



# ADR UK Annual Report

## 2022-23

**Administrative data  
is an invaluable  
resource for public  
good. *We're using it.***

**Note:** This annual report was developed as a digital microsite. The PDF version you are viewing has reduced functionality and content.

View the full ADR UK Annual Report 2022-23 online at <https://reports.adruk.org/annual-report-2022-2023/>.

## Foreword



*from Stian Westlake, Executive Chair of the  
Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)*

The role of data in helping us make informed decisions has never been more crucial. Timely and accurate data can address policymakers' biggest challenges, from managing inflation to protecting the environment.

ADR UK is well-placed to facilitate the generation of this evidence. It represents a major investment in the infrastructure needed to make data accessible, and in the skills researchers and analysts require to make the most of it.

Through close partnership with government and research organisations, the programme is generating new insights that can help us evaluate policy and improve its effectiveness. I am delighted to see ADR UK's training and capacity building strategy come into its own this year, with a range of ambitious initiatives to support research uptake of administrative data. This is an important step in supporting researchers to solve complex challenges across society. Throughout the Economic and Social Research Council, we are making strides towards supporting this increased capacity across the sector.

Our strategic delivery plan commits to providing a powerful evidence base for good policy to increase growth and prosperity across the UK. ADR UK forms part of a wider programme of investment that contributes to this ambition, including the ongoing work of our Data & Infrastructure team, and the Smart Data Research UK programme, which aims to develop thriving research communities focused on data from the digital world. Together, these activities are contributing to a future where data is used more effectively in the public interest across the UK.

# Introduction



*from Dr Emma Gordon, Director of ADR UK*

Just two years into the ADR UK 2021-26 Strategy and following a £90 million reinvestment from UK Research and Innovation, it is amazing to see how much is being achieved across the entire partnership.

In all four ADR UK trusted research environments, the collection of research-ready datasets continues to grow - transforming how researchers access linked or linkable administrative data. You can discover these on the new ADR UK Data Catalogue, which we launched this year following a cross-partnership project led by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). We have further invested in data linkage programmes across ADR England, ADR Northern Ireland, ADR Scotland, and ADR Wales outlined in their respective key developments and our new and emerging datasets.

Over the past year our partnership has agreed a definition of “flagship datasets” and developed supporting content to showcase these. These ADR UK flagship datasets provide the basis for the 20 PhD studentships ADR UK is funding. These studentships aim to supply a pipeline of new researchers using administrative data for public good research as well as produce policy-relevant insights on pressing social and economic issues. There has been an ever-increasing range of research using this linked data taking place over the past year. We have spotlighted some of these in the partners’ key developments. In addition to the core-funded research programmes in ADR Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, there is a growing number of ADR UK Research Fellows using ADR England data, with the most recent cohort starting in August. ADR UK Research Fellows also featured in the ONS Research Excellence Series in recognition of their outstanding contributions to linked administrative data research. Cross-partner initiatives such as our ADR UK Workshops Roadshow and Researcher Symposia strive to grow and support the researchers in administrative data research.

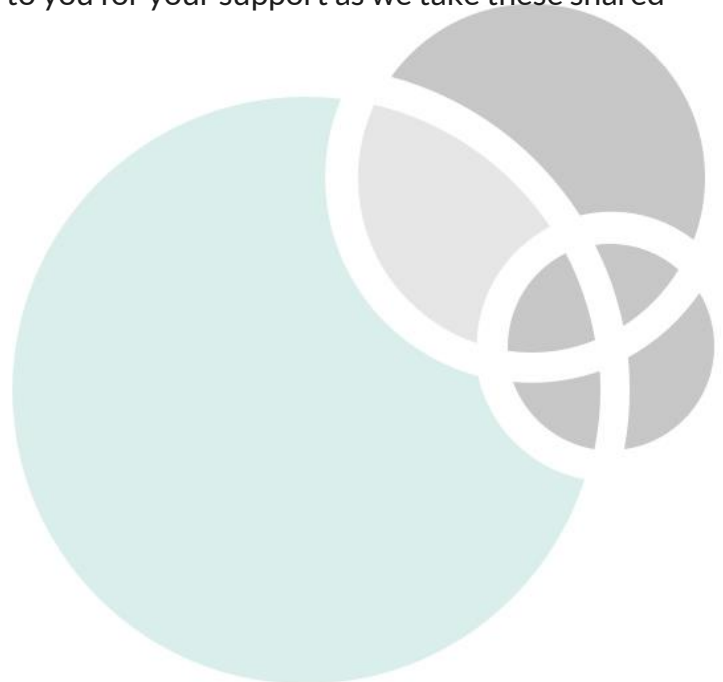
Increasingly, ADR UK is impacting policy and practice in the UK, particularly in the devolved nations where the ADR UK model that brings government and academia together has had more time to mature. The case studies in this annual report help demonstrate this impact. Also in the policy sphere, we have been pleased to contribute to various government consultations such as the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill, The Sudlow Review 'Unifying Health Data in the UK', and the inquiry Transforming

the UK's Evidence Base. In these, and all our work, we continue to advocate for safe and transparent use of the public's data in research.

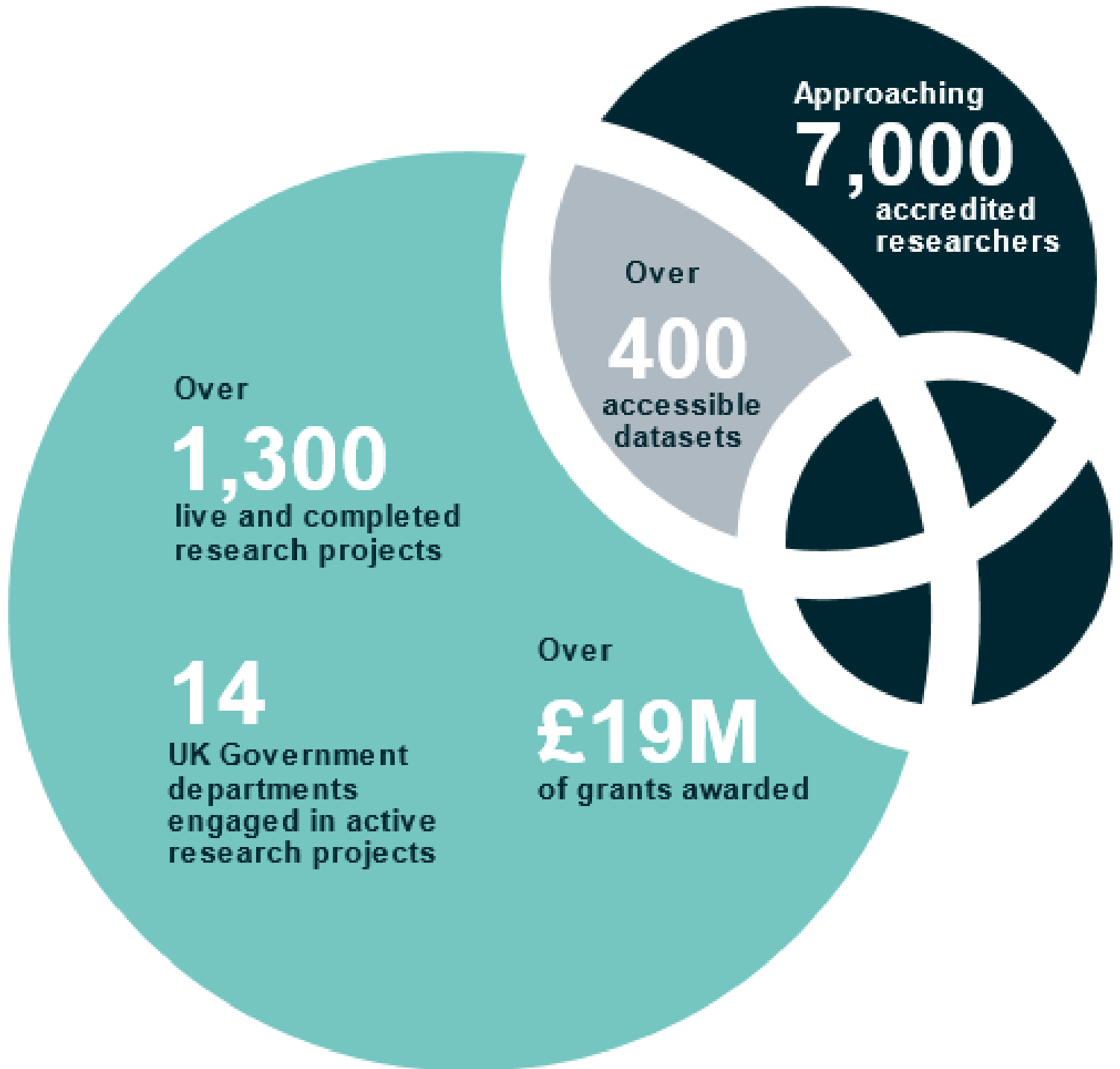
Since our [Public Engagement Strategy 2021-26](#) was published, ADR UK has remained committed to listening and responding to the public. We see this as essential to demonstrating trustworthiness and maximising the public benefit of research using administrative data. We marked the one-year anniversary of the strategy with a blog series celebrating public engagement approaches in each of the four national partnerships. The Public Engagement in Data Research Initiative (PEDRI), of which ADR UK is a founding member, likewise celebrated its one-year anniversary with partners in June. PEDRI marks a big step forward in collaborative public engagement within the data research landscape, and will continue to allow ADR UK and partners to champion best practice.

