



**An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh**

Central
Statistics
Office

CSO Social Statistics Ethics Advisory Group

Formal Submission for SVS Main Survey

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Introduction

Following on from the submission on the Sexual Violence Survey (SVS) pilot to the CSO Social Statistics Ethics Advisory Group (SSEAG) in early 2021, the CSO has completed the pilot for the survey and incorporated learnings from the pilot into the main survey design for the SVS. There is significant societal interest in the SVS and this submission outlines the approach the CSO is proposing to take to meet the pressing needs for high quality data on sexual violence in Ireland.

A lot of the groundwork laid when preparing for the pilot still stands. For example, the significant work in the development of the questionnaire and the staff protocols developed have been brought forward into the main survey. However, there are some larger changes from the pilot which are highlighted here:

- **Multi-mode approach**

The pilot SVS survey only allowed respondent returns via a web form (Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI)). The main SVS survey will be collected by one of three modes in order to maximise response rates (and hence data quality):

- web form (CAWI)
- self-completion interview (Computer Assisted Personal Interview/Computer Assisted Self Interview (CAPI/CASI))
- paper based form (Paper Assisted Personal Interview (PAPI)) form

The options are provided on a phased approach (see Figure 1.1 on page 7), with CAWI being offered first to respondents, then CAPI/CASI and finally PAPI. A key ethical principle is that sound methodology is exercised in the conduct of the survey and that the survey results will provide high quality sexual violence prevalence data. This design maintains an ethical approach to the data collection - respondents will have a choice in how they complete a survey on what is a very personal and sensitive topic, and each mode maintains the self-completion element of the survey to ensure privacy and maintain data quality. The choice of modes will perhaps facilitate a broader cross section of society to engage with the survey, leading then to higher response rates.

However, this overall approach does bring other changes in how the survey is managed. The CAWI only mode used for the pilot absolutely precluded a respondent from providing any information outside of the survey instrument (which did not facilitate any unrequested information to be provided by a respondent). The additional modes will allow respondents, if they wish to (despite being requested not to provide information outside of the survey instrument), to provide information outside of the survey instrument to the CSO. This change will be ethically managed through disclosure management processes consistent with the law and long standing CSO practice.

Further details about the multimode approach can be found in Chapter 1 and Appendix 4.2.

- **Frame**

Traditionally, CSO surveys of persons are conducted at the household level. This approach involves using the latest available Census of Population household details and then performing the random selection element of the survey at the household doorstep (so one random person from the household is then selected to partake in the survey concerned).

This approach is challenging for a sensitive survey like SVS given the necessary application of the graduated consent principle (whereby the true nature of the survey can only be disclosed to the actual person who will complete the survey return). In many cases, the selected person is not available at the time of interview and the requirements of the graduated consent principle consequently and unintendedly, impacts on response rates (which speaks to overall survey quality). Additionally, the latest available Census of Population is from 2016 and the passage of time since would mean that the household details captured at the time would not be updated (for inward and outward migration for example). The SVS main survey will use a person-based frame constructed by CSO as the sampling frame for the SVS main survey. The frame will contain a unique identifier for persons in Ireland aged 18 years and over and will allow direct contact with the randomly selected respondent (enhancing respondent safety) and will better place the survey regarding response rate management (by allowing for a more targeted approach to non-response management).

Further details about the frame can be found in Chapter 4, Appendix 4.2, and Appendix 4.3.

- **Communications plan**

There is significant societal interest in the impacts of violence and sexual violence in Ireland, and the data gaps which are currently there to truly understand the issue. It is proposed to communicate through different channels that the SVS main survey is happening. Prior awareness of the survey in the field may encourage a greater response and will validate the survey for respondents.

Due to the sensitivity of the topic, the tone of any messaging will be factual, informative and non-emotional but respectful. The key messaging will highlight:

- This survey is very important for Irish society – Ireland needs data on the extent to which sexual violence is prevalent in Ireland in order to better help victims
- “You” were selected at random
- This survey is for men and women
- Those with no experiences of sexual violence are as relevant as those who have experienced sexual violence in order that high quality prevalence data can be supplied

Further details about the communications plan can be found in Appendix 4.8.

The environmental context in which the survey is being run is important. The pilot showed the impact that a ransomware attack on the national health system and COVID spikes in local areas can have with respondent engagement. The design has to be adaptive in case of any public health restrictions being imposed. If public health guidelines indicate that face to face interactions (CAPI/CASI) cannot occur at the time of the survey starting or during the survey field operation, the survey can still continue with CAWI and PAPI modes.

The changes from the pilot survey to the main survey better place the survey to provide high quality sexual violence prevalence data for Ireland. The conduct of this survey is challenging given the particular ethical considerations. This submission outlines how CSO will propose to ethically ensure the conduct of the survey given these considerations.

Purpose of survey

The main aim of the Sexual Violence Survey (SVS) is to measure the prevalence of sexual violence in Ireland. It will involve collecting, among other things, socio-demographic information, information on experience of sexual abuse and reporting to An Garda Síochána or other services. The data collected will inform policy in several areas, including justice and equality, health and social service provision to survivors, education and children. A pilot survey for the SVS was run in 2021 and the learnings from that pilot have been incorporated into the survey design. Background information on the initiation of the work and further detail on the survey can be found in Appendix A.1 and Appendix A.2.

The aim is to begin main survey data collection in June 2022 and run it until November 2022. The survey will be based on a staged interaction with respondents and this design is further detailed in Chapter 4.

The legal basis for the collection of the survey is the Statistics Act 1993, Section 24, which outlines that the office can collect information and that it is on a voluntary basis.

Purpose of the document

This document has been drafted for the CSO Social Statistics Ethics Advisory Group (SSEAG) to provide the Advisory Group with an opportunity to provide advice to the CSO on the ethical aspects of the conduct of the Sexual Violence Survey (SVS) main survey. The terms of reference and membership of this group can be seen at Appendix A.3.

This submission outlines the steps taken by the CSO to meet its ethical responsibilities when conducting the proposed main survey of the Sexual Violence Survey in 2022. It outlines how well-established international principles for the conduct of sensitive surveys such as a sexual violence survey have been applied by CSO to ensure the ethical conduct of the SVS main survey.

Chapter 1 sets out the outline flow of the main survey. The main survey is different to the 2021 pilot and this chapter will summarise the design which will be useful in advance of detailing the ways in which the CSO will ensure the ethical conduct of the main survey.

Chapter 2 outlines the ethical principles which the CSO are using to guide the development of the survey in an ethical fashion.

The subsequent chapters refer to the ethical principles outlined in Chapter 2:

- Chapter 3 provides detail on how the office is managing safety for the respondent and field staff.
- Chapter 4 deals with the decisions made on the methodological approach and how the Office has addressed the ethical principles linked to this.
- Chapter 5 examines how the ethical principle on confidentiality is managed in the office generally and specifically for this survey.
- Chapter 6 deals with ethical principles related to staffing issues including how staff are supported and how staff can offer support.

Chapter 1. SVS main survey summary

The main survey for SVS is a multi-mode survey with options for online (Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI)), self-completion interview (Computer Assisted Personal Interview/Computer Assisted Self Interview (CAPI/CASI)) and a paper based (Paper Assisted Personal Interview (PAPI)) form. The options are provided on a phased bases with CAWI being offered first, then CAPI/CASI and finally PAPI.

The flow is summarised here and in Figure 1.1:

- An initial letter is sent directly to a selected person with a request to complete the survey with a link to the survey portal and the access details included (CAWI). If the site is not accessed within a set time period, up to two reminders will be sent.
- If the survey has not been completed after the reminders, the case will be referred to the interview team for the field operation. The interviewers will approach the selected person at their address and ask them to initially complete the survey online themselves. If the respondent does not wish to do the survey online, the interviewer will offer the respondent the possibility to complete the survey themselves using the interviewer's tablet (CAPI/CASI). The CAPI/CASI version of the survey will be very similar to the CAWI survey.
- If the respondent is not comfortable using technology but willing to complete the survey, a paper-based form (PAPI) will be provided. The paper version of the survey will not contain the same variables as the other two modes. It will contain only the key prevalence/disclosure questions to reduce the length of the questionnaire and remove the burden of the filtering from the respondent.

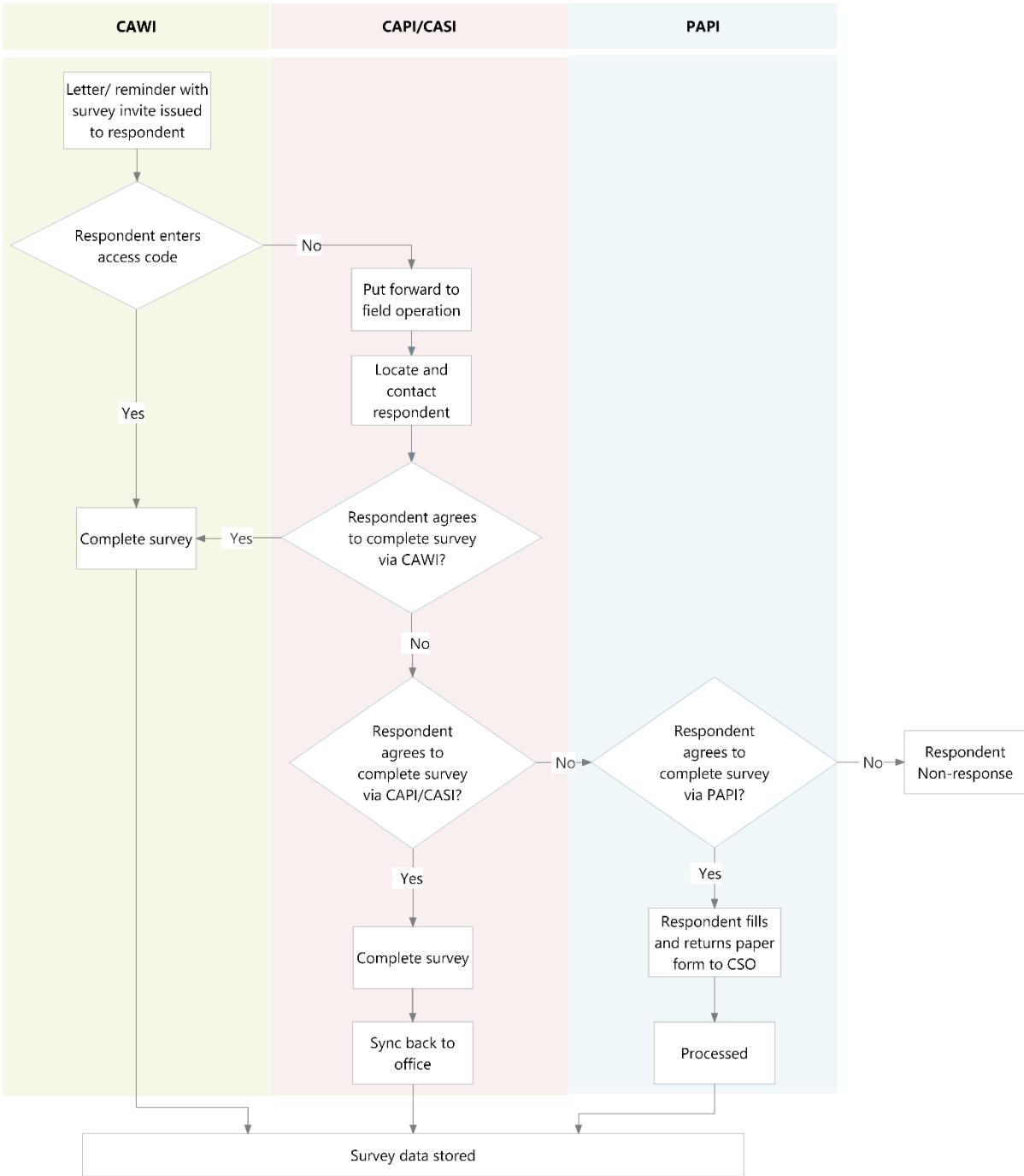


Figure 1.1 Summary of SVS main survey flow

Chapter 2. Ethical Principles

As part of the initial stages of building expertise, international approaches to data collection on sexual violence were evaluated by the CSO. Where there was little information on data collection specifically on sexual violence, related topics which could be deemed as sensitive were examined instead, for example, violence against women, domestic violence and gender-based violence.

A key reference used by many organisations (United Nations, Eurostat, academic papers) is the 2001 publication by the World Health Organisation (WHO) - *Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety recommendations for Research on Violence against Women*¹. This document was created as part of development work for the WHO *Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women*. It summarises ethical and safety concerns related to population-based surveys on domestic violence against women. The document itself states that "many of the principles identified are also applicable to other forms of quantitative and qualitative research on this issue".

The principles are outlined here:

- The safety of respondents and the research team is paramount, and should guide all project decisions.
- Prevalence studies need to be methodologically sound and to build upon current research experience about how to minimize the under-reporting of abuse.
- Protecting confidentiality is essential to ensure both women's safety and data quality.
- All research team members should be carefully selected and receive specialized training and ongoing support.
- The study design must include a number of actions aimed at reducing any possible distress caused to the participants by the research.
- Fieldworkers should be trained to refer women requesting assistance to available sources of support. Where few resources exist, it may be necessary for the study to create short-term support mechanisms.
- Researchers and donors have an ethical obligation to help ensure that their findings are properly interpreted and used to advance policy and intervention development.
- Violence questions should be incorporated into surveys designed for other purposes only when ethical and methodological requirements can be met.

The UN, in its 2005 Expert Group Meeting, "*Violence against women: a statistical overview, challenges and gaps in data collection and methodology and approaches for overcoming them*"² noted the importance of these principles. These principles were also noted in a 2014 UN document on data collection³ as remaining widely accepted principles for such research.

¹ WHO, 2001, *Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Guidelines for Research on Violence against Women* <https://www.who.int/gender/violence/womenfirtseng.pdf>

² UN, 2005, Report of the expert group meeting – *Violence against women: a statistical overview, challenges and gaps in data collection and methodology and approaches for overcoming them* <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/vaw-stat-2005/docs/final-report-vaw-stats.pdf>

³ UN, 2014, *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women* <https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/books/9789210559874>

This submission to SSEAG outlines how the CSO will ensure the ethical conduct of the SVS in accordance with the WHO principles.

Chapter 3. Safety

This section will deal with the following WHO principle:

- The safety of respondents and the research team is paramount, and should guide all project decisions.

For the purposes of this submission, respondents are those who are selected to complete the survey. Research team members are taken broadly to include all those who work on the project in any capacity for any amount of time.

Safety can relate to physical as well as emotional harm. Distress for respondents is addressed in Chapter 4 with greater detail provided in Appendix 4.13. Safety in terms of managing distress and working with this topic in a respectful and considered way for the research team members is looked at in Chapter 6.

The CSO aims to ensure that respondents and survey staff are not exposed to harm when participating in this survey. The CSO is safeguarding against these risks by ensuring the following:

For the respondent:

- Choice of modes - this survey provides the respondent with a choice in how they can respond; an online survey, with the interviewer (with the respondent completing the sensitive part of the survey by themselves), or if there are issues with using technology, a paper form is offered. The use of the online survey and paper form gives the respondent far greater control over when and where they participate in the survey. The use of self-completion on the tablet, which has been used for other surveys, can encourage responses while also offering privacy. If the respondent chooses to complete the survey with the interviewer, they will be given the option to reschedule the interviewer to a date/time that suits them, giving the respondent control over when they participate in the survey.
- Choice of collection approach – looking at international research, self-completion is recommended for sensitive questions to ensure data quality and respondent safety. Hence, sensitive questions in the SVS survey will be completed without the assistance of an interviewer. It creates an environment of privacy for the respondent to answer honestly and without any potential perceived judgement. This approach is maintained for all mode choices offered to the respondent.
- Choice of Frame – the use of a person-based frame as opposed to a household-based frame results in greater privacy for the respondent by allowing their selection for inclusion in the survey without involving other members of the household (as the use of a household-based frame would involve the random selection element being conducted at the household doorstep).
- Graduated consent – as this is a sensitive survey, it is important that when the survey is initially introduced that only the selected respondent is aware of the content of the survey to protect their privacy, as some respondents may be in an unsafe environment given the survey subject matter. Consequently, to protect the safety and privacy of respondents, the survey will not be initially introduced as a survey on sexual violence in the preliminary letter

of invitation and in the reminders sent. A more generic introductory name will be used - "Safety of the Person survey" - and the letters and introductory material will highlight the following general but important aspects:

- The potential sensitivity of the questions
- Respondents to only complete survey when their privacy is assured
- Single use of access credentials
- Confidentiality of the data submitted.

In cases where an Interviewer makes a visit to the household to encourage responses or offer that the survey can be completed on the tablet (dependant on the COVID-19 related restrictions at the time), they will be trained in sharing general information on the survey to other household members, for example, if another member of the household opens the door to the interviewer or how to respond if asked additional information on the survey by those household members. Further information on the survey name to be used is provided in Appendix 3.1.

The CSO has commissioned some qualitative research to review the use of this type of graduated introduction. See Appendix 3.2 for further details on this research. The findings from this research will be incorporated into the training for doorstep engagement by the interviewer and in the phrasing used in the letters and associated documentation, where appropriate. The focus groups consulted as part of this research commented favourably on the use of a web-based approach for the collection of sexual violence data.

The respondent will be made aware of the survey topic when they access the web survey (see Appendix 5.4 for further details on the proposed introduction to the survey).

- Device browser history – respondents may be sharing devices with other household members. The CSO will ensure the subsequent browser history will show only references to a general name and not to "Sexual Violence Survey"⁴. This approach was used in the 2021 pilot and an example of the browser history from a chrome browser is shown below.



- Single use access codes – this is a safety feature of the survey. This has been retained from the pilot to ensure that no other person, who may get access to the authentication code, whether by accident or intent, can open the survey responses already entered by a respondent.
- Unidirectional flow though the survey – this survey will not facilitate a respondent going back through previously submitted responses. This is a safety feature to ensure that if a respondent is mid-way through the survey, another person cannot force them to go back and then view their answers. In addition, it aids in reducing respondent burden as the filtering in the survey is complex.

⁴ If a household member clicks on the survey link in the browser history, they are brought to the CSO login page for all household surveys and the authentication code will be requested. If the code has been used before then the householder cannot open the survey nor access the submitted data.

- The CSO holds confidentiality as one of its core principles. All data received is stored securely and personal data is never shared with any other government department or agency. Further detail on this can be found in Chapter 5.

For CSO staff:

- Choice of survey mode – as the first choice of mode is web, this mode offers the most privacy to a respondent and so will not involve any direct engagement in person between CSO field staff and respondents.
Follow ups to the initial recruitment of the respondent will prioritise web completion, and only in the event of continued non-response will the other modes of data collection (CAPI/CASI and paper form) be offered.
- The CSO will provide health and safety training for interviewers to manage safety as a lone worker. Interviewers are trained on their responsibilities under the CSO Safety Statement and how to report any health and safety incident. They are also given comprehensive training in making dynamic risk assessments when working on their own for various situations, for example, locating households, entering households, dealing with dogs and aggressive behaviour.
- Choice of frame – Using a person-based frame results in direct access to respondents. For those respondents who must be contacted by the field staff team, the interviewer will have less interaction with other household members as they can identify the respondent before contacting them at their address.

Chapter 4. Methodology

This section will deal with the following WHO principles:

- Prevalence studies need to be methodologically sound and to build upon current research experience about how to minimise the under-reporting of violence.
- The study design must include actions aimed at reducing any possible distress caused to the participants by the research.
- Ethical obligation to ensure that survey findings are properly interpreted and used to advance policy and intervention development.
- Questions on violence should only be included into surveys designed for other purposes when ethical and methodological requirements can be met.

Survey development in the CSO follows an international framework – Generic Statistical Business Process Method (GSBPM) – which describes and defines the set of business processes needed to produce official statistics (see Appendix 4.1 for more detail on the GSBPM). Table 4.1 gives a breakdown of the main tasks associated with developing the SVS and the associated GSBPM stage.

Table 4.1 GSBPM and the SVS development

GSBPM stage	Tasks associated with SVS methodology
Specify needs	Refinement of data point list from Scoping Group report Creation and agreement on variable list Specification of operational model and requirements
Design	Sample design Distribution methodology Drafting of questionnaire Testing of questions and variables Select an appropriate frame and agree an appropriate sample design Creation of SVS questionnaire and any other relevant material for the field work Design any necessary field protocols (where appropriate) Solution design to support operational model and requirements Build pilot Run pilot Incorporate the pilot results into the main survey design
Build	Select field team to deliver main survey Delivery of Instrument ⁵ (for the SVS questionnaire and any other relevant material for the field work) Development of training programme for field staff Agreed distribution method for survey cases End to End System to support collect, process & analysis phase

⁵ Instrument in this context refers to the questionnaire itself whether it is converted into an electronic format to be run on the web/tablet as appropriate or designed and printed as a paper form.

Collect	Delivery of training programme for field staff Data collection in field using instrument including management of distribution and field force Secure storage of SVS data and associated para-data, for example, length of time to complete each question Qualitative reports from debriefing sessions
Process	Processing of SVS data including cleaning and editing of data
Analyse	Analysis of SVS data including univariate and bivariate analysis Creation of SVS tables for publication
Disseminate	SVS publication(s) signed off and released
Evaluate	List of recommendations identified for future projects on sensitive data.

