

Age, wellbeing and inequality Evidence from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing

James Nazroo, Stephen Jivraj, Tarani Chandola and
Bram Vanhoutte

Sociology, Social Statistics and Cathie Marsh Centre

james.nazroo@manchester.ac.uk

An ageing world

[Nothing] is more likely to shape economic, social, and political developments in the early twenty-first century than the simultaneous aging of Japan, Europe, and the United States ... The human life cycle is undergoing unprecedented change. To preserve economic security, we must adapt the social institutions built around it to these new realities.

Demographic aging brings with it a systematic transformation of all spheres of social life ... beneath even the daunting fiscal projections, lies a longer-term economic, social and cultural dynamic ... What will it be like to live in societies that are much older than any we have ever known or imagined?

The Commission on Global Aging (1999)

A Third Age?

Healthy, wealthy and engaged in society

- Post-retirement, post-parenting, but pre-dependency.
- Contributing to society:
 - Voluntary/community activities;
 - Political/civic engagement.
- Consuming and enjoying life, leisure and pleasure – cultural mainstream.
- Self-fulfilment:
 - Having a role;
 - Having status;
 - Having fun.
- More generally an ‘active ageing’ policy agenda is being promoted.
- But active ageing, and the resources to enjoy a ‘third’ age, are strongly related to socioeconomic position – in what ways do class inequalities persist post-retirement.

The English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (www.ifs.org.uk/elsa)

A panel study of people aged 50 and older, just begun our sixth wave of data collection, with additional wave 0 data available.

- Sample at wave 1 (2002) was approximately 11,400 people born before 1st March 1952 who were in the private household sector. Refreshed with younger people (50-54) at both waves 3 and 6, and boosted with a cross-section (50-74) at wave 4.
- Drawn from Health Survey for England (wave 0).
- Includes spouses outside the age range and 'new' partners who joined the household since wave 0.
- Face to face interview every two years since 2002, with a biomedical assessment carried out by a nurse every four years.
- Those incapable of doing the interview have a proxy interview.
- End of life interviews are carried out with the partners or carers of people who died after wave 1.

ELSA: broad questionnaire coverage

- Demographics
- Administrative data
- Self-assessed and oral health
- Diagnosed disease & symptoms
- Quality of received medical care
- Activities of daily living and Instrumental ADLS
- Eyesight, hearing, pain, falls
- Mental health
- Health behaviours
- Cognitive function measures
- Physical performance measures
- Biomedical measures
- Housing (tenure, quality, value)
- Household wealth and income
- Relative deprivation
- Pensions and retirement
- Employment status, earnings and job characteristics
- Consumption/spending
- Psychosocial factors & well-being
- Social, cultural and civic activities
- Expectations for the future
- Life history: childhood, education, work, marriage/family, migration, health, trauma

Wellbeing measures in ELSA

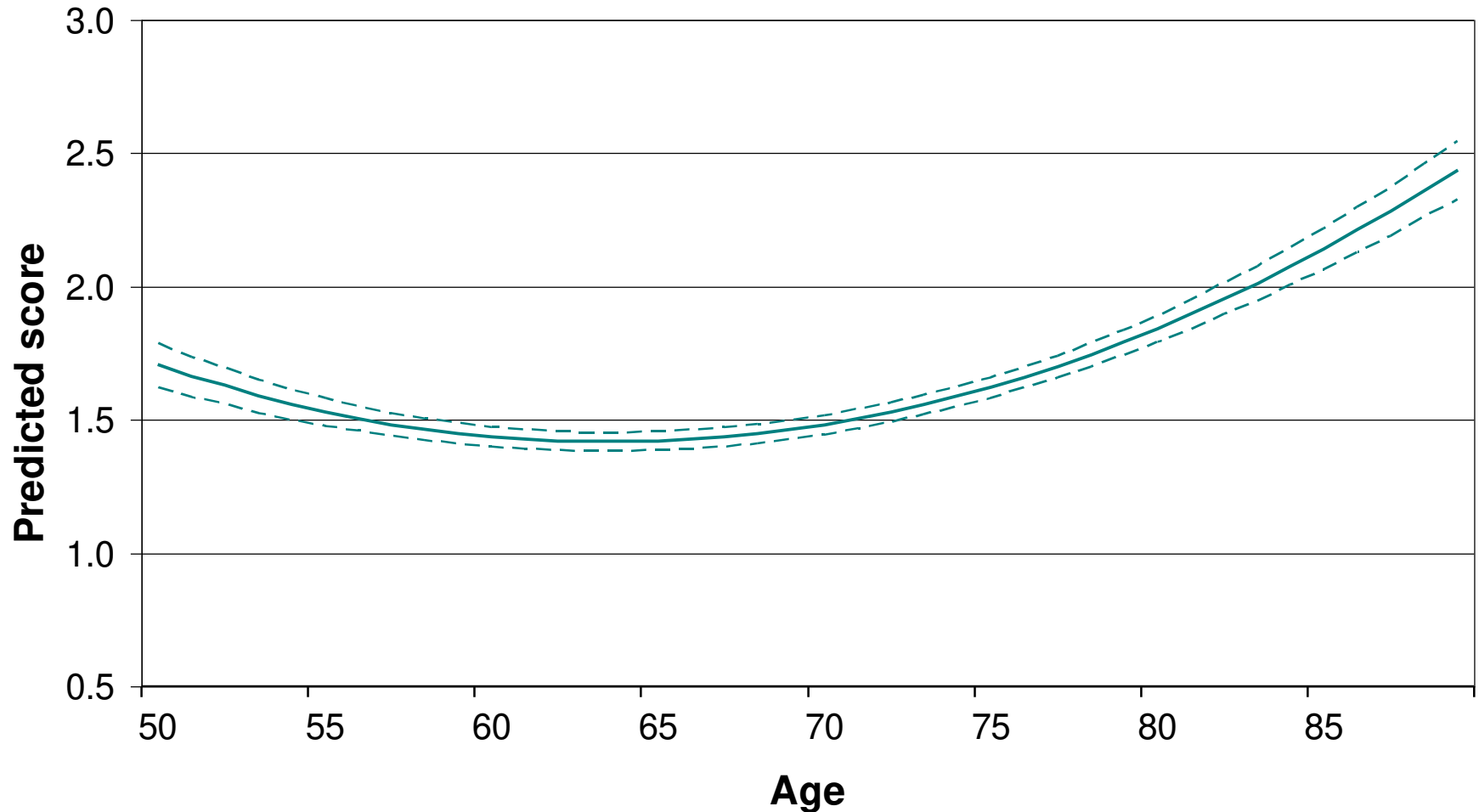
- Evaluative, hedonic and eudaimonic measures included.
- General Health Questionnaire (12 item version), every second wave
- Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression scale (8 item dichotomous version)
- Life satisfaction (Diener)
- Quality of Life (CASP – Control, Autonomy, Self-Realisation and Pleasure – 19 item version)
- Largely cover negative dimensions, but not entirely
- Experienced wellbeing is included in wave six (just in the field)

