

# Q2010 Training Courses

Cross-national surveys

# Cross-national surveys

## ■ Time

- Monday 3 May 2010
- 09:30-17:00

## ■ Venue

- Statistics Finland
- Työpajankatu 13, FI-00580, Helsinki, Kalasatama

## ■ Instructors

- Dr Ineke Stoop (Netherlands Institute for Social research/SCP)

## PROJECT INFORMATION

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## ESS FIELDWORK

- [Methodology](#)
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- [Fieldwork Documentation](#)
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## ESS DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

- [Quality Enhancement](#)
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## METHODOLOGICAL RESEARCH

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## ESS EVENT REPORTS

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## Home



The **European Social Survey** (the ESS) is an 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. Now preparing for its fifth round, the survey covers more than 30 nations and employs the most rigorous methodologies. A repeat cross-sectional survey, it has been funded through the European Commission's Framework Programmes, the European Science Foundation and national funding bodies in each country. A copy of the ESS information brochure is available [here](#). In addition there is a recently produced booklet of key findings from the first three rounds of the survey. This can be downloaded [here](#).

The ESS is also among the first social science projects to receive funding to support its **infrastructure**. In 2005 the ESS was awarded Europe's top annual science award, the **Descartes prize**. The ESS has also been nominated by ESFRI as a possible future European Research Infrastructure Consortium. Click [here](#) to read more details about the ESS Preparatory Phase.

The project is directed by a Central Coordinating Team led by **Roger Jowell** at the **Centre for Comparative Social Surveys, City University, UK**. The six other institutions represented are:

- [NSD, Norway](#)
- [GESIS, Germany](#)
- [The Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP, Netherlands](#)
- [Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain](#)
- [University of Leuven, Belgium](#)
- [University of Ljubljana, Slovenia](#)

If you have a general enquiry about the ESS or wish to comment on the website, please contact the team at [City University](#).

If your query concerns access to data, contact the archive at [NSD, Norway](#).

## LATEST NEWS

- **NEW: ESS Data User Statistics** for March 2010 available now
- **NEW: ESS ROUND 4 - DATA UPDATED**
- The Call for the 9th ESS Training Course is now **OPEN**
- Call for Round 6 Question Design Teams released
- **REMINDER TO ESS DATA USERS**
- ESS Round 4 Module Development Documents now available
- Commissioner Potočník says ESS upgrade to a long term infrastructure an urgent priority
- Round 5 Specification for Participating Countries now available

## Key characteristics

- Attitudes, values and beliefs
- Bi-annual
- 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008
- Small sample size: effective size 1500
- Central co-ordination
- National implementation

## Aims ESS

- To monitor and interpret public attitudes and values within Europe and to investigate how they interact with Europe's changing institutions
  - Provide data on beliefs, attitudes and values for scientific and policy making purposes
  - Measure attitude change in a changing Europe
- To advance and consolidate improved methods of cross-national survey measurement in Europe and beyond
  - Collect data according to highest standards
  - Generate methodological research
  - Develop and disseminate new best practices
  - Develop and improve social survey research infrastructure in Europe

## Substance: core modules

### ■ Socio-demo-graphic items

- household composition
- education
- housing
- occupation
- social structure

### ■ Attitudes and behaviour patterns

- religious affiliation and identity
- ethnic and national identity
- political trust
- party affiliation and voting behaviour
- media consumption
- value orientations
- social exclusion

# Substance: rotating modules

- Call for proposals
- Questions from scientific community
- Tested measures with proven explanatory value in national settings
- Appropriateness to academic and policy needs
- Suitability for multicultural and multinational measurement

# Rotating modules

- R1
  - Immigration
  - Citizenship, involvement and democracy
- R2
  - Family, work and well-being
  - Opinions on health and care-seeking
  - Economic Morality in Europe: Market Society & Citizenship
- R3
  - Personal & Social Well-being: Creating indicators for a flourishing Europe
  - The Timing of Life: The organisation of the life course in Europe
- R4
  - Experiences and Expressions of Ageism
  - Welfare attitudes in a changing Europe
- R5
  - Family, work and well-being: implications of economic recession
  - Trust in criminal justice and the police



## Methods:

### Central coordination

- Specifications
- Contracting checklist
- Sampling design
- Fieldwork monitoring
- Translation procedures
- Guidelines response enhancement
- Guidelines interviewer training
- Response calculation

