Bilendi
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# ESOMAR – 37 questions
# to help buyers of online samples

# Our answers to **ESOMAR's 37 questions** to help buyers of online samples

1 **What experience does your company have in providing online samples for market research? How long have you been providing this service? Do you also provide similar services for other uses such as direct marketing? If so, what proportion of your work is for market research?**

Since 2000 we have offered a range of innovative services and advanced technologies to collect and manage data to help decision-makers further their businesses. Through the use of a variety of reliable recruitment sources, we presently have more than 2.5 million highly qualified active panellists in thirteen countries at our disposal: United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway. In addition to our proprietary Bilendi panels, we can also provide access to further international panellists through our extensive network of trusted partners, when required. Very specific targets can be recruited via social media. We further ensure a high-quality implementation of online questionnaires as well as representative survey results at all times. Among our clients are more than 1,700 market research agencies, media agencies, consultancies, institutions, academics and end clients.
Market research accounts for 83% of our total activity. Additionally, in the UK, France and Morocco, we offer services for customer engagement and loyalty to clients not in the market research industry.

This answer might help you to form an opinion about the relevant experience of the sample provider as well as potential biases that might result from other uses such as being paid to watch ads or receiving a high volume of marketing messages.

2 **Do you have staff with responsibility for developing and monitoring the performance of the sampling algorithms and related automated functions who also have knowledge and experience in this area? What sort of training insampling techniques do you provide to your frontline staff?**

Our tools are developed internally by our team of IT specialists. Bilendi uses an advanced proprietary Sample Management Tool, which allows the construction of complex samples on specific population categories based on expected distribution. The tool can combine a large number of distribution variables and individual crossed combinations whilst respecting panel usage rules (such as maximum number of invites per member per week, limiting the number of invites to surveys on the same category, exclusion of members participating in previous studies etc). Based on the member activity history and requirements of the project, which is stored in our database, the Bilendi Sample Management Tool predicts the expected response rate of each individual and of the overall sample.

Our IT teams monitor the performance of our sample tools and constantly improve them. Continual in-house training is provided to our teams on each country's cultural sampling specifics. These training sessions are held by local experts.

It is important to know if the provider's offerings have been designed by and are monitored by staff with knowledge of basic principles of sampling. This may be useful at the sample design stage as well as during fulfilment when quotas become difficult to fill or when weighting may be required. Ditto for any frontline staff who may serve as your main point of contact with the sample provider.

## 3 What other services do you offer? Do you cover *sample-only*, or do you offer a broad range of data collection and analysis services?

Besides samples in 13 European countries and access to participants all over the world through trusted partners, we propose a full range of services, including survey scripting, hosting, translation, coding, data processing and tabulation.

Our services encompass quantitative, qualitative or hybrid research methodologies. With Bilendi Discuss, we offer a powerful tool with integrated AI features to conduct qualitative research at scale, enabling our clients to get richer insights in less time.

Depending on your company's capabilities, you may wish to work with a one-stop shop that can host your survey, produce basic tabulations, code open ends, and so on. There may be time and cost savings with this approach.

## 4 Using the broad classifications above, from what sources of online sample do you derive participants?

We operate and maintain proprietary panels in thirteen European countries. The recruitment of new participants is executed in collaboration with diversified online sources, including partnerships, public relations, ads, panellist referral programs and email campaigns. Panel members are recruited exclusively using permission-based techniques. Furthermore, we can offer specialised panels through regular screenings, for example in the field of B2B, healthcare, kids & teens etc.

Besides our own panels, we have a specific offer to target niche audiences which cannot be reached through panels because they represent only a very small part of the population. This offer is built on recruitment via social media.

Sample providers may deliver samples from a single source, such as their own proprietary panel, or other panels. Or they may leverage a range of technologies and platforms to aggregate/blend participants from a combination of sample sources. Some providers may do both. Clarity about the sources being used will help you to understand what type of sample is being offered. This answer might differ from country to country and from project to project.

## 5 Which of these sources are proprietary or exclusive and what is the percent share of each in the total sample provided to a buyer? (Assume proprietary to mean that the sample provider owns the asset. Assume exclusive to mean that the sample provider has an exclusive agreement to manage/provide access to sample originally collected by another entity.)

