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European Values Study 1999/2000 – A Third Wave: Data, Documentation and Database on CD-ROM

by Ruud Luijkx, Evelyn Brislinger and Wolfgang Zenk-Möltgen¹

The European Values Study (EVS) is a well-established network of social and political scientists, investigating basic values, beliefs, attitudes, priorities and preferences of the Europeans and exploring the similarities, differences, and changes in these orientations. The study is a follow-up of waves in 1981 and 1990. An important goal of the most recent wave was to examine whether the emerging concept of one common European cultural identity has an empirical basis.

Representative national samples were interviewed using uniformly structured questionnaires to enable generalization and comparison in 33 European countries: Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, and the Ukraine. The fieldwork was carried out in 1999 and 2000, except for Turkey, where fieldwork took place in 2001.

This third wave of the European Values Study was coordinated from Tilburg University by **Loek Halman**. The documentation was set up in close collaboration with the Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung in Cologne (ZA) and the Netherlands Institute for Scientific Information Services (NIWI) in Amsterdam.

As a result of this cooperation the CD-ROM "EVS 1999/2000" was developed. The CD-ROM contains the comprehensive stock of data, documents, and context information of the third wave of the EVS. In addition, complex searches and first analyses are supported through the integration of the data and documents in the ZA CodebookExplorer program.

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1 The European Values Studies

Origin

The project originated in the late 1970s, and was an initiative of Professor **Jan Kerkhofs** (Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium) and Professor **Ruud de Moor** (Tilburg University, the Netherlands). They aimed at addressing the following basic questions:

- Do Europeans share common values?
- Are values changing?
- Do Christian values continue to permeate European life and culture?
- Is a coherent alternative meaning system replacing that of Christianity?
- What are the implications for European unity?

The original idea was to confine the project to four major Western European countries and a couple of Eastern European countries. Unfortunately, it appeared impossible at that time to find partners in Eastern Europe. However, in Western Europe the project expanded into a project covering all member states of the (then) European Community, excluding Greece and Luxembourg, including Spain.

Three research institutes played an important role in the preparatory stages: Gallup London, Faits et Opinions in Paris, and the Institut für Demoskopie in Allensbach (Germany). An explorative study was conducted into the nature, number, and salience of values in the lives of individuals. A series of in-depth interviews were held with people who could be expected to have some insight into the happenings in society: journalists, architects, teachers, etc. Furthermore, group discussions were organized with individuals belonging to socially deprived groups such as the unemployed, members of minority groups, etc. The survey agencies conducted an archive search of different databases with respect to questions and items referring to values. This archive search resulted in a database of more than 900 possible items for the questionnaire. From this large database a questionnaire was produced, covering the main domains of life: work and leisure time, family and sexuality, religion, politics, and ethics. In 1980, the questionnaire was piloted in Great Britain, France, West Germany, and Spain. Based on the results of these pilots, a final questionnaire was produced in English. The interviewing agencies in the various countries took care of the translation of the English master questionnaire into the national language. Nationally representative samples were selected for the fieldwork, which was conducted in March-May 1981 in the following countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom (with separate surveys in

Great Britain and Northern Ireland), and West Germany. Gallup in London coordinated the fieldwork and gathered all data tapes and produced a combined data set. This data set has been deposited with the Economic and Social Research Council Data Archive (ESRC) at the University of Essex.

Researchers from all over the world became interested in the project and many decided to use the EVS questionnaire in their own country. As a result the EVS questionnaire has been applied in 26 countries: from the United States to Australia and New Zealand, from Argentina and Chile to Japan; in the Scandinavian countries and South Africa, and also in some Eastern European countries. This made it one of the largest social science research project ever carried out.

Second wave

In order to explore the dynamics and trajectories of value change, the preparations for a second wave of the European Values Study started in 1986. The main survey was carried out in the middle of 1990 and the beginning of 1991, covering the same themes as in 1981. The 1990 survey was conducted in all European Community member states (except Greece and Luxembourg), the Scandinavian countries, the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Austria, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, parts of the Russian Federation, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the former German Democratic Republic, Romania, Mexico, South Africa, and Japan. The European fieldwork was coordinated by the Institut für Demoskopie in Allensbach (Germany). National representative samples were drawn from the population of citizens over 18 years of age. **Ronald Inglehart** (University of Michigan) organized and coordinated surveys in countries other than those participating in the 1990 European Values Study.

The data of the European surveys has been deposited at Steinmetz Archive of the Netherlands Institute for Scientific Information Services (NIWI) in Amsterdam (www.niwi.nl). The data can also be obtained from Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung an der Universität zu Köln (www.gesis.org/za).

