



## Working with NCLS survey data and questions

NCLS Research holds datasets on a wide range of views, actions and characteristics of church attenders, leaders and church congregations and parishes. These datasets have been derived from National Church Life Surveys conducted over 20 years.

NCLS Research welcomes requests for datasets and for results derived from these datasets. Where such data/results are not in the public domain, a charge applies (a minimum of \$240 for results requests, and a minimum of \$1,000 for datasets requests).

NCLS Research also welcomes the use of our survey questions by other researchers, with appropriate acknowledgment.

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## 1 About NCLS data

NCLS holds datasets on the views and actions of church attenders, leaders and church congregations and parishes. These datasets have been derived from National Church Life Surveys, conducted in 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011.

The National Church Life Surveys include the following survey types:

- **Attender Surveys:** Church attenders filled out surveys asking about themselves, their faith, and their views about their local church. A small proportion of attenders completed variants of the main Attender Survey, which contained additional questions across a range of areas of religious faith and practice and social concern.
- **Operations Survey:** A leader or administrator in each church/parish completed a single Operations Survey, which provides information about the church's life and activities.
- **Leaders Survey:** All people in a leadership role in a church/parish were invited to complete the Leaders Survey and to take advantage of opportunities to identify and build their leadership.

## 2 Research requests

Survey results that are in the public domain, such as those that have appeared in NCLS books and occasional papers, are available on request and free of charge. Survey results that have been included in denominational church life profiles are also available on request, provided that permission is given by the denomination to the person requesting the results. People seeking such results should contact NCLS Research.

Researchers are required to submit formal written research requests to NCLS Research in order to access:

1. NCLS survey results that are not in the public domain
2. NCLS datasets

Further information about the processes involved in proceeding with these two types of request is provided below.

### 2.1 Requests for survey results not in the public domain

Survey results are provided as a pdf report and are charged at \$240 flat fee plus \$120/hour for NCLS researcher time. A research licence governing the use of the results may be required in some instances.

Results that may be requested include but not limited to:

- Simple frequencies
- Cross-tabulations by demographics such as age, sex, and employment status

- Cross-tabulations by religiosity variables such as frequency of church attendance, level of private devotional activity, and leadership/ministry role

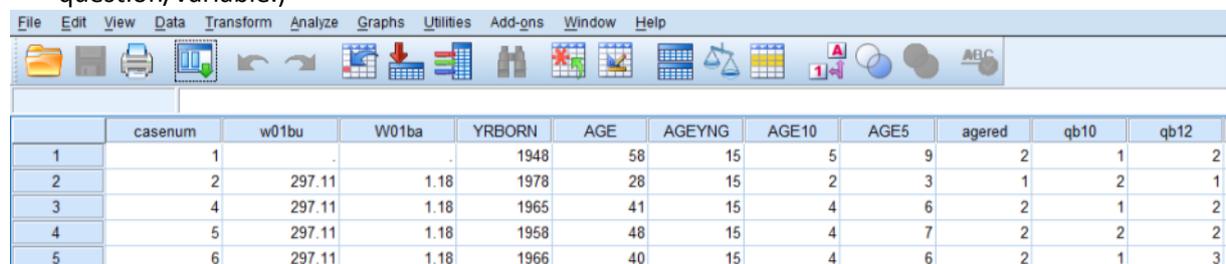
### 2.1.1 The process for obtaining NCLS survey results not in the public domain:

1. Applicant sends a written research request to NCLS Research, specifying the analysis and results required, and the purpose for which the results will be used. The applicant is requested to use a results request form provided by NCLS Research.
2. NCLS Research liaises with the applicant and provides a quotation for producing the results.
3. Applicant accepts quotation.
4. Depending on the type of request, it may need to be considered by NCLS's Research Subcommittee, which then presents a recommendation to the NCLS Board.
5. NCLS Research notifies the applicant of the Board's decision, and sends the applicant a licence agreement if the request is approved and if such an agreement is required.
6. NCLS Research provides the applicant with the research report (following return of the signed licence agreement, if such an agreement is required).
7. NCLS Research invoices the applicant.