In the vast majority of all surveys, the respondents come from our own online access panels where we continually monitor the quality and identity of respondents. In cases where we also need to use external sources, we only work with selected specialist market-research providers, who have their own panels and who do not offer survey-after-survey options to their respondents. In order to prevent duplicates from occurring between internal and external sources, we work with in-house cookie-based duplicate identification solutions. This cookie solution prevents multiple survey participation.

This question will help you to understand whether the vendor is 'running' the source or 'marketing' the source. Running the source implies a closer relationship with panellists and a deeper knowledge of recruitment techniques. This may also help you to understand whether the sample is exclusively available from this provider.

## 6 What recruitment channels are you using for each of the sources you have described? Is the recruitment process ‘open to all’ or by invitation only? Are you using probabilistic methods? Are you using affiliate networks and referral programs and in what proportions? How does your use of these channels vary by geography?

Understanding the method of recruitment and whether the recruitment is by invitation only will help you to understand the quality of the sample and how it may be used.

The teams in charge of recruiting panellists monitor volume, profile and quality indicators to build a recruitment and panel management strategy that is best suited to our clients’ needs. Based on these key performance indicators, recruitment, reactivation or retention campaigns are triggered. As the objective of a panellist is to answer questionnaires often, an adequate level of renewal of the panels allows us to avoid the “professionalisation” of panellists over the long term.

Therefore, recruitment is carried out continuously throughout the year by the Marketing team, through:

- Search Engine Advertising campaigns
- Search Engine Optimisation
- Communication on social media networks (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- Advertising on Social Media networks
- Emailing campaigns
- Display campaigns on websites
- Refer a Friend
- Natural traffic
- Partnerships

We constantly diversify our recruitment sources to be as representative as possible of the population, to have different profiles and reach all audiences, and to avoid the bias caused by recruiting from too few sources. For example, young people will be recruited more via social networks.
The recruitment process is open to all people who are 16 years old or older.

## 7 What form of validation do you use in recruitment to ensure that participants are real, unique, and are who they say they are? Describe this both in terms of the practical steps you take within your own organisation and the technologies you are using. Please try to be as specific and quantify as much as you can.

Understanding the level of recruitment validation undertaken by the sample provider will help you to mitigate effects of fraud in your projects. Working with providers who have fully developed strategies and are using up to date detection technologies is recommended.

Registration is a double opt-in process. This means that once registered, the panellist must click on the confirmation e-mail received in their mailbox. This avoids robots in particular. E-mail addresses and IP addresses are verified and duplicates are automatically rendered inactive. The combination of IP address and browser user agent of the person trying to register is matched against the entire panel database.

## 8 What brand (domain) and/or app are you using with proprietary sources? Summarise, by source, the proportion of sample accessing surveys by mobile app, email or other specified means.

By understanding the domain/app and method the sample provider is using with members, you will gain an indication of the extent of activity with those members and the quality of their relationship with the sample.

Our proprietary panels are operated under the brands Maximiles, mingle, Meinungsplatz,Club Nuove Idee, M3Panel and Ivoxpanel. In all our panels, the members can be invited to and access surveys via their account on desktop, app e-mail or via the end pages of surveys they have answered. The proportion for each participation channel differs according to countries and profiles, but on average about 50% participate through email, 25% through the app, 15% through the end pages and 10% through their account on the website itself.

## 9 Which model(s) do you offer to deliver sample? Managed service, self-serve, or API integration?

Sample provision is offered through three main channels: managed service, self-serve, and API (Application Planning Interface) integrations. In a self-serve model, buyers are given access to a platform which they can use to specify the audience they want to access, and manage all the steps of a research project, from sample design to launch to fieldwork management to closing. In a managed service model, sample providers will provide that service. API integrations are the mechanics which allow sample providers, buyers and data collection platforms to automate some aspects of the process.

Due to the high requirements of our panel management rules and quality standards, we pursue only a managed service model, enabling us to control the complete invitation process and selection. This ensures that panellists are not solicited too often or too seldom, nor to similar projects in a short period.

We invite through multiple channels: email, notification, publications on our website or on our mobile app. Appropriate media are selected on a per project basis, e.g. on some specific targets as for example young people,  the % of participants via our native mobile app is very high.

## 10 If offering intercepts, or providing access to more than one source, what level of transparency do you offer over the composition of your sample (sample sources, sample providers included in the blend). Do you let buyers control which sources of sample to include in their projects, and if so how? Do you have any integration mechanisms with third-party sources offered?

