Institution: City, University of London (City)

Unit of Assessment: 21 Sociology

Title of case study: Using European Social Survey data to shape policy initiatives across Europe

Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2002-2020

Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:

Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Professor Rory Fitzgerald	Director ESS ERIC	2003-2020
Dr Eric Harrison	Deputy Director ESS ERIC	2006-2020

Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013 - December 2020

Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? Yes

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

Between 2013 and 2020, European Social Survey (ESS) data was used to create and shape policy and practice internationally. Managed and hosted since 2003 by City, University of London, the ESS produces unique cross-sectional, cross-national data on European citizens' beliefs and values. The ESS has benefited policy makers and professionals at the supra-national, national, and regional levels. Here, four indicative examples show ESS data was used to (1) design the United Nations and European Commission's Active Ageing Index; (2) shape the World Health Organization's European Health Equity Status report and national action plans; (3) reverse conventional thinking on the factors leading to anti-immigrant prejudices in Europe, and (4) initiate bespoke training to improve trust in the Portuguese judiciary. City's expertise in reviewing international social surveys is also highlighted.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

The ESS makes a unique contribution to beneficiaries such as international organisations, governments, policy makers, professionals, and researchers. These groups demand methodologically rigorous, theoretically driven, comparative cross-national data that can be used to understand changes and stability in the values, attitudes, and beliefs of Europe's citizens in the face of grand societal challenges. The ESS meets that demand and represents a unique case study in the social sciences as a long-term, continuous cross-national research process, running since 2002 [3.1]. ESS has been headquartered since 2003 at City and in 2013 was awarded inter-governmental European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) status, the first in the UK [3.2]. This case study highlights impact since the REF2014 case study.

Over the REF period the City team has developed new methodological standards in cross-national research and measurement including questionnaire design, pre-testing, data collection, reducing bias, and the reliability of questions [3.3-3.5]. One example is the introduction of new methods in Round 9 (2018) for central fieldwork monitoring at the individual case level [3.4]. The ESS produces new cross-national comparative social survey data every two years. Each 'round' is managed by City and involves data collection with local researchers carrying out face-to-face interviews with residents [3.3, 3.4]. From 2013-2020, four rounds were completed: Round 6 (2012/13) involved 29 countries, Round 7 (2014/5) involved 22 countries, Round 8 (2016/17) 23 countries, and Round 9 (2018/19) 31 countries. For each round the ESS produces unique social datasets on topics often not found in other surveys, cutting across 12 core areas: crime; democracy and politics; human values; immigration; media use; national and ethnic identity; perceived discrimination; religion; social exclusion; social trust and trust in institutions; subjective wellbeing; and socio-demographics [3.3]. In addition, for each ESS round there is an open competition to design two new 'modules' to investigate a topic in depth. The eight new modules developed from 2013-2019 were: Personal and social wellbeing/Understanding and evolution of democracy (Round 6); Health inequalities [3.5]/Immigration (Round 7); Climate change and energy/Welfare (Round 8); Justice and Fairness/The timing of life (Round 9). The two winning

teams develop their module working directly with the City team. Based on around 50,000 one-to-one interviews, with production led by City, the resulting comprehensive ESS datasets are released in October of the year following the fieldwork; for Round 9 this was October 2019, Round 10 is delayed due to Covid-19. The datasets are made available as open access data for non-commercial use by policy makers, civil society, academics, and the public [3.3]. The ESS Director is appointed by the 26 nation states represented in the ESS ERIC General Assembly. In collaboration with ESS's Core Scientific Team (involving six other European institutions), the City-based team of Fitzgerald, Harrison and 12 other staff, are responsible for the design, content, oversight, and implementation of the ESS questionnaire and ensuring the methodological integrity of data collected [3.2, 3.3, 3.5]. Central work programme costs are funded by participating countries, based on GDP. The central budget for Round 9 was €5,102,194 [3.2].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

3.1 Fitzgerald, R. and Jowell, R. (2010). Measurement Equivalence in Comparative Surveys. In Harkness, J. *et al.* (Eds.) *Survey Methods in Multinational, Multiregional, and Multicultural Contexts.* London: Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470609927.ch26

3.2 European Social Survey (2017). Prospectus: European Social Survey, ERIC. Available at: https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/about/ESS_prospectus.pdf

3.3 European Social Survey Round 1-9 Cumulative Datasets. Available at: https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/data/round-index.html

3.4 Fitzgerald, R. and Zavala-Rojas, D. (2020). A Model for Cross-National Questionnaire Design and Pretesting. In Beatty, P.C. *et al.* (Eds.), *Advances in Questionnaire Design, Development, Evaluation and Testing* (pp.493-514). London: Wiley. ISBN 978-1-119-26362-3