What comes next? In November, ADR UK in partnership with the ONS will host the [ADR UK Conference 2023: 'Public Data for Resilience and Inclusion. Using administrative data to inform policy and practice in challenging times'](#). An event not to be missed - tickets are still available at the time of writing this. Exciting plans are also in place as the [ONS Secure Research Service](#) transitions data, people and their projects to the new [Integrated Data Service](#) - promising a step change in how ADR UK researchers will tap into the UK's wealth of administrative data. Accompanying this, we will continue to build capacity among researchers. Our new [Learning Hub](#) is a helpful starting point, providing information and resources on accessing and using administrative data. The [ADR England Research Community Catalysts](#) will also develop communities of researchers to advance administrative data research for public good.

You will hear about all of the above, and much more, in this 2022-23 edition of the ADR UK Annual Report. Our sincere thanks go to you for your support as we take these shared efforts forward.



# ADR UK in numbers



# Key developments across the partnership

ADR UK is made up of four national partnerships – ADR England, ADR Northern Ireland, ADR Scotland and ADR Wales – as well as the Office for National Statistics (ONS), and is coordinated by a UK-wide Strategic Hub. This structure allows each UK nation to have a dedicated trusted research environment and research expertise, focusing in on its national policy needs while also enabling UK-wide research.

Each ADR UK partner works closely with expert researchers from academic institutions and other research bodies, as well as government data holders and policymakers, to support research that fills key evidence gaps and informs policy and practice. This helps to connect academia and government, ensuring that insights from administrative data research can be used to improve society.

This year has seen ADR UK realising many ambitions, as work has continued across the partnership to achieve our shared mission. From facilitating access to new datasets, to building research capability around them, we're working to maximise the value of administrative data for public good research. This effort has been supported by two strategic publications this year: the legal framework for accessing data for research purposes and our interim position statement on synthetic data.

## **Cross-sector engagement is key to our success**

Following the success of last year's International Population Data Linkage Network Conference, cross-sector engagement has continued to be a priority for ADR UK, with preparations well underway for the ADR UK Conference 2023. In November, we hosted a showcase for ADR UK Ambassadors, to share projects underway and promote advocacy around the need for administrative data linkage and research.

ADR UK Research Fellows also featured in a guest slot in the ONS Research Excellence Series, opening new avenues for engagement and collaboration. And in July, we hosted a symposium for researchers and other stakeholders, featuring research from across the partnership on the theme of health and wellbeing. This highlighted the value of linked administrative data for policy-relevant insights to a new audience.

## **A new data catalogue makes it easier to find and access data**

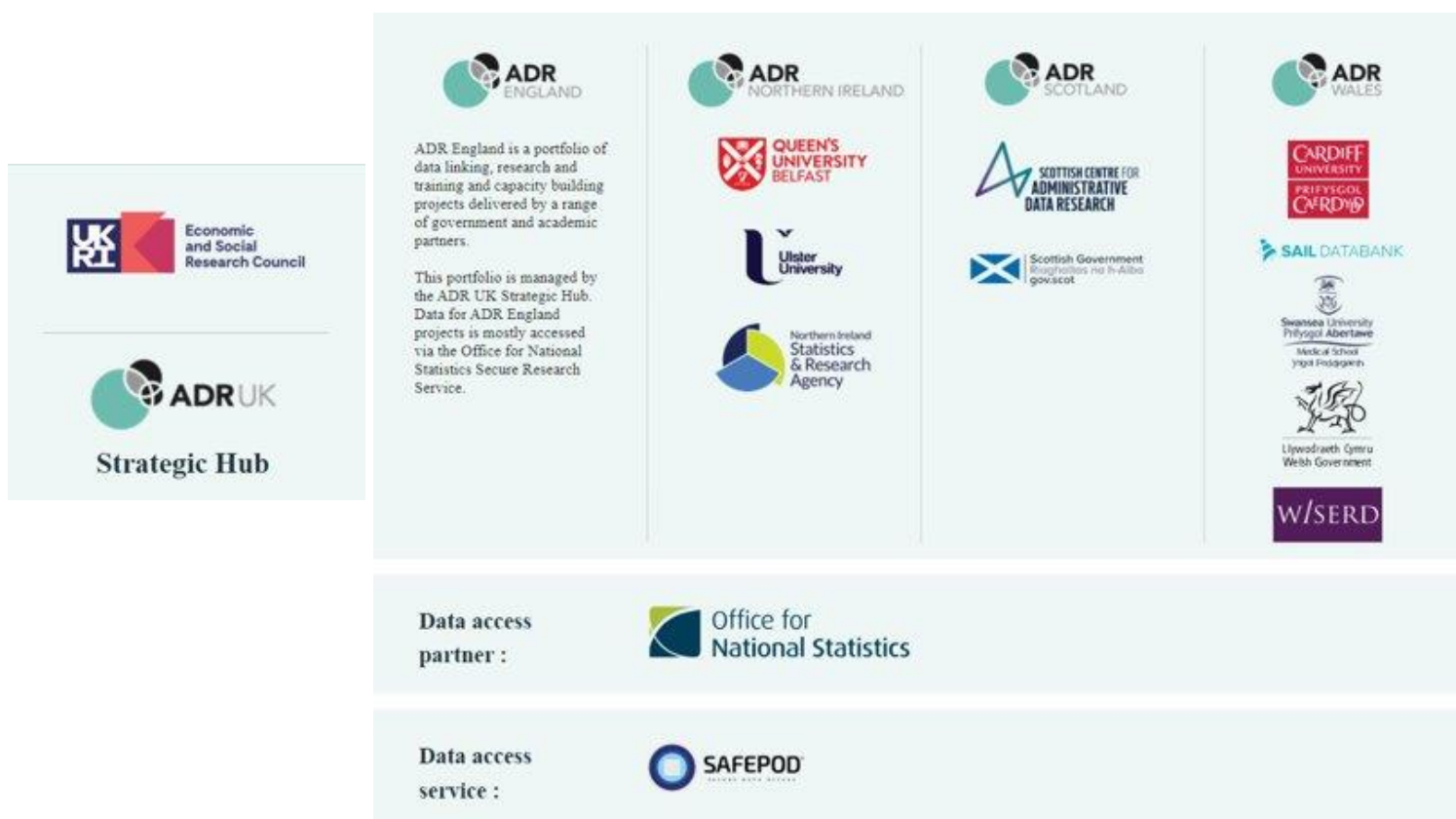
An important way we have promoted our linked datasets this year is through the launch of the ADR UK Data Catalogue: a directory of datasets available across the partnership for public good research. Users can explore key details such as coverage, size and supporting documentation, to determine whether datasets align with their research priorities and whether comparable datasets are available in other UK nations. As part of promoting our data, we have developed the concept of ADR UK flagship datasets, which all have particularly wide appeal and significant research value, because of the linked (or linkable) data they contain. These are now featured on our website.

## Developing the next generation of researchers with PhD studentships

To further increase research uptake of these linked datasets, this year ADR UK has continued to progress our training and capacity building strategy. In December, we announced 20 PhD studentship opportunities for projects using ADR UK flagship datasets. This landmark funding promotes the use of administrative data from post-graduate level, while also developing research capacity in priority areas. To support this expansion, we have carried out roadshow events across the UK in partnership with the UK Statistics Authority, to raise awareness of the wealth of administrative datasets available for public good research.

Finally, the launch of our new online learning hub provides a platform for researchers to find training and resources to support their skills development. In this way, ADR UK has continued to build the capability needed to maximise the use of administrative data for research for the public good.

