



Understanding Society

THE UK HOUSEHOLD LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Ethnicity & Migration Research using *Understanding Society*

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An initiative by the Economic and Social Research Council, with scientific leadership by the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex, and survey delivery by the National Centre for Social Research.



Understanding Society: The UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS)

- Started in 2009-10 with a sample of around 30,000 UK households
- Household survey
- Longitudinal survey
- Geographical locators provided

What happens when people move, households change?

- But what happens when individuals move?
 - We follow them as long as they are still living in UK (including to institutions) BUT
 - We don't interview them in places it is difficult to get access to, e.g., prisons
- But what happens when individuals move into the households of the core sample?
 - We interview them but only as long as they are living with the core sample members

Who provides the information?



- household & enumeration grid
 - answered by any adult at the doorstep
- household questionnaire
 - answered by an adult household member who knows about the household
- Individual adult questionnaires:
 - answered by adults (16+ years) in the household

Who provides the information?



- Proxy questionnaire
 - answered by spouse or adult child of a respondent if respondent not available for interview
 - shorter than the face-to-face individual questionnaire, consists of factual questions but not subjective attitudinal questions
- Youth questionnaire
 - answered by 10-15 year olds in the household

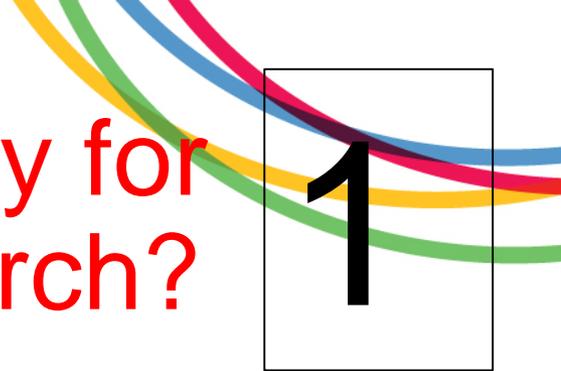
Multi-disciplinary content



Key Topics: significant research domains

- Education
- Employment
- Family and household
- Health, health behaviours, wellbeing
- Income, housing, wealth, expenditure & deprivation
- Attitudes, values and beliefs
- AND ETHNICITY & MIGRATION

Why Understanding Society for ethnicity & migration research?



1

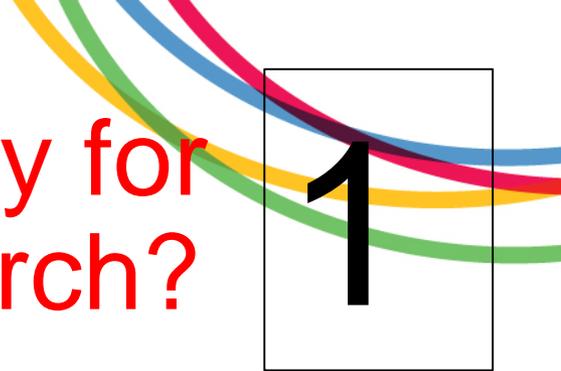
- [2009-10] In addition to a nationally representative sample of 26,000 households: General Population Sample (GPS)
- Oversamples of ethnic minorities and immigrants:
 - [2009-10] *Ethnic Minority Boost Sample (EMBS) 4000 hhs*
 - [2015] *Immigrant and Ethnic Minority Boost Sample (IEMBS) 2900 hhs*

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 - [2015] *Immigrant and Ethnic Minority Boost Sample (IEMBS) 2900 hhs*
- Large enough sample sizes of different ethnic groups to allow analysis of these groups separately

Why Understanding Society for ethnicity & migration research?



