

European Social Survey

**FACING THE FUTURE:
OPPORTUNITIES AND
CHALLENGES FOR CROSS-
NATIONAL SURVEYS: A
EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE**

**3MC Conference
Chicago. USA**

27 July 2016

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Today's presentation:

- Past: Lessons that remain important
- Present: data users and 2 examples from the ESS
- Future (in Europe): the SERISS initiative & CRONOS web panel
- Conclusions

THE PAST

Why we needed ESS

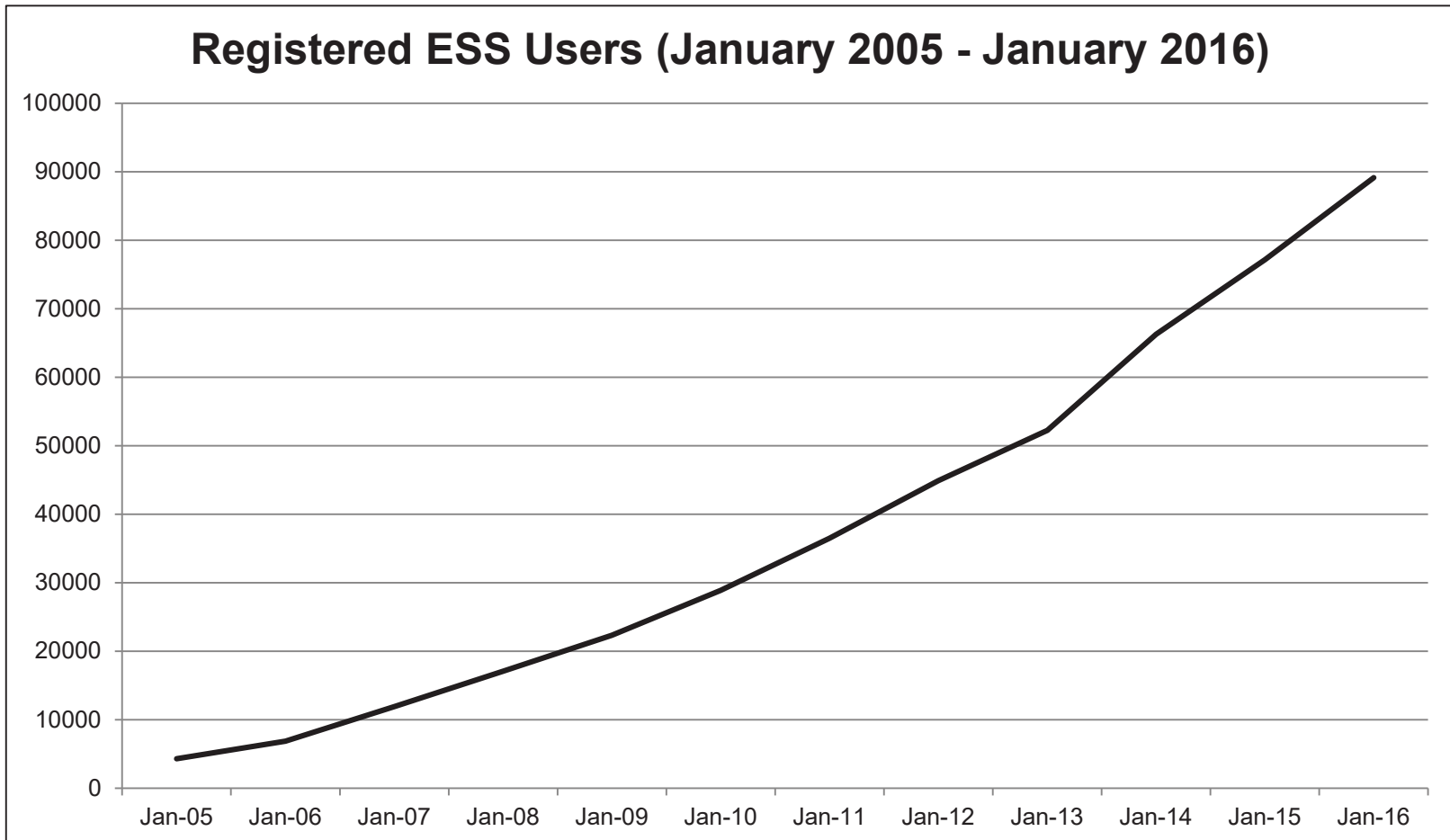
*“There is a wealth of data on individuals and households that are regularly collected by statistical offices and other administrative agencies. **These data, however, are frequently not comparable across nations and are often not accessible to researchers for reasons of administrative self-interest or data protection. Absolutely crucially, however, they do not deal with the whole range of individual orientations (attitudes, beliefs and behaviours) that are central in understanding modern societies, and that can be assessed by survey research.**”*

