

Good Planning, Better Survey Data

Introduction into Web Survey Design

CONTACT

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 09:30	Welcome and Introduction	 13:00	Participant Motivation and Incentivization
 10:00	Introduction to Web Surveys	 13:45	Data Protection
 10:30	Coffee Break	 14:15	Coffee Break
 10:45	Sampling in Web Surveys	 14:30	Documentation
 11:20	Participant Recruitment	 15:00	Getting Started
 11:50	Participant Motivation and Incentivization	 15:15	Wrap Up
 12:00	Lunch Break		

Introduction

Housekeeping

- Have your phones ready.
- Slides will be shared at the end.
- Certificates will be sent after the training
- Questions welcome ☺
- There are no stupid questions – this is (hopefully) a safe space!

Who am I?

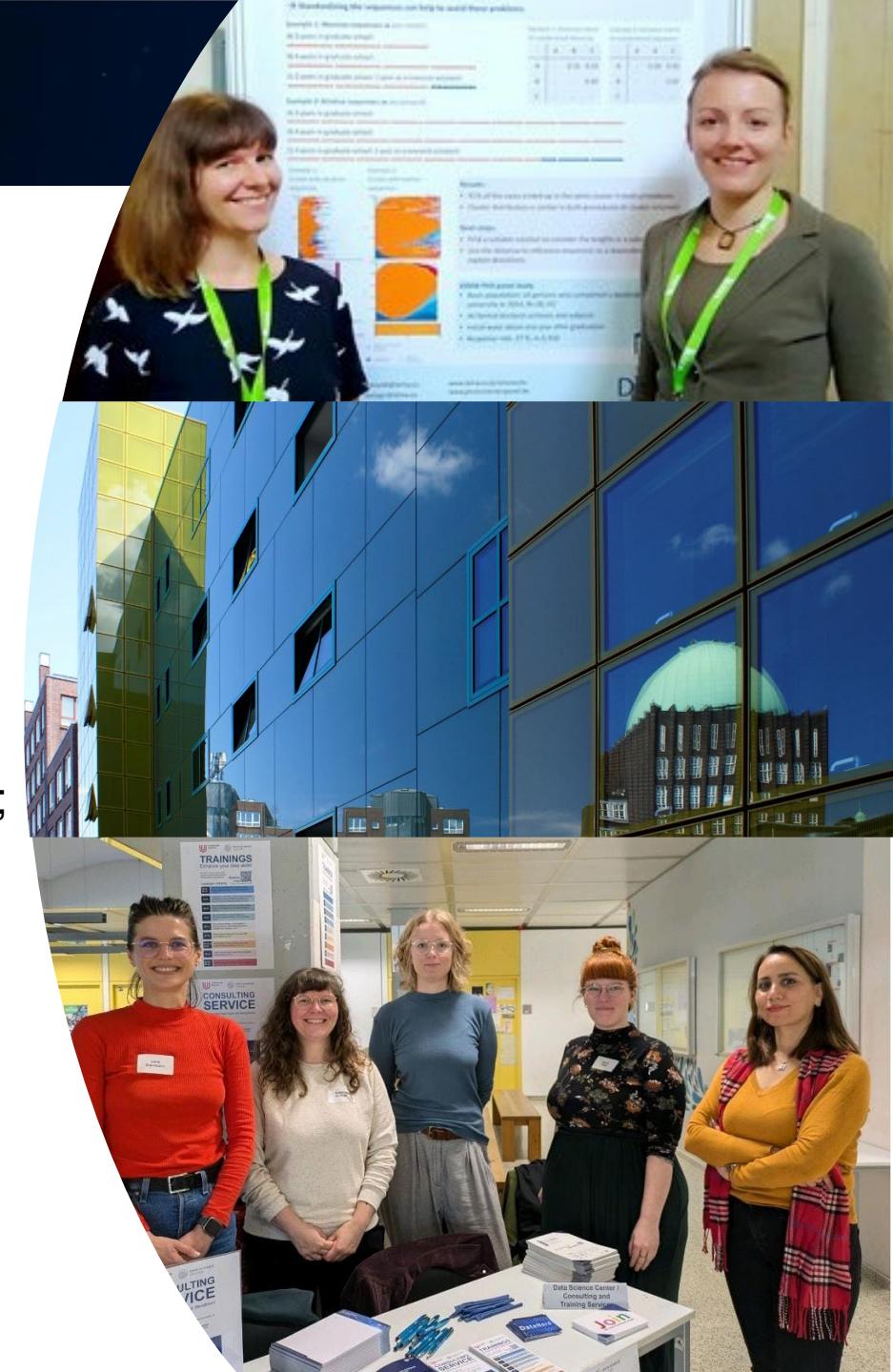
Susanne de Vogel (she/her)

Social Scientist

- Diploma in Social Sciences (2013), University of Cologne and Utrecht University
- PhD in Sociology (2019), Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg
- Research Associate at DZHW German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2013-2020), Hannover
- National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) and PhD Graduate Panel; survey design, panel data analysis, research data management
- Research on educational inequalities, early career researchers, academia

Since May 2024 Data Scientist at the Data Science Center

- Training and consulting for researchers
- Data science and research data management



PhD Panel Study (Promoviertenpanel)

Project duration: September 2013 – March 2024 (funded by BMBF)

Target population: census survey

- All persons who completed a doctorate at a German HEI in 2014 (N=28,147)
- All formal contexts and subjects
- Initial sample size n=5,408 (response rate 27%); follow-ups ca. n=3,000

Survey design: longitudinal study

- Initial wave about one year after graduation, paper-pencil
- Nine annual follow-up surveys, online

The collage consists of two main parts. The top part shows the cover page of the survey, which features a blue and white design with a central logo containing two arrows forming a circle, labeled 'Karrieren Promovierter'. The text on the cover page reads: 'Bundesweite Befragung zu den Promotionsbedingungen und zur beruflichen Entwicklung der Promovierten des Prüfungsjahrs 2013/14' and 'DZHW'. The bottom part shows a screenshot of a survey software interface. It includes the DZHW logo, a welcome message in German, and various survey instructions and questions. At the bottom of the screenshot, there are buttons for 'Weiter' (Next) and 'Logout'.

National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps)

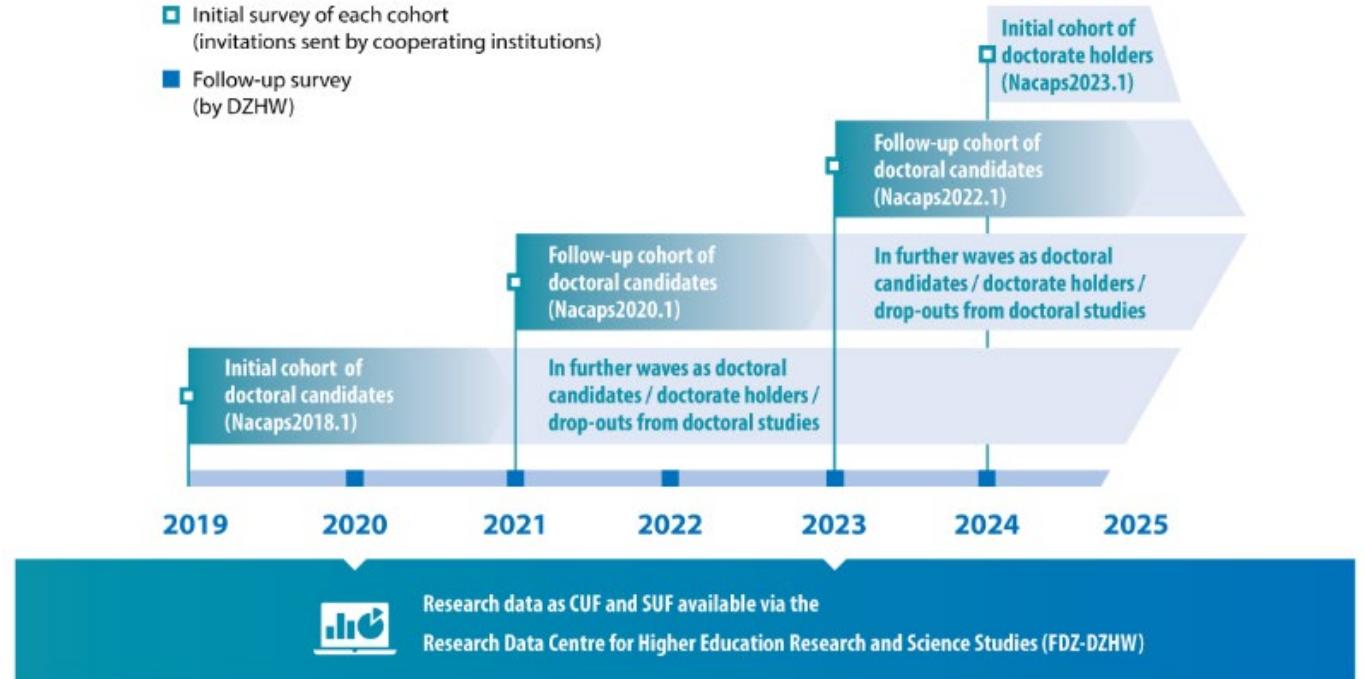
Project duration: Januar 2017 – ongoing (funded by BMBF)

Target population: census survey

- All persons who started/completed a doctorate at a German HEI
- 66 participating universities

Survey design: multicohort longitudinal study

- Initial wave about one year after starting/graduating PhD
- annual follow-up surveys
- New cohort every other year (doctoral candidates since 2018; doctorate holders since 2024)
- online



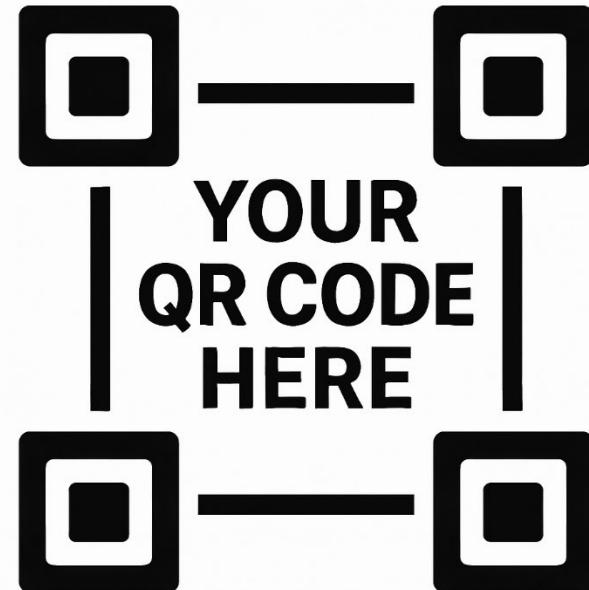
German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW) (2018). *Nacaps study design – survey logic*. Retrieved June 25, 2025, from https://www.nacaps.de/en/studie/index_html#studiendesign. Used with permission for educational purposes as stated on the website.

Brief round of introductions



- Name (pronouns)
- Institution
- Discipline

Web Survey!



Visit
www.menti.com

Enter code

Introduction to Web Surveys

What is it?

An online survey is a **digital questionnaire** distributed and **completed over the internet**.

- **Self-administered**
- Accessed on **internet-enabled** devices, such as computers, tablets, or smartphones
- Distributed via a **URL**, which can be shared through email, social media, or embedded on a website
- Responses are **automatically recorded** in a digital database



Pros



- **Cost-effective** (no need for printed materials, postage, or interviewers)
- Created, distributed, and collected **quickly**
- Broad **reach**
- **Easier** data cleaning and processing
 - Responses directly entered into the database, no data entry errors
 - Forcing, plausibility checks and range validation on the fly
- Support a **variety** of question formats, including images, audio, and videos
- **Convenience** for respondents
 - can complete the survey at their own pace and from any device
 - Visual conditions and branching

When useful?

- **Large, geographical diverse** samples
- **Time-sensitive** data collection
- **Sensitive** topics
- **Anonymity**
- Studies requiring **visual** or multimedia content
- **Follow-up** and longitudinal studies



Meme using the Oprah You Get a Car meme template, retrieved from Make a Meme, <https://makeameme.org/meme/quantitative-research-survey> (accessed 25 June 2025)

Cons



- Restricted **to individuals with internet access**, which can exclude certain demographics (e.g., older adults, low-income populations, or those in areas with limited internet connectivity)
- **Technical challenges**
- **Data quality issues**
 - higher risk of erroneous, incomplete, or fraudulent responses
- Respondents have a **shorter** attention span
 - Shorter questionnaires (max 15 min)
 - Lower response rates, high drop-out rates
- Limited control over respondents **environment**

When problematic?

- Population with **limited internet access**
- **Controlled** or observational studies
- Survey requires **extensive explanations**, probing questions, or clarification



Meme using the Grandma Finds the Internet template. Created by reddit user phamkethanh, captured via imgflip.com. Retrieved from https://www.reddit.com/r/meme/comments/1763imq/grandma_finds_the_internet/ (accessed 25 June 2025).

Types of Web Surveys



Types by timing

- Cross-sectional survey
- Longitudinal survey
 - Panel Survey
 - Cohort Survey
 - Trend Survey

Cross-Sectional Surveys

Data is collected at **one point in time**, without repeated follow-ups.

- Researchers observe and record data without manipulating any variables or introducing interventions.

When useful?

- **describing** the characteristics of a population, such as the prevalence of certain behaviors, conditions, or attitudes
- identify potential **associations** between variables (e.g., the relationship between age and smartphone usage)
- analyzing variations across **subgroups**

When problematic?

- No causal conclusion
- Findings represent the specific time of data collection
- No changes over time



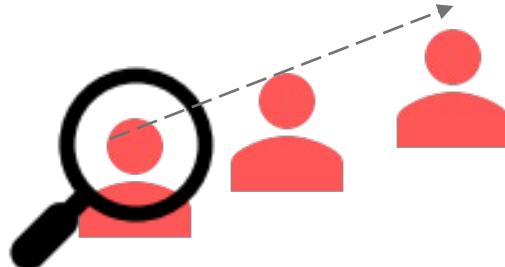
Longitudinal Surveys

Longitudinal data refer to **repetitive measurements over time**, often through repeated surveys at regular intervals.

Panel Survey

Follow the **same individuals** over time

- individual behavior and change
- Causal relationships



Cohort Survey

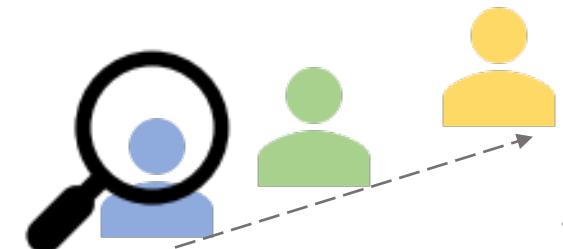
Follow **a specific group** that shares a defining characteristic (e.g., birth year) over time

- Live course research
- Comparing generational changes
- Tracking outcomes of shared experiences

Trend Survey

Survey **different samples** from the same population over time

- Population-level trends
- Monitoring social and economic indicators



Types of Web Surveys



Types by timing

- Cross-sectional survey
- Longitudinal survey
 - Panel Survey
 - Cohort Survey
 - Trend Survey



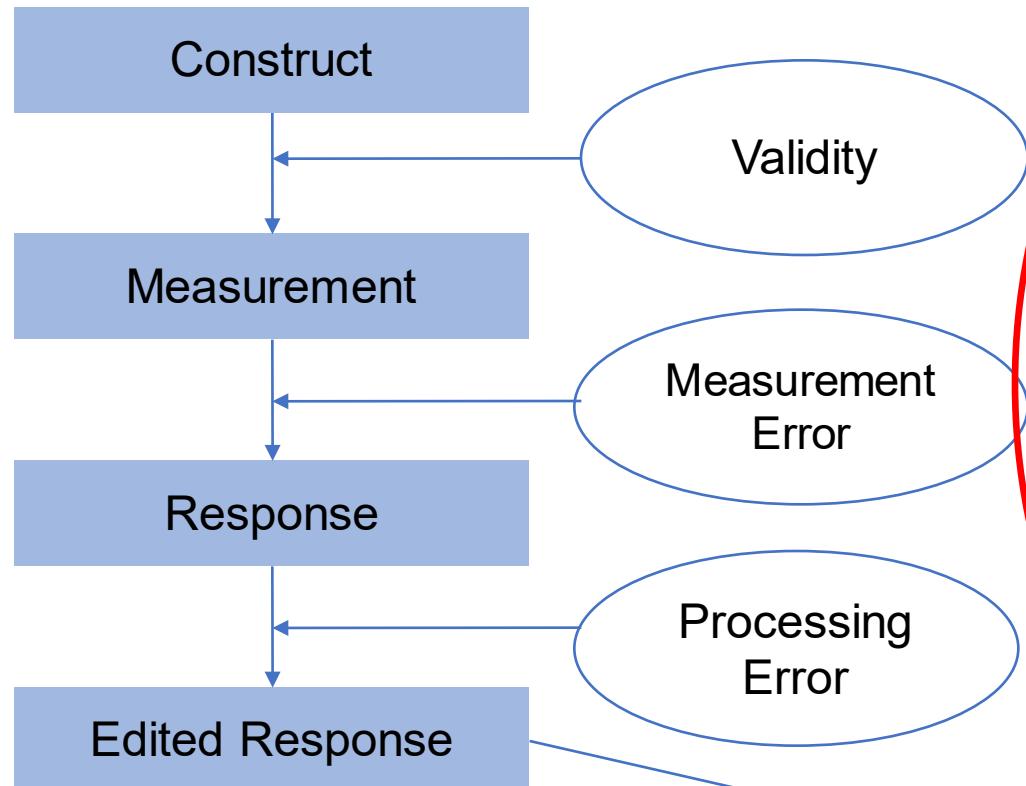
Types by purpose

- Exploratory survey
- Descriptive survey
- Explanatory survey

Purposes

Survey Type	Purpose	Typical Questions	Example Scenarios
Exploratory	To gather preliminary information (e.g. identifying issues) on a topic or phenomenon when little is known about it.	Is there something happening?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumer preferences• Health behavior• Workplace culture
Descriptive	To systematically describe the topic at hand.	What is happening?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Census data• Health statistics
Explanatory	To investigate cause-and-effect relationships by identifying how different variables relate to or influence each other	Why/How does this happen?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behavioral study• Educational research• Marketing analysis

Measurement



Representation

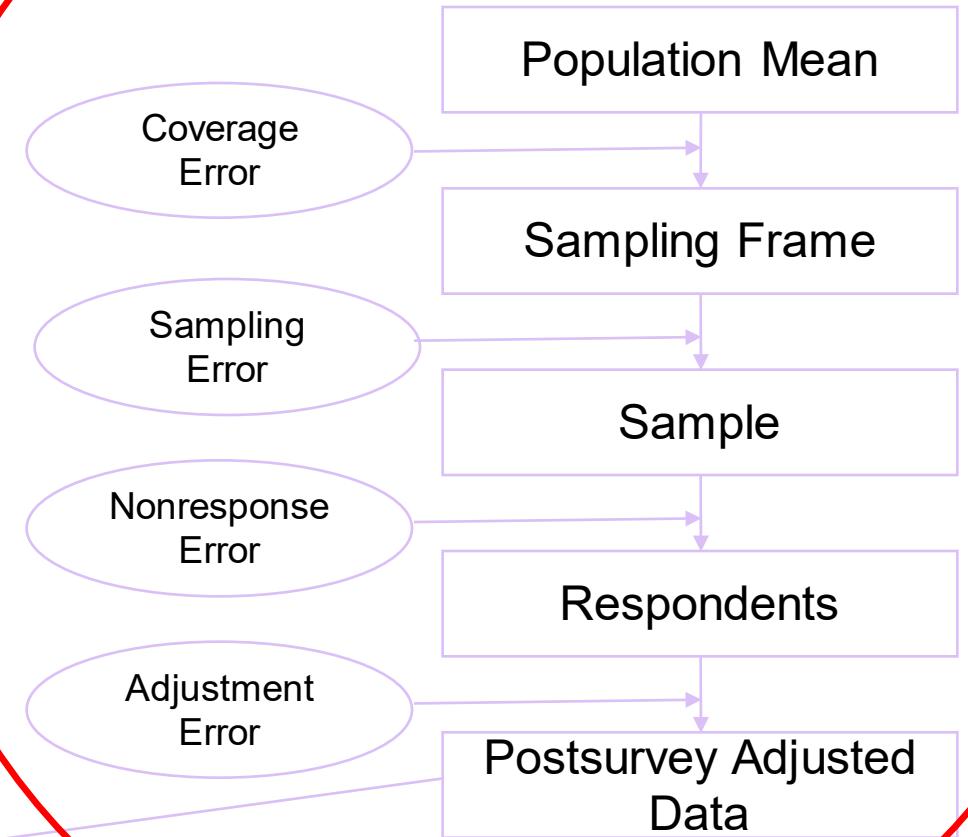


Figure adapted from Figure 2.5 in Groves, R.; Fowler, F.; Couper, M.; Lepkowski, J.; Singer, E.; Tourangeau, R. (2009). Survey Methodology (2nd Edition). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ISBN 0-470-46546-8

Coverage Error

Coverage error arises when there is a **mismatch** between the **target population** and the population actually **reachable by the survey** (survey frame)

- In web surveys, coverage error occurs because only individuals with **internet access** are included in the survey frame

Example

A web survey intended to represent the entire adult population excludes those without internet access, likely certain elderly individuals, poorer people or people in rural areas.

This can lead to **under-representation** of specific groups (coverage bias)



Sampling Error

Sampling error arises when only a **subset (sample)** of the population is surveyed rather than the entire population.

Error reflects the **variability** that arises from using a sample to **make inferences** about the broader population

- In web surveys, sampling error occurs if the sample selected doesn't perfectly represent the population's diversity



Example

In a web survey on online shopping habits, there is a larger proportion of younger respondents compared to older adults

The survey results may be **skewed** toward younger perspectives on online shopping (sampling bias).



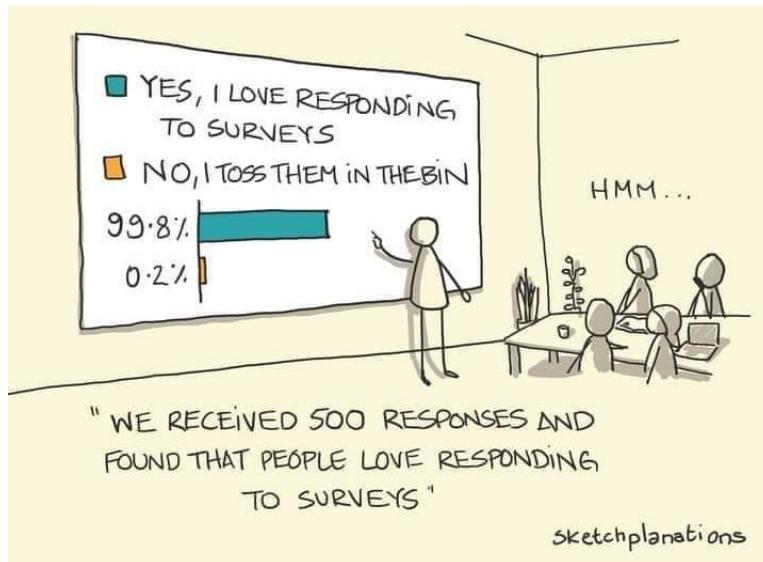
Meme using the I wonder what he's thinking template, retrieved from Make a Meme, <https://makeameme.org/meme/i-wonder-what-8e515bc5e8> (accessed 25 June 2025)

Nonresponse Error

Nonresponse error occurs when individuals selected for the survey do **not participate**.

This error can lead to biased results if the non-respondents **differ** significantly from respondents in ways **related to the survey topic**.

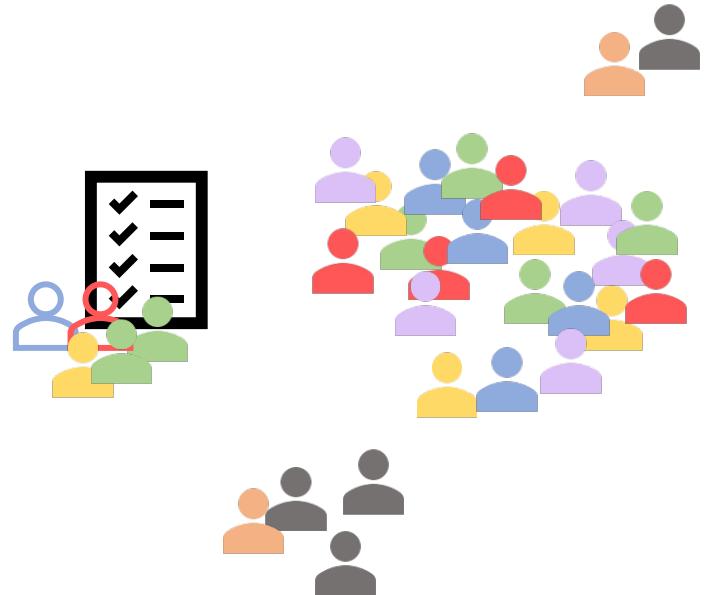
- In web surveys, response rates tend to be lower than other survey modes



Example

In a web survey about digital literacy, those with lower digital skills may be less likely to respond.

