

UKDS Data about environmental attitudes and behaviour

Pierre Walthéry, UK Data Service DRTN webinar - 5 October 2023





Plan of the presentation

- 1. About the UK Data Service
- 2. Data about the environment
- 3. Examples



1. The UK Data Service



What is the UK Data Service?

- Who are we?
 - Main repository of UK secondary social science data
 - A provider of support, training and guidance
 - Freely accessible, funded by the ESRC
- Who are we for?
 - Academic researchers and students
 - Government analysts
 - Charities and the voluntary sector
 - Business consultants
 - Independent research centres & think tanks

Data curated by the UKDS

- Main UK repository of secondary social science data
- UK surveys:
 - Large-scale cross-sectional government surveys
 - Major longitudinal surveys (ie following individuals over time)
- Multinational survey data and aggregate databanks
- Census data modern and historical
- Business and administrative microdata
- Range of multimedia qualitative data sources

User support and training

- Provision of support and training
- Helpdesk for data-related queries
- Webinars and online workshops: datasets, methods and software focused
- Online learning materials: data skills modules, guides
- 'Traditional' survey-related and new forms of data ie computational social science.
- Supporting data literacy among undergraduate students



2. Social science data about the environment



Multiple approaches to environmental issues

- Substantive aspects of the environmental crisis:
 - Carbon emissions/energy use
 - Biodiversity loss
 - Pollution / resources depletion
 - Resilience and adaptation
- Levels of analysis
 - Individuals / households
 - Geographical aggregate: region, country, continent
- Kind of data
 - Attitudes and social representations, narratives
 - Behavioural
 - Organisational behaviour

Social representations and attitudinal data

- People's views, attitudes and representations about aspects of the crisis and levels of support for policies
- Common in quantitative surveys, either:
 - Fully dedicated surveys about environmental issues (rare)
 - Modules or single questions in non-dedicated surveys
- Where to find them:
 - British Social Attitudes Survey
 - Understanding Society
 - People and Nature Survey for England (PaNS)
 - Also: European Social Survey, World Value Survey

Behavioural data

- Reported > direct observation of people's behaviour
- Behaviour is a broad term, applies to many areas of research:
 - Political participation and voting
 - BSA and the British Election Study
 - Consumption: Living Costs and Food Survey (LCFS)
 - Commuting and travel
 - National Travel Survey, the Census
 - Interaction with the natural environment
 - People and Nature Survey for England
 - Energy use, CO2 emissions: OECD and IEA datasets

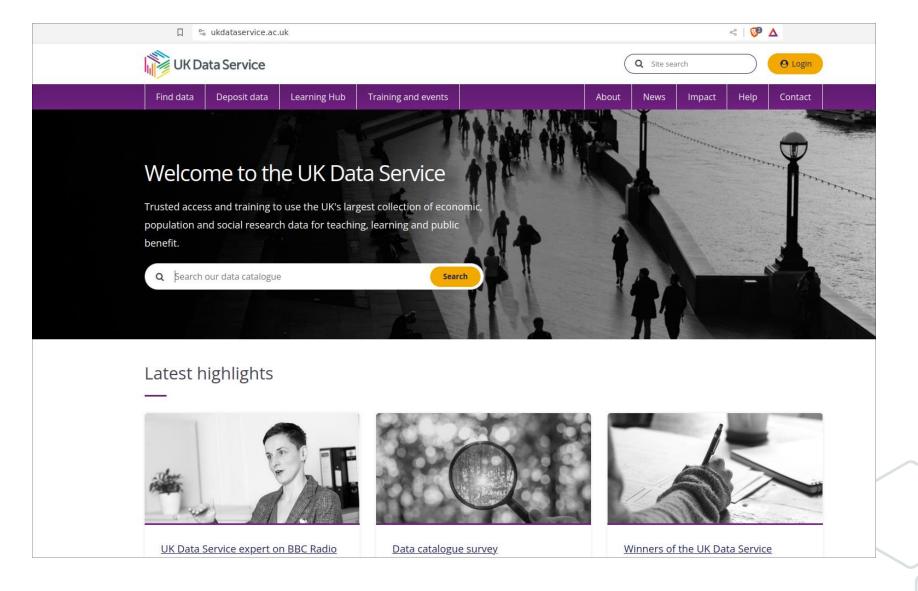
Qualitative and deposited research data

- No qualitative data equivalent to the major quantitative studies but...
- ESRC requirement that grant holders have todeposit their data with UKDS
- A growing treasure trove of qualitative (and quantitative) research data on sustainability and the environment
- Accessible via ReShare on the UKDS website, most freely accessible, sometimes authorisation of the PI is required