# Methods: consistency and comparability

- Sampling, coverage and response
  - Random probability samples
  - No substitution
  - 70% target response rate, max. 3% noncontact
- Face-to-face fieldwork
- Pilots, pretesting and MTMM experiments
- Extensive training and monitoring
- Translation, minority languages and documentation
- Context and events

# ESS and ESS: best of both worlds

## ■ European Social Survey

- Academically driven
- Bottom-up modules
- Attitudes, values and beliefs
- Methodological research
- Survey process identical
- Micro-data immediately available
- EU+
- Relatively small sample size

## ■ European Statistical System

- Standard classifications
- Rigorous random sampling
- Full documentation
- Confidentiality + disclosure control

## Special attention to

- Questionnaire structure and development
  - extensive pre-testing, ensuring functional equivalence, cognitive testing, maximising reliability and validity
- Strict probability sampling
  - differing sampling frames, pre-specified minimal effective sample size
- Reduce and analyse bias due to nonresponse
- Archiving and dissemination
- Methodological experiments

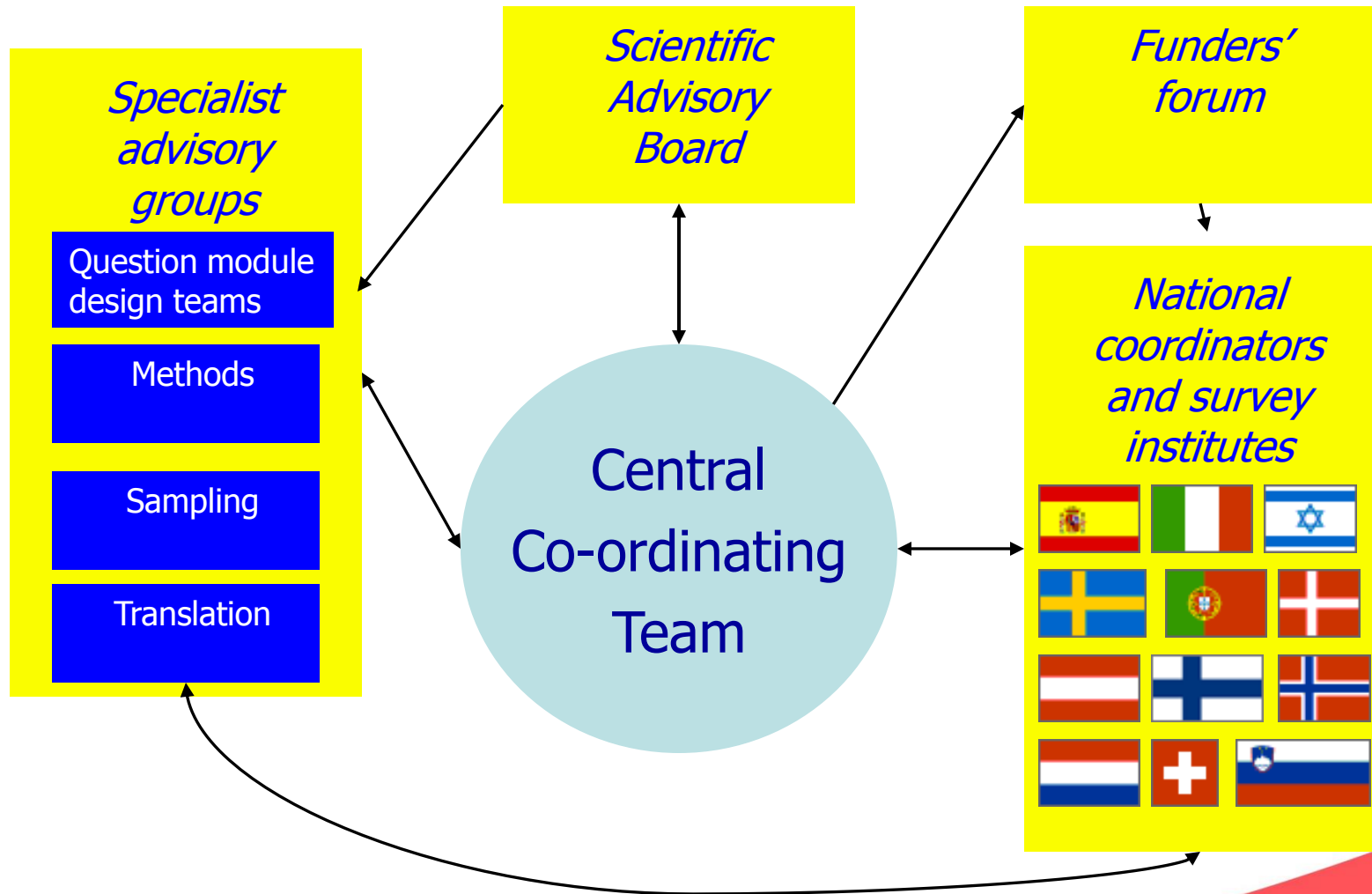
# History and organisation

- Five years of preparation under the Aegis of the European Science Foundation
- Grant EU 5th Framework Programme
- Grant European Science Foundation
- National fieldwork and co-ordination funded by national science foundations
- Central co-ordinating team
  
- Grants 6<sup>th</sup> framework for rounds and infrastructure project
- Application 7<sup>th</sup> framework ESFRI-projects

# Organisation

- Central co-ordination and specifications
- National implementation and expertise
- Multiple funders

