



UPDATE -

News from the
LS User Group

Issue no. 16
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This newsletter is designed to provide information on the ONS Longitudinal Study (LS) and a forum for the exchange of users' views and comments. It is produced by the LS User Support Programme at the Social Statistics Research Unit (SSRU), City University. All comments and contributions should be sent to Rosemary Creeser, LS Support Programme, SSRU, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0AR tel. 0171 477 8487 Email: rc@ssru.city.ac.uk Contributions on IBM -formatted floppy disk are always welcome and should be sent, clearly documented (file name, wordprocessing package and version used) along with a hard copy of the text.



1 Diary

This section highlights forthcoming events of interest to LS Users.

If you are arranging an event and wish to publicise it in future issues of *Update* you should send details to Dina Maher, the LS Administrative Secretary at SSRU.

LS workshops

SSRU hold regular 2-day workshops. These provide detailed information on the study and enable researchers to gain practical hands-on experience of accessing the data. They are also an ideal opportunity to meet members of the LS Support Team and to discuss the suitability of the LS for exploring specific research questions. The next two LS Workshops will be held on Tuesday 22nd April/Wednesday 23rd April 1997 and Monday 6th October/Tuesday 7th October 1997.

As part of the hands-on element of the workshop participants are able to specify a statistical analysis of their choice using a small sub-set of variables and a test data-set based on 1% of the LS data. The number of places is limited to ensure that participants get sufficient individual attention and hands-on experience. A non-refundable fee of £50 (or £20 for students) is charged to cover documentation, lunch, refreshments and administrative costs. Researchers who are planning to carry out analyses of LS data in the forthcoming year are advised to contact Dina Maher immediately on 0171 477 8486 to reserve a place. (EMAIL: dm@ssru.city.ac.uk)

ESRC/JISC workshops planning for the 2001 Census

A series of four workshops are planned involving participants who use Census of Population data. The purpose of the workshops is to advise the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) on the type of Census information required by the academic community and on a strategy for acquiring and disseminating machine readable data sets from the 2001 Census. Each workshop will produce a report for ESRC/JISC on the census issues discussed. To supplement the views of workshop participants and broaden the base of opinion a questionnaire survey will be sent out to academics who have used Census information or who might wish to use it in future. This builds on the work of Marsh *et al.* (1988¹) prior to the 1991 Census. The workshops and survey have the following aims:

- to prepare the case for ESRC/JISC purchase of 2001 Census data sets
- to investigate the case for a Census programme and suggest directions it might take
- to prepare options for ESRC/JISC on the dissemination of data sets
- to prepare proposals to the Census Offices on census questions, methods and products
- to prepare proposals to the Census Offices on collaborative ventures
- to advise on a strategy for negotiations with the Census Offices

The workshop programme

About 15-20 participants are being invited or may volunteer to present papers at the workshops, which will be also be open to other delegates. Key personnel from the Census Offices are also being invited to participate. Each workshop will last for two days and will be held at University venues around the country. The reports based on the workshop will consist of a summary of paper abstracts and

¹ Marsh C, Arber S, Wrigley N, Rhind D and Bulmer M (1988) "The view of academic social scientists on the 1991 UK Census of Population: a report of the Economic and Social Research Council Working Group", *Environment and Planning A*, 20, pp 851-889.

discussion, together with a set of recommendations. Edited versions of these reports will be prepared for publication.

The following meetings and publications are planned:

Month, Year	Activity	Subject
January 22/23 1997	First Workshop	The 2001 Census: what geography do we want?
February 1997	Report to ESRC/JISC	Views on the geography of the 2001 Census database.
April 1997	Second Workshop	Interfaces to 2001 Census data: what do we want?
May 1997	Report to ESRC/JISC	Interface and dissemination strategy.
May 1997	Document	Framework for User Survey.
July-Aug-Sept 1997	Questionnaire Survey	Census Use and Views.
September 1997	Third Workshop	Special datasets from the 2001 Census: what do we want?
September 1997	Report on Survey	Census Use and Views: from 1991 to 2001.
October 1997	Report to ESRC/JISC	Special datasets and their dissemination.
April 1998	Fourth Workshop	The 2001 Census as a GIS: what do we want?
June 1998	Final Report to ESRC/JISC	A strategy for the 2001 Census.

