![UniSAFE - ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE]

UniSAFE Survey

Briefing Materials for Inviting Respondents

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1.   THE UNISAFE PROJECT

The UniSAFE project is a nine-partner, EU-funded research project that aims to produce better knowledge on gender-based violence (GBV) in research performing and funding organisations, and to translate this knowledge into operational tools for higher education, research organisations and policymakers. It examines the mechanisms of gender-based violence, its determinants, antecedents, and consequences, by proposing a multilevel research design to collect, analyse, and synthesise qualitative and quantitative data. Violence, violations, and abuse may be physical, sexual, economic/financial, psychological – online or offline – and can include gender or sexual harassment. Quantitative data will be gathered through an online survey implemented in at least 45 research performing organisations (RPO) in 15 European Union Member States and Associated Countries, as well as among an international researchers' association.

Research and outreach activities targeting researchers, stakeholders and policymakers will be led across Europe for three years, starting in February 2021. The 3-year project supports the European Commission's objective of ending gender-based violence in Europe by contributing to the reduction of gender-based violence in European higher education.

For further information, please visit the project website.

2.   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary contact for all project-based questions about the UniSAFE project is GESIS who conducts the UniSAFE survey. The technical subcontractor, respondi, is responsible for the data collection of the UniSAFE survey. The subcontractor respondi will help you to invite students and employees to the survey, provide the link to the online survey, and ensure the data is collected and stored properly.

We need your help as university or research organisation to invite students and staff to the survey.

If you need support, you can either contact GESIS for general questions about the UniSAFE survey, or respondi for all technical issues, including survey invitation and access.

Please make sure to add the name of your university or research organisation in the subject line so that we can respond to your request as soon as possible.

2.1   CONTACT GESIS

For general questions about the UniSAFE survey, please contact unisafe-gbv@gesis.org.

In case of emergency, you can reach out to:

Claudia Schredl, +49 221 47694 263

Horst Baumann, +49 221 47694 443.

2.2 CONTACT RESPONDI

For all questions on technical issues, please contact unisafe@respondi.com.

In case of emergency, please reach out to the following contact persons at respondi:

Holger Nowak, +49 221 272318 234

Maria Tewes, +49 221 272318 141

3. YOUR SUPPORT TASKS

Your main support for the UniSAFE survey involves the invitation of staff and students to the survey.

This document gives you an overview of the necessary steps for inviting respondents to the UniSAFE survey. Your support involves the following three steps.

- Prepare invitations to all members of staff and students
- Invite them via your regular email system
- Do not send out more than 2,000 emails per hour

In addition, we would like to invite you to technical briefing meetings with respondi and GESIS to clarify open questions about the technical implementation of the UniSAFE survey. We will suggest three dates with one-hour timeslots at the UniSAFE RPO Kick-off Meeting.

4. ONLINE SURVEYS

4.1 METHOD

The UniSAFE survey gathers data on the prevalence of gender-based violence, as well as its determinants and consequences. The survey sample includes 45 universities, research organisations and geographically mobile researchers. Respondents take part by answering a standardised questionnaire in a Computer Assisted Web Interview – or more commonly known as an online survey. Standardised questionnaires mean, that for a given question a pre-defined set of answer options are given.

Based on previous answers, follow-up questions can be shown or not, which makes an online survey more adaptive. In contrast to a non-standardised qualitative interview, a finite number of paths through the online survey exists.

4.2 ACCESSIBILITY

The questionnaire is designed to be responsive which means that participation is possible from any device, including smartphone, tablet, or desktop. Regardless of the device used to answer the online survey, the questions are displayed accordingly. When selecting the colours of the questionnaire, a colour scheme is used so that it will be accessible to people with impaired vision or colour impairment. No audio is used in the online survey. Furthermore, the survey is compatible with screen-reading software.

4.3 ANONYMOUS ACCESS

Quantitative organisational surveys are used to measure attitudes, perceptions, and experiences of organisational members.

For anonymous surveys, respondents receive an anonymous link to the survey, which ensures respondents' anonymity. The survey respondents receive an anonymous and static link to a browser-based online survey via the official organisational email address. This means that every participant receives the same link, for example 'https://www.example.com/survey'. It contains neither personal information parameter nor any other parameter to identify the specific unit, status or similar.

To avoid re-identification of the individual respondents, results are only provided in aggregated form. The anonymity of the respondents is guaranteed at all times.

Due to the anonymous link to the survey, it cannot be interrupted and resumed later but must be completed in one go. If a respondent breaks off in the middle of the survey, he or she can still answer the survey later, but must start from the beginning. Unfortunately, there is technically no way around this. In this case, the first questions will already be known to the respondent.

It is also possible for a participant to take part in the survey more than once. This cannot be ruled out by the anonymous link and cannot be filtered out later using the data.

The advantage of the anonymous survey is that the participants are more willing to share their experiences, leading to valuable results.

5. PROCESS

Chapter 5 describes the preparation and necessary steps for sending out the survey link to all members of your organisation.

5.1 EMAIL INVITATION PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE SURVEY

All employees and students should receive an invitation with a link to the survey. Chapter 5 shows some common ways for sending an email invitation to the survey, that can be adapted to the needs of the research organisation.

The only requirement is that the email invitations are sent in tranches. to reduce the load on the survey server. In some cases, this means splitting email invitations among multiple groups, so that no more than 2,000 emails are sent per hour.

5.2 USAGE OF GENERIC ORGANISATIONAL EMAIL ADDRESS AS SENDER

Gender based violence is a sensitive topic. To avoid any inappropriate reactions from the participants, we highly recommend to not use a real name when sending the invitations.

Please use a generic email address from your organisation, like info@example.org.

5.3 USAGE OF ORGANISATIONAL EMAIL ADDRESSES TO THE PARTICIPANTS

All members of your RPO should be contacted via their official organisational email address. The email addresses are only used for sending the invitation to the survey. It is not possible to connect the email address with the provided survey data.

As described in the Chapter 7 on data protection, your RPO will receive an anonymised data set containing only the survey data collected at your institution after the field phase.

5.4 EMAIL TEMPLATES

Our email template is uploaded as Word, HTML, and text only. It contains the invitation to participate in the UniSAFE survey and a link to the UniSAFE survey.

5.5 BULK EMAIL VIA COMMON EMAIL CLIENTS: OUTLOOK

For sending out bulk emails with Outlook, please take the following steps.

