

## British Social Attitudes 1983-2014

### 4.1: Preliminary identification of measurement levels and missing values

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(Draft only: 25 April 2016)

To accelerate the correct specification of measurement levels and missing values, I asked the SPSS-X list if there was a way to search for specific value labels and obtain a list of all variable names using them.

I wrote:

*I can use Ctrl+F to find value labels such as "Strongly Disagree" in the Values column. Is it possible to identify all such labels in a single search and produce a list of the variables containing that phrase? If so this would immensely speed up the correct specification of measurement levels as Ordinal and missing values 8 = Don't know and 9 = Refused changed to -8 and -9 to be captured by the universal Lo thru -1 in the Missing column.*

*Variables with two digit values will be more difficult to identify unless they have labels such as "Completely satisfied": some of these are measured on 0-10 scales, others on 1-5. All two-digit variables have 98 and 99 as missing: they can be changed to -98 and -99. Some variables have three digits with 998 and 999 as missing, but I can find these myself.*

Jon Peck (ex-IBM Senior Software Engineer, now retired) provided syntax to produce a table of variables sorted by their labels. He wrote:

*For starters, you could run this code, which will give you a dataset containing an alphabetical list of all the value labels in the dataset along with other properties. You could then select out the words you want to examine.*

```
dataset declare values.  
oms select tables /if subtypes='Variable Values'  
/destination outfile=values format=sav viewer=no.  
display dict.  
omsend.
```

```
dataset activate values.  
sort cases by Label
```

I replied:

*Not sure what exactly I will get, so will run your syntax on a copy. This means the cases will remain in their original order in the source file.*

*There could well be several thousand varnames thrown up, so if I change my SPSS settings to names only, I should be able to pick up the first and last varnames from the first column of the table and use:*

```
var lev <first> to <last> (ord).  
recode <first> to <last> (8 = -8)(9 = -9).  
missing values <first> to <last> (lo thru -1).
```

*Just used Ctrl+F for "strongly disagree" in the Values column and the first block of variables found had values ranging from 1 = "1 Strongly disagree" to 10 = "10 Strongly agree" [sic: must have been written by a complete beginner] with -1 = "Not applicable", 98 "Don't know" and 99 "Refused".*

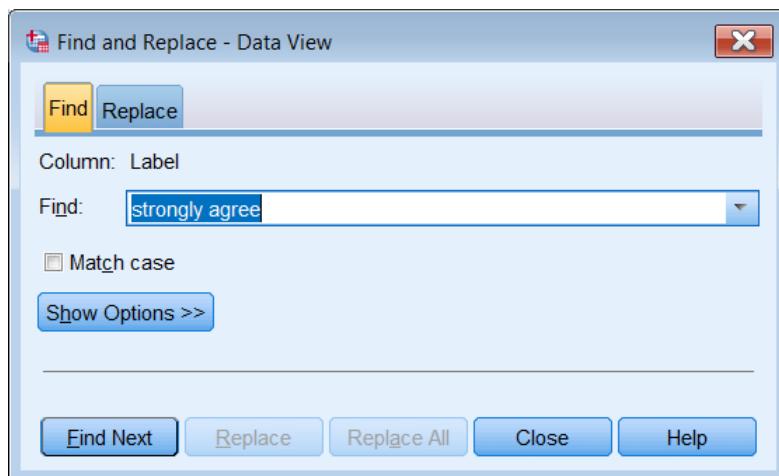
However "10 Strongly agree" could be used to identify items using 1-10 scales. Lo thru -1 is already declared as missing for most variables and will pick up the -1. 98 and 99 will have to be recoded and given new labels.

This creates another problem since there are also other Agree – Disagree items coded in the opposite direction! One set has five valid values (1 = "Agree strongly" 2 = "Agree" 3 = "Neither agree nor disagree" 4 = "Disagree" 5 = "Disagree strongly") Another has only four (1 = "Strongly agree" 2 = "Tend to agree" 3 = "Tend to disagree" 4 = "Strongly disagree"). Again the unique labels "Neither agree nor disagree" could be used to find the 1-5 items and "Tend to disagree" to find the 1-4 items.

Just ran your syntax. Judging by the new file I think I can identify sets of variables with the same properties from the Var2 column and copy blocks of names from Var1 into a new syntax file. In fact there are only three variables using the 1-10 agree-disagree scale, but all the others are listed in blocks so I can use <first> to <last> syntax to set levels and missing values.

Thanks a million: you just saved me days if not weeks.

Running Jon's syntax produced a table in which it is possible to find unique strings in the **Labels** column:



Var1	Var2	Labels
ASGdBad	10.0000	10 - Extremely good
MiEcono	10.0000	10 - Extremely good for economy
NHSStat1	10.0000	10 - strongly agree
NHSStat2	10.0000	10 - strongly agree
HhType	23.0000	10 adults

It is then a relatively simple matter to copy the variable names from the **Var1** column into a syntax file and set measurement levels, recode positive missing values to negative, add new value labels to the negative values and (if necessary) re-specify missing values.

