

# An annual mixed-mode survey to measure victimisation in France from 2022: The chronicle of an overhaul in 5 acts

Hélène Guedj<sup>a,\*</sup>, Tiaray Razafindranovona<sup>b</sup> and Sandra Zilloniz<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Directorate of Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES), Paris, France

<sup>b</sup>Ministerial Statistical Department for Internal Security (SSMSI), Paris, France

**Abstract.** In 2022, the “*Vécu et ressenti en matière de sécurité*” (Experiences and feelings about safety) victimisation survey (107,000 respondents during phase 1, almost 80% of which responded online) designed by the Ministerial Statistical Department for Internal Security (SSMSI) took the place of the “*Cadre de vie et sécurité*” (Living environment and security) survey, which was conducted annually by INSEE between 2007 and 2021. This new mixed-mode survey, carried out on a large sample of the general population, is the result of a major overhaul that has been under way at the SSMSI since 2019 and which has involved INSEE and all of the national stakeholders with an interest in security. In order for this project to succeed, a thorough review was needed of the existing situation, together with the development and evaluation of an innovative and ambitious protocol in the context of the development of a fast-growing mixed-mode survey and the hosting and management of a consultation within a multidisciplinary committee. The objective of this article is to present, in five acts, the main lines of the project that led to the design of the new survey. This first edition thus marks the beginning of a long-term process that will require future methodological developments which will help to consolidate the knowledge and practices acquired through the switch to a mixed-mode approach for surveys conducted among the general population.

Keywords: Mixed-mode, victimisation survey, survey methodology

## 1. Introduction

The “*Cadre de vie et sécurité*” (CVS) survey was conducted annually between 2007 and 2021 under the joint management of INSEE and the French National Observatory of Crime and Criminal Justice (ONDRP) until its disbandment in 2020 and the Ministerial Statistical Department for Internal Security (SSMSI, created in 2014). Known as the “victimisation” survey, it aims to identify the crimes that households and individuals may have fallen victim to during the two years preceding the survey, regardless of whether or not those crimes were reported to the police or gendarmerie. The information gathered through the victimisation survey

is separate from and complements the data recorded by the national police and gendarmerie, since victims do not always file reports. When combined, this information and data offer valuable tools to assess and analyse both crime and feelings of insecurity. The CVS survey involved an average of 15,000 households each year with face-to-face interviews. As is the case for other Official Statistics surveys, the CVS survey has evolved over the years, seeing changes to the questions, the addition or removal of thematic modules, occasional territorial extensions to include the overseas territories and even methodological revisions.

In April 2018, INSEE announced to the SSMSI and ONDRP that, due to severe budgetary constraints, it would no longer be able to conduct the CVS survey in its current form (conducted annually, face-to-face collection) with effect from 2022. The Ministry of the Interior is committed to providing the financial and hu-

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\*Corresponding author: Hélène Guedj, Directorate of Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES), Paris, France. E-mail: helene.guedj@sante.gouv.fr.

man resources required in order to guarantee, through the SSMSI, the sustainability of a victimisation survey scheme.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, in accordance with the commitments made before the National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS), in spring 2019, with the support of INSEE, the SSMSI began considering the changes that could be made to the overall scheme of the CVS survey by 2022, exploring in particular the possibilities offered by combining the various modes of collection (Internet, telephone, paper, face-to-face, etc.) being developed within the Official Statistical Service.

The aim of this article is to present, in five acts, the broad outlines of the project that led to the design of the new “*Vécu et ressenti en matière de sécurité*” survey, which was conducted for the first time in 2022.

## 2. Act I: Take stock of the existing situation and draw up a roadmap for the new scheme

### 2.1. Slid victimisation survey experience in France

Historically, crime was measured on the basis of administrative statistics, particularly prison, judicial and, more recently, police statistics [1]. The limitations of the data recorded by the police are well known [2,3]. They do not allow for the exhaustive measurement of criminal acts, as they only list offences brought to the attention of the security forces or the judicial authority (complaints, reports, operations, etc.). They are therefore heavily dependent on the propensity of victims to file a report, the practices involved in recording the reports and the actions taken by the security services. In addition, the typology on which recorded crime statistics are based must adapt to legislative changes and reforms that define the boundaries between offences, minor offences and misdemeanours, etc. Furthermore, these statistics do not allow for the establishment of a detailed socio-demographic profile of the victims, nor do they go any way towards understanding the influence that crime has on the way in which individuals portray or behave themselves. Given these clearly identified and well-documented limitations, a different approach emerged in the English-speaking world in the 1960s: that of victimisation surveys [4]. They provide information concerning direct victim crime, regardless of whether or not the victims have reported the crime

to the competent authorities. The principle is simple: households and/or individuals are contacted and asked to indicate and describe the crimes (taken from a specific list) to which they have fallen victim during a particular reference period. They may also be asked for their opinions and perceptions with regard to security and the actions being taken by the public authorities with a view to combating crime (repression, prevention, legal response, etc.).

In France, a broad distinction can be drawn between three periods when it comes to measuring direct victimisation through the use of surveys [5]:

- 1980–1995 “the early survey era”: in the early 1980s, the Centre for Sociological Research on Law and Criminal Justice Institutions (CESDIP) embarked on a sustained programme of national and local victimisation surveys. Having performed a qualitative survey in 1982, CESDIP conducted the first national survey covering a broad range of victims in 1986. This first survey also included an extensive section on opinions and attitudes, especially those concerning crime and social change [6,7].
- 1996–2006 “the EPCV era”: from 1996, INSEE included a victimisation module numbering around twenty questions concerning a limited number of crimes targeting persons and property in the fixed part of the “*enquête permanente sur les conditions de vie des ménages*” (permanent survey on household living conditions – EPCV), conducted annually in January on a face-to-face basis. In the wake of the recommendations set out in the Caresche/Pandraud parliamentary report in 2002 and the creation of the French National Observatory of Crime<sup>2</sup> (OND), INSEE enriched the victimisation module of the EPCV from January 2005. 2005 and 2006 therefore represent a pivotal period between the EPCV era and the following era: the enriched module known as “*Cadre de vie et sécurité*” (Living environment and security – CVS) made it possible to provide additional details for the victimisation information included in the usual fixed part of the EPCV with a sample of more than 12,000 respondent households. This set-up was repeated in January 2006.

<sup>1</sup>This approach was confirmed by the Ministry of the Interior in its response, on 9 April 2019, to parliamentary written question No 14645 of 27 November 2018.

<sup>2</sup>National Institute for Advanced Studies in Security and Justice (INHESJ), created in 2003. The OND then became the ONDRP until its disbandment in 2020.

- 2007–2021 “the CVS era”: in 2007, the implementation of the SILC panel (Statistics on Income and Living Conditions – part of the EU-SILC scheme) brought the EPCV series to a close. The INSEE-OND partnership continued with the establishment, in 2007, of an annual survey dedicated to the study of victimisation, which took the name of the prototype conducted in 2005 and 2006. Between 2007 and 2021, the CVS survey was conducted annually fourteen times in metropolitan France (there was no survey in 2020 due to the health crisis). Versions have also been conducted in the overseas departments (in La Réunion in 2011, in the three American overseas departments in 2015 and in Mayotte in 2020). Since its creation in 2014, the SSMSI has been involved in the joint project management of the CVS survey.