This could lead to an **overestimation** of digital literacy skills in the overall population (nonresponse error)



Adjustment Error

Adjustment error occurs during the data processing phase when researchers apply adjustments or weights to correct for coverage, sampling, or nonresponse errors.

These adjustments can introduce errors if the weighting or adjustment models are inaccurate.

- In web surveys, adjustments are often made to account for demographic imbalances.

Example

In a web survey on political opinions, weights are applied to compensate for underrepresentation of older respondents.

If the weighting model does not accurately reflect the political leanings of the older population, it can lead to biased estimates of overall political opinions (adjustment bias).



What type of response error is this?

Scenario 1

You are conducting a web survey on internet usage habits, but your sampling frame only includes people who subscribe to a high-speed internet provider.

Coverage error

Scenario 2

You are surveying a group of university students, but you only randomly select 50 participants from one campus, even though the university has 10 campuses.

Sampling error

Scenario 3

You send out a survey to 1,000 employees at a company, but only 200 respond, and the majority of nonrespondents are from entry-level positions.

Nonresponse error

Minimizing Representation Errors

Minimize survey errors to ensure data quality (accuracy, representativeness, and reliability)

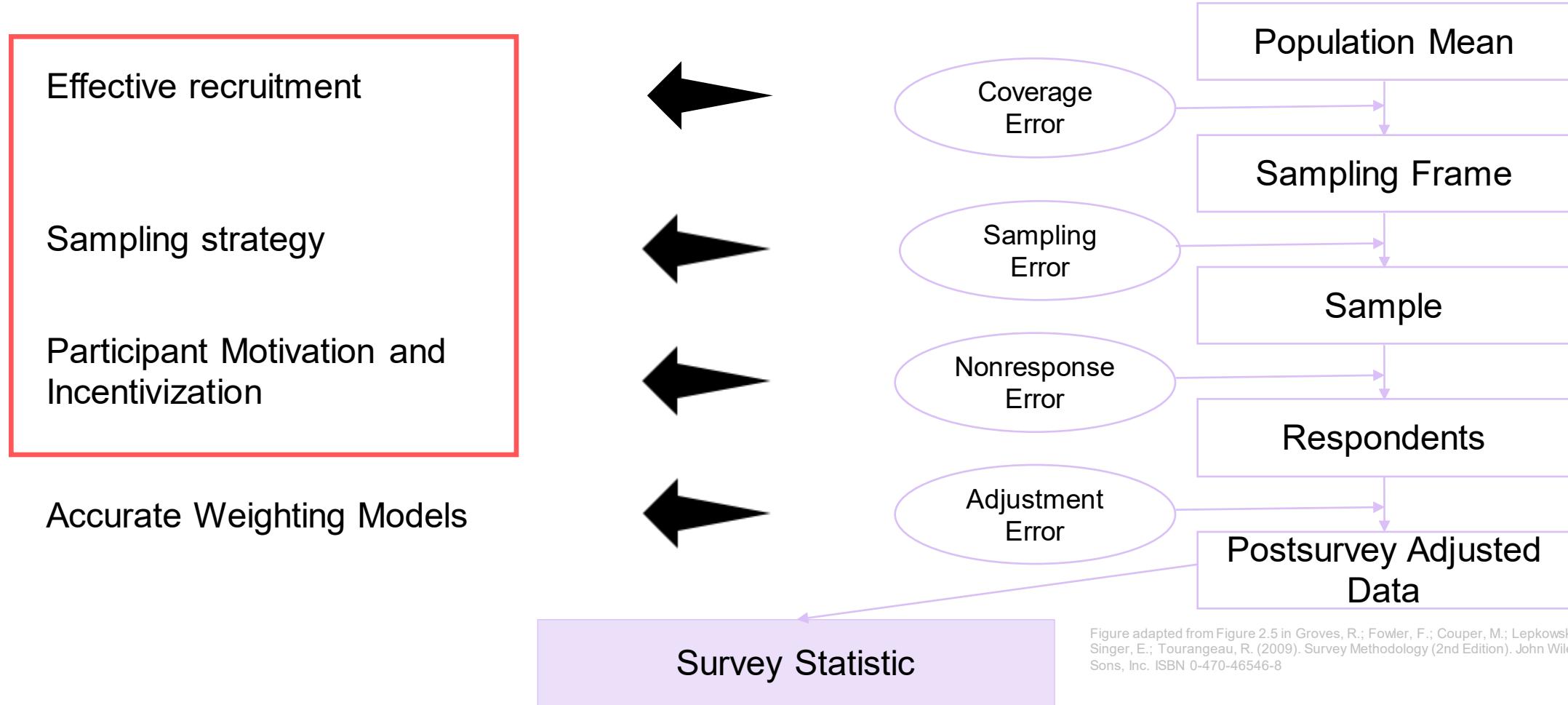


Figure adapted from Figure 2.5 in Groves, R.; Fowler, F.; Couper, M.; Lepkowski, J.; Singer, E.; Tourangeau, R. (2009). Survey Methodology (2nd Edition). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ISBN 0-470-46546-8

Break



Sampling in Web Surveys

Why have a good sampling strategy?

- helps to select participants in a way that **reflects the diversity of the population** being studied (representativeness)
- aligns the survey design with the **research objectives**
- ensures that the results are **statistically valid and generalizable**, despite the limitations of a web-based approach
- avoid **wasting resources** on collecting excessive or unhelpful data
- increases **the credibility of the findings**, as stakeholders can see that the sampling was intentional and methodical

Population

The complete set of individuals that share common characteristics and are the **focus of a survey study**.

- Group from which researchers intend to make inferences.



All doctoral candidates admitted to (registered at) German HEIs, following the University Statistics Act (HStatG section 5)

Briedis, K., Lietz, A., Ruß, U., Schwabe, U., Seifert, M., Mühleck, K., Scheller, P., Teichmann, C., de Vogel, S., Weber, A., Schmidtchen, H., Birkelbach, R., Hoffstätter, U. & Oestreich, T. (2024). Nacaps 2018 - Data and methods report on the National Academics Panel Study 2018 (1st-4th wave - doctoral candidates). Hanover: RDC-DZHW



full-time academic and artistic staff at German universities and equivalent institutions at the time of recruitment.

Fabian, G., Heger, C., Just, A., Weber, A. & Oestreich, T. (2025). DZHW Scientists Survey 2023. Data and methods report on the DZHW Scientists Survey 2023. Hanover: German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW).
<https://doi.org/10.21249/DZHW:scs2023-dmr-en:1.0.1>



German Internet Panel (GIP), University of Mannheim. (2005). Setting up an online panel representative of the general population. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://paneldata.org/gip/>

Persons living in private households in Germany and aged 16-75 at the time of recruitment.



All people aged 18 to 49 living in Germany in 2020.

Häring, A., Ruland, M., Von der Burg, K., Gilberg, R., Aust, F. (2022). Methodenbericht FReDA. Das familiendemografische Panel. Infas: Bonn. Retrieved July 9, 2025 from https://www.freda-panel.de/FReDA/DE/Publikationen/Datendokumentation/Downloads/Release05/Field-Reports/down_r5-0_method-report-infas-w1.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3

Sampling Frame

Specific list or database of **individuals in the target population from which a sample can be drawn** for a survey.

- practical means to access the population and is crucial for defining who has a **chance of being selected** in the sample.



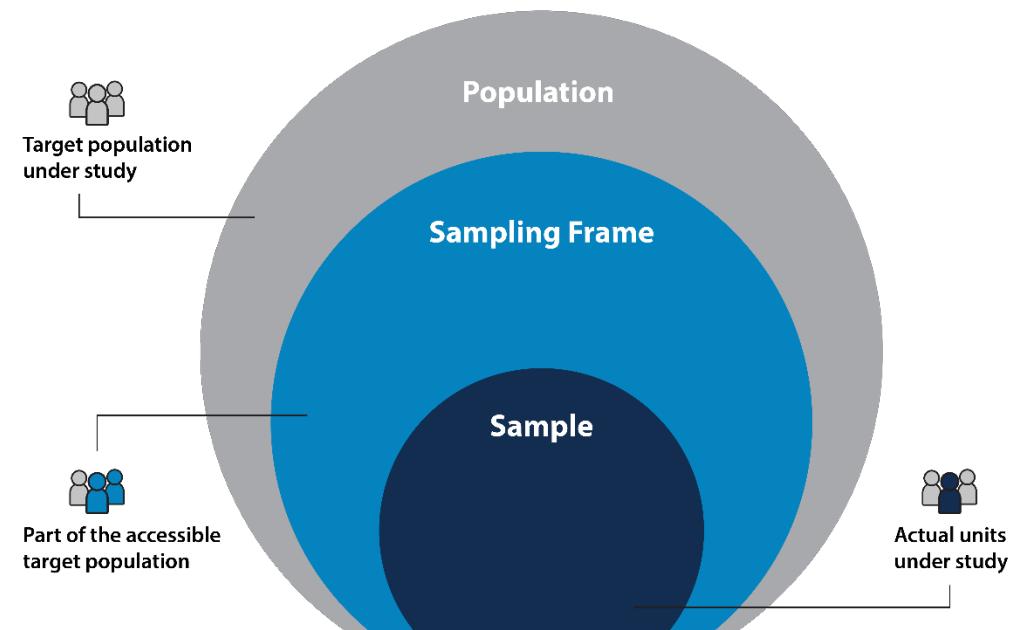
PhD students enrolled as a student at a HEI supporting Nacaps.

Briedis, K., Lietz, A., Ruß, U., Schwabe, U., Seifert, M., Mühleck, K., Scheller, P., Teichmann, C., de Vogel, S., Weber, A., Schmidchen, H., Birkelbach, R., Hoffstätter, U. & Oestreich, T. (2024). Nacaps 2018 - Data and methods report on the National Academics Panel Study 2018 (1st-4th wave - doctoral candidates). Hanover: RDC-DZHW



Researchers with address information found on the websites of universities and equivalent institutions on the internet.

Fabian, G., Heger, C., Just, A., Weber, A. & Oestreich, T. (2025). DZHW Scientists Survey 2023. Data and methods report on the DZHW Scientists Survey 2023. Hanover: German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW). <https://doi.org/10.21249/DZHW:scs2023-dmr-en:1.0.1>



Sample

The specific group of individuals **chosen from the target population** to participate in the survey.

- selected based on certain criteria or sampling methods to ensure that it accurately represents the larger population



Full census

Briedis, K., Lietz, A., Ruß, U., Schwabe, U., Seifert, M., Mühleck, K., Scheller, P., Teichmann, C., de Vogel, S., Weber, A., Schmidtchen, H., Birkelbach, R., Hoffstätter, U. & Oestreich, T. (2024). Nacaps 2018 - Data and methods report on the National Academics Panel Study 2018 (1st-4th wave - doctoral candidates). Hanover: RDC-DZHW



Random sample of 60,002 addresses, disproportionately stratified (with an oversampling of female professors and postdocs)

Fabian, G., Heger, C., Just, A., Weber, A. & Oestreich, T. (2025). DZHW Scientists Survey 2023. Data and methods report on the DZHW Scientists Survey 2023. Hanover: German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW).
<https://doi.org/10.21249/DZHW:scs2023-dmr-en:1.0.1>



German Internet Panel (GIP), University of Mannheim. (2005). Setting up an online panel representative of the general population. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://paneldata.org/gip/>

Multi-stage random samples which are regionally clustered, 2012 and 2014 samples are additionally clustered in households



Random two-stage sampling from the population registers of selected municipalities in Germany.

Häring, A., Ruland, M., Von der Burg, K., Gilberg, R., Aust, F. (2022). Methodenbericht FReDA. Das familiendemografische Panel Infas: Bonn. Retrieved July 9, 2025 from https://www.freda-panel.de/FReDA/DE/Publikationen/Datendokumentation/Downloads/Release_5/Field-Reports/down_r5_0_method-report-infas-w1.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3

Sampling Strategies

Probability Sampling

every member of the population has a known, non-zero **chance of being selected**.

- yield representative samples
- allow for generalization to the broader population

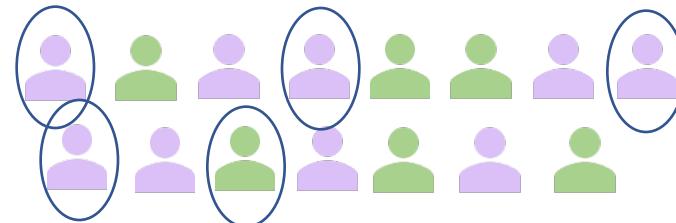
- Simple random sampling
- Systematic sampling
- Stratified sampling
- Cluster sampling



Frommknecht, A. (n.d.). "Lotto-Fee" Franziska Reichenbacher.
Retrieved July 9, 2025, from
<https://kress.de/news/beitrag/117398-ard-samstags-lotto-mit-festem-sendeplatz-um-19-57-uhr.html>

Simple Random Sample

Every individual in the population has an **equal chance** of being selected.



Adapted from: Scribbr. (n.d.). *Sampling methods*. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/>.

How?

Participants are chosen randomly, often using tools like random number generators.

Pros

- Minimizes sampling bias
- Straightforward and easy to understand
- Results are highly generalizable to the population

Example

A university uses a random number generator to select 500 students from a list of all enrolled students for a satisfaction survey.

When to Use

- When you have a complete and accessible list of the population
- When aiming for the highest level of representativeness
- For studies where random, unbiased samples are crucial

Systematic Sampling

Individuals are selected at **regular intervals** (k) from a sorted list.

How?

1. approximate the population size, N .
2. Determine the sample size desired, n .
3. Compute N/n and round down to the nearest integer. This value is k .
4. Randomly select a number between 1 and k as starting point

Example

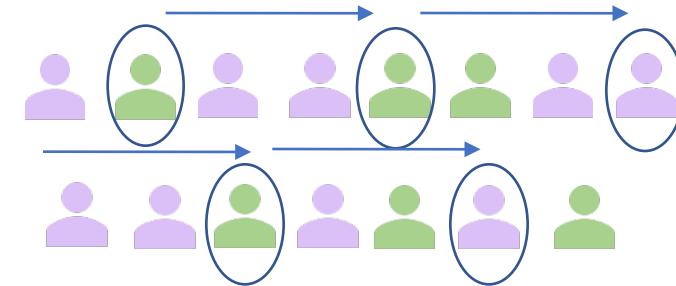
Starting with a random starting point, a researcher selects every 3rd name on a list of patients to survey them about their healthcare experience.

Pros

- Simpler and faster than simple random sampling
- Provides a high level of representativeness, similar to simple random sampling.
- Easy to implement if a complete list is available.

When to Use

- When you want an efficient method for sampling without complex randomization.
- For surveys where the population is evenly distributed and not cyclically patterned.



Adapted from: Scribbr. (n.d.). *Sampling methods*. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/>

Stratified Sampling

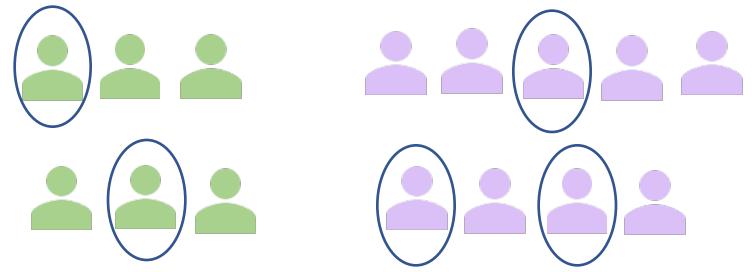
The population is **divided into distinct subgroups** (strata) based on specific characteristics (e.g., age, gender), and random samples are drawn from each stratum.

How?

1. Define the population N.
2. Divide the population into distinct subgroups (strata)
3. Determine sample size n and for each stratum
4. Randomly Select Individuals Within Each Stratum

Example

A survey on careers of university graduates may divide the sample by discipline and randomly select graduates from each discipline.



Adapted from: Scribbr. (n.d.). *Sampling methods*. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/>

Pros

- Ensuring all subgroups are proportionally represented.
- Reduces sampling error, especially when there are significant differences between strata.

When to Use

- When the population has clear subgroups relevant to the research (e.g., gender, income levels).
- When the study aims to understand differences across specific subgroups (e.g., comparing age groups' preferences).

Cluster Sampling

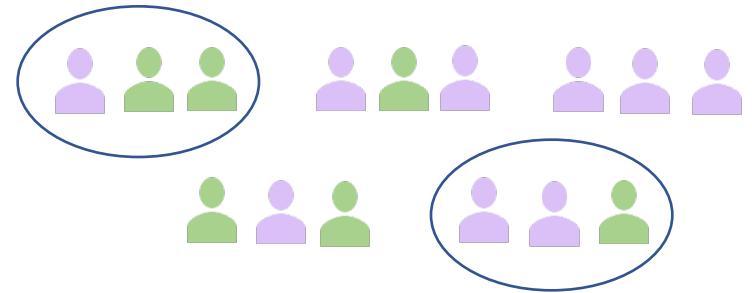
The population is **divided into clusters** (e.g., geographic areas, schools), and **entire clusters** are randomly selected.

How?

1. Define the population N.
2. Divide the population into naturally occurring clusters
3. Decide on the number of clusters
4. Select clusters randomly

Example

A survey on university graduates may divide the sample by HEI and randomly select HEIs whose graduates all are invited to the survey



Adapted from: Scribbr. (n.d.). *Sampling methods*. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/>

Pros

- Cost-effective and practical for large or geographically dispersed populations.

When to Use

- When the population is large and spread out over a wide area (e.g., national or regional surveys).
- For studies where clusters are naturally occurring units, such as schools, neighborhoods, or regions
- Useful when a complete list of individuals is not available, but clusters are accessible.

Sampling Strategies

Probability Sampling

every member of the population has a known, non-zero **chance of being selected**.

- yield representative samples
- allow for generalization to the broader population

- Simple random sampling
- Systematic sampling
- Stratified sampling
- Cluster sampling



Frommknecht, A. (n.d.). "Lotto-Fee" Franziska Reichenbacher. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://kress.de/news/beitrag/117398-ard-samstags-lotto-mit-festem-sendeplatz-um-19-57-uhr.html>

Non-Probability Sampling

not all individuals in the population have a known **chance of being selected**.

- easier to implement
- may introduce bias

- Convenience sampling
- Quota sampling
- Purposive sampling
- Snowball sampling
- Self-selection sampling



Torbz (n. d.) Adobe Stock (Image ID: 44819826). Retrieved July 9, 2025 from https://as1.ftcdn.net/v2/jpg/00/44/81/98/1000_F_44819826_vXbjtn8KLQaSoXbrghP9oRzSHw6sIid.jpg

Convenience Sampling

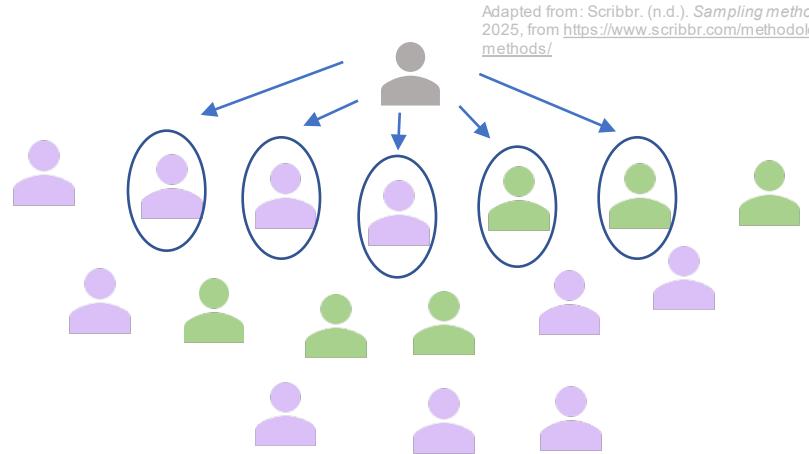
Participants are selected **based on their availability** and ease of access.

How?

- Post the survey on a website, social media, or email it to a readily available contact list
- Anyone who comes across the survey link to participate

Example

A university professor conducts a web survey on study habits and shares the survey link in her classes and through her department's online student portal.



Pros

- Quick and easy to reach respondents.
- Cost-effective as it requires minimal resources and outreach.

When to Use

- When time and resources are limited
- For exploratory or pilot studies, such as testing new survey questions
- When representativity is less important
- When targeting specific website visitors or communities

Quota Sampling

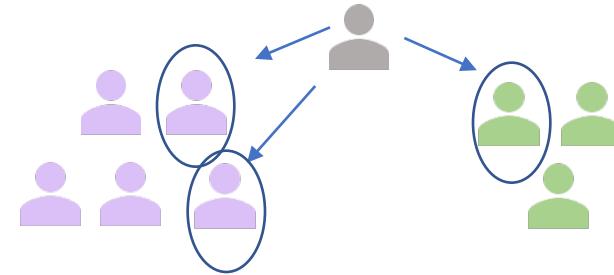
The target population is divided into subgroups, and a **specified quota of responses** is sought from each group. Selection within each group is not random.

How?

- Set quotas for specific demographic groups (e.g., age, gender) based on survey needs
- use screening questions to filter and recruit respondents until each quota is filled

Example

A researcher uses an online survey platform to recruit respondents and tracks ages quotas in real-time, stopping data collection for each age group once the quota is met.



Adapted from: Scribbr. (n.d.). *Sampling methods*. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/>

Pros

- More structured than convenience sampling and helps balance the sample.

When to Use

- When it's important to compare subgroups (e.g., comparing opinions by age or gender).
- When complete random sampling is impractical, but you still want proportional representation.

Purposive Sampling

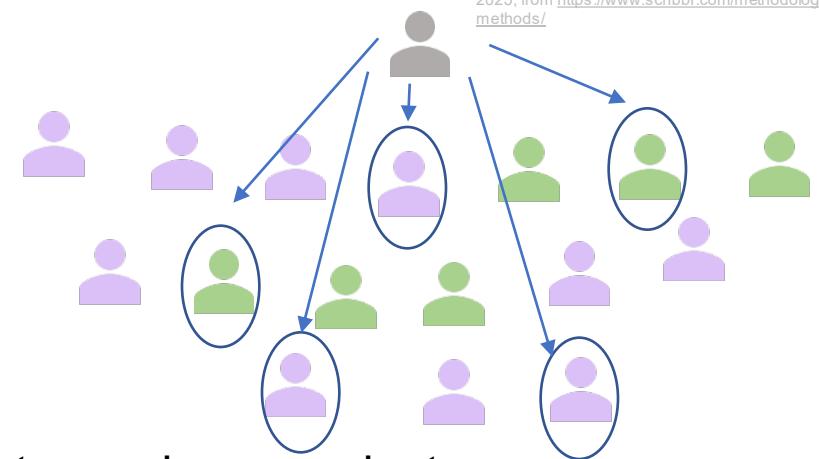
Participants are **selected based on specific criteria** or characteristics relevant to the research objectives.

How?

- Define criteria for inclusion (e.g., expertise or experience)
- Use targeted recruitment through professional networks, specialized forums, or social media groups where likely participants are active.
- Pre-screening questions in the survey

Example

A health researcher is studying attitudes toward telemedicine among healthcare providers. She emails the survey link to known practitioners who use telemedicine frequently.



Pros

- Quick and easy to reach respondents.
- Cost-effective as it requires minimal resources and outreach.

