



UK Household Longitudinal Study

Wave 9 technical report

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Introduction

The UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) is known to sample members as Understanding Society. This major longitudinal household panel survey started in 2009, and is the largest study of its kind, with around 40,000 households interviewed at Wave 1. The study collects data from household members aged 10 and above on an annual basis.

It is commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and led by the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex.

This report gives details of Wave 9 of Understanding Society, which was undertaken by Kantar, Public Division, and NatCen Social Research, working in consortium.

Overview of methodology

Households were issued in 24 monthly batches, with all households being issued in the same quarter as they were in previous waves. The sample was separated into two issue modes: 'CAWI first' (60% of the sample) and 'CAPI first' (40% of the sample).

Fieldwork for the CAWI first sample followed a sequential mixed mode design. Households were initially invited to take part online. At the end of the initial web fieldwork period any individuals or whole households that had not taken part online were issued to a face-to-face interviewer. From this point on the majority of interviewing was completed face-to-face although the web survey remained available for sample members to complete that way. A small amount of telephone interviewing (CATI) was also undertaken to 'mop up' any remaining individuals that had not taken part towards the end of fieldwork.

For the CAPI first group the majority of fieldwork was completed using face-to-face interviewing (CAPI), supplemented by a small amount of web interviewing (CAWI) and telephone interviewing (CATI) later in fieldwork to 'mop up' individuals and households that had not taken part.

The allocation of households to issue mode was done by ISER.

As with previous waves, there were a number of different elements to the study:

- A household enumeration questionnaire, completed once per household to confirm who is currently living there;
- A household questionnaire, completed once per household to gather some household level information;
- An individual questionnaire, completed by anyone aged 16 or more in each household;
- A paper self-completion questionnaire, completed by children aged 10 to 15;
- Consents for linking to administrative records.

The median questionnaire lengths were 3 minutes and 19 seconds for the household enumeration grid, 8 minutes and 8 seconds for the household questionnaire, and 42 minutes and 10 seconds for the individual interview.

Survey content

The Wave 9 survey covered many topics, including some sets of questions that are asked every year, and other 'rotating' content that had been included in some previous waves but not all. A full list of modules included in the survey can be found in Appendix A.

Outputs

Data from Understanding Society is deposited at the UK Data Archive after each wave is completed. As more completed waves of data have become available the number of research projects using Understanding Society data have increased. The latest publications, working papers and media coverage of Understanding Society are available on the study website (www.understandingsociety.ac.uk).

1. Fieldwork design

This section gives details of the sample that was issued at Wave 9 and the overall fieldwork design.

1.1 Increasing online interviewing

Online interviewing was used for the first time on the main Understanding Society survey at Wave 7, having previously only been used on the Innovation Panel. At Wave 7 only a minority of households were included in the CAWI first sample – mostly those that had not taken part at Wave 6. At Wave 8 40% of households were issued 'CAWI first', and this increased to 60% at Wave 9.

1.2 Allocation to issue mode

A fifth (20%) of the Understanding Society sample is 'ring fenced' to be issued CAPI first. This is so a representative sub-sample is available to use as a control group for research looking into the effects of mode on Understanding Society.

Once the ring fenced sample was excluded, ISER used a model, based on Innovation Panel data, to allocate households to mode. This model predicted a likelihood to respond by web to every household. The 75% of households who were most likely to respond online were allocated to CAWI first – 60% of the overall sample. The remaining households were then allocated to CAPI first.¹

1.3 Sample

The majority of Understanding Society sample was selected at Wave 1, for details of how this was done please refer to the Wave 1 technical report. Since Wave 1 some households have dropped out of the study, either due to adamantly refusing, continuous non-participation, or moving to an unknown location. Additional households have also been created where households have split, for example, where grown up children have moved out of their parents' home. Additional sample was introduced to the study as part of an immigrant and ethnic minority boost (IEMB), conducted alongside Wave 6 of Understanding Society, for further details please refer to the IEMB technical report. This IEMB sample was incorporated into the main part of the study for the first time at Wave 7.

The total number of 'active' households issued at Wave 9 was 24,741. This included four different sample types:

- The general population (GP) sample, originally sampled at Wave 1 of Understanding Society – 15,356 GP households were issued at Wave 9
- The ethnic minority boost (EMB) sample, originally sampled at Wave 1 of Understanding Society – 2,002 EMB households were issued at Wave 9

¹ After this a small number of adjustments were made for the sake of practicality. For example, each wave a small number of households are issued to the same address. The most common cause of this is a grown up child moving out of their parents' home (e.g. to attend University) so that a new 'split off' household is created for them. They later move back to their parents' address and inform ISER of this between waves. Therefore at the next wave both the original household (containing the parents) and the split off household (containing the grown up child) are issued to the same address. Face-to-face interviewers are aware of this situation and know how to deal with it so that the two households are merged back together. To ensure this would happen any households issued to the same address were issued CAPI first.

- The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and Northern Ireland Household Panel Survey (NIHPS) samples that were incorporated into Understanding Society at Wave 2 – 5,230 BHPS/NIHPS households were issued at Wave 9
- The immigrant and ethnic minority boost (IEMB) sample, originally sampled at Wave 6 of Understanding Society – 2,155 IEMB households were issued at Wave 9.

The BHPS/NIHPS sample was all issued in year 1 of fieldwork, and the IEMB sample all issued in year 2.

The number of individuals in the issued sample is shown in table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Number of individuals in the issued sample

	Adults (16+)	10 – 15s	Under 10s
GP	29,656	2,862	3,695
EMB	4,992	776	918
BHPS/NIHPS	10,216	927	1,260
IEMB	4,824	715	1,116

1.3.1 CATI only sample

Within the sample, there were a small number of issued households (n=173) who had previously indicated they would prefer to take part by phone. Many of these households were issued CAWI first and some completed online. Those that did not take part online, or which had an issue mode of 'CAPI first' were contacted by NatCen's telephone centre and interviewed by telephone where possible.

1.4 Fieldwork structure

Sample was provided to Kantar in eight quarterly batches. This ensured each household was issued in the same quarter as it had been at previous waves. Each quarterly sample was then split into three roughly evenly sized monthly batches. Where households were issued to the same address as the previous wave they were allocated to the same sample point and each sample point was usually issued in the same month as it had been at Wave 8.

At Wave 9 the sample was split so that 59% of sample points were allocated to Kantar interviewers and 41% were allocated to NatCen interviewers.

For sample allocated to Kantar interviewers, where possible, sample points were issued to the same interviewer that had worked on that sample point at Wave 8. This meant that, at Wave 9, of households allocated to Kantar and issued to the same address as the previous wave, 73% were issued back to the same interviewer.

For sample allocated to Natcen, this could not be issued back to the same interviewer as Kantar has conducted all Wave 8 fieldwork.

Sample was issued to field in 24 monthly batches, the first in January 2017 and the last in December 2018.

1.4.1 Fieldwork timings

The CAWI first sample had an initial web fieldwork period of 5 weeks. At the end of 5 weeks any households that had not completed online were issued to a face-to-face interviewer. Both the CAWI first and CAPI first sample was issued to face-to-face interviewers at the same time, 19 weeks before the end of fieldwork.

The web survey remained open throughout fieldwork so the CAWI first sample could still complete online after they had been issued to a face-to-face interviewer. The CAPI first sample could also complete online if they expressed a very strong preference for this. Interviewers were able to give sample members the web address and their login details for the web survey². A web mop up was also used for the CAPI first sample. CAPI first sample members with whom interviewers had not managed to make contact were sent invitations to complete the web survey after 11 weeks of face-to-face fieldwork.

Table 1.2 Fieldwork timings

Fieldwork weeks	CAPI first sample	Web first sample
Web fieldwork (5 weeks)	No fieldwork for CAPI first sample	Sample members invited to take part online
F2F weeks 1 to 8	CAPI assignments with original interviewer - interviewers aimed to have final outcomes for all sample after 8 weeks	Unproductive households issued to interviewers and incorporated into CAPI assignments (web survey remains open throughout fieldwork)
F2F weeks 9 and 10	CAPI mop up weeks with original interviewer	
F2F weeks 11 to 15	CAPI re-issue period At the start of week 11 sample members that had not been contacted were sent a letter and email inviting them to complete the web survey	CAPI re-issue period
F2F weeks 16 to 19	CATI mop up period	CATI mop up period

In reality, there was some flexibility around these timings. Original interviewers could hold on to sample after 10 weeks of face-to-face fieldwork if there was a good reason to do so. For example if they had made contact with a household and that household were willing to take part but unable to do so until later in fieldwork.

1.4.2 CATI mop up fieldwork

In the last three weeks of fieldwork, outstanding cases could be contacted by telephone. Not all live sample was transferred to the CATI mop up, some face-to-face interviewing was still carried out during these last three weeks.

Cases to be included in the CATI mop up were issued to NatCen's telephone centre to be contacted by telephone interviewers.

² Interviewers were instructed only to do this if a sample member was adamant that they would rather take part online. Otherwise, they always aimed to complete a face-to-face interview to minimise the chances of sample members saying they would complete online as a means of 'soft refusal'.

