

**A few notes on the exercise:**

The dataset used in this exercise is based on data from The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (2017): CSES Module 4 Fourth Advance Release. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5182 Data file Version 4.0.0, doi:10.7804/cses.module4.2017-04-11. The CSES data was modified for the use in this exercise. The persons and requests mentioned in this exercise are fictitious and not based on real persons.

**Acknowledgements**

This exercise has been shared by CESSDA Training at the GESIS Data Archive for the Social Sciences. It is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## Exercise: Re-Identification (quantitative data)

- 👥 Work in small groups
- 🕒 Time: about 30 minutes
- 😊 At the end, one member of your group should briefly present the results of your discussion and your conclusions.

Have a look at the email on the following page. In your group, try to re-identify Daniel, i.e. de-anonymize the data by extracting the corresponding ID-variables (D1005 or D1009) with the help of the given information. If you are able to do so, discuss

- what this teaches us about the level of anonymization of the data;
- how we should respond to Elizabeth.

Carry out this exercise using data from the CSES. The data are restricted to the German post-election study of 2013 and prepared for use in SPSS, STATA, or Excel. In addition, there is an extract of the CSES codebook.

### **The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)**

*The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (www.cses.org). CSES MODULE 4. SECOND ADVANCE RELEASE [dataset]. March 20, 2015 version. doi:10.7804/cses.module4.2015-03-20.*

*The CSES is a collaborative program of research among election study teams from around the world. Participating countries and provinces include a common module of survey questions in their post-election studies. The resulting data are deposited along with information on individual voting behavior and political attitudes and socio-demographic characteristics, such as gender, marital status or the size of the household, respondent's primary electoral district and the country's electoral system. The studies are merged into a single, free, public dataset for use in comparative study and cross-level analysis. For further information visit the CSES website (<http://www.cses.org/>).*

*Hint: The German electoral system is a two-vote system. While the second vote depends on a party list vote within each of the German states, the first vote is a candidate vote in small so-called single member districts. To identify Daniel, you should look for the primary electoral district where he may have cast his first vote ballot.*

**From:** Best, Colleague  
**Sent:** Montag, 27. Juli 2015 11:23  
**To:** Netscher, Sebastian  
**Subject:** Playing CSES matchmaker?

Hi Sebastian,

I received this email from an old friend of mine. Knowing that you were involved in the CSES which contains the German post-election study for 2013, maybe you could help Elizabeth find her lost love?

However, even if we could identify Daniel in the dataset and get his contact information (based on his ID), I doubt that we are in an ethical position to give her the information! What do you think?

Cheers,  
Colleague

**From:** [elitr@junkmail.com](mailto:elitr@junkmail.com)  
**Sent:** Montag, 27. Juli 2015 10:44  
**To:** Best, Colleague  
**Subject:** HELP PLEASE!!!

Hi Colleague,

I'm in desperate need of help. I lost touch with a person I met briefly back in 2014 but who affected me deeply.

We met in January 2014 on a skiing holiday in St Moritz, Switzerland. You know, I never believed in love at first sight but as soon as our eyes met it became evident he was my better half. I had the sense of being and wholeness like never before –being MYSELF, being ALIVE, being in LOVE!

We spent an entire day together and planned to meet again just before he was due to fly back to [Koeln](#) (Cologne) the following morning. When I woke up that day he had slipped a love message under my door. For the first time in years I felt loved. At that moment I suddenly panicked. The wounds of my past heartbreaks resurfaced and it was too much. I didn't go to meet him before his flight. All I could do was run away. Soon afterwards I started suffering from severe insomnia and Daniel's words began haunting me: 'This is the beginning of anything you want.' I MUST find Daniel, it's the only way I can reconcile with my past heartbreaks and hopefully move on.

I spent the last year looking for him unsuccessfully. My last hope lies with you. I remember that he once said he had been interviewed for the German post-election study in the fall of 2013. I know you are involved in political research and have been working for a Germany research institute for a couple of years now. Maybe you can help me to get in contact with Daniel by asking someone who is involved in the German post-election study?

Here is what I can tell you about him. (It is funny that we shared so many profound things but I can't recall his last name or his profession.) Daniel never got married but has a dog he truly adores. I recall him saying he felt so guilty undertaking the skiing trip without his dog. I could write so much more but I don't want to take too much of your time. All I hope is that these few lines convince you of my good intentions. I regret not seeing him on that last morning and I have to do everything I can to find him. Please help me find my lost love.

Yours hopefully,  
Elizabeth