

USING AND IMPROVING POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD STATISTICS
Migration data for local areas workshop
30 October 2009

Attendees

Alasdair Anthony – Population and Migration Statistics – lead
Laura McConnell – Population and Migration Statistics – minutes
Colin Fischbacher – NHS ISD
Jan Freeke – Glasgow City Council
Victoria Kapke – Inverclyde Council
Sheena Stevely – Renfrewshire Council
Bartlomiej Jaron – Population and Migration Statistics

Alasdair gave an introduction to the Local Area Migration Reports that were published by GROS for the first time in July this year. He also briefly introduced the Migration Indicators Tool – a spreadsheet based data bank developed by ONS. His presentation was followed by questions and comments:

- Colin asked if Mothers' Country of Birth data is available to all given that it's very important data. Alasdair wasn't sure off the top of his head exactly where the data is published. Alasdair will speak to Frank Dixon about the possibility of publishing this data by individual country rather than world area as at present.
- Do we have any idea how many migrants we are missing from our estimates? Alasdair explained that it's difficult to quantify 'missing' migrants especially given the variable definition of 'migrant'. Generally GROS pick up long-term migrants well but short-term migrants are more difficult to measure so they are not currently included in our figures. Improvements to the IPS may help with measurement of migration but out-migrants are still more difficult to count accurately.
- Pupil census – why aren't private schools included in this? It's not clear why private schools aren't included in the pupil census but the data would certainly be very useful, which is why part of Bart's job includes investigation (with Neil Bowie) on the feasibility of collection of similar data from private schools.
- Jan commented that the reports were very useful. The finding that the % of births to non-UK mothers has increased considerably over the past few years was new to him and very helpful to know. Also, the finding from the NINo data that migration has not only increased from A8 countries but also from the Middle East was new to Jan and again very interesting.
- Jan asked if HESA data would be available at the Council level. Alasdair explained that yes it would be but there are issues around accuracy and its use as a migration indicator was still to be assessed.
- Jan asked if there is any available data Alasdair knows of that would give a breakdown of the economic status of migrant. Alasdair explained that the Worker Registration Scheme holds some very useful information but that the Home Office is reluctant to release the data. However if you have

a gov.uk email address you can get access to it! Alasdair said he is keen on getting the data made publically available and is happy to take this up with the Home Office if there is enough demand for it. At that point Colin added that people are keen to see whatever data is available.

- Colin asked if you can readily download the data at a local level. Alasdair explained that users can contact him and he will send them the data or they can access the data through the migration indicators tool¹. At the moment the indicators tool only has some Scottish data, however Alasdair is pushing for more Scottish data to be added. The general feeling was that users would rather be able to download the data behind the migration reports direct from GROS website.

Alasdair then went on to ask the delegates some questions regarding his local area migration reports:

Q. If there was one aspect of the Migration Reports that Alasdair should concentrate on what should it be?

A. This was hard to answer. The general feeling was just making the data more available would be useful. One delegate suggested that instead of updating the report every year it would maybe be an idea to just link to the data source so that users can go direct to the source for more recent data.

Q. Are there any sources of migration that the Migration Reports do not cover?

A. Jan suggested that Alasdair could include some analysis of the Census data or at least the change in migration patterns in comparison to Census data.

Q. Do we need a Scotland level report?

A. Yes a Scotland level report would be useful for comparison purposes.

Q. In terms of updating the reports, how regularly should they be updated?

A. Annually would be suitable and would allow year to year comparisons.

Q. The reports tend to lean towards overseas migration – is this the type of migration that people are interested in?

A. Although there was a feeling that it would probably be useful to have similar amounts of overseas, rest of UK, and within Scotland migration information, the reports would then run the risk of losing focus. Perhaps then a separate international migration report is required. British migrants do not have the same implication for service provision as international migrants do.

¹ Alasdair to add a link from migration area of the GROS website to the ONS Migration Indicators tool