

# Task force on "quality of BCS data"

Response rates across consumer survey institutes

Joint EU/OECD workshop on recent developments in business and consumer surveys, Brussels, 14-15 November 2013

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Statistics Finland is grateful to all BCS survey organisations for their contributions to the research of response rates. We thank you for all the material and support we have received.

## Survey response rate and nonresponse

Survey response rate is affected by the *unit nonresponse*, i.e. by the situation where the selected sample person does not provide any information at all to the survey.

Three categories having distinctive causes:

- The selected sample element is *not contacted* due to failure to deliver the survey request
- The selected sample element *refuses to cooperate* i.e. refuses to participate in the survey
- The selected sample element is *not-able to participate* in the survey (because of language problems, illness, etc.)

## Calculation of response rate

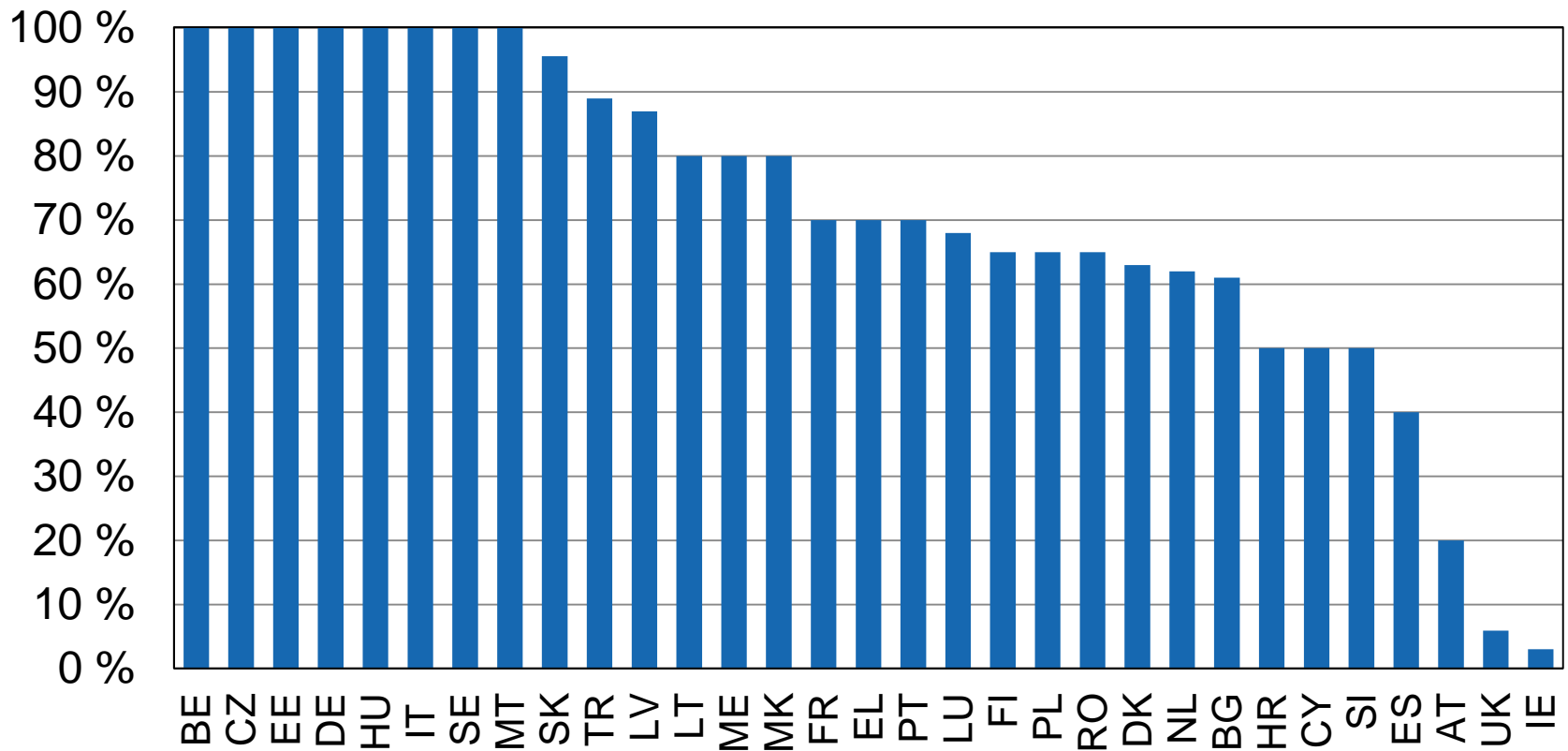
$$\text{Response rate} = \frac{\text{Respondents}}{\text{Eligible sample elements}}$$

