each country must be capable of, and have a track record in, conducting national probability-based surveys to the highest standards of rigour by means of CAPI face-to-face interviewing. All contenders will have to submit proposals and budgets according to the specifications outlined in the next section of this document. The NC will ensure that the agency is made aware that they may have to change or adapt some of their routine procedures and methods for the ESS in order to ensure cross-national comparability and equivalence.

The key tasks of the Survey Agency are preparing, conducting and monitoring of fieldwork as described in section 10, and processing data and preparing deliverables as described in sections 11.1 and 11.2.

The Survey Agency will be asked to adhere to the Declaration on Ethics of the International Statistical Institute, in addition to any co-existing national obligations that they may have (see footnote 2). **The survey agency must also undertake to adhere to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and national laws. Provision for this must should be included in the contract with the survey agency and NC.**

9.2. Communication

The Survey Agency will have to discuss fieldwork procedures, progress and outcomes with the NC in every phase.

Before the start of fieldwork a Fieldwork Questionnaire (provided by the CST) must be completed by the NC. The fieldwork questionnaire is meant to serve as an aid for NCs/survey agencies to enable them to adhere to the present ESS Specifications. The Fieldwork Questionnaire must be discussed with the CST and signed off by them at least 2 weeks before the start of fieldwork. **In many cases input from the Survey Agency will be required.**

Survey agencies will have to closely monitor fieldwork progress to allow the NC to provide at least weekly information to the CST on fieldwork progress (see also 10.7.2), alert these when something untoward happens, help them preparing deliverables and provide information requested by the ESS Archive at NSD.

Survey agencies must also follow all instructions given by the data controller (ESS ERIC Director) and report any data breaches to ESS ERIC HQ and National Coordinator at once.

Field directors from survey agencies are expected to attend one Field Directors' Meeting in spring 2018 which is usually held in The Hague, Netherlands.

9.3. Raw data and agreement on handling indirectly identifiable data

In recognition of the large amount of resources put into the collection of the ESS data, it is required that the participating countries deposit raw, unedited data and verbatim recorded answers to the official ESS ERIC Archive at NSD, Norway. This is to ensure that copies of the un-edited raw files are saved for possible future use and checks.

If national laws and regulations in countries outside the EU/EEA should prohibit the permanent deposit of raw data to the ESS Archive, the Survey Agency must commit to safely store and maintain the raw data for a minimum of 10 years. The ESS ERIC HQ must be notified before any destruction of ESS data.

Please note that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) entered into force on May 2016 and will apply from 25 May 2018. This means that procedures with regard to information given to the respondents, data handling agreements, transfer and protection will have to be adapted and harmonised (section 9.3 and section 12). Note that ESS ERIC is the Data Controller (their function defined by the GDPR). Survey agencies and NCs are Data Processors. It will be necessary for each data processor to inform ESS ERIC HQ who the Data Protection Officer is (in cases where they are appointed). ESS ERIC HQ will provide harmonised wording regarding data protection and storage which must be presented (without alternation other than translation) to every ESS respondent. Consent is noted by the interview being conducted and written consent is not required. Each data processor will need to sign a data handling agreement with ESS ERIC.

ESS ERIC will be appointing a Data Protection Officer and the name of this person will be clearly communicated to all participating countries.

NCs will be informed about possible further changes in procedures as soon as possible.

10. Specification for fieldwork

Fieldwork responsibilities

The NC is responsible for the national implementation of fieldwork, the monitoring of fieldwork and the deliverables. The Survey Agency will conduct fieldwork according to the specifications in this section, and according to the national elaboration and details of the fieldwork plan. The Survey Agency will also have to provide information on the progress of fieldwork, to make monitoring by the NC and the CST possible, and play a supporting role in the preparation of deliverables (section 11).

The tasks of the Survey Agency will have to be clearly specified in each country. In some cases there can be a division of labour between NC and Survey Agency. In all cases, close communication with the NC is required.

10.1. Summary of tasks

The Survey Agency will conduct ESS fieldwork according to the present Specifications. The ESS fieldwork period will last at least one month within a four-month period between 1 September and 31 December 2018 (see timetable in section 4).

Tasks of the Survey Agency include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- programming the questionnaires and designing (and, where necessary, printing) other fieldwork materials (Contact Forms, showcards, etc.),
- testing routing and completeness of questionnaires,
- pre-testing the translated questionnaire(s),
- interviewer training, briefing, and monitoring,
- preparing and sending advance material (advance letters, brochures),
- sampling implementation (samples of individuals, households or addresses),
- developing and implementing measures to enhance response rates (e.g. incentives),
- data collection: conducting interviews, completing Contact Forms and interviewer questionnaires,
- monitoring interviewers' and fieldwork progress, and providing case level fieldwork progress information to the CST,
- cleaning and editing data files,
- coding and classifying data,
- (helping) prepare data files and documents.