It is well documented that different sources can produce different results. Consistency in source blending can be vital for tracking studies or other intersurvey comparisons. The use of a single, narrow source, such as a single supermarket's loyalty scheme, may result in unintended bias.

Thanks to the size of our panels, for the vast majority of projects we use our proprietary panels. If we need to work with third parties, transparency is essential. Providers who observe process standards similar to ISO standards are required to give this information in advance of the selection process to establish their suitability as a preferred supplier by the Bilendi sourcing team.
The Bilendi sourcing team will carefully vet all partners before they become part of our supply network. All partners providing sample for Bilendi must share industry standard information about their company and the quality of their sample will be monitored over time. When assessing the quality of the participants, we look at their responses and include a number of quality control checks to ensure high standards are met. When requested, Bilendi can provide the names of sample sources used. Bilendi is not directly connected to third-party sources.

**11 Of the sample sources you have available, how would you describe the suitability of each for different research applications? For example, Is there sample suitable for product testing or other recruit/recall situations where the buyer may need to go back again to the same sample? Is the sample suitable for shorter or longer questionnaires? For mobile-only or desktop-only questionnaires? Is it suitable to recruit for communities? For online focus groups?**

By understanding the constraints of the sample being offered, you can understand if the actual sample available from the provider meets your particular research needs and changes any of the answers given previously to this section.

Bilendi provides sample from proprietary panels, allowing us to identify the respondents and to recontact them if necessary. As our internal panel management constantly ensures honest and motivated participants, we have high response rates and recontact rates, making our samples very suitable for product testing or longitudinal research.
Our proprietary panels are suitable for both quantitative and qualitative research as well as for shorter or longer questionnaires and mobile- or desktop-only questionnaires. If surveys scripted by our clients contain question types which are incompatible with smartphones or tablets, our internally developed device detection system ensures that a respondent will only have access to the survey if using an appropriate device. In case the panellist uses an inappropriate device, they are informed and allowed to restart the survey using a compatible device. We also have long-term experience in recruiting for communities, online focus groups or qualitative research projects, for example qual at scale projects with our tool Bilendi Discuss.
To reach very specific audiences that can't be reached via panels, we offer a niche sampling solution, based on recruitment via social media.
There is no survey router used.

**12 Briefly describe your overall process from invitation to survey completion. What steps do you take to achieve a sample that "looks like" the target population? What demographic quota controls, if any, do you recommend?**

The sampling process (i.e., how individuals are selected or allocated from the sample sources) may affect how random the sample is from within the sources proposed. Quota controls are commonly used to make samples look like the target population and, if done without thought, may be less than optimal for your particular project.

The target group is defined by the client, although the Bilendi project manager can provide advice if needed. Bilendi uses an advanced proprietary Sample Management Tool, which allows the construction of complex samples on specific population categories, based on the expected distribution. The tool can combine a large number of distribution variables and individual crossed combinations, while respecting panel usage rules (such as maximum number of invites per member per week, limited number of invites to surveys on the same category, exclusion of members participating in previous studies etc.)
Based on the member activity history and specifics of the project, which is stored in our database, the Bilendi Sample Management Tool predicts the expected response rate of each individual and the overall sample. Each member is assigned an individual probability to participate in the next survey and this information is updated every night. The tool uses this information to select the required number of members to be invited in total and per each variable. This way we ensure that the members participating in the survey will have the requested distribution and that the target structure objectives are met.

Bilendi can contact members through various support channels - email, survey published on their website account or app. The survey results are evaluated anonymously, i.e. the answers from each of the surveys are never linked to names or addresses of the panellists in the analysis. Data is never passed on to third parties and is used solely for market and social research. Panel members will not receive any unsolicited commercial emails or other spam.

## 13 What profiling information do you hold on at least 80% of your panel members plus any intercepts known to you through prior contact? How does this differ by the sources you offer? How often is each of those data points updated? Can you supply these data points as appends to the data set? Do you collect this profiling information directly or is it supplied by a third party?

Targeting samples based on pre-existing profiles increases efficiency. Some bias may result depending on the precise questions asked, when they were asked, and to how many people. Appending existing information reduces the burden on the panellists in the survey itself.

Our participants provide socio-demographic information when registering (age, gender, education, employment, income, family status, household size, number of children). We use more than 300 profiling criteria to meet even very specific target requirements. Those criteria are regularly updated and expanded in-house. Our members are regularly invited to fill in and update their profiles. Profile reminder campaigns are sent between every two weeks and every couple of months depending on the profile.

