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SERISS (Synergies for Europe’s Research Infrastructures in the Social Sciences) aims to exploit synergies, foster collaboration and develop shared standards between Europe’s social science infrastructures in order to better equip these infrastructures to play a major role in addressing Europe’s grand societal challenges and ensure that European policymaking is built on a solid base of the highest-quality socio-economic evidence.

The four year project (2015-19) is a collaboration between the three leading European Research Infrastructures in the social sciences – the European Social Survey (ESS ERIC), the Survey of Health Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE ERIC) and the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA AS) – and organisations representing the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP), European Values Study (EVS) and the WageIndicator Survey.

Work focuses on three key areas: Addressing key challenges for cross-national data collection, breaking down barriers between social science infrastructures and embracing the future of the social sciences.

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1. Introduction

The SERISS surveycodings tools offer resource-light alternatives to manual coding for variables measuring occupation, industry, levels of education, and fields of education. The tools are available in multiple languages, and produce harmonised data to account for cross-national differences in education systems and support the coding of responses to open questions on industry and occupation. In addition, a name generator tool enables the measurement and tracking of social networks in household surveys. The surveycodings tools can be embedded in CAPI and CAWI surveys, accessed live via a search function on the surveycodings website, or downloaded and stored for reference in the surveycodings app (currently available for Android devices only; for further information about the tools, see the surveycodings website: www.surveycodings.org).

Dissemination activities for the SERISS surveycodings tools have focussed on raising awareness of the tools amongst surveyholders and the survey research community via conference presentations, journal papers, training videos, workshops/project events and the surveycodings website. The surveycodings team have sought to build a community of experts to give input to the tools, and to encourage uptake of the tools by SERISS partners and other national and cross-national surveys.

Here we outline the activities that have brought the surveycodings tools into the awareness of the community, beginning with those that spanned all of the surveycodings domains. We then take a look at the activities that have been conducted for each domain individually (additional activities are listed in Appendix 1).

2. Dissemination activities

Dissemination activities for the SERISS surveycodings tools have included workshops and participation in the SERISS end of project event, as well as journal papers and conference presentations. In addition, the surveycodings website is in itself a vehicle for dissemination and seeks to engage the community via an inbuilt user feedback mechanism.

2.1 Dissemination activities that span the surveycodings workpackage

2.1.1 Website

The surveycodings website (www.surveycodings.org) provides information about the surveycodings tools and how to use them. It also provides access to download the questionnaire and databases for use in CAWI and CAPI surveys, and live access (for levels of education, fields of education, occupation and industry) to the databases that underlie the tools. The live search function also offers a portal to the user-facing part of the back-end of the website, which provides direct access to lists of codes/translations as appropriate.
The back-end user interface also invites users to give feedback on their experience of using the site. This aims to engage users in the on-going development and review of the surveycodings tools, including the functionality of the website, and optimisation of the codes and translations.

![Feedback form on the surveycodings website](image)

**Figure 1: Feedback form on the surveycodings website**

For an overview of the public facing part of the surveycodings website, see SERISS deliverable **D8.17** (Sibley, 2019a), and for technical information about the back-end of the website see SERISS deliverable **D3.13** (Martens, 2019).

### 2.1.2 2017 workshop

In September 2017, the first surveycodings workshop was held in Amsterdam in the Netherlands. Attended by researchers, survey practitioners and other stakeholders from organisations across Europe, this event spanned two days and sought to introduce the survey community to the surveycodings socio-economic coding tools. The workshop programme not only taught the participants about the tools, but provided the opportunity to try using them; this enabled the participants to give feedback, contribute ideas regarding the tools’ development, and inform the development of the surveycodings training materials.

The first day of the workshop included: introductory presentations by Eric Harrison (ESS ERIC), Peter Elias (University of Warwick), and Kea Tijdens (University of Amsterdam); presentations relating to coding occupation, industry and employment status, by Rita Bergenhill (Swedish Public Employment Service), Kea Tijdens (University of Amsterdam), and Michele Belloni (Ca’ Foscari, University of Venice); and, a presentation by Ella Schwartz (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) on measuring social networks. The first day ended with a practical session that included: a presentation by Maurice Martens (CentERdata) on the SERRIS surveycodings module demo; time for workshop participants to try out the occupation, industry and employment status module and the name generator tool; and, a Q&A session.

