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Task 2.1 Recruitment

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Focus Groups about Motivation and Participation in App-based Surveys

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1. Summary

The Federal Statistical Office Germany (Destatis) conducted focus groups to learn more about the attitudes, motives and obstacles of respondents regarding their willingness to participate in Smart Surveys. This was done as part of the European Union's Smart Survey Implementation (SSI) project, in which Destatis is participating alongside eight other project partners.

One result that emerged from the various sections of all three discussion groups is that the participants are more willing to take part in a survey, to download an app and to grant access to sensor data if they see a purpose in doing so on the one hand and have trust on the other.
The purpose can be given if the respondents understand why it is important to conduct the survey, why they should participate, why access to the sensor data is desired, what happens to the data and what it is used for by whom. However, respondents' own interest in the topic is also a very important purpose for many. Purpose is also given, if respondents see an advantage for themselves in participating or granting access to sensor data. This advantage can manifest in different ways: financial incentives, additional information about oneself or about a certain topic, or - in case of granting access to sensors - the advantage might be a lower response burden and easier operability. In general, however, the time and effort involved must be in good proportion to the benefits.
With regard to trust, it was shown that the survey's sponsor plays an important role. If the sponsor is known and trustworthy (such as an NSI) then the participants in the focus groups are more willing to take part and share data. It was also important to proactively point out basic data protection aspects and provide further information on this aspect during recruitment. Factors increasing trust in an app are the number of downloads, the ratings, as well as the app publisher named in the store.

In order to motivate people to participate, it seems particularly important against this background to provide transparent information explaining what it is all about, as well as why the survey and sensor access are needed and what is being done to ensure a high level of data protection and data security. Concerning the way participants want to be contacted, there is a preference for letter and email, due to trust and privacy reasons. The discussions showed that a short invitation letter with the most important information was rated as good and sufficient, but that further information should also be provided, e.g. on an additional information sheet or flyer.

When it came to willingness to give access to sensors, there was a difference between camera and location data: When allowing access to the camera to photograph receipts, participants recognized the benefits and the lower effort required (compared to entering the individual products by hand); the purpose was less obvious with location data. In addition, location data was generally classified as more sensitive, and especially if it was collected permanently. Some participants reported that they had less control over their data and felt more likely to be monitored. Therefore, participants were more sceptical and less willing to share location data, while sharing camera data was not an issue.

As a necessary prerequisite, it was also clearly expected that technical components need to work properly, be easy to understand and self-explanatory to operate and should not unnecessarily increase the response burden.

2. Background and test objectives

2.1. Background

Destatis conducted focus groups to learn more about the attitudes, motives and obstacles of respondents regarding their willingness to participate in Smart Surveys. By Smart Surveys we mean the combination of traditional question-based survey data collection and digital trace data collection by accessing device sensor data via an application (GPS, camera, microphone, accelerometer, ...). The focus groups are part of the European Union's Smart Survey Implementation (SSI) project, in which Destatis is participating alongside eight other project partners. More concrete, they are based in Work Package 2 of the SSI project, in which task 2.1 deals with recruitment strategies. In this context, a literature review was provided by the Uni Mannheim on factors influencing the willingness to participate in Smart Surveys. Moreover, a quantitative perception survey was conducted by other project partners (as part of Work Package 1) asking questions about participation and usage of devices. The findings of the focus groups aim to supplement this research and also serve to prepare a quantitative field test of app-based Smart Surveys, which is planned in the further course of the SSI project.

2.2. Test objectives

Unlike traditional surveys, Smart Surveys not only ask respondents for information but also require them to download an app to their personal smartphone and allow the app to access sensor data. These additional hurdles can have a negative impact on participation rates. The aim of conducting the focus groups was to find out more about general personal attitudes towards (app-based) Smart Surveys as well as the motives and obstacles of respondents regarding their willingness to participate in such surveys. Therefore, decision criteria regarding participation in Smart Surveys in general were identified. Participants also discussed different ways to be contacted as well as information to be mentioned in an invitation letter.

If there is a willingness to participate, an app must be downloaded and access to sensor data must be permitted. Therefore, with regard to the initially necessary download of the app from an app store, participants' evaluation criteria for app offerings and for or against downloading, were identified. In addition, motives for consenting to the use of sensor data were determined, with a focus on conditions under which respondents grant access to the smartphone camera. The focus was chosen because the household budget survey (HBS) use case includes the use of the smartphone camera to scan receipts in order to document expenses. Questions about willingness to participate were therefore also discussed against this background. As a subordinate use case, the willingness of users to grant access to their current geolocation was discussed as well.

3. Methods

3.1. Setting

Three focus groups with a total of 16 participants were conducted at the end of October 2023. The group discussions were led by a moderator using a guideline. The discussions lasted around two hours each and was video- and audio-recorded. The participation was rewarded with 40 €.

3.2. Participants and recruitment

The focus group participants were recruited from an in-house test person database at Destatis. Participants were assigned to each focus group according to their self-reported smartphone skills on a scale from 1 (worst) to 10 (best). The numerical statements were interpreted as "very good" (values 10 and 9) and "good" (values 7 and 8) smartphone skills. The distribution of participants according to their smartphone skills resulted in an advanced group 1, containing participants with mostly very good smartphone skills, while groups 2 and 3 contained participants with mainly good skills. Table 1 shows which group the individual participants were part of and their characteristics.

Table 1: Classification of the focus groups and characteristics of participants

Focus group	Nr.	Sex	Age	Smartphone skill level	Occupation	Education
1	1	w	27	9	Employed	University entrance qualification
	2	m	37	8	Employed	University entrance qualification
	3	w	33	9	Employed	Vocational university entrance
	4	w	34	10	Employed	Secondary school
	5	m	29	10	Student	Vocational university entrance
	6	m	19	7	Employed	Secondary school
2	7	w	67	7	Retired	Secondary school
	8	w	46	7	Unemployed	University entrance qualification
	9	w	33	7	Employee	Secondary school
	10	m	58	2	Self-employed	University entrance qualification
	11	w	20	8	Student	University entrance qualification
3	12	w	63	8	Partially retired	University entrance qualification
	13	w	57	7	Employed	University entrance qualification
	14	m	56	8	Househusband	University entrance qualification
	15	m	69	7	Retired, side job	Secondary school
	16	w	53	8	Self-employed	University entrance qualification

4. Results

The following chapter presents the results of the focus groups. Starting with general attitudes towards app-based surveys, criteria for (non)-participation are a major part in this chapter. Continuing with contact strategies and the invitation letter presented in the discussions, before criteria for downloading an app will be addressed. Part 6 and 7 of this chapter deal with reasons and criteria for granting access to sensor data in case of camera usage and location data. The last paragraph focuses on results and requirements concerning usability which was brought up by the participants.

