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# **EU RESEARCH ON SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**

***European Social Survey –  
Development and Round 1***

***ESSIE***

**FINAL REPORT**

EUR 23137

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# **EU RESEARCH ON SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**

## **European Social Survey — Development and Round 1**

**ESSIE**

**Final report**

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**Funded under the Key Action  
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## Preface

Within the Fifth Community RTD Framework Programme of the European Union (1998–2002), the Key Action 'Improving the Socio-economic Knowledge Base' had broad and ambitious objectives, namely: to improve our understanding of the structural changes taking place in European society, to identify ways of managing these changes and to promote the active involvement of European citizens in shaping their own futures. A further important aim was to mobilise the research communities in the social sciences and humanities at the European level and to provide scientific support to policies at various levels, with particular attention to EU policy fields.

This Key Action had a total budget of EUR 155 million and was implemented through three Calls for proposals. As a result, 185 projects involving more than 1 600 research teams from 38 countries have been selected for funding and have started their research between 1999 and 2002.

Most of these projects are now finalised and results are systematically published in the form of a Final Report.

The calls have addressed different but interrelated research themes which have contributed to the objectives outlined above. These themes can be grouped under a certain number of areas of policy relevance, each of which are addressed by a significant number of projects from a variety of perspectives.

These areas are the following:

- ***Societal trends and structural change***

16 projects, total investment of EUR 14.6 million, 164 teams

- ***Quality of life of European citizens***

5 projects, total investment of EUR 6.4 million, 36 teams

- ***European socio-economic models and challenges***

9 projects, total investment of EUR 9.3 million, 91 teams

- ***Social cohesion, migration and welfare***

30 projects, total investment of EUR 28 million, 249 teams

- ***Employment and changes in work***

18 projects, total investment of EUR 17.5 million, 149 teams

- ***Gender, participation and quality of life***

13 projects, total investment of EUR 12.3 million, 97 teams

- ***Dynamics of knowledge, generation and use***

8 projects, total investment of EUR 6.1 million, 77 teams

- ***Education, training and new forms of learning***

14 projects, total investment of EUR 12.9 million, 105 teams

- ***Economic development and dynamics***

22 projects, total investment of EUR 15.3 million, 134 teams

- ***Governance, democracy and citizenship***

28 projects; total investment of EUR 25.5 million, 233 teams

- ***Challenges from European enlargement***

13 projects, total investment of EUR 12.8 million, 116 teams

- ***Infrastructures to build the European research area***

9 projects, total investment of EUR 15.4 million, 74 teams

This publication contains the final report of the project 'European Social Survey – Development and Round 1', whose work has primarily contributed to the area 'Individual and collective strategies in a changing society'.

The report contains information about the main scientific findings of ESSIE and their policy implications. The research was carried out by six teams over a period of 42 months, starting in June 2001.

The abstract and executive summary presented in this edition offer the reader an overview of the main scientific and policy conclusions, before the main body of the research provided in the other chapters of this report.

As the results of the projects financed under the Key Action become available to the scientific and policy communities, Priority 7 'Citizens and Governance in a knowledge based society' of the Sixth Framework Programme is building on the progress already made and aims at making a further contribution to the development of a European Research Area in the social sciences and the humanities.

I hope readers find the information in this publication both interesting and useful as well as clear evidence of the importance attached by the European Union to fostering research in the field of social sciences and the humanities.

J.-M. BAER,

Director

## Table of contents

Preface	v
<b>I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1. Background to the study</b>	<b>13</b>
1.1.Objectives of the study	14
1.2. ESS and the Fifth Framework	15
<b>2. Background to the scientific description of project results &amp; methodology</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1. Organisation	16
2.2. Funding	16
2.3. Common specification	17
2.4. Sampling	17
2.5. Questionnaire Design	17
2.6. Rotating Modules and Questionnaire Design Teams	18
2.7. Two-nation Pilot	18
2.8. Translation	18
2.9. Fieldwork	19
2.10. Context and Event Data	19
2.11. Question Assessment	20
2.12. Quality Assessment	20
2.13. Contract adherence and deviations	22
2.14. Data Archiving and website	23
2.15. Data Releases	23
2.16. Methodological Work	24
<b>3. Policy Implications of the ESS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>4. Dissemination and exploitation of the results</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>II. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>1. Background to the study</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>2. Objectives of the study</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>3. ESS and the Fifth Framework</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>III. SCIENTIFIC DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>1. Organisation and funding</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>1.1. The Central Co-ordinating Team</b>	<b>33</b>
1.2. The creation of an infrastructure	34

1.3. Funding arrangements	36
1.4. A common specification for all participating countries	36
<b>2. Sampling</b>	<b>37</b>
2.1. Principles and requirements of sampling for the ESS	37
2.2. "Signing off" of sampling designs	39
2.3. Variety and equivalence	39
2.4. General assessment	46
<b>3. Questionnaire design</b>	<b>47</b>
3.1. Determining the content of the core	47
3.2. The questionnaire design process	52
3.3. Rotating modules and Questionnaire Design Teams	54
3.4. The 'Attitudes to Immigration and Asylum' module	55
3.5. The 'Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy' module	57
3.6. The two-nation pilot	60
3.7. Analysis of the pilot	60
<b>4. Translation</b>	<b>62</b>
4.1. Process and method	62
4.2. Application of TRAPD	63
4.3. Procedures for countries with 'shared' languages	65
4.4. Selecting translators, reviewers and adjudicators	67
4.5. Annotating the questionnaire	67
4.6. Translation and documentation	68
<b>5. Fieldwork</b>	<b>69</b>
5.1. Specification	69
5.2. Fieldwork details	70
<b>6. Context/event data</b>	<b>73</b>
6.1. Contextual data	73
6.2 Event data	73
<b>7. Question assessment</b>	<b>76</b>
7.1. Correcting for quality differences	76
7.2. MTMM design for ESS Round 1	77
7.3. Selection of experiments and meta-analysis	78
7.4. Results of the MTMM experiments	79
7.5. Conclusions	82
<b>8. Quality assessment</b>	<b>82</b>
8.1. Differences in non-response	82
8.2. Reducing non-contacts by interviewer calling strategies	84

8.3. Reducing refusals	86
8.4. Quality assessment of the responses	88
8.5. Interviewer reports	89
8.6. Item non-response	89
8.7. Systematic response tendencies	91
8.8. Cross-cultural measurement equivalence	91
<b>9. Contract adherence and deviations</b>	<b>92</b>
9.1. Content of contracts	92
9.2. Progress checking of fieldwork	92
9.3 Compliance and divergence	92
<b>10. Data Archiving and website</b>	<b>99</b>
10.1 Data Protocol	99
10.2 National Technical Summaries (NTS)	99
10.3 Data editing and processing	100
10.4. Transparency and security	102
10.5. Data releases	102
10.6. The ESS Data Web Site	102
<b>11. Methodological work</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>IV. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>105</b>
1. Why social attitudes matter	105
2. Methodological fallout from the ESS	107
3. Developing new European social indicators	108
<b>V. DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS</b>	<b>111</b>
1. European Social Survey Publicity and Dissemination across Europe	111
2. CCT presentations and publications	118
2.1. Presentations	118
2.2. Publications	125
<b>VI. REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>VII. ANNEXES</b>	<b>132</b>

<b>1. Expert Group on a European Social Survey – List of Members</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>2. Steering Committee - List of Members</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>3. Methodology Committee - List of Members</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>4. Round 1 Rotating Modules Advertisement</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>5. Round 1 Rotating Module Teams</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>6. Who's who in the ESS (Round 1)</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>7. Specification for participating countries</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>8. Effective Sample Size</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>9. Additional Materials on Translation</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>10. Status of electronic deliverables</b>	<b>173</b>

## **Abstract**

The European Social Survey (ESS) is a new multi-country biennial survey, the first round of which comprised 22 nations. It has two main aims. First, it seeks to measure, monitor and interpret changing public attitudes within Europe and the way in which they interact with Europe's changing institutions. Second, it seeks to advance and consolidate improved methods of cross-national quantitative measurement within Europe and beyond.

Drawing on the best examples at national and international level, the ESS has already produced a rich, publicly available dataset. The format in which it is available makes it easily accessible not only to the social science and policy communities in Europe and beyond, but also to the mass media and other interested users via the World Wide Web. The dataset is freely available without charge to any interested user.

The ESS has been designed as a regular biennial study that will measure change over time. The questionnaire is in two parts. A core section comprises a stable set of key measures designed to monitor critical aspects of social change within and between countries over time. A second section comprises rotating modules, the content of which changes at each round in response to a Europe-wide competition for proposals. In Round 1 these modules were on 'Attitudes to Immigration' and 'Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy' respectively.

Round 1 has provided benchmark measures which, when supplemented by data from future rounds, will provide evidence on the speed and direction of change in underlying public values over time. Even in an increasingly well-documented age, such data have hitherto been far from widely available. In addition, the ESS has attempted to pioneer and 'prove' a standard of methodology for cross-national attitude surveys that has hitherto not been considered achievable.

In these respects and others, the ESS aims to be highly innovative. In numerous respects – such as its sampling standards, questionnaire design, measurement methods, translation protocols, event monitoring, response enhancement, fieldwork management, data deposit and dissemination – the ESS has broken fresh ground and is already proving influential.

The project's impact on governance within an expanding EU is likely to be considerable, allowing shifts in social attitudes, definitively measured, to play a more transparent role in European governance than has hitherto been possible. Via the ESS, future policies should be able to be evaluated not against sure-fire opinion data measuring pro and anti

views on specific policies, but against a more sophisticated appreciation of people's underlying values and how they are changing. In an era of falling political participation and electoral turnout, such data help to mitigate the democratic deficit.

The unprecedented demand for the ESS data set throughout Europe from the very moment it became available is testimony to its perceived value and utility. It was given a welcome boost by the Commission's decision to host a major launch conference in Brussels at which the data and methodology were introduced to an enthusiastic audience of academics, policy-makers and commentators from all corners of Europe. Since then, the project team has reinforced the interest through a concerted programme of continuing dissemination.

## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The European Social Survey (ESS) is a new multi-country biennial survey covering 22 nations. Its twin aims are:

- to monitor and interpret public attitudes and values within Europe and to investigate how they interact with Europe's changing institutions;
- to advance and consolidate improved methods of cross-national survey measurement in Europe and beyond.

### **1. Background to the study**

The European Social Foundation (ESF) set up an expert panel to investigate the desirability and feasibility of an academically-led European-wide 'general social survey.' The panel reported unanimously that a regular, rigorous ESS would be a major asset to European governance, as well as to the academic community in Europe and beyond.

The ESS was established on the basis of two main aims. Firstly, the measurement and monitoring of underlying public attitudes, values and beliefs in Europe. The second key aim being to improve cross-national survey methodology in general. This was against a background where, the expert panel concluded, a major new initiative was now needed. This was because all existing cross-national European surveys were focused on the contrasting characteristics of Europeans (who we are and how we behave). The major gap in knowledge, therefore, was about Europe's contrasting character (how we think and feel about our world and ourselves). The ESS was therefore a significant challenge but the returns from its success would clearly be considerable. Steering and Methodology committees were duly appointed to devise a blue print for the ESS.

The European Commission has core funded the project, under Call 2 of Framework 5, to cover the co-ordination of the study. Meanwhile the ESF has met the costs of the scientific liaison and multinational advisory committee meetings. The national survey costs and associated national co-ordination have both been met from national sources.

Twenty-two nations joined the ESS in Round 1. For the first time in Europe a cross-national study was funded on the basis of identical ground rules laid down in a central specification. The ESS was thus an early example of the European Research Area at work. It is also an example of the highest quality in cross-national social survey research.

## **1.1.Objectives of the study**

To produce rigorous trend data about changes in people's underlying values.

To understand social and economic condition all societies require accurate data about themselves. One of the central roles of ESS is plugging a major gap in this area at a European level. This trend data had not been available at a European level and ESS Round 1 was the first step in meeting this need.

Drawing on the best examples at national level in Europe and beyond, ESS has produced a number of publicly available datasets. The formats in which they are available mean that it is accessible not only to the social science and policy communities in Europe and abroad but also to the mass media and all other interested users via the World Wide Web.

The ESS has been designed as a regular biennial study that will measure change over time. The questionnaire has been structured into two parts. A core section that is made up of a stable set of key measures designed to monitor critical aspects of social change within and between countries over time. The content of the rotating modules will be different at each round. In Round 1 these modules were on 'Attitudes to Immigration' and 'Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy' respectively.

Complementing the Eurostat series, the ESS aims to chart and try to explain the most important social and political trends of the period. This has been done in tandem with the compilation of 'event data' to enable future analysts to take account of important major national (or international) events that may have affected the responses in different nations at different times.

### ***To surmount the long standing obstacles to comparability in the conduct of cross-national surveys***

The ESS has an equally important methodological objective to complement its substantive role. Existing cross-national studies either had a behavioural or factual focus or could not be reinvented to meet the demands of the new research series. The European social science and policy communities could no longer rely on inadequate, inconsistent and often unrepresentative snippets of attitudinal data. Cross-national research needed to be bolstered by major advances in cross-national attitude measurement and ESS had a major methodological focus to meet this challenge.

The ESS has therefore had a methodological rigour that is unusually strict for a dispersed cross-national attitude survey. Each participating nation has had to ensure contract

adherence across a wide range of issues from sampling, questionnaire design, event and context measuring, translation, fieldwork standards, response rates and archiving. In turn, any deviations from these specifications that have occurred have been documented so that they are transparent to all users of the data. Furthermore a programme of methods experimentation has been embedded in the project with the aim of improving comparative survey methods more generally.

***To achieve recognition for reliable social indicators and attitudinal measures of national success or failure***

ESS Round 1 funding stopped short of substantive analysis for the data. The final Round 1 output was the launch of a publicly-accessible and freely available dataset on the Internet. A longer and equally important objective of the ESS is to achieve greater recognition for reliable social indicators and attitudinal measures to compliment the behavioural and structural indicators by which societal well-being is judged.

**1.2. ESS and the Fifth Framework**

The ESS has been designed to fulfill Tasks 1, 6 and 2 of the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework's Guiding Principles. The objectives and substantive issues covered by the ESS address these principles, namely: the 'management of societal change'; issues surrounding citizenship and governance in a multinational context; the 'complex inter-relationships between cultural, economic and other contexts as well as the perceived 'magnitude and pace of structural changes'.

The main objective of the first round of the ESS was to design, develop and run one round of a conceptually well-anchored and methodologically bullet-proof study of changing social attitudes and values in up to 15 European nations. The ESS has achieved this in 22 nations. The project is the start of a new, academically-driven, biennial survey which will chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions, its political and economic structures, and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations. Its data and outputs are now freely available to social and policy communities throughout Europe and beyond. They are also available to the citizens of Europe and the world.

Round 1 has provided a benchmark that, when complemented by data from future rounds, will provide reliable information about the speed and direction of change in people's underlying attitudes and values which, even in this increasingly well-documented age, has thus far been deficient. In turn the study has pioneered and aims

to 'prove' a standard of methodology for cross-national attitude surveys that has hitherto not been attempted anywhere in the world.

This End of Grant Report, prepared for the European Commission, documents the progress made in Round 1 of the project.

## **2. Background to the scientific description of project results & methodology**

The ESS, a cross-national survey with high substantive and methodological aims has now been successfully fielded in 22 disparate countries. A dataset reflecting this process is publicly available. The ESS has broken new ground and achieved consistently higher standards than anticipated at such an early stage of its development.

### **2.1. Organisation**

The project has an intellectual and administrative infrastructure that has supported its development and implementation.

The Central Co-ordinating Team (CCT) is made up of a variety of skills and disciplines amongst its member institutions and individuals which have allowed it to effectively design, steer and deliver Round 1 of the ESS to the exacting standards demanded. Led by Professor Jowell and his team at the National Centre for Social Research (now at City University), the other partners are based at Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen, Germany, Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, Netherlands, Universiteit van Amsterdam School of Communications Research, Netherlands, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium and Norwegian Social Science Data Services, Norway.

In addition, a wider network has been established to bolster the work of the CCT. This includes a Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), a network of National Co-ordinators, survey houses, an expert multi-nation Methods Group and a Funders Forum.

The CCT and SAB also appointed or convened various working groups. This included two expert multi-nation Questionnaire Design Teams, a multi-nation Sampling Panel and a multi-nation Translation Taskforce

### **2.2. Funding**

The ESS is funded from 24 separate sources. The European Science Foundation provided seed-funding as well as support for the projects academic liaison and meetings in Round 1. Under Framework 5, Call 2, Commission-funding established the project on a firm footing. The bulk of the funding for ESS comes from 22 national funding agencies, each of which independently associate their nation with the project.

### **2.3. Common specification**

There was a standard specification for all participating organisations on ESS Round 1 containing the methods, protocols and procedures that had to be followed. The specification aimed to ensure a high quality project and adherence to it was a requirement for a countries' data to be included in the integrated ESS dataset. The precision of this specification has set new standards in cross-national comparative research.

### **2.4. Sampling**

Sabine Haeder (ZUMA) oversaw the ESS sample design. The strategy was based on the principles of Kish. These state that although sample designs might be flexible in respect of their sources and precise selection methods, equivalence can still be achieved. A random probability sampling design was therefore established as the central element of ESS sampling.

A Sampling Panel advised each country and eventually 'signed off' on each country's design. Through immense variety, the Sampling Panel ultimately achieved equivalence across the participating nations.

All participating countries, including those who rarely applied strict probability methods, worked successfully with the Sampling Panel to meet the stringent requirements of the ESS. However, some response rates were poor and need to be improved in future rounds. Other countries failed to meet their numerical targets either because of lower than anticipated response rates or inadequate budgets

### **2.5. Questionnaire Design**

The ESS interview consisted of a main face-to-face interview, that was around an hour in duration, followed by a short self-completion supplement.

The main interview includes a core module that lasts half an hour. This module will remain largely unchanged for the life of the ESS. It was complemented by two 'rotating modules' which will be repeated on the ESS at far longer intervals. These modules provided an in-depth focus on particular topics. The core, on the other hand, has provided a baseline measurement against which it will be possible to measure change and continuity in a wide range of socio-economic, socio-political, socio-psychological and socio-demographic variables. After wide consultation the focus of the core was set in 3 broad domains:

- a) People's value orientations.
- b) People's cultural and national orientations.
- c) The underlying social structure of society.

## **2.6. Rotating Modules and Questionnaire Design Teams**

Following open competition two Questionnaire Design Teams were selected for Round 1 of the ESS. The teams selected were:

- a) ***Attitudes to Immigration*** - headed by Ian Preston at University College in the UK. A better understanding of opinion formation about immigrants and ethnic minorities, and of the factors that influence them, were long overdue. Few issues of public policy were more contentious or in need of serious scientifically-driven research.
- b) ***Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy*** - headed by Ken Newton at Southampton University in the UK. This module addressed the notion that modern western society is suffering from a range of domestic problems ranging from a decline in election turnout, a loss of trust in politicians, a loss of trust in institutions and government and a general feeling of dissatisfaction with politics.

## **2.7. Two-nation Pilot**

A pilot was held in Britain and the Netherlands in early 2002 to test the core, rotating modules and the supplementary questionnaire. The key finding was that the core questionnaire was too long and would require significant cuts. In addition findings were made in relation to item reliability, the distribution of responses across response scales, levels of 'don't knows', missing values on particular items and the impact of using showcards on 11-point scales.

## **2.8. Translation**

A specialist multi-nation Translation Taskforce, chaired by Janet Harkness of ZUMA, was set up to develop and implement the most appropriate approach to ESS translation. There were a number of important factors that underpinned the translation process. These included translating the questionnaire into all languages spoken by 5% or more of the population, ensuring optimally equivalent translations that would stand the test of time and fully documenting the process so that it could be understood and appreciated by scholars and other analysts.

The Translation Taskforce ensured that a uniform system of translation was used in each country. This involved Translation, Review, Adjudication, Pre-testing and Documentation (TRAPAD).

### **2.9. Fieldwork**

A clear specification for fieldwork was provided to each country. This included a 70% target response rate, a maximum non-contact rate of 70% and a 90% response rate to the Supplementary Questionnaire. In addition, there was a requirement to complete fieldwork over a minimum of 30 days but within a 4 month period. A minimum number of calls, at each issued sample unit at specified times was also required.

Seven of the ESS countries achieved or exceeded the 70% target response rate and a further six achieved between 60% and 69%. The other nine disappointingly fell below 60% in Round 1.

The maximum specified non-contact rate of 3% proved to be unachievable in 11 countries although in most cases it was generally lower than national norms.

Unfortunately most countries were unable to complete their fieldwork in the period specified – between September and December 2002.

The majority of countries complied with the specification in terms of maximum assignment sizes for each interviewer.

### **2.10. Context and Event Data**

A database of context and event data has been produced to allow data analysts to identify which national variations might owe more to exogeneous than to attitudinal factors.

In regards to contextual information an annotated inventory of sources of contextual information was established.

In relation to event data each National Co-ordinator was asked to report on major national events that attracted wide and long-lasting attention nationally, major events that make front page news for several subsequent days, as well as elections, major issues under discussion and possible changes to the political landscape. This was important because it was necessary to be aware of the possible effect on responses of socio-political factors in each country before and after fieldwork.

It is not yet possible to tell how much the events identified actually influenced the survey responses in different countries overall. Future analysts of the ESS data will appreciate being able to look at the events dataset for possible explanations of difficult-to-explain differences between nations.

### **2.11. Question Assessment**

Question assessment was an integral component of ESS Round 1. The experiments were designed to evaluate data quality and in particular the reliability and validity of the questions in different countries. Multitrait Multimethod (MTMM) experiments formed the central plank of this work.

Twelve extra questions were added to the main questionnaire and 24 extra questions were included in Supplementary Questionnaires for six MTMM experiments. MTMM experiments were employed in both the pilot and Main stages of ESS Round 1. The experiments were designed to look at issues such as open questions, frequencies or amounts versus 7-point category scales, 11-point bipolar scales with show cards versus the same questions without them and batteries of agree/disagree items versus direct questions with construct specific responses.

The conclusions of the work showed that the choices made to improve the quality of the questions in the main questionnaire had generally had a positive effect on the quality of the data. In most countries the questions used in the main questionnaire were better than possible alternatives in the supplementary questionnaire.

The average level of data quality observed through the experiments was good. Taking all countries and looking at the average variance across all the variables examined we see that 69% is due to the trait being measured, 5% to systematic error and 26% to random measurement error. This is generally considered to be a good result. However, the questions still vary by topic and by country, which remains a concern for a high-quality cross-national project such as the ESS. This will be an important and on-going issue in future rounds.

### **2.12. Quality Assessment**

The focus on the assessment of data quality on the ESS was not limited to MTMM experiments. Another crucially important area of assessment was in relation to the quality of achieved samples and the quality of registered responses. This means a two-fold focus: firstly to evaluate the processes leading to the sample selection and the output of the sample as affected by non-response issues. And secondly, the need to evaluate problems such as item non-response and measurement equivalence.

### *Response and Contact Rates*

In addition to the usual problems that non-response has for sample surveys in cross-national research, different levels of non-response between countries can threaten the ability to make accurate comparisons between countries. The findings from this analysis will be crucial in facilitating improvements in data collection for future rounds.

Many countries failed to achieve the target response of 3% non contacts in the sample. However, with the exception of two countries non-contacts accounted for a very small proportion of non-response. In almost all countries therefore it is the refusal rate that tends to determine the overall level of response. It is also the refusal rate that accounts for the differences between countries.

Further detailed analysis of interviewer calling patterns also demonstrated the differences between the calling strategies and outcomes found in different countries. For instance, in some countries if the minimum of four calls had not been significantly exceeded, much higher non-contact rates would have been recorded. In other countries a clear preference and effectiveness for calling patterns at certain times of the week or day were observed.

Refusal conversion techniques were employed in almost all countries. However the effectiveness of these varied significantly from a 16% increase in The Netherlands compared to just 6% in Switzerland. Where increases in response were found the impact on the findings of the survey were often quite marginal.

### *Quality Assessment of the Responses*

The data quality of responses on the ESS was assessed by studying interviewer reports, analysing the extent of item non-response, identifying systematic response tendencies and estimating the measurement qualities of sets of items.

### *Interviewer Feedback*

Interviewer assessments of respondent engagement in social surveys has been related to interview quality as measured by factors such as item non-response and inconsistent answers. However, the general picture from the ESS is that respondents had few problems understanding or answering the questions, even the more sensitive ones, and remained motivated throughout. Interviewers reported more positively in Nordic countries than in Southern Europe.

### *Item non-response*

Overall the incidence of 'Don't Know' (DK) answers on the ESS was highest in the rotating module on Attitudes to Immigration and second highest on the questions about politics. For other topics the average proportion of DK answers never exceeded 2%. Clear differences were observed between countries with some countries observing more normative patterns of item non-response and in addition, inter-country variation increased with the complexity abstraction of the item.

### *Systematic Response Tendencies and Cross-Cultural Measurement Equivalence*

Sometimes responses in social surveys can be influenced by artefacts to do with the question form or the available response options. Certain ratings scales, for instance, might induce a systematic pattern of responses that distort the 'true' response. However, an analysis of 51 questions using an 11-point response scale showed reassuringly small differences between countries.

Cross-cultural measurement equivalence models based on 15 countries found equivalent models for a range of variables we included on topics as diverse as religion, politics and immigration.

### **2.13. Contract adherence and deviations**

The Specification for Participating Countries contained details of the various responsibilities and obligations of National Co-ordinators, survey houses and the CCT itself.

The content of the contracts was checked via a questionnaire sent to all NCs with a strong focus on the fieldwork aspects. National Co-ordinators also monitored fieldwork, complemented by central CCT fieldwork monitoring.

The CCT endeavoured to ensure that standards and procedures were equivalent throughout the project and dealt with any difficulties that arose at the macro or micro levels. This was achieved by striking a delicate balance between strict comparability between countries on the one hand and appropriate variation on the other.

All deviations that have adversely affected equivalence are fully documented in the final Technical Report. This level of transparency in the ESS is ground-breaking for an international survey and allows data users to be fully aware of implementation differences that could impact upon the data.

#### **2.14. Data Archiving and website**

NSD have developed an extremely comprehensive and user-friendly ESS data website that is fully operational. It includes all services necessary to plan and produce standardised cross-national data files and to access and analyse the datasets.

NSD also produced a comprehensive Data Protocol as a comprehensive repository of the specifications and procedures that were to be used in the production of national ESS data files. This was based around the central idea that meticulous planning and attention to detail in advance of data deposit lead to more timely data of higher quality and greater standardisation.

National Technical Summaries were based on a questionnaire completed by each country. They include 50 country-specific items to do with the technical conduct of the survey that could not be covered in the Archive's final Documentation Report.

Data editing and processing was clearly specified in the protocol for data control and editing. This protocol has allowed for the generation of integrated data files that are as standardised and as user-friendly as possible. It was always a central part of the ESS specification that data editing has to be as meticulous as the rest of the project.

Where a significantly large number of inconsistencies were uncovered NSD highlighted them and asked the national team to consider undertaking another round of checking against the questionnaires. In some cases the CCT had to be called on to decide whether certain deviant parts of the data file should be omitted completely. Such unapproved variables were, however, still included as variables in the country data file, but not in the integrated file.

#### **2.15. Data Releases**

The processing of deposited data for Round 1 began in February 2003. The first public release of ESS data of 15 countries was in November 2003. Three further releases, each of one country, took place in December 2003, as well as January and June 2004. The deposit of the French data in June 2004 means that ESS Round 1 is complete.

The ESS Data Website has had extensive use since being launched. As of July 2004, less than 10 full months of being opened, there were 3235 registered users of the ESS data website across the world.

## **2.16. Methodological Work**

ESS has already proved itself to be more rigorous than previous cross-national (and many national) attitude surveys.

It has also made progress in its contribution to methodological advancement more generally. During Round 1 a collaborative project with Gallup Europe (partly funded by Gallup) has aimed to investigate (and ideally mitigate) the likely impact of mixed-mode data collection on future round of the ESS. This is especially important in light of the challenge as to whether face-to-face interviewing will remain the exclusive mode of interviewing for surveys such as the ESS.

One Round of mixed mode fieldwork has already taken place. Further phases will be undertaken in late 2004.

### **3. Policy Implications of the ESS**

It is far too early in the ESS's life to attempt to evaluate its impact on policy. The first round aim of the ESS was to produce reliable benchmark measures against which long-run changes in social values may subsequently be chartered and monitored.

However, it is possible to foresee the likely implications of the ESS for European governance in general rather than for specific policies.

The ESS has now demonstrated that it is possible to measure public attitudes successfully across countries. Public attitudes are always important to the formation of public policy, and on occasions critical, enabling existing or future policies to be evaluated by the electorate. Further their rigorous collection and analysis in an era of falling political participation and electoral turnout helps to mitigate the democratic deficit. The ESS is becoming an essential tool for monitoring the health of democracy in Europe.

Despite having completed just one round, the ESS has had a clear impact in terms of improving Europe-wide methods of social measurement. The ESS has demonstrated levels of quality and rigour in a Europe-wide comparative social survey that had hitherto been ruled out as unachievable. This will allow social attitudes to play a role in European governance.

In turn a range of variables already included in the ESS could make an invaluable contribution in expanding the existing socio-economic focus of European social indicators to include socio-political phenomena as well. Changes in such variables need to be

monitored and understood. Overlooking or ignoring such changes would be negligent and perhaps dangerous. In any event, whether these variables become part of the official indicators or comprise an 'unofficial' list that can be evaluated by scholars and politicians, the ESS is finally available to fill this gap with reliable data.

#### **4. Dissemination and exploitation of the results**

The final deliverable, according to the grant for ESS Round 1, was a fully-integrated cross-national dataset. However, the longer term aim of ESS is clearly for the widest possible use, dissemination and exploitation of ESS data.

In fact there has already been significant dissemination of the ESS to date. This has included not only the fully documented multi nation dataset being deposited on the NSD data website, but a wide range of other activities. This has included national launches organised by ESS National Co-ordinators, press releases, publicity about the data release and many other activities. The Commission also hosted a conference to mark the launch of Round 1 which included many examples of the initial findings from the survey.

In addition the CCT has conducted an extensive range of dissemination talks. The focus of most of these has been on the aims, importance, quality and methodological emphasis of the ESS. In addition a number of papers have been written reporting on the methodological findings from Round 1 of the ESS.

## II. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

### 1. Background to the study

The launch of the European Social Survey was the culmination of a six-year programme of work initially set up and seed-funded by the European Science Foundation (ESF). In the first instance the ESF decided to set up and fund an 'Expert Panel' (see Annex 1 for membership) with the task of investigating the desirability and feasibility of an academically-led European-wide 'general social survey'. While several such surveys exist at a national level (e.g. the US General Social Survey, the British Social Attitudes series and the German ALLBUS), they did not exist as such at a supranational level.

The Expert Panel reported unanimously (European Science Foundation, Standing Committee of the Social Sciences, 1999a, 5-6) that a regular, rigorous European Social Survey (ESS) would be a major asset to European governance, as well as to the academic community in Europe and beyond. An ESS would, however, need to concentrate not only on measuring and monitoring underlying public attitudes, values and beliefs in Europe, but also on the improvement of cross-national survey methodology in general. Europe had a unique need in this latter respect in view of its demand for comparative multi-national statistics and should have been contributing more in the way of technical advances.

