

**SCOTTISH YOUNG PEOPLE'S SURVEY 1986 (SPRING)  
SECOND SWEEP SURVEY OF THE 1983-1984 S4 COHORT  
TECHNICAL REPORT**

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## Preamble

The Scottish Young Peoples Survey (SYPS) is conducted in Scotland by the Centre for Educational Sociology (CES), University of Edinburgh, in conjunction with the Scottish Education Department (SED). It is a postal survey in which questionnaires are initially sent to young people approximately nine months after they have left school or have completed their fourth year in secondary school.

The current survey cycle began in 1985 contacting both a school-year group and also a school-leaver group. The 1986 survey is a one-year follow-up of the school-year group, that is, those who were in S4 in the Session 1983-84. The sample is described in Bundell (1986). The Survey is funded jointly by the Scottish Education Department, the Manpower Services Commission, the Industry Department for Scotland and the Department of Employment.

*Attrition reduction exercise* In the Autumn of 1985, an attrition reduction exercise was carried out with those people for whom no valid contact address could be obtained during the course of the 1985 survey, about 4% overall. Update addresses were obtained for 1% of the age cohort, in this way allowing them to be incorporated into the sample for the follow-up survey and reducing non-response.

*Sample size* The original target sample of 8078 for the age cohort was reduced to 8007 because 71 cases were found to be deceased or ineligible during the 1985 survey. There were 89 cases who refused to participate during the first sweep; these cases are included in the target population although they were not contacted for the second sweep. There were 16 anonymous returns.

## Questionnaires

The questionnaires were targeted according to the status of the respondents at the time of the 1985 survey. There were four questionnaire types: G, S, Y, and N.

The structure was modular. The G-type questionnaire formed the nucleus of the three main questionnaire types. The S-type had additional pages for those who were still at school during the 1985 survey, and the Y-type had an additional page for those who were on the Youth Training Scheme at the time of the last survey. The N-type was a short questionnaire for those who did not respond to the 1985 survey, or whom we were unable to contact.

The three main questionnaire types were divided into two versions, but there was a single version for the N-type. Those who received Versions 1, 3 or 5 in 1985, received

a Version 1 in 1986. Similarly those who received Versions 2, 4 or 6 in 1985 received Version 2 in 1986.

Table 1 shows how the versions were allocated.

Approximate proportions of all types and versions used:

|    |     |    |     |
|----|-----|----|-----|
| S1 | 19% | S2 | 19% |
| G1 | 13% | G2 | 12% |
| Y1 | 8%  | Y2 | 9%  |
|    | --- |    | --- |
|    | 40% |    | 40% |
|    | --- |    | --- |
| N  | 20% |    |     |

Table 2

Number of questionnaire by type and version: Target Sample

|    |      |    |             |
|----|------|----|-------------|
| S1 | 1512 | S2 | 1561 = 3073 |
| G1 | 1066 | G2 | 1002 = 2068 |
| Y1 | 647  | Y2 | 702 = 1349  |
| N  | 1517 |    | <u>1517</u> |
|    |      |    | <u>8007</u> |

#### Conduct of the survey and response

The survey was despatched on 13 March 1986. The reminder procedures are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Dates of Postal Despatch

|          | S        | G        | Y         | N        |
|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| 13 March | Despatch | Despatch | Despatch  | Despatch |
| 25 March | -        | -        | -         | PC1      |
| 27 March | PC1      | PC1      | PC1       | -        |
| 10 April | PC2      | Readmin1 | Readmin 1 | Readmin1 |
| 24 April | Readmin1 | Readmin2 | Readmin2  | Readmin2 |

Where PC indicates that a postcard requesting a response was sent, and Readmin1 indicates that a new questionnaire and covering letter were sent.

#### Updating addresses

Questionnaires were returned to us and recorded as unopened when the respondent was not (apparently) at the address given. His/her current address was sought by sending a letter and 'contact sheet' requesting information from the occupier of the last known address.

If the occupier returned the contact sheet showing a forwarding address for the respondent, or the address of an intermediary who might know the respondent's current whereabouts, the new address was recorded, and a further letter and contact sheet sent to the new address.

If the contact sheet was returned by the occupier stating that the address of the respondent was not known, or if the contact sheet was returned undelivered, these responses were recorded. If an alternative address or an intermediary address had been supplied by the respondent in the 1985 survey, a letter and contact sheet were sent to this alternative address.

One reminder letter and contact sheet was sent to the last address tried if no reply had been received after ten days.

If the contact sheet was returned by the respondent giving his/her current address, a questionnaire was sent to this new address.

Details of the numbers of respondents traced by sending letters and contact sheets are shown in Table 4, line 1.

In some cases a new address was supplied by the present occupier, but no response was received to the contact sheet sent to the new address (Table 4, line 2), or the contact sheet to the new address was returned undelivered (Table 4, line 3).

For the majority of cases included in the contact-sheet procedure, no new address was received, either because the contact sheet was returned stating 'address not know' or because the contact sheet was never returned (Table 4, line 4).

Table 4 line 5 shows a number of respondents for whom the contact-sheet procedure was not used. These can be described in four categories. Firstly, a group identified at the beginning of the survey as a control group for a methodological experiment to test the effectiveness of contact sheets. Secondly, those for whom the contact-sheet procedure during the attrition-reduction exercise (November 1985) and methodological experiment (January 1986) had already tried all available addresses without success. Thirdly, those for whom the address was unusable (either overseas or house demolished). Finally, those for whom the questionnaire was returned undelivered at too late a stage of the survey.

