

You might already know about *Understanding Society* – it's the biggest study of its kind in the world, conducted by researchers from the University of Essex together with NatCen. Studies like *Understanding Society* can help us find out about issues that matter to all of us – how the credit crunch is affecting people across the country, what the facilities are like in your area, whether we are leading a healthy lifestyle. The study will help us paint a unique picture of what Britain looks like today and how it is gradually changing.

Our study asks people questions about subjects such as health, caring for others and how you spend your leisure time. This information will be used to inform policy, provide evidence for discussion in the media and provide a rich resource for social researchers in our universities and colleges.

Your point of view is important to us – it helps to ensure that the study represents all types of people across the UK. In *Understanding Society* we want to get the views and opinions from people of all ages and backgrounds to enable us to represent the diverse nature of the UK population. Your participation is completely voluntary but we hope you will be able to help us as we rely on the goodwill and voluntary co-operation of those who are selected to take part to make the study a success.

Your interviewer is carrying an identification card with their photograph and NatCen's logo. They will be able to arrange a convenient time for an interview that should last approximately 30 minutes to an hour, depending on your circumstances.

As a small thank you, you will receive a Post office voucher. This can be redeemed at any Post Office for cash or they will transfer the amount into your bank account.

If there are children aged 10-15 in your household, we hope they will be willing to complete a short questionnaire about their hobbies, friends, school life and hopes for the future. Each child will be sent a gift voucher as a thank you for completing the questionnaire.

For more information, please contact us using the details below.

Yours faithfully,



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Professor Nick Buck
Director, *Understanding Society*
Institute for Social and Economic Research
University of Essex

This study is being conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act. This means your personal details will be kept strictly confidential and you and your household will not be identifiable from the data.