



National Statistics

Annual Report 2007/08

Presented to Parliament by
the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury
by Command of Her Majesty

Cm 7435

July 2008

£25.75

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ISBN 9780101743525

This document is part of a series of Departmental Reports which, along with the Main Estimates 2008-09, the document Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2008 and the Supplementary Budgetary Information 2008-09, present the Government's expenditure plans for 2008-09, and comparative outturn data for prior years.

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Foreword by the National Statistician

This is the eighth National Statistics annual report. Once again, it details some of the significant development work being carried out by statisticians across the Government Statistical Service (GSS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). In the main it is reporting progress against plans set out in the *National Statistics Work Programme 2005/06–2007/08*. The move to make ONS independent of ministers and to make the governance of official statistics the responsibility of an independent body was a particularly important development during the year.

The Statistics and Registration Service Act gained Royal Assent in July 2007 and this has led to the creation of the UK Statistics Authority, which came into being on 1 April 2008. This is probably the most significant change in government statistics in a generation. It has been a privilege to have been National Statistician while these major developments have been occurring and to have had an opportunity to help shape the legislation.

Although much of the public attention has been focused on the change in governance, with the UK Statistics Authority replacing the role of ministers and ONS being put at arm's length from government, this legislation has given us an opportunity to progress on a range of fronts. This is picked up within a number of the cross-cutting chapters in the report.

The data sharing clause within the Act will allow data, particularly data collected for administrative purposes, to be shared within government more easily than now. In time, this will allow more innovative data analysis and should also reduce the burden placed on individuals and businesses, as statisticians reuse data that has already been collected. Of course, data confidentiality will remain of utmost concern and there will be strict safeguards to protect personal information.

In addition, the introduction of the Act has given my heads of profession within other government departments and me an opportunity to evaluate critically the way in which the GSS operates. As a result, we have set in progress a range of initiatives to revitalise the GSS, and improve GSS learning and development. This work is outlined in the human resources chapter.

The establishment of GSS statisticians in each of the nine English regions has also been a major achievement. This initiative fulfils one of the

principal recommendations from the Allsopp *Review of Statistics for Economic Policymaking* and brings the GSS much closer to those people who use the statistics that we produce on a daily basis. This contact should introduce a new perspective and allow us to align our outputs more closely to their needs. Although the regional statisticians have only been in place for a relatively short time, they are already having a significant impact, and the reaction from both external and internal stakeholders has been overwhelmingly positive.

Not everything has gone as well as we would have liked. The ONS Modernisation Programme – Odyssey – has not achieved everything we planned at the outset. However, a significant amount has been achieved, with a number of statistical systems being modernised – significantly improving the quality of outputs while also reducing risk. In addition, the lessons we learned in carrying out this programme and the skills we gained will stand us in good stead with regard to the forthcoming ONS Transformation Strategy, which is currently being developed.

This is likely to be the last report in this format. Work is currently being undertaken by the UK Statistics Authority and the GSS to determine the most effective method of planning and reporting in the future. As such, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has worked on official statistics for all their hard work over the last few years. Their efforts have enabled us to achieve the plans set out in the National Statistics Work Programme three years ago.



Karen Dunnell
National Statistician
Director of the Office for National Statistics
Head of the Government Statistical Service

About this Report

This report summarises work carried out across the Government Statistical Service (GSS) during the last financial year against the plan set out in the preceding National Statistics three-year work programme.

Publication of this report also meets one of the key responsibilities assigned to the National Statistician in the *Framework for National Statistics*, namely:

to prepare an annual report on the performance of National Statistics to the Minister for National Statistics.

This year's report describes progress against the work programme during 2007/08 across three main areas of work:

- major developments that cut across departmental or theme boundaries
- National Statistics Theme Working Groups (TWGs), and
- quality improvements carried out in the context of the National Statistics Quality Review Programme

Throughout this report, readers will come across references to a number of interrelated terms and concepts; these are explained more fully below.

What are official statistics?

Until the commencement of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*, the term 'official statistics' embraced a range of numerical information and covered all those statistics that fell within the managerial responsibility of any official working for the State. They included:

- collected statistics – any statistics gathered by government through formal censuses, statistical surveys and statistical inquiries, either directly or through sponsorship or contractual/outsourcing arrangements
- administrative or management statistics – any statistics generated as a by-product of any operational, management or administrative system established, for example, to collect taxes, provide benefits or deliver services
- other statistics – statistics generated to help the work of government, for example internal operational figures relating to personnel and performance

Official statistics were defined as those managed or produced by any of the following:

- any civil servant working within central government – made up of government departments, devolved administrations, and their agencies, also known as 'Central Government Statistics'
- any official working in any one of the many thousands of public bodies – this category includes quasi-government organisations, such as non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), quasi-autonomous non-government organisations (quangos) and any other public body funded by central or local government

From 1 April 2008 the term 'official statistics' now embraces all those statistical outputs produced by:

- the UK Statistics Authority and its executive office – the Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- other UK government departments and agencies
- the Scottish Government

- a Welsh ministerial authority
- a Northern Ireland department, and
- any other person acting on behalf of the Crown – described collectively as ‘other Crown bodies’

The Act also allows ministers to specify, through secondary legislation (an Order), the non-Crown bodies that produce official statistics so that they too can be subject to monitoring by the UK Statistics Authority and their data can be eligible for assessment as National Statistics. This provision is designed to ensure a broad definition of official statistics from the start, as well as a flexible one that can be adapted over time to suit changing circumstances.

Framework for National Statistics

The *Framework for National Statistics* was published in June 2000 and described the governance and administration arrangements for National Statistics which were in place until 31 March 2008. It set out the aims and objectives of National Statistics (see Appendix A), outlining the roles and responsibilities of the major participants – ministers, the Statistics Commission, the National Statistician, and Heads of Profession for Statistics (HoPs). It also described the equivalent governance arrangements for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

On 1 April 2008 the *Framework for National Statistics* was superseded by the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*. As a result of the Act, the Statistics Commission has been abolished and its role subsumed by the UK Statistics Authority. The main duties of the Authority are set out in Appendix A.

Government Statistical Service

The GSS is a decentralised body spread across more than 30 government departments, agencies and devolved administrations. The National Statistician, as well as being the Director of ONS, is also the Head of the GSS. There are more than 7,000 civil servants working in the GSS, whether in ONS, in other government departments and organisations, or the devolved administrations. Their primary function is to collect, analyse and disseminate statistics. Members of the GSS operate within an ONS-administered personnel

framework that sets standards for recruitment, qualifications, competence and training. They are also under the managerial authority of a designated HoP. Appendix B shows all those organisations in which members of the GSS work.

The GSS works closely with the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) to ensure, as far as possible, the coherence and compatibility of statistical activities across the UK. Although for historical reasons NISRA is not part of the GSS, for the purposes of this report, where the term GSS is used it also encompasses the activities of NISRA.

Statistical Heads of Profession

Every government department or agency with a significant GSS presence in terms of either its production or use of GSS statistics, has its own Head of Profession (HoP). Each of the three devolved administrations has a Chief Statistician who performs the same functions. The National Statistician, along with her other roles, is the HoP for ONS, but delegates some of her HoP responsibilities to the Heads of ONS’s Statistical Directorates. Appendix B shows those organisations with a statistical HoP.

National Statistics Theme Working Groups

One of the key aims of the *Framework for National Statistics* was to improve the coherence and relevance of the statistics produced by the more than 30 departments, agencies and administrations from which the GSS is formed. One way of achieving this was through the 12 National Statistics Theme Working Groups (TWG). Each TWG has responsibility for a specific area of national life – such as ‘Crime and Justice’, the ‘Economy’ and ‘Health and Care’ – bringing together statistical representatives from each of the government departments, agencies and devolved administrations. Their role is to develop and implement coherent work plans for the National Statistics and official statistics that fall within their remit. These are then collated and published in the *National Statistics Work Programme*. TWGs also play a key role in generating and monitoring quality reviews of key outputs within their remit, which they do under the auspices of the National Statistics Quality

Review Programme. Appendix B shows the links between each of the organisations that make up the GSS and each of the TWGs.

National Statistics

The term 'National Statistics' covers a designated set of official statistics under the managerial control of statisticians working in the GSS. Prior to 1 April 2008, National Statistics were produced in accordance with the *Framework for National Statistics* and were expected to meet the high professional standards set out in the *National Statistics Code of Practice* and its supporting Protocols. National Statistics were also subject to regular quality assurance reviews and were free from any political influence.

To obtain this identity, official statistics had to meet National Statistics standards for quality and integrity, and one of the long-term aims behind the launch of the concept in June 2000 was to expand the total set of official statistics that could be called 'National Statistics'.

From 1 April 2008, the UK Statistics Authority has responsibility for assessing which statistics may be labelled as National Statistics, and only those statistics that fully comply with the Authority's Code of Practice will earn the title. The UK Statistics Authority will embark on a programme to assess all new and existing National Statistics and determine whether or not they can be classified as National Statistics. Those statistics that were designated as National Statistics on 1 April 2008 will remain as National Statistics until they have been reassessed by the UK Statistics Authority.

National Statistics Code of Practice – Statement of Principles

The *National Statistics Code of Practice* sets out the high-level standards, and key principles and practices that all producers of National Statistics across government are expected to follow and uphold. The Code is supplemented by 12 separate Protocols providing producers with practical guidance on how to apply the principles of the Code to a range of statistical activities. Until April 2008 the National Statistician was the final authority on the interpretation of the Code.

From 1 April 2008 the UK Statistics Authority became responsible for the Code. It is anticipated that an early priority for the Authority will be to develop a new Code which can then be used as the basis of its assessment programme.

Scope of National Statistics

The *Framework for National Statistics* gave government ministers responsibility for deciding the scope of National Statistics.

In practice, the decision on whether or not to designate any particular output as a 'National Statistic' was usually arrived at through negotiation. The HoPs in each government department, or the Chief Statisticians in each of the three devolved administrations, could initiate the process and, in so doing, would involve the National Statistician. The latter ensured that the statistics were of the right quality and were generated in accordance with the *National Statistics Code of Practice*. However, once the standards were met, the minister of the relevant department had the final authority to determine the designation. The long-term aim, set out in 2000, was that all GSS statistics would eventually qualify as National Statistics.

Over time, statistics might also have their National Statistics designation withdrawn. This could happen, for instance, because of statisticians' concerns about quality, or where a minister found the operational constraints of the Code of Practice too restrictive. Appendix D gives details of those statistics that were included within, or withdrawn from, the scope of National Statistics in the last year of the system established in 2000.

By the launch of National Statistics in June 2000, most government departments had categorised the majority of their key GSS statistics as National Statistics. In the case of ONS, all its outputs were automatically designated National Statistics.

From 1 April 2008, the UK Statistics Authority assumed sole responsibility for assigning National Statistics status. Ministers still have responsibility for determining the scope of National Statistics in so far as only they and the National Statistician can put forward statistics for assessment to become National Statistics. However, the UK Statistics Authority is able to ask ministers to put

forward a statistic for assessment and, should the minister decline such a request, then they must submit their reasons for doing so to Parliament. The UK Statistics Authority has sole responsibility for removing statistics from the scope of National Statistics.

Machinery of government changes

Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) was created in May 2007, bringing together the responsibilities of the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) and subsuming some of the responsibilities of the Home Office, including those relating to the Prison and Probation Services. The MoJ is responsible for policy on the overall criminal, civil, family and administrative justice systems, as well as the courts, tribunals, legal aid and constitutional reform. The Home Office has retained its other responsibilities, including those for policing, anti-social behaviour, drugs, crime reduction, immigration, asylum and identity management (identity cards and passports). In general, when this report deals with statistical matters that were the responsibility of the DCA but are now the responsibility of the new MoJ, it refers to the arrangements as they now exist and contact details have been updated accordingly.

DCSF, DIUS and BERR

On 28 June 2007 the Prime Minister outlined a further series of 'machinery of government' changes which resulted in the creation of three new government departments – Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF); Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS); and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR). As a result of these changes, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) ceased to exist.

- DCSF is responsible for taking forward policy relating to children and young people, and

co-ordinating and leading work across government on youth and family policy. It also took over responsibility for pre-19 education policy from DfES

- DIUS is responsible for science and innovation and oversees the Science Budget. It is also responsible for development, funding and performance management of higher education, and works closely with DCSF
- BERR is responsible for competition policy and for promoting better regulation across business, public and voluntary sectors. It also provides support to the Business Council. In addition, BERR assumed, from DTI, policy responsibility for productivity, business relations, energy, consumer policy, corporate law and employment regulation

In general, where this report deals with statistical matters which were the responsibility of DfES and DTI but are now the responsibility of DIUS, DCSF or BERR, it refers to the arrangements as they now exist and contact details have been updated accordingly. In addition, where this report uses abbreviations for government departments, it generally follows the practice of the department concerned, so that, for example, BERR is used as the abbreviation for the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and CLG is used for the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Scottish Government

In September 2007, Scottish ministers formally adopted the title 'Scottish Government' to replace the term 'Scottish Executive' as an expression of corporate identity. In this report, all references to the Scottish Executive have been replaced by the term Scottish Government. However, the term Scottish Executive, as defined by the Scotland Act 1998, continues to be used in formal legal documents such as legislation and contracts.

An Introductory Note on Statistical Legislation

On 26 July 2007, the *Statistics and Registration Service Act* gained Royal Assent. The Act created the UK Statistics Authority, which formally came into being on 1 April 2008. The UK Statistics Authority is a non-ministerial department, which operates at arm's length from ministers. The main objective of the UK Statistics Authority is to promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good. The UK Statistics Authority directly oversees the work of ONS and has oversight of all official statistics wherever they are produced. As a consequence of the Act, the *Framework for National Statistics* has been superseded and the Statistics Commission has been abolished.

The Act requires the UK Statistics Authority to prepare, adopt and publish a new Code of Practice and to assess all new and existing National Statistics against this Code. Only those statistics that are fully compliant with the Code will be designated as National Statistics. The Act also contains provisions which should make it easier to share administrative data between the UK Statistics Authority and other GSS departments.

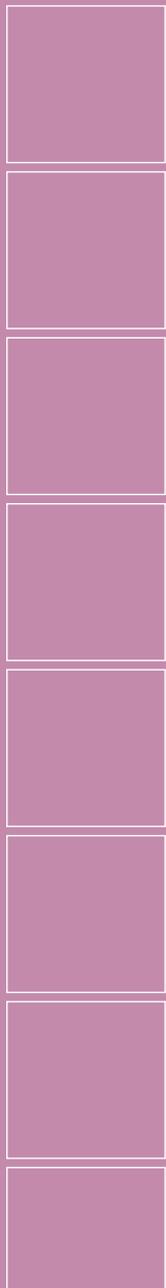
Simultaneously, the National Statistician and statistical Heads of Profession have been working on a range of complementary, non-statutory developments which aim to revitalise the GSS and ensure it meets the UK Statistics Authority's requirements.

The Act heralds a sea change in the governance and administration of statistics in the UK, and will have a profound effect on the direction and management of both ONS and the GSS more widely. As a consequence, some of the detailed proposals and plans articulated in previous versions of the *National Statistics Work Programme* have been reviewed in order to ensure that they continue to complement the Government's overall objectives for the new statistical system, reflect the new governance arrangements, and match the likely requirements of the new UK Statistics Authority. In some cases, this has meant putting planned developments on hold, while in other cases it has meant giving them a different emphasis.

Chapter 13 gives more information on the work that has been done over the last 12 months to support ONS independence.



strategic developments



National Statistics Strategy

Background

Formal commencement of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* in April 2008 established the UK Statistics Authority (described in the Act as 'The Statistics Board'), and assigned to the Authority a set of key objectives which bear close comparison with the strategic objectives set out in the *National Statistics Work Programme 2005/06–2007/08*.

In the context of the Act, the UK Statistics Authority's objectives are to promote and safeguard:

- the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good
- the quality of official statistics
- good practice in relation to official statistics, and
- the comprehensiveness of official statistics

In parallel with these legislative developments, the National Statistician has been working with colleagues from across the Government Statistical Service (GSS) to implement a strategy designed to address the low level of public confidence in official statistics. This strategy, which complements the aims set out in the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*, has focused on three key objectives:

- improving the quality and coherence of statistical outputs
- improving the ways in which statistics are communicated, and
- making statistics more accessible

Over the last year, and mindful of the new statutory provisions, the National Statistician has pressed ahead with the overall strategy set out in the Work Programme, but has kept its detail and implementation under continuous review and adapted the whole to reflect emerging insights into the UK Statistics Authority's way forward.

Building trust

The strategic aims and objectives that underpin

the production of National Statistics within the current statistical system were originally set out in the *Framework for National Statistics* (2000). They can be summarised in one word: trust.

If a statistical service is to be effective, the community that it serves must have a high degree of confidence not only in the statistics that it produces but also in the principles and practices that it espouses. Put simply, if stakeholders cannot place their trust in official statistics, they are unlikely to base their decisions on those figures. However, to be fully effective, a statistical service needs to be trusted for more than just the reliability of the figures it produces. It needs to be trusted, as well, for the integrity of its people and processes, its freedom from political interference, and its ability to maintain the security of the information that data providers entrust to it.

Building a reputation based on trust can take a relatively long time. Conversely, trust in official statistics can be eroded very quickly because of simple mistakes in compilation, perceptions of political interference in professional decisions, or suspicions about the way that statistical results are presented.

The National Statistics Strategy has, to date, been based on the aim of building trust in official statistics throughout every stage in the statistical value chain. Every process – from deciding work programmes, to collecting and analysing data, to the presentation of results – must be conducted in a manner that reinforces and enhances trust. The following sections describe, in different ways, how ONS and all other departments and administrations that are affiliated to the GSS, as well as the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), are working to this end.

Becoming world class

The main focus of the National Statistics Strategy has been to lay the foundations of trust by encouraging all staff involved in the production of National Statistics to emulate international best practice and become recognised as among the

best in the world through the integrity of their methods, practices, systems and statistics.

A world-class statistical system is one which does the following:

- Provides a vital contribution to the effective and efficient management and development of the Government's knowledge base
- Provides relevant and timely advice to help form evidence-based policy
- Produces complete and comprehensive statistics accessible to all
- Delivers every statistic on time with reliability, coherence and accessibility
- Is an exemplar of good statistical practice
- Provides leadership and support to the rest of the UK's public sector statistical service through the development of statistical infrastructure, methodology and practice
- Plays a leading role in the international statistics community
- Continually seeks to improve its products and processes
- Provides a framework for its members to make full use of their talents and develop their skills

To achieve this aim, all those involved in the production of National Statistics are expected to base all their statistical activities on the five key principles outlined below.

Relevance

If statistical data are to meet the needs of government, business and the community, they must be timely, reliable, easily accessible, based on transparent and effective consultation with stakeholders, and fit for purpose.

Integrity

The cost of accessing and analysing data is significantly reduced when data providers trust the statistical service to handle their personal and business information fairly, legally and sensitively, and with an absolute guarantee of confidentiality. The benefits of published statistics can be absorbed more rapidly, and their impact and value increased,

when users can depend on the independence and impartiality of the producers and place their trust in the information that they produce.

Quality

The desire to improve the quality of official statistics lies at the heart of the National Statistics Strategy. At a practical level, it has given purpose to the National Statistics Quality Review Programme, but it has also underpinned the aims of:

- developing a modern technical infrastructure
- focusing on integrated, documented systems and processes
- developing a human resources programme to ensure that staff of the right calibre are recruited and retained and to encourage their further professional development, and
- improving the communications strategy

The GSS and NISRA will be judged not only on the more technical quality attributes of their statistical processes but also on the quality of their people and all that they do, from the development of professional competence to effective management and the fostering of an open, dynamic culture.

Accessibility

ONS and the rest of the GSS are committed to timely, fair and open access. It means that those involved in producing National Statistics need to consider how to present information in a way that will ensure its widest use. Privileged access, where it occurs, must be plainly justified, transparent and rigorously controlled. All information should be adequately described, explained and documented.

Efficiency

Another key objective of the Strategy requires GSS producers to operate efficiently by improving value for money in the production of outputs and by minimising the contribution of time and effort required from data providers.

Measuring achievement

Success in achieving world class status has been measured across three sets of criteria:

- The extent to which National Statistics products and services are commonly perceived to embody the values set out in the *National Statistics Code of Practice* and its complement, the *European Statistics Code of Practice*
- The extent to which official statistics help decision-makers to engage in a timely and decisive way on key political and strategic issues, such as:
 - globalisation
 - devolution and regionalisation
 - modernising government and e-government
 - developing the knowledge economy
 - demographic change
 - neighbourhood renewal
 - sustainable development
 - data protection and freedom of information
 - public services delivery
- The degree to which statistical products are 'fit for purpose' and meet the needs of the whole user community
- International engagement – a strategy for promoting international co-operation and harmonisation with the aim of embedding international 'best practice' both in the UK and partner countries. For further information see chapter 4
- People – a human resources programme capable of attracting and retaining the best people and enhancing their expertise, experience and employability. For further information see chapter 5
- Customer relationships – a system for strengthening links with the customer base. For further information see chapter 6
- Communication – an 'i-dissemination' strategy designed to encourage the best and widest use of the mass of statistics and related data generated as National Statistics. For further information see chapter 13

A modernisation programme led from within ONS has supplemented the six government-wide initiatives detailed above and will have long-term implications for all producers of National Statistics. The modernisation of ONS will provide those involved in the production of official statistics in the UK with an information management platform that will underpin methodological advances and allow rapid access to statistical measures and statistical sources. For further information see chapter 7.

Putting the Strategy into effect

The key components listed below have provided the mainstays of support for the implementation of the National Statistics Strategy. Included within this list is a programme of modernisation which has initially affected only ONS, but which will eventually deliver benefits for the UK statistical system as a whole:

- Code of Practice – the *National Statistics Code of Practice* and its 12 supporting Protocols provide the GSS and NISRA with a detailed and codified framework of principles and practices designed to ensure the quality and credibility of their outputs. For further information see chapter 2
- Quality and methodology – a re-engineered programme of monitoring and improvement designed to bring GSS and NISRA products up to world class standards. For further information see chapter 3

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National Statistics Code of Practice and supporting Protocols

Introduction

The *National Statistics Code of Practice* and its 12 supporting Protocols provide the professional and procedural backdrop to the progress reports described elsewhere in this volume. The Code will continue to do so until it is replaced by the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics.

Background – the existing Code and Protocols

The launch of National Statistics in June 2000 signalled the commitment of both the UK Government and the devolved administrations to improving public trust and confidence in the integrity and quality of official statistics. The new arrangements were set out in the *Framework for National Statistics* and were designed to:

- safeguard the professional independence of official statisticians by introducing the necessary distance between ministers and statistical operations
- encourage greater transparency and accountability in the statistical process
- establish a statistical service that is open and responsive to the public agenda and to the needs of providers and users, and
- deliver better and more reliable official statistics that command public confidence

Improving public confidence

To further these aims, the GSS:

- introduced more rigorous professional standards for official statistics, particularly those designated as National Statistics
- implemented a government-wide quality improvement programme, and
- continued to invest in better statistical methods and systems to improve operational efficiency and minimise the burden on respondents

The implementation of a professional Code of Practice for National Statistics was central to this effort.

National Statistics Code of Practice

The Code was formally launched at the National Statistics Open Day on 11 October 2002 under the title *National Statistics Code of Practice – Statement of Principles*.

National Statistics Protocols

Two supporting Protocols were published alongside the Code in October 2002: one relating to *Release Practices* and the other to *Consultation Arrangements between the National Statistician and UK Government Ministers*. A further ten Protocols were published over the next two years and, by the end of 2004/05, all 12 were in place and published on the National Statistics website.

Additional policy formulation: third-tier documentation

Some of the Protocols placed an obligation on departments to publish further statements or policies giving additional information on the way that the Code and Protocols would be implemented. These supporting, third-tier documents form the core of the National Statistics compliance statements that have been published by each department.

Developments in 2007/08

European Statistics Code of Practice

In November 2005, Eurostat launched the *European Statistics Code of Practice*. This Code is based on 15 principles covering the institutional environment, statistical processes and statistical outputs. A set of indicators of good practice for each of the 15 principles has been developed, and each country has completed a self-assessment questionnaire to determine its compliance with the Code.

In 2007/08 ONS had its compliance with the Code reviewed by a peer group of European statisticians. The report of this review was published in February 2008 and indicated that ONS was fully compliant with 25 of the indicators assessed and largely compliant with the other ten indicators.

Statistics Commission's proposals for a revised Code

In October 2007, the Statistics Commission published *Report No 35: Proposals for a Code of Practice for Official Statistics*. In this report, it reviewed the existing *National Statistics Code of Practice* and suggested ways in which it could be revised in order to make it more appropriate for carrying out the UK Statistics Authority's assessment function. This fulfilled a commitment made by the Statistics Commission in 2006 to suggest ways in which the Code could be improved.

Revised Protocol on Statistical Integration

In February 2008, the National Statistician published a revised version of the *Protocol on Statistical Integration* to cover, in addition, the application of National Statistics standards to the development and management of statistical classifications. Among other matters, the revamped *Protocol on Statistical Integration and Classification* addressed issues raised by sectoral classification, and the classification of transactions, within the UK National Accounts. The new Protocol was preceded by a public consultation.

National Statistician's Code of Conduct

One key provision in the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* requires the UK Statistics Authority to prepare, adopt and publish a Code of Practice for Statistics. This new Code is likely to apply to organisations producing official statistics as well as to the statistics they produce. To complement this new Code, the National Statistician has been considering the possible format and content of a separate 'Code of Conduct for the producers of official statistics'. This will complement the *Civil Service Code* (which sets out the core values and standards that all civil servants are expected to uphold) and will set out the values and principles to which those people involved in the production of official statistics will be expected to adhere. The Code of Conduct is likely to be released at the same or a similar time as the UK Statistics Authority's revised Code of Practice.

Compliance with, and enforcement of, the Code

To date, responsibility for complying with the *National Statistics Code of Practice* has rested with the statistical Heads of Profession (HoPs) in each of the departments or agencies responsible for producing National Statistics and with each of the Chief Statisticians in the devolved administrations.

HoPs and Chief Statisticians have documented their operational compliance with the Code in their departmental compliance statements. These are published on their departmental websites and can also be viewed via a portal on the National Statistics website.

In future, the UK Statistics Authority's replacement Code is likely to embrace all organisations responsible for producing official statistics.

Monitoring and reporting

Under the system which was in force prior to April 2008, the National Statistician required all HoPs and Chief Statisticians to monitor compliance with the Code in their own department, administration or agency, and to report any instance of non-compliance as and when it happened. These reports detailed instances either of 'exceptions' to, or 'breaches' of, the Code.

- **Exceptions** to the Code or Protocols occurred when a decision was made in advance not to adhere to normal practice; for example, when additional early access to a release was granted, or a pre-announced release date was changed at late notice. Exceptions had to be agreed by HoPs or Chief Statisticians and reported to the National Statistician as they occurred
- **Breaches** of the Code or Protocols occurred in situations where a non-observance of the Code was not approved by the National Statistician or the HoP/Chief Statistician in advance of it happening. An example would be a 'leak' to the media, whether deliberate or accidental

Each breach report contained full details of the circumstances surrounding the breach and detailed any remedial action taken by the

department at the time of the breach. It also set out steps to prevent any recurrence. Once the National Statistician was satisfied with the action taken by the department, a copy of the breach report was passed to the Statistics Commission.

From 1 April 2008 the UK Statistics Authority is responsible for the *Code of Practice*, and all exemptions and breaches of the Code must now be reported directly to the Authority.

Compliance in 2007/08

During the year, some HoPs and Chief Statisticians reported to the National Statistician that they had deliberately permitted a number of exceptions to the principles embodied in the *Protocol on Release Practices*, while others reported a few instances of perceived or actual breaches. On a few occasions, and as a result of normal monitoring of media reports, the National Statistician felt compelled to approach a few HoPs with her own concerns about perceived breaches.

Notifications of actual or perceived non-compliance tended to focus on the *Protocol on Release Practices* and involved cases that compromised the principles of equality of access, orderly release, and documented early access, for example:

- third parties accidentally disclosing the figures before their formal release
- 'trailing' statistics to the media before their formal release
- releasing departmental statements about the figures prior to the release of the statistics themselves, and
- extending pre-release access to undocumented officials

Investigations and enquiries suggested that one of the main causes of such breaches was a lack of familiarity with the finer points of the Code and Protocols among non-statistical officials and policy advisers. Their early access to statistics, either for briefing purposes or, in the case of management or administrative statistics, their early and close

involvement in the compilation and analysis of such statistics, placed them in a position where they could compromise, often unwittingly, the strict requirements of the Code.

In most cases, HoPs and Chief Statisticians were able to address the situation by engaging with their department's policy officials, explaining the rationale behind the Code and seeking greater acceptance of its provisions.

Application of the Code

Formally, the *Code of Practice* applies only to those statistics designated as National Statistics. However, over the years, the National Statistician has worked with HoPs and Chief Statisticians to extend the use of the Code as a best practice model for all government statistical work. From the outset, the intention was that all statistics produced by the GSS, regardless of their designation, should follow, at the very least, the Code's standards covering:

- confidentiality and access
- methodology
- quality assurance, and
- value for money

From 1 April 2008, the Code becomes a model of best practice for all official statistics but only National Statistics are formally assessed for compliance with the Code.

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Introduction

This chapter describes the work undertaken in 2007/08 to improve quality and methodology across National Statistics. The theme chapters (that is, chapters 14 to 25) contain detailed information on the work being undertaken on specific topics within each theme.

The need for quality standards and sound methodology for official statistics was reinforced with the passing through Parliament of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*. The UK Statistics Authority's duties include:

- promoting and safeguarding the quality and comprehensiveness of official statistics
- developing, maintaining and promoting definitions, methodologies, classifications and standards for official statistics
- preparing, adopting and maintaining a Code of Practice for Statistics

A great deal of work was performed in 2007/08 in support of the Act and in preparation for the UK Statistics Authority coming into being on 1 April 2008. In particular, a Government Statistical Service (GSS) self assessment checklist was developed and tested in the Ministry of Justice and ONS. This has been seen as an important piece of work to provide the UK Statistics Authority with a possible template for beginning its new assessment function. ONS also did some initial work in connection with the establishment of a new GSS Methodology Consultancy Service that has provided support to the GSS following ONS's independence.

Other key activities in 2007/08 are set out below.

Setting standards for quality

The *European Statistics Code of Practice*, promulgated in the European Commission's recommendation of 25 May 2005, aims to establish the independence, integrity and accountability of the National and Community Statistical Institutes. The Code is based on 15 principles covering the institutional environment,

statistical processes and outputs. ONS has worked with key GSS departments that supply European statistics to raise awareness of this Code. At the same time, ONS's compliance with the *European Statistics Code of Practice* has been reviewed by a small team comprised of statisticians from across the European Statistical System. ONS scored well on all attributes and particularly well on quality.

Building sound methodologies and tools into statistical sources and outputs

The National Statistics Methodology Advisory Committee is a forum designed to allow interested and experienced professional statisticians from outside government to provide peer reviews on methodological issues. This forum provides an opportunity to build and strengthen links between the GSS and the rest of the statistical profession by openly discussing National Statistics methods and allowing statisticians outside the GSS to gain a better insight into the range of interesting and challenging problems that government statisticians face. The Committee met twice in 2007/08, holding one-day meetings in May and November 2007. Ten papers were discussed, including papers on methodologies for population and migration, outlier detection, the measurement of sexual identity and data matching.

The National Statistics Quality and Methodology Programme Board provides a cross-departmental steer on issues around quality management. The Board is made up of Heads of Profession who are responsible for taking forward the quality strategy, sharing best practice and supporting the uptake of good statistical methods across National Statistics.

The twelfth GSS Methodology Conference was held in June 2007. This event brings together people from across the GSS who are working on methodological developments and applications and provides a forum for sharing experiences and learning about different methods and techniques. The conference included speakers from the Economic and Social Research Council and the University of Southampton and included sessions

on data linking, statistical disclosure control, data collection methods, the 2011 Census, survey precision and administrative data sources. The conference coincided with the launch of the National Data Strategy, which aims to ensure that the national data infrastructure meets demands to address current and future research needs in the social sciences.

Effective management: project management, risk management and skills development

All statistical professionals are now required to maintain a level of professional development under the GSS framework for Continuing Professional Development. This framework is aligned with the frameworks for other professional groups and is part of the wider Professional Skills for Government Programme (see chapter 5).

There are many opportunities open to GSS statisticians to continue their professional development. ONS supports the MSc in Official Statistics through the University of Southampton. Other courses are also available; the ONS Statistical Training Unit delivers a course that supports the Royal Statistical Society Ordinary Certificate, and ONS also developed and delivered an enhanced range of Methodology Workshops for GSS staff.

GSS departments continue to provide staff with skills training in project and risk management. For significant programme work, this is evaluated through the Office of Government Commerce Gateway Review process.

Comprehensive and accessible documentation

ONS has made good progress on providing users with increased documentation on its statistical products. Standard quality reports have been developed by ONS as a means of documenting the strengths and limitations of its data, and these provide a clear and up-to-date documentation of surveys, outputs and processes. They will facilitate

effective use of the statistics and support continued improvement in the processes.

Fifteen reports were introduced in 2007/08 to add to the 16 developed previously. The new reports covered statistics including the Index of Production (IoP), Labour Force Survey, National Population Projections, and the Expenditure and Food Survey. The majority of key outputs now have quality reports in place. Reports will continue to be developed for all outputs.

Quality measurement

The ONS *Guidelines for Measuring Statistical Quality* have been further refined and version 3.1 published. It includes new measures for information loss once disclosure control methods have been applied. The Guidelines provide a set of standards for measuring and reporting on quality of survey data. The Guidelines contain a wide range of quality measures and indicators, grouped together in stages of the statistical production process. They also record the dimension of quality being measured in each case, using the six European Statistical System dimensions of quality:

- Relevance
- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Accessibility and Clarity
- Comparability, and
- Coherence

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4

International Activity

Introduction

This chapter sets out how the Government Statistical Service (GSS) met its international objectives and aspirations for 2007/08, as set out in the *National Statistics Work Programme 2005/06–2007/08*.

Strategic influences and policy drivers

The most significant policy drivers for 2007/08 were the development of global statistical systems; assessment of the UK statistical system against the *European Statistics Code of Practice (ESCOP)*; and the need to influence the European Union's (EU's) agenda by continuing to promote the reduction of direct costs, as well as reducing the compliance burden of statistical surveys, especially on businesses.

Other influences and policy drivers included: influencing the direction of the revised governance structures and changing legal framework of the European Statistical System (ESS); and the ongoing implementation of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS), which sets the framework for the development of statistical capacity in developing countries.

Aims and objectives

The objectives set for statistics in the field of international activity were to:

- strengthen the governance of the ESS
- reprioritise the statistical agenda in the EU
- reach agreement on proposed new statistical regulations
- continue implementation of MAPS
- increase financing for statistical capacity building in developing countries, and
- strengthen national statistical systems through provision of financial and technical resources to support countries' own national development strategies

Strengthening governance

The aim of this objective was to ensure effective adherence to the *ESCOP* through active participation in the peer review process, promoting

the creation of a High Level European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB) and a European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC).

In September 2007, ONS's compliance against the *ESCOP* was assessed over an intensive three-day period by a senior three-person team from across the ESS. The team concluded that the UK is fully compliant with 25 of the 35 indicators assessed and is largely compliant with the other ten. The review was published in February 2008 and can be accessed via the Eurostat website.

During 2007, the EU Council Working Party on Statistics discussed the development of the ESGAB and the ESAC. The UK took a leading role in these discussions. Work was finalised in January 2008 and both regulations will come into force in the near future.

Statistical reprioritisation

Resources for statistics continue to be limited in the UK and most other member states. Demands for new statistics can only be met by changing the way established statistics are produced. ONS has been instrumental in ensuring this approach remains on the EU agenda. Some progress has been achieved by balancing the data aspirations of EU users with compliance costs to the economy and society. It is essential that the UK continues to work with Eurostat to address the urgent need to cut existing data requirements and halt further net increases. In particular, the UK continues to stress the importance of securing co-operation and information sharing across government. The UK also seeks to promote engagement on how to address the perception of burden and how to promote the benefits (to business and individuals) of statistical data collection.

New regulations

ONS continues to represent the UK at the EU Council Working Party on Statistics. The key objective is to argue UK policy in order to influence the European Commission and other member states in the formulation of new statistical legislative proposals.

Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics

MAPS calls for a number of actions to enable

substantial improvements in the operation of national statistical systems across the world and in the quality of data available for monitoring development outcomes. The actions fall broadly into two groups: those directed at improving national statistical systems, and those directed at the activities of international statistical agencies, the multilateral development banks, and bilateral donors. The UK role is to support these developments through provision of resources, both financial and technical, to national statistical systems, and to work with the international agencies to create the right infrastructure for making the improvements.

Work in 2007/08

With increasing international integration, ONS is playing an active role in the development of statistics internationally.

In June 2007, ONS contributed to the United Nations Conference of European Statisticians by presenting a paper and chairing a session on the measurement of social capital – beyond the traditional methods. Measurement of social capital is helpful in some policy contexts, such as neighbourhood renewal. It also builds foundations for the understanding of wellbeing in societies.

In February 2008, ONS presented a paper on Employment Statistics to the United Nations Statistical Commission. The review spanned the field of international labour statistics and looked at ways in which specific improvements could be made in the future. It focused on three main areas of labour statistics: successes and gaps in the work of international agencies; an international survey of UN member states; and the uses of a labour statistics framework for countries at different stages of statistical development.

