

## BSPS MEETINGS

BSPS Conference 2006

Plenary theme: Global migration trends

University of Southampton 18-20 September 2006

Welcome to all participating in the 2006 BSPS Conference, at which this Newsletter is being distributed. Over 180 people have registered for the Conference, and there are 30 strand sessions of submitted papers, and three invited plenary sessions.

Conference abstracts and the final programme can be accessed at the BSPS website at [www.bsps.org.uk](http://www.bsps.org.uk) and many of the papers and presentations will be posted to the website after the Conference.

The 2007 Conference will be held at the University of St. Andrews, from 11-13 September 2007. You may wish to note this date in your diary now.

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Forthcoming BSPS Day Meeting

Infant-mortality : a continuing social problem?

Saturday 9 December 2006

- venue to be announced

The seminar will revisit the seminal 1906 work of Sir George Newman in its centenary year and launch a new book commemorating the work. Full information will be circulated as soon as available. Meeting organiser: Dr. Nicola Shelton - [drnjshelton@ntlworld.com](mailto:drnjshelton@ntlworld.com)

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## OTHER MEETINGS

An MRS Census and Geodemographics  
Group Seminar

27 November 2006,

The Society of Chemical Industry, London SW1

A one-day seminar bringing together experts from both academic and commercial sectors to talk from their alternative perspectives on a series of common topics relating to

“Geography and people.” For full information, see:  
<http://www.mrs.org.uk/networking/cgg/nov06.htm>

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## NOTICES

National Centre for Research Methods

The ESRC National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) has recently conducted a consultation exercise to identify the areas in which research or development in research methods is needed. The aim of this exercise is to inform the ESRC's strategic direction in this area.

Phase one of this exercise is now complete and responses to the initial consultation are invited from all interested members of the social research community. The initial report is available at:

<http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/news/show.php?article=90>

We would like responses to this Report to focus on the following issues:

- \* What areas identified in this report are already well researched?
- \* What are the priorities within the topics outlined in the report?
- \* What is the specific research agenda in relation to these topics?
- \* In what substantive areas are these specific methodological issues relevant?
- \* Are there any important gaps in the report?

Responses need to be submitted by September 30th 2006. Please submit responses by email to [info@ncrm.ac.uk](mailto:info@ncrm.ac.uk)

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Population Studies and Journal of Biosocial Science

BSPS members are reminded that the journals *Population Studies* and *The Journal of Biosocial Science* both have special reduced subscription rates for individual BSPS members. For further information see:

[www.popstudies.net](http://www.popstudies.net)

[www.cambridge.org/journals/journal\\_pricing.asp?mnemonic=JBS](http://www.cambridge.org/journals/journal_pricing.asp?mnemonic=JBS)

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Population Matters:  
Forums on the impact of Population Growth on the  
Millennium Development Goals to complement the  
2006 Parliamentary Hearings

September 2006 - January 2007

### Background

There is overwhelming evidence that rapid population growth and the pressure of increasing numbers of consumers pose substantial challenges to the attainment of the MDGs. Yet, population has been virtually ignored at a political level for the past decade. Since the term 'population' became increasingly tarnished by the brush of 'coercion' and 'control' during the 1980s it has remained politically sensitive. The link between poverty and population growth has been downplayed and financial and political support for population stabilisation has diminished.

This series of events aims to put population issues back on the public and political agenda. They will bring together a range of issues and perspectives to consider the evidence on the impact of population growth on the MDGs and to debate the major challenges and solutions.

### The series aims to influence future policy and action on population and the MDGs

A series of Forums will consider the impact of population growth on the MDGs (and their key targets and indicators), together with consideration of the barriers and solutions facing each issue. This series will conclude with a high profile event in the Houses of Parliament in early 2007.

### Population Forums

We aim to attract academics, health, environment and development NGOs to the sessions, and policy makers, and people from organisations who are either wary of discussing or acting on population issues or who know little about them.

Each session has two speakers, and one individual who will provide concluding remarks. The chair will be an MP from the APPG or other interested parliamentarian. The first five seminars examine the MDGs in relation to population growth issues and the final two examine pertinent cross-cutting issues relating to barriers to implementing population policies.

For more information, please contact Huyette Shillingford: [Huyette.Shillingford@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:Huyette.Shillingford@lshtm.ac.uk) or Catherine Budgett-Meakin: [cbm@populationandsustainability.org](mailto:cbm@populationandsustainability.org)

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REPORTS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

### Day 1: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June

After the initial registration and welcome by the conference organizers, Albert Sabater chaired the first afternoon session. The presentations were as follows:

**Claire Bailey** (University of Southampton) began with a presentation titled *Exposure to Family Planning Messages through Mass Media and Interpersonal Communication and Current Use of Modern Contraceptives in Ghana*. The paper examined the association of mass media messages towards family planning. The study aims to demonstrate that although mass media family planning messages do not have a direct association with contraceptive use, they are associated with creating interpersonal discussion, which in turn is associated with contraceptive use.

**DI Puradiredja** (London School of Economics and Political Science) developed the session by making sense of *Contexts and continuities of HIV risk behaviour. A study of urban female sex workers and their rural peers in Indonesia*. Her analysis concentrated in linking both qualitative (open-ended, in-depth, semi – structured interviews and focus group discussions) and quantitative methods (questionnaires and secondary data analysis of large-scale surveys) in one design. I intend to address the two primary objectives of my research: Firstly, to examine the social, cultural and economic context within which women employed or labelled 'at risk of' or 'vulnerable to' becoming employed in commercial sex work make decisions about risks. Secondly, how and to what extent contextual factors might influence women's decision to enter sex work and the types of sexual HIV-related risks these women may take or encounter as sex workers.

**Elena Vidal** (Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, Barcelona, Spain) continued the session with a presentation titled *Young immigrants in the Spanish labour market, 1999-2005*. Her paper put the emphasis on exploring how young immigrants are situated in the Spanish Labour Market during the period 1999-2005 in comparison with young nationals. This research is based in the dual or segmented labour market theory, which identifies two different segments in labour markets. Jobs in the primary segment are stable, well paid, with chances of advancement and with good working conditions.

**Gemma Catney** (Queen's University, Belfast) highlighted the importance of *Understanding internal migration in a divided society: insights from qualitative research in Northern Ireland*. Her paper explored the movement of individuals and households in Northern Ireland, reasons behind these moves, and their impact on residential patterns. Although a substantial portion of this research is quantitative in nature, utilising data from the 2001 Census of Population of Northern Ireland, the paper also focused on the qualitative research conducted to date.

**Lee Williamson** (University of Manchester) exposed with her paper titled *Deriving age-specific fertility rates by ethnic group at the ward level for Bradford: an assessment of six promising strategies*, a set of strategies for estimating demographic rates for small areas and ethnic groups for use in population projections, assessing their performance against actual births both by ethnic group at ward-level and at the

ward-level.

Gemma Catney chaired the second session of papers. The presentations were as follows:

**David Clifford** (University of Southampton) presented a paper titled *Stopping sooner or starting later? Fertility Decline in Uzbekistan*. His paper focused on the importance of context to an understanding of fertility change, and the particular socialist history of the region. His presentation provided an analysis of fertility change in Uzbekistan, by assessing whether fertility decline has been effected through a 'starting later' pattern, characterised by the postponement of childbearing, or a 'stopping sooner' pattern, characterised by a reduction in childbearing at later ages.

