4. Possible threats.

Low or differential subjects compliance.

High number of reminders to convince subjects to complete the survey.

The number of mails (and of spamming) everybody receives each day is dramatically increasing and people's attention could fall: possible necessity of using "traditional" (and costly) advertising tools as a support.

Possible bias from differential knowledge of internet tools according to age or education level.

Distribution of paper and web-based EFPQ, according to the subjects choice in each IDAMES centre.

IDAMES Centre	WEB-EFPQ	Paper-EFPQ
Florence (I)	24 (49.0%)	25 (51.0%)
Potsdam (D)	19 (33.9%)	37 (66.1%)
San Sebastian (E)	14 (23.3%)	46 (76.6%)
Tartu (EE)	65 (92.9%)	5 (7.1%)
Tromsoe (Nor)	21 (70.0%)	9 (30.0%)

Within the IDAMES pilot study, 400 subjects from five different countries were invited to fill in a common questionnaire regarding their usual food habits: the European Food Propensity Questionnaire (EFPQ). According to the study protocol, a choice was offered between a paper- and a web-based EFPQ version. The table shows that different patterns arise among countries, showing the highest proportion of web-based questionnaires among Estonian subjects and the lowest among the Spanish.

IDAMES
Innovative Dietary Assessment Methods in Epidemiological Studies and Public Health

INNOVATIVE TECNOLOGIES

SWOT Analysis

Executive Agency for Health and Consumers

www.idames.eu

1. Possible Strengths

Higher quality of data.

Immediate and automatic control for missing and implausible data.

Possibility of using high quality photos for portion estimation.

No interviewer effect.

Strongly standardized procedure.

Common multilanguage questionnaire for different countries (better comparability).

Direct data transfer to study centre.

Lower costs (no printing and postage).

Less organizational constraints (no manual checks, transfer of data to electronic format).

Higher compliance.

Completion at any time in any place, reminder messages, personalized feedback, interactive help features.

2. Possible Weaknesses

No assessment of atypical consumed food.

Finite food list with often closed ended response categories (but this could be improved).

Unique questionnaire for different countries (lack of cultural differences).

Measurement error.

- Often no quantification or imprecise estimation of portion sizes.
- Retrospective: good memory is required.
- Possible bias due to recent food intake.

Selection bias.

- Limited access to internet.
- Internet/computer skills required.

3. Possible Opportunities.

Growing internet diffusion among population.

No interviewer and data entry costs.

Wide-range study advertising and subject enrolment.

- Improved number of possible administered questionnaires.

Growth of Internet tools.

- Easier and more interactive websites.
- Smartphones applications.

Possible online recall administration.

- Completion at any time in any place