

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

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ESS – European Social Survey.

Origin of the study	<p>The ESS was initiated and seed-funded by the European Science Foundation, the body representing almost all of Europe's main national academic funding agencies. Prompting their decision was their realization that most cross-national attitude surveys in Europe at that time were not of sufficient rigour to draw on as reliable sources of knowledge about value change in Europe.</p> <p>An Expert Group was created to look into the possibility of starting a new time series on value change that would be an example of methodological and substantive rigour. The Expert Group report was enthusiastic, with the result that two new Committees were then appointed by the European Science Foundation to pursue the matter – a Steering Committee and a smaller Methodology Committee which was charged with crafting the structure and design of the proposed new time series.</p> <p>The two committees produced a joint 'Blueprint', which was subsequently to form the basis of a more detailed application by six of the seven institutions that still form the ESS Central Coordinating team. The application was successful. However, one final hurdle still needed to be cleared. The EC contribution covered only the project's central design and coordination. The bulk of the funding – for fieldwork and coordination at a national level - was intended to come from national academic research councils in each participating country. As it turned out, 22 countries in Round 1, 26 in Round 2, and 25 in R3 agreed to produce the necessary funding, together with a commitment to work within a rigorous centrally-determined specification, and the ESS came to being in 2001.</p> <p>The first round of the survey took place in 2002/03, the second in 2004/05; the third in 2006/07 and the fourth will take place in 2008/09.</p>
Management Structure	
Statement of purpose	<p>To gather data about changing values, attitudes, attributes and behaviour patterns within European polities. Academically driven, but designed to feed into key European policy debates, the ESS aims to measure and explain how people's social values, cultural norms and behaviour patterns are distributed, the way in which they differ within and between nations, and the direction and speed at which they are changing.</p>
Funded by	<p>The central coordination and design of the project has been funded through the European Commission's Fifth and Sixth Framework Programmes and the European Science Foundation. The national scientific funding bodies in each country are responsible for covering the costs of fieldwork.</p>
Affiliations	
Co-ordinators	<p>Central Coordination Team</p> <p>The following institutions are responsible for the design and coordination of the European Social Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Comparative Social Surveys, City University, UK (Lead institution) • Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen (GESIS-ZUMA), Germany • Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), Norway • Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium • Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP), Netherlands • ESADE, Universitat Ramon Lull, Spain • University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
Government partners	<p>European Commission</p>
Expert panels	<p>Scientific Advisory Board</p> <p>The multi-national Scientific Advisory Board is chaired by Professor Max Kaase and comprises one representative selected by each national funding agency plus two representatives from the European Commission and the European Science Foundation respectively.</p> <p>Methods Group</p> <p>This small, multi-national methods group advises the CCT on technical and methodological aspects of the survey. Its membership is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denise Lievesley, Chair • Norman Bradburn, US National Science Foundation • Paolo Garonna, UNECE • Lars Lyberg, Statistics Sweden • Vasja Vehovar, University of Ljubljana <p>Sampling panel</p> <p>This team of specialists advises on specific issues regarding sampling. They are responsible for advising National Coordinators on sample selection and will finally 'sign off' all national sample designs. The panel consists of Sabine Haeder (Convenor), Siegfried Gabler, Seppo Laaksonen, Peter Lynn and Matthias Ganninger.</p>

