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A multi-topic longitudinal panel survey of households and individuals in Kyrgyzstan, 2010–2025

Data Descriptor

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Abstract
The Life in Kyrgyzstan Study is a nationally representative longitudinal panel survey of households and individuals in Kyrgyzstan, conducted in seven waves between 2010 and 2025. The initial sample of 3,000 households was drawn by stratified two-stage random sampling across all seven provinces and the cities of Bishkek and Osh, and supports disaggregation by urban and rural areas and by northern and southern regions. All household members are tracked over time, including those who leave to form new households. Every adult, and from 2019 every household member aged 14–17, is interviewed individually, allowing analyses within households and over the life course. Separate face-to-face questionnaires collect data at the community, household, farm, and individual levels on demographics, education, health, employment, agriculture, assets, expenditure, income, migration, shocks, subjective well-being, risk attitudes, trust, and social and political participation. A master roster links individuals and households across waves. The data are available for not-for-profit research, policy analysis, and teaching.

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Background & Summary

Study Context and Motivation

Kyrgyzstan offers a rich setting for studying the micro-level dynamics of post-socialist transition and human development. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, real incomes and GDP fell by roughly half, and the country has since navigated between market-driven development and the legacies of central planning, enduring several forced transfers of political power and episodes of violent conflict. Despite attaining lower-middle-income status in 2015, poverty rates remain high by regional standards. The population is predominantly rural, rapidly growing, and multi-ethnic, with a large share of the workforce employed in agriculture and household livelihoods heavily dependent on international labour migration and remittances. The country is also highly exposed to climate-related risks, including water scarcity, landslides, and drought. Yet Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia more broadly remain understudied at the micro level, partly due to restrictive research environments across the region that have limited the availability of high-quality household data. Kyrgyzstan's comparatively open political environment in recent years and strong national research capacity have made it feasible to collect rigorous longitudinal data, conditions that motivated and enabled the development of the Life in Kyrgyzstan (LiK) Study.

The Life in Kyrgyzstan Study

The LiK Study is a research-driven multi-topic longitudinal survey of households and individuals in Kyrgyzstan (www.lifeinkyrgyzstan.org). It is now the longest-running panel study in the former Soviet Union outside of Russia. The LiK Study began in 2010 with an initial sample of 3,000 households and 8,160 adult individuals, all of whom are tracked over time. Its sample covers all seven provinces (oblasts) of Kyrgyzstan and the two administratively distinct cities of Bishkek and Osh. It comprises separate questionnaires administered at the community, household, farm, and individual levels, with sampling based on the 2009 national census. Critically, the individual questionnaire is answered by all adult (and later also all youth - see below) household members, enabling detailed intra-household analyses. By tracking all children born into the Study, the data can also be analysed as a birth cohort study, with many cohorts, each of small size. By 2026, the LiK Study had completed seven waves of data collection, conducted in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2025. The previous reference introducing and summarising the LiK Study has been the paper by Brück et al. [1].

Institutional hosting and funding for the LiK Study have evolved across waves (Table 1). The first three waves (2010–2012) were funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and hosted by the German Institute of Economic Research (DIW Berlin) with the American University of Central Asia (AUCA) as the principal Kyrgyz partner. Wave 4 (2013) was funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and IZA – Institute of Labor Economics as part of the Growth and Labour Markets in Low-Income Countries Programme, with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) serving as lead institution, the University of Central Asia (UCA) as the principal Kyrgyz partner, and additional partners from universities across Asia, Europe, and North America. Waves 5 and 6 (2016 and 2019) were hosted by the Leibniz Institute of Vegetable and Ornamental Crops (IGZ; renamed to the Leibniz Institute for Horticultural Sciences in September 2026) with funding from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), IGZ, and UCA. The seventh wave (2025) was implemented by ISDC - International Security and Development Center and UCA as co-hosting institutions, with funding provided by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank (WB), and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Throughout this period, the LiK Study was led by Tilman Brück as the Principal Investigator (PI) and by Damir Esenaliev as the Co-PI and Study

Coordinator. The LiK Study team regularly provides data user training and hosts an annual Life in Kyrgyzstan Conference in Bishkek each October, which brings together researchers and practitioners working with LiK and related data.

Table 1: Overview of Survey Waves: Institutions, Donors, and Key Features (2010–2025)

Wave	Year	Lead Institution(s)	Donor(s)	Key Features / Additions
Wave 1	2010	DIW Berlin	Volkswagen Foundation	*Baseline survey*
Wave 2	2011	DIW Berlin	Volkswagen Foundation	*Annual follow-up*
Wave 3	2012	DIW Berlin	Volkswagen Foundation	*Annual follow-up*
Wave 4	2013	SIPRI & UCA	DFID-IZA	*Expanded childcare, employment modules*
Wave 5	2016	IGZ & UCA	FAO & IFPRI	*Addition of agricultural questionnaire, aspirations and social cohesion indicators*
Wave 6	2019	IGZ & UCA	IGZ & UCA	*Addition of youth questionnaire (14–17 yrs); expansion of food security indicators*
Wave 7	2025	ISDC & UCA	ADB, WB, GIZ	*Expansion of childcare, climate change; energy use; and polarization sections*

Thematic Coverage

The LiK Study is multi-topic by design in the spirit of the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS), enabling interdisciplinary social science analyses connecting themes across a broad range of domains. At the household level, topics include demographics, child health and education, assets, income, expenditures, migration, and shocks. At the individual level, the questionnaire covers life satisfaction, education, health, employment, social networks, political and community participation, trust, and perceptions. Over time, the instrument has been expanded to capture emerging research goals, with some rotating survey modules featuring in some but not all waves (Table 1). In 2016, an agricultural questionnaire was introduced to collect detailed information on farming, covering both crop and livestock production. In 2019, a youth questionnaire was added to interview household members aged 14–17, mirroring the adult individual questionnaire insofar as the questions are relevant for this age group. In 2025, coverage of climate change and childcare was substantially expanded.