While fully acknowledging the pioneering role played by predecessor cross-national attitude surveys such as the Eurobarometers, the European Values Surveys and the International Social Survey Programme, and by various Europe-wide behavioural studies set up by Eurostat (such as the Labour Force Survey and the European Community Household Panel), it concluded that a major new initiative was now needed. To be optimally useful, the ESS would need to combine the rigour of the best national surveys with a sharp cross-national academic and policy focus. Granting the difficulty of the task prescribed, the Panel was confident nonetheless that the task was feasible and that returns would be considerable.

A new European Social Survey would, they argued, complement rather than overlap with existing studies. Unlike the Eurostat studies which help to reveal Europe's collective and contrasting *characteristics* (who we are and how we behave), the ESS would help to reveal Europe's collective and contrasting *character* (how we think and feel about our world and ourselves). No existing European survey series could, the Panel felt, fulfill such a role without abandoning their important but different present roles and without damaging the continuity of their existing time series.

In the light of the Expert Panel's report and with the unanimous support of its member institutions (22 national academic funding agencies), the ESF decided to fund a development phase and blueprint for an ESS. It set up a Steering Committee representing each of the 22 countries (see Annex 2 for its membership), and a Methodology Committee (see Annex 3 for its membership), whose joint task was to formulate detailed proposals. The task was duly completed and published (European Science Foundation, Standing Committee of the Social Sciences, 1999a & 1999b).

At its final meeting which adopted and approved the Blueprint, the Steering Committee asked Professor Roger Jowell (then Head of the UK National Centre for Social Research) if he would head a team that would seek funding from the European Commission, within Call 2 of Framework 5, for the co-ordination of the first round of a new European Social Survey. He agreed, a proposal was prepared and subsequently approved, and funding of the new ESS commenced in June 2001.

As was always envisaged, European Commission funding was to cover only the central costs of design and co-ordination of this multi-nation project. The national survey costs and associated national co-ordination were both to be met from national sources. With that in mind, Commission funding was conditional on the participation of at least nine self-funding nations. As it turned out, as many as 22 nations joined the project in its first round, their academic funding agencies contributing over three-quarters of the total costs of the enterprise. In addition, the ESF met the costs of the project's scientific liaison and multinational advisory committee meetings.

Even in its first round, the ESS was supported by a unique combination of 24 separate funding bodies. The Commission was the largest single source contributing just under one-quarter of the total costs. More importantly, however, each funding body's contribution was made according to identical ground-rules, placing great importance on adherence to the same high methodological and substantive standards laid down in a central specification. The ESS was thus an early and successful example of the European Research Area at work.

## **2. Objectives of the study**

- *To produce rigorous trend data about changes in people's underlying values*

All societies require accurate data about themselves if they are to understand and improve their social and economic condition. Multiple sources of such data already exist – at both a national and multinational level – about different societies' behaviour patterns, social circumstances and demographic characteristics. But even in an

increasingly well-documented age, there are still remarkably few sources of reliable data about the speed and direction of change in people's *underlying attitudes and values*. Moreover, to the extent that this gap exists at a national level, it is even larger, more persistent and more debilitating at a European level.

The ESS was devised to rectify this omission. Designed as a rigorous, academically-driven, biennial study of changing social attitudes throughout Europe, it drew on the best examples of similar studies at a national level in Europe and beyond. Its dataset was never to be the property of the research team responsible for its design and implementation, but rather to be released publicly in an easy-to-use form as soon as it was available. It was an important aim of the exercise for the data to be immediately accessible not only to the social science and policy communities in Europe and abroad, but also to the mass media and all other interested users via the World Wide Web.

Although funded initially for only one Round, the ESS was always intended to be a regular biennial study designed to measure change over time. Thus the approximately hour-long questionnaire at each Round was to be divided equally between 'core' items on the one hand and at least two sets of subject-specific 'rotating' items on the other. The purpose of the core module is to provide a stable set of key measures designed to monitor critical aspects of social and political change within and between countries over time. Only by keeping these items constant could the survey provide relatively 'bullet-proof' long-term measures of change in people's underlying value orientations and how they vary in relation to behaviour patterns, demographic characteristics and institutional change within different nations and across Europe (see Chapter IV: Conclusions and policy implications).

The rotating modules in contrast are each designed to focus on a particular subject of key academic or policy interest. While also designed for repetition at (longer) intervals to measure change over time, these modules will be different at each round. Both their subject matter and the membership of the multinational teams selected to develop them are to be selected at each round via a Europe-wide competition (see Annex 4 for R1 advertisement and Annex 5 for R1 rotating teams). In the first Round, the two rotating modules were on 'Immigration and Asylum' and 'Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy' respectively (see Chapter IV: Conclusions and policy implications).

As noted, 'general social surveys' already exist at a *national* level in certain countries and tend to be among the most widely-demanded and extensively-quarried of all the archived datasets in those countries. The ESS was thus always likely to be in similar or greater demand covering as it does such a large proportion of Europe and allowing

individual countries (or groups of countries) to be compared on a wide range of social phenomena – attitudinal, behavioural and structural.

In addition, the ESS aimed to complement the impressive range of economic, behavioural and demographic data already produced by Eurostat. Its role in this context is to help chart and explain the most pressing social and political trends of the period. This includes the decline in political trust and its relationship to electoral turnout, changing social and family values and the extent to which they are converging or diverging across Europe. It also covers social, ethnic and national identities and their relationship to 'outgroups', emerging socio-political cleavages and concerns, and many other topics. An innovative feature of the ESS is to supplement the survey-based data it collects with specially-compiled 'event data', collected just before and during the fieldwork period. These events data will enable present and future analysts to take account of the impact of major national (or international) events – such as elections, terrorist acts, economic turbulence, natural disasters -which might well vary in their impact on certain responses in different nations at different times. Similarly certain events might have a similar impact on all nations at the time of the survey but not prove to have a lasting impact. Event data would help to explain such phenomena.

The ESS datasets would be likely to appeal to academics from a wide range of disciplines, including political science, sociology, public administration, social policy, economics, social psychology, statistics, mass communication, modern social history and social anthropology. But extensive use of the data would also probably be made by civil servants, policy analysts, think tanks, journalists, politicians and the public at large. As survey builds upon survey, the ESS should thus provide a unique long-term account of change and development in the social fabric of modern Europe.

- *To surmount the longstanding obstacles to comparability in the conduct of cross-national surveys*

A second and equally important objective of the project is to pioneer and 'prove' a standard of methodology for cross-national attitude surveys that has hitherto rarely been attempted or achieved. As noted, despite the existence of a number of distinguished cross-national attitudinal time series, various constraints had always prevented them from approaching the sort of consistent rigour *across* countries that has been achieved by the best time series *within* countries (Jowell 1998, Harkness and Mohler 2003, European Science Foundation, Standing Committee of the Social Sciences 1999a). So, while the social sciences in Europe had long relied on the analysis of multinational attitudinal data, many important data were either not available at all or in such different forms in different countries that the basis for comparison was fragile indeed. But the

rigorous cross-national measurement of underlying public attitudes, values and beliefs is, in our view, central to an understanding of modern societies and of change within them, as well as to the governance of an increasingly integrated Europe. So an attempt urgently needed to be made to rectify the omission.

Although Eurostat was already overseeing several rigorous cross-national behavioural and factual surveys, it was (for good reason) highly unlikely to promote, sponsor or supervise an attitudinal time series in the same mould. Nor in the Expert Panel's view could existing attitudinal time series such as the Eurobarometers, the International Social Survey Programme or the European Values Surveys (EVS) somehow be re-invented to meet the demands of the new research series envisaged. Not only would it have been arrogant to attempt such a move, but in any case they were already tailored to different interests and carried out to different standards from the ESS template (European Science Foundation, Standing Committee of the Social Sciences 1999a 10-12). They also had quite different agendas from the proposed ESS and a need to preserve their own distinct time series.

So, if the persistent methodological problems posed by cross-national attitude surveys were to be tackled in earnest, the EU was the obvious natural laboratory for such work – possessing as it does not only an ideal combination of diversity and commonality, but also a strong vested interest in achieving a breakthrough. The European social science and policy communities could no longer risk having to rely on inadequate, inconsistent and often unrepresentative snippets of attitudinal data. Such exceptions as the Eurobarometers, the European Values Surveys and the International Social Survey Programme needed to be bolstered not only by a new substantive study, but also by major advances in cross-national attitude measurement.

The rigour employed in the ESS is thus unusually (probably uniquely) strict for such a dispersed cross-national attitude survey. To achieve it, a special budget is devoted to 'contract adherence' endeavouring to ensure that the ambitious standards laid down – in sampling, questionnaire design, event and context monitoring, translation, fieldwork standards, response rates and archiving – are actually adhered to on the ground. Moreover, to the extent that there are shortfalls in achieved standards in any of these respects, they are closely documented and transparent to all users of the data. In addition, a programme of methods experimentation, training and dissemination is embedded within the project to help advance comparative survey methods more generally, including the immediate and universal availability of well-documented technical as well as substantive data via the project's archive.

- *To achieve recognition for reliable social indicators and attitudinal measures of national success or failure*

Funding for Round 1 of the ESS stopped short of substantive analysis of the data. The final output for the contract was the set-up of a publicly accessible and freely available data set on the Internet. However, a longer term and equally important third aim of the time series is to achieve greater recognition for reliable social indicators and attitudinal measures to supplement the behavioural and structural (mostly economic) indicators by which we judge the well-being of societies (Atkinson 2002).

The rich variety and quality of the ESS data will, we hope, prove to be a productive source of material for the development of robust measures of this sort – both behavioural and attitudinal (See Chapter IV. Conclusions and policy implications.)

### **3. ESS and the Fifth Framework**

The project was designed to fulfil **Tasks 1, 6 and 2** of the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework's Guiding Principles.

In relation to **Task 1**, the project fits the overall aim of improving "the management of societal change". Indeed its key objectives are to produce and use relevant data about societal change and to create better tools for measuring it. By also investigating links between economic and social objectives and achievements, the project will inform European debates and policy-making.

In relation to **Task 6**, the project is centrally concerned with issues of citizenship and governance in a multinational context. The ESS collects consistent comparative data about political, social and economic aspects of national and European 'citizenship' and about perceived and actual conflicts of identity. By collecting these data, the study is designed to monitor and interpret progress towards European integration from the public's perspective and the factors that may inhibit or promote it.

In relation to **Task 2**, the project attempts to tackle directly the "complex inter-relationships between cultural, economic, institutional and other contexts", and the perceived "magnitude and pace of structural changes". It also addresses most of the "key issues" stressed in the guidance notes, such as changing attitudes and behaviour patterns in respect of work, family, gender, religion and so on, and the conflicts between competing priorities. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a richer source of quantitative research on these complex subjects than the ESS is now providing.

As noted in the application, the project also serves elements of **Tasks 4 and 7**.

### **III. SCIENTIFIC DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS AND METHODOLOGY**

The methodology and data for the ESS are inextricably intertwined. As noted, the project is designed not only to produce rigorous and robust findings about attitude and value change across Europe, but also radically to improve measurement and documentation in the process. The strategies employed and the lessons learned should be available to future generations of European and other comparative researchers.

We anticipate that the ESS data will be widely-used and much analysed by academics, government researchers, students and journalists. To help ensure this, a wide range of dissemination activities have been planned at both a national and a European level (see Chapter V: Dissemination and exploitation of results).

The striking success of the first round of the ESS has been the demonstration that a cross-national survey with such high substantive and methodological aims has actually been fielded in 22 disparate countries. There is of course still much room for improvement in future rounds of the survey, but in many respects the ESS has broken new ground and achieved consistently higher standards than anticipated so soon in the life of the time series.

This chapter lays out the detail of all aspects of the project methodology and assesses the success and contribution of each, under the following headings:

- Funding & organisation.
- Sampling.
- Questionnaire design
- Translation.
- Fieldwork.
- Context/event data.
- Question assessment.
- Response evaluation.
- Contract adherence/deviations.
- Methodological work.

- Data release and documentation.
- Substantive analysis.

## **1. Organisation and funding**

An important innovation of the European Social Survey was the organisational and funding network created for the project. As recommended within the ESF Blueprint document, the finances depended critically on both European-level and national-level funding. In addition, the project required the formation of an intellectual and administrative infrastructure capable of supporting its development and implementation.

### **1.1. The Central Co-ordinating Team**

The engine room of the ESS is the Central Co-ordinating Team, led by Professor Roger Jowell formerly of the National Centre for Social Research in London (during Round 1) but now at the Centre for Comparative Social Surveys at City University London from where Rounds 2 and 3 will be run. The six institutions below and the individuals within them were all involved throughout Round 1 and (as noted, other than NatCen) will continue to steer the project through its next two rounds. The variety of skills and disciplines among the individuals and institutions represented on the CCT has enabled it to design, steer and deliver the work to the exacting standards demanded.

**National Centre for Social Research, UK** (Professor Roger Jowell\*, Caroline Bryson, Ruth O'Shea, Mary Keane\*)

\*Now at City University London

**Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen, Germany** (Professor Peter Mohler, Janet Harkness, Sabine Haeder, Achim Koch)

**Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, Netherlands** (Ineke Stoop)

**Universiteit van Amsterdam School of Communications Research, Netherlands**

(Professor Willem Saris, Irmtraud Gallhofer)

**Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium** (Professor Jaak Billiet, Michel Philippens)

**Norwegian Social Science Data Services, Norway** (Bjorn Henrichsen, Knut Kalgraff Skjåk, Kirstine Kolsrud)

The **ESS website** ([www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org)) has been created as an important means of keeping participants, potential users and other parties informed about the project. The site contains background information about the development of the ESS, details of all participants, and copies of all key documents and protocols. The site was developed during Round 1 and regularly updated. Included in its content are assessments of data quality and details of any deviations within national datasets from the pre-specified procedures.

## **1.2. The creation of an infrastructure**

In addition to a Central Co-ordinating Team, a fledgling and unusually complex time series such as the ESS requires a wider network of people and institutions to steer and advise it (see Annex 6 for 'Who's Who in the ESS?'). The following supporting structure was created to bolster the CCT's attempts to design and co-ordinate the project to uniformly high standards:

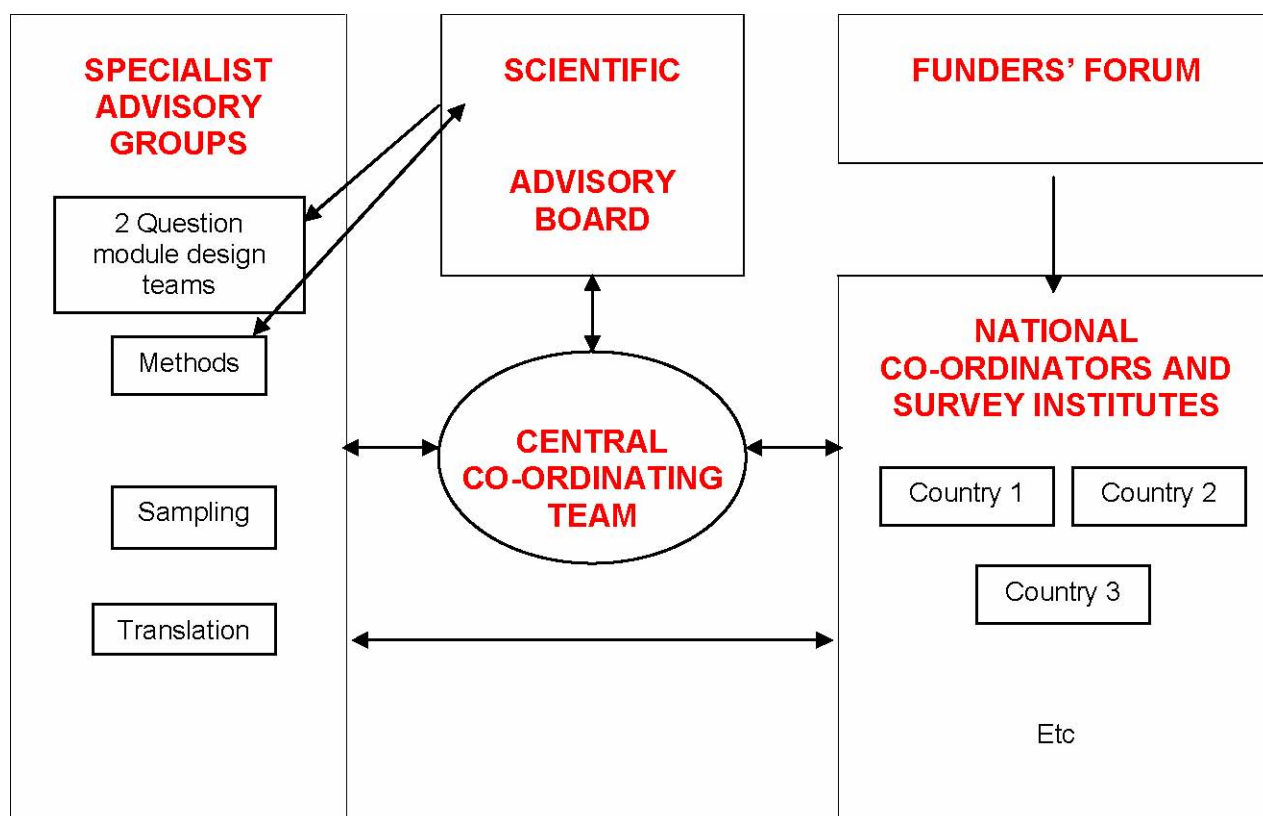
- a Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), chaired by Professor Max Kaase, and comprising one scientist appointed by each national funding agency, and two representatives each from the Commission and the European Social Survey (ESF). Their twice-yearly meetings were convened to advise and guide the CCT and were funded by the ESF (see Annex 6);
- a network of 22 National Co-ordinators (also appointed and funded by each national funding agency but according to a central specification), whose task it was to implement and oversee the project on the ground in each country. Their three plenary meetings were also funded by the ESF (see Annex 6);
- a network of 22 survey houses, each selected according to a strict centrally-produced specification and paid for by its respective national funding agency, usually via a competitive process (see Annex 6);
- an expert multi-nation Methods Group, whose task it was to anticipate and advise on how best to approach and deal with a variety of technical issues that were bound to arise in the course of the project. Its three meetings were also funded by the ESF (see Annex 6);
- a self-funded annual Funders' Forum, chaired by Eili Ervela-Myreen, and comprising a senior administrator from each funding agency. The aim of these meetings was to discuss funding and policy aspects of the project, the dissemination of results and the future direction of the time series. Its membership changes somewhat between meetings.

In addition, various working groups were appointed and convened by the CCT or SAB to ensure the input of appropriate expertise into particular aspects of the project – notably:

- two expert multi-nation Questionnaire Design Teams, both appointed by the SAB following a Europe-wide competition. Each was then responsible for assisting with the drafting of a 'rotating' module of subject-specific questions. Their meetings with the CCT for this purpose were funded by the ESF (see Annex 6);
- a multi-nation Sampling Panel appointed by the CCT and funded by the Commission grant. It was responsible for specifying, advising on and signing-off the sampling protocols in every participating country (see Annex 6);
- a multi-nation Translation Taskforce (also appointed by the CCT and funded by the Commission under FP5). It was responsible for specifying, advising on and co-ordinating standard translation protocols in every participating country (see Annex 6);

This multi-faceted infrastructure remained in place throughout Round 1 and indeed all the groups are still in place for the second round of the ESS which is currently in progress.

**Figure 1.** Illustrates the liaison mechanisms between the CCT and its various advisory and working groups.



### 1.3. Funding arrangements

The ESS is funded from 24 separate sources. As noted, the project's initial seed funding and development work over several years came from the European Science Foundation, which also provided vital support for the project's academic liaison and meetings during Round 1. The success of the bid to the Commission under Framework 5, Call 2, then established the project on a firm footing, enabling the ambitious plans formulated by the ESF-sponsored groups to be implemented. Even so, Commission funding accounted for less than one-third of the total cost of Round 1, the bulk of the support coming from 22 national funding agencies, each of which independently decided to associate their nation with the project.

#### 22 Participating Countries, Round 1

Austria	Germany	Luxembourg	Spain
Belgium	Greece	Netherlands	Sweden
Czech Republic	Hungary	Norway	Switzerland
Denmark	Ireland	Poland	UK
Finland	Israel	Portugal	
France	Italy	Slovenia	

Having taken repeated soundings from within the Funders' Forum, it appears that while a funding partnership along these lines between the Commission and national sources is regarded as the appropriate one for a project of this nature, a more secure and robust model for the ESS still needs to be developed. In particular, the long term balance of funding between the Commission, the ESF and national funding agencies needs to be looked at afresh, as must the present round-by-round process of funding a project that is essentially a continuing time series.

Meanwhile, indications are that the number of countries likely to participate in Round 2 of the ESS will be at least as great and probably greater than in Round 1.

### 1.4. A common specification for all participating countries

A key approach in the implementation of the ESS as a model of consistent good practice was the development of a standard specification for all participating organisations that contained the methods, protocols and procedures that were to be the *sine qua non* of a high quality project (see Annex 7).

In summary, this document contains:

- descriptions of the roles required of the National Co-ordinator and survey organisation;
- details of the population coverage and sampling strategy, ruling out non-random methods or substitution and requiring full discussion and disclosure of proposed methods and the signing-off of the agreed approach and methods;
- the target response rate to be aimed at and a variety of means and procedures to be deployed in an attempt to reach or exceed it details of how the questionnaire was designed and an outline of its contents, with stress laid on the necessity of implementing it in its entirety in all countries;
- an outline of the detailed translation protocols that had to be followed to transform the source (English) questionnaire into all other languages;
- requirements of fieldwork procedures, such as the mode to be used, the length of fieldwork period, quality control mechanisms, event reporting and recording, etc;
- requirements for coding, archiving and detailed documentation.

## **2. Sampling**

### **2.1. Principles and requirements of sampling for the ESS**

A specialist Sampling Panel, chaired by Sabine Häder of ZUMA was formed to oversee the ESS sample design and implementation (see Annex 6 for membership).

The objective of the Sampling Work Package was the “design and implementation of *workable and equivalent sampling strategies* in all participating countries”. Kish (1994, 173) provided the starting point for the ESS design, arguing that although sample designs may be flexible in respect of their sources and precise selection methods, probability sampling among all population elements was a pre-requisite of a high quality ESS.

The optimal sampling design would thus be the one which achieved the best random (probability) population available in each participating country. The choice of a *specific* design then depended on which frames were available where, what the experience of using them had been and, of course, the cost-benefit profile of various equivalent approaches (Häder/Gabler 2003).

The main elements of each national sample to be taken into consideration were:

- *Population coverage* – samples were to be as representative as possible of all persons aged 15 and over (no upper age limit) resident within private households in each country, regardless of their nationality, citizenship, language or legal status.
- *Random sampling* - samples were to be selected by strict probability methods at every stage and respondents were to be interviewed face-to-face. The selection probabilities of every sample member had to be known and recorded, together with any systematic non-coverage problems. Quota sampling was not permitted at any level, nor was the substitution of non-responding households or individuals.
- *Actual and effective sample size* - the target minimum number of interviews to be achieved was 2,000 (except in countries whose total population was less than 2 million, when the target minimum was then 1,000). Irrespective of the actual number of interviews, however, the target minimum 'effective' achieved sample size was 1,500, (after discounting for design effects), or 800 in countries with populations of under 2 million.
- *Over-sampling* - over-sampling (by using different selection probabilities for certain subgroups or strata) was acceptable provided that the total sample still complied with the effective sample size criterion and that the data were available for it to be subsequently re-weighted to its 'correct' distributions.
- *Documentation of sampling procedures* -the precise sampling procedures proposed in each country and their implications for representativeness were to be documented in advance and submitted to the CCT and expert panel before being officially 'signed off'.
- *Target contact and response rates* -the proportion of non-contacts was not to exceed 3 per cent of all sampled units, and the minimum target response rate - after subtracting ineligible and other 'deadwood' (closely defined by the CCT) - was 70%.

Sampling requirements were laid out fully in a document for participating countries (see Annex 8)

## **2.2. "Signing off" of sampling designs**

Each specialist member of the Sampling Panel was allocated about five countries to liaise with and support. In liaison with the respective National Co-ordinators, local sampling specialists and national survey houses, they helped forge a suitable sampling strategy that would on the one hand satisfy the stringent ESS requirements and on the other be capable of being implemented efficiently in each country. This involved developing completely new designs in several countries, while in others it was more a matter of clarifying details. Support in the calculation of 'effective' sample sizes was often required. On occasions the sampling panelists also visited one or more of their allocated countries for a more detailed investigation and discussion of anticipated problems which might compromise the achievement of a high quality random sample.

The Sampling Panel developed a standard form on which they filled details of the design of each country's sample, ensuring that the final design was clearly defined and statistically rigorous. In each case, the full Sampling Panel then examined the form, proposed amendments as necessary and eventually 'signed off' the proposed design.

By the time of the third meeting of the Sampling Panel in mid-October 2002, the majority of the 22 countries were able to be signed off. But the panel did not complete the task for all countries until mid-May 2003, having finally solved some of the more difficult national sample designs.

## **2.3. Variety and equivalence**

As noted, with design-based inference as a necessary goal for a survey such as the ESS, there could be no compromise on the need for probability samples in all countries. Even so, the actual sampling designs varied considerably from country to country in some or all of the following ways:

- *Population coverage* – To satisfy the sampling goals, all members of the target population in each country ideally had to have a known, non-zero probability of selection. Thus the more complete the coverage of the target population, the better the potential sample. But the quality of the frames in terms of coverage, updating and access differed substantially from country to country and required careful evaluation. These evaluations were documented so that they could be taken properly into account when the data were to be analysed. Various categories of potential sampling frames exist in different nations, some much more straightforward and appropriate than others.

For instance, some countries possess reliable and accessible lists of *individuals*, such as the Danish Central Person Register which is believed to cover around 99.9% of persons resident in Denmark. Other countries have reliable and accessible lists of *households*, such as the "SIPO" database in the Czech Republic which is estimated to cover around 98% of households. Yet other countries possess reliable and accessible lists of *addresses*, such as the "PTT-afgiftenpuntenbestand" in the Netherlands. And of course, some countries possess no reliable and/or available lists, such as Portugal or France, where the problem has to be tackled afresh.

However, in all cases, there was fortunately sufficient aggregated demographic information available for use in developing an acceptable sampling strategy. In some cases this information was not completely up to date (varying from some months out of date to some years adrift), but it generally provided a helpful starting point. Designing and drawing a sample was naturally more complicated where no registers or other reliable lists were available and in these cases area-based designs were an obvious option. The problem then was how to get from a random selection of areas to a random selection of dwelling units and eventually to the random selection of individuals within them. In each case one of two main approaches was used. The first option was to list all the addresses within certain areas of each selected community and then to select according to strict rules. The second was to use random route procedures to locate target households. Both of these approaches were acceptable and applied in different countries.

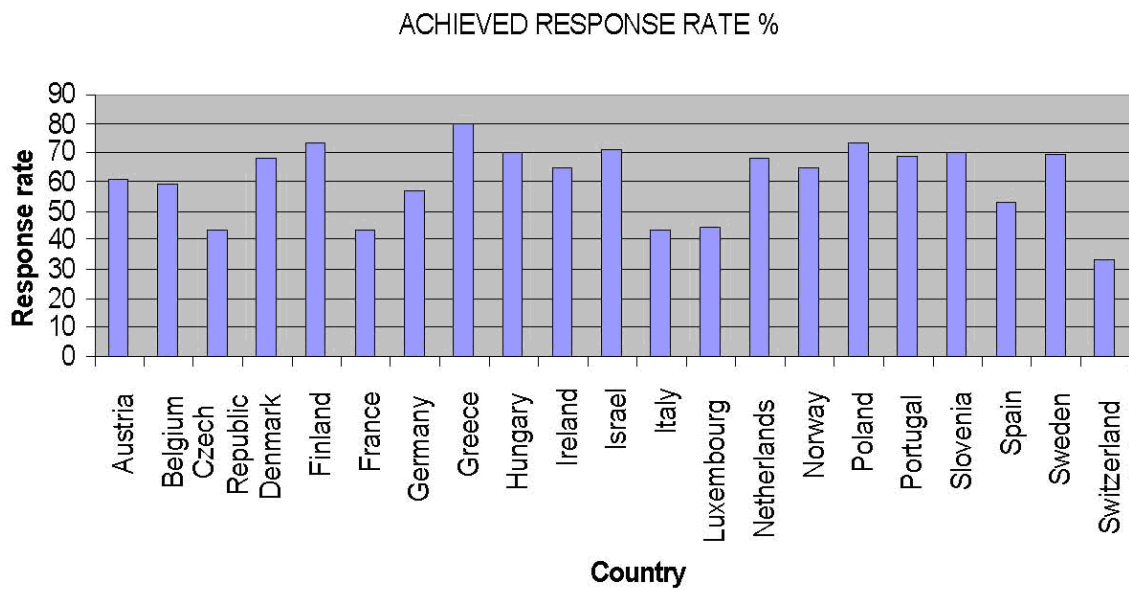
Indeed, even in countries where reliable frames existed, it was often the case that some problems had to be solved. For example, in Italy where there is an electoral register available for sampling, it contains persons of 18 years or older. The ESS covers people of 15 and over. So the electoral register there, as in Ireland, was deployed effectively just as a frame of addresses, with the individual then selected by random methods from within each address.

Homeless people and in some cases people with illegal residential status were clearly under-represented in several (if not all) ESS countries because the sampling methods concentrated so heavily on addresses or registers as their source. Where possible, however, such systematic losses are documented.

- *Response rates* - Non-response was another problem for the representativeness of the target population in the sample. A target response rate of 70% had been set, but the actual range varied among nations from 80% to just over 30%. Figure 2. below contains the actual distributions. It shows that for many countries the target response rate of 70% proved not to be as far from reality as some countries had

predicted it was bound to be. Indeed a response rate of 65% or higher was achieved in 11 of the 22 countries and in many cases (such as The Netherlands) this was greatly in excess of the usual response rates in national (and particularly multinational) surveys there. It was generally (but not universally) agreed among the National Co-ordinators and other advisers that the ESS's ambitious 70% target response rate was after all worth adhering to in future rounds.

**Figure 2.** Archived Response rate



While in Switzerland, a special methodological experiment was mounted to study the possibilities of boosting the generally poor survey response rates there, almost all countries employed a variety of techniques to the same end. One or more well-tried but effective measures such as an advance letter, a survey-specific pamphlet, a toll-free telephone contact number for respondents, plus of course extra training of interviewers in response-maximisation techniques and doorstep interactions were applied almost everywhere. See also sections III.8.2 and III.8.3 in this chapter.

- *Final sample designs* - Table 1. summarises the most important elements of each country's final sample designs and outcomes.

