

<b>Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland)</b>
--

**Minutes of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland):  
12 May 2014**
**Present**

Jenny Boag  
 Esta Clark  
 Lorraine Cook  
  
 Gerry Donnelly  
 Jan Freeke  
 Alistair Harvey  
 Norman Jamieson  
 Michelle Kirkpatrick  
 Darren Knox (minutes)  
 Cecilia Macintyre  
 Kirsty MacLachlan (chair)  
 Julie Ramsay  
 Thomas Robertson  
 Esther Roughsedge  
 Steve Smallwood (via telephone)  
 Nicholas Sobey  
 Iain Stewart  
 Sandy Taylor  
 Ed Turnbull  
 Tom Wallace  
 Amy Wilson  
 Konrad Zdeb

**Organisation**

Falkirk Council  
 National Records of Scotland (NRS)  
 Convention of Scottish Local Authorities.  
 (COSLA)  
 NRS  
 Glasgow City Council  
 City of Edinburgh Council  
 Church of Scotland  
 NHS: Information Services Division (ISD)  
 NRS  
 NRS  
 NRS  
 NRS  
 NRS  
 NRS  
 Office for National Statistics (ONS)  
 Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
 Renfrewshire Council  
 NRS  
 NRS  
 NRS  
 NRS  
 Improvement Service

**1. Introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 Kirsty MacLachlan welcomed the group. There were apologies received from Richard Pereira, Hervey Gibson, Paul McNamara, Angela Adams and Chris Carr.
- 1.2 Jenny Boag provided an update from the meeting of the ScotStat board on 17 December 2013. The board were given a pilot of the open data system by Sara Grainger. A paper on communicating analysis was discussed as was the potential impact of constitutional change. It was noted that constitutional change was on the agenda for today's meeting and could be covered under this item.
- 1.3 Jan Freeke asked about the availability of census data on Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) and Tom Wallace agreed to follow this up with SNS.

**Action point:** Tom Wallace to determine with SNS when and what census data will be available on their website.

## 2. Minutes of previous meeting (Paper 10 PAMS (13) 19)

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved subject to a minor correction. It was pointed out that three people listed as having attended the last meeting, namely Heidi Goodship, Allan Lambie and Lesley Mann, were not there. Furthermore, Paul McNamara was in attendance but was not named in the minutes.

## 3. Update on action points from previous meeting (Paper 1 PAMS (14) 01)

**Action point 2011.10** Cecilia Macintyre to follow up on the aggregate extracts for census Quality Assurance through the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) committee contacts – **closed**.

**Action point 2012.09** – Kirsty MacLachlan to contact Justice Analytical Services in Scottish Government to request that they make available divorce statistics on a calendar year basis. Kirsty contacted Justice Analytical Services and was advised that they will continue to publish divorce statistics for financial years. However, divorce statistics for calendar years may be made available upon request – **ongoing**.

**Action point 2013.01** – Kirsty MacLachlan to write to councils to clarify and find out whether data extracts were taken and they are still held. Jules Goodlet-Rowley is pursuing this with Glasgow and Highland – **closed**.

**Action point 2013.03** – Amy Wilson and Penni Rocks to investigate the potential for adding user defined geographies to the outputs dissemination system. Kirsty MacLachlan explained that this now falls under her remit. It was noted that Ed Turnbull would give an update on this later in the meeting – **ongoing**.

**Action point 2013.07** – For all: contact Tom Wallace about potential topics for special reports from 2011 Census data and any interest in contributing to these. No response received – **ongoing**.

**Action point 2013.09** – Amy Wilson to check if it is possible to include 2003 wards on the census online dissemination tool - **ongoing**.

**Action point 2013.10** – Amy Wilson to set up a meeting to discuss future details tables for census releases - **closed**.

**Action point 2013.11** – PAMS members to contact Esther Roughsedge with comments on household projection methodologies for Household Analysis Review Group (HARG) meeting in December 2013 - **closed**.

## 4. 2011 Census Outputs

- 4.1 Sandy Taylor gave an update on outputs from the 2011 Census.

