



Economic and Social Data Service

# Employment and the labour market Introductory user guide

## ESDS Government

Author: V. Higgins  
Updated: S. King-Hele  
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## **Employment and The Labour Market Introductory User Guide**

### **Introduction**

What is the extent of change in employment for women from minority ethnic groups across age cohorts over the last decade, by comparison with white women? Are there any differences in employment participation by level of educational qualification and the presence of children for women from different ethnic groups? These questions provide examples of the need to monitor employment and the labour market. Research into employment, unemployment, hours of work and training and qualifications (among other things) is vitally important for the development of social and economic policies and theories. For example, the monitoring of economic activity by gender, age and ethnicity over a number of decades has played an intrinsic role in the development of equal opportunity policies within the UK.

### **The large-scale government surveys supported by ESDS Government**

This document will guide you through the employment and labour market data that are available via the large-scale government surveys. The information provided is mainly for researchers who want to use the micro data from the surveys covered by ESDS Government to carry out their own analysis. The surveys covered by ESDS Government are:

- Labour Force Surveys/Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey
- General Household Survey/Continuous Household Survey (Northern Ireland)
- Family Expenditure Survey/Northern Ireland Family Expenditure Survey
- National Food Survey/Expenditure and Food Survey (new combined National Food Survey and Family Expenditure Survey)
- Family Resources Survey
- UKSA Omnibus Survey
- Survey of English Housing
- Health Survey for England/Welsh Health Survey/Scottish Health Survey
- British Crime Survey/Scottish Crime Survey
- British Social Attitudes/Scottish Social Attitudes/Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (and the former Northern Ireland Social Attitudes)/Young People's Social Attitudes (periodic offshoot of the British Social Attitudes Survey)
- National Travel Survey
- Time Use Survey

The ESDS Government web site contains a number of [pages dedicated to each of the surveys](#)<sup>1</sup> listed above. The web site also contains a page on the theme of [employment and the labour market](#)<sup>2</sup> which contains links to useful documents.

It is also worth noting that UKSA produce a [Labour Market guide](#)<sup>3</sup>, which has information on the concepts behind labour market statistics, the sources used to collect the statistics, the methods used to collect, collate and analyse data, the

dissemination of statistics via web-based and paper publications, data releases, publication schedules, the pros and cons of each source, and the most suitable source for data on specific concepts.

### **Accessing the microdata**

To access ESDS Government survey data, all users must [register](#)<sup>4</sup> with the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS). You will need to log in using your UK HE/FE Institutional or 'ukd' username and password to register. If you do not have a username and password, please see [Log-in help](#) on the ESDS web site.

Registered users can download/order the datasets direct from the ESDS web site (usually in SPSS, STATA or tab-delimited formats) via its online [catalogue](#)<sup>5</sup> record and via the download/order section of the [Major Studies](#)<sup>6</sup> web pages.

An increasing number of datasets are also available to most registered users in the [Nesstar](#)<sup>7</sup> system, which will allow you to explore the data online and to do basic exploratory analysis before choosing to download all, or a subset of, the data. Nesstar can save data into formats suitable for SPSS, STATA, SAS, Statistica, DIF (suitable for use in Excel), Dbase and NSDStat formats.

All users requiring data for non-commercial purposes can download data free of charge. Where data is required for commercial purposes there is a per study number fee of £500. For all CD orders there is a flat media fee of £7.50, a per study number handling fee of £2.50 and a flat rate postage and packing fee (£3 in the UK, £4 rest of EU, £5 rest of world). All packages are sent first class via Royal Mail. See [Charges](#)<sup>8</sup> on the ESDS web site.

### **Other data sources**

Aside from the surveys covered by ESDS Government, there are a number of other data sources that may be of use including:

- the New Earnings Survey, Annual Business Inquiry, Claimant Count and Jobcentre Vacancies (covered by [NOMIS](#)<sup>9</sup> and explained in more detail in the [ONS Guide to Regional and Local Labour Market Statistics](#))<sup>10</sup>
- [Census Aggregate Statistics](#)<sup>11</sup> (CasWeb)
- [Samples of Anonymised Records](#)<sup>12</sup>
- [Workplace Employee Relations Survey](#)<sup>13</sup>
- [Workforce Jobs quarterly surveys](#)<sup>14</sup> (formerly Workforce in Employment)
- [ESDS Longitudinal](#)<sup>15</sup> surveys such as the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and the British Cohort Studies.

If you simply want to obtain a figure, for example, the number of unemployed people in the UK in 2000, you can access a range of sources on the [UK Statistics Agency \(UKSA\)](#)<sup>16</sup> web site including [NOMIS](#)<sup>17</sup>, [Labour Market Trends](#)<sup>18</sup> and [Social Trends](#)<sup>19</sup>.

### **Employment and labour market questions in the large-scale government surveys**

All the ESDS government surveys ask questions about employment. The survey you choose for your research will depend upon what you want to do. For example, if you want to look at the whole of the UK then you will be restricted to certain surveys. Similarly, if you want to analyse employment data for a particular year or examine employment and another topic, such as health, then you will also be restricted in the surveys you can use. Table 1 gives a summary of each of the large-scale government surveys in relation to employment and the labour market and should help you to identify the surveys that hold the data you require. The main source of data for many researchers is the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which collects a wide range of data on economic activity and the labour market. Another source of data is the multi-purpose General Household survey (GHS) which enables the linking of topics together, for example economic activity and caring responsibilities among men and women.

Since the mid 1990s the government surveys have applied the principle of [harmonisation](#)<sup>20</sup> in order to improve the comparability of statistics. Harmonisation involves the use of standard questions and outputs with common classifications and definitions for a number of key concepts. Economic status, industry, occupation, employment status and socio-economic classifications are all harmonised concepts, which means that all government surveys that contain data on these topics will have obtained the data through the use of harmonised or 'standard' questions. Each of the government surveys also collect the following 'harmonised' core demographic variables from respondents: sex, age, ethnicity, marital status/cohabitation.

The harmonised questions on employment and unemployment are in line with the internationally agreed International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of employment and unemployment. To be unemployed, according to the ILO definition, you must be: not in paid employment in the last seven days but available to start within two weeks and have either looked for work in the last 4 weeks or been waiting to start a new job. ILO employment includes those who have been in paid work in the last seven days (either as an employee or self-employed) and those on a government-supported training scheme in the last seven days. ILO employed also includes people who are temporarily away from their job/business (e.g. on maternity leave or on holiday) and people who do unpaid work for their own business or a family business. NB: other than the Labour Force Survey and General Household Survey, many of the large-scale government surveys measure ILO unemployment and employment without including unpaid family work and/or being temporarily away from work because they do not ask this level of detail in the questionnaire. For more information about the definition of ILO unemployment and how to measure it see the [LFS documentation](#)<sup>21</sup> on the ESDS web site and the [UKSA harmonisation web site](#)<sup>22</sup>.

**Table 1: Summary of large-scale government surveys**

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
<a href="#">Labour Force Survey (LFS)</a> <sup>23</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2009 questionnaire</a> <sup>24</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>25</sup>	ILO measures; Training at work; Work history; Hours worked. Earnings (1992 onwards).	Education; Health and Disability.	1973-1983 biennial (1973 data unavailable). Annually from 1984. Quarterly from 1992, with major change to sample design. Advisable to use only from 1992 onwards when measuring over time. For further details see the 'LFS' section in this document.	All individuals aged 16+ in the sampled household.	UK. c. 60, 000 households per quarter	2006: Government Office Region (GOR) plus a more detailed level of GOR; The Unitary Authority/Local Authority Data files and the Annual Local Area Data files have been withdrawn from ESDS by UKSA. The QLFS Local Area Datasets are available from 1992 onwards. These provide data aggregated by area, i.e. data are on an area-level rather than an individual/person level. This is documented further in 'The LFS Datasets' section of this guide.
<a href="#">General Household Survey (GHS)</a> (now the General Lifestyle	ILO measures; Hours worked; Earnings.	Includes Education; Health and disability;	Annually from 1971 (except for breaks in 1997/98 when the survey was reviewed	All individuals aged 16+ in the sampled household.	GB. Achieved 9.731 households	2006: GOR; standard regions

