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Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK:  
The 2011 survey

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**Indicators of Access to Cultural  
Resources, Education and Skills for  
the PSE Survey**

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## Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK: The 2011 survey

### Overview

The Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK Project is funded by the Economic, Science and Research Council (ESRC). The Project is a collaboration between the University of Bristol, University of Glasgow, Heriot Watt University, Open University, Queen's University (Belfast), University of York, the National Centre for Social Research and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. The project commenced in April 2010 and will run for three-and-a-half years.

The primary purpose is to advance the 'state of the art' of the theory and practice of poverty and social exclusion measurement. In order to improve current measurement methodologies, the research will develop and repeat the 1999 Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey. This research will produce information of immediate and direct interest to policy makers, academics and the general public. It will provide a rigorous and detailed independent assessment on progress towards the UK Government's target of eradicating child poverty.

#### Objectives

This research has three main objectives:

- To improve the measurement of poverty, deprivation, social exclusion and standard of living .
- To assess changes in poverty and social exclusion in the UK
- To conduct policy-relevant analyses of poverty and social exclusion

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## Abstract

This paper discusses indicators relating to Domain 4 ('Cultural Resources') and Domain 7 ('Cultural Participation') of the revised Bristol Social Exclusion Matrix (Levitas, et al., October 2010) for use in the 2011 Poverty and Social Exclusion survey. In the BSEM, education is treated as a resource as well as an aspect of cultural participation. Questions in the PSE therefore need to cover both the educational resources (human capital) of the adults in the survey, i.e. their education background, and the educational resources currently received by children. 'Internet literacy' has become increasingly relevant for educational attainment, as well as for a range of other areas including access to services, employment and as a basis for social networks. This paper therefore identifies a number of potential questions about use of and access to the internet, based on the OXIS and ONS omnibus. Furthermore, the PSE 2011 survey needs to better capture educational advantages associated with higher income levels, in order to capture living standards across the socio-economic spectrum. Such advantages include private tutors and private education. In addition, there is a need for a question that captures adult's ability to communicate in English, as it is likely to affect areas such as children's performance at school, access to public services, social networks and access to employment.

Key words: poverty, social exclusion, poverty measurement, inequality, deprivation, education, educational attainment, educational resources, basic skills, literacy, numeracy, lifelong learning, children, internet access, digital divide, cultural capital, social capital, social mobility, life chances, ethnicity, language problems, special educational needs, behavioural problems in children, free school meals, private schools, private education, parenting, child care

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## Introduction

This paper presents and discusses indicators relating to cultural resources, education and skills, which might be used in the 2011 Poverty and Social Exclusion survey. This represents Domain 4 ('Cultural Resources') and Domain 7 ('Cultural Participation') of the revised Bristol Social Exclusion Matrix (Levitas, et al., October 2010). This paper parallels similar papers produced for Domain 2 ('Access to public and private services') and for Domain 10 ('Living environment'). There is quite a close conceptual and practical connection between these, because education is a major example of a local service, while cultural and leisure services are also an important part of the array of local services provided or influenced by local government.

As in parallel papers produced for other domains, the main aim of this review is to generate a set of questions and indicators within this domain which have a good claim to be included in the next PSE survey. Our approach is to start by casting the net more widely, identifying a range of relevant questions and indicators which have been used in a range of surveys within UK and across Europe. We then examine these against a range of criteria and try to sift down to a more manageable set of plausible candidates. The criteria considered include:

- How the need for, or use of, this good/service/amenity relates to poverty
- Whether lack of access to this could have adverse consequences for key outcomes such as health, learning and work.
- Whether access or use of this thing raises issues of affordability (particularly relevant to private services, utilities, transport, etc)
- Whether (non-)use of this good/service/amenity may be taken as an effective marker of social (exc/inc)lusion, in terms of participation in normal social life, or whether it is too affected by differing lifestyles/preferences
- Where there is a cluster of similar and related indicators, whether one can be chosen to represent or proxy that cluster
- International recognition and comparability
- The ability to set a defensible threshold of access or appropriateness of service
- Clarity of terminology and question wording
- Existing data on the prevalence of (lack of) access or use of this service

The review of indicators and survey questions takes the form of a table (Annex 1), which gives an overview of the indicators that were considered for this review..The first column presents the basic question or measure. The second provides comments, highlighting issues from the above checklist as appropriate. In some instances data on incidence/prevalence or trends are

referred to here, but we do not attempt to provide full descriptive profiles. The third column identifies some of the surveys which have included this question or indicator. The table breaks indicators down into the following areas of interest

- Educational attainment, basic skills and lifelong learning
- Educational activities and resources for children
- Risks to children
- Cultural leisure services and activities
- Internet access

This Annex is preceded by a concise textual discussion, within which we highlight our provisional recommendations on which indicators seem potentially more suitable for inclusion in PSE.

While the original Bristol Social Exclusion Matrix combined culture, education and skills into a single domain, the revised version has split this domain into two areas, distinguishing between cultural resources (domain 4) and cultural participation (domain 7). Domain 4, cultural resources, is grouped as one of the broad 'resources' available to an individual or household in the new BSEM framework. This puts it on a par, as it were, with material resources (income, assets), access to services, and social resources. If poverty is the lack of command over material and other resources to enable someone to "*obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, [...] in the societies to which they belong*" (Townsend, 1979, p. 31), then lack of education/basic skills/cultural competencies may lead to adverse outcomes in some or all of these respects, just as lack of money may do. This treats the BSEM as a kind of one-way or sequential model with causal chains running from the first group of factors to the second and on to the third. While there is a lot in this, it is also too simple a view of the situation. Educational attainment affects skill levels and job/income prospects, but it is also clear that educational attainment is affected by many factors across the domains and groupings, including income (another 'resource'), educational participation (domain 7), and health, housing and safety (in the quality of life group). While conceptually education as a resource may be distinguished from education as an aspect of participation, in practice it may be helpful to discuss these aspects together, as in this paper.

