



The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems: Exciting possibilities for cross- national electoral research

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Project Overview



The CSES Project in Brief

- Ongoing collaboration of established post-election studies in the world
- The CSES element is a 10-15 minute questionnaire with a specific substantive theme that asks the same questions in different countries.
- The data from all countries are merged into a single dataset along with demographic, district, and macro variables.
- A new theme & questionnaire every 5 years

The Rationale for the CSES

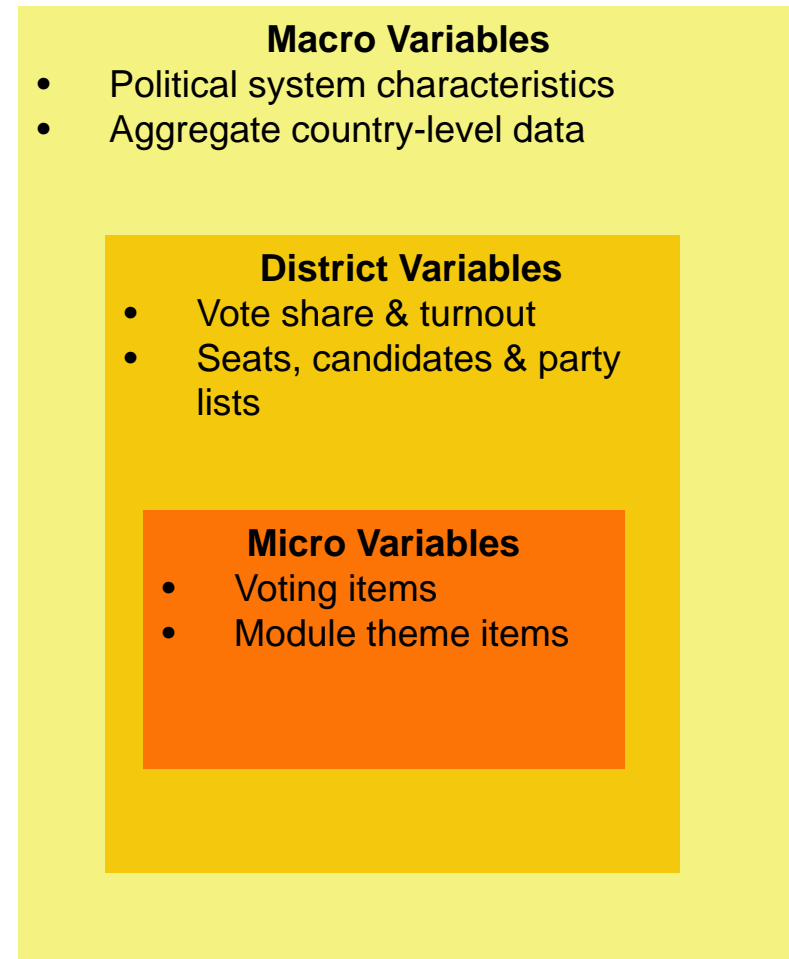
- **Make electoral research global**
- **There is wide variation across countries of...**
 - Electoral rules
 - Systems of governance (Presidential/parliamentary/mixed)
 - Federalism vs. unitary governments
 - Lines of political conflict ...and more
- *How do these variations impact individual attitudes and behaviours, especially voting and turnout?*

Multi-level Data Structure

The CSES is composed of three tightly linked parts:

1. Macro-level variables
2. District-level variables
3. Themed module & demographics (micro-level variables)

→ allows researchers to conduct cross-national, as well as cross-level analyses.



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The Modules: CSES as a research resource



Common questions/variables available in all CSES releases

- Voter turnout (current and past election)
- Vote choice
- Satisfaction with democracy
- Political efficacy
- Party attachment
- Evaluations of parties (like-dislike scale)
- Ideological assessments of parties (left-right scale)
- Demographics (e.g.: age, gender, education etc.)

