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# Representation of European Countries in International Survey Projects: ESS in Comparative Perspective

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## Aim of presentation

Placing ESS in the context of major international survey projects, to discuss its features with respect to:

(1) Data quality

(2) Country coverage

## Context

Longstanding project on Survey Data Recycling (SDR)

SDR is an analytic framework for integrating information from extant survey and non-survey sources to create multi-country multi-years datasets that enable comparative, cross-national research. The main idea is that past and extant survey data can be used under the condition of controlling for data quality.

SDR survey dataset: 22 international survey projects, 89 waves (i.e., project\*wave) and 1,721 national surveys (i.e. project\*wave\*countries); 142 countries/territories, from 1966 to 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014. N= 2, 289,060 respondents.

- Available at: [dataverse](https://dataverse.harvard.edu/). See also: [dataharmonization.org](http://dataharmonization.org)

The SDR framework involves an assessment of the data quality of national surveys from major international survey projects.

## Criteria of project selection

- Academic projects (for non-commercial use)
- Cross-national coverage (min. 3 countries)
- Accessibility of data (data are in public domain)
- Documentation in English
- Population coverage (national representative samples of adult population)
- Time span (preferred continued but also classic studies)

Abbrev.	Survey Project	Time span	Waves	Files	Data Sets	Cases
			Counts			
AFB	Afrobarometer	1999-2009	4	4	66	98942
AMB	Americas Barometer	2004-2012	5	1	92	151341
ARB	Arab Barometer	2006-2011	2	2	16	19684
ASB	Asian Barometer	2001-2011	3	3	30	43691
ASES	Asia Europe Survey	2000	1	1	18	18253
CB	Caucasus Barometer	2009-2012	4	4	12	24621
CDCEE	Consolidation of Democracy (C./East Europe)	1990-2001	2	1	27	28926
CNEP	Comparative National Elections Project	2004-2006	1	8	8	13372
EB	Eurobarometer	1983-2012	7	7	152	138753
EQLS	European Quality of Life Survey	2003-2012	3	1	93	105527
ESS	European Social Survey	2002-2013	6	2	146	281496
EVS/WVS	European Values Study/World Values Survey	1981-2009	9	1	312	423084
ISJP	International Social Justice Project	1991-1996	2	1	21	25805
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme	1985-2013	13	13	363	493243
LB	Latinobarometro	1995-2010	15	15	260	294965
LITS	Life in Transition Survey	2006-2010	2	2	64	67866
NBB	New Baltic Barometer	1993-2004	6	1	18	21601
PA2	Political Action II	1979-1981	1	1	3	4057
PA8NS	Political Action – 8 Nation Study	1973-1976	1	1	8	12588
PPE7N	Political Participation and Equality in 7 Nations	1966-1971	1	7	7	16522
VPCPCE	Values/Political Change, Post-communist E	1993	1	5	5	4723
<b>Total</b>		<b>1966-2013</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>1721</b>	<b>2289060</b>

## Quality-control Indicators (available as metadata in ex-post harmonized datasets )

- a) Survey documentation;**
- b) (In)consistency between data description (e.g. in codebooks, questionnaires) & data records and data records in computer file;**
- c) Computer data records themselves.**

## General Survey Documentation: How were the data collected?

### Answers

Does the survey documentation specify the type of sample used?

Yes = 0

No = 1

Does the survey documentation provide information on the response rate?

Yes = 0

No = 1

Was the questionnaire back-translated or translation checked in some other way?

Yes = 0

No = 1

Is there any evidence that the questionnaire was pre-tested?

Yes = 0

No = 1

Does the documentation show that the fieldwork was controlled?

Yes = 0

No = 1

**Effect of negative answers (No = 1) : Reduction of confidence in the data**

## Quality of surveys according to their documentation

	Summary index (from 0 to 5)		N
<b>International Survey Program</b>	Mean	SD	
<b>European Social Survey</b>	0.01	0.09	136
<b>European Values Study</b>	1.84	1.74	111
<b>World Vaues Survey</b>	2.84	1.55	62
<b>International Social Survey Programme</b>	1.50	1.13	185
<b>Eurobarometer</b>	3.24	0.43	134
<b>New Baltic Barometer</b>	3.17	0.62	18
<b>European Quality of Life Survey</b>	0.32	0.47	87
<b>Life in Transition Surveys</b>	1.87	1.00	43



**Specific Data Description: How consistent are data definitions in documentation with data records?**

**Answers**

**Do variable values in the codebook correspond to values in the data file?**

**Yes = 0**

**No = 1**

**Illegitimate Variable Values  
Misleading Variable Values  
Contradictory Variable Values  
Variable Values Discrepancy  
Lack of Variable Value Labels**