Third wave

Building on the experience and the knowledge of the two previous waves, a new questionnaire was designed for a third wave of the European Values Study taking into account several new issues, which had emerged in the various life spheres (solidarity, social capital, democracy, work ethics). Also the quality of the background variables, e.g., occupation, social class and education, improved. Again the

number of observations was enlarged by the inclusion of Belarus, Croatia, Greece, Luxembourg, Malta, Russia, and the Ukraine.

The preparation for the third wave was more structured than before. Five *research or working groups* (4 substantive and a methodological group) were established. The four substantive research groups covered the main domains in the questionnaire: religion and morality, society and politics, primary relations, and work and leisure. The tasks of these substantive research groups were the development of theories, concepts, and suggestions for concrete items to be included in the 1999 questionnaire. Each research group was made-up of experts on the domain at issue.

The main tasks of the methodology group were to reach consensus on the themes and items in the questionnaire, identify problems of comparability, plan the survey, make recommendations on socio-demographic background variables, take care of the quality of the data, and advice and provide assistance on analyses, etc. The proposals from the research groups were discussed in several meetings, resulting in a questionnaire, which was applied between 1999 and 2001 in almost all European countries.

Guidelines for the surveys were provided by the coordinating organization at Tilburg University and in order to get standardized information on the surveys in the various countries, the national representatives had to complete a methodological questionnaire (available on the CD-ROM). This provides detailed information about the translations, e.g., whether translations were problematic; whether optional or country-specific questions were included or core questions were excluded in the country questionnaires; whether the order of the questions was affected, etc. Furthermore, detailed information is available about the representativeness of the sample; stages in the sampling procedure and the number of clusters or sampling points; whether the sampling unit was an address, a household, a named individual, or otherwise; whether quota controls were used; and, whether substitution was permitted. Also, questions were asked about the quality of the interview; about supervising of interviewers, etc. Finally, information was gathered about the way the data was cleaned, filters were checked, reliability and consistency checks were made, and whether errors were corrected and a weight variable was added.

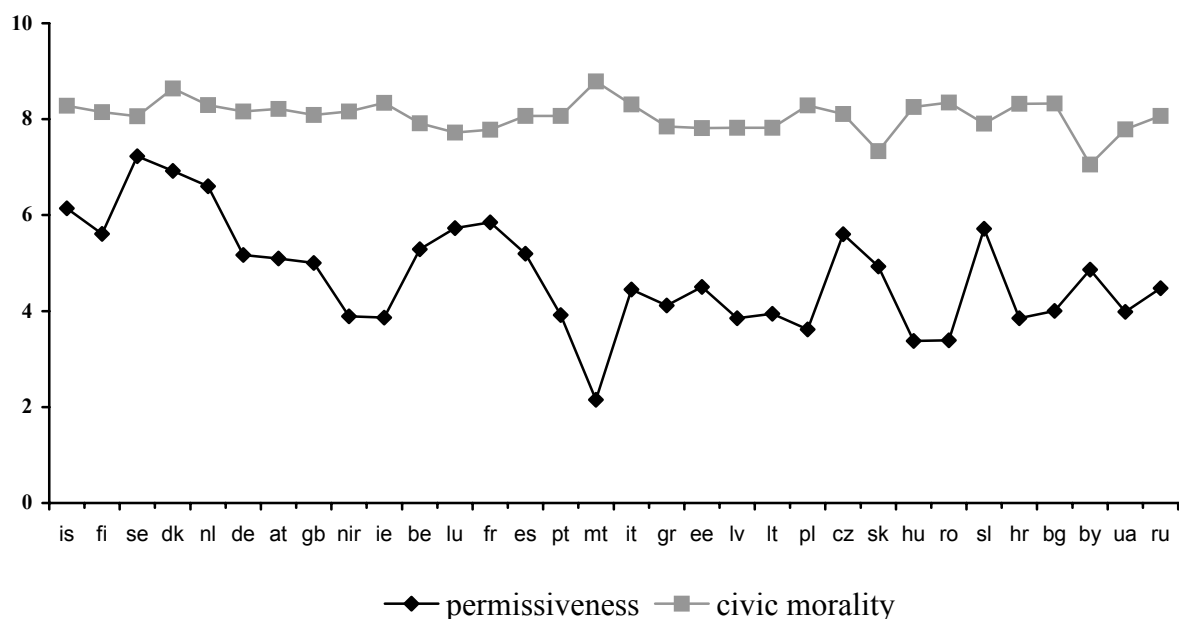
Some Results

The original idea of EVS was to explore basic values and it did not focus so much on testing particular hypotheses, nor did the project aim at rejecting or confirming specific theoretical ideas. The main objective was simply to attain a better insight into fundamental human values and value differences, similarities, and changes

within Europe. The previous waves of the European Values Study have excited demand from governmental, church, academic, and other institutions for access to the results. Certainly, the now released data will be of interest to (European) policy makers, political and religious leaders, and major companies. In view of the processes of economic, political, and cultural transnationalization and globalization, marketing leaders, labor unions, and employers can also benefit from an in-depth study of the basic European values.

