

ISR Italian Sociological Review

University of Verona, Italy
Department TeSIS, Section of Sociology

ISSN 2239-8589 | Editor in Chief Paola Di Nicola
Managing Editor Debora Viviani

Surveys on Household Consumption: An Overview of the Most Common Surveys

Marco Carradore*

How to cite

Carradore M. (2012). Surveys on Household Consumption: An Overview of the Most Common Surveys. [Italian Sociological Review, 2 (3), 219-233]

Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.13136/isr.v2i3.45>

[DOI: 10.13136/isr.v2i3.45]

1. Author/s information

* Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Italy

2. Contact authors' email addresses

* marco.carradore@unive.it

3. Article accepted for publication (*data*)

November 2012

**Additional information about
Italian Sociological Review**

can be found at:

[About ISR - Editorial Board - Manuscript submission](#)

Surveys on Household Consumption: An Overview of the Most Common Surveys¹

Marco Carradore

Marco Carradore
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Italy

Corresponding author:
Marco Carradore
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Italy
marco.carradore@unive.it

1. The sociology of consumption

This paper presents an overview of some of the most common surveys of household consumption. The number of sociology studies addressing household consumption has increased greatly over the last twenties years. The reasons for this growth are numerous, with the three most influential factors being: i) Bourdieu's (1984) analysis of consumption behaviour, a study which emphasised the importance of consumption practices in social differentiation; ii) the studies by Castells (1977), which have provoked an increased use of the concept of collective consumption; and iii) the diffusion of the culture of studying the consumption of goods, their use and significance. Consequent to these developments, sociologists have started to analyse many aspects of consumption. Some studies have focussed on the consumption behaviours of individuals – the micro-sociological perspective, while others have focussed on the consumer behaviours of an aggregate of individuals – the macro-sociological perspective; for example, some people buy certain products to indicate that they live in a particular way or that they believe something.

The study of consumption is not merely the analysis of consumed products. Indeed, this field of research addresses many different elements of product consumption, including: the decision processes involved in choosing one product over another; consumer practices; the quality of goods consumed; the price of goods; the strategies used to promote specific products; and a variety of other features. The analysis of these factors can be carried out in relation to the individual or on the societal level.

Moreover, changing consumption practices have undeniable characterised the development of society and can be correlated with the level of social status in people. Indeed, nowadays we can affirm that consumption is also associated with the diffuse use of information technology within society. Thanks to the widespread availability of the Internet, an increasing portion of society is starting to buy and even exchange products online. What is more, consumption practice has become a method through which people use to communicate with others.

In some countries, the current economic crisis has reduced as well as modified both individual and family consumption practices, thus the need to study these practices has become increasingly important. The present overview, does not help us understand the changes in individual and family behaviours and identify new strategies for combating the economic crisis, rather it presents a summary of the most common surveys about household consumption. The surveys addressed in this essay consider household consumption as well as general family finances. Some other surveys are also considered that do not specifically regard consumption, but which are nevertheless useful here because they address variables associated with household finances or general consumption.

¹ I wish to thank Mark Taylor of Essex University and Bruno Hopp of GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences Data Archive for the Social Sciences (DAS) Germany.

All of the surveys considered were funded by public institutions, public utility foundations or consumer organisations; none were sponsored by private companies.

In some cases, especially for some international surveys, like the Household Budget Survey (HBS) and the Household Finance and Consumption Network (HFCN), survey information is difficult to recognise accurately because such supranational surveys collect their data from nationals' survey, which may be carried out in different ways. For example, in some countries the HBS is carried out every year and in other countries only every five years. Of consequence, it is only possible to perform an international comparative study every five years.

The surveys described here concern the European area and they are classified into three groups: surveys that regard the European area, national areas or local areas. Here, the last cluster is relative to Italy. As much information about each survey is provided as was possible to obtain, including items such as the name of the principal investigator, the sponsoring institution (and thus owner of the data), the surveyed topics, the sampling procedure and interview techniques used, the frequency of data collection and the survey's website address. In some cases, some example questions are also provided.

In this work, I have tried to homogenise survey information, thus the data presented are only a synthesis. For more specific information, the web page of each survey should be consulted. It is also possible that some information may have been updated since the drafting of this overview, thus it is once again advisable to refer to original data sources.