## The ADR UK partnership





## ADR England

ADR England is a portfolio of data linking and research projects, which enable policy-relevant insights across England and the UK. This work is delivered by a wide range of partners across academia and government, using data held by UK Government departments and public bodies. ADR England is managed by the ADR UK Strategic Hub, embedded within the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Data for ADR England projects is accessed by accredited researchers predominantly via the ONS Secure Research Service.

### Driving up the use of ADR England data with research fellowships

A key focus for ADR England has been driving up the use of this data for research. ADR UK has launched two rounds of funding for Research Fellowships using ADR England flagship datasets, in October 2022 and July 2023. Recipients of this funding join a growing cohort of Research Fellows using ADR England data to answer priority research questions. This year, several Research Fellows completed their projects, including users of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Data First magistrates' and Crown Court, and MoJ & Department for Education linked datasets.

As well as supporting the appointment of two MoJ Evaluation Fellows, and co-funding two No. 10 Data Science Team Fellows with ESRC, the ADR UK Strategic Hub has appointed:

- two Research Fellows using the Data First probation and criminal justice system linked dataset
- two Research Fellows using the Data First family court – Cafcass linked dataset
- six Research Fellows using a range of ADR England flagship datasets.

These appointments show a development in the funding model for fellowships using ADR England data. Rather than focusing funding on a specific dataset, the six research fellows appointed in the 2022 round were given a choice of ADR England flagship datasets when making their proposals.

### Building stronger research communities

The Strategic Hub is also growing the research communities using ADR England flagship datasets. This has included a pilot mentoring scheme to run alongside the research fellowship opportunities, which matches applicants with mentors to support their application and skills development. Likewise, the ADR England Research Community Catalysts funding opportunity sets out to build self-sustaining research communities around cross-cutting themes.

Meanwhile, newer ADR England data-linkage projects are underway, which will produce new and enhanced linked datasets for public good research.





## **ADR Northern Ireland**

Administrative Data Research Northern Ireland (ADR NI) is a partnership between the Administrative Data Research Centre Northern Ireland (ADRC NI), comprising Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University, and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), which is an accredited processor under the Digital Economy Act 2017. Together they support the acquisition, linking and analysis of administrative datasets, developing cutting-edge research to improve knowledge, policymaking and public service delivery.

The last year has seen some significant changes in ADR NI, not least in personnel. Among many other important appointments, Dr Philip Wales has taken up post as Chief Executive of NISRA, Registrar General for Northern Ireland and ADR NI Co-Director. With fresh insights and vision comes the potential for innovation and creative thinking.

### **Increasing the range of administrative data for Northern Ireland**

NISRA has continued to drive forward data acquisition developments including the delivery of a rich, growing research resource for secondary education – the Educational Outcomes Linkage. Significant progress has also been made on the development of data linkages relating to business, income and agriculture, while the option of secure remote access has been introduced in some ADR NI processes.

Many of ADR NI's themed datasets are coming to fruition, such as the NI Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection. After an open research competition, there are seven research teams from across the UK undertaking projects based on the Earnings and Employees Study, and Business Data for Research. It is anticipated that early next year, Northern Ireland's Cross-Government Income administrative dataset will launch and the first update will be made to the recently launched Education Outcomes Linkage. There has also been significant progress on data builds relating to people who are homeless and to prisoners.

### **Providing new insights on the issues important to society**

ADR NI researchers have delivered comprehensive findings on Covid-19 mortality and equality, and disability and employment among other areas. With researchers now able to access all the safe settings following Covid-19 lockdowns, ADR NI's research agenda has refocused onto wider societal concerns, many of which were amplified by the pandemic. The team's research findings continue to contribute to policy development and evaluation. Even in the absence of a functioning devolved government, ADR NI has been able to reach wider policy and political audiences, including interaction with a range of All Party Groups and a renewed endorsement from the Permanent Secretary to the Executive Office. This work will be underpinned by the continued development and rollout of the new Northern Ireland Public Data Panel.

## ADR Scotland

ADR Scotland combines expertise from the Scottish Centre for Administrative Data Research (SCADR) and Scottish Government's Data for Research Unit. Together they are transforming how public sector data in Scotland is curated, accessed and explored to deliver novel, evidence-based insights for policy and public good.

Developments across ADR Scotland this year include notable research findings around Covid-19 fines and care-experienced children. The team has held a range of successful events focused on key datasets to promote their wider use, including a suite of Scottish education datasets, Nursing and Midwifery Council data and the potential of criminal justice data.

### **Building partnerships to support research**

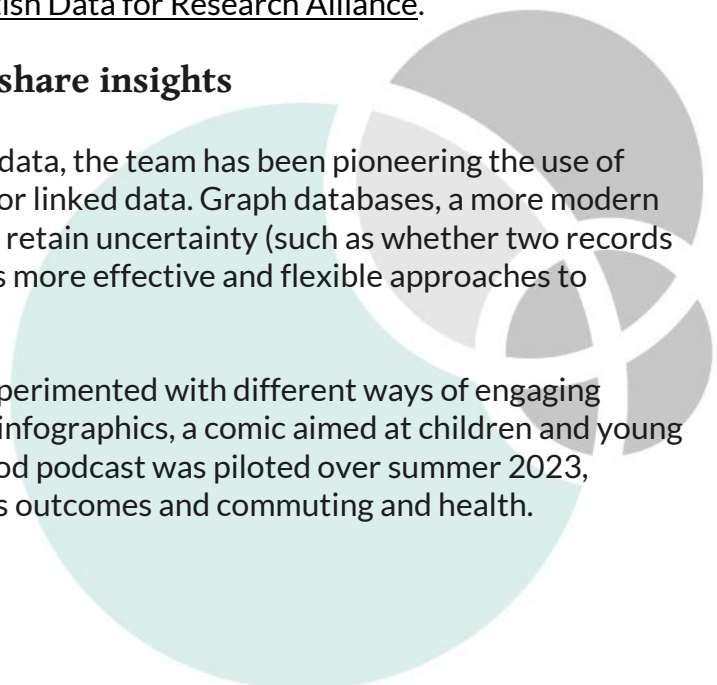
ADR Scotland has achieved the first linkage between police and health data in Scotland, facilitating significant insights about the underlying health vulnerabilities of those who were fined for breaching the coronavirus regulations during the pandemic. Members of ADR Scotland are working with the new Public Health Policing Hub to develop a programme of research around public health policing. This includes setting priorities for data sharing by Police Scotland.

In April 2023, [Research Data Scotland](#) (RDS) became a data delivery body as part of the ADR Scotland programme. RDS will undertake practical data preparation, manage data updates and help bring together a prioritised set of administrative datasets available for public good research. They have also joined with ADR Scotland to co-deliver a public panel, helping to realise the partnership's ambitions to expand and enhance this important work. ADR Scotland is committed to working with RDS and others to help improve the Scottish data system as part of the [Scottish Data for Research Alliance](#).

### **Innovative ways to generate and share insights**

In ADR Scotland's work around historic data, the team has been pioneering the use of graph rather than relational databases for linked data. Graph databases, a more modern database software, allow researchers to retain uncertainty (such as whether two records belong to the same person). This enables more effective and flexible approaches to research.

Over the last year, ADR Scotland has experimented with different ways of engaging audiences with their research including infographics, a comic aimed at children and young people, and a [podcast series](#). The DataPod podcast was piloted over summer 2023, exploring violence in Scotland, children's outcomes and commuting and health.



## ADR Wales

ADR Wales unites specialists from Swansea University Medical School and the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data (WISERD) at Cardiff University with statisticians, data scientists and social researchers from the Welsh Government. The cutting-edge data analysis techniques and research excellence developed, along with the world-renowned SAIL (Secure Anonymised Information Linkage) Databank – which is an accredited processor under the 2017 Digital Economy Act – allow the delivery of robust, secure and informative research.

Producing insightful research that can inform policy has always been at the heart of all decision making at ADR Wales, but the close engagement of the team with their policy counterparts has never been greater than in the past year.

### Supporting new insights in priority policy areas

In late 2022, ADR Wales publicly unveiled its 'Programme of Work 2022-2026', at an event supported by Ministers at the home of Welsh Parliament, The Senedd. The ADR Wales team outlined the programme's ten thematic areas, covering major considerations of sustainability, the Welsh language, engagement, and training and capacity building. It also aligns with national commitments in the Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the Programme for Government for Wales (2021-2026).

ADR Wales' established thematic areas continue to thrive, led by academic experts and facilitating collaboration between the data acquisition team and data owners across the UK.

Three new research areas of social justice, climate change and major societal challenges are expansive and cross-cutting, serving to strengthen ADR Wales' existing research offering while ensuring that the team can provide insights to make Wales fairer, greener and stronger.

