

ELSA

50+ Health & Life

NatCen
Social Research



Find out more about the study

natcen.ac.uk/elsa50plus



What is the study about?

Almost 40 per cent of the population of England is aged 50 or over. We are carrying out this research to find out more about the lives of people in this age group, who are becoming more influential.

Who is listening?

Thanks to our unique information, the government, universities and charities are taking notice of what ELSA members are saying. The government has already used what you say to inform their decisions on pensions and social care policy.

Why is ELSA different?

ELSA is unique. It is the only major study in England talking to people from 50, right up to 100 years old and beyond. That's why we're coming back to the same people every few years, to help us understand in detail how things are changing for you and your family. Some of you will also be invited to wear an activity monitor on your wrist after your interview to find out how physically active you are.

Why are you important?

We want to hear about the lives of everyone aged 50 and over. You might be retired, unemployed or still working nine to five. You could live alone or have a large family. You might be struggling financially or comfortably off. You could be feeling fit and healthy or dealing with health problems. Whatever your situation your experiences are important to us. Even if your circumstances have not changed, it is still important we talk to you.

Who is carrying out the research?

NatCen Social Research is carrying out the study alongside some of the UK's leading research organisations - University College London, the Institute for Fiscal Studies, the University of Manchester and the University of East Anglia. It is funded by a number of UK government departments, the ESRC and the National Institute on Aging in the United States.

NatCen have been carrying out high quality social research since 1969. We are a non-profit organisation, independent of all government departments and political parties.

How ELSA is making a difference

The study is used by a wide range of organisations including the NHS, Age UK, Independent Age, The Pensions Policy Institute, Royal Economic Society, the Economic Society and the Centre for Ageing Better. We are regularly quoted in the national media, recently featuring in the Daily Mail, the Sun, the Telegraph, the Times and the Guardian.

Here is an example of how ELSA has made an impact on people's lives:

Health benefits of having a free bus pass

ELSA research has found that older people who have a free bus pass have a better quality of life with fewer depressive symptoms. This is probably because people with a free bus pass are more active and less isolated than those who do not have a free bus pass.

Source: Jackson, S. E., Firth, J. A., Firth, J., Veronese, N., Gorely, T., Grabovac, I., Yang, L., Smith, L. (2019). Social Isolation and Physical Activity Mediate Associations between Free Bus Travel and Wellbeing among Older Adults in England. *Journal of Transport and Health*, Pages 274-284.

Around the world

Studies similar to ELSA are carried out internationally, including in Europe, the United States, Brazil, China and India. This means that comparisons can be made about people's experiences of life over the age of 50 around the world.

How will the data be used?

Your answers are put with answers collected from people across England and the survey findings are published in a report. You will not be identifiable from the published results. We will also make a copy of the anonymous dataset available in the UK Data Archive for people to use for research, teaching and learning. The only people with access to your personal details are the ELSA team who administer the survey. Find out more about the UK Data Service Archive at <https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/about-us>.

To access the showcards during your interview, please visit:
natcen.ac.uk/elsa-showcards-w10



Who has reviewed the study?

ELSA is assessed by an independent group of people called a research ethics committee to protect your interests. This study has been reviewed and approved by South Central - Berkshire NHS Research Ethics Committee.

For more information

If you'd like to know more, or have any concerns or complaints, you can raise any issues directly with your interviewer at the time of your interview. Alternatively, please get in touch. NatCen will respond to any complaints within ten working days.

Web natcen.ac.uk/elsa50plus

Email elsa@natcen.ac.uk

Freephone 0800 652 4574

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Our responsibilities to you



We respect your wishes

Taking part is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you don't want to.



We answer your questions

Your interviewer will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study.



We ensure your safety

All our interviewers carry photographic ID cards and have been checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (previously Criminal Records Bureau).



We guard your privacy

We will treat information you give in the strictest confidence under current data protection legislation. The results collected are used for research and statistical purposes only. We would only have to tell someone else what you say if, during the interview, you tell us about possible harm to yourself or others. You can read the ELSA Privacy Notice here:
natcen.ac.uk/elsa-privacy-notice