4.1. General attitudes concerning app-based surveys

At the beginning of the discussion, participants were asked to talk about their attitudes concerning app-based surveys. Generally, participants showed both positive as well as negative reactions to the idea of conducting surveys via an app.

Positive associations
Most participants expressed positive first associations regarding app-based surveys. Few see it as a modern and necessary approach and expect surveys to be conducted also by apps today. It was even commented that it would be strange that such an app for conducting surveys does not exist yet.
Many discussants explained their positive attitude with the fact that using an app for surveys offers practical advantages. For some, it is a relief that it is not necessary to log into the survey again and again, every time they want to respond. This also makes it easier to interrupt a survey and resume it later, as the app saves the login data. Apps would also make it easier to answer questions on the go in everyday life, "particularly in between times when you're on the train or something", as P2 puts it.

Negative associations
In contrast to the positive associations, having to download an app to participate in a survey is also perceived as an obstacle by many. While some stated that they would generally not download apps to their smartphone, one participant is having trouble with memory space on their phone and therefore does not want to install another app. In this context, some discussants also fear that less digitally affine people, such as older people, would be excluded from corresponding surveys through the use of an app. Few also expect bad usability and inconvenient use, caused by the small screen and font. They prefer to complete more extensive surveys on a larger screen such as tablet or paper.

4.2. Criteria for (non)-participation

When asked whether they would participate in a household budget survey type of questionnaire by submitting receipts via an app, overall about half of the discussants clearly stated that they generally would. Relevant decision criteria named for or against participation were the topic and the publisher of the survey, the personal benefit (incentive), the effort involved, as well as data security/protection and trust.

<u>Interest in the survey topic</u>

The topic of the survey is a relevant factor when deciding for or against participation according to most of the discussants. The topic plays a role in two respects: the personal interest in the topic of the survey and its perceived relevance for society and the purpose.

Personal interest

Unless there is a personal interest in the topic of the survey, the majority would not participate. Interest in the topic is an essential requirement for possibly participating. Apart from their own personal interest few also worry that they could not contribute anything substantial to a given topic. For instance, because it does not concern them or because they may have not yet dealt with it.

Only a minority see the topic of the survey as generally less relevant. One person suggested that they did not find any survey really interesting, but would still participate. Another discussant stated that they were generally happy to participate regardless of the topic.

Interest in household budget and expense tracking

When specifically asked about the subject of recording expenses in a household budget survey, some stated that they had no interest in this specific topic. They were generally not interested in having their expenditure analysed. "Maybe it wouldn't be so good to see what you spend. That would certainly exceed a lot and I honestly don't want to know that either" (P 13). The recording of expenditure therefore offers no personal added value for them. This is also true for persons who are interested in the data, but already know the amount of their expenditure through their household budget. However, some persons also showed interest in analysing their own expenditure in the app which increases the likelihood to participate.

Relevance for society and purpose

The perceived general relevance of a given topic for society and its purpose is also a relevant factor in the decision for or against participation, according to many discussants. One person said "it must be relevant to society" (P 11), while another specified: "I think it [participating] is part of the 'civic duty' once in a while" (P 14). A relevant purpose of the survey topic is perceived by many discussants regarding the topics that National Statistical Institutions (NSI) generally cover, which makes for a greater motivation to participate. "When I take part here [in surveys by the Federal Statistical Office], I personally have the feeling that it is a good purpose" (P 1). In contrast, some do not see a good purpose for topics that are perceived as less socially relevant. Accordingly, some reject topics from private business actors intended for commercial use: "... if it is perhaps somehow used by a business actor, I am not in favour of it" (P 1). Another person added: "I probably wouldn't do surveys for a brand at all because I don't know what it's used for" (P 3).

<u>Sponsor</u>

Related to the relevance and purpose of the topic is also the sponsor of a survey, which turns out to be very relevant in the decision to participate or not. A large majority of panellists distinguished between possible sponsors. They stated that they would rather participate with Destatis (resp. NSI) than with a commercial provider. "It really depends on who is offering the survey. If the Federal Statistics Office asks me to take part in a survey, I'd be more willing to take part than for KitKat", stated one discussant (P 5). A majority of panellists considered an NSI or other public authorities to be more reputable and would therefore be more likely to participate in their surveys via app. The

name alone would convey seriousness, "something official" (P 1) and a positive image for a few. Therefore, "you automatically have more confidence", as one participant put it (P 1).

Commercial providers (e.g. market research or companies) or providers unknown to the interviewees, by contrast, were viewed much more critically and were less trusted. One person suspected that commercial providers or brands are concerned with "ultimately influencing purchasing behaviour or products" (P 2). Another is of the opinion that commercial providers could use surveys to send out advertising and offers.

One limitation to be mentioned here is that people who agree to take part in a focus group discussion at an NSI probably have a certain basic trust in the authorities. Critical voices were possibly less represented here.

Trust

Regarding the factor of trust, not only the survey sponsor itself makes a difference. Other factors that were discussed as relevant for the decision in favour of or against participation are data security and fraud, e.g. through phishing or viruses.

Data security and sensitive data

According to some respondents, the trust placed in the app or survey depends to a significant extent on the perceived data security. This point is particularly important in light of the fact that information about personal expenditure is considered to be sensitive data by some. Some would be worried about reporting some of their product purchases. Accordingly, an anonymised collection of data and the separation of content data from personal data was demanded in order to make it impossible to draw conclusions about individuals. Name and address should be stored separately from other collected information. According to the panellists, this should also be clearly communicated. The storage duration of the data and server location were also mentioned as relevant data security information. It is also important to the participants that it is clear for what purpose they are sharing their data, i.e. what their data will be used for.

