

---

## **Population and Migration**

**Three Year Work Plan 2002/03-2004/05**

## 1. Summary

### An Introduction to the Population and Migration Theme

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 main government departments and devolved administrations involved in the preparation and production of these statistics are ONS; General Register Office for Scotland (GROS); NISRA, Government Actuary's Department (GAD) and Home Office (HO).

Population and migration statistics are produced using a range of data sources, both administrative and surveys. One of the most important is the decennial Census of Population and Housing which provides detailed information about numbers and characteristics for small areas. Administrative sources include the civil registration system, patient registers, and HO data on asylum seekers. Surveys such as the International Passenger Survey and the LFS provide information on international migration and ethnicity.

Population statistics are used extensively by a very wide range of users including government, business, academia and the general public. Census counts, population estimates and projections are used in determining annual resource allocation for local and health authorities; in planning for and projecting future needs for housing, education, health care, social welfare and transport; and by policy makers in taking account of demographic features such as the ageing of the population in developing policy. Census counts are used to assess the effectiveness of policies in areas such as housing and regeneration and racial discrimination and disadvantage. Population numbers are often used in the derivation of key indicators which measure the state of the economy e.g. GDP per head or social measures such as health indicators. Thus they are a key input to work on cross cutting issues such as social exclusion. Vital statistics and migration statistics provide information on the dynamics of

population change and on the experiences of different cohorts and subgroups.

Immigration and citizenship statistics are used mainly by HO Ministers and policy staff, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and ONS. There is also keen interest from Parliament, the media and the public.

User input on products and priorities is through well established regular user consultation mechanisms, including arrangements specific to England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The major groups include a wide range of users covering central government, local government, health sector, the private sector and academia.

### Brief Overview of the Theme's Work Programme:

The key activities covered in the plan are:

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

## 2. Strategic Influences and Policy Drivers

An objective of NS is to improve the quality, timeliness and relevance of statistics and the statistical service. This requires an awareness of, and responsiveness to, external influences and policy drivers. There is a great demand for population and migration statistics of a high quality. Requirements continually evolve as users become ever more sophisticated in their demands for information to support a wide range of policies and programmes. The key influences and

drivers are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion are generating significant new requirements, most notably for statistics relating to small areas and for a larger range of different geographies. For example, the recent Foot and Mouth Disease crisis gave rise to demands for statistics about the population in rural areas. The definitions of rural/urban areas are being reviewed and producers of population statistics will need to respond to definitional changes. As the Neighbourhood Statistics Service is being developed in response to the PAT 18 (Better Information) report and similar pressures in the devolved administrations, the demand for small area population estimates has increased. These estimates are needed in the derivation of a range of social and economic indicators for planning purposes. They are also required for the production of rates on a variety of social and health indicators, such as employment rates, and fertility and mortality rates.

There is an increased requirement from government and the public to monitor performance, policy effectiveness and sustainability achievement. Demographic information is required to provide both numerators and denominators for indicators at both national and local levels.

The diverse and changing population – The age structure of the UK population is an important factor affecting society in future years. The ageing population has implications for policy development e.g. in areas such as the labour market, health and social care. Policy makers will require projections of the future age structure of the population. Changes in household composition and family formation have implications for the provision of care and support in communities.

The influence of international migration – In recent years net inward migration has become the dominant element of population change in England. International migrants have increased the cultural diversity of the UK population. Understanding the different demographic behaviour of these different groups is fundamental in piecing together knowledge of social change. Information is required about the ethnic mix of the population at a local level and on where international migrants live.

The Government's recently announced policies on immigration and asylum require information about the economic contribution of migrants and how they can fill skill gaps; the integration of refugees and other migrants into society; information to address illegal residence and employment; and information to support service provision to migrants refugees and asylum seekers.

Devolution – The establishment of devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland has influenced responsibilities. Whilst the major priorities for the development of population and migration statistics are common, there are differences in the approaches of the individual countries that reflect local needs and priorities. The Censuses in the UK are the responsibility of the Registrars General reporting to the respective devolved parliament.

Civil registration review – The civil registration services are the data source for statistics on key life events. The systems in England and Wales and Scotland are under review, and consideration is being given to the need for change in Northern Ireland. There are potential implications for vital statistics systems, dependent upon the extent of any changes in the way the registration services operate and on the range of data collected.

International organisations – Organisations such as the EU, Council of Europe and UN require member states to provide demographic information. There is considerable activity to develop indicators that are comparable across all member states. At present there is a drive to improve the quality of statistics on migration, in particular.

Statistical challenges – Users require population statistics that are fit for a large range of different purposes. Population estimates and projections are used in the allocation of resources to local and health authorities and in decisions about future housing provision. This presents a drive for improvements in quality, reliability and consistency in all population statistics, but most notably on migration. Timely estimates are required for use in grossing-up sample numbers in surveys such as the LFS. Increased data management capabilities have resulted in increased demands for more information and greater transparency about methods. Also more administrative data sources are becoming available that need to be investigated and exploited.