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- Oversamples of ethnic minorities and immigrants:
 - [2009-10] *Ethnic Minority Boost Sample (EMBS) 4000 hhs*
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- Always include all samples in your analysis – not just the boost samples – to avoid coverage error

EMBS: design



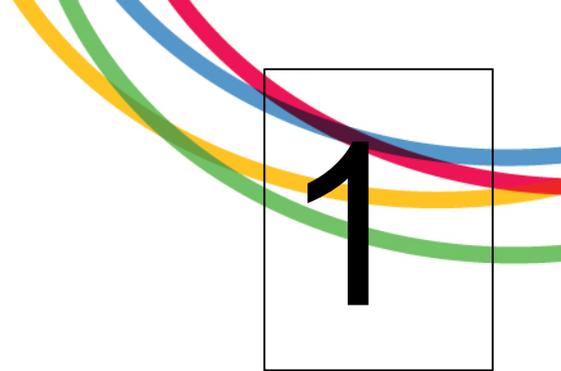
1

- Screening households in high ethnic minority density areas of Great Britain
- The doorstep screening question asked “Does anyone living at this address come from, or have parents or grandparents from any of the following ethnic groups” (see screening question on next slide)
- If they said yes, then the household was selected with a positive but different probability depending on the group identified

Screening question: Does anyone living at this address come from, or have parents or grandparents from any of the following ethnic groups?

- 01 Indian
- 02 Mixed Indian – (parents or grandparents from Indian ethnic group AND parents or grandparents from a non-Indian ethnic group)
- 03 Pakistani
- 04 Bangladeshi
- 05 Sri Lankan
- 06 Caribbean / West Indian
- 07 Mixed Caribbean/West Indian (parents or grandparents from Caribbean/West Indian ethnic group AND parents or grandparents from a non-Caribbean/West Indian ethnic group)
- 08 North African
- 09 Black African
- 10 African Asian
- 11 Chinese
- 12 Far Eastern (includes Filipino, Thai, Malaysian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Singaporean, Indonesian, Korean, Burmese)
- 13 Turkish
- 14 Middle Eastern / Iranian (includes Israeli, Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, Jordanian, Yemeni, Saudi, Iraqi, Afghani, other Gulf states)
- **None of these → zero selection probability**

IEMBS: design



1

- Screening households in high ethnic minority density areas of Great Britain
- There were 2 doorstep screening questions
- First question asked “Is there anyone living at this address who was born outside the UK?”
- If they said yes, the household was selected
- If they said no, the EMBS screening question was asked.
- If they said yes, then the household was selected

Why Understanding Society for ethnicity & migration research?

2

- Ethnicity is a core area of the study

Why Understanding Society for ethnicity & migration research?

2

- Ethnicity is a core area of the study

→ Lots of questions relevant for ethnicity & migration research.... Questions on

- (Census) Ethnic group
- Own/parents'/ grandparents' countries of birth
- Year of arrival to UK
- Religious background
- Childhood (main) language
- National identity, Britishness....

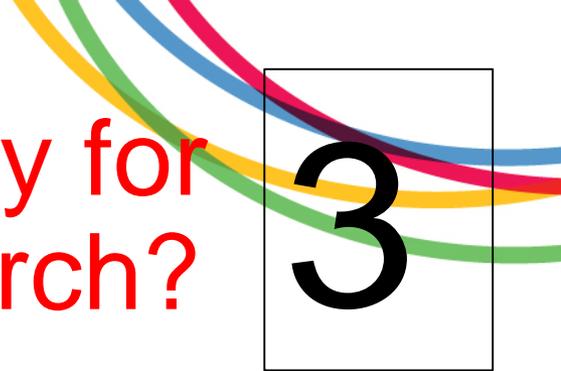
Why Understanding Society for ethnicity & migration research?



3

- Extra 5 minute question time set aside for some questions relevant for ethnicity and migration research
- E.g., questions on
 - Harassment
 - Discrimination
 - Migration history
 - Ethnic identity
 - Remittances
 - Migration intentions.....

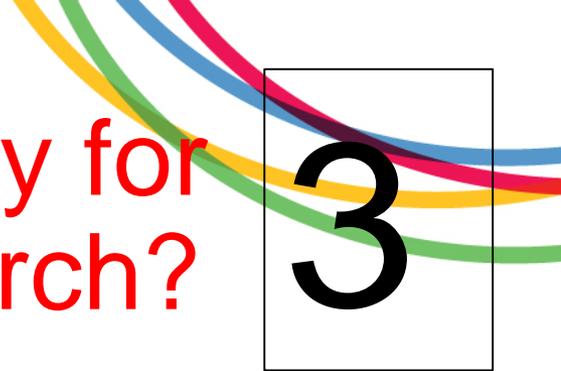
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- Extra 5 minute question time set aside for some questions relevant for ethnicity and migration research
- Who were asked these questions?
 - These were NOT ASKED of the whole sample
 - These WERE ASKED of boost samples – EMBS, IEMBS
 - These WERE ASKED of **some** GPS hhs for comparative analysis