Furthermore, several participants stated that they had no specific expectations regarding data protection. The reason for this is that the points listed in a privacy policy are difficult to check. Persons have to agree without being able to check the privacy policy conditions. According to some participants, data is not secure anywhere in case of doubt. "As soon as I have sent the data somewhere and what happens to it there, I no longer have any influence over it" (P 2).

The extent to which participants would devote themselves to the privacy policy varies greatly. Only a small proportion of participants would read the (detailed) information on data privacy. Several people stated that they would only skim through it. The rest would give their consent without reading. "I personally click on this and wave everything through" (P 14).

The participants believe that adding the privacy policy as a separate sheet to the invitation letter is a good approach. The majority are in favour of this. The fact that the invitation letter itself contains a link to further information was also rated positively. However, some say that they normally only receive information on data protection once they have downloaded an app. They usually then are told what the app wants access to. For some it would be enough if they only receive the data protection information in the app. "I don't need a printout. For it to be reliable, I need to know where it [the data protection info] is. I would also like to have it in the app, not as a link" (P 2).

Fraud: phishing and viruses

Another very present issue in the context of trust is the fear of scams and phishing. Some panellists mentioned that they were afraid of scams, phishing or viruses in the context of invitations via email. One participant had already been a victim of this themselves. It is important that the invitation to the survey (by e-mail or mail) has an official character. One person stated that they would also call the NSI (or sender) if in doubt.

Incentive

In terms of incentives, it can be said that these generally increase the likelihood of participation according to the discussants. Many stated that they would be more willing to participate in a survey if an equivalent value, benefit or compensation was offered. A financial reward for tracking all expenditure with an app (over a three-month period) was most frequently mentioned as the desired incentive.

Some also wished for a content and information-based incentive. In this regard, one person stated that they were interested in analysing their own expenditure in the app. Others expressed an interest in receiving the most important results of the respective survey and a comparison of their own data with the overall results. Competitions, vouchers or point systems with (non-cash) prizes were also mentioned by some participants as incentives motivating them to take part.

Only two participants stated that an incentive is not necessarily decisive for participation.

Effort and burden

According to some interviewees, the decision to participate in a survey via an app depends heavily on the effort required. Some mentioned a manageable effort as an important factor in their decision to participate. The time to be spent and the duration of the survey must be reasonable and also foreseeable. For instance, one discussant stated: "The bottom line is: what effort does it take? Can I complete the survey in the meantime? I prefer if they say right at the beginning that it will take 10 minutes or there are so many questions, and you can estimate that. So, I would definitely say that effort is one of the most important criteria" (P 16). Apart from the effort required for the survey itself, also the app should be designed simplistic, not too demanding or overburdening, and as accessible and low-threshold as possible, according to another discussant.

Use case: receipt documentation

The specific use case of receipt documentation via app was described by some persons as too time-consuming and cumbersome. "I wouldn't bother picking up the receipt and then uploading it", said one person (P 4), while others stated that they do not keep receipts, which makes documentation more difficult. However, the majority estimated the effort involved in scanning the receipts to be acceptable. Only having to photograph the receipts was cited by some as an advantage over manually recording individual products purchased. "Writing down every product manually, no way. But uploading receipts could still be manageable in doubt", stated one participant (P 2).

Accordingly, the majority stated that they would participate in such a documentation of receipts via camera in the app. One person said that receipt scanning could be done on the side, between times. The aim of minimising the response burden with the receipt scanning service is therefore recognised by some potential participants.

Duration
According to a few panellists, the duration of the data collection period for each participant is also a relevant factor in terms of the effort required to participate. Participation via app should not take up too much time and should be limited from the start. The duration of three months proposed by the moderator in the discussion round for the documentation of expenses is acceptable.

Carelessness / laziness
Related to the aspect of effort and burden, individual negligence was also mentioned in some cases. For example, panellists doubted whether they would be reliable enough to document their purchases on a daily basis and keep receipts.

Others
In addition, the wish to have surveys on various topics appear as regularly as possible in such a survey app, was expressed. Some respondents would like to take part in such surveys that are of interest to them. Many found it annoying to install an app for a single survey. One person said that it would otherwise even be "useless to install it [the app] once" (P 1) and that they would not do so.

Conclusion
The most relevant decision criteria that positively affect the likelihood of participation turn out to be the topic and the perceived purpose of the survey, as well as the sponsor. People take part more likely if they personally find a topic interesting or useful for society. NSIs are generally seen as credible and trustworthy. Regarding incentives, classic monetary incentives are essential, but also providing a summary of the overall or personal results of a survey can offer relevant added value. At the same time burden and effort should be manageable regarding total duration and complexity. Survey should ideally be answerable in between times to keep response burden as low as possible. Regarding trust, the perceived data security and privacy of sensitive data such as expenditure data plays an important role for discussants. Anonymous data collection is essential and should be clearly communicated in the recruitment process.

4.3. Contact Strategies

In the discussion, the participants were asked which method of contact (letter, email, telephone, interviewer on the doorstep) they would be most willing to use to take part in a survey. Participants named different criteria to explain their preference.

Trustworthiness and seriousness
All in all, a paper letter in the mail was seen as most trustworthy and serious. Participants were scared of scams, phishing and fraud in emails and telephone-calls or even reported of bad experience. Some participants seem to be really careful resulting in not answering calls from unknown numbers, only saying "Hello" at the beginning of a telephone call instead of one's name, and pretending to have no time, when they are asked to answer some survey questions on the telephone. Personal contact at the doorstep was also described as not credible, even if the interviewer could show an ID-card.

Time control and reachability
As advantage of paper letter and emails, time control was mentioned. Respondents can read the invitation whenever they want to and can decide without any pressure if they want to participate or not. Contacts made face to face or by telephone, it was argued, will not be successful because respondents may not be at home and not reachable. Moreover, if the call comes at an inopportune moment, respondents might not participate.