Many people would see education as crucial to tackling poverty in the longer term, because of its pervasive influence on later life chances, employability, earnings, social mobility, and civic participation. The term 'human capital' (G. S. Becker, 1964 / 1993) has gained currency as a way of capturing the role of education in building capabilities which act like key assets for individuals and societies, a concept reinforced by empirical evidence of the links between education and lifetime earnings for individuals and between education and economic growth for countries. This has then spawned parallel concepts such as 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1984) and 'social capital' (Coleman, 1988;

Portes, 1998; Putnam, 1995) which, while perhaps less clearly defined, still capture the notion of an embedded asset which is built up from a set of investments in a supportive environment and which are later available to be drawn on in the 'production' of social wellbeing outcomes. Social capital is relevant to other domains in the BSEM as well. Clearly, social capital relates directly to social resources (domain 3) which include social the networks people can draw upon for both affective and practical support. Such social networks are built and maintained through participation in common social activities, an area which belongs to domain 6 of the revised BSEM. Where such common social activities involves voluntary work or political participation, they also relate to domain 8 of the matrix: Political and civic participation.

One of the roles of our educational system is to embed cultural capital, which enables people to go on to engage in civic participation and participate in effective democracy. This conception of education implies a notion of a common culture, as well as the universality of core services or entitlements of citizenship (Gamarnikow & Green, 1999; Lister, 2007). Consequently, lack of educational attainment should be seen as both a cause and a consequence of exclusion in most other areas of the social exclusion matrix.

## Educational Issues

The preceding introductory discussion has set the scene by underlining the crucial wider role of education. This implies that it will be essential within PSE to record key measures of educational attainment, as a potential explanatory or control variable in understanding and modelling other outcomes, particularly the causes and antecedents of poverty today. It also suggests that, particularly with families of school-age children, it will be important to obtain information and views about educational services and their experiences of learning and the barriers to it.

### ***Drivers of attainment***

Poor educational attainment and a lack of skills with which to build upon basic education are not just a cause of poverty; they are also quite clearly a consequence of poverty in the backgrounds of children and communities. A large body of research into the drivers of variations in educational performance confirms that poverty (typically proxied in the UK by free school meals) and parents' educational background, along with other markers of deprivation like 'looked after children', are among the strongest drivers of attainment levels (Betts & Roemer, 2007; Bramley & Karley, 2007; Bramley, Watkins, & Karley, 2009; DCSF, 2009; Gardiner & Propper, 2001; Hobcraft, 2000, 2002; Lupton, 2004; Sigle-Rushton, 2004; Steele, Vignoles, & Jenkins, 2007; West, Pennell, Travers, & West, 2001). The following statement gives



official recognition to this, and helps to account for the quite strong apparent effects of poverty.

“Deprivation is commonly associated with a range of other factors which can influence children’s outcomes. These include: ill health; family stress; low levels of parental education and parental involvement in their children’s education; low levels of cultural and social capital; and low aspirations.” (DCSF, 2009, p. 57)

The American literature focuses a lot on the effects of race / ethnicity on educational attainment. In the UK, evidence on the effect of ethnicity is more mixed, with some minority ethnic groups performing better at the secondary stage once language problems are overcome. Apart from the effect of ethnicity, it has also been argued that home ownership is likely to have a positive impact on educational attainment, for example through social capital or stability. Moreover, lack of home ownership may result in greater mobility, which could have a negative effect on attainment (Bramley & Karley, 2007). More generally, some of the above literature emphasises that ‘area’ effects or ‘school’ level effects are important. Such effects include peer group and behavioural influences as well as a combination of factors resulting from neighbourhood and school-level concentrations of poverty and disadvantage. This implies that although the individualistic and intergenerational effects of family poverty and family background are have a significant impact, there are also compounding effects from context. While much of the debate and rhetoric about school quality implies that it is weaknesses in teaching or leadership which is responsible for poor quality education in deprived areas, the research clearly shows that concentrations of poverty and deprivation in a school make the task of getting good or even adequate outcomes very difficult.

There is arguably an issue about resources here. Although the argument that more resources at the school-level can improve educational outcomes has had a difficult history in the educational performance literature, recent work (e.g. Steele, et al., 2007) has argued that well-specified models do show positive effects from greater resources. It is undoubtedly important to consider *how* such resources are used. Nevertheless, the recognition that the disadvantages of poverty need to be balanced by additional resources if acceptable attainment standards are to be reached by all, has motivated attempts by both the previous Labour Government to boost spending in deprived schools and has underlain the current Coalition Government’s plans to introduce a ‘pupil premium’.

### **Special Needs**

Special educational needs (SEN) are a major focus for additional or differential provision and support within the education system. There is a wide variety of types of SEN and of degrees (levels or stages) of disadvantage, which tend to attract widely varying amounts of extra resources (much higher,

defined resources being associated with Statements than with the lower levels/stages). It can be shown that, to varying degrees with the different types of SEN, there is an association with poverty (Bramley, et al., 2009). Eligibility for free school meals (an indicator of low income deprivation) is quite strongly correlated with children being identified as having special educational needs. This association is particularly clear for three specific types of SEN: (1) behavioural, emotional and social difficulty (BESD); (2) moderate learning difficulty (MLD) and (3) severe learning difficulty (SLD). Approximately a third of the pupils identified with each of these three types of SEN are also eligible for free school meals (DCSF, 2009). For other types of SEN the association is less close, for example because the incidence of certain congenital or genetic abnormalities is more random in its incidence.

The current *Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances* led by Frank Field is particularly interested in ways of breaking into the processes which reinforce disadvantage from generation to generation. This therefore puts a particular spotlight on education as well as the Pre-School period (see below). There is, for example, a particular interest in parenting and in the role which pre-school and mainstream education services could play in 'teaching' and supporting better parenting. While this appears to emphasise changing behaviour, there is also an interest in measuring and monitoring the resources in the form of services available to children.

### **'Extras'**

Approximately 93% of children pass through the state school system. Private education is a key resource in accessing privileged and influential positions in society but is not really an issue on the boundaries between poverty and adequacy of living standards (although in some other societies it may be). Although the core of state education is free, there are significant 'extras' which involve costs to parents, including uniforms, sports kit, school trips, and home computers with internet access (see below) – some local authorities provide support to poorer households with some of these, e.g. uniforms. Many schools expect parents to make donations to school funds. School transport is provided for pupils living beyond 2/3 miles but within this distance any costs are borne by parents. Although not a formal requirement of school education, educational and stimulating toys are part of the wider support for the educational process. The ability to purchase such toys will, however, depend on the financial position of the family. Apart from educational toys, parents can "purchase" their children's improved educational attainment by paying for additional tuition in core subjects as well as 'extras' (music, dance, sport). Some minority ethnic groups, as well as middle class groups, appear to make significant use of private tuition. There is some overlap here with SEN provision – for example families with dyslexic children may buy private tuition because they perceive that support within the mainstream school is insufficient.