## 14 What information do you need about a project in order to provide an estimate of feasibility? What, if anything, do you do to give upper or lower boundaries around these estimates?

A sample provider failing to meet your sample requirements may require use of additional sample providers, adding time and complexity to the project.
Trackers should be assessed in the light of any exclusion periods you may want to introduce that will reduce the available sample for subsequent waves.

To provide a clear statement concerning a survey's feasibility, we require the following information:

- The country in which the survey takes place
- The definition of the target: age, gender, further specific characteristics (some criteria might be pre-identified as Bilendi panels are already profiled on more than 300 criteria)
- The number of desired completes
- The structure of the target (distribution per socio-demographic criteria)
- The incidence rate: If the incidence rate can't be provided by the client, the Bilendi account management teams can support finding the best estimation
- The survey's length
- The duration in the field
- Any stimuli that need to be tested, and that can impact the easibility (for example long videos might impact the drop rate in a survey)
- Any potential task to be completed by the respondents (testing products, visiting a store …)
- Exclusive rules to apply (e.g. for trackers, past participation on surveys on the same category etc.)

**15 What do you do if the project proves impossible for you to complete in field? Do you inform the sample buyer as to who you would use to complete the project? In such circumstances, how do you maintain and certify third party sources/sub-contractors?**

There may be good reasons why certain sample providers should not be used. For example; the provider may not have experience of operating in the geography relevant to your project.

For the vast majority of projects we use our own panels. In some cases, for feasibility reasons, we might need to work with third parties. If we do so, transparency is essential.

The Bilendi sourcing team has a strict vetting process for selecting the external partners before they become part of our supply network. Each partner needs to prove that the quality standards are respected and that the panels are strong enough to support the requirements. Providers who maintain process standards similar to ISO standards are required to give this information in advance of the selection process to establish their suitability as a preferred supplier by the Bilendi sourcing team. Bilendi keeps the number of panels involved in each survey as low as possible. When requested, Bilendi can provide the names of sample sources used.

**16 Do you employ a survey router or any yield management techniques? If yes, please describe how you go about allocating participants to surveys. How are potential participants asked to participate in a study? Please specify how this is done for each of the sources you offer.**

Biases of varying severity may arise from prioritization in the order in which surveys are presented to participants or the methods used to allocate a participant to one of the various surveys for which they may appear to qualify.

Bilendi invites the participants only directly to the survey, enabling us to keep complete control over who is invited. The Bilendi panellists are invited to participate in surveys through various channels: email, app, sms, or publications on the member website account.
To reach out to even very specific targets, respondents can also be invited via social media.

**17 Do you set limits on the amount of time a participant can be in the router before they qualify for a survey?**

An excessive amount of time spent in a router answering screening questions may cause a participant to be become fatigued, potentially impacting data quality.

Bilendi does not use a router.

**18 What information about a project is given to potential participants before they choose whether to take the survey or not? How does this differ by the sources you offer?**

The information about the survey (and associated rewards) may influence the type of people who agree to take part, creating the potential for bias.

No matter the invitation channel used, the members receive all relevant information regarding the duration of the survey as well as the incentive after successful completion (either points or cash incentive to be credited to the users' account). Upon the client's request, we can eventually indicate the subject of the survey. The invitation also indicates if the survey is mobile-compatible or only suitable for desktop, if it is a flash survey (meaning that it is only available for a very short period of time) and if it concerns the child of the member. Should any queries or problems arise prior to, after or during the survey, participants can receive support at all times via our contact forms, e-mail or telephone. For that, the invitations contain the reference code of the survey. The details given by the panellists are treated strictly in accordance with European data protection laws.

## 19 Do you allow participants to choose a survey from a selection of available surveys? If so, what are they told about each survey that helps them to make that choice?

The level of detail and the nature of the information given about a project may influence who responds, creating the potential for bias.

Participants are able to choose from available surveys, if they have been invited to more than one. The amount of invitations our panellists receive is strictly monitored, to make sure that they are neither over nor under solicited. In their accounts, participants can see the length of the surveys available as well as the incentives, the survey end date and the compatible device for the survey.

## 20 What ability do you have to increase (or decrease) incentives being offered to potential participants (or sub-groups of participants) during the course of a survey? If so, can this be flagged at the participant level in the dataset?