# Organisational structure



## Time table rounds

September-December year 2: Quality reports

September year 2: first data release

February-August year 2: Edits, checks and harmonisation

31 January year 2: Data delivery to archive

January year 2: national coding and editing

September-December year 1: Fieldwork

May-September year 1: Translation, pretest, national preparation

January-May year 1: Sample design, national fieldwork design, development source questionnaire

Year 0: selection fieldwork organisations, rotating modules



## Quality and errors

- Received Descartes prize for excellence in collaborative scientific research

but

- Errors can not be avoided and different quality concerns may conflict

# Survey Quality: Types of errors

## ■ Coverage errors

- institutional population, homeless people, minority language speakers excluded

## ■ Sampling errors

- different sampling frames and procedures per country
- Cluster effects, effective sample size

## ■ Measurement errors

- Reliability and validity
- Pre-test and methodological experiments
- Language: translation

## ■ Nonresponse errors

- Response rates between 35% and 80%
- Composition nonresponse
- Indications of nonresponse bias

## Coverage

- Random sample, but some groups are excluded
- Elderly in institutions, military, student halls, hostels
- Non-native speakers
- Not in population register
- Opt-out
- (No landline phone, ex-directory)
- (No internet)

# Sampling

- Sample size
  - Precision
  - Confidence intervals
  - Specific groups
- Sampling frames
- Sampling procedures
  - First cities, then persons
- Selection probability
  - Addresses, individuals
- Effective sample size

# Nonresponse

## ■ Smaller sample than intended

- Larger sample
- Oversampling (big cities)

