

BSPS MEETINGS

BSPS Annual Conference 2006

18-20 September 2006
The University of Southampton

The provisional programme and booking form for the 2006 Conference are now available. They have already been emailed to members, but can also be accessed and downloaded from the BSPS website at www.bsps.org.uk. As previously announced, the plenary theme is **Global Migration Trends**, and invited plenary speakers will be Professor Juha Alho, University of Joensuu, Professor William Clark, University of California at Los Angeles, and Professor John Salt, University College London.

In addition to the plenary session, there is a very full programme of **over a hundred submitted papers**, to be presented in parallel strand sessions, so most BSPS members will find much of interest in the programme.

Early booking is recommended. BSPS hopes as many members as possible will attend.

BSPS Annual General Meeting & Day Seminar

To be held in the Graham Wallas Room, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE on Thursday 6 July 2006

BSPS AGM

10.30am (members only)

Followed by:

ONS Population Estimates Seminar

Pre-registration required. At the moment, the seminar is fully booked, but names can be added to a waiting list in case of cancellations.

This seminar will take a detailed look at the methodology used in the calculation of the population estimates for England and Wales. Each component of the population estimates will be

discussed in turn. The final session will provide a brief overview of the work being carried out in the Improving Migration and Population Statistics project. Also included in the programme will be an opportunity for delegates to discuss and comment on important issues relating to population estimates: 'Quality Assurance' and 'Defining Usual Residence'. The aim of the seminar is to give delegates a greater understanding of population estimates and allow attendees to contribute their ideas and expertise to the thinking on two important issues.

Presenters – Ruth Fulton & Jonathan Swan

AGENDA

11.00am Coffee

11.30 Start

11.30-12.45 Population Estimates Methodology Part 1

12.45-1.30 Breakout session

Two parallel sessions:

- a) Quality assuring the estimates*
- b) Measuring the 'usually resident population'- definitional issues*

1.30-2.30 Lunch break – lunch not provided.

2.30-3.00 Feedback from Breakout sessions

3.00-3.45 Population Estimates Methodology Part 2

3.45-4.00 Tea/ Coffee Break

4.00-4.30 Improving Population and Migration Statistics (IMPS)

4.30-5.00 Questions

5.00 Close

The Population Estimates seminar is free and open to all, members and non-members. However, as space is limited, please **pre-register** by emailing the BSPS Secretariat at pic@lse.ac.uk – phone 020 7955 7666 – fax 020 7955 6831.

Attendance at the BSPS AGM is restricted to members only.

The Graham Wallas Room is on the fifth floor of the Main Building (Old Building) in Houghton Street. Take the lift to the fifth floor, go through the double doors to the Staff Dining Room, through the Dining Room itself, through the Senior Common Room, and the Graham Wallas Room is to the right. Alternatively, enter by the door **next to** the Student Centre door in Clare Market and take the lift, which is straight ahead, to the 5th Floor and the Graham Wallas Room is just round the corner.



BSPS Developing Countries Initiative

The BSPS Developing Countries Initiative has reserved £1,500 for each of three years for activities that encourage collaboration between population demographers in the UK and developing countries.

Suggestions for the use of part of all this fund for the year 2007 should be made before the end of January 2007, for decision by the BSPS Council at its February meeting. Suggestions would be best supported by a single typed sheet describing how the money might be spent and in what ways this would encourage collaboration .

In 2005 the initiative financed a visit by Sonia Catusus Cervera, president of the Cuban Population Studies Society, to attend and contribute a paper at the 2005 BSPS conference, and to stay a further four days to discuss common interests with colleagues at LSE, Manchester, ONS, UCL, and the Royal Statistical Society. A similar visit by a Cuban demographer, Consuelo Martin, will be supported in 2006. Suggestions need not use the whole budget. The future of the initiative will be reviewed in 2007.



OTHER MEETINGS

29-30 September 2006

Political Demography: Ethnic,
National and Religious Dimensions
at the London School of Economics

Call for Papers

Proposal Deadline: 15 July 2006

Sponsored by the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism (ASEN), in association with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and British Academy Demography - chiefly in the form of international migration and differential fertility rates - has enormous socio-political implications and is soaring in importance. Demography is the most predictable social phenomenon, yet demographers and social scientists inhabit parallel worlds. One goal of this conference is to initiate a conversation between demographers and scholars of ethnicity, nationalism and religion which will result in future research projects and publications.

Plenary Speakers: Jack Goldstone - George Mason University, Michael Hout - University of California Berkeley, Monica Duffy Toft - Harvard University.

Suggested Paper Themes: Demographic Perspectives

- ☞ Patterns of differential population growth between ethnic groups, religious denominations and nation-states due to fertility and migration
- ☞ The role of cultural factors in explaining fertility differences
- ☞ The impact of religious, ethnic or nationalist activity on individual-level fertility Social Science Perspectives
- ☞ Differential population growth and ethnic/religious/national conflict
- ☞ Demographic nationalism: immigration control, pronatalism, transmigration
- ☞ Demographic shifts and politics: elections, censuses and demographic propaganda

For Further Information see the conference website at:
www.lse.ac.uk/collections/ASEN/demography.htm

Submit Paper Proposals Online at:
http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/ASEN/Demog_proposal.htm



International Essay Competition on Population Politics and Human Rights

The Irmgard Coninx Foundation is continuing its program on human rights with an international conference and adjunct workshops to address the social, political, theoretical, and pragmatic issues of human rights today. The topic of the new focus is:

Population Politics and Human Rights

Can political intervention to family planning and fertility behaviour be brought into harmony at the global, national and regional levels with human rights, including the right to reproductive health, to self-determination, to freedom of movement and residence within and across the borders of the state, to a secure existence and social protection?

Deadline July 30th, 2007

For essay details, application procedure and additional information, please visit following website:
http://www.irmgard-coninx-stiftung.de/en/roundtables/population_politics.htm



ESRC Research Methods Festival

Booking is now open for the second Research Methods Festival, organised by the ESRC Research Methods Programme in collaboration with the National Centre for Research Methods and a number of ESRC Research and Resource Centres and Programmes.

The Festival is being held at St Catherine's College, Oxford from 17 - 20 July 2006.

and aims to engage social scientists across a wide range of disciplines and sectors and at different points in their research careers.

The programme runs from 3.30pm on Monday 17 July to 5.30pm on Thursday 20 July. Most sessions are organised as half-days, but some are only 45 minutes and some are all day. Most sessions need to be booked and will close when numbers reach capacity. Registration is £20 for each day and includes lunch, coffee and tea.

The programme includes sessions on methods for analysing spatial and social change over time; methodological issues in understanding the role of 'place' and the analysis of 'place'; linking data to inform decision making concerning urban change; optimising the use of partial information in urban and regional systems; resources for census users and ONS resources. Contributors include: Nigel Thrift, Charles Manski, Mike Batty, Adam Tickell, Simon Burgess, Bob Barr, Paul Norman, Ludi Simpson, David Martin. For further information, including programme and online booking form, visit the Festival website at:

<http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods/festival/>

NOTICES

The Joanna Stillwell Prize for Population Geography dissertations

The Population Geography Research Group (PopGRG) of the RGS-IBG has set up three prizes (£100 for first prize; £50 for second; £25 for third) to be awarded for the best undergraduate dissertations of 2006 in the broad field of Population Geography. Would you or your colleagues like to nominate up to three dissertations from your institution? If so, please send a copy of the dissertations to Daniel Vickers, School of Geography, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT by the end of July this year (2006). Please note that for practical purposes we can accept no more than three dissertations from any institution and to be eligible that institution has to be in the UK. The prize is in memory of the daughter of Professor John Stillwell of the University of Leeds. Joanna, who was a geography graduate from the University of Sheffield, died tragically in 2004.

