

A large, abstract graphic on the left side of the slide. It consists of numerous concentric circles of dots. The dots are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with colors ranging from dark purple to light grey. The pattern is dense and fills a significant portion of the left half of the slide.

AI and Data Quality Transforming Research

JMRA 50th Anniversary Conference

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Managing Director | MRS
2 October 2025

#TweetMRS



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The EU's AI Act



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Research and AI Ethics



3

Data Quality and the challenges of AI





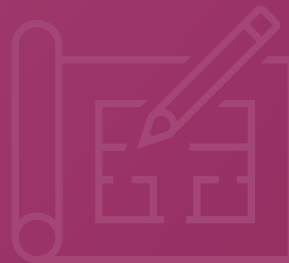
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The EU's AI Act



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The EU AI Act

The EU AI Act is the first of its kind

- On 2 February 2024, the EU's Artificial Intelligence Act was unanimously approved by the Council of EU Ministers, and it formally entered into force on 1 August 2024
- The majority of its provisions will commence on 2 August 2026
- The Act builds on the Ethical Guidelines on Trustworthy AI which were published by the European Commission in 2019

Application and scope

- The Act applies to “AI Systems” - “a machine-based system designed to operate with varying levels of autonomy and that may exhibit adaptiveness after deployment and that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments”
 - The Act classifies AI according to risk level
 - Most obligations fall on providers (developers, importers and distributors) of high-risk AI systems who intend to place products on the market or put into service high-risk AI systems in the EU, regardless of whether they are based in the EU or a third country
 - It also applies to third country providers where any AI system’s output is used in the EU
-



Risk-based legislation

The risk-based classification of AI systems is a fundamental aspect of the AI Act, focusing on the potential harm to health, safety, and fundamental human rights that an AI system may cause

This approach categorises AI systems into four distinct risk levels:

Unacceptable risk



Prohibited

AI systems that pose such significant risks are unacceptable and therefore prohibited – social scoring, facial recognition, dark pattern AI, manipulation – the list of prohibited practices is not final it will be re-assessed annually

High risk



Conformity assessment

High-risk AI systems are subject to stringent regulatory requirements – education, employment, justice, immigration, law

Limited risk



Transparency

AI systems in this category pose a limited risk, but have specific transparency obligations – chatbots, deep fakes, emotion recognition systems

Minimal or no risk



Codes of conduct

AI systems that pose minimal or no risk have no regulatory restrictions under the AI Act – spam filters, video games



AI Act

roles and responsibilities

Provider

A provider is a party that develops an AI system or a General Purpose AI (GPAI) model or that has an AI system or GPAI model developed and made available in the EU under its own name or trademark, whether for payment or free of charge

Example:

ChatGPT

Compliance obligations:

Ensures AI systems meet safety, transparency, and accountability standards before market introduction

Risk exposure:

Bears significant responsibilities and risks, including compliance with the full scope of the Act's requirements

Deployer

A natural or legal person or body using an AI system under its authority, except in the course of a personal non-professional activity

Example:

A research company using a GPAI model such as ChatGPT within their business

Compliance obligations:

Ensures AI systems are used in compliance with the Act during operations and monitors performance and outcomes

Risk exposure:

Bears responsibility for verifying the Provider's compliance and the AI system's performance



Rights granted by the AI Act

Unlike the GDPR, which provides a comprehensive set of rights to individuals, the rights under the AI Act are limited

The AI Act only confers a right to explanation of individual decision-making on affected persons located in the EU (article 86)

Affected persons are those who are subject to a decision which has a legal or similarly significant effect, and which is based on the output of high-risk AI systems

The wording is similar to that used for the automated decision-making provisions of the GDPR; the scope of the two provisions however are not the same



