



Data and services



Data and services

The UK Data Service provides researchers with flexible research support, training and access to the UK's largest collection of social, economic and population data. We are a critical part of the UK's research infrastructure, established to facilitate high quality, impactful research and education across all sectors. We enable researchers, teachers and policy makers to get an in-depth understanding of social and economic issues – and greater insights into tackling social challenges, now and in the future.

A partnership of five universities and Jisc, we are funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the collections of national data resources we provide access to have been built up over 50 years.

Our holdings include major UK government-sponsored surveys, longitudinal studies, UK census data, international macrodata, business microdata, cross-national surveys, qualitative data and administrative data.

Services that meet your needs

ukdataservice.ac.uk

Teaching

The use of real data in coursework adds authenticity and relevance to teaching resources and gives students the data analysis skills necessary to make significant contributions to society.

Research

We provide a Trusted Digital Repository for social and economic researchers' data through our lead partner, the UK Data Archive at the University of Essex.

Informing policy

Data we hold and provide access to inform ground-breaking research, influence national and regional policy and develop research excellence across all sectors.

Data Assessment

We offer significant expertise across the data publishing life cycle, from data appraisal, quality and disclosure risk assessment, through to preparation and documentation.

We work closely with data owners to help triage and share data with the appropriate governance measures in place.

We offer data cleaning, rescue and data 'archaeology' services, which we undertake alongside our core data preparation activities.

We have worked with data owners on various data and metadata enhancements including the Office for National Statistics and the National Archives.

Specialist resources and support

Register free online and search or browse our website to access:

- full descriptions of each dataset in our online catalogue
- guides supporting the use of specific datasets, suggestions for data relevant to particular topics and themes, methods and software including using or reusing data
- research and teaching case studies demonstrating how the data were used: ukdataservice.ac.uk/use-data/data-in-use.aspx
- survey questionnaires
- best practice guidance and service support
- on-demand, online Data Skills training modules
- webinar and face-to-face training throughout the year
- '5-Safes' and Statistical Disclosure Control training to access Secure data.

Read our Data Impact Blog to find out more about data-driven impactful teaching and learning, research and policy making:
blog.ukdataservice.ac.uk



Data and services

Major U.K surveys

All used to describe a population at one point in time and most can be used to compare populations across time and produce national estimates. Often used to inform policy.

Includes:

- British Social Attitudes Survey** (National Centre for Social Research)
- English Housing Survey** (Department for Communities and Local Government)
- National Travel Survey** (Department of Transport)
- Crime Survey for England and Wales, Labour Force Survey** (Office for National Statistics)

Longitudinal studies

Data from repeated observations of the same subjects, allowing researchers to analyse change at the individual level.

Includes:

- 1970 British Cohort Study, National Child Development Study** and **Millennium Cohort Study** (Centre for Longitudinal Studies)
- Understanding Society** (successor to the British Household Panel Survey)
- English Longitudinal Study of Ageing**

U.K Census data 1961 – 2011

Includes aggregate, boundary, flow and microdata from the last six censuses and we will be supporting the government in providing access to the Census data for 2021.

Population census is a vital resource for social scientific research and policy development, providing a snapshot of demographic and social life in the UK that helps inform government policy at local and central level.

Cross-national surveys

Studies where the same survey instrument and, where practical, methods and fieldwork protocols are used across many nations.

Includes:

- Households Below Average Income, 1994/95 – 2017/18** (Department for Work and Pensions)

International macrodata

Socio-economic time series data aggregated to a country or regional level for a range of countries over a substantial time period.

Many current releases of major statistical publications produced by intergovernmental organisations e.g. the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, covering, among other topics, economics, health, education, globalisation and environmental statistics.

Qualitative and mixed methods

Include in-depth interview transcripts, diaries, anthropological field notes, answers to open-ended survey questions, audio-visual recordings and images.

Training and resources

Webinars

Workshops

User guides

Research Data Management

Best practice guidance and tools

User support

Data Skills Modules

Teaching and research case studies

Impact blog

Collaboration and advocacy

Secure Lab Services

Five Safes Training

Developed in conjunction with the HMRC DataLab, the Office for National Statistics and Secure Research Service.

Secure data linkage

User support services and access to business, social and economic microdata from surveys too detailed or sensitive.

Statistical Disclosure Control

Ensures the delivery of safe statistical results.

