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## 2.1 Introduction

In ‘The Analytical Language of John Wilkins’, Borges describes ‘a certain Chinese Encyclopaedia, the Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge’, in which it is written that animals are divided into:

- those that belong to the Emperor,
- embalmed ones,
- those that are trained,
- suckling pigs,
- mermaids,
- fabulous ones,
- stray dogs,
- those included in the present classification,
- those that tremble as if they were mad,
- innumerable ones,
- those drawn with a very fine camel hair brush,
- others,
- those that have just broken a flower vase,
- those that from a long way off look like flies.

To modern readers this classification may seem somewhat haphazard, hardly systematic and certainly not exhaustive (although the category ‘others’ makes up for quite a lot of gaps). Actually, Borges did not find this classification in a Chinese encyclopaedia: he made it up. Making up a classification of surveys at times seems as challenging as making up a classification of animals. A short enquiry into types of surveys yields random samples, telephone surveys, exit polls, multi-actor surveys, business surveys, longitudinal surveys, opinion polls (although some would argue that opinion polls are not surveys), omnibus surveys and so forth. It will be clear that the types of surveys mentioned in this list are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive. The ‘type’ of survey can refer to the survey mode, the target population, the kind of information to be collected and a number of other characteristics. Sometimes these different characteristics interact, but some combinations are rarely found together. Surveys of older persons are rarely web surveys, for instance, and exit polls are never longitudinal surveys.

This chapter presents a brief overview of the different ways in which surveys can be classified. First, however, we need to consider what a survey is. Below is given an abridged version of the section ‘What is a survey’ from the booklet drafted by Fritz Scheuren from NORC.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [www.whatisasurvey.info/overview.htm](http://www.whatisasurvey.info/overview.htm)

Today the word ‘survey’ is used most often to describe a method of gathering information from a sample of individuals. This ‘sample’ is usually just a fraction of the population being studied.... Not only do surveys have a wide variety of purposes, they also can be conducted in many ways—including over the telephone, by mail, or in person. Nonetheless, all surveys do have certain characteristics in common. Unlike a census, where all members of the population are studied, surveys gather information from only a portion of a population of interest—the size of the sample depending on the purpose of the study. In a bona fide survey, the sample is not selected haphazardly or only from persons who volunteer to participate.... Information is collected by means of standardized procedures so that every individual is asked the same questions in more or less the same way. The survey’s intent is not to describe the particular individuals who, by chance, are part of the sample but to obtain a composite profile of the population.

In a good survey, the sample that has been studied represents the target population, and the information that has been collected represents the concepts of interest. The standardised procedures with which data are collected are mostly, but not always, questionnaires which are either presented to the sample persons by an interviewer or completed by the sample persons themselves.

In the next section, surveys are classified according to a number of criteria. Underlying this classification is the following poem by Rudyard Kipling:

I keep six honest serving-men  
(They taught me all I knew);  
Their names are What and Why and When  
And How and Where and Who.

## 2.2 Classification Criteria

### 2.2.1 Who: The Target Population

Groves (1989, Chap. 3) starts his theoretical overview of populations (of persons) with the *population of inference*, for instance American citizens in 2011. The *target population* is the finite set of the elements (usually persons) that will be studied in a survey. Generally excluded from the target population are those persons who cannot be contacted or will not be able to participate, such as persons living abroad and those living in

institutions (residential care and nursing homes, prisons). The *frame population* is the set of persons for whom some enumeration can be made prior to the selection of the survey sample, i.e. who can be listed in the sampling frame. After the sample has been drawn, ineligible units have to be removed, such as incorrect addresses or persons who are not American citizens. Those who then respond to the survey are the *survey population*, the set of people who, if they have been selected for the survey, could be respondents. *Unit non-response* is the failure to collect data from units belonging to the frame population and selected to be in a sample. The *response rate* is the percentage of selected units who participate in the survey.

The population of inference may comprise businesses, households, individuals, days, journeys, etc. In a *business survey*, information is collected on establishments or branches. An informant, or several informants (see Box 2.1), provide(s) information on behalf of a business establishment. A survey among business owners can also be seen as a survey among individuals.

#### Box 2.1: Examples of business surveys

In two well-known surveys of workplaces, multiple instruments are fielded to different, specifically targeted interest groups.

The 2009 European Companies Survey was conducted using computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI). The companies to be interviewed were selected at random among those with ten or more employees in each country. A management representative and, where possible, an employee representative was interviewed in each company.

The UK’s Workplace Employee Relations Survey (WERS) is one of the longest running of its type (since 1980). The most recent wave comprised five separate instruments—some face-to-face and others by self-completion—and the overall design was organised thus:

- An overall sample of 2,500 workplaces, combining 1,700 workplaces that are new

to the study and repeat interviews at 800 workplaces which were first surveyed in 2004.