Within the PSE study, this discussion suggests that we are interested in *both*

the educational resources (human capital) of the adults in the survey, which mainly relates to their *past* educational experience; *and* in the educational resources *currently received* by the children of households in the survey, which will be strongly affected by the characteristics of the (local) school or preschool services attended as well as by the ability and willingness of parents to pay for 'extras'.

It should be stressed that our interest for children in the survey is in the resources they can access, rather than in their attainment per se. The attainment levels of the schools children attend is a critical indicator of the *quality of service* available to them. The PSE survey is not a particularly appropriate tool for the investigation of the current determinants of school attainment, for example because of the relatively small sample of children at any key stage and the confidentiality limits on accessing individual attainment records. However, the routine statistical reporting of school, pupil and attainment data is now a very rich source in itself, which covers 100% of state funded schools and pupils, and has attracted some quite sophisticated research and analysis (including complex multi-level models and attempts to adjust school performance onto a 'value added' basis and to take account of social disadvantage in the intake profile). It would be possible to attach to the PSE dataset indicators for either or both of the specific schools attended or the pupils living in the small geographical neighbourhood. This is an example of the wider issue of geographical data linkage.

## Education Questions and Indicators

### **Basic skills**

'Basic skills' refers to the essential foundations of educational progress, literacy and numeracy. Arguably lack of these skills betokens 'deep poverty' in the educational/cultural domain. In earlier times when many jobs required mainly physical strength and endurance, or involved manual craft skills learned on-the job, literacy and numeracy were less essential. In post-industrial Britain jobs of these kinds are less common; much more common are service jobs which require the ability to read and write, in order to communicate within organisations, read instructions, keep track of money and so forth. Similarly, modes of communication increasingly emphasise the use of digital devices and media which tend to require these skills, and this affects people's ability to perform a wide range of social roles. Lack of capability or competence in this arena can lead to withdrawal and avoidance of situations which would expose the inadequacy, and so reinforce different forms of exclusion albeit as 'self exclusion'. Lack of financial literacy and effective exclusion from the use of banking and financial products would be one example; difficulty engaging with central or local government agencies

increasingly emphasising e-government could be another (see below).

Unfortunately it is difficult to cover basic skills directly in the PSE. Fundamentally, the lack of basic literacy and numeracy is typically a source of shame and people affected try not to draw attention to it. Therefore direct questioning on this is likely to create discomfort from the respondent and quite possibly a lot of inaccurate responses. Typically, surveys which aim to create an estimate of the distribution of basic skills in society do so by testing for these skills directly, such as the Skills for Life Survey (Burr, 2008).

In late 2010 the National Literacy trust will start an omnibus survey which explores young people's attitudes towards literacy. Annex 1 mentions some questions about English language competency from the Youth Lifestyles Survey 1998, but these appear to be geared mainly to non-native English speakers. We suggest a couple of possible questions in Annex 1 about ability to read magazines and to perform simple calculations, but we are not confident that these would work for the reason given above.

We wondered whether there might be a way capture indications of basic skills deficiencies within the interview situation. However, NatCen have indicated that they do not believe this would be possible, reliable or ethical.

Some estimates of the proportion of adults who are 'functionally illiterate' are around 20%, although it is argued that the numbers actually suffering significant literacy deficits are much lower (Payne, 2006). By default, the only indicator of basic skills deficiencies we have from our standard questions is the proportion of people with *no qualifications*. Unfortunately, this does not capture people who may lack basic skills in spite of having obtained qualifications. The 2003 Skills for Life Survey found that only 70% of respondents with degrees reached "entry level" in the literacy assessment, and only 42% of those educated to GCSE/O level (Burr, 2008). This underlines the importance of not only asking about qualifications, but also using another indicator to determine whether adults are functionally illiterate.

### **Pre-School**

In the UK compulsory education is from 5 to 16, and 'pre-school' refers to the period before that. Although also potentially covered in Domain 2 (public services), childcare arrangements are also relevant for this domain. This is a sector where policy and provision has changed over the last decade and a half. Part-time nursery education is now available to all who want it from age 3. The previous voluntary part-time pre-school playgroup movement has been partly absorbed into publicly sponsored provision, particularly through Children's Centres which have been particularly promoted in 'Sure Start' areas which are generally deprived. Local government does not provide much day nursery provision and most of that is also targeted on the most deprived. It does, however, regulate the sector including registered childminders and private day nurseries. As female participation in the labour force has

increased, among both lone and two-parent families, reliance on different forms of child care, other than the traditional extended family, has increased.

It is increasingly recognised that access to good quality pre-school activities, whether labelled as 'education' or simply 'care', can have a profound impact on children's starting level and chances once they are of school age. Evidence from the longitudinal child development studies supports this, including from the UK Millennium Cohort Study as reported for example in Kiernan & Mensah (2010). This study shows that children's early educational attainment is strongly influenced by both poverty and family resources, but that the quality of parenting plays both a mediating role (i.e. better where family resources are better) and an independent role. This provides some support to the focus of the Frank Field Commission on Poverty and Life Chances on parenting issues. Clearly part of the role of proactive early intervention services, such as Children's Centres, is intended to address these issues among others.

Pre-school provision is clearly strategically important for its potential impact on later child development and educational achievement. At the same time, it is also strategically important in relation to labour market participation, given the emphasis placed by successive governments on work as being the best route out of poverty. For parents of young children, and particularly for women, child care is often the most important constraint on their ability to work. Since most child care is paid for, issues of affordability are important here, although there are some tax and benefit concessions for these costs.

The FRS survey asks in detail about the kind of childcare arrangements parents have in place. We assume these will be usable within the PSE analysis so most of these questions are not repeated here in the Annex. The PSE 1999 survey included a number of items in the children's essentials list which can relate to the pre-school age group: toys, books, construction toys, educational games. There are roughly equivalent questions in EU-SILC. There was also a question on the use of playgroups

On parenting, three questions from Growing Up in Scotland Survey are mentioned in Annex 1 as possibilities. These are about playing with children. Another possible question about whether parents discuss with children the books they have been reading or looking at, which is suggested (together with availability of books at home) as a good predictor of reading ability (Clark & Hawkins 2010).