Relationships across sectors and organisations continue to grow, paving the way for collaboration and end results that make the best use of available data and expertise. The ADR Wales team continues to be called upon to provide insight, for example, their work focusing on substance misuse as part of the Ministry of Justice Better Outcomes through Linked Data (BOLD) programme has been bolstered by further investment.

### Informing the social care sector

ADR Wales has joined forces with Social Care Wales to drive forward their social care ambitions. Working closely with data providers, the team aims to improve the availability and quality of data that can inform this crucial sector. This collaboration seeks to build on

previous ADR Wales work to produce research-ready linked children's social care data, which has now been used by multiple data investments.

2022-2023 has been a year of growth and ambition for ADR Wales, and the team looks forward to sharing findings, making increasing levels of data available for research, and exchanging knowledge in the year ahead.

## **Office for National Statistics**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) plays a crucial role in sourcing, linking, and curating public sector data for ADR UK, ensuring that data is accessed by researchers safely and securely. With the support of ADR UK funding, the ONS continues to expand, improve and increase the range of administrative data available in the ONS Secure Research Service – the organisation's facility for providing secure access to de-identified unpublished data for research, as an accredited processor under the Digital Economy Act 2017. The ONS Secure Research Service is the trusted research environment for ADR England.

This year has been busy and varied for the ONS as they continue to run the Secure Research Service. This provides secure access to de-identified record level data for research in the public good. The ONS continues to improve services for users: reducing project approval times; expanding the remote access scheme; and implementing two factor authentication for user access. Work has continued to ensure that the ONS Secure Research Service Metadata Catalogue, launched in February 2022, is now fully embedded.

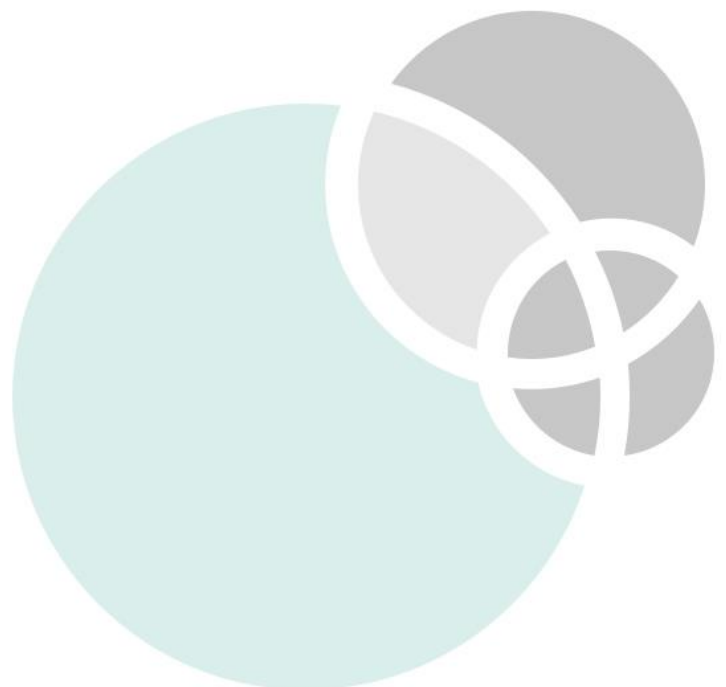
### **Increasing the range of data for public good research**

The ONS has made an increasing number of datasets available from other government departments, including Ministry of Justice, Department for Education and Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. New partnerships have been developed with the Bank of England and some charities to support the hosting of their data in the Secure Research Service for wider research use. The Education and Child Health Insights from Linked Data (ECHILD) - England dataset has been made available for researchers to apply to use, in addition to an updated and expanded version of the Longitudinal Education Outcomes dataset that will be made available imminently.

Synthetic data has been a key focus for ADR UK this year, because of its potential to allow users to develop and test their code before applying to use the real data. The ONS has made significant progress in supporting this work. They have created a new synthetic version of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020 dataset and ran a successful pilot project to test its value and usefulness.

## Tracking the outputs of public good research

The ONS has added to its capability to monitor data use in the Secure Research Service via the introduction of digital object identifiers (DOIs). These are unique digital identifiers that make it easier to track online where digital assets, in this case, datasets, have been cited in the public domain. DOIs are now included in the ONS Secure Research Service Metadata Catalogue.



# New and emerging datasets

This year has seen a number of developments for ADR UK datasets across the partnership, including newly-available datasets for public good research; emerging datasets that will soon be available; and new updates to existing datasets. Read on to find out more.

## Data First – England and Wales

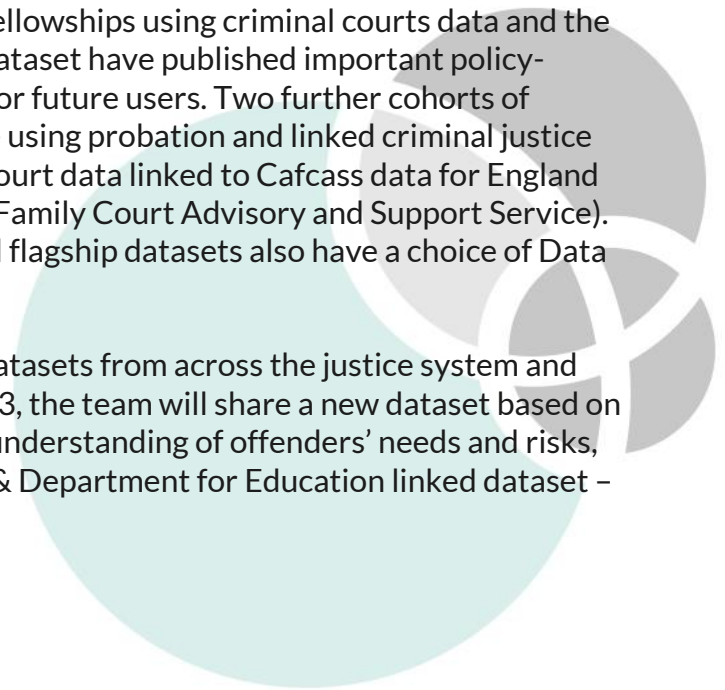
Data First is an ambitious data linking, academic engagement and research programme led by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), and part of the ADR England portfolio. Since 2019, Data First has shared nine research-ready datasets, created new data linkages, and worked alongside academic partners to deliver impactful research for policy.

In 2023, the Data First team made data on the civil justice system available to accredited researchers via the Office for National Statistics Secure Research Service, including information on all civil cases heard in the County Court and property repossession claims. The team shared criminal courts, prisons and probation services datasets with the SAIL (Secure Anonymised Information Linkage) Databank in Wales enabling further linkage with other sources such as the Census 2021.

MoJ's award-winning data-linking software, [Splink](#), was used to join datasets from across the criminal, civil and family justice systems to create a cross-justice system linked dataset. This enables researchers to analyse people's interactions across different jurisdictions of the justice system for the first time.

Two cohorts of ADR UK-funded Research Fellowships using criminal courts data and the linked MoJ and Department for Education dataset have published important policy-relevant findings as well as lessons learned for future users. Two further cohorts of Research Fellowships have commenced, one using probation and linked criminal justice system data and the other using the family court data linked to Cafcass data for England and Wales (Cafcass stands for Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service). Future Research Fellows using ADR England flagship datasets also have a choice of Data First datasets.

Data First continues to link and share new datasets from across the justice system and with other government departments. In 2023, the team will share a new dataset based on the Offender Assessment System to enrich understanding of offenders' needs and risks, as well as expanding the Ministry of Justice & Department for Education linked dataset – England.



## **Data First: Cross-Justice System – England and Wales**

This linking dataset can be used to join administrative records about people from across justice services. It enables researchers to link from the following Data First datasets:

- family courts
- civil courts
- probation services
- Crown Court
- magistrates' courts
- prisoner custodial journeys.

This newly linked data provides unique opportunities for research that has not been possible before. It allows researchers to explore cross-cutting justice questions, including how people interact across the civil, family and criminal courts; the overlaps in these interactions; and insights on end-to-end user journeys across justice services.

Potential areas for research include understanding:

- how people dealing with problems related to debt and housing are also involved in the criminal justice system
- the extent to which adults and children involved in resolving family issues, such as divorce or child arrangements, are also involved with criminal cases
- the journeys of people in prison or under probation supervision who have also been involved in resolving cases in the civil and family courts.

