



Understanding Society

THE UK HOUSEHOLD LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Understanding Society: the UK Household Longitudinal Study

Language Questions

An initiative by the Economic and Social Research Council, with scientific leadership by the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex, and survey delivery by the National Centre for Social Research.

What is Understanding Society?

- **It is a UK survey:** randomly selected sample of around 40,000 UK households
- **It is a Household survey:** information is collected about all members of the sampled household
- **It is a Longitudinal Survey:** same individuals are interviewed annually

What is Understanding Society?

- Some questions are asked every year, others are asked at 2/3/4 year intervals
- This allows researchers and analysts understand how the lives of UK residents change over time
- Initial conditions questions asked only once
- Some event-triggered questions

What type of questions are asked?

Every year adults (16+ year) sample members are asked about different aspects of their lives

- Age, sex, ethnic group, country of birth
- Family – partnerships, children, siblings
- Family background when respondent was young
- Education and employment
- Income, savings, wealth & assets (including housing)
- Health and wellbeing
- Attitudes, values and beliefs
- (un) Healthy behaviours

What type of questions are asked?

Every year young people (10-15 year old) in the sample are asked about different aspects of their lives

- Computer, social media, computer game usage
- Relationship to family members, friends, dating behaviour
- Health and happiness
- Bullying

0-9 year olds are not interviewed directly but information about them is collected from their parents and guardian

Additional data

- *One time* nurses collected data directly data on health and biomarkers such as height, weight, grip strength, waist circumference, blood pressure...

<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/health-assessment>

- Interviewers also provide data about the quality of the interview and the interview process

Additional data

- You can also link the data to externally available geography based data using the residential locator variables provided (such as LSOA, constituency etc)
- Similarly you can use school locator variables to link to school data
- Survey data linked to National Pupil Database

<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/linked-data>

How can I find out more about the survey?

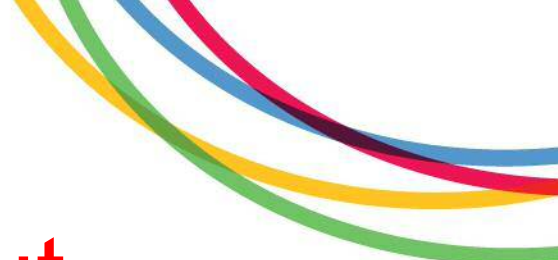
- Visit the website: <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/>

Here you can

- Read about the **research** conducted using this study on different topics
- Read the **user guides**, the **FAQs**, the **questionnaires**
- **Search for variables**

If you still need more information

- **Ask us questions**
- Access online Moodle **training** as well as attend our interactive virtual training sessions
- Watch **webinars** and **training videos**



How to find out what questions were asked about language?

Use the variable search facility – Click [here](#) and then type “Language” in the search box

<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation>

MAIN SURVEY

Home > Data and documentation > Main survey > Variable search > language

Variable search

Datafiles

Index terms

Questionnaire modules

Variable search

Find the variables you need for your research by searching by variable name, by data file or by index term. If you're new to using Understanding Society our [Getting Started Guide](#) will help you start working with the dataset. [Our list of key variable for the analysis of individual response data](#) may also help you.

language

Title	Label	Datafile	Waves
alllang97	other language	indresp	6
hglitrans	translated language	indall, child, hhresp	6, 7, 8
hliitrans	translated language	hhresp	6, 7, 8
ivlhitrans	translated language	hhresp	3, 4, 5
ivlitrans	translated language	indresp	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
kidlang	childhood language	indresp	2, 6, 8
kidlang_all	childhood language	indresp	2
lhitrans	translated language	hhresp	4, 5
litrans	translated language	indresp	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
lngoth	Other language	indresp	BH10
plitrans	translated language	indresp	6, 7, 8

Search found: **132 items**

language

[Clear search](#)

Datafile

- indall 3
- child 4
- hhresp 5

[Show more](#)

Wave

- Wave 8 (H, 2016-17) 15
- Wave 7 (G, 2015-16) 59
- Wave 6 (F, 2014-15) 17

[Show more](#)

