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Welcome to the sixth issue of the ESDS Government Newsletter. The big news is the announcement of the 'special licence' to provide researchers with access to more detailed data than is available in current datasets. The first survey to trial this exciting development is the Annual Population Survey (APS) 2004 and it is hoped that the licence will be rolled out to other surveys in the future. The article below provides more information.

Another important development is the new Longitudinal General Household Survey (GHS(L)) which will replace the GHS as we know it. The new survey involves some significant changes to the existing GHS and current users of the survey may find that it has important implications for their research. See the full article on page 3 for more information.

The next newsletter will be published in June 2006 - please feel free to send any contributions or suggestions to [govsurveys@esds.ac.uk](mailto:govsurveys@esds.ac.uk).

Best wishes  
ESDS Government team

## Special Licence: new arrangements for access to social survey microdata

Source: UK Data Archive web site  
[www.data-archive.ac.uk/orderingdata/specialLicence.asp](http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/orderingdata/specialLicence.asp)

Access to the large majority of data held at the UK Data Archive (UKDA) only requires registration, agreement to the End User Licence (EUL) and the registration of usage details. These data are fully anonymised and certain variables may be suppressed to minimise the risk of disclosure.

However, it is recognised that some researchers need access to more detailed data. To facilitate this and to increase the range of data available for statistical research, the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in collaboration with UKDA, has developed a strategy to provide, through the UKDA, access to social survey datasets that are detailed yet anonymised. Since these data pose a higher risk of disclosure, they have additional special conditions attached to them that take the form of a Special Licence (SL). The SL requires the signature(s) of the researcher(s) and the institution with responsibility for the researcher. It also needs the explicit permission of the data owner to release the data to the researcher(s).

The SL contains:

- the conditions for access for statistical research purposes;
- the obligation of the researcher(s) and the measures for protecting and respecting the confidentiality of statistical data;
- statistical purpose and how the data are to be used;

- justification why access to the more detailed version of the data is needed;
- standards and methods for disclosure control for any outputs;
- requirement on the researcher to supply the UKDA with bibliographic details of any published work, based wholly or in part on the data collection(s) accessed;
- clauses relating to data and site security and destruction of the data on completion of the project;
- sanctions to be applied to breaches of confidentiality.

SL applicants are screened by UKDA and the data depositors. Data are only provided to those researchers who can justify their need for the data for statistical research purposes and agree to meet the terms of the SL.

Users who obtain access under the SL are also required to read and follow the *Guide to good practice: microdata handling and security*. This includes additional guidance on:

- avoiding inadvertent statistical disclosure;
- storing and accessing data securely;
- how to permanently destroy copies of data;
- institutional responsibilities, including compliance with security standards.

The first ONS social surveys to trial this new access initiative are the Annual Population Survey (APS) 2004 and the QLFS (March-May 2005 and June-August 2005). The QLFS special licence version contains the same content as the QLFS end user file but has additional geographical information at local authority level. A list of the variables available in each file is available in an Excel file on the ESDS Government web site at [www.esds.ac.uk/government/lfs/](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/lfs/). The article below contains more information on the APS special licence file.

ONS intends that all social survey datasets will continue to be deposited with the UKDA in a form suitable for use under the current End User Licence. Versions of the datasets that contain more detail, and therefore that need approval from ONS for use on a case-by-case basis, will be clearly marked as 'Special Licence' datasets. ONS does not intend to review the status of datasets deposited before June 2005 and currently available under the End User Licence. This does not rule out the possibility of additions to the UKDA of SL versions of these earlier datasets.

Details of further Special Licence data will be publicised in due course. It is envisaged that the SL model will also be adopted by other data depositors for the deposit and release of more detailed data.

## Annual Population Survey

Source: ESDS Government web site  
[www.esds.ac.uk/government/aps/index.asp](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/aps/index.asp)

The Annual Population Survey (APS) represents a major new survey which comprises key variables from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), all the LFS boosts and the APS boost. For the first time it will provide survey data that can produce reliable estimates at local authority level. Key topics in the survey include education, employment, health and ethnicity. Fieldwork for the 2004 APS was conducted from January to December 2004.

The APS combines results from 5 different sources: the Labour Force Survey (waves 1 and 5); the English Local Labour Force Survey (LLFS); the Welsh Labour Force Survey (WLFS); the Scottish Labour Force Survey (SLFS) and the APS Boost Sample (APS(B)). 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/ Local Authority District 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.

## **APS Data**

The 2004 APS is available in two forms:

1. a Special Licence version of the Annual Population Survey that contains considerable detail, including local authority identifiers (as detailed in the special licence section above);
2. the usual ESDS End User Licence (EUL) version of the Annual Population Survey that contains less detail.

