



Promoting  
**excellence**  
in longitudinal  
research



**closer**

Cohort & Longitudinal Studies  
Enhancement Resources







## About CLOSER

**The UK is home to the world's largest and longest-running longitudinal studies. CLOSER aims to maximise their use, value and impact both at home and abroad.**

Bringing together eight leading biomedical and social science studies, the British Library and

the UK Data Service, CLOSER works to stimulate interdisciplinary research, develop shared resources, provide training, and share expertise.

CLOSER is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Medical Research Council.



## Areas of work



### **CLOSER's five main areas of work are:**

- CLOSER Discovery
- Data harmonisation
- Data linkage
- Research impact
- Training and capacity building



**UK longitudinal studies  
are part of CLOSER**



# CLOSER Discovery

**CLOSER Discovery is an online search engine that allows users to explore the content of eight UK longitudinal studies.**

Discovery provides access to information at an unprecedented level of detail. As well as overviews of the studies and their data collection sweeps, users will be able to access detailed information about what, when and how information was collected from study members.

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**search engine covering  
eight leading studies**



# Data harmonisation

By analysing data from different studies, researchers can check the strength and accuracy of their results. CLOSER's harmonisation work involves improving the comparability of data from different longitudinal studies, for example, by recoding or modifying biomedical and socioeconomic variables. This allows findings from different studies to be compared with one another, and gives us a better understanding of how society is changing.

## CLOSER's harmonisation projects include work on:

- body size and composition
- socioeconomic position
- biological sample analysis
- vision
- adult mental wellbeing
- overcrowding
- pubertal status
- biomarkers



# Data linkage

**Government routinely collects administrative data about individuals and their experiences across a wide range of areas, including education, benefits and health.**

CLOSER is working with data controllers to encourage more linkage between longitudinal studies and administrative data, securely and with participant consent, to improve our understanding of how different aspects of people's lives relate to one another.





# Research impact



**Researchers are increasingly encouraged to think about how their work benefits others – from the academic community, to the economy and wider society.**

CLOSER is working to maximise the impact of the studies on policy and practice. This involves supporting greater use of the data and findings, building networks between sectors and disciplines, and promoting the value of the findings to policymakers and practitioners.







# Training and capacity building

The CLOSER  
studies span

**80+**  
**years**  
of life in the UK

**CLOSER's training and capacity building programme is designed to share best practice across the studies, and help researchers develop the skills, tools and confidence to analyse complex longitudinal data sets.**

**Events and resources include:**

- training workshops on topics such as life course research and longitudinal study management
- online resources for students and teaching staff, including material aimed at those new to longitudinal studies
- simplified data sets for analysis and teaching
- guidance to aid data harmonisation for experienced users





# CLOSER partners


**The CLOSER partnership includes the British Library, the UK Data Service and eight leading longitudinal studies:**

- Hertfordshire Cohort Study
- MRC National Survey of Health and Development
- 1958 National Child Development Study
- 1970 British Cohort Study
- Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (Children of the 90s)
- Southampton Women's Survey
- Millennium Cohort Study (Child of the New Century)
- Understanding Society: The UK Household Longitudinal Study



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[www.closer.ac.uk](http://www.closer.ac.uk) | [@CLOSER\\_UK](https://twitter.com/CLOSER_UK)

A large crowd of people is shown from behind, looking towards the right. The crowd is dense, and the background is blurred. In the foreground, a person is wearing a light-colored straw hat. The lighting suggests it's daytime, possibly late afternoon or early morning, with some shadows.

The eight studies  
are following

**180,000**  
people from  
across the UK



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**CLOSER is funded by:**

