

European Social Survey

**Monitoring attitude change
in over 30 countries**

“ This ambitious project has been inspired and initiated by Europe’s main national academic funding agencies, the European Science Foundation and the European Commission. It now has around 35 separate funders, each **dedicated to discovering more about changes in Europe’s social, political and cultural fabric.** Each funder is as determined as we are to improve methods of quantitative social measurement in Europe and beyond, providing a means by which societies may judge themselves – at least partly – according to how their citizens feel about and fare in the world they inhabit. ”

Professor Roger Jowell
ESS Coordinator

About the European Social Survey

Since 2001, the European Social Survey (ESS) has been mapping long-term attitudinal and behavioural changes in Europe's social, political and moral climate.

Covering attitudes to religion, politics, moral issues and pressing policy concerns, the data reveal intriguing contrasts and similarities between over 30 European countries.

This rigorous comparative research is used to inform academic and political debate, allowing scholars, policy-makers, think tanks and other interested parties to measure and interpret changes over time in people's values.

It is the first social science project to win Europe's prestigious Descartes Prize "for excellence in collaborative scientific research", and is also one of the first to become a European Commission 'Infrastructure', a recognition of how much the ESS's high technical and academic standards are advancing the field of comparative social measurement.

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Monitoring change, advancing methods

The European Social Survey is a long-term project that aims to understand modern Europe and the changes within it.

In an age when European governance is changing and democratic engagement by citizens is in a state of flux, understanding attitudinal change takes on a new importance.

Each new survey in the series provides another layer of accurate data to inform academic debate and European governance.

It allows governments, policy analysts, scholars and members of the public to interpret how people in different countries and at different times see themselves and the world around them.

By adopting rigorous approaches to probability sampling, question-testing, event-recording, translation and response rate enhancement, the ESS has become *the* authoritative source of information about changing social values in a changing Europe.

With a view to exchanging best practice worldwide, all of the ESS's protocols, methods, procedures and data are made immediately available to all on its website. It is transparent about both its shortcomings and its successes.



Putting responses into context

Events can profoundly affect attitudes and perceptions, whether in the short or longer term. A single act of terrorism, for instance, can change the context of people's responses to a range of issues – affecting answers differently in different countries.

That is why **ESS National Coordinators monitor and record key media reports in each country** during the course of fieldwork that are likely to have at least a temporary impact on the survey responses. This helps to ensure that current and future data analysts are aware of the national context in which questions were answered.

Uncovering key issues

Questionnaires at each round of the survey, which takes place every two years, cover a range of topics that tap into key issues facing contemporary Europe.

Developed by leading European subject specialists, the questionnaire combines continuity with change through a consistent core module and a series of rotating modules – selected via a Europe-wide competition.

Core module

Repeated each round, it contains twelve broad topics that form one half of an hour-long interview.

- Trust in institutions
- National, ethnic, religious identity
- Political engagement
- Well-being, health and security
- Socio-political values
- Demographic composition
- Moral and social values
- Education and occupation
- Social capital
- Financial circumstances
- Social exclusion
- Household circumstances

Rotating modules

The other half of the interview is changed each round and consists of new modules designed in conjunction with leading academic specialists.

Round 1

Immigration and asylum
Citizen involvement and democracy

Round 2

Family, work and well-being
Economic morality
Health and care seeking

Round 3

Personal and social well-being
Perceptions of the life course



More than just translation

Words such as ‘**democracy**’ or ‘**social life**’ or ‘**unification**’ can mean different things to different people at different times in different countries. So **the ESS annotates its source questionnaire in an attempt to ensure that a translation conveying the same meaning is used** in all countries.

This is part of a team approach to translation involving several stages of review, adjudication, pre-testing and documentation. To ensure appropriate coverage, the questionnaire is translated into all languages spoken as a first language by more than five per cent of each country’s population.

Funded from multiple sources

With the twin aims of monitoring social change and improving social measurement, the European Social Survey is now core-funded for at least four rounds until the end of 2009.

Its funding comes from a combination of sources:

- The European Commission, which funds the project's overall design, coordination and control
- The European Science Foundation, which meets the cost of its academic and scientific liaison
- National academic funding bodies, which provide funding for their own country's fieldwork and coordination.

All funding is conditional on the survey being conducted according to a detailed set of specifications drawn up by the Central Coordinating Team, thus ensuring that the survey is conducted to the same high standards and with equivalent methods in all countries.

The European Commission also funds the ESS as an infrastructure, allowing it to run a series of seminars, provide long-term access to its data and protocols and to conduct a major programme of methodological research.

32 participating countries to date

Although still in its infancy, the European Social Survey has already attracted considerable interest and

influence in Europe and beyond, and secured participation from a growing group of nations both inside and outside the EU.

