



European Foundation
for the Improvement
of Living and Working
Conditions

The tripartite EU Agency providing knowledge
to assist in the development of better social,
employment and work-related policies

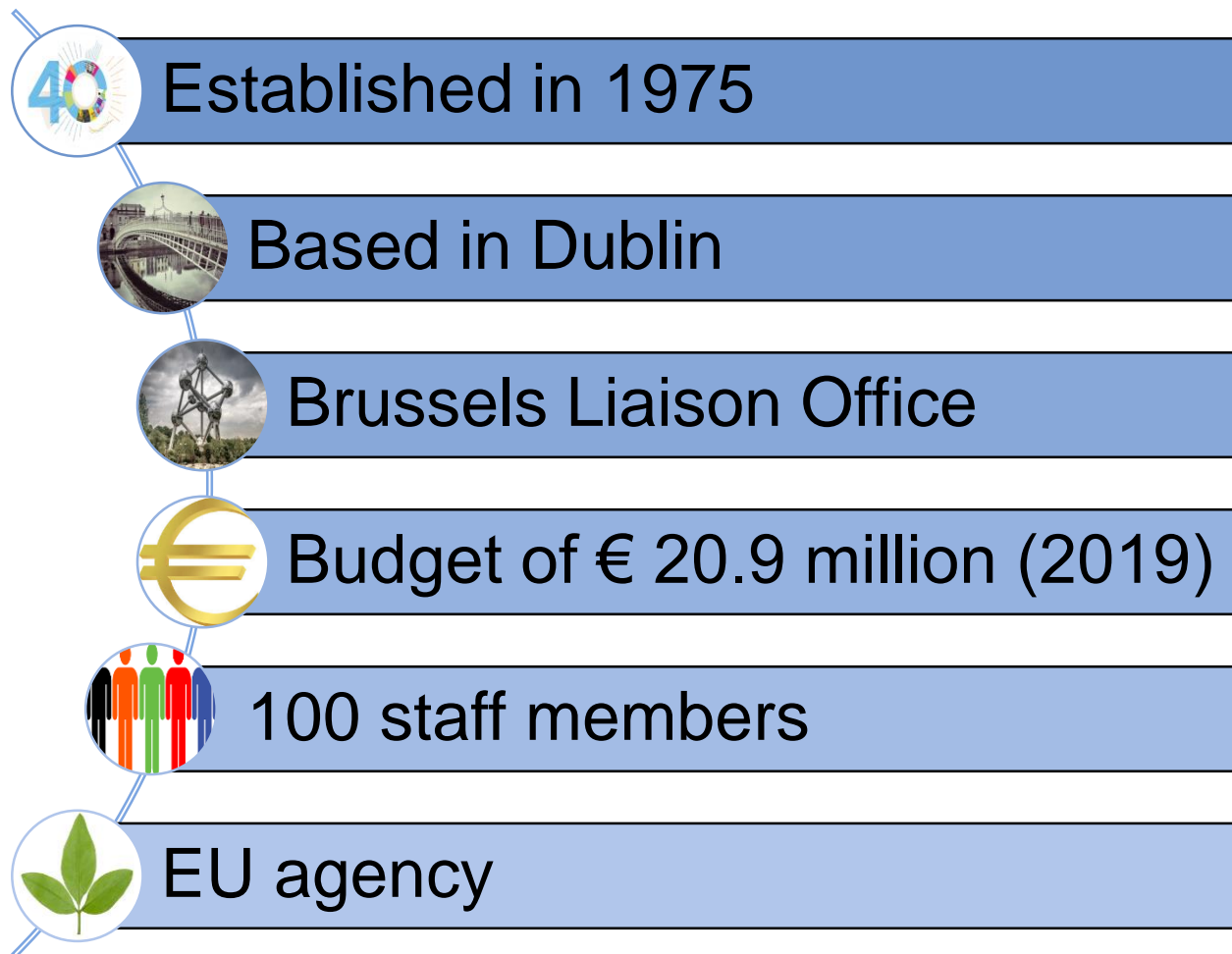
Quality Assurance and Quality Control for Eurofound's Surveys

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Fun(damental) Facts



Mission

To provide knowledge to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies.