10.2. Preparing the questionnaire

The ESS questionnaire has been prepared by the CST in cooperation with Questionnaire Design teams (QDT) and the NCs. A key task of the Survey Agency is to program the CAPI questionnaire, and prepare all other fieldwork documents (advance letters, Contact Forms, showcards, etc.).

Before fieldwork starts translated questionnaires must be pre-tested (see also section 7). The key aims of the pre-test are to check the CAPI programming and routing, and to check whether questions and answer scales are clear, complete and correct. **The pre-test is not an opportunity to amend the source questionnaire.** A quota-controlled, demographically-balanced sample of at least 30 people should be used.

10.3. Interviewer briefing and workload

In each country, a sufficient number of interviewers should be engaged to conduct the ESS interviews. Ideally, all ESS interviewers conduct multiple interviews to make briefing cost effective. However, even well trained interviewers can influence the quality of the collected data, and research has shown that higher workloads are positively related to larger interviewer effects. Therefore the workload per interviewer will be limited to a maximum of 48 sample units (i.e., respondents and non-respondents) throughout fieldwork. Any proposed deviation in this area must be agreed with the CST in advance.

All interviewers working on ESS are expected to have experience with face-to-face CAPI interviews among random samples. They are also expected to have been trained in conducting such interviews, i.e., they must have received instruction about effective doorstep interaction and standardised interviewing and they must have a sound grasp of both positive and negative effects of interviewer behaviour on data quality. If interviewers have not received such training prior to being hired for ESS work, the Survey Agency should ensure that a training session takes place before the briefing session.

Briefing is different from training in that it is project specific, i.e., it describes the ESS project, the ESS questionnaire, and ESS rules. All interviewers must be personally briefed by the NC or Survey Agency upon being hired for ESS Round 9 and before carrying out their assignment. Their briefing must cover in detail how to code observation data, how to follow contact procedures and complete the Contact Forms, and how to follow respondent selection procedures (if applicable). The CST will provide materials that serve as the basis for this briefing. It will also provide a practice interview which must be administered in full during the briefing so interviewers can practise asking questions from the survey.

ESS interviewer training and briefing

ESS interviewers must be trained (task specific) and briefed (project specific).

The CST will provide a series of pre-structured slides and related materials to be used as the basis for briefing sessions. Each key part of the briefing will be outlined with the explicit expectation that NC team will then adapt it to their local circumstances. The materials include, among other documents:

- Guidelines on completing ESS Contact Forms (see 10.5),
- Guidelines on collecting observable data (see 10.5),
- Scripted ESS practice interview,
- Guidelines on training as well as briefing,
- Guidelines on data protection, data handling and compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

NCs are expected to deposit the slides that are used during the interviewer briefings in their country at the ESS Archive when they deposit their data. NCs also fill out a short questionnaire about interviewer selection and briefing.

10.4. Respondent recruitment

The first contact with potential respondents, following a possible advance letter and brochure, will be face-to-face. Once contact with a household has been established, or after four unsuccessful personal visits, interviewers may make (or change) appointments by telephone.

The one exception to this is for countries with sample frames of named individuals with telephone numbers. Here the first contact may be made by telephone, in order to make appointments to visit the respondent. However, the country has to provide acceptable evidence to the CST that the response rate will not be damaged. Sampled individuals without a listed phone number must be contacted face-to-face. Where those with telephone numbers cannot be contacted by phone the same number of in person visits is still required (4 before it is considered a permanent non-contact). At least one in person visit to each sample unit is always required in order to collect information on the dwelling and neighbourhood (e.g., even in the event of a telephone hard refusal).

Survey research has shown that the effect of survey modes on the measurement can be large (Villar, A & Fitzgerald, R (2017) 'Using mixed modes in survey data research: Results from Six Experiments' In Breen, M (ed) Values and Identities in Europe. Evidence from the European Social Survey. Routledge. London). Substantial differences can be expected between administration of a questionnaire by telephone and in a face-to-face situation. For that reason, **interviews may not, under any circumstances, be conducted over the telephone, or by self-completion methods whether on paper or online.**

Interviews may only be conducted with the sampled individuals: substitution (replacing a respondent) or proxy interviews (someone answers on behalf of the respondent) are not allowed. When no list of named individuals or named households is available for sampling, it should be ensured that the enumerator, i.e. the person who lists the households in the field, is not the same person as the interviewer. Enumeration should take place before the start of fieldwork.