The second day of the workshop included: a session on coding educational attainment and fields of education, which involved a presentation by Verena Ortmanns (GESIS) on the Education database followed by training in using the module (followed by Q&A); a session on the benefits of the module for survey holders, which involved a presentation by Maurice Martens (CentERdata) on using the module in different survey modes, and a training session (followed by Q&A); a session on batch coding using CASCOT (Computer Assisted Structured Coding Tool), which involved a
presentation by Peter Elias (University of Warwick) introducing the multilingual CASCOT software, and a presentation by Sue Westerman (Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics) titled *CASCOT in practice – the example of Statistics Netherlands* (followed by Q&A); a presentation by Kristi Winters (GESIS) introducing the variable harmonisation software CharmStats; and, a discussion session chaired by Peter Elias (University of Warwick) on the challenges of harmonisation and the future of coding.

For further information about the 2017 workshop, see SERISS deliverable [D8.18](Sommer, 2017).

### 2.1.3 2019 workshop

In February 2019, the second surveycodings workshop was held at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, Italy. With the tools ready for testing, this event sought to:

1. Disseminate the surveycodings tools and encourage pilot testing.
2. Gain an overview of who is interested in the tools, how easy/difficult it is for survey holders and programmers to engage with/use them, and how they intend to do so.
3. Support participants in using the tools and make sure they feel comfortable asking for help.
4. Increase participants’ understanding of the surveycodings tools and how to use them.
5. Afford participants the opportunity to give input to the tools and their underlying databases to ensure quality.
6. Enable participants to find out what other surveys are doing and discuss the difficulties of existing coding approaches.
7. Provide an opportunity for participants to network.
8. Provide participants with support for standardised coding approaches, while minimising manual work and thus saving costs.

Delegates included survey managers, coders, programmers and researchers from survey organisations across Europe. In addition, special guests attended from two Italian institutions: INAPP – Public Policy Innovation and the Bank of Italy.

The workshop programme spanned two days and included presentations and more technical sessions during which attendees could directly engage with the surveycodings tools. Presentations by the surveycodings team included: a discussion of the need for surveycodings (Agar Brugiavini, Ca’ Foscari University of Venice), a general introduction to the project and the tools (Sarah Butt, ESS ERIC), more detailed introductions by the domain experts (Kea Tijdens, University of Amsterdam – Occupation and Industry; and, Silke Schneider, GESIS and Maurice Martens, CentERdata – Levels of Education and Fields of Education), an overview of the surveycodings tools and their technical features (Maurice Martens, CentERdata), and a discussion on the ongoing development of the tools and the idea of building a community of experts to contribute to this (Maurice Martens, CentERdata).

A split session included a technical workshop where participants could gain advice and support from technical colleagues from CentERdata, and approach the surveycodings domain experts with questions or ideas. In addition, Maurice Martens (CentERdata) introduced the surveycodings app and sought feedback on its usability.

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1 The information in this section has previously been presented in SERISS Deliverable [D8.19](Sibley, 2019b); some text from D8.19 is directly quoted here.
We also heard presentations by several participants, on the work being done by their organisations in relation to the coding of socio-economic variables in surveys, and presentations by special guests from two high profile Italian organisations: Alfonso Rosolia talked about the experience of the Bank of Italy, and Dario Guarascio spoke about the Italian O*Net INAPP project.

Feedback from attendees indicated that the 2019 workshop succeeded in raising awareness of the complexity of the survey codings tools and why harmonised coding is important, and instilled: a clearer understanding of how survey coding fits into the bigger picture; knowledge of the activities of others working in this field; and, awareness of the potential to work collaboratively with the survey codings experts on testing and further developing the tools. In addition, some participants also reported seeing a need to reconsider their organisation’s approach to survey coding, or think about whether their organisation could use the survey codings tools. The workshop also identified potential collaborations with respect to piloting the tools and comparing the performance of the automated coding tools/harmonised databases with manual coding/national code frames, as well as the possibility for cross-fertilisation between the work of the survey codings team and InGRID colleagues on understanding the importance and effects of socio-economic characteristics.

For further information about the 2019 workshop, see SERISS deliverable D8.19 (Sibley, 2019b).

2.1.4 End of project event

The SERISS end of project event took place in July 2019 in Zagreb, Croatia, during the week of the 8th European Survey Research Association (ESRA) Conference. The aim of this event was to showcase the tools and other outputs from the SERISS project, and ensure the work undertaken during SERISS remains in the minds of the survey research community. The SERISS end of project event attracted approximately 250 guests, who were able to visit stalls showcasing the work of each SERISS workpackage.

