MEMBERSHIP IN RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS - General Target Variable Report (GVR)

1. General Information

The target variable T_MEMBER_RELIG measures respondents' current membership (i.e. at the time of the interview) in religious organizations, groups, associations and societies. The measure is dichotomous (see Table 1.1). It takes the value 1 whenever respondents report that they are currently members of, or belong to, a religious organization, group, association or society), and the value 0 when they are not members of, or do not belong, to a religious organization, group, association or society.

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

- The Detailed Variable Report (DVR) T_MEMBER_RELIG_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;
- A Crosswalk Table (CWT): T_MEMBER_RELIG_CWT_SDR2.xlsx. CWT Excel files in SDR2 contain details about mapping of source values to target values.

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

	Variable description	**Variable name**	**Variable values**[a]
Target variable	Being a member or belonging to a religious organization, group, association or society at the time of the survey interview.	T_MEMBER_RELIG	1 = currently member 0 = currently not member
Source variables			See: T_MEMBER_RELIG_DVR_SDR2.xlsx. and T_MEMBER_RELIG_CWT_SDR2.xlsx.
Control variables	NA		

[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_RELIG appear in 12 international survey projects: ABS, AFB, CDCEE, CNEP, EB, EVS, ISSP, LB, LITS, PA1, PPE7N, WVS, 30 waves and 579 national surveys. The data cover 125 countries and years from 1966 to 2016.

3. General Rules and Procedures

3.1. Source data description

To construct T_MEMBER_RELIG, we use source items about respondents' self-reported membership in, and belonging to, religious organizations, groups, associations and societies at the time of the survey. We rely on the English language and Spanish language questionnaires and codebooks describing the source survey data.

The majority of source surveys provide a list of organizations for respondents to mark membership in. The typical question is "*Are you a member of any organization that appear on this list?"* (CDCEE/1-2).

We define as "religious" three types of organizations: religious groups (e.g., AFB/3, CNEP/3, LB/2008), parish religious organizations (e.g., CDCE/1-2, EB/49), and church or religious organizations (e.g., EB/19, EVS/1-4, ISSP/2004).

Apart from the standard item formulation discussed above, some source surveys use a different question wording to collect data on respondents' involvement with religious organizations. Specifically, in AFB/1 respondents are asked whether they attend meetings of a church group (other than religious services), and, in EB/9, whether they are subscribed to religious or philosophical societies. We take these source variables for harmonization, too.

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', 'no'; 'belongs', 'does not belong'; 'mentioned', 'not mentioned' (e.g., CNEP/3, EB/8, WVS/1-6). Others enable respondents to mark whether they are active or inactive members, or whether they hold a leadership role (e.g., AFB/3, LITS/3). Another type of answer option provides a choice between 'belong and participate', 'belong not participate', 'used to belong' and 'never belonged to'. (ISSP/2004 and ISSP/2014).

3.2. Rules of transformation of source variables into target variable

For ex-post harmonization, we select only those source variables that refer to respondents' membership or belonging to religious organizations, groups, associations and societies at the time of the survey (i.e. currently). We do not harmonize variables about past membership/belonging.

Generally, we code only information about respondents' membership in/belonging to religious organizations (see Section 1 and Table 1.1). However, in a few exceptional cases,

information about membership in religious organizations is mixed with information about membership in different organizations. Specifically, in CNEP/3 Taiwan we have an open-ended question ("Could you please tell me if you belong to any of the types of organizations?"), while in ABS/2-4, respondents are asked to write down three of the most important organizations or formal groups they belong to. In these cases, if respondents indicate membership in / belonging to religious organizations, we assign the value 1 to T_MEMBER_RELIG. If they refer to organizations other than religious ones, we assign the value 0. We code information from ISSP/2004 and ISSP/2014 source questions as follows: answers indicating that the respondent belongs to religious organizations (i.e. belong and participate', 'belong not participate') are coded 1, whereas answers of not belonging, or having belonged in the past ('used to belong' and 'never belonged') are coded as 0.

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.

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.