

Theme Programmes

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Summary of Theme-level Work Programmes

The Theme chapters which follow each give a brief overview of the Theme's work programme followed by an outline of the main influences which have contributed to the framing of the programme. Each chapter goes on to discuss the planned developments over the next three years and the changes from last year's plan. They continue by describing some of the international considerations that impact on the theme and conclude by setting out the costs for the Theme and listing relevant contacts and web addresses.

This chapter summarises the remit of each Theme and provides a brief overview of the key developments within each Theme's overall work programme. The timing of these proposals will be contingent on funding.

Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry

This Theme brings together information and statistics across the UK on the economic impact of the 'Agriculture', 'Fishing', 'Food' and 'Forestry' sectors, the development of statistics relating to rural areas (working as appropriate with other TWGs), outputs and inputs of agriculture and the food industry, animal and plant health, and food safety (again in association with other themes).

The outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in 2001 led to new demands for data and resulted in many of the developments for 2001-02 being substantially delayed or postponed. The key strategic influences and policy drivers for the theme fall under two main headings: Rural and Environmental Policy Issues, and Efficiency/Operational/Quality issues. The developments in the work programme for the theme are intended to support progress in one or both of these strands, and typically fall into one of the following categories: increasing use of electronic methods of data collection and dissemination; developing new outputs, e.g. rural indicators and a rural trends publication; developing more UK wide datasets; reducing data gaps; improvements to the agricultural census; reducing compliance costs for data suppliers.

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

- setting up new datasets and series on rural statistics (England);
- developing more integrated UK datasets;
- fuller use of Cattle Tracing System (CTS) and Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) data (England);
- continue development of Farm Survey System (FSS) (England and Wales);
- development of outputs to monitor recovery from Foot and Mouth Disease (Great Britain);
- continue investigation into linking of logbook and sales note fishing data electronically (England and Wales);
- comparison of Agricultural Census with Countryside Survey (England);

- further extension of electronic forms in farming surveys (England);
- improve contact with large farming businesses on Census (England);
- introduce new methods of working for June Agricultural Census (from FSS redevelopment) (England and Wales);
- implement Better Quality Services (BQS)/NS Review of Agriculture and Food Statistics (UK);
- analyse and extend range of rural data reports (England);
- Europe-wide Ground Use Survey – assessment of implications for existing data collection systems (UK);
- introduce Customer Survey on agricultural statistics (England).

Commerce, Energy and Industry

This Theme covers the full range of micro-economic data – i.e. data at detailed sectoral or industrial level (outputs for the macro-economy fall within the Economy theme). Micro-economic data includes indicators of output, gross value added, employment, productivity, trade in goods and services, foreign direct investment, statistics of small and medium size enterprises and insolvency statistics in the manufacturing and service sectors. Statistics on energy covers information on production, trade, supply and energy prices.

Over the forthcoming period, the theme will be focusing particularly on the development and provision of data to support and monitor government policies. In particular, the Government has made it one of its key economic objectives to narrow the productivity gap with other major industrialised nations. The Theme will aim to provide measures of performance at the industry and firm level. Other priorities include: developing data to assess the government's energy policy and inform the global debate; monitoring the government's initiatives in the areas of e-commerce and internet use; and increasing the range of indicators at the sub-national level to meet the growing demand for regional statistics. The enlargement of the EU and the impact of the Euro will also increase the requirements for data.

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

- exploring, under the (ONS) Data Collection Initiatives Strategy, a number of options for improved data collection including collection via the internet, Telephone Data Entry (TDE) and image processing of forms (UK);
- enhancing sample sizes, as already happens for Scotland and Northern Ireland and is planned for Wales for the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) 2001;
- re-designing sampling schemes and or methodology of UK surveys to improve the quality of sub-national estimates;
- implementing the recommendations of the quality review of the IDBR (UK);
- strengthening the ONS infrastructure systems supporting data collection and using new technology to disseminate data (UK);
- carrying out the Quality Review of Structural Business Statistics 2002/03 (UK);
- improving estimates of labour productivity (UK);
- maintaining the HMC&E on-line trade information service (www.uktradeinfo.com) introduced in June 2000 (UK);
- providing provisional summary monthly energy statistics covering production, use and prices on the internet at the beginning of each month with full data being posted at the end of the month (UK).

Crime and Justice

Crime and Justice statistics cover both the impact of crime on the public and the working of the criminal and civil justice systems. Within these broad headings are many more detailed topics: e.g. crime experienced by the public; crime known to the police; public confidence; the cost of crime. Drug-taking and its effect on young people; the effectiveness of justice systems. The extent of offending; cost-effectiveness; geographic variations; impacts on minority groups.