## 2.2. CVS 2007–2021: A relatively stable scheme

The CVS survey was conducted each year over a period of around 11 weeks in computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) by an interviewer from INSEE’s network. Due to the health crisis, the 2020 edition did not take place and the 2021 edition was primarily conducted via telephone. The survey collection rate is around 70% each year for the period from 2007 to 2017, with the exception of the 2013 edition (63% as a result of the introduction of new conditions of employment for INSEE interviewers). In recent years, as has been the case for other household surveys conducted in person by INSEE, the CVS collection rate has been falling (65% in 2019 following 68% in 2018), primarily as a result of the difficulty in contacting certain individuals, particularly in large urban areas (in 2019, the CVS collection rate in the Paris region was 46% and it was between 55% and 60% in Provence-Alpes-Côte-d’Azur and Hauts-de-France). During this period, the annual number of respondent households is generally between 15,000 and 17,000 and around 12,500 in 2019.

The CVS survey is based on four questionnaires that are conducted successively. They are based on a common structure and content for each edition. Nevertheless, it was possible for some modules to be added or removed between 2007 and 2020 (transport, scams, corruption, discrimination, etc.). The structure of the questionnaire for the 2019 CVS survey is as follows:

1. The “common household set”, administered in the vast majority of INSEE household surveys and in Official Statistics in general, allows a huge amount of socio-demographic information to be

gathered on the household and the individuals of which it is comprised. Preferably, the reference person for the household responds to the common household set (average time to complete the common household set: 15 min).

2. The household questionnaire, preferably completed face-to-face by the reference person of the household. This makes it possible to gather information on crimes affecting property belonging to the household (average time to complete this questionnaire: 8 min): crimes targeting the primary residence, i.e. burglary and attempted burglary, theft without forced entry, vandalism of the dwelling; burglary, attempted burglary and theft without forced entry of secondary residences and other properties owned or rented by the households; crimes targeting vehicles owned by the households, i.e. theft or attempted theft of cars, motorcycles and bicycles, theft and attempted theft of objects in or on cars and vandalism of cars; fraudulent debits from bank accounts held by the households (“bank fraud”).
3. The individual questionnaires conducted face-to-face with one individual per household (the “Kish” individual<sup>3</sup>): this person is selected at random from among the members of the household aged 15 or older as at 31 December of the year in which the survey is conducted. No proxies are permitted for the CVS survey. This questionnaire (average time to complete of 15 min) allows for the collection of information regarding “personal” victimisation outside of “sensitive” violence: property-related crimes targeting items owned by the Kish individual, i.e. theft and attempted theft with violence or threats and theft and attempted theft without violence or threats; crimes targeting individuals perpetrated by persons not living in the same household at the time of the survey (“non-domestic”), excluding sexual abuse, i.e. physical violence, threats and verbal abuse; scams (section introduced in 2018); corruption (section introduced in 2018); discrimination (section introduced in 2018). The IS also includes sections devoted to gathering the opinions,

<sup>3</sup>The method of selecting the individual is named after its designer, the American statistician Leslie KISH, a specialist in sampling methods; other selection techniques will be developed later. Kish’s individual selection methods consist of randomly selecting an individual in such a way as to ensure the equiprobability of the individuals in the survey field.

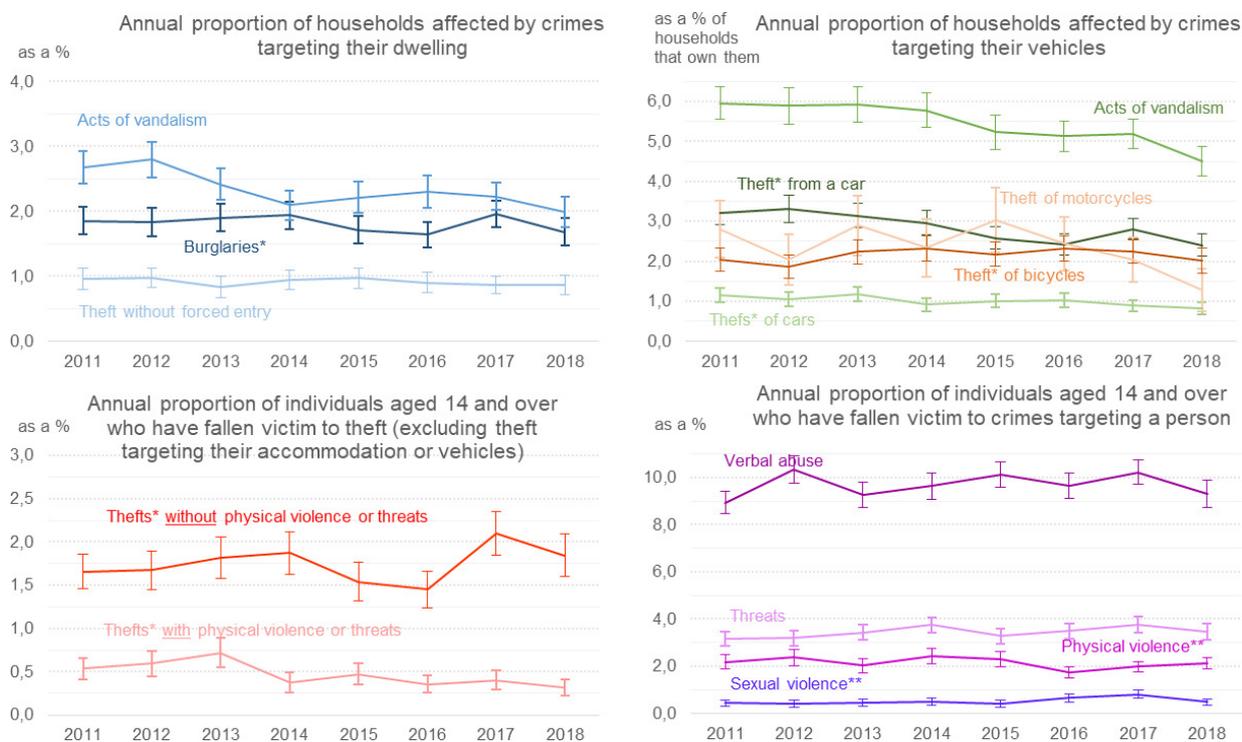


Fig. 1. Annual proportions and 95% confidence intervals of the key victimisation indicators for the period 2011–2018. \*Including attempted theft. \*\*Proportion of victims calculated among individuals aged 18–75 and excluding theft situations. Coverage: ordinary households in metropolitan France. Sources: CVS survey 2012–2019; SSMSI processing.

perceptions and experiences of the Kish individual in terms of safety, primarily assessed at the level of the neighbourhood or village<sup>4</sup> of residence, i.e. opinions on issues of concern within society and the neighbourhood, feelings of insecurity at home or in their neighbourhood/village, unwillingness to leave their house for safety reasons, observation of crime within the neighbourhood, opinions and satisfaction with regard to the actions of the police/gendarmerie in general and in the neighbourhood/village and satisfaction with the actions of the judicial system in general.