2. Contact and co-operation

Understanding Society puts much effort into contacting respondents and keeping them engaged with the study. As well as contact for each year's interview, there are also between wave mailings and emails to sample members to feedback findings from the study and encourage people to keep their contact details up to date. This chapter describes the contact strategy for Wave 9, including the between wave mailings.

2.1 Advance mailing

The advance mailing varied a little depending on whether sample members were part of the CAPI first sample or the CAWI first sample.

For the CAPI first sample, all eligible sample members aged 16 or over were sent a letter shortly before the start of face-to-face fieldwork for that month. The letter explained that an interviewer would call soon. A change of address card was attached to the bottom of the letter, and the mailing also included a freepost return envelope for the change of address card.

For the CAWI first sample, all eligible sample members aged 16 or over were sent a letter on the first day of web fieldwork for that month asking them to complete the survey online and providing the web address and their login details for doing so. The letter also explained that, if they were unable to complete the survey online, an interviewer would contact them as usual. The letters also included a change of address card and freepost return envelope. If an email address was available, these sample members were also sent an email with a unique link to start the web survey.

There were 10 different types of advance letter, depending on individual circumstances, as well as 2 types of letter for new entrants in households completing by web. In part different letter types were to deal with different incentives types and mode types, but they also used slightly different messages tailored to the circumstances. The letter types are shown in table 2.1.

For all addresses in Wales, the letter was sent in both Welsh and English. Individuals who had previously been interviewed in one of the other 8 translated languages (Bengali, Gujarati, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi Gurmukhi, Punjabi Urdu, Turkish, Urdu) were sent a letter in that language.

All letters were designed with Understanding Society branding, and were signed by the Director of Understanding Society.

Letters were sent to the most up to date address available for each sample member. If a sample member had moved from this address and so did not receive their letter, then interviewers were able to give them a generic copy of the advance letter.

2.1.1 New entrant letters


For the households issued CAWI-first at Wave 9, it was necessary to have a mechanism to contact individuals who had been added to households during household grids done on the web. Letters were sent to these individuals to provide them with their web login details and ask them to take part in the study online. These letters also included a change of address card and freepost return envelope.

Table 2.1: Letter types used at Wave 9 by issue mode

Household type	Adult type	CAPI first	Web first
Responding household at previous wave	Productive adult at Wave 8	Letter 1 (£10 unconditional incentive)	Letter 2 (£10 unconditional incentive)
	Unproductive adult at Wave 8	Letter 3 (£10 conditional incentive)	Letter 4 (£10 conditional incentive)
	Rising 16s ³	Letter 7 (£10 unconditional incentive)	Letter 8 (£10 unconditional incentive)
	New entrants	n/a	Letter 11 (£10 conditional incentive)
Unproductive household at previous wave	Adults	Letter 5 (£20 conditional incentive)	Letter 6 (£20 conditional incentive)
	Rising 16s	Letter 9 (£20 conditional incentive)	Letter 10 (£20 conditional incentive)
	New entrants	n/a	Letter 12 (£20 conditional incentive)

³ Rising 16s were sample members that had recently turned 16 and were therefore being asked to complete the adult survey for the first time at Wave 9, while in previous years they may have completed the youth paper questionnaire. They received different letters to those who were adults at Wave 8, although the incentives were the same.

Fig 2.1: Example Wave 9 (CAWI first) advance letter including change of address card



Firstname Lastname
 Address1
 Address2
 Address3
 Address4
 AB12 3CD

Contact us:
 Participant helpline: 0800 252 853
 Web: www.understandingsociety.ac.uk
 Email: contact@understandingsociety.ac.uk

Month 2017

Dear Firstname Lastname

Thank you for your continuing support for Understanding Society. Your participation is giving a voice to the experiences of thousands of people like you. The information you provide is used by academics, policy makers and charities such as Age UK and The Children's Society. To find out more about who uses the study data, please visit www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants

Please be assured that all the information you provide is treated confidentially. To read more on our policy on confidentiality, please visit <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participant/data-confidentiality>

We hope you will help us again this year as only by interviewing the same people every year can we accurately measure how life in the UK is changing. The survey is available at:

www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/society

When you've reached the website, you'll be asked to enter your unique username and password:

Username: 082adbrv	Password: Greens
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If you are unable to complete your questionnaire on-line, an interviewer will be in touch with you to arrange a convenient time for an interview. To say thank you for your help and let you know we value your contribution, we've enclosed a £10 gift card which has already been activated for you, and is ready to use.

If you're able to complete your interview online by February 7th, we will send you an extra £10 gift card soon after this deadline as a thank you for your early co-operation.

At the bottom of this letter is a change-of-address card. Please let us know if you change any of your contact details. If you have any questions about the study, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our Participant helpline.

With many thanks,

Michaela Benzoni

Professor Michaela Benzoni - Director, Understanding Society
 Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex

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Your continuing participation is very important to us. Please let us know if you move by updating your details on the Understanding Society website at www.understandingsociety.ac.uk, Freephone 0800 252 853 or return this card in the Freepost envelope (no stamp needed). To say thank you we will send you a £5 voucher.

Name: Firstname Lastname
 PID: 00203411350051
 MOVING FROM...
 Address1
 Address2
 Address3
 Address4
 AB12 3CD

MOVING TO...
 New Address: _____
 Home Phone: _____
 (inc STD code)
 Postcode: _____
 Mobile: _____
 E-mail address: _____
 Date of move: _____

Please let us know who will be living with you at your new address. Please list their full names below as we may like to ask them to take part in Understanding Society in the future. If possible, please provide their mobile number.

Name: _____

Mobile: _____

Name: _____

Mobile: _____


Name: _____

Mobile: _____


Name: _____

Mobile: _____


WHY TAKE PART?




Your contribution helps build a more detailed picture of life in the UK.



It only takes 40-60 minutes to complete the survey




Understanding Society gives you a voice on issues that matter




There are gift cards available for those who take part

WHO'S USING THE STUDY?




Academics

By taking part, you're helping universities all over the world carry out important work which helps researchers to understand society today.



Charities & think tanks

Your ongoing support means you're helping charities such as Age UK to improve their services.



Policy makers

Policy makers can make better decisions based on you answering the survey questions every year and this could change laws.

Moving home?
Take us with you.

www.understandingsociety.ac.uk
contact@understandingsociety.ac.uk

FREEPOST R80X-KEUJ-JGKS
 Understanding Society, University of Essex
 Wivenhoe Park, Colchester: CO4 3SQ

2.2 Incentives

The incentive amounts at Wave 9 varied depending on whether a household had taken part at the previous wave. The majority of sample members were sent an unconditional incentive in their advance letter, but not all. Table 2.2 details the incentives for adults.

Table 2.2: Incentive amounts for adults

Adult type	Amount and administration of incentive
Previous wave responding adults and rising 16s in productive households at the previous wave	£10 gift voucher included in advance letter
Adults that had not taken part at the previous wave but were in households that were partially productive at the previous wave	£10 gift voucher handed out by interviewer at the end of the interview (or posted for web and telephone respondents)
Adults in households that were not contacted at the previous wave	£20 gift voucher handed out by interviewer at the end of the interview (or posted for web and telephone respondents)
Adults in households that refused at the previous wave	£20 gift voucher included in advance letter
New entrant adults to households that had taken part at the previous wave	£10 gift voucher handed out by interviewer at the end of the interview (or posted for web and telephone respondents)
New entrant adults to households that had not taken part at the previous wave	£20 gift voucher handed out by interviewer at the end of the interview (or posted for web and telephone respondents)

All incentives were 'Love2Shop' gift cards, that could be used at a variety of shops. Where incentives were conditional, the CAPI script prompted interviewers to hand these out at the end of the interview. The CAPI script also asked interviewers to check, at the end of the interview, that respondents had received their advance letter and incentive. If they had not, the CAPI script prompted interviewers to hand out another voucher of the requisite amount.

2.2.1 Youth incentives

Young people aged 10-15 were given a £5 gift card for completing the paper youth self-completion questionnaire. This was partially unconditional as interviewers would hand out the voucher at the same time as the paper questionnaire, so it was not conditional on the questionnaire being completed. However, it was not completely unconditional as interviewers would not hand out vouchers if they were not able to make contact with the household, or if the young person or their parent refused to accept the paper questionnaire.

Where households completed online, the youth paper questionnaire, along with the £5 voucher, was sent to a parent with a covering letter asking the parent to pass both the voucher and the questionnaire on to the young person to complete and return in the freepost envelope provided.

2.3 Between wave mailings

Initially, every six months a mailing was sent to around half the sample (those not currently in field). So each adult received one between wave mailing per year. Later in the wave a different strategy was adopted so that a mailing was sent to each household (whether they were currently in field or not) once every six months. Both types of mailings included:

- A covering letter
- A short booklet or postcard highlighting some recent findings from the study

- A change of address card and freepost envelope in which to return it.

The purpose of these mailings was to thank respondents for their participation with the aim of encouraging future participation, and to encourage them to keep ISER informed of any changes of address.