This GSBPM method was followed to produce the methodology which is outlined in Appendix 4.2. International expertise in conducting surveys like this was also considered. Selecting a representative sample is a key prerequisite for reliable prevalence data. A new frame and subsequent sample design have been developed by the Office for this survey and these are discussed as part of the methodology in Appendix 4.2, but also specifically discussed in Appendices 4.3 and 4.4. In short, a person-based frame will be used for the SVS main survey, thereby enabling direct contact with the randomly selected respondent.

In addition, the CSO operates within the European Statistics Code of Practice (see Appendix 4.11). The principles in this Code which relate directly to methodological considerations are:

- Sound Methodology.
- Appropriate statistical procedures.
- Non-excessive burden on respondents.

As part of this international governance framework, the CSO adheres to these principles and is assessed regularly to ensure these principles are being observed. In addition, the Office has internal Office governance frameworks (Internal Audit and Quality Management processes) to help ensure the application of sound methodology in the CSO.

A key objective in collecting data on this sensitive subject is to address the risk of underreporting by respondents. The principal ways the CSO has addressed the area of underreporting risk are as follows:

- The self-completion aspect of the mode used in the SVS, namely, online, self-completion on a tablet or paper, ensures that there is no interviewer asking the sensitive questions. These modes will also give the respondent control as to when they want to complete the survey. Two of the options, paper and online, allows the respondent to complete the survey with no interviewer present when the survey is completed. It also gives the respondent control as to where they want to complete the survey.
- The high levels of public trust in the CSO in conducting household surveys, ensuring that respondents can have confidence in engaging with this survey in a secure and confidential manner.
- Ensuring that concepts used in the questionnaire are clear, for example, separating adult experiences of sexual violence into partner and non-partner experiences.

- Using best practice when designing the questions, for example, simple questions, clear unambiguous language to describe experiences.

Further detail on the underreporting risks is provided in Appendix 4.12.

Minimising distress for respondents has been a key aim of the questionnaire design team. The topic itself can be unsettling for both non-survivors and survivors. The ways in which this will be addressed are outlined as follows:

- Using graduated consent - this concept was discussed in Chapter 3. In summary, the SVS main survey will be introduced using a generic name in the introductory material. This protects the confidentiality of the respondent, reducing any potential distress from having the survey topic widely known in the household.
- Before the respondent starts to actually complete the survey, the respondent will be made aware of the survey topic in order to be transparent and honest with the respondent.
- Providing support service information, for example, national rape crisis helpline, at the start and at the end of the survey. In addition, support service information will be provided to CSO telephone support staff so that if a respondent rings the Office, that information can be shared with the respondent.
- Following best practise in designing sensitive questions, for example, using simple language, using yes/no responses, grading of experiences through the survey (starting with potentially less-sensitive topics and moving to more sensitive topics).

For a full list of the ways in which distress for respondents has been addressed through each stage of the SVS main survey design, see Appendix 4.13.

Prevalence data from the survey will be published after data processing and analysis of the collected data. Standard CSO publication guidelines will be followed to ensure that the intention of publishing good quality prevalence estimates will be met, including having a sufficient level of response for variable categories. The CSO will be proactive in ensuring that the published results are properly interpreted. The Office has quality mechanisms in place to ensure that results are at a sufficient standard to publish. These are collated in a quality report which will be published along with the data.

The users of this data (stakeholders such as policy makers, academic experts, support services and advocacy agencies) have been involved in the project from the beginning. They have contributed to the definition and interpretation of the variable list through the Data and Expert Group meetings (held in 2019) and through the Liaison Group meetings (held twice a year) as the project has progressed. The main policy making body, the Department of Justice, initiated this project, has guided the CSO on its data needs for policy making and is given regular quarterly updates on survey developments so they are aware of what is being collected and how it is being collected. This level of engagement throughout the survey life cycle better ensures that policy makers and those who will eventually use the published data will understand how to use the data appropriately.

The Office will be aware of the impact of the language and phrasing used in the eventual publication. A key component of the questionnaire design was to avoid any language or phrasing that could have been interpreted as victim blaming. The report will be mindful of this point as well.

The Office will also provide more detailed microdata to approved researchers in accordance with CSO policies for access to research microdata files (see Appendix 4.10) to maximise the value of the data. This is part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the Department of Justice and the CSO and is quite standard for CSO household surveys. A standard mechanism for applying for access to anonymised microdata by researchers is provided by the CSO.

This survey is designed as a single topic survey. Hence, the WHO principle on ensuring that any questions on sexual violence are only included in other surveys when ethical and methodological issues are addressed is met by the nature of the survey itself.

Chapter 5. Confidentiality

This section will deal with the following WHO principle:

- Protecting confidentiality is essential to ensure both safety and data quality.

The confidentiality of the data collection and management process for the SVS main survey is assured through the following:

- Legal basis for the protection of confidentiality.
- CSO policies and staff training on confidentiality.
- CSO IT procedures.
- Survey design.

Legal basis for the protection of confidentiality

The Statistics Act 1993 provides the legal framework for the collection of data and enshrined in it is the commitment to confidentiality. The CSO has a long-standing tradition and a strong corporate reputation in ensuring the confidentiality of the data it collects. Relevant sections from the Act are provided in Appendix 5.1. Further information on the statistical confidentiality policy is available on the CSO website:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/statisticalconfidentiality/>

The Office will balance the legal responsibilities from other legislation, for example, the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012. This is outlined in Appendix 5.2. In summary, the Office commits to the following:

- Any data/information collected under the Statistics Act is confidential.
- Any information obtained outside of the Statistics Act could be subject to disclosure as outlined in section 2 and 3 of the Withholding Act (as it relates to children or vulnerable persons), for example, visual observations of neglect, oral disclosures by respondents identifying a risk to a child or vulnerable person.

This is current CSO practice. Interviewers will get training on their responsibilities as per the standard CSO interviewer training.

- The survey does not facilitate the collection of directly identifiable information about perpetrators only data to allow classification of perpetrators, for example, sex, age if appropriate, general relationship status if appropriate.

This is implemented in the survey design. We do not ask for names or other personal details of respondents in the survey nor do we ask for perpetrator's name(s).

To encourage higher response rates (and hence data quality), respondents will be given options of different modes to complete the survey.

- The web mode (CAWI) will not facilitate the capture of information outside of the survey questions as no free text fields are included in the sensitive sections.
- For the CAPI/CASI and paper based (PAPI) modes, there will be opportunities for respondents to supply additional information to CSO and CSO staff outside of the intended survey instruments if a respondent chooses to do so (for example, a respondent may verbally inform the CSO staff member of an ongoing abusive issue

when the CSO staff member calls to the respondent's house). This will be despite CSO communications being clear that any information divulged outside of the Statistics Act will not have the protection of that Act. In these circumstances, as the information will not have been collected under the Statistics Act, the CSO will action such information appropriately (which may involve contact with the relevant authorities). Staff training and support procedures will be put in place to address this situation.

- Collect sensitive data anonymously

The online and paper mode supports the self-completion of, not just the sensitive data but, the entire survey in an anonymous fashion. The respondent has an opportunity to choose their environment and ensure their data remains confidential while they complete the survey.

For the online (CAWI) mode, as the respondent will be completing the survey on their own device, there is an unquantifiable risk that some of these devices may have monitoring/surveillance programs running in the background of a device. This is a risk beyond CSO's ability to mitigate.

The approach above, and how the data is to be collected, will strongly protect the confidentiality of the data collected and will ensure that the CSO will not have identifiable respondent data stored with the survey responses.

CSO policies and staff training on confidentiality

The office has policies and procedures in place to ensure confidentiality of data in addition to the legal basis for protecting confidentiality. A summary of the CSO Data Management Policy and an outline of the CSO Data Classification Scheme is available on the CSO website:

https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/foi/documents/CSO_Data_Management_Policy_Summary_2019.pdf

An overview of the safeguards for confidentiality in the CSO is provided in Appendix 5.3. It outlines the mechanisms through which confidentiality is protected through governance, training, processes followed and supports provided.

As per Chapter 4, the CSO implements the European Statistics Code of Practice (see Appendix 4.11). Statistical confidentiality is a principle described in this Code. As noted previously, the CSO is assessed against these principles and further details are available in that appendix.

Data from this survey, once processed and analysed, will be aggregated into tables for the SVS publication. These will be aggregated to ensure that no individual can be identified as per CSO Data Management Policy.

With respect to specific staff responsibilities for managing confidentiality:

- All staff are Officers of Statistics – a declaration of secrecy must be signed by CSO staff. Only a very limited number of staff will have access to the survey responses and these staff will not have access to any identifiable data.

- All staff are trained on their responsibilities with respect to confidentiality as part of the standard induction training programme for staff. Field staff training includes the following topics:
 - Core values of the CSO.
 - Legal basis for collection.
 - Overview of relevant areas of the Statistics Act.
 - Data Protection/General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
 - CSO Data Management Policy including the CSO Data Classification Scheme.
- Staff are trained as and when the need arises. All staff working on the survey will be given training on GDPR as part of the normal CSO interviewer training before the survey goes live.
- All staff are aware of the role of the Data Office which provides support in relation to policies, awareness, training and compliance. The Data Office also maintain a central area in the CSO intranet for all the relevant policy documentation.
- Staff are aware of the policies to ensure confidentiality in the CSO, for example, the CSO Data Management Policy, and are committed to ensuring data and information security - particularly regarding access to confidential data. This is included as a key goal of the annual goal setting stage for all staff through the “Performance Management and Development System” (PMDS) which all CSO staff engage in.
- Field staff have specific policies in place to maintain confidentiality. For example, if a respondent is known to an interviewer, they can follow a standard process to facilitate the assignment of another interviewer when necessary.

CSO security and IT procedures

The CSO manages confidentiality using these security and IT measures:

- Staff access to CSO buildings is controlled electronically. Visitors to the CSO must be signed in and accompanied at all times.
- Staff access to IT systems is password controlled. Staff only have access to the data or systems relevant to their work and these access rights are regularly reviewed. The IT systems and hardware are thoroughly protected by firewall and anti-virus security.
- CSO external devices (including tablets used for CAPI and CAPI/CASI) are encrypted.
- All data at rest or in transit to/from the CSO servers via web or CSO device is encrypted.
- Access Controls Policy in place to ensure access to CSO servers & databases granted via Data Owner to authorised personnel only.
- Active monitoring of access to CSO systems & databases
- System architecture and technology to support the delivery of the survey is compliant with CSO Data Management and Security Policies.
- In addition, CSO Data Management and Security Policies were reviewed as part of a successful audit in Q4 2019 for compliance with European Statistical System (ESS) IT Security Framework. All ESS members had to demonstrate compliance with the framework to be considered as a trusted partner in the ESS (in terms of security of its IT assets).

All surveys require IT systems to ensure the confidentiality of the data. Encryption, password protection and removal of the data from the tablet once the survey is complete are steps taken for all surveys. The very sensitive nature of the data collected by this survey coupled with the multi-mode design has demanded even more technology requirements. Some of these are detailed below:

- CAWI: The respondent is issued with a 12-digit pin in their introductory letter. This is a PIN to a blank form. The respondent is advised in advance that they have only one opportunity to complete the survey and once the PIN is activated, the survey cannot be accessed again. This security design is to ensure that only the respondent has access and that the completed survey cannot be revisited by anyone else thus giving the respondent the guarantee of confidentiality. Data collected via CAWI is completed on a CSO server and once completed stored on site in the CSO.
- CAPI/CASI: This mode involves both the interviewer and the respondent. The survey has been designed so that there is no option for either the respondent or the interviewer to move backwards through the questionnaire. This security design is to ensure that the interviewer is unable to review the data submitted. This should give the respondent assurance of confidentiality. Data collected via CAPI/CASI is completed on CSO hardware and once completed stored on site in the CSO.
- PAPI: Paper forms will be issued only by an interviewer to respondents. They will detail to the respondent how to return the form once completed. The paper returns will be stored securely in CSO and scanned in batches. Once the survey is processed, the forms will be deleted using verified secure destruction. The scanned image will also be deleted following transfer of the survey data to the survey dataset.

Survey design

All surveys or questionnaires in the CSO are designed to minimise the burden on the respondent.

The design of the survey has to ensure confidentiality for all modes. Ways in which confidentiality is addressed through the survey design are detailed below:

- The introduction of the survey topic in the advance letter and interviewer introduction will have been designed to introduce the respondent gently to the topic, give them an assurance of confidentiality, provide them with resources to validate the survey (web site, phone numbers etc) and link them to support services as outlined at Chapter 3.
- The self-completion approach for the sensitive questions for the survey removes the need for an interviewer to be present while the sensitive questions are completed (online or paper) or facilitates completion of the survey without the assistance of the interviewer (tablet based). Hence this creates an environment of security and confidentiality for the respondent. The choice of how to complete the survey also empowers the respondent to choose and control the environment in which they conduct the survey.
- Respondents will be made aware that confidentiality is assured in the introduction and reminded of such throughout the survey (See Appendix 5.4 for more information about the proposed survey introduction).
- To ensure the confidentiality of the data entry phase by the respondent, the respondent has one opportunity to complete the web survey online and consequently cannot return to the questionnaire if they depart from it. This prevents other household members accessing the form, particularly as the initial introductory material (letter with access details) will be sent to the respondent at their home address.
- For both the CAWI and CAPI/CASI modes the respondent has no option to navigate back through the survey instrument. This ensures that nobody else, including the interviewer, can

review the data in the survey during completion and pre-submission. As an added security measure if left idle, the questionnaire will time out and finish after 5 minutes.

- Household data, distribution information for reminders and SVS data are stored separately (see Appendix 5.5 for further details on system security). The impact of this on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rights will be addressed via the transparency notice which the respondent can access through the introduction to the web survey or referenced in the introductory material for the survey (see Appendix 5.6).

Chapter 6. Staffing

This section will deal with the following WHO principles:

- All research team members should be carefully selected and received specialised training, and on-going support.
- Fieldworkers should be trained to refer respondent's requesting assistance to available services and sources of support.

Research team members include all those who work on the project in any capacity for any time. It includes staff in the headquarters working on specification, design, building IT elements to support the survey, fieldwork and analysis as well as support areas such as the Communication and Printing sections. Staff working on the survey are CSO staff.

If a need arises to subcontract personnel, the Office will, as part of the tender document, request details on how any contracted personnel working on the project are provided with specialised training and support relevant to the SVS.

An agreed approach on how to deal with staff and this topic is provided in Appendix 6.1. Details on training are provided within this. An CSO Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) is available for all staff within the office. The EAO unit has been briefed on the establishment of this survey. The EAO created a presentation on working with sensitive topics which was delivered in 2020 and was delivered to interviewers who were working on the SVS pilot in 2021. These EAO training programmes will also be delivered as part of the suite of training for the main survey. The Office also has an active wellbeing programme where sessions on mindfulness/work life balance/stress management are provided.

The interviewer has a key role in conducting a sensitive survey when it is face to face, however the online and paper modes for the SVS ensures the interviewer is not present. For situations where the interviewer will be conducting the survey on their tablet (dependant on COVID restrictions at the time), self-completion of the sensitive questions will reduce the impact on interviewers as they will not have to ask the questions directly nor listen and record the answers.

Regarding details of support services, respondents will be provided links/contact details for support in the survey instrument. The approach per mode is outlined below:

- CAWI: Support information, in the form of national helplines, will be provided at the beginning of the survey when the topic is introduced and at the end of the survey. An additional link to the rape crisis website will allow someone to source local support more easily and will be provided as part of the online survey. See Figure 6.1. For those who complete the survey online, there is an additional section where the respondent can select their relevant NUTS3 region to get a list of localised services grouped by county area. See Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3.
- CAPI/CASI: As per the CAWI approach, support information will be provided at the beginning of the survey when the topic is introduced and at the end of the survey. As the CAPI/CASI

instrument is being built, screenshots are not available, but the screens will be very similar to the screens for CAWI.

- PAPI: As this will be paper based, there is a limit in how much support information can be provided. Hence, support information, in the form of national helplines and a link to the rape crisis website, will be provided at the beginning of the survey when the topic is introduced. See Figure 6.4. At the end of the survey, the national helplines for sexual violence and domestic violence are shared. See Figure 6.5.

An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh Central Statistics Office

Exit

CSO Survey

You have been selected at random to complete a survey about experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault in Ireland. This voluntary survey was introduced as a safety of the person survey in order to protect your privacy within the household.

Although this topic may be a sensitive one for respondents, it is extremely important that Ireland has comprehensive official statistics about sexual violence in this country. This means collecting information both from people who have experienced sexual violence and from those who have not.

The first questions in the survey are general questions about yourself which we will ask you to answer and will then move to more sensitive issues where you can skip questions if you wish.

When you are finished your answers will be encrypted, which means that no unauthorised person will ever be able to see them.

The Central Statistics Office is very grateful for your participation.

If you are affected by any of the issues raised in this survey, help is available here:
24 Hour Helpline on 1800 778888 or
www.rapecrisishelp.ie

Please select one of the following to proceed

Continue

I do not wish to continue

Save and continue

Central Statistics Office
Skehard Road, Cork T12 X00E, Ireland
Tel: (+353) 21 453 5341
E-Mail: sop@csso.ie

[Transparency Notice](#)
[Statistical Confidentiality](#)
[Privacy Statement](#)

Figure 6.1 CAWI screen shot of introduction page with national helpline information provided

CSO Survey

Thanks for your help in answering these questions today.

The following are a list of nationwide freephone helplines and websites available to you if you have been affected by any of the issues raised in the questionnaire.

National Sexual Violence Helpline (for men and women) - 1800 778 888 (available 24/7) or www.rapecrisishelp.ie

National Domestic Violence Helpline (for women) - 1800 341 900 (available 24/7)
 Male Advice Line (for men experiencing domestic abuse) - 1800 816 588 (not available 24/7)

If you prefer a service within your county, please select the region of Ireland you want to see the details for.

Select a value ▾

Save and continue

Figure 6.2 CAWI screen shot of the last page with national helpline information provided with an additional drop down if more localised support information is required.

CSO Survey

Thanks for your help in answering these questions today.

The following are a list of nationwide freephone helplines and websites available to you if you have been affected by any of the issues raised in the questionnaire.

National Sexual Violence Helpline (for men and women) - 1800 778 888 (available 24/7) or www.rapecrisishelp.ie

National Domestic Violence Helpline (for women) - 1800 341 900 (available 24/7)
 Male Advice Line (for men experiencing domestic abuse) - 1800 816 588 (not available 24/7)

If you prefer a service within your county, please select the region of Ireland you want to see the details for.

Mid-West ▾

County	Service	Helpline	Office	Website
Clare	Rape Crisis Midwest	1800 311 511	(065) 686 4665	www.rapecrisis.ie/home.html
Limerick City	Rape Crisis Midwest	1800 311 511	(061) 311 511	www.rapecrisis.ie/home.html
Limerick County	Rape Crisis Midwest	1800 311 511	(061) 311 511	www.rapecrisis.ie/home.html
North Tipperary	Tipperary Rape Crisis and Counselling Centre	1800 340 340	(052) 6127676	www.trcc.ie

Save and continue

Figure 6.3 CAWI screen shot of an example of the localised support information provided to respondent



Safety of the Person Survey 2022

Enquiries to
Phone: (021) 4535000
or (01) 4984000
Locall: 1800 313 414
Fax: (021) 4535555
Website www.cso.ie
E-mail _____

Please return completed form to

Central Statistics Office
Skehard Road
Cork
T12 X00E

You have been selected at random to complete a survey about experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault in Ireland.

Although this topic may be a sensitive one for respondents, it is extremely important that Ireland has comprehensive official statistics about sexual violence in this country. This means collecting information both from people who have experienced sexual violence and from those who have not.

The first questions in the survey are general questions about yourself which we will ask you to answer and will then move to more sensitive issues where you can skip questions if you wish.

The Central Statistics Office is very grateful for your participation.