Analytical methods

- Longitudinal multilevel models, observations nested within individuals, to give overlapping cohorts.
- Model the association between wellbeing and age, with adjustment for a range of covariates:
 - Demographic factors (gender and ethnicity)
 - Marital status
 - Socioeconomic factors (occupational class, economic activity and education)
 - Health (limiting longterm illness, ADLs, chronic conditions)
 - Social support (close contacts, support from contacts, caring and volunteering activities)
- Followed up for eight years (six years for some of the analyses).
- Some analyses stratified by population group (wealth quintiles).

Age and depression: a longitudinal analysis

(CES-D score adjusted for gender and ethnicity)



Contrasting images of ageing: Reflections of class?

A political storm is brewing over proposals to raise the state pension age to 67

(BBC News 2005)



**Monday 29 September –
Friday 10 October 2008**



Manchester Full of Life Festival

**Living La Vida
Older!**

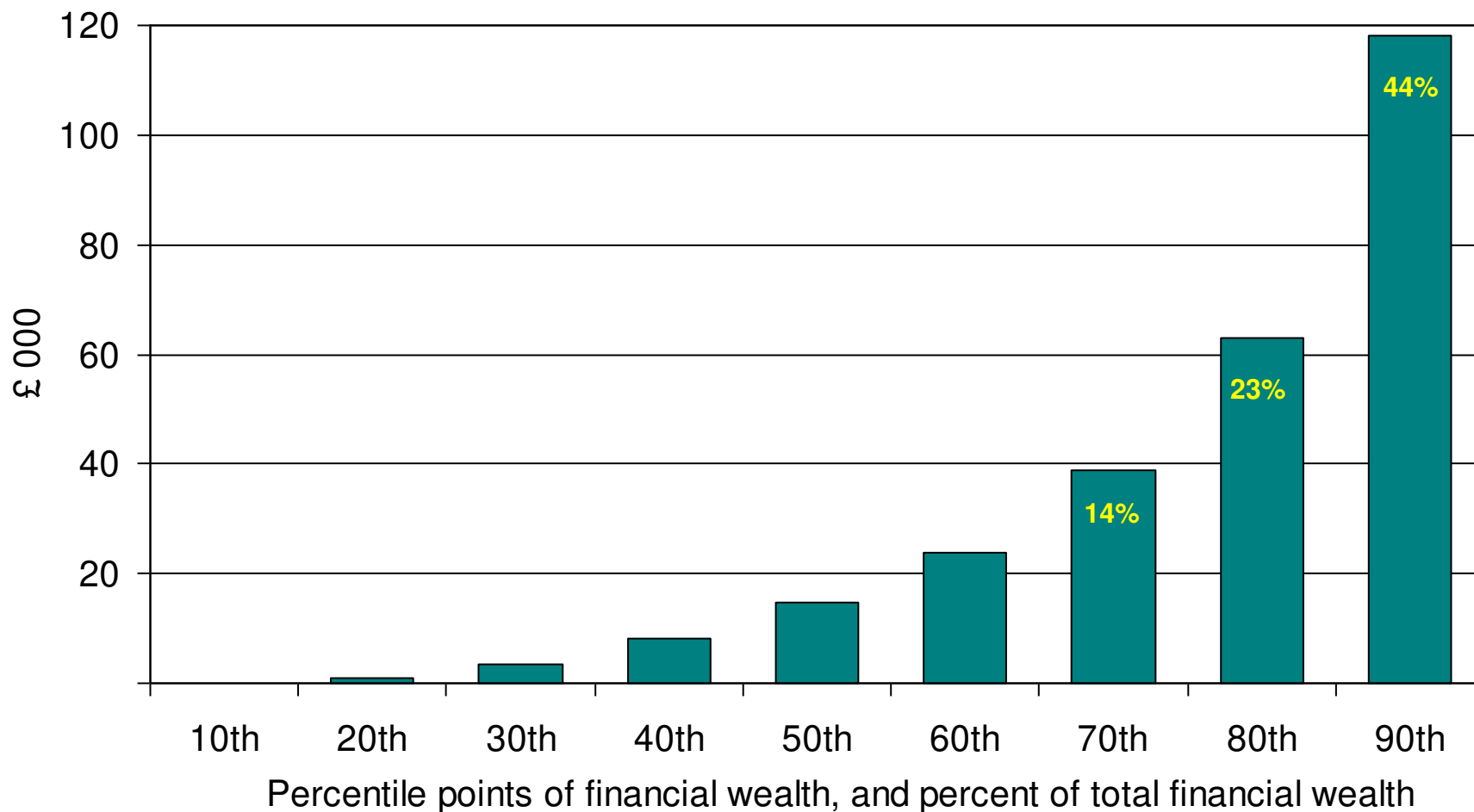
Manchester Full of Life Festival is back, bigger than ever, and bursting with things to do.

