

# Investigating mental health in the UK: Data from cohort and longitudinal studies

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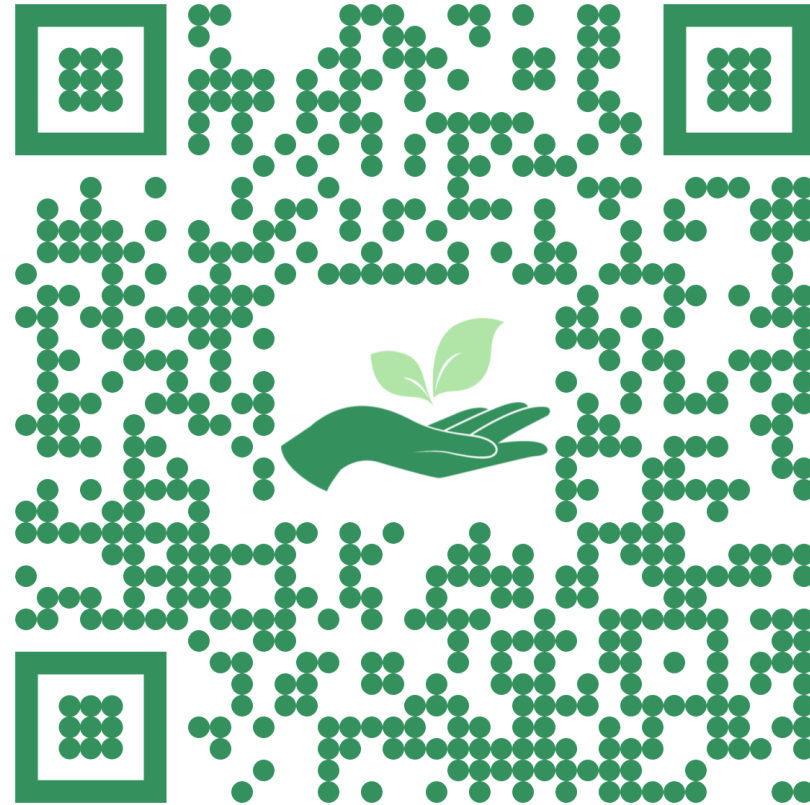


Research Gate: [Eoin\\_Mcelroy2](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Eoin-McElroy2)

# Outline

- What studies and measures are available?
- The British birth cohort studies
- Cohorts & longitudinal studies: research questions and strengths
- Harmonisation: maximising comparability of mental health measures in the British birth cohorts
- Access

# What studies and measures are available?



[www.cataloguementalhealth.ac.uk](http://www.cataloguementalhealth.ac.uk)



# What studies and measures are available?

Catalogue of Mental Health Measures

The Project Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources About Us Search Mental Health Measures

## An interactive catalogue of mental health and wellbeing measures in British cohort and longitudinal studies

The UK boasts rich and world-renowned cohort and longitudinal studies which offer unique opportunities to answer key questions about mental health and wellbeing.

The catalogue provides information about thousands of standard and non-standard measures of mental health and wellbeing collected in UK longitudinal studies.

Measures detailed in the catalogue include indicators of mental health problems, treatment, service use, impairment and psychological wellbeing.

[Search Mental Health Measures](#)

Aetiology and Ethnicity in Schizophrenia & Other Psychoses (AESOP-10)

Born in Bradford

Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC)

English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)

Born in Bradford: Better Start

British Cohort Study 1970 (BCS70)

Children of 1950s: Aberdeen Birth Cohorts

Growing Up in Scotland

Environmental Risk Longitudinal Twin Study (E-Risk)

Continuous Household Survey

European Social Survey (ESS)

Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development

Generation Scotland (Child Cohort & Birth Cohorts 1 & 2)

Cognitive Function and Ageing Studies

Determinants of Adolescent Social Wellbeing & Health

European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS)

# National Survey of Health and Development (NSHD)

Aetiology and Ethnicity in Schizophrenia & Other Psychoses (AESOP-10)

Health and Employment After Fifty Study (HEAF)

Born in Bradford

Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC)

Newcastle 85+

Hertfordshire Cohort Study

NICOLA

English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)

Born in Bradford: Better Start

British Cohort Study 1970 (BCS70)

Personnel: A Cohort Study

Peterborough Adolescent & Young Adult  
Development Study (PADS+)

Children of 1950s: Aberdeen Birth Cohorts

Growing Up in Scotland

Millennium Cohort Study (MCS)

Lothian Birth Cohorts of 1921 & 1936

Environmental Risk Longitudinal Twin Study (E-  
Risk)

Continuous Household Survey

Health and Wellbeing of UK Armed Forces

Million Women Study

European Social Survey (ESS)

Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development

IMAGEN

Next Steps

Health Survey for England

Generation Scotland (Child Cohort & Birth Cohorts 1 & 2)

Cognitive Function and Ageing Studies

National Child Development Study (NCDS)

Determinants of Adolescent Social  
Wellbeing & Health

European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS)