3.5 Eikemo, T. A., Bambra, C., Huijts, T. and Fitzgerald, R. (2017). 'The first pan-European sociological health inequalities survey of the general population: The European Social Survey rotating module on the social determinants of health', *European Sociological Review*, 33(1), pp.137-153. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcw019

Grants

- European Social Survey Sustainability, ESS-SUSTAIN. European Commission. 1 October 2015-31 March 2019. €2,367,888

Awards

- European Social Survey. European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) Status. European Commission. November 2013.
- European Social Survey. The Lijphart/Przerworkski/Verba Dataset Award for the best dataset in comparative politics. American Political Science Association. 2020.
- Professor Rory Fitzgerald. Appointed a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences (UK) in recognition of his work as Director of the ESS. 2020.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

4.1 Worldwide reach of the European Social Survey

The ESS produces huge amounts of useable data – some 108,000,000 data points – and as a data resource its influence and impact had international reach in this REF period serving wide-ranging beneficiaries. First, the worldwide users of the data – at the end of 2020 there were 162,700 registered ESS users, up from 58,236 in 2013. Many academics use ESS data, reflecting the theoretically driven approach to questionnaire design. The total number of international (English language) publications citing ESS data, according to Google Scholar, is 5,429 (2003-2020) [5.1]. Sometimes these papers represent a change in thinking which goes on to influence policy (see 4.3). The primary beneficiaries of the ESS beyond academia are socio-economic policy makers at the supranational, national, and regional level who are provided with powerful policy-relevant data, as well as robust findings provided by academics working with the datasets. By providing information for so many countries ESS facilitates comparisons which would not otherwise be possible on such scale and with such high quality.

In 2017, independent consultants Technopolis evaluated ESS impact, using documentary evidence and interviews, as part of the ESS-SUSTAIN project. The resulting Technopolis report [5.2a] and supporting 174-page Annex of impact examples [5.2b] concluded that "[ESS] stands out as a valuable resource especially due to its high quality standards, simple and open access,

and the increased capacity for international comparison" [5.2a, p. 1]. Technopolis identified ESS data being used to bear upon policy creation, policy change, and political agenda-setting on a range of issues [5.2a]. The Annex [5.2b] documents 36 examples of ESS data impact Europe-wide and in 17 individual countries (Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK). Beneficiaries were both European governments and their agencies, including Austria's Ministry for Social Affairs, France Stratégie (French government think tank), the German Federal Government, the Irish police force and Poland's Central Statistical Office, amongst others. Below, we present four examples of ESS data and analysis being used by policy makers at different levels, international to regional, from 2013-2020. Finally, we show how City's methodological expertise is steering other international policy-relevant social surveys.

4.2 ESS data used in Active Ageing Policies in Europe

The ESS was one of six datasets used to design and populate the Active Ageing Index (AAI) [5.3], a joint initiative between the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs, and Inclusion (DG-EMPI). The AAI aims to provide evidence to inform policy-making for dealing with an ageing population and its societal impacts. Indicators are grouped under four domains (employment; social participation; independent living; capacity for active ageing) and ESS data was used directly by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, an intergovernmental organisation affiliated to the UN, as the data source for the indicators on physical safety (independent living domain) and social connectedness (capacity for active ageing domain). The AAI, launched in 2012, is updated every 2 years to include the latest ESS data. Its creation by the supranational beneficiaries listed above stimulated action at the national and regional levels across Europe, with the AAI benefitting policy makers who use it as a practical tool to evaluate current policies and identify areas for improvement [5.2b, p.51-55].

At the national policy level the AAI has been used in Malta, Poland, and Czechia. The Maltese Ministry of Social Solidarity used ESS data to benchmark its policies and underpin the preparation of its National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing (2014-2020) [5.4a]. The benchmarking played a key role in the transformative shift from the long-held policy focus on 'elderly care' as dependency to 'active citizenship' as elder empowerment. In Poland, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy used the Index to measure active ageing across 16 regions and the resulting actions from regional and local authorities resulted in improved results for the AAI between 2013 and 2016 [5.4b, p.7]. This indicates that at the local level the beneficiaries of the AAI, which relies on ESS data, were many of Poland's nine million older people [5.4b, p.9]. In Czechia, the AAI was one of the sources used by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to produce its National Action Plan Promoting Positive Ageing for 2013-17 [5.4c]. The plan identified practical changes, such as better long-term care to improving access to labour markets for older people. Madrid was the first European city to use the AAI, producing an Action Plan for 2017-2019 to make Madrid an 'age-friendly city'.