Interviewers should be thoroughly briefed on selection methods and be informed that the correct selection is vital to ensuring the selection probabilities of the respondent are known.

Evidence from the ESS suggests that when interviewers have to make a selection of the target respondent from amongst all of those living in the household the final samples is less likely to accurately reflect the target population, compared to where a named sample of individuals is used. For example, more women tend to be selected than men whereas this should be equal. Interviewers must therefore be thoroughly briefed on careful selection and methods should be put in place to carefully monitor the selections made.

10.5. Response rates: targets, calculation and contact forms

10.5.1. Target response rates

The proportion of non-contacts should not exceed 3% of all sample units. In addition, a minimum target response – after discounting ineligible (as defined by the CST - see text block “Calculation of ESS response rates” below) – has been set at 70%. Ideally, all countries should aim for this 70%. Acknowledging – based on previous experiences in the ESS – that reaching this 70% target response rate is very challenging in many countries, all countries are expected to plan and budget fieldwork in order to reach a response rate higher than in the previous round.

Calculation of ESS response rates, and final disposition codes

The ESS response rate is calculated as shown below:

$$\text{Response rate} = \frac{\text{number of achieved complete interviews}}{\text{number of individuals, households, addresses selected MINUS ineligible}}$$

For the calculation of this response rate, **ineligibles** comprise:

For samples of individuals

- Respondent deceased,
- Respondent emigrated/left the country long term (for more than 6 months),
- Respondent resides in an institution.

For samples of households or addresses

- Address not occupied at all/demolished premises,
- Address not yet built/under construction,
- Non-residential address (e.g. used solely for business / industrial purposes or as an institutional address e.g. a prison, a nursing residence, or a boarding school),
- Address occupied, but no resident household (e.g. weekend or second homes),
- Address occupied by resident household, but no eligible respondent (no one aged 15 +).

The ESS response rate to be reported will be calculated according to a pre-specified standard format, which will include at least the following mutually-exclusive categories:

- A. Total issued addresses (or other sample units)
- B. Units not eligible, and why (as defined above)
- C. Total eligible sample (A-B)
- D. % no contact (after 4+ visits, or if fewer visits made, why)
- E. % personal refusal, and why (pre-specified categories)
- F. % too ill or incapacitated
- G. % household (or proxy) refusal, and why (pre-specified categories)
- H. % achieved complete interview
- I. Total per cent response rate (H/C)

NCs will discuss with the SWEP which national target response rate will be used in designing the sample and preparing fieldwork. This national target response rate will be based on response rates in previous rounds, and feedback from the Fieldwork Team on past deviations in fieldwork, and may require increased efforts and improvements in the fieldwork design. Survey agencies should cost their surveys with this response rate in mind and consider what steps may be required to achieve it.

10.5.2. Contact Forms

Outcomes of all contact attempts and contacts, whether by telephone or in-person visits, to addresses, households and individuals in the sample will be defined and recorded on so-called Contact Forms (CFs) according to a pre-specified set of categories that distinguish ineligibility, interview, non-contact, refusal, other contact (but no interview) and other types of nonresponse.

The purpose of the Contact Form is to document all stages of interviewers' attempts to make contact with every selected sample unit, to identify non-response units, to assist in improving response rates through converting initial refusers and to facilitate the detection of potential nonresponse bias. Given the nature of the contact procedures during ESS fieldwork, it is recommended that interviewers are remunerated additionally (or separately) for completing the Contact Form.

Interviewers are asked to record the following information in the CF:

- interviewer number,
- date, time and outcome of all contact attempts and contacts,
- household and respondent selection procedure (non-individual sampling frame countries),
- interviewer's judgment of future cooperation of initial refusers,
- demographic information of the initial refusers,
- information on dwelling and neighbourhood.

The CST provide model CFs, which must be requested from ESS ERIC HQ, for translation and use by national teams. It is preferable that these model CFs are used by all countries. However, if this is not possible, country-specific Contact Forms may be used but countries must show how they will 'bridge' their CF data into the ESS CF Data Protocol. This process will need to be agreed with the CST prior to fieldwork even if this has been approved in an earlier round. Where possible the CST strongly recommends that the CFs are programmed and added to the CAPI program or some other means of digital collection. Depending on the results of ongoing pilot tests, countries may have the option of using the FMMS, developed by the CST as part of the SERISS project (see below), to collect CF data. The information can then be used during fieldwork and centralised keying of the paper forms is not required.