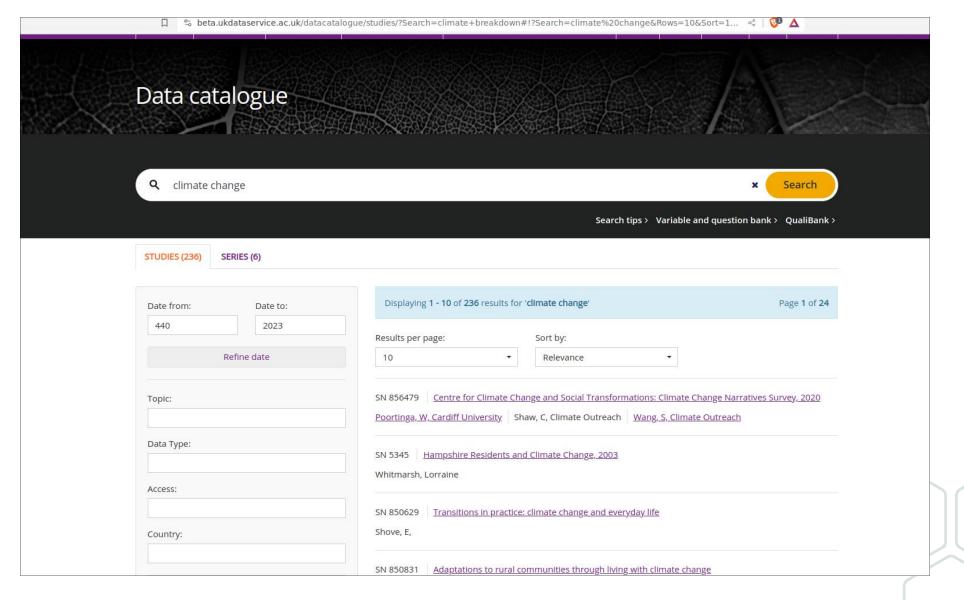
How to find and access data from the UKDS

- Data catalogue, either via
 - · The search tool
 - Browse data pages (themes, data type, Teaching data)
- Variable and Question Bank (updated version available soon)
- Qualibank
- HASSET Thesaurus

Searching the catalogue



Searching the catalogue



Data quality: essential questions to ask yourself

- What was the phrasing of the question (quantitative data)
- What was the research question/who funded the research?
- Is it representative, is the sample size large enough, what is the population of reference?
- How recent is it?
- Is a special application required in order to access the variable you are interested in?

Data Access Policy

Controlled data

 Accessed via a Safe Room, SecureLab within the UK or the <u>SafePod Network</u>

Safeguarded data

• End user licence (requires registration) and special licence (requires a form)

ReShare data

 Access controls set by the data owner and can vary

Open data

Can be used by all without registering

How to register

- Logging in via OpenAthens or Shibboleth
 - UK Universities
 - Some further education colleges
 - Some UK Government departments
 - Local authorities
- UK Data Archive username
 - International researchers
 - Charities
 - Think tanks
 - Schools
 - Personal researchers
 - Commercial organisations



3. Examples



Attitudinal data (1): the British Social Attitudes Survey

- Well established: since 1983, measures continuity and change in attitudes to social issues through repeated cross-sectional surveys
- First point of call for research on attitudes in the UK
- Representative of the UK population of adults 18 and over,
- Increasingly, also questions <u>about the environment</u>
- Allows for cross-sectional and repeateed cross-sectional analysis
- 2017 Environment and politics teaching dataset:
 - created from the original dataset
 - Reduced number of variables focusing on attitudes towards the environment
 - Simplified documentation
 - Open data
 - n=3,988

Attitudinal data (2): Understanding Society

- Understanding Society also known as UKLHS
- Allows for cross sectional and longitudinal (ie within person) analysis of change
- Major longitudinal study, data about a multitude of topics, in existence for 30+ years
- <u>Dedicated website with data exploration facility</u>: includes a section on environmental issues
- Documentation and datasets available from the UK Data Service website.