MiEcono	10.0000	10 - Extremely good for economy
NHSStat1	10.0000	10 - strongly agree
NHSStat2	10.0000	10 - strongly agree
HhType	23.0000	10 adults

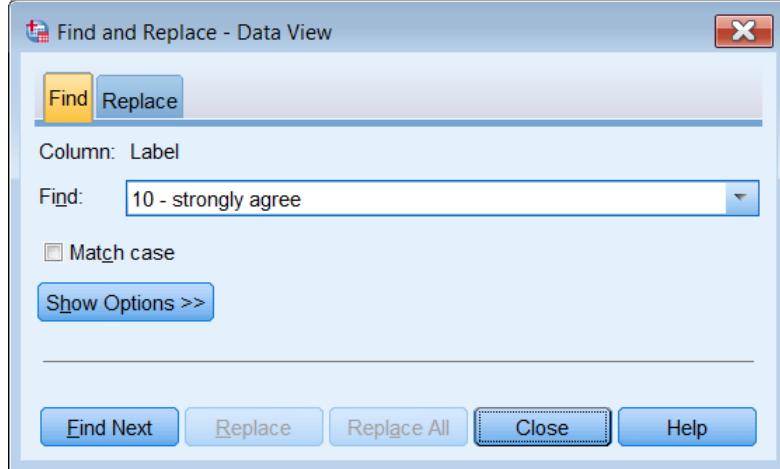
## variable level

NHSStat1

NHSStat2

(ordinal).

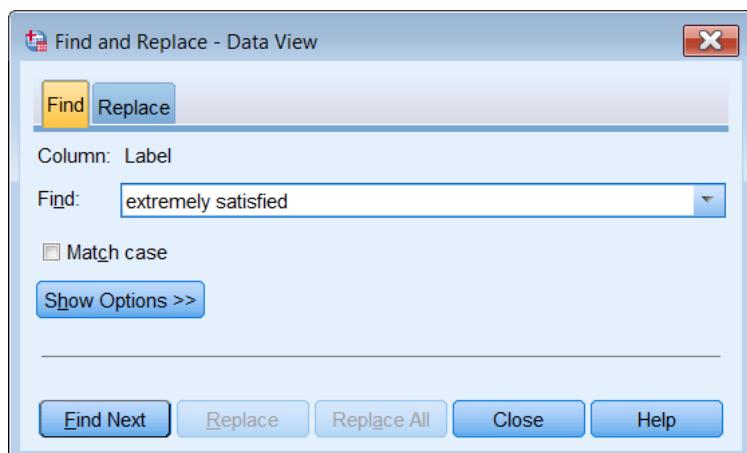
Searching instead for "10 - strongly agree" will pick out any further variables

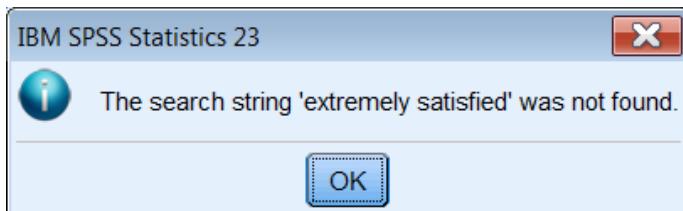


In fact there are only two in the whole file and I have already found them.

