

National Statistics Harmonisation Group Quarterly Meeting Agenda

Wednesday 9th December 2015 at 11:00 to 1330 hrs
Meeting Room 3, at ONS, 1 Drummond Gate, London, SW1V 2QQ

	Timing	Agenda Item	Paper No	Presenter
1	1100 – 1110 hrs	Welcome and Introductions		Emma Wright
2	1110 – 1120 hrs	Review of Previous Minutes and Actions	NSHG (15:3) 18	Emma Wright
3	1120 – 1140 hrs	a) GSS SPSC Meeting Report	Verbal Update	Emma Wright
		b) Review of NSHG Workplan	NSHG (15:4) 19	Mark Herniman
		c) Update on Admin Data and Business Harmonisation	Verbal Update	Becki Aquilina
		d) Update on Good Practice Team Work and Harmonisation	NSHG (15:4) 20	Martin Ralphs
4	1140 – 1150 hrs	Progress on Proposed IESS Framework	NSHG (15:4) 21	Sean White
5	1150 – 1200 hrs	Definition on Ethnic Minorities	NSHG (15:4) 22	Karen Hurrell / Angela Potter-Collins
6	1200 – 1210 hrs	Plans for 2021 Census Harmonisation of Topics	NSHG (15:4) 23	Ann Blake
7	1210 – 1220 hrs	Interim Revised Principle for Benefits and Tax Credits	NSHG (15:4) 24	Thom Sims
8	1220 – 1240 hrs	Update on Actions Arising from the NSHG Workshop	Presentation	Charlie Wroth-Smith / Becki Aquilina
9	1240 – 1315 hrs	NSHG Topic Group Updates	NSHG (15:4) 25	Topic Group Leads
		Benefits and Tax Credits	See main paper above	Thomas Sims
		Consumer Durables	Nothing to Report for this Period	Jana Kubascikova-Mullen
		Country of Birth & Migration	Nothing to Report for this Period	Pamela Spicer
		Crime & Anti Social Behaviour	Report Received	Fiona Aitchison
		Demographic Information	Report Received	Emily Knipe
		Economic Activity		TBC
		Education	Nothing to Report for this Period	Karen Wollgar
		EILR	See main paper above	Angela Potter-Collins
		Health, Disability and Carers	No Report Received	Steven Webster
		Housing and Tenure	Nothing to Report for this Period	Rob Green
		Income	Report Received	Richard Tonkin
Pensions	Report Received	Tim Gibbs		
10	1315 – 1325 hrs	AOB		Emma Wright
11	1325 – 1330 hrs	Next Meetings	<p>Wednesday 9th March 2016, between 1100 - 1330 hrs, ONS, Drummond Gate Office, London</p> <p>Wednesday 8th June 2016, between 1100 - 1330 hrs, ONS, Drummond Gate Office, London</p>	Emma Wright



Minutes of the National Statistics Harmonisation Group (NSHG) Meeting
23rd September 2015
1100 to 1330 hrs
ONS, 1 Drummond Gate, London, SW1V 2QQ

Attendees:		Apologies:	
Emma Wright (Chair)	ONS		
		Amanda Howells	ONS
Andy Bates	ONS	Angela Potter-Collins	ONS
Becki Aquilina	ONS	Dawn Camus	BIS
Catherine Davies	ONS	Emma Emery	RSS
Charlie Wroth-Smith	ONS	Julia Wilson	Scot Gov
David Matz	Home Office	Karen Woolgar	BIS
Emily Knipe	ONS	Kirsty MacLean	NRS
Fiona Aitchison	ONS	Marie Haythornthwaite	ONS
Jonathan Page-Swan	ONS	Martin Ralphs	UKSA
Karen Hurrell	EHRC	Martin van Staveren	MRS
Kevin Sams	HMRC	Matthew Tranter	DfT
Lisa Carter	HMRC	Pamela Spicer	ONS
Lisa Walters	Welsh Gov	Pete Betts	ONS
Nafeessah Ameerudden	BIS	Richard Tonkin	ONS
Paul Benson	HSE	Sarah Martin	Scot Gov
Palvi Shah	ONS	Thomas Sims	DWP
Rob Green	DCLG	Tim Vizard	ONS
Sean White	ONS (via audio)	Tom Anderson	ONS
Sezen Barutcu	ONS		
Steve Webster	HSCIC		
Tim Gibbs	ONS		
Mark Herniman (Secretariat)	ONS		

1.0 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 Emma Wright welcomed members to the meeting, explaining she has now taken over the permanent Chair for this group. There had not been a meeting since March as the June meeting had to be cancelled. Emma introduced the following new members; Charlie Wroth-Smith (ONS – Head of Harmonisation), Andy Bates (ONS), Fiona Aitchison (ONS – topic lead for Crime), Rob Green (DCLG – topic lead for Housing & Tenure and DCLG representative), Steven Webster (HSCIC – topic lead for Health, Disability & Carers), Kevin Sams (HMRC – Harmonisation Champion), Lisa Carter (HMRC – Harmonisation Champion) and Paul Benson (HSE – Harmonisation Champion). Emma thanked the leaving members for their contribution to the NSHG.

2.0 Review of the Minutes and Actions from the Last Meeting, NSHG (15:1) 09 – Emma Wright

- 2.1 The minutes from the March meeting and the usual reports for the June meeting were circulated by correspondence and members were asked to provide comments by the 15th July 2015. There were no comments received.
- 2.2 All actions were complete except; action 9, which is ongoing. This was for Karen Hurrell and Angela Potter-Collins to update the paper on the revised definition for Ethnic Minorities. It is hoped to present this at the December NSHG meeting.

3.0 Update on Harmonisation Work**a. GSS SPSC Meeting Report, Verbal Update – Emma Wright**

- 3.1 Due to reorganisation of GSS Governance, the Statistical Policy and Standards Committee (SPSC) is now chaired by Tricia Dodd (Chief Methodology Officer at ONS). There have been two meetings since the reorganisation, the first in June which picked up on some final actions of the group in its old format and looked at how the group would work in the future. The second in September looked at the Terms of Reference, how SPSC fits into the overall GSS governance structure and the sub-groups of the SPSC. It was agreed that the NSHG and the Steering Group would both remain as sub-groups.
- 3.2 The next meeting of the SPSC will be on the 12th November which Emma will be attending and will report back on at the December NSHG meeting. There were no comments or questions.

b. Review of the NSHG Workplan, NSHG (15:3) 13 – Mark Herniman

- 3.3 Mark gave an update of the workplan, explaining for the benefit of new members, the workplan contains the current programme of work and includes a summary table with progress against the programme of work which is updated on a quarterly basis.
- 3.4 It was suggested that Fiona Massey is contacted from the Labour Market Analysis Team because she may have suggestions to fill the post of topic lead for Economic Activity.

ACTION 1 – Secretariat to contact Fiona Massey for suggestions of a suitable topic lead for Economic Activity.

- 3.5 The proposed work on the definition for 'Ethnic Minorities' is to make the definition easier to understand and will recommend the term 'Ethnic Minority' is used rather than other terms to describe this. There would be no changes to the classifications for ethnicity.
- 3.6 With regard to the Country of Birth and Migration topic group it was explained that a permanent lead for this group would be sought now that a new head of Migration Statistics (Nicola White) is in place.

ACTION 2 – NSHG Chair to contact Nicola White with regard to placing a permanent lead for the Country of Birth and Migration topic group from the Migration Statistics Team.

- 3.7 There may be scope to work with the Dissemination Champions as it is recognised there are many initiatives across the GSS to promote and train staff to adopt good standards when presenting data. The Presentation and Dissemination Committee are responsible for this area of work.

- 3.8 There may be scope for harmonising 'data matching' methods into the harmonisation work programme. The NSHG should consider this and try to identify good standard methods in use for matching data and review the benefits of sharing good practice and common methods.

c. Verbal update on Business Harmonisation – Palvi Shah

- 3.9 The Harmonisation Team have been working closely with ONS Data Collection Methodology (DCM) to harmonise business survey questions within the Electronic Data Collection programme over the next four years. The order of the roll out to move survey questionnaires from paper to on-line has been agreed and is hoped will be complete by 2019.
- 3.10 The Harmonisation Team are facilitating a working group to coordinate ONS business surveys move to a harmonised set of variables in line with Eurostat's Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics (FRIBS) project. The first planned meeting of the ONS working group is on the 12 October in Newport.
- 3.11 The Harmonisation Team is considering how this work can be rolled out across the GSS. A separate 'GSS FRIBS Task and Finish' Group is being considered to agree harmonised business definitions and principles, once finalised. The scope of the NSHG could be expanded to include this work in the longer term.
- 3.12 The Electronic Data Collection Programme includes social surveys and is closely linked to developing the on-line questions for the Census. The Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) have an interest in business surveys and have been working on harmonisation improvements arising from FRIBS.

ACTION 3 – Nafeessah Ameerudden to talk to BIS colleagues on the work on harmonisation improvements arising from FRIBS and report back to the NSHG.

- 3.13 Her Majesties Revenue and Customs (HMRC) manages the Intrastat Survey (a central project within FRIBS) and over the last four years have been looking at options for a proposal for the future collection of EU trade data.

d. Verbal update on Admin Data Harmonisation – Becki Aquilina

- 3.14 The main focus at the moment is talking to the following range of users to understand how harmonisation can be progressed; Income Admin Topic Group, Health Admin Topic Group, Admin Data Requirements Integrated Project Team, Admin Data Group User Forum, Admin Data Collection Integrated Project Team and finally the Address Register Integrated Project Team. The Harmonisation Team are planning to attend the Health Data Linkage Workshop and conducting some admin data research using the Admin Data Research Network (ADRN). Emma Wright is the Admin Data Champion for Methodology and the first meeting was held in July.

e. Update on Good Practice Team & Harmonisation, NSHG (15:3) 14 – Nick Woodhill

- 3.15 Nick was unable to attend the meeting so the Chair presented the update explaining that the Harmonisation Team is in regular touch with the Good Practice Team (GPT).

4.0 Presentation - The ESS Peer Review and Implications for Harmonisation – Emma Wright/Andy Bates

- 4.1 The UK Statistical System, in common with those of all other EU countries, has been subject to a European Statistical System (ESS) Peer Review over the last year. The Review assessed the UK against the European Code of Practice. The aim was to re-assure stakeholders about the quality and trustworthiness of the statistics published by Eurostat. One of the recommendations of the Peer Review related to improving the comparability of statistics within the UK, and an action plan

is being developed by the NSHSG. The presentation slides on the ESS Peer Review and links to the report and implementation plan are at Annex B. The Harmonisation Team will keep the NSHG updated on the Peer Review action plan and progress against it.