Data about the environment in USoc



Home > Topics

Our environmental and transport behaviours can be influenced by a number of factors. Our home life, whether we're in employment, our wellbeing and the time we have available all impact on transport and environmental choices. Understanding Society helps researchers to investigate the links between these areas.

Professor Wouter Poortinga



Champion for Environmental Behaviour

☑ View profile

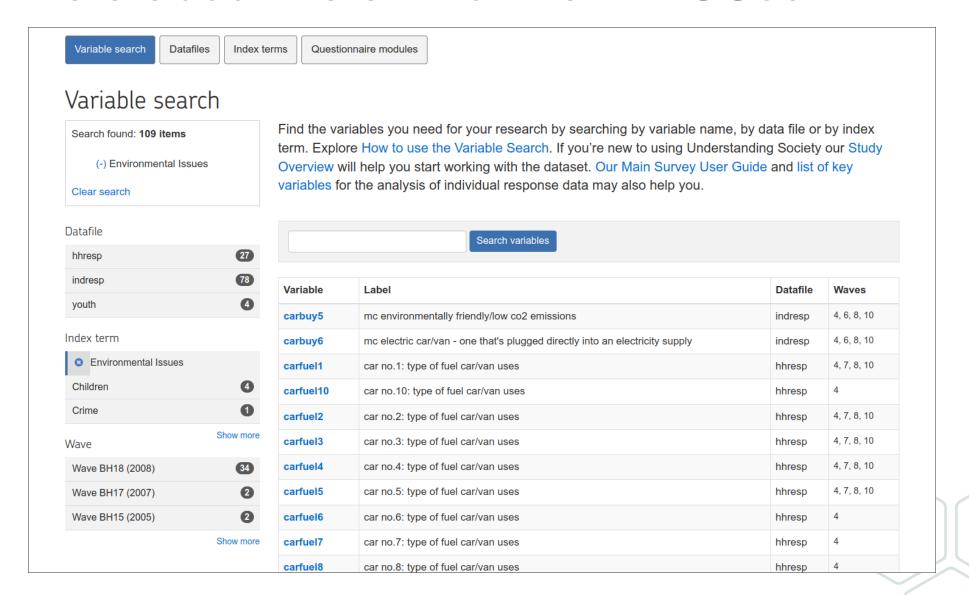
What data do Understanding Society collect?

Understanding Society is a study of people within their household context. We interview all members of the household over the age of ten and re-interview them annually, as the Study is longitudinal. A sub-set of the Understanding Society sample can be traced back to 1991 using the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). This design means we collect information which captures the interactions between people and their households with transport and environment behaviours; changing household circumstances, personal and household actions and evolving beliefs.

We ask children and adults regularly about their environmental behaviours and beliefs. Each year we ask households about their private transport and we regularly ask employees about their commutes to work.

To find out about the specific questions asked in the Study use the index terms where you can search for environment and transport variables including environmental issues, transport and values, opinions and attitudes. The questionnaire modules show the areas covered in each wave of the Study and allow you to see the actual questions asked in the survey.

Data about the environment in USoc



Data about the environment in USoc

scenv_tlat

climate change is beyond control



i scenv tlat, i indresp

Datafile

indresp

Index terms

Values, Opinions and Attitudes, Environmental Issues

Question asked in the latest wave

scaenvironment_w10.scenv_tlat

Climate change is beyond control

Text:

Climate change is beyond control - it's too late to do anything about it.

Universe:

if (GRIDVARIABLES.ModeType = 1 & CASISTART.scac = 1 thru 3) | (GRIDVARIABLES.ModeType = 2 | 3) (Mode is face-to-face and has agreed to self-completion OR mode is telephone or web)

Wave specific data

Wave 10 (2018-2010)

VVAVC 10 (2010-2019)				
-requencies				
Value label	Value	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency	
missing	-9	107	0.31%	
inapplicable	-8	1181	3.44%	
proxy	-7	804	2.34%	

Code Creator BETA

Create your own Stata code to extract data from the main end user licence Understanding Society dataset. Save your variables, then click Build data file to generate your code. The code will allow you to create your own data file containing just your variable selection, plus a handy set of commonly used sociodemographic variables and cross-sectional and longitudinal weight variables.