a) Open Outlook and select the account with the generic organisation email address as default account. Bulk email in Outlook are sent with your default profile.
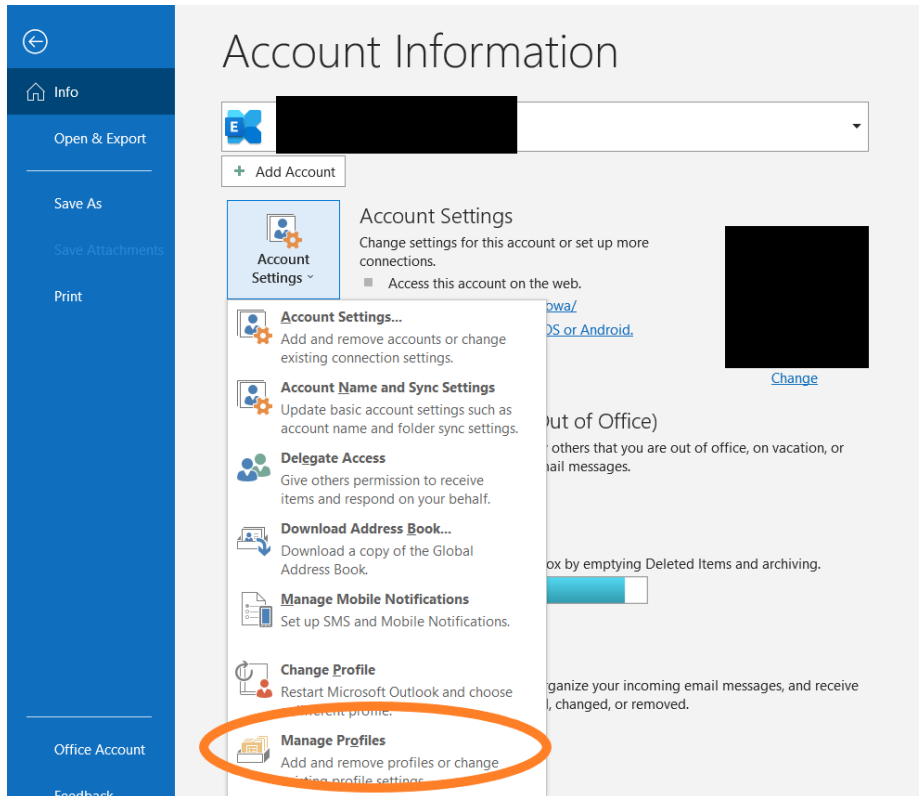
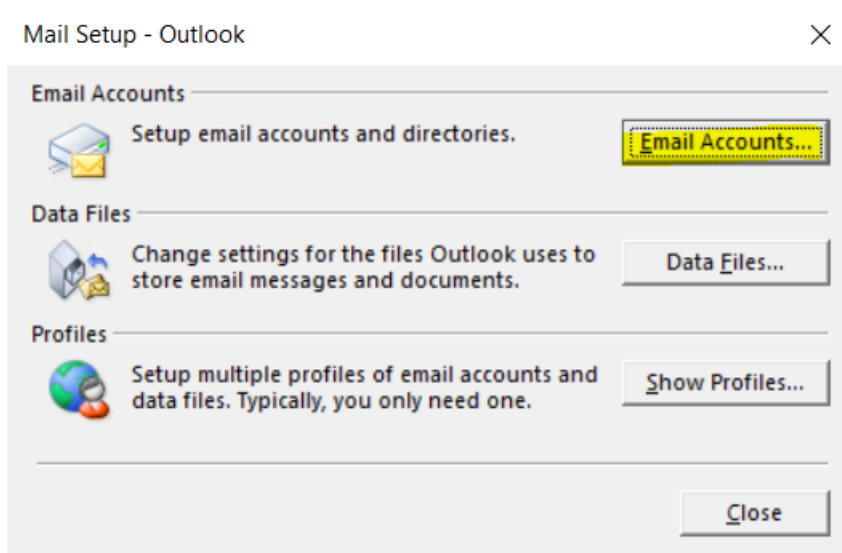*Figure 1 Outlook/Word Manage Profiles*
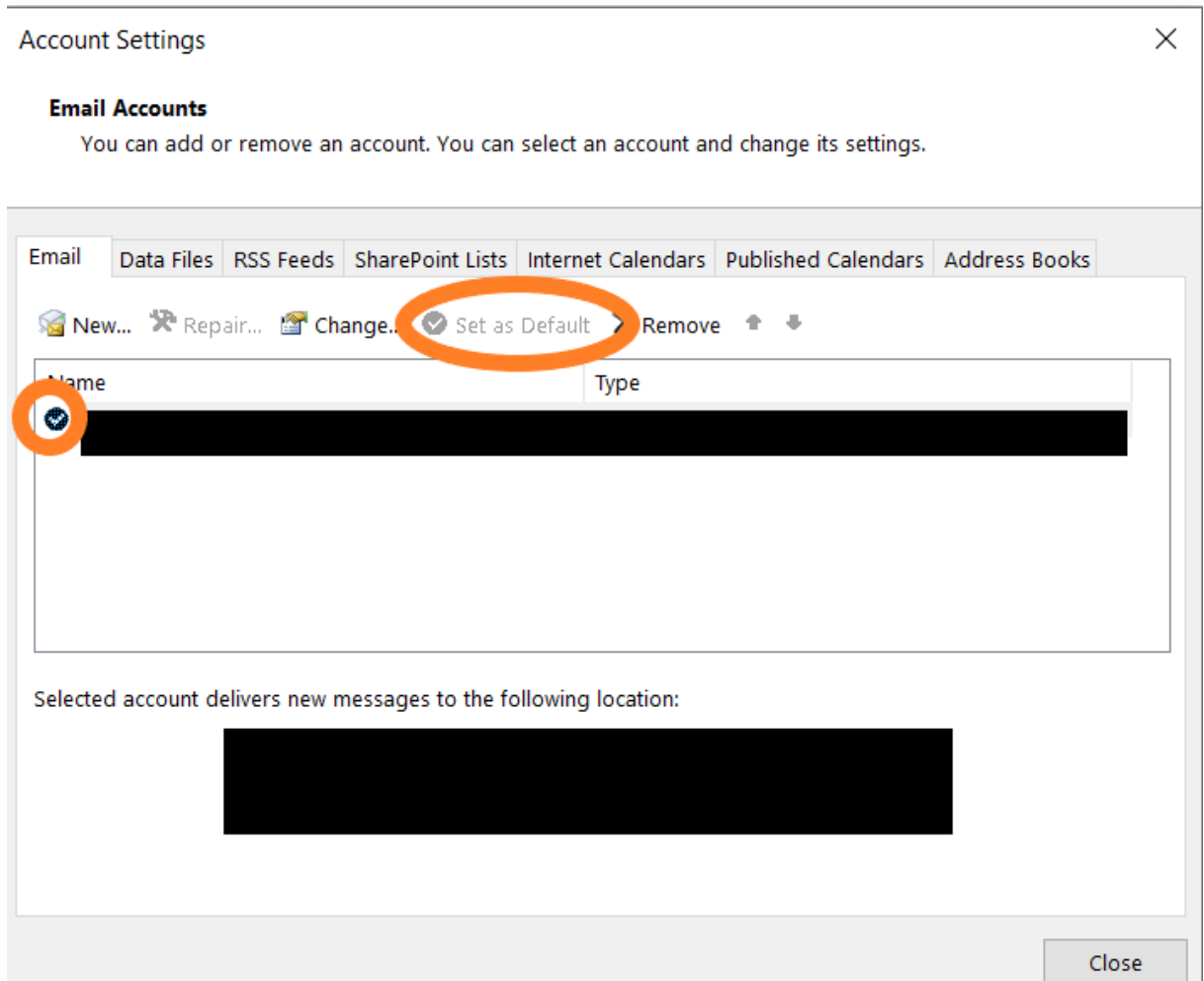

Figure 2 Outlook/Word Setup Email Accounts

Figure 3 Outlook/Word Set default Email Profile

b) Open Word and insert the email text from the template. To send the invitation, click in Word on the top of the tab "Mailings". Then click on the field "Start mail merge" and in the drop-down menu on "Email messages" (see Figure 4).
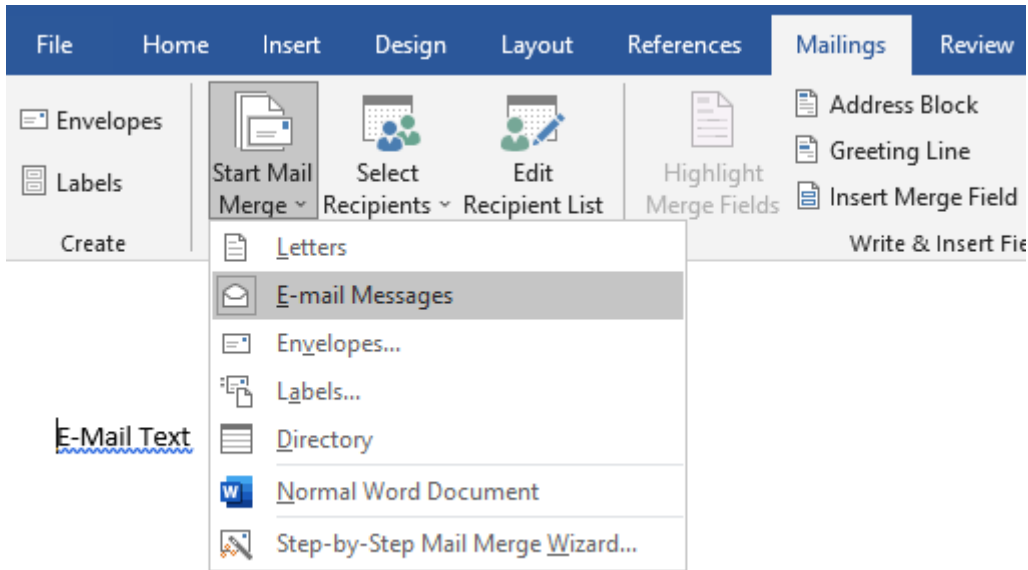
Figure 4 Outlook/Word Start E-mail Messages

