

Data in the spotlight

UK and cross-national surveys



Overview

The UK Data Service

Survey Data

Documentation and Tips

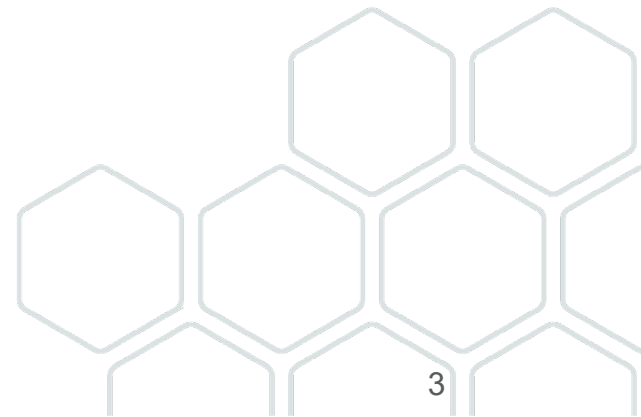
Website Tour

If you have questions put in the Q&A box and we will answer later



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



What data do we hold



UK surveys

Data about individuals or households

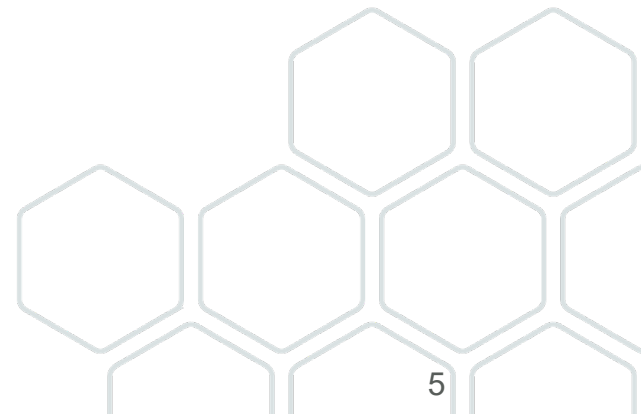
- Commissioned by Government departments
- Conducted by organisations such as the ONS, National Centre for Social Research

Datasets include key characteristics with large sample sizes

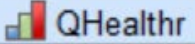

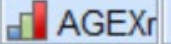



Nationally-representative

Repeated cross-sections

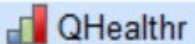
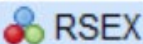
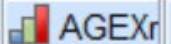
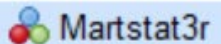
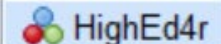
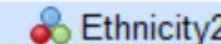
Same (or similar) questionnaire with a new sample of people every time, often repeated regularly



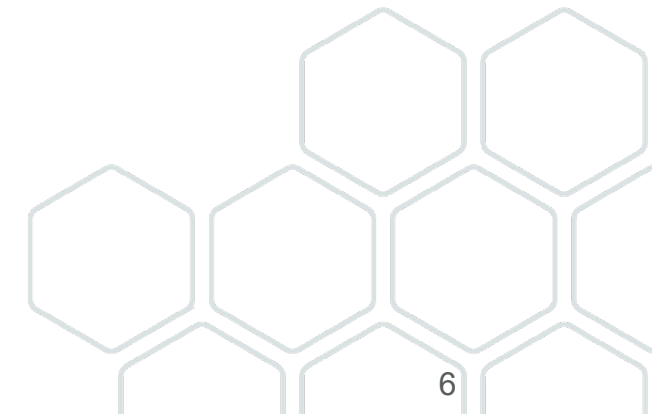
Survey microdata

	 QHealthr	 RSEX	 AGEXr	 Martstat3r	 HighEd4r	 Ethnicity2r
1	2	2	2	2.00	2	1
2	2	1	3	1.00	2	1
3	2	1	3	1.00	4	2
4	3	2	5	1.00	4	1
5	1	2	3	3.00	2	1
6	2	2	1	2.00	2	1

each column
Variables containing information collect by the survey

	 QHealthr	 RSEX	 AGEXr	 Martstat3r	 HighEd4r	 Ethnicity2r
1	Good	Female	25 to 44	Single	Below degree...	White
2	Good	Male	45 to 54	Married/Cohabitin...	Below degree...	White
3	Good	Male	45 to 54	Married/Cohabitin...	None	Other
4	Fair	Female	65 to 74	Married/Cohabitin...	None	White
5	Very good	Female	45 to 54	Married/Cohabitin...	Below degree...	White

example
Row 1 = Female, aged 25-44.