Prior Publications and Data Use

The LiK Study has grown into a global knowledge and research infrastructure. From 2016 to 2026, the panel dataset has been documented and made publicly available in open-access format through IZA's International Data Service Center (IDSC IZA). Following IZA's closure in early 2026, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS) serves as the new archiving repository from November 2026 onwards. This accessibility has contributed to the wide and growing use of the LiK data for academic research, with the data now used for research and teaching purposes by over 180 academic, research, and development institutions across 35 countries.

In terms of publications, as of October 2026, over 60 peer-reviewed journal articles drawing on LiK data have appeared in academic journals, including the *Agricultural Finance Review*, *American Political Science Review*, *Demography*, *Demographic Research*, *Economic Journal*, *Economics of Transition*, *Journal of Comparative Economics*, *Journal of Development Studies*, *Problems of Post-Communism*, *Social Science & Medicine*, *World Bank Research Observer*, and *World*

Development. The research spans a wide range of topics across multiple social science disciplines, including labour markets, employment, and wages[2–4]; migration and remittances[5–8]; marriage, family, and social norms[9,10]; social capital, wellbeing, and economic behaviour[11,12]; and education, health, and human capital[13–15].

Comparison with Related Datasets

The LiK Study occupies a distinct position in the data landscape of Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia more broadly. At the national level, an important source of household microdata is the Kyrgyz Integrated Household Survey (KIHS), a rotating panel operational since 2003 [16]. It is used for computing a variety of official statistical indicators, including household expenditure and prices. Other examples of micro-level data in Kyrgyzstan include UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)[17] and the World Bank's Listening to the Kyrgyz Republic survey[18]. While these instruments make important contributions, they are either cross-sectional or short panel by design, thematically narrow, focused on the household level (rather than the individual level) or not available in open-access format, thus limiting their utility for long-term longitudinal, interdisciplinary research of the kind the LiK Study enables.

At the regional level, Central Asia remains notably underserved in terms of high-quality, open-access household panel data. Among the other countries of the region, longitudinal household panel surveys were collected only in Tajikistan [19]. All Central Asian countries conduct some form of household surveys, but these are typically not publicly available and vary considerably in scope and methodological rigour. Thematic and sectoral initiatives do exist - for instance, the Agricultural UzFarmBarometer conducted by Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT) provides valuable insights into the agricultural sector in Uzbekistan [20] - but such surveys are narrower in scope and do not offer the multi-topic, longitudinal coverage that characterises the LiK Study. Recently, the World Bank launched its "Listening to…" survey series, which includes high-frequency panels in Kazakhstan[21], Kyrgyzstan[18], Tajikistan[22], and Uzbekistan[23]. Taken together, few other open-access, multi-topic household panel surveys currently cover the region.

In the post-Soviet space, the Russia Longitudinal Monitoring Survey (RLMS-HSE) stands out[24]. The RLMS-HSE is a series of nationally representative annual surveys launched in 1994 to track the effects of economic and social reforms on household and individual welfare. By 2025, the survey had completed 34 rounds of data collection. Ukraine also provides an important example, with several rounds of household survey data collected between 2003 and 2004 [25,26]. Russia, Ukraine and the Baltic countries also participate in cross-national surveys such as the European Social Survey (ESS). The ESS, however, uses a repeated cross-sectional design, drawing new samples in each round rather than following the same individuals over time[27].

Methods

Study Design and Sampling Frame

The LiK Study tracks over time and space all initial and subsequent members of the starting sample of 3,000 households (and newly formed households) across all seven provinces (oblasts) of Kyrgyzstan and the two administratively distinct cities of Bishkek and Osh. The original 3,000 households were drawn through stratified two-stage random sampling. The strata are formed by Bishkek city, Osh city, and the rural and urban areas of the seven oblasts, amounting to a total of 16 strata. At the first stage, a set of so-called population points (i.e. communities in rural areas, quarters in urban areas) were drawn in each stratum according to probabilities proportional to population size. At the second stage, 25 households were drawn in each enumeration cluster (also known as primary sampling units, PSU). As a result, the

dataset is nationally representative and supports disaggregation by rural/urban location and North/South region. The sample selection was conducted by the National Statistical Committee (NSC) of the Kyrgyz Republic based on the 2009 Population Census data.

All members of panel households are tracked in each wave, including those who split off to form new households. When a household splits, all members of the newly formed household are surveyed, not only the individual who left the original household. New household members, such as newborns and spouses, are likewise added to the panel and tracked in subsequent waves. Conceptually, an individual can only leave the sample by permanently migrating abroad or through death.