Index term

- Children 4
- Crime 60
- Education: Background and attainments 8

[Show more](#)

Language data: purpose

- Measure proficiency in language use
- Define language based ethno-cultural groups
- Survey process information: Languages translated in, or language interview conducted in

English & Welsh language proficiency

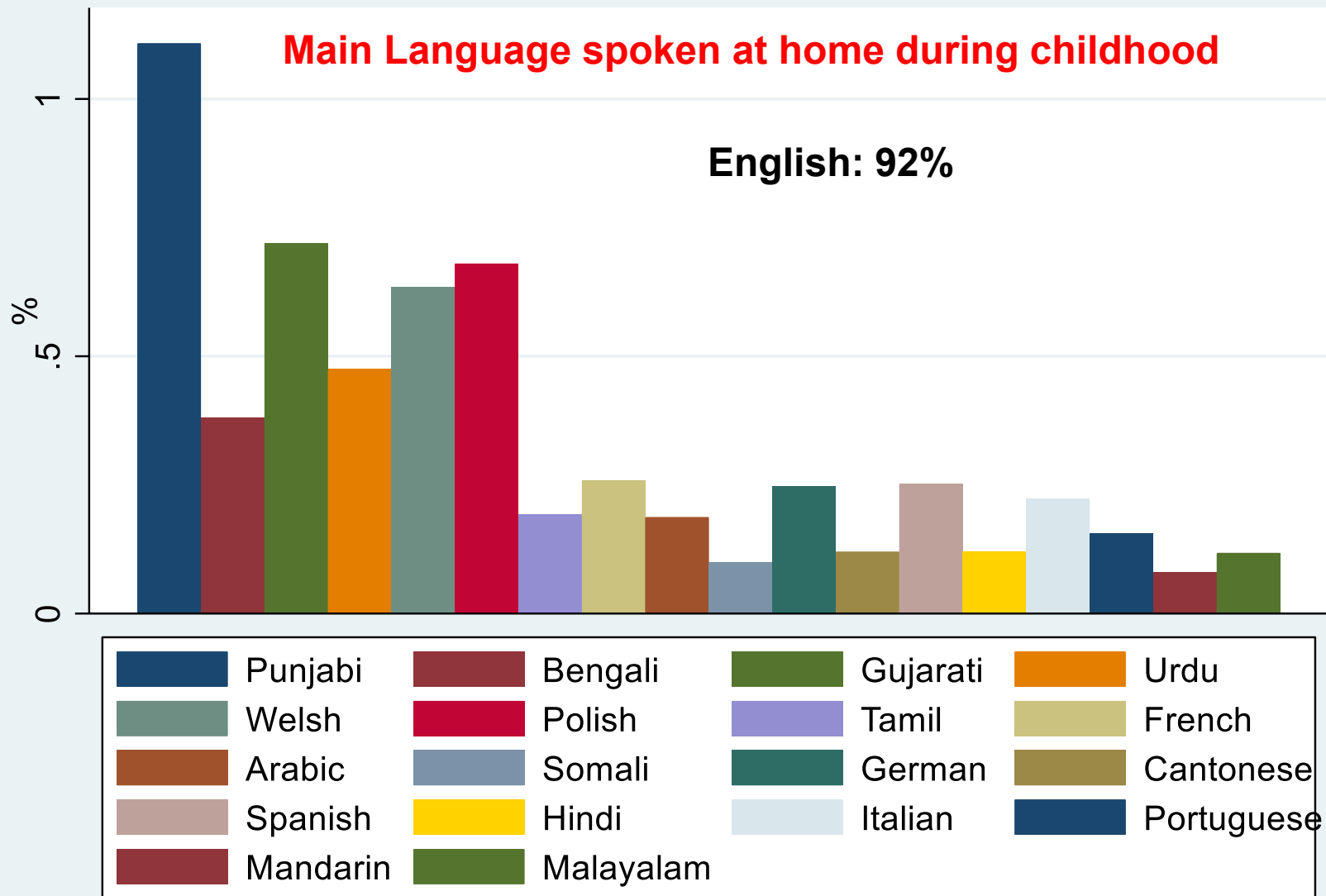
- Whether English is the first language
- If not, then a series of questions about English language proficiency in different contexts
 - When conducting day-to-day activities
 - When talking over the phone
 - When reading formal documents and letters, official forms
- Asked in 4 year intervals starting from the 1st wave
- Similar questions on Welsh language proficiency