Accessing microdata

Download

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

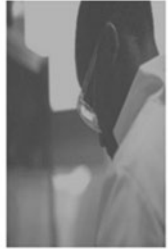
Online via Nesstar

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

Revised version to be released shortly



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

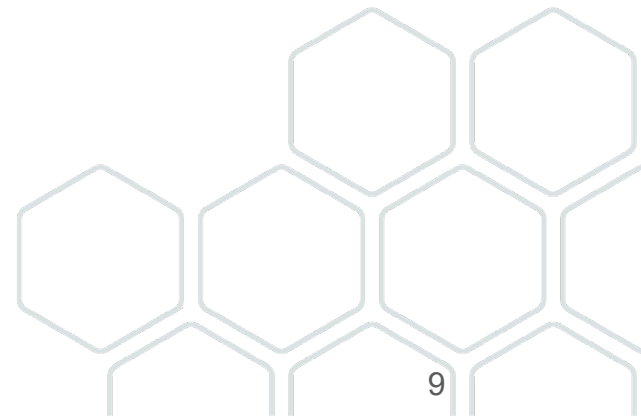
- English Housing Survey
- Living in Wales



Which of these variables do you think we hold?

Mentimeter

- Total daily expenditure for 2 weeks
- Surveyor report on properties
- Blood samples
- Number of sexual partners
- Covid-19 test results



Types of information 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

Understanding Society (Covid waves)

- test results, vaccination, infection, social and employment changes arising from Covid

Survey examples

British Social Attitudes survey

- Public attitudes
- Patterns of continuity and change
- 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



Gender equality

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.



Image adapted from the BSA 2012 report 'British Social Attitudes 30, published by NatCen
http://bsa-30.natcen.ac.uk/media/37580/bsa30_full_report.pdf

Labour Force Survey

ONS survey – main source of data in the labour market

- 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

Datasets

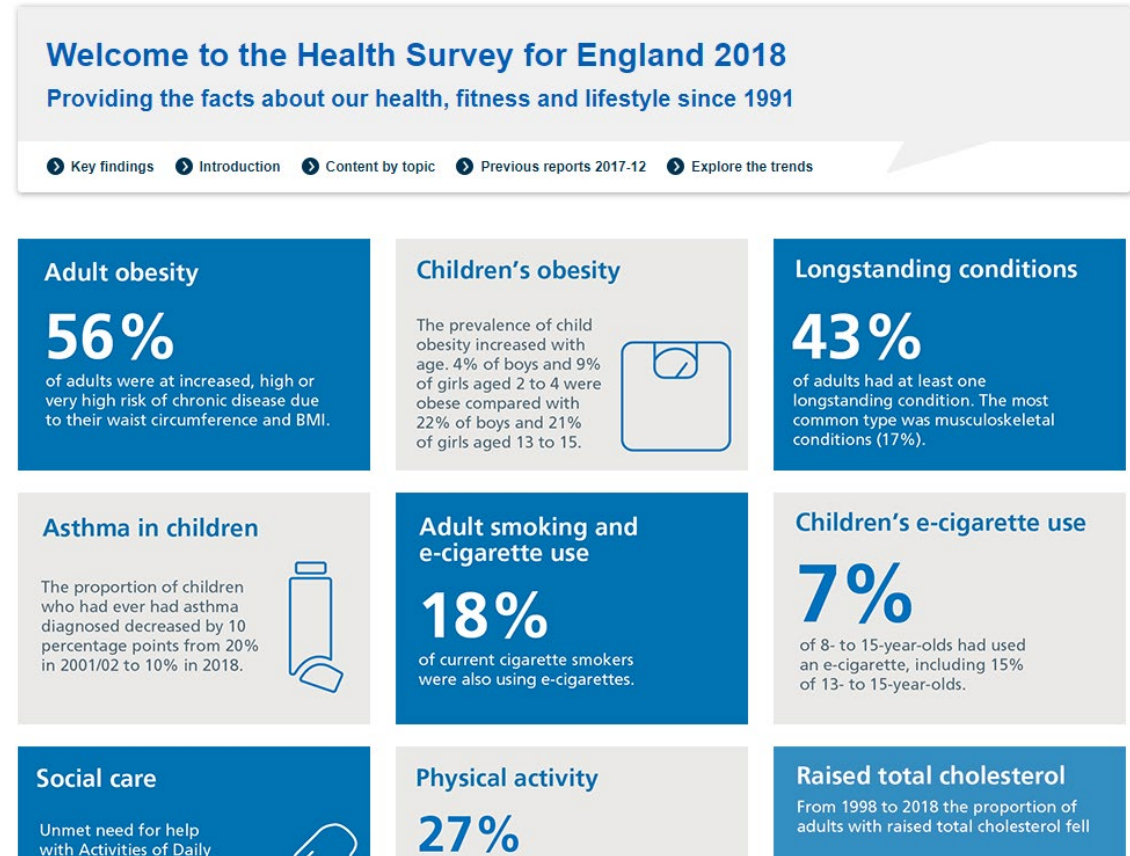
- Quarterly: individual and household
- Longitudinal datasets (linking quarters)