Country	R1	R2	R3	Country	R1	R2	R3
Austria	•	•	•	Latvia			•
Belgium	•	•	•	Luxembourg	•	•	
Bulgaria			•	Netherlands	•	•	•
Cyprus			•	Norway	•	•	•
Czech Republic	•	•		Poland	•	•	•
Denmark	•	•	•	Portugal	•	•	•
Estonia		•	•	Romania			•
Finland	•	•	•	Russia			•
France	•	•	•	Slovakia		•	•
Germany	•	•	•	Slovenia	•	•	•
Greece	•	•		Spain	•	•	•
Hungary	•	•	•	Sweden	•	•	•
Iceland		•		Switzerland	•	•	•
Ireland	•	•	•	Turkey		•	
Israel	•			Ukraine		•	•
Italy	•	•		UK	•	•	•



Getting closer to the facts

The quality of any survey project ultimately stands or falls by the quality of its fieldwork. Rather than use a single multi-national survey organisation for its fieldwork, the **ESS encourages each country to commission fieldwork from the agency best able to meet the ESS's exacting specifications.**

The result has been unusually high and consistent standards of data collection.

Unrestricted access

A unique quantitative source of data about changing European values, the European Social Survey makes its data immediately and freely available to all.

Access to the ESS datasets, each covering over 20 countries and over 30,000 face-to-face interviews across Europe, is available via the ESS's data website (<http://ess.nsd.uib.no>). Highly user-friendly, it offers data users the options of conducting simple analyses on-line, and of downloading all or parts of the dataset for more detailed or complex analyses. A web-based training tutorial, ESS EduNet, is also available to aid the less experienced user.

There are no restrictions on access, nor any privileged arrangements for certain users. So scholars, journalists, researchers, the general public and those most intimately involved in

running the project all have equal and simultaneous access to each round's findings. In addition, they have access to a comprehensive technical report and supporting data that describe and explain all aspects of the project.

Around 10,000 registered data users had already begun quarrying the ESS datasets within three years of its first release, producing analyses, journal articles, conference papers, newspaper articles and books in several languages.



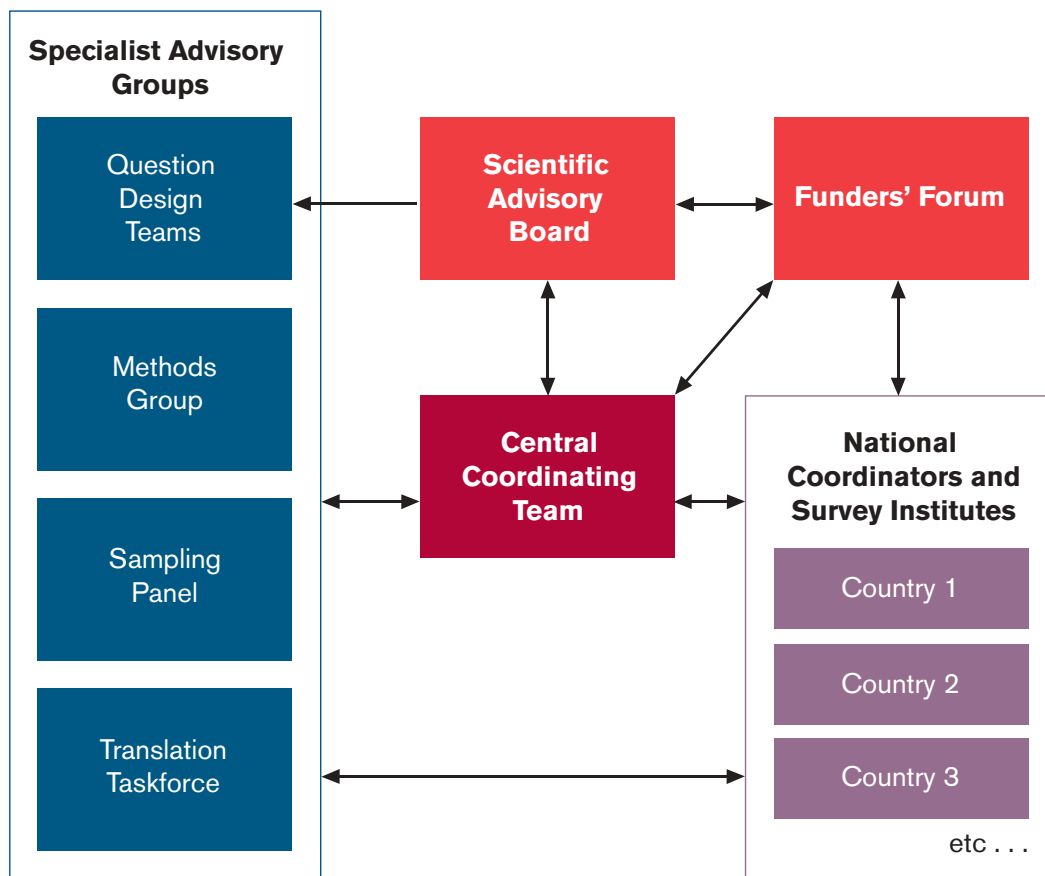
Informing public policy

Because an understanding of public attitudes is critical to formulating public policy, especially in an era of falling political participation and electoral turnout, **the ESS is likely to have a major impact over time on European governance.**

It differs from surveys which confine themselves to data about people's behaviour or social circumstances, and probes the cultural and political attitudes of the population – how people think and feel about themselves and their world. Its other key difference lies in the high scientific standards it employs, many of which had previously been regarded as unattainable in a survey of this nature.

