

**Population And Migration Statistics (PAMS)  
Committee (Scotland)**

**Update on statistics.gov.scot including the publication of population estimates and projections**

**Update on development of statistics.gov.scot**

1. Statistics.gov.scot was fully launched in August 2016 and provides access to a range of official statistics about Scotland for information and re-use.
2. Over the next three months the Scottish Government's Office of the Chief Statistician and Strategic Analysis (OCSSA) will be working on improvements to the system. Planned improvements include the development of a way to select geographies on a map. OCSSA also plan improvements to the back end of the system to make it easier to revise data. Feature requests are very welcome. Updates on the development will be provided on the blog at: <http://blog.statisticsbeta.com>.
3. OCSSA is continuing to work with teams producing official statistics to get datasets up to date, and to make new datasets available.

**Population Estimates**

4. OCSSA and National Records of Scotland are keen to publish the latest population estimates on statistics.gov.scot as soon as possible. There are several possible approaches, and we want to choose the approach that best meets user needs. The [Mid-Year Population Estimates dataset](#) currently on statistics.gov.scot is the largest on the system at 6.6 million observations. This is getting towards the upper end of what the system can currently handle, and means that navigating the dataset can be a bit slow. A recent update to the system has made some improvement, but splitting the estimates into multiple datasets would lead to far better performance. Points to consider are:
  - What age breakdowns are required? Currently there are custom 5 year age bands (0-4, 5-9, 10-15, 16-19, 20-24, and 5 year increments up to aggregated age 90+).
  - We propose to split the dataset into estimates based on 2001 Data Zone, and those based on 2011. The 2001 dataset would contain 2001 Data Zones and Intermediate Zones. The 2011 dataset would include estimates for 2011 Data Zones and Intermediate Zones and for higher geographies.
  - Is it important to be able to easily view a time series or could datasets be split by year?
  - Is the current system performance of the dataset acceptable? If not, what is the best way to split the data into multiple datasets?

## Population and Household Projections

5. National Records of Scotland (NRS) plan to publish the components of the 2014 based population projections on [statistics.gov.scot](http://statistics.gov.scot). There is a large amount of data that could be made available and views are sought on what to prioritise.
6. NRS have not yet decided how to publish the household projections on [statistics.gov.scot](http://statistics.gov.scot). An issue is that some of the combinations of household type, age group and geography are extremely small. For example, the number of households in a council area containing one adult and one child, with the adult aged 80-84, is tiny. In the household projections publication we get around this by publishing more limited age groups for some household types than for others. NRS could try to replicate this on [statistics.gov.scot](http://statistics.gov.scot), or they could publish the full age breakdowns. It is not a problem in terms of confidentiality or disclosure; the main problem with publishing such small numbers is just that it could be misleading or confusing for some users who may incorrectly assume the projections are reliable for such small figures.

## Training for using [statistics.gov.scot](http://statistics.gov.scot)

7. The help pages on the system have been updated, and some blog tutorials have been published covering how to [view maps of data](#), [using the data cart to download the data you need](#), and [finding data about a local area using a postcode](#). The contractor is considering developing videos showing how to perform common tasks.
8. Next year OCSSA is planning to offer training on using the system. Views are sought on what the training should cover, and if you or colleagues would be interested in it. Offers to host training events at locations beyond Edinburgh and Glasgow would be much appreciated.

## Feedback

9. Feedback on [statistics.gov.scot](http://statistics.gov.scot) is always welcome. It lets the team know what's working and what could be working better, and has been very helpful in developing the system. You can get in touch with the team by phone (0131 244 0442), email ([statistics.enquiries@gov.scot](mailto:statistics.enquiries@gov.scot) or [gregor.boyd@gov.scot](mailto:gregor.boyd@gov.scot)), Twitter (@ScotStat) or on our blog: <http://blog.statisticsbeta.com/>. So please get in touch.

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