



CeLSIUS News

Issue 19

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To join our free e-discussion list, go to:
www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/ls-support.html

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to this issue of the newsletter. As always, we are keen to spread the word about the ONS LS and the CeLSIUS service, so please help us to do this by passing on the link to CeLSIUS news to your colleagues in the UK academic community.

About CeLSIUS

CeLSIUS is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Census Programme to provide free advice, information and support to UK based academics, including students, who wish to use the ONS Longitudinal Study.

Our website at <http://www.celsius.census.ac.uk> (or www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk) offers a range of resources to help LS users including:

- web based training modules on themes such as ethnicity, geography, fertility
- searchable data dictionary
- searchable list of publications using the LS
- downloadable tables from LS research studies

CeLSIUS team news

CeLSIUS is moving to UCL!

We are pleased to announce that from 1st August 2012 the CeLSIUS service and most of the current CeLSIUS team will be moving to University College London (UCL). The new team at UCL will provide the service until 31st July 2017.

The continued aim will be to provide high quality user support for the ONS LS in a timely fashion, but this will be extended from 1st August to include non-academic users (who are currently supported by a team at ONS).

There may be some service disruption during the first few weeks at UCL, especially as the 2012 Olympics will be occurring simultaneously. We shall, however, endeavour to keep any disruption to a minimum.

The CeLSIUS website at <http://www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk> will continue to provide information about the service until a new website at UCL is up and running. We will inform current users and subscribers to our JISCmail list by email as soon as our new contact details are available, and will publish these details on the new website. In the meantime, please contact us by email at: celsius@lshtm.ac.uk. Our contact details (email and phone) at the ONS will not change. (Current contact details can be found at <http://www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk/contact.html>.)

CeLSIUS team until 31st July, at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine:

Emily Grundy	Director (now based at the University of Cambridge)
Pat Doyle	Associate
Chris Marshall	Research and Computing Support Officer
Susan Ramsay	Research and Computing Support Officer
Rachel Stuchbury	Research Support Officer
Jo Tomlinson	Administrator

CeLSIUS team from 1st August, at UCL:

Nicola Shelton	Director
Emily Grundy	Senior Advisor

Michael Batty	Senior Advisor
Oliver Duke-Williams	Senior Advisor
Adam Dennett	Research Associate
Chris Marshall	Senior Research Associate
Susan Ramsay	Research Associate
Rachel Stuchbury	Senior Research Associate
Jo Tomlinson	Administrative Officer

Are you moving to a different institution?

It is important that you let us know – in advance, preferably - if the location where you conduct your LS based research changes, i.e. if you move to a different institution. This is so that we can be sure that the preliminary outputs that you receive are always held securely in an approved place. **It is especially important that you consult us in advance if you are planning to move outside England and Wales** as the legislative and procedural framework for users outside E&W is different.

2011 Census linkage update

The linkage of 2011 Census data to the ONS LS is now well under way. As the Census analysts receive batches of data, they deliver extracts to the LS for tracing. Identifiers are attached to the 2011 records and used to link them to existing LS data. A period of beta testing of the new data has been planned for April to September 2013. The primary objectives of this stage are: to test the 2011 data for accuracy, comparability and consistency; and to use feedback from test participants to inform the decision whether to release the database to the wider research community. Experienced LS Users will be invited to apply for a beta test project and there will be an event to promote this opportunity in London in October 2012. The deadline for applications will be November 2012, and applicants will be notified about the outcome by the end of December 2012. It is anticipated that the new data will be released to all interested researchers in December 2013. Once the new data have been released, metadata will be developed, which will include a new and improved Data Dictionary.

Professor Emily Grundy, Director of CeLSIUS 2001-2012

When did you first undertake research using the LS?

I first became aware of the LS in the late 1970s when I was a MSc student at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. I heard John Fox give an inspirational talk at a meeting of the British Society for Population Studies on plans for the new data source. John was a key figure in getting the LS established and from the outset his vision included making sure the data were available to academic researchers as well as to those within the Office for Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS, later replaced by the Office for National Statistics). In pursuit of this he took a leave of absence from his civil service career to take up a Professorial Fellowship in the Social Statistics Research Unit (SSRU) at City University. He secured funding from the Medical Research Council and the Cancer Research Campaign for projects on inequalities in mortality (work based on the LS was a major component of the Black report) and in cancer incidence and survival.

He then started what was to become a long term relationship with the ESRC by securing funding for two research students and for a project on life course events and migration, and invited me to apply for a research fellow position to undertake this work. I joined the small SSRU team early in 1983. Other members of the group were Dave Leon, David Jones, Michael Rosato and later Kath Moser. Peter Goldblatt was the key contact at OPCS and very closely involved in the development and management of the LS, along with Audrey Brown.

How did you access the LS in the early days?

At that time, as now, access to the data was within the OPCS building, then St Catherine's House in Kingsway. Specific datasets for projects were created. This process was very tortuous compared to today. Researchers specified what they wanted from some existing data sets using a powerful, but very complicated and poorly documented, data extraction and manipulation programme called FILETAB. OPCS programmers played the major role in programming linkages and variable definitions for new data sets using SAS – this could take months and made it essential to think very carefully about exactly what variables were wanted. I remember being very excited when I finally got access to the dataset created for my project only to get very worried when my first tabulations showed results that were odd in the extreme – it turned out that there was an error in the documentation and the codes for non migrants and long distance migrants had been transposed.