Health Survey Northern Ireland

Southall and Brent Revisited (SABRE) National Survey of Health and Development (NSHD)  
Aetiology and Ethnicity in Schizophrenia & Other Psychoses (AESOP-10) Southampton Women's Survey  
Health and Employment After Fifty Study (HEAF) Born in Bradford  
Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC)  
Psychiatric Morbidity Surveys (including the Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey)  
Newcastle 85+ Hertfordshire Cohort Study NICOLA  
English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)  
UK Biobank British Cohort Study 1970 (BCS70)  
Born in Bradford: Better Start Peterborough Adolescent & Young Adult  
Personnel: A Cohort Study Development Study (PADS+)  
South East London Community Health Study (SELCoH) Growing Up in Scotland  
Children of 1950s: Aberdeen Birth Cohorts  
Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) Birth Cohorts of 1921 & 1936  
Twins Early Development Study (TEDS) Continuous Household Survey  
Environmental Risk Longitudinal Twin Study (E- Risk) Health and Wellbeing of UK Armed Forces Welsh Health Survey  
ROOTS Study European Social Survey (ESS)  
Million Women Study Wirral Child Health and Development Study (WCHADS)  
Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development IMAGEN  
Next Steps  
Health Survey for England Generation Scotland (Child Cohort & Birth Cohorts 1 & 2)  
Resilience, Ethnicity & Adolescent Mental Health (REACH) Determinants of Adolescent Social  
Cognitive Function and Ageing Studies National Child Development Study (NCDS)  
Wellbeing & Health  
UKHLS: Understanding Society & British Household Panel Survey  
European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS)  
Health Survey Northern Ireland  
The Whitehall Study  
Scottish Health Survey

# What studies and measures are available?


Browse or search studies and measures

Search for studies, measures, instruments...

Studies found: 30

**Filters**

- Related Themes >
- Age at recruitment >
- Start Date >
- Sample Size >

**CHILD OF THE NEW CENTURY**  Millennium Cohort Study (MCS)

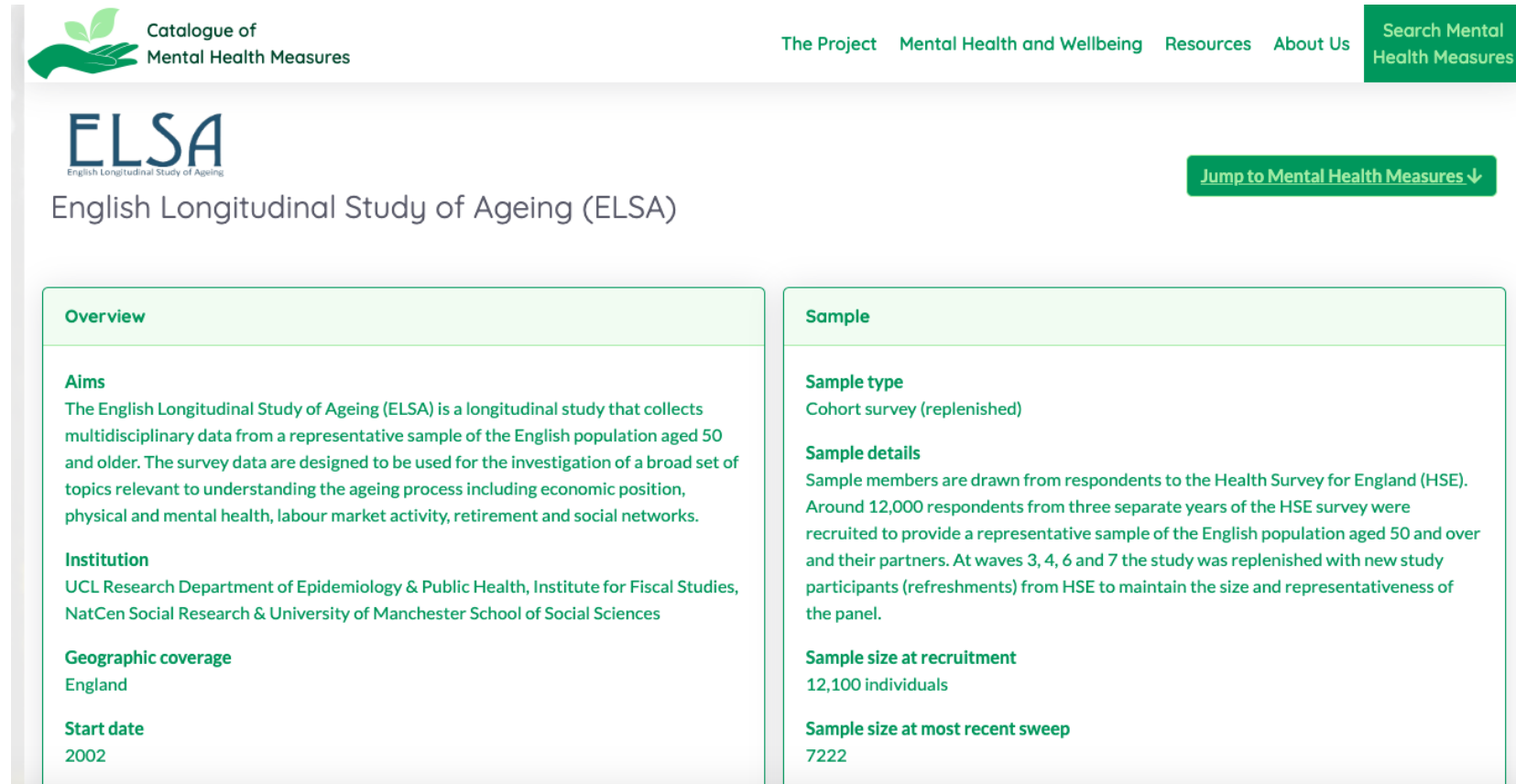
The Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) is a national longitudinal birth cohort study following the lives of around 19,000 young people born in the United Kingdom in 2000-01. This multidisciplinary survey aims to capture the influence of early family context on child development and outcomes. Children from minority ethnic backgrounds and children in Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland are oversampled to help capture the diversity of backgrounds into which children are born in the beginning of the 21st century.

**BCS70** 1970 British Cohort Study 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70)

The 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70) is a multidisciplinary national longitudinal birth cohort study. Original aims were to



# What studies and measures are available?



The screenshot displays the 'Catalogue of Mental Health Measures' website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'The Project', 'Mental Health and Wellbeing', 'Resources', and 'About Us'. A search bar is located in the top right corner, labeled 'Search Mental Health Measures'. The main heading is 'ELSA English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)', with a 'Jump to Mental Health Measures' button. The content is organized into two columns: 'Overview' and 'Sample'.