If all noncontacted sample elements were eligible, the number of eligible sample elements would be

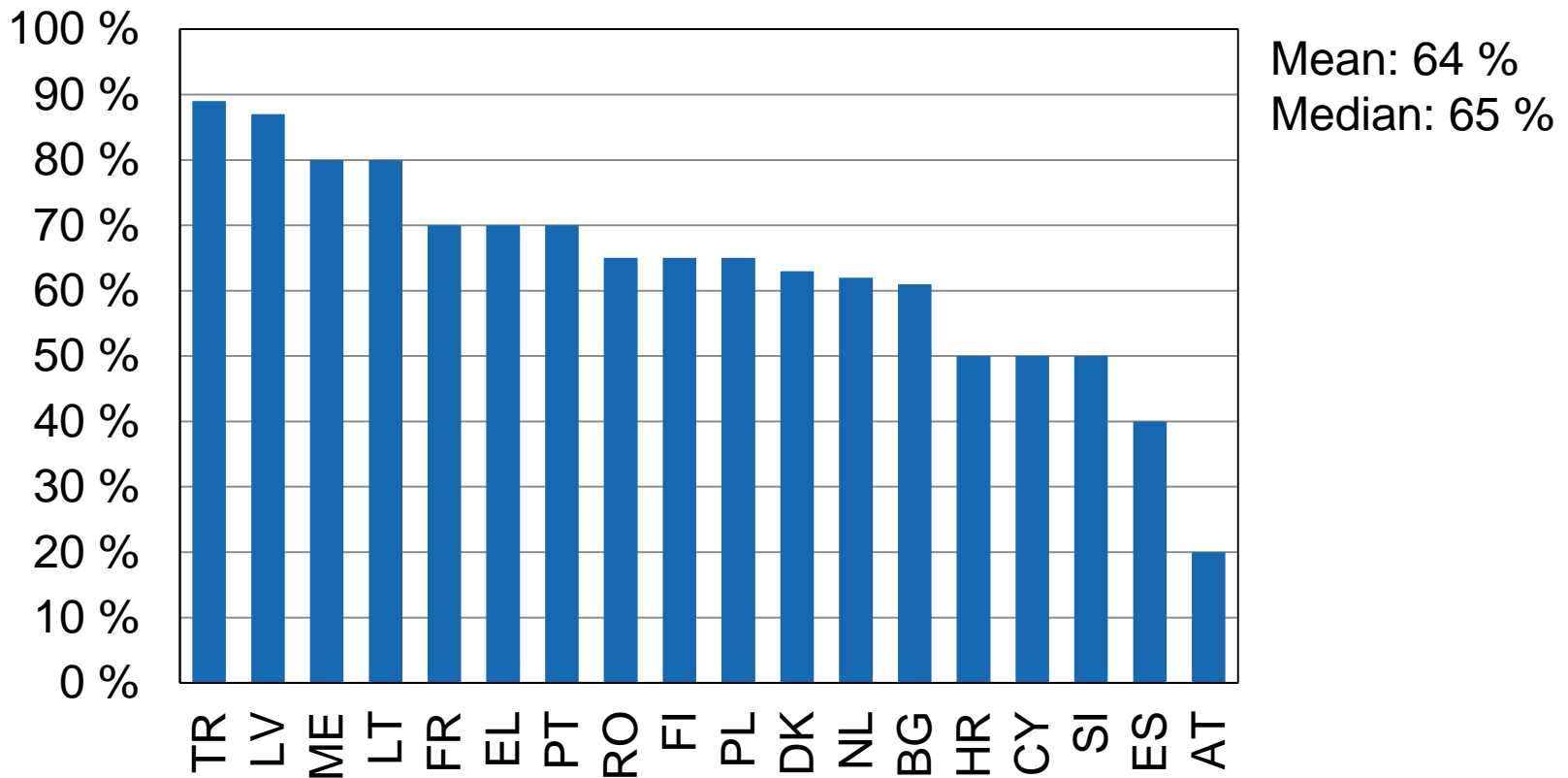
Eligible sample elements = Noncontacts + Refusers + Not-able Respondents + Respondents

The most popular way to calculate the response rate among BCS surveys was to use the total sample size as the number of eligible sample elements.

