# Norwegian Citizen Panel 

2018, Thirteenth Wave<br>Methodology report

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## BACKGROUND

This report describes the procedures of data collection in the thirteenth wave of The Norwegian Citizen Panel. Furthermore, the report discusses technical aspects of the data collection before turning to the representativity of the panel and how the weights are calculated.

The Norwegian Citizen Panel (NCP) is one of the main components of Digital Social Science Core Facility (DIGSSCORE) at the University of Bergen. NCP was established as a collaboration between several departments at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Bergen and Uni Research Rokkan Centre.
ideas2evidence is responsible for the panel recruitment, the administration of the panel, and the technical solutions regarding data collection and computing.

## TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE SURVEY

## SOFTWARE

The web-based research software Confirmit administers the surveys and the panel. Confirmit is a "Software-as-a-Service" solution, where all software runs on Confirmit's continuously monitored server park, and where survey respondents and developers interact with the system through various web-based interfaces. This software provides very high data security and operational stability. The security measures are the most stringent in the industry, and Confirmit guarantees 99.7 percent uptime. ideas2evidence does the programming of the survey in Confirmit on behalf of The Norwegian Citizen Panel.

## PILOT - PROCEDURE AND ASSESSMENT

The survey went through both large- N and small- N pilot testing before data collection. The large- N pilot was done in cooperation with Amalie Skram high school. In addition, the survey was tested extensively during the development phase by ideas2evidence and the researchers involved in the project.

The pilot testing was regarded as successful, and no major technical revisions were deemed necessary.
The field period started by inviting a random sample of the respondents (soft launch). This was done in order to minimize the consequences if the questionnaire contained technical errors. No such errors were located/reported after two hours of data collection among the random sample. Remaining panel members was therefore invited. Thus, the field period is regarded successful.

## RANDOMIZATION PROCEDURES

Each wave of NCP has an extensive use of randomization procedures. The context of each randomization procedure may vary, ${ }^{1}$ but they all share some common ground that will be described in the following.

All randomization procedures are executed live in the questionnaire. This means that the randomization takes place while the respondent is in the questionnaire, as opposed to pre-defined randomizations that are uploaded to the questionnaire. All randomizations are independent from another, unless the documentation states otherwise.

[^0]The randomization procedures are written in JavaScript. Math.random() $)^{2}$ is a key function, in combination with Math.floor() $)^{3}$. These functions are used to achieve the following:

- Randomly select one value from a vector
- Randomly shuffle the contents of an array

The first procedure is typically used to determine a random sample of respondents to i.e. a control group. Say for example we wish to create two groups of respondents: group 1 and group 2. All respondents are randomly assigned the value 1 or 2 , where each randomization is independent from one another. When N is large enough these two groups will be of equal size (50/50).

Here is an example of the JavaScript code executed in Confirmit:

```
var form = f("x1");
if(!form.toBoolean()) // If no previous randomization on x1
{
    var precodes = x1.domainValues();// Copies the length of x1
    var randomNumber : float = Math.random()*precodes.length;
    var randomIndex : int = Math.floor(randomNumber);
    var code = precodes[randomIndex];
    form.set(code);
}
```

The second procedure is typically used when defining the order of an answer list as random. This can be useful for example when asking for the respondent's party preference or in a list experiment. However, since i.e. a party cannot be listed twice, the procedure must take into account that the array of parties is reduced by 1 for each randomization.

Here is an example of the JavaScript code executed in Confirmit ${ }^{4}$ :

```
Function shuffle(array) {
    var currentIndex = array.length, temporaryValue, randomIndex;
    // While there remain elements to shuffle...
    while (0 !== currentIndex) {
        // Pick a remaining element...
        randomIndex = Math.floor(Math.random() * currentIndex);
        currentIndex -= 1;
        // And swap it with the current element.
        temporaryValue = array[currentIndex];
        array[currentIndex] = array[randomIndex];
        array[randomIndex] = temporaryValue;
    }
    return array;
}
```

[^1]
## PANEL RECRUITMENT

Panel members were recruited in wave 1, wave 3, wave 8 and wave 11. All samples were drawn from the National Population Registry of Norway. This registry holds information on everyone born in Norway, as well as former and current inhabitants. The formal responsibility for this registry is held by the Norwegian Tax Administration but has partly outsourced the administration to the private IT-company Evry. Evry drew the sample on behalf of the Norwegian Citizen Panel after relevant permissions were acquired from the Norwegian Tax Administration.

