



DIN SPEC 91368

Samples for scientific surveys: Quality criteria and documentation requirements

DIN SPEC 91368
CASE STUDY

Added value for survey research

The Background

“For many years, scientific researchers specializing in market, opinion and social research have had a methodological problem,” says Menno Schmid, Executive Director of infas GmbH. “People have become less inclined to disclose information and also more difficult to reach.” There are many reasons for this: Socio-demographic, psychosocial and even factors immanent to research can play a determining role. For example, telephone surveys conducted for research purposes may be mixed up with telemarketing calls, which many people regard as a nuisance. Due to the reduced accessibility and willingness of people to participate, the response rate – i.e. the ratio of selected to actual respondents – is no longer sufficient to assess the scientific quality of samples. “Additional criteria are therefore needed in order to evaluate the samples and to subsequently decide on the generalizability of the survey results”, says Uwe Czaia, Managing Partner of Immediate GmbH.

The DIN SPEC

The DIN SPEC 91368 “Samples for scientific surveys in market, opinion and social research – Quality criteria and documentation requirements” addresses this very issue: It determines and describes the quality-relevant criteria for samples. These criteria for the drawing and realization of samples are to be observed and adhered to when carrying out market, opinion and social research surveys. The DIN SPEC 91368 defines both general quality criteria for scientific surveys – with respect to issues such as the population, sample structure, effectiveness and weighting – as well as specific criteria and requirements for the various

- selection procedures (e.g. random area sampling, list selection, registration office sampling, quota sampling, access panels)
- acquisition modes (e.g. personal interview surveys, telephone surveys, postal surveys, mixed-mode surveys)
- target groups (e.g. specific subsectors of the population, children and young people, companies).

The DIN SPEC 91368 also includes detailed documentation requirements: It lists which general methodological and technical data on the survey must always be included in the report for the client. It also describes what documentation is required with regard to the various selection procedures and modes of acquisition.

The Value

The DIN SPEC 91368 provides significant added value for both research institutes and for the clients of scientific surveys. The quality criteria defined in this DIN SPEC make it possible to evaluate survey samples and thus also the significance of the survey results. “Institutes that comply with the criteria defined in the DIN SPEC 91368 can substantiate the scientific quality of their surveys”, says Axel Glemser, Managing Director of Kantar Public, Kantar Deutschland GmbH. “The level of participation rates is therefore not the only deciding factor in determining whether a survey adequately fulfils scientific demands and whether the results can be generalized.” The requirements on documentation outlined in this DIN SPEC ensure maximum transparency, also for the survey client.



“Institutes that comply with the criteria defined in the DIN SPEC 91368 can substantiate the scientific quality of their surveys”

DIN SPEC 91368
CASE STUDY

The Process

Representatives from seven institutions participated as authors in developing this DIN SPEC in a temporary body (“Workshop”) in accordance with the PAS (Publicly Available Specification) procedure: ADM Arbeitskreis Deutscher Markt- und Sozialforschungsinstitute e.V., Immediate GmbH, forsa Gesellschaft für Sozialforschung und statistische Analysen mbH, GfK Media & Communication Research GmbH und Co. KG, infas Institut für angewandte Sozialwissenschaft GmbH, Ipsos Operations GmbH and Kantar Deutschland GmbH. “It quickly became clear to us that survey research not only had a common problem, but also that it was holding the solution in its own hand,” says Erich Wiegand, Executive Director of ADM. Thanks to the constructive teamwork of survey research experts, the DIN SPEC 91368 was able to be developed and published within only six months – a true success story for a standardization project implemented in the shortest possible time with great benefits for market, opinion and social research.

About DIN SPEC

The success of a good idea often depends on how long it takes to reach the market. A DIN SPEC is the fastest way to turn research into a marketable product. No obligation to reach a consensus, and smaller, more agile working groups make it possible to develop a DIN SPEC within only a few months. DIN’s job is to ensure that a DIN SPEC does not conflict with any existing standards. With its international contacts, Beuth Verlag sees that DIN SPEC are published and sold to a wide circle of customers. And any DIN SPEC can be used as a basis for a full standard.

Five reasons to choose DIN SPEC

- Networking: The DIN SPEC process requires an exchange of experience with important market participants. This involves networking with key players. As a result, the needs of manufacturer and customer alike are covered by a common specification.
- Worldwide acceptance: The DIN ‘brand’ stands for success throughout the world and creates trust. This makes your innovation accepted by users and investors alike.
- Plug & Play: The DIN SPEC process makes sure innovations are up-to-date with the latest technology. Users thus have no trouble working with your innovation.
- Easy: DIN organizes the entire DIN SPEC process from beginning to end. This saves you time, letting you concentrate on content and networking with your partners.
- Fast: DIN SPEC can be developed and published within only a few months.