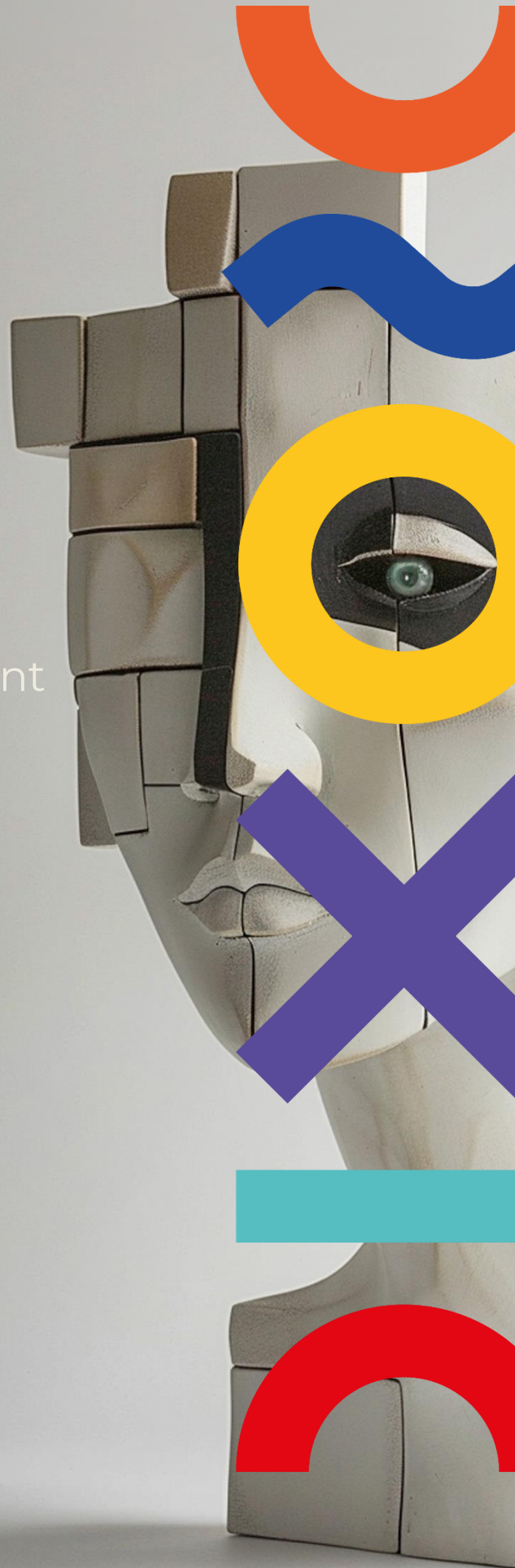


D1.3

Procedures and criteria for identification and recruitment of research participants



D1.3 Procedures and criteria for identification and recruitment of research participants

Dissemination Level: PU - Public

Lead Partner: ASM

Due date: 31.08.2024

Actual submission date: 31.08.2024

PUBLISHED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF

ENCODE - Unveiling emotional dimensions of politics to foster European democracy
consumers

AUTHORS

Małgorzata Walczak – Gomuła, ASM

Joanna Syrda, ASM

Łukasz Wilczyński, ASM

REVISION AND HISTORY CHART

VERSION	DATE	EDITORS		COMMENT
0.1	25.07.2024	Łukasz Wilczyński	ASM	Draft
0.2	29.07.2024	Agnieszka Kowalska	ASM	Internal review
0.3	30.07.2024	Łukasz Wilczyński	ASM	Second draft sent to review
0.4	27.08.2024	Lily Yakova	CSD	Review
0.5	28.08.2024	Łukasz Wilczyński	ASM	Update according to comments
1.0	31.08.2024	Aleksandra Oleksik	ASM	Submission to Participant Portal

DISCLAIMER

The information in this document is subject to change without notice. Company or product names mentioned in this document may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies.

All rights reserved

The document is proprietary of the ENCODE consortium members. No copying or distributing, in any form or by any means, is allowed without the prior written agreement of the owner of the property rights.

This document reflects only the authors' view. The European Community is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained herein. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the therein lies entirely with the author(s).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
1 INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 THE ENCODE PROJECT.....	6
1.2 OBJECTIVES OF DELIVERABLE.....	6
1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT.....	6
1.4 RELATION TO OTHER TASKS.....	6
2 IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	7
2.1 TARGET POPULATION.....	7
2.2 CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION.....	7
2.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY.....	7
2.2.2 GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE.....	10
2.2.3 EMOTIONAL AND POLITICAL DIVERSITY.....	10
3 RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES	10
3.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	10
3.1.1 INFORMED CONSENT.....	11
3.1.2 CONFIDENTIALITY.....	12
3.2 RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES.....	12
3.2.1 SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS.....	12
3.2.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.....	13
3.2.3 MEDIA OUTREACH.....	13
3.2.4 DIRECT INVITATIONS.....	13
3.3 INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION.....	13
3.3.1 COMPENSATION.....	13
3.3.2 NON-MONETARY BENEFITS.....	14
4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS	15
4.1 SURVEYS AND QUESTIONNAIRES.....	15
4.2 INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS.....	15
4.3 BIOMETRIC DATA COLLECTION.....	16
5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION	17
5.1 DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE.....	17
5.2 PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK.....	18
5.3 REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY.....	18
CONCLUSIONS	19

LIST OF FIGURES:
FIGURE 1

4

LIST OF TABLES:
TABLE 1

4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Procedures and Criteria for Identification and Recruitment of Research Participants" deliverable (D1.3) serves as a crucial guideline within the ENCODE project. The overarching aim of this document is to provide a systematic and ethically sound framework for identifying, recruiting, and engaging participants across multiple research activities within the project. The ENCODE project seeks to explore the emotional dimensions of political discourse in Europe, with the ultimate goal of fostering democratic resilience and enhancing citizen engagement. As the project involves various socio-political research methods, including surveys, focus groups, and biometric studies, ensuring that participants are selected in a representative, fair, and transparent manner is key to achieving valid and impactful results.