In addition, the Survey Agency should provide information on the interviewers' age group and gender, and, if possible, on the interviewers' years of experience (in classes). This information should be delivered as administrative variables in the Main data file to be deposited to the ESS Archive at NSD.

Detailed guidance on interviewer tasks and the completion on Contact Forms can be found in the NC Manual, which also includes a dummy interview and the interviewer manual (the latter incorporates the former project instructions and guidelines on completing contact forms and collecting observable data).

10.6. Response rate enhancement

The ESS aims for high response rates (target 70%) and low noncontact rates (maximum 3%) in all participating countries. To pursue this interviewers have to make at least four personal visits to each sample unit before it is abandoned as non-productive

- on different days of the week and times of day,
- of which at least one must be at the weekend and one in the evening,
- spread over at least two different weeks (14 days).

Similarly, to allow difficult-to-contact people to be located, the fieldwork period should not be less than 30 days.

All potential survey agencies must suggest a range of techniques that they believe would enhance the final response rate. Such techniques must include advance letters and brochures which will convey information about data protection and storage. Other possibilities might include toll-free telephone numbers for potential respondents to contact, links to national ESS websites, extra training of interviewers in response-maximisation techniques and doorstep interactions, implementing refusal avoidance and conversion techniques, re-issuing of refusals and non-contacts, and many others not listed here.

Refusal conversion, i.e. obtaining the cooperation of initially reluctant sample persons, should not be confused with the quality back-checks specified in section 10.7.1.

In pursuing high response rates one should be mindful of the need to maximise response amongst all groups of the population and to bring response rates to a consistent level among subgroups. Based on experiences from previous rounds groups can be identified that are harder to reach or less willing to participate, e.g. apartment dwellers, inner-city residents, men, younger respondents. In designing the survey special efforts should be made to include these groups, e.g. by making more (evening) calls, through interviewer bonuses or respondent incentives.

The CST has provided guidance on possible response enhancement strategies such as incentives (see Guidelines for enhancing response rates), whilst recognising that the effectiveness of different approaches may well vary between different countries, with different norms, cultural settings, geography, and so forth. Response enhancement techniques employed should be documented in the National Technical Summary Form.

A new tool for collecting contact form data: FMMS

The ESS continues to review how it can most effectively and efficiently monitor fieldwork across participating countries in such a way as to optimise the information available to all stakeholders whilst minimising the reporting burden. As part of the SERISS project (www.seriss.eu) we have been developing a Fieldwork Management and Monitoring system (FMMS) based around a mobile application to allow interviewers to collect CF data on the doorstep and transfer it in real time back to a central database accessible to the survey agency, NCs and the CST. The FMMS app will be tested in the field during the ESS Round 9 pilot. Stakeholder feedback on the FMMS app collected last year has already highlighted that using a centrally implemented app to collect Contact Form data could be problematic in some countries. During the R9 pilot we will therefore also be testing a new data upload portal which countries could use during fieldwork to provide the CST with (a subset of) the contact form data collected using their own in-house systems. The data upload portal provides a way for the CST and NCs to have access to timely and detailed monitoring data but without survey agencies having to use the FMMS app to collect CF data or to use the FMMS to handle personal data.

The FMMS app and data upload portal are still in development and undergoing careful piloting and evaluation. The CST will take a decision on how to take the tool forward for ESS Round 9 in February 2018.

Depending on the result of the pilot, countries without other means to collect ESS contact form data electronically may be encouraged to use the FMMS app for this purpose. However, adoption of the app will be (at most) on a voluntary basis for ESS Round 9.

To facilitate a move towards the more joined up fieldwork monitoring on the ESS as envisaged by the FMMS new standards have been developed for monitoring fieldwork and providing progress reports (see 10.7.2).

10.7. Fieldwork monitoring and quality assessment

10.7.1. Fieldwork projections

Fieldwork projections are forecasts of weekly production/response rates based on experience from previous rounds and current interviewer staffing. NCs are expected to submit fieldwork projections at least two weeks prior to the start of fieldwork to the CST. The fieldwork projections will be based on experiences from previous rounds, the design of the present fieldwork and discussions with the Survey Agency. Where a country participates for the first time it will naturally be more of an estimate.

10.7.2. Monitoring and progress reports

Survey agencies should closely monitor the progress of fieldwork. In Round 9 the following monitoring standards will be in place.

- Countries to provide *weekly* fieldwork progress information (independent of the length of fieldwork);
- Fieldwork progress information will need to be provided at a case level rather than at an aggregate level using a pre-specified template;
- Fieldwork progress information will need to be provided weekly in the form of a dataset;

- The number of variables that will be required for central monitoring purposes will be limited, about 30, and can mostly be extracted directly from the sample file and/or CF data collected.