The country's biggest free celebration of older people returns to the city from Monday 29 September to Friday 10 October and we don't want you to miss a thing!

Inside this special issue of the VOP newsletter you'll find listings for the **FULL OF LIFE FESTIVAL**,

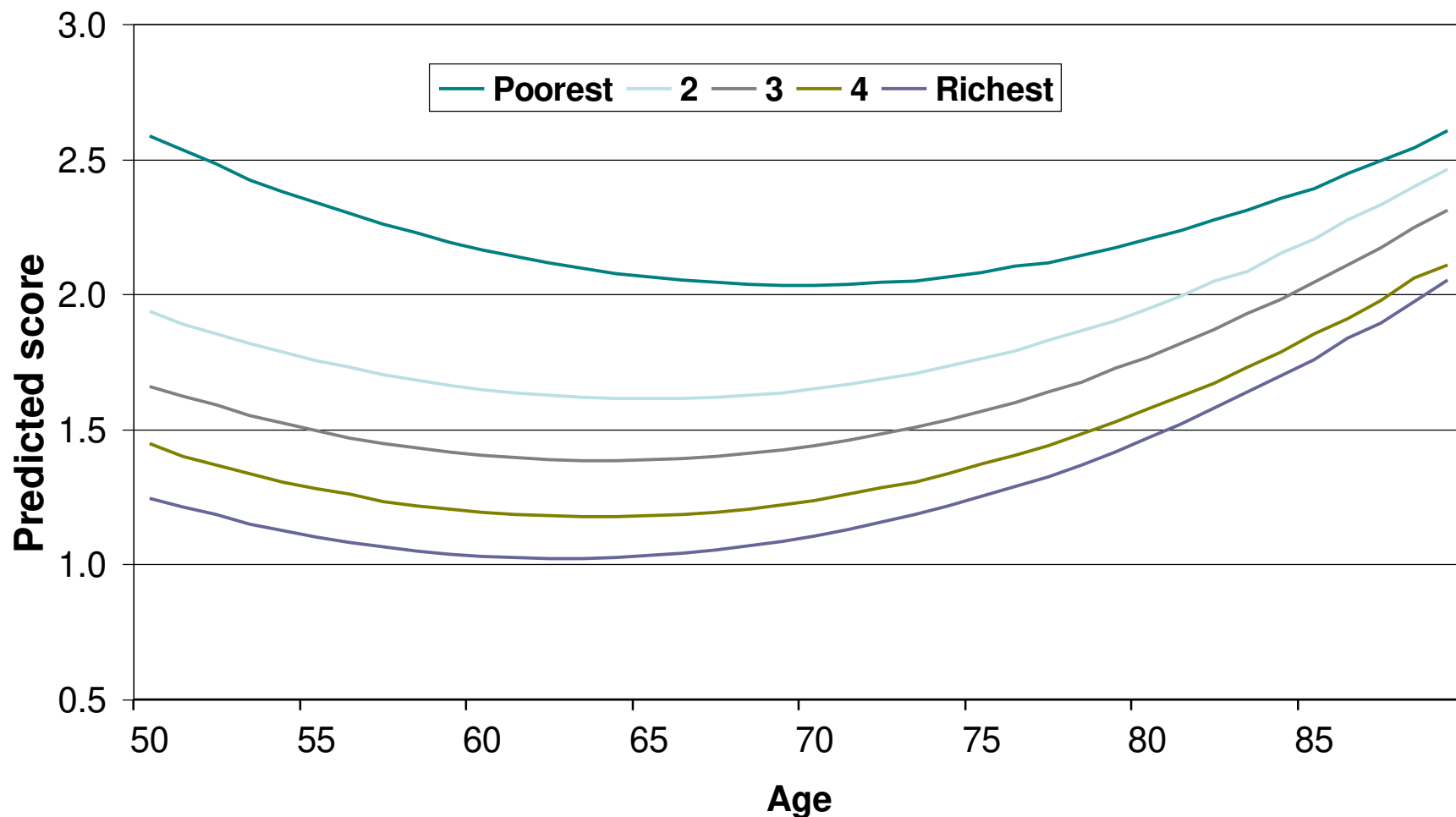


The distribution of financial wealth, age 60-74

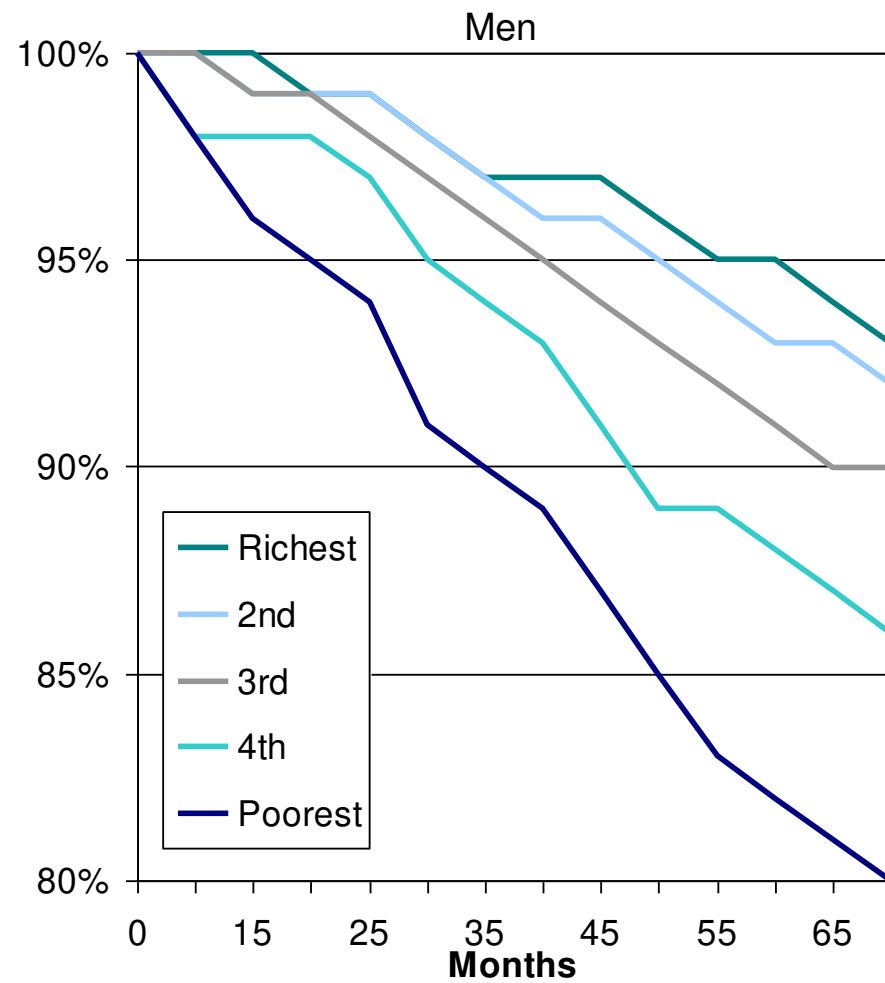
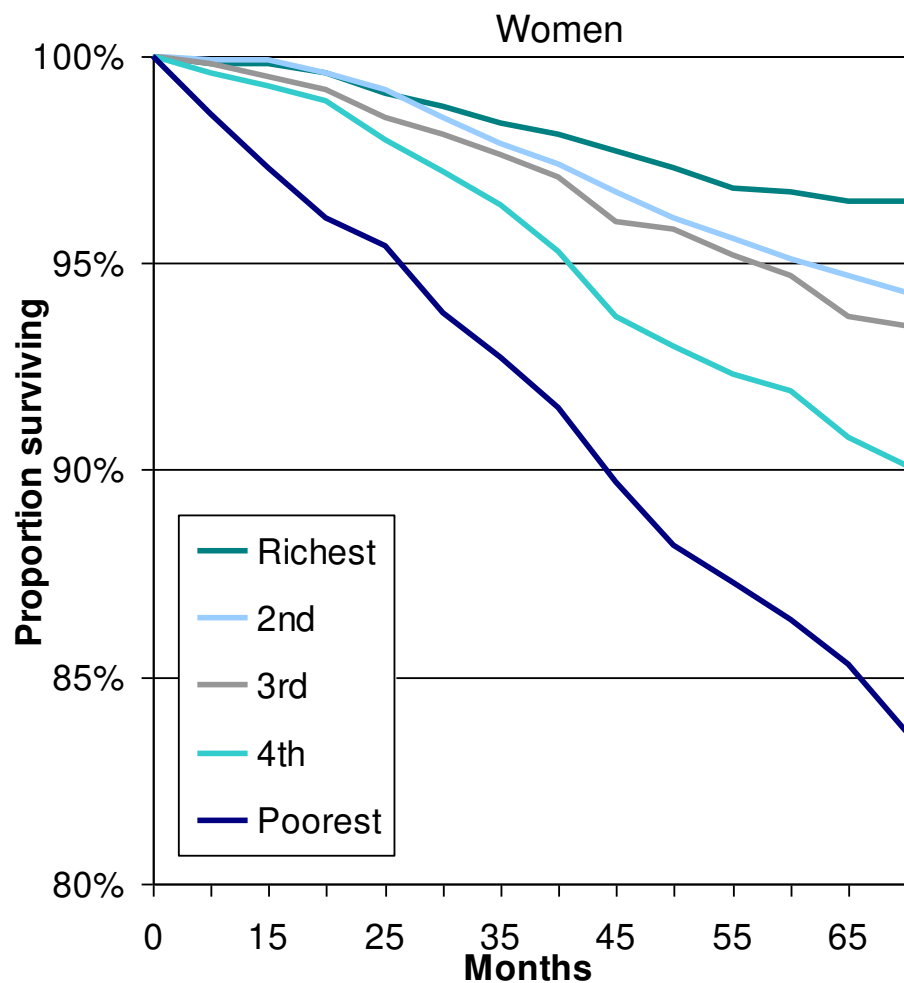


Age, depression and wealth: a longitudinal analysis

(CES-D score adjusted for gender and ethnicity)



