

## Research methods course

### Comparative Survey Research Analysis : old and new issues

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This one-day course aims to give the participants an overview of the major theoretical and empirical issues faced by the making and the statistical analysis of large N cross-national surveys. The trend in cross-national surveys research analysis has gained greater popularity in the last decades, especially since the developments of comparative cross-national data bases such as the Global barometers studies (Eurobarometer, Latinobarometer, Afrobarometer, ...), the EVS, the ISSP or ESS. Thanks to methodological developments in comparative survey designs such as the one achieved by a survey like ESS or equivalent surveys, a significant methodological step forward has been crossed over since the beginnings of the 2000s : the methodological benchmarking from the ESS has played a major role in improving the standards of cross-national surveys, in particular in minimizing (as much as possible) the risks of confusion between the « country effect » and the effect of country methodological specificities. But these highly demanding benchmarking is now faced with the developments of new techniques and new problematics of data collection : for instance online surveys and big data.

Another set of issues deserves our attention : how and what statistical techniques be use to identify and control for this « country effect » ? In a very challenging proposition A. Przeworski and H. Teune (1970) called for replacing « the proper names of countries » by relevant variables. This agenda of research is still on the table ; it also evocates the logics of the « variable-oriented » research design with quantitative methods as compared to the « case-oriented » research design of qualitative methods (Ragin 2014) even if we know how much methodological challenges of both can be similar (King, Keohane, Verba 1994). The dominant statistical technique used in the former context of quantitative methods has been the regression method and its extensions. More recently cross-national comparative surveys analysis has gone in new directions like the multi-levels models or the confirmatory factor analysis for multiple groups. How these techniques complement each other to answer the key question of invariance or homogeneity across cross-national surveys cases ?

The course will present an overview of these issues and problematics as well as the bridges between them. It will illustrate these points in using cross-national surveys.

*Bruno Cautrès, Cross-national surveys, in : Bertrand Badie, Dirk Berg-Schlosser, Leonardo Morlino (ed.). International Encyclopedia of Political Science, 1, Sage Publications, 2011, pp. 504-508.*

*Janet A. Harkness, Fons J. R. van de Vijver, Peter Ph. Mohler (ed.). Cross-cultural survey methods. NY, Wiley, 2003.*

*Roger Jowell, Caroline Roberts, Rory Fitzgerald et Gillian Eva, Measuring Attitudes Cross-Nationally : Lessons from the European Social Survey, Sage Publications, 2007*

*Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, & Sidney Verba, Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994*

*Adam Przeworski, Henry Teune, Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry. New York, Wiley, 1970*

*Charles Ragin, The Comparative Method. Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies (With a New Introduction). The University of California Press, 2014 (new edition)*