When to Use

- For studies requiring knowledgeable or experienced participants (e.g., professionals in a specific field)
- When researching niche topics or communities

Self-Selection Sampling

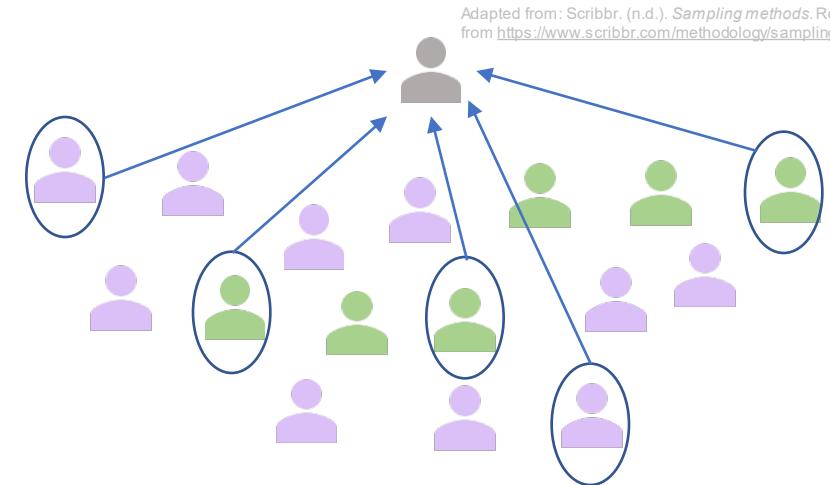
Participants **opt into** the survey voluntarily.

How?

- Post a survey link openly on a website, social media, or in an email newsletter, allowing anyone interested to participate.
- Online-Access Panels (e.g. SosciPanel)

Example

A news website posts an online poll asking readers their opinions on climate change. The survey link is open to anyone who visits the website, allowing readers to voluntarily participate by clicking the link.



Pros

- Simple to implement and can gather a large number of responses quickly.
- Cost-effective and requires minimal outreach.

When to Use

- When a high volume of responses is beneficial, such as for exploratory research
- When a broad range of opinions is sought
- representativeness is less critical

Snowball Sampling

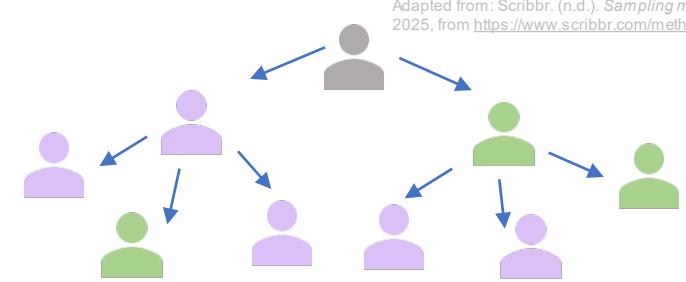
Initial participants **refer other qualified participants**, creating a network-based sample that grows over time.

How?

- Begin with a small group of participants recruited via online forums, social media, or email, then ask them to share the survey with others who meet the study criteria.

Example

A sociologist wants to survey freelancers about job satisfaction and uses a few initial contacts from LinkedIn. She asks these initial participants to share the survey link with other freelancers they know.



Adapted from: Scribbr. (n.d.). Sampling methods. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/>

Pros

- Effective for reaching hard-to-reach populations (e.g., certain social groups, online communities).
- Cost-effective, as it relies on referrals rather than broad recruitment.

When to Use

- When studying populations difficult to identify or access (e.g., people with specific health conditions)
- For social research focused on communities or network-based studies.

Exercise: Matching Research Scenarios with Sampling Strategies

Match each scenario to the most suitable sampling strategy.

Scenario

You want to measure student satisfaction across all universities in a country and randomly select 1,000 students from a national database.

To study voter behavior, you ensure proportional representation by sampling voters based on age groups

You're researching opinions about a new social media platform and survey people who respond to a link you post on Instagram

You are studying cybersecurity practices among freelance developers. Since there is no public list, you start with 10 developers you know and ask them to recommend others.

To study the effectiveness of a vaccination campaign in urban areas, you randomly select 10 cities and survey all residents in those cities.

Strategy

Simple random sampling

Stratified sampling

Convenience sampling

Snowball sampling

Cluster sampling

Sampling Strategies

- ✓ Simple random sampling
- ✗ Stratified sampling
- Cluster sampling
- ♥ Convenience sampling
- ★ Snowball sampling

Sample Size

Why sample size matters

- Ensures the survey results accurately represent the population
- Reduces the margin of error and increases confidence in results
- Balances the need for robust data with resource constraints (time, money, etc.)

Key factors influencing sample size

- Population size
- Margin of error (confidence interval, typically +/- 5%)
- Confidence level (95% or 99%)
- Variability
- Sampling strategy
- Anticipated response rate

Tools & Guidelines

[Australian Bureau of Statistics Sample Size Calculator](#)

[UK Sample Size Calculator](#)

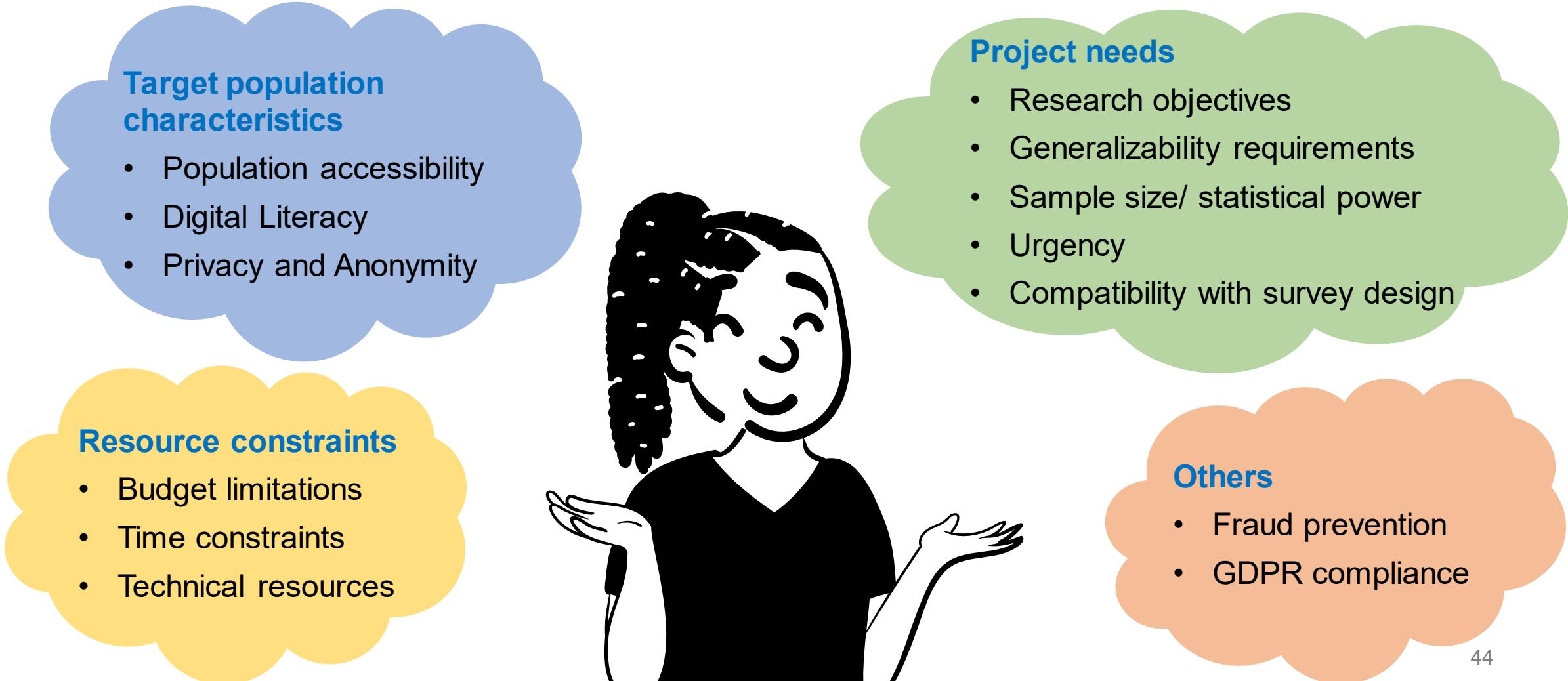
[G*Power Desktop Application](#)

[Gesis Sample Size Calculation For Complex Sampling Designs](#)

Stata [power](#) ado

R [pwr](#) and [practools](#) packages

What to consider in choosing a sampling strategy?



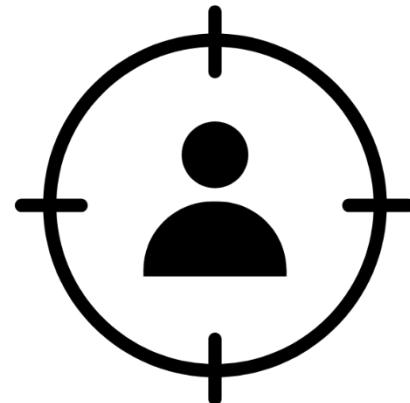
Participant Recruitment

Recruiting modes

Personal

Directly contacting individuals with a **customized** or individualized message.

- Postal
- E-Mail
- Direct Messages on Social Media



Created by Soekahurip from Noun Project

Impersonal

General invitations sent to a broader audience without customization for individual participants.

- Mass emails
- Social Media Post or Ads
- Website Banners or Pop-Ups
- Online Panels



Created by Ahmad Roaayala from Noun Project

Posted invitation letter

Physical letter sent via postal mail that invites recipients to participate in a web survey.

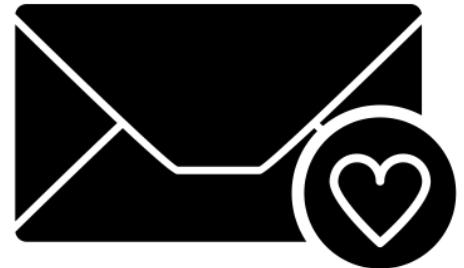
The letter includes the survey URL or a QR code, a unique access code (if needed), and any instructions for accessing the survey online.

Pros

- A physical letter can feel more official and trustworthy
- Physical mail can convey a more personal touch, showing that effort was made to reach out individually
- Postal invitations are unaffected by spam filters

Cons

- High printing, postage, and distribution costs
- Longer lead time
- Some recipients may discard unsolicited mail
- Switching from letter to online mode can pose a barrier



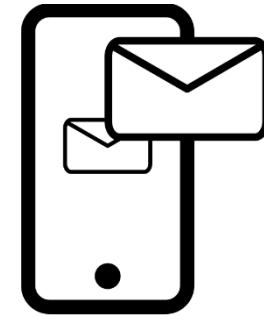
Created by n0pixel
from Noun Project

E-Mail & Direct Message

Emails addressed to each participant by name with tailored content or sending personalized messages to connections on LinkedIn, Facebook, or other platforms.

Pros

- Feels more exclusive than mass mails and can boost engagement
- Emails or messages from recognizable organizations or individuals create trust
- generally yield higher response rates compared to mass emails or social media posts
- Participants can simply click on a link in the message



Created by AM
from Noun Project



Created by Yaroslav Samoylov
from Noun Project

Cons

- Crafting individualized emails is more time-intensive, especially for large samples
- Risk of being marked as spam (use white lists!)

When to use?

Posted invitation letter

- Postal addresses are known and up-to-date
- Target population prefers traditional communication (e.g. older adults, rural communities, or those less engaged with digital platforms)
- For regional or community-based surveys, sending physical letters to a well-defined area can be effective
- When offering physical incentives or rewards (e.g., mailed gift cards), a posted letter can complement the incentive and reinforce the survey's legitimacy

Email invitation and messages

- E-mail address is known and up-to-date
- For studies with fewer participants (e.g., expert panels or alumni surveys) where personalized communication can significantly boost participation.
- When recruiting within organizations or interest groups with which you already have a relationship

Mass emails

Sending a **generic survey invitation** to a large list of recipients, usually from an existing database or mailing list.

Pros

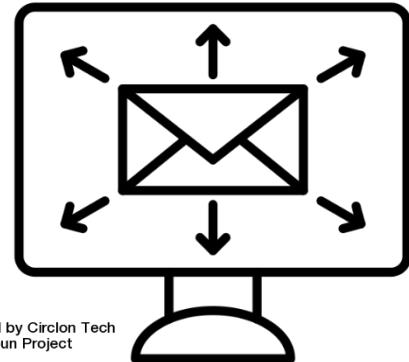
- allow for large-scale recruitment with minimal effort

Cons

- feel impersonal and are more likely to be ignored
- may end up in spam folders
- lower engagement than personalized emails

When to use?

- There is a mailing lists, but recipients are unknown
- Large-scale studies and/or broad audience
- low-budget projects



Created by Circlon Tech
from Noun Project

Social media posts, ads and pop-ups

Posts

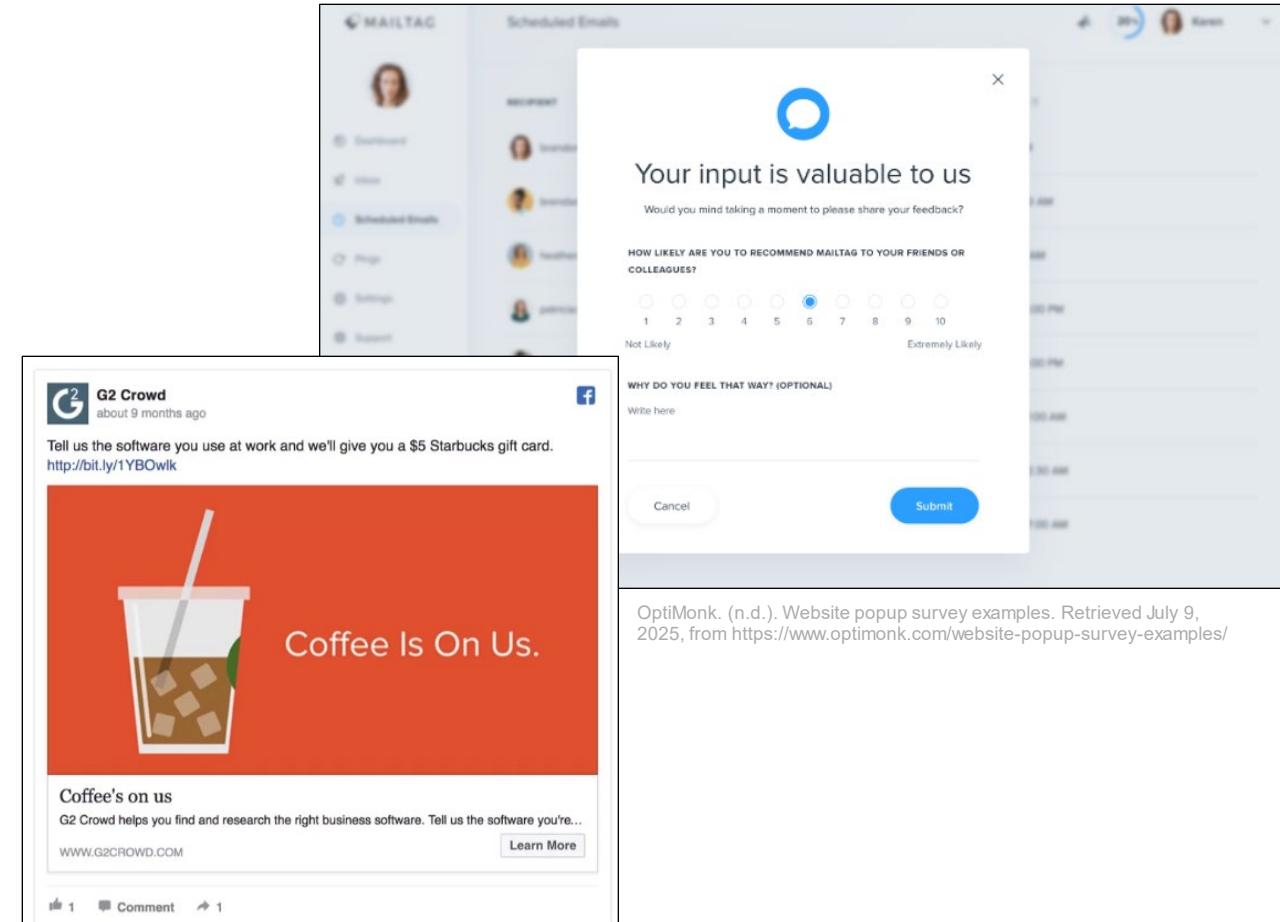
public or group-based posts on platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram, inviting followers or members of specific groups to participate in a survey.

Ads

paid promotions on platforms, specifically targeting demographics or interest groups relevant to the survey.

Pop-ups

on-page survey invitations that appear when users visit a website, app, or online platform.



OptiMonk. (n.d.). Website popup survey examples. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.optimonk.com/website-popup-survey-examples/>

Social media posts, ads and pop-ups

Pros

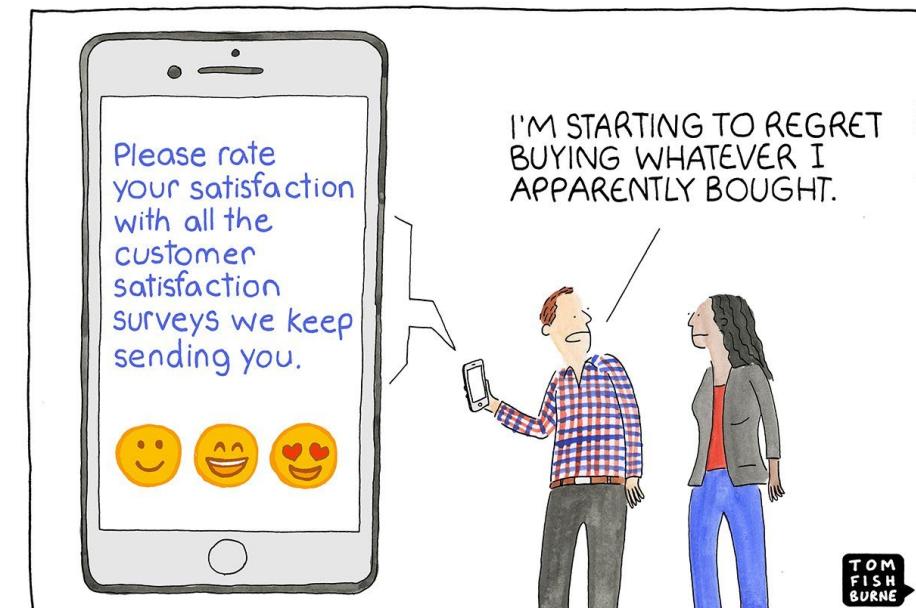
- Easy to target specific communities
- Social media platforms provide metrics on impressions, click-through rates, and engagement

When to use?

- When looking for specific groups, feedback on specific website content or features

Cons

- may attract respondents outside the target group
- excessive posts, ads and pop-ups can annoy users



Fishburne, T./Marketoonist (n.d.). Please rate your satisfaction...
Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://marketoonist.com>

© marketoonist.com

Online Access Panels (Convenience Pools)

Pre-recruited pool of individuals who have agreed to participate in web-based surveys and research studies.

- Panel providers maintain **large databases of respondents** and **use profiling data** (e.g., age, gender, income, interests) to match participants with surveys based on the study's requirements.
- Researchers **specify the sample criteria** they need, and the provider then distributes the survey link to matching panel members.

Pros

- easy to recruit participants with certain characteristics
- Quick data collection
- Higher response rates than general population surveys.
- Quality control measures to filter out low-quality respondents, including checks for speeding, straight-lining, and inconsistent answers.

Cons

- Frequent participation in surveys may lead to “professional respondent” behavior
- Panelists may be inclined toward survey participation for incentives.
- costly, especially for large sample sizes or highly targeted segments (e.g., high-income earners, specific professionals).

Online Access Panels (Convenience Pools)

When to use?

- When the survey requires responses from a specific demographic or professional group that may be hard to reach through other recruitment methods.
- Studies with tight deadlines

Examples

[SocSciPanel](#) LMU Munich, free for academic researcher

[GESIS Panel.pop](#) (GESIS Panel), GESIS

[GESIS Panel.dbd](#) for digital behavioral data, GESIS

[German Internet Panel](#) Uni Mannheim

[YouGov](#)



*German
Internet Panel*



What type of recruitment strategy fits best?

Target group 1

You are conducting a survey on the professional experiences of early-career researchers in academia.

Research on institutional websites, personalized emails or postal invitations.

Target group 2

You want to understand customer satisfaction with a nationwide telecommunications company. You have access to a database of 50,000 email addresses from registered users

Mass email

Target group 3

You are gathering feedback on the usability of a mobile app.

Pop-up during app usage

Target group 4

You quickly need a nationally representative sample for a study on public opinion about climate change policies.

Online panel

What to consider in choosing a recruiting mode?

Target population characteristics

- Population accessibility
- Homogeneity/Diversity
- Privacy and Anonymity



Resource constraints

- Budget limitations
- Time constraints
- Technical resources

Project needs

- Research objectives
- Generalizability requirements
- Sample size/statistical power

Participant Motivation and Incentivization

Why motivation matters

- Improves **response rates**
 - Motivated people are more likely to take part in the survey, reducing nonresponse bias
- Enhances **data quality**
 - Motivated participants are more attentive, providing thoughtful and accurate answers.
- Encourages **survey completion**
 - Motivation reduces dropout rates

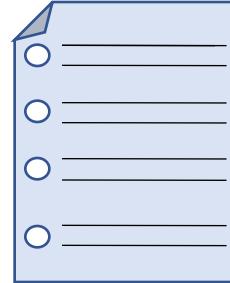


Stoop, I. A. L. (2005). The hunt for the last respondent: Nonresponse in sample surveys. Dissertation, Utrecht University

Three common issues

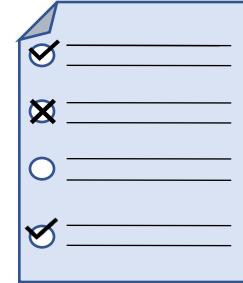
Unit nonresponse

An individual who is selected to participate in a survey **does not respond** at all and does not complete any part of the survey



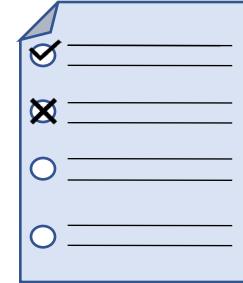
Item nonresponse

A respondent participates in the survey but **skips or does not answer** one or more **specific questions**



Dropout

A respondent **begins** the survey but **abandons** the survey partway through and does **not finish** the survey



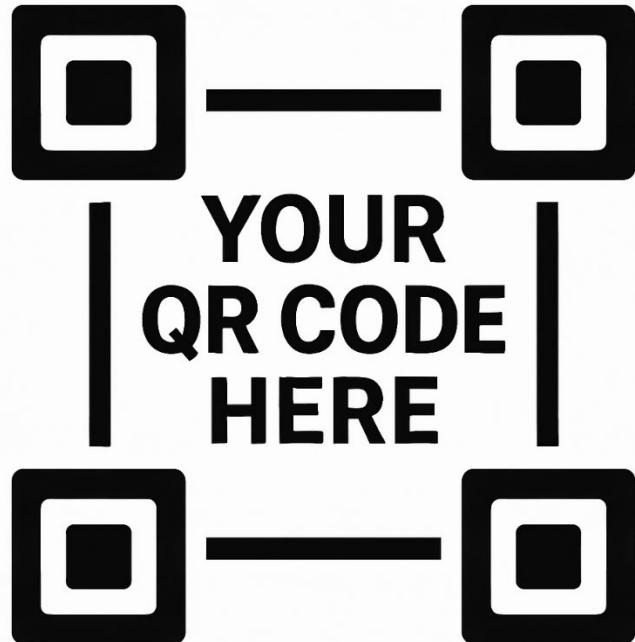
No data is being collected from them

All variables have missing data for the observation unit

Partial or incomplete data is being collected from them

Missing data for **one or more variables** for the observation unit

Guess the number 😊



Visit
www.menti.com

Enter code

Response rate

Mean

44 %

(Wu et al. 2022)

On average

12 % lower

compared to other
survey modes

(Daikeler et al., 2020)

Break



Factors influencing motivation



Perceived relevance

Participants are more motivated if they feel the survey is **relevant to their lives or interests.**

Respondents are more motivated when they feel that their experiences make an **important contribution.**

Personalized invitation

What's the content?

- Tailor language and level of formality to target group
- Addressing the participant by name
- Mention the purpose and relevance of the study
- Emphasize credible sponsor/funder
- If applicable, reference prior engagements with the individual (e.g., previous surveys, purchases, memberships)
- Link the recipient's background or role to the survey's purpose
- Highlight personal/professional benefits
- If applicable, mention incentives
- Ensure that data protection regulations are followed and responses are kept confidential

Email Invitation

Email subject: Study on the "HackIt!" hackathon

Dear Alice,

My name is Jack Johnson. I am a researcher at the Institute of Hackathon Studies and I'm contacting you regarding your participation in the "HackIt!" hackathon from April 3 to 5 2021.

Together with the organizers of "HackIt!", I study events like the "HackIt!" hackathon to support rapid sustainable innovation and provide guidance for future organizers, mentors, and participants.

