Understanding Society

0800 252 853
www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants
contact@understandingsociety.org.uk

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Your interview time and date:

.....

Your interviewer name:

.....

Understanding Society

Date:.....

Dear.....

You may remember that your household was interviewed for the *Living in Britain* study on _ _ /_ _ /2008. The study has now been renamed as *Understanding Society* and is being conducted by researchers from the University of Essex together with NatCen. As the study is concerned with how things change over time, we would like to interview you and your household again.

I called today at the address we have on our files and found that you now live elsewhere. I spoke to _____ who did not wish to give your new address or telephone number without your permission, but did agree to forward this letter to you on our behalf.

We would be most grateful if you would let us know your present address and telephone number, wherever you are living now. You can call us on Freephone **0800 252 853**, email us at **contact@understandingsociety.org.uk** or complete and return the reply slip below in the Freepost envelope provided – you will not need a stamp.

By giving us your name, address and telephone number you are not committing yourself to be interviewed. Once you have confirmed your new details an interviewer will contact you and invite you to take part. If you are willing, a convenient time for an interview can then be arranged.

If you have any questions about the study, or would prefer not to be contacted again, please visit **www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants** or call us using the number provided above.

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely,

.....
Your interviewer
Understanding Society

Nick Buck
Director,
Understanding Society

✂----------

Please complete this reply slip using BLOCK CAPITALS. **Serial number:**.....

Title:..... **First name:**..... **Surname:**.....

Address:.....

.....

Postcode:.....**Telephone:**.....

P2823/IP2/TL

✂----------

Please return the completed reply slip in the enclosed Freepost envelope – you don't need a stamp if you post it in the UK.

If you have any queries about this reply slip, or about *Understanding Society* please call Freephone **0800 252 853** or email **contact@understandingsociety.org.uk**

Thank you.

Moving house?
Take us with you

www.understandingsociety.org.uk

UKHLS_AddressChange_v2.indd 1 8/8/08 13:52:27

Thank you for taking part in *Understanding Society* this year. Your continuing participation is very important to us. Please let us know if you move by calling us on **Freephone 0800 252 853** or returning this card in the **Freepost envelope** (no stamp needed). To say thank-you we will send you a £5 voucher.

MOVING FROM...

_____

_____

_____

Date of move: _____

MOVING TO...

Surname: _____

First Name(s): _____

New Address: _____

_____

Postcode: _____

Home phone: _____

Mobile: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please let us know who will be living with you at your new address. Please list their names below as we may like to ask them to take part in *Understanding Society* in the future.If possible, please provide their mobile number.

Name: _____

Mobile: _____

Name: _____

Mobile: _____

Name: _____

Mobile: _____

Name: _____

Mobile: _____

UKHLS_AddressChange_v2.indd 2 8/8/08 13:52:28

Point | Add | HH | P no of who signed | Ckl

Understanding Society

As a way of saying thank you to your household for completing this study, NatCen promises to send you:

☐☐ x £5 voucher(s) for adults (aged 16 and over) and/or

☐☐ x £1 voucher(s) for children (aged 10-15)

You do not have to do anything to claim your gift voucher. It will be sent to you automatically and you should receive it within 4 weeks. If you do not receive the voucher, please contact the *Understanding Society* Team on 01277 200600.

Once again, thank you for taking part in this important study.

_____ (Interviewer)

☐☐☐☐ Int ID No

P2822: *Understanding Society* IP2

- -

Point | Add | HH | P no of who signed | Ckl

Understanding Society

As a way of saying thank you to your household for completing this study, NatCen promises to send you:

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_____ (Interviewer)

☐☐☐☐ Int ID No

P2822: *Understanding Society* IP2

That's life!

Most of you are satisfied with your life so far – in fact 83% of you are satisfied and just 7% dissatisfied (the other 10% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied). A greater proportion of 16-24 year olds seem to be happy with life (87% satisfied) compared to about 79% of 35-54 year olds.

About 89% of those aged 65 or above are satisfied with their life. Full-time students are the most satisfied group. People who are employed or retired are also generally happier than the average. Those who are least likely to say that they are satisfied with life are those who are looking after the home or family, the unemployed and those with a long-term sickness or disability.

Helping out

We asked you if you volunteer for a charity or other organisation and if you donate to charity.

Just less than one-fifth of you do some unpaid help or work for a local, national or international organisation or charity.

Organisations that you help most are those who deal with children or young people (29%). This was followed by local community or neighbourhood groups (24%), with religious groups on 20% and school or other education groups on 19%.

Around half of you who do voluntary work, do so every week or even more regularly than that.

Around 7 in 10 of you gave money to charity in the previous year and the proportion of people who donate to charity tends to increase with age. While about 57% of 16-34 year olds give to charity, almost 80% of those aged 55 or older donate money.