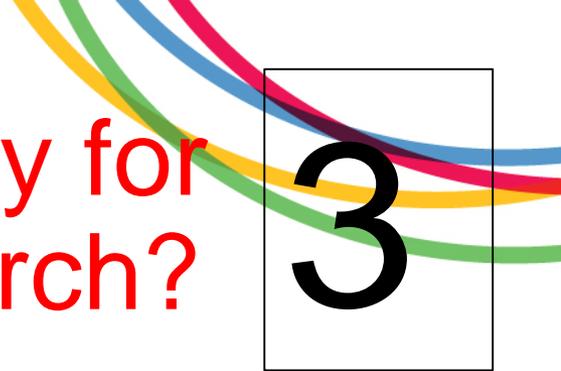
Why Understanding Society for ethnicity & migration research?



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 - Ethnic minorities in the GPS who live in low ethnic minority concentration areas

Why Understanding Society for ethnicity & migration research?

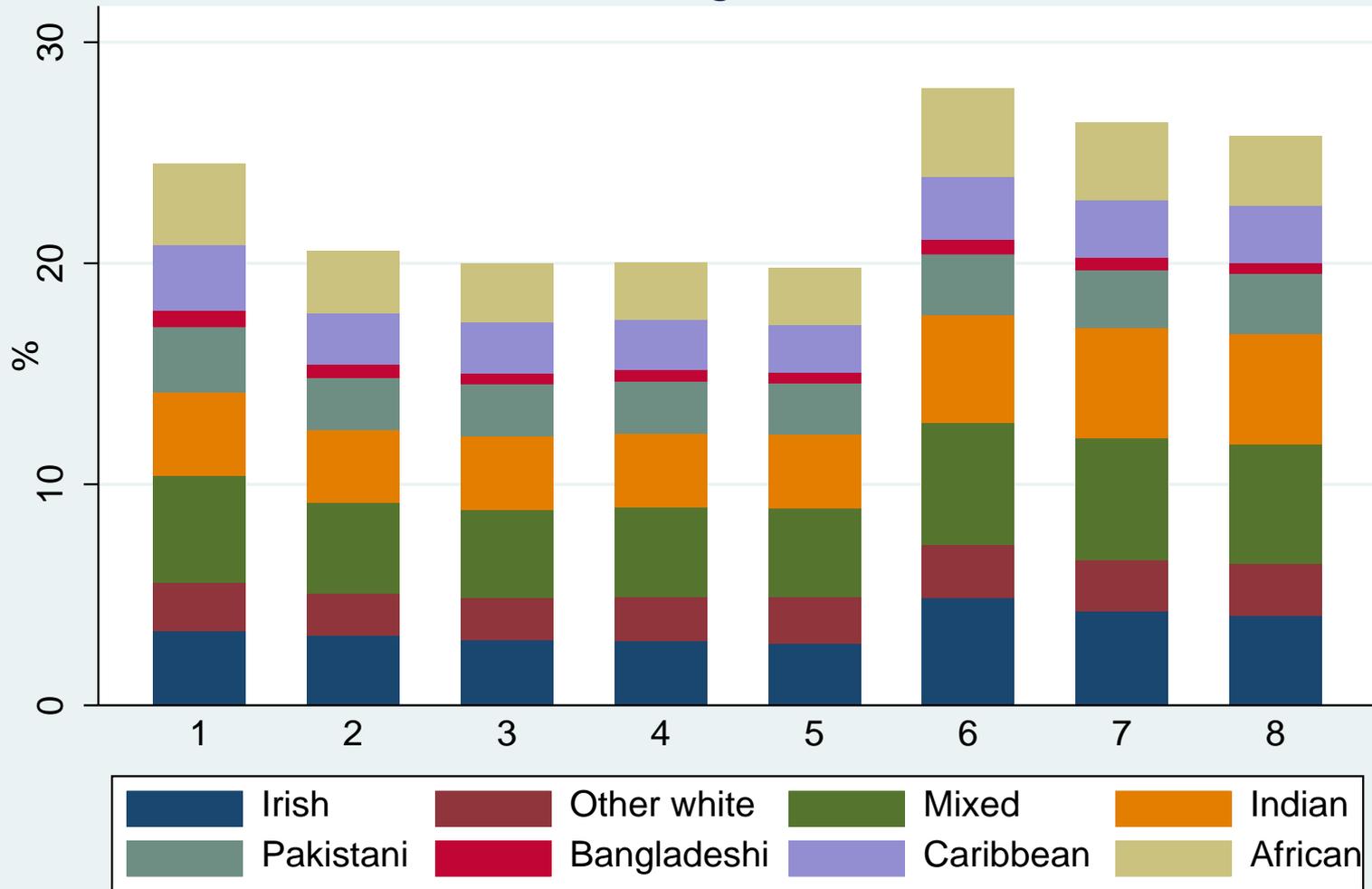


3

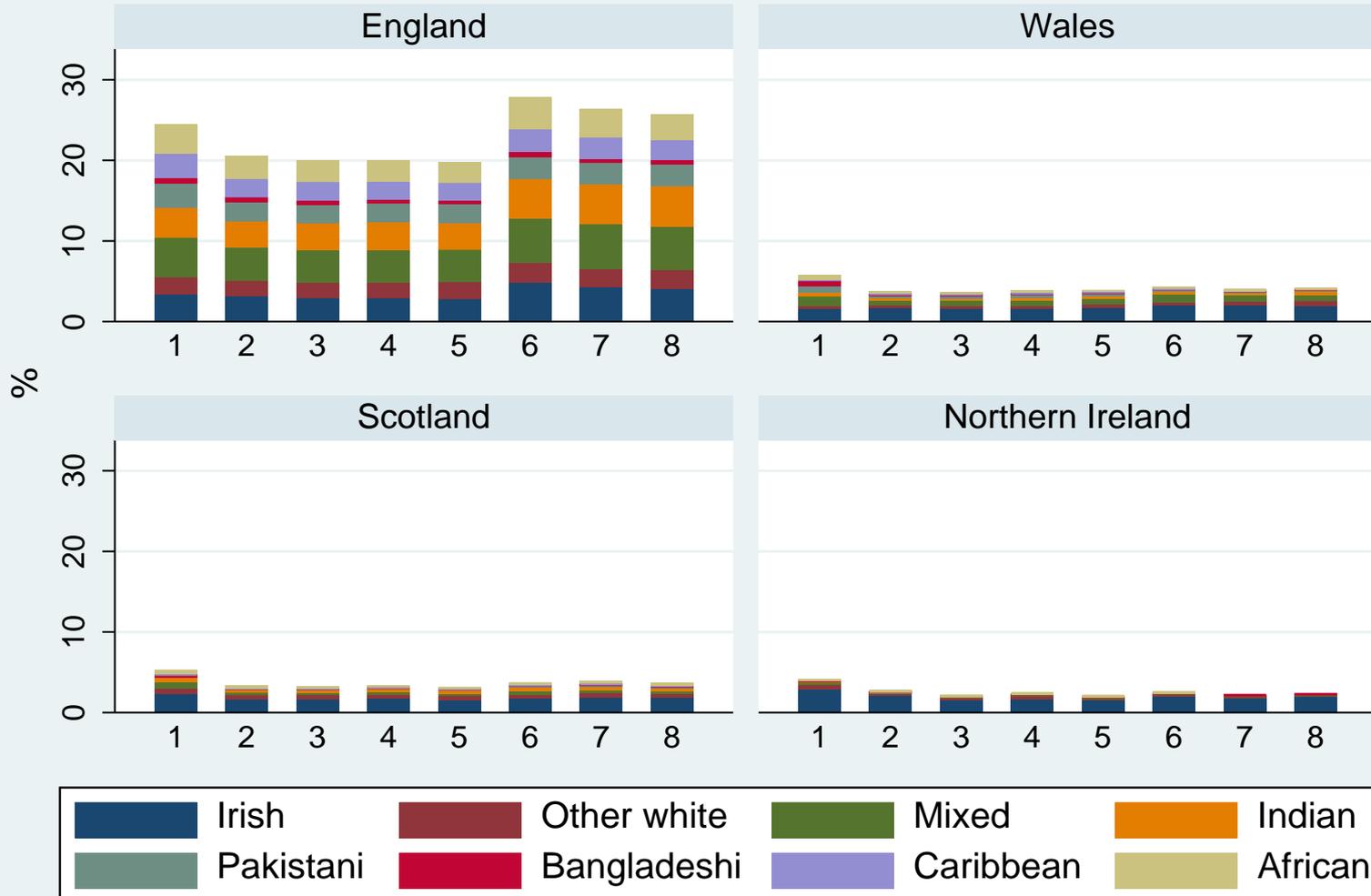
- Extra 5 minute question time set aside for some questions relevant for ethnicity and migration research
- List of extra five minutes questions – click here

