UPDATE -

News from the LS User Group

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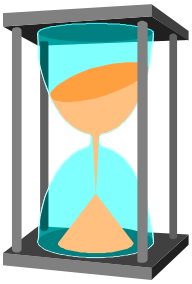
This newsletter is designed to provide information on the ONS Longitudinal Study (LS) and a forum for the exchange of users' views and comments. It is produced by the LS User Support Programme at the Social Statistics Research Unit (SSRU), City University. All comments and contributions should be sent 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 (Email: dm@ssru.city.ac.uk).

LS workshop

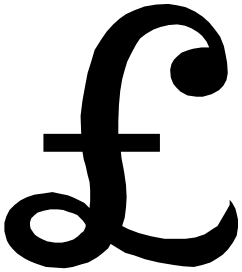
SSRU hold regular 2-day workshops. These provide detailed information on the study and enable researchers to gain practical hands-on experience of accessing the data. They are also an ideal opportunity to meet members of the LS Support Team and to discuss the suitability of the LS for exploring specific research questions. The next LS Workshops will be held on 1st/2nd April 1998.

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. If you are planning to carry out analyses of LS data in the forthcoming year please contact Dina Maher to reserve a place (Tel: 0171 477 8487 or Email: dm@ssru.city.ac.uk).

LS User Group meeting on households

On Thursday 5th February 1998 the annual meeting of the LS User Group will take place in the Senate Suite, City University. This year's meeting will focus on households. There will be a session summarising ways in which the LS may be used to investigate changes in contemporary living arrangements and presentations of recently completed or ongoing work. Participants will also be able to take part in a forum to discuss "what LS users want from the 2001 Census" with members of the LS Support Team at SSRU and Professor Phil Rees, Convenor of the ESRC/JISC workshops "Planning for the 2001 Census". For further information please contact Dina Maher on 0171 477 8486 (Email: dm@ssru.city.ac.uk).

2 Costing "heavy use" LS projects



Charges are now being levied for academic users with "heavy use" projects requiring extensive LS user support, which are no longer covered by the ESRC grant. Where applicable, charges will reflect the full economic cost of the support staff involved and in some cases the computing time. Projects which are likely to attract costs include:

- those requiring the derivation of new census variables from non-member data **or**
- those based on event data and more than one census.

It is essential that all prospective users estimate their support needs *before* applying for funding. This information is necessary to cost support, for scheduling and monitoring purposes.

3 Technical issues

MAILBASE discussion lists: “lo-cost-sewerage” to “eurosquid”

Many readers may already be familiar with MAILBASE, a service provider based at the University of Newcastle. MAILBASE supports over 1,700 electronic discussion lists with more than 100,000 members. These cover a wide range of academic subject areas and topics. Some of the more esoteric list titles include *lo-cost-sewerage*, *newcastle-disease* and *eurosquid* ! The MAILBASE service is free at the point of use - irrespective of your institutional affiliation and whether you are working in the UK or abroad. It differs from other mailing list services in the high level of support which is offered. Further information on the MAILBASE service, including details of how to set up a new list, may be found at URL: http::/ /www.mailbase.ac.uk/

LS MAILBASE discussion list

The LS Support Programme maintain an LS discussion list (*ls-ssru*) which is managed by MAILBASE. In addition to providing an alternative way of disseminating news of forthcoming LS events, the LS list provides a forum for the exchange of information and views on the LS.

Membership of a discussion list like *ls-ssru* is like sitting in on a discussion between a group of people who share a common interest. You are free to join in or merely observe (often referred to as 'lurking'). The LS list is open to all. However, contributions are "moderated" to ensure that list members do not get sent irrevelent material such as "junk mail" directly via the list.

To join the LS list send the following email message to mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk

join ls-ssru <first name><last name>
stop

Please remember to substitute your own first and last names !

We hope that you will join the LS discussion list and encourage others with an interest in the LS to do so.