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
Survey) <sup>26</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2006 questionnaire</a> <sup>27</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>28</sup>		Household and family information; Housing tenure; Consumer durables; Pensions; and from time to time topics such as Informal carers, Leisure, and many other topics: see <a href="#">Summary of main topics 1971 to 2005</a> <sup>29</sup>	and 1999/2000 when it was redeveloped). The 1971 data is not downloadable from ESDS and is only available in ASCII. Significant methodological changes from 2000 onwards. For further details see the 'GHS' section in this document.  2006- longitudinal component introduced (GHS-L/EU-SILC), see <a href="#">study description</a> .		(22,924 individual interviews) in 2006.  NI covered by <a href="#">Continuous Household Survey</a> <sup>30</sup> which is similar to and modelled on the GHS.	<a href="#">Continuous Household Survey 2005-06</a> <sup>31</sup> : country level
<a href="#">British Crime Survey (BCS)</a> <sup>32</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2008-2009 questionnaire</a> <sup>33</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>34</sup>	ILO measures; Violence at work.	Levels of crime Attitudes towards and fear of crime.	1982, 1984, 1988, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998. Annually from 2000. Significant methodological changes from 2001 onwards – a larger sample, moved to continuous fieldwork with a different reference period to previous years, a 'spliced' sample design, new questions.	One randomly selected individual (aged 16+) in each sampled household.	England and Wales 1984 and 1992 onwards.  GB in 1982 and 1988.  Achieved 46,286 cases (non-victim form); 16,184 cases (victim form) in 2008-2009.	2008-2009: GOR; Inner city/urban/rural. From 2008-2009 onwards, Police Force Area is now only available under Special Licence Access.  Earlier years also include UKSA District Level Classifications: Group, Subgroup, and Supergroup,

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
						(2003), LAD typology and 8-fold urban/rural classification 2004-
<a href="#">Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS)</a> <sup>35</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2008-09 questionnaire</a> <sup>36</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>37</sup>	Economic activity (not ILO); violence at work.	Views on social issues, levels of crime, fear of crime, experience of victimisation, contact with the police, views of respondent's locality, demographics	In 1982 and 1988 the Crime Survey in Scotland formed part of the British Crime Survey (BCS) - the Scottish part of the 1988 BCS was also known as the Scottish Areas Crime Survey. In 1993 the first independent Scottish Crime Survey was run and repeated in 1996, 2000 and 2003. In 2004 the SCS was re-launched as the larger Scottish Crime and Victimization Survey (SCVS) and renamed the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) from 2008 onwards.	One randomly selected adult (aged 16+) in each sampled household. All children aged 12-15 in the sampled household. The 2000 survey had an ethnic boost.	Scotland. Achieved 5,041 interviews with people aged 16 and over in 2003.  5000 adult interviews and 400 child interviews in 2000.  2008-09: Main survey: 16,003 cases. Self-completion form: 10,974 cases. Victim form: 5,772 cases.	For 2000 Scottish Crime Survey (SCS): Standard Scottish regions, 5 category rural indicator, highland/lowland indicator.  For 2008-09 SCJS: Health Boards; Police Force Areas; Community Justice Authority Areas; National Criminal Justice Board Areas; Local Authority Areas
<a href="#">British Social Attitudes (BSA) Survey</a> <sup>38</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2008 questionnaire</a> <sup>39</sup>	ILO measures; Hours worked; Attitudes towards employment and the workplace	Attitudes towards many topics including economic issues and policies, education, sex	Annually from 1983 (except in 1988 and 1992).	One randomly selected individual (aged 18+) in each sampled household.	GB. Achieved 4,468 <i>individuals</i> in 2008.	2005: GOR; SSR; Local Authority Code; Council Area in Scotland;

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
<a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>40</sup>	including health and safety in the workplace and trade unions.	and gender issues. See the <a href="#">Survey Question Bank</a> <sup>41</sup> web site for more details.				Parliamentary Constituencies.  2008: GOR
<a href="#">NI Life and Times Survey</a> <sup>42</sup> / <a href="#">NI Social Attitudes Survey</a> . <sup>43</sup>  <a href="#">Link to 2009 questionnaire</a> <sup>44</sup>  Link to NILT datasets from <a href="#">ARK</a> <sup>45</sup> or <a href="#">ESDS</a> <sup>46</sup>  <a href="#">Link to NISAS datasets</a> <sup>47</sup>	Economic activity (not full ILO), Social class	Attitudes towards many topics including politics, community relations, Europe.	Annually from 1998.  Previously, the NISAS 1989-1996 (except for 1992).	One randomly selected individual (aged 18+) in each sampled household.	Northern Ireland. 1,228 adults in 2009.	2009: National; Variable called 'Placeliv' (a big city, The suburbs or outskirts of a big city, A small city or town, A country village, Or, a farm or home in the country).
<a href="#">Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey</a> <sup>48</sup>  <a href="#">Link to 2007 questionnaire</a> <sup>49</sup>  <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>50</sup>	Economic activity (not full ILO), SOC, SEG, SIC.	Attitudes towards many topics including health, transport, religion, party identification.	Annually from 1999.	One randomly selected individual (aged 18+) in each sampled household.	Scotland. Achieved 1,508 respondents aged 18 and over in 2007.	Generally: Postcode Districts, Local Authority Areas and Parliamentary Constituencies. From 2000 wards are included and in 2002 the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) 6-fold urban-rural classification. From 2004 wards no longer are available

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
						on dataset. 2007: Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies (Scotland); Local Authority Districts; Scottish Executive Urban Rural Classification (previously called the Scottish Household Survey Urban Rural Classification).
<a href="#">Young People's Social Attitudes Survey</a> <sup>51</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2003 questionnaire</a> <sup>52</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>53</sup>	Economic activity (not full ILO)	Attitudes towards many topics including local area, politics, family life	1994, 1998 and 2003.	All young people aged 12-19 living in households of British Social Attitudes Survey respondents	GB. Achieved 663 interviews in 2003.	2003: Country; GOR.
<a href="#">Living Costs and Food Survey (EFS)</a> <sup>54</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2008 questionnaire</a> <sup>55</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>56</sup>	ILO measures; Earnings; Hours worked.	Expenditure: regular household bills, food expenditure, large items of expenditure, ownership of consumer durables; Income of individuals.	Annually from 2001: The <a href="#">Expenditure &amp; Food Survey (EFS)</a> <sup>57</sup> replaced the <a href="#">FES</a> <sup>58</sup> & <a href="#">NFS</a> <sup>59</sup>	Each individual aged 16 or over in the household keeps diary records of daily expenditure for two weeks. Simplified diaries are kept by children aged between 7 and 15. Detailed	UK  2008: 5,091 households in Great Britain, and 574 in Northern Ireland	2008: GOR

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
				questions are asked about the income of each adult member of the household.		
<a href="#">Family Expenditure Survey (FES)</a> <sup>60</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2000 questionnaire</a> <sup>61</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>62</sup>	ILO measures; Earnings; Hours worked.	Expenditure; Income.	Annually from 1957-2000. Datasets unavailable for 1957-1960 and 1964-1967.  Replaced by <a href="#">NFS</a> <sup>63</sup> in 2001.	Exactly the same as the Expenditure and Food Survey (EFS) above.	UK. NI incorporated in FES since 1968.  Achieved 6,000 households in 2000/1.	2000: SSR & SSR with metropolitan areas
<a href="#">Survey of English Housing (SEH)</a> <sup>64</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2007-2008 questionnaire</a> <sup>65</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>66</sup>	ILO measures; Earnings.	Tenure; housing costs; history and moving intentions; Attitude questions revised/rotated annually.	Survey of English Housing (SEH) was merged with the English Housing Condition Survey (EHCS) to form the <a href="#">English Housing Survey (EHS)</a> in 2008.  SHE: Annually from 1993.	Household reference person in the sampled household. Additional interviews with private renters or their partners in each tenancy group in the household.	England. Achieved 15,622 households in 2007-2008.	2007-2008: Local Authority GOR; SSR; County.
<a href="#">National Travel Survey</a> <sup>67</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2008 questionnaire</a> <sup>68</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>69</sup>	ILO measures; Earnings; Travel to work.	Vehicle ownership; Other travel behaviour, such as use of public transport and time spent	1965 (dataset unavailable), 1972, 1975, 1978, 1985.  Annually from 1998.	All individuals in the sampled household including children and babies. Both parent and child answer questions	GB. Achieved households 8,297 in 2006; 8,431 in 2007 and 8,094 in 2008.	1999- : GOR; Type of area (urban rural, specific cities)