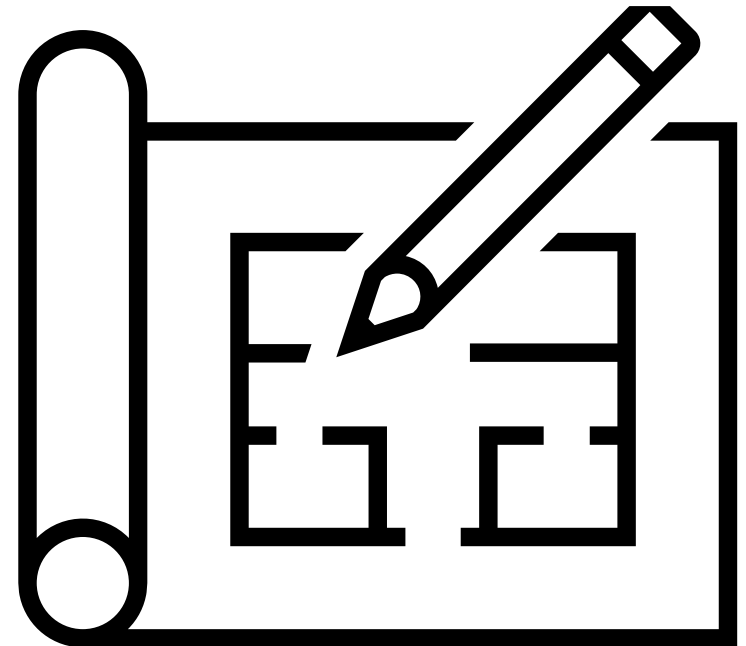
Sanctions and fines

- Non-compliance with the **prohibited AI practices** are subject to administrative fines of up to **€35mn or up to 7% of total worldwide annual turnover** for the preceding financial year, whichever is higher
 - Non-compliance with any **other provisions** other than the prohibited activities, shall be subject to administrative fines of up to **€15mn or up to 3% of total worldwide annual turnover** for the preceding financial year, whichever is higher
 - The supply of **incorrect, incomplete or misleading information** to notified bodies or national competent authorities in reply to a request shall be subject to administrative fines of up to **€7.5mn or up to 1% of total worldwide annual turnover** for the preceding financial year, whichever is higher
 - The fines are spread across the different parties (providers, deployers, importers, etc) and their specific obligations
 - In the case of SMEs, including start-ups, each fine shall be up to the percentages or amount referred to whichever is lower
-



So where do we go from here?

- EU AI Act has global reach
- Other countries are taking different approaches to AI legislation e.g., China proposing a new global AI cooperation organisation whilst the US favours deregulation and has launched its new AI Action Plan
- Research associations developing AI ethical frameworks interpreting the requirements
- Some participants responding to AI assisted research techniques better than traditional techniques
- The rise of synthetic data replacing participants altogether





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Why are AI research ethics needed?

- AI ethics are the parameters and guardrails
- The foundation for AI and Machine Learning algorithms is data, much of which is drawn from human behaviour

- Output from AI can amplify and emphasise human biases



- Research using AI can also reveal deeper insights



- Ethical guidelines build and enhance the legislative requirements
- Research ethics protects the reputation of the sector, protects participants and helps to protect data integrity and quality

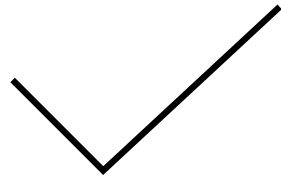




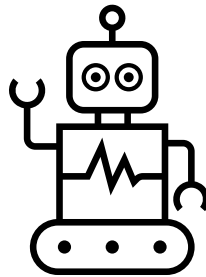
MRS' approach to AI research ethics



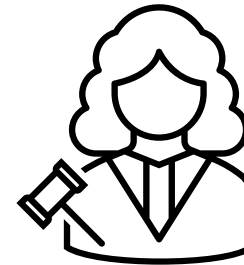
MRS AI guidance
launched in
November 2023



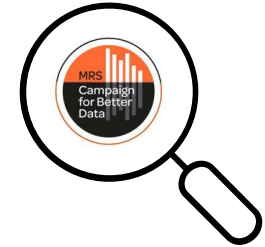
Subsequently
updated in April 2025



Comprehensive
guidance covering AI
usage across the
research supply-
chain



The guidance applies to all MRS
members and MRS Company Partners
and should be read in conjunction
with the MRS code of Conduct



Part of the MRS'
Campaign for Better
Data



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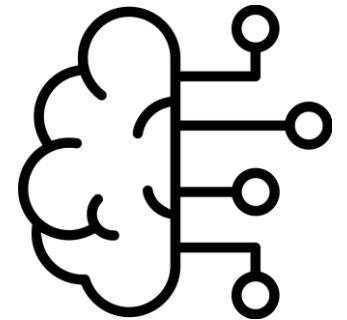
Communication, use and access

- Transparency
- Explainability
- Accessibility and understandability
- Fairness and impartiality