The process of analysis was also much more complicated then than now. OPCS had decided to create a bespoke tabulation package called TAU of which I was more or less the first outside user. As the package was being written while I was using it, this proved quite challenging and I spent many hours in computer terminal rooms at St Catherine's House. TAU couldn't at that time handle modelling, being primarily designed to produce tabulations for census outputs, so I had to do this using GLIM manually inputting count data. As now, outputs were cleared before release, however the procedure was much less formalised and largely involved leaving huge piles of old style computer output on Peter Goldblatt's desk.

While at City, I worked with John Fox on submitting the first application for a user support service – the precursor to CeLSIUS - although by the time the grant was awarded I had moved on to a lectureship at King's College London. As soon as I was there I applied for ESRC funding for another LS based project and so was able to send a researcher (Ann Harrop) to get familiar with TAU at St. Catherine's House rather than going myself.

How has the LS changed since then, in terms of resources and access?

Access was easiest during the 1990s when researchers were allowed to have anonymised databases for analysis at their home sites. Although this is still a theoretical option, disclosure control procedures on minimum cell counts are now much more stringent so this option is less often useful. More positively, the LS is clearly now much more powerful due to the incorporation of data from more censuses. Moreover, documentation and processing are much easier and faster and there is a much wider range of resources available (many of them through the CeLSIUS website) to help researchers.

What have you gained (or lost!) from your long association with the LS?

I have produced over 50 publications using LS data and been able to address many research questions for which other data were not suitable. I've also learned a lot about the working of OPCS and later ONS and of course have gained from working with the succession of committed staff at CeLSIUS and am very proud of what the service has achieved. I have also really enjoyed working with Dave Martin and other colleagues in the ESRC Census Programme teams. Of course this has all meant less time for other things.

What are your hopes for the future of the LS?

I very much hope a way will be found to allow linkage to other data sources – as already achieved by the Northern Irish and Scottish sister studies. In the long term it would be a

great boon if accredited researchers were able to access the data – or approved data subsets – in safe settings in their home institutions. From a personal point I am looking forward to helping with the handover of CeLSIUS to the new base at University College London and then to thinking about projects using 2011 Census data which should be made accessible in the LS during autumn 2013.

Events

The CeLSIUS/ONS Joint LS User Consultation meeting, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, 30th May 2012

The ONS and CeLSIUS invited LS users to help ONS decision-making with regard to the 2011 Census variables and LS derived variables.

New projects supported by CeLSIUS

Social disadvantage and infant mortality

Bianca De Stavola, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, University of London, and Emily Grundy, University of Cambridge

Transitions into care and mortality among older people

James Robards, Maria Evandrou, Jane Falkingham and Athina Vlachantoni, University of Southampton

The relationship between informal care-giving and mortality: an analysis using the ONS-LS

Dermot O'Reilly, Queen's University Belfast, Susan Ramsay, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, University of London and Emily Grundy, University of Cambridge

Inter-cohort trends in intergenerational mobility in England 1960-1990: income, status, and class (InTIME)

Franz Buscha, University of Westminster and Patrick Sturgis, University of Southampton

Differences in the risk of mortality following the death of a spouse

Susan Ramsay, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, University of London and Emily Grundy, University of Cambridge

From industries to services: occupational mobility and health in England and Wales

Eleni Kampanellou and Christopher Dibben, University of St Andrews and Frank Popham, Medical Research Council

Investigating individual and inter-generational changes in ethnicity over time and its relationship with measures of health

Rohini Mathur and Liam Smeeth, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, University of London and Emily Grundy, University of Cambridge

Recent publications from CeLSIUS-supported projects

Blomgren J, Martikainen P, Grundy E, Koskinen S. Marital history 1971-91 and mortality 1991-2004 in England & Wales and Finland. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*. 2012; 66: 30-36.

Feng Z, Boyle P, van Ham M, Raab G. Are mixed unions more likely to dissolve than co-ethnic unions? New evidence from Britain. *European Journal of Population*. 2012; 28 (2); 159-176.

Grundy E. Household transitions and subsequent mortality among older people in England and Wales: trends over three decades. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*. 2011; 65 (4): 353-359.

Popham F, Boyle P. Is there a 'Scottish effect' for mortality? Prospective observational study of census linkage studies. *Journal of Public Health*. 2011; 33 (3); 453-458.

Riva M, Curtis S. Associations between local labour market histories and individual health outcomes. *American Journal of Epidemiology*. 2011; 173 (Suppl. 11): S329.

Riva M, Curtis S, Norman P. Residential mobility within England and urban-rural inequalities in mortality. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2011; 73 (12): 1698-1706.

Spencer N, Blackburn C, Read J. Does social disadvantage precede or follow the onset of childhood limiting long term illness/disability? *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*. 2011; 65: A32-A33.

Webb RT, Marshall CE, Abel KM. Teenage motherhood and risk of premature death: long-term follow-up in the ONS Longitudinal Study. *Psychological Medicine*. 2011; 41 (9); 1867-77.

Key links

LS resources

Centre for Longitudinal Study Information and User Support (CeLSIUS):

<http://www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk/>

National Statistics Online: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>

ONS Longitudinal Study:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/who-we-are/services/longitudinal-study/index.html>

Census data support units

census.ac.uk, home of ESRC Census Programme: <http://census.ac.uk/>

Users wishing to use the data provided by CDU, CIDER, UKBORDERS, and SARs must register via census.ac.uk

Census Dissemination Unit (CDU): <http://cdu.mimas.ac.uk/>

Centre for Interaction Data Estimation and Research (CIDER): <http://cids.census.ac.uk/>

UK Boundary datasets (UKBORDERS): <http://www.edina.ac.uk/ukborders/>

Samples of Anonymised Records (SARs): <http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/sars/>

Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS):

www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/NILSResearchSupportUnit/

Scottish Longitudinal Study (SLS): <http://www.lscs.ac.uk/>