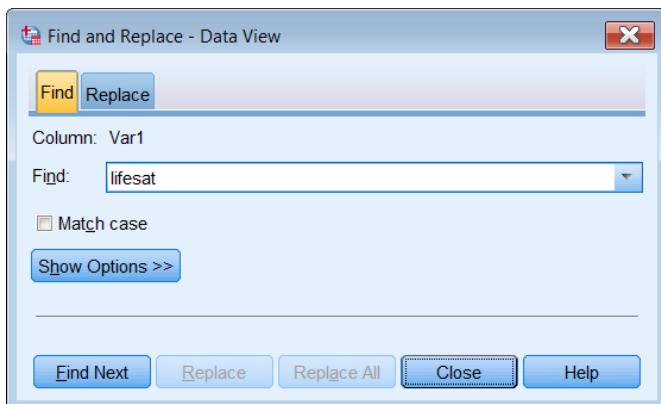


**Searching for extremely satisfied:**

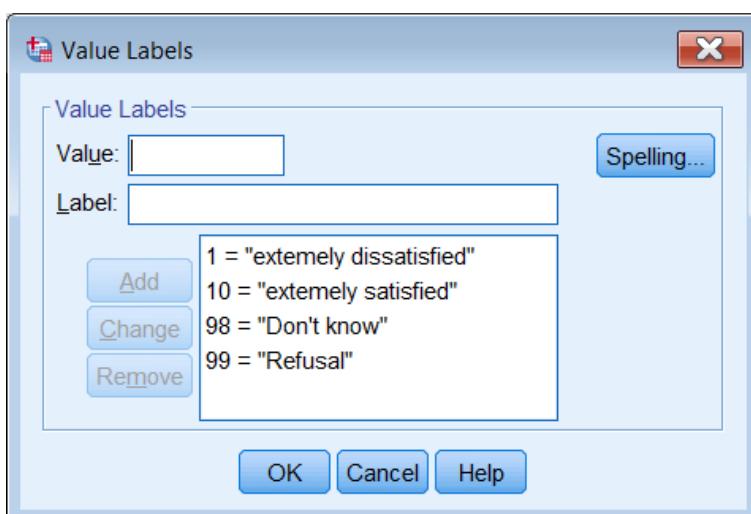
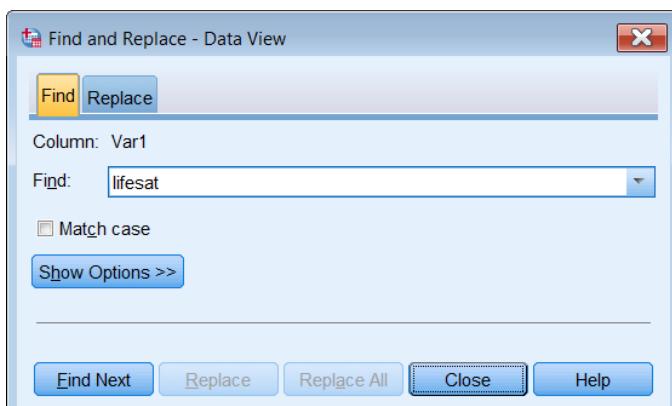




It helps to be searching the correct file and column! Search for **lifesat** in the **Var1** column:

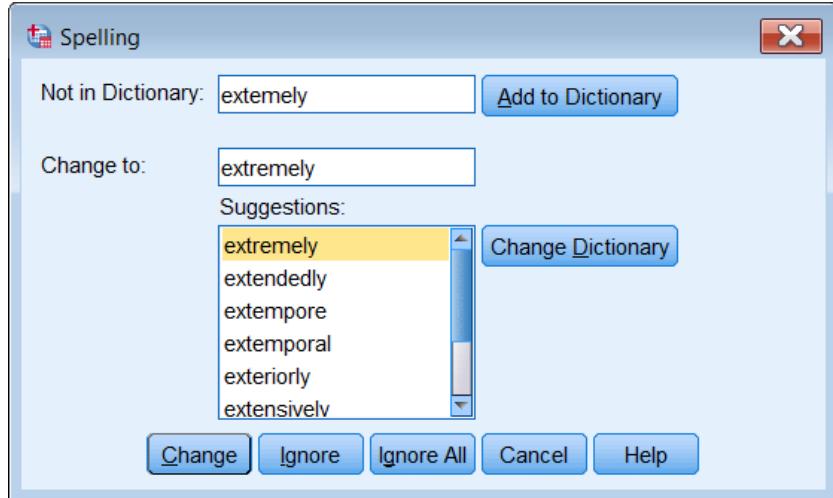


Search again in main file:

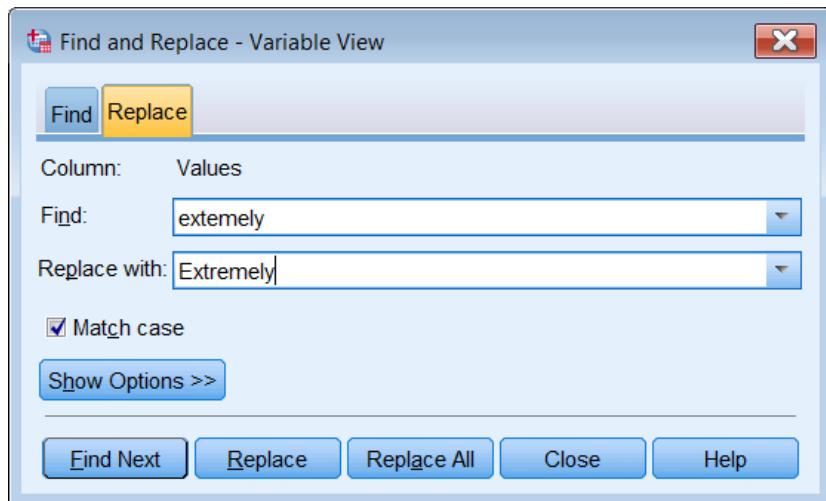


See the spelling mistake?