Bookmarked Variables

You don't yet have any saved variables. Click on ♥ Save to add some

Feedback

Help us improve our data and study documents

What did you like? What could we do better? Let us know.

People and Nature Survey for England (PaNS)

- One of the few surveys specifically dedicated to the environment
- Commissioned by Natural England no data for Scotland, Wales or NI
- Cross-sectional, quota sampling from an online panel (not random sampling)
- 34 monthly collections: April 2020 December 2022
- Themes
 - Attitudes about the natural environment
 - Interaction with the natural environment
 - Attitudes and behaviour towards protecting the environment

Environmental behaviour-related data in PaNS

- Module 4
- Comprehensive set of questions:
 - Attitude to nature
 - ... To the climate crisis
- Individual and collective behaviour
- Consumption
- Political engagement

Q55 (M4_Q14) Thinking about how you live your life, with the following?

I try to reduce...

DYNAMIC GRID STATEMENTS. SINGLE CODE.

- a) how often I consume meat and/or dairy
- b) energy use
- c) water waste
- d) the amount of things I buy in general

RESPONSE CODES

Please select one answer only

- Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Neither agree nor disagree
- 4. Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- 6. Not applicable

Example: contact with green spaces by income

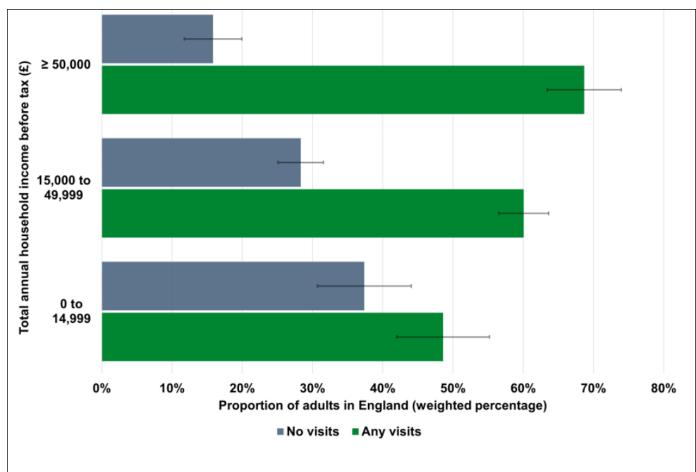
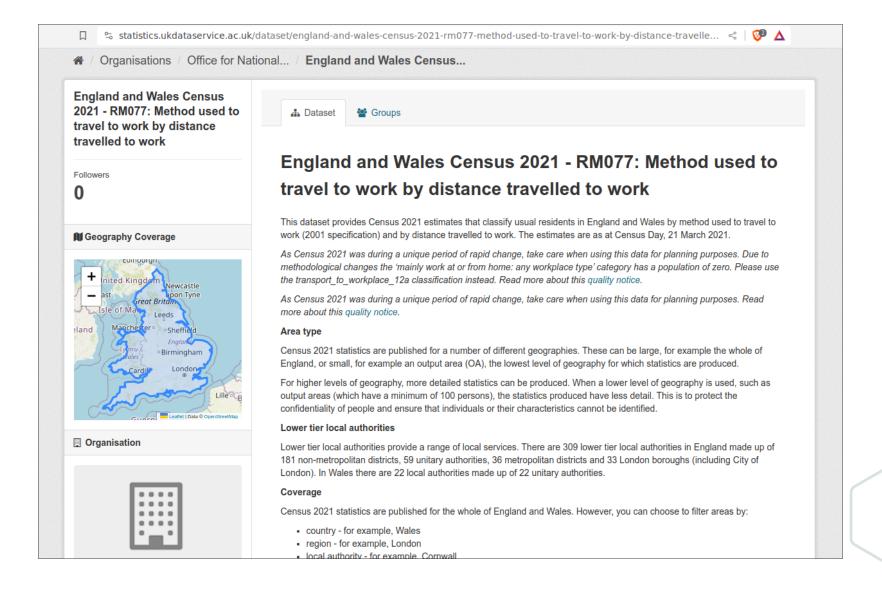


