

Population And Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland)

Population and Migration Statistics Update

Introduction

1. This paper provides an update on recent work and developments in population and migration statistics. The Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee is asked to note the paper and offer any comments. We would also be very keen to hear back from PAMS members about how you use our statistics and what impact they have. Written comments are also very welcome and can be sent to denise.patrick@nrscotland.gov.uk.

Staffing and branch changes

2. Recent staffing changes over the past few months include:
 - Sarah Mohammed returned from maternity leave in August 2018, meaning the branch is fully staffed again.
 - Over the summer we had two student placements to help support the work of the team and offer valuable work experience.
 - Fergus Skillen worked on the Local Area Migration spreadsheet and uploading datasets onto statistics.gov.scot.
 - Emma Howat created the small area population estimates data visualisation and worked on life expectancy statistics with the Vital Events branch.
3. Responsibility for publication of Electoral Statistics has now transferred to the Household Estimates and Projections branch.

Publications

4. Publications since the last PAMS meeting:
 - Total Migration To or From an Area, mid-2017 (25 Jul 2018)
 - Mid-2017 Small Area Population Estimates (23 Aug 2018)
 - Local Area Migration spreadsheet (23 Aug 2018)
 - Population Estimates for Scottish Centenarians, 2007-2017 (25 Sep 2018)

Future publications:

- Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, Jul 2017-Jun 2018 (29 Nov 2018)
- Mid-2018 Population Estimates, Scotland (Apr 2019)
- Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, Jan-Dec 2018 (May 2019)
- Total Migration To or From an Area, mid-2018 (Jul 2019)
- Local Area Migration spreadsheet (Aug 2019)
- Mid-2018 Small Area Population Estimates (Aug 2019)

Sub-Council Area Population Projections

5. Following the success and positive feedback from the POPGROUP training in Autumn 2017, NRS are exploring options for ongoing support to users in producing small area population projections. This year we applied to the Statistics Development Fund to bid for funding for a project to improve the availability of small area projections but we were unsuccessful in our bid. We have since secured a small amount of funds from our own budget within NRS.
6. We are currently exploring options around what we could deliver to support users of differing experience. We are keen to deliver resources that users can tailor to their own needs. As part of this, we are investigating opportunities to collaborate with other organisations to deliver sustainable support for users. **We would welcome your feedback on whether there are any other funding streams we should explore or organisations we could approach with a view to collaborating on a project.**
7. We will issue a short survey in the coming weeks to seek feedback from users and potential users of small area projections. We would like to find out whether there is demand for ongoing support and the types of support that would be of most value. **We will circulate the survey to PAMS members and welcome your responses.**
8. We continue to engage with academics to understand how customers use and interpret small area estimates and projections.

Mid-Year Population Estimates

9. Work on producing the 2018 mid-year population estimates has started.
10. Work to replace the excel-based migration processing system, MIG2000, has nearly concluded. Quality assurance of the code and of the outputs will happen later this year. After this is finished, the process of including it into the MYE production can be started, it will be used to process internal migration estimates for the mid-2019 population estimates.
11. NRS now has access to HESA time series data so further developmental work can take place to explore the feasibility of using HESA data to improve internal student migration estimates in Scotland. We are still in the early stages of planning this work and will keep the group updated on progress.
12. In August 2017, ONS published a research report outlining alternative methods of producing population estimates by ethnic group. This included:
 - a [research note](#), accompanied by illustrative estimates for 2016, on a method of combining data from the Census and the Annual Population Survey (APS). This included estimates for UK countries (so Scotland level data) but only included local authority data for England and Wales.
 - an [approach for](#) estimating ethnicity from survey and administrative data at the local authority level – which is an investigation into the longer-term potential of using administrative data as well as surveys.

We investigated whether the ONS methods were feasible for Scotland and concluded that the current datasets are not sufficiently large to create meaningful ethnic population estimates for Scottish local authorities.

13. We are continuing to work with colleagues in the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) to ensure the statistics we produce are of the highest quality. Discussions are ongoing with regard to the level of data we will get from both organisations for the next set of mid-year estimates, specifically in relation to cross-border flows.

Population Estimates for settlements and localities

14. A blog [post](#) has been published on NRS Open Book providing an overview of how we estimate local populations, including details of how to access the settlements and localities data and small area population estimates.
15. The mid-2016 population estimates for settlements and localities were published on 12 March 2018. **We are still inviting feedback on the publication from users to inform future publications. We would be particularly interested in receiving feedback on how the data is being used, including what users want from the publication and the published data in future.**
16. We are still working with Scottish Government colleagues to consider the frequency of publication in future, given that the settlement and locality estimates feed in to the production of the Scottish Government's Urban Rural Classification. **Views are sought on preferred frequency of publication for the settlements and localities publication in future, taking into account how the data is used and considering impact on the Urban Rural Classification.**

Small Area Population Estimates

17. The mid-2017 small area population estimates (SAPE) were published on 23 August 2018. As well as the national statistics release, we also published an [interactive data visualisation](#) which allows users to explore the population structure and trends of a data zone by entering a postcode of interest.
18. Work is in progress for the production of a consistent back series of SAPE on 2011 Data Zone boundaries for mid-2001 to mid-2010. Mid-2001 SAPE has been created using the 2001 Census population at postcode level aggregated to 2011 Data Zone boundaries. The production of further years is ongoing and will follow the established SAPE methodology.

Migration Statistics

19. We published the mid-2017 migration tables in July 2018, and the Local Area Migration spreadsheet in August 2018. The local area migration spreadsheet was improved by the inclusion of data on citizenships by council area (from the Home Office). We will continue to investigate the availability of new migration related data sources at council level, and look to include them in the local area migration spreadsheet in future.

20. Two migration datasets were uploaded to statistics.gov.scot in September 2018, adding to the suite of NRS data that already exists on the platform. We aim to update these datasets close to the date of the mid-2018 migration tables publication in July 2019.
21. On 29 November we will release the Population by Country of Birth and Nationality publication covering the period July 2017 to June 2018. This will be an update to the data tables only, no statistical bulletin will be produced.
22. NRS are continuing to work with ONS and other members of the GSS as part of a cross-government Migration Group to improve migration statistics through greater use of administrative data. This has the potential to allow greater local level analysis and may lead to improvements in the evidence we have available on the impact of migration at local level. **ONS will issue a consultation in December to seek views from users on what they need from a future migration statistics system. We will share details of the consultation once live and would encourage PAMS members to respond.**

NRS: Population and Migration Statistics branch
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