The reward or incentive system may have an impact on the reasons people participate in a specific project and these effects can result in bias in the sample.

For each successfully completed survey, we offer cash or loyalty points which can be redeemed online for various rewards, such as physical gifts, online vouchers, donations to charities or bank transfers. The amount of cash/number of points we offer our members will be determined by the length of the survey. If during the fieldwork we observe a significant increase or decrease in the interview length, we might modify the amount of incentive offered, in order for this to correspond to the effort. We have defined strict rules to calculate the amount of the incentive in accordance with the length of the survey. Only if the length of the survey changes significantly, the amount of the incentive can be changed. In general, changes are avoided to ensure consistent results without bias. We also give respondents who screen out or receive a quota full rejection an incentive for their effort. All of our points/cash incentives are issued in real time, meaning as soon as our member reaches the redirect page, their points/cash incentives are automatically awarded to their accounts.

## 21 Do you measure participant satisfaction at the individual project level? If so, can you provide normative data for similar projects (by length, by type, by subject, by target group)?

Participant satisfaction may be an indicator of willingness to take future surveys. Participant reactions to your survey from self-reported feedback or from an analysis of the points where participants drop out of the survey may enhance your understanding of the survey results and lead to improvements in questionnaire design for future surveys.

We regularly send satisfaction surveys to our participants in order to attain feedback and thereby improve our service and our portals.

These surveys cover a sample of 500 Bilendi panellists in each of the panels and address the following topics:

- Participants’ satisfaction (membership in general, technical set-up, frequency of invitations, etc.)
- Survey dropouts and the reasons for the dropouts
- Trust (e.g. data protection, delivery of incentives)
- Future participation

A satisfaction survey conducted in January 2023 among all panels reveals that on a 5-star rating scale, the Bilendi panellists indicate a satisfaction score of 4.38.

For general enquiries regarding surveys or other general matters, our support personnel is available for all panellists via contact form, email or telephone. The support team attends to all questions and queries relating to the survey. Feedback is forwarded to our project managers and, if necessary, passed on to the client.

## 22 Do you provide a debrief report about a project after it has completed? If yes, can you provide an example?

You should expect a full sample debrief report. Sample providers should be able to list the standard reports and metrics that they make available.

Our clients can work with us in two ways. They can either provide us with their own programmed surveys or, alternatively, make use of our hosting and programming services.

In the first case the client receives all relevant information such as incidence rate, dropout-rate, screen outs, quota full, etc. via his own systems. However, at the end of the survey, the project manager always provides a summary report mentioning all relevant survey KPIs.
In the second case all this information is provided through us as a service provider. Should the client require any information in addition to the above, we are happy to discuss this and assist where at all possible. Under no circumstances is participants’ data forwarded to the client for advertising purposes.

## 23 How often can the same individual participate in a survey? How does this vary across your sample sources? What is the mean and maximum amount of time a person may have already been taking surveys before they entered this survey? How do you manage this?

Answers to this question may alert you to about the potential for bias due to the participation of professional participants, simply survey fatigue, or category bias.

The participant’s response rates as well as activity are saved in the database. We take care to ensure that participants are neither contacted too often nor too little. Depending on the target group, we achieve a completion rate of on average 3 surveys per month. Our systems allow members to be excluded based on previous category participation, previous project participation or due to the length of time since their last complete. Bilendi’s model is to continuously recruit and manage panel members in "true" panels, enabling us to fully control all solicitations to panellists. Our panels are not accessible through marketplaces and we do not use a router.

## 24 What data do you maintain on individual participants such as recent participation history, date(s) of entry, source/channel, etc? Are you able to supply buyers with a project analysis of such individual level data? Are you able to append such data points to your participant records?

You may wish to append data that enables you to analyse and trend data to look for potential biases based on participation levels, sources, tenure, and other data the provider may hold.

We have detailed user data at our disposal (such as registration date, recruitment source, survey participation history, credentials etc.). We can provide our client with aggregated/anonymised or pseudonymised demographic information (e.g. age, gender, region) of survey participants. Bilendi follows the GDPR and local rules and under no circumstances, we will forward confidential information of individual members.

## 25 Please describe your procedures for confirmation of participant identity at the project level. Please describe these procedures as they are implemented at the point of entry to a survey or router.