	<p>Translation taskforce</p> <p>A team of translation specialists is responsible for guiding the translation process. They have provided guidance notes for and advice to National Co-ordinators, to enable them to work effectively with those who perform the translation from the source questionnaire in each country.</p> <p>The translation taskforce consists of: Janet Harkness (Convenor), GESIS-ZUMA; Beth-Ellen Pennell, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Alisú Schoua Glusberg, Research Support Services, Illinois; and Paul Kusmaul Johannes, Gutenberg University in Mainz.</p>
Data set basic information.	
Dates.	2002/2003, 2004/2005, 2006/2007 and 2008/2009
Countries.	<p>ESS 2002/03, 22 Countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and UK.</p> <p>ESS 2004/05, 26 Countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK and Ukraine.</p> <p>ESS 2006/07, 25 Countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and Ukraine.</p> <p>ESS 2008/09: Participating countries not confirmed yet.</p>
Contents.	<p>The ESS questionnaire includes two main sections; a 'core' module and two or more 'rotating' modules, repeated at intervals (see below).</p> <p>In addition, a supplementary questionnaire is given to respondents at the end of the main interview. The first part of this questionnaire is a human values scale (part of the core), while the second is devoted to measures to help evaluate the reliability and validity of items in the main questionnaire.</p>
Core data includes:	The core module aims to monitor change and continuity in a wide range of social variables, including: media use, social and public trust; political interest and participation; socio-political orientations, governance and efficacy; moral, political and social values; social exclusion, national, ethnic and religious allegiances; well-being, health and security; demographics and socio-economics.
Contextual data includes:	There are a number of socio-demographic items in the core questionnaire, including those on: household composition, sex, age, type of area, education and occupation of the respondent, their partner and parents as well as union membership, income and marital status.
Requirements of access.	Access to ESS data available for free after registration. See http://ess.nsd.uib.no/index.jsp .
Next wave/project.	
Next date and availability.	Fourth survey to be conducted in 2008/09; data available September 2009
New content / questions.	Not known at present – but see also <i>'What modules are included?'</i>
Countries to be added.	<p>In ESS 2004/05 – five new countries joined the project (Estonia, Iceland, Slovakia, Turkey, Ukraine) and one (Israel) did not participate.</p> <p>In ESS 2006/07 – a further five countries participated compared to ESS 2004/05 (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia, Romania and Russia) although six others did not participate (Czech Republic, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg and Turkey).</p>
Previous content not repeated in the next wave.	Not known at present
Countries not repeating the study in the next wave.	Not known at present
Methodology	
Sources and collection methods.	Data collection takes place every two years, by means of face to face interviews of around an hour in duration, followed by a short supplementary questionnaire. Interviews may be conducted using PAPI or CAPI depending on the country.
Unit of analysis.	People 15 years and older, with no upper age limit, who are resident within private households in each country, regardless of nationality, citizenship, language or legal status.
What is the sample design?	The sample will be selected by strict random probability methods at every stage. The relative selection probabilities of every sample member will be known and recorded on the data set. The sample design for the ESS should be the

	best probability sample design that is possible in each country. It is essential to find a suitable, frequently updated frame for the selection of individuals, households or addresses - preferably a population register.
Sample threshold	The minimum effective sample size is 1500 (or 800 for countries with less than 2 million inhabitants). Quota sampling is not permitted at any stage nor is substitution of non-responding households or individuals. The ESS has a target response rate of 70% and a desired non-contact rate of 3%.
Collection window	Between September and December of the first year i.e. fieldwork for the 2008/09 survey will be conducted in 2008.
Planning process	
Who is involved in the planning process?	The Central Coordination Team is responsible for the design and coordination of the European Social Survey. A structure has been adopted that combines central co-ordination with input from all participating countries, and independent advice from teams of academic experts (see <i>Expert panels</i> above).
When are the questionnaires finalised?	The main questionnaire is finalised approximately four months before fieldwork starts.
What modules are included?	The questionnaire includes two main sections, each consisting of approximately 120 items; a 'core' module which remains relatively constant from round to round, plus two or more 'rotating' modules, repeated at intervals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2002/03: Two rotating modules: Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy; Immigration. 50 items each. • 2004/05: Three rotating modules: Family, work and well-being (60 items); Opinions on health and care seeking (30 items) and Economic Morality in Europe: Market, Society and Citizenship (30 items) • 2006/07: Two rotating modules: Personal & Social Well-being: Creating indicators for a flourishing Europe (50 items) and The Timing of Life: The organisation of the life course in Europe (50 items). • 2008/09: Two rotating modules: Experiences and Expressions of Ageism (50 items), Welfare attitudes in a changing Europe (50 items).
Can countries add their own items?	No.
Links	
Home page for the website	www.europeansocialsurvey.org
To access the data online	To access data files, you have to register as ESS data user. See the ESS Data Archive website: http://ess.nsd.uib.no/
To access the international report	ESS Documentation reports for each round of the survey (and for each participating country) can be found on the ESS Data Archive Website (http://ess.nsd.uib.no/) under the heading 'Survey Documentation'.
How to access the technical reports	The ESS 2002/03 and ESS 2004/05 technical reports are available online at http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=101&Itemid=139
To access national reports	See 'to access the international report' above.
To access a list of research that uses the data	Research based on ESS data available online at http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=110&Itemid=148 . More information also available from the online bibliography hosted by the ESS Data Archive: http://ess.nsd.uib.no/index.jsp?year=2003&country=&module=essbib
Contact email:	An online question form for enquiries is available at: http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/index.php?option=com_contact&task=view&contact_id=27&Itemid=153