Information
In written contact modes as letter and email more information would be available as in oral contact modes like telephone and interviewer. The possibility that a person talking to potential respondents could answer questions and give additional information, was not mentioned.
It was argued that a paper letter is better remembered that an email. Emails might be forgotten very quickly, once they have been read. In contradiction to that another participant said, that paper letters are also forgotten.

Sustainability and costs
In the context of sustainability and costs, participants were opposed to paper letters and on-site interviewers.

Image
The image of the contact modes was also mentioned. Besides the already mentioned doubts concerning fraud in email, telephone calls and with on-site interviewers, telephone was seen by some in a bad image. Also, interviewers were described by some with a doorstep selling image. Concerning paper letters there were two different opinions: On the one side it is described as "old fashioned" (P 9), on the other side it was mentioned that it suits very well to the statistical office.

Privacy
As reported, interviewers were rejected by the participants on site. Privacy was also cited as a reason for this. However, the discussion showed that citizens are quite prepared to open their doors to interviewers and answer a questionnaire at their front door, as happened in the census. However, it was important that the census and its surveys were widely reported in the media (newspapers, radio, television) beforehand. In addition, the interviewer's visit was announced in advance by letter. So if good information is provided in advance, respondents know about it and trust in the survey has been established, then they are also willing to take part in the door-to-door survey.
Participants discussed also if they support the idea of a person on site helping installing the app. Most participants did not like the idea. They did not want to have an unknown person using their smartphone. Moreover, they argued that persons who need support installing the app, might not be the right persons to use a survey app. In contrast, it was seen as positive that such help could lower the inhibition threshold for participation.

Conclusion
Participants clearly prefer to be contacted by letter and email. Only a few want to be contacted via telephone and no one by interviewer at home. Talking about criteria for these preferences, trust and privacy reasons seem to play the most important role.

4.4. Invitation Letter

Within the meeting, each participant got a paper invitation letter. Participants had a few minutes to have a look at the letter and read it. Afterwards they were asked to rate the invitation and discuss it. The three discussion groups received two different versions of the invitation letter. The first version only contained a note in the "How can I take part" section stating that expenses are recorded in the app (group 1 and 2) (Appendix 1). Whereas the second version of the letter contained the information that receipts can be photographed to document expenses and that access to the camera must be granted for this purpose (group 3) (Appendix 2). In addition, the second variant of the letter contained a link to further data protection information under the heading "data security", while the first version of only referred to the enclosed sheet. Another piece of paper with more detailed information on data protection was enclosed with the invitation letter for all three groups.

General rating
On the whole, the invitation letter was rated as good. According to the participants, the organisation of the individual sections and the subheadings provide a clear good orientation, the layout is modern and appropriate. Individual participants criticised the fact that the font was too small.

Relevant information about data protection
On the first page of the invitation letter, three points on data protection were summarised under the heading "Security of your data". It stated that all data would only be used for statistical purposes, that no conclusions could be drawn about individual persons and reference was made to further information on the enclosed sheet respectively retrievable via a link. The participants said that they liked these three points (design and content). These contents were recognised by many and rated as relevant.
The enclosed sheet with detailed information about date protection was rated positively, because it is also familiar from other letters (e.g. from a bank or health insurance company). It is not unusual for some letters to contain attachments with a lot of text in small print, usually represented in two columns.
Only a few participants said that they would read this additional sheet. Several said they would skim it and most participants would not read it. But for the majority, the additional information sheet was positive because it inspires confidence and shows transparency, even if the points mentioned cannot be verified. "It does make a difference. You don't read through it, but when something like this is included, I have the feeling that they know what they're doing" (P 9). And another person: "I wouldn't read through it either. But I would probably be suspicious if it wasn't there" (P 3). On the other hand, some participants stated that they did not need this data protection notice. It would be enough for them to find it within the app.

Information about using sensor data
It is important to the persons that it is mentioned in the invitation letter that receipts are to be entered manually or photographed or uploaded. It is important to explain which data is collected and why. There is disagreement on the question of whether the invitation letter should also mention which consent for sensor approval is being requested. Some say that this is not necessary because it is logical that the camera is needed to take photos. The query comes in the app anyway. Others are of the opinion that it should be mentioned so that users know what it is about right from the start. The information would create transparency and build trust.

Further contents

According to the participants, the most important information is included in the invitation letter. However, some people additionally wish a name of a contact person and a telephone extension. That would be helpful to have a direct contact and would also increase trust.

There is further information on the household budget survey (HBS) that the participants would like to see in the invitation letter: Several persons said that the purpose of the survey should be explained a little further. Some participants would like more information on the survey process (completing two questionnaires, daily recording of expenditure). This should be provided before the app is installed. In addition, the validity period (of the identifiers) should be mentioned in the invitation letter. People would like to know in advance which expenses are to be recorded within the HBS. It would be helpful if some categories and examples were mentioned in the invitation letter. One person pointed out that "income" is included in the title of the survey, but that there is no information on this in the invitation letter. This should be added.

Conclusion

The way the invitation letter is designed and the information presented seems appropriate. Information on data protection and data security is important to the participants. Detailed information on data protection and the survey on additional sheets is important as it creates transparency and trust. Participants also demand detailed information on the content and procedure of the surveys. Here too, an additional information sheet or flyer could be a suitable way of ensuring that the invitation letter itself is not too long.

4.5. Criteria downloading an app

On the way from the first contact to participation in a study, respondents must download the app from the app store. The focus group therefore also addressed which criteria are important for participants when they download an app.

Access and findability

An official app should be available via the standard app stores. Participants would not be prepared to download an extra app store. Participants emphasised that good findability in the app store is important to them. On the one hand, that the app is displayed at the top of the hit list and on the other hand that there are as few similar-looking alternatives as possible. Long searches in the hit list is for some a no go. In other words, it should be as clear and easy as possible which app is the right one.

Design

Individual participants with high smartphone skills stated that they pay attention to the design of the app icon. The icon should be simple and appealing. Several discussants stated that they look at the preview of the app in the app store in the form of screenshots or videos. Only if the layout of the app appeals them they download it. An outdated design would be an impediment reason. People with very high smartphone skills stated this in particular. A modern and appealing design is important. "If it looks weird, then I won't use it" (P 4). However, other discussants stated that they do not pay attention to the preview at all.

