British Social Attitudes Survey 1983 onwards: Date of interview

 [**Draft only**: 29 Sep 2018]

The SPSS files for each survey year, as distributed by UKDS, are not mutually compatible. Variables with the same name are stored in a range of formats, types, widths, with different variable and value labels and specifications of missing values. This makes analysis across time difficult without some complex editing.

I therefore created a cumulative SPSS "mother" file for all waves 1983 to 2016, the metadata from which can be extracted to create mutually compatible files[1].

In some surveys, **[year]** (year of survey) is not a variable and has to be derived from other variables.

No survey
1988, 1992,

No year variable
1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989, 2015, 2016

Year variable at beginning of file (Line in Data Editor)
1990, 1991 (Line 1)
1993 (Line 2)

Year variable at end of file (Line in Data Editor)
1994 (1151)
1995 (1195)
1996 (1082) 1996au 1996bu (1080)
1997 (578)
1998 (1121)
1999 (905)
2000 (865)
2001soc (40)
2002 (719)
2003 (965)
2004 (879)
2005 (1210)
2006 (992)
2007 (1222)
2008 (1050)
2009 (848)
2010 (879)
2011 (855)
2012 (788)
2013 (772)
2014 (650)

Year at end of file before **[month]** and **[day]**[2]
2001 (Line 916)

[1] See: British Social Attitudes 1983 to 2014: Cumulative SPSS file
and British Social Attitudes: Making files from different years compatible.

[2] **[month]** and **[day]** are variables derived by the author from other variables in DATE format.

Metadata for date and time.

Data for **date of interview** in the source files are specified with different names, measurement levels, as different data types and in different formats:

Position	Name	Measure	Type	Format	Wave
	[Original]				
(2925)	dateint	Scale	Numeric	F6	1983-96
(4538)	dateintd	Scale	Numeric	F2	1989-91 1996
(4539)	dateintm	Nominal	Numeric	F2	1989-93 -1996
(4540)	dateinty	Nominal	Numeric	F2	1989-91
(6085)	sintdate	Nominal	Date	EDATE10	1998-2001, 04, 05, 07, 08
	[Derived by author]				
(6533)	day	Scale	Numeric	F2	95, 01, 03-06, 08
(6534)	month	Nominal	Numeric	F2	95, 01, 03-06, 08
(6535)	date	Scale	Numeric	F8.2	95, 96, 98, 01, 03, 04, 06-08
	[Original]				
(6536)	intdate	Scale	Date	EDATE10	98-05, 07
(9840)	lintdate	Scale	Date	EDATE10	98
(9946)	iintdate	Scale	Numeric	F8	97

Table 1

Variable Labels

Variable	Position	Label
dateint	2925	DATE OF INTERVIEW
dateintd	4538	Day of date of interview Q924eNI922e
dateintm	4539	Month of date of interview Q924eNI922e
dateinty	4540	Year of date of interview Q924eNI922e
SIntDate	6085	Computer Interview Date DD:MM:YYYY :Q38
day	6533	Day of interview
month	6534	Month of interview
date	6535	Date of interview (ddmmyyyy)
IntDate	6536	Interviewer: Check Date of Interview and alter if not correct Q36
lintdate	9840	Check date of interview: DDMMYYYY Q802
iintdate	9946	CHECK DATE OF INTERVIEW DDMMYYYY Q19

Variables in the working file

[**NB:** The variable labels are taken directly from the original files]

To make them compatible, variable labels, measurement levels and formats in the cumulative file have been standardised.

