

NATIONAL STATISTICS CENTRE FOR DEMOGRAPHY (NSCD)

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2007/08

Prepared for the United Kingdom Population Committee

Background

1.1 The United Kingdom Population Committee (UKPC) has responsibility for co-ordinating and agreeing a UK-wide work programme on population statistics and demographic analysis that is policy relevant and meets users' needs. The NSCD Advisory Board advises it in that role and helps identify gaps in provision. Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Population and Migration Theme Working Group is responsible for drawing up the three-year Work Programme which UKPC signs off at its May meeting each year.

1.2 The Theme Group meets twice a year and is formed from the main producers of population and migration statistics. A list of theme group members and useful websites can be found at the end of this document. The Theme covers population estimates and projections, outputs from the Census, international and internal migration estimates, household estimates and projections, demographic analysis, as well as statistics on births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships, divorces, citizenship, families and electoral turnout. These provide essential information about the characteristics, structure and dynamics of the population.

1.3 Population and migration statistics are produced using a range of data sources, both administrative and survey. The main government departments and devolved administrations involved in the preparation and production of these statistics (and hence provide membership of the theme group) are the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS), Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), the National Assembly for Wales (NAW), the Home Office (HO) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

1.4 Population statistics and demographic analysis are extensively used by a wide range of users including government (both Central and local), commercial users, academics and the general public. For example, they are used by the Bank of England and Her Majesty's Treasury in assessing the labour market and for economic forecasting; by DCLG and the Department of Health for local resource allocation; and by the Department for Work and Pensions for policy purposes, for example for planning pension provision. There is a significant level of interest in the statistics from local and health authorities, both from resource allocation and service planning and provision perspectives; there is a Central and Local Government Information Partnership (CLIP) sub-group to advise the ONS Centre for Demography (ONSCD) on key issues. Immigration and citizenship statistics are used mainly for policy purposes by the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). Parliament, the media and the public also have a strong interest in population statistics.

Context

2.1 We are currently experiencing a significant level of **population change** in the United Kingdom, especially in relation to the magnitude and diversity of international migration, which affects all of the constituent countries. This brings challenges in not only knowing what our population is, and its characteristics, but in understanding what impact the changes that are taking place now will have in the future.

2.2 Against this backdrop, users have expressed their wish to see **significant improvements** in the coverage and quality of our population and migration statistics. In particular, there are concerns about their fitness for certain purposes, most notably for resource allocation to a local level. A cross-Government Migration Task Force was convened by the National Statistician and reported in December 2006 on possible improvements that could be made to improve migration statistics; to deliver these improvements will require a significant level of cross-Government collaboration.

2.3 ONSCD and the devolved administrations are continuing **to prepare for the next Census** in 2011. In 2007, the Census Test will be carried out in England and Wales and the outcomes evaluated. Following the 2001 Census, concerns were expressed about the size of the gap between the 2001-based population estimates (rolled forward using the 1991 Census results) and the actual 2001 Census outputs. A significant amount of effort had to go into reconciling the two sources and it is hoped to be able to better, and more readily, reconcile the rolled forward 2011-based population estimates with the 2011 Census results.

2.4 The **devolution** arrangements are now relatively well established and we will continue to put a good deal of emphasis on finding the right balance between the requirements for UK statistics, for comparable statistics across the constituent countries of the UK, and the individual needs of users in individual countries, including those in the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2.5 The **Office for National Statistics** is to be made independent in April 2008 and will be overseen by a Statistics Board. It is unclear at this stage how this will affect priorities but it will almost certainly impact on how the population statistics programme is planned out and reported on.