**Joan Alberich** (Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, Barcelona, Spain) continued with a presentation titled *A critical review of the concept «linked population» used in the 2001 Census of Population in Spain. An application to Catalonia*. The aim of his presentation was twofold. Firstly, to analyse the results obtained of the linked population at individual and household level. Secondly, to demonstrate the efficacy of using weighting measures to improve the estimation of this population.

**Albert Sabater** (University of Manchester) carried on the session with his presentation titled *Constructing population time series with an ethnic breakdown (and age and sex) for sub-national areas in England and Wales, 1991-2001*. His paper presented a standard methodology to achieve population time series with an ethnic breakdown (and age and sex) for a variety of small areas, consistent with the latest revision of ONS mid-year estimates, thus allowing analyses of population change between 1991 and 2001 in England and Wales for sub-national areas.

**Alan Marshall** (University of Manchester), highlighted, with his paper titled *Estimating disability prevalence at sub-national levels*, a preliminary discussion of data analysis and methods to be used in a PhD investigating the forecasting of disability prevalence at sub-national levels, so that governments can direct their resources effectively and provide access to specialised services, equipment and support.

**Ainhoa Alustiza** (Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, Barcelona, Spain), ended the second session of the first day by presenting her paper *Disabled persons' families. Some preliminary results for the Basque Country from the "Disabilities, Deficiencies and Health Survey of 1999"*. The objective of her paper was to analyze the relationship between disabled people and their nearest environments, the family and the household, highlighting the importance of care-giving by relatives, especially by women aged over 50.

A successful and informative first day ended with the Guest Lecture by Martin Bell 'Dimensions of Mobility in Australia' and a wine reception. For this, Popfest delegates joined the Conference Programme of the Third International Conference on Population Geographies (TICPG).

The second day of the conference continued with the morning sessions in the TICPG. Popfest delegates were strongly encouraged to attend these morning sessions up until the

afternoon. Albert Sabater chaired the first afternoon session, with one paper and one talk given by Dr Paul Norman.

## **Day 2: Tuesday 20th June**

**Caroline Young** (University of Southampton) began the afternoon session with a presentation titled *Methods of Geographical Perturbation for Disclosure Control*. She described some new ideas for geographical perturbation of household records for disclosure control, performed on a synthetic census dataset, which has been created by a spatial microsimulation technique combining existing sources of census data into an enriched dataset at small area level.

### **Guest Presentation and Discussion:**

New to the 2006 conference was a talk given by **Paul Norman** on *General tips on how to write and publish your paper*. His presentation was acknowledged to be very useful for all delegates as he highlighted several issues and examples to put research into practice and make the process of publishing a simple and efficient one. The presentation also emphasized the importance of identifying research gaps and assess the effects of such research; issues of data acquisition and dissemination of research in general.

### **Poster presentations**

Five poster presentations were given in Popfest 2006.

**Laia Ferrer** (Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, Barcelona, Spain). Title: *Abortion in structural context on sexual and reproductive health. Cases of Belgium and France*.

**Marta Serra** (Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, Barcelona, Spain). Title: *Period fertility measures. Is there a perfect indicator?*

**Gemma Catney** (Queen's University, Belfast). Title: *Population Change, Residential Segregation and Internal Migration in Northern Ireland, 1971-2001*.

**Miquel Valls** (Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, Barcelona, Spain). Title: *The distribution of surnames in Catalonia: an approach of migrations in the past*.

**Pierre Walthery** (University of Manchester). Title: *Gender structures, methodological pluralism and triangulation: the role of research group*.

### **Next year's conference**

Popfest 2006 closed the sessions by planning next year's conference. We are all very happy to pass the torch to the delegates of the University of Southampton, who showed the enthusiasm to develop and organize Popfest 2007. For further information please contact **Claire Bailey**, [ceb504@soton.ac.uk](mailto:ceb504@soton.ac.uk), from the Department of Social Statistics.

The second day of the conference continued with the late afternoon sessions in the TICPG. Popfest delegates were again strongly encouraged to attend these afternoon sessions up until the end. The Conference Dinner at Est Est Est Restaurant

in the Albert Dock along with the TICPG delegates closed a very successful second and last day of Popfest sessions.

### Day 3: Wednesday 21st June

Morning sessions of the TIPGC were attended by delegates of Popfest. A final plenary chaired by Phil Rees titled *The ESRC/JISC Census Programme* by **David Martin, Paul Boyle** and **John Stillwell**, closed three days which provided an excellent opportunity to learn more about the diversity of population studies and the intricacies of each other's research. The high standard of papers and posters as well as the enthusiasm of the delegates helped to ensure the continued success and enjoyment of Popfest.

Popfest 2006 gratefully acknowledges the support of the following **sponsors**, without whom the conference would not have been possible:

**British Society for Population Studies**, Population Geography Research Group, as one of the specialist research groups of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of the British Geographers), the School of Geography, University of Leeds, the Department of Geography, University of Liverpool.

**TICPG organisers:** Phil Rees, Paul Norman, Darren P. Smith, Seraphim Alvanides, Paul Boyle, Dan Vickers and Nissa Finney.

Albert Sabater (University of Manchester). Chair, Popfest 2006

E-mail: [Albert.Sabater@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Albert.Sabater@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)



📍 **European Association for Population Studies and the Department of Geography, The University of Liverpool**

### EUROPEAN POPULATION CONFERENCE 2006 The University of Liverpool, UK, 21st -24th June

The European Population Conference was held at the University of Liverpool from June 21<sup>st</sup>- 24<sup>th</sup>, following on the heels the International Population Geographies Conference of the RGS-IBG's Population Geography Research Group at the same venue. The conference was well attended, with over 500 delegates, and around 350 papers being presented. At least 45 countries were represented, with many anxiously awaiting news of World Cup matches between sessions; the football theme was retained in the Organiser's dinner which took place at Anfield. The overall theme of the conference was "Population Challenges in Ageing Societies", although the busy programme, with 72 parallel sessions plus the opening plenary and closing sessions covered all aspects of demography and population geography.

A strong prominence was given to posters (over 180 accepted), with a presentation period scheduled and a large hall given over to their display. The session was well attended and very busy. Delegates were encouraged to nominate what they considered to be the three best posters; the (unranked) winners

were Géraldine Duthé and Gilles Pison (Adult mortality in Rural Senegal), Maria Puga and Antonio Abellán (Disability among the Spanish elderly) and Nadine Zielonke and Marc Luy (Gender gaps in mortality). The Friday evening on the conference saw the award of the 2006 IUSSP Laureate to Jan Hoem, the Director of the Max Plank Institute.

