



IPWS Internet and Platform Work Survey

Technical report for the second (Spring 2021) and third (Autumn 2021) waves of the ETUI Internet and Platform Work Survey (IPWS):

Sample

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Introduction

The ETUI IPWS is a cross-national survey on the extent of the online labour markets and the platform economy. The core objectives of the survey are firstly to provide reliable cross-nationally comparable data on the extent to which working age adults (aged 18-64) use the internet – and platforms more specifically – as work and to generate income. Secondly, it focusses on the characteristics of these workers, their work patterns, and collective involvement.

The main fieldwork of the second (Spring 2021) wave of the IPWS took place in 14 European countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Spain), between 5 March and 9 May 2021. The minimum required sample size was set at 1750 valid cases per country.

The main fieldwork for the third (Autumn 2021) wave of the IPWS took place in 8 European countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Slovakia and Spain), between 20 September and 20 December 2021. The minimum required sample size was set at 1250 valid cases per country in France, Germany, Italy and Spain, and at 1750 cases per country in Czechia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Estonia.

The second and third waves of the survey were carried out via computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). An identical methodology was implemented across all countries and both these waves. Fieldwork in all countries was harmonised and coordinated by Ipsos EPA.

Sampling methods and procedures

The sampling approach of the IPWS was to ensure that country samples are nationally representative uniformly across all countries. For this purpose, a single-frame mobile phone sample design was conducted in each of the countries where the survey was administered.

Target population and coverage

At least 95% of the target population – i.e. the working-age population (for this study defined as 18-65 year-olds resident in the country of interview and who speak the language(s) in which the survey is administered in the country) – was accessible via mobile phone, and this in each of the 14 EU countries where the survey was carried out.

The procedure used for generating RDD (random digit dial) samples followed the standard approach used on all high quality random probability CATI surveys. In each country, the sample was selected randomly from the full universe of mobile phone numbers. The universe was based on what is available in the country – the full numbering plan, or a list-assisted approach if the numbering plan was not fully specified. A probabilistic design was implemented for pulling “seed” blocks for generating the phone numbers.

An external sample provider was responsible for generating the RDD sample frames for all countries, thus avoiding the use of different local sampling frames and associated bias.

The RDD sample frames underwent thorough quality checks to ensure that the RDD numbers in the sample batches released to fieldwork teams were active numbers and all others, such as those associated with a fax number, no longer in service, in national “do not call” registers, etc. were removed. Moreover, only residential telephone providers were taken into account when generating the random RDD samples.

Sufficient sample was selected in each country factoring in response rate and eligibility assumptions plus a margin for contingency. In each country, the sample was released in batches in a centralised manner into balanced sample replicates and loaded iteratively during fieldwork to maximise the response rate while ensuring that all dialled sample was fully worked according to the fieldwork rules.

Selection of the respondent

Mobile phones were considered single-person use devices, in line with the practice in telephone surveys, and no within household selection rules were specified. Respondents were asked to confirm if they are aged between 18 and 65. Once eligibility had been established, the interviewer established informed consent (in accordance with GDPR) to start the interview.