If you are affected by any of the issues raised in this survey, help is available here:
24 Hour Helpline on 1800 778888 or www.rapecrisishelp.ie

Figure 6.4 PAPI form introduction with helpline information (first draft subject to change)

<p>Helplines</p> <p>Thanks for your help in answering these questions today.</p> <p>The following are a list of nationwide freephone helplines and websites available to you if you have been affected by any of the issues raised in the questionnaire.</p> <p>National Sexual Violence helpline (for men and women) - 1800 778 888 (available 24/7) or - http://www.rapecrisishelp.ie</p> <p>National Domestic Violence Helpline (for women) - 1800 341 900 (available 24/7)</p>
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Figure 6.5 PAPI form example of helpline information available at the end of the form (this draft will be expanded to include the male advice helpline information)

Appendix A.1

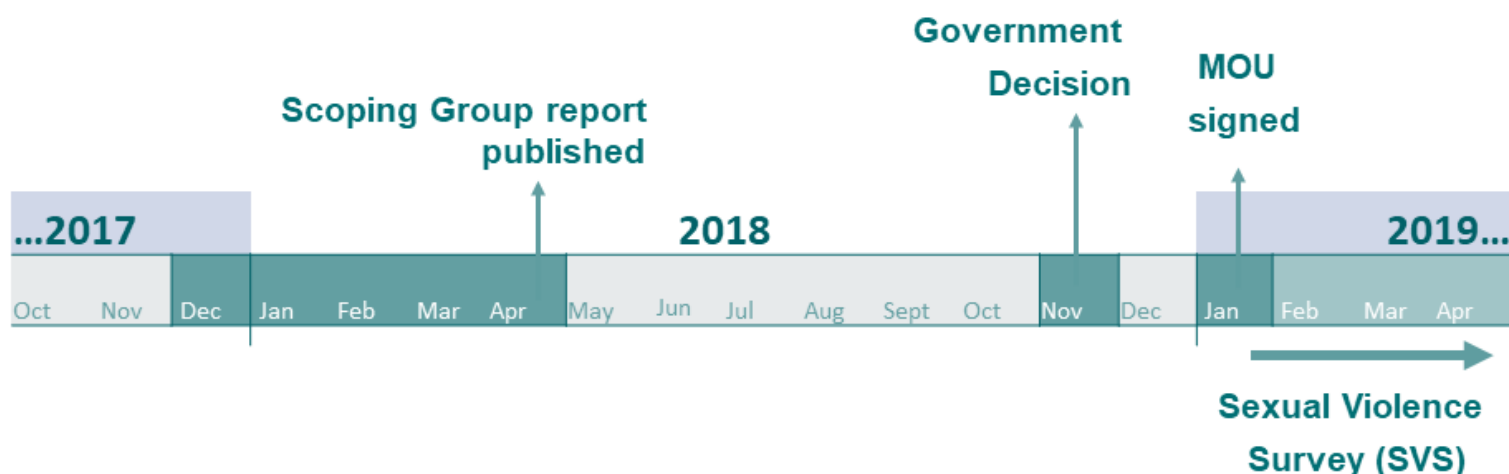
Background to the agreement on the need for a national survey on the prevalence of sexual violence

The Government agreed to establish a scoping group to consider the availability of data on the prevalence of sexual abuse and violence in Ireland in late 2017. The last major study that examined this issue – the Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland (SAVI) study – was published in 2002.

The Scoping Group published their report in April 2018 along with a list of potential data points to be collected in the survey. One of the key recommendations was:

“A comprehensive national survey on the prevalence of sexual violence, with a substantial number of participants should be undertaken.”

A government decision was made noting the recommendations and agreed that the CSO should begin to collect data on the prevalence of sexual violence.



In January 2019, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Department of Justice and Equality signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the undertaking of a comprehensive national survey on the prevalence of sexual violence in Ireland.

The survey will establish the prevalence of sexual violence as well as identify the proportion of crimes that are reported to An Garda Síochána and the data collected will therefore inform policy in several areas. It was named the Sexual Violence Survey (SVS). It will also be repeated at ten-year intervals.

List of relevant documentation:

Report of the Scoping Group on Sexual Violence Data:

<http://justice.ie/en/JELR/Report-of-the-Sexual-Violence-Survey-Scoping-Group.pdf/Files/Report-of-the-Sexual-Violence-Survey-Scoping-Group.pdf>

Memorandum of Understanding between the CSO and the Department of Justice and Equality:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/legislation/memorandumsofunderstanding/moucsodje/>

Appendix A.2

Introduction to the Sexual Violence Survey (SVS)

The aim of the Sexual Violence Survey (SVS) is to provide, for the first time, official statistics on the prevalence of sexual violence in Ireland. It will be undertaken within the framework of the Statistics Act, 1993.

The content for the survey has been generated by using the data points from the scoping group⁶ report as a starting point. The data point list has been refined through discussion with data and policy experts, and through testing of the questions/variables resulting in a set of variables and a questionnaire for the survey.

The survey will be asked of one person in a household who is at least 18 years or older. The person will be selected at random from those who are eligible from the household.

A major issue when measuring the prevalence of sexual violence is the risk of under-reporting of instances of sexual violence. The method of survey delivery can have a substantial impact for sensitive topics. Hence responses to the sensitive questions will be collected through a self-completion method.

The CSO has recognised the critical role that stakeholders will play in supporting the CSO across all aspects of the survey to ultimately ensure the delivery of official statistics for this area. Stakeholders interact with the CSO on this survey through the Liaison Group which meets at least twice a year. This group is an information sharing group which:

- Shares information on progress of the overall programme of work.
- Advises on user needs and where necessary suggesting priorities.
- Shares experiences and expertise in dealing with this complex and sensitive topic.

The survey will be piloted in Q2 2021.

List of relevant documentation:

Documentation currently on the website relating to SVS:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/surveys/surveysunderdevelopment/sexualviolencesurveysvs/>

Comparing the Sexual Violence Survey (SVS) to the previous Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland (SAVI) report:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/surveys/surveysunderdevelopment/sexualviolencesurveysvs/svsandsavi/>

⁶ 2018, *Report of the Scoping Group on Sexual Violence Data*, <http://justice.ie/en/JELR/Report-of-the-Sexual-Violence-Survey-Scoping-Group.pdf/Files/Report-of-the-Sexual-Violence-Survey-Scoping-Group.pdf>

Appendix A.3

CSO Social Surveys Ethics Advisory Group Terms of Reference

As the demand for statistics continues to grow, particularly in sensitive social domains, the case for an independent ethical review of statistical methodological developments in certain circumstances is recognised as best practice. The focus of the ethical review is to ensure that the rights and best interests of the survey participant and relevant CSO staff are fully protected and taken into account in the design and implementation of the survey methodology.

To enable this practice in respect of CSO Social Surveys, an Ethics Advisory Group is being established.

The Ethics Advisory Group will operate as a standalone group that will advise and provide guidance to the Director General of the CSO in respect of any ethical issues it identifies in respect of any aspects of the implementation of the survey methodology that are referred to it for consideration.

The Ethics Advisory Group:

- Will convene on an ad hoc basis at the request of the Director General of the CSO;
- Will consider the subject matter as set by the Director General of the CSO;
- Will consider the issue at hand, explore and examine the ethical considerations from all sides;
- May be informed by relevant experts if required; and
- Will present the results of its deliberations to the Director General of the CSO.

The role of the Group is solely advisory, and its advice is not binding on the Director General, who retains ultimate responsibility for statistical methodology under the provisions of Section 13 of the Statistics Act 1993.

The deliberations of the Group will remain confidential to the members of the Group. Minutes of Group meetings will be publicly available.

Secretarial support to the Group will be provided from the Executive Office of the CSO.

The size and the membership of the Group will be decided by the Director General of the CSO.

The membership of the Group is as follows:

- Gerry O’Hanlon (Chair), former Director General, CSO
- Marguerite Barry, Assistant Professor, School of Information and Communication Studies, UCD
- Claire Finn, Principal Officer, Dept of Transport, Tourism & Sport

- James Williams, former Research Professor, ESRI
- James Barrett, Policy, Planning and Change Management Section, CSO (secretary)

Appendix 3.1

Survey name for SVS

The CSO conducts a wide range of surveys on social topics across the year and across the country. Often the topic of the survey is used within the introduction to make participation seem interesting and enjoyable and to show how the survey can be useful, thereby increasing the chance that a respondent is recruited to participate. Honesty is a core tenet of the CSO values. Being honest in this context means being upfront as to what you are about to ask a respondent. This is in line with the GDPR requirement to ensure that respondents give informed consent when participating with a survey.

However, surveys on sensitive topics like sexual violence require careful consideration. Guidance from the World Health Organisation (WHO) states that it is not in the best interest of the respondent to be upfront on the topic that is being discussed in a survey on violence. As it states on page 12 of that document⁷,

“... for both ethical and safety reasons, it is important that the survey is not introduced to the household and wider community as a survey on violence”

The rationale behind this approach is that it may put the respondent at risk if a perpetrator becomes aware of the topic. As they state in the WHO recommendations:

“For women experiencing violence, the mere act of participating in a survey may provoke further violence, or place the respondent or the interview team at risk.”

It is also referenced to in the UN Guidelines⁸ where it re-enforces this concept of a safe name to the survey:

“An important aspect of reducing the risks to respondents’ safety is to apply a “safe” name to the survey, i.e., one that does not identify the survey topic by using a term such as violence against women or domestic violence or any other similarly revealing term”

This guidance is also recommended for countries implementing the European Gender Based Violence survey (EU-GBV). As per the methodological documentation⁹ prepared for the implementation of the main survey, it is noted that:

“the survey name should be neutral.”

They offer alternatives such as “Safety survey”, “Safety and security”, “Safety and quality of life”. When the EU-GBV was piloted in 2019, criticism of this approach was offered where some respondents felt misled by the apparent change in topic. Eurostat offer that once the rationale is explained behind the change in direction that respondents generally accept it as reasonable.

Two countries running the EU-GBV survey have not followed the guidance given by Eurostat for the survey title. Iceland is using the survey title “Study on gender-based violence”. Bulgaria is using “Gender based Violence”. They felt it would be misleading to do otherwise. However, the majority of

⁷ WHO (2001). *Putting women first: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women*. Geneva, Switzerland

⁸ UN (2014). *Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women - Statistical Surveys*. https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/docs/Guidelines_Statistics_VAW.pdf

⁹ Eurostat (2020) *EU-GBV METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES*. Eurostat. <https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/a132ad78-bfbc-4a12-bddd-3deb5167f5df/library/5808ce47-017d-4d6e-ab81-17da470f8541/details>

countries have followed the advice and used variations on safety as the basis for the name. The various names used for the EU-GBV survey is given in Table 3.1.1.

Table 3.1.1 European countries¹⁰ and the name applied to their EU-GBV survey

Country	Name of Survey
Austria	Quality of Life and Security in Austria
Belgium	Health, Safety and Living Conditions Survey
Bulgaria	Gender Based Violence
Croatia	Survey on Safety
Denmark	Women’s conditions and security
Estonia	Relationship survey: safe relationships within family, at work and outside work
Finland	Safety and well-being in Finland
France	Experienced and Perceived Safety Survey
Iceland	Study on gender-based violence
Latvia	Survey on personal safety and experiences of unwelcome behaviour in workplace, society, partnership, family and childhood
Lithuania	Statistical Survey of Population Safety
Malta	Survey of Safety and Wellbeing
Netherlands	Feeling Safe and Being Safe
Poland	Safety survey
Portugal	Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces
Slovenia	National Safety Survey
Spain	Survey on quality of life, wellbeing and public safety

This approach has been used in other research reports. The Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland (SAVI) 2002 report used the phrase “general health survey”. The 2012 Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) survey on violence against women was introduced as a “Survey about women’s well-being and safety”. The American National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey also uses this approach. This survey is introduced with general non-specific information about the survey topic, and only reveals the topic to the selected respondent as part of a graduated informed consent process.

On this basis it is agreed that CSO will use the title the “Safety of the Person” survey when describing the survey in the introductory material released to the respondent. However, the selected respondent will be made fully aware of safety recommendations for the survey with a focus on the sensitivity of the questions prior to collection (see Appendix 4.4) and will be made fully aware of the topic of the survey before beginning the data collection. In order to ensure that the consent of the respondent is informed, there is a consent-based question at the start of the survey to ensure that people understand what the survey is about, as drafted below:

Before you begin the survey, we want to ensure that you understand the following.
I understand that:

¹⁰ Please note that not every country in the EU is conducting the EU-GBV - 18 EU countries and Iceland have started the process. The countries were contacted, and this table summarises the replies which were received.

- *I should be 18 years of age or older to complete this survey.
- *This survey is about sexual violence.
- *My participation is entirely voluntary, and I may skip any question I do not wish to answer in the sensitive sections.
- *All the information I provide will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be used for statistical purposes only.
- *As my answers to all questions will be anonymised, I will not be able to inspect those answers or to have access to them for any reason once the questionnaire has been submitted to the CSO.
- *The information I provide will be combined with answers from a random sample of adults for statistical analysis and interpretation.

Please select one of the following

- 1 Yes, I understand and wish to continue
- 2 No, I do not understand and do not wish to continue

Appendix 3.2

Overview of the focus group research conducted on introductory scripts

The CSO engaged a professional research company¹¹, to pilot and test different scripts that will be used at the doorstep to encourage the respondent to complete the survey. The purpose of the focus group work would be:

- Research and identify representative audiences.
- Via a creative process, develop and test suggested scripts considering individuals circumstances.
- Present outcomes with recommendations.

The main objectives of the work were as follows:

- Understand and deliver clear recommendations on how to introduce a sensitive survey to a household, in a respectful and ethical way, which also encourages recruitment.
- Activity should not present any reputational risk for CSO and nor should it compromise trust in the CSO brand.

The approach consisted of three phases:

1. Pre-research and briefing

The research team were briefed by CSO on research that has been undertaken before on the selected door-step approach.

2. Conduct testing

- a. The Audience: It was researched with the general public, as the household survey is nationally representative and randomly selected.
- b. Methodology: Four mini focus groups of four participants were conducted – these smaller groups are more intimate and allow the respondents to be honest, rather than the potential discomfort of having to express opinions in large online groups of 8-10 people. It was conducted using Zoom and lasted c.90 mins.

In the research recruitment phase, participants were forewarned about the topic, to ensure that they are comfortable discussing these matters, whilst reassuring them that they will not be pressured to discuss anything personal. Participants were also assured of their anonymity. Projective techniques were used to allow participants to project their thoughts on to the third person, for example, *What might the average person think about this? What might a friend of yours say about this?* This approach allows the research respondents to give their true opinion. Individual responses were used first in the groups to get their unfiltered reactions to the script – this also ensures they are not affected by groupthink. A tool called the “emotions wheel” was used to help determine how participants are reacting to the scripts, and to help them articulate their thoughts - as this is something the public is likely to have limited experience with. Respondents were asked how they’d approach this if it was their problem to solve and if they’d change anything about the approach – giving

¹¹ The company used was Spark Market Research, a research and insights agency with offices in the UK and Dublin. www.sparkmr.com

them a chance to feel a sense of ownership of the issue which increases their sense of personal connection to it.

3. Final presentation

The research findings were presented, and a final report was provided with recommendations on messaging and approach.

Summary of results and recommendations:

After the research was completed, many insights were presented into the building of the relationship between CSO and the perspective respondent. The main points identified were:

- Their research indicated that respondents would prefer if the CSO were honest about the nature of the survey. They were unclear as to what a household survey was and believed they would be more inclined to participate if they knew what the subject matter was. There was some concern amongst the male group as to why their house had been chosen, therefore, the explanation of random selection was important. Random selection within the household also appeared to raise additional suspicions in the male group.
- All groups expressed the preference for 'time' to consider the survey. They did not want their first point of contact to be someone at their door but have some type of notification. Doing the survey via web was the preference of the majority. This mode, they felt, would allow them time and space to consider their replies.
- Some of the participants felt that there should be support available at all times during the survey, for example, at receipt of a letter, pre-survey, post survey.
- The overall feeling from the participants was that this was an important survey. It was important to complete it and for the CSO to undertake it.
- Participants felt the CSO was a trusted organisation and would use the data to address sexual violence concerns.

These findings have been incorporated into the final design for the survey. Direct contact with the selected respondent results in a more direct and transparent introduction to the survey. The clear message for time to consider participation in the survey is addressed by sending a survey invite letter first to the respondent. Support information will be made available at the survey introduction stage and at the end of the survey. In addition, it can be shared by interviewer staff and/or survey telephone support staff during the data collection stage, or it will be available on relevant webpages on the CSO website. Scripts for interviewers will also incorporate references to the importance of this survey, as identified by the focus group.

Appendix 4.1

Generic Statistical Business Process Method (GSBPM) and the SVS

The GSBPM is a framework which describes and defines the set of business processes needed to produce official statistics.

It identifies eight phases of the statistical business process and describes sub-processes within each phase. It was introduced in the CSO to:

- define and describe statistical processes in a coherent way.
- compare and benchmark processes within and between organisations.
- make better decisions on production systems and organisation of resources.

Detail of the phases in the GSBPM

Phases:	Specify Needs	Design	Build	Collect	Process	Analyse	Disseminate	Evaluate
Sub-phases:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Needs • Consult and confirm needs • Establish output objectives • Identify concepts • Check data availability • Prepare business case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design outputs • Design variable descriptions • Design collection • Design frame and sample • Design processing and analysis • Design production systems and workflow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build collection instrument • Build or enhance process components • Build or enhance dissemination components • Configure workflows • Test production system • Test statistical business process • Finalise production systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create frame and select sample • Set up collection • Run collection • Finalise collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate data • Classify and code • Review and validate • Edit and impute • Derive new variables and units • Calculate weights • Calculate aggregates • Finalise data files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare draft outputs • Validate outputs • Interpret and explain outputs • Apply disclosure control • Finalise outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update output systems • Produce dissemination products • Manage release of dissemination products • Promote dissemination products • Manage user support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather evaluation inputs • Conduct evaluation • Agree an action plan

It is not a linear model and sub-processes do not have to be followed in a strict order. It is more a matrix, through which there are many possible paths.

From those phases identified for the SVS, these are the expected outputs for each phase of the project.

GSBPM stage	Output
Specify needs	Variable list Specification of operational model and requirements
Design	Questionnaire, Field protocols Solution design to support operational model and requirements Completed pilot

Build	Main survey instrument, Training programme End to End System to support collect, process and analysis phase
Collect	Trained field staff, raw data, paradata, qualitative reports from debriefing sessions
Process	Pre-processed dataset, Edit SAS ¹² program, Clean Unit File
Analyse	Analysis SAS program Tables, Charts, Report Qualitative report on impact of survey on field staff/coordinators
Disseminate	Publication signed off and released.
Evaluate	List of recommendations for future surveys on this or similar topics relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variable list - Questionnaire - Field protocols - Instrument design - Training programme - Field supports required - Field documentation

¹² Statistical Analysis System (SAS) is an integrated system of software products provided by SAS Institute Inc. for statistical analysis.

Appendix 4.2

SVS methodology

Rationale for survey

In December 2017, at the request of the Minister for Justice and Equality, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) took part in a working group whose role was to consider the availability of data in relation to sexual violence and to make recommendations regarding future requirements. The result was a consensus on the need for a comprehensive national survey on the prevalence of sexual violence in Ireland.

The Sexual Violence Survey (SVS) will contain questions on experiences of harassment, life-time sexual violence and disclosure occurrences. This survey is the first time this Office has conducted a survey with such sensitive questions. The individual's wellbeing, whether respondent or interviewer, is the primary concern.

Points to be aware of with this survey are:

- Ethical concerns – the variables in this survey are considered a special category of personal data due to the sensitive nature of the experience captured¹³. It would be unreasonable to ask people to relive potentially traumatic experiences if the data is not going to be published hence the need for a strong methodology.
- Proportionality – as part of national statistical principles and GDPR¹⁴, data collected must be proportional (not excessive) and any data collected should only be collected for a clear purpose.
- Field operations – while the survey protocols will be built on currently existing protocols, due to the sensitive nature of the subject, additional protocols will need to be added and these will need to be tested prior to a full roll out.

Objective of the survey

The primary objective of the SVS is to produce estimated prevalence rates of sexual violence in Ireland.

Survey design

The main survey operation is planned to follow this sequence:

- An initial letter is sent to a respondent with a request to complete the survey with a survey link and the access details included. If not accessed, up to two reminders will be sent.
- If the survey has not been completed after the reminder, the respondent will be referred to the field-based interview team. The interviewers will locate the respondent and ask them to complete the survey via CAWI. If this is not agreeable, the interviewer will offer the survey

¹³https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/ethics/h2020_hi_ethics-data-protection_en.pdf

¹⁴ Data must be proportionate to achieve the specific task or purpose for which they were collected (Article 5(1) GDPR)

for completion by the respondent using the interviewer’s tablet. The tablet version of the survey will contain the same variables as the online survey.

- If this is not suitable for the person, a paper-based form will be provided. The paper version of the survey will not contain the same variables as the online survey. It will contain only the key prevalence/disclosure questions to reduce the length of the questionnaire and remove the burden of filtering from the respondent.

Survey coverage

The SVS will be collected directly from private individuals. For further details about the frame, see Appendix 4.3.

Sample design

Due to the person-based frame, a simple random sample stratified by local authority area will be generated. A sample of 20,000 will be chosen and split into a main sample of 13,000 and a reserve sample of 7,000. The aim is to achieve 5,000 completed responses. For further details about the sample, see Appendix 4.4.

Eligible persons

One individual will be selected/volunteer to participate in the SVS. Eligibility for participation is based on residency in Ireland and age - only those 18 and over are eligible.

Questionnaire design

The SVS is a newly designed questionnaire which used the survey from the 2002 Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland (SAVI) report and the European Gender-based Violence (EU-GBV) survey as well as other international surveys as reference points when designing the questions.

Due to the novel nature of the survey, significant testing was conducted on the concepts and questions which is outlined in Figure 4.2.1. Further detail on the work completed as part of questionnaire design is available in Appendix 4.5.

