

# ***The Royal Road to a Deeper Insight***

## ***The Use of Qualitative and Quantitative Research for Political and Campaign Planning***

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***International Conference on Public Opinion Polls: “Public Opinion in a Changing Society”  
November 08 – 10, 2009, Cairo***

# ***1. Opinion Polls - Anything else than Telephone?***

# 1. *Opinion Polls - Anything else than Telephone? /1*

## The Main Reasons for the Popularity of Telephone Polling in Germany

### ➤ Availability of target population by telephone

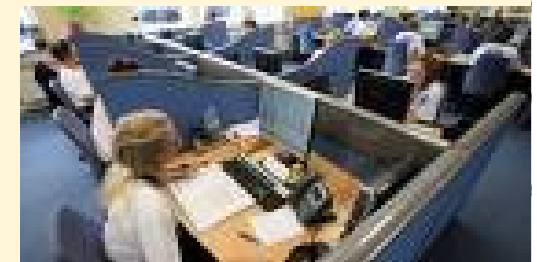
- ☐ Landline: 90% of households
- ☐ Cell phone only: 5%
- ☐ No phone: 5%

### ➤ Speed

- ☐ High volatility of attitudes, especially half life of voting intention
- ☐ Results immediately after termination of fieldwork
- ☐ Faster reaction/response for decision makers

### ➤ Cost (1/3 of PAPI interviews face2face)

- ☐ Affordable sophisticated data collection systems (Hard- and Software)
- ☐ Low telephone charges
- ☐ No travel costs for interviewer, no additional data entry
- ☐ No postage for shipping of questionnaires



## 1. *Opinion Polls - Anything else than Telephone? /2*

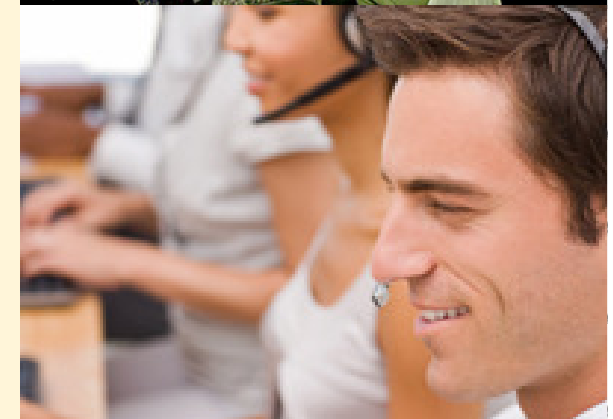
### The Main Reasons for the Popularity of Telephone Polling in Germany (Cont.)

#### ➤ Sampling

- ☐ Landline: Compensation of lacking information by RLD/RDD
- ☐ Cell phone only: No practical information for RLD/RDD (strings)
- ☐ No central register for the population (area sampling)
- ☐ Limited access to the web (72%, but age 60+ only 27%)

#### ➤ Other reasons

- ☐ No necessity to support answer behaviour by visual aids
- ☐ Relatively short interviews (< 20 – 30 minutes)
- ☐ Simple questions/scales, easy to understand
- ☐ Higher data quality
  - No additional data entry
  - Direct supervision of interviews
  - Prevention of interviewer mistakes
- ☐ Naturalistic situation (phone call at home)



## 1. *Opinion Polls - Anything else than by Telephone? /3*

### Reasons not to use telephone

- Low availability of population by telephone (< 70%)
- Long interviews (> 20 - 30 minutes)
- Need to present visual aids
- Difficult, complex questions/scales
- Long item batteries (lists → PAPI or CAPI)
- Specific target groups (Internet-Users)
- Qualitative research



### Conclusion:

Opinion polls by telephone are despite some minor methodological problems currently the only solid basis for quantitative social and political research in Germany and most other industrialized countries.

**But: Cultural specifics and norms must however be respected! (Japan)**

## ***2. Scratching at the Surface - Limitations of Polling***

## ***2. Scratching at the Surface – Limitations of Polling /1***

### **Benefits of Quantitative Telephone Polls**

#### **1. Representativeness**

(presupposition: availability of population, proper sampling)

#### **2. Comparability of questions and answers**

→ analysis based on percentages

#### **3. Sample Size (at least $n=1.000$ )**

→ analysis of subgroups by statistical or attitudinal characteristics, segmentations

#### **4. Reproducibility**

due to fully structured interviews, standardized sampling etc.