The LiK Study has not implemented sample refreshment or top-up sampling to date. Panel growth occurs organically through household splits: when a member of an existing household moves out and forms a new household, that household enters the panel and is tracked thereafter. The same process can result in new communities entering the sample, typically represented by a single household rather than a full community-level sample. By contrast, coverage of the agricultural and youth questionnaires expands within existing sampled households: these respondents were already part of the panel but were not surveyed personally until the respective modules were introduced. The investigators would welcome a top-up sample in the future, subject to the availability of further funding.

Questionnaire Structure and Instruments

Each questionnaire - administered at the community, household, farm, and individual levels - consists of several modules, with core modules fielded in every wave and thematic modules added, rotated or removed. At the household level, topics include demographics, child health and education, assets, expenditures, income, migration, and shocks. At the individual level, the adult questionnaire covers subjective well-being, education, health, healthy lifestyle and nutrition, risk attitudes, employment and inactivity, past employment history, movements, family decision making, gender attitudes, marriage practices, worries, aspirations, security and perceptions of violence and discrimination, social networks, membership in groups, political and civic participation, trust, and local governance and public services. The individual youth questionnaire, introduced in the sixth wave in 2019 and administered to household members aged 14–17, covers individual well-being, risk aversion, education, life skills, healthy lifestyle and nutrition, employment and migration, political participation, social networks and civic participation, local governance, values and attitudes towards women, perception of security, and trust. Starting with the fifth wave in 2016, agriculture is covered by a separate questionnaire. It is administered only to households that own agricultural land or livestock. The questionnaire covers farm land use; crop planting, harvesting, and sales; irrigation and soil management; livestock and poultry farming, including herd dynamics and animal products; fodder provision; farm investments; and access to agricultural information and product quality requirements. At the community level, the questionnaire is completed by a local administration representative or community leader and covers population and migration, services and infrastructure, economic activity, community life, development programmes, shocks affecting the community, and prices for food products.

Data Collection Procedures

Data are collected through face-to-face interviews with respondents in the LiK Study sample. Interviews are conducted by professional survey companies chosen based on competitive tenders. Waves 1–5 used paper-based methods conducted by the commercial data collection company Sotseconic, while from Wave 6 onward, data collection shifted to computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). In Waves 6 and 7, the partner company SIAR used SurveyToGo software. Both firms are well-established survey providers in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia.

Data collection for Waves 1–6 generally took place between October and December, with the 2016 and 2019 waves extending into January–February. Autumn is optimal for data collection as households are more available post-harvest and remote areas remain accessible before winter. Wave 7 was conducted from April to June 2025 due to funding delays. Dates of data collection are recorded in the data. Fieldwork typically lasts about 10 weeks. Data collection spans all seven oblasts of Kyrgyzstan - Batken, Chui, Djalalabad, Issyk-Kul, Naryn, Osh, and Talas - as well as the cities of Bishkek and Osh. By 2025, the sample had increased from an initial 93 distinct administrative population points (divided into 120 enumerator clusters) to 202 population points (and 208 enumeration clusters). Enumerators typically manage one cluster of about 20-25 households and are supervised by field supervisors. Previous waves involved 60–100 interviewers and around 40 supervisors.

Enumerator training is jointly conducted by the LiK team and survey firms, including two days of classroom instruction and one day of field piloting. Training covers survey objectives, panel design, interview techniques, anthropometric measurements, questionnaire modules, skip patterns, and handling unusual cases, with attention to gender, language, and cultural sensitivities. Field and regional supervisors oversee logistics, training, and quality control.

Data Processing and Quality Control

Quality control during fieldwork differed between the paper-based waves (Waves 1–5) and the tablet-based waves (Waves 6 and 7). In Waves 1–5, field supervisors first reviewed each completed paper questionnaire for completeness and consistency. The questionnaires were then passed to regional supervisors, who conducted a second round of checks. Trained operators entered the data using a dedicated data entry program, and a team of analysts at the survey company checked the entered data before transferring them to the research team. In Waves 6 and 7, initial quality checks were performed on the tablets through pre-programmed range, consistency, and skip-pattern controls. At the end of each day, the data were securely transferred to a central server, where the data team carried out a second round of checks immediately, allowing corrections while field teams were still on site. The raw data received from the survey company are anonymised, and precise household locations are de-identified before being made available for cleaning and processing. The LiK research team conducted a final round of checks and data cleaning following agreed protocols, including range and consistency checks, and variable and value labelling. Inconsistencies such as out-of-range values or duplicate identifiers were resolved in consultation with the survey company where possible. Issues that could only be resolved with strong assumptions were left unchanged in the final datasets. All corrections were documented, and datasets were versioned at each iteration. Data were processed in Stata, from version 11 (2010) to version 17 (2025).