During 2007/08, good progress was made towards meeting international objectives including:

- continuing to support statistical capacity building through International Comparison Programme (ICP) work in Africa
- continuing support to the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS 21)

- continuing financial and technical support to help developing countries to develop and implement a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)

In 2007/08 at the EU Council Working Party on Statistics, agreement was reached on new EU statistical regulations concerning:

- the ESGAB
- the ESAC
- Business Registers
- Nomenclature for Units of Territorial Statistics (NUTS)
- Classification of Products by Activity (CPA)
- Energy
- Job Vacancies
- Population and Housing Censuses
- Labour Force Sample Survey

Outcomes and outputs realised

Increased financial resources and increased demand for improved statistics for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are raising the profile of, and awareness of the need for, statistical capacity building. In 2007, the Department for International Development (DFID) published a new strategy, *Making statistics work for development*, which sets out how DFID statisticians are contributing to better development policies, more accountable partner governments and more responsive donors. A new facility was developed with the World Bank and other donors to provide additional financing for developing countries to improve their statistical systems. DFID has committed £50 million over the next four years to this new facility.

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5

Human Resources

Introduction

The Government Statistical Service Human Resources Committee (GSS HRC) acts on behalf of the National Statistician and statistical Heads of Profession (HoPs), and takes the lead in developing and implementing the GSS human resources strategy to attract, recruit, develop and retain sufficient numbers of people to meet current and future statistical workforce needs.

Each year the National Statistician and HoPs agree a programme of work for GSS HRC. GSS HRC volunteers take the lead for individual projects within the work programme, supported by the Statisticians in Government Team (SiGT). SiGT is the central unit in ONS that sets standards and manages GSS schemes to recruit professional staff. It also manages GSS induction training and other continuing professional development activities; provides career management advice; and maintains StatNet, the GSS intranet.

SiGT meets regularly with its analytical support team counterparts (economists, social researchers and operational researchers) to share good practice, and meets annually with European counterparts at the European Statistical Training Programme and the Human Resource Management Working Group chaired by Eurostat.

Work Programme for 2007/08

In 2007/08, GSS HRC's Work Programme had five key themes:

- Recruitment
- Professional development
- Careers
- Breaking down barriers and building networks, and
- ONS independence

Overall GSS HRC had a successful year in 2007/08. Despite the work programme being ambitious, good progress was made on all priority areas. Much of the focus was on monitoring and maintaining the existing work programme, and on developing new policies to steer action in 2008/09.

Recruitment

Assistant Statisticians

In 2007/08, there was a slight decline in recruitment for fast stream Assistant Statisticians (AS), with 20 recruited in total. This decline seems to be due to slightly fewer people passing the initial sift. There are also indications that some of the 'general' fast stream tests were harder in 2007/08, and this is also reflected in the figures for economists. As part of the next work programme, GSS HRC will investigate the reasons for this decline and determine the effects that this decline may be having on the GSS.

The size of the AS assessor pool has doubled and is now more diverse, with a more representative gender mix.

Statistical Officers

The mainstream Statistical Officer (StO) scheme enjoyed a 26 per cent increase on 2006/07, with 70 new StOs recruited.

A new style StO application form was introduced in 2007/08. It is now more explicit about the statistical knowledge required and candidates with little statistical knowledge are now less likely to apply.

Regional recruitment continued throughout the year and, in addition, SiGT worked with the Defence Analytical Services Agency in the south west to deliver a dedicated recruitment scheme in March 2008. It proved very successful, with 10 StOs recruited, and SiGT will investigate the possibility of running similar schemes in future with other departments.

SiGT are also running, in collaboration with a number of other government departments, more StO boards in Newcastle and Yorkshire, and have successfully recruited 17 StOs in the reporting period. Running these boards helped to save on resources. SiGT has also recruited 12 new statistical assessors from the departments who support the GSS in the north and north east. These initiatives have helped to lay some firm foundations for the future.

Temporary Statistical Officers

Temporary Statistical Officers (TSOs) help to fill urgent short-term vacancies across the GSS. During 2007/08, 20 TSOs were recruited. A number of established TSOs were also offered permanent employment contracts through the StO scheme during 2007/08.

Monitoring Recruitment and Promotion Standards for the Statistician Group

Discussions about standards and quality assurance procedures have been held with those departments that wish to carry out their own recruitment. A list of procedures for monitoring standards is under development and will be available in the new work programme year.

Assistant Statistician/Statistical Officer Job Analysis

The purpose of this work stream is to identify how AS/StO jobs are structured; how ASs and StOs are used and managed in support of business and personal needs; and what the differences are. The information will help to inform future AS/StO workforce planning, strategies and behaviours. A survey has been designed to collect the information and a report detailing the findings of the survey will be produced in spring 2008.

Manpower planning

A manpower planning model for the GSS was developed during March 2008. HoPs will be consulted on this model in spring 2008 before it is implemented.

Professional development Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy for the Statistician Group was launched in March 2006, and endorsed by HoPs as a vital tool to ensure that statistical staff acquire and retain the range of skills necessary to perform effectively throughout their careers.

The policy is defined broadly and embraces both 'statistical' and 'non-statistical' skills. A logbook is used to record annual achievements and will provide a useful record of development

throughout a statistician's career. From 1 April 2007, statisticians were required to provide CPD evidence to GSS boards as part of the selection process.

A number of initiatives were delivered during 2007/08 to support CPD:

- A survey was carried out to see how CPD was bedding-in across the GSS – this information will be used to inform the development of future initiatives
- GSS-tailored statistical learning activities have been developed by the Royal Statistical Society, in partnership with ONS
- The GSS Leaders in Statistics Conference and the AS/StO Conference were developed and held – both conferences helped to raise awareness about the impact of ONS Independence, and analysis and use of evidence in government
- A learning and development strategy for European statisticians is in the early stages of development – this work is being carried out in collaboration with other National Statistical Institutes and is being driven by the *European Statistics Code of Practice*
- The induction of 96 AS/StOs was achieved via the GSS Induction Programme
- CPD presentations were given across the GSS to help raise awareness and share good practice

Professional Skills for Government – Analysis and Use of Evidence

Professional Skills for Government (PSG) is a programme intended to enable civil servants to develop the skills and experience needed to design and deliver 21st century services.

PSG is made up of a number of elements, including a set of six core competences, one of which is, 'Analysis and Use of Evidence' (A&UoE). Statisticians, along with the other analytical professions, are joint custodians of this particular core competence and so have an important part to play in helping non-analytical staff across government to develop in this area.

The following PSG initiatives were delivered during 2007/08:

- The development and launch of a diagnostic tool for the Senior Civil Service (to help them self-assess against the A&UoE competence) – this was developed in collaboration with analytical counterparts and is hosted by the National School of Government's 'Virtual School' website
- A second A&UoE seminar for Senior Civil Service policymakers

Careers

A set of guidance for HoPs for dealing with ASs who do not progress to Grade 7 at the expected rate was developed.

Breaking down barriers and building networks

Links with other professional analytical groups

The GSS continues to build links with professional analytical group counterparts, and outputs from collaboration in 2007/08 included:

- Developing a strategy, with other analytical support teams, for Heads of Analysis (the National Statistician; the Government Chief Scientific Adviser; the joint Heads of the Government Economic Service; and the Head of Government Social Research) to work more effectively together through the new Heads of Analysis meetings. These meetings are chaired by the Permanent Secretary for HM Treasury
- Organising a conference for senior analysts, with other analytical support teams – an action plan was developed as an output from the conference, and was also informed by the results of a survey of analysts prepared in advance of the conference; a further conference for 2008/09 is in the planning stages

Job and career guidance for non-statisticians

A 'competence-based learning steer' is in the early stages of development for non-Statistician Group Members (non-SGMs) of the GSS. It will include:

- One to three desirable competences relating to data managing that some (but not all) non-SGMs may aim to develop
- A modest programme of GSS learning and development activities for non-SGMs and voluntary CPD

The initiative will be steered by the new 'Code of Conduct for the producers of official statistics' that is being developed by the National Statistician and will be designed to complement the Civil Service Code and the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics (see chapter 2).

ONS independence

GSS HRC has also taken on the role of the People Issues Advisory Group (PIAG). PIAG met four times during 2007/08 and acted as a sounding board for a number of policy issues related to ONS independence, in particular, ways to revitalise the GSS, strengthen the role of HoPs, and improve GSS learning and development.

Future work

The work programme in 2008/09 will be steered by the:

- revitalisation of the GSS agenda
- Government Skills Strategy, and
- investment in the European Statistical System

It will cover four broad themes:

- Recruitment
- Professional development
- Career management
- Building networks/breaking down barriers

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6

Relationships with Stakeholders

Introduction

The Government Statistical Service (GSS) operates within a complex web of contacts encompassing a wide range of individuals and organisations – including the Government, the media, businesses and the public – each of which has an interest (or a ‘stake’) in the service provided.

Central to the success of National Statistics is the ability to maintain and enhance mutually beneficial relationships with all these stakeholders, in order to obtain a clear understanding of their needs and to provide them with a timely and authoritative service in which they can trust.

National Statistics Code of Practice

Three of the Protocols that underpin the *National Statistics Code of Practice* focus on the relationships with stakeholders:

- The *Protocol on Managing Respondent Load* builds on the *Prime Minister’s Instructions on the Control of Statistical Surveys*, which currently apply to surveys of businesses and local authorities, and extends the management of the compliance load placed on data providers to a much wider range of surveys, including those for individuals and households
- The *Protocol on Consultation Arrangements between the National Statistician and UK Government Ministers* helps to ensure that ministers will have the information they need to discharge their policy responsibilities as well as their responsibilities for National Statistics
- The *Protocol on Customer Service and User Consultation* provides the producers of National Statistics with guidelines on how they can improve the relevance of their products and services to the wider user community through formal and informal consultation procedures

Data providers

A key aim of National Statistics is to keep the costs of compliance to an acceptable level and to collect data only when the benefits of a statistical survey exceed the cost to providers.

Survey Control Unit

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has responsibility for survey control across all government departments. The Survey Control Unit (SCU) aims to promote necessary surveys of the highest quality, prevent bad or unnecessary surveys and ensure that burdens on data providers are kept to a minimum. It is independent of the areas that conduct the business surveys and it serves to ensure that survey control procedures are followed by all parts of government. Particular emphasis is placed by the unit on ensuring that:

- new survey proposals are clearly justified and follow recognised guidelines for best practice
- alternative sources are thoroughly examined
- regular surveys are subject to periodic review

In 2005, the Better Regulation Executive (BRE) – then within the Cabinet Office – co-ordinated the Administrative Burden Reduction Project (ABRP). This was a cross-government initiative to measure the cost to business of government regulation (including the burden caused by completing statistical questionnaires) and to set each department a target for reducing this cost. The Administrative Burdens Measurement Exercise (ABME) was completed using the Standard Cost Model (SCM). As a result of this project, SCU has developed methodology for calculating administrative burden costs for completing statistical questionnaires, to ensure that the administrative burden is brought in line with the SCM.

Work within ONS has been concentrated on improving the questionnaire used for survey reviews and moving away from hybrid civil service hourly pay rates to use the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) employment category hourly rates. The new method was piloted in 2007/08 on nine surveys and will be available in ONS for Survey Reviews carried out in 2008/09.

In 2007/08, SCU also worked on developing a full list of GSS statistical surveys. This list will help SCU to identify where proposed new surveys duplicate

existing data sources. The list will be published on the National Statistics website in due course.

SCU has also updated the *Prime Minister's Instructions on the Control of Statistical Surveys* in order to clarify departmental responsibilities for limiting the burden on respondents. The instructions have been amended to make it easier for departments to understand their roles and responsibilities and to update some of the thresholds, on which the instructions rely, in line with inflation. A full update and public release will need to be reviewed in the context of ONS independence.

Reducing the administrative burden

Demand for statistics continues to grow, especially for information on the service sector and the new economy as the Government increasingly seeks an evidence base for its policymaking. In addition, nearly all business surveys are a European Union (EU) requirement in order to provide comparable economic statistics across the EU.

ONS exerts influence over European requirements for statistics on behalf of the UK, working with the EU to reduce the impact of regulations on the business community. ONS also provides leadership to the GSS on burden reduction. It chairs the National Statistics Small Business Forum where GSS representatives meet with business organisations to discuss and plan burden reduction initiatives.

The GSS has a long-term commitment to balance this ever-increasing demand for improved statistics against the need to reduce the burden on businesses. ONS sends surveys to some 280,000 separate businesses each year at an estimated cost to these businesses of £34 million. ONS has a long track record of minimising the burden of its inquiries on suppliers. This record is being maintained and ONS is working with the BRE – which leads the regulatory reform agenda across government and is now part of the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) – to reduce this administrative burden by 25 per cent.

The Better Regulation Agenda is about ensuring that the Government engages with stakeholders and delivers its policies in the best possible way. Success for ONS will be achieved if it delivers a net reduction of administrative costs and a real, tangible reduction in the burdens which respondents face, which matter most to stakeholders. This initiative requires departments to publish an annual Simplification Plan.

ONS Simplification Plan

In December 2007 ONS published its second Simplification Plan giving an update on how ONS works with other government departments, the EU and businesses to reduce the administrative burden on business. This Plan is part of the cross-government Better Regulation initiative to reduce regulatory burdens on business by 25 per cent. ONS has a firm target to reduce the load it places on businesses by 19 per cent by 2010, with further reductions dependent on data sharing with other government departments and lower demands for business statistics from Europe. The Plan also sets out initiatives aimed at reducing the burden by 25 per cent as a whole by 2015. Since the first Plan was published a year earlier, ONS has exceeded its expectations and reduced the burden of its business surveys by 15 per cent over the two years since targets were set in 2005/06.

These reductions are being achieved through initiatives such as using administrative data more fully, simplifying the requests for data from businesses and increasing the intervals between information requests. In addition, ONS is testing the feasibility of using tax data held by HM Revenue & Customs to enable further reductions in the number of businesses included in its surveys and to meet increasing demands for regional and service sector statistics.

The Simplification Plan incorporates the ONS annual Compliance Plan which has helped ONS monitor and control the burden imposed on businesses by ONS surveys since 1994. It therefore includes a number of elements required by the *Prime Minister's Instructions on the Control of Statistical Surveys*, such as reporting on

performance against the target published in the 2005/06 Compliance Plan; a summary of the department's statistical outputs and their use; and details of the reviews of surveys undertaken. The Simplification Plan includes all surveys for which ONS has direct responsibility, but not those conducted on behalf of other government departments or agencies. However, ONS works closely with other government departments carrying out statistical surveys to ensure that all National Statistics surveys are of the highest quality and are conducted in line with the *National Statistics Code of Practice*, and that respondent load is kept to a minimum.

The burden on business is formally managed by the ONS Better Regulation Board, which ensures that the year's survey developments are reviewed in the light of their implications for compliance. The Board includes representatives from BERR (previously the Department of Trade and Industry) and the Confederation of British Industry, who provide external advice and assess the response of the business community at the time decisions are made. As a result of the Better Regulation Agenda, ONS has expanded the membership of the Board to include a representative from the BRE, and has extended the Board's responsibilities to include monitoring progress against the Simplification Plan.

The Simplification Plan is available on the National Statistics website at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14683

Improving data security

Following the high-profile data loss from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) the prime minister announced that he had asked the cabinet secretary, with the advice of security experts, to work with departments to ensure that they and their agencies check their procedures for the safe handling of data within government. The scope of this Cabinet Office led review was widened to include measures for managing all types of 'information risk' rather than just data handling

risk. 'Information risk' has a wide definition extending from lost CDs through to a failure to exploit fully government's information resources.

The outcome of the review is expected to be a set of mandatory measures that prescribe features related to information management in departments. ONS, along with other government departments, will actively work towards meeting these requirements and improving approaches to information risk management. This work will continue throughout 2008/09.

Legislation

The *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* includes regulation-making powers that enable the UK Statistics Authority to share data held by other government departments and public authorities where there are currently legal barriers to doing so. These regulations require the bilateral agreement of the minister for the Cabinet Office (on behalf of the UK Statistics Authority) and the relevant minister for the other government department, and subsequent approval by Parliament. These powers came into force on 1 April 2008.

Stakeholder consultation and involvement

Two types of stakeholders need to be considered in any changes to business surveys – businesses that complete ONS survey questionnaires, and a wide range of users within other government departments who depend on ONS's high-quality statistics to create evidence-based policies and monitor performance against them.

ONS has a longstanding policy of working co-operatively with the business community to make the collection of business statistics as easy as possible, and has a number of initiatives designed to make compliance with survey requests as easy as possible. The development of the National Statistics Small Business Forum has allowed ONS to work with representatives from the business community to consider initiatives designed to limit the survey load on respondents. In addition, when

ONS reviews its business surveys, both respondents and data users are involved in the consultation process and their opinions are reflected in the review's recommendations.

Data collection initiatives

Response rates for social surveys

Social survey response rates in 2007/08 finished the year at about the same level as at the start, despite the expected monthly fluctuations. The trend in long-term response rates is still downwards. This is consistent with international comparators and research suggests that social survey response rates fall by around 1 percentage point a year.

A number of initiatives are in place to address the long-term trend of falling response rates. These are primarily focused on the data collection work, although increased consideration is being given to the design and mode of social surveys and the impact this has on response.

A new Interviewer Learning Programme has been introduced to provide structured development and support for new interviewers over the first six months of their employment. This is the period during which interviewer turnover is highest. Reducing this turnover is important as there is a significant increase in individual interviewer response rates with experience. Interviewer turnover is also costly, and reducing it will reduce expenditure on recruitment.

The allocation of survey cases to interviewers has been moved from a central headquarters operation out to remote-based field managers. This has enabled local knowledge and a better understanding of interviewers' strengths and experience to be applied to the allocation of work.

Training on individual surveys has also moved from headquarters out to the field. This has ensured that gaps in capacity for specific surveys can be identified quickly and training needs addressed as they arise.

A new comprehensive Management Information Suite has been developed to provide

headquarters-based managers with timely information on response. This is enabling the early identification of response problems and the targeting of resources at those surveys affected.

The new Survey Case Management System (SCMS) is currently being developed. This will produce an efficient allocation of work, minimising the distance between interviewers and their allocated sample. This will enable interviewers and field managers to spend more time chasing response. SCMS is due to go live in January 2009.

Response rates for business surveys

ONS continued with its programme to improve both the cost-effectiveness, and overall level, of business survey response rates during 2007/08. Response rates generally remained constant, although improvements were recorded for some surveys. ONS piloted several initiatives, including the development of a dedicated response chasing team designed to maximise available resources and utilise best practice in respect of response chasing techniques.

In addition, ONS is working on a number of projects designed to improve, and expand, the use of alternative methods of collecting data. In particular, the development of a Secure Electronic File Transfer system should improve respondent choice, while giving due consideration to data security requirements, for some of the more complex surveys undertaken.

Users

Official statistics are used regularly by a number of core user groups that put the data to a range of uses. They support decision-making in both the public and private sectors, and are used to monitor the performance of government and for a wide variety of research purposes in academia and elsewhere.

Statistics User Forum

The Royal Statistical Society Statistics User Forum (RSS SUF) is the main mechanism for consulting and taking into account the needs and views of

the statistical community. ONS staff held regular liaison meetings with the RSS SUF secretariat in 2007/08 to discuss issues of common interest and to share ideas and information.

The SUF held its latest annual conference in November 2007. The theme for the conference was 'Statistics on income, earnings and wealth – where do they come from and why do we need them?' Sir Michael Scholar, who in August 2007 had been appointed as chair-designate of the UK Statistics Authority established under the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*, gave the opening address. The conference included speakers from ONS, DWP, HMRC and academia.

Statistics Commission

The Statistics Commission was another important stakeholder in 2007/08. It had a role to play in the joint aim of improving public trust and confidence in official statistics as well as ensuring that National Statistics met the needs of stakeholders. The ONS secretariat continued to meet regularly with the Commission's secretariat to discuss issues of mutual interest. In their last report, *A candid friend: Reflections on the Statistics Commission 2000 – 2008*, the Commission reviewed their work and also set out some advice for the UK Statistics Authority. The Statistics Commission was abolished on 1 April 2008 as part of the implementation of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*.

Key government stakeholders

ONS has a small team devoted to managing the relationship with its key government stakeholders. The team's aim is to ensure that there are effectively managed relationships that deliver informed decision-making by both parties. This recognises that ONS is a major user of information from other sources and that it is just as important to be a trusted and effective user of data as it is a trusted and effective supplier.

National Statistics Theme Working Groups

The 12 National Statistics Theme Working Groups have continued to take forward work and have

been heavily involved in the development of a new taxonomy for National Statistics. The second half of this report gives detailed progress reports on the work that has been carried out under the auspices of each theme.

Consultation

Many statistics producers and theme working groups are engaged in specific consultation with users on proposals for change, while ongoing consultation with users continues to inform the development of National Statistics outputs. In 2007/08 ONS ran a major consultation on its work programme for 2008 to 2012. There is a page on the ONS website that gives details of all consultations being run by the GSS:

www.ons.gov.uk/about/consultation/Consultations/index.html

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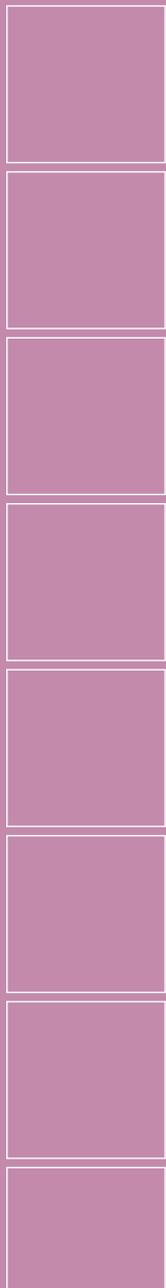
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cross-cutting issues



ONS Modernisation Programme – Odyssey

Introduction

The overall vision for ONS modernisation is to improve the quality and timeliness of, and access to, the key statistical systems managed by ONS, and to increase the efficiency with which they are produced. The intention is to create a more robust and comprehensive body of statistical evidence which is better fitted to the needs of government and better able to inform public policy development and decision-making.

Strategic influences and policy drivers

The internal and external drivers for the modernisation vision, which continue to increase, span from the day-to-day ONS business pressures to those that affect the wider reputation of ONS and the needs of government and include the:

- expectations of key users where existing systems do not meet reasonable demands for resilience and flexibility, and expose ONS to the risk of failing to sustain national statistical outputs
- need to reduce reliance on outdated IT systems and a diverse range of statistical tools
- pressures on ONS to meet government-wide timetables for e-business – in particular, those initiatives involving interactive electronic data collection
- downward pressures on compliance costs and the benefits that will accrue from redesigning business surveys, integration and wider use of administrative data to replace direct collection from businesses, and
- expanding requirements for regional analysis, and the need to be able to draw samples from the business register that are geographically representative

Aims and objectives

The aim is to produce more standardised and efficient systems and business processes that will produce better statistics and release resources for improved analysis, resulting in better informed decision-making. This will be achieved by developing new systems in a robust and enduring

shared technical environment, supported by an agreed set of common statistical tools and methods.

Work in 2007/08

During 2007/08, a key work area continued to be the delivery of the central systems for the National Accounts, which will deliver aggregate and time series processing in the Central ONS Repository for Data (CORD), as well as considering the business change implications of the project.

Work also focused on the development of new technology to make data collection from businesses more efficient, and to migrate key systems off outdated legacy hardware.

Outcomes and outputs realised

The following outputs were delivered during 2007/08:

- National Accounts central systems functionality to enable production of the 2008 *Blue Book* using re-engineered methods, processes and systems
- Migration of the Retail Prices Index onto a new processing system to reduce risks in the production of this vital economic indicator
- Completion of a pilot for the Integrated Household Survey in summer 2007, with the phased implementation of the new survey started in January 2008 as planned
- Implementation of the new telephone data entry and secure electronic file transfer systems to widen the options for businesses to submit survey data safely and to enable ONS to meet its e-government target for electronic data collection
- Deployment of new software for extracting data from survey questionnaires to improve data quality and provide efficiency savings
- Pilot of the new Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) which, when fully implemented, will improve the quality of regional statistics
- Implementation of a data matching tool for the Inter-departmental Business Register that is

now halving the time previously taken to conduct data matches, for example, with PAYE (pay-as-you-earn) data

- The installation of a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephone system in order to reduce the risk of telephone system failure
- Development of the functionality for processing marriages data

A few of the other projects faced a number of difficulties during the year. While some progress was made and outputs were delivered, they did not succeed in delivering all that was planned.

For example, the Labour Force Survey reweighting project did not deliver a fully working system. However, the project did deliver both hardware and software to support the reweighting process and it also modernised the aggregate systems used to compile the *Labour Market Statistics First Release* to enable a significant reduction in risk. The Survey Case Management System project delivered an initial work allocation system and broadband access to field and regional managers, but experienced serious resourcing difficulties, resulting in the need for much longer timescales for further delivery. This will also have a knock-on effect on the further development of the Integrated Household Survey.

Lessons learned and costs

ONS modernisation has been extremely challenging, and difficulties have been experienced due to a lack of appropriate skills and experience in ONS, for example, in the new technologies being used, in business analysis and in project management. Significant efforts have therefore been devoted to raising skill levels in ONS. ONS is also changing the way that modernisation is managed; a director general for transformation has been appointed to take forward a new ONS Transformation Strategy and the Odyssey programme ceased to exist from 1 April 2008.

The latest forecast expenditure on Odyssey during 2007/08 was £14.5 million.

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Planning the 2011 Census

Introduction

Plans for censuses in 2011 throughout the UK have continued to be developed during 2007/08 by the three UK Census Offices – the Office for National Statistics (ONS), General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The main event during 2007/08 was the Census Test held in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in May 2007, which followed the Scottish Test in 2006. The experience gained from the Census Tests is being applied in the planning process being undertaken for the census rehearsals to be carried out in 2009.

Strategic influences and policy drivers

Changes in society are reflected in the changing and increasing demands for census-based data. In response to these increasing demands, the Census project has secured additional funding from Government Departments to add a fourth page of questions to the form completed by individuals in England and Wales. This will allow for additional information to be collected which will improve the richness of the data that come from the Census.

Aims and objectives for 2011 Census

The primary benefits of the Census are realised when the users of census data make use of the published output. The census outputs must therefore be accurate, accessible and timely, and users must have confidence in them. As a prerequisite, the public must have confidence that their personal data will be protected, otherwise response rates (and hence data quality) will fall.

Seven key objectives of the Census have been identified to enable the overall aim to be met and the benefits to be realised:

- To provide the most accurate census population estimates for different geographic areas across the UK
- To provide accurate information about the structures and characteristics of the population

- To provide accessible output systems with the right content and functionality
- To ensure the widest possible awareness of census outputs and tools
- To ensure user confidence in the results
- To protect, and be seen to protect, confidential personal census information, and
- To ensure that the census is delivered efficiently and within budget

As a focal point to drive design and decision-making during development and live operations, and for post-census evaluation, critical success factors (CSFs) have been developed for each of the objectives. These describe 'what success will look like' for each objective.

The following sections highlight progress made during 2007/08.

Census Test and evaluation

A test of 100,000 households in five local authorities in England and Wales was carried out on 13 May 2007. The objectives of the Census Test were to:

- test the impact of the inclusion of a question about income on response rates
- test the impact on response rates of posting rather than hand delivering questionnaires to participants, and
- assess the effectiveness of contracting a recruitment agency to recruit, train and pay the field force employed for the Test

The conclusions drawn from the initial evaluation of the Census Test were:

- The inclusion of a question about income had a negative impact on the questionnaire return rate and was frequently left blank by those who did return a questionnaire. A follow-up survey also found that this question caused the greatest concern to respondents. Based on the evaluation of the Test and the strength of user demand for other topics, ONS will not be recommending the inclusion of an income question in the 2011 Census

- Posting rather than hand delivering forms to participants brings a number of advantages and cost savings. It allows resources to be focused on improving response rates in specific areas, particularly those that have a high level of multi-occupancy, communal establishments or rapid development of new buildings. The development of effective procedures to follow up those who do not respond can mitigate the risks associated with posting forms and the 2011 Census will therefore employ this delivery method
- The outsourcing of recruitment, training and pay to an agency proved successful and will be adopted for the 2011 Census

A Census Test covering about 10,000 households was also conducted in Northern Ireland on the same day as the Test in England and Wales. Although physically smaller than the latter, the design and objectives of the Northern Ireland Test were similar to that in England and Wales. NISRA is currently completing its evaluation of the Test.

A report reviewing the 2006 Census Test in Scotland was published on the GROS website in May 2007. This report includes a number of recommendations that will be taken forward into strategies and procedures for the census rehearsal in 2009 and the full Census in 2011.

Questionnaire development and user consultation

The development of 2011 Census questions is being co-ordinated between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Specific UK-wide topic groups are in operation to develop questions for use in the 2011 Census. The topic groups include:

- population definitions and bases
- ethnicity, identity, language and religion
- income
- labour market, National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification and qualifications

- health and care
- migration
- housing
- demographics

Major progress was made on developing the Census questionnaire, with question development, question testing, and further user consultation. Focus groups on the acceptability of colour terminology were carried out in April and May 2007. A programme of cognitive question testing was carried out in 2007/08 with over 200 respondents, accompanied by question testing on the Omnibus Survey during September, November and December 2007. Final, whole questionnaire testing will commence early in 2008/09.

ONS held a detailed consultation on user needs for ethnicity, national identity, language and religion information from the 2011 Census in England and Wales during December 2006 to March 2007. Comments from individuals and organisations were sought in order to gain a better understanding of key data requirements, to gain an awareness of the range of views held on these topics and to identify the relative priorities for this information given the constraints of space on the Census form.

A workshop took place in February 2008 with representatives of key user groups in order to discuss the ONS priorities for topics.

ONS published a summary report on 31 October 2007 on responses to the 2011 Census stakeholders' consultation in 2006/07 for England and Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government's Statistical Directorate simultaneously published a statistical bulletin focusing on the results from Wales only.

Wales

For the first time questions are being developed in both English and Welsh. This approach allows maximum opportunity for concurrent cognitive testing in both languages, and allows the parallel development of questions in both languages.

Welsh Assembly Government researchers undertook question-testing work on the ethnicity and national identity questions in Wales. A series of cognitive interviews were conducted with Somalis living in Wales to assess how they interpreted, understood and answered census questions relating to ethnicity, national identity, language and religion. Focus groups were also held with individuals living in Wales who would describe themselves as white Welsh/British in order to explore the acceptability of terms used in the ethnicity and national identity questions.

Further consultation was completed on census geography, and an online consultation started on census outputs. In addition, census staff met with established user groups representing: local authorities, business, academics, government departments, Health Service, and Welsh users of census data, as well as representatives of faith, ethnic minority and other community groups. Engagement with the UK Parliament included census-related Parliamentary Questions and a start to meetings with All-Party Parliamentary Groups.

As a means of engaging census users and stakeholders in Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government's Statistical Directorate launched a bimonthly census newsletter in September 2007 to inform users of recent news and developments regarding the Census. The newsletters are published on the Statistical Directorate website:

www.wales.gov.uk/statistics

Northern Ireland

In addition to participation in the UK-wide topic groups described above, NISRA has consulted local users with a specific focus on topics particular to Northern Ireland, such as language, religion and ethnicity. NISRA has tested questions in the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey, and held public meetings with users.

Scotland

In Scotland GROS undertook a consultation of users in spring 2007 seeking views on a number of issues around the questions to be used in 2011 as well as other topics. In addition, consultation

and planning by the Scottish Government, in association with GROS, on the format of a question on ethnic background for inclusion in the Census as well as government surveys has continued (see Project D in the Social and Welfare Theme).

Date of the Census

The planned date for the next UK Census of 27 March 2011 was announced jointly by ONS, GROS and NISRA in March 2008. Selection of the planned date for the Census took into account many factors, including public holidays, school and university term times, potential election dates and daylight hours.

Procurement

Considerable progress has been made in the procurement of processing services for England and Wales and for Northern Ireland. Two bidders remain in competition for the contract, which is expected to be awarded to the successful bidder in summer 2008. The scope of services to be covered by the contract was reviewed to ensure that they will be affordable. The following services will be covered: printing of the census questionnaires; receipting returned questionnaires and maintaining up-to-date management information for the field follow-up activities; a facility for responding via the Internet; scanning of the paper forms; data capture and coding of the responses; contact centre services and web-based help facilities. The preparatory stages of procurement have begun for postal services, publicity, distribution, recruitment, pay and training.

In October 2007 GROS withdrew from joint procurement with ONS and NISRA of the main census services contract and embarked on separate procurement of a similar set of services for Scotland alone. Substantial progress has been made, and GROS awarded a contract in June 2008.

Preparations for census rehearsal

A rehearsal for the 2011 Census is planned for 2009. In England and Wales this will take place in:

- Lancaster
- the London Borough of Newham, and
- Ynys Môn – Isle of Anglesey

The combination of rehearsal areas in England and Wales was chosen to provide experience of the different factors and environmental conditions that will occur in the 2011 Census. A sample of around 110,000 households across the three areas will be selected. Ten selection criteria were applied in order to determine the chosen areas. The combination selected includes a large two-tier area covering sections of a city and some surrounding rural areas, an area in London with diverse population, and an area in Wales with a high population of Welsh speakers.

ONS will work closely with local authorities and community groups in the rehearsal areas to establish effective ways of working together in the preparation for the 2011 Census.

Complementary rehearsals will also take place in Scotland and Northern Ireland in 2009. The rehearsal in Scotland will take place in spring 2009 in Edinburgh and the Western Isles. The rehearsals will pilot the processes and operational systems for the planned Census in 2011.

Local authority liaison

In England and Wales the Census Test provided an opportunity to develop principles and partnership models for working with local authorities in conjunction with key stakeholders, including SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) and the Local Government Association.

Local authorities for the rehearsal areas will be asked to work co-operatively with the Census in:

- address list development and quality assurance
- identification of hard-to-reach groups and areas
- liaison with local community groups to encourage participation, and
- the operational aspects of working together and
- evaluation

To promote partnership working and improve communication with local authority chief executives, a network of census regional champions is being developed. This network is based on the regional returning officers for each of the nine government offices for the regions and the returning officer for Wales.

Census addressing strategy

A complete and accurate address register is essential to achieve successful enumeration and subsequent high-quality data. In England and Wales the assembly of this address register will be undertaken in partnership with local authorities and the suppliers of national address lists. Local authority participation in creating the census address list in each area will give assurance on the quality of this list and the subsequent quality of the census outputs. A pilot exercise commenced in spring 2008 with 24 local authorities to design and implement a process to provide a high-quality address register. The pilot project will be completed during 2008.

A separate address register exists in Northern Ireland (Pointer) and NISRA is an active member of the group that is working to evaluate and improve the register. The provision of a fit-for-purpose address register for the 2011 Census is a target of the Pointer project.

Work is also under way in Scotland aimed at developing a high-quality address list for 2011. The address list is likely to be based on the Royal Mail's Postcode Address File, but it is also hoped to draw on the Corporate Address Gazetteers that have been developed for each local authority in Scotland.

Disclosure control

The census offices recognise that a robust disclosure control policy is vital to counterbalance the user demand for detailed information with the requirement to respect the confidentiality of individual census returns. A project has been initiated to develop a common policy throughout the UK upon which users will be consulted in advance of the Census.

International contribution

The need for census-based information is shared by the European Union (EU). A regulation requiring member states to provide Eurostat with census-type statistical information or equivalent data relating to the reference year 2011 came into force in March 2008. ONS officials, through membership of an EU Census Task Force, played a role throughout 2007/08 in shaping the scope and content of the draft regulation, ensuring that the UK would be able to comply with its general provisions.

The regulation does not prescribe the ways in which member states should collect the information, or the outputs to be provided. The specification of these outputs will be the subject of subsequent regulations. ONS continues to contribute to the Task Force, which is preparing the draft regulations.

In addition, ONS, together with colleagues from the Census Offices in Scotland and Northern Ireland, has contributed to the census programme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) by preparing papers for, and attending meetings of, the UNECE Steering Group on Population and Housing Censuses.

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9

Allsopp Review Implementation Programme

Introduction

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) agreed a target as part of its settlement of the 2004 Spending Review to implement the recommendations from the Allsopp Review. The Allsopp Review Implementation Programme, established in 2005, has been leading the implementation of these recommendations.

“The remit of this review encompassed two main themes: to examine the regional information and statistical framework necessary to support regional economic policymaking; and to assess whether the changing economic structure of the UK is being properly reflected in the nature, frequency and timeliness of official economic statistics. ”

In April 2008, the Allsopp Programme ceased and ONS is introducing new arrangements for managing its regional and service sector/structural change statistical developments in two separate streams of work.

Strategic influences and policy drivers

The Review’s final report, published in March 2004, was addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Governor of the Bank of England and the National Statistician. It contained a total of 62 recommendations and outlined a strategy to improve the quality and provision of statistics for economic policy based around a number of recommendations. Some of the key recommendations were:

- to produce good quality baseline Gross Value Added (GVA) estimates for the nine English regions and Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- to develop a coherent and efficient suite of registers, surveys and estimation procedures that deliver reliable results at acceptable compliance cost and that are not skewed towards particular sectors of the economy
- that information held by government should be used to increase the quality and cost efficiency of economic statistics, and

- to establish an ONS/Government Statistical Service (GSS) presence in each English region

The final report is accessible via the HM Treasury (HMT) website:

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Targets

The consequence of the Review was a Performance Management Framework (PMF) target for the ONS, as part of the 2004 Spending Review settlement:

to implement the recommendations from the *Allsopp Review of Statistics for Economic Policymaking*:

- we will begin launching new surveys during 2006 in accordance with a plan for full delivery by 2009
- we will create a Government Statistical Service presence in each region by March 2007

Progress in 2007/08

ONS has made significant progress towards achieving the PMF target, with the ONS statistical teams being successfully established in the English regions from March 2007. The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) pilot questionnaire was run in 2007, with a large-scale pilot planned for 2008 and full survey launch in 2009. A project to produce regional GVA (production measure) is in development with publication of a constant and current price series planned for December 2009.