**Table.1.** Table of sampling approaches and anticipated outcomes for all countries

Country	Frame	Predicted Design effect			Anticipated Response rate (%)	N <sub>gross</sub> Gross sample	n <sub>net</sub> Predicted interviews	n <sub>eff</sub> Predicted Effective sample	Predicted Primary Sampling Units
		DEFF <sub>c</sub> <sup>1</sup>	DEFF <sub>p</sub> <sup>2</sup>	DEFF <sup>3</sup>					
Austria	Selection of individuals: Telephone book	1.1	1.4	1.5	65	2,250	3,847	1,500	324
Belgium	Selection of individuals: National register	1.1	1.0	1.1	65	2,000	3,239	1,818	324
Czech Republic	Selection of households: SIPO database	1.1	1.2	1.3	70	2,100	3,300	1,630	666
Denmark	Selection of individuals: Central Person Register	1.0	1.0	1.0	75	2,250	3,000	2,250	-
Finland	Selection of individuals: Population register	1.0	1.0	1.0	75	2,050	2,800	2,050	-
France	Area based	1.2	1.3	1.6	60	1,500	2,500	950	125

<sup>1</sup> Predicted design effect due to clustering.

<sup>2</sup> Predicted design effect due to unequal inclusion probabilities.

<sup>3</sup> Predicted total design effect.

Germany	Selection of individuals: Local residents registers	1.4	1.1	1.5	70	3,066	4,868	2,017	163
Greece	Area based	1.1	1.2	1.3	70	2,100	3,100	1,570	438
Hungary	Selection of individuals: Central register	1.2	1.0	1.2	65	1,500	2,450	1,260	143
Ireland	Selection of addresses: National Electoral Register	1.2	1.3	1.6	63	2,400	4,233	1,500	220
Israel	Selection of households: Telephone	1.2	1.3	1.6	70	2,394	3,600	1,506	200
Italy	Selection of addresses: Electoral register	1.1	1.0	1.1	70	2,000	3,000	1,820	125

Country	Frame	Predicted Design effect			Anticipated Response Rate (%)	N <sub>gross</sub> Gross sample	n <sub>net</sub> Predicted interviews	n <sub>eff</sub> Predicted Effective sample	Predicted Primary Sampling Units
		DEFF <sub>c</sub> <sup>4</sup>	DEFF <sub>p</sub> <sup>5</sup>	DEFF <sup>6</sup>					
Luxembourg	Selection of households: Social security register	1.0	1.40	1.40	30	1,510	5,033	1,080	-
Netherlands	Selection of addresses: List of postal delivery points	1.2	1.0	1.2	70	2,371	3,565	2,000	-
Norway	Selection of individuals: National Population Register	1.2	1.2	1.5	70	2,250	3,215	1,500	109
Poland	Selection of individuals: Personal records of population	1.1	1.0	1.1	71	2,000	2,978	1,718	200
Portugal	Area based	1.1	1.1	1.2	75	1,695	2,260	1,367	150
Slovenia	Selection of individuals: Central register of population	1.4	1.0	1.4	66	1,336	2,250	955	150

<sup>4</sup> Predicted design effect due to clustering.

<sup>5</sup> Predicted design effect due to unequal inclusion probabilities.

<sup>6</sup> Predicted total design effect.

Spain	Selection of individuals: Municipal rolls	1.2	1.1	1.4	70	2,076	3,702	1,500	346
Sweden	Selection of individuals: Population register	1.0	1.0	1.0	75	2,198	3,000	2,198	-
Switzerland	Selection of households: Telephone book	1.2	1.2	1.5	40	2,205	6,660	1,500	220
UK	Selection of addresses: Postcode address files	1.3	1.2	1.6	70	2,348	4,013	1,515	162

Full descriptions of the sampling strategies and achievements are documented in the Sampling Reports available on the ESS website.

## 2.4. General assessment

All participating countries, including those which rarely applied strict probability methods, worked successfully with the Sampling Panel to meet the stringent requirements of the ESS. The result was that no quota elements or substitution of individuals or households were present in any of the plans signed off – an unusual if not unique departure for multinational attitude surveys. On the other hand, as noted, some response rates remained poor and need if possible to be improved on in future rounds, and some countries failed to meet their numerical targets – either because of lower than anticipated response rates or because of inadequate budgets. We note below some observations on the process which may be of some importance to future strategies:

- Many National Co-ordinators and survey houses were unfamiliar with the concept of design effects and therefore with calculating the predicted effective sample size given various design options. Some required assistance from the sampling panel, but this problem should diminish in future rounds with greater experience and better explanations in the documentation.
- For countries with a small design effect (between 1 and 1.33), the ESS rule that fixed an effective sample size of 1,500 interviews and a net sample size of 2,000 interviews did not prove to be a strong factor in improving the design. This twin requirement will thus be abandoned in future rounds and be replaced by a single requirement of an 'effective' sample size of at least 1,500.
- In some countries – particularly the Nordic countries - it is common practice to make first contacts via telephone, not only because telephone penetration is near universal but also because the existence of a population register enables individuals to be selected prior to the first contact with the household. For such countries therefore, first contact by telephone was in the end permitted.
- There is a wide range in the numbers of PSUs. Total survey error is of course reduced by increasing the number of PSUs and attempts will be made in future rounds to encourage countries with a low number of PSUs to increase them.
- As a result of the use in Round 1 of so many regularly-updated "official" frames of individuals or households, we have changed the definition of the target population for Round 2. No longer does it now include the phrase "regardless of... legal status", because it is clearly unlikely that many "illegal" residents will in fact be included in the sampling universe in any but the very small number of countries which employ random route sampling techniques.

### **3. Questionnaire design**

#### **3.1. Determining the content of the core**

Even during the embryonic stages of the ESS which were supported by the ESF, the early multi-nation group responsible for its conceptual development began to consider what the most appropriate composition of its core ought to be. Not concerned at that stage with individual questions but only with broader themes, they asked themselves (and other specialists) which key perennial topics needed to be stitched into the fabric of a new European Social Survey. Such decisions are always somewhat arbitrary, influenced as they are by factors that vary by discipline, as well as by time and space. But even at that stage it was relatively straightforward to eliminate certain classes of questions. For instance, an early decision was made to exclude a variety of transient issues over which media opinion polls happily have a monopoly. A biennial ESS must perforce focus on longer term variations in culture and social structure within Europe, aspiring to identify and interpret climate shifts in social circumstances and values rather than simply to monitor changes in the weather.

Even so, hard choices had to be made in order to distil the 'essential' components of an ESS from the much longer list of desirable components. Although only one round of the ESS was in prospect in the first instance, we have always been aware that a sine qua non of the whole enterprise was to measure and explain continuity and change in three broad domains:

- People's value orientations (their world views, including their religiosity, their socio-political values and their moral standpoints).
- People's cultural/national orientations (their sense of national and cultural attachment and their related feelings towards outgroups and cross-national governance).
- The underlying social structure of society (people's social positions, including class, education, degree of social exclusion, plus standard background socio-demographic variables, such as age, household structure, gender, etc, and a few questions about media usage that help to identify the primary sources of people's social and political knowledge).

We thus commissioned a number of international academic specialists within these fields, asking each of them to prepare a paper recommending the sub-areas (and if possible any existing batteries of questions) which they considered to be essential components of an ESS with the emphasis proposed. These papers were all based on

extensive searches of the literature and knowledge of previous social surveys in these fields. As some of the specialists themselves noted in their papers, the eventual questions adopted on most of these topics will serve as both dependent and independent variables, according to their projected use.

We summarise below, in a highly truncated form, the case for each of the three main domains in the core ESS questionnaire.

#### **a) People's value orientations.**

Academic specialist consultants: Jaak Billiet, John Curtice, Shalom Schwartz, Jacques Thomassen

When we refer to people's values, we mean the deeply rooted, abstract orientations that help to guide, justify or explain people's opinions, attitudes and actions (Rokeach 1973). These orientations tend not only to predict and help to explain people's opinions, attitudes and behaviour patterns, but also to influence - and be influenced by - social, political and economic changes within their respective societies. The rigorous measurement of differences in value structures between countries, and of changes in their character and distribution, was one of the primary motivations for the ESS.

The problem, however, was the absence of a comprehensive, well-tested and analytically-powerful set of tools for measuring underlying values across nations. Although the Eurobarometer, the European (and World) Values Surveys and the International Social Survey Programme have all made major contributions, on which we have certainly drawn, even their combined lists of individual items and, more importantly their combined array of validated scales, were not nearly comprehensive enough for our purposes.

We were fortunate in being able to include in the ESS the 21-item Basic Human Values Scale, developed by the Israeli psychologist, Shalom Schwartz (Schwartz 1997). Grounded in theory and well-tested internationally, this self-administered scale classifies respondents into ten distinct categories according to their primary psycho-social motivations (such as 'achievement', 'conformity', 'tradition' and other similar spurs). It would thus be both helpful analytically to ESS users and capable of measuring change over time within and between nations.

In addition, it was important for the ESS core module to identify and monitor the key socio-political cleavages that exist across cultures and nations within Europe (and beyond). Robust measures of these dimensions tend to serve primarily as independent variables, helping to explain and predict other substantive variables such as party

identification, voting behaviour and certain moral standpoints. But they too would on occasions serve as dependent variables in their own right, helping to describe and understand the nature of value changes in society, and on occasions political changes as well. Whereas the terms of debate about particular issues tend to vary from country to country, underlying values (such as in relation to 'equality' or 'liberty', or people's religious identification) tend in contrast to transcend nations and are thus more amenable to being tapped by multinational survey instruments such as the ESS.

The individual topics considered under this heading, not all of which featured prominently in the final core module, were:

- Left-right orientation.
- Libertarian-authoritarian orientation.
- Environmentalism.
- Post-materialism.
- Basic human values (Schwartz scale).
- Satisfaction with democracy.
- Trust in institutions, confidence in the economy.
- Interest in politics, party affiliation and voting turnout.
- Personal and system efficacy.
- Religious orientation, present and past.
- Church attendance.
- Belief in God.

**b) People's cultural/national orientations.**

Academic specialist consultants: Jaak Billiet, John Curtice, Juan Linz, Kees Kersbergen, Frans van Waarden

Over four decades ago, a slice of Western Europe, later to be greatly expanded, turned itself into much more than a collection of nation states alone via the formation of what was to become the European Union. Since then, it has continued to cut across traditional ideas of nationhood, providing a supranational social and political structure that exists

alongside national governments. The EU has always challenged longstanding ideas of national sentiment too, now perhaps more than ever with the abandonment of exclusive national currencies in many countries. Moreover, with increasing European integration still irreversibly on the agenda, cross-pressures between old nationalisms and a new sense of 'supranationalism' may grow, accompanied by a greater public recognition of the extent to which the economy of each member state depends on the success of the others. A European Social Survey has a special responsibility to chart and interpret these developments<sup>7</sup>.

Equally, however, we could not ignore the wider context – notably the growing tension both within many member states and, perhaps increasingly within the EU as a whole, between an inclusive sense of citizenship and patriotism on the one hand and an exclusive sense of nationalism and ethnocentrism on the other (Dowds & Young 1996). EU citizens might, on the one hand, take more and more advantage of their right to live and work anywhere within EU boundaries - thus eroding monolithic notions of citizenship and national identity. On the other might they may wish to seal the EU's borders more effectively against settlement from outside? And how might such a trend affect inter-group relations within the EU?

Europe is continually adapting to new forms of governance and grappling with new issues of inclusiveness and exclusiveness. To the extent that the ESS was able to get beneath the surface and aid understanding of these intricate sets of relationships, it was bound to do so. As demonstrated by the ESF's Beliefs in Government programme (Kaase & Newton 1995) in an era of falling turnouts and declining trust in government, there remained a pressing need for solid evidence about changes in public attitudes towards governance, both at a national and a supranational level.

The individual topics considered under this heading, not all of which featured prominently in the final core module, were:

- Citizenship and national identity.
- National sentiment and patriotism/chauvinism.
- Prejudice towards 'outgroups'.
- Attitudes to the EU and other forms of multi-level governance.
- Attitudes to migration.

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<sup>7</sup> The Eurobarometer already tracks general public attitudes to EU institutions to good effect.

### **c) The underlying social structure of society.**

Academic specialist consultants: Robert Erikson, Jan Jonsson, Ken Newton, Joachim Vogel

The importance of a person's social and economic position in society tends to be determined by, and in turn to determine, a number of other factors. The level of one's education, for instance, tends to be integrally related to one's occupation. Independently and in combination, however, both education level and occupational status tend to be closely related to one's income on the one hand and one's values on the other. We cannot properly understand and interpret values and value change in the absence of detailed collateral socio-economic and socio-demographic background information. A specific policy aim in certain countries is, for instance, to increase the proportion of young people who go on to tertiary education. To the extent that this policy succeeds, it will have a secular impact not only on the labour market in those countries, but also – according to extensive social science evidence (Inglehart 1990) - on people's values, since education is positively associated with more libertarian social values. So a serious multi-national study such as the ESS had to investigate and attempt to interpret the relationship between each country's socio-economic structure on the one hand and its socio-political (and moral) climate on the other.

A key component of the social and economic structure of nations, and one to which the ESS needed to measure, was the extent and distribution of 'social exclusion'. Multi-faceted and ill-defined as the concept of social exclusion is, it is nonetheless at the centre of national and multinational policy concerns. Moreover, with increasing attention being focused on the Atkinson report on social indicators (Atkinson 2001), the ESS offered a good opportunity to try to operationalise and broaden some of these measures, many of which did not fall neatly out of existing national social or economic statistics.

The individual topics considered under this heading, not all of which featured prominently in the final core module, were:

- Respondent and household demographic characteristics.
- Education of respondent, children and spouse.
- Racial/ethnic origin.
- Work status and unemployment experience of respondent and spouse.
- Occupation of respondent and spouse.

- Economic standing/income of household.
- Subjective health status of respondent.
- Social trust and networks.
- Subjective indicators of poverty.
- Experience and fear of crime.
- Access to and use of mass media.

The design of the core questionnaire started even before the ESS proper began, when the former Steering and Methodology Committees began discussing their priorities for topics to be included. Expert papers<sup>8</sup> were commissioned to provide both a substantive overview of the concepts in each selected field and, where possible, a set of recommended questions that would successfully tap these concepts cross-nationally. It soon became apparent to the CCT that we needed further specialist papers<sup>9</sup> to help decide whether and how remaining gaps in the coverage of the first draft ought to be filled.

These papers provided an initial set of proposals for the core questionnaire, but there were further processes to go through, outlined in more detail below.

### **3.2. The questionnaire design process**

After the appointment of the Questionnaire Design Teams in November 2001, the process of questionnaire development for the core and rotating modules began to coincide. The remaining stages of the process were co-ordinated by the CCT, in close collaboration with the two Questionnaire Design Teams and the group of academic specialists who were consulted on the core module. Wherever possible and appropriate, questions that found their way into the final version of the questionnaire had been 'tested' in other surveys, ideally in more than one language or country. In any event, the CCT took great care to ensure not only that every question passed a quality threshold, but also of course that it could plausibly be asked within all participating nations.

The stages of the questionnaire design process were as follows:

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<sup>8</sup> On Socio-structural position of the individual in society (Erikson and Jonsson); Citizenship and identity (Linz); Religious identity (Billiet); Social exclusion (Vogel); Political background (Thomassen); Value orientations (Schwartz); Media use and evaluation (Newton)

<sup>9</sup> On Ethnicity and ethnocentrism (Billiet); Socio-political cleavages (Curtice and Bryson); Multi-level governance (Kersbergen and van Waarden); Lifelong learning (Stoop); and Personal security (Mohler)

### ***Stage 1***

The first stage was to ensure that the various concepts we wished to include (based on the specialist papers) were actually represented as precisely as possible by the proposed questions and scales. Moreover, since subsequent data users would require source material that makes their provenance transparent, we charted and documented the development of each set of questions (see Questionnaire Development Report on the ESS website [www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org)).

### ***Stage 2***

To achieve the appropriate quality standard, most questions and scales underwent an evaluation using standard quality criteria such as reliability and validity, and employing procedures that had been developed and used widely in The Netherlands (Scherpenzeel and Saris, 1997, 341-383). Where possible, these evaluations were based on prior uses of the question in other surveys, but in the case of new questions they were based on 'predictions' that took into account their respective properties.

Validity and reliability were, of course, not the only criteria taken into account. Attention was also focused on issues such as comparability of items over time and place, expected item non-response, social desirability and other potential biases, and the avoidance of ambiguity, vagueness or confusion.

### ***Stage 3***

The next step was the first translation from the source language (English) into one other language for the purpose of two large-scale national pilots. The Translation Panel guided this process to ensure optimal functional equivalence of all questions.

### ***Stage 4***

The fourth step was the two-nation pilot itself, which also contained a number of split-run experiments on question wording alternatives. Most of these experiments were in a drop-off self-completion supplement, but some were in the main interview questionnaire.

### ***Stage 5***

The pilot was analysed in detail to assess both the quality of the questions and the distribution of the substantive answers. Doubtful questions, whether on grounds of weak reliability or validity, or because they turned out to produce deviant distributions or weak scales, were sent back to the drawing board.

## **Stage 6**

The final step was the production of a fully-fledged 'source questionnaire', ready for translation from English into all ESS languages. This source questionnaire was then carefully annotated to aid the translation process in collaboration with the various question authors. By providing definitions and clarifications of the concept behind the questions, especially where the words themselves were unlikely to have direct equivalents in other languages, the annotation served to reduce ambiguity. Each participating country then carried out a small-scale pre-test of its own to iron out any remaining translation issues.

### **3.3. Rotating modules and Questionnaire Design Teams**

To start the ball rolling for the design of the two rotating modules, we placed an advertisement in OJEC in July 2001 inviting proposals from potential questionnaire design teams, with a deadline of October 3. With the help of the ESF, letters were also sent to all ESF member organisations enclosing the advertisement and asking them to publicise it within their countries. In the event, we received eight applications by the due date, two of which were selected by the Scientific Advisory Board at its meeting on 1 November 2001.

The teams selected were:

- Attitudes to Immigration.

Ian Preston, University College London, UK

Thomas Bauer, Institute für die Zukunft der Arbeit, Bonn, Germany

David Card, University of California - Berkeley, USA

Christian Dustmann, University College London, UK

James Nazroo, University College London, UK

- Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy.

Ken Newton, University of Southampton, UK

José Ramon Montero, University of Madrid, Spain

Anders Westholm, University of Uppsala, Sweden

Hanspeter Kriesi, University of Geneva, Switzerland

Sigrid Rossteutscher, University of Mannheim, Germany

In consultation with the CCT, both Questionnaire Design Teams duly produced a draft set of ideas by mid-December 2001. Following further meetings and consultation with both the CCT and National Co-ordinators, they then produced first draft modules by end January 2002. The background to the two modules, and details of their contents are given below.

### **3.4. The 'Attitudes to Immigration and Asylum' module**

Migration had once again emerged as a key policy issue throughout Europe. The renewed interest in migration issues was driven in part by growing concern over refugee inflows, and the recognition that many of these refugees will settle permanently in their host countries. Related to this was a growing body of evidence that the children of earlier waves of migrants in many European countries lagged behind natives in their education, occupational attainment, and incomes. Simultaneously there was pressure to relax the constraints on international flows of highly skilled migrants whose services were needed in certain key sectors, such as financial services and high-technology. Policy makers thus had to strike a fine balance between the needs of refugees, the concerns of the native population, and the demands of employers. Consequently, the attitudes of the majority population towards ethnic minorities and immigrants were of great concern to politicians throughout Europe. A better understanding of opinion formation about immigrants and ethnic minorities, and of the factors that influence them was long overdue. Few issues of public policy were more contentious or more in need of serious scientifically-driven research.

Although Europe has always been characterised by large population movements, recent decades had in many countries seen large inflows of immigrants who were identifiably different from the native populations – either ethnically different or with different cultural and religious values, or both. The successful absorption of successive generations of these individuals and groups was and remains a major challenge for Europe. The need to understand the tensions and obstacles associated with this process, and trying to relate them to different institutional settings and migrant characteristics in different countries, was the driving force behind the module. Although a few existing studies had tried to collect reliable data about attitudes towards immigration across countries (Bauer et al, 2000; Gang & Rivera-Batiz, 1994), they were based either on different questions in their respective countries or on samples that were ultimately too small to generate robust conclusions.

Thus the module sought to include questions which covered:

- Perceptions of current social realities.

In the first instance, there was a need to know what the public's perceptions were of immigrant flows and numbers in the different societies concerned. Naturally such perceptions were unlikely to be accurate, but the direction and degree of inaccuracy may be telling and may well differ systematically not only between countries but also between individuals in the same country of different classes, ages or education levels. An adequate understanding of these differences in perceptions and of similar differences in knowledge levels about the characteristics and entitlements of immigrants was an excellent starting point of a broader appreciation of people's underlying attitudes and possible fears.

- Attitudes to immigration policy.

Of central interest was the public's response to questions about the relaxation or tightening of immigration policies. At the most basic level these could relate to whether the volume of immigration flows into the country should be expanded or contracted. Past research (Dustmann & Preston 2000) had shown the importance and usefulness of distinguishing between immigrants of different origins, since views tend to vary according to whether incoming migrants are culturally similar to or different from the majority population.

But related and somewhat more complex issues that also needed to be explored were the criteria that people regarded as suitable or unsuitable elements in immigration and asylum policy. For instance, how far should fear of persecution be a determining factor in granting entry, and how much weight should be given to factors such as the possession of appropriate skills, or proficiency in the language of the receiving country, or existing family links?

Closely related to these complicated issues are the criteria considered appropriate for granting nationality or citizenship itself. Entitlement to citizenship differs greatly between countries, whether in terms of ancestry, birth or length of residence, and these differences probably affect national perceptions or attitudes.

All these issues have a European perspective to them, especially in view of the mooted Common European Asylum System. In any event the goal of full freedom of labour movement within the European Union implies the eventual harmonisation of migration policies. Although the geographical scope of Round 1 of the ESS was not entirely co-terminus with the boundaries of the expanded EU (including certain countries outside the

EU and not yet including certain accession countries), the survey offered a unique opportunity to investigate some of the complex issues involved.

- Discrimination against new migrants.

Regardless of the strictness or otherwise of immigration or asylum policies, it was also important to establish public perceptions of and attitudes towards the treatment of new migrants after arrival. So, perceived discrimination against ethnic and racial minorities and appropriate or inappropriate remedies were also part of the coverage of the module. Moreover, since previous research (Dustmann & Preston 2000) had shown correlations between people's positions on immigration or asylum policy and their positions on broader economic and social issues, questions were included in the module to tap attitudes towards the impact of immigration on the receiving economy and society. Indicators of fear of competition from new migrants and of ethnic and racial prejudice among respondents were also included.

- Perceived impact of immigration.

Is immigration considered as culturally enriching or a threat to native culture? Is it a source of economic dynamism, a way of remedying skill shortages or a threat to jobs and wages of native workers? Is it a source of social tension or of crime? What impact does it have on public spending? Does it add to social costs through claims on the welfare system, or does it instead alleviate future pension problems by a process of demographic replacement? To what extent is immigration perceived to put pressure on housing? Even a partial understanding of how people approach issues such as these would greatly enhance policy debates, and the module therefore sought to address them. The questions themselves tried to distinguish between perceived effects on society as a whole and on the respondent personally. More broadly, the module included questions to tap whether restrictive immigration and asylum policies – whether justified or not – were perceived as a source of genuine hardship to potential or existing immigrants by, for instance, perpetuating economic hardship in poorer countries and preventing families from re-uniting.

### **3.5. The 'Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy' module**

Modern western society is said to be suffering from a range of democratic problems from declining election turnout and loss of trust in politicians to a loss of confidence in the institutions of government and a general feeling of disaffection with politics. This module took these themes as its central concerns and sought to examine contemporary theories that tried to explain them. At the heart of these theories is the idea that much of our

contemporary social and democratic malaise derives from a decline of social trust and community participation, which, in turn, eats away at our sense of common interests and at civic engagement more generally.

The theory starts with the idea that social trust is a crucial ingredient of all forms of social life (Misztal, 1996). It is essential for everyday social relations because it is the basis of co-operation and leads to an ability to compromise and empathise with others. It oils the economic system by improving the efficiency and smoothness of business relations and thus reducing their transaction costs. Trust between citizens and politicians is also essential for effective government. Indeed, without the social institutions that are built upon generalized trust, governments would be far less effective in framing and implementing policies that serve the public interest. Thus the theory refers to generalised trust in strangers rather than trust in known individuals.

The advancement of these theories has generated a new wave of academic interest in the existence and degree of social trust and its relationship to social and political behaviour. The interest has by no means been confined to political science but extends to sociology, psychology, economics and philosophy (Arrow 1972: 357; Baier 1986; Gambetta, ed. 1988; Coleman 1988, 1990: 306; Ostrom 1990; Fukuyama 1995; Seligman 1997; Hardin 1996, 1998; Braithwaite & Levi, eds., 1998; Warren, ed. 1999; Inglehart 1999; Uslaner 2002; Delhey & Newton 2003). Thus studies have been mounted to investigate the role of social trust in many aspects of social life, as varied as educational achievement in schools, crime rates, happiness and life satisfaction, health, longevity, community participation, citizenship and even in socio-economic behaviour such as the willingness to pay taxes. In particular, the studies by Putnam (1993, 2000) of the role of social capital in the functioning of democracy in Italy and the United States has stimulated widespread interest in the relationship between trust, participation in voluntary associations, and the healthy workings of democracy (Hardin 1999; Kaase 1999; van Deth et al eds 1999; Pharr & Putnam eds 2000; Dasgupta & Serageldin eds 2000; Newton & Norris 2000; Newton 2001; Uslaner 2002; Hooghe & Stolle eds 2003). These studies and others indicate the importance of social trust as a facilitator of co-operation in society and as a key ingredient of community participation, social integration, efficient economic transactions and effective democratic government.

The fact that social trust and community participation are both declining in certain countries is attributable to some extent to the worrying fact that adults under 35 tend to display the lowest levels of social trust, but so far there is insufficient evidence to know whether this is a life cycle or generational effect. Either way, it raises urgent questions

about the components of social trust and its consequences for government and politics in Europe and beyond.

Thus the module sought to include questions which covered:

- Participation in voluntary associations.

Ever since Tocqueville's classic study of democracy in America in the mid-nineteenth century and John Stuart Mill's writings on civic engagement in the Victorian era, social trust has been seen to be created and nurtured in the local community. Community associations and voluntary organisations, formed to promote common interests and activities among people who might well be unconnected in other respects, are particularly important in this regard – churches, trade unions, community organisations, educational associations, science clubs, social groups, self-help associations, youth organisations, sports clubs, and professional and business associations, among others. Thus at the heart of the module was a series of questions on community activity, associational membership and civic engagement.

- Social trust and reciprocal obligations.

But voluntary activity in local associations is only the vehicle for a range of benefits that are said to accrue from such activity. In particular, they involve face-to-face contacts, reciprocity, compromise and the development of reciprocal obligations, all of which help to nurture democratic co-operation and compromise. They also reinforce trustworthy behaviour in everyday life, since - at its simplest - it is difficult to cheat in business relations or social life when one is likely to meet one's victim at the sports club or community centre at the weekend. Many voluntary associations also help to train people in organisational skills and bridge social differences between classes, religions, and ethnic groups, creating common identities and shared expectations. The module sought to identify whether these qualities of social trust and shared identities were indeed related to organisational membership and activity.

- Civic engagement.

It is, of course, not only attitudes that are said to be affected by greater community identity. So is behaviour. Thus the module sought to discover whether membership of voluntary associations actually generated an interest, knowledge and willingness to participate in national political affairs – to vote, to join political parties, to discuss politics, to express political views, and to act in concert with others, whether to promote private interests or the common good. In contrast, the module was designed to find out whether those who were more isolated and privatised in their daily life showed lower

levels of social trust, higher levels of detachment from common interests, and less willingness to participate in both local and national politics.

The module also depended a great deal on various questions already included in the core module, such as confidence in institutions, political activity, and a range of standard socio-economic background questions.

### **3.6. The two-nation pilot**

During March and early April 2002, a pilot study was conducted in Britain and the Netherlands to test the core section, the two rotating modules of the questionnaire and the self-completion form. Just under 900 interviews were achieved across Britain and the Netherlands, in both cases spread across the country and as representative as possible in demographic characteristics.

Details of the pilot analysis are given below. But we also received qualitative feedback from pilot interviewers that they had found the survey rather difficult to 'sell'.

This may have been partly a function of having to 'cold call' (rather than having pre-selected addresses to which an advance letter had already been sent). If so, this was a problem that would apply mainly to the pilot itself, since the main stage would, wherever possible, include an advance letter. On the positive side, potential respondents seemed to be attracted by the idea of comparing themselves to people in other European countries. In any event, the pilot confirmed how important it was for National Coordinators and survey organisations to implement a series of suggested response enhancement procedures on which the CCT was to provide advice and guidance.

Interviewers also reported that the length of the interview had probably exacerbated the difficulties in persuading people to take part in the survey. Indeed, as it turned out from the pilot analysis, the core section of the questionnaire had proved to be far longer than planned for (by around 25%). So before long both attitudinal and socio-demographic items had to be pruned substantially

### **3.7. Analysis of the pilot**

Attempts to maximise the reliability and validity of items in the questionnaire had been made right from the start of the questionnaire design process by means of a predictive model developed and operated by Professor Saris and colleagues at the University of Amsterdam. But now at last quantitative pilot data were available for the items to be tested empirically. The four main focuses of the analysis by members of the CCT were on item reliability (using MTMM analysis), the distribution of responses across response

scales, levels of 'don't knows' or missing values on particular items, and the impact of using show cards (or not) for a series of 11-point scales that were embedded in the pilot questionnaire. The analysis concentrated particularly on new questions – especially in the rotating module on immigration, but also on socio-political attitude scales which had been developed in Britain but not yet tested comparatively (Heath, Evans, Lalljee, Witherspoon 1990).

The issues to be tested in the analysis were whether the items measured what the concept was supposed to measure (content validity), the predicted reliability and method effects (concurrent validity), and the relationships within and between constructs (construct validity). To the extent that it was able to do so, the pilot was also designed to reveal cognitive and interaction problems in the questionnaire and problems of comparability across countries. With that in mind, certain items had been included twice in the pilot questionnaire with only slightly different wording or response categories, thus enabling informed decisions to be made about which formulations should be used at the main stage.

As far as the use of showcards was concerned, we ran a split-ballot experiment in the British pilot designed to discover the impact of using show cards or not for a series of 11-point scales. One half of the sample were shown cards and the other half were not with a view to establishing the impact of show cards on the distribution of responses along the scale, levels of 'don't know' responses, and the extent of 'bunching' around certain points (eg 0, 5 and 10).

The experiment showed that show cards had a marginal positive effect on the quality of the data. Although for many items, the difference in levels of 'don't knows' was minor, there were also examples of significant differences – in particular that respondents not given a show card had a higher propensity to choose 0, 5, 10 or don't know on certain items. But overall the results were far from decisive.

Even so, we decided to use show cards for the 11-point scales in Round 1, recognising that they might be dropped with only minor impact in future rounds. Meanwhile, we would undertake methodological tests with a view to establishing ways of mitigating the small effects that do arise.

## 4. Translation

### 4.1. Process and method

A specialist multi-nation translation panel, chaired by Janet Harkness of ZUMA, was set up to develop and implement the most appropriate approach to ESS translation and review (see Annex 6 for membership).