Among the 1999 PSE questions about relevant services usage and quality, 'play facilities' stood out as showing the highest level of problems of quality and availability, particularly for poorer families. This could refer both to outdoor playgrounds, spaces and equipment but also to organised playgroups and suchlike. Nursery and playgroup facilities scored significantly better.

In considering international comparisons using sources such as EU-SILC, it is important to bear in mind that there are significant international differences in availability and cost of services in this sector, including in the age at which formal school education starts.

### ***Educational Attainment and School Quality***

As explained earlier, educational attainment is relevant in different ways to two groups within PSE: for adults we are interested in their past attainment, reflected mainly in qualifications, while for children we are more interested in the quality of local accessible schools. We may be able to rely on FRS data on the qualifications and school leaving age of adult respondents, so this may not be a priority for PSE survey itself.

The quality of local schools is probably best assessed by drawing on the extensive and systematic data compiled from the secondary data systems known as PLASC (Pupil-Level all Schools Census) in England and Wales (ScotXEd in Scotland) and the attainment data which is linked to this. This would require data linkage at a fine level, which may involve special arrangements to protect confidentiality. There are two options for linkage: to the school, or to the small area (LSOA or Datazone in Scotland) of residence, for which data from the schools census and attainment sets can be aggregated (as in IMD/SIMD/WIMD). For the former to work we would need to obtain the name of the school and then be able to link this to school codes. The former would probably be preferable in getting a more precise measure of school quality.

School quality may be assessed in two main ways: from the attainment data itself, or from measures of the 'difficulty' of the school challenge presented by the degree of concentration of pupils from poor homes (free meals), from other potentially disadvantaged circumstances (ethnicity, language, looked after) or with SEN. DCSF offers an indicator of the second kind known as IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children). Using attainment data, there is a further choice between raw performance (% of pupils achieving the target level at Key Stages 2 and 4 (ages 11 and 16) and performance expressed as 'value added' (gain in attainment over previous stage), adjusted for circumstances. Despite the apparent complexity we would regard these data as relatively robust, more so than for example Inspection Reports which from previous experience we would suggest are too subjective.

The approach suggested here may encounter some difficulties with precise replicability and comparability in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It is not clear that the value-added type measures are available in Scotland, there are detailed differences in the qualifications and age-stage links in Scotland, and there has been a move away from publishing school performance for primaries in both Scotland and Wales.

The PSE interview survey could be used to ask one or two questions to tease



out parents' perceptions of school quality and resources. The 1999 PSE survey asked parents about half-a-dozen ways in which inadequate school resources might have impacted on their children's education: missed classes through teacher shortage; shared books; not enough computers; class sizes; disrepair of buildings; other. About 20% identified one or more of these, but there was no significant difference between poor and non-poor households. It is debateable whether we would want to repeat this question. In favour would be the argument that it is important to tap households' perceptions as well as the administrative data. Against might be the argument that, with better resourcing over the last decade, these problems are likely to be much less common in 2011.

### ***Special Educational Needs***

The importance of SEN was highlighted in the earlier discussion of issues. Annex 1 identifies only a couple of questions relating to this, from the 1999 PSE: whether a child had any SEN and whether they had a Statement of Special Need. The latter will only apply to a very small proportion of children; the former is a broad and diverse set of categories. In England and Wales SEN is classified into four levels or stages ('School Action'; 'School Action Plus'; 'Statutory Assessment' and 'Statemented') (different categories apply in Scotland). There are about a dozen different types of difficulty, including for example 'Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties', 'Moderate Learning Difficulty', 'Multi-sensory impairment', 'Severe Learning Difficulty', or 'Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty'; these distinguish both degree and type of difficulty. Whether parents could classify their child against such a checklist is not quite clear. If we were to go further with SEN cases we might want to ask parents whether they felt that the additional help their child received was appropriate and effective; and whether any difficulties had been experienced in getting an appropriate assessment.

### ***'Extras'***

In the discussion of education issues we mentioned the range of ways in which parents may be called on to spend on various kinds of 'extras' associated with their children's education. Annex 1 identifies some questions both in the section on Attainment and the section on Activities. Paid for private classes or tutoring in subjects which are or are not covered at school is suggested as a pair of questions, based on the Longitudinal Study of Young People; this overlaps with Demi Patsios' suggestion of private tutoring, which is paralleled by a question on use of private schools. The motivation for the latter is to capture living standards further up the income scale. A number of questions from PSE and similar questions from EU-SILC are identified relating to children having leisure or sports equipment, books, home computer suitable for school work, a hobby (rather vague?), as well as questions about regular leisure activities, swimming or active sport. We see advantages in moving closer to the EU-SILC wording on some of these, and broadening swimming

to include other active sports. These questions tap into both the issue of broader educational and cultural development, but also into what is recognised as an increasingly important issue for long term health and wellbeing, namely physical activity.

### ***School exclusion and behaviour issues***

PSE 1999 asked questions about whether any child had been bullied at school or accused of bullying. There was also a question about whether a child had been excluded from school – a more specifically worded question from Growing Up in Scotland is also given in Annex 1, distinguishing temporary and permanent exclusion. Bullying is a school quality issue which can have a debilitating effect on victims' self-esteem and educational progress. Being accused of bullying would be a marker of the kind of emotional and behavioural disturbance which could place a child at risk of exclusion. Qualitative evidence suggests a strong connection between such behaviour and stresses at home of the kind often associated with poverty and relationship breakdown including possible violence (Hilton, 2006). Some children self-exclude from school through unauthorised absence – however, it is unlikely that questions to parents could reliably identify such cases. School exclusion (including self-exclusion) may be regarded as a fairly extreme form of social exclusion with potentially serious downstream consequences. One of the issues for excluded pupils is how adequate the alternative educational provision made for these pupils. While we could ask about this, the numbers would be very small.

### ***Further and Adult Education***

Further education colleges provide a range of opportunities both for young people and adults, including: alternatives to sixth forms as a route to GCSEs, A levels and similar academic qualifications; vocational training and education often on a part time day release basis linked to apprenticeships and work-based training; foundation and access courses; language, remedial and basic skills courses; and adult 'leisure classes'. This diversity makes it rather difficult to capture fully in PSE.

Annex 1 suggests keeping a distinction between 'leisure classes', which could be treated as one of the local services subject to the standard usage/adequacy question, and education or training courses, which are covered by a question in the FRS. GHS provides a benchmark for the former question, which could be reworded slightly to be more general than the 'evening classes' listed in PSE 1999.