Number of downloads, ratings and reviews
The number of downloads is important to several participants. A large number of downloads increases trust in the app. "Used by many, is trustworthy or seems to be good" (P 1). If the numbers were low, they would be more sceptical, unless it is a completely new app. Some people pay attention to the ratings in the form of the average number of stars, while others stated that they also read reviews. In some cases, only bad reviews are read in order to find out where the biggest problems lie. These people then weigh up whether to download the app despite the negative comments. Reasons for not installing the app would be compatibility problems or frequent crashes. Another participant relies on recommendations from friends and family when downloading apps.

Provider of app and trust in app
Other participants stated that they pay attention to the publisher of the app. Few persons do not pay attention to anything else when downloading, as they only install apps from well-known providers/companies. Several other participants also stated that trust in an app is significantly higher if it comes from large companies or well-known providers. With these providers, a few eyes are also turned if some of the aforementioned aspects are not (well) fulfilled. In other words, a poorly rated app is still installed if the provider is trusted and/or because there is no alternative to this app. "If it officially says Federal Statistical Office, it's probably legitimate" (P 11). Some other confirmed that even a poorly rated app from the Federal Statistical Office would have a good chance of being downloaded by them. One person stated that trust can be increased through public advertising for an app, e.g. at railway stations and bus stops.

Money and advertisement
Paying money for an app would be a no-go when downloading an app for some. Similarly, advertising that is displayed in the app is a reason for some not to download this app.

Conclusion
Crucial factors for downloading an app turned out to be a good findability in the app store and a modern and simplistic design. Furthermore, the app should appear established, which depends on the number of downloads, the ratings, as well as the app publisher named in the store.

4.6.   Consent to camera usage

The participants were asked to discuss whether and under what circumstances they would grant an app access to their smartphone's camera.

Cautious permissions
It turned out that many (but not all) participants are quite critical and cautious when it comes to sharing the camera. They do not give permanent permission, but are asked again each time they open the app and give permission each time they use the app. There is a wish that this should also be possible in an app for scanning receipts. Some participants also report that they always refuse to give permission first and check later, when using the app, whether permission for the camera is really needed for the app in question. Therefore, in their opinion, the request should only be made when the function is needed, not when the app is opened for the first time. In general, it must be

clear why access is required. "So with Insta[gram], I do it [enable camera use] simply because it's obvious. I don't do it with the Kicker [=German soccer magazine] news app" (P 2).

"So I look at the bottom of the app store to see what they want and that can be an exclusion criterion. A gaming app, for example, doesn't need my microphone access, or [access to my] contacts" (P 1).

Mistrust in Apps

Occasionally, there is a strong mistrust that apps use and process sensor data for different purposes as mentioned. For example, there are reports of advertisements appearing on Instagram on the exact topic that was discussed shortly before. In other words, people suspect that the Instagram app uses the microphone and analyses the data obtained to show personalized advertisement. Someone else reported something similar in relation to the use of location data. The person says that they always feel controlled and: "I'm now convinced that my phone knows everything about me anyway, no matter what I do" (P 7). Giving only limited access to sensors reduces the risk of such misuse in the eyes of the participants.

But some participants doubt that permission to use sensors makes any difference at all and are convinced that the apps access sensors regardless of whether consent has been given or not: "I think it's hypocritical anyway and that they're all listening in all the time anyway" (P 1). That's why the person has a sticker on their smartphone camera.

Practical benefits

This scepticism is countered by the practical benefits that prevent participants from doing without the app or smartphone. Some users grant permanent access, partly for the pragmatic reason of not being asked for permission every time. Some are very aware of the contradiction of pragmatism and data protection convictions: They know e.g. that they should not use WhatsApp according to their own beliefs but do use it anyway because of pragmatic reasons. However, they question the purpose and make their access to sensors access dependent on the benefit.

Use case household budget app

In the specific example of using the camera to photograph receipts, the participants recognize the benefits. They see the advantage over manual entry and would agree to its use. The fact that data is recorded via the smartphone camera is not a problem as long as no other data (such as the address of the supermarket) is recorded by taking the photo. The data would go to the office anyway and then it would simply be easier to use the camera function than to enter the products manually. There are no concerns about using the camera function; it is the usual, logical procedure. None of the participants would not take part in the survey because of using the camera function.

Taking photo in app vs. upload from gallery

During the discussions, participants wanted to know how exactly the receipts to be scanned should be recorded in the example of the household diary app. Two camps emerged, each favouring a different method of recording: on the one hand, taking photos within the app, and on the other, taking photos using the camera function and uploading them to the app from the photo gallery. Both groups see their respective method as the simpler, more practical one.

Taking photo in app

On the one hand, there is a group that wants to take a picture of the receipt from the app, similar to WhatsApp. The photographed receipt is sent directly to the app. They don't want these images in their photo gallery. They don't want any more unnecessary images there. But it would be good to have the images available in the app. Some are familiar with this procedure from their health insurance app. Uploading from the photo gallery would be far too cumbersome. In addition, some fear having to give the app access to the photo gallery, which they reject, as all private pictures are also stored there.

Upload from gallery

On the other hand, there is a group who first want to photograph the receipts normally using the camera function on their smartphone. The image is then in the photo gallery and they want to load it into the app from there. It is not necessary for the survey app to access the camera in this case, which increases trust in the app for some. Digital invoices and digital receipts could also be uploaded in this way. One person with a side business reported that they had already photographed many receipts on their cell phone anyway. They would therefore like to be able to load the receipts from the photo gallery and not have to photograph them again. This is not out of scepticism about enabling the camera function, but for practical reasons. Other people report that the quality of the images is better this way than with images taken within an app.

Security of the app

The perceived security of an app can play a role in the decision for or against permitting access to smartphone sensor data or the camera. When asked about the security of an app and how they perceive or determine this, it became clear that it is difficult for the participants to check whether an app is secure or not. As described earlier (chapter 4.5) some have a closer look before installing an app but trust is important. For some people, the number of users increases trust, as - according to the argument - apps that are used a lot, are more in focus and more needs to be done for security due to the mass of users. For others, personal recommendations from friends and acquaintances play a role. "If I hear everyone talking about the app, then I trust it" (P 5).

