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Partnership Histories 1974-2008

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A guide to the datasets (First Edition)

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The Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) is an ESRC Resource Centre based at the Institution of Education. It provides support and facilities for those using the three internationally-renowned birth cohort studies: the National Child Development Study (1958), the 1970 British Cohort Study and the Millennium Cohort Study (2000). CLS conducts research using the birth cohort study data, with a special interest in family life and parenting, family economics, youth life course transitions and basic skills. The views expressed in this work are those of the author(s) (amend as necessary) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Economic and Social Research Council. All errors and omissions remain those of the author(s).

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Preface

This document has been prepared to accompany the deposit, with the UK Data Archive at the University of Essex, of the derived datasets of partnership histories from the 1991, 2000, 2004 and 2008/9 follow-ups of the 1958 National Child Cohort Study (NCDS), a continuing, multidisciplinary, national, longitudinal study.

The elements of the deposit, to which reference will be made throughout this document, are identified below. Users are advised that they will need to consult all elements of the documentation to gain a full understanding of the data.

The Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) request that any work which is based wholly or in part on analysis of National Child Development Study data includes the following acknowledgement:

“The analyses in this work are based wholly or in part on analysis of data from the 1958 National Child Development Study (NCDS). The data was deposited at the UK Data Archive by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies at the Institute of Education, University of London. NCDS is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).”

CLS also request that the term ‘NCDS’ be included when compiling keywords to accompany any publications based on analysis of the study’s data.

Previous NCDS Partnership Histories Datasets

A partnership histories dataset was previously created (Kallis, 2005) and used for the analysis of the link between partnership and childbearing processes (Steele, 2007). This previous partnership history included data for women up to sweep6 only. Additionally overlapping partnerships and cohort members with same sex partnerships were omitted from the dataset and the dataset variables did not include data on partner attributes or divorce.

NCDS Partnership Histories (1974-2008)

Data on live-in relationships lasting one month or more have been collected in all NCDS sweeps from sweep5 (age 33). The purpose of the NCDS partnership histories is to merge all data on live-in relationships in successive sweeps into one longitudinal dataset.

The focus of the questions asked at each sweep are about the relationship start date; whether married/became civil partner (sweep8 and later) to this partner and if so the marriage/civil partnership dates; whether still together with this partner and if not the date that the relationship ended; how the relationship ended; if relevant whether divorced and divorce dates; the sex, marital status and age at start of relationship of the partner.

Details of the data collected at each sweep are as follows:

Sweep	Relationship data collected at sweep and used in relationship histories
Sweep 5 (1991, aged 33)	Data on current and previous live in relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start date of relationship• Whether got married and if relevant, marriage date• Partners age and marital status when started living together (current partner only)• If relevant; how the relationship ended and end date
Sweep 6 (2000, aged 42):	Data on current and previous live in relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start date of relationship• Whether got married and if relevant, marriage date• Partners age and marital status when started living together (current partner only)• If relevant; how the relationship ended and end date

Sweep

Relationship data collected at sweep and used in relationship histories

Sweep 7 (2004, aged 46): Data on current and previous relationships since CM's latest previous sweep or aged 16:

- Start date of relationship
- Whether got married and if relevant marriage date
- Partners age and marital status when started living together (current partner only)
- If relevant; how the relationship ended and end date

Sweep8 (2008, aged 50): Data on current and previous relationships since CM's latest previous sweep or January 2000 (if not interviewed at sweeps 6 or 7)

- Start date of relationship
- Whether got married/formed a civil partnership and if relevant marriage/civil partnership date
- Partner's sex
- Partners age and marital status when started living together (current partner only)
- If relevant; how the relationship ended and end date
- If relevant whether got divorced/ dissolved civil partnership and the date

NCDS Partnership and Partner Histories Datasets

NCDS Partnership dataset

The NCDS partnership histories dataset contains 1 record for each partnership. Cohabitation transformed into marriage is recorded as 2 separate partnerships. In the dataset there are 31,437 partnership records for 18,558 cohort members. 881 cohort members were known to have died before the age of 16 (one dummy record with variable NUMPSHPS=-1) and of the rest, 5,260 cohort members, including those not present at sweeps 5-8, have no partnership data reported (one dummy record with variable NUMPSHPS=0). All partnership variables are set to -1 (n/a) on these dummy records. 12,417 cohort members have at least 1 partnership reported (variable PSHIP=1) and report 13,883 marriages and 11,413 cohabitations between them (variable PTYPE=1,2). There is therefore an average of 2.04 partnerships for cohort members with at least one partnership.