4. The self-administered individual questionnaire conducted using a headset for the person interviewed in person referred to as the “Kish” individual (average time to complete this questionnaire: 9 min). It concerns violence considered to be sen-

sitive (sexual and domestic): sexual exposure, “inappropriate acts” and sexual violence (groping, rape and attempted rape) on the one hand and physical violence committed by persons living with the respondent at the time of the survey on the other hand. It is aimed at the person selected at random for the face-to-face “individual” survey, on the condition that they are aged 18 or over on the day of the survey or 75 or under on 1 January of the survey year. This self-administered questionnaire is available in French and five other languages (Arabic, Turkish, Portuguese, English and German).

The annual dynamics of the key victimisation indicators during the period from 2011 to 2018 are illustrated in Fig. 1.

While the scheme was relatively stable between 2007 and 2019, it nevertheless underwent some significant changes over time:

- Content changes: introduction or removal of modules or questions. In 2017, the change to the question allowing for the collection of information regarding sexual violence led to a possible break in series in the wake of the #MeToo movement;

<sup>4</sup>The concept of the neighbourhood differs depending on whether it is in a large city, a village or a hamlet. The respondents themselves define what they consider to be their neighbourhood. Therefore, where there is uncertainty regarding the delimitation of the perimeter of the neighbourhood for a person living in a hamlet (i.e. the hamlet itself or the village to which it belongs), the decision lies with the respondent.

- A major overhaul of the adjustment methodology, which led to the revision and backcasting of the series in 2016;
- The most recent edition of the CVS survey (2021) underwent three notable changes likely to bring about breaks in series ahead of the overhaul planned for 2022: the pushing back of the collection schedule (starting in mid-April rather than mid-February to allow the SILC survey to be performed at the beginning of the year in accordance with European regulations), the change to the sampling frame (with effect from 2021, all INSEE household surveys are based on the new NAUTILE (New Application Used for Drawing Individuals and Dwellings in Surveys) master sample, which is based on tax sources rather than the census) and finally the switch to telephone collection.

### 2.3. Recurring criticisms of the CVS survey

Between 2006 and 2019, the CVS survey was examined eight times by the Official Statistics Quality Label Committee with a view to obtaining the mandatory general interest and statistical quality label, a golden ticket for which a favourable opinion on its appropriateness must be obtained in advance from the CNIS “Public services and services to the public” committee. The survey received a favourable opinion from the Label Committee in each case. Nevertheless, a number of criticisms were raised time and again within the scope of this exercise. In addition, during this period, three meetings were arranged by CNIS in connection with the statistics concerning insecurity (2013, 2015 and 2016). All of these examinations point firstly to the difficulty in balancing the CVS survey, which is designed to meet the objective of situational analysis (barometric survey of crime) and the demand for structural information regarding victimisation, which does not require the survey to be conducted annually. In addition, the survey protocol makes it difficult to identify small or localised populations. Finally, the monoblock questionnaire did not appear suitable for the exploration of new topics without modifying the questionnaire and potentially bringing about breaks in series within the estimates.

Regardless of these criticisms, the SSMSI was created in 2014 in the wake of controversies surrounding the crime figures recorded by the security services with the aim of producing and disseminating to the general public statistics and analyses on the subject of internal security and crime. It thus joins INSEE and 15 others Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSOs), with which it

forms the Official Statistical Service (SSP). In view of the arrival of this new player in the statistical landscape and its obligations in terms of the scheduling of surveys and the associated resources in terms of interviewers, INSEE announced in 2018 that it would no longer be conducting the CVS survey in accordance with its current protocol (conducted annually, face-to-face collection) with effect from 2022. The questions surrounding the funding of the survey and the imperfections of the current scheme have led to the decision that it will not necessarily be conducted again in its existing form after 2022, but consideration will be given to new collection methods, revising the questionnaire and more generally evaluating the possibility of conducting different thematic surveys within the framework of a coordinated scheme.

Prior to the official launch of the consultation for the project aimed at overhauling the CVS survey at the end of 2020, the SSMSI led two written consultations with a view to analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the CVS survey and identifying needs. The first consultation took place between August and November 2019 with experts in victimisation and perceptions of security associated with the CVS survey consultation. Then, in October 2020, a “thematic” consultation took place with the Ministerial Statistical Offices (MSOs) and various entities with an interest in these subjects (administrations, researchers, etc.). These consultations have led to the following conclusions:

- France has robust experience in the measurement of victimisation through numerous national or local surveys, whether they be general or thematic: surveys conducted by CESDIP, INSEE, the Paris Region Institute, the “*enquête sur les violences faites aux femmes*” (survey on violence against women, ENVEFF) conducted in 2000 [8] and the *Violences et rapports de genre* (violence and gender relations, VIRAGE) survey conducted in 2015 [9] by the French Institute for Demographic Studies (INED), the “*Evènements de vie et santé*” (life events and health, EVS) survey conducted in 2006 [10] by the Directorate of Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics (DREES), the french ministerial statistical service in the health and social fields, etc.
- International recommendations are fairly well documented (UN Manual on Victimization Surveys), and international surveys, including the Sustainable Development Goals, help to frame the needs to be covered by the new scheme;

- Foreign models with long-standing experience of conducting victimisation surveys and/or that have undergone substantial overhauls, including shifts towards mixed-mode collection, offer an inspirational framework for the design of the new survey (Sweden and the Netherlands in particular);
- As regards the strengths of the CVS survey, the feedback from the consultation mentions: i) the relevance of the subject-matter of the survey, which serves as a base for many uses; ii) the scientific rigour of the sampling and protocol provided by INSEE; iii) the relative stability of the scheme, which allows for the serialisation of indicators;
- There is also agreement with regard to the weaknesses identified by the experts in the survey: i) the lack of precision of the estimates means that the scheme is nowhere near adequate for the analysis of annual trends or sub-national analyses; ii) the questionnaire includes a number of problematic blind spots: in particular, harassment, cybercrime, the limitation of the reference period to 24 months; iii) some of the opinion-based questions appear to be largely irrelevant.

All of these considerations have helped to define the primary objective of the new scheme: to respond to the dual requirement for information in terms of level and structure on victimisation and perceptions of safety while aiming to achieve representative results at the sub-national level and focusing on a combination of different collection methods.

### 3. Act II: Focusing on an innovative protocol against a backdrop of prolific growth of mixed-mode collection

#### 3.1. Mixed-mode collection or the sense of history

The increase in the use of mixed-mode collection for INSEE's household surveys has become a necessity that has been incorporated into INSEE's 2025 strategic areas,<sup>5</sup> as well as those of the main foreign national statistical institutes. In the context of the total survey error paradigm [11], the use of a mixed-mode scheme, i.e. one that combines different collection methods (Internet, paper, telephone, face-to-face) can be considered for a number of reasons: to improve coverage, to

encourage participation in the survey and therefore to reduce the total non-response error or even to reduce measurement error. The development of these schemes is also motivated by cost control. Collection methods could, for example, be combined with the aim of improving the quality of the survey at constant cost or to reduce costs without any adverse effect on quality [12]. These various dimensions must therefore be included in the analysis when seeking out the relevant combination of the various collection methods. The sequential proposal of the various collection methods typically starts with the cheapest collection method and works towards the most expensive.