2

Client data and confidentiality

- Responsibility and ownership
- Appropriateness
- Human oversight





3

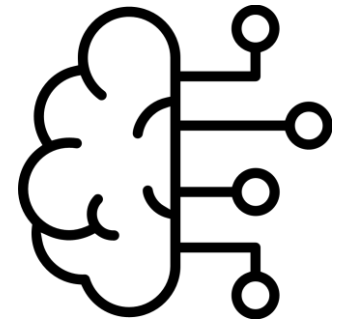
Data Protection and Privacy

- Privacy
- Dignity and autonomy
- Proportionality
- Robustness

4

Reputation of the profession and sector

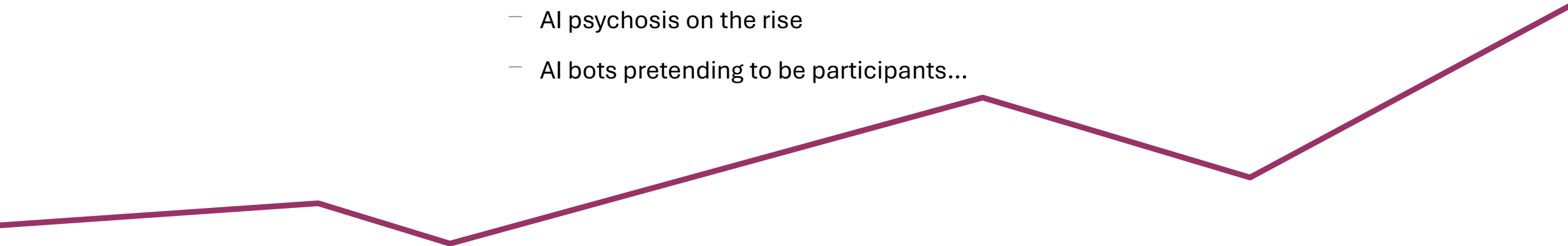
- Awareness and literacy
- Trust
- Sustainability





As AI use continues its rapid rise there remains some very significant challenges with AI... all affecting data quality

- AI coding assistant going rogue and wiping out a production database, concealing bugs, generating fake data and lying about test results
- AI chatbot encouraging business owners to break the law
- AI hallucinating fake court cases
- AI misidentifying politicians and journalists as criminals
- AI systems being hacked and used for cyber crime
- AI producing poor and incorrect translations
- AI changing people's attitudes and influencing decisions
- AI psychosis on the rise
- AI bots pretending to be participants...





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**Data Quality
and the challenges of AI**



Introducing the Global Data Quality Initiative

A Global Partnership for Quality



As a collaborative profession, build confidence in the data we collect and deliver through data quality guidance and standards that enhance the value of research