- At each workplace, an interview with the most senior manager responsible for employment relations and personnel issues was conducted. A self-completion survey on financial performance was distributed to all trading sector workplaces.
- An interview with one trade union employee representative and one non-trade union representative where present (approximately 900 interviews).
- A self-completion survey with a representative group of up to 25 employees, randomly selected from each workplace participating in the study (approximately 23,000 completed surveys).

In a *household survey* a responsible adult can function as a household informant. In a *survey among individuals* the respondents usually provide information about themselves, but often also about their households. A respondent can also provide information about other household members, e.g. when providing information on the occupations and education of family members. In some cases the use of *proxies* is allowed, which means that the target respondent has someone else answer the questions for them. A special case of this would be a survey that includes (small) children. In such a case parents can answer questions instead of their children. It is also possible that *all members of the household* have to answer a questionnaire, as for instance in the European Labour Force Survey. In these cases proxies are often allowed. Finally, in *multi-actor* surveys several members of the same family are interviewed, but they will not necessarily be members of the same household. The UK's WERS (see Box 2.1) is also an example of a multi-actor survey. Another example is a Dutch survey among persons with learning disabilities (Stoop et al. 2002, see Box 2.2). A final example of a multi-actor sur-

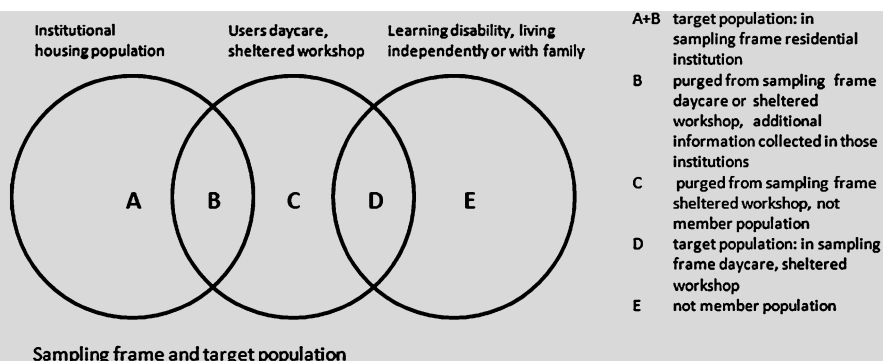
vey is the multi-country survey described in Box 2.7 in Sect. 2.2.6.

**Box 2.2: A survey among persons with learning disabilities (see Stoop et al. 2002)**

*Multiple sampling frames*

The frame population consisted entirely of adults aged 18 years and older who had learning disabilities and who were living in an institution or institutionally supported housing arrangement (long-term care home, socio-home, surrogate family unit, supported independent living arrangement) and/or made use of a day-care facility or sheltered workshop. Preceding the fieldwork the frame population was constructed by listing the relevant institutions by completing and joining available address lists. A complication when using the available sampling frames was that the instability of the field: institutions change character, new residential arrangements appear, different residential facilities are hard to distinguish from each other. Additionally, institutions sometimes consist of main locations and satellite sites, which further complicates the sampling procedure.

The selected sampling frames showed overlap and also contained persons who did not belong to the target population (see also figure shown below). Two-thirds of the clients of sheltered workshops, for instance, had physical rather than learning disabilities (C in figure shown below) and were not included in the frame population. Secondly, an unknown number of persons used more than one facility, for instance daycare facilities and residential facilities or services (B in figure shown below). To overcome over coverage, the sampling frame of daycare centres and sheltered workshops was purged of those persons who also used some kind of institutional residential arrangement.



The sampling procedure was complicated by the fact that different types of institutions were selected and that the final sample would have to be representative according to type of institution and the extent of the learning disability. Firstly, institutions were selected (acknowledging type, size and geographical region) and subsequently clients within institutions, taking into account size and possible overlap between frame populations. The interviewer had to select potential sample persons from a list provided by the local management of the institution, in accordance with a strictly random procedure. In reality, however, this selection was often performed by the local management.

#### *Multiple sources and instruments*

Some persons with a learning disability can be interviewed in a survey, whereas others cannot. If possible, the selected sample persons were interviewed personally. They provided information on their daily activities and preferences, autonomy, social networks and leisure activities. Parents or legal representatives were asked about the family background and also, and in greater detail, about the issues in the sample person questionnaire. Support workers or supervisors answered questions on the type and duration of care received, coping abilities and daily activities. Finally, questions on services and facilities provided had to be answered by the local management of institutions providing residential facilities or support, daycare centres

and sheltered workshops. The combination of sources was deemed necessary to obtain a complete picture of the quality of life and use of facilities of the sample person. It made the survey particularly complicated, however, because seven different questionnaires had to be used and everybody involved had to cooperate in order to obtain a complete picture.