This deliverable outlines the criteria and procedures essential for recruiting participants while addressing the critical aspects of ethical considerations, which include informed consent and confidentiality. These ethical considerations ensure that participants are not only informed, but also that their rights and privacy are upheld throughout the research process. The recruitment strategy is multifaceted, incorporating various channels such as social media campaigns, community engagement, media outreach, and direct invitations to ensure the inclusivity and diversity of the participant pool.

The report places significant emphasis on ensuring diversity in participant selection. Demographic factors like age, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status are given particular attention to create a participant pool that reflects the diverse political and cultural landscape of Europe. Furthermore, the research aims to capture the varied emotional and political perspectives of participants, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of how these dimensions influence democratic engagement and political behaviour.

To enhance participant motivation and retention, the deliverable explores different forms of incentives. These include both monetary compensation and non-monetary benefits, such as access to information, networking opportunities, and recognition. The document provides a framework for determining appropriate incentive structures that are fair, transparent, and free from undue influence.

The data collection methods outlined in this deliverable are diverse, ranging from quantitative surveys to qualitative interviews and biometric measurements. Each method is chosen based on its ability to capture relevant data while respecting participant privacy and ensuring high-quality results. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) section is crucial for maintaining data quality and ensuring that participant feedback is integrated into the research process, leading to continuous improvement and increased transparency.

In terms of ethical considerations, the deliverable details the importance of informed consent and confidentiality as non-negotiable elements of participant recruitment. The process of informed consent is broken down into clear steps, emphasizing transparency, comprehension, and voluntariness. Confidentiality measures include data anonymization, encryption, and controlled access to sensitive information, ensuring compliance with GDPR and other relevant regulations.

The monitoring and evaluation framework described in this deliverable is designed to maintain high standards of data quality and ethical conduct. It incorporates regular audits, participant feedback mechanisms, and transparent reporting practices. The document highlights the importance of consistent updates, clear communication, and the availability of anonymized data for broader academic and policy applications.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE ENCODE PROJECT

The ENCODE project, titled "Unveiling Emotional Dimensions of Politics to Foster European Democracy," aims to explore and decode the role of emotions in political discourse and their impact on democratic processes. Recognizing that emotional appeals have significantly influenced political movements and voter behaviour, ENCODE seeks to understand the interplay between emotions, values, and identities. The project's primary goal is to create new positive narratives that can foster trust and engagement in European democratic processes, thereby counteracting the negative emotions that often dominate political discussions. Through innovative methodologies, including social media sentiment analysis, biometric research, and surveys, ENCODE aims to provide policymakers with tools and strategies to better incorporate the emotional needs of citizens into governance, ultimately enhancing democratic resilience and fostering a more inclusive political environment.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF DELIVERABLE

The primary aim of deliverable D1.3 is to outline the ENCODE strategy for identifying and recruiting respondents. Recognizing that participant involvement is crucial for the research component of the project, it is imperative that the recruitment process is meticulously organized. This report emphasizes equitable recruitment criteria, diverse sampling methods, cultural sensitivity, and gender-related considerations. Furthermore, it is essential that the entire recruitment process complies with EU and national legislation concerning data protection, data management, and ethical standards.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

The deliverable is structured in the following sections:

- Chapter 1 - Introduction to the deliverable.
- Chapter 2 - Identification of research participants: describes ENCODE's target population of respondents and what the criteria for their identification are.
- Chapter 3 - Recruitment procedures: highlights ethical considerations including information about the informed consent and confidentiality, as well describes channels through which the recruitment can be conducted. Lastly the chapter presents the attitude toward incentives for participants.
- Chapter 4 - Data collection methods: describes what kind of method and tools will be used for data gathering.
- Chapter 5 - Monitoring and evaluation: focuses on the quality assurance, analysing feedback from participants and reporting rules.

1.4 RELATION TO OTHER TASKS

The current report is related to all tasks dealing with the research to be conducted among external participants (respondents). These tasks involve the conducting of interviews, focus groups and biometric research. The related Work Packages are:

1. WP4 - Understanding citizens emotional responses (biometrics and qualitative research)
2. WP5 – Explaining the effects of emotions (qualitative research)
3. WP6 – Active citizen innovation for future narratives (quantitative and qualitative research)
4. WP7 – Forward-looking – foresight and policymaking workshops (qualitative research)

2 IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

2.1 TARGET POPULATION

The ENCODE project's target population is carefully selected to ensure a broad and inclusive representation of European citizens. This diverse population allows the project to explore the intricate relationship between emotions and politics across different contexts, ultimately aiming to foster a more emotionally aware and resilient democratic process in Europe. Among the target population in the research are citizens of Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Denmark, North Macedonia and Poland.