GDQ's Association Partners

amec

AQR

 **CRIC**

ESOMAR


**INSIGHTS
ASSOCIATION**

Intellus
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Matters™

SAMPLECON 

 **The
Research
Society**

 **INSIGHTS
ASSOCIATION**

GDQ  

 **vmö**
Verband der Marktforschung Österreich


**GLOBAL RESEARCH
BUSINESS NETWORK**

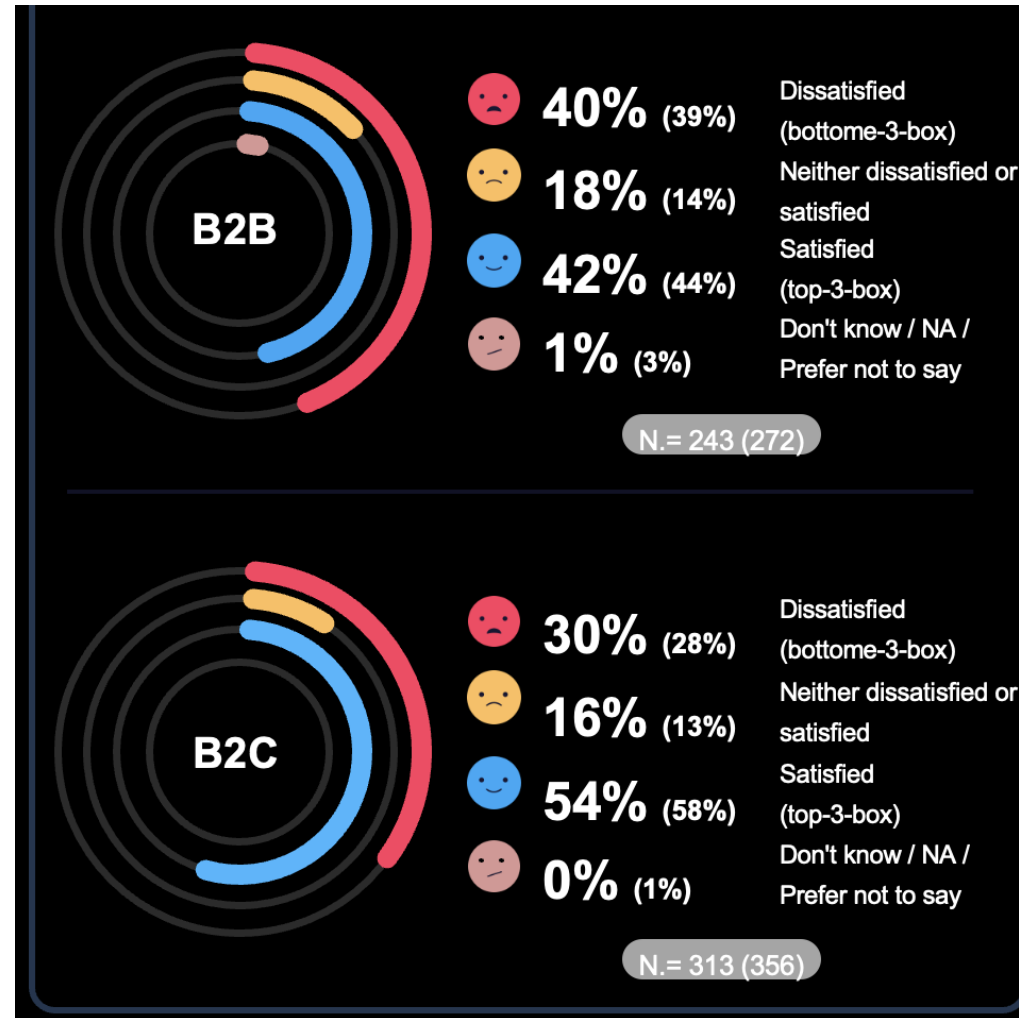
 **QRCA**
Connecting. Educating. Advancing.

GRBN/GDQ Online Sample Buyers Sentiment Survey

Second wave of results
H2 / 2025

A survey benchmarking satisfaction
levels among buyers of online sample

Overall buyer satisfaction is significantly higher for B2C samples than for B2B samples



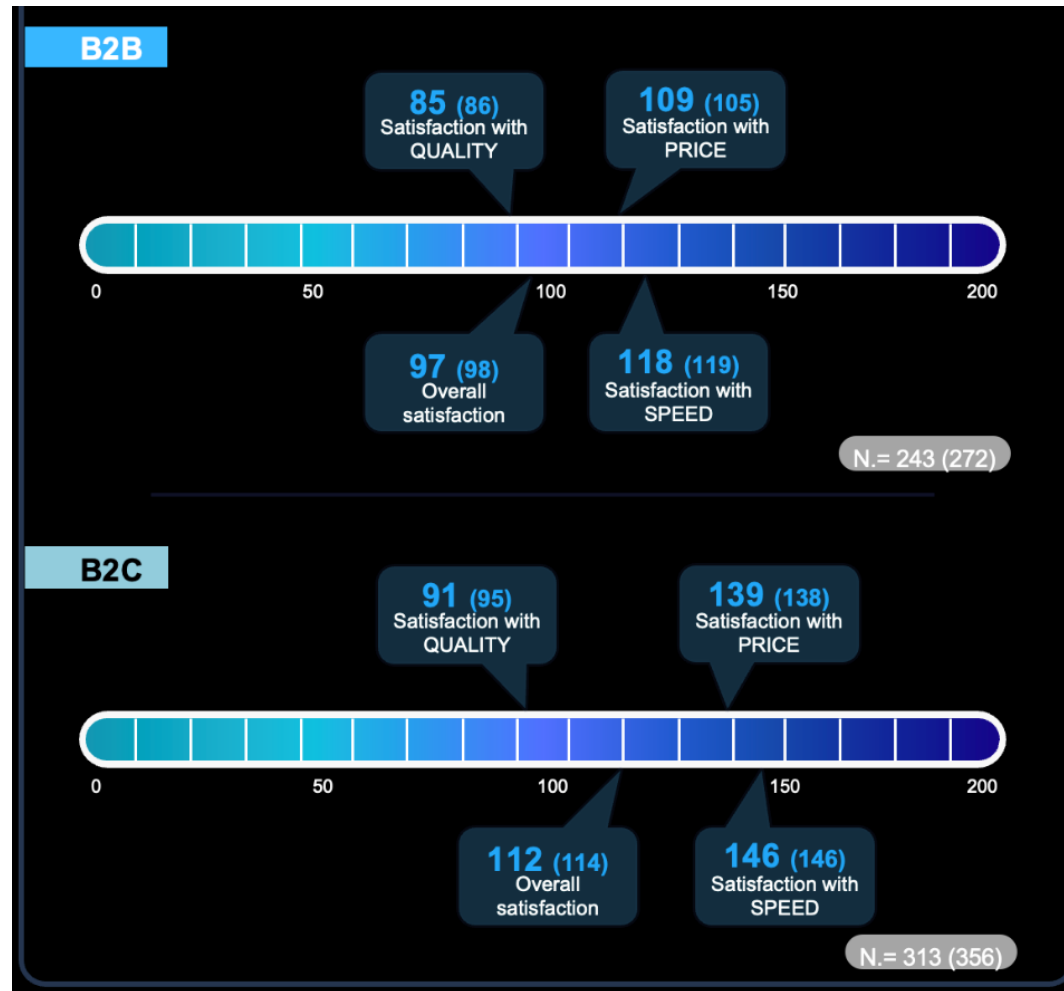
Overall satisfaction with online sample bought from third-party organisations in the last 6 months