Other relevant MAILBASE lists

Brief summaries on some of the other MAILBASE discussion lists which may be of direct interest to *Update* readers are included below: By the time you receive this newsletter the number of lists managed by MAILBASE is likely to have increased. For up-to-date details on relevant lists you are advised to visit the MAILBASE web pages at the URL given above.

bhps-all

A super-list for the bhps-links (open) and bhps-users (closed) lists established by the ESRC Research Centre on Micro-social Change for those interested in the British Household Panel Study (the BHPS). A message sent to this list will reach both sub-lists.

cancreg-discuss

This list is for the discussion of cancer registration, coding, epidemiology, aetiology and research and the exchange of national and international experiences and practices.

census analysis

This is a public discussion list to which anyone can subscribe and contribute. It is a forum for discussing problems and solutions, and exchanging ideas about the use of census data and related research.

census-news

This is an open list to which anyone can subscribe and contribute. It is for items of news about census datasets and census research and for circulating details of conferences and workshops relevant to the census community.

census-publications

This is an open, moderated list containing details of census research reports and other publications. Some of these documents are available in ASCII format as files and can be obtained by sending the appropriate command (see MAILBASE user guide for details).

census-uk

This is a moderated superlist for the group of lists run by the ESRC/JISC Census Programme network, on behalf of members of the academic community interested in using census data. Mail sent to the list will be forwarded to all members of the census lists.

essex-ghs

The purpose of this list, maintained by the Data Archive at Essex University, is to encourage the exchange of information, both between users of the General Household Survey (GHS) and between users and the Archive. All data users and potential users are welcome to join the list.

health-econometrics

The list is aimed at researchers who apply econometrics and other quantitative techniques in health economics. It is used to exchange details of meetings, papers, software and data. The list also allows users to share advice on technical problems.

public-health

This list provides a discussion forum and information resource for those working in epidemiology and publuc health. It aims to facilitate information sharing (eg workshops, seminars, conferences and new research) and promote links, collaborative working, joint problem-sharing and mutual support.

sars

This list is for the discussion and dissemination of information concerning the Samples of Anonymised Records (SARS) from the 1991 Census.

4 LS research

Household transitions: coding independent and supported households among older persons: Karen Glaser and Emily Grundy, Age Concern Institute of Gerontology, King's College London, Cornwall House Annex, Waterloo Road, London SE1 8WA and Kevin Lynch, SSRU, City University

Introduction

In a previous study, (Grundy 1993), moves into supported private households among elderly people were analysed using the ONS Longitudinal Study (LS). This research examined socio-economic differentials in the proportion of elderly people moving from independent to supported households in the 1971 to 1981 period. Independent households were defined to include people living alone or with only a spouse. Those in supported households were defined as people living with relatives other than a spouse (for example children or siblings), or with unrelated persons. Lone parents were allocated to one or other group on the basis of headship of household. People living in other types of family/households were not included in the previous analysis because they could not be sensibly allocated to one or other group.

Until recently it was only possible to identify the relationship of the LS member (in this case the elderly person) to other household members, if s/he was not the household head. (This was done using a variable, LSPPRIND8, based on the LS member's position in the household. Table 1 provides a summary of this and other household/family variables across the three decades.) If the elderly person was the head of the household (and the LS member) it was not possible to determine their relationship to the other household members. This was because the previous LS computing environment, based on fixed "data streams" did not easily facilitate access to the records of "non LS members". Using the 1991 Census-LS data to update the earlier study on moves from independent to supported households it has been possible to identify relationships within a household (see Wright and Lynch 1995), enabling a clearer understanding of who an elderly person is living with [in a supported household] regardless of whether they are the household head or not.

Typology of independent/supported Households

The ability to determine the relationships among household members gives a complex typology of the characteristics of independent or supported households reflecting the vast number of different relationships and a wide range of household types among the elderly population. In developing the typology of independent/supported households (shown in Table 2) the following four criteria were important in distinguishing the potential for support within the household: headship; the type of household; whether the elderly person was a member of a family within the household and; the identification of co-residents, ie children, other relatives (excluding spouses), or non-relatives. Independent households were relatively easy to categorise. These were defined as individuals living alone and those in married couple households [only]. Supported households include individuals living in lone parent households, those living in non-family (ie two adult siblings) or family (either one or two family) households, and the presence of adult children, relatives (other than a spouse), or non-relatives.