Any further enquiries can be directed to Daniel Vickers: geodwv@leeds.ac.uk.

PARKES FOUNDATION

Department of Biological Anthropology,

Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3DZ Parkes Foundation Grants Funds 2007

The Parkes Foundation has for a number of years provided limited funding through its Small Grants Fund to help Masters and PhD students conduct research into the biosocial sciences.

In 2007 the Foundation will continue to fund these Small Grants but, as an innovation, will also provide fieldwork grants of up to £3000 for a maximum of three PhD students who have longer fieldwork projects.

This new funding is to be called the **Parkes Foundation PhD Grants Fund**. There are separate application forms for the Small and PhD Grants Funds. A PhD student can apply to both funds but only one grant (Small or PhD) will be awarded during the tenure of a graduate student.

Parkes Foundation Small Grants Fund:

The Parkes Foundation Small Grants Fund helps to promote research into the biosocial sciences. Priority is given to the support of research which involves the integrated study of biological and social features of human populations. Relevant disciplines are anthropology, demography and population studies, ecology and environmental studies, nutrition, and population genetics. Grants are directed particularly towards helping **graduate research students** meet their fieldwork costs, but others may apply. Undergraduate projects are not supported. Grants usually do not exceed £600.

In 2006, grants were awarded to:

Ekisa Anyara, School of Social Sciences, University of Southampton (fertility transition in Kenya)

Sudeshna Ghosh, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India (young married women's reproductive health in rural West Bengal)

Sophie Haines, Dept of Anthropology, University College London (livelihoods, culture and land distribution in southern Belize)

Laura Jones, Dept of Human Sciences, Loughborough University (pubertal development in urban South African adolescents)

Susan Kasedde, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (influence of HIV on fostering in households in rural Uganda)

Kristin Klingaman, Dept of Anthropology, University of Durham (infant care after caesarean section delivery)

David Lawson, Dept of Anthropology, University College London (sibling competition for family resources, child development, and fertility)

Grazyna Liczbinska, Dept of Anthropology, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan (mortality among Roman Catholics and Lutherans in C19 Poznan)

Imon Sultana, Dept of Biological Anthropology, University of Cambridge (iron supplementation, deworming and cognitive function in Bangladeshi children)

Gretchen Walters, Dept of Anthropology, University College London (savanna resource use: traditional ecology and conservation practice in Gabon).

**Parkes Foundation PhD Grants Fund:
for research in reproduction or demography or
fertility**

The aim of these grants is to allow registered PhD students to undertake **substantive fieldwork** as part of their higher degree in the fields of **reproduction or demography or fertility**. A maximum of three grants will be awarded. Each grant will not exceed £3000.

Submission of applications to the Small Grants and PhD Grants Funds

There are separate application forms for the Small and PhD Grants Funds, on which applications **must** be submitted. If a PhD student is applying to both funds, a separate application must be submitted to each fund.

The forms can be obtained from the Executive Secretary by e-mail (mah44@cam.ac.uk) and applications must be submitted by e-mail. The Executive Secretary will acknowledge receipt of applications and will then contact applicants' referees.

The closing date for receipt of applications is **26 January 2007**; applications will be considered by the Trustees and awards will be decided in March/April 2007.

REPORTS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

**Report of the 2006 Annual Meeting of the
Population Association of America, Los Angeles,
March 30th-April 1st 2006**

The 2006 Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, held at the Westin Bonaventure hotel in Los Angeles, was attended by over 1690 participants. Over 2 and a half days, this typically large conference involved 174 paper sessions and 6 poster sessions resulting in the presentation of more than 700 oral papers and more than 300 posters. This research was presented by a diverse group of international researchers from both academic and non-academic agencies. The range of demographic topics covered was enormous. The core demographic topics of mortality, fertility and migration were well represented. Mortality sessions included 'Adult health and mortality in developing countries', 'Reproductive Health and Mortality in the Developing World' and 'Understanding Mortality Change: Variance, Nonlinearities, Interactions'. Among a variety of fertility sessions, very low fertility received attention in 2 sessions; fertility intentions, methodological issues and interactions between fertility and social structure and with HIV were also covered. There were 14 paper sessions and 1 poster session on migration, allowing a wide range of issues to be covered including economic, life course and methodological perspectives and migration in both developing countries and within the US. Many topics less familiar to the average demographer were also presented, such as 'Demography of Mental Health', 'Demography of Crime',

Demography in the Wake of Katrina', 'Demographic, Health and Economics Consequences of Weather Risk' and 'Demography of California' in deference to our host state. Difficult though it would be to draw out themes from such a large and varied programme, popular topics included life course studies (5 sessions), intergenerational transfers, religion (4 sessions each), and the effects of early life experiences on later outcomes (3 sessions). The latter topic was also the subject of Albert Palloni's Presidential Address on 'Reproducing Inequality: Luck, Wallets and the Enduring Influence of Childhood Health'.

It would be impossible to report on all research presented at this conference, so I will concentrate on those papers which I particularly enjoyed. As a biological demographer, I was pleased to see a number of sessions which included biological themes. There was a 'Biology and Demography' session, 3 sessions on the effects of childhood experiences on later health and mortality, 3 sessions on obesity and the nutrition transition, 2 sessions on biomarkers, 1 each on using genetic data for demographic purposes and on emerging and re-emerging diseases, plus a number of biological papers scattered throughout the other sessions. I will report on a few of the papers with biological themes which I found particularly interesting.

Two papers were presented on the subject of post-reproductive longevity and its benefits. Michael Gurven (from the University of California, Santa Barbara) presented a paper, co-authored with Hillard Kaplan (University of New Mexico), on a cross-cultural perspective on the longevity of hunter-gatherers. This paper compared mortality schedules from a variety of hunter-gatherer populations to conclude that post-reproductive longevity is a robust feature of hunter-gatherers and therefore of long-standing importance to the human species. This refutes the view that life in the past was generally 'nasty, brutish and short'. Later the same day, Jeff Winking (University of New Mexico) presented a paper (co-authored with Kaplan and Gurven) which used data from a group of Bolivian forager-farmers to test 4 hypotheses for the evolution of post-reproductive lifespan: the grandmother hypothesis (which states post-reproductive lifespan enables women to invest in their grandchildren), the mother hypothesis (proposing that post-reproductive lifespan enables women to invest in raising their existing children successfully to adulthood), the patriarch hypothesis (that the reproductive benefits to men of long life are sufficient to explain longevity) and the embodied capital hypothesis (a shift in productivity from older to younger ages selects for increased investments in survival and longevity). These authors used their data to come down on the side of the embodied capital hypothesis, finding, for example, relatively little evidence for grandmaternal investment in children.

