

Introduction to the ONS Longitudinal Study

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Census data in the UK / Great Britain

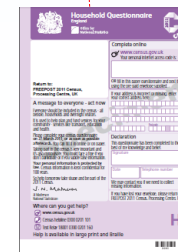
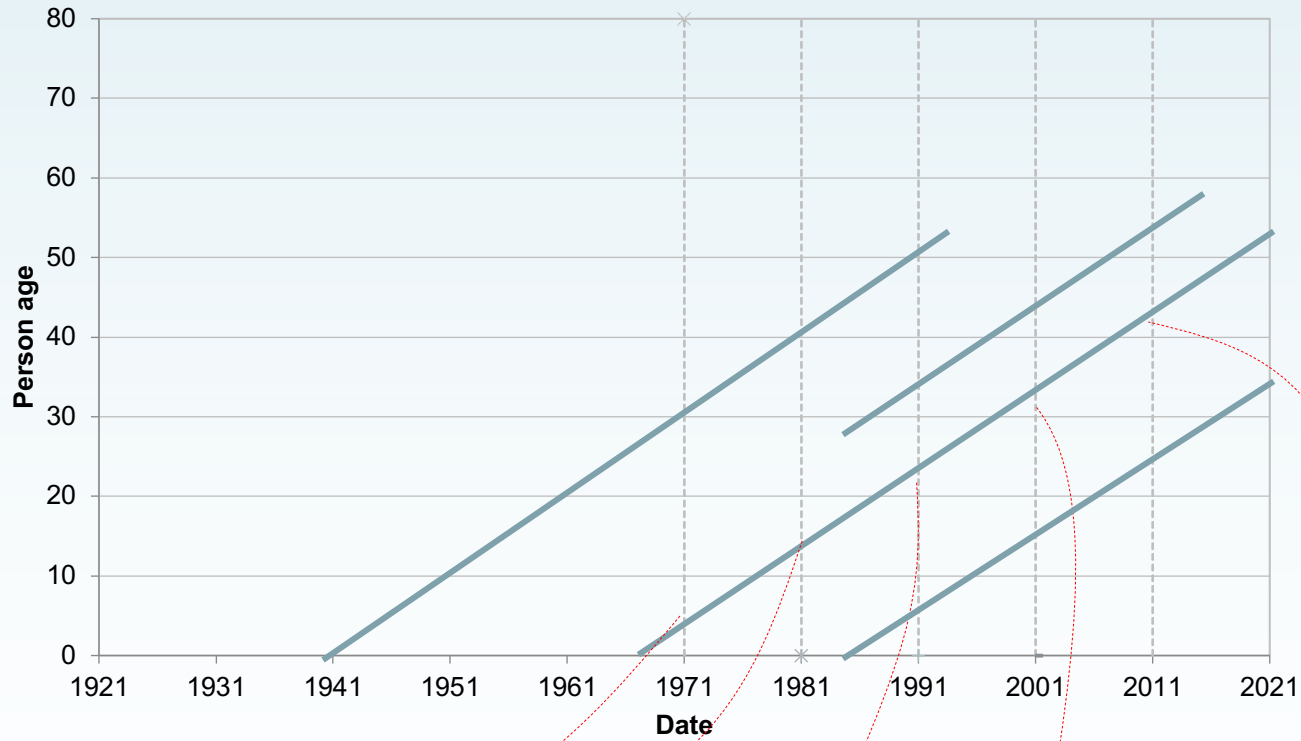
- Censuses held since 1801
- Current arrangement is three separate but coordinated censuses (E&W, S, NI)
- Users are generally most familiar with aggregate data

Longitudinal data

- There are three longitudinal studies in the UK
- They have different sample sizes and cover different time periods
- They also differ in the range and amount of linked data
- All have secure access arrangements