All of the household surveys conducted by the SSP are involved in the transition to mixed-mode collection. The “*Entrée dans la vie adulte*” (Entry Into Adult Life, EVA) and “*Technologies de l’information et de la communication*” (Information and Communication Technologies, ICT) surveys and the “*enquête sur les salariés de l’État*” (Survey of Government Employees, FPE) are already based on mixed collection methods, including a web component. The “*enquête annuelle de recensement*” (annual census survey, EAR) has been offering Internet collection since 2015. Since the beginning of 2020, it has been the iconic *Labor force survey* (LFS) that has partially switched, as part of a more general overhaul, to mixed-mode collection (Internet collection for repeat interviews [13,14]). Finally, by 2023, other surveys will have conducted pilots with a view to implementing the switch to mixed-mode collection (“*enquête Logement*” (Housing survey), “*enquête Emploi du temps*” (Time Use survey), etc.).

Taking a similar approach to other national statistical institutes, INSEE has developed a programme aimed at pooling the developments required for the design of the collection media. Working groups have been in place since 2017 with the aim of providing practical solutions for the design of collection media suitable for online and self-administered collection methods and for measuring the adjustment of collection method effects. Finally, an electronic newsletter informs those involved at the Official Statistical Service of the latest developments with regard to mixed-mode collection (Dépêche Mode newsletter).

It was in this fertile environment that the SSMSI prepared to overhaul the CVS survey protocol with the aim of establishing innovative mixed-mode collection. Generally speaking, when designing a quality victimisation survey, the statistician is faced with two key difficulties upstream of the design of the questionnaire. On the one hand, they need to manage the low frequency of the

<sup>5</sup><https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/fichier/4130132/INSEE-2025.pdf>.

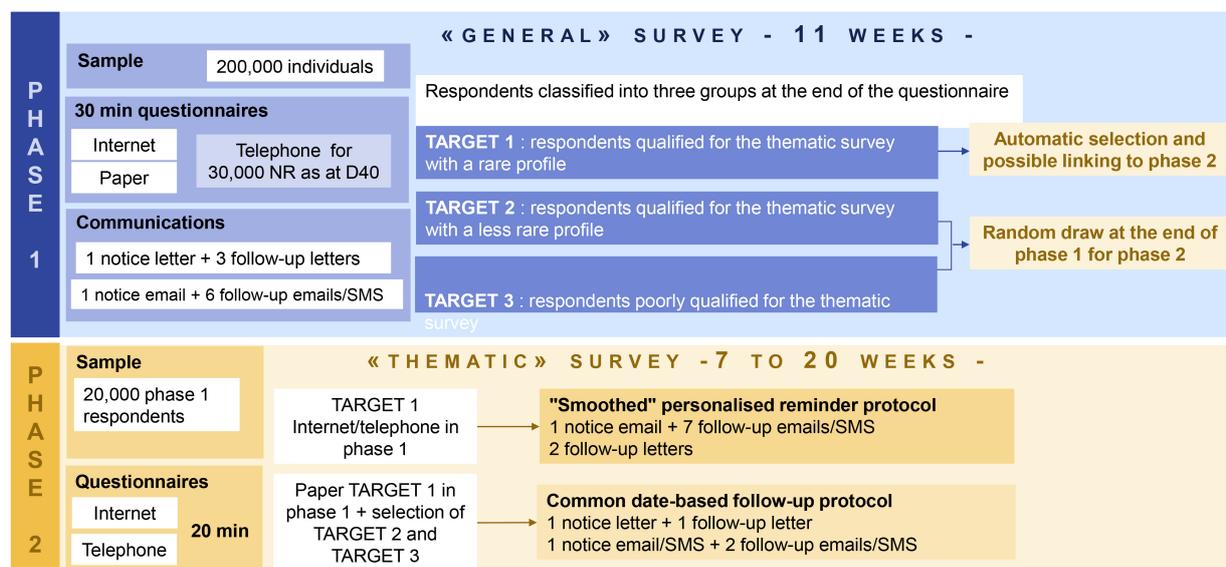


Fig. 2. General structure of the new victimisation survey scheme. Definitions: CAWI (Computer-assisted web interviewing) refers to online responses; CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing) refers to telephone responses; NR: non-respondents. Reading note: 30,000 NR as at D40 means that 30,000 individuals who had not responded to the survey after six weeks (D40) were selected at random from among the non-respondents with a mobile or landline telephone number to conduct a telephone interview.

crimes being measured – in particular the most serious violence, such as rape – which requires large sample sizes. On the other hand, they must take account of the “sensitive” nature of certain types of victimisation (sexual and domestic violence), which makes it especially difficult to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of the various collection methods.

Too small a sample leads to estimates for which the relative accuracy is mediocre and limits the possibilities of describing the phenomena studied. The EPCV (which relied on around 6,500 respondent households and a total of 11,000 to 12,000 individuals on average) has often been criticised for this, as has the CVS survey, as we have previously discussed.

The introduction of cheaper and more modern collection methods than interviewing respondents face-to-face is a good way to increase the sample size and improve the accuracy of estimates. Nevertheless, these protocol changes raise the question of the degree of confidentiality and security offered to respondents revealing sensitive information, as well as the continuity of historic series.

### 3.2. A two-phase mixed-mode protocol based on a large sample to allow for more accurate estimates and a focus on specific topics or populations

In July 2019, the SSMSI set up a methodological working group bringing together experts in mixed-mode

household surveys, the Surveys division and the INSEE team in charge of the CVS survey. The aim of the new protocol was to respond in an affordable, innovative and reliable way to the emerging need for localised and more precise data to allow for short-term monitoring while ensuring that the victims and crimes suffered are described in detail. The objective of ensuring the sub-national estimation and short-term monitoring of certain indicators requires a large sample of individuals. The objective of providing a detailed description of the various types of victimisation requires a large sample of victims. In order to achieve these two objectives, the SSMSI has joined forces with INSEE to design a dual-phase mixed-mode protocol, drawing inspiration from the CESDIP victimisation survey conducted in 1986 or, more recently, the “*enquête vie quotidienne et santé*” (Everyday Life and Health Survey, VQS-Care) conducted by DREES, which focuses on dependent persons aged 60 and over (Fig. 2). The first phase consists of a general mixed-mode (Internet, paper, telephone) survey based on questions to identify victimisation as well as perceptions and opinions of security conducted among a large sample (200,000 individuals). This initial phase allows for the production of the main victimisation indicators at the national and sub-national levels. The second phase involves a follow-up survey to dive deeper into a specific topic among a smaller sample of the respondents from phase 1 in which indi-

viduals who are most affected by the topic in question are over-represented.

