



# Access data

*Data generated by the Elfe study can be accessed by any public- or private-sector research team, based in France or abroad. The team must have a specific research project that meets the conditions set out in the data access charter.*

Quality controls are performed before the data yielded by the different surveys are made available to scientists.

The research teams that helped to design the Elfe study are given priority, enjoying exclusive access to the data for each study phase for the first 18 months after they become available. At the end of this period, access to the data is extended to the whole scientific community.

A secure Internet platform provides online documentation about the survey and handles data access requests.

Elfe's data access committee (CADE) responds to all such requests after careful scrutiny.

## Security and ethics

Elfe received a favourable opinion from the French National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) as a "noncompulsory survey in the public interest and of statistical quality". Each new stage is submitted for approval to the Consultative Committee for Data Processing in Health Research (CCTIRS), which assesses the scientific relevance of health projects in France. Research projects with a biomedical dimension are also submitted to an institutional review board (IRB). All these procedures are monitored by the French Data Protection Authority (CNIL).



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## Our partners

More than 80 teams of French researchers are now participating in the Elfe longitudinal study.

Coordinated by the French Institute for Demographic Studies (INED) and the French National Institute for Health and Medical Research (INSERM), in partnership with the French National Blood Service (EFS), Elfe has the backing of the French ministries responsible for health and social affairs, research, sustainable development, and culture. It also enjoys the support of several public bodies, including the French Institute for Public Health Surveillance (InVS), the French National Family Benefits Fund (CNAF) and the French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE). Elfe has been awarded central government funding, managed by the French National Research Agency (ANR) under its "Investments for the Future" programme (ref. ANR-11-EQPX-0038).

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**Design and layout:** Isabelle Milan (INED).



# French longitudinal study of children



For more information about available survey data and how to access our databases, go to:

[www.elfe-france.fr/access-data](http://www.elfe-france.fr/access-data)







# Elfe in brief

*Elfe is the first longitudinal study of its kind in France, tracking children from birth to adulthood. It will examine every aspect of these children's lives from the perspectives of health, social sciences and the environment.*



# Challenges for the future

*In many areas, the research conducted under the Elfe project will provide the public authorities with benchmarks for devising more effective health and family policies.*



# Practical follow-up

*Regular follow-up provides a means to track the children's development, as well as changes in their family and their environment. They also allow us to remain in contact with the families and give them regular updates on how the study is progressing.*

Launched with 500 pilot families in 2007, Elfe was extended to cover the whole of metropolitan France in April 2011, leading to the inclusion of more than 18,000 children.

Four specific periods in 2011 were selected, representing each of the four seasons: 1 to 4 April, 27 June to 4 July, 27 September to 4 October, and 28 November to 5 December. All children born during these periods in one of the French maternity units associated with the Elfe project were eligible to take part in the study.

Tracking children who were all born in the same year over a full two decades will give us a unique opportunity to deepen our understanding of what influences young people's development and how they find their place in society. Researchers are interested in the children's health, schooling and diet, but also in their family and social life, and their environment.

It is the drawing together of all these different strands that makes Elfe such a valuable scientific project.

• At what age should new foods be introduced? How do they influence food preferences and subsequent health?

• How do different types of childcare arrangements affect young children's relations with their peers, their integration at nursery school and their language acquisition?

• What impact do the pollutants in our environment have on children's health and development?

• What are the family, financial and sociocultural factors that determine children's academic achievement?

• How do computer use, sport and cultural activities influence children's socialization and their physical and intellectual development?

• Do our children grow up faster than they used to?

**Longitudinal in design, Elfe will provide new answers to a wide range of questions.**

The bulk of the data will be collected via regular surveys of the children's parents, in the form of telephone interviews and postal or Internet questionnaires. The children will also be directly studied from the age of 3½ years onwards (in-home encounters, then games to play over the Internet).

At key stages in their development, we will collect biological samples from some of the families, and environmental measures will be carried out in selected homes.

The children's GPs and teachers may also be asked to provide information as part of the Elfe study.

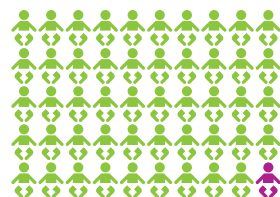
Whenever this is done, permission will first be sought from the parents, who will be kept fully informed at every stage. As the children grow older, they will be increasingly involved in this process.

One of the novel features of the Elfe study is how it encourages fathers to take part, reflecting their changing role and increased involvement in family life over the past few decades.

## Key figures

More than  
**18,000**  
children  
followed for  
**20 years**

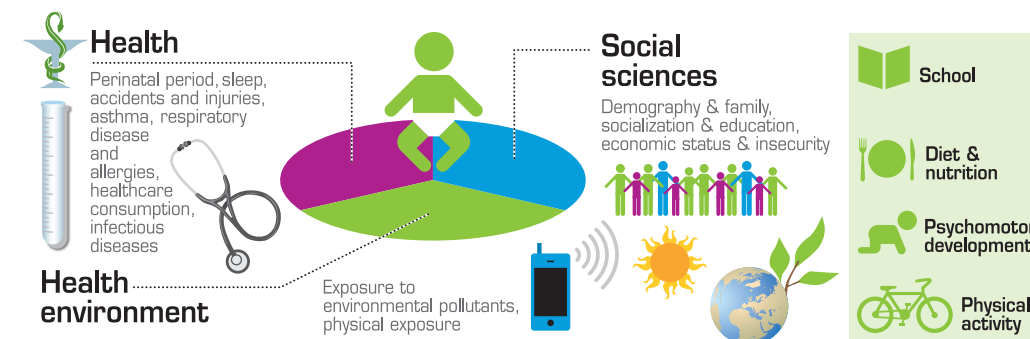
**150** researchers involved



**1 in 50**  
children  
born in  
**2011**  
is an  
**elfe** baby



## A multidisciplinary study



## Elfe's first steps

