



# The Future of the General Lifestyle Survey

Update on proposed changes

October 2011

## 1. Background

It was proposed in the consultation on the future of the General Lifestyle Survey (GLF) that ONS would discontinue the GLF in its current form after the 2011 survey year. This was due to the need to improve the efficiency of data collection, by ceasing to produce different UK and EU poverty estimates, which are currently derived from separate surveys. There was also a requirement to deliver cost savings in response to the 2010 Spending Review.

The data needed for the cross-sectional European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) required by European law, which are currently collected using the GLF, would be provided through the Family Resources Survey (FRS). In addition a standalone survey would provide the longitudinal element of EU-SILC. The consultation provided the opportunity to explore how non-EU-SILC information currently collected on the GLF could be collected on other ONS surveys, such as the ONS Opinions Survey.

Following this consultation, ONS published a response<sup>1</sup> summarising data user's views, with an ONS response and proposals for how current data requirements would be met in future.

This document provides an update on the proposals detailed in the ONS response to the public consultation on the future of the GLF.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/consultations/closed-consultations/2011/the-future-of-the-glf-survey/index.html>

## 2. Update on the future of the GLF

The ONS response to the public consultation on the future of the GLF made three proposals for future GLF data collection. These proposals are detailed below, along with a summary of progress made with implementing each proposal:

### **(1) The GLF will cease to run in its current form from January 2012**

ONS will not be collecting wave one GLF data from January 2012 onwards, after the 2011 GLF survey year. The FRS, alongside a standalone longitudinal survey, will meet EU-SILC data requirements from 2012. Some of the non-EU-SILC information currently collected on the GLF will be collected using a new survey; the 'Opinions and Lifestyle Survey'.

### **(2) EU-SILC questions to first time respondents will be asked within the Family Resources Survey (FRS) from April 2012, with repeated waves of EU-SILC questions (covering the longitudinal element of the EU-SILC requirement) asked as an ONS stand-alone survey**

An FRS questionnaire has been developed to meet cross-sectional EU-SILC data requirements. This questionnaire has been piloted and the results from this pilot indicate that the questionnaire worked well. Therefore, the FRS will collect EU-SILC wave one data from April 2012.

A new stand alone survey has been developed and tested to collect EU-SILC data for waves 2-4 only. This survey will collect longitudinal data on demographics; accommodation; household financial situation; health: general health and limiting longstanding illness; employment and economic status; pensions; education, and income including state benefits.

It was originally proposed that this survey would be conducted using telephone interviewing from January 2012. However, further testing of telephone interviewing is required to ensure effective integration with the telephone systems. Therefore, telephone interviewing for EU-SILC waves 2-4 data collection will not be implemented until January 2013 at the earliest.

### **(3) Non-EU-SILC questions will be collected on a separate survey which would also satisfy existing and new ONS Opinions Survey (OPN) data requirements from January 2012, subject to continued funding for non EU-SILC variables**

A new survey will be created as a result of merging the ONS Opinions Survey with non-EU-SILC GLF questions that have funding. This new survey will be called the 'Opinions and Lifestyle Survey'. This survey, based on a random two-stage Postcode Address File sample, will randomly select one adult (aged 16 and over) per household for interview and achieve a sample size of approximately 13,000 households. The Opinions and Lifestyle Survey will continue to offer the flexibility of the ONS Opinions Survey, where questions can be added for a month or more with a quick turnaround for question sponsors.

ONS has canvassed current sponsors of non-EU-SILC GLF questions to identify which questions are required and funded beyond December 2011. As a result, the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey will include some of the current GLF questions on health, family formations, and a reduced suite of questions on drinking. These questions will be asked from January 2012. The ONS Opinions Survey currently asks questions about smoking and these will continue to be asked on the merged survey. The withdrawal of NHS Information Centre funding during 2011 has led to the removal of drinking questions asked on the GLF ahead of the implementation of this new survey. A list of questions moving from the GLF to the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey are provided in Appendix A.