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
		travelling.		for those aged under 11.		
<a href="#">Family Resources Survey (FRS)</a> <sup>70</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2008-2009 questionnaire</a> <sup>71</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>72</sup>	ILO measures; Earnings	Income; Benefits; Assets; Pensions; Travel to work; Savings; Health and ability to work.	Annually from 1992 but data only available from ESDS from 1993 onwards.	All individuals aged 18+ in the sampled household (although some questions about benefits etc are asked about those aged 16-18).	GB. Achieved 25,088 households in 2008/9.  NI was included in for the first time in 2002-03	2008-2009: GOR; Standard statistical regions and regions within London.
<a href="#">Health Survey for England (HSE)</a> <sup>73</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2008 questionnaire</a> <sup>74</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>75</sup>	Household Reference Person only; ILO measures; Income (not specifically earnings from employment).	Health and disability; Health Behaviour.	Annually from 1991. Sample size greatly increased from 1993 onwards. Since 1995 children aged 2-15 have been interviewed (aged 0-15 since 2001). In 1997 and 2002, the sample was boosted for children and young people (aged 0-24). In 1999 and 2004 there was a boost sample of ethnic minority groups. In 2000, elderly residents of care homes were included and 2005 included a boost sample of people aged 65+ in private homes.	In 2003 up to a maximum of three households per address were selected. Up to 2 children aged 0-15 were interviewed in each household, as well as up to 10 adults aged 16 and over. Information was obtained directly from persons aged 13 and over. Information about children under 13 was obtained from a parent with the	England. Achieved 22,623 individuals in 2008.  NI covered by <a href="#">NI Health and Wellbeing Survey</a> <sup>76</sup>	2008: Strategic Health Authority; GOR; Degree of urbanisation; urban/rural indicator; Index of multiple deprivation (SOA level) 2007.  <a href="#">NI Health and Wellbeing Survey 2001</a> <sup>77</sup> : NI Health Board Area

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
				child present.		
<a href="#">Scottish Health Survey</a> <sup>78</sup> . <a href="#">Link to 2008 questionnaire</a> <sup>79</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>80</sup>	Economic activity (not full ILO), SOC, SEG, SIC, physical effort at work	Core questions such as general health, prescribed medicines, smoking and eating habits. Physical measurements such as height and weight. Blood and saliva samples. The 1995 survey focused on cardiovascular disease. The 1998 survey has a wider range of topics, including asthma and accidents. The 2003-4 survey also focuses on cardio-vascular disease. Household information, demographic information, education, parental	1995, 1998, 2003 and annually 2008 to 2011.	<p>The 1995 survey covered those aged 16-64. One adult was randomly selected for an individual interview.</p> <p>In 1998 the survey covered those aged 2-74. One adult and up to two children were selected. Parents completed the interview for those aged under 13, with the child present. Only children aged 8 and over completed the self-completion. In 2003-4, all adults (no upper age limit) and up to two children are included. Key household data collected in each year.</p>	<p>In 2003 a total of 8,148 adults and 3,324 children (including 391 aged 0-1) were interviewed. Of these, 5,444 adults were visited by a nurse and 2,224 children (including 254 aged 0-1).</p> <p>In 2008, there were 8,215 individual cases.</p>	<p>Scotland, including the islands.</p> <p>The geography on the data is Scottish Health Boards (12 in 1995 and 15 in 1998 and 2003), 7 regions and 5-category area type (inner city, rural etc). In 1995 postal areas were also included.</p> <p>In 2003 there was an additional Scottish Executive 8-fold urban/rural classification.</p> <p>In 2008: Health Boards; Health Authority Regions/Districts; Urban/rural indicator. (See the paper about <a href="#">sub-Scotland geographies</a><sup>81</sup> analyses using the 2008-2011 data.)</p>

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
		history				
<a href="#">Welsh Health Survey</a> <sup>82</sup> . <a href="#">Link to 2008 questionnaire</a> <sup>83</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>84</sup>	Economic activity (not full ILO)	General health, specific illnesses, use of and satisfaction with health service, self-perceived health, lifestyle. Demographic information, carers.	<p>Surveys were carried out: 1995 (questionnaire available from <a href="#">the Question Bank</a>) 1998 and the new WHS from 2003/4 onwards.</p> <p><i>Note: Results from the new WHS are not comparable with those from 1995 or 1998 due to changes in questionnaires and survey methodology.</i></p>	<p>Previously a postal questionnaire for adults aged 18 and over.</p> <p>From 2003-4, this survey involved a household interview and a self-completion (for all members of the household, including children) which is collected by the interviewer.</p>	<p>Wales. In 1998, around 30,000 individuals completed a postal questionnaire</p> <p>Achieved sample size for 2008: 13,313 adults and 2,653 children.</p>	<a href="#">Welsh Health Survey 1998</a> <sup>85</sup> . Welsh Health Authority; Welsh Unitary Authorities; Parliamentary constituency; Assembly Regional Committee Area; Assembly Electoral Region.
<a href="#">National Food Survey (NFS)</a> <sup>86</sup> <a href="#">Link to 2000 questionnaire</a> <sup>87</sup> <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>88</sup>	ILO Measures; Earnings	Food consumption and expenditure.	<p>Annually from 1940 but data is only available from ESDS from 1974 onwards.</p> <p>1940-1949: survey of the 'urban working class'.</p> <p>1950: widened to cover the population of GB as a whole.</p> <p>1994: extended to cover 'eating out'.</p> <p>1996: household food part of the survey extended to cover</p>	Household member who does most of the food shopping.	UK. Achieved 6,000 households in 2000/1.	2000: Local Authority District

### G3

The series of ESDS Guides are available online at [www.esds.ac.uk](http://www.esds.ac.uk)

Survey	Employment & labour market questions	Other topics in survey	Measurement over time	Respondents	Sample	Geographical level
			Northern Ireland. Replaced by <a href="#">EFS</a> <sup>89</sup> in 2001			
<a href="#">Time Use survey</a> <sup>90</sup>  <a href="#">Link to 2000 questionnaire</a> <sup>91</sup>  <a href="#">Link to dataset</a> <sup>92</sup>	ILO Measures; Earnings; Hours worked; Time taken to travel to work.	Work/leisure balance; Gender differences in childcare; Time spent volunteering and caring.	2000. Plans for a small 'pre-coded' time use module on the Omnibus survey in 2005 and another full survey in 2010.	All individuals aged 8+ in the sampled household..	UK. Achieved 6,500 households in 2000/1.	2000: GOR
<a href="#">ONS Opinions Survey (formerly the ONS Omnibus survey)</a> <sup>93</sup>  <a href="#">Link to February 2009 questionnaire</a> <sup>94</sup>  <a href="#">Link to datasets</a> <sup>95</sup>	ILO measures.	Various – see <a href="#">Omnibus</a> <sup>96</sup> homepage.	Carried out in 2/3 months each quarter since 1990.	One eligible person aged 16+ in the sampled household.	GB. Achieves around 1,800 <i>individuals</i> per month.	Feb. 2009: GOR at a detailed level

### The Integrated Household Survey (Continuous Population Survey)

Fieldwork for the Integrated Household Survey ([IHS](#))<sup>97</sup> (a.k.a the Continuous Population Survey (CPS)) began in January 2008. The design involves the integration of the household surveys on which UKSA leads into one IHS (CPS). The surveys included for integration are:

- Labour Force Survey ([LFS](#))<sup>98</sup> and associated boosts (APS)
- General Household Survey ([GHS](#)) (now the General Lifestyle Survey)<sup>99</sup>
- Expenditure and Food Survey ([EFS](#)) (now the Living Costs and Food Survey)<sup>100</sup>
- ONS Opinions (formerly the ONS Omnibus Survey) ([OMN](#))<sup>101</sup>

The IHS will collect information on employment and the labour market along with a variety of other topics such as health, expenditure, income etc so it has great potential as a secondary source for employment and labour market research.