2.2 CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION

To ensure the proper identification of the respondents, the recruitment process should be focused on identifying the most representative group of research participants in all partner countries, in consideration of an important number of factors.

2.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY

First factor related with preparing the target sample for the research is demographic diversity. Achieving good demographic diversity in socio-political research, such as surveys, focus groups, or vignette experiments, is essential for ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings. This involves careful consideration and inclusion of various demographic variables such as gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and educational background. Utilizing stratified or quota sampling techniques can help achieve a representative sample by ensuring that each subgroup within the population is proportionately represented¹. Recruitment should be conducted through diverse channels, including social media, community organizations, and public advertisements, to reach a broad audience. Additionally, employing inclusive language and culturally sensitive materials in all communications ensures that the research is accessible and engaging for all participants². It is also crucial to consider the ethical implications, such as obtaining informed consent and ensuring privacy, to protect the participants, particularly those from vulnerable groups. By

¹https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323364260_Designing_Valid_and_Reliable_Vignette_Experiments_for_Survey_Research_A_Case_Study_on_the_Fair_Gender_Income_Gap

² <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/16094069231163429>

addressing these factors, researchers can gather comprehensive and inclusive data, leading to more robust and generalizable conclusions in socio-political research³.

In summary, in the ENCODE project, the key demographic variables that we take into consideration are:

1. **Gender:** Ensuring good gender diversity in socio-political research is essential for capturing the full spectrum of perspectives and experiences across gender identities, including men, women, and non-binary individuals. Incorporating diverse gender representation in surveys, focus groups, and vignette experiments allows researchers to explore how gender influences political attitudes, behaviours, and policy preferences. This inclusivity is crucial for understanding gender-specific issues and their broader socio-political impacts. For instance, men, women, and non-binary people may experience and respond to political events and policies differently due to varying social roles, expectations, and lived experiences. By designing research that actively includes all gender identities, researchers can identify unique challenges and opportunities faced by each group. This approach not only enhances the validity and reliability of the research findings but also ensures that policy recommendations are equitable and reflective of the diverse society we live in. Therefore, careful consideration of gender diversity is vital in socio-political research to develop a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the interplay between gender and politics. We will aim to achieve the following sample distribution (if possible) in our data collection efforts:
 - 49% men,
 - 49% women
 - and 2% non-binary.
2. **Age:** In socio-political research, ensuring good age diversity by incorporating participants from various age categories (16-21, 22-35, 36-49, 50-65, and 65+) is essential for capturing the diverse perspectives and experiences that different age groups bring to the table. Each age group offers unique insights influenced by their life stages, historical contexts, and socio-economic conditions. For instance, younger participants (16-21) may provide fresh perspectives on emerging social issues and digital activism, while those in the 22-35 range often reflect early career and family formation influences. The 36-49 and 50-65 age groups can offer views shaped by mid-career and approaching retirement considerations, respectively, providing depth on socio-economic stability and policy impacts. Participants aged 65 and above can share valuable experiences related to aging, healthcare, and long-term socio-political changes. Including these varied age categories in surveys, focus groups, and vignette experiments ensures a comprehensive understanding of how socio-political attitudes and behaviours evolve across the lifespan, enhancing the reliability and applicability of research findings to a broader population. In ENCODE we will be aiming at the following sample distribution (if possible):
 - 16 – 21 (20%),
 - 22 – 35 (20%),
 - 36 – 49 (20%),
 - 50 – 65 (20%),
 - 65+ (20%)
3. **Ethnicity:** Ensuring good ethnic diversity in socio-political research is crucial for capturing the diverse experiences and perspectives of various ethnic groups, including ethnic minorities. This diversity is essential for understanding how different cultural backgrounds influence socio-political attitudes and behaviours. In surveys, focus groups, and vignette experiments, incorporating participants from a range of

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9796090/>

ethnic backgrounds helps to avoid bias and provides a more comprehensive view of societal dynamics. Researchers must carefully design their sampling strategies to include underrepresented ethnic groups, ensuring that their voices are heard and accurately represented. This involves using culturally sensitive methods and materials, facilitating participation through community engagement, and addressing language barriers. By doing so, the research not only gains validity and depth but also contributes to a more inclusive understanding of social and political issues. The insights gained from a diverse ethnic sample can inform policies and interventions that are equitable and responsive to the needs of all community members, fostering social cohesion and mutual understanding. This sample division should also represent the ethnic distribution in each of the ENCODE's partner countries where the research will be conducted.