First workshop

The aim of the first workshop held on 22nd/23rd January was to discuss progress in agreeing the geographical base for census outputs and to debate how the base should be developed. The meeting included contributions from each of the UK Census Offices and key users of census geographical outputs. Discussions also covered the geography to be used for the SARs and results of an ongoing Statistical Disclosure Control project investigating the risks of multiple Small Area Statistics. Participants were invited to “sign on” for particular tasks such as helping with the questionnaire survey or with the work to redesign the census geography.

Call for participants

The workshops are co-funded by ESRC award H507265031 and JISC. They are free to participants and funds are available to meet speaker expenses.

If you would like to present a paper, participate in the workshops/survey or to receive copies of the workshop reports please contact Phil Rees (Director: Census Programme) or Christine Macdonald (Programme Secretary) at the address below.

Phil Rees, School of Geography, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, Tel: 0113 233 3341, Fax: 0113 233 6757, email phil@geog.leeds.ac.uk or Christine Macdonald, Tel: 0113 233 6635, Fax: 0113 233 3308, email christin@geog.leeds.ac.uk

2 The ESRC Health Variations Programme, 1996-2000

Two new LS projects investigating intra-household/geographic variations in health and social variation in women's health have been funded by the ESRC Health Variations Programme. Below, Programme Director Hilary Graham, describes the programme. We will be reporting preliminary findings from the LS projects in future issues of Update.

The ESRC is funding a major five year programme of inter-disciplinary research focused on why there are persisting and widening socio-economic health variations in the UK. It represents the most significant programme of research on health variations in the UK and parallels proposed programmes of research underway in other EC countries including the Netherlands and Sweden. The £4 million Health Variation Programme aims to advance understanding of the social processes which underline and mediate socio-economic differences in health and well-being, through multidisciplinary projects based in university departments and research institutes across the UK.

The Health Variation Programme has two phases. The 13 projects in phase 1 of the Programme will be in progress by May 1997, tracking the influence of material and psycho-social factors across the lifecourse and within and across households, workplaces and areas. Methodological development, including the development of measures of socio-economic status sensitive to ethnic diversity and gender differences, is an integral part of phase 1 of the programme.

Phase 2 is due to begin in 1998. As with phase 1, it focuses on a set of interdisciplinary areas where UK research is likely to advance scientific understanding and to contribute to the development of policy and practice. Phase 2 will give particular emphasis to mental health, psychological factors and workplace influences. The role of lifestyles, the relationship between wealth and health and the impact of policy are other key areas.

The programme website at <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/apsocsci/hvp.htm> provides information on the programme, including details of the specification for phase 2. From March 1997 the website will also provide information on other health variations research, including UK and EC research and resource centres and forthcoming seminars/conferences.

The launch of the programme will take place in the Spring. A launch pack, providing full details of the projects in phase 1, will be available via the programme website and through the programme office. Advance requests can be made through both these sources.

The ESRC Health Variations Programme is located at the Department of Applied Social Science, Cartmel College, Lancaster University, Lancaster LA1 4YL

e-mail: hvp@lancaster.ac.uk

www: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/apsocsci/hvp.htm>

3 Technical issues

3.1 New aggregate level variables in the LS

A sub-set of 42 new aggregate variables at ward and ED level have recently been added to the LS as part of a project carried out by Dr Paul Wilkinson (Department of Small Area Health Statistics, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) investigating "The influence of migration in small area studies of environment and health". These include:

Population density

Measures of the population density at ward level for both the 1981 and 1991 Censuses (POPDEN8, POPDEN9) are now available. These may be used for distinguishing rural from urban areas at a finer level than has previously been possible.

Road density

Two variables have also been added reflecting road density at ward level (RDDEN8, RDDEN9). In certain cases these may provide a better measure of the urbanisation of an area than population density. A good example is the City of London which is a highly urbanised area - the home to many of the country's major financial institutions. Population density alone does not provide a very accurate picture of the extent of its urbanisation as the City has very few residents.

Carstairs deprivation scores

Variables reflecting the area level deprivation score developed by Vera Carstairs (Carstairs and Morris, 1989) have been added for both 1981 and 1991 (CARSCO8, CARSCO9). These are measured at ED (enumeration district) level and are available both as raw scores and quintiles.

As part of this project an analysis has been carried out using postcode pairs to calculate the migration distance between birth and census. LS birth registration data are currently postcoded from 1987 to the end of April 1992. These data may be used both to investigate migration between births registered after 1987 and the 1991 Census and the distance moved in the year following the 1991 Census.

If you are interested in using any of these variables please contact Simon Gleave at SSRU (tel: 0171 477 8000 X 4129 or email: sg@ssru.city.ac.uk).

