The MIMOD project: a platform for sharing knowledge and practices in the ESS

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**Keywords:** Mixed-mode data collection, Mode effects, Mode organisation, Multi-devices data

# Introduction

The MIMOD – Mixed Mode Designs for Social Surveys project was awarded a Eurostat Grant to support ESS National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) facing the challenges in implementing mixed-mode and multi-device data collection designs.

Istat is leading a Consortium in partnership with CBS (Netherlands), SSB (Norway), STAT (Austria) and Destatis (Germany). A network of supporting countries -INSEE (France), Czech Statistical Office (Czech Republic), Central Statistical Office of Poland (Poland), Statistic Finland (Finland) and Statistics Sweden (Sweden) – provides inputs to the project.

The MIMOD project covers a wide range of topics related to the use of mixed-mode approaches in social surveys, including mode organisation; questionnaire design; mode bias and mode effect; challenges for phone and tablets respondents in CAWI and case management systems. It aims at sharing knowledge on best practices in use in the ESS and streamlining theoretical findings available in the literature in order to create a common understanding and reference guidance to ESS NSIs in their path to the modernisation of official statistics.

The presentation will provide information on the main areas covered by the project, as well as the main outputs. It will include a summary of the results of the survey on the state of the art on mixed-mode designs in ESS social surveys carried out within the project framework activities.

# Methods

The MIMOD project moves from the results of the ESSnet DCSS - Data Collection for Social Surveys project (ESSnet DCSS, 2014) and aims at reporting on the state of the art and supporting the sharing best-practices in addressing a number of challenges ahead NSIs in mixed-mode and multi-device data collection in social surveys.

The MIMOD project is structured in six workpages (WPs) dealing with the following topics:

* WP1: *Investigation of mode organisation* (concurrent vs consecutive multi-mode data collection) with the objective of determining the steps in a decision tree that supports the implementation of mixed-mode survey designs and exploring the use of adaptive/responsive designs;
* WP2: *Mode bias/mode effect and its adjustment* with the aim of providing general guidelines on methodologies to deal with mode effects in multi-mode designs;
* WP3: *Case management in mixed-mode data collection* with the purpose of investigating the different systems in use in terms of technical components and organisational approaches used, as well as challenges in efficiency and quality;
* WP4: *Mixed-mode questionnaire designs (unimode vs. mode-specific questionnaires)* in order to give best practice recommendations on approaches for developing questionnaires for mixed-mode surveys as well as on modes used in the contact and follow-up phases of data collection;
* WP5: *Challenges for phone and tablets respondents in CAWI* with the aim of investigating the use of mobile devices (smartphones, tablets) in ESS surveys, and of mobile device sensors (such as GPS, camera, microphone, accelerometers) to enrich ESS surveys;
* WP6: *Organisation of the meeting and workshop and preparation of written reports* with the aim of organising the kick-off meeting, the final workshop where the project results will be presented that will take place in Rome in April 2019 as well as coordinating the whole project, ensuring the deadline are met and reporting to Eurostat.

# Results

The MIMOD project started in December 2017. The kick-off meeting took place 1 and 2 February 2018 in Vienna. The meeting was devoted to present and discuss the work to be done in each WP with a view on the interconnections among different workpackages in order to ensure coordinated activities.

A major activity was the discussion of the questionnaire for the survey on the state of the art in mixed-mode data collection in social surveys in the ESS. This survey is indeed a key input for all WPs 1-5 and is intended to provide information on all the topics dealt with in the project. The survey was conducted via an electronic questionnaire, developed with Limesurvey by Istat, which was sent to EU NSIs. The survey was launched on 26 March and lasted one month. All 31 countries, invited to fill the questionnaire, did answer.

The questionnaire was organised in sections according to the main topics of each WP 1-5. It was also aimed at getting information on trends over the past five years and on future plans. It comprises both quantitative and qualitative (open) questions. It was also possible to upload documents or screenshots of questionnaires. The survey results are quite rich and will feed the work of the different WPs. Generally speaking they show a general increase in the use of mixed-mode (71% of NSIs offer more mixed-modes in social surveys compared to 5 years ago) and also the use of the web technique has greatly increased (20 NSIs over 31 increased the use of the web in social surveys compared to 5 years ago). In the majority of the cases, the web is used in combination with other modes. Actually 23 out of 30 NSIs using mixed-mode strategies include the web component.

Additional results on the remaining sections will be presented at the Conference as well as a summary of the main results achieved by the WPs so far.

# Conclusions

The MIMOD project will provide suggestions on how to deal with the complex issues the NSIs face when implementing mixed-mode and multi-device data collection in social surveys, both from a methodological and a management viewpoint. It aims at supporting the sharing of good practices among EU NSIs for the successful implementation of mixed-mode designs in social surveys. The project results will be shared in the statistical community. They are being presented in a systematic way at the MIMOD Final Workshop in April 2019 in Rome, organised by Istat which is leading the Consortium.

# References

1. ESSnet DCSS (2014), Data Collection for Social Surveys using Multiple Modes – Final report, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cros/system/files/final\_report\_CP\_rev1.pdf

(Accessed: 18 May 2018).

1. Istat, Italian National Institute of Statistics [↑](#footnote-ref-1)