The Crime and Justice theme will be focusing on a number of areas over the forthcoming period at the UK level and at the devolved level, reflecting the differing criminal justice systems. The Theme will be working to

provide all administrations in the UK with statistics to support policies such as crime reduction, improvements to the criminal justice system, and to the treatment of victims and witnesses. Other policy areas requiring statistical support include the review of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and taking forward proposals for a new sentencing and courts framework. In England and Wales a key development will be the production of statistics at a local (Basic Command Unit) level. In Northern Ireland there will be particular emphasis on providing data that monitor the changes following the Patten review. In Scotland, data are required for monitoring policies such as improving the legal protection from domestic abuse for unmarried partners and to increase detection rates for racist crimes. The Theme also play a major role in the recently established EU Crime Prevention Network, and with the Council

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

Separate developments in England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland will be taken forward covering:

- extension of crime surveys;
- better information on offenders and offending;
- improvements in local area statistics;
- improved monitoring of race, gender and religion;
- contributions to international initiatives;
- better use of electronic means for data collection and dissemination.

Economy

The Economy Theme covers statistics about the national economic accounts, government expenditure and revenues, prices and measures of inflation, short term economic indicators and regional macro-economic statistics.

The focus for the Economy Theme in the period covered by this plan will be on improving the

quality, efficiency, flexibility and accessibility of macro-economic statistics and the underlying infrastructure systems. The development of new products will continue to reflect the need to measure the service and new economy sectors. It will continue to examine ways of meeting the increasing demand for high quality and more timely regional and sub-regional economic statistics. Any further changes will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary. This approach has been supported in the consultation exercise to develop this chapter, where users emphasised the need to focus on the delivery of already established priorities and recognised that system redevelopment was long overdue. Although the development of new products will be evolutionary, there is a continuing need to respond to events within the UK and globally such as the impact of the events of the 11th September on the insurance and airline industries.

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

- the statistical processing systems and associated business processes for the National Accounts will be redeveloped by ONS;
- further investigations will take place to improve the understanding of the devolved and regional economies;
- the SE have a three-year programme to develop Neighbourhood Statistics for Scotland;
- HMC&E will investigate the possibility of producing sub-regional overseas trade statistics;
- the feasibility of producing an Index of Services (IoS) for Northern Ireland will be investigated;
- development of GDP for Scotland will continue;
- strategies for measuring e-commerce and productivity will be developed by ONS;
- constant price supply use tables and annual chainlinking of quarterly and annual constant price GDP and its components will be implemented by ONS;

- satellite Accounts will be published by ONS to provide a better picture of the non-monetary aspects of welfare;
- HMC&E will develop a trade information service to provide a single access point for much of the information needed by businesses to make decisions on trading goods;
- electronic collection of trade data by HMC&E will be enhanced with the introduction of a new interactive input and editing system.

Education and Training

The Education and Training theme covers statistics about learners, learning progression, qualifications and skills, and the workforce that delivers learning.

There is a shared vision, across all parts of the UK, that essential information about learning will be routinely held, shared and used electronically with the aim of raising standards by increasing the availability, accessibility and quality of data to inform policy monitoring and development. The principle of "Collect once; use many times" will be employed, always having regard to data protection and privacy. This vision supports UK government initiatives such as the National Grid for Learning and Modernising Government agenda, and will improve interactions between government and its agencies. Administrative changes to post-16 learning in England and Wales will lead to harmonisation of definitions, surveys and performance measurement across routes. The development of pupil level records will continue throughout the UK and the electronic collection of pupil level school data will enable more sophisticated and focused analyses relevant to the raising of standards in schools and for particular groups of children. In Scotland, the new School Improvement Framework arrangements will have major implications for data collections and data flow.

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

- the development and exploitation of common basic data sets for education data, and pupil-level schools censuses. Electronic collection of education data sets (UK);
- the modification of collections and of publications to reflect indicators and targets

- published in education and training strategies (UK);
- the development and exploitation of surveys that measure basic skills in adults, key skills in the workforce and the progression of young people from full-time education into the labour market (England);
- the harmonisation of data on post-16 learning routes (England and Wales).
- in the long term, exploitation of the opportunities for new and improved statistics offered by developments in administrative systems used in the delivery of health and care, in particular the development of electronic health records;
- the resolution of issues relating to the use of information from personal health records in the production of statistics.

Note: these developments apply, to some extent, to all administrations in the UK, although this does not imply that all administrations will be taking forward these developments identically.

Health and Care

This Theme brings together information and statistics about health, health services provided by the NHS and social care, which provide for the more vulnerable members of our society. It also covers information relating to health and safety at work. This encompasses the statistics needed to describe and monitor the dynamics of health status in a population, including objective measures of health, and public/patient perceptions. Also included are both the determinants of health status and the activities that take place to improve health (including, but not solely, health system performance).