Reference:

Carstairs V and Morris M (1989) "Deprivation: explaining differences in mortality between Scotland and England and Wales", *British Medical Journal*, 299, pp 886-889

4 LS research

Children's experience of changing family lives

Lynda Clarke, Centre for Population Studies, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Heather Joshi, SSRU, City University

We used the LS to improve our understanding of recent demographic changes in terms of children's experience of family diversity. We compared the changes in children's family lives over the 1980s with the 1970s. We were interested in the long-term impacts on children's living arrangements of adults' changing co-residents and have compared findings with data from the National Child Development Study (NCDS).

Data Sources

The LS was used to follow change in the family status of children who were members of the study. Their status at the time of the 1981 or 1991 Census was compared with that at birth registration - ie whether registered within marriage, by the mother alone, or by two parents who were not married. This information was collated for children born on the sample dates. Tabulations for children born into the LS between 1981 and 1991 were compared with results for the decade up to 1981 (Brown, 1986).

Another source of more detailed evidence on children's family change is the NCDS, a cohort study of all births in a week in March 1958 covering Great Britain. In 1991 the 33-year-old cohort members were contacted. Retrospective data were collected on 9334 children from 4428 NCDS cohort members who were mothers, and on 7348 children from 3704 NCDS cohort members who were fathers. The parents reported dates of births and changes in partnerships as well as the current whereabouts of absent children. We constructed records for each child, summarising parental status at birth, at 1991, and for most children (ie those residing with a cohort parent in 1991) of intervening partnership change.

LS Results

Overall, in 1991, 83 per cent of all children aged under ten were living in a two-parent family. At least three-quarters of all children were with both natural parents. One in six of all children aged under ten were living with a lone mother and under one per cent with a lone father. Even fewer than this, (0.6 per cent), were living in a communal establishment or a private household, but not in a family - such as children being fostered, in care, or in a family to which they are unrelated.

Ten years earlier, in 1981, a higher proportion of children were living in a two-parent family - 90 per cent (84 per cent intact). The proportion with a lone mother was half that for 1991 (8 per cent). A higher proportion of children aged 0-9 ended up living with a lone mother by the 1991 Census than ten years ago.

Children were more likely to be born outside marriage in the 1980s and 1970s and more likely to be in a lone mother family at the 1991 Census (see figure 1). Over a third (36 per cent) of children aged 3 to 5 who were "jointly registered" and nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) of those who were "solely registered" in 1991 were living with lone mothers compared with 20 per cent and 38 per cent respectively for 1981. Children born outside marriage had become less likely to be in a two-parent family in 1991 than in 1981. There was an increasing likelihood of family disruption by age of the child. Figure 2 summarises where children were living in 1991 by their mother's age at birth and type of registration. This suggests that the experience of family change for children born between 1981 and 1991 was not undifferentiated. Only one third of children born to teenage mothers were registered by a married couple, compared with about nine tenths of those where the mother was over 25.

Figure 1: Living arrangements of children aged 0-9 at the 1981 and 1991 Censuses who were not living with the two parents who had registered their birth

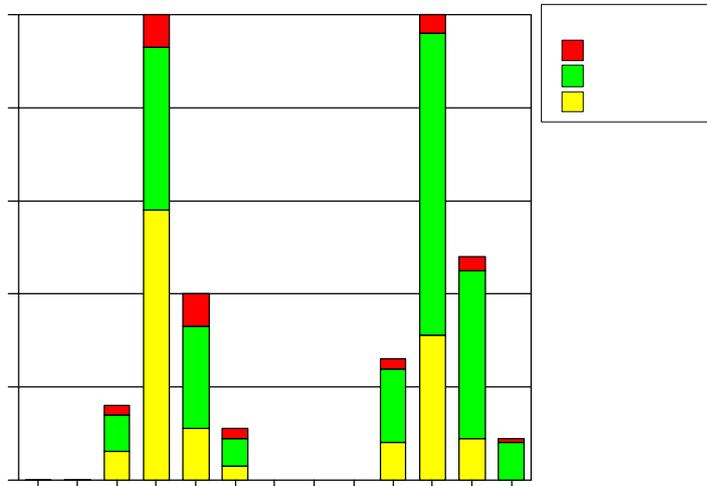
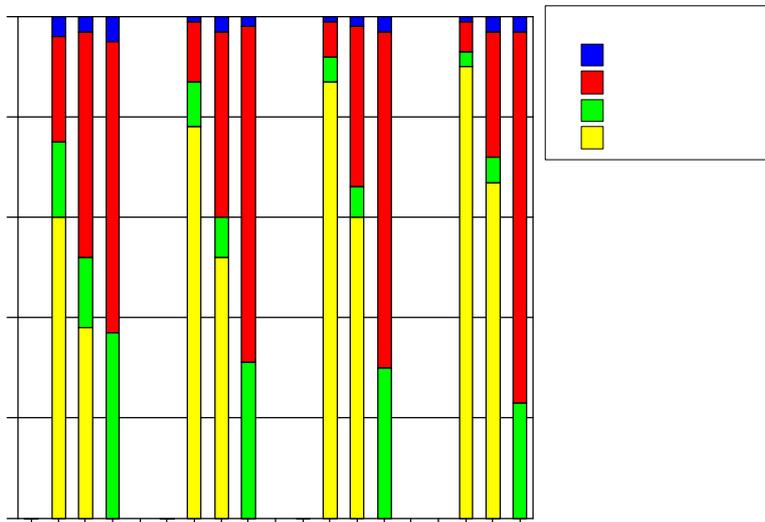


