

Template for quality and metadata reporting



Consumer conditions survey ¹

A Data description (metadata)

Describe the main characteristics of the data set in an easily understandable manner, referring to the main data and indicators disseminated. This short description should be understood immediately and easily by the users.

Data description

The consumer conditions survey is a representative survey conducted by the European Commission in each Member State of the Union, plus Iceland, Norway and (at least until 2020) the United Kingdom to assess consumer attitudes, behaviours and experience in the Single Market, regarding the respect of consumer rights and safety. In 2020 (results published in 2021), it includes targeted questions to assess the impact of COVID.

The survey contains respondents questions on opinions and statements codified on qualitative scales (e.g. from strongly agree to strongly disagree), as well as on consumer experiences and behaviour (e.g. problems experienced and actions to solve them) and consumer knowledge on their rights (in the form of quiz)

More information on the technical note of the survey can be found at the link below:

<https://public.tableau.com/views/ConsumerConditionsSurvey/TechnicalNote?%3AshowVizHome=no>

Describe the target statistical population (one or more) which the data set refers to, i.e. the population about which information is to be sought.

Statistical population

The target population for the survey includes all people aged 18 and above, resident in the country surveyed and having sufficient command of (one of) the respective national language(s) to answer the questionnaire. In addition, only people living in private households are interviewed. The sample excludes prisoners, residents of retirement homes, etc. who are difficult to contact in a telephone survey.

Statistical variables refer to specific time periods, which can be a specific day or a specific period (e.g. a month, a fiscal year, a calendar year or several calendar years). When there is a mismatch between the target and the actual reference period, for instance when data are not available for the target reference period, the difference should also be highlighted.

Reference period

For the majority of the questions, the reference period is the day in which the interview is conducted (this applies in particular to those referring to consumer opinions and knowledge). However, the survey also contains questions on consumer experiences and behaviour referring to the previous 12 or 24 months.

The frequency with which the data is disseminated should be mentioned (e.g. monthly, quarterly, yearly). The frequency can also be expressed by using the codes released in the harmonised code list available for the European Statistical System.

Frequency of dissemination

In principle, the consumer survey results are disseminated every 2 years.

At European level: The geographical area covered by the data set disseminated (e.g. EU Members states, EU regions, USA, Japan, etc. as well as aggregates such as EU-27, EEA). At national level: the country, the regions and aggregates covered by the data set disseminated

Geographical reference area

The survey covers all the 27 EU MS, IS, NO and UK. Data by NUTS regions are not disseminated. Country groups results (North, South, East and West) for EU countries are also disseminated as specified in the technical note of the survey:

<https://public.tableau.com/views/ConsumerConditionsSurvey/TechnicalNote?%3AshowVizHome=no>

The units of measures used for the data set disseminated should be listed (units of measures are e.g. Euro, %, number of persons). Also the exact use of magnitude (e.g. thousand, million) should be added.

Unit of measure

The unit of measure is % of persons for all the disseminated indicators.

Describe in short the main statistical variables provided. The definitions and types of variables provided should be listed.

Basic statistical concepts and definitions

The survey covers the following 3 broad pillars related to consumer indicators:

- consumer confidence and knowledge

¹ "This document is based on a template provided by Eurostat and based on the [SIMS standard](#) for reporting on reference metadata and quality of statistical products. The content is the sole responsibility of the publisher."

(<https://public.tableau.com/views/ConsumerConditionsSurvey/ConsumerConfidence?%3AshowVizHome=no>)

- consumer experience (<https://public.tableau.com/views/ConsumerConditionsSurvey/ConsumerExperience?%3AshowVizHome=no>)
- consumer behaviour (<https://public.tableau.com/views/ConsumerConditionsSurvey/ConsumerBehaviour?%3AshowVizHome=no>)

plus in 2020 there was an additional one on

- impact of COVID-19 on consumers (<https://public.tableau.com/views/ConsumerConditionsSurvey/CovidImpact?%3AshowVizHome=no>)

List all classifications which are used for the data set produced (with their detailed names).

Classifications used

ISCED for the breakdown by education.

Statistical Confidentiality

Legislative measures or other formal procedures which prevent unauthorised disclosure of data that identify a person or economic entity either directly or indirectly.

There is no information disclosed that would enable identification of persons or specific economic entities.

B Data quality

Describe the degree to which statistical information meets current and potential needs of the users.

Relevance

The consumer conditions survey is the main source of statistical information for the consumer scoreboard, which in turn is aimed at the following:

- monitor the impact of the measures in the New Consumer Agenda on consumer markets;
- assess, and where appropriate, support the enforcement capacities of Member States;
- provide detailed information in the form of factsheets and searchable databases to allow consumer policy stakeholders and researchers carry out their own analysis.

It also foresees the coverage of emerging policy needs (like in the case of the 2020 indicators on the COVID-19 impact on consumers)

Timeliness

Indicate the length of time between data availability and the event or phenomenon they describe.

The fieldwork for the 2020 edition took place between the 21/10/2020 and 01/12/2020. The survey's results were published on the 12/03/2021. Conversely, for the previous editions, the delay between the fieldwork and the data publication was longer to reflect specific policy needs.