## **Data First: Civil Court – England and Wales**

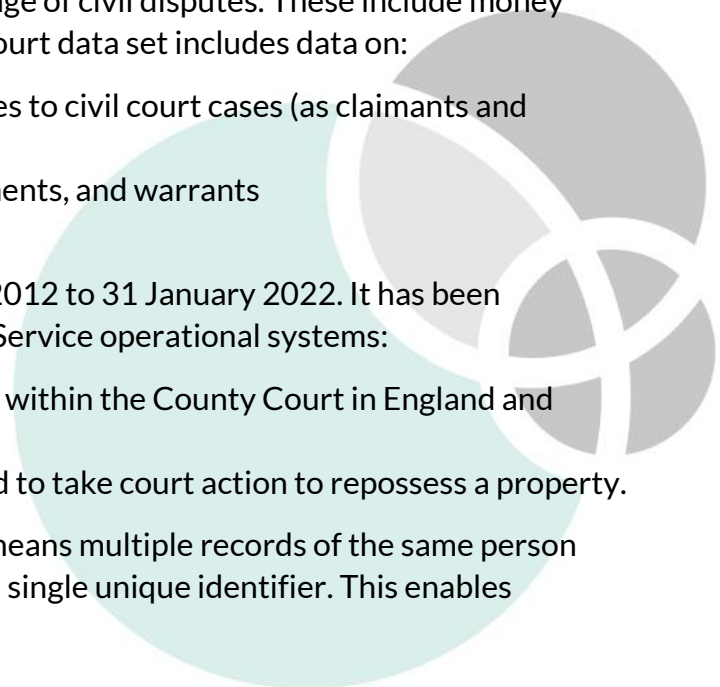
This dataset aims to increase understanding of users making and defending civil claims, and the progress and outcomes of a wide range of civil disputes. These include money claims and housing-related cases. The civil court data set includes data on:

- people and companies acting as parties to civil court cases (as claimants and defendants)
- case events including hearings, judgments, and warrants
- overall case information.

The dataset covers records from 1 January 2012 to 31 January 2022. It has been extracted from two HM Courts & Tribunals Service operational systems:

- CaseMan: used for case management within the County Court in England and Wales
- Possession Claim Online service: used to take court action to repossess a property.

The dataset has been de-duplicated, which means multiple records of the same person acting as a party to a civil case are assigned a single unique identifier. This enables





researchers to investigate the patterns associated with individuals who are repeatedly involved with civil justice claims.

## **Education and Child Health Insights from Linked Data (ECHILD) – England**

This has been an exciting year for ECHILD – the dataset is now available for all accredited researchers to apply to use. ECHILD links de-identified health, education and children’s social care data, and has been made available via a sublicense agreement with University College London (UCL). It is the result of a partnership between UCL, the Department for Education, NHS England, the Office for National Statistics and ADR UK. Additional datasets will also be linked in, including those relating to maternity services, mental health services, and community services.

Researchers who wish to use ECHILD can propose projects falling under five main research themes. These themes were presented to a stakeholder group in May 2023, who discussed the value that evidence generated by ECHILD could bring to health and education services in the UK.

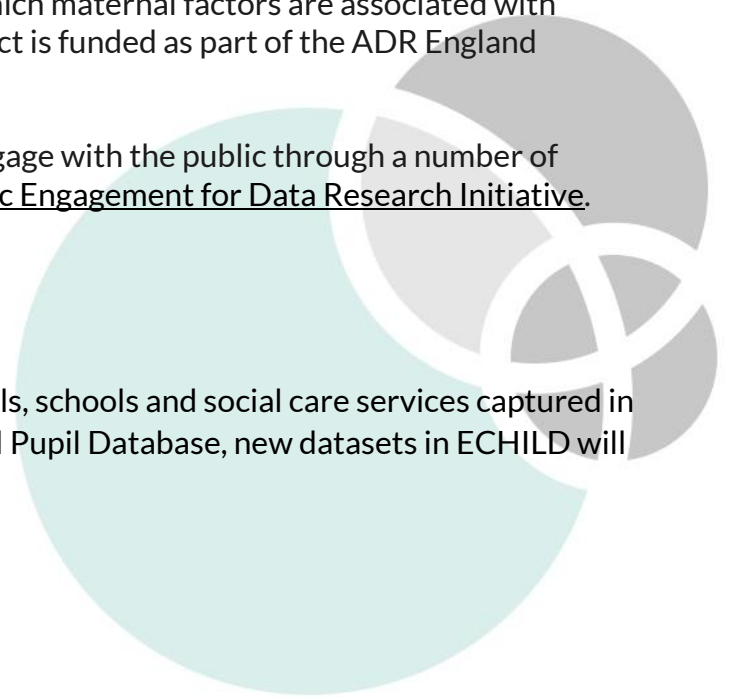
Another important milestone has been the re-linkage of historical data for children and young people born since September 1984 (previously, only those born from 1995 were included). This brings the total number of pupils included in ECHILD up to around 20 million. NHS England has implemented a new linkage algorithm that has led to 99% of pupil records being linked to a health record.

The team has also received approval to enhance ECHILD by including a mother-baby link, which will enable researchers to explore which maternal factors are associated with particular outcomes for children. This project is funded as part of the ADR England portfolio.

The ECHILD team has also continued to engage with the public through a number of events, workshops and a [video](#) for the [Public Engagement for Data Research Initiative](#).

### **New datasets in ECHILD**

As well as individual level data from hospitals, schools and social care services captured in Hospital Episode Statistics and the National Pupil Database, new datasets in ECHILD will include:



## **Mental Health Services Dataset**

Patient level data recording all activity relating to patients who receive assessments and treatment from mental health services in England, where the patient has (or is thought to have) a mental health condition; a need for support with their mental well-being; a learning disability; autism; or any other neurodevelopmental condition.

## **Maternity Services Dataset**

Patient level data recording activity carried out by maternity services relating to a mother and baby or babies, from the point of the first appointment booking until discharge from maternity services. ECHILD will also include birth notification data and birth registrations data.

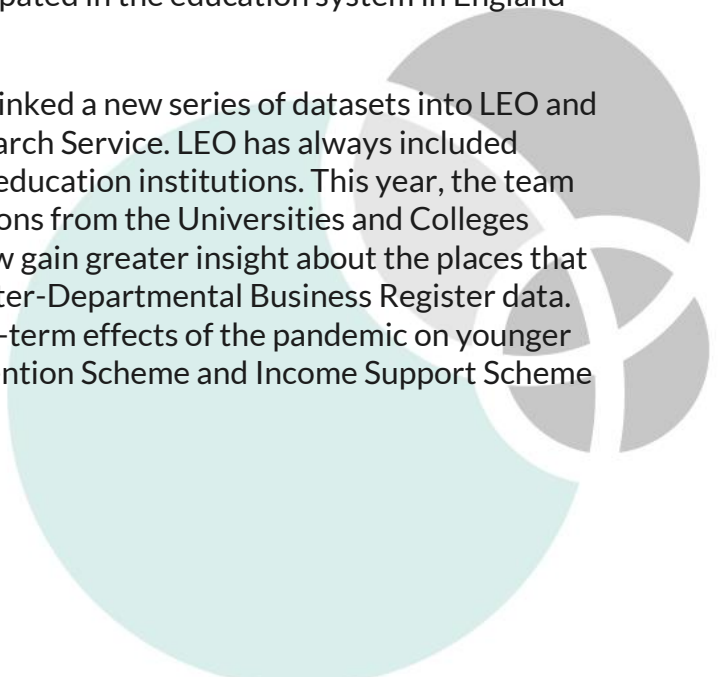
## **Community Services Dataset**

Individual level data about collected by community services, including health visiting teams.

## **Longitudinal Education Outcomes**

Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) is a world-leading dataset created by the Department for Education. It contains de-identified information on the characteristics, education, employment, benefits, and earnings of people in Britain. The dataset is a unique source of information, with the potential to provide transformative insight and evidence on the longer-term labour market outcomes and educational pathways of (currently) around 38 million individuals. The version of LEO shared via the ONS Secure Research Service has a focus on those who have participated in the education system in England and forms part of the ADR England portfolio.

This year the Department for Education has linked a new series of datasets into LEO and has made them available via the Secure Research Service. LEO has always included records from schools and higher and further education institutions. This year, the team has linked in new data on university applications from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. Researchers can also now gain greater insight about the places that individuals work, through a new linkage to Inter-Departmental Business Register data. Finally, for researchers interested in the long-term effects of the pandemic on younger workers, data from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Income Support Scheme have also been linked in.



## **Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) data**

The UCAS data that has been initially linked to LEO contains the university applications of all 18-year-old applicants in England. This includes information on the courses to which individuals have applied and whether they received an offer, as well as predicted A-level (or equivalent) grades and some limited background characteristics. This will support researchers to understand more about how university applications and offers vary across background characteristics not captured in the UCAS data, for example, by early attainment in primary school or special educational needs status.