Both the datasets contain approximately 550 variables. However, in order to ensure that the (usual ESDS) EUL dataset is non-disclosive, some detail of some data has been either banded, top-coded or excluded. For example the geography, ages and economic activity is given in less detail compared with the Special Licence. For more detailed information go to [www.esds.ac.uk/government/aps/index.asp](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/aps/index.asp).

## **New Longitudinal General Household Survey**

2005 General Household Survey (GHS) fieldwork will be the first to be undertaken under a new longitudinal survey design. The new design is also accompanied by a slight change in substantive emphasis, which leans towards a greater range of questions on social exclusion. The new design aims to satisfy new EU requirements to produce comparable data from a Survey of Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). The start of EU-SILC data collection was delayed in this country to permit the previous series of trailers to be completed.

The longitudinal design runs over a four yearly rotation and is known as the GHS(L) and should achieve a sample size of 10,200 households, an increase on the previous sample size. From 2006 onwards 3,200 households would be new entries to the survey, while the remaining 7,000 would be second, third or fourth interviews with households interviewed in previous years.

The new survey will collect an extensive range of information on income, social exclusion, labour market data and housing. As a result the data is likely to be an excellent data source in this important area. Users of previous trailers such as the caring module should be made aware that this series will not be available in future surveys.

ONS anticipate that the GHS(L) will be integrated into the Integrated Household Survey (IHS) (also previously known as the Continuous Population Survey, CPS) in 2008. You can read more about the IHS in the article on page 4 of this newsletter entitled 'Progress on the Development of an Integrated Household Survey'.

To find out more about the GHS(L) you can obtain a copy of an ONS Paper on the Transition to the GHS(L) from the General Household Survey pages on the ESDS Government web site at [www.esds.ac.uk/government/ghs/](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/ghs/). The page also contains a response from ESDS (Government) which lays out concerns about the design for users who currently pool datasets to produce time series or larger sample sizes.

## News from the Office for National Statistics

### Progress on the development of an Integrated Household Survey

Substantial work has taken place during 2005 on plans to integrate the major household surveys at ONS. The project has changed name from the Continuous Population Survey (CPS) to the Integrated Household Survey (IHS). This is to better reflect the project's aims.

The IHS development team have continued preparatory work towards the creation of an Integrated Household Survey to encompass the Labour Force Survey and all associated boosts, the General Household Survey, the Expenditure and Food Survey and the Omnibus Survey. The survey is due to be launched in January 2008.

Ahead of the first IHS field trials, there was a small-scale 'prototype' test of the questionnaire instrument by six experienced interviewers. The test provided an opportunity to test the existing data handling systems to see how well they would cope with such a large questionnaire object. Feedback indicated that there were no major difficulties with the design or the content of the IHS questionnaire. The data-handling systems proved capable of supporting the large questionnaire object.

The first small-scale field trial of the new survey was conducted in March using experienced ONS interviewers. Within the parameters of the test, the experiment was successful. It indicated that interviewers could handle mixed and varied workloads of different survey topics and administer a modular questionnaire, consisting of a core module and five different interview streams. Interviewers provided a number of useful comments that have fed into ongoing development work.

A second, small-scale field trial took place in September, using interviewers of mixed ability, including some inexperienced interviewers. The purpose of the trial was to test and assess the effectiveness of a new approach to interviewer training. The aim is to reduce the need for traditional classroom style delivery of training and move towards e-based distance learning. Interviewers were also provided with an electronic searchable help facility that they can access at any time, i.e. before, during and after interviewing. Results from the trial are currently being analysed.

The first large-scale pilot of the survey will take place in February and March 2006 and will involve approximately 40 interviewers. The pilot is the first opportunity to get a reasonable measure of response rates as previous field trials have been insufficient in size and were not designed for this purpose.

Continuity of time series data is an important issue for many stakeholders. A working group has been set up to consider in more detail the issues associated with making the switch from the existing surveys to the IHS, and to develop contingency options in the event of discontinuities arising. The Methodology Unit within ONS will carry out research to assess the methodological possibilities for reducing the impact of potential discontinuities and to make full use of the opportunities offered by the parallel run that is being planned for when the IHS starts in January 2008. Further work will include analysing pilot data in mid-2006.

A response to the formal consultation exercise conducted in 2004 is now available at [www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=936&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=208](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=936&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=208). The exercise produced a large and very positive response to the proposals. Agreement to implement the survey in January 2008 is subject to validation of the survey's design through satisfactory outcomes of the field tests, a round of further formal consultation during 2006 and delivery of associated projects on which the IHS is dependent.

An opportunity to obtain more information and comment on the design of the Integrated Household Survey will be available at an IHS consultation meeting at the Royal Statistical Society in London on the afternoon of 23 January 2006. Further details are available on the ESDS Government events page at [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/).