c) In the next step, go to the "Select recipients" field. Word offers three options to choose from. We recommend focussing on the last two options, either using an existing list of employees/students or a group of contacts from Outlook. If you are sending a reminder, please also make sure at this stage to exclude contacts who asked not to receive further invitations (see 5.10). Be aware, that no more than 2,000 emails should be sent per hour.
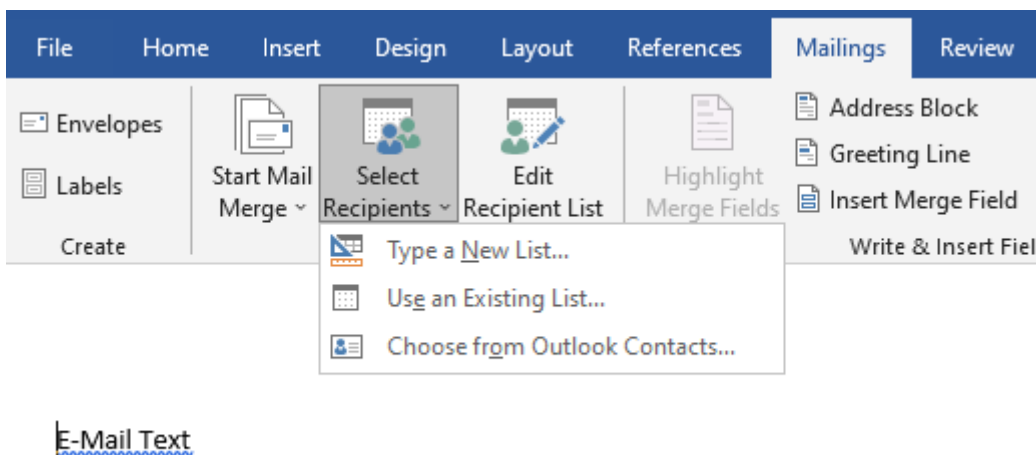

Figure 5 Outlook/Word Select recipients

Use an Existing List

Word can process all common document types, such as Excel, or CSV files. For this, the csv-file must be prepared in advance so that it contains at least the address column.

Choose from Outlook Contacts

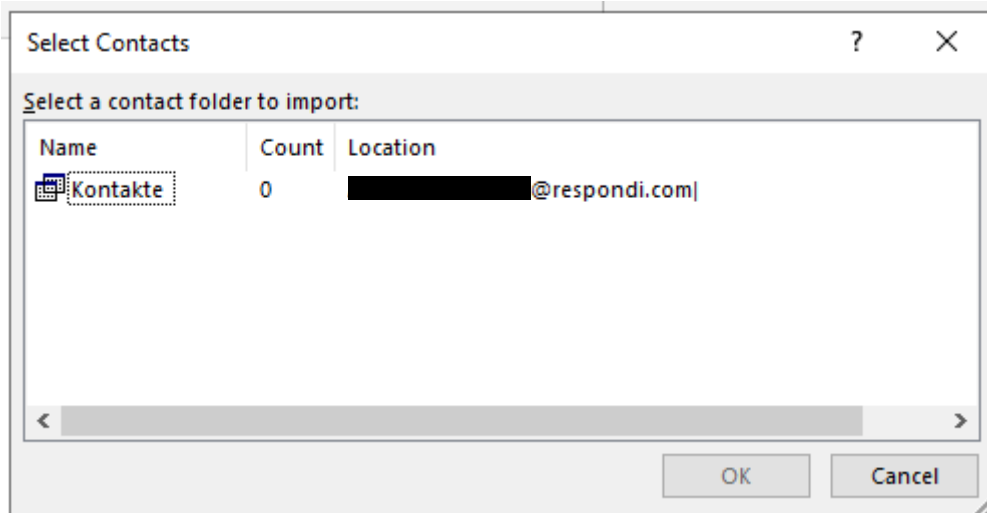Alternatively, you can select one of your outlook contacts lists.

Figure 6 Outlook/Word Select contacts from outlook

d) After selecting recipients, click on "Finish and merge" and send the emails by clicking on "Send email message".
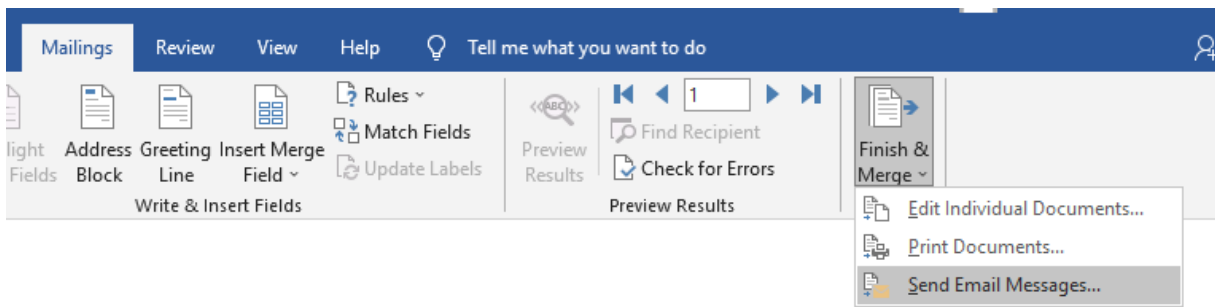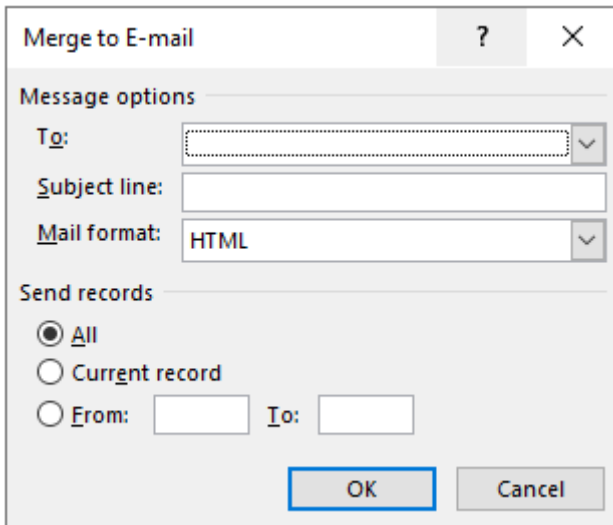

Figure 7 Outlook/Word Send Email Messages

e) Finally, enter the desired subject of the mail in the "Merge to e-mail" popup field and click "Ok".

Figure 8 Outlook/Word Merge to E-Mail

Note: If your contact lists contain more than 2,000 addresses you can split them. Choose the last option on "send records" and enter in a first run from: 1 to 2,000 and use corresponding tranches for the next runs.

5.6   BULK EMAIL VIA COMMON EMAIL CLIENTS: GMAIL

For sending out bulk emails with Gmail, please take the following steps.

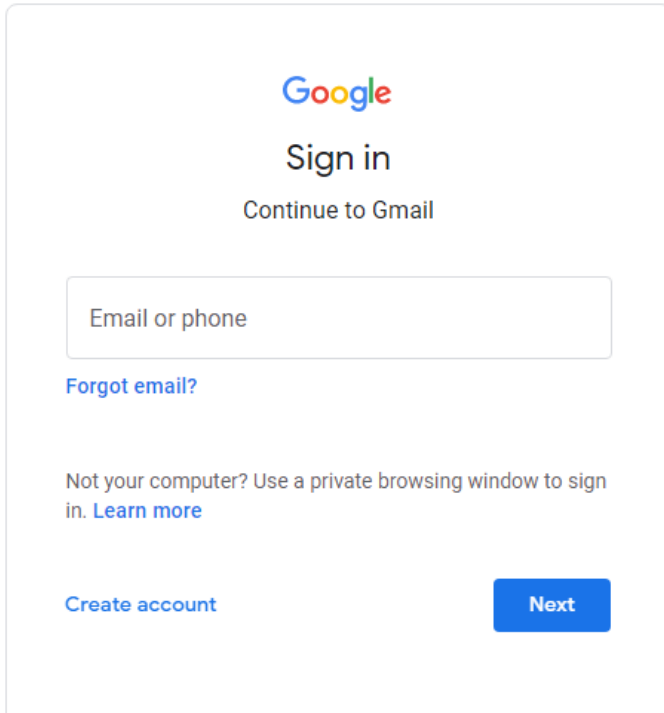a) If you want to send a bulk email using Gmail, first go to the mail.google.com page and sign in.