The phase 1 protocol combines 3 collection methods: online (CAWI), paper and telephone (CATI). The telephone follow-up is offered to a random selection of non-respondents, the number of whom is set a priori, after around six weeks. This choice makes it possible to control the costs associated with the survey by controlling the number of telephone interviews that are to be conducted. From a methodological point of view, it offers a quasi-experimental framework allowing the responses provided by selected eligible respondents for the CATI follow-up to be compared with those of eligible respondents who were not selected, with a view to assessing the collection method effects (see below). The paper questionnaire is offered to non-respondents at different stages of the collection process based on the contact details held with a view to contacting them in order to offer respondents an additional collection method while reducing the use of paper questionnaires, which results in partial non-response and much more substantial post-collection processing than for other collection methods.

The other original and innovative idea offered by the protocol involves the proposal of a personalised contact and follow-up scheme for the themed follow-up survey (phase 2): the most qualified profiles for the follow-up survey (“Target 1”) with a probability of selection equal to 1 for phase 2 have the option of combining the two questionnaires into a single interview (CAWI or CATI). If they do not combine the two questionnaires, these respondents are contacted and re-interviewed at a regular and identical rate, which starts on the day that the phase 1 questionnaire is completed. This differentiated protocol allows for:

- The proposal of a longer collection period and a personalised follow-up schedule that encourages response and reduces the attrition of phase 1 “Target 1” respondents who represent the population of interest for phase 2;
- Control to be maintained over the selection of “Target 2” and “Target 3” respondents based on the results of the phase 1 collection.

For methodological purposes, the mixed-mode protocol for the first edition of the new survey was also supplemented by face-to-face collection among a control group of around 3,000 individuals representative of metropolitan France. These individuals were contacted upon the launch of the mixed-mode Internet/telephone/paper survey to respond face-to-face during phase 1 of the survey. The objective of this control

group was to assess the measurement effects between face-to-face collection and the other methods proposed by the scheme Internet/paper/telephone and therefore to expand upon the lessons learned from the GENESE (Gender and security) survey on experiences and opinions about security and INSEE trials (see below).

A full-scale test of this prototype version of the protocol (excluding face-to-face at the start of collection) was performed by the SSMSI in 2021 (GENESE survey, see below).

#### **4. Act III: Experimentation and evaluation to ensure a reliable switch to mixed-mode collection and preparation to link the series**

The mass use of self-administered online questionnaires poses a number of methodological questions when the usual and validated paradigm involves collection in the presence of an interviewer. In particular, a key question addresses the collection method effects, particularly measurement biases. In other words, how similar are the answers given by a respondent to a question asked via two different collection methods [12,15–17]?

Therefore, before rolling out mixed-mode collection to household surveys, with the Internet as the preferred collection method, INSEE first conducted a vast array of experiments in the early 2010s. At the same time, the use of this new collection method for the census annual surveys (EAR) and the “*enquêtes entreprises*” (company surveys) has grown considerably. Since the findings in the literature are not always easy to apply more generally, the direction INSEE has chosen for the establishment of mixed-mode collection for household surveys is to focus on defining, for each survey, the best possible use of the Internet.

As regards the victimisation surveys, four trials were conducted between 2013 and 2021. Their conclusions, including those of the two following trials, contributed to the debate concerning the switch of the CVS survey to mixed-mode collection.

The “CVS mixed-mode panel” trial, which involved conducting repeat interviews of individuals who responded to the 2018 CVS survey in 2019 online and by telephone using a simplified questionnaire (10,271 questionnaires were completed, 5,490 of which were conducted by telephone and 4,781 online), was the subject of a paper presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> International Francophone Conference on Surveys [18]. It gave rise to a number of interesting conclusions:

- The results highlighted the importance of correctly designing a questionnaire suitable for self-administration in advance (simplification of question wording, inclusion of introductions, instructions and information bubbles, display of survey questions pertaining to victimisation belonging to the same category on a single screen to allow the respondent to enter the full extent of the crimes being measured and to help them to respond as accurately as possible) to limit incorrect classifications and double counting as much as possible, since these require tedious and costly post-collection processing, which is likely to be inadequate due to the lack of information available downstream;
- Telephone appears to be an indispensable alternative method to supplement online collection with a view to improving the representativeness of the respondents;
- The gross victimisation rates are consistently higher online. The analyses that have been performed suggest that the measurement bias is generally more pronounced for offences targeting housing or vehicles (“household victimisation”) than for offences targeting people (“individual” victimisation).

The preliminary results of the “CVS mixed-mode panel” trial, which looked at panelization, appear to indicate that its interest is not proven: little selection was observed on the variables collected during the first interview and, during the trial, the attrition of rare profiles of victims of sensitive violence was higher than for the other profiles.

Given its high demand on the subject of violence against women, in November 2019, the SSMSI applied for and received EU funding (EUR 1.5 million) to conduct the GENESE survey on gender-based violence at national level in 2021 based on the Gender-Based Violence questionnaire developed by Eurostat.

The GENESE survey was designed to meet two key ambitions of the SSMSI: i) to inform the public debate at European level by providing new data on patterns of gender-based and sexual violence, and; ii) to conduct a full-scale mixed-mode trial to measure victimisation and perceptions of safety according to the two-phase protocol designed by the SSMSI in collaboration with INSEE experts (see Fig. 2). In January 2021, it obtained the mandatory general interest and statistical quality label from CNIS.

The first phase of the survey took place over a period of 11 weeks from 1 March to 16 May 2021 and targeted 169,060 individuals aged between 18 and 74 residing in

metropolitan France. In total, almost 109,000 individuals (64%) responded, with 51% responding online, 3% by telephone and 10% on paper. The follow-up survey (phase 2), based on the questionnaire designed by Eurostat, was conducted among 15,000 phase 1 respondents, among whom victims of gender-based and sexual violence were over-represented. More than 10,000 people (68%) responded: 53% online and 15% by telephone.

Finally, at the end of phase 1, a face-to-face methodological component took place between 1 June and 24 July 2021 involving more than 3,000 people: the 1,000 total non-respondents in Gironde plus a random selection of 2,000 total non-respondents in Île-de-France. More than 1,000 completed questionnaires were collected (32%).

The conclusions of the studies looking into the effectiveness of the GENESE survey protocol [19] have allowed for the overall validation of the survey scheme designed by the SSMSI in collaboration with INSEE experts and for this protocol to be kept as a frame of reference for the new “*Vécu et Ressenti en matière de Sécurité*” survey (survey on experiences and feelings about safety, VRS survey). The decisions made by the designers with regard to the nature and frequency of follow-ups has enabled the achievement of high response rates, particularly online. The repeated sending of emails appears to be a key lever for participation, particularly at the start of collection. The introduction of telephone follow-ups also helps to encourage participation, not only by telephone, but also online, which militates for deferred rather than “pure” sequential competitive protocols. In terms of representativeness, telephone collection has resulted in significant gains with regard to profiles unlikely to respond at the start of collection, particularly among socially disadvantaged populations. Finally, the original link between phase 1 and phase 2 proved to be relevant: the attrition of rare profiles was particularly well managed thanks to the smoothed reminders and the sequencing of questionnaires, which was widely acclaimed by eligible individuals. In accordance with the objectives of the survey, the data collected in phase 1 allow for the production of more precise and localised prevalence indicators.<sup>6</sup> In addition, the targeted selection of the phase 2 sam-

