

Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey in Four European Countries

**Germany
(CILS4EU-DE)**

Technical Report

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1 General Remarks

We started the fieldwork of wave 4 of the “Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey in Four European Countries” (CILS4EU) in Germany with a gross sample of 3,827 adolescents. By the end of the fieldwork period, an overall proportion of 79.3% (N=3,034) of the gross sample had participated (for further details, see section 3).

Fieldwork was conducted in two different consecutive interview modes: by postal/web questionnaire and by telephone. The adolescents were first¹ contacted via postal and electronic mail simultaneously, followed by telephone calls in case they could not be reached via mail. Regardless of the interview mode that adolescents were approached with, we offered identical incentives for participation in the form of ten euro gift cards valid for a retail store of their choice.²

This technical report entails information about the two phases of the fieldwork process: the pre-fieldwork phase and the actual fieldwork phase. During the first phase, we conducted an extensive pretesting procedure (section 2), before the new instruments were finally applied in the field. The description of the second phase is structured as follows: first, our general proceeding in the different stages of fieldwork will be described (section 3); second, response rates will be presented separately for each interview mode (section 4). In the last section, we provide information on the respondents’ response times in the postal/web survey mode (section 5).

2 Development and Pretesting of Instruments

This chapter describes the development and pretesting of the two core modules that have been additionally introduced in wave 4. In detail, one module covers current and past information on adolescents’ romantic relationships; the other module was designed to gather information on the adolescents’ siblings and their respective educational status.

¹ There were a few exceptions to this order, which will be discussed in more detail in section 3.

² Alternatives to choose from: Amazon, Douglas, H&M, iTunes, Media Markt, Saturn.

In order to evaluate the instrument's overall quality, comprehensibility and feasibility, we decided to conduct a cognitive pre-test. An extensive pre-testing procedure seemed to be necessary for two specific reasons: first, both modules contained only questions that have not been implemented in the survey yet and second, the ordering of questions was slightly complex—at least for the postal self-completion mode. Both modules were applied only in Germany, thus, for the first time, no translations or language adaptations were necessary.

In the following sections of this chapter, we first describe the instruments (2.1), followed by a description of the cognitive interviewing procedure (2.2) and finally conclude with a brief summary of the results and adaptations (2.3).

2.1 Instruments

As mentioned above, wave 4 featured two additional modules: one focusing on adolescents' romantic relationships and another focusing on their siblings' educational status. Both modules aimed at covering key dimensions of each topic.

In the previous three waves of the survey, several items measuring characteristics of the current boy- or girlfriend had already been introduced. In wave 4, we repeated this measure again, but tried to extend our information by additionally including questions on general partnership intentions and perceptions of parental influence on adolescents' partnership choices. The entire development was guided by the classic differentiation between preferences, opportunities and third party influences (Kalmijn 1998). Consequently, we designed specific items capturing the adolescents' own preferences regarding educational, ethnic and religious status homophily, as well as the place of first encounter and shared neighbourhood context of the adolescents' current relationship. The assessment of third party influences in adolescents' partner choices were of particular importance; these influences were measured indirectly by asking respondents questions about their parents, e.g., if their parents already allow them to have a romantic relationship and if they actively communicate with their children about this topic. Parental homogamy preferences concerning their offspring's romantic relationships were measured complementary to the adolescents' preferences; again, concepts such as educational, ethnic and religious status

homophily were assessed and direct comparability between these two item batteries was guaranteed.

The other module focused on the sibling situation. In the first wave, we already asked for the number of siblings, but subsequently never gathered any information on their personal characteristics. To get the possibility of exploring potential influences of older siblings on adolescents' own educational career, we tried to collect data on all existing siblings without distinguishing between biological or stepbrothers and -sisters. We asked about their siblings' sex, age, current situation (e.g., attending school, studying, working full-time), school type (respectively the educational degree already accomplished), and occupation. Furthermore, we assessed more globally how many siblings actually exist, as the question in the first wave was only related to the number of siblings with whom the respondent lives in one home.

The general aim of cognitive interviews is to gather information about possible problems with single questions and to explore how questions are interpreted and understood by potential respondents (Prüfer and Rexroth 2005). In the present case, we tried to gain insight in the respondents' answering behaviour and the decision processes leading to certain answers. Specifically, we had been wondering, for example, if the German term for migration background ("Migrationshintergrund") would have been correctly understood and similarly interpreted by 17-year-olds. Another concern was if respondents in fact knew about their parent's attitudes and beliefs.