In addition to this, 'likely mover' mailings were sent once a quarter to any adult that had been interviewed in the previous three months and said they expected to move in the next year. These included a letter, a change of address card and a return envelope. The letter asked the sample member to return the change of address card in the event they did move.

2.4 First contact with sample members

Interviewers were instructed to attempt contact with all households within two weeks of the start of fieldwork to minimise the time between sample members receiving their advance letters and receiving a visit from their interviewer. Where households had been productive at the previous wave, interviewers were instructed to attempt first contact by telephone so they could make an appointment to complete the survey. This was a departure from previous waves where first contact was usually made face-to-face. This was introduced for two reasons. On Understanding Society time spent interviewing in a household can be relatively long, because of the requirement to interview multiple household members. For this reason it is unusual for interviewers to conduct any interviewing the first time they make contact with a household (as the household generally will not have time to take part 'then and there'). It is much more common that the interviewer makes an appointment the first time they make contact with a household. By making initial contact (and appointments) by telephone, this can:

- a) Be more convenient for respondents;
- b) Make fieldwork more efficient as interviewers are not having to travel to households just to make appointments.

For households that had not taken part at the previous wave, first contact was attempted face-to-face with the exception of the small number of telephone only households. Households that have not taken part at the previous waves are less likely to take part at the current wave, and in in-person visit from an interviewer is less likely to elicit a refusal than a telephone call. Where interviewers had made repeated unsuccessful face-to-face contact attempts they would start attempting contact by telephone.

2.5 Sample information sheets

The majority of information about households and sample members was held electronically on interviewers' encrypted CAPI laptops. However, a sample information sheet was also produced for each household so that interviewers would have some basic information easily to hand. The front page of the sample information sheet included household level information including: mode allocation (CAPI first or web first); outcome last wave; and the day and time the household questionnaire was completed at the last wave. The back page had individual level information including: first names, ages and genders; outcome at the previous wave; incentive type; and language interviewed in at the last wave.

The sample information sheet also included web login details for each sample member. This was so, if sample members expressed a strong preference for completing online, the interviewer could facilitate this.

2.6 Doorstep documents

Interviewers were provided with a number of materials that they could use on the doorstep to help with contacting sample members and persuading them to take part. All materials were Understanding Society branded. These included:

- '**Interviewer cards**' – these were for interviewers to use as calling cards (if they had called at a household and no one was in), appointment cards and broken appointment cards. Aside from the Understanding Society logo and a freephone number for either Kantar or NatCen these cards were

blank for interviewers to include their own message or write in appointment details. Interviewers were asked to always include their name on the card and encouraged to include their mobile phone number if they were willing to do so.

- **Laminated generic advance letter** – as this was Wave 9 of Understanding Society, and the study branding had remained the same throughout, interviewers found that holding a document with the Understanding Society logo visible when they first attempted contact was useful as sample members would recognise the logo and immediately know why the interviewer was there. This laminated copy of the advance letter was a useful document for interviewers to hold in this situation, it could also be shown to respondents who might not have received their advance letter. Interviewers also had non-laminated copies that they could leave with respondents.
- **'Information for participants' leaflet** – these leaflets included some information about Understanding Society, they were primarily aimed at new entrants to the study but interviewers could also give them to continuing sample members who wanted a bit more information.
- **Case study leaflets** – eight of these were produced to be used with respondents who might need a bit of persuading to take part. They emphasised the importance of the study by highlighting a particular policy area, detailing some findings from Understanding Society data in that area, coverage in the media and implications for policy.

3. Movers and tracing

As with any longitudinal study, tracing people who move is a crucial part of maintaining a representative panel. The overall strategy for tracing movers has multiple strands, some of which are undertaken by ISER. These include:

- Providing a change of address card (and freepost return envelope) with mailings to sample members, and at the end of interviews for those that did not receive an advance letter;
- Offering multiple options for sample members to update their contact details – posting a change of address card, a freephone telephone number, and through the Understanding Society website;
- Offering sample members a £5 gift card in return for updating their address;
- Between wave mailings (and corresponding emails) to sample members between fieldwork waves;
- During interviews, collecting a variety of contact details (and then verifying these at later waves) including email addresses, mobile and work telephone numbers, and a stable contact;
- Interviewer tracing of movers during fieldwork;
- Using commercial databases to try to find sample members that are known to have moved.

This chapter focuses on the tracing of movers during fieldwork by interviewers.

When trying to contact households and individuals, interviewers could encounter two different types of move. A **whole household move**, where none of the sample members were still living at the issued address, and a **split off move**, where one or more sample members had moved from the issued address, but at least one sample member remained at that address.

3.1 Tracing procedures

Tracing procedures were covered in interviewer briefings, and also detailed in interviewer instructions. Interviewers were instructed to start tracing procedures as soon as they became aware of a household move in order to maximise the time available to trace and then interview sample members.

The methods used by interviewers to trace sample members included asking current occupiers or neighbours, using telephone numbers, and contacting stable contacts. Interviewers were also provided with letters they could use to help with tracing:

- A **tracing letter** – this was for use in situations where the interviewer made contact with someone who did have contact details for a sample member, but was not comfortable giving these to the interviewer. The tracing letter was addressed to the sample member and left with the contact to pass or post to them. This letter asked the sample member to get in touch with ISER with their new contact details;
- A **stable contact letter** – this was for use if interviewers were unable to contact stable contacts by phone or in person, the letter was posted to them. The letter asked stable contacts to get in touch with ISER and provide new contact details for the sample member.

Where interviewers successfully traced a household, they were able to visit the new address straight away if it was in their area. If the new address was further away they would assign the household an outcome code of “moved out of area” and enter the new address if their electronic contact sheet. This would create an

update within the sample management system, alerting the sampling team that the household required re-assigning to a new interviewer.

Where interviewers exhausted their tracing options and were unable to find a new address, cases were passed back to ISER for further tracing. This was done via a weekly file, produced throughout fieldwork, which included all individuals that had moved and were untraced. If this second stage of tracing was successful, an address update would be returned to Kantar and then re-issued to field either to the same interviewer, or to a different interviewer if the new address was in a different area.

3.2 Split off households

If an interviewer identified a sample member that had split from their original household, they would attempt to find a new address for that sample member in the same ways used for whole households moves, although in many cases the remaining household members were able to provide a new address for the person that had moved out. Where interviewers found a new address, they entered this in the electronic contact sheet. This then caused an update in the electronic sample management system, and a new household was created for that individual, then issued to field.

3.3 Institutions

With the exception of those that were in prison, sample members who had moved to an institution remained eligible for interview at their new address. Interviewers were instructed to attempt to interview participants where possible, but briefed about the need to contact gatekeepers in advance in some circumstances, and also about allowing for sensitivities relating the reasons for the participants moving into an institution (for example a nursing home).

4. Translations

At Wave 9 the questionnaire was translated into nine different languages to help the survey be inclusive of people that would otherwise be unable to take part, in particular those in ethnic minority groups. For other languages, interviewers could still attempt to interview people, but would use someone else in the household to translate.

The web version of the questionnaire was not translated, so translated interviews could only be conducted face-to-face.

4.1 Formal translations

For the nine translated languages, core survey materials and the questionnaire script were translated into these languages. The interview was conducted in translation either by an interviewer that had been accredited in that language, or by an interviewer accompanied by an interpreter.

The table below shows the nine languages in which the translated script and materials were available, and also the number of individual interviews conducted in that language.

Table 4.1: Number of translated interviews conducted in each language

Language	No. individual interviews
Bengali	3
Gujarati	17
Polish	7
Portuguese	0
Punjabi Gurmukhi	4
Punjabi Urdu	28
Turkish	1
Urdu	79
Welsh	2

4.1.1 Accreditation of interviewers

In order to conduct interviews in translation, interviewers had to be briefed on Understanding Society and had to pass an accreditation process. They were sent an extract of the questionnaire that had been translated into the relevant language, then had a telephone call with a translator who spoke the language.

The call would be conducted in the relevant language and the interviewer would run through the questions they had been sent with the accreditor acting as a respondent. If the accreditor was satisfied that the interviewer was fluent in both reading and speaking the language, then the interviewer was allowed to conduct translated interviews.

4.1.2 Interpreters

Where a translated interview was required and there was not a Kantar or NatCen interviewer available to conduct it, an agency interpreter was used. In these cases the interpreter would accompany an interviewer to conduct the interview. The interviewer would deal with the administration of the interview and use of the CAPI laptop, while the interpreter would read out the questions and ensure the interviewer selected the appropriate answer.

4.1.3 Identifying cases for translation

As Understanding Society is a longitudinal study, most individuals that required a translated interview were already identified in the sample as they had also required a translated interview at previous waves. However, there were some cases where new joiners to households required a translated interview.

If interviewers were in a situation where no one in a household spoke English (or no one who was there when they called) they had some materials they could use to help identify which language the sample member spoke and therefore whether a formal translation was required. These materials were:

- A translation card – this was shown to household members to establish which language they spoke. The card included over 30 languages, each with the phrase “I speak <language>” (for example, in Bengali, it read “I speak Bengali”).
- A translation booklet – where a household member identified that they spoke a language that Understanding Society has been translated into, interviewers would show them the translation booklet which, in each of the nine languages, explained a bit more about the study and asked for a name and phone number so a translator could contact them about taking part.