UK total actual weekly hours worked (people aged 16 years and over), seasonally adjusted, between August to October 1992 and February to April 2020



Health Survey for England

- General health, longstanding illness, smoking and alcohol
- Core questionnaire plus focus topic for the year
- Annual survey, run since 1991
- Currently ~13,000 interviews a year
- Questionnaire with physical measurements and the analysis of blood sample
- Reports:
<http://healthsurvey.hscic.gov.uk/support-guidance/public-health/health-survey-for-england-2018/>



Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS)

- A survey of ethnic minorities during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Funded by ESRC grant
- More than 14,000 responses
- Unique evidence from smaller ethnic groups including health, well-being, financial security, employment and experiences of racism
- Unique survey methodology to make non-probabilistic sample nationally representative
- Free e-book [Racism and Inequality in a time of crisis: Findings from the evidence from equality national survey](#)



Weighted percentages

	Insult	Property damage	Physical attack	Any racist assault (one or more experience of any of the three)	N
	%	%	%	%	
White Irish	30.7	21.4	18.4	42.0	97
White Eastern European	15.8	5.3	6.9	19.6	360
Gypsy/Traveller	40.0	28.9	33.3	61.9	227
Roma	31.3	14.5	35.1	47.4	73
Jewish	43.9	26.2	22.2	56.7	476
Any other White background	13.5	6.4	4.7	16.0	650
Indian	23.0	18.1	13.0	31.5	1255
Pakistani	27.6	21.6	16.2	36.8	849
Bangladeshi	31.7	23.6	19.7	39.3	406
Mixed White and Asian	18.8	10.1	14.1	27.5	520
Chinese	23.5	14.1	15.3	30.0	662
Any other Asian background	17.5	14.6	10.9	25.4	663
Black Caribbean	36.3	22.9	21.7	47.0	557
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	37.8	19.3	18.1	48.1	354
Black African	23.5	18.1	16.2	33.0	1040
Mixed White and Black African	43.4	25.0	20.3	48.1	155
Any other Black background	44.6	37.3	37.8	60.9	176
Arab	21.3	13.6	12.8	22.5	152
Any other mixed/multiple background	25.3	12.3	11.1	31.7	363
Any other ethnic group	21.8	10.6	8.2	24.2	252
Overall	26.1	17.3	15.5	34.5	9287

Survey documentation

Understanding the survey

Understanding Society documentation

Key documents

- user guide summarises design, sampling, derived variables, using weights, funding, how to link to main survey and details of special access datasets
- questionnaires for each wave
- data dictionary
- participant information

Understanding Society: COVID-19 Study, 2020-2021

Details	Documentation	Resources	Access data
Documentation			
Title	File name	Size (MB)	
UK Data Archive Citation File for Study 8644	UKDA_Study_8644_Information.htm	0	
UK Data Archive Data Dictionaries	ukda_data_dictionaries.zip	1.47	
UK Data Archive ReadMe File for Study 8644	read8644.htm	0	
Understanding Society COVID-19 Study: April 2020 Questionnaire	8644_ukhls_covid19_apr20_questionnaire_v6.0.pdf	40.37	
Understanding Society COVID-19 Study: Changes to Data Previously Deposited with UK Data Service	8644_ukhls_covid19_data_changes_v8.0.pdf	7.38	

Understanding Society questionnaire

- questions asked
- variable name
- routing information (conditions on whether question is asked)
- time and date stamps for start and completion

The example asks about long Covid symptoms.

lgcvsymp [Long covid symptoms]

Universe: IF ff_hadsymp = 1 AND hadsymp is not 1 AND longcovid = 2 AND (ff_country is not 2 OR (ff_country = 2 AND welsh is not 1)) // Ask if previously reported having covid symptoms, and not reported having symptoms in current survey, and has not returned to previous health, and respondent not living in Wales, or living in Wales and did not complete survey in Welsh.

Source: UKHLS covid-19 survey

Scripting notes: For compatibility with 'symptoms' for current covid, category numbering is not in order – please follow order below.

Text: Which of the following symptoms do you have?

Please select all that apply.