### ***Higher Education***

Higher Education has attracted and continued to attract a high level of political, policy and media attention, particularly given the current debate over lifting fee levels. HE has moved to a mass participation phenomenon but with



wide variations in quality/status/experience within the sector. It has long been recognised that access and benefit from the HE system is strongly skewed towards people from a higher income and class background, and despite strong policy rhetoric on widening access progress is stubbornly slow. In analysis of the distribution of public spending to more and less deprived neighbourhoods, Bramley et al (2005) found that HE was the service with the most regressive distribution of expenditure of all of those analysed – the most advantaged ward in Edinburgh secured 28 times more resources than the least advantaged ward in Nottingham.

While this background makes HE a tempting target for investigation within PSE, the structure of the survey may not make it a suitable vehicle for such an investigation. The main focus is upon a narrow age group in transition from school to post-school education, who would not be represented in large numbers within the sample. Older adults do participate in HE, but again this would be a relatively rare population. The most interesting questions, if they could be framed and targeted appropriately, might be to adults who had considered going for HE but who had not succeeded in this, and exploring the reasons for this. However, this might still be a relatively small sub-sample in practice. Attainment in secondary schools is the primary determinant of subsequent eligibility to apply for HE, so it is probably more important to focus on that.

## Culture and Communications

### ***Cultural leisure activities***

The concept of 'cultural capital' has its origins in the work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) Bourdieu observed that class domination takes place through the passing on of tacit cultural knowledge, tastes and behaviours that are acquired through participation in cultural leisure activities (Bourdieu, 1984). Cultural capital includes shared norms, which then potentially go on to define necessities for participation in the normal life of the community or reference group.

Leisure activities would be defined as activities undertaken outside of the spheres of formal work, full time education or the domestic sphere, and which typically involve varying degrees of structure, association, skill and effort. These include sports, hobbies, pastimes, travel, artistic expression, amusement/entertainment, etc. We would argue that these involve the acquisition and use of some combination of economic, social and cultural assets. Leisure activities may develop mental or manual skills that lead to success in the job market. Leisure activities may also facilitate access to networks and connections that can translate into occupational success. Certain leisure activities can therefore be used as tools for economic and social mobility. More basically, some of these services act as a gateway to

information and the potential use of other services, as well as access to the job market.. (but see also Internet below).

This conceptualisation suggests that cultural leisure activities are simultaneously a sub-category of Domain 4 - as non-participation in cultural activities can be a part of social exclusion - and Domain 7 – cultural participation. In addition, a lot of local public services (domain 2) are related to leisure activities as defined here. Nonetheless, there is clearly a substantial role for the private and voluntary sectors, including clubs based on mutual shared interests which may acquire assets and operate as quasi businesses. The kind of adult leisure classes discussed above under ‘Further Education’ (alias ‘Lifelong Learning’) also contribute to people’s ability to participate in leisure activities. If cultural capital is of value in accessing economic and social positions and opportunities, then there may seem a case for helping less advantaged groups to participate. Subsidising cultural leisure activities, however, has been argued to be of little success as a tool for widening the job opportunities of marginalised populations (Roberts, 2004). The evidence of past surveys, including Breadline Britain 1990 and PSE 1999, tends to show a somewhat regressive distribution of usage and benefits from such services, for example sports, parks, adult classes, libraries, arts and cultural events. This does not exclude the possibility of more progressive distribution in some localities where particular strategies of outreach, ‘social marketing’ or free access have been tried.

The poor may under-participate in leisure activities and services for a range of reasons. Many poor households are under pressure both financially and in terms of time. They may lack the requisite mobility in terms of car ownership. They may be deterred by lack of confidence and self-esteem, particularly if having low educational achievement. Disability and health problems may be a barrier, as may caring responsibilities.

There is also a broader issue here about ‘universalism’ versus particular tastes and preferences. The postmodern world is characterised by a move away from mass participation in a limited number of common cultural experiences towards a proliferation of diverse individualised projects and experiences based on tastes and preferences. Ethnic diversity and multi-culturalism gives an added twist to this. The downward trend in utilisation of common local public leisure facilities may be evidence of this shift. The central precept embodied in the definition of poverty inspiring the PSE is of being able to participate in the normal life of the community. But if such participation cannot easily be defined by a limited number of specific activities of wide or universal relevance, it becomes difficult to operationalise the concept of necessities.

### ***Internet access and capability***

There is a widespread view that, as the impact of the internet on people's daily lives increases, whether in the spheres of work or leisure, consumption or engagement with officialdom, 'internet literacy' is increasingly important. Using the internet requires a range of skills, not only knowledge of computers but also reading skills, and critical thinking skills in order to determine how reliable information is. Children may need additional skills to protect themselves from online risks.

Concern that in this situation a new 'digital divide' might open up in society has been widely voiced. This divide seems likely to be correlated strongly with income, class, and particularly attainment of basic educational skills. Socioeconomic status is a strong determinant for internet activity in children (Livingstone, Bober, & Helsper, 2005) and adults (Dutton, Helsper, & Gerber, 2009).

"Digital exclusion is strongly related to other types of social disadvantage, those who are socially and economically excluded are also unlikely to access the Internet for these purposes. In fact, analysis of OxIS (Oxford Internet Survey) has shown that people who suffer deep social exclusion are four times more likely to be disengaged from the Internet, compared to the socially advantaged. In addition, different types of disadvantage are often reflected online. For example, Internet users who feel socially isolated offline often disengage from social activities online." (Helsper, cited in Dutton, et al., 2009)

This source also suggests that the gap between those with only 'basic' education and others widened recently (Sinclair & Bramley, 2011 forthcoming). In addition, there is a massive gap between people in work and those out of work; much internet use (even personal use) actually takes place in the workplace. Another group for whom computer and internet literacy and usage lag far behind is the elderly, reflecting an understandable generational effect.

For children, owning a computer connected to the internet may improve school performance. Research by the National Literacy Trust showed that having a profile on a social networking site or having a blog is connected to enjoyment of writing and confidence in writing (Clark & Dugdale, 2010). While using a computer for educational purposes is positively linked to educational attainment, extensive use for entertainment is negatively linked with qualifications (BECTA, 2009). Not only are young people from lower income backgrounds more likely than higher income households to own entertainment technologies, such as a Playstation, ownership of such technologies is inversely related to ownership of home computers. Becker (2000) also found qualitative divisions in ICT use, with children from higher income households

using home PCs for a much wider range of activities than those from lower income families.