Module 1: 1996-2001

Theme: System Performance

- Constitutional and institutional effects on democratic performance
- The social underpinnings of party systems
- Attitudes to parties, political institutions, and the democratic process
- 39 election studies in 31 countries

Module 1: 1996-2001 – specific variables

- Whether last election was conducted fairly?
- Whether politicians “know what ordinary people think?”
- Whether political parties care what people think?
- Whether political parties are necessary?

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Slide 9

schwarhh1 Modules 1 and 4
Schwarz, Hannah, 29/05/2017

Module 2: 2001-2006

Theme: Accountability and Representation

- Do elections hold governments accountable?
- Are citizens' views represented?
- Citizen Engagement & political participation
- 41 elections in 38 countries

Module 2: 2001-2006 – specific variables

- Contacted by candidate or party during campaign?
- Political participation: persuade others, campaign activities, protest/demonstration
- How well voters' views are represented in elections?
- Government performance on most important problem/issue, performance of party voted for in previous election

Module 3: 2006-2011

Theme: Electoral Choices

- Perceived variety and quality of political choices in election
- How does satisfaction vary with choices?
- Consequences of limited choices?
 - Turnout, new parties, threats to democracy
- 50 election studies in 41 countries

Module 3: 2006-2011 – specific variables

- During campaign, whether there were choice options (differences between parties/candidates)
- If voted, did you consider voting for others? Others you would never vote for?
- Most important problem/issue facing the country over the last legislative period
- Candidate/party competence on most important problem/issue

Module 4: 2011-2016

Theme: Distributional Politics/Social Protection

- Global financial crisis:
 - Views on government expenditure and redistribution
 - Job security
 - Aspirations of upward mobility & battery of questions measuring wealth
- Secondary theme: mobilization
 - Campaign contact (including via social media)
 - Campaign participation
- So far 38 election studies in 36 countries
- **Final Release Expected for 2018**

Module 4: 2011-2016 – specific variables

- Attitudes to public expenditure on areas such as health, welfare, defence, pensions, business and industry etc.
- Standard of living over the next ten years
- Mobilization by a party/ candidate and the means of contact
- Mobilization by a personal contact and the means of doing so

Coming up - Module 5: 2016-2021

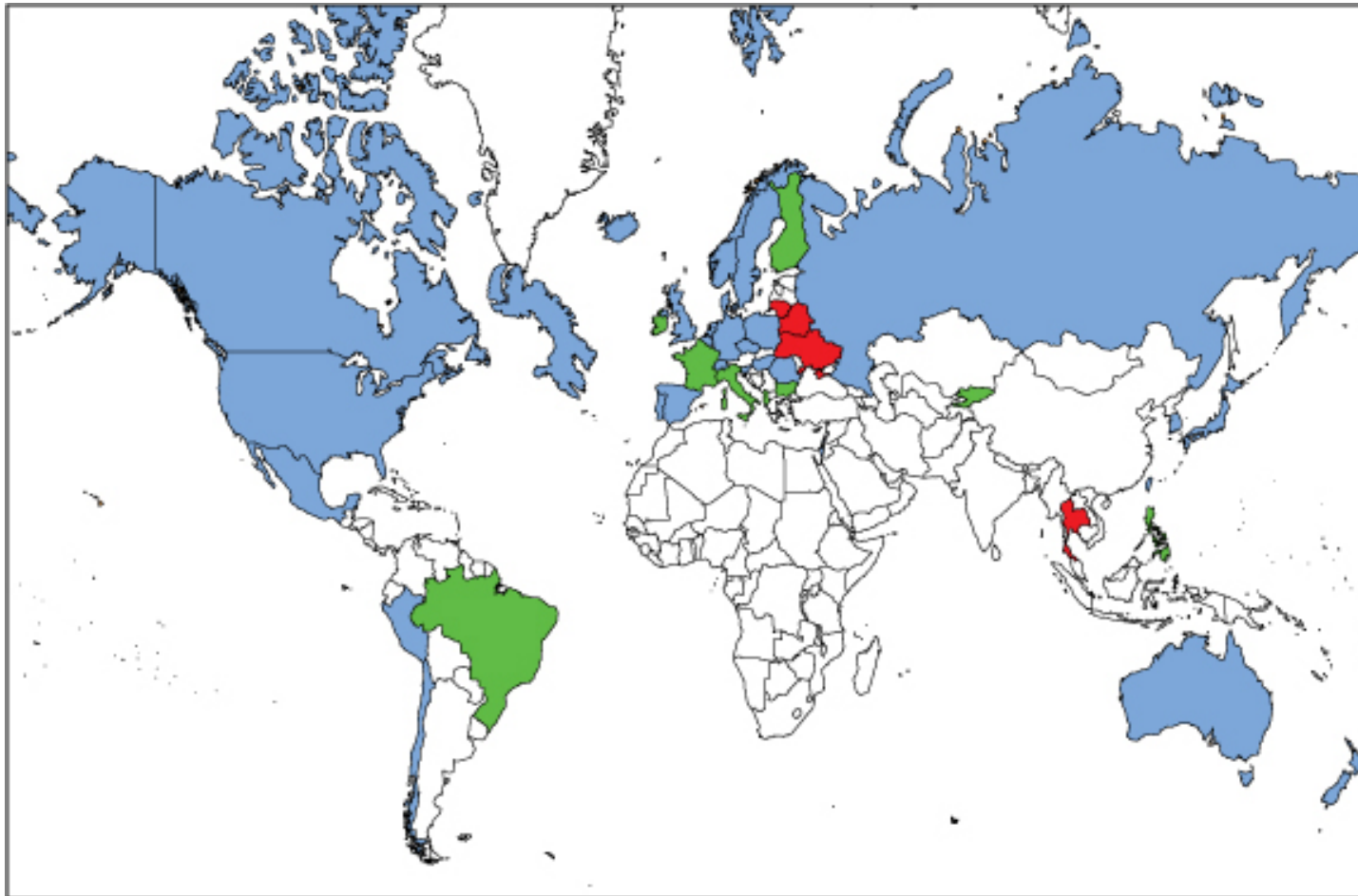
Theme: Democracy Divided? People, Politicians and the Politics of Populism