An equivalent to the GLF Overview Report will continue to be produced annually, based on data collected from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

If you have any questions or comments on the consultation or this document, please contact us at [glf.consultation@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:glf.consultation@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

## Appendix A: Questions moving from the GLF to Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

| <b>Smoking</b>                          |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Variable Name</b>                    | <b>Question</b>   |
| SelfCom                                 | Respondent is aged 16 or 17 - offer self completion form and enter code   |
| SmokEver                                | Have you/has (...) ever smoked a cigarette, a cigar, or a pipe?   |
| CigNow                                  | Do you/does he/she smoke cigarettes at all nowadays?  |
| QtyWkEnd                                | About how many cigarettes a day do you smoke usually smoke at weekends?   |
| QtyWkDay                                | About how many cigarettes a day do you smoke usually smoke on weekdays?   |
| CigType                                 | Do you mainly smoke...<br>1) filter-tipped cigarettes<br>2) or plain or untipped cigarettes<br>3) or hand-rolled cigarettes?  |
| CigEver                                 | Have you ever smoked cigarettes regularly?  |
| <b>Family Information and Fertility</b> |   |
| <b>Variable Name</b>                    | <b>Question</b>   |
| ChkFIA                                  | Interviewer code  |
| HusbAway                                | May I check, is your husband/wife absent because he/she usually works away from home, the marriage has broken down or for some other reason?  |
| SelfCom3                                | The next set of questions is about family information, which you may wish to complete on your own.  |
| AreWed                                  | Earlier you said you were married/ separated/ divorced/ widowed. Thinking of this/ your last marriage, are/ were you legally married or are/ were you simply living together as a couple? |
| HowWed                                  | Did you get married with a religious ceremony of some kind, or at a register office or approved premises?   |
| NumMar                                  | How many times have you been legally married?   |
| CIYr                                    | Which year did you and your partner start living together as a couple?  |
| CLMon                                   | Which month did you and your partner start living together as a couple?   |
| CIMar                                   | Have you ever been married?   |
| CINumMar                                | How many times have you been legally married altogether?  |
| YrMar                                   | In which year were you married?   |
| MonMar                                  | In which month were you married?  |
| LvTgthr                                 | Before getting married, did you and your husband/wife live together as a couple?  |
| YrLvTgthr                               | In which year did you start living together?  |
| MonLvTgth                               | In which month did you start living together?   |
| Current                                 | Thinking about your present/ most recent/ first marriage, is this marriage current, or has it ended through death, divorce or separation?   |
| HowEnded                                | Did your marriage end in...<br>1) death<br>2) divorce<br>3) or separation   |
| YrDie                                   | In which year did your husband/wife die?  |
| Mondie                                  | In which month of that year did your husband/wife die?  |
| YrSep                                   | In which year did you stop living together as a couple?   |
| MonSep                                  | In which month of that year did you stop living together?   |
| YrDiv                                   | In which year was your decree absolute granted?   |

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| MonDiv   | In which month of that year was your decree absolute granted?   |
| Cohab    | Have you had any (other) relationships in which you lived together with someone as a couple but did not get married?  |
| Numcohab | How many relationships have you had altogether in which you lived together with someone as a couple but did not get married?  |
| TimeCoY1 | Thinking about the first/second/third relationships where you lived with someone as a couple but did not get married...how long did you live together in terms of years and months? (Enter years) |
| TimeCoM1 | Now enter number of months  |
| WhencoY1 | Can you tell me the year in which you started or stopped living together as a couple with your partner?   |
| WhencoM1 | Can you tell me the month in which you started or stopped living together as a couple with your partner?  |
| Starten1 | Interviewer - Is this when the respondent and his/her partner started living together or finished living together as a couple?  |
| othdate1 | If that was the date you started/stopped living together, then you started/stopped living together in...(month)...(year), Does that seem right?   |
| RghtdtM1 | What is the correct date? (month)   |
| RghtdtY1 | What is the correct date? (year)  |
| Endcoh1  | You said you stopped living together in ...(month)...(year). May I just check was this when you stopped living together in the same accommodation, when the relationship ended or both?           |
| endrelY1 | In which year did the relationship end?   |
| endrelM1 | In which month did the relationship end?  |
| EndlivY1 | In which year did you stop living in the same accommodation?  |
| EndlivM1 | In which month did you stop living in the same accommodation?   |
| Children | Do you have any children in the household?  |
| StpChldF | Do you have any step, foster or adopted children of any age living with you?  |
| StpChldM | Do you have any step, foster or adopted children of any age living with you?  |
| NumStepF | How many step children do you live with?  |
| NumStepM | How many step children do you live with?  |
| NumFost  | How many foster children have you living with you altogether?   |
| NumAdop  | How many adopted children have you living with you altogether?  |
| ChildNo  | From the list below, please copy the number of the first/second step/foster/adopted child.  |
| ChldType | Thinking about NAME. Is NAME your step-child, your adopted-child or are they your foster child?   |
| ChLivYr  | Please state the year (CHILD'S NAME) started living with you.   |
| ChLivMon | Please state the month (CHILD'S NAME) started living with you.  |
| Baby     | Have you ever given birth to a baby - even one who only lived for a short time?   |
| NumBaby  | How many children have you given birth to, including any who live somewhere else and any who have died since birth?   |
| BirthDte | Please enter the Date of birth  |
| BirthSex | Sex of child  |
| ChldLive | Is this child living with you?  |
| Pregnant | May I just check... Are you pregnant now?   |
| MoreChld | Do you think that you will have any (more) children (after the one you are expecting)?  |