This is not the place to give a full report of all the results of the third wave or of longitudinal comparisons of the three waves. However, a few remarkable findings may provide an impression. In many Western countries, ideas about a decline or decay of values have a long tradition. It is often argued that it is the result of increasing permissiveness in upbringing, a growing hedonism and egoism as a result of increasing levels of individualism and secularization. The European Values Study puts these common ideas and thoughts in perspective. The majority of the respondents in all countries consider tax evasion, fare dodging, joy riding, and bribery of civil servants as absolutely inadmissible. This indicates a high level of “civic morality”. On the other side, homosexuality, abortion, divorce and also euthanasia are considered permissible under certain circumstances. However, the latter orientation, which may be labeled personal permissiveness, varies between the European countries. This is depicted in figure 1.

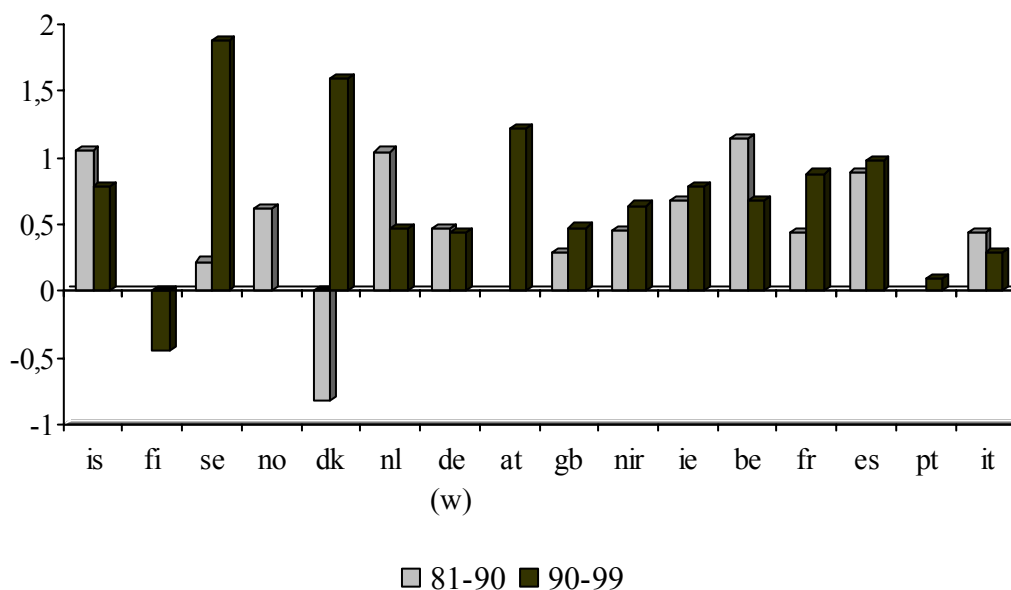
Figure 1 Levels of permissiveness and civic morality in European countries



On the one hand, Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands score around seven (on a ten-point scale; higher scores mean more “permissiveness”), on the other hand, Malta, Hungary, and Romania score around three. This indicates large differences. On “civic morality” all countries score around eight, indicating small differences between the European countries. These results seem to indicate that the transition of societies into service economies goes together with an increase of “permissiveness” with regard to personal private issues, but apparently do not put the “civic morality” under pressure.

This conclusion about increased “permissiveness” is corroborated for the Western European countries when we compare the results from the third wave with the two earlier waves from 1981 and 1990. In figure 2, a positive value indicates an increase in “permissiveness” between two time points. All bars are in the positive area, except for Finland between 1990 and 1999 and for Denmark between 1981 and 1990. But also in Denmark, we can observe an increase in “permissiveness” for the period 1981-1999. It is evident that we observe a Western European development. As far as civic morality is concerned, hardly any significant shifts can be observed. Civic morality was high and remains high in all European societies. As such the ideas of moral decay cannot be substantiated and need reconsideration.

Figure 2 Shifts in permissiveness between 1981-1990 and 1990-1999 in European countries



The data of the European Values Study covers an even broader range of areas and many more indicators, which helps understanding social, political, and cultural values and attitudes in different countries. As such the data is a rich source for a broad audience. The Study provides a wealth of data that may be of interest not only to scientists but also to policymakers and politicians, journalists and also for marketing leaders, labor unions, and employers and salesmen who are interested in getting to know and understanding the societies in which they are involved.

2 Data and Documentation on CD-ROM

The CD-ROM “EVS 1999/2000” contains the 33 national data sets, the integrated data set and the relevant documentation required for secondary analyses.