Figure 2: A comparison of where children aged 0-9 were living in 1991 by mother's age at birth and type of birth registration



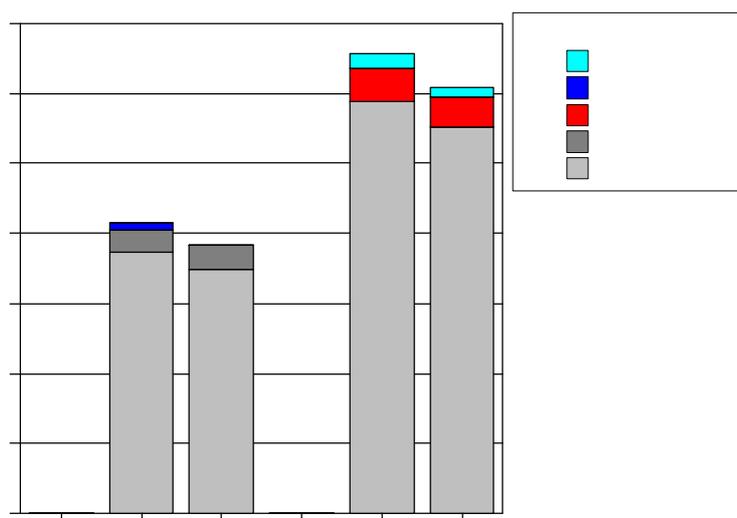
Key: M=inside marriage J=joint registration S=sole registration

Sole and joint registrations outside marriage were most common among births to teenage mothers. The outcome at 1991 Census was also strikingly different in the case of mothers under 20 at the time of the birth. A third of children were living with lone mothers, and only just over a third appeared to be with both natural parents. At older ages of mother, the proportion of children with lone mothers at Census falls (to 9 per cent, where the mother was over 30 at birth) and the proportion apparently in intact families rises (to 86 per cent, mother over 30).

This pattern is not only a consequence of the different composition of these sub-samples in terms of circumstances at birth. For any given type of registration, the age of the mother decreases the chances of subsequent change. The children of teenage mothers who "end up" with lone mothers are not all the same children as were fatherless at registration. Thirty seven per cent of the latter had acquired father figures and five per cent were living away from their mothers (mostly with lone fathers). These exits from lone motherhood were almost exactly replaced by children whose parents had parted company, particularly those whose fathers were not married to the teenaged mother. The higher rate of young mother families breaking up is counter-balanced by a higher rate of sole registrations moving into married couple families (though there is not much age gradient in the movement from joint registration to marriage).

The pattern of declining family disruption with age of mother applies within narrower age-bands of children (not shown). For children under 3 at Census less time for family dissolutions and reconstitutions had elapsed than for older children. With the longer exposure of those aged 6-9 years, married mothers were more likely to have become lone mothers and those who were unmarried were more likely to have married.