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| ProbMore                       | On the whole do you think...<br>1) You will probably have any/more children<br>2) Or you will probably not have any/more children?   |
| TotChld                        | How many children do you think you will have born to you in total, including those you have had already who are still alive/ (and) the one you are expecting?  |
| NextAge                        | How old do you think you will be when you have your first/next baby (after the one you are expecting)?   |
| <b>Adult Health</b>            |  |
| <b>Variable Name</b>           | <b>Question</b>  |
| <b>General Health</b>          |  |
| QHealth1                       | How is your/his/her health in general; would you say it was...<br>1) Very good<br>2) Good<br>3) Fair<br>4) Bad<br>5) Or very bad   |
| LSIII                          | (And) do you/does (..) have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity by long-standing I mean anything that has troubled you/him/her over a period of time or that is likely to affect you/him/her over a period of time? |
| IIIAff_Har                     | Do any of these conditions or illnesses affect you in any of the following areas?  |
| LimitAct                       | Does this illness or disability (Do any of these illnesses or disabilities) limit your activities in any way?  |
| Lmatter                        | Earlier you said you had a longstanding illness... What is the matter with you?  |
| LMatNum                        | How many longstanding illnesses or infirmities does respondent have?   |
| Lmat                           | What is the matter with the respondent?  |
| ICD                            | Code for each complaint at Lmat  |
| <b>Use of Medical Services</b> |  |
| DocTalk                        | During the 2 weeks ending yesterday, apart from any visit to a hospital, did you talk to a doctor for any reason at all, either in person or by telephone?   |
| Nchats                         | How many times did you talk to a doctor in these 2 weeks?  |
| WhsBhlf                        | On whose behalf was this consultation made?  |
| ForPerNo                       | Code who consultation was made for   |
| NHS                            | Was this consultation...<br>1) Under the National Health Service<br>2) or paid for privately   |
| GP                             | Was the doctor...<br>1) A GP (i.e. a family doctor)<br>2) or some other kind of doctor?  |
| OutPatnt                       | During the months of (last 3 complete calendar months) did you attend as a patient at the casualty or outpatient department of a hospital (apart from straightforward ante- or post-natal visits)?                                 |
| NTimes1                        | How many times did you attend in (earliest month in reference period)?   |
| NTimes2                        | How many times did you attend in (second month in reference period)?   |
| NTimes3                        | How many times did you attend in (third month in reference period)?  |
| Casualty                       | Was this visit (were any of these visits) to the casualty department or was it (were they all) to some other part of the hospital?   |

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| NCasVis                        | (May I just check) How many times did you go to Casualty altogether?  |
| PrVists                        | Was your outpatient visit (were any of your outpatient visits) during (reference period) made under the NHS, or was it (were any of them) paid for privately?   |
| NPrVists                       | (May I just check), How many of the visits were paid for privately?   |
| <b>Child Health</b>            |   |
| <b>Variable Name</b>           | <b>Question</b>   |
| <b>General Health</b>          |   |
| GenHlth2                       | How is (name's) health in general? Would you say it was...<br>1) Very good<br>2) Good<br>3) Fair<br>4) Bad<br>5) Or very bad  |
| Illness                        | Does (name) have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By long-standing, I mean anything that has troubled them over a period of time or that is likely to affect them over a period of time?                 |
| LimitAct                       | Does this illness or disability (Do any of these illnesses or disabilities) limit (name)'s activities in any way?   |
| <b>Use of Medical Services</b> |   |
| DocTalk                        | During the 2 weeks ending yesterday, apart from visits to a hospital, did (name) talk to a doctor for any reason at all, or did you or any other member of the household talk to a doctor on his/her behalf?                |
| Nchats                         | How many times did (name) talk to the doctor (or you or any other member of the household consult the doctor on name's behalf) in those 2 weeks?  |
| NHS                            | Was this consultation...<br>1) Under the National Health Service<br>2) or paid for privately  |
| GP                             | Was the doctor...<br>1) A GP (i.e. a family doctor)<br>2) or some other kind of doctor?   |
| OutPatnt                       | During the months of (last 3 complete calendar months), did (name) attend as a patient the casualty or outpatient department of a hospital?   |
| Ntimes1                        | How many times did (name) attend in (earliest month in reference period)?   |
| Ntimes2                        | How many times did (name) attend in (second month in reference period)?   |
| Ntimes3                        | How many times did (name) attend in (third month in reference period)?  |
| casualty                       | Was the visit (were any of the visits) to the casualty department or was it (were they) to some other part of the hospital?   |
| NCasVis                        | (May I just check) How many times did (name) go to casualty altogether?   |
| <b>Drinking</b>                |   |
| <b>Variable Name</b>           | <b>Question</b>   |
| SelfCom2                       | Respondent is aged 16 or 17 - offer self completion form and enter code   |
| DrinkNow                       | Do you ever drink alcohol nowadays, including drinks you brew or make at home?  |
| DrinkAny                       | Could I just check, does that mean you will never have an alcoholic drink nowadays, or do you have an alcoholic drink very occasionally, perhaps for medicinal purposes or on special occasions like Christmas or New Year? |

