

How do I obtain NLS data?

NLS data are made available to researchers through Investigator (www.nlsinfo.org/investigator). Investigator allows users to search for variables of interest for any NLS cohort, create simple tabulations of the data, extract data files for analysis, and access documentation. NLS public data are immediately available and free of charge. See below for information on obtaining restricted-access NLS data such as the geocoded files.

Where do I get more information?

Visit the NLS website (www.bls.gov/nls/) for online access to questionnaires and other documentation, a searchable, annotated bibliography of NLS research, news releases, updates, information on obtaining restricted-access data, and much more.

Questions about NLS data should be directed to NLS User Services: usersvc@chrr.osu.edu or 614-442-7366.

Questions about BLS publications and restricted-access NLS data should be directed to NLS_info@bls.gov or 202-691-7410.

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Accessing NLS Data via Investigator

What is NLS Investigator?

NLS data are made available to researchers through NLS Investigator, which can be accessed using any standard Internet browser. Through Investigator, users can:

- peruse the data for any NLS cohort
- search for variables of interest by variable title, area of interest, survey year, reference number, or question name, or search for any word in the question name or question text
- save variables of interest into a “tag set”
- create simple frequency tables or crosstabs without extracting data
- extract data files along with commands to read the files into SAS, SPSS, or Stata, for use on the researcher’s computer or network

Investigator offers several additional features to help researchers better understand and use NLS data.

User Manual: An HTML manual available on the website explains how to use each of the search functions and how to extract data. Researchers can access these instructions by following the “Help” link in Investigator.

Custom Weights: Each round of survey data includes sample weights, which allow researchers to adjust their statistics to account for the complex sample design. For projects using multiple rounds of data, however, a single round’s weights may not provide the most accurate adjustment. The custom weighting program allows users to create a custom set of survey weights for multiple rounds of data for any NLS cohort simply by clicking on the “Custom Weights” link in Investigator.

Survey Documentation: User’s guides, questionnaires, and codebook supplements for each cohort are available through Investigator. Researchers can review the various materials in their entirety by clicking on the “Documentation” link in Investigator. In addition, the codebook pages for many NLS variables have links that will take the user directly to the relevant section of the user’s guide or codebook supplement.

Errata: When survey staff discover errors within the data file, the variables are corrected and updated on Investigator. Error notices explaining corrections and updates can be found for each cohort within Investigator’s documentation link. Researchers are encouraged to review the errata so that they will be aware of any significant changes to variables of interest.

How Do I Access NLS Investigator?

- ▶ Go to www.nlsinfo.org/investigator
- ▶ **Search as a guest or create an account** (requires only a valid email address) for additional features
- ▶ Questions? Contact Steve McClaskie at NLS User Services: usersvc@chrr.osu.edu or 614.442.7366

Cohorts in the National Longitudinal Surveys

NLSY97

-women and men ages 12-16 as of December 31, 1996

NLSY79

-women and men ages 14-21 as of December 31, 1978

NLSY79 Child and Young Adult

-children born to women of the NLSY79

NLS of Older Men

-men ages 45-59 in 1966 (discontinued after 1990)

NLS of Young Men

-men ages 14-24 in 1966 (discontinued after 1981)

NLS of Mature Women

-women ages 30-44 in 1967 (discontinued after 2003)

NLS of Young Women

-women ages 14-24 in 1968 (discontinued after 2003)