Figure 4.2.1 An overview of the ways in which stages of the survey has been tested

SVS stages	Ways tested	
Variables	Expert Groups (Data and Policy Expert Groups)	Governance group (Liaison Group)
Questions	Focus Groups	Cognitive Interviewing
Questionnaire modules/full	Clinical Psychologists, Expert in trauma	Language therapist
Questionnaire in full	Internal Expert Review	Pilot/Survivor review

Overall, the SVS questionnaire can be broken down into these sections:

- Demographic details
- Sexual harassment/Stalking.
- Adult experiences.
 - Intimate partner sexual violence.
 - Non-intimate partner sexual violence.
- Childhood experiences.
 - Non-contact sexual violence.
 - Contact sexual violence.
- Disclosure of experiences.
- Attitudes (will be asked only of those who do not disclose experiences of harassment, stalking or sexual violence).
- Respondent module.

The flow of the questionnaire in each instrument is shown in Appendix 4.7.

Reference period

The SVS will be conducted over a 5-month period from June to November 2022. Respondents will be asked about different types of experiences in the twelve months prior to interview as well as lifetime experiences.

Data collection

Due to the changed nature of the survey from the pilot in 2021, a small-scale pilot is intended to be run to test the CAPI/CASI protocols and learnings from this will be included in the main survey.

The aim is to have 35 interviewers and 3 co-ordinators for the survey. They will work solely on this project and not conduct any other surveys during the SVS data collection period.

Training for this will include:

- An overview of SVS, including an overview of sexual violence in Ireland.
- The survey aims/procedures.
- Recruitment of household training.
- Confidentiality/disclosure training.
- COVID working procedures.
- Mindfulness/wellbeing.

Before the survey begins, a press release identifying that the survey will be in the field shortly will be published. It will explain the purpose of the survey, how people were selected at random, the importance of the data collection for those who both have experiences and those who do not, and any other pertinent elements. This will serve to help validate the survey for those invited to participate. See Appendix 4.8 for further details.

The initial contact with the selected respondent will be led by the Field Administration Unit (FAU) in the CSO. Letters of invitation will be generated for the selected respondent (see Appendix 4.9). Within the letter will be the survey link and the authentication code to access the online survey. It will be addressed directly to the selected respondent. Two reminders will be issued to the person if

there is no response within a set time period. If no response has been received, then the case will be forwarded to the field data collection team.

The field data collection will follow the standard model for data collection in the Office. If any respondent contacts the Office directly instead, relevant information will be passed where necessary to the interviewer as per normal procedures. They will be provided with training and interview material in advance and will be comfortable with using the required technology.

At the first visit, interviewers will be encouraging respondents to go online to complete the survey. If a respondent requests the survey link or authentication code, then the Office will reissue the survey invite letter to the respondent.

If the respondent does not complete the survey online, the interviewer will revisit the respondent and offer a tablet-based interview with the respondent completing the entire survey on the interviewer tablet. If the respondent is not happy to complete the survey on the tablet but wishes to contribute to the survey, a paper form will be offered as an alternative.

As per other surveys, debriefing will occur as and when needed but at least once, mid-way through the survey and again, at the end. Debriefing will relate to any difficulties with the technology used and will also focus on the difficulties in recruiting respondents – particularly on the types of queries raised. Solutions for any issues which arise will be generated in the group setting where possible and noted for future training. Coordinators/interviewers can also contact the Office directly as and when problems occur outside of these specific debriefing times as well.

Expected survey response

It is planned to get at least 5,000 completed responses to ensure that cell sizes are sufficient for publication.

Processing of data

After the data collection phase, the survey data will be saved in a secure database. Details on how the data is moved, unlinked and how access is granted is detailed in the Chapter 5. Processing the data will consist of:

- Testing for consistency within the questionnaire responses.
- Coding, particularly focusing on the “other” category for some questions.
- Checks on data, for example, validation of responses, checking logic and internal consistency within the record, missing data.
- Evaluating appropriate edits for any inconsistencies in the data. Limited editing will be necessary as answers to the questions are limited to a predefined list of options. Edits are carried out in SAS to ensure consistency.
- Accounting for non-response and grossing back to the sample frame including calibration.

To clarify, there will be no imputation for this survey. Once the dataset is error free, then it will move to the analysis stage for the survey.

Analysis stage

Survey drop-off and item non-response (where a question is not answered) within the survey will be assessed. Response rates will be calculated. The characteristics of the people who completed the survey and how they completed the survey will be examined also.

Additional analysis will also be conducted into the para data resulting from the survey, for example, the time taken to answer each question. This will be used as a quality check on the questions.

The respondent module will also give some quantitative data on the impact of the survey and this will be analysis and compared to key variables for additional insight.

Outputs from the survey will be compiled by aggregation of grossed data to produce the totals appearing in the release. The aggregations are done by key variables such as gender, age and other demographic breakdowns. Aggregations by specific sexual violence variables such as frequency of unwanted sexual experiences, reasons for not disclosing the experiences will be compiled. The aggregations are calculated using SAS.

Dissemination stage

The final format of the publication is still under consideration. This will be progressed with input from the CSO Communications unit to ensure clear and easily understandable data is provided.

The data will be available in a publication and PX tables as per other household survey output. As per the MOU signed between the Department of Justice and the CSO, the data will also be available for researchers. Further details on this process can be found in Appendix 4.10.

Appendix 4.3

Sample Frame

Introduction

Traditionally CSO surveys of persons are conducted at the household level. This approach involves using the latest available Census of Population household details and then performing the random selection element of the survey at the household doorstep (so one random person from the household is then selected to partake in the survey concerned). This was one of the ways the SVS pilot was conducted in 2021. This approach is challenging given the necessary application of the graduated consent principle (whereby the survey purpose can only be discussed with the actual person selected for the survey after random selection). In many cases, the selected person is not available at the time of interview and the requirements of the graduated consent principle consequently and unintendedly, impacts on response rates (which speaks to overall survey quality). Feedback from the CSO survey staff who were engaged on the SVS pilot survey is very clear on these points. Additionally, the latest available Census of Population is from 2016 and the passage of time since would mean that the household details captured at the time would not be updated (for inward and outward migration for example).

Over recent years there have been significant developments in the use of Administrative data by CSO. As a result of these developments, CSO published last December an estimated population count based on administrative sources¹⁵. We need a way to directly sample and directly contact a respondent for ethical and data quality reasons. Consequently, it is proposed to use this CSO created IPEADS administrative frame, as adjusted with other sources, as the sampling frame for the SVS main survey.

Irish Population Estimates from Administrative Data Sources (IPEADS)

The Irish Population Estimates from Administrative Data Sources (IPEADS) was published in December 2021. It estimated that the population of Ireland in April 2020 was 5.2 million. It used pseudonymised administrative data from public sector bodies. IPEADS creates a population frame using seventeen different administrative datasets. See Appendix 4.3.1 for details of the administrative datasets used. IPEADS, by definition, is a very good source of PPSNs for those active in the administrative population as a person must have a valid PPSN for inclusion in the population count. Other attributes, including addresses are of lower quality and were deemed unsuitable for statistics at low levels of geography.

The first step for the creation of the IPEADS frame was to identify available data sources that contain people who are resident in Ireland based on their interactions with public sector bodies. The following key requirements needed to be met:

- the datasets were linkable using the pseudonymised version of the PPSN
- there was good coverage of pseudonymised PPSN in the dataset to facilitate linking
- the dataset was available for time periods relevant to deriving usual residence in April 2020

¹⁵ <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/fp-ipeads/irishpopulationestimatesfromadministrativedatasources2020/populationestimates/>

The approach taken was to examine cohorts of the population and assess what available data could be used to ensure persons active in that cohort were included in the population count. The cohorts included children, students, employees, welfare recipients, etc. Many persons belong to more than one of these cohorts, but this does not affect their inclusion in the population. Linkage across multiple administrative datasets through the pseudonymised version of the PPSN used as a unique identifier ensures that persons who appear in more than one data source will be counted only once in the population.

The population estimates are produced by linking administrative records from various data sets that have been pseudonymised to maintain privacy. Rules were then applied to decide who should be included in or excluded from the usually resident population.

Given the extensive analysis work performed and the “business rules” applied to account for double counting, etc., there is confidence that IPEADS represents a good frame of persons in Ireland on a particular date.

However, the IPEADS publication notes the quality issues with addresses at a low level of geography. Accordingly, for use as a person-based frame for sampling purposes, IPEADS needs to be supplemented with additional sources to improve the addresses at the level of the individual. This will be addressed after the sample is selected. In summary, addresses and EIRCODES will be attached to the sample and validated (and amended if necessary) with the most recent economic and health datasets. For further details, see Appendix 4.4.

Conclusion

Rather than using just one source (Census of Population 2016) as the frame for the SVS main survey, it is proposed to use a new frame created from a large range of administrative datasets. The final frame will contain a unique identifier for persons in Ireland aged 18 years and over and will allow direct contact with the randomly selected respondent (enhancing respondent safety) and will better place the survey regarding response rate management (by allowing for a more targeted approach to non-response management). There is no such thing a ‘perfect’ frame – all population frames experience a mix of errors (under and over coverage for example) but given the extensive analysis and data cleaning work performed we can have confidence in the use of proposed population frame for the main SVS survey.

Appendix 4.3.1

Administrative records used in the creation of IPEADS

Children included in IPEADS are collected using the following data sources:

- **Child Benefit (CB)**
The Child Benefit dataset contains information on eligible children's benefit payments to parents/guardians. Data is supplied by the Department of Employment and Social Protection on an annual basis. The CRS Client file (see Central Records System (CRS) below) is used to identify children born in the year prior to the reference date and not yet in receipt of Child Benefit.
- **Primary Pupils Database (POD)**
The Primary Pupils Database contains data on each student enrolled in each recognised primary school collected by the Department of Education. Data is supplied on an annual basis.
- **Post-Primary Pupils Database (PPPDB)**
The Post-Primary Pupil Database is currently the only national archive of student enrolment at post-primary schools. Individual and personal data on each student enrolled in each recognised post-primary school are collected by the Department of Education. Data is supplied on an annual basis.
- **Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS – GMS)**
The PCRS is responsible for making payments to healthcare professionals – doctors, dentists, pharmacists and optometrists/ophthalmologists – for the free or reduced costs services they provide to the public across a range of community health schemes. The scheme is the infrastructure through which the HSE delivers a significant proportion of Primary Care to the public. PCRS also manages the National Medical Card Unit (NMCU) which was established in 2011 to process all Medical Card and GP Visit Card applications at a national level. Data is supplied by the HSE on an annual basis.

Students included in IPEADS are collected using the following data sources:

- **Higher Education Authority (HEA)**
The Higher Education Authority data provides details on annual enrolments and graduations from the publicly funded universities and institutes of technology in Ireland. Data is supplied by the HEA on an annual basis.
- **Programme Learner Support System (PLSS)**
The Programme Learner Support System is used to manage course information, learner records and reporting by SOLAS (an tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna). Solas is the Further Education and Training Authority. They provide a clear, integrated pathway for learners seeking to enrol in Further Education and Training. Data is supplied by SOLAS on an annual basis.
- **Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)**
Quality and Qualifications Ireland is an amalgamation of the previously operational Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC); the Higher Education and Training Awards

Council (HETAC); the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI). Data is supplied on an annual basis.

- Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI)
Student Universal Support Ireland contains funding information for all higher and further education grants. SUSI offers funding to eligible students in approved full-time, third-level education. Data is supplied on an annual basis.
- HEA Springboard
HEA Springboard and ICT provides information on students who have undertaken HEA springboard or ICT courses. This data includes course details and basic demographic information for enrolled students. Data is supplied by the HEA on an annual basis.

Employees, pensioners and persons in receipt of welfare payments included in IPEADS are collected using the following data sources:

- DSP Payments (DSP)
Department of Social Protection's database (real-time) from the Business Object Model implementation (BOMi) and Integrated Short-Term Payments System (ISTS) contains information on welfare payments, including state pension, unemployment benefit and child benefit (adults only). Data is supplied monthly.
- PAYE Modernisation (PMOD)
The Revenue Commissioners' PAYE Modernisation (PMOD) dataset contains information on payslip submissions of persons in employment and on occupational pensions from 2019 onwards. Data is supplied monthly.

Self-employed persons included in IPEADS are collected using the following data sources:

- Form 11 Income Tax returns (ITForm11)
The ITForm11 contains the annual income tax returns of the self-employed. Data for a calendar year is only complete three years after the reference year, because of the nature of self-assessment, although the majority of records are available about 14 months after the reference year.

Linkage across multiple administrative datasets through a pseudonymised version of the PPSN used as a unique identifier ensures that persons who appear in more than one data source will be counted only once in the population.

Data sources used to assign geography and other attribute variables:

- Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) Register
The Residential Tenancies Board register contains information on all tenancies registered by landlords, both private and Approved Housing Bodies (AHB). Data is supplied by the RTB on a quarterly basis.
- Local Property Tax (LPT)
The LPT file contains one record - the most recent LPT return - for each of the properties in the State. A local property tax return is not an indicator of activity but used to determine location (among other sources). Data is supplied by the Revenue Commissioner on an annual basis.
- Central Records System (CRS)

The Central Records System is a legacy system within the Department of Social Protection (DSP) which holds data on their customers held on different systems within DSP. Data from the CRS used in this analysis includes information on age, sex, address, nationality and relationships (for example, dependent children and marital status). Data is supplied by the DSP on a quarterly basis.

Address data from the HEA dataset records students' usual place of residence outside term time and is used to assign up to date off campus geography data for students.

Note: some individuals that may be administratively active may not live in the State, for example, professionals commuting to work from Northern Ireland or individuals living abroad and receiving a state pension. Persons are excluded from the population count where indicators for usually resident outside Ireland are available from the administrative data sources listed above.

Appendix 4.4

Sample design

Sampling Frame

The Safety of a Person sample will be selected from the Irish Population Estimates from Administrative Data Source (IPEADS) person-based sampling frame. IPEADS uses pseudonymised administrative data from public sector bodies to produce estimates of the population in Ireland and includes breakdowns by several variables including sex, age, nationality, marital status and economic status over three levels of geography; State, County and Electoral Division. IPEADS is created using 17 different data flow sources, such as the Central Record System (CRS), the Local Property Tax (LPT), etc. IPEADS consists of 5.2m person records. Further information about the frame can be found in Appendix 4.3.

Sample Design

The sample of persons, aged 18 and over, will be selected using a Stratified Simple Random Sample, stratified by local authority area ("COUNTY_31"). The sample will be examined to ensure it is representative in terms of sex and age. This geography variable is considered the most appropriate variable on the frame for stratification purposes, as it is the most consistent variable across the different IPEADS sources.

Following consultation with CSO Methodology Division, a sample of n=20,000 will be chosen and split into a main sample of n=13,000 and a reserve sample of n=7,000. An achieved sample of n=5,000 is required in order to be able to publish detailed information and satisfy the publication guidelines which the office use¹⁶. This will allow publication of the estimated headline sexual violence prevalence rate¹⁷ based on a 3% margin of error and 95% confidence. Response rates will be monitored over the initial weeks of distribution and batches from the reserve sample will be released if necessary. To ensure representative coverage, these batches will be released across the whole country and not used to target specific groups or areas.

For more information on reserve sampling see Li *et al.* (2014)¹⁸. For information, this reserve sampling approach will also be used for an educational assessment survey CSO will be conducting later this year (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)).

¹⁶ The CSO publication approach removes data which is unreliable due to small cell sizes. Estimates where there are less than 30 persons in a cell are too small to be considered reliable. These estimates are removed from the table and represented with an asterisk (*). Where there are 30-49 persons in a cell, estimates are considered to have a wider margin of error and should be treated with caution. These cells are published however within a parentheses [].

¹⁷ This rate has been estimated using previously published Irish sexual violence prevalence figures and other international sexual violence prevalence rates.

¹⁸ Li, Lin, Tom Krenzke, and Leyla Mohadjer. "Considerations for selection and release of reserve samples for in-person surveys." *Survey Methodology* 40 (2014): 105-123.

Address Validation

A data matching exercise will be undertaken to examine the addresses on the sample derived from the frame. This will be done for several reasons:

- To validate the addresses on the sample. Due to the sensitive nature of this survey, and as the letters will be addressed to individual persons names, it is important, in so far as it can be assured, that the letters go to the correct households.
- To increase the EIRCODE coverage.
- To identify the most recent address of a person.
- To facilitate an increased match to Census of Population to acquire household classification variables.

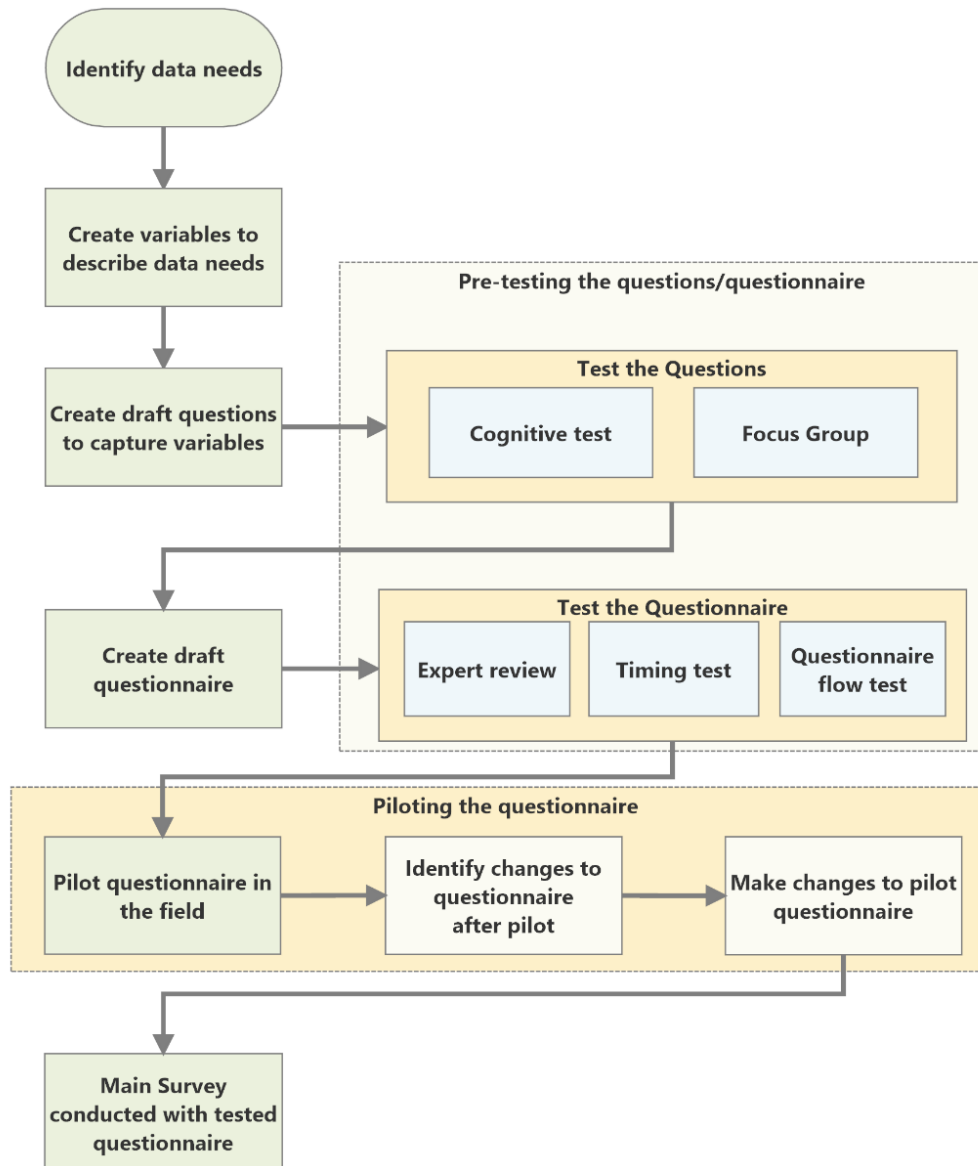
Analysis of IPEADS using other data sources for validation is ongoing. Addresses will be matched to numerous data sources, including the Census of Population, updated versions of the IPEADS component administrative datasets and more recent economic and social administrative datasets¹⁹. One of these more recently available datasets is the “COVAX” HSE COVID-19 vaccination dataset. Given the population coverage of this vaccination dataset, the addresses from this dataset will be an important input to providing high quality addresses. Business rules will be developed to determine the best address to use for a respondent if a respondent has more than one address on IPEADS. In general, the address used for an individual will be the address associated with the most recent update/interaction with the administrative data sources being used.

¹⁹ An example of a more recent economic administrative dataset is the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) dataflow. The PUP contains administrative data for the payment for employees and the self-employed who lost employment due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Appendix 4.5

Questionnaire development overview

The outline of work conducted in defining the variables and testing the questionnaire is summarised in this diagram.



Identifying data needs was addressed through using the data list provided as part of the Scoping Group Report on Sexual Violence data. Data experts and policy experts were identified and consulted on the definition of the data points provided, discussed prioritisation and core needs for policy/service development.

Following this a variable list was created and shared with the SVS Liaison Group and Steering Group where feedback, where appropriate, was incorporated.

Questions were designed to capture these variables using various reference points for crafting the questions, for example, Eurostat Gender Based Violence Survey, The Sexual Assault and Violence in Ireland report (SAVI), Scottish Crime and Justice Survey, Crime Survey of England and Wales, model UN questionnaire, etc.

