

# Key issues in reusing data

## Overview

- ◎ Pros & cons of reusing research data
- ◎ Getting started with documentation
- ◎ A (quantitative) case study

1.

# Pros & cons

## Primary data

- ⦿ Data collected by a researcher for the specific research purposes
- ⦿ CSO
- ⦿ ESRI
- ⦿ Major research groups
- ⦿ Individual researchers

# D A T A S H A R I N G

## Secondary data

- ⦿ Dataset collected by someone else for some other purpose
- ⦿ Researcher using secondary data for analysis purposes did not participate in research design or data collection process
- ⦿ Data not collected to answer specific research questions

## Advantages

- ◎ Datasets impossible to create
- ◎ Cost effective & time saving
- ◎ Ethical issues about data collection dealt with
- ◎ Can spend bulk of time analysing data
- ◎ Breadth of data available
- ◎ Many surveys available even in an Irish context

## Disadvantages

Data are not collected to answer your specific research questions

- ⊙ Particular information may not have been collected
- ⊙ Different geographic region
- ⊙ Different time period
- ⊙ Specific population
- ⊙ Variables may have been defined or categorised differently

## Disadvantages

Data are not collected to answer your specific research questions

- ⦿ Data collection process
- ⦿ Low response rate
- ⦿ Anonymisation may be quite extensive

## Re-using data

- ◎ Check out the documentation of the data collection procedures, data cleaning procedures and other technical information
- ◎ Make an effort to understand the data
- ◎ Be pragmatic about whether data are good enough for your purpose



2.

# Documentation



# Documentation

Helps you to  
understand the  
meaning of the data &  
to evaluate suitability  
for your research  
question



## Making sense of data

The documentation help you understand:

- ⦿ exactly what information was collected
- ⦿ from whom
- ⦿ when and where

And

- ⦿ what has been done to the resulting data before being archived?

## Making sense of data

◎ Start with the catalogue record

○ Metadata

◎ Survey instrument

◎ Codebook

◎ Official reports

3.

# A case study

## Growing Up in Ireland

Growing Up in Ireland is the national longitudinal study of children.

- ⊙ Infant Cohort
- ⊙ Child Cohort



## GUI Summary Guide

- ◎ Background to the study
- ◎ Sample design (for each cohort)
- ◎ Instrument development (design and piloting)
- ◎ Fieldwork and implementation (how it was carried out)
- ◎ Structure and content of the data files (e.g. main respondent, variable names, scaled measures used)
- ◎ Ethical considerations

# GUI Questionnaires

Child's Activities

Child's Emotional Health & Well-being

Child's Education

Family Context

Socio-demographics

Neighbourhood / Community



## GUI Data Dictionary (Codebook)

Provides information on every variable in the dataset, including:

- ⦿ Label
- ⦿ Type of variable
- ⦿ Measurement level
- ⦿ Valid values

# GUI: Variable Naming Conventions and Longitudinal Data Dictionary for Waves 1 & 2 of the Infant Cohort

TopicCat	Varname	9mthName	9mthLabel	9mthRMF	9mthAMF	3yrname	3yrlabel	3yr RMF	3yr AMF
HC	pHC26a	genderp6out	Gender Child Outside Hsd 6	yes	no	b2extsib6_sex	Sex of sixth sibling outside hsd - Wave 2	yes	no
HC	pHC26b	MMagep6out	Age last birthday Child Outside Hsd 6	yes	no	b2extsib6_age	Age in years of fifth external sibling Wave 2	yes	no
HC	pHC26c					b2extsib6_relc	Relationship to study child of sixth sibling outside hsd - Wave 2	yes	no
HC	pHC27a	genderp7out	Gender Child Outside Hsd 7	yes	no				
HC	pHC27b	MMagep7out	Age last birthday Child Outside Hsd 7	yes	no				
HC	pHC28a	genderp8out	Gender Child Outside Hsd 8	yes	no				
HC	pHC28b	MMagep8out	Age last birthday Child Outside Hsd 8	yes	no				
HC	pHC30	MS1	S1. Are you the biological parent of baby?	yes	no	bpc2S1	PC S1 Are you the biological parent of child	yes	no
HC	sHC30	FS1	S1. Are you the biological parent of baby?	yes	no	bsc2S1	SC S1 Are you the biological parent of child	yes	no
HC	pHC31a	MS2	S2. Are you the adoptive parent of baby?	yes	no	bpc2S2	PC S2 Are you the adoptive parent of child	yes	no
HC	sHC31a	FS2	S2. Are you the adoptive parent of baby?	yes	no	bsc2S2	SC S2 Are you the adoptive parent of child	yes	no
HC	pHC31b	MS3	S3. Was that a domestic or an inter-country adoption?	yes	no	bpc2S3	PC S3 Domestic or inter-country adoption	yes	no
HC	sHC31b	FS3	S3. Was that a domestic or an inter-country adoption?	yes	no	bsc2S3	SC S3 Domestic or inter-country adoption	yes	no
HC	pHC31c	MS4	S4. Was that a within family adoption?	yes	no	bpc2S4	PC S4 Was that a within family adoption?	yes	no
HC	sHC31c	FS4	S4. Was that a within family adoption?	yes	no	bsc2S4	SC S4 Was that a within family adoption?	yes	no
HC	pHC31d	MS6	S6. What age [in months] was baby when you adopted him/her?	yes	no	bpc2S6	PC S6 Age in months at adoption	yes	no

# Thank You!

## Any questions?

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