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 Topics

• Module 1 (1996-2001)
  — Performance of the System

• Module 2 (2001-2006)
  — Representation and Accountability

• Module 3 (2006-2011)
  — Electoral Choices

• 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
Funding and Support

• Planning Meetings, Plenaries, Conferences
  — Local expenses funded by host organization
  — Participants typically arrange their own flight

• In Kind Contributions
  — Online analysis tools (ASEP, JD Systems, GESIS)
  — Translation (many persons)
  — Interns (ELECDEM)
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>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>André Blais (chair)</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Chi Huang</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth Gidengil</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Michal Shamir</td>
<td>Israel</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Planning Committee Meetings

One or more times per year, to:

• Develop the questionnaire and related materials
• Oversee the study administration
• Ensure broad participation in the study
• Troubleshoot any problems
• Work on fundraising
• Encourage presentations and publications
• Pursue special projects
Planning Committee Meetings

— 2009: Budapest, Hungary
— 2008: Warsaw, Poland
— 2008: Manchester, UK
— 2006: Bangalore, India
— 2006: Seville, Spain
— 2005: Taipei, Taiwan
— 2004: Mexico City, Mexico

...also at large conferences (APSA, ECPR, etc.)
Collaborators: Module 1
Collaborators: Modules 1 and 2
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 administering the study
- Present results
- Network with peers
- Share ideas and methodologies
Collaborator (Plenary) Meetings

—2011: (being planned)
—2009: Toronto, Canada
—2005: Washington DC, United States
—2003: Stockholm, Sweden
—1998: Berlin, Germany
—1995: Budapest, Hungary
African Representation in CSES

• 2003 Plenary Session
  — Baffour Agyeman-Duah, Ghana
  — Christiaan Keulder, Namibia
  — João Pereira, Mozambique
  — Babaly Sall, Senegal

• CSES Module 3 Planning Committee
  — Christiaan Keulder, Namibia

• Data collections
  — Bob Mattes, South Africa 2009, Module 3

• Meetings… this is the first one.
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
- Conference and event invitations
- Presentation, panel, and publication opportunities
- 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
Event Invitations

- Washington DC Plenary
- 51 persons, 30 countries
- Presentation of Module 3
- 8 substantive papers
Presentation Opportunities

A Conference on the CSES

• Madrid, Spain
• 15 substantive papers
• 31 participants, 17 countries
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

Party Politics

Special Issue: Political Parties and Political Development: A New Perspective

Guest Editors: Russell J. Dalton and Ian McAllister
Publication Opportunities

Electoral Studies

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

Guest Editor: Ian McAllister
Publication Opportunities

A new CSES book series, published by Oxford University Press
Collaborator Requirements
Collaborator Requirements

• Raise own funding for data collection
• Meet quality guidelines
• Deposit data and documentation
• Processing
Quality Guidelines

1. Mode of Interviewing

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Module 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Timing of Interviewing

...soon 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
Quality Guidelines

3. Placement of Module

…entirely in post-election study
…include all of the Module questions “as is”
…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
Quality Guidelines

4. Sample

...national sample from all age-eligible citizens
...random sampling procedures at all stages
...good coverage
...recommend no fewer than 1,000 interviews

Averages: Module 1 = 1,600; Module 2 = 1,567
Quality Guidelines

5. Careful field practices
   ...collaborators should pre-test their instrument
   ...interviewers should be trained in the survey
   ...make every effort to achieve high response rate
   ...practice refusal conversion
   ...provide data on contacts, attempts, etc.

   Module 1: Reported response rate was over 60% on average for the group
6. Translation

...should back-translate and compare
...collaborate on translation with others

Module 3 Design Report (borrowed from the ISSP):

- Who translated the questionnaire?
- Was the translation checked or evaluated?
- Was the translated questionnaire pre-tested?
- What problems were there in doing the translation?
Deliverables

- Data file
- Macro Report
- Design Report
- Questionnaire, respondent booklet
Processing

- Collaborators are asked to clean their dataset and documentation to their local standards before depositing it, and to code open-ended questions.

- CSES Secretariat processes the deposited files to maximize the ability for comparison.

- Secretariat then asks questions and advice of the collaborator, and for clarifications.

- Before the data release, collaborators are given a chance to review and provide feedback on their part of the dataset and documentation, as processed by CSES.
Collaborator Application Process

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

• Judgments
  — likelihood to run the current Module
  — ability to meet quality guidelines
  — both survey capacity and substantive interest

• 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**
  14 election studies, 14 countries
  ...with another release coming soon
Usage

• 2,000 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
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.

CSES Plenary in Washington, DC, USA
Variable List > Demographic Variables

The following list of variables was produced from the Full Release of CSES Module 1 (August 4, 2003 version), and the second Advance Release of CSES Module 2 (December 15, 2004 version).

|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|

**Demographic Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>A2001</th>
<th>B2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of respondent (in years).</td>
<td>Age of respondent (in years).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>A2002</th>
<th>B2002</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender of respondent.</td>
<td>Gender of respondent.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Website: Data Center

CSES Data Center

DOWNLOAD DATA AND DOCUMENTATION

..from our United States site:
- CSES Module 1: 1996-2001
- CSES Module 2: 2001-2006
- CSES Researcher Contributions

..from our European mirror site:
- CSES Module 1: 1996-2001
- CSES Module 2: 2001-2006
- CSES Researcher Contributions

Mirror sites allow you to download files more quickly from a location that is geographically closer to you. You can download files from any of the locations shown. Please note that mirror sites are updated overnight, and so new files may not be available for download until a day after they have appeared on the United States site.

We would like to thank the Central Archive for Empirical Social Research at the

ANALYZE ONLINE

If you would rather not download the files, or if you do not have access to a statistical package like SAS, SPSS, or STATA, you may wish to analyze the following datasets online. Only a web browser is needed.

- CSES Module 1: 1996-2001

We are extremely grateful to ASEP and JD Systems in Madrid, who developed this service and are hosting it at no cost to the study.

ONLINE HELP FILES

- How to unZIP a File
- How to Read CSES Data into SPSS
CSES Module 1: 1996-2001

About the Module

CSES Module 1 focused on three general themes: the impact of electoral institutions on citizens' political cognition and behavior (parliamentary versus presidential systems of government, the electoral rules that govern the casting and counting of ballots; and political parties); the nature of political and social cleavages and alignments; and the evaluation of democratic institution and processes.

CSES Module 1 Full Release

- Download the CSES Module 1 Dataset (ZIP file) August 4, 2003 version
- Errata - updates and error corrections
- Module 1 Collaborators
- Funding
- How to Cite the Study

Original documents, no longer in use:
- CSES Module 1 Questionnaire (PDF file)
- CSES Module 1 Macro Report (PDF file)
- CSES Module 1 Design Report (PDF file)

CSES Module 1 Election Study Archive

CSES Bibliography

June 30, 2005

Complete list
(198 entries)


Publications

Number of Publications from 2001 to 2009.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal Articles using CSES...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Journal of Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Political Science Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Journal of Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Political Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia: An International Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Journal of Political Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Environmental Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Political Science Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Social Science Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Journal of Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinião Pública</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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