**Effect of negative answers (No = 1): Decrease of interpretability of the data**

## Computer Data File: Are the data formally correct?

## Answers

**Do survey cases (respondents) have unique identification numbers (IDs)?**

**Yes = 0**

**No = 1**

**Are survey weights free of formal errors?**

**Yes = 0**

**No = 1**

**Is the proportion of missing values for gender and age within the standard limits (< 5%)?**

**Yes = 0**

**No = 1**

**Is the data file free from repeated cases (duplicates)?**

**Yes = 0**

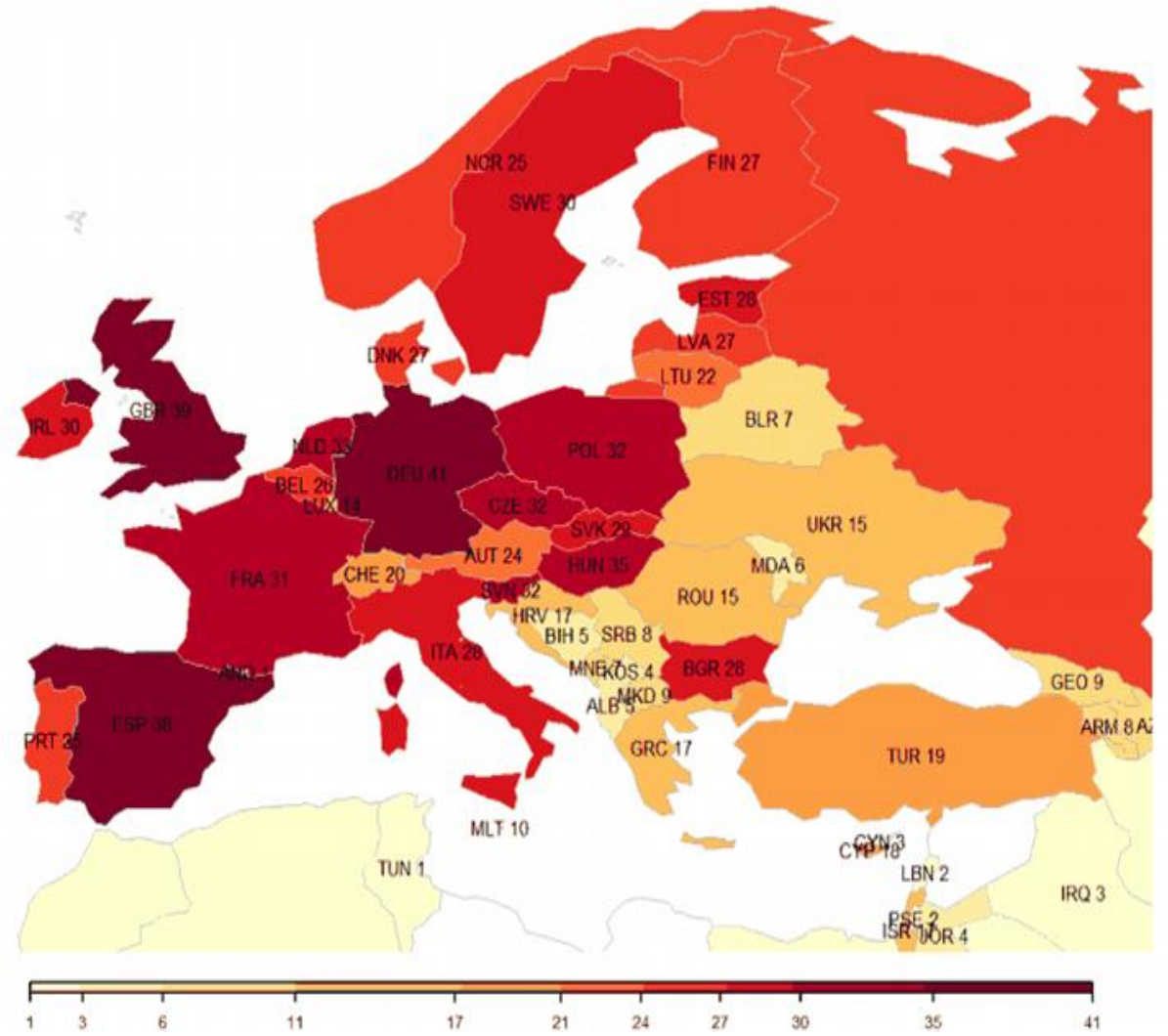
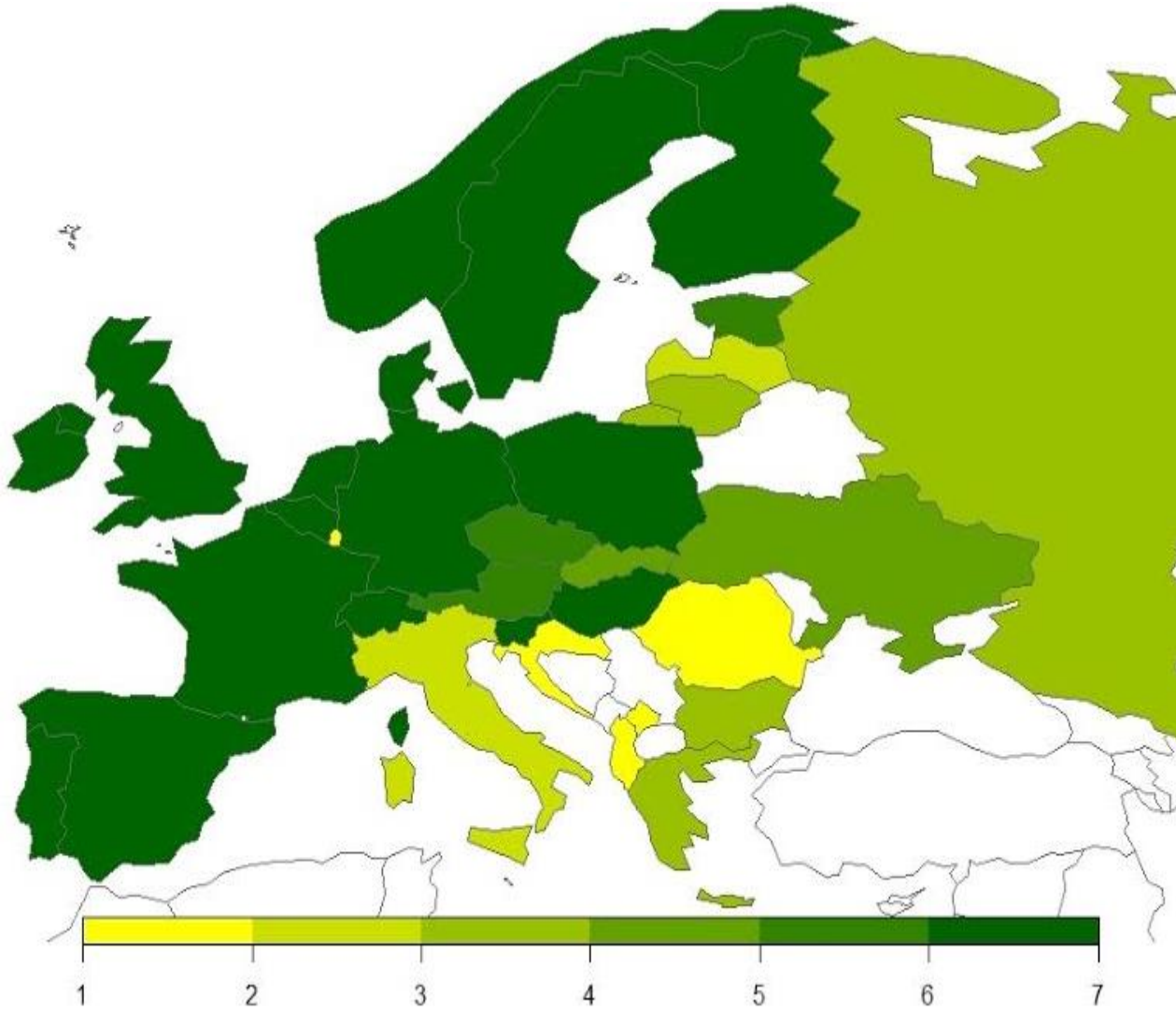
**No = 1**

