

Tutorial

There are quite a lot of options to help search the database. Some examples of how to use these options are given here by means of screenshots.

For more information about the Mass Observation archive and the data please read the Introduction and FAQs page on the website

How to search – by Gender and Birth Cohort

The top of the “Search Database” page looks like this. When you first go to the page no filters have been set so all results are visible. To restrict the results by Gender and Birth Cohort do the following.

The screenshot shows the 'Search Filters' section on the left and 'Search Preferences' on the right. The 'Search Filters' section includes input fields for 'Archive Ref', 'Participant Ref', 'Directive title', 'Gender', and 'Birth cohort'. The 'Gender' dropdown is set to 'male' and the 'Birth cohort' dropdown is set to '1920s'. The 'Search Preferences' section includes a dropdown for '10 rows of results per page', a 'Search' button, a 'Clear' button, and two 'Download' buttons. The 'Search' button is highlighted with a blue box and a callout box labeled '3. Click Search Button'. The 'Gender' and 'Birth cohort' dropdowns are also highlighted with blue boxes and callout boxes labeled '1. Select Gender from dropdown' and '2. Select Birth cohort from dropdown' respectively. Below the filters, there is a table with columns: List, Archive Ref, Directive title, Participant, Gender, Birth cohort, Region, Deprivation Index - Scotland, and Deprivation Index - Wales. The first row of the table is partially visible, showing 'SxMOA2/1/6/11/1' and '6:Summer 198: Public&Private Services, The Budget, Gas & Electricity Bills, Devalty Inflation'.

Search Filters

Archive Ref: e.g. SxMOA2/1/4/

Participant Ref: Show all

Directive title: e.g. wedding

Gender: male

Birth cohort: 1920s

Search Preferences

10 rows of results per page

Search Clear

Download all results as Excel doc

Download visible results as Excel doc

1. Select Gender from dropdown

2. Select Birth cohort from dropdown

3. Click Search Button

List	Archive Ref	Directive title	Participant	Gender	Birth cohort	Region	Deprivation Index - Scotland	Deprivation Index - Wales
Add to List	SxMOA2/1/6/11/1	6:Summer 198: Public&Private Services, The Budget, Gas & Electricity Bills, Devalty Inflation						

Using Auto-complete Search Filters

Some of the filters such as “Directive title” expect you to start typing then display options in a dropdown. Either select the text you have typed from the dropdown to get all results containing that text, or choose one of the other options

The screenshot shows a search interface with several filters. The 'Directive title' filter is active, showing a dropdown menu with suggestions. Callouts provide instructions on how to use these suggestions.

1. Start typing the word wedding

Either: Choose “weddi” option to get all directives with the word “weddi” in the title

Or: Choose one of the other options to get just that directive in the results.

Viewing the Results Online or Downloading as Excel

The results are displayed online as a number of pages. The number of results displayed per page can be changed before making a search.

Choose the appropriate “Download as Excel ” button to get either all the results of your search or just the visible results

The screenshot shows the 'Search Preferences' section and the 'Search Filters' section. Callouts explain the download options available.

Select number of results to display per page

All the results from your search will be downloaded as an Excel document

Just the results you can see on screen will be downloaded as an Excel document

Download the entire database as an Excel spreadsheet

You will need to remove all the search filters you may have set to get all the data in the database before Downloading

Search Filters

Arch...
Parti...
Directive title e.g. wedding
Gender male
Birth cohort 1920s

Search Preferences

10 rows of results per page

Search Clear

Download all results as Excel doc

Download visible results as Excel doc

Hide Advanced Search Options ▲
View Options to Hide Columns ▼

Click Clear button to reset all Search filters

Click "Download all results as Excel doc" button

Advanced Options – additional search filters, hiding unwanted results columns, repeating previous searches

There are some advanced options that are hidden by default. They are using additional search filters such as marital status and occupation, hiding unwanted columns in the results, and viewing a list of previous searches that have been made and repeating them. They can be seen by clicking on the appropriate link as shown below.