The following factors had to be taken into account in developing the ESS translation and assessment guidelines:

- All countries would translate the source questionnaire into all languages spoken as a first language by five percent or more of their resident population. Some countries therefore had to undertake two or even three translations of the source questionnaire.
- Since the core questionnaire was to be designed for replication at each round and the rotating modules for (less frequent) repetitions, it was especially important for each country to produce optimally equivalent translations that would stand the test of time.
- A paper trail of the translation process was essential so that the provenance of every question in every country could be understood and appreciated by scholars and other analysts.
- Countries that 'shared' languages (eg France, Belgium and Switzerland) should be able to benefit from each other's work, but were not required to conform to one another. On the contrary, they were to adhere to rules of engagement that ensured that every country used its own appropriate equivalent phraseology.
- Detailed practical guidelines – many of them developed especially for the ESS - were drawn up for each phase of translation and assessment and introduced to National Co-ordinators at one of their plenary meetings, supported by a helpline that could be contacted until the process was complete.

The ESS's sequential design meant that the source questionnaire was finalised before any translation would begin, in principle enabling equivalence to be achieved and individual questions to be compared across countries in advance. Such Ask-the-Same-Question (ASQ) designs need to ensure not only that the words and phrases are 'correct' but also that they maintain the intended measurement properties (for discussion, see Harkness, van de Vijver & Johnson, 2003).

The ESS translation and translation assessment procedures thus entailed a structured approach requiring participating countries to expend unusual effort, the details of which were explicitly included in the ESS specifications so that they could be appropriately costed.

The approach is based on a five-step process consisting of **Translation, Review, Adjudication, Pre-testing and Documentation (TRAPD)**. The TRAPD procedures involve a team approach, with those involved taking on one or more of three different roles: translator, reviewer, and adjudicator.

- Translators were to be trained practitioners ideally with experience of translating questionnaires. Two such translators were required for each language version in each country. They were to translate from the English source questionnaire into their strongest language (in almost all cases their 'first' language).
- Reviewers were also to have good translation skills but needed as well to be familiar with questionnaire design principles and with survey research more generally. Only one reviewer per language per country was required, but if one person could not be found with all the skills required then the task could be shared.
- Adjudicators were to be responsible for the final decisions on translation options, ideally in agreement with reviewer and translators, but at any rate after discussion with the reviewer. Only one adjudicator was required for each language in each country, and he or she ideally had to appreciate the overall subject matter and principles of the research and be proficient both in English and the other language involved. The adjudicator was in fact frequently the National Co-ordinator or someone else of senior standing already working on the project.

This multi-staged approach was chosen to mitigate the subjective nature of translation and text-based translation assessment procedures; to ensure appropriate stage by stage documentation which would help both adjudicators and subsequent analysts; and to allow careful but parsimonious translations in countries which share a language with other countries

#### **4.2. Application of TRAPD**

TRAPD can be organised either by means of parallel or split translations:

- Parallel translations involve several people making independent translations of the same questionnaire (Brislin 1980; Schoua-Glusberg 1992; Guillemin et al 1993; Acquadro et al 1996). Then, at a reconciliation meeting, the translators and a

reviewer go through the questionnaire question by question, discussing discrepancies. They then agree on a final review version. The adjudicator may attend the review process or even be a reviewer. If he or she is not involved in the review process, the version produced through discussion moves on to adjudication. A version of such parallel translation was the recommended procedure for the ESS. However, split translation (see below) was offered as an option to countries which 'shared' a language or languages with another country (see Annex 9, Document B, 'Information Note 3').

- Split translations also involve at least two translators plus a reviewer-cum-adjudicator (or a reviewer and adjudicator). But the questionnaire is divided up between the translators in the alternating fashion used in dealing cards. Thus, each translator gets an even spread of material from the questionnaire and translates his/her own section. At a reconciliation meeting, translators and the reviewer go through the questionnaire using the same procedure as for parallel translations. The adjudicator may attend the review process and become involved in the review or merely enter the process afterwards to adjudicate. Task-splitting can save time and effort, particularly if the questionnaire is long (Schoua-Glusberg 1992).

So both these approaches were employed in the ESS in different countries and with apparently similar degrees of success. Some countries merged review and adjudication processes wholly or in part, again without undue problems (Harkness, Pennell & Schoua-Glusberg, 2004).

A growing body of specialists now advocate such team-based arrangements for comparative survey research. They argue persuasively that a translator working alone and simply 'handing over' the finished assignment has no opportunity to discuss and develop alternatives. So regional variance, idiosyncratic interpretations and inevitable individual 'blind spots' all come prominently into play. A team approach mitigates and helps to neutralise such problems and does so more productively, they argue, than the traditional iterative approach to translation.

### 4.3. Procedures for countries with 'shared' languages

As Table 2. below shows, several ESS countries shared languages:

**Table 2.**

Language	Countries sharing
French	Belgium, France, Switzerland, Luxembourg
German	Austria, Germany, Switzerland
Italian	Italy, Switzerland
Dutch/Flemish	Belgium, The Netherlands
Swedish	Sweden, Finland
English	UK, Ireland

As noted, the ESS did not follow a policy of deliberate harmonisation between different countries sharing a common language. The countries concerned did consult with one another so that *unnecessary* differences in translation were avoided, but in the knowledge that some differences were necessary because of different usages.

On occasions, consultation between countries with a common language added a new perspective and led to a 'better' common solution. But on other occasions it led to the adoption of different solutions. The great advantage of consultation, however, was to ensure that *unnecessary* differences in wording were avoided. Either way, countries were required to document the outcome of their consultations, distinguishing between and explaining common solutions and different versions. The Translation panel provided a template to aid this documentation.

Unlike countries with a unique language, those who shared a language were free to adopt a split approach to translation - using two translators who parcelled up the materials into two more or less equal random parts. (The precise steps are described in Information Note 3, Annex 9, Document B.) It was important to stress that in these situations that no country's version should be considered as definitive or even dominant. Experience had shown that idiom and meaning were to a large extent culturally constructed along different lines in different nations.

With that in mind, all countries were asked to complete their own translations before comparing it with another country's version. The Translation Panel would thus be in a

position to analyse the process in more detail and learn the lessons for comparative research in general.

All countries were also requested to:

- indicate their intention of co-operating with a named country or countries several months in advance of the start of the translation process per se;
- submit their individual versions to the Translation Panel before the consultation process began;
- include in their documentation a record of initial differences and subsequent 'solutions'.

Table 3. lists the countries that produced more than one translation, complying either with the specification that an appropriate version of the questionnaire should be produced for all minority (first) language groups comprising 5% or more of the population, or because the country had more than one official language and thus felt it necessary to produce a version for each of those languages. So Switzerland for instance produced three language versions (German, French and Italian), all official languages, and was able to 'share' the development of each version with one or more other countries. In contrast, Israel also produced three language versions (Hebrew, Arabic and Russian), *not* all official languages, and was unable to share the development of any of them with another country. Not surprisingly, Israel opted for a split translation approach.

**Table.3.**

Country	Language(s)	Shared
Belgium	Flemish (Dutch) French	Yes Yes
Finland	Finnish Swedish	No Yes
Israel	Hebrew Arabic Russian	No No No
Luxembourg	French German	Yes Yes
Switzerland	Italian French German	Yes Yes Yes
Spain	Spanish Catalan	No No

#### **4.4. Selecting translators, reviewers and adjudicators**

Guidelines were provided to National Co-ordinators on what are believed to be the most appropriate characteristics of translators, reviewers and adjudicators, and how to assess candidates. Various briefing and training materials were also provided, along with guidance notes, on the use of the annotated questionnaire and documentation (see Annex 9), all designed to ease and improve the process (Holz-Mänttari 1984; Gile 1995; Kussmaul 1995; Gutknecht & Rölle 1996; Wilss 1996). These materials were produced in the knowledge that well-trained and generally well-informed translators are more likely than others to care about and adhere to the measurement objectives in making their translations (Hulin 1987; Hambleton 1993; Borg 1998).

Great emphasis was placed on the value of briefing translators thoroughly, indicating the degree of freedom permitted in translations and how to report back on potential divergences from the source questionnaire or other 'same' language versions.

#### **4.5. Annotating the questionnaire**

Questionnaires lead a double life: while on the surface they appear straightforward and simple they are in fact complex, highly-crafted documents consisting of a combination of concepts, questions, response options, definitions and instructions. Choices about wording, sequence, degree of explanation and layout are all critical to the design.

Annotations on source questionnaires are therefore employed to help translators, reviewers and adjudicators to find the most optimally equivalent translations from the original English. They are certainly not intended as crutches for translators with, say, a weak command of English, but instead to provide information that enables the various actors in the translation process to focus directly on what concept or connotation lies behind the actual question. For instance, in some cultures, the word 'household' might automatically tend to be associated with 'home' and hence 'family'. In this instance, the annotation would point out that the appropriate focus is the dwelling unit (variously defined as shared cooking facilities, shared finances or shared sitting room).

The annotations sometimes also include helpful background information about questions to show their provenance (such as country of origin, language and date of first appearance). These details help translators to appreciate a question's origin and history and sometimes enable them to refer to earlier translations.

#### 4.6. Translation and documentation

As noted, all NCs were asked to document translation and review decisions:

- for the benefit of reviewers and adjudicators themselves (Harkness, Pennell & Schoua-Glusberg, 2004) to provide a record of points at issue in the initial translations;
- for the benefit of countries sharing languages who need to be able to compare and contrast versions and later to defend the final version;
- for the benefit of future scholars and ESS analysts; and
- for the benefit of methodologists involved in assessing the reliability or validity of questions, where different national response patterns could stem from faulty translations.

The International Social Survey Programme (Harkness, Langfeldt & Scholz, 2000) keeps such records only while the work is in progress, but ESS practice will be to keep them for longer as a source of continuing methodological analysis. A document has thus already been compiled of all the comments from participating countries on individual questions in order to inform both future rounds of the ESS and future analysts more generally.

The tight schedule in ESS Round 1 left no time between completion of the source questionnaire, translation of other questionnaires, and the actual fielding phase for the planned conduct of cognitive interviews with a small sample of different experienced translators. So they had to be postponed till later in the life of the package. The taped interviews took these translators through a small number of source questions asking them to comment on anything they saw as difficult or problematic. At a later stage they will be asked to comment on their own versions compared to the final ESS versions, providing external feedback on ESS translations into various languages. This work is part of the 'self-improvement' agenda of all ESS methodology.

## 5. Fieldwork

### 5.1. Specification

The Specification for participating countries laid down the general rules for fieldwork procedures. In particular:

- Countries were set a target response rate of 70%, and a maximum non-contact rate of 3%. Naturally, these targets could not be turned into contractual conditions, and – in the event – either one or both of these targets were not achieved in several places. But they were nonetheless serious targets to be aimed at conscientiously by means of appropriate procedures and costings. Similarly, the target response rate for the supplementary questionnaire was set at 90% of productive face-to-face respondents. The procedures for calculating ‘response rates’ were laid down in the specification.
- The CCT also provided guidance on response rate enhancement procedures, but the specification already insisted that interviewers had to make at least 4 personal visits to a sampling unit before treating it as non-productive. Moreover, at least one visit had to be in the evening and one at the weekend, and visits were to be spread over at least 2 different weeks. Similarly, to allow hard-to-contact or temporarily unreachable people to be located, the fieldwork period itself had to last at least 30 days, within a 4 month period from September-December 2002. In the event, the timetable frequently stretched beyond the specified limits and sometimes well beyond. This was partly as a result of country-specific factors such as national elections, but also partly because of difficulties in achieving the response rate targets and the subsequent need to reissue ‘soft’ refusals and non-contacts in a renewed attempt to boost response and make the sample more representative.
- First contacts were to be made face-to-face (mostly but not in all cases following an advance letter), but the exception to this rule was in countries where the sample was one of named individuals. In these cases only, a phone could be used to make first contact. Even so, all interviews everywhere were to be carried out face-to-face. Only the supplementary questionnaire was allowed to be carried out by self-completion methods.
- Quality control back-checks had to be carried out and documented on at least 5% of respondents, 10% of refusals and 10% of non-contacts.

- Interviewer assignment sizes were not to exceed 24 issued units and no interviewer was to carry out more than 2 assignments.
- Interviewers were to be personally briefed about all aspects of the survey.

## 5.2. Fieldwork details

Table 4. gives a broad overview of the fieldwork in each country, including the identity of the survey organisation commissioned to carry out the work, the mode of main and supplementary questionnaires, the start and end fieldwork dates and the response rates.

There were some deviations from the specification, which are summarised below and covered in more detail in the section on contract adherence:

- In the event, seven of the ESS countries (see Table 4. below) achieved or exceeded the 70% target, and a further six achieved between 60% and 69%. The other nine disappointingly fell below 60% in Round 1 and hope to improve on these figures in Round 2 and beyond. So, although we knew that the target was unrealistically high for certain countries, it proved to be in reach (or nearly so) for most. More importantly, the response rates achieved in the ESS in the great majority of countries were above or well above national norms for similar projects, suggesting that the target was well worth specifying.
- Similarly, the maximum specified non-contact rate of 3% proved to be unachievable in 11 countries<sup>10</sup> (even in some that achieved 70% or higher response rates). On the other hand, the non-contact rate was once again generally lower than national norms.
- As for the supplementary questionnaires, all but four countries met the response rate target of 90% of all productive face-to-face respondents, and even the four that failed to meet the 90% target still achieved 85% or higher response rates for their supplementary questionnaires.
- As noted, most countries were not in the event able to complete their fieldwork in the period specified – between September and December 2002. In some cases late agreement to funding or intervening national events delayed the start of fieldwork; in others, the need to boost response rates delayed the finish.

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<sup>10</sup> No detailed information was available for France and the Czech republic.

- Compliance with back checking targets was generally good, particularly in respect of back checks on productive respondents. In three countries, however, fewer than 10% refusals were back checked, and in six fewer than 10% of non-contacts were back checked.
- The majority of countries also complied with the specification in terms of maximum assignment sizes. Although in seven countries the maximum assignment size was exceeded in some cases, it applied to a very small proportion of the total interviewer load.

**Table 4.** Fieldwork details by country

COUNTRY	Survey organization	Mode of questionnaire		Fieldwork dates		Response rate %
		Main	Supplementary	Start	End	
Austria	Institute for Panel Research	PAPI	Interview	Feb 03	Sept 03	60
Belgium (Flemish)	Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research (ISPO), Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	PAPI	Interview	Oct 02	Apr 03	59
Belgium (Franco-phone)	CLEO, University of Liège	PAPI	Interview	Oct 02	Apr 03	59
Czech Republic	STEM	PAPI	Most interview	Nov 02	Mar 03	43
Denmark	Danish National Institute of Social Research	CAPI	Interview	Oct 02	Jun 03	68
Finland	Statistics Finland	CAPI	S/C	Sept 02	Dec 02	73
France	Institut de Sondage Lavalie(ISL)	CAPI	Most interview	Sept 03	Dec 03	43
Germany	Institute for Applied Social Sciences (infas)	CAPI	Most S/C	Nov 02	May 03	57
Greece	Consortium: MRB and Opinion	PAPI	Most interview	Jan 03	Mar 03	80
Hungary	TARKI	PAPI	S/C	Oct 02	Nov 02	70
Ireland	Economic and Social Research Institute	PAPI	Most nterview	Dec 02	Apr 03	65

Israel	B.I. Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research, Tel-Aviv University	PAPI	Most nterview	Oct 02	Jan 03	71
Italy	ABACUS	CAPI	Most interview	Jan 03	Jun 03	44
Luxembourg	CEPS/INSTEAD	PAPI	Not fielded	Apr 03	Aug 03	44
Netherlands	GfK Panel Services Benelux	CAPI	Most S/C	Sep 02	Feb 03	68
Norway	Statistics Norway	CAPI	S/C	Sep 02	Jan 03	65
Poland	Centre for Social Survey Research, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences	PAPI	Most interview	Sep 02	Dec 02	73
Portugal	Euroteste, Marketing e Opinião.	PAPI	Interview	Sep 02	Jan 03	69
Slovenia	Public Opinion and Mass Communication Research Centre (CJMMK), Ljubljana University	PAPI	Interview	Oct 02	Nov 02	71
Spain	Demoscopia	PAPI	Most interviews	Nov 02	Jan 03	53
Sweden	Statistics Sweden	CAPI	Most S/C	Sep 02	Dec 02	70
Switzerland	MIS Trend	CAPI	Interview	Sep 02	Feb 03	34
UK	National Centre for Social Research	CAPI	Most S/C	Sep 02	Feb 03	56

## 6. Context/event data

### 6.1. Contextual data

A context data base was always planned for the ESS so that national and European\*level background data could be used in data analysis to identify which national variations owed more to exogenous factors than to attitudinal differences. Such contextual data might also be useful at a later stage for other purposes, such as weighting of the data.

An inventory was thus made of publicly, electronically available background information taking into account its completeness, reliability, how up-to-date it was, how accessible, and so on. As a result of this initial work and subsequent consultations with NCs, we decided it would not be necessary or desirable to second-guess in advance which areas of contextual data would be most in demand by data users. Instead we decided simply to provide and annotate an inventory of *sources* of contextual data for them to refer to at will. This inventory is available at [www.scp.nl/users/stoop/ess\\_events/links\\_contextual\\_data.htm](http://www.scp.nl/users/stoop/ess_events/links_contextual_data.htm). In addition, a small subset of population and demographic data for each country is available from the ESS Archive at NSD.

### 6.2 Event data

Equally important in their likely effect on responses are socio-political factors in a particular country before and during fieldwork. The proximity of an election, for instance, or an unpopular tax rise, or industrial unrest, or even a natural disaster could have a profound – if possibly temporary – effect on public attitudes and perceptions of certain topics in the questionnaire. Any serious cross-national comparison or historical micro analyses should ideally be able to discount or control for these sorts of factors. So the ESS team decided to include the recording of such major national events in and around fieldwork within its remit.

To help develop a workable system, each National Coordinator was asked to take part in a trial, during which they reported on any major national (or international) event that might be likely to influence responses to issues covered by the questionnaire. The trial ran from 15 March to 1 May 2002 (see the report at: [www.scp.nl/users/stoop/ess\\_events/events\\_context\\_interim\\_report.pdf](http://www.scp.nl/users/stoop/ess_events/events_context_interim_report.pdf)).

As a result, the following protocol was developed for event reporting in the ESS fieldwork proper:

NCs should report on the following events:

Major national events that attract wide and long-lasting attention nationally and even in other countries (category a and b)

Major national events that make front page news for several subsequent days and give rise to widespread public discussion and/or to a substantive increase in media use (categories c, d and e provided that they concern real 'major' events)

Elections, the major issues under discussion, possible changes in the political landscape.

It will be clear that there is no clear-cut definition of which events have to be registered. The appraisal of the impact has a subjective element, the cross-border relevancy will not always be clear from the start, the impact of an event may lag or only come to the surface in relation to similar events, etc. As a safeguard NCs might decide to register rather too many than too few events.

#### *Format*

NCs are requested to register events in Word in the following format:

- name event (eg major strike, national election, new immigration law) and give keywords;
- short description;
- assessment of scope, impact (how much attention did it get in the press, how many persons are involved);
- names of relevant newspapers, dates of front page news, headlines;
- if possible, when did it start and when did it end?
- additional information (how could this affect the fieldwork?);
- assign the event to one or more categories
  - International conflicts.
  - Elections, plebiscite.

- Resignation, appointment, dismissal of politically significant person.
- Fall of cabinet, organization, reshuffle of new government.
- Organization of opposition party.
- Significant change of laws.
- Strikes, demonstrations, riots.
- Events involving ethnic minorities, asylum seekers.
- Events concerning the national economy, labour market.
- Political, financial, economic scandal.
- National events (royal weddings, sports championships);.
- Disasters (crashing financial markets, explosions, outbreaks foot and mouth/mad cow disease, extreme weather conditions)

*Period and logistics*

The registration of events should start as of 1st August 2002 (to be well ahead of fieldwork). NCs are requested to send in an overview of events each month. The first mail should also contain a one page overview of current issues in the country concerned, to use as a baseline.

*Action expected of National Coordinators:*

Send an overview of major events each month to the CCT in the format specified above

This was of course an innovative departure for a cross-national (or for that matter national) survey, and we were delighted that the NCs did such an excellent job (see the inventory of reports at [www.scp.nl/users/stoop/ess\\_events/events\\_overview.htm](http://www.scp.nl/users/stoop/ess_events/events_overview.htm)). Most reports took care to present their data in a standardized format, to mention dates and sources and to point to the possible impact of the events on the social, political and economic climate in their country in general, and on the issues in the ESS questionnaire in particular. Indeed, despite the amount of time and effort required, several National Co-ordinators suggested extra coding categories, provided thoughtful analyses and

invented useful formats for reporting. As for the consistency of the event reporting in Round 1, there are of course still some national differences in style of reporting, but overall the experiment proved highly successful.

We cannot yet tell how much the events we identified actually influenced the survey responses in different countries or overall. But many events that occurred just before and during fieldwork certainly seemed to be directly related to the content of the questionnaire. For instance, the war in Iraq may have had a differential influence in different countries, depending on the timing of fieldwork (before, during and after the war) and on the stance of that country in relation to the war. Similarly, economic difficulties seem to have had a substantial impact in many countries, whether involving layoffs, rising unemployment, inflation or falling share prices. The issue of immigration became more prominent during the period in several countries as diverse as Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland and the UK.

Future analysts of the ESS data will, we hope, appreciate the ability to look at the events dataset for possible explanations of difficult-to-explain patterns of difference between nations.

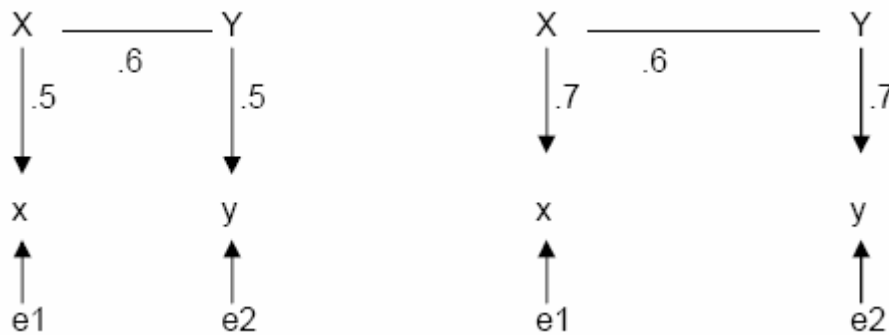
## **7. Question assessment**

The task of question assessment was to test and analyse a series of experiments to evaluate data quality - especially the reliability and validity of the questions in the different countries. The work was done primarily by means of MTMM experiments (see below).

### **7.1. Correcting for quality differences**

It is common practice to assume that measures have to be equivalent across countries, but this is not necessarily the case. If it is the relationships between variables rather than just univariate distributions that are the object of the measurement, then the measures themselves do not have to be equivalent across countries as long as the differences can be corrected for.

Such differences are generally in the quality of the measures in the different countries, and they can be large:



If the quality of the measured relationship between the variables (X,Y) and the observed variables (x,y) is 0.5 in one country and 0.7 in the other country, while in both countries the correlation between the two variables X and Y is the same (0.6), then it follows that the correlation between x and y in the first country is 0.15 (the product of the coefficients  $0.5 \times 0.6 \times 0.5$ ), and in the second country 0.30. So it is clear that differences in the quality of measure in different countries can account for large differences between the observed correlations. This has been shown to be true even for countries such as Germany and The Netherlands with rather similar languages. So countries with more diverse languages may well produce larger differences.

However, if the quality of the measures is known for the different countries, the correlations between the observed variables for differences in quality between the measures can be corrected. This is desirable in any research, but certainly in cross-national research.

## 7.2. MTMM design for ESS Round 1

We inserted 12 extra questions in the main questionnaire and 24 extra questions in the drop-off questionnaire for 6 MTMM experiments. We employed a split ballot MTMM design combined with a test-retest element where the preferred question forms were included in the main questionnaire and were thus completed by all respondents. The split ballot applied only to the drop-off form, such that the sample was randomly divided into subgroups each completing different questionnaires. In all, six MTMM experiments were carried out, each based on three traits and three methods. The split ballot made it possible to have 6 extra questions in 6 different tests, each completed by around 250 randomly assigned respondents, with two groups of respondents always getting an alternative form of the same traits. So, from the respondents' point of view, the number of questions and the repetition of the same questions they were asked to complete was reduced from a possible 36 to only

6. Even so, the standard results of a normal split ballot experiment together with information with respect to reliability, validity and method effects were all provided (Saris, Satorra & Coenders 2003; Saris & Krosnick 2003).

After discussions within the CCT, two different options were offered to NCs for the experiments: a 6 groups design with 6 questions extra in each group, or a 2 group design with 18 extra questions in each group. Each National Coordinator then chose one of the alternative designs after consultation with the survey house.

### **7.3. Selection of experiments and meta-analysis**

Naturally, the MTMM experiments could not cover all ESS variables. Besides which, estimates of data quality are affected by other factors such as the position of a question in the questionnaire, the distance to another MTMM measure, the length of its text etc. So, both to take these other factors into account and to make predictions of the quality of ESS questions that were not to be separately tested, we made use of a meta analysis of MTMM experiments (Andrews, 1984; Scherpenzeel & Saris, 1997). Thus the new MTMM experiments were to test certain crucial variables while the meta analysis of the results of previous experiments helped to provide a prediction of the likely range of reliability, validity and method effects deriving from other questions. These predictions were based on more than 1000 survey questions.

In the pilot stages, six MTMM experimental designs were employed on the following crucial issues:

- a) 'open' questions asking frequencies or amounts *versus* 7-point category scales;
- b) dichotomous versus 5-point *versus* 11-point scales;
- c) individual 5-point agree/disagree items *versus* direct questions with construct-specific responses;
- d) 11-point bipolar scales with show cards *versus* the same questions without them;
- e) 4-point bipolar scales *versus* 4-point unipolar scales and 11-point bipolar scales;
- f) batteries of agree/disagree items *versus* direct questions with construct-specific responses.

The following topic areas were chosen for each of the different experiments:

- a) media use;
- b) political efficacy;
- c) social trust;
- d) satisfaction with the economy, democracy and government;
- e) trust in political institutions;
- f) socio-political orientations.

A complex design was developed to estimate the effect on the reliability and validity of questions arising from a variety of different factors. To do this, a coding frame was formulated and all questions were coded to it with respect to 21 different characteristics, including unavoidable ones such as their position in the questionnaire, their mode of data collection, the distance between items, etc. Iterating these steps led to a design for which the standards errors of the estimates were of a size sufficient to ensure that the explanatory factors were not highly correlated. If on the other hand correlations between the traits had been too close to zero, problems would have arisen (Saris, Satorra & Coenders, 2003). In practice, only two of the experiments threw up such low correlations between traits.

#### **7.4. Results of the MTMM experiments**

The results below are based on the first 14 countries to be released.<sup>11</sup> As noted, six experiments were done in each country, thus theoretically providing 84 MTMM matrices. But in two countries the analysis could not be done for the media data and in three others, no analysis could be done for socio-political orientations. So in all 79 data sets were analysed, each consisting of nine questions, adding up to 711 questions. The analysis was done using the model developed by Saris, Satorra & Coenders (2003), using a Lisrel program for the estimation of reliability and validity arising from the 79 correlation matrices.

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<sup>11</sup> The potential figure was 15, but Hungary had to be omitted because data from their supplementary questionnaires were incomplete.

In Table 5 the mean reliability and validity coefficients are given for the forms used in the main and supplementary questionnaires in each country. The best result in each country is shown in italics.

**Table 5.** The mean reliability and validity coefficients over six experiments in 14 countries

Country	Reliability coefficient			Validity coefficient		
	main	sup 1	sup2	main	sup 1	sup 2
UK	.818	<i>.855</i>	.852	<i>.973</i>	.929	.937
Ireland	<i>.868</i>	.816	.799	<i>.955</i>	.932	.912
Netherlands	<i>.871</i>	.808	.816	<i>.988</i>	.919	.934
Sweden	<i>.814</i>	.843	<i>.856</i>	<i>.962</i>	.875	.931
Norway	<i>.836</i>	.823	.779	<i>.987</i>	.887	.884
Finland	<i>.846</i>	.817	.831	<i>.957</i>	.922	.941
Spain	<i>.870</i>	.843	.819	<i>.976</i>	.925	.913
Portugal	<i>.911</i>	.875	.874	<i>.957</i>	.929	.899
Greece	<i>.908</i>	.904	.878	.982	.958	.936
Czech	<i>.897</i>	.845	.819	.932	.929	<i>.937</i>
Poland	.841	.888	.860	.948	<i>.975</i>	.963
Slovenia	.853	.864	<i>.868</i>	<i>.930</i>	.958	<i>.986</i>
Switzerland	.822	<i>.855</i>	.843	<i>.982</i>	.923	.941
Israel	<i>.863</i>	.856	.842	<i>.985</i>	.926	.931
Means	<i>.858</i>	.849	.837	<i>.966</i>	.927	.934

The table provides reassurance that in general the right choices were made. In 9 of the 14 countries, for instance, the reliability coefficients of the question in the main questionnaire was higher than its reliability coefficient in the supplementary questionnaire. Similarly, 11 of the 14 countries had a higher validity coefficient for questions in the main questionnaire than in the supplementary questionnaire. Nonetheless, these promising cross-national results should not deflect attention from the fact that some quite large differences in results occurred on different topics, as the following Table 6 shows. Whereas Table 5 aggregated results across topics, Table 6 differentiates between the forms for each of the topics according to the means over the countries. Again the best result for each topic is shown in italics and the number of studies on which the results were based is shown in brackets.

**Table 6.** The mean reliability and validity coefficients for different topics across countries

Topic	Reliability coefficient			Validity coefficient		
	Main	sup 1	sup 2	main	sup 1	SUP 2
Media (12)	.938	.748	.826	.997	.878	.946
Political efficacy (14)	.797	.908	.833	1.00	.969	.966
Satisfaction (14)	.878	.816	.875	.907	.881	.939
Social trust (14)	.832	.880	.775	.966	.909	.857
Political trust (14)	.924	.944	.923	.957	.949	.940
Socio-pol orientations (11)	.771	.889	.793	.974	.980	.959

The results show that the validity coefficients in the main questionnaire for all topics are fairly close to 1 which suggests hardly any method effect, but that cannot be said for the other measures, thus confirming once again that the choices for the main questionnaire were good. However, with respect to the reliability coefficients, the results show much more variation, even for the topics covered in the main questionnaire. If one topic generates a reliability coefficient of .938, it means that observed correlations are hardly affected by random errors. If another topic generates one of .748, it means that the size of its observed correlations are half the size of the first topic.

To evaluate the effect of the different factors, more studies would be needed, but some effects are already easy to detect. For example, for media use a scale in the main questionnaire was used with 7 categories. Its coefficient of .938 shows that it worked well. In one of the variants in the self-completion supplement, we used an open question in response to which respondents were asked to indicate in hours and minutes how much time they spent using the media. In the event, some respondents specified minutes in the box for hours, or only registered hours and no minutes. Whereas an interviewer can detect such errors at the time and help the respondent to remedy them, that is not possible in a self-completion form, leading to preventable errors and therefore low reliability (.748).