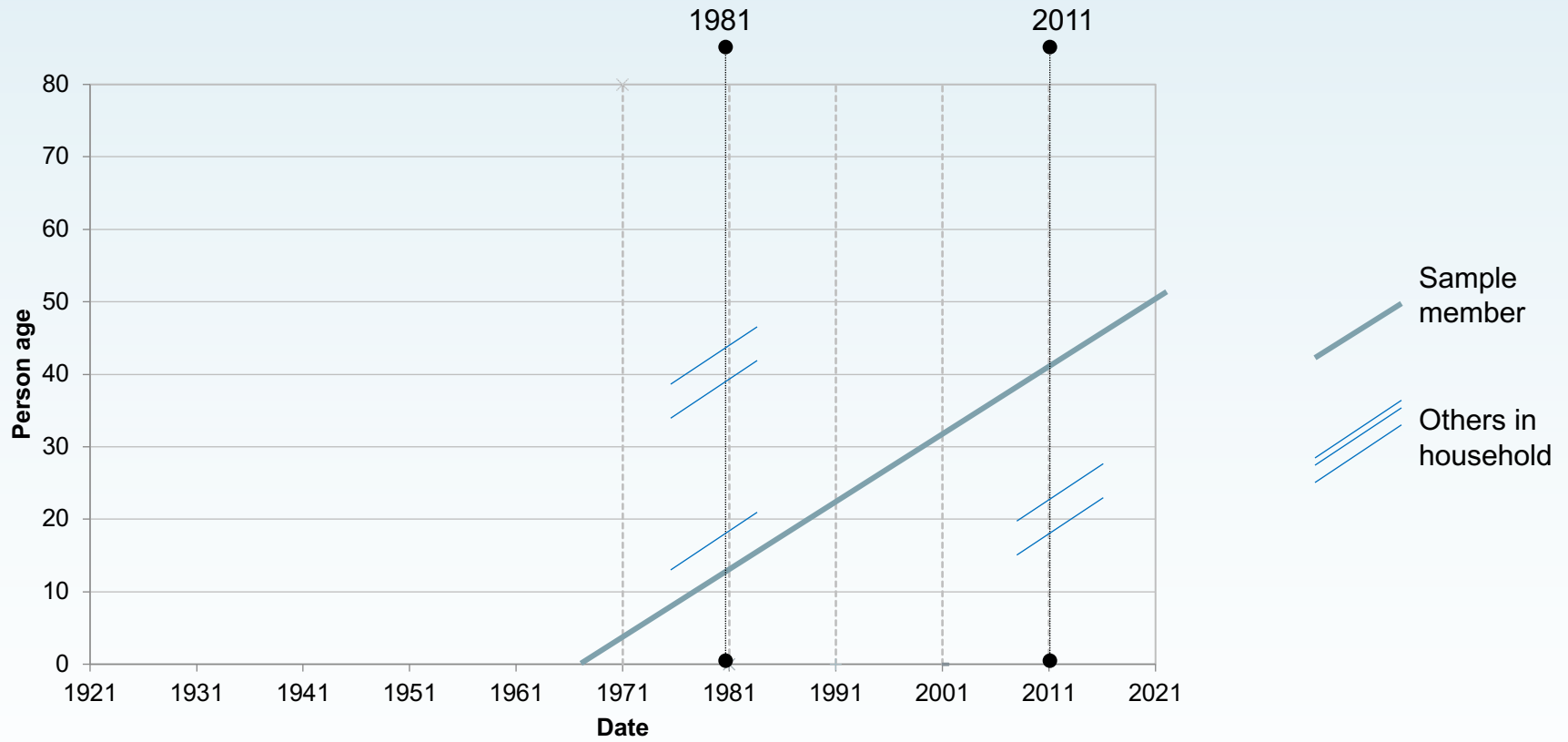
UK Census Longitudinal Studies

	Sample size	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
ONS Longitudinal Study	4/365.25	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Longitudinal Study	20/365.25		✓	✓	✓	✓
Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study	104/365.25			✓	✓	✓



What is in the ONS LS?

