

Quality Assessment of ISSP Background Variables

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The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)

- Collaborative programme of cross-cultural social science survey research
- Founded in 1984 by four countries
- 49 countries (05/2012) from all over the world
- Annual monothematic module design
- Topics important for social science research
- Substantive questions - input harmonized
- ISSP standard background variables (BV) - output harmonized

ISSP Standard BV – until ISSP 2009

- Fixed set of 34 ISSP standard background variables (BV);
- Stipulated measurement goals;
but: no fixed BV question wording;
no fixed question order and
no rules of BV construction.
- Country-specific data collection and country-specific construction of ISSP BV;
done by each ISSP member individually.

Revised ISSP Standard BV ISSP since 2010

- Fixed set of 47 revised ISSP standard BV
 - Still: Country-specific data collection;
 - Still: Country-specific harmonization; to do by ISSP members.
- New: ISSP BV guidelines
 - Clarification of measurement goals;
 - Suggestions for question wording and order suggested;
 - Guidelines for the construction of ISSP BV.

Quality Assessment of ISSP 2010 BV

- Quality assessment in technical terms.
- Based on first data release of ISSP 2010: 30 countries.

- Non-coverage of ISSP BV;
- Non-coverage of individual categories;
- Item non-response.

Non-coverage of ISSP BV

- Basic check of country-specific frequency distribution of ISSP BV.
- If ISSP BV NOT covered by ISSP member search for reasons:
 - Back checking the ISSP 2010 study monitoring report on omitted ISSP BV;
 - Back checking country-specific ISSP BV documentations.

Non-coverage: Results

- 27 BV provided by all ISSP members in ISSP 2010.
- For 8 BV, only one ISSP member missed to provide them.
- For 12 BV, several ISSP members missed to provide them.
- Most problematic:
 - partner's working hours (6 ISSP members);
 - employment relationship (5 ISSP members);
 - partner supervises other employees (7 ISSP members).

Non-coverage of Individual Categories

- Basic check of country-specific frequency distributions of ISSP BV.
- If ISSP BV category DOES NOT appear search for reasons:
 - Back checking ISSP BV documentations;
 - Back checking ISSP 2010 field questionnaires on existence of explicite/ implicite response category.

Non-coverage of Individual Cat.: Results

- For 20 BV: no pre-defined categories.
- For 11 BV: pre-defined categories are covered by all ISSP members.
- For 4 BV: only single ISSP members did not cover all pre-defined categories.
- For 12 BV: several ISSP members did not cover all pre-defined categories.
- Most problematic:
 - R main status (13 ISSP members);
 - spouse main status (12 ISSP members);
 - party affiliation constructed into left-right scale (10 members);
 - religious groups (10 ISSP members).

Item Non-response

- Check of country-specific frequency distributions of ISSP BV.
- No answer (NA), don't know (DK), refused .
- Filter routing considered; NAP not counted in non-response.
- Classification of non-response level
 - low: <10%
 - medium: 10-50%
 - high: >50%

Item Non-response: Results

- 14 BV do not show considerable non-response.
- For 5 BV, only single ISSP members showed non-response higher than 10%.
- For 17 BV, several ISSP members' data show a considerable amount of non-response:
 - For 10 BV: non-response higher than 10% for 2-6 members;
 - For 7 BV: non-response higher than 10% for 8-13 members.
- Most problematic:
 - income (personal and household: 20 ISSP members and more);
 - number of employees;
 - number of supervised employees.

Summary

Some concerns on quality of a few ISSP BV due to combination of various problems:

- NEMPLOY: high amount of non-response;
- NSUP: not provided by four ISSP members **and** high amount of non-response;
- SPWRKHRS, SPEMPREL and SPWRKSUP: not provided by considerable amount of ISSP members **and** considerable amount of non-response;
- Personal and household INCOME: considerable amount of non-response.

Future Plans

- Re-run basic quality assessment for ISSP 2011 data.
- Additional substantive analyses on the value of revised ISSP standard BV.

Thank you for your attention.

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Information on ISSP

- General information on ISSP: www.issp.org
- ISSP-data and documentation (of ISSP BV for ISSP 2004ff.) from GESIS Data Archive
- ISSP BV guidelines and sample BV questionnaire from GESIS Data Archive
<http://www.gesis.org/en/issp/issp-home/>

