CeLSIUS

Centre for Longitudinal Study Information and User Support

CeLSIUS News

Issue 3 May 2003

Welcome to Issue 3 of CeLSIUS News.

We thought you might like to know of recent developments in support for users of the ONS Longitudinal Study.

CeLSIUS was established as the new user support service early last year and our web site www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk has full details about us, current and past research on the LS support service and dataset developments.

We have two online training modules about using the LS, one on "Ethnicity" and one on "Defining a Study Population", with more in development; a searchable list of publications; and an online version of the data dictionary, all of which we hope will make preparing a project easier.

Linkage of 2001 Census data is going well and should be fully completed by August 2004 (and test versions of the new data will be available earlier – see news from the Office for National Statistics on page 4 of this issue for further details). Once these data are included, the LS will have information spanning a thirty-year period. The 2001 Census also includes data which will provide new opportunities for research including, for example, two questions on health (and as one is the same as that included in 1991, the potential to look at health transitions), questions on care-giving, religion and ethnicity (again for the second time) and improved and more detailed information on educational qualifications and intra-household relationships. So now is the time to start planning projects. Please do visit the website, contact us for more information or subscribe to our mailing list at: www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/ls-support.html.

We would also be very grateful for any feedback on the website, training modules or other outputs of CeLSIUS's work, including CeLSIUS News.

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News from CeLSIUS

Online training

The second training module, *Defining a study population*, is now available from the CeLSIUS website at www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk/training.html. The aim of this module is to show users how to select the subjects from the LS that are appropriate to their study design. The module guides the user through the process of selecting a study population for various different types of study, to illustrate the issues that can arise.

The next module, *Households and families*, is in development and is expected to be ready by the end of May.

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Recent events

Lynda Clarke
Children's changing families: an example of using the ONS Longitudinal Study

6 March 2003, South Bank University

Lynda's paper documents the evidence on the demography of children's family location and the transitions they are likely to face, and presents new data on the social and economic conditions of children.

ESRC National Longitudinal Strategy Committee, supported by the ESRC UK Longitudinal Studies Centre
Opportunities for complementarity between longitudinal studies

4 April 2003, Royal Statistical Society

In this interesting meeting Mel Bartley gave a talk on using a life course approach to studying unemployment, work and health, and John Ermisch spoke on using the BCS70 and BHPS to measure the impacts of teenage childbearing particularly interesting at this meeting.

Population Association of America
2003 Annual Meeting
1-3 May 2003, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Emily Grundy presented a paper reporting on the LS based work she and Cecilia Tomassini have been doing on associations between childbearing history and health and mortality in later life. US colleagues were very impressed by the opportunities the LS provides for this kind of life course research.

News from users

Ethnic minority social mobility

Report from Lucinda Platt, University of Essex

My investigation using the LS is stimulated by two factors: first in the study of class mobility in Britain, relatively little attention has been paid to ethnic differences in mobility patterns. What work does exist tends to take aggregate occupational profiles by ethnic groups and compares them over time rather than tracing the actual parent child trajectories. This is in large part a consequence of limited suitable data – the LS providing one of very few sources with potential for a study of intergenerational mobility by ethnic group. A second, though related, consideration is the extent to which standard accounts of social mobility and the comparison of the relative chances of those with particular class origins to end up in particular class destinations is appropriate to understanding the experience of ethnic minority groups. It has tended to be assumed (on the basis of some evidence) that the relative success, for example, of the Indian ethnic group over time is a consequence of a sharp drop in social class relative to previous occupation or background following migration, with a reassertion of the parent's pre-migration class background in the second generation. This can then be contrasted with a situation for less successful groups where their occupation following migration is not necessarily at odds with their class background. By exploring the intergenerational mobility among LS members I hope to shed light on the extent to which trajectories do vary with ethnicity, and the extent to which a conventional study of class mobility for the children of migrants is meaningful. This is intended to be the groundwork for pursuing in more detail the different patterns of intergenerational mobility between minority groups as well as between particular minority groups and a white, non-migrant population.

One of the strengths of the LS is that it is possible to measure the parental class of the respondent at the time, rather than depending on retrospective measures. A second advantage is the fact that the social class measured is explicitly that of the migrant parent at the time they were working in Britain, rather than a pre-migration class. As I have indicated, identifying pre-migration social class is an important part of the consideration of ethnic minority social mobility, but is distinct from the concerns of this paper which require a post-migration class classification. A further advantage is the ability to focus on a particular cohort: class outcomes clearly vary with age, but controlling for age in a more general sample will tend to conflate age and cohort effects.

To explore the patterns of intergenerational mobility I am using the LS cohort who were aged between 8 and 15 in 1971. Their father's/parent's class position at this time gives the origin class and their own class in 1991 gives the destination class. Within this cohort I have selected three groups for analysis and comparison: those with at least one parent who was not born in Britain and who describe themselves as Black Caribbean or as Black other at the 1991 Census (hereafter termed Caribbeans), those with at least one parent who was not born in Britain and who define themselves as Indian at the 1991 Census (hereafter Indians), and those with both or their only parent born in Britain who describe themselves as White at the 1991 Census (hereafter white non-migrants). Respondents were also broken down by sex.

