MEMBERSHIP IN TRADE UNION - General Target Variable Report (GVR)

1. General Information

The target variable T_MEMBER_UNION measures respondents' current membership (i.e. at the time of the interview) in trade unions or similar organizations. T_MEMBER_UNION is a dichotomous variable (see Table 1.1). Value 1 indicates that a respondent belongs to a trade/labor union or a trade/labor union or similar organization (farmers association, professional association, professional societies, employer associations). Value 0 indicates that a respondent is not a member of a trade/labor union or a similar organization. The target variable T_MEMBER_UNION is accompanied by a harmonization control variable C_MEMBER_UNION_EXTEND, which flags survey items that ask not only about a trade union but also other professional organizations within the same question.

The target variable report for T_MEMBER_UNION is accompanied by the following Excel documents:

- one Detailed Variable Report (DVR): T_MEMBER_UNION_DVR_SDR2.xlsx. DVR Excel files in SDR2 systemize all information about source variables that were used for harmonization into a given target variable of the SDR2 database;
- one Crosswalk Table (CWT): T_MEMBER_UNION_CWT_SDR2.xlsx. CWT Excel files in SDR2 contain details about mapping of source values to target values.

Table 1.1 T_MEMBER_UNION: Description of the target, source, and control variables

	Variable description	**Variable name**	**Variable values**[a]
Target variable	Being member of a trade union or a similar organization (farmers association, professional association, professional societies, employer associations) at the time of the interview	T_ MEMBER_UNION	0 = currently not member 1 = currently member
Source variables			See:T_MEMBER_UNION_DVR_SDR2.xlsx T_MEMBER_UNION_CWT_SDR2.xlsx

Control variable	Extended definition of membership in trade union	C_MEMBER_UNION_EXTEND	0 = Membership in trade union 1 = Membership in trade union or professional organization

[a] Missing values are assigned according to the SDR2 missing codes schema, provided in the Appendix.

2. Survey Projects

Source variables that we used for T_MEMBER_UNION appear in 18 international survey projects: ABS, AFB, ARB, ASES, CDCEE, CNEP, EB, ESS, EVS, ISSP, LB, LITS, NBB, NEB, PA1, PA2, PPE7N, WVS, 81 waves and 1546 national surveys. The data cover 123 countries and years from 1967 to 2017.

3. General Rules and Procedures

3.1. Source data description

To construct the target variable T_MEMBER_UNION, we use source items providing information about respondents' declared membership in trade unions, labor unions, trade unions or similar organizations (ESS/1-8 `mbtru`), trade unions or professional organizations (EB/49 `v268`), trade unions or professional associations (ARB/2 `q5013`), and trade union or farmers association (AFB/3 `q28b`) at the time of the interview. Some surveys ask specifically about membership in trade unions. Others provide a list of organizations, for respondents to mark membership in; the maximum number of organizations a respondent can name is three (ABS and CNEP/4 United States).

Source items exhibit some variation in terms of answer options and value labels. Some surveys only ask about the fact of membership or belonging, providing binary answer options, such as 'yes' and 'no,' 'belongs' and 'does not belong', 'mentioned' and 'not mentioned.' Others enable respondents to mark whether they are active or inactive members (e.g., AFB/2 `q24b`), whether they are members currently or were previously (ESS), for how many years they have been members (PPE7N Austria), and who in their family belongs to a trade union (ISJP/1-2 `v2121`, NEB/4 `q35`).

Some surveys ask about "trade/labor union" membership as part of a battery of organizations, e.g., "Now I am going to read out a list of groups that people join or attend. For each one, could you tell me whether you are an official leader, an active member, an inactive member, or not a member: A trade union or farmers association/club/cooperative?" (AFB/2 `q24b`). One survey

(NEB/7 G4B) provides information on whether there is a trade union at respondent's place of work.

3.2. Rules of transformation of source variables into target variable

For ex-post harmonization, we select only source variables that refer to respondents' declared membership in trade unions or similar organizations at the time of the interview. In surveys that record membership in a variety of organizations via separate variables, we harmonize only the variable pertaining to trade union membership.

We assign the target value 0 whenever respondents state that they are not a member of a trade union or similar organization (e.g. 'no', 'not a member', 'does not belong to any organization', 'not marked', 'not mentioned', 'other').

We assign the target value 1 whenever respondents report membership in a trade union or professional organization (such as 'yes', 'member', 'belong', 'mentioned', 'marked', 'active member', 'inactive member'). This rule applies to dummy source variables, as well as to source variables asking about intensity of belonging to a union (LB/2007 p65nb, and PPE7N Yugoslavia V130), or active or passive membership (e.g. in ISSP/2014 V27 "1|Belong and actively participate" and "2|Belong but don't actively participate" were both coded as 1). In cases when a question refers to respondent's family (NEB/4 q35: "Are you or another member of your household a member of a trade union?"), only the value label that refers to the respondent is coded as 1.

When source questions are open, as in CNEP/3 Taiwan ("Could you please tell me if you belong to any of the types of organizations?"), or when they ask respondents to write down three of the most important organizations or formal groups they belong to (ABS/2-4), we code T_MEMBER_UNION and C_MEMBER_UNION_EXTENDED respectively, depending if a respondent indicates membership in a trade union or organizations other than trade unions.

Missing values and different situations that warrant to be treated as missing data are coded according to the SDR2 missing codes schema, provided in Table A.1 in the Appendix.

3.3. Methodological variables that accompany T_MEMBER_UNION

The target variable T_MEMBER_UNION is accompanied by a harmonization control variable C_MEMBER_UNION_EXTEND. It takes the value 0 when a source question asks about "trade union" only. It takes the value 1 if a source question asks not only about membership in "trade union" but also some other professional organizations, e.g. "farmers association," "professional association," "professional societies," and "employer associations".

Appendix: Codes for missing values in SDR2

In the SDR database v.2 we identify different situations that warrant to be treated as missing data. Table A.1 lists all SDR2 missing value codes:

Table A.1. Codes for missing values in SDR2

SDR tag [a]	SPSS (STATA) codes	Label
		Standardized source codes for missing values
DK	-1 (.a)	Don't know
NA	-2 (.b)	No answer
REF	-3 (.c)	Refusal
DU	-4 (.d)	Don't understand the question
DNR	-5 (.e)	Any combination of DK, NA, REF, DU
INAP	-6 (.f)	Inapplicable
NEC	-7 (.g)	Not elsewhere classified
		SDR created codes for missing values
UNFIT	-8 (.h)	Source value does not fit to target
ERR	-9 (.i)	Errors in source data and undocumented source values
COMBI	-10 (.j)	Different missing codes on multiple sources taken for a target
CINAP	-11 (.k)	For control variables only: inapplicable
INSUF	-12 (.l)	For survey: Insufficiently defined response categories
QNA	-20 (.t)	For survey: Question not available

[a] Abbreviations for the labels corresponding to the SDR2 codes for missing values. These tags are used in the Crosswalk Table (CWT) files (Excel) that accompany documentation of SDR2 target variables.

In exceptional situations when codes for missing data listed in Table A.1 cannot be used, we apply a system missing <null> value.