A sample of 4 cases with a subset of the variables is shown below:

NCDSID	....	NUMPSHP S	PARTNE R	PSHI P	PSTCMC	PENDCMC	PDU R	PTYP E	POUTCOM E	....
N10001N	....	2	1	1	956	1168	212	1	2	....

N10001N	.... .	2	2	2	1184	1249	65	2	2	.....
....
N10002P	.... .	4	1	1	1064	1086	22	2	1	.....
N10002P	.... .	4	1	2	1086	1164	78	1	2	.....
N10002P	.... .	4	2	3	1164	1194	30	2	1	.....
N10002P	.... .	4	2	4	1194	-6	113	1	5	.....
....
N10018X	.... .	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	.....
....
N10038B	.... .	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	.....

Case N10001N has 2 partnerships reported, one marriage and a cohabitation that did not lead into marriage. Case N10002P has 4 partnerships reported; 2 cohabitations that both lead into marriages. Case N10018X is not known to have died before age 16 but has not partnerships reported. Case N10038B is known to have died before age 16.

The description of the variables included in the above sample:

Variable Name	Variable description
NUMPSHPS	Total number of partnerships
PARTNER	Partner number ¹
PSHIP	Partnership number
PSTCMC	Partnership start century month ²
PENDCMC	Partnership end date century month ²
PDUR	Duration of Partnership in months
PTYPE	Type of partnership
POUTCOME	Partnership outcome

Variable PTYPE holds the partner type, the partner type categories included are:

PTYPE value	PTYPE category
1	Marriage
2	Cohabitation

¹ The PARTNER variable indicates whether or not multiple partnerships are formed with the same partner (e.g. in the table above case N10002P has four partnerships with two partners).

² Century month is calculated as the number of months since 1900

Variable POUTCOME describes the outcome of the cohabitation, the outcome categories are:

POUTCOME value	POUTCOME category
1	Marriage
2	Separation
3	Death of partner
4	Remain a couple but no longer live together
5	Pship still intact at latest sweep

Data variables included in the partnership histories dataset

A summary of the types of data variables included in the partnership histories is as follows:

Participation in each sweep and if so whether any partnership data at that sweep
CM's sex
Total number of partnerships, partner number and partnership number
Century months ³ of latest interview and partnership start and end dates
Partnership duration in months (truncated at latest sweep)
Partnership type (marriage or cohabitation)
Partnership outcome (see above for categories)
Partner attributes at start of partnership: sex; age and marital status ⁴⁵
Partnership start and end dates (month and year)
Partnership start and end dates (month and year)
Whether divorced, divorce dates and century month of divorce
Case and partnership errors
Date of CMS interview at each sweep
Sweep and slot number that partnership was reported in

A detailed list of the variables included in the partnership histories is found in appendix 2

³ Century month is calculated as the number of months since 1900

⁴ The variables describing the partner's attributes: age at start of relationship and marital status at start of relationship are only collected for sweep6 and sweep7 current partners and sweep8 new partners. Therefore these variables are set to -8 (don't know/ not enough info) for partnership data collected in other slots

⁵ The age at start of relationship and marital status at start of relationship relate to when the cohort member start living with that partner i.e. if cohabited before marriage then relates to the start of the cohabitation even if the partnership relates to the marriage.

