

11.30-12.45 Population Estimates Methodology Part 1

12.45-1.30 Breakout session

Two parallel sessions:

The Graham Wallis Room is on the fifth floor of the Main Building (Old Building) in Houghton Street. Take the lift to the fifth floor, go through the double doors to the Staff Dining Room, through the Dining Room itself, through the Senior

The Festival is being held at St Catherine's College, Oxford from 17 - 20 July 2006.

and aims to engage social scientists across a wide range of disciplines and sectors and at different points in their research careers.

The programme runs from 3.30pm on Monday 17 July to 5.30pm on Thursday 20 July. Most sessions are organised as half-days, but some are only 45 minutes and some are all day. Most sessions need to be booked and will close when numbers reach capacity. Registration is £20 for each day and includes lunch, coffee and tea.

The programme includes sessions on methods for analysing spatial and social change over time; methodological issues in understanding the role of 'place' and the analysis of 'place'; linking data to inform decision making concerning urban change; optimising the use of partial information in urban and regional systems; resources for census users and ONS resources. Contributors include: Nigel Thrift, Charles Manski, Mike Batty, Adam Tickell, Simon Burgess, Bob Barr, Paul Norman, Ludi Simpson, David Martin. For further information, including programme and online booking form, visit the Festival website at:

<http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods/festival/>



NOTICES

The Joanna Stillwell Prize for Population Geography dissertations

The Population Geography Research Group (PopGRG) of the RGS-IBG has set up three prizes (£100 for first prize; £50 for second; £25 for third) to be awarded for the best undergraduate dissertations of 2006 in the broad field of Population Geography. Would you or your colleagues like to



**Parkes Foundation PhD Grants Fund:
for research in reproduction or demography or
fertility**

The aim of these grants is to allow registered PhD students to undertake **substantive fieldwork** as part of their higher degree in the fields of **reproduction or demography or fertility**. A maximum of three grants will be awarded. Each grant will not exceed £3000.

Submission of applications to the Small Grants and PhD Grants Funds

There are separate application forms for the Small and PhD Grants Funds, on which applications **must** be submitted. If a PhD student is applying to both funds, a separate application must be submitted to each fund.

The forms can be obtained from the Executive Secretary by e-mail (mah44@cam.ac.uk) and applications must be submitted by e-mail. The Executive Secretary will acknowledge receipt of applications and will then contact applicants' referees.

The closing date for receipt of applications is **26 January 2007**; applications will be considered by the Trustees and awards will be decided in March/April 2007.



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on the economic productivity of children in Bangladesh. Mead Cain's analysis in the 1970s reported that sons became net producers (i.e. producing more calories than they consume) for their families in their pre-teens, but that daughters never become net producers. Cain's analysis ignored the household labour that women perform, which is relatively difficult to quantify, and assumed that only males produced calories for the household and that females consumed but did not produce. Sullivan's paper (co-authored with Karen Kramer at SUNY Stonybrook) suggested that if the importance of female productive labour within the household is quantified and included in the analysis, then daughters do eventually become net producers for their households and at a substantially earlier age than sons: her analysis raises the age at which sons become net producers to between 30-50 years, whereas females produce more calories than they consume by their mid-20s.

Along with this vast array of original research papers (most posted helpfully online on the PAA Conference website for those interested in reading further: <http://www.popassoc.org/meetings.html>

population in the capital in the form of Diversity Indices. There was also an allied analysis of segregation in the capital that highlighted the failings of simple segregation measures to truly grasp the nature of segregation.

Estimating London's New Migrant Population, An Analytical Framework Peter Boden (Edge Analytics) and Phil Rees (University of Leeds)

International migration is now the dominant driver of population change but there remains no single source of accurate data on the level, distribution and profile of migrants coming into and out of the UK.

Peter Boden's presentation outlined the ONS initiatives that are underway to improve the National Statistics on international migration and indicated the additional data sources that could provide complementary information, highlighting the positives and negatives of each data source.

Phil Rees summarised the recommendations made by the project, the main thrust being the development of the New Migrant Databank, bringing together alternative sources of international migration data into a single repository to facilitate regular statistical reporting, together with further research, analysis and, importantly, improvements in the new migrant estimation process.