<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation/index/extra-5-minutes-variables>

England



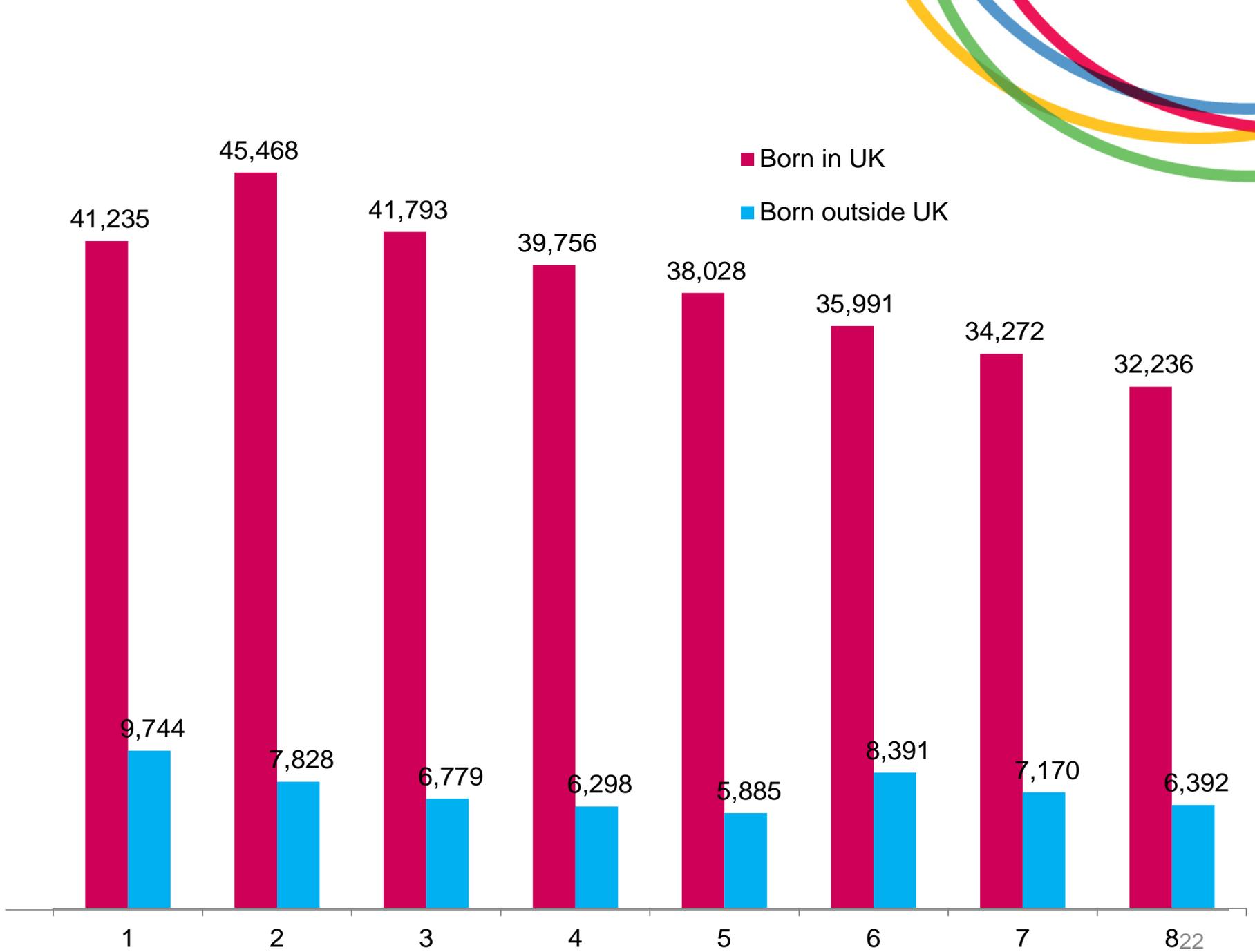
Waves



Graphs by country

Waves

Ethnic group	Waves							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>white</i>								
British/ English/ Scottish/ Welsh/ Northern Irish	36,892	41,618	38,345	36,254	34,619	31,910	30,463	28,779
Irish	732	1,205	1,088	986	914	909	853	821
Gypsy or Irish traveller	18	13	11	11	13	13	12	10
Any other white background	1,503	1,425	1,216	1,141	1,047	1,773	1,480	1,325
<i>Mixed</i>								
white and black Caribbean	356	303	287	290	301	331	298	297
white and black African	158	124	108	109	107	123	111	98
white and Asian	203	181	170	166	161	194	173	167
any other mixed background	188	160	148	147	149	196	167	159
<i>Asian or Asian British</i>								
Indian	1,982	1,630	1,442	1,398	1,333	1,872	1,748	1,603
Pakistani	1,533	1,292	1,208	1,164	1,116	1,660	1,584	1,487
Bangladeshi	1,181	927	838	804	756	919	824	803
Chinese	331	241	183	185	174	234	183	155
Any other Asian background	653	537	484	457	427	545	456	423
<i>Black/African/ Caribbean/ Black British</i>								
Caribbean	1,183	898	819	765	696	946	811	753
African	1,499	1,111	967	886	844	1,347	1,112	933
Any other black background	91	78	70	62	64	84	73	56
<i>Other ethnic group</i>								
Arab	291	203	178	149	136	248	179	167
Any other ethnic group	276	231	201	179	171	223	186	167



Ethnicity and immigration

Understanding Society provides an up-to-date and accurate picture of ethnicity and immigration in the UK, the likes of which have never been possible before.

