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The social desirability bias across modes: The case of the Czech experimental survey

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Context

- Increasing costs and declining RR → CAWI, mixed-mode, Big data
- Mixed-mode: marketing research, statistical offices, main cross-national surveys
- pros: lower costs, faster collection, coverage and response improvement
- cons: possibly all pros + differences in measurement (mode effect)



Mode effect

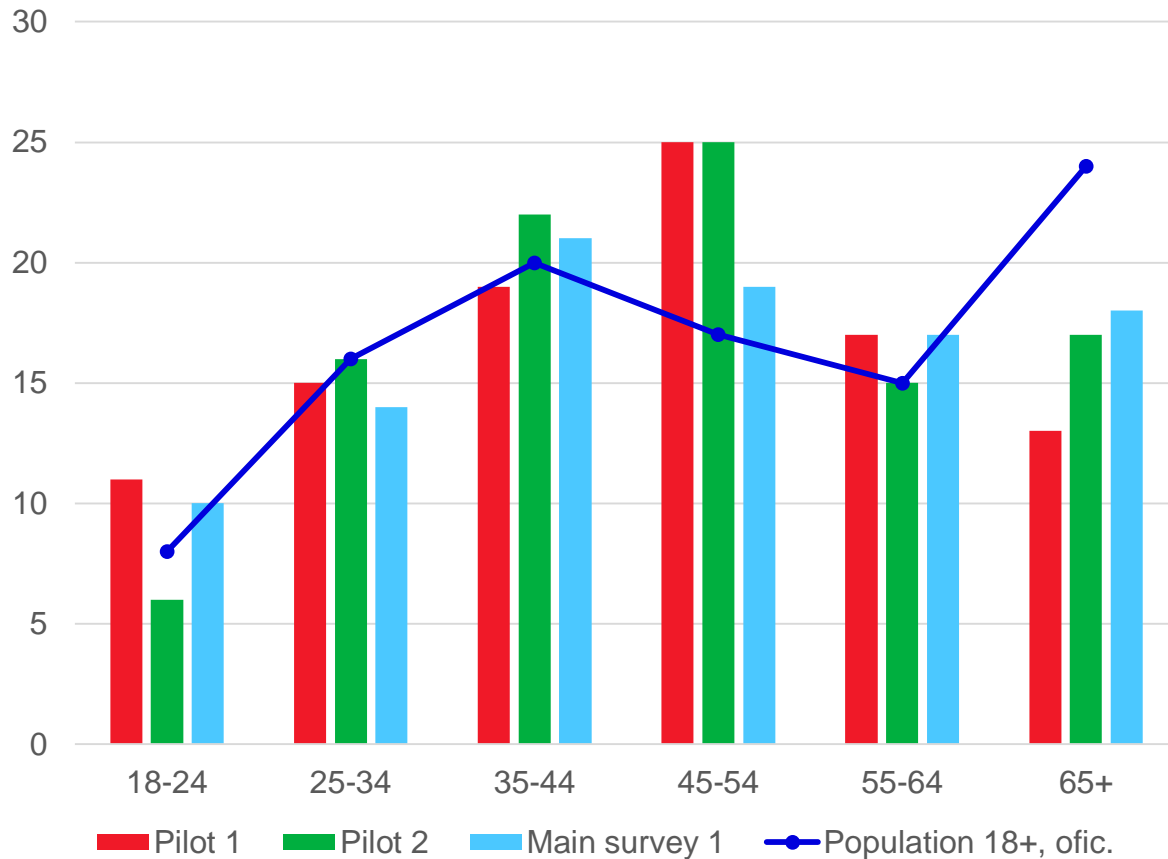
- consists of coverage, sampling, and measurement difference
- change in distributions X in correlations
- difficult diagnosis → minimisation through survey design
- especially between interviewer-administered and self-administered modes
- stronger for subjective questions, such as attitudes
- higher in sensitive questions – “sensitivity” differs across societies/countries

