



The impact of longitudinal research

The policy impact of the *European Social Survey*

The ESS at glance:

The European Social Survey coordinated by City, University of London, and the project's Director is Professor Rory Fitzgerald.

Funding: Its funding is provided through an annual membership fee paid by each participating country and amounts to around 2.3 million Euros per annum for financial years 2013 to 2017 (ESS ERIC, 2016).

Duration: 2001-Present

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The European Social Survey has proved effective in influencing both the academic and non-academic world: the data it provides constitutes a powerful tool for assessing the changes in beliefs, values and attitudes across European countries (Kolarz, et al., 2017).

Estonian Strategy for Children and Families

The ESS played a significant role on the design of "*Strategy of Children and Families 2012-2020*" at the **Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs**.

- The strategy relied on indicators constructed with ESS data;
- Estonian policymakers employed ESS in order to better understand the attitudes towards child-rearing in Estonia relative to other European countries.

Austrian Social Affairs and Welfare Policies

The **Austrian Ministry for Labour Social Affairs and Consumer Protection** (BMASK) co-funds the ESS with the intention of using the data, partially due to a lack of national level data (Technopolis Group, 2017).

- The **Department of General Social Policy Affairs** at the BMASK has employed the ESS as the core Austrian data source for monitoring welfare attitudes since 2009.
- The BMASK used ESS data in the press release to provide supporting evidence for the ministry's argument not raising the pension age.

Lithuanian Action Plan for Citizenship Education

The analysis using ESS data was a crucial input in the formulation of the "*Lithuanian Action Plan for Citizenship Education 2016*" – a joint project of several **Lithuanian governmental institutions and Ministries**.

- It was among the main driver to justify the need for a new approach to facilitating civic engagement among Lithuanian youth.
- The ESS data was employed because members involved in developing the Action Plan recognized the need to analyse Lithuania within the European context



The wider impact of the *European Social Survey*

Estonian Strategy for Children and Families

In **Estonia**, the ESS data has continued contributing to the implementation of the “*Strategy of Children and Families 2012–2020*” (Technopolis Group, 2017).

- The indicators derived from the ESS now provide essential data for monitoring the Strategy implementation and comparing Estonia’s performance with other European countries.
- The **Department of Children and Families** has used evidence derived from the ESS as background information in their public presentation and in response to inquiries from the media.
- The findings using ESS data on parenting practice and corporal punishment against children has also triggered internal policy discussion within the Ministry around the issues.
- It is considered that the ESS has raised the public awareness about positive parenting and child rights among Estonian.



NordMod 2030

NordMod 2030 – a **pan-Nordic research project** analysing the Nordic model – has used the ESS data for reflections on central issues including trust and life satisfaction and satisfaction with public services in Nordic nations (Technopolis Group, 2017).

NordMod 2030, underpinned in crucial parts by the ESS, is the basis for major agenda settings for the future of social democratic perspective in Nordic countries.

NordMod 2030 has constituted the foundation for the *Sørmarka Declaration* by the **Nordic Workers’ Congress** – a political answers to the challenges and a political manifesto to the future of the Nordic model.

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“...the ESS has contributed to the development and implementation of the Estonian children and family policy by providing policymakers with relevant background information on the Estonian position on several indicators, particularly around parents’ awareness about, and attitudes towards, child-rearing. The ESS is considered especially valuable because it provides an opportunity to compare Estonia’s performance with other European countries.”

ESS Eric Impact Case study
Technopolis (2017)

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European Social Survey



The European Social Survey (ESS) is a cross-national survey established in 2001 and conducted every two years in more than 20 European countries.

It investigates the **attitudes, beliefs and social structure** of citizens in Europe. The first round took place in 2002, involved at least 22 countries; Round 9 is being carried out in 2018 and includes 28 countries. The original questionnaire is written in British English and then translated into national language used as first language by at least 5 per cent of the population.

The survey consists of two parts:

- The core module aims at detecting and monitoring key issues of European society and provide information on the changing values and attitudes in Europe;
- There are also two rotating modules which change from round to round and focus on specific topics concerning European societies, such as immigration, personal and social wellbeing, welfare attitudes.

On November 2013, the European Commission awarded the ESS the status of **European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC)**, which represented a crucial step for ensuring the survey's long term funding horizon (European Commission, 2013).



“Access to high quality comparative data will help us to improve our understanding of the profound social, political, economic and demographic changes occurring in Europe as well as the relationship between Europe and the rest of the world.”

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, then European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science (quoted in ESS ERIC, 2017)



Research references

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EuroCohort is a proposed European longitudinal survey of children and young people's wellbeing

Growing Up in Europe: EuroCohort

EuroCohort will directly benefit children and young people by collecting both objective and subjective wellbeing measures which will be used to ensure that social policies are evidence based. Major themes covered in the survey include: *Inequality, Learning, Digital Life and Lifestyle*.

The survey is currently being developed through the **European Cohort Development Project (ECDP)**, led by the Policy Evaluation and Research Unit at Manchester Metropolitan University in the UK.

Funding: The study is funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 7770449.

The aim of EuroCohort is to provide deep, insightful, comparative and longitudinal data on the wellbeing experiences of children and young people across Europe. By doing so, researchers, governments and others might better understand – and take steps to improve – youth's life chances, outlook, happiness and wellbeing.

The Potential Impact of EuroCohort

To understand whether and how EuroCohort might have such impact, researchers from Manchester Metropolitan and University of Bologna (UNIBO) have developed a series of impact case studies. These examine the policy impacts that other longitudinal surveys have delivered.

These impact case studies explore how and in what ways these studies have effected government policies, by asking three important question:

- *How did the survey affect policy?* Did survey analysis directly lead to new or changed policies? Did it contribute to wider discussions on the need for policy change?
- *What type of knowledge or insight did the survey provide?* Did the survey provide insight into social problems? Of what policy interventions worked and did not work? Of how to make policies more effective?
- *Was the policy effective?* Is there any evaluation or other research evidence that the policy was effective and had a positive effect in the ways intended?