Keep in touch

Thanks again for taking part in *Understanding Society*. We hope you think these early findings from the survey are as interesting as we do. If you want to know more about the survey you've helped with or about these and other findings, take a look at the website at **www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants** where you can also update your details if they have changed.

We are always very pleased to hear from you. You can call the *Understanding Society* team on **0800 252 853**. Colette Lo and Sandra Jones will try to answer any questions you might have.

You can also email us at
understandingsociety@essex.ac.uk
Or you can write to us at

Understanding Society
University of Essex
FREEPOST RRXX-KEKJ-JGKS
Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ

Sandra

Colette

Understanding Society is an initiative by the Economic and Social Research Council, with scientific leadership by the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex, and survey delivery by the National Centre for Social Research.

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E·S·R·C ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

ISER INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL & ECONOMIC RESEARCH

NatCen National Centre for Social Research

Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency

Participants' Update 2

Providing valuable new evidence about people's lives, behaviours and beliefs in the UK

Understanding Society

First findings from *Understanding Society*

What you tell us matters! And to thank you for taking the time to participate in this really valuable and important survey, we want you to be the first to know about what we are beginning to learn. If you want to know more, please take a look at the special website we have created for you and all the other people who are taking part at **www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants**

While you're on the website, why not use your personalised invitation login to check and update your details, we'll send you £5 as a thank you for keeping us up to date when you move house.

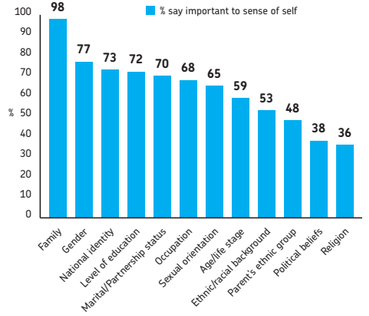
When we interviewed you last year, we asked you questions ranging from important aspects of your identity, to whether you were feeling the pinch as the credit crunch began to take hold. All of your responses are now being used by researchers in their analyses. This update tells you a bit more about some of the things they are learning. We hope you find it as interesting as we do.

More detailed findings are available on the website. **www.understandingsociety.org.uk/participants**

Who am I?

Last year we asked you to think about your identity, and what aspects of your background are important to you.

Nearly everyone said that their family was important to their sense of who they were. Just over three-quarters of you said that your gender was important to your sense of self, while just under three-quarters of you said that your national identity, your education or your marital status were important. Surprisingly, few of you said that your political beliefs or your religion contribute to your sense of who you are as a person.



When asked what you thought about when questioned about your ethnic background, over half of you (56%) said your national identity. Just under one-third (29%) of you thought about your mother's or father's ethnic group and one-fifth (20%) of you thought about your religion. Slightly more than one-fifth (22%) said that you didn't think of any of these aspects.

Keeping active and busy?

Sport, recreation, leisure activities and events attended in your spare time – this was one of the main topics we asked you about last year. This gives researchers information about how we spend our time; whether we prefer to watch a football match or kick a ball around the park or if we go to the theatre, whether we pay to watch or get up on stage!

A majority of people (59%) said that they had taken part in sports or active recreation in the previous month. Men were slightly more likely to have taken part (62%) than women (56%). Younger people were more likely to have been sporty or active (69% of those aged under 35) than those in the older age groups (58% of those aged 45-64 and 45% of those aged 65 or above).

Crafts, including buying art, was the most popular creative activity, with one-fifth of you doing this during the year. Around one in ten of you had taken part in some dance or acting, played – or rehearsed – music or singing. A similar proportion of you had also done other sorts of art during the year.

Are you green to go?

With so much recent public interest in climate change and other environmental issues, we asked about a number of 'environmentally-friendly' actions you might take. It will be extremely interesting to see how people change their behaviour, or don't, over time in light of those discussions.

Most common of these actions was to switch lights off in rooms which aren't being used - 82% of you do this 'always' or 'very often'. 69% of you turn off the TV at night instead of putting it on 'stand-by'.

Over recent years there has been an increased awareness on the re-use of plastic shopping bags by supermarkets and other shops. More than 6 out of 10 of you said that you always, or very often, take your own shopping bag with you when you shop. More than half of you turn the tap off whilst brushing your teeth and put more clothes on when it's cold rather than turning the heating up.

Women tend to be more environmentally-friendly than men, and older people tend to be more environmentally-friendly than younger people.

Just less than one-third of you use public transport "a lot" or "quite often". Women use public transport more than men (33% compared to 25%). Both younger age groups and the older age groups also tend to use public transport more than the others. When asked why some people don't use public transport more often, the most common response was that it was not convenient (43% of people gave this response).