In contrast to previous censuses, for LS members who are the heads of households it is possible to identify co-residents by investigating the records of other household members and determining their relationship to the head of household. (The variables HRC7B7 in 1971, HRC8 in 1981 and RELAT9 in 1991 can be used to identify the relationship of the non-LS member to the head of household.) Thus, it is now possible to identify a household where an elderly widow, the head of the household, is living with her son and daughter-in-law. (In such cases she would be classified as belonging to supported category 9, as a head of household, in a one family household, not in a family herself, and living with a child.) For simplification, individuals in non-family, one family and two family

households have been grouped together and distinguished by whether or not the co-residents are children, other relatives and non-relatives.

Table 1: Household/family variables - comparable and non-comparable measures		
1971	**1981**	**1991**
MHUCOM7	**MHUCOM8**	**MHUCOM9**
Combination of Minimal Household Units (MHU)		
HRC7B7	**HRC8**	**RELAT9**
Relationship of LS member/ non-LS member to head of household		
	LSRELAT8	**LSRELAT9**
No comparable measure, has different meaning in 1971	Relationship of other person in household to LS member	
RELAT7	**RELAT8**	
Relationship of head of LS member's family to head of household		No comparable measure, has different meaning in 1991, see above
FAMSTAT7	**LSPRIND8**	
Whether or not LS member is in a family	Position of LS member in household	

Lone Parent Households

Individuals in lone parent households have been kept separate from those in non-family, one family or two family households. This is because it is difficult to establish which are "independent" or "supported" as in some cases the elderly parent may be providing rather than receiving support (Grundy 1991). One way to attempt to disentangle these relationships is to look at the elderly persons position within the household. For this reason, lone parent households are divided into two sub-categories - distinguishing whether the LS member is the head of the household or not. Thus, LS members who are the head of a lone parent household can be classified as either living in independent households (Grundy 1991), or they can be reclassified as living in supported households - depending on whether they are the head of household or not (Grundy 1993). This system allows for both means of classification.

Knowing whether the elderly person is a member of a family within a household is also important. It provides an indirect measure of whether s/he is receiving or providing support. Therefore, LS members in lone parent households are further subdivided. Those who are the head of the lone parent family are classified as belonging to independent households, while those who are not the head of the lone parent family are classified as belonging to lone parent supported households. The remainder, who are in a lone parent household but not part of the lone parent family are allocated to supported households, differentiated by whether the lone parent family is their child's, relative's or is unrelated.

For example, in a lone parent household, the LS member could be an elderly parent, who is the head of household, living with his/her never-married daughter. Both individuals are members of the lone parent family. Alternatively, s/he may be an elderly parent, who is not the household head, living with her/his daughter and

grand-daughter. In this instance the daughter and grand-daughter are classified as belonging to the lone-parent family while the elderly person is categorised as not being in a family and would be considered to live in a supported household with a child present. While the LS member resides in a lone parent household in both arrangements, clearly her/his position within the household has important implications for the assumption of intra-household support.

Results

Table 3 shows the distribution of individuals aged 55 and over living in various types of independent and supported households in 1971, 1981 and 1991. Around 12 per cent of individuals of this age group were in supported households in 1971. Elderly persons in supported households were as likely to be living with children, for example an elderly widow and her married daughter and son-in-law, as with other relatives, and less likely to be residing with non-relatives. The fact that there are almost no individuals in the supported lone parent family category for 1971 may be the result of changes in the identification of the household head across censuses. Only at the 1971 Census was there a formal question on household headship (this needs further investigation).

The most dramatic change over time has been a decrease in the number of older persons living in supported households, from about 12 per cent in 1971 to 6 per cent in 1991. This fall has affected all types of supported living arrangements, the largest occurring among households shared with relatives.

Conclusion

This study shows that even though investigating changes in independent and supported households among older persons may appear to be comparatively simple, in reality it becomes quite complex as it is necessary to consider the wide range of household and family variables. The LS provides an ideal data source both because of its large size and the ability to categorise people into various types of household and family living arrangements.