A second example is the topic of socio-political orientations. The questions in the main questionnaire and the first form of the supplementary questionnaire were deliberately formulated in an identical way. The only difference was that for many respondents the supplementary questionnaire was a self-completion questionnaire. Yet it seems that this difference alone was sufficient to create a rather large difference in the reliability co-

efficient of.1 between the two measures, with the main questionnaire as usual generating greater reliability. In the second variant of this experiment, the question was formulated in a yes/no format and followed up by asking for an indication of how strongly they felt. As Ongena (2003) has shown, this format can also lead to lower data quality.

All the results we obtained were broadly in agreement with previous findings on factors affecting the reliability and validity of questions.

### **7.5. Conclusions**

The work showed that the choices we made in an attempt to improve the quality of the questions in the main questionnaire generally had a positive effect on the quality of the data. In most countries the questions used in the main questionnaire were better than possible alternatives tested in the supplementary questionnaire. And the average level of data quality is also good: over all countries and topics the reliability coefficient is.858 and the validity coefficient.966. This means that of the total variance of an observed variable, 69% is due to the trait to be measured, 5.0 % to systematic error and 26% to random measurement error – generally considered to be a good result. Even so, the quality of the questions does still vary by topic and by country, which remains a concern for a high quality cross-national project such as the ESS. The issue must continue to be addressed in future rounds.

## **8. Quality assessment**

We refer here to two aspects of data quality - the *quality of the achieved samples* and the *quality of the registered responses*. So, on the one hand we need to evaluate the processes leading to the sample selection and the output of the sample - as affected by non-response rates and non-response errors. And on the other hand, we need to evaluate problems such as item-non-response and measurement equivalence.

### **8.1. Differences in non-response**

A full report on this issue based on a detailed analysis of interviewer call records is available on the ESS website (Billiet & Philippens, 'Data Based Quality Assessment in the ESS: Part 2).

As noted, a target response rate of 70% was specified for all participating countries, and countries were advised to adopt a range of fieldwork procedures in their attempts to achieve it. Moreover, a precise method of how to calculate the response rate was also laid down, and a great deal of attention was devoted to the documentation of non-

response. Even so, there were of course large differences in non-response rates within and between nations.

Despite the widespread indifference to response rates *per se* in much modern opinion polling and commercial research – which emphasises demographic representativeness via quota samples rather than high rates of participation among random samples – non-response still matters greatly in serious studies designed to measure and interpret society’s attitudes, values or behaviour patterns. Research by Groves & Couper (1998) and more recently by Voogt et al (2003) confirms the fact that participation in surveys (as in many other aspects of society) tends naturally to be biased towards certain groups in society to the exclusion of others. Unless these tendencies are counteracted, non-response bias will confound the results. This is of course particularly true in cross-national studies in which different levels of non-response between countries may threaten the validity of comparisons between them (Couper & De Leeuw, 2003; De Heer, 1999).

Non-response in surveys has two main components – people who are not or cannot be contacted in the first place, and people who are contacted but then refuse to participate. The problem is that each of these sources may lead to different biases. So, if the make-up of these two non-responding groups happens to differ between countries, it will tend to increase cross-national biases.

As an indication of the differences, we show in Table 7 below the overall response, non-contact and refusal rates for 12 of the 15 ESS countries whose data were released as part of the first wave<sup>12</sup> in September 2003. These figures are derived from the standard contact description form filled in by all interviewers in all countries, which included details about the selection procedures, time, day and date of each call, outcome of each call, and housing/neighbourhood characteristics.<sup>13</sup> We can distinguish three broad groups of countries. The first group, consisting of Poland, Slovenia, Israel, Greece and Finland achieved response rates higher than the 70% target. The second group, consisting of Ireland, Hungary, the Netherlands and Portugal, narrowly missed the target, achieving response rates of between 60% and 70%. And the third group, consisting of the UK, Spain and Switzerland achieved response rates lower than 60%.

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<sup>12</sup> The three excluded were Norway, Czech Republic and Sweden which did not provide suitable data for the analysis undertaken

<sup>13</sup> Fuller figures on non-response are available from the National Technical Summaries for each country which were compiled by National Co-ordinators. They include response data such as number of issued sample units, refusals, non-contacts, ineligible, refusals by respondent, refusals by proxy, and number of achieved interviews.

As noted, the target maximum for non-contact rates was 3%, and – although in most countries they exceeded this rate (averaging close to 5%), they nonetheless still accounted for a very small proportion of non-response. Exceptions were Ireland (10.9%) and Spain (8%).

**Table 7.** Achieved response, refusal and noncontact rates: contact form information

Country	Response Rate	Non-contacts	Refusals	N <sup>1</sup>	N <sup>2</sup>
Finland %	73.3	1.6	20.9	2728	2766
Greece %	79.6	1.7	16.9	3222	3227
Hungary %	70.3	6.7	15.1	2398	2484
Ireland %	64.4	10.8	22.9	3179	3185
Israel %	70.9	3.0	21.3	3523	3600
Neth'Inds %	67.8	2.5	26.2	3486	3570
Poland %	72.2	2.1	19.6	2921	2978
Portugal %	68.8	3.2	26.9	2196	2366
Slovenia %	71.8	5.3	15.3	2114	2175
Spain %	53.6	8.0	35.3	3227	3657
Switz'lnd %	33.0	2.0	55.1	4652	5086
UK %	55.0	3.8	30.6	3730	4013

N<sup>1</sup> : total eligible sample size, N<sup>2</sup> : total issued sample

High refusal rates (above 30%) occurred in Switzerland, Spain and the UK, intermediate refusal rates (20%-30%) in Portugal, The Netherlands, Ireland, Israel and Finland, and lower refusal rates (under 20%) in Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Poland and Slovenia. In almost all cases therefore it is the refusal rate that tends to determine the overall level of response, thus reducing the risk we referred to of differential sources of non-response bias between countries (De Heer, 1999, Couper & De Leeuw, 2003).

## 8.2. Reducing non-contacts by interviewer calling strategies

Differences in non-contact rates may arise either from differences in the objective contactability of respondents, or from differences in the effort put into the process, or both. As far as contacting efforts are concerned, of paramount importance is the timing and number of calls to the address or household before a non-contact is recorded as such as a final outcome.

As a way of minimizing fieldwork variation between countries, we had specified a common calling strategy for all participating countries. All interviewers in all countries were to make at least four personal visits to each sampling unit before abandoning it as non-productive, including at least one call in the evening, and at least one at the weekend. Moreover, these calls had to be spread over at least two different weeks. As noted, the first contact with potential respondents, following a possible advance letter, had to be face-to-face except in those countries with samples of individuals whose telephone numbers were available – so that a personal initial telephone contact was possible. This applied to Finland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. In all other countries – as the call records confirm – face to face initial contact was more or less universal.

The detailed analysis of call records revealed that:

- In certain countries, people are much harder to reach than in others. In order to bring down non-contact rates, these countries had to invest in extended interviewer efforts and costs. The data argue, for instance, that in the UK, Switzerland, Spain and Portugal, if the minimum of only four contact attempts had actually been adhered to, it would have led to much higher non-contact rates than were actually obtained in those countries (cf. Purdon et al, 1999). These unusually “hard-to-reach” populations need to be aware of the potential extra investment they will have to make to reduce the proportion of non-contacts in their overall response rates.
- In certain other countries, notably Ireland, Israel and Hungary, the percentage of non-contacts who received fewer than the stipulated four calls was relatively high. Meanwhile the opposite was true for Spain and Portugal, where not a single case was abandoned before the fourth call. But the highest average number of calls made to non-contacts was in Switzerland (73 telephone calls), followed by the UK (9.4 visits) and Spain (7.8 visits). The lowest average was in Israel (2.6 visits), followed by Ireland (3.3 visits), where in both cases a closer adherence to the specification would almost certainly have lowered their non-contacts and increased their overall response rates.
- The timing of calls made to non-contacts differed by country. For instance, weekday day-time calls seem to be favoured in Spain (84% of all first calls), Ireland (75%), and the UK (71%). The opposite was true in Israel (38% of first calls on weekday mornings and afternoons) and Portugal (46%). Subsequent calls on weekday mornings or afternoons tended to fall in all countries that used face-to-face recruitment. As for weekend calls, however, they were especially unpopular in Finland and Switzerland (both of which contacted their named samples initially

by telephone). Indeed in Finland only 3% of their first calls were made at weekends, in sharp contrast to Portuguese, Hungarian and Polish interviewers, who made around 40% of their first visits at weekends.

- The rules relating to the minimum number of evening and weekend calls were at least partially breached in all countries. For instance, the stipulation that at least one evening call must be made was most frequently broken in Hungary and Ireland, where in both cases more than one half of their non-contacts did not receive the required evening call. This compares with only one in five of all non-contacts in Spain, Switzerland and Greece. And with respect to the number of weekend calls made to non-contacts, Spain again performed best with only 1% of all non-contacts receiving no visit at the weekend. The deviations are strongest in Finland, where only 1 out of 4 non-contacts was telephoned at the weekend.
- The data show that in most countries weekday evening calls are the most productive – more so than either weekend or daytime calls during the week. Again the differences between countries are instructive. In Poland, Greece and Israel, for instance, timing of first calls matters less, making little impact on the probability of a contact. But for other countries – notably Switzerland, the UK and Ireland, all containing hard-to-reach populations – evening calls achieve a contact rate on average between 10 and 17 percentage points higher than daytime weekday calls. As for weekend calls, they were especially productive in Spain and Portugal.

Our findings suggest therefore that countries with hard to reach populations (often due to demographic or labour market factors) may do well to adapt their calling strategies to optimal effect. It must be said, however, that increasing the proportion of evening and/or weekend calls has some disadvantages too in that it effectively reduces the length of the working day, which may result in increases in travel costs and even in the overall number of fieldwork hours. In any case, as Purdon et al (1999) point out, calling strategies need to be sensitive to the circumstances and preferences of interviewers.

### **8.3. Reducing refusals**

The specification recommended that all 'soft' refusals, plus a proportion of 'hard' refusals should be re-allocated to a senior interviewer as a second attempt to recruit participation. Naturally, this left things rather vague, since there are no hard and fast definitions of 'soft' or 'hard' refusals. So we anticipated considerable divergences between countries, added to by the fact that different initial response rates would be bound to have an impact on national refusal conversion efforts. Even so, all countries

other than Ireland and Spain, did make use of refusal conversion procedures, despite the cost, effort and practical problems of doing so.

The detailed analysis of call records revealed that:

- In the UK, Netherlands and Switzerland a particularly high percentage of refusals were indeed re-contacted by different interviewers, while in Hungary not only was a particularly low percentage re-contacted, but this was usually done by the same interviewer.
- As expected, most conversion attempts in all countries ended in failure, but once again there was considerable inter-country variation. For instance, the lowest success rates were in Switzerland (6.1% of all re-issued refusals), Spain (12.3%) and Great Britain (13.8%). By far the highest success rate was in The Netherlands (39.7%). In most countries the success rate was between 20% and 30%, producing modest but significant increases in response rates. Particularly frustrating were the results for Great Britain and Switzerland which, despite massive efforts on each of their parts, produced increases in response rates of only three and two percentage points respectively. In comparison, The Netherlands increased its response rates via refusal conversion from 52% to 68% - just two points short of the target.
- The Netherlands success rate bears examination. The National Technical Summary reveals that the Dutch survey organisation implemented a range of special refusal conversion strategies - starting with the interviewers' written instructions which contained examples of persuasive arguments for them to deploy with reluctant potential respondents. All sampled addresses were also sent an advance letter, and interviewers were issued with a brochure containing background information on the ESS and a reference to the ESS-website with additional information. Around half way through the interview period, a letter aimed at respondents who had refused asked them to re-consider. In addition, all sampled members had been encouraged to participate by a small incentive consisting of a gift from among three on offer, each costing no more than €2.5. Then, about half way through the field work period these incentives were increased with an additional sum of €5, supplemented by a quiz with monetary prizes to be won. So the impact seemed to have been achieved not by one but by a range of conversion strategies which in combination probably helped to transform The Netherlands from a habitually low response rate nation to one of the ESS's success stories.

- Apart from response rate boosts, how much difference does the conversion of refusals make to the actual survey estimates? In a study by Loosveldt et al (2003), 26 survey estimates from the ESS were examined in seven countries to answer this question. In terms of demographic and socio-economic characteristics, he found that converted refusals were on average somewhat older and less highly educated than other respondents, and with smaller incomes. They were also more likely to live in apartment blocks and to be less interested in politics and other social organizations. They also tended to give more xenophobic responses. These differences are almost all in the expected direction, indicating that their inclusion in samples does indeed help reduce bias due to non-response. Even so, the marginal bias avoided by converting refusals is rather small, varying from around one half of a percentage point in Switzerland to around two percentage points in the Netherlands, where the highest marginal changes were in degree of political interest and the possession of social capital.
- Though clearly a success story, it is not yet entirely clear that other countries will wish to follow suit and deploy the whole range of special refusal conversion techniques that were employed in The Netherlands. For one thing, it is by no means obvious that an approach that worked well in one country would necessarily work well in another. And for another, more work needs to be done to justify the considerable additional costs. The increase in Dutch response rates from 52% to 68% by means of refusal conversion certainly did have the effect of reducing bias in their survey estimates, but by a level which was not necessarily large enough to be decisive. These issues will be pursued in further rounds of the ESS.

#### **8.4. Quality assessment of the responses**

Answering survey questions require respondents to accomplish several cognitive tasks, such as understanding and interpreting the questions, retrieving information from memory and forming a judgement, formatting the response to fit into one of the answer categories and communicating the answer (Sudman et al, 1996). Problems arise for respondents who either do not have the necessary cognitive or communicative skills to perform one of these tasks, or who do not have the concentration or make the effort to bother, both resulting in poor data quality. We assessed the data quality of responses in the ESS by:

- studying interviewer reports;
- analysing the extent of item non-response;

- identifying systematic response tendencies;
- estimating the measurement qualities of sets of items.

We report on each of these assessments below (see Loosveldt et al, 2004).

### **8.5. Interviewer reports**

The interviewer reports provide qualitative assessments of the motivation and cognitive ability of respondents. They are based on a short self-completion questionnaire that interviewers were asked to fill in at the end of each interview about the interview itself and the respondent. Once again, this summary is based on 14 countries - the 15 early-release countries other than Hungary for which no reports were forthcoming. The questionnaire asked about perceived motivation and comprehension, and the extent to which the respondent requested clarification or showed reluctance to answer. Previous research shows that such interviewer evaluations are indeed related to interview quality as measured by factors such as item non-response and inconsistent answers. On the other hand, significant interviewer variance has also been observed on such evaluations, suggesting that interviewers differ in the way they report similar problems (Loosveldt et al, 1999).

Based on the results of the questionnaires, we conclude that the general picture of respondents in the ESS is positive. The vast majority of respondents were reported to have had few problems understanding or answering the questions, even the more sensitive ones, and remained motivated throughout. The number of what may be called 'difficult-to-interview-respondents' (Pickery & Loosveldt, 1999) seems to have been rather small. As always, however, there were country differences. In particular, interviewer evaluations in Southern Europe (notably Spain and Portugal) and Eastern Europe (notably the Czech Republic) were more negative than those in the Nordic countries.

### **8.6. Item non-response**

According to Krosnick (1991) the use of 'don't know' or 'no opinion' answers are often a form of 'satisficing' behaviour – where the respondent, faced by the difficulty or lack of interest in the task, settles for responses that are less than optimal. He or she will fail to answer certain questions and take the easy way out on others. In any event, high item non-response decreases the available sample size and, if respondents differ from non-respondents on the item, the survey estimates might be biased. So 'don't know' (DK) answers are worth examining and comparing systematically as a form both of question and interview evaluation.

Overall, the incidence of DK answers in the ESS was highest in the rotating module on immigration and asylum, and second highest on the questions about politics. For other topics the average proportion of DK answers never exceeded 2%. So the average respondent answered 'don't know' to less than 2% of the questions.

As far as country differences are concerned, the immigration module generated quite a bit of variation. In particular, respondents from countries with comparatively small inward migration – mainly in Southern and Eastern Europe, such as Greece, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary - more often gave DK answers.

Apart from these patterns, the items that produced higher proportions of DK responses were predictably those that were the most abstract or 'difficult' – such as on social trust and multi-level governance, which required cognitive effort or political awareness. Similarly, problems occurred with the question on whether there should be a law against ethnic discrimination in the workplace (see also Ongena, 2003). Complex questions, such as the one that asked for estimates of the proportion of people born outside their country generated large numbers of DKs in some countries, such as Spain (as many as 40% DK), but fewer than 2% in Norway.

So our preliminary conclusions confirm previous findings that item non-response gets higher as the cognitive burden or difficulty of questions increases. But they also suggest two other patterns: first, that in certain countries item non-response seems to be more normative (notably Portugal, Spain and Czech Republic); and second that inter-country variation also increases with the complexity or abstraction of the item.

A particular case of item non-response occurs on sensitive questions, most notably the income question in the ESS. Once again, however, country variation is present and large. Whereas in Spain, for instance, only 60% of respondents agreed to answer the income question, it proved to be barely any problem in the Nordic countries: 97% answered it in Norway and 94% in Sweden. These sorts of differences are clearly due to cultural factors – primarily concerned with different conceptions of privacy – but may also have something to do with different labour market patterns such as the proportion of self employed and unemployed.

### **8.7. Systematic response tendencies**

The credibility of survey research is based on the assumption that people's answers to survey questions are a reasonably accurate reflection of the 'truth'. In other words, we assume that they have heard and understood the questions and conscientiously answered them as accurately and rationally as they can. On the other hand we know that responses are in fact also influenced to some extent by artefacts to do with the question form or the available response options. Certain rating scales, for instance, might induce a systematic pattern of responses that distorts the 'true' responses.

To examine the use of response scales in each of the countries we considered a set of 51 questions covering a wide range of topics including social trust, politics, immigrant issues and subjective well-being. All 51 questions used an 11-point response scale with verbal endpoints, so we were able to look at repeating patterns both within and between countries, such that certain positions on the scale were systematically more popular than others.

Reassuringly, however, the distribution of answers over the different points of the scale in different countries was indeed similar. For all countries, for instance, the middle alternative was either the most (or second most) popular point on the scale. True, the tendency to use the middle category was higher in Slovenia (19%), and lower in Israel and Greece (13%), but the differences were reassuringly small.

### **8.8. Cross-cultural measurement equivalence**

Finally, we focus on the measurement quality of sets of indicators that are expected to tap latent variables. To do this we first investigated the measurement quality of the indicators and second whether the measurement models were equivalent for all countries. This involved applying a complete factorial invariant measurement model to all the countries (see Rensvold & Cheung, 1998; Billiet, 2003).

Indeed, our criteria were rather severe because we did not confine ourselves to models with the same structure or pattern of indicators in all countries, but to factorial invariant models in which the corresponding indicators had the same relationships to the latent variables. Again reassuringly, however, these measurement models based on all 15 early release countries found equivalent models for the whole range of variables we included on topics as diverse as religion, politics and immigration.

## **9. Contract adherence and deviations**

The Specification for Participating Countries contained details of the various responsibilities and obligations of National Co-ordinators, survey houses and the CCT itself (as the overall co-ordinating group).

### **9.1. Content of contracts**

The precise nature and content of the ESS contracts with survey houses differed from country to country, but they naturally had many common elements. To check on the content of these contracts, National Co-ordinators completed a questionnaire once the contracts had been finalised. Although the main focus of the questionnaire was on aspects of fieldwork, other vital information on questionnaire administration, data sets and costs were also covered. (The Sampling Panel had already collected similar relevant information on sampling as had the Translation Panel on various translation issues.) Copies of the contracts were also collected centrally and are retained as part of the ESS archiving.

### **9.2. Progress checking of fieldwork**

National Co-ordinators were responsible for regular checks on the progress achieved by the survey organisations throughout the fieldwork period. As noted in the Specification, "fieldwork progress must be closely monitored, including producing a fortnightly report on response..." A set of recommendations for the content of these fortnightly progress reports and complementary measures was also circulated. It included a full breakdown of all contacts (interviews, refusals, etc), with an overall response rate calculation to date, and breakdowns by region, demographics and individual interviewers.

During the fieldwork period several members of the CCT acted as contact persons for the participating countries. They kept in touch at intervals with NCs by phone and e-mail, gathered information about the timing, progress and success rates of fieldwork, and offered assistance on any emerging problems. Based on the information gathered, the CCT prepared and circulated global progress reports from time to time so that all NCs could compare their progress against others.

### **9.3 Compliance and divergence**

The overall Co-ordinator and the CCT had to ensure that standards and procedures were equivalent throughout the project and deal with any difficulties that arose at both macro or micro levels. To do this involved striking a delicate balance between strict comparability between countries on the one hand and appropriate variation on the other.

In some cases, participating countries wished to deviate from the Specifications in order to accommodate their local situation. For instance, some of the information required in the contact forms was reported to be contrary to data protection laws in a few countries and therefore had to be omitted. This was agreed. Other countries wished to use quota samples or telephone interviewing either because that was the norm or because of inadequate finances. This was not agreed.

In other cases, unplanned deviations occurred and came to light only once the data from each country were scrutinised. What to do about such deviations had to be decided case by case. In most instances, all that could be done in the event was to 'flag' the issue in both the technical report and the dataset itself as a way of making data users aware of the deviation. In a minority of cases, however, remedial action was still possible. For instance, we identified an error in sampling procedures in the Danish data set, in that non-citizens had been excluded from the sample. The universe should have been all *residents*, not just citizens. Having discussed this with the National Co-ordinator it was agreed that the error could be corrected and the survey organisation was asked to randomly sample and interview the requisite number of non-citizens.

All deviations which adversely affected equivalence are of course fully documented in the final technical report.

We summarise below *all* deviations from the specification, however minor, by no means most of which will actually affect the reliability of data comparisons. But for the sake of transparency they are all recorded and made available to all users. We divide the deviations into eight headings each to do with a different aspect of the project. In each case we first set out the requirement and then the specific deviations. For fuller details, please see the Technical Report available on the ESS website ([www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org)).

a) Set-up and contractual issues<sup>14</sup>

*Requirement: Each national funding agency is to appoint (or cause to be appointed) a National Coordinator and a Survey Organisation (2.1).*

**No deviations**

*Requirement: The contract with the survey organisation should stress that contract adherence will... be monitored nationally and... also by the CCT in its role as overall ESS*

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<sup>14</sup> Based on responses to the **Study Monitoring Questionnaire**

project co-ordinator (4.2). In order to scrutinise agreements, contracts will therefore be required in English translation.

**Countries with no formal contract for survey organisation:** Luxembourg, Poland

**Countries with contract but not provided in English:** Austria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Sweden

Requirement: The study subscribes to the Declaration on Ethics of the International Statistical Institute... to which all national teams should adhere (5.16).

**Countries with no contractual obligation on survey organisation to adhere to ISI Declaration:** Belgium, Hungary, Israel, Luxembourg, Portugal

**Unconfirmed:** Norway

#### **b) The sample<sup>15</sup>**

Requirement: The survey will aim to be representative of all persons aged 15 and over (no upper age limit) resident within private households in each country, regardless of their nationality, citizenship, language or legal status (5.1).

**Countries with minor deviations from the above definition<sup>16</sup> (for details see Sampling Plans on <http://ess.nsd.uib.no>):** Austria, Czech Republic, France, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

Requirement: The sample is to be selected by strict random probability methods at every stage (5.1).

#### **No deviations**

Requirement: The relative selection probabilities of every sample member must be known and recorded (5.2).

**Countries with (small) amounts of missing data in the Sample Design File<sup>17</sup>:**  
Czech Republic, Israel, Spain, Switzerland

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<sup>15</sup> As reported in the **National Technical Summaries (NTS)**

<sup>16</sup> As reported in the **Signing-off forms**

<sup>17</sup> Based on the documentation for the computation of design weights

Requirement: The minimum number of actual interviews to be achieved is 2,000 (except in countries whose total population is less than 2 million, where the minimum number is 1,000) (5.3).

Requirement: Irrespective of the actual number of interviews ... the minimum 'effective sample size' should be 1,500, after discounting for design effects... or 800 in countries with a population of under 2 million (5.3).

### Not yet computed

Requirement: The sample for the pre-test of the translated questionnaire should be a quota-controlled, demographically-balanced sample of around 50 people (5.12).  
 ['Around 50' was interpreted for these purposes as not less than 45.]

<b>Countries with pre-test sample size less than 45</b>
<b>Less than 30:</b> Italy, Israel, Poland
<b>Between 30 and 44:</b> Germany, Finland, Slovenia, Sweden

### c) Response and non-response<sup>18</sup>

Requirement: The minimum 'target' response rate... should be 70% (5.6).

<b>Countries with less than 70% actual response rates</b>
<b>Less than 60%:</b> Switzerland, Czech Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, United Kingdom, Germany
<b>Between 60% and 69%:</b> Ireland, Norway, Denmark, The Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Hungary

Requirement: The proportion of non-contacts should not exceed 3 per cent of all sampled units (5.6).

<b>Countries with noncontact rates over 3%</b>
<b>More than 5% non contacts:</b> Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Spain, Ireland, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Switzerland, Slovenia
<b>Between 3 and 5% noncontacts:</b> United Kingdom, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Denmark

<sup>18</sup> Based on the National Technical Summaries

*Requirement:* For the supplementary questionnaire... a minimum 'target' response rate of 90% of those who completed the interview (5.10).

<b>Countries with response rate to supplementary questionnaire less than 90%</b> Sweden, United Kingdom, Finland, Norway
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#### **d) Questionnaire**

*Requirement:* The core and supplementary questionnaires should be implemented in full and in the same order as the source questionnaire specified by the CCT (5.10).

<b>Countries with some questions omitted from the source questionnaire:</b> Hungary, Luxembourg, Norway
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*Requirement:* Any country may add items to the questionnaire for national rather than multinational use. But any additional country-specific questions may be inserted only **after the ESS questions**, whether in the interview or in the self-completion questionnaire (5.10).

<b>Countries with some questions inserted out of sequence:</b> Czech Republic, Switzerland
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<b>Unconfirmed whether out of sequence:</b> Spain, UK (Northern Ireland),
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<b>Belgium (Flemish).</b> For more details refer to Fieldwork Reports on web site
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#### **e) Translation**

*Requirement:* In countries in which any minority language is used as a first language by 5 per cent or more of the population, the questionnaire must be translated into that language too (5.12).

#### **No deviations**

#### **f) Fieldwork<sup>19</sup>**

*Requirement:* The main fieldwork period should last for at least one month within a four-month period between 1 September and end December 2002 (5.12).

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<sup>19</sup> Based on the **National Technical Summaries**

<b>Countries with fieldwork not completed by December 31<sup>st</sup> 2002</b>
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<b>Ending fieldwork during January 2003:</b> Portugal, Norway, Israel, Spain, Denmark*
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**Ending fieldwork during February 2003:** The Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom

**After February 2003:** Luxembourg, Italy, Germany, Ireland, Greece, Czech Republic

\*Excluding additional fieldwork period for non-citizens

<b>Countries with fieldwork lasting longer than 4 months</b>
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<b>Between 4 and 5 months:</b> United Kingdom, Norway, Ireland, Luxembourg
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<b>More than 5 months:</b> Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland
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<b>Countries with fieldwork period less than 1 month:</b> Hungary
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*Requirement:* The first contact with potential respondents, following a possible advance letter, will be face-to-face (Spec, 5.13), but telephone contact is permitted for countries with a sample source of named individuals, such as a population register.

**No deviations** (to be confirmed)

*Requirement:* All interviews to be conducted face-to-face (5.13).

**No deviations**

**g) Interviewers<sup>20</sup>**

*Requirement:* All interviewers to be personally briefed before carrying out an assignment, drawing on detailed interviewer instructions prepared by the CCT (5.13).

<b>Countries where not all interviewers personally briefed:</b> Czech Republic, Sweden, Poland, United Kingdom, Luxembourg
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*Requirement:* Quality control back-checks (in person, by telephone or by post) to be carried out and documented in a pre-specified form on at least 5% of respondents, 10% of refusals and 10% of non-contacts (5.13).

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<sup>20</sup> Based on **National Technical Summaries**

<b>Countries with fewer than specified back-checks on respondents (target 5%)</b>
<b>Unconfirmed/unclear information:</b> Denmark, Luxembourg, The Netherlands
<b>Countries with fewer than specified back-checks on refusals (target 10%)</b>
<b>Less than 5% checked:</b> Czech Republic, Ireland, Hungary
<b>5-10% checked:</b> Sweden, Spain, Poland, Finland, Norway
<b>Unconfirmed/unclear information:</b> Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, The Netherlands
<b>Countries with fewer than specified back-checks on non-contacts (target 10%)</b>
<b>Less than 5% checked:</b> Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Sweden
<b>Unconfirmed/unclear information:</b> Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, The Netherlands

*Requirement: Interviewers' assignment sizes should not exceed 24 issued sampling units and no interviewer should carry out more than two assignments (5.13). Thus maximum number of interviews per interviewer = 48.<sup>21</sup>*

<b>Countries with some interviewers conducting more than 48 interviews</b> Switzerland, Portugal, The Netherlands, Israel, Spain, Greece, Poland
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#### **h) Events data**

*Requirement: Countries should complete events data according to the specification.*

<b>Countries with partial completion or not for full period:</b> Austria, Belgium (Wallonia), Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden
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<sup>21</sup> Based on Contact data file

## **10. Data Archiving and website**

Developed by NSD, a comprehensive and user-friendly ESS data website is now in operation (<http://essdata.nsd.uib.no>), designed to serve as the central archive service for the ESS. It includes all services necessary to plan and produce standardised cross-national data files and to access and analyse the datasets. It is open to all users following a simple registration and all data are freely supplied at no cost. It contains not only ESS data, but also all relevant ESS documents in all languages.

### **10.1 Data Protocol**

The ESS 2002 Data Protocol was produced by NSD as a comprehensive repository of the specifications and procedures that were to be used in the production of national ESS data files (see <http://essdata.nsd.uib.no/passord/dok/Protocol2002e3.zip>). Its comprehensiveness is based on the premise that meticulous planning and attention to detail in advance of data deposit (especially in a cross-national survey) leads to more timely data of higher quality and greater standardisation.

The Data Protocol contains detailed specifications for the coding of data, as well as for the production and delivery of data files and other electronic deliverables. It also specifies what steps the national teams are required to take to deposit their data successfully and in a suitably anonymised form. It provides specifications of variables and their attributes in the core and rotating questionnaires, as well as country-specific substantive and administrative variables.

The programs for applying Data Protocol Attributes to the variables in the data files are available in the Archive Web Site in parallel to the Data Protocol itself (see <http://essdata.nsd.uib.no/passord/dok/ESSstat.zip>). These programs are available in SPSS and SAS, the two most widely used social science statistical packages

### **10.2 National Technical Summaries (NTS)**

<http://essdata.nsd.uib.no/passord/dok/NTech2002xx.zip>

The ESS has dedicated itself to the provision of high quality data to the scientific and policy communities throughout Europe and beyond. Thus the meta data documentation has been designed to measure up to those standards. Its comprehensive list of elements matches the structure of the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) Document Type

definition<sup>22</sup>, ensuring that meta data are accessible on the Internet in a standardised and structured language alongside the data files themselves.