**Overview**

**Aims**  
The English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) is a longitudinal study that collects multidisciplinary data from a representative sample of the English population aged 50 and older. The survey data are designed to be used for the investigation of a broad set of topics relevant to understanding the ageing process including economic position, physical and mental health, labour market activity, retirement and social networks.

**Institution**  
UCL Research Department of Epidemiology & Public Health, Institute for Fiscal Studies, NatCen Social Research & University of Manchester School of Social Sciences

**Geographic coverage**  
England

**Start date**  
2002

**Sample**

**Sample type**  
Cohort survey (replenished)

**Sample details**  
Sample members are drawn from respondents to the Health Survey for England (HSE). Around 12,000 respondents from three separate years of the HSE survey were recruited to provide a representative sample of the English population aged 50 and over and their partners. At waves 3, 4, 6 and 7 the study was replenished with new study participants (refreshments) from HSE to maintain the size and representativeness of the panel.

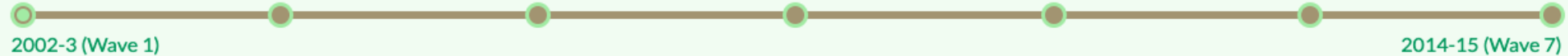
**Sample size at recruitment**  
12,100 individuals

**Sample size at most recent sweep**  
7222

# What studies and measures are available?

## Mental health measures timeline

Showing measures used in sweep: **2002-3 (Wave 1)**  
*click on the timeline below to see other sweeps*



Topic	Scale	Focus	Informant	Standard Instrument
+ Alcohol use	Alcohol use	Cohort member	Self-report	✗
+ Depression	Centre for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (8-item) (CES-D)	Cohort member	Self-report	✓
+ Depression, anxiety	General Health Questionnaire (12-item) (GHQ-12)	Cohort member	Self-report	✓
+ Mental illness	Mental illness diagnosis	Cohort member	Self-report	✗
+ Psychological wellbeing	CASP-19 Quality of Life Scale (19-item)	Cohort member	Self-report	✓

Showing 1 to 5 of 5 entries

# The British birth cohort studies

NSHD 1946

**NSHD**, is the longest running national birth cohort study and includes over 25 data collections over participants lives so far. Next one planned for when they are 74 next year.