The key high-level programme milestones as agreed at the start of 2007/08 for the Allsopp Programme have largely been met.

Regional GVA production measure

At the start of 2007/08 the project reviewed four options for producing a production-based regional GVA measure and recommended a hybrid approach as being most suitable based on the availability of data required. This represents a top down approach whereby indicators of regional activity are applied to national data to obtain a current price series, and deflators are then used to obtain a constant price series. More information

can be found in an article published on the National Statistics website:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/development/allsopp/downloads/RegionalGVAMethods.pdf

A prototype system was developed, and initial current and constant price results were presented to the inter-departmental Technical Advisory Group. These early results differ significantly from existing published regional GVA, produced using an income approach, and have raised concerns about the quality of regional Annual Business Inquiry/part 2 (ABI/2) data, a key data source in the production measure. A review of the apportionment model used to produce regional ABI/2 is planned, and this will include an investigation into a possible 'London headquarters effect'. Any recommendations for short-term refinements to this model will be incorporated by September 2008, in advance of major improvements expected from BRES in 2010.

A short paper will be published in May 2008 outlining progress to date, quality issues and project plans. ONS intends to publish regional GVA (production measure) estimates in current and constant prices by 2009. The statistics may, in time, be put forward for assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's assessment team and become National Statistics.

Regional Statistician Evaluation Project

In 2007/08 an ONS statistical team was established in each of the nine regions of England, in partnership with Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), to fulfil one of the principal recommendations of the Allsopp Review (see also chapter 12).

The Evaluation Project seeks evidence each quarter for the actual progress against the agreed criteria for each of the core functions for the regional statisticians. Over 80 contacts are invited to contribute to the review; these include regional statisticians, RDA contacts, regional observatories, government offices, regional assemblies, other regional contacts and ONS business areas. The

evaluation to date has delivered an overwhelmingly positive response, with an overall positive impact on external and internal stakeholders.

IDBR Data for Regional Development Agencies and ONS Regional Statisticians Project

The Business Register Unit was funded to deliver data from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) to the regional statisticians for the benefit of the RDAs, as part of the ONS/RDA matched funding agreement. The main deliverable has been a full regional extract for each of the nine regions. The tailor-made extracts for each region have been the most comprehensive and also the most time-consuming product supplied. In addition, 12 ad hoc datasets have been produced. Matching work was also conducted for seven regions; this involved taking RDA files and matching these to the IDBR using specialised matching software. These requests were required for RDA projects.

Regional Economic Analysis Project

This project continued to develop a range of in-house regional economic analyses and to publish related articles throughout the year. Six articles were published on the National Statistics website, including 'Changing Regional Economies' (for the regional statisticians launch); 'Quarterly Regional Economic Indicators'; and a chapter on 'Regional Productivity' in the *ONS Productivity Handbook: A statistical overview and guide*. In addition, the project undertook peer review input into the *Regional GVA* and *Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI)* publications and input into the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Working Party on Territorial Indicators.

Business Register and Employment Survey Project

The aim of the project is to design and implement a BRES, which will be used to collect the data required for maintaining the sample frame for business surveys and to produce annual estimates

of employment. In 2007/08 the project created a BRES home page for the National Statistics website:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about/surveys/bres/default.asp

In 2007/08, the survey design proceeded to plan and the project conducted a questionnaire pilot. The aim was to test how easily businesses could provide the variables requested at business and site level. The questionnaires were sent to a random sample of multi-site businesses, including types of industries that have known difficulties completing the Business Register Survey (BRS) questionnaire. To reduce the burden, businesses selected for the BRES pilot did not receive a BRS or ABI/1 questionnaire. This will result in some BRES data being used in the ABI/1 2007 results.

Validation and analysis of responses to the pilot questionnaire are ongoing. The findings so far are that the pilot has been successful, with 85 per cent of private sector businesses providing site turnover data, as requested. The response rate is better than for the BRS (which BRES replaces) and validation failures are being checked.

Administrative data for business surveys

Investigations into the use of HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) Corporation Tax (CT) data to supplement or replace Business Survey (ABI/2) data have concluded and demonstrated the feasibility of ONS using administrative data to supplement survey data. However, ONS requires CT data in electronic format in order to use the data in statistical production and this is unlikely to be pursued by HMRC in the next few years. The CT investigation was by no means redundant as much was learned by ONS about the matching and editing of administrative data which would be utilised to help speed up the investigations into Value Added Tax (VAT) data. If the VAT investigations proved feasible, it would enable ONS to reduce the sample size of ABI/2 (particularly the number of small business sampled) and supplement this information with administrative data.

Discussions with HMRC on data sharing commenced in August 2007 following Royal Assent for the *Statistics and Registration Service Act (2007)*. ONS plans to present one information sharing order to Parliament in 2008/09 seeking access to VAT data provided to HMRC on businesses' VAT returns. ONS also intends to pursue access to individuals' earnings data to assist the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; however, it is thought legal access to these data exists without a data sharing order. ONS investigations into HMRC's VAT system are progressing and ONS has gained access to a data snapshot of the system. This project will be subsumed within the wider ONS Consolidated Administrative Data Project, which started in April 2008.

Service sector improvements

There has been considerable progress with the development of the Index of Services (IoS), which has gained National Statistics status. In addition, ONS continues to address other aspects of the imbalance in availability of data on manufacturing and services, in part through work done to enable implementation in 2008 of the revised Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities – SIC 2007. In addition, continued work on modernising the National Accounts (NA) aims to deliver future benefits, such as expanding the coverage of service sector industries and enhancing the NA framework to allow changes in the structure of the economy to be reflected faster.

Cost

The Allsopp Programme had a budget of £2 million in 2007/08 and was delivered within budget. The budget included £1 million from RDAs to support ONS in the ongoing presence of the Regional Statisticians.

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Administrative Data and Data Sharing

Introduction

Access to, and use of, data from administrative sources is increasingly seen as a key priority across government. More specifically, the integration of data from different sources, as well as the development and use of data linkage and matching, will be essential if the Government Statistical Service (GSS) is to meet growing requirements for better statistics to support resource allocation, policy formulation, evaluation and review, service planning and delivery.

There is enormous potential to use data collected by government for a range of administrative purposes. The sharing of data from such sources will reduce the costs associated with traditional surveys and censuses, and help deal with the increasing difficulties of maintaining high response rates. At the same time data sharing will improve the availability of information at small area level and support work designed to meet demands for increasingly sophisticated performance measures and cross-cutting indicators. As a result, the quality and range of official statistics should be improved, and the GSS will be better able to respond to the increasing pressures for better data on topics of public concern.

Strategic influences and policy drivers

While work on data sharing has been influenced by legislative developments, making better use of information from administrative sources is an essential component of the ONS Statistical Work Programme as well as projects in other government departments to improve migration, population, economic, business, education, crime and health statistics.

The inclusion of data sharing provisions in the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* marks the beginning of a new era for statistical and analytical work in the UK. The availability of these new statutory powers should act as a catalyst encouraging innovation and the development of new and improved statistics.

Administrative data will be essential if the GSS is to meet demands for new and improved statistics.

By making full and effective use of the data sharing provisions in the 2007 Act, ONS and other government departments will be better able to meet the increasing need for better information at small area level, contribute to work on evidence-based policymaking, improve the quality and relevance of a range of National Statistics, reduce the costs of collecting data and minimise the burden placed on respondents.

There are many policy drivers pushing the development of specific projects involving administrative sources, and several government-wide reviews and reports have identified the cross-cutting potential of data from administrative sources and data sharing for statistical, research and analytical purposes. In this context the *Report of the Inter-Departmental Task Force on Migration Statistics* merits special attention.

The Task Force reported in December 2006 and recommended that proactive attention needed to be given to access to, and use of, administrative sources to improve population and migration statistics. More recently, the relevant ministers in the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Home Office have set up a ministerial group to help support ONS and the rest of the GSS with this work and to drive through change at an appropriate pace.

The GSS has identified the need for better information on local populations, on long-term and short-term migration, the number of migrants' resident here by age and sex, estimates of flows of migrants into and out of the UK by age and sex, as well as details on intended and actual length of stay. No single source will be capable of meeting these needs and access to data from a number of administrative systems, including those managed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Home Office, will be essential.

Aims and objectives

During 2007/08 there were three key objectives:

- To secure parliamentary approval for the data

sharing powers in the *Statistics and Registration Service Bill*

- To develop a strategic plan for data sharing across the GSS
- To understand and prioritise requirements for access to data from administrative sources

Work in 2007/08

The focus of work during 2007/08 was on data sharing and the opportunities offered by new legislation. Early activities were concerned with policy development relating to relevant clauses in the Bill, including the preparation of a draft data sharing regulation. Subsequently, attention shifted to considering strategic and operational issues, including plans for taking advantage of the opportunities opened up by the approval of the data sharing provisions. This work has been taken forward and co-ordinated by a new subgroup of the GSS.

The GSS Sources and Standards Committee established the subgroup on data sharing for statistical and analytical purposes in March 2007 in order to consider the data sharing clauses in the Bill and develop a 'roadmap' or strategic plan on data sharing. Members of the subgroup were drawn from across the GSS and included representatives from the General Register Office for Scotland, ONS, the Department for Education and Skills (now the DCSF), HMRC and the Department of Trade and Industry (now the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform).

During 2007/08, members of the subgroup worked co-operatively to develop a basis for making use of the new data sharing provisions set out in the Act. Special attention was given to a range of legal and policy issues as well as a variety of operational matters, including identifying data sharing requirements and establishing agreed priorities, as well as considering resource, technical, methodological, ethical and related challenges.

Consultation with representatives from across

government provided the basis for developing a consistent understanding of data sharing needs and helped to identify high priority requirements for access to data from a number of sources, most notably the School Census, the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, the Labour Force Survey and the Inter-Departmental Business Register.

A series of papers have been prepared for consideration by members of the GSS Sources and Standards Committee and heads of profession from individual government departments and the devolved administrations. The final version of the strategic plan was endorsed at a meeting of heads of profession in March 2008 and the planned programme of work, including details relating to both immediate and longer-term priorities, ethical issues and plans for stakeholder management and communication, is due to be considered by the UK Statistics Authority.

Outcomes and outputs realised

The passage of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*, and the acceptance of its data sharing provisions, mark a significant step forward for ONS and the GSS. From 1 April 2008 the Act allows ministers to make regulations to enable data sharing between the UK Statistics Authority and other public authorities, including government departments and agencies. These statutory powers will enable information from the UK Statistics Authority to be passed to other public authorities (outflows) and information from public authorities to be passed to the UK Statistics Authority (inflows) for statistical purposes. However, the Act is restricted to data sharing involving the UK Statistics Authority and therefore it is important that government departments continue to create and use other legal gateways. For example, provisions in the *Education and Skills Bill* would allow the DCSF and the Scottish Government to share data on further education qualifications with the DWP.

As an integral part of its work, the GSS subgroup identified a small number of high priority requirements for access to administrative data

covering potential inflows and outflows. At this stage it is anticipated that early use of the data sharing provisions would be directed to securing access to data to produce new or improved migration statistics (inflow to the UK Statistics Authority), facilitate the development, evaluation and review of policies on educational attainment (outflows from the UK Statistics Authority to the DCSF) and help reduce the cost and burden of data collection. These immediate needs are complemented by other less urgent requirements. For example, access to data held by ONS under the *Statistics of Trade Act 1947* would improve economic and business statistics, including improved regional Gross Value Added information (outflow from the UK Statistics Authority). In addition, the integration of information on education, employment and skills would contribute to the work on the skills agenda as well as efforts to improve education, training or employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups.

A framework for data sharing for statistical and analytical purposes has been developed. This is designed to help the GSS make the best use of the data sharing provisions in the 2007 Act by providing advice on a range of legal and operational issues. For example, procedures relating to the development and preparation of data sharing regulations have been complemented by guidelines relating to methodological, technical, data security and confidentiality issues. The proposals and recommendations outlined in the framework are designed to aid the implementation of the data sharing provisions in a consistent and coherent way, with the minimum burden on departments.

Lessons learned and costs

Although there is widespread support for improved data sharing, progress will not be easy, partly because of public concern about government stewardship of personal data and partly because of the methodological and statistical complexities associated with making more effective use of data from administrative

sources. Real improvements will require leadership from the UK Statistics Authority and the National Statistician, as well as commitment and co-operation from government departments, the devolved administrations and other public authorities.

ONS has allocated some funding as part of the Statistical Work Programme for work on data sharing, most notably in relation to requirements for improved population, migration and business statistics. However, the current financial climate and associated headcount reduction targets across government will limit the amount of work that can be done in the short term and the sums available for major infrastructure and methodological developments. Resource restraints reinforce the need for collaboration in order to ensure that funding is directed in the most appropriate and cost-effective ways. Government departments will need to make full and effective use of new funding opportunities, such as Invest to Save schemes, and to promote and sponsor joint research and other statistical activities.

The subgroup has been an excellent example of the GSS working together towards a common goal. It is only by collaborating that it will be possible to take forward work on data sharing in an efficient and effective way. The GSS must build on the progress that has been achieved to ensure that it can respond to the increasing demands for better and more trusted statistics to serve the common good.

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Measurement of Government Output and Productivity

Introduction

The UK Centre for the Measurement of Government Activity (UKCeMGA) was launched in July 2005 following the publication of the Atkinson Review Final Report *Measurement of Government Output and Productivity for the National Accounts*. UKCeMGA's remit is to implement the Atkinson Review recommendations and to develop and publish improved measures of change in the output, inputs and productivity of public services for the whole of the UK.

UKCeMGA is a division of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and has its own advisory board, led by a non-executive Chair. Members of the advisory board are all external to central government and have a mixture of skills in the delivery of public services, analysis and national accounting. The advisory board was set up in recognition of the politically sensitive nature of the work of UKCeMGA, to provide transparent, independent advice to the National Statistician on the work programme and priorities.

Strategic influences and policy drivers

The aim of UKCeMGA is to strengthen ONS's service to customers by publishing authoritative, independent and credible analyses of the productivity of public services, and to feed estimates of public service output into the UK National Accounts. This improves overall estimates of economic output and productivity growth.

This aim will be achieved by:

- publishing high-quality business products, including both statistical and development products
- making significant progress in a development programme designed to enhance the authority and credibility of productivity analyses over time, in particular by implementing the Atkinson Review recommendations, and
- evaluating the above against a number of key success criteria

Overall aims and objectives

UKCeMGA is responsible for the delivery of a number of statistical products in the form of articles and productivity publications. Below is a list by business area of the outputs produced during the year. These can be accessed at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/ukcemga

UKCeMGA also supplies time series data that are used for compiling the National Accounts. In particular, it is responsible for the supply of volume measure time series data for the output of public services. Volume measures are currently supplied for health, education, adult and children's social care, social security administration, fire services and county courts.

Productivity and development articles

During 2007/08 a number of productivity and development articles were produced by UKCeMGA.

The measurement of non-market output in education and health

Published in June 2007, this article summarised contributions at an international workshop held in October 2006, organised jointly with the Norwegian Government and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), on measurement of non-market output in the National Accounts. The workshop supported a project to provide detailed international guidelines for development of volume measures of non-market outputs, in particular for education and health.

Strategy for measuring quality as part of public service output

This article was published in July 2007 and followed on from the Atkinson Review, which advised that output should be measured in a way that takes account of quality change. It drew on the results of a public consultation carried out by UKCeMGA from September 2006 to April 2007.

The paper set out: the overall strategy for measuring public service output, of which quality

of service will be a key part; the future development programme needed to take the strategy forward; and specific decisions on methods for measuring quality as part of education and health care output.

It proposed a conceptual framework for measuring quality of public services, which would be based on the extent to which the service succeeds in delivering intended outcomes and responds to user needs. The balance between the two should depend on evidence or assumptions that are clear to all.

The strategy also discussed 'rise in earnings' adjustments in previously published education and health care productivity articles, and concluded they should not be used in this context.

Public service productivity: education

This article, published in September 2007, followed on from an article in October 2005, and provided updated figures based on the latest input and output data. In addition to new data, the article incorporated a number of methodological improvements, including new information for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland reflecting the 'Strategy for measuring quality as part of public service output' (see above).

Quality adjusting school education output

This article, also published in September 2007, described the derivation of a new quality adjustment for school education output. It followed on from responses to a public consultation exercise in 2006/07, and views subsequently expressed by the Quality Assurance Panel for Education. It outlined two methods: one used by the National Accounts and a new method used to adjust components of publicly funded education output in the article 'Public Service Productivity: Education' published in September 2007.

Public service productivity: adult social care

This article, issued in September 2007, showed the latest figures on adult social care productivity,

building on the previous article published in April 2006. The article included data on Scotland for the first time. The key finding was that productivity fell over the period 1995 to 2005. However, the output index was not adjusted for quality changes, and there was some evidence that quality improved and also some evidence of increased levels of dependency of clients in care homes.

Metrics of efficiency and productivity used by ONS and HMT

This article, published in January 2008, investigated the metrics of efficiency and productivity used by ONS and HM Treasury (HMT). The article explained similarities and differences between the methods used to calculate productivity change in ONS's public service productivity articles, and the metrics of efficiency established for use by HMT to monitor delivery of efficiency targets from the 2004 Spending Review.

Improvements to the measurement of government output in the National Accounts

This article, published in *Economic & Labour Market Review (ELMR)* in February 2008, described improvements made by ONS to the National Accounts and their impact on estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Improved measurement methods have added 3.8 per cent to the growth in government output between 1995 and 2005. The figures detailed in the publication equated to a cumulative increase of 0.7 percentage points in GDP. The article also described further developments proposed for future inclusion in the National Accounts.

Public service productivity: Health Care

Published in January 2008, this article updated the February 2006 article. In addition to new data, the article incorporated a number of methodological improvements, reflecting the 'Strategy for Measuring Quality as Part of Public Service Output' (see above). A supporting technical article that described the new methods used was also published on the UKCeMGA webpage.

Criminal justice system (scoping document)

This article was published in March 2008 and explored the inputs, outputs and productivity of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) within the context of National Accounts (NA). The article described current methods for measuring CJS output in NA and reviewed a number of options for improving the current methodology. The first involved improving and updating the current ONS methodology, estimating the individual output of the different CJS agencies. The second was an administration of justice approach, which recognised the interdependencies between CJS agencies, and the third was an outcome-based model which gauged the impact of the CJS and other factors on levels of crime. While the latter two options are attractive in principle, at present they cannot be currently implemented.

The article also recognised the limitations of the existing measures of CJS inputs and several options for improvement in this area were discussed. A number of recommendations for the future measurement of the inputs, outputs and productivity of the CJS were proposed.

Framework for measuring the quality of methods used to estimate public service output and productivity

UKCeMGA has developed a framework for measuring the quality of existing and proposed new methods. This paper, published in March 2008, outlined the framework and gave an example of how it is used in practice. The framework built on international work on statistical (or output) quality and that on process quality. The framework is based on the six European Statistical System Dimensions of Quality developed by Eurostat: relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility and clarity, comparability and coherence. Six attributes of process quality have been adopted by ONS: efficiency, effectiveness, robustness, flexibility, transparency and integration. These were combined to provide a framework that will give UKCeMGA the information it needs to decide on its methods, and

users of its estimates the information they need to understand why a particular method was chosen, and the advantages and disadvantages compared with some alternatives. The framework will also be used to prioritise the programme for improving existing methods and developing new ones based on identifying the areas of current methodology that appear to be of the lowest quality.

Quality measurement framework

The Government has made it clear that value for money should determine who delivers public services – whether public, private or third (voluntary and community) sector providers – and that the third sector has the potential to contribute more than at present. An HMT discussion paper identified the need to ‘improve the evidence base demonstrating the sector’s contribution to the higher quality service provision’ and posed the question ‘what measures and evaluation processes can be used to identify the direct and wider benefits of third sector organisations?’

The aim of the Quality Measurement Framework (QMF) Project is to establish a simple but robust quality measurement system that will enable service procurers to distinguish the relative quality of service providers and thus establish their relative value for money. The system will manage this without imposing a large data collection burden on service providers or procurers.

An interim report was published in autumn 2007. This set out the problems and issues with the relationships between local authorities and third sector service providers, and showed how these resulted in a monitoring system that is unduly burdensome without providing the quality information necessary to truly determine best value for money provision.

In December 2007 a number of partner reports were published:

- *Estimates of government funding to the Third Sector: Experimental Statistics* – a report by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations

- *Value for Money Comparison of Public and Voluntary Sector Provision of Pre-school Childcare and Education* – a literature review, compiled by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR)
- *Measuring Outcomes in Social Care: Conceptual Development and Empirical Design* – an interim report by the Personal Social Services Research Unit, and
- *Value for Money Comparison of Public and Third Sector Provision of Pre-school Childcare and Education* – a scoping study compiled by the NIESR, on the proposal for stage 2 work

During 2007/08 the QMF Project Team held a number of meetings and group discussions around the UK to promote the work of the project and explore issues around measuring the value of public services, such as pre-school education and social care services.

Other achievements

In recognition of cross-government co-operation on UKCeMGA's work, a new interdepartmental group, the Departmental Output and Productivity Advisory Group, has been established to help steer the productivity agenda across government.

This Group met twice during the year, discussing issues that impacted on the progress of UKCeMGA's work programme.

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Introduction

This chapter refers to statistical outputs at geographical levels below that of the UK as a whole, in particular Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and the nine Government Office Regions (GORs) in England.

The Demography and Regional Statistics Directorate of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) takes the lead on co-ordinating on sub-UK statistical information across the Government Statistical Service (GSS). It has two regional statistics divisions, covering Regional Economic Analysis (READ) and Regional and Neighbourhood Outputs and Analysis (RNOAD).

The work of the Directorate has been greatly enhanced by the recent appointment of an ONS statistician and analyst in each of the nine GORs.

Other government departments and the devolved nations contribute to the development of sub-UK statistics. The main vehicle for communicating this work during 2007/08 was via the GSS Regional and Geography Group (GSSRG), which has a wide range of members.

ONS has regular contact, both formal and informal, with the devolved administrations to ensure effective working relationships, including through Four Nations meetings and key accounts, and is currently building and strengthening its relationships with regional bodies in the UK. It also has responsibility for developing the area-based analysis work programme and for the day-to-day running of Neighbourhood Statistics in England and Wales.

Strategic influences and policy drivers

The European context

Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union (EU), is responsible for collecting a wide range of sub-UK data on behalf of the European Commission to help inform policymaking across Europe. In the UK, data are provided to Eurostat by ONS and by other government departments. In this context, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

are categorised with the same geographical taxonomy for statistical purposes as the nine Regions of England (known as NUTS1). ONS co-ordinates a UK-wide response to Eurostat projects.

Coherence between the four nations of the UK

There is a Memorandum of Understanding and a Concordat on Statistics between ONS and the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales with the devolved administrations represented on various working groups. Through formal and informal channels, all parties work together to provide coherent data for the UK where possible and appropriate.

Outcomes and outputs realised

Through its RNOAD and READ divisions, ONS conducts research and produces analyses at a regional and local level to support key area-based policies within the UK. These divisions also provide advice and support to those wishing to carry out similar analysis themselves.

Strategic framework for regional statistics

ONS has been working with devolved administrations and other stakeholders on a strategic framework for regional statistics to help develop a coherent approach to needs for statistics at geographical (both country and regional) levels below that of the UK as a whole.

The framework was published in May 2006 and is available on the National Statistics website at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14719

The various bodies involved in this work recognise the need for an appropriate balance between the statistical requirements of the administrations of the individual countries, and increasingly individual regions, with the requirement for coherence at a UK level and for comparable statistics across the UK.

The arrangements for the handling of inter-administration issues, and collaboration more

generally, with devolved administrations are currently the subject of further discussion in the light of ONS Independence.

Establishment of Regional Statisticians in the English Regions

In 2007/08 an ONS statistical team was established in each of the nine regions of England, in partnership with the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), to fulfil one of the principal recommendations of the Allsopp Review. The regional statisticians have a number of core functions that are tailored to individual regional circumstances. The primary function is to establish closer links between regional stakeholders and government statisticians. The regional statisticians act as a source of regional expertise assisting ONS in its decision-making. They also work in collaboration with regional and sub-regional institutions to improve the quality, comparability and use of the regional evidence base.

An evaluation exercise is being carried out and more details are contained in chapter 9.

Neighbourhood Statistics (England and Wales)

Neighbourhood Statistics is highly rated by users and attracts over 100,000 visits a month. The Neighbourhood Statistics website has continued to see a high volume of new data release and updates to existing datasets. Between April 2007 and January 2008 over 200 datasets were loaded onto the website.

A full list of these, together with links to articles and analysis relating to the data, is available on the news page within the website:

www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/Info.do?page=News.htm

Development

Work is under way on assessing potential changes to parts of the website, in particular:

- topics route: where users can find, and view or download all available datasets
- customised tables charts and maps route: the

most complicated (but most powerful) part of the website where users can perform a range of analysis, including comparing areas, constructing customised tables of chosen areas and variables from different datasets, create user-defined areas, perform time series analysis including rebasing, and view different boundaries on a map

Online training (e-learning)

The second phase of neighbourhood statistics online training was released in July 2007:

www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/Info.do?page=ELearning_home.htm

The new material includes guidance and exercises on statistical analysis and data presentation. It is suitable both as an introduction for beginners or as a reminder for experienced data users.

Data exchange – interoperability

Work continues on delivering better ways of sharing data between systems – particularly between the Neighbourhood Statistics Service (NeSS) and other local information systems. Discussions have also taken place with the Department for Communities and Local Government with regards to its data exchange proposals, and an .xml standard for data exchange has been agreed.

Analysis toolkit

The Neighbourhood Statistics analysis toolkit is designed for anyone using Neighbourhood Statistics to carry out research. It aims to help people get the best out of the data by making their analysis more effective. Sections published on the NeSS website in April 2008 included:

- introduction to the Neighbourhood Statistics analysis toolkit
- finding statistics to help build the evidence base
- creating common statistics
- how to find out if my area has changed over time
- how to find out the characteristics of an area

Further sections about making comparisons between areas and evaluating significant change over time are in development.

Worklessness summary statistics

A number of key variables related to worklessness have been published via Neighbourhood Statistics in a single dataset. These are drawn largely from labour market data available via Nomis®, and combined with population estimates to produce percentages. The first release of data was in January 2008.

Change over time

Work is progressing on an approach to measuring change over time in small areas within a local authority. An article was published in the February 2008 edition of *LARIA news* and a discussion paper is expected to be published in spring 2008.

Area-based analysis

Model-based estimates of income

Model-based estimates of income are currently being produced for the Middle Layer Super Output Area geography for 2004/05, and the methodology being used for this work is the same as for the previously released ward-based estimates. Following publication in September 2007, further investigation is being carried out by ONS's methodology division to determine whether it will be possible to produce estimates of publishable quality for Lower Layer Super Output Areas, local authorities and for different income distributions.

Travel to work areas

ONS is now working on producing analysis, tools and data which show commuting patterns for subpopulations: ethnicity, gender, age, industry, occupation, means of travel and part-time employment.

Area classification

Area classifications already exist for several of the geographies regularly used when analysing data. A new classification was released in March 2008 from 2001 Census data for Super Output Areas and Data Zones, the geography for which the

majority of data are available on the Neighbourhood Statistics website.

Analyses of place

Work has now started to produce analyses of place and two articles have been written for *Regional Trends*:

- comparing the rural/urban definition with the new 2001 area classification of Super Output Areas and Data Zones, and
- assessing whether areas with high levels of worklessness deprivation in 2001 are improving at a faster rate than other areas

Other analyses planned include:

- analysis of deprivation using the new Index of Deprivation (IoD07)
- investigating the impact of migration
- extending the change over time analyses to include the rural/urban definition (to see, for example, whether rural areas are improving faster than urban areas)
- assessing data on community wellbeing
- analysing health patterns based on hospital episode statistics
- analysing patterns of income using model-based estimates of income and income domain in the indices of deprivation

Regional economic analysis

The objective of the regional economic analysis work is to develop the capabilities of regional analysis within ONS and to maximise the usefulness of existing datasets. The development of the regional economic indicators articles published in *Economic & Labour Market Review* has contributed to a wider understanding of regional and area-based (such as urban and rural) issues and statistics, and an improved understanding of the factors that explain differences in regional performance.

These developments will continue to facilitate the incorporation of developmental and new analysis being carried out in the area of regional and sub-

regional analysis. A study that started in 2006 and identified the contributory components of regional economic performance has been extended onto a time series basis and will be further developed to cover more detailed geographies. Preliminary work towards the production of sub-regional productivity estimates and the introduction of regional productivity estimates with an industry breakdown is ongoing. Some sub-regional productivity analyses were published in articles during 2007 and further results should be disseminated in 2008.

Other work involved completing a chapter describing regional productivity and the issues that are particularly relevant for regional analysis, which was included in the *ONS Productivity Handbook: A statistical overview and guide*, published in mid-2007.

Changing Regional Economies reports were produced for each of the nine English regions to coincide with the official launch of the ONS Regional Statisticians teams, established in each English GOR in April 2007. Each report provided a profile of the relevant region and presented a range of statistics that help to understand differences between regions. Within regions, comparisons were made between sub-regions and between rural and urban areas. Regional statistics in the context of the European structural funds were also discussed.

ONS has chaired the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) working party on territorial indicators, which develops the methodology for examining regional performance. In 2007 the working party continued its work on 'defining and measuring metropolitan areas', extending the discussion to also cover rural areas and urban-rural linkages. This work should lead to the production of guidance on the relevance of different approaches to this issue. This work is of particular relevance in the context of the UK policy interest in emphasising the importance of cities as the drivers of growth and the 'city region' agenda.

Regional publications

Regional Snapshot

Since its launch in October 2005, Regional Snapshot, the regional web page available on the National Statistics website, has been expanded several times. As well as providing a profile for each region and country of the UK, there are key data tables covering a range of topics, some of which are at local authority and district level. The data can be accessed at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/regionalsnapshot

The subject-based section now includes 71 different tables, some for more than one time period, of which 14 provide sub-regional data. The latest release in December 2007 updated some of the tables previously released on Regional Snapshot in the areas of population and migration, crime, education, housing, and benefits. Previous versions have been placed in a new archive area.

Further releases will be made in the coming months as new information becomes available, three or four times a year. The next release will update the regional profiles alongside their publication in *Regional Trends*.

The extent of the snapshot will be reviewed as resources allow. Other improvements under consideration include speeding up the production and updating of the regional profiles. It is hoped that the launch of the new ONS website earlier in 2008 (see chapter 13) will have improved accessibility and enabled further improvements to be implemented.

Regional Trends 40

Production of the next edition of *Regional Trends* (No 40) is on schedule. It is hoped to make some small improvements to accessibility on the Internet and the relationship with data on Regional Snapshot. *RT40* will contain an article highlighting the three Neighbourhood Statistics websites in the UK with collaboration from the four nations. The article provides more information on the early history of the websites and on how they are being

used, including case studies, their functionality and the future challenges and direction of the websites.

A review of *Regional Trends* has been carried out to assess the implementation so far of the sub-national outputs portfolio review conducted in 2004, and to make proposals for the future direction of *Regional Trends* and Regional Snapshot. Consideration is being given to publishing tables online only in future, in order to devote more of the available resources to analysis and interpretation of regional and sub-regional data. The outcome of the review will be announced in spring 2008.

Focus on London

A new edition of *Focus on London* was published in May 2007.

Urban Audit

In March 2008 ONS completed all available data collection for the Urban Audit III project, which commenced in June 2006. Sponsored by the European Commission, the project will allow for comparisons of standardised data for 299 cities in the EU.

Data have been collected for 30 cities in the UK, including all local authorities with a population greater than 250,000 people. To ensure that data collected are relevant to policymakers, administrative boundaries are used to define the cities. For a selection of variables, data are also collected relating to the larger urban region (the 'larger urban zone') and smaller areas within the city ('sub-city districts'). Data have been collected for nearly 350 variables, covering topics such as crime, transport, employment and health. In addition, a subset of data has been collected for a further 76 cities. This 'large city audit' will mean that datasets will cover every local authority with a population greater than 100,000 people in the UK.

Previous Urban Audit projects collected data for 2001, with historical data for 1991 and 1996 for selected variables. Urban Audit III has collected

data for 2004 to help analyse change over time. The new datasets are likely to be published in mid-2008. Information on Urban Audit is available on the National Statistics website at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/urbanaudit

Regional Sustainable Development Indicators

Work was undertaken by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) during 2007/08 to update the English Regional Sustainable Development Indicators, which were originally published in December 2005. Work has also been undertaken to produce international comparative sustainable development indicators, which compare the UK with other countries, particularly in Europe. The indicators highlight issues within the priority areas of sustainable consumption and production, natural resources, and sustainable communities. Other indicators provide useful contextual information. The indicators pull together already published statistics at regional level, to enable comparisons to be made between English regions, and with progress nationally. In 2007/08 it was possible to produce regional versions of two recently developed and important national indicators on environmental inequality and wellbeing. All regional sustainable development indicators are available at:

www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/regional/index.htm

Eurostat Rural Development Indicators

In January 2008 Eurostat met to discuss the development of statistics for rural areas across the whole of the EU. This meeting was generally information sharing in nature with no formal decisions made. Eurostat has carried out a review of the latest data collection exercise and wanted initial reactions to its proposals for collecting the data in the future. It wrote to member states at the end of March 2008 after considering the feedback it received at the meeting.

The meeting was attended by the majority of member states and representatives from Eurostat and the Urban Audit team. The key proposals in

the UK are to streamline the data collection process (using existing sources), use data from the Labour Force Survey for labour market information (to ensure comparability), to use the OECD urban-rural definition and to give clear proposals on the geographic level at which they wish data to be supplied.

A paper presented on Eurostat Rural Development Indicators contained variables that have been proposed by member states for possible future collection. They have not been endorsed by Eurostat. Member states were asked for initial comments on their relevance and availability at different geographic levels. The UK and other countries commented that they would need to consult more widely and suggested that the proposals should align with both national and EU priorities. They also emphasised the need to align any definitions for these variables with existing definitions, particularly those produced by the Urban Audit exercise.

Regional Trade Statistics

An important indicator of regional and devolved economic activity is the level of export trade that is achieved. Regional trade in goods statistics provide this information, and also act as a source of market intelligence for the commercial and academic sectors. The trade statistics area in HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) produces quarterly data for trade in goods between the nine GORs, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and partner countries outside the UK. HMRC recently enhanced the format of the press release, including a graphical representation of the data, following a user consultation on the presentation of the regional trade statistics. The statistics are available at the HMRC international trade website:

www.uktradeinfo.com

National Insurance Number registrations

In July 2007 the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published 2006/07 statistics at local authority and parliamentary constituency level on National Insurance numbers registered to overseas nationals. These augment previously published UK-level figures and are a useful

addition to the information available on the inflow of migrant workers.

New Deal

From September 2007 New Deal statistics by Middle Layer Super Output Area were published on the Neighbourhood Statistics website with additional breakdowns by ethnic group and gender.

Northern Ireland

Multiple Deprivation Measures

During 2007 Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), in partnership with Northern Ireland government departments, implemented the recommendations contained in the spatial deprivation report published in 2005, including establishing research into small area income estimates. Further research is planned for 2008/09.

Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service

The Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) website continues to support a wide range of users, with over 15,000 visits a month.

In January 2008 NINIS launched its Investing for Health website, which has been developed to support the 'Investing for Health' strategy by providing access to health and wellbeing statistics at a small area level. Future developments in 2008 include the addition of interactive maps allowing visual comparison of key health data across Northern Ireland. The website can be accessed at:

www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/ifh

Scotland

Scotland, like the other devolved administrations, has an active programme of ongoing and developmental statistical activity. Achievements in statistics in the Scottish administration will be covered in its own annual report, to be published during 2008. Statistics on Scotland are available at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/stats

Small area statistics

Scotland works closely with the other UK administrations on mutual issues. Regular meetings of the four nations have ensured work on small area statistics and neighbourhood statistics progress in a joined-up way as appropriate. Lessons learned by each of the four nations from their indices of deprivation are shared at the four nations deprivation working group and built into future updates where applicable.

Economic statistics

Scottish Government worked closely with the UK Centre for the Measurement of Government Activity (UKCeMGA) on the OECD workshop and on providing Scottish data to allow for analysis across the whole of the UK. There have also been helpful methodological developments in relation to Regional Accounts for Scotland and Gross Domestic Product through the joint project conducted alongside the ONS Regional Accounts team.

Wales

Welsh Assembly Government statisticians work to support policymaking in Wales, strive continuously to improve the evidence base, and develop the data sources to ensure policy in Wales is based on solid, robust, data through working closely with partners such as ONS and Health Solutions Wales.

The programme of statistical work is published in an annual statistical workplan and achievements are described in the annual report of the Wales Statistical Directorate. Both of these can be found along with the full range of statistical outputs online at:

www.statswales.wales.gov.uk

Contact

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Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight those developments that have had a significant impact on the Government Statistical Service (GSS) but were not anticipated when the work programme was being developed.

Independence for statistics

On 26 July 2007 the Statistics and Registration Service Act gained Royal Assent. The Act creates the Statistics Board (now known as the UK Statistics Authority) and sets out its main duties (see Appendix A).

The UK Statistics Authority is a non-ministerial government department acting at arm's length from ministers. It replaces ministers in terms of lines of accountability for the Office for National Statistics (ONS), and abolishes the Statistics Commission in terms of an advisory/regulatory role for the statistical system.

ONS has become the Authority's Executive Office. The National Statistician is the Chief Executive of the Executive Office, and a member of the Authority's board.