The “ZA CodebookExplorer”² program on the CD-ROM is provided as the main data exploration utility and supports:

- The presentation of meta-information at study and variable level in an easily accessible form.
- Simple and extended searches in a user-friendly manner.
- First analyses and the creation of tables or graphs for frequencies, cross-tabulations and comparative analyses.
- The ability to print codebooks, tables and graphs.

In addition, the user can get direct access to the following information, stored outside the database:

- The national data sets and the integrated data set.
- The original questionnaires and the methodological questionnaires of all participating countries.
- The Master Questionnaire and the summarized information from the methodological questionnaires.
- The List of Country Codes, which also contains the ZA number to identify the data sets and the corresponding documentation, and the internet abbreviations which were used for the names of the country-specific variables.

All documents are available as PDF-files and can be viewed and printed with Adobe Acrobat Reader included on the CD-ROM. The data files are in SPSS-format for further analyses using SPSS software.

2 The ZA CodebookExplorer was developed by *Wolfgang Zenk-Möltgen*, Zentralarchiv.

3 The EVS database in the ZA Codebook Explorer

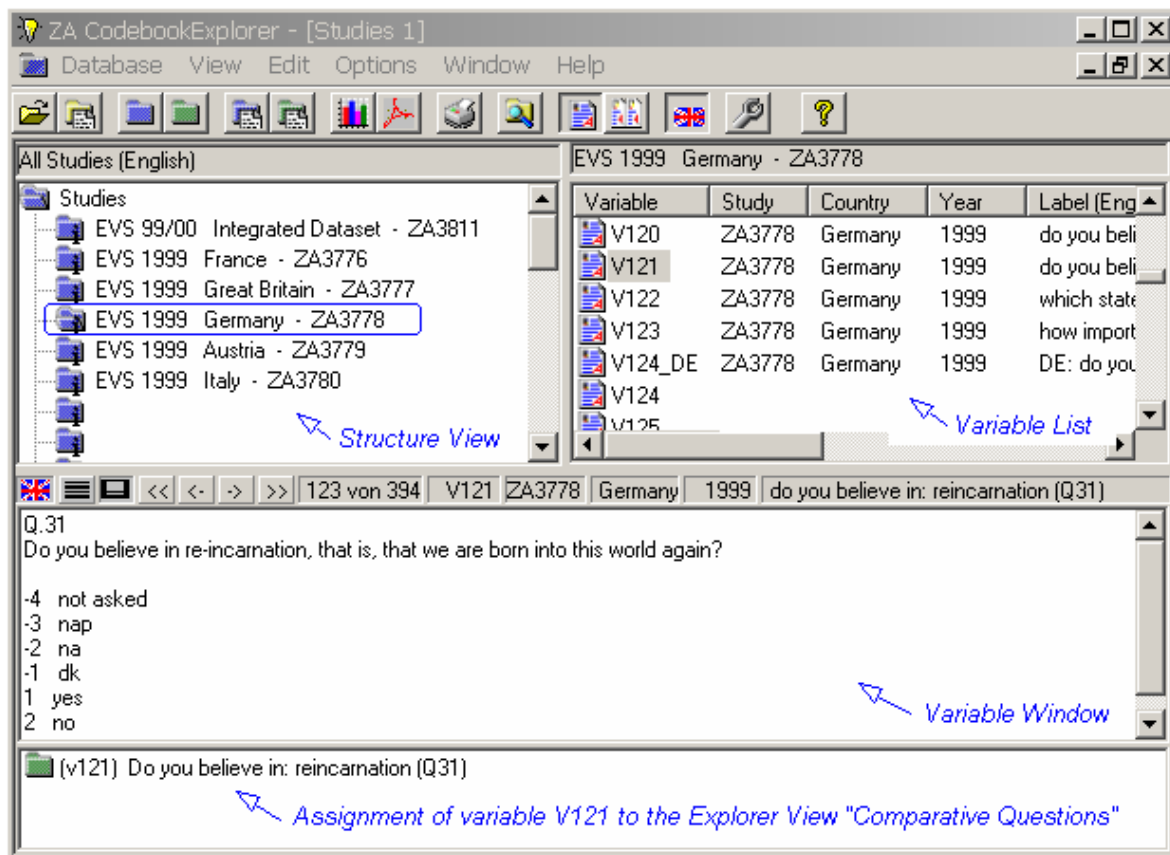
The integration of the EVS 1999/2000 into the ZA Codebook Explorer makes it possible to structure the information in different Explorer Views. The number and types of Explorer Views depend on the database design and can contain studies, categories, trends, scales, etc. Within these Explorer Views additional information can be retrieved from the respective nodes (a study, a trend, etc.). The EVS Database consists of the Explorer View “*Studies*” and the Explorer View “*Comparative Questions*”.

