

A UNICEF-IRC / OECD compendium of basic information on child or family-focused cross-national surveys

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EQLS – European Quality of Life Survey.

Origin of the study	<p>The enlargement of the European Union since May 2004 has included 12 new Member States. This puts diversity at the forefront of the European Union – diversity in living conditions, in cultural traditions, and outlook. Nurturing this cultural diversity is at the very heart of the European ideal. But large differences in material resources and living standards, in political participation rates, in levels of trust in public institutions and in how needs and responsibilities are understood, can lead to tensions and conflict.</p> <p>To help foster cohesion in this larger and more diversified Union, policymakers and civil society actors need to draw on precise information about how people live and how they perceive their circumstances.</p> <p>Against this background, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions launched its first ever pan-European Quality of life survey (EQLS) in the summer of 2003.</p>
Management Structure	
Statement of purpose.	<p>To gather information for comparisons between countries as well as between demographic, social and economic groups, the EQLS report documents material conditions, employment situations, living and working conditions, family and community life, health and housing in the participating countries.</p> <p>EQLS looks at the views of Europe’s citizens on living conditions, their subjective well-being and their assessments of the society in which they live. More in-depth analyses on specific issues raised in the survey form a key part of the Foundation’s ongoing series of reports on living conditions and quality of life in the enlarged Europe.</p> <p>The descriptive report ‘Quality of life in Europe’ provides a unique insight into Europeans’ quality of life today aimed at providing a useful contribution towards shaping the policies which seek to improve living and working conditions throughout Europe.</p> <p>Data from EQLS are also used in the EurLIFE database http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/qualityoflife/eurlife/index.php</p> <p>This interactive online database combines data from OECD, Eurostat, Eurobarometer and European social surveys to provide up-to-date information in relation to 160 objective and subjective indicators across 12 key quality of life domains.</p>
Funded by	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions;
Affiliations.	The data collector was Intomart GfK (Hilversum, Netherlands). Data analysis was undertaken by the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin fuer Sozialforschung (Social Science Research Centre) in consortium with the Economic and Social Research Institute (Dublin), the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, the Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw) and the Department of Social Sciences, University of Turin.
Consortium	
Government partners	
Expert panels	<p>A network of experts from accession and candidate countries (now NMS) was established to assist in the interpretation of survey results for those countries: Prof Wladyslaw Adamski, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, PAS Warsaw, Nowy Swiet 7200330, Warsaw, Poland;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof Yusuf Ziya Ozcan, Dept of Sociology, Middle East Technical University, 06531 Ankara, Turkey; • Dr Rasa Aliskauskiene, Baltic Surveys, Sermuksniu 6º, 2001 Vilnius, Lithuania; • Dr Martin Potucek, Centre for Social and Economic Strategies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, Celetná 20, 116 36 Praha 1, Czech Republic; • Dr Jan Buncák, Associate Professor Department of Sociology, FIF UK, Gondova, 281801 Bratislava, Slovakia; • Dr Solveiga Silina, Deputy Head, Living Standard Statistics Section, Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia 1, Lacplesa Str., Riga, LV-1301, Latvia; • Dr Olivia Gale-Seychell, Casa Gizimin, Pres A, Buttigieg Street, Zejtun ZTN 03, Malta; • Dr Zsolt Spéder, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Angol u. 77, Budapest, Hungary; • Ms Soteroula Hajispyrou, Programme Coordinator, Economics Research Centre, University of Cyprus, P.O.Box 20537, 1678 Nicosia, Cyprus; • Dr Vasil Tsanov, Institute of Economics, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 3 Aksakov Str., 1040 Sofia, Bulgaria; • Mr Andrus Saar, Saar Poll Ltd, Veetorni 4, Tallinn 10119, Estonia; • Prof Samo Uhan, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Kardeljeva ploščad 5, P.O. Box 2547, 1001 Ljubljana, Slovenia; • Prof Ioan Marginean, Universitatea Bucuresti, Institutul de Cercetare a Calitatii Vietii, Calea 13 Septembrie, No. 13, Bucuresti, Romania.