- 4.2 There is a requirement for ONS to produce geography statistics for Eurostat based on the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) geographies, so there will be some outputs aligned to this. NUTS is more relevant to Eurostat work and is not a standard GSS geography. The standard geographies within the GSS, such as administrative and health geographies should be promoted as harmonised geographies.
- 4.3 Encouragement of the uptake of harmonised principles across the GSS should be seen as a collaborative effort and not the role of one department enforcing on others. All departments should be working in partnership across the GSS. The Harmonisation Team is working with the Statistics Authority to identify where harmonised geographies and principles have not been implemented. Departments who know they have upcoming assessments are encouraged to see if they are complying with the GSS Geography Policy and Harmonised Principles and the Harmonisation Team, in particular Andy Bates, is willing to help if departments need advice. The Harmonisation Team is working closely with the Statistics Authority to promote harmonisation and has recently met with Ed Humpherson to discuss this.

5.0 New IESS Framework, NSHG (15:3) 15 – Sean White

- 5.1 The new Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) Framework is part of a modernisation programme for social statistics within Eurostat and is the equivalent framework regulation to FRIBS. The purpose of IESS is to bring together some of the major surveys for social statistics under one framework. The latest version is more forward thinking and the ability to use admin data is now embedded into the framework. Links between the ONS Admin Data Division (ADD) and IESS should be forged.

ACTION 4 – Jonathan Page-Swan to contact Sean White to discuss future links between ADD and IESS.

- 5.2 The Global Activity Limitations Indicator (GALI) is being proposed as a core variable across surveys but looks like being restricted to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS). There is a proposal to include the disability module from the EHIS under the IESS Framework. This is currently being discussed although no specifics are yet known. Karen Hurrell requested she be kept informed if any further information became available.

ACTION 5 – Sean to keep Karen Hurrell informed if further information becomes available (Secretariat to provide Sean White with Karen’s contact details).

- 5.3 There are currently 14 Core Social Variables and further additions are not planned. The questions around the Core Variables would not need to be changed but additional ‘detailed topics’ are being reviewed and would need to be collected at some point. The survey teams at ONS are aware of proposed new topics and will report any issues back to Eurostat.
- 5.4 A recent regulation adopted on Official Statistics requires National Statistics Institutes (NSIs) and Eurostat to agree action plans to include measures to reduce burden on suppliers and respondents. The GSS reported to Eurostat that any additional increase to topics in surveys may result in questions being dropped to reduce the level of burden which may impact response rates. The IESS have been made aware of these issues and it’s important that any additional burden is minimised as much as possible. The IESS Framework is being presented to the ESS Committee

in November and it was thought useful for an update paper to be presented to the next NSHG meeting.

ACTION 6 – Sean White to present an update paper on the progress of the proposed IESS Framework at the 9th December NSHG meeting.

6.0 Presentation – Admin Data Quality Assurance – Jonathan Page-Swan

- 6.1 The aim of the Admin Data Project is to encourage and increase the use and re-use of admin data and behind this sits the principle of ‘collect once, use many times’. The presentation covered aspects of the work of the Admin Data Division (ADD) including the importance of admin data, how to break down the barriers to admin data, what services are offered to the GSS, data integration and the regulatory requirements of data assurance. The presentation slides are at Annex C.
- 6.2 HMRC and ONS are currently in discussion to see how they can strengthen their links with regard to re-assessment of the ‘balance of payments’ statistics by the UK Statistics Authority. The UK Statistics Authority have developed a toolkit covering four practice areas (see slides) and ADD are happy to review QA work to see if any useful suggestions can be made.
- 6.3 The barriers that exist to admin data and the lessons learnt from dealing with these are very much the same as those for survey data.
- 6.4 The level of assurance required for data quality, varies dependent upon the four practice areas. This can vary from an email understanding for low level assurance to formal data supplier agreement, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or Service Level Agreement for the upper levels of assurance required. A link to the levels of assurance is to be provided by Jonathan Page-Swan.

ACTION No 7 – Jonathan Page-Swan to provide the secretariat with a link to the different assurance levels for data quality.

- 6.5 The geographical focus to the datasets collected by ADD depends on who the customers are as some have a UK focus and some have a focus on England and Wales. Some data collected at UK level can be sub-set to country level.
- 6.6 Catherine Davies from the ONS Quality Centre (QC) mentioned the work on the Metadata Project explaining metadata can mean different things to different people. In terms of the work the QC is doing, metadata means structural metadata, such as code lists, classifications and variable definitions and reference metadata such as quality reports, methodological reports and glossaries. During a recent audit conducted within ONS it was realised there was an issue with emphasis being placed on the data rather than the metadata. There was also a lack of coherence across teams and sometimes within teams on how they work with metadata, and no central storage for metadata within ONS.
- 6.7 A workplan was developed which included work on a Vision, Strategy, and a Roadmap. There is a discovery stage (fact finding) to the workplan, where the project is talking to people across the GSS and other NSIs to investigate how they are working with metadata and if there is any relevant work the project should be aware of.
- 6.8 Within ONS, the project is taking opportunities to work with other teams on metadata related work including the development of metadata templates. Discussions are taking place with Census to understand how they plan to approach storing metadata for the next census. The project has

close links with the Classification and Harmonisation Unit at ONS and the work on the use of question libraries. The project is interested to hear from NSHG members if there is relevant work the team should be aware of. Some discussions have already taken place with the Home Office, the Scottish Government and BIS. Since the meeting an overview slide of the work of the Metadata Team has been produced and is at Annex D.

7.0 Revised NSHG Terms of Reference, NSHG (15:3) 16 – Mark Herniman

- 7.1 The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the NSHG have been updated to include changes in names to government departments, organisational changes within ONS and, as the scope of the harmonisation work has expanded, elements from the Statistical and Registration Services Act (2007) and the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice to reflect this. The meeting was asked to review these and to make any comment by the 7th October. If no comments are received by this date the TOR would be agreed and published.

ACTION 8 – NSHG members to review the revised Terms of Reference and provide any comments to the secretariat by the 7th October 2015.

8.0 NMSG Topic Lead Updates, NSHG (15:3) 17 – Topic Group Leads

8.1 Benefits and Tax Credits Verbal Report – Thomas Sims

- 8.1.1 Thomas was unable to attend the meeting and a report had not been submitted. Thomas had indicated the revised interim harmonised principle should be ready for the December NSHG meeting.

8.2 Consumer Durables Verbal Update – Jana Kubascikova-Mullen

- 8.2.1 Jana was unable to attend the meeting and had nothing to report for this period.

8.3 Country of Birth and Migration – Pamela Spicer (interim lead)

- 8.3.1 Pamela was unable to attend the meeting and had nothing to report for this period. Pamela is only the topic lead until a permanent replacement is found – see action 2.

8.4 Crime and Anti Social Behaviour – Fiona Aitchison

- 8.4.1 Fiona informed members the survey questionnaire is updated annually. The Crime Survey for England and Wales is being extended to include questions on fraud and cyber crime. These are new topics and new questions are being developed. There is a plan to potentially extend this across the rest of the UK in the future, and this will involve some harmonisation work at some point.

ACTION 9 – Secretariat to contact Fiona with regard to historic topic lead reports and other information that may be useful.

8.5 Demographic Information – Emily Knipe

- 8.5.1 Providing the NSHG were happy, the Gender Identity work will be taken forward by the Census consultation work. Unless the Census defines a user need for Gender Identity, there is not a business need to take the work forward.
- 8.5.2 Work on 'Same Sex Marriage' is included in the Census consultation work. Discussions have taken place with regard to what users want from the questions and outputs and how the work can be implemented. Work is ongoing with the Labour Force Survey (LFS), using the relationship matrix to identify same sex marriages and some quality assurance of the data already captured to date looks promising.

- 8.5.3 'Age Bands' are being looked at after it was identified that some key outputs within the Population Statistics Division of ONS, were not using the harmonised age bands. An audit was undertaken within the Division and this will result in a proposed new set of age bands. The need for harmonised age bands at the oldest ages was identified (90 and over). A paper will be produced on this in due course. The needs of other producers have to be taken into account. Discussions will take place with the Census as there was some rationalisation work on age bands that took place for the 2001 Census. The Statistics Users Forum (SUF) have shown interest in any changes to the age bands and would like to be involved in this work.

ACTION 10 – Charlie Wroth-Smith to provide contact details of the Statistics Users Forum to Emily Knipe.

8.6 Economic Activity – TBA

- 8.6.1 The Harmonisation Team is still trying to identify potential new leads for this topic group, through the Labour Market Division at ONS and the Labour Force Survey. The lead identified at Action 1 will also be followed up.

8.7 Education – Karen Woolgar

- 8.7.1 Karen was unable to attend the meeting but was represented by Nafeessah Ameerudden who presented the report and may be replacing Karen on a more permanent basis.

8.8 EILR – Angela Potter-Collins

- 8.8.1 Angela was unable to attend the meeting but had submitted a report. Karen Hurrell who has been working with Angela on the proposed revised definition for Ethnic Minorities, reported the work has been progressing slowly due to other workloads but may be ready for the December NSHG meeting.

8.9 Health, Disability and Carers – Steve Webster

- 8.9.1 Steve presented his report stating he was new to the role and not aware of an existing topic group but would speak to Chris White to confirm. Steve is the Chair of other groups that may be relevant; the Programme Advisory Group (covers main suppliers of health and disability statistics), and the Sub-International Health Statistics Group and is hoping to involve these in the topic group. It may be worth having some tie-in with the IESS framework.

8.10 Housing and Tenure – Rob Green

- 8.10.1 Rob as a new topic lead, and having only just taken over, had nothing to report for this period.

ACTION 11 – Secretariat to contact Rob with regard to historic topic lead reports and other information that may be useful.

8.11 Income – Richard Tonkin

- 8.11.1 Richard was not able to attend the meeting and had nothing to report for this period.

8.12 Pensions – Tim Gibbs

- 8.12.1 The topic group is supportive of trying to involve some admin data sources in the scope of the group. The group is aware of the potential of admin data to change definitions and there may be scope to do minor changes to the definitions used on social surveys as this would help with quality assurance. As this topic potentially spans across social, business and admin sources, the group should be representative of these areas of work. Cross representation of this type may be where the future of the NSHG lies and it would be useful to use this as a template to see how it works. Although it was recognised at the moment there is limited scope for harmonisation, it was worth keeping Becki Aquilina (harmonisation of admin data) and Palvi Shah (harmonisation of Business data) informed of any wider developments.

9.0 Any Other Business

- 9.1 The Royal Statistical Society (RSS) are hosting an open meeting to discuss Sir Charles Bean's Review of Economic Statistics on the 28th September 2015.
- 9.2 A number of items have been identified for possible inclusion in the next meeting; update paper on the progress of the proposed IESS Framework, proposed definition for ethnic minorities, paper on the census consultation exercise and the revised interim harmonised principle for benefits and tax credits.

10.0 Next Meetings

- 10.1 Dates of the next two meetings are:

Wednesday 9th December 2015, 1100 to 1330 hrs at ONS Drummond Gate, Meeting Room 3

Wednesday 9th March 2016, 1100 to 1330 hrs at ONS Drummond Gate, Meeting Room 3.