- All variables apart from individual identifiers
- Sample members and others in the household



Census Data

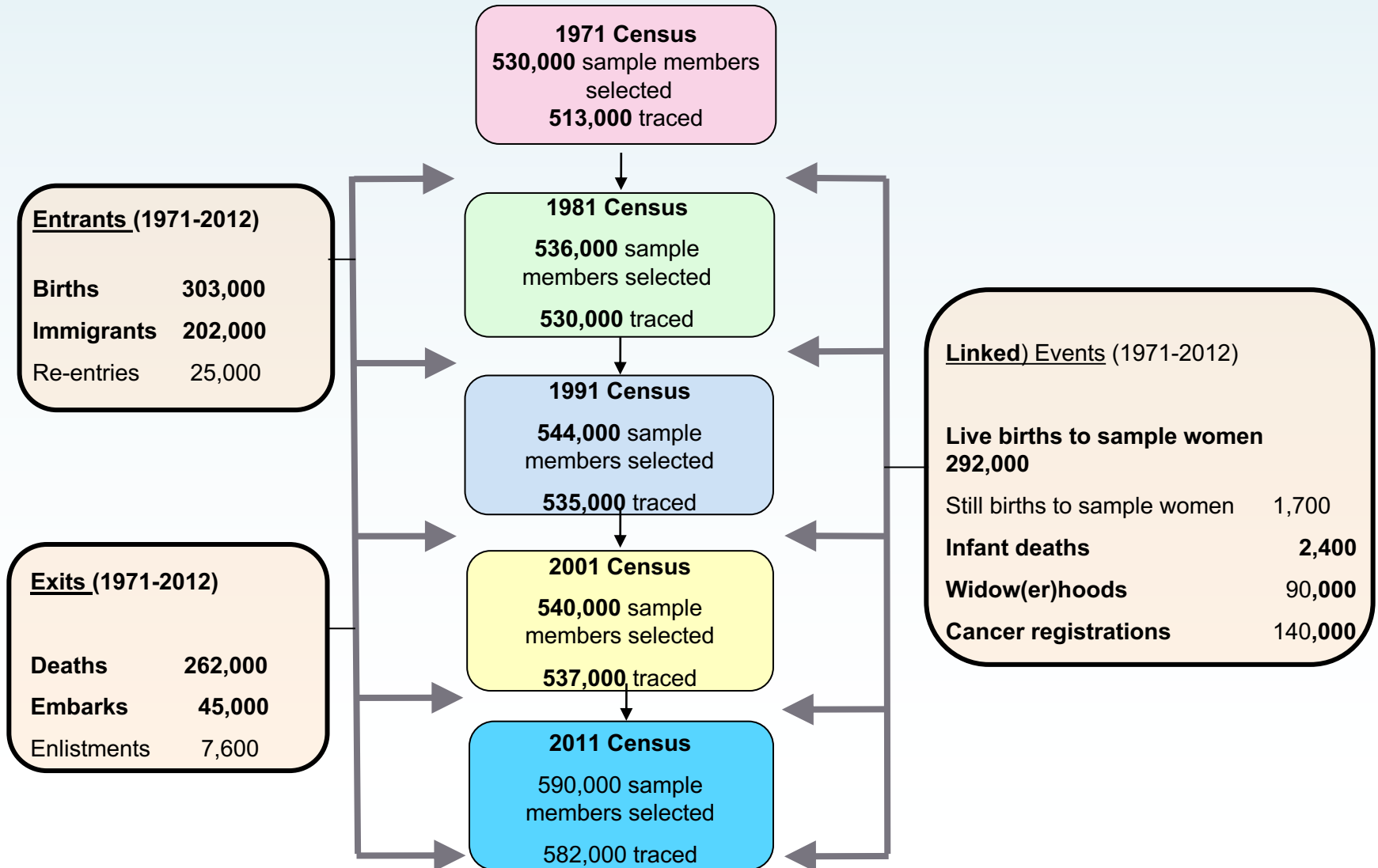
From each census

- LS sample members
- Other household members
- Age, sex, marital status, country of birth
- Family and household types, communal establishments
- Housing: tenure, rooms and amenities
- Qualifications, economic activity, occupation, industry and social class
- Travel to work and one-year migration
- Geographical information