Figure 9 Gmail - Sign in

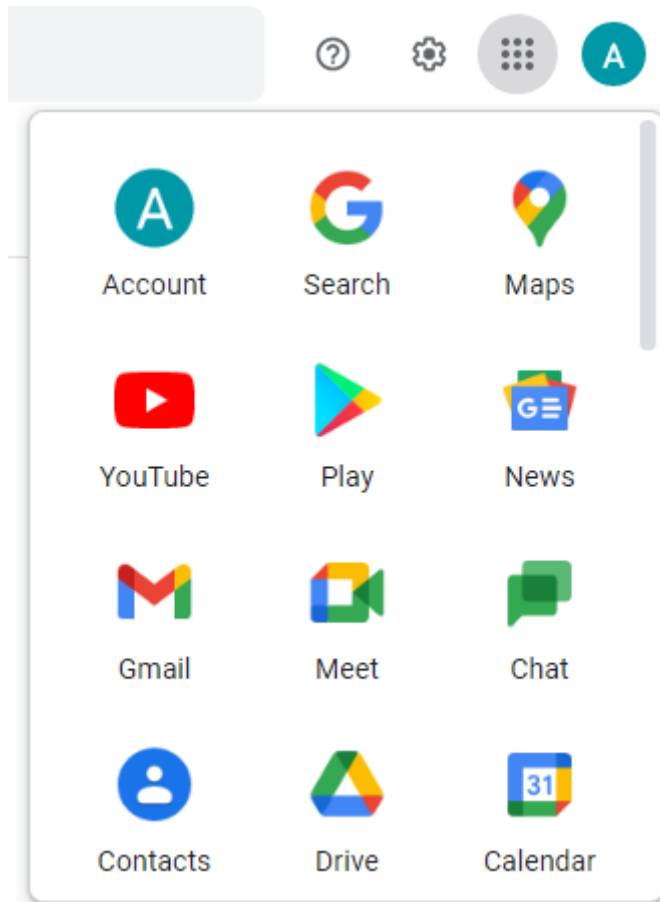Click on the cube icon at the top right corner. Here, select the "Contacts" item.

Figure 10 Gmail - Select Contacts

b) Select the contacts you want to add to the distribution list. If you are sending a reminder, please also make sure at this stage to exclude contacts who asked not to receive further invitations (see 5.10). After selection, click the "Labels" icon above the contact list and click "Create labels".
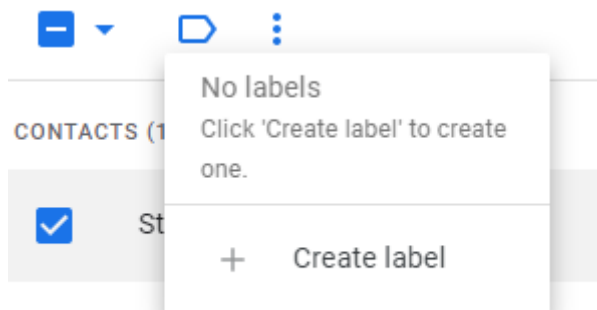

Figure 11 Gmail - Create Labels for contacts part I

c) Enter a name for the group, for example "Students" or "Staff" and confirm it with "Ok".
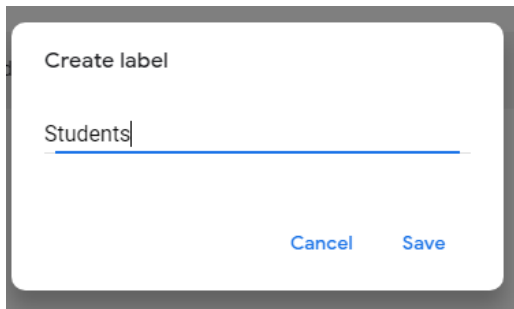

Figure 12 Gmail - Create Labels for contacts part II

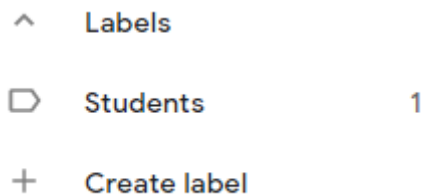You will then see the corresponding group on the left side under "Labels".

Figure 13 Gmail - Overview of contact labels

d) Then enter the name of the label in the "Recipient" field in the next step. The email will be sent to all members who are in this list.
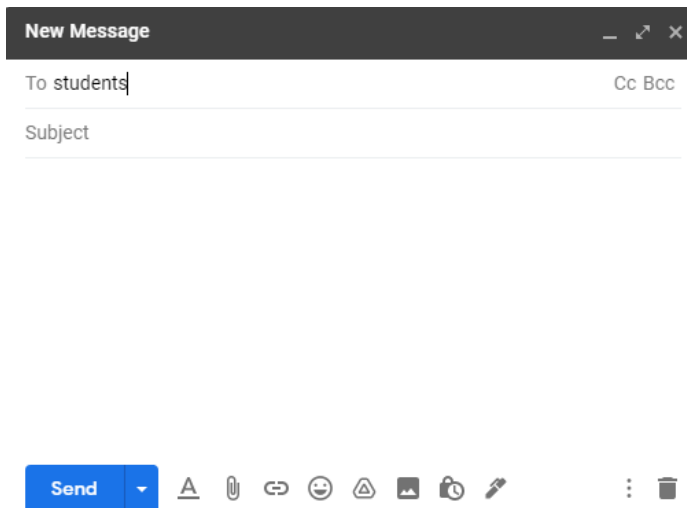
Figure 14 Gmail - Compose a message

e) Change the sender to the generic address of your organisation

Figure 15 Gmail – Change sender

5.7 BULK EMAIL VIA COMMON EMAIL CLIENTS: THUNDERBIRD

For sending out bulk emails with Thunderbird, please take the following steps.

a) You can send bulk emails in Thunderbird via an additional add-on. Open the "add/ons and Themes" menu from the hamburger menu, i.e., the navigation bar with the three lines top right. The "Add-on Manager" opens.
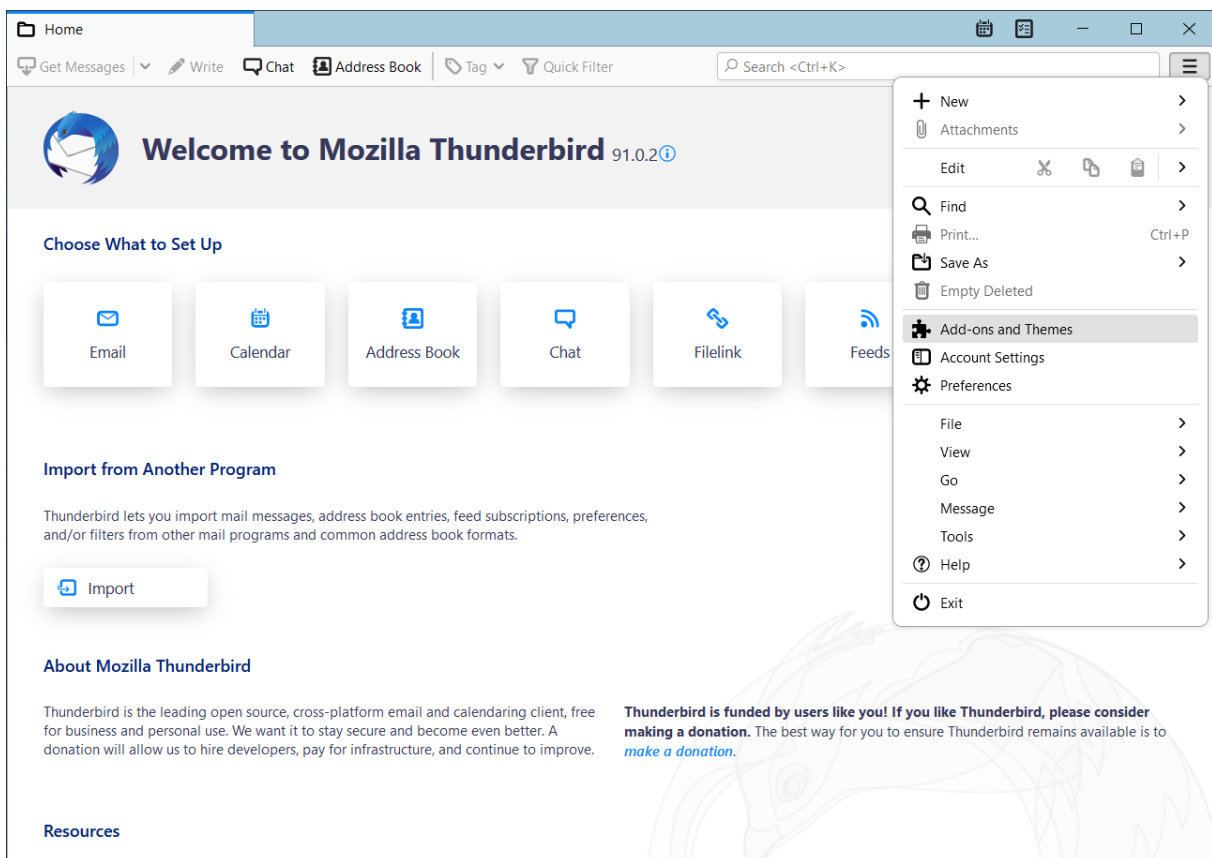
Figure 16 Thunderbird - Add Bulk Mail add-on part I

