

British Social Attitudes 2009 – 2014: Multiple response questions

Some questions allow for more than one choice of answer from a list: the data for these have been entered as **0** *Not mentioned* and **1** *Mentioned* for each item in the list, even if respondents only picked out one item. For example:

If the government were going to take action to reduce the cost of living, which of the following do you think would be the most useful actions to take? Please choose up to three actions.

[CARD B11 INTERVIEWER: CODE UP TO 3]

Multicoded (Maximum of 3 codes)

[Variable name in SPSS file]

| | |
|---|------------|
| 1 Reduce unemployment | [GovRedu1] |
| 2 Increase the minimum wage | [GovRedu2] |
| 3 Lower taxes for everyone | [GovRedu3] |
| 4 Lower taxes for people on low incomes | [GovRedu4] |
| 5 Reduce tax on petrol | [GovRedu5] |
| 6 Reduce VAT | [GovRedu6] |
| 7 Help with the cost of childcare | [GovRedu7] |
| 8 Cap energy prices | [GovRedu8] |
| 9 Provide more social housing | [GovRedu9] |
| 10 Something else (PLEASE SAY WHAT) | [GovRed10] |

| Name | Measure | Label | Values | Missing |
|--------------|---------|--|-------------------------|---------|
| 139 GovRedu1 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Reduce unempl... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 140 GovRedu2 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Increase the mi... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 141 GovRedu3 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Lower taxes for ... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 142 GovRedu4 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Lower taxes for ... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 143 GovRedu5 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Reduce tax on ... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 144 GovRedu6 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Reduce VAT | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 145 GovRedu7 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Help with the co... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 146 GovRedu8 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Cap energy pri... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 147 GovRedu9 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Provide more s... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |
| 148 GovRed10 | Nominal | Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Something else ... | {-1, Not applicable}... | LO - -1 |

The variable labels are **far too long**, but I will leave them alone for now. The value labels for each variable in the set are:

| Value | Label |
|-------|------------------|
| -1 | "Not applicable" |
| 0 | "Not mentioned" |
| 1 | "Mentioned" |
| 8 | "Don't know" |
| 9 | "Refused" |

Variables such as [**GovRedu1**] to [**GovRedu10**] will rarely be analysed individually: they can be analysed together using SPSS command **MULT RESPONSE** (see my [Multiple response](#) tutorials).

In many surveys, the items in such questions would be coded from **1** to **10** (and only take up three variable names) but in this case they are effectively dichotomous (and take up ten names).

Although they have values **0** "Not mentioned" **8** "Don't know" and **9** "Refused" the only value of interest is **1** "Mentioned". Rather than tabulating each item individually, they can be analysed with **MULT RESPONSE** in dichotomous mode or by defining them as a multiple response set with **MRSET**. (from the GUI: **Data** > **Define Multiple Response Set**)

For example **MULT RESPONSE** in dichotomous mode:

```
mult resp groups
govred 'Most useful actions to reduce cost of living'
(govredu1 to govred10 (1))
/freq govred.
```

| | | Responses | | Percent of Cases |
|--|--|-----------|---------|------------------|
| | | N | Percent | |
| govred Most useful actions to reduce cost of living ^a | GovRedu1 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Reduce unemployment | 1149 | 14.2% | 40.2% |
| | GovRedU2 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Increase the minimum wage | 1278 | 15.8% | 44.7% |
| | GovRedu3 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Lower taxes for everyone | 551 | 6.8% | 19.3% |
| | GovRedu4 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Lower taxes for people on low incomes | 961 | 11.9% | 33.6% |
| | GovRedu5 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Reduce tax on petrol | 870 | 10.8% | 30.4% |
| | GovRedu6 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Reduce VAT | 747 | 9.2% | 26.1% |
| | GovRedu7 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Help with the cost of childcare | 750 | 9.3% | 26.2% |
| | GovRedu8 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Cap energy prices | 1163 | 14.4% | 40.7% |
| | GovRedu9 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Provide more social housing | 530 | 6.6% | 18.5% |
| | GovRed10 Most useful government actions to reduce the cost of living: Something else (PLEASE SAY WHAT) | 91 | 1.1% | 3.2% |
| Total | 8090 | 100.0% | 282.8% | |

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

See what I mean about the labels? All the key information is at the end (*my highlights in red*). The table would be much clearer and easier to read if the repeated text was deleted altogether.

Another question asked about priorities for extra government spending, but in this case the priorities were ranked as first and second choice.

*Here are some items of government spending.
Which of them, if any, would be your highest priority for **extra** spending?
Please read through the whole list before deciding.*

- 1 Education
- 2 Defence
- 3 Health
- 4 Housing
- 5 Public transport
- 6 Roads
- 7 Police and prisons
- 8 Social security benefits
- 9 Help for industry
- 10 Overseas aid
- 11 (None of these)

And which next?