Annexes:

- A. List of Actions
- B. Presentation Slides – The ESS Peer Review and Implications for Harmonisation.
- C. Presentation Slides – Admin Data Quality Assurance
- D. Presentation Slides – Metadata

ANNEX A

ACTIONS FROM THE NSHG MEETING – 23rd September 2015				
Action No	Para	Action	Responsible	Status
1	3.4	Secretariat to contact Fiona Massey to see if anyone in the Labour Market Analysis Team would be prepared to act as the topic lead for Economic Activity.	Secretariat	On Hold
2	3.6	NSHG Chair to contact Nicola White with regard to placing a permanent lead for the Country of Birth and Migration topic group form the Migration Statistics Team.	Emma Wright	Complete
3	3.12	Nafeessah Ameerudden to talk to BIS colleagues on the work on harmonisation improvements to FRIBS and report back to the NSHG.	Nafeessah Ameerudden	
4	5.1	Jonathan Page-Swan to contact Sean White to discuss future links between ADD and IESS.	Jonathan Page-Swan	
5	5.2	Sean to keep Karen Hurrell informed if further information becomes available (Secretariat to provide Sean White with Karen's contact details).	(1) Sean White & (2) Secretariat	(1) Ongoing (2) Complete
6	5.6	Sean White to present an update paper on the progress of the proposed IESS Framework at the 9 th December NSHG meeting.	Sean White	Complete
7	6.4	Jonathan Page-Swan to provide the secretariat with a link to the different assurance levels for data quality, to go in the minutes.	Jonathan Page-Swan	Complete
8	7.1	NSHG members to review the revised Terms of Reference and provide any comments to the secretariat by the 7 th October 2015.	NSHG members	Complete
9	8.4.1	Secretariat to contact Fiona with regard to historic topic lead reports and other information that may be useful.	Secretariat	Complete
10	8.5.3	Charlie Wroth-Smith to provide contact details of the Statistics Users Forum to Emily Knipe.	Charlie Wroth-Smith	Complete
11	8.10.1	Secretariat to contact Rob with regard to historic topic lead reports and other information that may be useful.	Secretariat	Complete

ANNEX B

Presentation Slides – The ESS Peer Review and Implications for Harmonisation

ANNEX C

Presentation Slides – Admin Data Quality Assurance

ANNEX D

Presentation Slides – Metadata



National Statistics Harmonisation Group

NSHG Work Plan – December 2015

Executive Summary

1. The Harmonisation programme involves the harmonisation of survey questions, concepts, classifications and outputs in order to make survey results more comparable. This paper is regularly presented to the National Statistics Harmonisation Group (NSHG) and summarises the harmonisation initiatives currently in progress together with an overview of the current work programme.
2. **Annex A** contains a table summarising the terms of reference for the group and progress against the activities from the last meeting, the main items of progress being reported below.

Current Work Programme

3. **NSHG Terms of Reference** – The revised version of the Terms of Reference (TOR) were circulated for comments. Some very minor amendments were made as a result of two responses. The revised TOR have now been published on the GSS website.
4. **Harmonisation Web pages** – Work is taking place with the new 'Beta' version of the new ONS website. The Harmonisation Team have provided input to the new look harmonisation pages but it is expected these will not look that different as it was reported these pages were some of the most informative and up to date on the current website. The A-Z of Harmonised Principles will be updated to reflect changes to the revise Benefits and Tax Credits Harmonised Principle when this is published and will be available in soft copy only.
5. **GSS Website** - The revised NSHG Terms of Reference have been published on the GSS website. The GSS website is currently unavailable due to site security certificate issues. This is being investigated and a fix will hopefully be in place soon.
6. **Sub Topic Groups** – There are now twelve topic groups reporting to the NSHG. In most cases, the work of these Topic Groups has been ongoing and the quarterly reports from these groups are presented at this meeting. The current topic groups are:
 - Benefits and Tax Credits
 - Consumer Durables
 - Country of Birth/Migration and Citizenship
 - Crime and Anti Social Behaviour
 - Demographic Information
 - Economic Activity and Employment Status (no current topic lead)
 - Educational Attainment
 - Ethnicity, Identity, Language & Religion (EILR) and includes Sexual identity
 - Health, Disability and Carers
 - Housing and Tenure
 - Income
 - Pensions

A permanent lead for the Country of Birth, Migration and Citizenship topic group is still being sought, to take the work forward to produce the new harmonised principle covering this set of questions. In the meantime this is being looked after by a temporary lead.

A replacement lead is still being sought for the Economic Activity topic group. The Harmonisation Team are now exploring possibilities from within the Labour Market Analysis Team at ONS. We would welcome any input from the membership on finding a suitable replacement.

The revised Harmonised Principle for Benefits and Tax credits will be presented at the December NSHG meeting. Once this has been agreed by the NSHG it will then be sent to the GSS Statistical Standards and Policy Committee for approval.

The revised definition for the term 'Ethnic Minority' will be presented to the NSHG for agreement at the December NSHG meeting. Once this is agreed it will be published on the ONS website.

7. **Improving the Effectiveness of the NSHG** - The Harmonisation Team are currently conducting a review of the NSHG in an attempt to improve its effectiveness. The team have started working using the 'Agile' process and have completed their first 'Sprint' looking into the roles and responsibilities of the NSHG members, the topic leads, the harmonisation champions, the Harmonisation Team and how we communicate. All of the topic leads have been involved and provided valuable feedback. There will be a presentation on progress to date at the December NSHG meeting. The next sprint will be focussing on the Harmonisation Process with a view to seeing if the process can be simplified and made clearer, in an attempt to reduce some of the burden to the topic leads.
8. **Proposed Harmonisation Work** – The proposed revised guidance on best practise for defining ethnic minorities has now been completed and will be presented to the December NSHG meeting. ONS currently has a style guide part of which covers this guidance, which will be updated with the new definition. The new information will also be published on the ONS website for guidance.
9. **UK Data Service Variable and Question Bank** – The Harmonisation Team continue to use and promote the use of the VQB and recently provided a demo for a member from the Valuation Office Agency, ONS metadata and ONS systems Architecture. There are still ongoing issues with viewing all Census 2001/2011 questions on the VQB but we are working closely with the UK to resolve this. The Harmonisation Team have also requested analysis on the uptake of Harmonised Principles from the VQB team and are awaiting the outcome. <http://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/variables>
10. **Raising the profile of Harmonisation and strengthening links** – The Harmonisation Team has regular meetings with the UK Statistics Authority Good Practice Team, the ONS Quality Centre, ONS Data Collection Methodology, the UK Data Service, ONS Electronic Data Collection and the ONS Admin Data Division. Harmonisation Champions have now been appointed and have attended the NSHG Workshop. NSHG members have been reminded to think about how they can promote harmonisation within their department and to get in touch with their GSS Quality Champion (where one exists) to discuss how they can work together to promote harmonisation. The circulation list for the NSHG Newsletter has grown, through people requesting to be sent copies.
11. **Harmonisation Presentations/Roadshows** – Since the last meeting no roadshows/ presentations have taken place:
 - Stand at GSS Conference - 17/18 Sept
 - Presentation to ONS Business Statistics Microdata User Group - 18 Sept
 - Stand and presentation to Local Area Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) London Network Event - 29 Sep

Future events planned are:

- Social Research Association Conference, British Library, London – 14 Dec

12. **NSH Steering Group** – The NSH SG met on 10th September and the meeting discussed the following agenda items;

- Harmonisation baseline document
- Governance of business harmonisation
- NSHG Communication Plan
- Legal Entity Identifiers (LEI's)
- First draft of the action plan to address the ESS Peer Review
- How to use the VQB further and
- Horizon scanning

The minutes of the meeting may be found on the GSS website (<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/?s=NSH+SG>). The next meeting is to be held on 10th December and will be focussed on reviewing the final action plan to address the ESS Peer Review and agree the 2016 Communication Plan. Jacqui Jones (ONS) will be on secondment to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) from January 2016 and the new Chair of the Steering Group will be Jennet Woolford (ONS).

13. **Harmonising Business Statistics** - The first FRIBS (Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics) Harmonised Variables Working Group was held in October. The remit of the group is to discuss how ONS will meet the Eurostat requirements in a coordinated manner i.e. coordinating across various ONS output areas and being mindful of other programmes that are happening in ONS such as EDC. The meeting discussed and agreed the Terms of Reference for the group. The next meeting will be held in the next couple of months.

14. **Harmonising Administrative Data** - The Harmonisation team are talking to a range of users to understand how we can influence harmonisation of administrative data. We are currently involved in the following groups/forums:

- Income admin topic group (organised by the Admin User Group - ONS)
- Health admin topic group (organised by the Admin User Group - ONS)
- Admin Data Requirements (ADR) Census Integrated Project Team (IPT)
- Admin Data Group User Forum
- Admin Data Collection (ADC) Census Integrated Project Team (IPT)
- Address Registers Census IPT (not yet begun)

15. **Research** - The Team has recently conducted some analysis to compare the existing harmonised inputs, outputs and interviewer instructions, to identify any gaps. The Topic Leads will then be contacted to advise on missing information and possible reasons why, bearing in mind there may be very good reasons for these.

16. **Harmonisation and Social Media** - The harmonisation team are still active members of StatsUserNet and the GSS blog, but are looking for suitable articles to publish. It is planned that the Harmonisation Team will publish an article relating to their work once a fortnight. If members have harmonisation related work to promote or publicise please contact the harmonisation team.