In contrast, Krzysztof Tymicki from the Warsaw School of Economics found that grandmothers (and grandfathers) did have a positive effect on child outcomes in his study of the correlates of infant and child mortality in 18th and 19th century Poland. This suggests that grandparents may have useful roles in play on the lives of children in certain societies. A different perspective on family relationships was provided by Rachel Sullivan from the University of California, Berkeley who presented a very interesting reanalysis of Mead Cain's work

on the economic productivity of children in Bangladesh. Mead Cain's analysis in the 1970s reported that sons became net producers (i.e. producing more calories than they consume) for their families in their pre-teens, but that daughters never become net producers. Cain's analysis ignored the household labour that women perform, which is relatively difficult to quantify, and assumed that only males produced calories for the household and that females consumed but did not produce. Sullivan's paper (co-authored with Karen Kramer at SUNY Stonybrook) suggested that if the importance of female productive labour within the household is quantified and included in the analysis, then daughters do eventually become net producers for their households and at a substantially earlier age than sons: her analysis raises the age at which sons become net producers to between 30-50 years, whereas females produce more calories than they consume by their mid-20s.

Along with this vast array of original research papers (most posted helpfully online on the PAA Conference website for those interested in reading further: <http://www.popassoc.org/meetings.html>), there were also sessions during which authors could meet their critics. Arland Thornton met the critics of his book 'Reading History Sideways: the Fallacy and Enduring Impact of the Developmental Paradigm on Family Life'. Valerie Hudson and Andrea Den-Boer braved the critics of their book 'Bare Branches: the Security Implications of Asia's Male Surplus Population', a book which intriguingly suggests that the increasingly male-biased sex ratios in countries such as China and India will eventually threaten global security, as governments channel the large numbers of unmarried men within their societies into functions associated with conflict, such as the armed forces. Overall, PAA provided their members with a stimulating and varied programme of demographic research, which resulted in a very successful conference.

by Rebecca Sear, LSE.

**BSPS Day Seminar:
Migration and Multicultural Britain
2nd May 2006, City Hall, London**

John Hollis, president of the BSPS, welcomed the large audience to London's City Hall for the day's meeting on Migration and Multicultural Britain. **Ludi Simpson**, who co-organised the day with Baljit Bains, introduced the day outlining the reasons why the topic was chosen for discussion, to talk about the nature and drivers behind people's migration (or not), both internal and international and suggesting that many of the reasons cut across ethnic, cultural and class boundaries. He also spoke about some of the possible data sources for information on "migration" and how this leads to different definitions of migration. The Census, for example, can be used to look at those having moved since a year ago, those who have moved between censuses, and those who have moved to the UK since birth. PLASC (Pupil Level Annual Schools Census), on the other hand can be used to glean longitudinal information on children's migration, while the Home Office has some information tracking asylum seekers.

The first presentation of the day was More Mixing? More

Segregation? from **Ludi Simpson**. In it, he outlined opposing views on integration as to the extent to which this must involve residential mixing – complete residential and social mix vs support networks to be gained from clustering. A study of Rochdale and Oldham, looking at areas of growth in the Asian population between the 1991 and 2001 Censuses and the patterns of change show some areas as being more attractive than other to the Asian population.

He had used Census data to estimate natural change and net migration over a decade, using population change and age structure for each ethnic group, thus differentiate between areas of settlement, Asian growth, small Asian growth and other areas. In Oldham/Rochdale there had been net migration out of settlement areas, ie a more dispersed Asian population in 2001 within these two cities. Applying these techniques to a national picture showed similar patterns of net migration of Black and Asian groups out of all of the wards with high levels of Black and Asian population. A range of measures could be used and each showed more mixing (geographical evenness) in the 2001 Census compared to the 1991 Census, at the same time as visible clusters remain and grow spatially larger. Amongst religions, the greatest segregation was found amongst the Jewish population.

Danny Dorling presented Migration, multiculturalism – a brief history of the mix, in which he attempted in his usual eclectic and provocative style to address four questions: From where have we come? Why this many migrants now? What cultural mix are we? and So what do we do? He looked at a historical view of the origins of the population of Britain (which he was surprised to learn had not been collated previously) looking at countries of birth of the population since 1841 from the decennial Censuses. He also showed a global perspective of which countries have high and low immigration and emigration. He also looked at the relationship between natural change and international migration showing how for England and Wales, they had always followed the same pattern until the last few years. He then looked at some perceptions of integration or segregation and showed how statistical techniques can be used to provoke reactions, rather than to help achieve understanding of the situation and showed examples of the hidden inequalities between ethnic groups and hidden positive and negative messages sent through publicity.

Baljit Bains presented on the nature and context of London's population and the contribution of migration to London's diversity. The presentation started by looking at the historical demographic changes that have taken place since the 1800s leading up to the modern day. It was clear from the presentation that the primary driver of population change in the capital has been natural change however there is significant migrant churn, both internationally and internally.

Analysis of 2001 Census data showed that most internal migrants into the capital are young people (aged 18 to 27) and most out migrants are young families (adults from 27-35) accompanied by young children. International migrants in to the UK are also young people who encourage the rejuvenation of London's population. There was also a brief breakdown of the ethnicity of internal migrants who are predominantly White and international migrants who are much more ethnically mixed.

The presentation also covered population projections for London as well as breakdown of the diversity of the

population in the capital in the form of Diversity Indices. There was also an allied analysis of segregation in the capital that highlighted the failings of simple segregation measures to truly grasp the nature of segregation.

Estimating London's New Migrant Population, An Analytical Framework Peter Boden (Edge Analytics) and Phil Rees (University of Leeds)

International migration is now the dominant driver of population change but there remains no single source of accurate data on the level, distribution and profile of migrants coming into and out of the UK.

Peter Boden's presentation outlined the ONS initiatives that are underway to improve the National Statistics on international migration and indicated the additional data sources that could provide complementary information, highlighting the positives and negatives of each data source.

Phil Rees summarised the recommendations made by the project, the main thrust being the development of the New Migrant Databank, bringing together alternative sources of international migration data into a single repository to facilitate regular statistical reporting, together with further research, analysis and, importantly, improvements in the new migrant estimation process.

Mike Coombes (CURDS Newcastle University): Migrants from East/Central Europe: a new settlement pattern?

This presentation was based on shortly-to-be-published research for the ODPM New Horizons programme. The results in detail are not yet for quotation. The work has looked at migrants from the A8 countries – ie the EU Accession States in East and Central Europe that joined in May 2004.

Early estimates of the likely numbers of migrants from A8 coming to the UK were too low, largely due to these estimated pre-dating the refusal of most EU members to allow A8 nationals access to their labour markets. The information on A8 migrants to the UK is from the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS) and only covers those who have found work. It has been estimated by some that as a result of their presence in the labour market, the UK economy has been boosted by 0.2% and interest rates are 0.25% lower than otherwise. At present their influence is felt as labour rather than as employers.

The WRS has registered 345 thousand workers from A8 between May 2004 and the end of 2005. These people were mainly young and single, with the slight majority males. Many were employed seasonally, as illustrated by the share in the agricultural (15%) or hospitality (30%) sectors. Others are working in low-skilled manufacturing (30%) or personal services (10%). London has the largest concentration of these workers but their influence (measured by location quotients) is larger in other parts of the country, particularly in Boston and other Fenland areas

The new migrants appear to have had little contact with established UK residents from the same countries, mainly because the latter mostly arrived 50 or more years ago and so are of a different generation. Yet the two groups of migrants are rather similarly distributed across the country:

- they are less concentrated in urban areas than most migrants groups
- they have not targeted areas of labour shortages (like other youthful migrants, such as those from the 'old Commonwealth')

they have not become concentrated in declining urban areas, such as many groups from the 'new Commonwealth').

