

# ESS Electronic Questionnaire Device

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NCRM Data Collection Network  
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[europeansocialsurvey.org](https://europeansocialsurvey.org)

ESS is a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ESS ERIC)



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## Combined benefits

ESS-EQD combines benefits from multiple modes:

- delivered at the doorstep, introduced to device
  - no computer literacy needed
  - no connectivity or set-up needed
  - super easy to use, no need to “open an app”
  - device has locus of control
  - can be used anywhere, at any time
  - large fonts, high contrast, no visual clutter
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- can be cleaned and disinfected (as opposed to paper)
  - fully GDPR compliant (as opposed to paper)
  - no digital divide problem (as opposed to mobile and Web)

## Progress so far



### Scoping

Internal tests  
Bug fixes



### Usability testing R1 (NL)

Improvements



### Usability testing R2 (SL)

Further improvements



Preparation of the survey instrument

### Acceptance testing (GB, PT, RS , SK)

Qualitative follow-up



### Evaluating the results

Writing the conclusions

## What we learned: The device

Off-shelf Android tablet can be used

Reliable model with scratch resistant screen

*cheap models scratched quickly*

Battery life is of essence

*cheap models started suddenly »dying«*

10 inch models are recommended for dexterity reasons

*7, 8 and 10 inch models were tested*

Obtain all at once (models are refreshed quite often)

Need to carefully plan around system and device updates

During the testing, all devices came back undamaged. All devices were returned

## What we learned: The agency

Has more work compared to Web mode.

- Adapt the SAQ version of the questionnaire from web
- Add QR codes to the sample
- Install and test the tablets
- Prepare paper instructions
- Provide a helpline

There were no real deal-breakers, but the process takes time.

## What we learned: The interviewer

Is in essence a knock-to-nudge doorstep delivery.  
We would avoid other means of device delivery (eg post).

- Delivers the EQD, motivates the respondent
- Scans the QR code, **trains the respondent**
- *Recommended: support respondents via telephone*
- Picks up the EQD, downloads the data and cleans the device

Their costs include travel, contacting, training and supporting the respondent, as well as picking up the device.

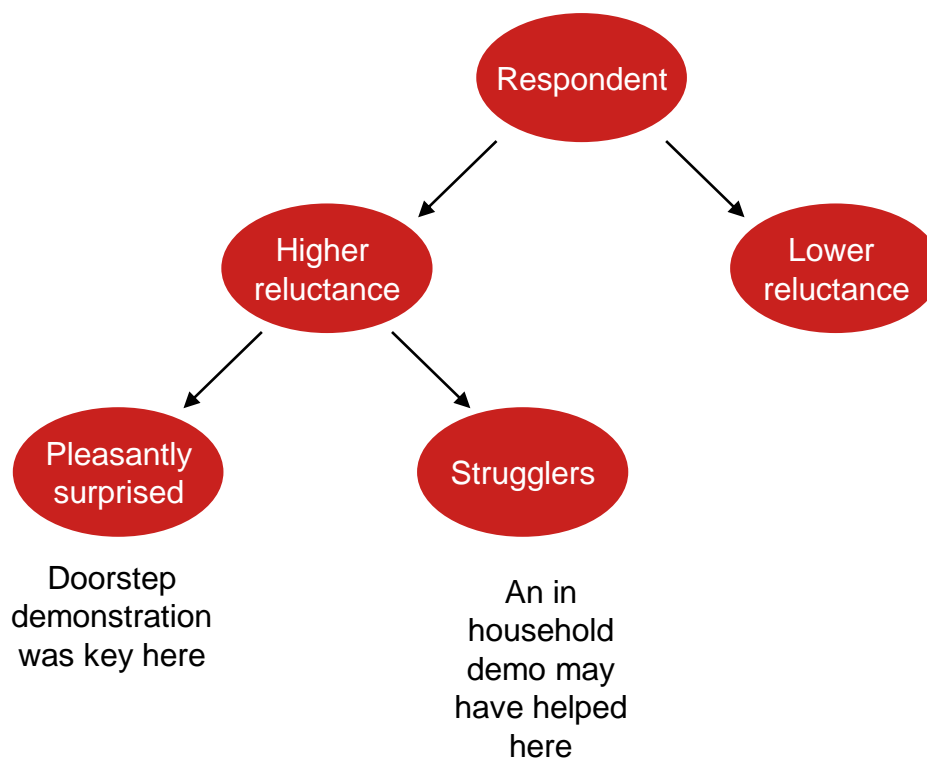
## What we learned: The respondent

- Instilling confidence is key
- Practice questions at start really helped
- Training within home could be helpful (rather than on doorstep)
- Written instructions helped in many cases
- Need to provide a good helpline
- Should make the device as user friendly as possible (eg always allow going backwards)
- Provide a stylus to help with selecting points on the screen



## What we learned: The respondent

Respondents initially reluctant, but 87% of respondents would do it again.  
74% of finished the survey completely.



## Wrap-up

- No mail delivery, use good field workers
- Respondent training (and confidence instilling) is key
- Include practice items
- Provide a helpline
- Translation management worked well
- Refusals are mostly due to fear of the technology
- Respondents want to be able to browse through the questionnaire
- Open questions are problematic
  - Most prefer typing over recording (< 20 of 121 provided a recorded response)
- Overall clear potential to use this device with parts of the off-line population

## Outlook

- Positive signals but limited ability to generalise so far
- Next step would be to test in a random probability survey (esp alongside a web survey)
- Could be a very useful tool in a probability based web panel for including off-liners
- Future use by ESS in a cross-sectional study will be evaluated vis-à-vis paper (as ESS is considering a move away from face to face)
- Still need to cost use of such a tool in a large scale study



## Contact

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