### G3

The series of ESDS Guides are available online at [www.esds.ac.uk](http://www.esds.ac.uk)

The following IHS/CPS-related web sites and documents provide further information:

- information on [IHS on UKSA web site](#)<sup>102</sup>
- [Proposals for the CPS](#)<sup>103</sup>
- [Integrated Population Statistics System](#)<sup>104</sup>
- [Response to the IHS \(CPS\) consultation](#)<sup>105</sup>
- A [Consultation meeting on the IHS \(CPS\)](#) took place on 23 January 2006 and the slides from the meeting can be [downloaded](#)<sup>106</sup> from the ESDS web site. A [further meeting](#) took place on 29 March 2007 and an update was given at the [General Household Survey user meeting](#) on 13 March 2009.

## The Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Other than the Census, the [LFS](#)<sup>107</sup> is the only comprehensive source of information about all aspects of the labour market and it assists many government departments in the framing and monitoring of social and economic policy. The UK is required by European Union Regulation to carry out an annual LFS. The survey is carried out by UK Statistics Authority (UKSA). The UKSA has an information booklet [What Exactly is the Labour Force Survey?](#)<sup>108</sup> which provides a general introduction to it.

Table 2 shows major developments in the LFS over the last 30 years.

**Table 2: Major developments in the LFS**

Years	Description	Other information
1973-1983	Biennial survey	Achieved sample: c.85,000 and 3,500 households in GB and Northern Ireland respectively. Sample design: cross sectional survey (no panel element) with one responsible adult in each household answering questions on behalf of other household members.
1984 –1991	Annual survey  For further information of the LFS pre-1992 see the <a href="#">User Guide 7</a> <sup>109</sup> detailing variables 1979-1991.	Consisted of two elements: 1) a quarterly survey conducted in Great Britain throughout the year, in which each sampled address is called on five times at quarterly intervals, and which yields about 15,000 responding households in every quarter; 2) a `boost' survey in the quarter March to May, which produces interviews at over 44,000 households in Great Britain and over 4,000 households in Northern Ireland. However, only the data from the spring quarter and the boost survey were included in the annual datasets for public release. All individuals age 16+ in the household take part. ILO definition of employment introduced.
1992 (Spring) onwards	Quarterly survey	Sample size: c.60,000 and 5,000 households in GB and Northern Ireland respectively. Sample design: unclustered sample of addresses introduced. Overlapping panel design introduced with 5 waves throughout the year and c.12,000 responding households per quarter. Inclusion of those living in NHS accommodation and those in student halls. All individuals age 16+ in the household take part.
2000 (Spring) onwards	Local LFS (annual enhancement)	All LEAs target a minimum sample size of 875 (smaller in Rutland and London boroughs). This is combined with the annual LFS survey data. More information is available from <a href="#">Labour Market Trends, January 2002</a> <sup>110</sup>

	to LFS)	
2004 (January) onwards	Annual Population Survey ( <a href="#">APS</a> ) <sup>111</sup>	<p>The APS represents a major new survey which comprises key variables from the LFS, all the LFS boosts and the APS boost (please note that the APS boost sample finished at the end of December, see below for more details). For the first time the APS will provide survey data that can produce reliable estimates at local authority level. Key topics in the survey include education, employment, health and ethnicity.</p> <p>The APS combines results from five different sources: the LFS (waves 1 and 5); the English Local LFS (LLFS); the Welsh LFS (WLFS); the Scottish LFS (SLFS) and the APS Boost Sample (APS(B)). However, the LLFS, WLFS and SLFS are not currently held at ESDS). Please note that the APS(B) ceased to exist at the end of December 2005 so APS data from January 2006 onwards will contain all the above data apart from APS(B) data.</p> <p>The APS aims to provide enhanced annual data for England, covering a target sample of at least 510 economically active persons for each Unitary Authority (UA)/Local Authority District (LAD) and at least 450 economically active persons in each Greater London Borough. In combination with local LFS boost samples from Wales (WLFS) and Scotland (SLFS) the survey provides estimates for a range of indicators down to Local Education Authority (LEA) level across the UK. For further detailed information about methodology users should consult the <a href="#">LFS User Guide Vol.1: Background and Methodology</a><sup>112</sup>, which has been included with the APS documentation for reference purposes.</p> <p>Fieldwork for the 2004 APS was conducted from January to December 2004. The data is available from the ESDS in the form of a <a href="#">Special Licence</a><sup>113</sup>. The 'Special Licence ' APS dataset contains approximately 550 variables and it contains more detail than would be available under a normal End User Licence (EUL) (e.g. unitary authority/local area districts and individual ages). Special Licence users need to read the <a href="#">Guide to good practice: microdata handling and security</a><sup>114</sup> and agree to abide by its requirements<sup>1</sup>. For more information see the <a href="#">APS pages on the National Statistics web site</a><sup>115</sup>.</p>
2008	The IHS (formerly CPS)	Information on the IHS is provided in the section above

<sup>1</sup> Note: UKSA have decided to withdraw the April 04 - March 05 APS datasets from the UK Data Archive and cancel the release of the July 04 - June 05 datasets due to an error in the data.

## Methodology

Since 1992, the LFS has had a simple, stratified random sample (unclustered) drawn from the Postcode Address File (PAF). The LFS has an overlapping panel design introduced with five waves throughout the year. With the exception of the recent enhancement or boost, each sampled household is interviewed for five 'waves' at three-monthly intervals (the first interview is face-to-face and subsequent interviews are by telephone). Interviewers can accept proxy information for household members who are unavailable when the interview takes place. This means that there is an 80 percent overlap in the samples for each successive quarter (see [pg.5](#)<sup>116</sup> for a diagram).

For the new boosts there is an overlapping panel element to it, where the design is for households to be interviewed each year for four years. In the first wave of the boost not all interviews were face-to-face, telephone interviews were used based on costs. This enables there to be a 75 percent overlap in the supplementary sample from one year to the next (for more info go to [pg.1](#)<sup>117</sup> on survey methodology).

Further information about the methodology of the LFS can be found in the [LFS user guide – Volume 1 Background and Methodology](#)<sup>118</sup> on the ESDS web site. This is a large document (around 150 pages) containing detailed explanations of the survey design, sampling errors and weighting, among other things. Other, more specific, methodological guides include:

- [User Guides Vol.1-9](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [Methodology for 2002/03 annual local area LFS data](#)<sup>120</sup>
- [Guidance on the use of LFS micro data pending full re-weighting following the 2001 Census](#)<sup>121</sup>
- [LFS: regrossing and seasonal adjustment. A description of the effects of the annual seasonal adjustment and regrossing on the headline LFS estimates.](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [Labour Force Survey reweighting and seasonal adjustment review](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [NSQR Series Report No.12: Review of the Labour Force Survey \(released 4 September 2002\)](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [NSM17: Methodological issues in the production and analysis of longitudinal data from the labour force survey, GSS Methodology Series](#)<sup>125</sup>
- [Labour Market Trends](#)<sup>126</sup>
- [Annual local area LFS data for 2000/01, Labour Market Trends, January 2002](#)<sup>127</sup>
- [The new ethnicity classification in the LFS, Labour Market Trends, December 2002, page 657](#)<sup>128</sup>
- [UKSA guide to the classification of ethnic group in the LFS](#)<sup>129</sup>
- [UKSA guide to regional and local labour market statistics](#)<sup>130</sup>

## Overview of questions

The LFS questionnaire comprises a set of core questions which are included in every survey and cover household, family structure, basic housing information and demographic details of individuals in the households. Some questions in the core are only asked at the first interview e.g. sex, ethnic group. The survey also asks non-core questions which change from quarter to quarter. These non-core questions provide information which is only needed once or twice a year. Further details on the LFS questions can be found by following these links: [National Statistics](#)<sup>131</sup>; [Survey Question Bank](#)<sup>132</sup>; [ESDS](#)<sup>133</sup>. For information on the pre-1992 LFS, see the [User Guide 7](#)<sup>134</sup> detailing variables 1979-1991.