The Explorer View “Studies”

This Explorer View comprises all 33 national data sets and the integrated data set. It provides a comprehensive overview of the questions which were asked in the third wave of the EVS: the core questions and the optional questions of the Master Questionnaire as well as the country-specific questions, which are part of the integrated data set, and the “extra” country-specific variables which are only part of the national data sets. This Study View is composed of the following elements (see figure 3):

- The *Structure View* on the left side gives an overview of all studies, each one with the corresponding ZA number.
- The *Variable List* contains all variables, which are assigned to the marked node (study). With the selection of the national data set of Germany the total of 394 variables of the German data set are displayed in the *Variable List* supplemented by additional information (ZA No., country, year of data collection, variable label).
- The *Variable Window* displays the answer and question texts for the marked variable (“V121” in figure 3). For all core and optional variables of the integrated and the national data sets the full question and answer texts of the Master Questionnaire is integrated. All country-specific variables are connected with a short note or archival remark which indicates the specific deviation of the Master Questionnaire. Also the “extra” country-specific variables are documented, a few of them in original language.
- Below the Variable Window a list of other Explorer Views appears to which the marked variable is assigned. E.g., Variable “V121” of the German data set is assigned to the Explorer View “Comparative Questions”. A double-click on the node “(V121) Do you believe in: reincarnation (Q31)” would open the Explorer View and list all comparable variables of the national data sets.

Figure 3 Explorer View “Studies” (V121)