It will also enable researchers to gain greater understanding of the role of individual preferences and predicted grades in generating links between socioeconomic background, education choices, and later outcomes. For example, the addition of UCAS data will enable researchers to compare individuals who made the same application decisions but ended up in different institutions, or who may have made different choices if they had applied to university with actual rather than predicted grades, to explore whether the benefits of going to university remain the same. In future, data on applicants of all ages will be added to LEO.

## **Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) data**

The IDBR data is a comprehensive list of businesses that pay Value-Added Tax (VAT) or operate a Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) scheme. Linking it to LEO will allow researchers to distinguish the business in which an individual works (via a pseudonym – a numerical code used instead of the business's name to prevent the identification of businesses or individuals). Researchers will be able to access some information about that business, such as the industry in which it is based. They will also be able to identify which individuals work together, and whether individuals who are trained in particular subjects go on to work in similar industries. This will allow the research community to address important questions about the links between education, skills and productivity, and how this varies across firms or industries

## **Business Data for Research - Northern Ireland**

The Business Data for Research (BDR) database is an ADR Northern Ireland initiative, due to open for research applications in autumn 2023. This follows the implementation of recommendations from the early user testing by a small number of accredited researchers in 2022. It involves a collaboration between the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and the Department for the Economy. The initiative aims to make de-identified NISRA trade and business data available for research in support of governmental research and policy priorities.

There are a number of research themes associated with the BDR data including the impact of the EU exit, exports and the economic impact of Covid-19. The database is also recognised as key to providing an evidence base for Department for the Economy strategies, including its economic strategy and supporting research programme.

The BDR database currently includes two surveys - the Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) and the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) - for the years 2014 to 2020. Work on the inclusion of the 2021 ABI, BRES and Broad Economy Sales and Export Statistics data is also underway. Once early user testing is complete, the aim is to release the final datasets more widely to ADR UK researchers in autumn 2023. Phase two of the BDR project will seek to include additional economic and labour market datasets and will continue to make annual updates to the existing BDR datasets.

## **Education Outcomes Linkage - Northern Ireland**

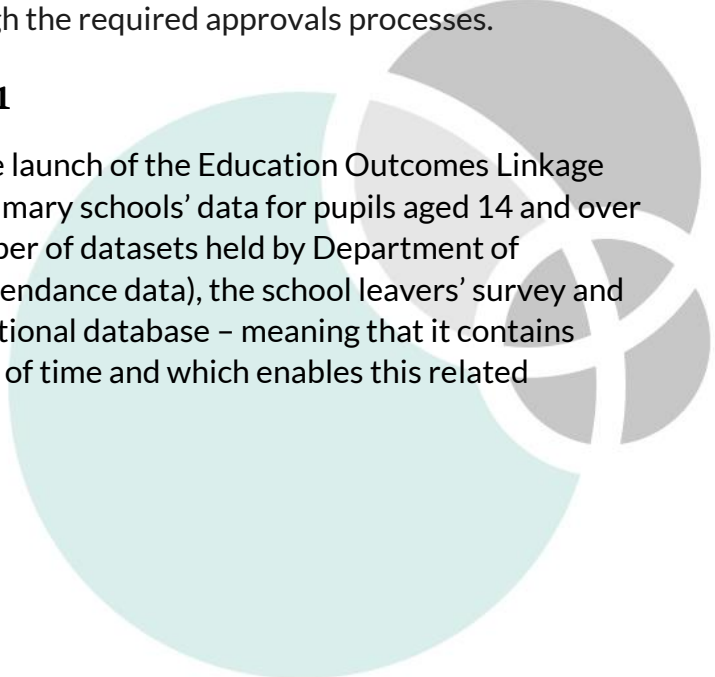
The Education Outcomes Linkage flagship dataset is newly available this year. An ADR Northern Ireland initiative launched in March 2023, it involves a collaboration between NISRA, the Department of Education and the Department for the Economy. The project has developed the foundation of a Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) database for Northern Ireland.

The Education Outcomes Linkage has been developed to advance research across a range of themes and to enable a number of research questions to be considered. These include the best predictors of educational attainment; the impact of free school meals; an exploration of special educational needs outcomes; and the impact of geographical comparisons, ethnicity, religion, and first language on exam performance.

One research project has already commenced using the Education Outcomes Linkage, and a further project is being progressed through the required approvals processes.

### **Education Outcomes Linkage phase 1**

Phase one of the project concluded with the launch of the Education Outcomes Linkage 2018/19 in March 2023. It contains post primary schools' data for pupils aged 14 and over in Northern Ireland. It links together a number of datasets held by Department of Education: the schools census (including attendance data), the school leavers' survey and the exams database. It is a longitudinal, relational database - meaning that it contains information about people covering a period of time and which enables this related information to be linked.



## **Education Outcomes Linkage phase 2**

Work has also commenced to update the Education Outcomes Linkage with data for the years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. Phase two of the project will involve the inclusion of Department for the Economy data covering further education, apprenticeships, training and higher education. Initial planning for this phase has commenced and a project team and project board will be established in due course.

## **Nursing and Midwifery Registrant Data - UK**

Nursing and Midwifery Council Registrant Data is an emerging UK-wide dataset led by ADR Scotland. By utilising registrant data, collected by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) as part of their regulatory duties, ADR Scotland hopes to contribute to and enhance the evidence base to support nurses and midwives.

The nursing and midwifery professions are facing challenges on recruitment and retention, and innovative solutions will be required if services are to be sustainable in the long-term. To practise in the UK, all nurses and midwives must be registered with the NMC. Further, they must 'revalidate' every three years to demonstrate their practice is up to date. Resulting data creates a longitudinal dataset which can answer key policy questions, both on its own and when linked to other data. Over the last year, ADR Scotland has worked closely with colleagues from NMC and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to make this UK-wide data resource accessible for approved projects.

The data will shortly be available through the ONS Secure Research Service. A linkage with data from the Census 2021 for England and Wales is in progress. This has the potential to facilitate understanding of the social dimensions of these key professions.

Public and policy engagement have been important elements of this work, with a series of ongoing events and an advisory group. This is helping to ensure that people's views are represented and that key questions for analysis are identified. Next stages include initial data analysis and the development of data resources to support users. ADR Scotland looks forward to continuing and widening these collaborations to support this crucial workforce.

## **Farm Structure Survey – Scotland**

As part of the Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection project, which aims to use data linkage to unlock the power of agricultural data, ADR Scotland has been working to make Scotland's Farm Structure Survey available for research. This will be part of a suite of datasets which aim to better understand farm households and businesses and

help to enhance the wellbeing of farmers and their families. This is the first time that agricultural data has been linked to census, education and health data. The project will help to create a holistic understanding of health, education and economic characteristics associated with different types and sizes of farming businesses.

The Scottish 2010 Farm Structure Survey covers topics such as farming activity, workforce and income. Payment information has been added to the survey to expand possible research opportunities. The project team has created a metadata file; this will be made available via the ADR UK Data Catalogue once the dataset is ready.

Over the past year, Scottish Government colleagues have focused on information governance for this data and agreements in Scotland are close to being finalised. Work has begun to transfer the data sources into Scotland's National Safe Haven. ADR Scotland linkage partners, the National Records of Scotland, have completed a linkage exercise on the Farm Structure Survey and linkage rates will be published.

Work with various stakeholders including National Records of Scotland, Public Health Scotland and Edinburgh Parallel Computing Centre continues, with the aim to make this data available by winter 2023.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the project team at [AD-ARC@gov.wales](mailto:AD-ARC@gov.wales).

## **ONS Census 2021 - England & Wales**

The ONS Census 2021 data is now in the [SAIL Databank](#) and will begin provisioning to pilot projects at the end of September. This data is considered the definitive population source for England and Wales and can be used by itself or, subject to data owner approval, linked to a wide range of UK, England and devolved administration datasets for a wide variety of research.

Census 2021 in SAIL is a complete linkable extract. It enables person-based analysis of demographics, health, social, and economic questions, as well as household-based and geography-based research.

Access to Census 2021 data in SAIL will be available from October 2023. It can be applied for via the standard SAIL process, including approval by the SAIL Information Governance Review Panel, UK Statistics Authority Research Accreditation Panel and the data owner. The arrival of Census 2021 into the SAIL Databank provides a step change in the research value of data available in SAIL.