Ethics Statement

Ethical approval was obtained from private and institutional ethics review boards, including DIW Berlin (2010–2012, no number), IRB Services (ref# GA-C1-RA5-064, October 2013), the International Food Policy Research Institute (ref# 00007490, October 2016), and UCA (October 2019, no number; and ref# 2025-03, March 2025). Informed consent for data collection, sharing, and storage was obtained in writing from each respondent prior to the interview, which approved the data collection and the sharing of anonymised data for research. Information on household members was provided by the main household respondent, who consented on behalf of the household. For respondents aged 14–17, consent was obtained from both a parent or guardian and the respondent. For children aged 0–17, mothers or other adult respondents were informed about anthropometric measurements and gave their approval. Consent was obtained by reading the form aloud or allowing respondents to read it themselves. The consent form outlined the survey's objectives, responsible institutions, topics,

confidentiality, and data security. It was signed in duplicate, with one copy kept by the respondent and the other submitted to the field supervisor and central office. With CAPI data collection in 2019 and 2025 waves, the signature was received on the tablet screens.

Data Records

Repository and Access

The Life in Kyrgyzstan (LiK) Study dataset, Waves 1–6, has been openly available at GESIS since November 2026 for not-for-profit research, policy analysis, and teaching. Access requires user registration and confirmation of the intended data use. Survey questionnaires, interviewer manuals, and other documentation are also available there, and Table 2 lists the DOI for each wave. Wave 7 will be released in December 2026.

Table 2: LiK data repository

LiK wave	Year collected	DOI
1	2010	https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14862 [28]
2	2011	https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14863 [29]
3	2012	https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14864 [30]
4	2013	https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14865 [31]
5	2016	https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14866 [32]
6	2019	https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14867 [33]

From 2016 to early 2026, Waves 1-6 were hosted at the IZA International Data Service Center (IDSC): idsc.iza.org/lik [34], under the DOI: https://doi.org/10.15185/izadp.7055.1. After IZA and its data archiving service closed in 2026, hosting moved to GESIS. The transfer was completed in November 2026.

File Organisation and Structure

The data generated are quantitative, organised as relational databases. They originate from individual respondents at three levels: individual (adults and youth), household-and-farm, and community. The data are structured as separate databases for each questionnaire - household, agriculture, individual, youth, and community - with each level stored in its own folder. Files within each folder are named according to their topical module (and section, where applicable). The dataset also includes the master linking files that connect individuals and households across waves, a key feature of the panel design. The data are numerical and string in nature. Each wave contains approximately 1.0–1.5 thousand variables (e.g., the 2016 wave has 1,365 variables), organised across 50–60 data files per wave, each typically 15–20 MB in size (in Stata data format). Stata is the primary data format, with public LiK data also provided in SPSS and CSV formats. Individual-level files contain both household and individual codes; household and farm files contain household codes; and community files contain community codes. Together, these identifiers allow an individual to be linked to their household, community, and region (oblast). However, since these codes are wave-specific, forming the panel across waves requires connecting them through the master panel roster. Table 3 details file naming conventions, formats, observation counts, and content descriptions.

Table 3: Dataset Files and Variable Coverage

Naming Convention	Formats	Obs. (max - min)	Description
cm1, cm_price	.dta / .csv / .sav	208 - 117	Community-level characteristics (infrastructure, prices, etc.)
hh0, hh1a, …	.dta / .csv / .sav	3,000 - 2,245	Household roster, child education and health, living conditions, assets, expenditure, income, migration, shocks
ag0, ag1_2, …	.dta / .csv / .sav	1,813 - 1,632	Farm/agricultural data covering plant- and livestock-based value chains and related topics (Waves 5–7)
id0, id1, id2, ...	.dta / .csv / .sav	8,160 - 6,646	Individual demographics, health, education, employment, social life, attitudes
yt0, yt1, …	.dta / .csv / .sav	854 - 706	Youth respondents aged 14–17 (Waves 6–7); topics mirror individual-level data.
mroster10_19, mroster10_25	.dta / .csv / .sav	22,870 - 20,115	Master file linking a unique panel ID for each individual to their household and individual identifiers across waves.

Variable Definitions and Codebook

Variable names mirror the question numbers in the questionnaires, so mapping variables to questions is generally straightforward unless otherwise constructed. For example, household data variables follow the format "hNNN" (e.g., h108), individual data variables follow "iNNN" (e.g., i101), agricultural data variables start with "aNNN", youth data variables start with "yNNN", and community data variables start with "cNNN". Single-choice questions are represented by one variable; multiple-choice questions are represented by as many variables as there are options. Variables and values are labelled in English. The linking variables are *psu* (community level), *hhid* (household and farm level), and *pid* (individual level, for both adults and youth). These identifiers are wave-specific, particularly the individual identifiers. A data dictionary is provided in CSV format. Missing values are coded as "." (Stata format), "Don't know" as 99 or 999, "Not applicable" as 90, and "Refused" as 88. While efforts were made to apply this coding consistently, some questions may follow a different scheme.

Technical Validation

Sample Representativeness

We compare LiK sample characteristics at baseline (Wave 1, 2010) with the 2009 national population census across key dimensions: age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, education, employment, housing, and urban residence. Table 4 presents the comparison and t-test results. We use the 2009 Kyrgyz population census as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS International), an openly available 10% sample of census records (564,986 observations) that includes most key census variables[35].

