




www.idames.eu



**Standard Operating
Procedures
Food Frequency/Food
Propensity Questionnaire
and survey information
material**

	<i>Standard Operating Procedure</i>	
<i>SOP 1.1 version 2</i> <i>Valid from: 24.05.2009</i>	<i>Food Frequency/Food Propensity Questionnaire and related survey information material</i>	<i>Page 2 / 8</i>

1. Scope
2. Objective
3. Definitions, abbreviations
4. Responsibilities
5. Procedure
6. Documentation and record keeping
7. Data Backup
8. Flow chart

Revision table

SOP version no.	Date of change	Description of change	Prepared by	Approved and released by
1.1.0		First draft	Dagrun Engeset	
1.1.1	03.03.2009	Changed according to feed back from the WP6 partners	Dagrun Engeset Gianluca Tognon Simonetta Salvini	
1.1.2	24.05.2009	Changed to better fit other epidemiological and public health studies	IDAMES, WP6 partners	

1. Scope

This SOP applies to studies using food frequency (FFQ) or food propensity questionnaires (FPQ), preferably the common European Food Propensity Questionnaire, EFPQ. The Questionnaires can be either web based or paper based, or the participants can have an option of choosing between the two versions. It relates to all procedures needed to recruit subjects for the compilation of the Questionnaire and to the storage of the collected information.

2. Objective

This SOP describes how to contact the participants prior to a survey, how to deal with the information material related to the study and how to handle the preference for either web or paper based FFQs/FPQs.

3. Definitions, abbreviations

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP): a set of instructions having the force of a directive, covering those features of operations that lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness.

Critical control point (CCP): a point, step or procedure at which controls can be applied and a hazard can be prevented, eliminated or reduced to acceptable (critical) levels.

Food Frequency Questionnaire (FFQ): a questionnaire which aims to assess the frequency with which food items or food groups are consumed during a specified time period. With the addition of portion-size estimates the method is called semi-quantitative.

Food Propensity Questionnaire (FPQ): a recently implemented dietary assessment tool, which collects much of the same information as a FFQ, but without asking for portion size. The FPQ should be used in combination with data from multiple 24-hour dietary recalls. Data from the FPQ can be used as covariates when estimating usual intake of episodically consumed foods from 24-hour dietary recall data.

European Food Propensity Questionnaire (EFPQ): multi-language FPQ specifically designed for European studies, developed within the Idames project.

4. Responsibilities

The responsible researcher:

- ensures that all the documents needed (SOP, FFQ/FPQ and information material needed for the study) will be correctly translated to the local language if necessary, and that all study information documents are available as appendices with the SOP. *It is important to put special emphasis to the translation to avoid misunderstanding;*
- prepares the list of eligible subjects;
- randomizes an appropriate sample of eligible subjects;
- mails letters to potential participants;
- receives answers from potential participants and solicits non responders;
- mails paper FFQ/FPQ as needed;
- assists participant by telephone or in person;
- archives all collected information;
- enters data from paper FFQ/FPQ into web based questionnaire.

The project leader/head of department:

- ensures that the responsible researcher has the necessary competences to carry out the tasks described in this SOP;

- ensures that the researcher receives appropriate specific training;
- ensures that work is carried out according to the valid (latest) version of the SOP.

The IDAMES organisation:

- provides an English version of the EFPQ if wanted, or in other languages if available;
- ensures regular revision of this SOP and initiates the update of this SOP, whenever needed;
- requests users of this SOP to give suggestions for improvements/feed-back from their experience to make the SOP a living document;
- ensures that the valid version of this SOP is made available at the IDAMES website www.idames.eu.

5. Procedure

5.1. Before the study starts

There are several possibilities for the collection of data from questionnaires: web-based with or without assistance, paper based with or without assistance and finally web or paper based filling in at your institution. The participants may be given the opportunity to choose what is most appropriate for them. This must be clearly formulated in the invitation letter and the response slip.

When decided which questionnaire to use (FFQ or FPQ), and how to collect the data from the questionnaires:

- draw a random sample of the study population of the age range, and gender and ethnicity composition of interest;
- prepare lists of names, addresses, and if web based: IDs and password;
- the following should be mailed to each potential participant:
 - a standard letter of invitation;
 - information about the study;
 - your contact information: telephone number and e-mail address;
 - response slip, including an official consent form, according to local privacy laws (remembering to ask for all possible contacts, such as landline phone, mobile phone and e-mails);
 - a prepaid and preaddressed envelope for response;
 - if a paper based questionnaire is used and it is the only option, you may send the paper questionnaire (and attached a suitable prepaid envelope) together with the study information and response slip.

