



Report on „The First EASR Conference“

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Attachment: *Definite timetable „The First EASR Conference“* ([MDI](#), [PDF](#) to download)

An international scientific conference entitled: “The first EASR Conference” was held in Barcelona from 18. - 22. July 2005. It was the first conference on Survey Research on behalf of the European Association for Survey Research and organized in co-operation with the School of Political Science and Public Management, and the Department of Political and Social Science of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra and the ESADE Business School of the Universitat Ramon Llull. At the conference participated researchers from many countries: United Kingdom, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Ireland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Algeria, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Mexico, Israel, Austria, Estonia, Turkey, Slovenia, Croatia, Luxembourg, Bulgaria, Russia, Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Germany, Spain, Norway, Poland, Australia, United States, Denmark and were presented about 260 papers.

The organizing committee, which members were namely Willem E. Saris, Joan Manuel Batista i Foguet, Mariano Torcal, Roger Jowell and others, had three reasons or three aims to organize this conference:

1. In Europe a considerable amount of knowledge has been built up about national and European Survey Research but so far hardly any exchange of information between these researchers takes place. To organize such an exchange of information was the first aim of this conference.
2. The second reason for the conference was that the gap between the methodologists and substantive researchers becomes wider and wider. Therefore the second aim of this conference was to bring substantive and methodological researchers together so that the substantive researchers saw what is possible and the methodologists saw what problems the substantive researchers are concerned with.
3. The third reason to organize this conference was that the organizers /EASR/ would like to bring people from different disciplines together. Usually people from business research, marketing, health surveys and demographics have their own meetings. However many of the methodological problems they are confronted with are comparable. Therefore the organizers would like to bring the specialists of the different fields together to exchange with each other the existing information.

The conference was opened on Monday afternoon July 18 at ESADE by Wilem E. Saris (professor at ESADE and the University of Amsterdam, the chairman of EASR), Xavier Mendoza (Dean of ESADE Business School) and Mariano Torcal (Dean of the Department of Political and Social Science of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra). The opening speech had Roger Jowell (City University London; Principal Investigator of the European Social Survey), who talked about importance of the formation of EASR. Both as a medium for discussion and as a means of counteracting the forces that undermine methodological excellence, the new body should help to reinforce and to enhance best practice in Europe and beyond. After this opening ESADE offered a reception to all participants in the Cloisters of Pedralbes. It was a very beautiful complex and gave us a lasting impression of the Catalan culture.

The regular meetings began on Tuesday 19 July and were held at the Campus of Universitat Pompeu Fabra which was in the Olympic Village of Barcelona. The conference had a very elaborate program. Every day there were four panels titled: 1. Comparative Research; 2. Data Collection; 3. Quality of Measurement; and 4. Miscellaneous Topics. Each of these panels was divided into ten or eleven sessions.

Because the program was really very extensive, a concrete view of all sessions and papers, that were presented, is under the same cover at the end of this report.

In this conference took part and presented their papers from research also researchers from the Institut of Social Science, the Slovak Academy of Sciences: Jozef Výrost, Miroslav Frankovský, František Baumgartner, Michal Kentoš, Denisa Fedáková, Katarína Vasilová and Anna Takáčová.

Besides the ordinary paper sessions the local committee organized also Panel discussions at the end of each day. On Tuesday 19 July it was "Change and continuity in panel surveys and repeated cross sections" with a chairman Roger Jowell and members of the panel: Max Kaase (Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board of the ESS), Jacques Thomassen (Member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the ESS), Jaak Billiet and Willem E. Saris (Members of the Central Coordination Team of the ESS). They discussed about a major problem in repeated surveys, whether the questionnaires can be changed or should remain the same.

On Wednesday 20 July there were two panel discussions: 1. "The infrastructure for Comparative surveys: assessment of the existing infrastructures and suggestions for the future" with a chairman Wolfgang Jagodzinski from University of Koln and members as Jaak Billiet (European Value Survey), Juan Dies Nicolas (Comparative Study of Electoral Systems), Ronald Inglehart (World Value Survey), Roger Jowell, Kazufumi Manabe (Japanese & Asian Infrastructure) and Peter Mohler (International Social Survey Program) and 2. „The design of a European Internet Panel“ with a chairman Vasja Vehovar of the University Ljubljana and members of the panel: Katja Lozar and Anja Goritz (ESF program „New Technologies and data collection in social sciences“), Sandra Rathod (Representative of Bloomerco that has Access panels in most European countries) and George Terhanian (Representative of Harris Interactive that has Access panels in most European countries and the USA). The first panel discussion dealt with a comparative research and a fact, that comparative surveys can not be organized as a one-shot enterprise but that the quality of a survey heavily depends on the availability of an efficient infrastructure. The establishment of an on-line access panel which will be sound enough for European academic, social and/or methodological research was discussed in the second panel discussion on Wednesday early evening.

On Thursday 21 July we had the last panel discussion titled „Teaching Survey Research Methodology using large scale surveys“ with a chairman Peter Mohler (Director of ZUMA) and members as Eric Tannenbaum (Director of the European Consortium for Political Research - ECPR), Ab Mooyaart (Director of the Interuniversity Organization for Psychometry and Sociometry - IOPS), Chris Skinner (Director of the ESF program Quantitative Methods for the Social Sciences - QMSS), Rolf Steyer (Chairman of the European Association for Methodology - EAM) and Vasja Vehovar (Chairman of the ESF program New Technologies). The main theme of the discussion was the initiatives to organize courses teaching Survey Research Methodology. For example the EAM has organized some courses and plans to organize other courses in Social Science Methodology in the near future.

Consequently the conference program was really very various, interesting and full of new information and know-how. The organizing committee prepared for the conference participants also interesting social events. On Wednesday night it was Walking Tour of Barcelona´s centre - from Paseo de Gracia through the Gothic centre of the city and Night skate with tapas organized by Albert Satorra and Willem Saris was prepared on Thursday night.

On Friday 22 July in the early evening we had closing session of the EASR Conference with closing words given by Willem Saris and Josep Joan Moreso (Rector of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra) and closing lecture gave us Colm O´Muircheartaigh from University of Chicago (Vicepresident for Statistics & Methodology in the NORC).

After this closing session was finished, another meeting took place. It was „The First Meeting of European Association for Survey Research“, which was opened and moderated by Willem Saris. The meeting was settled on activities that the EASR could develop in for the field of survey research, concrete:

1. Publication of an European journal on Survey research,
2. Organize conferences,
3. Organize courses with respect to survey research in order to stimulate the improvement of survey research.

(For those who are interested in the topic of survey research: Information about established European

Association for Survey Research and about membership as well, is available at the web-site www.easr.sqp.nl.)

End-of-conference we can say, that „the First EASR conference“ fulfilled its core aim and every participants was satisfied, full of interesting experiences and new contacts from almost all around the world. We hope that we will meet the next year again to share new information from different research areas.