Work Plan for 2007/08

Providing a relevant and accurate picture of the population

3.1 During 2007/08, we plan to provide a relevant and accurate picture of the population of the United Kingdom, updated for changing user requirements. In particular, we will:

- **Make High Level Statements on the Population of the United Kingdom** through
 - A Planned Statement by the National Statistician on Population Statistics in Population Trends (December 2007);
 - The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Statistics 2006 in Scotland in July 2007;
 - The Annual Report (2006) of the Registrar General for Northern Ireland in November 2007; and

- The first Annual Report providing a summary of demographic information for Wales in April 2007.
- **Produce and publish regular outputs containing statistics, analysis and associated metadata, including:**
 - Population Estimates and Projections (National and Subnational);
 - Small Area Population Estimates, Quarterly Population Estimates, Population Estimates by Ethnic Group, by Cohabitation and Lone Parenthood;
 - Household Estimates and Projections;
 - Marital Status Estimates;
 - Migration Statistics (International - Immigrants and Emigrants - and Internal);
 - Asylum Statistics and Data on Persons Granted British Citizenship;
 - Compendia reports, including Key Population and Vital Statistics (April 2007) and Population Trends (quarterly);
 - Regular Vital Events Statistics;
 - Detailed Fertility Analyses, including cohort fertility figures and true birth order estimates;
 - Life Expectancy Data;
 - Settlement and Locality Population Estimates (for Scotland);
 - Electoral Statistics;
 - Additional analyses for internal/external customers, such as Worker Registration Scheme and National Insurance Statistics and Data on Unaccompanied Minors.
- **Produce revisions for our Population Estimates and Projections (in England and Wales).** We will establish a Revisions Policy by July 2007 and be implementing changes to the international migration component of population change as a consequence of the improved method of estimation (to be published in April 2007). The revisions will be made for England and Wales (and also for the UK population data as a whole) from August 2007 onwards; we will be revising our population estimates back to 2002 and producing revised 2004-based sub-national projections for England by the end of September. A communication plan has been established, including holding three Local Authority workshops in May 2007, to explain the changes and their impact. The extent to which the new methodologies might also be adopted in Scotland and Northern Ireland will be assessed at a statistical level against existing methods;
- **Develop new and improved outputs, in line with user requirements, including**
 - Continue to develop our longitudinal data capabilities, following the success of the ONS Longitudinal Study as a data source. We shall complete development of the Scottish Longitudinal Study (SLS) database by early April 2007, promote and develop use of the SLS data. We will further develop the use of the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study that was formally launched in December 2006;
 - Produce an annual statistical series on the numbers of households in Northern Ireland since 2001;
 - Produce a Focus on Families Publication (October 2007);
 - Review what is produced annually on migration, and how these statistics are presented and disseminated, including existing sources of statistical information on immigration control (and asylum seekers), with a view to

establishing a single publication plan and a more comprehensive picture of migrants, set in an international context;

- Provide the first estimates of numbers of short term migrants (those who stay for periods of between 1- or 3- months and a year for certain purposes, most notably for work) at a national level and assess whether any estimates can be made from existing data of “population churn” at a local authority level;
 - Provide small area estimates on various alternative geographies, including parliamentary constituencies, statistical wards and National park areas;
 - Civil Partnerships - design of outputs and statistical reporting;
 - Produce a new Output on Centenarians (September 2007).
- **Improve the presentation of our population data**, including work on the ONS (through the i-Dissemination project), GROS and NISRA websites. We will also deliver a one-day seminar to key users and stakeholders in Wales to promote the awareness of population data; and produce new guidance materials on sources of population data within Wales and their strengths and weaknesses.

3.2 Across the countries of the United Kingdom, we will be **joined-up** in our approach to our regular population outputs across the individual countries of the UK and, where possible, produce headline statistics for the individual countries that coincide with the publication of key ONSCD outputs (including for the mid-year population estimates and national population projections).

3.3 During 2006/07, UKPC reviewed our **NSCD governance and committee structure** and recommended changes to how we keep up-to-date with changing user requirements - in particular, that we introduce a Central Government User Network and approach the Statistics Users Forum to see how non-commercial users might be better engaged. This will strengthen existing user links. These recommendations will be taken forward in 2007/08, while maintaining the existing CLIP population sub-group arrangements. For next year’s work programme, we will seek users’ views more explicitly on our programme of work and develop a separate section on identified user needs.

3.4 We will meet our **International Obligations** to supply data to the European Commission, Eurostat, UNHCR, IGC and other international stakeholders. We will be playing an active role in 2007/08, including producing a new set of coherent European Population Projections and in participating in discussions on the EU draft regulation on the harmonisation of statistics.