2. International household consumption surveys

This section describes some international surveys that are not specifically about consumption sociology. Instead, they address other issues that nevertheless provide very useful variables for the study of individual/family economic conditions, which can be used as proxies of household consumption. Two specific European surveys about household consumption are also illustrated.

The following surveys are described:

- International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)
- European Social Survey (ESS)
- Eurobarometer
- Household Budget Survey (HBS)
- Household Finance and Consumption Network (HFCN)

Name of survey: International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)

Institutional sponsor: Member countries (currently 48 countries)

Principal investigator: Each member country performs the survey within its own country

Depositor: Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Data Archive for the Social Sciences (GESIS)

Topics: Various

Last three topics:

- 2010 Environment III
- 2011 Health
- 2012 Family, Work and Gender Roles IV

Geographic coverage: EU countries and other countries from other continents

Data collection: The programme started in 1984 (first survey was in 1985)

Frequency of data collection: Annually

Survey period: Not specified

Sampling Procedure: Stratified three-stage probability sampling stages

The variables used are: area units, households and number of persons.

The people interviewed were 18 years or older and resident within private households in each participating country, regardless of nationality and citizenship, language or legal status.

Homeless and institutional populations are excluded

Sample size: Different for each country

Unit of analysis: Individuals

Mode of data collection: Face-to-face and postal interviews

Access condition: Free after registering with Data Archive for the Social Sciences (GESIS)

Related publications: ISSP News and many research reports (for list of research reports see ISSP bibliography)

Web page: <http://www.issp.org/>

Language(s) of materials: English

Note: This research does not analyse household consumption but collects other useful information associated with family consumption

Some examples of the variables are:

Questionnaire ISSP 2012 (from the most recent survey):

N 13. Who do you think should primarily cover the costs of childcare for children under school age? *Please tick one box only*

- The family
- The government/public funds
- The employers
- Can't choose

N 15. And who do you think should primarily cover the costs of this help to these elderly people? *Please tick one box only*

- The elderly people themselves or their family
- The government/public funds
- Can't choose

R 18. (2002: 7) How do you and your spouse/partner organise the income that one or both of you receive? Please choose the option that comes closest. *Please tick one box only*

- I manage all the money and give my spouse/partner his/her share
- My spouse/partner manages all the money and gives me my share
- We pool all the money and each take out what we need
- We pool some of the money and keep the rest separate
- We each keep our own money separate

R 19. (2002: 8a-f) In your household who does the following things ...?

Please tick one box only

- Always me
- Usually me
- About equal or both together
- Usually my spouse/partner
- Always my spouse/partner
- Is done by a third person
- Can't choose

Name of survey: European Social Survey (ESS)

Institutional sponsor: the project is funded jointly by the European Commission, the European Science Foundation and academic funding bodies in each participating country

Principal investigator: European Science Foundation and National academic institutions

Depositor: Consortium Centre for Comparative Social Surveys at City University London, UK

The six other institutions represented are:

- NSD, Norway
- GESIS, Germany
- The Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP, Netherlands
- Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain
- University of Leuven, Belgium
- University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Topics: The questionnaire includes two main sections, each consisting of approximately 120 items; a 'core' module, which remains relatively constant from round to round, plus two or more 'rotating' modules, repeated at intervals. The core module aims to monitor change and continuity in a wide range of social variables, including: media use, social and public trust, political interest and participation, socio-political orientations, governance and efficacy, morals, political and social values, social exclusion, national, ethnic and religious allegiances, well-being, health and security, human values, demographics and socio-economics.

Geographic coverage: EU countries

Data collection: Survey started in 2002

Frequency of data collection: Biennial cross-sectional survey

Survey period:

- Round 1 year 2002
- Round 2 year 2004
- Round 3 year 2006
- Round 4 year 2008
- Round 5 year 2010

Sampling Procedure: The objective of the ESS sampling strategy is the "design and implementation of workable and equivalent sampling strategies in all participating countries". The requirement is for random (probability) samples with comparable estimates based on full coverage of the eligible residential populations aged 15 years and above.

