Understanding Society
THE UK HOUSEHOLD LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Following the lives of people in 40,000 households and providing valuable evidence about 21st century life in the UK.

Discover more about the study and its unique features.

About the study
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Getting started, Main survey

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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?

- Ambitious study designed to analyse social change and improve lives by examining:

  what people are experiencing (circumstances and events)
  peoples attitudes and cognition (views and capabilities)
  how society really works (behaviours and transitions)

- One of the most important ventures of the century – a "living laboratory of changing life in the UK" and the largest longitudinal panel survey in the world

- Funded by the ESRC, Government Departments and Devolved Administrations; delivered by Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER, University of Essex)

- Began in January 2009; successor to the British Household Panel Study

Wide ranging public issues examined

Sub-group	Count	Sub-group	Count
England	55,436	Indian	1,445
Wales	5,134	Bangladeshi	1,147
Scotland	6,334	Caribbean	823
N. Ireland	5,416	African	991
2 year olds	1,057	People working from home	1,077
3 year olds	1,089	Diagnosed with diabetes	2,520
Over 85s	931	Diagnosed with cancer	730
Separated but legally married	957	Seen ballet performance in the past 12 months	1,584
Completely dissatisfied with job	554	Drank alcoholic drink each day in the past week	2,162

Respondent numbers: Wave 2

Social distance: potential modules (adults)

- **Social networks (Waves 3, 6 and 9)**
- Family networks (Wave 1, every two years)
- **3 best friends (Waves 3, 6 and 9)**
- Social support (Waves 2, 5 and 8)
- **Neighbourhood belonging (Waves 1, 3, 6, 9)**

Other modules of interest

- Voluntary work (Waves 2, 4, 6 and 8)
- Political & social engagement: Groups & organisations (Waves 3, 6 & 9)
- Ethnicity and national identity (Waves 1, 2, 4 and onwards)
- Non-resident relationships (Wave 3 onwards)
- Employment (Wave 1 onwards)

Social Networks

Friends: age

What proportion of your friends are of a similar age as you?

Showcard

TBC

Options

1	All similar
2	more than half
3	about half
4	or less than half?
5	SPONTANEOUS: Don't have any friends

Friends: ethnicity

Source

Citizenship Survey

Text

And what about ethnic group. What proportion of your friends are of the same ethnic group as you?

Showcard

TBC

Options

1	All the same
2	more than half
3	about half
4	or, less than half?

Friends: education

Source
UKHLS

Text
What proportion of your friends have a similar level of education as you?

Showcard
TBC

Options

1	All similar
2	more than half
3	about half
4	or less than half?

Friends: employment

UKHLS

Text

And what proportion of your friends are employed, either full or part-time, or are self-employed?

Showcard

TBC

Options

1	All of them
2	more than half
3	about half
4	or less than half?

Friends: income

Source

Citizenship Survey

Text

What proportion of your friends have similar incomes to you?

Showcard

TBC

Options

1	All similar
2	more than half
3	about half
4	or less than half?

Friends: local

Source
UKHLS

Text
What proportion of your friends live in your local area?

Showcard
TBC

Options

1	All are in the local area
2	more than half
3	about half
4	less than half
5	or none?

Family or friends?

Source

UKHLS

Text

Some people consider family members as friends. What proportion of your friends are family members?

Showcard

TBC

Options

1	All of them
2	more than half
3	about half
4	or, less than half?
5	Don't have any friends / family

Networking: extent

Source
UKHLS Youth Self-Completion Questionnaire

Text
How many hours do you spend chatting or interacting with friends through social web-sites on a normal week day, that is Monday to Friday?

Showcard
TBC

Options

1	None
2	Less than an hour
3	1-3 hours
4	4-6 hours
5	7 or more hours

Socialising

Socialising: barriers

Source
DfT

Text
What stops you from going out socially or visiting friends when you want to?

Interviewer Instruction
PROBE FOR OTHER REASONS
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Showcard
TBC

Options

1	Too busy / not enough time
2	Financial reasons
3	A health condition, illness or impairment, or disability
4	No public transport available
5	Public transport is infrequent or unreliable
5	Can't access the public transport that is available
7	No access to a car as a driver or passenger
8	Nowhere to go in the area
9	No-one to go with
10	Attitudes of other people
11	Fear of crowds
12	Fear of crime
13	Anxiety / lack of confidence
14	Caring responsibilities
97	Other reasons

Groups

Source
BHPS

Text
Are you currently a member of any of the kinds of organisations on this card?

Showcard

Options

1	Yes
2	No

Options

1	Political party
2	Trade Unions
3	Environmental group
4	Parents'/School Association
5	Tenants'/Residents' Group or Neighbourhood Watch
6	Religious group or church organisation
7	Voluntary services group
8	Pensioners group/organisation
9	Scouts/Guides organisation
10	Professional organisation
11	Other community or civic group
12	Social Club/Working men's club
13	Sports Club
14	Women's Institute/Townswomen's Guild
15	Women's Group/Feminist Organisation
16	Other group or organisation
96	SPONTANEOUS None of these

Participation

Whether you are a member or not, do you join in the activities of any of these organisations on a regular basis?

Interviewer Instruction
PROBE FOR ANY OTHERS

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Showcard
Use same showcard as at ORG

Options

1	Political party
2	Trade Unions
3	Environmental group
4	Parents'/School Association
5	Tenants'/Residents' Group or Neighbourhood Watch
6	Religious group or church organisation
7	Voluntary services group
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Neighbourhood belonging

Source: www.tanzfonds.de