Economic and Social Research Council

Review of ESRC's Cohort Studies 2024/25: Key Findings and ESRC Actions

Preface

ESRC's cohort studies are a key social science research infrastructure. Over decades, they have enabled researchers to track life trajectories, uncover patterns, and analyse causal relationships—producing evidence that has shaped policy and advanced understanding of social change. They have secured these public benefits by carefully balancing continuity and evolution, most critically in periods of rapid change–such as now.

We are living through era-defining changes in technology, society and the environment. These impact the lives of people the cohorts are there to study, and thus shape ESRC's cohort portfolio. This is why ESRC and the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) recently launched Generation New Era (GNE), the UK's newest birth cohort building on the success of the preceding studies. These changes create opportunities, such as those offered by new data sources and the use of AI, but also present challenges in maintaining participant engagement and ensuring representative samples.

ESRC conducted the Cohorts Review to shape our strategy for the cohort studies, how they should adapt in response to these significant changes and how we can support them to maintain and grow their value to their users and society more widely. As part of this process, ESRC engaged a wide range of stakeholders—including cohort data users and researchers from across the UK and internationally—to gather evidence on the portfolio's structure, scope, and future direction.

A central focus of the review has been sustaining the portfolio over the long-term, balancing the considerable opportunities available with the available budget. The review offers a realistic appraisal of what can be achieved—considering the optimal timing between cohorts, the scheduling of data collection, and clarifying criteria for transitioning studies from active collection.

Throughout the review, ESRC have welcomed stakeholder scrutiny of our long-term approach to investing in cohort studies. Though the evidence in the review demonstrates this approach has been, and continues to be, highly successful, an effective funder must periodically reflect on how to best sustain and enhance the impact of its investment. Accordingly, ESRC will remain curious in its approach and draw on partner input to achieve this, as demonstrated by the actions below.

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Summary of ESRC Actions

The following is a short summary of the actions ESRC will take based on the findings of the review of ESRC's cohorts hosted by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS). Further detail and rationale informing these actions can be found in sections 4 and 5. The first two actions relate to the long-term shape of the cohorts model.

1. **Engage stakeholders on whether alternative cohort models could generate improved scientific and public benefits:** Reflecting the advice of some stakeholders, ESRC will create opportunities for the existing and potential users of cohort data to discuss whether alternative models could improve research outcomes before commissioning a new life-course cohort.

2. **Aim to establish a new cohort once every 25 years:** If proceeding with life-course cohorts, ESRC will aim to commission a new cohort once every 25 years, unless there is a period of very rapid social change.

The remaining actions relate to improving and refining the existing cohorts.

3. **Sunset support for Next Steps:** ESRC will stop funding active data collection on Next Steps and focus on securing the long-term value of prior investment. ESRC's approach for delivering this action will be designed such that it can be extended to the other cohorts when appropriate.

4. **Continue collecting life-course data twice a decade:** Whilst active data collection on a cohort continues, ESRC will fund a data collection sweep roughly twice a decade, and more frequently in childhood.

5. **Specify statistical conditions for triggering a reassessment of active data collection on a cohort:** ESRC to convene an expert group to specify conditions for triggering a review of active data collection on a cohort based on the statistical analyses they are able to support. Following such a review, either active data collection will be stopped, or new reassessment conditions will be established.

6. **Clarify where, why and how the cohorts are aligned:** ESRC will require CLS to develop and publish a clear framework for what content and data is shared between cohorts and why – whether that is longitudinally, at a given age or time of data collection, by design or through retrospective harmonisation.

7. **Empower a broader research community to help deliver, design and use the existing cohorts:** ESRC will require CLS to further open its processes to external input, ensure that stakeholders outside the host institution and CLS's established networks

understand when and how they can meaningfully contribute and thus embed stakeholder needs throughout the design and delivery.

8. **Address the complexity of cohort data:** ESRC will prioritise helping users to manage the innate complexity of cohort data, while actively reducing avoidable complexity that creates barriers to usability and accessibility.

9. **Prioritise combating attrition and missing data:** ESRC will focus its resources on maintaining and improving data quality and enhancements to scientific capability with a low impact on participant retention.

10. **Continue enhancing cohort data through linkages:** ESRC will continue to support the studies in developing data linkages as a key means to enhancing scientific utility whilst minimising the impact on participant retention.

11. **Continue refining content and utility of the cohorts:** ESRC will –

    a) Maintain support for research on a range of themes including areas of existing strengths, notably inequality, education, health, and care.

    b) Ask CLS to improve support for research on productivity, climate change, the home environment, changing family systems and digital life.

    c) Explore further enhancing measures of interactions with digital technology and links with administrative income data.

12. **Prioritise longitudinal utility over making the studies representative of their age group:** the target sample for the cohorts should remain the UK-born population of a given age and will not be extended to cover immigrants of that age (e.g., via sample boosts) at the current time. ESRC will aim to reassess this in 2035.

13. **Improve transparency about which groups cohorts are designed to represent:** ESRC to work with CLS to ensure users are clear that the existing cohorts' target populations exclude immigrants of the same age and encourage this to be reflected in how the studies are portrayed and findings are communicated.

14. **Further investigate the need for enhancing cohort data in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland:** ESRC will carry out further research and consult with stakeholders to evaluate the need for enhancing cohort data in these regions (e.g., via sample boosts).

1. Background

ESRC has supported cohort data collection since its inception 60 years ago. ESRC funds the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) within University College London (UCL) to deliver the current ESRC portfolio of four cohort studies:

- **National Child Development Study (NCDS):** birth cohort of around 17,000 people born in Great Britain (not Northern Ireland) across one week in 1958, subsequently extended to become a whole life-course study.

- **1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70):** birth cohort of around 17,0004 people born in Great Britain (not Northern Ireland) across one week in 1970, subsequently extended to become a whole life-course study.

- **Next Steps (NS):** Next Steps, formerly "the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE)", was initiated by Department for Education (DfE) as a cohort of around 16,000 children in England aged 13-14 in 2004. DfE-funded data collection ceased in 2010. In 2013, the management of the study was transferred to CLS and in 2015, ESRC took a decision to fund data collection on this cohort.

- **Millennium Cohort Study (MCS):** birth cohort of around 19,000 young people born across the UK between 2000 and 2002, designed as a life-course study.

In particular, other than Next Steps, data collection begins from birth or early infancy and continue until later stages of life, most often post-retirement age. Each study is a birth cohort, defined by the shared characteristic that all participants were born around the same time.

CLS conducts data collection on each cohort every 4-6 years, primarily via a survey.

In 2024, ESRC initiated a review of existing studies to inform the future development of its portfolio, including both the next phase of CLS funding, which ESRC anticipates commissioning towards the end of 2025, and potential longer-term changes.

In parallel, ESRC commissioned CLS to deliver **Generation New Era (GNE)**, a new cohort study following children born in the late 2020s, which officially launched in 2025.

2. Review objectives

The aim of the Cohorts Review was to inform the development of a clear rationale and strategy for ESRC's short, medium and long-term funding of cohort studies.

More specifically the review aimed to:

1. **Understand the strategic value and clarify the collective purpose of cohort studies** – explore the distinct value and potential of cohort-based data to research and policy over the long-term, and where it can enable significant impact. This will enable ESRC to better specify what its collective investment in cohort studies is expected to achieve.

2. **Evaluate the existing cohorts –** examine the historic and current use of existing cohorts, their impact and relative strengths and weaknesses, considering changes in the relevant landscape including new cohorts, types of data, and research interest (e.g., inclusion of biological samples) and methods (e.g., linkage, use of AI tools and technologies). This will inform the practical implementation of future ESRC investment.

