



# CeLSIUS News

Issue 11

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[www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/ls-support.html](http://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 ESRC Census Programme to provide free advice, information and support to UK based academics wishing to use the ONS Longitudinal Study.

Our website at <http://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, household and families
- searchable data dictionary
- searchable publications using the LS
- downloadable tables from LS research studies

## CeLSIUS News including information from the ONS

There have been a number of important changes affecting CeLSIUS over recent weeks including the impact of the Statistics and Registration Act, the transfer of LS data files to new computers, the physical move of the safe setting for researchers from Drummond Gate, Pimlico to Myddelton Street, Islington and the move of applications to the Virtual Microdata Laboratory environment. While there will be benefits brought by these changes, in the short term there are also some practical challenges. This issue of our newsletter will bring you up to date with the current situation.

## The Statistics and Registration Act (2007) and changes to procedures for users of the ONS LS

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 the Statistics and Registration Act came into force. This created the UK Statistics Authority as a fully independent body accountable to Parliament; this also involved a change of status for ONS from being a UK Government Department to being the executive of the UK Statistics Authority. More information on both organisations can be found at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/index.html>

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/about>

One outcome of these changes is that there is a new legal framework underpinning revised access arrangements to all ONS microdata (including the LS) which were set out in the 2007 Act. In legal terms, the most significant change is the replacement of the current project based Licence arrangements with the requirement for all members of the project research team to apply for accreditation as Approved Researcher. You can find out more about this in the section below on how to apply to use the ONS LS.

## **ONS Analysis User Support (MAUS) and the Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML)**

Access to the ONS LS is now through the VML, this is a secure computer environment which already 'hosts' a number of other datasets such as the Annual Population Survey and the Workplace Employment Relations Survey. The VML is managed by the MAUS team within the ONS.

Unfortunately the VML is temporarily closed to external users (see the note below from the ONS) however it is hoped to restore normal service soon. CeLSIUS will continue to support academic users in the UK wishing to use the ONS LS.

## **Move of the safe setting from Drummond Gate**

The safe setting for use by researchers is now at:

1, Myddelton Street, London EC1R 1UW

Nearest tube/BR stations:

Angel (Northern line City Branch)

Farringdon (Circle, Metropolitan, Hammersmith and City lines and British Rail)

Bus routes: 19, 38, 431

## **Access to the VML – note from the ONS**

This note explains why ONS's Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML) is currently closed to external users, including users accessing the ONS Longitudinal Study.

### *Background*

The VML moved between physical sites at the end of May, as part of ONS's move to offices in Myddelton Street, and is being upgraded to incorporate new services. A period of closure was necessary to accomplish this. ONS takes data security extremely seriously and it seemed sensible to use the necessary down period to check this. In the event, routine testing of the new environment and security checks ahead of the move and the planned closure revealed potential vulnerabilities in the system.

As a precautionary measure, ONS therefore closed the VML to all users within and outside ONS in late April. A full independent security review was commissioned. Until the security review reports and its findings are acted upon, the VML will remain closed to external users; this is likely to last at least until the middle of June.

## Current and future situation

ONS apologises for inconvenience and uncertainty over when service will be resumed. ONS would like to reassure all users that it is working to provide a good level of service from the new site, ensuring that confidentiality of VML data is maintained. Full service will be resumed as soon as possible but this will depend upon the results of the security review. ONS will update this statement on 5 June (see below).

### Update 6<sup>th</sup> June 2008

#### Background

ONS circulated a note on 23rd May stating that the VML would be closed to external users while a security review is being carried out. The security review has now finished and has made several recommendations in respect to the running of the VML. Key security changes have been made; additional recommendations are now being addressed.

#### Accordingly

We intend to re-open for external users from Tuesday 17th June. Users should expect some minor ongoing variation in service as continuing changes are made. This may continue until the end of July. Users are asked to contact us if they have any queries on [maus@ons.gov.uk](mailto:maus@ons.gov.uk).