2.2 Cognitive Interviewing

Four student assistants were selected to conduct cognitive interviews. To guide them, a small manual with specific questions and potential problems was developed, which also included instructions on the interviewing technique to be chosen for the respective items. The interviews took place between November 21st and November 28th, 2013. Respondents for the cognitive interviews were recruited in local youth clubs in Mannheim and Ludwigshafen. They were selected on a voluntary basis, but still with a focus on certain characteristics; generally, we tried to obtain a sample that resembled the later survey sample

regarding its main composition (i.e., age and educational status). In total, 33 adolescents participated. Table 1 provides an overview of the respondents' sex and ethnic origin.

Table 1: Description of the cognitive interviewing sample (% in brackets)

	Male	Female	Total
German background	2 (8.33)	4 (57.14)	6 (18.18)
Migration background	24 (92.31)	3 (42.86)	27 (81.81)
Total	26	7	33

The cognitive interview was designed as follows: first, interviewees had to fill out the questionnaire on their own. Interviewers were explicitly instructed to observe the participants' behaviour and immediate (non-)verbal reactions towards specific items. After filling out the questionnaire, the interviewer should instruct the participant to go through the whole instrument together. In doing so, interviewers should watch out for questions which were skipped and carefully check if the interviewee had chosen the intended answer category. Interviewers were held to apply the following cognitive interviewing techniques:

- requesting and/or probing,
- security assessment,
- paraphrasing,
- and think-aloud technique.

The second part of the cognitive interview was recorded and subsequently transcribed, which facilitated the locating of mistakes and understanding problems. The interview took on average 10 minutes. Participants received an incentive in the form of ten euros after the interview was completed.

2.3 Results and Adaptions

The majority of the tested items seemed to work very well, although some minor problems were detected. For instance, some Turkish respondents struggled with the meaning of the term "related" (cf. item: "Apply the following statements to you and your boy-/girlfriend: our families are related"), as in their opinion "being related" was not exclusively restricted

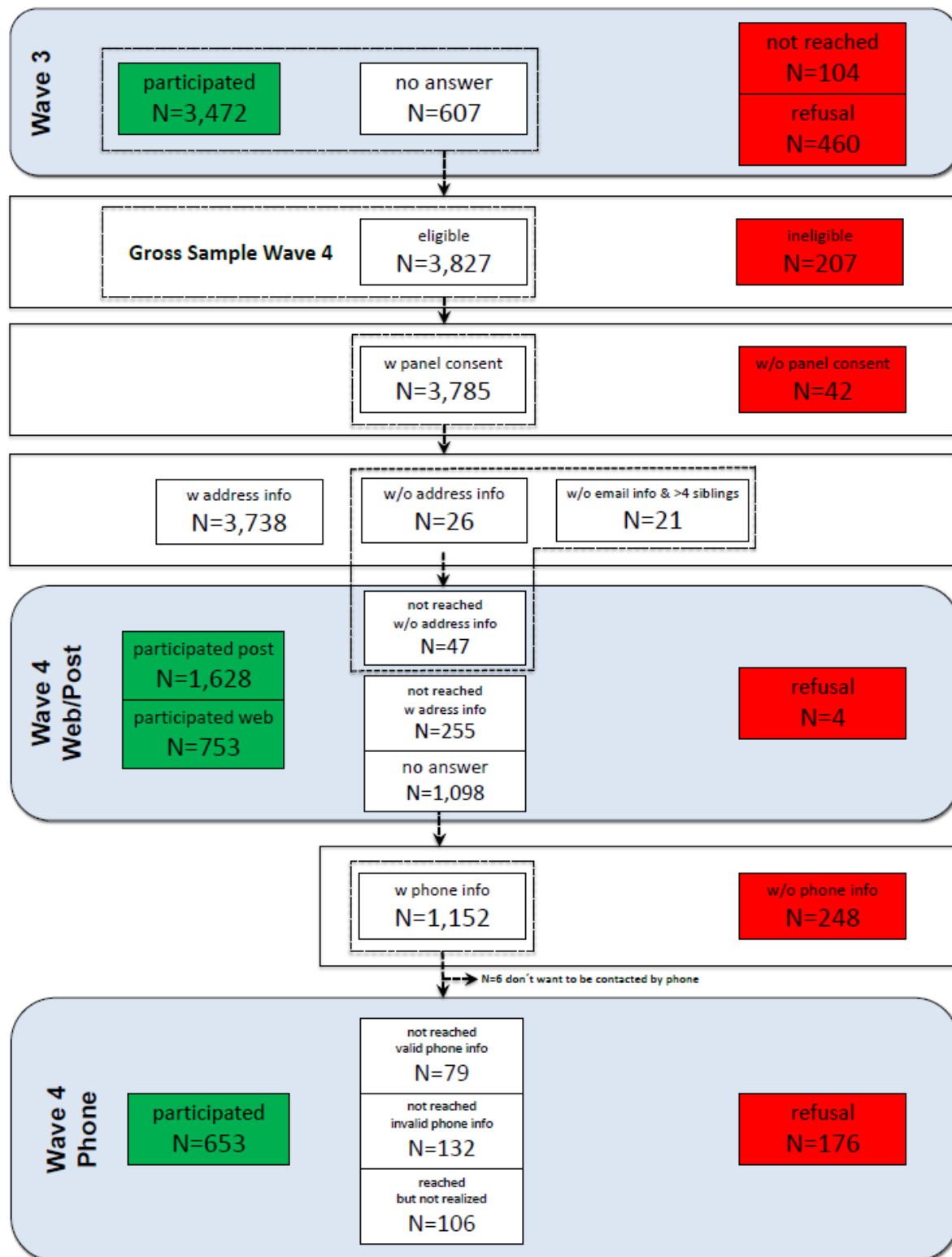
to biological kinship, which in this case was intended to be measured, but would also include life-long acquaintances and old friends of their parents. Other respondents neither knew if their parents had any preferences about future girl- or boyfriends, nor which these beliefs were. As a result, some of them tended to decide for the middle category “neither/nor”, whereas others chose the last category “not at all”. Virtually all of them had problems in understanding and explaining the German term of “migration background”. Many respondents were confused by the initial layout of the sibling module: as the rows to answer the questions about each sibling separately were arranged horizontally, they forgot to answer two questions placed after the page-break.

