

POPULATION AND MIGRATION STATISTICS COMMITTEE (SCOTLAND)

Improving Population and Migration Statistics (IMPS) Project

This paper is primarily provided for information though comments are welcome, either at the meeting or by email to roma.chappell@ons.gsi.gov.uk.

1. Background and context

This paper provides an update on recent progress within the various strands of the Improving Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS) project.

IMPS Update

2. Taking forward recommendations from the National Statistics International Migration Quality Review

An update on the NSQR work is available on the National Statistics website and can be accessed at

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/reviews/population.asp>

The following summarises progress to the end of March 2005.

- IPS fieldwork pilots were conducted in December 2005 to investigate the feasibility of collecting information on the characteristics of refusals and non-contacts in the IPS. Analysis of the pilots will be taken forward over the next few months. This work relates to the IPS as a whole, not just the impact of non-response on estimates of migration.
- IPS emigration samples have been analysed by port to assess which ports should be targeted if emigration filter shifts were introduced. This work concluded that emigration filter shifts should be mainly conducted at Heathrow and Gatwick airports (as for the existing immigration filter shifts). Three emigration filter shift pilots have been conducted at Heathrow in the last few months, and the results of these pilot shifts are currently being assessed.
- ONS are currently investigating the feasibility of using non-NHS administrative sources to inform the estimation of international migration. Sources being researched include the Inland Revenue NIRS and NIRS2 databases, the DWP Lifetime Labour Market database, DWP benefit databases, and the DfES Pupil-level Annual School Census (PLASC).
- Contacts have been established with many countries and comparisons conducted of IPS estimates of UK emigration to individual countries with estimates of immigration from the UK from both register and survey sources in those countries. Recent work has focussed on key non-EU destination countries for emigrants from the UK. Findings from this work are currently being reviewed and will be combined with the results of work considering overseas estimates of stocks of UK emigrants. In addition, ONS are participating in a joint UNECE-Eurostat Taskforce on measuring emigration using data collected by the receiving country; this taskforce is due to report at the end of 2006.
- Estimates of stocks of UK-born and UK-nationals resident in overseas countries derived from censuses, household surveys and population registers are currently being compiled and compared with IPS estimates of migration flows of UK-born and UK-nationals to and from the UK. Once completed, results will be reported together with those from the analysis of overseas migration flow estimates (see above)
- The potential of UK administrative sources on citizens living abroad has been investigated. Data sources considered include DVLA records, DWP data on Pensions and Child Benefit, and National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR) data. The administrative actions required when emigrating abroad are also being considered in order to identify any other potential data sources that might be useful

- Questions on emigration (and immigration) were included in the Omnibus Survey in December 2005 and January 2006, with analysis of these data scheduled to be completed by the end of May 2006.
- Following detailed comparisons of the geographical distribution of immigrants in the IPS, the LFS and the 2001 Census, ONS concluded that there was potential for using information from the LFS to aid distribution of international migration at a country/regional level. An update is provided in a separate paper.
- A meeting was held with representatives from the GLA to discuss the work being carried out by Phil Rees and Peter Boden on methods to estimate the new migrant population of London.

3. In response to a growing user requirement for data on short-term migration and temporary foreign workers, work has begun to consider other ways in which the number of people who spend part of the year living or working in the UK/abroad, without being classified as an international migrant, can be estimated and the feasibility of producing published estimates of short-term migration. This work will be taken forward collaboratively with the Northern Ireland Research and Statistics Agency and the General Register Office for Scotland.

Studies of local and national sources – research update

2006 LA case studies

4. The first four Local Authorities (LAs) (Barnet, Derby, Hammersmith & Fulham and Welwyn Hatfield) have been selected for case study in 2006. It is likely that more LAs will be studied once the current studies have been completed and reviewed. Meetings have been held with the LAs and they have all agreed to work with ONS to research local issues and data sources. Workplans are currently being drawn up and the plan is to complete and report on the studies by late Summer 2006. An announcement about the selected LAs and the methodology used to select them was published on the web in March 2006.

5. The aim of the studies is to gain a better understanding of how LAs use the population estimates, what other information and data sources they use, what particular issues affect population estimates within an LA and what methods and data sources are used by LAs to overcome these issues. The key issues being investigated in these first studies are:

- Minority ethnic groups (research on whether any ethnic groups are likely to be missed, additional data sources)
- Young men (sources of information, comparisons with electoral roll and patient register data)
- Students (registration with GPs on arriving and leaving university, migration flows)
- Property gazetteers (coverage, extent of ancillary information, value in estimating size of population)
- Babies under 1 (comparison of birth registrations with hospital births data, migration of under 1s)

6. To complement the LA case studies, an ONS/LA workshop was held on 29 November 2005. The aim was to give LAs an opportunity to raise their issues with the MYEs and to feed their ideas for improving population statistics into the IMPS project. There were several recurring themes; in particular how to improve the methods and sources for measuring migrants (internal and international) including asylum seekers and for allocating migrants and special population groups (e.g. armed forces personnel and their dependents) at a local level. This was seen as a priority by many of the fifty five delegates. The information collected has fed into the IMPS research plan.