### Comments on specific sessions:

#### Leaving home and family formation

The session started with a comparison of the phenomenon of leaving the parental home in Sweden and Italy (Eva Bernhardt, Antonella Pinnelli, and Francesca Fiori). The analysis confirmed that there are very strong differences between the two countries, with late 'nest leaving' in Italy, generally for marriage, and early leaving in Sweden for a variety of purposes including work and education. A similar theme was taken up in the next paper, on the relationship between nest-leaving and timing of first marriage in Japan (Setsuya Fukuda). Japan displays some similarities to Italy in nest-leaving, with cohabitation low and the majority of never-married young adults still living with their parents. However, there are strong gender differences. Amongst the deterrents to nest-leaving in Italy is the high cost of housing. The third paper looked at the degree to which parents in Italy assisted their children with house purchases (Alessandro Rosina). Financial support varied for different types of union, with strong differentials depending on the parents approval or non-approval of cohabitational unions. The final paper in the session looked at first-time home ownership in the Netherlands (Annika Smits and Clara Mulder). Using the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study, the authors showed links between the propensity to become a home-owner and the degree to which one was socialised with home-ownership through the experience on one's parents being home-owners.

#### Partnerships

Civil Partnerships were introduced in the UK in 2005. The session on 'partnerships' on the Friday morning started with an interesting review of the legalisation of same-sex partnerships in a growing number of European countries since they were introduced in Denmark in 1989 (Patrick Festy and Marie Digoix). A variety of different forms of legislation have been used, offering differing degrees of legal equality with traditional marriages; at the same time rates of same-sex partnership have varied in the countries in which it has been introduced. This was followed by a comparison of marital and cohabitational unions (Francesca Fiori), using the European Community Household Panel (ECHP), in order to investigate the hypothesis that cohabitational unions would exhibit greater gender equality. Early results suggested differing behaviour in different parts (northern, central, southern) of Europe. Cohabitation is part of a spectrum of postmodern partnership behaviour, discussed with examples from the German 'Generations and Survey' (Gert Hullen). The paper showed that the results of the survey did not support the hypothesis of a singularization of living arrangements of young adults: partnerships remain important. Finally, the use of a household relationship matrix in the 2001 UK Census was reviewed (Steve Smallwood and Oliver Duke-Williams). This was the first such use of a matrix in a



census (as opposed to a interviewer-assisted survey) and as such was ambitious. The matrix presented difficulties at a number of levels: for those completing the census form, for the agencies processing the data, and for analysts who wish to use the results. However, the results have started to allow new analyses to be conducted, and it is hoped will be retained for the 2011 Census.

### Internal migration

Saturday saw two sessions on internal migration: internal migration (2), followed logically enough by internal migration (1). The first of the sessions had a strong Australian theme, with three papers relating to migration in Australia. To start, an overview of internal migration in Australia was given (Martin Bell, Tom Wilson, Dom Brown and Salut Muhidin) which described a growing collection of data from the last 5 quinquennial Australian Censuses. Although overall movement intensities have remained stable over this time, spatial patterns have changed, with a reduction in migration effectiveness and in net redistribution of population through internal migration. Incorporating migration with a mobility spectrum, the next Australian paper considered problems of capturing temporal fluctuation in small area populations (Elin Charles-Edwards, Martin Bell, Dom Brown). The paper used the Australian National Visitor Survey to start to develop a model of the determinants of patterns of visitor flows to different areas of Australia, taking into account such things as seasonal affects and regional and functional characteristics. Finally, the process of return (internal) migration within Australia was considered (Angelique Parr, Martin Bell and Tom Wilson). The Australian Censuses monitor migration by asking about residence both 1 year before the Census date and 5 years before it. This has allowed a three-location data set to be created (area of residence in 1996, 2000 and 2001), in which migrants returning to their starting location (in 1996) can be identified. The paper identified differing spatial patterning and age profiles for these return migrants. Sandwiched amongst the Australian set of papers, was one on migration within Turkey (Elwood Carlson). Using the 1993 Turkish Demographic and Health Survey, migration histories were created for mothers, by coding the mother's providence of residence at the time of the birth of each of her children. Integration with other information recorded in the survey (region, education, marriage arrangements etc.) allowed interesting models of risk of migration to be established; complicating factors included adjustments to province boundaries over the course of the mother's life. Comparison of separate 'lifetime migration' and residential history information also allowed undercount in the lifetime migration figures to be identified.

The second internal migration session featured papers focussing on arrange of European countries. The first paper looked at the characteristics of long-term absent residents in Catalonia. (Marc Ajenjo and Albert Sabater). Using a number of new questions regarding second homes in the 2001 Spanish Census, the authors were able to develop a methodology to identify absent residents and re-estimate the size and structure of local populations. Failing to adjust for long-term absent residents caused a number of effects, such as masking of rural population decline and age-profile changes, and false patterns of employment characteristics. The second paper looked at

migration between English city regions (Mike Coombes and Tony Champion), using the Special Migration Statistics from the 2001 UK Census to classify cities under a four-way scheme: gateway cities (those for which international immigration is highly important) and those with a stronger, moderate or weaker migration influence. The dominance of London within English internal migration was examined with respect to the attraction of those with highly-skilled jobs. Census data on internal migration are often gathered by means of a question asking about residence a year prior to the Census; such a question was first asked in the Italian Census in 2001. The third paper examined migration patterns given educational attainment (Angela Ferruzza, Frank Heins, and Mariangela Verrascina). This was followed by a paper on changes in apparent migration patterns in a time series of Finnish migration data (Matti Saari). A change in legislation in 1994 (Municipality of Residences Act) allowed students to gain residency status in the municipality where they studied; the paper examined the degree to which changes in migration patterns observed in the data were in fact an artefact of this legislation. The final paper considered the UNECE recommendations for collection of migration data in the 2010 international round of Censuses (William Xu-Doeve). The paper identifies a number of changes that are necessary to these recommendations if the richest possible migration data are to be collected. The presentation focussed on the argument that Censuses should ask questions about duration of residence at particular locations rather than on location of residence at some fixed point in the past.

Oliver Duke-Williams

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☞ Report on the poster session of the European Population Conference, Liverpool, 21-24 June, 2006

The European Population Conference took place 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> June 2006 in Liverpool. Among the different sessions, the poster session was a distinctive one which attracted almost all the participants as there were no simultaneous sessions during that time. The poster session was scheduled on 23 June from 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM. The topic of the posters covered almost all the areas addressed in oral sessions. I could manage to see all the posters and amazed by the colourfulness and diversity of the areas covered. Content wise most of the posters were very rich and hold equal weight as the presentations in the oral sessions. There was a provision of awarding three best posters from the session, which I believe was a difficult task. Because, selecting three posters from a big list with varying topic and colourful display was not so easy. However, the selectors could identify three winners. They are: **Géraldine Duthé** and **Gilles Pison** for their poster (No.36) entitled, 'Adult mortality in a rural area of Senegal: trends and causes of death'; **Maria D. Puga** and **Antonio Abellán** for their poster (No.119) entitled, 'Advance or delay of the onset of disability among Spanish elderly? 1994-2004'; and **Nadine Zielonke** and **Marc Luy** for their poster (No.181) entitled, 'The phenomenon of patterns: gender gaps in mortality'. I would like to congratulate them for their achievements. A total of 182 posters were selected of which only 100 posters were presented. Among the participants who

did not show up 47 are from developing countries that might have missed the opportunity due to lack of travel grants. Some of the oral sessions were also affected by such 'no show'. It would be nice if the potential absentees were identified by proper communication and their names be deleted from the programme. About 45 percent empty boards put a bad impression on the session that was not enjoyable for the presenters as well as the viewers. I also had a poster at the session located in the middle of couple of empty boards. That was like a single inhabitant in a remote island. My understanding is that some of the posters presented at the session could be rescheduled in appropriate oral sessions against any 'no show' in that session. However, the lesser number of posters gave some extra time to the viewers to concentrate more on the posters of their interest.