Research project and research design

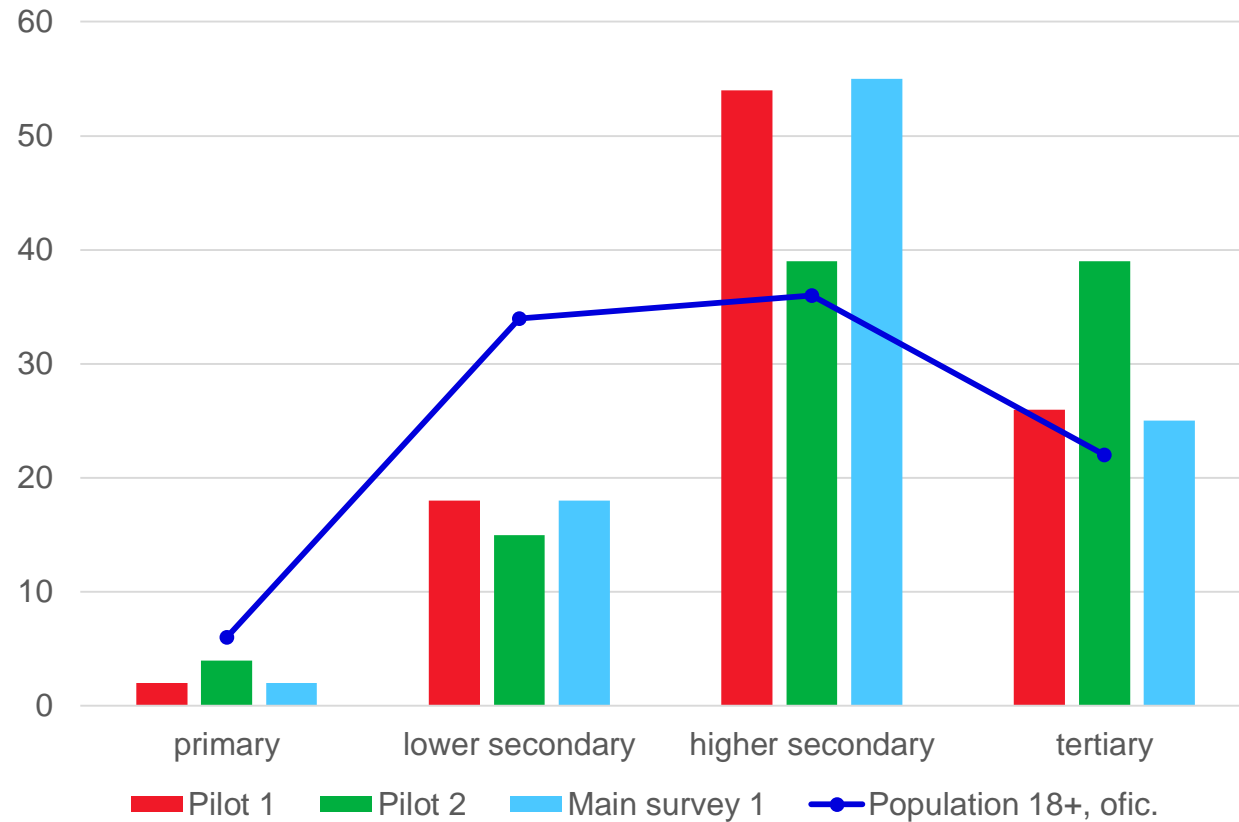
- Project of applied research ,*Development of multimode technique and application of this survey mode in areas of population, sociological, and marketing research*'
- Development of the mixed-mode design suitable for the Czech research environment
- Mixing random samples for CAWI (recruited via RDD) and CAPI
- Interviewing all segments through combining lower price and higher convenience of CAWI with F2F interviewing of (especially) groups with lower digital abilities