Table 2

Variable Information

Variable	Position	Label	Measurement Level	Print Format	Write Format
dateint	2925	DATE OF INTERVIEW	Scale	F6	F6
dateintd	4538	Day of date of interview Q924eNI922e	Scale	F2	F2
dateintm	4539	Month of date of interview Q924eNI922e	Nominal	F2	F2
dateinty	4540	Year of date of interview Q924eNI922e	Nominal	F2	F2
SIntDate	6085	Computer Interview Date DD:MM:YYYY :Q38	Nominal	EDATE10	EDATE10
day	6533	Day of interview	Scale	F2	F2
month	6534	Month of interview	Nominal	F2	F2
date	6535	Date of interview (ddmmyyyy)	Scale	F8.2	F8.2
IntDate	6536	Interviewer: Check Date of Interview and alter if not correct Q36	Scale	EDATE10	EDATE10
lintdate	9840	Check date of interview: DDMMYYYY Q802	Scale	EDATE10	EDATE10
iintdate	9946	CHECK DATE OF INTERVIEW DDMMYYYY Q19	Scale	F8	F8

Variables in the working file

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum
dateint DATE OF INTERVIEW	33640	10383	99999999
dateintd Day of date of interview Q924eNI922e	12406	1	99
dateintm Month of date of interview Q924eNI922e	15351	0	99
dateinty Year of date of interview Q924eNI922e	8744	89	91
SIntDate Computer Interview Date DD:MM:YYYY :Q38	29079	25.10.1582	08.11.2008
day Day of interview	23955	1	99
month Month of interview	23955	1	99
date Date of interview (ddmmyyyy)	28743	402.00	13446000000.00
IntDate Interviewer: Check Date of Interview and alter if not correct Q36	32460	26.10.1582	24.11.2007
lintdate Check date of interview: DDMMYYYY Q802	2071	26.10.1582	08.10.1583
iintdate CHECK DATE OF INTERVIEW DDMMYYYY Q19	1355	1031997	31031997
Valid N (listwise)	0		

dateint is used in years
1983 - 1996

Table 4a

year Year of Interview
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1989
1990
1991
1993
1994
1995
1996

sintdate is used in years
1998 - 2008

Table 4b

year Year of Interview
1998
1999
2000
2001
2004
2005
2007
2008

iintdate is used in 1997

lintdate is used in 1998

. . but they are stored in different formats:

Table 4c

```
iintdate

 2031997
 1031997
25021997
18021997
28041997
```

Table 4d

```
  lintdate

03.06.1583
14.06.1583
14.06.1583
07.07.1583
08.10.1583
```

. . from which **[year]** is derived

Table 5a

		Frequency
Valid	1997	1355

Table 5b

		Frequency
Valid	1998	2071

To avoid manually reordering the variables to move **[year]** to the beginning of each year file, I made a new (to me) discovery. Without properly reading the manual, and in view of my experience of Algol programming[3] in the 1960s, I tried:

```
GET
  FILE='<pathway><sourcefile>.sav'.
SAVE OUT '<pathway><targetfile>.sav'
 /KEEP year ALL.
```

. . and it worked!

When I boasted of this to the SPSS-X list, Bruce Weaver pointed out that the manual actually says:

> *"DROP and KEEP are used to save a subset of variables. DROP specifies the variables that are not to be saved in the new data file; KEEP specifies the variables that are to be saved in the new data file; variables that are not named on KEEP are dropped.*
>
> *- Variables can be specified in any order. The order of variables on KEEP determines the order of variables in the data file. The order on DROP does not affect the order of variables in the data file.*
>
> *- Keyword ALL on KEEP refers to all remaining variables that were not previously specified on KEEP or DROP. ALL must be the last specification on KEEP."*

To make the source files mutually compatible, they have to be downloaded from UKDS and converted using the metadata from bsamother_zerocases.sav (a special version of the SPSS mother file) from which, as a data safeguarding measure, all cases have been deleted.

Downloaded files can then be processed, one at a time, in any order.

Procedure to follow[4]:

1: Download **bsamother_zerocases.sav** from this site.
2: Download a source file from UKDS
3: Open a new syntax file and write in your commands.

Format:

```
GET   FILE= <mother zerocases.sav> .
*bsamother_zerocases.sav becomes dataset1.
GET   FILE= <source.sav> .
* bsa1985.sav becomes dataset2.
APPLY DICTIONARY FROM dataset1
SAVE OUTFILE= <target.sav>.
```

[3] **See:** A general data-processing package
[4] See: British Social Attitudes: Making files from different years compatible.