Since 1994, there has been no dedicated national survey of Britain's main ethnic minority groups and there has never been a national household panel survey in which substantial numbers of minority group members are followed year-on-year.

Researching ethnicity in Understanding Society

Understanding Society has four key elements that enable extensive research of ethnicity and across ethnic groups over time:

- an emphasis on [ethnicity-related questions](#) in the survey as a whole.
- a boost sample of over 6,000 adults from all ethnic minority groups (designed to reach at least 1,000 in each of five ethnic groups: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Black African), in addition to over 5,500 in the main, nationally representative sample.
- a new [immigrant and ethnic minority boost sample](#) (currently in the field).
- an additional five minutes of questions with an ethnicity focus, which are asked of only a subsection of the whole Study.

The questionnaire

All participants answer the same basic [questionnaire](#), a subsample comprising mainly ethnic minorities and immigrants living in Great Britain are asked an additional five minutes of questions. The [basic questionnaire](#) also includes ethnicity-related questions related to issues such as ethnic group, national identity, own, parents' and grandparents' countries of birth, childhood language.

How are the 'extra five minutes' decided?

The [questions](#) are chosen in consultation with researchers and stakeholders, and in discussion with the [Ethnicity Strand Advisory Committee](#).

How do I find the data?

The data from Understanding Society are available via the [UK Data Service](#).