Depending on the outcome of ongoing pilot tests of the FMMS, countries will either be required to upload weekly datasets to the FMMS data portal or to provide the weekly dataset to the CST via another means of safe file transfer. Confirmation of the requirements will be provided in spring 2018.

Survey agencies should also collect information on the average length of interview for each interviewer and investigate interviewers who are outliers in case this indicates quality problems.

10.7.3. Quality control back-checks

Quality control back-checks are a standard tool to monitor the performance of interviewers. Survey agencies should make quality control back-checks to respondents and ineligibles. In the case of respondents they involve a short interview (whether by telephone or in person) including:

- checks on the respondent selection (if applicable),
- checks on whether an interview was indeed conducted,
- checks if show cards were used,
- checks that a laptop was used (if applicable),
- the approximate length of the interview,
- and optionally, some of the ESS questions where change would be unlikely could be repeated (e.g., age, job title).

We require that back-checks are mentioned during the ESS interviewer briefing. It needs to be mentioned when and how interviews will be selected for back-checks and how this selection will be conducted, on which aspects they will be back-checked, and what the (possible) consequences are in case of the detection of irregularities.

Quality control back-checks of respondents and ineligible should be conducted across all interviewer assignments. Ideally an interviewer or supervisor should be sent to check these cases in person. 'Respondent died' cases should not be checked.

Table 3: Permissible methods and proportions required for quality back-checks

	Interviews	Ineligibles
% to be achieved	10%	5%
In person	YES	YES
By phone	YES	YES
By mail (only in exceptional circumstances)	NO	YES

An alternative for ineligible is to send postal mail to these persons, households or addresses. Households or named individuals can then be asked to return a pre-paid card requesting that they confirm whether they had contact with an interviewer. This can also be used to check interviewer claims that 'addresses do not exist' and 'address derelict' if a system exists reporting that mail was undelivered. However, the response rate amongst these cases is likely to be extremely low and postal methods should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

Back-checks should not be confused with re-assigning non-contacts and refusals to interviewers in order to increase the response rates. Back-checks are a quality control instrument.

11. After fieldwork: Data preparation

11.1. Deliverables

The ESS Data Protocol provides the complete list of deliverables to be deposited to the ESS Archive at NSD. All details on how to present the deliverables as well as the procedures to be applied in the production of the national ESS data and metadata are described in this protocol. All NCs should adhere to the specifications provided in the ESS Data Protocol and dictionaries. The ESS Data Protocol for Round 9 will be made available from the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet in June 2018.

ESS deliverables:

Data files

- a) Data from Main questionnaire, including test questions
- b) Data from Interviewer questionnaire
- c) Contact Form (CF) data
- d) Sample design data file (SDDF)
- e) Raw data
- f) Parents' occupation (POCC)
- g) Verbatim recorded answers
- h) Verbatim recorded Ancestry

Documents

- a) National Technical Summary (NTS) with appendices (education, income, political parties, marital and relationship status and ancestry)
- b) Population statistics
- c) Main questionnaire (all language versions)
- d) Interviewer questionnaire
- e) Contact Form (or code used for collection programme)
- f) Showcards
- g) Interviewer and fieldwork instructions
- h) Interviewer briefing and training material
- i) NCs' responses to a short questionnaire about the interviewer training and briefing
- j) Advance letters, brochures and other written information to the respondents
- k) Final (T)VFF
- l) CAPI programs

All electronic deliverables are to be uploaded to the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet by the end of February 2019. Prior to deposit of data, each NC is responsible for checking their data to ensure confidentiality is not breached (see section 12).

If the content and quality of the electronic deliverables do not adhere to the specifications in the Data Protocol and the standards available from the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet, the Archive reserves the right to ask for new deliverables.

11.2. Coding

The following socio-demographic items will be recorded verbatim and subsequently coded by the Survey Agency according to international standard classifications. These items include:

- Occupation: four-digit ISCO code for respondent and partner,
- Industry: two-digit NACE code for respondent,

- Country: two-character ISO 3166-1 code for respondent's citizenship and country of birth, mother's country of birth and father's country of birth,
- Language: three-character ISO 639-2 code for first and second language spoken at home, and language of interview.

Further items in the questionnaire require country-specific variables to be bridged into the following standards:

- Education: country-specific question(s) to be bridged into a detailed ISCED coding frame for respondent, partner, father and mother,
- Religion: country-specific questions on current or past religious belonging to be bridged into ESS coding frame.

For Ancestry of respondent (question F61 in ESS Round 8) the verbatim recorded answers in the "Other" category must be coded into the ESS coding frame for ancestry. The coding of Ancestry should be included in the costings.