The key strategic influences and policy drivers for the theme fall under five main headings: Government Policies; Information for Clients and Patients; Information for Health and Care Professionals; Information for Managing; Statistical Infrastructure. The developments in the work programme for the theme are intended to support progress in one or more of these strands, and typically fall into one of the following categories: developing new outputs or enhancing existing outputs; data linkage to provide better outcome data for clinical governance; developing new data sources; improving exploitation of existing data; performance monitoring; enhancing geographic coherence; continuing to contribute to international work.

Key Developments

- work on the development of a “Framework for Health and Care statistics”;
- development of data and publications relating to inequalities and to targets for reducing inequalities;
- further work on performance measures relating to health and social care in particular relating to the quality and outcomes of care;

Labour Market

This Theme brings together information and statistics about our working lives. It covers statistics about: characteristics of those people who have a job and those who do not; occupations and industries in which people work; travel-to-work arrangements; pay and earnings from employment; employers’ demand for labour and their employment costs; and industrial relations between employers and employees.

Over the period, the key priorities for the theme will be to invest in systems to support a number of the government’s policies, both in the macro-economic and monetary domain, and in the Labour Market sphere (in particular to monitor four key Public Service Agreement targets relating to “Welfare to Work” and a number of targets relating to educational and training standards). Other key priorities include providing data to support the work of the Low Pay Commission (LPC) in setting the National Minimum wage, and enhancing the information supplied on employee relations. There will be ongoing work to support the information needs of the devolved administrations, and more general requirements for sub-national data. Meeting the needs of the European Union, which increasingly requires more speedy delivery of data, harmonised across member countries will also be a priority.

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

- modernisation of labour market statistics systems in ONS to better meet the needs of the Bank of England and the Treasury for macro-economic analysis (UK);

- developments following on from the Labour Market Statistics (LMS) Framework Review (UK);
- ONS will take forward a structured approach to the improvement of local area labour market statistics in response to increasing demand for sub-national data (UK);
- in 2002 ONS plans to produce results from a new survey of job vacancies across the economy to enhance the information available about labour demand (GB);
- improvements to the LFS following the recommendations of the LFS Quality Review (UK);
- improvements to earnings statistics following from the Distribution of Earnings Review (UK);
- ONS and DWP will be working together to enhance the quality of information about claimants of welfare benefits as a contribution to 'Welfare to work' policy needs (GB).

Natural and Built Environment

Statistics on this theme cover four main areas:

- Natural Environment, covering air, water, soil, wildlife, natural resources, waste and land cover;
- Housing, covering houses, households, housing finance and homelessness;
- Construction covering output, new orders, employment, building materials and price and cost indices;
- Land use and planning covering development control, land use change and stock, small area retail turnover, floor-space, town centres and green belt.

Data are collected from a variety of sources, including businesses, local authorities and individuals. The role of government statisticians is to bring this information together in a way that provides an overview of the state of the environment and its interactions with socio-economic activity. The Theme includes data used to support many areas of policy development and monitoring in UK government. The theme

will be focusing on data needs arising from social inclusion, regeneration and the regional, rural and urban policy agendas.

Given the breadth of the theme, there are a number of particular priorities relating to specific components. In the Natural Environment area particular focus will be placed on statistics to support Environmental Protection policies, as well as data on solid waste and water resources, and data on commercial and industrial waste. Within Housing a particular focus will be improving the breadth and quality of data, and making improvements to data on homelessness. There will be an increased focus within the Planning section on methodology, including urban and rural definitions and general enhancements to land use data sources. For Construction statistics, there will be focus on, among other things, taking forward the recommendations of the quality review.

Key Developments

The key developments that will support this overall direction are listed below:

- quality improvements, such as increases in sample sizes and the disaggregation of data, in conjunction with the emphasis on better regional and rural statistics, will aid policy development and monitoring in areas such as regeneration and social inclusion;
- developments of better links between existing data sources on land use and property to contribute to analysis at central and local government level for better use of land;
- increased emphasis on regional and rural issues, in keeping with some of the aims of social exclusion policy in the development of rural areas, and improved analysis for urban and rural areas following a review of urban/rural definitions. The reorganisation of the machinery of government has left the Theme in an excellent position to address this area;
- increasing use of electronic data collection and expanding and improving current surveys, in many cases with the intention of bringing more surveys into scope for National Statistics;
- greater availability of information and wider dissemination via the Internet;

- increasing involvement in international considerations across the Theme.

Details of specific developments in the four main areas can be found in the theme chapter.

Population and Migration

The Population and Migration theme brings together information and statistics about the population and its comings and goings. It includes population estimates, projections, outputs from the Census of Population and Housing, international and internal migration, statistics on births, deaths, marriages and divorces, immigration and citizenship statistics and electoral statistics. These provide essential information about the characteristics, structure and dynamics of the population.