## ESDS user survey results

In June an ESDS user survey was carried out to seek the views of ESDS users and suppliers. ESYS plc, the independent strategic consultancy, were commissioned to undertake the survey which included an online questionnaire, targeted telephone interviews, a series of focus groups and desk research. The survey was commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the results will form part of the mid-term ESDS review.

The survey captured and analysed the views of over 200 users and stakeholders on aspects of ESDS including quality of service, effectiveness, appropriateness, value for money, value added and areas for future development. Over 70 percent of respondents came from UK higher education, the majority of whom are end users of social science data. Other respondents came from public organisations, FE colleges and commercial bodies. 13 percent of respondents were non-UK.

Key findings were that ESDS is regarded as a key resource for research and increasingly for teaching. ESDS has demonstrated an impressive growth in users, from around 14,000 in 2003/04 to nearly 29,000 currently, and user support is one of the main strengths of the service with very positive user feedback. The results from the online questionnaire showed a high take up (75 percent) of the ESDS Government web pages, online data access and the user guides. At least 78 percent of these users rated these components as useful or very useful.

Users gave a number of suggestions about the focus of future ESDS activities, including:

- data with geographical identifiers;
- international datasets;
- data confidentiality;
- support to users in best practice/methodologies applied to specific data;
- better targeting of user engagement - more focus on specific datasets, data issues etc;
- improvements to data discovery/analysis tools;
- clarify ESDS identity and relationship with other ESRC and non-ESRC resources;
- facilitate formal user feedback;
- address needs of non-UK users and accessibility concerns.

## Theme for 2006

Each year, ESDS Government has a different theme (or topic) upon which we base our resources. The theme for 2006 will be ethnicity. ESDS government will be collating and producing useful resources for research or teaching using ethnicity. Furthermore each year the ESDS government annual conference is based on our theme. If you would like to submit a short research paper please email details of the data you are using and a short abstract to [gillian.meadows@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:gillian.meadows@manchester.ac.uk).

## New Guide to data sources for Scotland

The aim of this ESDS Government guide is to provide a resource to researchers who want to study Scotland. For the most part the main large-scale government surveys, especially those supported by ESDS Government, are covered in detail. The guide can be found at [www.esds.ac.uk/government/resources/themeguides.asp](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/resources/themeguides.asp).

## New Social capital resources

The ESDS government theme for 2005 is Social Capital. New resources have been developed surrounding the theme including an introductory guide to social capital. The guide and links related to the theme can all be found at [www.esds.ac.uk/government/themes/socialcapital/](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/themes/socialcapital/).

## New ESDS Government acronyms

ESDS government have compiled a collection of acronyms used in relation to the service. This can be found at [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/acronyms/index.shtml](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/acronyms/index.shtml). The web page has the facility to search on the acronym and also offers the option to send us acronyms to be added.

## Derived Variables

The ongoing work by ESDS Government to produce a series of look-up tables of variables consistent over time on key government surveys has been expanded to ethnicity for the General Household Survey (GHS). The syntax to derive a consistent ethnicity variable on the GHS is also available. All this can be found at [www.esds.ac.uk/government/dv/ethnicity/GHS/index.asp](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/dv/ethnicity/GHS/index.asp).

## Meetings and workshops

ESDS Government organises workshops, meetings and conferences throughout the year. Forthcoming events are listed below and further details can be found at [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/).

### **Monday 23 January 2006 (1.30 - 4.30pm)**

*A consultation on the ONS Continuous Population Survey/Integrated Household Survey, Royal Statistical Society, London*

The CPS, now re-named the IHS, is planned to begin in January 2008 (see news from ONS for more details). This meeting provides an opportunity to find out the latest developments from ONS. It is also an opportunity to ensure that your needs are heard and considered. Booking information for the afternoon is available from [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2006-01-23/](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2006-01-23/).

## **Tuesday 31 January 2006**

*Surveys, social capital and social networks, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, Belfast*

This meeting, jointly organised by ESDS Government and the ESRC Research Methods Programme, consists of two half-day seminars which may be booked together or separately. Booking information and the programme is available from [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2006-01-31/](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2006-01-31/).

## **Wednesday 22 February 2006**

*General Household Survey User Group Meeting, Royal Statistical Society, London*

The meeting will provide a forum for the exchange of information and views between users and producers of the GHS. For more information as it is confirmed go to [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/).

*Other dates for your diary*

## **January - June 2006**

You may be interested in the following courses organised by CCSR at the University of Manchester. CCSR offer a wide range of short course training in quantitative research methods and data analysis. Courses are offered at introductory, intermediate and advanced level. For further information about these or any other CCSR courses, please go to [www.ccsr.ac.uk/courses/](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/courses/).