NCs are also expected to liaise with the Sampling and Weighting Expert Panel concerning the calculation of post-stratification weights.

Further details regarding standards and bridging will be available in the ESS Data Protocol and from the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet. To ensure optimal comparability the standards that are provided on the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet must be used and care should be taken.

11.3. Processing and dissemination

Throughout the ESS Archive's processing of the national files, the NCs have full access to all programmes, files and listed output from the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet. NCs must take great care to protect their log in details as the data must be considered disclosive before it is signed off by the NC. It is important that the NCs are available for consultation during the Archive's data processing period.

The processing is organised in two main steps, each leading up to standardised reports. The reports contain a summary of the programmes, files and output produced during the processing as well as queries that the Archive will need feedback on to produce the national files that will later be integrated into the international data file for Round 9.

When the Archive has completed the processing of the national data file, a draft file will be provided for NCs to approve of the processing carried out by the Archive. All NCs are responsible for the validity of their national data. All national files will be subject to further quality checks by the CST and the QDTs when a draft international file is available.

A complete deposit of all deliverables is a prerequisite for a country to be included in the integrated released file.

No national data (or interpretations of such data) can be released, published or reported in any way until the data has been officially released by the ESS Archive at NSD. Thereafter, the data will be available without restriction for non-commercial use, scientific research, knowledge and policy making in all participating countries and beyond to quarry at will. In respect of use of the ESS ERIC's intellectual property for commercial purposes this shall be handled on a case by case basis.

12. Data protection, data transfer, data access and ethics

12.1. Data protection and data transfer

Survey agencies and NCs must act according to national data protection laws. They must report incidents and breaches to the Data Controller (ESS ERIC HQ) and their relevant national authorities.

Anonymised data

In accordance with data protection regulations in participating countries, only anonymised data will be made publicly available to users. Before depositing data to the ESS Archive at NSD, each national team is responsible for checking their data with confidentiality requirements in mind. NCs will be asked to confirm in their National Technical Summary that all data that will be made publicly available to users has been anonymised in accordance with national and EU regulations¹¹ including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Once a country's data has been published the survey agency is required to delete the key that links the serial number to the name and address of the respondent. Survey agencies will be required to confirm to the Data Controller they have done this in writing within 10 days of the data being published. These arrangements must be outlined in the information to the respondents.

Indirectly identifiable data

Specific files like the raw data or the sample design data can – in combination with interview data – contain indirectly identifiable information. Data that could possibly indirectly identify individuals will not be released to the public from the ESS website, but will be stored in a safe environment in accordance with the Data Handling Agreement between the ESS ERIC Controller and NSD as a Data Processor.

Data transfer

The data, metadata and paradata resulting from the data collected for the ESS in participating countries must be transferred to the official ESS Archive at NSD from the ESS Round 9 NC Intranet area ensuring secure transfer.

All rights connected to the transferred material are subject to the provisions of the ESS ERIC statutes and related Standing Orders as decided by the General Assembly.

12.2. Information given to respondents

ESS ERIC will provide an advance letter which clearly outlines the following:

- Who the Data Controller and Data Processors are
- The purpose for which the data is being collected
- Where the data will be stored and for how long
- A note about sensitive information that will be collected, e.g., religion, ancestry
- A note about the voluntary nature of the research and the right not to answer specific questions
- Information about data collected that is not part of the interview (e.g., contact form data, neighbourhood characteristics)
- Name and contact details for the ESS ERIC Data Protection Officer.

Interviewers will be required to give all respondents a copy of the letter in case they have not read it before the interview. Additional information might also be required. ESS ERIC will be monitoring the outputs from the working party on informed consent which will report in November 2017. A final version of this letter will be available from April 2018 and it will reflect the most recent guidance available.

¹¹ http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/privacy/

12.3. Access

According to art. 23 of the Statutes, the ESS ERIC shall where practicable seek to own the intellectual property rights in its work. It shall grant a royalty free non-exclusive licence over its intellectual property rights to any person for non-commercial purposes. In respect of use of the ESS ERIC's intellectual property for commercial purposes this shall be handled on a case by case basis.

The ESS ERIC shall allow free access to all anonymised data of the European Social Survey by the scientific community. There shall be no privileged access rights by any person to such data except during its processing and preparation for public use.

12.4. Ethics

New questions for each round will be submitted to the ESS Research Ethics Committee prior to the finalisation of the source questionnaire. National Coordinators and survey agencies must ensure compliance with relevant institutional ethics approval procedures.