- The Census Data Explorer (CDE) is a work in progress and Sandy Taylor would like to hear of any problems users encounter or any suggested improvements.
- UK-level data on a range of census variables was released on 31 March 2014 on the UK census website. The release includes data at Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) 1, NUTS 2 and Local Administrative Unit (LAU) 2 level.

- Flow data (i.e. origin-destination data) and microdata will be available from the summer. Consideration is being given as to appropriate dissemination channels for these releases and with regard to the flow data they are looking to consult with users early in the summer.
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) will be publishing flow data for Scotland in the summer. In particular, they will be publishing data on migration and travel to work. However, it should be noted that ONS will not be publishing data on travel to study for Scotland.
- User-defined tables are not a priority at the moment due to disclosure concerns.
- Each table that is being released is being double checked. There are some concerns about whether or not it will be possible to produce cross tabulations for communal establishments at Council area level, long-term health conditions tables for Detailed Characteristic (DC) sectors and tables on students living away from home.
- Some tables may be available at data zone level only, and it may be preferable to wait for the new data zones.
- Theme tables are not being proposed for 2011 but feedback from users would be welcomed.

#### 4.2 Sandy's update was followed by some discussion and feedback from the PAMS members.

- Jenny Boag commented that she felt the census outputs had been 'bitty'. There had been delays and users were still waiting on fundamental tables. Jenny said that whilst it appeared at one point in time that progress was being made, the feeling among some users is that they are confused as to which tables to expect and when to expect them. Jenny also expressed frustration about the Statistical Disclosure Control (SDC) processes and discrepancies between what was expected and what was received. She felt that there were lessons to learn for 2021 and it was felt that receiving all tables at once would be preferable to staggered releases of the data. Furthermore, Jenny added that she had abandoned use of the tables until everything was finalised. In Jenny's view less data would be acceptable, e.g. higher geographies.
- Tom Wallace informed the meeting that an index of all tables – whether already published or to be published – was available on the website. He also asked Jenny to be in touch and outline the fundamental tables that were missing. He added that a meeting had taken place with Jenny and others in February to discuss and agree the ordering of Release 3 topics/tables for publication. He also asked for feedback on what else National Records of Scotland (NRS) can be doing now to help users.
- Steve Smallwood commented that SDC had gone well for ONS.
- Cecilia MacIntyre asked whether or not a repackaging of the existing tables would be of use to users. Jenny Boag commented that from her point of view she would have preferred more tables on, for example, economic activity and less on, for example, ethnicity.

**Action point:** Jenny Boag to provide Sandy Taylor with a list of the key tables that were missing or have still to be released. She would also investigate whether or not there is anything that we can do to help users with regards to the tables that have already been released and the tables that are due to be released in the future.

- Steve Smallwood said that it was the view of ONS that when planning a census you should start with the output tables and work back from there designing an appropriate SDC methodology for the tables that you intend to release. There are a relatively small number of tables that are frequently used.
- Norman Jamieson asked whether or not it would be possible to release output area level data first and then Council areas. However, this would not save time or provide a benefit as all geographies are built from output areas.
- Tom Wallace said that NRS would take on board all this feedback and seek more when we consult for 2021. We will need to pay attention to what all census users need and balance competing views.
- Jenny Boag commented that to her knowledge there were no SDC concerns in 2001 and that no users complained about the output tables.
- Jan Freeke asked what can be expected in terms of origin-destination data from the 2011 Census. Migration flows by postcode sector were available from the 2001 Census and it was Jan's view that it would be useful if equivalent data from the 2011 Census was available for comparison purposes.
- Data will be made available through NOMIS. This is publicly available but is more aimed at academics than local authority representatives.

**Action point:** Sandy Taylor to add a note with the minutes (or an email) advising what (origin-destination) tables are being made available in July and how they can be accessed.