The survey codings team presented a video overview of the tools and on-screen demonstrations of the tools. Flyers were available giving details of the different databases as well as who to contact for more information.

2.1.5 End of project video

In the survey codings end of project video, Kea Tijdens (University of Amsterdam) talks about the challenges associated with coding occupation, and the survey codings tool for Industry and the tool that predicts industry from occupation. In addition, Maurice Martens (CentERdata) talks through the survey codings website, including a run-through of the module demo and the database live search function for Industry and for Occupation.

The survey codings end of project video has a runtime of approximately 10 minutes. It was shown at the SERISS end of project event and it is available on the SERISS project website.

In addition, two longer videos are available on the SERISS website, with Silke Schneider (GESIS) talking about using survey codings for measuring educational attainment in cross-cultural surveys, and Maurice Martens (CentERdata) giving a more detailed tour of the survey codings.org website. Silke’s presentation was first given at the 2019 survey codings workshop in Venice.
2.1.6 SERISS Newsletter article

Kea Tijdens (University of Amsterdam) and Maurice Martens (CentERdata) contributed an article about the surveycodings coding module for socio-economic survey questions, to the third issue of the SERISS newsletter (Tijdens & Martens, 2017). This article introduced readers to the coding module and the ways in which it can be used, flagged its showcasing at the 2017 surveycodings workshop, and directed readers to the surveycodings website.

2.2 Domain-specific activities

Here we take a look at the dissemination activities that have been undertaken by members of the surveycodings team for each domain: Education (covering both levels of education and fields of education), Occupation and Industry, and Social Networks. The SERISS surveycodings project has some overlap with other projects: Computer-Assisted Measurement and Coding of Educational Qualifications in Surveys (CAMCES), and work done by the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE). Some activities therefore relate to CAMCES or SHARE in addition to SERISS.

2.2.1 API (Application Programming Interface)

In general, presentations relating to the surveycodings tools have focussed on the substantive surveycodings domains. However, one presentation did focus on the API; in 2016, Developing a coding platform was presented at the 3MC Conference in Chicago (Martens, 2016).

2.2.2 Education – report provided by Silke Schneider

Several studies have been using or shown interest in the education tools. The German Socio-Economic Panel Study (GSOEP) Migration Samples had piloted the first version of the tools in 2015, and continued using it in 2016, 2017 and 2018, also extending it to the new sample of refugees 2017 and 2018 (the documentation was published as Briceno-Rosas et al., 2018). Potentially, they will again implement it in 2020, this time for first panel interviews, which should result in a much higher yield than the previous data collection, which only implemented the tool in the first re-interview and thus affected by panel attrition. We are in ongoing discussion with the Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories (Germany), which hosts the National Education Panel Study (NEPS), regarding adapting and implementing the tools for this important German survey. Their specific needs would however require extending the database and re-programming the CAPI tool that was developed as part of the CAMCES project. Some international surveys commissioned by the Federal Rights Agency were also interested. However, their CAPI software is Android-based, while the CAPI-tool for education was developed for Windows only.

The dissemination activities of the surveycodings tasks related to education furthermore include both conference presentations and publications. Right at the start of the project, we presented our work in the newly established Harmonization Newsletter (Ortmanns & Schneider, 2015). In 2016, we presented it at the Second International Conference on Survey Methods in Multinational, Multiregional and Multicultural Contexts (3MC) in Chicago, at the conference of the Research Committee on Logic and Methodology in Sociology (RC33) of the International Sociological Association in Leicester and at the Conference of European Statistics Stakeholders (CESS) in Budapest; in 2017, at the annual conference of the Leibniz Education Research Network (LERN)
and at the conference of the European Survey Research Association (ESRA); and, in 2019, at the ESRA conference in Zagreb. Our presentation in the international Symposium "Surveying the migrant population", held in Mannheim in 2017, resulted in a book chapter (Schneider, Briceno-Rosas, Ortmanns & Herzing, 2018). In 2016, we were also invited to talk about the tools in the research colloquia of a German research institute (University of Konstanz).