The National Technical Summary form was made available to the national data producers in different text formats directly from the ESS Archive website, and included 50 country-specific items to do with the technical conduct of the survey so that they could be covered in the Archive's final Documentation Report.

### **10.3 Data editing and processing**

The development of a protocol for data control and editing started in the first year of the project. The protocol combines a wide range of detailed automatic checks covering every single variable in the data files with similarly thorough clerical checks. The aim of the protocol was to generate integrated data files that are as standardised and user-friendly as possible, reflecting the reliability and quality of the data. Thus the data editing had to be as meticulous as the rest of the project.

Once the National Co-ordinators have overseen the deposit on-line by survey houses of all required data files and documentation to the ESS Archive Web Site, the content list of the country's upload directory is refreshed, confirming a successful upload. The ESS data team at NSD is at the same time notified by an automatic mail that processing of the data files may now start. In the spirit of transparency of the ESS, all National Coordinators are given prior access to the content of the programs to be employed and files to be produced during the data control and editing that is then undertaken at the Archive.

The main focus of the processing is on the data files that emerge from the Core, Rotating and Supplementary questionnaire modules, but basic editing of data files from other aspects of the project are also included. The processing involves three elements:

**a) Automatic content checks of:**

ID numbers on all files within all work packages.

Correct variable names on all variables.

The presence of all required country-specific variables.

The presence of extra variables, not specified in the Data Protocol.

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<sup>22</sup> The Data Documentation Initiative is a continuing effort to establish a universally supported metadata standard for the social science community. See <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/DDI/index.html>

Correct ranges of post-coded variables.

**b) Manual checks involving:**

Browsing of variable descriptors.

Browsing of structural consistency.

Feedback to national teams with queries (1st Data Processing report).

ID number duplicates.

Deviations from Data Protocol.

Listing of 'wild codes' in post-coded variables.

Querying of prevalent 'wild codes and structural inconsistency.

**c) Data editing protocols:**

Checking that 'not applicable' codes were used only when appropriate.

Setting 'wild' codes of pre-coded variables to 'no answer'.

Ensuring, when inconsistencies occur between routing variables and substantive variables, that the data in the substantial variables is not edited, and that the data in the routed variables is set to 'no answer.

Leaving inconsistencies between substantive variables unedited.

The input file of the data editing was then compared to the data file not only as a check on the data editing but also to note and report on inconsistencies. Incidents of spotted, but not edited inconsistencies, were also noted. After initial checks by NSD, the first data file was completed and, unless the number of inconsistencies was significant, national teams were asked to download their own data files for validation. Only when the national team had approved the file was it included in the integrated files.

In those cases where the number of inconsistencies *was* significant, NSD would highlight them and ask the national team to consider undertaking another round of data checking against questionnaires, based on a listing of ID numbers and data values provided by NSD. In some instances the CCT had to be called on to decide whether certain deviant parts the data file should be omitted altogether. Any such unapproved variables were, however, still included as variables in the country data file, but not in the integrated file.

#### **10.4. Transparency and security**

Up to the time that the data set was first released, access to programs and data files on the Archive web site was controlled by login using usernames and passwords. All National Coordinators and their teams had access to their own data files only, while the CCT members had full access, thus making the Archive web site an on-line workbench for the project.

All steps and actions were continually documented and updated in the programs used, and all programs and preliminary data files were permanently archived. It was thus possible for those with access rights to trace back all decisions and actions taken during the data processing.

It was up to the National Coordinators and survey houses in each country to ensure that the data themselves were suitably anonymised to comply both with their national laws and regulations and with spirit of the ISI Declaration on Ethics. The integrated data set has thus had all personal identifiers removed or anonymised.

After September 2003, when the web site was first opened to public use as the **ESS Data Web Site**, access became free to all, subject only to a straightforward registration.

#### **10.5. Data releases**

The processing of deposited data for Round 1 began in February 2003 and the first public release containing data from the first 15 countries on the *ESS Data Web Site* was in September 2003. A further four countries were published in a second release in November 2003. Three further releases, each of one country, place in December 2003, January 2004 and June 2004 respectively. With the release of French data in June 2004 ESS Round 1 was completed.

#### **10.6. The ESS Data Web Site**

The site (<http://ess.nsd.uib.no>) offers the following services to users:

- On-line browsing, analysis and download of data, including sub-setting.
- Guidance on use and weighting of the data.
- Survey documentation.
- All relevant fieldwork documents.
- Direct download of data.

- A user database.

The web is a comprehensive holding of data and documents, including for instance all questionnaires and show cards in all languages. Documents and data are also available in different formats.

Initial use of the site has been overwhelming. By the July 2004, only some 10 months after the first release of data there were 3235 registered users of ESS data and over 650 users had actually downloaded data and many others had used the on-line data browsing facilities. The main users have been academics, students, government, the private sector and non governmental organisations.

## **11. Methodological work**

Apart from its substantive aim of monitoring and interpreting cross-national and cross-cultural changes in European attitudes and values, the ESS has from the start also been intent on contributing to methods of comparative survey research. Numerous innovative methodological features are already embedded in the ESS design and protocols. Examples are:

- its uniform and rigorous random sampling methods designed to result in consistent 'effective' sample sizes in all countries;
- its expert-led, evidence-informed approach to questionnaire design and construction;
- its detailed protocols and procedures to achieve optimal equivalence in translation;
- its wide range of procedures for assessing and improving data quality;
- its compilation of relevant event and context data from all participating countries;
- its sophisticated and accessible data archiving arrangements;
- its on-line facilities for speedy data analysis and downloading;

But the ESS promised not only to be more rigorous than previous cross-national (and indeed many national) attitude surveys. It also aimed to contribute to methodological advancement more generally through conducting methodological experimentation and trials alongside its substantive work.

So during Round 1, we began a collaborative project with (and partly financed by) Gallup Europe with the aim of investigating (and if necessary mitigating) the likely impact of a

mixed-mode approach to data collection in some future round of the ESS. The project will continue into the second round of the ESS, with results available in 2005.

The fact is that countries vary in their preferred interviewing modes. Among ESS nations, for instance, several now tend to use telephone interviewing as opposed to face-to-face interviewing as their main form of data collection in household surveys. Although often prompted solely by cost considerations, the use of telephone interviewing in some countries is also said to reflect respondent preferences, where 'cold-calling' at a household is apparently seen as more intrusive than a telephone call. In any event, many countries are increasingly concerned with the high costs of face-to-face interviewing, and are beginning to weigh its clear 'quality' advantages against its relative cost disadvantages. So, while face-to-face interviewing will still almost certainly be *among* the main modes of data collection for the foreseeable future, we must consider whether it will remain the *exclusive* mode for surveys such as the ESS.

At present, we cannot be sure whether and how viable alternatives to face-to-face interviewing might be introduced successfully alongside face-to-face interviewing in later rounds of the ESS without damaging its continuity and quality. So our methodological work (which combines the methods budgets for ESS Rounds 1 and 2, together with funds from Gallup Europe) is investigating the impact on responses of different modes of data collection. Our aim is to begin to explore the future feasibility of allowing respondents themselves to choose between different modes of data collection or, at any rate, different countries to use their preferred modes without generating artefactual differences in response distributions. The purpose of our research is to therefore to go beyond simply (re-) discovering that different modes of data collection tend to generate different findings on certain types of question or issue. Its aim is to discover and understand the processes behind such an impact and to try to find ways of mitigating it.

This fieldwork is being conducted in phases, with the first phase already completed. Further phases of fieldwork will be undertaken in 2004.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

It is far too early in the ESS's life to attempt to measure or evaluate its impact on policy. The long term aim of this time series is to inform and enrich policy analysis by uncovering the nature, direction and salience of shifting public attitudes towards a variety of socio-political issues. But its first round was to achieve the more modest (though in practice perhaps, no less difficult) aim of producing reliable benchmark measures against which long-run changes in social values may subsequently be charted and monitored. Repeated rounds of the ESS will, we hope, begin to generate data that should have a clear influence on the content and quality of policy debates in Europe and beyond. Even so, however, the long-term quantifiable impact of social survey data on any *particular* set of policies will tend for the most part to be indirect and attenuated.

The critical longer run task of uncovering and interpreting the main policy messages that emerge from each round of the ESS will of course be shared by a wide range of scholars, policy analysts, government officials, journalists and other commentators throughout Europe and beyond. For the moment, a much smaller multinational team (the CCT) has had the task of shaping and implementing a complex set of rules, protocols, practices, procedures and instruments – all designed to measure and monitor social values consistently across a continent and over time.

This chapter focuses on the likely implications of the ESS not for specific policies but for European governance more generally.

##### **1. Why social attitudes matter**

Government statistical services rarely involve themselves in large-scale surveys of social attitudes such as the ESS. They concentrate instead on charting trends in demographic and behavioural patterns, economic conditions and social circumstances. While they meticulously measure major shifts in population, the labour market, the economy, crime, health, welfare and so on, they tend to exclude trends in socio-political attitudes from their purview.

This omission is not of course a function of official indifference towards the role of socio-political attitudes within a democracy. On the contrary, governments and oppositions tend to be among the most avid followers of opinion polls and other such makeshift monitors of public attitudes. Nor can the omission be attributed to the fact that attitudes, unlike behaviour patterns, are especially resistant to accurate measurement and validation. Several routinely-collected and regularly-published behavioural and factual

trend measurements present similar - or even more intractable - obstacles to reliable measurement.

Rather, the primary reason for the paucity of attitudinal data within official statistics more or less worldwide is that such data are prone to controversy and political dispute – the more so perhaps if they were to be produced by official agencies which may be suspected of being *party prix*. Rightly or wrongly, the perceived authority of attitudinal statistics seems to rely above all on the sort of *demonstrable* independence and impartiality that the ESS has been designed to embody.

Past resistance to attitude monitoring was based on a number of sparsely supported assertions, the most common of which was that people's feelings and beliefs were inherently too elusive, unstable and unreliable to be captured via quantitative measurement techniques. Public opinion, the argument ran, was not only inherently too ambivalent and volatile to be tapped successfully, but also too abstract and individual to be encapsulated within generic categories. In short, these detractors dismissed attitude measurements as themselves 'subjective', lacking the apparent impartiality of what were seen to be their more 'objective' behavioural and demographic counterparts. In truth of course, all data - behavioural and attitudinal – are subject to similar problems of reliability and validity which need to be mitigated via appropriated design and execution.

Admittedly, these sorts of disparaging reactions to attitude measurement *per se* were usually made in reference to the excessive attention increasingly accorded to sure-fire media opinion polls, which tend to be over-interpreted and over-publicised in more or less inverse proportion to their quality. Journalists and other social commentators persistently draw inferences from media polls that were never remotely designed to sustain the weight of such conclusions. The shallowness of these data, exacerbated by their illegitimate subsequent use, results in an over-simplification of complex phenomena, blurring rather than sharpening the image of social reality they are trying to describe and explain.

Naturally, however, these legitimate criticisms of certain forms of opinion monitoring do not apply to all forms of attitude measurement. As with all forms of research, the credibility or otherwise of a particular piece of attitudinal measurement depends on its intrinsic merits - in particular on the extent to which it achieves or fails to achieve a range of well-established scientific criteria for such studies in general, or (as in this case) for cross-national studies in particular. In any event, the ESS is a very unusual attempt to apply the very highest standards of scientific endeavour in its field. While based on an extensive and well-documented body of academic literature, such standards have nonetheless only very rarely been applied to such a large multinational endeavour.

Once it is accepted that public attitudes (and how they change over time) can indeed be measured successfully across countries, there can be no possible case against ensuring that a range of such studies exists at a European level. Public attitudes are always important to the formation of social policy, and on occasions critical, enabling existing or future policies to be evaluated directly by the electorate. Their rigorous collection and analysis in an era of falling political participation and electoral turnout helps to mitigate the democratic deficit. It is axiomatic that no democracy these days

– whether within an individual nation state or across nations – can any longer survive without accurate information on shifting public attitudes and values.

## **2. Methodological fallout from the ESS**

As noted, one of the primary longer-run policy benefits of the ESS is to provide regular high quality information (on the same basis throughout Europe) about the ebbs and flows of socio-political attitudes and human values. But an equally important role of the ESS is to help improve Europe-wide methods of social measurement.

In the context of an expanding and more closely integrated European Union, it is increasingly important for the techniques of cross-national measurement to approach the quality and precision of such measurements at a national level. Eurostat has of course made considerable strides to ensure this on a range of subjects, but not on the important topic of social attitude change across nations and over time. Nor – for the reasons described earlier in this chapter – is a body such as Eurostat likely to be able to rectify this omission.

Yet the quest for better methods of cross-national attitude measurement at a European level is increasingly urgent. Not only is poor research and intelligence sometimes worse than no intelligence at all, but accurate, verifiable data sources are now an indispensable tool of modern governance. More importantly, we now know that good *cross-national* research capacity does not flow automatically from good *national* research capacities. Indeed, the flow may often be in precisely the opposite direction. Either way, Europe is in pole position to lead the world in establishing best practice in multicultural social research.

The role of the ESS in this respect should be pivotal. Although great strides have previously been made by other distinguished time series such as the *Eurobarometers*, the *European Values Surveys* and the *International Social Surveys Programme*, the ESS marks a new departure in comparability and rigour in a cross-national attitude survey. This was one of the ESF's principal aims when it promoted and funded the ESS Expert

Group in the first place, and has since been inextricably interwoven into the fabric of the project. A key objective of the ESS is to lift the standards of social attitude measurement throughout Europe and beyond, so that reliable trends in social values may in future be accorded equivalent weight to similar data on behaviour and population movements.

Financial contributions come to the ESS not only from the Commission and the ESF, but also from the principal academic funding agencies of 22 countries - all strictly on the basis that the ESS's demanding specification will be fulfilled. This level of endorsement for a highly rigorous new time series of surveys is almost certainly unprecedented. Indeed, for over twenty funding sources from all corners of Europe -all with different funding rules and priorities - to have committed themselves jointly to this costly new long term venture suggests an astonishing community of purpose. The time for a rigorous new comparative attitude survey in the shape of the ESS has surely arrived.

Even after only its first round, the ESS's impact on methods of comparative attitude surveys may well be equivalent to what, for instance, Eurostat's Labour Force Survey or the UN's World Fertility Survey had previously achieved for comparative behavioural surveys. It has demonstrated levels of quality and rigour in a Europe-wide comparative social survey that had hitherto been ruled out as unachievable. This task could never remotely have been achieved without the enthusiastic consensus of the Commission, the ESF and the principal funding agencies of 22 disparate nations, by no means all of them then (or even now) member nations of the EU. In this respect particularly, the ESS is a premature example of the European Research Area in action.

### **3. Developing new European social indicators**

Arising out of the report to the Commission by Sir Anthony Atkinson and colleagues (Atkinson et al, 2001), eighteen standard social indicators have now been adopted by the Commission for regular publication and analysis. They are to stand alongside the exclusively economic indicators (eg GDP, RPI, unemployment figures, growth rates) which have hitherto served as a proxy for monitoring *overall* national progress. Although these 18 new measures will surely fill what has been a debilitating long-term gap in the means by which we are routinely supposed to judge societal progress, they are just a starting-point. For one thing, the list of new indicators is heavily biased towards socio-economic rather than socio-political phenomena. Thus there is a preponderance of measures to do with aspects of poverty, income and exclusion and only scant or no attention given to broader aspects of quality of life – such as health, life satisfaction and the absence of the fear of crime.

Notably, only one of the eighteen new indicators (on health) is to be based on people's own assessments of how they view their world and themselves. The remainder are to be generated from administrative statistics of one sort or another, untouched by public input into either their choice or compilation.

The ESS should thus provide an ideal opportunity to broaden the present narrow range of criteria by which we routinely evaluate national success and quality of life. Based as it is on high quality data collected in a standardised form from the bulk of EU countries, the ESS already provides an obvious source of data for the new 'subjective health' indicator proposed by Atkinson and his colleagues. But it should in time offer the chance to monitor many other important aspects of national success or social progress.

It is widely accepted, for instance, that fear of crime can wreak havoc with people's quality of life. Fear of crime is a far more important determinant of people's actual behaviour than is the crime rate itself (whether based on reported crime or victimisation events). Indeed, people change their patterns of behaviour and decide, for instance, not to go out after dark not on the basis of statistical analysis of trends in crimes of violence on the streets, but because of their own increasing sense of vulnerability – whether justified or imagined.

Yet 'fear of crime' has unaccountably still been overlooked as even one of the social indicators by which we will routinely judge the quality of life across EU countries. It would be convenient to argue in this context that fear of crime has been omitted primarily because it is an 'attitudinal' or 'subjective' variable. But that case would be more convincing if 'objective' crime figures were themselves among the new list of social indicators. They are not. As noted, the new list - while greatly to be welcomed as a major and thoughtful advance – nonetheless provides only a narrow shaft of light on social determinants of national progress or quality of life. A bigger picture is in due course bound to be demanded.

A range of variables already included in the ESS (or due to be in future rounds) could be invaluable in helping to expand the existing list of EU social indicators. Because the ESS is a multi-nation, high quality, repeat and representative source, it represents an important new source of statistics. But unusually its content brings into focus important aspects of Europe's social condition that the primarily economic emphasis of present evaluation mechanisms unavoidably ignores.

What aspects might an expanded list comprise? 'Crime victimisation' of one type or another and 'fear of crime' (a set of administrative indicators juxtaposed against an attitudinal indicator) would be just a start. 'Electoral turnout' and 'political trust' would

be a similarly intriguing twosome. Then a range of other variables would suggest themselves – such as ‘trust in democratic institutions’, ‘perceptions of equal opportunity’, ‘system efficacy’, ‘confidence in the judicial system’ – all of them fundamental to democratic stability in an otherwise changing Europe.

Changes in such variables need to be monitored and understood. Indeed, overlooking or ignoring such changes would be negligent and possibly dangerous. They must therefore either become strong contenders for a larger list of official European social criteria of national success, or – if not – in time comprise an ‘unofficial’ list that can be evaluated by scholars and politicians alongside the existing mainly economic criteria.

Either way, the ESS is at last available to fill the gap with reliable data along these lines.

## **V. DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS**

Several papers have been given during the course of the year about the project as a whole and the contribution it will make to social science and European governance. Further papers have been presented on particular methodological aspects, including sample design, translation, question design and assessment and survey non-response.<sup>23</sup> We expect further material to be produced once the data release is complete and we can exploit and disseminate the data fully.

We held a two-day launch conference of the first round of the ESS in November last year, hosted by the Commission. Speakers included the main protagonists of the first round, covering both the substantive and methodological issues involved. We are planning to use the conference papers as a basis for two ESS books (one substantive, one methodological) to be published in 2004. The slides from the conference are currently available on the ESS website.

In addition, various collaborations are being planned to produce academic papers on comparative aspects of the data. All participating countries are being urged to encourage data use within their countries, and we are getting very encouraging feedback about workshops, publications and other dissemination.

By all accounts, the results of the study were well received, and we are confident that they will be widely-quarried and reported. As will be apparent from Annex 1, there is already a large and distinguished list of immediate participants in the study, spanning more than 23 countries, who will doubtless be first in line to make use of the data they have done so much to produce. But they will certainly not be alone.

### **1. European Social Survey Publicity and Dissemination across Europe**

In addition to publicity at a European level, national teams were all asked to make plans for disseminating the ESS data in their own countries. Below are details of events and publicity in several countries. For further information please contact the relevant National Co-ordinator, using the email address given.

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<sup>23</sup> A full list of all papers will soon be available on the website.

**BELGIUM (French)** Frédéric Heselmans - frederic.heselmans@ulg.ac.be

- Press conference.
- Emailing.
- Presentation Website.
- Researchers/students workshops.

**BELGIUM (Flemish)** Geert Loosveldt – geert.loosveldt@soc.kuleuven.ac.be

- A launch meeting was held in February 2004 for Flemish researchers, organised by the centre for survey methodology at KU Leuven. The ESS Data website was introduced and some first results of the analysis were presented.

**DENMARK** Torben Fridberg – tf@sfi.dk

- Introduction to ESS distributed by e-mail in all relevant departments and institutes.
- Visits to a number of university institutes with an Introduction “show”, aiming at researchers and students.
- Introduction to ESS in seminars and conferences (like 26. Symposium of Applied Statistics at University of Copenhagen).
- Research seminar to be held in spring 2004.
- Danish ESS homepage started up with introduction in Danish and links to data.
- Press release targeted to interested journalists at national newspapers.
- Plans for publication in Danish on ESS results.

**FINLAND** Heikki Ervasti - heikki.ervasti@utu.fi

- Flyer to be distributed at all events of the Social Science community and introduction of the ESS in several seminars and conferences.
- E-mails were sent to the relevant departments in all Finnish universities, with the prospect of visiting them personally. These departments were also informed of the release of the Round 1 results.
- Presentation about ESS by national team at Åbo Akademi University.

- Short articles about the ESS were published in the newsletters of Statistics Finland and Finnish Social Science Data Archive.
- Seminar to be held in February '04.
- Articles to be published in national newsletters, professional periodicals and journals, introducing the data sets and presenting some main findings.

**GERMANY** Jan van Deth - jvdeth@rumms.uni-mannheim.de

- Short information note was sent to the most important scientific journals and to the main professional organisations of Political Scientists and Sociologists, covering technical aspects including downloading data.
- Book covering the main topics of the questionnaire to appear in 2004. The articles will be written by the members of the National Coordinating Team and other authors.
- Articles to be published in national newsletters, professional periodicals and journals, introducing the data sets and presenting some main findings.
- German ESS homepage to be designed, including some selected results.
- Data to be used for teaching and students to be encouraged to write their diploma or thesis using the data.

**GREECE** Yannis Voulgaris - y\_v@ekke.gr

- The presentation of the ESS first results concerning Greece induced an intensive public debate through the Media: newspapers, TV and radio.
- Daily press published around 60 press releases concerning the ESS in Greece. An interview was published with the National Coordinator and various articles examining the findings of the survey.

**HUNGARY** Peter Robert - robert@tarki.hu

- Meeting held on April 4, 2003 where the ESS project and first draft of the Hungarian results were presented to interested researchers in social sciences and journalists.
- New comparative international ESS file to be archived in the TARKI Data Archive and advertising of the availability of the new data-set on our website.

- Information on the ESS to be presented at the Hungarian Sociological Association annual meeting in November.
- Plans for a TARKI workshop sometime in the future.

**ISRAEL** Noah Lewin-Epstein – noah1@post.tau.ac.il

- In December the B.I. Cohen Institute published a short report describing the project as well as descriptive analysis comparing the countries included in the first data release regarding a variety of variables. This was made available to social scientists and research institutes and various agencies.
- In February a presentation will be held at the annual meeting of the Israeli Sociological Society. We are also preparing material for distribution to all participants at the meeting. We hope to do the same at the meeting of political scientists and generate interest in the data set

**ITALY** Antonio Schizzerotto - antonio.schizzerotto@unimib.it

- Conference to be held. Speakers to discuss general substantive and methodological features of the ESS and present some provisional comparative analyses as examples of possible uses of the ESS data base.

**LUXEMBOURG** Uwe Warner -uwe.warner@ceps.lu

- All members of the Luxembourg science foundation to be emailed.
- Flyer to be published in French for the university members.
- One day seminar to be held at the beginning of 2004.
- Use of ESS data to be promoted at the International Masters in Social Policy Analysis by Luxembourg, Leuven and Associate Institutes programme.
- Short article to be published in the publications series of Luxembourg statistical office and findings to be summarised in CEPS working paper series on "Population and Employment".

**NETHERLANDS** Peer Scheepers - p.scheepers@maw.kun.nl

- Two short papers, both available on the Internet, published to publicise the ESS and to make it known in the science community.
- Articles to spread ESS news were published in electronic magazines by the NIWI/Steinmetz Archive, the Dutch Central Data Archive, as well as by NWO, the Dutch Science Foundation, supporting ESS financially.
- Academic colleagues were informed on the data, particularly on the possibility to use the individual data and connect these to the contextual data.
- Academic colleagues were informed on the methodological targets as previously set and actually achieved.
- Methodological targets set by ESS are used as examples of 'best practices' in research master courses where students are encouraged to use the data for their master thesis.
- Parts of the ESS data are already part of research proposals, one of which is already granted as a post-doc project.
- Parts of the ESS data have already been analysed as part of research projects for the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.
- Other parts of the ESS data will be used for analyses as part of research projects for the Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office as well as for the Central Planning Office, eventually to be delivered to the Dutch Parliament.

**NORWAY** Kristen Ringdal - kristen.ringdal@svt.ntnu.no

- One day seminar arranged by the Norwegian Research Council in Oslo, November 11, which gathered 35 participants. The program included a presentation of the ESS by Roger Jowell, as well as several presentations of the possibilities in the ESS as well as a couple of analyse of the data.
- An overview article to be published in 2004 describing Norway in a European context.

**POLAND** Pawel Sztabinski - psztabin@ifispan.waw.pl

- Information containing a description of the ESS project was sent to over 400 social scientists and representatives of a variety of institutions.
- Annual congress of the Polish Association of Market and Opinion Researchers (October 16 - 17, 2003) included a lecture based on ESS findings, on the subject 'How to enhance the response rate in surveys with probability samples.'
- Conference devoted to ESS to be held on January 22. Methodological, interpretative and substantive aspects to be covered, plus research quality standards in Poland.
- Book based on ESS data will be published in 2004. It will discuss the main topics covered in the ESS.
- An overview article to be published in 2004 in methodological journal "ASK". Articles to be published in national professional journals, introducing the data sets and presenting some main findings.
- Information on the ESS project and links to data will start up on the web site of Institute of Philosophy and Sociology Polish Academy of Sciences (<http://www.ifispan.waw.pl/>)
- Data to be used for teaching as examples of 'best practices' and students to be encouraged to write their diploma or thesis using the data.

**PORTUGAL** Jorge Vala - jorge.vala@ics.ul.pt

- E-mail has been sent to all research centres in Social Sciences announcing the availability of the international data.
- Seminar to be held to present and discuss papers based on ESS data.
- Book to be published discussing topics covered in the ESS.

**SLOVENIA** Brina Malnar - brina.malnar@uni-lj.si

- Press conference to be held in November 2003 with a brief presentation of descriptive comparative results.
- Presentation of results to take place, followed by a workshop covering how to use ESS data.

- Academic colleagues to be informed of the potential uses of the data.
- Book based on ESS data, focusing on attitudes of the Slovenian public within Europe may be published in 2004.

**SPAIN** Mariano Torcal - mariano.torcal@cpis.upf.es

- ESS presented at the National Congress of Political Scientists.
- ESS officially presented to the media on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2003.
- 500 brochures on the ESS distributed to all mass media and major institutions of Spain.
- Two books covering the main topics of the questionnaire are being developed by members of the National Coordinating Team.
- 100-page report on the basic results for Spain compared with other countries.
- Spanish ESS homepage, including some selected results and questionnaire ([www.spain-ess.upf.edu](http://www.spain-ess.upf.edu))
- Data to be used for teaching and students to be encouraged to write their diploma or thesis using the data.
- A conference is being organised by the Swedish Research Council for sometime in spring.

**SWEDEN** Stefan Svallfors - stefan.svallfors@soc.umu.se

- Article on the ESS was published in the newsletter for the Swedish Research Council.
- Interview published in "Universitetsläraren".
- E-mail advertising of the survey to research groups was carried out.

**SWITZERLAND** Dominique Joye - dominique.joye@sidos.unine.ch

- Announcement regarding the ESS to be made in the next edition of the "Bulletin" of the Swiss Sociology and Political Science Associations.
- E-mail to be sent to over 1800 social scientists.

- ESS to be publicised on SIDOS website.

**UK** Alison Park - a.park@natcen.ac.uk

- Launch conference for the ESS was held on Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> 2003.
- Parts of the GB ESS data on immigration have been used in the forthcoming British Social Attitudes report (due out in early December 2003).

## **2. CCT presentations and publications**

### **2.1. Presentations**

#### 29/30 October 2001

Bruges conference;

- Roger Jowell, 'The case for European-wide social indicators of subjective well-being'.

#### 6-7 December 2001

Colloquium organised by SIDOS, Swiss National Council for UNESCO, and the Institute of Sociology, University of Neuchatel.

- Roger Jowell, 'The case for European-wide social indicators of subjective well-being'.

#### 6 February 2002

Social Research Methodology Centre, City University, Inaugural seminar, London.

- Roger Jowell, 'The European Social Survey Programme'.

#### 20 February 2002

ARK Seminar, Belfast

- Roger Jowell, 'The European Social Survey'.

#### 28 June 2002

Berne conference;

- Roger Jowell, 'Social Science Infrastructure Building in Europe'.

25-28 August 2002

International Conference on Improving Surveys, Copenhagen;

- Ineke Stoop, Roger Jowell and Peter Mohler, The European Social Survey: One Survey in Two Dozen Countries.

13 September 2002

University of Essex, NESSIE Roundtable.

- Roger Jowell, 'The European Social Survey: creating a new comparative dataset.

26-27 September 2002

19<sup>th</sup> CEIES Seminar, Lisbon;

- NSD, 'Innovative Solutions in providing access to microdata'.

3-4 October 2002

Workshop on Monitoring Living Conditions and Quality of Life in Europe, Dublin;

- Ineke Stoop, European Social Survey, Living Conditions, Quality of Life.

25 October 2002

CREST Annual Conference, British Academy, London

- Roger Jowell, Caroline Bryson & Ruth O'Shea, '*Are the British especially (in)tolerant?*'

30 October 2002

HSRC seminar, South Africa

- Roger Jowell, 'Who do we think we are, why do we need to know, and how can we find out?'

5 November 2002

8<sup>th</sup> Siena Conference, London

- Caroline Bryson, 'The European Social Survey'.

18 December 2002

Luxembourg

- Roger Jowell, 'The European Social Survey: creating a new comparative dataset.'

28 January 2003

London School of Economics seminar, (MSc students).

- Roger Jowell, 'Social Attitudes Surveys: Britain and Abroad'.

31 March-2 April 2003

International Workshop on Comparative Survey Design and Implementation, Brussels.

- Ineke Stoop, 2 papers: 'European Social Survey' and 'Collecting event data'.

4 April 2003

CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives) Business Meeting, Prague.

- Bjørn Henrichsen, 'The European Social Survey'.

2 May 2003

Manchester University Conference on 'Threats and opportunities for labour market statistics'.

- Caroline Bryson, 'The European Social Survey'.

20 June 2003

Queen Mary College London, Summer School.

- Roger Jowell, 'Challenges of comparative research'.

9 July 2003

DWP Summer School, Kings College Cambridge -Roger Jowell, '*How comparative is comparative research?*'

4 September 2003 ECSR Summer School, Belfast

- Roger Jowell, 'The European Social Survey'.

26 September 2003 CHANGEQUAL Seminar, Nuffield

- Caroline Bryson, 'The European Social Survey'.

22-24 September 2003

14th International Workshop on Household Survey Nonresponse, Leuven (Belgium).

- Michel Phillipens, Ineke Stoop, Geert Loosveldt & Jaak Billiet, '*Refusal conversion procedures in the ESS*'.
- Ineke Stoop, Silke Devacht & Jaak Billiet, 'The development of a uniform contact description form in the ESS'.
- Michel Philippens, Ineke Stoop, Geert Loosveldt & Jaak Billiet, 'Contacting procedures and calling strategies in the ESS'.