List of ISSP Standard Background Variables–ISSP 2002-2009

SEX	Sex of respondent	SPISCO88	Spouse / partner: occupation, four digit 1988 ISCO / ILO occupation code <u>(if R not working ask most recent job)</u>
AGE	Age of respondent	SPWRKTYP	S-P: Working for private sector, public sector or self-employed <u>(if R not working ask most recent job)</u>
MARITAL	Marital status of respondent	INCOME	Family income
COHAB	Do you live together with a partner?	RINCOME	Respondent's earnings
EDUCYRS	Education I - years (of full time) schooling	HOMPOP	How many persons in household
DEGREE	Education II - highest education level / degree	HHCYCLE	Household composition: adults and children (less than 18 years)
nat_DEGR	Education II – country specific categories	PARTY_LR	Party affiliation - left-right <u>(Not asked but coded in a 5-point left - right scheme by data producers)</u>
WRKST	Current employment status, main source of living	nat_PRTY	Party affiliation - Country-specific
WRKHRS	Working hours - number of hours (usually) worked weekly <u>(including regular overtime work)</u>	VOTE_LE	Vote last general election: Yes/no
ISCO88	Occupation - four digit 1988 ISCO / ILO occupation code <u>(if R not working ask most recent job)</u>	ATTEND	Attendance of religious services
WRKSUP	Supervises others at work - Do you supervise the work of any other people? <u>(if R not working ask most recent job)</u>	RELIG	Religious denomination <u>(asked country-specific but re-coded to standard)</u>
WRKTYPE	R: Working for private sector, public sector or self-employed <u>(if R not working ask most recent job)</u>	RELIGGRP	Religious main-group derived from RELIG
NEMPLOY	(If self employed) Do you have any employees? If so, how many? <u>(if R not working ask most recent job)</u>	TOPBOT	10 point top-bottom scale
UNION	Is respondent member of a trade union <u>(or was in the past)?</u>	nat_REG	Region - Country-specific
SPWRKST	Spouse / partner: current employment status, main source of living	nat_SIZE	Size of community - Country-specific
		URBRURAL	Type of community: urban / rural – self-assessed
		WEIGHT	Weighting factor
		MODE	Administrative mode of data-collection
		nat_ETHN	<i>Ethnic identity / family origin (Country specific)</i>
		<i>(optional)</i>	

List of ISSP Standard Background Variables–ISSP 2010

SEX	Sex of respondent	PARTY_LR	Party affiliation: left – right scale
BIRTH	Year of birth	VOTE_LE	Did respondent vote in last general election?
AGE	Age of respondent	nat_ETHN	Country-specific: origin country / ethnic group / ethnic identity / family origin
EDUCYRS	Education I: years of schooling	HOMPOP	How many persons in household
nat_DEGR	Country-specific highest completed degree of education	HHCHILDR	How many children in household
DEGREE	Education II: categories	HHTODD	How many toddlers in household
WORK	Currently, formerly, or never in paid work	nat_RINC	Country-specific: personal income
WRKHRS	Hours worked weekly	nat_INC	Country-specific: household income
EMPREL	Employment relationship	MARITAL	Legal partnership status
NEMPLOY	Self-employed: how many employees	URBRURAL	Place of living: urban – rural
WRKSUP	Supervise other employees	nat_REG	Country-specific: region
NSUP	Number of other employees supervised	CASEID	ID No. of respondent
TYPORG1	Type of organisation, for-profit/non-profit	SUBSCASE	Case substitution flag
TYPORG2	Type of organisation, public/private	DATEYR	Year of interview
ISCO88	Occupation ISCO 1988	DATEMO	Month of interview
MAINSTAT	Main status	DATEDY	Day of interview
PARTLIV	Living in steady partnership	WEIGHT	Weight
SPWORK	Spouse, partner: currently, formerly or never in paid work	MODE	Administrative mode of data-collection
SPWRKHRS	Spouse, partner: hours worked weekly		
SPEMPREL	Spouse, partner: employment relationship		
SPWRKSUP	Spouse, partner: supervise other employees		
SPISCO88	Spouse, partner: occupation ISCO 1988		
SPMAINST	Spouse, partner: main status		
UNION	Trade union membership		
nat_RELIG	Country-specific religious affiliation		
RELIGGRP	Groups of religious affiliations		
ATTEND	Attendance of religious services		
TOPBOT	Top-Bottom self-placement		
nat_PRTY	Country-specific party affiliation		

MAINSTAT "Main status"

1. Measurement goal

The aim of this variable is to measure the current main status of the respondent. In combination with WORK it is possible to identify whether respondents have dual statuses, e.g. in paid work and student.

2. Filtering questions/respondent universe

Ask all.

3. Variable definition/code list

MAINSTAT "Main status"

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | In paid work |
| 2 | Unemployed and looking for a job |
| 3 | In education |
| 4 | Apprentice or trainee |
| 5 | Permanently sick or disabled |
| 6 | Retired |
| 7 | Domestic work |
| 8 | In compulsory military service or community service |
| 9 | Other |
| 99 | No answer |

4. Example question text(s)

Which of the following best describes your current situation?

[TN: If there is no such thing as compulsory military or community service in your country, please omit category 8.]

If you temporarily are not working because of temporary illness/parental leave/vacation/strike etc., please refer to your normal work situation.

Please tick one box only.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | In paid work (as an employee, self-employed, or working for your own family's business) |
| 2 | Unemployed and looking for a job |
| 3 | In education (not paid for by employer), in school/student/pupil even if on vacation |
| 4 | Apprentice or trainee |
| 5 | Permanently sick or disabled |
| 6 | Retired |
| 7 | Doing housework, looking after the home, children or other persons |
| 8 | In compulsory military service or community service |
| 9 | Other |

5. Coding & classification instructions

In case of multiple answers in self-completion, please use the lowest score.