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Annex A
NSHG Workplan – Review September 2015

Term of Reference			
1. To provide strategic direction for the design, development and maintenance of common statistical frames, definitions and classification for Statistics			
Key action Step(s)	Previous reporting activities	This reporting activity	Person/area responsible
Research project – Administrative sources A-Z of Harmonised Principles Harmonisation Web-pages Harmonisation Strategy and Implementation Plan NSHG Workshop NSH SG Business Harmonisation	September 2015 The published Harmonised Principles have been checked and corrected to ensure the term ‘standard’ has been replaced with ‘principle’ and some errors were noticed. The National Statistics Harmonisation Steering Group met on the 10 th July 2015 and again on the 10 th September 2015. The next meeting will be in six months time. The Terms of Reference for the NSHG have undergone a minor revision to update stakeholder details and some content. These will be presented at the September NSHG meeting for agreement.	December 2015 ONS are working on the ‘Beta’ version of the new website which will bring a new look to the site as well as better search capability. The Harmonisation Team are conducting a review of how the NSHG works with a view to improving effectiveness and communications. The revised NSHG Terms of Reference have now been circulated and published on the GSS website.	ONS NSHG Harmonisation Team
Term of Reference			
2. To be responsible for setting harmonised principles			
Key action Step(s)	Previous reporting activities	This reporting activity	Person/area responsible
NSHG Topic Sub Groups NSHG workshop to identify, review and prioritise harmonised standards	September 2015 The interim revised harmonised principle for Benefits and Tax Credits will not now be ready for the 23 rd September 2015 NSHG meeting. Topic lead for Health Disability & Carers is now in place. New topic lead for Crime & Anti-social Behaviour has taken over the lead.	December 2015 The interim revised harmonised principle for Benefits and Tax Credits will be presented at the 9 December 2015 NSHG meeting. The NSHG Workshop took place in September with many members attending. A review of the procedures in place for topic leads has begun, with a view to improving topic lead documentation. All the current leads have been involved in this.	NSHG Topic Lead NSHG Harmonisation Team

Term of Reference 3. To oversee the development of guidance to support the National Statistician's Guidance on the CoP			
Key action Step(s)	Previous reporting activities	This reporting activity	Person/area responsible
UK Data Service Variable and Question Bank will support the CoP by directing survey designers towards Harmonised Principles	<p>September 2015</p> <p>There are still ongoing issues with viewing all Census 2001/2011 questions on the VQB but we are working closely with the UK to resolve this. Users are guided towards this a source of harmonised questions.</p> <p>The Harmonisation Team continue to use and promote the use of the VQB. A meeting was recently held at the University of Manchester to discuss 'Metadata Strategy and publication of GSS Harmonised variables' and to look at future improvements to the VQB</p>	<p>December 2015</p> <p>The Harmonisation Team have requested analysis on the uptake of Harmonised Principles from the VQB team and are awaiting the outcome.</p>	Harmonisation Team
Term of Reference 4. To be responsible for encouraging compliance to the Code of Practice			
Key action Step(s)	Previous reporting activities	This reporting activity	Person/area responsible
<p>UK Data Service Variable and Question Bank will support the CoP by directing survey designers towards Harmonised Principles</p> <p>Roadshows</p> <p>Harmonisation web-pages</p> <p>A-Z produced</p> <p>StatsUserNet community</p> <p>StatNet/GSSnet publications</p> <p>Other targeted articles (3Moons etc)</p>	<p>September 2015</p> <p>The Harmonisation Team will present to the Local Area Research & Intelligence Association on the 29th September (London Network) and the 14th October (North West Network)</p> <p>The Harmonisation Team will have a stand at the GSS Conference taking place 17th to 18th September.</p> <p>The GSS website continues to be the main site for the promulgation of Agenda, papers and minutes for the NSHG meetings.</p>	<p>December 2015</p> <p>The Harmonisation Team had hoped to have a stand at the SRA Conference at the British Library on the 14 December but costs have precluded this. Instead, it has been agreed that Harmonisation flyers will be included in the delegate handouts.</p> <p>The revised Benefits and Tax Credits Harmonised Principle and the revised definition for Ethnic Minority will be included in a re-issue of the The A-Z of Harmonised Principles.</p>	<p>Harmonisation Team</p> <p>Harmonisation Team</p>

Term of Reference 5. To act as a board for new and/or cross-cutting harmonisation projects			
Key action Step(s)	Previous reporting activities	This reporting activity	Person/area responsible
NSHG Topic Sub Groups NSHG Workshop Business Harmonisation Workshop Watching brief of Beyond 2011 administrative data and data linkage as future harmonised topic groups. Watching brief on future harmonisation topics: Alcoholic Consumption as part of the Health, Disability and Carers, Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETS).	September 2015 Work is still continuing on the harmonised definition for ethnic minorities and will be distributed to the NSHG for comment and agreement when complete. The Harmonisation Team will present to the ONS Business Statistics Microdata User Group on 18 th September. The NSHG Workshop will follow the NSHG meeting on 23 rd September. The theme for this year's workshop is 'The Roles and Responsibilities of NSHG Members and Design Setting'.	December 2015 The revised definition for the term 'Ethnic Minority' will be presented to the NSHG for agreement at the December NSHG meeting. The revised Harmonised Principle for Benefits and Tax credits will be presented at the December NSHG meeting.	NSHG Topic Lead / Karen Hurrell NSHG Topic Lead
Term of Reference 6. To promote the use of harmonised standards for collecting and reporting statistics, and ensure that user needs are met			
Key action Step(s)	Previous reporting activities	This reporting activity	Person/area responsible
Promote use of UK Data Service Variable and Question Bank Harmonisation Web-Pages A-Z of Harmonised Principles Promotional material and articles Harmonisation Roadshows Harmonisation in-box StatsUserNet community StatNet/GSSnet	September 2015 There have been 10 queries received into the Harmonisation In-box. These include queries on the following topics: Employment Status, Ethnic Classifications, EU & International Statistical Systems, Long-lasting Illness, Symbols in Tables, Gender Identity, Job Vacancy Statistics, and Ordering of Gender Categories. The harmonisation team are still active members of StatsUserNet and the GSS blog, but are looking for suitable articles to publish. If members have harmonisation related work to promote or publicise please contact the harmonisation team.	December 2015 There have been 9 queries received into the Harmonisation In-box. These include queries on the following topics: Migration Statistics, Crime, Internet Access, Health & Disability, Income Bands, Personal Well-being, Demographic Information & Symbols in Tables. The harmonisation team are still active members of StatsUserNet and the GSS blog. If members have suitable articles on harmonisation related work to promote or publicise please contact the harmonisation team.	Harmonisation Team Harmonisation Team



National Statistics Harmonisation Group

Good Practice Team Update - December 2015

Introduction

This paper provides a short update on Good Practice Team activities relating to harmonisation and quality assurance.

The Good Practice Team was set up in 2013 to work across GSS departments in promoting good practice in the production and dissemination of statistics. Our priority areas at present are communication of statistical information, working with users and supporting the Monitoring and Assessment team in Quality Assurance of Administrative Data. We are keen to support harmonised approaches and raise awareness of resources with GSS colleagues. The team is happy to work with the Committee to disseminate information across the GSS and feed back issues that colleagues raise with us.

Note on recent activities

1. Full Fact have raised concerns about compliance with GSS geography standards (especially the use of standard geographical codes) and our published spreadsheet guidance in GSS publications. We will be meeting with the Full Fact team along with the Chair of GSS Presentation and Dissemination Committee, Laura Dewis and Richard Laux from the UK Statistics Authority on November 24th to explore the key issues and consider what we might do to improve compliance and further raise awareness.
2. We are working with the Harmonisation team on a series of events to raise awareness of the GSS Geography policy and what producers need to do to ensure compliance. We will be piloting this in ONS in January 2016, and holding further GSS events afterwards. Harmonisation are working on a short checklist for producers to accompany this. The new Geography Champions network will also strengthen our ability to promote standards and guidance.
3. GPT are getting more involved in support for the Statistics Authority's Quality Assurance of Administrative Data guidance, particularly for producers outside ONS. We supported the Monitoring and Assessment team in delivering a QAAD workshop on 16th November at Home Office.

Martin Ralphs
Good Practice Team
GSS Professional Support
16th November 2015



National Statistics Harmonisation Group

Update on Proposed IESS Framework - December 2015

Introduction

The United Kingdom is faced with a changing landscape in terms of the collection and delivery of social statistics to the European Commission (EC) over the next ten years. Much of the direction of change will come through the development of a new framework regulation covering social statistics from the EC that seeks to modernise the suite of social statistics collected by member states to better enable increased responsiveness to user needs, quality and efficiency. This is part of a wider modernisation programme for social statistics from the European Commission. The new framework regulation is referred to as Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) and presents a number of concerns for the UK in terms of the implications for increased burden in our statistical system.

Since April 2014, work has commenced in drawing up a framework regulation for an integrated system of social surveys. The scope includes not only the main pillars Labour Force Survey (LFS) and EU Survey of Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), but also the health requirements from EHIS (European Health Interview Survey), a time use survey (TUS), HBS (Household Budget Survey), AES (Adult Education Survey). The framework regulation refers to data sources and principles for statistics production, but does not include detailed variables or methodological issues that are instead dealt with through delegated or implementing acts.

The aim is to finalise discussions of the new framework regulation in 2015 through Directors of Social Statistics (DSS) meetings so that the framework regulation can be brought to the ESSC in late 2015. Eurostat realistically expect lengthy discussions at the Council and the European Parliament so do not expect that it will be in place before 2018 (with the first year of data collection in 2019).

In all, three framework regulations are envisaged as part of the European Commissions' Modernisation Programme for Social Statistics. The first framework regulation (IESS – Integrated European Social Statistics) is the subject of this note and is designed to provide a unified legal base for the existing social microdata collections while enabling the future integration and improvements foreseen under the modernisation programme. IESS would also create a legal base for two existing surveys which are currently produced under 'gentlemen's agreement', the Household Budget Survey and the Time Use Survey.

The second framework regulation would cover population statistics including population and housing censuses, and the third framework regulation would cover the administratively-based statistics and accounts.

Timetable

The modernisation programme for social statistics allows for a stepwise approach moving forward in parallel in several areas. The following key phases and milestones can be identified:

Until IESS regulation is adopted	Transitional period: work on timeliness of SILC information, on deprivation indicators, on availability of poverty and social exclusion data at the regional level and of flows data for the labour market
2014-2017	For social microdata collections: improvements to existing social microdata collections including joint plannings, standardized definitions and variables and harmonised quality criteria; development of IESS framework regulation and implementing measures and methodological developments for streamlining of social surveys. In parallel: Continuation of work on the use of administrative data including big data Preparation for 2021 Census, including adoption of new implementing measures under Regulation 763/2008. Methodological developments for post-2021 censuses and harmonisation of population definitions.
2015	Consultation of ESSC on IESS
Q4 2015 or Q1 2016	Adoption of Commission proposal for IESS
2017 or 2018	Adoption of IESS by European Parliament and Council, with adoption of implementing measures by Commission shortly afterwards.
2020 onwards	Adoption by European Parliament and Council of a second framework regulation to support a new approach to continuous collection of population and census data based on harmonised definitions; and of a third framework regulation to cover mainly administratively based aggregated data collections and accounts

Implications for the UK – risks and opportunities

Opportunities

Many of the ideas behind the European vision and the plans for social surveys are favoured by the UK. The European policy agenda is evolving and it is important that social surveys meet emerging needs. To achieve this the EC is attempting to establish closer links between education and labour market statistics and to move towards the development of health information and improving timeliness of poverty and inequality data. Standardisation, simplification and harmonisation are also goals. The review of questions which will challenge existing demands and make room for items that are currently more policy relevant is in line with UK aims. The greater use of modularisation which would reduce work on the current system of ad hoc modules would provide benefits.

Risks

Although many of the principles within the regulation are acceptable for the UK, the potential additional costs on the UK Government and devolved administrations are most unwelcome and we are continuing to challenge Eurostat on the need for burdensome additional requirements. There is also a lack of clarity on the timetable for much of the work. This is potentially a large wide ranging project with the expectation from Eurostat that much of it will be ready for implementation

in 2018 or 2019. This is likely to put a huge resource strain on social surveys both in finance and capability.