A grant of £250 from the British Society for Population Studies (BSPS) was very helpful to me that enabled me to present my poster at the conference. I would like to thank BSPS for their kind support. I also thank Prof. Bill Gould, Department of Geography, The University of Liverpool and Laura Staetsky, Division of Social Statistics, University of Southampton for providing me some important information on the poster session.

Mohammad Amirul Islam  
Division of Social Statistics  
University of Southampton

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☞ **The 19<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, 27-30 June, 2006, Leiden, the Netherlands**

The European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies is a conference that is organised once in every two years by the European Association of South Asian Studies (EASAS). This conference is a unique place to present and share the research findings on South Asian countries. It is multidisciplinary in nature and covers issues related to history, politics, economics, population, culture, religion and linguistics. This year the conference was organised by EASAS jointly with International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) that took place at university of Leiden, Leiden, the Netherlands during 27-30 June, 2006. A total of 49 panels were organised in the conference. I presented a paper in panel 46 on 'Fulfilling Millennium Development Goals: Institutional Responses in South Asia'. My presentation was on 'Men's awareness of HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh: How far we are from the Millennium Development Goal?' Panel 46 was the only panel on population issues that addressed some other components of Millennium Development Goals, such as, education, poverty alleviation, microfinance, health, and gender discrimination etc. and presentations were scheduled in two sessions in two successive days. I attended some other sessions of my interest during my stay at Leiden on South Asian politics, education and Culture. The conference was a gathering place of good number of scholars from South Asia as well as researchers working in developed countries. I enjoyed the presentations that I attended as well as the informal discussions with many of the conference participants. A number of my country men were also present at the conference

with whom I passed some memorable time. I have met some scholars those I met in the 18<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies in Lund, Sweden in June, 2004. A conference on South Asian Studies helps to realise the difficulty to implement the policies generated from the research findings into socio-cultural and political settings like South Asia. My trip to Leiden was successful in terms of dissemination of my research findings, exchanging views with other scholars, and gathering knowledge on areas other than my research interest. The natural beauty of Leiden and organised canal network amazed me very much that will remain in my memory for a long time. I thank the British Society for Population Studies (BSPS) for providing me a partial grant towards my conference attendance that helped me to present my research work at the conference.

Mohammad Amirul Islam  
Division of Social Statistics  
University of Southampton

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☞ **Joint ESRC/ONS/BSPS Seminar  
'Demographic aspects of population ageing'  
30th June 2006 - LSE, London**

Population ageing was the topic discussed at the second seminar in the series of three, which aim to examine key demographic changes occurring in the UK today and to explore subsequent policy responses. The events have been jointly organised by Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the British Society for Population Studies (BSPS) and form part of the ESRC's 'Mapping the public policy landscape' seminar series. Attendees from policy departments and academia were invited to discuss the key issues with those that provide the statistics. Speakers outlined the demographic picture of population ageing, discussing the social, health and economic impacts. A representative of DWP outlined the fundamental issues facing policy makers. A brochure outlining the key messages is publicly available on the ESRC website at <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/about/CI/events/seminarseries/index.aspx>

**Karen Dunnell**, National Statistician, chaired the event. Introducing the seminar Karen highlighted the challenge provided by population ageing in terms of providing statistics and policy making in the future, emphasising the potential impact of this on the economy, health and housing. She explained further that the seminar has relevance both to her personal career researching demography and health, and to ONS as an organisation. Within the last year ONS has formed a new National Statistics Centre for Demography, with ONS containing the Office for National Statistics Centre for Demography. The new centre now includes the population projections work, which transferred from the Government's Actuary Department, and closer working relationships with the new devolved administrations. The aim is to provide a cohesive approach to demographic statistics in the UK today and in the future.

**Steve Smallwood** (ONS) provided the audience with a

synopsis of the data needs for researching an ageing population. He illustrated population ageing in the UK using population projections to measure changes to the age structure and dependency ratios in the future. With the increase in numbers at older ages, particularly the oldest old, Steve recognised the increasing diversity of this group in terms of health and caring, employment and income and ethnicity. Based on this, Steve accentuated the need for good data sources, which capture this group, and allow for the analysis of cross-domain relationships. In particular Steve stressed the importance of using a life course approach. Longitudinal data analysis is beneficial as it can be used to track individual's experiences and circumstances over time. Steve warned that as the composition of the ageing population is changing and becoming more diverse, data requirements are becoming more complex.

**Ed Harding** (ILC-UK) widened the perspective of the seminar by presenting the key findings from 'The State of Ageing and Health in Europe', published by ILC-UK on the 28<sup>th</sup> June. Ed concluded this with a plea for action to improve the scope of data about older people and the issues surrounding them. Notably he asked for better health data, a movement away from treating older people as one homogenous group aged over 65, for vulnerable people not to be missed, age to be included in the health inequality debate, the need to recognise the role of the informal carer, and better recognition of the issues of mental health.

**Emily Grundy** (LSHTM) presented an overview of the demography of ageing over the past century and what impact these processes have, and will have, on family and social structures. Emily begun by demonstrating the historical changes to the proportion of people aged over 65, and reiterated that population ageing is as a result of a long evolution of change; falling fertility since the late nineteenth century, and more recent improvements in life expectancy.

Emily demonstrated other demographic changes that would impact on the ageing population, such as marriage patterns and family formation behaviour. Whilst disputing concerns that ageing is a negative phenomenon Emily reasoned that there will be improvements to kin availability both because people are being widowed later in life, and, because there will be increases to the proportion of families with 2 or more living generations.

However Emily pointed out that the demographic availability of close kin is a necessary, but not always a sufficient, requirement for the provision of family support. Other concerns have been raised about possible changes in the willingness or ability of younger generations to provide assistance, although Emily had seen little research evidence that suggested this was true. Such concerns have been coupled with the increase in the proportions of older people living alone. These changes in living arrangements have a number of important implications on demand for housing, health and social care.

Emily concluded by pointing out that population ageing has major implications for all aspects of public policy, and for individual and family life planning. On the positive side there

are improvements in the proportion of older people with close relatives, and levels of family interaction. However on the flip side this will be reversed after 2030, when cohorts with more childlessness, lower marriage rates and more family dissolution reach older ages.

**Jane Falkingham** (University of Southampton) started by showing how important it is to look beyond simple age based measures of the ageing population. Age based dependency ratios are simplistic, as many other things other than age determine whether someone is dependent or not. By basing these calculations on age alone, it is insinuated that older people are just recipients in society (dependents) and treats people over retirement age in one homogenous group. Jane suggested that economic dependency ratios are of greater value, as they take account of other variables such as, education, unemployment, female labour participation and early retirement.

Jane provided a historic look at changes to participation in the labour market, observing that, over the long term, retirement can be considered a fairly new phenomenon. At the start of the twentieth century people would work from 15 years old until their late 60s or even 70s. In contrast, more recently there has been shrinkage of the working life, where recent cohorts have entered the labour market later and withdrawn earlier. For men the average working life has reduced from 50 years at the beginning of the 1900s to 40 years in 1970. In contrast recent increases in female labour market participation have offset the changes to male labour market participation.

