

Video Interviewing at ESS11 - Guidelines for National Coordinators

For Round 11 of ESS, video interviews can be conducted in cases where target respondents would prefer this approach to an in-person interview.

This document includes guidelines for NCs that choose to allow video interviews in their country. All NCs proposing to allow video interviews in their country will be asked to answer a small number of questions outlining their planned approach as part of the Round 11 Fieldwork Questionnaire.

Please refer to the points below regarding arrangements that must be made for video interviews.

Whether to allow video interviews

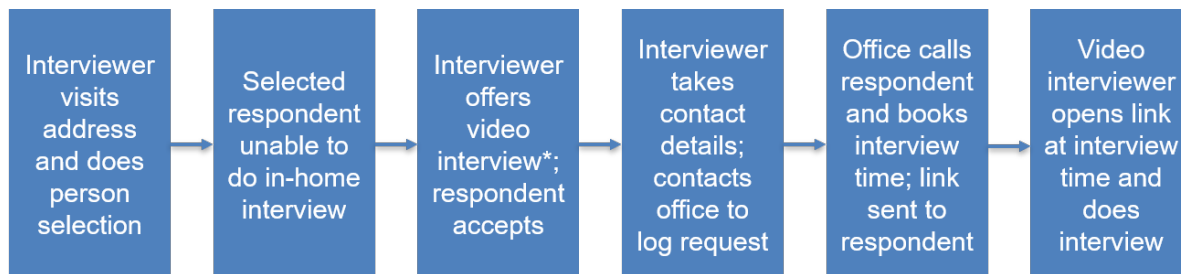
Each NC team should make a decision on whether to allow video interviews in their country. There is no requirement to allow video interviews; if it is felt this is not appropriate or will not be helpful in delivering fieldwork, this option should not be included.

If a country chooses not to allow video interviews, they cannot offer telephone interviews instead (telephone interviews are not permitted in any cases).

How to manage video interviews

The Fieldwork Team recommends establishing a small specialist team of interviewers to conduct video interviews, rather than allowing all interviewers to do this. Figure 1 gives an example process flow from first face-to-face contact to conducting the video interview under this approach. However, it will be up to each country to determine the approach that works best for them.

Figure 1: Example process flow for video interviews where centralised team used



* Interviewer would need to be incentivised

Where countries would prefer to allow all of their interviewers to conduct video interviews, such an approach is allowed. However, NCs should consider how they will monitor interviewers to ensure they are carrying out video interviews as specified.

Regardless of the approach taken, it is strongly recommended that reminder calls are scheduled with respondents in advance of any video interviews arranged. This should help minimise the risk of 'drop-outs' on the day of interviews. We also recommend that basic instructions for joining the video interview (based on the platform used) are shared with respondents in advance of interviews, to minimise the risk of any technical issues. Interviewers should also be given a technical briefing on the platform used for the interviews so they can easily troubleshoot issues.

For both approaches, the usual maximum of 48 sample units per interviewer still applies. This is an overall maximum, across in-person and video interviews combined, and not a maximum per mode. Countries using a small centralised team should particularly consider how they can minimise the number of interviews done by an individual interviewer. We recommend assessing the demand for video interviews in the early part of fieldwork and increasing the size of the video

interviewing team where needed to ensure interviews are spread across a reasonable number of interviewers. Cases should also be allocated to video interviewers 'randomly' rather than at a PSU level to minimise the possible impact of interviewer effects.

Making contact with sample units

There should be no change to how interviewers make contact with sample units. For most countries, this will always be done face-to-face. For countries using address or dwelling based samples, the person selection should always take place face-to-face.

Where countries are allowed to make initial contact by telephone, the interviewer can offer the video option if a respondent is reluctant to take part in a face-to-face interview at this stage.

When to introduce the option of video interviews

For Round 11, the option of a video interview can be offered as an equal alternative to an in-person interview.

It can be mentioned in advance letters sent to sample units. If the video option is mentioned in the letter, a contact number can be included for respondents to arrange a time for the interview. A separate version of the advance letter template is provided for countries offering video interviews.

Interviewers can offer the option of a video interview on the doorstep as and when deemed appropriate (e.g. at first contact or only after they sense reluctance to take part in an in-person interview).

A version of the respondent information leaflet has been prepared for countries offering video interviewing. All countries using video interviewing should make sure they use the version of the leaflet that includes this wording.

If a video interview is arranged and is not carried out (e.g. due to the respondent not joining the interview) further contact should be attempted with the respondent by phone and/or face-to-face in line with the usual ESS contact requirements.

How to incentivise interviewers

It will be important that incentives are offered to face-to-face interviewers in cases where video interviews are passed to a central team. It will be up to each country to determine the appropriate incentive level. However, the incentive should be sufficient to motivate interviewers to introduce the video option rather than accepting a refusal, but not so high that it disincentivises the interviewer conducting the interview face-to-face.

Platforms to allow and data protection

To minimise the variation in platforms used, we advise that video interviews are conducted using Zoom or Microsoft Teams. We advise using a single platform rather than offering a choice of platforms to more easily manage technical arrangements. If NCs feel that Zoom/Teams are not suitable in their country, an alternative platform may be considered. However, in this case, more detailed information on how this platform meets GDPR requirements will need to be provided in the Data Processing Agreement (DPA) with ESS ERIC.

NCs need to include information on their proposed approach to conducting video interviews in Annexes 1 and 2 of the DPA. This needs to include the platform being used, information on how the platform will be used, and how the security of the platform will be guaranteed. Fieldwork cannot start until a DPA is in place.

NCs should have agreements in place with their data collection organisations on the platform that will be used, including confirmation that they use a licensed version of the platform. Respondents should not be required to sign up for/set up an account or install any new software before taking part in a video interview.

Recording interviews

Video interviews must never be recorded. NCs should have an explicit agreement with their data collection organisation that interviews are never recorded.

Devices to allow – interviewer

Interviewers should ideally have two devices or two screens – one for the video call and to screen-share showcards and the other to ask the questions/record responses in the CAPI program. It may also be possible to conduct interviews with one device (using separate windows for the video call and CAPI program); however, NCs should ensure this approach has been tested and proved to be effective before the start of main stage fieldwork.

Devices to allow – respondent

Respondents will be able to use any internet-enabled device for the interview, including a smartphone. However, where available, it is recommended that a larger screen (desktop/laptop/tablet) is used for clearer display of the video and showcards.

Showcards

It is recommended that the showcards are displayed by interviewers in PDF and full screen mode. This will allow the interviewer to easily move between cards using the ‘page down’ function.

We recommend providing interviewers with spare copies of the showcards. This will allow a hard copy showcard pack to be shared with respondents in cases where there are issues with viewing the showcards on screen (e.g. where a smartphone is being used for this interview).

Pre-testing

If countries used video interviewing at ESS Round 10, there is no specific need to include video interviews as part of the ESS Round 11 pre-test. However, if any countries are carrying out video interviewing for the first time, or have changed their supplier or approach since Round 10, the approach should be tested in the pre-test (with at least 5 video interviews carried out).

Interviewer briefings

Interviewers must be briefed on video interviewing as part of the Round 11 briefings. The nature of this briefing will depend on the approach being used in each country. For example, if the central team approach is being used, face-to-face interviewers will only need to be briefed on the process of introducing the video interview option and collecting/passing on contact details (with a separate briefing arranged for the small team of interviewers conducting the video interviews). ESS HQ will provide some outline briefing material on video interviewing, to be adapted to the approach used by each country.

Back-checks

Video interviews need to be back-checked using the same procedure as outlined for face-to-face interviews in the R11 specification.