Measurement of ethno-cultural group

- Asked which was the main language spoken at home during childhood
- This was asked in Wave 2 (new entrants were asked in some later waves)
- The main languages reported are: English, Punjabi, Bengali, Gujarati, Urdu, Welsh, Polish, Tamil, French, Arabic, Somali, German, Cantonese, Spanish, Hindi, Italian, Mandarin, Malayalam, Turkish,.....

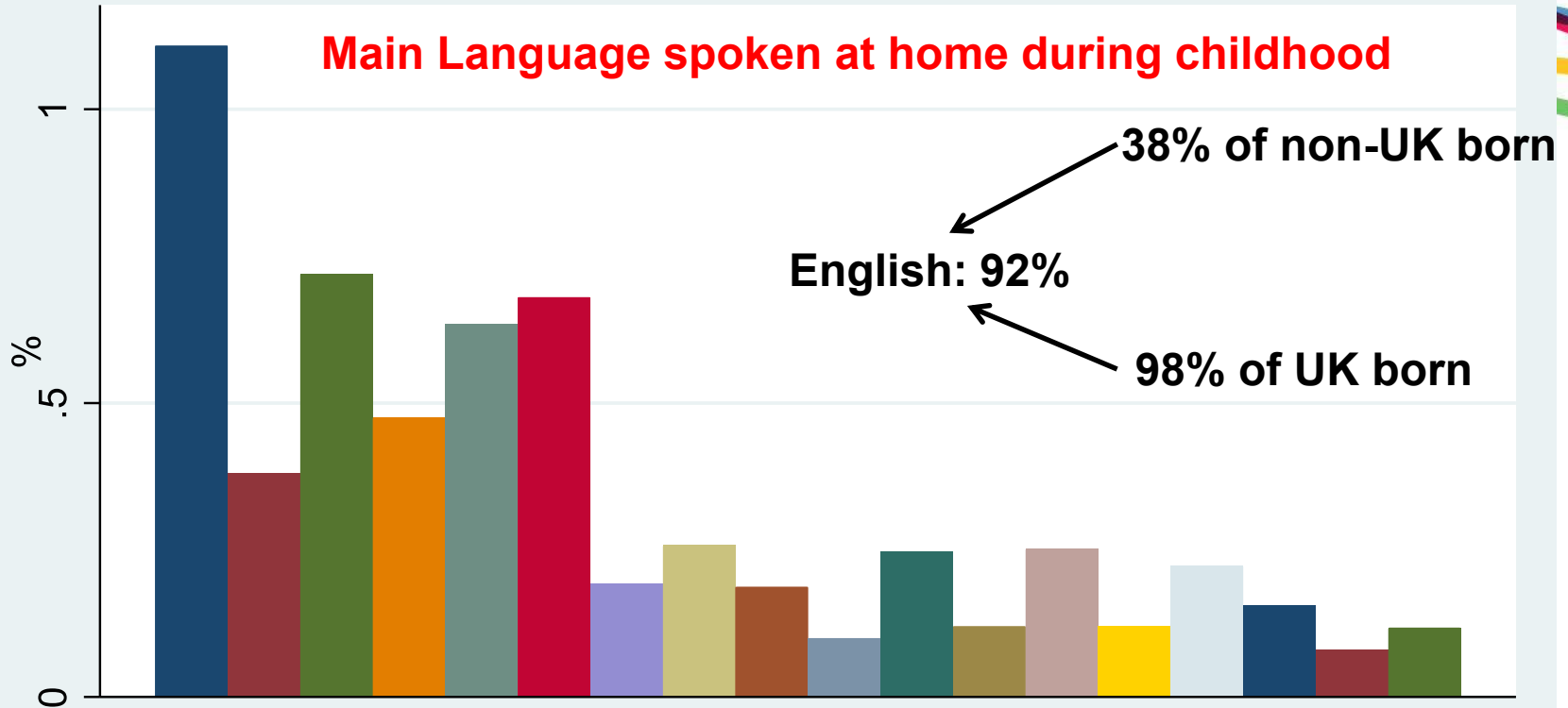
Main Language spoken at home during childhood