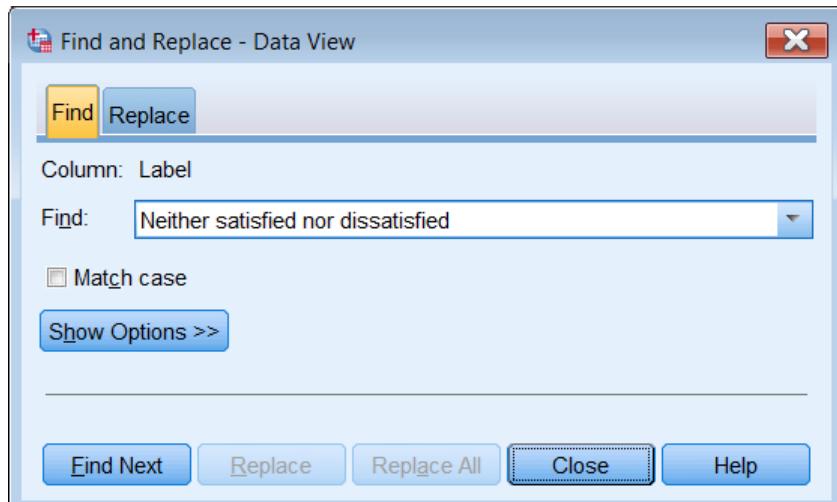
Clicking on **Spelling** takes you into uncharted territory



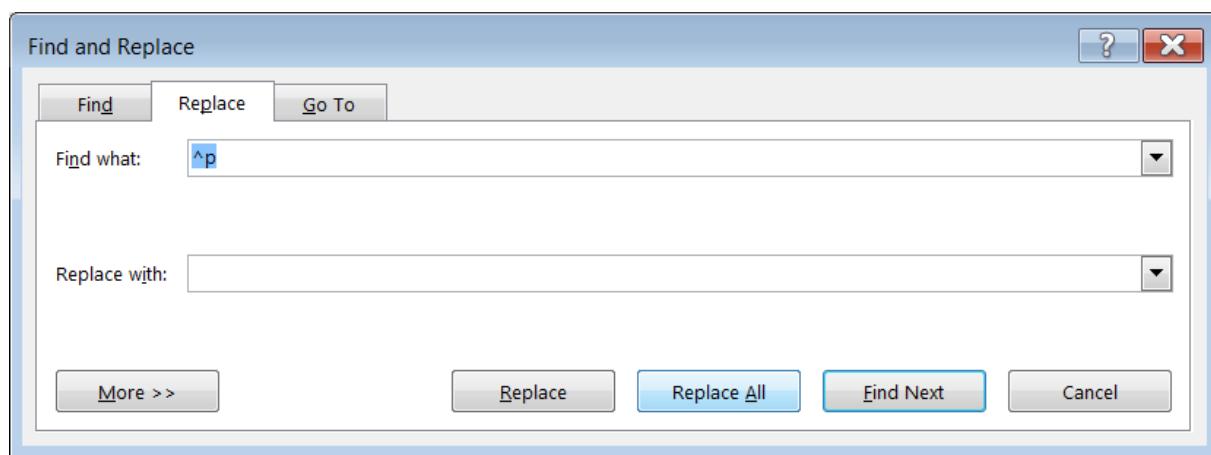
Stick to **Ctrl H**



Seems there were only two instances.



Lists copied from the file are arranged vertically, but can be aligned horizontally by replacing the <line feed/carriage return> (^p) with a space:



This is extremely tedious and mistakes can be made when assigning variables to categories, or even omitting them altogether.

The following are very much working notes intended as my *aide-mémoire*. The blocks of variables can be copied into SPSS syntax files, but without the notes (unless they are prefaced with /\*) So far I don't seem to have made any, but you never know!

## Phase 1

/\*1-5 scales.

/\*Agree – Disagree (1-5) .

/\*(3 = Neither).

SecSchl1 SecSchl4 SecSchl5 RelSup1 RelSup2

/\*(3 = Neither agree nor disagree).