## Youth Endowment Fund – England

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) is an independent charitable trust founded in March 2019 by the children’s charity Impetus, with a £200 million endowment and 10-year mandate from the Home Office. YEF enacts their mission – to find out what works to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in violence – by funding and evaluating interventions. They aim to put their knowledge into practice by equipping service leaders and policymakers with the best evidence.

At the end of evaluations, data collected on the children involved in YEF interventions is de-identified and archived within the ONS Secure Research Service. The data is linked to unique identifiers from the Department for Education, allowing accredited researchers to combine YEF data with education and other linked datasets. These linkages enable evaluation of the long-term impact of YEF programmes on educational attainment, offending and other policy-relevant outcomes.

### Youth Endowment Fund datasets available in the ONS Secure Research Service

Two YEF datasets are currently available for accredited researchers in the ONS Secure Research Service, based on the following YEF interventions:

**DARE25:** A school-based programme that encouraged children to make safer and more informed choices, in order to protect them from involvement in crime and violence. The programme provided information on various topics such as dealing with stressful situations and peer pressure, and aimed to develop skills including communication and stress management. The programme included assessments to evaluate the impact of this intervention on behavioural and emotional problems, which are typically associated with later involvement in crime and violence.

**Functional Family Therapy – Gangs:** A project focused on gangs, which worked to improve life at home for those at risk of involvement in county lines drug networks or child criminal exploitation. The programme provided a Functional Family Therapy worker to help families to reduce conflict and build positive relationships. Within the programme, measures were taken to assess the effectiveness of the therapy, whether a participant was involved in a gang before and after the intervention, and level of antisocial behaviour.

YEF aims to ingest an additional five datasets in September 2023, including the Lives Not Knives and Branching Out programmes. The Lives Not Knives evaluation delivered training and resources about violence prevention to teachers and support staff in schools, and provided mentoring to pupils most at risk of involvement in violence. Branching Out delivered social skills training in schools, youth work in community areas and mentoring as part of a targeted programme for the most vulnerable children.



# Looking forward

In the year ahead, ADR UK will continue working to meet the ambitions for our current funding period, which runs until 2026. Activities will be aligned to our [national partnership strategies](#). Published in 2022, these strategies lay out how we will achieve our shared aims:

- building trust and sustainability
- supporting research for public good
- improving data access for research
- providing a seamless researcher service.

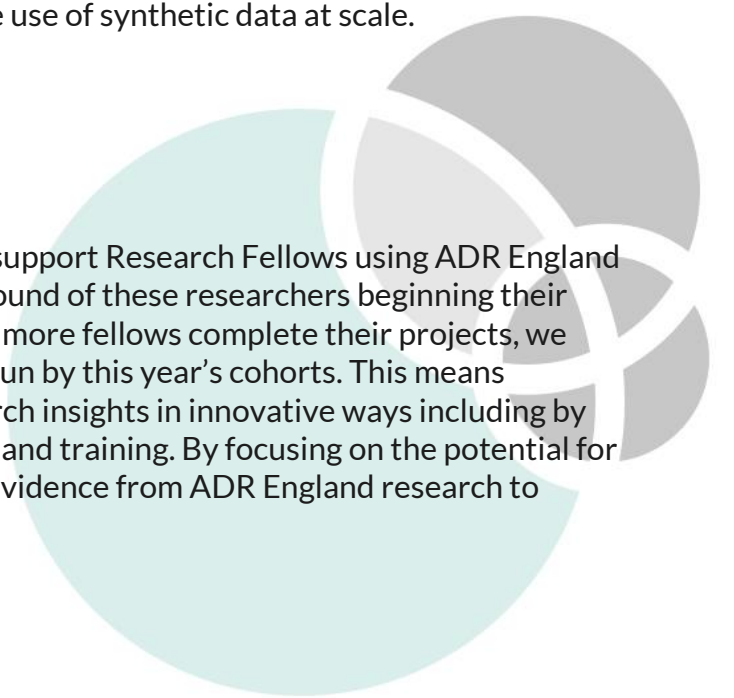
Similarly, our [training and capacity building strategy](#) will continue to play a key role in directing our work. The candidates for the 20 PhD studentship opportunities using ADR UK flagship datasets will begin their research this year, and we look forward to supporting their development in collaboration with the Economic and Social Research Council Doctoral Training Partnerships.

Over the next year, we will look to publish learning resources online and facilitate courses on specific administrative datasets. This will make datasets more accessible for research use, while at the same time supporting researchers to develop their skills. Our ultimate aim to maximise the value of these datasets for the public good, and supporting more researchers to be able to use them effectively is an important step in our mission.

The role of synthetic data is also an important consideration for our training and capacity building work, as synthetic data provides an invaluable resource for training, exploratory analysis and code development. You can read our [interim position statement](#) on our website. We are committed to engaging the public around synthetic data and its use which will help determine how to operationalise the use of synthetic data at scale.

## ADR England

In the coming year, ADR UK will continue to support Research Fellows using ADR England flagship data. We look forward to the 2023 round of these researchers beginning their funded projects in early 2024. Meanwhile, as more fellows complete their projects, we hope to build on the impact work already begun by this year's cohorts. This means supporting more fellows to share their research insights in innovative ways including by supporting the new PhD cohort with insights and training. By focusing on the potential for impact, we will create more opportunity for evidence from ADR England research to inform decisions that improve people's lives.



ADR UK will launch another round of Research Fellowships in 2024, continuing to promote our growing collection of ADR England flagship data. This will open a wider choice of policy-relevant research questions for fellows to explore, expanding the insights that arise from our data.

Knowledge sharing and community-building will remain a core priority across the ADR England portfolio in the next year. In early 2024, the ADR England Research Community Catalysts are due to begin work developing self-sustaining research communities around key themes. ADR UK will continue to evaluate the pilot mentoring scheme for applicants, and will seek ways to enhance skills development and capacity building for research using ADR England data.

2023-24 will also see the portfolio of ADR England research-ready data projects continuing to progress and produce outputs. Ultimately, they aim to expand the scope of the linked datasets offered by ADR England for public good research.

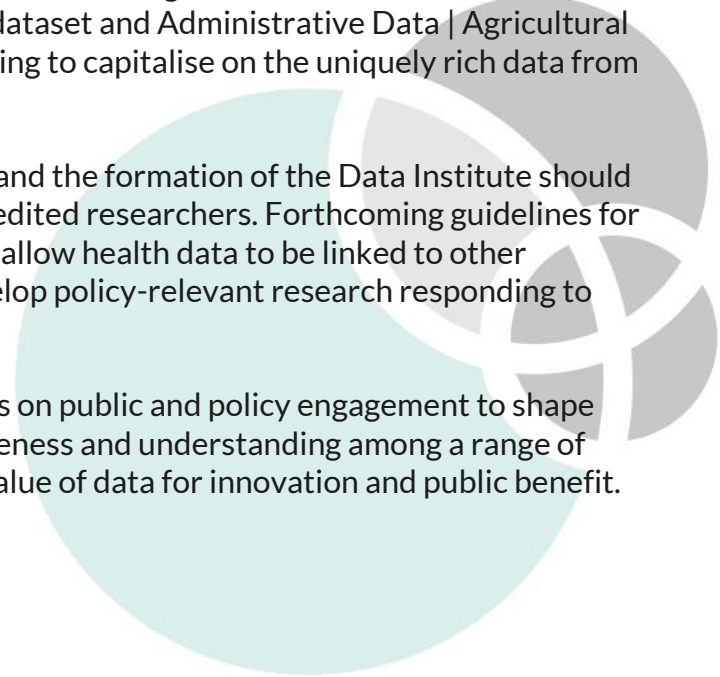
## **ADR Northern Ireland**

ADR Northern Ireland (NI) is looking forward to an exciting year ahead. The team's increasing ambition is to contribute to areas of policy overlap through increasing use of linked administrative data, for example, between criminal justice and housing.

ADR NI will continue to bring new datasets on board, forging closer trust and understanding with data custodians across government. Over the next year, they will extend the current portfolio of themed datasets. The Educational Outcomes Linkage will be extended to include additional years of secondary level data, as well as data on tertiary education. New datasets will be made available including Business Data for Research, the Cross-Government Income administrative dataset and Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection, alongside work beginning to capitalise on the uniquely rich data from Census 2021.

The reshaping of the health data landscape and the formation of the Data Institute should streamline access to health data for all accredited researchers. Forthcoming guidelines for legislation on secondary uses of data aim to allow health data to be linked to other datasets, improving ADR NI's ability to develop policy-relevant research responding to crucial issues in society.

The team will also place a renewed emphasis on public and policy engagement to shape their work. They will continue to build awareness and understanding among a range of stakeholders and data contributors of the value of data for innovation and public benefit.



