

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:
 - Annemarie Ernsten-Birns gained a promotion and moved to Scottish Government in February 2019.
 - Craig Thomson joined the branch in March 2019, on a fixed term contract, meaning the branch is currently fully staffed.
 - A student will join the branch for the summer, as part of a placement through the DataLab.

Publications

3. Publications since the last PAMS meeting:
 - Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, Jul 2017-Jun 2018 (29 Nov 2018)

Future publications:

- Mid-2018 Population Estimates, Scotland (25 Apr 2019)
- Mid-2018 Migration Statistics (25 Apr 2019)
- Population by Country of Birth and Nationality for Scottish Areas, 2018 (May 2019)
- Local Area Migration (Aug 2019)
- Mid-2018 Small Area Population Estimates (Aug 2019)
- Population estimates for Scottish Centenarians 2008-2018 (Sep 2019)
- 2018-based National Population Projections (Oct 2019)

Mid-Year Population Estimates

4. The mid-2018 population estimates for Scotland, its council areas and NHS board areas was published on 25 April 2019. Along with the national statistics release, we also

published an infographic summary, updated the interactive data visualisation and released a blog post summarising the key findings.

5. 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. The plan is to use this to process internal migration estimates for the mid-2019 population estimates.
6. 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.
7. 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.

National Population Projections

8. Work has begun for the 2018-based national population projections. The NPP committee has met. Independent expert panel meetings took place recently to discuss trends in mortality, fertility and migration. This will inform the assumption setting for the projections. Consultations with users will take place over the summer and we are in discussion with ONS about a Scottish user event.
9. We have worked with the Office for Statistics Regulation, part of the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA), on their recent compliance check for the national population projections. This was a high-level investigation for all constituent countries of the extent to which the NPPs meet the standards of the Code of Practice. Their letter is published on the UKSA [website](#) and highlights the strong links with users through PAMS. We are working with ONS and NISRA to take forward the OSR recommendations for improvements in a collaborative way.

Sub-Council Area Population Projections

10. Earlier in the year we issued a survey to understand user needs for small area population projections. Thank you to PAMS members for promoting the survey. We had a great response and it highlighted the demand from users for support on these statistics. Overall, the survey showed that users would value training in producing projections, assistance with preparing the input data for POPGROUP and written guidance. It also highlighted the demand for a standard set of projections to be published, and illustrated the wide range of uses of small area projections. A full report of the findings is available in PAMS Paper 19 (6).
11. We have been successful in gaining funds from the Statistics Development Fund, as well as from our NRS budget. We are currently scoping out the project, which will likely include training and guidance for POPGROUP for those who wish to produce projections. We are in discussion with the Improvement Service to see whether a

standard set of small area projections could be produced and published. We are currently investigating options for automating the preparation of POPGROUP input files.

12. The LGA POPGROUP Steering Committee have a vacancy for a Scottish representative and would like to invite interest from PAMS members. This is an opportunity to influence the future development of POPGROUP and represent the interests of councils. Members do not need to be POPGROUP or demographic experts – the group wants to reflect the range of users across local government. They generally meet once a year (members can phone in if necessary), and the amount of time members devote to it in between meetings is up to them. A copy of the terms of reference is included in Annex A. **Please let us know if you would be interested in joining the LGA POPGROUP Steering Committee or would like more information.**
13. Following a request from PAMS (Angela Adams), Scottish Government colleagues contacted Edge Analytics to find out more information about their plans to produce small area population and household forecasts, linked to Local Development Plan housing growth trajectories. Edge Analytics confirmed they have developed a tool called “Consilium”, a template for the collection, organisation and visualisation of Local Plan evidence and statistics from UK local authorities. With Consilium, they have sought to introduce consistency to the Local Plan evidence, a particular challenge with English local authorities where there is considerable variation in document/data contents, names, plan-periods, plan status, five-year land supply, planned completions etc. They plan to use this evidence on future housing growth to inform forecasts of population change for both macro and micro areas. The Consilium tool is being used in England to help English Local Authorities produce Local Development Plans. Scottish Government colleagues advise that they do not see a market for this in Scotland as there is clear guidance on Scottish Planning Policy and these are underpinned by a variety of high quality sources of statistics and evidence.

Small Area Population Estimates

14. Work for the mid-2018 small area population estimates (SAPE) is ongoing. These will be published later in the year (August 2019).
15. Following user demand, we are planning to publish time series tables containing population estimates by council area and health board broken down by SIMD deciles and Urban Rural Classification (6-fold and 8-fold) along with the SAPE 2018 release later this year.
16. 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. Initial estimates for mid-2001 to mid-2010 have been created by rolling forward from the mid-2001 SAPE based on postcode-level populations in the 2001 Census. Work is currently ongoing to adjust these estimates for consistency with the already published mid-2011 SAPE based on the 2011 Census. Details of the work so far and the method we plan to use for this adjustment are provided in an additional PAMS Paper 19 (7).