Business microdata

Almost all of the data are collected using the sampling frame of the Inter-Departmental Business Register. It is therefore possible to combine data for the same company from two or more surveys, increasing the range of research and hypotheses that can be tested. The data cover among other topics, productivity, innovation, workforce skills, earnings, international trade, industrial relations and foreign direct investment.

Administrative data

Routinely collected by central or local government departments and agencies. Can provide even greater insights to key social challenges when securely linked with other data collections.

Includes:

- National Pupil Database** (Department for Education).

For more information visit ukdataservice.ac.uk

Free access to data for academic and not-for-profit use ¹

Most of our data is open or requires a short online registration process. Please visit our online user guide which outlines the registration options in more detail and provides a step-by-step guide on how to get data and add it to your 'My Account' area of the website.

Sharing data

The UK Data Service provides value by making data available for re-use. If looking to deposit data, our comprehensive support services and best practice guidance can help you choose the most appropriate data sharing pathway for your data and research.

European access

Our ongoing work, in partnership with the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) helps to ensure UK researchers continue to benefit from the CESSDA data catalogue, making data findable and accessible from other social science data archives across Europe. In 2018, we also opened a new secure data access point in the UK Data Service Safe Room at the University of Essex to allow remote access to French secure data from the UK.

Find it, use it, cite it

Data are a vital part of the scientific research process and proper citation is an important feature of research publications.

Whenever you use the UK Data Service to access data, always make sure you cite the persistent identifier or Digital Object Identifier (DOI) correctly: check out the latest guidance at ukdataservice.ac.uk/citethedata

Secure research access while protecting confidentiality

We provide support services for secure data linkage and access for researchers to business, social and economic microdata from surveys that are too detailed or sensitive to be made available under a standard End User Licence or Special Licence.

Due to the sensitive nature of these data, researchers must apply to use this specialist service and receive training around the Five Safes Framework, developed in conjunction with HMRC DataLab, the Office for National Statistics and Secure Research Service. Once data analysis is complete, our Secure Lab applies Statistical Disclosure Control techniques to ensure the delivery of safe statistical results.

The UK Data Service Secure Lab provides approved and accredited researchers with controlled access to sensitive or confidential data, enabling researchers to access and use datasets in a responsible and secure way, whilst protecting data confidentiality.

Future access

Our innovative Data Service as a Platform is being developed to enable us to continue to provide data services for a new generation of big data science in a safe and trusted environment. When finished, it will enable you anytime anyplace access to larger, new and novel forms of data. Visit dsaap.info for more information.

¹There is a charge for commercial use of data, and in certain other instances. You will be notified during the ordering process if charges are applicable.



Frequent questions

Is this service only for academic users?

No. Most collections are available under a standard end user licence or under special licence conditions, meaning they are open to researchers, analysts and teachers from all sectors.

Is there a charge for data?

In most cases, no. Data access is free for academic and not-for-profit purposes. Continued ESRC funding means that all materials in the UK Data Service are also available to search and browse free of charge.

How do I share my research data through the UK Data Service?

We have different pathways for regular depositors of major surveys or data series, for research data from ESRC grants and other research projects, for datasets described in data papers and for offers of new data collections.

I am an ESRC grant holder. How do I deposit my data at the end of my grant?

Specialist staff in the UK Data Service are here to advise on any data management issues and help researchers choose the most appropriate way to deposit their data. Please contact us with any queries.

How should my data be prepared for sharing and longer-term archiving?

Good data management is fundamental for high quality research data and research excellence. We offer advice and workshops for those creating, supporting and managing research data in the social sciences and beyond. Visit the 'Manage data' section of our website for more information.

Is there training available on how to find and analyse data?

Yes. We offer social science data users on-demand Data Skills training, webinars, face-to-face workshops and online user guides supporting the use of specific datasets, suggestions for data relevant to particular topics and themes, methods and software including using or reusing data.

Please contact us for more information:

ukdataservice.ac.uk

help@ukdataservice.ac.uk

Follow us:



@UKDataService





Copyright © 2019
University of Essex.
Created by the UK Data Archive,
University of Essex,
Wivenhoe Park,
Colchester,
CO4 3SQ

The UK Data Service
ukdataservice.ac.uk
help@ukdataservice.ac.uk
+44 (0)1206 872143

Funded by:

