

BSPS MEETINGS

11-13 September 2007

BSPS Annual Conference 2007
The University of St. Andrews

CALL FOR PAPERS:

The 2007 BSPS Conference will be held at the University of St. Andrews, from 11-13 September.

There will be a full programme of simultaneous strand sessions of submitted papers. Proposals or abstracts for papers and posters are invited across the **entire demographic and population studies spectrum**. For organizational purposes, strand organizers have been allocated to specific themes, but if you wish to submit a paper that does not appear to come under any of the headings given, please submit either to the strand organiser that appears most appropriate, or to the contact in the list below. If accepted, the paper will be allocated to an appropriate strand session when the programme is timetabled.

Plenary speakers will be announced shortly. The plenary theme of the Conference will be **POPULATION CHALLENGES**, and it is hoped that three invited speakers will each speak on a different and specific challenge: *Climate change*, *European population challenges*, and *Methodological challenges* (plenary speaker confirmed as **Jan Hoem**). Submitted papers on the three aspects of the plenary theme are also invited and should be submitted as shown in the list below. Information updates on the Conference will be posted to the BSPS website at:
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/BSPS/annualConference/2007.htm> as available.

Presenters of posters will be expected to attend the scheduled poster session on the first evening of the Conference, but posters will remain on display for the duration of the Conference.

Preliminary abstracts of papers – which may be in the form of a declaration of intent – of up to 250 words, plus a provisional title, should be **submitted by Tuesday 1 May 2007, preferably by email** to strand organisers as follows:

Estimation and forecasting methods:

Ludi Simpson
Cathie Marsh Centre for Survey & Census Research
CCSR, Crawford House
University of Manchester
Booth Street East
Manchester M13 9PL
Email: ludi.simpson@man.ac.uk
Fax: +44 (0)161 275 4722

Families and households:

Steve Smallwood
Office for National Statistics
Family Demography Unit
D3/07
1 Drummond Gate
London SW1V 2QQ
Email: steve.smallwood@ons.gsi.gov.uk
Fax: +44 (0)20 7533 5189

Fertility & reproductive health:

Sabu Padmadas
Division of Social Statistics
University of Southampton
Highfield
Southampton SO17 1BJ
Email: ssp@socsci.soton.ac.uk
Fax: +44 (0)23 8059 3846

Health and mortality inequalities:

Paula Griffiths
Department of Human Sciences
Loughborough University
Loughborough LE11 3TU
Email: p.griffiths@lboro.ac.uk
Fax: +44 (0)1509 228486

Historical demography:

Eilidh Garrett
63 Barncliffe Crescent
Sheffield S10 4DB
Email: eilidh.garrett@btinternet.com

- Local authority, census & planning
John Hollis
- Papers fitting the plenary theme of climate change
Greater London Authority
Data Management & Analysis

- Papers which do not appear to fit one of the existing strands:

City Hall (5 East)
The Queen's Walk London SE1 2AA
Email: john.hollis@london.gov.uk
Fax: +44 (0)20 7983 4057
(phone first on (0)20 7983 4604)

Posters:

Laura Jones
Department of Human Sciences
Loughborough University
Loughborough LE11 3TU
Email: l.l.jones@lboro.ac.uk

Religious & cultural demography:

David Voas
Cathie Marsh Centre for Survey & Census Research
CCSR, Crawford House
University of Manchester
Booth Street East
Manchester M13 9PL
Fax: +44 (0)161 275 4722
Email: voas@man.ac.uk

- Scottish demography.
- Papers fitting plenary theme of methodological challenges:

Paul Boyle
School of Geography & Geosciences
University of St. Andrew's
St. Andrew's
Fife KY16 9AJ
Email: p.boyle@st-andrews.ac.uk
Fax: +44 (0)1334 463949

- Transnational & subnational migration
- Papers fitting plenary theme of European population challenges

Paul Williamson
Department of Geography University of Liverpool
Roxby Building
Liverpool L69 7ZT
Email: p.williamson@liv.ac.uk
Fax: +44 (0)151 794 2866