The analysis is still at a preliminary stage, but it shows, using the Registrar General's class scheme reduced to a three-class classification, the strikingly different starting positions of the different groups: over 23 per cent of the white non-migrant group had parents in classes I or II compared to under 4 percent of Caribbeans and roughly 10 per cent of Indians. By the time the children's own class was measured in 1991, a third of Indians were in classes I and II and 21 per cent of Caribbeans were in one of these classes, while white non-migrants had also increased their preponderance in these classes, but only to 29 per cent. Preliminary analysis also indicates that mobility experiences are distinct for the different groups. In fact it suggests those Indians and Caribbeans whose parents were in classes I or II are not substantially more likely to end up there than those who were in classes IV and V. This contrasts with the white non-migrant group where the relative chances of ending up in classes I or II are substantially greater for those with parents in these classes: they have odds of 3.9:1 relative to those with parents in classes IV or V. This would tend to indicate that class background is far more salient to the non-migrant population than it is to minority groups with a recent migration history.

News from related organisations

The Office for National Statistics (ONS)

New User Guide on Households and Families

ONS will publish LS user guide no. 20, *Researching Households and Families using the ONS Longitudinal Study*, soon. Written by Angela Brassett-Grundy of the Centre for Longitudinal Studies at the Institute of Education, this guide will help researchers working on any aspect of family and household structure and the relationships between individuals within households and families using LS data. Census definitions and questions and classifications of households and families are described and compared across all four censuses from 1971-2001, and the relevant LS variables documented. The complexities of relationships within and between family and household units in the LS, and other methodological and analytical issues, are clearly explained.

The user guide will be available in a downloadable PDF version through the National Statistics and CeLSIUS websites.

Longitudinal Study Beta Test

As part of the beta testing of its LS\2001 Census Link dataset, ONS is looking for the early submission of independently funded research proposals using the 2001 data, that can examine the accuracy, coherence and comparability of the data. Projects selected for beta testing will be given access to the data from February 2004, six months before their planned release to the wider research community. In return testers will be asked to:

Submit monthly summaries of progress to the test management team.

Promptly report any anomalies, issues or problems encountered in the data, metadata or access technology.

Present sign-off reports by July 2004 (the planned end of the beta test period) detailing the analysis undertaken and any problems encountered. Please note that there is no requirement for the projects themselves to end at this time, but testers should plan for milestones relevant to the beta test to be achieved and reported on within the test period.

Be aware that they are participating in a test, and may therefore need to repeat any extracts of 2001 data in the unlikely event that serious problems should arise with it.

The selection of projects for beta testing will be rigorous. Each test project will need to meet the normal LS Research Board (LSRB) criteria including scientific and policy relevance. As the success of the test will depend on the early identification of concerns or problems with the data, each project team should include an experienced LS user and an expert in the substantive area covered by the project. Because support resources available for the test period are strictly limited, every effort will be made during selection to avoid unnecessary duplication, in terms of substantive research areas selected and areas of the database being tested.

The approval process will run from now to September 2003, involving representatives from CeLSIUS, LS user support and the LS\2001 Census Link Project. Interested parties should contact CeLSIUS, Chris White or Peter Martin at ONS (chris.white@ons.gov.uk or peter.martin@ons.gov.uk) for a summary proposal template as soon as possible.

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The 2001 Samples of Anonymised Records (SARs)

The sampling design for the 2001 SAR is very similar to that for 1991 except the SAR sample is now drawn from the entire census population instead of a 10% sample. As with other Census outputs, the SARs have been subject to a stricter confidentiality appraisal than in 1991 and this has delayed the completion of the specification.

ONS have agreed to do additional coding for the additional occupational information that has not been coded for the main census (i.e. occupation/industry for 16-64s who last worked more than 5 years ago but less than 10, and 65-74s not currently working who worked in the previous 10 years). This is very good news because, without this information, we would have no occupation or social class information for people who have a long-term absence from the labour market (5-10 years), or who retired early or stopped work beyond normal retirement age. Occupational information for both files will be at the level of SOC minor (81 categories).

Individual File (3%)

The Individual SAR will be a 3% sample of individuals. In order to retain sufficient individual detail (e.g. 16 categories of ethnic group) the lowest level of geography will be the Government Office Region. However, we expect to be able to compensate for this reduction in geography in two ways:

- By the addition of an indicator of the ranking on the Index Of Deprivation for 2001 (decile) for the ward of enumeration.
- By the addition of a pseudo-LAD indicator. This uses an imputation process in which distributions from the 100% Census tables are used as constraints to allocate individuals in the SAR to LADs.