The samples consisted of people over the age of 18 that were randomly drawn from the register. The extracted information was a) last name, b) first name, c) address, d) gender, e) year of birth, and f) phone number (the latter was only included in wave 3 and 8). The sample excluded persons without a current home address in Norway.

For a detailed description of the recruitment process in wave 1 , wave 3 , wave 8 and wave 11 , we refer to the respective methodology reports for each wave. Note, however, that there are some differences between the four recruitment processes. Please refer to table 1.

Table 1: Summary of recruitment processes

|  | Sample size | Mode | Contacts | Returned <br> letters |  |
| :--- | ---: | :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Recruitment 1 (wave 1) | 25000 | Postal | 2 | 546 | Response Rate (\%) |
| Recruitment 2 (wave 3) | 25000 | Postal, phone/SMS | 4 | 543 | $20.1 \%$ |
| Recruitment 3 (wave 8) | 22000 | Postal/SMS | 3 | 479 | $23.0 \%$ |
| Recruitment 4 (wave 11) | 14000 | Postal/SMS | 2 | 334 | $19.4 \%$ |

## DATA COLLECTION WAVE 13

## RESPONSES BY METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The survey was launched October $17^{\text {th }}$ 2018. It was sent to the email accounts of the panel's 16,157 members. In these e-mails, the basic information about the Norwegian Citizen Panel was repeated, and the individual panel members received unique URLs that led to the questionnaire.

The invitation, the first reminder and the second reminder were all distributed via e-mail. The third, and last reminder was, depending on whether the individual panel member had a registered mobile phone number or not, distributed via SMS and e-mail. Prior to wave 21.2 percent of the panel was registered with a mobile phone number.

Table 2: Responses and response rate for panel members by the different stages of data collection

|  | Response | Cumulative <br> Responses | Response <br> Rate (\%) | Cumulative <br> Response Rate |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Invitation (17 th of October) | 3486 | 3486 | $36.1 \%$ | $36.1 \%$ |
| $1^{\text {st }}$ reminder (23 rd of October) | 1896 | 5382 | $19.6 \%$ | $55.7 \%$ |
| $2^{\text {nd }}$ reminder (29 | of October) | 931 | 6313 | $9.6 \%$ |
| $3^{\text {rd }}$ reminder - email (1 $1^{\text {th }}$ of November) | 754 | 7067 | $7.8 \%$ | $65.3 \%$ |
| $3^{\text {rd }}$ reminder - SMS (1 $1^{\text {th }}$ of November) | 142 | 7209 | $1.5 \%$ | $73.1 \%$ |

In total, the questionnaire received 7,209 answers. 3,486 respondents completed the survey in the period between the invitation and the first reminder (October $17^{\text {th }}-$ October $23^{\text {rd }}$ ), a response rate of 36.1 percent.
The pattern is similar to earlier waves; the email invitation produces a higher number of respondents than the subsequent reminders. In total, the first, second and third reminder produces the same amount of responses as the invitation. For details on the number of respondents after each reminder, we refer you to table 2.

As before we exclude respondents that have not participated in any of the last three waves when we calculate the response rate. This leaves us with 9,668 eligible respondents. The overall response rate, as reported in table 2 , is $\mathbf{7 4 . 6}$ percent.

## RESPONSE OF EXISTING PANEL MEMBERS OVER TIME

The number of respondents in this last wave is as already mentioned 7,209 - compared to 7,193 in wave 12. This gives us an overall wave-to-wave retention rate of 100.2 percent. This is higher than the retention rate between wave 11 and wave 12, and higher than what is considered normal as illustrated in figure 1 . The fall of 2017 ( t 10 , t 8 and t 3 , depending on time of recruitment) and fall of 2016 ( t 7 and t 4 , depending on time of recruitment) also had high retention rates. This trend suggests that questionnaires fielded in the fall produces higher retention rates.

Figure 1: Wave-to-wave retention rate


## PLATFORMS

The questionnaire was prepared for data input via smart phones. In order to enhance the respondents' experience with the questionnaire, mobile users got a different visual representation of some questions.
36.9 percent of all survey respondents that opened the questionnaire used a mobile phone. 5.5 percent of the mobile users did not complete to such an extent that they were classified as respondents in the wave 13 . For non-mobile users the percentage was 4 percent. Mobile users were thus more likely to leave the questionnaire before completion. This was also the case in previous waves.