b) Search for "Mail Merge" in the upper right corner and install the Open-Source licenced version from Alexander Bergmann with the "Add to Thunderbird" button.
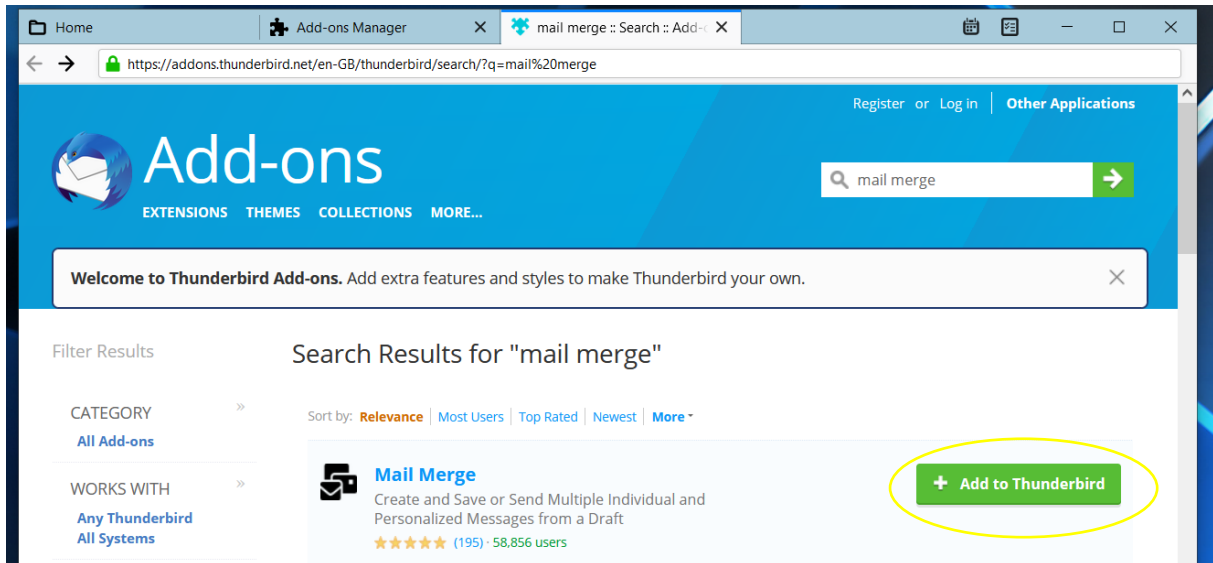
Figure 17 Thunderbird - Add bulk mail add-on part II

c) Create your bulk emails by clicking on the "Write"-button in Thunderbird. Enter the column header of the email address field in your external data file, e.g., "{{Email}}" in the "To" field and ignore the red warning for now. Do not forget to change the sender address to your generic organisation address. Continue to insert the email template.
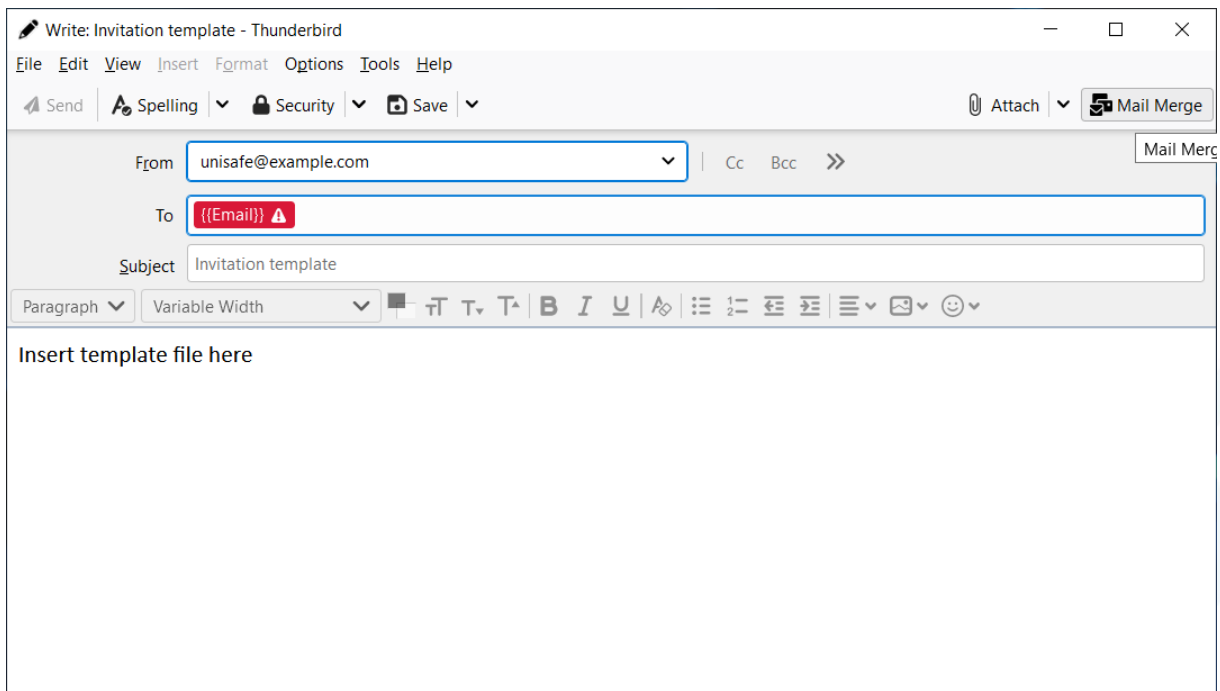
Figure 18 Thunderbird - Compose email

d) Click on "Mail Merge" in the upper right corner.

Figure 19 Thunderbird - Select recipients

e) Select the appropriate source, such as an Excel file (Spreadsheet) or a CSV file If you are sending a reminder, please also make sure at this stage to exclude contacts who asked not to receive further invitations (see 5.10). For the invitation to the survey, it is sufficient that the file contains the email addresses. Please note, that the column that contains the email address must be named exactly (case sensitive) as you entered it in the "To" field.

f) You can either send the email directly or save it as a draft (i.e. store in the template folder) and send it later.