A process of testing these questions was designed using best practice techniques. The two main methods were cognitive testing and focus groups. The protocols for these tests are provided on page 53 and 58. But to summarise:

- Cognitive testing looked at testing:
 - the questions
 - understanding of phrasing.

Due to the sensitivity of the topic, the questions were split into sensitive and non-sensitive questions. The non-sensitive set of questions were asked of the volunteers from within the Office and the sensitive set of questions were posed to service providers volunteers who would be more familiar with the language and be better equipped to handle the potential distress caused by these sensitive questions. In all, there were ten interviews conducted.

Focus group testing looked at testing:

- the concepts.
- types of categories.

Due to the sensitivity of the topic, we have chosen to use service providers rather than volunteers from the Office for the discussion to facilitate the voice of victims through this format rather than a one-on-one format in the cognitive test. In all, two focus groups were conducted.

Once conducted a report was drawn up and learnings were incorporated into the questionnaire.

Evaluating the whole draft questionnaire was conducted both before the pilot was run (April to June 2021) and the pilot itself was a test of the questionnaire. An overview is provided below:

- Pre-pilot:
 - External - Clinical psychologists and an expert in language and speech therapy were asked to look at the impact of the questionnaire and the phrasing used for potential victims and non-victims. Their observations were incorporated where possible into the questionnaire.
 - Internal – Experts in methodology and question design were identified within the CSO office. They were asked to go through the questionnaire with specific scenarios and report any pertinent observations.
 - Timing tests and questionnaire flow tests were completed on the questionnaire after it was converted into an electronic instrument.
- Pilot:
 - A large-scale pilot was held in Q2 2021. An overview of the pilot and its results are given in Appendix 4.6. Overall, the pilot validated the use of the questionnaire.
 - A concurrent focus group was held with survivors of sexual violence during the pilot to get qualitative feedback. The protocol for the test is available in Appendix 4.5.3 on page 61. It identified some areas for additional work to be completed for the

questionnaire, such as including ways to signal progression²⁰ through the questionnaire and improving the format of some questions (particularly the disability and consent questions).

²⁰ A progression bar is being planned for the online instrument and is currently in the design phase.

Appendix 4.5.1 Cognitive Test Plan for the Sexual Violence Survey

1. INTRODUCTION

The approach to the cognitive testing of the Sexual Violence Survey outlined in this plan is based on the recommendations of the *Guidelines for Pretesting the EU Gender Based Violence Survey Questionnaire, Eurostat (2017)* and the recommendations on cognitive testing of sensitive questions from Gordon B. Willis (2005) *Cognitive Interviewing: A Tool for Improving Questionnaire Design*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.

1.1. Purpose of cognitive test for the Sexual violence Survey

The purpose of the cognitive test will be to test the respondents' understanding of the key concepts used in the survey; to assess their understanding of the phrasing used in the questionnaire; to assess if the questions are effective in prompting respondents to identify, recall and share their relevant experiences; and to gather some information on the potential impact of the sensitive nature of the questions on respondents.

After the initial tests are complete, the results will be analysed and recommendations for questionnaire design will be prepared. An additional cognitive test on a revised set of questions may be carried out if the questionnaire design unit decide that it is needed.

2. PROTOCOL

2.1 Strategy to test sensitive questions

As pointed out by Willis (2005) "Probing sensitive content may be the single most challenging variety of cognitive interviewing...We often cannot answer the...question, "Will respondents in my survey find these questions sensitive and answer them truthfully?" However, he points out the value of cognitive testing in investigating comprehension and recall issues relating to sensitive questions. He also highlights the fact that the purpose of cognitive test is to explore the questions not the answers. This focus is important in considering the impact of participation in this test by respondents. "Sometimes we do not need to literally ask people to answer the sensitive questions. Rather, we can learn a lot simply by asking about term interpretation...or recall."

As recommended by Willis, this test will include certain strategies to recognise the sensitivity of the subject matter. These will include the following:

- Interviews will not be recorded. Therefore, a member of the questionnaire design unit will participate in the interview only to take notes. This role will be clearly explained to the participants.
- Respondents will not be asked to disclose their personal experiences. The interview will be focused on sharing their comprehension and interpretation of the questions in the questionnaire. For this test, the additional step of giving each respondent a test case to use as the source of their answers for specific questions will be considered.
- Where possible, interviewers will be of the same gender as the respondents.

- Staff involved in this testing will be made aware of the availability of support services should they need them.
- Respondents will be asked to sign a consent form that will explain the purpose of the test and confirm that all feedback from the test will be treated as completely confidential.
- Respondents will be given information on the availability of support services should they find themselves affected by any issues raised during the discussion.
- Respondents will be reminded at the beginning of the interview that they can end the discussion at any time.
- To specifically focus on assessing the questionnaire from the perspective of victims/survivors of sexual violence, separate testing will be carried out through carefully targeted focus groups rather than through cognitive testing.

2.2 Protocol

Each interview will last no longer than one hour.

A combination of “verbal probing” and “think aloud” techniques will be used to maximise the value of the cognitive test.

As the mode of the Sexual Violence Survey will be self-completion, respondents will be given a paper version of each question to read. The interviewer will then follow-up with questions relating to the cognitive test as outlined below.

The protocol will be as follows:

FOR THE INTERVIEWER:

- Allow the respondent time to read the question.
- Use the suggested probes included after each question and use spontaneous probes if needed.
- Record the feedback provided by the respondent and enter comments under each question on any additional issues that may arise.

RESPONDENT BACKGROUND INFORMATION (to be completed by respondent):

Gender; age; education level.

FOR THE INTERVIEWER: READ OUT TO THE RESPONDENT

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of this project is to develop a survey about sexual violence that will eventually be asked as a national household survey in Ireland. Therefore, we are testing the survey to find out if the questions make sense to respondents and are understood by everyone in the same way. Your interview will help us find out how the questions are working.

During the interview I will ask you to read each question to yourself and think about how you would answer it. I will not ask you to share your answer. After you have had time to read the question, I will ask you to explain how you understand it and ask you follow up questions to explore how well the survey is working. This test is not about collecting your answers to the questionnaire, it is about getting your feedback on any problems that might exist with our current set of questions. Please keep in mind that I really want to hear all of your opinions and reactions. I did not write the questions so don't hesitate to indicate if something seems unclear, or it is hard to answer, or any other problems that may arise from the questions and the answer categories.

Everything that you tell me is confidential and will be kept private. The information will be used only for the aims of the questionnaire testing.

If you do not want to answer a question, please tell me and I will move to the next one. This interview will last about one hour. If at any stage you decide that you'd prefer not to continue this interview, just let me know and we will stop straight away.

Before we begin, do you have any questions?

We will start with an example of the type of questions I will ask. For example, if the question to be tested read:

Is any local bus service available in your town or city?

1. Yes
2. No

I might ask you:

What is the question asking?

What does the phrase "local bus service" mean to you?

What area did you think of when you heard "town or city"?

Was that hard or easy to answer?

OK, now let's start with the questions that we are testing.

FOR INTERVIEWER: MARK THE STARTING TIME |__|__| hour |__|__| minutes

Read introduction and hand the question to the respondent.

*Note: The following is a sample question from the Eurostat GBV questionnaire to illustrate the style of the test. **The final script and questions tested can be provided if required.***

The following questions are about your working life. Some people might experience unwanted behaviour with a sexual connotation by persons in the workplace, for example a colleague or co-worker; boss or supervisor; client, customer or patient, which made them feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Please, think about your current workplace or about your last workplace, if you are currently not employed.

D1. Have you experienced inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated or somebody in the work environment sent or showed you sexually explicit pictures, photos that made you feel offended, humiliated or intimidated?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

FOR INTERVIEWER: PROBES

Could you repeat the question to me in your own words?

.....
.....

Do you think you would be able to find an answer option from the ones provided? ...

.....
.....

Was that easy or difficult to answer? Why?

.....
.....

In your words, what is meant by "made you feel offended, humiliated or intimidated"?

.....
.....

What time period were you thinking about when you answered this question?

.....
.....

How did you feel about answering this question?

.....
.....

Do you find this question too personal/intrusive or embarrassing? Why?

.....
.....

Do you think other people would find this question sensitive? Why?

.....
.....

INTERVIEWER'S NOTES:

Did the respondent ask to have the question explained? If so, what part of the question did the respondent find confusing?

.....
.....

Did the respondent have any other difficulty answering the question?

.....
.....

Other remarks:

.....
.....
.....

FOR INTERVIEWER: MARK THE ENDING TIME |__|__|hour |__|__|minutes

FOR INTERVIEWER: AFTER RESPONDENT HAS LEFT, PLEASE ENTER ANY OTHER INTERVIEW NOTES:

.....
.....
.....

3: Sampling and recruitment of the respondents.

3.1 The **sample selection** for the cognitive test is “purposive”: respondents are not selected through a random process, but rather are selected for specific characteristics related to the target survey population and other characteristics related with the topic under investigation. For this cognitive test, the sample will be composed of 10 people aged 18 years or more, males and females.

3.2 **Respondents** for this test will be selected based on the sensitivity of the questions being tested. For questions that are considered by the SVS team to be less sensitive, colleagues in the CSO will be asked to volunteer to act as respondents. For more sensitive questions, staff of local service providers working in the field of sexual violence will be asked to participate as respondents.

4: Interviewers

4.1 The interviews will be conducted by CSO staff experienced in questionnaire design and familiar with the purpose of the Sexual Violence Survey. Interviewers will be given a detailed briefing on the aims of the test and the issues being explored. Interviewers will carry out practice mock interviews with colleagues in the SVS team to prepare for the test and will use the protocol above.

5: Results & Recommendations

5.1 When all tests have been completed, the QDU team will analyse the data collected, consult with SVS RAP colleagues and make recommendations for the design of the questionnaire. The results and recommendations will be outlined in a brief report.

Appendix 4.5.2 Focus Group Test Plan for the Sexual Violence Survey

1. INTRODUCTION

The approach to the use of focus groups for the Sexual Violence Survey outlined in this plan is based on the recommendations of the *Guidelines for Pretesting the EU Gender Based Violence Survey Questionnaire, Eurostat (2017)*.

1.1. Purpose of focus groups for the Sexual Violence Survey

The purpose of the focus group will be to explore some key concepts suggested for inclusion in the survey and to consider the survey from the perspective of survivors of sexual violence.

Specifically, concepts to be explored will be selected from the following depending on time constraints:

- a) Collecting data relating to sexual violence, alcohol and drugs.
- b) What is understood by the term “sexual harassment”?
- c) What is understood by the term “sexual stalking” vs. “stalking”?
- d) What are the main reasons that people do not report sexual violence?
- e) How does sexual violence impact the lives of survivors?

2. PROTOCOL

2.1 Format of the Focus Group

Each Focus group should last about 1.5-2 hours and will address questions selected from the list above. Questions will be short and clear and in an open-ended format that requires participants to answer with more than "yes" or "no".

The discussion will begin with broad, open-ended questions and with low emotional intensity issues and then move to more sensitive issues. The format will be as follows:

- Introduction by moderator: to briefly introduce the Sexual Violence Survey and to explain the purpose of the Focus Group.
- Discussion of the key questions as outlined above. Discussion to begin with “less sensitive” topics.
- Close the discussion: moderator to summarise and thank the participants.

2.2 Strategies to recognise the sensitivity of the subject matter will include the following:

- Group discussions will not be recorded. Therefore, a member of the questionnaire design unit will participate only to take notes. This role will be clearly explained to the participants.
- Participants will not be asked to disclose their personal experiences. The discussion will be a general discussion on the issues listed.
- Participants will be asked to sign a consent form that will explain the purpose of the Focus Group and confirm that all feedback will be treated as completely confidential.
- Participants and relevant CSO staff will be given information on the availability of support services should they find themselves affected by any issues raised during the discussion.

- Participants will be reminded at the beginning of the Focus Group that they can leave the discussion at any time.

The **protocol** will be as follows:

- Moderator will welcome participants, briefly outline the SVS and the purpose of the Focus Group.
- Moderator will stress confidentiality, explain how the information will be used, and explain the role of the notetaker.
- Moderator will remind the group that if they are uncomfortable at any stage, they are free to take a break or leave the discussion.
- Moderator will explain the format of the discussion: x number of topics to discuss; time allowed for each.
- Each participant should introduce themselves briefly.
- Moderator begins the discussion of key questions.
- During the discussion, the role of moderator is to stimulate the discussion, make sure that all participants are included, and all issues are covered. Moderator should remember that information should come from participants: the moderator should not offer their own opinion.
- Moderator will lead the discussion using probes:

To elaborate: "Could you give an example?" "You said ..., could I ask you a bit more about that?"
 To clarify: "Could you explain that in a little more detail?" "Can I take you back to something you said earlier?"
 To explore meaning and understanding: "What do you understand by ...?" "What does ... mean to you?"

- At the end of the discussion participants should be given an opportunity to add anything they feel they haven't had a chance to say. The moderator will thank the participants and remind everyone of the confidential nature of the discussion.
- Moderator will ensure that each participant has received information leaflet on the availability of support services should they find themselves affected by any issues raised during the discussion.

3: Recruitment of the group participants

3.1 **Participants** for this test will be selected based on the recommendations of the Eurostat Guidelines. The Guidelines recommend considering participants from:

- Workers in shelters of victims of domestic violence
- Victims of violence
- General population
- Interviewers
- National experts on the topic of gender-based violence
- Stakeholders

Two focus groups will take place. Volunteers from the Sexual Violence Centre Cork will be invited to participate in a focus group in December 2019. A second focus group will take place in early January 2020. Participants for this group will be invited from the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. Each group will have approximately 4 - 6 participants.

4: Moderators

4.1 The groups will be moderated by CSO staff currently working on the Sexual Violence Survey. Moderators will be familiar with the aims of the focus group exercise and the issues being explored.

5: Results & Recommendations

5.1 When all groups have been completed, the Questionnaire Design Unit team will analyse the data collected, consult with SVS RAP colleagues and make recommendations for the design of the questionnaire. The results and recommendations will be outlined in a brief report.

Appendix 4.5.3 Focus Group Test Plan for the Sexual Violence Survey – Survivor pilot

Introduction

The approach to the testing of the Sexual Violence Survey outlined in this plan is based on the recommendations of the Guidelines for Pretesting the EU Gender Based Violence Survey Questionnaire, Eurostat (2017)²¹.

Purpose

The objectives of the test will be to examine several issues with the questionnaire including:

- The overall flow of the questionnaire
- Expanding on areas identified through the Internal Expert review and initial analysis from the collected SVS survey responses
- Focusing on questions which may lead to premature termination or spot skip pattern or logical errors

Due to the qualitative nature of the test, a focus group approach is the most appropriate way to garner this information. After the reviews are complete, the results will be analysed and recommendations for the main survey questionnaire design will be prepared.

Protocol

Format of the evaluation

This test consists of preparatory work for the focus group and the focus group itself.

1. Each participant will work down through the survey independently in their own time and with their own devices to mimic the actual real-life experience of the survey. They can take notes on aspects of the survey they would like to explore and discuss in the focus group. In order to do this, the participants will be furnished with a computer assisted web interview (CAWI) link to the online questionnaire and an authentication code to gain access to the questionnaire 2-3 days prior to the focus group. They will have full functionality to go through the survey i.e. they can go backwards and save and continue. They will be given several codes, so they can enter the survey several times if they wish however we will ask them to go through at least once. And the first attempt on the survey we will ask them to move only forwards to mimic the actual survey design.

They will also be given a scenario to use to answer the questions to respect their privacy however it will be up to them whether they wish to use their own experiences or the scenario. They will be asked to complete the questionnaire as close to the focus group date as possible.

2. Participants will then meet for a group led focus group discussion as described below.

Format of the Focus Group

²¹ <https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/b9bfdb29-ae28-466c-829c-c945c38cdf0e/Guidelines%20for%20pretesting%20EU%20GBV%20survey%20questionnaire.pdf>

The format of this focus group will be a face-to-face interaction and will depend on public health guidelines in place on the agreed date²². The focus group should last about 1.5-2 hours and will discuss the participants views on the flow of the CAWI instrument and their views on potential areas of confusion or areas that may lead to premature termination of the survey from a potential victim of sexual violence perspective. The discussion will be clear and in an open-ended format that requires participants to answer with more than "yes" or "no".

The discussion will begin with broad, open-ended questions and with low emotional intensity issues and then move to more sensitive issues. The format will be as follows:

- Introduction by moderator: to briefly introduce the Sexual Violence Survey and to explain the purpose of the focus group.
- Discussion of the observations brought to the focus group by the selected participants after completing the CAWI survey. Discussion can be guided by moderator to begin with “less sensitive” topics.
- Close the discussion: moderator to summarise and thank the participants.

Strategies to recognise the sensitivity of the subject matter

- Group discussions will not be recorded. Therefore, a member of the questionnaire design unit will participate to take notes or clarify any technical points. This role will be clearly explained to the participants.
- Participants will not be asked to disclose their personal experiences; the discussion will be a general discussion on the objectives listed above. In addition, they will also not be asked to use their own personal experiences when entering data on the questionnaire as a common scenario will be provided.
- Participants will be asked to sign a consent form that will explain the purpose of the focus group and confirm that all feedback will be treated as completely confidential.
- Participants and relevant CSO staff will be given information on the availability of support services should they find themselves affected by any issues raised during the discussion.
- Participants will be reminded at the beginning of the focus group that they can leave the discussion at any time.

The protocol will be as follows:

- Moderator will welcome participants, briefly outline the SVS and the purpose of the Focus Group.
- Moderator will stress confidentiality, explain how the information will be used, and explain the role of the notetaker.
- Moderator will remind the group that if they are uncomfortable at any stage, they are free to take a break or leave the discussion.
- Moderator will explain the format of the discussion: open-semi-structured format that requires participants to actively participate.
- Each participant should introduce themselves briefly.
- Moderator begins the discussion of key questions.

²² If public health guidance limits face to face restrictions, an online session will be set up for the participants – if they are in agreement. As a further way to protect anonymity of participants the consent form which has to be signed will be sent to the service provider to arrange for virtual signing and submit them to the office.

- During the discussion, the role of moderator is to stimulate the discussion, make sure that all participants are included, and all issues are covered. Moderator should remember that information should come from participants: the moderator should not offer their own opinion.
- Moderator will lead the discussion using probes:

To elaborate: “Could you give an example?” “You said ..., could I ask you a bit more about that?”
 To clarify: “Could you explain that in a little more detail?” “Can I take you back to something you said earlier?”
 To explore meaning and understanding: “What do you understand by ...?” “What does ... mean to you?”

- At the end of the discussion participants should be given an opportunity to add anything they feel they haven’t had a chance to say. The moderator will thank the participants and remind everyone of the confidential nature of the discussion.
- Moderator will ensure that each participant has received an information leaflet on the availability of support services should they find themselves affected by any issues raised during the discussion.

Recruitment of the group participants

Recruitment of participants will be initiated by Helen McGrath, CSO SVS statistician, through liaising with support services who focus on supporting survivors of sexual violence. As noted previously, the participants will be furnished with a computer assisted web interview (CAWI) link to the online questionnaire, an authentication code to gain access to the questionnaire and a scenario to follow. The group will have approximately 5-7 participants. A decision will be made on whether more than one group is required once the focus group report is completed.

Moderators

The groups will be moderated by CSO staff currently working on the Sexual Violence Survey. Moderators will be familiar with the aims of the focus group exercise and the issues being explored.

Results & Recommendations

When the focus group has been completed, the Questionnaire Design Unit team will analyse the data collected, consult with SVS RAP colleagues and make recommendations for the design of the questionnaire. The results and recommendations will be outlined in a brief report.

Appendix 4.6

Pilot overview

The main purpose of the SVS pilot was to test the feasibility of the web-based data collection (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI)) approach and test the questionnaire and field operations approach before the main survey. Publication of prevalence figures or nationally representative data was not within scope for this pilot. In summary, the pilot was based on two approaches:

- A field-based approach to test recruitment of the household and selection of respondent at random by an interviewer. The web based SVS survey was issued to that randomly selected respondent. There were 1,997 households involved in this test.
- A web-based approach where the household was recruited by letter and a respondent aged 18 years and over from the household was asked to complete the survey online. There were 1,994 households involved in this test

The pilot ran from the 19th April to the 26th June 2021. During this time, public health guidelines (due to the COVID-19 pandemic) were observed at all times during the pilot, leading to some limitations on the extent that field work could operate. Field staff were limited to no more than 15 minutes at a household and to one day in the field, but it could be extended to two days subject to prior approval from the Office. Some feedback from field staff highlighted that increases in COVID infections in a region, for example, in Limerick in early June 2021, had an effect on respondent's willingness to engage with field staff within that region. The HSE ransomware attack was announced on the 14th May 2021 and based on feedback from our field staff, may have also impacted on the ability to recruit some households for the pilot.