NCDS Partner dataset

The NCDS partner histories dataset contains 1 record for each partner. A cohabitation which has transformed into marriage is treated as one partner. In the dataset there are 24,948 partner records for 18,558 cohort members. 881 cohort members were known to have died before the age of 16 (one dummy record with variable NUMPARTS=-1) and of the rest, 5,260 cohort members, including those not present at sweeps 5-8, have no partnership data reported (one dummy record with variable NUMPARTS=0). All partner variables are set to -1 (n/a) on these dummy records. 12,417 cohort members have at least 1 partner reported (variable PARTNER=1) and report 7394 marriages with no previous cohabitation, 4918 cohabitations that did not end in marriage and 6495 cohabitations that did end in marriage (variable PTYPE=1,2,3 respectively). There is therefore an average of 1.51 partners for cohort members with at least one partner.

A sample of 4 cases with a subset of the variables is shown below:

NCDSID	NUMPARTS	PARTNER	PSTCMC	PENDCMC	PDUR	PTYPE	POUTCOME
N10001N	2	1	956	1168	212	1	1
N10001N	2	2	1184	1249	65	2	1
N10002P	2	1	1064	1164	100	3	1
N10002P	2	2	1164	-6	143	3	4
N10018X	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	-1
N10038B	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	-1

Case N10001N has 2 partners reported one of whom they married and they other cohabited with but did not marry. . Case N10002P has 2 partners both of who they cohabited with and then married. Case N10018X is not known to have died before age 16 but has not partnerships reported. Case N10038B is known to have died before age 16.

A description of the variables included in the above sample is as follows:

Variable Name	Variable description
NUMPARTS	Total number of partners
PARTNER	Partner number
PSTCMC	Partnership start century month ⁶
PENDCMC	Partnership end date century month ⁶
PDUR	Duration of Partnership in months
PTYPE	Type of partnership
POUTCOME	Partnership outcome

⁶ Century month is calculated as the number of months since 1900

Variable TYPE holds the partner type, the partner type categories included are:

PTYPE value	PTYPE category
1	Marriage
2	Cohabitation
3	Cohabitation then marriage

Variable OUTCOME describes the outcome of the cohabitation, the outcome categories are:

POUTCOME value	POUTCOME category
1	Separation
2	Death of partner
3	Remain a couple but no longer live together
4	Pship still intact at latest sweep

Data variables included in the partner histories dataset

A summary of the types of data variables included in the partner histories is as follows:

Participation in each sweep and if so whether any partner data at that sweep
CM's sex
Total number of partners and partner number
Century months ⁷ of latest interview and partnership start and end dates
Partner duration in months (truncated at latest sweep)
Partner type (marriage or cohabitation)
Partner outcome (see above for categories)
Partner attributes at start of partnership: sex; age and marital status ⁸
Partner start and end dates (month and year)
Partner start and end dates (month and year)
Whether divorced, divorce dates and century month of divorce
Case and partner errors
Date of CMS interview at each sweep
Sweep and slot number that partner was reported in

A detailed list of the variables included in the partner histories is found in appendix 2

⁷ Century month is calculated as the number of months since 1900

⁸ The variables describing the partner's attributes: age at start of relationship and marital status at start of relationship are only collected for sweep6 and sweep7 current partners and sweep8 new partners. Therefore these variables are set to -8 (don't know/ not enough info) for partnership data collected in other slots.

Construction of NCDS partnership and partner histories

The NCDS partnership and partner histories datasets are constructed using the SIR programming language. Partnership data is accessed from sweeps 4 (1981)⁹, 5 (1991), 6 (1999-2000), 7 (2004) and 8 (2008) and stored in arrays. These arrays are then examined for data issues that require editing; duplication (where activities are reported again in a later sweep) cohabitation overlap and missing end dates (see below).

Repaired partnership data at 2008 interview

In the sweep8 data collection, cohort members who had incomplete partnership data collected at sweep7 are asked for their partnership histories back to sweep6 and open ex-partner and last current partner data relates to sweep6. All sweep7 data is ignored for repair cases (see duplicate partnership section below) unless data was not collected at sweep6 and data collected at sweep 7 included data partnerships that were completed before January 2000.