ONS apologises for the continuing delay in returning to a full service, but we have taken the view that researchers would prefer to have the service available, with a potential short-term drop in service, as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please contact the MAUS team on [maus@ons.gov.uk](mailto:maus@ons.gov.uk).

Although it is not possible for our users to come into the safe setting to work in the short term, members of the CeLSIUS team can still access the data and are continuing to work on our users' projects and to support academics in applying for access to the LS for new projects.

## Applying to use the ONS LS

Following the legal and administrative changes outlined above there is a new process for applying to use the LS.

There are now three forms to complete; you can see the relation of the old to the new forms below:

Old form	New form	What does the new form do?
Application form Part A	Customer Request form (CRF) pages 1-2	One form for EACH PROJECT: This is where you tell us about yourself and your project.

Application form Part B	CRF Supplement Part B (access to the ONS LS)	This is where you tell us in more detail about the data you wish to use. This section is usually completed collaboratively with your Research and Computing Support Officer
LS Licence	Data Access Agreement	One form for EACH PROJECT: Signed on behalf of the project by the lead researcher.
<i>No comparable form</i>	Approved Researcher form	One form for EACH NAMED RESEARCHER on the project: A requirement to establish researcher as a 'fit and proper person' under the terms of the Statistics and Regulation Act.

### Stage 1:

Discuss the project with your Research and Computing Support Officer and complete the Customer Request form and the Data Access Agreement. Each named researcher on the research team should complete the Approved Researcher form. All three forms are then sent to CeLSIUS for submission to the Longitudinal Study Research Board (LSRB). While not recommended, it is possible send only the Customer Request form but this can cause delays at stage 3 (see flowchart below)

### Stage 2:

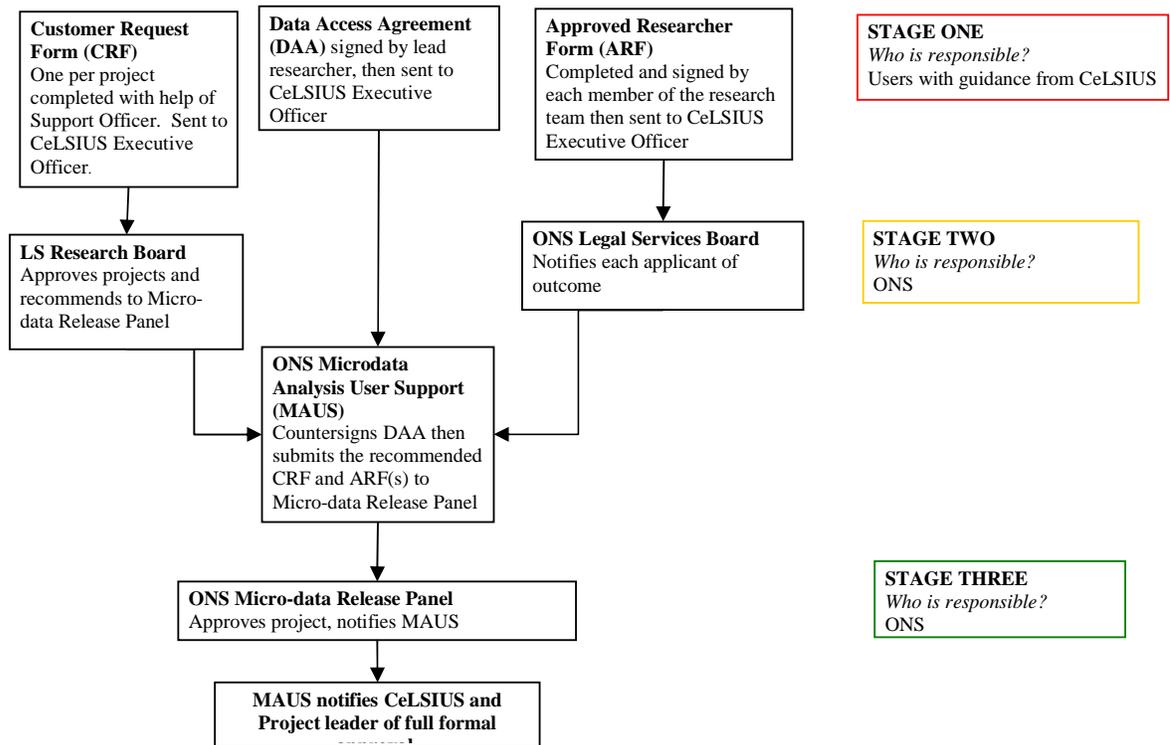
The Longitudinal Study Research Board considers your application and recommends suitable projects to the Microdata Release Panel. Once the LSRB have approved the project your Research and Computing Support Officer can start work on your project but cannot release any data until Stage 3 is completed.