We'd like to ask you a few questions about your experiences during the "HackIt!" hackathon through a short (10 min) survey.

In order to participate, you must be 18 years of age or older. Your participation is completely voluntary. All survey responses will be de-identified, and we will keep your answers confidential. There is no compensation for participating.

The survey is available at: [survey link]

The survey form closes on Sunday, August 9.

Feel free to contact me at jack.johnson@hackinstitute.org if you have any questions about the study.

Me and my cat are looking forward to your answers, and thank you for your time and help!

With kind regards,
Jack Johnson
Assistant Professor, Institute of Hackathon Studies

If you do not want to participate in this survey and don't want to receive any more invitations, please click the following link: [opt-out link]



Chounta, I.-A., & Nolte, A. (2022). [Title of specific figure if known] (Figure X) in: *The CAT Effect: Exploring the Impact of Casual Affective Triggers on Online Surveys' Response Rates*, Proceedings of CHI '22. ACM. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3491102.3517481>

[Chounta & Nolte \(2022\)](#)

Reminder

What should go inside?

- Recognize that the recipient may have seen the earlier invitation but **not had time** to respond.
- Remind participants of the **purpose** of the survey and its **relevance to them**
- Include the **survey link** prominently
- Create a **sense of urgency** by specifying the survey's closing date (last reminder only!)
- If offering an **incentive**, remind participants of the reward and how to claim it.
- Provide an **email or phone number** for participants who have questions or encounter technical issues



puppy-meme.com

@grpcio (2018) Have taken the survey yet? Meme captured using puppy-meme.com. Retrieved July 9, 2025 from <https://x.com/grpcio/status/1032398676508008448>.

Example

Reminder: 3. Nacaps-Befragung/survey Inbox

Nacaps <nacaps@dzhw.eu>
to susanne.devogel ▾

20 May 2021, 17:33 Star Smile Reply More

Don't translate German X

Dear Ms De Vogel,

about a month ago you received an invitation to participate in the follow-up survey of the National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps). Today we would like to cordially invite you again to participate in the survey. If you have already started the survey but not yet had the opportunity to complete it we would thank you for answering the remaining questions within the next few days.

The following individualised link leads you directly to the current survey:
https://survey02.dzhw.eu/nacaps18-3/special/login.html?zofar_token=tester9

If you are prompted to enter a password, please use the following:
tester9

The survey will take 20 to 30 minutes depending on your current situation. As a token of our thanks, we will be holding a raffle among all participants in summer 2021

the latest smartphone Fairphone 3+,
two BOSE „TV-Speaker“ (Soundbar) and
ten "Wunschgutscheine" worth each 50.00 Euro.

We can only picture the different life situations and careers in a meaningful way if as many people as possible take part in the follow-up survey. If you have completed, interrupted or quit your doctorate in the meantime, we would still like to ask you to participate.

Your participation is of course voluntary and all legal requirements of data protection will be adhered to. The anonymised data will not allow identifying you as a person. You agree to participate in the survey by explicitly accepting the data protection conditions. The data protection conditions can be found via the link on the homepage of the survey. You can also revoke your participation in the study at a later date. In this case, please send back this personalised e-mail with the remark "revocation".

By the way: results of the Germany-wide survey can be found on our homepage www.nacaps-datenportal.de

If you have any questions, comments or would like to make changes to your contact data, please do not hesitate to contact our project team member:
Carola Teichmann | Tel. +49 511 450 670-146 | E-Mail: nacaps@dzhw.eu

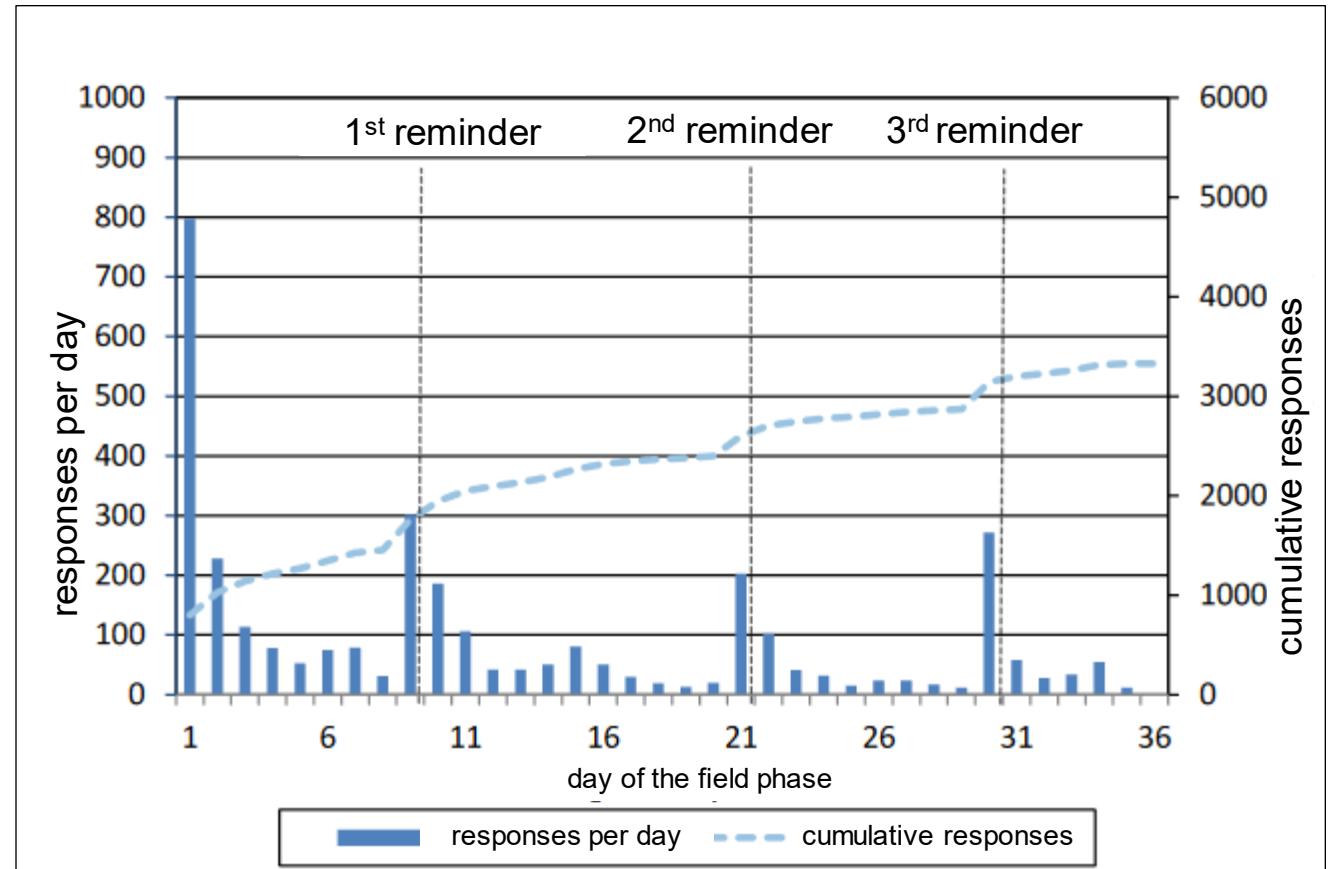
Thank you very much in advance for your cooperation and support!

Yours sincerely,
Dr. Kolja Briedis and Dr. Antje Wegner

Invitation and Reminder Timing

What to send?

- Send **2-3 reminders** for most surveys
- **Space** invitation and reminder appropriately to balance encouragement and avoid annoyance
 - **First Reminder:** 3-5 days after the initial invitation.
 - **Second Reminder:** 7-10 days after the first reminder.
 - **Final Reminder:** 1-3 days before the survey deadline; state deadline



Responses in the DZHW PhD Graduate Panel 2014 over time, Wave 2

Brandt et al. (2014). DZHW-Promoviertenpanel 2014 Daten- und Methodenbericht zu den Erhebungen der Promoviertenkohorte 2014 (Befragungswelle 1-5); Version 4.0.0. Hannover: DZHW

Invitation and Reminder Timing

Which weekdays work best?

- **Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday** are typically the best days to send survey invitations and reminders
 - On these days, recipients are more likely to have settled into their weekly routine and are less overwhelmed by emails
- Consider **audience's schedule**
 - For populations like students, elderly people or shift workers, their schedules may not align with traditional workweeks.
- Avoid **public holidays/ school holidays**

What is the best time of the day?

- **Morning** (9 AM to 11 AM)
 - Many recipients check their email early in the workday.
- **Early Afternoon** (1 PM to 3 PM)
 - After lunch, people are often more relaxed and may engage with emails during a break or before diving back into work.
- Account for **time zones**



Created by Satria Arnata
from Noun Project

Public relations

- Measures to **capture attention** and **communicate** the survey's impact and importance
 - **Press release** announcing the survey
 - Work with **local or national media outlets** to feature stories about the survey
 - Collaborate with community groups to introduce the survey and its goals



ZDF. (2023, November 5). MAITHINK X – Die Show: Folge 11. Retrieved July 9, 2025 from <https://www.zdf.de/video/shows/mai-think-x-die-show-102/maithink-x-folge-11-100>

PROMOTION

AKADEMISCHES SPRUNGBRETT

Protokoll: Astrid Herbold

Doktoranden in Deutschland forschen mit wenig Zeit, kleinen Gehältern und großer Leidenschaft. Eine große Studie zeigt jetzt, wie es ihnen geht – und was sie sich von ihrer Arbeit versprechen.

Die ZEIT (2020) Promotion: Akademisches Sprungbrett. Retrieved December 2, 2024 from <https://www.zeit.de/2020/10/promotion-arbeitsbedingungen-wissenschaftsgehalt-doktoranden>

Presseinformation

Start der Onlinebefragung von Promovierenden

Promovierende – die noch unbekannten Wesen im deutschen Wissenschaftssystem

Heute startet die Onlinebefragung der „National Academics Panel Study“ (Nacaps), zu der ca. 60.000 Promovierende in ganz Deutschland per E-Mail eingeladen werden. Mithilfe dieser Daten wird es erstmals möglich sein, ein detailliertes Bild der Promotionslandschaft in Deutschland zu zeichnen. Durchgeführt wird die Studie vom Deutschen Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung (DZHW) in Kooperation mit über 50 promotionsberechtigten Hochschulen.

Hannover/Berlin, den 18.02.2019: Heute beginnt die erste Runde der Online-Befragungsstudie „Nacaps“. Im Verlauf der Befragung werden die Promotionsbedingungen, Karriereabsichten und Karriereverläufe sowie die allgemeinen Lebensbedingungen Promovierender in Deutschland erstmals systematisch untersucht. „Promovierende waren lange Zeit eine Art unbekanntes Wesen für die Hochschulen“, so Nacaps-Projektleiter Dr. Kolja Briedis. „Die vor gut einem Jahr eingeführte Promovierendenstatistik wird helfen, endlich einen Überblick darüber zu bekommen, wie viele Personen überhaupt an deutschen Hochschulen promovieren. Viele wichtige Fragen bleiben aber weiterhin ungeklärt. Wie wirken sich zum Beispiel unterschiedliche Promotionsbedingungen auf den Promotionsfortschritt aus? Welche beruflichen Ziele verfolgen Promovierende? Und wer verbleibt nach der Promotion im Wissenschaftssystem? Um Antworten darauf zu erhalten, müssen wir die Promovierenden selbst fragen“, so Briedis weiter.

Ab heute haben die Promovierenden der kooperierenden Partnerhochschulen sechs Wochen lang Zeit, um die Fragen zu Themen wie Motivation, Qualifizierungs- und Beschäftigungsbedingungen, Karriereverläufen innerhalb und außerhalb des Wissenschaftssystems u.v.m. zu beantworten. Von den Ergebnissen der Studie werden auch die Befragten selbst profitieren, denn mit den Ergebnissen können die Hochschulen ihre Angebote und Unterstützungsleistungen verbessern. Dass auch seitens der Bildungspolitik ein großer Bedarf an umfassenderen Informationen über Promovierende besteht, wurde im letzten Bundesbericht zum Wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchs (BuWIN) deutlich, denn dort wurden erhebliche Lücken in der Datenlage zum wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchs offenbar.

DZHW (2023). Wie geht es den Promovierenden in Deutschland? Start der großen Onlinebefragung Nacaps. Presseinformation. Retrieved July 9, 2025 from https://www.dzhw.eu/services/material/pressemitteilungen/2023_02_27_pm_nacaps.pdf 68



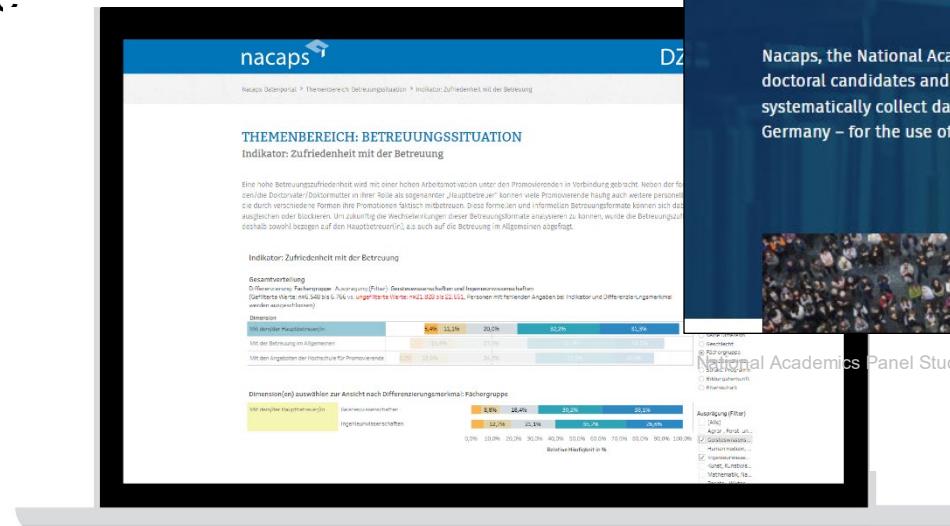
Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung GmbH
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30029 Hannover
Telefon +49 511 450670-0
Telefax +49 511 450670-960
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Pressekontakt:
Daniel Matthes
Tel.: 0511 450 670-532
E-Mail: matthes@dzhw.eu

Ansprechpartner:
Dr. Kolja Briedis
Tel.: 0511 450670-132
E-Mail: briedis@dzhw.eu

Public relations

- Measures to show respondents **how their information is utilized** and that their efforts **make a real contribution** (e.g. results, published papers, conference talks, PhD theses) during and after the survey period
 - Project website
 - Newsletter
 - Social media
 - Data portal



National Academics Panel Study (NACAPS). (n.d.). University cooperation partners. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from https://www.nacaps.de/hochschulkooperationen/index_html



nacaps⁺
National Academics
Panel Study

The Study Participation Service Contact

A longitudinal study of doctoral candidates and doctorate holders

Nacaps, the National Academics Panel Study, is a new longitudinal study of doctoral candidates and doctorate holders. This is the first study to systematically collect data on career paths of highly qualified academics in Germany – for the use of researchers, HEIs and academic policy makers.

News // 05.01.2023
New Survey starts in February

National Academics Panel Study (NACAPS). (n.d.). Home. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.nacaps.de>

National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps)
Nacaps ist eine Längsschnittstudie über die Karriereverläufe von Promovierenden und Promovierten am DZHW
Hochschulen und Universitäten • Hannover, Niedersachsen
298 Follower:innen • 2 - 10 Beschäftigte

National Academics Panel Study (Na...
298 Follower:innen
4 Monate • Bearbeitet • 69
Dr. Otnane Azeroual vom Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung GmbH hat einen lebenswerten Artikel über... mehr anzeigen

Start Info Beiträge Jobs Personen
Alle Bilder Videos Artikel Dokumente
National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) hat dies geteilt
National Academics Panel Study (Na...
298 Follower:innen
4 Monate • Bearbeitet • 69
Dr. Otnane Azeroual vom Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung GmbH hat einen lebenswerten Artikel über... mehr anzeigen

69

Factors influencing motivation



Perceived relevance

Participants are more motivated if they feel the survey is **relevant to their lives or interests**.

Respondents are more motivated when they feel that their experiences make an **important contribution**.



Ease of participation

A high **response burden** may reduce motivation

Response burden

Response burden refers to the **perceived effort, time, and complexity that respondents experience** when completing a survey.

- A high response burden can **negatively affect the data quality**:
 - Lower response rates/ high drop-out
 - Incomplete responses
 - Inaccurate or random answers
 - Bias (e.g. only highly motivated people respond)
- Keep that **response burden low** ☺

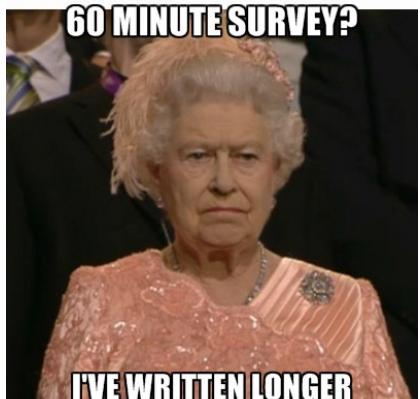


@betweenwalks (n.d.). "I've been carrying a heavy burden..." Comic. Retrieved June 25, 2025, from <https://www.instagram.com/betweenwalks>. Used for non-commercial educational purposes.

Three types of response burden

Time burden

Time it takes to complete
the survey

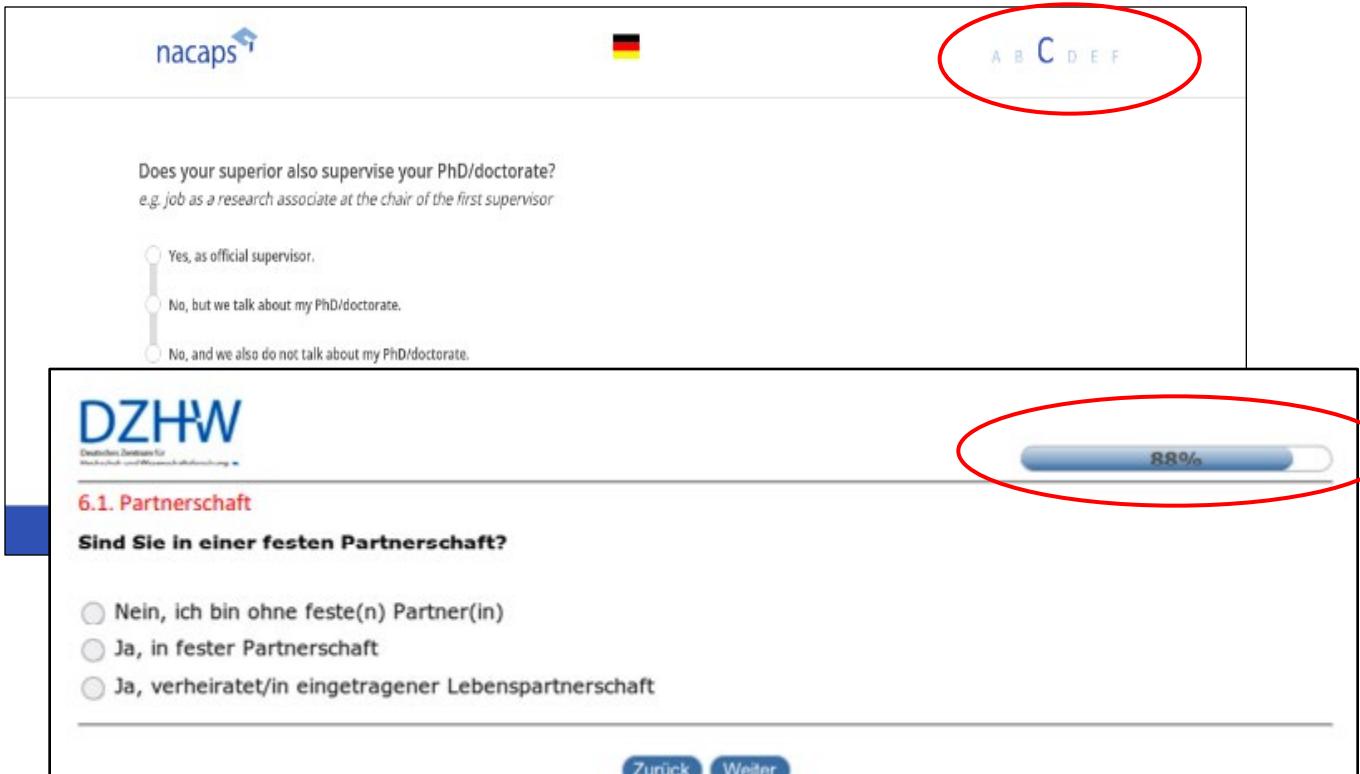


- Questions relevant for project and respondent
- Survey short and concise (<15 min.)

Survey length and completion time

Online respondents may have **short attention spans**, so it's crucial to make the survey short and concise

- Only questions **relevant** to them
- Keep the survey as **short** as possible (ideally under 15 minutes)
- Provide an **estimated completion time** at the beginning to set expectations (be honest!)
- **Prioritize key questions** and place more important questions early in the survey
- Provide a **progress bar** so respondents know how far along they are
- Use **filtering** and/or **split-half** methods



The image shows two screenshots of survey software. The top screenshot is from the Nacaps 2018 survey. It features a question about PhD supervision with three radio button options: 'Yes, as official supervisor.', 'No, but we talk about my PhD/doctorate.', and 'No, and we also do not talk about my PhD/doctorate.' Above the question is the Nacaps logo and a small German flag icon. To the right, there is a navigation bar with letters A, B, C, D, E, F, which is circled in red. The bottom screenshot is from the DZHW 2014 survey. It shows a section titled '6.1. Partnerschaft' with a question 'Sind Sie in einer festen Partnerschaft?'. It has three radio button options: 'Nein, ich bin ohne feste(n) Partner(in)', 'Ja, in fester Partnerschaft', and 'Ja, verheiratet/in eingetragener Lebenspartnerschaft'. Below the question is the DZHW logo and a progress bar indicating 88% completion, which is also circled in red. At the bottom of the page are 'Zurück' and 'Weiter' buttons.

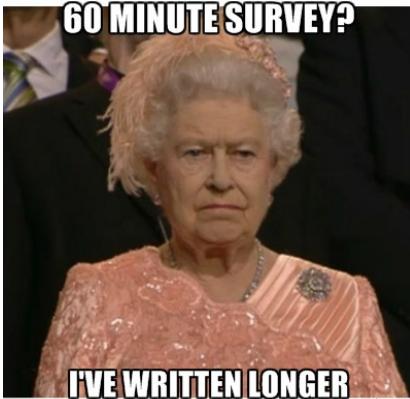
German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2024). National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) 2018 - Survey 1. Data collection: 2019. Hanover: FDZ-DZHW. <https://doi.org/10.21249/DZHW:nac2018:2.0.0>. Questionnaire "Nacaps 2018. Variable Questionnaire for National Academics Panel Study 2018 (1st wave - doctoral candidates) (English)". Question C1.

German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2024). DZHW PhD Panel 2014 - Survey 3. Data collection: 2017. Hanover: FDZ-DZHW.10.21249/DZHW:phd2014:4.0.0. Questionnaire "Karrieren Promovierter" (3rd wave - German)". Question 6.1

Three types of response burden

Time burden

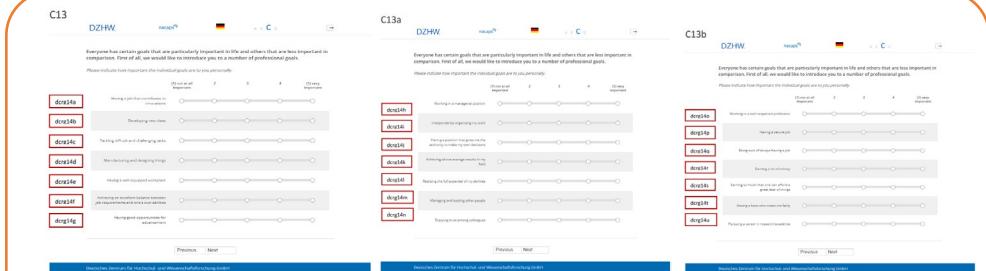
Time it takes to complete the survey



- Questions relevant for project and respondent
- Survey short and concise (<15 min.)