The actual method of achieving this requirement varies considerably between participating countries, depending on their access to sampling sources and other considerations. But they are all based on the same basic principles of strict probability and representativeness.

In terms of size, the minimum effective sample size (as required by ESS) is 1,500, or 800 for countries with less than 2 million people

Sample size: Different for each country

Unit of analysis: Individuals

Mode of data collection: Face-to-face

Access condition: The data are available free of charge and without restrictions for not-for-profit purposes. To access data files one has to register as an ESS data user.

Related publications: ESS Bibliography

Web page: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>

Language(s) of materials: English

Note: Some examples of the variables:

Round 5 2010/2011

Card 70 Using this card, please tell me to what extent each of the following has applied to you in the last three years. *Read out each statement and code in grid.*

Interviewer: If respondents never took holidays or bought no new household equipment in the last three years code as 00.

- G8 I have had to manage on a lower household income.
- G9 I have had to draw on my savings or get into debt to cover ordinary living expenses.
- G10 I have had to cut back on holidays or new household equipment.

Grid

Not at all						A great deal	(Don't know)
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	88

Round 3 2006/7

F31 CARD 52 Please consider the income of all household members and any income which may be received by the household as a whole. What is the main source of income in your household?
Please use this card.

- 01 Wages or salaries
- 02 Income from self-employment (excluding farming)
- 03 Income from farming
- 04 Pensions
- 05 Unemployment/redundancy benefit
- 06 Any other social benefits or grants
- 07 Income from investment, savings, insurance or property
- 08 Income from other sources
- 77 (Refused)
- 88 (Don't know)

Name of survey: Eurobarometer

Institutional sponsor: European Commission

Principal investigator: European Commission, DG Communication, Eurobarometer Sector

Depositor: European Commission

Topics: Regular standard module on attitudes towards European unification issues, institutions and policies. Topical modules on issues, such as: energy, the environment, gender roles, family, youth, the elderly, health related issues, poverty, regional identity, science and technology, consumer behaviour

Geographic coverage: European area (EC/EU member and candidate countries)

Data collection: The programme started in 1973

Frequency of data collection: Bi-annual (Standard Eurobarometer)

Survey period: Spring and autumn (additional surveys on special topics have also been included since 1990)

Sampling Procedure: All member states have adopted a multi-stage, random (probability) sampling design, based on the random selection of sampling points after stratification by the distribution of the national resident population in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas, i.e. proportional to the population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to the population density. These primary sampling units (PSU) are selected from each of the administrative regions in each country.

In the second stage, a cluster of addresses is selected from each sampled PSU. Addresses are chosen systematically using standard random route procedures, beginning with an initial address selected at random.

In each household, a respondent is selected by a random procedure, such as the first birthday method. Up to two recalls are made to obtain an interview with the selected respondent. No more

than one interview is conducted in each household. In the case of special target groups or oversamples, the sampling procedure may differ (e.g. quota sampling).

Other sampling methods (e.g. quota sampling) were applied until the late eighties and differed between countries

Sample size: Standard sample size n=1000, except for small countries like Luxembourg, Malta, and Cyprus (500), and Northern Ireland (300)

Unit of analysis: Individuals

Mode of data collection: Face-to-face interviews, and where possible CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview) is used

Access condition: Free online access after registration at Data Archive for the Social Sciences

Related publications: Standard and Special Eurobarometer reports are published by the European Commission

Web page: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

Language(s) of materials: the principal languages are English, French and German, but the materials are also translated into the languages of the participating countries

Note: Some examples of variables:

Eurobarometer 73.2+3 - Feb - Apr 2010 - ZA 5236

QA16

Thinking about (*national*) consumer organisations or public agencies/authorities, can you please name any organisations representing and protecting consumers in (*our country*) that you have heard of?

QA19

When did you last buy or order goods or services for private use via a website? Note that ordering or purchasing goods or services by email is not considered as a purchase or order over the Internet.

- 1 Within the last 3 months
- 2 Between 3 months and a year ago
- 3 More than one year ago
- 4 Never
- 5 Don't know

QA24

Imagine you buying goods or services over the Internet from a website based in another EU country which aims at (*national*) consumers because the site is available in (*language*), showing prices in (*local currency*) and offers delivery to (*our country*). Which consumer protection laws apply to the transaction?