2.2.3 Occupation and Industry – report provided by Kea Tijdens

The dissemination activities of the surveycodings tasks related to occupations and industry include publication in an academic journal and a book chapter. These are the article ‘Validating occupational coding indexes for use in multi-country surveys’ in Survey Insights: Methods from the Field (Tijdens & Kaandorp, 2018), and a chapter published in Health and socio-economic status over the life course. First results from SHARE Waves 6 and 7, namely ‘Working conditions and health of older workers’ (Belloni, Buia, Kovacic & Meschi, 2019). An additional article was produced as part of the work that’s going on in parallel in SHARE: ‘Measurement error in occupational coding: an analysis on SHARE data’ in the Journal of Official Statistics (Belloni, Brugiavini, Meschi & Tijdens, 2017).

In addition, presentations on the occupation and/or industry tools have been given at numerous conferences and events. The 2017 full-day annual AIAS conference about Wages in Global Perspective (1 September 2017) was fully dedicated to the WageIndicator data-collection, its findings and its databases for occupations and industries. Among others, presentations were given about WageIndicator for worldwide data-collection and research. Presentations have been given at public lectures for students at the Central University in Budapest (12 March 2018) and in Brno (3 May 2018). Presentations using the occupation-related task data, measured in WageIndicator web survey were given at the International IAB Conference on Occupations and Social Inequalities in Nuremberg (29 June 2017). Stephanie Steinmetz, Kea Tijdens, and Stefano Visintin presented “The interrelation between task sex segregation and the gender wage gap – Some evidence of within-occupational gender inequality for the Netherlands”, based on task data collected in the WageIndicator web survey. At several events of the InGRID and InGRID-2 H2020 projects, coordinated by HIVA (Leuven, Belgium), the results of the occupation and task databases were presented. Kea Tijdens and Stephanie Steinmetz presented “New skills, new jobs: improving the measurement of occupations and tasks” (Ingrid workshop, Leuven, 17 January 2017). On the InGRID-2 dataforum on 31 August 2017 Kea Tijdens gave a presentation about WageIndicator’s volunteer web-survey on work and wages. At several ESRA conferences, the occupation and industry databases have been presented. At the ESRA conference in Lisbon on 19 July 2017 Kea Tijdens presented “Self-identification of occupation in web-surveys: Respondents’ choice between autosuggest and search tree”. This paper has also been presented at the 2017 CSDI Workshop in Mannheim (17 March 2017). Most recently, at the 2019 ESRA conference in Zagreb, Kea Tijdens and Michele Belloni presented "Design Principles of a Multi-Country, Multilingual Database of Occupations". And finally, on 8 July 2019 Kea Tijdens and Maarten van Klaveren presented “Understanding the Drivers of Minimum Wage-Setting: An Analysis of 146 countries” at the International Labour Organization’s 6th Regulating for Decent Work (RDW) Conference in Geneva.

Several multi-country surveys have shown an interest in the occupation database. SHARE used the database in Wave 8 (2019), the European Social Survey is planning to use the database in its next wave, and so is the Gender and Generations Survey. The WageIndicator Salary Survey will continue using the database in its continuous web-survey, and is planning to include the occupation-industry prediction to enable respondents to answer the survey question on industry. Maintenance and extension of the database are ensured in the SSHOC project (2019-22, EU H2020 GA no 823782).
2.2.4 Social networks – report provided by Ella Schwartz

Work on social networks conducted as part of the SERISS project built on initial work by SHARE and focused on designing a ‘name generator’ for cross-national surveys. This tool allows respondents to name all close confidants and intensity of contact with these confidants. A key aim was to construct and translate computerized questionnaire items that can be used in longitudinal and cross-sectional settings for all social surveys. Subsequent work generated a standardized classification of network types based on the data collected. We carried out several dissemination activities to spread the use of the social networks instrument. As part of the work going on in parallel in SHARE, we published journal articles that focused on the longitudinal dimension of the social network measures in Waves 4 and 6 of SHARE. One paper described these changes (Schwartz & Litwin, 2018). Another paper showed the effects of adding and losing close confidants on older individuals’ mental health (Schwartz & Litwin, 2017a). We also examined the reciprocal associations between changes in social networks and changes in mental health (Schwartz & Litwin, 2017b). A paper that is currently under review focuses on classification of network types, their changes over time and their linkage with mental health changes. We also published a methodological chapter detailing the social networks instrument and its longitudinal aspect (Schwartz, Litwin, & Kotte, 2017). A chapter in the First Results Book of SHARE Waves 6 and 7 examines the effects of longitudinal social network changes on cognition in old age (Schwartz & Litwin, 2019).

