

Key data: UK and cross-national surveys

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Overview

- UK Data Service
- Survey data
- Documentation and tips
- Website tour
- Questions
 - Type into the questions box
 - I will answer them at the end



What is the UK Data Service?



- A comprehensive resource funded by the ESRC
- A single point of access to a wide range of secondary social science data
- Support, training and guidance



Our main data types



UK and cross-national surveys

Background

- Collect data about individuals or households
- Commissioned by Government
- Conducted by organisations such as the ONS or NatCen

Key characteristics

- Large sample sizes
- Nationally-representative
- Repeated cross-sections
 - Same (or similar) questionnaire with a new sample of people every time
 - Many repeated regularly
- Cross-national surveys
 - Studies where the same survey instrument are used across many nations
 - Same or similar methods and fieldwork protocols



Survey microdata

each row
data from
one case
(person in
this
dataset)

	Househld	RSex	RAge	P2Sex	P2Age	P2Rel3
1	3	1	73	2	67	1
2	1	2	75	0	-1	0
3	3	1	36	2	32	1
4	2	2	56	2	32	2
5	2	1	38	2	30	1
6	1	2	34	0	-1	0
7	5	1	39	2	36	1
8	2	1	81	2	73	1
9	2	1	25	2	26	8
10	2	1	70	2	71	1

each column
Variables
containing
information
collect by the
survey

	Househld	RSex	RAge	P2Sex	P2Age	P2Rel3
1	3	Male	73	Female	67	Partner/ sp...
2	1	Female	75	No further...	No further ...	No further ...
3	3	Male	36	Female	32	Partner/ sp...
4	2	Female	56	Female	32	Son/ daug...
5	2	Male	38	Female	30	Partner/ sp...
6	1	Female	34	No further...	No further ...	No further ...
7	5	Male	39	Female	36	Partner/ sp...
8	2	Male	81	Female	73	Partner/ sp...
9	2	Male	25	Female	26	Other non-r...
10	2	Male	70	Female	71	Partner/ sp...
11	2	Female	57	Male	59	Partner/ sp...
12	3	Male	39	Female	44	Partner/ sp...

Most data stored
numerically
each row with
descriptive labels

example
Row 1 = Male,
aged 73

Accessing microdata

Download

- Whole datasets (and documentation)
- Different formats: SPSS, STATA and Tab

Online via Nesstar

- Browse variables and metadata
- Simple data analysis
- Export tables and graphs
- Download subsets of data

Key topics



Employment and work

- Labour Force Survey
- Annual Population Survey
- European Working Conditions Survey



Health

- Health Survey for England
- Scottish Health Survey
- Diet and Nutrition surveys



Family Finances

- Family Resources Survey
- Living Costs and Food Survey



Crime

- Crime Survey for England and Wales
- Scottish Crime and Justice Survey



Attitudes and opinions

- British Social Attitudes Survey
- NI Life and Times Survey
- Eurobarometer
- European and World Values Surveys



Housing and the local environment

- English Housing Survey
- Living in Wales

Which forms of information are collected in UK surveys?



Which forms of information are collected in UK surveys?

The Living Costs and Foods Survey

- expenditure and food

The English Housing Survey

- a surveyors report on housing conditions

Health Survey for England

- a nurse visit to a sub-sample of participants includes both a blood and saliva test as well as taking height and weight measurements

The National Survey for Sexual Attitudes and lifestyles,

- asks detailed questions about sexual experiences, behaviours, and views

Example: British Social Attitudes (BSA)

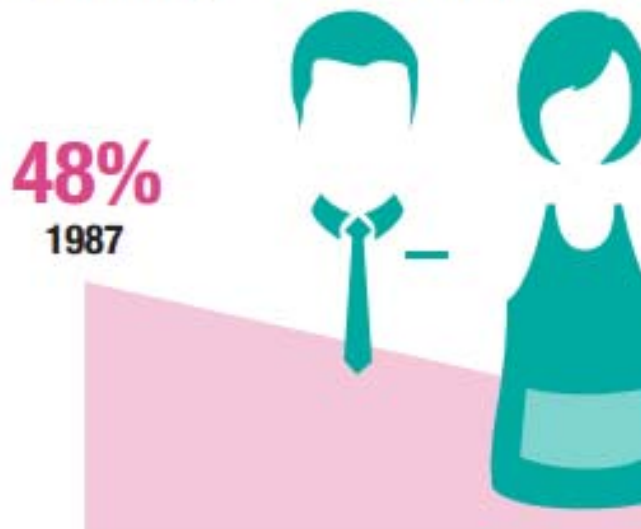
- To provide annual measures of attitudinal movements
- Patterns of continuity and change in social attitudes
- Most years since 1983
- Sample ~3,000
- Core questions (asked most years)
 - Including background and classificatory questions
- Modules on social, economic, political and moral issues
 - some asked regularly, others less often



Quiz

Attitudes to gender roles

Support for a traditional division of gender roles has declined over time, though substantial support remains for women having the primary caring role when children are young.