Overall, the LiK 2010 sample closely matches the 2009 census on basic demographics. Small differences in gender, age, and urban residence are statistically significant, likely reflecting the very large census sample rather than substantive differences: LiK respondents are only about 0.9 years older on average, with nearly identical female and urban shares. Ethnic composition shows somewhat larger but still modest differences, with the shares of Kyrgyz, Uzbek, and Russian respondents each 1–2 percentage points lower in LiK than in the census, implying a

somewhat larger share of other ethnicities. LiK dwellings are also somewhat larger (3.6 vs. 3.3 rooms on average), consistent with the larger household sizes observed later in the panel.

More notable differences emerge among adults (18+): LiK adults report secondary-or-higher education 10 percentage points less often than those in the census (47% vs. 57%) and are 14 percentage points less likely to be employed (47% vs. 61%). Given the close match in basic demographic characteristics, these larger differences in education and employment are more likely to reflect differences in how these concepts were defined or measured across the two sources than systematic sampling differences.

Table 4: Comparison of LiK sample characteristics with population census

	(1)		(2)		(1)-(2)
	Census 2009		**LiK 2010**		**Pairwise t-test**
Variable	*N*	*Mean/(SE)*	*N*	*Mean/(SE)*	*Mean difference*
		Total population			
Age	564,986	27.737	13,739	28.609	-0.872***
		(0.025)		*(0.171)*	
Female	564,986	0.509	13,739	0.505	0.003
		(0.001)		*(0.004)*	
Kyrgyz	564,986	0.714	13,739	0.691	0.023***
		(0.001)		*(0.004)*	
Uzbek	564,986	0.145	13,739	0.129	0.017***
		(0.000)		*(0.003)*	
Russian	564,986	0.088	13,739	0.076	0.012***
		(0.000)		*(0.002)*	
Housing (# of rooms)	563,541	3.317	13,273	3.635	-0.318***
		(0.002)		*(0.012)*	
Urban	564,986	0.352	13,739	0.344	0.007*
		(0.001)		*(0.004)*	
		Adults population, 18+			
Married	357,548	0.620	8,925	0.660	-0.040***
		(0.001)		*(0.005)*	
Secondary education	357,548	0.573	8,925	0.472	0.100***
		(0.001)		*(0.005)*	
Employed	357,548	0.611	8,925	0.469	0.142***
		(0.001)		*(0.005)*	

Sources: 1) Kyrgyz population census 2009 subset from IPUMS database (10% from the Census data); 2) LiK 2010.

Panel Attrition

The LiK household sample declined steadily from 3,000 in 2010 to 2,245 in 2025, corresponding to a 75% retention rate, with sharper losses during 2012–2013 and 2016–2019 than in the other intervals (Table 5), while the loss over the longest gap (2019–2025) was comparatively modest (3.4%). Individual retention was higher, at 81%, and followed a less consistent pattern, increasing even as the number of households declined in 2012 and 2016. The community and youth samples also grew rather than declined, while the agricultural household sample slightly decreased broadly in line with the overall household sample.

Table 5: Evolution of the LiK sample, 2010-2025

Year (wave) / Questionnaire	2010 (wave 1)	2011 (wave 2)	2012 (wave 3)	2013 (wave 4)	2016 (wave 5)	2019 (wave 6)	2025 (wave 7)
Community (*enumeration clusters*)	120	120	120	144	117	143	208
Household	3,000	2,862	2,816	2,586	2,529	2,323	2,245
Agriculture					1,813	1,632	1,643
Individual	8,160	8,065	8,177	7,681	8,094	7,083	6,646
Youth						706	854
Total observations	**11,280**	**11,047**	**11,113**	**10,387**	**12,557**	**11,938**	**11,574**
Memo: Population points	*93*	*93*	*100*	*111*	*117*	*141*	*202*

Source: LiK Study, 2010-2025.

Tables 6 and 7 examine this underlying attrition by analysing household and individual characteristics associated with sample loss. Specifically, we estimate a binary logit model in which attrition status is regressed on a set of household- and individual-level characteristics. Note that we consider here both attrition in the sense of an individual or household refusing participation or being untraceable and of moving abroad or dying (which are conceptually different but at times hard to differentiate empirically).

In the pooled panel sample, where a household counts as attriting if it drops out in any wave ("All waves" column), the strongest household-level predictor of attrition is having a migrant household head (Table 6). This is associated with a 6.0 percentage-point higher probability of attrition, and the effect is also statistically significant in three of the wave-specific estimates. The second strongest predictor is renting one's housing, which is associated with a 4.7 percentage-point increase. In contrast, larger household size is consistently protective and statistically significant in every wave. Urban residence and location in the northern oblasts are associated with higher attrition risk, with the urban effect strongest in Waves 6–7 and the northern effect in Waves 4, 5, and 7. Head's education and employment status have weaker and less consistent associations, while head's gender and ethnicity do not show robust effects. Overall, model fit is modest, with pseudo-R^2 values ranging from 0.035 to 0.091.

