

# Working Group Position Paper

## on mixed-mode data collection in household surveys

### Minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting

### July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Participants: Fiona O’Riordan (Ireland), Fiona O’Callaghan (Ireland), Andreja Smukavec (Slovenia), Martina Stare (Slovenia), Clelia Romano (Italy), Claudia de Vitiis (Italy), Thomas Burg (Austria), Patrick Sillard (France), Ferenc Mújdricza (Hungary), Zoltán Vereczkei (Hungary), Petra Fekete-Nagy (Hungary), Gwennaëlle Brilhault (France)

Excused: Nadja Lamei (Austria)

The proposed agenda for the meeting is the following:

1. Feedback on the questionnaire and organization of the analysis (F. O’Callaghan)
2. First discussion of a draft outline of the position paper

## 1. Questionnaire / organization of the analysis

**F. O’Callaghan** sent the data to the group last Friday. We have 32 returns. People left blanks but that’s manageable. There were exchange with some countries. People get confused with the function “save as draft” and instead submitted it so for some countries, there were several copies. **F. O’Callaghan** contacted them in order to have one final full submission. Some countries asked for corrections but after submission **F. O’Callaghan** went in the dataset to make the corrections.

One country said that it would have been good to separate the questionnaire according to the surveys, because, put together as we did, filling in the questionnaire required some coordination.

Just one document was uploaded. Another country sent a document by e-mail because they had problems in uploading document. The format by default for the output data is excel.

**F. O’Callaghan** suggests to share the code for reading the data (into sas or R).

Concerning the organization of the analysis. There are people in front of many questions. The big gap is for SILC. There is a small one for section 7 (changes concerning all the surveys). There are also gaps in section 8. **Z. Vereczkei** proposes that Hungary takes the gaps in section 8.

**T. Burg** mentions that Austria could take the SILC gap but he has to confirm this with **N. Lamei** if there are enough resources. For section 7, Austria is OK to take the residual questions.

The idea is then to have primary analysis of the questions for the next meeting of the group, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July. **A. Smukavec** and **M. Stare** will be on holidays at that time so she proposes to send

written elements by the 21<sup>st</sup> of the July, her last working day before the meeting. The excel file concluding this discussion is given in Annex 2.

Concerning the form: we should make written analysis, at least a basic one for July. And then we could put the things together in a more analytic way. If we refer to the draft outline that was proposed by **P. Sillard** before the meeting (see annex 1), there would be a technical report on the questionnaire (maybe reporting the results question by question, or block by block of questions ) in annex of the Position paper and then a more analytic and synthetic part in the report itself (part 3 and contribution of the questionnaire to the axes of research in part 4).

**T. Burg** says that there are two things: on one hand you can describe the results and give the numbers in a flat manner, and on the other hand you can draw some qualitative conclusions. Of course we need some qualitative conclusions. But do we need that by the end of July?

**P. Sillard** thinks that we need, by the end of July, a descriptive picture of the questionnaire, not the full analysis. And then we could work on the analysis later on.

**Z. Vereczkei** suggests that in addition to the analysis, all the people responsible for the analysis of a block of questions should come with the two or three main messages concerning their block of questionnaire. And then we should discuss these messages in plenary. **T. Burg** agreed with this: the one responsible for the analysis should take the position of a discussant and lead the discussion accordingly in the plenary, introducing the discussion based on the key messages she or he has.

For open questions, **F. Mújdricza** suggests to make a qualitative analysis, with a full reading of the material, instead of a numerical text analysis of the keywords as suggested by **T. Burg**. **P. Sillard** agrees with this, especially as the number of questionnaires is low (32) and the comments made are rather few.

## 2. First discussion of a draft outline of the position paper

**P. Sillard** presents the draft outline of the position paper he has prepared and circulated before the meeting (annex 1). The proposal contains 5 parts. The 1<sup>st</sup> part is devoted to the context and the motivation of the paper. Here we will use mainly the introductory letter of the questionnaire as well as the mandate of the group we have discussed in the first two meetings of the group. Then the 2<sup>nd</sup> part would present the organization of the work (the choice of developing a questionnaire, the systematic review of MIMOD, the consultations of the ESS directors groups, the analysis of the questionnaire). The 3<sup>rd</sup> part would be on the questionnaire itself which could give the key elements and some factual elements like the returns we had, etc. The 4<sup>th</sup> part would be on the future and challenges related to mixed-mode. The proposal by P. Sillard is to follow the organization of the MIMOD work packages since they cover more or less all the issues relevant for the Position paper. This material could be supplemented by material from the questionnaire. A final part (5) would be devoted to the recommendations we give to the community and Eurostat for action in the future.

**P. Sillard** proposes to have a discussion on the outline and also on the content of the 4th paragraph which is based, in the proposal, mainly on the minutes of the last meeting of the group and of

course on the papers distributed by the group members before the last meeting reviewing the MIMOD work packages.

**Z. Vereczkei** thinks that the outline is fine. The structure is good. The analysis of the questionnaire will go to part 3. And in part 4, we should also enrich the description from the major conclusions we have from the questionnaire on the same topic. It will connect the background from MIMOD to the questionnaire. There should be somebody responsible for drafting part 1, and also part 2. We may divide the work like this. And on part 5, it is where the punchlines should be. It should also be fed by the part 8 of the questionnaire. Then it should also partly reflect what the countries mentioned in the questionnaire. Part 5 is a huge task.