3. **Optimise investment in the cohort studies –** examine how ESRC should utilise its constrained resources to best deliver the distinct benefits of cohort data over the long-term, in particular how ESRC should balance the following parameters:

    a) **Time period between cohorts:** the optimal gap between successive cohorts based on factors that influence research demand (e.g., rate of change in social circumstances, time for learning between cohorts).
    b) **Timing of data collection:** when and how often data should be collected in the life course.
    c) **How and when data collection on a cohort should end:** the principles for when activity associated to a cohort should be scaled down or ended.
    d) **Groups on which cohorts should enable research**: the groups or populations on which cohorts should enable significant, robust research over their life course, potentially through boosted samples.
    e) **High-level content priorities:** the principles behind what data should be collected (e.g., degree of harmonisation and comparability across waves of data collection and cohorts, responsiveness to prevailing research/policy needs for a given generation at the time, extent to which other sources of data address the same need).
    f) **Data collection methods:** the approaches used to create the data now and, in the future, including innovation in methods (e.g., by using web surveys, passive data collection, linkages to other forms of data, including smart and administrative data).

The key questions associated with each of these objectives can be found in Annex 1. Please note that ESRC aimed to address the questions for Objectives 1 and 2, while focusing its efforts for Objective 3 on areas identified as most valuable based on the insights from Objectives 1 and 2.

3. Approach

ESRC gathered evidence through a range of stakeholder meetings and desk-based research.

The list of stakeholders was created by ESRC, considering suggestions from CLS and other members of the wider social science community. It included individuals both within and outside UK, and representatives of academia, policymakers, government, and non-government organisations. Stakeholder engagement predominantly took place between Summer 2024 and Spring 2025 and typically included a 30–60 minute structured discussion with follow up correspondence by email. A total of 45 meetings were conducted including 48 stakeholders in addition to several discussions with CLS staff.

The desk-based research examined previous reviews relevant to the ESRC and other cohort studies, the UK and international cohort landscapes, reports from CLS (particularly the interim report on the impact evidence programme), data downloads, and publications citing cohort data.

Details of the stakeholder groups consulted, along with other additional sources, are provided in Annex 2. Information from internal reports has been included with the consent of the relevant investment teams.

4. Key findings

4.1 Value to stakeholders

The existing cohort studies are highly valued by a large number of researchers. The stakeholders interviewed were highly appreciative of the range of topics covered and the quality of the data, indicating how the studies are a prized source of secondary data. International stakeholders highlighted how the cohorts are a unique research resource; no other country has a national lifelong cohort, let alone several supporting the potential for research across generations. Researchers around the world use the data to study how societies function and evolve over periods of time.

The usage figures support this conclusion with over 1000 users each year and over 6000 publications[1] that use the cohorts, with nearly one in five users and two in five corresponding authors from outside the UK. We have compared utilisation metrics for the cohorts and ESRC's other large social survey Understanding Society. The average total number of data users per year across all the cohorts is ~1300, to Understanding Society's ~4000[2]. There are significant methodological challenges in identifying publications that utilise research infrastructures, and a range of distinctive approaches for doing so. The CLS bibliography identifies around 280-360 new publications a year and Understanding Society

[1] Figures on Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS): CLS, *Measuring the Impact of the CLS Cohort Studies* (July 2024, internal report, not publicly available).
[2] Figures on Understanding Society: Understanding Society, *UK Household Longitudinal Study Annual Report 2024 (2024)*, Understanding Society 2024 Annual Report

around 320-450, with the latter including some categories of publication not included by the former.

Understanding Society receives substantially more funding, but using the figures above, the number of users of CLS per year per £ is estimated to be at least 30% lower even when using low estimates of CLS's cost per year. Based on these figures, CLS performs at least as well as Understanding Society in the number of papers identified using their data per year per £ and performs significant better when using low estimates of CLS's cost per year. This may relate to differences in the study models, notably cohorts having less frequent data collection and their utility being more focused on research and motivating policy change (the latter is discussed in section 4.2).

The CLS impact evidence report analysed 1,296 journal articles, books, and book chapters published between 2018 and 2023 that used cohort data, identifying 6,336 unique authors. Of these, 850 authors were from UCL, including 571 from outside the Institute of Education where CLS is based. This figure is significantly higher than that of the next most represented institution, the University of Cambridge (234 authors). This suggests a broad user base across institutions, with the most significant concentration within the host institution. Several factors may contribute to this, such as UCL's overall size and its large user base of quantitative researchers.

Over the course of the review, three core types of research the cohorts enable emerged:

1. **Life trajectory / life course:** owing to their longitudinal design spanning the entire lifespan, cohort studies—especially birth cohorts—offer a unique opportunity to examine individuals' development and experiences across time. They enable researchers to explore how circumstances, exposures, and events at different life stages—from early childhood through adulthood and into older age—shape later outcomes in areas such as health, education, employment, and wellbeing.

2. **Intergenerational impact:** data on key variables is not only available on cohort members but their parents, and in some instances grandparents and children, enabling research on intergenerational transfer in some cases

3. **Historical and contemporary insights**: cohort data captures what it is like to be born and live at a particular point in time, offering invaluable evidence on social and historical change. They provide both immediate insights into current issues and enduring value for understanding the past and informing future research.

Having a set of cohorts further enhances this value enabling researchers to compare long-term trajectories of generations. The cohorts provide larger sample sizes at the available ages and data collected over a longer time period than other studies. However, the cohorts are less useful for comparing all generations at a given time than other studies collecting data across more or all age groups at the same time. The potential for cross-cohort and

multicohort research was frequently highlighted, with the existing cohorts in an internationally unique position due to existing and potential harmonisation.

Administrative data is highly valuable to stakeholders but cannot replace cohort survey data collection. Cohort survey data is purpose built for research and provides rich information on people's lives, capturing subjective experiences. In contrast, administrative data are typically objective, not subject to participant attrition, and reduce respondent burden. Value is maximised by linking survey and administrative data and balancing their complementary strengths.

4.2 The strategic vision and its implementation

CLS and the research community are well-aligned on the types of research the existing life-course cohort model should support, namely research that helps builds a picture of causality between earlier and later life circumstances and events, and how this may change between different UK-born generations.

Identifying the key life stages and factors that lead to later outcomes is highly valuable. It enables researchers to conduct exploratory research looking for long-term patterns that may otherwise be difficult to discern, as well as enabling hypothesis-driven research. It often contributes to an evidence base for people to advocate for where policy interventions are needed. However, often research based on the life-course cohorts is of more limited utility for finessing the design of a specific policy changes or evaluations, as these activities typically take place on far shorter timescales. This may be why the largest non-academic user group of the cohorts is from the third sector, rather than government. This relative focus means ESRC support is a critical foundation for the existing cohort model.

The existing cohort model has evolved over time. Broadly, the model that CLS and its main users currently advocate as best supporting this research includes the following principles:

- a new cohort is recruited whenever sufficient time has passed for significant social change to have occurred, at least once every 12 years
- participants are recruited early in life, no later than 1 year old and preferably earlier
- a representative sample of the UK-born population over a period of ~1-2 years
- data is collected on themes covering the breadth of significant life experiences and circumstances
- alignment in themes and questions:
- longitudinally: at different data collection sweeps from the same cohort
- by life stage: at data collection sweeps when cohorts are at a specific age
- data collection on cohorts every 4-6 years in adulthood and more frequently in childhood
- data collection is conducted using mixed modes (web and face to face)

However, partly because this model builds on learning from the cohorts themselves, ESRC considers the existing suite of cohorts to be some way from fully meeting these characteristics.

The table below illustrates how cohort studies align with key life-course research properties, including data availability, UK coverage, coverage of life experiences, representation, and sample size. Each study has been assessed by ESRC as fully, mostly, partially, or limited in meeting each property.