12 October 2003

ICPSR Biannual Meeting, Ann Arbor, USA.

- NSD, 'European Social Survey'.

17 October 2003

ESS launch, Spain

- Ineke Stoop, 'Monitoring attitude change in Europe'.

22 October 2003

ESS launch, UK

- Ineke Stoop & Jurjen Iedema, 'Contextual and event data in the ESS'.
- NSD, 'Access to ESS data: the ESS Data Web site'.
- Roger Jowell, 'The pursuit of equivalence in cross-national surveys'.
- Caroline Bryson & Ruth O'Shea, 'The European Social Survey'.

17 October 2003

ESS presentation, Iceland

- Ruth O'Shea, 'The European Social Survey'.

### 11 November 2003

ESS launch, Norway;

- NSD, ' Access to ESS data: the ESS Data Web site'.
- Roger Jowell, 'The European Social Survey: building a new time series (with difficulty)'.

### 25<sup>th</sup> /26th November 2003

ESS Launch Conference, Brussels

- Jaak Billiet, 'The religious divide'.
- Michel Philippens & Achim Koch, 'Fieldwork efforts in ESS'.
- Ineke Stoop & Jurjen Iedema, 'Context, events and attitudes'.
- NSD, 'ESS data: immediate access for all'.
- Roger Jowell, Caroline Bryson & Ruth O'Shea, 'The European Social Survey'.

### November 2003

Seminar, Bratislava

- Roger Jowell, 'The European Social Survey – is it worth all the effort and exposure?'

### 14 January 2004

Department of Sociology, University of Bergen, Norway;

- NSD, presentation of the ESS Data Web Site (Bachelor & Master students).

#### 21-22 January 2004

Presentation to Poland's ESS representatives

- Roger Jowell, 'Pursuing Equivalence in Multinational Surveys'.

#### 26 January 2004

National Centre for Social Research seminar, London

- Roger Jowell, 'How comparative are comparative surveys?'

#### 27 January 2004

London School of Economics, seminar (MSc students)

- Roger Jowell, 'Surveys to Monitor Public Attitudes'.

#### 4 February 2004

Brussels Workshop on Support for Research Infrastructures

- Roger Jowell, 'The European Social Survey'.

#### 6 February 2004

Presentation of ESS to researchers in Flemish universities, Leuven

- Geert Loosveldt, 'Kennismaking met de datasets van het ESS eerste ronde' (Introduction to the datasets of ESS round 1).
- Jaak Billiet, 'Religieuze verscheidenheid in Europa' (The religious divide in Europe).
- Jaak Billiet & Katrien Meireman, 'Immigratie en asiel. De opvattingen en houdingen van de Belgen in een Europese context' (Immigration and asylum: the attitudes of the Belgians in a European context).
- Michel Phillipens, 'Evaluatie van de datakwaliteit van het European Social Survey' (Evaluation of data quality of the ESS).

17 February 2004

MRS Social Research Conference, London

- Roger Jowell, 'The contribution of comparative research to policy'.

10 March 2004

ESS launch, the Netherlands

- Ineke Stoop, 'Geschiedenis en organisatie van het ESS' (History and organisation of the ESS).
- Peer Scheepers, 'Thema's en methodologie van het ESS 1' (Themes and methodology of the ESS 1).
- Peter Willems/Kamieke van der Riet, 'Dataverzameling voor het ESS' (Data collection for the ESS).
- Michel Philippens, 'Evaluatie data kwaliteit ESS' (Evaluating ESS data quality).
- Ineke Stoop, 'Context informatie voor ESS' (Context information in the ESS).
- Willem Saris, 'Experimentele designs in ESS' (Experimental designs in the ESS).
- Jacques Thomassen, 'Heeft Europa een gemeenschappelijke politieke cultuur?' (Does Europe have a distinct political culture?)
- Rob Eisinga, 'Thema's en methodologie van het ESS 2' (Themes and methodology of the ESS 2).

15 April 2004 National Economic & Social Council's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Summit, Mauritius

- Roger Jowell, 'Measuring social attitudes as an aid to policy' & 'The need for a social observatory'.

19 May 2004 ESS launch in Portugal, Lisbon

- Roger Jowell, '*The ESS as a source of European social indicators*'.

## 2.2. Publications

The ESS dataset has only recently been finalised with the inclusion of France. Many publications are therefore works in progress. However there have been a number of important methodological papers.

Skjåk K & Kolsrud K (June 2002), '*Reducing the barriers between users and data. Dissemination of data from the European Social Survey*'.

Loosveldt G, Carton A & Billiet J (2004), 'Assessment of survey data quality: a pragmatic approach focused on interviewer tasks', *International Journal of Market Research, Vol 46 (1), pp. 65-82.*

Billiet J & Meireman K (2004), 'Immigratie en asiel: de opvattingen en houdingen van de Belgen in het Europees Sociaal Survey' (Immigration and asylum: beliefs and attitudes of the Belgians in the European Social Survey), *Bulletin No. DA/2004-36 of the Department of Sociology, K.U. Leuven, 30 pp.* (This is a real working paper (in Dutch) on immigration items in Belgium and comparison with other countries.)

NSD Newsletter No.1 (2004), 'Data from European Social Survey – direct access for all'.

Billiet J & Welkenhuysen-Gybels (2004), 'Assessing cross-national construct equivalence in the ESS: the case of religious involvement', paper prepared for and presented at the European Conference on Quality & Methodology in Official Statistics, Mainz, May 2004.

Billiet J & Welkenhuysen-Gybels J (2004), 'Assessing cross-national construct equivalence in the ESS: the case of six immigration items', paper prepared for and presented at the European Conference on Quality & Methodology in Official Statistics, Mainz, May 2004.

Philippens M & Billiet J, 'Monitoring and evaluating non-response issues and fieldwork efforts in the European Social Survey', paper prepared for and presented at the European Conference on Quality & Methodology in Official Statistics, Mainz, May 2004.

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## VII. ANNEXES

### 1. Expert Group on a European Social Survey – List of Members

***Professor Max Kaase (Chairman)***

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung

GERMANY

***Mr. Bruno Cautrès***

CIDSP/IEP de Grenoble Domaine Universitaire

France

***Professor Juan Diez Nicolas***

ASEP, Madrid

SPAIN

***Professor Fredrik Engelstad***

Institute for Social Research (ISF), Oslo

NORWAY

***Professor Roger Jowell***

National Centre for Social Research (formerly SCPR)

UNITED KINGDOM

***Professor Leif Nordberg***

Åbo Academy University, Turku

FINLAND

***Professor Antonio Schizzerotto***

Università degli Studi di Trento

ITALY

***Dr. L. Henk Stronkhorst***

Scientific Statistical Agency

NETHERLANDS

***Dr. John H. Smith***

European Science Foundation

## **2. Steering Committee - List of Members**

***Professor Max Kaase (Chairman)***

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung

GERMANY

***Professor Rune Åberg***

University of Umeå

SWEDEN

***Professor Jaak Billiet***

Catholic University Leuven

BELGIUM

***Professor Antonio Brandao Moniz***

Universidade Nova de Lisboa

PORTUGAL

***Mr. Bruno Cautrès***

Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Grenoble

FRANCE

***Professor Nikiforos Diamandouros***

National Centre for Social Research

GREECE

***Professor Henryk Domanski***

Polish Academy of Sciences

POLAND

***Professor Yilmaz Esmer***

Bogazici University, Istanbul

TURKEY

***Dr. Peter Farago***

Landert Farago, Davatz & Partner, Zurich

SWITZERLAND

***Professor Roger Jowell***

National Centre for Social Research (formerly SCPR)

UNITED KINGDOM

***Professor Stein Kuhnle***

University of Bergen

NORWAY

***Professor Michael Laver***

Trinity College, Dublin

IRELAND

*Substitute to Michael Laver:*

***Professor Michael Marsh***

Trinity College, Dublin

IRELAND

***Professor Guido Martinotti***

University of Milan

ITALY

***Professor José Ramón Montero***

Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales

SPAIN

***Dr. Karl H. Müller***

Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna

AUSTRIA

***Professor Leif NordbergÅbo***

Academy University, Turku

FINLAND

***Ms Klara Plecita***

Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic

CZECH REPUBLIC

***Dr. Niels Ploug***

National Institute for Social Research

DENMARK

*Substitute to Dr. Niels Ploug:*

***Mr Torben Fridberg***

National Institute for Social Research

DENMARK

***Professor Shalom Schwartz***

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

ISRAEL

***Mrs. Ineke Stoop***

Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau

THE NETHERLANDS

***Dr. Eva Tall***

MTA Politikai Tudományok Intézete

HUNGARY

***Professor Françoise Thys-Clement***

Université Libre de Bruxelles

BELGIUM

*Substitute to Professor F. Thys-Clement:*

***Professor Pierre Desmarez***

Université Libre de Bruxelles BELGIUM

***Professor Niko Toš***

University of Ljubljana

SLOVENIA

***Professor Michael Warren***

UNITED KINGDOM

***Dr. John H. Smith***

European Science Foundation

### **3. Methodology Committee - List of Members**

***Professor Roger Jowell (Chairman)***

National Centre for Social Research (formerly SCPR)

UNITED KINGDOM

***Professor Jacques Billiet***

Catholic University Leuven

BELGIUM

***Professor Max Kaase***

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung

GERMANY

***Mr Peter Lynn***

National Centre for Social Research (formerly SCPR)

UNITED KINGDOM

***Dr. Nonna Mayer***

Centre d'Etude de la Vie Politique Française

FRANCE

***Dr. Ekkehard Mochmann***

Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung, Universität zu Köln

GERMANY

***Professor José Ramón Montero***

Fundación Juan March, Centro de Estudios Avanzados Ciencias Sociales

SPAIN

***Professor Willem Saris***

University of Amsterdam

THE NETHERLANDS

***Professor Antonio Schizzeroto***

Università di Trento

ITALY

***Professor Dr. Jan van Deth***

Universität Mannheim

GERMANY

***Dr. Joachim Vogel***

Statistics Sweden

SWEDEN

***Dr. John H. Smith***

European Science Foundation

#### **4. Round 1 Rotating Modules Advertisement**

##### **The European Social Survey – call for Questionnaire Design Teams**

###### *1 Awarding authority:*

The European Social Survey Central Co-ordinating Team (ESS-CCT) at the National Centre for Social Research, 35 Northampton Square, London, EC1V 0AX, UK.

Att: Roger Jowell Tel: +44 (0)20 7549 9504

###### *2 Category of service and description:*

The ESS is a new, academically-driven social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations. The survey will cover at least 15 nations and will employ the most rigorous methodologies.

The study is funded via the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme, with supplementary funds from the European Science Foundation. Fieldwork costs in each participating nation, plus those of a half-time national co-ordinator, will however be borne by the respective NSFs (or other national funding agencies). Although intended as a time series, initial funding covers only the first round of the study, spread over two years. Fieldwork is scheduled for autumn 2002, and a fully-documented multinational dataset will be released in mid-2003.

The questionnaire for each round will consist of two elements: a core module of socio-demographic and substantive indicators (around 120 items); and two rotating modules of around 60 items each. Each rotating module will cover a single academic and/or policy concern within Europe and will be drafted by a team to be appointed following this call.

The project will be directed by a Central Co-ordinating Team (CCT) led by the National Centre for Social Research in the UK (Roger Jowell), and comprising NSD Norway (Bjorn Henrichsen), SCP Netherlands (Ineke Stoop), University of Amsterdam (Willem Saris), University of Leuven (Jaak Billiet), and ZUMA Germany (Peter Mohler). This team is responsible for design, content, methodology, co-ordination and time-tabling of the study.

### *Call for Questionnaire Design Teams*

Applications are invited from multinational teams of three to five subject specialists to design one of the rotating modules for the first round of ESS. Two such teams will be appointed for each round by the study's Scientific Advisory Board, chaired by Professor Max Kaase (International University, Bremen and Vice President of the ESF).

In not more than 6 pages, applicants should make the case for their intended topic area, justifying their claims as substantive and survey specialists in that field. The proposal should be theory-driven, demonstrating the team's expertise in their chosen topic (citing relevant literature, past studies, and publications in the field). It should argue the relevance of the topic to a key academic or policy concern within the European arena, and confirm the existence of indicators that can successfully be deployed in a cross-national study.

Each team will work with the CCT and others on the design of their module. No budgetary provision exists to cover salary or associated costs for either team. However, travel and accommodation costs for up to four working meetings of each team will be met - two with the CCT, two with National Co-ordinators. Teams will have access to early data in order to check and 'prove' the provisional dataset, thereby providing them the opportunity to plan (but not publish) articles prior to the dataset's official release - in July 2003.

Proposals, documents and all meetings are to be in English, the ESS's working language, and the timetable below is critical. Final decisions on the questionnaire will be the responsibility of the CCT in the light of pilot results, translation considerations, timing and any other factors.

#### *Participating countries:*

The following 15 countries have already confirmed their participation, and six others are actively considering joining the ESS:

Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK.

Timetable:	
Proposals by:	3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2001, 1200 hrs
Selection of teams by:	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2001
Draft module by:	mid-January 2002
Start of pilot:	mid-February 2002
Analysis of pilot data:	April/May 2002

Finalise questionnaire prior to translations: end May 2002

**Further details from [r.jowell@natcen.ac.uk](mailto:r.jowell@natcen.ac.uk), tel +44 (0)20 7549 9504.**

## **5. Round 1 Rotating Module Teams**

### *1. Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy*

This module will build on existing work and is designed to investigate the growing problem in most modern democratic societies of political and social disengagement, loss of community, and a decline in trust. The module will attempt to assess which social and political conditions are most likely to encourage greater social and political involvement of citizens. It will focus on the extent and breadth of civic engagement in different societies and investigate its impact. The module will cover engagement at both a micro and macro level ('small' democracy and 'big' democracy) in order to bring out possible links between social and political participation and the impact of both on the health of a democracy.

Team:

Ken Newton, *University of Southampton, UK*

José Ramon Montero, *University of Madrid, Spain*

Anders Westholm, *University of Uppsala, Sweden*

Hanspeter Kriesi, *University of Geneva, Switzerland*

Sigrid Rossteutscher, *University of Mannheim, Germany*

## *2. Immigration*

Immigration is a subject that has re-emerged as a key policy issue throughout Europe. The module will aid understanding of the way in which public opinion on this issue is formed and how it relates to attitudes towards minorities and outgroups. The module will address two main dimensions:

- a) Public perceptions of the scale of immigration: estimates of the extent of current and past migration, how this compares with migration to other European countries, the proportion of migrants who are asylum seekers or refugees, the extent to which immigrants and other 'outgroups' are discriminated against, etc.
- b) Public perceptions of the impact of immigration: its impact on the labour market and the economy more generally, national culture, poverty, crime rates, public spending, etc

Team:

Ian Preston, *University College London, UK*

Thomas Bauer, *Institut für die Zukunft der Arbeit, Bonn, Germany*

David Card, *University of California, USA*

Christian Dustmann, *University College London, UK*

James Nazroo, *University College London, UK*

## **6. Who's who in the ESS (Round 1)**

The organisational structure of the project is shown below. It is designed to achieve high and consistent standards among scholars and survey organisations in 23 countries, each with different methodological priorities, protocols and conventions.

### ***Central Co-ordinating Team***

A five-nation Central Co-ordinating Team is responsible for the overall design, development, implementation, archiving and dissemination of the project. It meets regularly and co-ordinates the work of both national and expert teams.

***Roger Jowell (PI)***, City University, UK

Caroline Bryson, Ruth O'Shea, Mary Keane

**Jaak Billiet**, Michel Philippens Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

**Bjørn Henrichsen**, Knut Skjåk, NSD, Norway

Kirstine Kolsrud

**Peter Mohler**, Janet Harkness, ZUMA, Germany

Sabine Häder, Achim Koch

**Willem Saris**, Irmtraud Gallhofer University of Amsterdam Netherlands.

**Ineke Stoop** SCP, Netherlands.

<b>Sampling Panel</b> <i>A specialist team advises and 'signs off' the sample designs of all countries</i>	<b>Translation Taskforce</b> <i>Similarly, a group of specialists guides the translation process</i>
<b>Sabine Häder</b> ZUMA, Germany Siegfried Gabler ZUMA, Germany Seppo Laaksonen Statistics Finland Peter Lynn University of Essex, UK	<b>Janet Harkness</b> ZUMA, Germany Hans Hönig University of Mainz, Germany Paul Kusmaul University of Mainz, Germany Beth-Ellen Pennell University of Michigan, USA Alisú Schoua-Glousberg Research Support Services, USA

### Question Module Design Teams

Question Module Design Teams, selected following a competition, help to design the rotating modules of questions at each round. In round 1, they were:

<b>Citizenship, Involvement &amp; Democracy</b>	<b>Immigration</b>
<b>Ken Newton</b> University of Southampton, UK Hanspeter Kriesi University of Geneva, Switzerland José Ramón Montero University of Madrid, Spain Sigrid University of Rossteutscher Mannheim, Germany Anders University of Westholm Uppsala, Sweden	<b>Ian Preston</b> University College London, UK Thomas Bauer Institut für de Zukunft der Arbeit, Germany David Card University of California, USA Christian Dustmann University College London, UK James Nazroo University College, London, UK

## **Methods Group**

A distinguished group of survey methodologists advises on technical aspects of the survey series.

Denise Lievesley (Chair)	UNESCO
Norman Bradburn	US National Science Foundation
Paolo Garonna	UNECE
Lars Lyberg	Statistics Sweden
Vasja Vehovar	University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

## NATIONAL PARTICIPATION

COUNTRY	SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD <sup>24</sup> (Chair: Max Kaase, International University, Bremen)	NATIONAL CO-ORDINATOR	SURVEY ORGANISATION	FUNDING AGENCY
Austria	Karl H. Müller, WISDOM	Karl H. Müller, WISDOM	Institute for Panel Research (ipr)	Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur
Belgium (Flemish)	Ron Lesthaeghe, Vrije Universiteit Brussel	Geert Loosveldt, Centre for Survey Methodology, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research (ISPO), Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek
Belgium (Francophone)	Pierre Desmarez, Université Libre de Bruxelles	René Doutrelepont, University of Liège	CLEO, University of Liège	Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique
Czech Republic	Martin Kreidl, Institute of Sociology, AS CR	Klára Plecítá-Vlachová, Institute of Sociology, AS CR	STEM	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic
Denmark	Niels Ploug, Danish National Institute for Social Research	Torben Fridberg, Danish National Institute for Social Research	Danish National Institute of Social Research	Danish Social Science Research Council
Finland	Olli Kangas, University of Turku	Heikki Ervasti, University of Turku	Statistics Finland	Academy of Finland

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24 Representatives of our two international bodies sit on the project's Scientific Advisory Board. From the **European Commission** – Andrew Sors and Virginia Vitorino. From the **European Science Foundation** – Christopher Whelan and Henk Stronkhorst.

France	Olivier Galland, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, CNRS, Paris	Bruno Cautrès, CIDSP, Institut d'études politiques, Grenoble Etienne Schweisguth, CEVIPOF, Institut d'études politiques, Paris	Institut de Sondage Lavielle (ISL)	Comité de concertation pour les données en sciences humaines et sociales, Fonds National de la Science
Germany	Ursula Hoffmann-Lange, University of Bamberg	Jan van Deth, University of Mannheim	Institute for Applied Social Sciences (infas)	German Research Foundation (DFG)
Greece	Thomas Maloutas, Institute of Urban and Rural Sociology, National Centre for Social Research (EKKE)	Yannis Voulgaris, Institute of Political Sociology, National Centre for Social Research (EKKE)	Consortium: MRB and Opinion	General Secretariat of Research and Technology, Ministry of Development; National Hellenic Research Foundation
Hungary	Eva Tall, Institute for Political Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences	Peter Robert, TARKI	TARKI	Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Ireland	Michael Laver, Trinity College Dublin	Richard Sinnott, Institute for the Study of Social Change (ISSC), University College Dublin	Economic and Social Research Institute	Higher Education Authority
Israel	Shalom Schwartz, Hebrew University of Jerusalem	Noah Lewin-Epstein, B.I. Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research, Tel-Aviv University	B.I. Cohen Institute for Public Opinion Research, Tel-Aviv University	Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities
Italy	Guido Martinotti, University of Milan Bicocca	Antonio Schizzerotto, University of Milan Bicocca	ABACUS	Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche
Luxembourg	Gaston Schaber, CEPS/INSTEAD	Uwe Warner, CEPS/INSTEAD	CEPS/INSTEAD	CEPS/INSTEAD; Fonds National de la Recherche

Netherlands	Jacques Thomassen, University of Twente	Peer Scheepers, University of Nijmegen	GfK Panel Services Benelux	Nederlandse organisatie voor wetenschappelijk onderzoek (NWO); Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP)
Norway	Steine Kuhnle, University of Bergen	Kristen Ringdal, Norwegian University of Technology & Science	Statistics Norway	Research Council of Norway (RCN)
Poland	Henryk Domanski, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences	Pawel Sztabinski, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences	Centre for Social Survey Research, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences	State Committee for Scientific Research; Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences
Portugal	Manuel Villaverde Cabral, Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa; João Ferreira de Almeida, Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa	Jorge Vala, Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa	Euroteste, Marketing e Opinião.	Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia – Ministério da Ciência e do Ensino Superior
Slovenia	Niko Tos, University of Ljubljana	Brinar Malnar, University of Ljubljana	Public Opinion and Mass Communication Research Centre (CJMMK), Ljubljana University	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport; Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs; Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development; Government Office for European Affairs
Spain	José Ramón Montero, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid	Mariano Torcal, Universitat Pompeu Fabra	Demoscopia	Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología (MCyT); Departament d'Universitats, Recerca i Societat de la Informació (Generalitat de Catalunya)
Sweden	Rune Åberg, University of Umeå	Stefan Svallfors, University of Umeå	Statistics Sweden	Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research; The Swedish Research Council; The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation

Switzerland	Peter Farago, Landert Farago Davatz & Partner	Dominique Joye, SIDOS	MIS Trend	Schweizerischer Nationalfonds zur Förderung der Wissenschaftlichen Forschung
Turkey	Yilmaz Esmer, Bogaziçi University	Yilmaz Esmer, Bogaziçi University	Birim Arastirma and/or Makro Arastirma	Turkish Academy of Sciences(TÜBA); Open Society Institute
UK	Ian Diamond, Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC)	Alison Park, National Centre for Social Research	National Centre for Social Research	Economic and Social Research Council

## 7. Specification for participating countries

### Introduction

- 1) The new European Social Survey involves the design, development and implementation of the first round of an academically-led and methodologically rigorous study of changing social attitudes and values within a number of European nations. The co-ordination of the project is to be entrusted to a team led by Professor Roger Jowell (National Centre for Social Research, London UK), and including Professor Jaak Billiet (University of Leuven Belgium), Bjorn Henrichsen (Director NSD, Bergen Norway), Professor Peter Mohler (ZUMA, Mannheim Germany), Professor Willem Saris (University of Amsterdam Netherlands), and Ineke Stoop (SCP, The Hague Netherlands). They will constitute the project's **Central Co-ordinating Team (CCT)**.
- 2) The multinational design and co-ordination of the project is to be financed by a grant from the European Commission (under its 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme), supplemented by a grant from the European Science Foundation (ESF). The project was first conceived and recommended by an Expert Panel of the ESF and subsequently developed over a number of years by an ESF Steering Committee under the chairmanship of Professor Max Kaase (now at the International University, Bremen, Germany), and a Methodological Committee under the chairmanship of Professor Roger Jowell. The costs of both the national survey and the National Co-ordinator within each participating country are to be borne by each country.
- 3) The CCT will be supported by a number of advisory and consultative groups, principal among which is a Scientific Advisory Board under the chairmanship of Professor Max Kaase and consisting of one representative each from participating national funding agencies, one from the ESF and two from the Commission. The CCT will also have at its disposal roving panels of expert advisers on sampling and translation issues. A small multinational methods advisory committee will be formed to advise on other methodological issues, while two separate questionnaire design teams will be selected by a competitive process to help frame the variable elements of the questionnaire.
- 4) The principal long term aim of the project is to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions, its political and economic structures, and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations. But an equally important shorter term aim is to develop and demonstrate an

approach to the conduct of rigorous quantitative multinational social surveys in Europe which matches that of the best national surveys in Europe and the USA. The data and outputs of the ESS will be freely available to the social and policy communities throughout Europe and beyond. Although not funded yet beyond the first round, the ESS is being designed as a time series. Thus, if and when survey builds upon survey, it will provide a unique long-term account of change and development in the social fabric of modern Europe. In addition, it will help to activate research networks across Europe and the participation of young researchers in the substance and methodology of rigorous comparative research.

- 5) These specifications are provided for the national funding agencies in participating countries to aid **the selection of National Co-ordinators** (see Specification for National Co-ordinator ) and **Survey Organisations** (see Specification for Survey Organisation ), who will both be responsible to the CCT for the conduct of each national survey to a common specification and standard. Since the specification of the survey itself will, of course, play a major role in all the selection processes, it is also included here (see Specification for the Survey ). This document is only the first of many that will be produced during the course of the project. Later documents will refine and develop these specifications.

### **National level appointments**

- 1) In order to carry out the ESS to a comparable standard within each participating country, each national funding agency is to appoint (or cause to be appointed) a National Co-ordinator and a Survey Organisation. These appointments may or may not be located in a single institution.
- 2) The selection process will, of course, vary between countries according to local circumstances and conventions. The CCT may be called upon either to advise on or assist in the selection process. In any event the CCT is to be consulted in sufficient time to ensure that the appointments comply as closely as possible with the specifications below.
- 3) The two appointments may be made simultaneously or consecutively. Either way, the national funding agency and others involved should bear in mind the paramount need for its selected appointees to work successfully as a coherent team.

- 4) The National Co-ordinator will be the principal contact with the CCT on all aspects of the ESS in each country. He or she will also be responsible to the CCT for the implementation of a rigorous, standardised set of procedures and methods to a pre-specified design and timetable.
- 5) The selection of these two national level appointments by each national funding agency is ideally to be made in time for work to start at national level at the beginning of October 2001, but at any rate no later than end November 2001.

### **Specification for National Co-ordinator**

- 1) The workload of the National Co-ordinator will vary somewhat over the period of the survey, but a half-time commitment for around eighteen months from the time of the appointment is the minimum requirement (i.e. at least 9 months full-time-equivalent over the period October or November 2001 to end July 2003).

Towards the end of the period, as the formal role of national co-ordination begins to tail off, it is hoped that multinational groups of participating co-ordinators may get together to investigate and analyse the preliminary findings as the datasets begin to emerge from the Archive. Apart from the value of early analysis in its own right, it will help to identify any remaining imperfections in the dataset which need attention before its formal release.

- 2) The National Co-ordinator will be:

- a person of standing within the social science community of his/her country;
- familiar at first hand with survey methodology and procedures;
- knowledgeable about past national or sub-national studies of a similar nature and, ideally, with experience of cross-national research;
- fluent in spoken and written English.

- 3) His or her role will be to:

- serve as the link between the national survey operation and the CCT;
- meet with and advise 'ESS expert panellists' on appropriate local procedures to comply with ESS sampling requirements, including optimising effective sample size;

- meet with and advise ESS questionnaire design teams on question construction;
  - co-ordinate translation from English draft (pilot and main) questionnaires;
  - co-ordinate and interpret national pre-tests according to a common specification;
  - monitor fieldwork and data preparation operations, ensuring contract compliance and optimum response;
  - authorise code book, data documentation and fieldwork documentation;
  - collect or facilitate collection of pre-specified country-specific context variables;
  - liaise as necessary with ESS data archive (NSD Norway) about data deposit;
  - attend plenary meetings with other National Co-ordinators (for which travel and subsistence costs are already available);
  - prepare a full technical report (to a pre-specified format and standard) containing details of national sampling, fieldwork, response rates, etc;
  - advise on post-stratification of national data and any weighting required;
  - set up and operate appropriate financial accounting systems.
- 4) In countries where the National Co-ordinator works within a separate organisation from the survey institution, some of the tasks above may contractually be transferred to the survey organisation, but the responsibility for their delivery and for the liaison role with the CCT must continue to reside with the National Co-ordinator.

### **Specification for Survey Organisation**

1) The Survey Organisation appointed in each country must be capable of, and have a track record in, conducting national probability-based surveys to the highest standards of rigour by means of face-to-face interviewing. All contenders will have to submit proposals and budgets according to the specification of the survey in section (Specification for the Survey) 5 below. They will also need to be made aware that for this survey they may have to change or adapt some of their routine national procedures and methods in order to ensure cross-national comparability and equivalence.

- 2) The contract with the survey organisation should stress that contract adherence will, in fact, be monitored not only by the responsible national body, but also by the CCT in its role as overall ESS project co-ordinator.

### **Specification for the Survey**

- 1) *Population coverage* The survey will be representative of all persons aged 15 and over (no upper age limit) resident within private households in each country, regardless of their nationality, citizenship, language or legal status. [Please note that questionnaires are to be available in all languages spoken as a first language by 5 per cent or more of the population and interviewers must be available to administer them (see 5.12). For speakers of certain minority languages, however, it may be possible to use or adapt the questionnaire from another participating country.] Potential under-coverage of certain groups, say because of language problems or sampling frame deficiencies, or for any other reason, must be discussed with the CCT and their expert panel prior to deciding on the final sampling method, so that the problem can if at all possible be remedied.
- 2) *The sample* The sample is to be selected by strict random probability methods at every stage and respondents are to be interviewed face-to-face (see section 13 below). Procedures for selecting a household from a multi-household address, and an individual within a household will be specified and agreed in advance. In any event, the relative selection probabilities of every sample member must be known and recorded, as should any remaining systematic non-coverage problems. Quota sampling is not permitted at any stage, nor is substitution of non-responding households or individuals (whether 'refusals' or 'non-contacts').
- 3) *Effective sample size* The **minimum number of actual interviews to be achieved is 2,000** (except in countries whose total population is less than 2 million, when the minimum number is 1,000). Irrespective of the actual number of interviews, however, the **minimum 'effective achieved sample size' should be 1,500**, after discounting for design effects (see Appendix 1), or 800 in countries with populations of under 2 million. Thus, each country should determine the appropriate size of its initial issued sample by taking into account the realistic estimated impact of clustering, eligibility rates (where appropriate) and response rate on the effective sample size.
- 4) *Over-sampling* Over-sampling (or using different selection probabilities) among certain subgroups or strata is acceptable provided that the total sample still

complies with the effective sample size criterion. For instance, if a low response rate in certain strata (say large cities) is predicted, it would be efficient to over-sample in large cities by a factor because the resultant non-response weight would largely cancel out the selection probability weight, minimising any loss of precision due to weighting. Similarly, certain minority groups may be over-sampled to permit separate analysis of them. However, over-sampling will only help to ensure that certain cells are better filled than they otherwise would have been. It will not influence the target overall response rate. Moreover, since over-sampling will also necessitate subsequent additional weighting of the data to correct for the different selection probabilities, any proposals to over-sample must be discussed and agreed in advance with the CCT and their expert panel.