CAWI sample through RDD – three surveys

Final sample (CAWI), age composition compared to population 18+



Final sample (CAWI), level of education compared to population 18+



=> CAPI for omitted groups

Data collection

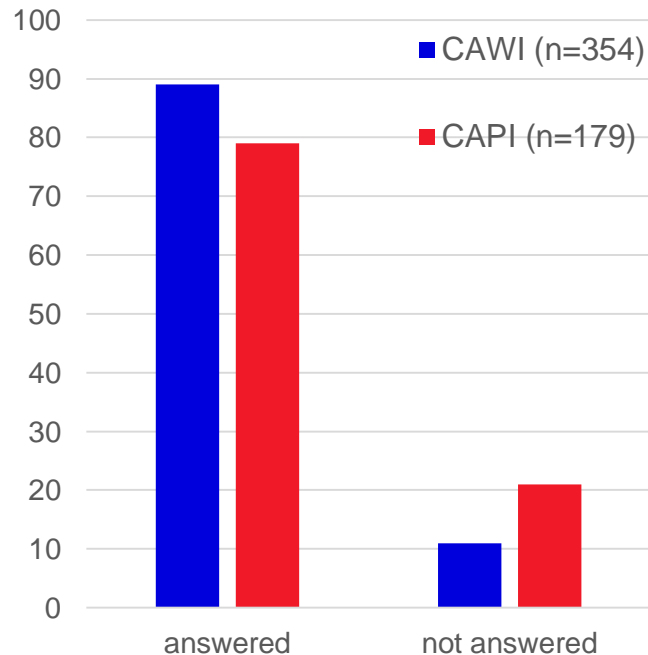
- RDD recruitment for CAWI and coverage of under-represented groups in CAPI
- Completed questionnaires in CAWI n=354; drop out n=145
- CAPI n=179
- Total sample **n=533**
- Mode effect vs composition effect

	CAWI	CAPI
% women	54	44
Mean age	46.9	52.3
<i>Education (%)</i>		
Primary	2	34
Lower secondary	18	66
Higher secondary	55	--
Lower tertiary	25	--

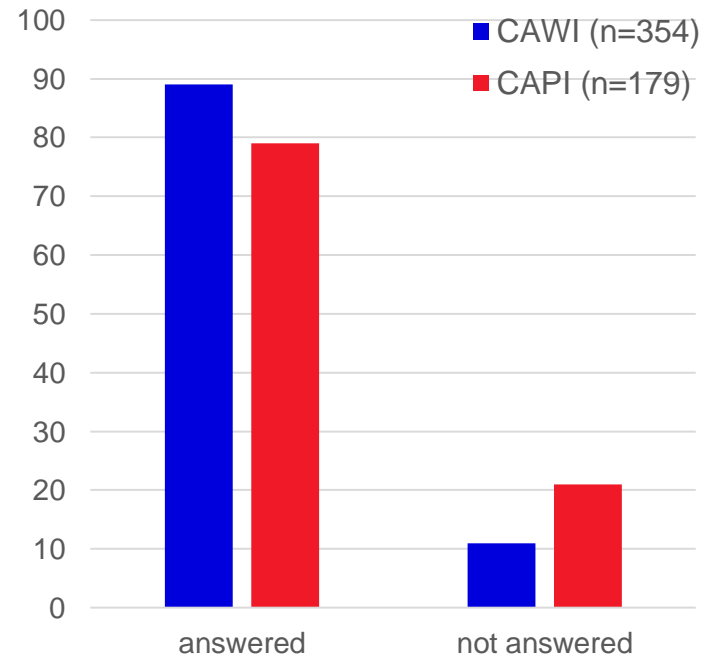
CAWI vs. CASI – nonresponse in income

What of the total monthly net income of your household?