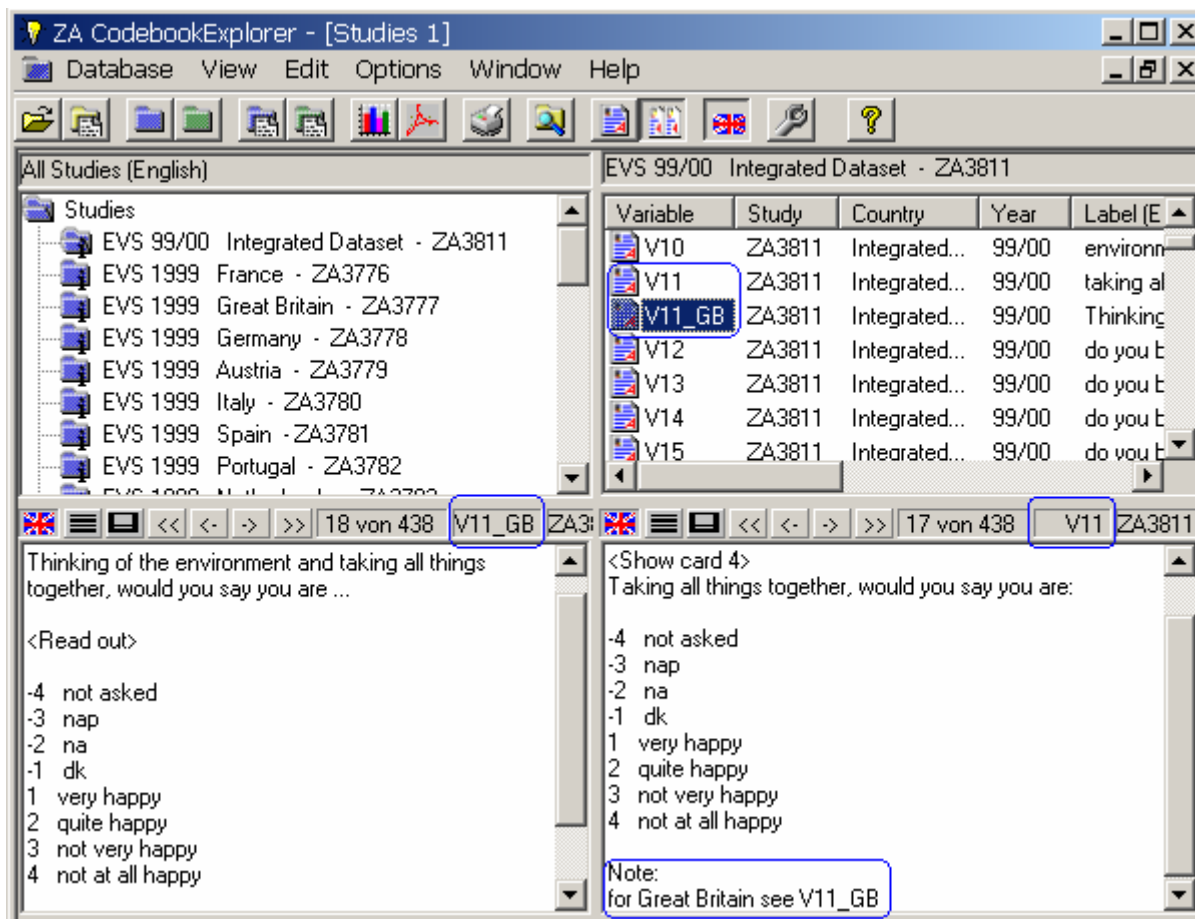


Additional information at study level can be retrieved from the respective nodes within the Explorer View. By selecting a study the standardized ZA Study Description for the corresponding study can be opened with information on the principal investigator, the data collection, the content of the study, the sample and publications. To enable the comparison of the applied question texts, the Master Questionnaire and all field questionnaires are available as PDF-files. In addition, the methodological questionnaires are included, which provide more detailed information on the translation of the questionnaire, the sampling procedures, fieldwork, weighting, the inclusion of optional and country-specific questions, etc.

Users who are interested in an exact comparison of the wording of question texts of different variables are supported by the tool "Doubled Variable Window" (see figure 4). In the "EVS 1999/2000" this tool enables the comparison of the country-specific question texts with the question wording in the Master Questionnaire. In our example two questions of the integrated data set will be compared. The right Variable Window shows variable "V11" (double-click in the Variable List). Below the question text a note or archival remark is added which indicates that there is a country-specific variable for Great Britain with the internet abbreviation "gb" as an exten-

sion. By a single click on “V11_gb” the question text of this country-specific variable is displayed in the left Variable Window. Now it is possible to compare both variables, identify the deviations in the question wording, and to decide if comparative analysis is applicable.

Figure 4 Doubled Variable Window (V11 and V11_gb)



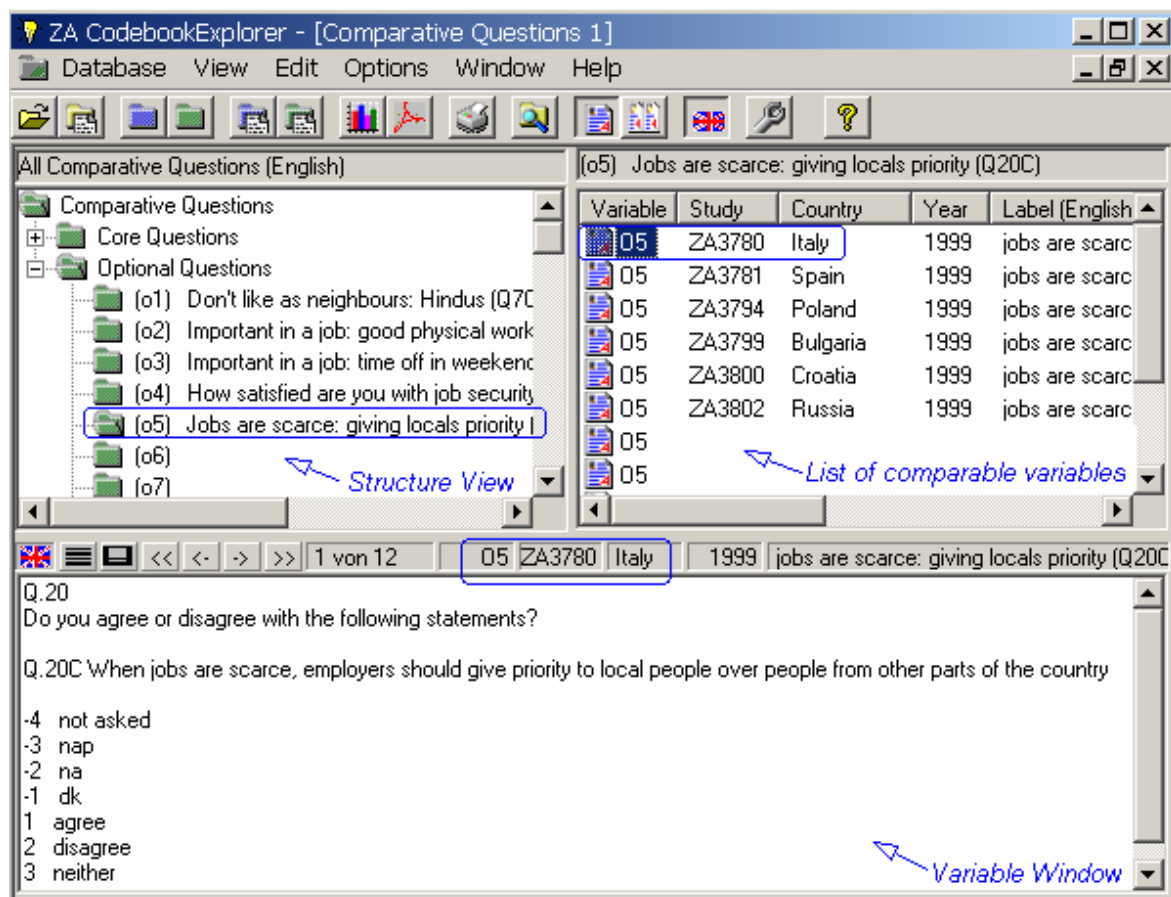
The Explorer View “Comparative Questions”

The Explorer View “Comparative Questions” contains only the integrated data set with the 438 core and optional variables (see figure 5).