Most of the presentations from this meeting can be accessed on the BSPS website at www.bsps.org.uk

Annual Conference of the Israeli Sociological Society

Within the Israeli academic culture demographic science has a peculiar standing. On one hand, since the establishment of Israel, Israeli demographers have been prolific on issues directly related to the Israeli population as well as on a great number of theoretical issues. Hebrew University of Jerusalem is a leading centre in Jewish demography. In this context, names of Roberto Bachi, Eitan Sabatello, Uziel Schmelz, Dov Friedlander, Zvi Eisenbach, Calvin Goldscheider, Judah Matras, Orly Manor, Barbara Okun, Sergio Della Pergola and Jona Schellekens are worth mentioning. On the other hand, somewhat paradoxically, Israeli demography not been strong enough organizationally, and has tended to affiliate with other subjects, primarily sociology and epidemiology/public health. Specifically, it has not formed a distinct professional body similar to the British Society for Population Studies or Population Association of America. It has, however, established a Demography section within the Israeli Sociological Society. This combination of disciplinary strength and organizational weakness, although not unique to Israeli demography, has not been sufficiently explained and would constitute an interesting subject for those interested in history of demography. Although the focus of this report is not on the development and features of Israeli demography, its place within the broader academic context of Israel is worth remembering when the contents of the annual meeting of Israeli demographers are examined.

Traditionally, annual meetings of Israeli demographers take place as a separate session of the annual Sociological Conference. Annual meetings provide a vibrant forum where the latest research, and, quite frequently, research in progress, is presented and opinions are exchanged. This year the Israeli Sociological Conference (ISS) was hosted by the Bar-Ilan University. The Conferences spread over 2 days (22-23 February 2006) and contained 55 sessions and over 200 presentations. As in previous years, most presenters came from the Israeli universities. Those who came from abroad were involved in joint research projects with Israeli universities or studied issues in Israeli society. It has become a tradition of the Conference to invite at least one leading sociologist from abroad as a plenary speaker. This year invited plenary speakers were Luc Boltanski (École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris,) and Brian Turner (University of Singapore).

I am grateful to the BSPS for providing me with funding to attend the Conference in order to present a paper "Sex Differentials among Israeli Jews: What is Unusual about them?" within the specialized session on Demography. This

year the session included presentations on a number of classic demographic subjects—mortality, fertility, migration, marriage dissolution and a presentation with methodological focus.

My own study explores patterns of sex differentials in mortality exhibited by the Jewish population in Israel in the second half of the 20th century in relation to other countries in the world. The sex differentials among Israeli Jews, measured as a difference between female and male life expectancies, have been significantly lower than in countries of Europe and North America. The phenomenon is frequently commented on in Israeli demographic literature and even labelled as “paradox” of Jewish mortality but, curiously, it has not been sufficiently described, let alone explained. The main sources of information come from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics and the *Human Mortality Database*. These data allow the relative positioning of Israeli Jews in an international context. The study identifies major sex and age-specific features of Israeli Jewish mortality responsible for Israeli Jews’ positioning, and attempts to explain the differentials in the light of Israel’s migration history. It shows that a small sex differential is a result of a combination of very low male mortality and high female mortality. The findings are suggestive of a cohort dynamic. Very similar features of sex differentials are detected among Israeli Jews of different socio-cultural backgrounds. This opportunity to present my research was especially valuable since this was the first time the subject was discussed in a forum of Israeli demographers equipped with sound local knowledge of national demographic features, the economy and health care.

Jona Schellekens (Hebrew University, Population Studies) presented his research on the relationship between family allowances and fertility. Family allowances are repeatedly looked at as a means of increasing fertility by various governments in continental Europe. This is despite the poor record of such allowances to actually do so. In Israel, the existence of a significant sector of ultra-orthodox Jews, supported by family allowances and displaying particularly high fertility, is a focus of a heated public debate. Schellekens’ research explores the effect of family allowances within Israeli Jewish society with the help of the last two Israeli Censuses of 1983 and 1995, reconstructing birth histories using the own-children method and identifying those who reported as family allowances recipients among other types of income. The study does not provide evidence for family allowances being a cost-effective way to increase fertility levels, confirming what is already known from other contexts. The research points out that attention should be given to the differential effects of the allowances on sub-groups of population. Specifically, the least educated women tend to be more responsive to an increase in family allowances. However, the allowances cannot be seen as cost-effective even among lower-income families since their influence disappears after a relatively short time. The results also show that allowances might have greater impact on high-order births. Ultra-orthodox Jews, whose fertility increased during the past 30 years, might be more responsive to cash allowances than the general population.

Uzi Rebhun (Hebrew University, Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry) presented a study of socio-economic mobility of Israeli migrants in the United States. The USA is a major destination country for Israeli migrants, and demographic studies of this type of migration are rare mainly due to data limitations. Rebhun’s study is based on a dataset

created by matching USA Census records from 1980, 1990 and 2000. The study shows socio-economic mobility with the help of three indicators: proficiency in English, acquisition of citizenship and level of education. For a certain cohort of Israeli migrants, language proficiency increased steadily for young migrants, whilst the increase was less impressive for migrants at older ages. Acquisition of American citizenship was nearly universal after 25 years residence in the USA. Additionally, the educational level of Israeli migrants increased during the examined period. It is planned to include income among the indicators of mobility in the future.

Orna Khait-Marely’s research (Hebrew University, Population Studies) focuses on socio-demographic influences on divorce in Israel. Surprisingly, the subject has received relatively little attention. The study relates to two potential risk factors of marriage dissolution: the employment status of a woman and the similarity/dissimilarity of spouses in relation to age, ethnic origin and education. These issues are of particular interest in an Israeli society characterised by high rates of labour force participation by married women and significant socio-economic and cultural heterogeneity. The study is based on matched records from the Censuses of 1983 and 1995. The results show a differential impact of the mentioned risk factors on two marriage cohorts. A woman’s participation in labour force, exogamous marriage and a woman being older and more educated than her spouse are risk factors for those married during 1960-72, but not for those married during 1973-83. Significant age gap between the spouses, where a woman is significantly younger than a man, is a special risk factor for marriage. The study presents various possible interpretations to these findings.

Shlomit Levy (Hebrew University, Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry) presented a non-metric technique for the analysis of relationships between nominal variables. The gist of the method is in its potential to lead to “metric” conclusions in relation to qualitative data, and in its clarity of presentation. A few graphical examples were given with the help of the data on various forms of religious/national identification among Jews. Each variable is presented as a dot in a space of minimal dimensionality. In this way, distance between certain categories is easily viewed. Examination of the patterns of dispersion of the dots is very useful for establishing social regularities. The method is an extension of Louise Guttman’s work on scaling theory, recognized as a major development in social sciences of the 20th century.

Although presentations of immediate demographic interest are normally delivered within one specialized session, studies potentially relevant to demographers are scattered through a variety of other sessions. Two types of research presented outside the session on Demography were potentially interesting for a demographer: presentations of new datasets by representatives of various research institutions and presentations of research findings relevant to explaining certain demographic processes and phenomena. Such sessions are usually attended by demographers participating in a Conference. I attended three such sessions: on Inequality, on Gender, Family and Labour, and on Nationalism.

