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Accounting for age-specific fertility differences between England & Wales and France using the ONS Longitudinal Study

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BSPS
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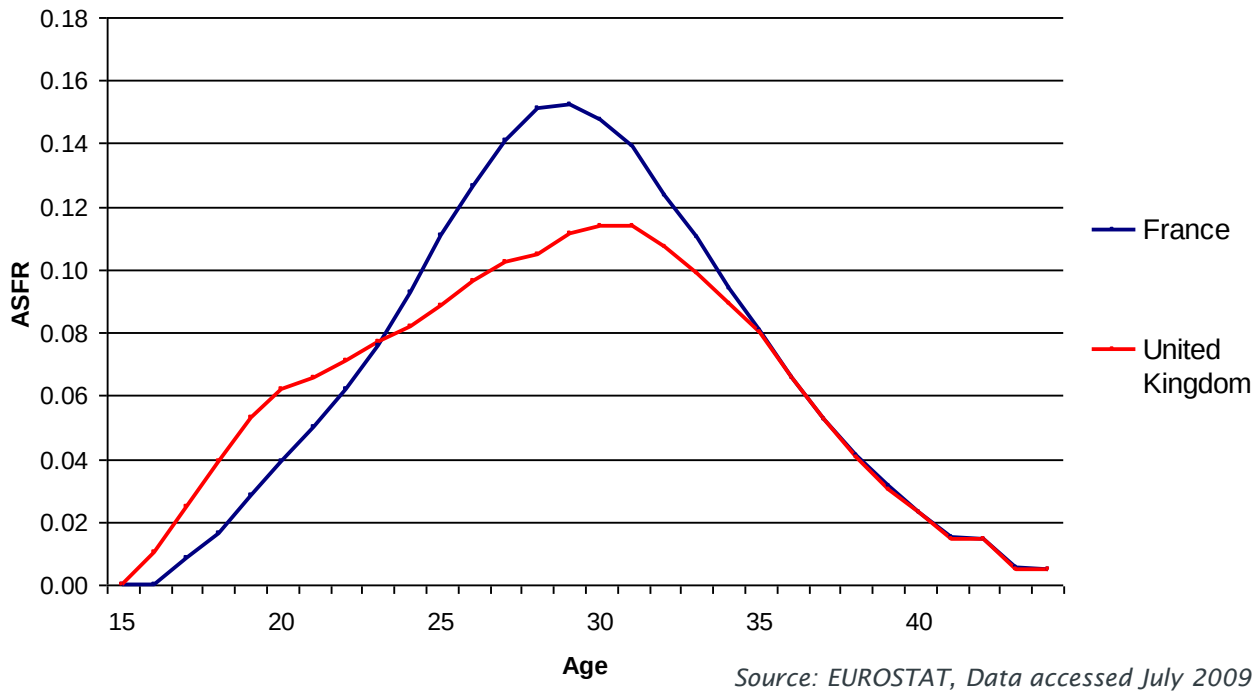
Outline

- Empirical background
- Research questions
- Findings from use of the Longitudinal Study
- Comments and questions

Why compare England & Wales with France?

- Major differences:
  1. Age-specific
  2. Parity
  3. Socio-economic



- ...and policy

- Similar overall period rates

Policy environments

- United Kingdom
  - No coherent family policy
  - Increased benefit levels since 1999 as part of aims to end child poverty
  - No population policy

- France
  - Historically pronatalist
  - High levels of benefits
  - *Allocation Parentale d'Éducation* (*APE*)

