

1970 BRITISH COHORT STUDY UPDATE 2011



INITIAL FINDINGS FROM THE AGE 38 SURVEY



As many of you may remember, the most recent survey took place between October 2008 and May 2009. Interviews were conducted by telephone and we were delighted to speak to almost 9,000 of you. We would like to say a big thank you to all those who took part.

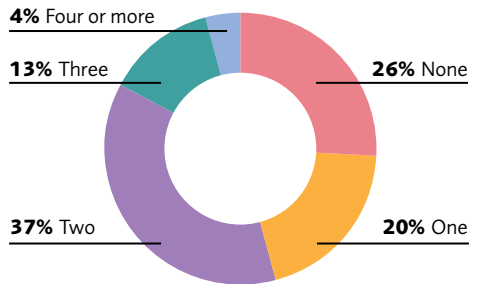
This leaflet provides a summary of some of the initial findings. We hope you find them interesting!

INITIAL FINDINGS FROM THE AGE 38 SURVEY

FAMILY LIFE

- Six in ten (60%) of you lived with a husband or wife and a further one in six (16%) lived with a cohabiting partner.
- Just under three quarters had at least one child (74%). Over half (54%) had two or more (Graph 1).
- Your children ranged in age from newly born to 24 years old, with the average age being eight and a half.
- Three in ten (30%) had become first-time parents since the previous survey (conducted when you were 34).
- Women were more likely to have children than men (78% compared with 69%).
- Those living with a married partner were more likely to have children than those with a cohabiting partner (87% compared with 65%).
- Women were far more likely than men to be lone-parents (13% compared with 2%) and men were far more likely to be step-parents (9% compared with 1%). Similarly, men were more likely to have children that they did not live with (14% compared with 5%).
- One in twenty (5%) lived alone (7% of men and 4% of women).

Graph 1 Number of children at age 38





PARENTS

- Just over a quarter (27%) had experienced the death of at least one parent. More fathers had died than mothers (21% compared with 10%).
- One third of those with a least one parent alive spent more than an hour per week giving them some form of help or care. On average, 80 minutes per week was spent providing this care, most commonly giving them lifts in your car (26%), shopping for them (18%) and doing decorating, gardening or repairs (16%).

HOUSING

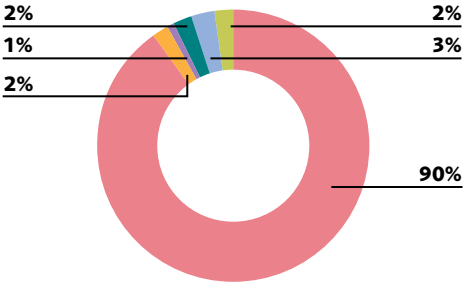
- Four in five (78%) owned your own home, the majority with the help of a mortgage although 11% owned your home outright. Just less than one in ten (9%) was living in social housing at 38; a hugely different situation from when you were children. At age five, a third (32%) of you lived in social housing.
- Just over a third (34%) had moved house since we last spoke to you in 2004. The most common reason for moving was the desire for a larger home (33% of movers). Other common reasons were to buy a home (11%), getting a new job in a new area or to move nearer to your current job (8%), relationship breakdowns (8%), new relationships (7%), wanting a better home (6%) or to move to a better area (6%).

INITIAL FINDINGS FROM THE AGE 38 SURVEY

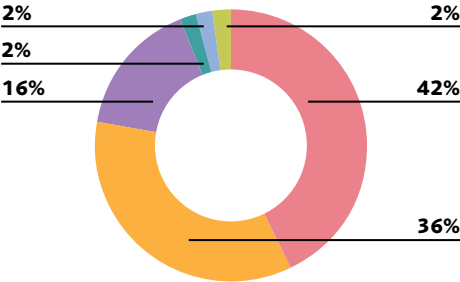
EMPLOYMENT

- Nine in ten men were in paid employment, almost all working full-time (Graph 2a).
- At 34, just under three quarters (74%) of women had paid employment. By 38 this proportion had risen slightly to 78%. Just over four in ten women (42%) were working full-time and just under four in ten (36%) were working part-time (Graph 2b).
- On average, male employees worked just under 45 hours a week (including overtime) – 14 more than female employees. Self-employed males typically worked a little longer – 47 hours a week on average.
- Six in ten employees worked in the private sector and four in ten were in the public sector. Over half (52%) of female employees were in the public sector compared with three in 10 men (29%).
- One in six (16%) women was looking after their home or family.