English: 92%



Understanding Society Wave 2 data, weighted

Main Language spoken at home during childhood



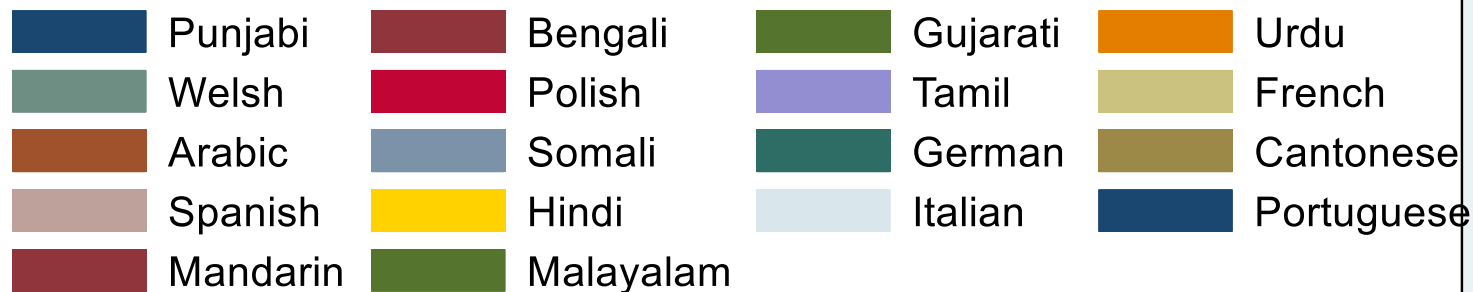
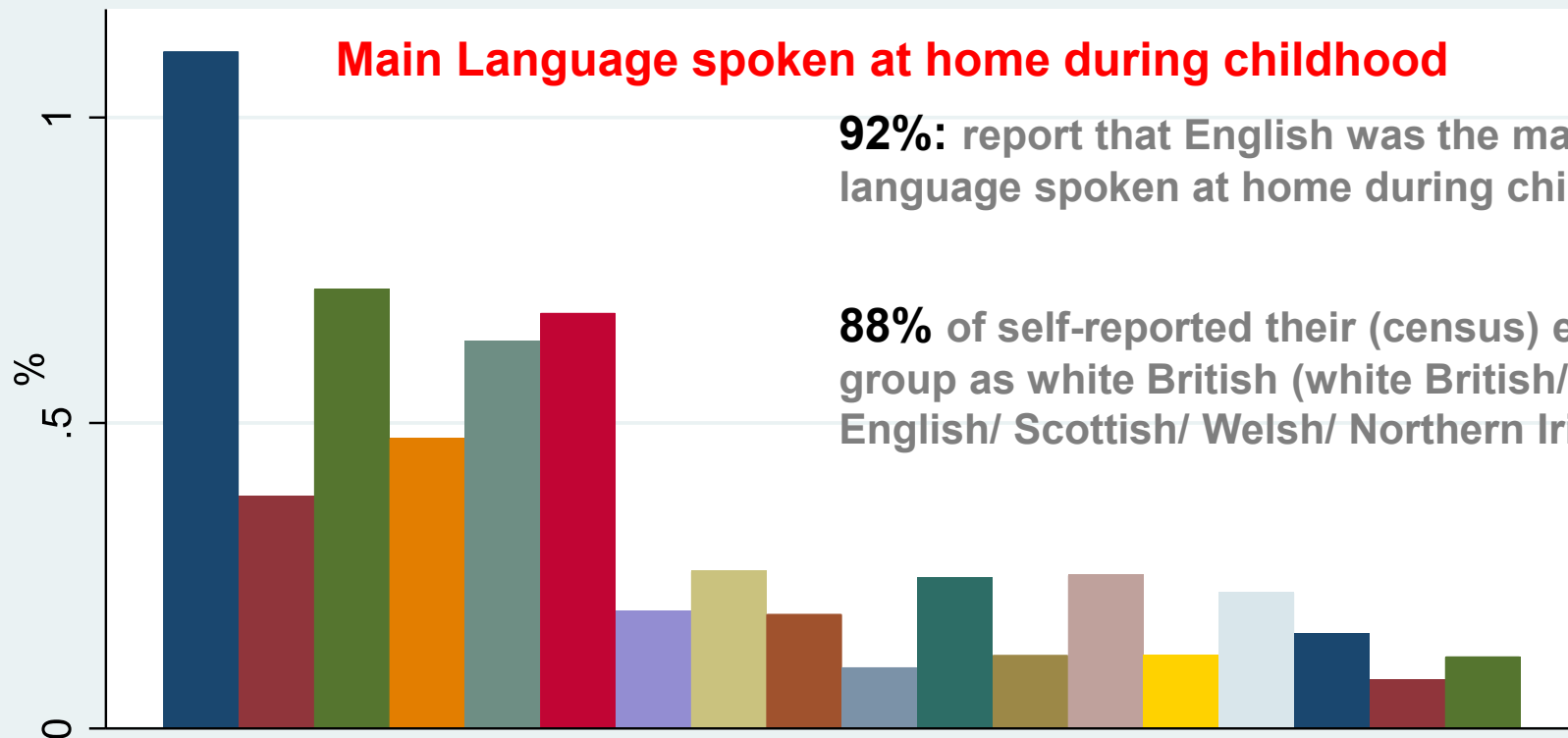
- | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|--|-----------|--|----------|--|------------|
| | Punjabi | | Bengali | | Gujarati | | Urdu |
| | Welsh | | Polish | | Tamil | | French |
| | Arabic | | Somali | | German | | Cantonese |
| | Spanish | | Hindi | | Italian | | Portuguese |
| | Mandarin | | Malayalam | | | | |