The data look like this:

| | | | | | |
|-----|----------|---------|---|-----------------------|---------|
| 640 | spendb1 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Education | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 641 | spendb2 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Defence | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 642 | spendb3 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Health | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 643 | spendb4 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Housing | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 644 | spendb5 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Public transport | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 645 | spendb6 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Roads | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 646 | spendb7 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Police and prisons | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 647 | spendb8 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Social security benefits | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 648 | spendb9 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Help for industry | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 649 | spendb10 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: Overseas aid | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |
| 650 | spendb11 | Nominal | DV priority for extra Govt spending: (None of these) | {0, not mentioned}... | LO - -1 |

Variables such as [**spendb1**] to [**spendb11**] will rarely be analysed individually: they can be analysed together using SPSS command **MULT RESPONSE** in dichotomous mode or by defining them as a multiple response set with **MRSET**. Although they have values **0** "Not mentioned" **8** "Don't know" and **9** "Refusal" the only value of interest is **1** "Mentioned".

I also find the labels **far too long**, but will leave them alone for now.

For example **MULT RESPONSE** in dichotomous mode:

```
mult resp groups
  priorities 'Priorities for extra Govt spending'
  (spendb1 to spendb11 (1))
/freq priorities.
```

priorities Frequencies

| | | Responses | | Percent of Cases |
|---|---|-----------|---------|------------------|
| | | N | Percent | |
| priorities | spendb1 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Education | 5537 | 29.7% | 59.2% |
| Priorities for extra Govt spending ^a | spendb2 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Defence | 835 | 4.5% | 8.9% |
| | spendb3 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Health | 6829 | 36.6% | 73.0% |
| | spendb4 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Housing | 1590 | 8.5% | 17.0% |
| | spendb5 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Public transport | 558 | 3.0% | 6.0% |
| | spendb6 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Roads | 694 | 3.7% | 7.4% |
| | spendb7 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Police and prisons | 827 | 4.4% | 8.8% |
| | spendb8 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Social security benefits | 515 | 2.8% | 5.5% |
| | spendb9 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Help for industry | 1113 | 6.0% | 11.9% |
| | spendb10 DV priority for extra Govt spending: Overseas aid | 59 | 0.3% | 0.6% |
| | spendb11 DV priority for extra Govt spending: (None of these) | 88 | 0.5% | 0.9% |
| Total | | 18645 | 100.0% | 199.4% |

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Nominal (Binary): Multiple response sets

I have identified the following sets of variables as multiple response: numbers refer to the row position in the combined file.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 139 [GovRedu1] to 148 [GovRed10] | 1282 PolyNews to 1289 PolyNone |
| 190 [NHS5yr11] to 207 [NHS5yrD9] | 1298 csaexpB1 to 1301 csaexpB4 |
| 236 [HActWh1] to [HActWh6] | 1440 CPR2Gov to 1447 CPWNone |
| 332 [TrONSY1] to 350 [TrONSN10] | 1451 RRetIll to 1457 RRetOth |
| 314 ONSpa1 to 319 ONSpa6 | 1481 CarPPub to 1485 CarPNoCh |
| 420 [EdQual1] to 449 [EdQual37] | 1488 CausDfor to 1501 CausAbrd |
| 454 [BenefOAP] to 495 [BenFNone] | 1627 DRGBfr to 1635 DRNone |
| 640 [spendb1] to 650 [spendb11] | 1640 LATerlyb to 1655 LATNone |
| 701 [PoorC1] to 705 [PoorC5] | 1676 FInvTp1 to 1703 Oexp15 |
| 757 [CCTCars] to 765 [CCTNoCC] | 1717 DoneMP to 1725 DoneNone |
| 770 [YSBEmp] to 784 [YSBNone] | 1739 BAbrMP 1740 BAbrFP |
| 894 [digb1] to 907 [digbh97] | 1860 FxPT to 1871 ContFlex |
| 909 [digg1] to 941 [brnOth] | 1882 plgYtDo to 1891 plgNon |
| 1061 KGMLNOT to 1067 KGMLNSUR | 1949 NTypNo to 19161 NTenOth |
| 1077 Refhang to 1079 RefEUPwr | 1990 StEnNoth to 2001 StEnOth |
| 1082 RelGfFa to 1085 RelGmMo | 2023 AtPrvRsp to 2032 AtSelNon |
| 1097 socbenb1 to 1102 socbenb6 | 2087 GECmLeaf to 2107 GECWNone |
| 1106 impbenb1 to 1113 impben8 | 2108 CanLegal |
| 1125 CPRGov to 1147 CPWOth | 2302 RelGPIInf to 2313 RelGFNon |
| 1163 FlexPart to 1161 FlexNone | 2317 AbWSPar to 2340 AbRAII |
| 1200 MemNone to 1210 memsikvl | 2348 DWhNNeed to 2358 DWhNOth |
| 1239 impDthB1 to 1251 discnon | 2375 IGapWBen to 2383 IGapWNot |
| 1253 careKn1 to 1260 WillB3 | |
| 1270 oliNews to 1280 oliNone | |

(Draft only: John F Hall 5 April 2016)