Figure 2: Share of mobile users by gender and age in wave 13


Respondents between 18 and 45 years old are more inclined than others to use their mobile phone when answering the questionnaire, as shown in figure 2 . From 46 years and higher, the share of mobile users declines substantially. Overall, women are more inclined to use mobile to answer the questionnaire compared to men. Among the men, the age group 18-25 uses the mobile most frequent ( 51 percent), while the same is true for women between $26-35$ years of age ( 65 percent).

## TIME USAGE

The average respondent used 16.3 minutes to complete the questionnaire. This is one minute more than the respondents were told upon invitation. The challenge of measuring average time usage is that respondents may leave the questionnaire open in order to complete the survey later. This idle time causes an artificially high average for completing the survey. The average of 16.3 minutes therefore only includes the respondents which used less than, or equal to, 60 minutes.

Figure 3: Time usage of survey respondents in wave 13


As in earlier waves, the NCP questionnaire is divided into different subsets. Wave 13 consisted of five subsets, group 1-5. The respondents were assigned to a group by random when they first entered the questionnaire. Figure 3 and table 3 shows that respondents that answered questions as part of group 4 spent more time on the questionnaire, compared to the other groups.

## Table 3: Average time usage (minutes) in each subset in wave 13

|  | All <br> respondents | G1- <br> respondents | G2- <br> respondents | G3- <br> respondents | G4- <br> respondents | G5- <br> respondents |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| All users | 16.3 | 16.1 | 14.1 | 16.9 | 18.1 | 16.8 |
| Non-mobile users | 17.2 | 16.9 | 15.0 | 17.7 | 19.1 | 17.4 |
| Mobile users | 14.8 | 14.6 | 12.3 | 15.6 | 16.2 | 15.6 |

As before, mobile users on average use substantially less time on the survey than non-mobile users. The documentation report from wave 7 showed that mobile users spend less time writing text on open text questions. Mobile users in wave 7 wrote on average 42 characters in the open text questions, while users answering on non-mobile platforms on average wrote 62 characters.

The same report also noted that mobile users spend considerable less time answering some of the more complex questions in the questionnaire (i.e. questions with long and/or high degree of complexity in the vignettes). This could imply that users on mobile platforms spend less time reading vignettes before answering the questions. 65 percent of the respondents answering "don't know" on one specific, complex question in the wave 7 survey were mobile users, a significantly higher number than expected when we take into account that the percentage of respondents answering the survey on a mobile phone was 26 percent of the total sample. Our numbers show that mobile users on average spent less time than non-mobile users on 85 percent of the questions in the seventh wave.

## REPRESENTATIVITY

In this section, we describe the representativity of the panel as a whole. First, we will discuss factors explaining representativity. Thereafter we apply demographic variables to present data on representativity by different strata. The data on representativity is the foundation for the section on weighting.

## FACTORS EXPLAINING LACK OF REPRESENTATIVITY

There are two main points that can serve as explanations to non-response and lack of representativity when recruiting panel and maintaining panel members:

- access to and familiarity with the internet (given that a web-based questionnaire was the only response mode made available)
- the motivation and interest of the respondents

The first challenge is strongly related to the age composition of the survey respondents. Although Norway has a very high computer and internet density, the probability of having an e-mail address, and the skills required to access and fill in an online questionnaire, normally decreases with increasing age. The second challenge, motivation and interest, is often explained by the respondents' level of education. In addition to age and education, we added the variables of geography and gender in order to test the representativity of the survey respondents. The variables have the following categories:

- Age: 19-29 years, 30-59 years, 60 and above.
- Highest completed education: no education/elementary school, upper secondary, university/university college.
- Geography: Oslo/Akershus, Eastern Norway, Southern Norway, Western Norway, Trøndelag, Northern Norway.


## the representativity of the norwegian citizen panel

The sampling frame of the survey equals to the Norwegian population above the age of 18, comprising a population of approximately 4,1 million individuals. Earlier reports have documented a systematic underrepresentation of respondents belonging to the two lowest educational groups, independent of gender and age. The underrepresentation is particularly strong for young men. As expected, individuals with education from universities or university colleges are overrepresented. All of these observations are still true for wave 13.

