Population And Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland)

Scotland's Census 2021

Programme-wide update

Work continues to put in place the various necessary structures to resource the programme. A number of additional staff have been recruited since May, including in more specialised areas such as security. We have conducted a 'Request for Information' exercise to help shape our commercial strategy and held a couple of engagement events in Edinburgh and London to support this.

As noted at the time of the last PAMS meeting, we intended publishing more information on the design of the census and this is now available on the Scotland's Census website in a dedicated 2021 section. This includes initial thinking around the questionnaire, how we are planning on ensuring inclusion and assisting respondents, engaging with our stakeholders and plans for publicising the census. Please take some time to consider the information provided and provide any feedback.

Outputs & Statistical Disclosure Control

Work on outputs and the statistical disclosure control element of the programme continues. This includes engaging with the other UK census agencies, participating in international groups on dissemination and disclosure and testing a number of disclosure control methods.

With input from our Outputs Working Group, we are developing a stronger sense of user requirements for 2021 outputs. This includes discussions around the potential functionality of the output dissemination system and compiling a first draft of the essential outputs/ tables for 2021. We will continue to work with the Outputs Group to further this work and develop a consultation document to seek a wider range of users views. We plan to consult through a formal consultation document and through a number of focus groups in early 2017.

Geography

Activity on the first release of the new format Scottish Address Directory continues on schedule. Work is also continuing on our analysis of Output Area thresholds ahead of a paper which will be issued to the Outputs Working Group meeting in November.

Questions and Questionnaire design (formally User Needs, Content and Benefits)

The Topic Consultation Report was published on 15 August. We are now devising our next steps which will include working with a variety of stakeholders to better understand needs as well as undertaking research and small-scale question testing to further inform our recommendations. This work will continue into and through 2017.

Statistical Methods and Data Processing

Initial requirements gathering work has been completed on Data Cleansing and for resolving multiple responses. The development of a metadata solution has been added to the data processing project and the team are currently developing this work. Work continues with IT and Security colleagues towards being in a position to prototype a suitable data processing system.

Data Collection

Work is progressing to develop Hard to Count methodology, Enumeration and Field Force Strategies. We are continuing to work with the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations to explore challenges and ways of reaching, enumerating and assisting a variety of people and groups served by sections of the third sector.

Admin Data

The admin data project intends to use admin data to produce experimental population and households estimates, help quality assure the census and make recommendations regarding the use of admin data in future censuses.

Communications, Stakeholder Engagement and Legislation

Activity continues in respect of the programme's initial Privacy Impact Assessment which we intend to publish around the end of the year. Work similarly continues in respect of the programme's Equality Impact Assessment. Early discussions are underway with colleagues in relation to the legislation that will be required to pave the way to conduct the census.

NRS: Statistical Futures
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