

Annex C: Guide to the FRS User Documentation

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Changes Documentation

Changes metadata (Changes_Metadata.xls)

This spreadsheet shows the variable changes to the hierarchical database that have taken place since the previous survey year and links them to the *Guide to Changes*. It covers new and dropped variables, and category changes within variables.

Dataset and Changes Summary (dataset_and_changes_summary.pdf)

This guide, for analysts, highlights questionnaire changes and processing changes between survey years.

Guide to Changes (Guide_to_Changes.pdf)

This guide, for interviewers and analysts, highlights questionnaire changes between survey years. The document also covers changes to the wording of particular questions.

Dataset Documentation

Releases Documentation ([releases_documentation.pdf](#))

This guide outlines the changes between releases in each survey year.

Derived Variables Documentation

Derived Variables (dvsummary.xls)

This document lists and provides details for all derived variables (DVs) on the FRS datasets. This document also details changes made to DVs for each year back to 2008/09

Income Tree (income_tree.xls)

The document includes a tree diagram detailing the components that make-up each income DV in the FRS datasets.

Metadata Documentation

Benefits (benefits.xls)

This has two sheets. The first (benefit) outlines the questions asked for each benefit:

- ◆ Column A – BENEFIT KEY – This is key number used for this benefit on the benefit table
- ◆ Column B – ONS/NATCEN KEY – not required for dataset analysis
- ◆ Column C – QUESTION – The initial question asking whether they receive the benefit, as held on the adult table. 1Q2 means it is category 2 of question ben1q, and the answer is held in ben1q2.
- ◆ Column D – BENEFIT - Gives the name of the benefit
- ◆ Column E – ABBREVIATION – an abbreviation of the benefit name
- ◆ Columns F to K – BASIC INFORMATION – This lists the detailed questions which are asked for that benefit. The column headings are the benefit table variables onto which the answer is mapped.
- ◆ Columns L to Q – DOCUMENT CONSULTED INFORMATION – Shows which documents the respondent may consult for that benefit.
- ◆ Columns R to T – USUAL AMOUNT INFORMATION – Shows whether and when this is asked
- ◆ Column U – CURRENT – whether presently receiving the benefit.
- ◆ Column V – CURRENT –how many weeks they have been receiving the benefit.
- ◆ Columns W to AA – WHO GETS – Some disability benefits can be received by one person on behalf another. The benefit will be coded to the person who received it, these variables (WhoRec) show on who they are receiving it for.
- ◆ Columns AB to AF – NON STANDARD QUESTIONS – For some benefits, we wish to hold benefit-specific information. To save space, this information is mapped onto the multi-purpose variables Var<number>. Columns AB to AF show which questions are mapped onto which Var* and the second sheet gives further details...

The second sheet (var) holds details of the multi-purpose variables Var1-Var5 (though not all years require all five). These are used to hold information which is relevant to only a few benefits. For each of the questions shown on sheet 'benefits' cols AB to AF there should be a corresponding bit on this sheet giving the answer formats.

Flatfile documentation (flatfile_documentation.xls)

This spreadsheet describes the mapping between the flatfile and hierarchical datasets. The following information is shown:

- Column A – Flatfile variable name
- Column B – Full flatfile variable names (expanded list of column A summary)
- Column C – The source table on the hierarchical dataset
- Column D – The source variable name on the hierarchical dataset
- Column E – Usage (amount, categorical etc)
- Column F – Whether a derived variable
- Column G – The original question name
- Column H – The name of the SAS format applied (if required)
- Column I – Key value (if required), e.g. key to show which benefit
- Column J – The value of the SAS format applied to key value (if required)
- Column K – The label applied

The remaining columns show the decode values of the label applied (if required)

Hierarchical Documentation (Hierarchical_documentation.xls)

This spreadsheet describes the hierarchical data set, including documentation that relates the data set back to the FRS questionnaire:

Column A	TABLE	The source table on the hierarchical dataset
Column B	VARIABLE	The variable name on the hierarchical dataset
Column C	VAR_FMT	The name of the SAS format associated with the variable
Column D	LABEL	The label associated with the variable
Column E	FRSVALUE	List of numerical values associated with the SAS format
Column F	FMTVALUE	The value/label of the SAS format associated with the variable
Column G	MINVAL	Refers to the FRS questionnaire, minimum value which the variable can take
Column H	MAXVAL	Refers to the FRS questionnaire, maximum value which the variable can take
Column I	DERIVED	Indication of whether the variable is derived or not. Takes the value of 1 if the variable is derived and 0 if it is not
Column J	PER_VAR	Period code variable associated with amount variable if applicable
Column K	BENEFIT	Benefit key associated with document Benefits. Non-benefit variables take the value zero
Column L	QUESTION	Refers to the FRS questionnaire, source question associated with variable
Column M	TYPE	Whether the variable is an integer (I), floating point (F) or date (D) type variable
Column N	BLOCK	Refers to the FRS questionnaire, block of questions where the variable can be found
Column O	VARSEQ	Refers to the FRS questionnaire and the sequence in which questions are asked
Column P	USAGE	Description of the type of the variable, e.g. frequency, categorical etc. Further information on this (e.g. whether an amount variable has been converted to a weekly value) is held in the document Usage

Questionnaire Documentation

Questionnaire Instructions (GB/NI Questionnaire_Instructions.pdf)

This gives the interviewers' instructions for the questionnaire, and is useful when trying to understand the context and routing of the questions. However, it should not be treated as definitive: instructions are updated manually and may therefore be prone to error. For documentation generated directly from the FRS interview program, see Questionnaire Routing documentation.

Questionnaire Routing (Questionnaire_Routing_part_1/2/3/4/5.pdf)

This gives the questionnaire routing, checks and computations in more detail. It is generated from the interview itself and is more definitive than the interviewers' instructions, but is difficult to follow. Once a variable on the database has been identified, this should be mapped to the original question name (using the hierarchical or flatfile documentation). The question name can then be searched for in this document.

Interviewers' Showcards (showcards.pdf)

The interviewers' showcards that are used in various questions when the respondent is asked to say in which of a number of categories they lie. For example, when asked to which ethnic group they belong, they are shown a card with different ethnicities on it.

Interviewer Pocket Guide (Interviewer pocket guide.pdf)

The interviewers' pocket guide to benefits, savings, mortgages and pensions, as produced by the survey contractors.