### 3. Planned Developments

Although there is general consensus on developments between UK and devolved administrations, the precise work ascribed to ONS in this section will cover England and Wales, and may not be pursued in the same way for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The planned development of a framework for social statistics will provide context for the development of population and migration statistics. Within ONS the development of population statistics has been identified as a key area because a sound understanding of the population and its dynamics is essential in assessing social changes in the UK.

#### Developments to outputs

##### Small area population estimates

Projects are underway to assess the feasibility of producing small area population estimates of an appropriate quality in the intercensal period. The availability of small area population estimates permits flexible aggregation to different geographies, such as any new urban /rural definitions. The ONS project will evaluate a range of methods and data sources, comparing results with 2001 Census figures. A recommendation on the most suitable approach will be made early in 2004. A similar Scottish project aims to recommend a methodology by end 2002.

##### Ethnic minority estimates and projections

At present in the intercensal period only limited information is available on population by ethnic group for areas below government office region. Research will be carried out to investigate the extent to which approaches can be developed to produce population estimates by ethnic group for local areas. The Local LFS, which is the LFS with an additional sample, will be used in future to make some small improvements in reliability of the estimates.

ONS is leading a feasibility study on producing projections of ethnic minority populations. The report will provide an assessment of what can be reliably achieved. The feasibility report is due for publication in June 2002, and will be used in the development of the subsequent work programme.

#### Quarterly population estimates

Modernisation of labour market statistics systems is a strand of the ONS statistical infrastructure programme. This will include grossing mechanisms for the LFS. A need has been identified for more frequent, i.e. quarterly, and more timely population estimates, initially at the national level for use in the grossing process. Work will be undertaken to determine what can be produced with minimal use of projections and minimal need for revisions.

#### Demographic analysis

In addition to the production of statistics, estimates and projections, there is a need for more detailed analyses and descriptive material explaining the demographic situation in the UK. There will be a programme of analytical outputs, initially focussing on family demography, but over time expanding as the analytical capability is developed. Additionally ONS have a programme of cross-cutting analysis which includes work on ethnicity and identity, and the labour market and demography. Contributions from the demographic perspective will be made to these and other cross cutting analysis of social issues.

#### Dissemination

The Internet and the NS website will be the main mechanism for release of statistics. This will facilitate more flexible dissemination of a range of outputs on population, vital statistics and migration. Population Trends, the flagship publication for the theme, will be reviewed in the context of all Social flagship publications.

#### Developments to sources

##### Census 2001

The 2001 Census will provide a wealth of statistics at the local level, on the ethnic mix of the population and on socio-economic groupings. The timetable for release of Census results is not finalised, but the Census organisations are working to the following targets. The mid year estimates for 2001, scheduled for publication in August 2002, will be based on the One Number Census results. ONS and NISRA aim to publish Key Statistics in December 2002, with the main national and local results being issued in the first half of 2003.

In addition to providing the baseline for estimates for the next intercensal period, the 2001 Census results will be used to assess the accuracy of the

intercensal estimates produced over the previous decade. Findings will be used to make judgements on methodological and quality improvements to produce high quality estimates over the next decade. The mid-year estimates for the period 1992 to 2000 will be rebased to provide a consistent series.

The Population and Migration theme will contribute to the post evaluation review of the 2001 Census, which will include an evaluation of the innovative One Number Census process. Additionally, the PAT 18 Better Information report, which related to England, recommended that ONS be invited to evaluate whether there is merit in conducting a Census in 2006. ONS have started a review and recommendations will be put to Ministers.

Census data will be used extensively in demographic analysis and in a range of multi-source topic analyses.

#### **Patient register data**

Patient register data maintained by Health Authorities (HAs) is used in England and Wales to estimate migration between local authority areas. In April 2002 there will be a significant restructuring in the Health Service in England and Wales, which has implications for data supply. There will be an evaluation of the NHS Strategic Tracing Service (NSTS) as there are potential benefits from acquiring data from a single source (NSTS) rather than from individual HAs. This will include assessment of the current method of deriving internal migration estimates.

Patient register data will be evaluated for its potential use in the preparation of small area estimates and for estimating migration within local authority areas. This evaluation will focus on data quality issues. Given the mobility of some sectors of the community, there are some concerns that patient registers are not recording all moves, e.g. for groups such as young men and asylum seekers.

The Central Health Index in Northern Ireland and the Community Health Index in Scotland will continue to be exploited in the production of population statistics.

#### **Changes in sources/exploiting new sources**

As new administrative data sources become available they are evaluated in the context of the

production of population statistics, and whether their introduction will improve reliability and quality. The aim is to ensure that the available administrative and survey data are used to best effect, taking appropriate account of data confidentiality and data protection issues.

Civil registration review. There will be input to the review processes to ensure that statistical needs are taken into account when modernising the civil registration services. The White Paper on Civil Registration: Vital Change, published on 22 January, sets out the high level strategy for the registration service in England and Wales. This will be followed by a consultation on the detail in summer 2002, as is required under the Regulatory Reform Act. The aim is to lay a draft order and explanatory note before a Parliamentary Committee in 2003. On deaths, it will be necessary to take account of recommendations of the Shipman Enquiry and the Coroner's Review, which are both due to report in Spring 2003.