4.2 Informal translations

If a sample member did not speak English or one of the nine translated languages, they could still be interviewed. In these cases the interviewer would use someone else to translate – usually another household member but sometimes a family member or friend of the sample member who lived nearby.

4.3 Welsh translations

For all households in Wales, advance letters were sent in both English and Welsh. The youth self-completion questionnaire was also translated into Welsh. However, very few interviews were conducted in Welsh and the Welsh youth questionnaire was rarely used.

5. The interview

The main component of the Wave 9 interview was the individual adult questionnaire. This was administered using a CAI script, and interviews were attempted with all individuals aged 16 or more in the household. Just over half of interviews were completed by web (52%). Just under half (47%) were conducted face-to-face, and the CAPI questionnaire also included a self-completion (CASI) section. A small number (1%) of respondents took part by telephone. Other elements of the Wave 9 interview were:

- The household enumeration grid and household questionnaire (completed once per household)
- The youth self-completion questionnaire for 10-15 year olds (on paper)
- A proxy interview for adults that were unable or unwilling to complete a full interview.

A full list of the topics covered by the Wave 9 questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

5.1 Questionnaire length

The questionnaires were heavily routed depending on an individual's circumstances so the length of interviews varied. Interview lengths were generally longer for people who were employed, had children, or were being interviewed for the first time.

Table 5.1 shows the median interview lengths for different sample types for CAPI interviews only. Table 5.2 gives median interview lengths by sample type for CAWI interviews.

Table 5.1: Median interview lengths (minutes) by sample type – CAPI interviews

Questionnaire element	GP	BHPS	EMB	IEMB	Total
Household questionnaire (including enumeration)	11:33	10:57	11:26	11:33	11:24
Individual adult CAI questionnaire	31:46	28:28	28:09	28:47	30:26
Individual adult CASI questionnaire	11:28	10:53	9:42	9:55	11:03
Individual adult questionnaire – total (CAI +CASI)	43:55	40:24	38:08	38:33	42:06
CAI proxy questionnaire	4:01	3:42	2:57	3:34	3:45

Table 5.2: Median interview lengths (minutes) by sample type – CAWI interviews

Questionnaire element	GP	BHPS	EMB	IEMB	Total
Household questionnaire (including enumeration)	12:21	12:16	14:06	13:57	12:29
Individual adult questionnaire – total	42:09	41:03	42:52	45:44	42:05

5.2 Questionnaire programming

The CAI instrument was programmed using Unicom Intelligence software (previously known as IBM Data Collection), which is able to handle the complexity of the Understanding Society questionnaire. The same script was used for CAPI, CAWI and CATI, with some minor modifications to allow for mode type. Two scripts were created, the first was at household level and included the household enumeration grid, the household questionnaire and administrative content such as call records. The second was the individual level script which included the adult interview, proxy interview and administration of the youth self-completion questionnaire.

5.3 Youth self-completion questionnaire

Youth questionnaires for sample members aged 10 to 15 were completed on paper, although the individual level script included information to help interviewers administer these. Firstly interviewers sought verbal consent from a parent or guardian, then asked the young person if they would complete the questionnaire. The interviewer used information from the CAI instrument to fill in some details on the front of the questionnaire, before handing it to the young person along with an envelope in which to seal it when completed, and a £5 voucher. Ideally the young person would complete the questionnaire while the interviewer was in the household, but this was not always possible.

Interviewers could also leave questionnaires with parents to be given to the young person.

Interviewers were encouraged to go back to households to collect completed questionnaires, but as a last resort sample members could be left with a reply paid envelope in which to return the questionnaire themselves.

5.3.1 Households completing via web

Where the household completed the survey online, questionnaires were posted to a parent (who had completed online) with a request to ask their child to complete and return the paper questionnaire.

Fig 5.1: Youth self-completion questionnaire – front cover

Your questionnaire

Self-completion questionnaire (10-15 yrs)

+


+

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN FROM CAPI SCREEN

Serial	Person number	
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	
First name	Interviewer number	Month
<div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div></div>

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 Understanding Society

250139150 WS GS 10-15

6. Piloting

Fieldwork arrangements for the study had changed between Wave 8 and Wave 9. Kantar were responsible for conducting all fieldwork at Wave 8, but at Wave 9 Kantar and NatCen were working together to conduct fieldwork. Kantar were responsible for all sample and data management so NatCen interviewers needed to communicate with Kantar directly. To do this, a 'virtual machine' (a copy of Kantar's interviewing and sample management software) was installed on the CAPI devices of NatCen interviewers. To enable NatCen to manage fieldwork, daily update files of interviewer progress were sent to NatCen. These were designed to replicate as closely as possible data that would be fed back into NatCen's fieldwork management systems if they were using their own software.

There was also a change to how telephone fieldwork was conducted at Wave 9. For the previous three waves this has been done by face-to-face interviewers using the CAPI script (adapted for CATI). At Wave 9 NatCen's telephone centre conducted all telephone fieldwork, both telephone-first cases and the telephone mop-up, using the CAWI script (adapted for CATI).

A pilot was therefore crucial to test these shared fieldwork procedures and the flow of information between agencies. The pilot was designed to mirror main stage fieldwork as closely as possible in order to test all elements of fieldwork procedures with the exception of translations. No translated interviews were conducted as part of the pilot.

The pilot was conducted from 27th October to 4th December 2016.

The Understanding Society pilot sample included a relatively high number of telephone only cases. Some of these were issued CAWI first and some straight to NatCen's telephone centre.

The pilot sample consisted of:

- 85 households issued web first. Of these, 62 were productive. Of the productive households, for 42 all interviewing was completed by CAWI, seven only completed CAPI interviews and two household completed a mixture of CAPI and CAWI. Nine households only completed CATI interviews and two completed by a mix of CAWI and CATI.
- 67 households issued CAPI first. Two of these had become ineligible, 56 were productive. Of the productive households, for 46 all interviewing was completed by CAPI, for 8 households interviewing was by CAWI or a mix of CAPI and CAWI, and 2 of these productive households only completed CATI interviews.
- 19 households issued CATI first. Eleven of these were productive. Of the productive households, for 10 all interviewing was completed by CATI, and one just completed CAWI interviews.
- There were also 12 split off households created from the existing pilot sample. Six of these were not issued to field as they were no longer eligible, and four were not issued to field as no address could be found. The remaining two were issued to field but both were unproductive.

Towards the end of pilot fieldwork, debriefs were held with the interviewers who were working on the pilot. The purpose of these was to gather feedback on fieldwork procedures, questionnaires, briefings and fieldwork materials so that improvements might be made before main stage fieldwork.

7. Briefings and interviewer materials

7.1 Briefings

Two different types of briefing were used for Wave 9 of Understanding Society:

- 'Refresher' briefings for interviewers that had already worked on Wave 8 of Understanding Society;
- 'Full' briefings for interviewers that had not previously worked on the study.

Both types of briefing were conducted face-to-face and were usually with groups of around 15 interviewers. For Kantar the majority of briefings for Wave 9 were refresher briefings. All NatCen interviewers were required to attend a full briefing as they had not worked on the previous three waves of the study. Researchers from Kantar and NatCen⁴ ran the briefings and in many cases a researcher from ISER also attended and presented part of the briefing.

7.1.1 Full briefings

Full briefings lasted around 6 hours and covered the following:

- An introduction to Understanding Society, the background to and purpose of the study;
- Examples of the impact Understanding Society had had so far;
- Information about the sample, different types, length of time in the study;
- Multimode elements of the study and interviewers responsibilities for web first households;
- Procedures for contacting households, minimum call requirements and tracing movers;
- Materials provided to interviewers, what they are for and when to use them;
- Achieving a high response rate, avoiding refusals;
- The questionnaire, different components, topics covered by each, and who should be answering each element;
- Rules for who should be included in the household enumeration grid;
- When and with whom to conduct proxy interviews;
- Procedures for administering the 10-15 paper questionnaire;
- Consents for data linkage;
- Special procedures: translations; interviewing people in institutions; interviewing people with disabilities;
- The importance of collecting and updating contact information.

The briefings also included a session with interviewers using their laptops to follow sections of the CAPI script that a researcher led them through. This was used to ensure interviewers knew how to access all the different elements of the CAPI script.

⁴ Each agency was responsible for briefing its own interviewers due to slight differences in administration and fieldwork management structures.

For NatCen interviewers there was further content on using Kantar's CAPI systems, and briefings therefore lasted longer. NatCen interviewers were using a "virtual machine", this is a copy of Kantar's interviewing systems and software that was installed on NatCen's CAPI devices. It meant that NatCen interviewers used Kantar's sample management and interviewing software. This was unfamiliar to NatCen interviewers and so the briefing took them through exercises on how to use these systems.

7.1.2 Refresher briefings

Refresher briefings were shorter (around 3 hours) and were designed to help motivate interviewers as well as build up their knowledge of the study and of certain fieldwork procedures that were not always correctly followed. The refresher briefings were therefore much less formal and involved discussions with interviewers about their experiences so far on the study.