Three Europe-wide Surveys

The European Working Conditions Survey



European Working Conditions Survey

1990/91; 1995/96; 2000;
2005; 2010; 2015; 2020

The European Quality of Life Survey



European Quality of Life Survey

2003; 2007/8;
2011/12; 2016

The European Company Survey



European Company Survey

2004; 2009;
2013; 2019

Overview of the 3 surveys

European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS)

Population of workers aged 15+ living in private households
37 countries to be covered in 2020: EU28, 7 candidate countries, Norway and Switzerland
Multi-stage stratified probability sampling
Use of sampling frames where updated high quality address or population registers are available; else enumeration
Face-to-face CAPI
1000+ interviews per country
Top-ups in Belgium, Spain and Slovenia

European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS)

Population of residents aged 18+ living in private households
33 countries surveyed in 2016: EU28 and 5 candidate countries
Multi-stage stratified probability sampling
Use of sampling frames where updated high quality address or population registers are available; else enumeration
Face-to-face CAPI
1000+ interviews per country
Top-up in Italy

European Company Survey (ECS)

Population of establishment of 10+ employees
EU28 surveyed in 2019
Moved from CATI in 2013 to push-to-web in 2019
150-1500 establishments per country
All sectors except NACE Rev 2 categories A, O, P, Q, T & U
Joint collaboration with Cedefop in 2019

Eurofound surveys...

- are a basis for a series of focused EF reports
- have a wealth of information for academic and policy-oriented research
- Provide a basis for advice on Eurostat task groups for filling in the gaps and shaping indicators (e.g. LFS ad-hoc modules on accidents at work, working time and work organisation, SILC 2016 module on public services)
- Provide indicators for policy makers and researchers, e.g. quality of work and employment index
- Provide potential for future combined analysis ('data matching') between official statistics and Eurofound survey data



Eurofound's Approach to Quality Assurance for Surveys (1)

- Alignment with the European Statistical System principles: relevance & timeliness, accuracy, accessibility, coherence
- Following Cross-Cultural Survey Guidelines
- Applying the Total Survey Error approach: coverage, sampling, non-response and measurement error
- Closely monitoring and comprehensively documenting the survey production process

