

GUS Data – Frequently asked questions

March 2008

1. Can the GUS data be analysed at any sub national level e.g. Local Authority areas and Health Board areas?

No. Local Authority has been used as a stratification variable during sampling, this means the distribution of the GUS sample by Local Authority will be representative of the distribution of Local Authorities in Scotland. However, the sample sizes are such that we would not recommend analysis by Local Authority. The small sample sizes would give misleading results.

2. Can the data be analysed by ethnic group?

Yes, but due to the very small numbers of minority ethnic families included in the study (reflecting the small proportion of the Scottish population as a whole who are from ethnic minorities), and the related possibility of disclosure, analysis by ethnicity is restricted to white and non-white only.

3. Were asylum seekers and refugees included in the Study?

Assuming that these families were receiving Child Benefit, they were eligible for inclusion in the study. However, the data does not allow the identification of families with asylum or refugee status.

4. Can GUS provide us with any data on children in care?

The GUS sample includes a small number of children in foster care arrangements. This number is too small to allow any useful analysis by this characteristic.

5. Can GUS provide us with any data on children with disabilities?

The data contains information on the extent to which a child has a long-standing illness or disability, and whether this illness or disability limits the child's ability to carry out normal day-to-day tasks. However, at sweep 1, the exact nature of the illness or disability was not collected.

6. Did language spoken in the household affect response rates?

Not significantly. A number of interviews were undertaken via a translator - either someone else in the household, the interviewer, or a representative from a translation service.

7. Is all the health data collected self-reported?

Yes, at this stage all of the health data collected has been reported by the respondent. However, in the near future, we hope to link GUS data with child and maternal health information held by the NHS.

8. Can you explain how the data is weighted?

Full details on how the data is weighted are contained within the sweep 1 user guide which you can access on

<http://www.crfr.ac.uk/gus/Data%20stuff/GUS%20SW1%20User%20Guide.pdf>

9. In terms of the response rates year on year, what is the rate of annual 'drop off'?

So far, we can only look at the 'drop-off' or sample retention between sweeps 1 and 2. At sweep 2, we achieved an interview with 88% of those who had participated at sweep 1. Response so far at sweep 3 suggests that many of those who did not participate at sweep 2 have completed an interview at sweep 3. We will not be able to look at this in detail until sweep 3 fieldwork finishes in May 2008.

10. Are there any particular areas/ questions where the response rates are lower?

The only question/topic area which receives a notably lower response is on household income. This is a trend experienced by almost all social surveys which include these questions.

11. How does GUS compensate for lower response and drop out rates amongst harder to reach/ more vulnerable families?

Non-response amongst certain groups is compensated for by the use of weights. Therefore, to ensure the data is fully representative, all analysis should be undertaken using weighted data.

12. What is the purpose of the self-complete part of the interview?

Having a self-completion section in the interview allows the inclusion of more sensitive questions where the respondent may not feel comfortable giving the answer to an interviewer. It also gives the respondent an opportunity to become more involved in the interview process by inputting their own answers.

13. Are there plans for the children to answer questions in the future?

Children in the younger cohort are already involved in this manner. At sweep 3, they are completing two educational exercises taken from the British Ability Scales range which allow measurement of their cognitive skills. As they get older, we hope to get all of the children involved in other ways, including having them answer survey questions themselves.

14. What is an 'Athens ID'?

Athens is an authentication system that supplies one login to access many different resources. For more information about Athens and obtaining an Athens id for accessing data, see

<http://www.esds.ac.uk/aandp/access/athensh.asp>

15. With reference to the GUS data being available through ESDS, are there guidelines about how to cite the dataset if referring to analysis of GUS data in published documents?

Guidelines for citing data can be found on the ESDS web-pages at <http://www.esds.ac.uk/about/faq.asp#cite>. Based on this, GUS should be cited as follows Scottish Centre for Social Research, Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) Sweep 1, 2005-2006 [computer file]. 1st Edition. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], December 2007. SN: 5760

16. Do you need approval to use GUS data for teaching purposes?

When registering to use the GUS data you will be asked to complete a form detailing what you will be using the data for and to agree to the terms and condition of use. There is a box to tick on the registration form if you will be using the datasets for teaching. Each student who uses the data during the course must sign an agreement, supplied by ESDS. Each separate use of the data must be registered. If you register to use the data for a particular piece of research (for example on childcare arrangements) but also want to use the data for teaching then you will have to re-register. If at a later date you have another piece of research that includes GUS data you should also re-register. Similarly if a colleague wanted to use the GUS data for their own research they will have to register their use rather than just using your copy of the dataset.

17. Will the GUS data be available through the Nesstar on-line analysis facility?

We have discussed this with ESDS. They currently include only their most frequently used datasets on Nesstar. As GUS has been newly deposited it will take time to build up a large enough user-base for this to happen.