Happiness Economics – Tasks

The European Value Study (EVS) "is a large-scale, cross-national, and longitudinal survey research program on how Europeans think about family, work, religion, politics and society." (Link EVS)

The World Values Survey (WVS) "is a global research project that explores people's values and beliefs, how they change over time, and what social and political impact they have. Since 1981 a worldwide network of social scientists have conducted representative national surveys as part of WVS in almost 100 countries." (Link WVS)

Data of specific countries of the joint EVS/WVS 2017-2021 dataset is provided in our OLAT course together with the original documentation files. In one documentation file all variables are highlighted in yellow, which are in the data file.

TASKS

1. Download the data for the country you choose. You also find the official variable description file in the corresponding folder.

2. Get acquainted with the data (rename and/or recode variables). The main variables with which we are going to work are measures of *subjective well-being (SWB)*, namely general happiness and life satisfaction. Are these two variables comparable measures of SWB? How do these variables correlate with personal characteristics like income, health, age, marital status, etc.? Find suitable ways to show some possible (not necessarily causal) relationships.

3. The literature shows that **Social Capital** is an important factor for increasing the level of SWB. For the **trust** dimension of social capital you may use the variable asking whether people can generally be trusted or not, for the **weak ties** dimension you could use the sum of the variables asking whether one is a member of ....

4. Try to find appropriate components for the **political interest and attitude** dimension, e.g. run a PCA using the variables "Interested in politics", "Satisfaction with the political system", "Having a democratic political system", "Importance of democracy", ...

Good luck and I am looking forward to your findings!