



NATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE



European Health Surveys Information Database (EUHSID) Newsletter #4, June 2011

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Work progress



The EUHSID (European Health Surveys Information Database) project gathers information on population Health Interview (HIS), Health Examination (HES) and combined HIS/HES surveys implemented at national level. Surveys meeting the inclusion criteria are included in the HIS/HES Database (<https://hishes.wiv-isp.be>).

Since the previous newsletter, the following health surveys have been entered / updated in the database:

Name of the survey	Country	Year	Survey type	Database code
Health Survey for England	UK, England	2007	HIS/HES	UK35
Swiss Health Survey	Switzerland	2007	HIS	CH03
National Survey of Public Health	Sweden	2007	HIS	SE09
Health and Wellbeing of Icelanders	Iceland	2007	HIS	IS04
Welsh Health Survey	UK, Wales	2007	HIS	UK34
Health Survey for England	UK, England	2008	HIS/HES	UK36
Health Interview Survey	Romania	2008	HIS	RO02
European Health Interview Survey	Latvia	2008	HIS	LV06
Health Interview Survey	Turkey	2008	HIS	TR06
Scottish Health Survey	UK, Scotland	2009	HIS/HES	UK37
European Health Interview Survey	Spain	2009	HIS	ES07
European Health Interview Survey	Poland	2009	HIS	PL08
European Health Interview Survey	Hungary	2009	HIS	HU06

National health surveys conducted since 2007 have been [listed](#) on the EUHSID website. This list shows which surveys:

- have been conducted in different countries and
- whether or not they meet the criteria for inclusion in the HIS/HES Database
- have already been included in the database or are in process.

Upgrade of the HIS/HES Database



An upgraded version of the HIS/HES Database (<https://hishes.wiv-isp.be>) has been released on June 7th 2011. The development work focused on several functions and layout of the database. Improvements include for example:

- Better instructions for easier navigation
- Improved search methods
- Improved summary reports
- More information on reference tools.

Some new features have been added:

- Possibility to make searches based on EHS topic codes
- Definitions for topic codes
- Glossary of terms
- Feedback function
- User name reminder.

All feedback regarding this upgrade and the usability of the database are welcome. Please use the new feedback option in the database.

Progress in the European Health Survey System



European Health Interview Survey (EHIS)

The EHIS questionnaire has already been implemented in national surveys in 20 European countries to a varying degree between 2006 and 2010. The comparability of the EHIS source questions (in English) and the national questions have been evaluated. The main goal was to identify to which degree the EHIS standard questionnaire has been used in the European countries in the first wave of EHIS. Most of the national questions were fully comparable with the EHIS source questions (66.5%). Questions were rated as partially comparable (21%) if they were missing important specifications or had other differences. Questions that could not produce the same outcome due to major differences, were rated as non-comparable (1,5%). 11% of EHIS questions were completely missing in the national questionnaires. The report is now available on the EUHSID website: www.euhsid.org/documents.

Besides the preparation of the EHIS data analysis, this assessment procedure will also contribute to the review of the questionnaire in order to prepare the second wave of EHIS scheduled for the years 2013–2014. The preparation of this second wave was officially launched during the workshop of Berlin in September 2010.

In addition to the comparison of the wording of the questions, several other consultations have been made in order to:

1. Summarise the conclusion of the quality reports provided by the countries which implemented the EHIS.
2. List and summarise problems and conclusions from several reports submitted by these countries during the translation process and/or implementation of the survey

3. Assess the comparability of the results based on the analysis of simple frequency tables (stratified by age and gender when useful).

In addition, some modules, such as mental health, physical activity and alcohol consumption, were reviewed in detail. This work was led by a consortium of three institutes: Robert Koch Institute in Germany, National Institute for health Development in Estonia and Scientific Institute of Public Health in Belgium. The new proposals are currently in the field testing phase.

The European Health Examination Survey (EHES)



12 EU Member States (Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and UK/England) and one EFTA/EEA country (Norway) are involved in the EHES pilot project. 12 countries have finished or have an ongoing pilot or a full size HES.

