

ESS Round 9 Translation Quality Check List

This list is intended to help avoid some common translation errors. It is not an exhaustive check list and does not cover basic accuracy issues or good flow. Tick the box if a step has been completed, so you will have an overview of what kind of procedures you still need to implement.

A. General

Make sure that any changes to the core questions have been implemented in accordance with the document '**ESS Round 9: Making changes to existing translations of core questionnaire or repeated rotating module items: Guidance for NCs**' available from the ESS Round 9 intranet area.

For countries who missed a round/several rounds, but who already have a translation of core items available: Make sure that you have implemented all the changes to the core questions in the source questionnaire from previous rounds. Documents outlining these changes between earlier rounds are available on request from ess@city.ac.uk. Please check carefully that any existing translations align with the Round 9 source questionnaire.

Make sure that you have modified your questionnaire according to **all Round 9 questionnaire alerts from ESS ERIC HQ**. Any questionnaire alerts will be communicated directly to all NCs.

For countries that participated in previous rounds: Were there **any deviations** in your **Round 8** questionnaire that need to be corrected, such as translation mistakes, question omissions, missing implementation of core question changes? If so, please make sure to correct any such deviations in accordance with the two steps listed below:

If you feel you need to make **any changes to your existing translations of core questions or of questions from the repeated rotating module** 'Timing of Life', please get in contact with ess_translate@gesis.org and ess@city.ac.uk before making these changes. Remember this should only be considered where there is a serious mistake. Please make sure to explain the rationale for the proposed change and include a back translation of the relevant wording into English if possible. See also the separate guidance note on 'Making changes to existing translations of core questionnaire or repeated rotating module items: Guidance for NCs'.

If **any changes to questions from the core or from the repeated rotating module** are approved, please make sure that they are duly documented in the (T)VFF or in the TMT.

If you feel you need to **adapt your translation**, we remind you to contact ess_translate@gesis.org and ess@city.ac.uk before making any adaptations. By *adaptation* we mean any deliberate modification to content or format from source questionnaire content and format. This does not apply to the country-specific input

required for background variable questions on education, voting, etc. It also does not apply to re-orientation of language direction and tables such as those needed in Hebrew.

(See also the section 24 on 'Adaptations' in the ESS Round 9 Translation Guidelines.)

Make sure that you have consulted the **translation queries and answers** list and taken into account the answers provided. Countries may have similar problems, so these answers are likely to be of use for your country, too. The translation queries and answers list will be made available in the Round 9 "Prepare for fieldwork/Translation and verification" section of the intranet at <https://essdata.nsd.uib.no/ESS9/pages/viewpage.do?id=3>. We encourage NCs to check this page regularly for any updates of the document.

B. Technical format checks

Compare your version against the source questionnaire and showcards.

Please make sure that...

- ... the routing is correct.
- ... the formatting is appropriate and correct, e.g. where words are underlined in the source text to indicate which words require special emphasis in the interview, this should be done also in the target text (or a similar emphasis should be used).
- ... the coding is correct.
- ... each question has exactly the same number of precodes as in the source questionnaire (the only exception being the small number of country-specific questions).
- ... there are no inadvertent copy and paste mistakes (e.g. copied in a wrong response scale).
- ... your question numbering AND showcard numbering are correct and consistent.
- ... the answer scales are correct both on the questionnaire AND on the showcards.
- ... you have not omitted anything inadvertently, such as questions, interviewer instructions, response categories, etc.

C. Checks on Translation Verification and SQP Coding

Please make sure to duly complete Translation Verification by cApStAn. The Translation Verification process is described and explained in the ESS Round 9 Verification Instructions available from the Round 9 "Prepare for fieldwork/Translation and verification" section of the intranet at <https://essdata.nsd.uib.no/ESS9/pages/viewpage.do?id=3>.

Relating to Translation Verification: please make sure that you have completed all feedback loops resulting from the verifiers' interventions and that all changes have correctly been incorporated into your translation(s). Please note that the Translation Verification process will not be complete until all comments requiring follow-up have been discussed and implemented/rejected.

As this step is only applied to a sample of items from the ESS Round 9 source questionnaire, please make sure that changes resulting from Translation Verification are applied consistently to the rest of the questionnaire too.