In response to the results of the cognitive pre-test, some adaptations of the questionnaire were implemented. We excluded the item about biological kinship with the current partner, because it had different meanings for different groups. An additional “don’t know” category was offered to all adolescents who were unable to report about their parents’ attitudes. We maintained the German term for migration background, but added a precise description of it. Finally, the sibling module in the postal self-completion mode was completely modified from a horizontal to a vertical layout.

In summary, the cognitive pre-test was a successful intervention for two reasons: first, it proved that the majority of the newly developed items were understood as we originally intended them to be. Second, several problems were discovered and later resolved in the final version of our questionnaire through changes of single wordings and an improved layout.

3 Fieldwork

Figure 1: Fieldwork overview



3.1 Gross Sample of Wave 4

In wave 3, we successfully conducted 3,427 interviews. 607 persons did not answer, 104 persons could not be reached³ and 460 persons refused to participate (see Figure 1, first row). Net of the number of refusals and persons who could not be reached, in total 4,034 adolescents remained for further investigation.

Out of that number, 207 persons were not eligible to be contacted again in wave 4 because they did not participate in either one of the two previous waves (wave 2 and 3). We thus ended up with a gross sample of 3,827 adolescents for wave 4 of our panel survey. Among the remaining 3,827 adolescents, however, 42 withdrew from their panel consent during the third wave, i.e. they participated in the interview, but refused to be contacted again (see Figure 1, third row). Consequently, we had a total of 3,785 adolescents that could be contacted in our fourth wave.

3.2 General Proceeding

Our general proceeding was to initially approach the adolescents with postal/online questionnaires, followed by telephone interviews if the first approach was not successful. Persons with valid home address information or e-mail addresses were provided with postal and/or online questionnaires. However, due to the fact that the sibling module of the paper questionnaire was limited to information about four siblings, adolescents with more than four siblings were in this step only approached via e-mail (provided that an e-mail address of the adolescent was available) and invited to complete the online questionnaire. Persons without valid address information, persons who did not answer and persons who were not reached via postal/electronic mail were in a second step contacted by telephone (provided that we knew their phone number). The telephone sample was regularly updated, as paper and online questionnaires could still be completed.

³ A person “could not be reached” when his/her paper questionnaire could not be delivered and e-mail address and telephone number (if available) turned out to be invalid.