Three principal research questions

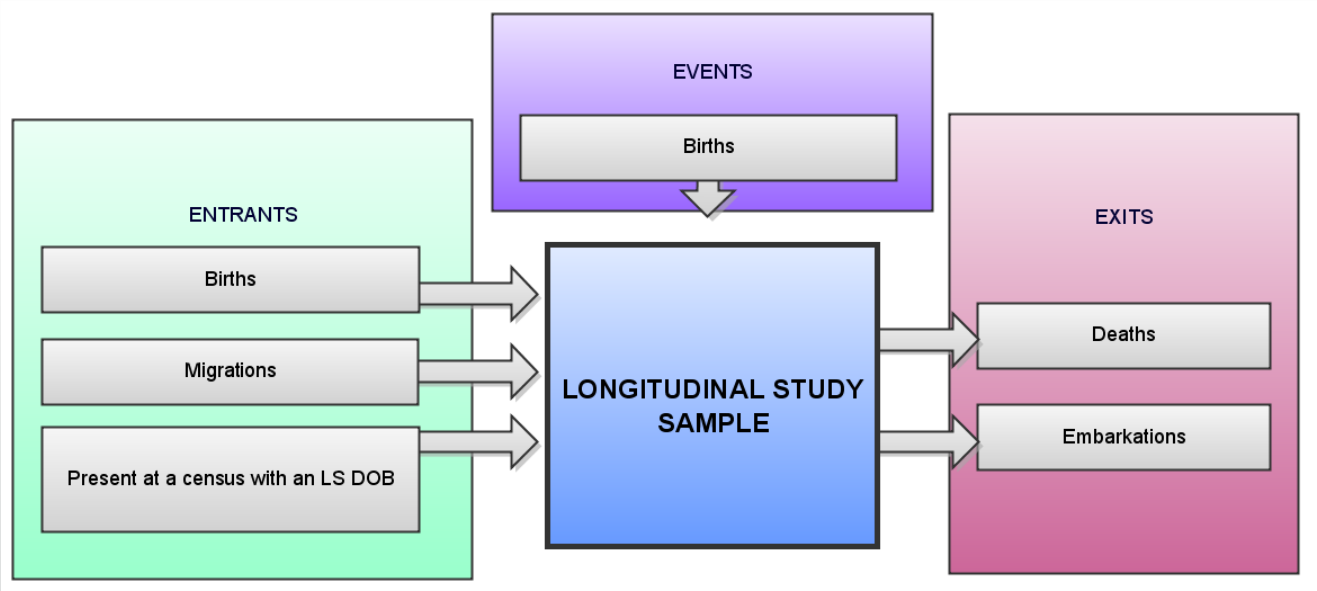
1. How has the fertility of women in their twenties in the UK and France compared over time and in relation to key policy changes?

2. What are the parity-specific fertility trends in the UK and France and have family policy reforms impacted on these?

3. To what extent are differing socio-economic characteristics of fertility in the UK and France related to differences in family policy?

1. How the LS works

- Sample - 1%.
- 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 census data
- Birth, death, migration and cancer data linked



2. Use of LS - findings of others

- ONS reports on tracing, sampling and linkage
  - Tracing rates have improved, particularly for 2001.
  - Lowest rates for women aged 20-24 (2% not traced).
  - Higher among those in the 'inactive' or 'student' economic categories.
  - Highest failure rates for non-UK born.

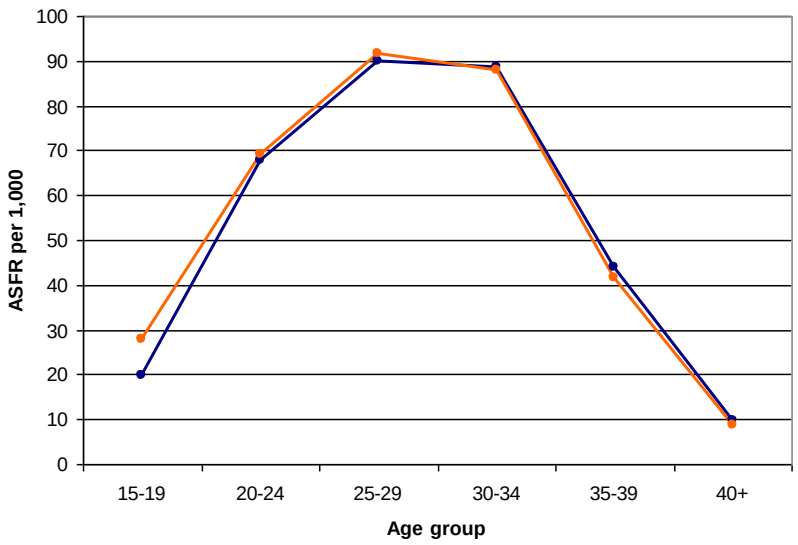
- Published research
  - Babb and Hattersley (1992)
  - Hattersley and Creeser (1995)
  - Rendall and Smallwood (2003)
  - Others – have not given much attention

3. Lower overall fertility rates

Year	LS TFR (filter 1)	LS TFR (filter 2)	ONS Offical TFR
2001	1.15	1.60	1.63
2002	1.29	1.53	1.65
2003	1.21	1.58	1.73
2004	1.27	1.63	1.78
2005	1.28	1.56	1.79
2006	1.35	1.64	1.86