- Jan Freeke commented that one important output that can be derived from the census is information on where workers live, but there is not enough information available in order to analyse the change between 2001 and 2011. Kirsty MacLachlan mentioned that Scottish Informatics Linkage Collaboration (SILC) and ONS' Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML) may be options. Celia Macintyre mentioned that NOMIS or INFUSE contain data for all local authorities in the UK, not just Scotland. Jan mentioned that it would be good to get clarity on what will be available: tables, formats and geographies.
- Ed Turnbull then gave an update on the Census Data Explorer (CDE).
- Fully customisable geographies are not possible as all geographies have to be in the output database. However, it should be possible to save and share geographies that users create for reuse – this is on-going work.
- There is no definite release date though it should be some point in the next couple of months. We will update PAMS in due course.

- Pilot users are not being sought after at the moment but this could possibly be of interest.
- Alastair Harvey commented that it would be useful if you could save and then edit geographies on your own machine, e.g. by editing the list of output areas selected. Nicholas Sobey made a similar comment. Ed Turnbull noted these comments.
- User sharing of text files.

**Action:** Alastair Harvey and Nicholas Sobey to supply areas to test this with.

- It was noted that there is an upper limit (1,000) to the number of polygons that can be selected.

## 5. Census statistics relevant to migration

- 5.1 Cecilia MacIntyre gave a short update on census statistics relevant to migration.
- 5.2 There are various different census products on migration. Some were published by Eurostat at the end of March and these products will eventually be released through the normal channels.
- 5.3 Section 1.3 of [Paper 3 PAMS \(14\) 03](#) details the tables that are currently available to download from the Eurostat and Office for National Statistics (ONS) websites. Section 1.5 provides details of the origin destination tables (transport and migration) that will be published by ONS. Section 1.6 details the current plans for the internal migration tables that will be published by ONS. A list of the proposed tables is given in Annex A.

## 6. Promoting use of Census 2011 data – a role for NRS

- 6.1 Cecilia MacIntyre gave an update on how data from the 2011 Census is being used internally within NRS and also externally. This programme of work is detailed in [Paper 4 PAMS \(14\) 04](#). She invited the group to provide topics which would be of most interest.
- 6.2 Members of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) committee were interested to know whether any analysis had been done or was planned in the following areas: economic status, household type, housing market areas, comparisons between rural areas and cities/mid-sized settlements, characteristics of recent migrants groups, specifically Polish migrants and more generally migrants from the European Union (EU) 8.
- 6.3 The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) are undertaking the Migration Matters Scotland project looking at migrants who have arrived in Scotland from outwith the EU8, students and asylum seekers. The project will look at how migrants are engaged and integrated into the communities. There will be two focus groups looking at access to services and integration needs and these will commence in August 2014. Data from the census will be valuable for this project.

**Action:** Lorraine Cook to circulate documentation outlining the Migration Matters Scotland project.

- 6.4 Members of the PAMS committee were also interested to know whether or not there is any guidance on the use of the standard industrial classification/ occupation codes. It was suggested that ONS may be able to provide guidance as they have done some long-term comparisons.

**Action:** Sandy Taylor and/or Cecilia Macintyre to find out more about this.

- 6.5 There was also interest from the PAMS committee members as to whether or not, as there was in 2001, a report on inhabited islands would be published. It was noted that (i) it would be possible to produce a similar report for 2011 and (ii) that there would be considerable public interest in it.

## **7. Planning for a census in 2021**

- 7.1 Amy Wilson gave an update on the current plans for a census in 2021. More detail can be found in [Paper 5 PAMS \(14\) 05](#).
- 7.2 The Scottish Government published the White Paper on Scotland's Future in November 2013. In this White Paper it was noted that in the event of a Yes vote in the referendum then it is envisaged that the National Records of Scotland (NRS) would become Scotland's National Statistics Institute (NSI). Transition planning is already taking place, working with Scottish Government colleagues and others. It was noted that this could be a topic for the next PAMS meeting.
- 7.3 It was announced on 27 March 2014 that NRS intends to focus on planning for a census in 2021. The planning is focused around a (primarily) online census that makes the best use of the available administrative data sources.
- 7.4 The picture is evolving at the moment but the Beyond 2011 project has been closed and the initial planning for a 2021 Census is under way. The team is forming and the starting point for any planning will be the Beyond 2011 project.
- 7.5 The high-level plans will be sent to ministers in 2016. A final decision will then be taken by Ministers on the basis of the business case.
- 7.6 NRS are keen to work with users to establish their needs. Furthermore, NRS are working with Scottish Government colleagues to ensure consistency between the census and any continuous surveys.
- 7.7 The Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) committee members were keen that there is harmonisation between the census and existing surveys and it was asked whether or not perception questions could be incorporated into existing surveys. There were some concerns around the timescales given that no formal decision on whether or not a census will take place will be taken until 2016. There were also questions on what outputs from a census in 2021 would look like. Feedback on how user needs have been met by the outputs from the 2011 Census would be useful. It was noted that there is a need to balance privacy (statistical disclosure control) concerns with the needs of users. There were also questions on whether or not, in the event of a Yes vote in the referendum, there would be fewer ties with Office for National Statistics in 2021.