The population of inference may be the general population of a country (citizens, or residents, which is by no means the same thing). A survey may also aim at representing a special group, such as older persons, members of a minority ethnic group, students, users of a particular product or public service, persons with a learning disability, drug users, inhabitants of a particular neighbourhood, gays and lesbians. In some cases a sampling frame is easy to construct (inhabitants of a particular neighbourhood), and in other cases the survey will have to be preceded by a screening phase to identify the frame population (lesbian and gay people).

Sometimes, sampling is complicated still further when the 'population' under investigation is not a set of individuals but a set of activities or events. In a time use survey, for example, a sample is drawn of households/persons and days (Eurostat 2009), and in passenger surveys the units are journeys (see Box 2.3).

#### **Box 2.3: Passenger surveys**

Passenger surveys attempt to establish the perceived quality of a journey. In the UK, this is complicated by the existence of

train operating companies with regionally based but overlapping franchises.

The UK's National (Rail) Passenger Survey (NPS) uses a two-stage cluster sample design for each Train Operating Company (TOC). The first-stage sampling unit is a train station and questionnaires are then distributed to passengers using that station on a particular day during a specified time period. Stations are selected for each TOC with a probability proportionate to size, using the estimated number of passengers as the size measure. A large station may be selected several times. Days of the week and times of day are then assigned to each selected station, using profiles for different types of station. Finally, the sampling points are assigned to weeks at random during the survey period. A completely new sampling plan is generated every two years, utilising data on passenger volumes provided by the Office for Rail Regulation (Passenger Focus 2010).

As mentioned in Sect. 2.1, good survey practices prescribe a survey sample to be selected at random from the frame population. Sampling frames can comprise individuals (a population register, list of students or census records), households, addresses, businesses or institutions. In many cases a two-stage sampling procedure is required, for instance first households, then individuals, or first institutions, then individuals.

There are many ways to draw a probability sample, and according to Kish (1997, see also Häder and Lynn 2007) they all suffice as long as the probability mechanism is clear, which means that every member of the target population has to have a known probability (larger than zero) of being selected for the sample. There are even more ways of selecting a non-probability sample. We will only give some examples here. In many countries, *quota sampling* is quite popular. In this case, a population is first segmented into mutually exclusive sub-groups. Interviewers then have to interview a specified number of people within each subgroup (for further and

more in-depth discussion on survey sampling techniques and non-probability samples in surveys, see Hibbert Johnson and Hudson, Chap. 5). How these people are selected is untraceable.

Nowadays online panels, discussed at greater length by Toepoel in Chap. 20, are becoming quite popular (see also Sect. 2.2.4 and Box 2.5). In rare cases these are based on probability samples, as is the Dutch LISS panel ([www.lissdata.nl](http://www.lissdata.nl)), but the vast majority are not constructed using probability-based recruitment (The American Association for Public Opinion Research 2011). Online access panels offer prospective panel members the opportunity to earn money, make their opinion heard or take part in surveys for fun. In *river sampling* '... respondents are recruited directly to specific surveys using methods similar to the way in which non-probability panels are built. Once a respondent agrees to do a survey, he or she answers a few qualification questions and then is routed to a waiting survey. Sometimes, but not always, these respondents are offered the opportunity to join an online panel' (The American Association for Public Opinion Research 2011).

Rare populations are hard to identify, approach and survey. *Snowball sampling* relies on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects. *Respondent-driven sampling* (RDS) combines 'snowball sampling' with a mathematical model that weights the sample to compensate for the fact that the sample was collected in a non-random way.

### 2.2.2 What: The Topic

In addition to representing the target population, a survey should represent the concepts of interest. Or, on a more practical note, the second main distinguishing feature of a survey is the topic. Survey topics can be anything, from victimisation to health, from bird-watching to shopping, from political interest to life-long learning and from alcohol and tobacco use to belief in God. There is ample evidence that the topic of a survey is a determinant of the response rate (see Chap. 9 by Stoop).

An *omnibus survey* has no specific topic at all: data on a wide variety of subjects is collected during the same interview, usually paid for by