- 1 The laws of (*our country*)
- 2 The laws of the country of the trader
- 3 Both (*spontaneous*)
- 4 It depends (*spontaneous*)
- 5 Don't know

Eurobarometer 74.1 - Aug - Sept 2010 - ZA 5237

QD1

For each of the following products or services, please tell me if you check its origin and if this influences your decision when you buy it. If you don't buy these products or services, but do intend

to do so in the future, please tell me if you would check its origin and if this would influence your decision if you were buying it.

- a) Food
- b) Textiles/clothes
- c) Electronic devices
- d) Cars/motorbikes
- e) High tech services, such as a mobile phone services

Answers

- 1. Yes, you check its origin and this influences your decision
- 2. Yes, you check its origin but this does not influence your decision
- 3. No, you do not check its origin
- 4. Don't know

Moreover, on the Eurobarometer page of the GESIS website under "special topics" specific Eurobarometer surveys can be found that address the following themes concerning consumer behaviour:

- Consumer associations
- Consumer goods: quality
- Consumer rights
- Food products (which includes: Genetically modified food)
- Product safety
- Purchasing behaviour (which includes: Innovation)
- Purchasing across borders
- Purchasing via Internet
- Service products (which includes: Financial services, Health services and Social services)

Name of survey: Household Budget Survey (HBS)

Institutional sponsor: Each member country sponsors its own survey

Principal investigator: Each member country performs the survey within its own country

Depositor: Eurostat for the surveys carried out in years 1988, 1994, 1999 and 2005

Topics: Household expenditure on goods, services and living conditions

Geographic coverage: EU countries (actually in 27 EU member state)

Data collection: The programme started at the start of the 1960's

Frequency of data collection: The surveys vary between countries in terms of frequency, timing, content and structure. Two-thirds of the Member States carry out annual surveys, while the remainder have five-year or even longer intervals between surveys

Survey period: different for each country

Sampling Procedure: Probability sampling is used in the large majority of surveys in the EU and it is representative at either the regional or national level; it varies from country to country

Sample size: Variable for each country

Unit of analysis: Private households, dwellings or head of the household

Mode of data collection: Household diary and interviews

Access condition: The data are free on the Eurostat website for the aggregate level and have been published every five years since 1988

Related publications: publications regarding the statistics can be found on the Eurostat website and on the national websites of each participating country

Web page:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/household_budget_surveys/Publications

Language(s) of materials: English

Note: Eurostat collects its data from each national HBS, thus for more detailed information it is better to check the website for each national survey

Name of survey: Household Finance and Consumption Network (HFCN)

Institutional sponsor: Governing Council of the European Central Bank in collaboration with some national statistical institutes

Principal investigator: European Central Bank and some national statistical institutes

Depositor: European Central Bank and some national statistical institutes

Topics: Household finances and consumption, specifically: real and financial assets, liabilities, consumption and saving, income and employment, future pension entitlements, intergenerational transfers and gifts, attitudes to risk

Geographic coverage: EU countries participating in the network

Data collection: The programme started in 2006 and the first survey took place in late 2010/early 2011 in most countries

Frequency of data collection: The surveys vary between countries in terms of frequency

Survey period: different for each country

Sampling procedure: Probability sampling is used in the large majority of surveys in the EU countries participating in the network

Sample size: Different for each country

Unit of analysis: Household-level

Mode of data collection: Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI)

Access condition: The HFCN plans to make anonymised data available to the research community in early 2013; the results of research in the field of household finance and consumption are currently only available for a few countries

Related publications: some publications can be found on the website of the European Central Bank, as can a list of all the National Central Banks and National Statistical Institutes participating in the HFCS

Web page: http://www.ecb.int/home/html/researcher_hfcn.en.html

Language(s) of materials: English

Note: At present, the results of studies in the field of household finance and consumption are only available for a few countries. Given the differences between countries – whether related to institutional arrangements or specific economic circumstances – general conclusions cannot be easily drawn on the basis of results for single economies. The current lack of comparable data prevents any analysis from being carried out for the euro area as a whole. Moreover, a standardisation process is still in progress.