Jane presented labour market forecasts for the twenty-first century based on analysis using a micro-simulation model developed by the SAGE Research Group. For male cohorts born after 1972 it is expected that there will be a reversal of the trend for lower participation rates. For females, changes are anticipated to be more substantial, particularly due to the rises to retirement ages.

Jane then examined how these changes would impact on the economic welfare of older people, presenting analysis both on the current situation and in the future. The economic position for older people today was seen as positive due to increases to the gross income over the past ten years, both due to significant improvements to benefits income, as well as, rises in private pensions. However despite these improvements significant inequalities exist. These were largely due to the impact of different working experiences (and resulting private pensions) between different groups in the population. Older pensioners, women and ethnic minorities were shown to be the most disadvantaged.

In the future it was likely that while many of the 1960s baby boomers will be better off in retirement than their parent's generation, because of to real economic growth over time, there is evidence that the poorest baby boomers have benefited relatively less from this growth, widening inequality within their peers. However with increasing life expectancy any additional money will have to go further.

Concluding Jane commented that there is a need for better information on employment trajectories and how these vary

by occupation and education. In addition there is a need to understand the interaction between employment and family.

George Clark (Department for Work and Pensions) provided a policy perspective to the topic of the ageing population. The key to DWPs approach to ageing is the idea that what happens all the way through a person's life course determines their circumstances at older ages. Building on this idea, George outlined a few issues and considerations faced by the department.

Population ageing has become an important issue, particularly as the topic has moved up the political agenda in the last 20 years. As pensions currently represent a £60 billion of public spending, it is necessary to understand the affordability of pension spending in the future. Many factors affecting pension provision and saving for the future are marred by the general perception among the population that people will not survive to 90, despite projections of life expectancy suggesting otherwise. George explained that as health and economic activity can impact on pension provision it is important to understand their long term trends.

George agreed that it was important to use economic dependency ratios, and have an understanding of the balance between workers and non-workers. The Government aspiration is to achieve a target of 80% employment (in the past it has been 70 to 75%) by trying to draw economically inactive groups back to work. This would encourage better outcomes for future older age groups. For the individual this equates to better employment, encouraging savings and leading a healthy life. For employers, as more people will remain in employment at older ages, they should provide flexible working life and continued investment in skills beyond the early years of employment.

The health impacts on pension provision are less clear as there a number of conflicting theories. Increasing longevity suggests that people may be able to stay economically active longer. However this is only achieved if people remain healthy in their later years. Similarly the notion of more older people also suggests there will be larger number of people needed to provide informal care. These informal carers could themselves find their employment affected, and could be poorer in old age.

The floor was then opened for comments and discussion. Two main issues emerged; geography and living arrangements. One participant commented that the seminar lacked a geographical perspective. He offered that it is was important to understand what issues such as socio-economic inequalities look like on the ground, stressing that geography is an essential data requirement for service provision. This was supported by the view that there are large variations in the health experiences between regions of the UK. Another delegate suggested that analyses looking at geographic differences of certain outcomes should control for socio-economic group. For example, while geographical differences in private pensions take-up exists, these differences largely reflect differences between socio-economic groups and the geography of these groups.

Several discussants highlighted the need for a better understanding on how families and households will be formed

in the future. In particular there is a data requirement for projections of cohabitation and intergenerational families for addressing housing and caring needs. Similarly there was a request for better data on older people living in communal establishments, particularly the needs of such residents.

Zoe Uren  
Office for National Statistics



☞ **Joint ESRC/ONS/BSPS Seminar 3 'Globalisation, population mobility and the impact of migration on population'**

21<sup>st</sup> July 2006 - Royal Statistical Society, London

**Jil Matheson**, Director of Social Statistics at ONS, chaired the seminar and began by saying that migration was an important topic for ONS at present. Recently a cross departmental task force had been set up to explore ways that the measurement of migration can be improved. The seminar consisted of two presentations by academics and then a government policy response.

**John Salt** (University College London) gave the first presentation. He began by noting that 2004 had seen the highest ever recorded net migration gain and that in recent years migration had overtaken natural change as the major driver of population growth. Looking just at movements rather than the strict UN definition of migration<sup>1</sup> the recent flows from Eastern Europe were likely to have been the largest ever single wave of movement to the British Isles in history. Looking back over the last decade, a number of events affecting migration were not easy to foresee, including the IT boom, health service recruitment, the big rise in foreign students in British universities, as well as changes in Eastern Europe.

Migration has the propensity to be more volatile from year to year than natural change (at least over the last few decades). An examination of European projections in the 1990s had shown that only one country had an error of under 10 per cent five years into the projection, and a number of countries had errors of more than 100 per cent. Migration was also a difficult topic as it involved complex concepts and definitions. The reducing of the debate on migration to sound bites and the conflation of terms like migrant and asylum seekers by sections of the media were unhelpful. While the numbers of foreign citizens here were large in absolute terms compared with other countries, their proportion of the total population is around average for European countries. The rise in non-British inflows over the last decade has led to a rise in the number of foreign citizens from around 750,000 to 1.5 million. A rise has also been seen in the data for acceptances for settlement. Asylum as a percentage of all immigration has fallen from a peak of around 26 per cent in the late 1990s, to around 10 per cent now, reflecting both falls in asylum seekers but also the increase in other forms of migration.

Having demonstrated using Labour Force Survey data that migrants from different areas have different skill levels, John went on to examine skills data from the Work Permit (WP)



system and Workers Registration Scheme (WRS). WPs were almost exclusively for managerial, professional and associate professional jobs, whereas those on the WRS were mainly in unskilled or construction jobs.

John then posed the question 'how can we become statistically better informed, especially on the scale of the migration flows?'. Most migration data are derived from data collected for other purposes, thus when comparing data from different sources there are discontinuities and differences, some caused by timing and some by definitional issues. The International Passenger Survey (IPS) is virtually the only source of data for emigration but suffers from a small sample size and consequently has large standard errors and is therefore particularly difficult to use sub-nationally. However, John cautioned that even in countries with registers emigration data can be of poor quality as those from abroad have incentives to register when they arrive but not to deregister when they leave. John also felt that efforts should be made to quantify 'irregular' migrants but again this was difficult because of the agenda of some of the media. The UK is not alone in these issues. In the EU progression towards common policies on migration is slow. At present only the UK, Ireland and Sweden had opened their borders to the A8 countries, although the Mediterranean countries will next. A further issue was the lack of understanding of how many Britains were leaving the UK and why.

In conclusion, John despaired of the UK ever having a sensible policy debate; there was a need to work with the media and to develop non contentious grammar and vocabulary. He felt that there was a wider debate to be had on overall population policy. Ultimately we should think about the desirable level of population, policy on migration would then be subsidiary to population policy decisions.

**Phil Rees** (University of Leeds) began by thanking government and fellow academic researchers for the data and analysis that he and John use. Facts about the state are an essential input into policy.

Over the last four decades, world migrant populations have increased at a faster rate (138 per cent) than the world population (100 per cent). However, over the period the UK's share of that world migration rose and then decreased, returning to the 1960 level. But the increase in UK immigration (142 per cent over the four decades) is much larger than the increase in population size (12 per cent). Traditionally the UK has been a country of emigration but our share of world emigration is now smaller than our share of world immigration.