Given the widely acknowledged risk of fraud in online research, buyers should understand identity and fraud controls, not just at recruitment, but at the point of survey entry. It is essential that there be measures in place to ensure that participants are who they say they are and that the member or email account has not been hacked, is not a duplicate with other accounts from other channels or panels, and whether or not the account is shared by other members of the household.

Quality is very important to Bilendi and we have a lot of quality checks in place from the registration stage, through the survey stage and during the entire life of a panellist, to guarantee that the respondents are unique and real.
At survey entry, we perform the following checks:

- Geo IP check: We make sure that the member belongs to the panel country
- Automatic device detection: If a member is not on the correct device, he is redirected to an entry page
- Duplicate check on cookies: to ensure that members only participate once in a survey
- Speed checks and plausibility checks: Detection and elimination of happy clickers with trap questions when requested by the client
- Consistency checks: Automatic check in real-time of consistency in screening questions vs qualification for full-service projects

- Authenticity checks: Displaying a video and asking a question about the content of the video (i.e. what animal did you see) as well as reCAPTCHA on full-service projects.

## 26 How do you manage source consistency and blend at the project level? With regard to trackers, how do you ensure that the nature and composition of sample sources remain the same over time? Do you have reports on blends and sources that can be provided to buyers? Can source be appended to the participant data records?

Participant source is a known contributor to data representativeness. Knowing all the sources used for the project, especially for tracking and longitudinal research, and that the proportions from each source are known and reportable over time, will allow you to understand any population biases that might exist.

For most surveys, Bilendi uses its own panels. When selecting participants, our sampling tool takes into account well-defined rules ensuring that panellists are not contacted too often, nor too rarely. In some cases, e.g. for very specific requests, we might need to use an external vendor to complete the surveys. We only use pre-selected vendors. The Bilendi sourcing team will carefully vet all partners before they become part of our supply network. All partners providing samples for Bilendi must share industry standard information about their company and the quality of their sample will be monitored over time. When working on trackers, we ensure a consistent split of panels from wave to wave. The quotas per vendors are defined in advance and respected in the field. Bilendi keeps the number of panels involved in each survey as low as possible. Each participant source is recorded in the database and, when requested, Bilendi can provide the names of sample sources used.

## 27 Please describe your participant/member quality tracking, along with any health metrics you maintain on members/ participants, and how those metrics are used to invite, track, quarantine, and block people from entering the platform, router, or a survey. What processes do you have in place to compare profiled and known data to in-survey responses?

Buyers and providers often work together to track individual survey response quality, so buyers should understand what data the provider uses to confirm survey answers, block or remove a member, and how to enable that information exchange.

On a weekly basis, various metrics on panel activity are measured.
These metrics measure:
- The size of our panels in the different countries
- The activity of our panellists (e.g. invitations, participations, completes, screen outs)
- The participation channel (website, app, e-mail, end pages)
- The redemption of points/incentives
- The panellist behaviour (e.g. quality issues, blacklisted members)
- The depth of profiling data
- KPI on specific target groups

The Bilendi panel management team is closely monitoring the different metrics and take action if deemed necessary. Members who do not reach our quality standards are blocked from further participation. This applies for example to persons with incoherent qualification data, persons who fail our quality checks at registration or survey level (see question 28) or persons who show suspicious behaviour on points redemption.

**28 For work where you program, host, and deliver the survey data, what processes do you have in place to reduce or eliminate undesired in-survey behaviours, such as (a) random responding, (b) Illogical or inconsistent responding, (c) overuse of item nonresponse (e.g., "Don't Know") (d) inaccurate or inconsistent responding, (e) incomplete responding, or (f) too rapid survey completion?**

We monitor the quality of responses of every panellist during their participation in our surveys. This includes:
- Speed checks: to eliminate participants who are answering the questionnaires too quickly
- Variance checks: to eliminate participants whose answers are contradictory
- Plausibility checks: to exclude participants who give illogical or unreliable answers
- Duplicate checks: to recognise participants with similar addresses, IP addresses and identical browser configurations
- Cookie check: to ensure that members only participate once in a survey
- GEO IP: to ensure that the member belongs to the panel country

Data cleansing methods are often built into survey programs and platforms. Some of those methods are set up to automatically remove responses, while others are optional or manual. Understanding what tools will be used will aid buyers in understanding how much cleaning they should plan to do once they receive the final dataset, and what biases might be introduced by automated cleaning practices.