In this context, the presentation by Sharon Raz (Haifa University,) delivered within a session on Inequality, is interesting. The study presented is part of an international project exploring status order (as distinct from class) in modern societies. Status order is defined as hierarchical

relations expressing accepted social inequality on the basis of positions that individuals hold, or their ascribed attributes. This work is closely related to a similar project in the UK, with the results summarised by Chan and Goldthorpe in *European Sociological Review*, 20 (2004). The specific questions that this study is trying to answer are (1) does status order exist as a category distinct from social class; and (2) how is it related to social class, a more objective socio-economic category. The research is based on the Israeli Census 1995, and examines occupational proximity within married couples with the help of multidimensional scaling. Preliminary findings are suggestive of the existence of status order in Israeli society. A future direction of the research is to examine relations between the status order and class, and attributes such as country of origin, ethnicity, income and education.

I also found illuminating a presentation by Dafnah Kaspi-Dror (Tel Aviv University), in the same session, on the relationship between participation in the labour force and poverty. Although it is known that participation in the labour force means less likelihood of experiencing poverty, it does not give absolute protection against this. According to official estimates, in Israel 40% of households experiencing poverty are households in which there is at least one person in work. The study uses the Israeli Census 1995, linked to longitudinal data on employment from a special administrative source, and builds a profile of poor households. It investigates the relationship between different patterns of labour force participation and poverty, and examines other socio-economic characteristics, operating independently of patterns of labour force participation, on the probability of a household experiencing poverty.

Equally interesting were studies delivered in a session on Gender, Family and Labour. Pamela S. Tolbert (Cornell University) and Ronit Waismel-Manor (Hebrew University) presented their research on the impact of relative earnings within couples on individuals' career and family satisfaction. Currently, in a significant proportion of couples in the USA, wives are the main earners. Some studies have shown that women's share of housework declines as their relative earnings increase. However, the studies also showed that in couples in which women are the main earners they are also responsible for a greater share of household chores than in couples where husband and wife are equal earners. Supposedly, this arrangement is developed in order to compensate for violations of traditional gender roles. Tolbert and Waismel-Manor hypothesise that couples with wives as main earners should be less satisfied with their family life and/or career. The study uses survey data collected from full-time employed, dual-earner couples in New York. The findings support the initial hypothesis.

In the same session, Hela Adan and Karmit Almassi (Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel) presented descriptive findings from the Social Survey conducted by the CBS in 2004. They focused specifically on various types of child care arrangements in their relation to parents' patterns of labour force participation, socio-economic characteristics, number of children and their ages. The survey also allows examination of the impact of attitudes, as opposed to objective conditions, on preferred child care arrangements.

I enjoyed the Conference. It was an excellent opportunity to receive constructive input from the scholars involved in research in Jewish demography, and to become acquainted

with the latest advances in this field. I am very grateful to the BSPS for making this experience possible.

Laura Staetsky,
University of Southampton

Changing family and household structures and complex living arrangements

This was the first in a series of three seminars jointly organised by Economic and Social Research Council, Office for National Statistics and the British Society for Population Studies took place on 18th May 2006 at City Hall London. The seminars are part of the ESRC's 'Mapping the public policy landscape' seminar series. The seminars, which are for invited attendees, have the aim of engaging policy departments and academic experts to discuss the key issues with those who provide the statistics. Each of the seminars is accompanied by a brochure which is publicly available. The brochure for this seminar is available at http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/ESRC_household_tcm6-15384.pdf

The seminar was chaired by Ian Diamond, Chief Executive of ESRC, who welcomed the audience and highlighted that the aim of ESRC was to make public policy makers aware of cutting edge knowledge. Population change was a key element in framing public policy. He said this seminar will be followed by one on ageing in June and on migration in July (more details are given at the end of this note). Jil Matheson, Director of Social Statistics at ONS, then spoke briefly about the challenges that face those measuring population in today's world. In a reply to a recent parliamentary select committee question a Home Office official was reported as saying he had not got a clue about the number of illegal immigrants in the UK, Jil said the challenge was to 'have a clue' about demographic change. She then spoke about the creation of the National Statistics Centre for Demography (NSCD). This aimed to bring together precious demographic resources in UK government. To this end, national population projections had transferred from the Government Actuary's Department to ONS. Its second aim is to be outward focused, valuing collaboration with others. To help bridge the gap between users and producers of demographic statistics and analysis an advisory group is being set up for the NSCD.

Ian Diamond then introduced the two main speakers, saying that the demographic research in this country is world class in quality, if not in quantity, and both speakers today reflected that quality.

John Ermisch gave the first presentation on changing patterns of family formation. He began by noting that while registration data were a very important source, they had not kept pace with changes in society, which could currently only be measure by looking at sources such as the BHPS or GHS. He began by highlighting well known trends such as the rise in median age at marriage from under age 24 for women born around 1961 to over 28 for women born a decade later. For cohorts born in the 1970s the proportion cohabiting prior to marriage was over 80 per cent compared with 60 per cent for

cohorts born in the 1960s and around 25 per cent for cohorts born in the 1950s. At the same time age at first partnership had increased, but not by as much as marriage. Delayed entry into motherhood reflected the shift from direct marriage to cohabitation in first partnership and postponement of partnership formation.

He then pointed out that trends in postponement were different by educational group by looking at data for women born in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s from the BHPS. Doubtless other correlates could be found but education was a useful proxy for a number of different social factors. For those that were higher educated (above O/GCSE level), median age of first union was significantly later for all three groups, postponement of motherhood was similar for both groups but faster and higher for more educated women. Cohabitation in first union was far more likely for more educated women born in the 1950s and 1960s but the less educated had caught up by the 1970s cohort. However, while more educated women born in the 1950s and 1960s married much later than the less educated group, by the 1970s cohort it was the less educated who married later. These trends are the one side of a coin which has on the other the rise in births outside marriage.

Using proportional hazards models John showed that: less educated women were always more likely to have a non-marital birth; within cohabiting unions rates this difference had widened for successive cohorts; this widening had happened to an even greater extent for births outside unions. Alongside these trends in partnership formation and fertility has also been a change in partnership dissolution. Unlike the trends above there was no significant difference in duration of first cohabiting union by educational group. However, there has been an increase in the median duration over the cohorts compared, from about 2 years for women born in the 1950s to about 3.5 years for women born in the 1970s. However there are differences in the dissolution rate of cohabiting unions, the rate has increased over time but by more for the less educated women. By the 1970s cohort the less educated are more likely to have a dissolved union than the more educated. Overall about half of cohabiting unions turn into marriage with the other half dissolving.

Divorce remains the primary way that lone parent families are formed but the sharp rise in childbearing within cohabiting unions has also made a significant contribution to the increase in lone parenthood. This is partly because the 'conversion to marriage' rate is lower for mothers than childless women in cohabiting unions. There is therefore a social selection into lone parenthood. Less educated women are more likely to have a child outside of a live-in partnership, have a child within a cohabiting union, dissolve a cohabiting union and dissolve a marriage.

Repartnering also affects the numbers of lone parents as well as the proportion of people who live alone. Half of those leaving a cohabiting union are likely to repartner within two years, whereas it takes over seven years to reach half of those exiting a marriage repartnered. Again this does not differ by educational group.

For the higher educated amongst the 1970s cohort (compared with the lower educated) they were likely to enter their first partnership later are less likely to have their first birth outside marriage or within a cohabiting union, will become a

mother later, are less likely to dissolve a cohabiting union or marriage and are less likely to become a lone mother.