Next Steps 1989

MCS 2001

1940

1960

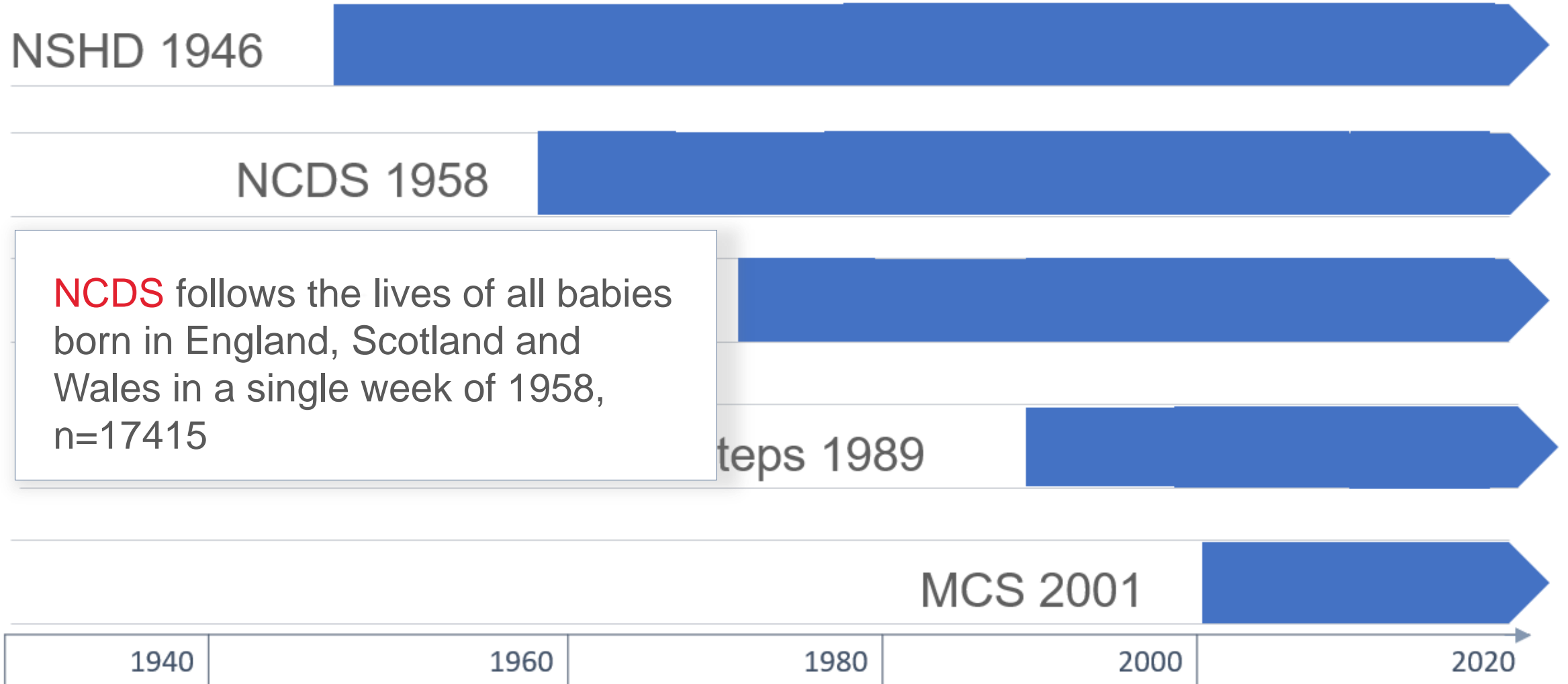
1980

2000

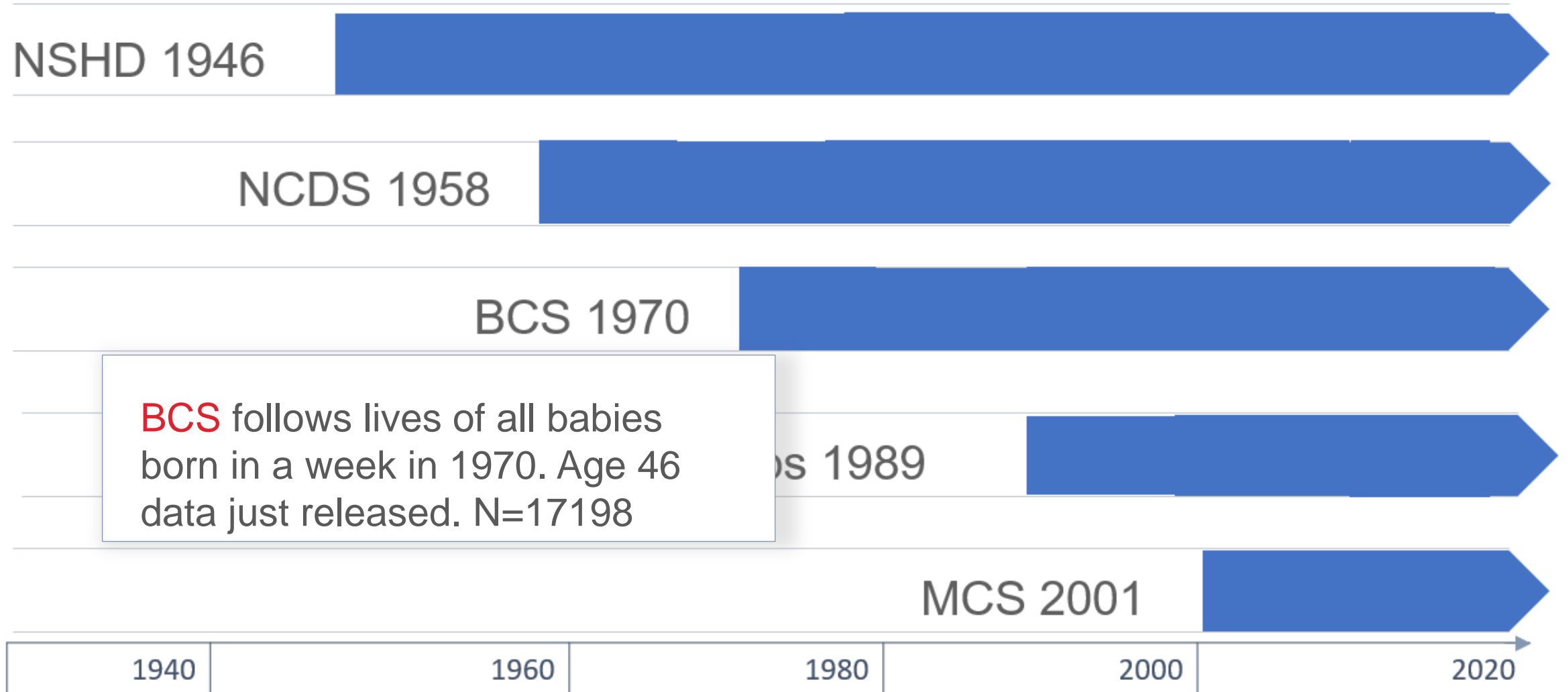
2020



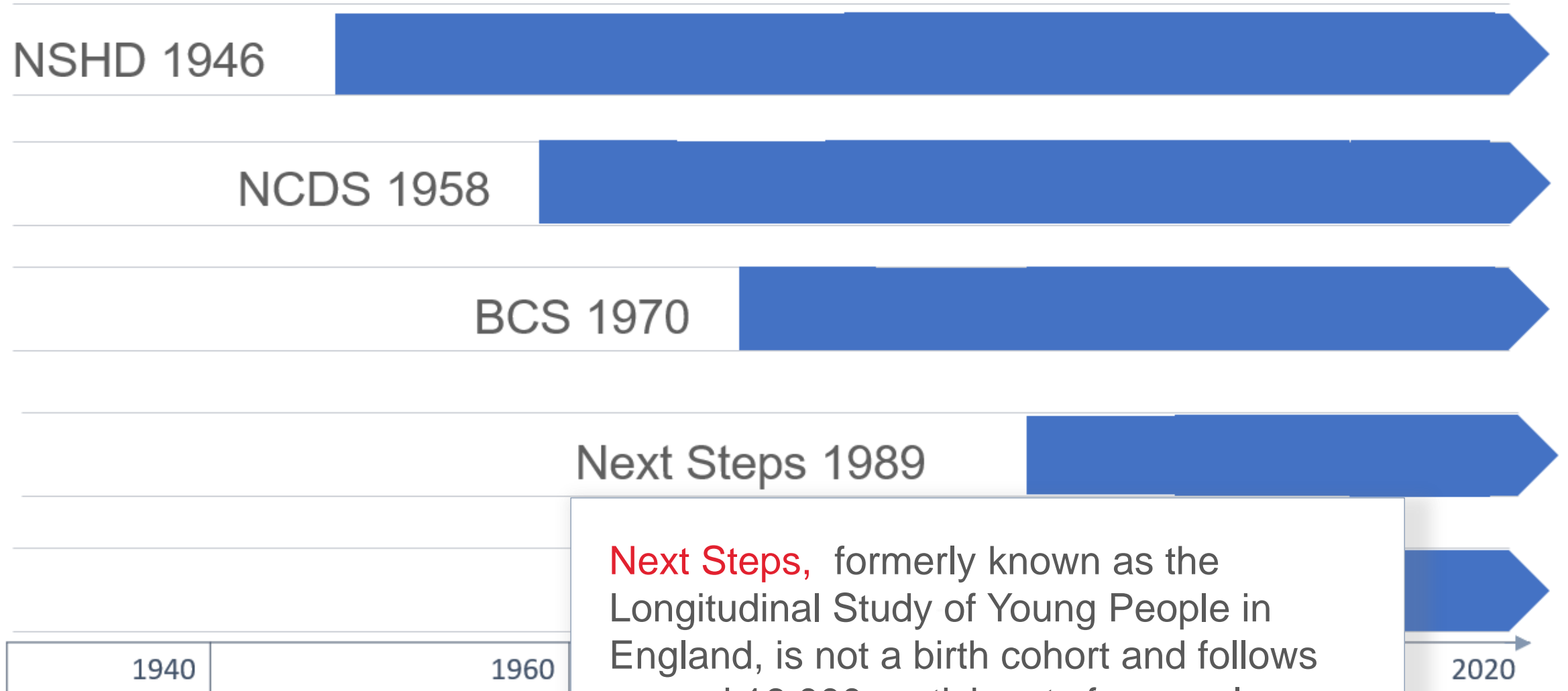
# The British birth cohort studies



# The British birth cohort studies



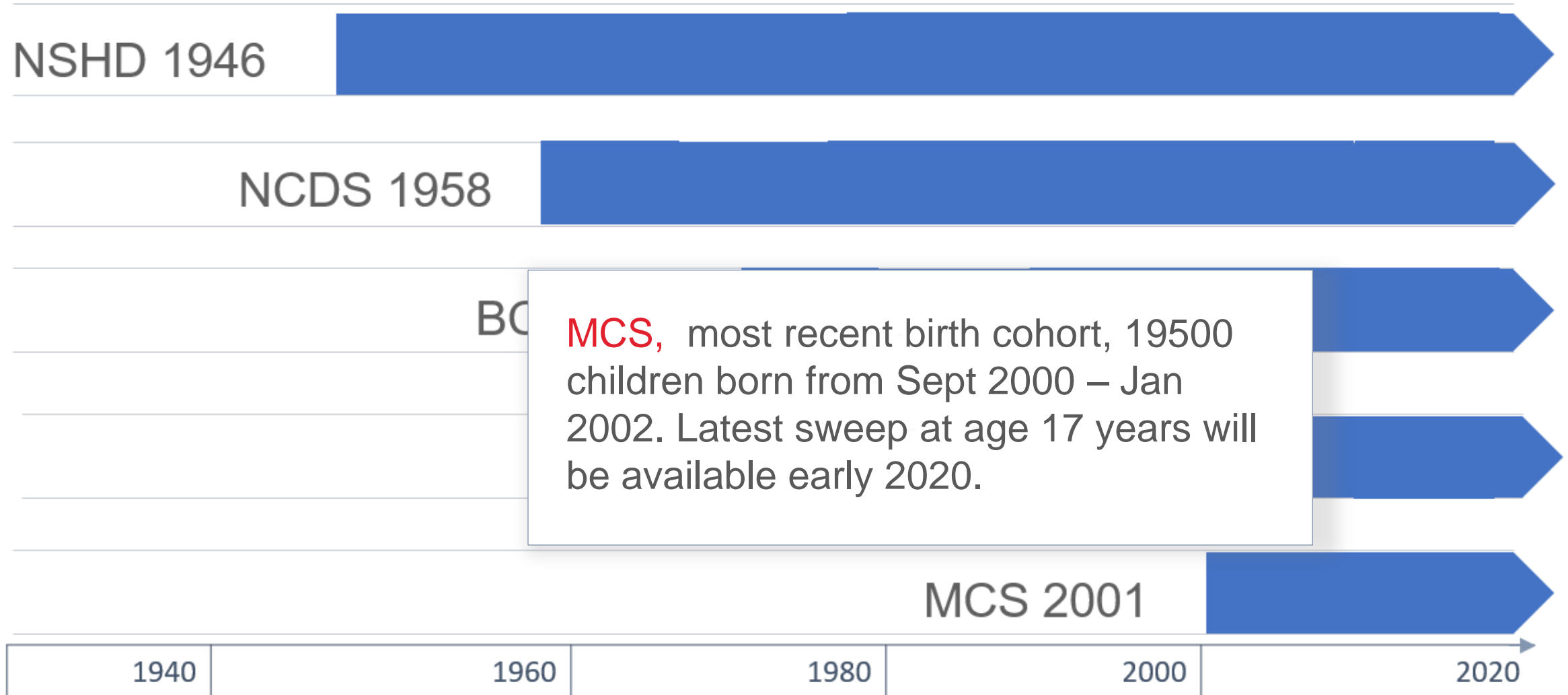
# The British birth cohort studies






Next Steps 1989

**Next Steps**, formerly known as the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, is not a birth cohort and follows around 16,000 participants from early adolescence in England.