Active consideration is being given to holding a similar review in Northern Ireland. The civil registration review in Scotland is unlikely to have implications for statistics.

The statistics of Control of Immigration and Asylum will be further developed to reflect improvements in administrative data sources and the implementation of policy changes.

#### **Report on the theme quality review programme**

The NS Quality Review programme provides a structured framework to review the statistics required, and the methods and data sources used in the preparation of the statistics.

#### ***National Population Projections***

The Government Actuary's Department will implement, where possible, the recommendations from the NS Quality Review of the methodology used in preparing mortality projections, in time for the 2002-based national population projections.

#### ***Reviews scheduled for 2001-02***

Some preliminary work on the international migration review has been started during 2001-02. Work has yet to begin on the births and deaths review.

**International migration.**

High priority will be given to improving the statistics on international migration and asylum seekers. One of the issues identified by users is the need for more reliable estimates of international migration at county and local authority level. The NS quality review will investigate this and other user requirements, assess how the currently available statistics meet these needs, assess gaps and make recommendations. The review will also address information requirements about the economic outcomes of different categories of migrants, and the implications in social terms for example to support service providers. An ongoing programme ensures the best use of funding to identify migrants from the International Passenger Survey. ONS/GROS/NISRA will work with the HO to try and improve information on the geographical location of asylum seekers.

**Planned Quality Developments**

Although the drive to improve quality is spearheaded through the NS Quality Review programme for the theme, additionally there is a continuous programme of research to make methodological improvements. This draws on academics and other experts as necessary. Data sources are kept under review and new sources are investigated to assess their potential use in population and migration statistics.

Improved guidance and increased information about methods is now in the public domain. This will be enhanced and updated as necessary.

**Statistics to support immigration control and asylum**

The HO will continue to improve the quality and scope of the statistics by utilising improved administrative sources of casework information.

**New measures for geographical coherence****Vital Statistics**

As part of the drive to improve the quality of geographic referencing, ONS will use address based grid references on births and deaths data from 2003, retrospectively coding data for 2001 and 2002. The NS Socio-Economic Classification and SOC 2000 will be used in processing births and deaths data from 2001 onwards.

**Devolution and coherence**

The Concordat on Statistics reflects the need to ensure coherent statistics for the UK, whilst

recognising devolved responsibilities and that individual countries may have specific requirements and priorities. There are regular UK-wide co-ordination and liaison mechanisms in place for both Census and on population and migration statistics more generally. The aims are to meet user needs for comparable statistics across the UK and to fulfil requirements for consistent UK statistics.

**4. Key Changes from last year's Plan**

The current plan reflects the evolutionary development of population and migration statistics. The only major change from last year is the planned quarterly population estimates.

**5. International Considerations**

The UK will continue to be active participants at various Eurostat, UNECE, UN and Council of Europe meetings, seeking to improve the comparability and coherence of population and migration statistics. The HO will further develop its contribution at international forum dealing with statistics of immigration control and asylum.

**6. Costs**

For a full explanation of National Statistics costs, see Appendix B.

Theme specific expenditure is as follows:

**'Projected' Resource Costs:**

2002/03	£12.5m
2003/04	£12.7m

These annual estimates of 'projected' expenditure include the following expenditure on **significant developments** (i.e. over £50k):

Redevelopment of Population Estimates	2002/03	£1.25m
	2003/04	£1.25m
Quarterly Population Estimates	2002/03	£165k
	2003/04	£175k
Ethnic Population Projections	2002/03	£165k
	2003/04	£175k

Demographic Analysis	2002/03	£110k
	2003/04	£110k

Small Area Population Estimates	2002/03	£310k
	2003/04	£380k

Please note, these figures represent **significant** developments only and will not match the total expenditure on statistical developments for the theme shown in Table 1 in Appendix B.

Graham Jones  
*Office for National Statistics*

David Orr  
*General Register Office for Scotland*

Chris Shaw  
*Government Actuary's Department*

Judith Walton (Editor)  
*Office for National Statistics*

Peter Ward  
*Home Office*

Katie Fisher (Secretary)  
*Office for National Statistics*

## 7. Contacts and further information

### Websites

Further information on statistics covered by this Theme can be found at the following websites:

National Statistics  
[www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency  
[www.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.nisra.gov.uk)

National Assembly for Wales  
[www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales/index.htm](http://www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales/index.htm)

General Register Office – Scotland  
[www.gro-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk)

Government Actuary's Department  
[www.gad.gov.uk](http://www.gad.gov.uk)

Scottish Executive  
[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

Home Office  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

### Theme address

If you have any comments on this Theme plan, or suggestions for future programmes, please email us at:  
[population@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:population@statistics.gov.uk)

### Theme Group Members

This Theme plan was developed by the following people:

Karen Dunnell (Chair)  
*Office for National Statistics*

Peter Capell  
*Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions*

Norman Caven  
*Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency*

This is a blank page