



## Political Information Subcommittee

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## Mandate

- Evaluate the performance of the Module 4 knowledge items
- Make recommendations regarding the measurement of political knowledge in CSES Module 5

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## Criteria

- Is there sufficient variation in scores **within** countries to allow for meaningful analysis?
- How well do the items scale?

# Approaches to Measuring Political Information

Modules 1, 2 and 3:

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Module 4:

A common battery of multiple-choice items:

- Party/parties that came in second
- Name of finance minister
- Name of UN Secretary-General
- Unemployment rate

## Distribution of Correct Answers

	2 <sup>nd</sup> party	Finance	UN Secretary	Unemployment
Australia	61.4	55.7	50.6	64.1
Austria	90.1	78.1	58.3	50.3
France	63.3	52.9	22.4	42.5
Germany	94.2	87.9	42.3	34.7
Greece	88.4	68.6	50.0	35.7
Iceland	72.3	61.6	38.9	31.9
Japan	59.2	58.2	41.0	38.8
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>9.3</b>
<b>Montenegro</b>	74.6	46.3	47.7	<b>11.6</b>
New Zealand	86.8	85.3	47.2	33.2
<b>Poland</b>	84.1	47.0	<b>7.8</b>	35.9
<b>Serbia</b>	56.6	43.7	56.5	<b>16.4</b>
Switzerland	48.4	53.8	61.4	56.5
Taiwan	87.1	34.8	18.7	33.8
<b>Thailand</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>0.5</b>
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## Variation in Distribution of Mean Number of Correct, Incorrect and Don't Know Responses

	Correct	Incorrect	Don't know	Guessing Rate
<b>Australia</b>	<b>2.32</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>1.26</b>	<b>0.25</b>
<b>Austria</b>	<b>2.77</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.60</b>
France	1.82	1.18	1.01	0.54
<b>Germany</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>0.60</b>
<b>Greece</b>	<b>2.44</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>0.63</b>
Iceland	2.05	1.11	0.84	0.57
Japan	1.97	1.12	0.91	0.55
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>2.76</b>	<b>0.24</b>
Montenegro	1.83	0.81	1.36	0.37
New Zealand	2.52	0.50	0.98	0.34
<b>Poland</b>	<b>1.75</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>0.23</b>
Serbia	1.73	1.25	1.02	0.55
<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>2.27</b>	<b>1.17</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>0.68</b>
Taiwan	1.74	0.95	1.31	0.42
<b>Thailand</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>0.12</b>
USA	1.25	1.15	1.60	0.42

The guessing rate is the number of incorrect responses as a proportion of the total number of incorrect and don't know responses (Mondak & Canache). **Variation in DK and Guessing could be due to culture, variation in instructions (prompts) preceding the knowledge questions, and/or mode.**



## Scalability of the Political Knowledge Questions

	Cronbach's Alpha	Loevinger's H
Australia	.70	.44
Austria	.42	.28
France	.60	.42
Germany	.36	.29
Greece	.51	.40
Iceland	.44	.27
Japan	.48	.24
Mexico	.29	.15
Montenegro	.44	.31
New Zealand	.55	.48
Poland	.55	.56
Serbia	.48	.28
Switzerland	.49	.22
Taiwan	.54	.42
Thailand	.44	.60
USA	.57	.39

## Alternative options considered

- Interviewer ratings
  - Reasonable substitute though validity and reliability would depend on interviewer training/experience; importantly, cannot be used in all modes.
- Count of don't knows on opinion questions
  - Does not add to length, but resulting scales do not perform as well as knowledge questions due to less variation in these measures.
- Left-right (or alternative) party placements for top 4 parties
  - Does not add to length and outperforms the Module 4 knowledge questions.

# Committee Recommendation

- Given that the two types of political knowledge modules have displayed significant short-comings, and given length constraints on the CSES module, we recommend:
- ***Removing the political knowledge battery from Module 5***
- ***Encouraging scholars to make use of party placement questions to generate political sophistication measures***
  - *Because such a measure could be constructed in different ways, we recommend against including a pre-constructed measure in the released module.*
- ***Including a general political interest question in the module to provide additional leverage***