

Survey Design and Implementation Team Report 2011/12

Submitted by Peter Granda and Sue Ellen Hansen Co-Chairs

Team Members

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- Dan Zahs, University of Michigan, Survey Research Operations
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After submitting a series of recommendations to include additional elements on survey design and questionnaire development, the Survey Design and Implementation Working Group decided to split into two subgroups to study other aspects of the pre-data collection phase of the survey life cycle. One group proposed to focus initially on weighting and then on non-response adjustment issues and a second group will concentrate their efforts on paradata.

Both groups have had conference calls and they have summarized their current activities in the following reports:

Paradata Working Subgroup

Sue Ellen Hansen (Chair), Kristine Kolsrud, Wendy Thomas (DDI Technical Group representative), Dan Zahs, and Adam Zammit

Paradata are data related to study processes that may be used to assess the quality of data and monitor the processes used to produce them. Members of this working group will collaborate to provide a broad list of types of paradata and use cases, that is, examples of how one might use DDI to document paradata as well as study quality through analysis of process paradata and documentation of such analyses.

Types of information that may be documented include:

- Paradata datasets (at various levels, such as contact attempt, data element, sample ID, interviewer or other study staff member, aggregate statistics, etc.)

- Descriptions of datasets
- Documentation of how the paradata were produced and used to assess quality

With the assistance of the DDI Technical Group representative, the group will examine the current DDI specification for possible ways to enhance it to enable documenting study paradata. The goal would be to meet the needs of producers, archivists and users of study data. The group will then develop a set of specifications for meeting these needs and submit a proposal to the Chair of the Alliance Expert Committee.

In developing the proposal, the paradata working group will follow the *DDI Manual: Instructions for Development and Expanding the DDI Conceptual Specification* (2004).

Weighting Working Subgroup

Peter Granda (Chair), Dan Gillman, Amanda Norton, Anita Rocha, Wendy Thomas (DDI Technical Group representative)

This goal of this subgroup is to build on the existing set of descriptors about weighting that currently exist in the DDI 3.1 and what is contemplated from 3.2.

The group will consider the various types of weights used in both demographic and economic surveys (e.g., the various types of probability/design and replicate weights) and what characteristics of their description and purpose should be included in DDI-L. An initial task was to accumulate various case studies about weighting, discuss some of the algorithms used in producing weights during the various stages of the survey collection process (e.g., sampling, stratification, nonresponse), and define all of the required inputs, both informational and programmatic, to fully document these operations.

Some examples of how major survey projects provided documentation on weighting for their end users were discussed. The examples included weighting statements and guidelines provided by the Eurobarometers, American Community Survey, Survey of Consumer Finances, and the extensive information on this subject documented with the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey.

The group is currently engaged in further study of the characteristics of these weights as they apply to cross-sectional and longitudinal surveys, files of replicate weights which sometime accompany such surveys, and what happens with weighting when data are pooled over time.