The particular areas of focus for the Wave 9 refresher briefings were:

- Recent findings from the study that might be of interest to sample members;
- Interviewers responsibilities for households that were issued web-first;
- Making contact and overcoming reluctance;
- Defining who is in the household, some less common scenarios;
- Collecting details of respondent's jobs – details required for SOC coding;
- Collecting and updating contact information.

7.2 Interviewer materials

Interviewers were provided with a range of materials to help them when conducting fieldwork. These included a set of project instructions which included all of the information covered in briefings as well as further details such as a full list of outcome codes. These were intended as a reference document that interviewers could use if they needed reminding of any fieldwork procedures.

Other materials included:

- Sample information sheet – one per household, these included a few details about each household and the sample members living there, most of this information was held electronically on interviewers' laptops;
- Copies of advance letters, including a laminated copy;
- Interviewer cards to be used as calling cards, appointments cards and broken appointment cards, other than the Understanding Society logo and a freephone telephone number for either Kantar or NatCen these cards were blank for interviewers to write a message or appointment time on;
- Information for participants leaflets;
- Case study flyers – these were eight flyers that highlighted different findings from Understanding Society and how these had been used. The purpose of the leaflets was to help interviewers demonstrate the purpose of the study to any sample members that queried this;
- Showcards;
- Incentives for use where sample members had not received an incentive in their advance letter;
- Youth self-completion questionnaires, envelopes marked 'confidential' to seal them in, and pre-paid return envelopes;
- Data linkage consent leaflets and a consent flowchart to demonstrate the information flow during the data linkage process;

- Change of address cards and pre-paid return envelopes;
- Thank you leaflets;
- Tracing letters and stable contact letters, envelopes and stamps;
- Translation cards to help identify the language of non-English speakers.

8. Response to web survey

Chapter 9 looks at overall response to Wave 9. This chapter just focuses on response to the web survey.

8.1 Household response rate

At Wave 9 there was a target that 40% of households issued CAWI first would fully complete online during the web fieldwork period, and so not be issued to a face-to-face interviewer. Overall, across the whole of Wave 9, the proportion of households issued CAWI first that fully completed by web was 44%. This was higher for households that were productive at the previous wave (49%), than households that had been unproductive at the previous wave (11%). Table 8.1 shows the full household web completion rate broken down by previous wave response and by sample type.

Table 8.1: Household web response rate by sample origin and whether productive last wave

	Households issued CAWI first (n)	Fully productive web households (n)	Household web response rate (fully productive) (%)
Households that were productive last wave			
GP sample	8,483	4,339	51%
EMB sample	849	328	39%
BHPS/NIHPS sample	2,697	1,385	51%
IEMB sample	618	198	32%
Households that were not productive last wave			
GP sample	1,109	143	13%
EMB sample	207	23	11%
BHPS/NIHPS sample	311	44	14%
IEMB sample	424	20	5%

8.2 Individual response rate

Of adults that were issued web first, 55% completed online during the web fieldwork period. This was much higher for individuals that had taken part at the previous wave (68%) than those that had not been productive at Wave 8 (19%). There was also some variation by sample type, as shown in table 8.2.

Table 8.2: Individual web response rate by sample origin and whether productive last wave

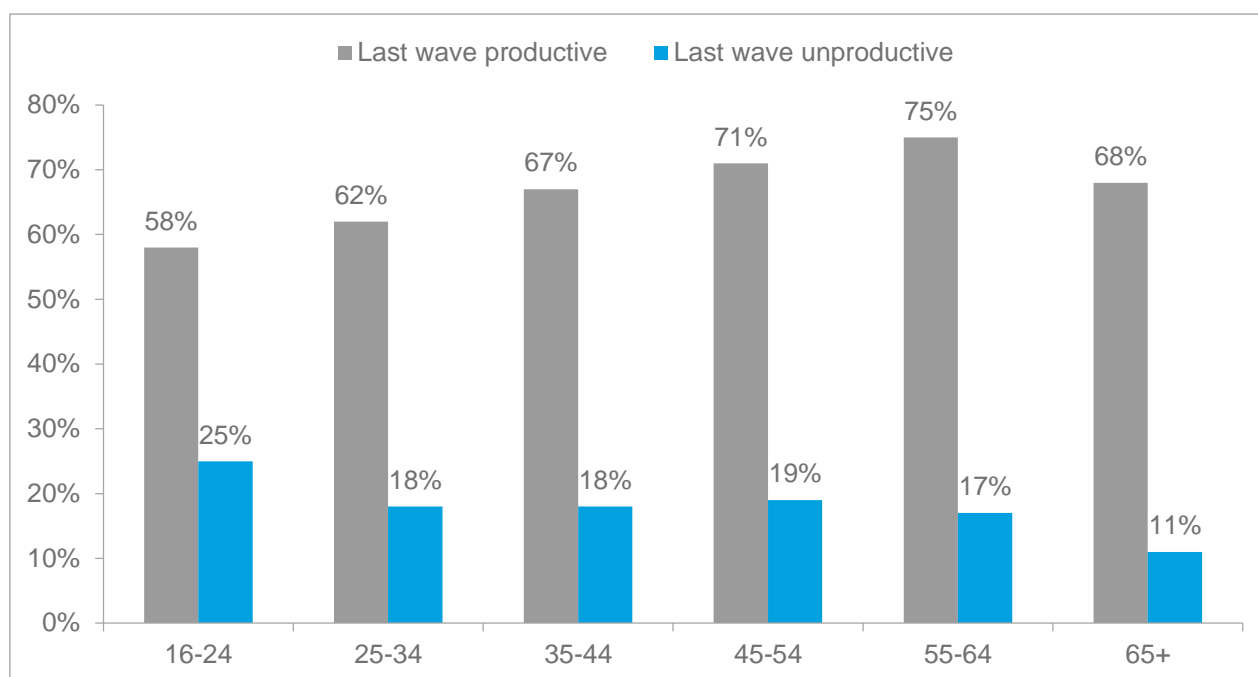
	Adults issued CAWI first (n)	Adults that took part by web (n)	Individual web response rate (%)
Adults that were productive last wave			
GP sample	14,297	9,998	70%
EMB sample	1,634	932	57%
BHPS/NIHPS sample	4,701	3,251	69%
IEMB sample	1,106	535	48%
Adults that were not productive last wave			
GP sample	4,542	951	21%
EMB sample	894	165	18%
BHPS/NIHPS sample	1,273	285	22%
IEMB sample	1,203	112	9%

Women were slightly more likely than men to complete the survey online:

- 69% of last wave productive women vs 66% of last wave productive men
- 19% of last wave unproductive women vs 15% of last wave productive men

For last wave productive adults the web response rate increased with age up until the 65+ age group where response was a little lower than 45 to 64 year olds. For adults that had not taken part at the previous wave those aged 16-24 were more likely than other age groups to complete online. These results are shown in chart 8.1.

Chart 8.1: Adult web response rate by age and whether took part at the previous wave



Base: All web first adults. Last wave productive: 16-24 (2,178); 25-34 (2,901); 35-44 (3,720); 45-54 (4,197); 55-64 (3,847); 65+ (4,895). Last wave unproductive: 16-24 (2,068); 25-34 (1,462); 35-44 (1,289); 45-54 (1,301); 55-64 (946); 65+ (846).

8.3 Web completion during face-to-face fieldwork

So far this chapter has focused on web response before face-to-face fieldwork starts but the web survey remained open throughout face-to-face fieldwork. CAPI first sample members could also complete online once they had been given their web login details, either by a face-to-face interviewer (if the sample member told the interviewer they wanted to take part online) or during the web mop up. The web mop up stage was where CAPI first adults that had not yet taken part were sent a letter with their web login details towards the end of CAPI fieldwork.

Overall, 6% of adult interviews on Wave 9 were completed by web after face-to-face fieldwork had started. The breakdown of interview mode by issue mode is shown in table 8.3.