Overview of findings from the pilot

Notwithstanding these issues, there were a lot of valuable findings from the pilot. Related to the questionnaire, initial observations from looking at the respondent module show that despite the majority of people finding the questionnaire sensitive, they found it quick to complete, and found using the website easy. A qualitative focus group with survivors of sexual violence identified some areas for additional work to be completed for the questionnaire, such as including ways to signal progression²³ through the questionnaire and improving the format of some questions (particularly the disability and consent questions).

Related to the field operations, there were two feedback sessions with field-based staff and a feedback session with the telephone staff. Overall, field staff felt they were prepared for the field and shared their experiences, including suggestions for improvements to survey introductions, field work approaches and the design of the instrument with which they collected the basic information.

On the test of the approaches using the online instrument, there were several important findings. Response rates are calculated using data from both complete and partial interviews as the majority of the partial cases did answer the key questions within the survey. Overall, one in four (24.7%) households responded to the web based only approach. The field-based approach had two stages – selection of the random person from within the household and the completion of the survey. Two in five households (42.1%) completed the random selection stage with only two in five (42%) of these

²³ This is still in development and is planned to be delivered.

completing the survey, leading to 17.7% response rate overall. Further details are available in Table 4.6.1.

Minimising distress for respondents was a key aim. The majority of respondents who answered the respondent module found that the questionnaire was sensitive, regardless of their lifetime experiences (64% of respondents who had never experienced sexual violence found the questionnaire very or quite sensitive compared to 74% of those who had experienced sexual violence). The perception of the time spent on the survey can be a proxy for respondent burden. Notwithstanding that respondents found the survey sensitive; the vast majority of respondents found the survey quick to complete regardless of their lifetime experiences (almost four in five respondents (80%) who had never experienced sexual violence found the questionnaire very or quite quick compared to 74% of those who had experienced sexual violence).

Overall, the majority of respondents were female (55% versus 45% of males). All age groups were represented. One in twenty (5%) of the responses were from the 18-24 year old age group and 16% of the responses were from those aged over 65. The overall average duration of the survey was 16 minutes with no major differences for those who had experienced sexual violence (18 minutes on average) and those who had not (14 minutes on average). However, some surveys did take longer - the longest was 57 minutes.

Table 4.6.1 Overview of the data collection metrics for the pilot

Safety of the Person: Data Collection Metrics	
CAWI-Only	
Total Sample Size	1,994
Number of complete cases ²⁴	360
Number of partial cases	132
Number of cases where survey accessed using code but did not proceed	39
Response Rate	18.1%
Response Rate (incl. Partial)	24.7%
CAPI-Recruit	
Total Sample Size	1,997
Complete interview with householder ²⁵	840
Number of complete cases ¹	283
Number of partial cases	71
Number of cases where survey accessed using code but did not proceed	46
Quick-Count Response Rate	42.1%
Response Rate	14.2%
Response rate (incl. Partial)	17.7%
Total Complete Cases	643
Total Partial Cases	203
Total Accessed Using Code but did not complete	85

²⁴ A complete case is one where the final question, SV_248 – Questionnaire sign off screen, is answered i.e. “click on finish to exit”. This does not mean all the previous questions were answered. A partial case is one where the final question is not answered.

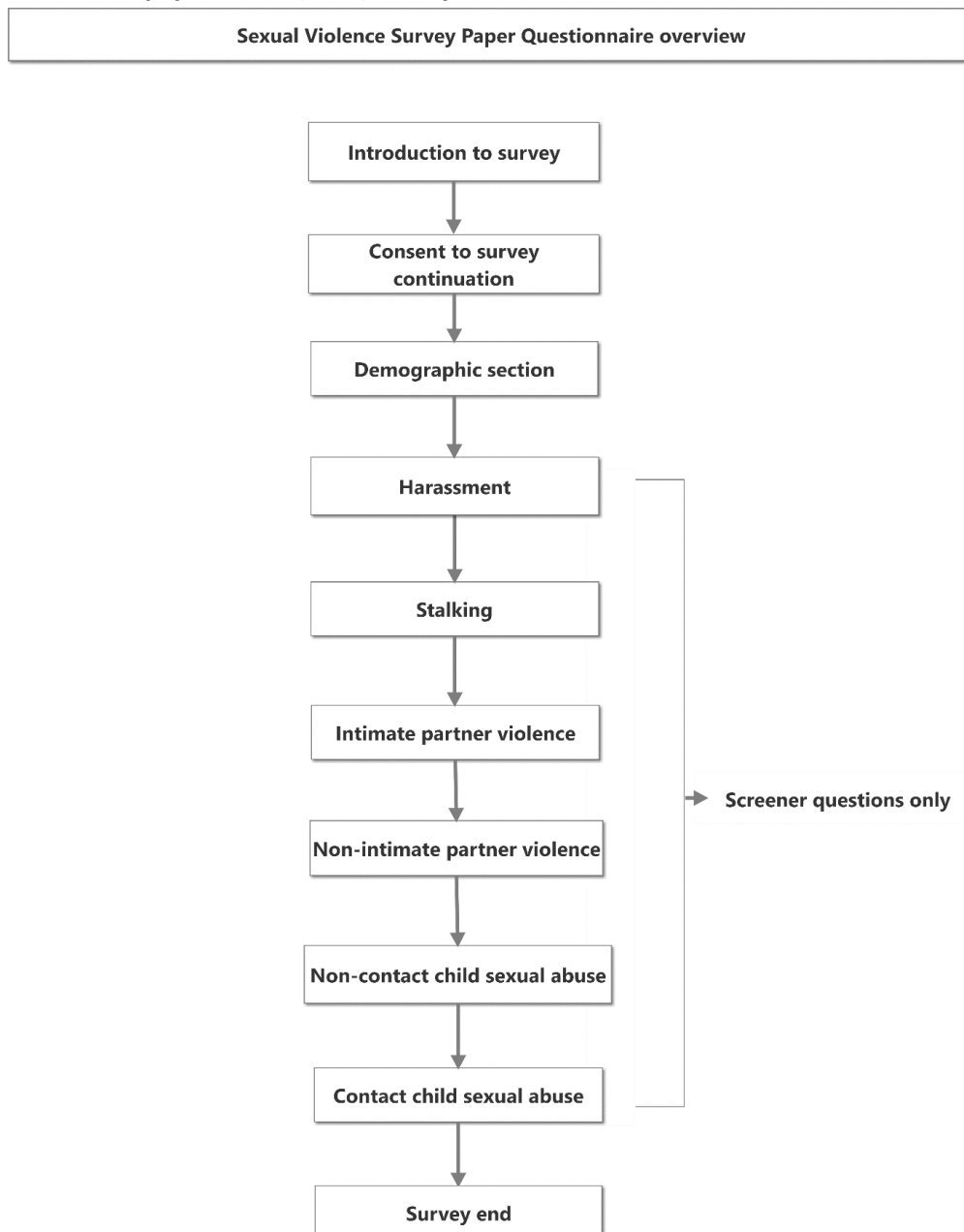
²⁵ A complete interview with householder is one where an email address is gathered for the respondent chosen at random (either directly from the chosen respondent or by proxy from the householder) or if the respondent agrees to receive a letter to complete the interview

Appendix 4.7

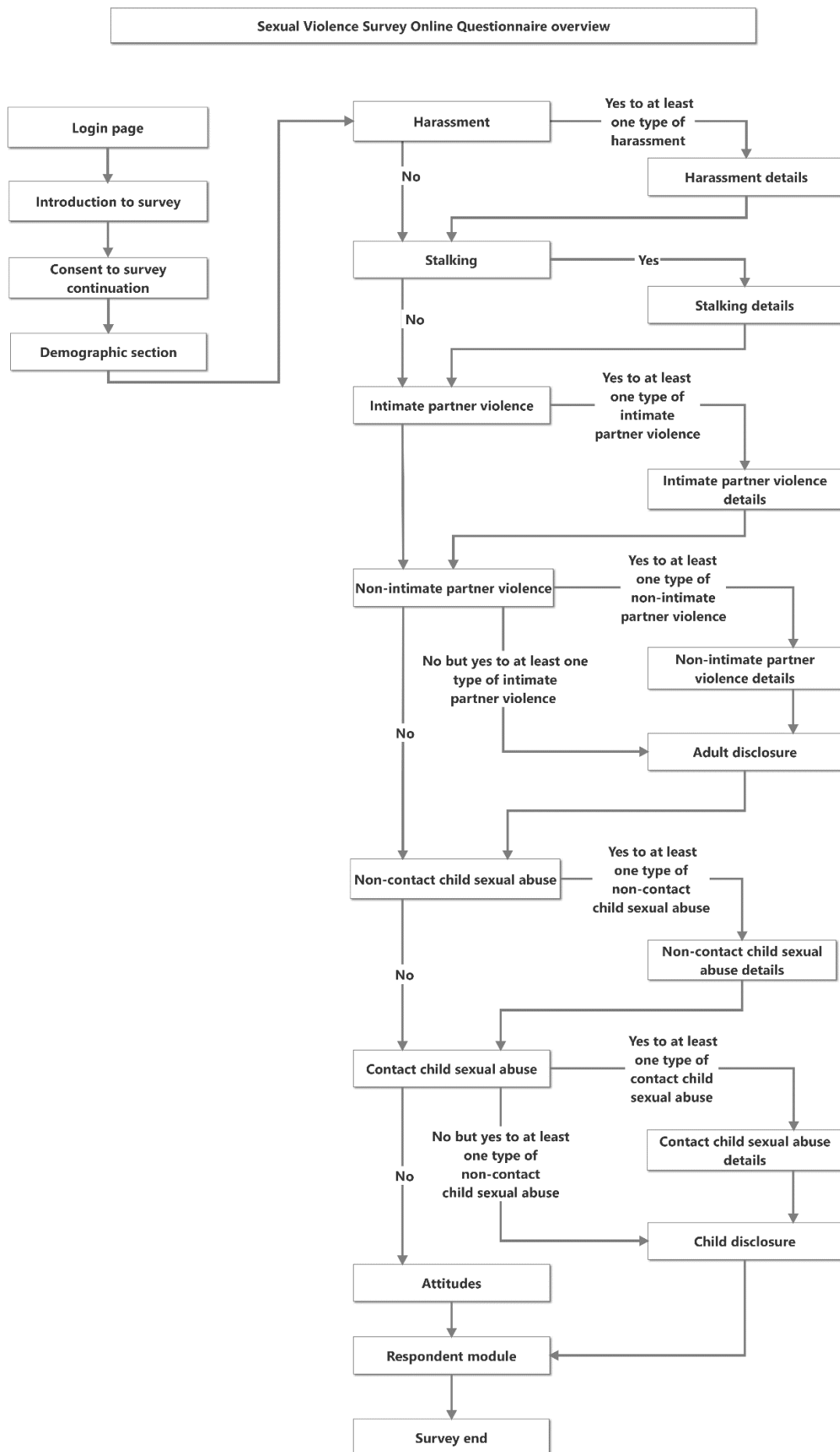
Flow of the surveys

The flow of the various survey instruments from the respondent's point of view are provided in this appendix. The PAPI survey instrument is shorter to reduce respondent burden. The CAWI and CAPI/CASI survey flow are very similar. However, the CAPI/CASI instrument flow is subject to change as the instrument is still in development.

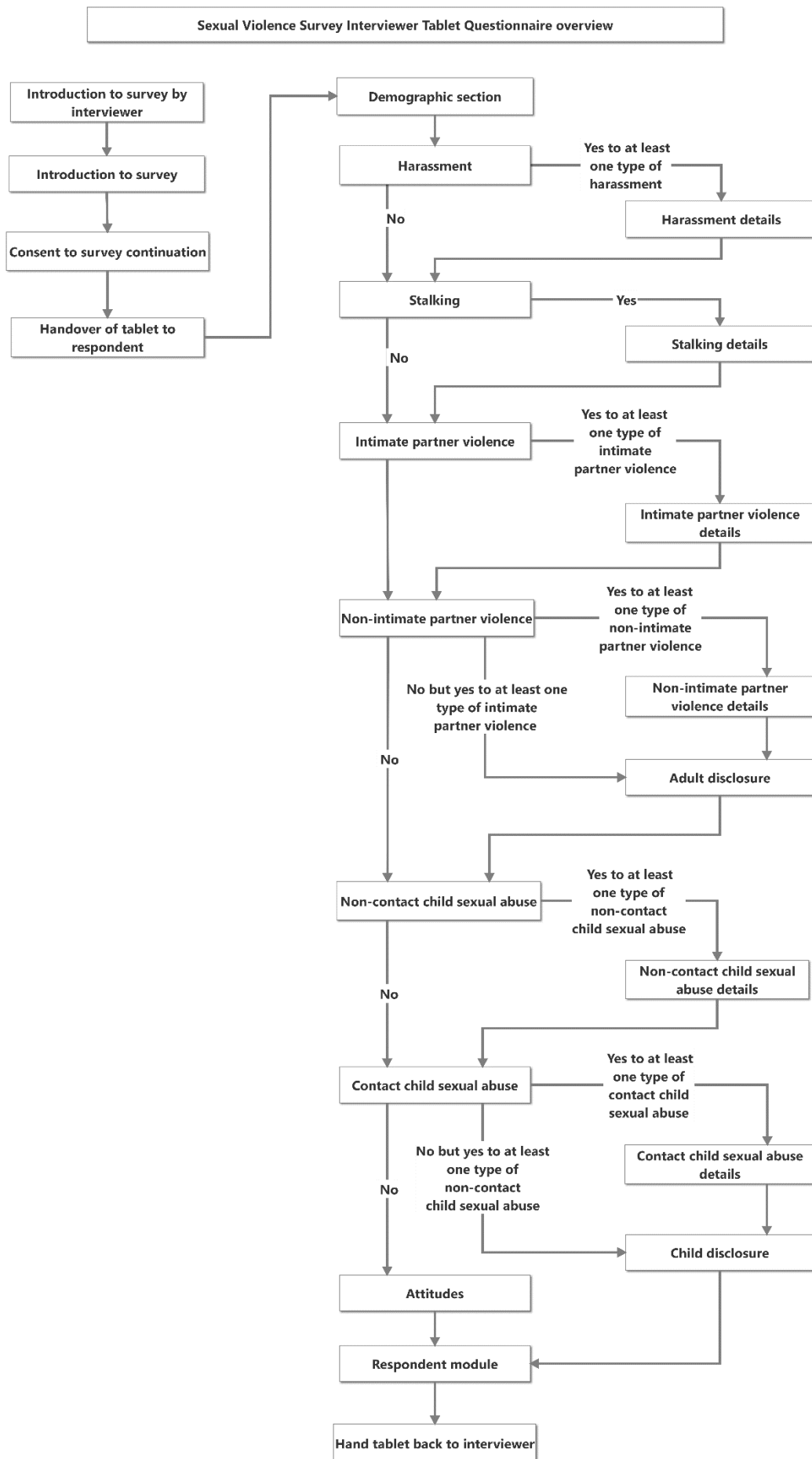
Flow of the paper based (PAPI) survey



Flow of the online (CAWI) survey



Flow of the tablet based (CAPI/CASI) survey



Appendix 4.8

Communications approach prior to and during survey

The CSO sometimes used awareness campaigns for surveys. The Census of Population is supported by a national campaign through radio, TV and online channels. The most recent Census of Agriculture was supported through adverts in relevant newspaper, newspaper articles, and social media advertising. Awareness campaigns have also been run for CSO household surveys. As regards the SVS, it is proposed to run a proactive communications and awareness raising campaign. There is significant societal interest in this survey, and the importance of boosting response rates and validating the survey for respondents are important considerations.

As a survey on a very sensitive topic, ensuring the legitimacy of the survey for respondents is important. Prior awareness of the survey in the field may encourage a greater response. However, there are some risks from raising awareness of the survey when data collection is underway - perpetrators of sexual violence who are aware of the nature of an ongoing survey could react negatively, for example, by preventing respondents from taking part.

The EU survey on gender-based violence against women and other forms of inter-personal violence (EU-GBV) is being conducted by 18 European countries and Iceland. While not a dedicated sexual violence survey like what is being conducted in Ireland, the EU-GBV does address very sensitive issues of violence, including sexual violence. The Eurostat methodological manual for the survey includes guidance on the issue of using the media to promote the survey which highlighted the pros and cons of such, but ultimately left it as a decision for each country to make itself. The majority of countries (16 out of 19) running the EU-GBV did not run a media campaign. Reasons included that this was a difficult topic to explain, to avoid potentially antagonising perpetrators in domestic violent situations or that they didn't normally conduct such campaigns for a household survey.

There is a particular context in Ireland regarding sexual violence currently:

- The Third Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence will be launched in the coming weeks by the Department of Justice and it is very likely to include a reference that SVS will be planned to be in the field in 2022.
- Recent tragic events of violence and sexual violence in Ireland have generated a lot of societal and media interest on the issue of violence in general, and the data gaps around violence in particular.
- There is a high degree of awareness of the forthcoming SVS among Irish stakeholders in the sexual violence support community. Indeed, CSO has been very proactive in keeping all project stakeholders up to date on SVS progress.

It is proposed that a limited media and awareness raising campaign will be engaged in, cognisant of the need to properly explain and update policy makers, stakeholders and the public about a very complex survey in a measured way.

At a high level, the following is the proposed approach:

- for the respondent - survey invite letter introducing the survey, survey brochures, online material including the GDPR Transparency Notice, the “Taking part in a survey” section of the CSO website.
- for main project stakeholders – information shared via the SVS Steering Group and Liaison Group structure.
- for the public/media/stakeholders – before data collection begins, a press release explaining the purpose of the survey will be issued. This will stress the importance of participation, and dealing with other connected issues, for example, explaining the random selection of respondents.

In addition, the CSO Communications unit is exploring other proportionate ways to promote the survey, for example, advertising on social media channels to raise the general awareness of the survey, while highlighting that the survey is a sample survey so persons cannot opt into the survey and must instead be randomly selected. The communications campaign is proposed to have four key messages:

- This survey is very important for Irish society – Ireland needs data on the extent to which sexual violence is prevalent in Ireland in order to better help survivors.
- “You” were selected at random.
- This survey is for men and women.
- Those with no experiences of sexual violence are as relevant as those who have experienced sexual violence in order that high quality prevalence data can be supplied.

Due to the sensitivity of the topic, the tone of any messaging will be factual, informative and non-emotional, but respectful.

Appendix 4.9

Example of the proposed letter of invitation

This text is a draft of proposed wording provided for the letter of invitation. It is subject to change – awaiting input from the CSO Communication unit.

Dear Sir/Madam,



Take part in our survey

I would like to invite you to take part in the Central Statistics Office (CSO) national Safety of the Person Survey.

The CSO cannot survey every person in the state so you have been chosen randomly, along with thousands of others throughout the country, to take part in this very important survey. Your participation is important and will help to ensure services and information are provided to those who require them.

Although this topic may be a sensitive one for respondents, it is extremely important that Ireland has the highest standards of official statistics, therefore, your participation is important. This process must involve collecting information both from people who have experienced some of the topics covered in this survey and from those who have not.

This survey does contain questions on sensitive topics, but it is important that we collect this information.

How you can take part

We ask that you complete the survey. The survey can be carried out on any device, including a mobile phone.

You can complete it by either copying the following link into a web browser or scanning the QR code using a mobile device: <https://socialsurveys.cso.ie/weblogin>

You will then be asked to enter the following **access key**:



Confidential, anonymous and secure

I can assure you that, under the Statistics Act, 1993, all information you give the CSO is guaranteed confidential and secure and could never be used to identify you or your household in any way. A Transparency Notice for the study is available at the following link: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/tn/survey>.

To find out more about the CSO and household surveys:

- Visit www.cso.ie
- Telephone the CSO head office on 021-4535341, 9am to 8pm Mon - Fri and 10am to 12pm on Sat.
- Email us at sop@cso.ie

On behalf of the CSO, thank you for taking the time to read this letter and we hope that you will consider assisting us.

Yours sincerely

Pádraig Dalton
Director General
Central Statistics Office



An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh Bóthar na Sceiche Airde, Corcaigh, Éire, T12 X00E
Central Statistics Office Skehard Road, Cork, Ireland, T12 X00E



Up to two reminder letters will be issued if there is no response after the letter of invitation. The reminder letter will highlight that an interviewer may visit to conduct the survey if there is no response to the letter.

Appendix 4.10

Microdata access

Introduction

The CSO will be solely responsible for publishing the survey results in line with section 13(a) to (c) of the Statistics Act, 1993.

It will be necessary to adopt a differentiated approach to dissemination to meet the needs of a wide range of audiences. A publication that contains appropriate accessible content will be designed for the public, press and assorted media outlets. The needs of NGOs and state agencies will be met primarily via customised tabulations as required. And a separate approach to meet the needs of the research community for access to microdata will be facilitated. This is already in place for researchers.

Access to microdata

The primary objective of the CSO in providing access to microdata is to support the research community and to ensure that maximum usage is made of the data collected by the CSO. This approach supports the move towards evidence-based policymaking, has the potential to reduce the cost of research and also helps to avoid duplicate data collections.

The information available to the CSO (whether directly or indirectly) is used by the Office for statistical purposes only. The manner in which the information is protected is outlined in the Statistics Act, 1993. As the issue of confidentiality is of paramount importance to the work of the Office, a CSO Code of Practice on Statistical Confidentiality²⁶ has been published and is strictly enforced.