## Advantages and limitations of the LFS – for employment-related research

### Advantages of the LFS

1. The survey asks very detailed questions on the labour market and employment.
2. The structure of the LFS supports different types of secondary analysis as the LFS can be used cross-sectionally (e.g. for getting an unemployment rate); comparatively, for example comparing two time points through the repeated cross-sectional data (e.g. unemployment rate in Sept 2000 and Sept 2001); and for longitudinal analysis (e.g. using the panel element of the data).
3. Information is available for people living in NHS accommodation as well as those living in private households. A sampling frame for NHS accommodation was specifically developed for the LFS.
4. Information is available for young people aged 16 to 24 years because the LFS sample includes people living away from the parental home in a student hall of residence or a similar institution during term time.
5. Interviews are conducted North of the Caledonian Canal.
6. Data is available for household, individual and family levels because everyone in the household (aged 16+) is interviewed.
7. Measurement is available over time: annually from 1984 but biennial before then (1973-1983). However, the biennial survey did not use ILO definition of unemployment. In 1992, the survey design changed considerably and it is advisable to use LFS datasets only from 1992 onwards when measuring over time.
8. Longitudinal datasets are available which link the 5 quarters e.g. June 2001 to August 2002.
9. The survey can be used for the analyses of ethnic minorities and other small samples. In order to obtain adequate sample sizes it is necessary to combine a number of years of data together.
10. A grossing factor is available on the dataset which enables population estimates to be produced.
11. The survey has small sampling errors for main population sub-groups because of the large sample size and stratified random sample with no clustering. The sample design also allows representative results to be published for any thirteen-week period. For more information on the LFS sampling errors see the [Technical Note](#)<sup>135</sup> of the latest LFS quarterly supplement.

## Limitations of the LFS

1. The LFS has a high proportion of proxy interviews (c.30%) when compared with other surveys such as the General Household Surveys (c.5%). Proxy interviews are carried out with another member of the household if the respondent is unavailable. The following reports outline some of the problems with the use of proxy interviews on the LFS: [NSM17: Methodological issues in the production and analysis of longitudinal data from the Labour Force Survey, GSS Methodology Series, Section 9](#)<sup>136</sup>; [LFS User Guide 2003, Volume 1, Section 11](#).<sup>137</sup>
2. Like most other large-scale government surveys, the LFS excludes people living in communal establishments (except for those in NHS accommodation and students in halls of residence).
3. There are some discontinuities over time. Mainly prior to 1984 when the survey was biennial and in 1992 when the sample design changed.
4. As with most government surveys the response rates for the LFS have dropped in recent years. In 1999/2000 the response rate was 63%.

## The LFS datasets

There are a number of different types of LFS datasets available from ESDS. These are described briefly below. However the [ESDS web site](#)<sup>138</sup> contains fuller explanations of each of the datasets.

[Quarterly LFS](#):<sup>139</sup> each of the quarterly datasets from Spring 1992 through to Oct-Dec 2006 are available. These datasets are for individual/person level analyses. If you are carrying out household level analyses then you should use the Household Datasets (see below). Most of datasets from 1998 onwards are available to in the [Nesstar](#)<sup>140</sup> system, which will allows basic exploratory analysis before downloading the data.

[Quarterly LFS Special Licence Access](#):<sup>141</sup> From the Mar-May 2005 quarter, a Special Licence version of the QLFS data is available in addition to the QLFS. This contains extra variables, mostly covering geographical area, that are not included in the standard End User Licence version of the QLFS data and therefore is subject to more restrictive access conditions.

[Quarterly LFS Household Datasets](#):<sup>142</sup> the LFS Household Datasets should be used for household level or family-unit level analyses. They are available from 1990 to 1997 and for each spring and autumn thereafter. The datasets include all the usual variables found in the individual level LFS datasets with the exception of those relating to income. The datasets contain new derived variables at household and family unit level, to facilitate the analysis of economic activity patterns of whole households<sup>2</sup>. From 1999, most of these datasets are available for online exploration using the [Nesstar](#)<sup>143</sup> system, and the most recent data available for downloading is Oct-Dec 2006. For more information on the LFS household datasets see the [ONS web site](#)<sup>144</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> A specific set of household level weights are provided with these data files. For more information see [Household and Family Data User Guide](#) in the LFS Documentation

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[LFS Two-Quarter Longitudinal Datasets](#)<sup>145</sup> and [LFS Five-Quarter Longitudinal datasets](#)<sup>146</sup>: the LFS Longitudinal Datasets are available from winter 1992 onwards. The two-quarter datasets link data for the same people from two consecutive waves, while the five-quarter datasets link across a whole year (for example summer 1999 to summer 2000 inclusive) and contain data from all five waves. The longitudinal datasets only contain a subset of the data from the quarterly datasets and they have different weights (although they are weighting for the same reasons). See the [Longitudinal Datasets User Guide](#)<sup>147</sup> for more information. The most recent data for the Two-Quarter Longitudinal Datasets is April-Sep 2006 and the Five-Quarter Longitudinal Datasets is Jul 2005-Sep 2006. For more information on the LFS longitudinal datasets see the [ONS web site](#)<sup>148</sup>.

[LFS Statistical Office of the European Communities \(SOEC\) Datasets](#):<sup>149</sup> the SOEC datasets are available from spring 1999 to winter 1999/2000. These datasets are supplied to the SOEC, via Eurostat, on a quarterly basis and contain a subset of variables from the main QLFS and occasionally a special module. For further information see the [Eurostat and Eurostat Derived Variables User Guide](#)<sup>150</sup> in the LFS documentation.

[Quarterly LFS Local Area Data](#):<sup>151</sup> the QLFS Local Area Datasets are available from 1992 onwards. They provide data aggregated by area, i.e. data are on an area-level rather than an individual/person level. For example, from this dataset you can find out the number of people in employment in a specific area. Data have been produced for Counties/Scottish Councils, Local Authority Districts (LADs), Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), Local Enterprise Companies (LECs), Government Offices (GOs) and Training, Enterprise and Education Directorate (TEED) regions. (Comparable aggregate analyses for Great Britain and Standard Regions are also produced). The Local Area Data cover data from Great Britain and from September 1997 also include data from Northern Ireland. The datasets contain a subset of the variables from the main QLFS (approximately 100), e.g. employment (by age groups); employees; self-employed; ILO unemployed (by age groups); economically active (by age groups). The most recent Quarterly LFS Local Area datasets dataset available is Jan-March 2006.

*The LFS Annual Local Area Data Series* containing individual/person level data and the Unitary Authority/Local Authority (UA/LA series) was available from ESDS but in 2004 was removed from general release to lower the risk of identification<sup>3</sup>. [LFS 1975-1991](#)<sup>152</sup> these are data from the annual and biennial surveys and are available from 1975 to 1991.

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<sup>3</sup> UKSA released the following information: UKSA and its predecessors have always offered an assurance of confidentiality to potential respondents in its surveys. Databases released for analysis by outside bodies have always been anonymised to ensure that users could not identify any respondent with the information given. However advances in technology and software has made it easier to link survey records to either other survey files or other administrative or commercial databases. Although the risk for most respondents is very small, there remains a risk of identification for people with unusual combinations of personal circumstances. Thus the release outside the central government statistical services of social survey databases with small area identifiers, alongside a national database with detailed coding, has now been ceased."

[LFS 2002: Teaching Dataset](#)<sup>153</sup> This dataset can help class tutors to incorporate empirical data into their courses and thus develop students' skills in quantitative methods of analysis and their knowledge of large-scale government surveys. For more information see the [user guide](#)<sup>154</sup> or information on variable derivations is available from [ESDS web site](#)<sup>155</sup>.

