FAMILY HISTORIES FROM BHPS

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The consolidated marital, cohabitation and fertility file contains retrospective lifetime histories and subsequent panel data related to respondents' partnerships and childbearing. It contains **32,342** adults interviewed at least once during the survey.

Every date is calculated as months elapsed since **January 1900**. When we are not sure about the month, we denote it to be June and we add **.5** at the end. Missing dates are set to **-1**.

Variables description

variable name	variable label
pp	person number identification
sex	Gender
birth	date of birth

Example

pp	sex	Birth
10017933	female	513

Gender composition

gender	freq.	Percent
male	15,401	47.62
female	16,941	52.38
	32,342	100.00

Example

	obs	mean	st dev	Min	max
birth	32,342	706.102	251.5614	-62	1116

We define variables that designate the household and region, **hh_** and **region_** in which a respondent lived at each wave, from wave 1 to wave 18.

Variables description

variable name	variable label
hh1	household number in the first wave
region1	region of residence in the first wave

Example

pp	hh1	region1	hh2	region2	hh6	region6
10014578	1001221	inner lo	2000369	inner lo	6000185	inner lo

This is the region distribution in respondent-years, pooling all 18 waves; 19 is Northern Ireland, -1 is missing.

region	observations
-1	36
inner London	5,097
outer London	9,195
r. of south east	28,991
south west	14,274
east Anglia	6,416
east midlands	13,125
west midlands conurbation	5,811
r. of west midlands	8,120
greater Manchester	6,015
Merseyside	3,396
r. of north west	7,023
south Yorkshire	4,007
west Yorkshire	5,397
r. of Yorks & Humberside	5,110
Tyne & wear	3,513
r. of north	6,031
Wales	22,389
Scotland	27,623
19	11,930

Fertility

For each child the person has had, we know when the child was born and the birth order. The maximum number of children for a person is 16, for 1 respondent. The variable **fertility** provides the source of information: when it is equal to 2, 11, 12 the information is from the fertility histories in the BHPS in waves 2, 11 and 12, respectively and it is updated with information from the panel (using all natural children stated in the household); when it is equal to 100, there is only information from the panel; when it is equal to 0 the person is childless. The data of each child birth is given by **childbirth_**. When two births are too close together, but we are sure that they are two different children, we impose a distance of 9.75 months. We also define a variable called **twin_**, which indicates whether the birth is a singleton, twins or triplets.

Variables description

variable name	variable label
childbirth1	first childbirth
twin1	number of kids for the first childbirth
fertility	source of information for the fertility history

Example

childbirth1	twin1	childbirth2	twin2	last_int	fertility
730	1	754	1	1270	2

source of information for the fertility history	observations
no children	14,881
wave 2	6,135
wave 11	3,320
wave 12	1,905
from the panel	6,101

This is the distribution of the order of the births over time.

number of children	observations
1	17,461
2	12,643
3	5,610
4	2,110
5	816
6	345
7	160
8	85
9	47
10	22
11	14
12	8
13	4
14	4
15	4
16	1

Are there twins?

children per birth	observations
one child	38,907
two twins	420
three twins	7

For purely descriptive reasons, we calculate the person's age at their first child (in months):

number of subjects	survival time 25%	survival time 50%	survival time 75%
32274	294	357	-

For purely descriptive reasons, we calculate the interval between the first and the second child.

number of subjects	survival time 25%	survival time 50%	survival time 75%
17376	25	48	118

For purely descriptive reasons, we calculate the interval between the second and the third child.

number of subjects	survival time 25%	survival time 50%	survival time 75%
12568	38	-	-

All the durations are equal or greater than 9 months.

min1	min2	min3	min4	min5	min6	min7	min8	min9	min10	min11	min12	min13	min14	min15	min16
168	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	12	12	9

Min 1 is the minimum age of the parent (14 years old). Min 2-16 are the minimum distance between two following births.

Union histories

From the retrospective histories and the panel we can determine how many unions each respondent has had during their life up to their last interview in the panel. For those without a retrospective history, we can observe how many they have had during the panel. The maximum is 10 unions, for two respondents. The **union_** type indicator variable is equal to 1 when it is a marriage, to 2 when it is cohabitation and 0 otherwise. For some unions we do not know the start date; these are indicated by a value of 1 for the indicator variable for 'left censoring', **left_**; for such unions the variable **start_date_** gives the first date in which we observe them in the union. For the others **start_date_** is the actual starting date. For each union, we also provide the date of its end, **stop_date_**, how the union ended, **end_**, and the pid number of the partner, **partner_1**, when available. If the union type is equal to 1 (marriage), the partner can die (widowhood, **end_**=1), they can get divorced (**end_**=2), separate (**end_**=3) or they can be currently together (**end_**=6); if the union type is equal to 2 (cohabitation), they can split (**end_**=4), get married (**end_**=5) or they can be currently together (**end_**=6). For divorced people, there is also the date of the separation, **separation_**, when available. All dates for which we are not sure about the month end with .5. The variable **marital** indicates the source of information: when it is equal to 2, 11, 12 they are from the marital histories in BHPS in waves 2, 11 and 12, respectively, and they are updated with information from the panel; when it is equal to 100, they married in their life, but we only have information from the panel; when it is equal to 50, they married and got divorced before the survey and we have no information about dates; when it is equal to 0 they were never married. The variable cohabitation indicates the source of information: when it is equal to 2, 11, 12 they are from the cohabitation histories in BHPS in waves 2, 11 and 12, respectively, and they are updated with information from the panel; when it is equal to 100, they have cohabitated in their life, but we only have information from the panel; when it is equal to 0, they never cohabitated.

Variables description

variable name	variable label
union1	first union
partner1	first partner
left1	left censoring
start_date1	starting date
end1	how it is ended
stop_date1	ending date
separation1	separation date
marital	source of information for the marital history
cohabitation	source of information for the cohabitation history

Example

union1	parter1	left1	start_date1	end1	stop_date1	separation
marriage	10162372	1	1103	divorce	1186	1175

The following statistics are defined over all unions.

source of information for the marital history	observations
no marriages	11,652
wave 2	6,976
wave 11	1,224
wave 12	552
already married	1,858
from the panel	10,080

source of information for the cohabitation history	observations
no cohabitations	24,514
wave 2	1,240
wave 11	825
wave 12	253
from the panel	5,510

How can a marriage end?

end	observations
widowhood	2,454
divorce	3,553
separation	613
currently together	14,479

Purely for descriptive reasons, we calculate the median duration of a marriage.

number of subjects	survival time 25%	survival time 50%	survival time 75%
13715	174	441	656

How can cohabitation end?

end	observations
splitting	2,812
marriage	4,424
currently together	2,361

Purely for descriptive reasons, we calculate the median duration of cohabitation.

number of subjects	survival time 25%	survival time 50%	survival time 75%
8925	13	29	62