Survival rates by wealth, age 50+

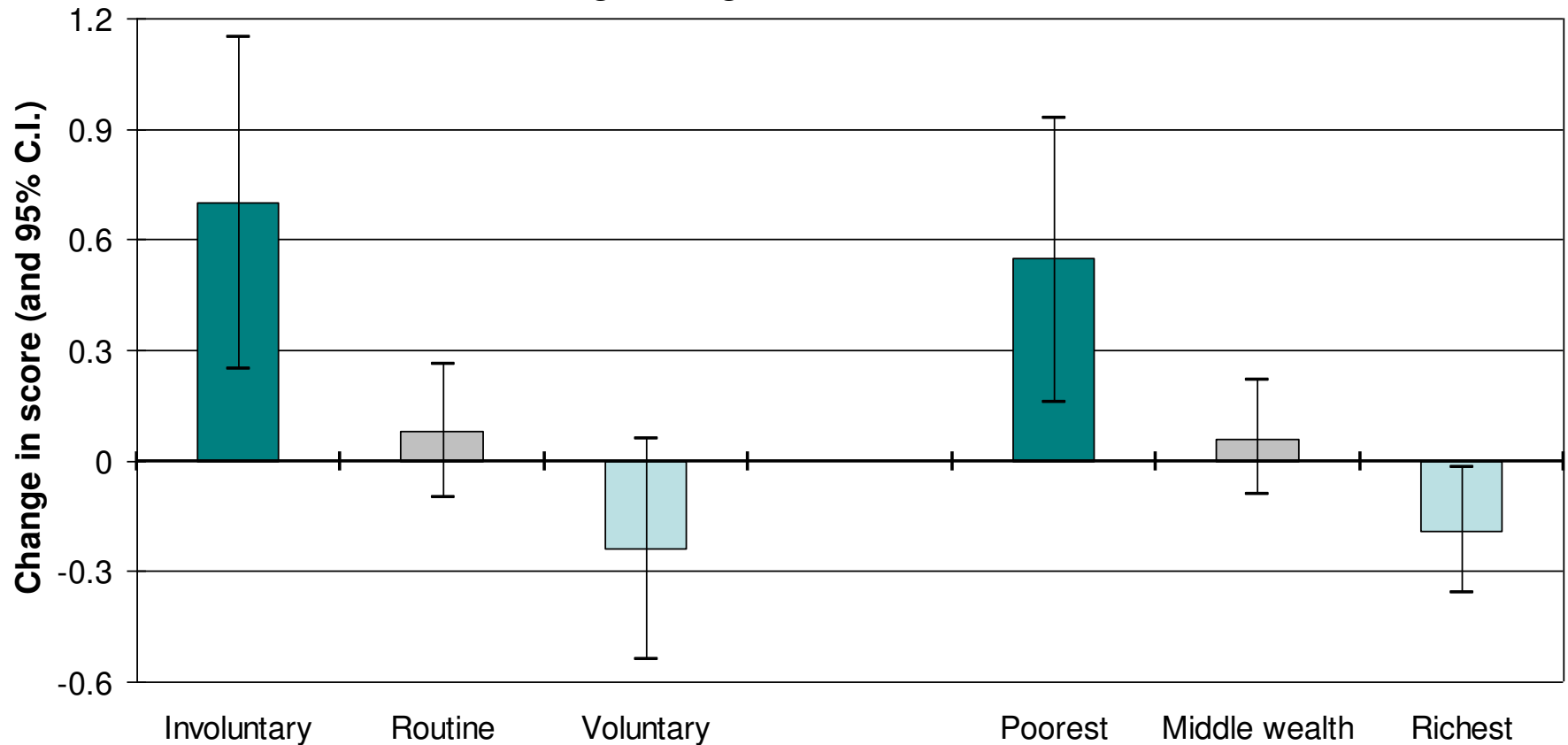


The impact of retirement on wellbeing

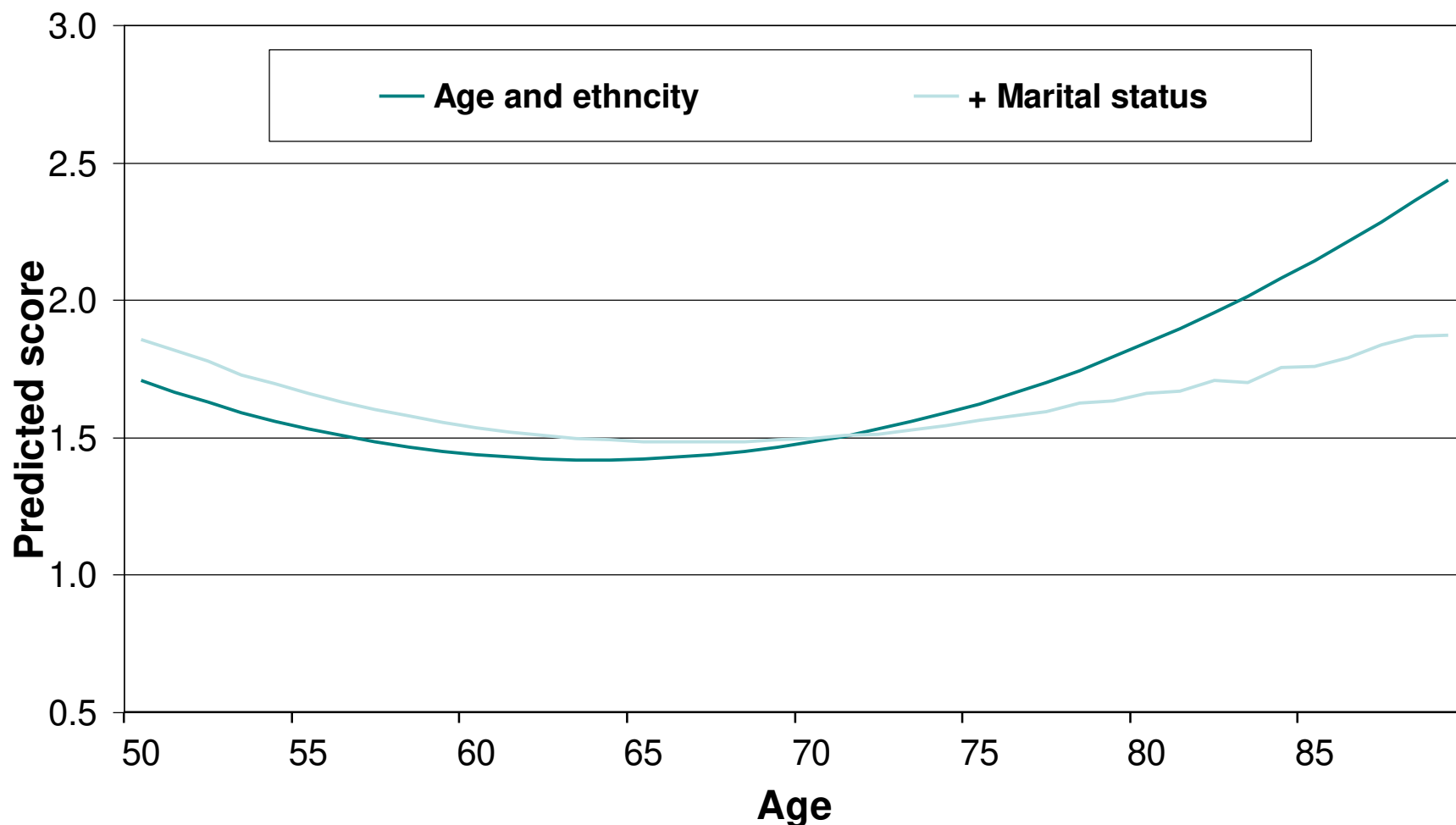
- Model transitions into retirement compared with those still working, for those aged 70 or younger and who are economically active.
- Routine retirement, because ‘reached retirement age’
- Voluntary
 - To enjoy life
 - To spend time with partner or family
 - Fed up with job and wanted a change
 - To give the younger generation a chance
 - Offered reasonable financial terms to retire early
- Involuntary
 - Ill health (own, or of a relative/friend)
 - Made redundant
 - Could not find another job

Depression and type of retirement transition

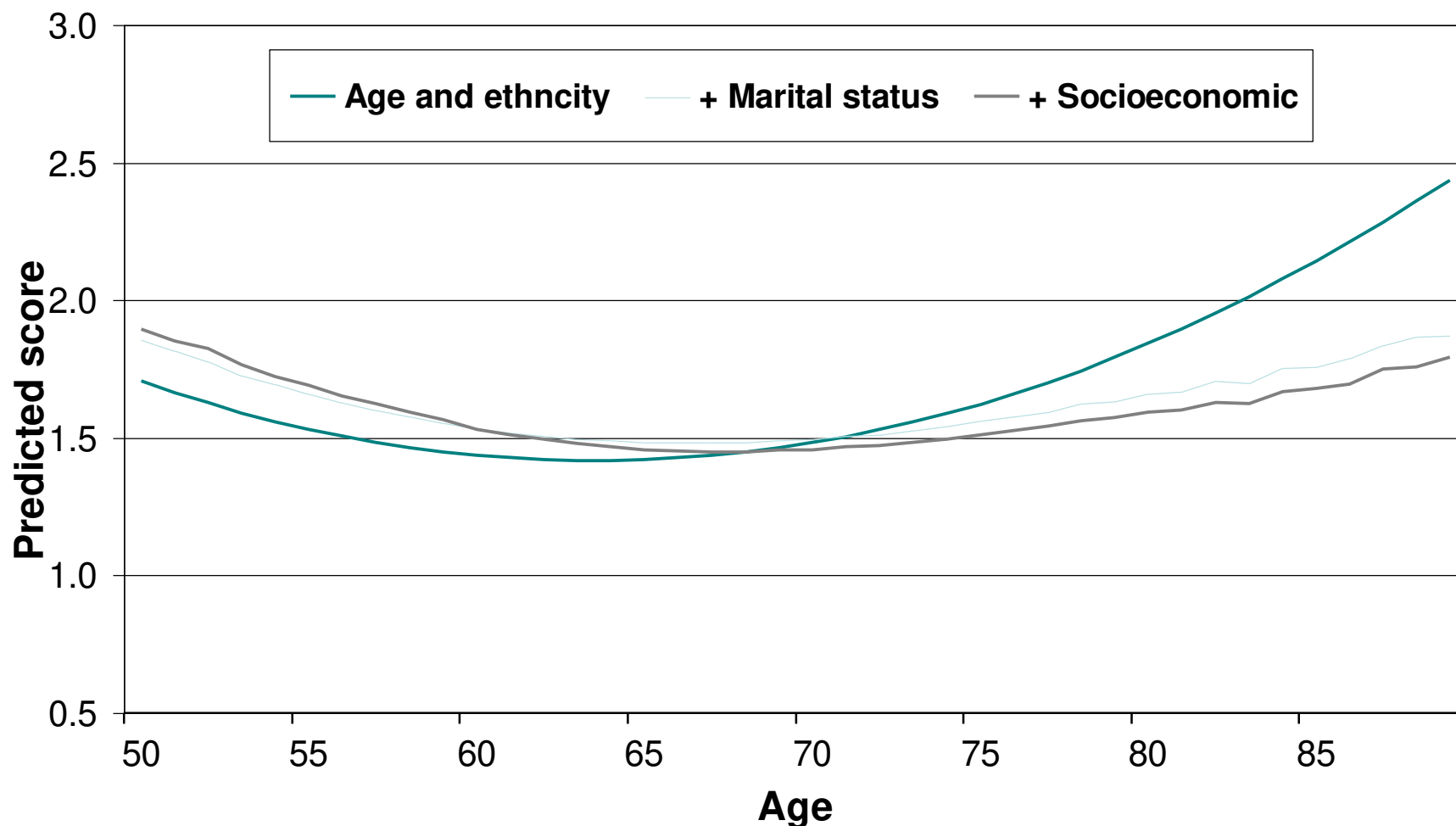
Change in depression score compared with those remaining in work:
age and gender standardised