Under the provisions of the Statistics Act, 1993, the CSO may provide access to microdata files under strict conditions to ensure that the integrity and confidentiality of data collected under the Act is maintained. Access is granted to microdata for scientific and statistical purposes only.

The CSO provides access to two types of microdata files:

- **Anonymised Microdata Files (AMFs)**
Anonymised microdata files²⁷ contain microdata that are provided for statistical/research purposes only in such a form that the information related to an identifiable entity/person cannot be directly (so, no direct identifiers) or indirectly (in many cases having undergone additional anonymisation procedures such as "top-coding", for example, specific age re-coded to an age class) identified.
- **Research Microdata Files (RMFs)**
RMFs are unit record files that do not contain direct identifiers but where the risk of disclosure through indirect identification is considered to be significant. RMFs are not statistical products, as our products relate to aggregated statistical analysis, but are research

²⁶ <https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/statisticalconfidentiality/codeofpractice/>

²⁷ <https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/dataforresearchers/anonymisedmicrodatafiles/>

files that are made available to persons authorised to access such files under the Statistics Act, 1993 subject to strict criteria.

The RMF Policy is available here:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/dataforresearchers/policies/#d.en.210341>

Approval for access to RMF microdata

Access to RMFs is strictly controlled and can only be granted within the framework of the Statistics Act, 1993. In order for RMF access to be granted, approval must be granted by a Statistician, a Senior Statistician, a Director/Assistant Director General and by the Director General of the CSO. Approval will be considered for RMF access only where a researcher meets the following requirements:

- The researcher is employed by or is formally related to a registered Research Organisation.
- The researcher has registered with the CSO in order to be eligible to apply for access to RMFs.
- The researcher has completed CSO researcher training which reinforces the terms and conditions of the RMF Standard Agreement.
- The researcher agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of the RMF Standard Agreement.
- The researcher signs a Declaration of Secrecy and is appointed an Officers of Statistics.

Further details on the application process for researchers is available here:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/dataforresearchers/rmfapplicationprocedure/>

Appendix 4.11

European Statistics Code of Practice

The European Statistics Code of Practice is the cornerstone of the quality framework and sets the standards for developing, producing and disseminating European statistics. It provides a reference for reviewing the implementation of the Code and increases transparency in the European Statistical System.

It consists of 16 principles grouped into 3 main areas as outlined below:

Institutional Environment

1. Professional independence
- 1.bis Coordination and cooperation
2. Mandate for data collection
3. Adequacy of resources
4. Quality commitment
5. Statistical confidentiality
6. Impartiality & objective

Statistical Processes

7. Sound Methodology

8. Appropriate statistical procedures
9. Non-excessive burden on respondents
10. Cost effectiveness

Statistical Output

11. Relevance
12. Accuracy & reliability
13. Timeliness & punctuality
14. Coherence & comparability
15. Accessibility & clarity

Each principle contains detailed indicators outlining how the principle is to operate in practice (84 indicators in total). This essentially outlines how to be a 'good' provider of statistical information.

Compliance with the Code of Practice is periodically assessed by means of peer review and strict follow-up of the improvement actions identified. Two rounds of peer review have been completed (see below). The next round is being conducted over the period 2021-2023 and the peer review for CSO has occurred in February 2022. More details on the peer review process can be found here: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/peer-reviews>

Reports from the European Statistics Code of Practice peer reviews for Ireland are available here:

2007 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4187653/5777641/PEER_REVIEW_IE_2007-EN.PDF/afa82986-e6aa-4534-b050-07aa9f872a4b?version=1.0

2015 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/64157/4372828/2015-IE-improvement+actions/b3aa45e2-68f1-4ce3-8655-c2665bf2238b>

For more information on the European Statistics Code of Practice <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/overview>

Appendix 4.12

Minimising under-reporting in the SVS

The collection of data on sexual violence involves the use of sensitive questions. Sensitive questions are identified by Tourange and Lee²⁸ as those which display some of the following characteristics:

- Intrusive in nature.
- Include a potential threat of disclosure – when answering a question may result in harm, for example, admitting to drug use or a crime.
- Introduce social desirability – when a question is answered in a socially acceptable fashion rather than with the truth.

The impact of this is higher non-response rates, both in terms of unit and item non-response. Unit nonresponse occurs when a respondent refuses to participate in the survey; item nonresponse occurs when respondents do not answer particular questions in the survey.

This can lead to a biased measurement and is a particular issue for sexual violence measurement²⁹. The reasons for this apparent bias in the measurement of the prevalence of sexual violence in surveys are varied. Notwithstanding media reports of specific or alleged crimes involving sexual violence, the topic itself is generally not part of everyday conversation. It may provoke feelings of unease, nervousness and awkwardness in those who are not used to speaking openly about the topic or using that specific language. For those who have direct or indirect experience of harassment or sexual violence, feelings of shame, fear, emotional distress may be evoked. This can lead to either an unwillingness to participate or disclose any instances of sexual violence.

This fear in disclosing may also be exacerbated when there is:

- A lack of trust in the statistical process.
- If the survey respondent feels unsafe or insecure in the environment when the survey is being conducted.

Interestingly, the presence of an interviewer itself can have a positive or negative effect on disclosure rates. When the interviewer is well trained, experienced in the topic and the language used, they can be a key figure in ensuring the respondent is supported appropriately when disclosing painful experiences in an interview setting. However, the converse is true, when an interviewer, by asking the question to a respondent, can induce social desirability where the respondent gives an answer that would be more socially acceptable than the truth.

To limit under-reporting these are the aspects highlighted when designing the survey:

- The choice of mode: The CSO Methodology Unit was tasked with producing a report examining the literature on mode options for a survey on sexual violence. They looked at the experience of other National Statistical Institutes as well as approaches used in academic

²⁸ Tourangeau, R. and T. Yan (2007). Asking Sensitive Questions: The impact of data collection mode, question format and question context. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 60, No. 2, pp. 275-304.

²⁹ Tourange and Lee note, in reference to sexual violence, that “*Biases introduced through under-reporting of instances of sexual violence will far exceed all other forms of survey and sampling errors.*”

papers. Their report shows that the mode can have a large impact on underreporting when surveying sensitive topics. They recommended a face-to-face survey with self-completion for the sensitive questions (for example, on an interviewer's tablet). A web-based survey was noted as an alternative, but the potential risks around higher non-response rates were noted as an issue to manage.

- The online mode for the SVS will allow the respondent to select the setting and timing that ensure that they can remain private when entering the answers. A self-completion mode like this also reduces the tendency for social desirability in surveys such as these. The use of self-completion where an interviewer provides the tablet upon which the survey can be completed also maintains this sense of privacy.
- There is a risk that there may be a proportion of people who may be unable to access or able to use computers to complete the survey. This was observed during the pilot. In order to support those who wish to access the survey but do not have the technical ability, a paper form will be provided to these respondents. Like the online mode, it will allow the respondent to choose when and where they want to complete the survey.
- The choice of survey organisation: The CSO is widely seen as an independent body with high levels of public trust.
- Clarity for complex concepts: In order to encourage respondents to identify their personal experiences as being relevant for the survey, the concepts have been broken down to constituent parts in as much as possible. For example, sexual violence for those over 17 is detailed by partner and non-partner experiences. Research has shown that respondents are less likely to disclose experiences with their partner in prevalence surveys. This may be due to recall issues or minimisation of the experiences. Hence, providing more a separate section on the sexual violence experience with a partner may prompt the respondent to recall these experiences.
- Best practice in questionnaire design was employed when designing the questions:
 - The survey was designed to reduce any element of potential victim blaming language or phrasing. There are no direct questions on alcohol/drugs consumption which could be misconstrued.
 - The questions are sensitively phrased, and this was tested through focus group and cognitive testing with volunteers.
 - The topics in the survey flow are graded from less sensitive to more sensitive though the survey, for example, demographic to harassment to adult experience to child experiences.
 - The questions relating to experiences are also graded by level of contact, for example, questions on begin touched without consent move to touching another without your consent and then move to penetration.
 - The questions do not use terminology which can be misunderstood or is emotive, for example, anal sex is used rather than homosexual sex, sexual intercourse rather than rape.

- Significant testing of the questions/concepts prior to going in the field with relevant groups, for example, survivors of sexual violence.
- The language and phrasing used in the questionnaire was assessed by a speech and language expert to ensure it was as understandable as possible to aid those with lower literacy abilities.

Appendix 4.13

Managing respondent distress through SVS

The topic of sexual violence is an emotive and sensitive one. Collecting clear and objective data on this topic is challenging due to the personal reaction to the topic and the difficulty in terms of categorising of experiences. For a survey on lifetime prevalence, recalling previous experiences can be deeply affecting. In addition, the nature of these experiences and the differing personal interpretations of consent may mean that people are not consciously aware that they are survivors of these types of experiences.

The design of the survey means that the sensitive questions are solely completed through self-completion and facilitates several modes for the respondent to complete. While this can limit a dynamic assessment of respondent distress throughout the survey, there are many advantages to this, for example, removing an interviewer from the interview in the case of the online and paper modes, giving a respondent control as to when and where they want to complete the survey. These can, in themselves, reduce distress.

An overview of the ways in which managing respondent distress has been addressed for the SVS is given below:

- Questionnaire design stage
 - Significant work done in the early stages of the SVS work on reducing the data points identified in the Scoping Group report to a more reasonable and realistic set of data needs.
 - The questions were tested prior to piloting using those with experience of sexual violence and service providers.
 - The language and phrasing used were reviewed by clinical psychologists and a speech and language therapist prior to piloting.
 - Filtering through the survey will ensure that people are not asked questions which are inappropriate, for example, questions requesting details of experiences are not asked to those who do not disclose relevant experiences.
 - Questions were designed to be quickly answered using yes/no answer categories where possible.
 - The attitude section will not be asked of those who disclose any experiences of harassment, stalking, adult or childhood sexual violence due to the risk that it may be distressing to finish the survey on this section after disclosing sensitive experiences.
 - The questionnaire has been through an extensive pilot in 2021 with a sample size of almost 4,000. Findings from this pilot have been incorporated into the main survey questionnaire.
- Survey invite stage
 - Through the survey invite process, the survey topic will be referred to in a general sense (however important features such as the potentially distressing nature of questions, and ways to manage privacy will be shared in the introductory material for the respondent).

- At door
 - When the interviewer introducing the survey to the selected respondent, the use of the generic name for the survey will reduce embarrassment, awkwardness or anger. This also leads to potentially better data quality as the respondent will not be perhaps primed to dismiss their involvement in the survey if they feel they have had no experiences of sexual violence.
- During the survey
 - The introduction to the survey will be clear that the topic of the survey is sexual violence. This introduction will also give the rationale why it was not introduced as such prior to that point. The web survey introduction will also give key advice – complete when you are on your own without being overseen, the survey can be ended at any time, there is no compulsion to answer every question. For more detail on the introduction, see Appendix 5.4.
 - The paper-based mode survey instrument, as noted previously, allows the respondent to engaged at a time and place that suits them. In addition, the survey instrument has been shortened to the key prevalence questions. This was done to reduce the respondent burden, by removing the filtering and detailed questions and hence to reduce the respondent’s distress. Also contact details for support services will be available at the beginning and the end of the survey form.
 - The face-to-face interaction can be rescheduled before beginning the survey interview, to a date and time that suits the respondent, ensuring the respondent is in control. The interviewer will begin the survey with the non-sensitive questions building rapport with the respondent and reducing the number of questions to be asked in the self-completion section. Once the sensitive section is reached the tablet is handed over to the respondent so that they are not asked the sensitive questions directly.
The interviewer will be trained to be unobtrusive while the respondent completes the survey themselves. However, the interviewer will also be trained to recognise respondent distress and how to provide details of support services in a non-judgemental fashion.
- Information on support services will be provided at the beginning and end of the survey. In addition, a localised list of services grouped by county will be provided if the respondent wishes to select their NUTS region from a drop-down list at the end of the survey.
 - The non-judgemental language used reduces the possibility of inadvertent victim blaming. This is evident in the description given for intimate partner relationships.
 - The sections in the survey and questions within those sections are graded from less sensitive experiences to more sensitive experiences.
- After the survey
 - Information in support services will be provided in other relevant areas of the website, for example, the “Taking part in a survey?” section of the website, the information page on the development of the survey. The “Taking part in a survey?” section will be freely available as long as the survey is in the field. The information on the development of the survey will be available after the survey closes so support information will be available if a respondent wishes to access it afterwards.

- There is a possibility that respondents may ring the Office following completion of the survey requesting further details on the survey generally. Any queries on the survey and its methodology will be directed to staff who work on the project, and they will have received disclosure training. How these staff will be supported is outlined in Appendix 6.1.

Appendix 5.1

Statistical Confidentiality

Information provided by respondents to surveys is strictly confidential and may only be used for statistical compilation and analysis purposes. All CSO staff sign a Declaration of Secrecy under Section 21 of the Statistics Act and become an Officer of Statistics. Information relating to an identifiable person may not be disclosed to any person other than an Officer of Statistics during their duties. As a rule, confidential or personal information, as defined in the Statistics Act 1993 and the Data Protection Acts, may not be copied or transmitted in any format outside the CSO offices or IT systems. This is contained in the CSO Code of Practice on Statistical Confidentiality which relates to the protection of the confidentiality of the individual information, relating to persons and undertakings, collected by the CSO.

Relevant extracts from Statistics Act, 1993

Declaration of secrecy

21. Every person shall before assuming duties as an officer of statistics sign a declaration in the following form -

"I _____, solemnly declare that I will fully and honestly fulfil my duties as an officer of statistics in conformity with the requirements of the Statistics Act, 1993, and of all orders thereunder, and that I will not, except in the performance of my duties under that Act and such orders, disclose or make known during my service as an officer of statistics or at any time thereafter, any matter which comes to my knowledge relating to any person, family, household or undertaking by reason of my service as an officer of statistics."

Restrictions on use of information

32. All information furnished by a person, undertaking or public authority under this Act shall be used only for statistical compilation and analysis purposes.

Prohibition on disclosure of information

33. (1) No information obtained in any way under this Act or the repealed enactments which can be related to an identifiable person or undertaking shall, except with the written consent of that person or undertaking or the personal representative or next-of-kin of a deceased person, be disseminated, shown or communicated to any person or body except as follows -

(a) for the purposes of a prosecution for an offence under this Act;

(b) to officers of statistics in the course of their duties under this Act;

(c) for the purposes of recording such information solely for the use of the Office in such form and manner as is provided for by a contract in writing made by the Director General which protects its confidentiality to his satisfaction.

Misuse of information

38. Any person who uses information furnished under this Act or the repealed enactments in contravention of section 32 of this Act or wilfully discloses information relating to any identifiable person or undertaking in contravention of section 33 of this Act shall be guilty of an offence.

Appendix 5.2

Disclosure management and the SVS survey

The CSO operates on a strict basis of statistical confidentiality, which is enshrined in the Statistics Act 1993. No data collected in the course of a survey can be used for any non-statistical purpose. This protection is considered the fundamental bedrock of statistical quality. Without this, the reliability and representative nature of the data would be compromised, undermining the value for research, analysis or policy purposes.

The primary purpose of the Sexual Violence Survey is to gather data that will provide statistics on the prevalence of sexual abuse and violence in Ireland. The survey is not designed to detect, investigate, or assist in the prosecution of criminal offences.

The nature of the survey itself will result in information indicating or confirming incidents of sexual violence being shared. These incidents may involve children or vulnerable adults, and be either historic, ongoing or where there may be a risk of recurrence in the future.

Child welfare and protection legislation requires the reporting to relevant authorities of incidents or knowledge regarding children or vulnerable people at risk. Compliance with relevant legislation is a requirement of this project. The relevant legislation is:

- The Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
This Act focus on the protection of children and certain vulnerable adults. It creates offences for withholding information relating to certain arrestable offences, including sexual offences.

A combined approach to manage both the requirement for confidentiality and the moral and legal obligations was considered by the CSO and the Attorney General's Office. The following is the position:

- Any data/information collected under the Statistics Act would remain confidential, for example, any data collected as part of a data collection instrument. This is current CSO practice.
- Any data/information obtained outside of the Statistics Act could be subject to disclosure, for example, visual observations of neglect, oral disclosures by respondents identifying a risk to a child or vulnerable person. This is current CSO practice.
- The survey will not directly identify a named perpetrator.
- Sensitive data will be collected anonymously.

Key points for the SVS survey

Any data/information collected under the Statistics Act will remain confidential

- All survey responses are contained within instruments which are collected under the Statistics Act.
- Respondents can trust that any information disclosed in the instruments will remain secure. The questionnaire will refer to this point of confidentiality in the introduction.

Any data/information obtained outside of the Statistics Act could be subject to disclosure:

- For those who have been encouraged to go online after an interviewer visit, or those who respond via self-completion on the interviewer's tablet or by paper - as the interviewer will be present at the house - there is a risk that information relevant to this point may be observed. This risk is an existing risk for all current CSO household surveys and current interviewer training addresses interviewer responsibilities in this area.
This training focuses on three elements; the seriousness of the offence (sexual violence is a serious offence), whether there is a child or vulnerable person at risk and whether the interviewer has information that would be useful in a prosecution. If an interviewer has information that a serious offence has occurred or will occur and is aware a child or vulnerable person is at risk then the field co-ordinator is contacted, who then reports it to the field manager in the CSO for consideration and decision. CSO's in-house Legal Unit will also be consulted. This process flow can be seen in Figure 5.2.1.
This would be the same process no matter the medium – whether the interviewer is told directly, or the interviewer visually observes something when with the respondent, or whether a respondent writes something on the paper form (outside of answering the survey questions).
- For those who reply using the online option without any interviewer interaction – there is no facility for the respondent to disclose information outside of the survey instrument as there are no free text fields in the sensitive sections.

The survey does not ask questions which could directly identify a named perpetrator:

- There are no requests for named individuals in the questionnaire.
- The questionnaire requests the relationship of the perpetrator to the respondent and the response categories contain a broad group, for example, parent (mother/father/step-mother/step-father).
- The personal data used to randomly select and contact the selected person and the survey responses will be stored in separate locations. See Appendix 4.5 for further information.

Sensitive data will be collected anonymously:

- All sensitive data is collected via a self-completion method.
- For the CAWI approach: Access details (authentication code) for the survey will be designed to ensure that the household or an individual is not inadvertently identifiable. An IP address is not collected as part of the paradata nor as part of the questionnaire.
The respondent will use the access details provided to open the survey but the link between their personal identifiers and the access details will be broken once the survey is returned to CSO.
- For the CAPI/CASI approach: The name and address of the respondent, used to locate the respondent, are stored in one program on the interviewer tablet, the case management system. The survey itself is accessed using a separate program. Once the survey is complete, the case details including the name and address are removed from the tablet. The interviewer cannot reopen the survey responses after the survey is complete.
- For the PAPI approach: Blank forms will be offered to the respondent. The PAPI survey will not request any name or address on the form.

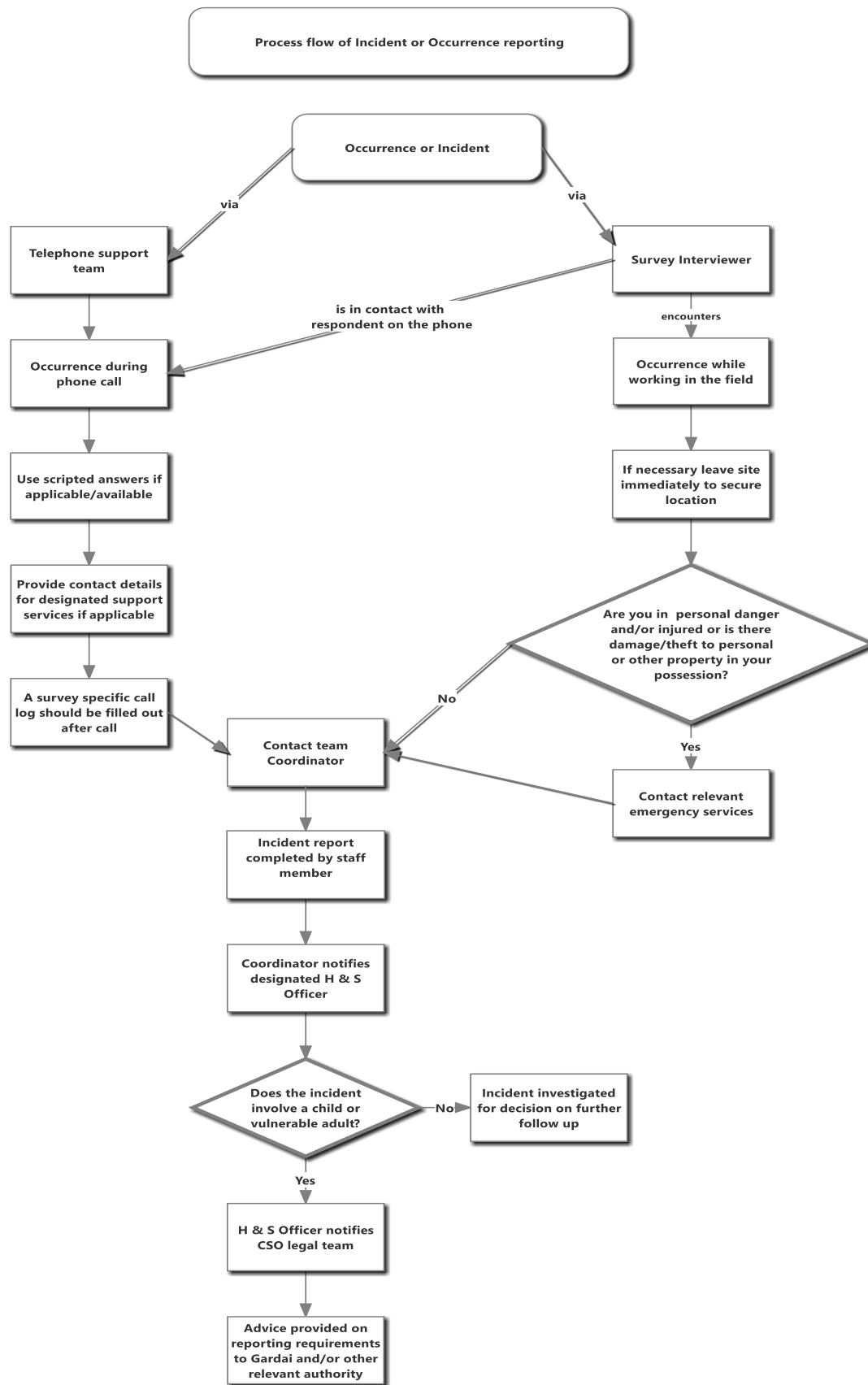


Figure 5.2.1 Process flow for incident or occurrence reporting. This is an overview of the process where a CSO field staff member observes or obtains any data/information outside of the Statistics Act which could be subject to disclosure.