3.3 Postal/Web Survey

As can be seen in Figure 1, 26 adolescents could not be approached via post/web, as they had not provided us with any home or e-mail address in the previous waves. Another 21 adolescents have not been contacted, because they had more than four siblings and no e-mail address. The remaining 3,738 adolescents entered the first step of the interview modes.

We sent out a cover letter together with a self-completion questionnaire (19 pages), a contact sheet, two stamped return envelopes, sweets and a pencil on January 14th, 2014. On January 17th, the adolescents were also contacted via e-mail and asked for participation in the web survey⁴ (if an e-mail address was available). After two weeks, all adolescents received a thank-you note in the form of a post card, regardless of whether they had already participated or not. Another two weeks later (on February 11th, 2014), we sent a reminder to all persons who had not responded by that time including a second questionnaire, a contact sheet, two stamped return envelopes, sweets and a pencil.

Altogether, the post/web survey resulted in 2,381 obtained interviews (1,628 respondents completed a paper questionnaire and 753 participated online). Up to this point, four persons had actively refused participation. We had no answers from 1,098 adolescents and did not reach another 255 adolescents, whose e-mail addresses turned out to be invalid and/or whose paper questionnaires could not be delivered. Additional efforts were made for persons whose questionnaires could not be delivered by postal mail: we contacted the register of residents in order to obtain new addresses, which proved to be quite successful.

3.4 Telephone Survey

A total of 1,152 adolescents of those who could not be contacted (including those who could not be reached due to missing addresses, as can be seen in Figure 1, dashed box in the fifth row) or did not respond in the first step had provided us with their telephone number and were approached in the second step of the survey. However, we had no further contact information of 248 adolescents, as can be seen in the sixth row of Figure 1. Another six

⁴ The web survey was programmed by Simon Henke (student research assistant) by use of the provider "Unipark".

adolescents were not approached, as they explicitly stated in previous waves that they did not want to be contacted by phone.

The CATI software “Voxco” was programmed by Simon Henke, just like the web survey, and checked carefully by the German research team; only minor adaptations were necessary. The average duration⁵ of an interview amounted to approximately 23 minutes. The telephone interviews were realized in the telephone laboratory of the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (MZES) of the Mannheim University. The interviews were carried out between February 17th, 2014 and May 17th, 2014. We employed 59 interviewers who called respondents from Mondays through Fridays from 3.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. and on Saturdays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.⁶ The interviewers were Bachelor students who were hired as student research assistants and were paid an hourly wage.

By the end of the telephone fieldwork period, another 653 interviews had been conducted. The main reason for not realizing more telephone interviews was that, when contacted, some adolescents refused participation (N=176, see Figure 1 (last row) or Table 6 for more details).

4 Participation Rates

4.1 Overall Participation Rates

Table 2 represents the participation results of wave 4 for the entire eligible sample. We obtained an overall participation rate of 79.3% (N=3,034). The participation rate is lower for immigrants⁷ (75.5% vs. 82.5%), which is mainly due to the fact that we were less able to contact them or that they did not answer (cf. row “not reached/no answer”: 18.6% vs. 11.8%).

⁵ Please note that approximately three minutes at the end of the interview were needed to collect the respondent’s contact information. Thus, the regular questionnaire was finished after an average of 20 minutes.

⁶ Towards the end of the fieldwork, this time frame was reduced.

⁷ Immigrants are defined as persons with a migration background up to the 2.75th generation. For better comparability with previous reports, see Tables 8-10 in the appendix, in which we used a weaker definition of immigrants (up to the 3.5th generation).

Table 2: Overall participation by immigrant status (% in brackets)

	Natives	Immigrants	Total
Participated total	1,707 (82.46)	1,327 (75.53)	3,034 (79.28)
Participated telephone	305 (14.73)	348 (19.81)	653 (17.06)
Participated post	975 (47.10)	653 (37.17)	1,628 (42.54)
Participated web	427 (20.63)	326 (18.55)	753 (19.68)
Refusal total	119 (5.75)	103 (5.86)	222 (5.80)
Refusal telephone	94 (4.54)	82 (4.67)	176 (4.60)
Refusal post	2 (0.10)	2 (0.11)	4 (0.10)
No panel consent w3	23 (1.11)	19 (1.08)	42 (1.10)
Not reached/no answer	244 (11.79)	327 (18.61)	571 (14.92)
Total	2,070	1,757	3,827

Response rates also differed systematically with respect to school strata. Adolescents from lower strata schools had both higher participation rates and lower refusal rates than adolescents from higher strata schools (see Table 3).