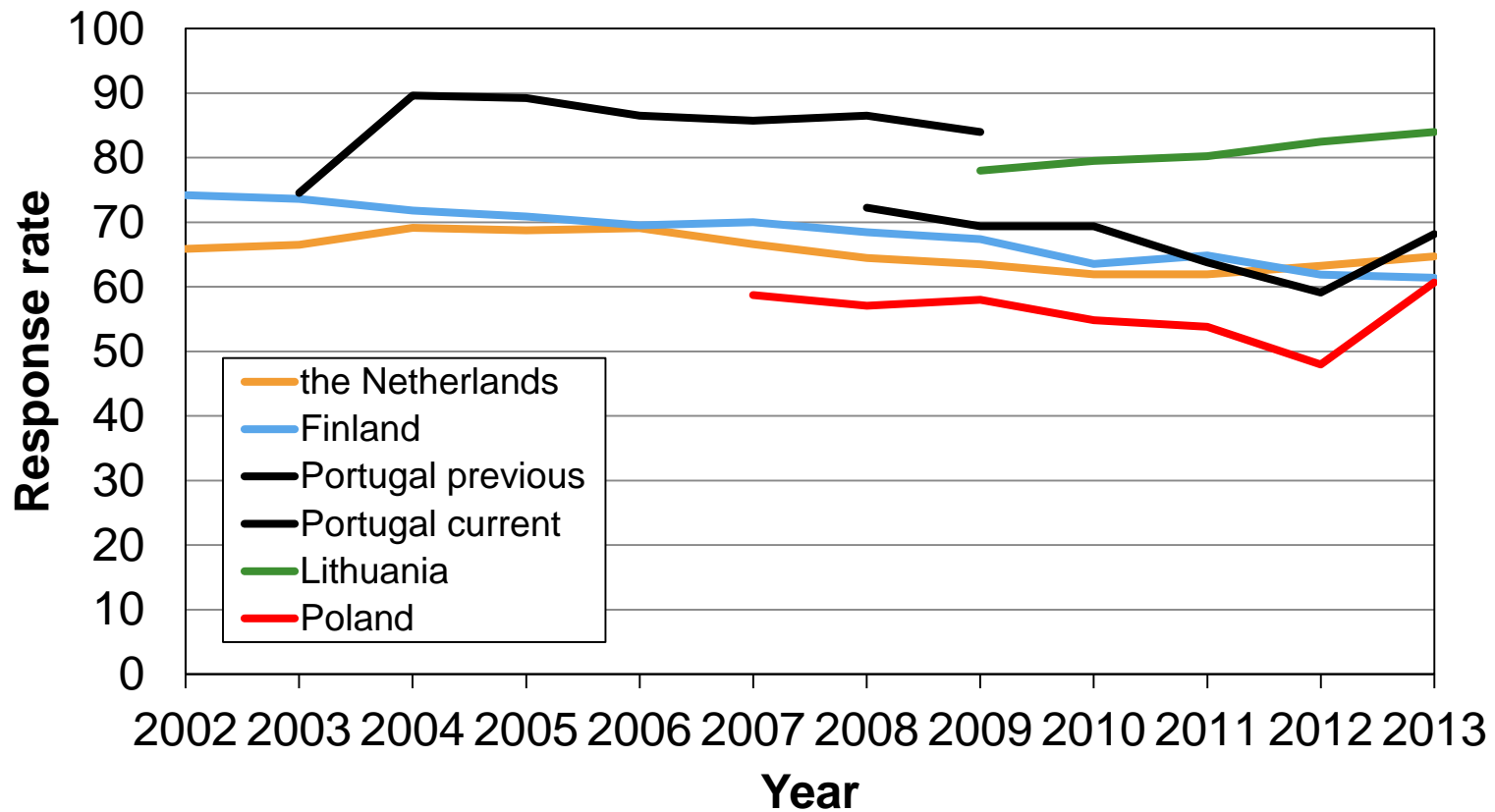
## Response rates



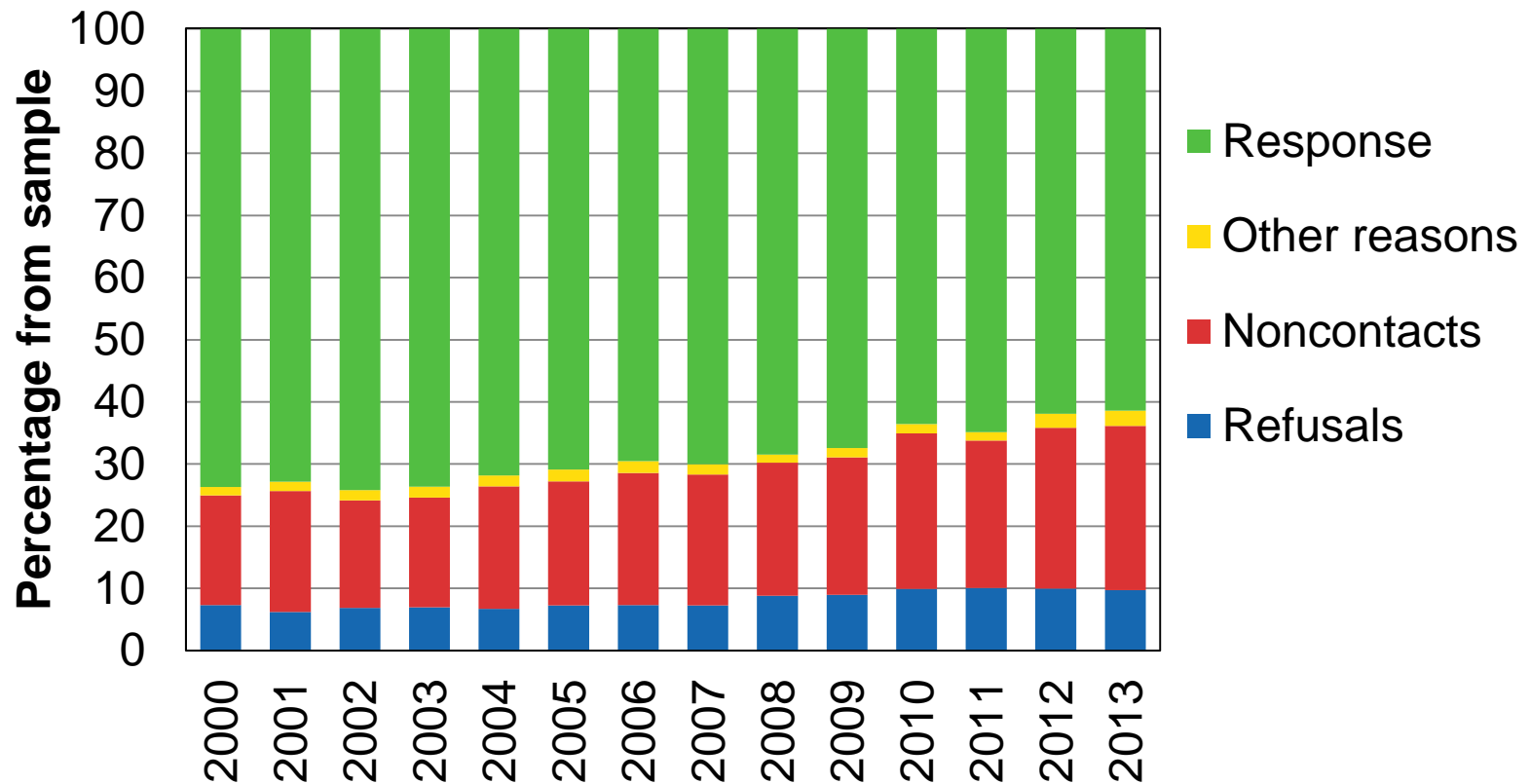
## Response rates: probability sampling countries



## Response rate trends



## Response and nonresponse rates in Finland





## Reducing nonresponse

The only way for survey organization to reduce the number of nonrespondents is through different survey design features.

Ways to reduce the number of noncontacts:

- Number and timing of contact attempts
- Length of the fieldwork period
- Lowering the workload of interviewers

Ways to reduce the number of refusals:

- Advance and persuasion letters
- Respondent incentives
- Selection of the survey mode
- The role of the interviewer

## Reducing nonresponse

	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Advance letter</b>	<b>Number of contact attempts</b>	<b>Wage dependency</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Turkey	CAPI	Yes	At least 3 visits	No	<b>89 %</b>
Lithuania	Mixed-mode	Yes	Limited to 3	Yes	<b>80 %</b>
France	Telephone	Yes	Limited to 5	Yes	<b>70 %</b>
Portugal	Mixed-mode	Yes	No limitations	Yes	<b>70 %</b>
Greece	CATI	No	Limited to 5	Yes	<b>70 %</b>
Finland	CATI	Yes	20 by default	No	<b>65 %</b>
Romania	Face-to-Face	No	Limited to 2	Yes	<b>65 %</b>
Denmark	Telephone	No	No limitations	No	<b>63 %</b>
the Netherlands	CATI	Yes	At least 12 attempts	No	<b>62 %</b>
Slovenia	CATI	Yes	No limitations	No	<b>50 %</b>
Cyprus	CATI	No	No limitations	No	<b>50 %</b>
Spain	CATI	No	Limited to 3	No	<b>40 %</b>