Key responsibilities

Monitoring and reporting on all official statistics

The UK Statistics Authority has the overall objective of promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good. Official statistics are defined in the Act as statistics produced by, or on behalf of, the UK Statistics Authority, another government department or the devolved administrations. Other public bodies may also produce official statistics if set down in secondary legislation.

This is a broad remit, given strength by the UK Statistics Authority's ability, as set out in the Act, to comment publicly on any concerns it has about statistics. This means that the UK Statistics Authority's interest is much wider than National Statistics and other GSS-produced statistics, extending to statistics wherever they are produced in the UK.

The UK Statistics Authority is obliged to lay at least one report each year before Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Assessment and designation

This is one of the most significant new responsibilities of the UK Statistics Authority. The Authority is required to develop, consult upon and implement a new Code of Practice and also the principles for assessment. The Authority must then assess all candidate National Statistics and all existing National Statistics against this Code, and decide whether or not to designate them as National Statistics.

Assessments will be carried out by an assessment team led by the Authority's Head of Assessment. The assessment team will work independently and report directly to the Authority's board. Each year the UK Statistics Authority must publish a list of all those statistics that are designated as National Statistics by the Authority.

The Act ensures that there is separation between assessment and production of statistics. It is clear that those with responsibility for statistical production should not be involved in decisions about whether to designate these statistics as National Statistics. Likewise, assessors should not be involved in the production of statistics.

Oversight of ONS

The UK Statistics Authority has replaced HM Treasury (HMT) ministers as the top level of ONS's governance. The National Statistician, as Chief Executive, is responsible to the Authority's board for the efficient running of the executive office. Residual ministerial responsibility for statistics, for the purpose of laying reports and the introduction of legislation, has been transferred from HMT to the Cabinet Office.

Other developments

In August 2007 Sir Michael Scholar was appointed as Chair-Designate of the Statistics Board. In January 2008 the non-executive members of the Statistics Board were appointed. They are: Partha Dasgupta, Moira Gibb, Sir Alan Langlands,

Professor Stephen Nickell, Professor David Rhind, Lord David Rowe-Beddoe and Professor Adrian Smith. Two of the non-executives have been appointed as Deputy Chairs: Lord Rowe-Beddoe is a Deputy Chair with responsibility for the governance of ONS. The other Deputy Chair, with responsibility for the wider statistical system, is Professor Smith.

The UK Statistics Authority met for the first time in shadow form in February 2008. It met on a further two occasions before formally taking up its powers on 1 April 2008. One of the first decisions taken was to adopt the name of the UK Statistics Authority. However, the term Statistics Board, as defined by the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, will continue to be used in formal legal documents, such as legislation and contracts.

During 2007/08 a small team of ONS officials, supported by a small number of GSS advisory groups, have been working on a dedicated Independence Work Programme. During 2007/08 the Programme focused on five objectives:

- To co-ordinate development of options for proposals on professional matters for consideration by the National Statistician and the incoming Shadow Chair as appropriate
- To co-ordinate input from across the GSS (and from other stakeholders) to ensure that proposals for delivering the professional aspect of Independence are informed by, and reflective of, the balance of views across the GSS
- To oversee the implementation of the chosen options across ONS and ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements
- To identify and manage the risks, interdependencies and resources involved in the transition to Independence in a controlled and structured programme environment, and
- To arrange the formal launch of the UK Statistics Authority and provide it with the assistance required to establish and deliver its objectives

As a result of this work, the National Statistician

and the Statistical Heads of Profession are considering a number of proposals around governance and planning for the GSS. These are designed to help to revitalise the GSS and ensure that it is in a position to respond to the demands placed upon it by the UK Statistics Authority.

An engagement and learning programme was launched in November 2007 at the GSS Leaders in Statistics Conference and is designed to raise awareness among GSS staff of the Act and its implications. The Act and its implications was also a major theme for the Assistant Statisticians' Conference held in December 2007. This was followed up by a series of roadshow presentations to GSS staff working across the UK.

Determining rules for pre-release access

Under the Act, rules and procedures for pre-release access to statistics in their final form will be set out in an Order made by the Minister for the Cabinet Office to Parliament. In December 2007 HMT and the Cabinet Office launched a consultation on the rules relating to pre-release access to statistics – *Limiting pre release access to statistics: a consultation document* – in order to determine what the Order should contain. In this document, they set out a number of proposals for tightening the rules relating to pre-release access, including restrictions on the length of time allowed for pre-release access and limits on the number of people who routinely receive such access. This consultation closed in March 2008 and the UK Statistics Authority submitted a response to the proposals. It is anticipated that the Pre-Release Access to Statistics Order 2008 will go before Parliament in late spring 2008, and that once the Order has been passed it will form an integral part of the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice.

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ONS i-dissemination programme

The i-dissemination programme has been established by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to design and create a number of new websites which are required following the implementation of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. ONS has adopted a user-centred approach for this work and is also looking to develop new methods for disseminating statistical data, as well as re-engineering a range of back-office processes.

As a part of this work, the i-dissemination team are also developing a new taxonomy for National Statistics and will create an online National Statistics Catalogue. These developments should mean that users will find it much easier to find statistical data and get a much better indication of the range of data appropriate to their needs.

Building new websites

The implementation of the Act required the creation of a website for the UK Statistics Authority. This new website describes the roles and composition of the Authority and it is where it will publish new policies, guidelines and reports as they become available. It went live on 1 April 2008:

www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk

The ONS homepage has moved web addresses to www.ons.gov.uk and this provides a homepage for all ONS products. A new microsite has also been developed which contains a range of corporate information about ONS (www.ons.gov.uk/about). Both of these websites went live on 1 April 2008.

There is also a new home page for government statistics, known as the Publication Hub, which, as the i-dissemination programme progresses, will provide a 'one-stop shop' for all National Statistics. The Publication Hub, which is not part of the Act but has become closely associated with it, is intended to provide a single source for all new releases of National Statistics, in a form that ensures the statistics are clearly separated from

any political statements about the releases. The initial launch of the Publication Hub was on 1 April 2008 and it gives access to all new releases of National Statistics from across the UK, along with the Calendar of pre-announced publication dates. In due course the Publication Hub will be further enhanced to provide access to the full National Statistics Catalogue and the full development is intended for completion by April 2009. The home page is:

www.statistics.gov.uk

A new taxonomy

Work has started on the development of a new taxonomy for statistics. This taxonomy will provide the navigation for both the National Statistics Catalogue and ONS websites. It is intended that this should be a public-focused taxonomy, so the language it uses will be non-technical and facilitate easy navigation through to the desired statistics by less experienced users.

The new taxonomy will create a new set of themes, subjects and topics which will collectively provide a clear structure for all National Statistics as well as much improved search facilities. This will be a considerable improvement on the current database-driven approach to the ONS website, where searches produce long lists of pages and documents but give no indication as to which is the most up to date or appropriate, or any assurance that the list is complete.

This taxonomy will help define the structure of the National Statistics Catalogue, as well as the standard search terms and themes for the Publication Hub.

Initial discussions have been held with GSS statisticians in order to start work on developing an appropriate taxonomy and it is intended that this new taxonomy will be implemented in autumn 2008, alongside a range of other website improvements, such as improved search facilities.

National Statistics Catalogue

It is intended that the National Statistics Catalogue will provide users with a clear mapping and an

overview of all of the National Statistics products that are produced within any particular topic or theme. So, as an example, within the Crime and Justice Theme there may be a subject called crime and then a number of related topics, such as crime trends, international comparisons and drug crime. The Catalogue will let anyone who has an interest in crime discover the full range of data that are available, alongside other relevant information and links. The Catalogue is being developed by the ONS i-dissemination team, but the content will be provided from across the GSS. The intention is to build the Catalogue incrementally, with the full service being in place by April 2009.

Other developments

The i-dissemination programme is also sponsoring work, with ONS's communications directorate, to co-ordinate and rationalise the types of publications being produced within ONS. Additionally, it is working with the ONS information management directorate to consider new methods for disseminating ONS datasets over the Internet.

Contact

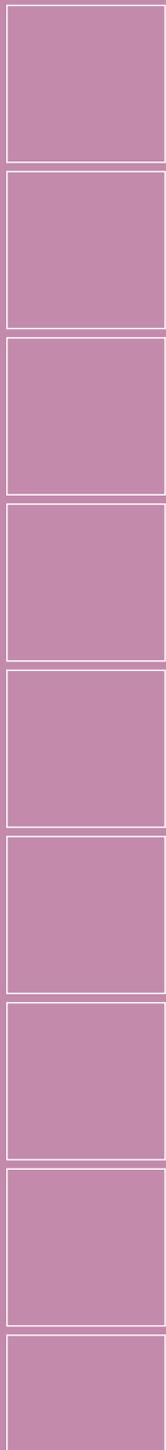
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themes



Introduction

This theme brings together information and statistics from across the UK about the agriculture, fishing, food and forestry sectors. In particular, the theme includes statistics on:

- the economic impact of these sectors
- rural areas, working as appropriate with other Theme Working Groups (TWGs)
- outputs and inputs of agriculture and the food industry, and the environmental consequences
- animal and plant health
- food (in association with other TWGs)

A high priority for this theme over the three years of the work programme is being given to the development of a sustainable agriculture and food industry, and to the economic, social and environmental development of rural areas. While traditional agricultural statistics remain important, they need increasingly to be set in the wider strategic and rural context.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the TWG was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter reports on the progress made over the last 12 months on the most important projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. The projects are listed in no order of importance.

Priority projects

A. Information to support the sustainable farming and food agenda

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to develop a suite of performance indicators to monitor the success of the policies delivering the Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy (SFFS). The project includes co-ordinating the development of internal and external surveys and monitoring schemes to provide data to feed into and support the indicators.

Progress to date

A set of 11 headline and approximately 60 supporting core indicators have been developed.

Headline indicators have been developed to be consistent with other strategies and action plans for sustainable development. Targets and trajectories have been set for the headline indicators. Stakeholder consultation has taken place through the SFFS implementation group, which was set up to take forward and oversee delivery of strategy. Where possible, indicators have been based on established data series and only data sources that are fit for purpose are used. A website designed to publish the indicator results was launched in July 2006:

www.statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/indicator.asp

Planned future work

Planned future work includes:

- continuing the rolling programme of updates for indicators' results
- ongoing development of indicators to reflect changing issues, priorities, monitoring programmes and data sources
- ensuring that the SFFS indicators reflect other relevant strategies and programmes, including at European Union (EU) and international level
- developing an overall assessment of the strategy

Completion date

The SFFS targets and trajectories for the headline indicators run until 2010

Cost

Approximately £75,000 a year for the years 2005, 2006 and 2007, falling to £40,000 for subsequent years as the project moves from development to maintenance of the indicators

Contact

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B. Making greater use of administrative data

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to increase the use of administrative data for statistical purposes, thereby reducing compliance costs for both the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and respondents. Defra statisticians are working closely with colleagues who are developing administrative approaches to livestock, land and customer data and with the Whole Farm Approach, with a view to collecting data once and using many times. Initial work has focused on the use of cattle tracing data to replace June survey questions.

Progress to date

In 2007, for the first time, EU and domestic requirements for statistics on cattle, normally met through the June Agricultural and Horticultural survey, were sourced from the Cattle Tracing System. Accordingly, the 2007 June survey contained no questions on cattle.

Statisticians continue to work closely with colleagues dealing with other administrative data systems relating to livestock. In addition, they are contributing actively on a project to develop a strategy for land link identifiers to be used across Defra which, together with cross-departmental activity on customer identity management, will enable greater access to, and improve the quality of, the data to be shared.

Work is also under way to assess whether the need to collect crop data in the June survey can be removed through greater alignment with, and adjustment of, the Single Payment Scheme arrangements.

For the last two years, data for the Sheep and Goat Inventory have been collected at the same time as the December survey to reduce the burden on farmers.

Planned future work

It is hoped that the work, which is currently under way, to explore whether the questions about

sheep in the December survey can be combined with the Sheep and Goat Inventory will allow the survey burden to be reduced while still meeting legislative requirements.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Around £100,000 a year in staff resource and system adjustment

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C. Animal health and welfare indicators

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to provide a suite of performance indicators that measure the progress of Defra's Animal Health and Welfare Strategy. This will contribute towards delivery of its main strategic outcomes as expressed in the Vision for the Future statement contained in the Strategy document *Animal Health and Welfare Strategy for Great Britain*, published in June 2004 and accessible on the Defra website at:

www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/ahws/strategy/ahws.pdf

The work involves building a suitable framework for the indicators based on the strategic outcomes. Beyond that, indicators at the headline and core level are being developed and will be populated with data from administrative, official and private sources.

Progress to date

An indicator framework for farmed livestock within England has been developed in conjunction with the England Implementation Group (EIG), a Defra-appointed steering group to oversee the delivery of the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy within England.

Measures for these livestock indicators have been developed and, where possible so far, populated using a variety of data from statistical and administrative datasets. The data used to populate the indicators have been updated twice during the past 12 months to ensure the measures remain up to date.

The indicator framework and the indicators populated to date are published at:

www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/ahws/eig/indicators/index.htm

Planned future work

Further work is needed to populate the livestock indicators that have not been populated to date, and to continue to refresh the existing indicators with the latest available data.

During 2008/09 it is expected that indicators of farmed livestock welfare and indicators on companion animals (pets) will be developed. This work will include devising suitable measures and sourcing appropriate data, ensuring that the indicators fit within the current indicator framework and are aligned to the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy.

Completion date

The Animal Health and Welfare Strategy is a ten-year programme that started in 2004. It is expected to take to at least the end of 2008/09 to develop the indicators, although some of the more complex indicators may take longer to be fully developed. The monitoring functions will be required up to 2014 or beyond.

Cost

It is difficult to estimate resource costs over the duration of the project. Costs are envisaged to be about £100,000 for 2008/09.

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Theme group members

This work programme was developed by:

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Paul Caskie

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Graham Collett

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Adam Krawczyk

Scottish Government Environment and Rural Affairs Department

Tom McMahon

Central Statistics Office, Ireland

Alistair Murray

Central Science Laboratory

Stuart Neil

Welsh Assembly Government

Stuart Platt

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Allan Reese

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science

Marc Thomas

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Sheila Ward

Forestry Commission

Philippa Brimicombe

Office for National Statistics (Secretary)

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

www.defra.gov.uk

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Northern Ireland

www.dardni.gov.uk

Forestry Commission

www.forestry.gov.uk/statistics

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales/index.htm

Commerce, Energy and Industry

Report of progress against plans 2007/08

Introduction

The Commerce, Energy and Industry (CEI) theme covers the full range of microeconomic data produced by the Government Statistical Service (GSS). Microeconomic data include: indicators of output, Gross Value Added (GVA), employment, productivity, trade in goods and services, foreign direct investment, statistics of small and medium-sized businesses, and insolvency statistics in the manufacturing and service sectors. Statistics on energy cover information on production, trade, supply and prices.

This theme has very close links with the economy theme, which covers macroeconomic data. In many cases, the data sources are the same, as are the major users, such as HM Treasury (HMT), Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), devolved administrations and Eurostat.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter reports on the progress made over the last 12 months on the most important projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. The projects are listed in no order of importance.

Priority projects

A. Business data laboratory

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML) is to provide ONS with a corporate facility for secure, cross-site access to microdata for research purposes. It is an analytical resource, both supporting Office for National Statistics (ONS) researchers and carrying out in-house research on behalf of ONS in the areas of quality assurances, methodology and the development of new statistics and analyses.

The VML is also offered as a service to other government departments and academic researchers. The VML team participate fully in the policy agenda surrounding microdata use, including confidentiality and disclosure control.

Progress to date

The rate of growth of VML usage has slowed slightly from around 50 per cent a year to approximately 30 per cent a year, as measured by projects and outputs. ONS usage of the data has grown, and the VML is now used as a key resource in four ONS divisions and as an occasional facility in the others. Around one-tenth of ONS analytical staff use or have used the VML to access restricted data. Over 400 researchers, two-thirds external to ONS, have been trained in the use of the VML.

The VML has been taken as the model for two other research data centres: HMRC has set up a facility based on the VML, and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is funding an academic counterpart to the VML modelled closely on it.

The VML continues to be seen as a world leader in the provision of access to confidential data. The VML team is active in developing links between analysts within and outside ONS, and has given presentations about microdata analysis to universities, government departments and academic conferences. VML staff have acted as expert advisers for a range of events related to confidentiality and data management. The VML series of quarterly workshops on economic research, attended by researchers, data custodians and policymakers, is now usually oversubscribed.

Two major developments were initiated in 2007/08:

- A pilot scheme to provide terminals in other government departments, from which the VML could be accessed, got under way. Technical difficulties and unexpectedly lengthy negotiations with host organisations meant that by March 2008 only the first of the four pilot sites, at the offices of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), was working, although a second site in Glasgow is under construction, and
- In October 2007 it was agreed that the VML team should take overall responsibility (with the

exception of some internal clients) for user support for the ONS Longitudinal Study. This is a major ONS data resource and also offers access to confidential microdata in a secure setting. However, its operational model is quite different, and while some of the administrative gains in combining the two services are now being realised, a significant bedding-in period is expected

Planned future work

Four main tasks are due for 2008/09:

- Completion and evaluation of the pilot expansion: completion of the pilot network and testing will provide essential information for longer-term planning of the VML – the pilot should report by September 2008
- Integration of the Longitudinal Study and other research support: this will allow the benefits from combining two similar operations to be realised – the first stage is due to be completed in May 2008
- Developing the Longitudinal Study user base: the Longitudinal Study is a potentially valuable data source for a number of ONS's key themes (for example, children and young people, ageing population and wellbeing) – a major development in 2008/09 will be to identify internal user data and support requirements, and the first stage of this will be completed by the end of May 2008, and
- Reviewing microdata research: in late summer 2008 a major review of microdata access is planned – this will take the lessons learned from the pilot expansion, the merger of the VML and the Longitudinal Study, the ESRC's complementary service, the introduction of the new legal framework, and the previous four years of operations of the VML, to generate a sustainable, funded plan for the VML for future years

For business-as-usual operations, the microdata holdings in the VML will continue to be quality assured, documented and, where appropriate, linked for approved analysis. Household surveys and other social data are being added to the VML.

Completion dates

- May 2008 for the first stage of the Longitudinal Study integration projects
- September 2008 for the evaluation of the pilot expansion
- November 2008 for the review of microdata operations

Cost

Not available – VML is funded as core ONS business

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B. Improvements in quality and reliability of pension statistics

Aims and objectives

The aims of this project are to rebuild public confidence in existing pension statistics, improve the quality of data from existing sources, and to develop new data sources.

Progress to date

ONS has established the Pensions Analysis Unit (PAU), which succeeded the Pensions Statistics Task Force. The PAU has continued to work towards improving the quality of pension statistics and to rebuild public confidence. The Pension Statistics Advisory Group (PSAG) has continued to meet to help facilitate interdepartmental co-ordination on pension statistics. The PAU continues to monitor user confidence in pension statistics through the PSAG and from user and media comments.

Updates to *Pension Trends* have continued and ten of the 13 chapters have been updated. A new chapter 14 on 'Life expectancy and healthy ageing' has been added. Updates to estimates of pension contributions in the National Accounts were also published.

The Occupational Pension Schemes Survey (OPSS) has transferred from the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) to ONS. The OPSS questionnaires were redesigned to help improve data quality and response rates. ONS collected data for the 2006 survey in November 2006 and significant improvements to response rates were observed. A first release of the results was published in June 2007 with a more detailed annual report published in October 2007.

Improvements to ONS surveys have continued. Changes have been made to the 2008 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings pension questions. Work on improving the pension fund and insurance company surveys has continued, with a major review of the questionnaires completed in March 2008.

Planned future work

Further updates to *Pension Trends* will be

published, including new chapters on under-saving and inequalities. Updates to estimates of pension contributions in the National Accounts will be published. Work will continue on estimating retirement age, improving the pension fund and insurance company surveys, and improving the OPSS. Work on analysis of the pension data from the Wealth and Assets Survey will also start.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

2005/06:	£250,000
2006/07:	£350,000
2007/08:	£340,000

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C. Development of regional and local estimates of energy consumption

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to collect and compile regional and local estimates of energy consumption for different fuel sources. This information will be used by local and regional bodies to design, implement and monitor sustainable energy policies in their areas. It will also enable the investigation and analysis of local and regional variations in energy consumption.

Progress to date

BERR has developed a suite of local authority and Government Office Region (GOR) level figures on the consumption of gas, electricity, fuel for road transport, and other fuels as a result of this ongoing project. Gas and electricity data have also been made available at middle layer super output area level.

The data were officially reclassified from experimental statistics to National Statistics in March 2008. One of the key uses of the data is that they form the basis of local authority carbon dioxide emissions statistics, produced by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), and are used as the basis for one of Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) indicators for local authorities.

All the data, together with explanatory notes, have been made available to users online at:

www.berr.gov.uk/energy/statistics/regional/index.html

Planned future work

This includes:

- release of 2007 electricity and gas consumption estimates at GOR, local authority and middle layer super output area level for Great Britain
- release of 2006 consumption estimates at GOR and local authority level for road transport fuels, other fuels, and total fuels in the UK
- work to improve the domestic and industrial/commercial split of gas consumption data by

using information held on the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR)

Completion date

The development phase for data production is now complete. The project now forms part of BERR's regular data compilation.

Cost

£16,000

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D. E-collection of energy statistics

The aim of this project was to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the energy data collection by introducing an electronic data collection system.

The project was completed at the end of March 2006 and BERR now collects coal, gas, oil and electricity data electronically.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

E. Revised approach to the EU Electricity and Gas Price Transparency Directive

The aim of this project was to develop a new methodology which would allow the calculation of annual prices for the country as a whole and would meet Eurostat requirements under the EU Electricity and Gas Price Transparency Directive.

A new methodology has been developed and has been used since January 2008.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

F. Review of the International Trade in Services Survey questionnaire

The aim of this project was to review the International Trade in Services (ITIS) questionnaire in order to improve the design of survey questionnaires and the quality of the data collected. This would also allow the UK to provide the additional Trade in Services detail which is required by the European Balance of Payments (BoP) Regulation.

This project has been completed. A new questionnaire was used for the 2005 survey, and the provisional and final results for total ITIS were compliant with the requirements of the European BoP Regulation.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

G. Development of the DCMS Evidence Toolkit to provide data on the DCMS sectors

Aims and objectives

The project aims to develop the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Evidence Toolkit (DET) to provide improved definitions and statistics for the DCMS sectors. The programme of work will include identifying the appropriate Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes, and proportions of codes where necessary, to update the *Creative Industries Economic Estimates* statistical bulletin. DCMS will also be developing proposals for five-digit subclasses for the SIC 2007 revisions, with the aim of further improving the available data. Ultimately, the DET will provide a framework for statistical analysis of each DCMS sector, including comparisons with other sectors where data are better established.

Further information about the DET can be found on the DCMS website at:

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/rands/guidanceandmethods

Progress to date

This project has been encompassed into wider DCMS analytical work, particularly the wider Creative Economy Programme, launched in November 2005 to consider key drivers of productivity in the creative industries. As part of the evidence and analysis strand of the Programme, the current methodology used to measure the creative industries was investigated and a proposal has been developed for a more detailed approach. This development work was published in September 2007 and is available via:

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/rands/statistics/creative_industries_eco_est.htm

Planned future work

The next stage for the analysis is to investigate the feasibility of incorporating a revised methodology into the annual *Creative Industries Economic Estimates* bulletin. This will require a process of consultation with both internal and external

stakeholders to determine user views and requirements, as well as further analysis of the available data sources. A key part of this will be to use the DET to develop a methodology that builds on the previous work undertaken in this area.

Completion date

The next *Creative Industries Economic Estimates* bulletin is due to be published in autumn 2008

Cost

Not available

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H. Development of new Short Term Output Indicators for Wales

This project is also of concern to the economy theme. For full details, please see Project D in chapter 17.

I. Implementing the Allsopp Review

This project has a significant impact on a number of themes. Please see chapter 9 for more details.

J. Intrastat – reducing the burden on businesses

The aim of this project was to research potential avenues for reducing the administrative burden on businesses by using stratified random sampling to reduce the sample size of the Intrastat survey, which collects data from businesses about trade between European Union member states.

A methodology for stratified random sampling was developed and the final report was sent to Eurostat in March 2007.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

Theme Group Members

This Work Programme was developed by:

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Edward Zamboni

HM Revenue & Customs

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Office for National Statistics

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Business, Enterprise and
Regulatory Reform

www.berr.gov.uk

Department for Communities and Local
Government

www.communities.gov.uk

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

www.culture.gov.uk

Department for Transport

www.dft.gov.uk

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment,
Northern Ireland

www.detini.gov.uk

HM Revenue & Customs

www.hmrc.gov.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

UK Trade Information

www.uktradeinfo.com

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk

Introduction

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, for example: crime experienced by the public; crime known to the police; public confidence; the cost of crime; drug-taking and its effect on young people; court cases affecting families, children and the resolution of civil disputes; the effectiveness of justice systems; the extent of offending; geographic variations; and impacts on minority groups.

Data are collected from a wide range of sources, many based on administrative and operational systems, and some on surveys of households or public bodies. Research supplies a good deal of the material available, most of which is outside the range of National Statistics.

The constituent countries of the UK each have different justice systems. Statistics are therefore, in general, available separately for each constituent part of the UK.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group (TWG) was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter reports on the progress made over the last 12 months on the most important projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. The projects are listed in no order of importance.

Priority projects

A. Integration of the Scottish criminal justice Statistical and Management Information System project

Aims and objectives

The overall aim of the project is to prove the concept of a data warehouse approach to gathering statistical and management information on Scottish criminal justice cases. In particular, the project will seek to:

- test the logistics of capturing, processing and summarising data electronically for dates of key events in the life cycle of criminal justice cases
- develop a front-end analysis and reporting tool for users to generate standard summaries of this information, broken down by factors of interest to them, such as police force area and type of offence

Progress to date

In 2007/08 work focused on exploiting the underlying data extracts from the Statistical and Management Information System (SMIS), to meet the performance management information needs of the National and Local Criminal Justice Boards. Analyses from the data extracts are now reported to the Boards on a monthly basis, via the Criminal Justice Board Management Information System (CJBMIS).

A full evaluation of the pilot SMIS system was completed in February 2008 and this was accepted by the project board. The main conclusions were:

- to retain the current data extracts from Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service to the Scottish Government – their maintenance and development should be included within the Data Integration Project, supported by the existing analytical team within justice analytical services division
- to remove the web-based front end tool and associated database from the server
- to retain the base code and to extract all value from the front end tool, to feed into future developments
- to continue to support, develop and disseminate the existing and new key performance indicators within the CJBMIS
- to work with the summary justice reform evaluation and monitoring team to support the development of additional monitoring indicators

- to develop, in partnership with specific data owners, protocols to deal with ad hoc requests for information

Planned future work

The conclusions from the evaluation will now be implemented and a formal project closure document will be prepared by June 2008.

Completion date

June 2008

Cost

The cost for the pilot was:

2004/05: £25,000

2005/06: £66,000

2006/07: £18,000

2007/08: £27,250

B. Development of the Home Office analysis of data drawn from the Police National Computer

The aim of this project was to develop the Home Office Police National Computer (HOPNC) database which would be used for research and statistical purposes.

The HOPNC is now well established within the Home Office as a rich source of data on offending and reoffending in England and Wales. It is used for a wide range of analyses relating to criminal histories and reconviction. In particular, the database is used to measure progress towards achieving the Home Office Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets on reducing reoffending for both adults and juveniles.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

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C. Development of an equity monitoring system for the Northern Ireland justice system

Aims and objectives

The aims of the project are to:

- deliver a sound, reliable data collection methodology for equity monitoring to allow monitoring to begin across Northern Ireland by 2007/08
- ensure that the administrative equity monitoring data that are available and the corresponding outcome data are captured on the Causeway Integrated IT system, and
- introduce a self-classified element to collect that information which is not currently available from administrative systems (race, religion, disability, marital status, nationality and whether or not the defendant has dependants)

This will meet one of the recommendations that arose from the *Review of the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland* which was that 'the Criminal Justice Board and its research subcommittee be tasked with developing and implementing a strategy for equity monitoring the criminal justice system, as it affects categories of people, in particular by community background, gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation and disability; whilst ensuring that this is done in a way that does not compromise judicial independence'.

Progress to date

Self-classification

The self-classified equity monitoring pilot has concluded that the proposed processes would not be workable on a system-wide basis. The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has recently decided to collect data relating to the categories in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 at the point of entry to the system (within custody suites). The Section places a statutory obligation on public authorities in carrying out their various functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity. More information on what is covered under the heading of equality can be found at:

www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/section_75

Capturing data

Systems have been tested by an administrative data pilot study as part of the Equity Monitoring Driver to Causeway Project to capture the equity monitoring data on the Causeway Integrated IT system when they become available from the PSNI.

The sharing of Section 75 data collected and stored by the PSNI will feed into the equity monitoring process via their storage on a specially created stand-alone entity on the Causeway Data Sharing Mechanism (DSM). This provides a mechanism for specifying appropriate permissions to control access to the data which will ensure that they are kept separate from routine data flows.

Planned future work

Once Causeway has been populated with the Section 75 and outcome data, an overall equity monitoring system will facilitate monitoring performance against Section 75 categories. One of the recommendations of the Criminal Justice Review was that the Criminal Justice Board should monitor the Criminal Justice System, as this is comprised of a number of linked stages. A report from the equity monitoring database will not be produced until after the database has been populated with a reasonable amount of data and the first data sharing mechanism (DSM1) has been implemented. Consideration will be given to the optimum approach to publishing data.

Completion date

The availability of data for outcome and context indicators is necessarily limited by the current stage of development of Causeway. Outcome data, reflecting decisions made by criminal justice organisations, will not be available until the release of DSM1, which is currently scheduled for October 2008.

Cost

Not available

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D. Publication of a Research and Statistics Strategy for the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System

Aim and objectives

The aim of the project was to publish a Research and Statistics Strategy for the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System which would:

- set out the strategic context of the research and statistical work being taken forward within the Northern Ireland Office (NIO)
- show how this work is linked to the overall research aims and objectives of the NIO
- invite research proposals that will contribute to the achievement of these aims and objectives

The Research and Statistics Strategy for the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System for 2007/08 has been agreed with relevant parties and signed off.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

E. Development of the Northern Ireland Crime Survey

Aims and objectives

The aim of this project was to improve the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS), which is used to assess the experiences and perceptions of crime of adults living in private households throughout Northern Ireland.

Since January 2005 NICS fieldwork has been operating on a continuous basis. The target for achieved sample size has been increased from 3,000 to 4,000. The NICS is being used to track progress towards 2004 Spending Review targets on public confidence in policing and in the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

F. Development of systems to collect and analyse individual data and enhance the use of geographical information systems for crime and data analysis

Aims and objectives

The recorded crime data that the Home Office receives are currently supplied at aggregate level. Police forces in England and Wales supply summary returns with data combined, for example, by crime grouping or by geographic area. In the case of geography, data are supplied at a level consistent with the 376 local authorities in England and Wales.

Following the development of the National Management Information System (NMIS) within the majority of police forces, it is anticipated that the future data will be supplied at unit record level with details available for every recorded crime. This will allow much more detailed analysis of the data and, where a grid reference is attached to the record, will allow the statistics to be compiled at a far more local geographic level.

Progress to date

The first phase of development of the Home Office data hub, which will hold data from NMIS, is nearing completion with the delivery of the system into the Home Office. A memorandum of understanding on sharing information between the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers has been signed by both organisations. Record level datasets are now being received from police forces and testing is under way.

Planned future work

A period of double running will commence in autumn 2008, with forces providing data to the new and existing systems. During this time further reporting functionality will be developed. The Home Office plans to switch over to the record level submission in April 2009.

The dataset on Neighbourhood Statistics (NeSS) will be expanded to increase the number of police forces' data held, initially through voluntary data collections from forces, until the data hub

development is completed. Updates to the information already provided (for 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07), along with data covering additional force areas, will be provided to ONS by autumn 2008.

Once the data hub is in place and fully functional, information should be available on a consistent basis across the whole of England and Wales.

Completion date

The project will end when the data hub has been implemented, tested and is able to produce the information required by NeSS. This is currently anticipated to be achieved by mid-2009.

Cost

This project has been partially funded through the Neighbourhood Statistics budget. The allocation for 2007/08 was £170,000.

G. Review of the data management and analysis systems on the British Crime Survey

Aims and objectives

The aims of this project were to improve the efficiency of the British Crime Survey (BCS) data processing systems, to assure the quality and timeliness, and to improve continuity.

An external consultancy review of BCS data processing systems recommended a number of innovations to streamline and improve processing. This work has been completed and an integrated data system was built and tested successfully in 2007.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

H. Review of Judicial Statistics annual report

This project was included in the *Addendum to the National Statistics Work Programme 2005/06–2007/08*, published in July 2006.

Judicial Statistics was withdrawn from the scope of National Statistics with effect from the revised 2005 edition, published in August 2006. Work to develop the publication is ongoing, but as it is no longer a National Statistics publication it does not come within the remit of this annual report.

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I. Development of the National Statistics on crime in England and Wales

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project was to develop the crime statistics further in response to two independent reviews of crime statistics by the Statistics Commission (Report No 30: *Crime Statistics: User Perspectives*, published in September 2006) and Professor Adrian Smith (*Crime Statistics: An independent report*, published in November 2006). Both reviews included recommendations suggesting changes to the presentation of the recorded crime figures, including redefining major crime categories. The Smith Review also made recommendations on changing the frequency of release and placing greater emphasis on release of figures by local police, and a number of recommendations relating to surveys, including extending the coverage of the British Crime Survey (BCS) to include those under 16 and those living in group residences. The Statistics Commission recommended giving consideration to the development of a weighted crime index.

Progress to date

The Home Office has taken forward work in relation to these and other recommendations from the reviews. The annual crime statistics volume published in July 2007 included suggestions for enhancing the future presentation of crime statistics, such as using a 'basket of serious crime' as a key measure of crime trends and discussion of options that might be used for constructing a weighted crime index.

Feedback was requested from readers at the time of publication and also in parallel from key stakeholders, and responses were passed to the Flanagan Review Team to inform the recent review of policing by Sir Ronnie Flanagan (Final Report: *The Review of Policing*, February 2008). In addition, the Home Office commissioned methodological work to explore the feasibility of extending the BCS to under-16s and those living in group residences. The Home Office intends to hold a consultation in 2008 to determine whether

the BCS should be extended. Other actions have been integrated into Home Office business where appropriate.

Length of project

The project was completed in March 2008, but work to improve crime statistics is ongoing.

Planned future work

Decisions around the presentation of crime statistics in the future will be taken in the light of recommendations presented in the Flanagan Report

Cost

Not available – dependent on further development of proposals

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Theme group members

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Tim Stamp
Ministry of Justice

Alison Walker
Home Office

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Office for National Statistics

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub
www.statistics.gov.uk

Crown Prosecution Service
www.cps.gov.uk

HM Courts Service
www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk

Home Office Research, Development and Statistics
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds

Ministry of Justice
www.justice.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Court Service
www.courtsni.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Office
www.nio.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Policing Board
www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
www.nisra.gov.uk

Police Service of Northern Ireland
www.psnipolice.uk

Probation Board for Northern Ireland
www.pbni.org.uk

Scottish Government
www.scotland.gov.uk

Introduction

The Economy Theme covers statistics about expenditure and revenue, prices and measures of inflation, short-term economic indicators and regional macroeconomic statistics. The statistics are produced by a variety of government departments and the devolved administrations.

The data underpinning macroeconomic statistics are collected in a number of different ways and from a variety of sources, including business and household surveys, specialised monthly price collections, trade statistics, administrative data and banking statistics.

Economic statistics have a wide range of users. The statistics are used by HM Treasury (HMT) as an input to the setting of economic policy and to monitor the performance of the economy. The Bank of England and the Monetary Policy Committee use the outputs to set and monitor monetary policy. The outputs are also used by Parliament as an input to their assessments of the performance of government and the UK economy. Use of economic statistics within government departments for policy analysis is extensive, particularly for the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and the devolved administrations. Regional economic statistics are used by central government, the devolved administrations and local government to inform policy and resource allocation.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group (TWG) was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter reports on the progress made over the last 12 months on the most important projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. The projects are listed in no order of importance.

Priority projects

A. Implementing the Allsopp Review

This project has a significant impact on a number of themes. Please see chapter 9 for more details.

B. Atkinson Review

Developments for this project are reported in detail in chapter 11.

C. Statistics Commission Revisions Review

The purpose of this work was to take forward the recommendations made in the Statistics Commission's Revisions Review, published in April 2004.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) completed this work in 2005 and a final report on progress was published in *Economic Trends* in December 2005. The article is available on the National Statistics website at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/article.asp?id=1289

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

D. Short-term output indicators for Wales

Aims and objectives

The programme to improve economic statistics for Wales involves:

- improving the underlying data sources for both employment- and business-related statistics by supplementing the UK-wide quarterly Labour Force Survey with a Welsh Annual Population Survey, and by boosting the Welsh sample of a range of ONS's annual business surveys
- providing up-to-date measures of economic performance by compiling a range of short-term economic output indicators for various sectors of the Welsh economy – this work is being carried out for the Welsh Assembly Government by ONS
- working with the providers of existing data sources that cover Wales to improve the understanding of, and access to, that data

Progress to date

During 2007/08 ONS completed a review of the methodology used for some of the short-term output indicators which has been incorporated into the index of production and the index of distribution for Wales. A new indicator, the Welsh index of business services, was also released.

Planned future work

The results from the Annual Population Survey will be extended to produce household-level outputs and the survey will be reweighted to current population estimates over the coming year. The Welsh Assembly Government is also participating in the ONS project to introduce the Business Register and Employment Survey (see chapter 9), which will improve the quality of regional business data.

Other developments will include taking forward work on public sector output and productivity, specifically through developing measures of health and social care output and generally working closely with ONS through the UK Centre for the Measurement of Government Activity (UKCeMGA). The Welsh Assembly Government will also extend the short-term output indicators to include an index of financial services in Wales and consider requirements for an index of other services. The aim is to bring this work together to form a new index of market services to provide a more robust estimate of the output of the service sector as a whole.

Another strand of work will be to continue to develop analyses based on administrative data, including longitudinal data about benefit claimants, and household survey data sources, including the British Household Panel Survey and the Living in Wales Survey.

Completion date

Work on the project commenced in June 2004 and will continue beyond 2007/08

Cost

The total cost of this project is currently £1.3 million a year

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E. Single Data System Project

Aims and objectives

The purpose of this project was to develop a simplified and strengthened government financial management system by combining three separate HMT systems into one Single Data System (SDS) – ‘COINS’ (Combined Online Information System) – integrating budgeting, in-year reporting and end-year reporting processes.

The rollout of the COINS system was completed on time, with COINS used to produce Main Estimates and related outputs in spring 2006 for the first time.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

F. National Accounts Re-engineering Project

Aims and objectives

The aims of the National Accounts Re-engineering Project (NAREP) are to:

- develop processes and systems that are more standardised, more transparent, faster, more efficient, less complex, less labour-intensive, less error-prone and less risky
- enable the delivery of better quality and more reliable estimates of the National Accounts
- provide better, more reliable evidence of economic activity on which government and other key stakeholders can base decisions
- provide a better and more responsive service to key customers of the National Accounts
- strengthen the standing and reputation of ONS

To achieve these aims, the NAREP is seeking to deliver the following objectives:

- to identify and agree with key stakeholders the broad requirements for National Accounts estimates, both now and in the future
- to reassess and update (within the overall framework of the European System of Accounts 1995) the methods and assumptions on which the National Accounts are based
- to re-engineer the processes, data flows and organisational structure to ensure efficient and effective delivery of the National Accounts
- to ensure the availability of appropriate statistical tools for the delivery of the National Accounts
- to re-engineer the computer systems so that they will effectively and efficiently handle the new methods, processes and data flows and deliver the required National Accounts service

Progress to date

During 2007/08 the project continued towards the full implementation of the first phase of modernisation, needed to produce the *Blue Book* in September 2008. Progress was not as fast as had been hoped and this precipitated a re-evaluation of

what was feasible for the *Blue Book* production, taking account the priorities of key users.

The project concluded that depending fully on modernised systems for the delivery of quarterly and annual National Accounts datasets from the publication of *Blue Book* 2008 was high risk. To minimise this risk, it was decided to use the new systems to set the level of annual current price Gross Domestic Product, but continue to use existing systems for quarterly estimates and dissemination.

In May 2008 an update to the February 2007 article *Modernising the UK's National Accounts (MUKNA)* was issued. This document provides details on the progress and scope of *Blue Book* 2008.:

www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/article.asp?id=2010

The National Accounts Re-engineering project became part of a wider National Accounts Modernisation Programme in October 2007. This programme has been established to ensure a cohesive approach to modernisation and brings together the Re-engineering, Business Change, Blue Book Production and Relocation projects.

Planned future work

The approach to full modernisation has been reevaluated and it is our intention to deliver the range of improvements over a period of years rather than as a single 'big bang' delivery. This phased approach will permit clearer understanding and better explanation of changes in each *Blue Book* round.

The first stage in the modernisation of the UK National Accounts will complete in 2008/09. The next stage will consider the priorities for future *Blue Book* production. For *Blue Book* 2009, the priority will be to expand the dimensions of the supply-use table and to extend the number of years for which the tables are compiled. The move to quarterly balancing will follow the successful incorporation of annual constant price balancing. In the meantime, the established process for completion of quarterly and annual rounds will continue.

These advances will be dependent on improvement in systems performance and this is being reviewed. It is expected that the findings of this review will, in part, determine plans for future *Blue Book* rounds. Plans for both *Blue Book* 2009 and future *Blue Books* will be outlined in future articles in *Economic and Labour Market Review*.

Completion date

The first stage of implementation is due to be achieved in September 2008, the second phase is due for completion at the end of 2009 and full modernisation is due for completion by 2010

Cost

The budget for the project in 2007/08 was £2.62 million (made up of £2.36 resource, £0.25million capital)

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Theme group members

This work programme was developed by:

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Tim Andrews

Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

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HM Treasury

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Welsh Assembly Government

Sandy Stewart

Scottish Government

Sandra Tudor

HM Revenue & Customs

Glen Watson

Office for National Statistics

Matt Prior (Secretary)

Office for National Statistics

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

www.berr.gov.uk

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland

www.detini.gov.uk

HM Revenue & Customs

www.hmrc.gov.uk

HM Treasury

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk/stats

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales

Introduction

The Education and Training Theme covers statistics about learners, learning progression, qualifications and skills, and the workforce and providers that deliver learning.

The data that make up education and training statistics are collected from education authorities, learning providers, qualifications agencies, learners and employers. Much of the data is held on administrative datasets, but business, household and learner surveys provide important supplementary data.

In June 2007 two new Departments were created: the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), and they assumed responsibility for the work that used to be done by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). This change has affected departmental ownership of a number of the development projects described in this chapter.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group (TWG) was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter highlights the priority projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08 and covers all official statistics, not just National Statistics. They are listed in no order of importance.

Priority projects

A. Development of a follow-up sample survey as the second phase of the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education process

Aims and objectives

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) return collects data from all leavers of UK or other European Union (EU) domicile at six months after completion. It includes qualifiers from part-time programmes as well as those from full-time programmes. The aim of this project, forming part of the overall DLHE process, is the

development of a follow-up sample survey conducted at the 42-month point which will collect a simple career history as well as snapshot information. This will make it possible to monitor career pathways and to overcome other limitations and weaknesses of the six-month snapshot when used in isolation.

Progress to date

HESA has always collected data on the destinations of qualifiers from Higher Education (HE) programmes at the six-month point after completion on a muster rather than a sample basis (the DLHE collection). It was planned that the data on 2002/03 qualifiers would be supplemented by a sample survey ('Longitudinal DLHE') at a later point, finally selected as three and a half years after completion. A pilot project to test methodological options and assess the quality of contact information and likely response rates was conducted on a small test sample in 2005/06. In light of this, the substantive survey was planned for 2006/07, and the contract to carry out the survey was let competitively to IFF/YouGov.

A sample of around 60,000 was selected, with the target of achieving a 40 per cent response rate. With a small amount of reinforcement of one element of the data collection process, this rate was achieved, with about 25,000 returns being obtained. IFF/YouGov were able to deliver the data to HESA by mid-2007. HESA decided to employ consultants to report on the fitness-for-purpose of the survey, to inform decisions about its future, and on the substantive conclusions that could be drawn from the data. The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) was appointed through competitive tendering to carry out this work.

Planned future work

The report by NatCen on fitness-for-purpose was positive and, in light of this, the HE funding bodies across the UK that fund the work have agreed to repeat the survey in 2008/09 on the 2004/05 leaving cohort. The contract with IFF/YouGov has an option for one further survey, and it is likely

that it will be carried out every alternate year thereafter under a new contract. The report by NatCen on what emerged from the data has been placed on the HESA website at:

www.hesa.ac.uk/dox/dlhe_longitudinal/0203/DLHE_Long_2002_03_FINAL.pdf

Completion date

This project has been completed

Cost

Not available

B. Development of the National Pupil Database, Wales

The aim of the project was to establish a database of records at the individual pupil level to aid more detailed analysis.

This project has been completed, but there have been some changes from the original plan. Primary school performance data have been included, although performance booklets will not be incorporated until this coming academic year.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

C. Development of outputs from the new Lifelong Learning Wales Record

The project's aim was to establish a regular series of statistical outputs from the new Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) database in partnership with Education and Learning Wales (ELWa).

This work has now been completed and has been brought into a regular timetable. There will be a need for further work in the future to bring it within the scope of National Statistics.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

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D. ScotXed – continuation and development of the data exchange programme

Aims

Scottish Exchange of Educational Data (ScotXed) is a partnership project involving local authorities, schools, HM Inspectorate of Education, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Learning and Teaching Scotland, and the Scottish Government Education Analytical Service. ScotXed provides effective secure data exchange so that partners benefit from access to information to monitor and improve services.

Objectives

The objectives of the project are to:

- build IT and statistical expertise to facilitate the delivery of a forward-looking, sustainable, robust and dependable online benchmarking framework
- ensure that developments in *Standard Tables and Charts (STACs)* reflect and support Scottish Government policy relating to *A Curriculum for Excellence* and wider achievement and attainment
- build capacity with partners, stakeholders and other users of *STACs* to encourage and ensure best use is made of the service, and
- lead on activities that encourage collaboration between partners, stakeholders and other users that lead to improved benchmarking methodologies

Further information is available at:

www.scotxed.net

Progress to date

STACs is a benchmarking and self-evaluation publication, allowing internal and external benchmarking of SQA attainment data among schools and local education authorities. In 2007/08 a number of developments were introduced to enhance the system.

School-College Partnerships (SCP)

The system now contains data reflecting

partnerships between schools and colleges, and between schools and other schools. In the reports the teaching centres gain credit for the course results, while the base schools gain credit for whole-school performance.

Points-based outputs

A wide range of pilot output types have been developed, increasing *STACs* analysis and reporting.

Merged school

This development creates a 'virtual school pre-merger' for merged schools, meaning that historical data can be attributed and merged schools can access the same benchmarked information as any other school.

Receiving schools base roll

Schools that enrol a significant number of pupils directly into Stage 5 from junior high schools can now benchmark themselves accurately and can be used as accurate benchmarks by other schools.

Ungraded courses

The term 'ungraded courses' is used to refer to all courses that are awarded on a pass/fail basis. Examples include access clusters and Skills for Work courses. These courses are now included in *STACs* reports.

Planned future work

Planned future work involves continuing to develop and embed the exchange and use of relevant and timely data.

Points-based outputs

A wide range of pilot points-based outputs have been developed, extending the range of *STACs* analysis and reporting. Based on the feedback from the education community, these new outputs will undergo refinement to ensure they address the needs of stakeholders.

Benchmarking comparator groups

In 2006/07 the main development in *STACs* was a new way of placing schools into comparable groups by utilising principal components analysis to create a measure using a number of different

variables. Based on the feedback from users since its introduction into the STACs system, Scottish Government plans to investigate possible enhancements to the benchmarking comparator groups which will aid application and interpretation.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

£161,594

E. Analysis of Northern Ireland higher education students migrating to study in Great Britain

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to determine the reasons why Northern Ireland students migrate to Great Britain to study higher education.

Progress to date

Final reports are due to be completed by the researchers by spring 2008.

Planned future work

The material gathered in this study will be used to inform the debate and discussion of HE participation in the UK through participation in seminars and conferences together with publications in scholarly journals.

Completion date

Spring 2008

Cost

£65,600

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F. Longitudinal Survey of Young People

Aims and objectives

The project will establish a Longitudinal Survey of Young People (LSYPE), starting when young people are in year 9 at school (aged 13–14), and it is intended to run for around ten years. This will follow their transition through the final two years of compulsory education and into further and higher education, employment or other outcomes. The study includes sample boosts to ensure more robust results for young people in the six major ethnic minorities (Black African, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani and Mixed) and those in schools with high levels of pupils eligible for free school meals. The study is based on annual interviews with sample members and, for the first four waves at least, interviews also with their co-resident parents or guardians.

The project aims to provide an insight into the lives of young people and into the influences on the choices they make in the areas of education, employment and training, in particular in the final years of compulsory education and the period immediately following. By interviewing parents as well as young people, this will lead to a better understanding of how, and at what stage, decisions are made and actions taken, and the factors that are most important at these stages.

Progress to date

The first four annual waves of LSYPE have now taken place, starting in spring 2004 and collecting a wealth of information from young people and their parents. Response rate targets have been exceeded, both in terms of the overall level and the evenness of response rates, both geographically and across groups of interest. Initially some 21,000 were in the issued sample and, with response rates of approximately 74 per cent, 86 per cent, 92 per cent and 92 per cent respectively for the four waves, more than 11,000 young people remaining will be contacted at Wave 5. Wave 4 included a boost of 600 cases to Black ethnic groups to ensure sufficient representation in the study is maintained.

Data from waves 1 and 2 have been deposited at the data archive and data from waves 3 and 4 will

follow over the next few months. The data have been linked to administrative records of pupil exam results and to local area variables, greatly increasing the scope for analysis. Currently various projects are under way using LSYPE data, both within government and among academics. Further details and links are available at:

www.esds.ac.uk/longitudinal/access/lstype/L5545.asp

Planned future work

Wave 5 is currently being planned and fieldwork for this will start around late May 2008, running through until September 2008. This wave will move to a mixed mode approach with web-based surveys, telephone interviewing and, for a relatively small group of 10 to 15 per cent, face-to-face interviewing. This is the first wave that will not include an interview with parents, although this is being considered again for wave 6.

From wave 4 onwards, LSYPE is synchronised with another exercise run by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, the Youth Cohort Study (YCS) which has been running for many years. The thirteenth cohort of YCS covers the same age group as the LSYPE sample and, for many areas of interest, the overlapping coverage will enable the disaggregation of analysis more than was previously possible; for example with more analysis by social class and gender rather than just social class.

DCSF is in discussions with other parts of government over their potential interest in the study now that the sample members have potentially left education. It is expected that LSYPE will become a cross-government study and the project is already co-funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Completion date

The study is intended to run for around ten years, although this is dependent upon funding

Cost

Approximately £8 million for the first four waves

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G. Framework for Excellence and New Measures of Success programmes

Aims and objectives

The Success for All (SFA) programme, launched in November 2002, aimed to ensure that post-16 learning providers offer high-quality learning to meet the needs of young people, adults and employers. The New Measures of Success Programme (NMS) was one strand of SFA with the aim of ensuring the right management information was available to achieve the aims of SFA.

In March 2006 DfES published the white paper: *FE Reform – Raising skills improving Life Chances*. The Framework for Excellence (FFE) is one strand of the quality theme within the further education (FE) white paper and is a method of managing performance within providers and across the learning and skills sector. Its key objectives are to make learning provision more responsive and demand-led, increase the proportion of good and outstanding provision, and reduce the bureaucracy involved in monitoring quality, using a range of provider level measures.

Further information can be found on the FFE website:

[www.lsc.gov.uk/whatwedo/
FrameworkforExcellence.htm](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/whatwedo/FrameworkforExcellence.htm)

Progress to date and planned future work

New Measures of Success Programme Qualification success rate

A work-based learning (WBL) measure comparable with FE was developed during 2004/05 and 2005/06 and published for the first time in February 2006. In 2006/07 new data fields in the Post 16 Learning Aims Management System (PLAMS) were piloted, allowing the calculation of a school sixth-form measure comparable with FE.

From 2007/08 the data will be collected on the annual School Census. The specification of the measure will be developed in 2008/09.

Value added and distance travelled) for 16–19s

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has

developed an Internet application – the Learner Achievement Tracker (LAT) – to enable providers and inspectors to analyse both learner progress in individual graded qualifications at level 3 (such as A2 and AS levels) relative to their prior attainment (the value added measure) and cohort progress in ungraded qualifications at levels 2 and 3 (such as National Vocational Qualifications and apprenticeships) relative to their prior attainment (the distance travelled measure). The software is available for use now to all 16–19 providers in England. A value added (VA) measure, enabling the analysis of learner progress in a package of A levels for use in provider comparisons in performance tables, was piloted during 2005/06 and 2006/07.

A statement of intent for national rollout in 2008 will be published in May 2008. Guidelines for implementing the measure will be published in September 2008.

Recognising and recording progress and achievement

Recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) is a methodology for assessing progress (distance travelled) in non-accredited provision. It is a staged approach, rather than a measure, in which skill levels are measured at the beginning and end of a course (and throughout if appropriate), and results are used to assess levels of improvement.

Since September 2006 all providers in receipt of LSC funding for non-accredited learning have been strongly encouraged to use RARPA. Guidance and training are provided by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education and by Learning and Skills Networks. Off-the-shelf tests for assessing skills levels are not available as the appropriate form will vary by course and area of learning.

In making judgements about standards, Ofsted inspectors now assess the achievements of learners on non-accredited courses using RARPA methodology.

Adult distance travelled

For accredited adult learning, a 2004 feasibility

study concluded that a robust statistical model for adult distance travelled could not be developed using existing data. A version of RARPA for accredited learning has been developed, but it has not yet been published.

Staff quality

The percentage of teachers qualified or working towards a qualification has been monitored using the LSC Staff Individualised Record (SIR) since 2002. From 2007/08 the LSC SIR will be replaced by a survey conducted by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), the Sector Skills Council for post-compulsory teaching and related workers.

Framework for Excellence Programme

There are three measures concerned with determining: the proportion of learners at each provider that progress into further learning and the labour market; how well colleges are responding to the needs of learners; and how well colleges are responding to the needs of employers. In 2007 the LSC ran three pilots to evaluate the measures, involving surveys at the 100 providers involved in the wider FFE project. Evaluations of these pilots will be published later in 2008. Details of how the measures will be operated in version 1 of the FFE (national rollout) will be published in July 2008

Completion date

Individual measures will be piloted between 2007 and 2009 for all providers in the FE system, other than school sixth forms, with a view to publication of summary information from the complete framework (including an overall performance rating derived from it) in early 2010

Cost

Funding of around £8 million has been agreed with ministers for each of the years 2006/07 to 2008/09

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H. Managing Information Across Partners

Aims and objectives

The project aims to improve sharing of post-14 learner data. Its primary objective is to create services that enable the timely and accurate sharing of learner identification, participation and achievement data within the education system.

The project has the support of a wide range of stakeholders across the education sector with an interest in improving data sharing for learners. The main driver is the need to maximise the use of data so that learners experience a better service within education, while minimising the administrative burden of providing it. A number of sector-wide projects, such as 14–19 Diplomas, Qualifications and Credit Framework, Schools Interoperability Framework, Skills Accounts, National Vacancy Apprenticeships Matching and Offender Learning Plans, are critically dependent on Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP).

MIAP has worked closely with the Information Commissioner's Office to put in place appropriate data governance arrangements, which support the eight principles in the Data Protection Act.

Progress to date and planned future work

MIAP is a programme of work that started in April 2002 and is expected to run to at least March 2012. The programme of work includes a number of phases:

- Scoping and feasibility – started in April 2002 and completed in March 2004
- Consolidation – started in April 2004 and completed in September 2004
- User requirements/justification – started in October 2004 and ended in June 2005
- Technical options/design – started in July 2005 and ended in March 2006
- Build and implementation – started in April 2006 and due to end in March 2009
- Opportunity enhancements to maximise benefit realisation – started in April 2007 and due to end in March 2012

Key milestones

A number of key milestones have already been achieved, but there are a number which will be met in the coming years:

- Unique Learner Number (ULN) agreed (May 2005)
- UK Register of Learning Providers introduced (September 2005)
- Common Data Definitions agreed (May 2006)
- first pilot of ULN completed (September 2006)
- Data Sharing Interface introduced (September 2006)
- second pilot of ULN completed (September 2007)
- Learner Registration Service launched (February 2008)
- web services to enable system-to-system data sharing introduced (March 2008)
- full introduction of ULN to post-14 learners in schools, colleges and other FE providers (September 2008)
- pilot of Learner Record (September 2008), and
- full introduction of Learner Record (September 2009)

This work should lead to improved administration, advice and record services for individual learners, with significant cost savings and benefits for the education sector through unique identification of learners and providers and system-to-system transactions, which includes quicker and more accurate data sharing.

Particular improvements will include improved access to, and matching of, learning details, removal of double counting where the same learner is involved in a number of different pieces of learning, and better longitudinal datasets looking at routes and progression through learning.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

£45 million over five years: 2006 to 2011

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I. New Relationship with Schools: data strand (Data Sub Programme)

Aims and objectives

New Relationship with Schools (NRwS) is organised around a number of strands, one of which covers data. The data strand aims to reduce the number of demands for data from schools, alongside helping schools and local authorities to maximise the use of data in raising standards.

Progress to date

The Data Sub Programme (DSP) is responsible for delivering the data strand of the NRwS and for ensuring the availability and effective use of good quality data in the schools sector while reducing related burdens on schools.

School Census and COLLECT

All schools are now participating in termly collections of pupil-level data for the School Census, which were introduced for secondary schools in 2006, and primary schools and special schools in 2007. This has reduced burdens on schools by incorporating six separate surveys into the new census arrangements and enables more timely, more accurate and more sophisticated analyses to meet a variety of user needs, such as supporting key policy areas. COLLECT, a new secure web-based data collection system, was used to assemble School Census data from schools and local authorities for the first time in the autumn 2007 collection. Despite some initial teething problems, COLLECT has performed well and user feedback is on the whole positive. COLLECT has improved the efficiency of data collection from schools and ensured that high-quality data are made available to them. Work continues on rationalising data collection arrangements.

Post-16 data collection

DCSF is collecting post-16 learning aims from all secondary schools with sixth forms. The information gathered has supported fair funding and the consistent calculation of qualification success rates across all post-16 education, including FE and work-based learning as well as

sixth forms in schools. The collection has enabled potential learners and parents to have better information about the choices available post-16, and helped schools to analyse the performance of their pupils more rigorously for the benefit of learners and aiding institutional self-improvement.

RAISEonline

RAISEonline (Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through School self-Evaluation) is a web-based interactive tool developed by Ofsted and DCSF to replace the PANDA (Performance and Assessment) report and PAT (Pupil Achievement Tracker). It is a significant step in the provision of data analysis for schools, School Improvement Partners (SIPs), local authorities, governors, inspectors and all those working to support self-evaluation and school improvement, and will provide a single convenient point of access to data and analyses. RAISEonline now provides comprehensive 2007 data for Key Stages 1 to 4. The release of Key Stage data has been in line with the published release timetable and it is a significant improvement on the previous year's timescales.

Memorandum of Understanding

DCSF has signed a memorandum of understanding with seven of the major suppliers of Management Information Systems (MIS) to schools. This has brought substantial benefits to schools and local authorities by minimising the number of new data items in the School Census in 2008/09 and by improving the service they receive from software suppliers. It will help to ensure schools receive reliable upgraded software on time.

Information Standards Board

DCSF and DIUS have been working to establish the Information Standards Board (ISB) for education, skills and children's services, which will be the overriding authority for system-wide information standards. The ISB will play a central role in taking forward work on data standards and harmonisation. It will be formed of senior information specialists across the sector, including

DCSF, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), LSC, Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), HESA, the Training and Development Agency (TDA), Ofsted and other key stakeholders, and it will work with organisations that have a specific role in standards issues, such as the British Standards Institution.

The ISB's main aim will be to produce and promulgate common definitions for all data used and shared across the sectors – Education, Skills and Children's Services. Its mission will be to facilitate information sharing across the system; agree information standards to aid front-line delivery; and improve efficiency, reduce costs and minimise bureaucracy.

It will be responsible for standards for both data (information about learners and others) and for e-learning, although it might build its remit in stages. It will set priorities, co-ordinate work around the system and provide quality assurance, formal approval and change control. The ISB will provide governance and advisory support and resources for setting standards across the system.

Planned future work

Business Intelligence (data storage analysis and dissemination)

DCSF is planning to enhance existing data warehouse capabilities by introducing a new Business Intelligence project. The objective is to improve the efficiency and capabilities of the Department's storage, analysis and dissemination of key data, including data collections from schools, to better enable DCSF and its partners to meet their core objectives and goals. This will include supporting the provision of good quality data to schools, local authorities and partners for self-evaluation and improvement purposes.

Unique Learner Numbers

The introduction of 14–19 Diplomas commences in September 2008. These can be delivered in a range of schools, colleges and other providers, and are made up of qualifications awarded by a range of bodies. It will be necessary for providers across the sector to be able to identify learners

uniquely. Each learner will be assigned a Unique Learner Number (ULN) which fulfils this function and also supports a range of other policies, such as the Qualifications and Credit Framework and Skills Accounts. It will also bring a range of benefits in its own right by improving communication and data sharing across the whole sector for example, between schools and awarding bodies/schools and Connexions Services. From January 2009 DCSF will be collecting ULNs from schools alongside the established pupil identifier, the Unique Pupil Number (UPN).

School Workforce Census collection

DCSF intends to undertake collections of individual level school workforce data from 2010. The collection of more comprehensive, individual level data on the school workforce will support workforce reforms and the remodelling agenda. The first pilot collection of the School Workforce Census took place in January 2008 and there will be further pilot collections throughout 2008 and 2009. If they are successful, the Census will be rolled out nationally in January 2010.

Data collection from Early Years settings

Individual child-level data for three- and four-year-old children receiving Early Years education in private, voluntary and independent settings funded by the DCSF were collected for the first time in January 2008. The collection has provided better quality data to aid the development and delivery of Early Years education policy, and to ensure that the funds provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) are targeted properly.

Protocol on Data Sharing and Harmonisation

The Protocol commits DCSF and the 16 signatory partner organisations to minimise the burdens of data collection on the front line, and ensure that data are used sensibly by the centre, following the key principles that:

- data should be collected once and used many times
- collection and sharing of data should be fully automated

- the value of data collected should clearly outweigh the costs of collection, and
- personal data on individuals should be properly protected

The Protocol is a voluntary agreement with no formal legal status. It has so far been directed at reducing the number of data collections from schools and local authorities.

On a wider front, and again through the Protocol, DCSF will co-ordinate action to fulfil the Government's commitment to more and better information sharing between public sector organisations and service providers. DCSF expects that the main focus of the Protocol will be on data harmonisation issues, by putting in place common data standards and datasets to create a unified data language, and a shared approach to business practices.

It is intended that the Protocol should follow the course being set by the new DCSF ISB, whose main aim is to produce and promulgate common definitions for all data used and shared across the sectors – education, skills and children's services. The Protocol will seek to include as signatories those organisations concerned with data in the wider children's services sector.

Becta (British Educational Communications and Technology Agency)

The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta), one of the Government's strategic partners for improving education, is consulting with stakeholders on how every school can best have access to the management information systems it requires, and is working on the development of the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) data model.

The data model will allow interoperability between software packages, which will reduce costs and significantly increase the ease of transfer of data between schools systems and the ease of transfer by a school to different suppliers. Over the last 18 months, a good deal of work has taken place on SIF, including a successful proof of

concept project involving schools in Birmingham local authority in which DCSF received absence data the next day rather than the usual four to five months. Birmingham is now gearing up to implement SIF for all its 427 schools later in 2008, and other pioneering activity is taking place elsewhere.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

The DSP annual programme budget is £5.7 million

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J. Better use of existing data by linking data using the Unique Pupil Number

Aims and objectives

DCSF started to collect the Unique Pupil Number (UPN) for all children looked after (CLA) in the 2005/06 CLA data collection. The intention was to obtain a more complete picture of the educational attainment of CLA by matching the CLA collection to the education data from the National Pupil Database (NPD). A further aim was to reduce the burden on local authorities by discontinuing the collection of educational information through both the CLA and the Outcome Indicators (OC2) returns.

Progress to date

The matching of the UPN for children looked after at 31 March 2006 data was successful – 96 per cent of the valid UPN data were matched to information held in the NPD. An exercise to evaluate this matching took place in autumn 2007, in preparation for some exploratory analysis of the educational attainment of these children, which will be carried out in spring 2008.

Planned future work

Data for children looked after at 31 March 2007 with a UPN was matched to the NPD in autumn 2007, and the results of the evaluation of this matching are due in spring 2008. Further exploratory analyses based on 2006/07 data collection will be carried out in autumn 2008 to further inform policy colleagues about the educational achievements of CLA.

Completion date

The matching exercise is ongoing, as each year a new set of data will be matched to the NPD

Cost

Not available

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Theme group members

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Robin Sibson

Higher Education Statistics Agency

Peter Whitehouse

Scottish Government

Philippa Brimicombe (Secretary)

Office for National Statistics

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families

www.dcsf.gov.uk

Department for Employment and Learning,
Northern Ireland

www.delni.gov.uk

Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills

www.dius.gov.uk

Department of Education, Northern Ireland

www.deni.gov.uk

Higher Education Statistics Agency

www.hesa.ac.uk

Learning and Skills Council

www.lsc.gov.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk

Introduction

This theme brings together information about public health, health services provided by the National Health Service (NHS) and social care. It also covers information relating to health and safety at work. In addition, the chapter covers activities on improvements to data, including access to data; data scope, quality and infrastructure; and measuring progress.

Statistical information is provided for a wide variety of users and stakeholders, for example:

- clients and patients – to support choice and monitor experience
- health and care professionals – to measure outcomes
- managers – to compare and monitor performance
- academic and research communities – to enable wider analysis
- the public and the media – to enable understanding and reporting

The theme covers a wide range of outputs and channels for dissemination. These are mostly based around each constituent government department, with a measure of cross-theme linkage being provided through the National Statistics website and the *UK Health Statistics* publication. This variety of outputs reflects the range of users of health and care statistics.

Health and social care are matters devolved from the UK Government to administrations in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each administration shares the common objective of improving public health, health services and social care, but has developed different policies and systems to achieve these goals. Statistical activity across the administrations will therefore reflect both the common ground and the differences between the administrations.

There is collaboration across the UK on a number of information issues, including, where useful and practicable, getting greater harmonisation of data

across the countries. ONS has published a further volume of *UK Health Statistics* and another edition is planned for 2008. Work is under way to consider the scope for expanding the published data in the volume following consultation with users. In addition, there has been collaboration on the collection of data on waiting times and on disclosure issues across the UK, and reports have been published.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the theme working group was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter reports on progress made over the last 12 months on the most important projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. The projects are listed in no order of importance.

Health gain

A. Analysis of mortality rates, including infant mortality, and life expectancy data in context of health inequalities

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the project is to enable government and the public to evaluate the effectiveness of public health policies, initiatives and targets.

Progress to date

England

The Department of Health (DH) continues to use Office for National Statistics (ONS)-supplied data to monitor against the DH Public Service Agreement (PSA) mortality, life expectancy and infant mortality targets (target date 2010). The monitoring work requires DH to perform analysis on summary counts of death registrations by cause of death and ONS population estimates to produce age-standardised death rates. ONS estimates of life expectancy at birth are also used. PSA targets on health inequalities are defined in two ways: socio-economic, that is, infant mortality rates by father's socio-economic group; and geographical, such as life expectancy for the 'Spearhead' group of local authority areas with the worst health and deprivation indicators.

Development work has been carried out to draw up new Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs), new PSAs and delivery agreements. A new set of indicators for the NHS – ‘Vital Signs’ – were devised and launched, and many of these rely on ONS data for monitoring.

DH publications during 2007/08 that drew heavily on ONS data included the *Health Profile of England 2007*, *Tackling Health Inequalities: Status Report on the Programme for Action – 2007*, the *Implementation Plan for Reducing Health Inequalities in Infant Mortality (2007)*, and a new series of target monitoring update bulletins: *Mortality Target Monitoring* and *Health Inequalities Target Monitoring (covering Life Expectancy, Infant Mortality and Mortality from Cancer and Circulatory Diseases)* (data updates to 2006).

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland has developed a health inequalities monitoring system that incorporates small area trend data on a range of indicators covering, among other things, disease specific mortality, infant mortality and life expectancy. The system has been updated on an annual basis from the base year of 2001, and a baseline report and two update reports have been published, with the most recent being published in October 2007.

Planned future work

England

Reporting and monitoring against current PSA targets will continue to be principally on an annual basis through DH departmental reports, HM Treasury (HMT), the Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit reporting mechanisms and the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) Floor Targets interactive website.

Other reporting includes cross-government and international strategies, such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) *Opportunity for All* reports and the *UK National Action Plan on Social Inclusion*. DH is a member of the steering groups for both these projects and will continue to work closely with DWP officials to maintain consistency

of reporting on indicators for infant mortality and life expectancy.

DH will continue to input to the development of a shortlist of health indicators being prepared for the European Commission via the European Community Health Indicators and Monitoring (ECHIM) project.

Northern Ireland

The Health Inequalities Monitoring system will continue to be updated on an annual basis. Future planned work includes undertaking investigations into the potential use of additional data sources (such as the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study) and the feasibility of providing inequality gap analyses at a sub-regional level. Selected indicators are also used to monitor progress against a number of departmental PSA and Public Health Strategy targets.

Project length

Ongoing activity

Cost

Not available

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B. Analysis of trends in healthy lifestyle determinants, notably smoking and obesity

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the project is to enable government, the public and health providers to evaluate the effectiveness of public health policies, initiatives and targets by publishing more evidence on health determinants.

Progress to date

England

The *Infant Feeding Survey 2005* full report was published by the NHS Information Centre (IC) in May 2007. The five-yearly survey provides information on smoking and drinking behaviour of mothers before, during and after pregnancy.

In June 2007 the IC started a review of its survey programme to ensure that the design and outputs continue to meet the needs of users and stakeholders. Following preliminary consultation with a sample of direct customers and users, the IC launched a public consultation exercise in January 2008 seeking views on its future role in population-based surveys; priority topic areas; and the preferred balance between depth of questioning, geographical coverage and frequency. The review is expected to report in April 2008.

The IC published the main report of the *Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England, 2006* in August 2007. This is the latest report in an annual series, which includes smoking prevalence and attitudes to smoking among secondary schoolchildren.

Model-based estimates of healthy lifestyle behaviours covering the prevalence of smoking, binge drinking, obesity, and fruit and vegetable consumption among adults were published on the Neighbourhood Statistics website in December 2007. These estimates were produced for all middle layer super output areas and local authorities in England. As further validation and quality assurance were required during the statistical modelling process in deriving these

estimates, they could not be published to the May 2007 timescales, as had been stated in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*.

In January 2008 the IC published updated trend tables and the main report from the *Health Survey for England 2006*. The main report focused on cardiovascular disease and risk factors among adults and on obesity and risk factors for children, covering smoking, obesity, eating habits and physical activity among both adults and children in 2006. The trend tables include a wide range of health topics and can be used to monitor trends at a national level.

The second annual statistical bulletin *Statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet – January 2008* was published by the IC in January 2008, presenting a range of information on overweight and obesity, physical activity levels, eating habits and health outcomes of being obese, drawn together from a variety of sources.

In February 2008 the IC published the results of the *2006/07 National Child Measurement Programme*. The results show overweight and obesity prevalence estimates for children in reception and year 6 of primary school. They are broken down by a number of demographic factors, such as area (Strategic Health Authority (SHA), Primary Care Trust (PCT), and local authority), ethnicity, deprivation and rurality. The 2007/08 collection is currently under way in schools and the results are planned to be published in February 2009.

Scotland

The Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO) website (www.scotpho.org.uk) is updated annually to contain the most up-to-date trends on lifestyle determinants.

ScotPHO published *An atlas of tobacco smoking in Scotland: a report presenting estimated smoking prevalence and smoking attributable deaths within Scotland* in July 2007. The atlas presents estimates of current smoking prevalence in Scotland at a variety of geographical levels. In addition to the

smoking prevalence estimates, the atlas also includes estimates of smoking-attributable mortality in order to illustrate the burden of smoking-related harm within Scotland.

ScotPHO also published *Obesity in Scotland: an epidemiological briefing* in September 2007. The report provides an overview of the epidemiology of obesity in Scotland, describing geographical and social variations in obesity, health inequalities, and related morbidity and mortality.

The *Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) – National Report 2006* was published in May 2007. It is part of the biennial series of secondary school surveys on smoking, drinking and drug use commissioned by the Scottish Government. The survey collects a large amount of data on the prevalence, attitudes and behaviour of young people in regard to smoking, drinking and drug use. The report can be accessed at:

www.drugmisuse.isdscotland.org/publications/abstracts/salsus_national06.htm

ISD – Information and Statistics Division (NHS Scotland) – published updated childhood obesity statistics in December 2007 for children in Primary 1 (aged four to six years) for school year 2006/07, and published trends on maternal smoking at first antenatal booking appointment on the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics website.

Wales

In Wales information on lifestyle behaviours, including smoking, obesity, alcohol consumption, physical activity and consumption of fruit and vegetables, has been published on an annual basis for the first three years of the Welsh Health Survey (most recently *Welsh Health Survey 2005/06*, which was published in August 2007). A separate report, *Smoking in Wales: current facts*, produced jointly with the Wales Centre for Health, was published in November 2007.

Planned future work

England

The IC will publish statistical bulletins on drinking, drug misuse, smoking and obesity in 2008/09.

These bulletins will continue to collate data and information from a wide variety of sources and aim to provide an overview of these lifestyle determinants, including the most up-to-date trend data. These bulletins are designed to disseminate statistics on lifestyle issues to a wider audience.

Model-based estimates of healthy lifestyle behaviours covering the prevalence of smoking, binge drinking, obesity, and fruit and vegetable consumption among adults at primary care organisations level are due to be published in April 2008.

The next report on *Drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England* is due to be published in July 2008. This report will focus on drug use among secondary schoolchildren in England, but will also include core information on smoking and drinking.

Scotland

The ScotPHO website will continue to collate data and information from a wide variety of sources and provide an overview of lifestyle determinants, including the most up-to-date trend data. ScotPHO will publish a tobacco population health briefing. ISD will continue to publish annual updates on childhood obesity and maternal smoking.

Data collection for the new continuous Scottish Health Survey began in January 2008. Results for people surveyed in 2008 will be published in summer 2009. They will include information on a range of lifestyle factors, including smoking and obesity.

Wales

Welsh Health Survey reports, including information on lifestyle behaviours, will be published annually, enabling trend information to be built up (the next annual report is due to be published in late summer 2008). Child height and weight measurements were introduced to the survey from 2007, and will be included in future reports.

Northern Ireland – smoke-free legislation

The Department of Health, Social Services and

Public Safety is undertaking an evaluation of the impact of the smoke-free legislation in Northern Ireland. The prohibition of smoking in enclosed public places was introduced on 30 April 2007 and it is intended that a one-year evaluation report will be published in autumn 2008.

This evaluation will include findings from the Young Persons Behaviour and Attitudes Survey and the Continuous Household Survey in respect of smoking prevalence and attitudinal and behavioural responses to smoke-free legislation. Monitoring of tobacco-related hospital admissions and tobacco-related deaths will be included, as will information on the number of people accessing smoking cessation services. The Adult Drinking Patterns Survey will be used to determine the effects on drinking patterns, particularly changes in home drinking, and an evaluation of the short-term and long-term economic impact on the hospitality sector will be included. Statistics on compliance with the smoke-free legislation are collated centrally and will also be included.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

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C. Identify an agreed set of core public health data for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

Aims and objectives/strategic influences and policy drivers

The purpose of the project is to identify an agreed set of core public health data in England and Scotland, where possible from existing data sources, to support agreed measures of progress to be used nationally and locally, and to build a public health information and intelligence base.

Progress to date

England

The Association of Public Health Observatories (APHO) was commissioned by DH to produce prototype health profiles for each local authority in England for the first time in 2006. They were released in June 2006 as a printed version, and also made available on a publicly accessible dedicated website. There was a commitment that these health profiles will be updated annually, and *Health Profiles 2007* was published in June 2007. They are widely used in the NHS and beyond. The process of producing *Health Profiles 2008* is now nearly complete.

Health profiles are a commitment in the DH Public Health White Paper *Choosing Health – Making Healthy Choices Easier* and a key part of *Informing Healthier Choices*, the Public Health Information and Intelligence Strategy. Health profiles are aimed to inform local authorities, SHAs and PCTs (and their partners), and especially their Joint Directors of Public Health.

A key feature of the health profiles is that they represent a set of health indicators that are nationally comparable, benchmarked and methodologically consistent. As such, they are complementary to any local data analysis provided by local Directors of Public Health, but they assist local areas in the production of, for instance, their annual reports, community plans, local area agreements and joint strategic needs assessments. Specific examples of their use include in planning tobacco control and alcohol harm reduction, and provision of parenting support.

The first *Health Profile of England* was published in October 2006. The *Health Profile of England 2007* was published in October 2007, and provides an updated collection of national and regional data to be used as a benchmark against which local areas can compare their own health profile data. The *Health Profile of England 2007* builds on and complements information presented in the related local health profiles. For 2007 the *Health Profile of England* was limited to production of a web-based update of key data plus a short section presenting selected international comparisons.

The APHO published the following reports in 2007 – *Mental Health Indications*, *Child Health Indications*, *Alcohol Indications* and *Intelligent Health Partnerships*. In January 2008 an *Older People's Indications* report was published on behalf of the APHO, and two technical briefings have also been published.

Scotland

The ScotPHO website presents core public health data for Scotland at national and subnational level. UK comparisons are included where possible. The website also contains a copy of the World Health Organisation (WHO) *Health for All* database with Scotland level data added in so that international comparisons can be made:

www.scotpho.org.uk

The Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics website contains public health data at different Scottish geographies:

www.sns.gov.uk

Planned future work

England

The process of producing *Health Profiles 2008* is now nearly complete. The 2008 edition of *Health Profile of England* is planned for October 2008, subject to available resources.

Continuing evaluation of the Health Profiles remains part of the project. This process of testing and learning involves a wide range of users and

stakeholders. In line with the findings from the evaluation, and while retaining a recognisable product, *Health Profiles 2007* were an improved development from the prototype of 2006. This improvement process continues with *Health Profiles 2008*. Of the 32 indicators in the health summary, 23 are the same or have minor modifications, eight are new or significantly improved indicators, and only one now has a gap with no data to support the indicators (compared with five indicators where there were gaps in the previous year).

The APHO plans two further indications report publications during 2008 – one on substance misuse, and one on communicable disease and health protection. An APHO Annual Report is also due for publication later in 2008. Four further technical briefings are also planned. The National Library for Public Health is due to be relaunched, as is the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Gateway. There may also be a formal launch of a tool to assess Health Inequalities Interventions.

Scotland

The ScotPHO website will continue to be expanded to include further major public health topics, and additional public health data will be added to the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics website.

Health and wellbeing profiles for communities across Scotland will be published on the ScotPHO website in June 2008. These will include 60 indicators of health and wellbeing. For selected indicators there will be UK comparisons.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

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Access to services

D. Monitoring English waiting experience from general practice referral to hospital treatment

Aims and objectives

The 18-week target is a key government target. *The NHS Improvement Plan*, published in June 2004, stated that 'by 2008, no one will have to wait longer than 18 weeks from GP referral to hospital treatment'.

The purpose of the 18-week measurement project is to enable the NHS to record and report on waiting times from referral to treatment. Data from this project will inform the public and the Government of the progress of the NHS in delivering against this target.

Progress to date

DH worked in partnership with the NHS and NHS Connecting for Health to develop the 18 weeks Referral to Treatment (RTT) monitoring data collection and associated definitions and guidance. The data are submitted to DH by NHS commissioners, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts via an online data collection system.

Following a successful piloting and consultation exercise in early 2006, the national collection commenced on a voluntary basis in autumn 2006 before becoming compulsory in the early part of 2007. The voluntary phase of the exercise was very useful and allowed the data collection mechanisms, the transmission of data and the supporting technology to be tested.

DH commenced publication of the RTT data in 2007 once testing and validation of the data had given the necessary assurances that the data were fit for purpose and of sufficient quality to publish. The data are now published routinely each month. A data completeness assessment is published alongside the data in order to aid interpretation and this assessment has been subject to a number of refinements.

DH has also worked closely with NHS Connecting for Health and with the Information Standards

Board for Health and Social Care to ensure the necessary data standards were developed and approved for use by the NHS, and to ensure that 18 weeks data will be available within the Secondary Uses Service (SUS).

For further information, see the 18-week website:

www.18weeks.nhs.uk

Planned future work

Development work on RTT data continues. Delivery of the target for admitted pathways will be assessed on an adjusted basis which will exclude any periods of clock pause. Clock pause occurs when patients turn down offers of admissions made with reasonable notice. To enable delivery to be assessed on this basis, the adjusted RTT data collection was introduced in early 2008.

Completion date

This project will be completed in 2008/09

Cost

This work is funded as part of the 18 week programme

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E. Collection and analysis of English information relevant to helping vulnerable older people live in their own homes

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the project is to enable government, public and social care providers to evaluate the effectiveness of social care policies and initiatives, by publishing more evidence on the number of older people being supported to live in their own homes.

The PSA target is to 'improve the quality of life and independence of older people so that they can live at home wherever possible, by increasing by March 2008 the number of those supported intensively to live at home to 34 per cent of the total being supported by social services at home or in residential care; and to increase the number of older people per 1,000 population supported to live in their own home by 1 per cent in March 2007 and March 2008'.

Progress to date

The PSA target is measured using three existing data sources collected annually from Councils with Adult Social Service Responsibilities (CASSRs) by the IC. The data sources for the first part of the target are the Home help/home care (HH1) return and the Supported Residents (SR1 return), while the second part of the target uses data from the Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care (RAP) return.

The first part of the target on the number of older people supported intensively to live at home is an extension of the previous PSA target, increasing the target from 30 per cent by March 2006 to 34 per cent by March 2008. DH and the IC have been monitoring the previous target at both national and local level. The IC has published the results for 2006/07 on its website to help councils analyse and improve their performance, and this work will continue as new data become available.

Baseline data for the second part of the target to increase the number of older people per 1,000 population supported to live in their own home

for 2005/06 were first published in November 2006, with final data published in February 2007. Data for 2006/07 were published in November 2007, with final data published in February 2008.

Planned future work

DH and the IC will continue to monitor this target, both at national and local level.

Project length

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

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Health sector outputs, outcomes and productivity

F. Improving measurement of health sector productivity

Many of the departments participating in this theme are contributing to ongoing work in this area, which is being taken forward by ONS as part of the work to improve public service productivity (see chapter 11).

Progress to date

The key event of 2007/08 was the publication by ONS of the 'Public Service Productivity: Health Care' article in January 2008. This incorporated updated estimates in the quality adjustment used as part of health care output, which were published by DH in October 2007 in *Further Developments in Measuring Quality Adjusted Healthcare Output*.

The ONS article included the first implementation of the following advances:

- Taking account of price falls for GP-prescribed drugs when patent protection ends
- Breakdown of healthcare output and productivity into separate estimates for hospital and community health services and family health services
- Identification of principal sources of error

Other ONS development work in 2007/08 included:

- detailed work with the IC to shift to Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) activity data for hospital output in 2006/07 due to v.3.5 reference cost data being discontinued – the UK Centre for the Measurement of Government Activity (UKCeMGA) has agreed the basis for the 2006/07 measure and is now documenting a detailed specification of what the IC will supply
- preparing with the IC to shift to HES v.4 spells data for hospital output in 2007/08 in order to implement the *Review of data sources and methodology for the calculation of hospital output in the NHS* – UKCeMGA has agreed in principle the data required from the IC

- initial work with the Welsh Assembly Government to include Welsh public service health care output and input into ONS measures – there is now agreement on the underlying concepts and UKCeMGA is planning a detailed schedule for the work involved
- a study of improvements to forecasting quarterly public service health care output

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland continues to produce and extend the coverage of its weighted activity output measure (equivalent to England) and the Northern Ireland estimates contribute to the overall published UK Health output figure. Work has continued to replicate the various quality adjustments being developed by DH and liaison with UKCeMGA ensures latest developments and thinking are considered in the development of the Northern Ireland measures. Northern Ireland also supplied other productivity indicators to cross-validate its output measure, some of which were included in the latest UKCeMGA health productivity article.

Planned future work

In 2008/09 there will be further work with the devolved administrations to include measures of output and input from their jurisdictions into the UK productivity measure, thereby improving its accuracy. Another key objective is implementation of the *Review of data sources and methodology for the calculation of hospital output in the NHS*. This means that the ONS measure of hospital output in England will be based on an improved inpatient activity classification system, and the units will be spells rather than episodes. DH is continuing work with the York University Centre for Health Economics to improve the output measure.

Northern Ireland

It is intended to incorporate an improved inpatient activity classification system into the output measure which will further help describe the complexity of the hospital workload. The feasibility of producing a quality-adjusted output measure will also be investigated and it is also

hoped to take forward work on the development of Northern Ireland specific cost deflators. This would then allow preliminary estimates of Northern Ireland health service productivity to be calculated for the first time.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

Health and safety at work

G. To monitor progress on improving the control of risks in the workplace and hence health and safety outcomes in Great Britain

Aims and objectives

The mission of the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is 'to protect people's health and safety by ensuring risks in the changing workplace are properly controlled'. This is reflected in the DWP/HSE 2004 Spending Review PSA target and the related targets set in the HSC's Strategy *Revitalising Health and Safety*. An important role for HSE's Statistics Branch, as part of its aim of supporting HSC/E's priorities by providing data and advice on work-related ill health and injuries, is to produce statistical assessments of progress that are robust, credible and useful to stakeholders.

Progress to date

The *Revitalising Health and Safety* targets were for specific percentage reductions in injuries, ill health and working days lost to be achieved by 2009/10 and by the mid-point of 2004/05. HSE Statistics Branch has produced annual assessments of progress against each of these three targets, bringing together data from different sources according to a methodology set out in a published Statistical Note. For the mid-point targets, the progress judgements were more comprehensive and were exposed to external peer review. The most recent progress report, covering data up to 2006/07, was published in November 2007. For further information see:

www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/targets.htm

HSE Statistics Branch also played a key role in the setting of new departmental strategic objective targets for HSE, as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.

Planned future work

Assessments of progress will continue to be produced annually and published on HSE's website. HSE Statistics Branch will also play a key role in developing new measures of HSE progress.

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Completion date

The current PSA target runs until 2007/08 with statistical assessment in November 2008. The targets in *Revitalising Health and Safety* run until 2009/10. Progress monitoring against the DSO targets will continue beyond these dates.

Cost

Not available

Access to data

H. Development of UK Health Statistics

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the project is to provide a comparative picture of health services, public health and social care information across the countries of the UK.

Progress to date

Following the successful publication of *UK Health Statistics (UKHS) No 2* in 2006, collaborative work between ONS and the four health administrations of the UK has continued to increase the scope and quality of cross-UK comparable health statistics. *UK Health Statistics (UKHS) No 3* will be published in summer 2008 and will contain 11 new tables, while a further 23 tables have been revised as a result of harmonisation in methods or definitions between the countries. The additional tables include immunisation against influenza in the elderly, work-related illness and injury, and drug treatment presentations. There is also improved coverage of high-profile issues in health service activity, including hospital waiting times, discharge rates and inpatient lengths of stay. Much of the health service data is provided with breakdowns by diagnosis or operative procedure.

ONS, the IC and the UK health departments have worked closely together to provide UK data for international organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Eurostat and WHO. The metadata for the figures provided for the annual OECD health report have been improved, and improved sources have been found for some sections. Synergies between international data requirements, the UKHS project and ongoing harmonisation work between the health administrations have contributed substantially to the new edition of *UKHS*.

Since 2007 the IC has fed back to health departments the UK data submitted to international organisations, disaggregated at the four-country level. Sharing data in this way, as well as potentially being informative for policy and

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management purposes, helps highlight areas where harmonisation of definitions or methodologies would be helpful, which should lead to more consistent UK-level data over time.

The organisations responsible for the publication of Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) data in the UK have also liaised closely to ensure that data are provided in similar formats, to similar levels and in the same week. This allows easier and more timely comparisons to be made.

In response to recommendations from the Statistics Commission, the UK Comparative Waiting Times Group has continued to develop a number of initiatives designed to maximise harmonisation between the four UK nations in relation to waiting time issues. One such initiative involved the Group undertaking a comparative analysis of the length of time patients had waited for a list of 11 inpatient procedures, selected on the basis of both volume and data quality, within each country. This analysis adopted the financial year 2005/06 as the base year, with a further analysis of 2006/07 data, and measured the median completed waiting time in days, together with an estimate of the value of the 90th percentile completed wait, in days, for each procedure. The results of these analyses will be included in the 2008 edition of *UKHS*.

The Adult Care Information Network (ACIN) was set up in March 2006 to bring together leading policymakers and information specialists on adult social care from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Since its formation, the group has worked on a range of issues, including outcomes in social care and measuring intermediate care. The ACIN website provides a central resource for accessing the outputs of the group and other useful information:

www.ic.nhs.uk/acin

Planned future work

Work to prepare for *UKHS No 4* will begin in summer 2008. Stakeholder views and the implications of relevant initiatives, for example planned developments in the dissemination of

National Statistics outputs, will be taken into account in decisions on timing, content and presentation.

The frequency of the publication of *UKHS* is currently being considered by the steering group. If the publication became annual there would be more familiarity and awareness of the publication. However, this may mean publishing tables that show little year-on-year change and omitting some tables where data are not available annually. Consideration will also be given to the potential for cross-UK collaborative analysis on key health topics to feed into publication.

It is intended that the analysis of completed waiting times for inpatient procedures, across the UK, will be performed on an annual basis in the future.

The IC has recently begun work with representatives from the health surveys in other parts of the UK, to present a co-ordinated UK view at Eurostat Technical Group discussions on the future implementation of the European Health Interview Survey. The existing health surveys differ both methodologically and in topic coverage, but initial findings have highlighted areas of commonality and some for potential harmonisation.

Completion date

This project comprises a range of ongoing work

Cost

This project is not separately costed. It relies on a range of ongoing work across ONS, the IC, DH and the devolved administrations.

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Data scope, quality and infrastructure

I. Integrate Electronic Staff Record with NHS workforce data collection

Aims and objectives

The Electronic Staff Record (ESR) is an integrated Human Resource (HR)/Payroll system developed to replace the 29 payroll systems and 38 HR systems historically used across the NHS in England and Wales.

In addition to its principal deliverable of a fully integrated HR/Payroll system for the NHS, the ESR project will provide systems/software to enable the direct extraction of workforce information for all NHS organisations via the ESR Data Warehouse.

The utilisation of ESR as a fundamental source of NHS workforce information was a key project for the IC in 2007/08. The IC is working closely with SHAs, the users of ESR within the NHS and DH to ensure a system of high data integrity. This will in turn enable the realisation of a key benefit of ESR and the ESR Data Warehouse – a reduction in the burden on the NHS by replacing the requirement for individual NHS organisations to complete individual aggregate returns.

Progress to date

The ESR system is in the final stages of being rolled out across the NHS. The rollout programme involves 12 'waves' of NHS organisations, and rollout will be completed by spring 2008.

The 2007 medical and non-medical workforce census information was extracted from the ESR Data Warehouse for the 85 per cent of NHS organisations (349 out of 413) on the system as at 30 September 2007.

The IC and the ESR programme have been working closely with ESR users across the NHS to develop a data quality action plan which will be communicated to the wider NHS and implemented throughout 2008/09 and beyond.

Planned future work

The 2008 workforce census (as at 30 September

2008) will be drawn entirely from the ESR Data Warehouse, except for the two NHS organisations not currently scheduled to implement ESR.

Work is ongoing to construct a development programme aimed at delivering, routinely, key workforce metrics on headcount, full-time equivalent, sickness absence and earnings, among others. This programme will be delivered throughout 2008/09 accompanied by metrics showing the quality of key workforce data items.

Completion date

The ESR system is due to be fully rolled out across the NHS by spring 2008

Cost

Not available

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J. Develop Secondary Uses Service of the National Programme for IT

Aims and objectives

The term 'secondary uses' is used to describe the use of information, which is principally derived from operational and care systems, for purposes other than the direct care of patients.

Secondary Uses Service (SUS) provides comprehensive data on hospital activity to enable a range of reporting and analysis to support the NHS and its partners in the areas of planning, commissioning, management, research, audit and public health. SUS is jointly delivered by the IC and NHS Connecting for Health. The *NHS in England: the Operating Framework for 2008/09* stated that 'from April 2009 it is intended that the NHS should use SUS as the standard repository for activity for performance monitoring, reconciliation and payments'.

The SUS Programme comprises the development, implementation and management of a related set of systems and services. These systems and services are being implemented within a consistent information governance model, which ensures the security and confidentiality of identifiable data through the use of role-based access controls, the replacement of identifiers with encrypted pseudonyms and the use of statistical rules to prevent disclosure. These systems include:

- a core data warehouse and facilities for users to access and report, and data provided as part of the National Programme for IT (NPfIT) – the core warehouse manages commissioning datasets covering NHS-commissioned admitted patient care, outpatient and accident and emergency activity at patient level, while users access data from this warehouse to support NHS business operations
- the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), which is a secondary data repository with analysis and reporting facilities, updated principally through extracts from the core warehouse – this supports a wider range of purposes, including strategic analysis for policy and research
- NHS Comparators, which is a comparative

information analysis and presentation application, using data from HES and the core warehouse to support commissioning analysis, service planning and public health requirements

- a national clinical audit application, which supports the analysis and reporting of data collected within a number of NHS-wide audit programmes

The information derived from these systems supports a wide range of purposes, ranging from NHS business operations associated with payments for services provided and the management and monitoring of the achievement of the 18-week referral to treatment target (RTT), to medical and health-related research. The presumption is that these purposes, while requiring access to patient level data, do not require this to be identifiable to an individual and the Government's policy is to minimise the use of identifiable data for these purposes.

The data currently managed within SUS are derived from the commissioning datasets, which providers of NHS care must submit and make available to commissioners. In future, wherever possible, data will be captured automatically from NHS operational systems, including the NHS Care Records Service (NHSCRS) and other NPfIT services including choose and book, the patient demographics service and the electronic prescribing system.

Every secondary care provider in England has to submit on a regular basis a set of standard data files (commissioning data sets) to SUS. These files contain details of all the care they have provided, including that covered by Payment by Results (PbR)

The SUS PbR service is available through the NHSCRS Access Portal. An online service allows providers, commissioners and SHAs to access SUS directly, and request extracts to be run, and allows summary analysis and reporting. Extracts showing how much PbR relevant care has cost are produced by the SUS and published on a secure site for the PCTs to access.

Users are able to access records in datasets within the SUS data warehouse appropriate to their role and organisation. Users in shared services or agency organisations that are representing multiple organisations are able to access data for all the organisations for which they are responsible. Users' access is controlled through the NHS SPINE database and the SUS Role Based Access Control (RBAC) mechanism.

Users can download data on request from SUS, which can then be loaded into local systems.

The IC has overall responsibility for delivering the SUS to users, typically in PCTs and providers of NHS-funded care. NHS Connecting for Health is responsible for procuring and managing the technical solution to support end user needs.

Progress to date

During 2007 SUS provided releases which:

- enabled monitoring of progress against the NHS target of reducing waiting times to less than 18 weeks
- launched NHS Comparators to support the rollout of practice-based commissioning (PBC)
- delivered a major hardware and system software upgrade to improve the speed of processing

Planned future work

During 2008/09 further releases are planned including:

- reports on demand management, waiting times and choice analysis that will take advantage of the new choose and book information flowing into SUS
- a new audit analysis and reporting system for national clinical audit, initially covering bowel, lung and head and neck cancers
- a new 18-week referral to treatment reporting application, which will enable the NHS to measure and track the progress of patients along their RTT pathways – it will allow users to analyse and report on closed RTT periods to identify the duration of patients' RTT pathways,

and support tracking of RTT periods as they progress, that is, patient pathways from referral to treatment of a particular condition that have yet to be completed; this prospective RTT period reporting allows commissioners and providers to monitor the progress of patients who may be waiting for their treatments

- the development of functionality to enable the production of pseudonyms for identifiable data, which are not subsequently managed within the SUS warehouse – this will initially take the form of a pseudonymisation service for local service providers of NPfIT systems
- support for the implementation of the Mental Health Act 2007 and the PSA relating to socially excluded adults
- a number of enhancements that are currently under consideration for spring 2009, including an upgrade for PbR in 2009/10

Completion date

The agreed releases for SUS will be completed in 2008, but it is expected that further developments will follow as the NHSCRS is more widely implemented

Cost

Not available

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K. Publication of Welsh Health Survey

Aims and objectives

The Welsh Health Survey is a major source of information about the health and health-related lifestyle of people in Wales and their use of health services. This project covers publication plans for the survey.

Progress to date

Annual reports for the first three years of the Welsh Health Survey have been published, most recently *Welsh Health Survey 2005/06*, which was published in August 2007. Shorter statistical bulletins on specific topics have also been published.

Planned future work

Welsh Health Survey reports are being published annually and the fourth annual report is due to be published in late summer 2008.

Completion date

Ongoing – these are annual publications

Cost

This is part of wider work on the Welsh Health Survey and separate costs for this element of the work are not available

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L. Review of the Scottish Health Survey

Aims and objectives

To review the structure and content of the Scottish Health Survey, to ensure that it continues to meet the information needs of key stakeholders and to provide good value for money. The key issues for consideration were:

- whether resources could be pooled with local NHS Board Health and Lifestyle Surveys to create one national, consistent survey that meets both national and local needs and provides better value for money
- harmonisation of methodology and core content with other large-scale Scottish Government surveys

Progress to date

In July 2007 the contract for running the survey from 2008 to 2011 was awarded, and fieldwork began at the end of January 2008 with the following major changes:

- Fieldwork is now running continuously
- The sample design is unclustered
- It has a core and modular structure, with one module of questions purchased by NHS Health Scotland as a replacement for its Health Education Population Survey (HEPS)
- Scotland level results will be available annually
- NHS Board level results will be available at least every four years (more frequently for larger Boards)
- Three NHS Boards have purchased boosts to their samples

Planned future work

The first year of fieldwork is currently under way. Work will begin soon to consult on minor questionnaire changes for the 2009 survey and to develop plans for dissemination of the 2008 data in summer 2009. It is also planned to bring the survey within the scope of National Statistics before its first publication in 2009.

Completion date

The project has been completed as the formal review has now been completed

Cost

£7.26 million over four years (including costs incurred by NHS Health Scotland and Boards)

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M. Development of comparative analysis of completed waiting times for inpatient admission for selected procedures across the four UK nations

Aims and objectives

In the report *Enhancing the Value of Health Statistics: User Perspectives*, the Statistics Commission recommended that inconsistencies in definitions of waiting times between the four UK nations should be addressed. A UK Comparative Waiting Times Group (UKCWTG) was created which carried out a review of waiting time criteria in each nation. The report from this group recommended that the four nations should consider 'publishing harmonised data for completed waits – [it is understood] that data already exists in most countries from the Hospital Episode Statistics and other sources which could be published in an agreed common format'.

The UKCWTG agreed to investigate if an appropriate waiting time data series was available to allow a comparative analysis of waiting times across the four UK nations.

Progress to date

The UKCWTG undertook a project addressing this recommendation and identified a list of 11 inpatient procedures, selected on the basis of both volume and data quality within each country, for analysis. The 11 selected inpatient procedures were: cataract surgery; hip replacement; knee replacement; bypass surgery; angioplasty; angiography; hernia repair; varicose surgery; tonsillectomy; endoscope of bladder and endoscope of upper gastro intestinal tract.

It was agreed that an analysis of the length of time a patient had waited, from the initial decision to admit to the date of admission for the procedure, including periods of suspension for medical and social reasons, should be performed. This analysis adopted the financial year 2005/06 as the base year and measured the median completed waiting time in days, together with an estimate of the value of the 90th percentile completed wait, in days, for each procedure. It

should be noted that the measurement of a completed wait, including periods of suspension, is not comparable with the waiting time policies in each country, which exclude such periods from a patients 'statistical' waiting time for target monitoring purposes. The analysis was also performed on data for 2006/07. The completed analysis will be published in the 2008 edition of *UKHS*.

Planned future work

It is hoped that this analysis will be updated, utilising this methodology, on an annual basis. It is also hoped to produce an academic paper for submission to the Royal Statistical Society on this subject during 2008/09.

Completion date

The analysis of data for inclusion in the 2008 edition of *UKHS* was completed in February 2008

Cost

Not available

Contact

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N. Development of patient level dataset to report on waiting times for inpatient treatment in Northern Ireland

Aims and objectives

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland maintains responsibility for publishing official information outlining the number of patients awaiting admission to an NHS hospital for inpatient treatment. This information had previously been collected and published on a quarterly basis via a data return that compiled information on the number of patients waiting for inpatient treatment by specialty and the length of time they had been waiting at the end of each quarter for each hospital.

Waiting times were reported in three-month time bands. This meant that, while it was possible to report on the number of patients waiting less than three months, between three and six months and so on, it was not possible to estimate exact waiting times. In addition, analysis of waiting times for specific procedures was not possible, given that data were provided at specialty level.

A project was undertaken at the beginning of 2007/08 to develop a patient level dataset that would improve the scope of information collected, enabling more in-depth analyses to be performed. In addition, this information would be extracted directly from Patient Administration Systems in each hospital, so minimising the burden on health service staff in providing this information.

A three-stage validation process was also developed as part of this project to ensure the information extracted was of National Statistics standard prior to its publication.

Progress to date

A methodology for the extraction and validation of patient level information on the number of patients awaiting inpatient treatment was developed and piloted for the waiting time positions at the end of June and September 2007. This pilot proved successful and a National

Statistics consultation, proposing a change in the methodology used to collate this series, was undertaken in late 2007. Respondents to the consultation were supportive of the change and data derived using the new methodology were published in March 2008, for the position at the end of December 2007.

Planned future work

It is intended that a scoping exercise will be undertaken during 2008/09 to determine the feasibility of introducing a similar patient level system to report on waiting times for a first outpatient assessment.

Completion date

The project was completed in February 2008

Cost

Not available

Theme group Members

This work programme was developed by:

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Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families

www.dcsf.gov.uk

Department of Health

www.dh.gov.uk/home/fs/en

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Health and Safety Executive

www.hse.gov.uk

NHS Information Centre

www.ic.nhs.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

Scottish Health Statistics

www.isdscotland.org

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk

Introduction

The Labour Market Theme brings together information and statistics about many aspects of the labour market relating to people, to employing enterprises and to relevant elements of the social security system. Labour Market Statistics (LMS) use household and enterprise surveys as the core source for data, although in the future administrative-based data will have a key role in supplementing these survey sources.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the topic group was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter highlights and provides an update for the priority projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. It covers all official statistics, not just National Statistics. They are listed in no order of importance.

A. Improvement of the public sector employment statistics

Aims and objectives

The main aim of this project was to publish accurate and definitive quarterly headcount and full-time equivalent (FTE) figures for both the civil service and public sector workforce and to publish an enhanced series of annual analytical reports on public sector employment.

Both aims have been achieved. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has continued its programme of improvements to public sector employment (PSE) statistics, in collaboration with other departments, having established a single set of definitive estimates and a series of analytical articles. ONS now publishes the official PSE estimates each quarter, as National Statistics, three months after the period to which they refer, compared with a year or more previously.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

B. Modernisation of Labour Market Statistics processing system

Aims and objectives

The aim of this project is to re-engineer Labour Force Survey (LFS) processing systems. The key benefit will be to allow the latest population estimates and projections to be incorporated into the LFS microdata to the same timescale currently achieved for LFS monthly time series.

Progress to date

A modernised system for LFS reweighting of microdata was delivered during 2007. However, it was not fully operational in time to meet the planned timescale of the reweighting. ONS therefore used previous methods supported by aspects of the new system to undertake the reweighting exercise.

This, combined with the delay in supply of the 2006 mid-year population estimates which were revised back to 2002 and necessary to support reweighting, meant that the planned delivery date of October 2007 was missed by a few months.

A detailed timetable for release of reweighted LFS microdata has now been agreed with users. It is planned that the labour market aggregates in the monthly *Labour Market Statistics First Release* will be based on the reweighted microdata from May 2008.

ONS successfully used modernised systems for producing the aggregate results (the time series for weighted and aggregated data) for inclusion in the *Labour Market Statistics First Release* from October 2007. These new systems are more flexible and allow a significant reduction in the risks posed by the existing antiquated systems that were error prone, particularly when system or population changes were required.

Planned future work

In the *ONS Work Programme 2008/09–2011/12*, ONS envisages that it may reweight the LFS microdata on a biennial basis, although the frequency of reweighting depends upon the extent of any methodological changes

implemented in the production of UK population estimates and consequent revisions to these estimates.

In the shorter term it is envisaged that the methods used for the reweighting exercise undertaken in 2007/08 will be used, although the aim is to build on the re-engineering work completed to date.

Completion date

Depends on prioritisation of funding to future modernisation initiatives

Cost

Not available

Contact

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C. Development of earnings statistics

Aims and objectives

The aim of this project is to make major improvements to earnings statistics, including the publication of an Average Earnings Ratio (AER), following the Turnbull/King Review of the Average Earnings Index (AEI) in 1999, and the development of a Labour Cost Index (LCI).

The AER uses the same wages data that are used to construct the AEI, but has an improved estimation process. This allows the publication of a level of average earnings each month and estimation of the effect of movements of employees between industries on average earnings growth.

The LCI combines the AER with measures of non-wage labour costs and hours worked data to produce an index that shows the changes in the total cost to employers per hour worked.

Progress to date

Following the launch of the experimental Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) (formerly referred to as the AER) and the Index of Labour Costs per Hour (ILCH) (formerly referred to as the LCI) in May 2005, development work continued during 2006/07 with the aim of achieving National Statistics status by March 2007.

This work included reviewing the imputation and outliers methodology, the production of sampling errors and a detailed reconciliation of the AWE and the AEI. The reconciliation work has taken longer than anticipated, resulting in a delay in achieving National Statistics status.

The methodological work and the detailed reconciliation work are now being reviewed by Martin Weale, Director of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research. Subject to the results of this review, it is hoped that the AWE will achieve National Statistics status during 2008.

Planned future work

The future work programme will depend in part on the results of the Weale review, but the aim

will be to achieve National Statistics status as soon as possible.

Completion date

By the end of 2008

Cost

Not available

Contact

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D. Implementation of the Allsopp Review recommendations relating to Labour Market Statistics

Aims and objectives

The main aim of this project is to provide improved Labour Market Statistics at subnational level, in response to user demands identified in the Allsopp Review.

Progress to date

Local area labour markets: statistical indicators continues to be published quarterly, to coincide with the release of the results of the Annual Population Survey (APS), and the eighth edition was published in February 2008.

Model-based estimates of unemployment for local areas have been published as National Statistics since the July 2006 edition of the quarterly publication. The Nomis® labour market profiles were extended to include data on working age benefits, and the model-based unemployment estimates. Model-based estimates of unemployment for parliamentary constituencies were under development during 2007/08.

In addition, plans have been developed to amend the *Labour Market Regional First Release*: the monthly headline labour supply estimates will continue to be provided from the rolling three-monthly LFS, but the detailed labour supply estimates will be provided by the APS. This has a much bigger sample than the quarterly LFS, and hence will provide more precise estimates.

Planned future work

Consultation with users on the model-based estimates of unemployment for parliamentary constituencies is planned for summer 2008.

The incorporation of APS detailed labour supply estimates into the *Labour Market Regional First Release* is planned for 2008/09, after the completion of the reweighting of the LFS and APS microdata, so that all LFS and APS estimates are consistent with the latest population estimates.

Project length

Ongoing

Cost

Developments will be implemented from existing sources

E. Completion of Employment and Jobs Quality Review

The main aim of this project was to complete the Employment and Jobs Quality Review and to implement the recommendations.

The Review was completed and a final report published in January 2006. An implementation plan, detailing how the recommendations are to be taken forward, was published in June 2006. The report and the plan are available on the National Statistics website at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/reviews/labour.asp#nsqremf

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

Contact

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F. Input to the Paris Group and International Labour Organisation (ILO) discussions of ILO resolution on working hours statistics

Aims and objectives

ONS is participating in an international programme of work with the Paris Group to develop a draft ILO resolution relating to the collection and compilation of working hours statistics.

Progress to date

The Paris Group has developed and submitted proposals for ILO draft international standards on working time measurement. These will be discussed at the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians planned for December 2008.

Planned future work

It is not anticipated that the Paris Group will continue following completion of this work.

Completion date

December 2008

Cost

Not available

G. Development and analysis of inactivity statistics

Aims and objectives

As a result of proposals made in an article published in *Labour Market Trends* in October 2003, ONS aimed to develop and test new inactivity questions for the 2005 LFS, with a view to improving the value of the survey for assessing potential labour supply. This work is being carried out as part of an international collaboration co-ordinated by the ILO.

Progress to date

Modifications have been made to the LFS questions that ask about people's reasons for inactivity. Test questions have been included in the questionnaire since spring 2005 regarding inactive respondents' propensity to work in future. An article that included an analysis of the new questions was published in *Economic & Labour Market Review* in December 2007.

Planned future work

Economic inactivity will continue to be analysed on a regular basis as part of the programme of work for the labour market division analysis team.

Completion date

December 2007

Cost

Not available

Contacts

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H. Development of working age benefit data for labour market statistics

Aims and objectives

The project aims to develop working age benefit data for inclusion in labour market assessment and analysis. ONS plans to use the improved and more accessible working age benefit data that are being developed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Progress to date

Data on DWP benefits have been available on Nomis® since October 2005. The first benefits data on Nomis® were from a sample of 5 per cent of claimants, but DWP now produces statistics on benefits using information from all claimants. Data for small areas (wards and Super Output Areas) derived from all benefit claimants are now available on Nomis®.

In November 2006 the number of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance by ethnicity became available. Claimant statistics covering movements on and off benefits, by eight ethnic groups and 16 ethnicity types, are available.

During 2007 the geographical coverage of benefits data based on all claimants was extended to other areas on Nomis®, including local authorities and parliamentary constituencies. Consideration of inclusion of further benefits data in the *Labour Market First Releases* has been postponed owing to the Data Warehousing Modernisation Project currently being undertaken by DWP, which is modernising its benefits processing systems.

Planned future work

ONS and DWP will be considering the further benefits data that should be included in the *Labour Market First Releases* during the course of the DWP Data Warehousing Modernisation Project. Modernisation of DWP benefits processing will result in more timely data, which in turn will be fed through into Nomis®.

Completion date

Under negotiation between ONS and DWP

Cost

Not available

Contact

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I. Preparation of labour force projections

Aims and objectives

During 2004 consistent employment and unemployment series back to 1971 were produced on ILO definitions using an econometric modelling approach and published. ONS aimed to produce projections of the economically active population on the same consistent basis which incorporated the latest population projections. These labour force projections were published by ONS in January 2006.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

J. Development of local area modelled labour market statistics

Aims and objectives

In response to demands from local government users of labour market statistics (LMS), a project to develop modelled unemployment data for local areas has developed experimental estimates, which are published on the National Statistics website. Since these estimates were produced, the model methodology has been further developed to produce estimates that are more precise than the LFS estimates for all areas. This new methodology is now being peer reviewed, and users are validating the estimates produced by the new model (see also Project D).

Progress to date

The model-based unemployment estimates for local authorities were published as National Statistics for the first time in July 2006. A new model has also been developed to produce similar estimates for parliamentary constituencies, but these have not yet been published.

Planned future work

Model-based estimates of unemployment for parliamentary constituencies are undergoing further work following a review of the initial estimates. A multivariate model, which will simultaneously estimate both unemployment and either employment or inactivity, is being developed.

Completion date

Estimates for parliamentary constituencies and from the multivariate model are undergoing further work. It is unclear when these estimates will become available.

Cost

Around £22,000 – this is made up of staff costs in labour market division and methodology group in ONS

Contact

bob.watson@ons.gov.uk

K. Publication of Labour Market Review volume and accompanying online Guide to Labour Market Statistics

The aim of this project was to develop and publish the *Labour Market Review* volume which would complement the monthly LMS published by ONS and describe some longer-term trends. The aim of the online guide – the *Guide to Labour Market Statistics* – was to provide an easily accessible and comprehensive source of information about the outputs, sources, definitions and methods used for the compilation of the UK's LMS.

The Review volume and online guide were both published in March 2006 on the National Statistics website:

www.statistics.gov.uk/labourmarketreview

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

Topic group members

This work programme was developed by:

Joe Grice (Chair)

Office for National Statistics

Graeme Walker (Deputy Chair)

Office for National Statistics

Derek Bird

Office for National Statistics

Debra Prestwood

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Scottish Government

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Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland

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Chris Kelly

HM Treasury

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HM Revenue & Customs

Timothy Butcher

Low Pay Commission

Julian Revell

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Katherine Neiss

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Bill Wells

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Iain Walsh

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Claire Hughes

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Office for National Statistics (Secretary)

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Business, Enterprise and
Regulatory Reform

www.berr.gov.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families

www.dcsf.gov.uk

Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills

www.dius.gov.uk

Department for Work and Pensions

www.dwp.gov.uk

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment,
Northern Ireland

www.detini.gov.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk

Introduction

The Natural and Built Environment Theme covers statistics for four main areas:

- Natural environment (air, water, soil, wildlife, natural resources, waste and land cover)
- Housing (houses, households, housing finance, house prices and homelessness)
- Construction (output, new orders, employment, building materials, price and cost indices), and
- Land use and planning (development control, land use change and stock, small area retail turnover, floorspace, town centres and green belt)

The main government departments represented within the theme are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), ONS, Scottish Government (SG), Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland, Department for Social Development, Northern Ireland (DSD) and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). This theme has links with the agriculture, fishing and forestry theme.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group (TWG) was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter reports on the progress made over the last 12 months on the most important projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. The projects are listed in no order of importance.

Priority projects

A. Development of the Sustainable Consumption and Production statistical evidence base including indicators

Aims and objectives

The project aims to compile a robust and credible evidence base to support the delivery of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) policies.

Progress to date

The statistical evidence base for SCP policy is being developed as part of Defra's evidence and innovation strategy, which went out to consultation in October 2005. The Strategy identifies the need to understand the resource flows and environmental impacts of different social and economic trends, different sectors and different products.

Underpinning the strategy is a research programme that has initially focused on reviewing the available evidence and identifying areas for further work and development. Among the research projects that reported during 2007 were:

- a review of recent developments in, and the practical use of, ecological footprinting methodologies
- a review of the suitability of different methodologies for measuring the embedded emissions in products and services for use in a Publicly Available Specification (a fast track British Standards Institution standard)
- a study mapping the evidence and trends in the sustainable development aspects of tourism
- the development of an embedded carbon emissions indicator for 1992 to 2004
- a survey of Public Attitudes to the Environment

Planned future work

New projects due to report in 2008 include:

- the development and application of indicators of eco-innovation
- a study of the household and economy-wide impacts of changing environmental behaviours
- research into the contribution of products and services towards meeting the UK's climate change targets

These projects, combined with research already undertaken, represent the first stage in the development of modelling tools and frameworks that can integrate the disparate sources of evidence on material flows and environmental impacts.

Completion date

Not known, as it is part of a wider research programme

Cost

Not available, as it is part of a wider research programme

Contact

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B. Production of more comprehensive, relevant, frequent and timely waste statistics

Aims and objectives

The aim of this project, which is being taken forward by Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government jointly with the Environment Agency, is to provide a sound evidence base for improved waste management, policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, at both national and local levels.

Progress to date

A new central data warehouse, the waste data hub, has been developed and implemented. This hub brings together much of the data required to fill many of the information gaps identified in the joint Defra and WAG waste data strategy 2006. In September 2007 it was successfully rolled out to select users within the Environment Agency and WAG. Analytical work is currently being carried out to align the data in the hub against the source systems, and full publication of reports will then follow.

There has been a marked increase in the demand for the data in 2008, with requests received from regional and local planning authorities and from Defra policy teams. A new web content management system has been delivered that will enable the team to publish reports in a timely manner once the quality assurance work has been completed.

Municipal waste data provided by local authorities to WasteDataFlow (a web-based system for collecting quarterly local authority data on municipal waste) is continuing to be published on a regular basis, with quarterly releases introduced from February 2008:

www.defra.gov.uk/environment/statistics/wastats

Planned future work

Work will continue to improve the quality of waste data and to ensure the growing demand for the data by all stakeholders can be met.

There will be a new phase of work to further develop the hub. This work is likely to lead directly to the capture of new datasets and will further expand the breadth and depth of the published reports.

Project length

Phase 1 – hub implementation – completed May 2007

Phase 2 – system developments to better meet short-term reporting needs are due to be completed by March 2009

Cost

Phase 1 – £2.3 million

Phase 2 – £0.8 million

C. Production of more comprehensive, relevant, frequent and timely waste statistics in Northern Ireland

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the project was to carry out a number of surveys on different waste streams, including commercial and industrial waste arisings.

The Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste Arisings Survey (CDEWAS) was published in June 2006. The Commercial and Industrial Waste Arisings Survey (CIWAS) was published in March 2007.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

Contact

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D. Publication of household projection figures for Northern Ireland

Aims and objectives

The purpose of this project is to produce updated household projections for Northern Ireland up to 2025, applying the data from the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) 2004-based population projections for Northern Ireland to provide better projections.

Progress to date

An Examination in Public of the Housing Growth Indicators for Northern Ireland concluded in February 2006 and the panel published its report in March 2006. The report endorsed the use of the NISRA model for forecasting population and household change. At the same time it was recognised that, given the change in the European Union in 2004 and the possibility of an increase in inward migration, it would not be appropriate to fully review the household projections based on the 2004 population projection series. It was agreed to wait until the 2006-based population projections were available. The 2006-based household projections were published in March 2008, comprising Northern Ireland household projections by size and type until 2031, and sub-national projections by size and type until 2021. They are available on the NISRA website at:

www.nisra.gov.uk

Planned future work

A further review of the methodology will be undertaken during 2008/09 for the 2008-based household projections. This will include the use of alternative data sources to further understand trends in household formation. There will be further collaboration with counterparts in Great Britain and Republic of Ireland on the development of household projections methodology.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

Contact

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E. Settlement shops and services in Northern Ireland

Aims and objectives

The study will improve the classification and monitoring of settlement shops and services. The project will provide better identification of settlements by counting the number of shops and services in them, and not relying only on a population count.

Progress to date

This project has been completed and results were published in December 2006 as a NISRA occasional paper.

Planned future work

Plans for future work are currently being considered. They may include methods for enabling the identification of the catchment areas for service centres and also determination of a way to routinely update information on settlement service levels.

Completion date

To be determined

Cost

Not available

Contact

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F. Living in Wales Survey

Aims and objectives

Living in Wales is a survey for the WAG carried out by Ipsos MORI. It is the main source of information on households and the condition of homes in Wales. This annual survey is carried out as a face-to-face interview with the household reference person or another appropriate adult. Ad hoc property condition surveys take place in conjunction with the household survey.

Progress to date

Initial results from the 2004 survey have been published at the Wales level via a series of topic-specific statistical releases. These releases provide information from both the household and the house condition surveys carried out in 2004.

Fieldwork for the 2005, 2006 and 2007 surveys, which contain a more diverse range of questions, have been completed and so far results from the 2005 and 2006 surveys have been published via statistical releases. Work is currently under way on the 2008 survey and associated property condition survey.

Planned future work

Results for the 2007 survey are expected to be published during 2008, as well as the first results for local authorities, based on a combined dataset of three years of survey data (2004 to 2006). Further results, including those from the 2008 household and property condition surveys, will be published in 2009.

There is no equivalent survey planned for 2009. Options for a national survey beyond 2009 are currently being reviewed.

Project length

The project will finish at the end of 2008

Cost

Not available

Contact

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G. Development of resource indicators based on the UK material flow account

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is the compilation of resource use and resource intensity indicators in preparation for future Eurostat requirements.

Progress to date

Material flows have been developed sufficiently so that they can now be compiled according to the basic National Accounting matrix including environmental accounts framework, which is a Eurostat requirement. However, additional work related to this project that looked at measures of material intensity has not taken place.

In the *Environmental Accounts* published in November 2006, ONS was able to build on the progress made during the project to date, to present existing data in a way that provided more information on the total UK demand for particular resources, such as fossil fuels and minerals.

However, ONS has changed the emphasis of work, away from development work on Environmental Accounts towards the maintenance of existing outputs. Further work on this project has therefore been suspended and there are no plans at present to review this position.

Contact

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H. Rationalisation of data collection from social housing landlords in Scotland

Aims and objectives

The project aims to provide consistent information on stock, vacancies, lettings, rents and improvement activities for local authority and housing association landlords at national, local authority and neighbourhood levels. It also aims to simplify reporting and reduce the burden of data supply.

Progress to date

In 2007/08 the reporting burden on councils was alleviated by reducing the frequency of data collected on vacancies and lettings of council properties from quarterly to annual. This brings the frequency and timing of the data collection into line with that for housing associations.

An electronic, spreadsheet-based proforma has been developed to gather annual (financial year) summary information on councils' waiting lists, vacancies and lettings.

The contract for the Scottish Continuous Recording System (SCORE) has been let, and the work programme for the new contractor includes supporting electronic data transfer of SCORE-compatible data from local authorities. Local authority participation will be voluntary. Authorities have expressed support for this development at meetings of the Scottish Housing Best Value Network.

Planned future work

In 2008/09 electronic data capture of summary information on waiting lists, vacancies and lettings will commence. The move to full harmonisation of council and housing association data has been delayed until 2010/11 following the recent creation of the Scottish Housing Regulator, which will have responsibility for gathering summary statistical information on housing associations.

Completion date

The aim is to complete full harmonisation by 2010/11

Cost

Not available

Contact

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I. Sub-national household projections for England and Wales

The aim of this work was to produce long-term 2003-based projections of the number of additional households in England and Wales. These projections were published in March and April 2006.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

Theme group members

This work programme was developed by:

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Scottish Government

David Lee

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Chris Morris

Department for Social Development, Northern Ireland

Frances Pottier

Office for National Statistics

Phillip White

Department for Communities and Local Government

Matt Prior (Secretary)

Office for National Statistics

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

www.berr.gov.uk

Department for Communities and Local Government

www.communities.gov.uk

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

www.defra.gov.uk/environment/statistics

Department for Social Development, Northern Ireland

www.dsdni.gov.uk

Department for Transport

www.dft.gov.uk

Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland

www.doeni.gov.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk

Introduction

The Population and Migration theme brings together information and statistics about the UK's population. The theme covers population estimates and projections, outputs from the population census and international and internal migration, as well as statistics on births, deaths, marriages, divorces, citizenship and electoral turnout. These provide essential information about the characteristics, structure and dynamics of the population. Population and migration statistics are produced using a range of data sources, both administrative and survey.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group (TWG) was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter highlights and provides an update for the priority projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. It covers all official statistics, not just National Statistics. They are listed in no order of importance.

A. Research plans for improving population and migration statistics for England and Wales

Aims and objectives

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has an ongoing work programme to improve population estimates, projections and migration statistics. The aim of this programme is to reduce the risk that, when population estimates based on the 2011 Census are available, users of population statistics are again faced with large differences between these and the mid-year population estimates based on the 2001 Census. Research will also aim to ensure that ONS has a better understanding of the reasons underlying any large differences that do occur.

This work includes projects aimed at improving ONS's migration statistics, and ONS will also work with local authorities to conduct a number of population studies in England and Wales. The aim of the population studies is to investigate the potential for using alternative, high-quality, national and local data sources to improve the current methods for estimating population change

to local levels in England and Wales. The plans also recognise the need to feed through insights from this work that may benefit those planning the 2011 Census.

Migration, both international and internal, is the most difficult component of population change to measure reliably owing to the paucity of available sources and the absence of a direct measure. Work is under way to implement recommendations of the *Review of International Migration Statistics*. Research is planned to improve the reliability of the national estimates on international migration, and the geographical distribution of migrants within England and Wales and between the countries of the UK.

The Allsopp *Review of Statistics for Economic Policymaking* recommended that ONS develops its programme of research to establish how internal migration can be estimated more reliably. The current patient register data source is being redeveloped as part of the National Health Service's (NHS) National Programme for IT (NPfIT) and ONS will seek opportunities to acquire improved data from the new systems. Furthermore, ONS plans to investigate other administrative sources to assess whether they can be used to resolve the known limitations of the patient register source.

It should be noted that these issues are common throughout the UK, and both the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) are involved in developing a UK-wide solution.

Progress to date

The *Report of the Inter-departmental Task Force on Migration Statistics* was published in December 2006. The report is available on the National Statistics website at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14731

Since publication of this report, much of the focus for developing migration statistics has been on taking forward the 15 recommendations made. The vision for migration statistics, as described in

the task force report, is to reach a situation where there are more timely and accurate estimates of the numbers of people coming into, going out of and present in the UK for different durations and reasons. Sufficient detail would be available to meet key requirements for population and migration statistics, together with the capacity to interpret trends and provide secondary analyses to present the key messages. ONS is working closely with other government departments to take the recommendations forward.

In a first step towards a vision for more coherent reporting of migration across government departments, the Home Office and ONS co-ordinated the release date of several migration outputs and published these in February 2008.

In April 2007 ONS announced improved methods for estimating international migration and distributing the figures between local areas. Three seminars were held in May 2007 to inform local authorities of the new methods. The changes were implemented in the mid-2006 population estimates issued in August 2007 and were used to revise previously published estimates for 2002 to 2005. They also fed into other ONS Centre for Demography (ONSCD) population statistics, including the revised 2004-based sub-national population projections, published in September 2007, that were used as a basis for local government funding by the Department for Communities and Local Government, and the 2006-based National Population Projections. They have also fed into the 2006-based Sub-national Population Projections assumptions.

New experimental statistics relating to short-term migration were developed and released in October 2007 to supplement the current outputs that cover long-term migration only. These estimates were available for England and Wales, with a London/outside London split.

New indicators of population turnover, or churn, were developed and published in summer 2007. These gave an indication of the level of population change that can occur for local authority areas even if the net migration estimates are low.

An *Interim Report on the Port Survey Review* was published in October 2007. This report identified a series of short-term improvements which will be implemented in 2008. Enhancements include new migration shifts at major ports, in addition to those currently operating, and changes to the distribution of International Passenger Survey (IPS) interviews to reflect new patterns of migration coming through airports such as Luton and Stansted.

The report also identified more fundamental changes to the design of the IPS, including statistical redesign and separate surveys for migration and expenditure/tourism. For more details, please see Project M of the Transport, Travel and Tourism chapter.

In February 2008 ONS published a final summary report on four detailed local authority case studies assessing the accuracy of population estimates in these areas. The studies were carried out in Hammersmith & Fulham, Barnet, Derby, and Welwyn Hatfield. Working in close partnership with these authorities, the aim of these studies was to investigate whether additional national and local knowledge and sources could be used to assist the compilation of the population estimates.

Work has continued on population bases, particularly those that might be needed for outputs from 2011.

Planned future work

Governance arrangements for taking forward the migration task force recommendations have been put in place. There will be a high-level interdepartmental programme board, and an overseeing ministerial group jointly chaired by the Minister for Communities and Local Government and the Minister for Borders and Immigration.

The future work plan covers five main work streams, each steered by an interdepartmental working group. They are listed below, together with key pieces of work planned for the next period within each.

Entry/exit data

This work stream is looking at collecting better

information on people as they enter or leave the UK. Planned work involves:

- development of the IPS as outlined in the interim report of the Port Survey Review, to further improve coverage of migrants
- working with the Home Office and the Border and Immigration Agency to ensure that the statistical requirements of the e-Borders programme and points-based system are met for these potentially valuable sources of migration information
- researching how the outputs from these migration systems will be able to help in migration estimation

Migration reporting

The first step in a move to a more coherent approach for migration reporting across government was made in February 2008, when the Home Office and ONS worked closely to co-ordinate the release of some regular outputs. Further moves towards a fully coherent situation are planned throughout 2008, including:

- more coinciding dates (reducing the number of migration-related release dates from around 40 in 2007 to less than a quarter of this)
- providing improved commentary with the releases to explain better to customers how and why different migration statistics from different sources show different results
- development of an annual migration volume giving the current state of migration in the UK with expert commentary and analysis

Local population estimates

Planned work on improving population statistics at the local authority level to help key customers with resource allocation includes:

- further development of the new short-term migration estimates, with a report on the feasibility of producing these at local authority level planned for autumn 2008, and research into the possibility of obtaining National Statistics status
- research into the possibility of using more

timely administrative data in the distribution of international migration to local authority level

- improvements to the methods used for modelling out-migration from local areas
- using data collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to inform and improve estimates of internal migration at student ages

Alternative sources

This work stream is concerned with the development and use of data sources that have not been used directly before in population estimation. On 1 April 2008 the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* came into force. The Act allows better sharing of data between the UK Statistics Authority and public organisations. Planned work includes:

- working with the Department for Work and Pensions to gain access to the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, which is a rich source of information and will potentially provide information on migration for a large proportion of the population
- similarly, working closely with the Department for Children, Schools and Families to see how the School Census data might help with migration estimation for the younger age groups
- development of a Communal Establishment survey to collect information on migrants living in communal establishments that are currently not covered by household-based surveys

Analysis and indicators

Work is planned to develop new indicators of the social and economic impact of migration at national and local levels.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

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B. Research on demographic trends in Scotland

Aims and objectives

Scotland's population is changing; an ageing and declining population is posing critical challenges for policymakers. In April 2005 the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) announced a two-year research initiative into demographic trends in Scotland. This research, which is funded in partnership with the Scottish Government, investigated three key aspects of Scotland's demography: migration, fertility and the impact of an ageing population.

Six research projects, funded by this partnership initiative and supported by GROS, aimed to address some of the key issues underlying Scotland's changing demography. The projects included: investigations into low fertility in Scotland and wide variations in fertility rates within Scotland; policy-relevant issues around Scotland's ageing population; macroeconomic impacts of demographic change in Scotland; and aspects of migration, including a study of Scottish graduate migration and retention.

Progress to date

The projects have now been completed and published. The research findings were presented to an audience of policymakers, academics and Research Council representatives at a seminar in December 2007. A debate on the future direction of research in this area was also held with a view to shaping the next programme of research in Scottish demography.

The programme was widely regarded as successful and has generated significant developments, including new research insights into under-explored areas (such as fertility in Scotland); new methodological developments (for example, in economic modelling and microsimulation); and new relationships between the contributing partners – the ESRC, Scottish Government and GROS.

Planned future work

GROS is in the process of identifying priorities for

research and will be discussing these with the ESRC.

Completion date

This project has been completed

Cost

Not available

Contact

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C. Developing new population products

Aims and objectives

ONS has three research projects aimed at developing new population products for England and Wales. The overall aim is to maintain the relevance of ONS population outputs and meet user needs in a timely fashion by producing quarterly estimates six weeks after the end of the quarter. However, continued delivery of these projects is dependent upon continued funding.

Small area population estimates

This research project was set up to investigate the feasibility of producing authoritative population estimates below local authority level. These estimates are needed to meet the growing need for population information at geographic levels below local authority level.

Quarterly population estimates

This project aims to provide quarterly population estimates that will give timely short-term forecasts, and be updated at least once a year to be in line with the mid-year population estimates for England and Wales. It will replace the current method used to produce 1 January estimates for Eurostat.

Ethnic population estimates

One of the Policy Action Team 18 (PAT18) recommendations was for ONS to improve ethnic statistics. As part of this, the Neighbourhood Statistics Service (NeSS) has funded an ongoing project looking at developing a methodology for producing population projections with an ethnic dimension. It was concluded that, as a first step, population estimates by ethnic group were required. Changing priorities have resulted in developing estimates by ethnic group, but work on projections has not been taken forward by ONS. The ESRC has funded a project at the University of Leeds to research further population projections by ethnic group.

Scotland

Developments in population statistics for Scotland, which are the responsibility of GROS, include development of:

- a new national household estimates series based on council tax data
- data zone population estimates for 2001 to 2004
- data zone household estimates

Northern Ireland

Development of population statistics for Northern Ireland includes:

- publication of population estimates for Super Output Areas (SOAs) for 2001 to 2004 in May 2005
- development of a method for population estimates at SOA level as the 2001 Census benchmark becomes less timely, published by March 2006
- development and publication of a range of demographic statistics at SOA level by autumn 2005

Progress to date

Small area population estimates

ONSCD has developed a 'Postcode Best Fit' methodology to produce population estimates for a variety of different geographies to meet user needs. This method uses the Lower Layer Super Output Area estimates and patient register data to derive estimates for geographies that cannot be derived by aggregation of the Lower Layer Super Output Area estimates alone. This method has been used to produce and publish population estimates for wards, parliamentary constituencies and National Parks, all of which have been released as experimental statistics.

Quarterly population estimates

ONSCD has continued to produce the experimental Quarterly Population Estimates for England and Wales, and Government Office Regions in England to the published timetable. In the future Quarter 1, Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 releases will coincide with the quarterly co-ordinated release dates for population and migration statistics. Quarter 2 and the revised estimates rebased to take account of the annual mid-year estimates will continue to be published in late September or October.

Ethnic population estimates

Population Estimates by Ethnic Group (PEEGs) provide a breakdown of the population by age and sex and 16-way ethnic group at local authority level within England. The most recent estimates, for mid-2005, were published in October 2007, as were revised estimates back to mid-2002 to take on board revisions to the main mid-year estimates.

Scotland

Data zone estimates have now been published for 2001 to 2006, and these have been compared with a range of administrative sources as part of a quality control exercise. To date, comparisons have been made with child benefit data from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), school census data from the Scottish Government's Education Department, the Super Older Person's database from DWP and the Community Health Index.

In 2007/08 GROS collected data from higher education establishments on numbers and characteristics of students in student accommodation. These data were used to improve the estimates in predominantly student areas. This was a one-off exercise and, in future, GROS plans to use data provided by HESA for this purpose.

Northern Ireland

NISRA has developed a wide range of statistical indicators at the SOA level, including demographic statistics covering fertility and mortality. These are disseminated through NISRA's Neighbourhood Information Service.

NISRA has not made the progress anticipated on small area population estimates owing to a lack of resources. The most recent small area population estimates (2003-based) were produced as part of a project on the spatial patterns of deprivation, published in 2005. NISRA has initiated work to update these measures with a target publication date of 2009. The work on small area population estimates will be included in this deprivation project.

Planned future work

Small area population estimates

Work will be focused on preparing population estimates for different geographies for assessment as National Statistics. The scope and nature of this work are dependent on the assessment criteria that the UK Statistics Authority will formulate.

Quarterly population estimates

Regular production and publication of the Quarterly Population Estimates will continue. Work in the immediate future will be focused on evaluation of the estimates. Work will also be undertaken on methodological refinement and in the longer term preparing for an assessment to be considered as National Statistics.

Ethnic population estimates

The next set of PEEGs, covering mid-2006, will be published in August 2008, alongside the main annual population estimates (for 2007) publication. In future it is anticipated that this time lag will be reduced. Work in the short term on PEEGs will be focused on evaluation and comparison of the estimates against information available from household surveys (the Labour Force Survey and/or Annual Population Survey). There will also be some additional methodological work and in the longer term working to move towards National Statistics status.

Scotland

GROS intends to develop the use of the National Health Service Central Register, the Community Health Index and the Scottish Government's School Census to inform estimates of migration.

The Scottish Government is consulting on proposals to abolish Council Tax and replace it with a Local Income Tax. A side-effect of this would be the loss of the source of data used to produce the GROS household statistics, so GROS is carrying out work to identify potential alternative sources of statistics on households.

New small area statistics on occupied and vacant dwellings, based on information from Council Tax systems, will be published via Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics in summer 2008. This

website also contains small area statistics on dwellings by Council Tax band, type of property and number of rooms, which have been developed by GROS:

www.sns.gov.uk

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study, launched in December 2006, is now an established research resource, with over 20 research projects under way. In 2008/09 a Research Support Unit linked to the study will be established.

In March 2008 NISRA issued new household projections based on the 2006-based population projections. In 2008/09 NISRA will undertake further work to improve the underlying household estimates series.

In common with other offices across the UK, NISRA is continuing to develop data sources to estimate migration. NISRA has established additional information sources from existing administrative systems such as the School Census and Central Health Index, and by placing migration questions in a range of household surveys. In 2008/09 NISRA will continue to work to integrate and further exploit these sources.

Project length

The ONS outputs are currently experimental estimates and they will remain as part of the developing statistics programme until they gain National Statistics status, when they would transfer to become part of the suite of ONS's regular population statistics

Cost

Not available

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D. Census

For information on changes planned for the 2011 Census of Population, please see chapter 8.

E. Stochastic forecasting

Aims and objectives

ONS, in collaboration with the University of Leeds, aims to develop probabilistic national population projections for the UK, thus enabling the uncertainty in national projections to be specified.

This project was originally agreed between the Government Actuary's Department (GAD), which then had responsibility for the production of national population projections, and the University of Leeds.

On 31 January 2006 responsibility for the production of national population projections was transferred from GAD to ONS when the new ONSCD was established.

Progress to date

A basic working model has been created, based on the national population projections model. The stochastic model has been tested using 2,500 simulations of the future UK population derived from assumed probability distributions for future values of the total fertility rate, life expectancy at birth and net migration.

Probability distributions have been prepared, based on an analysis of past projections errors and expert opinion. The past projection analysis was derived from the historical population projections database published on the GAD website.

The expert views were obtained from a questionnaire completed by the National Population Projections Expert Advisory Group in early 2007. Age distributions from the main population projections have been used to obtain detailed age specific rates and numbers from the stochastically derived fertility, mortality and migration variables.

The model was initially created to produce 2004-based projections. It has since been updated to

use the starting population, assumptions and age distributions from the 2006-based projections.

Planned future work

The 2006-based stochastic model is being finalised. The current working version of the model generates total population numbers. Versions of the model to produce additional outputs, such as dependency ratios and populations by age group and sex, are being developed.

Completion date

ONS aims to publish a set of probabilistic projections, on an experimental basis, during 2008/09

Cost

The cost of this project cannot be identified as it is part of the ONSCD Population Statistics Development Programme

Theme Group Members

This Work Programme was developed by:

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Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

General Register Office for Scotland

www.gro-scotland.gov.uk

Home Office

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

www.nisra.gov.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk

Introduction

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; social capital; culture, sport and leisure activities; household and family structure and projections; and households and housing (also covered by the Natural and Built Environment Theme).

The data are collected from a variety of sources, including the population Census, household and employer surveys, and administrative data systems. The primary dissemination channel for the Theme is the National Statistics website, supplemented by the relevant departmental websites and paper publications.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group (TWG) was responsible for drawing up a three-year Work Programme. This chapter reports on progress made over the last 12 months on the most important projects being carried out by the Theme during 2005/06–2007/08. The projects are listed in no order of importance.

Priority projects

A. Development of a new publication on Pension Statistics

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project was to present a comprehensive set of statistics and analysis on UK pensions through a single publication.

This work has been completed and *Pension Trends* was published by ONS in October 2005.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

Further work is in progress to improve the quality and reliability of pension statistics – for information, please see Project B in the Commerce, Energy and Industry Theme.

B. Modernising Department for Work and Pensions statistical publications

Aims and objectives

The aim of the modernising statistics project is to review most DWP National Statistics publications in the light of Internet dissemination advances and to integrate more accurate data from the new Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study.

Progress to date

Since October 2005 DWP National Statistics have been available via an interactive tabulation tool which allows users to specify the statistical breakdowns they require.

Feedback has been positive and there are around 60,000 visitors a year with 2.5 million hits. Since its launch, DWP has added data on the ethnicity of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants, second-tier pensions, and National Insurance contributions. In November 2007 experimental statistics on benefit flows were published for the first time. The tabulation tool may be accessed at:

www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/tabtool.asp

Planned future work

This project has now been completed. DWP will continue to review and improve its statistical publications and a formal review of the tabulation tool is under way.

Project length

Completed

Cost

£300,000 for the whole life of the project, excluding live running costs

Contact

michael.payne@dwp.gov.uk

C. Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is to identify small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a fair way.

Progress to date

The Index was first published in 2004 and some revisions were made to the methodology and indicators for the publication of SIMD 2006 in October 2006. Since publication Scottish Government (SG) has produced further analysis of the Index and worked on promoting the correct use of the Index to users across Scotland.

Planned future work

Work for 2008/09 includes development of data and domains for the next update to SIMD.

Completion date

The next update to SIMD will be published in autumn 2009

Cost

Not available. SIMD is funded as part of the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics Programme.

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D. Ethnicity classifications

Aims and objectives

SG, in partnership with the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS), has reviewed Scotland's official ethnicity classification, used in Scottish official statistics and recommended for Scotland's 2011 Census. A rolling programme of work, led by SG, was set up to gather evidence to inform the new classification.

The aim of the project is to develop a modernised classification that is statistically robust, meets the information needs of data users, is broadly acceptable to data providers and communities and, where possible and desirable, is harmonised with the classifications being developed by the other UK Census offices.

Progress to date

In 2007/08 several pieces of evidence were gathered and a number of key milestones were reached. These are set out below:

Evidence gathered

As part of GROS's wider consultation programme, a consultation with Census users was held in spring 2007 to assess their data needs. SG provided the consultation questions on ethnicity and national identity, and the subsequent GROS analysis informed the joint development of the ethnicity classification.

GROS analysed the results of the 2006 Scottish Census Test, including a bespoke analysis of write-in answers. GROS also led work to map individual responses from the 2006 Scottish Census Test to responses given on the 2001 Census to investigate changes in response patterns caused by changes to the ethnicity question.

SG and ONS conducted a joint project to run focus groups in Glasgow with members of the public identifying as 'African', 'Caribbean' and/or 'Black' to gather more views on using colour to monitor ethnicity in Scotland.

Two waves of cognitive question testing were conducted with a cross-section of Scottish ethnic groups to assess the functionality and usability of

a revised classification to ensure that the final question formulation is fit for purpose. Each wave of testing was commissioned, independently by, SG and GROS respectively (with joint working on both waves).

SG also led fieldwork, conducted with Glasgow and Edinburgh City Councils and NHS Scotland, to gather information on how a revised classification would function in a real world setting and the operational impact of any changes to the existing classification by these types of organisation.

SG and GROS held a meeting with key stakeholders to discuss possible ways forward for classifying 'African', 'Caribbean' or 'Black' ethnicity in Scotland.

Milestones reached

In January 2008 the Review's advisory group met to agree the final version of Scotland's new classification. (This is subject to agreement with ONS, the UK Registrars General and the Scottish Cabinet.)

In February 2008 SG and UK Census offices held a UK Harmonisation Workshop to agree the parts of the UK classifications that needed to be harmonised and the parts that would be developed independently to meet the specific circumstances of each UK country. The UK Census Committee (UKCC) met and the three UK Registrar Generals approved each of the UK classifications.

In April 2008 Scotland's Chief Statistician and Registrar General put recommendations to the Scottish Cabinet for a new classification for Scottish official statistics and recommended for Scotland's 2011 Census.

Planned future work

Following approval of the new classification by the Scottish Cabinet:

- SG, in partnership with GROS, would produce and publish two papers: a main paper setting out the new classification and evidence underpinning it, and a small technical paper

explaining issues around coding and outputting ethnicity statistics as data

- SG would consider producing and publishing a guide for the collection and classification of ethnicity data using the new classification, with the intention of helping those organisations, especially public authorities, that conduct ethnic monitoring and use an ethnicity classification as part of this
- SG would work with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Scotland to promote uptake of the new classification by organisations that conduct ethnic monitoring; SG would also promote gradual uptake of the new classification by Scottish official statistics
- GROS and SG would work with communities, including different ethnic groups, to explain the importance of completing the Census (and in particular the ethnicity classification) and to explain how Census data are used
- SG would continue to provide support to GROS when it places Census topics and content before the Scottish Parliament, planned for autumn 2008 and 2010, in advance of Scotland's 2009 Census Rehearsal and 2011 Census, respectively

Completion date

Provisionally, the new classification will be made public by SG and GROS by the end of spring 2008. Thereafter, the SG Office of the Chief Statistician will hand over the remaining stages of the project to the SG social justice analysis, equality unit, equality research and GROS.

Cost

Not available

Contact

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E. Production of a bulletin on household circumstances in Northern Ireland

Aims and objectives

The aim of this work was to improve and expand the available Northern Ireland data coverage of household circumstances to match that of, and be able to contribute to, data for Great Britain.

This work was completed in February 2006 and a range of bulletins based on Family Resources Survey data have been published.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

F. Improving the quality of the analytical dataset derived from tax credits administrative data

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project was to improve analytical capabilities via data matching, by merging HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) employment data into the Social and Welfare Longitudinal Database (SWLD). The outcome of the project was a database containing Social Security Agency data matched with employment data allowing the tracking of customers from benefit to employment and vice versa. This allows measurement to be made of the success of those policies aimed at getting benefit claimants back to work.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

G. Updating the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

Aims and objectives

The main objective of this project was to update and revise the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 in order to provide a more up-to-date snapshot of deprivation in Wales, at lower Super Output Area geography. Other objectives included:

- producing a supplementary subset of indicators on 'life stages', that is children and the elderly, where reliable results can be produced
- producing specific information for each local authority
- reporting on the changes to the compilation of the Index since it was prepared in 2000

This work was completed in November 2005.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

H. Development of a new household survey for culture and sporting activities on attendance, participation and attitudes

Aims and objectives

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), working in partnership with its non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) and others, is aiming to improve current understanding of participants and non-participants in DCMS sectors and activities. To meet this aim, a new household survey and publication called *Taking Part* is being developed to collect information from around 27,000 adults in England each year.

Progress to date

Taking Part is currently in its third annual sweep. A number of reports have been released on the data collected to date. This includes the first annual report of the core adult data as well as a headline report on the child data. The reports can be found on the DCMS website at:

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/rands/taking_part_survey/surveyoutputs.htm

Planned future work

The survey is in the final stage of its initial three-year contract. Work is currently under way to recommission the survey for an additional three years. This will coincide with further work to develop the survey tool to ensure that it continues to reflect the strategic objectives of DCMS and its partner bodies.

Further work is also planned on continuing to exploit the data collected. A number of reports are expected which will be linked to the new joint research plan between DCMS and its key stakeholders.

Project length

This project is ongoing. The initial three-year phase will be completed by December 2008. The survey will then roll forward and become part of 'business-as-usual' work within DCMS.

Cost

£2.7 million a year

Contact

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I. Improving the quality of the analytical dataset derived from tax credits administrative data

Aims and objectives

The project aims to maximise the value of administrative data on Child and Working Tax Credits to customers inside and outside central government.

This work was completed in 2006. For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

J. Family Resources Survey linking project

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to link records held on the Family Resources Survey (FRS) with administrative data held by DWP. The project, which relates to Great Britain, was set up as a result of the FRS Strategic Review in 2004 which consulted key users as to their future requirements.

The greatest potential early gain from this project will be through the analysis of benefit receipt on the FRS. This will give new insights into DWP estimates of take-up of income-related benefits and the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) series which is used to produce the official poverty measures. The linkage of FRS data will also allow longitudinal analysis to track movements between benefits and employment. These improvements will be beneficial to all areas of policy development.

DWP has introduced a question to seek informed consent from FRS respondents to link their records to information held by the Department within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS). The WPLS holds data on all individuals' benefits and tax credits, tax and employment, savings, National Insurance and private pensions.

Progress to date

Following pilots, a data linking question was introduced into the FRS from November 2006. However, the consent rate was lower than anticipated – around 45 per cent. This fell to approximately 35 per cent if consent from proxy interviews was included.

During June and July 2007 DWP consulted with the fieldwork contractors (ONS and National Centre for Social Research) on a range of options to improve the consent rate. It was agreed that from August 2007 onwards the consent question would temporarily be suspended to divert resources to development of a new, improved question.

During October 2007 cognitive testing took place and a new simplified draft question and documentation were piloted during January 2008. Results from the pilot study indicate that the consent rate has risen to around 62 per cent. The new question will be introduced from April 2008.

Although the consent rate from the 2006/07 FRS was lower than expected, there is still a wide range of useful analyses that can be carried out on data for November 2006 to March 2007. During 2007/08 work started to compare benefit receipt on the FRS to administrative data for those individuals relating to the same period. A project has also begun to compare HMRC savings records to those held on the FRS.

Planned future work

DWP has already started a programme of work to analyse linked 2006/07 FRS data, which has been agreed with stakeholders. This includes investigating:

- HMRC savings data compared with FRS data
- how benefits data on the FRS compare with administrative data
- how benefit misreporting could affect total household income
- how people are living on low or zero incomes
- how people move in and out of work
- how take-up of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) is affected by spells spent on JSA

Completion date

This project is ongoing. However, the first full year's linked FRS data will be for the 2008/09 FRS. This will be available to analysts at the end of 2009.

Cost

The estimated cost of data linking in 2007/08 was £100,000. This is based on costs incurred by the fieldwork contractors and DWP staffing costs.

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Theme group members

This work programme was developed by:

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Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Matt Prior

Office for National Statistics (Secretary)

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Communities and Local Government

www.communities.gov.uk

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

www.culture.gov.uk

Department for Work and Pensions

www.dwp.gov.uk

HM Revenue & Customs

www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/index.htm

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

www.nisra.gov.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk

Transport, Travel and Tourism

Report of progress against plans 2007/08

Introduction

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.

Sources and data collection methods for transport and tourism statistics are wide-ranging. They include surveys involving direct observation, other surveys and administrative sources.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group (TWG) was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter highlights and provides an update for the priority projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. It covers all official statistics, not just National Statistics. They are listed in no order of importance.