Table 8.3: Adult mode of completion by issue mode

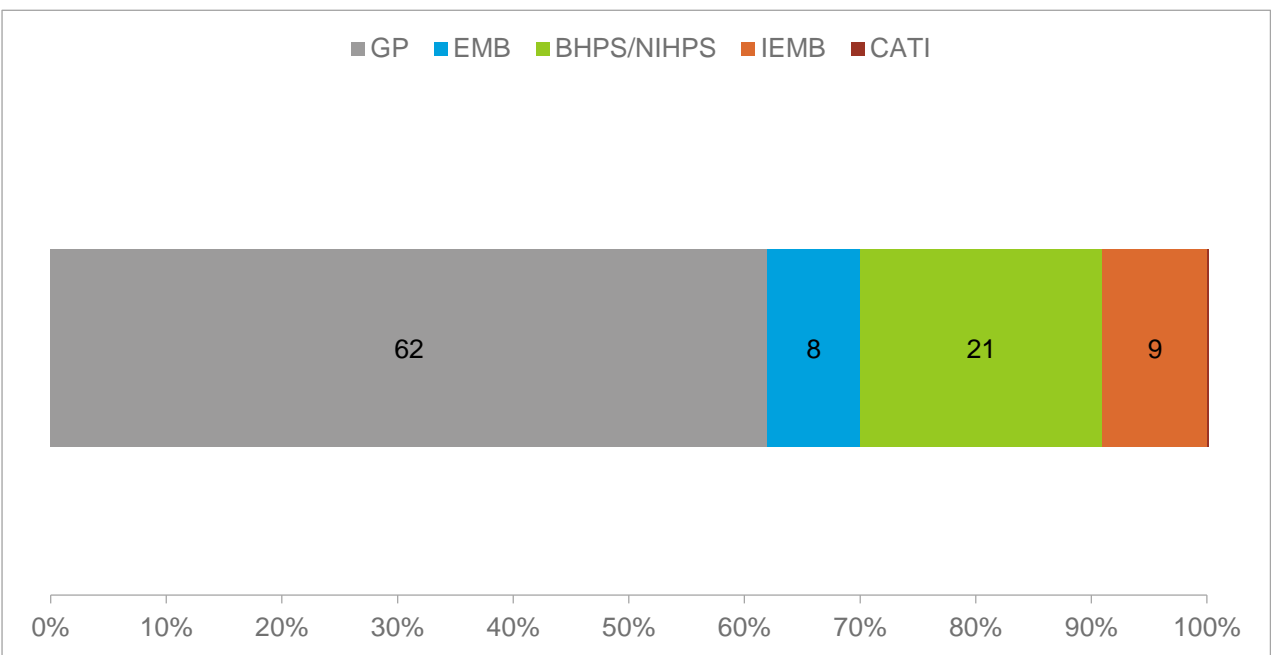
	CAPI first adults		CAWI first adults		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Web complete in web period	0		16185	76%	16185	46%
Web complete after f2f fieldwork started	699	5%	1355	6%	2054	6%
CAPI complete	12831	94%	3744	17%	16575	74%
CATI complete	133	1%	116	1%	249	1%
<i>Base: all productive adults</i>	13663		21400		35063	

9. Overall response

9.1 Household level response

A total of 24,743 households were issued at Wave 9. Of these, 15,329 were in the General Population (GP) sample, 2,000 were in the Ethnic Minority Boost (EMB) sample, 5,086 were in the British/Northern Irish Household Panel Survey sample (BHPS/NIHPS), 2,155 were in the Immigrant and Ethnic Minority Boost sample (IEMB), and 173 were telephone only households (CATI).

Chart 9.1: Issued sample (households) by sample type



9.1.1 Response rates

Table 9.1 details household response rates for the different sample types, dependent on whether the households had been productive at the previous wave. As would be expected, households that had been productive at Wave 8 were much more likely to be productive again at Wave 9 than those that had not responded.

Amongst the different sample types, the BHPS/NIHPS sample achieved the highest response rate, while the IEMB sample achieved the lowest.

Table 9.1: Household response rate by sample origin and whether productive last wave

	GP – productive last wave		GP – un- productive last wave		EMB – productive last wave		EMB– un- productive last wave		BHPS / NIHPS– productive last wave		BHPS / NIHPS – un- productive last wave		IEMB – productive last wave		IEMB – un- productive last wave		CATI – productive last wave		CATI – un- productive last wave	
Base: All issued sample																				
Issued	13831		1498		1686		314		4680		406		1569		586		150		23	
Split households	347	3%	196	13%	22	1%	25	8%	86	2%	96	24%	49	3%	17	3%	0		8	35%
Total households	14178		1694		1708		339		4766		502		1618		603		150		31	
Base: Total households																				
Ineligible households	163	1%	56	3%	15	1	8	2%	55	1%	28	6%	23	1%	19	3%	13	9%	4	13%
Eligible households	14015		1638		1693		331		4711		474		1595		584		137		27	
Base: Eligible households																				
Fully productive	9552	68%	361	22%	937	55%	70	21%	3454	73%	135	28%	790	50%	78	13%	71	52%	3	11%
Partially productive	2929	21%	220	13%	479	28%	51	15%	891	19%	60	13%	373	23%	50	9%	49	36%	6	22%
No contact	216	2%	157	10%	44	3%	47	14%	45	1%	37	8%	62	4%	75	13%	3	2%	1	4%
Refusal	666	5%	516	32%	136	8%	103	31%	154	3%	122	26%	187	12%	246	42%	6	4%	7	26%
Other unprod- uctive	652	5%	384	23%	97	6%	60	18%	167	4%	120	25%	183	11%	135	23%	8	6%	10	37%

Table 9.2 shows household response rates broken down by whether the household was an original issue household or a split off created during Wave 9 fieldwork. Response rates are much lower among split off households with most being 'other unproductives' – many of these are untraced movers.

Table 9.2: Household response rate by household type

	Original HH – productive last wave	Original HH – unproductive last wave	Split HH – productive last wave	Split HH – unproductive last wave	Total
Fully productive	68%	21%	28%	19%	61%
Partially productive	22%	13%	5%	6%	20%
No contact	2%	11%	5%	4%	3%
Refusal	5%	36%	6%	6%	9%
Other unproductive	4%	18%	56%	65%	7%
<i>Base: eligible households</i>	<i>21647</i>	<i>2712</i>	<i>504</i>	<i>342</i>	<i>25205</i>

9.2 Individual level response

Individual response rates were examined separately for adults that had been interviewed at the previous wave and those that had not. The response rate is calculated as the proportion of eligible adults in each group that gave interviews at Wave 9.

For adults that had been interviewed at the previous wave, the overall response rate was 85%. This varies notably by sample type, as shown in table 9.3.

Response is lower for both the ethnic boost samples, but the IEMB in particular. At Wave 9, the IEMB was being contacted for the fourth time, so there is some expectation that response would be lower than for other sample types. The CATI sample also achieved a relatively low response rate (70% of previous wave responding adults took part at Wave 9). The way the CATI sample was contacted had changed for Wave 9 compared with Waves 6 to 8. At Waves 6 to 8 these cases were contacted (by telephone) by face-to-face interviewers. In many cases the face-to-face interviewers then arranged an appointment to conduct interviewing in person, as this was acceptable to the household. At Wave 9 interviewing in this group was conducted by telephone interviewers who did not have the option of conducting interviews in person and this appears to have led to lower response.

Overall, the response rate was 25% for adults that had not been interviewed at the previous wave, and 47% for new entrants and rising 16s⁵. Previous wave productive adults were the particular focus for maximising response at Wave 9 and so it is this group that are detailed further below.

⁵ Rising 16s are sample members who have recently turned 16 and so are being asked to complete an adult interview for the first time at the current wave.

Table 9.3: Individual response rate by sample origin for adults interviewed at the previous wave

	GP	EMB	BHPS / NIHPS	IEMB	CATI
Productive	87%	78%	90%	69%	70%
Proxy	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%
No contact	2%	5%	1%	6%	9%
Refusal	7%	12%	6%	15%	5%
Other unproductive	3%	4%	2%	8%	15%
<i>Base: previous wave productive adults</i>	22704	3263	7990	2796	240

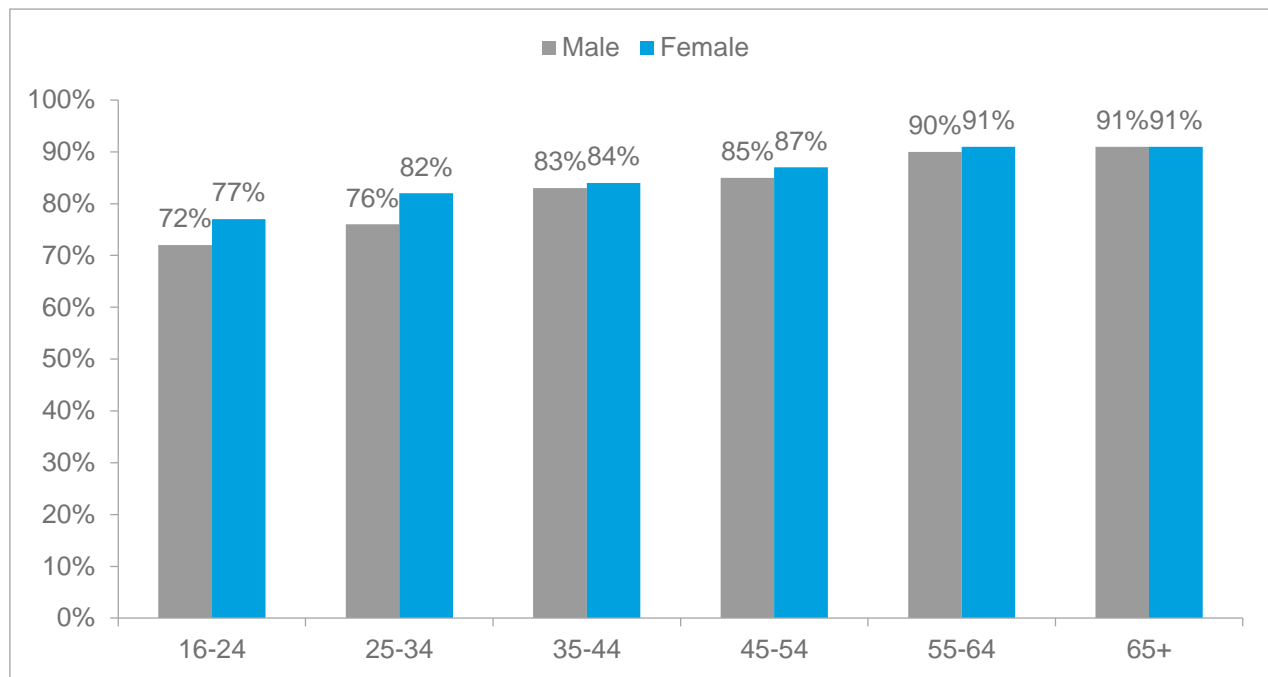
There was some variation in response rate by country, this is shown in table 9.4. However, this is largely attributable to the make up of the sample – the EMB and IEMB samples make up 20% of the sample in England, compared with 2% or less in other countries. The lower response amongst the ethnic boost samples therefore explains the slightly lower response rate in England.