5.8 BULK EMAIL VIA CRM-SYSTEMS: MICROSOFT DYNAMICS

Bulk emails can be also sent with the help of Microsoft Dynamics in many ways. For simplicity we refer to the "Activity" option which does not require additional marketing modules. Please take the following steps.

a) Create an email template:
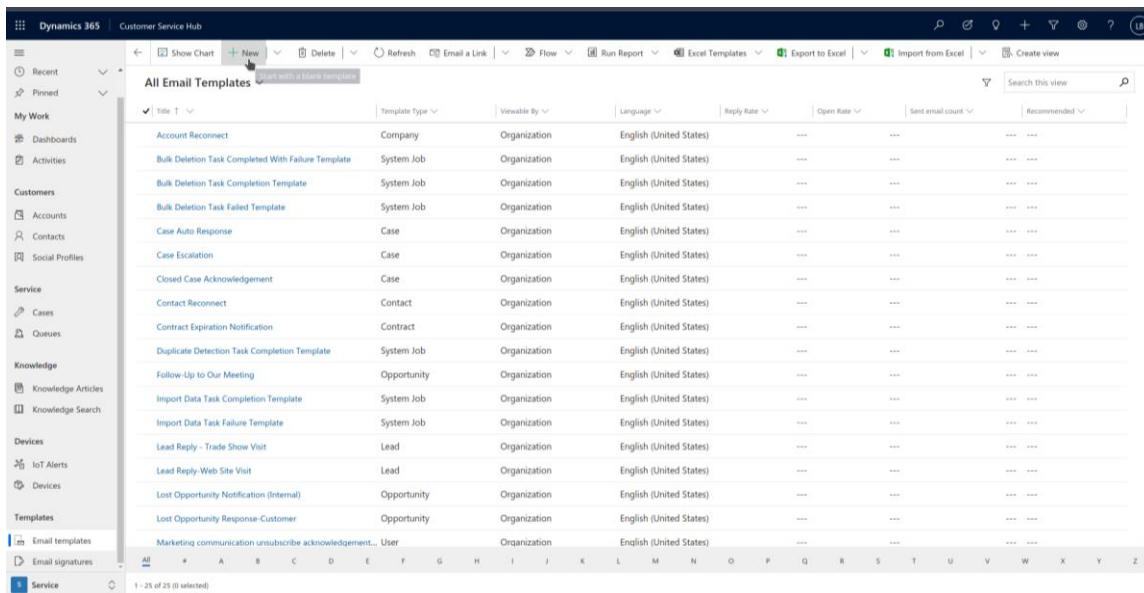
Figure 20 MS Dynamics - Create email template part I
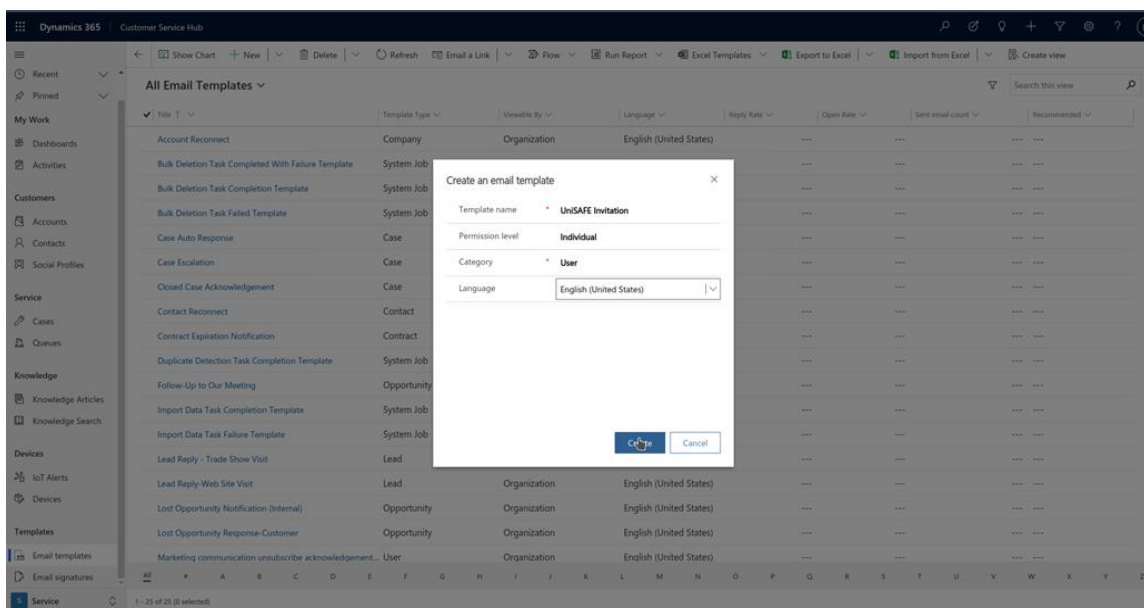
Figure 21 MS Dynamics - Create email template part II
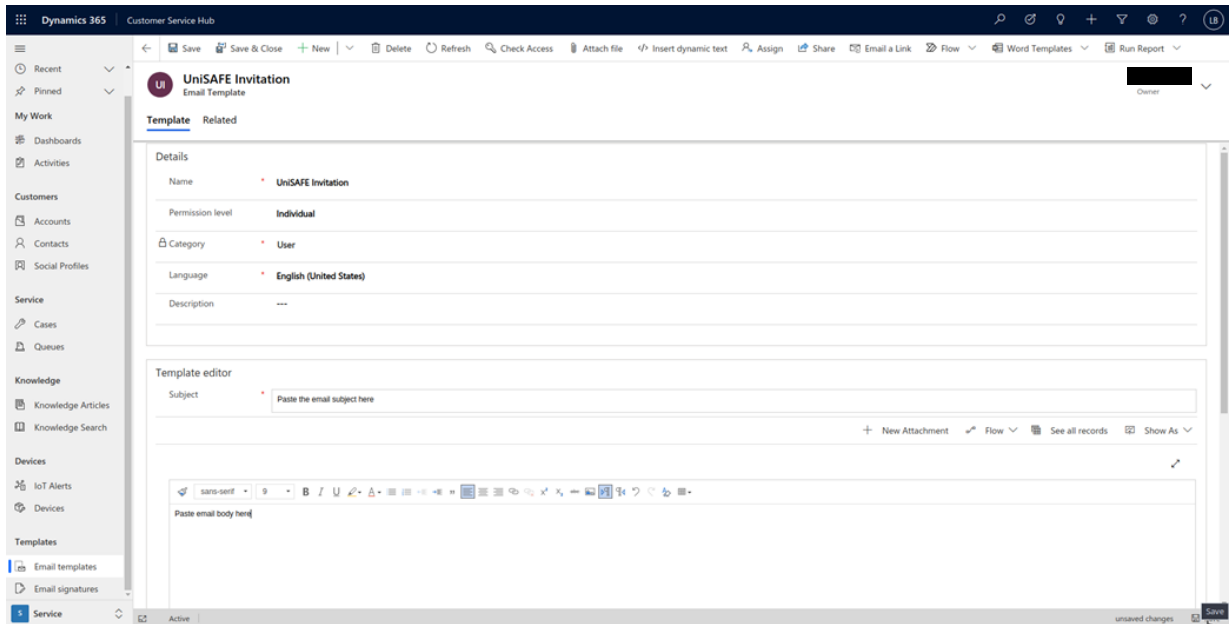
Figure 22 MS Dynamics - Create email template part III

b) Once the template is added and saved, it can be used for sending bulk emails.

c) You can schedule email deliverables by adding a new email activity.
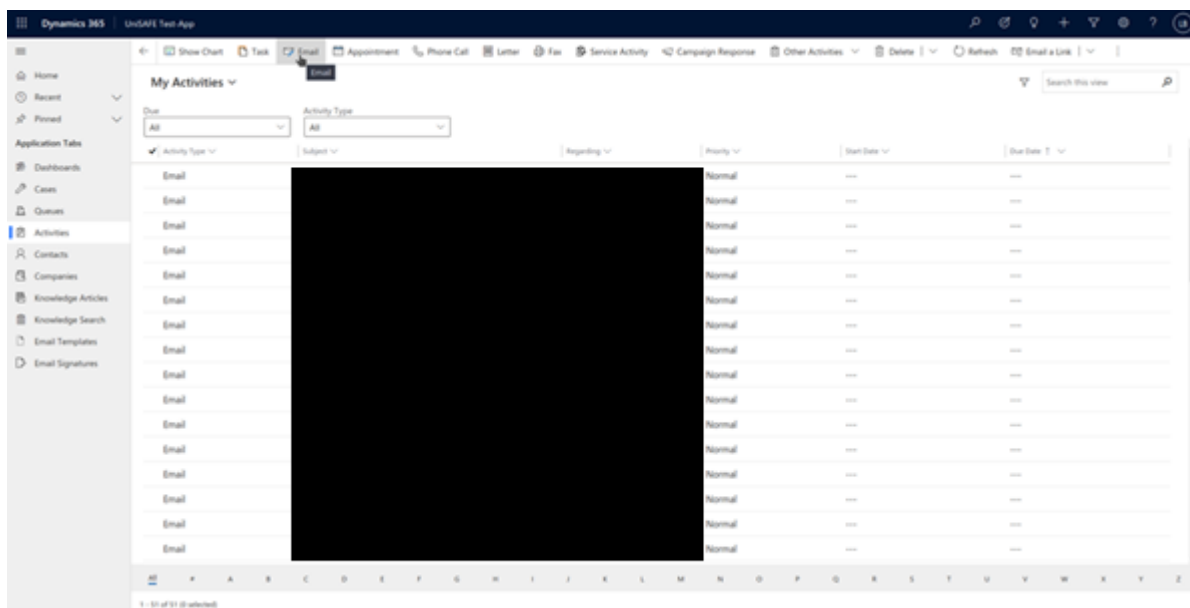
Figure 23 MS Dynamics - Add email activity