- Attitudes towards political elites and 'out-groups'
- Attitudes towards representative democracy and majority rule
- Attitudes towards direct involvement of citizens in decision making
- Corruption
- **First Advance Release expected for 2019**

Module 5: 2016-2021 – specific variables

- Political interest
- Agreement with attitudinal statements (for example):
 - Most politicians do not care about the people
 - The people, not politicians, should make most important decisions
 - Minorities should adapt to the customs and traditions of [country]
 - The will of the majority should always prevail, even over the rights of minorities
 - Immigrants are generally good for [country]’s economy
- How widespread is corruption?

CSES Coverage (Example: Module 2)



For comprehensive coverage overview: <http://www.cses.org/electionstudies.htm>

District-level Variables

- Available in all five modules for most countries
- Collected for each district:
 - Number of seats
 - Number of candidates
 - Number of party lists
 - Percent vote for the top six parties
 - Turnout
- Expanded to include size of electorate (or population) in district from Module 5

Macro-level Variables

- System-level macro data
 - Official national turnout
 - Official national election results
 - Voting rules
 - Party characteristics (party family, international organization)
 - Most salient factors in election (expert judgments)
- Aggregate macro data from public sources incl.:
 - Population Total (World Bank)
 - GDP growth for election year and t-1 and t-2 (World Bank)
 - Human Development Index for election year and t-1 and t-2 (United Nations)
 - Unemployment for election year and t-1 and t-2 (World Bank)
 - Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International)

Examples of scholarship using CSES I: Karp & Banducci (2008)

RQ: How does the election of women candidates in national legislatures influence political engagement & efficacy of women?

Data: CSES Module 2 – 35 countries

Research Design:

y: Political engagement, campaign activity of women

x: % women in parliament

- Cross-national comparison
- Multi-level analysis

Results: Women not mobilized by women reps, but % women in parliament correlates with positive evaluations of quality of democratic process

Karp, Jeffrey A. and Susan A. Banducci (2008) “*When politics is not just a man’s game: Women’s representation and political engagement.*” *Electoral Studies* 27(1): 105-115.

