The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES): An Overview of the Project

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Project Description
The Origins of the CSES

The project was founded in 1994:

- To promote international collaboration among national election studies

- Micro-macro design, to study variations in electoral systems (and other political institutions)

- Foremost a comparative project, but serves other purposes also
Rationale for the CSES

• There is wide variations across countries on...
  — Electoral rules
  — Presidential or parliamentary system
  — Federalism vs. unitary government
  — Lines of political conflict
  ...and more

• How do these variations impact individual attitudes and behaviors, especially in regards to voting and turnout?
The CSES Project in Brief

- A CSES Module is a 10-15 minute respondent questionnaire with a specific substantive theme.
- The CSES Module is included in high quality national post-election surveys around the world.
- A new theme and questionnaire every five years.
- The data from all countries are merged into a single dataset along with administrative, demographic, district, and macro variables.
Module Timing

- Module 1 (1996-2001)
- Module 2 (2001-2006)
- Module 3 (2006-2011)
- Module 4 (2011-2016)
Funding and Support

• CSES Secretariat
  —Housed in the United States and Germany
  —Funded by American National Science Foundation, German governments, and the University of Michigan

• Data Collections
  —Collaborators fund their own election studies
  —CSES offers letters of support, text for proposals, ideas, networking
Organization
Process

1. A Planning Committee, comprised of, selected by, and informed by collaborators, designs and oversees each Module

2. Collaborators raise funds locally and collect data for their country in a post-election study

3. Collaborators deposit data, documentation and reports with the CSES Secretariat

4. Secretariat processes and merges the items into a single data file for comparative study
# Module 4 Planning Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>André Blais (chair)</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Chi Huang</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bernt Aardal</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Ken'ichi Ikeda</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kees Aarts</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Pedro Magalhaes</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Aldrich</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Radoslaw Markowski</td>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulises Beltrán</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Rachel Meneguello</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goran Cular</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>David Sanders</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Gibson</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Nicolas Sauger</td>
<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elisabeth Gidengil</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Michal Shamir</td>
<td>Israel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sara Hobolt</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Jack Vowles</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David A. Howell</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Bernhard Weßels</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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Planning Committee Meetings

One or more times per year, to:
• Develop the questionnaire and related materials
• Oversee the study
• Ensure broad participation
• Work on fundraising
• Encourage presentations and publications
Planning Committee Meetings

— 2012: Paris, France
— 2010: Tel Aviv, Israel
— 2009: Budapest, Hungary
— 2008: Warsaw, Poland
— 2008: Manchester, UK
— 2006: Bangalore, India
— 2006: Seville, Spain
— 2005: Taipei, Taiwan
Module 3 Collaborators
Collaborator Meetings

Approximately twice per Module, to:

• Vote on the Planning Committee membership
• Review the proposed theme and questionnaire
• Convey experiences in running the study
• Present results
• Network with peers
• Share ideas and methodologies
Collaborator (Plenary) Meetings

— 2014: ?
— 2011: Mexico City, Mexico
— 2009: Toronto, Canada
— 2005: Washington DC, United States
— 2003: Stockholm, Sweden
— 1998: Berlin, Germany
— 1995: Budapest, Hungary
Regional Representation in CSES

- Data Collections
  - Albania: Module 3, maybe Module 4
  - Bulgaria: Modules 1 and 2
  - Croatia: Modules 3 and 4
  - Greece: Modules 3 and 4
  - Serbia: Module 4
  - Slovenia: Modules 1, 2, 3, and 4

- CSES Module 4 Planning Committee
  - Goran Cular, Croatia
Collaborator Benefits
Collaborator Benefits

- Appearing in the CSES dataset and documentation (more use of your data)
- The ability to include your country-specific data in comparative analyses
- International profile for your country
- Acknowledgment on the CSES website of yourself, your organization, and funders
Collaborator Benefits

• Participation in the network of CSES scholars
• Knowledge transfer: cutting edge issues, methodological and substantive
• Assistance and advice in raising funding – letters of support, advice, proposal text
Event Invitations

- Stockholm Plenary
- 80 persons, 47 countries
- Planning for Module 3
- 27 substantive papers
Presentation Opportunities