## **8. Draft Statistical Areas Statistics Plan 2014-15**

- 8.1 Kirsty MacLachlan gave an update on the draft plans for 2014-15 for the statistical areas within National Records of Scotland (NRS). For more details refer to [Paper 6 PAMS \(14\) 06](#).

- 8.2 The need for NRS' objectives to be aligned with, and contribute to the objectives of, the Government Statistical Service (GSS) and the Scottish Government National Performance Framework (NPF) was discussed.
- 8.3 Future NRS statistical publications and continuous improvement work was discussed. More details can be found in [Paper 6 PAMS \(14\) 06](#).
- 8.4 The question of where NRS' attention should be focussed when resources are tight was asked.
- 8.5 It was asked what users thoughts were on the Small Area Population Estimates (SAPE) Working Group since it has been a long time (May 2005) since the group last met. It was asked whether or not it would be useful to incorporate this meeting into the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) committee meeting but it was felt that it would be best to close this group with the option to resurrect it in the future if the need arises.
- 8.6 It was noted that there would be a [POPGROUP Users Group \(Scotland\)](#) meeting following publication of the 2012-based Sub-National Population Projections.
- 8.7 It was also noted that some statistical areas within NRS are being assessed by the United Kingdom Statistics Authority in June.
- 8.8 It was clarified that the work mentioned at the top of page 12 in [Paper 6 PAMS \(14\) 06](#) refers to the Glasgow & Highland projects which Jules Goodlet-Rowley is leading on.
- 8.9 Plans to publish an NRS newsletter were put to members of the PAMS committee. The newsletter was to be aimed at users and it was intended to publish it every quarter. Office for national Statistics (ONS) published a newsletter every quarter, aimed at specialists and local authority representatives. The ONS newsletter is web based and works well keeping users informed. However, there was a muted response from the PAMS members and it was felt that SCOTSTAT is sufficient to keep our users informed of our statistics.

## 9. Data visualisations and infographics

- 9.1 Esther Roughsedge presented a paper on National Records of Scotland's (NRS') use of infographics and data visualisations. More details can be found in [Paper 7 PAMS \(14\) 07](#).
- 9.2 It was noted that Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) committee members are perhaps not a key audience for infographics and data visualisations. They are perhaps of more interest to the media, Ministers and non-specialist users. However, it was felt that it would be useful to seek the views of PAMS members on our use of them given that they might find them useful when disseminating our statistics.
- 9.3 The PAMS members were very positive about NRS use of infographics and data visualisations, and said they would find them very useful. It was noted that PAMS members would find it more useful if our infographics and data visualisations were interactive, allowing them to select, for example, Council areas of interest.
- 9.4 It was also noted that while infographics and data visualisations are of use to non-specialist users, specialist users are keener on the raw data and we should not lose sight of this rather important fact.

## **10. Household estimates and projections branch update**

- 10.1 Esther Roughsedge proceeded to give an update from Household estimates and projections branch. For more details refer to [Paper 9 PAMS \(14\) 09](#).
- 10.2 A lot of work has been done to review the methodologies used to produce household projections. As a result of this review it has been decided that data from three censuses should be used, and data from the 2012 Scottish Household survey will be used to constrain distributions by household type, for Scotland.
- 10.3 It was noted that the Household Analysis Review Group (HARG) would meet in early June.
- 10.4 It was noted that household projections for Scotland's Strategic Development Plan Areas and National Parks will hopefully be published in November.
- 10.5 It was noted that back revisions (of household estimates) for new data zones will not be possible, though it may be possible for dwelling estimates.