<sup>6</sup>The large number of respondents and the sampling plan enable unprecedented representativeness of a large number of indicators at department level (a fortiori regional) and at the level of the priority districts of urban policy (QPV) and Republican reconquest neighbourhoods (QRR, a scheme under the daily security policy that entered into force in September 2018 and which provides for additional police officers in targeted neighbourhoods with the aim of combat-

ple allows unprecedented insight into gender-based and sexual violence: 1,200 female victims of physical or sexual violence during the reference period responded to the Eurostat questionnaire compared with an average of 200 for an annual edition of the CVS survey. The initial findings were published in autumn 2022 in the form of a general overview of violence, paving the way for many more in-depth studies. This publication describes three types of violence: violence suffered in childhood, violence committed “by a partner” within couples and violence committed by somebody other than a partner [20] (see Table 1). Beyond measuring the number and proportion of men and women who have fallen victim to these types of violence during their life or more recently, the experiences of victims throughout their life is explored according to their gender with a view to precisely characterising the violence suffered (psychological, physical or sexual) and to provide certain information regarding the characteristics of the victims and the perpetrators.

As has already been mentioned above, the GENESE survey scheme was designed in advance in order to offer a framework that is, in theory, relatively close to random experimentation [21], allowing for the comparison of responses received online and by telephone. Therefore, people who responded online who are eligible for telephone follow-up (40 days after the start of collection) but who are not selected (by random draw) are compared with telephone respondents (eligible and selected). The idea is to have two sub-populations that are as comparable as possible, including from the point of view of their non-observable characteristics: the collection method effect purged of selection differences on the basis of observable characteristics can then be considered a collection method effect that is intrinsically linked to the measurement.

In order to compare the responses of these two populations to the main variables of interest present in the CVS survey and intended to be carried over into the new victimisation survey, two selection control methods were implemented: regression models and matching models [22]. The observation made on the basis of these initial analyses is rather reassuring: the collection method effects linked to the measurement are generally limited when it comes to the victimisation indicators [23]. Therefore, of all of the indicators tested,

only two present statistically significant effects that withstand both control methods selected: acts of vandalism (under-reported via telephone when compared with online) and physical violence (over-reported via telephone). The common feature of these indicators is the relative ambiguity of the wording of the questions, which points to the possibility of improving the wording in order to limit these effects. However, the collection method effects are more pronounced for questions concerning opinions of security. These findings, which are consistent with the literature, are linked to social desirability: the social interactions with the interviewer bring about a degree of conformity with normal expectations. As a result, responses received by telephone allude to greater satisfaction with the actions of the police/gendarmes and the judicial system, while feelings of insecurity are less likely to be declared. The collection method effects are also significant for some of the questions relating to the observation of crime, but are less pronounced.

#### 5. Act IV: Consultation for the design of questionnaires to respond to social demand

The SSMSI organised the official meeting to launch the consultation for the overhaul of the victimisation survey scheme on 14 December 2020. Attendees included INSEE, Ministerial Statistical Offices, government bodies, research centres and trade union representatives, professional organisations and local assemblies and CNIS members. During this meeting, the SSMSI presented the conclusions of the consultations carried out, together with the committees associated with the project, which is based around a steering committee tasked with ensuring compliance with the objectives, monitoring the progress of the design phases and preparing and conducting the survey, and a consultation committee tasked with collaborating with other stakeholders to design the statistical methodology, the coverage of the population of interest, the coverage of the crimes, the questionnaires and the documents linked to the survey collections. In order to ensure the quality and the scope of the studies carried out by the SSMSI, it also appeared important to provide the project to overhaul the survey with a multi-disciplinary scientific council in order to scientifically evaluate the studies carried out and to decide how the data produced will be used.

In order to determine the topic to be explored in the follow-up survey (phase 2) in 2022, a call for proposals was launched by the SSMSI within the consultation

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ing crime and trafficking. These neighbourhoods are home to a little under 2% of the population aged 18 and over), which constitutes a zoning of operational interest for the directorates of the Ministry of the Interior.

Table 1  
Numbers and proportions of victims of violence (numbers in thousands)

	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Victims at least once before the age of 15</b>						
<b>Climate of violence between parents</b>	<b>2094</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>3395</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>5489</b>	<b>12.4</b>
Humiliation between parents	1032	4.8	2109	9.3	3141	7.1
Physical violence between parents	1674	7.8	2579	11.3	4253	9.6
<b>Psychological violence</b>	<b>1156</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>2670</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>3826</b>	<b>8.7</b>
Repeated humiliation of parents or domestic harassment	667	3.1	1733	7.6	2399	5.4
<i>Including both domestic and non-domestic harassment</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>0.4</i>
Non-domestic harassment	547	2.6	1122	4.9	1670	3.8
<b>Physical violence by parents<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>2611</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>2737</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>5348</b>	<b>12.1</b>
<b>Sexual violence</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>2570</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>3373</b>	<b>7.6</b>
Domestic sexual violence	387	1.8	1398	6.1	1786	4.0
<i>Including both domestic and non-domestic sexual violence</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>453</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>613</i>	<i>1.4</i>
Non-domestic sexual violence	415	1.9	1172	5.1	1587	3.6
<b>Victim of violence at the hands of a partner at least once since turning 15</b>						
<b>Psychological violence</b>	<b>4012</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>6164</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>10176</b>	<b>23.0</b>
<i>Control or dominance</i>	<i>3192</i>	<i>14.9</i>	<i>4260</i>	<i>18.7</i>	<i>7453</i>	<i>16.8</i>
<i>Moral harassment or denigration</i>	<i>1751</i>	<i>8.2</i>	<i>4523</i>	<i>19.8</i>	<i>6275</i>	<i>14.2</i>
<i>Intimidation or threats</i>	<i>1656</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>3822</i>	<i>16.8</i>	<i>5477</i>	<i>12.4</i>
<b>Physical or sexual violence</b>	<b>1192</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>3622</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>4815</b>	<b>10.9</b>
<i>Physical violence only</i>	<i>891</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>1750</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>2642</i>	<i>6.0</i>
<i>Sexual violence only</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>626</i>	<i>2.7</i>	<i>786</i>	<i>1.8</i>
<i>Physical and sexual violence</i>	<i>141</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>1246</i>	<i>5.5</i>	<i>1388</i>	<i>3.1</i>
<b>Victim at least once in the last 5 years</b>						
<b>Psychological violence</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>2378</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>4396</b>	<b>9.9</b>
<b>Physical or sexual violence</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1387</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Victim at least once in the last 12 years</b>						
<b>Psychological violence</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>1794</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Physical or sexual violence</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Victim of violence at the hands of somebody other than a partner at least once since turning 15</b>						
<b>Physical violence</b>	<b>4384</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>3472</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>7856</b>	<b>17.8</b>
<i>Physical violence only</i>	<i>3871</i>	<i>18.1</i>	<i>1808</i>	<i>7.9</i>	<i>5679</i>	<i>12.8</i>
<b>Sexual violence</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3833</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>4535</b>	<b>10.3</b>
<i>Sexual violence only</i>	<i>190</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>2169</i>	<i>9.5</i>	<i>2359</i>	<i>5.3</i>
<b>Physical and sexual violence</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>1664</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>2177</b>	<b>4.9</b>
<b>Victim at least once in the past 5 years</b>						
<b>Physical violence</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>1469</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<i>Physical violence only</i>	<i>772</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>458</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>1230</i>	<i>2.8</i>
<b>Sexual violence</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<i>Sexual violence only</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>498</i>	<i>2.2</i>	<i>572</i>	<i>1.3</i>
<b>Physical and sexual violence</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Victim at least once in the past 12 years</b>						
<b>Physical violence</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<i>Physical violence only</i>	<i>293</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>161</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>364</i>	<i>0.8</i>
<b>Sexual violence</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<i>Sexual violence only</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>135</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>164</i>	<i>0.4</i>
<b>Physical and sexual violence</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0.1</b>