Figure 3: A comparison of the LS and NCDS of numbers of children born 1981-1991 by sex of parent and circumstances at birth



Results: Comparing the LS and NCDS

The comparison of the two data sources in Figure 3 takes children under 10 in the LS with parents born in 1958 and those born in the previous 10 years in the NCDS cohort. This should be nearly identical information for children born to parents from the 1958 birth cohort. As the fertility histories of men collected in the NCDS survey were something of a novelty, under-reporting of absent children is suspected. It is therefore particularly useful to compare them with another source. Neither source is completely reliable. The LS does not "capture" the fathers of solely registered births and it does not succeed in linking all cases to the Census, particularly if the births were outside marriage. Each type of under-coverage might be thought to bias the resulting sample away from disrupted families. The NCDS has a rather larger fraction of the target population which was not contacted. There is also the possibility that those who did respond might understate the numbers of children born or the number of partners. The fact that the number of mothers identified exceeds the number of fathers, in both sources, does not necessarily mean that men are understating their fertility. It could also have arise out of differential timing of fertility,

women being closer to completing childbearing at 33 than men. This would seem to be the explanation for the different numbers of cases (4152-3841= 311) in the LS as only 110 cases lacked a father at registration. With a similar parental-sex ratio among NCDS children (1.08), the same explanation must also be important.

Using the NCDS to complement the LS allows insight into the detailed longitudinal experience of children, albeit only for children of parents aged 33, beyond the linkage of birth and census data. Tracing children through the NCDS reveals that children born to lone mothers may be joined by their fathers at some time after their birth, which cannot be known from the LS. One third of children of NCDS fathers born to a mother with no coresident partner (32 per cent) and over one tenth (12 per cent) of those of NCDS mothers were currently living with both natural parents.

Being without a father at birth is identified differently in the LS and NCDS: no co-resident partner in the NCDS and sole registrations in the LS. The greater number of the former probably reflects the fact that not all joint registrations were by cohabiting parents. The greater propensity of cohabiting parents in NCDS to maintain an intact two natural-parent-family (79 per cent and 82 per cent, women and men, compared with 56 per cent and 57 per cent in the LS) suggests greater stability of cohabiting versus non-cohabiting jointly registering partnerships.

The NCDS evidence allows the number of family status changes to be determined. This suggests that, of those children observed as experiencing family change in the LS, not many experience more than one family change before the age of ten. The experience of ever having lived in a step-family was different from the cross-sectional rates at 1991. Three per cent of all children reported by women had lived with a step-parent previously but not in 1991. These children are likely to have moved through a step-family to a lone mother family by 1991. We can also identify those children whose family history has involved more than one step-parent over the years. They are a tiny fraction of those born in the past 10 years, or ever born to male survey members. Among the children of women the experience of multiple step-fathers rises to 1 per cent, still very much a minority experience. This suggests that the LS evidence on status at census is not likely to hide much family change.

Conclusion

Children whose parents were not legally married at their birth experienced more disruption than those born inside marriage. There was an inverse relationship between the age of mother and the likelihood of a subsequent change in family circumstances for any type of birth registration. The chances of family disruption are highest for children born to parents under 20. Only just over a third of children aged under 10 of teenage mothers were living with both their natural parents in 1991. Older mothers show more stability in two-parent families but less chance, if unmarried at a child's birth, to form a two-parent family. It is likely that both the LS and NCDS underestimate the extent of family disruption but they both illustrate the greater family stability for children with older mothers.

It should be emphasized that the majority of children in both data sources were still living with both natural parents by the age of ten. Experience of family change by this age is still limited to a minority of children. The risk of family breakdown increases with the child's age. This is also an effect of the age of parents in NCDS. It is planned that further work using the NCDS will disentangle the effects of age at parenting and age of child. The living arrangements of adults will also be investigated.

References:

Brown A (1986) "Family circumstances of young children", *Population Trends*, 43, pp 18-23

Clarke L, Joshi H, Di Salvo P and Wright J (1997) "Stability and instability in children's family lives: longitudinal evidence from two British sources", *CPS Research Paper 97-1*, London: Centre for Population Studies, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

5 Related research

On May 13th 1996 Dominique Rouault, head of the longitudinal studies section of INSEE (the French statistical office) visited SSRU. This article summarises a presentation he gave on research which used data from the EDP (Echantillon Démographique Permanent).

Length of higher education and the association with socio-economic background

Dominique Rouault, formerly INSEE, 18 Boulevard Adolphe Pinard, 75675 Paris, France

Background

This work used the EDP - an ongoing study based upon census and registration documents for 1% sample of individuals living in France. (Basic information on the EDP, including the range of events which are included and the way in which the data are collected, may be found in Rouault, 1994.) The sample chosen for this particular study included members of the EDP who were born between 1949 and 1971. Figure 4 illustrates the different ways of characterising individuals adopted by the research. It is important to bear in mind that in France compulsory education ends at 17.

