The European Social Survey seeks to ensure its results are relevant to academic researchers, teachers, policy makers, and civil society. The ESS is fielded every two years and as many as 36 countries have participated in at least one round since 2002. All EU Member States, apart from Malta, have participated in the ESS, as have nine countries from outside the EU (Albania, Kosovo, Iceland, Israel, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine).

Ireland is now undertaking Round 8, and the fieldwork agency is Amárach Research. ESSR is funded by an award from the Irish Research Council. The research is being coordinated by Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

Contact Details:
Dr Amy Healy, Post-Doctoral Researcher
Dr Siobhán Howard, National Coordinator
Dr Brendan O’Keeffe, National Coordinator and Primary Investigator
E-mail: essr@mic.ul.ie

Round 8 of the European Social Survey

Consumers of mainstream news will be all too well aware of the various threats to democracy that are ongoing in our society as well as the internal tensions, ideological, political, economic, and environmental - that are in need of urgent resolution.

Now, more than ever, European leaders need both clarity and resolve. It is only by drawing on solid data and reliable information, rather than reacting to the rhetoric of the few, and by being resolute in defence of principles, rather than dismantling freedoms, that Europe can find a way forward in the face of both old and newly emerging threats.

The dataset of the European Social Survey is one such tool in the armoury of leaders and policy makers. By providing accurate data about the values, opinions, attitudes and beliefs of Europe’s citizens, it provides a bedrock of hard information which is both reliable and extensive. The most recent round of the European Social Survey, Round 7, included modules on immigration and health inequalities, which touch on a range of issues central to the current debate. Forthcoming modules in Round 8 will deal with the welfare state and climate change. These data are critical in understanding and responding to the divisions in European society.

The future of the European project requires a strong and unyielding defence of its defining values, primary among them being freedom and equality. The data of the European Social Survey provide insights into how these values are threatened in some respects and how they can be strengthened in others.

It is vital that the European Social Survey continues to grow and develop in the year ahead. Its task of providing accurate and reliable data is required more than ever as the best policy decisions can only be made with the underpinning of high quality information, such as that provided by the European Social Survey.

It is the immense privilege of the ESS family to be engaged in generating these datasets and in subsequent research. We share the European vision and we are committed, more than ever at this time, to building a better society for all by contributing to solving the grand challenges before us.

Professor Michael Breen, Chair, ESS ERIC General Assembly

Message from ESS ERIC Director Rory Fitzgerald

ESS ERIC is now preparing for Round 8 of the social survey including modules on attitudes towards the welfare state and a module on climate change and energy. In parallel Round 7 is being released shedding light on attitudes towards immigration and delivering the first cross-national insight into health inequalities within a sociological framework. The inclusion of these topics underlines the relevance of the ESS to addressing the grand challenges that Europe faces by providing academically rigorous and relevant data. It is therefore critically important that additional countries join ESS ERIC in the years to come to ensure more complete coverage of the thoughts, values, opinions and behaviours of Europeans on these critical issues.

Looking ahead ESS ERIC is also delighted to be coordinating the ‘Synergies for Europe’s Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences’ (SERISS) cluster project working with other leading research infrastructures on producing a more solid and coherent evidence base so that social science can play a leading role in debates about our future. The central role of ESS ERIC in that project underlines the leading role that ESS is playing in the European social science landscape.

ESS ERIC Headquarters, City University London, UK.