9 January:	SPSS for social scientists
10-12 January:	Structural equation modelling in M-plus
13 January:	Introduction to data mining
18 January:	Introduction to STATA
25-27 January:	Design and analysis of complex surveys
22 February:	Aspects of statistical modelling
6 March:	Conceptualising longitudinal data
15 March:	Introduction to longitudinal analysis
4 April:	SPSS for social scientists
5 April:	Surveys and sampling
6 April:	Introduction to data analysis Part 1
7 April:	Introduction to data analysis Part 2
10-12 April:	Longitudinal data analysis
3 May:	Multiple regression
10 May:	Logistic regression
15 May:	Data reduction and classification
16 May:	Multilevel modelling
24 May:	Population estimating and forecasting
25-26 May:	Demographic forecasting with POPGROUP
25-26 June:	Demographic concepts and methods

## **20-24 March 2006**

*Easter School on Panel Data, Nuffield College, Oxford*

The second of two Royal Economic Society Ph.D. schools in econometrics to be held at Nuffield College, Oxford. Both schools are supported by the ESRC Research Methods Programme. Registration information is available from [www.nuff.ox.ac.uk/users/nielsen/res/EasterSchool2006.html](http://www.nuff.ox.ac.uk/users/nielsen/res/EasterSchool2006.html).

## **5 April 2006**

*Short Course on the Analysis of Panel Data, Highfield Campus, University of Southampton*

One-day short course to precede Southampton Statistical Sciences Research Institute (S3RI) Symposium on the Convergences of Methods for the Analysis of Panel Data. For course aims and registration details see [www.s3ri.soton.ac.uk/events/2005/analysisofpaneldata.php](http://www.s3ri.soton.ac.uk/events/2005/analysisofpaneldata.php).

## **6 April 2006**

*S3RI Symposium on the Convergences of Methods for the Analysis of Panel Data, Highfield Campus, University of Southampton*

There are many approaches to modelling panel, longitudinal or repeated measure data, including graphical chain models, marginal models, random effects models and structural equation models. The aim of this symposium is to bring together experts to discuss the current state of the art of these various approaches. For registration go to [www.s3ri.soton.ac.uk/events/2005/paneldata.php](http://www.s3ri.soton.ac.uk/events/2005/paneldata.php).

## **17 - 20 July 2006**

*Second ESRC Research Methods Festival, St Catherine's College, Oxford*

Booking will open in spring 2006. More information will be available from [www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods/festival06/index.htm](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods/festival06/index.htm).

### *Other courses*

Courses in applied social surveys at the Centre for Applied Social Surveys (CASS), is a programme of short courses by the Southampton Statistical Sciences Research Unit. CASS provides short courses for academic social scientists and applied researchers in government, market research and the independent and voluntary sectors. The programme covers topics in survey design and implementation, survey sampling, data collection and data analysis methods. For more information go to [www.s3ri.soton.ac.uk/cass/index.html](http://www.s3ri.soton.ac.uk/cass/index.html).

## **Proceedings of the Health Survey's User Group Meeting**

### **Friday 1 July 2005**

The annual Health Survey User Group meeting was held at the Royal Statistical Society in London. The meeting provided a forum for the exchange of information and views between users and producers of the health surveys. There was a good turnout, with over 70 bookings, and it proved to be an interesting and informative day. Copies of the slides can be found at [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2005-07-01/slides/](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2005-07-01/slides/).

*Rick Bond, Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC)*

Rick gave a brief overview of HSCIC, including what the HSCIC is, details of all the services it provides and the surveys the HSCIC manages. Rick closed with their perspective on the Health Survey for England (HSE).

*Catherine Bromley, Scottish Centre for Social Research*

Catherine reported on the 2003 Scottish Health Survey (SHeS), giving background then presenting the reporting and archiving plans, the structure of the planned report and the new weighting scheme. New measures for 2003 include household income and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), along with parental social class for the multivariate analysis.

*Cath Roberts, Welsh Assembly*

Cath introduced the Welsh Health Survey (WHS) which is a new survey that replaces intermittent series of surveys. Cath covered WHS background, aims, methodology, response, the results schedule and preliminary results. The WHS is different from the HSE and SHeS in that it is conducted through a 15-minute face-to-face interview and a 16-page self-completion questionnaire for each household member aged 16+.

*Heather Wardle, National Centre for Social Research*

Heather presented information on the HSE for 2005 and beyond. New features in the HSE 2005 are:

- Quality of care (in relation to chronic illnesses);
- Falls;
- Depression score;
- Stable address;
- Physical performance measures (balance tests, grip strength, chair rises, timed walk).

Heather also uncovered that the 2006 HSE is to potentially focus on childhood obesity and related issues.