## **11. Scottish Informatics Linkage Collaboration (SILC)**

- 11.1 Gerry Donnelly then gave an oral update on the Scottish Informatics Linkage Collaboration.
- 11.2 SILC is intended to be a resource for analysts across Scotland, pulling together the Administrative Data Research Centre (ADRC) Scotland, the Farr Institute and what was previously the Data Sharing and Linkage Service.
- 11.3 The main aim of SILC is linking data to enable good analysis based on the proportionate management of risk around privacy. It is intended that, when completed, it will be a centre of excellence that stimulates good analysis and research.
- 11.4 Access to the centre will not be limited to only government statisticians and academics. There is some concern around private sector use of the centre. However, this would not be ruled out for the future provided that required standards around projects being ethical, legal and in the public interest can be met.
- 11.5 The Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) committee asked about how the centre is being publicised and were advised that a communications group representing partners was taking this forward.
- 11.6 The PAMS committee also asked about consistency with published estimates. It was pointed out that data will be linked to the 2011 Census and existing sources used to produce estimates.
- 11.7 The PAMS committee also stressed that care should be taken when communicating results derived from administrative sources.
- 11.8 The update concluded with an overview of the main aims of SILC, specifically that it will be a centre of excellence which is transparent and open to scrutiny and is used to produce peer reviewed academic papers and National Statistics.

## 12. Population and Migrations Statistics Update

- 12.1 Esta Clark presented [Paper 8 PAMS \(14\) 08](#), an update from Population and Migrations Statistics branch.
- 12.2 Rebased population estimates for mid-2002 to mid-2010 were published in December 2013 and mid-year population estimates for 2013 will be published on 26 June 2014 (the same date as Office for National Statistics' (ONS') UK release).
- 12.3 Subnational population projections will be published on 14 May 2014. Comments on the assumptions have been received and considered and we will write back explaining the decisions taken.
- 12.4 Rebased small area population estimates for mid-2002 to mid-2010 (old data zones) will be published on 22 May 2014. Estimates for mid-2013 will be published in August. When available, estimates for new data zones will be revised back to 2001/02.
- 12.5 Settlements and localities for mid-2012 will be published in July. There will be a consultation process and quality issues that are raised will be taken into consideration.
- 12.6 There is also a lot of research and improvement work going on within the branch. Data from the 2011 Census and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) are being used to review the methodology used to estimate internal migration, the need for population estimates by marital status and ethnicity is being reviewed, the feasibility of producing confidence intervals and quality indicators to accompany the mid-year population estimates is being explored and the methodologies used to produce small area population estimates and subnational population projections is being reviewed.
- 12.7 In the opinion of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) committee members there is little interest in population estimates by marital status. However, there would be interest in population estimates by ethnicity.
- 12.8 It was also noted that the branch are being assessed by the UK Statistics Authority.
- 12.9 Esta asked for feedback on any of the publications and improvement work and for PAMS members to let her know of the impact on any uses of the statistics.

## 13. Vital Events Update

- 13.1 Development work is currently being undertaken to report the ethnicity of the deceased and system updates are being prepared to capture the additional information which will be available from new cause of death certificates. For more details refer to [Paper 10 PAMS \(14\) 10](#).

## 14. Statistical Information Services – Update for PAMS

- 14.1 It was noted that there is likely to be issue around publications containing broken links when the new NRS Corporate website goes live. It was noted that it may be useful to flag publications that are likely to contain broken links. For more details refer to [Paper 11 PAMS \(14\) 11](#).

**15. AOB**

- 15.1 There was no other business as such. However, more details on the plans for a census in 2021, further user feedback on the outputs from the 2011 Census and more information on the Scottish Informatics Linkage Collaboration were all suggested as interesting topics for discussion at the next meeting of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) committee.

**16. Date of Next Meeting**

- 16.1 October/November 2014 (after the referendum).