Change in social detachment in older age in England

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What is social detachment?
Social detachment and successful ageing
Measuring social detachment

• English Longitudinal Study of Ageing
  – Longitudinal data from sample of people aged 50 and over
  – 5 Waves biennial since 2002/03
  – Cross-sectional & longitudinal analysis

• Social detachment domains
  – Civic participation
  – Leisure activities
  – Cultural engagement
  – Social networks
Civic participation

• Define individuals as detached from civic participation if they:
  – Not member of political organisation
  – Not member of neighbourhood association
  – Not a member of church or religious group
  – Not a member of a charitable association
  – Did not do voluntary work at least once in the last year
Prevalence of civic participation detachment by sex, cross-sectional waves 1-5
Leisure activities

- Define individuals as detached from leisure activities if they are not a member:
  - Education, arts or music group or evening class
  - Social club
  - Sports club, gym or exercise class
  - Other organisation, club or society
Prevalence of leisure activities detachment by sex, cross-sectional waves 1-5

[Bar chart showing the prevalence of leisure activities detachment by sex across different waves (1 to 5). The chart compares 'All people', 'Men', and 'Women' with error bars indicating variability.]
Cultural engagement

• Define individuals as detached from cultural engagement if, in the last year, they did not:
  – Go to the cinema
  – Go to an art gallery or museum
  – Go to the theatre, a concert or the opera
Prevalence of cultural engagement detachment by sex, cross-sectional w1-5
Social networks

• Define individuals as detached from social networks if they:
  – Do not have any children, family or friends
  – Have children, family or friends but have contact with them (meeting, phone or write) less than once a week
Prevalence of social networks detachment by sex, cross-sectional waves 1-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave</th>
<th>All people</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wave 1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 2</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 4</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 5</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The bars represent the percentage of people experiencing social networks detachment across different waves and by sex.
Prevalence of more than two domains of social detachment by sex, cross-sectional waves 1-5
Longitudinal analysis
## Social detachment trajectories

Prevalence of social detachment domains by trajectory, longitudinal change waves 1-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Civic participation</th>
<th>Leisure activities</th>
<th>Social networks</th>
<th>Cultural engagement</th>
<th>Social detachment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never detached</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always detached</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve then decline</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline then improve</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;2 transitions</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant odds ratios of movement into detachment by wealth quintile and domain (reference category: poorest wealth quintile)
Significant odds ratios of movement into detachment by domain and age group (reference category: aged 50–59)
Change in martial status

Significant odds ratios of movement into detachment by domain and change in marital status (reference category: always in a couple)
Change in access to transport

Significant odds ratios of movement into detachment by domain and change in access to transport status (reference category: access to transport)

- Civic
- Leisure
- Cultural
- Networks
- Overall

No transport both waves  No longer has transport
Summary of findings

• The prevalence of social detachment remained relatively stable in older age population since 2002

• However, individual change in social detachment domains is volatile

• Poorer wealth is the strongest driver of movement into social detachment

• Becoming separated or loosing access to transport increases likelihood of moving into social detachment
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