Electoral Systems and Electoral Politics

- Bangalore, India
- 11 substantive papers
- 41 participants, 9 countries
Panel Participation

- IPSA (Japan)
  *Political Behavior within Institutions: Comparative Perspectives using CSES data*

- WAPOR (Israel)
  *Issues and Non-Issues in Campaigns and Voting*

- APSA (Chicago)
  *Is Democracy Working? Satisfaction, Accountability and Participation in Electoral Democracies*
Publication Opportunities

Electoral Studies

Special Symposium:
Evaluating Democracy: Satisfaction, Accountability and Participation in Electoral Democracies

Guest Editor: Ian McAllister
Publication Opportunities

Collaborator Requirements
Collaborator Requirements

- Raise own funding for data collection
- Meet data collection quality guidelines
- Deposit data and documentation
- Answer questions during CSES processing
Mode of Interviewing

...face-to-face preferred
...other methods only if quality warrants it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Module 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail/self-completion</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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Timing of Interviewing

...as soon as possible after the election

Module 1:
• 82% of data collections completed within three months after election day

Module 2:
• 71% of data collections completed within three months after election day
Placement of Module

…CSES Module must be entirely in post-election
…prefer single, uninterrupted block of questions

Module 1:
• 24 of 34 election studies (for which such information is available) administered CSES Module 1 as an uninterrupted block of questions
Sampling Procedures

...national sample from all age-eligible citizens
   —With adequate coverage

...random sampling procedures at all stages
Sample Size

...recommend no fewer than 1,000 interviews

Module 1:
• Average of 1,600 interviews per election study

Module 2:
• Average of 1,567 interviews per election study
Field Practices

...collaborators should pre-test their instrument
...well-trained interviewers
...make every effort to achieve high response rate
...practice refusal conversion
Translation

...careful translation of concepts
...collaborate on translation with others
Deliverables

• Data file, cleaned and documented to local standards
• Macro Report
• Design Report
• Questionnaire, respondent booklet
Collaborator Application Process

• No formal application process
  — identify through existing networks
  — by word-of-mouth and recommendation

• To apply
  — speak to a Planning Committee member, or
  — email the CSES Secretariat: cses@umich.edu
Datasets and Dissemination
Data Availability

— Public access, without embargo
— Free (no cost)
— Download from CSES website: www.cses.org
— Also archived at ICPSR, GESIS, and elsewhere
Current Data Releases

• Module 1 Full Release
  39 election studies, 33 countries

• Module 2 Full Release
  41 election studies, 38 countries

• Module 3 Advance Release
  May 2012: 37 election studies so far
  … final release hoped for by end of 2012

• Module 4 Advance Release
  … expected to be early in 2013
The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) is a collaborative program of research among election study teams from around the world. Participating countries include a common module of survey questions in their post-election studies. The resulting data are deposited along with voting, demographic, district and macro variables. The studies are then merged into a single, free, public dataset for use in comparative study and cross-level analysis.

The research agenda, questionnaires, and study design are developed by an international committee of leading scholars of electoral politics and political science. The design is implemented in each country by their foremost social scientists.
Usage

- Nearly 3,000 persons are on our email list
- Tens of thousands have downloaded the data — from over 130 countries
- Hundreds of presentations and publications — book series — special issues of journals
  … list maintained in an online bibliography
Journal Articles using CSES...

American Journal of Political Science
American Political Science Review
British Journal of Political Science
Comparative Political Studies
East Asia: An International Quarterly
Electoral Studies
European Journal of Political Research
Global Environmental Politics
International Journal of Public Opinion Research
International Political Science Review
International Social Science Journal
Japanese Journal of Political Science
Journal of Politics
Opinião Pública

Party Politics
Political Analysis
Political Behavior
Political Research Quarterly
Political Studies
Presidential Studies Quarterly
Problems of Post-Communism
PS: Political Science & Politics
Public Opinion Pros
Scandinavian Political Studies
South European Society & Politics
West European Politics
World Politics
Book Example

Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behavior

Author: Pippa Norris
Thank you for your time!

To learn more, or to download data, visit us at:

www.cses.org

...or email your questions to:

cses@umich.edu