Other related initiatives have been carried out in many countries, such as: the Household Finance and Consumption Survey in Finland, the Panel on Household Finance in German and the Household Budget Survey in Portugal (each of these surveys are named differently in their originating country, for example the Portuguese name for the Household Budget Survey is *Inquérito às Despesas das Famílias*). The Italian Survey about Household Income and Wealth (SHIW) is described in the following section

Another interesting survey about consumption is the Flas Eurobarometer, associated to the Eurobarometer survey. The Flas Eurobarometer is not carried out on a regular basis and the interview mode employed for data collection is principally telephone interview. These surveys are not indicated here because they are not carried out on a continual and regular basis. The Flas Eurobarometer addresses various topics, the key ones being:

- Consumer associations
- Consumer goods: quality
- Consumer rights

- Food products (including genetically modified food)
- Product safety
- Purchasing behaviour (including innovation)
- Purchasing across borders
- Purchasing via Internet
- Service products (including financial services, health services and social services)

Useful information about these surveys can be found on the following web page:

<http://www.gesis.org/eurobarometer-data-service/survey-series/flash-eb/study-overview/#c9804>

Other information about past consumer behaviours can be obtained from the European Community Household Panel (ECHP). The ECHP was a panel survey that ran from 1994 to 2001 (8 waves) in which a sample of households and people were interviewed on a yearly basis. The topics surveyed were: income, financial situation, working life, housing situation, social relations and health, as well as other biographical information. The advantage of the ECHP consists in the homogeneity of the sampling procedures and in the questionnaires used across countries, which allows a high level of cross-country comparability. The ECHP webpage is: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/echp>.

3. National surveys of household economic conditions

Many surveys of household consumption also exist on the national level. For example, the Household Budget Survey (HBS) is carried out in many countries, including: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom; although many differences in the survey exist between countries.

The section provides some examples of national consumption surveys that are different from the HBS, but that nevertheless focus on consumption.

The examples reported are:

- Survey on Final Energy Consumption in Households (Cyprus)
- Consumer Behaviour Monitor (Belgium)
- Household Finances (Sweden)
- Living Costs and Food Survey (United Kingdom)
- British Household Panel Survey (United Kingdom)
- Household Consumption Survey (Italy)
- Survey on Household Income and Wealth (Italy)
- National survey of household consumption strategies (Italy)

Country: Cyprus

Name of survey: Survey on Final Energy Consumption in Households, 2009

Institutional sponsor: the European Commission and Statistical Service of Cyprus

Principal investigator: Statistical Service of Cyprus

Depositor: Statistical Service of Cyprus

Topics: The fundamental objective of the survey was to obtain a reliable estimate of the final energy consumption of a typical Cypriot household according to end use category (space heating, water heating, space cooling, cooking, electrical appliances and lighting). The respondents were also asked to estimate the amount of money spent on energy consumption in a year (i.e. how much they spend on heating and how much they spend on energy consumption in total)

Geographic coverage: The Government controlled area of Cyprus

Data collection: The survey was carried out during autumn 2010 and the reference year was 2009 (i.e. from 1/1/2009 through to 31/12/2009)

Frequency of data collection: The survey took place only once as a pilot survey

Survey period: From September 2010 until January 2011

Sampling procedure: The survey was aimed at households, whose residents had their permanent or usual residence in Cyprus, irrespective of their citizenship or country of origin. The sampling frame used for sample selection was the Population Census 2001 register. New housing units constructed since 2001, provided by the Electricity Authority of Cyprus (EAC), were also added to the frame. The sample frame of households was stratified into urban and rural strata by administrative district, so that nine strata were formed. Simple random sampling without replacement was applied so that the allocation of the sample was proportional to the size of each stratum

Sample size: 3.300 households

Unit of analysis: Households

Mode of data collection: Data collection was conducted by means of personal interviews in households. For this purpose, 15 interviewers were employed on a casual basis

Access condition: Summary data for the whole sample population is freely available online

Related publications: Published material is available regarding the survey strategy and some tables of data analysis