Broadly speaking our emigration is to rich or richer countries while our immigration is from poorer countries. The effect of continued net inflows of migrants is the growth in the population. Under the 2004-based principal official projection the population of the UK will rise from 58.8 million in 2001 to 67.0 million by 2031 and 70.7 million by 2074. Under the high migration scenario, which Phil felt was a more realistic projection than the principal, the figures will be 69.1 million and then 76.6 million.

Phil then turned to how migration influences the composition of the population by looking at ethnic projections. The

unavailability of official ethnic projections had led to him producing his own set as part of some work on child poverty for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The only other set of projections available, produced by Coleman and Sherbov were for the UK only and not at the sub-national level. Phil reminded the meeting that more than half of those in minority ethnic groups were likely to have been British rather than foreign born, so were not migrants. In putting the projections together Phil commented that he had experienced difficulty in getting hold of data from the census by single year of age, such data was vital for demographic modelling work.

Although the assumptions and method used were simple, the tentative conclusions of the work was that the white population would only grow a little, primarily as the result of migration, while the ethnic minority populations would grow substantially. The work also demonstrated that regions with the lowest ethnic concentrations would see the largest proportionate growth and that the fastest growing group would be the mixed group. However such projections were highly dependent on the assumptions made and methods used and there was need for further work to identify the robustness of the results.

Phil then returned to the issue of migration data. Phil had recently completed a project with Peter Boden (Edge Analytics) compiling data sources and methods to improve 'new migrant' estimates for London Boroughs. The report should be appearing on the GLA web site in early August. The presentation concluded with suggestions for improving data collection. In the Short term effort should be put into building a migration databank from existing data. In the medium term embarkation and landing cards should be reintroduced for all passengers. This would provide 100 per cent data on arrivals and include questions on address, intended length of stay and purpose of journey. Phil thought that e-borders (electronic passports) would not be so useful as they would not provide information on such questions. In the longer term more refined migration questions could be asked in the 2011 census. Phil was concerned that the possibility of collecting extra information on migration in the 2001 census may have been closed off. Ultimately a population register system based on national ID cards with the integration of other government records (with strong privacy safeguards) was the ideal.

Responding to the keynote presentations, Helen Earner, head of the Managed Migration and Review section at the Home Office, began by thanking John and Phil for their stimulating presentations which she felt highlighted the importance of sharing data. The analysis raised wide policy issues across government. She then spoke about the new points based system for awarding work permits, the need for greater monitoring of points of entry and the need to keep in touch with labour market trends, especially for non-EEA nationals. Home office was reflecting the work on the impacts of concentration and gave the example of the current policy of dispersals for asylum seekers to avoid concentrations of communities. She noted that Communities Policy had, under the recent cabinet reshuffle, moved away from the Home Office to the Department of Communities and Local Government. Other issues of relevance to the Government

were the change in the ethnic composition of the population and the ageing of the population.

All of the above was happening in a context of increasing complexity: borders are becoming harder to define and monitor; there was instability in many parts of the world; the changing EU, both current and planned; improvements in opportunities to travel; and also in global communications were some examples. These set challenges on mass movement and migration, organised crime, terrorism and community change. There had been numerous policy responses to these challenges.

- The meeting of the tipping point target of more asylum removals than arrivals and the implementation of the new asylum model.
- The development of the points based migration system.
- Establishing and growing the airline liaison officers' network overseas.
- The use of biometric information on UK visas and more overseas posts working on visa applications.

Helen ended by identifying some perceived data gaps. These included: embarkation control data to produce robust net flows; methodology for assessing skills gaps and the skills of migrants that may meet those gaps, particularly those from beyond the accession countries; the effects of dependants; and, migration and social cohesion. She was aware on the last point that the Audit Commission were planning work in the autumn.

There then followed a lively series of questions and discussions. In response to a question on the fertility assumptions underlying the ethnic projections Phil pointed out that his assumptions derived by the own child method from the census, were for higher fertility for minority ethnic groups than the assumptions for ethnic groups in the other projections and he had held Census differentials constant.

A question about lack of information on ethnic groups and communities prompted mention of work carried out by the Eastern regional development agency where there had been a recent migrant workers and employers' survey carried out. It was hoped other agencies would carry out studies on migration, ethnicity and integration.

There was support for Phil's call for the use of embarkation cards, including the fact that they should be designed to be electronic/swipable. Helen responded that the current review of Home Office work may lead to change being considered. She would certainly pass on the comments about the limitations of e-borders. However, it was hoped some of those limitations could be met by linking e-borders inflows and outflows data. The e-borders data would certainly play a part in improving migration statistics. It was also hoped that further down the line data from e-borders could be linked with DWP data.

In response to a question about the effects of other countries' policies Phil felt there was value in looking at the policies of some of the other major 'migration' countries (say the 20 largest). In particular policies in other EU countries were vital. There may also be value in looking at data on the British from censuses in other countries. However there were issues about those that came here as non-British migrants, obtained British

citizenship and then emigrated as British. John felt that there would be definitional problems with data from other countries. The UK's recent competitive advantage over other European countries in attracting migrants was based on the financial centre of London and the English language. As other countries change policy some new flows may get diverted to alternative destinations but those that have already moved to the UK will have established well developed networks that are likely to remain.

There was a reminder that the National Employers Skills Survey would be published very shortly [now available at [http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/SubjectListing/Research/LSCcommissionedresearch/ness05\\_main-report.htm](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/SubjectListing/Research/LSCcommissionedresearch/ness05_main-report.htm)]. Phil pointed out the difficulties there are in comparability of data on those from abroad for example on qualifications. Others mentioned issues on comparability of earnings between countries. John Salt concluded his comments by reiterating that population size and therefore migration raised issues in policy areas such as congestion, housing and education, we needed to have some feel for the overall population direction.

In response to Phil's comments on the census the meeting was reminded that the primary purpose of the Census was to produce the best estimate of the population and information on migration was part of that process. However, it was unlikely that there would be any more space per person than on the 2001 census form and thus extra questions on migration were competing for space with other topics.

Jil concluded the meeting with thanks to all who had taken part.

Steve Smallwood  
Office for National Statistics

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#### **Report of BSPS AGM day meeting - Population Estimates Seminar (ONS)**

**Held at the London School of Economics - 6<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

The day meeting following the 2006 AGM was on the subject of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Population Estimates. The meeting, which was over-subscribed, took the form of a seminar led by Jonathan Swan with Ruth Fulton, Briony Eckstein and Kanak Ghosh. Jonathan and Ruth presented two sessions on the methodology for production of the estimates, either side of a breakout session during which three groups considered quality assurance of the estimates and the measurement of the 'usually resident population'. The day concluded with Briony and Kanak presenting details of the objectives and areas of research of the Improving Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS) project.

#### **Population Estimates Methodology**

The first session looked at the basic definitions used in the calculation of the annually produced ONS Mid Year Estimates, and the methodology used to roll the estimates

forwards, with a detailed look at each of the individual components. The estimates are of the resident population as at 30<sup>th</sup> June. They are prepared for England and Wales, regions, local authorities and primary care organisations and are available by age, sex, marital status and for total and household populations.