Cognitive burden

Mental effort required to understand and answer the questions



The image shows three separate screens of a survey interface. Each screen displays a list of statements followed by a horizontal Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The statements are as follows:

- C13:**
 - Working with your colleagues
 - Teaching others what you know
 - Meeting new people
 - Hanging out with friends
 - Reading for pleasure
 - Planning for the future
 - Thinking about your goals
 - Thinking about your achievements
- C13a:**
 - Working in a professional position
 - Having a good job
 - Having a good education
 - Having a good place to live
 - Having a good social life
 - Having a good family
 - Having a good job
 - Having a good education
- C13b:**
 - Working with your colleagues
 - Teaching others what you know
 - Meeting new people
 - Hanging out with friends
 - Reading for pleasure
 - Planning for the future
 - Thinking about your goals
 - Thinking about your achievements

- Use simple and clear language, avoid technical jargon, appropriate to target group, provide instructions
- No repetitive or redundant questions
- Clear, responsive, barrier-free layout
- Questionnaire follows logical flow

Clear and concise questions

That Scooter
you know



@memes_be_like_ha

That Scooter
I know



HeroXD (2019). Scooter and Scooter MEME. Retrieved June 25, 2025, from <https://www.deviantart.com/heroxidart/Scooter-and-Scooter-MEME-793711534>. Used for non-commercial educational purposes.

Questions
must be simple
and clearly
worded

Provide clear
instructions

Questions should be culturally appropriate and contextually relevant

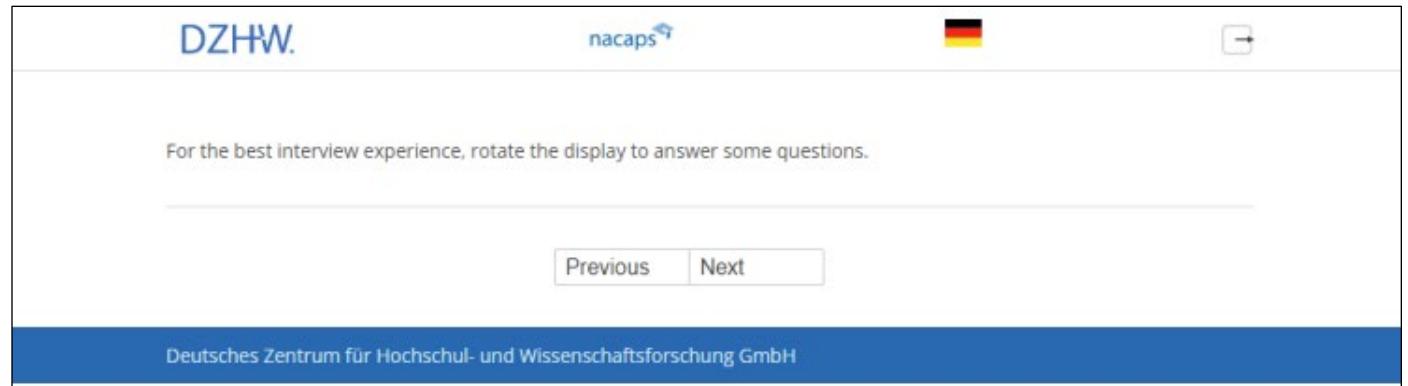


Screenshots from Narcos (Netflix, Gaumont International Television). Meme created using imgflip.com. Retrieved June 25, 2025. Used for non-commercial educational purposes.

Relevant and exhaustive response options

Instructions

- How to administer **the questionnaire**
 - language
 - recommended devices



DZHW. nacaps  

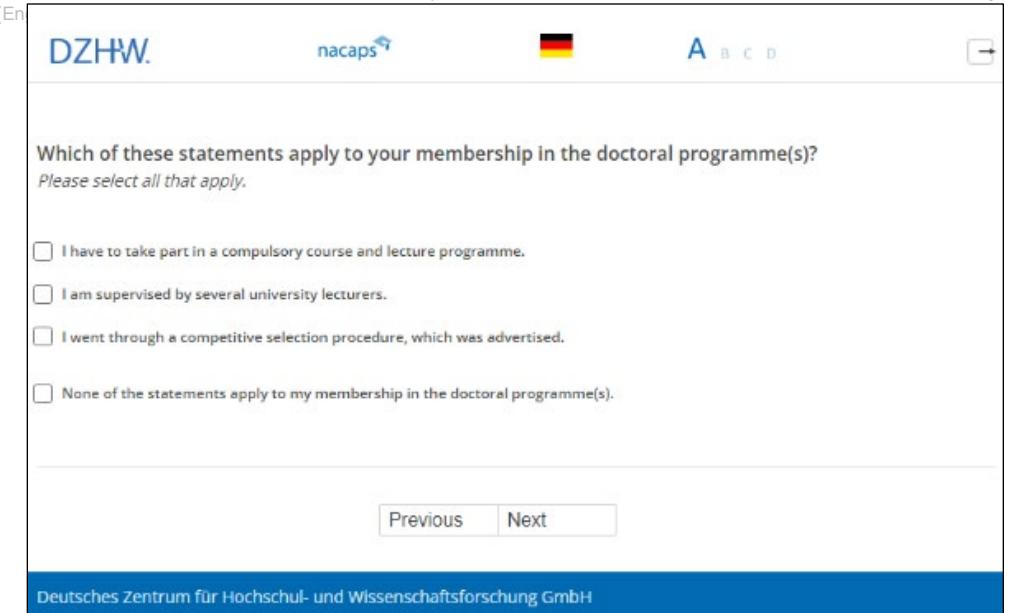
For the best interview experience, rotate the display to answer some questions.

Previous Next

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German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2024). National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) 2018 - Survey 4. Data collection: 2022. Hanover: FDZ-DZHW. <https://doi.org/10.21249/DZHW:nac2018:2.0.0>. Questionnaire "Nacaps 2018. Variable Questionnaire for National Academics Panel Study 2018 (4th wave - doctoral candidates) (English)"

- How to answer **each questions**
 - optional/ required questions
 - Allowed input formats, value ranges
 - Single/multiple choice



DZHW. nacaps  A B C D 

Which of these statements apply to your membership in the doctoral programme(s)?
Please select all that apply.

I have to take part in a compulsory course and lecture programme.
 I am supervised by several university lecturers.
 I went through a competitive selection procedure, which was advertised.
 None of the statements apply to my membership in the doctoral programme(s).

Previous Next

Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung GmbH

German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2024). National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) 2018 - Survey 4. Data collection: 2022. Hanover: FDZ-DZHW. <https://doi.org/10.21249/DZHW:nac2018:2.0.0>. Questionnaire "Nacaps 2018. Variable Questionnaire for National Academics Panel Study 2018 (4th wave - doctoral candidates) (English)". Question A15.

More instructions....

DZHW nacaps[®] DE A B C D

The survey is structured into four topics represented by the letters A to D.

At the last survey in you were officially registered as a doctoral candidate at your university. Something could have changed in the meantime. Please indicate your current status.

Your PhD/doctorate is regarded as completed when you have successfully passed the final examination (usually: *disputation or viva voce*).

I am doing a PhD/doctorate.
 I have submitted my thesis, respectively all relevant papers, for examination.
 I have completed the PhD/doctorate.
 I have interrupted my PhD/doctoral project.
 I have quit my PhD/doctoral project.

This question is important for the further procedure of the survey. If you do not give a specification, you will receive questions which do not apply to your current situation. Therefore, please answer this question to be able to proceed further.

Previous Next

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DZHW nacaps[®] DE A B C D

How high is/was your monthly gross income (before deducting taxes and social contributions), including regular monthly bonuses (e.g. shift bonuses, performance bonuses and paid overtime)?

For the self-employed: How much are/were your average earnings before taxes or your fees collected each month?

For persons employed abroad: Please indicate your gross income without converting and enlist the local currency (e.g. US-Dollar or CHF) in the second input field.

If you are (currently) not employed, please refer to your last job or the job before interrupting employment.

Please round to full amounts of Euros and dispense of decimal places and delimiters (12345 instead of 12.345,00).

Amount: Euro/month

Currency: (if a currency other than Euro)

Previous Next

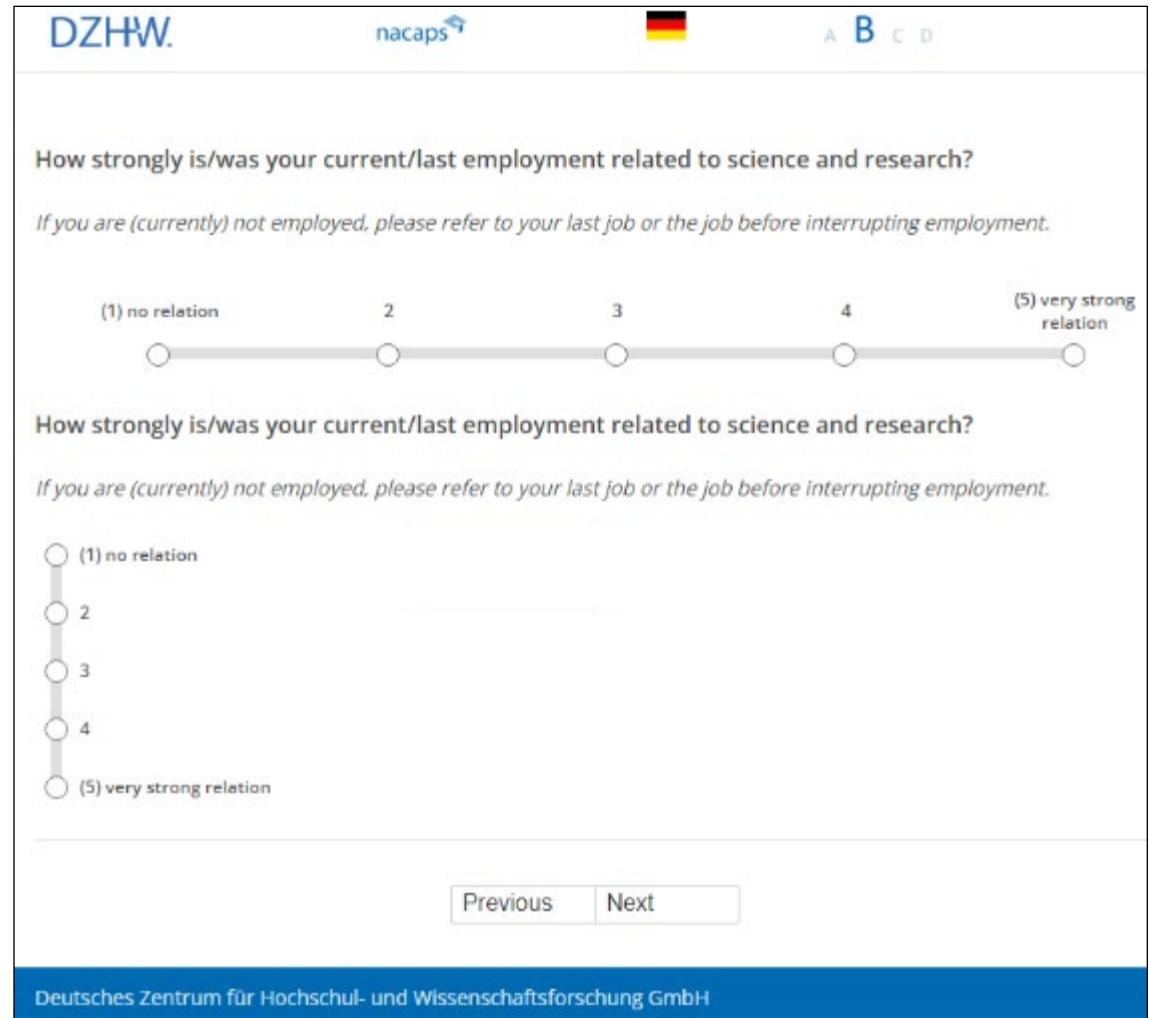
Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung GmbH

Ease of Participation

Responsive design

Many respondents will use **mobile devices**, so the survey should be optimized to navigate with different devices.

- Ensure the survey is responsive and adjusts well to **different screen sizes**.
- **Avoid complex question formats**, like drag-and-drop, which may not work well on mobile devices.
- **Test the survey on multiple devices** and browsers before launch



The screenshot displays a survey interface with two versions of a question side-by-side. Both versions ask: "How strongly is/was your current/last employment related to science and research? If you are (currently) not employed, please refer to your last job or the job before interrupting employment."

Top Version (Horizontal Scale):

- Labels: (1) no relation, 2, 3, 4, (5) very strong relation
- Scale: A horizontal line with five evenly spaced circles, each containing a number from 1 to 5.

Bottom Version (Vertical Scale):

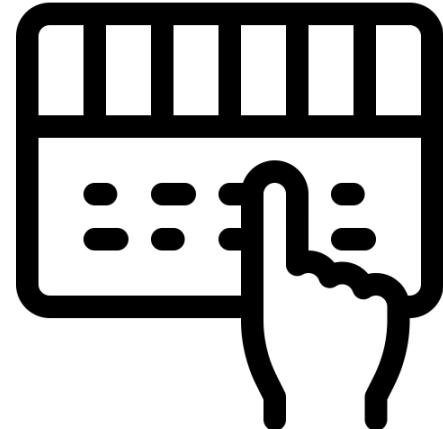
- Labels: (1) no relation, 2, 3, 4, (5) very strong relation
- Scale: A vertical line with five evenly spaced circles, each containing a number from 1 to 5.

Both versions include "Previous" and "Next" navigation buttons at the bottom.

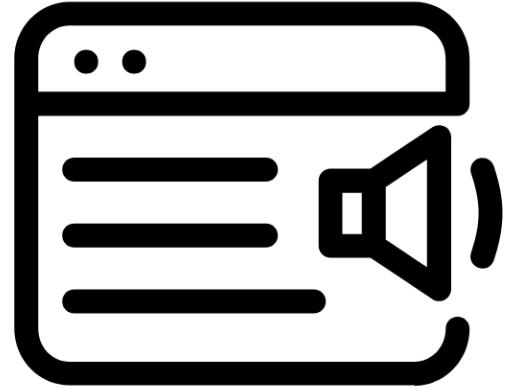
Accessibility

To reach a broad audience, online surveys should be accessible to **individuals with disabilities**

- Use **keyboard navigation**, alt text for images, and **appropriate colour contrast**
- **Test** the survey for compatibility with screen readers and other assistive technologies
- **Avoid complex elements** like timed questions



Created by Travis Avery
from Noun Project



Created by Bambang Tirta Suganda
from Noun Project

Logical flow of questions

- **Group related questions** and avoid jumps in topics
- Provide **transition statements**
- Use **filter questions**
DISCLAIMER: The more extensive and complex the filtering, the more time-consuming the data processing
- Start with **easy questions** or a catchy **icebreaker**
- **Move from general to more specific questions**

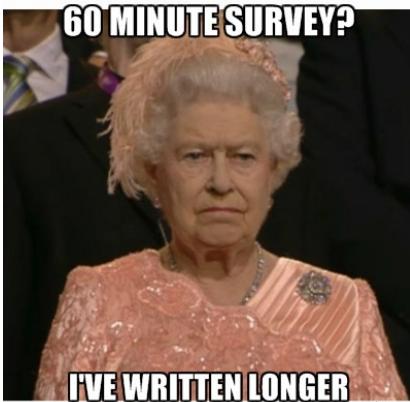


German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2024). DZHW PhD Panel 2014 - Survey 2. Data collection: 2016. Hanover: FDZ-DZHW.10.21249/DZHW:phd2014:4.0.0. Questionnaire "Karrieren Promovierter" (2nd wave - German)".

Three types of response burden

Time burden

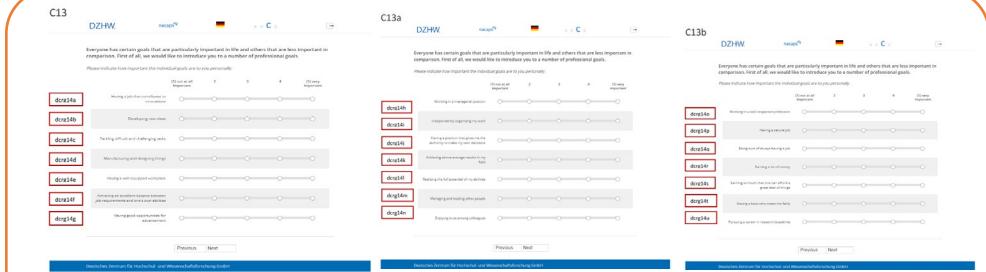
Time it takes to complete the survey



- Questions relevant for project and respondent
- Survey short and concise (<15 min.)

Cognitive burden

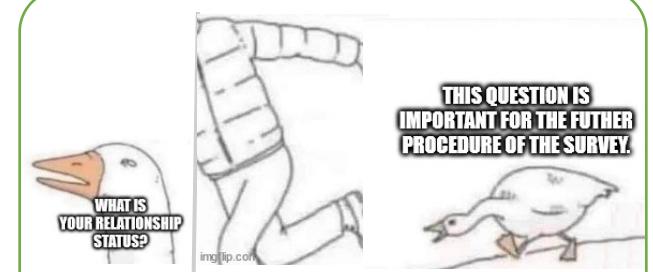
Mental effort required to understand and answer the questions



- Use simple and clear language, avoid technical jargon, appropriate to target group, provide instructions
- No repetitive or redundant questions
- Clear, responsive, barrier-free layout
- Questionnaire follows logical flow

Emotional burden

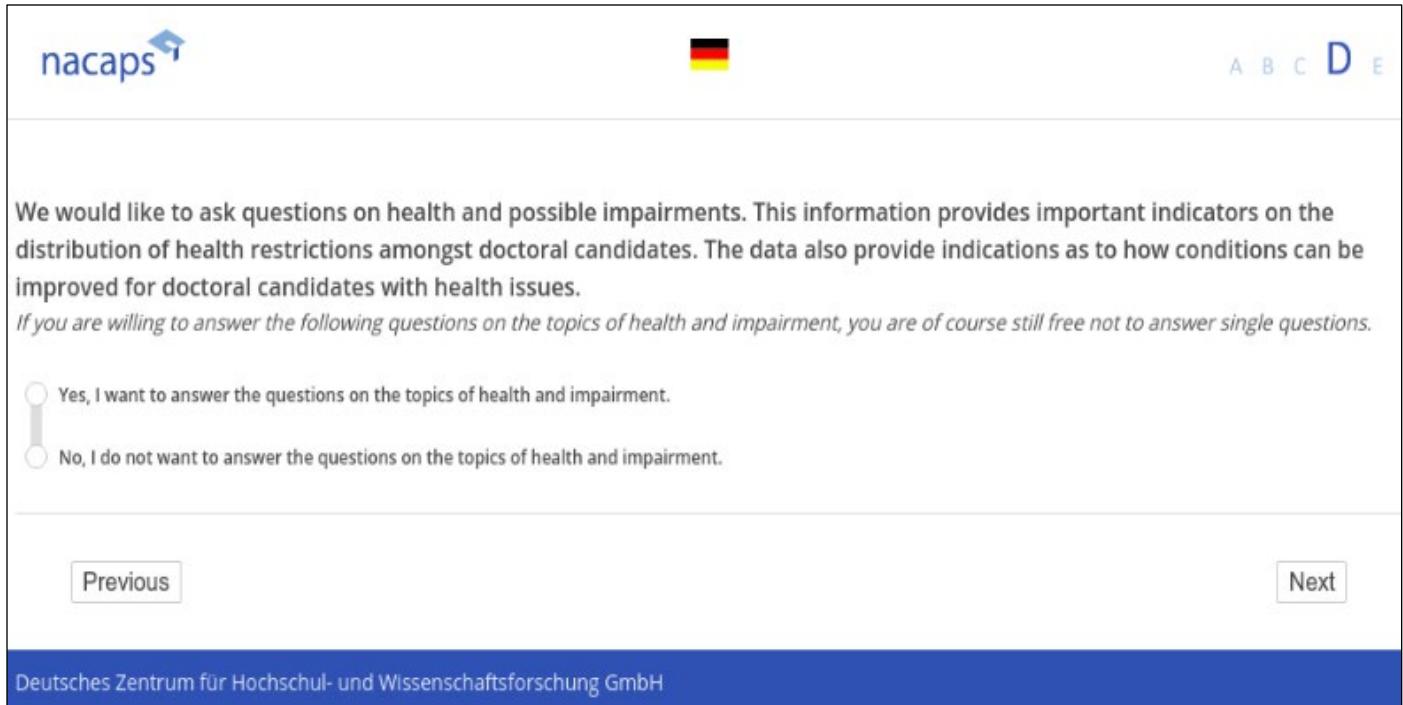
Emotional strain or discomfort experienced by respondents



- Use sensitive and respectful language
- Provide purpose
- Assure data protection and confidentiality
- Allow skipping questions

Ethical research

- **Assess questions** for any topics that may be sensitive, intrusive, or distressing
- Use **neutral**, non-judgmental wording
- Place sensitive questions **later in the questionnaire**
- Provide a **trigger warning** and a **skip option** or “prefer not to answer” response for sensitive questions
- Avoid language that might **alienate** or **marginalize** certain populations
- Review language and content for **cultural relevance and appropriateness**
- Use **professional translators** familiar with cultural nuances to maintain the original meaning



The screenshot shows a survey page from the Nacaps 2018 study. At the top, there is a logo for 'nacaps' with a graduation cap icon, the German flag, and navigation links labeled A, B, C, D, and E. The main text on the page reads: "We would like to ask questions on health and possible impairments. This information provides important indicators on the distribution of health restrictions amongst doctoral candidates. The data also provide indications as to how conditions can be improved for doctoral candidates with health issues." Below this, a note says: "If you are willing to answer the following questions on the topics of health and impairment, you are of course still free not to answer single questions." There are two radio button options: "Yes, I want to answer the questions on the topics of health and impairment." and "No, I do not want to answer the questions on the topics of health and impairment." At the bottom of the page, there are 'Previous' and 'Next' buttons, and a blue footer bar with the text "Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung GmbH".

German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2024). National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) 2018 - Survey 1. Data collection: 2019. Hanover: FDZ-DZHW. <https://doi.org/10.21249/DZHW:nac2018:2.0.0>. Questionnaire "Nacaps 2018. Variable Questionnaire for National Academics Panel Study 2018 (1st wave - doctoral candidates) (English)". Question D14.

Factors influencing motivation



Perceived relevance

Participants are more motivated if they feel the survey is **relevant to their lives or interests**.

Respondents are more motivated when they feel that their experiences make an **important contribution**.



Ease of participation

A high **response burden** may reduce motivation

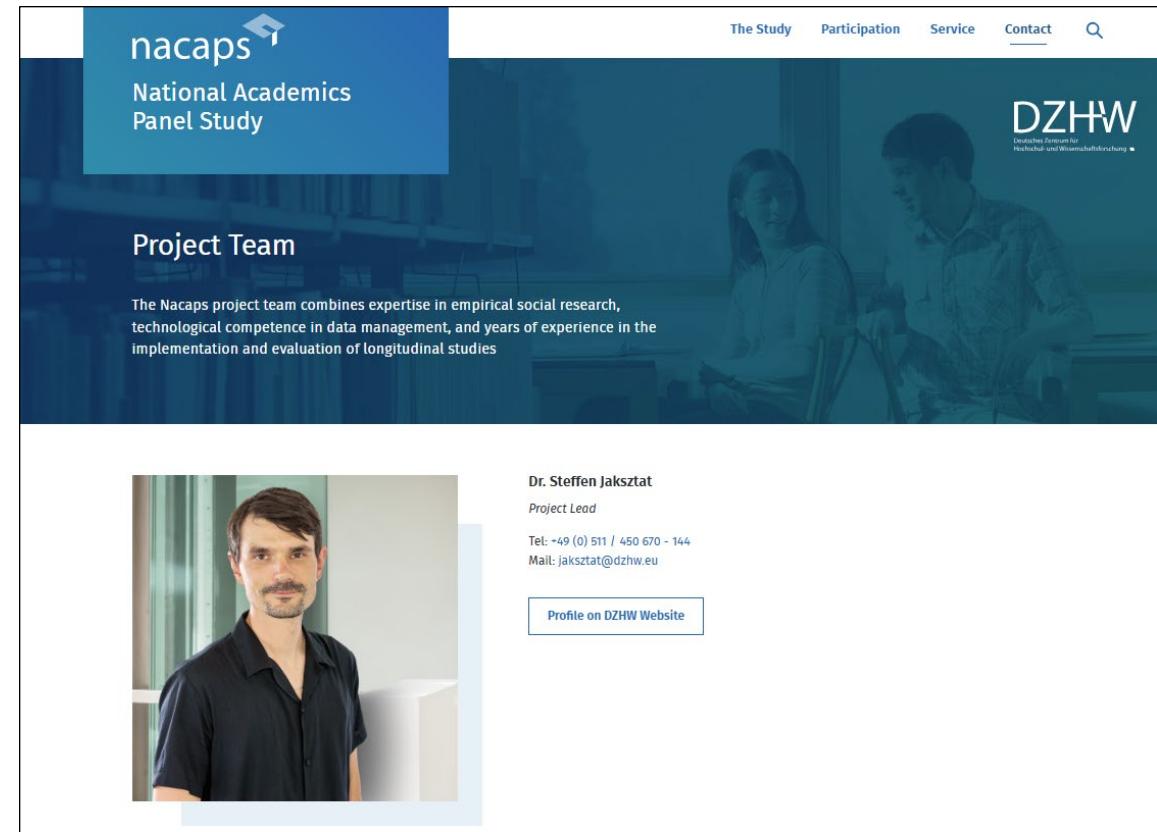


Trust in researcher

Trust in the organization conducting the survey and **assurances of confidentiality** can boost participation

Research Team and Organization

- Introducing the **research team** and the **involved organizations** provides clarity that a serious research project is behind the survey.
- Knowing a **name and face** associated with the study builds trust regarding who is processing their data
 - Mention organization, project, principal investigator, and contact details in the invitation and on the survey index page
 - Provide detailed information about organization and research team on the project website or social media posts
- Make invitation **look serious** and official



National Academics Panel Study (NACAPS). (n.d.). *Project Team*. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from https://www.nacaps.de/en/team/index_html

Sponsor/Funder

- Naming a **reputable sponsor** (e.g., a government agency, university, or well-known organization) assures participants that the survey is legitimate and not spam or a scam.
- Openly sharing who is behind the survey makes participants feel more secure about how their data will be used
 - Name sponsor or funder in invitation
 - **PRO TIP:** If possible, attach some kind of support letter or statement

Background

There is a great demand for systematically collected data on conditions, motives, career prospects and career paths of people who are or were active in the academic world. A range of user groups are looking for a better database on these topics to enable them to make evidence-based decisions:

Support for doctoral candidates and doctorate holders is a key factor in successful higher education and science policy. Qualifying highly educated talent for the academic and non-academic job market is essential to secure a leading position in the global education market and fulfil the demands of a strong innovation based national economy. Young researchers are also expected to make considerable contributions to fulfilling Germany's and the European Union's innovation and development targets.