ONS is also concerned about the possible increase in burden on social surveys. Response rates have been falling in recent years so ONS is against any increase in length of the survey. Although Eurostat aim to remove some questions and ask others less frequently to make room for new variables there is a danger that the UK might not be able to do this where there are national needs for variables. Moreover the main aim of the LFS is for labour market variables. The UK is concerned about increasing the scope for example in adding health and income variables.

Current Status

Negotiations on the Framework Regulation covering social statistics – Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) that have been on-going through the DSS meetings, including those since the September meeting, are now complete. The outcome of the full negotiations through DSS is as follows:

- Delegated acts – delegated acts covering periodicity and transmission deadlines have been removed from the IESS regulation in the final version meaning lower risk to future costs, as proposed by UK.
- Victimization survey – excluded from IESS, as proposed by UK
- Tourism demand data – excluded from IESS, as proposed by UK
- LFS Household income questions – excluded from IESS, as proposed by UK. To be replaced by a currently collected variable on take home pay from work.
- GALI questions - compromise of GALI only being included on LFS (and EHIS as now) every two years instead of on all surveys covered by IESS, agreed by UK
- Time Use Survey and Household Budget Survey – the implementation of both surveys under IESS has been postponed until 2025, after the current spending round period.
- EHIS – periodicity has been changed to every 6 years instead of every 5 years as argued for by the UK.
- AES - periodicity has been changed to every 6 years instead of every 5 years as argued for by the UK.
- EU-SILC – agreement has been reached on reducing the precision requirements at NUTS 2 level to only include areas over a 500,000 population threshold. This reduces the impact of these requirements.
- LFS precision requirements – The proposal from Eurostat is that annual data can be used for an interim period to meet precision requirements

Remaining Issues

- Delegated acts still cover the list of detailed topics/variables in Article 2 and 3 (and Annex 1). Adding variables to the surveys without deleting others is not acceptable to us.

- HBS and TUS are still part of the IESS regulation whereas they are currently covered by gentleman's agreement.
- We want assurance in writing over precision requirements compromises for both EU-SILC and LFS. We are working to secure this confirmation.

Next Steps

- ESSC discussed IESS in December – Most countries are in favour but some concerns still remain. Bi-lateral discussions will continue until IESS goes back to ESSC in February.

Sean White
ONS, Public Policy Division
Date 27/11/2015



National Statistics Harmonisation Group

Revised Race and Ethnicity definition on the ONS Style Guide

Introduction

The ONS Style Guide currently has a definition for defining race and ethnicity and ethnic minority population(s) (<http://style.ons.gov.uk/language-and-spelling/race-and-ethnicity/>).

However, it is evident from enquiries that there is uncertainty with regard to reporting statistics on 'ethnic minorities' and in particular to overarching terms, such as BME, BAME etc. Although it is best to describe ethnic groups separately and to avoid combining ethnic groups in this way, it is often necessary, for example where survey samples are too small to permit more detailed analysis.

There can also be a difference between GB and UK data which is not highlighted in the current guidance.

Issues for Discussion

The guidance (see Annex A) has been amended in order to encourage best practice and a harmonised standard. The NSHG group members are invited to take note of this update with a view to agreeing to it. Comments are welcome.

Next Steps

If the NSHG are in agreement the ONS Style Guide will be updated. If no comments are received it shall be assumed that members are content with the revised definition of ethnic minorities.

Angela Potter-Collins (ONS) and Karen Hurrell (EMRC)

December 2015

List of Annexes:

Annex A – Amended guidance for defining race and ethnicity

ANNEX A – Amended guidance for defining race and ethnicity

Style.ONS

Race and ethnicity

When there is a need to refer to a person's race or ethnicity best practice is to refer to specific ethnic groups separately.

Example

Pakistani and Chinese

Note the use of initial capitals for ethnic group names and remember that White British is itself an ethnic group.

If it is not possible to use separate groups then broad ethnic group categories may be used.

Example

Asian/Asian British

Ethnic Minorities

Best practice is to use terms like 'ethnic minority', 'ethnic minorities', 'ethnic minority population(s)' etc., instead of acronyms such as BME and BAME which are frequently used to refer to all except the White ethnic group. This is to avoid highlighting particular groups above others and, as with all acronyms, not everyone will know what they mean.

The Ethnic Minority (GB) group includes all ethnic groups other than White British.

Where the White British group is not available, as in Northern Ireland or UK data, the Ethnic Minority (UK) group may be used instead, which includes all ethnic groups other than White. Remember that the White group also includes some minority White ethnic groups.

Ethnic groups vary, so if you do combine different ethnic groups into a 'single' minority group, make sure it is clear who you are talking about and that it is not misleading.

- Always make sure you explain what you mean by the term ethnic minority/ethnic minorities
- Use the definition that is most appropriate to your context or data.

Further details on how to present ethnic group data can be found in ['Ethnic Group Statistics: a guide for the collection and classification of ethnicity data'](#) (ONS 2011).



National Statistics Harmonisation Group

Plans for 2021 Census Harmonisation of Topics - December 2015

Introduction

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) ran a consultation on the topics to be included in the 2021 Census for England and Wales from 4 June to 27 August 2015.

Northern Ireland Research and Statistics Agency (NISRA) are running a consultation on the topics to be included in the 2021 Census for Northern Ireland from 25 September to 17 December 2015.

National Records of Scotland (NRS) are running a consultation on the topics to be included in the 2021 Census for Scotland from 8 October 2015 to 15 January 2016.

This purpose of this paper is to provide an update to NSHG regarding plans for harmonisation of topics across the respective Censuses and to seek endorsement and support for this approach.

Links to the consultations are provided in Annex A.

Issues for Discussion

The context for the overall approach to harmonisation of Censuses across the UK is set by the Registrars' General Agreement included at Annex B.

This makes it clear that whilst each country will work autonomously, we "will aim to work in unison to ensure that the 2021 Censuses are a success in providing high quality population and housing statistics for the UK, meeting the needs of data users and reflecting UN-ECE, Eurostat and other international requirements". In practice this means that we will as a minimum meet the Eurostat requirements.

The Registrars' General Agreement also sets out a number of aspects of the census where they will aim to achieve harmonisation.

As a first step ONS, NISRA and NRS are liaising regarding the publication of each organisation's response to the consultation setting out plans for developing the content for the respective Censuses across the UK. It is our aim to publish the responses at the same time. ONS, NISRA and NRS have liaised on the general approach taken, overall style of consultation documents, the evaluation process.

ONS already has in place "Topic experts" for each of the topics. ONS also plans to establish an advisory group for each of the topics for England and Wales - "Topic Groups" - and are exploring how best to align these with the Harmonisation Working Groups. The purpose of the topic groups will be to provide expert advice on the development of the 2021 Census definitions, questions, edit rules, coding frames/ classifications and routing initially, but will also be involved in advising on the development of outputs and quality assurance as the 2021 Census development progresses.

NRS are considering setting up topic groups involving Scottish topic experts, and as part of this will consider how best to link into some of the work of the ONS topic groups including related development work.

There will need to be a discussion on how any UK harmonisation work is coordinated and governed.

All three consultations have asked users for feedback regarding the need for UK comparability of topics. We would welcome input from the NSHG regarding the key topics where UK harmonisation should be a priority.

Next Steps

ONS, NISRA and NRS expect to publish responses to their respective consultations in spring 2016.

ONS will be establishing topic groups from January, and will prioritise those topics for which there is the most development work to do.

We will provide an update on progress at the next meeting of the NSHG.

Ann Blake

Census Transformation Programme, ONS

November 2015

Annex A: 2021 Census Consultation Links

Link to "The 2021 Census - Initial view on content for England and Wales"

https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/census/2021-census-topics-consultation/consult_view

Link to "2021 Census: Topic consultation for Northern Ireland"

https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/department-of-finance-and-personnel/2021-census-topic-consultation-ni/consult_view

Link to "Scotland's Census 2021 - Topic Consultation"

<https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/national-records-of-scotland-survey/scotlands-census-2021-topic-consultation>

Annex B

The Conduct of the 2021 Censuses in the UK

A statement of agreement between the National Statistician and the Registrars General for Scotland and Northern Ireland

Introduction

This is a statement of agreement between the National Statistician and the Registrars General for Scotland and Northern Ireland about the conduct of the 2021 Censuses, which it is the intention to conduct simultaneously throughout the UK in 2021. A similar agreement was developed for the 2011 Censuses that is believed to have enhanced the extent of harmonisation across the 2011 Censuses throughout the UK.

A census is taken by the Office for National Statistics and the Registrar General for Scotland under the Census Act 1920 and by the Registrar General for Northern Ireland under the Census Act (Northern Ireland) 1969. The necessary subordinate legislation, relating to the specific arrangements for the census in each country, requires the approval of the UK Parliament in Westminster (for England and Wales) the

Scottish Parliament, and the Northern Ireland Assembly respectively.

Welsh Ministers are consulted on the census for England and Wales, and are responsible for making Census Regulations for Wales.

Principles

Each country will be autonomous, with the final decision lying with the National Statistician and the relevant Registrar General, ministers and legislatures.

Subject to that autonomy, the National Statistician and Registrars General agree that the three census offices (the Office for National Statistics(ONS), National Records of Scotland (NRS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)) will aim to work in unison to ensure that the 2021 Censuses are a success in providing high quality population and housing statistics for the UK, meeting the needs of data users and reflecting UN-ECE, Eurostat and other international requirements.

In particular, the National Statistician and the Registrars General have agreed that the three census offices and the Welsh Assembly Government will work together and will reach mutual agreement wherever possible on the points in this statement of agreement, which will facilitate harmonisation where it is in the interest of census users and the public good more generally.

The census offices will consult regularly with users and keep this agreement on harmonisation under constant review.

UK and international requirements

The European Union (EU) requires the UK to provide prescribed census-type statistical information to Eurostat; Regulations (EC) No 763/2008 and (EU) No 519/2010, implemented through Regulation (EU) No 1151/2010 imposed this requirement in respect of the 2011 Census, and similar Regulations are anticipated in respect of the 2021 Census.

As described in the introduction, the conduct of the censuses are themselves subject to, variously, the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007, the Census Act 1920 and the Census Act (Northern Ireland) 1969, and subsequent secondary legislation.

In addition, there is a user demand for consistent, coherent and accessible statistics for the UK, for each country and geographic areas within each country.

Harmonised aspects

The National Statistician and the Registrars General have, subject to the need for approval where appropriate by the relevant legislatures, agreed the following aspects (below) of the census where they will aim to achieve harmonisation.

Harmonised outputs

The 2021 Census outputs should constitute consistent, coherent and accessible statistics for the UK, individual countries and geographic areas within each country. Common definitions and classifications, typically based on international standards, should be agreed, used and published. [This includes a common population base.]