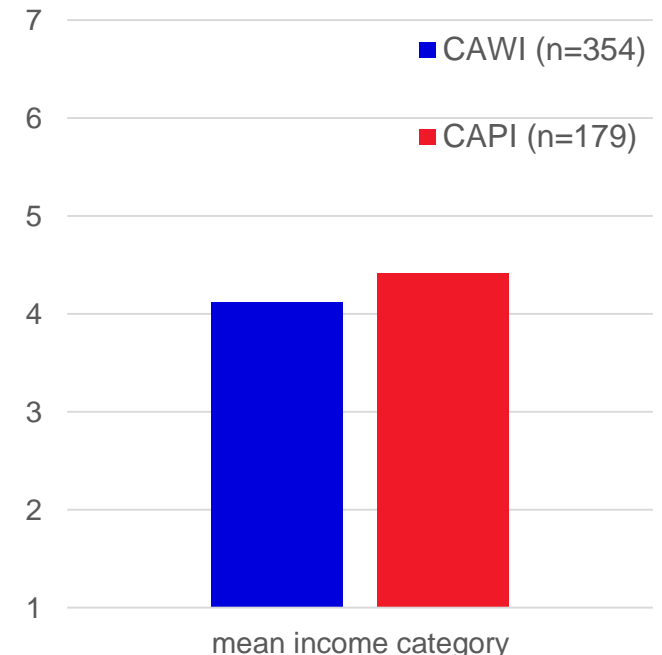
- options: seven income ranges and ,I do not want to answer‘



Valid answers across modes



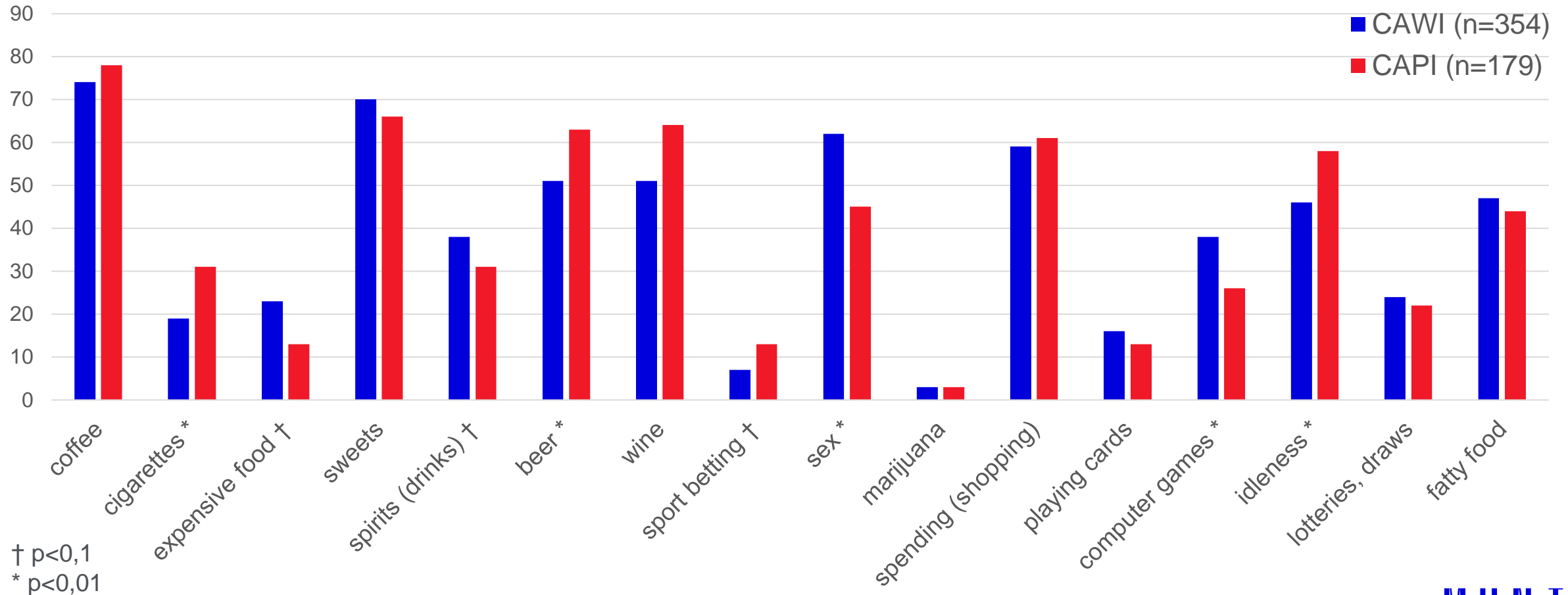
Margins from logistic regr.