Examples of scholarship using CSES II: Vowles (2008)

RQ: Do differences between degrees of globalization shape perceptions about whether politicians can make a difference?

Data: Modules 1 & 2 - 72 elections in 40 countries

Research Design:

y: Perception of responsible party government

x: Trade dependence, financial integration

- Cross-national comparison
- Multi-level analysis

Results: Appears to be no link

Vowles, Jack (2008). *“Does globalization affect public perceptions of ‘Who in power can make a difference?’ Evidence from 40 countries, 1996-2006.”* Electoral Studies 27(1): 63-76.

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Note on Methodology and Documentation



Sampling Procedures & Sample Size

- National sample from all age-eligible citizens
- Random sampling procedures at all stages
- Detailed documentation of sampling procedures
- Conventionally no fewer than 1,000 interviews

CSES Philosophy of Documentation I

- The imperfections of a study should not be hidden, but highlighted:
 - Improves the quality of resulting analyses
 - Allows proper comparisons using the data
- Codebook notes anything we know of that has a possible impact on quality, comparability, or analytical outcomes → large codebooks

D27. This variable reports the respondent's region of residence. Regions are usually (but not always) based upon the social, cultural, or historical differences (though some correspond to administrative regions) that manifest themselves in political cleavages

01.-80. REGION CODES [SEE ELECTION STUDY NOTES]

99. MISSING

VARIABLES NOTES: D2028

Data are unavailable for HONG KONG (2012), IRELAND (2011), ISRAEL (2013), KENYA (2013), MEXICO (2012).

ELECTION STUDY NOTES - AUSTRALIA (2013): D2028

CSES Code	Election Study Code/Category
01.	New South Wales
02.	Victoria
03.	Queensland
04.	South Australia
05.	Western Australia
06.	Tasmania
07.	Northern Territory
08.	Australian Capital Territory

ELECTION STUDY NOTES - AUSTRIA (2013): D2028

The Austrian Bundesland Vienna is not included in D2028, although a number of persons report a ballot cast in one of Vienna's electoral districts, according to D2032.

CSES Code	Election Study Code/Category
01.	Burgenland
02.	Carinthia
03.	Lower Austria
04.	Upper Austria
05.	Salzburg
06.	Styria
07.	Tyrol
08.	Vorarlberg

ELECTION STUDY NOTES - BULGARIA (2014): D2028

CSES Philosophy of Documentation II

- **More is better – let the practitioner(s) decide.**
- Original collaborator documents are made available for public download:
 - Original language questionnaire
 - English language questionnaire translations
 - Macro report
 - Sample design and data collection (methodology) report

Data Availability

- Public access, **free of charge**
- Download from CSES website: www.cses.org or [via the GESIS data catalogue](#)
- Archived at GESIS & ICPSR
- Full release every five years but advance releases of data every year

GESIS online analysis tool

- Modules 1-4, see www.zacat.gesis.org

The screenshot displays the GESIS online analysis tool interface. On the left, a tree view shows the structure of the CSES dataset, including metadata and various variable categories such as identification, weight variables, demographic and election variables, and survey variables. On the right, the 'DESCRIPTION' tab is active, showing the title 'ZA5181 Datafiles and Documentation download' and an abstract. The abstract states that the module was administered as a post-election interview. Below the abstract, there is a 'CSES Variable List' link and a 'Themes' section. The 'MICRO-LEVEL DATA' section lists various variables, including identification and study administration variables, weighting factors, election type, date of election, study timing, mode of interview, gender of interviewer, date questionnaire administered, primary electoral district of respondent, and number of days the interview was conducted after the election. The 'Demography' section lists variables such as age, gender, education, marital status, union membership, business association membership, professional association membership, current employment status, main occupation, socio economic status, employment type, industrial sector, household income, number of persons in household, number of children under 18, attendance at religious services, religiosity, religious denomination, language usually spoken at home, race, ethnicity, region of residence, and rural or urban residence.