Common topics and questions should be agreed wherever possible, with the intention of making available consistent census outputs across the UK.

Census procedures

The three censuses should be carried out with reference to the same date in 2021.

The statistical procedures applied to the census data, such as methodologies for statistical disclosure control and estimation should be evaluated, tested and agreed in advance of the census, and co-ordinated across the UK.

Recognising their common requirements, the census offices will share skills and experiences and endeavour to exploit economies of scale wherever possible.

The census offices will work together to exploit, and make greater use of, administrative data sources.

The census offices will endeavour to ensure that the publicity campaigns for each census complement each other.

Governance and dispute resolution

To promote UK harmonisation, every effort will be made to reach agreement through the cross-working mechanisms of the three census offices and any differences of opinion will be discussed and resolved at the UK Census Committee.

October 2015



National Statistics Harmonisation Group

Revised Benefits and Tax Credits Harmonised Principle Request for NSHG Endorsement 9th December 2015

Reasons for the Changes to the Current Harmonised Principle

Changes to the harmonisation principle for benefits and tax credits were proposed in response to changes to the welfare system, the most significant of which were the introduction of Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment, and changes to Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit. There were also a number of benefits that had been discontinued.

What are the Proposed Changes

The proposed changes include the addition of new benefits (e.g. Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payments), changes to existing benefits (e.g. Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit), and the removed of defunct benefits (e.g. In-work Credit, Return to Work Credit).

In addition to this, the pre-existing benefits and tax credits harmonised principle has undergone a major reorganisation in order to make the block easier to understand for both interviewers and respondents.

See Annex A for the new Harmonised Principle.

Benefits the Changes will Bring

The changes are necessary to accurately reflect changes to the benefit system. However, the review of the benefits block has also been seen as an opportunity to improve the accuracy of benefit recording in household surveys, which have tended to underreport benefit receipt. Anecdotal evidence from interviewers cited a lack of clarity and cohesion in the pre-existing benefits and tax credits harmonised principle as contributing factors underlying the misreporting of benefit receipt. It was hoped that a restructuring of the benefits and tax credits principle and the accompanying show cards would improve the quality of the data recorded.

Consultation with Stakeholder

During the early stages of the process there was extensive consultation with stakeholders including representatives from;

- Household's Below Average Income
- Pensioner Income Series
- Wealth and Assets Survey
- English Longitudinal Study of Aging
- EU Statistics of Income and Living Conditions (longitudinal component)
- Understanding Society
- Life Opportunities Survey
- Labour Force Survey
- ONS Social Surveys Division
- ONS Pensions Analysis
- Tax Credit Analysis (HMRC)

Advice was also sought from policy experts in the areas of the effected benefits. NatCen and ONS assisted with the implementation of the changes.

Resolution of any Issues

The main issue that arose from the changes concerned the repayment of social fund loans; in particular, early versions of the new principle attempted to disentangle repayment of loans to DWP and to local authorities. There were concerns over the quality of this data, the salience of this information, and the cognitive burden that would be placed on respondents trying the work out proportion of loans repaid to different sources. With guidance from ONS Data Collection Methodology, as well as policy experts and NatCen the new social fund items were revised. The revised social fund questions were included for the first time on the Family Resource Survey (FRS) for financial year 2014/15.

Other issues that have arisen are the ongoing changes to the benefits system, which is currently undergoing a significant period of transition. For example, certain benefits that existed when the revised harmonised principle was first devised have since been discontinued, and the harmonisation principle has had to be addressed accordingly.

Overview of any Testing Conducted

During the initial development stages, NatCen undertook cognitive testing of the proposed harmonised principle. The feedback from the testing was positive, with both interviewers and respondents finding the new harmonised principle easier to understand. In particular, it was felt that the flow of the interview improved. However, the scope of the testing did not extend to analysis of the quality of the data.

The revised harmonised principle was included in the FRS questionnaire for the first time for the financial year 2013-2014. Data from the survey was first made available for analysis in June 2015. High level analysis of FRS estimates of benefit receipt did not indicate any systematic improvements to benefit capture across the board – see Annex B. There is some evidence of modest improvement to capture specific benefits, namely Job Seeker's Allowance and Carer's Allowance. Apparent improvements in the capture of Income Support should be treated with caution as there was also an increase in the proportion of FRS respondents over-reporting this benefit. For a more exhaustive comparison of FRS data and administrative data please see the annual FRS publication;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/family-resources-survey--2>

Next Steps

The NSHG members are asked to make comment on the revised Harmonised Principle for Benefits and Tax Credits by the **18 December 2015**.

Thomas Sims

Family Resources Survey Team, Survey's Branch, DWP
2nd December 2015

List of Annexes:

Annex A : Revised Harmonised Principle for Benefits and Tax Credits

Annex B : Receipt of State Support - FRS compared to administrative data

Annex A - Secondary Harmonised Principle for Benefits and Tax Credit Receipt

About This Document and Update History Secondary Standards

About this document

This document forms part of a series that replaces the original *Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Government Social Surveys*. This series will make topics easier to find, with clearer guidance and consistent layouts. By using a series of documents, updates will be simpler and faster, and new topics will be easier to incorporate.

This document is part of the set of Harmonised Secondary Principles for social sources. These are concepts and questions that apply only to a selected group of surveys. They are distinct from Primary Harmonised Principles, as the latter are used on all or nearly all major government social surveys. For more information, please see the introductory document, available on our website.

This is version 5.0. published in December 2015.

This document has been updated to reflect changes to the welfare system, the most significant of which were the introduction of Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment, and changes to Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit. A number of benefits have also been discontinued.

The document has been designed for those surveys interested in collecting information on benefits and tax credits receipt. Following the changes to the welfare system these questions can no longer be assumed to provide indications as to why a claimant is in receipt of benefit.

Previous versions

Version 4.1. published in October 2010.

This document has been updated to version 4.1 to reflect changes in the levels of benefits.

Version 4.0. published in December 2008.

This document has been updated as a result of re-formatting the document so that 'inputs' appear before 'outputs' for each Harmonised standard.

Version 3.0. published in April 2008.

This document includes changes to the amount payable for benefits, changes to information about the 'Job Grant' and includes the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). Contact details for the Harmonisation Team have also been updated.

Version 2.0, published in March 2005.

This version includes recent changes to output categories to remove redundant benefits and to capture the recent changes in the benefit system; changes to guidance on Disability Living Allowance (DLA) mobility; and changes to details of questions to update benefit awards in line with the 2005-06 prices, and to capture the recent changes to benefits.

Version 1.0, was published in June 2004.

Version 1.0 was part of a series that replaced the Harmonised Concepts and Questions document. We had worked to make our guidance easier to find and clearer to use. Other than the formatting and layout changes, there were no new changes to questions or outputs in this version.

Please note that version control is new to this edition. Please ensure that you always use up-to-date versions of questions and outputs by checking our website for new editions – the version number will be incremented when changes are made.

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Introduction

Note: For more detailed questions on benefits and tax credits than the harmonised set, please refer to the lead survey, the Family Resources Survey (FRS). If that detail is important to the survey's purposes (including very detailed comparison with the FRS) then the FRS questions should be used.

This document has been designed for those surveys interested in collecting information on benefits and tax credits receipt. Following the changes to the welfare system these questions can no longer be assumed to provide indications as to why a claimant is in receipt of benefit.

Contact us

For more information about Harmonisation or to join our mailing list, please visit our website at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/harmonisation/index.html>

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Inputs - benefit receipt

The questions on state benefits ask about benefits that are currently received.

Note: This is a topic which is subject to frequent changes, so users are urged to check the latest position on the Harmonisation website.

This interim standard has been designed for those surveys interested in collecting information on benefits and tax credits receipt. Following the changes to the welfare system these questions can no longer be assumed to provide indications as to why a claimant is in receipt of benefit.

IF AGE >= 16

WORKING AGE BENEFITS (WAgeBen)

– **Looking at this card, are you at present receiving any of these state benefits in your own right: that is, where you are the named recipient?**

SHOW CARD

1. Universal Credit
2. Housing Benefit
3. Working Tax Credit (excluding any childcare element of Working Tax Credit)
4. Child Tax Credit (including any childcare element of Working Tax Credit)
5. Income Support
6. Jobseeker's Allowance
7. Employment and Support Allowance
8. Carer's Allowance
9. None of these
10. (spontaneous) One of these / more than one of these, but I don't know which

Information on the benefits in the show card above is available in Annex A.

DISABILITY BENEFITS (DisBen)

– **Looking at this card, are you at present receiving any of these state benefits in your own right, or on behalf of another person?**

SHOW CARD

1. Personal Independence Payment (including the car allowance known as Motability)
2. Disability Living Allowance (including the car allowance known as Motability)
3. Attendance Allowance
4. Severe Disablement Allowance
5. Incapacity Benefit
6. Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
7. None of these
8. (spontaneous) One of these / more than one of these, but I don't know which

Information on the benefits in the show card above is available in Annex B.

PENSIONER BENEFITS (PenBen)

– **Looking at this card, are you at present receiving any of these state benefits in your own right: that is, where you are the named recipient?**

SHOW CARD

1. Pension Credit
2. State Retirement Pension
3. Widow's Pension, Bereavement Allowance, or Widowed Parent's Allowance (formerly Widowed Mother's Allowance)
4. Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (formerly War Disablement Pension), including Guaranteed Income Payments
5. War Widow's / Widower's Pension (and any related allowances)
6. None of these
7. (spontaneous) One of these / more than one of these, but I don't know which

Information on the benefits in the show card above is available in Annex C.

CHILD BENEFITS (KidBen)

– **Looking at this card, are you at present receiving any of these state benefits in your own right: that is, where you are the named recipient?**

SHOW CARD

1. Child Benefit
2. Guardian's Allowance
3. Maternity Allowance
4. None of these
5. (spontaneous) One of these / more than one of these, but I don't know which

Information on the benefits in the show card above is available in Annex D.

SOCIAL FUND (SocFund) (This question is not relevant for Northern Ireland)

– **Looking at this card, in the last 12 months, have you received any of these state benefits in your own right: that is, where you are the named recipient?**

SHOW CARD

1. A grant from the Social Fund for funeral expenses
2. A grant from the Social Fund for maternity expenses/ Sure Start Maternity Grant
3. A budgeting loan or budgeting advance from DWP
4. A loan or grant from your local authority
5. None of these
6. (spontaneous) One of these / more than one of these, but I don't know which

Information on the benefits in the show card above is available in Annex E.

OTHER BENEFITS (OtherBen)

– **Looking at this card, in the last 6 months, are you at present receiving any of these state benefits in your own right: that is, where you are the named recipient?**

SHOW CARD

1. 'Extended Payment' of Housing Benefit / rent rebate (4 week payment only)
2. Bereavement Payment
3. Any National Insurance or State Benefit not mentioned earlier¹
4. None of these
5. (spontaneous) One of these / more than one of these, but I don't know which

Information on the benefits in the show card above is available in Annex F.