Table 1 - ESRC assessment of cohort studies against desired life-course properties

Source of data	Life course data	Geographical coverage (UK)	Coverage of life experiences, circumstances and outcomes	Representation and inclusion of key sub-groups of the target population	Sufficient sample size for robust statistical analysis
1958 National Child Development Study (NCDS)	Fully meets this property.	Partially meets this property: excludes Northern Ireland	Fully meets this property.	Mostly meets this property: sample all born within one week.	Fully meets this property.
1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70)	Fully meets this property.	Partially meets this property: excludes Northern Ireland	Fully meets this property.	Mostly meets this property: sample all born within one week.	Fully meets this property.
Next Steps	Meets this property to a limited extent: data collection started age 14. Some retrospective data available.	Does not meet this property: England only.	Partially meets this property: limited prior to ESRC funding.	Fully meets this property.	Fully meets this property.
Millenium Cohort Study (MCS)	Fully meets this property.	Fully meets this property.	Fully meets this property.	Fully meets this property.	Fully meets this property.

MCS is considered the only individual cohort that meets all the design principles articulated above. As earlier cohorts that informed MCS, NCDS and BCS70 understandably do not meet all of its properties: they were recruited over a single week and do not include Northern

Ireland. Next Steps, as a former Department for Education cohort that was been repurposed, does not meet the ideal in several ways. It lacks comprehensive life course data—though efforts are underway to address this through admin data linkages and a retrospective module at age 32 capturing key early-life events. Additionally, it is England-only, and its earlier waves have a narrower focus on education. All the existing cohorts have limited sample sizes in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, which may have constrained their use in these regions.

Collectively, maintaining a suite of aligned cohorts has been challenging. There was a 30+ year gap between BCS70 and MCS, which was a key strategic driver for adopting Next Steps as a substitute 90s cohort. There will be a 25+ year gap between MCS and the new cohort, Generation New Era. In addition, interviews with external stakeholders revealed a lack of clarity regarding which themes, questions, and data are aligned across cohorts, and how decisions about this alignment have been made.

Issues of alignment arise because sustaining consistent and comparable data collection across generations is inherently difficult. Coordinating and harmonising cohort data over such extended periods is an ambitious undertaking, both within and beyond the social sciences. As a result, the cohort model is particularly sensitive to the following challenges:

1. **Funding availability:** each new cohort has a high start-up cost and significant long-term, ongoing costs. This means they are major investments for ESRC, and thus the effective implementation of any cohort model is highly dependent on ESRC budget availability and competing priorities at the time. A suite of life-course cohorts are particularly vulnerable to delay or (as between BCS70 and MCS) skipping a cohort entirely

2. **Developments in scientific approaches:** all longitudinal studies must balance maintaining consistency with using the most up-to-date approaches to maximise their scientific potential. The existing model exacerbates this challenge, as newer cohorts also need to consider comparability with previous cohorts when they were the same age, using approaches from several decades earlier

3. **Recruitment and attrition:** longitudinal studies need to recruit and retain sufficient sample members to remain representative of their original target population. Over long-time scales, this also means retaining members through life transitions. It should be noted that CLS has been effective in minimising attrition; however, trends in the wider survey research community suggest recruiting and retaining participants for surveys is becoming increasingly challenging

The complexity of cross-cohort research is further increased by changing social constructs. Over time, societal concepts—such as gender or the definition of being “well off”—evolve, meaning that even if survey instruments remain consistent, the underlying phenomena they

measure may not.

4.3 How the studies are used

This section draws heavily on the CLS impact evidence programme's interim evidence report (2018–2023)[3], which provides exemplary evidence on who is using the studies, the extent of their use, and the reasons behind it. Here, we present only a small selection of the information included in the report.

The CLS impact evidence team analysed data provided by the UK Data Service on users who access CLS cohort data via the End User Licence or Special Licence. Users were counted once per year they downloaded the data. See Figures A and B below.

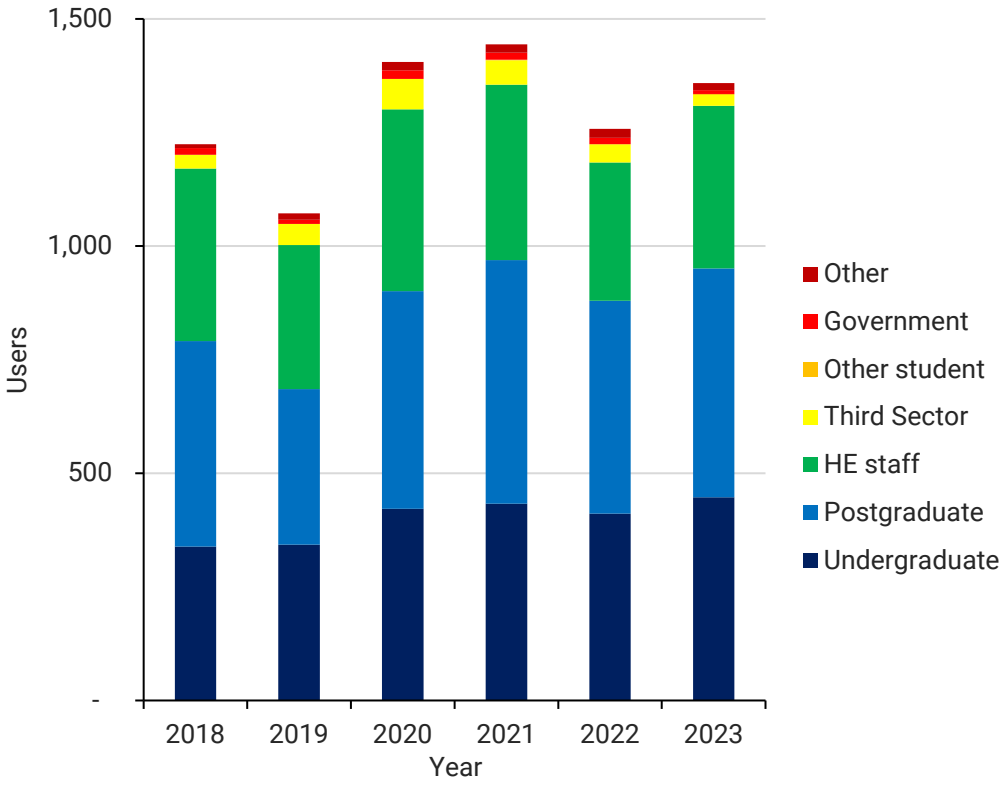
Figure 1 highlights how CLS users via UKDS are concentrated in research organisations, in particular those who identified as undergraduate, postgraduate and staff at the time of registration with the service. There is lower but significant use by those who identified as the third sector or government at the time of registration.

Figure 2 highlights the distribution of users by self-identified discipline. Upon registering with UKDS, users are required to select their 'best fit' discipline from a pre-defined list. Economics & Finance represents the largest group (30.1%), followed by Psychology (16.4%), other Social Sciences (15.2%), and Medicine & Clinical (11.3%).

The full underlying data for these figures are presented in Annex 2.