The purpose for setting up the EHES pilot project was to test the existing standard examination protocols in each country. The EHES Reference Centre (RC) is responsible for the coordination of the project and also for preparing the EHES Manuals that include European standards for health examination surveys. The EHES RC also made audit visits to the 12 pilot countries. Experiences of the EHES pilot were shared in the Cultural Adaptations Workshop in Helsinki 14–15.6.2011. More information at www.ehes.info.

Implementation of EU Health Indicators (ECHI): recent news



The ECHIM (European Health Indicators and Monitoring) project had an important meeting in Luxembourg in March, 2011. Representatives of almost 30 European countries were present, including some newcomers (Albania, Kosovo). Top achievements of the meeting include first results of the “Pilot Data Collection”, presenting health data that are not available in any international database. Revisions of the ECHI shortlist of 88 indicators, and plans for the future of ECHIM and the European health indicator work as a whole were discussed. EHIS and EHES are an important source of data for the ECHI indicators.

Implementation of the ECHI Indicators in the European countries proceeds well. Some countries have already embedded the ECHI shortlist in their national health indicator systems. More information at www.echim.org/news.

Future of the HIS/HES Database



The funding for the EUHSID project has ended, so this is the last newsletter for the time being.

The HIS/HES Database has proven to be valuable source of sharing information between survey organisers, researchers and students. It is highly appreciated by the users. There is no other single database that contains as much information on the methods, questions and examinations used in national health surveys in Europe. The database has also recently been further developed to better serve its users. It would be very important to solve out how the database can be kept up-to-date to serve the implementation of EHIS and EHES and standardisation of other European surveys.

Information about other population health surveys and projects



Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance System

The Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is the world's largest, on-going telephone health survey system, tracking health conditions and risk behaviours in the United States yearly since 1984. Currently, data are collected monthly in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/brfss. There is an easy access to the survey data and documentation for any BRFSS survey year.



European Social Survey – training

The European Social Survey is an academically-driven survey designed to study the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes of its diverse populations. The survey covers more than 30 nations, and is preparing its sixth round and employs rigorous methodologies. It is funded through the European Commission's Framework Programmes, the European Science Foundation and national funding bodies in each country.

The training courses organised by the ESS are open also to any national expert even if not involved in the ESS. *ESS Train 11* will take place between 17 and 18 October 2011 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The topic will be the use of multilevel modelling in comparative research. Accommodation costs will be covered by the ESS for all participants and there is no tuition fee. However, due to budget restrictions travel costs will not be reimbursed except in cases of unusual hardship. The course is limited to 25 places. More information and application www.europeansocialsurvey.org -> Training Courses.



EU Menu

The EU Menu is a project aimed at harmonising data collection on food consumption across Europe. It is co-ordinated by the European Food Safety Agency, and conducted in close co-operation with Member States. It will allow the collection of comparable food consumption data across the EU.

Although national dietary surveys are already conducted in many European countries, it is not currently possible to carry out EU-wide analysis or country-to country comparisons on food consumption due to differences in how the information is collected.

The EU Menu aims to provide standardised information on what people eat in all countries and in regions across the EU. It will allow more efficient and accurate exposure assessment and support risk managers in their decision making on food safety. It will also assist policy makers in assessing the nutritional status of population groups, setting targets regarding healthy diets and monitoring progress over time. In that way, the EU Menu will contribute to safer food and healthier diets for European citizens. More information at: www.efsa.europa.eu -> Panels & units.

Health Behaviour in School children (HBSC)



New opportunities have opened up to collaborate with the HBSC Research Network. HBSC's new membership system welcomes applications from research groups within the WHO European Region, and for the first time, also invites countries outside the WHO European Region to also collaborate either as Linked Projects or Satellite Members. Full details of the new membership and linked project system are listed on the HBSC website at: www.hbsc.org -> Become an HBSC Member/Linked Project.

How to receive news of the HIS/HES Database



If you would like to receive news of the HIS/HES Database or unsubscribe from the mailing list, please send a request to sanna.ahonen@thl.fi.

More information on the project: www.euhsid.org.

The EUHSID project is implemented by the Scientific Institute of Public Health (IPH) in Belgium and the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) in Finland, with financial support by Eurostat and the Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO). The views expressed here are those of the authors and they do not represent Commission's official position.