Data set basic information.	
Dates.	2003 and 2007
Countries.	EQSL 2003, 28 Countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and United Kingdom. EQSL 2007, 30 Countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway,, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and United Kingdom.
Contents.	The EQSL represents an ambitious attempt to explore quality of life in a wide range of countries. EQSL therefore examines a range of issues, such as employment, income, education, housing, family, health, work-life balance, life satisfaction and perceived quality of society. The face to face questionnaire consists of 65 questions.
Core data includes:	The core focus of the survey is on employment, economic resources, family and households, community life and social participation, health and health care, knowledge, education and training.
Contextual data includes:	<i>Socio-demographic information such as: age, sex, social class, education levels, urban/rural as well as a series of macro variables added to the dataset such as GDP, suicide rates, life expectancy</i>
Requirements of access.	Available through the Data Archive. Registration is required and standard conditions of use apply (including providing information about usage). To see the terms and conditions of the data archive: http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/orderingdata/termsandConditions.asp
Next wave/project.	
Next date and availability.	2007, The Foundation expects to publish first results in May 2008 followed by a descriptive report and a series of analytical reports in late 2008 and 2009.
New content / questions.	The content remains the same and the questionnaire will repeat most of the questions used in 2003 but also offers some new questions (up to 25%). This allows analysis of trends and changes over time. New questions added on governance, voluntary work, quality of society, health care systems, attitudes towards migrants, mental health, caring and housing.
Countries to be added.	Croatia and Norway ; both countries self financed the 2003 survey using the EQSL questionnaire
Previous content not repeated in the next wave.	Same content however based on the findings of the review in 2006 to examine the quality of the methodology used in the 2003 survey, recommendations to improve the methodology are reflected in the 2007 survey.
Methodology	
Sources and collection methods.	The EQSL uses face-to-face interviews (in people's homes) for data collection.
Unit of analysis.	For EQSL 2003; Adults (aged 18 years and over) resident in one of the 27 European Union countries, plus Turkey.
What is the sample design	For EQSL 2003 a multi-stage stratified random sample was used. For larger countries around 1000 face-to-face interviews took place, in smaller countries (including Cyprus, Estonia, Luxembourg, Malta and Slovenia) around 600 interviews were conducted. In all totaling 26,000 interviews. Sampling points were drawn after stratification by region and degree of urbanisation. The random route method was used in the majority of countries (see links below for further details). The specifications for this method were that one address had to be drawn at random in each of the selected sampling points. That starting address formed the first of a cluster of a maximum of 20 addresses. The remainder of the cluster was selected by standard random route procedure from the initial address. Weighting variables were produced according to age, gender and region within country. In addition, several weighting variables were also produced that adapt the sample size of each country to the proportion of their population within several recognised EU country groupings, e.g. EU15, EU25, and AC10. For EQSL 2007 the same sampling methodology and sample size was used, with the exception of Germany and Turkey, where 2000 interviews are completed in each country, and 1500 interviews in France, Italy, Poland and UK.
Sample threshold	
Collection window	For EQSL 2007 interviews were carried out face to face in people's homes, from September to November 2007.
Planning process	
Who is involved in the planning process?	<i>European Foundation, stakeholder groups such as European commission, employers, governments, trade unions, ngo's and experts.</i>
When are the questionnaires finalised?	<i>After pre-piloting and piloting.</i>

What modules are included?	No modules. One standard questionnaire focussing on employment, economic resources, family and households, community life and social participation, health and health care, knowledge, education and training.
Can countries add their own items?	No
Links	
Home page for the website	www.eurofound.europa.eu
To access the data online	http://www.esds.ac.uk/international/access/133365.asp
To access the international report	The EQSL 2003 international report is available online at http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2004/105/en/1/ef04105en.pdf
How to access the technical reports	Research based on EQSL 2003 data available online at http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/qualityoflife/eqls/2003/eqlsfindings.htm
To access national reports	Research based on EQSL 2003 data available online at http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/qualityoflife/eqls/2003/eqlsfindings.htm
To access a list of research that uses the data	Research based on EQSL 2003 data available online at http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/qualityoflife/eqls/2003/eqlsfindings.htm
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