

## News

### Millennium Cohort Study publishes Fourth Survey User's Guide

The Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) is the fourth national birth cohort study in Britain. It has so far followed up the 'Children of the New Century' four times, and is set to track them through their teenage years and into adulthood. The fourth survey (MCS4) collected information from some 14,000 children born in 2000–02 across the UK. The survey was conducted when most of the children were aged 7, in 2008, following previous sweeps at 9 months, age 3 and age 5. This report is a first look at the MCS4 data. It offers mainly simple snapshots of the nation's 7-year-olds and their families but paves the way for more complex analysis of the longitudinal data accumulated so far.

The Guide, edited by Kirstine Hansen, Elizabeth Jones, Heather Joshi and David Budge, covers the following topics:

- Family demographics
- Parenting
- Child self-report
- Education, schooling and childcare
- Cognitive development
- Child behaviour
- Child health
- Parental health
- Parents' employment and education
- Income and poverty
- Housing, neighbourhood and residential mobility

The full report is available at: [www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/MCSFindings](http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/MCSFindings)

### SLLS and EUCCONET Conference Report

"Developments and Challenges in Longitudinal Studies from Childhood" took place 22-24 September 2010, in Clare College, Cambridge, supported by co-funding arrangements between the European Science Foundation (ESF) through the European Child Cohort Network (EUCCONET) [www.esf.org/index.php?id=4796](http://www.esf.org/index.php?id=4796) and Longview [www.longviewuk.com](http://www.longviewuk.com). The conference aims were, raising the visibility of birth cohort studies, enhancing their quality and initiating new and in-

depth collaboration to share expertise. Experts in longitudinal enquiry from across the developmental, health, social and statistical sciences presented papers focussing on the long-term impact of early childhood circumstances and experience, and on the methodology and practice of longitudinal study.

The meeting was organised jointly with the newly-established international *Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (SLLS)* [www.longstudies.longviewuk.com](http://www.longstudies.longviewuk.com) for which the conference was the inaugural meeting. One hundred and sixty eight longitudinal and life course researchers participated, of which 96 were from the UK, 45 from other European countries and 27 from countries outside Europe. A third of participants were early career researchers under the age of 35; 58% were women.

The conference was organised in terms of plenary sessions, 4 streams of parallel group sessions and two poster sessions, and also included three keynote talks:

- *Professor Karl Ulrich-Mayer* (Yale University, Director of the German Life History study and the newly-appointed Director of the Leibniz Institute), "Life Course and Social Policy".
- *Professor Carol Dezateux* (Institute of Child Health, University College London, and Principal Investigator of the potential UK 2012 birth cohort study) "Developments and Challenges of Longitudinal Studies in Childhood".
- *Professor Bren Neale* (University of Leeds and Director of the UK "Timescapes" project) "Journeys through Time: time as a concept category and methodological strategy in qualitative Longitudinal Research".

There were sixteen symposia on a wide range of topics and 10 themed individual paper sessions, at which a 104 papers in total were presented. Of the two poster sessions, one was devoted to EUCCONET affiliated projects, - 34 in total. *The conference abstracts will be published in the next Issue of LCCS.*

At the conference dinner held in the 'Great Hall' of the college, the newly appointed Chief Executive of the UK 'Economic and Social Research Council' (ESRC), Professor Paul Boyle, a founder (and now retiring) member of the SLLS Executive Committee, gave a rousing and amusing after-dinner talk, stressing the importance of international

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collaboration in the next phase of longitudinal research, and its public value.

Feedback from the conference participants was supplied through completion of a short questionnaire and gave a most positive appraisal. There was acclaim for the range of disciplinary interests and experience represented, the generally high quality of the papers, and the networking and

collaborative opportunities the conference provided.

The conference was a memorable and highly significant event in the development of the field of longitudinal and life course studies, to which the ESF through EUCCONET has now made a major contribution.

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## Events 2011

**SRCD** - (Society for Research in Child Development) Biennial Meeting **March 31<sup>st</sup> – April 2<sup>nd</sup>**, Montreal, Canada. <http://www.srcd.org>

Volunteer Reviewer website <http://www.srcd.org/submissions2011/volunteers>.

**SLLS** - (Society for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies) Summer School, **July 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>**, University of Antwerp, Belgium, particularly for research post-graduates and post-doctoral fellows. Other sponsors include the European Association of Population Studies and CELLO (Centrum voor Longitudinaal en Levensloop Onderzoek - Research Centre for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies), University of Antwerp. Registration opens on 1 Sept 2010 at [www.ua.ac.be/cello/summerschool](http://www.ua.ac.be/cello/summerschool).

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## Resources

### The Neville Butler Memorial Prize



**Longview's trustees are calling for applications for the 3rd Neville Butler Memorial Prize.** This prestigious annual award, supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), is **open to early-career researchers whose work involves longitudinal and/or life course research and analysis.**

The prize comprises an award **up to £5000** for research dissemination and networking activities, together with significant support for promoting the winner's research and its implications for policy or practice.

The award is a collaboration between Longview, an independent thinktank which exists to promote longitudinal and life course studies, and the ESRC,

which is the UK's leading research and training agency addressing economic and social concerns. The award was established in honour of Neville Butler, who was both a distinguished paediatrician and professor of child health, and an outstanding international pioneer of longitudinal and life course studies.

***The aims of the prize are:***

- to promote the understanding and importance of longitudinal and life course research within the public domain.
- to reward publically relevant new work, grounded in empirical analysis of longitudinal data.
- to enhance the capacity of early career researchers to communicate their findings to a wider audience.

***The research should:***

- be in the broad field of the economic or social sciences, including interdisciplinary work.
- make an original contribution involving empirical investigation and using longitudinal data.
- have demonstrable social value and public relevance.

Longitudinal research involves gathering data on the same individuals or groups at repeated points

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in time. The studies may be large-scale cohort or panel studies, but are not restricted to these. Life course research focuses on the trajectories and transitions of individual lives and how these unfold in particular contexts.

***The award panel would like to see applications from a wide range of disciplines and fields.*** These include (but are not restricted to) health, economics, education, business, psychology, sociology and law. Particular encouragement is given to research which spans more than one discipline and field, and demonstrates breadth of outlook. We are looking for individuals who demonstrate intellectual rigour, an imaginative approach to the design and execution of research and a keen awareness of the particular value of longitudinal research.

Applicants are asked to submit a report fulfilling these criteria, of 5-7000 words. The report should be accessible to non-academic audiences. The prize-winner will be required to submit a revised version for publication in the international journal *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies*.

***The prize is open to all longitudinal researchers at the early stage of their career.*** Eligible applicants must fulfil the following criteria:

- have completed a PhD, or an equivalent professional qualification or experience within the last five years
- be currently engaged in longitudinal\life course research in the UK, or have a strong current associations with a longitudinal research centre or project in the UK

Exceptions may be considered if an applicant has had a formal career break taken for family care responsibilities, health or other reasons. Any academic or policy field interdisciplinary research within the ESRC remit is eligible (see application form).

Winners will be expected to make themselves available for both the prize-giving event, to be held in April/May 2011, and media opportunities that may arise following the announcement of the prize. The ESRC will provide media training as part of the promotional platform.