*Kate Cox, The ELSA Team, National Centre for Social Research*

Kate provided an update on the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA), which is longitudinal multidisciplinary study of people aged 50+ and their younger partners. Kate introduced, through information on interview content and structure, details of wave 0 (HSE 98, 99, 01), wave 1 (2002/3) right through to wave 4 (2008/9). Kate also provided information on ELSA data and documentation.

*Jo Wathan, ESDS Government*

Jo introduced the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS) which is a specialist service to support users of the large, continuous, cross-sectional surveys collected (largely) for government purposes. Jo focused mainly on the health resources: web pages dedicated to the HSE, SHeS, WHS (as well as for other ESDS-supported surveys), the HSE 2002 teaching dataset, the introductory guide to using large-scale government surveys for health research and the JISCmail list.

*Tom Daly, University of Surrey*

Tom introduced the Survey Link Scheme which offers social scientists and others the opportunity to observe the data collection phase of some of the main British large-scale surveys. People attend a one-Day workshop at a regional location then go out on a fieldwork visit with an interviewer from either NATCEN, ONS, ISER or BMRB. The workshop provides a brief overview of the BLAISE computer program used in the development of questionnaires, information on the construction of the questionnaire, a practical discussion on interviewing and a presentation on the use of CAPI in a major survey. See <http://qb.soc.surrey.ac.uk/slsdocs/apply.htm> for more information.

### **Examples of research using Health surveys**

*Rachel Craig, National Centre for Social Research*

Rachel presented some results from the 2003 HSE, focusing on cardiovascular disease (CVD) and risk factors for CVD. The risk factor examples covered diabetes, alcohol, smoking and fruit and vegetable consumption, obesity and blood pressure. Rachel drew comparisons with the 1994 and 1998 HSE. Findings suggest a gradual decline in smoking prevalence since 1994, when 29 percent of men and 27 percent of women reported smoking, but smoking is highest among young adults and there is a continued association with socio-demographic status. In addition, prevalence of generalised obesity has continued to increase among both sexes since 1994 and the difference between men and women in 1994 has largely disappeared.

*Professor Roy Carr-Hill, Centre for Health Economics, University of York*

Roy presented an analysis of intra-household effects through multilevel analysis of the 1993 HSE, considering the determinants of drinking behaviour and exploring the influence of group, especially household membership. Roy then discussed some findings from various different models: the fixed effects, the household characteristics and random level effects. He concluded that the proportion of unexplained variation in alcohol consumption attributable to household membership is almost as great as that explained by individual effects. In addition, with many surveys intra-household effects can be addressed which are often important but comments that place effects are often exaggerated.

*Ben Wheeler, Social and Spatial Inequalities Research Group, University of Sheffield*

Ben presented geographical research using the HSE for 1995-97 investigating environmental health equity. Ben investigated a small air quality index with some respiratory health measures: 'ever' diagnosed asthma and forced expiratory volume in 1 second (FEV1). His regression results showed that there is a possibility that effects on lung function are exacerbated for lower social class groups, but adjusting for air quality doesn't attenuate social gradient. Also, for asthma there was no relationship between air quality and asthma prevalence.

*Graham Moon, Institute for the Geography of Health, University of Portsmouth*

Graham presented research using the HSE for years 1998-2003 along with other data sources to estimate small area indicators of health need. The research aims were to provide an overview of the outcomes of a programme of integrated projects focussed on the derivation of small area indicators of health need using synthetic estimation. Graham concluded by presenting some areas for England that are healthy/unhealthy and stated that there are clear advantages in methodological terms and through linkage with other sources.

*David Boniface, University College London*

David presented some research on distribution shape and the obesity epidemic using the HSE from 1994 to 2003. He investigated changes in distribution of body shape and obesity prevalence using BMI (body mass index). David concluded on obesity distribution that over the nine years the percentiles of BMI have increased over the range of BMI and that whatever threshold defines overweight, its prevalence will have shown an increase and that the higher the threshold the greater the increase in prevalence.

## **Proceedings of the first country specific seminar to highlight the research value of government datasets**

**Thursday 8 September 2005**

ESDS government's first country specific meeting brought together users and providers of datasets from both academia and the public sector to highlight the research value of datasets that can facilitate analysis of the Scottish population. Copies of the slides can be found at [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2005-09-08/slides/](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2005-09-08/slides/). The day was chaired by John Curtice of the University of Strathclyde and was hosted by Edinburgh University Data Library. ESDS government would like to thank John and Robin Rice from the Data Library for their role in ensuring the day ran smoothly and to time. Angela Dale of CCSR, University of Manchester provided a short introduction to the day and launched the new *Guide to data sources for Scotland*, which can be found at [www.esds.ac.uk/government/docs/ScotlandGuide.pdf](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/docs/ScotlandGuide.pdf).