PropCRe Wk65I PENSEC govnosa2 govnocar polundst infpoli2 govright govself polpar1 polpar2 polpar3 bnlowp bnmove pencomp earlyret credplan borohard marvie16 marview6 uniaff unicar undwry gmlmarry welfhelp morewelf unempjob sochelp dolefidl welffeet damlives proudwlf redistrb bigbusnn wealth richlaw indust4 tradvals stifsent deathapp obey wronglaw censor SavFrRet InStuEc InStuCu InStuOc InStuCs CycDang CCALowE CCACar CCAPLANE AffEngl AffLocl BuilAff BuilUnf SupDes IDMus IDEaster IDBAsian VacOW DateOW RespOW PresOW NormOW VacPT AskPT LocalPT FamPT DatePT RespPT PresPT NormPT VacFT AskFT LocalFT DateFT RespFT PresFT NormFT ASAStay Soeqsame NatCitzn NatAshmd NatLike NatBest NatSupp NatSport NatPrdBr NatShrt ForgRel1 ForgRel2 ForgRel4 ForgRel5 ForgRel6 MNNTDNMG FreeTrde GBFollow MNNTPower CitWorld SharTrad EthncAid Immigrt1 Immigrt2 Immigrt3 Immigrt4 Immigrt6 Citzshp3 Citzshp4 Citzshp5 EUFollow lowwage UniFibet UniDebts UniNWort carwalk2 carbus2 carbike2 plnallow plnterm plnenvt plnuppri cartaxhi carallow carreduc carnod2 carenvdc ddnodrv ddnklmt specams1 specammo specamtm speedlim speavesc mobdsafe mobddang mobdban mobdlaw WestLoth SamsxPr PerVLook LookAchi GirlWApp GovNoSay VoteOnly GovComp LowWage2 WWRELCHD WWCHDSUF WWFAMSUF WANTHOME HWIFEFFL BOTHEARN SEXROLE MARVIEW1 MARVIE11 MARVIE13 MARVIE10 lescpar2 gaypar2 chdview2 chdview3 chdview9 chdvie10 chdvie11 chdvie12 FEMJOB hwcmtv mwdiff machnowk fammencr chmsca chmscb chmscc chmscd chmsce chmscf chmscg chmsch chmsci chmscj CliCar CliPlane CCASpe ASWork AfAccept AfSucces AfWrong AfSupMem IqAccept IqSucc IqWrong IqSupMem ESCompND ESCompDi LivAp1 LivAp2 LivAp3 LivAp4 LivAp5 LivAp6 LivAp7 LoseTch VoteIntr PtyNMat2 QuitRule QuitBdJb MYRDONE2 MYRPOWER2 MYRSPK2 PCCRIME PCPOLINF HSysImpr UseHCS LimHCS HClneff AcNoCit AcDamHe DmHSuff EnvSuff GeneSuff PoorSuff AltMSol AltMProm TrustDrs DrsDisc DrSkNGd DrCaEarn DrTelMis BnTarget BnComp BnSlow HlthGap DirectFI RelTime RoadCap CARNODi2 DrugNoDr SpeCAvFS MigWorPS MigrStop MiHardWk CTAXREF2 InfChoic RefForce HLExpert Wk65Mon OldWk65 OldWkFlx OldWkChg IncRedis Happ10yr Adve10yr Edu10yr Safe10yr YPTime Noplygrd YPBehav2 GirlsBv2 YPRes2 LikeSR NeligSR GoStatSc GoStaQua ManSkill COwnPref CManPref RetStan2 Wk65Flx PRIVENT INCDIFF SCIEBELF SCIEHARM SCIESOLV FUTENVIR HARMEVIR HARMVIRW ENVIRECG GROWHARM POPGROW ENVIRDIF ENVIRRGT MORIMPEN NOPTENV EXAGENV DKHrmEnv EnvEfLif INTAGENV POORLESS ECPSLOW SOCWCHLD ChldGrow Ownhlth1 Ownhlth2 Ownhlth3 Ownhlth4 RelyDoc BRPyMr BTPyMr BTNoAlt CmplChrg MOTORWAY BUILDTRA CARNODIF DD5YBAN SpeCmInc HOMERISK buycheap movehome moneytie freedom finburdn leavefam homeresp riskjob WAITFAM ScChRt BestSch clsSchCm clsSchSC SchSlsh UniAnyAg DegGdJob UniAdvt PREGTN11 SafeJob ManRelKp ManRelUn ManRelHo ConfSc1 ConfSc2 ConfSc3 ConfSc4 ConfSc5 ConfSc6 ConfSc7 ConfSc8 ConfSc9 PropRep ETHTAKJ2 EETAKJ2 GPDay GPEve GPOnly WhRchPar IncNec Inclnev IncUnf IncWrk IncWrng Incprob Bonus1 Bonus2 Bonus3 ScotPayE CREDSPND INCOPP1 INCOPP2 INCOPP3 EQUALOPP EQUALOP2 OldJobOp WellInf EnjoyPdW EnjoyCJB PatFeel1 PatFeel2 PatFeel3 PatFeel4 GETON3 GETON4 GETON5 GETON6 INEQRICH INCDIFFS UNEMPSOL LESSBENF DisNtEff DisNoAll OldAlw PubOwnSt

**/\*Satisfied - Dissatisfied .**

**/(1-7) .**

BrHSSat DrTrSat AltMeSat HspTrSat jobsat2 famsat2

**/(1-5).**

NHSSat GPSat DentSat InpatSat OutpaSat AESat CareSat3 Appearsa CareSat2  
jobsat2 famsat2 NDirSat Ambsat diogsat AreaSat JobSat3 PaySatis HrsSatis PrDenSat