Sweep 8 data on ex- and current partners from last sweep

The partnerships history program attempts to reconcile the sweep8 data on ex- and last current partner with that collected from the earlier sweeps. The following rules are used

- Where there is a most recent open married ex- / current partner, the sweep 8 data is used to update this/these.
- Where there is sweep8 data on an ex-partner and there is no most recent open married ex-partner, but there is a current partner at swp6 /7 and no data for current partner in swp8; the swp8 ex-partner information is used to update the current partner at swp6/7 (it is assumed that this previous current partnership had ended).
- Where there is sweep8 data on an ex-partner and there is no open married ex-partner; the swp8 ex-partner data is used to update the most recent non-married ex-partner (if divorce reported in swp8 then the update will set 'marriage after cohabitation' to 'yes' for this partnership).
- In repair cases sweep7 data ignored unless there is no sweep6 data in which case the sweep7 data is considered for matching with the ex-partner and current partner data in sweep8.

⁹ If cohort member not interviewed at sweep5 (1991)

Duplicate partnerships

For each cohort member all the partnerships are compared with each other to identify duplicates. Partnerships are considered to be duplicates if the names (if exist) of the partners are similar (first 3 characters the same) and:

- Duplicate type 1: The partnerships are reported in different sweeps and have the same start dates or the same marriage dates. If end dates exist these should also match.
- Duplicate type2: The partnerships are reported in different sweeps and their start dates are within 14 months of each other and the end date of each is not before start and marriage date of the other.
- Duplicate type 3: The partnerships are reported in different sweeps, one of the sweeps being sweep5 and the start dates are within 18 months of each other and at least one of the partnerships has an end date and this is not before the start date of the other relationship

In the case of duplicates, the dates reported in the earlier sweep are assumed to be the more reliable. Non-date data is taken from duplicated partnerships where missing in the latest version. Data is only taken from the earlier duplicated partnerships if this is consistent with the later data.

Cases where reported separated at sweep6 but no previous partnership data

In some cases there are no partnership data prior to sweep6 yet the marital status at sweep6 is reported to be separated. In these cases a dummy partnership is added, with all variables set to -8 (don't know), and flagged with variable PERROR13=1. All records for such cases are flagged with CERROR1=1.

Partnership / partner end dates and durations

Where a subsequent partnership/ partner starts before the reported end of a partnership, the partnership duration is truncated to end before the subsequent partnership/ partner starts. Where a partnership has no end date reported, it is truncated at the latest sweep that it was current at. This may result in zero duration partnerships. Zero durations partnerships also result from cohort members reporting start and end dates of partnerships to be the same month in the same year. Zero duration partnerships have been included in the dataset for completeness.

Date century months

In order to facilitate date computations, century months, the number of months since 1900, are calculated for all dates. Where the date year is missing, the century month variable is set to -8 (don't know). Where the date month is missing, a value of 6 (June) is used in the century month calculations.

Missing data

Variables are set to missing value -1 (not applicable) where no data is expected, as in the case of dummy partnership records (added where a cohort member was reported to have died by age 16 or has had no activity data reported) or where a variable is not applicable for a particular partnership, for example divorce dates where no marriage has taken place.

Variables are set to -8 (don't know/ insufficient information) where data is expected but has not been collected.

End of partnership variables are set to -6 where a partnership is still intact at the cohort member's most recent sweep.

Bibliography

KALLIS, C. (2005) [CLS Cohort Studies Data Note 5: Partnership Histories in NCDS54 and NCDS6](#). London: Centre for Multilevel Modelling, Bedford Group for Lifecourse and Statistical Studies, Institute of Education, University of London

Steele, F., Joshi, H., Kallis, C. and Goldstein, H. (2007) [Changes in the Relationship between the Outcomes of Cohabiting Partnerships and Fertility among Young British Women: Evidence from the 1958 and 1970 Birth Cohort Studies](#). CLS Working Paper, London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies.