Table 3: Overall participation by stratum (% in brackets)

	0-10%	10-30%	30-60%	60-100%	Total
Participated total	533 (88.25)	1,104 (85.85)	682 (74.29)	715 (70.17)	3,034 (79.28)
Participated telephone	77 (12.75)	184 (14.31)	180 (19.61)	212 (20.80)	653 (17.06)
Participated post	280 (46.36)	642 (49.92)	363 (39.54)	343 (33.66)	1,628 (42.54)
Participated web	176 (29.14)	278 (21.62)	139 (15.14)	160 (15.70)	753 (19.68)
Refusal total	24 (3.97)	63 (4.90)	71 (7.73)	64 (6.28)	222 (5.80)
Refusal telephone	22 (3.64)	51 (3.97)	55 (5.99)	48 (4.71)	176 (4.60)
Refusal post	0 (0.00)	1 (0.08)	2 (0.22)	1 (0.10)	4 (0.10)
No panel consent w3	2 (0.33)	11 (0.86)	14 (1.53)	15 (1.47)	42 (1.10)
Not reached/no answer	47 (7.78)	119 (9.25)	165 (17.97)	240 (23.56)	571 (14.92)
Total	604	1,286	918	1,019	3,827

4.2 Post/Web Survey Participation Rates

Similarly to the overall figures, Table 4 shows that the response rate in the post/web survey is lower for immigrants. Especially the figures for participation in the postal survey differ between natives and immigrants (47.9% vs. 38.3%). Immigrants were less likely to participate via mail questionnaire, which is due to the fact that it was more difficult to reach them and/or they did not answer. As can be seen in Table 5, participation rates again differ according to school strata. While almost 30 percent of respondents of the lowest strata schools participated online, only around 16 percent of the highest strata did. Accordingly,

almost 50 percent of the adolescents of the highest strata could not be reached or did not answer, compared to only around 24 percent in the lowest strata.

Table 4: Participation in post/web survey by immigrant status (% in brackets)

	Natives	Immigrants	Total
Participated post	975 (47.91)	653 (38.34)	1,628 (43.55)
Participated web	427 (20.98)	326 (19.14)	753 (20.14)
Refusal post	2 (0.10)	2 (0.12)	4 (0.11)
Not reached/no answer	631 (31.01)	722 (42.40)	1,353 (36.19)
Total	2,035	1,703	3,738

Table 5: Participation in post/web survey by stratum (% in brackets)

	0-10%	10-30%	30-60%	60-100%	Total
Participated post	280 (46.74)	642 (50.59)	363 (41.25)	343 (34.65)	1,628 (43.55)
Participated web	176 (29.38)	278 (21.91)	139 (15.80)	160 (16.16)	753 (20.14)
Refusal post	0 (0.00)	1 (0.08)	2 (0.23)	1 (0.10)	4 (0.11)
Not reached/no answer	143 (23.88)	348 (27.42)	376 (42.73)	486 (49.09)	1,353 (36.19)
Total	599	1,269	880	990	3,738

4.3 Telephone Survey Participation Rates

Table 6 indicates that the participation rates in the telephone survey differ slightly between natives and immigrants (55.9% vs. 58.0%). Furthermore, natives were more likely to refuse participation than immigrants. Table 7 displays that adolescents from the highest strata schools have lower participation rates than adolescents from the lower strata schools, but they also have a lower refusal rate. Again, the reason for the lower participation rate of adolescents from higher strata schools is that they could not be reached or did not answer.

Table 6: Participation in telephone survey by immigrant status (% in brackets)

	Natives	Immigrants	Total
Participated	305 (55.86)	348 (58.00)	653 (56.98)
Refusal	94 (17.22)	82 (13.67)	176 (15.36)
Not reached/no answer ⁸	147 (26.92)	170 (28.33)	317 (27.66)
Total	546	600	1,146

Table 7: Participation in telephone survey by stratum (% in brackets)

