

CRRC Caucasus Barometer 2013

Survey Methodology and Fieldwork Report

The 10th wave of the *Caucasus Barometer* survey was conducted in the fall of 2013 by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. It surveyed the adult (18+) population of these countries, excluding the populations living in Mountainous Karabakh, Nakhichevan, South Ossetia and Abkhazia.¹

Caucasus Barometer (CB) is an annual survey which has been conducted by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC) since 2004 and applies the same methodological approach in all countries.² This is the only survey in the region which provides reliable comparative data about the household composition, opinions, assessments, and economic behavior of the populations of the three countries over the last ten years.

Information about methodology and fieldwork for the 2013 survey is presented in this report. For information about earlier waves, please visit CRRC [Online Data Analysis](#) webpage.

Stratification and Sampling

Stratification

Lists of the voting precincts were used as sampling frames in all three countries. The population of each country was broken down into three strata: residents of the capital, other urban settlements and rural settlements. Sample size was calculated at 95% confidence level, independently for each stratum.

Urban and rural strata were further divided by four geographic regions ('quadrants'): north-east, north-west, south-east, and south-west. Sample sizes for each stratum were allocated between these four geographic substrata proportional to their relative population sizes, as obtained from the Central Election Commissions of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. This practice ensures that urban and rural settlements from the large areas of the country are not excluded from the sample due to random chance. Survey results, however, are not representative of the population of the particular geographic substrata – the results are representative for the countries as a whole and for each strata within countries (i.e. for the population of capitals, rural settlements and urban settlements).

¹ The survey targeted Armenian-speaking adults in Armenia, Azeri-speaking adults in Azerbaijan, and Georgian, Armenian or Azeri-speaking adults in Georgia.

² Before 2010, the survey was called *Data Initiative*.

The factors that influenced the sample size include the number of population subgroups to be represented, targeted margin of error, and available resources. In each stratum, the sample size was adjusted based on expected non-response,³ hence, the interviewers contacted more households to get the targeted number of completed interviews.

Sampling

During the first stage of selection, electoral precincts (primary sampling units - PSUs) were sampled randomly in each substratum with probability proportional to the number of registered voters.

During the second stage, households (secondary sampling units) were sampled within the sampled precincts, using the [‘random walk’ procedure](#).

During the third stage, respondents (final sampling units) were sampled, using Leslie Kish’s objective respondent selection method.⁴ Table 1 summarizes CB 2013 sample size and distribution for each country.

Table 1: CB 2013 sample size and distribution

Country	Stratum	Number of sampled PSUs	Number of interview attempts per PSU	Step size	Total number of interview attempts	Estimated margin of error (%)
Armenia	Capital	72	16	7	1152	3.2
	Urban	47	19	7	893	3.0
	Rural	47	17	7	799	3.0
	Total	166	n/a	n/a	2844	1.8
Azerbaijan	Capital	41	18	10	738	3.8
	Urban	43	22	7	946	4.0
	Rural	39	19	5	741	3.9
	Total	123	n/a	n/a	2425	2.3
Georgia	Capital	58	24	7	1392	3.4
	Urban	53	12	7	636	3.4
	Rural	54	20	7 ⁵	1077	3.3
	Total	165	n/a	n/a	3105	2.0

Questionnaire

The CB 2013 questionnaire was developed by CRRC teams in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, with the involvement of local researchers and other stakeholders (see [CRRC Questionnaire Discussion Strategy](#)). The source questionnaire was developed in English, and was then translated into Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Georgian following CRRC questionnaire translation strategy.

The *Caucasus Barometer* 2013 source questionnaire and show cards are available [online](#). Local language translations are also available on CRRC country websites.

³ Expected non-response rates for each stratum were calculated from the previous CB surveys.

⁴ <http://koha.iset.ge/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=1120>. Pp. 380-387.

⁵ Except two PSUs where the step size was 5.

Fieldwork

In Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, there are no regulations requiring permission from the government in order to conduct a survey. Still, CRRC in all three countries prepares formal letters, describing the aims and procedures of the survey. The interviewers can use these letters during fieldwork, if needed.

CB 2013 fieldwork was conducted based on PAPI face-to-face interviews. All interviews in Armenia were conducted in Armenian, and in Azerbaijan in Azeri. As for Georgia, 89.5% of the interviews were conducted in Georgian, 5.7% in Azeri and 4.8% in Armenian.

Fieldwork staff

Experienced CRRC interviewers and fieldwork supervisors were involved in CB 2013 data collection. Most of them have worked with CRRC for several years.

CB 2013 fieldwork was supervised by nine fieldwork supervisors in Armenia, seven supervisors in Azerbaijan, and eight supervisors in Georgia. 57 interviewers were involved in fieldwork in Armenia (13 male interviewers, 44 female interviewers; their average age was 39)⁶; 46 interviewers were involved in fieldwork in Azerbaijan (22 male interviewers, 24 female interviewers; their average age was 45); and 98 interviewers were involved in fieldwork in Georgia (9 male interviewers, 89 female interviewers; their average age was 39).

Trainings for Supervisors and Interviewers

Intensive trainings were carried out for fieldwork supervisors and interviewers before the fieldwork. Prior to the trainings, all interviewers received the questionnaire, show cards and sampling instructions in order to review them and be prepared for the training. During the training, the interviewers practiced the questionnaire and sampling instructions (including random walk, step size, and respondent selection), and discussed possible problems or challenges that could arise during fieldwork. In addition, a quiz was administered at the end of the training in order to test knowledge of the questionnaire and fieldwork process. All interviewers passed the quiz successfully.