4. **Socioeconomic Status:** In socio-political research, ensuring research participants representing a good variety of socioeconomic status (SES) is crucial for obtaining comprehensive and nuanced insights. This involves incorporating individuals from diverse income levels, educational backgrounds, occupational statuses, and living conditions. SES diversity helps to capture the varied experiences and perspectives that different socioeconomic groups bring to socio-political issues. For example, individuals from lower-income brackets may have different priorities and challenges compared to those from higher-income groups, influencing their political attitudes and behaviours. Educational attainment also plays a significant role, as it often correlates with political awareness and engagement. Including a wide range of SES variables in surveys, focus groups, and vignette experiments enables researchers to explore how socio-political views and experiences vary across different socioeconomic strata. This approach ensures that findings are not skewed towards a particular group but instead reflect the broader societal landscape, providing a more accurate and equitable understanding of socio-political dynamics.
5. **Educational Background:** In socio-political research, ensuring a good variety of educational backgrounds among participants is essential for capturing the diverse perspectives and influences of different educational levels. This can be achieved by categorizing educational attainment into distinct groups such as people with less than high school, high school diploma or the equivalent, some college or associate degree, bachelor's degree, and graduate or professional degree. Including participants from these varied educational backgrounds helps researchers understand how education influences political attitudes, behaviours, and policy preferences. For instance, individuals with higher education levels may have different levels of political engagement and awareness compared to those with less formal education. This diversity allows for a more comprehensive analysis of how education shapes socio-political views and behaviours. By integrating these educational categories into surveys, focus groups, and vignette experiments, researchers can identify patterns and differences across educational strata, leading to more robust and generalizable findings. This approach not only enhances the validity of the research but also ensures that the socio-political insights derived are reflective of the broader population's educational diversity. The distribution of the sample should involve people that have reached a specific educational level (based on the ISCED classification⁴):
 1. Less than primary, primary or lower secondary level of education (ISCED levels 0 -2)
 2. Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED levels 3 – 4)

⁴ <https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/international-standard-classification-of-education-isced-2011-en.pdf>

- a. General orientation
 - b. Vocational orientation
3. Tertiary education (ISCED levels 5 – 8)

2.2.2 GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

Ensuring good geographical coverage in socio-political research is crucial for capturing a comprehensive range of socio-political dynamics and cultural contexts. In the context of this project, which includes six case study countries—Bulgaria, Poland, Austria, Denmark, North Macedonia, and Bosnia & Herzegovina—and extends its survey distribution to Belgium, France, Italy, and Hungary, the geographical diversity allows for a more robust analysis of regional variations in socio-political attitudes and behaviours. This extensive coverage facilitates the comparison of political climates and social norms across different European regions, providing insights into how local and national contexts influence public opinion and policy preferences. By incorporating both EU member states and non-member states, the research can address diverse political environments and economic conditions, enriching the understanding of cross-national differences and similarities. This approach ensures that the findings are not only representative of the individual countries but also contribute to a broader understanding of European socio-political trends. The inclusion of diverse geographical areas also enhances the validity of the research by capturing a wide range of experiences and perspectives, thus offering a more complete picture of the socio-political landscape across Europe.

2.2.3 EMOTIONAL AND POLITICAL DIVERSITY

Emotional and Political Diversity in socio-political research, embracing emotional and political diversity is critical for understanding the full spectrum of emotions and political views that influence democratic processes. Including individuals with varied emotional responses and political ideologies allows researchers to capture the complex interplay between emotions and political behaviour. This diversity helps reveal how different emotional triggers can affect political attitudes and decisions, providing insights into the emotional underpinnings of political engagement and polarization. For instance, participants with strong partisan views may react differently to political events than those who are more moderate or apathetic, highlighting the role of emotions in shaping political discourse and action. Using methods such as surveys, focus groups, and vignette experiments, researchers can systematically explore these emotional and political differences, thereby enriching the analysis with nuanced perspectives. This approach not only enhances the validity of the research findings but also ensures that the study's conclusions are reflective of the diverse emotional and political landscape, ultimately contributing to more informed and effective democratic governance.³ Recruitment procedures

3 RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

3.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations are at the heart of participant recruitment. These considerations ensure that all recruitment activities respect participants' autonomy, protect their privacy, and are conducted in line with regulatory standards and international best practices. Central to these ethical concerns are the processes of informed consent and confidentiality, which are discussed below.

3.1.1 INFORMED CONSENT

Informed consent⁵ is a cornerstone of ethical research and refers to the process by which participants are provided with all the relevant information they need to make a voluntary, informed decision about their participation in the study. This information typically includes the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks and benefits, and the participant's rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. In the ENCODE project the process of creating Informed Consent involves several key steps:

1. **Information Disclosure:** Researchers must provide participants with clear, accurate, and comprehensive information about the study. This should be done in a language and format that is easily understandable by the target population. Special attention should be given to vulnerable groups, such as individuals with limited literacy, minors, or those with cognitive impairments, ensuring that the information is accessible and appropriately adapted to their needs.
2. **Comprehension:** It is not enough to simply provide information; researchers must ensure that participants fully understand what they are consenting to. This can be assessed through methods such as asking participants to repeat key points of the information back to the researcher or using simplified explanations and visual aids. The goal is to confirm that participants are not only informed, but truly comprehend the nature of their involvement in the study.
3. **Voluntariness:** Participation in the study must be voluntary and free from coercion or undue influence. Researchers should be cautious of offering excessive incentives that may compel individuals to participate against their better judgment. The informed consent process should emphasize that refusal to participate or withdrawal from the study will not result in any loss of benefits to which the participant is otherwise entitled.
4. **Documentation:** Informed consent is typically documented through a signed consent form. However, in certain contexts, alternative methods such as verbal consent or electronic consent (e-consent) may be appropriate, especially for online studies or when literacy barriers exist. Regardless of the method used, researchers must ensure that consent is recorded and stored securely in compliance with data protection regulations.
5. **Ongoing Consent:** Informed consent is not a one-time event but an ongoing process. Participants should be regularly reminded of their rights and updated on any significant changes in the study that could impact their continued participation. This is particularly important in long-term studies where new risks or benefits may emerge over time.