# The British birth cohort studies



# Typical information covered

 Birth	 School years	 Adult
<p>Household composition</p> <p>Parental social class</p> <p>Obstetric history</p> <p>Smoking in pregnancy</p> <p>Pregnancy</p> <p>Labour</p> <p>Birthweight, length</p>	<p>Household composition</p> <p>Parental social class</p> <p>Parental employment</p> <p>Financial circumstances</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Health</p> <p>Cognitive tests</p> <p>Social development</p> <p><b>Mental health</b></p> <p>School</p> <p>Views and expectations</p> <p>Attainment</p>	<p>Household composition</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Social class</p> <p>Income</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Health (including biomarkers)</p> <p>Well-being and mental health</p> <p>Health-related behaviour</p> <p>Training and qualifications</p> <p>Basic skills</p> <p>Cognitive tests</p> <p>Views and expectations</p>



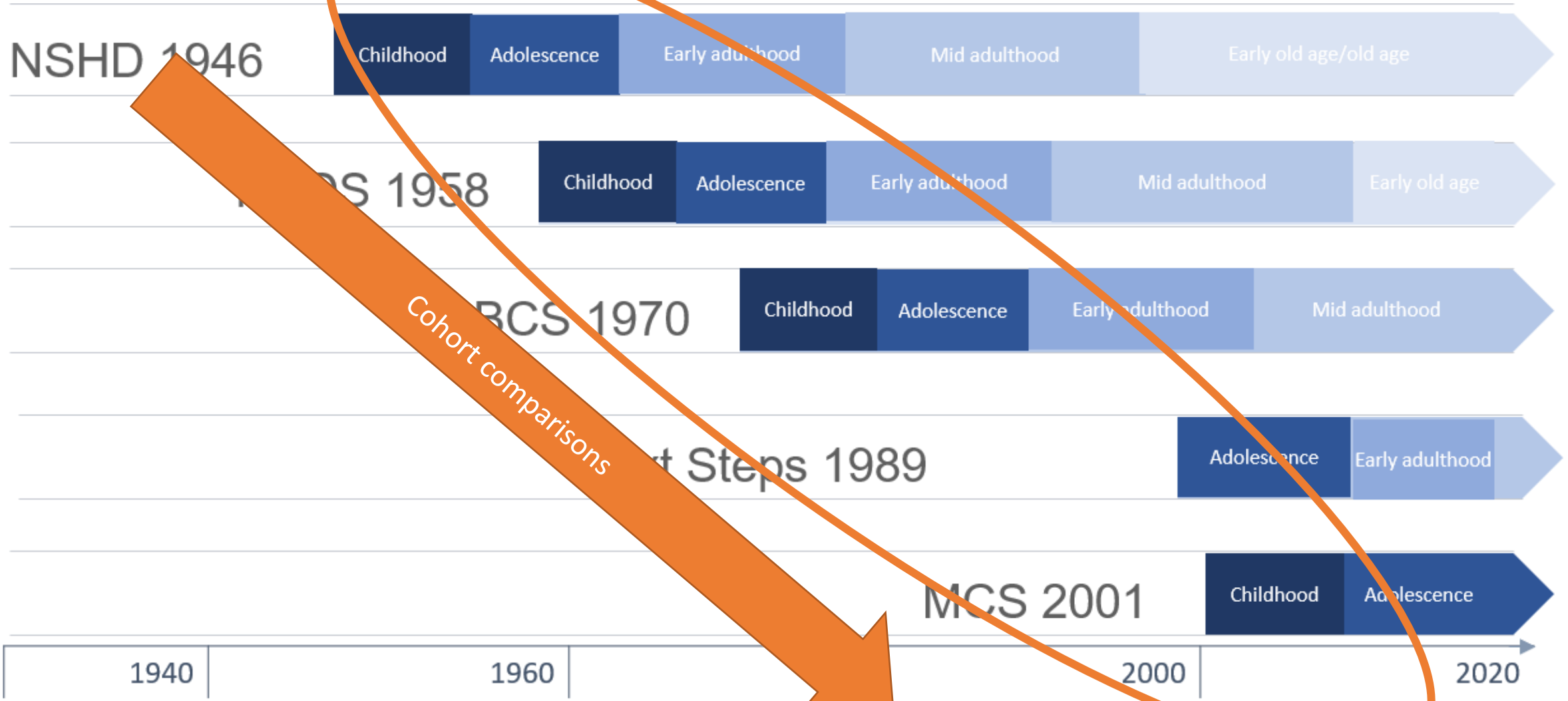
## Cohorts & longitudinal studies: Types of research questions

- **Exploring patterns of change and the dynamics of individual behaviour**
- Developmental trajectories
- Antecedents, risk factors
- Consequences

## Cohorts & longitudinal studies: Strengths of the datasets

- Detail over the life course
  - Can control for a rich set of early life factors and confounding variables
- Establishing the order in which events occur
- Reducing recall bias
- Nationally representative -> generalisable to the UK population
- Detailed measures across multiple domains of interest to developmental psychologists

Longitudinal development



Cohort comparisons

# Harmonisation: maximising comparability of mental health measures in the British birth cohorts

- Barriers to comparability
  - Content
  - Scale
  - Reporter

+ **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire** +

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the item seems daft! Please give your answers on the basis of the child's behaviour over the last six months or this school year.

Child's Name ..... Male/Female

Date of Birth.....

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
Considerate of other people's feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shares readily with other children (treats, toys, pencils etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rather solitary, tends to play alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally obedient, usually does what adults request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many worries, often seems worried	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7A

**III BEHAVIOUR**

15. Which statement in each group *best* describes the child?

(a) Very popular with other children.....

Of average popularity.....

Tends to be ignored by other children.....

(b) Liable to get unduly rough during play

Takes a normal part in rough games.....

Rather frightened of rough games.....

(c) Avoids attention, hates being in the limelight

Does not unduly avoid or seek attention.....