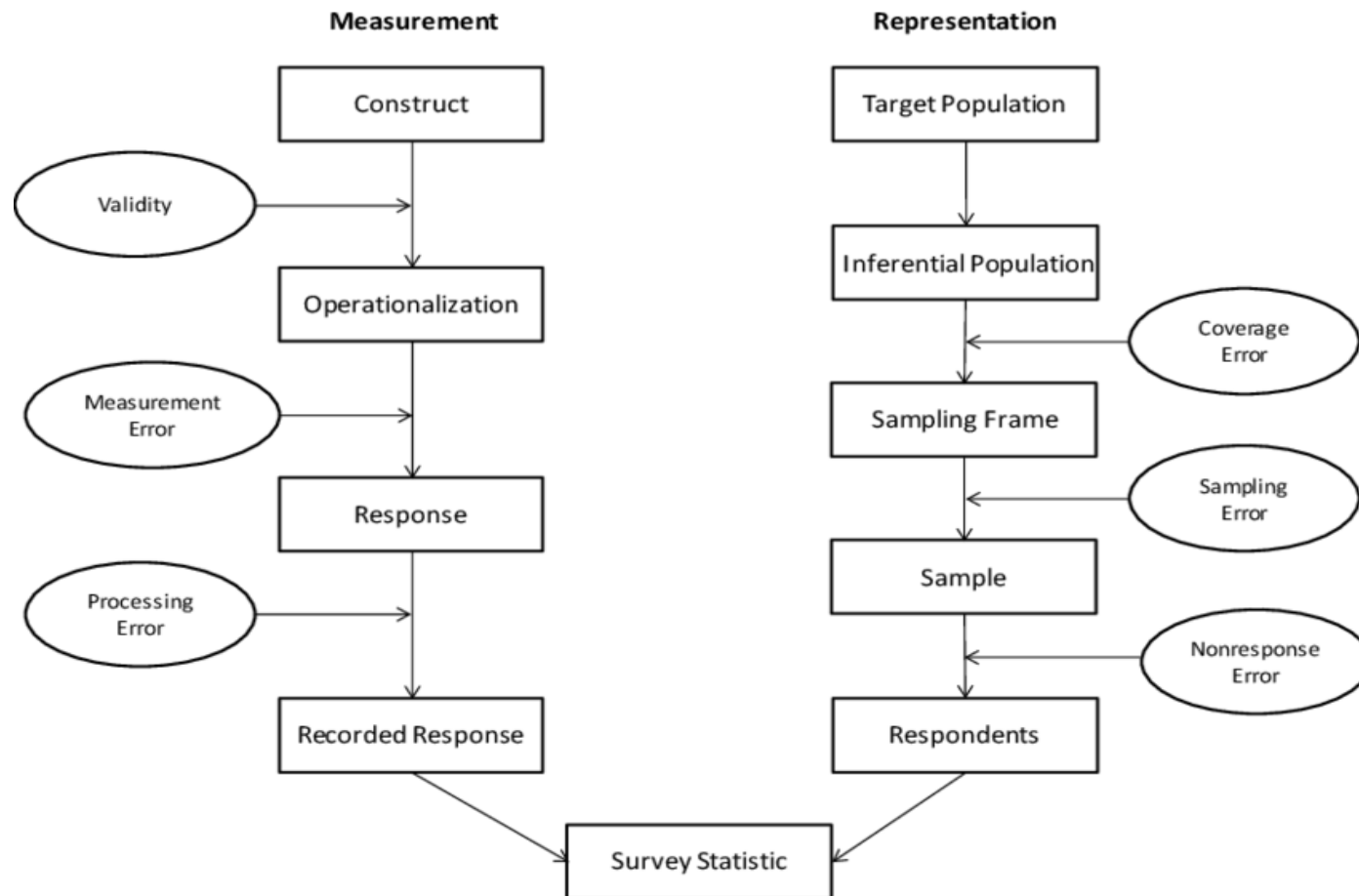
European Statistical System Quality Criteria

- **Relevance & Timeliness**
 - relevance for users of the survey data reports, in terms of substance and timing of publication.
- **Accuracy**
 - validity and reliability of the survey data.
- **Accessibility**
 - Availability of outputs and transparency of processes.
- **Coherence & Comparability**
 - Consistency with other data sources
- **Punctuality**
 - adherence to the timeline as set at the start of the project.

European Statistical System quality criteria applied to all survey stages

		Relevance	Accuracy	Accessibility	Coherence & Comparability	Timeliness & Punctuality
Planning & Design						
Sampling & Weighting	Sampling					
	Weighting					
Questionnaire	Questionnaire					
	Translation					
Pre-Fieldwork	Fieldwork infrastructure					
	Scripting					
	Training of fieldwork managers and interviewers					
Fieldwork	Fieldwork organisation					
	Fieldwork monitoring and data validation					
Post-Fieldwork	Data processing					
	Micro data					
Analyses & Dissemination						

Focus on quality from 'a total survey error' perspective



TSE improvements introduced over time

Measurement error

User survey

Questionnaire expert meetings

Cognitive testing

Translatability assessment and advance translation

TRAPD method for questionnaire translation

Representation error

Use of high quality registers

Enumeration as a separate stage when registers are not available

Random selection of starting points in all PSUs using lists or geo-mapping instead of landmarks