Ethical challenges in informed consent may arise when dealing with populations that are culturally diverse or that have different levels of trust in research institutions. To address these challenges, community engagement and culturally sensitive communication strategies are essential. Additionally, research ethics committees play a crucial role in reviewing the informed consent process and ensuring that it adheres to ethical standards. In the ENCODE project each research team responsible for conducting studies will be responsible for preparing unique Informed Consent Form adequate to the type of the research, target groups etc. More details related with the Informed Consent are presented in the deliverable D9.1 related with the project Ethics (including general draft version of the Informed Consent Form).

⁵ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/372300197_Ethical_considerations_in_informed_consent

3.1.2 CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality refers to the protection of participants' personal information, ensuring that it is not disclosed to unauthorized parties. Maintaining confidentiality is critical for building trust with participants and for complying with legal and regulatory requirements such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe or similar data protection laws in other regions. There are 6 key principles related with the confidentiality:

1. **Data Anonymization:** Anonymization involves removing or masking personal identifiers, such as names, addresses, and social security numbers, from the data. Where complete anonymization is not possible, pseudonymization (replacing identifiable information with codes or pseudonyms) can be employed to reduce the risk of identification. Data should be stored in a secure manner, with restricted access granted only to authorized personnel who are directly involved in the research.
2. **Data Encryption:** For digital data, encryption is a critical tool for protecting confidential information. Strong encryption methods should be used to secure both data at rest and data in transit. Researchers must ensure that all devices, including laptops, servers, and portable storage devices, are equipped with encryption software and that secure communication protocols are used when transferring data.
3. **Limited Access and Role-Based Control:** Access to confidential data should be limited based on the roles and responsibilities of the research team. Role-based access control (RBAC) ensures that only those who need access to specific data for their work are granted the necessary permissions. Regular audits and reviews should be conducted to ensure that access controls are effective and that no unauthorized access occurs.
4. **Participant Communication:** Participants must be informed about how their data will be stored, used, and protected. They should also be made aware of their rights regarding data access, correction, and deletion. Clear communication helps build trust and reassures participants that their privacy will be respected throughout the research process.
5. **Handling Breaches:** In the event of a data breach, researchers must have a response plan in place. This plan should include immediate measures to contain the breach, notification of affected participants, and steps to mitigate any potential harm. Depending on the jurisdiction, there may also be legal obligations to report data breaches to regulatory authorities within a specified timeframe.
6. **Data Retention and Disposal:** Researchers should establish clear guidelines for how long data will be retained and the methods for securely disposing of it once it is no longer needed. This includes securely deleting digital data and shredding physical records. These procedures should be aligned with the study's objectives, ethical guidelines, and regulatory requirements.

3.2 RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Effective recruitment strategies are essential for ensuring the successful identification and engagement of research participants. This chapter outlines the various methods employed in the recruitment process, emphasizing the importance of diverse and inclusive approaches to reach a wide range of participants.

3.2.1 SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Social media platforms offer a powerful tool for recruiting research participants due to their broad reach and targeted advertising capabilities. Campaigns on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn can be tailored to specific demographics, interests, and geographic locations. By leveraging these platforms, researchers can

disseminate information about the study, share testimonials, and engage potential participants through interactive content such as videos, polls, and Q&A sessions. The use of hashtags and community groups can further enhance visibility and engagement, making social media an efficient and cost-effective recruitment strategy.

3.2.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement involves building relationships with local organizations, leaders, and influencers to foster trust and encourage participation in research studies. This strategy is particularly effective for reaching underrepresented or hard-to-reach populations. Engaging with community centres, religious institutions, schools, and local businesses allows researchers to connect with potential participants in their familiar environments. Hosting informational sessions, workshops, and collaborative events can provide valuable opportunities to discuss the research, address concerns, and build rapport with the community. This approach not only facilitates recruitment but also enhances the credibility and relevance of the research within the community.

3.2.3 MEDIA OUTREACH

Media outreach encompasses the use of traditional and digital media channels to promote the research study and attract participants. Press releases, interviews, and articles in newspapers, magazines, and online publications can raise awareness about the study among a broader audience. Collaborating with local radio and television stations to feature the research in news segments or talk shows can also be effective in reaching diverse demographics. Additionally, creating informative content for blogs, podcasts, and webinars can engage potential participants who prefer digital media. Consistent and strategic media outreach ensures that the study gains visibility and credibility, encouraging more individuals to participate.

3.2.4 DIRECT INVITATIONS

Direct invitations involve personally reaching out to potential participants through various communication channels such as emails, phone calls, and mailed letters. This approach allows for a personalized and targeted recruitment process, ensuring that specific individuals or groups are informed about the study and encouraged to participate. Personalized invitations can be particularly effective in professional or academic settings where participants may require detailed information and reassurance about the study's purpose and procedures. Follow-up communications and reminders are essential to maintaining engagement and addressing any questions or concerns that potential participants may have.

3.3 INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION

Incentives play a crucial role in the successful recruitment and retention of research participants. They serve as a motivation for individuals to engage in research activities and complete study protocols. Properly designed incentives can enhance the overall quality of the research by ensuring diverse and representative participation. This chapter explores two primary types of incentives: compensation and non-monetary benefits.