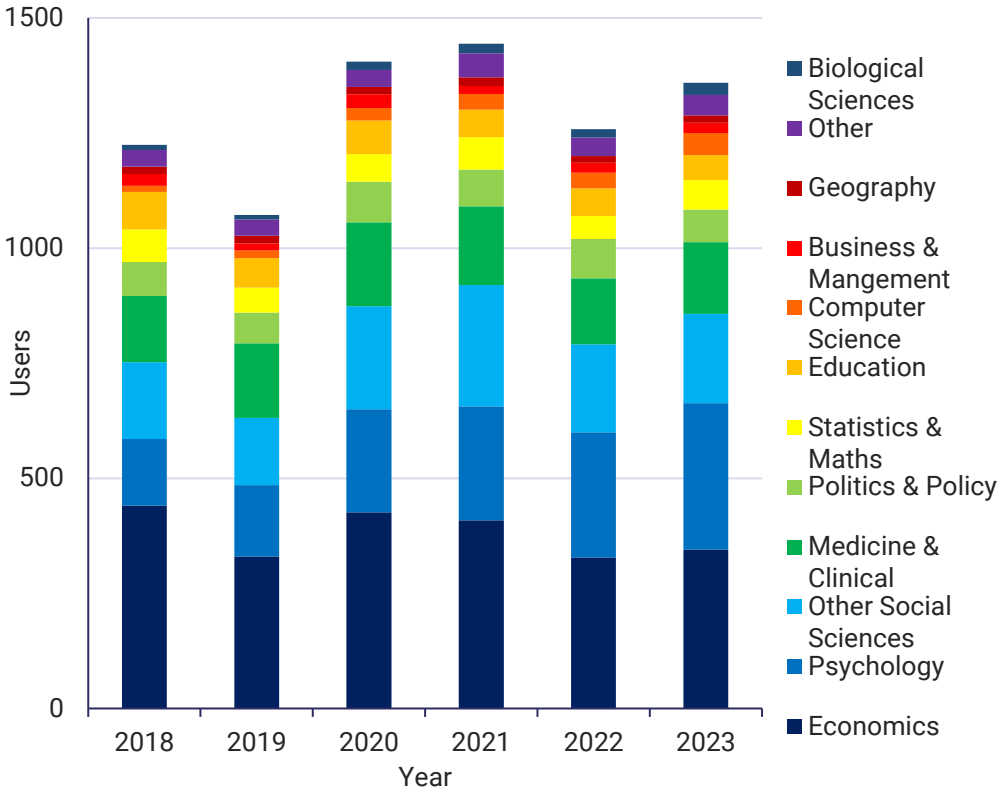
[3] CLS, *Measuring the Impact of the CLS Cohort Studies* (July 2024, internal report, not publicly available).

Figure 1 - Number of cohort data users per year from 2018 to 2023, grouped by user type (data from UKDS; chart by CLS)



Alt text for Figure 1: Stacked bar chart showing user counts from 2018 to 2023 across categories: Undergraduate, Postgraduate, HE staff, Third Sector, Other student, Government, and Other.

Figure 2 - Number of cohort data users per year from 2018 to 2023, grouped by disciplinary background (data from UKDS; chart by CLS)



Alt text for Figure 2: Stacked bar chart showing user counts from 2018 to 2023 across disciplines: Economics, Psychology, Other Social Sciences, Medicine & Clinical, Politics & Policy, Statistics & Maths, Education, Computer Science, Business & Management, Geography, Other, and Biological Sciences.

This data provide insights into how the cohorts are used, both individually and collectively.

The table below presents the average number of data users, projects, publications, and policy citations per year for cohort studies from 2018 to 2023, along with totals across all cohorts.

Table 2 - Average annual data users, projects, publications, and policy citations for cohort studies (2018–2023), compiled by ESRC

	NCDS	BCS70	Next Steps	MCS	Any cohort*
Average # users / year (UKDS)	290	331	222	676	1294
Average # projects / year (UKDS)	305	352	229	720	1409
Average # publications / year (CLS Bibliography)	140	79	37	121	298
Average # policy citations / year (Overton)	28	31	14	80	132

* This column counts unique items using one or more cohorts; items using two or more cohorts are only counted once, so the total is less than the sum of the individual cohorts.

Overall, MCS is the most widely used of the studies, followed by NCDS and BCS70. In contrast, Next Steps is used significantly less than the others—a pattern that is also reflected in ESRC's engagement with academic stakeholders. Identifying users of Next Steps for this review proved more challenging, and those who did engage primarily used data collected during the cohort's time under the Department for Education, rather than from the first wave funded by the ESRC.

The reasons behind this lower level of use remain unclear. It may reflect limited research interest in the specific life stage covered by Next Steps, or there may be intrinsic features of the study that make it less appealing or accessible to researchers. However, its comparatively low uptake could suggest that early life data is a key driver of research interest and engagement.

The CLS impact evidence programme's interim report highlights that differences in projects, publications, and policy citations across studies reflect factors such as study design and user communities, particularly disciplinary background. Comparing publication volumes is inherently complex due to variations in disciplinary publishing conventions. For example, Next Steps has fewer users from epidemiology and health-related fields—disciplines typically associated with higher outputs—partly explaining its relatively lower publication count. Therefore, direct comparisons between cohorts should be made with caution.

Further insight comes from an analysis of 1,296 journal articles, books, and book chapters using CLS cohort data, which demonstrates how different cohorts are used in combination. This analysis was necessarily limited to publications with DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers), as these are required for scientometric analyses. Among papers using NCDS, 23% also drew on at least one other CLS cohort. The corresponding figures were 51% for BCS70, 41% for Next Steps, and 13% for MCS. These findings underscore the meaningful and complementary use of multiple cohorts.

To assess longitudinal engagement more broadly, ESRC analysed a random subsample of 196 papers from the CLS Bibliography. They found that 73% of papers drew on multiple waves from at least one cohort, confirming a strong pattern of longitudinal usage consistent with the studies' design and purpose.

4.4 How the studies generate impact

The cohort studies support a variety of types of research and policy impact. The below table includes several illustrative, qualitative examples of the type of research facilitated by cohort data.

Table 3 - Illustrative examples of research and policy impacts supported by cohort studies

Type of use/impact	Example
Research: life trajectory	Research using BCS70 investigating the impact of adult literacy and numeracy had a strong relationship with negative outcomes in adult life. The trajectory of this disadvantage begins in early life. Research also identified this impacted the children of parents with lower literacy and numeracy skills. This research has been cited in various policy documents and more. For further details, please see Institute of Education's report.
Research: intergenerational impact	Research using NCDS, BCS70 (and their children), ALSPAC, MCS, BHPS and children of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth helped change the presumption that children are affected by their mothers working. This influenced welfare to work policies, including parental leave. For further details, see case study 6 in the ESRC Longitudinal Studies Review.

Research: comparing life trajectories of different UK-born cohorts	Research using MCS, ALSPAC, BCS70, NCDS and NSHD shows an increase in BMI across generations, with those born more recently experiencing a higher probability of overweight or obesity. For further details, see Johnson et al (2015).
Research: historical	Research investigating secondary education and social change in the UK since 1945 used both qualitative and quantitative data from NCDS and the 1946 birth cohort to understand peoples' experiences at this time. For further details, see the Secondary Education and Social Change in the UK since 1945 project website.
Research: connecting physical and social factors influencing health	Genetic data collection in NCDS at the age 44 biomedical sweep has led to a mass of contributions to genetics research due to its inclusion in the Wellcome Trust Case Control Consortium genome wide association study. NCDS is now in the top 5 most-used datasets worldwide for genome wide association studies (Mills and Rahal, 2019).
Motivating policy change: academic-led	Research on MCS identified the scale of mental ill-health among adolescents in the UK and studied the drivers, focused national attention on this issue prompting government policy and strategies. The work here was awarded an ESRC impact prize in 202. For further details, see the ESRC webpage.
Motivating policy change: government-led	MCS, Next Steps, BCS70 and NCDS (alongside other longitudinal studies) were cited in the National institute for Health and Care Excellence on Long Covid which provides recommendations to GP's on identification and care among other things. For further details, see the NICE Guideline.
Motivating policy change: third sector-led	Research using Next Steps by Operation Black Vote, the Carnegie Trust and researchers at CLS investigated ethnic differences in labour market precarity. This research was used as evidence in the Unequal Impact inquiry by the House of Commons Women and Inequalities Committee in 2020, contributing to discussions on the impact of COVID-19 and economic inequalities experienced by BAME communities.