Age	Description	Method of classification
10 - 17	"teenage phase"	father's social position
18 - 21	"youth phase"	in higher education/not
26 - 32	"adulthood"	individuals classified according to their career trajectory

Choice of the EDP and its limitations

One of reasons for using the EDP for this research was its large sample size, which meant that there were sufficient numbers to investigate the educational achievement of comparatively rare groups - such as the children of blue collar workers ('ouvriers') who had succeeded in obtaining higher educational qualifications. In this article the group with the highest qualifications (>bac+2) had studied for two years or more after obtaining "le bac". The baccalaureate or "le bac", as it is often known, is the passport to higher studies in France.

On the other hand several characteristics of the EDP imposed limitations on what could be done. For example, the 1968 EDP Census data do not include anything on the family and only twenty five per cent of the 1982 Census records in the EDP include information on the economic position of the study member's father.

Figure 5 shows the activities of young people aged 18 at the 1975, 1982 and 1990 Censuses. In 1982 the percentage of students was broadly similar to that in 1975, while the proportion who were unemployed increased dramatically. By 1990, 72 per cent of young people aged 18 were in higher education and the proportion of unemployed had decreased. Figure 6 summarises the types of activities young adults aged

19-21 were engaged in at the 1975, 1982 and 1990 Censuses. By this age considerably less were in higher education than those aged 18. For example, in 1990 the proportion was 43 per cent.

Figure 5: Eighteen year olds' activities, in 1975, 1982 and 1990

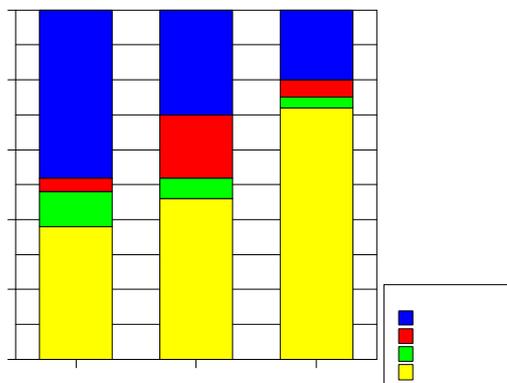


Figure 6: Young people's activities aged 19-21, in 1975, 1982 and 1990

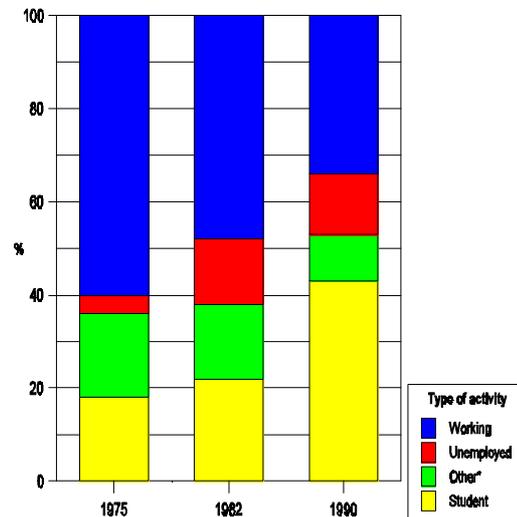


Figure 7: Young people's activities, at age 22-24, in 1975, 1982 and 1990

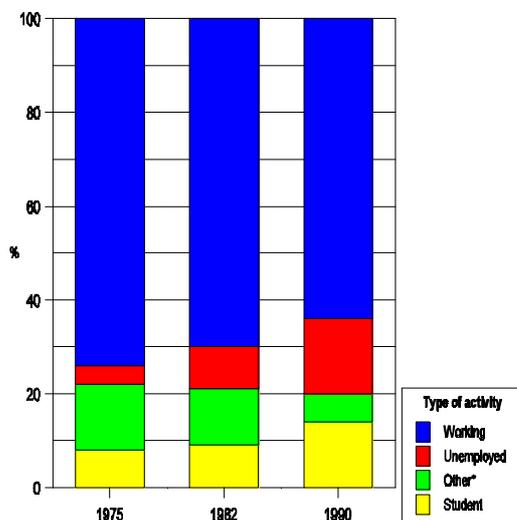
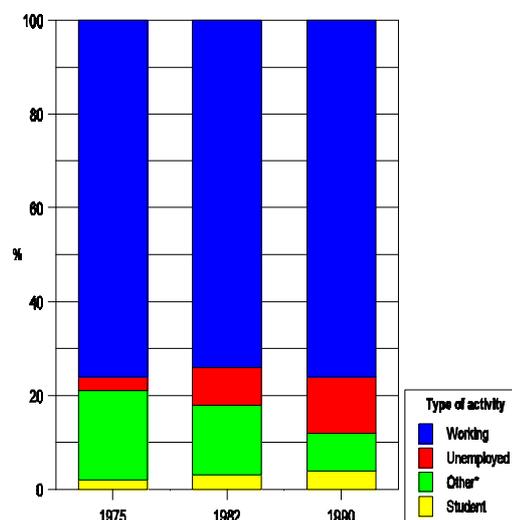