**29 Please provide the link to your participant privacy notice (sometimes referred to as a privacy policy) as well as a summary of the key concepts it addresses. (Note: If your company uses different privacy notices for different products or services, please provide an example relevant to the products or services covered in your response to this question). A privacy notice is required by various data protection laws and regulations as well as other laws and regulations as well some market research industry codes.**

During the registration process, each participant has to accept the general terms and conditions as well as our privacy policy. By accepting, the participant explicitly consents to Bilendi data collection and data use. These documents can be viewed on the panel community websites at all times. In the case of fundamental changes, our panellists are asked to accept the latest versions. Please see an example here.

A privacy notice discloses information about the personal data that a sample provider collects and processes and the way that that personal data is used, disclosed, and managed. A review of a sample provider's privacy notice can help you understand their procedures and practices related to personal data and the degree to which they comply with applicable laws, regulations, and industry codes.

**30 How do you comply with key data protection laws and regulations that apply in the various jurisdictions in which you operate? How do you address requirements regarding consent or other legal bases for the processing personal data? How do you address requirements for data breach response, cross-border transfer, and data retention? Have you appointed a data protection officer?**

Each Bilendi office applies the local laws which regulate the collection and use of personal data. These local laws implement the European Directive 95/46/EC on data protection (Data Protection Directive). All the data is hosted in the European

As noted above, buyers and sample providers are subject to data protection and related information security requirements imposed by data protection laws and regulations, other laws and regulations as well as clients. Understanding a sample provider's compliance position with these laws and regulations is essential.

Union. The delegates responsible for data protection within the company are Harlay Advocats, an independent external law firm. Our data protection officer can be contacted directly via all our websites.
Furthermore, Bilendi carries out technical and organisational measures to protect data according to a high standard: in protecting its infrastructure, in preventing external access to the data, and in the level of training and experience of its staff.
All our processes comply with ISO 20252:2019. Client service is available in all local languages and our panellists can have access to their complete personal data at any time.

**31 How can participants provide, manage and revise consent for the processing of their personal data? What support channels do you provide for participants? In your response, please address the sample sources you wholly own, as well as those owned by other parties to whom you provide access.**

Participants provide their personal data during the registration process (profiling questions) and during surveys. They can at any time access and modify their data online or revise consent for the processing of their personal data. Various channels can be used for this, as described in the Bilendi Privacy Policy: via an online form, via e-mail or by letter. We provide personal support to our participants via contact form, e-mail or phone in the local languages.

Consent for the collection and processing of personal data has long been required by market research industry codes. It is also explicitly required by some data protection laws and regulations. Some data protection laws and regulations, including EU-GDPR and CCPA as examples, also provide for access rights for participants to correct, update, or delete their data. Implementation of a participant support channel is also required by ISO 20252 (ISO 20252:2019: Market, Opinion and Social Research, Including Insights and Data Analytics - Vocabulary and Service Requirements).

**32 How do you track and comply with other applicable laws and regulations, such as those that might impact the incentives paid to participants?**

Our internal experts are aware of local and international laws and regulations and ensure that they are met. Possible changes are monitored and will be followed. The incentive system of our panellists is based on a point system or on payment of cash, depending on the panel in which the participant is registered. Detailed information on our incentive system can be found in our privacy policies.

As stated above, buyers and sample providers are subject to laws and regulations such as those that may impact incentives paid to participants.

**33 What is your approach to collecting and processing the personal data of children and young people? Do you adhere to standards and guidelines provided by ESOMAR or GRBN member associations? How do you comply with applicable data protection laws and regulations?**

Bilendi does not register or conduct surveys on minors under the legal age limit applicable in the specific country. In order to allow for market research amongst children under the legal age, parents are contacted via email and asked to give their consent, as well as to oversee the child whilst the survey is in progress. This procedure conforms to the respective ESOMAR guidelines.

Some data protection laws and regulations (for example COPPA and EU-GDPR) impose specific requirements with the respect to the collection and processing of the personal data of children and young people. These requirements include specific age definitions as well as a requirement for verifiable parental consent. See the ESOMAR & GRBN Guideline on Research and Data Analytics with Children, Young People, and Other Vulnerable Individuals for further discussion.

## 34 Do you implement "data protection by design" (sometimes referred to as "privacy by design") in your systems and processes? If so, please describe how.