As discussed in section 4.2, the studies have a particular strength for supporting curiosity driven research and motivating policy change as they can be used to identify associations or potentially causal relationships between life experiences and circumstances over long periods of time. This is what they are designed to support, and thus where ESRC should expect its use and impact to be focused. The studies can sometimes be used to inform the design of specific details in policy changes or to evaluate the impact of initiatives, depending on how well their timings and content align with cohort data collection. For example, the new cohort, Generation New Era, will begin shortly after the government

increases the availability of free childcare and is likely to serve as an evidence base for assessing the impacts of these changes. Similar opportunities must be adequately tensioned with any effects they have on the long-term scientific utility of the cohorts.

4.5 Meeting cohort data user needs

In general, the stakeholders consulted were highly supportive of the cohorts. The quality of the data was perceived as being high and there was broad satisfaction with the topic coverage. Many stakeholders highlighted that data from the cohort studies is amongst the most accessible for researchers, and how highly they valued that in facilitating the research process. The studies are performing well but have room to improve:

- cross-cohort alignment
- empowering stakeholders in study design, delivery and use
- study complexity
- support for some upcoming thematic areas
- transparency around which groups the cohorts represent

Each of these are the focus of specific ESRC actions, and further details can be found in section 5. We focus the remainder of this section on the needs highlighted by users that are not specifically addressed by the actions resulting from this review.

Several stakeholders noted that it is not uncommon for inexperienced users to struggle to use the data if they are not well supported by prior users, many of whom have strong existing links to CLS. This is a challenge that is regularly cited with many of ESRC's datasets, particularly those at large scale like the cohorts. ESRC has ongoing programmes in skills and the development of data services which aim to improve these wider issues, and ESRC will continue working with individual data collections to improve accessibility.

5. ESRC Actions and rationales

This section describes the actions ESRC will take as a result of the review and the rationale for them.

1. Engage stakeholders on whether alternative cohort models could generate improved scientific and public benefits: Reflecting the advice of some stakeholders, ESRC will create opportunities for the existing and potential users of cohort data to discuss whether alternative models could improve research outcomes before commissioning a new life-course cohort.

Engagement suggested many stakeholders highly value the existing life-course cohorts. However, some believed the current model may not be maximising the scientific benefit of

the investment and it may be time for ESRC and the broader social science community to reflect on this.

There is significant evidence that whole life-course studies are highly ambitious. Their longevity means they are particularly vulnerable to the typical threats to longitudinal studies outlined in section 4.2, and this is compounded as alignment between cohorts is increased. It is possible, given the increasing challenges facing survey fieldwork and retaining participants, that the existing model may become unviable, and alternatives will be required. The second wave of ESRC's new life-course cohort will provide key indications to underpin any discussion on alternative models.

Alternative models may include (groups of) studies designed to:

- target key life stages or transitions (e.g. childhood into early adulthood, retirement) where there is a particular research need
- target research areas where cohorts can provide unique value
- capture the experiences of whole generations living in the UK (as opposed to just those born here)
- understand distinct social environments in the UK (e.g. selections of communities in coastal, metropolitan or rural areas) with a shared, common core question set/themes
- rely on a different balance of data on cohort members, including administrative, smart or qualitative data as well as quantitative survey data e.g., an administrative data core with survey data as a supplement

Such studies need not be life-course studies. There is also a case that some of the alternative models above may be most effective when embedded within a wider life-course framework. Discussions may conclude that the existing life-course model is the most suitable, and if so, that will strengthen the long-term strategic case for the current approach. They could also conclude that a different balance in investment between life-course and other models would be more optimal.

Any new cohort would also need to be strategically prioritised over other opportunities.

2. Aim to establish a new cohort once every 25 years: If proceeding with life-course cohorts, ESRC will reduce the frequency with which it aims to establish new cohorts to once every 25 years, unless there is a period of very rapid social change.

The UK's oldest national birth cohort study began in 1946 (MRC). Subsequent cohorts were born in 1958 and 1970, creating a 12-year gap between studies. At the time, this interval was considered optimal for capturing contemporaneous data on children to inform policy, while also allowing social and policy changes to enhance each cohort's distinctiveness and usefulness.

Since 1970, for a variety of reasons, gaps between nationally representative birth cohorts have widened significantly. There was a 30-year gap between BCS70 and MCS and the interval between MCS and the proposed new cohort will be at around 25 years. These longer gaps reduce the availability of life-course data, especially in early childhood—a critical period for research—and may leave gaps in understanding for new generations. For example, the ESRC review team recognises that the gap following MCS was a factor in the Department for Education's launch of the Children of the 2020s (Cot20s) study, which tracks approximately 8,500 children born in late 2021.

Launching a new cohort every 12 years and maintaining it until around age 84 would mean supporting approximately eight cohorts concurrently, requiring substantial and sustained funding increases. The opportunity costs of such expansion must be carefully weighed.

Over the past six decades, the broader data landscape has evolved. Alongside traditional cohorts, household panels, administrative data, and emerging sources such as smart data offer new research opportunities. While increasing cohort frequency could enhance cross-cohort analysis, it risks diluting the distinctiveness of individual studies, potentially reducing their standalone value.

This review confirms the considerable value of longitudinal cohorts. However, to justify a sustained funding increase, ESRC must be confident that the benefits outweigh those of alternative investments. Without corresponding improvements in benefits to match rising costs, increasing funding risks reducing cost-effectiveness.

Maintaining longer intervals between cohorts limits the number of studies requiring ongoing support—a model effectively used since 1970. Alternatively, ESRC could reduce cohort sizes to support more simultaneously, though this would impact statistical power and utility.

Therefore, ESRC proposes launching a new life-course cohort every 25 years, with no more than four cohorts maintained concurrently at steady state. Under this model, the Generation New Era cohort, launched in 2025, would be followed by another in 2050. By that time, earlier cohorts such as NCDS will be over 90 years old and may no longer be viable for active data collection. This approach maintains a manageable funding and operational load and aligns with the actual gap between MCS and the proposed new cohort.

ESRC acknowledges that extending data collection intervals could create gaps in contemporaneous childhood data. To address this, ESRC will work with other stakeholders to better coordinate public investments in early-life data.

Finally, ESRC recognises the need for flexibility. Should rapid social change—such as the COVID-19 pandemic—create a compelling scientific case, ESRC would consider accelerating the cohort launch schedule.

3. Sunset support for Next Steps: ESRC will stop funding active data collection on Next Steps and focus on securing the long-term value of prior investment. ESRC's approach for delivering this action will be designed such that it can be extended to the other cohorts when appropriate.

Analysis shows that Next Steps data is used less than other CLS cohorts, and results in a lower volume of outputs. The second ESRC funded wave of Next Steps, the age 32 dataset, was released in 2024 and early statistics suggest that usage remains low. Stakeholder feedback indicates that the ESRC-funded waves are less widely utilised than those originally funded by the Department for Education. The study's narrower scope—it is not a full life-course study, covers only England, and focuses early data primarily on education—likely contributes to its lower overall use. ALSPAC, despite being not being nationally representative, is often used in its place, perhaps because it provides a fuller life-course perspective.

ESRC began funding Next Steps to address a gap in the UK's longitudinal data portfolio between BCS70 and MCS, with the intention of building toward a 12-year cohort model. The new ESRC approach, establishing one new cohort every 25 years, reduces the long-term strategic case for continuing active data collection on Next Steps.

