



National institute
of **Public Health**

Qualitative and quantitative pilot testing of the Slovenian GPS questionnaire

Darja Lavtar and Gaja Zager Kocjan
National Institute of Public Health, Slovenia

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Outline

- Aim of qualitative and quantitative testing
- Selection of questions for testing
- Methodology used for:
 - Cognitive interviews,
 - Pilot survey.
- Example
- Conclusions from piloting

Introduction

- Aim: to test qualitatively and quantitatively the Slovene versions of the selected survey questions before the national GPS implementation
- The first systematic implementation of cognitive testing at NIJZ
- June – December 2017
- The first GPS was implemented in 2011/2012

Process

(1) Selection of questions

New

Revised



(2) Qualitative testing (cognitive interviews)

Face-to-face

Web



(3) Quantitative testing (pilot survey)

Face-to-face

Web

(1) Selection of questions

New:

- New topics to be added to GPS (misuse of medicines, use of cannabis for medical purposes)
- New questions to be added to existing modules

Revised:

- Proposed new wording of existing survey questions and answers

Altogether, **22 questions** (with showcards) were selected for testing

(1) Selection of questions

Topic	Number of questions
Tobacco	3
Alcohol	6 (+ showcard)
Misuse of medicines	2 (+ introduction)
Cannabis	4
New psychoactive substances	2
Polydrug use	3
Consequences of drug use	2

(2) qualitative testing (cognitive interviews)

- Cognitive interviews focus on investigating mental processes involved in answering survey questions.
- A predeveloped cognitive interviewing protocol was used. Techniques such as **think aloud**, **probing**, and **observation** were employed.
- Implementation of cognitive interviews:



- Two modes used because of: survey design and sensitive survey topic (social desirability).

(2) qualitative testing (face-to-face cognitive interviews)

- Number of questions: 12-22 (filters).
- Duration: approx. 45 minutes.
- 12 respondents
- Participants: respondent + moderator/interviewer + two to three observers.
- Observation: record of responses, suggestions and remarks written in a separate document form.
- Brief discussions of the moderator and observers after each interview, and an extensive discussion and analysis of written notes after the completion of all interviews → **decision on revisions of some questions.**

(2) qualitative testing (web cognitive interviews)

Version 1: all topics

- 12-20 questions (with filters).
- Sent to different addresses with the request that the link is shared.
- 34 respondents (24 in total): 17 M and 19 F.
- The average age was 36.8 years.

Version 2: drug use and misuse of medicines

- 11 questions (no filters).
- Sent to DrogArt (NGO) users.
- 15 respondents (6 in total): 4 M and 11 F.
- The average age was 24.5 years.



(2) qualitative testing (example)

Do you smoke or have you ever smoked?

START

1 - I do not smoke and I never smoked.

2 - I do not smoke now, but I smoked in the past.

3 - I smoke now.

Probes:

- Were you thinking of smoking tobacco products exclusively or were you thinking of anything else?
- Can you find the right answer among the answers offered? Would you shape the answers differently by yourself?
- Where would you put (a) someone who smokes once a week, but not every day, and (b) someone who is currently quitting smoking?
- How do you understand the answer "I do not smoke now, but I smoked in the past"?
- Do you think one could interpret "I smoke now" as an act at this moment, "I do not smoke now, but I smoked in the past" as an act short-time back?

(2) qualitative testing (example)

Do you smoke or have you ever smoked tobacco (cigarettes, hand-rolled tobacco, cigars, cigarillos, water pipes)? Please do not take into account electronic cigarettes.

WEB

- 1 - I smoke every day.
- 2 - I smoke occasionally.
- 3 - I do not smoke now, but I smoked in the past.
- 4 - I do not smoke and I never smoked.

(2) qualitative testing (example)

The analysis of cognitive interviewing data revealed the following problems:

- it was unclear whether all smoking related products or just tobacco products should be considered,
- several occasional smokers did not regard themselves as current smokers but rather as former smokers or non-smokers,
- respondents that have smoked only for a short period in their past regarded themselves as non-smokers or former smokers.

Based on these findings, the question on smoking habits was revised: a note was added explaining which products should be considered and two additional answer categories were included, covering occasional smokers and non-smokers that only tried smoking few times.

(2) qualitative testing (example)

FINAL

Do you smoke or have you ever smoked?

Cigarettes, hand-rolled tobacco, cigars, cigarillos, and water pipes are included. Electronic cigarettes and snus are excluded.

1 - I smoke every day.

2 - I smoke occasionally.

3 - I do not smoke now, but I smoked in the past (regularly or occasionally).

4 - I do not smoke, but I tried a few times in my life.

5 - I do not smoke and I never smoked.

(3) quantitative testing: pilot survey

Two separate samples:

1. **face-to-face** interviewing (CAPI) with a two stage sample of 600 inhabitants,
2. **web** interviewing (CAWI) with a simple random sample (SRS) of 600 inhabitants.

Questionnaire: All survey questions included.

(3) quantitative testing: face-to-face pilot survey

- Call for public tender; outsourced company.
- We asked for respondents' comments to be recorded.
- Response rate: 61 %.
- Control letter: 86 % of respondents were completely honest when answering survey questions.
- Interviewers' debriefing after the completion of data collection.

(3) quantitative testing: web pilot survey

Web interviewing (CAWI) with a simple random sample (SRS) of 600 inhabitants was **split into two halves**, allowing to test:

- a. and compare the original (GPS 2011/2012) and revised version of 5 selected questions (smoking, binge drinking),
- b. two methods of moving forward with survey questions,
- c. whether a personalised reminder increases the response rate.

The **response rate** for exclusive web survey was 26 % (info important for planning the implementation of the national GPS).

(3) quantitative testing: web pilot survey (example)

Do you smoke or have you ever smoked?

WEB 1

I do not smoke and I never smoked. (55 %)

I do not smoke now, but I smoked in the past. (30 %)

I smoke now. (15 %)

Do you smoke or have you ever smoked?

WEB 2

Cigarettes, hand-rolled tobacco, cigars, cigarillos, water pipes are included. Electronic cigarettes and snus are excluded.

I smoke every day. }
I smoke occasionally. } 21 %

I do not smoke now, but I smoked in the past (regularly or occasionally). (24 %)

I do not smoke, but I tried a few times in my life. }
I do not smoke and I never smoked. } 55 %

Conclusion (example)

The initial GPS 2011/2012 will be used in the GPS 2018:

Do you smoke or have you ever smoked?

- 1 - I do not smoke and I never smoked.
- 2 - I do not smoke now, but I smoked in the past.
- 3 - I smoke now.

- The trend is important.
- New tobacco control act, introduced in March 2017, represents a comprehensive tobacco control program.
- We know that current smokers are under-reported (occasional smokers consider themselves as past smokers).

Conclusions

- We have recognised the importance of cognitive interviewing in **identifying problems** regarding understanding and answering survey questions, particularly those concerning sensitive topics, prior to collecting data in the field.
- Qualitative and quantitative testing prior to GPS implementation is **necessary**.
- Although not pretested, three topics were added to national GPS (at the end of the questionnaire): use of internet, gaming and gambling.
- The start of national GPS in March 2018 was successful.

Thank you for your attention!