**/\*Same – Worse.**

NHS5yrs Say5Yrs NHSNx5Yr WtOp5Yrs WtAp5Yrs WtCo5Yrs WtGP5Yrs WtRf5Yrs Des20yr  
PrejNow PrejFut UniJobs AgeDNow AgeDOldW AgeDYngW

**/\*Approve – disapprove.**

PHelpSc1 PHelpSc2 PHelpSc3 PHelpSc4 PHelpSc5 PHelpSc6

**/\*Comfortable – Uncomfortable.**

HIncDif4 FlexAsk TalkLGB SocLGB

**/\* 5 = Can't imagine it.**

DMPSens DMPPhys DMPMent DMPLdis DNeiSens DNeiPhys DNeiMent DNeiLdis  
DSchSens DSchPhys DSchMent DSchLdis DBosSens DBosPhys DBosMent DBosLdis  
DGrpSens DGrpPhys DGrpMent DGrpLdis DMarSens DMarPhys DMarMent DMarLdis  
DNegShp DNegFr FlexAsk

**/\*Secure.**

SecurEmp

**/\*Successful.**

GvOKHlth GvOKOld GvOKSec GvOKCrm GvOKUnmp GvOKEnv

**/\*Support-oppose.**

HomsBult SchPrv SchVol SchPar2 HospPrv HospVol CarePrv CareVol Vouch

**/\*Willing – Unwilling.**

TaxHlth PRENVIR TAXENVIR CUTENVIR

**/\*Easy – difficult.**

Replaced EasyJob Buy20yr CostActs ArrTime EasySell AbTell

**/\*Fair – unfair.**

HEFair1 fairelec IncEd IncHC

**/\*Good – poor.**

GManView GManResp GManInfl

**/\*High – low.**

OpAF

**/\*In favour of – against.**

BritNuc ScoTxWel resclose res20mph resbumps UBCommWk PfCheck PfHIV PfObese PfTransp  
ImmNeig

**/\*Increase – reduce.**

PrNHSBr PrSclBr PrNHSLA PrSclLA

**/\*Likely – unlikely.**

HActOp FlexBal WkOldFlx LivFut

**/\*Positive – Negative.**

NegAAs NegALes NegA70 NegAlmig NegAGay NegA30 NegAWom NegAMen FlexPcp  
FlexProm FlexView FlexEPrm

**/\*Right – wrong.**

RgrfJbAg RgrfJbYo BUYHLTH BUYEDUCN

**/\*1-7 scales (8 = can't choose).**

**/\*Important .**

citduty1 citduty2 citduty3 citduty4 citduty5 citduty6 citduty7 citduty8 citduty9

**/\*Happy – unhappy.**

RUHappy2

**/\*Satisfied – dissatisfied.**

**/\*(3 = fairly).**

jobsat2 famsat2 BrHSSat DrTrSat AltMeSat HspTrSat

**/\*(2 = fairly).**

AreaSat

**/\*Fairly prepared.**

CareDis1 CareDis2 CareDis3 CareDis4 CareDis5

**/\*depends = 3 for binary or 6 for ordinal.**

**/\*(3 binary).**

LevTax2A LevOAPA HEFeeWhn

**/\*(6 ordinal).**

PMS HomoSex MEXMS WEXMS ExMS

**/\*None (priorities).**

Spend1 Spend2 SocBen1 SocBen2

**/\*None (binary?).**

NatIDB NatID2 NatIDC BNationU BestNatU EdSpnd1c EdSpnd2c CCTrans1 CCTrans2 CCTrans3  
EngParGB NatIdGB NatId EngParl ImpBen1 ImpBen2 WhyNeed TUMstImp WhyRich

**/\*Binary .**

**/\*Yes – no or forced choice.**

PeopTrs2 SocTrust CareDisF

**/\*Multiple response checklists.**

spendb1 spendb2 spendb3 spendb4 spendb5 spendb6 spendb7 spendb8 spendb9 spendb10  
spendb11

careKn1 careKn2 careKn3 careKn4 careKn5 WillB1 WillB2 WillB3 oliNews oliTvRa oliLive oliAtte  
oliTorc oliFaci oliCult oliVolu oliComm oliOthe oliNone PolyNews PolyTvRa PolyLive PolyEven  
PolyVolu PolyComm PolyOthe PolyNone csaexpB1 csaexpB2 csaexpB3 csaexpB4 RelFath  
RelMoth relbroth relsist RelSon RelDaug RelGrChD RelGrChS RelNone3 GovRedu1 GovRedu2  
GovRedu3 GovRedu4 GovRedu5 GovRedu6 GovRedu7 GovRedu8 GovRedu9 GovRed10  
NHS5yrl1 NHS5yrl2 NHS5yrl3 NHS5yrl4 NHS5yrl5 NHS5yrl6 NHS5yrl7 NHS5yrl8 NHS5yrl9