Rules on number and size of PSUs

Focus on quality from a 'survey production quality' perspective

Survey production quality

PRODUCT	PROCESS	ORGANISATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor required to produce clear and comprehensive reports for every stage of the process Minimum requirements set (e.g. 10% of interviews back-checked) in order to achieve high quality data EF makes available all methodological reports and microdata to the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every EF survey is developed taking into account quality assessment of previous surveys, lessons learnt, user survey and input from experts Outputs are built in stages and are discussed and agreed (proposed a strategy, agree a final plan, produce a report) Contractor's work is closely and systematically monitored by EF (e.g. fortnightly/weekly teleconferences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One person allocated to all three surveys to ensure continuity and cross learning One person to oversee that transparent and comprehensive documentation is provided by contractor and archived by EF Contractor and EF work within a Quality Assurance Framework List of quality indicators established with targets for contractor and EF

Quality assurance framework

Developed by Eurofound in 2013 and based on the quality concept of the European Statistical System, the Cross-Cultural Survey Guidelines and the Total Survey Error Approach.

3 elements:

- **Quality assurance:** planned procedures and activities to ensure that the survey meets quality requirements
- **Quality control:** planned system of process monitoring, verification and analysis of indicators of quality, and updates to quality assurance procedures, to ensure that quality assurance works
- **Quality indicators:** list of measurable indicators on the basis of which the quality of the survey processes and output will be monitored and assessed

Quality indicators and the Quality Assurance Plan (QAP)

Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) includes quality indicators which covers all aspects of the survey from beginning to end. Targets are set for both contractor and EF.

1. List of quality indicators provided to tenderers outlining
 - targets that **have to be** achieved (red)
 - targets that **are aimed to be** achieved
2. Tenderer confirms/proposes benchmark targets for non-red ones
3. EF and contractor agree benchmarks for non-red targets.
4. Indicators to be integrated into all aspects of the survey
4. Quality indicators file updated monthly by contractor
5. Final quality indicator list produced by contractor at end of project

Quality indicators – some improvements

Quality indicators first introduced in ECS 2013 as part of quality assurance framework and have now been in use for 4 surveys.

Initially, language a bit complicated and list of indicators very long and some possibly unrealistic or superfluous

With experience and feedback from contractors:

- Simplification of language and clear messages in quality framework
- Reduction and simplification of indicators
- Target categories reduced from three to two
- Indicators discussed and reviewed intensively at kick-off meeting
- Introduction of “evidence” column

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We aim for a high quality ...

QAP – Source Questionnaire

- Questionnaires are developed based on experts' and stakeholders' input

E&C	Questionnaire has been consulted with Eurofound and Cedefop's stakeholders	Y	Documentation of steering group meetings
E&C	Percentage of questionnaire items in the final source questionnaire that meet international methodological standards of question design (such as outlined in Saris & Gallhofer (2007))	100%	Documentation of expert consultation

- Advance translation and cognitive testing

E&C	Comprehensive documentation of the process of advance translation	Y	Documentation of advance translation (advance translation report)
E&C	Advance translation delivered to contractor at agreed date (date to be inserted here by client when agreed with client)	Y	Email from client sending results of advance translation to contractor
CT	A strategy for cognitive testing is agreed that that reflects current academic standards, as illustrated by academic references included in a document outlining the strategy for cognitive testing	Y	Cognitive test strategy
E&C	Number of questions for which 'major' issues are detected that are kept	0	Cognitive test report
CT	Cognitive test results delivered at the agreed date	Y	Email to client delivering cognitive test report

We aim for a high quality ...