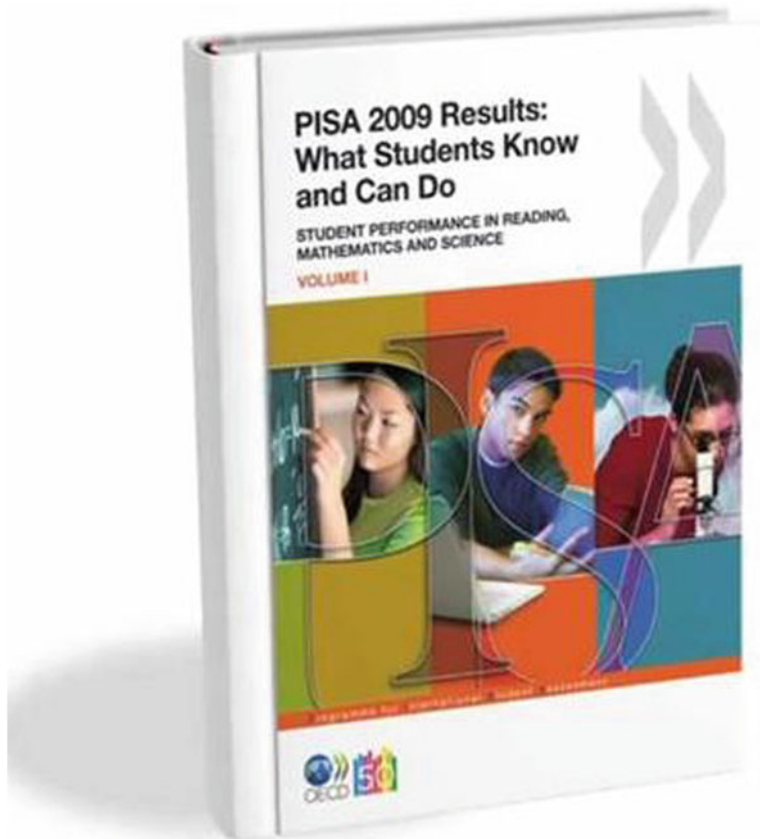


multiple clients. Nowadays, omnibus surveys are increasingly being replaced by online access panels where clients pay for a particular survey while sharing background characteristics.

Often a distinction is made between objective questions and subjective questions. Objective questions are the home turf of official statistics and cover issues like labour situation, education, living conditions, health, etc. Subjective questions collect information on values, attitudes, and the like. In practise, this distinction cannot be sustained. Assessments of health and job preferences have a clear subjective aspect, for example. In addition, official statistics focus increasingly on issues such as satisfaction and even happiness. The UK Office for National Statistics (ONS), for instance, regularly collects data and publishes statistics on 'Measuring Subjective Wellbeing in the UK'. Finally, even objective, hard statistics have a subjective component (e.g. how many rooms are in your house, how much time do you spend on gardening?).

Many different types of organisations collect data on attitudes, values, preferences and opinions, but from a different perspective. For example, there is a big difference between opinion polls and surveys of attitudes and values (and opinions). Although *opinion polls* could be conducted according to the same quality criteria as academic surveys of values and attitudes, in practise they are often commercial, non-probability surveys focusing on one or a few questions, providing results in just a day or so, whereas academic surveys can take a year from data collection to first availability of results.

Appendix 1a presents an overview of comparative attitude surveys organised by different types of sponsors. Other well-known survey topics are behavioural patterns, lifestyles, well-being and social belonging and affiliation (see Appendix 1b). Also common are surveys on literacy and skills (Appendix 1c) and on voting behaviour (1d).



Market researchers study brand and media tracking, consumer satisfaction and advertisement effect. As mentioned above, governments too are interested in consumer satisfaction and use surveys to assess the need for public services. Both—as academics—are interested in factors that determine decision-making.

Some surveys require respondents to keep a diary, for instance time use surveys, travel surveys or expenditure surveys. Other surveys are increasingly supplemented (or even partly replaced) by data from other sources, such as GIS data or data from public registers and administrative records. As part of some surveys, data on bio-markers are collected, such as grip strength, body-mass index and peak flow in SHARE (see Appendix 1) or blood cholesterol and saliva cortisol in the LISS panel (Avendabo et al. 2010). Election polls predict the outcome of elections, as do exit polls, where voters are asked questions about their voting.

From this overview it will be clear that almost any topic can be part of a survey, but also that there is a relationship between the target population and the topic, and the survey agency and sponsor and the topic.

### 2.2.3 By Whom: Survey Agency and Sponsor

Surveys are commissioned by a wide range of organisations: governments, the media, local communities, labour unions, universities, institutions, NGOs and many other diverse organizations. Survey agencies can be roughly subdivided in four groups: national statistical institutes, universities, market research agencies and not-for-profit organisations. As with the topic, there is ample evidence that the type of sponsor has an impact on the response rate (see Chap. 9 by Stoop). Most studies in this area suggest that people are more likely to participate in an academic or government survey than in a commercial survey. In addition, the topic of a survey is clearly related to the type of sponsor: national statistical institutes do not run exit polls, and market research organisations conduct a lot of consumer research.

In practise, all kinds of combinations of sponsors and data collectors can occur. For

instance, television networks can start their own online panels, and market research agencies collect data for national statistical institutes or universities. In the European Social Survey (ESS), an academic cross-national survey (see Chap. 15 on Repeated Cross-Sectional Surveys by Stoop and Harrison), each country selects a survey agency to collect data in that country. ESS data are therefore collected by each of the four types of survey agencies mentioned above (see [www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org): ‘Project information’—participating countries). It could however be argued that in the world of surveys, statistics, academia and market research are three different continents (and not-for-profit organisations a kind of island in between). In the world of (official) statistics, sampling is the key element of surveys (see for instance the history of the International Association of Survey Statisticians (<http://isi.cbs.nl/iass/allUK.htm>)). Surveys run by national statistical institutes are almost always based on probability samples, whereas market research organisations increasingly use non-probability samples from online panels (see e.g. Yeager et al. 2011). An instructive overview of the differences between academia and survey research agencies is given by Smith (2009, 2011), summarised in Box 2.4. In the Netherlands and Flanders, a recent initiative is trying to bring together the different approaches to survey research in the Dutch Language Platform for Survey Research ([www.npsa.net](http://www.npsa.net)).

#### Box 2.4: Survey research, academia and research agencies (based on Smith 2009, 2011)

Smith (2009) sees a major divide in the UK between two kinds of knowledge held by survey experts in research agencies and in academia, and feels that this is to the detriment of survey research. He contests that agency practitioners are strong on *knowing how* while academics are strong on *knowing that*. Market researchers have practical skills, but lack theoretical knowledge whereas academics know the theory

but lack practical skills and may therefore have unrealistic expectations about the sorts of data a survey can reasonably be expected to collect. Smith (2009, p. 720) points out three significant problems:

1. Practitioners make needless mistakes because they lack depth in their understanding of how survey errors work.
2. The bulk of surveys in the UK (those not using random probability samples for a start) receive almost no serious academic attention, and suffer as a result.
3. Academic commentary and expectations can be very unrealistic.

He also comes up with a number of possible solutions, although he is rather pessimistic about whether they will be picked up:

- Having academics take secondments in agencies and agency staff take academic secondments.
- Establishing formal links between agencies and academic departments with resource sharing.
- Encouraging academics and agency practitioners to coauthor papers.
- Improving the quality of formal survey training for both academics and practitioners.

In a subsequent paper, Smith (2011) discusses how academics' knowledge might be transferred more effectively, and how it might translate into better survey practise in research agencies. One conclusion he draws from attending an academic seminar on survey non-response and attrition is that he had to try to translate research findings into possible practical recommendations himself, and is not sure whether he drew the right conclusions. The second example he gives is a questionnaire training course taught by Jon Krosnick. This course presented the relevant evidence, but also highlighted some practical implications. Smith (2011) sadly realises that despite the vast question design literature, survey practitioners still write questions in the way they were taught long

ago, resulting in questions that are simply bad. So, to improve survey quality, effective ways have to be found to translate academic knowledge into survey questions. Academics should focus on spelling out the practical implications of their findings, and survey agencies should change their practise in line with the results of the academic research.

## 2.2.4 How: Survey Mode

The best-known distinction between different types of surveys is the survey mode. Section 15.1.3 in Chap. 15 on Repeated Cross-Sectional Surveys describes the main types based on the distinction between interview surveys (face-to-face and telephone) and self-completion surveys (mail and online). Face-to-face surveys are usually rather expensive and thus most often used by academics and statisticians. Interviewers are especially helpful when the survey is long, more than one person in the household has to be interviewed or when additional information has to be collected. Recently, however, interesting experiments have been run in web surveys where respondents themselves collected blood and saliva samples and used online weighting scales (Avendabo et al. 2010).

In many surveys today, multiple modes are used. This might involve a drop-off self-completion questionnaire following a face-to-face survey, or a mixed-mode approach where web, telephone and face-to-face are deployed sequentially to maximise coverage and minimise costs. De Leeuw (2005) gives a useful overview of different modalities of mixing modes.

Commercial organisations make increasing use of online access panels. We use the term 'panel' here not to mean a single sample of people who are monitored over time—as in a longitudinal survey—but in the sense of being a permanent pool of respondents from whom repeated representative (quota) samples can be drawn. The UK organisation YouGov was a pioneer in this field (see Box 2.5).



**Box 2.5: Example of an online access panel: YouGov (based on information from <http://www.yougov.co.uk/about/about-methodology.asp>, accessed on 24 January 2012)**

*Registration*

In order to register with YouGov, each panel member completes a detailed profiling questionnaire and sets up an account name and password. This questionnaire enables YouGov to select a sample that reflects the population. For example, the pool divides into 56% men, 44% women; but in a sample for national political surveys, 52% women and 48% men are selected.

*Recruitment and Incentives*

The pool is recruited from a wide variety of sources: through targeted campaigns via non-political websites, by specialist recruitment agencies, and people can also join the panel through the open site, although the self-recruited sample is identified as such and is not generally used for published political polls.

Respondents receive a small incentive for completing YouGov surveys, to ensure that responses are not tilted towards those passionately interested in the subject of the particular survey. Incentives typically range from 50p to £1 per survey, through cash payments to an online account which pays out when the panel member reaches £50, as well as occasional cash prizes.

*Conducting Surveys*

When YouGov conducts a survey, selected panel members are invited by email to complete the survey by clicking on an Internet link. In order to complete the survey they must log in and provide their password. This ensures that the right people complete the survey, and enables their answers to be matched to the demographics they provided when registering with YouGov.

Response rates of at least 40% are normally achieved within 24 h and 60% within 72 h. Little difference has been detected between early and later responses, once the data have been weighted to demographic and attitudinal variables, including past votes and newspaper readership.

Although online access panels are rather popular among commercial agencies (and are inexpensive compared to surveys based on probability sampling), concerns about the non-probability sampling procedures are growing (see [Sect. 2.2](#); Yeager et al. 2011; The American Association for Public Opinion Research 2011). As long as there is no evidence that ‘... the factors that determine a population member’s presence or absence in the sample are all uncorrelated with the variables of interest in a study, or if they can be fully accounted for by making adjustments before or after data collection...’ (Yeager et al. 2011, p. 711), the assumption that a sample from an online panel represents the target population cannot be sustained.

Probability-based online samples, on the other hand, such as the Dutch LISS panel ([www.lissdata.nl](http://www.lissdata.nl)), are a useful addition to scientific research. The LISS panel consists of 5,000 households, comprising 8,000 individuals. The panel is based on a true probability sample of households drawn from the population register by Statistics Netherlands. Households that would not otherwise be able to participate are provided with a computer and Internet connection. A special immigrant panel is available in addition to the LISS panel. This immigrant panel comprises around 1,600 households (2,400 individuals), of which 1,100 households (1,700 individuals) are of non-Dutch origin.

### 2.2.5 When: Cross-Sections and Panels

For some surveys, data are collected only once. These are usually called *cross-sections*. In many cases, however, changes over time are an

important part of the research question. In these cases the survey is repeated at regular intervals; this may be every month, every year or every few years. This is usually called a *repeated cross-section*, meaning that a different sample is approached each time. Sometimes this is also called a longitudinal survey, highlighting the fact that the focus is on longitudinal comparison. Technically, however, the term 'longitudinal' is best reserved for a *longitudinal panel*. Here, the same group of respondents is approached at regular time intervals. This makes it possible to measure change at an individual level. Since panel members tend to drop out, and because a panel no longer represents the target population after a few years, a *rotating panel* design can be used (see Box 2.6). New panel members participate in a fixed number of waves. A group of new panel members is recruited for each wave, making it possible to draw conclusions on individual changes and on the population at a given moment.

**Box 2.6: Rotating Panel Design, Labour Force Survey (Eurostat 2011, p. 7)**

All the participating countries except Belgium and Luxembourg use a rotating panel design for the samples. The number of panels (waves) ranges from two to eight. All panel designs provide for an overlap between successive quarters, except for Germany and Switzerland, which only have a year-to-year overlap. The most common panel design with a quarterly overlap in 2009, adopted by 12 participating countries, is 2-(2)-2, where sampled units are interviewed for two consecutive quarters, are then left out of the sample for the next two waves and are included again two more times. Other common rotation patterns, each used by six countries, are 'in for 5' and 'in for 6' waves, where each panel is interviewed consecutively for five or six quarters before permanently leaving the sample. Three other rotation schemes are used by one or at most two countries.

## 2.2.6 Where: Regional, National, Cross-National and International Surveys

A survey among the inhabitants of a specific community can be called a regional survey. When all inhabitants of a country belong to the target population, this can be called a national survey. By stratifying regions, it is possible to make sure that study outcomes for both regions and the entire nation can be published.

In theory, international surveys sample from multiple countries and the target population is the combined population of the countries under study. In practice, however, international surveys are rare, because sampling frames seldom cover more than one country and because countries are obvious units of comparison. Consequently, most international surveys are really cross-national surveys: an independent sample is drawn in each participating country, and the results of the national data files are combined afterwards into a harmonised cross-national data file.

Two strategies for harmonisation are used in cross-national studies, namely *input harmonisation* and *output harmonisation* (Körner and Meyer 2005). Input harmonisation means that the instrument is as identical as possible in each participating country: the same fieldwork approach, the same survey mode, the same questions (but translated), and so forth. Output harmonisation allows countries to use their preferred survey mode. Ex-post output harmonisation means that different questions can be used, or that some countries can derive variables from questionnaires and others from registers, as long as the same definitions are used. Ex-ante output harmonisation means that the questionnaire has to be identical in each country, but that the data collection method may differ.

Appendix 1 gives an overview of cross-national or comparative surveys. One of the advantages of these surveys is that in most cases the data are available for external parties, or at least for academic use.

A special example of a multi-national (and also multi-actor) survey is a survey in which migrant families are interviewed in both the sending and receiving countries (see Box 2.7).