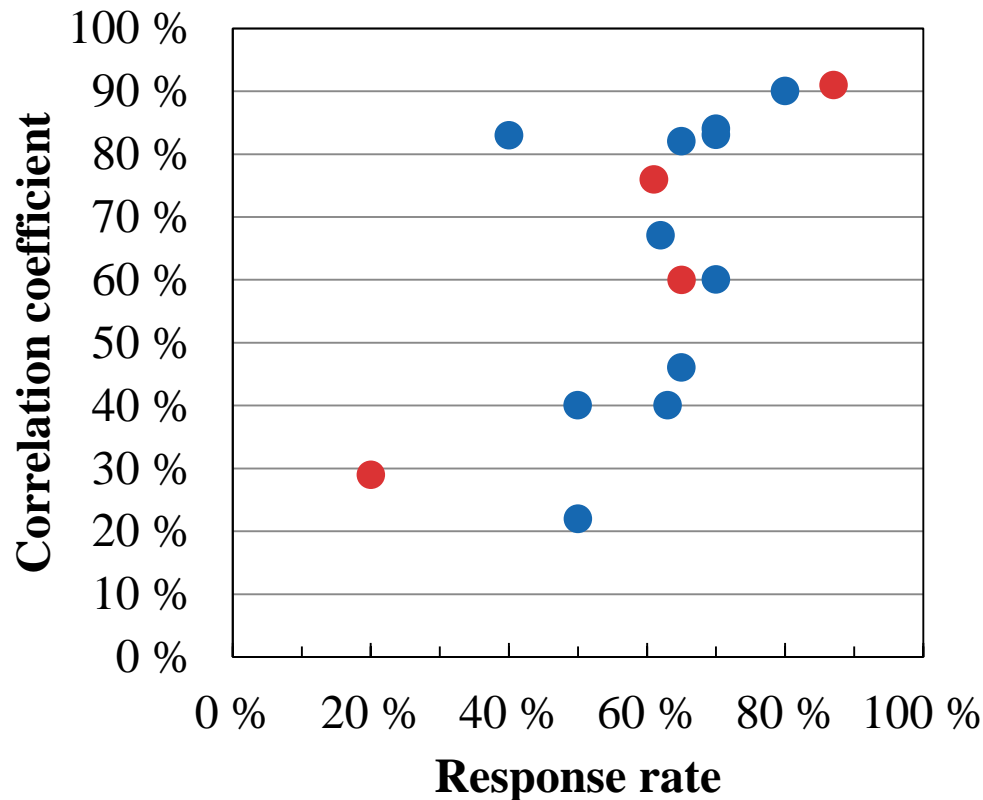
## Reducing nonresponse

	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Advance letter</b>	<b>Reminder</b>	<b>Wage dependency</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Latvia	Face-to-Face	No	No	Yes	<b>87 %</b>
Montenegro	CATI+email	No	No	Yes	<b>80 %</b>
Poland	Face-to-Face	Yes	No	Yes	<b>65 %</b>
Bulgaria	Face-to-Face	No	No	Yes	<b>61 %</b>
Croatia	CAPI	No	No	Yes	<b>50 %</b>
Austria	CATI	No	No	Yes/No	<b>20 %</b>

	<b>Denominator</b>
Latvia	Completed + Refusals
Montenegro	Contacted households
Poland	Contacted households
Bulgaria	Total contacts made
Croatia	Contacted households?
Austria	Number of total usable addresses