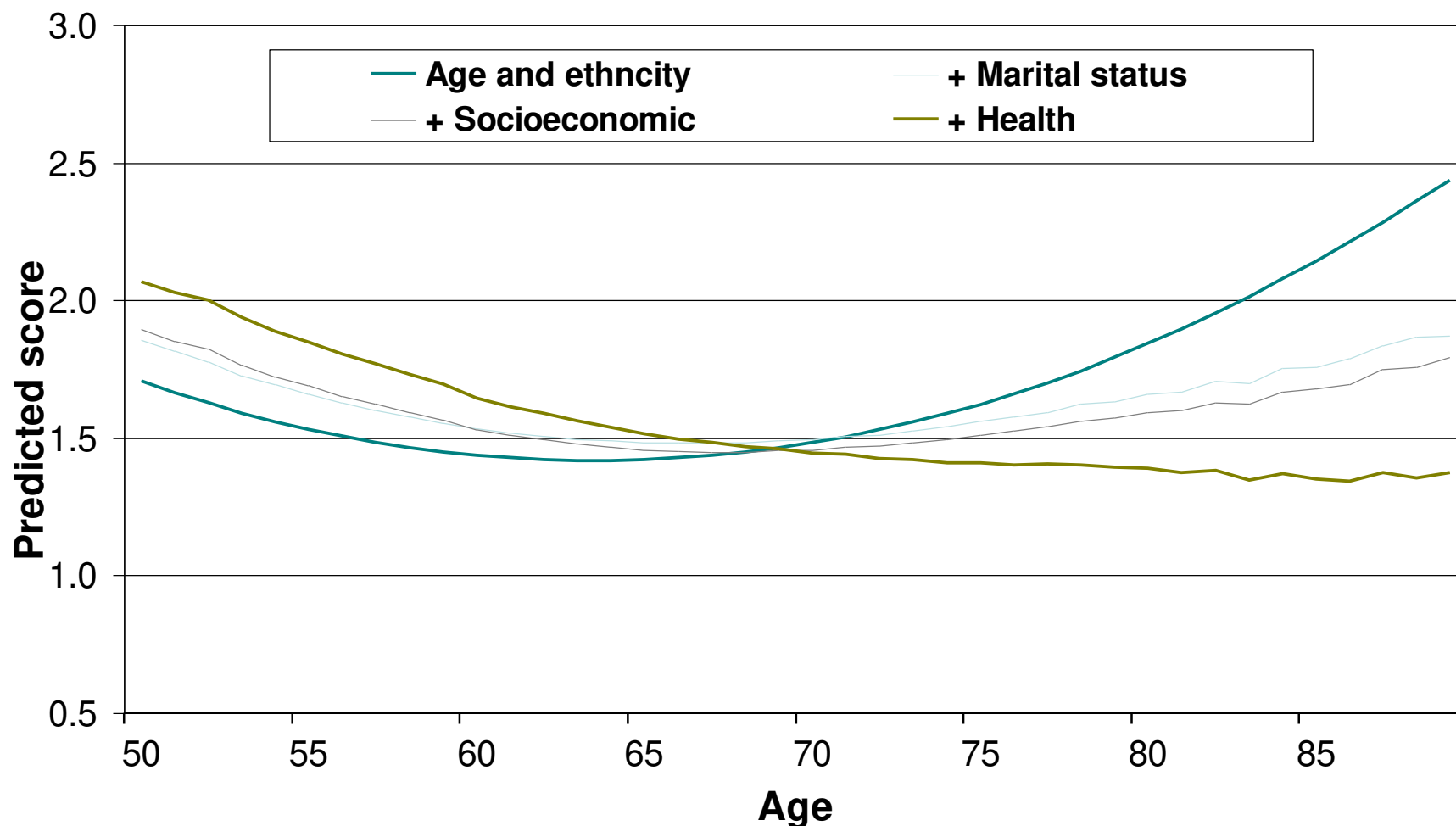
Age and depression: explaining the relationship (CES-D score adjusted for gender and ethnicity)



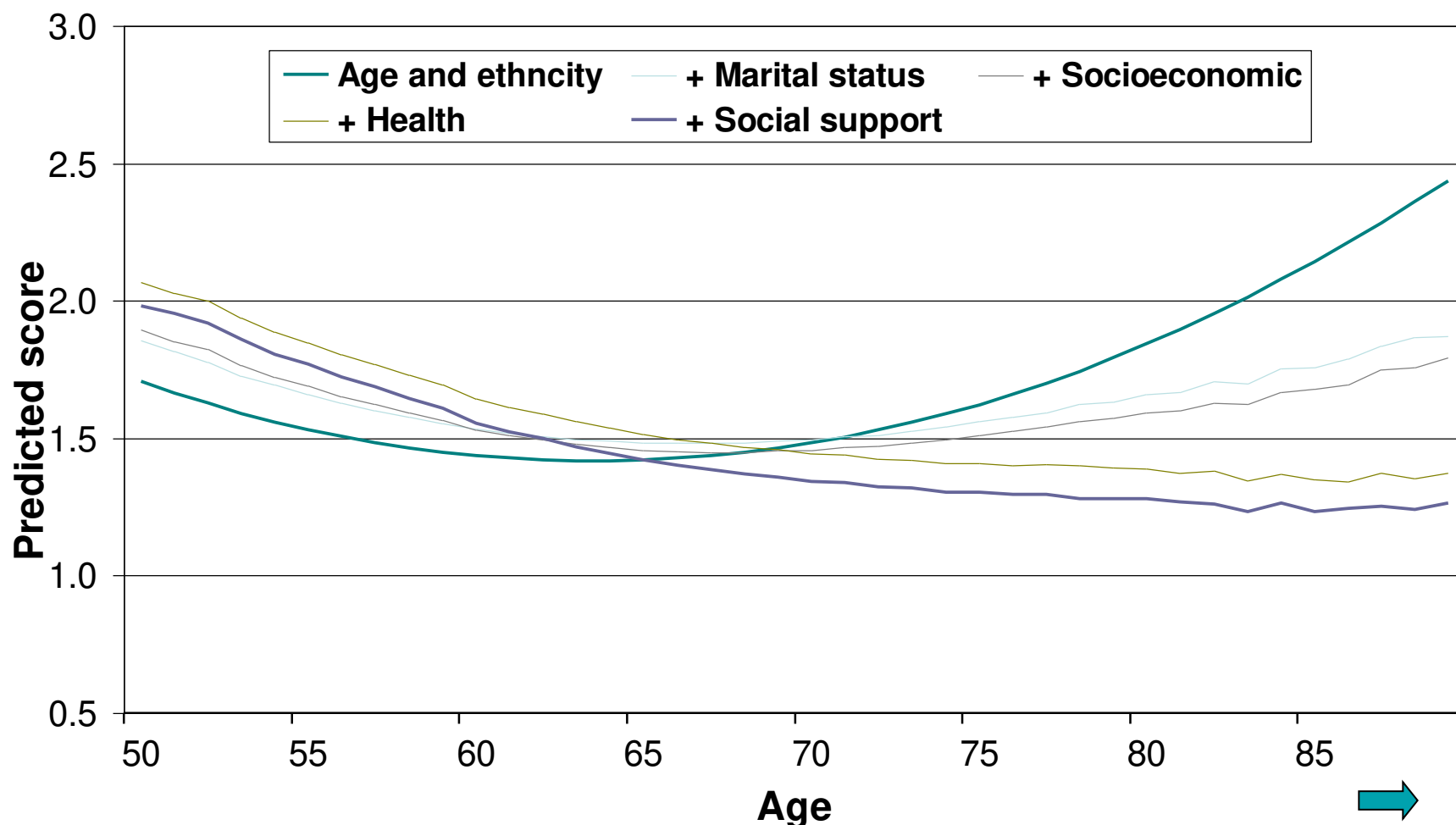
Age and depression: explaining the relationship (CES-D score adjusted for gender and ethnicity)