## 2.2 Requests for datasets

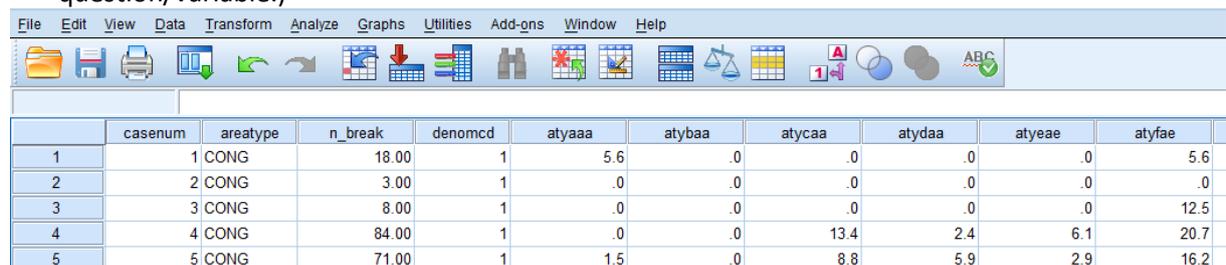
NCLS Research holds four sorts of datasets:

- **Individual Attender Survey datasets:** Each row of data corresponds to an individual church attender's survey responses in a given survey year. (Note: The first column is a unique identifier for each individual church attender. Subsequent columns (examples shown) include answers to survey questions and calculated variables such as case weights. A codebook defines each question/variable.)



	casenum	w01bu	W01ba	YRBORN	AGE	AGEYNG	AGE10	AGE5	agered	qb10	qb12
1	1	.	.	1948	58	15	5	9	2	1	2
2	2	297.11	1.18	1978	28	15	2	3	1	2	1
3	4	297.11	1.18	1965	41	15	4	6	2	1	2
4	5	297.11	1.18	1958	48	15	4	7	2	2	2
5	6	297.11	1.18	1966	40	15	4	6	2	1	3

- **Aggregated Attender Survey datasets:** Each row of data corresponds to the composite results for all the individual attenders in a given church/parish or in a specified denominational region (e.g. Diocese or state) in a given survey year. (Note: The first column is a unique identifier for each individual church/parish/region. Subsequent columns (examples shown) include aggregated results for survey questions and other calculated variables. A codebook defines each question/variable.)



	casenum	areatype	n_break	denomcd	atyaaa	atybaa	atycaa	atydaa	atyeae	atyfae
1	1	CONG	18.00	1	5.6	.0	.0	.0	.0	5.6
2	2	CONG	3.00	1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
3	3	CONG	8.00	1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	12.5
4	4	CONG	84.00	1	.0	.0	13.4	2.4	6.1	20.7
5	5	CONG	71.00	1	1.5	.0	8.8	5.9	2.9	16.2

- **Individual Leader Survey datasets:** Each row of data corresponds to an individual leader’s survey responses in a given survey year. (Note: The first column is a unique identifier for each individual leader. Subsequent columns (examples shown) include answers to survey questions and calculated variables. A codebook defines each question/variable.)

	casenum	B1	AGE	AGE10	B2	B3	ETHNIC	B6	B7	STATE
1	1	45	61	6	1	7	2	3	2	7
2	2	70	36	3	2	2	1	7	1	3
3	3	45	61	6	1	7	2	3	1	7
4	4	37	69	6	1	6	1	6	1	3
5	5	74	32	3	2	2	1	6	6	3

- **Operations Survey datasets:** Each row of data corresponds to the survey responses for a congregation/parish in a given survey year. (Note: The first column is a unique identifier for each individual church/parish. Subsequent columns (examples shown) include answers to survey questions and calculated variables such as case weights. A codebook defines each question/variable.)

	casenum	WALL01A	WALL01U	WPROT01A	WPROT01U	FSTCATH	AREATYPE	y04groaa	y04grpaa	y01ae
1	1	.74	1.41	.80	1.41	.	CONG	.	.	30
2	2	.74	1.41	.80	1.41	.	CONG	-4.00	-.19	17
3	3	.74	1.41	.80	1.41	.	CONG	.	.	80
4	4	.74	1.41	.80	1.41	.	CONG	25.00	.29	100
5	5	.74	1.41	.80	1.41	.	CONG	20.00	.27	90

A research licence is required to access NCLS datasets directly. Individual Attender Survey datasets, aggregated Attender Survey datasets, individual Leader Survey datasets, and Operations Survey datasets may be requested. Datasets are provided as SPSS data files. Information that could be used to identify individual respondents or individual congregations/parishes is not provided.