Web page:

http://www.cystat.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/energy_environment_81main_en/energy_environment_81main_en?OpenForm&sub=1&sel=2

Language(s) of materials: Most parts of the survey were carried out in Greek, but the manuals used for the survey are in English

Country: Belgium

Name of survey: Consumer Behaviour Monitor

Institutional sponsor: CRIOC - Centre de recherche et d'information des organisations de consommateurs (Research and Information Centre of Consumer Organisations)

Principal investigator: CRIOC - Centre de recherche et d'information des organisations de consommateurs (Research and Information Centre of Consumer Organisations)

Depositor: CRIOC - Centre de recherche et d'information des organisations de consommateurs

Topics: Consumer behaviours and food and non-food product choices

Geographic coverage: Belgium

Data collection: The programme started in 2002

Frequency of data collection: Annually

Survey period: The last survey took place in April 2012

Sampling procedure: Stratified random sample

Sample size: 654 interviews

Unit of analysis: Households

Mode of data collection: Face-to-face interview

Access condition: It is necessary to contact CRIOC

Related publications: Consumer Behaviour Monitor Report

Web page: <http://www.crioc.be/>

Language(s) of materials: Most parts of the survey were carried out in French

Note: CRIOC is not a public institution but a consumer organisation, thus the survey was included in the present analysis

Country: Sweden

Name of survey: Household Finances

Institutional sponsor: The Swedish Ministry of Finance

Principal investigator: Statistics Sweden; Economic Welfare Unit

Depositor: Statistics Sweden

Topics: The aims of the survey are: to map the distribution of disposable income among households, to illustrate income structures and to describe the living situation and living expenses for various types of household.

The official housing statistics have been reported in the Household Finances Survey since 2003

Geographic coverage: Sweden

Data collection: Survey started in 1975

Frequency of data collection: Yearly

Survey period: January - June

Sampling procedure: The sample consists of the individuals within a household. The sampling technique is a stratified random sample without replacement. The sample is stratified by type of dwelling, household composition and age

Sample size: 17,000 households

Unit of analysis: Households and individuals

Mode of data collection: CATI and register based income data.

Access condition: Restricted, due to the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400)

Related publications: Some publications are available on the survey's website:

http://www.scb.se/Pages/ProductTables___7284.aspx

Web page: www.scb.se/HE0103-EN

Language(s) of materials: Swedish and English

Country: United Kingdom

Name of survey: Living Costs and Food Survey

Institutional sponsor: Office for National Statistics and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Principal investigator: Office for National Statistics and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Depositor: Office for National Statistics

Topics: Expenditure and food survey, consumer behaviour, nutrition, family life and marriage, and income, property and investment

Geographic coverage: United Kingdom

Data collection: The programme was initiated in 1957 and continued until 2001 as the *Family Expenditure Survey* (FES) and *National Food Survey* (NFS). In April 2001, these surveys were combined to form the *Expenditure and Food Survey* (EFS), which completely replaced both series. Since January 2008, the EFS became known as the *Living Costs and Food* (LCF) module of the *Integrated Household Survey* (IHS)

Frequency of data collection: Annually

Survey period: From January to December

Sampling procedure: Multi-stage stratified random sample. Due to funding constraints, since January 2010 the Northern Ireland (NI) sample used for the LCF has been reduced to a sample proportional to the NI population relative to the UK

Sample size: 5,116 households in Great Britain and 147 in Northern Ireland

Unit of analysis: Households

Mode of data collection: Face-to-face interview and diaries

Access condition: Free after registration

Related publications: Reports based on the survey

Web page: <http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/efsTitles.asp>

Language(s) of materials: English

Country: United Kingdom

Name of survey: British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)

Institutional sponsor: [Economic and Social Research Council](#)

Principal investigator: Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex, Wivenhoe, Park Colchester

Depositor: UK Data Archive

Topics: Household composition, housing conditions, residential mobility, education and training, health and the usage of health services, labour market behaviour, socio-economic values, and income from employment, benefits and pensions