CSES
CSES Module 3 Full Release. Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (2006-2011)
Metadata
Variable Description
MICRO-LEVEL: IDENTIFICATION, AND STUDY ADMINISTRATION VARIABLES
MICRO-LEVEL: WEIGHT VARIABLES
ORIGINAL WEIGHT: SAMPLE
ORIGINAL WEIGHT: DEMOGRAPHIC
ORIGINAL WEIGHT: POLITICAL
POLITY WEIGHT: SAMPLE
POLITY WEIGHT: DEMOGRAPHIC
POLITY WEIGHT: POLITICAL
DATASET WEIGHT: SAMPLE
DATASET WEIGHT: DEMOGRAPHIC
DATASET WEIGHT: POLITICAL
MICRO-LEVEL: DEMOGRAPHIC, VOTE CHOICE, AND ELECTION VARIABLES
MICRO-LEVEL: SURVEY VARIABLES
MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM-EGOCENTRIC-FIRST MENTION
MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM-EGOCENTRIC-SECOND MENTION
MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM-SOCIOTROPIC-FIRST MENTION
MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM-SOCIOTROPIC-SECOND MENTION
PARTY/CANDIDATE COMPETENCE-FIRST SOCIOTROPIC PROBLEM
PARTY/CANDIDATE COMPETENCE-SECOND SOCIOTROPIC PROBLEM
WHO IS IN POWER CAN MAKE DIFFERENCE
WHO PEOPLE VOTE FOR MAKES A DIFFERENCE
GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE: GENERAL
IS THERE A PARTY THAT REPRESENTS R'S VIEWS
PARTY THAT REPRESENTS R'S VIEWS BEST
IS THERE A LEADER WHO REPRESENTS R'S VIEWS
LEADER WHO REPRESENTS R'S VIEWS
LIKE-DISLIKE - PARTY A
LIKE-DISLIKE - PARTY B
LIKE-DISLIKE - PARTY C
LIKE-DISLIKE - PARTY D
LIKE-DISLIKE - PARTY E
LIKE-DISLIKE - PARTY F
LIKE-DISLIKE - ADDITIONAL - PARTY G
LIKE-DISLIKE - ADDITIONAL - PARTY H
LIKE-DISLIKE - ADDITIONAL - PARTY I
LIKE-DISLIKE - LEADER A
LIKE-DISLIKE - LEADER B
LIKE-DISLIKE - LEADER C
LIKE-DISLIKE - LEADER D
LIKE-DISLIKE - LEADER E
LIKE-DISLIKE - LEADER F
LIKE-DISLIKE - ADDITIONAL - LEADER G
LIKE-DISLIKE - ADDITIONAL - LEADER H
LIKE-DISLIKE - ADDITIONAL - LEADER I
LEFT-RIGHT - PARTY A

DESCRIPTION | **TABULATION** | **ANALYSIS**

ZA5181 Datafiles and Documentation download (via data catalogue)

Abstract
The module was administered as a post-election interview. The resulting data are provided along with voting, demographic, district and macro variables in a single dataset.

[CSES Variable List](#)
The list of variables is being provided on the CSES Website to help in understanding what content is available from CSES, and to compare the content available in each module.

Themes:

MICRO-LEVEL DATA:

Identification and study administration variables:
weighting factors;
election type;
date of election 1st and 2nd round;
study timing (post election study, pre-election and post-election study, between rounds of majoritarian election);
mode of interview;
gender of interviewer;
date questionnaire administered;
primary electoral district of respondent;
number of days the interview was conducted after the election.

Demography:
age;
gender;
education;
marital status;
union membership;
union membership of others in household;
business association membership, farmers' association membership;
professional association membership;
current employment status;
main occupation;
socio economic status;
employment type - public or private;
industrial sector;
current employment status, occupation, socio economic status, employment type - public or private, and industrial sector of spouse;
household income;
number of persons in household;
number of children in household under the age of 18;
attendance at religious services;
religiosity;
religious denomination;
language usually spoken at home;
race;
ethnicity;
region of residence;
rural or urban residence.



To learn more about CSES, or to
download data:

www.cses.org

...or email your questions to:

cses@umich.edu



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