

Millennium Cohort Study:

Longitudinal Family File

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CENTRE FOR
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The UCL Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) is an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Resource Centre based at the UCL Institution of Education (IOE), University College London. It manages four internationally-renowned cohort studies: the 1958 National Child Development Study, the 1970 British Cohort Study, Next Steps, and the Millennium Cohort Study. For more information, visit www.cls.ucl.ac.uk.

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About the Millennium Cohort Study

The Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) is a longitudinal birth cohort study, following a nationally representative sample of approximately 19,000 people born in the UK at the turn of the century.

Through the study, we have captured rich information about the different aspects of cohort members' lives, from birth to childhood and adolescence, and we are continuing to keep up with them now they are adults.

As a multidisciplinary study, MCS is used by researchers working in a wide range of fields. Findings from MCS have influenced policy at the highest level, and today the study remains a vital source of evidence on the major issues affecting young

people's lives. If you have any questions or comments please contact CLS at clsfeedback@ucl.ac.uk.

Sweep	Fieldwork / data collection starting year	Cohort Members' average age
MCS 1	2001	9 months old
MCS 2	2004	3 years old
MCS 3	2006	5 years old
MCS 4	2008	7 years old
MCS 5	2012	11 years old
MCS 6	2015	14 years old
MCS 7	2018	17 years old

Introduction to `mcs_longitudinal_family_file`

This guide provides information about the `mcs_longitudinal_family_file` which is an important dataset of the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS). The `mcs_longitudinal_family_file` applies across sweeps and is available in: SN 8172 - Millennium Cohort Study: Longitudinal Family File, 2001-2015.

Until March 2017, the longitudinal family file has been provided separately with each sweep with the name: the `mcs_longitudinal_family_file` or `longitudinal_family_file`. These files have been removed from the separate sweeps of MCS from the UKDS and the only version of the longitudinal family file that is maintained and available through the UKDS in the SN 8172.

Researchers that have used an older version of longitudinal family file need to request access and use the file provided in SN 8172.

1. Overview of the `mcs_longitudinal_family_file`

1.1 Structure/level of the dataset

The `mcs_longitudinal_family_file` contains one row per family. There is one row for each family that has participated in the Millennium Cohort Study since either Sweep 1 or 2. As there is sample attrition some families may not have participated in certain

sweeps, datasets of a specific sweep contain the productive or partially productive cases. However, the `mcs_longitudinal_family_file` contains one row for each family, including their outcome codes, regardless if they have not participated in later sweeps.

1.2 Usability of the `mcs_longitudinal_family_file`

The `mcs_longitudinal_family_file` can be used for research that focuses on a single sweep of MCS or for a project that requires more than one sweep. The file contains information about the outcomes of a family in each sweep. This means that it can be used to follow cases longitudinally.

It also includes the weights that have been calculated for sweeps 1 to 6 and the user can use them either for research on one sweep or when using more than one sweeps.

Specific information on how the weight variables have been constructed for each sweep is provided with the User Guide of the respective sweep.

2 Useful information on specific variables

2.1 MCSID

It is the anonymised identifier for each family. The MCSID identifies a family and that the individuals within a family can be followed by using PNUM (Person number for any individual other than the Cohort Members) and CNUM (Cohort member number, some families have more than one, e.g. in case of twins). A family holds the same MCSID across sweeps. Similarly, the individuals have the same PNUM and CNUM across sweeps.

2.2 DUALBABYFAMILY

These families are the cases where a mother gave birth to two Cohort Members within the sample selection period. Both of the children are Cohort Members, however they were not part of a multiple birth (like twins and triplets).

2.3 SENTRY

Not all families were interviewed in sweep 1. Some families were interviewed for the first time in sweep 2 and were asked similar questions about the birth of the cohort child as the families that entered the survey in sweep 1. This means that if the research project requires information about birth and the first days of life of Cohort Member, this can be obtained for families that entered the survey in sweep 2.

2.4 DATA_AVAILABILITY

The DATA_AVAILABILITY variable is important for researchers to finalise the sample that can be used for research. It flags the licence that the data are available under. The majority of the sample is available under End User Licence through the UKDS (EUL). However a few cases are available under Secure Access (SA). More information on licences is available here: <https://ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/how-to-access/conditions/eul.aspx>

For example, the survey data of families that contain triplets are available under Secure Access due to its sensitivity. Researchers can request the full sample if their research requires data that are available under Secure Access Licence by applying for Data Access. More information <https://cls.ucl.ac.uk/data-access-training/access-cls-dac/>