**T. Burg** also thinks that the draft is useful and can endorse the structure. In terms of how to divide the work, it is necessary to have a kind of pen-holder for each chapter. Pen-holders should make a first introductory text. **T. Burg** is not quite sure if we should start by writing paragraph or only put bullet points. We could circulate the material produced by the pen-holders and then we could discuss the texts in the plenary. Concerning part 5, it is a huge task. A way to proceed could be, first, that the pen-holders should write apart some recommendations for chapter 5 that come from their own part.

**A. Smukavec** also thinks that the organization is fine and we should split the work accordingly. But for section 5, maybe we could just put some ideas first, and finalize it at the end of the document writing. **F. O’Riordan** also agrees that the section 5 should be written later, especially having in mind what the data say. Section 4 will be essentially MIMOD with data and section 5 will be a discussion we will have to have.

**T. Burg** wondered whether our aim is to give recommendations to the ESS member states or only to the European level. In other words, the question is to whom do we address recommendations? Concerning this question by **T. Burg**, **P. Sillard** thinks that the main target is Eurostat and the director groups of Methodology and Social statistics. And Eurostat will have to translate that into task forces and working groups.

Concerning the mandate, it was rather vague as mentioned by **F. O’Riordan**. Therefore, she thinks that it would not be a good idea to deviate too far from MIMOD. Then this primary outline is right on this point. And this should be reinforced by the data we will have from the questionnaire. **Z. Vereczkei** underlines that the motivation to launch the Position paper was specific and not targeting another guideline or something equivalent. Then **Z. Vereczkei** would be willing to write the motivation part of the position paper. And he agrees that the target of the Position paper is the ESS and the DIME & DSS. In part 5 of the Position paper, we can elaborate on what is needed (teaching, groups, etc.) and ask Eurostat to come back to the DIME & DSS with formal proposals for organizing the work. Apart from the ESS, we can send the paper to some workshops on Methodology (like Non-response workshop for example). They will be informed of the work.

**P. Sillard** recalled that there was a discussion on the mandate at the second meeting of the group (see minutes) and **Z. Vereczkei** had already developed the ideas that DIME had in mind while launching this group.

Concerning part 4, **P. Sillard** explains that for him, the idea is not to summarize the work of MIMOD but to take from MIMOD what is useful to draw the lines on which we would like to work

in the future. Starting from the questions opened by MIMOD that were not solved at the time the MIMOD documents were written.

**C. de Vitiis**, concerning paragraph 4 of the outline, asks what will be the use that is going to be made of the papers written in summary of the MIMOD work, because for now, the proposed outline contains only a summary of these texts. **P. Sillard** answers that of course the texts will be used but we will need to harmonize and to keep what is really necessary for the Position paper (PP). The goal here is not to make a summary of what was done in MIMOD. So we will probably have to work again on the MIMOD material but it is mainly a question of wording: the material is already there and it will be completed by the ideas coming from the questionnaire.

Apart from the annex of the PP, **C. de Vitiis** wonders what would be the appropriate length of the Position paper. And she also thinks that if the Position paper is long, it might be good to have an executive summary at the beginning.

For **P. Sillard**, the appropriate length is 10 to 20 pages. If the document becomes longer or reaches almost 20 pages, a one-page summary giving the main messages will be necessary. He suggests to see this question of executive summary at the end of the work.

Regarding the proposed organization of the document, **A. Smukavec** asked where the issues explored in the questionnaire regarding the coverage and the construction of the sampling frame with contact details (phone numbers, emails) could be addressed. Probably in paragraph 4, but where exactly? And she emphasizes that these issues are important. **G. Brilhault** proposes to put these issues in paragraph 3 (facts about the questionnaire). **P. Sillard** agrees with that and the detailed analysis will appear in the annex of the PP.

**In summary**, for the next meeting (end of July), we could work in two directions:

- A) We need to analyze the questionnaire in a “flat manner”. And people responsible for the analysis of a block (annex 2) should come with main messages they derive from their block of questions. We will organize the discussion around these messages. A written paper containing the “flat analysis” and the key message should be sent by the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July.
- B) We could also work on the document in parallel. The motivation part could be written and **Z. Vereczkei** offered to prepare a draft. And Part 4 could be studied in two directions: first to check if the open questions raised by MIMOD are really present and if nothing has been left out; and secondly, each of us could go back to his or her part and, based of its original text on the corresponding MIMOD Work package, try to write a first draft paragraph, bearing in mind that we are taking up the questions opened by MIMOD and that the aim is not to summarize the MIMOD work.

Part 2 (organization of the work) can be written later on. And for Part 3, (facts about the questionnaire), the first step is to analyze the questionnaire (point A) mentioned above).

**Z. Vereczkei** agrees on this plan. And the goal is to finish the paper for circulation to member states by mid-septembre. Then they will have one month for written reactions. Between mid-october and end of october, we will finalize the paper in order to finish it and to be able to send it to the DIME-ITDG and DSS director groups by the end of october.

Annex 1: Draft outline of the Position paper sent before the meeting for discussion (Point 2)



Annex 2: Analysis of the questionnaire- who is doing what?