- The left part comprises the *Structure View* with a hierarchical system of nodes. The node “Comparative Questions” consists of the sub-nodes “Core Questions” and “Optional Questions”. These sub-nodes again contain sub-nodes, one for each core or optional question of the integrated data set. The name of a sub-node consists of the variable name, the variable label and the number of the corresponding question in the Master Questionnaire.

- By selecting the sub-node "(O5) Jobs are scarce: giving locals priority? (Q20C)", the *List of Variables* on the right side of the Explorer View displays the countries where the same question was asked.
- Again, by clicking on the variable "O5" (e.g., in the Italian data set) the full question and answer texts become visible in the *Variable Window*.

Figure 5 Explorer View "Comparative Questions" (O5)



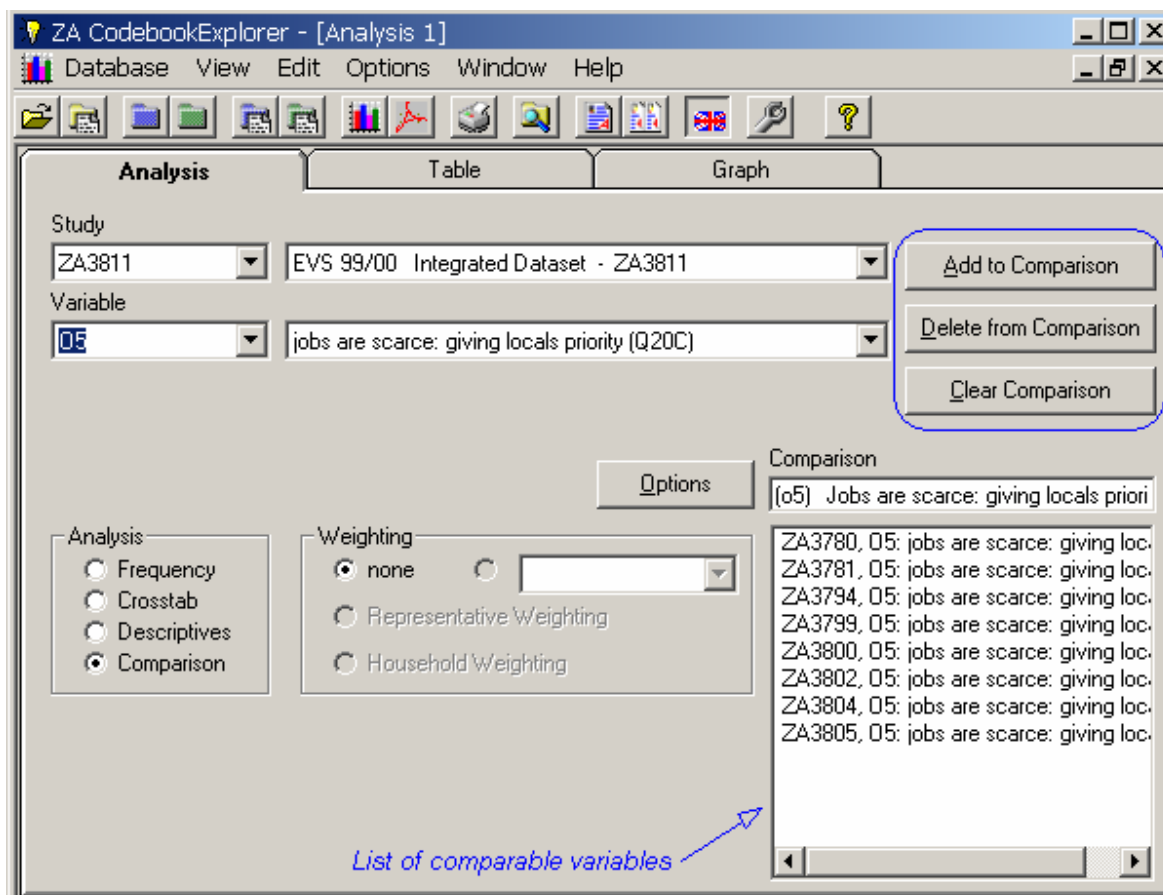
The user has the possibility to compose an own list of comparable variables. This Explorer View allows him to manipulate the nodes and the list of comparable variables. The existing nodes can be changed or deleted and new nodes can be added. Variables can be assigned to the list of comparable variables or can also be deleted.