Age and depression: explaining the relationship (CES-D score adjusted for gender and ethnicity)

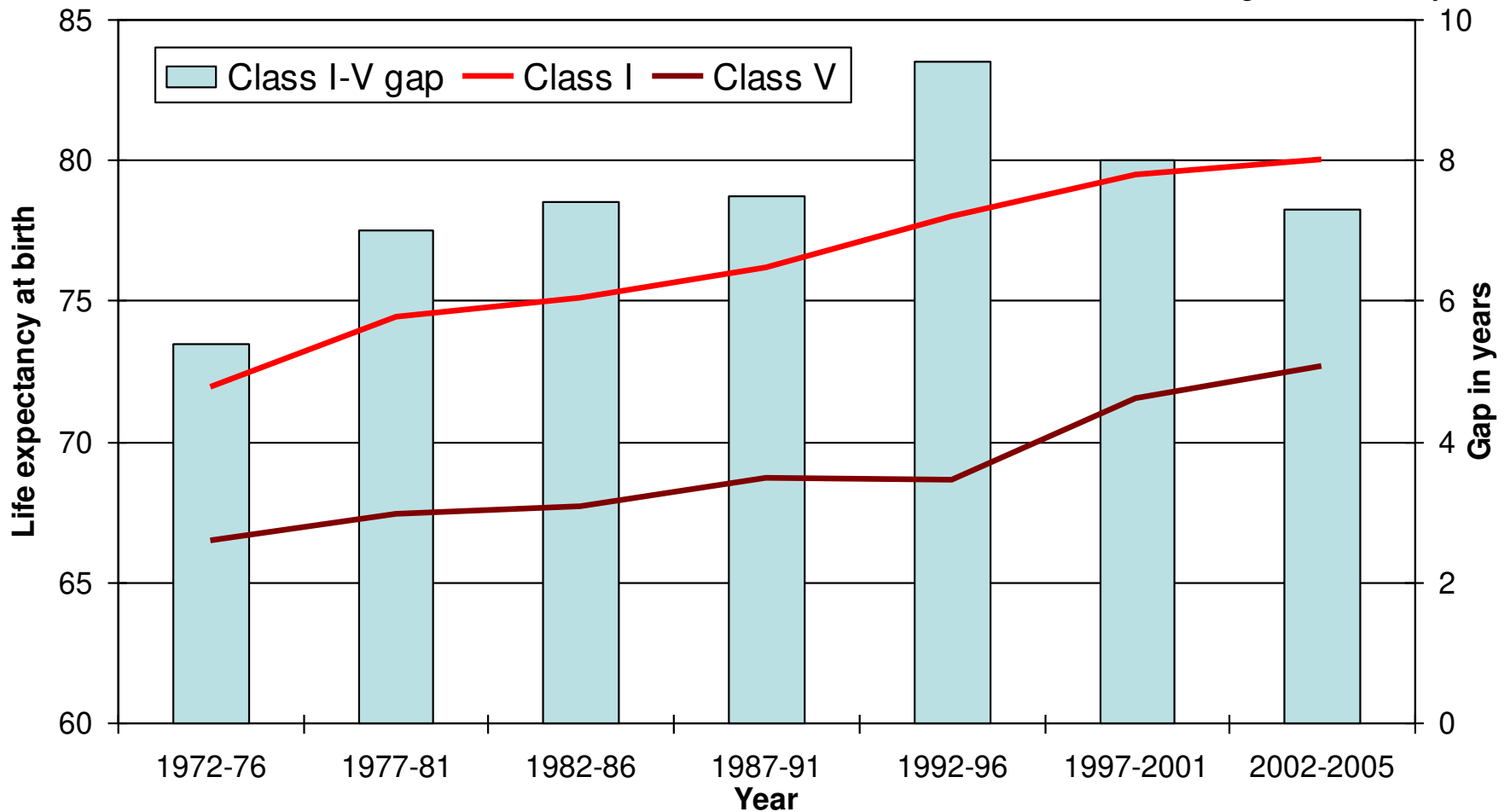


Age and depression: explaining the relationship (CES-D score adjusted for gender and ethnicity)



Persisting class inequalities: improvements in men's life expectancy at birth

ONS Longitudinal Study 2007



Social mobility: odds to be in a professional or managerial class for four age cohorts

	<u>Year of birth</u>				
	< 1920	1920-29	1930-39	1940-45	1946-52
Class of origin					
Semi/un-skilled manual	1	1	1	1	1
Skilled manual	1.46	1.39*	1.35	1.51	1.26
Administrative/Skilled non-manual	1.86*	3.30	2.76	2.31	2.06
Manager/professional	2.76	4.94	4.02	3.40	3.32

Bold figures $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Concluding comments: well-being in later life

- Age and transitions:
 - Wealth
 - Marital status (divorce and widowhood)
 - Health/disability
 - Retirement status/route (voluntary)
- Social class
- Cohort and generation:
 - Occupational structures
 - Pension arrangements
 - Retirement choices/opportunities
 - Marriage choices
 - But persisting inequalities