Table 4: Age distribution in the population and the net sample of wave 13

|  | 18-29 years | 30-59 years | $\mathbf{6 0}$ years and above |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Population | $20.3 \%$ | $51.1 \%$ | $28.6 \%$ |
| Net sample | $9.0 \%$ | $48.8 \%$ | $42.3 \%$ |

From the age distribution presented in table 4, we see that 18-29 year olds are underrepresented in the net sample of wave 13. The representation of the age group 30-59 years in the net sample is slightly underrepresented compared to the distribution in the population, while respondents aged 60 years and above are clearly overrepresented.

The representation of the youngest age bracket was marginally improved in wave 11 due to recruitment of new panel members (figure 4). The recruitment in wave 11 also stagnated the trend where the two oldest age brackets has moved away from perfect representativity over time. In wave 13, the distance to perfect representativity is marginally reduced compared to wave 12 for all age brackets. However, the underrepresentation of young respondents and overrepresentation of respondents above the age of 60 is, as in wave 12 , at its most prominent.

Loyalty to the panel explains the development of the oldest age group in figure 4; they started out as underrepresented in wave 1 , but thereafter they have become increasingly overrepresented. A lesser sense of loyalty/interest explains the development of 18-29 years old as they started out as underrepresented - an underrepresentation that has only increased.

Figure 4: Representativity of age groups from wave 1-13


New patterns emerge when adding gender in table 5; young men are more underrepresented than young women. In the oldest age group, men are clearly overrepresented, more so than women. Lastly, the middleaged men in the net sample are underrepresented, while women in this age bracket are overrepresented.

Table 5: Combined distribution of age and gender in the population and the net sample of wave 13

|  | 18-29 years |  | 30-59 years |  | 60 years and above |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women |
| Population | 10.4 \% | 9.9 \% | 26.3 \% | 24.8 \% | 13.4 \% | 15.2 \% |
| Net sample | 3.6 \% | 5.3 \% | 23.0 \% | 25.8 \% | 23.2 \% | 19.1 \% |

The inclusion of educational level in table 6 reveals a systematic underrepresentation of respondents with little or no education, independent of age and gender. As discussed in relation to table 4, the underrepresentation is strong for young respondents. The underrepresentation is also strong for middle-aged respondents with little or no education. There is also some underrepresentation of respondents aged 60 and above with little or no education.

Table 6: Combined distribution of age, gender and education in the population and the net sample of wave 13

|  | Population |  |  | Net sample - w13 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | en | Women | Men | Women |
| No education/elementary school |  | 4.1 \% | 3.1 \% | 0.3 \% | 0.5 \% |
| Upper secondary education | ¢ | 4.1 \% | 3.2 \% | 1.5 \% | 1.9 \% |
| University/university college |  | 2.3 \% | 3.6 \% | 1.6 \% | 2.8 \% |
| No education/elementary school |  | 5.5 \% | 4.7 \% | 1.0 \% | 0.8 \% |
| Upper secondary education | $\begin{aligned} & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \end{aligned}$ | 11.6 \% | 8.3 \% | 8.2 \% | 6.1 \% |
| University/university college |  | 9.2 \% | 11.8 \% | 14.3 \% | 19.1 \% |
| No education/elementary school |  | 3.2 \% | 4.6 \% | 2.6 \% | 2.4 \% |
| Upper secondary education | - | 6.7 \% | 7.3 \% | 6.8 \% | 4.6 \% |
| University/university college | $\bigcirc$ | 3.6 \% | 3.3 \% | 13.9 \% | 11.6 \% |

Respondents that have upper secondary education as their highest completed education are underrepresented in all groups, except men with upper secondary education aged 60 years or above. Those who have university or university college education are clearly overrepresented in the two oldest age brackets, independent of gender.

Figure 5: Representativity of education groups from wave 1-13


- No education/elementary school - Upper secondary education - University/university college

Figure 5 illustrates the representation of education groups since wave 1 . The general trend is that the highly educated are overrepresented compared to those with less or no education Except for a slight increase in the overrepresentation of the highly educated respondents and a corresponding increase in the underrepresentation of respondents with less or no education, the overall pattern has since wave 5 remained stable.

