Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) Module 6 Design Report

Version: December 2022

Country/territory: Belgium Flemish Region
Date of election: 9 June 2024
Prepared by: Prof. Marc Hooghe, Dr Dieter Stiers
Date of preparation: July 2025

The answers provided in this Design Report are used to create variables in the CSES dataset, enable the CSES Secretariat to evaluate the eligibility of election studies for inclusion in the cross-national dataset, and provide users with important information for their analyses.

Notes to collaborators…

- All sections of the Design Report must be filled in for an election study deposit to be considered complete. The CSES Secretariat is available to provide clarification and support.
- Where brackets [ ] appear, answer by placing an "X" within the appropriate bracket(s).
- If more space or iterations are required to answer any question, please lengthen the document and duplicate items as necessary.
- In your deposited dataset, please be sure to include any weight variables, as well a variable that indicates the mode of interview for each observation (respondent) that is included.
- If you have an existing methodology report for your study, we would appreciate receiving an electronic copy of it, to supplement the information in your completed Design Report. We will make both your Design Report and any supplemental methodological report available for download from the CSES website. We encourage you to cut-and-paste information from your existing methodology report into your answers below, as appropriate.

Section A1. Collaborator(s)

Collaborators are the contact persons for election studies that appear in CSES. Collaborators are not necessarily who collected the data. This collaborators list will appear on the CSES website.

Collaborator name: Prof. Dr. Marc Hooghe
Affiliation: KU Leuven
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Collaborator name: Dr. Dieter Stiers
Affiliation: KU Leuven
Email: dieter.stiers@kuleuven.be

Section A2. Data Collection Organization

Organization that conducted the survey field work/data collection…

Organization name: KU Leuven, Centre for Political Science Research
Website: https://soc.kuleuven.be/afdeling-politieke-wetenschappen/centre-for-political-research

Section A3. Funding Organization(s)

Organization(s) that funded the data collection…

Organization name: FWO-Flemish Community of Belgium
Website: https://www.fwo.be/en/

Section A4. Archiving Organization

If appropriate, please indicate the primary location where the full, original election study dataset (not just the CSES portion) will archived.

Organization name: RDR - Research Data Repository: KU Leuven
Website: https://www.kuleuven.be/rdm/en/rdr

Section B. Study Design

1. Timing of the study that the CSES Module was included in:
   [X] Post-Election Study
   [ ] Pre-Election/Post-Election Panel Study
   [ ] Between Rounds
   [ ] Other, please specify: _____

2. For the post-election survey in which the CSES Module appeared, please provide the following three pieces of information…

The date that interviewing began: June 9, 2024

The date that interviewing ended: October 10, 2024

The number of days between the date of the election and when interviewing began:

3. Was the survey that included the CSES Module part of a panel study?
   [ ] Yes
   [X] No

   If yes, please describe the design of the panel study, including the date at which interviewing for each prior wave began and ended:

4. How many respondents answered the post-election survey in which the CSES Module appeared? That is, how many records/observations are there in the CSES portion of your study?

1,072 for Flanders

5. Did respondents give their consent to share their responses as part of the CSES dataset, in accordance with local human rights regulations and data protection laws?

[X] Yes
[ ] No

Section C. Sample frame, selection, and eligibility

6. Please describe the population that your study is meant to be representative of.

The sampling focused on the Flemish Region of Belgium's two main regions, Wallonia (deposited separately) and Flanders ages 18 to 85, excluding the bilingual Brussels Capital region, which makes up about 10% of the population. Brussels voters can choose from all national parties, including smaller ones exclusive to the region, requiring separate questionnaires in both Dutch and French. To keep the sample manageable, Brussels was excluded, covering about 90% of the Belgian population. The German-speaking region, with under 1% of the population, was also not included for logistical reasons.

7. What steps were taken as part of the sampling and/or data collection process to ensure that the sample is representative of the target population? In what ways were those steps successful, and in what ways were they not (please provide evidence wherever possible)?

The initial sample was representative because we could rely on a purely random sample of the National Register that includes information on all citizens of Belgium.

8. Please list the criteria for an individual to be eligible to be interviewed in your study. For example minimum age, citizenship, voter registration, etc.