OLS regr. – income category

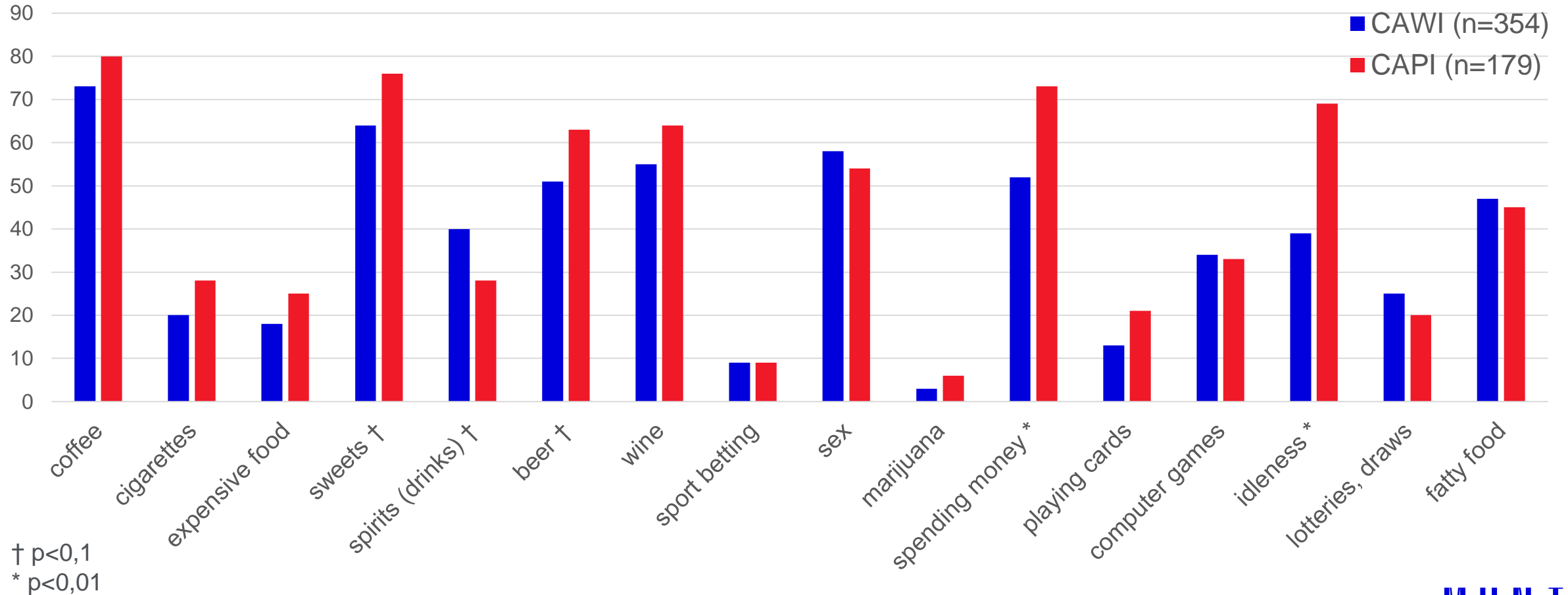
CAWI vs. CASI – descriptive differences

What of the following do you eat, drink, or do at least sometimes?



CAWI vs. CASI – margins from logistic regr.

What of the following do you eat, drink, or do at least sometimes?



Conclusions

- measurement differences among modes not only in this study
 - unimode recommendations
 - reflection of potential mode differences in the analyses
- BUT: measurement error in mode effect is often overestimated, because controlling for selection bias via sociodemographic characteristics is not fully adequate
 - adding subjective characteristics into control variables
- good reasons for mixing modes must exist (complex administration, mode effect), BUT a lot of data already collected

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Thank you for your attention!

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Prevention of mode effect

- reflection of potential change of mode during the questionnaire preparation
- unimode design – maximising similarity among modes
- special attention to sensitive questions
 - CASI in F2F interviews
 - social desirability scale, other techniques