Quiz

Attitudes to gender roles

Support for a traditional division of gender roles has declined over time, though substantial support remains for women having the primary caring role when children are young.



Labour Force Survey

- A key government survey
- Measures employment, unemployment and economic activity
- Plus related topics
 - occupation, training, hours of work and personal characteristics of household members aged 16 years and over
- Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 1992-
 - ~60,000 interviewed per quarter
- Also
 - Longitudinal datasets (linking quarters)
 - Eurostat version of the dataset

UK jobless rate falls to 5.6%, lowest since 2008, but pay still sluggish

Economists say fall in unemployment is still not feeding through to consumers in the form of higher wages

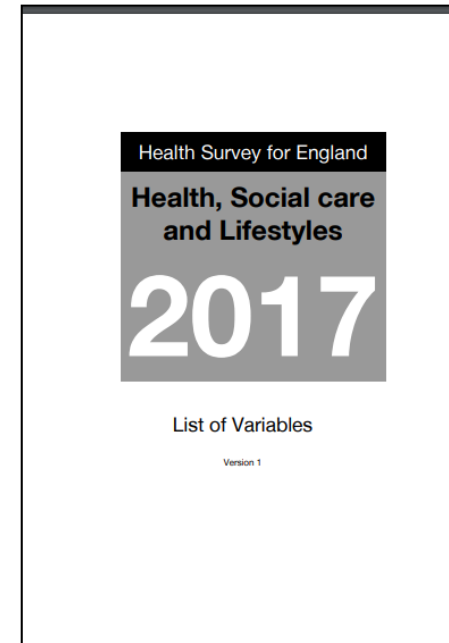


📷 The UK employment rate is 73.4%, the highest since comparable records began in 1971. Photograph: Danny Lawson/PA

Britain's unemployment rate has dropped to its lowest level since 2008 but earnings growth has slowed, according to the final official labour market figures before the election.

Health Survey for England

- General health, longstanding illness, smoking and alcohol
- Core questions every wave + each year focuses on a disease or condition or population group revisited later at appropriate intervals in order to monitor change
- Annual survey, run since 1991
- Currently ~13,000 interviews a year
- The survey combines questionnaire-based answers with physical measurements and the analysis of blood sample



Eurobarometer



- Long running (since early 1970s) regular cross-national and cross-temporal opinion poll program
- Monitors social and political attitudes
- Run, Individual level data with face to face interviews with individuals in each of the EU countries
- More information about the series may be found on the Data Archive for the Social Sciences (GESIS) Eurobarometer Survey Series web pages
- Access to the data is via the German data archive

Survey documentation

- Questionnaires, user guides, technical reports, details of derived variables
- Key to understanding the data.
 - Questions
 - Who answered
 - How the survey was conducted
 - Any changes to the raw data
- Available on our website



FTPTW - Whether working full or part time (employees and self employed people only)	
(1)	Part-time – student
(2)	Part-time – ill or disabled
(3)	Part-time – could not find full-time job
(4)	Part-time – did not want full-time job
(5)	Part-time – no reason given
(6)	Full-time
FREQUENCY:	Each quarter from Spring 92
COVERAGE:	Applies to all respondents who are employees or self employed.
NOTES:	Unpaid family workers are not included in this variable but are included in FTPTWK.
This is a derived variable, please see User Guide Volume 4 for further guidance.	