Mike Murphy began by providing some basic information about long term trends, emphasising the importance of these trends and their counter-intuitive nature by noting that despite experience of long-term "below replacement" fertility the population would continue to grow for many years to come and referred to a recent paper in Population Trends No 119 for further explanation of this. He showed that along with lower fertility and mortality, there had been a reduction in household size and changes in household composition, but he reminded us that the distribution of numbers of people in households of different types looks different to the household type distribution. The growth in people living alone had received some attention, although in Britain there was now a smaller proportion of women aged 65 and over living alone in 2004/05 than there was in 1986/87 so factors other than a generalised propensity to live alone were at work. Changing sex differentials in mortality with men showing greater improvements and the marriage behaviour of cohorts in these age groups have both contributed to stopping the rising trend in older women living alone. Levels of older women living alone were similar or higher in other European countries. Italy, although still below the GB level had seen the fastest rise since 1970.

It should be remembered that the general rise in living alone does not necessarily mean there is less family in the biological sense. There is a complex web of kin and friendship interactions which are not captured because the household has been the primary unit of statistical enquiry.

Projections show that the overall growth in the population size will mainly be older people. Comparing mid-2006 with mid-2031 in the UK national projections, 5.6 million of the expected 6.5 million growth in population will be older people (aged 65 and over). There will be 0.3 million fewer children and young people (aged under 20) with the working age group growing by 1.2 million. Projections also show that sex ratios will continue to narrow at older ages because of differential mortality improvements, for example the ratio of 5 women to 1 man at ages 95 to 99 in 2001 is likely to be around 2 women to 1 man in 2021.

Echoing John Ermisch's presentation, Mike referred to the sharp reductions in marriage at younger ages. Cohabitation did not make up the gap in marriage and consequently there was growth in the number of people not in a co-residential partnership. However in terms of kinship and care there was an 'availability of children' bonus in the next few decades. The 1940s cohort experienced high levels of marriage, relatively low levels of divorce and high fertility. They were therefore demographically advantaged in the coming years. By 2026 it was projected that there would be more one person than married couple households, and household size would continue to decline both because of demographic and social changes.

Mike then pointed to the issue of diversity within demographic and household change. The proportion of the foreign born in the population had doubled between 1951 and 2001. Similarly there had been a rise in minority ethnic groups. Ethnic groups exhibit different behaviour, for example fewer old Asian women live alone and ethnic family

type patterns are very different.

He concluded by saying that family and household change was likely to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary as compared with the massive changes of recent decades but that the centrality of 'family' would remain. However the ageing of the population, particularly those born in the 1960s, would be a major influence. More attention was needed on beyond household relationships such as living apart together. The growing diversity within the population needed special attention.

Jonathan Portes, Director, Children, Poverty and Analysis at the Department of Work and Pensions gave a policy response from a government point of view. After an anecdote pointing to the fact that individuals within government systems were able to respond effectively to a changing society, he pointed out that there were exogenous and endogenous issues for policy. The exogenous question was, given these changes what should we do? - they have implications for housing, education, even defence. The key was the need for flexibility in institutions and policies. We have much less understanding of endogenous effects, to what extent to government policies drive changes? This is an area where we are only beginning to scratch the surface. He noted that John Ermisch had been careful to refer to correlations rather than causality, but undoubtedly education, housing, tax and benefits, child support and other policies have had some impact.

The question and answer time began with a contribution suggesting that the rise in single person households over the past decades had been primarily from people who had been in relationships, either cohabiting or married. Former cohabitantes seem to behave in a similar way to the divorced. Was there a need to collect information on former partnership status in sources such as the census? Mike Murphy reminded the meeting that even for those potentially in a partnership it was sometimes difficult to determine cohabitation status, it would be even more difficult to collect information on previous status in a census, surveys may be better sources for such information although sufficient sample sizes would be needed for analysis on a sub-national basis. The meeting was reminded of the difficulties in collecting cohabitation information in the Millennium Cohort Study and a DWP expert had helped with determining definitional issues for cohabitation. Mention was made of research carried out on cohabiting couples that showed some feel that they are 'as good as married', but often it is not clear when the cohabitation began. This was a conundrum as many said they should have rights after a certain length of time cohabiting. Ian Diamond raised the issue of the impact of increased longevity. It did appear that the life course was getting stretched, perhaps in part as a response to increased longevity. In response to a question on what the next 'big issue' might be Mike Murphy responded that he thought that diversity would be a major issue. Other issues would be partnership breakdown during the life course and social relations combined with pressures of employment. The point was made from the floor that current ethnicity categories, especially with the emergence of mixed ethnicity (the fastest growing category) were sometimes clumsy - it would be useful to include in analyses whether people were born inside or outside the country.

Ian Diamond closed the discussion and the meeting with

the comment that the ESRC was happy to engage with policy makers. Emphasising diversity again, he said that one size fits all policies needed to be avoided. His final comment was that ESRC would be funding an increase in the BHPS sample size so that it would contain a sample of up to 40 thousand households.

The next seminar is on 30 June 2006 at the London School of Economics. The topic is the demographic aspects of population ageing and the academic presenters will be Emily Grundy and Jane Falkingham. The final seminar is on 25 July on the topic of migration. Held at the Royal Statistical society, the academic speakers will be John Salt and Phil Rees. More information about the seminars is available from ESRC. See <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/PO/releases/2006/may/lifestyles.aspx?ComponentId=15371&SourcePageId=5433> or contact Amanda Williams (amanda.williams@esrc.ac.uk) on 01793 413126

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INDEPENDENCE FOR STATISTICS: Response by the BPS

Introduction

The Treasury's consultation document 'Independence for Statistics' was issued on 22 March 2006 and follows the Chancellor's announcement on 28 November 2005 that the Government intended to legislate for independence in statistics.

The understanding of the issues and the focus of the BPS response benefited from an early draft of the Royal Statistical Society response as well as the well-attended Statistics Commission meeting on the consultation on 17 May 2006. The response was drafted by John Hollis and was circulated to all Council members for additional input.

Background

The Government's consultation document identifies the following key elements of the Framework for National Statistics. The following is our assessment of each element:

- **The National Statistician.** There has been a need to coordinate statistics across the system that has not been completely achieved. The role needs to be entrenched in legislation following international experience exemplified by the document. The key coordination role of the National Statistician has been built into the legislation in other countries with strong national statistics systems.
- **The Statistics Commission.** The independent Commission has provided a counter balance to the National Statistician by focussing on quality and integrity of national statistics. The Commission plays a key role between the statistics providers and the multitude of

users. This independent role for a new body (the Board) should also be established in legislation.

- **National Statistics.** The concept of ‘National Statistics’ was to provide an accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful description of the UK economy and society. This has been applied in a piecemeal way to individual datasets. The focus should be redirected towards establishing a wide body of knowledge in which users should have maximum confidence with the support of the Code of Practice. For the concept to succeed there needs to be a single body responsible for setting priorities about what we need to know and its delivery.
- **The Office for National Statistics.** ONS has for ten years been the statistical agency that supports the National Statistician in creating and bringing together statistical sources and analysis to report on the state of the nation. It now requires a legal basis and, vitally, stability in its funding.
- **Heads of Profession,** The departmental chief statisticians must develop and uphold the quality and integrity in statistics and also support the statistical needs of the their departments in developing and monitoring policy. The Head of Profession role must be strengthened in order to provide credibility and engender confidence in their output and for consistency of individual status across departments.
- **The Government Statistical Service.** The GSS plays an important part in integrating analysis across government. It must be possible for a distinctive identity for professional statisticians to be maintained whilst working closely with colleagues in other related professions. The role of the National Statistician must be to ensure that the GSS plays a full role in developing and delivering national statistics.
- **Devolved Administrations.** UK statistics have not been maintained in quality or range by devolution. National Statistics must do better to ensure the needs of users in all parts of the UK are met by providing easy access to directly comparable statistics across the UK. This is one of the most pressing areas for improvement in the present system.