It is important to recognise that the study has several notable strengths. It follows a generation now entering a critical phase in adulthood, relevant to priority areas such as productivity, labour market participation, housing, and parenting. Its diverse sample – particularly strong in ethnic and socio-economic representation – remains valuable for understanding outcomes across key demographic groups.

Given these factors, ESRC will work with CLS and the user community to develop a clear and responsible pathway to conclude ESRC's funding of active data collection on Next Steps. This transition will consider maximising the long-term value of existing investments through passive data collection, such as data linkage, similarly to the MRC's Longitudinal Population Study life stages model. This approach will also inform planning for other cohorts as they mature.

4. Continue collecting life-course data twice a decade: Whilst active data collection on a cohort continues, ESRC will fund a data collection sweep roughly twice a decade, and more frequently in childhood.

Stakeholders generally supported data collection on a five-year cycle. An exception is early life and childhood, when development occurs rapidly; during these periods, more frequent data collection is required to capture key changes.

Less frequent data collection may have a negative impact on the data quality, through reduced participant recall and attrition due to lower participant engagement.

More frequent data collection would increase the cost of life course cohorts and may not provide value for money, as more than one data collection during a time of relative stability may not be required when taking a life course perspective. Additionally, other resources are available to researchers who want to take a more fine-grained time-series analysis such as Understanding Society and the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing.

5. Specify statistical conditions for triggering a reassessment of active data collection on a cohort: ESRC to convene an expert group to specify conditions for triggering a review of active data collection on a cohort based on the statistical analyses they are able to support. Following such a review, either active data collection will be stopped, or new reassessment conditions will be established.

Stakeholders agreed that there should be a defined point or threshold at which a cohort study is discontinued. Most felt this threshold could be based on one or more measures of the cohort's statistical utility for the target population and potentially key subgroups of research interest. Further discussions are needed to specify and agree on these boundaries and assessment criteria, ensuring public funds are used appropriately while maintaining the value of existing data. Any statistical criteria developed will complement other evaluation measures, such as impact assessment. ESRC will, as standard practice, continue to provide funding for the cohorts while exploring alternative investment opportunities.

6. Clarify where, why and how the cohorts are aligned: ESRC will require CLS to develop and publish a clear framework for what content and data is shared between cohorts and why - whether that is longitudinally, at a given age or time of data collection, by design or through retrospective harmonisation.

CLS and its core user community have a reasonable clear vision for what a set of aligned life-course studies should be. Each study should be focused on supporting research into how (sometimes substantially) earlier life stages affect later life circumstances and outcomes. Collectively, they can enable research that compares the long-term trajectories of groups born in the UK at different times, holding the potential for insight into experiences of different generations of the UK-born population. These are the strategic unique selling points of the cohorts individually and collectively.

Our stakeholder engagement and analysis suggest that there is notable longitudinal use of the studies individually. While the publications statistics cited above suggest that cohorts are often used together to compare different cohort experiences, stakeholder contributions suggested that external stakeholders are unclear about which themes and content remain consistent over time and across cohorts, despite this being integral to the current cohort model. Addressing this uncertainty could help clarify the value of cross-cohort analyses and inform future priorities for enhancing comparability between cohorts, an area identified as a key priority during consultations.

Our engagement highlighted that stakeholders interviewed were often unclear about how they could provide input on the shape of the study, and how the study would identify and take account of their needs. Additionally, stakeholders interviewed were unsure of how decisions regarding the delivery and design of the cohorts were made.

As the cohorts are funded as a resource for the wider social science community, they must meet the needs of researchers in both their design and usability. Ensuring users are supported, actively engaged, and listened to is essential to ensure this is a valuable resource for the whole social science community. ESRC recognises that achieving the optimal outcome within the available financial support and participant capacity is a delicate balance for which the study team are primarily responsible. Some potential users needs will inevitably have to be deprioritised. Publishing and communicating the framework proposed in Action 6 will also contribute to the delivery of this action.

It is important to recognise that CLS does make efforts to engage and seek input including from the external research community. However, it appears that these efforts are not reaching some in the wider community and thus CLS's approaches to community engagement needs further refinement.

8. Address the complexity of cohort data: ESRC will prioritise helping users to manage the innate complexity of cohort data, while actively reducing avoidable complexity that creates barriers to usability and accessibility.

Cohort data is innately complex due to its longitudinal design, large scale, and breadth of content. Some complexity is necessary and expected to support its scientific value, as this reflects a complex society. However, interviews highlighted that complexity can pose a barrier, particularly for users without prior experience or guidance. Challenges include navigating documentation, cleaning data, and managing complex structures across waves.

While this innate complexity cannot—and should not—be removed, there is scope to reduce unnecessary complexity arising from survey design, data formatting, or user-facing systems. Some contributors noted that questionnaires have become increasingly burdensome, with an extensive range of topics and instruments that may discourage both researchers and participants.

Reducing avoidable complexity, without compromising scientific integrity, can help broaden access and improve usability. This includes simplifying recurring survey content where appropriate, enhancing documentation, and strengthening user support.

It is important to note that while MCS is, in several respects, the most complex cohort design, it is also the most widely used. This demonstrates that there is not a direct trade-off between complexity and use; rather, the potential of the data and the quality of available

support are equally critical. ESRC supports CLS in ensuring that complexity is proportionate, transparent, and does not limit the accessibility or impact of the studies—recognising that the aim is not to simplify the data, but to manage complexity effectively.

9. Prioritise combating attrition and missing data: ESRC will focus its resources on maintaining and improving data quality and enhancements to scientific capability with a low impact on participant retention.

For users, high-quality data is of the utmost importance and therefore ensuring attrition and missing data is minimised is the main priority. Attrition is an issue present in all longitudinal data, which can negatively impact the value of the data in terms of statistical power, generalisability, and representativeness. This has a direct impact on the quality of the data and thus usefulness to users. Constrained resources should therefore focus on ensuring and improving data quality. Enhancements and innovations must be evaluated and prioritised based on their impact on participant retention, attrition, and missing data.

10. Continue enhancing cohort data through linkages: ESRC will continue to support the studies in developing data linkages as a key means to enhancing scientific utility whilst minimising the impact on participant retention.

Data linkage has been identified as a key area for enhancing scientific capability whilst reducing missing data, participant burden, and attrition. CLS is collaborating with the UK Longitudinal Linkage Collaboration (UK LLC) and other partners to expand administrative linkages. Stakeholders have highlighted that strengthening connections to administrative income data would be particularly valuable. UK LLC is currently linking CLS cohorts to administrative income data, which is expected to become available to users in 2025. Administrative and geo-linkages remain core features of CLS data resources, and future opportunities will include further integration with 'digital' data, such as those developed through Smart Data Research UK and related initiatives.

11. Continue refining content and utility of the cohorts: ESRC will –

- maintain support for research on a range of themes including areas of existing strengths, notably inequality, education, health and care.
- ask CLS to improve support for research on productivity, climate change, the home environment, changing family systems and digital life.
- explore further enhancing measures of interactions with digital technology and links with administrative income data.

From the CLS and ESRC analyses and engagement, the topics under point 1 were identified as areas where the cohorts are already well used and have had notable impact. Sustaining these areas (as appropriate by age) is important to continue meeting the broader needs of stakeholders.

The research themes under point 2 were identified by stakeholders as areas of untapped or strategic potential that could be addressed through refinements to the surveys.

Similarly, the enhancements outlined under point 3 have the potential to unlock further value, although they may require substantial additional investment, which ESRC will need to balance against other priorities. As noted previously, UK LLC is currently linking DWP and HMRC administrative records (including taxable income) to the CLS cohorts, with these data expected to become available to users later this year. This action is therefore already well underway.