Source data: *Indicate if the data set is based on a survey or on administrative data sources. If sample surveys are used, some sample characteristics should also be given (e.g. gross and net sample size, type of sampling design, reporting domain etc.). If administrative registers are used, the description of registers should be given (source, year, primary purpose, potential deficiencies and solutions to address them, etc.)*

Data collection and methods used: *Describe the method used to gather data from respondents (e.g. postal survey, CAPI, on-line survey, etc.). Some additional information on questionnaire design and testing, interviewer training, methods used to monitor non-response etc. should be provided here.*

Sampling

Around 28,000 people are interviewed each wave across the 30 countries in scope.

The survey is based on randomly drawn samples set at 1000 consumers per market and per country in most of the EU countries, the United Kingdom and Norway. In Luxembourg, Cyprus, Malta and Iceland, the target is equal to 500 consumers per market. No quota is set for socio-demographic variables, but the overall sample intake is monitored daily, to follow up on the overall composition of the sample on gender, age, region (and level of urbanisation, where available), and the possession of a mobile and/or a fixed phone in accordance with the sampling approach adopted.

In every country, a random sample representative of the national population aged 18 or over is drawn. In other words, each person belonging to the target universe has a chance to participate in the survey. A dual sampling frame is used comprising both fixed line and mobile telephone numbers.

Interviewing method

The survey relies on the CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system.

Questionnaire

The Consumer Condition Survey gathers systematic evidence to monitor consumer markets and national consumer conditions within the EU, Iceland, Norway and (at least until 2020) the United Kingdom, with the information subsequently summarised in the flagship Consumer Conditions Scoreboard. Part of the questionnaire has

remained unchanged since the survey's inception in 2006, providing for trend comparison over several waves. Other questions have been modified or added over the years, including 2020. The questionnaire design relies on cognitive testing when new questions are introduced. Translations from the master questionnaire (in EN) into national languages are checked by both the Contractor and the Contracting Authority. In addition, piloting across all the 30 countries is executed before actual fieldwork.

Data cleaning, processing and validation

Data storage and the cleaning and analyses of data are performed by the Contractor to:

- ensure a fully homogenous approach across countries
- enable consistent quality control
- minimise potential errors occurring in data storage and cleaning in the individual countries

The Contractor carries out full checks on survey results during the course of fieldwork, with a focus on identifying unusual variations both across survey waves and between countries.

A second step in data cleaning comprises consistency checks and treatment of missing responses. In order to identify issues, frequency distributions are checked and compared between countries and fieldwork agencies (the latter with the aim of detecting patterns that appeared linked to countries covered by the same agency). Overall, this step is focused on identifying outlier patterns, such as a very high or very low proportions of non-responses to questions.

A minimum number of non-responses is nevertheless expected, as for most questions respondents are allowed (though never explicitly invited) to give a 'don't know' response. Such non-responses is left unchanged, as this information is often valid and relevant in and of itself. (For questions used for weighting - age, gender, phone type - no 'don't know' or 'refusal' options are included, so that non-responses were avoided).

Any flagged cases are discussed with the respective field agency, after which a decision on whether to remove that case is made.

Once the raw data were cleaned, the data are prepared for analysis and reporting.

The tables with all differences and indications of statistical significances (per country and per sociodemographic characteristics) can be found in the link below: <https://www.consumerconditionssurvey.com>

Publications: Regular or ad-hoc publications in which the data are made easily available to users.

The following publications were made available to the users for the 2021 wave (fieldwork in 2020):

- Consumer Conditions Survey 2021 edition
- Country highlights

All the related documents can be accessed from the following page:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/consumers/consumer-protection-policy/key-consumer-data_en

Accessibility and clarity

In addition, interactive tables and graphs are made available through a microsite

<https://public.tableau.com/views/ConsumerConditionsSurvey/Start?:showVizHome=no>

The full data tables can be found at the link below:

<https://www.consumerconditionssurvey.com/>

Quality documentation: Documentation on procedures applied for quality management and quality assessment.

The Contractor provides a technical and an evaluation report, which, however, has not been published until now.

Geographical: Describe any problems of comparability between countries or regions. The reasons for the problems should be described and as well the order of magnitude of the effects of the main sources of errors.

No sizable problems of data comparison across countries are to be expected. Translations of questionnaires are checked by both the Contractor and the Contracting Authority. However, as data reliability depends, all other things being equal, on the sample size, it is expected to be lower in country where the sample comprises 500 interviews rather than 1000.

Coherence and comparability

Over time: Provide information on the length of comparable time series, reference periods at which series breaks occur, the reasons for the breaks and treatments of them.

The length of the time series is not the same for all the indicators. For a few of them it starts from 2006 while in most of the cases in a later period (including from 2020 for the indicators which were collected for the first in the latest wave).

C**Contact and update**

Contact organisation	<i>The name of the contact organisation for the data or metadata.</i> Units E1 and 03 of Directorate General Justice and Consumers (European Commission)
Contact name	<i>The name of the contact points for the data or metadata.</i> Mireille Busson and Luca Protti
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Metadata update	<i>The date on which a metadata element was inserted or modified in the database/on the website.</i> 12 July 2021