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year the session included presentations on a number of classic demographic subjects—mortality, fertility, migration, marriage dissolution and a presentation with methodological focus.

My own study explores patterns of sex differentials in mortality exhibited by the Jewish population in Israel in the second half of the 20th century in relation to other countries in the world. The sex differentials among Israeli Jews, measured as a difference between female and male life expectancies, have been significantly lower than in countries of Europe and North America. The phenomenon is frequently commented on in Israeli demographic literature and even labelled as “paradox” of Jewish mortality but, curiously, it has not been sufficiently described, let alone explained. The main sources of information come from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics and the *Human Mortality Database*. These data allow the relative positioning of Israeli Jews in an international context. The study identifies major sex and age-specific features of Israeli Jewish mortality responsible for Israeli Jews’ positioning, and attempts to explain the differentials in the light of Israel’s migration history. It shows that a small sex differential is a result of a combination of very low male mortality and high female mortality. The findings are suggestive of a cohort dynamic. Very similar features of sex differentials are detected among Israeli Jews of different socio-cultural backgrounds. This opportunity to present my research was especially valuable since this was the first time the subject was discussed in a forum of Israeli demographers equipped with sound local knowledge of national demographic features, the economy and health care.

Jona Schellekens (Hebrew University, Population Studies) presented his research on the relationship between family allowances and fertility. Family allowances are repeatedly looked at as a means of increasing fertility by various governments in continental Europe. This is despite the poor record of such allowances to actually do so. In Israel, the existence of a significant sector of ultra-orthodox Jews, supported by family allowances and displaying particularly high fertility, is a focus of a heated public debate. Schellekens’ research explores the effect of family allowances within Israeli Jewish society with the help of the last two Israeli Censuses of 1983 and 1995, reconstructing birth histories using the own-children method and identifying those who reported as family allowances recipients among other types of income. The study does not provide evidence for family allowances being a cost-effective way to increase fertility levels, confirming what is already known.

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relations expressing accepted social inequality on the basis of positions that individuals hold, or their ascribed attributes. This work is closely related to a similar project in the UK, with the results summarised by Chan and Goldthorpe in *European Sociological Review*, 20 (2004). The specific questions that this study is trying to answer are (1) does status order exist as a category distinct from social class; and (2) how is it related to

type patterns are very different.

He concluded by saying that family and household change was likely to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary as compared with the massive changes of recent decades but that the centrality of 'family' would remain. However the ageing of the population, particularly those born in the 1960s, would be a major influence. More attention was needed on beyond household relationships such as living apart together. The growing diversity within the population needed special attention.

Jonathan Portes, Director, Children, Poverty and Analysis at the Department of Work and Pensions gave a policy response from a government point of view. After an anecdote pointing to the fact that individuals within government systems were able to respond effectively to a changing society, he pointed out that there were exogenous and endogenous issues for policy. The exogenous question was, given these changes what should we do? - they have implications for housing, education, even defence. The key was the need for flexibility in institutions and policies. We have much less understanding of endogenous effects, to what extent to government policies drive changes? This is an area where we are only beginning to scratch the surface. He noted that John Ermisch had been careful to refer to correlations rather than causality, but undoubtedly education, housing, tax and benefits, child support and other policies have had some impact.

The question and answer time began with a contribution suggesting that the rise in single person households over the past decades had been primarily from people who had been in relationships, either cohabiting or married. Former cohabitantes seem to behave in a similar way to the divorced. Was there a need to collect information on former partnership status in sources such as the census? Mike Murphy reminded the meeting that even for those potentially in a partnership it was sometimes difficult to determine cohabitation status, it would be even more difficult to collect information on previous status in a census, surveys may be better sources for such information although sufficient sample sizes would be needed for analysis on a sub-national basis. The meeting was reminded of the difficulties in collecting cohabitation information in the Millennium Cohort Study and a DWP expert had helped with determining definitional issues for cohabitation. Mention was made of research carried out on cohabiting couples that showed some feel that they are 'as good as married', but often it is not clear when the cohabitation began. This was a conundrum as many said they should have rights after a certain length of time cohabiting. Ian Diamond raised the issue of the impact of increased longevity. It did appear that the life course was getting stretched, perhaps in part as a response to increased longevity. In response to a question on what the next 'big issue' might be Mike Murphy responded that he thought that diversity would be a major issue. Other issues would be partnership breakdown during the life course and social relations combined with pressures of employment. The point was made from the floor that current ethnicity categories, especially with the emergence of mixed ethnicity (the fastest growing category) were sometimes clumsy - it would be useful to include in analyses whether people were born inside or outside the country.