UPTAP – Understanding Population Trends and Processes

John Stillwell
School of Geography
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT
Fax: +44 (0)113 34 33308
Email: j.c.h.stillwell@leeds.ac.uk

General & administrative enquiries:

BSPS Secretariat
pic@lse.ac.uk

Notes:

- Please do not submit the same paper to more than one strand organiser.
- Submissions should be accompanied by a submission pro-forma form, available with the call for papers on

the BSPS website at:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/BSPS/annualConference/2007.htm>

- Strand organisers may allocate papers to a different strand from that to which the paper was submitted, if appropriate, but potential presenters will be advised.
- A maximum of two papers per author, please.
- Presenters are encouraged to submit ongoing work with incomplete analyses and findings as posters, rather than papers. Papers should include results.
- Submissions from non-members are very welcome.
- Submissions will be acknowledged, and notice of inclusion in the provisional programme will follow in early May.
- An abstract of approximately 250 words will be required by the end of July for the final programme.
- Presenters of papers will be asked to register for the Conference before the paper is finally accepted and included in the final programme.
- Papers are organised into strand sessions lasting ninety minutes. Each presenter will have half an hour to present their paper and to take questions in the last 5-10 minutes.
- **Please note that attendance at the BSPS Conference to present a paper or poster cannot be subsidised by the BSPS- this applies to BSPS members and non-members.** (Except for student bursaries granted to BSPS student members presenting papers and posters – see bursary details below.)
- **Effective presentations** – notes available on the website at: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/BSPS/annualConference/2007.htm>

BSPS Day Meeting

Wednesday April 18th 2007

BSPS in conjunction with the Centre for Human Development and Ageing at Loughborough University

Approaches to assessing community socio-economic inequalities in health

**Wavy Top Building, Loughborough University,
Leicestershire
10:00-17:00 (lunch provided)**

Speakers:

Professor Graham Moon (Portsmouth University)
“Place-sensitive small area estimation of health needs”

Dr Kate Pickett (University of York)
“People like us: Group density effects and health”

Myer Glickman (Office for National Statistics)
“A place to die: area deprivation and causality in the mortality of older men”

Professor Jane Falkingham (University of Southampton)
“Child nutritional status in Tajikistan: the role of community

and household socio-economic status” (Paper authors: *Angela Baschieri, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Jane Falkingham*)

This is a free day meeting. However, attendance is limited to 50 places and these will be allocated on a first come first served basis, with the exception of a small number of places that will be reserved for participants who have an abstract accepted to present a poster at the meeting.

To reserve a place at the meeting please e-mail the BSPS secretariat: pic@lse.ac.uk

Call for poster abstracts:

Abstracts (250 words max) are invited for posters that relate to the theme of the one day meeting and should be submitted to Dr Paula Griffiths (P.griffiths@lboro.ac.uk) by 9th March 2007.

Student bursaries:

There are a limited number of postgraduate student bursaries for **BSPS members** to help with travel costs. Those wishing to apply should indicate their intention to the BSPS secretariat when reserving a place for the meeting. Having confirmed a place, students should then send a paragraph explaining why they think the meeting will benefit their studies to pic@lse.ac.uk by 9th March 2007.

NOTICES

Student bursaries for BSPS Conference 2007

Bursaries are available **only** to **BSPS student members presenting a paper or poster**. These are expected to cover the cost of accommodation, where required, and registration, plus an allowance for travel in the UK only. (BSPS cannot cover the cost of international travel.) As the number of bursaries available will be limited, applications **must be received at the Secretariat by 1 May 2007**. Please apply by email or post, advising to which strand you have submitted, to:

BSPS Secretariat, PS201, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE. Email: pic@lse.ac.uk Telephone 020 7955 7666. Fax 020 7955 6831.