- Please make sure to duly complete SQP Coding. The SQP Coding is explained in the ESS Round 9 SQP Coding Guidelines and SQP User Manual, which will be released via the Round 9 NC intranet in April 2018.
- As this step is only applied to a sample of items from the ESS Round 9 source questionnaire, please make sure that changes resulting from SQP Coding are applied consistently to the rest of the questionnaire too.

D. Consistency checks on material repeated

Please make sure that...

- ... key terms that are repeated in the English source text and that have the same intended meaning across questions are translated consistently. [But be aware of polysemy: the English language may be able to use the same word in different contexts where other languages need to resort to different words. So the same English word (e.g., “government”) may need to be translated differently if different meanings are activated.]
- ... scale explanations such as *0 means ... and 10 means ...* and the corresponding scale are translated consistently.
- ... identical response scales that are used repeatedly throughout the questionnaire are translated consistently.
- ... interviewer instructions are laid out consistently.
- ... the formulation of the test items reflects intended variations for testing purposes (e.g. scale length or stimuli).

(See also the section 23 on ‘Consistency’ in the ESS Round 9 Translation Guidelines.)

E. Final copy-editing / proofreading / cross-checking

- When finalising your translations, please make sure to carry out a thorough copy-editing / final editing / proof-reading of the entire text in its final version in the target language(s).

(See also the section 30 on ‘Final copy-editing / proofreading / cross-checking’ in the ESS Round 9 Translation Guidelines.)

F. Other checks

- Remember that any changes made to components that are repeated within the questionnaire (answer scales, instructions, terms repeated on showcards, for example) will then need to be changed in all the other places where they occur. Keep this in mind, for example, if you make changes after translation verification, SQP Coding or after your pre-test.
- Remember that annotations are not meant to be translated and are not intended for inclusion in the questionnaire. Instead, they are intended to guide translators.

Make sure annotations do not appear in the questionnaire used by interviewers.

Check your answer scales. Make sure that ...

- the order is the same as in the source questionnaire;
- translated categories do not overlap (e.g. *often* and *frequently* overlap);
- hidden answer codes – e.g. (*don't know*) – are not offered overtly to respondents. They must not appear on the showcards and it should be clear to interviewers that they should also not offer these codes to respondents.
- 'extremely' and 'completely' appearing in answer scales are translated as extreme endpoints, that is, that nothing can go beyond it. Please make sure this only applies to **new** and **modified items** of the ESS 9 questionnaire. Where 'extremely' and 'completely' are used in answer scales in existing items, the existing translation **MUST NOT** be amended, otherwise the time-series is compromised.

G. Pre-testing

Please make sure that...

- ... you have scheduled a national pre-test well ahead of the start of the fieldwork in your country.
- ... you have identified and discussed with the ESS translation team and the team at ESS ERIC HQ any translation-related findings or issues arising in the course of your national pre-tests.
- ... in case your national pre-tests show that changes need to be made to your translated questionnaire(s), you have made these changes consistently across the entire ESS Round 9 questionnaire(s) in the language(s) concerned.

Please refer to the 'ESS Round 9 Pre-testing Guidelines' for further details on pre-tests that must be conducted in each country prior to the start of fieldwork.

H. Documentation and Sign off

- In Round 9 every National Coordinator is asked to send information about all people involved in the translation process(es) for all languages used in their countries: please send the ESS translation team (ess_translate@gesis.org) information in particular on (a) their training, and (b) their experience in questionnaire translation. Please send this information as soon as it is known within the NC team.
- In Round 9 every National Coordinator is asked to send their final translations after the completion of Translation Verification by cApStAn, SQP Coding and the national Pre-tests, as well as documentation of any changes made to previously translated questions and any additional translation or documentation materials to ess_translate@gesis.org. National Coordinators are asked to upload their final versions of the questionnaire and of the showcards to the ESS Round 9 intranet together with their fieldwork documents.

In addition, every National Coordinator is asked to formally sign off on their translation(s): They should write to ess_translate@gesis.org prior to fieldwork commencing and confirm:

- the languages into which the source questionnaire was translated,
- that the ESS Round 9 Translation Guidelines and the ESS Round 9 Verification Instructions were followed in full when carrying out the translation,
- that the checks outlined in the Translation Quality Check List have been performed,
- that no changes were made to translations between rounds except those agreed with the ESS translation team at GESIS and the ESS ERIC HQ.