So far, however, little is known in Germany about which institutional conditions of qualification and support or which conditions of knowledge production are

particularly helpful in producing outstanding scientific publications or innovations. A solid data foundation is required if this situation is to change.

The study produces valuable data that enable researchers to examine career paths and professional development in more detail than was previously possible. This enables work to be done on many research questions that have remained unaddressed up to now.

The Nacaps longitudinal study aims to systematically collect this data for the first time and as comprehensively as possible, for HEIs, policy makers and researchers.

Further detailed information about the background and research questions, the study design and Nacaps' sampling concept are contained in the scientific concept for the study.

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

Who is funding this study?

The study is being funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).



Testimonials

Testimonials from **peers or respected figures** reassure them that the survey is legitimate and worthwhile.

- Individuals in the target audience group
- Experts or stakeholders
- Researchers or organizers
- Advocates



German Centre for higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW). (n.d.). Promoviertenpanel. *Home*. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.pomoviertenpanel.de>



"Wir begrüßen eine groß angelegte Studie zur Erfassung, Evaluierung und Verbesserung der Situation der Doktorand*innen in Deutschland. N² vertritt vornehmlich außeruniversitäre Promovierende, aber viele Hürden und Herausforderungen, die wir in unseren eigenen Umfragen gesehen haben, betreffen Promovierende unabhängig von ihrem Arbeitgeber."

"We appreciate a large-scale study on the situation of Doctoral Researchers in Germany, in order to assess, evaluate and improve working conditions. N² currently represents only non-university Doctoral Researchers. Many hurdles and challenges, which we identified in our own surveys, affect Doctoral Researchers independently of their employer."

Board des N² / Network of Networks, dem Zusammenschluss der Promovierendenvertretungen Max Planck PhNet, Helmholtz Juniors und Leibniz PhD Network



"Nacaps liefert wichtige Erkenntnisse über die Situation und Perspektiven von Promovierenden und Promovierten in Deutschland. Daten zu den Beschäftigungsbedingungen und Karrieren von jungen Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftlern bieten eine wichtige Grundlage für strategische Entscheidungen an den Hochschulen und für die Weiterentwicklung passgenauer Förderangebote."

Prof. Dr. Peter-André Alt, ehemaliger Präsident der Hochschulrektorenkonferenz

National Academics Panel Study (NACAPS). (n.d.). *Home*. Retrieved July 9, 2025, from <https://www.nacaps.de/en/index.html>

Data protection

- Assure that the survey is **compliant with GDPR**
 - Information on website with FAQs
 - Data protection and security concept

Data Protection

Nacaps gives top priority to guaranteeing the security of all data and excluding the possibility of re-identifying individuals or individual HEIs, in accordance with social science research standards. To hold up these standards, the Nacaps study has been designed with a focus on participant's privacy from the get-go.

In addition to the German Data Protection Act (BDSG), Nacaps also complies with the currently applicable strict guidelines of the European General Data Protection Regulation (EU-DSGVO) and follows the German Data Forum (RatSWD)'s recommendations for social and economic data.

This data protection handout sums up key information about data protection regarding the first survey of Nacaps.

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

What will happen to the information I give on the questionnaire, i.e. with the survey data?

What exactly will happen to my contact data if I participate?

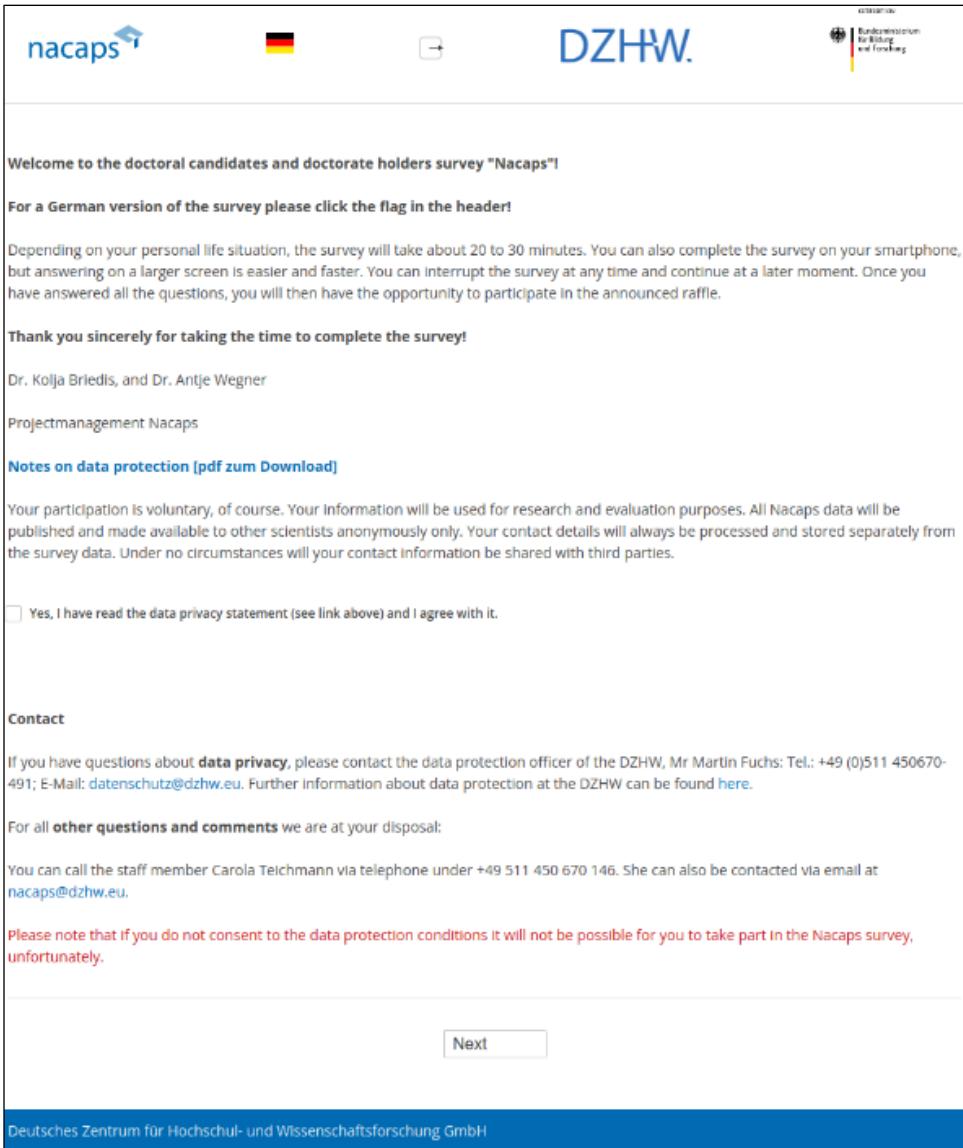
How did you obtain my address details?



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Data protection

- Assure that the survey is **compliant with GDPR**
 - Information on website with FAQs
 - Data protection and security concept
 - Informed consent



Welcome to the doctoral candidates and doctorate holders survey "Nacaps"!

For a German version of the survey please click the flag in the header!

Depending on your personal life situation, the survey will take about 20 to 30 minutes. You can also complete the survey on your smartphone, but answering on a larger screen is easier and faster. You can interrupt the survey at any time and continue at a later moment. Once you have answered all the questions, you will then have the opportunity to participate in the announced raffle.

Thank you sincerely for taking the time to complete the survey!

Dr. Kolja Briedls, and Dr. Antje Wegner

Projectmanagement Nacaps

[Notes on data protection \[pdf zum Download\]](#)

Your participation is voluntary, of course. Your information will be used for research and evaluation purposes. All Nacaps data will be published and made available to other scientists anonymously only. Your contact details will always be processed and stored separately from the survey data. Under no circumstances will your contact information be shared with third parties.

Yes, I have read the data privacy statement (see link above) and I agree with it.

Contact

If you have questions about [data privacy](#), please contact the data protection officer of the DZHW, Mr Martin Fuchs: Tel.: +49 (0)511 450670-491; E-Mail: datenschutz@dzhw.eu. Further information about data protection at the DZHW can be found [here](#).

For all [other questions and comments](#) we are at your disposal:

You can call the staff member Carola Teichmann via telephone under +49 511 450 670 146. She can also be contacted via email at nacaps@dzhw.eu.

Please note that if you do not consent to the data protection conditions it will not be possible for you to take part in the Nacaps survey, unfortunately.

[Next](#)

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Factors influencing motivation



Perceived relevance

Participants are more motivated if they feel the survey is **relevant to their lives or interests**.

Respondents are more motivated when they feel that their experiences make an **important contribution**.



Ease of participation

A high **response burden** may reduce motivation



Trust in researcher

Trust in the organization conducting the survey and **assurances of confidentiality** can boost participation



Incentives

Individuals are more likely to participate in the survey when participation has a perceived **benefit** for them.

Incentives

Rewards or compensations offered to participants to encourage them to take part in a survey.

Incentivization strategies

- Monetary incentives
- Non-monetary incentives
- Prize-draws



Monetary incentives

Direct Payments

Pros and Cons

- Appealing for most audiences
- Particularly effective for long or complex surveys
- High costs

Best for

- Short surveys
- Time-sensitive studies

Gift cards and vouchers

Pros and Cons

- Convenient and appealing to a broad demographic
- Allows flexibility in how the reward is used
- High costs



Best for

- Surveys targeting general populations
- When providing direct cash is not feasible

Pay-per-Response

Pros and Cons

- Cost-efficient for high-volume, low-burden surveys.
- Rapid data collection.
- May attract "professional survey-takers" who provide low-quality responses



Best for

- High-volume research
- A/B testing

Non-monetary incentives

Access to survey results or reports

Pros and Cons

- Cost-effective
- Builds engagement and goodwill
- Not as effective for some target groups

Best for

- Participants who value knowledge or are invested in the survey topic.
- Academic surveys, professional studies



German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies.
(2022). Ergebnisflyer Promovierte PgJ 2014. Retrieved July 9, 2025 from
https://www.dzhw.eu/pdf/22/ergebnisflyer_promovierte_pgj2014_druck.pdf

Charitable donations made on behalf of participants

Pros and Cons

- Enhances the survey's alignment with a greater cause
- Choice of organization may deter some participants

Best for

- Surveys targeting altruistic and socially conscious groups populations

Prize draws

Raffles for larger high-value items or gift cards

Pros and Cons

- Cost-effective, as not all participants receive reward
- Generates fun and excitement
- Reduces administrative burden
- Uncertainty may reduce motivation

Best for

- Large sample surveys
- General or diverse populations
- Limited budgets

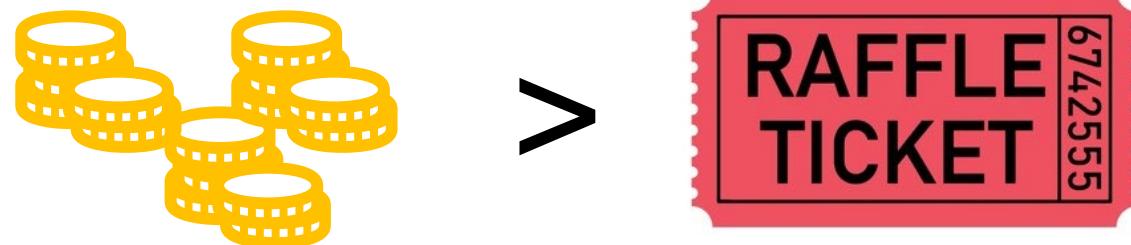
Communicate

- Description of the prize(s)
- Number of winners
- Draw date and how winners will be contacted.



What works best according to research?

- Offering **instant compensation** (e.g., cash, e-vouchers) upon survey completion outperforms delayed rewards in terms of response rates
- **Guaranteed** small payments (e.g., 5€) generally motivate more people than the possibility of winning a larger prize (e.g., 100€).
- As survey length increases, so should the value of the incentive



https://as1.ftcdn.net/v2/jpg/13/10/66/58/1000_F_1310665867_zkwsUk2wbWStVci4PmVooQf0e94YQ27X.jpg

What incentive fits best?

Scenario 1: Graduate Student Research Study

A **graduate student** is conducting a survey for their thesis on study habits and time management among university students. They want to recruit **as many students as possible** across multiple universities and have a **limited budget**.

Raffle of small gift cards or vouchers

Scenario 2: Faculty Research on Collaborative Teaching

A team of researchers is studying interdisciplinary teaching practices and wants to **survey faculty members** from various disciplines. The survey is detailed and requires about 15 minutes to complete.

Survey results

Scenario 3: Public Health Survey on Vaccination Attitudes

A research team is conducting a survey to study attitudes toward vaccinations in a local community. The target audience includes **parents of school-age children**, and the survey is distributed **online through schools and local health organizations**. The survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Small toys or vouchers for toy stores; charitable donation to child welfare organization

What to consider in choosing an incentivization strategy?

- Calculate the budget and decide whether **broad incentives** (e.g., micro-incentives) or **selective incentives** (e.g., prize draws) are more feasible.
- Different **groups** respond differently to incentives:
 - Younger audiences may prefer digital rewards or price-draws for smartphones, laptops etc.
 - Professionals may value results
- Choose incentives related to the **survey topic** to enhance perceived relevance.
- **Combine** incentives (e.g. one large and few smaller prizes in a raffle)



Data Protection

Why is it important to think about?

- Designing surveys with data protection in mind helps ensure that all data collection processes are **lawful**, reducing the risk of penalties for non-compliance.
- Compliant practices show respondents that their **privacy is respected**, which can lead to higher response rates and better-quality data.
- Failure to comply with data protection regulations or poor implementation can negatively **impact the research project** (e.g., deletion of survey data)

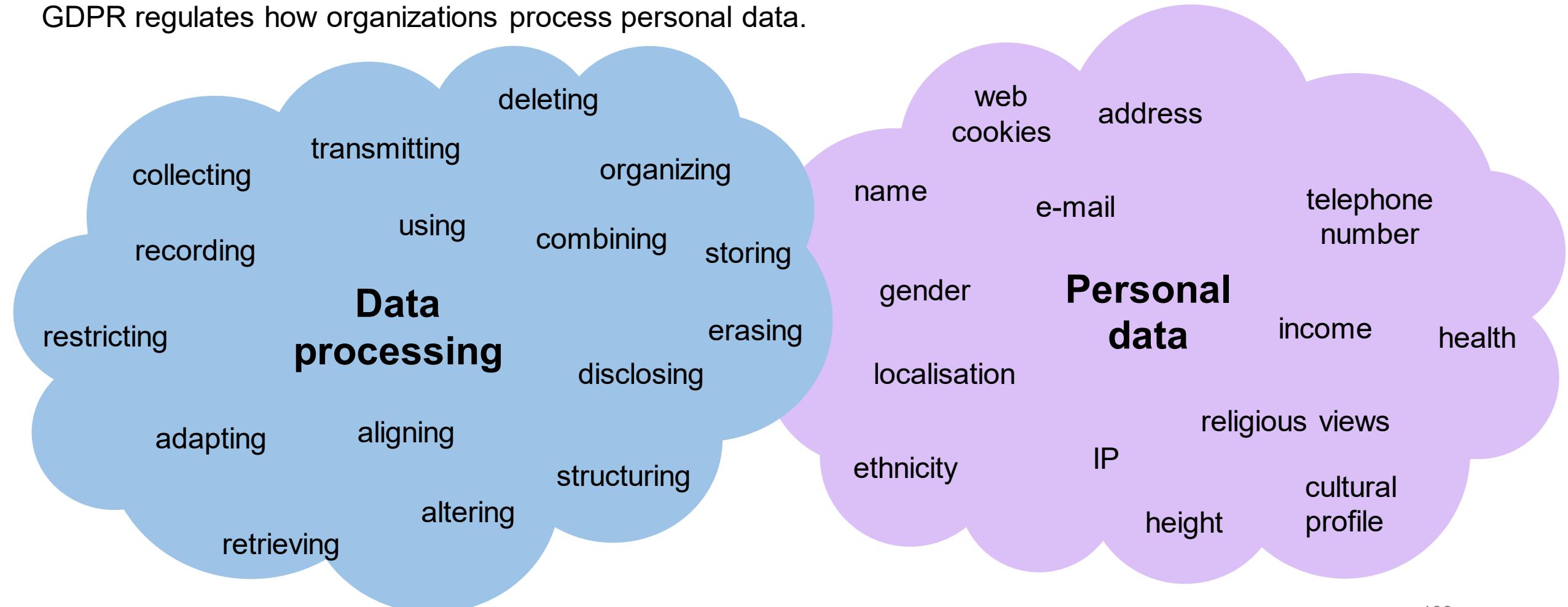
Disclaimer



I'm not a lawyer!

EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

GDPR regulates how organizations process personal data.



Sensitive personal data

Certain types of sensitive personal data are subject to **additional protection** under the GDPR (**special category data** according to Art 9 + 10 GDPR)

- Ethnic origin
- Religious or philosophical beliefs
- Trade union membership and political opinions
- Sex life or sexual orientation
- Health information
- Genetic and biometric data for identification
- Crime records

Applies also to **circumstantial personal information** (e.g. name-specific data relating to the spouse, cohabitee or partner of a person) when it indirectly discloses the above mentioned information.

Adobe Stock | #466187769



Created by Hermawan
from Noun Project



flaticon.com



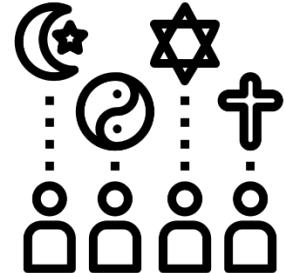
Created by Chaiwat Kinkaeaw
from Noun Project



flaticon.com



flaticon.com



Created by Chaiwat Kinkaeaw
from Noun Project

Legal basis for data processing

Legislation



There is a statutory provision that permits (or mandates) data processing

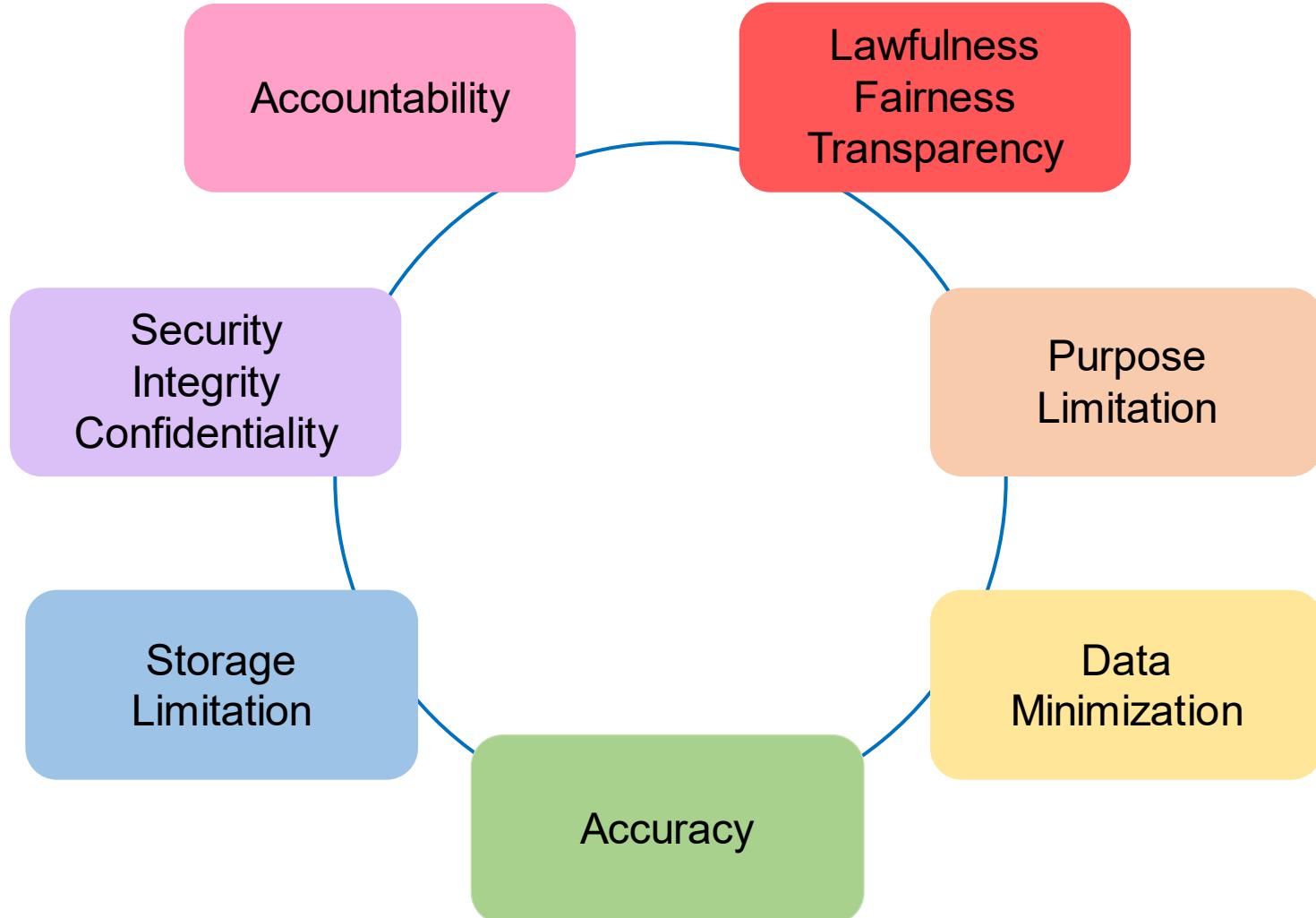
Consent



The individual has given clear consent for their data to be processed for a specific purpose



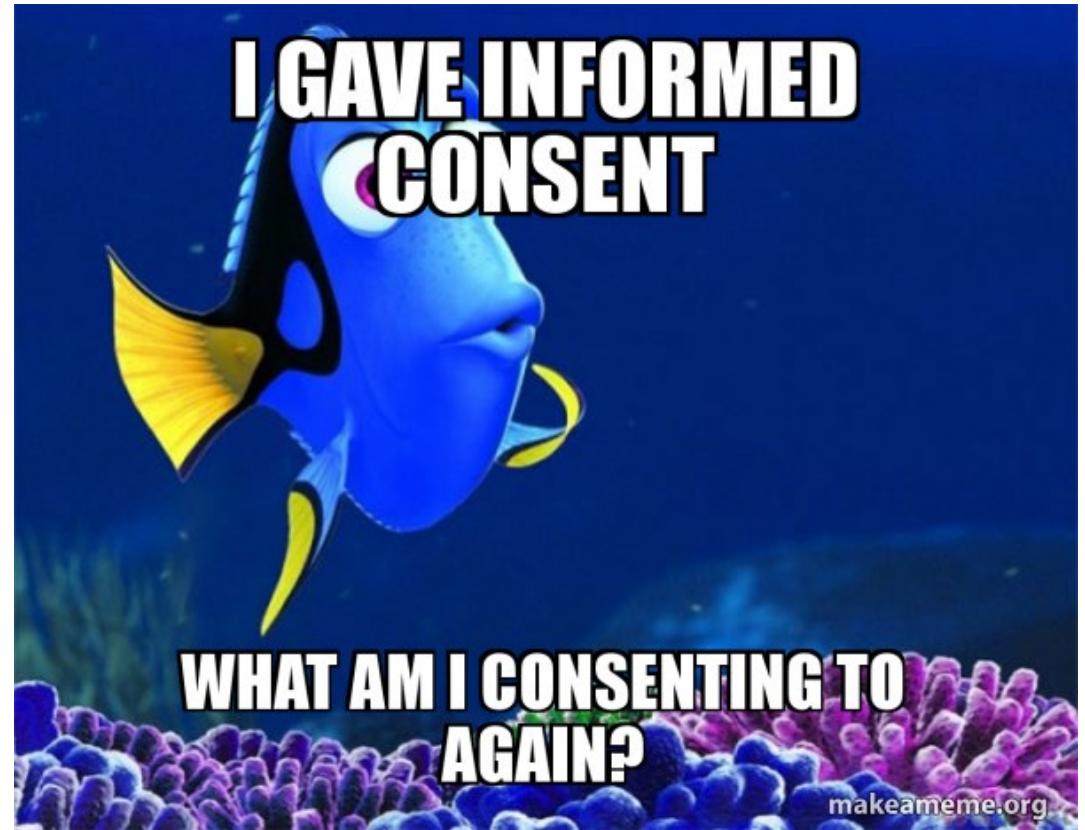
GDPR Principles in Data Processing



Informed consent

Information for data subjects about data processing (Art. 13, 14 GDPR)

- **Responsible entity** (name and contact details) / contact details of the **data protection officer**
- What **categories of personal data** are being processed?
- For what **purpose** is the data being processed?
- On what **legal basis** is the data processing taking place?
- Which **groups of recipients** have access to the data?
- When will the data be **deleted or anonymized**?
- If applicable, information on **data transfer outside the EU**
- Information on **data subjects' rights** under GDPR (access, deletion, etc.)