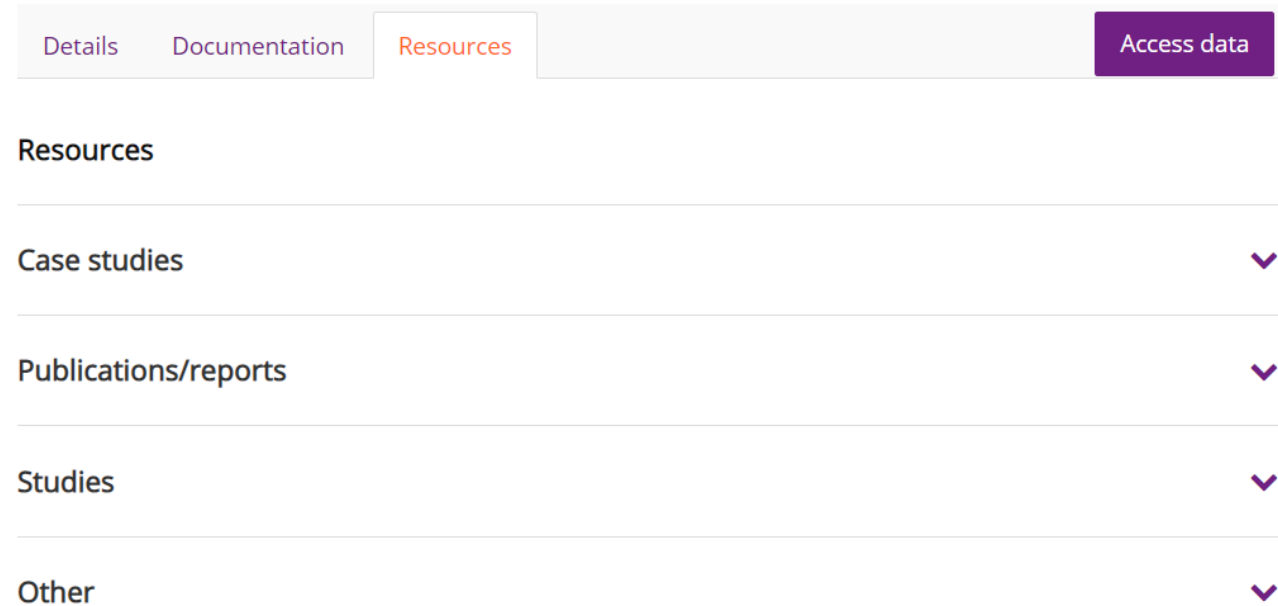
1. High temperature
23. Persistent coughing
24. Loss of concentration
25. Difficulty remembering things
3. Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
4. Runny or stuffy nose
5. Muscle or body aches
6. Headaches
7. Sore throat
8. Fatigue
9. Diarrhoea/Digestive issues/Upset stomach
10. Loss of sense of smell or taste
12. Decrease in appetite
13. Sneezing
14. Sore eyes
15. Hoarse voice
16. Dizziness
17. Tightness in the chest
18. Chest pain
19. Chills (feeling too cold)
20. Difficulty sleeping
21. Numbness or tingling somewhere in the body
22. Feeling of heaviness in arms or legs
26. Other

Understanding Society resources

The Resources tab provides links to

- case studies that analyse key messages from the dataset
- publications that have used the dataset
- details of related studies / datasets
- other relevant information (in this case link to the Understanding Society website that includes a variable search facility)

Understanding Society: COVID-19 Study, 2020-2021



The screenshot shows a web interface for the Understanding Society COVID-19 Study (2020-2021). At the top, there are four tabs: 'Details', 'Documentation', 'Resources' (which is highlighted in orange), and 'Access data' (a purple button). Below the tabs, the 'Resources' section is expanded, showing a list of categories: 'Case studies', 'Publications/reports', 'Studies', and 'Other'. Each category has a downward-pointing chevron icon on the right side, indicating that the list is expandable.

Survey weights

- Survey datasets contain weighting variable(s) in the dataset
- Make the sample data better represent the population – results can be incorrect without weights
- Easy to use in statistics packages
- Details will be in the survey documentation

For more information see out guides

- What is weighting?
- An introduction to using weights in social surveys (Video)
- How to use weights in Nesstar (Video)
- Guides to SPSS, Stata and R
- Data skills modules

Access conditions

Open access

- Available with few restrictions
- Small number of teaching datasets

Safeguarded

- Most survey data is safeguarded
- End User Licence (EUL)
- Need to register and agree to conditions
- May have additional conditions

Controlled

- Applications checked
- Access through a secure access agreement
- Access through a physical or virtual secure environment

Useful sources of information

Drop-in session

[Survey data drop-in — UK Data Service](#)

Regular event with a session today at 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Training programme

[Training and events — UK Data Service](#)

Support materials

[Learning Hub — UK Data Service](#)

Data Skills modules

Help and support

[UK Data Service › Help](#)