A. Undertake and implement recommendations of the Quality Review Programme

Aims and objectives

The aim of this project is to undertake and implement quality reviews as listed in the schedule of the National Statistics Quality Review Programme, including reviews of Road Traffic Statistics and Maritime Statistics.

Progress to date

Road Traffic and Road Lengths

The *National Statistics Quality Review on Road Traffic and Road Lengths* was published in January 2007. The review highlighted minor roads as one of the main areas for improvement. Significant resources will go towards carrying out a minor roads benchmarking exercise. Other recommendations included: investigating the possibility of sharing data more widely and using new technologies to change the way Department for Transport (DfT) collects traffic data, as well as updating and improving the IT systems used and producing quality measures for the traffic estimates.

Some of the recommendations from the review have already been completed. Others are being taken forward as part of the DfT Traffic Estimates Improvement Programme.

Maritime statistics

The *National Statistics Quality Review of Maritime Statistics* was published in December 2007. The review found that, in general, the system works well, providing statistics that are fit for purpose and are used by a wide range of government and industry bodies, and academics and consultants. The review made a number of recommendations of varying importance. All were accepted by DfT and are being addressed through its action plan. A Maritime Statistics Advisory Group has been established to help steer this and other development work on this topic.

Vehicle licensing statistics

DfT commissioned a methodological review of Vehicle Excise Duty evasion statistics and it was published in October 2007.

Planned future work

Future work will be focused on implementing review recommendations.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

Contact

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B. Implementation of the Statistical Modernisation Programme on the International Passenger Survey

Aims and objectives

This Office for National Statistics (ONS) project would have involved upgrading the processing system used on the International Passenger Survey (IPS) as part of the ONS Statistical Modernisation Programme.

However, work on the IPS has been removed from the scope of the Modernisation Programme, and as a result there has been no progress and no future work is planned at present. ONS is currently carrying out a review of the IPS (see Project K).

C. Development of the replacement methodology for the UK Tourism Survey

The aim of this project was to develop a new methodology for the UK Tourism Survey, which is the main source of data on domestic overnight tourism.

This project has been completed successfully and a new methodology was introduced in April 2005.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2005/06*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2006.pdf

Contact

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D. Improve dissemination of transport statistics

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to improve dissemination of statistics by considering new outputs and by improved access to data through web-based enhancements.

Progress to date

Various improvements were made to publications and websites during 2007/08 as part of the continual process to improve dissemination, as well as to improve the relevance, quality and integrity of transport statistics.

Planned future work

Further improvements to the presentation of transport statistics on the DfT website will continue.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

Contacts

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E. Improving the congestion measuring project

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the project was to enhance capability to monitor congestion in England, by developing existing and new data sources and measures which capture the key aspects of congestion and better reflect road users' experiences. In particular, the intention was to introduce new measures that reflect the variability of journey times. The project involves the Highways Agency and local highway authorities.

Progress to date

DfT currently has Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets on congestion, public transport and road safety, agreed as part of the 2004 Spending Review. In April 2008 new PSA targets arising from the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review were introduced, although the data sources used stayed the same. The data for these targets are produced by DfT's statistics roads and statistics travel divisions.

Detailed information on the PSA targets, including technical notes, is available at:

www.dft.gov.uk/about/howthedftworks/psa

PSA1 covers the reliability of inter-urban motorway and trunk roads in England, measured in terms of delay on the worst 10 per cent of journeys, and the reference date for this target is the year to March 2008. Until recently, work has focused on data production and quality from new sources. Currently, the focus is more on understanding the effect of traffic and events that cause delays.

PSA4 covers congestion on a selection of major routes in ten large urban areas, including London, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. Data for the 2005/06 baseline were published in 2006 and the reference date for this target is 2010/11. In 2007/08 work focused on data production and quality from new sources.

Planned future work

For PSA1 the focus of the work will continue to be understanding the effect of traffic and the events

that cause delays, and some new work will focus on using the data in a way that is more understandable and useful to the general public. There is also an aim to achieve National Statistics status.

For PSA4 work will continue to be focused on data production and identifying new sources of good quality data. Data for 2006/07 are expected to be published early in 2008/09.

Completion date

Work will be ongoing to monitor progress against these targets until 2007/08 (PSA1) and 2010/11 (PSA4), and to develop understanding of congestion and improve the management of roads

Cost

Not available

Contacts

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PSA4: eric.crane@dft.gov.uk

F. Improvements to road accident statistics in Great Britain

Aims and objectives

The main objective of this project is to collect additional information to ensure that road accident statistics meet current needs. A further objective is to strengthen the statistics by ensuring consistency in the way that road accident information is collected by the police, while minimising the collection burden.

Progress to date

DfT currently has PSA targets on congestion, public transport and road safety agreed as part of the 2004 Spending Review. In April 2008 new PSA targets arising from the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review were introduced, although the data sources used stayed the same. The data for these targets are produced by DfT's statistics roads and statistics travel divisions.

The DfT road safety target to reduce killed and seriously injured road casualties is based on a long-established dataset (known as STATS19) of accidents reported to the police. The focus of current developments is on gaining a better understanding of possible changes in reporting levels to the police, particularly in the light of newer data on road casualties available from the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) system.

Planned future work

The research into matching the HES and STATS19 datasets should be completed in 2008.

Another project, known as CRASH, will provide a 'mobile solution' to enable better reporting of accidents at the scene, and also to provide better back office software. The aims include reducing the burden on the police, improving data quality, and allowing the electronic capture of more data, some of which exist in paper form only at present.

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

Contact

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G. Monitoring local transport

Aims and objectives

The aim of this project was to assist local authorities in England with monitoring local transport, by further development of common resources.

Progress to date

In 2006/07 DfT, in conjunction with the National Centre for Social Research, ran two training seminars relating to the local travel survey toolkit. The toolkit was designed for use by local authorities and others wishing to carry out local household travel surveys.

DfT published its 2005 core accessibility indicators in March 2007. These indicators provide a number of measures of accessibility by public transport, walking and, where appropriate, cycling to seven service types: primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food shops and employment. With the exception of further education, indicators have also been produced for an 'at-risk' subgroup of the population.

The core indicators have been calculated to help local authorities develop their evidence base for their accessibility strategies. Using nationally consistent datasets, they give local authorities a picture of journey time barriers to accessibility to some services in their area. From 2007 onwards, the employment indicator will also be used to monitor the local authority national indicator NI176 – access to employment. (national indicators are used to measure progress on the national priorities that have been agreed by government.)

The core indicators have been released as a series of spreadsheet data tables on the DfT Transport Statistics website. The spreadsheets cover England (excluding London) at lower layer Super Output Area, as well as district and local transport authorities. An accompanying technical report has also been released.

Planned future work

The 2007 core accessibility indicators are due to be released in May 2008. For the first time the

indicators will also cover London. A revised version of the 2005 indicators, incorporating access by demand-responsive transport, will be released at the same time. There will be subsequent releases of indicators on an annual basis.

Completion date

May 2008

Cost

Not available

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H. Weighting the National Travel Survey

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the project was to complete the weighting of the National Travel Survey (NTS) to improve the representativeness of results. This was one of the key recommendations from the *Review of the National Travel Survey*. A strategy for weighting the NTS was developed and published in September 2005.

The results from the 2005 NTS were also published in September 2006 and were based on weighted data. All NTS figures for 1995 onwards that are published or released are now based on weighted data.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

I. Develop use of spatial analysis for informing transport policy and development monitoring

The availability of spatially referenced data is increasing all the time and, when allied to geographic map-based information, can lead to improved understanding of data. The purpose of this project is to improve awareness of the potential of the spatial analysis in transport policymaking, provide an analytical mapping service in DfT, increase usage of spatial analysis in DfT, and increase the value gained from spatially referenced data.

Progress to date

The Geographical Information System (GIS) Unit in DfT Transport Statistics has continued to provide a mapping and spatial analysis service to increasing numbers of users across DfT. The Unit has also encouraged the co-ordination of different applications of spatial data across DfT, and provided advice to groups needing their own GIS capability. This should offer both efficiency gains and benefits from the ability to share datasets. The Unit has also continued to promote wider awareness of the value of spatial analysis among those areas in DfT not so familiar with GIS.

Planned future work

The work to co-ordinate spatial data across DfT, and promotion of the value of spatial analysis, will continue.

Project length

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

Contact

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J. Explore the potential of intelligent transport systems to provide better quality and more cost-effective means of data collection

Aims and objectives

The aim of this project was to explore the potential for using electronic tracking systems installed in road haulage vehicles to collect at least some of the statistics that are currently collected using questionnaires.

Investigations to date have determined that it is unlikely to be possible to introduce electronic data capture in the near future. It is planned that this project will be resurrected at a time in the future when developments offer the opportunity to collect representative data from haulage operators.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

K. Review of the weighting process on the International Passenger Survey

Aims and objectives

The survey data collected on the International Passenger Survey (IPS) are weighted by passenger data supplied by BAA, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), DfT, Eurotunnel and Eurostar. The weighting process used on the IPS is complex in needing to take account of a number of different variables.

This review, to be carried out by the ONS methodology directorate, will investigate the need for all these variables, whether the process can be simplified and become more transparent, and whether there are additional or alternative variables that should be considered.

Progress to date

A review of the weighting process was carried out in 2006 and a report was produced in December 2006.

Planned future work

Implementation of the review is delayed until the Port Survey Review (PSR) – see Project M – has been completed. Changes to the sample design are anticipated from the PSR and these could be incorporated into the implementation. In addition, there may be further recommendations coming from the PSR that may impact on the work involved. It is expected that the weighting of the IPS will in future be carried out in Generalised Estimation System (GES).

Contact

david.savage@ons.gov.uk

L. Review of Northern Ireland Vehicle Kilometrage Travelled Survey

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to perform a comprehensive review of the Northern Ireland Vehicle Kilometrage Travelled (NI VKT) Survey in order to ensure that it provides full and robust estimates of VKT in Northern Ireland and fulfils as many user requirements as are practical.

Progress to date

The sampling frame was produced and the sample has been drawn for the minor roads network and the major roads network for the 2008 survey.

Planned future work

This will involve monitoring the implementation of the new survey methodology and assessing the 2008 VKT results.

Completion date

March 2009

Cost

The one-off large-scale survey of the minor road network will cost approximately £200,000

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M. Port Survey Review – review of the International Passenger Survey with emphasis on the migration part of the survey

Aims and objectives

Following publication in December 2006 of the *Report of the Inter-departmental Task Force on Migration Statistics*, a review of the IPS was set up. This is looking at the IPS to see if it is the most suitable means of collecting information on migrants and if changes should be made to improve the data collected. The main objectives of the review are to:

- identify options and recommend solutions that better meet the demand for data on long-term and short-term international migration into and out of the UK
- continue to meet the demands of other users of the data
- improve the efficiency of data collection
- identify the required statistical outputs and their most efficient production, including current IPS outputs

Progress to date

An *Interim Report on the Port Survey Review* was published in October 2007. This outlined some recommended changes for 2008 and also additional work that was planned for 2008 and would lead to further changes in January 2009. The changes being introduced in April 2008 include:

- the introduction of migration filter shifts at Luton, Stansted and Manchester airports (migration filter shifts are those shifts that only carry out interviews with those people identified as migrants)
- the introduction of interviewing on the survey at Southampton, Bournemouth and Doncaster airports
- additional shifts being carried out at Birmingham, Edinburgh and Newcastle airports
- additional shifts on Dover–Calais and Dover–Dunkerque ferry crossings

- additional shifts on the Eurotunnel shuttle between Cheriton and Coquelles

In addition, the migration filter shifts have been extended to include interviews of short-term migrants (those intending to change their country of residence for between three and 12 months) having previously only covered long-term migrants (those intending to change their country of residence for longer than 12 months).

Planned future work

Work to progress more fundamental changes to the design of the IPS is under way and planned, including:

- reviewing the coverage of the sample, for example, identifying whether other airports or sea routes should be included
- a review of questionnaire design
- exploring the potential use of administrative data
- enhancing the operational aspects of data collection, including processing and Information Management systems

Completion date

Ongoing

Cost

Not available

Theme group members

This work programme was developed by:

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Office for National Statistics

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Office for National Statistics

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Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

www.culture.gov.uk

Department for Regional Development, Northern Ireland

www.drdni.gov.uk

Department for Transport

www.dft.gov.uk

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk/transtat

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk/statistics

Introduction

The Other National Statistics theme covers statistics on a wide range of topics. It includes numbers of people working in the public sector and armed forces; the provision of public and community services, such as the fire and rescue service (FRS); compendia publications (those that contain statistics from a number of themes); and statistics on international developments.

Under the *Framework for National Statistics*, the Theme Working Group (TWG) was responsible for drawing up a three-year work programme. This chapter reports on progress made over the last 12 months on the most important projects being carried out by the theme during 2005/06–2007/08. They are listed in no order of importance.

Priority projects

A. Quarterly survey of civil service staff in post

Aims and objectives

The aim of this project was to develop a survey which could provide timely statistics on civil service headcount. The Quarterly Public Sector Employee Survey (QPSES) was launched in 2004/05 and the statistics were first published in May 2005.

For more details, please see the entry relating to this project in the *National Statistics Annual Report 2006/07*:

www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/downloads/NSAR2007.pdf

B. Introduction of the Common Employee Record

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the project is to collect data on civil servants more relevant to civil service need, particularly data on skills and qualifications of civil servants.

Progress to date

In 2007 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) launched the Annual Civil Service Employment Survey (ACSES) to replace the Mandate survey. This replaces the original Cabinet Office plans for the Common Employee Record.

The survey is a streamlined version of Mandate, reflecting consultation with the Cabinet Office on latest Civil Service policy requirements and with government departments on the availability of the required data. A full methodological review was conducted and new more robust processing systems have been developed.

Eleven questions were dropped from the old survey and three were added, including questions on professions and Professional Skills for Government (PSG). The data collection instruments were also improved and new collection methods will deliver significant improvements to ONS's analytical capability and the coverage of future published statistics.

Planned future work

The first statistics from the new survey are scheduled for publication in June 2008.

Completion date

June 2008

Cost

£172,000

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C. Introduction of electronic data collection for fire and rescue incident statistics

Aims and objectives

The introduction of an electronic data collection process for fire and rescue services will meet the following objectives:

- To end the use of paper forms for the collection of incident data by the FRS
- To provide 100 per cent reporting of incidents attended by the FRS
- To expand the collection and to provide more details on non-fire incidents, and
- To provide more timely statistics

Progress to date

Since the pilot of the Incident Recording System (IRS) in October 2006, the system has undergone extensive development and testing to ensure that it meets user requirements, fulfils National Statistics needs and meets individual FRS demands.

The IRS helpdesk in Garston opened in October 2007 and deals with telephone and email queries regarding the new system. This will be the single point of contact for all the FRSs with queries on or moving onto the IRS.

In October 2007 Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service became the first FRS to use the IRS to submit its data to the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). Its experience to date has been very good and it said that the system had cut its administrative overheads significantly.

In February 2008 CLG held a one-day seminar on the IRS in Warwickshire giving guidance and sharing experience; 45 UK FRSs were represented and 126 people attended, including CLG staff and the software suppliers to the FRSs.

On 1 April 2008 the following FRSs went live on IRS: Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire and Merseyside.

Support in using the IRS is available to FRSs

including a one-day technical training course. To date 14 FRSs have received this training. It is then the responsibility of each FRS to cascade the training to all users of the system before they roll the system out.

In addition, an e-learning package has been created and is now available to FRSs. This provides an overview of the IRS and how to use it. It has been developed in conjunction with the Fire Service College. This complements the IRS guidance which is available in a number of different media.

Planned future work

On 1 June 2008 it is planned that four more FRSs – Greater Manchester, Cleveland, Nottinghamshire and West Sussex – will transfer to the system.

CLG will continue to support FRSs to ensure the smooth transition between their current data collection and switching to IRS. All current activities will continue.

CLG will undertake an annual review of the IRS collection, including the questions asked, the guidance and the use of the system. This annual review will include users of the data and the system, and should help to improve it continually. The first review is scheduled to begin in June/July 2008.

Completion date

All FRSs should be using the new system by the end of March 2009. After this date, the current system will no longer be available. Once all FRSs have moved to the IRS, data will be able to be produced automatically.

Cost

The cost to date is £2.99 million, funded by CLG and Invest to Save budgets, while support and maintenance costs will be approximately £300,000 a year for the next five years.

Contact

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D. Establishing a Neighbourhood Statistics database for primary fire incidents and all incidents attended by the Fire and Rescue Service in England and Wales

Aims and objectives

The aim of the 'fires attended' project is to provide counts of primary fires (primary fires are ones which involve casualties, rescues or damage) by location (that is, dwelling, other building, road vehicle, or other outdoors), and whether the cause was accidental or deliberate, as well as counts of any associated casualties. These are reported for areas smaller than FRS areas. This will facilitate identification of those most at risk from having a fire, falling victim to a deliberate fire attack or being injured.

The aim of the 'all incidents attended' project is to provide information on the types of incidents attended with counts of fatal and non-fatal casualties, along with individuals rescued. These data will help users identify areas most at risk from having a fire, being involved in a special service incident, or being subject to some types of anti-social behaviour (such as malicious false alarms).

Data are provided for the following incidents:

- 'Primary fires' (which involve casualties, rescues or damage)
- 'Secondary fires' (which do not involve casualties, rescues or damage)
- 'Chimney fires' (fires confined to chimneys)
- 'Special services' incidents attended, such as road traffic incidents and water rescues, and
- 'False alarms', either malicious, in good faith or initiated by apparatus

These figures will also assist the targeting of urban renewal programmes and community safety initiatives, as well as being used to support the fire service emergency cover toolkit, which is a risk assessment and resource deployment tool for use by FRSs to underpin their management decisions.

Progress to date

CLG has successfully produced and published, on the Neighbourhood Statistics website, data for four years of geo-coded primary fires attended by the FRS since 2002. It has also successfully produced and published *All Incidents Attended by the FRS* datasets covering each year from 2001 to 2005.

Planned future work

All Incidents Attended by the FRS 2006 and *All Fires Attended by the FRS 2006* are due to be published in summer 2008.

Completion date

The collection and publication of Neighbourhood Statistics on fires and all incidents attended by the FRS are ongoing projects.

By March 2009/10 the new electronic incident recording system will be in use, which will allow much of the data required to be provided automatically from FRSs.

Cost

In 2007/08 the total programme and administration cost was £90,000.

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Theme group members

This work programme was developed by:

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Heidi Grainger

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Andrew Roberts

Office for National Statistics

Dave Sharp

Office for National Statistics

Philippa Brimicombe

Office for National Statistics (Secretary)

Useful websites

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

National Statistics Publication Hub

www.statistics.gov.uk

Defence Analytical Services Agency

www.dasa.mod.uk

Department for Communities and Local Government

www.communities.gov.uk

Department for International Development

www.dfid.gov.uk

Home Office

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

www.nisra.gov.uk

Scottish Government

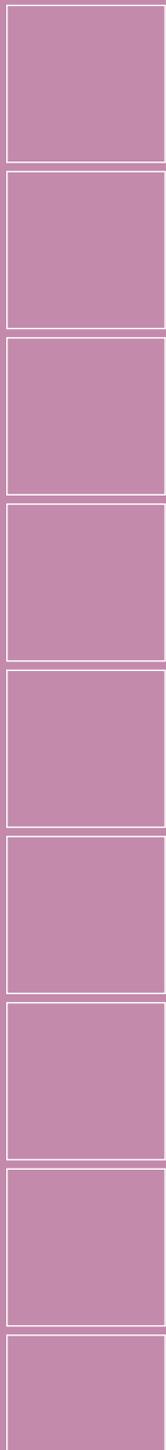
www.scotland.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government

www.wales.gov.uk



appendices



Appendix A

Aims and objectives of National Statistics

The *Framework for National Statistics*, published in June 2000, set out the aims and objectives of National Statistics as follows:

The primary aim of National Statistics is to provide an accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful picture of the economy and society and to support the formulation and monitoring of economic and social policies by government at all levels. National Statistics also aims:

- to inform the parliaments and assemblies and the citizen about the state of the nation, and provide a window on the work and performance of government, allowing the impact of government policies and actions to be assessed
- to provide business with a statistical service which promotes the efficient functioning of commerce and industry
- to provide researchers, analysts and other customers with a statistical service that assists their work and studies, and
- to promote these aims within the UK, the European Union (EU) and internationally and to provide a statistical service to meet EU and international requirements

The Framework document goes on to describe the three main objectives of National Statistics in pursuit of these aims which are to:

- improve the quality, timeliness and relevance of its services to customers, both within government and the wider community
- improve public confidence in official statistics by demonstrating that they are produced to best professional standards and free from political interference, and
- operate efficiently by improving value for money in the production of its outputs and minimising the burden on those who supply it with data

Please note that the Framework has now been succeeded by the provisions of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

Main duties of the UK Statistics Authority

The UK Statistics Authority's overall objective is to promote and safeguard the quality of official statistics that serve the public good. It is also required to promote and safeguard:

- the quality and comprehensiveness of official statistics, and
- good practice in relation to official statistics

The Authority has three main functions:

- monitoring and reporting on all official statistics – it is required to monitor, and may report on, all official statistics (wherever produced), whether or not they are National Statistics
- independent assessment of key statistics – it is required to prepare and publish a Code of Practice against which it is required to independently assess the quality and integrity of key statistics (produced in ONS and across government departments) for formal approval as National Statistics, and
- oversight of ONS – the Authority provides the top level of governance for ONS, replacing the oversight role that HM Treasury ministers performed and, consequently, the Authority has a statutory power to produce statistics

Appendix B

Relationship between GSS-affiliated departments, agencies and administrations and theme working groups

Department/Agency	Head of Profession	National Statistics Theme Working Groups			
		Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry	Commerce, Energy and Industry	Crime and Justice	Economy
Bank of England	✓				
Cabinet Office	✓				
Competition Commission					
Crown Prosecution Service					
Defence Analytical Services Agency	✓				
Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform	✓		✗		✗
Department for Children, Schools and Families	✓				
Department for Communities and Local Government	✓				
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	✓		✗		
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	✓	✗			
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	✓				
Department for International Development	✓				
Department for Transport	✓				
Department for Work and Pensions	✓				
Department of Health	✓				
Employment Service					
Equal Opportunities Commission					
Foreign and Commonwealth Office					
Forestry Commission	✓	✗			
General Register Office for Scotland	✓				
Health and Safety Executive	✓				
Higher Education Funding Council for England					
Higher Education Statistics Agency					
HM Courts Service				✗	
HM Revenue and Customs	✓		✗		✗
HM Treasury	✓				✗
Home Office	✓			✗	
House of Commons Library					
Learning and Skills Council					
Local Government Data Unit					
Ministry of Justice	✓			✗	
National Audit Office					
National Savings and Investments					
National School of Government					
NHS Information Centre	✓				
NHS Scotland					
Northern Ireland Civil Service*	✓	✗		✗	
Office for National Statistics	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Office for Standards in Education	✓				
Office of Communications					
Office of Fair Trading					
Office of Manpower Economics	✓				
Office of Water Services	✓				
Scottish Government	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Welsh Assembly Government	✓	✗			✗

An ✗ denotes departmental participation in a particular Theme Working Group.

* Statisticians working in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and other Northern Ireland Departments are not members of the GSS.

Appendix C

National Statistics Quality Review Programme

Details of completed reviews as at 31 March 2008

The current National Statistics Quality Review Programme was due to end in June 2005, with a new updated programme commencing in April 2006. Due to the announcement by the Chancellor in November 2005, that ONS would become independent of ministers, it was decided not to end the current programme but to continue it until the new structure for an independent ONS was in place.

Theme Review topic	Completed								Lead department ²	
	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08		
Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry										
Forestry Statistics			✓							Forestry Commission
Strategic Review of Farming and Food Statistics					✓					Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Commerce, Energy and Industry										
Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR)		✓								Office for National Statistics
Crime and Justice										
Forecasting the Prison and Probation Populations			✓							Home Office
Crime Statistics				(✓)						Home Office ¹
Efficacy of Sentencing				(✓)						Home Office ¹
Homicide Statistics				(✓)						Home Office ¹
Motoring Statistics				(✓)						Home Office ¹
Administration of Justice Statistics				(✓)						Home Office ¹
Drug Seizure and Offender Statistics				✓						Home Office
Economy										
Short Term Output Indicators	✓									Office for National Statistics
Government Accounts and Indicators			✓							Office for National Statistics
Balance of Payments and Trade Statistic					✓					Office for National Statistics
Review of UK Regional Accounts						✓				Office for National Statistics
Education and Training										
Higher Education Student Statistics			✓							Department for Education and Skills
Initial Entry Rate into Higher Education				✓						Department for Education and Skills
School Workforce Statistics					✓					Department for Education and Skills
Measurement of Attainment of Young People					✓					Department for Education and Skills
Review of School Statistics in Northern Ireland						✓				Department of Education (Northern Ireland)
Higher Education Destinations Data							✓			Higher Education Statistics Agency

✓ denotes completed Reviews

¹ These Home Office reviews were started/completed prior to the formal launch of National statistics and were published formally under the National Statistics banner in 2003/04.

² The Lead Department listed is the department that took the lead at the time the quality review was carried out and does not reflect the recent machinery of government changes.

Theme Review topic	Completed								Lead department ²
	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	
Health and Care									
Reviews will be subject to the outcome of work on the Framework for Health and Care Statistics and the wide-ranging review of public health information sources									
Labour Market									
Distribution of Earnings Statistics			✓						Office for National Statistics
Framework for Labour Market Statistics			✓						Office for National Statistics
Labour Force Survey			✓						Office for National Statistics
Review of Employment and Jobs Statistics						✓			Office for National Statistics
Natural and Built Environment									
Construction Statistics		✓							Department of Trade and Industry
Survey of English Housing and Related Sources					✓				Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now CLG)
Population and Migration									
National Population Projections: Review of Methodology for Projecting Mortality		✓							Government Actuary's Department
International Migration Statistics				✓					Office for National Statistics
Home Office Publications of Control of Immigration Statistics							✓		Home Office
Social and Welfare									
Income Support Statistics		✓							Department for Work and Pensions
Jobseeker's Allowance Statistics		✓							Department for Work and Pensions
Child Support Agency Statistics		✓							Department for Work and Pensions
Households Below Average Income and the Pensioners' Incomes Series				✓					Department for Work and Pensions
Issues in Measuring Household Income and the Redistribution of Income				✓					Office for National Statistics
Take-up of Income-related Benefit Statistics							✓		Department for Work and Pensions
Transport, Travel and Tourism									
National Travel Survey		✓							Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (now DfT)
Bus, Coach and Light Rail Statistics				✓					Department for Transport
Road Freight Statistics				✓					Department for Transport

✓ denotes completed Reviews

1 These Home Office reviews were started/completed prior to the formal launch of National statistics and were published formally under the National Statistics banner in 2003/04.

2 The Lead Department listed is the department that took the lead at the time the quality review was carried out and does not reflect the recent machinery of government changes.

Theme Review topic	Completed								Lead department ²
	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	
Transport, Travel and Tourism (continued)									
Tourism Statistics					✓				Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Domestic Waterborne Freight in the UK					✓				Department for Transport
Road Accident Statistics							✓		Department for Transport
Road Traffic and Road Length Statistics							✓		Department for Transport
Maritime Statistics								✓	Department for Transport
Other National Statistics									
Defence Personnel Statistics		✓							Defence Analytical Services Agency – MoD
United Kingdom Defence Statistics Annual Publication			✓						Defence Analytical Services Agency – MoD
Armed Forces Medical Statistics			✓						Defence Analytical Services Agency – MoD
DFID's Statistical Information Systems			✓						Department for International Development
Ministry of Defence Finance and Economic Statistics					✓				Defence Analytical Services Agency – MoD
Statistics on Defence Logistics					✓				Defence Analytical Services Agency – MoD
Review of Service Pensioners' Statistics						✓			Defence Analytical Services Agency – MoD
Yearly totals									
	1	8	10	12	9	4	5	1	Total = 50

✓ denotes completed Reviews

1 These Home Office reviews were started/completed prior to the formal launch of National statistics and were published formally under the National Statistics banner in 2003/04.

2 The Lead Department listed is the department that took the lead at the time the quality review was carried out and does not reflect the recent machinery of government changes.

Appendix D

Changes to the Scope of National Statistics during 2007/08

Series brought into scope

Defra

Emissions of carbon dioxide for local authority areas

Quarterly Municipal Waste Management Statistics

DH

NHS One Month Waiting Lists – it should be noted that there are no longer distinct monthly and quarterly releases for inpatient and outpatient waiting times. These figures are produced every month to show the numbers of people on the waiting list on a given date and for how long they have been waiting.

DfT

Inter-Urban Congestion Statistics

Home Office

Drug Misuse declared: Findings from the British Crime Survey (annual)

IC

Hospital Episode Statistics (admitted patient care)

Hospital Outpatient Activity

Scottish Government

Free Personal and Nursing Care, Scotland

Public Sector Employment in Scotland

Rural Scotland Key Facts

Welsh Assembly Government

Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning

Welsh Index of Business Services

Welsh Index of Distribution

Welsh Index of Hotels and Restaurants

Welsh Index of Transport, Storage and Communication

Withdrawals from scope

IC

NHS Maternity Statistics – publication withdrawn from the scope of National Statistics as their fitness for purpose is being reviewed; they will continue to be published by the IC as official statistics

DASA

Aircraft air accidents and associated deaths and major injuries (quarterly and annual)

Aircraft accidents and damage rates (annual) – in November 2006 Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) carried out an internal review which demonstrated that there was little need for these statistics internally and, following a public consultation which demonstrated that there was no external interest, they have ceased to be produced

TSP 11 – UK Regular Forces Marital Status – this release has been suspended indefinitely as the data are no longer available following the introduction of a new personnel administration system

DCMS

Betting Licensing – these statistics are no longer being produced owing to a lack of demand

Appendix E

Glossary

A

- ABI** Annual Business Inquiry
- ACIN** Adult Care Information Network
- ACSES** Annual Civil Service Employment Survey
- AEI** Average Earnings Index
- AER** Average Earnings Ratio
- AFF** Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry
- APHO** Association of Public Health Observatories
- APS** Annual Population Survey
- AS** Assistant Statistician
- ASHE** Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings
- A&UofE** Analysis and Use of Evidence
- AWE** Average Weekly Earnings

B

- BCS** British Crime Survey
- BERR** Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
- BoP** Balance of Payments
- BRE** Better Regulation Executive
- BRES** Business Register Employment Survey
- BRS** Business Register Survey

C

- CASSR** Councils with Adult Social Service Responsibilities
- CDEWAS** Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste Arisings Survey
- CEI** Commerce, Energy and Industry
- CIWAS** Commercial and Industrial Waste Arisings Survey
- CJBMIS** Criminal Justice Board Management Information System
- CJS** Criminal Justice System
- CLA** Children Looked After
- CLG** Department for Communities and Local Government
- CLIP** Central & Local Government Information Partnership
- COINS** Combined Online Information System
- CORD** Central ONS Repository for Data

CPD Continuing Professional Development

CT Corporation Tax

D

- DASA** Defence Analytical Services Agency
- DCA** Department for Constitutional Affairs
- DCMS** Department for Culture, Media and Sport
- DCSF** Department for Children, Schools and Families
- Defra** Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- DELNI** Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland
- DENI** Department of Education, Northern Ireland
- DET** DCMS Evidence Toolkit
- DETI** Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland
- DfES** Department for Education and Skills
- DFID** Department for International Development
- DfT** Department for Transport
- DH** Department of Health
- DHSSPS** Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland
- DIUS** Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
- DLHE** Destination of Leavers from Higher Education
- DSD** Department for Social Development, Northern Ireland
- DSM** Data Sharing Mechanism
- DSO** Departmental Strategic Objective
- DSP** Data Sub Programme
- DTI** Department of Trade and Industry
- DWP** Department for Work and Pensions

E

- EIG** England Implementation Group
- ELWa** Education and Learning Wales
- ESA95** European System of Accounts 1995
- ESAC** European Statistical Advisory Committee
- ESCOPE** European Statistics Code of Practice

ESGAB European Statistical Governance Advisory Board

ESR Electronic Staff Record

ESRC Economic and Social Research Council

ESS European Statistical System

EU European Union

Eurostat Statistical Office of the European Union

F

FE Further Education

FFE Framework for Excellence

FRS Family Resources Survey, Fire and Rescue Service

FTE Full-Time Equivalent

G

GAD Government Actuary's Department

GB Great Britain

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GIS Geographic Information System

GOR Government Office Region

GP General Practitioner

GROS General Register Office for Scotland

GSS Government Statistical Service

GSS HRC GSS Human Resources Committee

GSSRG GSS Regional and Geography Group

GVA Gross Value Added

H

HE Higher Education

HES Hospital Episode Statistics

HESA Higher Education Statistics Agency

HH1 Home help/Home Care Return

HMRC Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs

HMT Her Majesty's Treasury (the Treasury)

HO Home Office

HoP Head of Profession (for Statistics)/Statistical Head of Profession

HOPNC Home Office Police National Computer database

HR Human Resources

HSC Health & Safety Commission

HSE Health & Safety Executive, Health Survey for England

I

IC NHS Information Centre

ICT Information and Communication Technology

IDBR Inter-Departmental Business Register

ILCH Index of Labour Costs per Hour

ILO International Labour Organisation

Intrastat Intra-EC Trade Statistics

IoP Index of Production

IoS Index of Services

IPS International Passenger Survey

IRS Incident Recording System

ISB Information Standards Board

ISD Information and Statistics Division (NHS Scotland)

IT Information Technology

ITIS International Trade in Services

J

JSA Jobseeker's Allowance

L

LA Local Authority

LAT Learning Achievement Tracker

LCI Labour Cost Index

LFS Labour Force Survey

LLUK Lifelong Learning UK

LLWR Lifelong Learning Wales Record

LMS Labour Market Statistics

LSC Learning and Skills Council

LSYPE Longitudinal Survey of Young People

M

MAPS Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics

MDG Millennium Development Goal

MIAP Managing Information Across Partners

MIS Management Information System

MLSOA Middle Layer Super Output Area

MoD Ministry of Defence

MoJ Ministry of Justice

N

NA National Accounts

NAREP National Accounts Re-engineering Project

NatCen National Centre for Social Research

NDPB Non-Departmental Public Body

NeSS Neighbourhood Statistics Service

NHS National Health Service

NHSCRS NHS Care Records Service

NI Northern Ireland

NICS Northern Ireland Crime Survey

NIESR National Institute of Economic and Social Research

NINIS Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service

NIO Northern Ireland Office

NISRA Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

NMIS National Management Information System

NMS New Measures of Success

Nomis® National Online Manpower Information Service

NPD National Pupil Database

NPfIT National Programme for Information Technology (Department of Health)

NRwS New Relationship with Schools

NS National Statistics

NSI National Statistical Institute

NTS National Travel Survey

NUTS Nomenclature for Units of Territorial Statistics

O

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development

Ofsted Office for Standards in Education

ONS Office for National Statistics

ONSCD ONS Centre for Demography

OPSS Occupational Pension Schemes Survey

P

PAT18 Policy Action Team 18

PAU Pensions Analysis Unit

PBC Practice-based Commissioning

PbR Payment by Results

PCT Primary Care Trust

PEEG Population Estimates by Ethnic Groups

PIAG People Issues Advisory Group

PMF Performance Management Framework

PSA Public Service Agreement

PSAG Pension Statistics Advisory Group

PSE Public Sector Employment

PSG Professional Skills for Government

PSNI Police Service of Northern Ireland

PSR Port Survey Review

Q

QMF Quality Measurement Framework

QOF Quality and Outcomes Framework

R

RAISEonline Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through School self-Evaluation

RAP Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care return

RARPA Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement

R&D Research & Development

RDA Regional Development Agency

READ Regional Economic Analysis Division (ONS)

RNOAD Regional and Neighbourhood Outputs and Analysis Division (ONS)

RS Regional Statisticians

RSS Royal Statistical Society

RTT Referral to Treatment

S

SCM Standard Cost Model

SCMS Survey Case Management System

SCORE Scottish Continuous Recording System

ScotPHO Scottish Public Health Observatory

ScotXed Scottish Exchange of Educational Data
SCP Sustainable Consumption and Production
SCU Survey Control Unit
SDS Single Data System
SFA Success for all
SFFS Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy
SG Scottish Government
SGM Statistician Group Member
SHA Strategic Health Authority
SIC Standard Industrial Classification
SIF Schools Interoperability Framework
SIGT Statisticians in Government Team (ONS)
SIMD Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SIP School Improvement Partners
SIR Staff Individualised Record
SMIS Scottish criminal justice Statistical and Management Information System
SOA Super Output Area
SQA Scottish Qualifications Authority
SR1 Supported Residents Return 1
STACs Standard Tables and Charts
StO Statistical Officer
SUF Statistics User Forum
SUS Secondary Uses Service
SWLD Social and Welfare Longitudinal Database

T

TSO Temporary Statistical Officer
TTWA Travel to Work Area
TWG Theme Working Group

U

UK United Kingdom
UKCeMGA UK Centre for the Measurement of Government Activity
UKCWGTG UK Comparative Waiting Times Group
UKHS United Kingdom Health Statistics
ULN Unique Learner Number
UN United Nations

UNECE United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

UPN Unique Pupil Number

V

VA Value Added
VAT Value Added Tax
VKT Vehicle Kilometrage Travelled
VML Virtual Microdata Laboratory

W

WAG Welsh Assembly Government
WBL Work Based Learning
WHO World Health Organisation
WPLS Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

X

XML Extensible Mark-up Language

Y

YCS Youth Cohort Study

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ID 5847471 08/07

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