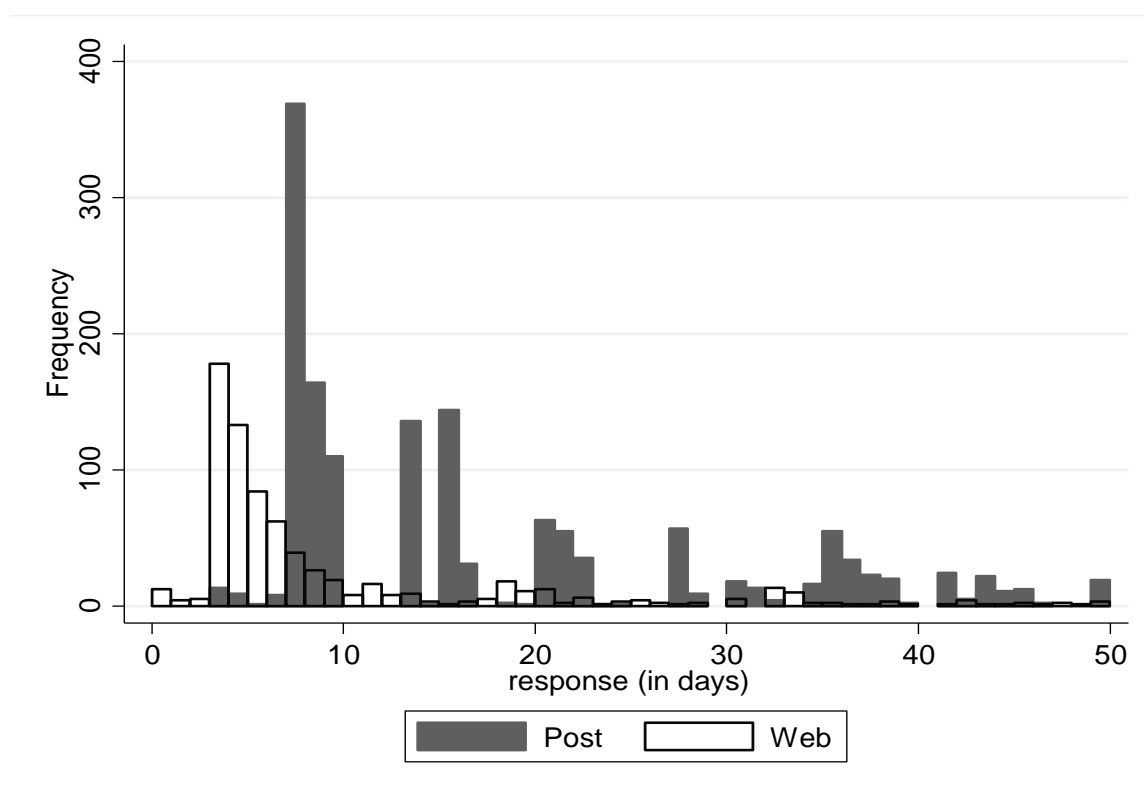
	0-10%	10-30%	30-60%	60-100%	Total
Participated	77 (60.63)	184 (59.55)	180 (57.14)	212 (53.67)	653 (56.98)
Refusal	22 (17.32)	51 (16.50)	55 (17.46)	48 (12.15)	176 (15.36)
Not reached/no answer ⁸	28 (22.05)	74 (23.95)	80 (25.39)	135 (34.18)	317 (27.66)
Total	127	309	315	395	1,146

⁸ “No answer” in this context means that the person could be reached, but it was not possible to conduct an interview with him/her during the field period.

5 Response Times

Figure 2 represents the response times in the web/postal survey, which vary greatly. The majority of participants responded within the first two weeks, with a maximum response one week after sending out the first postal questionnaire.⁹ However, a second response peak 13 to 15 days after the first contact is evident. This rise might be due to the thank-you-notes that were sent out two weeks after the first contact. There is also some indication that the reminder letter we sent out 4 weeks after the first contact had a certain impact. Reminder notes therefore seem to matter (for separate plots of the web and postal surveys, see Figures 3 and 4 in the appendix).

Figure 2: Response times in web/postal survey (truncated at response=50 days)



⁹ For the vast majority of respondents we defined “day 0” as the day we sent out the first postal questionnaire. Some respondents, however, could only be reached via e-mail. In these cases we defined “day 0” as the day we sent out the first e-mail notification.