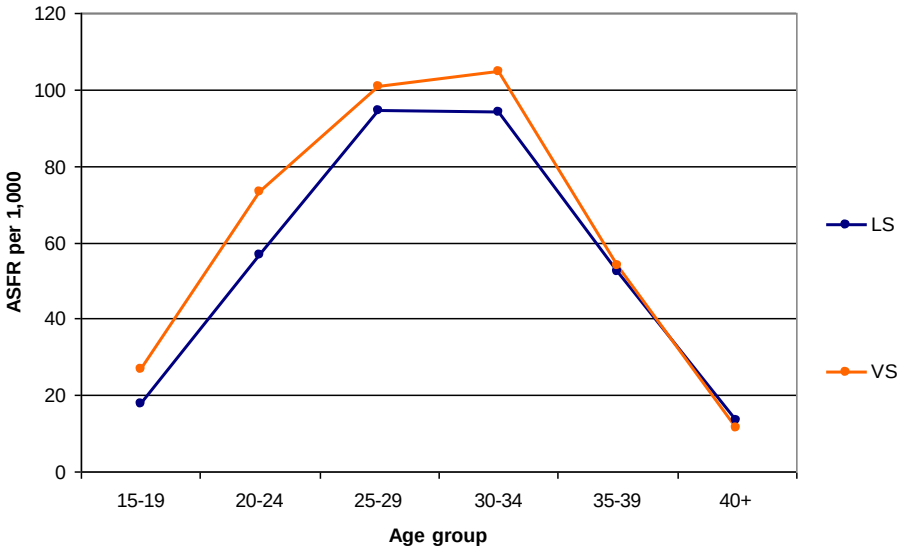
Source: ONS LS, Data accessed August 2009

2001



Source: ONS LS, Data accessed August 2009

2006



Source: ONS LS, Data accessed August 2009

4. Terminology

- **Sampling fraction of official statistics births by LS**

  ‘Sampling fraction’.

  The number of LS births divided by the England & Wales births multiplied by 100.

- **Representation of LS births based on official statistics**

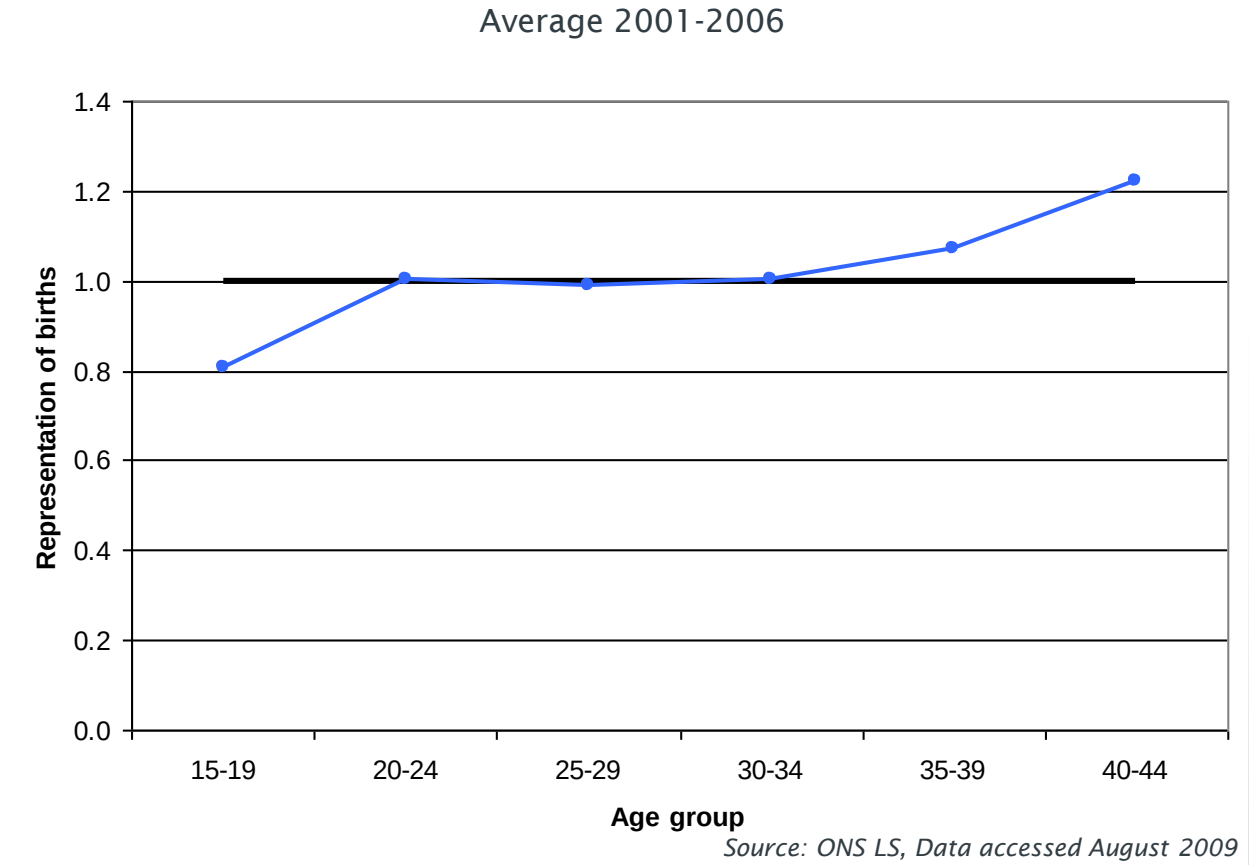
  ‘Linkage rate’.