<sup>a</sup>Physical violence suffered before the age of 15 at the hands of persons other than the parents of the victim are not recorded in the survey. SD: under the dissemination threshold (number of respondents < 30). Notes: the term "domestic" refers to family members: father/stepfather/adoptive father, mother/stepmother/adoptive mother, brother/stepbrother, sister/stepsister, another male relative (grandfather, uncle, cousin, nephew, etc.), another female relative (grandmother, aunt, cousin, niece, etc.). Persons who have reported falling victim to the same type of violence (harassment or sexual violence) both within and outside of the family sphere are counted as domestic. Reading note: in 2021, 3.6 million women aged between 18 and 74, so 15.9% of women within this age group, reported having fallen victim to physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner at least once since the age of 15. Coverage: metropolitan France, individuals aged 18 to 74 living in ordinary households. Sources: SSMSI-Eurostat, GENESE survey, 2021.

committee. The only topic put forward concerned the relationship between public security services and the population. Therefore, the questionnaire for the 2022

VRS follow-up survey provides for the collection of detailed information regarding feedback, provided by individuals who have had interactions with the police and

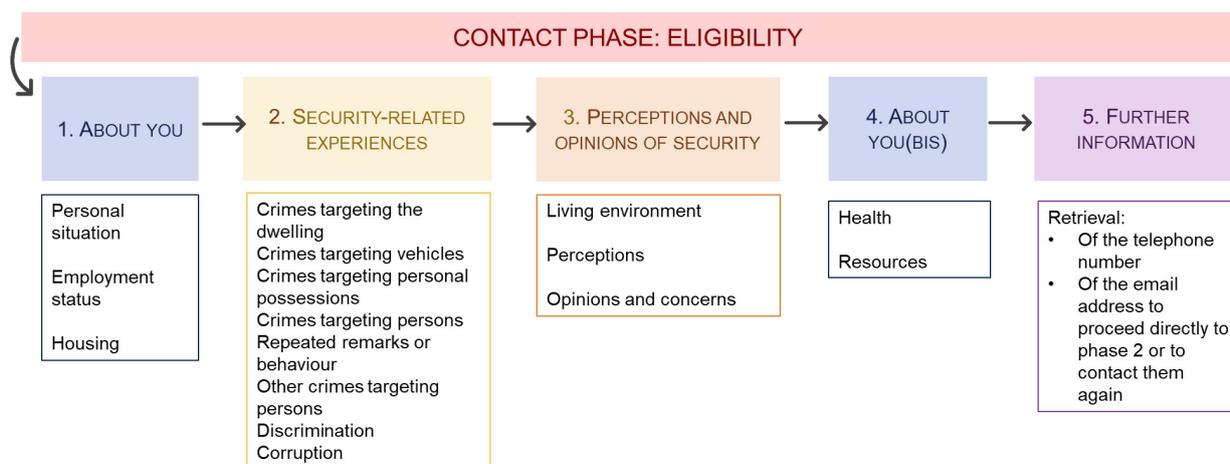


Fig. 3. Content of the “core” (phase 1) questionnaire of the 2022 *Vécu et ressenti en matière de sécurité* survey.

gendarmerie services, regarding the expectations and satisfaction of the general population with regard to digital procedures and looks deeper into the opinions of the respondents with regard to the actions of the police and gendarmerie services in their neighbourhood/village.

In accordance with the provisional schedule, within the scope of the consultation, the SSMSI designed test questionnaires for the core survey and the thematic survey and organised:

- A qualitative test involving 30 individuals between 19 and 23 July 2021;
- A pilot involving 2,400 individuals aged 18 and over residing in metropolitan France, Guadeloupe and La Réunion between 30 August and 31 October 2021. This test made it possible to estimate how long it would take to respond to questionnaires and the partial non-response rate. It also provided qualitative information with regard to the correct understanding and due receipt of the questionnaires by the respondents by means of: i) a series of evaluation questions at the end of the CAWI/CATI questionnaire; ii) feedback from CATI interviewers.

Upon the completion of these tests and based on feedback from the scientific council and the consultation committee, the SSMSI drew up the final survey questionnaires (see Figs 3 and 4). The VRS 2022 survey provided coverage for the population aged 18 and over residing in France, excluding Mayotte and French Guiana. The sample of 200,000 individuals was selected by INSEE from the tax source (Fidéli) sampling frame.

In December 2021, the SSMSI submitted the application for the mandatory general interest and statistical

quality label to the Label Committee. The Committee issued its positive opinion in January 2022.

The first phase of the survey took place over a period of 11 weeks from 26 February to 15 May 2022 and involved 200,622 individuals aged 18 and over residing in metropolitan France, Martinique, Guadeloupe and La Réunion. In total, around 107,000 individuals (53%) responded, 42% online, 2% by telephone and 9% on paper. The follow-up survey (phase 2) was conducted between 26 February and 17 July 2022 and involved 20,000 of the respondents from phase 1 with over-representation of those who had been in contact with the public security services. More than 13,000 individuals (66%) responded: 48% online and 18% by telephone. When compared with the GENESE survey, on the comparable field of persons aged 18–74 residing in metropolitan France, the collection rate recorded for the VRS 2022 is 9 points lower for phase 1 and very similar for phase 2. The longer stated duration of the phase 1 questionnaire of 30 minutes in the notice letter for the VRS survey, compared with 20 minutes for that of the GENESE survey, is the main reason for this lower participation rate. The context may also have had a significant impact: the GENESE survey took place in the middle of a regionalised semi-lockdown period, whereas the VRS survey was conducted post-lockdown in the middle of the electoral period. This may have had an impact on the availability of respondents and, potentially, on the participation of certain respondents due to the high media profile of security-related issues, as well as on the longer delivery times for post and the more complex monitoring of its distribution.