If the Approved Researcher forms have been received, these are simultaneously reviewed by the Legal Services Board who will notify each researcher directly of the outcome of their application. CeLSIUS will also be informed for administrative purposes.

### Stage 3:

As soon as the project has had approval from the Microdata Release Panel, the signed Data Access Agreement has been received and all named researchers have been confirmed as having Approved Researcher Status the Microdata Release Panel ratify the approval. At this point data can be released.

Flowchart illustrating process:



Full step-by-step guidance on this will be added to the CeLSIUS website <http://www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk> very soon. In the interim, if you have any questions please contact the Executive Officer on 0207 299 4634 or by email at [celsius@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:celsius@lshtm.ac.uk).

## The ERSC Census Programme Portal News

### Workshops

The current series of workshops has now concluded, a further series is being planned for later in the year and CeLSIUS will be presenting at selected events. To see the range of themes covered from November 2007 – May 2008 go to <http://www.census.ac.uk/News/Workshops.aspx>.

## Census News

### Evaluation of the 2007 Census Test in England and Wales

The 2007 Census Test was held on 13 May 2007 in five local authorities covering about 100,000 households. The results are still being evaluated, although preliminary findings on the main objectives of the test have recently been reported (1).

The two main objectives of the Test were to assess:

- the effect on response of the use of post-out to deliver questionnaires; and the inclusion of a question on income
- the feasibility of major innovations in operational procedures, such as the outsourcing of recruitment, training and pay

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

### **Delivery Method**

Based on the evidence from the Test, the cost modelling, and an analysis of risks, it was concluded that:

- post-out does have an impact on initial return rates, but this is small enough to consider that the drop in initial response could be made up with more intensive follow-up
- the improvements identified for the address register and follow-up procedures suggest that the levels of under coverage on the register will be small and manageable
- a post-out methodology will provide significant savings to invest in targeted follow-up and community liaison
- the risks identified are manageable, but further development of mitigations needs to be initiated.

On balance, the evidence suggests that a post-out methodology brings a number of advantages and savings to manage the risks associated with post-out and follow-up.

Follow-up is crucial, whatever the delivery method, and how the Office for National Statistics (ONS) implements the procedures and manages the risks will be essential to maximising response rates.

**Therefore ONS has decided that post-out will be the primary method of delivering questionnaires in 2011.**

### **Income**

A decision on the inclusion of an income question in the 2011 Census will depend on both the findings from the 2007 Test and the outcome of continuing consultation on topics and the relative priority given to this question in relation to other user demands for new census information. The jury is still out, but a final decision on topics and questions will be made in spring 2008. The inclusion of a question on income will be considered as part of this process, provided that the full evaluation of the Test shows that the inclusion of an income question will not adversely affect the quality of responses.

To date only an analysis of return rates has been conducted. The difference in return rates between questionnaires with and without an income question is 2.9 percentage points. Overall, questionnaires with income had a return rate of 44.6 per cent compared with 47.5 per cent from questionnaires with no income question.

Further assessment of the quality of responses to the income question is being undertaken along with the results of the Census Test Evaluation Survey – which specifically tested views on the income question from both responders and non-responders.