OVERVIEW

USER GUIDES

WORKING PAPERS

<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/ethnicity-immigration>

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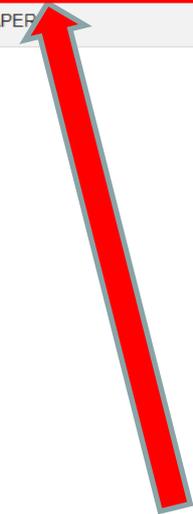
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For more information

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- Online dataset documentation:
<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation>
- Questionnaires:
<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/questionnaires>

Publications on specific study design aspects

QUALITY PROFILE

- Lynn, P., Knies, G. (ed.) (2016) *Understanding Society: the UK Household Longitudinal Study: Wave 1-5 Quality Profile*. Colchester: University of Essex.

PAPERS ON SAMPLE DESIGN

- Lynn (2009) “Sample design for Understanding Society”. *Understanding Society Working Paper 2009-01, Understanding Society Working Paper Series No. 2009-01*
- Berthoud et al. (2009) “Design of the Understanding Society ethnic minority boost sample”. *Understanding Society Working Paper Series No. 2009-02*
- McFall et al. (2012) “Implementing the Biosocial Component of Understanding Society – Nurse Collection of Biomeasures” *Understanding Society Working Paper Series No. 2012-04*
- Lynn, P., Nandi, A., Parutis, V. and Platt, L. (2017). Design and implementation of a high quality probability sample of immigrants and ethnic minorities. *Understanding Society Working Paper 2017-11*. Colchester: University of Essex.

Ethnicity related research

- Go to the PUBLICATIONS page on the Understanding Society website

<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/research/publications>

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Discover which publications have used Understanding Society data by using this search facility. The research can be filtered by subject, publication type, author and year of publication.

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Search [] Search Reset

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Displaying publications 1 - 25 of 2166 in total

[Advances in comparative survey methods: multinational, multiregional, and multicultural contexts \(3MC\)](#)
Book WILEY SERIES IN SURVEY METHODOLOGY - 01 Jun 2019

[Best practices for panel maintenance and retention](#)
Nicole Watson, Eva Leissou, Heidi Guyer, Mark Wooden
Book Chapter NO. 29 - 01 Jun 2019

Subject

Health	338
Well Being	334
Labour Market	218
Young People	192
Psychology	163
Households	156
Ethnic Groups	140
Economics	134
Life Course Analysis	134
Public Policy	133

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Record Type

Media	790
Journal Article	419
Report	261
Conference Paper	219

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Search on key terms: Ethnicity, Immigration, Ethnic groups

For which publications have used Understanding Society data by using this search facility. The research can be filtered by subject, publication type, author and year of publication.

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Record Type

Media	790
Journal Article	419
Report	261
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Displaying publications 1 - 25 of 170 in total

Ethnic minority voters in the UK 2015 general election: a breakthrough for the Conservative party?

Nicole S. Martin

Journal Article - Electoral Studies - 15 Feb 2019

Politics Elections, Electoral Behaviour Ethnic Groups

Who voted for Brexit? Individual and regional data combined

Eleonora Alabrese, Sascha O. Becker, Thiemo Fetzer, Dennis Novy

Journal Article - European Journal of Political Economy - 15 Jan 2019

Politics Area Effects Psychology Geography Elections, Electoral Behaviour Demography International Economic Relations

The prevalence and persistence of ethnic and racial harassment and its impact on health: a longitudinal analysis

Alita Nandi, Renee Reichl Luthra

Report - 15 Dec 2018

Crime And Justice Public Policy Ethnic Groups Well Being Health Social Behaviour Social Psychology Race Relations

Ethnic disparities in neighbourhood selection: understanding the role of income

Rory Coulter, William A.V. Clark

Journal Article - International Journal of Urban and Regional Research - 26 Nov 2018

Area Effects Geography Income Dynamics Household Economics Ethnic Groups Social Stratification

Persisting disadvantages: a study of labour market dynamics of ethnic unemployment and earnings in the UK (2009-2015)

Yaojun Li, Anthony Heath

Journal Article - Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies - 16 Nov 2018

Labour Market Unemployment Wages And Earnings Ethnic Groups Life Course Analysis

Race Relations	16
Record Type	Show more
Journal Article	67
Conference Paper	26
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Understanding Society Working Paper Series	11
ISER Working Paper Series	10
Thesis	6
Book Chapter	4
Parliamentary Paper	2