*David Bell, Professor of Economics, University of Stirling*

David Bell gave an overview of Scottish data for Scottish research. This included strictly Scottish datasets such as the Scottish Household Survey (SHS), Scottish Social Attitudes survey (SSA), the Scottish Crime Survey (SCS) and the Scottish Health Survey (SHeS). In addition the large-scale surveys that have Scottish boosts were also described, including the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Family Resources Survey (FRS), British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS).

### ***Attitudinal evidence from Scotland***

*David McCrone, Professor of Sociology and Co-Director of Institute of Governance, Edinburgh University*

David talked on charting national identity through survey evidence from 1974/79. This included detailed examples of how questions have changed over time on national identity, pride in being Scottish, feeling Scottish, being Scottish including multiple identities and a question on identification with flags. David also demonstrated that the 2003 and 2005 SSA contained scenario-type questions.

*Lindsay Paterson, Sociologist and Professor of Educational Policy, Edinburgh University*

Lindsay offered research on voting in Scotland. He explored voting transitions in Scotland using data from the British Election Panel Study for 1992-97 and 1997-2001. Party identification and voting transitions were explored with respect to gender, age and constitutional attitudes. Results for Scotland were contrasted with those for England where a greater degree of voting stability over time is apparent.

*Jo Wathan, ESDS Government, University of Manchester*

Jo introduced services provided by ESDS Government including promoting and supporting the use of data such as the SCS, SHeS and SSA and producing value-added materials such as the new guide to data sources for Scotland. Jo finished with news about the new special licence agreement making surveys such as the APS available in more detail for the first time, the introduction of a longitudinal design for the GHS and the Integrated Household Survey (previously called the Continuous Population Survey). ESDS Government news can be found on the ESDS web site at [www.esds.ac.uk/government/news/](http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/news/).

### ***Attitudes to family and social change***

*Lynn Jamieson, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, University of Edinburgh*

Lynn summarised findings from research into families, relationships and social change. SHS data was used to show that people who live alone are not socially isolated. Data from the SSA and British Social Attitudes survey (BSA) demonstrated the different attitudes to families and relationships for Scotland and England. Finally, British Youth Panel data (from the BHPS) was used to explore differences in home centredness and parenting, comparing answers across Scotland, Wales and England.

*Fran Wasoff, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, University of Edinburgh and Claudia Martin, Scottish Centre for Social Research*

Fran and Claudia provided an analysis which drew on the family law module that formed part of the SSA 2004. Descriptive analysis shows a very high degree of support for grandparent's rights to contact with their grandchildren. Cohabitee's financial rights, for both mixed and same sex couples received a high degree of support but a lower degree of support was given to same sex couple's rights to adopt.

*Matt Sutton, Health Economics Research Unit, University of Aberdeen*

Matt presented some interesting research on social, biological and lifestyle risk factors for hospital admission. The analysis was of the SHeS linked to hospital records. This was linking people from the 1995 and 1998 SHeS to the September 2004 version of ISD's linked SMR01 catalogue and the linkage was good at 73 percent. General health factors (GHQ12 and self-assessed health), smoking and individual-level socio-economic factors were seen to be more valuable predictors of hospital admission.

### ***Survey developments in Scotland***

*Simon Anderson (speaking on behalf of Paul Bradshaw, Senior Researcher, Scottish Centre for Social Research)*

Simon introduced the development of Growing Up in Scotland (GUS), a new Scottish longitudinal research project. GUS contributes to the development of the early years evidence base for the Scottish Executive and the wider research community in Scotland. This includes monitoring and evaluation of early years/children's services policies, providing both longitudinal and cross-sectional data on children's development and well-being and the effectiveness of services. Simon then detailed the study design involving two cohorts of 5,000 babies and 3,000 toddlers. The questionnaire for sweep 1 has had a high response rate of over 80 percent.

*Lisa Taylor, SHS project team, Scottish Executive*

Lisa provided a brief introduction to the SHS, including survey design, topic coverage and response rate. She also uncovered some new developments for the SHS questionnaire, including questions on finances, anti-social behaviour, quality of local council services and volunteering. Lisa ended on discussing the SHS review, some early recommendations and the next steps for the SHS.

*Adam Krawczyk, Scottish Executive Health Department*

Adam summarised details of the SHeS review process, involving the review team and key stakeholders. The review considers the questionnaire review, future SHeS, other UK Health Surveys, other Data Sources (such as SALSUS), the IHS (CPS), NHS Board Health and Lifestyle Surveys and Health and Community Care Statistics. Adam reported the potential impact of developments in e-Health and new GMS contracts and also considered record linkage on the future design of the SHeS.