6 Appendix

Table 8: Overall participation by immigrant status (weak definition) (% in brackets)

	Natives	Immigrants	Total
Participated total	1,598 (82.63)	1,436 (75.86)	3,034 (79.28)
Participated telephone	287 (14.84)	366 (19.33)	653 (17.06)
Participated post	908 (46.95)	720 (38.03)	1,628 (42.54)
Participated web	403 (20.84)	350 (18.49)	753 (19.68)
Refusal total	114 (5.89)	108 (5.71)	222 (5.80)
Refusal telephone	90 (4.65)	86 (4.54)	176 (4.60)
Refusal post	2 (0.10)	2 (0.11)	4 (0.10)
No panel consent w3	22 (1.14)	20 (1.06)	42 (1.10)
Not reached/no answer	222 (11.48)	349 (18.44)	571 (14.92)
Total	1,934	1,893	3,827

Table 9: Participation in post/web survey by immigrant status (weak definition) (% in brackets)

	Natives	Immigrants	Total
Participated post	908 (47.74)	720 (39.22)	1,628 (43.55)
Participated web	403 (21.19)	350 (19.06)	753 (20.14)
Refusal post	2 (0.11)	2 (0.11)	4 (0.11)
Not reached/no answer	589 (30.97)	764 (41.61)	1,353 (36.20)
Total	1,902	1,836	3,738

Table 10: Participation in telephone survey by immigrant status (weak definition) (% in brackets)

	Natives	Immigrants	Total
Participated	287 (56.39)	366 (57.46)	653 (56.98)
Refusal	90 (17.68)	86 (13.50)	176 (15.36)
Not reached/no answer ¹⁰	132 (25.93)	185 (29.04)	317 (27.66)
Total	509	637	1,146

¹⁰ “No answer” in this context means that the person could be reached, but it was not possible to conduct an interview with him/her during the field period.

Figure 3: Response times in postal survey (truncated at response=50 days)

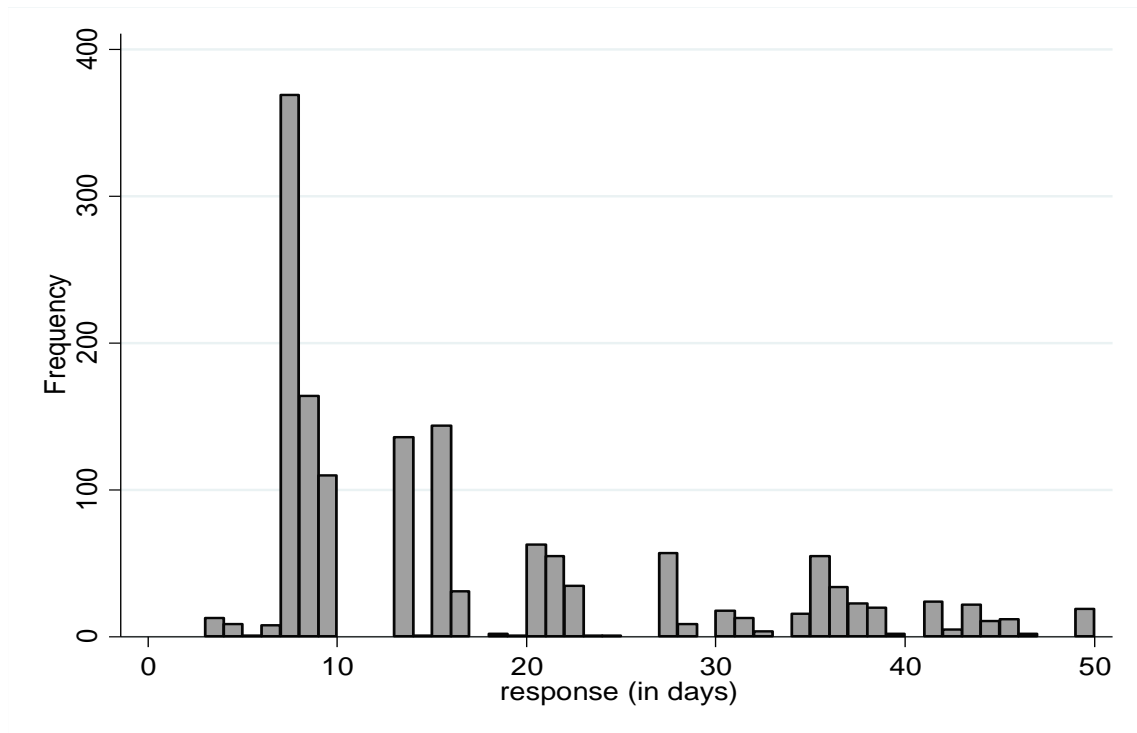


Figure 4: Response times in web survey (truncated at response=50 days)