Geographic coverage: United Kingdom

Data collection: Survey began in 1991

Frequency of data collection: Annually

Survey period: From January to December

Sampling procedure: The sample is representative of British residents. The wave 1 panel consists of some 5,500 households and 10,300 individuals drawn from 250 areas of Great Britain. Additional samples of 1,500 households in each of Scotland and Wales were added to the main sample in 1999, and in 2001 a sample of 2,000 households in Northern Ireland was added, making the panel suitable for UK-wide research

Sample size: The BHPS comprises a nationally representative sample of around 5,500 households and over 10,000 individuals who are re-interviewed each year

Unit of analysis: Households

Mode of data collection: CAPI, telephone interview and face-to-face interview. Every adult member of the sampled households is interviewed in this survey

Access condition: Free after registration

Related publications: Reports based on the survey

Web page: <http://www.esds.ac.uk/longitudinal/access/bhps/L33196.asp>

Language(s) of materials: English

Country: Italy

Name of survey: Household Consumption Survey

Institutional sponsor: The National Institute for Statistics (Istat)

Principal investigator: Istat

Depositor: Istat

Topics: Household conditions, household spending and household consumptions

Geographic coverage: Italy

Data collection: The survey was started in 1968 and revisited in 1997

Frequency of data collection: Annually

Survey period: During all months

Sampling procedure: The sample for the survey is drawn in two probability sampling stages, with municipalities and households as the primary and secondary sampling units, respectively. Thus Italy is divided into 228 strata by region, population size and municipality.

The individual households to be interviewed are then selected randomly from each town's register

Sample size: Approximately 24,000 families

Unit of analysis: Families

Modes of data collection: Self-completion questionnaire and face-to-face interview

Access condition: Free

Related publications: Survey reports

Web page: <http://www.istat.it/it/>

Language(s) of materials: Italian

Country: Italy

Name of survey: Survey on Household Income and Wealth (SHIW)

Institutional sponsor: Bank of Italy

Principal investigator: Bank of Italy

Depositor: Bank of Italy

Topics: Incomes and savings of Italian households. The survey currently includes wealth and other aspects of household economic and financial behaviour, such as payment method choices

Geographic coverage: Italy

Data collection: Survey began in the 1960s

Frequency of data collection: Once every two years

Survey period: Usually between January and September

Sampling procedure: The sample for the survey is drawn in two stages, with municipalities and households as the primary and secondary sampling units, respectively. Before the primary units are selected, they are stratified by region and population size.

Within each stratum, the municipalities in which interviews are to be conducted are selected to include all those with a population of more than 40,000 and those with panel households (*self-representing* municipalities), while the smaller towns are selected on the basis of probability-proportional-to-size (PPS). The individual households to be interviewed are then selected randomly

Sample size: 8,000 households (24,000 individuals) distributed across approximately 350 Italian municipalities

Unit of analysis: Families

Mode of data collection: Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing programme (CAPI) and paper-based questionnaires (PAPI, Paper-And-pencil Personal Interviewing)

Access condition: Free

Related publications: Supplements to the Bank of Italy's Statistical Bulletin

Web page: <http://www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/indcamp/bilfait>

Language(s) of materials: Italian and English

Country: Italy

Name of survey: National survey of household consumption strategies (Osservatorio nazionale sulle strategie di consumo familiare)

Institutional sponsor: Centre for Social Research (University of Verona) and SWG (private company)

Principal investigator: Researchers from the Centre for Social Research (University of Verona)

Depositor: Centre for Social Research (University of Verona)

Topics: Family consumption, shopping, life-style, welfare, social services, health care services

Geographic coverage: Italy

Data collection: Survey started in December 2009

Frequency of data collection: Annually

Survey period: December 2009 (first survey)

Sampling procedure: Proportional stratified random sample by sex, age and residence area (northwest, northeast, central and southern Italy and the Italian islands)

Sample size: About 2,000 people (representative of the population residing in Italy on 1st January 2009 who were aged at least 25 years)

Unit of analysis: Individuals

Mode of data collection: CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing)

Access condition: Restricted

Related publications: Newsletter: "Osservatorio nazionale sulle strategie di consumo delle famiglie italiane" (National survey of Italian family consumption strategies)