6. Other comments

"Main" status refers to the self-assessed main status of the respondent.
See comment for WORK about question order.

NEMPLOY "Self-employed: how many employees"

1. Measurement goal

The aim of this variable is to assess the size of the business of a self-employed respondent, in terms of number of employees.

2. Filtering questions/respondent universe

Ask if EMPREL=3, respondent self-employed with employees.

3. Variable definition/code list

NEMPLOY "Self employed: how many employees"

1	1 employee
...	
9995	9995 employees or more
9999	No answer
0000	NAP (Code 1, 2, 4, 0 in EMPREL)

4. Example question text(s)

How many employees do/did you have, not counting yourself?

Please write in.

.....employees.

5. Coding & classification instructions

Please code the number of employees as exactly as possible. Exclude the respondent himself/herself.

An employee is any person with a regular labour contract, irrespective of family relationship; thus also fixed-term employees or formally employed family members should be included.

6. Other comments

See comment for WORK about question order.

NSUP "Number of other employees supervised"

1. Measurement goal

The aim of this variable is to measure the number of other employees the respondent has/had the responsibility to supervise. Supervision is to be understood as a leadership function of monitoring and being responsible for the work of others.

2. Filtering questions/respondent universe

Ask if WRKSUP =1, the respondent is/was responsible for supervising other employees.

3. Variable definition/code list

NSUP "Number of other employees supervised"

1	1 employee
...	
9995	9995 employees or more
9999	No answer
0000	NAP (Code 2, 0...in WRKSUP)

4. Example question text(s)

How many other employees do/did you supervise?

[TN: Supervision is to be understood as a leadership function of monitoring and being responsible for the work of others.]

Please write in.

.....employees.

5. Coding & classification instructions

Please code the number of employees as exactly as possible.

6. Other comments

See WRKSUP for "supervision yes/no".

See comment for WORK about question order.

SPWRKHRS "Spouse, partner: hours worked weekly"

1. Measurement goal

The aim of this variable is to measure the total number of hours per week the spouse/partner usually spends working (summing up all jobs if the respondent has more than one), including any regular overtime (irrespective of whether this is paid or unpaid overtime).

2. Filtering questions/respondent universe

Ask if SPWORK = 1, spouse/partner currently in paid work.

3. Variable definition/code list

SPWRKHRS "Spouse, partner: hours worked weekly, spouse"

1	1 hour
...	
96	96 hours or more
98	Don't know
99	No answer
00	NAP (Code 2 or 3 in SPWORK)

4. Example question text(s)

How many hours, on average, does your spouse/partner usually work for pay in a normal week, including overtime?

If he/she works for more than one employer, or if he/she is both employed and self-employed, please count the total number of working hours that he/she does.

If he/she temporarily is not working because of temporary illness/parental leave/vacation/strike etc., please refer to his/her normal work situation.

Please write in.

On average, he/she works.....hours a week, overtime included.

5. Coding & classification instructions

Round to full hours.

6. Other comments

See comment for SPWORK about question order.

SPEMPREL "Spouse, partner: employment relationship"

1. Measurement goal

The aim of this variable is to distinguish between spouses/partners being employees and self-employed spouses/partners.

2. Filtering questions/respondent universe

Ask if SPWORK=1 or 2, spouse/partner in current or past paid work.

3. Variable definition/code list

SPEMPREL "Spouse, partner: employment relationship"

1	Employee
2	Self-employed without employees
3	Self-employed with employees
4	Working for own family's business
9	No answer
0	NAP (Code 3 in SPWORK)

4. Example question text(s)

Is/was your spouse/partner an employee, self-employed, or working for his/her own family's business?

[TN: Country-specific terms such as 'wage employee' or 'wage worker' may be used here to clarify the meaning of "employee".]

If he/she is both employed and self-employed, please refer to his/her main job.

If he/she is retired or not currently working, please refer to his/her last main job.

Please tick one box only.

1	An employee
2	Self-employed without employees
3	Self-employed with employees
4	Working for his/her own family's business

5. Coding & classification instructions

See instructions at EMPREL.

6. Other comments

See comment on EMPREL.

See comment for SPWORK about question order.

SPWRKSUP "Spouse, partner: supervise other employees"

1. Measurement goal

The aim of this variable is to measure whether the spouse/partner supervises/supervised others at work. Supervision is to be understood as a leadership function of monitoring and being responsible for the work of others.

2. Filtering questions/respondent universe

Ask if SPWORK=1 or 2, spouse/partner in current or past paid work.

3. Variable definition/code list

SPWRKSUP "Spouse, partner: supervise other employees"

1	Yes
2	No
8	Don't know
9	No answer
0	NAP (Code 3..in SPWORK)

4. Example question text(s)

Does/did your spouse/partner supervise other employees?

[TN: Supervision is to be understood as a leadership function of monitoring and being responsible for the work of others.]

If he/she works for more than one employer, or if he/she is both employed and self-employed, please refer to his/her main job.

If he/she is retired or not currently working, please refer to his/her last main job.

Please tick one box only.

1	Yes
2	No

5. Coding & classification instructions

6. Other comments

See comment for SPWORK about question order.