Voting-eligible citizens aged between 18 and 85. All Belgian citizens are automatically registered to vote.

9. Please describe the sample frame, its type and source, and its coverage of the population.

All citizens with voting right, between the ages of 18 and 85.

10. Were any of the following excluded from the sample frame? Mark all that apply.

[X] Specific regions of the country: Brussels Capital Region
[ ] Institutionalized persons
[ ] Military personnel
[X] Other, please specify: oldest age group above 85, about ~2-3 % of the voting-eligible population.

For each group that was excluded, please provide additional details about the exclusion (for instance, the regions excluded), why the exclusion, and what percent of the total eligible population was excluded from the sample frame in each instance. Please also indicate the total percentage of the eligible population excluded from the sample frame.

The sampling was restricted to the two main regions of Belgium: Wallonia and Flanders. This means that the bilingual region of Brussels Capital (with ca. 10 per cent of the Belgian population) was not included. The main reason to do so is related to the specific structure of the Belgian electoral system. While in most of the country, only one set of parties operates (Dutch speaking parties in Flanders and French speaking parties in Wallonia), the inhabitants of Brussels can actually select all parties in the country, and there are also some smaller parties that only compete in the Brussels region. This would mean that if one wants to include the smaller Brussels region, specific questionnaires would have to be developed for that region, both in Dutch as in French. Furthermore, that would mean that a sufficiently large sample would have to be reached just in the Brussels region, just for this reason. Given all these logistic considerations, it was decided to limit the sampling to the two main regions of the country, thus reaching ca. 90 per cent of the total Belgian population. The country also has a much smaller German language region, with ca. 80,000 inhabitants, or less than one per cent of the overall Belgian population. For logistic reasons, the German language community of Belgium is not included in this survey.

11. Please describe in detail how the sample for the study was selected from the sampling frame. For multi-stage samples, please sure to list all sampling stages, and describe the sampling units and selection methods at each stage. Furthermore, please describe how individual respondents were identified and selected in the final stage. If the survey is part of a panel study, please describe not just the current wave but also the original sample. For telephone samples, please indicate whether the sample was a random digit dial (RDD) sample, listed sample, or dual frame sample. For surveys conducted by mail, indicate whether a listed sample.

A random selection of 5,000 voters in Flanders were selected by Belgian National Register and drown from their National Register of all voters in Flanders. The random selection was done by Belgian National Register, due to strict privacy regulations. Our team was not allowed to contact respondents, and all addresses and names were handled by the Belgian National Register. The full sample of 5,000 voters was used in the initial approach to fill in the questionnaire.

12. Were probability-based methods used for all stages of the selection process? That is, units were randomly selected throughout the process, including at initial recruitment (if a panel).

[X] Yes
[ ] No

If no, please describe all instances where non-probability methods were used and provide a justification for each as to why random selection was not used.

13. Did your sampling design make use of one or more of the following techniques? Please mark all that apply.

[ ] Stratification
[ ] Cluster sampling
[ ] Quota sampling
[X] Interviewing more than one respondent from a single household
[ ] Respondent or household substitution

[ ] Non-sample replacement methods

There is a small chance that two people are randomly selected from the same household, however we do not have access to the household compositions or names to know the exact number of such cases.

Definitions:

- Stratification involves the division of the population into groups according to certain characteristics (for instance by demographic characteristics). Random selection then occurs within each of the groups that result to ensure their adequate inclusion.
- Cluster sampling divides the population into groups and then uses random selection to include some of the groups but not others. For example, a cluster sample might divide a large country into geographic areas and then select only some of the areas while excluding others, to avoid the need (and cost) of interviewer travel to all areas.
- In quota sampling, a respondent is sometimes selected based on demographic characteristics, rather than randomly, to ensure certain target distributions are met.
- Substitution is replacing one sampling unit with another when the first sampled unit is difficult to reach and/or interview.

Section D1. Interviewing Mode(s)

14. Please indicate the mode(s) of interviewing for the post-election survey in which the CSES Module appeared. Mark all that apply.