Unknown creator (n.d.). *I gave informed consent, but I didn't understand a thing* [Meme]. Retrieved June 30, 2025, from <https://makeameme.org/meme/i-gave-informed>

Informed Consent - Example

Welcome to the doctoral candidates and doctorate holders survey "Nacaps"!

For a German version of the survey please click the flag in the header!

Depending on your personal life situation, the survey will take about 20 to 30 minutes. You can also complete the survey on your smartphone, but answering on a larger screen is easier and faster. You can interrupt the survey at any time and continue at a later moment. Once you have answered all the questions, you will then have the opportunity to participate in the announced raffle.

Thank you sincerely for taking the time to complete the survey!

Dr. Kolja Briedis, and Dr. Antje Wegner

Projectmanagement Nacaps

Notes on data protection [pdf zum Download]

Your participation is voluntary, of course. Your information will be used for research and evaluation purposes. All Nacaps data will be published and made available to other scientists anonymously only. Your contact details will always be processed and stored separately from the survey data. Under no circumstances will your contact information be shared with third parties.

Yes, I have read the data privacy statement (see link above) and I agree with it.

Contact

If you have questions about **data privacy**, please contact the data protection officer of the DZHW, Mr Martin Fuchs: Tel.: +49 (0)511 450670-491; E-Mail: datenschutz@dzhw.eu. Further information about data protection at the DZHW can be found [here](#).

For all **other questions and comments** we are at your disposal:

You can call the staff member Carola Teichmann via telephone under +49 511 450 670 146. She can also be contacted via email at nacaps@dzhw.eu.

Please note that if you do not consent to the data protection conditions it will not be possible for you to take part in the Nacaps survey, unfortunately.

[Next](#)

Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung GmbH

nacaps
National Academics Panel Study

DZHW
Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung

Information and Consent to Survey and Data Protection

What is the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW)?
The DZHW (Lange Laube 12, in 30159 Hanover, Germany, represented by the directors Prof. Dr. Monika Jungbauer-Gans and Karen Schlüter) is a non-profit institution of the German federal government and all 16 federal states that has been collecting survey data for over forty years for scientific studies on educational and higher education policy issues. You can find extensive information and a series of publications at www.dzhw.eu.

What is the "National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps)"?
Nacaps is a scientific study about PhD conditions and plans for the professional future and general personal circumstances of doctoral candidates and doctorate holders. You can find further information about the study at www.nacaps.de.

What is the survey about?
Nacaps is designed as a longitudinal study in order to examine PhD/doctorate conditions and professional careers over a longer period of time. That is why after completing this survey, you also have the option of giving us your permission to contact you again. To be notified of follow-up surveys please fill in your name, (if possible a steady) email address and your postal address in the boxes provided at the end of the online survey. You can find good reasons to participate on the project homepage at www.nacaps.de/teilnahme.

Meanwhile we would also like to contact you to inform you about the results of the first Nacaps survey or in case of winning the raffle.

Where did we get your email address from?
The university you were registered at as a doctoral candidate in December 2018 and the DZHW are jointly conducting the survey. Therefore, you will receive the invitation to participate in Nacaps directly from your university in most cases. In some cases, we have made an agreement that the DZHW is responsible for sending out the survey invitation. For that purpose you either had the opportunity to register at our homepage or we already received your email address from your university in advance.

What data are collected?
Three different forms of data will be collected during the survey. Your name, address and email address (from now on referred to as *contact data*) are stored strictly separated from your other survey information (from now on referred to as *survey data*). In order to carry out the online survey correctly, the survey website also receives information about your end device (from now on referred to as *process data*). This technical information is stored in a separate database from the survey data, together with information on when the individual survey pages were called.

What happens to your data?
Your *contact data* will be used by the DZHW exclusively for contacting you and will not be passed on to third parties. In case you want to inform us of a change as regards your contact data, please get back to the Nacaps staff members via nacaps@dzhw.eu.

The DZHW evaluates your *survey data* (a) for scientific purposes regarding higher education research and science studies. If the survey data is used for scientific analyses in publications, it will not be possible to identify individual persons. Since Nacaps is a joint survey, survey data of all respondents from one university will be also transferred to this specific university. Your university evaluates the survey data for (b) the purposes of quality assurance and monitoring in the field of doctoral candidates' training conditions. It will also not be possible to directly identify individual persons based on these analyses. Both parties are contractually bound to refrain from any attempts to identify individuals. (c) A part of the survey data will also

100

German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2024). National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) 2018 - Survey 4. Data collection: 2022. Hanover: FDZ-DZHW. <https://doi.org/10.21249/DZHW:nac2018:2.0.0>. Questionnaire "Nacaps 2018. Information and Consent to Survey and Data Protection"

Third-Party Platforms

Online surveys must protect respondents' data, especially when collecting personal or sensitive information.

- Ensure that the survey platform uses **encryption** (e.g., SSL) to secure data transmission.
- Survey platform needs to **comply with data protection regulations** (e.g. GDPR, HIPAA)
- store data on **EU servers**



SurveyMonkey®
(EU server for new corporate customers only)



(intransparent about server locations)



Google Forms

(enterprise version of Google Workspace and have set your data storage preferences)



Typeform

Collecting Contact Information in Web Surveys

- Inquire contact data at the end of the survey
- Allow participants to opt out
- Clearly separate survey data from contact data
 - Use dedicated tools or functions to collect contact information
For example, use a "*contact form*" function or *linked survey page* that stores data on a separate server.
 - Store contact data separately from response data
- Apply strong encryption
- Use secure and access-controlled storage
 - Store on institutional servers or trusted, GDPR-compliant cloud solutions.
- Restrict access to contact data
 - Grant access only to authorized personnel, ideally with role-based permissions.
- Inform participants transparently
 - Clearly state what data will be collected, how it will be stored, and for what purpose.



[Cryptomator - Installation](#)

Ressources

U Bremen employees

Katja Losch-Kremer

katja.losch-kremer@vv.uni-Bremen.de

Consulting on Data Protection
Data Protection Officer

[Information portal on data protection and information security](#)

- Templates
- Checklist “Data Protection for Research Projects” (DE/EN)

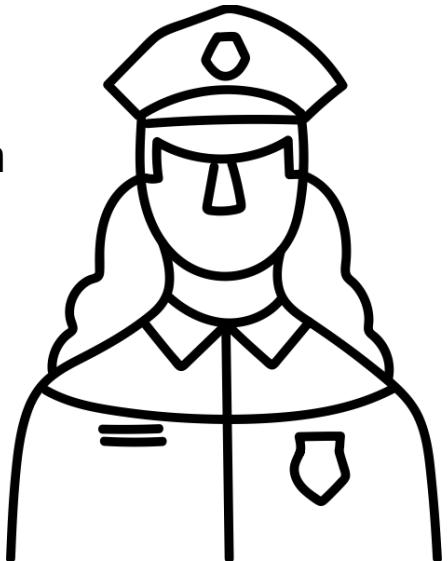
... and More

[RatSWD Data Protection Guide](#)

[RatSWD Informed Consent Documents](#)

[VerbundFDB Information and Templates \(also for minors\)](#)

[BERD@BW Virtual Assistant Tool](#)



Created by Lara
from Noun Project

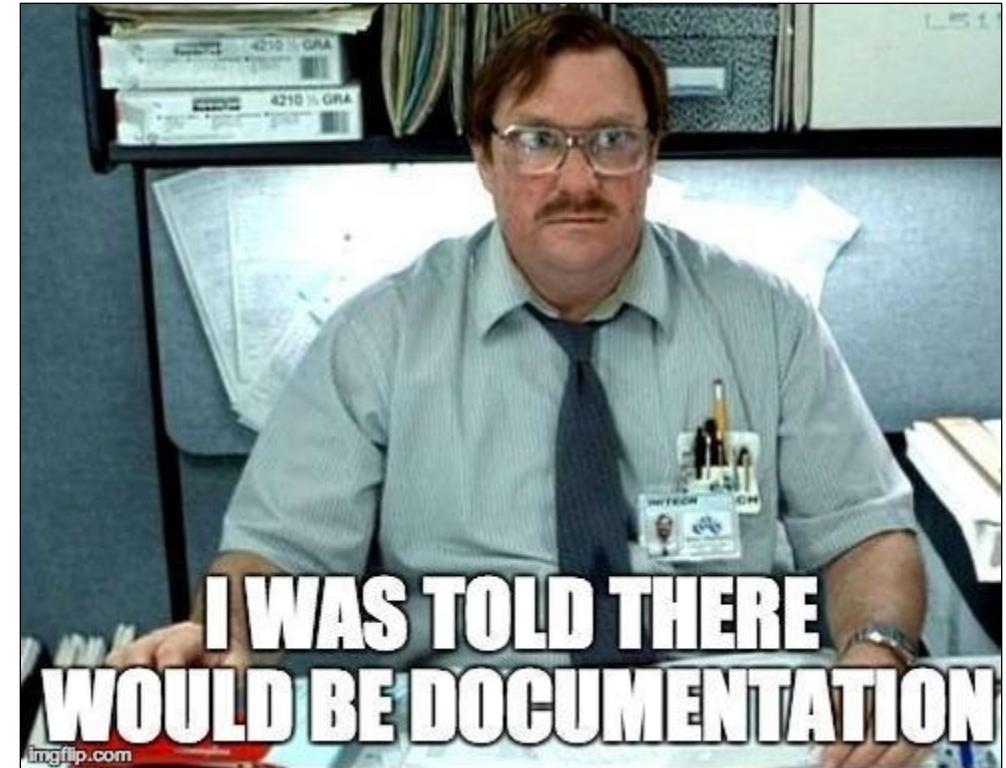
Break



Documentation

Why is it important to think about it?

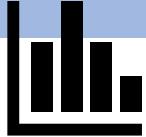
- Allows others (e.g., collaborators, reviewers, or stakeholders) for future you to **understand the rationale** behind design choices and changes
- **Tracks changes** and secures against data loss
- Provides context for **interpreting results** accurately
- Enables researchers to **assess** what worked well and consider alternative approaches for future projects
- Provides the necessary details that **reviewers and funders** look for when evaluating the study
- Documents **compliance** with data protection laws (like GDPR) and ethical considerations
- Provides information and material for **publishing** and **reusing** the data



Drata. (2023). "I was told there would be documentation" meme. Retrieved June 30, 2025, from <https://drata.com/blog/compliance-memes>

What to document?

General information



- Study topic and objectives
- Researchers and affiliations
- Funding
- Responsibilities
- Fieldwork time
- Target population
- Sampling strategy
- Sample size, characteristics
- Response metrics

Response metrics

The **American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR)** provides standardized definitions and formulas for response metrics

- ensures consistency, transparency, and comparability in reporting survey outcomes.

[AAPOR Standard Definitions Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys](#)

[AAPOR Response Rates Calculator](#)

[Gesis Adaptation of the AAPOR Final Disposition Codes for the German Survey Context](#)

Table 9: Gross and net response rate of the Nacaps follow-up survey waves (according to AAPOR 2016)

Data	2nd wave	3rd wave	4th wave
Invitations sent [1]*	17.553	17.377	17.199
Undeliverable*	159	299	488
Adjusted invitations sent [2]*	17.394	17.078	16.711
Survey opened but not filled [3]	473	494	237
Partially completed (break-off from A01 and before C01) [4]	626	527	387
Fully completed (break-off from C01 or no break-off) [5]	8.893	6.994	6.915
Number of cases ([3]+[4]+[5])	9.992	8.015	7.539
of which usable cases ([4]+[5])	9.519	7.521	7.302
Response Rate 1 (RR1) is the minimum response rate. ([5]/[1])	50,66%	40,25%	40,21%
Response Rate 2 (RR2) counts partial interviews as respondents. ([4]+[5])/[2])	54,73%	44,04%	43,69%

* It should be noted that the number given here also includes cases that were additionally invited to the survey for other purposes and removed from the published data.

Briedis, K., Lietz, A., Ruß, U., Schwabe, U., Seifert, M., Mühlbeck, K., Scheller, P., Teichmann, C., de Vogel, S., Weber, A., Schmidtchen, H., Birkelbach, R., Hoffstätter, U. & Oestreich, T. (2024). Nacaps 2018 - Data and methods report on the National Academics Panel Study 2018 (1st-4th wave - doctoral candidates). Hanover: RDC-DZHW.

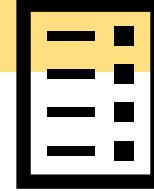
What to document?

General information



- Study topic and objectives
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- Funding
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- Target population
- Sampling strategy
- Sample size, characteristics
- Response metrics

Questionnaire



- Measurement instrument development
- Translation
- Pretests (interview guide-lines, transcripts, results)
- Variable questionnaire, Layout version (e.g. screenshots)
- Flowchart
- Codebook

Variable questionnaire and layout version

A5

[if {A1 („PhD/doctorate status“) = 1 („doctorate“) or 3 („interrupted“)} and preload01 („university“) = everyone]

[Visible condition: if {A1 („PhD/doctorate status“) = 1 („doctorate“) or 3 („interrupted“)}]

Why did you start the PhD/doctorate?

	does not apply at all	1	2	3	4	5 applies fully
Because I am interested in the issue	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01a]					
Because I would like to contribute to scientific progress	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01b]					
Because it is common in my discipline	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01c]					
Because my personal environment expects it	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01d]					
Because nothing else came about	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01e]					
Because I would like to work in academia permanently	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01f]					
Because I would like to contribute to solving societal problems	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01g]					
Because I would like to increase my reputation	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01h]					
Because I would like to improve my career opportunities in the job market outside academia	<input type="checkbox"/> [adtc01i]					

A5: Outlet filter

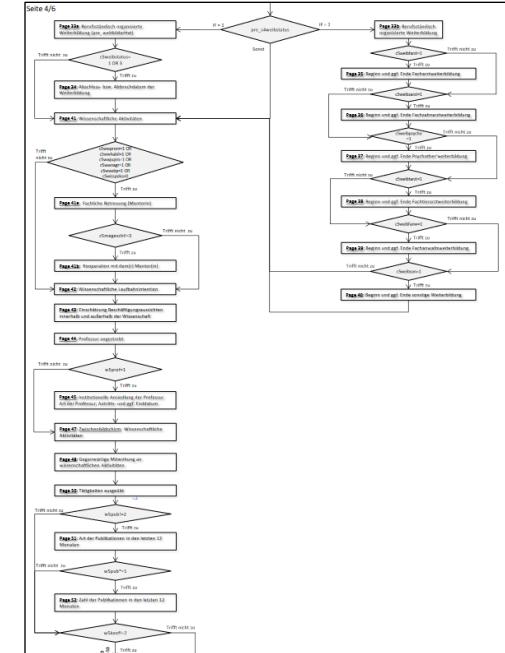
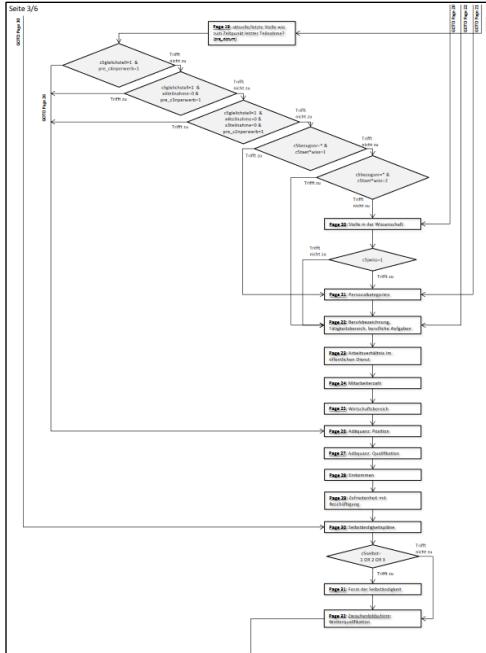
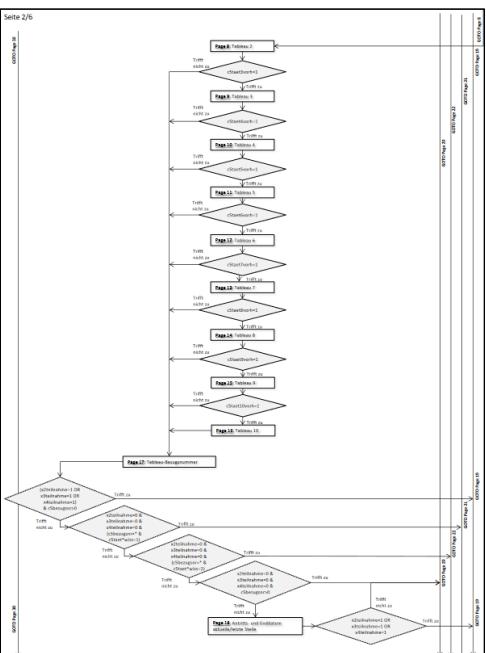
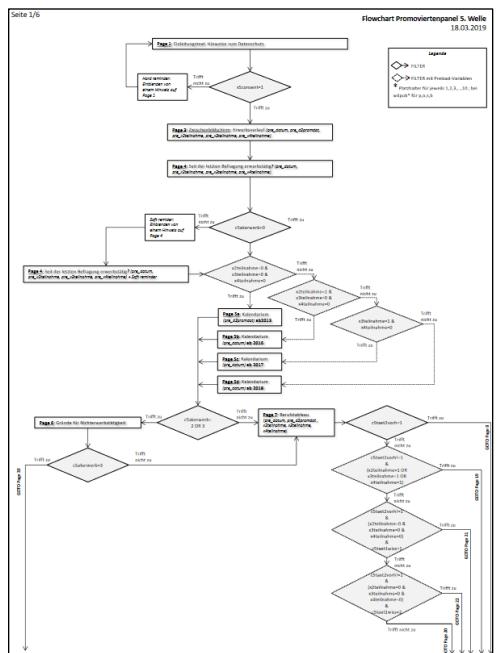
GOTO A6



Flowchart

Visual tool that maps out the **structure and logical flow** of the survey

- Sequence of questions
- Skip patterns or branching logic
- Visible condition
- Randomization and rotation



German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (2024). DZHW PhD Panel 2014 - Survey1. Data collection: 2015. Hanover: FDZ-DZHW.10.21249/DZHW.phd2014:4.0.0. Question Flow (5th wave - German)

Documentation

Codebooks

Structured document that provides detailed information about the variables and coding system used in a dataset:

- Variable name, -label, -type
- Valid values, value labels
- Missing values

More Infos

[Cookbook for a Codebook](#)

[DDI Codebook Examples of DDI codebooks](#)

There are also R-packages, for example, that can be helpful in the automatic creation of DDI codebooks (DDIwR, rddi)

Some survey platforms generate codebooks automatically

Code	Label	Type	Mean	Prop_miss
1	name	character	NA	0.00000000
2	essround	double	7.000000e+00	0.00000000
3	edition	character	NA	0.00000000
4	proddate	character	NA	0.00000000
5	idno	double	6.464965e+06	0.00000000
6	cnty	character	NA	0.00000000
7	tvtot	double	4.263954e+00	0.00000000
8	tvpol	double	5.519273e+00	0.00000000
9	pplrst	double	5.364987e+00	0.00000000
10	pplfair	double	6.376036e+00	0.00000000
11	pplhlp	double	5.428667e+00	0.00000000
12	polintr	double	2.589424e+00	0.00000000
13	psppsgv	double	5.522160e+00	0.00000000

Showing 1 to 14 of 601 entries, 5 total columns

Cernat, A. (n.d.). An easy way to make a codebook in R. Retrieved June 30, 2025, from <https://www.alexcernat.com/easy-way-to-make-a-codebook-in-r/>

What to document?

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Questionnaire



- Measurement instrument development
- Translation
- Pretests (interview guide-lines, transcripts, results)
- Variable questionnaire, Layout version (e.g. screenshots)
- Flowchart
- Codebook

Data collection



- Contact strategy
- Reminder strategy
- Invitation and reminder letters
- Incentives
- Informed consent, checklists

Version control

Records changes made in a file or set of files over time,
so that you and your collaborators

- can **track** their history
- **review** any changes
- **revert** or go back to earlier versions

How?

- Use **continuous numbering**
- Include date and **version number** in the file names
- Use a **version control table**
- Save versions of **milestones**
- **version control software** (e. g. Git and Github)

Status	Version	Author	Date	Changes
Draft	v0.1	Name Surname Email	20200115	First draft
Draft	V2.0	Name Surname Email	20200120	Inserted images and tables
Final	V1.0	Name Surname Email	20200130	Inserted references and typos correction
Approved	V1.0	Name Surname Email	20200205	Approved by XX

ELIXIR Belgium (n. d.). Version control table. Retrieved June 30, 2025, from https://rdm.elixir-belgium.org/version_control

Example: Nacaps

Nacaps metadata

Nacaps

National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) 2018

Survey Period: Feb 18, 2019 - Jun 1, 2022

Waves: 4

Survey Data Type: Quantitative Data

Data available in: German, English

DOI: 10.21249/DZHW:nac2018:2.0.0

Published at: Apr 30, 2024

Version: 2.0.0 (current)

Access Way:

Add to shopping cart

Go to shopping cart

Cite...

Export metadata...

In case you have problems with the ordering process, please contact userservice@dzhw.eu.

Data Search > Data Package nac2018

National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps) 2018

Tags: PhD students, funding, mobility, structured doctoral studies, health, employment trajectories, mentoring, young academics, doctoral students, science system, motives for doctoral studies, non-monetary returns, personality, dropout of doctoral studies, scientific careers, doctorate, reconciling work and family life, forms of doctoral studies, labour market success within and outside of academia, monetary returns, young scholars

Details

Study Series: National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps)

Institution(s): German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW)

Sponsored by: Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Project Contributors: Adrian, Dominik; Ambrasat, Jens; Briedis, Kolja; Friedrich, Christian; Fuchs, Amrei; Gells, Matthias; Koválova, Iryna; Lange, Janine; Lietz, Almuth; Martens, Bernd; Redeke, Susanne; Ruß, Uwe; Sarclotti, Andreas; Schwabe, Ulrike; Seifert, Moritz; Siegel, Madeleine; Teichmann, Carola; Tesch, Jakob; de Vogel, Susanne; Wegner, Antje; Mühleck, Kai; Scheller, Percy; Berroth, Lara; Jänsch, Vanessa K.