Timing of fieldwork

CB 2013 fieldwork took place between October 26–November 15 in Armenia, November 1–December 16 in Azerbaijan, and October 3–27 in Georgia.

The following important events occurred before and during the fieldwork, and were widely covered by the media. Hence, they could have influenced respondents' opinions:

- The process of Armenia joining the Customs Union with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan was widely discussed in society.
- Presidential elections were held on October 9, 2013 in Azerbaijan. CB 2013 fieldwork started a few weeks after the elections (on November 1, 2013).

⁶ All supervisors in Armenia, except of one, were also interviewers. In order to avoid a conflict of interest, the questionnaires of the interviews conducted by the supervisors were checked by the CRRC fieldwork coordinator.

- Fieldwork took place during the pre-election campaign (Presidential elections were held on October 27, 2013) in Georgia. Hence, the respondents were exposed to intense political coverage. However, compared with previous pre-election periods in Georgia, the 2013 pre-election period cannot be described as tense and highly politicized.
- Drawing borderlines between the occupied region of South Ossetia and the rest of Georgia by Russian troops was a highly covered event that could have affected respondents' attitudes towards Georgia's foreign policy, conflict resolution, and, specifically, attitudes towards Russia.
- Incumbent Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili's statement about his decision to resign after the October 27, 2013 elections provoked discussions about his possible successors and led to the polarization of society regarding this decision.

Sampling adjustments during the fieldwork

Due to a smaller number of available households, step size was reduced from 5 to 3 in two rural PSUs in Azerbaijan. In Georgia, the step size varied from 2 to 7 in seven rural PSUs. This was, again, due to a smaller number of available households. No sampling adjustment were made in Armenia.

Length of interviews

The average length of interview was 44 minutes in Armenia, 66 minutes in Azerbaijan, and 57 minutes in Georgia. Information about completed interviews by visit is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Completed interviews by visit (%)

Country	First visit	Second visit	Third visit
Armenia	83%	15%	2%
Azerbaijan	89%	9%	2%
Georgia	80%	18%	3%

Response Rate

Table 3 presents information about response rate in each stratum of all three countries; reasons for non-response are presented in Table 4.

Table 3: Response rate (%)

	Capital	Urban	Rural	Total
Armenia	42	77	84	65
Azerbaijan	77	83	86	82
Georgia	46	81	91	69

Table 4: Reasons for non-response (% by country)

	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Georgia
Household / The person who opened the door refused to be interviewed	50	52	58
Respondent not at home and will not return during the period of fieldwork	15	3	10
Household closed / No contact made	14	14	23
Dwelling inaccessible	12	1	1
Respondent refused to be interviewed	5	2	3
Respondent was not capable of being interviewed for reasons other than language	2	0	2
Interview interrupted by authorities	1	14	0
Other	2	14	3

Respondents' attitudes

Overall, the respondents' attitudes during the fieldwork were positive. Interviewers filled in Interviewer Assessment Forms after each interview. On these forms, interviewers recorded respondents' attitudes towards the survey. Tables 5 and 6 below present information about the respondents' attitudes in each country as assessed by the interviewers:

Table 5: Frequency of respondent being reluctant to answer the questions (% by country)

	Never	For a few questions	For some questions	For many questions	Through most or entire interview
Armenia	64	25	9	2	1
Azerbaijan	32	39	21	7	2
Georgia	60	29	9	2	0

Table 6: Sincerity of the respondents' answers (% by country)⁷

	Sincere	In the middle	Not sincere
Armenia	81	13	6
Azerbaijan	64	19	17
Georgia	77	16	7

⁷ The interviewers rated respondents' sincerity using a 10-point scale, where code '1' corresponded to the answer "Not sincere at all" and code '10' corresponded to the answer "Completely sincere." For this table, the original scale was recoded so that codes 1, 2, 3, and 4 were grouped to "Not sincere," codes 5 and 6 were grouped to "In the middle," and codes 7, 8, 9 and 10 were grouped to "Sincere."

Back checks

6% of the completed interviews were back checked in Armenia, 10% in Azerbaijan, and 9% in Georgia.

Data management

Data Entry

Data entry was conducted between November 15 and December 3 in Armenia, between November 5 and December 17 in Azerbaijan, and between October 19 and October 30 in Georgia in CSPro software, using blind double entry.

Data Cleaning

After data entry, a series of logical checks were run on the data set, and flags were generated anywhere that illogical series of data were found. Summaries of the flags were generated, and paper questionnaires were checked in order to determine the source of illogical values.

Weighting

Sampling weights account for the fact that different members of the population have different probabilities of being selected for interview and thus represent different numbers of people in the population. CB 2013 weights result from the following three components: probability weights, non-response weights, and demographic weights.

Probability weights for households and individuals were calculated as the inverse of selection probability so that each household's and individual's weight is equivalent to the number of households and individuals that it represents in the entire population in the country.

Probability weights were then adjusted for non-response. Weights of those who responded were adjusted upwards by a factor of 1.54 in Armenia, 1.22 in Azerbaijan, and 1.45 in Georgia, based on the response rate in each country.

Finally, the respondents were binned into gender and age categories (ages 18-34, 35-54, and 55+), and weights were adjusted so that the weighted age and gender ratios of the sample matched that of the population (based on national census data).

Final dataset

The final CB 2013 dataset is available [online](#).