But there are also people who state that they are not very concerned about the security of apps. They trust the apps, especially the heavily used ones. They do not assume that they are being monitored or do not care: "If someone wants to eavesdrop on me, they should eavesdrop on me" (P 11). Others again mentioned the institution that publishes the app (see section 5.5) "If I have the Federal Statistical Office, I already have a certain amount of trust that nothing will happen to my data, because they cannot afford this scandal. So I wouldn't be so unsure" (P 1).

Conclusion

Participants are quite cautious when it comes to granting access to their smartphone camera. It is essential that it is clear why the access is required in the first place, especially because a certain amount of mistrust against apps prevails. If accessing the camera makes sense in the context of the use case (such as scanning receipts for an HBS), then most discussants would allow the access.

It is seen as a logical procedure or consequence and for the HBS use case, people recognized the practical advantages of scanning receipts with the camera compared to manually entering all purchases.

4.7.　　Consent to location sharing

In the further course of the conversation, the participants were also asked whether they would be willing to share their location with an app. Some people categorically reject permanent location sharing but about the same number are willing to do so under certain circumstances.

Location as sensitive data
The reasons given against sharing, are that location data is more sensitive and sharing it is a greater invasion of privacy. While some would participate in the survey per se, but do not want to share their smartphone location data, others would generally not take part in a survey which asks for location tracking. Several people stated that they felt monitored in such cases. Some participants report that they do not activate their location tracking at all, or only when they use google maps. "I don't even tell my girlfriend where I am, the app shouldn't know that either" (P 5). One person reported that they would provide their health insurance company with data on their activity via the app. They would otherwise be willing to do this, but not to share their location. An argument in favour of approval is the Federal Statistical Office. Here, again, it is mentioned as a trusted provider which raises the probability to consent.

Battery
Another reason given for not agreeing to permanent location sharing is the battery. People would be willing to share their location once, but not permanently, because they fear that this would consume a lot of power and quickly drain their smartphone battery. The problem here is not so much data protection, but the battery life of the smartphone. If a powerful device were made available, some people would be willing to participate.

Control and time limitation
Other participants are also in favour of a different device or an AirTag. They argue that with another device they can be sure that no app transmits any data from their private smartphone after the end of the study. They don't trust the app and like the idea of a solution without any doubt.
Another aspect of control is to be able to decide for themselves when to allow sharing data and when not. This is also seen as a difference to the camera function: With receipts, people can decide for themselves what data to make available, but less so with location.
Further criterion is a time limit. The duration of the location survey also plays a role: more people are willing to share their location for 2-3 days than for a week or longer period.

Information, interest, benefit
As with the camera, people who are willing to share their location ask about the purpose and benefits. They want to know the background and understand why the data is being collected. They are more willing to do so if they are interested in the topic or the data collected and if they can find out information about themselves, for example whether they have been out more or less than other respondents. Others see the aspect of use and functionality: "I know this from Google Maps. If I want to use it properly, I have to share my location. I wouldn't have a problem with that" (P 15). However, unlike taking a photo of the receipt, which saves you having to enter it manually, it is not so clear what the advantage is for the individual person when sharing their location. The reduction of response burden and the advantage of the sensor is not seen so easily and this is why it is less likely to give consent.

Conclusion
Overall, the participants want to be informed about the purpose and meaning, as well as the use of the data, when they grant access to sensor data. It must be logical and comprehensible to them why access to sensor data should be given. They also want to know who uses this data and for what purpose, and who makes which decisions based on this data. They are more willing to share data if they have an interest in the topic, if they consider the survey to be useful and if they see a personal benefit.

4.8. Additional results: usability

According to the participants, a clear design and a logical as well as straightforward structure of the app is essential. The application should be easy to use and user guidance must be as simple as possible. "One would expect that, and it is negatively noticeable if it is not" (P 2). This would be the minimum requirement for the app to be used. The app should generally appeal to its users and make a friendly impression.
A short and clear questionnaire design was also mentioned as a prerequisite for the usefulness of an app. Content should fit the screen and should be easily recognizable without having to scroll horizontally. Otherwise, using the app would again be too much of a burden.
Entering data should also be made as easy as possible. For the log-in and entering passwords or other longer numbers in blocks, they demand automatic placeholders, such as when entering the IBAN after every 4 digits. In addition, the login data should already be stored with a QR code.
Several people state that they would not take part in the survey if they had to enter all products individually by hand. It would be too time-consuming and take too much time. "No. Then I probably wouldn't take part [laughs]. That's not an alternative" (P 7). It should also be possible to record invoices digitally by taking photos, not just receipts, comparable to health insurance apps.
But not only the design of the user interface and handling, but also the communication and language must be kept simple and generally understandable in order to reach everyone. Questions should be asked precisely. Moreover, according to some participants, the simplicity of the app also means that not too many notifications or additional requests are sent.

5.1. Appendix 1: Invitation letter without information on sensor data use

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Statistisches Bundesamt | Einkommens- und Verbrauchsbefragung 2023 | 65180 Wiesbaden   25. Oktober 2023

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Einladung zur Einkommens- und Verbrauchsbefragung

Sehr geehrte Frau Musterfrau,

wofür geben die Menschen in Deutschland ihr Geld aus? Um diese Frage zu beantworten brauchen wir – die amtliche Statistik – Ihre Hilfe.

Worum geht's?
- Wir wollen wissen, **wie viel Geld** den Haushalten in Deutschland zur Verfügung steht und **wofür sie es ausgeben.**
- Dies dient unter anderem der Berechnung der Inflationsrate und als Grundlage für eine gerechte Sozial- und Familienpolitik.

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Sicherheit Ihrer Daten
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- Daten werden ohne Namen und Anschrift ausgewertet, **Rückschlüsse auf einzelne Personen sind ausgeschlossen.**
- Ausführliche rechtliche Hinweise, sowie Erklärungen zu Rechtsgrundlagen, Datenschutz, Datenverarbeitung der App und Geheimhaltung finden Sie auf dem beigefügten Info-Blatt.

Wir bedanken uns für Ihre Unterstützung.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Johannes Volk

B22 | Fragebogenpretest, Erhebungsmethoden

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Passwort: **z?c9rmvZT,M**

Sicherheit Ihrer Daten
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- Ausführliche rechtliche Hinweise, sowie Erklärungen zu Rechtsgrundlagen, Datenschutz, Datenverarbeitung der App und Geheimhaltung finden Sie unter: www.destatis.de/EVS/Datenschutz

Wir bedanken uns für Ihre Unterstützung.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Johannes Volk

B22 | Fragebogenpretest, Erhebungsmethoden

5.3. Appendix 3: detailed information on data protection

Statistisches Bundesamt

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Zweck, Art und Umfang der Erhebung

Die Erhebung wird durch die Statistischen Ämter der Länder alle fünf Jahre bei rund 60 000 Privathaushalten durchgeführt.

Aus den so erhobenen Daten lassen sich wesentliche Erkenntnisse über die wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Verhältnisse der Haushalte, sowie ihre Einnahmen und Verwendungen für den privaten Konsum, Steuern und Abgaben, Sozialversicherungsbeiträge und für sonstige Zwecke gewinnen. Die Daten liefern wertvolle Ergebnisse für Politik, Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft. Beispielsweise bilden sie eine wichtige Datengrundlage für die Armuts- und Reichtumsberichterstattung der Bundesregierung. Die Ergebnisse zum privaten Konsum werden unter anderem für die Festsetzung des Wägungsschemas der Verbraucherpreisstatistik verwendet.

Rechtsgrundlagen, Freiwilligkeit

Rechtsgrundlage ist das Gesetz über die Statistik der Wirtschaftsrechnungen privater Haushalte (PrHaushStatG) in Verbindung mit dem BStatG. Erhoben werden die Angaben zu § 2 PrHaushStatG.

Die Erteilung der Auskunft ist freiwillig.

Die Grundlage für die Verarbeitung der von Ihnen gemachten Angaben ist die Einwilligung nach Artikel 6 Absatz 1 Buchstabe a DS-GVO.

Die Grundlage für die Verarbeitung Ihrer freiwillig gemachten Angaben ist die Einwilligung nach Artikel 6 Absatz 1 Buchstabe a in Verbindung mit Artikel 9 Absatz 2 Buchstabe a DS-GVO, soweit die Daten Rückschlüsse auf die sexuelle Orientierung (beispielsweise durch die Angabe von Lebenspartnerschaften), den Gesundheitszustand (beispielsweise durch die Angabe von Ausgaben für Arztkosten, medizinischen Behandlungen, Medikamenten) oder Religions- und Gewerkschaftszugehörigkeiten (beispielsweise durch die Angabe von Ausgaben für entsprechende Mitgliedschaftsbeiträge) zulassen.

Die Einwilligung in die Verarbeitung der personenbezogenen Angaben kann jederzeit widerrufen werden. Der Widerruf wirkt erst für die Zukunft. Verarbeitungen, die vor dem Widerruf erfolgt sind, sind davon nicht berührt.

Die Grundlage für die Verarbeitung der Bankverbindungsdaten der Auskunft gebenden Haushalte ist ebenfalls die Einwilligung gemäß Artikel 6 Absatz 1 Buchstabe a DS-GVO.

Verantwortlicher

Verantwortlich für die Erhebung Ihrer Daten ist das für Ihr Bundesland zuständige statistische Amt. Für die Aufbereitung der Statistik ist das Statistische Bundesamt verantwortlich. Die Kontaktdaten finden Sie im https://www.statistikportal.de/de/statistische-aemter

Arten der durch die App zur technischen Durchführung der Erhebung verarbeiteten Daten und Verarbeitungszwecke

Ihre Angaben können Sie sowohl über die mobile App als auch in der Web-App tätigen. Die mobile App ist verfügbar für die Betriebssysteme Android und iOS. Die Web-App kann über gängige Internetbrowser wie Firefox oder Google Chrome aufgerufen werden. Damit Sie Endgeräte-übergreifend auf Ihre Daten zugreifen können, werden Ihre Angaben immer, wenn Sie online (mit dem Internet verbunden) sind, an eine zentrale Datenbank beim Landesbetrieb Information und Technik Nordrhein-Westfalen (IT.NRW) übermittelt. Dort werden Ihre Angaben in einem Netzwerk gespeichert, das vor Zugriffen von außen geschützt ist.

Die mobile App beziehungsweise die Web-App verarbeitet die folgenden Daten zur organisatorischen Durchführung der Erhebung:
- E-Mail-Adresse der Haushaltsmitglieder
- Vornamen und Nachname der Haushaltsmitglieder
- Geburtsdatum der Haushaltsmitglieder
- Benutzername und Kennwort (verschlüsselt)
- IP-Adresse
- Art und Version des genutzten Internetbrowsers
- Art des genutzten mobilen Endgeräts sowie Art und Version des verwendeten Betriebssystems
- Datum und Uhrzeit der Abrufe
- Meldung, ob der Abruf erfolgreich war

Bereitstellung über die App Stores und Nutzung von Push-Benachrichtigungen

Die mobile App wird Ihnen über den Google Play Store oder den Apple App Store zur Verfügung gestellt. Die Nutzung der Stores und die damit verbundene Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten unterliegt der Vereinbarung zwischen den Betreibern der Stores und Ihnen. Damit sind das Statistische Bundesamt und IT.NRW für die Verarbeitung dieser Daten nicht verantwortlich.

Um Ihnen Push-Benachrichtigungen (beispielsweise zur Erinnerung an Ihre Tagebuchtage) zusenden zu können, verwenden wir das Notification-Framework Google Firebase Cloud Messaging. Dazu wird bei diesem Service bei der Installation der App ein personenbezogener pseudonymisierter Schlüssel (Token) als Referenz erstellt. Der Token wird an die Server von IT.NRW übermittelt und in Ihrem Datensatz gespeichert. Die versendeten Push-Benachrichtigungen werden mit Hilfe dieses Tokens über die Firebase-Server an Sie weitergeleitet. Die Firebase-Server dienen ausschließlich als Übermittler. Die in diesem Zusammenhang gespeicherten Daten werden von uns nicht weiterverarbeitet. Der Empfang von Push-Benachrichtigungen kann von Ihnen jederzeit in den App-Einstellungen Ihres Endgeräts deaktiviert oder aktiviert werden.