Table 6: Predictors of household attrition

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	All waves	**Wave 2**	**Wave 3**	**Wave 4**	**Wave 5**	**Wave 6**	**Wave 7**
Household head - female	0.010*	0.003	-0.005	-0.007	-0.002	0.018	0.026
	(0.005)	*(0.009)*	*(0.009)*	*(0.013)*	*(0.015)*	*(0.017)*	*(0.016)*
Household head - age	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000	-0.001	0.000	-0.002***	-0.001*
	(0.000)	*(0.000)*	*(0.000)*	*(0.000)*	*(0.001)*	*(0.001)*	*(0.001)*
Household head - Kyrgyz	-0.006	-0.009	-0.002	-0.029**	-0.003	0.003	-0.002
	(0.005)	*(0.008)*	*(0.007)*	*(0.012)*	*(0.014)*	*(0.016)*	*(0.016)*
Household head - education (years)	0.004***	-0.000	0.000	-0.002	0.000	0.012***	-0.001
	(0.001)	*(0.001)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.003)*	*(0.003)*
Household head - employed	-0.012**	0.004	-0.000	0.002	-0.015	-0.046***	-0.024
	(0.005)	*(0.009)*	*(0.007)*	*(0.013)*	*(0.014)*	*(0.016)*	*(0.016)*
Household head - migrant	0.060***	0.026	0.047***	0.083**	-0.031	0.057*	0.031
	(0.012)	*(0.019)*	*(0.012)*	*(0.033)*	*(0.045)*	*(0.030)*	*(0.036)*

Household size	-0.009***	-0.009***	-0.006***	-0.010***	-0.013***	-0.025***	-0.012***
	(0.001)	*(0.003)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.003)*	*(0.004)*	*(0.004)*	*(0.004)*
Rents housing	0.047***	0.037***	0.043***	0.050*	0.036	0.054	0.012
	(0.010)	*(0.014)*	*(0.011)*	*(0.027)*	*(0.033)*	*(0.036)*	*(0.050)*
Urban	0.023***	0.005	-0.005	0.038***	0.004	0.080***	0.060***
	(0.005)	*(0.009)*	*(0.008)*	*(0.013)*	*(0.014)*	*(0.016)*	*(0.016)*
North oblast	0.038***	0.030***	0.001	0.059***	0.062***	0.014	0.093***
	(0.006)	*(0.011)*	*(0.009)*	*(0.015)*	*(0.014)*	*(0.017)*	*(0.016)*
Observations	15,614	2,930	2,810	2,749	2,468	2,439	2,218
Pseudo R-squared	0.036	0.068	0.065	0.050	0.035	0.091	0.056

Source: LiK Study, 2010-2025. Logit model, average marginal effects. Robust/clustered standard errors in parentheses. DV: 0 = No dropout, 1 = Dropout. Cells are average marginal effects (dy/dx) from logit models, not coefficients. SEs for the "All waves" column are clustered by household. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01.

The individual-level results in Table 7 echo those in Table 6: renting, urban residence, and northern oblast location have effects of similar direction and magnitude, as expected for shared household characteristics. The standout individual-level predictor is marital status: being unmarried is associated with a 5.5 percentage-point higher probability of attrition in the pooled sample, rising to 11.1 points by Wave 7. This suggests that single respondents become harder to retain as the panel ages, potentially due to life-course transitions such as leaving home or migrating. Stated migration intentions are also associated with subsequent attrition (+4.1 points), while employment is modestly protective. One notable reversal is household size: larger households are strongly protective at the household level but mildly increase individual attrition (+0.2 points), suggesting that households may remain in the panel even as individual members leave or split off. Model fit is lower than at the household level (pseudo-R^2 0.021–0.046).

Table 7: Predictors of individual attrition

	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
	All waves	**Wave 2**	**Wave 3**	**Wave 4**	**Wave 5**	**Wave 6**	**Wave 7**
Female	0.003	-0.004	-0.007	0.012	-0.002	0.036***	0.000
	(0.003)	*(0.006)*	*(0.006)*	*(0.008)*	*(0.009)*	*(0.010)*	*(0.011)*
Age	0.001***	0.000	0.000*	0.000	0.001***	-0.001*	0.001**
	(0.000)	*(0.000)*	*(0.000)*	*(0.000)*	*(0.000)*	*(0.000)*	*(0.000)*
Household head	-0.011***	-0.001	-0.007	-0.010	-0.014	0.023*	-0.010
	(0.004)	*(0.006)*	*(0.007)*	*(0.010)*	*(0.011)*	*(0.013)*	*(0.013)*
Not married	0.055***	0.007	0.026***	0.031***	0.065***	0.061***	0.111***
	(0.003)	*(0.006)*	*(0.005)*	*(0.008)*	*(0.009)*	*(0.010)*	*(0.011)*
Education (years)	0.002***	-0.002**	-0.000	-0.002	-0.001	0.002	-0.007***
	(0.001)	*(0.001)*	*(0.001)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.002)*
Employed	-0.021***	-0.001	-0.016***	-0.003	-0.032***	-0.029***	-0.046***
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Wants to migrate	0.041***	0.021**	0.021*	0.044**	-0.016	0.025	0.037*
	(0.007)	*(0.011)*	*(0.011)*	*(0.018)*	*(0.023)*	*(0.018)*	*(0.019)*