The ESS ERIC subscribes to the Declaration on Ethics of the International Statistical Institute (ISI)¹², to which the Survey Agencies that conduct the data collection will be asked to adhere.

¹² www.isi-web.org/index.php/activities/professional-ethics/isi-declaration

13. Quality, comparability and compliance

The ESS is a cross-sectional time series survey that also aims to improve standards of social measurement. As such, it aims to achieve the highest methodological standards in all participating countries, as users need to have confidence in the data collected and published by the ESS. This means that high quality standards pertain to the instruments, fieldwork and resulting data of the ESS; it means that serious efforts are made to produce comparable data both across countries and over time; and it also means that compliance with ESS rules, regulations and procedures needs to be achieved to promote quality and comparability.

There are four groups of compliance issues that can compromise the quality and comparability of ESS data and thus seriously limit the value for users.

The first group of compliance issues are particularly central. Therefore, all Member, Observer countries and guest countries are asked to ensure that they:

- field the complete ESS Round 9 questionnaire,
- deliver a Sample Design Data File (SDDF) which allows the calculation of inclusion probabilities,
- make a complete delivery of ESS Round 9 data (including the Contact Form data) and documentation to the ESS Archive at NSD within 12 months after the official deadline (by February 2019) for submitting deliverables to the archive (by February 2020).

In the past, significant deviations from these requirements have led to exclusion of the data from the integrated data file and are likely to do so in future.

The second group of compliance issues relate to the quality assurance procedures imposed by the CST. In particular, a country has to finalise the following **before fieldwork starts**:

- the translation, verification and SQP procedures for the ESS Round 9 questionnaire,
- the sign-off procedure for the sampling design,
- the sign-off procedure of the fieldwork questionnaire (FWQ).

During fieldwork, weekly information on fieldwork progress has to be provided in a standardised format.

The third set of compliance issues arise if quality control analyses performed by the CST reveal serious doubts as regards data quality. This may, for instance, include indications of very high design effects or interviewer effects, indications of very large nonresponse bias or very low measurement quality (reliability/validity) of the data, including large amounts of missing data. Respondent substitution and interviewer fraud are also serious threats to data quality.

The fourth area of compliance relates to data release. ESS data is a public good. NCs must ensure that no national data is released until the official data release via the ESS archive. This allows the data to be properly checked prior to release and ensures equal access to the data for all.

In the event of a breach of any of these four key compliance considerations, the CST reserves the right not to include the country data in the integrated file. In these cases, the representative for that country in the ESS ERIC General Assembly will be informed of this decision, which shall be final.

Appendix 1. Glossary and abbreviations

Term	Abbr.	Explanation
Country contact	CC	CST member, assigned by the Director, who oversees the entire national survey life cycle for that country.
Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing	CAPI	Data obtained from the interview is directly entered into a computer programme instead of first using paper forms.
Contact Form	CF	Form on which interviewer records outcomes of all contact attempts and contacts, whether by telephone or in personal visits, to addresses, households and individuals, for all sample units (respondents and nonrespondents) according to a pre-specified set of categories that distinguish ineligibility, interview, non-contact, refusal, other contact (but no interview) and other types of non-response.
Core Scientific Team	CST	Team comprising HQ and six other institutions in charge of managing and coordinating the survey. A committee of the Director.
Country questionnaire		The source questionnaire translated in the national languages in which the ESS is fielded in every participating country.
Data protocol		Guide to the production of the ESS data files and documentation. It contains detailed descriptions of the required deliverables and also includes a complete list of variable definitions.
ESS Archive		ESS ERIC Data Archive at NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data.
European Research Infrastructure Consortium	ERIC	The principal task of the ERIC is to establish and operate the ESS research infrastructure on a non-economic basis.
European Social Survey	ESS	European Social Survey.
Field Directors' Meeting	FDM	Meeting of Field Directors and CST members aimed at discussing ESS requirements and national experiences.
Fieldwork Management and Monitoring system	FMMS	Mobile application that allows interviewers to collect CF data on the doorstep and transfer it in real time back to a central database accessible to the survey agency, NCs and the CST
Fieldwork projections		Forecasts of weekly production/response rates based on experience from previous rounds and current interviewer staffing. To be delivered 2 weeks before the start of fieldwork at the latest.
Fieldwork Team	FWT	Team comprising CST members from HQ, GESIS and SCP involved in discussing with NCs the fieldwork plan of each country as laid down in the Fieldwork Questionnaire, signing off the FWQ, and monitoring fieldwork planning and fieldwork progress.
Fieldwork Questionnaire	FWQ	Questionnaire developed by the Fieldwork Team of the CST to monitor fieldwork plans. It is an instrument to help decide upon, discuss and document major fieldwork decisions and parameters (timing of fieldwork, number of interviewers, etc.).
General Assembly	GA	The body representing all the Members of the ESS ERIC.
General Data Protection Regulation	GDPR	The GDPR (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) is a regulation by which the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Commission intend to strengthen and unify data protection for individuals within the European Union (EU). It will come into force in May 2018.
Headquarters	HQ	Headquarters of the ESS ERIC, home of the Director.
International Standard Classification of Education	ISCED	Standard Classification developed by UNESCO to facilitate comparisons of education statistics and indicators across countries on the basis of uniform and internationally agreed definitions
International Standard Classification of Occupations	ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations is a tool for organizing jobs into a clearly defined set of groups according to the tasks and duties undertaken in the job. The ILO is responsible for ISCO.
International Standard for Country Codes	ISO	ISO 3166 is the International Standard for country codes and codes for their subdivisions.
Multitrait Multimethod	MTMM	MTMM test questions to assess construct validity.
National Coordinator	NC	NCs coordinate the activities of the ESS ERIC at a national level and assure its compliance with the specifications. In many countries there will be a National Coordinating team. NCs and their teams are jointly called 'NCs'.