Table 9.4 Individual response rate by country for adults interviewed at the previous wave

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Total
Productive	85%	86%	88%	89%	85%
Proxy	1%	1%	<1%	1%	1%
No contact	3%	3%	2%	1%	3%
Refusal	8%	7%	7%	7%	8%
Other unproductive	4%	3%	2%	2%	3%
<i>Base: previous wave productive adults</i>	29237	2357	3046	2353	36993

Response rates did not tend to vary by gender for sample members aged 35 and over, but in younger age groups women were a little more likely to respond than men. For both genders there was a notable increase in response with increasing age. The 16-24 age group were particularly difficult to achieve interviews with. Chart 9.2 shows response rate by age and gender for adults that had been interviewed at the previous wave.

Chart 9.2: Individual response rate by age and gender

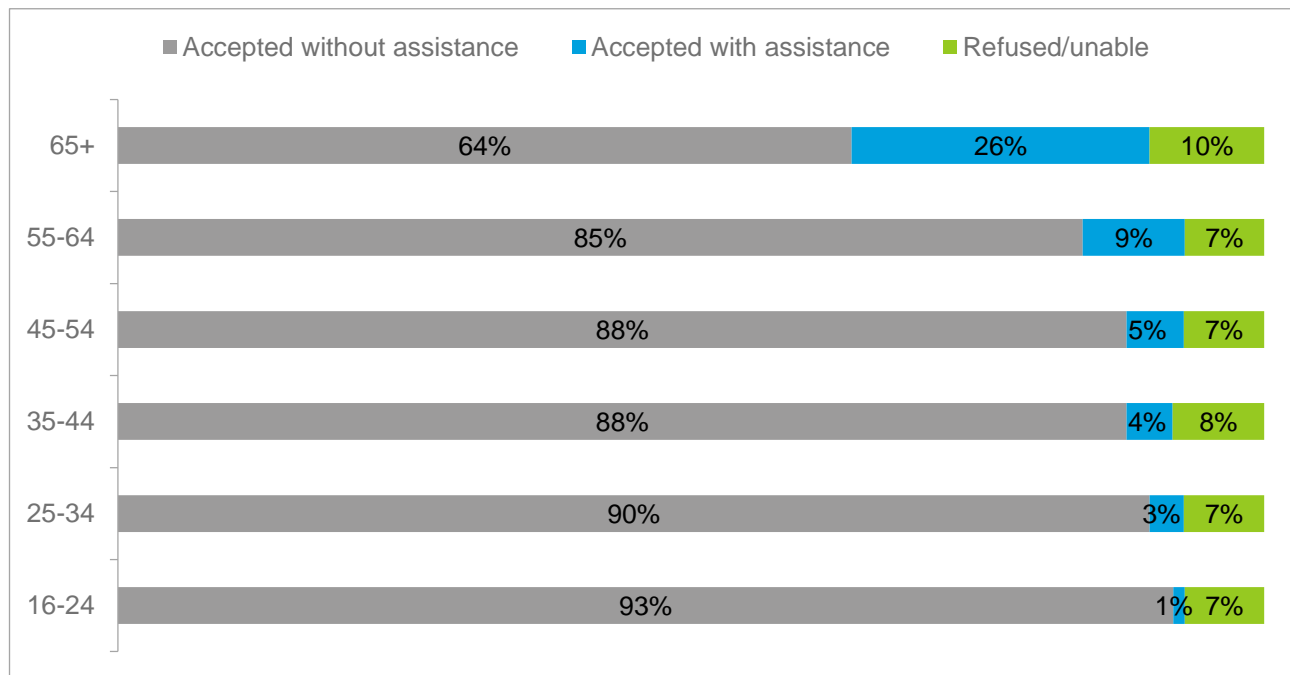


Base: All eligible adults that had been productive at the last wave. Men: 16-24 (1961); 25-34 (1962); 35-44 (2556); 45-54 (3080); 55-64 (2789); 65+ (4128). Women: 16-24 (2196); 25-34 (2677); 35-44 (3486); 45-54 (3824); 55-64 (3416); 65+ (4918).

9.2.1 Adult self-completion interviews

As part of the adult interview there was a self-completion (CASI) section. The vast majority of adults completed this on the CAPI laptops themselves without assistance. Amongst older respondents (aged 65 or more) it was more common for assistance to be required. Chart 9.3 shows these results. This chart is based on adults who completed CAPI interviews, as for telephone and web modes the respondent was not asked about willingness to complete this section.

Chart 9.3: Self completion response rate by age



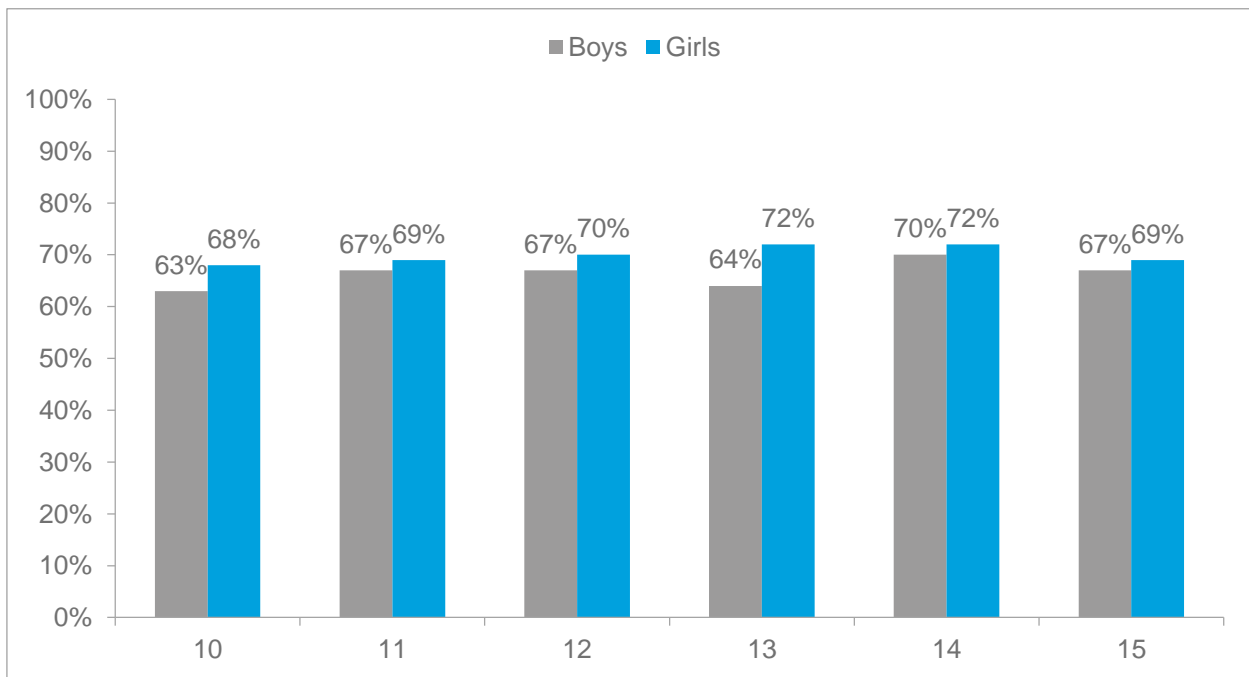
Base: All productive adults that completed by CAPI and reached the CASI section of the questionnaire. 16-24 (2041); 25-34 (1857); 35-44 (2426); 45-54 (2834); 55-64 (2574); 65+ (4841).

9.2.2 Youth self-completion questionnaires

In households that were productive (at least one adult completed an interview), 68% of 10 to 15 year olds completed and returned a paper questionnaire. This proportion varied by sample type, it was 68% amongst the GP sample, 79% amongst the BHPS/NIHPS sample, 66% amongst the EMB sample and 53% amongst the IEMB sample.

Chart 9.4 shows the youth self-completion response rate by age and gender.