QAP - Translation

- State of the art translation process: translatability assessment, team translation methodology (TRAPD - Translation, Review, Adjudication, Pre-testing and Documentation)

CT	Percentage of translators and adjudicators that take part in translator training	100%	Attendance lists
CT	Translation materials (e.g. translator instructions, and translator and adjudicator training materials) are constructed using input from the cognitive test and advance translation and are provided to the translators	Y	Translation report (re input and provision) / Translation instructions and training materials, training sessions (re provision to translators)
E&C	<i>Translation materials are made publicly available.</i>	Y	<i>Availability on Eurofound website</i>
CT	Percentage of languages for which translation or adaptation follows the agreed process	100%	Translation report
CT	Percentage of languages, out of those for which translation is required, for which systematic documentation in English is provided about the process and results of adjudication	100%	Translation documentation
CT	Percentage of cross-national review sessions, in which adjudicators from each of the countries sharing the particular language participate	100%	Attendance lists
CT	Percentage of final translated questionnaire items that required editing (e.g. correcting typo's, copying and pasting errors, etc.)	<5%	Translation documentation

We aim for a high quality ECS ...

QAP – Sampling

- Detailed sampling plans are drawn up in close collaboration between ourselves and the contractor

CT	A common sampling strategy is agreed that reflects current academic standards, as illustrated by academic references included in the sampling strategy document	Y	Sampling strategy
CT	Final sampling strategy delivered to client at the agreed date	Y	Email to client submitting final sampling strategy
CT	Percentage of countries where a sampling frame on the establishment level is used	43%	Sampling strategy
E&C	<i>Sampling plans approved by client at agreed date</i>	Y	<i>Email(s) from client approving final country-level sampling plans</i>

We aim for a high quality ECS ...

QAP – Training

- Face to face seminar with national fieldwork partners

CT	Percentage of local project leaders/country coordinators attending the fieldwork manager instruction meeting	100%	List of participants
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- Training of interviewers

CT	Interviewer training materials are comprehensive, fully covering the process for respondent selection and recruitment as well as for questionnaire administration.	Y	Interviewer training materials
CT	Interviewer training materials are translated into the working languages of all the country teams	Y	Interviewer training materials
CT	Percentage of interviewers that are trained before they participate in fieldwork	100%	Attendance lists; email confirming the fact to client
CT	Percentage of staff in charge of online administration of interviews that are trained before they participate in fieldwork	100%	Attendance lists; email confirmation to client

We aim for a high quality ECS ...

QAP – Fieldwork monitoring, training

- Weekly teleconferences with contractor (and more if necessary)
- Close fieldwork monitoring in place by contractor and followed by EF/CF; 10% of screener calls checked; detailed weekly reports to be provided

CT	An explicit, comprehensive and discriminative interviewer monitoring strategy is outlined	Y	Fieldwork strategy
CT	Percentage of countries where at least 10% of successful screening interviews are monitored	100%	Technical report; Weekly reporting; Contact data
CT	Percentage of countries where at least 10% of follow-up calls for CAWI completion are monitored	100%	Technical report; Weekly reporting; Contact data
CT	Percentage of countries covered in weekly monitoring data (in accordance with template)	100%	Weekly reporting
CT	Number of times that the weekly monitoring data for the preceding week is not delivered on Tuesday by the end of business, without prior agreement	0	Emails to client delivering weekly reports
E&C	<i>Number of times that the quantitative indicators in the weekly monitoring data and the progress and projections (of end date) are not checked by the following Thursday by the end of business, without prior agreement</i>	0	<i>Emails responding to weekly reports</i>
CT	Results from the data validation approach are integrated in the weekly fieldwork reports	Y	Weekly reporting

We aim for a high quality surveys ...

- Data protection and ethics strategy in place for contractor, national partners and interviewers
- Extra efforts for high response (e.g. using best interviewers, advance letters, brochures, targeted timing of calls, visits and for ECS email and telephone follow-up, *customised report* offered to respondents)
- Independent quality assessment review to be commissioned following completion of the survey

Challenges for Eurofound

Trade-offs...

...between survey quality and logistics/costs

...between innovation and continuity

...between surveys and other research

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Quality approaches (Lynn, 2003)

A TSE perspective in 3 MC (Pennell et al, 2017)

Thank you for your time

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