National Coordinators' Forum	NC Forum	The NC Forum comprises the National Coordinators of each Member, the Director and Deputy Directors. They assist the Director.
Norwegian Centre for Research Data	NSD	The ESS Archive.
National Technical Summary	NTS	Overview of the metadata of the survey for each country and each round of the ESS. The NCs have a central role in the production of such documentation.
Primary Sampling Unit	PSU	Sampling units that are selected in the first (primary) stage of a multi-stage sample ultimately aimed at selecting individual elements.
Question Module Design Team	QDT	External team selected by the SAB from applications received following an international competition, assisting the Director in developing a Question Module.
Sample design data file	SDDF	File to be produced by each country and delivered to the CST, containing complete information about the sample design, such as inclusion probabilities at each stage, information on clustering and stratification.
Sampling and Weighting Expert Panel	SWEP	Team of sampling and weighting experts advising NCs on the optimal sampling design. The SWEP must sign off the sampling design well before fieldwork starts. The SWEP also provides design and post-stratification weights.
Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community	NACE	The Nomenclature of Economic Activities is the European statistical classification of economic activities. NACE groups organizations according to their business activities.
Survey Agency		The survey agency appointed to conduct the ESS Round 9 fieldwork in a participating country.
Survey Quality Predictor	SQP	SQP coding aims at preventing unnecessary deviations between the source questionnaire and the country versions by comparing a number of formal characteristics of the items. SQP coding is meant to improve language versions by making NCs more aware of the choices that are made in translation, and the impact these choices can have on comparability, validity, and reliability of the question.
Synergies for Europe's Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences	SERISS	A Horizon 2020 project focused around three key themes – key challenges facing cross-national data collection, breaking down barriers between research infrastructures, and embracing the future of social sciences. It addresses issues relating to survey design and data collection, data management and curation from a collaborative, cross-national perspective. The project will better equip Europe's social science data infrastructures to play a major role in addressing the key societal challenges facing Europe today and help ensure that national and European policymaking is built on a solid base of the highest-quality socio-economic evidence. See www.seriss.eu .
Translation Expert Panel	TEP	The ESS Translation Expert Panel consists of questionnaire translation experts, some of these being members of the CST, others external experts. The function of the TEP is to advise the ESS translation team in questionnaire translation matters on an ongoing basis.
Translation Guidelines	TG	Detailed descriptions of the translation procedures and requirements, shared languages and verification, and the choice of suitable personnel.
Translation Management Tool	TMT	A customised web interface for managing the translations which also provides a digital repository of the process (originally developed for the SHARE survey and now adapted for use by the by ESS as well).
Translation, Review, Adjudication, Pre-testing and Documentation	TRAPD	The translation protocol requires the following steps (1) Questionnaire translation using a committee or team approach (TRAPD), including shared language harmonisation if applicable; (2) External linguistic expert check of all translated language versions in the form of 'translation verification' by the external service provider cApStAn; Comparing formal characteristics of the translated questions with those in the source language (SQP coding); (3) National pre-testing (TRAPD); (4) Sign-off on translations and documentation of the translation process (TRAPD).
(Translation and) Verification Follow-Up Form	(T)VFF	National document including, if possible, the entire translation history of one language version. This includes the translation/review/adjudication and, if applicable, shared language harmonisation steps (TRA); these steps will only be included in the (T)VFF if the national team used the (T)VFF also for their full translation.