Experiences with Multi-Topic Implementation at Statistics Norway

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Statistics Norway has utilized the CATI functionality in Blaise since 2005. Initially, this was used in combination with list-based offline interviewing (CAPI) and later expanded to include CAWI. Until recently, we employed the traditional single-topic approach, which had several significant shortcomings. One major issue was the high workload for supervisors, who were required to actively assign specific surveys to individual interviewers. During daytime shifts, when fewer interviewers were available, handling appointments became particularly challenging as they had to switch between surveys. For smaller surveys, the daybatch often became exhausted quickly, necessitating frequent supervisor intervention.

In 2023, we began exploring the Multi-Topic approach to address the challenges associated with the traditional method. This exploration involved extensive technical testing and consultation with supervisors, interviewers, and other stakeholders. The first survey implemented using the Multi-Topic solution was the Media Survey in September 2024, followed shortly by a second survey, Housing Panel Survey. Both surveys had relatively few cases and overlapped for just one week. The initial experience was positive, prompting us to transition all newly deployed CATI surveys to the Multi-Topic system starting in January 2025. This includes the Labour Force Survey, the Omnibus Survey, and EU-SILC. Additionally, the Labour Force Survey, Housing Panel Survey, and Media Survey are conducted in mixed-mode (CAWI and CATI).

In preparation for the Multi-Topic implementation, we made several key adjustments. These included revising questionnaire templates and introducing appointment control in combination with operation times. When prioritizing specific respondents is necessary, we now use the sub-priority functionality in Blaise instead of groups, which were challenging for supervisors to manage. Milestones have also been incorporated to ensure accurate workload management. Furthermore, we have leveraged data from the dial history of previous interviews to calculate the appropriate workload for each response.