

# MULTINATIONAL TIME USE STUDY

---

## USER'S GUIDE AND DOCUMENTATION

Version 9

---

22 February 2016

Kimberly Fisher and Jonathan Gershuny

With contributions from: Jooyeoun Suh, Ewa Jarosz, Evrim Altintas and Anne H. Gauthier

With further contributions from:

Alyssa Borkosky, Anita Bortnik, Michael Corey, Donna Dosman, Cara Fedick, Tyler Frederick, Thomas Grund, Sally Jones, Jiweon Jun, Ladislav Kozak, Aaron Lai, Qianhan Lin, Tingting Lu, Fiona Lui, Leslie MacRae, Berenice Monna, José Ignacio Giménez Nadal, Monica Pauls, Cori Pawlak, Almudena Sevilla-Sanz, Andrew Shipley, Cecilia Tinonin, Nuno Torres, Charlemagne Victorino, and Oi-Ching Yeung

**Important:**

This User Guide and Documentation pertains to Release 7 of dataset and replaces Releases 6 (December 2013), 5 (October 2012), 4 (October 2011), 3 (March 2009), 2 (May2005) and 1 (March 2003). Errors have been corrected, new surveys have been added, and the old files have been reformatted.

# Table of contents

Acknowledgements	
Disclaimer	
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Overview of the MTUS	3
1.1: Introduction	3
1.2: Format and structure of the datasets	4
1.3: Surveys included	8
1.4: Technical information on the surveys	11
1.5: File naming conventions	13
1.6: Missing value conventions	14
1.7: Data preparation	15
1.8: Identifying quality diaries	18
Chapter 2: Historical development of the MTUS	21
2.1: Theoretical origins and the search for data	21
2.2: Development of the MTUS and parallel cross-national projects	23
2.3: Early phases of the MTUS	24
2.4: Variables from older versions no longer in use	25
Chapter 3: Activity codes	38
3.1: Using MTUS activity codes	40
3.2: MTUS 69 activity and 25+4 activity typologies	42
3.3: MTUS original 41 activity typology	44
3.4: Context and episode variables	48
3.5: Cross-survey comparability	56
Chapter 4: Demographic and socio-economic variables	59
4.1: Diary, survey and case information	61
4.2: Household-level variables	67
4.3: Person-level demographic variables	73
4.4: Employment and education variables	75
4.5: Health variables	81
Chapter 5: Weights in MTUS	83
Chapter 6: The analysis of time-use data	85
6.1: The data which time diaries collect	85
6.2: Basic analysis	87
References	90
Appendix 1: Variable and value labels in English	93
Apéndice 2: Variables y etiquetas de valores en Español	120
Appendix 3: Notes on variables from surveys yet to be upgraded	148

## Acknowledgements

The development of the Multinational Time Use Study (MTUS) spanned several decades, involved numerous research assistants, and various sources of funding. The authors of this User's Guide are particularly grateful to our statistical partners without whom MTUS would not have been possible. We especially appreciate their willingness to share the datasets with us and to answer our numerous questions about them.

It would be impossible to list all of them. Among our many collaborators, we are grateful to Michael Bittman (Australia), Jens Bonke (Denmark), Koen Breedveld (Netherlands), Françoise Dumontier (France), Manfred Ehling (Germany), Andrew Harvey (Canada), Duncan Ironmonger (Australia), Glenn Moss (South Africa), Iiris Niemi (Finland), Hannu Pääkkönen (Finland), Maria Clelia Romano (Italy), John Robinson (United States), Klas Rydenstam (Sweden), Endre Sik (Hungary), Faye Soupourmas (Australia), Jay Stewart (USA), Oriel Sullivan (Israel), and Odd Frank Vaage (Norway).

Our most recent collaborations entail work with The Maryland Population Research Center (Sandra Hofferth, Katharine Abraham) and the Minnesota Population Centre (Sarah Flood and Matthew Sobek), as well as work with the Centre for Time Use Research website provider, Wizzard Solutions Limited, who all are committed to increasing the accessibility and ease of use of time use data.

In addition, we are grateful to the following national statistical agencies: the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Austrian Central Statistical Office, the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), the German Federal Statistical Office, the Instituto Nacional de Estadística of Spain, the Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE) of Portugal, the Italian National Statistical Institute (ISTAT), Statistics Canada, Statistics Finland, Statistics Korea, Statistics Norway, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Statistics South Africa, Statistics Sweden, the United Kingdom Office for National Statistics (ONS), and the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

We are also grateful to the following funding agencies which have supported our research program over the years: the Canada Research Chair Program, the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC - UK) (Developing the Centre for Time Use Research RES-060-25-0037 from 2008-2013; previously Time Use Studies: Daily Life and Social Change RES-000-23-TO704 and RES-000-23-TO704-A), the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EFILWC) (Ireland), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) (UK), the University



of Essex (UK), the University of Melbourne (Australia), and The Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust (UK). The authors of this User's Guide take full responsibilities for omissions and errors.

## **Disclaimer**

Although we aimed at the highest level of accuracy when preparing this document, errors are possible. Users of the MTUS dataset do so at their own risk. Note also that the User's Guide and individual survey documentation thoroughly document the recoding of the harmonised variables for the Release 6 version of the harmonised episode, aggregate and core files. In addition to adding new data, the MTUS team undertake periodic reviews and upgrades of all surveys included in this dataset.