Student Poster Competition at the BSPS Conference

A prize of £100 in book tokens is offered for the student poster judged to be the best on display. The invited judges will be announced later. All student posters accepted for the Conference will be entered automatically for the Poster Prize.

Council vacancies from July 2007

There will be five vacancies for Council members from July 2007, as Paula Griffiths (Loughborough), Steve Smallwood

(ONS), Cheng Yong Lee (Kent County Council), Sarah Salway (Sheffield) and Nicola Shelton will have completed their four-year terms and will not be eligible for re-election. All members are encouraged to nominate possible new Council members, with the proviso that those nominated must be willing to serve a four year term as a Council member, so please ensure your nomination is willing. New Council members will be expected to organise at least one day meeting during their term. Nominations, with seconder, please to the BSPS Secretariat, pic@lse.ac.uk by 1 May 2007.

The BSPS President, John Hollis, will have completed his 2 year term in July 2007, and is expected to be replaced as President, subject to a vote to this effect at the AGM, by Professor Paul Boyle (University of St. Andrews). A new Vice-President will also be elected at the 2007 AGM, for which Council has already received a nomination: further nominations are welcome, but would mean that a ballot of the membership would have to be held.

LEDC Initiative 2007

Council agreed, at their meeting on 7 February 2007, to accept a joint proposal from LSE and the University of Southampton, for a visit to the UK in September 2007 by Professor Andre’ Caetano, from the Centro de Desenvolvimento e Planejamento Regional (CEDEPLAR) at the University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Professor Caetano is a well established researcher, known for his works related to fertility and family planning in Latin America. He will give a paper at the 2007 BSPS Conference, research seminars at a range of UK institutions, and will have research meetings with academics at LSE, Southampton, and any other interested institutions.

The Joint Hewlett/ESRC Economic Development and Population/Reproductive Health Research Scheme

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (Hewlett) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) have formed a strategic partnership to provide a new joint funding scheme.

This scheme aims to enhance the quality and impact of social science research addressing the key international development issue of how population dynamics and reproductive health outcomes impact economic growth and poverty reduction. The new scheme will fund world class scientific research on issues relating to economic development and quality of life in less developed countries with the potential for impact on policy and practice for economic development and improved reproductive health. This joint scheme has a total budget of £2 million over four years and we expect most applications to be between £250,000 and £350,000.

The Hewlett Foundation and the ESRC seek to contribute to the development of a deeper, more policy-relevant understanding of the relationship between demographic and economic change in sub-Saharan Africa by designing, funding, and communicating the results of this research

initiative. It is clear that these issues are multi-faceted, and a deeper understanding requires attention to the interaction between various closely-related variables and situations. The sponsors encourage applicants to address the complexity of interactions, both in their conceptual frameworks and in the development and application of appropriate methodologies. The aim is to fill gaps in knowledge about the relationship between reproductive health/demography and macroeconomic outcomes, particularly economic growth; and between reproductive health/ demography and microeconomic outcomes, particularly poverty reduction and household economic welfare. In addressing these issues, the two sponsors encourage contributions from different social science perspectives. In assessing the consequences of socio-economic changes, the sponsors encourage applicants to address both positive and negative aspects.

The sponsors wish to stress that applicants should adopt a broad definition of terminology deployed in this specification, including that used for “reproductive health”. Depending on social context, reproductive health policies and interventions can be multi-faceted – the sponsors do not have any preconceived notions or prejudices as to what might be construed as appropriate reproductive health interventions in different contexts; the key issue is that in any proposal the focus and definition adopted for the proposed project be feasible and coherent in terms of research questions, methodology, data regime and anticipated intellectual and policy outcomes.

The full call specification document can be found by following the link below (along with other relevant information). Deadline for applications: 4pm on 24 April 2007. http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/current_funding_opportunities/HewlettESRCResearchScheme.aspx?

Please send an email to Hewlett@esrc.ac.uk should you have any queries on the above, or telephone:

Lyndy Griffin: (01793) 413135
Mary Day: (01793) 413078

OTHER MEETINGS

ILC-UK and Actuarial Profession Joint Seminar

Promoting Inertia: How should the Government sell Personal Accounts and what should its retirement savings message be?