If a web based questionnaire is used, the mailed information should also include:

- web address
- a unique ID-number and password for each participant

NOTE: If the participants are given the option to choose between a web based or a paper based questionnaire, this must be indicated on the response slip.

CCPI: Non – responders.

Preventive action: Send the subject a prepaid envelope. Highlight all contact details where he can ask for information (e.g.: a toll-free number).

Corrective action: A sensible number of reminders should be decided to make sure the subject has received the study information and/or sends out the response form. The reminders should be sent within 2-5 weeks after the first invitation was sent. Try to gently insist if the subject is not convinced or seems to be willing to refuse.

CCP2: Refusals.

Preventive action: Make sure that all information is written in a simple and clear language.

Corrective action: None.

5.2. When the response slip is received by the study centre:

Follow the steps below (5.2.1 – 5.2.4) depending on which options are given of filling in the questionnaire: web based or paper based, with or without assistance.

5.2.1. If the paper questionnaire is chosen:

Send the questionnaire together with a pre-paid envelope with the address of your institute. You must also give a contact number and e-mail address where the participant can reach you in case they have questions or need help in filling out the questionnaire.

5.2.2. If the web-based questionnaire is chosen:

Check the web address of the questionnaire to see if the questionnaire has been completed spontaneously without returning the response slip (you may indicate in the study information that by filling in the questionnaire you give your consent to participate in the study).

5.2.3. If participant wants help in filling in the questionnaire:

You have to agree about a time when it is convenient for the participant to be assisted over the telephone. You must explain to the participant, in a neutral manner, how to fill in the questionnaire. It may be necessary to assist the participant step-by-step through the questionnaire. If the participant still finds it difficult to fill in you may, as an alternative, fill in the questionnaire for him/her.

In that case you have to:

- ask for the participants ID-number and password and log in as the participant (if web based);
- ask the questions from the questionnaire and fill in the answers on behalf of the participant. Remember to thank the participant for his/her kind participation.

5.2.4. If the questionnaire to be completed at your institute is chosen:

Set up an appointment for the subject to come for an in-office compilation with your assistance. When you have finished your assistance with the questionnaire, remember to thank the participant for his/her kind participation.

CCP3: Non responders.

Preventive action: If the questionnaire to be filled in is paper based, remember to send the subject a prepaid envelope. Make sure that all the instructions are given clearly and simply.

Corrective action: A sensible number of reminders is to be decided to make sure the subject sends out the paper Qs in case paper questionnaire is chosen, and to make sure the Web based Qs is filled out in case the web based questionnaire is chosen. The reminders should

be sent within 2-5 weeks after the first invitation was sent. Try to gently insist if the subject shows to have changed his/her mind.

5.3. When the questionnaire has been completed:

5.3.1. If web based:

check for incorrect or missing data.

5.3.2. If paper based, but with web based option:

enter the questionnaire data into the web based questionnaire and check for incorrect or missing data.

5.3.3. If paper based and no web based option:

enter the data following the coding instructions/codebooks decided at your institute and check for incorrect or missing data.

5.3.4. If you intend to do telephone administered 24-hour dietary recalls as a part of your study:

send the picture booklet to be used for the 24-hour recalls to the participants as soon as the web-based questionnaire is completed or institute receives filled out paper questionnaire together with a letter with information about the booklet: why they receive it and that they have to keep it for the telephone interviews.

CCP4: Incorrect data

Preventive action: Make sure that all the instructions on how to fill in the questionnaire are given clearly and simply.

Corrective action: Phone call subject to gather incorrect or missing data from the questionnaire.

6. Documentation and record keeping

The researcher must keep a record of all activities during the administration of the study material and the FFQ/FPQ, including deviation from the standard procedures, and if he/she experienced any difficulties in following the standard procedures as described in this document. This should be reported to the IDAMES for revision of the SOP (anne-kathrin.illner@dife.de).

CCP5: Record keeping.

Preventive action: A standardized record form (better if using a computer database, especially if set on a common server) should be implemented and shared with the whole working group.

Corrective action: Collect all possible information that was not recorded.

7. Data Backup

Remember to do back up of all your files during the study. At least one extra copy should be saved *whenever you make changes* on another hard disk, server (*most desirable choice*) or CD or floppy disk, than where you saved your original documents.

Follow the back up procedures at your institute, if available.

CCP6: Backup.

Preventive action: Perform a backup at a regular interval of time. Servers can be set to backup data automatically.

Corrective action: Do a backup when forgotten.

8. Flow chart.