#### **5. Speed, relatively low cost**

→ value for money

#### **6. Fast reaction and implementation of results**

into political actions and strategies

## ***2. Scratching at the Surface – Limitations of Polling /2***







### **Limitations and Disadvantages of Quantitative Telephone Polls**

- **No individual attendance of respondents  
due to structured interview situation**
- 2. Lack of information about motivations for attitudes and behaviour  
Why did people change their minds about the remaining life of nuclear plants?**
- 3. Lack of detailed (background-)information  
about motivations, subconscious attitudes and barriers (H1N1 vaccination)**
- 4. Need for speculation and unverified explanations  
about reasons of attitudes, deduction of assumptions from other sources**
- 5. Limited information for detailed planning  
of political and communication strategies**



## 2. Scratching at the Surface – Limitations of Polling /3

### Example: Popularity of Leading Politicians in Germany in October 2009

FGW Politbarometer		Sympathy: Scale from +5 to -5 <sup>1)</sup>				
		Oct. 09 II	Difference to Week 40	Oct. 09 I	Sept. 09	
		Week 42		Week 40	Week 38	
Karl Theodor zu Guttenberg		2,3 ?	±0,0	2,3	2,1	
Angela Merkel		2,1	-0,5	2,6	2,1	
Peer Steinbrück		1,1	-0,4	1,5	1,4	
Ursula von der Leyen		1,0	-0,1	1,1	0,9	
Frank-Walter Steinmeier		0,8 ?	-0,3	1,1 ?	1,5	
Guido Westerwelle		0,5	-0,4	0,9	0,5	
Sigmar Gabriel		0,4	-0,3	0,7	0,4	
Horst Seehofer		0,0	±0,0	0,0	0,5	
Gregor Gysi		-0,9	-0,2	-0,7	-0,9	
Oskar Lafontaine		-1,0	±0,0	-1,0	-1,7	

<sup>1)</sup> Mean of a scale from +5 to -5

### ***3. Underlying Motivations - How to get a Deeper Insight***

### ***3. Underlying Motivations - How to get a Deeper Insight /1***

## **Impact for Planning of Politics, Strategies and Communication**

### **Rapid Social Change, Social Pluralism, Volatility of Attitudes and Behaviour**

- ↳ **Necessity for earlier and more systematic political planning**
- ↳ **Need for permanent monitoring and adaptation due to changes of general set up**
- ↳ **More frequent use of market and opinion research (Tracking / Monitoring)**
- ↳ **Need for Early Warning Systems (“Social Weather Station” in Manila)**

### **Overwhelming the Problems of quantitative standardized Polls**

- ↳ **Complementary use of qualitative, psychological research methods**
  - ➔ **Determination of motivations and partly subconscious attitudes**
  - ➔ **Identification of the impact of the connotation of specific terms or phrases**
  - ➔ **Pretesting of political communication, advertising (Spots, Posters, Slogans)**
- ↳ **Interlocking of quantitative and qualitative research**

### 3. *Underlying Motivations - How to get a Deeper Insight /2*

## Qualitative Tools

### Focus Groups



- 10 – 12 participants
- Moderator
- Discussion guide
- Observation
- Video/DVD recording
- Psychological tests

### In Depth Interviews



- Face to Face interview
- Semi- or unstructured questionnaire
- Observation in CLT possible
- Video/DVD recording
- Psychological tests

### Creative Workshops



- 10 – 12 participants
- Programme guide
- Observation possible
- Video/DVD recording
- Discussion, verbal and nonverbal techniques

### 3. *Underlying Motivations - How to get a Deeper Insight /3*

#### Case Focus Groups: Benchmarking of Gerhard Schröder with the ideal Chancellor

Strengths of Schröder 2001/2002	Weaknesses of Schröder 2001/2002
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appearance, Rhetoric</li> <li>2. Charisma, Personality</li> <li>3. Leadership, Self - Assertion, Determination</li> <li>4. Good in foreign politics, international Representative</li> <li>4. Tactician, clever, sly</li> <li>6. Intelligence, Education</li> <li>6. Economic and financial competence</li>   <li>6. Grass root - politician</li> <li>6. sympathetic</li> <li>10. <u>further</u>: Competence , social attitude, Integrator/Teamworker, modern, cheerful, Chancellor of the Economy, Entertainer</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fake, Actor, Fop, Cream Puff, Showman</li> <li>2. Liar, empty promises</li> <li>3. Affable attitude, Narcissist, self-satisfied</li> <li>4. Unsympathetic, slimy, superficial</li> <li>5. Power seeker / Autocrat</li> <li>5. Tries to avoid problems / Cheater</li> <li>5. Four marriages</li> <li>5. Arrogant</li> <li>5. dishonest, unreliable</li>   <li>10. <u>further</u>: Populism, no Ideas / no Vision, loves status symbols and money</li> </ol>
<p><b>Main deficit: dishonesty and a much too big focus on outward appearance</b></p>	<p><b>Strongly polarizing perceptions with a clear dominance of negative characteristics / deficits</b></p>