3.5 We will continue to provide a **Source of Expertise and Advice** more generally and respond promptly to Parliamentary Questions and other requests for data/advice.

Developing an improved understanding of the impacts of population change

4.1 We are constantly seeking to do the production and dissemination of our regular outputs in more efficient ways so as to be able to put more effort and resource into **demographic analysis**. This was re-inforced as a priority by the NSCD Advisory Board. In 2007/08, ONSCD will conduct a publications review to see how outputs could be better focused and will assess how the demographic analysis strand might be strengthened and developed for 2008/09 onwards.

4.2 Some of the demographic analysis work may be done in **partnerships**, for example with the ESRC, the LGA and other organisations with an interest in demography. There is already precedent set in this respect in Scotland (see below) and through the ESRC seminar series in England. ONSCD have also started engaging with organisations as to where partnerships might be helpful and this work will be continued in 2007/08, in the light of the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review (and potentially for implementation from 2008/09 onwards).

4.3 During 2007/08, we will concentrate our efforts on:

- Existing demographic analysis and reporting plans (compendia; fertility; migration; ageing; children/young people; mortality/life expectancy; families; households). For example, we plan to produce analyses of sub-national fertility for reporting purposes but also potentially to inform sub-national projections;
- Conducting analyses to inform the assumptions underpinning the National Population Projections. The NPP Expert Advisory Panel (comprising seven experts nominated by the British Society for Population Studies) meets on March 16; the aim of this group, instigated in 2005, is to advise ONSCD on the appropriate assumptions to be adopted for national population projections. As part of this work, ONSCD are trialling an innovative questionnaire devised by Professor Wolfgang Lutz from the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA). The questionnaire aims to assess the validity and importance of alternative arguments concerning future trends in fertility, mortality and migration;
- Conducting analyses to inform the National Population Projections - for example, we will be carrying out research to inform the fertility assumptions, including assessing the impact of international migration on fertility, as well as producing the detailed projected age-specific fertility rates. Also, various analyses to inform mortality and migration assumptions;
- Conducting and analysing repeat Omnibus modules on living apart together, including refinement of questions;
- Analysis of migration at older ages (using the ONS Longitudinal Study); Update Focus on Older People overviews; Analysis of the characteristics and trends of the older workforce (based on the Labour Force Survey);
- Analysis of information collected on the International Passenger Survey on marriages abroad and publish outcomes (June 2007), as well as analysis of other marriage statistics, for example in relation to so-called “sham” marriages;
- Establishing improved links with ESRC, LGA and other stakeholders, including on new ESRC programmes, learning from UPTAP initiatives/studentships, as well as supporting specific projects - for example,

“Migration, Race and Population Dynamics: Explaining Britain’s Ethnic Geography” (Leverhulme Trust/University of Manchester);

- Working with the Greater London Authority whose recently commissioned report recommended that a New Migrant Databank should be established to provide an integrated source of intelligence on new migrant activity. GLA envisage this to be undertaken as a partnership venture with ONSCD as a member of the project steering group.

4.4 Scotland’s Demography Research Programme (ESRC/Scottish Executive), which aims to develop greater understanding of the key aspects of fertility, migration and ageing to inform the evidence base on demographic issues in Scotland, will be on-going throughout 2007/08. Projects include:

- **Macroeconomic impacts of demographic change in Scotland**
Award Holders: Professor P. McGregor, Professor R. Wright, Professor J. Swales-
University of Strathclyde
Project Completion: March 28 2006
Status: End of Award report submitted, peer review complete, ready to be uploaded
Release on ESRC website: **February 13 2007**
- **Scottish graduation migration and retention - A case study of the University of Edinburgh 2000 cohort**
Award Holders: Dr R. Bond, Dr K. Charsley - University of Edinburgh
Project Completion: July 31 2006
Status: End of Award report submitted, currently being peer reviewed
Estimated release on ESRC website: **March 2007**
- **Scotland’s ageing population: Micro-simulation of the baby boomers**
Award Holders: Professor D Bell, Professor A. Bowes, Dr P. Lambert, Dr V. Sarajeva - University of Stirling
Project Completion: September 2006
Status: End of Award report submitted, currently being peer reviewed
Estimated release on ESRC website: **February 2007**
- **Why is fertility in Scotland lower than in England?**
Award Holders: Dr E. Graham, Professor P. Boyle, Professor J. Ermisch, Dr V. Gayle – Universities of St Andrews, Essex and Stirling
Project Completion: October 17 2006
Status: Research ongoing
Estimated release on ESRC website: **June 2007**
- **Fertility variations in Scotland: Socio-cultural attitudes and interactions**
Award Holders: Dr I. Dey, Professor K. Backett-Milburn, Professor P. Boyle, Dr E. Graham, Professor L. Jamieson, Dr F. Wasoff – Universities of Edinburgh and St Andrews
Project Completion: November 30 2006
Status: Research ongoing
Estimated release on ESRC website: **June 2007**
- **Scottish demography: Scottish migration to and return from SE England**
Award Holders: Professor A. Findlay, Professor R. Harrison, Dr D. Houston, Professor C. Mason - Universities of Dundee, Edinburgh and Strathclyde
Project Completion: March 31 2007
Status: Research ongoing
Estimated release on ESRC website: **October 2007**

A public policy seminar is being organised to disseminate the results of the Demography Research Programme and plan ahead.

Developing further our population statistics

5.1 A key aim of our development work is to be prepared for 2012, when we will receive the results of the 2011 Census, while recognising that there is also an on-going requirement to develop our population statistics and to strengthen the methodological basis for our work.

5.2 ONSCD is establishing a Population Statistics Development Board to oversee and help prioritise further developments. In 2007/08, it will develop strands of work around the following key questions:

- What do the population statistics of the future look like and how do we deliver them?
- What are the best sources to underpin them, including the need for a 2021 Census, the use of admin sources and the Integrated Household Survey?
- How do we avoid the issues arising following the 2001 Census, when there was a large difference between the Census results and the rolled-forward population estimates, and how do we best reconcile observed differences?
- How do we provide better estimates of migration at a national level and improved distributions of population locally, taking account of the Migration Task Force recommendations?
- How is the structure of the UK population changing, what is driving those changes and what are the implications?
- What does a fully modernised and automated population statistics system look like?
- How can we communicate to users a better sense of the quality of what we produce?

5.3 During the year, we already have the following plans:

- The key elements of the migration data development work will be:
 - Specific research to develop improvements to population statistics for implementation in subsequent years, working closely with others across government. Key strands are: to research the feasibility and develop methods to produce estimates of short-term migrants; and to research improvements to internal migration estimates;
 - Progressing further work on international migration statistics by taking forward the recommendations of the recent interdepartmental Task Force (with other stakeholders - the Home Office, DWP, DfES, DH, Treasury, Bank of England and DCLG). A bid for resources will need to be made in 2007/08 to take forward the key recommendations from 2008/09 onwards. Some limited work will be able to be taken forward within existing resources, including a review of port surveys;

- We will also collaborate across Government on e-Borders and the Points-Based System to seek to develop the longitudinal personal data required both for Home Office and ONSCD purposes, but also on alternative data sources, such as the WPLS/NI records and patient register data;
 - Completion of 4 LA Case Studies (Barnet, Hammersmith & Fulham, Derby and Welwyn Hatfield) currently underway to investigate potential for using local sources (data and intelligence) to improve ONSCD population statistics for all LAs in E&W or groups of LAs. The LA case studies will report between February and May 2007 with a final report following later in 2007 to summarise findings from all four studies and make recommendations.
- Representing interests on projects to improve address lists in Scotland, including the Definitive National Address (DNA) Project and Assessors' Portal. Compare the address lists used in the 2006 Census Test in Scotland with address lists from the DNA project;
- Continuing to investigate the potential for developing more efficient population statistics systems in Scotland, including:
 - Update current collections and reports: school census, child benefit, older persons, DVLA car registration, electoral registration;
 - Begin work on evaluating additional data from school census to inform migration estimates;
 - Complete evaluation of record linkage projects (especially Scottish Longitudinal Study) and carry out an experiment linking Census Test 2006 to Census 2001;
 - Begin work on evaluating scope for making more use of the NHS Central Register.
- We will continue to develop our demographic statistics in Northern Ireland. In particular, NISRA are examining a number of ways to improve migration statistics, following on from the publication of a sources and methods paper in July 2006. A common set of questions will be introduced into a range of household surveys to provide further information. In addition, further research will be conducted on the potential to extract information from administrative data sources, such as National Insurance Numbers.
- Examine the potential of the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study to inform population statistics and preparations for the 2011 Census; Work with the Pointer team to exploit the value of the NI address database;
- We will work on an assessment of the accuracy of past UK national projections which we will publish in the Summer 2007 issue of Population Trends. We have commissioned a complementary article for Population Trends from Nico Keilman from the University of Oslo which will consider the accuracy of projections made throughout Europe in order to set the UK analysis in context;