Table 4

Addresses updated by contact-sheet procedure

|   | cases | % of target |
|---|-------|-------------|
| 1. New address confirmed by contact sheet from respondent | 73    | .9          |
| 2. No response to contact sheet to new address            | 12    | .15         |
| 3. Contact sheet to new address undelivered               | 19    | .2          |
| 4. No new address supplied                                | 424   | 5.3         |
| <hr/>   |       |             |
| 5. Did not send contact sheet during 2nd sweep            | 562   | 7.1         |
| 6. Never undelivered during 2nd sweep                     | 6861  | 86.3        |

A further attempt to update addresses was made with the help of careers officers. Each careers office was sent a list of the uncontacted respondents who had attended schools in their area, and they supplied any new addresses they had. A questionnaire was sent to each respondent for whom a new address had been supplied.

Table 5 shows the results of the careers office exercise: a new address was deemed to be confirmed by the respondent if a questionnaire was returned (Table 5, line 1), so the results are not entirely comparable with the contact-sheet exercise in which an address was confirmed by a contact sheet.

Whereas the contact-sheet exercise was a continuous process, there was just one request made to careers offices at the beginning of May 1986. Some cases were recorded as undelivered too late for the request to careers offices, and others had been traced before the request to careers offices was made (Table 5, line 5).

Table 5

Addresses updated by careers offices

|   | cases | % of target |
|---|-------|-------------|
| 1. New address confirmed by questionnaire from respondent | 70    | .9          |
| 2. No response to questionnaire to new address            | 56    | .7          |
| 3. Questionnaire to new address undelivered               | 20    | .25         |
| 4. CO could not give new address                          |       |             |
| -----   |       |             |
| 5. CO was not asked                                       | 571   | 7.2         |
| 6. Never undelivered                                      | 6861  | 86.3        |

The total of known non-contacts after conducting both these exercises is shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Non-replies by questionnaire type:

|                    | S     | G     | Y     | N     |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Dead               | 0     | 1     | 0     | 1     |
| Undelivered        | 41    | 77    | 37    | 238   |
| % Undelivered      | 1.3%  | 3.7%  | 2.7%  | 15.7% |
| -----              |       |       |       |       |
| Total non-contact  | 41    | 78    | 37    | 239   |
| % Non-contact      | 1.3%  | 3.8%  | 2.7%  | 15.8% |
|                    |       |       |       |       |
| No response        | 278   | 416   | 269   | 673   |
| % No response      | 9.0%  | 20.1% | 19.9% | 44.4% |
|                    |       |       |       |       |
| Refusal            | 23    | 32    | 21    | 100   |
| % Refusal          | 0.7%  | 1.5%  | 1.6%  | 6.6%  |
| -----              |       |       |       |       |
| Total non-achieved | 342   | 526   | 327   | 1012  |
| % Non-achieved     | 11.1% | 25.4% | 24.2% | 66.7% |

The final response rate achieved as at 3 September 1986 is shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Response by Questionnaire type

|   | S     | G     | Y     | N     | Total |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Number returned   | 2731  | 1541  | 1022  | 508   | 5802  |
| Target sample 2nd sweep   | 3073  | 2068  | 1349  | 1517  | 8007  |
| Response as % of target   | 88.9% | 74.5% | 75.8% | 33.5% | 72.5% |
| Response as % of contact<br>(excl dead and<br>undelivered, Table 6) | 90.1% | 77.4% | 77.9% | 39.7% | 76.2% |

Total returned excluding N: 5294  
Target excluding N: 6490  
% response rate excluding N: 81.6%

### Weighting

The weighting procedure was carried out on achieved S, G and Y questionnaire-type cases only. Achieved N questionnaires were not included since they do not possess the information required by the weighting algorithm.

Within the database a special record belonging to a single 'dummy case' held the population figures in a table. 24 cells of the table contained figures defined by SEX, T4SCEPX and LFTSCHX. In more detail:

SEX (1) - Male  
(2) - Female

T4SCEPX (1) - No Awards  
(2) - 0 grade D-E Awards only  
(3) - 1-2 O grades A-C  
(4) - 3-4 O grades A-C  
(5) - 5-6 O grades A-C  
(6) - 7 or More O grades A-C

LFTSCHX (1) - Left at or before Xmas 1984  
(2) - Left after Xmas 1984.

The 25th cell in the table held the sum of all the preceding cells, the total population, in a variable called CTOTPOP.

The cases in the database were then processed and assigned to 1 of 24 possible categories according to the value of SEX, T4SCEPX and LFTSCHX. A count was made of the number of cases in each category and also a grand total of these cases was made and called CHRNO.

The dummy case was processed to calculate the 24 weighting factors as follows:

- 1 .  $CHRRATE = CHRNO/CTOTPOP$
- 2 .  $Weight (S,L,A) = ALLPOP (S,L,A)/COPOP(S,L,A)*CHRRATE$

Where: S = Sex (male or Female)  
L = Leaving (Before/at Xmas 1984 OR Later)  
A = Value of T4SCEP (1-6)  
weight = weighting factor  
AUPOP = Number in Population  
COPOP = Number in Cohort

The cases in the database were processed once again and a weighting factor assigned to each case and held in the variable WGHT86X according to the values of SEX, T4SCEPX and LFTSCHX held by the case.

For further discussion of weighting, see Raffe (1987),

#### References

- Bundell, I. M. (ed.) (1986) 'Documentation of the 1985 SYPS database', CES working paper.
- Raffe, D. (1987) 'Weighting procedures for the longitudinal component of the Scottish Young Peoples Survey', CES working paper