3.3.1 COMPENSATION

Compensation refers to monetary rewards given to participants for their time, effort, and any potential inconvenience or expenses incurred due to their participation in the research study. It is essential to design compensation strategies that are ethical, fair, and compliant with regulatory guidelines. Among them there are:

1. **Monetary Incentives:** Monetary incentives are the most straightforward form of compensation. They can be provided in various formats, including cash payments, checks, or electronic transfers. The amount offered typically depends on the complexity, duration, and demands of the study. It is crucial to balance the need to attract participants with the ethical considerations of offering excessive payments that could unduly influence individuals' decision to participate. For instance, a simple survey might offer a small stipend, while a longitudinal study requiring multiple visits or complex procedures might provide a higher amount. Additionally, researchers should consider the local economic context when determining compensation amounts to ensure that payments are appropriate and equitable.
2. **Reimbursement of Expenses:** Reimbursement for expenses incurred during participation, such as travel costs, meals, childcare, or lost wages, is another vital component of compensation. This approach ensures that participants are not financially disadvantaged by their involvement in the study. Clear guidelines and processes for submitting and processing reimbursements should be established to ensure transparency and efficiency.
3. **Tiered Compensation:** Tiered compensation structures can be used to reward participants based on their level of involvement or the completion of specific milestones within the study. This approach incentivizes continued participation and helps mitigate attrition rates in long-term studies. For example, participants might receive an initial payment for completing a baseline survey, additional payments for attending follow-up visits, and a final bonus for completing the entire study.

Finally, when designing compensation packages, ethical considerations must be at the forefront. The principle of voluntary participation must be maintained, ensuring that compensation does not coerce individuals into participating against their better judgment. Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) or Ethics Committees play a crucial role in reviewing and approving compensation plans to safeguard participant welfare and ensure compliance with ethical standards.

3.3.2 NON-MONETARY BENEFITS

Non-monetary benefits provide additional incentives for participation that do not involve direct financial compensation. These benefits can enhance participants' experience and offer value beyond monetary rewards, contributing to their willingness to engage in the study. There are several types of non-monetary benefits:

1. **Access to information:** Providing participants with access to study results, personalized feedback, or educational materials can be a significant non-monetary benefit. This approach allows participants to gain insights into their health, behaviours, or other areas of interest, fostering a sense of involvement and contribution to the research process. For example, participants in a health study might receive a summary of their health assessments and recommendations for improvement.
2. **Community and Social Engagement:** Creating opportunities for community and social engagement can enhance the appeal of participating in a research study. This might include organizing community events, discussion groups, or workshops related to the study topic. Participants can benefit from the social interaction, networking opportunities, and the sense of community that these activities provide.

This approach is particularly effective in fostering long-term engagement and building trust within the community.

3. **Recognition and Certificates:** Recognizing participants' contributions through certificates, letters of appreciation, or public acknowledgment can be a meaningful non-monetary benefit. Such recognition can enhance participants' sense of accomplishment and pride in their involvement. For academic studies, providing opportunities for co-authorship or acknowledgment in publications can be an additional incentive for participants from academic or professional backgrounds.
4. **Networking opportunities:** Offering networking opportunities with experts, policymakers, or industry leaders related to the study's field can be a valuable non-monetary benefit. Participants can gain insights, mentorship, and potential career advancement opportunities through these interactions. This approach is particularly effective in studies involving professionals, students, or individuals interested in the study's subject matter.

As with monetary compensation, ethical considerations are crucial when offering non-monetary benefits. It is essential to ensure that these benefits are appropriate, do not create undue influence, and are equitably distributed among participants. Researchers must also be transparent about the nature and extent of non-monetary benefits during the informed consent process.

4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Understanding various data collection methods is crucial in socio-political studies as they provide the necessary insights into public opinions, behaviours, and biometric responses. These methods help in capturing both the overt and covert responses of study participants, which are essential for formulating effective and inclusive policies.

4.1 SURVEYS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

Surveys and questionnaires are pivotal for gathering quantitative data, allowing researchers to collect responses from a broad audience at a relatively low cost. These tools are designed to be distributed to a large number of people and can be conducted online, by mail, or in person. They are particularly effective in socio-political studies for gauging public opinion, political participation, or understanding demographic variables influencing political behaviour. In the ENCODE project, quantitative data will be gathered with the use of:

CAWI surveys: Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) is a survey method where participants complete questionnaires online. This approach is efficient for gathering data from a large number of respondents across different geographical areas, making it ideal for ENCODE's diverse and widespread target population. CAWI enables researchers to easily reach and include varied demographics, including those in different countries involved in the project.

4.2 INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Interviews and focus groups collect qualitative data, providing deeper insights into the participants' feelings, perceptions, and opinions. While interviews offer detailed information from an individual's perspective, focus groups leverage group dynamics to obtain diverse viewpoints. These methods are essential in exploring complex issues like political identity, voter behaviour, and societal changes in response to policy adjustments. There are many

more different qualitative data collection methods. In the ENCODE project there is a plan to use:

1. **IDI Interviews:** In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) involve conducting detailed, one-on-one interviews to gather comprehensive information on participants' thoughts, experiences, and emotions. This qualitative method allows researchers to explore complex issues in depth, providing nuanced insights that are crucial for understanding the emotional dimensions of political narratives.
2. **FGI Interviews:** Focus groups bring together small groups of participants to discuss specific topics, guided by a moderator. This method is valuable for exploring collective views and social dynamics. In the ENCODE project, focus groups will help capture diverse perspectives and emotional reactions to political narratives and campaigns, facilitating a deeper understanding of group dynamics and public sentiments.
3. **Vignette Experiments:** Vignette experiments present respondents with hypothetical scenarios to gauge their reactions and decision-making processes. This method is particularly useful in socio-political research for examining how different narratives and emotional appeals influence attitudes and behaviours. ENCODE will use vignette experiments to test the impact of various political narratives on trust, voting patterns, and activism.
4. **Delphi Groups:** The Delphi method involves multiple rounds of surveys and discussions among a panel of experts to reach a consensus on specific issues. This iterative process is useful for forecasting and developing strategic insights. In the context of ENCODE, Delphi groups will be instrumental in refining and validating new narratives and policy recommendations, ensuring they are robust and well-supported by expert opinion.
5. **Experts Interviews:** Conducting interviews with experts and policymakers provides specialized insights into the feasibility and potential impact of proposed narratives and policy recommendations. These interviews will help align ENCODE's research findings with practical policy applications and enhance the project's relevance to current political challenges.

4.3 BIOMETRIC DATA COLLECTION

Biometric methods, such as face-tracking, are employed to capture unconscious emotional responses. This involves analysing facial expressions to classify emotions based on models like Ekman's (joy, anger, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust). Biometric data provides objective measures of emotional reactions, complementing self-reported data from surveys and interviews, and offering deeper insights into the neurobiological underpinnings of emotional responses. Biometric data in ENCODE will be collected by:

1. **Eye-tracking:** Eye tracking is a method used to measure where and how long a person looks at various stimuli. The technology captures data on eye movements and gaze points, which includes pupil position, the gaze vector for each eye, and the specific point of focus. There are three main types of eye trackers: screen-based (or remote/desktop), glasses-based (or mobile), and integrated systems. Screen-based trackers are typically used for tasks that involve static displays, like websites or software interfaces, while glasses-based trackers are used for more dynamic environments. Eye tracking has applications in psychological research, usability studies, marketing, and human-computer interaction.
2. **Face-tracking:** Face tracking involves the process of continuously detecting and following the position and movement of human faces within a video or real-time camera feed. This technology utilizes algorithms to identify facial features such as

eyes, nose, and mouth, and then tracks these features as the face moves. The basic mathematical framework for face tracking includes feature extraction, which identifies key points on the face, and motion estimation, which predicts the movement of these points. Current state-of-the-art methods incorporate deep learning techniques to enhance accuracy and robustness, allowing for applications in fields like augmented reality, facial recognition, and emotion analysis

5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are critical components of the research process, ensuring that the study meets its objectives while maintaining high standards of quality and integrity. Effective M&E strategies help identify potential issues early, allowing for timely corrective actions. This chapter outlines the procedures and criteria for monitoring and evaluating the identification and recruitment of research participants, focusing on data quality assurance, participant feedback, and reporting and transparency.

5.1 DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE

Data quality assurance (DQA) is essential to ensure the reliability and validity of research findings. High-quality data is crucial for making informed decisions and drawing accurate conclusions. DQA encompasses several key activities, including data validation, consistency checks, and regular audits.

1. **Data Validation** - Data validation involves verifying that the data collected is accurate, complete, and meets the predefined criteria. This process includes:
 - **Pre-screening Data:** Ensuring that only eligible participants are included in the study. This step involves checking the inclusion and exclusion criteria during the initial recruitment phase.
 - **Double Data Entry:** Entering data twice independently to identify and correct any discrepancies. This method helps minimize data entry errors.
 - **Automated Validation Checks:** Implementing software tools to automatically flag inconsistent or out-of-range data. These tools can prompt data collectors to review and correct errors in real-time.
2. **Consistency Checks** - Consistency checks are performed to ensure that the data remains uniform and logical throughout the study. These checks include:
 - **Cross-Validation:** Comparing data points across different sources or sections of the questionnaire to ensure they align. For example, checking that a participant's reported age is consistent with their date of birth.
 - **Temporal Consistency:** Ensuring that longitudinal data collected at different time points remains consistent and shows logical progression. This check is crucial for studies with multiple follow-up phases.
3. **Regular Audits** - Regular audits are conducted to review the data collection process and identify any deviations from the protocol. These audits include:
 - **Internal Audits:** Performed by the research team to review data entry practices, storage procedures, and adherence to the study protocol.

- **External Audits:** Conducted by other consortium partners not directly involved in particular research to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines and regulatory requirements.

5.2 PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Participant feedback is a vital component of the M&E process. Gathering insights from participants helps improve the study design, recruitment strategies, and overall participant experience. Feedback can be collected through various methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

1. **Feedback Surveys** - Feedback surveys are a quick and efficient way to gather participants' opinions and experiences. These surveys can include questions about:
 - **Recruitment Experience:** Assessing the ease of the recruitment process, clarity of information provided, and participants' motivation for joining the study.
 - **Study Procedures:** Evaluating participants' experiences with study visits, data collection methods, and any challenges faced during the study.
 - **Compensation and Incentives:** Understanding participants' views on the adequacy and fairness of compensation and non-monetary benefits.
2. **In-Depth Interviews** - In-depth interviews provide detailed insights into participants' experiences and perceptions. These interviews can uncover specific issues that may not be apparent through surveys, such as:
 - **Personal Motivations and Barriers:** Exploring individual reasons for participation or non-participation and identifying any barriers encountered.
 - **Satisfaction with Communication:** Assessing participants' satisfaction with the communication and support provided by the research team.
3. **Focus Groups** - Focus groups facilitate open discussions among participants, allowing them to share their experiences and suggestions. These sessions can help identify common themes and areas for improvement, such as:
 - **Group Dynamics:** Understanding how group interactions influence participants' experiences and engagement.
 - **Perceived Benefits:** Discussing the perceived benefits of participation and identifying any unmet needs.