Blue letters = corresponding to the ideal chancellor, red letters = deficit in comparison to the ideal chancellor

### 3. *Underlying Motivations - How to get a Deeper Insight /4*

#### Case Projective Test: Gerhard Schröder as a Car (excerpt)



##### Type, age, make

Predominantly a **new car with a strong engine**, mainly a petrol Sedan or Convertible, sometimes also a **sports car**, sporadically also a **truck**.

**Make mainly a big AUDI, less frequently also a Mercedes.**

Amongst the other makes an accumulation of fast and very expensive cars (**Porsche, Ferrari, Maserati, Jaguar**) and sporadically of middle of the market cars (**Opel = GM**).

##### Trimmings and Use of the car

Trimmings not always quite clear. Predominantly **“got all the trimmings”** or **“luxurious”**. Sometimes also **simple, normal or functional**.

**Quality quite often mediocre (Color partly off, scratches, perforated upholstery).**  
**Color most often red, partly also black, sometimes “garish”, “fashion color”, or “very bright metallic color”.** Often also **“tinted windows”**.

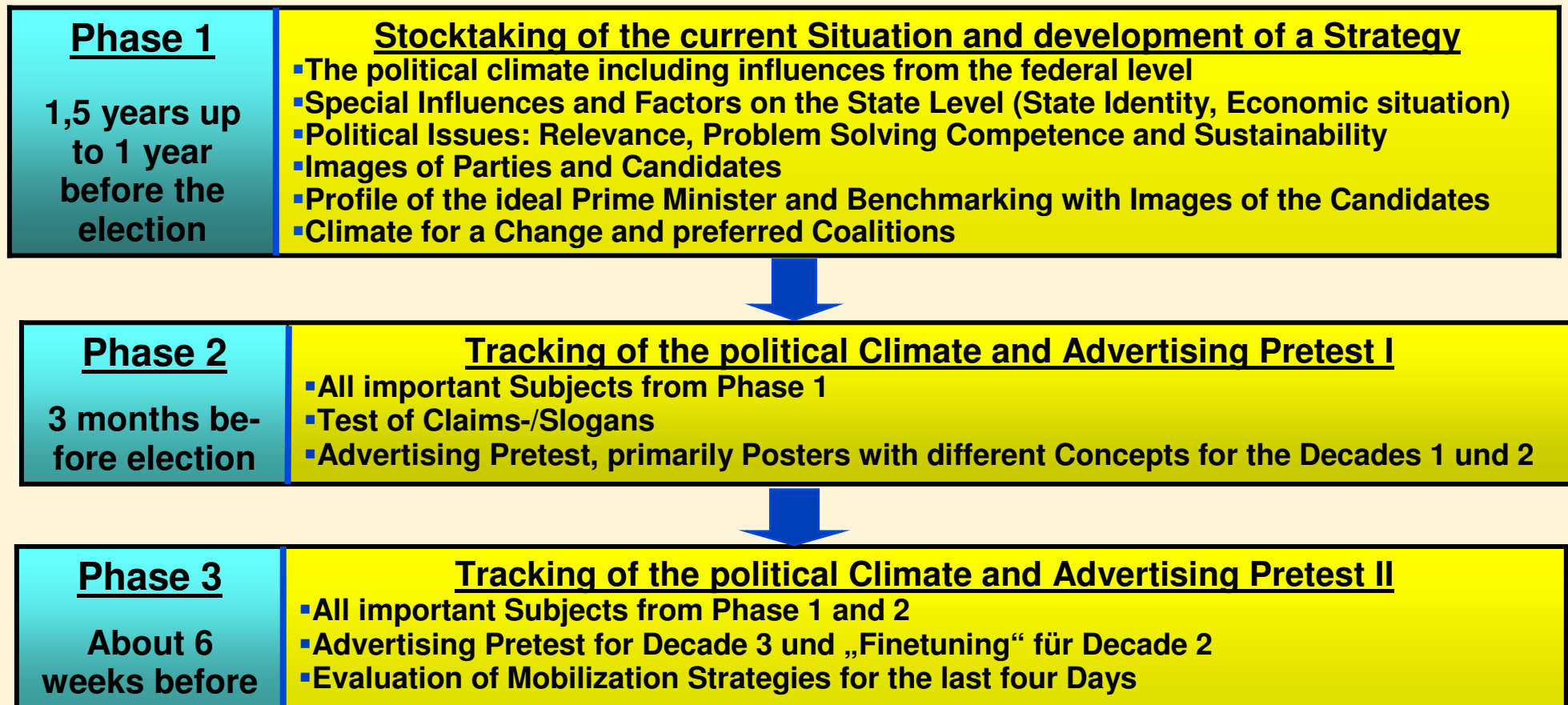
Furthermore: **Air Condition, broad tyres and a big selection of equipment for entertaining and communication (Radio, CD, Phone, TV).**