ONS still hope that the final specification will be agreed shortly with delivery of the Individual SAR to CCSR by September 2003. Developments will be posted on the CCSR website at www.ccsr.ac.uk/sars/

Household File (1%)

The specification of the Household SAR is waiting on additional checks by ONS. In 1991 confidentiality concerns over large households led to individual records being suppressed for households of size 12 and over. This represented only 28 households. In their October consultation ONS expressed concern over households with more than 6 members - or more than 5 members if region was retained. The current specification will have the following reduction in detail:

- Households with 7 members will have age grouped in 5-year bands (except for children under 16 (single year) and young people to age 24 (2 year age groups).
- Households with 8 members have age banded in 10 year groups and a reduction in detail on ethnic group (5 categories); marital status (2 categories).

- Households with 9 members have age in only 3 categories and reductions in marital status and ethnic group as above.
- For households with 10+ members there will be no individual information at all but the possibility of some derived variables. Based on 1991 figures this represents about 1,000 usual residents and about 100 households.

Whilst the actual numbers of individuals and households are relatively small, large households are not randomly distributed in the population. For example, the loss of this information would disproportionately affect Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic groups and would bias estimates of overcrowding and various forms of deprivation. We are currently consulting over ways of imputing individual-level information for these large households.

We hope to have a specification of the Household file available in May. The intention is that this file should be released in the Autumn. More detail is available in the 19th SARs Newsletter (see website).

Web-based access to the Sample of Anonymised Records

The 1991 SARs are available for web-browsing and download. The software and modes of access are those that will be used with the 2001 SARs. We therefore urge prospective 2001 SAR users to try out two new software packages with the 1991 data. As well as the ability to download the entire files in SPSS or STATA format, users can now access the data via their web-browser using NESSTAR or download to their desktop with a tailored analysis package, NSDstat.

Users will be asked to provide their ATHENS user name and password. If a user tries to log in without registering for access to Census data, then they are automatically prompted to register, and can immediately afterwards access the data. The Nesstar Light is accessed via a web browser: just go to www.ccsr.ac.uk/sars. The 1991 SARs can also be downloaded direct to a PC with their own analysis package – NSDstat. This is a desktop statistical analysis package developed around the concepts of user-friendliness and the power to process large amounts of data in minimal time.

Non-academic users will register direct with CCSR rather than through the census registration system and we will supply 2001 SARs on CD-ROM with NSDstat - and in a range of other formats. If non-academic users wish to download direct from the web we will supply them with a password to allow this. Please contact CCSR and we will provide detailed information on the costs of acquiring the 2001 SARs.

CCSR documents relating to the ONS consultation in the SARs are available at www.ccsr.ac.uk/sars. The latest news of 2001 Census plans is available in the ONS Census News. To add your name to the mailing list or to download a pdf version of the latest newsletter see:
www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/cennews.asp.

Research using the LS

Projects supported by CeLSIUS

Jerome Adda and Tarani Chandola, University College London
Income distribution and its effect on mortality in Britain

David Coleman and Martin Smith, University of Oxford
Post-war migration and the United Kingdom: evaluating the demographic and workforce consequences

Elizabeth Davies, University of Liverpool
The leaving of Liverpool an examination into the migratory characteristics of Liverpool

Richard Feltbower, University of Leeds
Geographic mobility of long-term childhood cancer survivors

Emily Grundy and Cecilia Tomassini, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Fertility, marriage and household associations with the health and mortality of women in later life - Phase I

Jason Strelitz, London School of Economics and Political Science
From Immigration to inclusion? A longitudinal study of immigration and outcomes for children

Andy Sloggett and Emily Grundy, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Socio-economic and socio-demographic inequalities in cancer incidence and survival in the older population of England and Wales

Malcolm Williams, University of Plymouth and Brian Dodgeon, Institute of Education, University of London
Single households and household change 1971-1991

Projects supported by the ONS

Angela Donkin, Office for National Statistics
Imputation of income on the LS

Seeromanie Harding, Michael Rosato and Kennedy Cruikshank
Differences in birth outcomes between first and second generation ethnic groups

Yuan Huang Lee, Office for National Statistics
A study of ethnic variations in mortality by socio-economic measures

Richard Pereira, Office for National Statistics
Population projections by ethnic group

Chris White, Office for National Statistics
An examination of the social, geographical and housing characteristics of females age 10-16 in 1971 yet to give birth using the ONS Longitudinal Study

Publications update

For the full list of ONS LS publications, please visit www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk/publications.html.

New publications

Reproductive and Family History and Health in Later Life: Associations Between Childbearing History, Health and Mortality Among Women in England and Wales, Results from a Record Linkage Study. Grundy, Emily and Tomassini, Cecilia (2003). Paper presented at the Population Association of America 2003 Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1-3 May 2003.

Higher qualifications and the timing and subsequent pace of childbearing: A study of women born in England and Wales between 1954 and 1958. Rendall, M S and Smallwood, S (2003). Population Trends 2003; (April).