

2001 OUTPUT ON-LINE SURVEY: INITIAL FINDINGS **SCOTLAND SPECIFIC RESULTS**

Earlier this year the UK Census Offices ran an on-line survey which asked users about their use and experience of 2001 Census outputs and their high level requirements for 2011 Census outputs. Initial findings from the Scotland census data users are presented below and the overall UK findings can be accessed here- <http://ukcensusoutputs.net>

RESPONDENT PROFILE

Overall 529 questionnaires were completed and submitted and out of these there were 50 respondents who indicated that they were interested in Scotland specific data alone.

The largest proportion of the Scotland responses to the survey came from those census data users working for Local Government and Partner Organisations -48%. Other sectors of census users were represented- Central Government 2%; Regional Government 8%; Academic 2%; Health 20%; Commercial 4%; Third Sector 8%; and Other (6%). There were no respondents who did not work for any type of organisation (members of the public).

Just over 89% of users currently use or look at census data every couple of months, but when it is first published 89% stated that they use or look at census data weekly or more frequently.

Datazone level is the geography used the most regularly by respondents (77%) and Parish level is used the least frequently (9%).

96% of respondents had experience of 2001 census products and services, just under half had experience of 1991 census outputs and 18% had used census data going back to at least 1981 outputs. 4% of respondents had no experience of census data to date.

USE AND EXPERIENCE OF 2001 PRODUCTS

Tables

The most frequently used 2001 census tabular products were Key Statistics (KS) and Census Area Statistics (CAS) (used by 51% and 46% of respondents respectively). Just fewer than 40% of respondents noted that they had used Census tables before but did not know which type.

Value-added products

Used by just under half of all respondents, the most widely used value added 2001 Census products were the Area classifications and Look-up tables.

Analysing and presenting 2001 census data

The most commonly used products for analysing and/or presenting 2001 Census data were MS Excel, Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics, and SCROL (used by 83%, 75%, and 69% of respondents respectively). The main use of census data is for research purposes (80%) and the main access point of 2001 census data was SCROL (83%).

Metadata

The most commonly used 2001 metadata product was the Glossary of terms (used by 61% of respondents).

A third of respondents said they made use of 2001 data quality indicators such as overall response rates, question response rates, imputation rates and confidence intervals.

The majority of respondents thought the detail and technical level of the metadata supplied was about right (91% and 78% respectively).

2011 REQUIREMENTS

Types of census products

Over half of respondents (60%) said that it was important for the Census Offices to produce reports which provide analysis and commentary on census tables, with the remainder saying tables of counts would be sufficient to meet their needs.

2001/2011 comparisons

The vast majority of respondents (90%) said they will have a requirement to compare 2011 Census results with those from the 2001 Census. Of these the requirement for comparative outputs was for all levels of geography including for the UK (9%) with a majority wanting comparisons at County/LA/UA district level (71%). Notably, almost two-thirds needed the flexibility to compare 2001/2011 results for their own bespoke areas of interest.

Access and dissemination

In terms of access to 2011 Census data, 69% of respondents indicated that it was either important or very important to be able to access data from each Census office from one access point.

Further to this however, only 25% of Scotland respondents indicated that they found it important or very important to have one access point to all 2011 Census data for the UK. This differs greatly from the UK as a whole where it was found that 54% of respondents indicated that they found it important or very important to have one access point to all 2011 Census data for the UK.

There is a strong demand for 2011 Census output to be made available in machine readable format (a requirement from 63% of respondents) however making census tables available as printed reports in addition to making the tables available electronically was important or very important to only 29% of respondents.

12% of respondents also noted that their top priority when it comes to all aspects of 2011 Census outputs was that data was released as soon as possible

Flexible outputs

Respondents were asked about different types of functionality that they would find useful, and would prioritise, for a 2011 Census dissemination system. In terms of flexible outputs, 76% of respondents said that the facility to create user defined tables from given sets of variables (hypercubes) would be very useful and 61% gave this a high priority in terms of functionality.

Furthermore, three quarters of respondents would prefer to have a smaller set of pre-defined tables with a facility to make their own tables from data cubes rather than having a pre-defined set of tables equivalent in scope and quantity to 2001 census tables.

Metadata

Tying up metadata with statistical output is important to the majority of respondents but not at the expense of any possible delay to publication of results.

Statistical Disclosure Control

Most users understand the need for Statistical Disclosure Control to protect the confidentiality of 2011 census outputs, however just under a third of respondents indicated they were not previously aware that SDC methodology was applied to Census outputs.

In terms of the potential effects of SDC on the outputs the most important features for users were table additivity and consistency and that the data is as accurate as possible. Of these, accurate data is the most important feature. Only 28% of respondents said they would be prepared to sacrifice some accuracy in order to have additive and consistent tables.

Spring 2007 Census Consultation

The results of this current consultation are on the whole in line with findings of the previous user consultation run by GROS in spring 2007. The Spring 2007 census consultation found strong support

for flexible table generation, as did the current consultation. A facility for comparing 2001 and 2011 results, an effective and flexible approach to output geographies and an on-line facility for mapping and graphing of standard and user defined outputs were also found to be important to users in both consultations.

Scotland Vs. UK as a whole

The user requirements emerging from the survey indicate that the Scotland census data users were largely in parallel with those of the overall UK respondents. Both sets of respondents were in agreement regarding 2011 requirements, such as a need for flexible outputs, the ability to compare 2011 data with 2001 results, and that data accuracy is very important when it comes to SDC methodology.

The only real main difference between the UK and Scotland respondents was their thoughts on having one access point to all 2011 census data for the UK. 54% of UK respondents indicated that it was important or very important to have one access point to all 2011 Census data for the UK, where only 28% of Scotland users indicated that this was an important or very important requirement.