*“Very many individual surveys have been and will be conducted in particular European countries. Inevitably, however, these are tailored to individual projects and interests. **The social sciences, if they are to make progress, require regular cross-national surveys that are conceptually well anchored, conducted according to rigorous methodological standards and are available at little cost to the entire research and policy community.**”*

ESF Blueprint, March 1998

THE PRESENT

Use of ESS infrastructure



ANALYSIS CHALLENGES

- Weighting
 - Not always clear if applied (Malnar, 2015)
 - Most common user query
 - Complex sampling designs not accounted for
 - Use of a harmonized methodology for post stratification weights needs to be evaluated
- Interviewer effects not accounted for (Buellens & Loosveldt)
- Differences in question quality rarely accounted for
- Equivalence testing not always performed
- More on-line training and guidance required in future
- Number of steps & analysis level both increasing
- Data for all?

COMPARABILITY

Scalar invariance - Allowing for comparison of relationships and means across groups in each Round

Concept tested	Number of indicators	Across countries / groups (combination of language and country)
Interest in Political Issues presented in the Media	3	29/30 countries (R1-R4)
Depression	8	6/27 countries (R3 and R6)
Trust in police procedural fairness	3	18/27 countries (R5)
Political satisfaction	2	10/25 (R1-R5)
Quality of state services	2	7/25 (R1-R5)
Trust in political institutions	2	21/33 groups (R2-R5)
Trust in political authorities	2	33/33 groups (R2-R5)
Internal political efficacy	3	14/18 groups (R7 first data release)
External political efficacy	3	15/18 groups (R7 first data release)

Scalar invariance - Allowing for comparison of relationships and means across rounds within each group

Concept tested	Number of indicators	Within country longitudinal results
Interest in Political Issues presented in the Media	3	29/30 countries (R1-R4)
Depression	8	22/22 countries (R3 and R6)
Political satisfaction	2	For most countries that participated in 4 or 5 rounds, within-country scalar equivalence established over 4-5 rounds.
Quality of state services	2	For most countries that participated in 4 or 5 rounds, within-country scalar equivalence established over 4-5 rounds.

MODE

ESS mixed mode research (Villar and Fitzgerald, forthcoming)

- ESS has always used face-to-face interviews
- Six studies into measurement, representativeness and cost efficiency
- Same sampling frame (mostly) same as the standard ESS
- Lack of named person samples a serious barrier to mixed mode surveys
- Response rates remained lower in all mixed-mode designs compared to face-to-face design, often substantially lower
- Telephone interviews had particularly poor response rates
- Mixed-mode online performed better – but results still disappointing
- One exception: Estonia – hope for future?
- Nonresponse bias likely to be increased by moving to mixed-mode
- Mode effects would be introduced; no easy way to correct for these
- Time series would be seriously disrupted
- Limited cost savings

THE FUTURE



seriss

SYNERGIES FOR EUROPE'S
RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

www.seriss.eu
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A collaboration between:

- European Social Survey (ESS ERIC)
- Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE ERIC)
- Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA AS)
- Generations and Gender Programme (GGP)
- European Values Study
- WageIndicator Survey



cessda



This project has received funding from the *European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme* under grant agreement No 654221.



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Designed to:

- Strengthen social science research across Europe and beyond by overcoming fragmentation and fostering interoperability, harmonisation and innovation
- Equip social science infrastructures to play a major role in addressing key societal challenges and ensure that national and European policy making is built on a firm socio-economic evidence base
- Promote the value of the social sciences to the wider research community, and policymakers



