

Recent Research on Aging from the National Longitudinal Surveys

RETIREMENT PLANS, EXPECTATIONS, AND ATTITUDES – EXPERIENCES & ACTIVITIES DURING RETIREMENT – PENSION PLANS – PENSION INCOME – DISABILITY INCOME – WILLS, TRUSTS, AND FINANCIAL PLANNING – POVERTY – DEBT – DISABILITY – PHYSICAL HEALTH – COGNITION AND AGING – HEALTH LIMITATIONS – HEIGHT & WEIGHT – HEALTH CONDITIONS – PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING – DEPRESSION – DRUG, ALCOHOL & CIGARETTE USE – HEALTH INSURANCE – AGE AT DEATH – INTRA-FAMILY TRANSFERS

The National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) are a set of surveys sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U.S. Department of Labor. These surveys have gathered information at multiple points in time on the labor market experiences and other significant life events of several groups of men and women. Each of the NLS samples consists of several thousand individuals, many of whom have been surveyed over several decades.

Among the four original NLS cohorts (for which data collection has ended), three contain older sample members:

Older Men: Began in 1966 with 5,020 men born in 1906-21 (ages 45-59 in 1966). Sample members were interviewed 13 times: in 1966-69, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1983 and 1990. The final interview in 1990 was conducted with 2,092 respondents who were 69-83 years old, and 2,206 family members of deceased respondents.

Mature Women: Began in 1967 with 5,083 women born in 1922-37 (ages 30-44 in 1967). Sample members were interviewed 21 times from 1967 to 2003. The final interview in 2003 was conducted with 2,237 women ages 66- 80.

Young Women: Began in 1968 with 5,159 women born in 1943-53 (ages 14-24 in 1968). Sample members were interviewed 22 times from 1968 to 2003. The final interview in 2003 was conducted with 2,857 women ages 49-59.

Among the three NLS cohorts that continue to collect data, one contains older sample members:

National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY79): Began in 1979 with 12,686 men and women born in 1957-64 (ages 14-22 in 1979). Sample members were interviewed annually from 1979 to 1994 and biennially thereafter. The 2020 interview was conducted with 6,413 men and women ages 57-66.

The three remaining NLS cohorts (Young Men, NLSY79 Child/Young Adult, and 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth) do not have sample members over age 50 as of the most recent interview.

Citations:

Davis, Jonathan and Bhashkar Mazumder. "The Decline in Intergenerational Mobility After 1980." *Review of Economics and Statistics* (9 February 2024): 1-47. (NLSY79)

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- Thomeer, Mieke Beth, Clifford Ross, Rin Reczek, and Monir Hossain. "Women's Childbearing Histories and Their Alcohol Use at Midlife." *Journal of Woman and Aging* published online (09 October 2023). (NLSY79)
- Upenieks, Laura and Xi Zhu. "Life Course Religious Attendance and Cognitive Health at Midlife: Exploring Gendered Contingencies." *Research on Aging* 46, 2 (11 July 2023): 95-112. (NLSY79)
- Wolfe, Joseph D., Mieke Thomeer, and Rin Reczek. "Age at First Birth and Women's Midlife Health: Cohort and Race Differences Across the 20th Century." *Social Science & Medicine* Volume 331 (August 2023). (Mature Women, NLSY79)

NLS data and documentation are publicly available for search and download at: <http://www.nlsinfo.org/>

The annotated, searchable NLS bibliography can be accessed at: <http://www.nlsbibliography.org/>