Bilendi ensures that privacy and data protection principles are considered and integrated when setting up and configuring our processes and systems. All our technology is developed in-house by our R&D teams, enabling us to have complete control and to adapt immediately to possible changes. Our panel and project management information system has been designed to minimise access to Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Only authorised Bilendi staff members have access to PII. The vast majority of our staff does not have access. It is based on standard Open Source, internally developed and hosted on proprietary servers. Besides embedding privacy and data protection measures at the earliest stage of the design of our processing operations, Bilendi also ensures by default that all data of our panellists and our clients is processed with the highest privacy protection. The user settings of our panellists are automatically data protection-friendly. Only data which is necessary is collected.

Data protection by design" (which may also be referred to as "privacy by design") is an approach that requires the consideration of privacy and data protection issues at the design phase of any system, service, product or process and then throughout the lifecycle. Understanding a sample providers use or lack of use of "data protection by design" can help you understand its data protection compliance posture.

## 35 What are the key elements of your information security compliance program? Please specify the framework(s) or auditing procedure(s) you comply with or certify to. Does your program include an asset-based risk assessment and internal audit process?

Bilendi itself is not directly subject to ISO 27001 and SOC 2, but the companies who are hosting our infrastructure (GTT, Databank) comply with ISO 27001, SOC 1 and SOC2, ensuring detailed security aspects surrounding the core elements of people, process, organisation and technology.

Information security frameworks such as ISO 27001 or SOC 2 are accepted and recognized frameworks for information security compliance. Understanding which framework(s) a sample provider uses or if a sample provider doesn't use such a framework can help you understand the sample provider's information security compliance posture.

## 36 Do you certify to or comply with a quality framework such as ISO 20252?

The entire Bilendi Group with all companies involved in market research was certified in accordance with ISO 20252 in October 2022. Every two years another surveillance audit and after 6 years a recertification takes place to maintain the standard. ISO 20252 specifies requirements for market, opinion, and social research, including sampling, data collection, and data processing. The certification demonstrates that Bilendi meets the standards set by ISO 20252 for conducting market research and providing reliable and high-quality research services to its clients.

ISO 20252 is an international quality standard recognised by many market research industry associations.
In addition to requirement for a system to manage research processes, it explicitly addresses requirements for data protection and information security compliance.

As a certified company, Bilendi ensures standards at various levels. Improved quality of research: Clients can be assured that research conducted by a company that complies with ISO 20252 follows standardised procedures that result in high-quality and accurate data.
· Increased reliability: Compliance with ISO 20252 can ensure that research data is collected, processed, and analysed consistently and reliably, reducing the risk of errors and inconsistencies.
· Better decision-making: Clients can make more informed decisions based on research conducted by a company that complies with ISO 20252, as the data is more likely to be accurate and reliable.
· Trust and credibility: Working with a company that complies with ISO 20252 can help build trust with clients and stakeholders, as it demonstrates a commitment to maintaining high standards of quality and best practices.
· Cost-effectiveness: Compliance with ISO 20252 can result in more efficient use of resources, reducing costs for clients while maintaining high-quality research services.

Overall, working with Bilendi, clients will be provided with the confidence that the research conducted on their behalf is of high quality, reliable, and consistent with best practices. This can lead to better decision-making, improved outcomes, and a stronger reputation for both the client and the research firm.

## 37 Which of the following are you able to provide to buyers, in aggregate and by country and source? Please include a link or attach a file of a sample report for each of the metrics you use.

**01.** Average qualifying or completion rate, trended by month
**02.** Percent of paid completes rejected per month/project, trended by month
**03.** Percent of members/accounts removed/quarantined, trended by month
**04.** Percent of paid completes from 0-3 months tenure, trended by month
**05.** Percent of paid completes from smartphones, trended by month
**06.** Percent of paid completes from owned/branded member relationships versus intercept participants, trended by month
**07.** Average number of dispositions (survey attempts, screenouts, and completes) per member, trended by month (potentially by cohort)
**08.** Average number of paid completes per member, trended by month (potentially by cohort)
**09.** Active unique participants in the last 30 days
**10.** Active unique 18-24 male participants in the last 30 days
**11.** Maximum feasibility in a specific country with nat rep quotas, seven days in field, 100% incidence, 10-minute interview
**12.** Percent of quotas that reached full quota at time of delivery, trended by month

Upon the request of our clients, we can provide detailed information on the structure of our panels, the completion rates and feasibilities. As this data is dynamic in nature, we only provide it on demand, to ensure it accurately represents the current status quo.

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