There are two further key players in the Framework for National Statistics:

- **The Government.** Ministers continue to decide what National Statistics will cover, decide who will have access to National Statistics before their release (including themselves) and then release those statistics through their departmental Press Offices, often accompanied by their own press releases. This has been a key reason why the description of roles set out in the Framework has not achieved the desired improvements in public confidence.
- **Parliament.** The opportunity Parliament has taken to seek evidence from the three separate players in the national statistical system appears to have facilitated improved

scrutiny: the Government, as the funder and a key user of statistics; the Statistics Commission, in its dual roles of ensuring quality assurance and integrity; and the National Statistician, as being responsible of delivery.

Principles

National Statistics are vital to public policy and to decisions made throughout the public and private sectors. These decisions and policies affect the lives of each of us. Billions of pounds are allocated on the basis of National Statistics. National Statistics must be the currency of public debate, allowing people to monitor the effectiveness of public policies and public services and, ultimately, to make informed democratic choices.

Given their importance, for both the Government and the general public, confidence in the quality and integrity of National Statistics is essential. All users must have confidence that National Statistics have been compiled and disseminated in an impartial way using objective methods within a professional environment that is free from political influence or pressure. It should be a goal that all official statistics should be National Statistics.

Legislation should have a guiding principle to engender maximum trust in national statistics throughout society, from Ministers to casual ‘users’ of the outputs as filtered through the media. To do this independence from government must be achieved and be transparently seen to have been achieved.

The Government has been guided by the following key principles:

- **High quality statistics** – produced to the highest standards and fit for purpose. This requires choosing the right measures that allow all users to consider how to respond to the information provided. It is therefore necessary to collect and analyse the information to high standards and to explain the technical basis for those calculations to allow proper scrutiny. It also requires full and effective communication of the information so that it can be readily understood and used.
- **High integrity** – ie free from political interference.
- **Clearly defined roles and responsibilities** - with mechanisms to hold key office holders to account. It will be necessary to clearly define the separate functions of quality, delivery and scrutiny and where responsibility lies for each
- **Transparent laws, regulations and codes of practise.**
- **Flexibility** – to respond to changing needs without harming the trust of users. While National Statistics must move on with society to reflect change this should be done in a controlled manner that does not harm serial comparability across time. Change must be a carefully controlled process to enhance National Statistics and not damage them. The governing board must have the responsibility to determine any alterations to the extent of national statistics.
- **Efficiency** – ensuring value for money and minimising the burden on business and others. If several official

agencies produce statistics on the same topic there will be a waste of resources in collection, both by the official agency and by those required to provide the raw data, and even more waste of resources by users in having to reconcile conflicting figures.

THE KEY AREAS FOR REFORM

Against this background we believe that the following key areas need reform:

- **Scope needs to be wide.** The scope of the reforms should cover those statistics on which the public and Government rely to make decisions and judgements about policy and the effectiveness of Government. Under a new model with a Governing Board, that body will be well placed both to call for gaps to be filled and to support the National Statistician in refusing to accredit inadequate statistics. In the current system it was assumed that over time Ministers would wish to include more statistical outputs as National Statistics. This has not been borne out over the last five years. Decisions about scope should not be left with Ministers since this would risk continuing concern about independence, with consequent implications for public trust. It would also risk an inconsistency of application based on the views of individual Ministers rather than the significance of the information to public debate. We reject the proposition that statistics that derive from the management of public services are inherently different and cannot meet the requirements of the National Statistics Code of Practice. If statistics merit release for public use, especially if they are being used as performance indicators, then they merit inclusion as National Statistics.
- **The role of the National Statistician needs to be reinforced in legislation.** The National Statistician is an executive role that needs to be made clearly responsible for delivery of the statistics required. This means running ONS, coordinating the system as a whole, being the ultimate authority on statistical matters throughout the system as well as the Government's Chief Advisor and the UK representative on statistical matters. In accordance with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, the National Statistician should be entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics. The National Statistician should be appointed through a mechanism that fosters the widest possible support.
- **A Governing Board needs to be established.** A Board needs to set direction and priorities and then to hold the National Statistician to account for delivery. The Governing Board must oversee the statistical system to safeguard the public interest. This means agreement of strategic priorities and business plans, scrutiny and reporting to Parliament. It includes audit of compliance with the Code of Practice in ONS or any other part of the system on the same basis. Its role should be distinct from the delivery role of the National Statistician. If the Governing Board has a delivery function it would be important to retain the Statistics Commission or establish another scrutiny body to oversee the Governing Board. If not, then the clear distinction between oversight and

delivery is established and the Statistics Commission can be abolished.

- **A single statistical system needs to be maintained.** There have been calls for some parts of the statistical system to be hived off into a body entirely separate from Government and for data collection to be separated from analysis. We believe that this would be counterproductive within the UK context and result in more rather than less argument about the validity of statistics, especially in policy sensitive areas. This leads to the conclusion that ONS should remain within the civil service but with a clear and well understood statutory Code of Practice for everyone working on National Statistics inside and outside ONS.
- **The system should be UK based and involve the Devolved Administrations.** The UK's international commitments require a focal point (the National Statistician) and domestic needs demand an ability to produce coherent UK-wide statistics. The whole system should take account of the needs of all users including the administrations and citizens in devolved territories. This will require joined up legislation across all competent legislatures within the UK.
- **Funding arrangements should be transparent and secure:** Arrangements should be made to avoid concerns about political manipulation but nonetheless provide incentives to improve efficiency. A transparent presentation of the budget for statistics across all bodies involved in their production, not just ONS, should be available. While separate arrangements may need to be in place for the national census of population these should not be at the mercy of CSR arrangements within the lifetime of a huge and lengthy project to plan, consult, test, enumerate, process, quality assure and, finally, deliver the vast array of statistics
- **Release practices should be reformed.** The reform process provides an opportunity to make complementary improvements to the system that will improve trust. Reform of the counterproductive policy of allowing pre-release access by Ministers and officials to statistical releases is a notable example. As is the practice of releasing departmental statistics through the same press office and often accompanied by a separate Ministerial press statement about the statistics. Parallel arrangements should be established in devolved administrations.
- **Administrative data already held within government should be made available for statistical purposes.** It has been recognised that legislation would be necessary to provide access and also to provide the safeguards necessary to protect confidentiality and privacy. The statistical system should have access to administrative systems for statistical purposes and should be legally required to afford this information the same level of protection as for data collected from survey respondents.
- **Access for regional government and other organisations.** The opportunity should be taken to remove anomalies in past statistical legislation that effectively bars access to certain data to publicly-funded organisations that were not in existence at the time of the legislation, particularly regional government organisations including assemblies and development agencies.