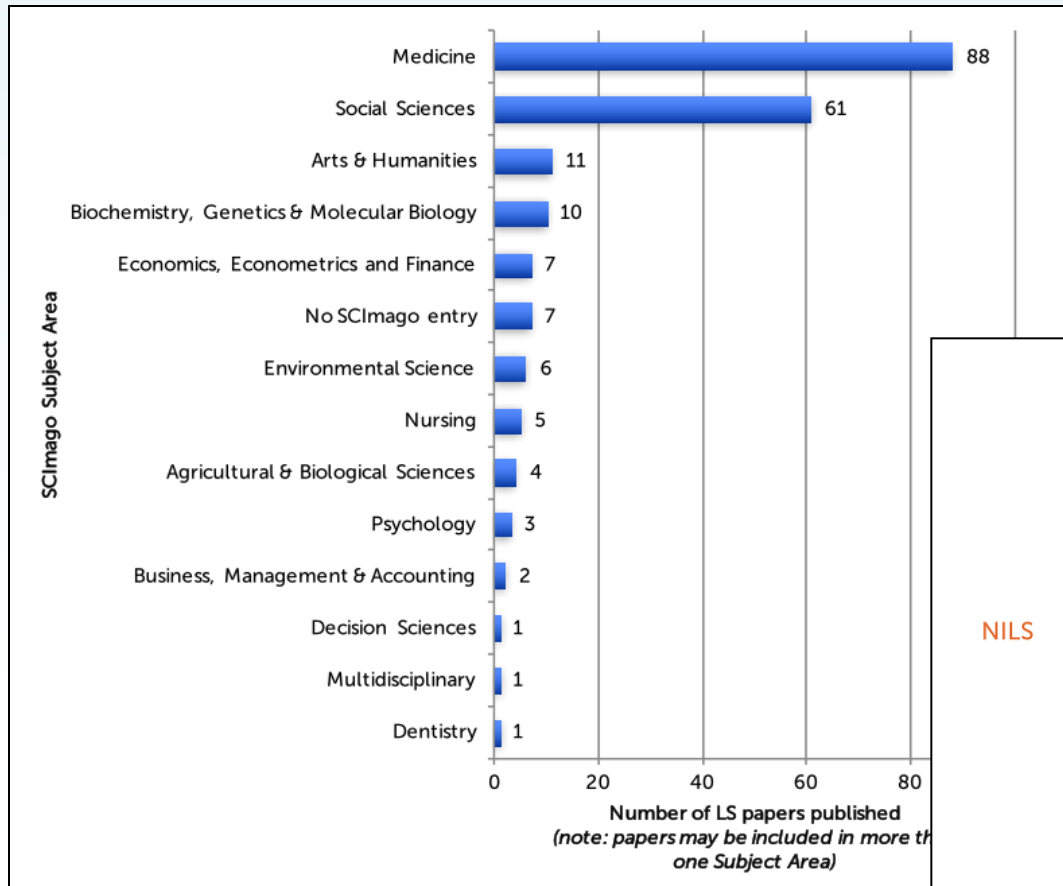
More recent censuses

- Ethnicity (1991-2011)
- National identity (2011)
- Year of arrival (2011)
- Limiting long-term illness (1991-2011) & self-rated health (2001, 2011)
- Care-giving (2001, 2011)
- Religion (2001, 2011)
- Short-term migration (2011)
- Main language (2011)

LS structure: England & Wales



Who uses the LS?



Source: Cox, F (2017) CALLS Hub Citation Analysis
<https://calls.ac.uk/research-blog/>



Comparison with birth cohorts

- People unfamiliar with the LSes are often more familiar with the idea of birth cohort studies
 - Birth cohorts draw a sample of persons born in a particular year
 - Census longitudinal studies draw a sample across all persons regardless of age

Comparison with birth cohorts

- Sample sizes
 - LS total samples are much bigger
 - LS individual year-of-age samples are smaller in England and Wales, but less subject to attrition
 - Starting cohort sizes 17-19K
 - ONS LS, 2011 per single year of age < 65 c. 5-8K
- Content
 - Cohort studies have much broader content
 - Sample size allows LS to have more detailed geography etc