### **Research potential of the LFS**

The LFS has high research potential for secondary analysis of employment and the labour market due to its large sample size and detailed questions. Box 1 gives recent examples of publications/articles resulting from secondary analyses of the employment and labour market questions. A searchable database of publications which cite the ESDS Government surveys is available on the [ESDS Government web site](#).<sup>156</sup>

### **ESDS Government resources for the LFS:**

- [LFS survey pages on ESDS web site](#)<sup>157</sup>
- Derived Variables over time: [Occupational coding and NS-SEC](#)<sup>158</sup>, [Country of Birth and Nationality](#)<sup>159</sup> and [Ethnicity](#)<sup>160</sup>
- Derived Variables [comparability between Census 2001 and QLFS Spring 2001 variables](#)<sup>161</sup>
- [Analysis of the LFS Using Stata \(user guide\)](#)<sup>162</sup>
- [LFS 2002 teaching dataset](#)<sup>163</sup>
- LFS User Meetings: [2005](#)<sup>164</sup>, [2004](#)<sup>165</sup> and [2003](#)<sup>166</sup>
- [Publications citing the LFS](#)<sup>167</sup>

**Box 1**

Dale A, Lindley J, Dex S. "A life-course perspective on ethnic differences in women's economic activity in Britain" EUROPEAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW. 22 (3) JUL 2006

Elliott RJR, Lindley J. "Skill specificity and labour mobility: Occupational and sectoral dimensions" MANCHESTER SCHOOL. 74 (3) JUN 2006

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Chen YQ, McDonald JC, Cherry NM. "Incidence and suspected cause of work-related musculoskeletal disorders, United Kingdom, 1996-2001" OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE-OXFORD. 56 (6) SEP 2006

Ma AHY (Ma, Ada H. Y.), Roberts E (Roberts, Elizabeth), Elliott RF (Elliott, Robert F.), Bell D (Bell, David), Scott A (Scott, Anthony). "Comparing the New Earnings Survey (NES) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS): An analysis of the differences between the data sets and their implications for the pattern of geographical pay in the UK" REGIONAL STUDIES. 40 AUG 2006

Elliott RJR, Lindley JK. "Trade, skills and adjustment costs: A study of intra-sectoral labor mobility" REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS 10 (1). FEB 2006

Durrant GB (Durrant, Gabriele B.), Skinner C (Skinner, Chris). "Using data augmentation to correct for non-ignorable non-response when surrogate data are available: an application to the distribution of hourly pay" JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL STATISTICAL SOCIETY SERIES A-STATISTICS IN SOCIETY. 169 (3) 2006

McIntosh S. "Further analysis of the returns to academic and vocational qualifications" OXFORD BULLETIN OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS. 68 (2) APR 2006

Chen YQ (Chen, Yiqun), McDonald JC (McDonald, J. Corbett), Cherry NM (Cherry, Nicola M.). "Incidence and suspected cause of work-related musculoskeletal disorders, United Kingdom, 1996-2001" OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE-OXFORD. 51 (7) SEP 2006

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## **The General Household Survey (GHS) (now the General Lifestyle Survey)**

The (GHS)<sup>168</sup> is a multi-purpose continuous survey carried out by the UKSA for a variety of government departments. The survey has a large sample size and collects information on a wide range of topics and is therefore a strong data source for linking employment and labour market data with other topics, such as caring responsibilities, family information or health.

### **Methodology**

The GHS is a cross-sectional survey carried out annually since 1971, except in 1997/98 when the survey was reviewed and 1999/2000 when it was redeveloped. It has a stratified and clustered sample of approximately 13,000 addresses drawn from the Postcode Address File (PAF). In 2004/2005 the achieved sample size was approximately 8,700 households and over 20,000 individuals. Interviewers can accept proxy information for household members who are still unavailable after repeated attempts to contact them. There have been a number of methodological changes to the GHS since its onset in 1971, including:

- the small users Postcode Address File (PAF) replaced the Electoral Registers as the sampling frame in 1984
- since 1988 the survey has been based on the financial year rather than the calendar year
- until 1994 a supplementary sample of addresses was selected in Scotland to improve estimates in separate analyses for Scotland
- since 1994 interviews have been conducted using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) on laptop computers
- following the recommendations from the 1997 review of the GHS, a number of significant methodological changes took place from 2000 onwards including changes to the sample design, alternative methods of data collection, questionnaire content and the introduction of weighting. Appendix E of the [2000 report](#)<sup>169</sup> describes the changes in more detail.

Further information about the methodology of the GHS can be found in Appendix B in the [GHS online reports](#)<sup>170</sup>.

### **Overview of questions**

The survey consists of two elements: a set of core questions that are included every year and a set of non-core questions ("trailers") that are included at certain intervals, for example, every two years or every five years. The 1997 review of the GHS resulted in the core questions remaining unchanged for the five-year period April 2000 to March 2005, apart from essential changes to take account of, for example, changes in benefits or pensions (see the [Living in Britain](#)<sup>171</sup> and [Survey Question Bank](#)<sup>172</sup> web sites for further details). The core element consists of a household questionnaire to be answered by the Household Reference Person (Appendix A of the [2002 report](#)<sup>173</sup> gives a detailed definition) or spouse, and an individual

questionnaire to be completed by all adults aged 16 or over resident in the household. The household questionnaire covers the following topics:

- demographic information about household members
- household and family information
- household accommodation
- housing tenure
- consumer durables
- migration.

The individual questionnaire includes sections on:

- employment
- pensions
- education
- health and use of health services
- smoking
- drinking in the last seven days
- family information including marriage, cohabitation and fertility history
- income.

### **Advantages and limitations of the GHS – for employment-related research**

#### Advantages of the GHS

1. The GHS collects detailed harmonised questions on economic activity and employment status, using the ILO definition of unemployment, and is an excellent source of data for linking employment and the labour market with one or more different topics.
2. Data are available for household, individual and family levels because everyone in the household (aged 16 and over) is interviewed.
3. Demographic and health information is available for children.
4. Measurement is available over time: there has been an annual survey since 1971 with breaks in 1997 and 1999, though not all topics are covered each year (see Appendix F in [2002 report](#)<sup>174</sup> for topics covered).
5. Interviews are conducted North of the Caledonian Canal (off-shore islands are not covered).
6. The large sample size (approximately 13,000 addresses sampled and about 19,000 individual respondents per year) and the multi-stage stratified sample design result in small sampling errors.

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7. Since 2000, a dual weighting scheme has been introduced to the GHS. First, weighting to compensate for non-response in the sample and second, weighting (grossing) up to match known population distributions in terms of region, age group and sex.
8. The GHS has a low level of proxy interviews (5% in 2000).

#### Limitations of the GHS

1. Data is not available for 1997/98 (when the survey was reviewed) or for 1999/2000 (when the survey was re-developed).
2. As with most government surveys the response rates for the GHS have dropped in recent years. In 2003-04 survey the response rate for the GHS was 72% - based on a target of 14,302 households and 10,283 households obtained - compared with 76% in 1996.
3. Unlike the LFS, the sample is clustered into areas in order to make the interviewing easier; clustering can substantially increase standard errors for variables such as employment and ethnicity that are likely to differ by area. For further information on standard errors in the GHS see [Appendix C](#)<sup>175</sup> of the 2004 report. To give an example, the standard error (when multiplied by the design factor) for "in employment" on the GHS (2001) is 0.77 compared with 0.20 on the LFS (Spring 1999).

Datasets from the GHS surveys are available from [ESDS](#)<sup>176</sup> and from 1993-94 it is available for online exploration through the [Nesstar](#)<sup>177</sup> system. There are also various teaching datasets, information is available from the [ESDS web site](#)<sup>178</sup>.

#### **Research potential of the GHS**

The GHS has high research potential for secondary analysis of employment and the labour market because of its sample size and design, and cross-linkage with other subjects such as health. Box 2 gives recent examples of publications/articles resulting from secondary analyses of the GHS employment and labour market questions. A searchable database of publications which cite the ESDS government surveys is available on the [ESDS Government web site](#).<sup>179</sup>

## Box 2

McAlaney J, McMahon J. "Establishing rates of binge drinking in the UK: Anomalies in the data" *ALCOHOL AND ALCOHOLISM*. 41 (4) 2006

Pope D, Bamba C. "Has the Disability Discrimination Act closed the employment gap?" *DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION*. 27 (20) 2005

Gilbert H, Sutton S, Sutherland G. "Who Calls QUIT (R)? The characteristics of smokers seeking advice via a telephone helpline compared with smokers attending a clinic and those in the general population" *PUBLIC HEALTH* 119 (10). OCT 2005

Macintyre S, Der G, Norrie J. "Are there socioeconomic differences in responses to a commonly used self report measure of chronic illness?" *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY* 34 (6). DEC 2005

Elamir, EAH. "Analysis of re-identification risk based on log-linear models" *PRIVACY IN STATISTICAL DATABASES, PROCEEDINGS*. 3050 2004

Perren K, Arber S, Davidson K. "Neighbouring in later life: The influence of socio-economic resources, gender and household composition on neighbourly relationships" *SOCIOLOGY-THE JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION*. 38 (5) DEC 2004

Arber, S, Cooper, H. "Gender, health and occupational classifications in working and later life" in D. Rose and D. Pevalin (eds.) *A researcher's guide to the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification*. 2003, London: Sage.