Staple Inn Hall, High Holborn, WC1V 7QJ
21 March 2007 4.00pm-6.30pm

The ILC-UK and the Actuarial Profession are pleased to invite you to our next event on **21 March 2007**.

A panel of guest speakers will be exploring issues around the second Pensions White Paper, and specifically proposals for auto-enrolment into Personal Accounts, and what this means for the Government’s message to individuals on retirement

saving.

The introduction of Personal Accounts will be the first time in the UK that *inertia* in financial behaviour - a major cause of under-saving - will actually be used to help individuals save. Faced with the choice of whether to opt out of Personal Accounts, many employees are likely to display inertia, remaining in the scheme, but believing that they have ‘dealt’ with saving for their retirement.

The Government will, therefore, have to sell Personal Accounts to individuals, while simultaneously encouraging them to undertake additional saving; that is, to both do nothing and take action. The Government’s savings message will need to be finely tuned; emphasising the urgent importance of individual saving, without undermining the validity or perceived value of Personal Accounts.

Any savings message is dependent on the vehicle used to deliver it. The Government’s message on saving will have to reference current debates on financial capability, and the recent announcement of a national scheme to provide generic financial advice. This raises the question: How should the Government’s message on retirement saving be delivered in this new era?

The debate on Wednesday 21 March 2007 will begin with an introductory address from Adrian Boulding, Wealth Policy Director of Legal & General. Guest panellists, including Niki Cleal of the Pensions Policy Institute and Sue Regan, Chief Executive of the Resolution Foundation, will respond and the debate will be opened up for contributions from the floor.

In addition, this event will mark **the official launch of a new ‘state of the art’ website for the ILC-UK.**

The event schedule is as follows:

- 4.00pm Registration & Tea
- 4.30pm Welcome and Introduction: Stewart Ritchie, President of the Faculty of Actuaries
- 4.40pm Adrian Boulding, Wealth Policy Director, Legal and General
- 5.00pm Panel Response
- 5.30pm Debate
- 6.25pm Summary
- 6.30pm Close by Baroness Sally Greengross
Drinks

This event is **free**, so if you or a colleague would like to attend, please RSVP to Kristen Wehlow on kristenwehlow@ilcuk.org.uk. Your details are required for security purposes at Staple Inn Hall. Could you please provide your Organisation, Job Title and email address (if different from the one you are using to reply to this email).

European Human Behaviour and Evolution Conference

The second European Human Behaviour and Evolution conference will be held at LSE between 28-30th March 2007.

The aim of this conference is to create a multidisciplinary European forum in which researchers applying evolutionary theory to the behavioural sciences can meet and exchange ideas. Many of the presentations concern reproductive behaviour, and include papers on: the demographic impact of a development project; the effects of uncertainty on reproductive behaviour; variation in life expectancy in relation to diet; maternal determination of sex ratios at birth; reproductive history and body size; and "baby fever" and emotional incentives for childbearing. The full programme of oral presentations is now available on our website; posters will also be presented.

Places are still available for this conference, but please pre-register. Full conference information, including a registration form, is available on our website: <http://www.ehbes.com/> Any queries should be directed to: Conference.Ehbe.2007@lse.ac.uk.

Exploiting Existing Data For Health Research

International Conference, 18-20 September 2007
Universities of St Andrews & Dundee

Social Dimensions of Health Institute

There is a growing recognition of the value of linking routine administrative data for health research, evidenced by the increasing number of bespoke projects and larger general purpose studies. This 3-day inter-disciplinary conference will gather together an international group of researchers who have expertise in the linkage of administrative or routine data for health research or health care improvement.

We invite abstracts to be submitted by Thursday 31 May 2007 on one of five themes:

1. The value of record linkage in health research

The use of linked data is commonplace in health research. This theme will include papers based on one-off and general-purpose studies which demonstrate the range of research benefits that result from record linkage.