Understanding Society Wave 2 data, weighted

Main Language spoken at home during childhood

92%: report that English was the main language spoken at home during childhood

88% of self-reported their (census) ethnic group as white British (white British/ English/ Scottish/ Welsh/ Northern Irish)



Understanding Society Wave 2 data, weighted

Interview process language variables



- Anyone in the household needs interview to be translated
- Language household interview was translated into
- Language individual interview was conducted in
- Language the interview was needed to be translated into
- Anyone in the household spoke English even if that was not their main language

Other variables related to language

- Questions about physical or verbal abuse ask whether such an experience was due to their language
- Questions about identity (sense of who they are, belonging, pride) related to their language

Research using language data



<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/research/publications>

Research using language data

Latest research

Discover which publications have used Understanding Society data by using this search facility. The research can be filtered by subject, publication type, author and year of publication.

Please [let us know](#) about your research

Contains all of these words

Search found 11 items

language

Displaying publications 1 - 11 of 11 in total

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Research using language data



- **Sparsely used**
- **Variables used: English language as first language, Difficulty with English**
- **Main results: Poorer labour market and economic outcomes for ethnic minorities and migrant groups if English is not their first language and/or if poor English proficiency**

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZYQzqhFDBZof66luum6TKQ>

Questions



- Q: Which waves was the Welsh language question asked in?
- Ans: Wave 1, and was asked again in Wave 10 (data not yet available, data to be released in November 2020)

Questions

- Q: Was it asked of only Wales residents?
- Ans: Yes

Questions



- Q: How many sample members would have answered this question? How many respondents live in Wales?
- Ans: In Wave 1, there were 1396 responding households (with 3382 enumerated members), 2378 adult respondents, 221 youth respondents lived in Wales.



More questions?
Ask us here

<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/content/contact-user-support>