The methodology is based on the cohort component method – although three sub-groups that do not ‘age-on’ are treated separately (see below). The estimates are re-based to the most recent Census. Both births and deaths registrations data are very accurate sources, although events abroad and to non-residents present challenges, as do late death registrations and incorrect date of birth used to calculate age at death.

The migration component is separated into internal moves within the UK and international moves. Internal migration estimates at local authority level are based on address change notifications on GP patient registers. There are several pitfalls, the main one being for residents failing to notify their GP of an address change, which is most likely during the highly mobile young adult years. However, the source is broadly accepted as a good proxy for year on year moves within the UK.

It is with the elements that make up international migration where the main difficulties lie. The international migration estimate is based on data from the International Passenger Survey (IPS) and supplementary data on Irish Flows minus an adjustment for migrant switchers plus adjustments for visitor switchers and asylum seekers. Each component flow was presented in turn with sources, methodology and challenges clearly identified. Challenges include identifying the proportion and distribution of successful and failed asylum seekers; overlap with Armed Forces migrants; linking first onward move of international migrants; sample variation; and differences between intentions and actuality of migrants and visitors. The Quality Review on International Migration and the ongoing IMPS project (see below) are clearly attempts by ONS to try and find a better solution to this highly complex issue and this move is very much welcomed.

The second session looked at the three population sub groups (school boarders, prisoners and armed forces) that are handled outside the standard cohort component methodology because they do not ‘age-on’ and are not covered by internal and/or international migration estimates. The population estimates for most authorities are unaffected by the estimated numbers in these groups, but they can have a substantial impact on the estimates for affected authorities.

Changes in the number of school boarders and prisoners are estimated from a comparison of consecutive year’s data, supplied by DfES/WAG and the Home Office respectively. However, changes in the way these groups are recorded by the NHS, may make it possible in future to estimate migration within both groups using the standard NHSCR and Patient Register methodology.

The multi-stage process used to estimate home armed forces and their dependents is perhaps the most complex of the entire Mid Year Estimates methodology. First, UK armed forces and their families stationed abroad are removed from total UK

armed forces, with 2001 Census ratios used to estimate place of origin within England and Wales. Data on home armed forces by sex by station base is received from the Defence Analytical Statistics Agency (DASA) and averaged on a quarterly basis. Gurkhas (all male) are added on, and ‘Whitehall Warriors’ (service personnel occupying desk jobs in London) are redistributed from Westminster LB to other London boroughs using Census ratios. Base to residence and age/gender distributions specific to each LA are applied using Census data, with the results constrained to national totals supplied by DASA.

The final stage is to remove service children and wives overseas. Both groups are estimated by applying scaling factors, specific to each force, to married males in the UK armed forces stationed abroad. For children, equal numbers of boys and girls are assumed with an age distribution derived from Child Benefit data less an allowance for children remaining in the UK (mainly at boarding schools). Service wives abroad are given the same age distribution as the married males. In mid-2005 there were 8,900 service wives and 11,900 service children living abroad who originated in England and Wales.

Challenges in estimating the UK and home armed forces are the use of Census derived distributions and matrices and the use of constant ratios based on 1998 data to estimate the number of service wives and children abroad. The increasing age of the source material may not reflect subsequent changes in living patterns.

Finally, an estimate of foreign armed forces stationed in the UK has to be included. These are predominantly American forces, concentrated in a few locations in East Anglia and Gloucestershire, whose movements into and out of the country are not recorded by the IPS. Numbers of both forces and dependents in all branches of the forces are provided from a single point of contact in the USAF, and a 2001 Census derived age distribution applied.

### **Breakout Sessions**

Three breakout sessions were held between the above two sessions on population estimates methodology. Two of the breakout sessions considered issues of quality assurance with the third considering definitions of usual residence. Each group benefited from background notes prepared by the presenters (see web-link below). The feedback from the participants in the breakout sessions is summarised below:

### **Quality Assurance**

From the user perspective, the definition of quality depends on the purposes for which the data are used. Different uses may require different degrees of precision and reliability. One of the key uses of population data in England is in the formulae for sharing out central government’s financial grant to local authorities. Although the estimates are no longer directly used to allocate funding, having been replaced by the sub-national population projections, the estimates still provide the population base for the projections and thus indirectly influence changes in spending on local government services

across the country. Furthermore the multiplier effect within the formula grant is very large, perhaps of the order of £500 per person (varying across the country), which massively amplifies the effects of changes and uncertainties in the population distribution. Other specific grants (tied to particular services) are also often based on elements of the formula grant calculation, so the final effect on resources available for some authorities can be substantial.

The technical value of the quality checks undertaken by ONS was recognised in the discussions and it was concluded that there were two distinct types of QA:

1. *Annual Cycle QA* - to check and sign-off the annual ONS production of the estimates. It was recognised that timescales limit possible checks but that they should include 'sense checking' the input data and the results output and also confirm that the currently specified method has run correctly. Despite the tight timescales it was considered that possible improvements were:
  - Involving Local Authorities in the process, as is already done in the validating of the DASA data, perhaps initially through a limited number known to have reliable and strong data sources. This could prompt other authorities to strengthen their data sources.
  - Checking input data and/or output results against a greater number of administrative data sources than the three used at present.
  - Greater transparency by publication of key indicators resulting from QA checks, ideally with commentary on the checking process and interpretation of the findings. This would allow users of the estimates to form their own view on the accuracy of the estimates.
  - Recognising the nature and limitations of the estimates there was discussion of publication of confidence Intervals for the estimates. It was recognised that this would be very difficult due to the nature of the methodology. However, work on this issue could illustrate sensitivity to changed assumptions and therefore inform longer term QA priorities.
2. *Longer-term methodology QA* – to check individual estimates and monitor the longer series of estimates in order to inform and guide future changes to methodology and data sources, including prioritisation of effort. Key points expressed during discussion were:
  - ONS should consider a Champion/Challenger approach, whereby the current 'Champion' methodology is tested against 'Challenger' methodologies on several key quality indicators. The 'Challenger' would become the new 'Champion' methodology if it scored better on the majority of indicators.
  - Longer term monitoring QA should seek factors leading to "drift" in the estimates because the significance and character of the components of change, and elements in the population, do not remain constant.
  - A key focus for this type of QA should be on improving estimates of migration, particularly

whether the underlying data sources and/or assumptions could be improved.

- It was suggested that the use of 'Flag 4' data from GP registration data could prove to be a very useful data source either for validation or, possibly, within the method itself.
- The validity of using 2001 Census results within the methodology to distribute large area counts for sub-populations to small areas, or to apply age distributions to sub-populations was questioned, especially the further away from the 2001 Census and given current speed of change.
- The focus of the annual QA process on the distribution of a pre-determined national estimate was understandable given the top-down methodology but was a cause for concern. Longer term QA should consider evidence to identify possible problems in the estimation of population change at the national level.
- ONS should publish the results of any QA work in a transparent manner but should secure active involvement of Local Authorities in the QA process to add an early customer perspective.
- Initiatives by ONS such as the 'Improving Migration & Population Statistics (IMPS)' study were welcome but there was concern that the timescales for reacting to QA results and improving the estimates methodology could be longer than hoped for by users given the speed of change in living patterns and the range of uses for the estimates, particularly resource allocation.