2. Record linkage for health care improvement

Linked datasets are also vital to the improvement of health care services. This theme will include papers covering a range of themes including linkage to support health surveillance, health needs assessment, patient safety and quality improvement activities, performance assessment and accountability.

3. Longitudinal record linkage

Of particular research value are longitudinal studies which track information about individuals or organisations through time, providing the opportunity to examine how different characteristics influence one another sequentially. This session will include papers that address the particular strengths of longitudinal data collection.

4. The methodological challenges of record linkage

This theme will include papers on state-of-the-art techniques for record linkage. Techniques might include methods for

record linkage, disclosure control, data management and analysis of linked data.

5. Confidentiality, disclosure and ethical issues

The linkage of potentially sensitive data for health research and health care improvement raises various ethical issues. This theme will include papers that evaluate, for example, the public perception of record linkage.

Those interested in presenting a paper at the conference should submit an abstract of no more than one page via email to: dataconf@dundee.ac.uk. Please include full contact details.

CALL FOR PAPERS

European Network for the Sociological and Demographic Study of Divorce Call for Papers

This is a call for papers for Fifth meeting of [European Network for the Sociological and Demographic Study of Divorce](#), 17-18 September 2007 at the London School of Economics. The topic of the conference will be *Comparative and Gendered Perspectives on Family Structure*.

Proposals for papers to be presented at the meeting should be sent to the organizer, Wendy Sigle-Rushton (W.Sigle-Rushton@lse.ac.uk), before 1 May 2007. Papers with a comparative perspective (cross-national, cross-generational) and/or with an focus on gender are especially welcome. There will be special sessions on both.

To promote discussion, a completed version of the paper should be available early September 2007, two weeks before the conference.

The format of the conference will be similar to earlier conferences in Florence ([2002](#) and [2006](#)), [Tilburg](#) and [Köln](#): with presentations and time for discussion.

REPORTS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Report of BSPS afternoon meeting on Household Projections and Estimates Held at City Hall London - 26 January 2007

John Hollis' introduction drew attention to the critical importance of projections for local and regional development planning. Work by the Greater London Authority had highlighted the effects of assumptions about population change, growing numbers of single males and changes in gender ratios.

Dave King – Household Projections

Dave King, of Anglia Ruskin University, prepares household projections on behalf of the Department of Communities and

Local Government (DCLG). Projections are prepared for England and for local authority areas.

Sub-national population projections prepared by the Office for National Statistics, together with the Government Actuary's marital status projections, provide the demographic input for the household projections. Household membership rates are applied to the household population disaggregated by age, sex and marital/cohabitational status. Results are presented for "household representatives" of the following household types: Married Couple, Cohabiting Couple, Lone Parent, Other Multi-Person and One-Person. Unusually a peer review group examined the results of the latest suite of household projections.

The latest, 2003-based work projects a growth of 5.1 million households during the period 2003-2026, exceeding the 3.8 million increase between 1981 and 2003. This assumes population growth of 5.2 million and a fall in average household size from 2.3 to 2.1. The main drivers for growth in household numbers are population growth and changes in age structure whilst household composition accounts for 20% of the increase. Marital status changes have a minimal effect, although there is a trend away from marriage to cohabiting.

One person households are the main component of household change contributing 3.6 million out of the 5.1 million increase, but a quarter of the extra one person households can be attributed to changes to household representative rates. Increasingly, widowed men and women are projected to form one-person households rather than cohabit. There has been a large growth in single middle aged or older people. International comparisons suggest that the growth in one-person households here is not exceptional.

There has been a massive growth in the number of former cohabiters whose subsequent housing behaviour differs to divorcees. Further research is needed into this group as well as into the issue of children of divorced or separated partners.

Other groups worth investigating are lone parents with non-dependent 'children' and 'other person households'. There is a need too to model changes in the transient population (students, armed forces and international migrants). The numbers of concealed households have reduced. In the past, they were mainly families, whereas now contemporary forms of concealment are people such as carers or key workers returning to the parental home. How should these be modelled?