In regards to geography, (table 7) we observe that Trøndelag and Southern Norway are on level with the population, while the capital area - the counties of Oslo and Akershus - is clearly overrepresented. Western Norway is also overrepresented, but not as prominent as the capital area. Northern Norway and Eastern Norway meanwhile are underrepresented among the respondents in the thirteenth wave.

Table 7: Combined distribution of age, gender and geography in the population and the net sample of wave 13


The clearly most overrepresented group are men and women aged 60 years and above living in the capital area. This group accounts for 5.8 percent of the population but 11.1 percent of the respondents in wave 13 belongs to this demography. The most underrepresented groups are middle aged men and women in Eastern Norway, in addition to young men and women in all regions.

Figure 6: Representativity of regions from wave 1-13


The representativity of regions has more or less gone unchanged from wave 1 through wave 13 (figure 6 above). Once recruited it does not seem that geography has an important role in determining the loyalty of the respondent. At least not at the same level as age and education.

## WEIGHTING

To compensate for the observed biases, we have calculated a set of weights. The weights are equal to the relation between a given strata in the population and the total population, divided by the relation between a given strata in the net sample and the total net sample. ${ }^{5}$ This procedure returns values around 1 , but above 0 . Respondents belonging to a stratum that is underrepresented will receive a weight above 1 and respondents belonging to an overrepresented stratum will receive a weight below 1 . We have listed the weights of the different strata in table 11 in the appendix.

When calculating the weights, information regarding the respondents' geographical location, gender and age is based on registry data. Information on these variables was included in the sample file we received from the Norwegian National Registry. Information regarding the level of education is from the survey. 3 percent of the twelfth wave net sample have not answered the question about level of education. Because of this, two different weights have been calculated:

- Weight 1 is based on demographic variables only (age, gender and geography)
- Weight 2 combines the demographic variables with education. Respondents with missing data on the education variable are only weighted on demography (the education component of the weight is in these cases set to 1 ).

The variables have the following categories:

- Age: 19-29 years, 30-59 years, 60 and above.
- Highest completed education: no education/elementary school, upper secondary, university/university college.

5 The applied formula for weight $w_{i}$ for element $i$, in strata $h$ is: $w_{i}=\frac{N_{h} / N}{n_{h} / n}$

- Geography: Oslo/Akershus, Eastern Norway, Southern Norway, Western Norway, Trøndelag, Northern Norway.

The method for calculating weights is the same as in previous waves.
When applied, both weights will provide a weighted N equal to the number of respondents in the dataset.
As shown in the discussion above, of the factors considered, level of education creates the most bias. We therefore strongly recommend using weight 2 in most statistical analyses, as this weight provides the most accurate compensation for the various sources of bias in the net sample. Table 8 shows the effects of weight 2 on the distribution of self-reported level of education in the net sample. As we can observe, the weight gives the sample a perfect distribution compared to the population. It is however important to stress that the distribution when not weighted is far from ideal, with a clear underrepresentation of the population with low levels of education.

Table 8: Effect of weight 2 on self-reported level of education

|  | Sample - <br> not <br> weighted | Sample - <br> weighted | Population | Difference <br> between sample <br> and population | Difference between <br> weighted sample and <br> population |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| No education/elementary school | $7.6 \%$ | $25.0 \%$ | $25.2 \%$ | $-17.6 \%$ | $-0.2 \%$ |
| Upper secondary eduction | $29.1 \%$ | $41.3 \%$ | $41.2 \%$ | $-12.1 \%$ | $0.1 \%$ |
| University/university college | $63.3 \%$ | $33.7 \%$ | $33.6 \%$ | $29.7 \%$ | $0.1 \%$ |

## APPENDIX

Table 9: Weights applied to different strata (weight 2)



[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ Some examples: sorting respondents in different thematic subsets, randomly allocate treatment value in experiments, randomize order of an answer list/array, order a sequence of questions by random, ask a given question to a subset of the respondents.

[^1]:    ${ }^{2}$ Please see following resource (or other internet resources):https://developer.mozilla.org/enUS/docs/Web/JavaScript/Reference/Global_Objects/Math/random
    ${ }^{3}$ Please see following resource (or other internet resources):https://developer.mozilla.org/en-
    US/docs/Web/JavaScript/Reference/Global Objects/Math/floor
    ${ }^{4}$ Code collected from Mike Bostocks visualization: https://bost.ocks.org/mike/shuffle/