Author	
Lucinda Platt	35
Alita Nandi	34
Renee Reichl Luthra	10
Ann Berrington	7
Gundi Knies	7
Rishi Sunak	7
Saratha Rajeswaran	7
Athina Vlachantoni	6
Maria Evandrou	6

Ethnicity and immigration research using *Understanding Society* data

- Employment, unemployment dynamics
- Earnings and wages
- Poverty – incidence, persistence, entry
- Wellbeing: life satisfaction, mental health
- Ethnic and racial harassment
- Ethnic identity, Britishness, acculturation
- Voting behaviour, political partisanship
- Attitudes, values: expectations of family transitions
- Inter-ethnic marriages



“Ethnic minorities are not only more likely to face **unemployment**, previous experiences of unemployment also carry more enduring scars for them than for the majority group in terms of reemployment and pay.”

Li and Heath (2018) “Persisting disadvantages: a study of labour market dynamics of ethnic unemployment and earnings in the UK (2009–2015)” JEMS Special Issue

“The main determinant of ethnic **unemployment** differentials seems to be the longer duration of unemployment for ethnic minorities, which, however, remains largely unexplained after the inclusion of individual and household characteristics.”

Longhi (2018) “A longitudinal analysis of ethnic unemployment differentials in the UK” JEMS SI



“We find that differences in **levels of parental partisanship and political engagement** are the key factors in explaining the difference in minority and white UK acquisition and retention of party attachment during this critical period of political development.” *Martin and Mellon (2018) “The puzzle of high political partisanship among ethnic minority young people in Great Britain” JEMS Special issue*

We also show that there are unobserved factors jointly implicated in **individuals' political and ethnic identities**, which we interpret as providing suggestive evidence of more general political mobilisation of **ethnicity**. *Nandi and Platt (2018) “The relationship between political and ethnic identity among UK ethnic minority and majority populations” JEMS Special Issue*

“We find that **expectations** for marriage and parenthood are unanimously high, but that there is greater uncertainty among white British and black Caribbean adolescents as to the age at which these transitions will occur.”

Berrington (2018) “Expectations for family transitions in young adulthood among the UK second generation” JEMS Special Issue

“Those who became citizens subsequently reported **lower interest in politics**, relative to those who remained non-citizens; in addition, they were not more likely to be active in organizations (e.g. political parties and trade unions).”

Batram (2018) “The UK citizenship process: political integration or marginalization?” *Sociology*



“We find **life satisfaction** is lower among ethnic minorities, and especially for the second generation, even controlling for individual and area characteristics.”

Knies, Nandi and Platt (2016) “Life satisfaction, ethnicity and neighbourhoods: Is there an effect of neighbourhood ethnic composition on life satisfaction?” 60: 110-124

“We also find that ethnic minority men and women who report stronger ethnic maintenance are less likely to **binge drink.**”

Luthra, Nandi and Benzeval (2018) “Unravelling the ‘immigrant health paradox’: ethnic maintenance, discrimination, and health behaviours of the foreign born and their children in England ” JEMS Special Issue

Help, support and training

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BIOMARKERS, GENETICS & EPIGENETICS | EDUCATION | EMPLOYMENT | FAMILY & HOUSEHOLDS | POLITICS & SOCIAL ATTITUDES

THE UK HOUSEHOLD LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Capturing life in the UK in the 21st century

Understanding Society is the largest longitudinal household panel study of its kind and provides vital evidence on life changes and stability

[About the study](#) [Using the data](#)

<https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/help>

- Getting Started
- FAQs
- Training
- User support forum
- Citations

New! Interactive online Helpdesk Hour every Wednesday 2-3pm
EMAIL: usersupport@understandingsociety.ac.uk TO REGISTER
For more info: <https://iserswww.essex.ac.uk/support/news/36>

Analysis tips

1. Use all samples together for your analyses
2. Use appropriate weights: See the user guide on how to choose the correct weight
3. Statistical softwares assume that the data was collected from a Simple Random Sample, but as Understanding Society samples are Clustered & Stratified, you will need to “tell” the software in order for it to correctly estimate Standard Errors:

Variable representing Primary Sampling Unit: **w_psu**

Variable representing Strata: **w_strata**