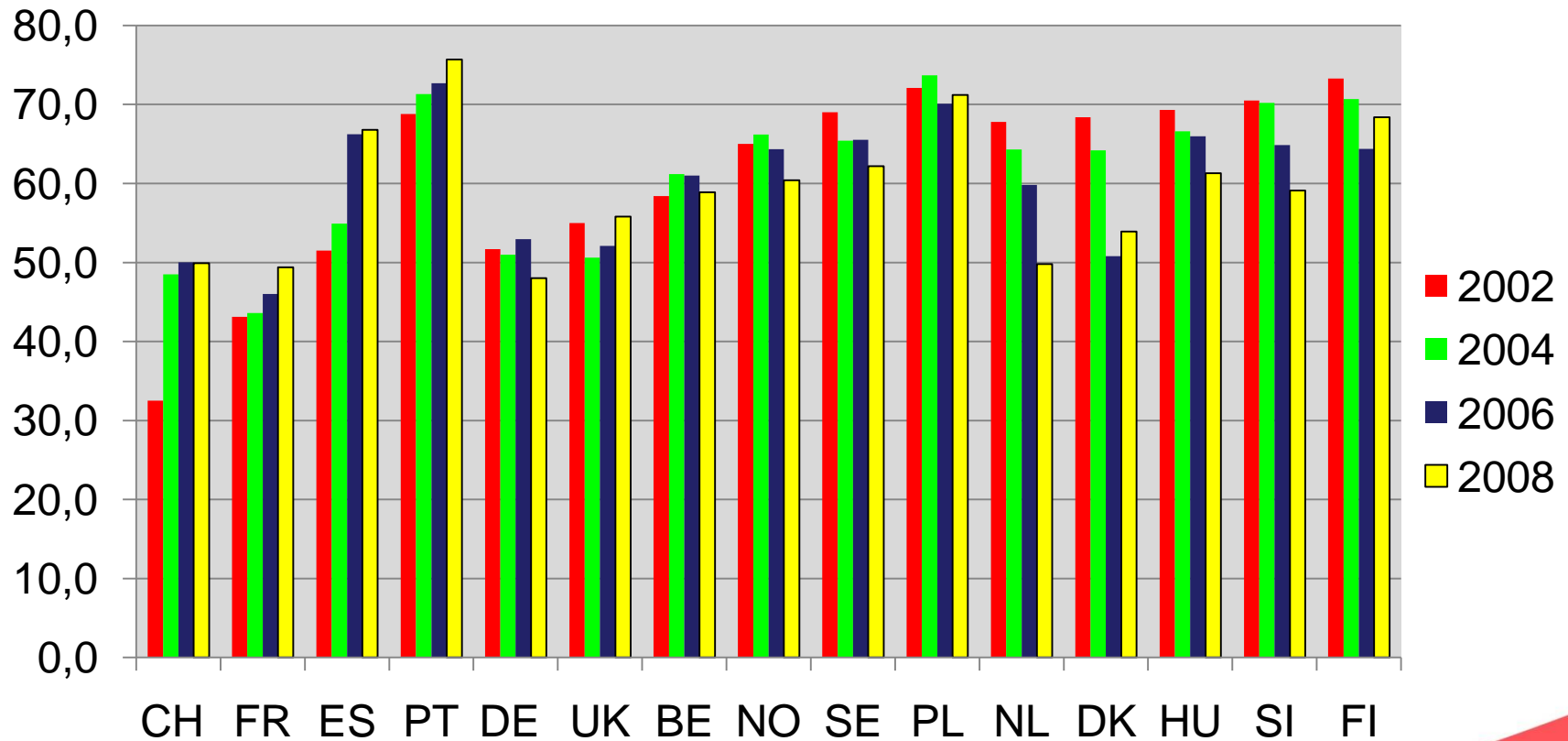
## ■ Composition

## ■ Noncontact/refusal

## ■ Some groups cooperate less

- Background characteristics
  - Big cities
  - Ethnic minorities
- Core variables
  - Interest in politics
  - Trust in government
  - Voluntary work

# Response rates ESS



# Measurement error (1)

## ■ Method effect

- 5 point scale
- Acquiescence
- Social desirability

## ■ Do people know?

- Total household income
- TV watching, sports, average hours per week
- Are you in favour of mobility policy of Dutch government

## ■ Context

- Topic survey
- Specific and general satisfaction
- Russia and US

## Measurement error (2)

- Double barreled question
  - Are you in favour of more rules and strong leaders? (agree/disagree)
- Hidden assumptions
  - Women should have shorter working weeks because of poorer health? (agree/disagree)
- Plan stupid questions
  - Do you think that the government should spend more on reducing the budget deficit or spend more money on behalf of citizens? (yes/no/don't know)



# Measurement error (Translation)

- Concepts and questions
- Old or new questions
- Identical or different questions
- ESS procedure
  - Ensure that various concepts were actually represented as precisely as possible
  - Reliability and validity tests (SQP)
  - Cognitive interviews
  - Translation from source language into 1 target language for two-country pilot
  - Two-nation pilot
  - Analysis pilot
  - Comments national coordinators
  - Final source questionnaire and annotations
  - Translation and documentation
  - Small pilots in every participating country

## No back-translation in ESS

### ■ Back translation

- It's raining cats and dogs
- Have you had your tea yet?
- Geniessen in vollen Zügen
- Dear undertakers

### ■ Perfect back translation does not guarantee a good question in the target language

- Good help in finding obvious errors (wealthy/healthy)

# TRAPD

## ■ Translation

- More than 1 translator
- Parallel or split
- What is a good questionnaire translator
- Training of translators

## ■ Review

- Discuss and compare

## ■ Adjudicate

- Decide on 1 version

## ■ Pretest

## ■ Documentation

- Also of review process

## ■ Verify

# Survey modes (1)

## ■ Face-to-face

- Crucial role of interviewer
- Let someone in house
- Interviewer can have an effect on answers
- Usually higher response rates
- Long fieldwork period
- Expensive

## ■ Mail

- Less socially desirable
- Lower response rates
- Who answers the questionnaire?