  The number of births expected in the LS is calculated by dividing 365.25 (days of the year inclusive of 0.25 for leap years) by 4 (the number of birth dates used in the LS) and then multiplying this by the England & Wales births figure.

  The number of LS births divided by the expected births in the LS.

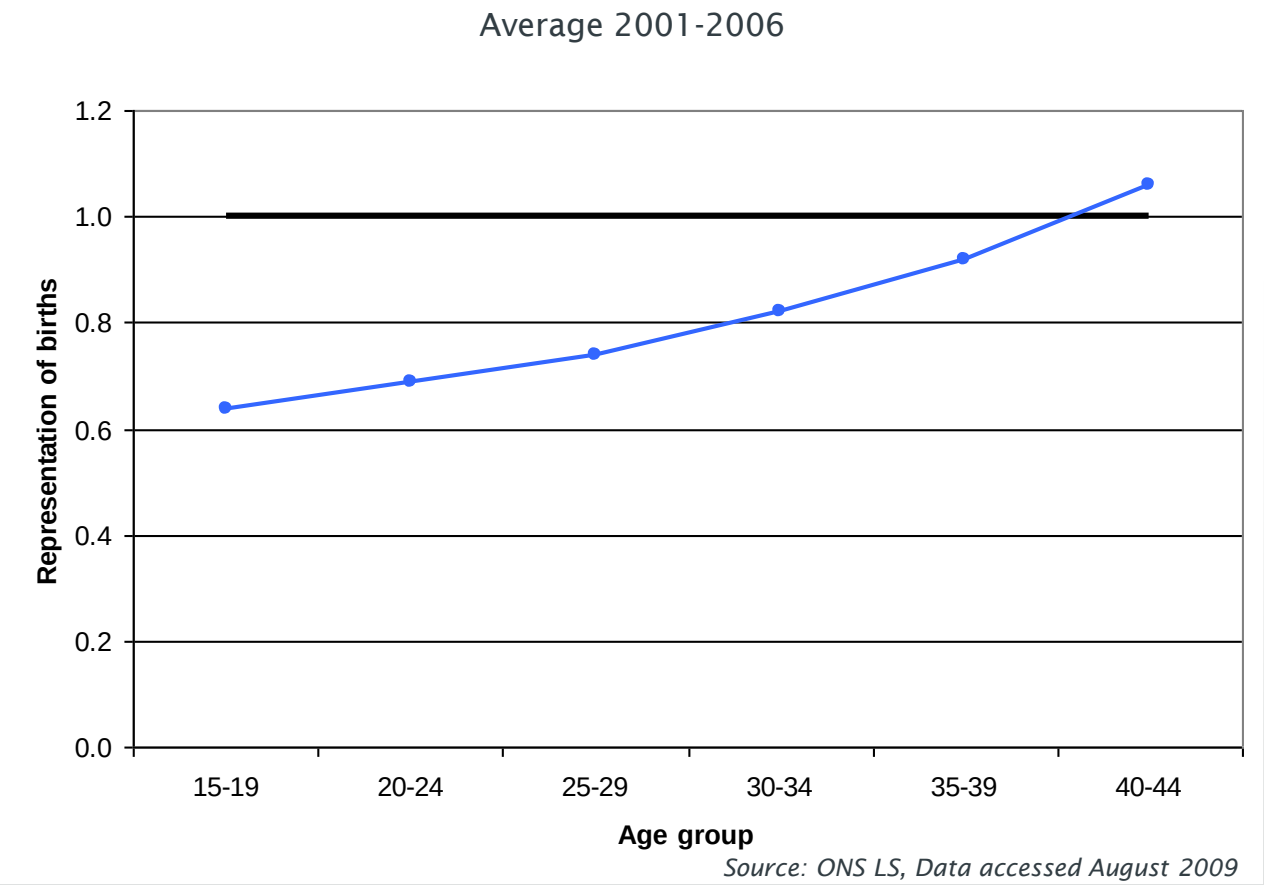
5. Representation of LS births compared to official statistics – filter 1