Appendix 1: Variables in NCDS partnership histories dataset

Variable Name	Variable Label
NCDSID	NCDSID of cohort member
WSWEEP05	Sweep5: Wh participated and wh any partnership data
WSWEEP06	Sweep6: Wh participated and wh any partnership data
WSWEEP07	Sweep7: Wh participated and wh any partnership data
WSWEEP08	Sweep8: Wh participated and wh any partnership data
CMSEX	Sex of cohort member
NUMPSHPS	Total number of partnerships
PARTNER	Partner number
PSHIP	Partnership number
LSTSWCMC	Century month ¹⁰ of latest interview
PSTCMC	Partnership start century month ¹⁰
PENDCMC	Partnership end date century month ¹⁰
PDUR	Duration of Partnership in months
PTYPE	Type of partnership
POUTCOME	Partnership outcome
PSEX	Partner's gender
PSAMESX	Same sex relationship
PPAGE	Partner's age at start of rel (not asked for all partners)
PPMS	Partner's marital status at start (not asked for all partners)
PPLEGS	Wh partner was legally sep.at start (not asked all partners)
PSTARTY	Year CM started living wth partner
PSTARTM	Month CM started living with partner
PENDY	Year cm separated / partner died
PENDM	Month cm separated / partner died
PDIVCE	Wh CM and partner got divorced
PDIVCEY	Year of divorce
PDIVCEM	Month of divorce
PDIVCMC	Divorce date century month ¹⁰
CERRORS	Case has partnership history errors
PERRORS	Pship has partnership history errors
PERROR1	Pship err: end date overlaps next rel, truncated
PERROR2	Pship err: has no end date but not current at latest swp
PERROR3	Pship err: divorced but no divorce date
PERROR4	Pship err: Marriage w/o reporting divorce from prev spouse/cp
PERROR5	Pship err: Marriage dates outside of pship dates
PERROR6	Pship err: End before start, end set to dk
PERROR7	Pship err: Date<age16, if start set=age16/marriage=st/end=dk
PERROR8	Pship err: Cohab then marriage but marriagecmc=startcmc

¹⁰ Century month is calculated as the number of months since 1900

Variable Name	Variable Label
PERROR9	Pship err: Cohab then marriage but marriage date missing
PERROR10	Pship err: Reconciliation with previous spouse
PERROR11	Pship err: No end date but marriage > start of next pship
PERROR12	Pship err: Marriage > end date
PERROR13	Pship err: Dummy pship as sep at swp6 but no prev pships
PERROR14	Pship err: Not yet in use
PERROR15	Pship err: Not yet in use
CERROR1	Case err: No swp5data, no swp6 ex-parts, separated at swp6
CERROR2	Case err: No pship data but marital status other than single
CERROR2A	Case err: SWPs with marital status other than single
CERROR3	Case err: Case appears to reconstitute with previous spouse
SWPFLG05	CM in sweep 5
INTMON05	Month of sweep 5 interview
INTYR05	Year of sweep 5 interview
INTCMC05	Century month ¹¹ of sweep 5 interview
SWPFLG06	CM in sweep 6
INTMON06	Month of sweep 6 interview
INTYR06	Year of sweep 6 interview
INTCMC06	Century month ¹¹ of sweep 6 interview
SWPFLG07	CM in sweep 7
INTMON07	Month of sweep 7 interview
INTYR07	Year of sweep 7 interview
INTCMC07	Century month ¹¹ of sweep 7 interview
SWPFLG08	CM in sweep 8
INTMON08	Month of sweep 8 interview
INTYR08	Year of sweep 8 interview
INTCMC08	Century month ¹¹ of sweep 8 interview
PSLOT	Cohab history slot number
PSWP	Sweep Partnership reported in
PFSTSWP	First sweep Partnership reported in