*Andrew Robinson, Communities Scotland*

Andrew introduced the Scottish House Conditions Survey (SHCS), stressing that although the SHCS may be underutilised by academic researchers it has been directly linked to policy, for example Fuel Poverty, the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and the Housing Bill. He discussed the dissemination strategy involving topic-based reports and providing tables and ad hoc analysis for survey users. Andrew ended with information on new developments: the SHCS is now a continuous survey as this gives increased flexibility of content and more efficient use of resources.

*Robert Williams, Office of the Chief Statistician, Scottish Executive*

Robert discussed moving towards an integrated household survey, reporting work on harmonising and realigning Scottish government surveys. To assess current coverage and identify gaps major surveys were evaluated in terms of their methodologies, question harmonisation, overlaps and gaps, contracts and procurement, survey management and analysis. He outlined what integration would mean in terms of harmonisation and discussed the potential gained through integration.

*Vernon Gayle, University of Stirling*

Vernon gave an introduction to the new Scottish Longitudinal Study (SLS) which, when complete, will constitute a 5.5 percent sample of the Scottish population based on 20 birth dates. Vernon talked through how other data sources can be linked into the SLS, including Census information, vital statistics, health and population data. He finished by outlining current plans for providing researchers with access to the SLS.

## **Proceedings of the ESDS Government research conference**

### **Friday 4 November 2005**

This year's annual research conference, on the theme of social capital, was held at the British Academy and was a joint event with the UK Longitudinal Studies Centre. The event was chaired by Professor Waqar Ahmed of Middlesex University. ONS and academic speakers reported a wide range of research using secondary analysis of ESDS Government and longitudinal microdata. In addition to substantive analyses, methodological issues and the problem of measuring social capital were major themes and the subject of lively debate amongst an audience composed of both researchers and policy makers.

Copies of the slides from the research conference can be found at [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2005-11-04/slides.html](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/events/2005-11-04/slides.html).

*Penny Babb, Office for National Statistics*

Penny started the day by describing how ONS have navigated the nebulous, multifaceted concept of social capital, by adopting the OECD definition of social capital; "networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate cooperation within or among groups". A full set of standardised social capital questions were developed with the aid of focus groups, piloting and cognitive interviewing. A shorter 15-question set has also been identified. This harmonised set was included in the 2004/5 GHS and will be widely used in the future, both nationally and locally.

*Guilio Flore, Office for National Statistics*

*Guilio* reported on a project to explore the relationship between social capital and ethnic diversity. Using data from the Home Office Citizenship Survey (HOCS) 2003 and Census 2001 data at Super Output Area, results show a higher degree of trust in one's neighbours amongst respondents who are UK-born, white and in ethnically homogenous areas. The relationship is reversed for civic engagement. No relationship between ethnic diversity and volunteering was seen. Ethnic diversity is a more powerful explanatory factor than urbanisation and language fluency and is still significant after population density and individual characteristics have been controlled for.

*Eldin Fahmy, University of Bristol*

*Eldin* drew on the GHS social capital module 2000 to explore the relationship between civic action and social capital among young people. Noting that cultural approaches to social capital have been particularly problematic given intergenerational differences, he focussed on civic engagement in terms of protest and contacting political actors. He found young people to be less active in these respects, with differences being more strongly related to attitudinal variation rather than social networks. He found that while young people have more extensive networks they are less likely to draw on these resources in a crisis.

*Yaojun Li, University of Birmingham*

*Yaojun* compared the relative strengths of human and social capital for looking at income differentials over time using the British Household Panel Study (BHPS). Using a range of both types of indicators social capital is found to be a more important explanatory factor set than human capital when looking at income differences at a single time point and remains important when exploring changes in income over time. Further explanatory power could be provided by information on whether respondents know people in a range of positions at the time of applying for their job.

*Tessa Peasgood, University of Sheffield*

Tessa explored subjective well-being using the BHPS. Preferring to avoid the term 'social capital' she finds that satisfaction with one's life is much lower for those who do not speak to neighbours, or live alone. Low reported levels of satisfaction with one's life is also associated with poor sleep or subjective inability to cope financially. One's relationships are clearly very important, and the need to consider human needs for social support is a challenge to policy makers whose focus might otherwise centre on financial security at the expense of social contact.

*Nick Buck, ISER, University of Essex*

Nick has explored the relationship between social capital and areal deprivation by linking the BHPS to ward level Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles. Several social capital indicators are negatively associated with increasing area deprivation, including trust, talking to neighbours and organisation memberships. This relationship becomes stronger when individual characteristics are controlled for. However, in poorer areas, one's best friends are more likely to live within five miles. Many aspects of social capital remain unaffected when an individual moves home. The only measure which has a clear negative association with migration is neighbourhood affiliation.