**Also useful things** (electric windows) and **“less useful” Extras** (Chrome, Spoiler, Mahogany-Steering Wheel, White Tires).

## ***4. The Case - Planning of a Campaign***

## 4. The Case - Planning of a Campaign /1

The ideal Proceeding: Example State Election with three Phases of Research



*Usually first qualitative Methods (Focus Groups), then Quantification by Opinion Polls*



## ***4. The Case - Planning of a Campaign /2***

### **The Case North-Rhine-Westphalia**

#### **➤ Most important findings from opinion polls and focus groups**

##### **❑ Sustainable issues**

- primarily: Work and education
- but also: Economy, settlement of industry, reduction of coal subsidies
- further: Crime, Health, Traffic, Finances, Family und Youth, partly also with reference to the community and federal level

##### **❑ Parties**

- CDU: In the past comfortably settled in the role of opposition, now active again
- SPD: worn out in government, encrusted, nepotism, no political heads
- Grüne: brakeman for economy and progress, main responsibility for stagnation

##### **❑ Candidates**

- Steinbrück: dry administrator, no leadership
- Rüttgers: more distinguished, sympathetic, but: experience as political leader ?

## ***4. The Case - Planning of a Campaign /3***

### **The Case North-Rhine-Westphalia (continued)**

#### **➤ Conclusions for the Campaign Strategy**

- ☐ Election Campaign with Focus on issues instead candidates
- ☐ Making Use of the bad perception of the situation of North - Rhine - Westphalia  
(= “Roof” of Election Campaign with arguments for a change)
- ☐ Use of the political climate on the federal level (Signal to Berlin, Voting Decision as Lesson for Red-Green in Berlin)
- ☐ Focus on the three most important political issues
  - Work and Economy
  - Education
  - Crime and Terrorism
  - possibly also stagnation due to much bureaucracy
- ☐ Use of the advantages with regard to the images of candidates and parties
- ☐ Balanced linking up of the central issues with the party and the candidate

## 4. The Case - Planning of a Campaign /4

Development of strategy with  
Campaign Roof and issues  
derived from basic claims

Basic Claims  
for the roof of the Campaign:

1. „Broken Promises !“
2. „NRW has fallen back in comparison to other States!“
3. „SPD no longer able to recover while still in charge!“
4. „Nepotism, corruption and scandals require to vote out Red-Green of office“

The three  
issue (columns)  
of the CDU-NRW

**Economy  
and Work**

**Education  
School**

**Crime, law and  
order (urban  
areas only)**





and general:

**Reduction of Bureaucracy!**

## ***5. Conclusions***

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### **Recommendations for the Use of Political Opinion Research**

- 1. Earlier**
- 2. More frequently**
- 3. Continuous Tracking and permanent Monitoring due to changes of general set up**
- 4. Complementary use of qualitative, psychological research methods**
  -  **Determination of motivations and partly subconscious attitudes**
  -  **Positioning of a candidate**
  -  **Identification of the impact of the connotation of specific terms or phrases**
  -  **Pretesting of political communication, advertising (Spots, Posters, Slogans)**
- 5. Interlocking of quantitative and qualitative research**
- 6. Segmentation in order to launch Campaigns for specific target groups**
- 7. Use of more multivariate analysis techniques instead of percentages and crosstabs**
- 8. Limited Value of Polls for Media (other questions, irrelevant subjects, black box)**

***Thank You***  
***very much***  
***for your***  
***attention!***