Migration Statistics

17. The annual update of our detailed migration tables was brought forward from its usual July release to be released alongside the mid-2018 population estimates on 25 April 2019. This was possible due to improvements to the process that creates the tables,

which is now more automated than it was previously. These improvements will make it possible to publish the migration tables alongside the mid-year estimates on a consistent basis.

18. We are investigating how we can improve the dissemination and accessibility of the range of migration statistics that are available at Scotland level and local area level. Part of these developments could include turning the [Local Area Migration](#) spreadsheet into an interactive app which will be available on our website. This spreadsheet collates a range of migration-related indicators from different sources. Initially, we plan to release both the spreadsheet and a pilot version of the app. The app will be an ongoing development subject to user feedback. **We welcome feedback from PAMS members on the Local Area Migration spreadsheet and views on the plans to develop an interactive app. We would also like to encourage anyone who would be interested in testing early versions of the app to get in touch** (please email: daniel.burns@nrscotland.gov.uk).
19. The next update of Population by Country of Birth and Nationality for Scottish areas is scheduled to be released on 23 May 2019. The UK may have to hold European Parliamentary elections on this date, and in line with [GSS policy](#) this means statistics publications will be released the next working day. This publication will have the latest estimates of the number of British, non-British, EU and non-EU nationals/born populations for Scotland and council areas. For this release, we are also going to include data aggregated to the [RESAS classification of council areas](#) which clusters local authorities according to their level of rurality and establishes four different groups (larger cities; urban with substantial rural areas; mainly rural; and islands and remote).

NRS: Population and Migration Statistics branch
May 2019

Annex A

POPGROUP steering committee

Terms of reference

Purpose

The steering committee exists to:

- A. build and shape understanding of the major issues affecting POPGROUP finances, services, development and/or performance;
- B. represent the interests of local authority users of POPGROUP;
- C. act as an advisory body to the Local Government Association (LGA), owners of POPGROUP IPR.

Responsibilities

The steering committee will:

- 1. Provide papers summarising major issues affecting POPGROUP, including options for how they might be addressed, and recommendations to the LGA for consideration or proposals for implementation together with estimated costings. These issues will include the following:
 - i. Supporting the annual review and evaluation of the licensee;
 - ii. Identification and shaping of strategic and/or financial issues;
 - iii. Use of POPGROUP funds held by the LGA;
 - iv. Identifying and understanding user requirements;
 - v. Advising on the commissioning and outcome of technical reviews conducted as part of the licence evaluation;
 - vi. Where appropriate, working with the LGA to make the case for the continuance of the source national statistics necessary for POPGROUP.

Membership

The SC will have ten (10) places which carry voting rights comprising eight (8) for local authorities (see below for details), and two (2) for the LGA.

Membership is open to POPGROUP users working in 'local authorities', defined as councils at NUTS levels 2 and 3 (as defined by EU), fire and rescue authorities, national parks authorities and integrated transport authorities in the United Kingdom. This includes 'delivery vehicles' owned by local authorities. Members should, as far as possible, come from all types of local authority (London boroughs, metropolitan districts, unitaries in all four countries, counties and shire districts), and be a mix of experienced and new POPGROUP users.

There will also be the following non-voting places:

- (i) independent technical adviser who can participate in discussions where there is no potential conflict of interest.
- (ii) The Licensee, or a representative thereof, may also attend as and when required.
- (iii) up to four (4) places for representatives of appropriate national public bodies (Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland, Welsh Government, NISRA) which use POPGROUP to produce sub-national projections.

Numbers permitting, each member, including the chair, will normally serve a term of five years, which can be extended with the agreement of the committee. Members may be sought at any time if the committee numbers below ten. Membership will be reviewed every five years, starting in 2020, with a view to seeking new members. If new members are found and their addition takes the total membership above ten, a number of existing members will be asked to stand down to restore the limit of ten. This will be on a voluntary or, failing that, first in-first-out basis. There should always be a minimum of three local authority members. The chair of the SC will be elected by voting members of the SC.

Applicants to join the SC will be asked to briefly explain why they wish to join and give an indication of the nature and extent of their current and/or previous use of POPGROUP.

Decision making

When the SC is required to make a decision on any issue and members' opinions are split, a vote shall be held and members will be bound by the result. The quorum for each meeting is five voting members. In the event of a vote being tied, the SC chair will have the final say.

Meetings

The SC will meet once a year, with virtual email or telephone meetings in between as and when required. Timely meetings will be arranged by the LGA.

Expenses

Travel expenses to and from the annual SC meeting will be reimbursed by the LGA.

Review of ToR

The SC's terms of reference will be reviewed biennially.