Figure 8: Young people's activities at age 25 in 1975, 1982 and 1990



Other:* The category used in figures 5 to 8 includes those doing national service.

Figures 7 and 8 show the increasing proportion of young people aged 22 -24 and 25 who were unemployed at each of the three censuses (1975, 1982, 1990). For both groups the percentage out of work in 1990 was four times greater than in 1975.

Figure 9 shows the percentage of 18-24 year olds in higher education in 1982 and 1990. During this period the rates increased among all social groups. However, on closer inspection it appears that, in terms of higher education, the children of small shop -keepers and blue-collar workers lost out proportionately.

Figure 10 shows the percentage of 18 year olds who went on to obtain "le bac" or higher qualifications, according to their father's social background. This figure illustrates that there was a "catching up" process between 1982 and 1990. For example, in 1990 96 per cent of young people from "blue collar" families had obtained "le bac".

Figure 9: Percentage of 18-24 year olds in higher education, by father's social background

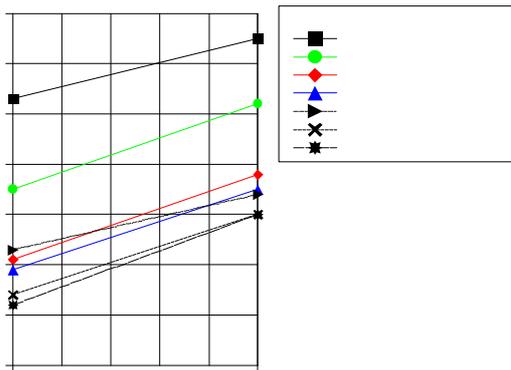
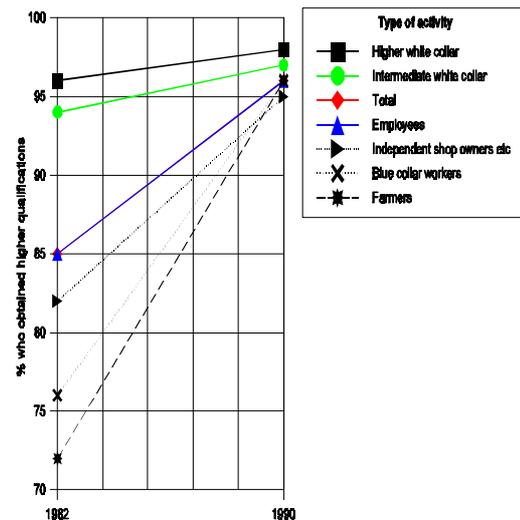


Figure 10: Percentage of 18 year olds who went on to obtain "le bac" or higher qualifications, by father's social background



It is interesting to explore why some individuals did not survive the "educational course". Initially, those with higher educational diplomas are advantaged. Children of those in the higher social groups tend not to be interested in entering the labour market early on. Therefore even if they don't do well at the onset they will continue to pursue their studies.

Figure 11: Access to higher white collar occupations between 26-32, by age and final qualification level

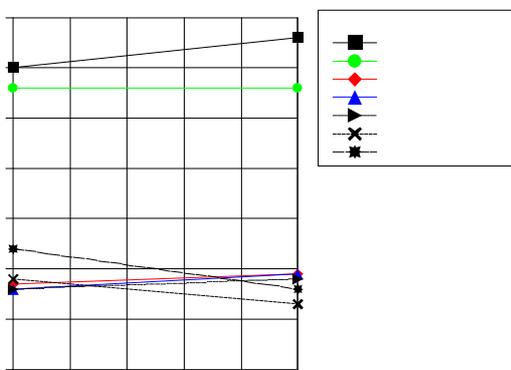


Figure 12: Access to higher white collar occupations between age 26-32, by sex and qualification level