12. Prioritise longitudinal utility over making the studies representative of their age group: the target sample for the cohorts should remain the UK-born population of a given age and will not be extended to cover immigrants of that age (e.g., via sample boosts) at the current time. ESRC will aim to reassess this in 2035.

ESRC and stakeholders discussed the possibility of introducing sample boosts to the life-course cohorts to address concerns that, as they age, they become less representative of the population living in the UK of that age (as opposed to the population born in the UK at the same time, which remains the target population) on account of immigration.

Stakeholders expressed mixed views on the use of sample boosts in the current life-course cohorts. However, the majority believe sample boosts would not provide sufficient additional value as the new participants would lack the longitudinal data which is core to the value of life-course cohorts. Additionally, boosts would further increase the complexity of delivering and using the studies.

ESRC recognises that the UK population may change drastically over the next 10-15 years due to migration, and thus the research needs may evolve. ESRC will therefore reassess the use of sample boosts to account for immigration in 10 years.

13. Improve transparency about which groups cohorts are designed to represent: ESRC to work with CLS to ensure users are clear that the existing cohorts' target populations exclude immigrants of the same age and encourage this to be reflected in how the studies are portrayed and findings are communicated.

Many stakeholders perceived the cohorts as nationally representative, and representativeness was highlighted as a key indicator of 'good cohort data'. Some stakeholders noted that attrition and sample design mean the studies are increasingly less representative of their age group in the UK over time. According to the 2021/22 Census, 16% of the UK population was born abroad—a group likely to have different experiences and circumstances compared to those born in the UK.

CLS has worked to clarify the target populations of each cohort through publications, user guides, and training. However, some users continue to hold an impression that the studies are representative of all people of a given age living in the UK, which is not true due to the study design.

CLS provides evidence that the cohorts remain sufficiently representative of people born during the specified periods within the geographic areas originally sampled. CLS has also assessed the representativeness of the studies in relation to both their target populations and contemporary external population benchmarks (including immigrants), demonstrating that the samples can be adjusted to achieve current population representativeness across multiple benchmarks. Nonetheless, CLS acknowledges that the cohorts have more limited utility for analyses focused on inequalities related to migration and, in the case of NCDS and BCS70, ethnicity, as these studies cannot be considered fully representative of the current UK population.

Given this context, it is important to clearly communicate the populations the cohorts were designed to study and their limitations. Doing so helps users assess whether the data are suitable for their research questions, manage any limitations effectively, and carry out higher quality analyses, while minimising the risk of misinterpretation or misuse.

14. Further investigate the need for enhancing cohort data in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland: ESRC will carry out further research and consult with stakeholders to evaluate the need for enhancing cohort data in these regions (e.g., via sample boosts).

Stakeholders from Scotland and Wales highlighted that the sample sizes of the cohorts in Scotland and Wales are small, and this constrains their use for research in these nations. We were unable to speak to stakeholders in Northern Ireland, but it is likely that similar constraints are present.

The review advises that, for existing cohorts, ESRC should prioritise supporting longitudinal research rather than expanding target samples solely to improve representativeness (see Action 12). However, in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the small sample sizes severely constrain analysis—including longitudinal—creating a distinct tension between enhancing scientific utility and increasing study complexity than at the UK-wide level.

In recognition of this, ESRC has prioritised increasing the sample sizes in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland for the new life-course cohort it is currently commissioning.

6. How ESRC will take forward the above actions

CLS intends to incorporate these actions into the next commissioning exercise for CLS and the cohorts. In parallel, a delivery plan will be developed to implement the agreed actions over the short, medium, and long term, with work on this expected to commence in late 2025.

Annex 1: Review questions

The below provides the current plan which may need to be modified as the review and context develops.

Key questions

1. To understand the strategic value and clarify the collective purpose of cohort studies:
    - why and when is cohort data valuable, and why and when is it not? Where does cohort data make a unique contribution, set against other forms of data? Who is cohort data particularly valuable to?
    - what is the added value of having a collection of aligned cohorts?
    - what is the added value of cohort data being lifelong?
    - what are the current and likely future scientific, policy and practice related needs for cohort data?
    - what impacts should ESRC expect from cohort data?
    - what is the role of the UK cohort studies in the international landscape?

2. To evaluate the existing cohorts:
    - how well used are the existing cohorts by user communities? Are the user community's needs met?
    - how are the CLS' cohort data currently used, and why are they used? Is data use different across data of different life stages? How is it affected by factors such as additional data releases?
    - what are the barriers to using cohort data?
    - are there questions the current cohorts do not help answer, but could with modifications?
    - how much is use of cohort data constrained by a lack of the appropriate analysis skills?
    - what impact has been achieved using cohort data?
    - what other UK-based cohorts are active, and how do they compare to the CLS cohorts?
    - what are the strengths and weaknesses of each study in terms of, for instance, coverage (population, topics, life stages) or use?

3. To optimise investment in the cohort studies given constrained budgets:
[Time period between cohorts]
    - when is a new cohort needed? (in abstract, and in practice after ELC) How long do we need between cohorts to capture changing experiences through the generations?
    - under what circumstances should ESRC opt for a boosted representative, less frequent cohorts, over more cohorts?

[Timing of data collection]

- what are the key life stages and transitions for research? Do they change over time?
- what warrants a new data collection?

[How and when data collection on a cohort should end]

- is there a point when activity associated to a cohort should be scaled down or ended? What are the key factors that should be considered in these decisions?
- how should factors such as the following influence the decision? Research utility (e.g., in relation to new cohorts), sample composition, ethical research practice (e.g., might the current survey method involving home visit and face-to-face interview be too intrusive for participants now or in the future?)
- what should scaling down and ending a cohort (i.e., activity associated to a cohort) involve?

[Groups which cohorts should enable research on]

- which groups or populations should cohort data enable research on? (i.e., which groups should ESRC aim to ensure researchers can conduct robust analyses on?)
- could sample boosts throughout the life course be used to improve the utility of cohorts for researching some groups, or generations as a whole?
- what would constitute a sufficient rationale for a sample boost?

[High-level content priorities]

- what are the principles and processes by which we should decide what data should be collected?
- who, and how often, should ESRC and study teams engage when assessing the community research, policy and practice needs?
- is the right balance being struck between harmonisation and comparability across cohorts whilst tailoring content to current circumstances and life stage?
- should ESRC support biological and bio-social data collections in the cohorts?

[Data collection methods]

- how critical is face-to-face data collection? When is it necessary?
- how should the data collection methods for the cohorts be evolved moving forward? What are the advantages and disadvantages of different data collection methods?
- how can ESRC best support methodological innovation in collecting cohort data?
- how should linkage of, for instance, administrative, smart data be used with the cohort data?

[Balancing]

- how should ESRC balance the above requirements? More specifically, what aspects could be de-prioritised to better support others?
- how should the funding decision be informed by these parameters?