**Effect of negative answers (No = 1) : Possible distortion of the research results based on the data**

## Issues for comparative analyses with ESS: Country coverage

- (1) Long-term comparative analyses including period before 2002**
- (2) Comparative analyses including countries not covered by ESS at all or not covered in the integrated file (cumulative data / wizard)**

Coverage in ESS (green) and in Harmonization dataset (red)



Coverage of Visegrad countries in international survey projects before 2002

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Coverage</b>		
	<b>1981- 1991</b>	<b>1992- 2002</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Poland</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>44</b>

Covarage of countries that the ESS1-7 integrated file (cummulative data/wizard) does not include by other international survey projects

Countries	Coverage		
	1981- 2001	2002-2014	Total
Albania	1	3	4
Belarus	4	2	6
Bosnia & Herzegovina	2	6	8
Latvia	6	6	12
Kosovo	-	4	4
Macedonia	2	4	6
Moldova	1	3	4
Montenegro	2	4	6
Romania	5	5	10
Serbia	2	5	7
Total	25	42	67

Using data from different international survey projects

**The idea of survey data recycling:**

- **Data quality can be described, measured, and accounted for.**
- **ESS is of good quality. If other surveys are to be analyzed together with ESS, the data must be controlled by indicators of data quality.**







## Quality of surveys according to the data description

	Summary index (from 0 to 1)		Waves
	Mean	SD	
<b>International Survey Program</b>			
<b>European Social Survey</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>European Values Study</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>World Vaues Survey</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>International Social Survey Programme</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Eurobarometer</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>New Baltic Barometer</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>European Quality of Life Survey</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>0.23</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Life in Transition Surveys</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>2</b>

## Countries not included in ESS, 2002-2014

**Belarus**

**Bosnia & Herzegovina**

**Latvia**

**Macedonia**

**Moldova**

**Montenegro**

**Serbia**

**The case of**