Organisational structure

The European Social Survey team works with scholars and survey organisations all over Europe, and its organisational structure reflects this.



Who's who

The Central Coordinating Team

Led by City University, this six-nation team has overall responsibility for the project as a whole. It meets regularly to coordinate the work of both national and specialist teams.

City University, UK

Roger Jowell, *ESS Coordinator*

Rory Fitzgerald
Caroline Roberts
Gillian Eva
Mary Keane

University of Leuven, Belgium

Jaak Billiet

NSD, Norway

Bjørn Henrichsen
Kirstine Kolsrud
Knut Skjåk
Atle Jåstad

ZUMA, Germany

Peter Mohler
Janet Harkness
Sabine Häder
Achim Koch

ESADE, Spain

Willem Saris
Irmtraud Gallhofer

SCP, Netherlands

Ineke Stoop

Methods Group

A multinational group of survey methodologists guides the project's technical innovations.

Denise Lievesley, *Health and Social Care Information Centre, UK*

Norman Bradburn, *NORC, USA*

Paolo Garonna, *UN Economic Commission for Europe, Switzerland*

Lars Lyberg, *Statistics Sweden*

Vasja Vehovar, *University of Ljubljana, Slovenia*

Sampling Panel

A specialist team of statisticians advises and signs off sample designs for all countries.

Sabine Häder, *ZUMA, Germany*

Siegfried Gabler, *ZUMA, Germany*

Seppo Laaksonen, *University of Helsinki, Finland*

Peter Lynn, *University of Essex, UK*

Translation Taskforce

An expert group also guides the translation process, to ensure the equivalence of questions in all languages.

Janet Harkness, *ZUMA, Germany*

Beth-Ellen Pennell, *University of Michigan, USA*

Alisú Schoua Glusberg, *Research Support Services, USA*

Paul Kussmaul, *Johannes Gutenberg University, Germany*

Scientific Advisory Board and National Coordinators

Chaired by **Max Kaase**, the project's multi-national Scientific Advisory Board includes representatives from each participating country, and two representatives each from the European Commission and the European Science Foundation.

Each national survey is overseen by a National Coordinator and carried out by a leading national survey organisation, which is selected and funded by its respective national academic funding agency.

Central Coordinating Team



From left to right

Roger Jowell, *ESS Coordinator, CCT, City University*

Rory Fitzgerald, *CCT, City University*

Caroline Roberts, *CCT, City University*

Gillian Eva, *CCT, City University*



Mary Keane, *CCT, City University*

Peter Mohler, *CCT, ZUMA*

Janet Harkness, *CCT, ZUMA*

Sabine Häder, *CCT, ZUMA*



Achim Koch, *CCT, ZUMA*

Bjørn Henriksen, *CCT, NSD*

Knut Skjåk, *CCT, NSD*

Kirstine Kolsrud, *CCT, NSD*



Willem Saris, *CCT, ESADE*

Jaak Billiet, *CCT, Leuven*

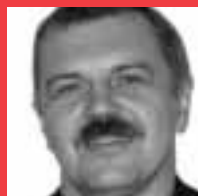
Ineke Stoop, *CCT, SCP*



Max Kaase, *Chair, SAB*

Denise Lievesley, *Chair, Methods*

National Coordinators



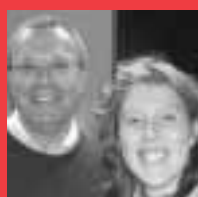
From left to right

Anna Andreenkova, NC Russia

Alison Park, NC UK

Andrii Gorbachyk, NC Ukraine

Brina Malnar, NC Slovenia



Dominique Joye, NC and the Swiss team

Geert Loosveldt, NC Belgium

Harry Ganzeboom, NC

Netherlands and Saskia Opdam

Heikki Ervasti, NC Finland

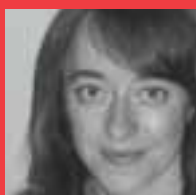


Jan van Deth, NC Germany

Jorge Vala, NC and the Portuguese team

Jozef Vyrost, NC Slovak Republic

Kairi Talves, NC Estonia



Klára Plecítá-Vlachova, NC Czech Republic

Kristen Ringdal, NC Norway

Lilia Dimova, NC Bulgaria

Mariano Torcal, NC Spain



Mihaela Vlasceanu, NC Romania

Mikael Hjerm, NC Sweden

Nicolas Sauger, NC France

Noah Lewin-Epstein, NC Israel



Pawel Sztabinski, NC Poland

Spyros Spyrou and Antonis

Theocharous, NCs Cyprus

Susana Ferreira, NC Ireland

Torben Fridberg, NC Denmark



Yannis Voulgaris, NC Greece

Karl Mueller, NC Austria

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