Survey weights

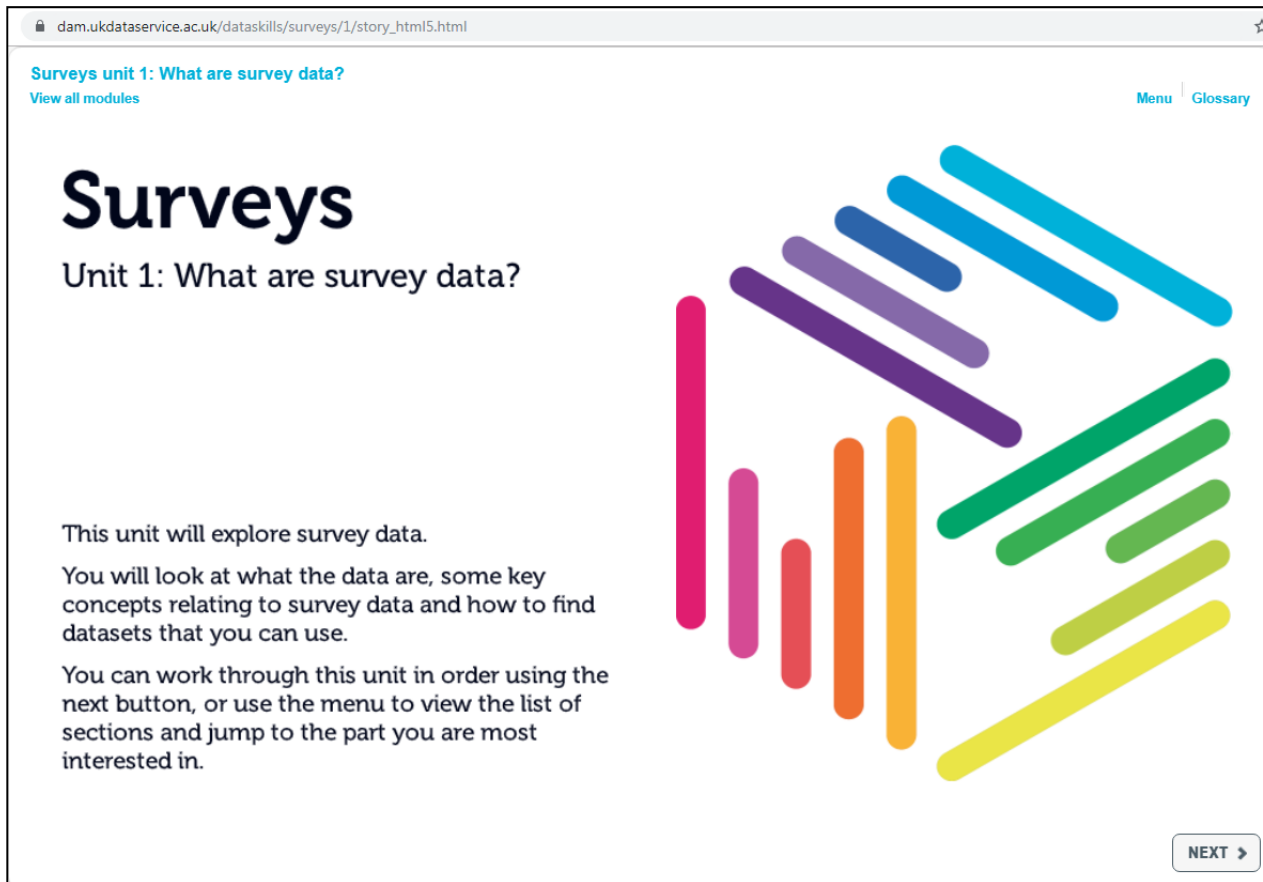
- Often needed with survey data
- Weighting variable(s) in the dataset
- Make the sample data better represent the population
- Easy to use in statistics packages
- Details will be in the survey documentation

See our guides:

- [What is weighting?](#)
- [An introduction to using weights in social surveys \(Video\)](#)
- [How to use weights in Nesstar \(Video\)](#)



Learn online through our Data Skills Modules



dam.ukdataservice.ac.uk/dataskills/surveys/1/story_html5.html

Surveys unit 1: What are survey data?
[View all modules](#)

Menu | [Glossary](#)

Surveys

Unit 1: What are survey data?

This unit will explore survey data.

You will look at what the data are, some key concepts relating to survey data and how to find datasets that you can use.

You can work through this unit in order using the next button, or use the menu to view the list of sections and jump to the part you are most interested in.

[NEXT >](#)

Website demo

- [Ukdataservice.ac.uk](http://ukdataservice.ac.uk)
 - How to find survey data
 - Catalogue pages: getting information about the survey
 - Using Nesstar to view data and do simple analyses online
 - How to download the data



Access conditions

Reflect risk of disclosure