Shows off; seeks attention.....3

(d) A dare-devil.....1

As cautious as the average child.....2

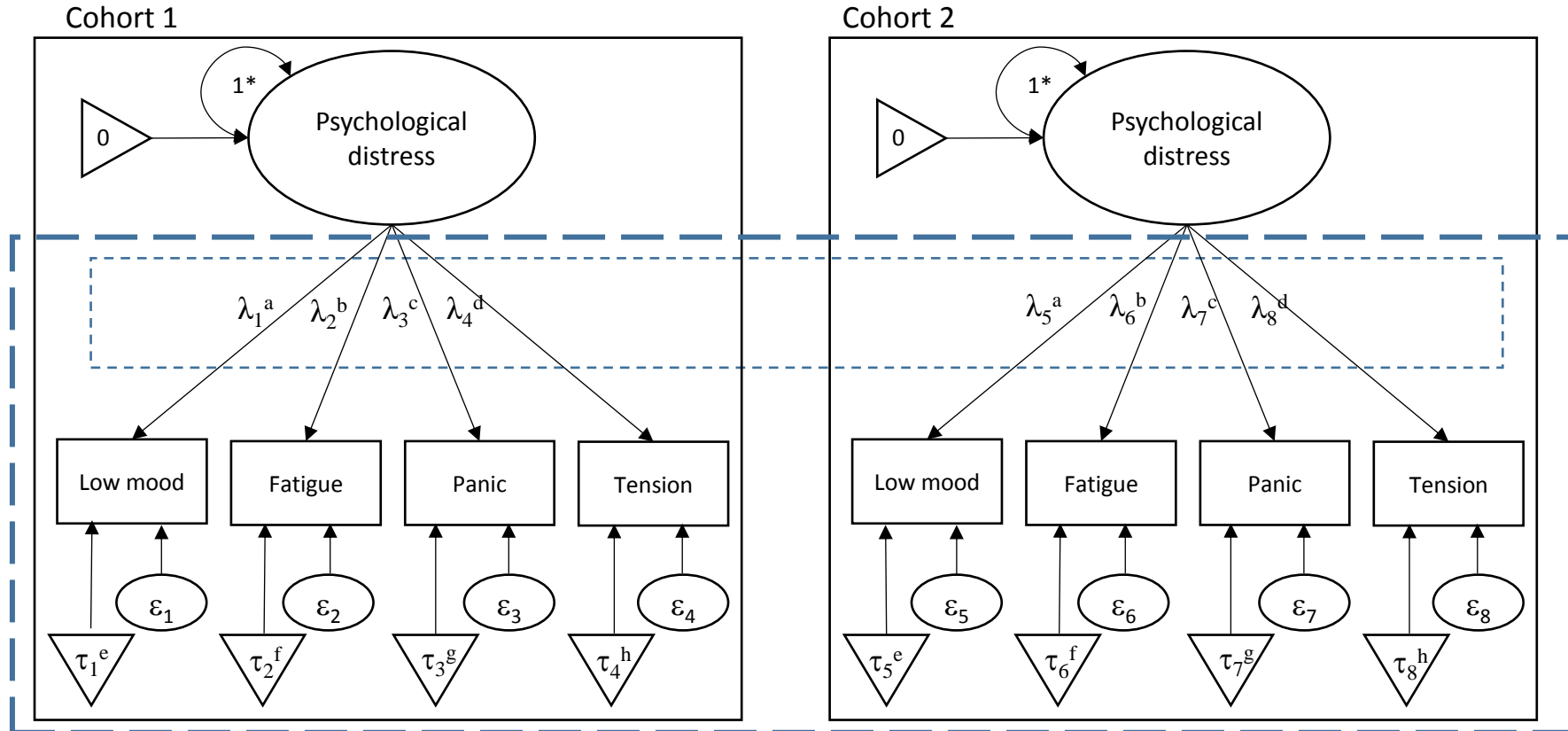
Extremely fearful.....3



# Harmonisation: maximising comparability of mental health measures in the British birth cohorts

	General Health Questionnaire (28-item) (GHQ-28)	Psychiatric Symptom Frequency Scale (18 items)	Present State Examination (selected items)	Malaise Inventory (9 item)
<b>Low Mood</b>	17. Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities	2. have you been in low spirits or felt miserable	20. Do you keep reasonably cheerful or have you been very depressed or low spirited recently? Have you cried at all? (Rate depressed mood)	2. Do you often feel miserable or depressed?
<b>Fatigue</b>	2. Been feeling in need of a good tonic	14. have there been days when you tired out very easily?	3. Have you been exhausted and worn out during the day or evening even when you haven't been working very hard? (rate tiredness/exhaustion) (slightly doubtful about this one)	1. Do you feel tired most of the time?
<b>Tension</b>	16. Felt constantly under strain	1. have you felt on edge of keyed up or mentally tense	7. Do you often feel on edge, or keyed up, or mentally tense or strained? (rate nervous tension)	7. Are you constantly keyed up and jittery?
<b>Panic</b>	19. Been getting scared or panicky for no good reason	8. have you been in situations when you felt shaky or sweaty or your heart pounded or you could not get your breath?	11. Have you had times when you felt shaky or your heart pounded or you felt sweaty and you simply had to do something about it? (rate panic attacks)	9. Does your heart often race like mad?

