

REVIEW OF METHODOLOGY: ISSUES

A methodological review should contain the following items:

1. Examination of Present Projection Method: Problems and Limitations.

Experience during the 1990's and in recent years has shown up issues that are problematic with the present method:

- a. a tendency to overestimate household formation during the 1990s;
- b. adult feasibility problem, i.e. in some cases the household projection assumes more adults than are available in the population projection;
- c. a decision is needed on the selection of which Census years to use for the projection of headship rates: 1971-1981, 1981-1991 and 1971-1991;
- d. household estimates are currently only available in total, whereas household projections are done by type. This allows a re-base of the projections only on a total household basis. This can give rise to a mismatch, as the projected households by type distribution is not updated for the base year;
- e. no allowance is made for age-cohort effects in headship rate projection; and,
- f. the use of a black box approach, i.e. there is no descriptive link of changes in headship rates to demographic events (marriage, cohabitation, and divorce).

2. Comparison with 2001 Census Data.

To assess the performance of the projection method, data from the 2001 Census need to be compared with Scottish Executive household projection results for 2001 (base 1996, 1998 and 2000), both in total and by household type.

3. Review of Projection Methods.

A review should take place of possible methods for making household projections for Scotland and its Council Areas. This should include a comparison with the DETR method used for England and Wales.

4. Recommendation of Method to Use.

A recommendation is required as to which projection method to use. This should take into account:

- a. user requirements, as identified in the recent surveys of users both from Local Authorities and other Public Bodies;
- b. methodological advances (see section 3); and,
- c. new data sources.

For some background information see the BSPS Annual Conference 2002 paper "Household Projections in Scotland – a user/practitioner's view".

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