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Egerton, M "Mature graduates II: occupational attainment and the effects of social class" *OXFORD REVIEW OF EDUCATION*. 27 (2) JUN 2001

Clark, K Drinkwater, S Leslie, D "Ethnicity and self-employment earnings in Britain 1973-95" *APPLIED ECONOMICS LETTERS*. 5 (10) OCT 1998

Ginn, J Arber, S. "Changing patterns of pension inequality: the shift from state to private sources" *AGEING AND SOCIETY*. 19 MAY 1999

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### ESDS Government resources for the GHS:

- [GHS survey pages on ESDS web site](#)<sup>180</sup>
- Derived Variables over time: [Occupational coding and NS-SEC](#)<sup>181</sup>, [Country of Birth](#)<sup>182</sup> and [Ethnicity](#)<sup>183</sup>
- [GHS 2001-2002: Social Capital Teaching Dataset](#)<sup>184</sup>

### Weighting and grossing

The information given below relates to the latest available data at the time of writing for each survey that covers the topic of employment. You should refer to the survey documentation on the [ESDS web site](#)<sup>185</sup> for the specific year(s) you are interested in, as the weighting may change slightly from year to year. For general information on weighting refer to [Weighting The Social Surveys](#)<sup>186</sup> on the ESDS Government web site.

#### Labour Force Survey

Since 1984 the LFS has been weighted (grossed) to produce population estimates and to compensate for non-response among sub-groups. Additionally, the earnings data is also grossed. UKSA have recently published reweighted QLFS estimates for 1992-2003, based on survey microdata that have been weighted to post-2001 Census population estimates for the first time. New editions of all quarters from 1992 to 2003 were deposited during April/May 2004 at ESDS. For more information on the reweighting and previous names for the weights see [User Guide Vol.3 2006 p379](#)<sup>187</sup>.

The *QLFS* datasets in 2005 have two weights (Pwt03 and Piwt03), (1) Pwt03 is the weight for individual data - this compensates for non-response and grosses to population estimates. (2) Piwt03 is the weight for income data - this weights so that the weight of a sub-group corresponds to that sub-group's size in the population and also weights to give estimates of the number of people in certain groups. This is restricted to employees' earnings, other income data are not (yet) weighted.

The *QLFS household* datasets have one weight to gross to population estimates. The 2007 weighting variable is called HHWT03. See the [Household and Family Data User Guide](#)<sup>188</sup> or p397 of the [User Guide Vol.3 2007](#)<sup>189</sup> for more information.

The *QLFS longitudinal* datasets (2-quarter and 5-quarter) contain one weight to compensate for non-response and to produce population estimates. The 2003/04 weighting variable is called LGWT. See the [Longitudinal Datasets User Guide](#)<sup>190</sup> for more information.

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### General Household Survey

Since 2000, a dual weighting scheme has been introduced to the GHS. The dataset contains one weighting variable for two purposes (1) to compensate for non-response in the sample (2) to gross up to match known population distributions in terms of region, age-group and sex. The 2003-2004 weighting variable is called Weight03. See Appendix D of the [2002 GHS report](#)<sup>191</sup> or the [2004 GHS report](#)<sup>192</sup> for more information.

### British Crime Survey

The BCS has been weighted since 1982. The survey has a number of different weights which should be applied in different circumstances. There are three main reasons for weighting the BCS (1) to compensate for unequal selection probabilities (2) to compensate for differential response rates (3) to ensure that quarters are equally weighted for analyses that combine data from more than one quarter. All weights include a component for unequal selection probabilities. However, weighting to compensate for differential response and to equally weight quarters are included in some weights but not in others. In 2001 the survey methodology changed considerably and calibrated weights were introduced (older datasets do not have calibrated weights). See the [BCS 2005/06 report](#)<sup>193</sup> for more information on calibrated weights, for general information on weighting of the BCS see the 2003-04 [Technical Guide Vol.1](#)<sup>194</sup> section 7.

### Scottish Crime Survey

The survey has a number of different weights which should be applied in different circumstances. For example the 2000 SCS has the following weights:

- w\_house: a household weight for the main sample only. To account for (1) inaccuracies in the Postcode Address File (2) property-type bias and (3) area bias. All household data in the main sample should be analysed using this weight
- w\_indiv: an individual weight for the main sample. The weight is a combination of household and individual weighting factors. The weight accounts for (1) different probabilities of selection and (2) response bias towards females. All individual data in the main sample should be analysed using this weight
- w\_person: an individual weight for the ethnic minority boost sample. This is the same as w\_indiv but without the household weighting factor. All individual data in the ethnic boost sample should be analysed using this weight
- w\_series: a victim form series weight to reflect the fact that some victim forms refer to two or more incidents. There are two different versions on this weight: one on the main sample victim form dataset and the second on the ethnic boost sample victim form dataset. Both versions of the weight are called w\_series.

There is more information on weighting in the technical reports, for [1993](#)<sup>195</sup> go to pg.16, [1996](#)<sup>196</sup> go to pg.20 and [2000](#)<sup>197</sup> see pg.21.

### British Social Attitudes Survey

The BSAS has been weighted since 1983. The 2004 survey has one sample design weight (Wtfactor) used to compensate for unequal selection probabilities (because only one person per household is interviewed). The [BSAS 2005 User Guide](#)<sup>198</sup> explains this in more detail.

### Scottish Social Attitudes Survey

The SSA is weighted, using the variable called WtFactor, to account for differing selection probabilities because only one person in the household is interviewed. Since 2002 new weights were added to account for the addresses in remote and rural parts of Scotland having a greater chance of selection due to the boost, the weights are WtRural, WtRemote and WtUrban (go to p2 of the 2004 [User Guide](#)<sup>199</sup> for more details).

### Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey.

All analyses of the adult data should be weighted in order to allow for disproportionate household size. In 2005 the weighting variable is called *WTFCTOR*. The only exceptions are the few household variables (for example, tenure and household income), which do not need to be weighted, see the 2005 [User Guide](#)<sup>200</sup> for details.

### Young Peoples Social Attitudes

As with the British Social Attitudes Survey (BSAS), the YPSA data were weighted to take account of the relative selection probabilities of the BSAS adult respondent at the two main stages of selection: address and household. In this respect the young people's data were weighted in the same way as the adult data. The weight on the 2003 dataset is called YPWT.

### Expenditure and Food Survey

The EFS is weighted to adjust for non-response and to gross to population estimates. The 2002-03 dataset contains two weights: weighta and weightq. Weighta is an annual weight and weightq is a quarterly weight. The quarterly weight was introduced because sample sizes vary from quarter to quarter as a result of re-issuing addresses where there had been a non-contact or refusal to a new interviewer after an interval of a few months, so that there are more interviews in the later quarters of the year than in the first quarter. Spending patterns are seasonal and quarterly grossing counteracts any bias from the uneven spread of interviews through the year. See Appendix B in the [EFS 2003-04](#)<sup>201</sup> or the [EFS 2004-05](#)<sup>202</sup> report for more information.

### Family Expenditure Survey

Since 1998/99 the FES data has used one weight which adjusts for non-response and grosses to population estimates. The 2000-2001 weighting variable is called "weight". Appendix B of the 2005 FES Report ['Family Spending'](#)<sup>203</sup> contains further details of the weights.

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### Health Survey for England

Weighting variables are year specific owing to the variable sample design and the survey topic. For example, in 2000 weights are added for different probabilities of selection in care homes - see the [2000 User Guide](#)<sup>204</sup>. In 2002, no weights need to be applied if only using the adult sample. If using the boost sample (on its own or together with the adult sample) a sample design weight which accounts for unequal probabilities of selection needs to be applied (tablewt). From 2003, non-response weights were introduced for both adults and children. There are four sets of non-response weights in total: a household level weight (hhld\_wt) and three sets of individual level weights, the interview weight (int\_wt), the nurse weight (nurse\_wt) and the blood weight (blood\_wt). The appropriate weight variable should be used for analysis done using data from the relevant sections. There is an extra weight (child\_wt) to compensate for limiting the number of children (aged 0-15) interviewed in a household to two. The variables int\_wt and nurse\_wt for children aged 0-15 include both the child selection weights and non-response weights. the [2004 user guide](#)<sup>205</sup> for more information

### Welsh Health Survey

The 1998 data contains one weight (zzwght) to reduce the bias caused by different response rates between age groups and sex.