- **Rates are consistent**



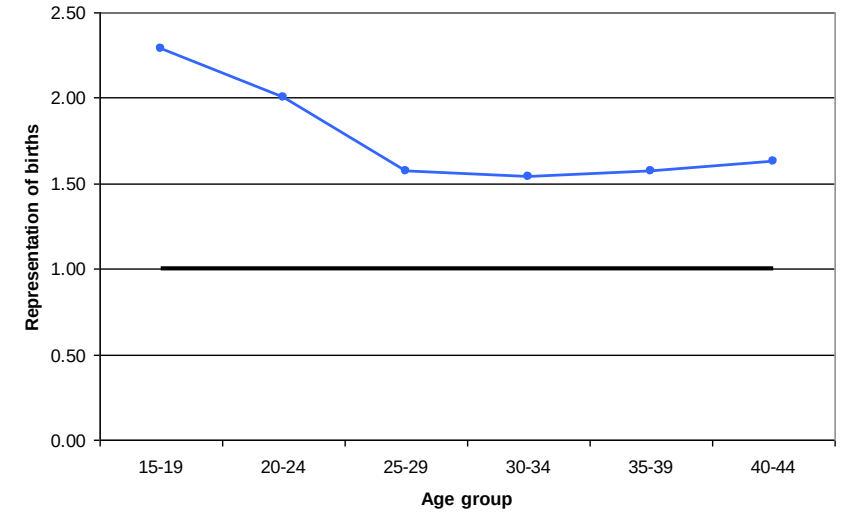
6. Representation of LS births compared to official statistics – filter 2 (present in 2001)

- **Rates increase with age**



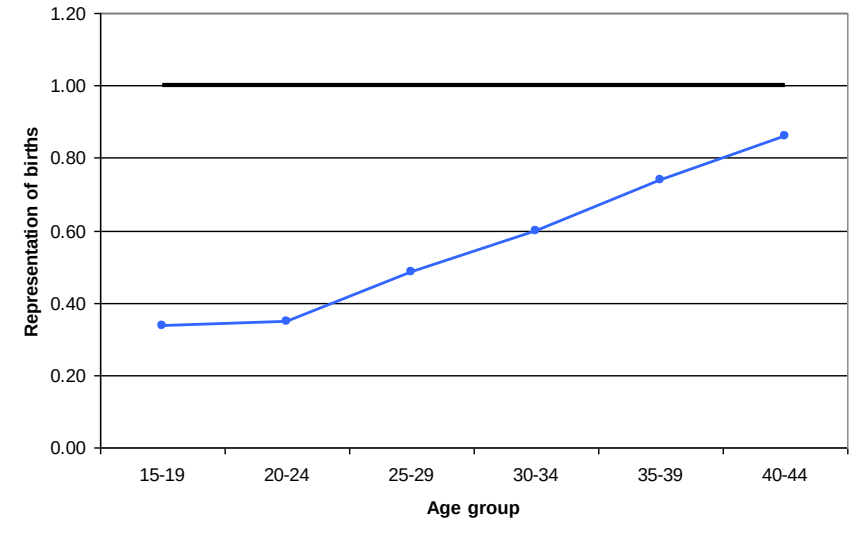
7. Representation of LS births to foreign born women compared to official statistics

Average 2001-2006
-present in 2001



Source: ONS LS, Data accessed August 2009

Average 2001-2006
-filter1



Source: ONS LS, Data accessed August 2009

In summary / next steps

- Representation of births in the LS declines over time.
- By age group the representation declines.

- Use of missing data techniques.
- Techniques of Rendall and Smallwood (2003) seem ideal.
- Narrowly defined population to work with.
- BHPS.

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Using the ONS Longitudinal Study

- **Academic users**

  For help and advice on using the Longitudinal Study, contact the Centre for Longitudinal Study Information and User Support.

  celsius@census.ac.uk / www.celsius.ac.uk

- **Non-academic users**

  Contact the LS unit at ONS

  maus@ons.gov.uk

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Comments and questions please…

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The permission of the Office for National Statistics to use the Longitudinal Study is gratefully acknowledged, as is the help provided by staff of the Centre for Longitudinal Study Information & User Support (CeLSIUS). CeLSIUS is supported by the ESRC Census of Population Programme (Award Ref: RES-348-25-0004). The authors alone are responsible for the interpretation of the data.

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