

Script to construct an indicator of social class in the ESS

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Scripts written for: European Social Survey, rounds 1 to 6 (2002 to 2012)

Scripts written in: SPSS, Stata

Syntax files for SPSS:

- ESS 2002 to 2010:
Oesch_class_schema_ESS2002_2010_ESS_Cumulative_Data_Wizard_SPSS
- ESS 2012:
Oesch_class_schema_ESS2012_SPSS

Do-files for Stata:

- ESS 2002 to 2006:
Oesch_class_schema_ESS2002_2006_Stata
- ESS 2008 to 2010:
Oesch_class_schema_ESS2008_2010_ESS_Cumulative_Data_Wizard_Stata
- ESS 2012:
Oesch_class_schema_ESS2012_Stata

Description: These scripts permit the user to construct an indicator of social class based on two dimensions. A first dimension is vertical and discriminates between more or less privileged employment relationships. In the most detailed 16-class version, occupations are divided into four hierarchical levels: i. professional/managerial; ii. associate professional/associate managerial; iii. skilled working class; iv. low-skilled working class. The second dimension is horizontal and distinguishes between different work logics. The concept of work logic refers to differences between occupations in the potential for the division of labour, the type of skills required, or the nature of authority relations. The following four types of work logic are separated: i. independent work logic; ii. organizational/administrative work logic; iii. technical work logic; iv. interpersonal work logic. The combination of the vertical and horizontal dimensions produces the detailed 16-class schema shown below in Table 1. The script further constructs two aggregated versions of the class schema: a 8-class schema (Table 2) and a 5-class schema (Table 3). Depending on the research question and the number of observations available, users may prefer a detailed or aggregated indicator of class. Our class measure is based on information for individuals. Note, however, that our script assigns a partner's class position to respondents for whom information on occupation is missing.

Variables used to construct the class indicator: isco08, emplrel, emplno, isco08p, emprelp

References for the class schema:

- Oesch, D. (2006). "Coming to grips with a changing class structure. An analysis of employment stratification in Britain, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland", *International Sociology* 21(2): 263-288. [pdf here](#)
- Oesch, D. (2006). *Redrawing the Class Map. Stratification and Institutions in Britain, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Table 1: the detailed 16-class schema based on four hierarchical levels and four work logics

<i>Self-employed</i>		<i>Employees</i>		
INDEPENDENT WORK LOGIC		TECHNICAL WORK LOGIC	ORGANIZATIONAL WORK LOGIC	INTERPERSONAL SERVICE WORK LOGIC
1. Large employers	2. Self-employed professionals	5. Technical experts	9. Higher-grade managers	13. Socio-cultural professionals
3. Small business owners with employees		6. Technicians	10. Lower grade managers	14. Socio-cultural semi-professionals
4. Small business owners without employees		7. Skilled crafts workers	11. Skilled clerks	15. Skilled service workers
		8. Low-skilled production workers	12. Low-skilled clerks	16. Low-skilled service workers

This version seems useful for research into topics such as labour market stratification or gender segregation.

Table 2: the collapsed 8-class schema based on two hierarchical levels and four work logics

INDEPENDENT WORK LOGIC	TECHNICAL WORK LOGIC	ORGANIZATIONAL WORK LOGIC	INTERPERSONAL SERVICE WORK LOGIC
1. Large employers & self-employed professionals	3. Technical (semi-) professionals	5. (Associate) managers	7. Socio-cultural (semi-) professionals
2. Small business owners	4. Production workers	6. Office clerks	8. Service workers

This version seems useful for research into topics such as party preferences and political participation.

Table 3: the collapsed 5-class schema based on four hierarchical levels and small business owners

1. Upper and upper-middle class (large employers, self-employed and employed professionals, managers)	
3. Small business owners (with or without employees)	2. Lower middle class (semi-professionals and associate managers)
	4. Skilled-working class (craft workers, clerks and skilled service workers)
	5. Low-skilled working class

This version seems useful for research into topics such as intergenerational social mobility and social inequality.