FUTURE BENEFITS (ClaiFut)

– **And may I just check, are you awaiting the outcome of a claim for any of the following benefits?**

SHOW CARD

1. Pension Credit
2. Universal Credit
3. Housing Benefit
4. Working Tax Credit
5. Child Tax Credit
6. Income Support
7. Jobseeker's Allowance
8. Employment and Support Allowance
9. None of these
10. (spontaneous) One of these / more than one of these, but I don't know which

¹ This option captures any benefits that do not appear on one of the show cards. Please see Annex F for further details.

Inputs - standard follow-up questions

BENEFIT LETTER (BenLettr)

– Do you have a letter {or award notice} from the {DWP or Benefits Agency/Pensions part of the DWP/Disability and Carer’s Directorate (DCD) or DWP} that you could consult?

1. Yes
2. No

Ask if BenLettr = 2 (No)

BANK STATEMENT (BankStmt)

– ...or is there a bank statement you could consult?

1. Yes
2. No

BENEFIT AMOUNT (BenAmt)

– How much did you get last time for [benefit name]?

(If combined with another benefit and unable to give separate amount, enter ‘don’t know’ for both/ all such benefits).

BENEFIT PERIOD (BenPd)

– How long did this cover?

1. One week
2. Two weeks
3. Three weeks
4. Four weeks
5. Calendar month
7. Two calendar months
8. Eight times a year
9. Nine times a year
10. Ten times a year
13. Three months/13 weeks
26. Six months/26 weeks
52. One year/12 months/52 weeks
90. Less than one week
95. One off/lump sum
97. None of these (EXPLAIN IN A NOTE <Ctrl+M>)

Ask if BenAmt = DK (Don’t know)

DON’T KNOW BENEFIT AMOUNT (BenAmtDK)

Interviewer: *Is this don’t know because it’s paid in combination with ANOTHER benefit, and you cannot establish a separate amount?*

1. Yes INTERVIEWER: Leave your ‘amount’ answer as ‘Don’t Know’ and enter the combined benefit figure in a note, with explanations as needed
2. No

If ‘Yes’, the note should state the following:

- The names of the household member concerned;
- The names of the individual benefits covered by the payment;
- The total amount received;
- The period covered;
- Any other information which might be useful.

‘Don’t Know’ should also be entered at the BenAmt for the other benefits concerned with a note cross-referencing the others.

LENGTH OF CLAIM (Weeks)

– For how long have you been on [benefit name]?

Interviewer: *Please note that a number of changes in circumstances, not just a change of address could have resulted in a break of claim (e.g. a partnership forming/dissolving, change in number of dependents etc)...*

1. Up to 2 years
2. 2 years but less than 3
3. 3 years but less than 4
4. 4 years but less than 5
5. 5 or more years

Ask if Weeks = 1 (Up to 2 years)

LENGTH OF CLAIM (Weeks2)

– How many weeks have you been on [benefit name]?

Enter number of weeks

Ask if BenAmt = DK (Don't know)

AMOUNT RECEIVED FOR ALL BENEFITS (TtBPrx)

– Thinking about all the benefits and tax credits you receive, approximately how much would you say you receive from these sources per week?

Interviewer: *An approximate figure to the nearest pound is acceptable at this question.*

Ask for all benefits except Universal Credit²

USUAL AMOUNT (Usual)

– Is that the amount you usually get?

1. Yes
2. No

Ask if Usual = 1 (Yes)

USUAL AMOUNT IF UNUSUAL (BUAmt)

– How much do you usually get?

BENEFIT PERIOD (BUspd)

– How long did this cover?

GOVERNMENT PAYMENTS (GOVPAY)

– Are DWP paying directly for any of the things shown on this card?

Interviewer: *Code all that apply. These are paid for by deductions from Income Support/ Pension Credit/ Universal Credit/Jobseeker's Allowance.*

1. Mortgage interest
2. Rent arrears
3. Fees for nursing home or residential care
4. Gas or electric bills
5. Service charges for heating or fuel
6. Water charges (including sewerage charges)
7. Council Tax arrears
8. Fines
9. Child maintenance payments
10. Personal and commercial loan repayments
12. Yes - but don't know which
13. No - none of these

AMOUNT (GovAmt)

– How much (in total) is the DWP paying for this/ these things?

² Universal Credit payments can fluctuate with wages therefore it is likely that respondents will not have a 'usual amount'. Therefore this question is not asked for receipt of this benefit.

INCLUDED IN BENEFIT (GovBefore)

– **Just now, you said you got [amount] [benefit] last time. Was that before or after taking off what DWP pay for directly?**

1. BEFORE deducting what DWP pay for directly (i.e. respondent's gross entitlement)
2. AFTER deducting what DWP pay for directly (i.e. net amount received by respondent)

Inputs - non-standard follow-up questions

Card: WAgeBen

Ask if WAgeBen = 2 (Housing Benefit)

PAYMENT OF HOUSING BENEFIT (HBRcp)

– Is the Housing Benefit or rent [allowance/rebate] paid directly to you or directly to your landlord?

1. Directly to recipient of Housing Benefit or Rent [allowance/rebate] (i.e. the respondent or an appointee)
2. Directly to the landlord / property agent

Ask if WAgeBen = 2 (Housing Benefit) and Weeks = 1 (Up to 2 years)

YEAR CLAIM BEGAN (HBYear)

– Can I just check, in which year did you begin your current housing benefit claim?

Enter year

Ask if WAgeBen = 2 (Housing Benefit) and Weeks = 1 (Up to 2 years)

MONTH CLAIM BEGAN (Mnth)

– And which month was that?

1. January
2. February
3. March
4. April
5. May
6. June
7. July
8. August
9. September
10. October
11. November
12. December

Ask if WAgeBen <> (does not equal) 1(Universal Credit) or 3 (Working Tax Credits) or 4 (Child Tax Credits)

EVER RECEIVED TAX CREDITS (TCEver)

– Have you received any tax credit payments since April 2003 (when Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit were introduced)?

Interviewer: We are only interested in Working Tax Credits and Child Tax Credit at this question. Exclude Working Families' Tax Credit, Disabled Person's Tax Credit and Children's Tax Credit which were replaced from April 2003 by Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit.

1. Working Tax Credit (excluding any childcare element of Working Tax Credit)
2. Child Tax Credit (including any childcare element of Working Tax Credit)
3. None of these

Ask if TCEver = 1 (Working Tax Credit) or 2 (Child Tax Credit)

TAX CREDIT THIS YEAR (TCThsYr)

– Have you received any tax credit payments since April [survey year]?

1. Working Tax Credit (excluding any childcare element of Working Tax Credit)
2. Child Tax Credit (including any childcare element of Working Tax Credit)
3. None of these

Ask if TCEver = 1 (Working Tax Credit) or 2 (Child Tax Credit)

Interviewer: Respondent is not receiving tax credits at the moment but did last financial year or in a previous year

TAX CREDIT REPAYMENT (TCRepay)

– Why are you not receiving any tax credit payments at the moment?

1. Repaying an overpayment from earlier this year
2. Repaying an overpayment from previous year
3. Not completed application forms
4. Income too high

5. Not eligible for another reason
 6. Other
- Code 1 will only appear if TCThsYr = 1 (Working Tax Credit) or 2 (Child Tax Credit)

Ask if WAgeBen = 3 (Working Tax Credits)

WTC WITH DISABILITY ELEMENT (WTCD)

– Does the payment of [amount given for Working Tax Credit] include a disability element?

1. Yes
2. No

Ask if WAgeBen = 3 (Working Tax Credits)

PAYMENT INCLUDE CCTC (CCTC)

– Does this payment include a childcare element to help pay for childcare expenses?

1. Yes
2. No

Ask if WAgeBen = 6 (Jobseeker's Allowance)

(JSAType)

– There are two types of Jobseeker's Allowance. Is your allowance:

1. 'Contributory' - that is based on your National Insurance Contributions
2. ...or is it 'income related' - which is based on an assessment of your income
3. ...or is it a combination of 'contributory' and 'income related'?

Ask if WAgeBen = 7 (Employment and Support Allowance)

(ESAType)

– There are two types of Employment and Support Allowance. Is your allowance:

1. 'Contributory' - that is based on your National Insurance Contributions
2. ...or is it 'income based' - which is based on an assessment of your income
3. ...or is it a combination of 'contributory' and 'income related'?

Ask if WAgeBen = 8 (Carer's Allowance)

CARER'S ALLOWANCE (CAPer)

– Who is the person you care for that qualifies you for the allowance?

- 1 - 14 [Names of household members]
21. Relative (outside of household)
22. Friend/Neighbour
23. Client of voluntary organisation
24. Other non-household member

Ask if WAgeBen = 1 (Universal Credit), 5 (Income Support), 6 (Jobseeker's Allowance), 7 (Employment and Support Allowance), or PenBen = 1 (Pension Credit)

SOCIAL FUND REPAYMENTS (SFRepay)

– Are you at present making any repayments on any loans from DWP or your local authority?³

1. Yes
2. No

Ask if SFRepay = 1 (Yes)

REPAY AMOUNT (RepayAmt)

– How much in total do you repay, per week?

INCLUDED IN BENEFIT (SFInc)

– Just now, you said you got [amount] [benefit] last time. Was that before or after taking off these repayments?

1. Before
2. After

³ With the current routing this will pick up payments from WAgeBen only. Please consider routing if you are interested in all loan repayments.

Card: DisBen

Ask if DisBen = 1 (Personal Independence Payments)

TYPE OF PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT (PIPtype)

– There are two types of Personal Independence Payments. Is your allowance:

1. Daily Living component only, or
2. Mobility component only, or
3. Both - Daily Living and Mobility components?

Ask if PIPtype = 2 (Mobility) or 3 (Both)

(PIPMota)

– Is your Personal Independence Payment the car allowance known as Motability?

1. Yes
2. No
3. (spontaneous) Don't know

Ask if DisBen = 2 (Disability Living Allowance)

TYPE OF DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE (DLAtype)

– There are two types of Disability Living Allowance. Is your allowance:

1. Care component only, or
2. Mobility component only, or
3. Both - Care and Mobility components?

Ask if DLAtype = 2 (Mobility) or 3 (Both)

(DLAMota)

– Is your Disability Living Allowance a Motability payment?

1. Yes
2. No
3. (spontaneous) Don't know

Ask if DLAtype = 1 (Care) or 3 (Both)

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE 1 (DC)

– Is this care component of DLA paid as part of your [Retirement Pension / Widow's Pension / Bereavement Allowance / Widowed Mother's Allowance / Widowed Parents Allowance], or do you receive a separate payment?

1. Paid as part of pension
2. Separate Payment

Ask if DLAtype = 2 (Mobility) or 3 (Both)

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE 2 (DM)

– Is this mobility component of DLA paid as part of your [Retirement Pension / Widow's Pension / Bereavement Allowance / Widowed Mother's Allowance / Widowed Parents Allowance], or do you receive a separate payment?