Survey Design: Panel

Waves: 4

Survey Data Type: Quantitative Data

Data available in: German, English

Data Curation: Weber, Anne; Schmidchen, Henrike; Hoffstätter, Ute; Daniel, Andreas; Birkelbach, Robert

DOI: 10.21249/DZHW:nac2018:2.0.0

Version: 2.0.0 (published at Apr 30, 2024)

Additional Links: Nacaps-Website, Citation Guideline for Data Packages, Data and Methods Reports and Questionnaires/Questions, Information on data use (German), Information on data use (English)

Allowed use cases: scientific use, teaching purposes

German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW). (n.d.). National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps), 2018 – Version 2.0.0. FDZ-DZHW Metadata Portal.
Retrieved June 25, 2025, from <https://metadata.fdz.dzhw.eu/de/data-packages/stu-nac2018?page=1&size=10&type=surveys&version=2.0.0>

Documentation

Guidelines

[Gesis Guidelines on Documentation of Online Surveys](#)

[Gesis Guideline on Survey Data Documentation](#)

[AAPOR Best Practices for Survey Research](#)

[Gesis Guideline Documenting Measurement Instruments for the Social and Behavioral Sciences](#)

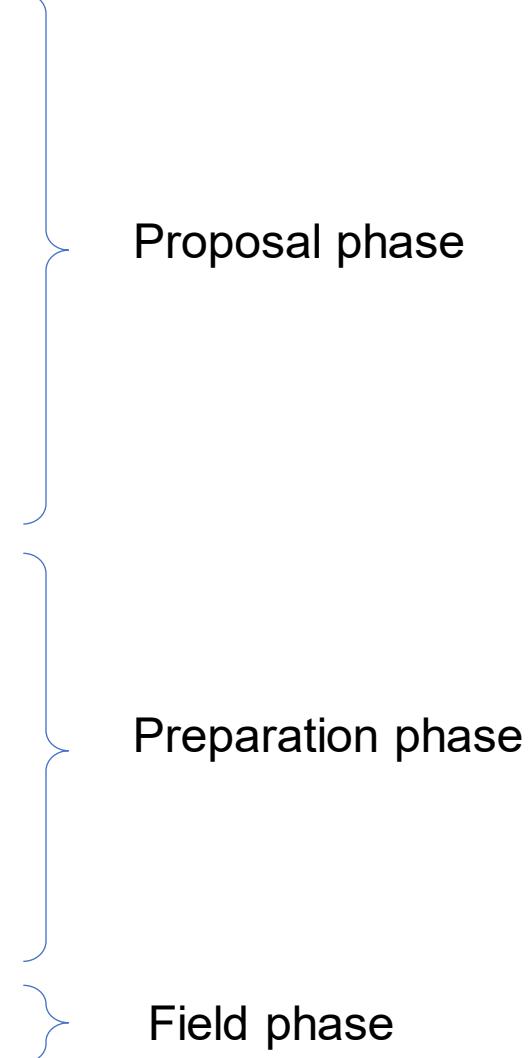
[RatSWD Guidelines on Quality Standards for Measurement Instruments](#)

[Gesis Guideline on Documenting Survey Translation](#)



Getting Started

Recommended order

- ✓ Develop your research question and hypotheses
 - ✓ Define the target population
 - ✓ Choose a sampling strategy
 - ✓ Decide on a recruiting and incentivization strategy
 - ✓ Develop a public relation strategy
 - ✓ If necessary, decide on a web survey platform
 - ✓ Develop, pretest, revise and finish the questionnaire
 - ✓ Implement the questionnaire
 - ✓ Test and revise the implemented questionnaire
 - ✓ Draw your sample
 - ✓ Craft invitation letter and reminder
 - ✓ Survey start
- 
- Proposal phase
- Preparation phase
- Field phase

The background of the slide features a dark blue gradient with numerous fine, glowing blue lines and small particles that create a sense of depth and motion, resembling a digital or space environment.

Wrap Up

Data Quality

Groves, R.; Fowler, F.; Couper, M.; Lepkowski, J.; Singer, E.; Tourangeau, R. (2009). Survey Methodology (2nd Edition). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ISBN 0-470-46546-8

Danner, D. (2016). [Reliability – The precision of a measurement](#). GESIS Survey Guidelines. Mannheim, Germany: GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. doi: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_011

Repke, Lydia; Birkenmaier, Lukas; Lechner, Clemens M. (2024). [Validity in Survey Research - From Research Design to Measurement Instruments](#). Mannheim, GESIS – Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS – Survey Guidelines). DOI: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_048

Web Surveys

Bandilla, W. (2016). [Web Surveys](#). GESIS Survey Guidelines. Mannheim, Germany: GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. doi: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_003

Beuthner, C., Daikeler, J., & Silber, H. (2019). [Mixed-Device and Mobile Web Surveys](#). Mannheim, GESIS - Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS - Survey Guidelines).
DOI: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_028

Resources

Sampling

Gabler, S., & Häder, S. (2016). [Sampling in Theory](#). GESIS Survey Guidelines. Mannheim, Germany: GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. doi: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_009

Häder, S. (2016). [Sampling in Practice](#). GESIS Survey Guidelines. Mannheim, Germany: GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. doi: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_014

Pötzschke, Steffen, Weiß, Bernd, Daikeler, Jessica, Silber Henning and Beuthner, Christoph (2023). [A guideline on how to recruit respondents for online surveys using Facebook and Instagram: Using hard-to-reach health workers as an example](#). Mannheim, GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS Survey Guidelines). DOI: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_045

Nonresponse-Bias

Koch, A., & Blohm, M. (2016). [Nonresponse Bias](#). GESIS Survey Guidelines. Mannheim, Germany: GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. doi: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_004

Barbara Felderer (2024). [Nonresponse Bias Analysis](#). Mannheim, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS- Survey Guidelines). DOI: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_047

Data Collection and Fieldwork

Stadt Müller, S., Martin, S., & Zabal, A. (2019). [Das Zielpersonen-Anschreiben in sozialwissenschaftlichen Befragungen](#). Mannheim, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS - Survey Guidelines). DOI: 10.15465/gesis-sg_029

Pforr, K. (2016). [Incentives](#). GESIS Survey Guidelines. Mannheim, Germany: GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. doi: 10.15465/gesis-sg_en_001

Para Data

Kunz, T. & Hadler, P. (2020). [Web Paradata in Survey Research](#). Mannheim, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS - Survey Guidelines). DOI: 10.15465/gesis-sg_037

Kunz, Tanja, Christoph Beuthner, Patricia Hadler, Joss Roßmann, and Ines Schaurer (2020). [Informing about Web Paradata Collection and Use](#). Mannheim, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS - Survey Guidelines).

Gesis Survey Methodology Consulting

Survey methods consulting

We provide consultation on survey methods, including the development and translation of survey instruments, survey design and fieldwork, survey statistics, as well as the comparability of survey data. Drawing on our extensive experience and foundational research at GESIS, we offer tailored advice at every stage of the research process to ensure your data achieves the highest possible quality.

[Request consultation](#)

- Questionnaire design
- Survey Design
- Sample Design
- Weighting and Missing Values
- Harmonization



Who is this service for?

We provide consultation to researchers within the context of research and infrastructure projects, whose outputs benefit the social sciences (e.g., through publications, publicly available data, or validated measurement instruments). Unfortunately, we are unable to offer advice on bachelor's or master's theses.



What are the costs?

Short consultations, offered as a form of guidance for self-help, are free of charge. We are also happy to support you with more in-depth, fee-based consulting services. Further details can be found in our pricing overview.

[Consultation fees](#)

GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. (2025). Survey Methods Consulting. Retrieved June 30, 2025, from <https://www.gesis.org/en/consulting/survey-methods-consulting>

More information... [Gesis Website](#)



GESIS Leibniz-Institut
für Sozialwissenschaften

Target audience

- Researchers planning a social science survey
- Not for final theses

Costs

- Help to help yourself is free
- Charges apply for more in-depth services

Gesis Training



gesis
training

What they offer

- Workshops (Cologne/Mannheim/Online)
- Summer School in Survey Methodology
- Spring Seminar

Pro's and Cons

- They are great!
- ECTS points
- International audience
- Costly

More information... [Gesis Training Website](#)

Expert*inneninterviews

21.05 - 23.05.2025, Köln / Unter Sachsenhausen 6-8

Einführung in die Mehrebenen-Strukturgleichungsmodellierung

26.05 - 27.05.2025, Online via Zoom

Adapters: Lightweight Machine Learning for Social Science Research

02.06 - 04.06.2025, hybrid (online via Zoom / Unter Sachsenhausen 6-8)

Preprocessing and Analyzing Web Tracking Data

02.06 - 03.06.2025, hybrid (online via Zoom / Unter Sachsenhausen 6-8)

Einführung in die Längsschnittliche Datenanalyse

23.06 - 24.06.2025, Mannheim B6, 4-5

Interactive Data Analysis with Shiny

03.07 - 11.07.2025, Online via Zoom

Einführung in Ideen der qualitativen Sozialforschung

07.07 - 08.07.2025, Köln / Unter Sachsenhausen 6-8

Geodata and Spatial Regression Analysis

09.07 - 11.07.2025, Mannheim B6, 4-5

Design and Methods for Mobile Data Collection

09.07 - 11.07.2025, Online via Zoom

Short Course B: Introduction to Stata for Data Management and Analysis

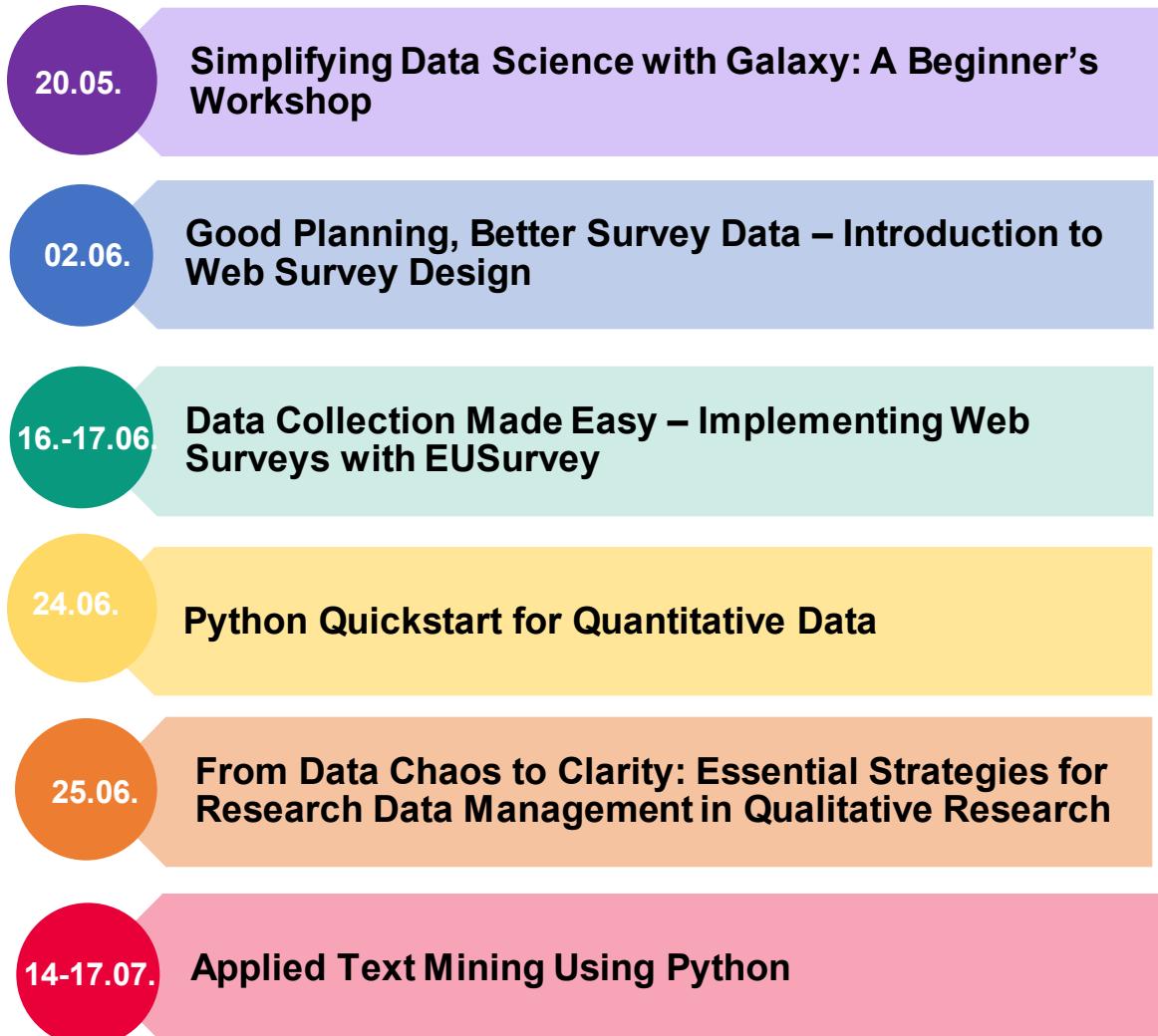
23.07 - 24.07.2025, Hybrid (Online via Zoom / Unter Sachsenhausen 6-8)

Short Course A: Introduction to R for Data Analysis

23.07 - 24.07.2025, Cologne / Unter Sachsenhausen 6-8

- **Interdisciplinary and subject-specific workshops**
(esp. in social sciences, marine and environmental sciences, health sciences, and humanities)
- **On-demand customized training** for graduate programs, departments, etc.

... more on dsc-ub.de/en/qualification

- 
- 20.05. Simplifying Data Science with Galaxy: A Beginner's Workshop
 - 02.06. Good Planning, Better Survey Data – Introduction to Web Survey Design
 - 16.-17.06. Data Collection Made Easy – Implementing Web Surveys with EUSurvey
 - 24.06. Python Quickstart for Quantitative Data
 - 25.06. From Data Chaos to Clarity: Essential Strategies for Research Data Management in Qualitative Research
 - 14.-17.07. Applied Text Mining Using Python

And many more...

Data Insights in 30 Minutes!

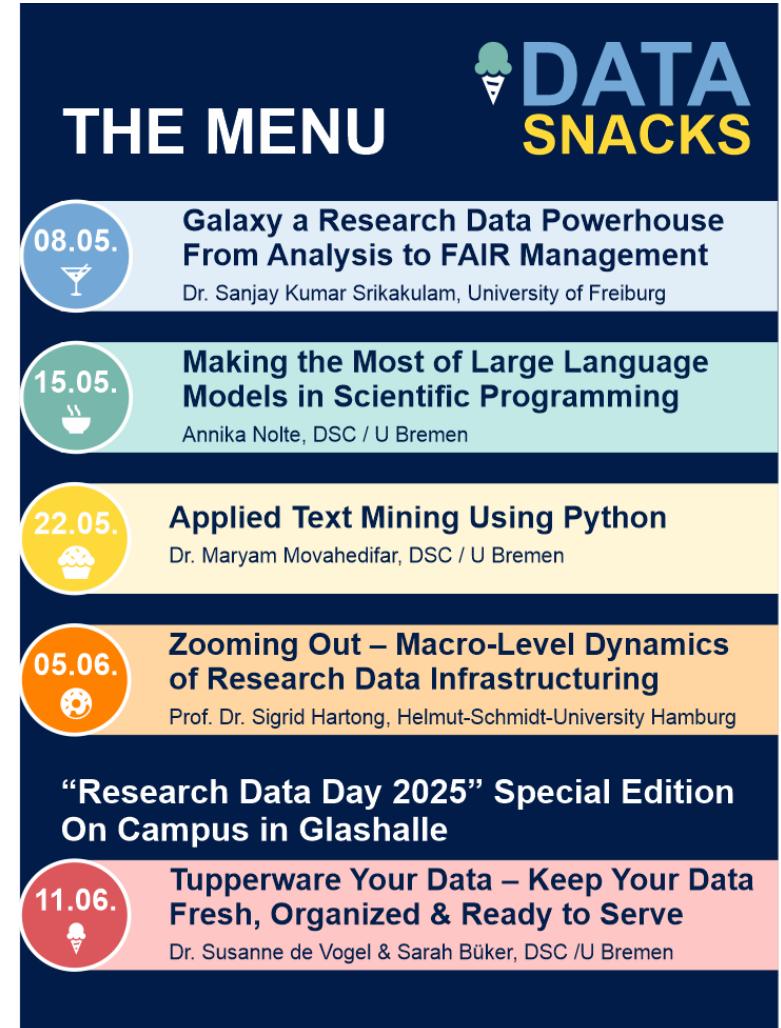
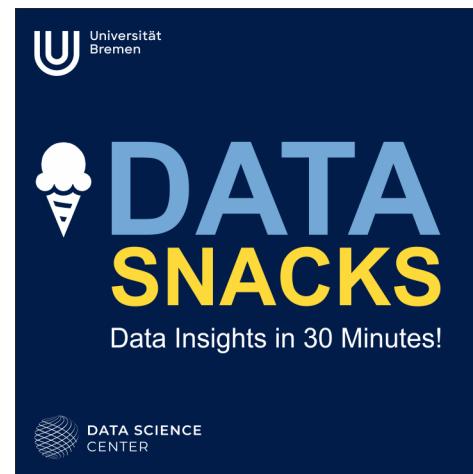
Short and engaging sessions on different “data topics”

Next Data Snack Series: May to June 2025

- Free & open for everyone
- Online
- No registration required, just drop in!

More information at:

https://www.dsc-ub.de/data_science_forum.php

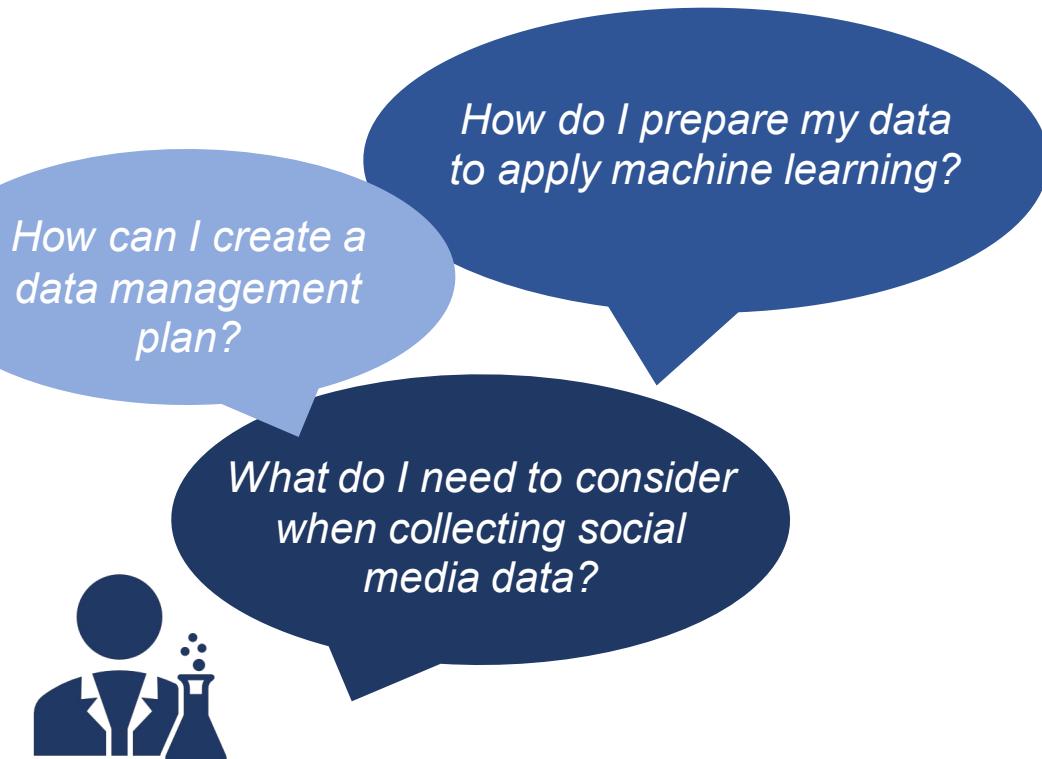


THE MENU

DATA SNACKS

Date	Topic	Speaker
08.05.	Galaxy a Research Data Powerhouse From Analysis to FAIR Management	Dr. Sanjay Kumar Srikakulam, University of Freiburg
15.05.	Making the Most of Large Language Models in Scientific Programming	Annika Nolte, DSC / U Bremen
22.05.	Applied Text Mining Using Python	Dr. Maryam Movahedifar, DSC / U Bremen
05.06.	Zooming Out – Macro-Level Dynamics of Research Data Infrastructuring	Prof. Dr. Sigrid Hartong, Helmut-Schmidt-University Hamburg
“Research Data Day 2025” Special Edition On Campus in Glashalle		
11.06.	Tupperware Your Data – Keep Your Data Fresh, Organized & Ready to Serve	Dr. Susanne de Vogel & Sarah Büker, DSC / U Bremen

DataNord Consulting Service



Lisa Jungmann, U Bremen

- Interdisciplinary Help Desk for researchers from all DataNord institutions
- Support in the application phase and research process
- Free of charge!
- More information: <https://dsc-ub.de/en/consultation.php>

Sign Up Now!

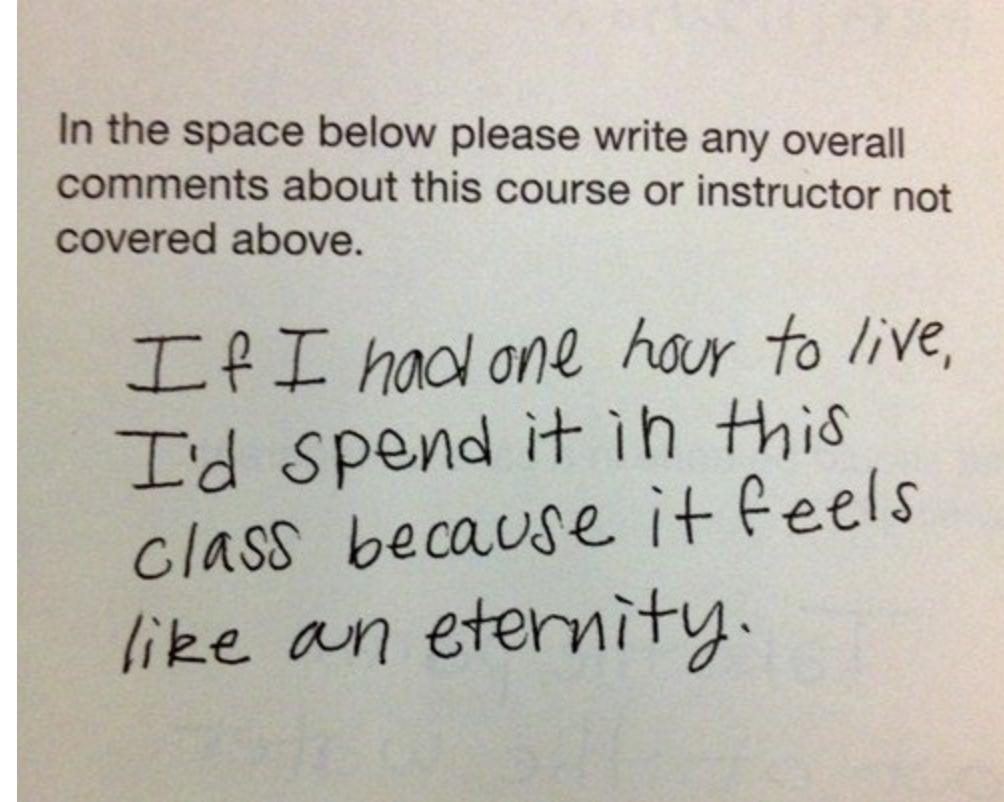


[www.bremen-research.de/
datanord/newsletter](http://www.bremen-research.de/datanord/newsletter)

- **Monthly Updates!**
- Target group: Researchers and anyone who is interested in our offers
- Overview of DataNord **trainings, networking opportunities and other events** in the next month
- Additional announcements



Meme using an image of a baby pygmy hippopotamus. Original photo source unknown; Caption created via Imgflip (Retrieved June 30, 2025)



9GAG (via Pinterest). (n.d.). "If you need inspiration on your teacher evaluations..." Retrieved June 30, 2025, from <https://de.pinterest.com/pin/448460075368152788/>

Thank You for Your Participation!

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 dsc-ub.de



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