## Survey modes (2)

### ■ Telephone

- Crucial role of interviewer
- Interviewer can have an effect on answers
- Lower response rate
- No landline phone, ex-directory
- Short interviews

### ■ Internet

- Less socially desirable
- Lower response rates
- Who answers the questionnaire?

## Access



- Round 1, 2, 3 and 4 available
- Fully documented
- Free access
- Tables and graphics online, or download data
- Training package for young researchers
  
- Everything available
- All deviations documented

## European Social Survey

ESS Round 1 - 2002  
 ESS Round 2 - 2004  
 ESS Round 3 - 2006  
 ESS Round 4 - 2008  
 Survey documentation  
 Fieldwork documents  
 Summary/deviations  
 Data download  
 Online Analysis  
 Cumulative File  
 Contextual Data  
 Conditions of Use

## ESS EduNet

## ESS Bibliography

New User?

ESS Data archive  
 Norwegian Social Science  
 Data Services (NSD)  
 Harald Hårfagrestr. 29  
 N-5007 Bergen  
 Norway  
 Phone: +47 555 82 117  
 Fax: +47 555 89 650  
[essdata@nsd.uib.no](mailto:essdata@nsd.uib.no)

## ESS4 - 2008 Summary and deviations

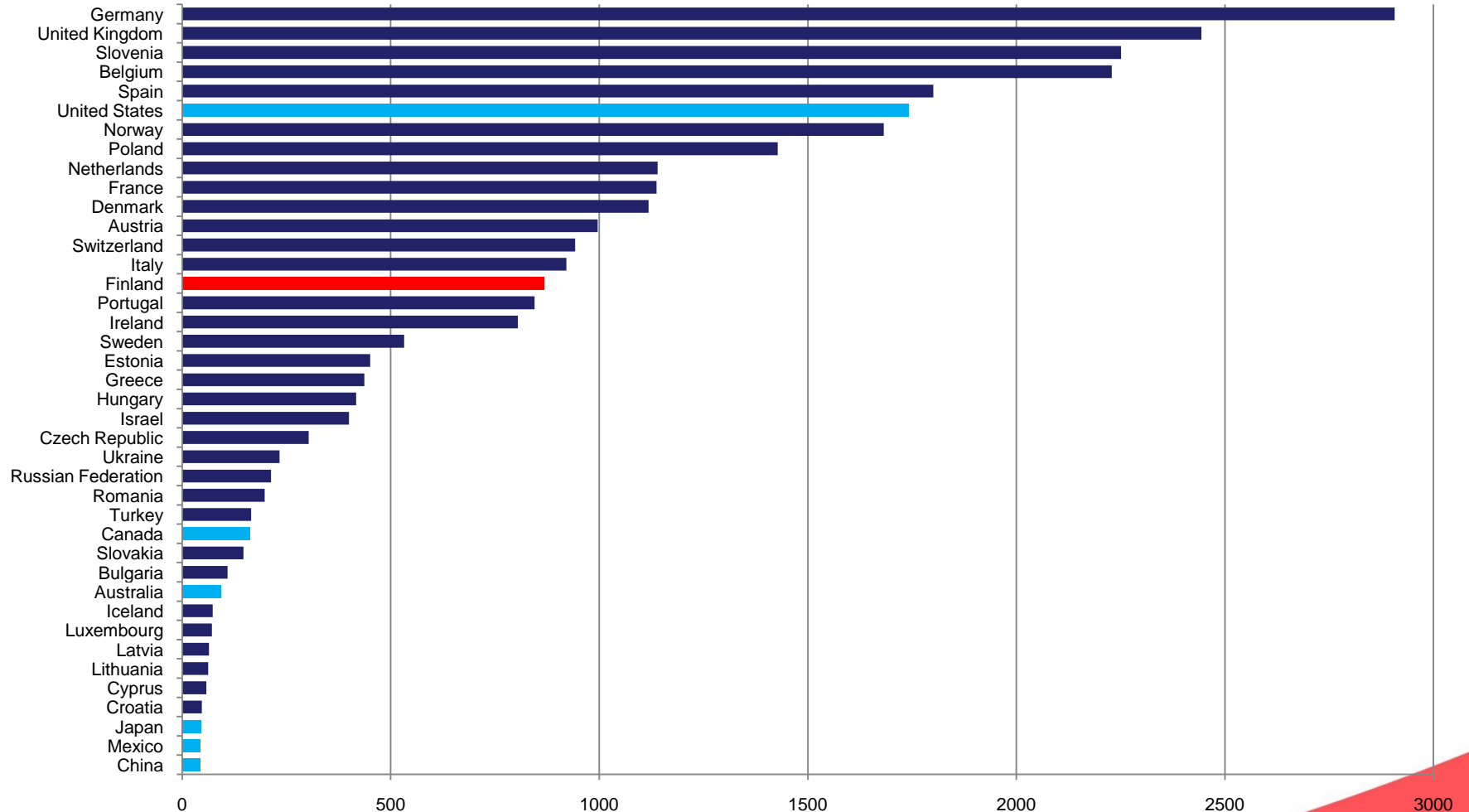
Target response rate: 70%.  
 Target fieldwork period: 01.09.08 - 31.12.08.