Household size	0.002**	-0.005***	-0.003**	-0.005**	0.000	-0.011***	0.002
	(0.001)	*(0.001)*	*(0.001)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.002)*	*(0.002)*
Rents housing	0.061***	0.049***	0.067***	0.064***	0.078***	0.056*	-0.013
	(0.008)	*(0.010)*	*(0.010)*	*(0.019)*	*(0.025)*	*(0.029)*	*(0.039)*
Urban	0.032***	0.009*	-0.004	0.029***	0.005	0.087***	0.102***
	(0.003)	*(0.005)*	*(0.006)*	*(0.008)*	*(0.009)*	*(0.010)*	*(0.011)*
North oblast	0.038***	0.031***	0.001	0.064***	0.077***	-0.003	0.081***
	(0.003)	*(0.006)*	*(0.006)*	*(0.008)*	*(0.009)*	*(0.010)*	*(0.011)*
Observations	46,707	8,154	8,050	8,165	7,500	7,871	6,967
Pseudo R-squared	0.021	0.045	0.031	0.030	0.028	0.033	0.046

Source: LiK Study, 2010-2025. The sample includes individual respondents aged 18 and older. Cells are average marginal effects (dy/dx) from logit models. Standard errors in parentheses. DV: *0 = No dropout, 1 = Dropout*. SEs for the *All waves* column are clustered by person. *Female*, *Household head*, *Not married*, *Employed*, *Wants to migrate*, *Rents housing*, *Urban*, *North oblast* are dummy variables (0-1) that indicate the status of the respondent. The *Education* is years of formal schooling. The *household size* is the number of listed members. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01.

Internal Consistency Checks

Internal consistency is ensured throughout the LiK Study. The household roster serves as the key source for verifying that all relevant, available, and willing adults and youth are interviewed; where this is not the case, the reason for non-participation is recorded. The same logic applies to the agricultural questionnaire, which is administered to households selected on the basis of owning agricultural land or livestock. Data issues identified during the initial cleaning process were corrected to a reasonable degree, but some issues discovered after data processing have remained in the datasets, such as in the agricultural questionnaire for certain years, where households reported sales of products without reporting the corresponding underlying production. Total expenditure values are largely within reasonable ranges; however, some coding errors in units of measurement, as well as unusually low or high values, may remain and are left to the researcher's discretion to address before analysis.

Comparison with External Data Sources

We compare the LiK data from the latest wave (2025) with the 2022 Population and Housing Census[36] and two large household surveys in Kyrgyzstan from similar years: the Kyrgyz Integrated Household Survey (KIHS) collected by NSC in 2024[37] and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), collected by UNICEF in 2023[38]. The census provides the population benchmark. Because the four sources differ in objectives and design, we compare only characteristics that are measured in a comparable way across them: demographic, economic, and geographic (Table 8).

Table 8: Comparison of LiK Sample Characteristics with Census, MICS and KIHS

	Population Census 2022	*MICS 2023*	*KIHS 2024*	*LiK 2025*
Average age, years	28.1	29.4	32.9	28.9
Female, share	0.51	0.51	0.53	0.50
Kyrgyz, share	0.78	0.78	.	0.71

Uzbek, share	0.14	0.14	.	0.17
Russian, share	0.04	0.04	.	0.03
Secondary education or higher, share*	0.82	0.70	0.84	0.85
Household size, present members	4.90	4.97	4.87	6.27
Income per capita, Soms/month	.	.	11,275	11,790
Consumption per capita, Soms/month	.	.	8,365	7,739
Urban, share	0.35	0.64	0.54	0.26
South, share	0.53	0.46	0.43	0.67
Individuals, sample size	6,936,156	27,834	18,638	12,680
Households, sample size	1,401,017	6,639	5,016	2,245

Sources: Population Census 2022 (NSC); MICS 2023 (UNICEF); KIHS 2024 (NSC); LiK 2025 (ISDC and UCA). Education levels refer to individuals aged 18 and older in KIHS, LiK, and MICS, and those aged 15 and older in the Population Census. Mean estimates from the survey data are unweighted.

Compared with the census, LiK closely matches the population in age, gender, and adult educational attainment, whereas KIHS respondents are older on average and MICS reports lower education. Income per capita is similar in LiK and KIHS, while LiK's consumption per capita is somewhat lower. The clearest differences concern household size and geography. LiK households are larger, at about six members compared with five in the other sources, possibly due to differences in household definitions. LiK is also more rural and more concentrated in the southern oblasts than the census, consistent with the higher attrition of urban and northern households (Tables 6–7). This southern concentration also explains its smaller Kyrgyz and larger Uzbek shares. MICS and KIHS, in turn, are more urban and less southern than the census, likely reflecting their sampling designs, as all survey means are unweighted.

Measurement Reliability

The producers of the LiK data did not build dedicated reliability tests into data collection, such as test-retest reliability or inter-rater agreement. Some variables nevertheless allow natural consistency checks. First, the survey includes general and community trust questions with opposite meanings, whose responses should correlate negatively. Second, risk-taking attitudes are persistent and moderately stable within individuals [39,40], although they may decline with age and shift after major shocks such as health events or natural disasters [41,42]. We therefore examine the risk-taking attitudes of respondents who took part in at least two of the seven LiK waves.

Table 9 presents the results. In 2010–2012, the paired trust questions correlated negatively as expected: −0.34 to −0.40 for general trust and −0.27 to −0.28 for community trust. From 2013 onwards, the correlations weaken and approach zero by 2019 and 2025 (−0.08 to 0.01), meaning that many respondents agree, or disagree, with both statements of a pair. The statements are not strict logical opposites, since one can trust community members and still consider caution necessary. Agreement bias (the tendency to agree with statements regardless of their content) and changes in fieldwork procedures may also play a role.