Chart 9.4: Youth response rate by age and gender



Base: All eligible 10-15s in productive households. Boys: 10 (364); 11 (356); 12 (378); 13 (327); 14 (363); 15 (332). Girls: 10 (336); 11 (377); 12 (316); 13 (353); 14 (324); 15 (315).

Administration of the youth questionnaire was different for households that took part by web and those that took part face-to-face. Where a parent completed online, the 10-15 questionnaire was posted to them with a request to pass to their child to complete and return the questionnaire. For face-to-face interviews, interviewers handed out questionnaires, and collected them where possible. As a result, there is a small difference in response between CAPI first and web first households:

- 70% of youths in productive CAPI first households completed a paper questionnaire
- 67% of youths in productive web-first households complete a paper questionnaire

10. Data preparation

10.1 Combining CAPI and CAWI data

At Wave 9 there were two sources of CAI data to be merged – CAPI and CAWI (CATI interviews were also completed on the CAWI script). This meant the first stage of data processing at Wave 9 was combining the CAPI and CAWI data together.

There were measures in place within the electronic sample management system on Wave 9 to minimise the chances of duplicate interviews being conducted on CAPI and CAWI. Data was passed between the CAPI and CAWI systems daily but the transfer of information to and from CAPI was reliant on interviewers synchronising their laptops. In general interviewers would synchronise each day that they worked on Understanding Society but there could be circumstances under which they did not. There were therefore a very small number of duplicate interviews across CAPI and CAWI and the data merging process needed to take account of these. If both interviews were fully complete then the more recent interview was usually selected.

It was also possible for a respondent to start their interview on CAWI and complete it via CAPI. In these cases the interview would restart at the beginning of the first incomplete module (so respondents might be re-asked a few questions) rather than the specific question at which the interview had finished on CAWI. Such cases were extremely rare but, again, the data merging process needed to allow for this and stitch the two partial interviews together.

While Wave 9 used the same CAI script across modes (with routing to tailor question wording depending on the mode), there were some questions which had to be scripted separately for different modes because different question layouts were used. For example at some questions the CAWI script made use of drop down lists rather than standard response lists. In raw data there would be two versions of the question, one for CAPI and one for CAWI (and CATI) so the formatted data needed to draw data from both of these.

10.2 Data scanning and reconciliation

The vast majority of Understanding Society data was collected using CAI scripts. The scripts made use of consistency checks and range checks to clarify any data discrepancies with respondents as they arose. This means there was little need for any cleaning or editing of the data after fieldwork.

The exception to this was the data from the youth self-completion questionnaires. As these were completed on paper⁶ there could be data inconsistencies such as missing data, routing errors, multiple answers at single choice questions, and values out of range. Youth self-completion questionnaires were scanned to capture the data, and then a series of checks were undertaken to find any inconsistencies. Rules were agreed for how to handle data inconsistencies and edits applied in accordance with these rules.

Scanned data needed to be reconciled against CAI data to ensure data was attributed to the correct sample member. This was done using serial number, name, date of birth and gender.

⁶ During Wave 9 an experiment was conducted to test the use of a web version of the youth questionnaire. The vast majority of youth data at Wave 9 came from paper questionnaires, but there were a small number of youth interviews completed online. The paper and CAWI data therefore also needed combining.

10.3 SIC and SOC coding

Questions from the employment and proxy sections of the questionnaire were coded to 4 digit SIC and SOC codes. The codes and verbatims were included in the data.

10.4 Data checking

Once data from all sources had been combined and formatted, a series of checks were undertaken to validate the data and ensure consistency of format. Three rounds of checking were employed:

- Administrative checks on individuals and households – these were to ensure that all households and individuals were included in the data with a final outcome, that individuals were finally located in one household, that outcomes were consistent with the presence of raw data, and that joiners added to the household grid were accounted for.
- Structural checks on all files – these checked the format of files, and also that the right households and individuals were included in each file.
- Routing checks – these checked, for every variable, that a response was present when there should be a response, and not present where there should not be a response, according to questionnaire routing.

10.5 Data issues at Wave 9 and script changes affecting data

There were some small errors in and/or changes to the Wave 9 script and showcards. Most of these only affected a small number of questions, and were fixed during the course of fieldwork. The questions and modules affected were:

- The government updated the pensions classification during fieldwork. The pensioner variable was updated to reflect this. This change was made 2 months into fieldwork.
- The questions ncars and carval were mistakenly removed from the script. The script was amended to include these questions 6 months into fieldwork.
- A small number of households were not asked hsowned when a feed forward variable (ff_hsowned) was blank, when they should have been. This was fixed 6 months into fieldwork.
- The textfill for relcon did not work where the feed forward variable ff_rel was set as 'don't know', 'refused' or 'missing'. This was updated so that respondents were asked r if ff_rel was blank. This amendment was made 7 months into fieldwork.
- The numbering of answer codes at cmnil was incorrect in the script and did not match the showcard. This was corrected 5 months into fieldwork.
- The chmain loop was not set correctly in the script. This meant that the loop was not restricted to children enumerated at csakidno, cmcokidno and cmvolkidno. Instead it looped through any child who had an absent parent and who was the natural child, step child, or adopted child of the respondent. This was corrected 5 months into fieldwork.
- The "Parenting Styles" module loop was incorrectly limited to one irritation. This was updated 5 months into fieldwork.
- The "General Elections" module was added 6 months into fieldwork. A change was also made to the filter as this was not working as intended in CAWI. This was corrected 7 months into fieldwork.
- GCSE reforms were implemented by the government during fieldwork. Updates were made to the script to reflect these changes 9 months into fieldwork.

Appendix A – Wave 9 interview content

Understanding Society includes many different topics in the questionnaire. Some topics are included at all waves, while others vary from wave to wave.

Table A1: Content of Wave 9 household questionnaire

Theme	Module name
HH Composition	Household grid
Consumption	HH: Consumer durables
Consumption	HH: Expenditure
Expenditure	HH: Fuel type and expenditure
Financial behaviour and attitudes	HH: Financial strain
Housing characteristics	HH Area characteristics
Housing characteristics	HH: Structural characteristics
Housing characteristics	HH: Home tenure
Housing characteristics	HH: Taxation
Wealth and debts	HH: Assets

Table A2: Content of Wave 9 adult questionnaire

Theme	Module name
Individual interview modules (repeated annually)	
Basic Demographics	Demographics
Caring	Caring
Change in Characteristics	Annual event history
Childcare	Childcare
Employment	Current employment

Employment	Employees
Employment	Self-employment
Employment	Job satisfaction
Employment	Non-employment
Employment	Mothers return to work
Employment	Second jobs
Expectations	Educational aspirations
Family relationships	No co-resident relationships (self-completion)
Financial behaviour and attitudes	Household finances
Health and social care utilisation	Use of health services
Health and social care utilisation	Use of social care
Health status	SF-12 (self-completion)
Health status	Disability
Income and earnings	Unearned income and state benefits
Mental health and wellbeing	GHQ (self-completion)
Satisfaction	Life satisfaction (self-completion)
Mental health and wellbeing	Loneliness (self-completion)
Individual interview modules conditional on age (repeated annually)	
Expectations	Retirement planning
Family relationships	Child development (self-completion)
Family relationships	Parenting styles (self-completion)
Young adults	Young adults
Individual interview modules (rotating)	
Family relationships	Family networks
Family relationships	Parents and children
Family relationships	Partner relationships (self-completion)

Financial behaviour and attitudes	Child maintenance
Financial behaviour and attitudes	Pension drawdown
Health behaviour	Alcohol consumption (self-completion)
Health behaviour	Exercise
Health behaviour	Nutrition
Health behaviour	Smoking
Important events	Positive and negative events
Local Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood belonging (self-completion)
News and media use	News and media use
Political and social engagement	General election (self-completion)
Political and social engagement	Groups and organisations
Political and social engagement	Politics (self-completion)
Political and social engagement	Political engagement (self-completion)
Political and social engagement	Political efficacy (self-completion)
Sexual orientation	Sexual orientation (self-completion)
Social and friendship networks	Social networks
Individual interview modules – ethnicity strand (rotating)	
Harassment	Harassment
Employment conditions	Discrimination
Migration	Migration background
Migration	Migration history
Modules asked only once (included for new entrants)	
Chronic health conditions	Health conditions
Stable characteristics	Ethnicity and national identity
Stable characteristics	Family background
Stable characteristics	Fertility history

Stable characteristics	Initial conditions
Stable characteristics	Own first job
Stable characteristics	Partnership history
Stable characteristics	Religion

Table A3: Content of Wave 9 youth self-completion questionnaire

Theme	Module name
Demographic	
Leisure	TV
Leisure	Mobile phone use
Leisure	Online social networks
Family	Meals
Family	Support
Family	Supervision
Family	Talking/quarrelling
Step parent relationship	
Behaviour	Bullying at home
Friends	Friendship networks
Behaviour	SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire)
Happiness	
Local neighbourhood	
Fear of crime	
Education	Aspirations
Education	Homework
Education	Truancy
Education	Parental involvement

Education	Misbehaviour
Behaviour	Bullying at school
Saving behaviour	
Pocket money	
Earnings	
Caring	