Figure notes

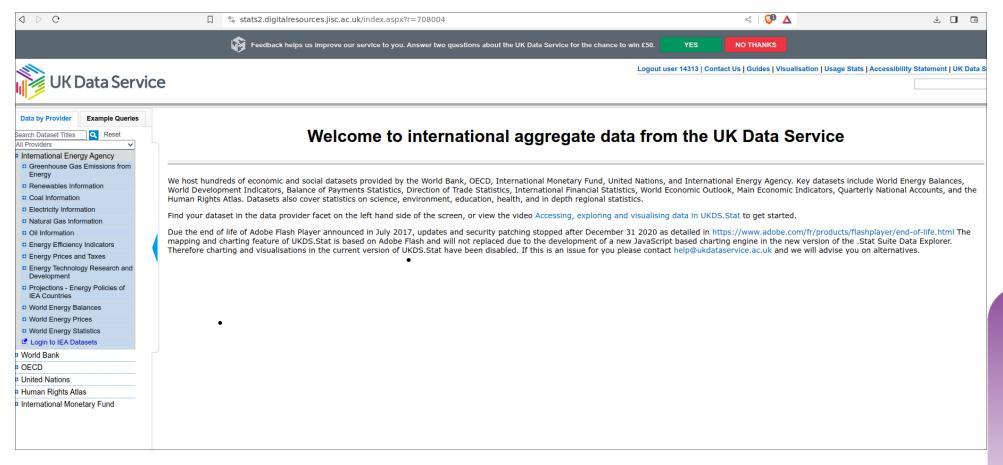
Source:

Q6 / No_Of_Visits: How many times, if at all, did you make this type of visit to green and natural spaces in the last 14 days?

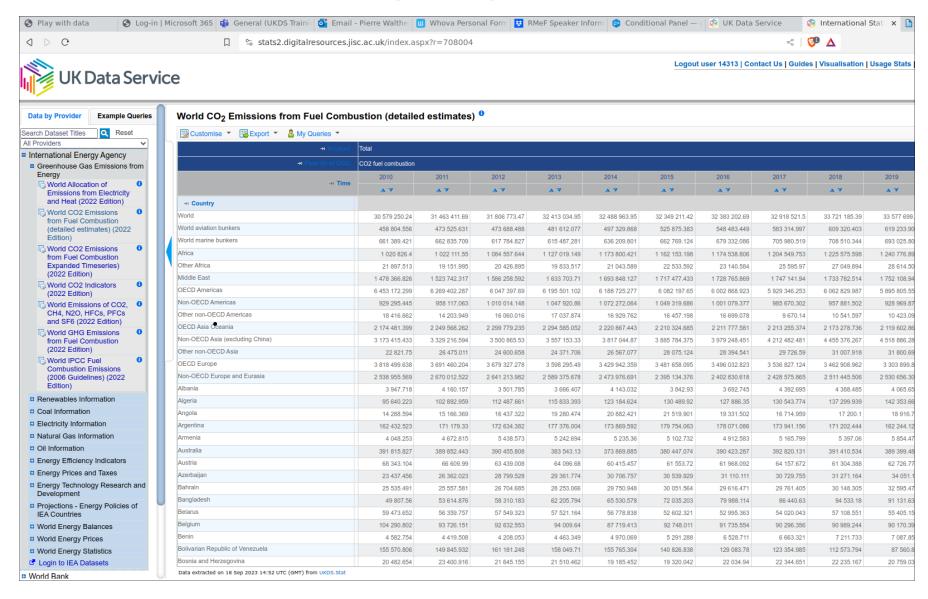
Commuting behaviour in the Census



International Energy Agency data - 1

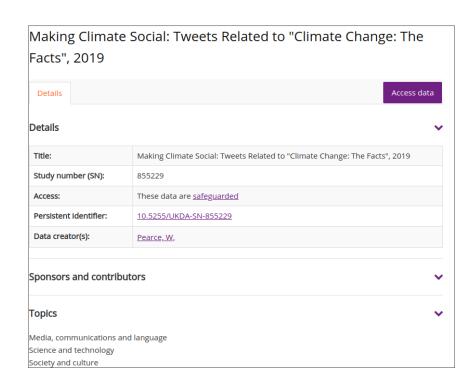


International Energy Agency data - 2



What else is there?

- UK Time Use Surveys 2000 and 2014/15
 - Detailed travel behaviour (duration, mode, reason)
 - Detailed leisure behaviour
 - Remote working patterns
- ReShare repository of deposited data from ESRC-funded research projects
- Significant number of sustainability and environment-related data:





Thank you for your attention

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