Appendix 5.3

Safeguards in place to protect data collected by the CSO

Confidentiality is a core value of the CSO. The Office places a very high value on its obligation to respect statistical confidentiality and has put an extensive system of safeguards in place to protect the data which the Office receives.

Personnel: All staff of the CSO are Officers of Statistics under the Statistics Act 1993 and have signed a Declaration of Secrecy under the Act. The data provided to the CSO may only be processed by Officers of Statistics and only for statistical purposes. All staff must attend regular training on statistical confidentiality and data security, including mandatory refresher courses.

Governance: The CSO's governance structure for data protection comprises: the Confidentiality and Data Security Committee (CDSC) which reports to the Management Board; the Data Protection Officer at Assistant-Director level who oversees compliance with statistical confidentiality and data protection requirements; and the Data Office which provides support in relation to policies, awareness, training and compliance.

Data Office: The CSO's Data Office has the pivotal role of managing policies in relation to data protection and statistical confidentiality, promoting awareness, providing training, and assuring compliance. The Data Office provides advice to CSO statistical areas on all issues related to data protection and statistical confidentiality.

Policies: The CSO has a comprehensive suite of policies in relation to roles, responsibilities and corporate rules in relation to statistical confidentiality, data security and data protection. These policies are consolidated into a single Data Management Policy, which is a central reference point for all statistical processing.

Data Classification Scheme: This is a corporate confidentiality classification system that allocates a confidentiality level (A to D) to all data held by the CSO. Detailed management rules and procedures are assigned depending on the level given. Statistical micro-data has the highest level of security (A) and the strictest rules and procedures with regard to processing of the data. SVS data is classed as security level A.

Access to statistical data: All access to statistical data is restricted and limited to relevant staff that have a legitimate business reason for that access. This access is monitored on an ongoing basis. Access to RMF/AMF data will follow the standard CSO protocols after Statistical Disclosure Control procedures implemented.

Tables and publications: The CSO implements thorough Statistical Disclosure Control procedures to ensure that the tables and reports it publishes do not identify any individual or business.

Data Lifecycle: When survey forms or other data records are no longer required for statistical purposes, they are securely destroyed. The only identifiable records retained by the CSO are Census of Population forms – under Section 35 of the Statistics Act, these become public records after 100 years. All other forms are securely destroyed. Further detail on how the paper forms for this survey will be destroyed can be found in Chapter 5.

Formal Assessment Processes: The CSO undertakes a Data Necessity and Proportionality Assessment for each source of personal data used in the production of statistics. In addition, the CSO undertakes a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) as per the GDPR regulations to help identify and minimise the data protection risks of a project. The aim of these two assessment processes is to identify risks at each stage and make sure that confidentiality and data protection are respected and well-managed at every stage of collecting and producing statistics.

This is a subset of the information available for data providers on the CSO website and is in addition to the sections already outlined in Chapter 5:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/igdp/csodatapolicies/informationfordataproviders/>

Appendix 5.4

Introduction to the web survey

This appendix will focus on the introduction to the paper-based survey (PAPI) and the online survey (CAWI). The CAPI/CASI tablet-based instrument introduction will be very similar to the second stage of the introduction to the online survey.

CAWI

The survey is introduced in two stages once the respondent goes online.

Login page

The survey link in the invite letter brings the respondent to this landing page:



Access key: The access key provided is a single use code, this means that you can only gain entry to the survey once using this code.

Survey time-out: If the survey times out (5 minutes) or you mistakenly exit the survey before completion you will not be able to gain entry again.

Sensitive topic: This survey does contain questions on sensitive topics, therefore, we recommend that you complete this survey when you are alone or in a location where your privacy can be maintained.

Throughout the survey: Once you have selected an answer and clicked the 'Save and continue' button your answers will be encrypted which means you will not be able to go back and change your answer. Please bear this in mind and read the question carefully and answer to the best of your ability.

Please enter your 16 Digit Access Key

- #### - #### -

This page identifies several key safety messages:

- The access code is single use only.
- The survey will time out after 5 minutes of inactivity.
- The survey should be completed when you are on your own.
- The responses are encrypted and cannot be changed after moving on from a question.

At the end of the page, the access key can be entered.

Survey Introduction

A screenshot of the introduction is provided below with key points highlighted.



Exit

CSO Survey

You have been selected at random to complete a survey about experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault in Ireland. This voluntary survey was introduced as a safety of the person survey in order to protect your privacy within the household.

Although this topic may be a sensitive one for respondents, it is extremely important that Ireland has comprehensive official statistics about sexual violence in this country. This means collecting information both from people who have experienced sexual violence and from those who have not.

The first questions in the survey are general questions about yourself which we will ask you to answer and will then move to more sensitive issues where you can skip questions if you wish.

When you are finished your answers will be encrypted, which means that no unauthorised person will ever be able to see them.

The Central Statistics Office is very grateful for your participation.

If you are affected by any of the issues raised in this survey, help is available here:
24 Hour Helpline on 1800 778888 or www.rapecrisishelp.ie

Please select one of the following to proceed

Continue

I do not wish to continue

Save and continue

Central Statistics Office
Skehard Road, Cork T12 X00E, Ireland
Tel: (+353) 21 453 5341
E-Mail: sop@cso.ie

[Transparency Notice](#)
[Statistical Confidentiality](#)
[Privacy Statement](#)

Voluntary nature of survey identified

Highlighting the voluntary nature of each question

Contact details for CSO team
Available on every page within the survey

Topic of the survey identified

Rationale for alternative name of survey used

Highlighting the need for those who have and have not experienced this to participate

Identifying the progression of sensitive topics within the survey

Security of responses highlighted. See Chapter 5 for more details

Support details

Transparency notice (See Appendix 5.6) and other standard CSO survey information
Available on every page within the survey

PAPI

The introduction to the paper-based form follows on from an interviewer led introduction to the survey. These forms will be handed to respondents in cases where the respondent wishes to participate however they are not able to use the tablet/online survey. The following figure is a draft prototype of the paper form however this is subject to change.

CONFIDENTIAL

Safety of the Person Survey 2022



Enquiries to
Phone: (021) 4535000
or (01) 4984000
Local: 1800 313 414
Fax: (021) 4535555
Website www.cso.ie
E-mail _____

Please return completed form to

Central Statistics Office
Skehard Road
Cork
T12 X00E

You have been selected at random to complete a survey about experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault in Ireland.

Although this topic may be a sensitive one for respondents, it is extremely important that Ireland has comprehensive official statistics about sexual violence in this country. This means collecting information both from people who have experienced sexual violence and from those who have not.

The first questions in the survey are general questions about yourself which we will ask you to answer and will then move to more sensitive issues where you can skip questions if you wish.

The Central Statistics Office is very grateful for your participation.

If you are affected by any of the issues raised in this survey, help is available here:
24 Hour Helpline on 1800 778888 or www.rapecrisishelp.ie

Appendix 5.5

Overview of system design

System Design

- This overview is summarised in Figure 5.5.1. This is subject to change as the process is further developed.
- A sample for survey is selected.
- A distribution file (Data store A in Figure 5.5.1) will be generated to support web survey distribution and reminders - this file associates the individual name, address and survey access details (12-digit access code).
 - This distribution data will be stored separately to the survey data.
 - In line with CSO Access Control Policy, access is granted by the Data Owner to a database. Access to the distribution data is limited to only essential technology system staff to support the distribution and Field Administration Unit staff to manage the distribution/reminders for the duration of the data collection period.
- For the CAWI approach, a survey invite with the link to the online survey and access details (12-digit access code) will be posted to the respondent. The respondent will go to the login page of the survey, enter the access details to open and complete the online survey.
 - On inputting the access details, an automatic process will run in the background to update distribution data file (Data store A in Figure 5.5.1) to remove/amend the respondent details before storing the survey responses.
 - Survey responses are stored in a Survey Response Database (Data store C in Figure 5.5.1) which is separate from the distribution database (Data store A in Figure 5.5.1).
- Information for respondents who do not respond to the online survey will be distributed to interviewer tablets. This information will not include the access details but only the name and address to facilitate contacting the respondent (Data store B in Figure 5.5.1). It is stored in a standalone programme on the tablet.
- For the CAPI/CASI approach, interviewers will encourage a respondent to complete the survey online first. If the respondent is not willing to do that, an offer to complete the survey on the interviewer tablet, a secured CSO device, is made.
 - The survey data on the tablet is stored separate to the contact information on the tablet. Once the survey is marked complete the respondent details and survey responses are hidden from the interviewer.
 - The survey data is returned from the tablet by syncing back to the CSO Survey Response Database (Data store C in Figure 5.5.1).
- If a respondent is not willing to complete the survey online, nor on the tablet, but wishes to complete the survey, a paper survey form will be offered. They are distributed in the field by household interviewers. These are posted back to CSO by the respondent, processed and the data stored in a format that can be added subsequently to the Survey Response Database (Data store C in Figure 5.5.1). Survey forms will be destroyed.

Appendix 5.6

Data Protection Transparency Notice

This is based on the transparency notice used for the SVS pilot in 2021. This is subject to change following consultation with the CSO Data Office, although minimal changes (if any) are expected.

Survey Name

Safety of the Person Survey

Survey purpose and legal basis

Under Data Protection legislation, individuals have a number of rights in relation to the personal data an organisation holds about them. The purpose of this notice is to inform you, as a Safety of the Person survey participant, about the data processed by the CSO, how these data are handled and what your rights are.

The Safety of the Person Survey (SOP) is a voluntary survey carried out by the Central Statistics Office under Section 24 of the Statistics Act, 1993.

The purpose of the SOP is to provide data on the personal safety of individuals in Ireland. Data that are collected include aspects such as; harassment, mistreatment, and attitudes towards these topics. Demographic details including date of birth, gender and citizenship are also collected.

Any information gathered to inform this survey is subject to the restrictions of use and prohibition of disclosure under sections 32, 33, and 34 of the Statistics Act, 1993.

Who uses the results?

The results are only ever made available to the public in aggregate form and we make sure that it is impossible for individuals to be identified. Anonymised survey information may also be provided to other government departments, approved organisations and approved researchers for statistical purposes only.

The data will be used extensively by relevant stakeholders, national agencies, Government Departments and the media.

Is your personal data confidential and how long will the data be retained?

Yes, all information supplied to the CSO is treated as strictly confidential. The confidentiality of data is provided for under sections 32, 33, and 34 of the Statistics Act, 1993, which sets stringent confidentiality standards. These include the use of data for statistical purposes only, and the non-disclosure of data in an identifiable form.

The personal data collected to inform this survey will be stored for a maximum of four months. In addition, the response to the questionnaire will immediately be separated from the personal identifiers, providing further anonymity to responses.

The survey data will be securely held for a maximum of ten years from the date of issue of this survey and can only be used for statistical purposes.

The sources and categories of your personal data, where the data has not been collected directly from you:

Not applicable.

For further information on this survey, your Data Protection rights and how your data is used please contact:

Helen McGrath, Social Analysis Division, Central Statistics Office, Skehard Road, Cork, T12 X00E.

Tel: +(353) 21 453 5108 E-mail: sop@cso.ie

Data Protection Information:

Under the General Data Protection Regulation, you have the following rights:

- The right to lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Commission. Contact details: Office of the Data Protection Commission, 21 Fitzwilliam Square South, Dublin 2, D02 RD28, Ireland.
- The right to request access, rectification, erasure, restriction or to object to the processing of your personal data.

However, because your data is processed for statistical purposes these rights may be limited in accordance with Article 89 of the GDPR. This is due to the fact that the exercise of any of these rights may render impossible, or seriously impair, the achievement of the statistical processing and such restriction may be necessary for the fulfilment of those purposes.

Central Statistics Office Data Protection Officer Contact Details:

DPO@cso.ie

Appendix 6.1

Guidance for dealing with the subject matter of sexual violence with CSO staff

Purpose of the document

The Sexual Violence Survey (SVS) is a national household survey on the prevalence of sexual violence in Ireland.

It is acknowledged that SVS contains sensitive and potentially distressing content. The following guidelines apply for all staff to support a respectful approach:

- Highlighting the importance of maintaining a safe environment for staff.
- Reducing any distress caused by developing the survey.

This guidance applies to all staff involved across the SVS survey lifecycle (See Appendix 6.1.1). This applies in conjunction with other CSO policies on managing staff, workloads and confidentiality.

This note was based on work practices in each division involved in the project (Social Data Collection, IT Division, Social Analysis) and was drawn together to formalise the shared and consistent approach. In addition, input was sought from the CSO Employee Assistance Officer.

Staff working on the project

There are many different processes in this project and certain teams will work on very sensitive aspects (questionnaire design which includes QDU and the Blaise team) and others may work on other processes like field management and technology. It is important that all team members are told of the nature of the work before they start and given an option not to be involved. More specific details of this are listed below:

To work on the project:

- The nature of the work must be explained, and the individual must be asked if they are willing to work on the subject matter.
- The individual must be given a reasonable time to consider the offer.
- After this time, if individual is willing, then confirm participation.
- For those whose role involves in-depth work on the subject matter by virtue of the amount of the individual's working time spent on the topic or the nature of the work, for example, variable specification, question design, then:
 - Ensure that, within the first two weeks of working on the subject matter, that the individual either;
 - attends a training event which addresses the impact of the material, for example, DRCC one-day training event, or
 - Is exposed to the extent of the sensitivity of the subject matter through research and/or discussion with line manager.
 - After first two weeks re-confirm that the individual is still willing to continue working on the subject matter. The individual must be made aware that the if circumstances change, there are ways to facilitate a move.

- For those whose role may involve less time spent on the project or the work is more detracted from the specifics, for example, graphic design, communication, printing, HR, sample selection.
 - The full-time staff will be available to discuss any aspect of the subject matter work if required.
- Staff will have access to the supports listed in the section **Resources available to all staff** which is located at the end of the note.
- Line managers will check with staff member on a regular basis as to how they are managing the subject matter.

If at any stage a team member doesn't want to work on this project, this should be acceptable, and the person should be offered support from the employee assistance officer.

Evaluation of the process will be an oncoming process between line manager and the individual.

Staff volunteers on the project

A call for volunteers to offer their time within the working day may be made to the wider office, for example, in questionnaire development. They will be involved for 1-2 hours potentially on a one-off basis.

- Any request for volunteers on the bulletin board must have the name of the survey or the topic in the heading. This allows the person to choose to open the notice or not.
- Any request for volunteers must be clear with staff as to what a volunteer will be asked to do and what the subject matter is, so they can make an informed choice.
- Information on services which can help if a person is upset by the request should be provided on the note³⁰.
- Keep any meetings with staff volunteers private:
 - Book room with the organisers name on the main room booking system which is visible to everyone.
 - Create a second meeting with the volunteer and make that private.
- Details with support services should be offered at the beginning of the session/interaction process. In addition, their attention should be drawn to assistance in the form of Employee Assistance Officers, the module on handling stressful topics and wellbeing information.
- They will be informed from the start they can withdraw participation at any stage in the process.
- Staff will have access to the supports listed in the section **Resources available to all staff**.
- Evaluation of the process will be dependent on each request.

Other staff in the office

³⁰ This is the text which should be associated with this information note: *If you have been affected by the issues raised in this notice, you can contact the Rape Crisis Centre 24-hour national helpline on 1800 77 88 88 or by email at counselling@rcc.ie.*

There are general principles that all members of staff working on the project should apply to ensure that other staff members not working on the subject matter are not exposed to potentially upsetting material.

- Do not talk about detailed elements of the survey in open plan offices/common areas of office, for example, staff working on SVS sitting in open plan areas.
- Book meetings rooms to have meetings related to the survey.
- Ad-hoc phone calls on sensitive material must be rescheduled to a time or place that means the conversation will be private.
- Documents with sensitive material should only be accessible to approved SVS staff, for example, make lotus notes documents with sensitive subject matter private.
- Maintain current clean desk policy - nothing left on the table that anyone in the office can oversee as per the approach to confidential data in CSO Data Management Policy - Office Notice 16/2019.
- All staff will have access to the supports listed in the section **Resources available to all staff**.
- Information on services which can help if a person is upset by the request should be provided on any office notices relating to the project¹.

Field staff working on the survey

Field staff may be involved in delivering the survey to selected participants. These are the general principles that will apply for field staff:

- Any request for field staff to work on this survey must be informed about of the subject matter so they can make an informed choice.
- Information on services which can help if a person is upset by the request should be provided on the email².
- Depending on the mode selected for the field collection, debriefing may be a key element - field work scheduling to account for necessary debriefing (survey operation and workload)
- Field staff will have access to the supports listed in the section **Resources available to all staff**.
- Field protocols and training to incorporate learnings from relevant international guidelines, liaison group and focus group feedback where relevant.
- Information will be provided on what if scenarios, for example, if respondent is known to you, if respondent becomes distressed.
- The interviewer can withdraw participation at any stage in the process.
- This will be evaluated at the end of the survey through field staff debriefings.

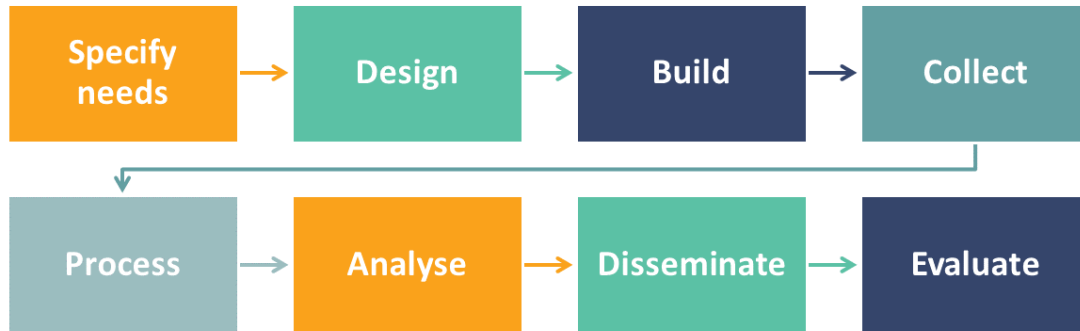
Resources available for all staff

- The office provides assistance in the form of Employee Assistance Officers (D/F Circular 35/1997 Employee Assistance Service).
- A module on handling stressful topics will be delivered by trained staff (EAOs) which will be available to all staff. It will be delivered through the wellbeing initiative and documentation from the module will be available on the system.
- Information on mindfulness and self-care routines are freely available on the intranet at:
 - Wellbeing homepage.

- Lotus Note on mindfulness in the Social Analysis section under SVS.

Appendix 6.1.1 - SVS survey lifecycle

Main phases of SVS



Detail of the phases in SVS

Phases:	Specify Needs	Design	Build	Collect	Process	Analyse	Disseminate	Evaluate
Sub-phases:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Needs Consult and confirm needs Establish output objectives Identify concepts Check data availability Prepare business case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design outputs Design variable descriptions Design collection Design frame and sample Design processing and analysis Design production systems and workflow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build collection instrument Build or enhance process components Build or enhance dissemination components Configure workflows Test production system Test statistical business process Finalise production systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create frame and select sample Set up collection Run collection Finalise collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate data Classify and code Review and validate Edit and impute Derive new variables and units Calculate weights Calculate aggregates Finalise data files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare draft outputs Validate outputs Interpret and explain outputs Apply disclosure control Finalise outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update output systems Produce dissemination products Manage release of dissemination products Promote dissemination products Manage user support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather evaluation inputs Conduct evaluation Agree an action plan