

The GSS is in transition from a replicating cross-sectional design to a design that uses rotating panels. In 2008 there were two components: a new 2008 cross-section with 2,023 cases and the first reinterviews with 1,536 respondents from the 2006 GSS. In 2010 the new design will be fully implemented. There will be a new cross-section of about 2,000 cases, the first reinterviews of the 2008 GSS respondents, and the second and final reinterviews of the 2006 GSS respondents. In 2012 and later years this design will be repeated. Each GSS will thus 1) start a new 4-year/3-wave panel, 2) be in the middle of a 4-year/3-wave panel, and 3) finish a still earlier 4-year/3-wave panel.

GSS data will be released in several stages and formats. The first release combines the new cross-sectional data with previous cross-sections into an updated, cumulative file (1972-2008). This is the traditional GSS data file. The second release is a panel file that combines the results from the 2006 interviews and the 2008 reinterviews. (In later years when the new design is fully implemented, two panel files will be release – an interim, 2-wave/2-year panel and a final, 3-wave, 4-year panel.) Finally, the new cross-sectional data will be combined with the earlier panel data to make an augmented 2008 file. For 2008 this will combine the 2,023 cases from the 2008 cross-section with the 1,536 cases from the 2006 panel reinterviews for a total of 3,559 cases. (In later years data from both earlier panels will be combined with the new cross-sectional data to make an augmented file.)