Options for Reform

The BPS makes the following comments on the options for reform set out in Chapter 4 of the Treasury's consultation document:

- **Overall objectives** (4.1-4.4). Each of the Government's objectives is agreed. Comments on the six key principles (1.9 and 4.3) are included above. Underlying each of these should be an uncompromising commitment on quality, trust and efficiency. In addition the key principles should include mention of the vital coordination role throughout the GSS that must be part of the National Statistician's remit. This is clear from the brief analyses of arrangements in a selection of other countries.
- **Structure of legislation** (4.5-4.6). The elements of reform do not distinguish an essential separation of roles: the delivery role and the scrutiny role.
- **Benefits of decentralisation** (4.7-4.8). Agreed, but the National Statistician's role regarding the Government Statistical Service together with the roles of Heads of Profession need to be strengthened and covered by legislation.
- **Accountable to, not within, Parliament** (4.9). Agreed.
- **Integrated independence** (4.10). The delivery and scrutiny systems both require independence from Government. However there needs to be a clear separation of responsibilities between the National Statistician, the 'statistics office' and the governing board.
- **A Non-Ministerial Department** (4.11-4.12). It is important that the continuing function of ONS is to support the National Statistician in delivering National Statistics, which are collected both within ONS and outside. The statistics produced by ONS and those produced outside ONS must be on the same plain and ONS must have a system wide responsibility for coordination and quality. The Governing Board should oversee the NMD but this should not be an executive function.
- **Civil service status** (4.13). Agreed.
- **Scope of the system** (4.14-4.15). There should be a statutory Code of Practice but we consider that this will require a new Code to be developed by the National Statistician for endorsement by the Governing Board and Parliament. This should be a priority requirement of the National Statistician. The Board should have responsibility for safeguarding the public interest in regard to what constitutes national statistics and should also have scrutiny over statistics that are not national statistics, wherever produced. Ministers should not be involved in this process. The governing board must decide, following appropriate wide consultation arrangements, what statistics are required and then ensure that they are produced to meet the requirement.
- **Roles and responsibilities** (4.16). The one key element of the proposed system that is not mentioned here is the National Statistician, who is the hub of much of the system. The board should have common responsibilities for all national statistics, whether produced by the proposed NMD or by others. The role proposed for Parliament is essential as the national scrutiny panel for the nation's official statistics.
- **The Board** (4.17-4.18). Delivery and scrutiny roles should be clear and be separated. The Board's role should be consistent regarding statistics produced by the NMD as well as by others.
- **The statistics office** (4.19). As the proposals include the abolition of the Statistics Commission, the Board is put in position of being both in charge of the production of national statistics as well as responsible for their scrutiny and reporting to Parliament. This may be seen as offering too much independence and so reducing Parliamentary accountability. There needs to be absolute clarity as to how the Board achieves impartiality in both its executive and oversight functions.
- **The National Statistics system** (4.20). The coordination responsibility of the Board across all statistics, whether produced within the NMD or outside, is paramount to a modern statistical system and needs to be strengthened.
- **Assessing quality and integrity** (4.21): Agreed.
- **Advising on areas of concern** (4.22). The Board must have the power to advise on areas of concern, but its advice should not be confined to Ministers. It should be offered widely at the Board's discretion.
- **Overview of coverage** (4.23). This is an area where the dual responsibilities of the Board need clarification. It would be better if the National Statistician continues to be responsible for the development of national statistics and for the Board to comment on and agree the final strategy and ensure delivery.
- **Minimising business burden** (4.24-4.25). The sentiment to minimise burdens on those providing data is important, but this must be reviewed in the light of the utility of the data collected. Legislation must give the National Statistician the powers to collect information, having ensured that the information is not already available in any other form. In this regard it must be possible to allow statistical access to administrative data. The burden is not just an issue for business but for all from whom data is requested.
- **Data access** (4.26): We agree that the National Statistician should have access to administrative data for statistical purposes. The proposed Integrated Population Statistics System to be developed over the next decade partly relies upon protected use of administrative data.
- **Protecting confidentiality** (4.27-4.29). There are established practices that ensure that information shared for statistical purposes does not breach confidentiality of individuals or organisations. This is recognised in Data Protection legislation. Statistics legislation needs to allow statisticians to reuse information as well as to protect confidentiality and privacy. The Board should have the duty of policing the development of national statistics in this regard, building on existing procedures.
- **Arrangements for pre-release** (Box 4). Issues of public trust in national statistics are linked with the interpretation placed on national statistics by government departments in advance of 'official' release. In order to reduce perceptions of political interference there should be no pre-release access to statistics by anyone, outside

the statistical production team, until the statistics are released generally.

- **Board structure** (4.30). The Board must include persons representing a wide range of statistics user constituencies, including local/regional government and the general public interest.
- **Non-executive chair** (4.31). The non-executive chair need not be a statistician, but does need to have the other high level management skills indicated.
- **The Chief Statistician** (4.32). The functions outlined for this post are agreed. The postholder should also be the principal UK representative in international statistical forums. The present functions of the National Statistician in relation to coordination of the statistical system must be included in the brief. The designation 'Chief Statistician' should be also reconsidered. We have a preference to retain 'National Statistician'.
- **Independence of assessment** (4.33). Agreed.
- **Independent appointment process** (4.34). Agreed.
- **The Government Statistical Service** (4.35). The reforms provide an opportunity to develop the GSS and especially to encourage interdepartmental moves and secondments. Scope to widen this professional interchange with appropriate regional government bodies should also be included.
- **Heads of Profession** (4.36). Heads of Profession should be jointly appointed by their department and the National Statistician. The GSS offers the scope that these appointments be secondments from the NMD.
- **Professional accountability** (4.37). Agreed.
- **Parliament** (4.38-4.41). Agreed
- **Funding** (4.42-4.45). The proposal is that extra funding is provided for statistics that the Government wants but that extra funding is not provided for statistics required by others as recommended by the Board. This will undermine the perceived independence of the system, impede the Board's role in ensuring that the statistical system meets the broader public interest and generally engender public mistrust in national statistics. The Board should be vested with the power to determine those National Statistics that should be produced for the general benefit of the nation. The initial level of funding should be determined by a joint review involving Parliament and include core ongoing funding for infrastructure spending. We do not support the proposal that the population census be funded through the normal Spending Review process as census development is a long-term process and the profile of expenditure must be decided well in advance of the usual windows of Spending Reviews. Legislation should also enshrine the principle that National Statistics, as determined by the Board, should be free at the point of use to all.
- **The Devolved Administrations** (4.46-4.47). The current arrangements do not deliver coherent (sometimes, any) statistics across the UK in a number of areas. This is a problem for those seeking consistent information at a UK wide level, for the Devolved Administrations themselves and for others wishing to make comparisons across the UK. The existing concordat is not meeting user requirement.

- **The Statistics Commission** (4.48). Agreed that the Statistics Commission can be wound up once the new arrangements are in place, but only if the new Board has an oversight rather than a delivery function.
- **The Registrar General** (4.49-4.51). Agreed that the Registrar General's functions should be separated from those of the National Statistician. The functions that need to be transferred to the NMD go much further than the population census. The function to conduct social surveys and to access administrative data for the purposes of monitoring the number and condition of the population currently rests with the Registrar General as do the powers in relation to vital and population statistics. The 100-year rule for release of Census records also needs to be carried forward. Functions should be transferred to the National Statistician (responsible for delivery) rather than to the Board. Mechanisms should also be put in place to ensure that the statistical role of vital registration continues to be prominent in the separated Registrar General's function.
- **Legal ramifications** (4.52). A wide range of powers currently restrict access to information to a number of bodies including regional authorities in ways that are inconsistent with the objectives of these reforms. These inconsistencies need to be reviewed and consequential amendments incorporated.