

International Steering Group – Note of Key Points

30th June 2022 : 9am – 11 am (BST time)

Attending

Professor James Brown – UTS

Abby Morgan – Stats New Zealand

Owen Abbott – ONS

Professor David Martin – University of Southampton

Sir Ian Diamond – UK National Statistician

Esta Clark – NRS

David Rowley – NRS

Benjamin Little – NRS

Ralph Mcdevitt - NRS

Pete Whitehouse – NRS

Will Howes – NRS

Key Actions

1. NRS updated the group on progress with the census – the household return rate is now 89.1%, which is unlikely to change. 19 of 32 local authorities have a return rate of over 90%, while 30 have a return rate over the KPI of 85%. Glasgow City has the lowest return rate at 83.3%.
2. NRS provided an update to the group on CCS progress. Figures from Tuesday 28th of June showed that property listing had started in 98% of postcodes and was complete in 90%. In 3 COMAs, property listing has completed. The focus for interviewers has now shifted on to interviews and the census address list will be used in areas where property listing has not completed. 6,900 interviews had been completed as of 28th of June, with 1,600 soft refusals and interviewers were unable to access 1,200 properties.
3. NRS will look at vacant property rates recorded by census field force and compare this with those from the CCS. This will help to corroborate information from CCS field staff where they have encountered large numbers of properties they cannot access, for example holiday lets. NRS will report back to the group on findings from this.
4. NRS will provide a written update on the CCS to the steering group weekly, on a Friday.

5. NRS presented slides on the progress that NRS is making in obtaining various admin datasets. NRS have received NHSCR, Electoral Register, School Pupil Census, Vital Events, Council Tax Band and aggregate-level data on MoD base number usual residents.
6. NRS are pursuing permission to link admin datasets to the census for the purposes of assessing coverage and improving estimation. For most of them, NRS have permission to link datasets together, but do not yet have permission to link them to the census. NRS will report back to the group on any updates.
7. NRS to accelerate work to obtain address level council tax exemption data. This requires getting the data from each of the 32 local authorities separately. NRS will focus on getting the data from higher-priority local authorities first, which should establish a process for obtaining the data that makes it quicker for getting it from other local authorities.
8. NRS are expecting to receive health activity data this summer. NRS are currently discussing with Public Health Scotland on getting vaccination data included with this, although the type of interaction will not be known. The panel commented on how useful this would be.
9. NRS to share detail of their linking methodology for Administrative-based Population Estimates with group members.
10. NRS are in contact with Social Security Scotland on obtaining their data; Social Security Scotland have not yet identified a legal gateway for sharing data with NRS, but they are looking into this. An update will be provided at the next meeting by NRS.
11. NRS are meeting with HMRC on 30th of June, an update will be provided to the group on progress made at the next meeting.
12. Scottish Government, including Ally McAlpine, are meeting with DWP in the week commencing the 4th of July to discuss data sharing more broadly. NRS are planning to use this route to try and obtain DWP data for census use. Ally McAlpine/NRS to provide an update at the next meeting.
13. NRS to copy relevant group members into communication with DWP.
14. ONS to investigate whether they could onward share aggregate-level DWP data with NRS.
15. The group discussed that the two departments have a shared customer information system, so it may be possible to obtain useful data for census from one joint request to both DWP and HMRC. NRS to discuss with ONS what data they have received from DWP and HMRC.
16. NRS are in contact with colleagues in Scottish Government HE/FE stats who have close links with HESA. We have agreed that SG colleagues will make contact with HESA to establish whether onward sharing of the extract they receive of individual-level student data in December is possible. NRS are prepared to pursue other routes if this is not possible.
17. The method of using the HESA data was discussed, including its uses for estimating the number of students living in CEs and private dwellings, which will likely need to be done separately.
18. NRS are planning to make contact with universities directly to explore the possibility of receiving data similar to the universities' HESA extract directly from source.
19. NRS are planning to write out to student halls to request aggregate information on residents for those that didn't respond to the census.

20. NRS to provide ISG with return rate by communal establishment type.
21. NRS have requested aggregate-level data from Public Health Scotland from their Care Home Census.
22. NRS have received aggregate-level data for prisons.
23. NRS to explore other data sources at aggregate level to assist with quality assurance of population estimates for the elderly.

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