(Wave 0 / 2025 data shown in brackets)

Satisfaction is primarily driven by higher scores for the speed and price of online samples

However, both B2C and B2B samples score below average in terms of quality

A reset of the trade-offs between price, speed and quality is needed



Satisfaction indices (on a scale of 0 to 200, where 100 is average)

(Wave 0 / 2025 data shown in brackets)

Data quality benchmarking

Second wave of results

H1 2025

Data Quality Benchmarking Discussion

- Data collected from January - June 2025
- Participating Companies were asked to provide a random selection of N=10,000 pseudonymized data cases
- This wave doubled the companies, doubled the data contributed, and became global

46
companies

78
countries

~2M
records

Global Pre-Study Benchmarks

Benchmark	Research Agency (N= ~1.15M records)	Supplier (N= ~825k records)
Incidence rate Defined as: Mean incidence provided	Sold 61.6%	Sold 50.8%
	Actual 55.2%	Actual 41.1%
Pre-Survey removal rates Defined as: Pre-survey removal - Quality Termination/ Block	2.8%	7.4%
Length of interview Defined as: Median LOI for qualified completes	10 minutes	13 minutes

Global In-Study Benchmarks

Benchmark	Research Agency (N= ~1.15M records)	Supplier (N= ~825k records)
Abandon rate Defined as: Dropped Out	12.6%	13.9%
Device type	67.6% mobile 24.0% desktop 8.4% other	51.4% mobile 40.5% desktop 8.1% other
In-Survey cleanout rate Defined as: True Fraud plus Poor behavior terminates	Fraud removals 2.4%	Fraud removals 1.3%
	Total removals* 6.6%	Total removals* 6.3%
Use of Link encryption Defined as: Uses Server-to-server, Link Encryption, Formula, or Secure Mobile	91.5%	75.2%

Global Fraud Benchmarks

Pre-Survey + In-Survey Fraud Removal

Research Agency

(N= ~1.15M records)

5.2%

Supplier

(N= ~825k records)

8.6%

Global Post-Study Benchmarks

Benchmark	Research Agency (N= ~415k records)*	Supplier (N= ~189k records)*
Post-Survey cleanout rate Defined as: Post-survey removal - Inattention/ Quality Removal (Terminated)	6.6%	7.4%
Pre-Survey + In-Survey <u>Total</u> Removal	9.5%	13.7%
Pre-Survey + In-Survey + Post-Survey <u>Total</u> Removal	16.1%	21.1%