Table 9: Trust correlations and average risk-taking attitude by wave

Wave	2010	2011	2012	2013	2016	2019	2025
1) General trust	-0.34	-0.39	-0.40	-0.28	-0.14	-0.03	-0.08
N	*8,113*	*7,683*	*8,162*	*6,921*	*7,404*	*6,901*	*6,120*
2) Trust in community members	-0.27	-0.28	-0.27	-0.14	-0.20	-0.02	0.01
N	*8,113*	*7,683*	*8,162*	*6,691*	*7,134*	*6,970*	*5,953*
3) Average risk-taking attitude	3.80	4.70	4.73	4.73	4.77	3.51	3.83
N	*7,750*	*7,991*	*8,037*	*7,398*	*7,577*	*6,537*	*5,288*

Source: LiK Study, 2010-2025. Note: Rows 1–2 report Spearman rank correlations between pairs of trust questions with opposite meanings. General trust: "In general, you can trust people" vs "Nowadays, you cannot rely on anybody". Trust in community members: "Most people who live in this community can be trusted" vs "In this community, you have to be cautious, otherwise someone is likely to take advantage of you". Answers range from 1 (absolutely disagree) to 4 (absolutely agree). Row 3 reports the mean of the general risk question, on a scale from 0 (completely unwilling to take risks) to 10 (completely willing), for respondents with valid answers in at least two waves. The risk question was worded: "Are you generally a person who is fully willing to take risks or do you avoid taking risks?"

The average risk-taking attitude is stable between 2011 and 2016 (4.70–4.77 on the 0–10 scale) but lower in 2010, 2019, and 2025 (3.51–3.83). Since the question was administered consistently, the shifts of about one point between adjacent waves more likely reflect sample composition and economic conditions. Together with an intraclass correlation of 0.21, based on a random-intercept model controlling for waves, this indicates that risk-taking attitudes have a persistent individual component but vary considerably between waves, so analyses of change should control for wave effects. In 2019 and 2025, five domain-specific risk-taking items were added: driving, financial matters, career decisions, health behaviors, and social situations. All five correlate positively with the general question (Spearman's $\rho = 0.46–0.73$), supporting convergent validity, with the highest correlations in 2025 for social situations, career decisions, and health behaviors. The domain items also form an internally consistent scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.86–0.94$), and removing any item would lower α.

Usage Notes

Data Access Procedure

The LiK data for 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016, and 2019 are available for data users from GESIS. The LiK data are provided after registration of a user and confirming the data use purpose. The data are to be used for not-for-profit research, policy analysis, and teaching.

Merging Across Levels and Waves

The accompanying roster file links individuals and households across waves, where each row represents a person ever listed as a household member. A permanent panel identifier tracks each individual across all waves, with corresponding wave-specific identifiers that combine a household code and an individual's roster number. To build a panel, a data user needs to create the relevant wave identifier in the corresponding data file and merge it using the appropriate software command.

Merging with Geospatial Data

To protect respondents' identities, household GPS locations are not shared. Geospatial displacement of locations ("fuzzing") offers little protection in Kyrgyzstan, because population densities in some rural areas are very low. Instead, the LiK team plans to release community-level geocodes: the point coordinates of the central village of each sub-district (*ayil aimak*) where data were collected. This level of detail should suffice for linking LiK data to external geospatial data, such as conflict event or climate data.

Sampling Weights

No sampling weights have been assigned given the sampling of households and respondents was taken proportional to population size in each of the surveyed regions and was based on the 2009 Population Census. As attrition makes the sample less representative in some of the regions, efforts are underway to generate sampling weights based on the 2022 Population Census in Kyrgyzstan.

Known Limitations

The first four waves were conducted annually, followed by two waves at three-year intervals, while the seventh wave took place six years after the sixth. The substantially longer interval between the last two waves made panel attrition a more significant concern. Additionally, data collection for Waves 1-5 relied on paper questionnaires before transitioning to CAPI in Waves 6 and 7. While the transition improved data quality through automated skip patterns and consistency checks, it may also have introduced minor mode effects that should be considered when interpreting the results.

Data Availability

The Life in Kyrgyzstan Study data for Waves 1–6 (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016, and 2019) are deposited at GESIS under the following DOIs: Wave 1, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14862; Wave 2, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14863; Wave 3, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14864; Wave 4, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14865; Wave 5, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14866; Wave 6, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14867. The Wave 7 (2025) data will be deposited at GESIS in December 2026 and will be assigned a DOI. Each deposit contains the community, household, agricultural, individual, and youth data files for that wave in Stata, SPSS, and CSV formats, together with questionnaires, interviewer manuals, and a data dictionary. The master roster files (mroster10_19 and mroster10_25), which link individuals and households across waves, are provided with the 2019 and 2025 data packages. The data are available for not-for-profit research, policy analysis, and teaching after user registration at GESIS and confirmation of the intended data use.

Code Availability

No custom code was used in the creation of this dataset. Various versions of Stata software (from version 11 to 17) were used for data processing.

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Competing Interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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