NHS5yrD1 NHS5yrD2 NHS5yrD3 NHS5yrD4 NHS5yrD5 NHS5yrD6 NHS5yrD7 NHS5yrD8  
 NHS5yrD9 HActWh1 HActWh2 HActWh3 HActWh4 HActWh5 HActWh6 ONSpa1 ONSpa2  
 ONSpa3 ONSpa4 ONSpa5 ONSpa6 TrONSY1 TrONSY2 TrONSY3 TrONSY4 TrONSY5  
 TrONSY6 TrONSY7 TrONSY8 TrONSY9 TrONSN1 TrONSN2 TrONSN3 TrONSN4 TrONSN5  
 TrONSN6 TrONSN7 TrONSN8 TrONSN9 TrONSN10 NatBrit NatEng NatEuro NatIrlsh NatNI  
 NatScot NatUlst NatWelsh NatAsia NatAfric NatOth NatNone BenefOAP BenefWar BenefWid  
 BenefUB BenefIS2 BenefPC BenefCB BenefCTC BenefFC BenefHB BenefCT BenefUC BenefInc  
 BenefDLA BenefPIP BenefAtA BenefSev BenefICA BenefInd BenefOth BenUB BenIS BenDB  
 BenCaB BenTC BenHB BenCoT BenPC BenUC BenPIP BenNone BenFUB BenFIS BenFDB  
 BenFCaB BenFTC BenFHB BenFCoT BenFPC BenFUC BenFPIP BenFNone PoorC1 PoorC2  
 PoorC3 PoorC4 PoorC5 CCTCars CCTBuses CCTVans CCTPlane CCTTrain CCTShips  
 CCTMBike CCTNone CCTNoCC YSBEmpl YSBTrans YSBGreen YSBSch YSBAfRnt YSBAfOwn  
 YSBDesig YSBShops YSBMedic YSBLiby YSBLeis YSBFinan YSBOther YSBDep YSBNone  
 digb1 digb2 digb3 digb4 digb5 digb6 digb7 digb8 digbh1 digbh2 digbh3 digbh4 digbh96 digbh97  
 digp1 digp2 digp3 digp4 digp5 digp6 digp7 digp97 digph1 digph2 digph3 digph4 digph96 digph97  
 BAbrNone BAbrResp BAbrF BAbrM BAbrPa brnInd brnPak brnBang brnPol brnROI brnFr brnGer  
 brnEsp brnWInd brnNige brnGhan brnUga brnSA brnOth KGMLNOT KGMLREL KGMLPAL  
 KGMLAQQU KGMLWORK KGMLELSE KGMLNSUR RelGfFa RelGfMo RelGmFa RelGmMo  
 socbenb1 socbenb2 socbenb3 socbenb4 socbenb5 socbenb6 impbenb1 impbenb2 impbenb3  
 impbenb4 impbenb5 impbenb6 impbenb7 impbenb8 CPRGov CPRLGov CPRPple CPRFrRel  
 CPRChar CPROth CPRNoCP CPWSocBn CPWIII CPWBrk CPWWkPay CPWDrug CPWOutWk  
 CPWArea CPWNmKid CPWEduc CPWWkHrs CPWWntWk CPWGpar CPWDisc CPWHous  
 CPWIneq CPWOth FlexPart FlexTerm FlexShre FlexFlex FlexComp FlexRduc FlexHome FlexAnnI  
 FlexNone MemNone MemResid MemPTA MemSciGv MemPIPty MemParCI MemNghCI  
 MemNghWt MemEnvir MemComVI memsikvl impDthB1 impDthB2 impDthB3 impDthB4 impDthB5  
 impDthB6 dismed discspi discpea discdig discwhe discpai discnon CPR2Gov CPR2Lgov  
 CPR2Pple CPR2FrRI CPR2Char CPR2Oth CPR2NoCP CPWNone RRetIII RRetCare RRetPrtn  
 RRetPack RRetLJob RRetWant RRetOth CarPPub CarPChD CarPNoJ CarPOth CarPNoCh  
 CausDfor CausRdEm CausPIEm CausOtEm CausAreeo CausGsEl CausMeth CausNatC  
 CausNone CausOthr CausNoCC CausPopl CausSpac CausAbnd DRGBfr DRPart DROHalf  
 DRFiance DRHusWif DR Lover DRSignO DROth DRNone LATerlyb LATmardb LATNtTh  
 LATPJobb LATPStdb LATIPrb LATPPrb LATChldb LATAfrdb LATBenef LATHomeb LATRespb  
 LATJstR LATNotwb LATOthb LATNone FInvTp1 FInvTp2 FInvTp3 FInvTp4 FInvTp5 FInvTp6  
 FInvTp7 FInvTp8 FInvTp9 FInvTp10 FInvTp11 FInvTp12 FInvTp13 Oexpi1 Oexpi2 Oexpi3 Oexpi4  
 Oexpi5 Oexpi6 Oexpi7 Oexpi8 Oexpi9 Oexpi10 Oexpi11 Oexpi12 Oexpi13 Oexpi14 Oexpi15  
 DoneMP DoneSpk DoneGov DoneTV DoneSign DoneRais DoneProt DoneGrp DoneNone  
 BAbrMP BAbrFP FxPT FXRed FxJbSh FxFlex FxComp FxAnn FxTTwk FxUL FXHome FxOther  
 FxNone plgYtDo plgTeen plgSafe plgUSaf plgNspl plgCrmL plgCrmM plgTrfc plgNP plgNon  
 NTypNo NTypflt NTyp12b NTyp34b NTyp5b NTypbung NTypOth NTenNo NTenbuy NTenPR  
 NTenSR NTenSh NTenOth StEnNoth StEnExp StEnnosv StEnnors StEnnoti StEnnokn StEntrls  
 StEntrin StEnnodf StEnspap StEnrdvl StEnOthr AtPrvRsp AtPrvPar AtPrvSib AtPrvChd AtPrvNon  
 AtSelRsp AtSelPar AtSelSib AtSelChd AtSelNon GECmLeaf GECmPEB GECmCont GECmDbt  
 GECmTVPr GECmNPap GECmWrot GECmMeet GECmWCon GECmDisc GECmPers  
 GECmNone GECWPWeb GECWBlo2 GECWOWeb GECWSEm2 GECWWEm2 GECWNPa2  
 GECWFrie GECWPers GECWNone CPRAII RelGPInf RelGPAdv RelGPCou RelGPMed  
 RelGPOth RelGPNon RelGFInf RelGFAdv RelGFCou RelGFMed RelGFOth RelGFNon AbWSPar  
 AbWSChld AbWPolic AbWSocs AbWDoc AbWRelig AbWTeach AbWChrt AbWOth AbWNone  
 AbWAdvce AbWOthKn AbRPol AbRSServ AbRDoc AbRChur AbRSch AbRChar AbRGov  
 AbRExFam AbRNei AbROther AbRNoone AbRAII DWhNNeed DWhNScrd DWhNTime DWhNRnd  
 DWhNExp DWhNOpen DWhNFind DWhNPriv DWhNChos DWhNOth IGapWBen IGapWRTx  
 IGapWITx IGapWLim IGapWJob IGapWMin IGapWTrn IGapWOth IGapWNot