We tend to associate internet with home or work-based desktop computers but there are different ways of accessing internet and these possibilities are widening rapidly, e.g. laptop using wifi connection, mobile phone, I-pad and similar handheld devices, digital TV. However each technology has its limitations. A few years ago access to broadband was limited in many geographical areas, particularly rural areas, but this problem has been substantially overcome. While there is inevitably a correlation between capabilities of using each of these media, it may be true that some of these will prove to be more easily usable for some groups than conventional PCs. Given the high penetration of (a) mobile phones and (b) TV, these media might be ones to focus on in widening access.

The internet is also impacting on how people access services, both public and private. E-government has been a major theme in public service delivery, with strong commitments to make a wide range of services accessible via the internet. However, particularly as spending cuts and efficiency savings are pursued with more vigour, there is a possibility that more traditional routes to access services (local or main office counters, library, telephone) may be removed or reduced, and again this would particularly disadvantage groups with low internet capability or access – the poor, the old, the unemployed, those with the least or most basic education. This scenario parallels that for financial services, where the growth of internet banking has paralleled the rundown of branch networks, particularly in poorer estates/suburbs and smaller rural settlements

The internet is also increasingly a basis for social networks. Does this mean that there will be a corresponding increase in the extent of social exclusion or division between classes?

In concluding a recent review Sinclair & Bramley (2011 forthcoming) suggest the existing research confirms Golding's (Golding, 2005, p. 1) conclusion that, 'The "digital divide", though becoming a cliché, nonetheless describes a real schism in the experience and opportunities facing different groups in the population'. Divisions in ICT (Information and Communications Technology) engagement reflect existing socio-economic inequalities rather than new forms of stratification, but it is evident that exclusion in the virtual world of digital communications has impact in the real world.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The 1999 PSE Survey provides quite a good basis for capturing some aspects of this domain, particularly through a number of the items contained within the Adult and Child Necessities and Activities questions, Local Public and Private Services and Participation questions, and the Self-Completion section on Childrens' Education. The 2011 Survey will be linked to the FRS and it is assumed that information on child care arrangements and qualifications will be derived from this source.

There are a number of areas where the previous PSE questionnaire could be adapted to include new developments and research priorities. Arguably, one of the most important social developments in the last decade has been the increasing prominence of internet as a means of communication and as a resource. We should certainly include new questions on internet access and usage. Annex 1 identifies possible general questions about use of internet, where people have access to it (possibly) and what they use it for, based on OXIS and/or ONS omnibus. The aim is to be able to distinguish non-users, users with a limited capability, and confident multi-functional users (proxied by range of uses). We may want to try to highlight the barriers to access, although we suspect that at root this is very similar to the issue of basic literacy skills, and subject to the same inhibitions.

Furthermore, the PSE 2011 survey needs to better capture educational advantages associated with higher income/class, in order to capture living standards across the socio-economic spectrum. Our suggestion is to include more questions about "school extras" that some parents can afford: e.g. private classes in subjects taught at school / in extracurricular subjects and private education.

In addition, there is a need for a question that captures adult's ability to communicate in English, as it is likely to affect, for instance, children's performance at school, access to public services, access to employment, ability to access ICT and Internet. We have generally identified a lack of indicators relation to adult literacy and other basic skills. However, the PSE survey is not a particularly appropriate tool for assessing basic skills in the population.

The attainment levels of the schools children attend are a critical indicator of the quality of service available to them. In order to better capture school attainment, we suggest that it would be useful to attach to the PSE dataset indicators for either or both of the specific schools attended or the pupils living in the small geographical neighbourhood. The former would require identifying by name the school(s) attended and could be more problematic.

Apart from including new questions, the text and accompanying table have identified a number of instances where the questions if the last PSE survey could/should be reworded in order to either correspond with other recent surveys, or because the original wording is not sufficiently clear and unambiguous. Those questions that should be newly included and questions that need to be reworded are listed below:

**Suggested additional questions:**

- Personal use of internet – at all, now or in past (OXIS)
- Ways of access to internet (e.g. home, at work, library) (ONS or OXIS)
- What purposes used internet for in last month (ONS)
- Leisure or recreation classes (as a necessity item or local service)
- Do any of your children currently attend (or attended in the past) private school?
- Have you in the last year, employed a private tutor for any of children?
- (if yes) was this tutoring related to any of the following: tuition in a subject taught at child's school, tuition in a subject not taught at child's school, tuition related to a special need (e.g. dyslexia), tuition in a leisure activity or sport (e.g. private music classes)
- Do you speak English as your first language?
- (If no) How well would you say you speak English?
- Has (child) ever been excluded from school, even for a day?

**Suggested rephrased children's necessity items:**

- An active sport at least once a month (swimming, football, hockey)
- indoor games suitable for their ages (building blocks, board games, etc)

**Further suggestions**

- Whether in the last twelve months (adult) has paid for (child) to have private classes in specific subjects – either subjects taught at school or other subjects, and including extra tuition related to “special needs.” [could be combined with ‘private tutor’ question above]
- Nature and extent of any Special Educational Need (SEN) could be clarified further e.g. What is the nature of learning difficulty (showcard?) and how much extra help does child receive?
- One or two questions to tease out parents' perceptions of school quality and resources [possibly modify existing question on school resources]
- A question about English language competency e.g. ‘Do you have any difficulty reading English or not?’
- A measure of basic skills in adults – possibly ‘Do you have any difficulty reading magazines or newspapers/ performing simple calculations?’
- Questions relating to parenting/parental input:  
e.g. ‘How often do you/partner play indoor or outdoor games with

child/play at recognising letters, words numbers or shapes/ use a computer to play games, draw or look for information?' (GUIS);

- 'Do you talk with your child about what they are reading?'
- Specific question to identify use of Childrens' Centres
- Questions touching on aspiration for lifelong/further/higher education: e.g. Whether adults have considered engaging in further or higher education, and perceived barriers.



