

Workshop 1: Introduction to Household Panel Surveys and Understanding Society

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There are more than 15 household panel surveys conducted in more than 15 countries across the world including the UK, Germany, Australia, USA, South Africa, South Korea. This workshop will give an overview of household panel surveys and their usefulness for longitudinal and lifecourse research and to get a better understanding of such surveys, it will focus on one such survey, Understanding Society.

Understanding Society follows the members of a core sample of around 40,000 households wherever they move within the UK. All 10+ year old household members are eligible for interviews every year. These yearly interviews cover a vast array of topics. In addition to socio-demographic variables like date of birth, sex, ethnic group, religion, country of birth, they survey collects information on education, employment, partnership and fertility behaviour, health and wellbeing, attitudes, values and behaviour including political attitude and behaviour, environmental attitude and behaviour, identity, personality, gender role attitudes. This survey thus allows research on a multitude of topics and types of analyses: longitudinal analysis, analysis of households, families and generations, comparison across regions and ethno-religious groups & migrant generations. To achieve the main goals of this multipurpose survey Understanding Society has a complex sample design and consequently a complex data structure. Thus, analysing the data requires a good understanding of the general structure of the survey, the sample design and the data. In this workshop, participants will learn about the study and,

- its sample design
- questionnaire content, topics covered in interviews
- the interview process (who gets interviewed, interview mode, incentives, eligibility rules)
- health and biomarker data collected by nurses
- other datasets that can be linked to this survey
- how to use the website and online documentation to know more about the study, find variables, and ask for help & support