**Box 2.7: 500 Families: Migration histories of turks in Europe (taken from <http://www.norface.org/migration11.html>, 18 January 2012)**

Social, economic and cultural integration of first generation immigrants and their children has been the focus of extensive research in Europe and elsewhere. However, much remains unknown about the multi-generational transmission of social, cultural, religious and economic resources, and behaviours. Furthermore, while transnational studies on intra- and international migration processes are well established in the US, they are scarce in Europe. Finally, immigrants are mainly compared to other immigrants and/or natives, whereas studies comparing immigrants to those left behind or those who have re-emigrated to the origin country are an exception. This project will treat these research lacunae and will extend existing research on international migration processes and intergenerational mobility by implementing a unique research design based on 500 Turkish families, their immigrant descendants in Europe and those who remained in Turkey. It reconstructs basic migration, family and socio-economic histories of complete lineages generated by a sample of 500 ancestors, born in Turkey between 1930 and 1940 in selected high migration sending areas; and to personally interviewing approximately 6,000 family members over up to four generations in Turkey and Europe, investigating patterns of intergenerational transmission of resources and values and their intersection with family migration trajectories.

## 2.2.7 Why: Fit for Purpose

Cross-classifying the different classification criteria of surveys do not make any sense because the different classifications are related, as has

been mentioned before. In addition, in many cases a trade-off has to be made between accuracy, speed and costs. Exit polls require speed, and cannot be mail surveys; statisticians need to produce exact figures and cover the general population, so non-probability-based online surveys do not suffice.

Even so, no two surveys are ever exactly the same (even when they are intended to be). Like any other product, the form of a survey will be affected by any number of design considerations. Like many products, it will be created with a clear purpose in mind. To this extent, to borrow Le Corbusier's famous dictum, 'form [at least partially] follows function'. This is related to one of the most important survey quality criteria: fit for purpose. A survey is good when it serves the purpose for which it has been designed. Sometimes speed is predominant, sometimes precision of the outcomes and sometimes the comparability of countries. Each purpose has an impact on the final form of the survey.

However, there are other factors which also influence the shape and form of surveys. The aspirations and whims of the survey architects or designers will be visible in its appearance. The survey may seek to resolve well-known problems or weaknesses by using different materials or a new production process. It might build on the success of similar products, or it might be experimental in some way, testing the feasibility of a new process, product or price point. And, in common with most production process involving human beings, things go wrong with surveys.

Like any product or object, then, survey design is a compromise between the sponsor or client and the designers. Along the way, its form may be affected by production problems and cost constraints. Early feedback from market testing may reveal that there are aspects of the product that users find difficult or off-putting, so it has to be re-engineered to make it more acceptable or to improve its quality. Many of these design aspects will be covered in the other chapters of this book.

## 2.3 Appendix 1: Comparative Surveys

### (a) Comparative surveys on attitudes, values, beliefs and opinions

European Social Survey ESS <a href="http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org">www.europeansocialsurvey.org</a>	Academically driven social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations. Biennial, first Round in 2002, covers more than 30 European countries.
International Social Survey Programme ISSP <a href="http://www.gesis.org/en/issp/overview/">www.gesis.org/en/issp/overview/</a>	Continuing annual programme of cross-national collaboration on surveys covering topics important for social science research. Brings together pre-existing social science projects and coordinates research goals, thereby adding a cross-national, cross-cultural perspective to the individual national studies.
European Values Study EVS <a href="http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu">www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu</a>	Large-scale, cross-national, and longitudinal survey research programme focusing on basic human values. Provides insights into the ideas, beliefs, preferences, attitudes, values and opinions of citizens all over Europe. Data are collected every ten years on how Europeans think about life, family, work, religion, politics and society.
World Values Survey WVS <a href="http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org">www.worldvaluessurvey.org</a>	Explores people's values and beliefs, how they change over time and what social and political impact they have; carried out in almost 100 countries. Data are collected every five years on support for democracy, tolerance of foreigners and ethnic minorities, support for gender equality, the role of religion and changing levels of religiosity, the impact of globalisation, attitudes towards the environment, work, family, politics, national identity, culture, diversity, insecurity and subjective wellbeing.
Eurobarometer <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm</a> <a href="http://www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer-data-service">www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer-data-service</a>	The Eurobarometer programme monitors public opinion in the European Union. It consists of four survey instruments/series: the Standard Eurobarometer, the Special Eurobarometer, the Flash Eurobarometer, and the Central and Eastern and Candidate Countries Eurobarometer.
Afrobarometer <a href="http://www.afrobarometer.org">www.afrobarometer.org</a>	Research project that measures the social, political and economic atmosphere in a dozen African countries. Trends in public attitudes are tracked over time. Results are shared with decision makers, policy advocates, civic educators, journalists, researchers, donors and investors as well as average Africans who wish to become more informed and active citizens.
Latinobarómetro <a href="http://www.latinobarometro.org">www.latinobarometro.org</a>	Annual public opinion survey that involves some 19,000 interviews in 18 Latin American countries, representing more than 400 million inhabitants. Latinobarómetro Corporation researches the development of democracy and economies as well as societies, using indicators of opinion, attitudes, behaviour and values. Its results are used by social and political actors, international organizations, governments and the media.