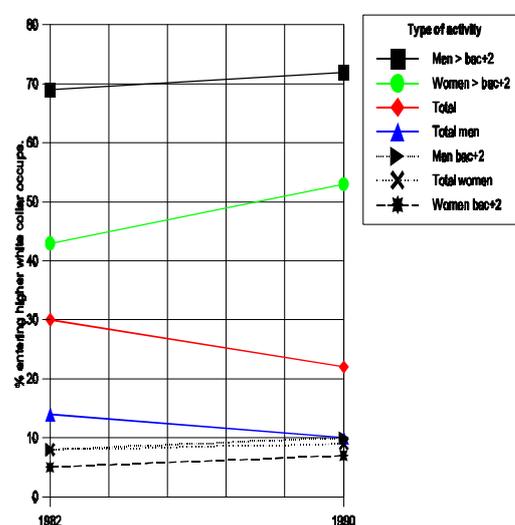


Figure 11 illustrates the process of acquiring higher white collar occupations between the age of 26 and 32, according to age and final qualification. This shows that those with higher qualifications (> bac+2) are much more likely to gain access to higher white collar occupations than those with only two years of higher study (bac+2). Although gender did not appear to effect the probability of entering higher education, there are big differences later on in respect to access to higher white collar positions. (See figure 12.) For example, in 1990 the percentage of women with more than two years higher study in higher white collar posts is about 20 per cent lower than the similarly qualified group of men.

Figure 13: Access to higher or intermediate white collar positions in 1990 according to father's social background and level of education (Bac,Bac+2, >Bac+2)

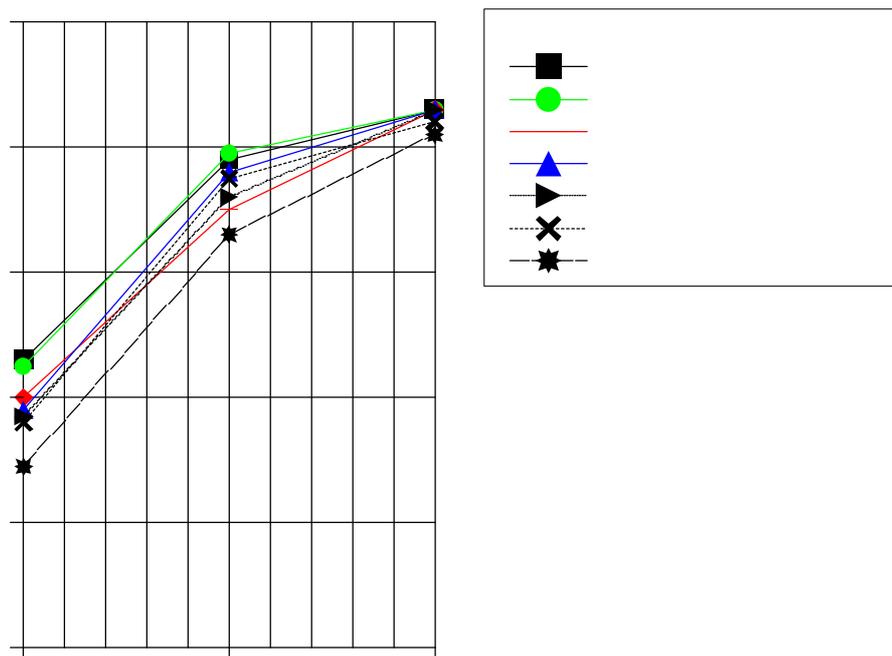


Figure 13 illustrates that the chances of entering higher white collar or intermediate positions are consistently greater among those whose father had more than two years higher education.

Conclusion

This research highlighted that like their English counterparts French women experience greater difficulty in achieving positions of higher social status. This may be partly attributed to the subjects they study. For example, women are much less likely to study sciences or business.

One of the limitations of the EDP is that, unlike the ONS Longitudinal Study, it does not include any information on the subjects studied.

Although other French studies² contain this information it is not possible to use them to investigate the effect of social background. During the discussion the importance of this type of data was further

² A good example is the "Formation et qualifications professionnels" - a retrospective study of approximately 300,000 individuals which is carried out every seven years.

explored. To give one example, British results on graduates' earnings illustrate the disparity between those with degrees in Economics and Sociology, which are usually grouped together under the broad heading of "Social Sciences".

Reference:

Rouault D (1994) "The Echantillon Demographique Permanent: A French equivalent to the Longitudinal Study", *Update - News from the LS User Group*, Issue no. 7 (January 1994) , pp 5-12