Script to construct an indicator of social class in the European Social Survey

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Scripts written for: European Social Survey (ESS), rounds 1 to 9 (2002 to 2018)

Scripts written in: Stata, R, SPSS

Do-files for Stata:
- ESS 2002 to 2006:
  Stata_Oesch_class_schema_ESS2002_2004_2006
- ESS 2008 to 2010:
  Stata_Oesch_class_schema_ESS2008_2010_Cumulative_Data_Wizard
- ESS 2012 to 2018:
  Stata_Oesch_class_schema_ESS2012_2014_2016_2018

Codes for R:
- ESS 2002 to 2010:
  R_Oesch_class_schema_ESS2002_2004_2006_2008_2010
- ESS 2012 to 2018:
  R_Oesch_class_schema_ESS2012_2014_2016_2018

Syntax files for SPSS:
- ESS 2002 to 2010:
  SPSS_Oesch_class_schema_ESS2002_2004_2006_2008_2010_Cumulative_Data_Wizard
- ESS 2012 to 2018:
  SPSS_Oesch_class_schema_ESS2012_2014_2016_2018

Description: These scripts allow users to construct an indicator of social class (the Oesch class schema) based on two dimensions. A first dimension is vertical and discriminates between more or less advantaged employment relationships. In the 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 and the nature of authority relations. The following four types of work logic are distinguished: i. independent work logic; ii. organizational/administrative work logic; iii. technical work logic; iv. interpersonal service work logic. The combination of the vertical and horizontal dimensions produces the 16-class schema shown 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 an aggregated indicator of class. The class measure is based on information for individuals. Yet these scripts make it possible to assign a class position to respondents as well as their partners. The partner's class position is assigned to those 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 pdf here.

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

Self-employed		*Employees*		
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 Oesch schema

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, attitudes and political participation.

Table 3: the collapsed 5-class Oesch schema

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.