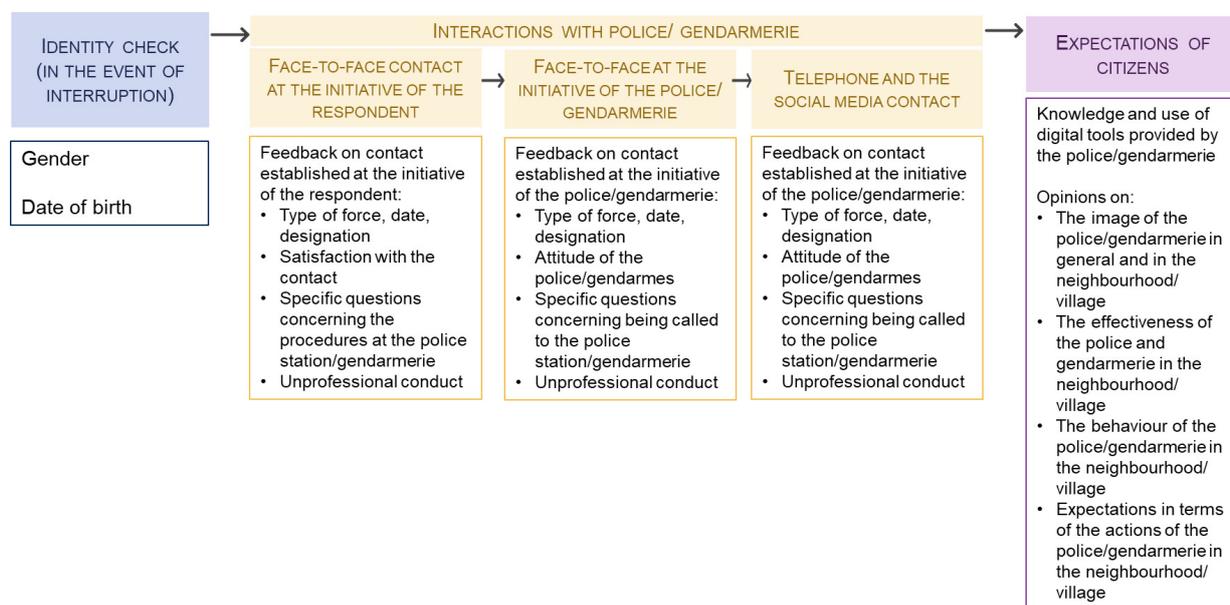


Fig. 4. Content of the “thematic” (phase 2) questionnaire of the 2022 *Vécu et ressenti en matière de sécurité* survey.

## 6. Act V: Consolidation of the survey and ensuring the dissemination of data

The second edition of the annual VRS survey will take place during Q2 2023. Although the bulk of the work for the overhaul project therefore appears to have been completed, the second phase, which is just as ambitious and complex, is just beginning: continue to lead the consultation and address outstanding issues (inclusion of minors, other overseas departments and regions, translations of questionnaires, etc.); design subsequent editions of the thematic questionnaires exploring new security-related topics and ensure the dissemination of data.

The committees in place for the first edition of the VRS survey are retained with feedback of the work carried out by the working groups during two plenary sessions per year: i) a spring meeting, the primary objective of which is to present an initial version of the thematic questionnaire for year  $N$ , as well as to provide an update on the topics currently being investigated for future VRS surveys and in particular the selection of the topic for year  $N+1$ ; ii) an autumn meeting, during which the final versions of the core and thematic surveys for year  $N$  are put forward for approval with a view to their submission to the Label Committee.

If, during the second edition of the VRS, the coverage of the survey remains unchanged, the SSMSI looks into the possibilities of extending the coverage to minors and to other territories (French Guiana and Mayotte)

that are not currently surveyed. Work will commence in 2023, once the study into the associated legal constraints and the necessary adjustments with regard to the questionnaires and the collection protocol has begun.

To ensure communication within the scope of the consultation, the SSMSI provides a documentary area dedicated to the VRS survey on Osmose, a collaborative platform for the State’s professional communities. All of the documentation associated with the survey, as well as the schedule of events, is shared on this platform, which has more than a hundred registered members.

In 2023 and for future editions, the pilot – a kind of mini general rehearsal for the survey – conducted in 2022 and during the first edition of the VRS is being replaced with a qualitative test. It is based on a hundred semi-structured face-to-face or telephone interviews with panellists. Its primary objective is to test the understanding of the thematic questionnaire, which is different for each edition. Since the panellists are also interviewed with regard to the core questionnaire (phase 1), the test also allows the difficulties that may be encountered with this questionnaire to be updated and contributes to its improvement.

Finally, the methodological work is prioritised to ensure that the initial publication of the results of the VRS 2022 survey takes place as quickly as possible, along with the dissemination of a database that can be used by researchers. In the summer of 2022, the SSMSI therefore commenced data reconciliation and adjustment work (calculation of weights and precisions

at departmental level). A processing chain has been set up and will be consolidated in future editions.

## 7. Epilogue or end of part 1

In 2022, the SSMSI conducted the first edition of the “Vécu et ressenti en matière de sécurité” (VRS) among 200,000 individuals in France (excluding Mayotte and French Guiana). The main objective of this mandatory victimization survey is to provide prevalence of a wide range of offenses (burglary, theft, fraud, physical and sexual violence, harassment, threats, insults, discrimination, corruption), the corresponding complaint rates, as well as indicators of perception and opinion regarding security. This new survey follows on the “Cadre de vie et sécurité” (CVS) survey carried out annually by INSEE between 2007 and 2021. To carry out the overhaul project from 2019 to 2022, the SSMSI completed the 5 following main stages to ensure the switch from CVS to VRS: take stock of the existing system to develop a roadmap, design an innovative protocol in a context of multimode development, experiment and evaluate to make mixed-mode switchover and series connection more reliable, establish a framework for consultation to structure the design work and consolidate the survey and ensure data dissemination.

The second edition of the annual “Vécu et ressenti en matière de sécurité” survey will be conducted during the first semester of 2023. The methodological evaluation still needs to continue, looking in particular at the thorny issue of the linking of the series from the old and new schemes. Indeed, temporal comparison over a long period is the key interest of a survey repeated over time. As part of a major overhaul, this question of comparability over time finds itself at the crossroads of a number of issues. Should we focus on the “right” measurement for a given period or comparability with the past? Should we guard against comparability issues in the future?

To accompany the overhaul of the CVS survey, it will be crucial for the SSMSI to document, understand, explain and interpret the possible breaks observed in the indicators historically monitored over time in advance of the work aimed at potentially linking the series. Concerning the estimates of victimisation and opinions with regard to security, the first results of the VRS 2022 survey will be disseminated in the last half of 2023.

## Glossary

CAPI: Computer-assisted personal interviewing, i.e. face-to-face interviews

CATI: Computer-assisted telephone interviewing, i.e. telephone responses

CAWI: Computer-assisted web interviewing, i.e. online responses

CESDIP: Centre for Sociological Research on Law and Criminal Justice Institutions

CNIS: National Council for Statistical Information

CVS: “Cadre de Vie et Sécurité” (living environment and security) survey

EPCV: “Enquête permanente sur les conditions de vie des ménages” is a permanent survey on household living conditions

GENESE: “Genre et sécurité” (gender and security) survey

INSEE: National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies

ONDRP: French National Observatory of Crime and Criminal Justice

SSMSI: Ministerial Statistical Department for Internal Security

VRS: “Vécu et Ressenti en matière de Sécurité” (experiences and feelings about safety) survey

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