Our dissemination activities have also included presenting the name generator instrument to the scientific community in conferences and workshops. The types of social network change were derived from data from Waves 4 and 6 of SHARE. This work was presented as a poster in the 24th Nordic Congress of Gerontology, which was held in Oslo, Norway, in May 2018 (Schwartz, 2018). As part of the work going on in parallel in SHARE, we also examined transitions among various network types across the two waves, a project that was presented as a lecture at the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics European Region Congress 2019 in Gothenburg, Sweden, May 2019 (Levinsky & Litwin, 2019). We have additionally presented the name generator instrument to data users in Israel, as part of the work going on in parallel in SHARE, in two methodological workshops conducted in May 2017 and April 2019. These lectures introduced the name generator in SHARE and demonstrated different approaches to its utilization. Prof. Litwin has given talks explaining the measurement of social networks in the SHARE at two international workshops aimed at researchers - the Belgian SHARE Users Workshop, October 2017 and at the Summer Institute of Ageing in Venice, June 2019.

3. Looking to the future

The surveycodings team have continued to work on the tools to ensure that they will be in the best state of readiness possible at the end of the SERISS project in August 2019. As part of the Social Sciences and Humanities Open Cloud (SSHOC; GA No 823782) surveycodings promotion activities², an update will be sent to Venice workshop participants later in 2019. This update will summarise for each tool and underlying database: the current status of the tool; any

² The surveycodings tools will be further developed under SSHOC.
omissions/known bugs; any plans for further work (along with a timetable for doing so); and, details of who to contact for more information.

Further thought is being given to how to build a surveycodings user community, and to the crucial issues relating to updating and versioning the databases that underlie the tools (for further information, see SERISS deliverable D8.19). In the meantime, training materials have now been developed for the surveycodings tools and these are due to be made available via the surveycodings website.
References


Sibley, E. (2019b) Training event on the survey codings tools Deliverable 8.19 of the SERISS project funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme GA No: 654221. Available at: www.seriss.eu/resources/deliverables


Tijdens K.G. (2016, April) Do jobholders do the same work activities in the same occupations? Measuring tasks in 430 occupations across countries, presentation at the ILPC conference, Berlin (DE)

Tijdens KG (2016, November) Self-identification of occupation in (web-) surveys: databases and experiences, presented at INGRID workshop, Leuven


### Appendix 1

Table A1: Dissemination activities not listed in the References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Dissemination activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>Tijdens KG (UvA) <em>The art of research &amp; a coding module for occupations</em>, presented at Workshop of Eduworks researchers and affiliates, Bratislava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11</td>
<td>Tijdens KG (UvA) <em>WP8 A coding module for socio-economic survey questions</em>, presentation 3rd Expert Workshop Computer-assisted measurement and coding of education in surveys (CAMCES), Mannheim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M25</td>
<td>Several Workpackage 8 members gave presentations at the European Survey Research Association Conference (ESRA) 2017 (Lisbon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M21</td>
<td>Presentations about the education database and the occupation database were also given at the International Workshop on Comparative Survey Design and Implementation (CSDI) 2017 (Mannheim, M21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESS ERIC (GESIS) presented a paper about Identification and explanation of inconsistencies of education variables in cross-national surveys (Amsterdam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M28</td>
<td>Belgian SHARE Users Workshop: keynote presentation about social networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M29</td>
<td>The team at ESS ERIC (GESIS) presented the results of the educational measurement, titled 'Die Messung von Bildung bei Migrantinnen und Migranten der ersten Generation: ein neues adaptives Instrument für Umfragen' (Berlin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M33 M35</td>
<td>UVA gave two public lectures: 'WageIndicator for worldwide data-collection and research, including occupations database' Budapest, M33; Brno, M35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M45</td>
<td>Article reporting on the 2019 surveycodings workshop, in the 4th issue of the InGRID Newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M45</td>
<td>Article reporting on the 2019 surveycodings workshop, on the SERISS website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M46</td>
<td>Methodological SHARE workshop by the Israel Gerontological Data Center, Lecture title: &quot;Research tools to investigate changes in social networks&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M49</td>
<td>Session titled &quot;Database lookups for socio-demographics in surveys&quot; in 8th ESRA Conference in Zagreb, including presentations regarding the occupation, industry, and education tools</td>
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</table>