Acknowledgements

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References:

Grundy E (1991) "Ageing: age related change in later life", In: Murphy MJ and Hobcraft J (eds), Population Research in Britain, Supplement to *Population Studies*, 45, pp 133-156

Grundy E (1993) "Moves into supported private households among elderly people in England and Wales", *Environment and Planning A*, 25, pp 1467-1479

Wright J and Lynch K (1995) "Using the LS for intra household analyses", *Update - News from the LS User Group*, **Issue 12 (November 1995)**, pp 12-16.

Table 2: Coding for independent/supported households

Independent
I1. Solitary
I2. MC only
I3. Head or spouse in one-family or two of more family household

Lone-parent household - elderly household member is the head
I4. Head, in lone-parent household, family, living with child
I5. Head, in lone-parent household, not in family, living with child
I6. Head, in lone-parent household, not in family, living with relative
I7. Head, in lone-parent household, not in family, living with non-relative (head)

Supported
Lone-parent household - elderly household member is not the head
S1. Not head, in lone-parent household, family, living with child (head)
S2. Not head, in lone-parent household, family, living with relative (head)
S3. Not head, in lone-parent household, family, living with non-relative (head)
S4. Not head, in lone-parent household, not in family, living with child (head)
S5. Not head, in lone-parent household, not in family, living with relative (head)
S6. Not head, in lone-parent family, not in family, living with non-relatives (head)

Non-family/one family/2+ family household - living with child
S7. Not head, in one family/2+ family household, in family, living with child
S8. Not head, in non-family/one family/two family household, not in family, living with child
S9. Head, non-family/one family/two family household, not in family, living with child

Non-family/one family/2+ family household - living with relative
S10. Not head, in one family household/2+ family household, in family, living with relative (head)
S11. Not head, in non-family/one family/2+ family household, not in family, living with relative (head)
S12. Head, in non-family/one family/2+ family household, not in family, living with relative

Non-family/one family/2+ family household - living with non-relative
S13. Not head, in one family/2+ family household, in family, living with non-relative (head)
S14. Not head, in non-family/one family/2+ family household, not in family, living with non-relative (head)
S15. Head, in non-family/one family/2+ family household, not in family, living with non-relative

Note: Category I3 is often omitted from the analysis of independent/supported households as we usually consider only those individuals with no co-resident children or other relatives at the beginning of the period. For example, this excludes elderly persons resident with a handicapped child.

Table 3: Type of independent/supported household among individuals 55+ in 1971, 1981 and 1991 (%)				
Independent/supported households		**1971**	**1981**	**1991**
	Independent			
I1	Solitary	18.7	22.8	25.6
I2	MC only	40.9	44.1	46.2
I3	Head or spouse in other one or two family household	19.5	16.8	14.7
I4	Head in lone-parent family	4.5	3.8	3.3
	Sub-total	*83.5*	*87.5*	*89.8*
	Supported			
S1-S3	Not head in lone-parent family	---	0.7	0.7
I5, S4, S7-S9	Living with ever-married child	4.2	2.9	2.3
I6, S5, S10-S12	Living with other relative	4.7	3.4	2.0
I7, S6, S13-S15	Living with non-relative	2.9	2.2	1.3
	Sub-total	*11.8*	*9.2*	*6.3*
	Residual[1]			
	Sub-total	*4.7*	*3.3*	*3.9*
	Base=100%	**129300**	**134206**	**138137**

[1] *The residual category includes those individuals in institutions, servants in 1971 and 1981, and people 55 and over who are living with their elderly parents.*

Note: --- < 0.1%

Notes:

1. Co-resident children are usually adult ever-married children.

2. The coding for the presence of adult children, relatives and non-relatives was hierarchical. Thus if there were any adult children in the household the LS member was coded as living with adult children regardless of whether other relatives or non-relatives were present. Similarly, if no adult children were present and the LS member lived with both relatives and non-relatives, they would be coded as living with relatives.

3. Two family households include a small number of individuals in two or more family households.