Graph 2a Economic activity status (men)



Graph 2b Economic activity status (women)



Working full-time
Working part-time

Looking after home/family
Permanently sick/disabled

Unemployed
Other

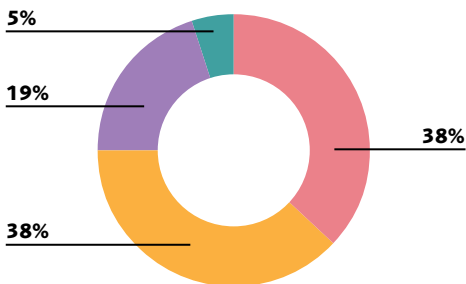
FINANCIAL SITUATION

- At 34 and 38 you were asked to say how well you were managing financially. At 34, three quarters (76%) were 'living comfortably' or 'doing all right', one in five (19%) was 'just about getting by' and one in twenty (5%) was 'finding it difficult' (Graph 3a).
- Four years later, at 38, less of you were 'living comfortably' or 'doing all right' (66%) and more were 'finding it difficult' (9%) (Graph 3b).

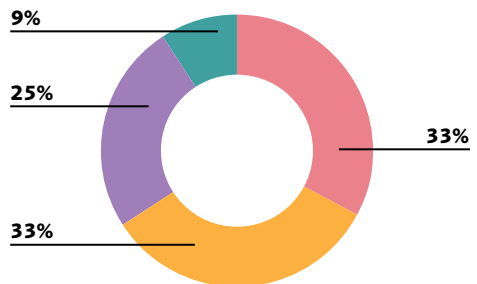
EDUCATION

- Just under one in seven (15%) had achieved some form of qualification between the ages of 34 and 38. Men and women were equally likely to have gained a qualification.
- Those with the highest qualifications (higher degrees or equivalent) at 34 were most likely to have achieved additional qualifications by 38 (21% compared with 9% of those who had no qualifications at age 34).

Graph 3a Financial situation - age 34



Graph 3b Financial situation - age 38



Living comfortably
Doing all right

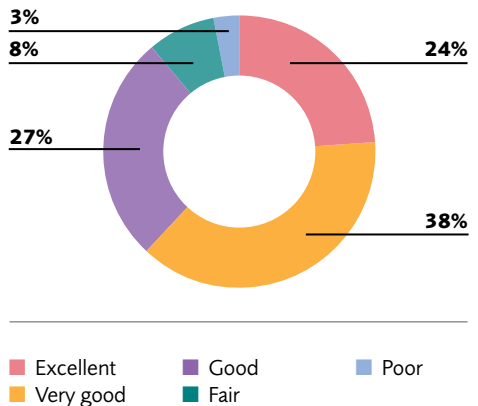
Just about getting by
Finding it difficult

INITIAL FINDINGS FROM THE AGE 38 SURVEY

HEALTH

- A quarter of you (24%) reported that your health was 'excellent' and a further four in ten (38%) said it was 'very good'. A very small proportion (3%) told us your health was 'poor' (GRAPH 4).
- The most commonly reported health problems (other than needing glasses) were hay fever (20%), recurring backache (15%), eczema and other skin problems (11%), migraines (10%), although twice as common amongst women than men – 13% compared with 6%) and asthma or wheezy bronchitis (10%).
- Women were more likely than men to report at least one health problem (75% compared with 69%).
- Just over one in ten suggested that health problems limited your daily activities.

Graph 4 Health at age 38



SMOKING

- The number of smokers has been gradually falling since you were 30. At that age almost a third (30%) smoked every day, by 34 this had fallen to a quarter (25%) and by 38 this had dropped to a fifth (20%) although a further 6% smoked occasionally.
- At 38, male smokers typically smoked 16 cigarettes a day – three more than female smokers.



SURVEY NEWS

The next interviews will take place next year when you are aged 42 and will be conducted by an interviewer who will visit your home. We hope that that you will be able to take part as we aim to speak to even more of you than we did last time.

You may know that the Centre for Longitudinal Studies, which manages the 1970 British Cohort Study, is also responsible for running the National Child Development

Study (NCDS), a similar study which began in 1958. In 2000, members of this study (who are now aged 53) were interviewed when they were 42. Much of the information that we collect from you will be comparable with that collected from NCDS study members so it will be very interesting for researchers to compare your lives at 42 with those of individuals born 12 years previously.



KEEPING IN TOUCH

If you change your address or phone number, please let us know so that we can contact you in the future.

You can tell us by:

- Calling us free (from a UK landline) on 0500 600 616
- Emailing us at bcs70@ioe.ac.uk
- Completing the contact form on the study website: www.bcs70.info
- Or writing to us at 1970 British Cohort Study, FREEPOST, KE7770, London, WC1H 0BR (no stamp required if posted in the UK)