¹¹ Century month is calculated as the number of months since 1900

Appendix 2: Variables in NCDS partner histories dataset

Variable Name	Variable Label
NCDSID	NCDSID of cohort member
WSWEEP05	Sweep5: Wh participated and wh any partnership data
WSWEEP06	Sweep6: Wh participated and wh any partnership data
WSWEEP07	Sweep7: Wh participated and wh any partnership data
WSWEEP08	Sweep8: Wh participated and wh any partnership data
CMSEX	Sex of cohort member
NUMPARTS	Total number of partners
PARTNER	Partner number
LSTSWCMC	Century month ¹² of latest interview
PSTCMC	Partnership start century month ¹²
PENDCMC	Partnership end date century month ¹²
PDUR	Duration of Partnership in months
PTYPE	Type of partnership
POUTCOME	Partnership outcome
PSEX	Partner's gender
PSAMESX	Same sex relationship
PPAGE	Partner's age at start of rel (not asked for all partners)
PPMS	Partner's marital status at start (not asked for all partners)
PPLEGS	Wh partner was legally sep.at start (not asked all partners)
PSTARTY	Year CM started living wth partner
PSTARTM	Month CM started living with partner
PMARBF	Wh married before moved in together
PMARCP	Wh CM subsequently married partner
PMARCPY	Year CM married partner
PMARCPM	Month CM married partner
PMYCMC	Marriage date century month ¹²
PHOWEND	How relationship ended
PENDY	Year cm separated / partner died
PENDM	Month cm separated / partner died
PDIVCE	Wh CM and partner got divorced
PDIVCEY	Year of divorce
PDIVCEM	Month of divorce
PDIVCMC	Divorce date century month ¹²
CERRORS	Case has partnership history errors
PERRORS	Pship has partnership history errors

¹² Century month is calculated as the number of months since 1900

Variable Name	Variable Label
PERROR1	Pship err: end date overlaps next rel, truncated
PERROR2	Pship err: has no end date but not current at latest swp
PERROR3	Pship err: divorced but no divorce date
PERROR4	Pship err: Marriage w/0 reporting divorce from prev spouse/cp
PERROR5	Pship err: Marriage dates outside of pship dates
PERROR6	Pship err: End before start, end set to dk
PERROR7	Pship err: Date<age16, if start set=age16/marriage=st/end=dk
PERROR8	Pship err: Cohab then marriage but marriagecmc=startcmc
PERROR9	Pship err: Cohab then marriage but marriage date missing
PERROR10	Pship err: Reconciliation with previous spouse
PERROR11	Pship err: No end date but marriage>start of next pship
PERROR12	Pship err: Marriage > end date
PERROR13	Pship err: Dummy pship as sep at swp6 but no prev pships
PERROR14	Pship err: Not yet in use
PERROR15	Pship err: Not yet in use
CERROR1	Case err: No swp5data, no swp6 ex-parts, separated at swp6
CERROR2	Case err: No pship data but marital status other than single
CERROR2A	Case err: SWPs with marital status other than single
CERROR3	Case err: Case appears to recombine with previous spouse
SWPFLG05	CM in sweep 5
INTMON05	Month of sweep 5 interview
INTYR05	Year of sweep 5 interview
INTCMC05	Century month ¹³ of sweep 5 interview
SWPFLG06	CM in sweep 6
INTMON06	Month of sweep 6 interview
INTYR06	Year of sweep 6 interview
INTCMC06	Century month ¹³ of sweep 6 interview
SWPFLG07	CM in sweep 7
INTMON07	Month of sweep 7 interview
INTYR07	Year of sweep 7 interview
INTCMC07	Century month ¹³ of sweep 7 interview
SWPFLG08	CM in sweep 8
INTMON08	Month of sweep 8 interview
INTYR08	Year of sweep 8 interview
INTCMC08	Century month ¹³ of sweep 8 interview
PSLOT	Cohab history slot number
PSWP	Sweep Partnership reported in
PFSTSWP	First sweep Partnership reported in

¹³ Century month is calculated as the number of months since 1900

Appendix 3: NCDS Partnership Histories SPSS Dataset filenames

Dataset	SPSS filename
NCDS Partnership histories dataset	NCDS_partnership_histories.sav
NCDS Partner histories dataset	NCDS_partner_histories.sav

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