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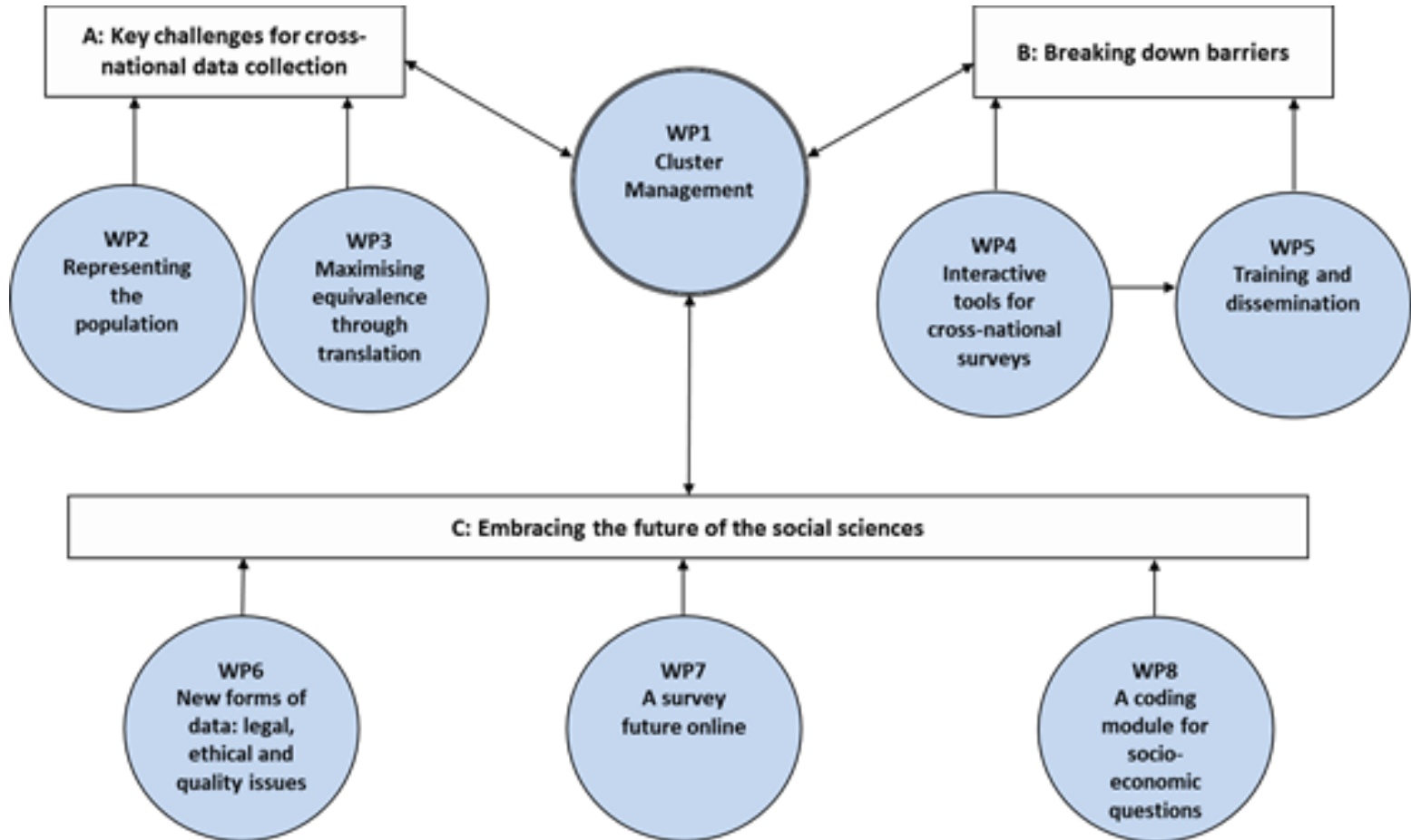
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Achieved by:

- **Addressing key challenges for cross-national data collection** e.g. accurately representing the population, achieving equivalence through translation
- **Breaking down barriers between social science infrastructures** via training and networking events and the development of shared online tools to facilitate harmonised data collection and documentation
- **Embracing the future of the social sciences** by examining the legal and ethical challenges associated with new forms of data, developing a cross-national probability-based web survey and exploring automated coding for socio-economic variables



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Methodology: The SERISS-ESS CRONOS web panel

- Assessing feasibility of obtaining cross-national data online
- Largely input-harmonised approach
- CRONOS respondents will be recruited on the back of ESS8 in three countries
- Recruits will take part in 12-month web panel
- Respondents will be asked to complete a 20-minute web survey every other month at any point during a two-month period
- Surveys will be programmed and administered using Questback-EFS
- Questions will be taken from European Value Study, ESS and European Quality of Life Survey
- Respondents will be given a small token of appreciation
- Some data will be freely accessible
- If positive outcome, could be adopted by ESS to provide additional capacity and maximise investment in face-to-face fieldwork

- Projects like ESS successful due to input harmonisation with strong central coordination
- Is there evidence it is time to abandon input harmonisation?
- Essential to keep making the case for rigor to justify costs
- Data collection is a precious resource
- Mixed mode data collection without correction factors is a DANGER to comparability and equivalence
- Working together key to future, CSDI / 3MC, SERISS, regional social surveys workshop planned by ESS
- As analysis challenges increase, helping end users to overcome these is one of the key challenges for the future
- Protectionism and instability appear to be increasing making cross-national survey implementation harder eg Brexit, Turkey, US presidential election, war, migration

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