[ ] Interviewer-administered: In person (sometimes called face-to-face)
[ ] Interviewer-administered: Video
[ ] Interviewer-administered: Telephone
[X] Self-completion: Paper (by mail, supplement, etc.)
[X] Self-completion: Internet
[ ] Other, please specify: _____

Section D2. Interviewing Mode(s): Mixed-Mode

15. If the survey in which the CSES Module appeared was mixed-mode (that is, made use of more than one mode type)…

Was the mixed-mode design intended to address a particular problem or problems?

[ ] Yes
[X] No

If yes, please elaborate:

Were all modes available to respondents from the beginning, or was there a mode progression (that is, if the respondent did not respond by one mode, another mode was subsequently offered to them)? If the latter, please describe the mode progression.

Right from the start respondent had the option to answer online or by returning the paper questionnaire.

Were individuals assigned a mode after recruitment or was this part of the recruitment?

[X] Assigned a mode after recruitment
[ ] Assigned a mode as part of the recruitment

Did respondents self-select the mode by which they would respond?

[X] Yes
[ ] No

Did the design include a mode change *within* interviews (e.g., selected self-completion elements within the same questionnaire)?

[ ] Yes
[X] No

If yes, please provide details:

If there were substantial differences in the distribution of key demographics across modes, please note them here.

Section D3. Interviewing Mode(s): Telephone

16. If the post-election survey in which the CSES Module appeared was entirely or partly conducted by telephone…

What is the estimated percentage of households without a phone? _____ %

Were unlisted telephone numbers included in the population sampled?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

If no, what percent of the total eligible population did this exclude from the sample frame? _____ %

Section D4. Interviewing Mode(s): Internet

17. If the post-election survey in which the CSES Module appeared was entirely or partly conducted via the Internet…

What is the estimated percentage of households without access to the Internet (that is, the percent of the eligible population excluded due to lack of Internet access)?

For Belgium Flanders this is 8%, however each of the respondents had an option to fill in pre-paid questionnaire and post it back to our team.

Were provisions taken to include members of the population without access to the Internet?

[X] Yes
[ ] No

If "Yes", please explain:

Respondents could answer the survey either online or by sending back the paper questionnaire using a pre-paid envelope that was included with the invitation. Respondents thus did not need an internet connection to be able to participate.

If "No", what percent of the total eligible population did this exclude from the sample frame? _____ %

Did the survey make use of an access panel (i.e. respondents were selected from a group of pre-screened panelists)?

[ ] Yes
[X] No

If yes, please describe the access panel (company, population [does it include persons without initial access to the Internet and how are they interviewed], method of recruiting members, total size of access panel, method of selecting survey respondents from the panel):

Did respondents self-select into the survey, at any stage?

[ ] Yes
[X] No

If yes, please explain:

Section E. Respondent Persuasion

18. What was the average number of contact attempts made per household, for the entire sample (not just for survey completions)?

There is no information available on the average number of attempts per household.

19. What was the maximum number of contact attempts made per household, for the entire sample (not just for survey completions)?

We made 3 attempts in total to contact the respondents.

20. Did respondents receive incentive payments? Please mark all that apply.

[ ] Yes, during the screening process
[ ] Yes, in advance of their interview
[ ] Yes, after their interview

[X] No

In the first question of the survey, respondents could select one out of four offered charities. We donated €2 to the charity of their choice upon receiving their completed questionnaire.

21. Were special efforts made to persuade respondents who were reluctant to be interviewed?
[X] Yes
[ ] No

There was open phone line for respondents to contact us if they had any questions or were reluctant to fill in the survey. Also, there was a letter accompanying the survey which described the academic importance of respondent's participation. This was also included in the final reminder.
One of the elements that was used to increase response rate was to offer an incentive. The first question of the survey offered respondents the choose an charity among four options (humanitarian, health, animal rights and child care) to which we would donate two euro for every returned questionnaire.

Section F: Interview/Survey Verification

22. Was interview/survey verification used?
[ ] Yes
[X] No

If yes, please indicate the percent of completed surveys that were verified: _____ %

If yes, please describe the method(s) used for verification:

Definition: Interview/survey verification is the process of verifying that an interview was conducted and that the survey was administered to the correct respondent, for quality control purposes.