The results of this analysis will be published in a more detailed ONS report early in 2008, available from the [2007 Census Test](#) page.

1 White, I. (2007) 'Evaluation of the 2007 Census Test in England and Wales – emerging findings', *BURISA*, 174, pp. 2-6.

## Projects

### **Recently approved projects supported by CeLSIUS:**

*Risk of premature death among teenage mothers in England & Wales*  
Roger Webb and Katherine Abel University of Manchester

*Children, ethnicity and workless households*  
Lucinda Platt, University of Essex

*Ethnicity, mortality and self-reported limiting long term illness and general health in the 2001 Census*  
Dermot O'Reilly and Michael Rosato, Dept of Epidemiology and Public Health, Queen's University Belfast

*The relationship between informal care giving and mortality: an analysis using the ONS-LS*  
Dermot O'Reilly and Michael Rosato, Dept of Epidemiology and Public Health, Queen's University Belfast

*Pilot project to investigate if there are intergenerational patterns in household car ownership*  
Hazel Baslington and Dr Tight, University of Leeds

*The relationship between self reported health, levels of economic activity and mortality: an analysis using the ONS LS*  
Dermot O'Reilly, Dept of Epidemiology & Public Health, Queen's University Belfast

*Adaptive and Maladaptive Coping in Bereaved Parents*  
Mairi Harper, Ronan O'Connell and Rory O'Connor, Stirling University

*Developing integrated analyses of the England and Wales, Scottish and Northern Ireland Census Longitudinal Studies: health and mortality as a case study*

Emily Grundy and Harriet Young, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; Paul Boyle, St Andrew's University; Dermot O'Reilly, Queen's University Belfast

*Secondary road traffic casualties in England and Wales*

Ruth Sullivan, Phil Edwards and Andy Sloggett, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

## On the CeLSIUS website

Presentations by CeLSIUS staff:

[ONS Longitudinal Study for Academic Users.](#) J Buxton & C Marshall, 2007

[Academic research using the LS.](#) E Grundy, 2007

[Cohabitation.](#) L Clarke & J Buxton, British Society for Population Studies 2006

[Imputation in the 2001 Census: implications for analysis of the LS.](#) J Buxton, Methodology of Longitudinal Surveys, 2006

[Geography and geographical analysis using the LS.](#) C Marshall & J Buxton, 2005

[Introduction to methodological issues in LS ethnicity research.](#) J Buxton & B Akinwale, 2005

## Database of publications

There is a searchable database of publications using LS data on the CeLSIUS web site at <http://www.celsius.lshtm.ac.uk/publications.html>. To submit a publication based on research conducted with the LS, please email [celsius@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:celsius@lshtm.ac.uk) or (if you are a registered Census data user) submit it online at <http://census.ac.uk>.

## Events

3<sup>rd</sup> ESRC Research Methods Festival, 30<sup>th</sup> June – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008  
St Catherine's College, Oxford  
<http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/RMF2008/festival/index.php>

Census Microdata: Findings and futures 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008  
University of Manchester  
<http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/sars/conference>

Royal Statistical Society Conference 2008 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> September 2008  
<http://www.rss.org.uk/rss2008>

British Society of Population Studies Conference 2008 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> September 2008  
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/BSPS/annualConference/2008.htm>

## The CeLSIUS Team

### Team News

Emily Grundy	Director
Andy Sloggett	Associated Lecturer
Julian Buxton	Research and Computing Support Officer
Chris Marshall	Research and Computing Support Officer
Rachel Stuchbury	Research Support Officer
Melissa Neal	Executive Officer

### Key links

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

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

ONS Longitudinal Study  
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/ls/default.asp>

## **Census of Population Programme Data Units Links**

Home of ESRC Census Programme: [Census.ac.uk](http://census.ac.uk/)  
<http://census.ac.uk/>

*Users wishing to use the data provided by CDU, CIDER, UKBORDERS, SARs must register via [census.ac.uk](http://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/>

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

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