Investigation into whether there are administrative data sources which would be useful at National or local level for incorporation into the MYE process.

7. MYEs are calculated using cohort component method (CCM). In this method each of the components of population change (births, deaths and migration) is estimated individually. The results of these estimates are then amalgamated into the MYEs.

This workpackage will evaluate the usefulness of other data sources (that adhere to a number of selection criteria) in the estimation and /or quality assurance of each of the components of change, for each component as a whole and/or for specific sub groups in that component. It will also consider whether current sources could be used in different ways for this purpose.

8. The first stage is the development of criteria to be used when evaluating data sources.

These include:

- population coverage and overlap
- quality of data source
- availability/supply issues from source
- availability of LA level data

Research into improving the method and data sources for estimating internal migration

9. The aim of this work is to research existing data sources that would better measure, additionally measure or serve as a check for existing internal migration estimates. It also covers existing and emerging issues regarding the coverage of certain sub-groups of the population such as students, young mobile adults (especially single men) and ethnic minorities.

10. There is no single, compulsory, registration system for moves within England and Wales. The existing method of estimating internal migration makes use of two sources of NHS administrative data: the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR) and Health Authority Patient Registers (PRDS). These sources provide numbers of NHS patients changing GP or notifying their existing GP of a change of address whenever they move. There are known limitations with these data sources and therefore the purpose of this review is to investigate what other sources exist that may in some way help improve the method of estimating internal migration.

11. Students who move away from the parental home to study elsewhere bring up a number of issues for the current internal migration method. In the past, it was not known to what extent they registered with a GP at their place of study, giving their term-time address. It has now become policy in some institutions that students register with the institution health centre as part of their registration process. However, it for some institutions the contact details for the students are the institution building rather than their residential addresses. It is necessary, therefore, to get a better understanding or more info about student registration with GPs to gain better insight into the data.

12. The migration of certain sub-groups of the population may not be covered in the same way by the NHS sources as others. Current prominent issues are listed below. Any alternative sources for measuring moves of these sub-groups will need to be used in line with measures for ensuring that those members of the sub-groups who are captured by the NHS sources are not double-counted.

- Young mobile adults, especially single men, do not inform or change their GP as soon after they migrate as other people do. To what extent does this lead to list inflation in origin areas, and undercounting in destination areas, and how can this be allowed for in estimates? What sources are available that better measure the moves of these people?
- Are all ethnic groups adequately covered by the NHS sources, for their initial registration and when informing/changing GP on migration? To what extent are any issues geographically concentrated/biased? Are there alternative sources for measuring their moves? At present we only have anecdotal evidence of a potential problem.

- What is the impact of 'closed lists' and 'walk in centres' on the recording of migrant moves, and do they affect some sub-groups more than others?

Population Bases and definitions

13. A Final Statement paper was submitted to the Census Population Bases and Definitions Topic Group (CPBDTG) at the end of February. This summarised the work of the Population Definitions Working Group (PDWG) on a number of key issues around population bases, for example:

- Continuing discussions over the data needs of different users with regards to usual residence underline the potential usefulness of obtaining information on secondary residence
- Defining households. The group discussed the definition of the household, and possible amendments to the 2001 definition e.g. to remove the term 'common housekeeping'

14. A conference paper on population definitions and the 2011 Census was presented at the annual meeting of LARIA (Local Authority Research and Intelligence Association) on 21 March 2006. This presentation summarised the key points made in the Final Statement. The paper was well received and some interesting discussion resulted. An article is planned for a forthcoming issue of *Population Trends*.

Communication with stakeholders

15. Information on the IMPS project was published on the National Statistics website in September 2005 with a further update on the LA case studies and LA workshop in March 2006. For more information see link <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/imps>. It is planned to add further updates including the IMPS research plan, a full report on the LA workshop plus regular updates on IMPS research.

16. Updates on the IMPS project and progress on IMPS research will be presented at a number of forthcoming conferences including the GSS methodology conference and European Association for Population Studies (EAPS) conference in June.

Amanda Blunden
National Statistics Centre for Demography
March 2006

Amanda.Blunden@ons.gov.uk