- 5) *Documentation of sampling procedures* The precise sampling procedures to be employed in each country, and their implications for representativeness, must be documented in full and submitted in advance to the CCT for reference to the expert panel and 'signing off'. This precaution is to ensure that all countries within the ESS have defensible (and equivalent) national probability samples of their adult populations. The final sample design will be fully documented in the national technical report of the survey. It will include details of the definition and description of the sampling units used at each stage, the degree of clustering, any stratification factors applied to the sampling frame, any over-sampling, and an assessment of the ways in which selection probabilities might otherwise have varied at each stage. Such documentation will be translated into one or more variables within the national data file to indicate the relative selection probabilities of cases and to enable appropriate weighting strategies to be calculated.
- 6) *Target response rates* Outcomes of all approaches to addresses, households and individuals in the sample will be defined and recorded according to a pre-specified set of categories that distinguish non-eligibility, non-contacts and refusals. The proportion of non-contacts should not exceed 3 per cent of all sampled units, and the **minimum target response rate** - after discounting ineligibles (and other 'deadwood', as defined by the CCT) - **should be 70%**. This figure is likely to be exceeded in certain countries and the ESS as a whole would be damaged if major national variations in response rates were to occur. Survey organisations should thus cost their surveys with this response rate in mind and consider what steps may be required to achieve it.

- 7) *Response rate enhancement* Various specific steps designed to enhance response rates should also be allowed for. They include **at least four personal visits** by interviewers to each sampling unit before it is abandoned as non-productive, including at least one call in the evening and at least one at the weekend. These calls should be spread over at least two different weeks. Similarly, to allow difficult-to-contact people to be located, the fieldwork period should not be less than 30 days (see 5.13 and 5.15). All potential survey organisations must be invited to suggest a range of techniques that they believe would enhance the final response rate. Such techniques may include advance letters, toll-free telephone numbers for potential respondents to contact, extra training of interviewers in response-maximisation techniques and doorstep interactions, implementing refusal avoidance and conversion techniques, re-issuing of 'soft' refusals and 'indecisive' non-contacts, and many others. These suggestions will be forwarded to the CCT both for comment and for possible transmission to other nations for consideration locally.
- 8) *Response rate calculation and documentation* Reporting of response outcomes will be carried out, calculated and keyed according to a pre-specified standard format, which will include at least the following mutually-exclusive categories:
- A) *Total issued addresses* (or other sample units).
  - B) % not eligible, and why;
  - C) *Total eligible sample* (A-B).
  - D) % no contact (after 4+ visits, or if fewer, why);
  - E) % personal refusal, and why (pre-specified categories);
  - G) % too ill or incapacitated;
  - H) % household (or proxy) refusal, and why (pre-specified categories);
  - I) % achieved interview (partial & complete);
  - J) Total percent response rate (I/C).
- 9) *Field outcomes* In addition to the recording of case outcomes, field outcomes for each call at each address (or other primary unit) will be documented and ultimately keyed from a standardised set of similar summary codes for each call. Interviewers will also be asked to record for each sample unit a number of

observable area, dwelling and household characteristics for each case in the issued sample (to be specified in detail later).

10) *Questionnaire design – process* There will be two questionnaires: a) a face-to-face interview questionnaire of around 60 minutes average duration; and b) a self-completion supplement of around 20 minutes average duration.

a) The interview questionnaire

Around one half of the interview questionnaire will comprise 'core' items (both socio-demographic and substantive in nature) and the other half will comprise 'rotating' items (from round to round) - in two separate modules, each to be inspired and drafted by two competitively-selected, multinational questionnaire design teams. The interviews will be conducted in respondents' homes. The questionnaire will be administered face-to-face either in a paper-and-pencil form or by computer-assisted interviewing – the latter if there is adequate experience of it in a particular country.

b) The self-completion questionnaire

The self-completion questionnaire may either be left behind for subsequent collection by interviewer or returned by post. Either way, a target response rate of 90% of those who completed the interview must be aimed at. Procedures such as Dillman's Total Design Method should be deployed if necessary in order to achieve this target. The self-completion questionnaire will mostly contain items designed specifically to help evaluate the reliability and validity of other items.

c) Adding country-specific questions

Any nation may add items to the questionnaire for national rather than multinational use. But any additional country-specific questions may be inserted only **after the ESS questions** in sequence, whether in the interview or in the self-completion questionnaire. The number and duration of any extra questions should, however, be discussed in advance with the CCT to ensure that the extra time of interview does not compromise overall response rates.

11) *Questionnaire design - content* The core questionnaire items will cover both socio-demographic and substantive themes. They will include both independent variables and dependent variables, the latter designed to measure shifts over time in what are considered to be key components of Europe's social fabric. These core questions are already being designed in collaboration with a group of experts in different fields and will cover subjects such as religion, party

identity, media usage, labour market participation, socio-economic classifications, social exclusion, national identity and value orientations. Some of the core items (notably those on value orientations) will be in the self-completion supplement. In contrast, the content of the rotating parts of the questionnaire will be determined 'bottom-up' via a call for proposals throughout the participating countries from small, multinational team of social scientists. The two successful proposals will be those that (in terms of relevance and timeliness) are likely to make the greatest contribution to social science and policy in a European context. The quality of the proposals (and the teams) will be evaluated by the ESS Scientific Advisory Board in collaboration with the CCT. Two Questionnaire Design teams will then be selected for each round, each charged with the lead role in designing one of two 15-minute questionnaire modules for that round of the survey.

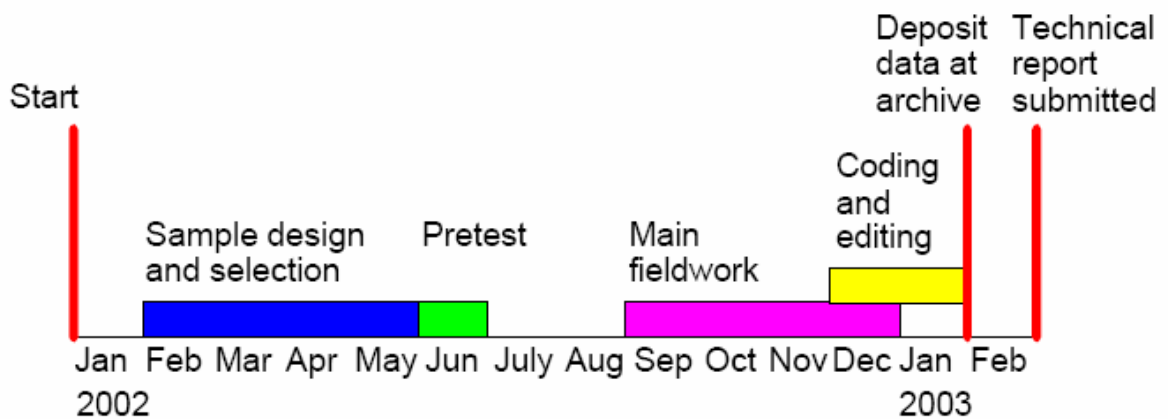
12) *Questionnaire translation, assessment and pre-testing* The questionnaire will be collectively designed in 'British-English'. At the end of the design stage, it will be signed off by the CCT. Each country will then translate its own version of the questionnaire. In countries in which any minority language is used as a first language by 5 per cent or more of the population, the questionnaire must be translated into that language too. Consultations about appropriate translation and adaptations of question wording will take place between countries who share the same language, but in the end each nation will be responsible for ensuring the functional equivalence of its own translation(s). The CCT, in conjunction with an expert panel, will provide detailed guidance on all translation procedures and assessment methods, none of which need necessarily involve professional translators. The translated questionnaires will then be pre-tested in each participating country in accordance with guidelines specified by the CCT on a quota-controlled, demographically-balanced sample of around 50 people. The costs of translation, assessment and pre-testing should be included in the Survey Organisation's budget, and the process will be overseen by the National Co-ordinator.

13) *Fieldwork* The main fieldwork period will last for at least one month within a four-month period between 1 September and end December 2002 (see timetable in 15). Only in special circumstances within a particular country would deviations from this timetable be allowed (in agreement with the CCT), for instance when a major national event - such as an election or referendum - would be likely to interfere with fieldwork. The first contact with potential respondents, following a possible advance letter, will be face-to-face. Once in

contact with a household, however, interviewers will be permitted to make (or change) appointments, though not to conduct interviews, by telephone. Quality control back-checks (in person, by telephone or by post) must be carried out and documented in a pre-specified form on at least 5% of respondents, 10% of refusals and 10% of non-contacts. Interviewers' assignment sizes should not exceed 24 issued sampling units and no interviewer should carry out more than two assignments. All interviewers will be personally briefed by the National Coordinator and others before carrying out an assignment, drawing on detailed interviewer instructions prepared by the CCT. Fieldwork progress must be closely monitored, including producing a fortnightly report on response, broken down into similar categories to those listed in section 8 (Specification for the Survey) but distinguishing between decisive refusals and 'soft' refusals, as well as between primary issued addresses and re-issued ones.

- 14) *Coding and editing* Other than a few socio-demographic items such as occupation and perhaps education, which will be recorded verbatim and subsequently coded by the survey organisation, all questions will be pre-coded. Occupation (for respondent and spouse) will be coded according to the ISCO (or other standard) classification, and education level (again for up to two people per household) will also be coded according to a standard format. The Survey Organisation will also implement a set of pre-specified range and logic checks, which may have already been implemented in those countries where computer-assisted interviewing is being employed. The country data-file will include a record for each selected sample case, indicating response outcome plus interviewer-recorded items and a geographical identifier. Only when a country's dataset has 'passed' these checks will it be signed off for central archiving and submitted to the NSD Archive. It will then be followed soon by a detailed country-specific technical report containing a pre-specified collection of facts and figures relevant to future analysts of the data. Both the National Coordinator and the Survey Organisation should then be prepared to clarify or rectify problems subsequently identified by the Archive as it cleans and merges the country data-files.

## 15) Timetable



The ESS Archive (NSD) will then merge the national datasets into a combined multi-nation dataset which will be released publicly and to all national data repositories as soon as it is signed off by the CCT, but at any rate before end August 2003. This initial release may, however, have to exclude any national dataset that arrives after the deadline of end January 2003, or for which the technical documentation is late or incomplete.

16) *Ethical guidelines* The study subscribes to the Declaration on Ethics of the International Statistical Institute (ISI, <http://www.cbs.nl/isi/ethics.htm>), to which all national teams will be asked to adhere (in addition to any current code obligations they may have).

17) *Copyrights* No national data (or interpretations of such data) must be released or published until the merged dataset is officially released by the ESS data archive at NSD Norway. Thereafter, the data will be available without restriction as a resource for the social science communities in all participating countries and beyond to quarry at will. As noted, however, it is to be hoped that multinational teams of participants in the study will nonetheless get to grips with the datasets while they are being finally cleaned and processed at the archive, allowing them subsequently to be among the first to publish and interpret results of the ESS.

18) *Costs* The Survey Organisation should break down the estimated costs of the survey into each of the following categories:

- research time/project management;
- pre-test;

- liaison with NC (if applicable);
- liaison with CCT;
- preparation of questionnaire and other field documents (translation, layout, printing and/or programming);
- postage and telephone costs;
- fieldwork (including travel, briefings, incentives - if any - and quality control);
- coding;
- editing and cleaning data;
- data deposit;
- technical report;
- other (specify).

## 8. Effective Sample Size

The effective sample size ( $n_{eff}$ ) is the size of a simple random sample which would produce the same precision (standard errors) as the design actually used. Typically,  $n_{eff}$  is less than the actual number of achieved interviews,  $m$ , as certain aspects of survey design

- for example, clustering or the use of differing selection probabilities - tend to reduce the precision of estimates. The reduction of precision is known as the design effect (DEFF):

$DEFF = \text{Actual sampling variance} / \text{Sampling variance with simple random samples of same size}$ ;

$DEFF = m/n_{eff}$ , so  $n_{eff} = m/DEFF$

We therefore need to be able to predict the value of DEFF for a proposed sample design, in order to determine how many interviews should be achieved so as to produce a particular value of  $n_{eff}$ . We suggest that two components of DEFF should be taken into account at the design stage - the design effect arising from differing selection probabilities (DEFF<sub>p</sub>) and the design effect arising from clustering (DEFF<sub>c</sub>). Then  $DEFF = DEFF_p \times DEFF_c$ . We then also need to predict the survey response rate (and the

proportion of ineligible on the sampling frame, if relevant) in order to determine the size of the initial sample (n) required in order to achieve approximately m interviews.

#### Design Effects due to Differing Selection Probabilities

In some countries which have accessible population registers, it will be possible to select an equal-probability sample from the survey population. In other countries, it will be necessary to select the sample in stages, with the penultimate stage being residential addresses. In this case, each person's selection probability will depend on their household size. Another reason why differing selection probabilities might be used is if important minority groups were to be over-sampled.

If differing selection probabilities are to be used - for whatever reason - the associated design effect should be predicted. This can be done very simply, using the following formula

$$DEFF_p = \frac{m(\sum_i m_i w_i^2)}{(\sum_i m_i w_i)^2}$$

where there are  $m_i$  respondents in the  $i^{\text{th}}$  selection probability class, each receiving a weight of  $w_i$ , where

$$w_i = \alpha \frac{N_i}{m_i}$$

(This formula assumes that the population variance of survey variables will not vary over selection probability classes - a reasonable assumption in most situations)

#### *Design Effects Due to Clustering*

It is anticipated that in most countries it will be efficient to select a multi-stage, clustered, sample. In such situations there will also be a design effect due to clustering:

$$DEFF_c = 1 + (b-1) \rho$$

where  $b$  is the mean number of respondents per cluster and  $\rho$  is the intra-cluster correlation (or "rate of homogeneity") - a measure of the extent to which persons within a clustering unit are more homogeneous than persons within the population as a whole (see Kish, 1994, Survey Sampling, pp. 161-164 (New York: Wiley and Sons, Inc.)). This

design effect can be estimated, at least crudely, from knowledge of other surveys and/or the nature of the clustering units.

In practice, all elements of the overall design effect, including that due to differing selection probabilities and that due to clustering, will take different values for different survey estimates. For sample design purposes, an average value should be used.

*Example: How to determine the size of issued sample*

We have prescribed  $n_{eff} > 1500$ .

To determine  $m$ , we must first estimate  $DEFF = DEFF_p \times DEFF_c$

- 1) Suppose the proposed clustering units are administrative areas of around 5,000 households on average and that based on data from other surveys, we expect that for these areas,  $\rho$  will take values of around 0.02 for many variables. Then, if we are

proposing a design with a mean of 15 interviews per cluster:

$$DEFF_c = 1 + (15 - 1) \times 0.02 = 1.28.$$

[Note: If there is no available empirical evidence at all upon which to base an estimate of  $\Delta$ , then we suggest that a value of 0.02 should be used.]

- 2) Suppose that the only available sampling frame is a list of addresses and that these must be selected with equal probabilities. The proposed design is then randomly to select one person to interview at each address. This is the only aspect of the proposed design that involves differing selection probabilities. Then, we can use population statistics on the distribution of household size to estimate the number of respondents in each selection probability class, thus: The population distribution of household size appears in the first two columns. From this, we can predict that the sample distribution will be as shown in the third column. We can thus predict  $DEFF_p$ :

No of persons aged 18+ in household i	Proportion of households in population $H_i/H$	No of achieved interviews $m_i$	Relative weight		
			$w_i$	$m_i w_i$	$m_i w_i^2$
1	0.35	0.35m	1	0.35m	0.35m
2	0.45	0.45m	2	0.90m	1.80m
3	0.12	0.12m	3	0.36m	1.08m
4	0.06	0.06m	4	0.24m	0.96m
5	0.02	0.02m	5	0.10m	0.50m
				1.95m	4.69m

$$DEFF_p = m \times 4.69m / (1.95m)^2 = 4.69 / 1.95^2 = 1.23$$

3) Thus, we predict  $DEFF = 1.28 \times 1.23 = 1.57$ . Consequently, to achieve  $neff > 1,500$  with this design, we would need  $m > 1,500 \times 1.57 = 2,355$ .

4) The final stage is to calculate the sample size to select initially in order to be likely to achieve around 2,355 interviews. Suppose we anticipate a response rate of 80% and that 5% of the sampling frame units will be ineligible (e.g. addresses which do not contain a resident household), then:

$$n = (m / 0.80) / 0.95 = 3,098$$

So we would select a sample of at least 3,100 addresses.

## 9. Additional Materials on Translation

A directory containing all the materials delivered to National Co-ordinators and other ESS bodies in Round One was made available on the ESS web site by autumn 2003 <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>. These include handouts such as Documents A- D below.

## DOCUMENT A

### *Information presented at National Co-ordinators' Meetings 2001-2002*

#### **1) National Co-ordinators' Meeting December 2001**

- a) Overview of the work package strategy Three-step approach to materials for each national co-ordinators' meeting Three-step approach to translation and assessment (Translation; Assessment/Review, Adjudication/Resolution).
- b) Potential for co-operation across countries sharing languages c) Hand-out of action points for participating countries (see next page).

#### **2) National Co-ordinators' Meeting, March 2002**

- a) Guidelines on selecting, assessing and training translators.
- b) Guidelines on preparing materials for step one.
- c) More on the TRAPD approach to translation and assessment.
- d) Outline of suitable translation and assessment procedures.
- e) Co-operation across countries sharing languages: procedures.

#### **3) National Co-ordinators' Meeting, June 2002**

Translation hands-on briefing.

- a) Working with the annotated questionnaire.
- b) Training the work team.
- c) Adjudicating translations.
- d) Dealing with problems: options and procedures.
- e) Documenting translations.

## DOCUMENT B

### ESS INFORMATION NOTE 3: *Reminders and Developments on Translation*

This is the third Information Note produced by the ESS Central Co-ordinating Team. The purpose of these notes is to provide information or clarification to national funding bodies, National Co-ordinators and survey agencies.

This note addresses some issues which were raised at or since the Second National Co-ordinators Meeting about translation.

The guidelines for translation and assessment worked out by the translation expert panel are put forward to help participating countries optimise their procedures. ESS members will be asked to report in some detail to the translation taskforce on how they translated the materials and how they assessed them.

#### 1) Note on translation timing:

A few countries expressed interest in beginning translation early - before the final version of the questionnaire is finished. The CCT consulted on this at length. We have decided we must ask all countries not to begin translation before the final version of the interview and self-completion questionnaires are available. The reason for this is that the questionnaires are being reviewed and revised from now until late May, and annotations can thus only be added once this process is completed. Meanwhile, questions, parts of questions, answer scales and question sequences might all still change considerably. The final questionnaire will be available in time for the Third National Co-ordinators' meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup> and we ask you please only to use the final version of the questionnaires for your translations.

#### 2) Note on who you might use as translators

*One or two countries indicate they are thinking of using translation agencies or bureaux. The translation and assessment strategies proposed for the ESS questionnaires (see materials from the First and Second National Co-ordinators meetings) envisage that translators and reviewers discuss the translation together. This makes the assessment of the translation much more effective. In our experience, translation agencies do not usually allow translators and 'clients' to engage in this kind of discussion. We suggest countries reconsider such points carefully before they commission translators.*

3) Note on possible contact people in your own country:

*The materials made available at the Second National Co-ordinators meeting suggest how you might locate and evaluate possible translators. The translation work package will forward a list of specific experts in each country. The people named in this list are leading professional people in their field who are known to members of the ESS translation expert panel.*

If you have any difficulty finding suitable people, these experts will probably be able to help you further.

Remember that even experts of this calibre need to be provided with briefing material of the kinds described at the Second National Co-ordinators meeting.

4) Note on shared languages

This section is relevant for countries preparing a translation (for an eligible population) in the following languages:

<b>LANGUAGE</b>	<b>COUNTRIES SHARING</b>
English	Great Britain and Ireland
French	Belgium, France, Switzerland, Luxembourg
German	Austria, Germany and Switzerland
Italian	Italy and Switzerland
Dutch/Flemish	Belgium and the Netherlands
Swedish	Sweden and Finland

(Ireland and the UK 'share' English and may also need to confer on their versions.)

**The standard practice** for ESS translations is to have 2 translators and 2 full translations, followed by review and adjudication (see materials from the first and second National Co-ordinators Meetings). However, countries sharing a translated language can choose either to follow the standard practice **or to do a split translation** as described below. The split saves time and money on translation but at the same time involves co-ordination across countries.

Here is an outline of the steps in the procedure for a split translation (**only** for countries sharing languages **AND** co-operating).

Janet Harkness (harkness@zuma-mannheim.de) will be happy to discuss details with individual countries as needed.

- 1) Each country uses 2 translators. Each translator translates one half of the questionnaires. (Please see the details on **how to divide** the translation between translators which were provided at the Second National Co-ordinators Meeting);
- 2) Each country does a preliminary review and revision of this translation (= first reviewed version);
- 3) Countries then deposit their translations with the translation work package (a requirement if doing a 'split');
- 4) Countries exchange translations with the other country or countries sharing the language;
- 5) Countries individually review their own translation plus the translation(s) from their partners and decide on the "best" version for their country (= second reviewed/adjudicated version);
- 6) Countries consult **together** on the final version for each country

(= third reviewed/adjudicated and perhaps 'harmonised' version). Each country keeps differences which they decide need to be kept. They "harmonise" and remove differences across countries which they decide do not need to be kept (see notes from the Second National Co-ordinators Meeting).

**This is a procedure which calls for good planning and timing;**

- 7) Countries deposit their final versions with the work package along with documentation on the co-operation process (differences kept, changes made, etc. A template for this will be provided by the translation work package).

An important point in this procedure is, obviously, that countries have finished their own versions and their first review in enough time to deposit their version with the work package, then exchange versions with other countries, review and decide on a version, then finally consult with the other countries to optimise the final version *across* countries.

However, since many participating countries have similar time schedules for completing preparations for fielding after the Third National Co-ordinators meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup>, the crucial factor may be more a matter of good and timely communication between countries sharing languages. Again, the translation team (contact Janet Harkness) will be glad to assist wherever possible.

## DOCUMENT C

### Selecting and Training Translators

*(Materials presented and discussed with National Co-ordinators at NC Meetings)*

#### *Getting a Good Team*

What staff do you need to find?

Your individual needs determine whether you require to find translators, translators and reviewers, or also perhaps an adjudicator.

If a national co-ordinator is not to be the adjudicator for a given translation, a person of senior standing with the appropriate qualities is required. (For obvious reasons we do not discuss how to find such people.)

In looking for translators, you may also find someone suitable to act as reviewer. The reviewer's language skills and understanding of translation issues should be at least as good as those of the translators.

*It is useful to have a number of applicants or possible translators.* Even if some ESS members feel they have suitable people already, we suggest these people be 'put to the test' along with new recruits. In this way, for example, it is easier to decide who might be better suited as reviewer and who as translator, or which of two translators is stronger for the task at hand.

Where several different translated questionnaires are to be produced, translation begins in each case from the English source questionnaire, not from a translated questionnaire (e.g. Catalan from English, not Catalan from Spanish). Thus in every case translators are needed who habitually work *from* English *into* another language (and into their 'strongest' language).

## ***Finding and Selecting Translators***

### *Finding translators*

The first step is to find likely people (the next to select from among them). The appropriate places to look are official channels (translation associations and the like); places of instruction, e.g., translating colleges; your own network channels; the ESS translation work package network channel; possibly within your institution; and through other institutions likely to use translators.

Using translation bureaux will in most cases not be a viable option, since, for example, translators may work long distance or not be allowed to interact directly with ESS members as 'clients' or, indeed, with each other. Translation bureaux are also unlikely to accommodate the selection procedures outlined below. Apart from this, translation bureaux are usually more expensive than individual translators are. Fielding agencies are unlikely to be able to accommodate this requirement either.

### *Selecting Translators*

Survey literature advocates that translators should be 'bilinguals,' 'professional translators,' people who understand empirical social science research, or combinations of all of these. The most important factors for deciding on which translators to use is whether they are experienced translators and whether (in the interview we recommend), they demonstrate their suitability. Official credentials are relevant but decisions should certainly not be based primarily on these.

#### **In selecting translators, it is wise to look at:**

- 1) *Performance* in tasks presented at the interview (outlined under training and in Appendix D)
- 2) *Past performance*: samples of work, although these can be misleading on many accounts. If poor, forget the candidate.
- 3) *Experience*: a novice is not recommended;
- 4) *Type of work*: someone who has worked on different text types and not just on one type—contracts, commercial correspondence—may be better equipped to tackle a new text type;

- 5) *Personal background and education*: someone with social sciences training could have an advantage over someone from a pure science background, while a language background could be indicative of a general (and relevant) interest in language;
- 6) *Degree of cultural embedding* in the context for which they are translating: this may be less of a problem for the ESS, but national co-ordinators should be aware of the kind of problems arising from using translators who do not know or no longer know the culture for whom they are translating. Translators used for minority languages should know this minority culture and not just the language;
- 7) *Official credentials*: these indicate a career choice, unlikely for those who end up translating by virtue of the fact that they speak a foreign language and need employment. At the same time, credentials differ greatly within and across countries. In addition, the number of people entering serious translation training differs across countries. It is not necessary to insist on official credentials, other things being equal;
- 8) *Openness to the approach* your country plans to employ: people who 'bristle' in the interview at discussion of their 'version' of a test task are not natural choices for a team approach;
- 9) *Their views on translation and their job*: translators who are convinced there is some single 'correct' or 'best' translation, for example, and seem unaware of pragmatic meaning and the fact that people construct meaning are not likely to be suitable.

## **Training**

The people most likely to be good questionnaire translators are people who are already good translators and who learn/are trained to become questionnaire translators. The procedures suggested for training include procedures which can be used to assess the suitability of applicants. Training materials can readily be developed from available questionnaire translations; old questionnaires can be used for training and practice.

Both applicants and translators being trained can, for example, be asked to identify problems in question formulations in either English or the target language, to provide translations, comment on translations already available (old, prepared questionnaires), to correct translations, to make questions more suitable for a specified target population, to explain what questions are asking, and so forth. This gives some impression of their

ability to work with the materials as well as their 'ear' for suitable language for different modes and target audiences. Their flexibility in impromptu generation of versions (alongside the quality of these versions) is a good indicator of likely suitability. Good translators, aware of the constraints, tend to recognise good translation solutions when they see them.

The ESS training will include familiarisation with the annotated questionnaire and with the documentation required for the translation-review process.

Given the scarcity of training opportunities for survey translation, not many translators will have been trained to translate questionnaires adequately. Thus, in many cases, proven translating skills will be more important than survey translation experience. Translators who have had experience in translating questionnaires but were never actually trained to handle this kind of text may, indeed, prove difficult to (re-) train. At all events translators with experience in translating survey questions should also be interviewed and assessed carefully.

### **Check your Choice**

Even once translators have been appointed, decisions sometimes need to be reversed. The first *10 percent* of the first assignment should be delivered for monitoring *as soon as it is completed*. It is unlikely that *serious deficiencies* can be remedied by pointing out or discussing problems. If the translation quality is not already reasonable, it is probably better to start again with a new translator.

If translators are not good team members, remember that an individual translation is only the first step in a team approach. You can expect to have many of the draft translations improved in the review discussion. Therefore someone who does not function well in the team weakens the input you have during the review session(s).

### **Provide task specifications and support materials**

Equipping translators properly for the task helps them perform better (Holz-Mänttari 1984; Gile 1995; Kussmaul 1995; Gutknecht and Rölle 1996; Wilss 1996). Translators need to understand the function of target and source text to see the best possible translation options. What they produce as a translation depends not only on their ability and training but on the quality of the material they are asked to translate and on the task specifications they receive. If not given job specifications, translators mentally decide their own, since they cannot translate in a vacuum. Task specifications must thus indicate the intended audience, level of literacy and tone of text (e.g., official or more casual tone), the function of the text (e.g., a questionnaire for fielding or a gloss to

describe the contents of a questionnaire), and the degree of freedom permitted in translation. Since the ESS follows an ASQ model, functionally equivalent (but different) components are not envisaged. Translators need to be informed of how close or free translation is required to be.

Translators informed about the measurement components of questions and trained to be sensitive to design requirements as well as target audience requirements are in an optimal position to produce good versions. They are also more likely to be able to point out when one or the other requirement cannot be met and to recognise problems (Hulin 1987; Hambleton 1993; Borg 1998). It is thus strongly recommended that translators are given support materials, example texts, and the information relevant for their part in producing instruments. The annotated questionnaire and the documentation required are likely to be new to many translators.

## **DOCUMENT D**

### ***Action Points Reminder***

#### **Action points for participating countries for translation:**

##### After first NC meeting:

- Inform CCT of language(s) you will field in.

##### As soon as final questionnaires are available:

- Check and inform CCT/work package whether translations of items (exactly the same) are available (Procedures related to this will be outlined for you when questionnaires are ready).

##### After second NC meeting:

- Inform CCT of any intended co-operation (contact [ess\\_translate@zuma-mannheim.de](mailto:ess_translate@zuma-mannheim.de)) (Procedures related to this are outlined at the second NC meeting).

##### After third NC meeting:

- Document translation and assessment process and outcomes.
- Provide CCT with a copy of materials used in selecting or assessing work team (Procedures related to this are described at second and third NC meetings).

After your questionnaires are finalised in translation (August 2002):

- Provide CCT with Word file of questionnaires (including background variables).

## **10. Status of electronic deliverables**

### **Deliverables No: 7, 8, 9 and 10**

This annex records the status of the remaining electronic deliverables, that is:

- Deliverable Number 7 – data set and code book.
- Deliverable Number 8 – Fully archived dataset.
- Deliverable Number 9 - Data distribution mechanism.
- Deliverable Number 10 – Information and support system for users.

The ESS data are now freely available to users (see [http://129.177.90.106/2003\\_index.jsp](http://129.177.90.106/2003_index.jsp)).

All Twenty-two out of the twenty-two participating countries were included in the website (as at June 2004). The number of countries with data archived is well in excess of the minimum number (9) specified as a condition of the EC funding.

The dataset is available for download in SAS or SPSS format free of charge. In addition, the data can be accessed for tabulation on-line. Codebooks are available on the website, both on-line or as separate documentation. The latter includes a full description of the structure of the integrated dataset as well as detailed breakdowns for each country of any country-specific differences to note. This fulfils the requirements for Deliverables Number 7 and 9.

The dataset is archived in accordance with NSD's usual standards on storage and migration of data (Deliverable 8).

There is much information and support available to users of the ESS data (Deliverable 10). Documentation of the survey available on the data website includes:

- national technical summaries of fieldwork in each country;
- a guide to weighting ESS data;
- details of sampling and design weight calculations in each country;

- details of reliability and validity analyses for the main stage of the survey;
- all fieldwork documents (questionnaires, showcards, instructions, contact forms) - both the source documents and translated versions used by each country;
- macro-data on a range of socio-demographic variables for each country and a subset of information at regional level within country;
- links to other sources of data on countries.

Members of the CCT also regularly field queries from users of ESS data.

### **Event data**

Although not officially a deliverable to the Commission, for Round 1 we also set up an event database to record possibly significant events shortly before and during fieldwork that might affect responses to the survey. These are available at [http://www.scp.nl/users/stoop/ess\\_events/events\\_overview.htm](http://www.scp.nl/users/stoop/ess_events/events_overview.htm).

European Commission

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