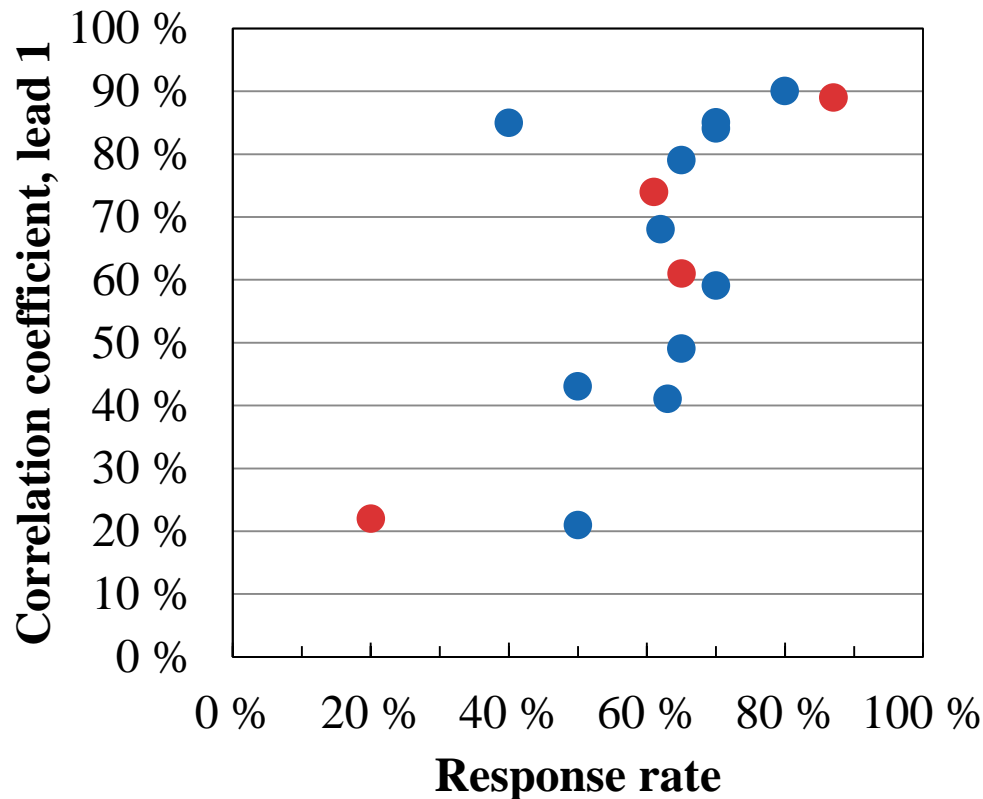
# Tracking performance: **contemporaneous**