4.3 ESS data shaping World Health Organization's European Health Equity Status report

In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) published its first-ever European Health Equity Status report (EHES) [5.5a], along with 32 case studies [5.5b]. Data and analysis from the ESS 'module' on 'health inequalities' (Round 7, 2014) [3.5] were used directly by the WHO to create a comparative pan-European dataset on the social determinants of health which shaped the EHES [5.5a, pages xix, xx, xxxii, 21-23, 25-26, 30-31, 90 and more]. In addition, existing publications that used ESS data were cited in the report, e.g. 'Societal change and trust in institutions' (Eurofound, 2018) [5.5a, p.89]. EHES promotes and supports government policy and actions to address health inequalities in the WHO European Region (covering 53 countries). Analysis from the ESS health inequalities data was used to understand 'social and human capital' – one of five critical factors identified by the EHES as driving health inequities, explaining 19% of the gap in poor health between the most and least affluent adults in European countries [5.5a, p.xxxi]. In this example the beneficiaries of the ESS are the WHO, supra-national and national level policy makers. A senior member of the WHO Europe Scientific Expert Advisory Group for the EHES Report Initiative said: "The area where the ESS is really useful is in what we call 'social capital', some of the areas of social relationships and influence, which are not particularly well captured by other surveys. [Without the ESS] our report [EHES] just wouldn't have had as good coverage both in terms of countries, but also of the kinds of measures we were looking at" [5.6, p.6].

The European Commission (EC) has committed to launching an Action Plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights, which incorporates the EHES' five critical factors [5.7a]. At the national level, Wales was the first country to establish its own Health Equity Status Report in November 2020 [5.7b], while Italy and Slovenia are developing EHES-informed national policies to reduce health inequalities. The ESS Round 7 health inequalities module was designed and led by Professor Terje Eikemo (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) working with the City ESS team [3.5].

4.4 ESS data reverses conventional thinking in the UN on anti-immigrant prejudices

ESS data on how Europe's attitudes to immigrants have changed over time among countries exposed to different levels of migration before and after the 2007 economic crisis were used by Dr Valeria Bello (United Nations University Institute on Globalization, Culture, and Mobility, UNU-GCM) to reverse conventional thinking on anti-immigrant prejudices. Comparing ESS data from 2002-06 with 2008-10 from 25 countries, Bello showed that in times of economic crisis, cultural rather than economic factors play a more significant role in determining individual attitudes to immigrants. This means that people with intercultural values do not become more prejudiced towards immigrants in an economic crisis. [5.2b, p.168-171] This analysis was possible because the ESS immigration modules were explicitly designed to allow testing of this hypothesis.

Bello's ESS analysis was recognised supra-nationally with the UNU-GCM acknowledging that it 'completely reversed' previously held assumptions about the inter-relationship between economic crises and perceptions of migrants [5.8, p.5]. Drawing on and citing her ESS analysis, Bello co-authored a policy brief for the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Secretariat, the region's political and economic policy organisation consisting of 18 countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Samoa. The 'Promoting human security and minimizing conflict associated with forced migration in the Pacific region' brief (2015) [5.9] sets out seven policy recommendations to better understand the relationship between climate change, migration, and conflict. In 2018, the Boe Declaration on regional security from the PIF leaders reaffirmed that 'climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific'. A 2019 report commissioned by South Pacific Defence Ministers cites the policy brief as evidence of increased activity by regional leaders to respond to the multiple challenges presented by climate change [5.10, p.57]. The beneficiaries in this example are UN and national Pacific region policy makers who benefited from ESS findings, even though ESS data was not collected in that region.

4.5 ESS data inspires changes to judicial training in Portugal

Results from the ESS 'Justice' module (ESS Round 5, 2010/11) highlighted that trust in the judiciary in Portugal was exceptionally low when compared with other European countries. This directly resulted in changes to judicial training, to the benefit of those managing the judicial system, judges, prosecutors, and perhaps ultimately the citizens of Portugal. An item about the 'Trust in Courts' module in the ESS top-line findings newsletter caught the eye of the chairman of the Centre for Judicial Studies (Centro de Estudos Judiciários, CEJ) [5.2b, pp.117-122]. The CEJ is part of the Ministry of Justice, responsible for the initial and ongoing training of all Portugal's judges and public prosecutors. The ESS insights led them to set up a new training course to address the trust problem, starting in 2012-13. ESS data was used to illustrate how the Portuguese justice system compared to other countries, how the judicial service should respond to negative community perceptions, and how to increase confidence in the functioning of the judiciary. In 2017 the training was extended to Portugal's Court Presidents (senior judges) and Court Administrators. The outcome of the training programme has been improved judicial practice and better communication to citizens about judicial decisions aiming to increase public trust and confidence in the functioning of the justice system. Technopolis, reflecting on their analysis, described ESS as "catalytic in the process of making the Portuguese judiciary more transparent and to create greater awareness of the role of the judiciary within Portuguese society" [5.2b, p.120].

