



Growing Up In Europe

EuroCohort: an accelerated cohort survey of growing up in Europe

Summary

There is, at present, no single data source to support comparative analysis of the wellbeing of children and young people across Europe as they grow up. Some European countries have regularly invested in cohort survey and benefited from analyses drawn from longitudinal studies, such as the British Cohort Studies (1946, 1958, 1970, 2000), the French Longitudinal Study of Children, the Danish Longitudinal Survey of Children, Growing up in Ireland, or the National Education Panel on Early Education and Schooling in Germany. These surveys remain an important source of evidence which supports policy development. The merits of collecting national longitudinal data are widely recognised, and yet the current studies are not easily comparable as they contain different questions and are conducted at different times and on different age groups.

Europe's first comparative birth cohort survey, a Research Infrastructure (RI) called **EuroCohort**, will be an important source of evidence in developing social policies for children, young people and families across Europe for many years to come. **EuroCohort** will be an **accelerated** cohort survey including a sample of new born babies as well as a sample of school age children. With two cohorts taking place in parallel it will be possible to make cohort comparisons early in the life of the survey.

Why policy-makers value longitudinal surveys

EuroCohort will directly benefit children and young people by collecting both objective and subjective wellbeing measures which will be used to ensure that social policies are evidence based. Major themes covered in the survey include: *Inequality, Learning, Digital Life and Lifestyle*.

Longitudinal surveys routinely inform policy development. Longitudinal data is important as it can be used to show how the experiences of different cohorts of people vary over their life course. **EuroCohort** offers policy-makers the following:

- Unique insights into key transitions in children's lives

- The ability to make international comparisons on child and youth wellbeing
- Opportunities to evaluate policies over time

About EuroCohort

The **EuroCohort** consortium currently comprises 16 partners from 13 countries and is led by UK experts in longitudinal surveys from Manchester Metropolitan University, University College London, City, University of London and the University of Essex.

EuroCohort builds on the MYWeB project, which provided the proof of concept for the development of a Europe wide longitudinal survey of child and youth wellbeing in regard to:

- desirability among stakeholder groups
- technical do-ability in relation to questionnaire surveys of children as young as seven years old
- policy relevance in regard to the evidence needs for policy development in the area of children, families and education
- policy benefits weighed against the infrastructural costs.

The MYWeB project estimated that the minimum sample size for countries with large populations should be 10,000 and for countries with small populations, it could be as low as 5,000. Funding is likely to be of the order of €1Million for a sample size of 10,000 per year in northern European countries.

What next?

Across Europe there are Research Infrastructures in most academic disciplines. Within the EU these are organised within the [European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures \(ESFRI\)](#). Our aim is that EuroCohort will be included on the 2021 ESFRI roadmap and receive EU funding to support the coordination of the survey.

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