Annex 2: Sources

Table 4 - A table showing the number of cohort data users per year from 2018 to 2023, grouped by user type

User type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Undergraduate	339	343	422	433	411	447
Postgraduate	452	342	479	536	469	504
HE staff	380	317	400	386	304	358
Third Sector	30	47	67	54	40	24
Other student	0	0	0	1	0	2
Government	15	9	19	16	14	8
Other	8	14	18	18	20	16

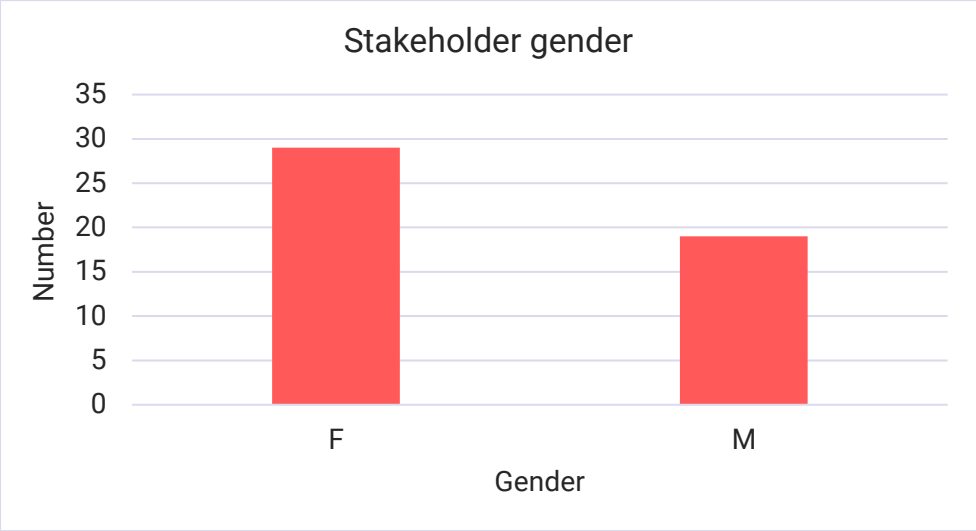
Table 5 - A table showing the number of cohort data users per year from 2018 to 2023, grouped by disciplinary background

Discipline	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Biological Sciences	11	10	18	21	18	26
Other	36	35	37	52	40	45
Geography	16	17	16	19	15	16
Business & Management	26	15	30	17	21	22
Computer Science	13	17	27	34	34	48
Education	81	64	73	60	60	54
Statistics & Maths	71	54	60	70	50	64
Politics & Policy	74	67	88	80	86	71
Medicine & Clinical	144	162	182	171	143	156
Other Social Sciences	167	146	224	264	191	194
Psychology	144	155	224	247	272	318
Economics	441	330	426	409	328	345

Stakeholders

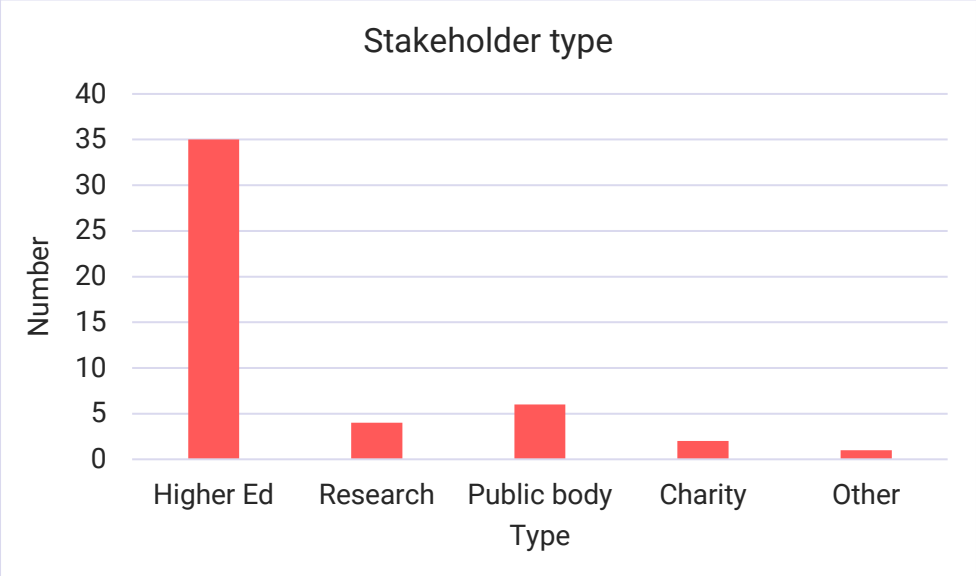
A total of 48 interviews were conducted. The following graphs summarise the characteristics of the contributors, who were selected for their expertise in the cohorts or similar studies, or as potential users of the data and its outputs.

Figure 3 – Gender composition of stakeholders



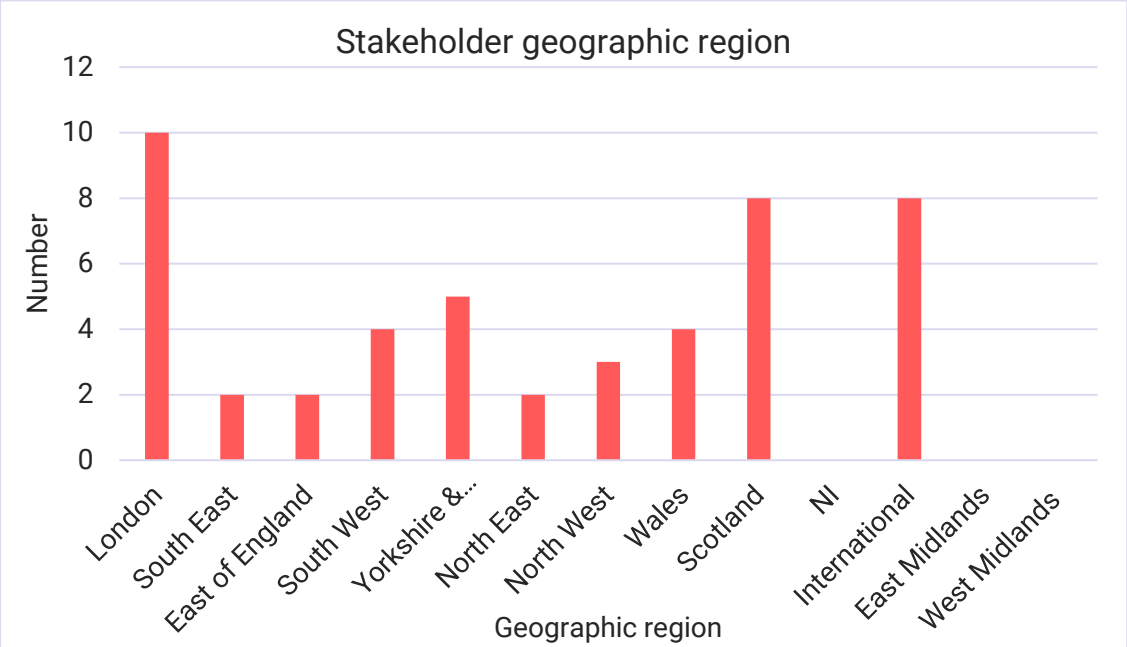
Alt text for Figure 3: Bar chart showing the number of stakeholders broken down by gender: 29 female and 19 male stakeholders.

Figure 4 – Composition of stakeholders by type of organisation in which they are based



Alt text for Figure 4: Bar chart showing the number of stakeholders by type of organisation: 35 from higher education, 4 from research, 6 from public bodies, 2 from charities, and 1 from other organisations.

Figure 5 – Composition of stakeholders by region in which they are based



At text for Figure 5: Bar chart showing the number of stakeholders by region. London has 10; Scotland and International have 8 each; Yorkshire & the Humber has 5; South West and Wales have 4 each; North West has 3; South East, East of England, and North East each have 2; Northern Ireland, East Midlands, and West Midlands have none.

Figure 6 – Composition of stakeholder background by disciplinary background, as classified by ESRC

Alt text for Figure 6: Bar chart showing the number of stakeholders by discipline. Psychology has 13; Economics has 9; Population Studies/Health has 6; Not Assigned (NA) has 10; Social Policy, Sociology, and Epidemiology each have 2; Education, Demography, History, and Medicine each have 1.

Additional sources

Centre for Longitudinal Studies (July 2024). *Measuring the Impact of the CLS Cohort Studies.* Internal report (not publicly available).

Understanding Society (2024). *UK Household Longitudinal Study Annual Report 2024.* Available online: Understanding Society 2024 Annual Report