23. What steps, if any, were taken to ensure that respondents were providing truthful answers to the questions? Were any respondents removed from the final dataset (e.g. due to speeding, satisficing, completing multiple surveys, etc.)? Please provide details.

We deleted respondents that had answered both in the online mode and in the paper mode.

Section G1. Response Rate

Notes to collaborators:
- If multiple modes of interviewing were used for the post-election survey in which the CSES Module appeared, please repeat the following questions as appropriate for each mode used.
- Standard definitions for the below items, as well as a helpful response rate calculator, can be accessed on the website of the American Association for Public Opinion Research at:

https://www.aapor.org/Communications/AAPOR-Journals/Standard-Definitions.aspx

24. For each of the following categories, please indicate the number of cases/records from the sample that fall into each. (If the CSES Module appeared in a panel study, please report the numbers for the first wave of the study, even if the CSES Module did not appear in that wave.)

Interviews	
I. Completed interviews	I = 1,072_____
P. Partial interviews	P =_____
Non-interviews	
R. Refusals and break-offs	R = 3,366_____
NC. Non-Contact	NC =_____
O. Other	O = 562_____
Unknown Eligibility	
UH. Unknown if household/occupied household unit	UH =_____
UO. Unknown, other	UO =_____

25. Please calculate the response rate (RR2) by inserting the answers from Question 24 into the following formula.

$$RR2 = \frac{(I + P)}{(I + P) + (R + NC + O) + (UH + UO)} = \frac{1{,}072}{5{,}000} = \mathbf{0{,}2144}$$

26. If the number of cases with unknown eligibility (UH and/or UO in Question 24) is greater than zero, please estimate what proportion of cases of unknown eligibility is actually eligible. Please indicate the basis, evidence, and any scientific justification for this estimate.

Section G2. Response Rate: Panel Studies

27. If the CSES Module appeared in a panel study…

How many waves were conducted prior to the wave that included the CSES Module?

What was the response rate at the initial recruitment stage? Please show your calculations.

What percent of recruited respondents participated in the first wave of the study? Please show your calculations.

What was the total panel attrition between the first wave of the study and the wave that included the CSES Module? Please show your calculations.

If there were substantial differences in the distribution of key demographics (for example, age, gender, education, etc.) between the first wave of the study and the wave that included CSES, please note them here.

Please provide the number of completed interviews for the wave that included the CSES Module.

Section H. Post-Survey Adjustment Weights

28. Are weights included in the data file?

[ ] Yes
[X] No

If No, please explain why no weights are provided:

If Yes, please describe in detail: their construction, what they correct for, and how their use makes the survey dataset more representative of the population.

29. Were any other steps taken to mitigate the impact of non-response in the dataset? If so, how do the adjustments affect the survey results?

Nothing specific.

Section I. Translation

Notes to collaborators…

- As part of your deposit, please provide the original questionnaire(s) in each language used.
- For questionnaires in a language other than English, if a back-translation to English happens to be available, we would appreciate receiving the back-translation, also.
- The below questions on translation are adapted from those developed for the ISSP.

30. Was the questionnaire translated?

[X] Yes, translated by member(s) of research team
[ ] Yes, by translation bureau
[X] Yes, by specially trained translator(s)
[ ] No, not translated

31. Please list all languages used for the fielded module.
Dutch for the questionnaire in Flanders

32. If the questionnaire was translated, was the translated questionnaire assessed/checked or evaluated? Please mark all that apply.

[X] Yes, a group worked together on it and reconciled their differences through discussion
[ ] Yes, an expert checked it
[X] Yes, by back translation
[ ] Other; please specify: _____
[ ] No
[ ] Not applicable

33. If the questionnaire was translated, was the questionnaire pre-tested?

[ ] Yes
[X] No
[ ] Not applicable

34. If the questionnaire was translated, were there any questions which caused problems when translating?

[ ] Yes
[X] No
[ ] Not applicable

35. If the questionnaire was translated, please provide a list of all questions which caused problems when translating. For each question listed, describe what problems were encountered and how they were solved:

Section J. Other

36. Please list any additional advice you have for analysts about how the survey should be used, and any remaining special considerations in that regard.

Nothing special.