### Scottish Health Survey

The 1995 and 1998 SHeS data contain one weighting variable which (1) compensates for unequal probabilities of selection (2) down-weights the data from the boosted final quarter (3) adjusts for differential response rates by region, age and sex. For more information see the [1998 SHeS Technical Report](#)<sup>206</sup>. In 2003, as with HSE, non-response weights were introduced for both adults and children. There are four sets of non-response weights in total: a household level weight (hhld\_wt) and three sets of individual level weights, the interview weight (int\_wt for adults and cint\_wt for children aged 0-15), the nurse weight (nurse\_wt for adults and cnurse\_wt for children) and the blood sample weight (blood\_wt for adults and cblood\_wt for children). See p2 of the [2003 user guide](#)<sup>207</sup> for more information.

### NI Health and Wellbeing Survey

The 2001 survey does not include weights because a simple random sample of addresses was selected. However, a weight was required in 1997 because the survey was designed to select equal samples from each of the Four Health and Social Services Board, which meant that overall the survey would not accurately reflect the Northern Ireland population. Weighting adjusts the results to those that would be achieved if the sample had been drawn as a random sample of addresses in NI. A weight was also required for the physical appraisal element of the 1997 study. Only one adult was selected from each household for the physical measures, therefore individuals living in large households had a lower chance of being included in the sample than individuals in small households. This weighting process adjusts the results to those that would have been

achieved if the sample had been drawn as a random sample of adults rather than addresses. Thus, the 1997 dataset contains two weights (Indvni and Physni). See the [1997 User Guide](#)<sup>208</sup> for more information.

### Survey of English Housing

The SEH has been weighted since 1994/95 to produce population estimates and to compensate for different response rates among households. The 2001/02 and 2002/03 datasets have two weight variables, both of which combine weights for non-response and grossing (1) weights for non-response and grosses to households in England (in 000s), h4d in 2001/02 and h4b in 2002/03, and (2) weights for non-response and grosses to tenancy groups in England (in 000s), h4dt in 2001/02, h4bt in 2002/03, and h4b in 2003/04. For more information see the [2003/04 User Guide](#)<sup>209</sup>.

### National Travel Survey

The NTS data are currently not weighted to correct for non-response or sample selection. Weighting the NTS is not straightforward because of the many levels used for analysis (household, individual, vehicle, trip etc). In collaboration with NatCen, a methodology for weighting the NTS has been developed and applied to data from the 2002 NTS. This provides two sets of weights. One set, referred to as the 'diary weights', is for the sample of fully co-operating households where all members completed a travel record and the data are used for analysing trips. The other set, the 'interview weights', comprises all households that completed an interview, and therefore as well as fully co-operating households it includes 'partially responding' households, where not all individuals completed a travel record. This sample is only used for analyses that do not require travel record trip data. The weighting for both sets adjusts for household selection, household non-participation, and removal of households with missing individual interviews. Calibration weighting was carried out to adjust the weights so that the age/sex and GOR distributions of the respondents matched population estimates. This information was taken from p194-5 of the [2003-2004 Technical Report](#)<sup>210</sup>, where there is also further information on weighting or see the [Weighting the NTS: Methodology Final Report](#)<sup>211</sup> by Pickering et al.

### National Food Survey

The weighting used in the National Food Survey is for Northern Ireland. Prior to inclusion of Northern Ireland (1996) there was no weighting. The weight accounts for the deliberate over sampling of Northern Ireland and for differential response rates among different household types. This is described in detail in the [NFS User Guide](#)<sup>212</sup>. The datasets for 1996 onwards contain an Excel file called nfsweights.xls which gives the weights that users should add to the files if using the NI data.

### Family Resources Survey

Since 1992 the FRS has used one weighting variable for two purposes (1) to gross to population (2) to compensate for non-response. However, the 1994-1995 to 2001-2002 datasets were re-released due to the inclusion of a new (interim) grossing factor introduced to make adjustments to the FRS for low-income households in Scotland. These datasets contain two

weighting variables: Gross1 is the original variable and Gross2 is the new variable. The 2002-03 dataset contains Gross2 only. Following on from the [Grossing Review](#)<sup>213</sup> a new grossing regime for the survey was issued with the 2003-04 FRS data. This new regime consists of both an enhanced set of control totals and incorporates data on a post-Census basis. This review has focussed on the Great Britain grossing regime with the regime employed for Northern Ireland grossing not affected by these changes. On the data there are 2 grossing factors: GROSS2 – this is the previous, interim methodology, using pre-Census control totals to produce the grossing factors, and will be consistent with previous values of this variable on earlier releases. GROSS3 - this is the new grossing regime, and also uses control total information on a post-Census basis (as far as is currently possible). GROSS3 can be applied to sample estimates so that analyses reflect the overall UK population. This involves the use of a set of adjustment factors that attempt to correct for differential non-response at the same time as they scale up sample estimates. These factors take into account demographic variables such as age, sex and marital status together with region and tenure. GROSS3, has been back cast over the FRS series from 1994-95. For expanded information on FRS grossing go to [User Guide 1: Introduction, Guides, Analysing the FRS, Grossing Regime and Data Conversion](#)<sup>214</sup>.

### Time Use Survey

The TUS uses weighting for a variety of reasons. There are different weights on the different files (individual questionnaire file, worksheet file, household questionnaire file and diary file). For more information go to the [Time Use 2000 User Guide](#)<sup>215</sup>.

- There are 2 individual questionnaire weights: both weights compensate for non-response and are calibrated to UK population characteristics for age group, sex and region. The difference between the two weights is that one grosses to the UK population and the other does not. (1) wtpq\_ug is the ungrossed weight which weights to the achieved sample size (2) wtpq\_gr is the grossed weight which weights to UK population of those aged 8yrs or more living in private households.
- There are 2 worksheet weights: as individual weights (1) wtwrk\_ug is ungrossed (2) wtwrk\_gr is grossed.
- There are two diary weights: as individual weights but also compensates for differential sampling of weekdays and weekends (1) wtdwh\_ug is ungrossed weight (2) wtdwh\_gr is grossed.
- There are six household questionnaire weights: as individual weights but two separate weights for each of following:
  - households with dairy-keepers (1) wtdh\_ug is ungrossed (2) wtdg\_gr is grossed
  - households with worksheet-keepers (3) wtwh\_ug is ungrossed (4) wtwg\_gr is grossed
  - households with diary and worksheet-keepers (5) wtdh\_ug is ungrossed (6) wtdg\_gr is grossed

### Omnibus

The Omnibus survey weights for unequal probabilities of selection. The April 2004 dataset has two separate sample design weights (WtA and WtC) to correct for unequal probability of selection caused by either (a) interviewing only one adult per household or (b) restricting the eligibility of the module to certain types of respondent. WtA should be applied if the unit of analysis is the individual because the weight makes the sample representative of British adults. WtC should be applied if the

unit of analysis is the household reference person or spouse. The September 2005 survey includes an individual (indwgt) and household weight (hhwgt). See the [September 2005 technical report](#) for further details. The Occasionally extra weights are developed separately for modules which ask questions at a different level, for example the family level. For a copy of the Omnibus Technical Report contact the Omnibus team on [Omnibus@ons.gov.uk](mailto:Omnibus@ons.gov.uk) or 0207 533 5310.

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  - <sup>4</sup> <http://www.esds.ac.uk/aandp/access/access.asp>
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### G3

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ESDS Government  
Economic and Social Data Service  
Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research  
University of Manchester  
Manchester M13 9PL

Email: [govsurveys@esds.ac.uk](mailto:govsurveys@esds.ac.uk)  
Tel: +44 (0)161 275 1980  
Fax: 0161 275 4722  
[www.esds.ac.uk/government](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government)