This was followed by some discussion on the practicality of these suggestions.

### **Definitions of Usual Residence**

The usually resident population for the estimates is defined as all people who usually live in an area, whatever their nationality. HM and US Armed Forces resident in England and Wales are included, while those stationed outside England and Wales are not included. Students are taken to be resident at their term time address. Other definitions of usual residence exist (see web-link below). Also, there are practical working definitions of usual residence for many of the components of the estimates e.g. international migrant estimates are based on a minimum residence of 12 months.

It was recognised that the Census, through question structure, could allow derivation of multiple definitions of population. However, the nature of the estimates requires choice of one definition. A key issue therefore was whether the basis of the definition would allow interchange of key groups between different definitions (both 'de jure' and 'de facto'), including their identification in the component data used to produce the estimates.

Two possible definitions were identified – one based on the family home and one based on weekday address (to cover those working from home). Further discussion of the question distinguished between the technical issues and the resource and policy issues arising from these two definitions.



Technically, it was unclear whether Census data could be used to identify difficult sub-groups within each definition. Even so, bearing in mind existing problems, the key issue was the availability of suitable administrative sources or survey data to roll forward Census data and whether they were sufficiently robust at local authority level to obtain national consistency. Particular difficulties were already experienced in determining the usual residence of those who recorded a residence of less than 12 months. Using the weekday definition was likely to extend those difficulties in respect of identification of temporary and project workers and the turnover of short-term migrant workers. Further, it was not clear what implications the definition would have for students. The electoral roll was advanced as a local count of adults although questions of dual registration, non-registration, and variable practices on cleaning the roll were recognised.

The purposes to which the estimates are put are equally, if not more, relevant to the choice of definition for the population as the availability of data. The role of the estimates within the public sector resource allocation process would emphasise a definition based on where people lived most of their time. This would potentially relate better to service provision requirements.

Nevertheless, the policy implications of population data can vary with different definitions. The two definitions featured in discussion have different relationships to travel-to-work data and its interpretation. For instance, to what extent is a worker living away from home during the week making a free lifestyle choice through ability to own a second home or, responding to an imposed choice due to inadequate job opportunity in the home area? Given that the estimates become the base for population and other related projections the policy issues arising from different definitions are potentially magnified into the future. This is particularly so if data sources and the estimates methodology are unable to respond quickly enough to social and economic change and working and living arrangements.

### **Improving Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS)**

The Improving Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS) project is designed to improve the migration and population statistics produced by ONS by gaining a better understanding of areas of weakness or concern within the population estimation process. It originated following the assessment of a discrepancy of 1.1 million people between the 2001 population estimates rolled forward from the 1991 Census and those based on the 2001 Census, but it was completely separate from the Census Quality Review. ONS considered that there remained an unexplained gap of 209,000 people after adjustments of 351,000 for young men, 305,000 for international migration, especially out-migration, and 275,000 by other 2001 post-Census adjustments. Further information on these adjustments can be found at [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme\\_population/LAStudy\\_FullReport.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_FullReport.pdf)

Possible weaknesses have been scoped in each aspect of the estimates relating to base populations, deaths, migration and

groups which are difficult to count or are mobile. The IMPS project aims to improve future migration and population statistics to ensure that any corresponding gap between rolled forward 2011 estimates and Census is smaller and that the reasons are understood. The project has identified different work streams to examine population bases, alternative data sources, international migration and internal migration.

Case studies are underway in 4 local authorities (Barnet, Derby, Hammersmith and Fulham and Welwyn Hatfield) to investigate local data sources suitable to produce or quality assure estimates. The authorities were selected as being most representative of the 4 key clusters identified through principal component analysis of specific risk factors. The latest information on the case studies can be found at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/default.asp>

The international migration work, linked to the National Statistics Quality Review of International Migration Statistics, is looking at the sampling methodology used in the IPS; the use of questions on people's intentions in the IPS; methods to integrate current data sources; potential use of alternative data sources; and methods for distributing IPS flows within the UK. Other research is looking at the issue of short-term migration (under a year).

The NHS Central Register is the dominant data source on internal migration but other sources are being examined from national government sources (e.g. benefits data, schools' census, national insurance and electoral roll); from local authority sources (e.g. council tax); and from commercial sources (e.g. utility companies and databases such as ACORN). Research is also ongoing into the estimation of moves of particularly difficult groups like young males, ethnic minorities, non-English speakers and armed forces and their dependants.

### **Discussion**

Most of the major concerns about the mid year population estimates arise from their use for resource allocation. This was evident from the number of suggestions that the estimates for particular local areas were too low, with an absence of suggestion that estimates for any local areas were too high. But, given that the estimates have to be produced on a nationally consistent basis the challenge is to improve the methodology in a fair and consistent manner rather than effect particular local adjustments.

The local authority case studies within IMPS were welcomed as a means to improve understanding of producer and consumer perspectives of the estimates. The resultant report of the research will hopefully provide a full review of the merits or otherwise of using a range of local data sources within the process of producing the estimates. Nevertheless, the indicators used for defining clusters were challenged (especially the non-white population as a proxy for social exclusion problems even though it correlated well). However, the methodology for the case studies is being reviewed as the work proceeds. Also, ONS is evaluating whether it was a good idea to have selected local authorities which were central

within a cluster rather than at an extremity. A fifth case study, preferably in an area with a large armed forces population, was suggested since this was a risk factor in the selection process and this group is a concern within the existing methodology.

The scale and distribution of international migration was seen as a particularly challenging issue, especially given the available data sources. However, the concept of an intermediate geography for international migrants was challenged, especially for London where it was felt that only a distinction between inner and outer London was appropriate. Research into the use of GP lists to assist work on the international migration component was suggested. Refinements in collection of health data by the NHS could assist work on international as well as on internal migration. The presenters indicated that research was also planned on propensities for international out-migration.

Despite its high profile, international migration was only one element of current concern about the estimates. Other issues arising during discussion included:

- The value of research on differential registration with GPs, particularly by students and young men.
- The removal of the unidentified population change adjustment in the components of change had had the most impact on areas where population estimates were already thought to be too low.
- Turnover rates had been analysed, with high turnover causing a higher risk of error in population estimates - but one that means the estimates could be too high or too low.
- It is difficult to get good data on housing stock change with information from estate agents being unreliable. Schools census data might help.
- If the estimates methodology was changed then mid year estimates could be revised back to 2002.

Thanks are due to the ONS team of Jonathan Swan, Ruth Fulton, Briony Eckstein and Kanak Ghosh for presenting such a detailed insight into production of, and research for, the population estimates. The meeting was particularly useful in providing producers and customers of the estimates the opportunity to review the whole MYE process and identify common themes for further study. It is to be hoped that further meetings can be organised to discuss the outcomes from the IMPS project and other related research.

The programme, handouts and presentation slides are available on the BSPS web-site – <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/BSPS/dayMeetings/populationestimates.htm>.

*Compiled from contributions from Greg Ball, Malcolm Brown, Robin Edwards, Piers Elias, Robin Howick and Roy Lewis.*

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<sup>1</sup> The UN recommends the following definition of an international long-term migrant. An international long-term migrant is defined as a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.