Promoting **excellence** in cohort and 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 nine leading studies, the British Library and the UK Data Service, CLOSER works to stimulate interdisciplinary research, develop shared resources, provide training, **and share expertise. In this way, CLOSER is helping to build the body of knowledge on how life in the UK is changing – both across generations and in comparison to the rest of the world.**

CLOSER is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Medical Research Council (MRC).

Areas of work

CLOSER's five main areas of work are:

- Data harmonisation
- Data linkage
- CLOSER search platform
- Research impact
- Training and capacity building

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**studies are part of
the CLOSER project**

Data harmonisation

By analysing data from different studies, researchers can check the strength and accuracy of their results. This ultimately gives us a better understanding of how society is changing, and how policies have made a difference in people's lives.

CLOSER is working to make data from longitudinal studies even more comparable, in order to encourage greater cross-cohort research. Data harmonisation involves recoding or modifying biomedical and socio-economic variables so they are similar across studies.

Data linkage

Government departments routinely collect data on various aspects of life in the UK, such as children's progress through the education system, information about benefits claimed and taxes paid, and individuals' experiences of hospital treatment.

CLOSER is helping to link data from longitudinal studies to these administrative records, securely and with participant consent, so we can improve our understanding of how different aspects of people's lives relate to one another.

Search platform

CLOSER is building a search facility that will serve as a valuable tool for researchers to find variables across all nine cohort and longitudinal studies involved.

The search platform will be designed for users with varying levels of experience in data management, data analysis and data discovery. It will provide relevant results for both basic and advanced queries.

1 tool will be able to search across all nine studies

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 bridges between sectors and disciplines, and promoting the value of the findings to policymakers and practitioners.

Training and capacity building

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

Events and resources include:

- training workshops on topics such as life course research and cohort study management
- customised longitudinal data sets for teaching on themes including health, social status and educational attainment
- tools to aid data harmonisation for experienced users.

The studies span

80+ years

of life in the UK

CLOSER
partners

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

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

The nine studies have
a combined total of

200,000+
participants

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