Trends in household representative rates are derived from previous Censuses and the sample Labour Force Survey. Dave identified difficulties in comparing results from different Censuses and the effects of sampling and non-response bias in surveys. Data availability and quality is more problematic at sub-national level.

Trajectory modelling of household representative shows both period and cohort effects; both produce an increase. The life cycle procedure is a 3D exponential surface that tracks for all ages and for all time periods a surface that fits most data and gives future outcome. However, in the 2003-based projections

this method produced problems in the 30 to 50 age groups which Dave tackled by imposing more "cohort discipline". Instead of every age and period influencing all the others moderation was applied so as household formation rates of the under 30s were slightly dampened. Although the intervention is subjective Dave has more confidence in the results of the revised method and considers the logic sound. Each household membership type is modelled separately and but this seems to provide plausible overall results.

Further research could include:

Differential modelling for particular groups; for example, the trajectory for lone parents is associated with child rearing so cannot be modelled for older ages

Panel studies and longitudinal studies may enable more dynamic modelling

Linked trajectories

Cohabitation needs to be investigated as part of a life cycle approach.

Link household projections to dwelling consumption, dwelling size and tenure.

Other challenges include:

The sub-national projections are controlled through a top-down approach that restricts the ability to model policy outcomes.

The spatial hierarchy follows administrative geography but would clusters of like areas achieve a better modelling outcome?

Could population and household projections use migrant structures based on household size & type rather than age and gender?

Greater integration of household estimates and dwelling numbers; what is the connection between the two?

Greater integration of population and household estimates.

In response to questions, Dave agreed the Longitudinal Study which goes back to 1971 could shed more light on cohabitation of individuals. Information on changes to marital status confirms what appears to be going on. Dave thought assumptions about living arrangements of the elderly were probably valid nationally, but acknowledged that the assumptions may not be so accurate for small areas. The numbers in communal establishments may be changing, but the projection cannot model such changes.

It was asked whether the method took account of the growth of minority ethnic groups in some cities. Dave responded that this should be reflected in the historic trend data that the model uses, but there is a question over new immigrants. Those that stay would follow the same trend as previous groups, but those who are transient might have different housing arrangements. There is a need for research.

A question was asked about sensitivity to changes in the economy. The 1996-based projections were tested for sensitivity, but it is not planned to repeat this with the recent projections. In Dave's view, recent trends, with house prices growing faster than incomes, have dampened growth in household numbers. Household trends are similar in European countries with different housing policies and markets.

Household Projections and the South East Regional Plan - Robin Edwards

Robin Edwards is Chairman of the South East Regional Demography Sub-group and has been presenting the Regional Assembly's case at the Examination in Public into proposals for future housing development. This examination started in November 2006 and was ongoing at the time of the meeting.

Technical work for the regional plan started in 2003. Throughout the process, the lack of current data has caused problems. The Assembly's demographic projections used material from the 2001 Census plus the 2002-based fertility and mortality projections from the Government Actuary. The 2003 DCLG projections did not become available until March 2006. The annual increase in the latter, 36,800 households, was noticeably more than that projected by the Assembly (35,000) and the previous sub-national projections (34,500). The main reason for the differences was the more rapid population growth in the 2003 projections.

The Assembly chose not to base proposals on projected trends in households. Their choice reflected views expressed in public consultation and considerations bearing on the supply of land for development. The chosen figure, 29,500 allowed for household growth arising from local population change (zero net migration), plus allowances for some in-migration and a reduction in housing needs that were unmet at the base year.

Robin explained why the Assembly did not follow the household projections. The projections do not show housing need. All projections are ephemeral and not to be slavishly followed. The 2001 Census showed that the 1996-based projections had overstated the rate of household growth. The most recent 2004-based population projections show fewer migrants into the region. Evidence suggests that the divorce rate, a contributor to household formation, may have started to fall.