## Tables

**Table 1: Educational attainment**

Indicator	Comments	Measured in
All those aged 16-69: How old were you when you left school?		GHS, FRS
(If in education) What are you doing at present? (list including types of education)	Asked of all in household in FRS: "Are you at school or 6th form or at present enrolled on any full-time or part-time education course excluding leisure classes? What kind of course are you on. Is it full-time or part-time, a medical or nursing course or some other kind of course?"	GHS, FRS
(if finished education) Now thinking of your full-time education, what type of school or college did you LAST attend full-time?	The FRS asks: "What is the highest level of qualification that you have received from school, college or since leaving education? Please include any work-based training". In order to look at people's educational level, the highest level of education is more relevant than the last education, which could theoretically be lower.	GHS, FRS
How old were you when you left there, or when you finished or stopped your course?	FRS asks for all household members: At what age did [name] complete continuous full time education?	GHS, FRS, FES
Have you passed any examinations of the types listed on this card?	The FRS asks: "What is the highest level of qualification that you have received from school, college or since leaving education? Please include any work-based training".	GHS, FRS
Left school without qualification	This indicator can be inferred by combining the indicators above. I.e., school leavers are cases where the type of education last attended does not match examinations passed.	-
Were you on any of the government schemes for employment training shown on this card?		FRS
Whether in the last twelve months (adult) has paid for (child) to have private classes in subjects also taught at child's school? Type / frequency of these classes	This question would allow us to better capture advantages associated with higher income levels and the associated educational advantages.	Longitudinal Study of Young People in England: Waves One to Five, 2004-2008



Did any child have paid private lessons/ classes in subjects NOT covered at school? Type / frequency of these classes		Longitudinal Study of Young People in England: Waves One to Five, 2004-2008
Do any of your children currently attend (or attended in the past) private school?	Item suggested in Demi Patsios' paper in order to better capture higher income threshold.	
Do you employ anyone of the following on a part-time or full-time domestic capacity? – private tutor	Item suggested in Demi Patsios' paper in order to better capture higher income threshold.	
Child attends school with high proportion of students from areas with a high IDACI score	IDACI = Income Deprivation Affecting Children. See also comments above.	DCSF
Achieving 5+ A*-C grades at Key Stage 4	A pupil who is not on free school meals has three times the odds of achieving 5+ A*-C grades at Key Stage 4, and 3.6 times the odds of achieving 5+ A*-C including English and maths, compared to pupil who is eligible for free school meals (DCSF, 2009). Students in the 10% least deprived area are 6.4 times more likely to get 5 or more good Key stage 4 grades than those in the 10% most deprived areas.	DCSF
Child attends school with high proportion of students eligible for free school meals	Composite indicator useful for gaining an impression of the general level of at-risk pupils in the school. Children from deprived backgrounds, as measured by free school meal eligibility, tend to be concentrated over a small proportion of schools (DCSF, 2009). If it would be possible to know what school children attend, this indicator and the next could be constructed. If not, it might be possible to approximate a similar indicator based on area characteristics.	DCSF

**Table 2: Educational activities and resources for children**

Indicator	Comments	Measured in
Toys (e.g. dolls, play figures, teddies, etc.)		PSE 1999
Do they ALL have indoor games suitable for their ages (building blocks, board games, computer games, etc.)?’	In the PSE, it is not necessary to specifically ask whether ALL children have a specific item for every item as this could instead be included in the question at the beginning of the necessities list. The EU-SILC item is more specific than the corresponding PSE 1999 item. It may be a good idea to adopt the EU-SILC questions in these cases, as this allows for better comparison with other European countries, including between The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. However, mentioning computer games as an example may affect results if respondents do not believe computers to be a necessity. The suggestion is therefore: indoor games suitable for their ages (building blocks, board games, etc)	EU-SILC, Suggestion for PSE 2011
Leisure equipment (e.g. sports equipment or a bicycle)	Sports equipment could be considered to include a Wii or other “active computer games” , which may be a (sole) source of exercise for some children and adolescents. However, research has shown that active computer games are of insufficient intensity to significantly contribute towards recommendations for children’s daily exercise (Graves, Stratton, Ridgers, & Cable, 2008).	PSE 1999
Do they ALL have outdoor leisure equipment suitable for their ages (bicycle, roller skates, etc.)?’		EU-SILC
Books of her or his own		PSE1999
Do they ALL have books at home suitable for their ages?’		EU-SILC, Suggestion for PSE 2011
Construction toys such as Duplo or Lego		PSE1999
Educational games		PSE1999
Computer suitable for school work		PSE1999

A hobby or leisure activity		PSE1999
Do they ALL have regular leisure activities (swimming, playing an instrument, youth organisations, sports etc.)'		EU-SILC
Swimming at least once a month	Suggestion: remove this item in favour of the one below.	PSE 1999
An active sport at least once a month (swimming, football, hockey)	Playing an active sport has health implications. There is, however, no particular reason to restrict this item to swimming only	Suggestion for PSE 2010
Play group at least once a week for pre-school aged children	Also covered in FRS. Therefore, this question may not need to be asked again in the PSE survey.	PSE 1999
Going on a school trip at least once a term for school aged children		PSE1999
Do ALL the children who attend school participate in school trips and school events that cost money?	Lack of money may be a deterrent for some parents to allow their children to take part in school trips. For the purpose of the PSE survey, however, it is enough to know whether children are able to take part in school trips, which relates to social inclusion and may also affect educational attainment. The item in the PSE (above) is therefore sufficient.	EU-SILC

**Table 3: Parenting**

Indicator	Comments	Measured in
How often do you/partner play indoor or outdoor games with child?	Could be a used to include an aspect of parenting. However, quality of parenting is too complex an issue to measure in this way and answers may not be very accurate.	Growing Up in Scotland: Sweep 1
How often do you/partner play at recognising letters, words, numbers or shapes with child?	Same as above	Growing Up in Scotland: Sweep 1
How often do you/partner use a computer with child for	Only applies to parents who have a computer.	Growing Up in Scotland: Sweep 1

example to play games, draw or look for information?		
Do you talk with your child about what they are reading?	Scale, i.e. every day, weekly, monthly, rarely or never. Together with children's ownership of books, research has shown this variable to be a strong predictor of reading ability in children (Clark & Hawkins, 2010).	