The Analysis Window

The purpose of the Explorer View "Comparative Questions" is to directly enable comparative analyses. By selecting one of the sub-nodes, in our example "(O5) Jobs are scarce: giving locals priority? (Q20C)", and by opening the Analysis View all variables of this sub-node are added to the comparison automatically (see figure 6).

This list can be manipulated by using the buttons “Add to Comparison”, “Delete from Comparison” or “Clear the comparison”.

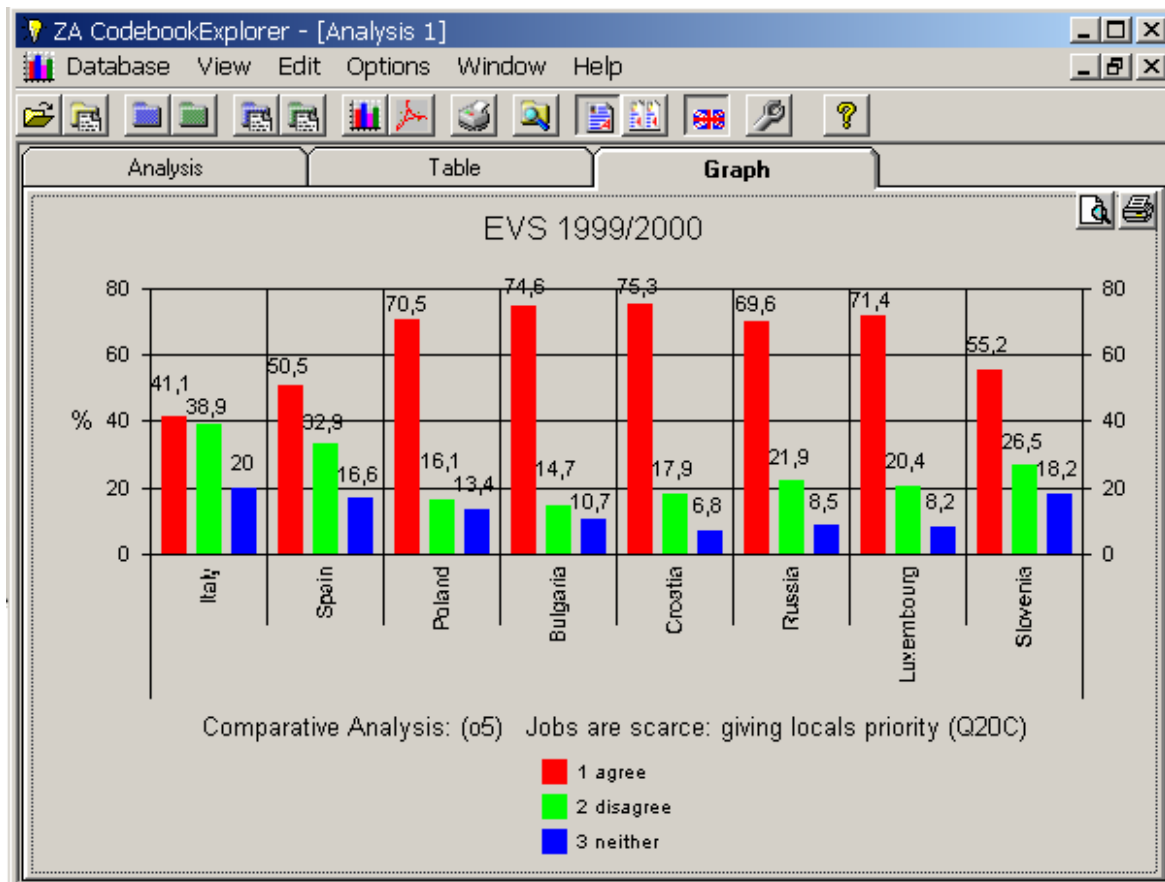
Figure 6 Analysis Window “Comparative Analysis - Options” (O5)



The following bar graph (see figure 7) shows the answers to variable “O5” with the question text “Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? When jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to local people over people from other parts of the country”³ in eight of the participating countries.

3 In this example missing values are not shown in the graph.

Figure 7 Analysis Window “Comparative Analysis - Graph” (O5)



This contribution concentrates on individual aspects of the information and functionality offered by the ZA Codebook Explorer. A more comprehensive presentation of its possibilities and detailed help can be found on the CD-ROM.

The CD-ROM is available at the ZA in Cologne and at the GESIS Branch Office Berlin from the beginning of July 2003 at a price of 50 EURO. Orders can be made via **Evelyn Brislinger** brislinger@za.uni-koeln.de.

For further information on the European Values Study see www.europeanvalues.nl. Questions and remarks can be mailed to evs@uvt.nl.