Gender Show all
Birth cohort Show all

View Advanced Search Options ▼

View Options to Hide Columns ▼

View My Previous Searches ▼

List 0

Archive Ref	Directive title	Participant Ref	Region	Deprivation Index	Deprivation Index	Deprivation Index
SxMOA2/1/1/1/1/5	1:Summer 1981: Currency, Royal	A10				

Add to List

Click to see additional search filters such as Marital Status, Region, Occupation and Keywords

There are a lot of columns in the results. Click here to see options to exclude some of them.

Click here to view a list of the different searches you have made this session so you can repeat them if you want

How to Hide Unwanted Columns in the Results

Having chosen the “View Options to hide columns” link as described in the previous section you will see a list of columns which can be hidden or made visible by ticking the appropriate boxes.

Hide Options to Hide Columns

You can make unwanted columns in the results disappear by ticking the boxes

Archive Ref	Directive title	Participant Ref	Gender	Birth cohort	Region	Deprivation Index - England	Deprivation Index - Scotland	Deprivation Index - Wales	Deprivation Index - Northern Ireland
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Gender and Birth cohort have both been ticked and don't appear in the results. Untick them and the columns will reappear

View My Previous Searches

List	 0	Archive Ref	Directive title	Participant Ref	Region	Deprivation Index - England	Deprivation Index - Scotland	Deprivation Index - Wales
								
Add to List	SxMOA2/1/1/1/1/5	1:Summer 1981: Currency, Royal Wedding, Business Premises, Unemployment, Holidays, Food	A10	South East	low (under 34)			

Note the Gender and Birth cohort columns are invisible. They will be here when visible

Viewing Previous Searches

You can view details of the searches you have made this session and repeat them. Choose the “View my previous searches” link as described above and if you have made any searches using filters you will see something like the below. Please note that just searches made this session are kept so once you close your browser the list will be reset.

Hide My Previous Searches

Below is a list of searches you have already made during this session

No search terms [Repeat this search](#)

Birth cohort: 1970s [Repeat this search](#)

Birth cohort: 1920s Gender: male [Repeat this search](#)

Marital Status: divorced, separated [Repeat this search](#)

Employment Status: not answered [Repeat this search](#)

Birth cohort: 1950s Marital Status: married [Repeat this search](#)

Employment Status: retired [Repeat this search](#)

Employment Status: employee [Repeat this search](#)

Region: Yorkshire and The Humber [Repeat this search](#)

Directive title: wedding [Repeat this search](#)

You made a search with No extra search filters

This search was for Men from the 1920s birth cohort

Click on “Repeat this Search” to re-do the search for retired people

List	 0	Archive Ref	Directive title	Participant Ref	Region	Deprivation Index - England	Deprivation Index - Scotland
							
Add to List	SxMOA2/1/1/1/5	1:Summer 1981: Currency, Royal	A10	South East	low (under 34)		

Saving your results in a list

You may want to save the results of different searches together in a list.

Please note that your list is only saved for the current session. When you close the browser the list will be lost, so download it as an Excel spreadsheet if you want to keep it.

The screenshot shows a search results table with the following columns: Archive Ref, Directive title, Participant Ref, and Region. A callout box points to a star icon with the number '5' next to it, stating 'There are 5 items in the list'. Another callout box points to the 'Add to List' button, stating 'Click to view the list. You will be able to download the list as Excel and see graphs of the gender and birth cohort balances compared to known census values.' A third callout box points to the 'Add to List' button for a specific item, stating 'Click to add this item to the list'. A fourth callout box points to the 'Take from List' button for a specific item, stating 'This item is already in the list. Click to remove it'.

Archive Ref	Directive title	Participant Ref	Region
SxMOA2/1 /6/1/1/1	6:Summer 1982: Public&Private Services, Budget, Gas & Electricity Bills, Royalty, Inflation, Currency, Food, EEC	A1	South East
SxMOA2/1 /8/1/1/1	8:Autumn 1982: Pocket Money, Business Premises/Cheque Books/Currency	A1	South East