

1. Sample design

- The sample design for the ESS should be **the best probability sample design** that is possible in your country.
- It is essential to find a suitable, frequently updated **frame** for the selection of individuals, households or addresses - preferably a population register.
- All details of the design, such as number of primary sampling units, mean cluster size and stratification variables have to be discussed with your sampling expert and filled in the “**Signing-off form**” before the sampling process starts.

2. Sample size

- The minimum **effective sample size is 1,500**, for countries with less than 2 mill. inhabitants.
- The net sample size (number of realised interviews) is calculated as product of the effective sample size and the design effect, i.e. $n_{net}=n_{eff}*DEFF=1,500*DEFF$. You will get an estimate for the design effect DEFF in your country from your sampling expert.
- The gross sample size is calculated as follows: $n_{gross}=n_{net}/(RR*ER)$, where RR (target is 70%) is the predicted response rate and ER is the eligibility rate.

3. Sample design data file

All information on the sample design (inclusion probabilities, stratification, PSU's, outcome variable and so on) has to be recorded in the sample design data file. For the creation of this file you get a special instruction and advise from your sampling expert. The sample design data file is the basic information for the calculation of the design weights. For this, the expert panel needs the file at the time when you deposit the other files at NSD.

4. Design effects

The design effects are **calculated by the expert panel**. For this, the information from the sample design data file is needed. Moreover, since design effects may vary from variable to variable some groups of variables from the main questionnaire including netdays, stfeco, stfgov, stfdem, ppltrst, pplfair, pplhlp, dscrrce, dscrntn and others are selected to estimate a “mean design effect”.

5. Sampling expert panel

The sampling expert panel consists of the following statisticians:

Siegfried Gabler (Centre for Survey Research and Methodology, Germany)

Sabine Häder (Centre for Survey Research and Methodology, Germany)

Seppo Laaksonen (University of Helsinki, Finland)

Peter Lynn (University of Essex, U.K.)

Each of the experts will be assigned about six countries to liaise and support. However, the decision to “sign off” a design will be made together by the whole team (based on the above mentioned “Signing-off form”).