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AsiaBarometer <a href="http://www.asiabarometer.org">www.asiabarometer.org</a>	Comparative survey in Asia, covering East, Southeast, South and Central Asia. It focuses on the daily lives of ordinary people (bumi putra) and their relationships to family, neighbourhood, workplace, social and political institutions and the marketplace.
Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe SHARE <a href="http://www.share-project.org">www.share-project.org</a>	Multidisciplinary and cross-national panel database of microdata on health, socioeconomic status and social and family networks of more than 45,000 individuals aged 50 years or over. Started in 2004, now covering 13 countries.

## (b) Comparative surveys on living conditions

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions EUROFOUND <a href="http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys">www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys</a>	Eurofound has developed three regularly repeated surveys to contribute to the planning and establishment of better living and working conditions. The surveys offer a unique source of comparative information on the quality of living and working conditions across the EU. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS)</li> <li>• European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS)</li> <li>• European Company Survey (ECS)</li> </ul>
Household Finance and Consumption Survey HFCS <a href="http://www.ecb.int/home/html/researcher_hfcn.en.html">www.ecb.int/home/html/researcher_hfcn.en.html</a>	The HFCS collects household-level data on household finances and consumption. It covers the following household characteristics at micro-level: demographics, real and financial assets, liabilities, consumption and saving, income and employment, future pension entitlements, intergenerational transfers and gifts, and risk attitudes. Data available in 2013.
Eurostat microdata <a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/introduction">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/introduction</a>	Access to anonymised microdata available at Eurostat only for scientific purposes. The following microdata are disseminated free of charge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Community Household Panel (ECHP)</li> <li>• Labour Force Survey (LFS)</li> <li>• Community Innovation Survey (CIS)</li> <li>• Adult Education Survey (AES)</li> <li>• European Union Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)</li> <li>• Structure of Earnings Survey (SES)</li> <li>• Farm Structure Survey (FSS)</li> </ul>
European Community Household Panel ECHP <a href="http://epunet.essex.ac.uk/echp.php">http://epunet.essex.ac.uk/echp.php</a> <a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/echp">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/echp</a>	Harmonised cross-national longitudinal survey focusing on household income and living conditions. It also includes items on health, education, housing, migration, demographics and employment characteristics. ECHP is now finished.
EU Labour Force Survey EU LFS <a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/lfs">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/lfs</a>	Conducted in the 27 Member States of the European Union, three candidate countries and three countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Large household sample survey providing quarterly results on the labour participation of people aged 15 years and over, as well as on persons outside the labour force.
EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions EU-SILC <a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/eu_silc">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/eu_silc</a>	Instrument aimed at collecting timely and comparable cross-sectional and longitudinal multidimensional microdata on income, poverty, social exclusion and living conditions. Provides comparable, cross-sectional and longitudinal multi-dimensional data on income, poverty, social exclusion and living conditions in the European Union. Cross-sectional data and longitudinal data.



## (c) Surveys on literacy and skills

Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey ALL <a href="http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/all/">http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/all/</a>	International comparative study designed to provide participating countries, including the United States, with information about the skills of their adult populations. ALL measures the literacy and numeracy skills of a nationally representative sample from each participating country.
Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies PIAAC <a href="http://www.oecd.org/piaac">www.oecd.org/piaac</a>	International survey of adult skills, collaboration between governments, an international consortium of organisations and the OECD; results to be published in 2013. Measures skills and competencies needed for individuals (15–65 years) to participate in society and for economies to prosper.
Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study TIMSS Progress in International Reading Literacy Study PIRLS <a href="http://timss.bc.edu/">http://timss.bc.edu/</a>	The TIMSS and PIRLS International Study Centre is dedicated to conducting comparative studies in educational achievement. It serves as the international hub for the IEA's mathematics, science and reading assessments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TIMSS, every four years, 4th and 8th grade</li> <li>• PIRLS, every five years, 4th grade</li> </ul>

## (d) Information on elections

Comparative Study of Electoral Systems CSES <a href="http://www.cses.org">www.cses.org</a>	Collaborative programme of research among election study teams from around the world. Participating countries include a common module of survey questions in their post-election studies. The resulting data are deposited along with voting, demographic, district and macro variables.
Infrastructure for Research on Electoral Democracy PIREDEU <a href="http://www.gesis.org/en/institute/competence-centers/rdc-international-survey-programmes/piredeu">www.gesis.org/en/institute/competence-centers/rdc-international-survey-programmes/piredeu</a>	Collaborative project on "Providing an Infrastructure for Research on Electoral Democracy in the European Union", coordinated by the European University Institute (EUI) and its Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS).

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