



NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR RECRUITMENT Slovak Republic

Final version

1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides an overview of the National recruitment strategy planned in the Slovak Republic for developing the Pilot Study DEMOCOPHES. This approach should be considered as a guideline for working but it has to be taken into account that changes could be done in the future depending on the requirements of the fieldwork.

The Slovak plan for recruitment follows the strategy defined in the EU study protocol, with minor changes according to the framework of DEMOCOPHES in the Slovak Republic.

2. PILOT STUDY DEMOCOPHES

The study design of the pilot study should be described as a cross-sectional study in a specific population (mother and child pairs). Although this design is not ideal and does not give representative information about general population it might be sufficient for testing the feasibility of a common EU-HBM that generates comparable data.

The study population will be composed by children aged 6 to 11 years (10 children per age group: 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 years) and accompanying mothers aged ≤ 45 years. The total sample size in each country will be 120 pairs in two different locations, rural and urban. These locations should be selected according the degree of urbanization (the highest and lowest category) and cannot include hot-spots.

With regard to the selection of potential participants, the criteria are that:

- Mothers or children living in hospitals, institutions or being homeless will not be considered.
- Mother and child must have been living together in the sampling location for the last 5 years.
- Only one child per mother (randomly selected) can be included in the study.
- Immigrants and children from immigrant families should not be excluded as long as they have sufficient language ability in one of the national languages.
- A potential occupational exposure will not be considered as an exclusion criterion. It is planned instead, to assess occupational exposure as good as possible and practicable within the interview. Job titles, a description of tasks and potential exposure to the substances that will be measured will be asked.



- Only children should be considered who live most of the time (>16 days/month) with the mother
- None of the participants should have metabolic disturbances or abnormal urine excretion

The recruitment will be done via schools.

During the sampling period, from September to December 2011, samples of first-morning urine and scalp hair will be collected together with information about potential exposure sources, lifestyles and socio-economic status.

Two sub-populations of priority are addressed:

- a) Children (age group of 6 to 11 years)
- b) Accompanying mothers representing women at childbearing age (age group ≤ 45 years)

3. DEMOCOPHES IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

For the development of DEMOCOPHES in the Slovak Republic, it is planned to follow as much as possible the EU study protocol although some minor changes have been done. The fieldwork will be coordinated and managed by the NMU/survey office located at the National Authority of the Public Health of the Slovak Republic in Bratislava. The NMU has already established 2 survey offices as units for conducting of field work and these survey offices are responsible for management of recruitment of participants, for field work, questionnaires and sampling of samples. They are responsible for the management of work with participants, recruitment and sampling in the study areas /locations. First sampling location called “Big city” is under survey office supervised at UVZ SR in Bratislava (NMU) and second sampling location called “Rural area” is under survey office supervised at RUVZ in Banská Bystrica. Both of them are under supervision of the NMU.

The NMU/survey office is led by the study leader Katarina Halzlova.

The field workers team consists of laboratory research/technical personnel and some temporary staff –data management, translation, technician for technical and administrative support etc.

3.1. PROCEDURE FOR THE SELECTION OF THE SAMPLING LOCATIONS

Regarding the sampling locations, they have been selected according to the requirements of the EU study protocol.

Urban location: Bratislava (the national legislation defining degree of urbanisation (city > 100 000 inhabitants), as a capital it is a location with the highest density of the population in Slovakia.

Rural location: Villages from the district of Banská Bystrica – Slovenská Ľupča a Brusno (the national legislation defining degree of urbanisation (rural < 5 000 inhabitants). They are no commuter area of Bratislava region.

Both of them have fulfilled all criteria according the SOP (Selection of participants).



3.2 PROCEDURE FOR THE SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Concerning the selection of participants on the base of previous experiences at national level we are going to do this via schools - Option 2.

In big city we are going to select all state schools fulfilled all criteria according SOP (Selection of participants) and one of them will be selected at random.

In rural location it might be difficult to find enough study participants. We are going to add another village which must be as close as possible and comparable to the first one.

After selection the schools randomly, the school principal has to be asked to give his permission to collaborate with the teachers. Then the teacher informs and explains his class about the survey and hand out the survey material to all children born in the years 2000 to 2005 according the steps defining in Figure 4.3.1. Recruitment via schools (SOP Selection of Participants) as well as Figure 3.2 in SOP - Recruitment and field work. All children who receive the invitation letter have to be assigned a random number by the survey office. Then the survey offices will handle the reply cards and start with evaluation. They will use different approaches for responder, excluded responder and non-responder. They sort them according to age group and gender and start calling the families according to the random number to check exclusion/inclusion criteria, which results in 10 children per age cohort and area. This implies 60 children met the inclusion criteria in each location.