*Liz Twigg, University of Southampton and John Mohan, University of Portsmouth*

Liz and John have made linkages between micro and geographic data to explore the relationship between social capital and health outcomes. By generating (and validating) synthetic estimates of social capital for small areas, they were able to explore mortality variations in relation to areal and individual social capital and socio-economic factors using the Health and Lifestyles Survey. They found that individual social capital does not impact on mortality. Areal social capital was largely not significant when areal deprivation was controlled for as these variables are highly collinear. Individual material circumstances and health-related behaviour appear to have a mediating affect between social capital and health.

*Jonathan Gershuny, ISER, University of Essex*

Nick Buck reported work using the British Cohort Study (BCS) 1970. This study sought to explore the relationship between social and human capital. While the BCS70 offers longitudinal data including parental human capital indicators at birth, a counter-intuitive finding demonstrated the importance of contingent life-stage factors on the meaningfulness of longitudinal data. A counter-intuitive finding that sociability at age 16 appeared to be negatively associated with wages in adulthood, may be explained by age 16 being the time when more studious teenagers might defer social activities to focus on examinations.

Summarising the day, *Ray Pahl (ISER)* argued that while one might not be able to produce a definitive account of social capital as a concept, social capital as a field of study has produced some thought provoking and useful work. During discussion participants argued for a continued work in the area whilst remaining critical of social capital as a conceptual panacea.

### **Third Radstats Critical Essay Competition**

The Radstats group invite submissions to their Third Radical Statistics Critical Essay Competition. The auspicious judges are Simon Briscoe, Len Cook, Prof. Ruth Levitas, Prof. Denise Lievesley and Dr. Susan Starkings. Submissions are required by 1 May 2006. First prize is £300 and second £200, in two categories of entry: Student or Open. More information is available on [www.radstats.org.uk](http://www.radstats.org.uk) or from [janet.rmshapiro@btopenworld.com](mailto:janet.rmshapiro@btopenworld.com).

### **User support, discussion list and mailing list**

To obtain user support email [govsurveys@esds.ac.uk](mailto:govsurveys@esds.ac.uk) or telephone 0161 275 1980. To join the JISCMail discussion list send the following message to [listserv@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:listserv@jiscmail.ac.uk): 'subscribe esds-govsurveys <name>'. To join the mailing list to receive copies of ESDS Government newsletters go to [www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/join](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/esds/join).

## Glossary of terms and acronyms

<b>APS</b>	Annual Population Survey
<b>BCS</b>	British Cohort Study
<b>BEPS</b>	British Election Panel Study
<b>BHPS</b>	British Household Panel Survey
<b>BMI</b>	Body Mass Index
<b>BMRB</b>	British Market Research Bureau
<b>BSA</b>	British Social Attitudes
<b>BYP</b>	British Youth Panel (from BHPS)
<b>CASS</b>	Centre for Applied Social Surveys
<b>CCSR</b>	Centre for Census and Survey Research (in Manchester)
<b>CPS</b>	Continuous Population Survey
<b>CVD</b>	Cardiovascular disease
<b>ELSA</b>	English Longitudinal Study of Ageing
<b>ESDS</b>	Economic and Social Data Service
<b>ESRC</b>	Economic and Social Research Council
<b>EUL</b>	End User Licence
<b>FEV</b>	Forced Expiratory Volume
<b>FRS</b>	Family Resources Survey
<b>GHQ</b>	General Health Questionnaire
<b>GHS</b>	General Household Survey
<b>GHS (L)</b>	General Household Survey (Longitudinal)
<b>GUS</b>	Growing Up in Scotland
<b>HBSC</b>	Health Behaviour of School Children
<b>HOCS</b>	Home Office Citizenship Survey
<b>HSCIC</b>	Health and Social Care Information Centre
<b>HSE</b>	Health Survey for England
<b>IHS</b>	Integrated Household Survey
<b>ISER</b>	Institute for Social and Economic Research
<b>JISCMail</b>	a mailing list service for sharing information by email
<b>LEA</b>	Local Education Authority
<b>LFS</b>	Labour Force Survey
<b>MCS</b>	Millennium Cohort Study
<b>NATCEN</b>	National Centre for Social Research
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>ONS</b>	Office for National Statistics
<b>SALSUS</b>	Scottish schools adolescent lifestyle and substance use survey
<b>SCS</b>	Scottish Crime Survey
<b>SIMD</b>	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
<b>SHeS</b>	Scottish Health Survey
<b>SHS</b>	Scottish Household Survey
<b>SHCS</b>	Scottish House Conditions Survey
<b>SL</b>	Special Licence
<b>SLS</b>	Scottish Longitudinal Study
<b>SRA</b>	Social Research Association
<b>SSA</b>	Scottish Social Attitudes
<b>S3RI</b>	Southampton Statistical Sciences Research Institute
<b>UKDA</b>	UK Data Archive
<b>WHS</b>	Welsh Health Survey