#### \*1 – 4 scales.

PeopAdv PeopTrs3

**\*Most of the time**

NHSTrus2 HSPNTrus NHMgTrus GovTrust MPsTrust Trsteq1 Trsteq2 Trsteq3 Trsteq4 DisFul2 RThDsWa2 RThDsAw2 RThDsCa2 RThDsSa2 RThDsPrd CLLRTXTR CLLRDEVL DisFull

**\*Important.**

QualDP22 QualDP23 QualDP24 QualDP25 QualDP27 QualDP28 QualDP9 QualDP10 QualDP11 QualDP12 QualD22 QualD23 QualD24 QualD25 QualD27 QualD28 QualD9 QualD10 QualD11 QualD12 DPAYRESP DPAYEDUC DPAYFAM DPAYCHLD DPAYWELL DPAYHARD

**\*Conflicts.**

CONFIMM CONFJOB CONFLICT1 CONFLICT2 CONFLICT4 CONFLICT7

**\*Proud.**

NatPrid1 NatPrd2b NatPrid3 NatPrid4 NatPrid5 NatPrid6 NatPrid7 NatPrid8 NatPrid9  
NatPrid10 gbprid

**\*Likely – Unlikely.**

protgrp protattn ChLikUn2 LivFut FalCatch Ben500Do

**\*Comfortable – uncomfortable.**

DNegBoss DNegColl DNegBoss DNegShp DNegFr FlexAsk DMPSens DMPPhys DMPMent  
DMPLdis DNeiSens DNeiPhys DNeiMent DNeiLdis DSchSens DSchPhys DSchMent  
DSchLdis DBosSens DBosPhys DBosMent DBosLdis DGrpSens DGrpPhys DGrpMent  
DGrpLdis DMarSens DMarPhys DMarMent DMarLdis

Levels run in **setlevels1.sps** and saved in **bsalatest3.sav**

What to do with **6** = “Depends” in ordinal scales?

PMS 995 HomoSex 1280 MEXMS 78 WEXMS 79 ExMS 509

Some missing values for binary variables are **(-9 thru -1)**. Leave alone? Value labels for **8** and **9** are still there: is there a quick way of deleting them without affecting other labels?