d) Add a contact group. It is already possible and recommended to change the sender to your generic organisation address.
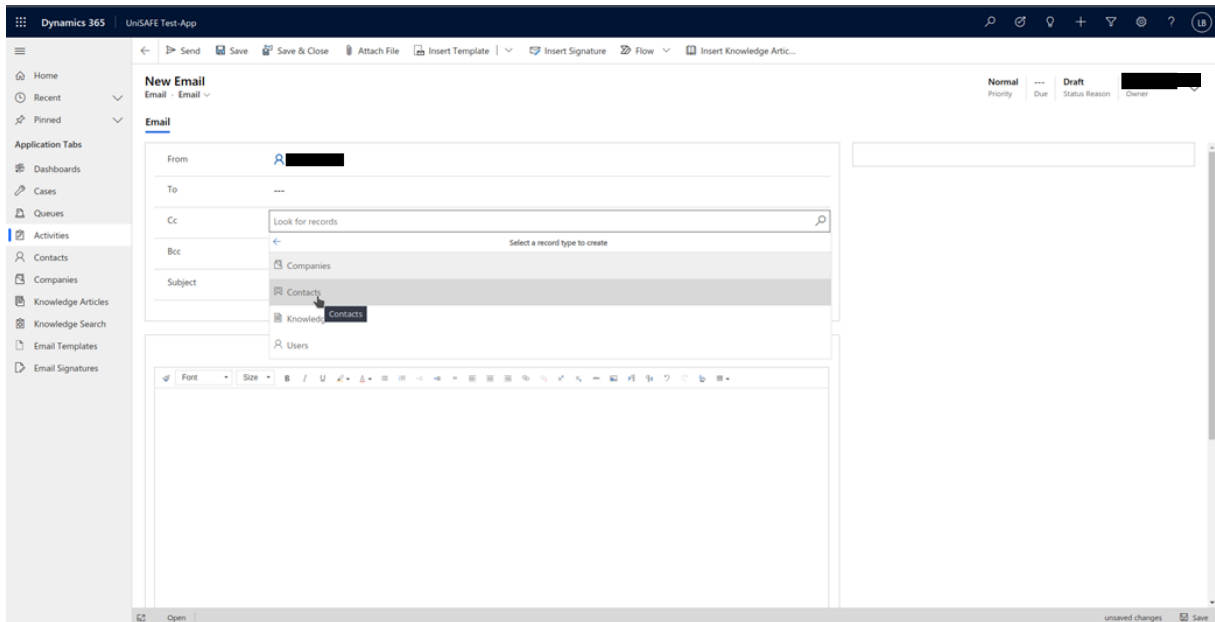
Figure 24 MS Dynamics - Compose email

e) The email template can be added with the "Insert template" box in the header menu.
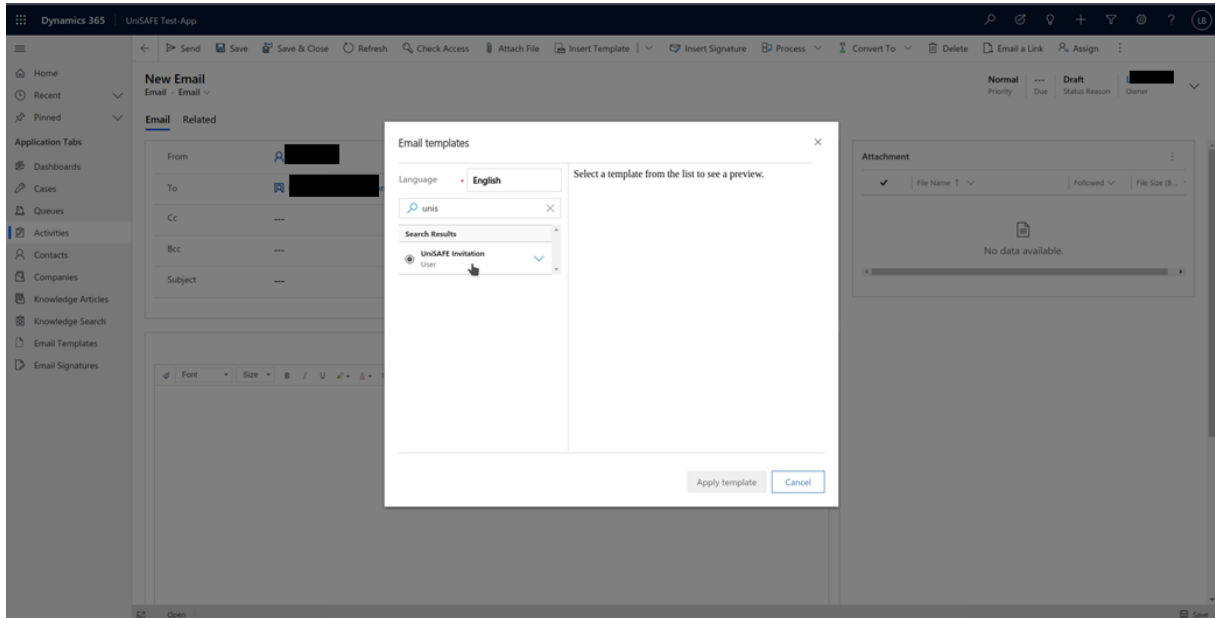
Figure 25 MS Dynamics - Insert template

f) Then send the bulk email.
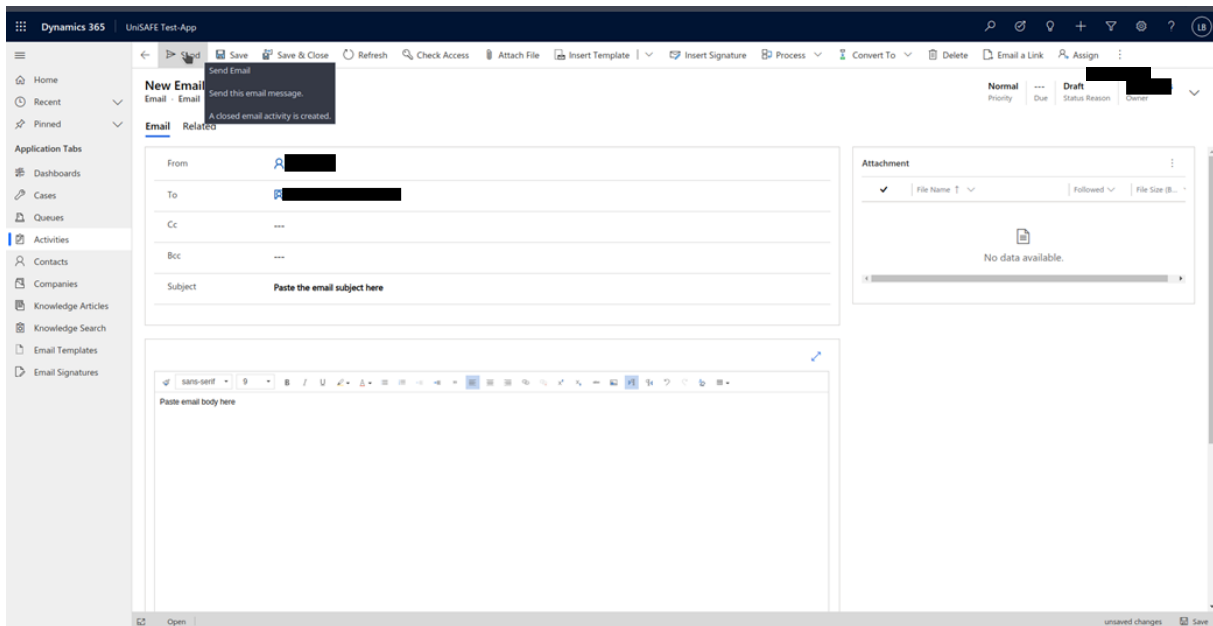
Figure 26 MS Dynamics - Send email

5.9 USING OTHER EMAIL CLIENTS

In case you are using an email client not covered in this document and do not know how to send bulk emails to students and employees, please contact unisafe@respondi.com and we will support you.