4.6 ESS expertise improves methodological design of international social surveys

The ESS team are recognised as methodological innovators in social surveys [3.4], being consulted on the design of other major international social surveys [3.1, 3.4], used by policy makers. These include the: International Social Survey Programme, European Quality of Life Survey [5.2b, pp.163-167], European Values Survey and the Survey for Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe. An example of methodological expertise leading to impact is Fitzgerald and

Harrison's 2020 review of the Technical Standards for the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). PISA measures 15-year-olds' ability to use their reading, mathematics, and science knowledge to meet real-life challenges. In 2019 it was used in 79 countries, representing over ten million students. The review involved benchmarking PISA against the ESS and other key references. The OECD official responsible for PISA said "The standards for survey implementation will undergo a full revision, informed by the recommendations of the review … in time for the PISA 2025 assessment" [5.11]. The PISA Governing Board increased the budget to fund the recommended R&D work, with a new quality framework in preparation for 2021-22.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

5.1 ESS (2021, 11 February). 5,429 academic publications based on ESS data. http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/singlenew.html?a=/about/news/essnews0104.html

5.2a Technopolis (2017). Comparative impact study of the European Social Survey (ESS) ERIC. Final Report. Available at: https://www.technopolis-group.com/report/comparative-impact-study-of-the-european-social-survey-ess-eric/

5.2b Technopolis (2017). ESS Eric Impact Study. Report Annex: Impact Case Studies. Available at: http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/findings/ESS-Impact-study-ANNEX-Impact-case-studies.pdf

5.3 UNECE. *Active Ageing Index Home*. Accessed 15.3.21. https://statswiki.unece.org/display/AAI/Active+Ageing+Index+Home

5.4a Malta, National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing (2014-2020). Available at: https://activeageing.gov.mt/en/Pages/NSPAA.aspx

5.4b UNECE (2017) Criteria-Specific Analysis Of The Active Ageing Index (AAI) At National Level In Poland. https://statswiki.unece.org/display/AAI/V.+Documents+and+publications

5.4c Czechia, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (2015). Active Ageing Policy in the Czech Republic. 8th Working Group on Ageing, Geneva, 19-20 November. Available at: https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/WG8/Presentations/8-Active_Ageing_Czech_Republic.pdf

5.5a World Health Organisation 'Healthy, prosperous lives for all: The European Health Equity Status Report' (2019). Available at: https://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/health-equity-status-report-2019 ISBN 978 92 890 5425 6.

5.5b World Health Organisation European Health Equity Status Report Initiative: Case studies. (2019). Available at: http://awhhe.am/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Case-studies-the-WHO-European-Health-Equity-Status-Report-Initiative-1.pdf

5.6 Testimonial from the WHO Europe Scientific Expert Advisory Group for the Health Equity Status Report. 30 March 2020.

5.7a European Commission (2019). Political Guidelines for The Next European Commission 2019-2024.http://www.eunec.eu/sites/www.eunec.eu/files/attachment/files/political-guidelines-next-commission_en_kopie.pdf

5.7b Welsh Government (2020, 11 November). Written statement, Minister for Health and Social Services. https://gov.wales/written-statement-signing-memorandum-understanding-world-health-organisation-promote-health-equity

5.8 United Nations University (2018). Contributions of the International Metropolis Project to the Global Discussions on the Relations Between Migration and Development. https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/coordination/16/documents/papers/14.%20UNU.pdf

5.9 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, UNU-GCM/UNU-EHS (2015). Promoting human security and minimizing conflict associated with forced migration in the Pacific region. Available at: http://i.unu.edu/media/gcm.unu.edu/publication/2399/EXTENDIDAS-BAJA-PACIFIC-REPORT.pdf

5.10 Observatory on Defence and Climate (2019). Implications of Climate Change on Defence and Security in the South Pacific by 2030. https://www.irsem.fr/data/files/irsem/documents/document/file/3070/Climat%20partie%202.pdf

5.11 Testimonial from senior official at the OECD WISE Centre. Paris, 26 January 2021.