Geheimhaltung

Die erhobenen Einzelangaben werden nach § 16 BStatG grundsätzlich geheim gehalten. Nur in ausdrücklich gesetzlich geregelten Ausnahmefällen dürfen Einzelangaben übermittelt werden.

Eine solche Übermittlung von Einzelangaben ist insbesondere zulässig an:

- öffentliche Stellen und Institutionen innerhalb des Statistischen Verbunds, die mit der Durchführung einer Bundes- oder europäischen Statistik vertraut sind (zum Beispiel die Statistischen Ämter der Länder, die Deutsche Bundesbank, das Statistische Amt der Europäischen Union [Eurostat]),
- Dienstleister, zu denen ein Auftragsverhältnis besteht (ITZBund als IT-Dienstleister des Statistischen Bundesamtes, Rechenzentren der Länder).

Eine Liste der regelmäßig beauftragten IT-Dienstleister finden Sie hier:

https://www.statistikportal.de/de/statistische-aemter

Nach § 16 Absatz 6 BStatG ist es zulässig, Hochschulen oder sonstigen Einrichtungen mit der Aufgabe unabhängiger wissenschaftlicher Forschung für die Durchführung wissenschaftlicher Vorhaben

1. Einzelangaben zu übermitteln, wenn die Einzelangaben so anonymisiert sind, dass sie nur mit einem unverhältnismäßig großen Aufwand an Zeit, Kosten und Arbeitskraft den Befragten oder Betroffenen zugeordnet werden können (faktisch anonymisierte Einzelangaben),

2. innerhalb speziell abgesicherter Bereiche des Statistischen Bundesamtes und der Statistischen Ämter der Länder Zugang zu Einzelangaben ohne Name und Anschrift (formal anonymisierte Einzelangaben) zu gewähren, wenn wirksame Vorkehrungen zur Wahrung der Geheimhaltung getroffen werden.

Die Pflicht zur Geheimhaltung besteht auch für Personen, die Einzelangaben erhalten.

Hilfsmerkmale, Haushaltsnummer, Bankverbindung, Trennung und Löschung

Name und Kontaktdaten der Auskunftgebenden sowie die Vornamen der Haushaltsmitglieder sind Hilfsmerkmale, die lediglich der technischen Durchführung der Erhebung dienen.

Sie werden von den Angaben zu den Erhebungsmerkmalen getrennt und gesondert aufbewahrt oder gespeichert und nach Abschluss der Überprüfung der Erhebungs- und Hilfsmerkmale auf ihre Schlüssigkeit und Vollständigkeit vernichtet beziehungsweise gelöscht. Die in elektronischer Form gespeicherten und in den Papierunterlagen enthaltenen personenbezogenen Daten werden spätestens nach Abschluss der Datenaufbereitung gelöscht beziehungsweise vernichtet.

Die Rohdaten aus den Täglichen Ausgaben werden zunächst erfasst und gespeichert und anschließend im Rahmen der Datenaufbereitung nach einer amtlichen Systematik (sogenannter Systematik der Einnahmen und Ausgaben der privaten Haushalte) codiert. Nur in codierter Form finden sie Eingang in die dauerhaft gespeicherten formal anonymisierten Datensätze, die die Grundlage für die Auswertungen und Ergebnisveröffentlichungen sind.

Die Haushaltsnummer ist eine Ordnungsnummer. Sie dient der Unterscheidung der an der Erhebung beteiligten Haushalte und besteht aus einer frei vergebenen laufenden Nummer, welche über diese statistischen Zusammenhänge hinaus keine weitergehenden Angaben über persönliche oder sachliche Verhältnisse enthält.

Diese Ordnungsnummer wird zusammen mit den Angaben zu den Erhebungsmerkmalen solange verarbeitet und gespeichert, wie dies für die Erfüllung der gesetzlichen Verpflichtungen erforderlich ist.

Die Angaben der Auskunft gebenden Haushalte zu ihrer Bankverbindung (IBAN, BIC, Bankinstitut, Kontoinhaber beziehungsweise Kontoinhaberin) werden für die Überweisung der Aufwandsentschädigung verwendet, die für die freiwillige Teilnahme an der Einkommens- und Verbrauchsstichprobe gezahlt wird. Die Bankverbindungsdaten werden nach Teilnahme an der Erhebung und Auszahlung der Aufwandsentschädigung gelöscht.

Rechte der Betroffenen, Kontaktdaten der Datenschutzbeauftragten, Recht auf Beschwerde

Die Auskunftgebenden, deren personenbezogenen Angaben verarbeitet werden, können

- eine Auskunft nach Artikel 15 DS-GVO,
- eine Berichtigung nach Artikel 16 DS-GVO,
- die Löschung nach Artikel 17 DS-GVO sowie
- die Einschränkung der Verarbeitung nach Artikel 18 DS-GVO

der jeweils sie betreffenden personenbezogenen Angaben beantragen.

Die Betroffenenrechte können gegenüber jedem zuständigen Verantwortlichen geltend gemacht werden.

Sollte von den oben genannten Rechten Gebrauch gemacht werden, prüft die zuständige öffentliche Stelle, ob die gesetzlichen Voraussetzungen hierfür erfüllt sind. Die antragstellende Person wird gegebenenfalls aufgefordert ihre Identität nachzuweisen, bevor weitere Maßnahmen ergriffen werden.

Fragen und Beschwerden über die Einhaltung datenschutzrechtlicher Bestimmungen können jederzeit an die behördliche Datenschutzbeauftragte oder den behördlichen Datenschutzbeauftragten des verantwortlichen statistischen Amtes oder an die jeweils zuständige Datenschutzaufsichtsbehörde gerichtet werden (Artikel 77 DS-GVO).

Deren Kontaktdaten finden Sie unter
https://www.statistikportal.de/de/datenschutz.