5.3 REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY

Transparent reporting is essential for maintaining the credibility and integrity of the research. It involves providing clear, accurate, and comprehensive information about the study's progress, findings, and any deviations from the protocol. Reporting and transparency practices include regular updates, final reports, and open access to data.

1. **Regular Updates** - Regular updates keep stakeholders informed about the study's progress and any significant developments. These updates can be provided through:
 - **Progress Reports:** Periodic reports detailing recruitment numbers, data collection status, and any challenges encountered. These reports can be shared with funding agencies, ethics committees, and other stakeholders.

- **Newsletters:** Regular newsletters sent to participants and community partners to keep them informed about the study's progress and upcoming activities.
2. **Final Reports** - Final reports summarize the study's findings, including detailed analyses and interpretations. These reports should include:
 - **Methodology:** A comprehensive description of the study design, data collection methods, and analytical approaches.
 - **Results:** Detailed presentation of the study's findings, including any unexpected results or deviations from the original protocol.
 - **Conclusions and Recommendations:** Interpretation of the results in the context of the study's objectives, along with recommendations for future research or policy implications.
 3. **Open Access to Data** - Providing open access to data promotes transparency and enables other researchers to validate and build upon the study's findings. Open access practices include:
 - **Data Repositories:** Depositing anonymized data sets in publicly accessible repositories, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.
 - **Data Sharing Agreements:** Establishing agreements with other researchers or institutions to share data while protecting participants' privacy and confidentiality.

CONCLUSIONS

The "Procedures and Criteria for Identification and Recruitment of Research Participants" deliverable is a comprehensive guide for ensuring the ethical, transparent, and effective recruitment of participants across various research activities within the ENCODE project. The recruitment strategies proposed are diverse and inclusive, enabling the identification and engagement of participants from varied backgrounds, thus ensuring that the research findings are robust, reliable, and reflective of the diverse political and cultural contexts in Europe.

Key to the success of this approach is the emphasis on ethical considerations. The detailed guidelines on informed consent and confidentiality provide a strong foundation for participant engagement, ensuring that their rights are respected throughout the research process. The informed consent process is carefully designed to be accessible and transparent, while confidentiality measures align with GDPR standards, safeguarding participant data against unauthorized access and breaches.

The recruitment strategy integrates both traditional and digital channels, offering flexibility and reach. Social media campaigns allow for targeted outreach, community engagement builds trust within local populations, and media outreach broadens the study's visibility. Direct invitations offer a more personalized approach, ensuring that even hard-to-reach populations are considered in the participant pool.

The deliverable also addresses the importance of participant diversity, which is critical for the validity of socio-political research. By incorporating a balanced mix of demographic variables

such as age, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, the ENCODE project ensures that its research findings are generalizable and applicable across different population segments. This diversity extends to the inclusion of varied emotional and political perspectives, enriching the study's analysis of how these factors influence political engagement.

Incentives for participation are thoughtfully structured to ensure they are ethically sound and do not exert undue influence on participants. Both monetary and non-monetary incentives are considered, with the latter focusing on the intrinsic value of participation, such as access to research findings, recognition, and networking opportunities. The deliverable's approach to incentives is aligned with best practices in research ethics, maintaining the voluntary nature of participation.

Data collection methods are selected based on their ability to capture both quantitative and qualitative data. The combination of surveys, interviews, focus groups, and biometric techniques ensures a comprehensive understanding of the research questions. The use of innovative methods like vignette experiments and Delphi groups demonstrates the project's commitment to methodological rigor and the exploration of complex socio-political phenomena.

The monitoring and evaluation framework is robust, focusing on data quality, participant feedback, and transparency. Regular audits and validation checks ensure that the data collected is reliable and free from errors. Participant feedback mechanisms allow for continuous improvement in recruitment strategies and overall research design, while transparent reporting practices build trust among stakeholders and enhance the credibility of the research findings.

In conclusion, this deliverable sets a high standard for participant recruitment and data quality in socio-political research. By prioritizing ethical conduct, inclusivity, and methodological rigour, the ENCODE project is well-positioned to contribute valuable insights into the role of emotions in European political discourse and to foster more resilient democratic processes.

ACRONYM	FULL NAME
CAWI	Computer Assisted Web Interview
D	Deliverable
DQA	Data Quality Assurance
EC	European Commission
EASME	The Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
GA	Grant Agreement
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
PC	Project Coordinator
WP	Work Package
TL	Task Leader
DoA	Description of Action
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SES	Socioeconomic status
SQM	Scientific and Quality Manager
PM	Person month
M	Month

ENC  DE



Funded by
the European Union

This project has received funding from the European Union under
the Horizon Europe Research & Innovation Programme
(Grant Agreement no. 101132698 ENCODE).