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| DrinkAmt      | I'm going to read out a few descriptions about the amounts of alcohol people drink, and I'd like you to say which one fits you best. Would you say you:<br>1) hardly drink at all<br>2) drink a little<br>3) drink a moderate amount<br>4) drink quite a lot<br>5) or drink heavily |
| SpiritsQ_New  | ....and were those spirits<br>1 - measured in a pub, bar, restaurant or club (or similar licensed premises)<br>2 - measured at home / someone else's home<br>3 - not measured   |
| SpiritsQ_New2 | ....and were those<br>1) standard single pub measures of 25ml<br>2) pub measures of 35ml<br>3) standard double pub measures of 50ml<br>4) other measure   |
| DrinkOfT      | Thinking now about all kinds of drinks, how often have you had an alcoholic drink of any kind during the last 12 months?  |
| DrinkL7       | Did you have an alcoholic drink in the seven days ending yesterday?   |
| DrnkDay       | On how many days in the last seven did you have an alcoholic drink?   |
| DrnkSame      | Did you drink more on some days than others, or did you drink about the same on each of those days?   |
| WhichDay      | Which day (last week) did you last have an alcoholic drink?   |
| DrnkTyp       | Thinking about last (Day at 'whichday') what types of drink did you have that day?  |
| NBrL7         | Still thinking about last (Day at 'whichday'), how much normal strength beer, lager, stout, cider or shandy (excluding cans and bottles of shandy) did you drink that day?  |
| NBrL7Q        | How many (Ans at NBrL7) of normal strength beer, lager, stout, cider or shandy (excluding cans and bottles of shandy) did you drink that day?   |
| SBrL7         | Still thinking about last (Day at 'whichday'), how much strong beer, lager, stout or cider did you drink that day?  |
| SBrL7Q        | How many (Ans at SBrL7) of strong beer, lager, stout or cider did you drink that day?   |
| SpirL7        | Still thinking about last (Day at 'whichday'), how much Spirits or liqueurs, such as gin, whisky, brandy, rum, vodka, advocaat or cocktails did you drink that day?   |
| ShryL7        | Still thinking about last (Day at 'whichday'), how much Sherry or Martini including port, vermouth, Cinzano, Dubonnet did you drink that day?   |
| WineL7        | Still thinking about last (Day at 'whichday'), how much wine, including babycham and champagne, did you drink that day?   |
| BWine2        | Were those...<br>1) Small glasses (approx. 125ml)<br>2) Standard (approx. 175ml)<br>3) Or Large Glasses (approx. 250ml)?<br>4) Bottles (spontaneous only)<br>5) Don't Know (spontaneous only)   |
| PopsL7        | Still thinking about last (Day at 'whichday'), how much Alcopops (i.e. alcoholic lemonade, alcoholic colas or other alcoholic fruit-or-herb flavoured drinks for e.g. Smirnoff Ice, Bacardi Breezer, WKD, Metz etc), did you drink that day?  |

| <b>Demographics</b>  |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Variable Name</b> | <b>Question</b>   |
| Cry01                | In which country were you born?   |
| CryOX7               | Country of Birth  |
| CameYr               | Which year did you first arrive in the UK?  |
| ContUK               | Apart from holidays and short visits abroad have you lived in the UK continuously since then? |
| CameY2               | Which year did you last arrive in the UK?   |
| CameMT               | In which month did you arrive in the UK?  |
| Relig                | What is your religion?  |