Web page: <http://profs.formazione.univr.it/crisvr/ricerche/osservatorio/>

Language(s) of materials: Italian

Note: Example questions

1) In your family, who decides to buy:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| a) food | <i>answer</i> | me; partner; together ... |
| b) clothes | | me; partner; together ... |
| c) furniture | | me; partner; together ... |
| d) medicine | | me; partner; together ... |
| e) technology products | | me; partner; together ... |

2) When you choose the shopping centre, for buying something, how important is it for you:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| a) product quality | <i>answer</i> | 1;2;3;4;5;6;7;8;9;10 |
| b) cheaper prices | | 1;2;3;4;5;6;7;8;9;10 |
| c) trust in the seller | | 1;2;3;4;5;6;7;8;9;10 |

These are the most important surveys relevant to household consumption. For more specific information, the reader is advised to consult the relevant website of the National Statistics Office for the country of interest. Many more surveys exist that have been conducted by private company, but these are not included in the present overview.

4. Local surveys in Italy

This section summarises three Italian local surveys which address household consumption. The surveys considered here were carried out by public institutions (City Council or Chamber of Commerce) and they consider their respective municipality area or sub-national regions.

Name of survey: Family consumption survey of the Piedmont Region

Institutional sponsor: Chamber of Commerce of the Piedmont Region and the Union of Chambers of Commerce of Piedmont (UnionCamere del Piemonte)

Principal investigator: Union of Chambers of Commerce of Piedmont

Depositor: Union of Chambers of Commerce of Piedmont

Topics: Household consumption

Geographic coverage: The main towns in the Piedmont Region

Data collection: Survey started in 2002

Frequency of data collection: Annually

Survey period: Different months

Sampling procedure: The sample is drawn by proportional quota sampling. The individual households to be interviewed are then selected by characteristics of household components

Sample size: Approximately 810 families

Unit of analysis: Family

Mode of data collection: Self-completion questionnaire and interview

Access condition: Restricted

Related publications: Survey report

Web page: http://www.pie.camcom.it/Page/t04/view_html?idp=594

Language(s) of materials: Italian

Name of survey: Family consumption survey

Institutional sponsor: Milan Chamber of Commerce and the Milan City Council

Principal investigator: Milan Chamber of Commerce

Depositor: Milan Chamber of Commerce and Milan City Council

Topics: Family expenditures for the home, transport, clothing, free time and health

Geographic coverage: The Milan district

Data collection: Survey started in 2005

Frequency of data collection: Annually
Survey period: From March to February 2013
Sampling procedure: The sample for the survey is selected by number of household components, average number of household members and residential area
Sample size: More than 900 families
Unit of analysis: Family
Mode of data collection: Self-completion questionnaire
Access condition: Restricted
Related publications: Survey report
Web page: <http://www.milano.consumi.info/>
Language(s) of materials: Italian

Name of survey: Family consumption survey
Institutional sponsor: Turin Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with Ascom Turin (Association of Trade, Tourism and Service Enterprises) and Confesercenti Turin (Confederation of Trade, Tourism and Service Enterprises)
Principal investigator: Ascom
Depositor: Turin Chamber of Commerce
Topics: Monthly consumption expenditures per household
Geographic coverage: The Turin district
Data collection: Survey started in 1996
Frequency of data collection: Annually
Survey period: From March to January of 2013
Sampling procedure: The sample is drawn by proportional quota sampling. The individual households to be interviewed are then selected by household component characteristics. The households are selected from local registers
Sample size: Approximately 220 families
Unit of analysis: Family
Mode of data collection: Self-completion questionnaire and interview
Access condition: Restricted
Related publications: Survey report
Web page: http://www.to.camcom.it/Page/t08/view_html?idp=6559
Language(s) of materials: Italian

As indicated above, the most local surveys are carried out by the Chamber of Commerce and access to the data is restricted. However, specific information about data access can be obtained by contacting the Institutional sponsor directly.

References

- Bourdieu P. (1984), *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge
Castells M. (1977), *The Urban Question. A Marxist Approach*, London, Edward Arnold
Secondulfo D. (1995), *Ditelo con i fiori. Strutture del consumo e comunicazione sociale*, FrancoAngeli, Milano
Secondulfo D. (2012), *Sociologia del consumo e della cultura materiale*, FrancoAngeli, Milano