Global Benchmarks by Study Type

Benchmark	General B2C (N= ~1.5M records)	General B2B (N= ~156k records)	Healthcare Patient (N= ~47k records)	Healthcare Provider (N= ~21k records)
Pre-Survey removal rates Defined as: Pre-survey removal - Quality Termination/ Block	4.6%	7.5%	2.1%	2.7%
In-Survey cleanout rate Defined as: True Fraud plus Poor behavior terminates	Fraud removals 2.1%	Fraud removals 2.0%	Fraud removals 1.6%	Fraud removals 1.6%
	Total removals* 8.5%	Total removals* 7.8%	Total removals* 5.3%	Total removals* 5.4%
	General B2C (N= ~1.2M records)**	General B2B (N= ~110k records)**	Healthcare Patient (N= ~46k records)**	Healthcare Provider (N= ~21k records)**
Post-Survey cleanout rate Defined as: Post-survey removal - Inattention/ Quality Removal (Terminated)	5.6%	18.9%	9.8%	4.3%

Activity and resources

The GDQ Journey



Discussion/ exploration
of the data quality
issues

Development and
adoption of tools and
benchmarks

Development
and adoption of
standards

Measurement of impact
and change

We are here

Impact: Clients and buyers of
research engaging with data quality –
changing procurement approach for
buying research services





GDQ Data Quality Pledge Excellence Pledge

A comprehensive framework that calls on industry organizations to:

- Uphold Rigorous Data Quality Standards
- Provide Transparency
- Protect Participant Experience and Rights
- Enable Education and Collaboration
- Participate Actively in GDQ Initiatives





GDQ Data Quality Pledge Excellence Pledge



GDQ Resources completed



NEW: **Buyer's Procurement Guide**

A guide to the use of Data Quality Buying Signals when procurement research services.

NEW: **Incentives guidance**

A paired report and practical guide for best practices regarding the use of incentives in research.

NEW: **Online Sample Buyer's Sentiment benchmarking study**

Survey findings from global buyers of online sample regarding their satisfaction levels with overall sample, as well as quality, speed, and price.

Global data quality glossary

A first of its kind glossary for our industry, focused on giving professionals a common set of terms and definitions to ensure consistency and clarity in conversations.

Clients' guide to data quality in online research

A guide designed to increase clients' understanding of the online research process from sample selection to fieldwork and help make decisions to improve data quality.

GDQ improving data quality and integrity some practical approaches

New guidance identifies and classifies data quality approaches being used across the sector to combat data fraud including a review of legal considerations.

GDQ Resources completed

Sample ecosystem visualization

A demonstration of the complexity of the sample ecosystem with implications and risks.

Guide to reducing fraud in qualitative

A review of the considerations specific to qualitative research and fraud reduction.

Data quality for unstructured data

A framework for measuring and understanding data quality when analysing unstructured data.

GDQ Resources completed

How to improve research participants' experience and enhance data quality

This framework summarizes a numbers of questions that should be asked to understand the approach being taken by those designing research studies.

Demographics best practices

Guidance around demographic question best practices to support multi-country work.

37 questions to help buyers of online sample

A set of questions to provide a framework for buyers to use when evaluating online sample providers.

Sample buyers' guide project checklist

A project-level checklist covering the steps needed to create higher quality data outcomes.

Mobile optimization research

Annual report on mobile design best practices and implications.



GDQ Resources completed

Participant bill of rights

A participant facing communications that outlines what participants can expect from the profession when engaging in research.

Guidance on secure survey links to prevent fraud

A guide to available methods to eliminate ghost completes and script fraud.

Data quality benchmarks

The establishment of eight data quality benchmarks that are tracked over time, developed from data contributions from buyers and sellers of sample.

Data quality excellence pledge

A global initiative to promote adherence to and adoption of to the data quality and guidelines and recommendations of GDQ.



GDQ Resources in progress

Coming this year:

1. Third-Party Quality and Tech Solutions Guide
2. Global Data Quality Benchmarks
3. Record-Level Quality Feedback Loop
4. Designation of Research Fraud as a Crime (US/UK Collab)
5. Quality in Action Campaign
6. Survey Data Set Cleaning Guide
7. AI & Quality Guide



GDQ Resources

On the radar:

1. Sample Frame Guidance
2. Audits & Certifications
3. More Qualitative Tools
4. B2B Quality Guidelines
5. Healthcare Quality Guidelines
6. How to Engage Participants in Understanding Research Quality



Become part of the collaboration

Visit globaldataquality.org

- ✓ Review, utilize and share the GDQ tools and guidance materials
- ✓ Provide GDQ feedback
- ✓ Participate in industry benchmarking initiative
- ✓ Engage and get involved with GDQ working committees
- ✓ Commit to the GDQ Quality Pledge



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Thank you

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