**Table 4: Basic skills**

Indicator	Comments	Measured in
Were you born in the UK or somewhere else?		Youth Lifestyles survey 1998
Do you speak English as your first language?	The next three questions are only asked if the answer is yes.	Youth Lifestyles survey 1998
How well would you say you understand English when it is spoken to you?	Scale, i.e. very well, fairly well, etc	Youth Lifestyles survey 1998
How well would you say you speak English?	Scale, i.e. very well, fairly well, etc. If only one out of these three questions is asked, this question would probably be a reasonable indicator for the other two. It may be interesting to include a measure of English language ability as it is likely to affect, for instance, children's performance at school, access to public services, access to employment and other relevant variables.	Youth Lifestyles survey 1998
Do you have any difficulty reading English or not?	Scale, i.e. a great deal, a fair amount, a little	Youth Lifestyles survey 1998
Do you have any difficulty reading a magazine or newspaper (not related to vision impairment or disability)?	A question like this is likely to invite incorrect answers. People may also be embarrassed to openly discuss literacy or numeracy problems in this way.	Suggestion
Do you ever have difficulty making calculations, such as knowing how much change you should get back in a shop?		

**Table 5: Risks to children**

Indicator	Comments	Measured in
Ever been bullied		PSE 1999
Ever been accused of bullying		PSE 1999
Have special education needs		PSE 1999
Have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)		PSE 1999
Ever been suspended or excluded from school	Growing up in Scotland: “Has [child name] ever been excluded from school, even for a day?” and “ Has [child] ever been permanently excluded from a school?” This variable is also interesting with reference to children’s exclusion from services.	PSE 1999, Growing up in Scotland
How many times has [child] been excluded?		Growing up in Scotland
Child has missed classes because of teacher shortage		PSE 1999
Child has shared school books in key subjects		PSE 1999
Child has found difficulty in obtaining school books		PSE 1999
School does not have enough computers		PSE 1999
Large class sizes (more than 30 pupils)		PSE 1999
School buildings are in a bad state of repair		PSE 1999
Other problems due to lack of resources at school		PSE 1999
None of these		PSE 1999

**Table 6: Cultural leisure activities**

Indicator	Comments	Measured in
Are you at present attending any sort of leisure or recreation classes during the day, in the evenings or at weekends?	This is not in the FRS, and should perhaps be in the PSE only as a “necessity” item in the list of public and private services. Note: the concept of leisure class may be confusing as some classes are purely recreational, while others may be using evening or daytime classes to gain extra qualifications and to learn new skills. The concept of “classes” may also require further clarification, for instance with regards to whether it includes (Include correspondence courses and open learning. According to the family expenditure survey spending on sports admissions, subscriptions, leisure class fees and equipment hire accounted for £4.80 a week per household in the UK.	GHS, FES
Here is a list of things people do in their leisure time when they are not at work, college, or school. Can you please tell me which, if any, you have been to or done in the last month?	A list with a wide variety of items including community work, buying lottery tickets, attending political meetings, cinema, theatre or concert, etc.	Youth Lifestyle Survey
What type of college or organisation runs these classes? e.g.: Evening Institute/Local Education Authority/ College or Centre of Adult Education College of Further Education/ Technical College	This is not relevant for the PSE, too detailed.	GHS
Cinema or theatre (essential / desirable)		PSE 1999
Libraries (use adequate / inadequate / don't use don't want, etc)		PSE 1999
Museums and galleries (use adequate / inadequate / don't use don't want, etc)		PSE 1999

Evening classes (use adequate / inadequate / don't use don't want, etc)	Suggestion: change to leisure classes	PSE 1999
A cinema or theatre (use adequate / inadequate / don't use don't want, etc)		PSE 1999
May I just check, when was the last time, if ever, that you visited a public library (including a mobile library service)		CHS, GHS, NICHs
How often do you/partner take your child to the library	Possible that other person takes child to library or child goes alone, it might be better to ask "How often does your child visit a library?"	Growing up in Scotland
How often did you go to the library in the last year / In the last year, have you been to a library / Have you used a library in the past 12 months?	e.g. Every few months, Once a month, once a week.  Might be better to say have you <i>used</i> a library as virtual use of library should count as well	Growing up in Scotland, the National Survey of Culture, Leisure and Sport, 2005-2006
Reason why you do not use/you have not used the Public Library Service in the past 12 months?	1 Difficult to find the time 2 Costs too much 3 Feel uncomfortable or out of place 4 Never occurred to me 5 Not really interested 6 Wouldn't enjoy it 7 No need to go Etc.. (CHS has 20 options)  May be interesting in order to analyse reasons for differences in usage. It is known that libraries and museums are not pro-poor in their distribution of use, but we could gain more insight as to why.	CHS
Museums	Use has declined between 1990 and 1999 (Fisher & Bramley, 2006).	PSE
What would encourage you to go to museums more often?	For example: cheaper admission prices, longer opening hours, exhibitions I'm interested in, better access to transport, etc	CHS
Library use	Use has declined between 1990 and 1999 (Fisher & Bramley, 2006).	PSE

**Table 7: Internet access**

Indicator	Comments	Measured in
Do you yourself personally use the Internet at home, work, school, college or elsewhere or have you used the Internet anywhere in the past?	Quite a good general question, though adding the “or have you used ... in the past” does make it include people who may have only tried to use the internet once or twice, and are not regular users. According to the Oxford Internet Survey, Internet use and home access remained nearly equivalent: In 2009, 70% of British people said they used the Internet and only 5% of Internet users did not have household access. The percentage of Britons who had never used the Internet decreased from 35% in 2003 to 23% in 2009. The number of people who had access in the past but who do not currently have access remained stable at 7% of the population. People in the highest income category were more than twice as likely to use the Internet in 2009 (97%) than those in the lowest income category (38%) (Dutton, et al., 2009). .	OxIS 2009
In what ways can you access the Internet (list including at home, at work, public library)?	The purpose of this question for the PSE would be mainly to find out whether people have easy access to the internet. This indicator could also be partially covered by a necessity item, for instance “computer with access to the internet”. It may therefore not be necessary to include this specific question about where people access the internet.	ONS internet access module 2009, OxIS 2009
Place mostly/exclusively used to access Internet	Same as above.	ONS internet access module 2009
Have you, in the last month, used the internet for any of the following purposes: e.g. Communicating with friends or family (email, facebook, msn, skype)? Buying or ordering tickets, goods or services? Personal banking? Looking for jobs or work? General browsing or surfing?	The internet is increasingly important for a variety of purposes, such as access to information, finding jobs, communicating with others, etc. Lacking access to the internet could potentially contribute to social exclusion, as well as to material deprivation, as increasingly cheaper services are available through the internet as well (for example train services, cheaper utilities, purchasing items online). The top three most common activities on the internet in 2009 were, respectively: sending / receiving emails, finding information about goods and services and using services related to travel and accommodation (Office for National Statistics, 2009).	ONS internet access module 2009



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