The Population and Migration theme will be focusing on a number of key areas over the period, including the provision of population information for key projects such as Neighbourhood Statistics. Emphasis will also be placed on providing data on the population, which is critical to labour market, health and education policies. The theme will also focus on producing data that measure effectively key changes to the age structure, ethnic make-up and size of the UK the population, especially the impact of immigration and asylum.

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

- exploiting 2001 Census results, e.g. as a baseline for population statistics in the intercensal period and for demographic analysis (UK);
- research on the methods of producing population estimates for small areas (UK);
- investigating options for producing ethnic minority population estimates for smaller areas than currently available (England and Wales);
- investigating administrative data sources to assess their potential usage in the preparation of population and migration statistics (UK);
- improvements in statistics on asylum and immigration (HO);

- development of quarterly population estimates (England and Wales).

Social and Welfare

The Social and Welfare Theme brings together information and statistics about the domestic, financial and social living arrangements of individuals and families. It covers: social trends and overviews, household finances, benefits and tax credits, welfare, socio-economic inequalities and poverty, household and family structures and projections, households and housing, culture, sport and leisure activities.

Over the forthcoming period, the theme will be focusing on a number of key areas including the provision of data to support analysis of government policies such as the Tax Credit programme. With an increasing focus and need for client group analysis, there will also be an extension of analysis projects, and publications to support this. Additionally the theme will be investing resource to ensure the more effective delivery of key data and publications electronically, including Social Trends and Family Spending (from Expenditure and Food Survey (EFS) available electronically).

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

- extending the Family Resources Survey (FRS) to Northern Ireland (NISRA and DWP);
- enhancing the LFS in Wales (Welsh Assembly);
- producing new series of topic reports drawing on a range of sources, especially the 2001 Census (ONS) (UK);
- preparing to publish data from the National Lottery awards database under the NS logo DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport);
- improving the National Statistics Social and Welfare website (ONS) (UK);
- extending client group analysis, covering children and families, pensioners, those of working age and the disabled (Department for Work and Pensions and Northern Ireland Department for Social Development);

- developing a new cradle-to-grave database, covering some of the key social and economic features of people's lives over time (DWP) (GB).

Transport, Travel and Tourism

Transport Travel and Tourism statistics cover a range of topics from national traffic counts and large-scale surveys of road freight operators to assessment of the role of tourism in the economy and statistics about the relative safety of different transport modes.

The overall direction the theme will be taking over the forthcoming period reflects key priorities including: producing statistics to monitor the Ten Year Transport Plan and to support policy for sustainable transport; providing information to promote regional policy and to assist monitoring of Local transport plans; development of statistics to support the road congestion and safety agendas; increasing recognition of the need to monitor the role of tourism.

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below.

Key Developments

- enhancement of the National Travel Survey (NTS) to allow annual monitoring of key national trends and greater geographical detail (GB);
- extension and rationalisation of data available at various sub-national levels;
- development of a programme to monitor road congestion (England);
- work to bring the UK Tourism Survey within the scope of NS;
- quality Review of Road Accident Statistics.

Other National Statistics

The Other National Statistics Theme covers statistics on a wide range of topics, including numbers of people working in the public sector and the armed forces; the provision of public and community services such as the Fire Brigade Service; compendia publications (those that contain statistics from a number of NS Themes) and statistics on international development.

Given the range of topics covered by this theme, there are a range of priorities over the coming period. Cross-governmental policies such as Civil Service Reform, the Modernising Government Agenda and the work of the Knowledge Network will all impact on the work of the theme. The Department for International Development will be particularly focused on monitoring outcomes and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. The theme will also be contributing extensively to the NeSS which is, in part a response to the Government's Neighbourhood Renewal and Social Inclusion agendas.

The key developments which will support this overall direction are listed below:

Key Developments

- work is being taken forward across government to produce outputs on personnel statistics from April 2002 onwards that reflect the new ethnic categories used in the Census (UK);
- the CO are reviewing how their outputs are used and, more broadly, are developing a communications strategy which will include further development of their website (England and Wales);
- the Defence Analytical Research Agency (DASA) will continue to implement the findings of the NS quality review on *Armed Forces Personnel Statistics*, which was published in August 2001 (UK);
- DASA will also be taking forward recommendations of the reviews of both *Armed Forces Medical Statistics* and *United Kingdom Defence Statistics* (UK);
- DFID are conducting an internal review of their systems for collecting information on the purpose of aid. This should lead to more comprehensive and accurate reporting in future;
- on the dissemination side, DFID are taking forward development of a Compact Disc Read-Only Memory (CD-ROM) version of the key output '*Statistics on International Development*';

- a number of reviews of the contents and use of compendia publications produced by the ONS are planned, including the *Annual Abstract*;
- a wide-ranging review of dissemination practices to exploit new technologies is underway. This will see, for example, *Regional Trends* published simultaneously as an interactive Portable Document Format (PDF) and paper publication.

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