Ian Diamond closed the discussion and the meeting with

the comment that the ESRC was happy to engage with policy makers. Emphasising diversity again, he said that one size fits all policies needed to be avoided. His final comment was that ESRC would be funding an increase in the BHPS sample size so that it would contain a sample of up to 40 thousand households.

The next seminar is on 30 June 2006 at the London School of Economics. The topic is the demographic aspects of population ageing and the academic presenters will be Emily Grundy and Jane Falkingham. The final seminar is on 25 July on the topic of migration. Held at the Royal Statistical society, the academic speakers will be John Salt and Phil Rees. More information about the seminars is available from ESRC. See <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/PO/releases/2006/may/lifestyles.aspx?ComponentId=15371&SourcePageId=5433> or contact Amanda Williams (amanda.williams@esrc.ac.uk)

users. This independent role for a new body (the Board) should also be established in legislation.

- **National Statistics.** The concept of 'National Statistics' was to provide an accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful description of the UK economy and society. This has been applied in a piecemeal way to individual datasets. The focus should be redirected towards establishing a wide body of knowledge in which users should have maximum confidence with the support of the Code of Practice. For the concept to succeed there needs to be a single body responsible for setting priorities about

agencies produce statistics on the same topic there will be a waste of resources in collection, both by the official agency and by those required to provide the raw data, and even more waste of resources by users in having to reconcile conflicting figures.

THE KEY AREAS FOR REFORM

Against this background we believe that the following key areas need reform:

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Options for Reform

The BPS makes the following comments on the options for reform set out in Chapter 4 of the Treasury's consultation document:

- **Overall objectives** (4.1-4.4). Each of the Government's objectives is agreed. Comments on the six key principles (1.9 and 4.3) are included above. Underlying each of these should be an uncompromising commitment on quality, trust and efficiency. In addition the key principles should include mention of the vital coordination role throughout the GSS that must be part of the National Statistician's remit. This is clear from the brief analyses of arrangements in a selection of other countries.
- **Structure of legislation** (4.5-4.6). The elements of reform do not distinguish an essential separation of roles: the delivery role and the scrutiny role.
- **Benefits of decentralisation** (4.7-4.8). Agreed, but the National Statistician's role regarding the Government Statistical Service together with the roles of Heads of Profession need to be strengthened and covered by legislation.
- **Accountable to, not within, Parliament** (4.9). Agreed.
- **Integrated independence** (4.10). The delivery and scrutiny systems both require independence from Government. However there needs to be a clear separation of responsibilities between the National Statistician, the 'statistics office' and the governing board.
- **A Non-Ministerial Department** (4.11-4.12). It is important that the continuing function of ONS is to support the National Statistician in delivering National Statistics, which are collected both within ONS and outside. The statistics produced by ONS and those produced outside ONS must be on the same plain and ONS must have a system wide responsibility for coordination and quality. The Governing Board should oversee the NMD but this should not be an executive function.
- **Civil service status** (4.13). Agreed.
- **Scope of the system** (4.14-4.15). There should be a statutory Code of Practice but we consider that this will require a new Code to be developed by the National Statistician for endorsement by the Governing Board and Parliament. This should be a priority requirement of the National Statistician. The Board should have responsibility for safeguarding the public interest in regard to what constitutes national statistics and should also have scrutiny over statistics that are not national statistics, wherever produced. Ministers should not be involved in this process. The governing board must decide, following appropriate wide consultation arrangements, what statistics are required and then ensure that they are produced to meet the requirement.
- **Roles and responsibilities** (4.16). The one key element of the proposed system that is not mentioned here is the National Statistician, who is the hub of much of the system. The board should have common responsibilities for all national statistics, whether produced by the proposed NMD or by others. The role proposed for Parliament is essential as the national scrutiny panel for the nation's official statistics.
- **The Board** (4.17-4.18). Delivery and scrutiny roles should be clear and be separated. The Board's role should be consistent regarding statistics produced by the NMD as well as by others.
- **The statistics office** (4.19). As the proposals include the abolition of the Statistics Commission, the Board is put in position of being both in charge of the production of national statistics as well as responsible for their scrutiny and reporting to Parliament. This may be seen as offering too much independence and so reducing Parliamentary accountability. There needs to be absolute clarity as to how the Board achieves impartiality in both its executive and oversight functions.
- **The National Statistics system** (4.20). The coordination responsibility of the Board across all statistics, whether produced within the NMD or outside, is paramount to a modern statistical system and needs to be strengthened.
- **Assessing quality and integrity** (4.21): Agreed.
- **Advising on areas of concern** (4.22). The Board must have the power to advise on areas of concern, but its advice should not be confined to Ministers. It should be offered widely at the Board's discretion.
- **Overview of coverage** (4.23). This is an area where the dual responsibilities of the Board need clarification. It would be better if the National Statistician continues to be responsible for the development of national statistics and for the Board to comment on and agree the final strategy and ensure delivery.
- **Minimising business burden** (4.24-4.25). The sentiment to minimise burdens on those providing data is important, but this must be reviewed in the light of the utility of the data collected. Legislation must give the National Statistician the powers to collect information, having ensured that the information is not already available in any other form. In this regard it must be possible to allow statistical access to administrative data. The burden is not just an issue for business but for all from whom data is requested.
- **Data access** (4.26): We agree that the National Statistician should have access to administrative data for statistical purposes. The proposed Integrated Population Statistics System to be developed over the next decade partly relies upon protected use of administrative data.
- **Protecting confidentiality** (4.27-4.29). There are established practices that ensure that information shared for statistical purposes does not breach confidentiality of individuals or organisations. This is recognised in Data Protection legislation. Statistics legislation needs to allow statisticians to reuse information as well as to protect confidentiality and privacy. The Board should have the duty of policing the development of national statistics in this regard, building on existing procedures.
- **Arrangements for pre-release** (Box 4). Issues of public trust in national statistics are linked with the interpretation placed on national statistics by government departments in advance of 'official' release. In order to reduce perceptions of political interference there should be no pre-release access to statistics by anyone, outside

the statistical production team, until the statistics are released generally.

- **Board structure** (4.30). The Board must include persons representing a wide range of statistics user constituencies, including local/regional government and the general public interest.
- **Non-executive chair** (4.31). The non-executive chair need not be a statistician, but does need to have the other high level management skills indicated.
- **The Chief Statistician** (4.32). The functions outlined for this post are agreed. The postholder should also be the principal UK representative in international statistical forums. The present functions of the National Statistician in relation to coordination of the statistical system must be included in the brief. The designation 'Chief Statistician' should be also reconsidered. We have a preference to retain 'National Statistician'.
- **Independence of assessment** (4.33). Agreed.
- **Independent appointment process** (4.34). Agreed.
- **The Government Statistical Service** (4.35). The reforms provide an opportunity to develop the GSS and especially to encourage interdepartmental moves and secondments. Scope to widen this professional interchange with appropriate regional government bodies should also be included.
- **Heads of Profession** (4.36). Heads of Profession should be jointly appointed by their department and the National Statistician. The GSS offers the scope that these appointments be secondments from the NMD.
- **Professional accountability** (4.37). Agreed.
- **Parliament** (4.38-4.41). Agreed
- **Funding** (4.42-4.45). The proposal is that extra funding is provided for statistics that the Government wants but that extra funding is not provided for statistics required by others as recommended by the Board. This will undermine the perceived independence of the system, impede the Board's role in ensuring that the statistical system meets the broader public interest and generally engender public mistrust in national statistics. The Board should be vested

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