5.10 REMOVING PARTICIPANTS FROM THE CONTACT LIST

You may receive a notification that a potential participant wants to be excluded and does not want to receive any further email notifications.

In this case you need to remove the person from the list. The easiest way is to copy the existing contact list and manually remove the entry.

5.11 SCHEDULING EMAIL DELIVERABLES AND SENDING IN TRANCHES

We strongly recommend sending no more than 2,000 emails per hour to avoid survey server outages and bad user experience due to slow server speed. As described above most common systems let you select email subgroups and schedule them.

Your IT team might be able to help with this as well.

6. HOW TO DEAL WITH QUESTIONS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS

If respondents contact you with questions concerning the UniSAFE project in general or its research aims, you can contact GESIS, unisafe-gbv@gesis.org.

For questions on technical issues, please contact the subcontractor respondi, unisafe@respondi.com. When contacting respondi for technical issues or questions, please use the following prefixes in the e-mail subject for better allocation and faster processing: [fyi] for comments that are for information only, to which no reply is required and [request] for comments to be responded to by respondi.

6.1   TYPICAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WEB SURVEY

Are conclusions about my person or my personal data possible through my answers?

- No. Your answers do not allow any conclusions to be drawn about your person. All data will be used anonymously, and your organisation will receive only aggregated data.

Will my personal data, such as names or email addresses, be given to the party conducting the study?

- No. At no time will personal data be collected or shared.

Can I suspend the study and continue answering later, or do I have to answer the study in one attempt?

- You can suspend the study and continue later by clicking on the invitation link again. Due to the anonymisation of the data, we cannot allocate the answers to any specific person, so unfortunately you will have to start the questionnaire again from the beginning after suspending the survey.

I do not want to take part and do not wish to get any further communication

- Please reply to the invitation and state that you do not wish to get any further emails regarding the gender-based violence survey

Which technical devices may be used to answer the survey?

- The study is designed to be barrier-free. You can participate in the survey with mobile devices (smartphones, tablets) as well as with laptops or computers. Your device needs to have an internet browser and an internet connection.

Do I have to fear that information I have given can be used against me by the organisation I work for or study at?

- No. The information you provide will only be made available to your educational institution in an aggregated and anonymised form; it is not possible to draw any conclusions about your person.

I took part in the survey, but I would like my survey data not to be used for evaluation after all, but to be deleted. Is that possible?

- No. Due to the anonymisation of the data, it is unfortunately no longer possible to delete the answers you gave afterwards, as we cannot allocate the answers to a specific person.

6.2   GENERAL QUESTIONS ON THE UNISAFE PROJECT

How is gender-based violence defined in the project?

- The concept of 'gender-based violence' encompasses many and different forms of online/offline violence, violations and abuse, and gender harassment and sexual harassment.

  The following is a more detailed definition.

  Gender-based violence is a human rights violation, most often recognised as a cause and consequence of gender inequalities, with potential serious consequences for individuals, organisations, and societies. Violence, always gendered, may however perhaps more usefully be understood as a system of violence – including perpetration, victimhood/survivorhood, responses, policies and practices, rather than isolated, individual and aberrant incidents (Strid et al. 2018; Hearn et al. 2020). It is often an instrumental means for a goal, heterotelic, such as men's control over women and the maintenance of patriarchal institutions and power, and sometimes an end in itself, autotelic, for its own sake (Schinkel 2010). Gender-based violence involves both detailed brutal activities and daily subtle actions that can lead to a life of control and coercion (Stark 2007); it can mean that further violence is unnecessary to maintain control, thus raising a major problem for empiricism and measuring violence; which also is the case with the increasing levels and forms of online violence, noted as cyberviolence among university students (Lewis & Anitha 2019). In UniSAFE, gender-based violence is conceptualised as an expression of power and structural dominance, rather than as an expression of the loss of power and individual marginalisation. This understanding reverses "truths" in conventional mainstream sociology, criminology or psychology where violence is often studied, as a reaction to the loss of power or as violence from the marginalised, socially disadvantaged or psychologically deviant. Furthermore, gender-based violence is deeply intertwined with other forms of inequalities. It is therefore crucial to examine gender-based violence from an intersectional perspective by simultaneously keeping multiple inequalities and the way they intersect in sight, without losing focus on privilege and power of dominant groups (Walby et al. 2012). An intersectional perspective is crucial to the system of gender-based violence, and to examine how certain determinants affect experiences of gender-based violence. Determinants can be demographic factors, such as age, but can also encompass other socio-demographic factors such as human and social capital, academic status and migration status.

Is the RPO cooperation expected to be administrative, academic or both?

- RPOs will mostly provide organisational support to run the online survey – with our assistance – in the institution among all staff and students. We will also analyse the institutional policy framework, so access to the policy framework will be needed. At a later stage, some of the institutions that took part in the survey will be selected and invited to be analysed as a case study in the in-depth, qualitative part of the project's research.

What are the ethical issues to be addressed?

- RPOs commit to obtaining ethics approvals from their institutional and/or national Ethics Committees, as applicable. UniSAFE will assist the RPOs by providing a dedicated Ethics Helpdesk that will inform them about the ethical aspects of the project and answer their ethics-related questions.

Will UniSAFE cover eventual RPOs costs to participate in the project?

- No. The institutions participate with their own resources, with guidance from the project. They will freely benefit from the survey instrument developed, be provided with results (anonymised data), and optionally get in-depth qualitative analysis. Participating organisations may also benefit from the UniSAFE community by developing effective policies and measures to combat GBV adapted to their own processes and structures. They will be provided with first-hand information, as well as specific support from expert partners. There is no research money involved.

What happens to the data collected? Will the respondents of the survey be anonymous?

- The RPOs will not share any contact detail of individuals, including email addresses, with the survey research group of UniSAFE.
- The information provided anonymously by the survey respondents will be used for the purpose of research by members of the UniSAFE project team.
- After the end of the UniSAFE project, the cumulated data from all RPOs will be made available for secondary research in accordance with the European Union's Open Access policy. The UniSAFE project complies with the GDPR to ensure data security. All data are checked to rule out any possibility of re-identification of individuals from the dataset, including contextual re-identification, before they are shared with the RPOs. All information of identifiable respondents is either deleted or aggregated (e.g., age is coded into categories) in such a way that deanonymization is ruled out.

Will RPOs have a say in the survey questions or have the possibility to add any questions?

- Given the number of participants (45), it will unfortunately not be possible to influence the survey design or questions. The survey instrument will be the same for all 45 participating institutions. No questions can be added or left out.

On a practical level, how will RPOs run the survey?

- UniSAFE will provide RPOs with a specific link to their survey, a template of a cover letter to be addressed by the institution, along with guidelines and resources explaining our methodology and the technical details.

7. DATA PROTECTION

The UniSAFE research team acknowledges the personal and sensitive character of this research and takes all necessary measures to protect the privacy of the survey participants and the confidentiality of the collected data. The participation in the survey is anonymous, which means that no one will know such details about the respondents as their name or e-mail address. The data will be processed and stored in compliance with the relevant international and national data protection regulations, in particular the European Union's (General Data Protection Regulation) and German (Datenschutzgrundverordnung of 25 May 2018) laws and the UK 'Data Protection Act 2018'. Appropriate technical, administrative, and physical safeguards are utilised to ensure data protection.

The raw survey data collected at the participating research performing organisations (RPOs) will be available only to the UniSAFE research partners who will use them solely for scientific purposes, including project outcomes and open access publications. The UniSAFE consortium will disseminate research findings, through meetings, workshops, conference presentations, scientific and media publications as well as the project's webpage.

All participating RPOs will be provided with an anonymised data set containing the data collected at their institution.

In accordance with the European Union's Open Access policy, the cumulated data from all RPOs will be made available for secondary research after the end of the UniSAFE project. For this purpose, the data will be processed such that neither participants nor participating organisations can be re-identified. Any data potentially suitable for re-identification will be either diluted or removed from the data set. The data set will then be permanently and securely stored at the open access data repository of GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, where it will be available for legitimate scientific purposes on request only.