There was no evidence of an overall shortage of housing. Certain groups face difficulties in affording housing largely because government policy has reduced dwelling numbers in the social rented sector. Robin suggested that increases in house prices are driven by investment considerations, boosted in recent years by growing numbers of individuals buying property to rent out on the private market. The Labour Force Survey shows that the recent growth in the numbers renting privately matches the increase in the number of owner-occupiers.

Esther Roughsedge - Household Estimates in Scotland

Esther described the changes in the method that the General Register Office for Scotland uses to calculate household estimates.

The previous method used the stock of dwellings. Updates from the Census household base used information on subsequent additions and losses to the housing stock. This was subject to delays in assembling the data. There was little data about changes in vacant dwellings or households that share accommodation.

One alternative was to apply household representative rates to the latest population estimate, adjusting for people not living in households. This is the approach used in England to prepare estimates and in both countries for projecting household numbers. It provides an analysis of household type but is reliant on projecting trends in household representative rates.

The chosen new method uses Council Tax records of residential accommodation. This data is updated regularly and available with minimal delay. Vacant properties are exempt from tax, allowing estimates of occupied dwellings to be calculated.

The data source is flexible and available for smaller geographical units. However, the source would dry up if the tax were to be abolished. There is no information about household type or sharing of accommodation. The figures do not match the Census counts.

In discussion, it was suggested that the tax discount for single persons would indicate the number of lone adults (although this includes a lone adult with children). People with second homes may nominate their main residence as that which incurs the least tax. This may provide a misleading picture of the actual pattern of occupancy. Some authorities measure change in the dwelling stock by comparing changes in successive releases of the Address-Point database.

New Approaches to Household Estimates - Alan Holmans

Alan observed that the number of dwellings has increased less rapidly than the estimated number of households. Does this indicate a housing crisis or just a discrepancy in data and methods? The 2001 Census results suggest that housing estimates prepared during the 1990's were too high and the main reason for this was the over-estimation of population.

Alan suggested a number of improvements. ONS are developing the Integrated Housing Survey (IHS). This will bring together surveys, including the Labour Force Survey, which is used in estimating household representative rates. Were household composition to be included in the survey's fixed core of questions, this would improve the evidence for updating household representative rates. However, household estimates would still rely on the accuracy of the ONS population estimates. An alternative might be to gross the sample results if problems of bias could be solved. Comparisons are needed with independent sources, such as an estimate based on the dwelling stock.

A number of improvements to a dwelling stock approach were proposed. The IHS should include a question on sharing accommodation. Council Tax data could provide data on vacant dwellings and second homes

DCLG Plans for Housing Estimates and Projections – Bob Garland.

Bob reported that the Department for Communities and Local Government would issue new 2004-based household

projections in March 2007. DCLG hope to issue a 2006-based set in 2008.

He raised questions about the methods used to produce estimates and projections in England. The existing method, the composition approach, is complex - perhaps too complex. The simplest approach is average household size (persons per household). This is easy to understand but does not differentiate the sources of household change. It masks age structure and household representative effects. It provides no information on changes in types of households.

The Northern Ireland Statistics Agency (NISRA) has produced a good summary of alternative approaches. NISRA adopt a 'household membership' approach, similar to that used in New Zealand. Again, this is complex and data hungry.

Bob asked whether the benefits of the marital status and life cycle components of the current method were sufficient to merit the complexity and lack of transparency for users. As policies for providing care for those in need are changing, is it reasonable to assume the non-household population will remain the same? Econometric models may help to produce a range of scenarios of the future.

Issues raised in the discussion included the need to understand the way in which policy makers use the projections, and perhaps to educate them about the limitations of projections. There were differing views about the role of marital status in household change.

Thanks are due to the John Hollis of the GLA for providing the venue and chairing the event. The contributors are to be congratulated on presenting a range of insights into the way that estimates and projections are prepared and used and the options available for future developments.

Report by Mary Moore and Greg Ball