*CCI ↔ Private Consumption*



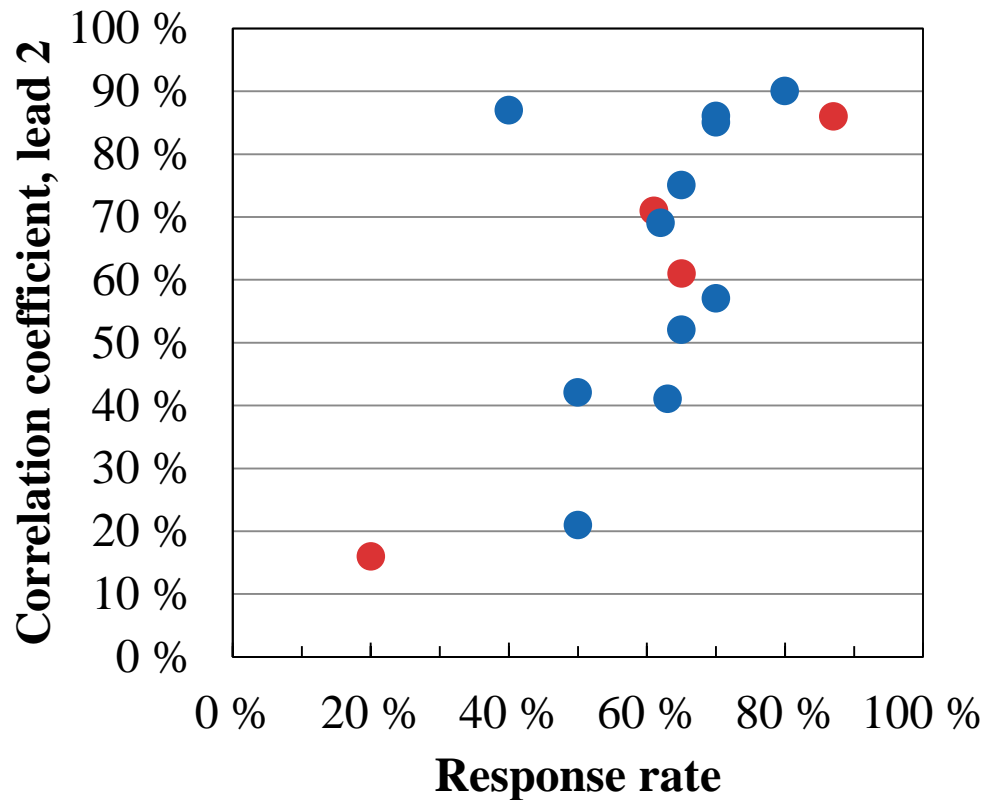
# Tracking performance: lead 1

*CCI ↔ Private Consumption*



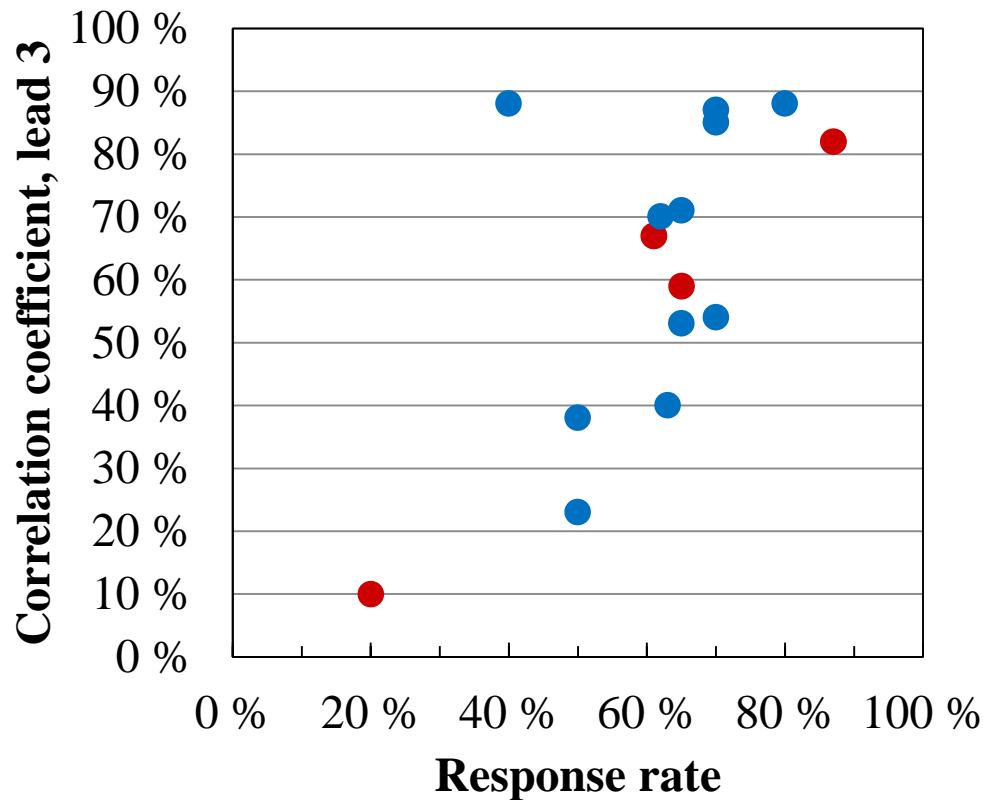
# Tracking performance: lead 2

*CCI ↔ Private Consumption*



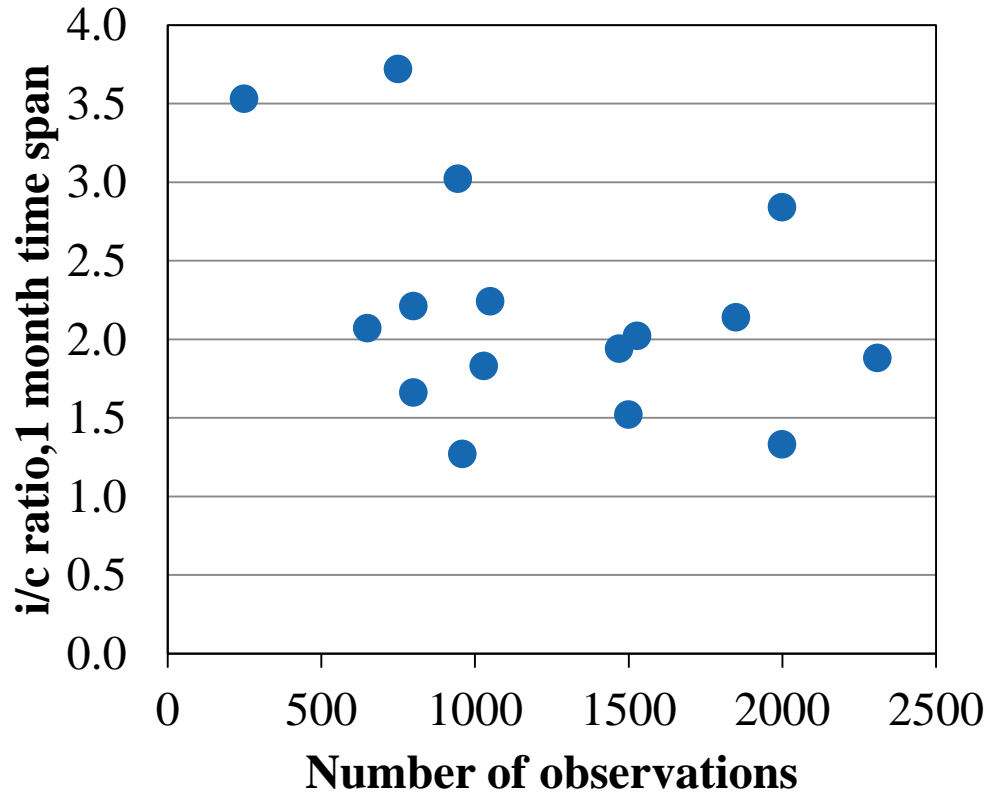
# Tracking performance: **lead 3**

*CCI ↔ Private Consumption*



# Volatility: i/c ratio, 1 month

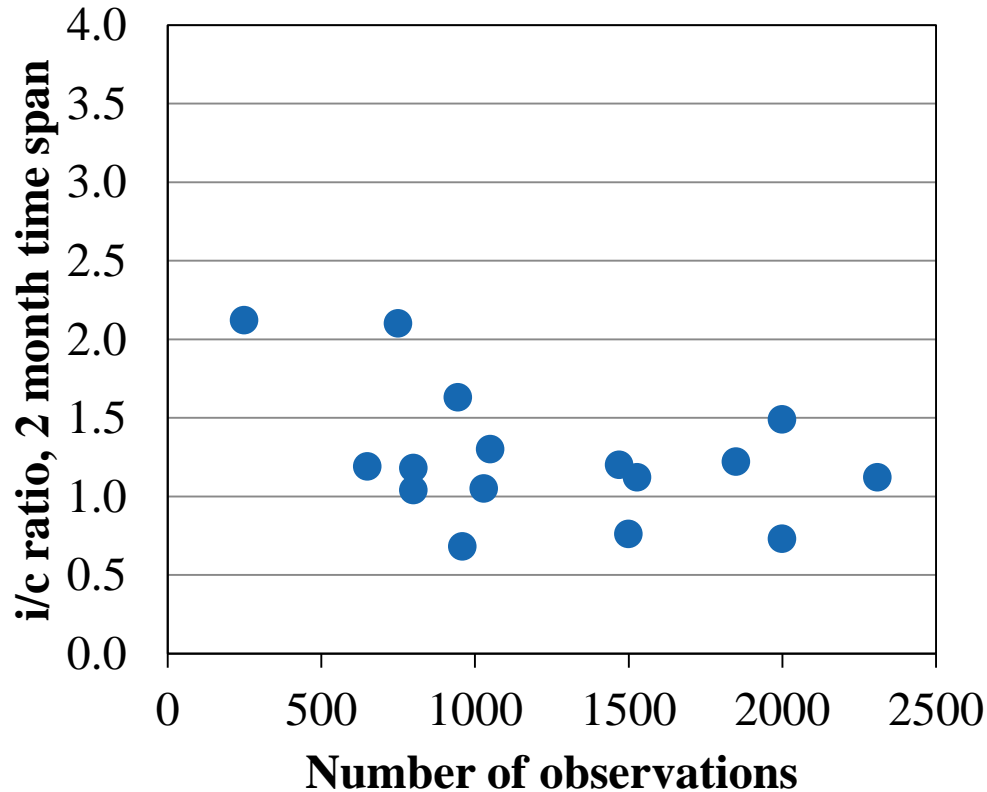
*Months for Cyclical Dominance (MCD)*





# Volatility: i/c ratio, **2 month**

*Months for Cyclical Dominance (MCD)*



## Main findings

- Response rates vary a lot between countries (minimum 3 %, maximum 100 %).
- The computational formula for calculation of response rates is not uniform.
- Survey modes with a face-to-face data collection period produce in average higher response rates than telephone surveys.
- Most of the countries with the highest response rates (calculated as a ratio to the total sample size) use advance letters and have interviewer salary dependent on the number of completed interviews.
- There could be a linkage between tracking performance and response rates, but these findings need more support from a proper statistical analysis

# Thank you!

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