COUNTRY	FIELDWORK PERIOD	N	RESP. RATE*	DEVIATIONS IN DATA (CLICK ON TEXT BELOW FOR DETAILS)
Belgium	13.11.08-20.03.09	1 760	58.9	F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM)
Bulgaria	06.03.09-31.05.09	2 230	75.0	F32 (HINCTNTA), F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM)
Cyprus	29.09.08-21.12.08	1 215	78.7	F32 (HINCTNTA), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM)
Denmark	01.09.08-11.01.09	1 610	53.9	E23 (ACQ30BS), E24 (ACQ70BS), F70 (CHLDHHE)
Estonia	05.11.08-11.03.09	1 661	57.4	F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM), F62 (MARITALA), F63 (LVGHWA), F64 (LVGPTNA), F66 (LVGPTNE), F68 (DVRCDEV)
Finland	19.09.08-05.02.09	2 195	68.4	B 11 (VOTE), C 18 (RLGDNM) and C20 (RLGDNME), E11 (P20CNEC), E13 (P70CUST)
France	28.09.08-31.01.09	2 073	49.4	F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM), F8c (MAINACT), F37c (MNACTP)
Germany	27.08.08-31.01.09	2 751	48.0	C28 (BRNCNTR), C33 (FACNTR), C35 (MOCNTR), F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM), F54 (OCCF14B), F60 (OCCM14B), (INWEHH), (INWEMM), (INWTHM)
Norway	25.08.08-20.01.09	1 549	60.4	Item non-response. E50 (TWCOL20), E51 (TWCOL70); F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM)
Poland	03.11.08-15.02.09	1 619	71.2	F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM)
Portugal	09.10.08-08.03.09	2 367	75.7	F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM)
Russian Federation	08.11.08-09.04.09	2 512	67.9	F20 (WKHCT)
Slovakia	17.11.08-15.02.09	1 810	72.6	F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM), F32 (HINCTNTA)
Slovenia	20.10.08-20.01.09	1 286	59.1	Item non-response. C33 (FACNTR), C35 (MOCNTR)
Spain	05.09.08-31.01.09	2 576	66.8	F54 (OCCF14B), F60 (OCCM14B)
Sweden	15.09.08-03.02.09	1 830	62.2	
Switzerland	30.08.08-17.04.09	1 819	49.9	F6 (EDULVL), F36 (EDULVLP), F49 (EDULVLF), F55 (EDULVLM)
United Kingdom	01.09.08-19.01.09	2 342	54.5	Item non-response

\* ) Data source for response rates: National Technical Summaries/ESS Documentation Report.

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# ESS top 40 data users (March 2009) (N=30,458)





# ESS interesting because of

## ■ Aim

- High quality
- Optimal comparability

## ■ Research

- Sampling
- Weighting
- Translation
- Nonresponse

## ■ Problems and errors

## More about cross-national surveys

- Cross-cultural survey guidelines
- <http://ccsg.isr.umich.edu/>
  
- ESS edunet
- <http://essedunet.nsd.uib.no/>

## Cross-national surveys

- The more we know ...
- .... the more we realise what we don't know