# Harmonisation: maximising comparability of mental health measures in the British birth cohorts



Metric Invariance

Scalar Invariance

# Harmonisation: maximising comparability of mental health measures in the British birth cohorts



[Home](#) > [About the research we fund](#) > [Data harmonisation](#) > Mental health

## Mental health

Full project title: Harmonisation of mental health measures in British birth cohorts



<https://www.closer.ac.uk/research-fund-2/data-harmonisation/harmonisation-mental-health-measures-british-birth-cohorts/>

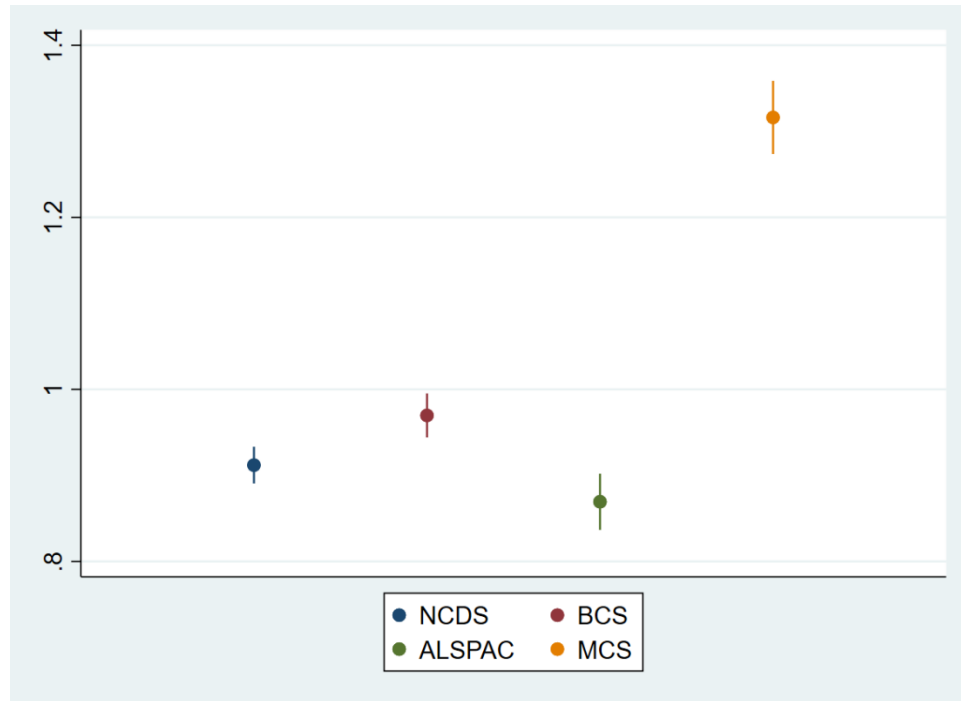
CLOSER Resource Report: Mental Health Measures

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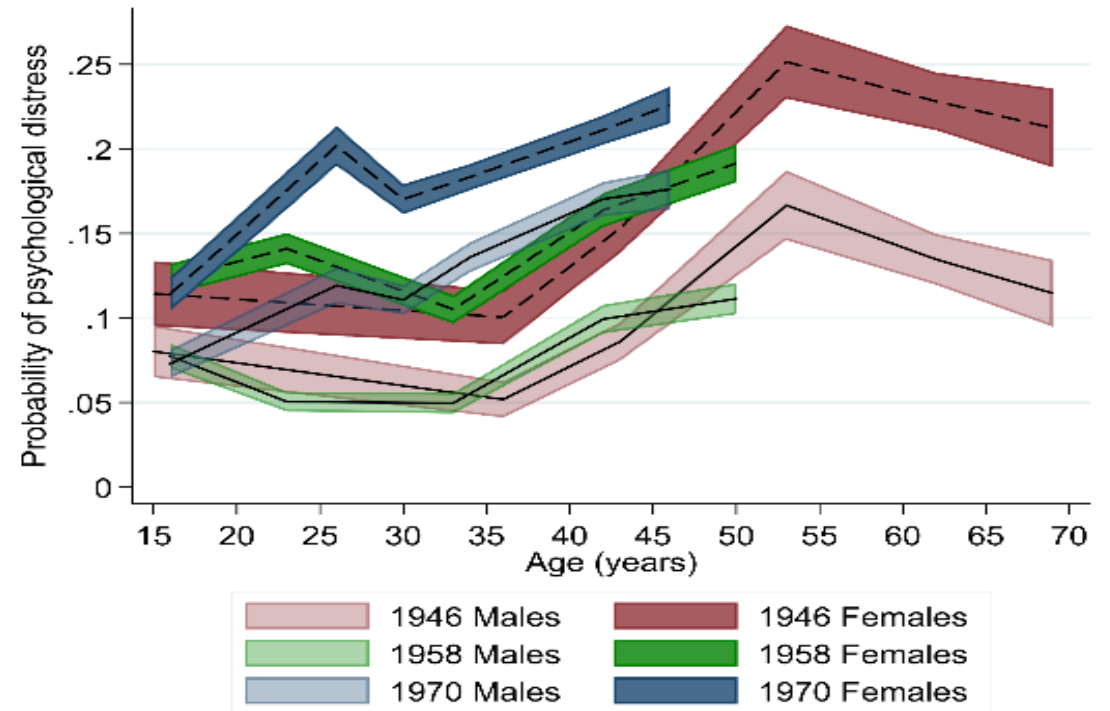
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# Harmonisation: maximising comparability of mental health measures in the British birth cohorts



(McElroy et al., in prep)




(Gondek et al., under review)


# Accessing cohort data and documentation

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- 1958, 1970, NS and MCS cohorts freely available to researchers, government analysts and third sector via UKDS


# Accessing cohort data and documentation



## MRC National Survey of Health and Development

 MRC Lifelong Health & Ageing Unit at UCL

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  - Data Access Request Form
  - Data Sharing Agreement



**MRC Unit for Lifelong Health and Ageing at UCL : LHA**  
&  
**MRC National Survey of Health and Development : NSHD**



## Welcome to the NSHD Data Sharing website

The Medical Research Council (MRC) National Survey of Health of Development (NSHD) is an ongoing cohort study involving some 5,362 men and women

<https://skylark.ucl.ac.uk/NSHD/doku.php>

Thank you

UK Data Service



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& SOCIAL  
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# Thank you

- Questions????
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- em447@leicester.ac.uk