ADR NI is committed to facilitating remote access so that a greater number of researchers from across the UK can have access to their rich data sources, and so contribute to policy development and evaluation.

## **ADR Scotland**

In the coming year, ADR Scotland will build on its data sourcing including delivery of key datasets in nursing and farming. The team will continue to develop the Scottish Historical Population Platform, exploring complex linkages and methods, and starting to extract the first cohorts of family histories for research. They will also establish a Unique Property Reference Number linkage as business as usual for research use. Following a recent stakeholder workshop, the team looks forward to developing geospatial capability - the use of location information to help analyse cohorts based on geography - within ADR Scotland's data infrastructure to further enhance potential research.

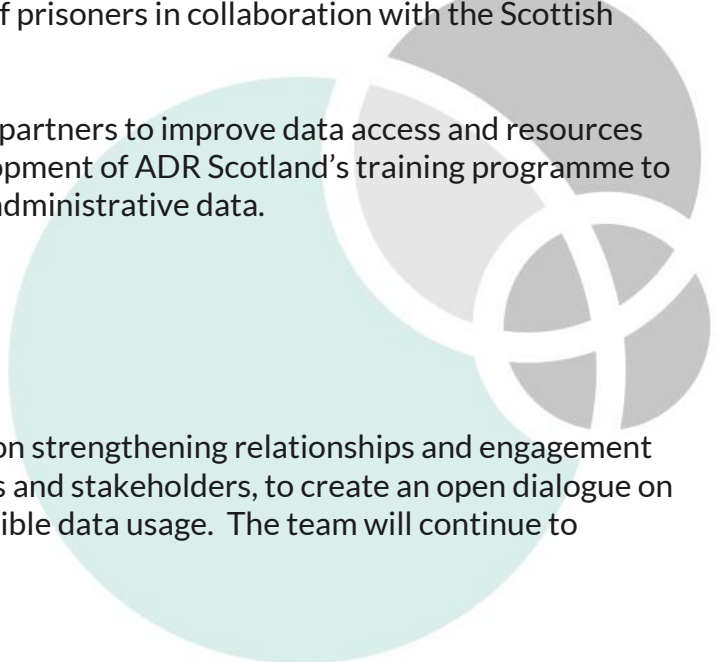
The ADR Scotland team plans to expand engagement with the public and policymakers, which is crucial to their work. Working with Research Data Scotland, they will expand their public panel membership and develop how the panel is delivered. A number of events are planned including with the Department for Work and Pensions on their areas of research interest and around children in care. They will also undertake regional engagement on the nursing and midwifery workforce research with key stakeholders including the Chief Nursing Offices.

ADR Scotland will build on the existing success of securing police data to develop a wider programme of projects on public health and justice. This includes proposals for new research on the criminal justice and mental health outcomes of service leavers, in partnership with the Scottish Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, and a study on the health and mortality of prisoners in collaboration with the Scottish Prison Service.

There will be ongoing collaboration with partners to improve data access and resources for datasets in Scotland, as well as development of ADR Scotland's training programme to support researcher skills in using linked administrative data.

## **ADR Wales**

In the year ahead, ADR Wales will focus on strengthening relationships and engagement with partners, policymakers, data owners and stakeholders, to create an open dialogue on the possibilities created through responsible data usage. The team will continue to



promote the opportunities available through data linkage and advocate for the responsible use of data for research.

ADR Wales looks forward to delivering analyses from each of the thematic areas, which will help to inform thinking around vital policies in Wales. They will also pursue opportunities to support others to do the same, through the publication of the ADR Wales Training and Capacity Building programme.

Colleagues will work collectively with Welsh Government and Office for National Statistics (ONS) analysts to deliver the ONS and Welsh Government joint work plan on coherence of Welsh language statistics. ADR Wales' commitment to exploring Welsh language was set out in the ADR Wales planned programme of work for 2022-2026. Collectively they will undertake a joint project exploring differences in reporting Welsh language capabilities in the Census 2021 and Annual Population Survey. This will inform understanding of progress toward the Cymraeg 2050: Welsh language strategy, while also informing future data collections.

The ADR Wales team is excited about the opportunities that can be realised thanks to their partnership with Social Care Wales. The collaboration aims to acquire data and achieve a linked adult social care dataset for Wales using the skills, knowledge and expertise of colleagues in both Social Care Wales and ADR Wales.

## **Office for National Statistics**

Over the next 12 months, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) will be taking forward some exciting developments. This will include continuing to bring in new datasets and progress new linkages, including those funded via ADR UK's research-ready datasets funding call – data which we are confident will prove hugely valuable in providing new analytical insights. They will also continue to support the ADR UK Research Fellows working in the ONS Secure Research Service, using ADR England flagship datasets.

Tracking impact continues to be key focus. Researchers are encouraged to inform the ONS about what they have published, allowing the team to highlight the impact of their work. The use of digital object identifiers should help in identifying mentions of the use of ONS data, and resulting publications and policy reports, across the wider internet.

The ONS will support the development of the new Integrated Data Service and liaise with ADR UK to ensure an effective transition from the Secure Research Service.

Finally, the ONS team are delighted to be playing a lead role in organising the ADR UK Conference 2023 in Birmingham in November.



# Our vision for 2026

<b>Vision</b>	ADR UK's vision for 2026 is to be the default choice to host linked administrative data from across the entirety of UK and devolved government, making it accessible to a deep pool of trained researchers to generate insights routinely used to inform policy and practice.			
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Trust &amp; Sustainability</b>	<b>Reserch for public good</b>	<b>Reserch access &amp; support</b>	<b>Available data for reserch</b>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p>Commitment and sustainability for administrative data research: Strategic focus on addressing major societal challenges through administrative data research, with support throughout government for releasing data to create a sustainable research resource.</p>	<p><b>Measurable public good:</b> Demonstrable impact arising from administrative data research that addresses major societal challenges.</p>	<p><b>Seamless researcher service:</b> Transparent, coordinated, secure and timely access to administrative data and support services for the wider research community.</p>	<p><b>A highly useful long-term research resource:</b> Flow, accessibility and long-term preservation of high-quality, research-ready administrative data, designed to address major societal challenges.</p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p><b>A coordinated partnership:</b> A focal point and leadership to help align academic and government capabilities and values to answer important societal questions through administrative data research.</p>	<p><b>Impact for data owners:</b> Recognition from data owners that administrative data research has delivered significant benefit to government departments.</p>	<p><b>Extended and improved UK-wide accessibility:</b> Significant and geographically spread increase in secure physical and remote access to our complete research-ready data catalogue, with effective and coordinated support.</p>	<p><b>Building better national core researcher data:</b> Government committed to sharing data using the ADR UK model, with new datasets developed to address their strategic research priorities.</p>
	<p><b>A sustainable research resource for the future:</b> Evidence created to inform investment in and lay foundations for a sustainable mainstream research resource, complementing other UKRI infrastructure.</p>	<p><b>Bodies of knowledge:</b> Innovative and impactful research using administrative data builds and contributes to bodies of knowledge that address major societal challenges.</p>	<p><b>More widespread access to more data for more researchers:</b> A larger and broader range of researchers securely accessing administrative data more easily, more often and more quickly, both individually and collaboratively, via clear access routes.</p>	<p><b>High-quality research data:</b> Existing and new data are ethically and legally compliant, and prepared, enhanced and preserved for research purposes.</p>
	<p><b>Trustworthy programme of work:</b> ADR UK is viewed as a trustworthy programme of work, championing open engagement, with the public broadly supportive of the shift towards retaining and preserving de-identified datasets for research and innovation that address societal challenges.</p>	<p><b>Greater impact from existing data and research:</b> More innovative and impactful research from existing data holdings and more impact from existing research.</p>	<p><b>UK economic and social researchers have the skills and tools to conduct world-class administrative data research for public benefit:</b> Training pathways are promoted and enhanced to support researchers in using the new linked data assets that ADR UK makes available both directly and in partnership with others. ADR UK is not only recognised as an enabler of research that improves public policy but also as bolstering the platforms and futures of researchers and maintaining and nurturing the talent pipeline.</p>	



This annual report was developed as a digital microsite. The PDF version you are viewing has reduced functionality and content.

View the full ADR UK Annual Report 2022-23 online at <https://reports.adruk.org/annual-report-2022-2023/>.

ADR UK (Administrative Data Research UK) is a partnership transforming the way researchers access the UK's wealth of public sector data, to enable better informed policy decisions that improve people's lives.

To find out more, visit [adruk.org](https://adruk.org)

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