- We have created a basic model for the production of stochastic population projections. Over the next year, we plan to investigate a range of methodological issues which have been identified. Professor Phil Rees from the University of Leeds is acting as an academic advisor for this project;
- We intend to Research and develop sub-national population projections down to local authority level in Wales, a level not achieved since local government reorganisation in 1996. As part of this, the Welsh Assembly Government will lead in forming a UK group to develop appropriate methodologies and learn from the ‘bottom-up’ experience. The main demands for sub-national projections in Wales include: Local authority and national park planners require such projections in order to inform their Local Development Plans, and in some cases have worked towards developing their own projections in the absence of figures published by government; Those planning and assessing service provision sub-nationally require sub-national projections (eg demand from Social Services Inspectorate Wales as part of planning care services for the elderly); The Welsh Assembly Government also wish to investigate using sub-national projections for the allocation of resources to local councils on a three year basis. There are similar demands for local authority household projections for planning purposes and local authority population projections are the basis for deriving these.
- Conducting a review of the methodologies for forward household projections - by DCLG, SE/GROS and NISRA, learning from recent experiences across NSCD; GROS are also co-supervising a student at Liverpool University doing a PhD on “Incorporating Social Trends into Household Projections”.
- Continue to prepare for the 2011 Census, including conducting the 2007 Test and evaluating the outcomes. The Census plans are set out separately and not reported more fully in this theme document. However, as mentioned above, a key strand of our development work for the Population and Migration Theme will be preparing for the 2011 Census. This will include work on coverage and definitions, and planning for the demographic analysis needed.
- Demographic changes are being faced by all British-Irish Council (BIC) administrations. Demography was adopted as a work sector of the Council at the London Summit in June 2006. Scotland is taking forward the development of this new work stream.

2008-09 and beyond: Looking Forward

6.1 The following items have been identified as emerging issues. Taking them forward is subject to funding, planning and capacity constraints:

- The Migration Task Force recommendations;
- Development of coherent ONSCD work programme on the demographics of aging;
- Further analysis work on impacts of changes in family formations/household composition (ONSCD, unfunded);
- Ethnic Population Projections (not being pursued at this point - may be developed outside of NSCD, for example under UPTAP).
- Working in partnerships (ESRC, LGA).

Theme Group Members

This Work Programme was developed by the following people:

Guy Goodwin (Chair)	ONSCD
Chris Shaw	ONSCD
Patrick Collier	Home Office
Bob Garland	Department for Communities and Local Government
Robert Beatty	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
Roma Chappell	ONSCD
Luned Jones	National Assembly for Wales
Kirsty MacLachlan	General Register Office for Scotland
Ian Cope	Office for National Statistics
Peter Goldblatt	ONSCD
Philippa Brimicombe (Sec)	Office for National Statistics

Useful Websites

Further information on the statistics covered by this theme can be found at:

National Statistics	www.statistics.gov.uk
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency	www.nisra.gov.uk
General Register Office for Scotland	www.gro-scotland.gov.uk
Home Office	www.homeoffice.gov.uk
National Assembly for Wales	www.wales.gov.uk
Scottish Executive	www.scotland.gov.uk
Department for Communities and Local Government	www.communities.gov.uk