Research licences start from \$1,000 per dataset, for up to five requested variables. Standard variables are also provided as a part of each dataset (see Appendix B). An additional price multiplier applies for more than five requested variables and for datasets with more than 2,000 cases. Visit the pricing calculator to estimate the cost of your dataset.

### 2.2.1 The process for obtaining an NCLS dataset

1. Applicant sends a written research request to NCLS Research, specifying the purpose of the research, the data requested, and the research outputs and timings. The applicant is requested to use a dataset request form provided by NCLS Research.
2. NCLS Research liaises with the applicant and provides a quotation for the licence.
3. Applicant accepts quotation.
4. The request is considered by NCLS’s Research Subcommittee, which then presents a recommendation to the NCLS Board.
5. NCLS Research notifies the applicant of the Board’s decision, and, if the request is approved, sends the applicant a licence agreement and associated invoice.

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6. NCLS Research provides the applicant with the dataset once the signed licence agreement has been returned and the payment has been received.
  7. NCLS Research invoices the applicant.

### 2.3 Board meeting dates

Requests for datasets and some types of results requests are referred to the NCLS Board for approval. The Board meeting dates for 2014 are –

- FEB – Wed 26<sup>th</sup>
- JUN – Wed 25<sup>th</sup>
- OCT – Wed 29<sup>th</sup>
- DEC – Wed 10<sup>th</sup>

## 3 Using NCLS survey questions

Researchers may reproduce (or, less preferably, use and modify) NCLS survey questions and scales in their own surveys. Researchers should acknowledge the source of the questions in any published work.

## Appendix – Standard variables provided with datasets

Attender Survey datasets are provided with the following standard variables:

Demographics:

Year of birth

Age (15-29, 30-49, 50-69, 70+)

Sex

Marital status (unmarried, separated/divorced, married/defacto, widowed)

Country of birth (Australia, English speaking, non-English speaking)

Highest level of education (school, trade/certificate/diploma, university)

Employment status (employed, full-time home duties/family responsibilities, unemployed, retired)

State (NSW/ACT, Qld, WA, NT, SA, Vic, Tas)

Religiosity variables:

Frequency of church attendance (less than monthly, more than monthly/less than weekly, weekly or more often)

Level of private devotional activity (hardly ever/never, occasionally, once a week/a few times a week, everyday/most days)

Faith identity (not available for Catholic surveys)

Importance of God

Church activity involvement

Leadership/ministry role (ROLE01)

Attender type (newcomers, switchers, transfers, long-term attenders, visitors)

Leader Survey datasets are provided with the following standard variables:

Demographics:

Year of birth

Age (15-29, 30-49, 50-69, 70+)

Sex

Marital status (unmarried, separated/divorced, married/defacto, widowed)

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Country of birth (Australia, English speaking, non-English speaking)  
Highest level of education (school, trade/certificate/diploma, university)  
Highest level of theological qualification  
State (NSW/ACT, Qld, WA, NT, SA, Vic, Tas)

Ministry variables:

Position in the congregation/parish  
Leadership/ministry roles currently performing  
Years working in the congregation/parish  
Years in the ordained (accredited) ministry  
Number of congregations/parishes currently serving in ministry  
Paid or unpaid role  
Any other occupations held

Religiosity variables:

Level of private devotional activity (hardly ever/never, occasionally, once a week/a few times a week, everyday/most days)  
Experience of God's presence  
Faith identity (not available for Catholic surveys)

Operations Survey datasets are provided with the following standard variables:

Year founded  
State (NSW/ACT, Qld, WA, NT, SA, Vic, Tas)  
Locality (rural, regional, urban, suburban)