1. Paid as part of pension
2. Separate Payment

Ask if DisBen = 3 (Attendance Allowance)

ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE (AA)

– Is this Attendance Allowance paid as part of your [Retirement Pension / Widow's Pension / Bereavement Allowance / Widowed Mother's Allowance / Widowed Parents Allowance], or do you receive a separate payment?

1. Paid as part of pension
2. Separate Payment

Ask if DisBen = 2 (Disability Living Allowance) or 3 (Attendance Allowance)

WHO RECEIVES DLA / ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE (WhoRec)

– Who (do you/will you) receive it for?

If current household member, enter the person number(s). Otherwise enter 97.

Ask if DisBen = 2 (Disability Living Allowance) or 3 (Attendance Allowance)

RECEIVING CARER'S ALLOWANCE (GetCA)

– Ask or code: Is there anyone getting Carer's Allowance for looking after you?

Interviewer: Include other household member or someone outside the household. The previous question will also appear later if a person is in receipt of attendance allowance.

Card: PenBen

Ask if PenBen = 1 (Pension Credit)

PENSION CREDIT ELEMENT RECEIVED (PComp)

– Interviewer: Ask respondent to consult award notice to see if guarantee credit and savings credit being received. Code all that apply

1. Guaranteed element received (see section titled 'His/Her Guarantee Credit')
2. Savings element received (see section titled 'His/Her Saving Credit')

Ask if PenBen <> (does not equal) 2 (State Retirement Pension) and respondent is over state pension age.

DEFERRED STATE PENSION (DefrPen)

Interviewer: The respondent is over state pension age and so could collect state pension BUT they have not reported having NI retirement pension (or Widow's pension/bereavement allowance) or Old Person's pension. However, some people defer taking up their State Pension in order to build up extra State Pension which they will receive when they start claiming State Pension. This question is checking whether people have deferred taking up State Pension.

– Have you deferred taking up your State Pension?

1. Yes
2. No

Ask if DefrPen = 2 (No)

(DefrPEX)

Interviewer: It appears that the respondent is not claiming Retirement Pensions and has not deferred their State Pension. Please check the reason for this and explain in a note.

Ask if PenBen = 3 (Widow's Pension, Bereavement Allowance, Widowed Parent's Allowance (formerly Widowed Mother's Allowance))

TYPE OF WIDOW'S PENSION / ALLOWANCE (Wid)

– Interviewer: Ask or record which one was received?

1. Widow's Pension
2. Widowed Mother's Allowance
3. Bereavement Allowance
4. Widowed Parent's Allowance

Card: KidBen

Ask if KidBen <> 1 (Child Benefit) but respondent has dependent child

CHILD BENEFITS CHECK (CBChk)

– Can I just check, you didn't report receipt of Child Benefit - is this because...

1. You have chosen to stop receiving Child Benefit payments due to having a high income?
2. You have not applied for Child Benefit?
3. Your partner receives this benefit
4. Other? (INTERVIEWER: please explain circumstances in a note)

Ask if KidBen = 1 (Child Benefit)

CHILD BENEFITS TAX (CBTax)

Interviewer: Since January 2013 families where at least one parent earns £50,000 or more a year have had to pay a High Income Child Benefit charge on the Child Benefit they receive. This charge is paid through the tax system. Some families may have decided to stop receiving Child Benefit payments rather than pay the money back through tax.

– Can I check, do you pay a high income Child Benefit tax charge on the Child Benefit you receive?

1. Yes
2. No

Ask if CBTax = 1

CHILD BENEFITS PAYE (CBPAYE)

Interviewer: All those paying the charge will have a choice to pay the charge directly themselves, or, if they are in PAYE, pay the charge through their tax code, i.e. it is included in their regular tax payments.

– You said that <person> pays a high income Child Benefit tax charge, how are these payments made?

1. Self-assessment
2. PAYE
3. Both

Ask if KidBen = 1 (Child Benefit) but WAgeBen <> (does not equal) 1 (Universal Credit) or 4 (Child Tax Credits)

CHILD BENEFITS AND CHILD TAX CREDIT CHECKS (ChkCTC)

Interviewer: Although the respondent receives Child Benefit he/she hasn't reported receipt of Child Tax Credits. Are you certain that the respondent does not receive Child Tax Credits? This is a means tested benefit so it is plausible the respondent may not receive Child Tax Credits if their income is above a certain threshold.

– If necessary check with the respondent

1. Yes, I am certain (the respondent DOES NOT receive Child Tax Credits)
2. No, I am not certain (the respondent did not know which Tax Credits received)

Card: SocFund

Ask if SocFund = 3 (A loan or grant from DWP)

SOCIAL FUND LOAN OR GRANT (SFTtype)

– Thinking about the money you received from Social Fund, was that a loan, or a grant (if both code 1 and 2)

Ask for each type of loan:

(LoanNum)

– How many loans have you had in the last 6 months?

(LoanAmt)

– How much did you borrow altogether?

Card: OtherBen

Ask if OtherBen = 1 ('Extended Payment' of Housing Benefit / rent rebate)

EXTENDED BENEFIT AMOUNT (ExtBenAmt)

– How much was the extended payment?

Enter the lump sum payment covering 4 weeks

Ask if OthBen = 6 (Any National Insurance or State Benefit not mentioned earlier)

OTHER NAMED BENEFIT (OthName)

– Interviewer: Enter the name of this 'other' NI or State Benefit

Enter Response

Ask if OthBen = 6 (Any National Insurance or State Benefit not mentioned earlier)

OTHER BENEFITS AT PRESENT (OthPres)

– Are you receiving [this benefit] at present?

1. Yes
2. No

Ask if OthBen = 6 (Any National Insurance or State Benefit not mentioned earlier)

NUMBER OF WEEKS RECEIVED BENEFIT 1 (OthWeeks)

– For how many weeks in the last 6 months have you received this benefit?

Enter Amount.

Outputs

Output Categories - Publication

Benefit Receipt:

Universal Credit	xxxx
Housing Benefit	xxxx
Working Tax Credit	xxxx
Child Tax Credit	xxxx
Income Support	xxxx
Jobseeker's Allowance	xxxx
Employment and Support Allowance	xxxx
Carer's Allowance	xxxx
Personal Independence Payment (care component)	xxxx
Personal Independence Payment (mobility component)	xxxx
Disability Living Allowance (care component)	xxxx
Disability Living Allowance (mobility component)	xxxx
Attendance Allowance	xxxx
Severe Disablement Allowance	xxxx
Incapacity Benefit	xxxx
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	xxxx
Pension Credit	xxxx
State Retirement Pension	xxxx
Widow's Pension, Bereavement Allowance, Widowed Parent's Allowance (formerly Widowed Mother's Allowance)	xxxx
Armed Forces Compensation Scheme	xxxx
Child Benefit	xxxx
All in receipt of income-related benefits*	xxxx
All in receipt of non-income-related benefits*	xxxx
All in receipt of benefits	xxxx
All in receipt of tax credits	xxxx
All not in receipt of state support	xxxx

*

Income-related benefits	Non-income-related benefits
Universal Credit	PIP (both Mobility and Daily Living components)
Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) (income-related element)	DLA (both Mobility and Care components)
	ESA (contributory based element)
Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) (income-based element)	JSA (contributory based element)
	Widow's / Bereavement Payment
Pension Credit	Retirement Pension
Housing Benefit	Widowed Mother's / Parent's Allowance
Rates Rebate	Armed Forces Compensation Scheme
Social Fund (All)	Incapacity Benefit
N. Ireland rate relief for full-time students, Trainees, under 18s and those leaving care	Severe Disablement Allowance
	Attendance Allowance
Child Maintenance Bonus	Carer's Allowance
Child Benefit	Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
	Maternity Allowance
N. Ireland Other Rate Rebate	Guardian's Allowance

<i>Income-related benefits</i>	<i>Non-income-related benefits</i>
Extended Payments (Housing Benefit)	Winter Fuel Payments
	Other State Benefits
	N.Ireland Disability Rate Rebate
	N.Ireland Lone Pensions Rate Rebate

Annex A - WAgeBen Benefit information

Universal Credit: (means tested)

Universal Credit (UC) will replace income-based JSA, income related ESA, Income Support, Child Tax Credits, Working Tax Credits, and Housing Benefit, mainly for those aged 18 to State Pension Age (SPA) from October 2013 (and some pilot areas from April 2013). Under Universal Credit, claimants will have to meet certain requirements that reflect the work-related activity they can be reasonably expected to undertake given their capabilities and circumstances.

Universal Credit will be made up of a standard allowance plus additional elements. There are up to six additional elements, which depend on a claimant's circumstances: child element(s); disabled and severely disabled child additions; a childcare element; a carer element; elements for individuals with a limited capability for work, and a higher rate for those with a limited capability for work-related activity; and a housing element (rent and support for mortgage interest).

The standard allowance and additional elements make up a notional maximum out-of-work award. Actual awards will be affected by income, capital and work. In-work claimants have an initial amount of earnings disregarded (their Work Allowance), with net earnings exceeding this amount reducing their UC award by 65p in every pound earned. Payments under Universal Credit will usually be made on a monthly basis.

Housing Benefit: (means tested)

Paid by the local authority to people who need help with rent. Council tenants on HB get a rent rebate which means that their rent due is reduced by the amount of rebate. They are however responsible for their own water charges so those on 100% rent rebate do pay a weekly or fortnightly amount to cover these and other charges, where other charges are involved. Private tenants and Housing Association/Registered Social Landlords' tenants usually receive HB (or rent allowance) personally. HB may be paid personally or directly to the landlord in a small number of cases. People on IS, income related ESA or income-based JSA usually get maximum HB. The recipient, or the recipient and their partner, must not have over £16,000 in savings. HB is not normally more than rent but may exceed rent as part of the Local Housing Allowance Project.

Working Tax Credit: (means tested)

A payment to top up the earnings of working people on low incomes, with or without children. Usually paid via PAYE and based on the number of hours worked and income (joint income for couples). There are extra credits for those recipients in working households where someone has a disability. WTC replaced Working Family Tax Credits and Disabled Person's Tax Credit in April 2003.

Child Tax Credit: (means tested)

A payment to support families with children. The credit is paid to the person responsible for caring for the children directly into a bank or building society. The CTC may also contain an additional allowance for child care expenses. Replaced Children's Tax Credit and Childcare Tax Credit.

Income Support: (means tested)

Made up of personal allowances for each member of the benefit unit, premiums for any special needs, and housing costs, principally for mortgage interest payments. Those on IS are likely to be getting HB (if in rented accommodation) and CTB (if liable). Often paid to top up other benefits, or earnings from p/t work. PC is the equivalent of IS for those over the female retirement age. A dependant addition may also be received if there is a child under the age of 16 years in the household and Child Tax Credit is not in payment. Families may be entitled to a family addition.

Jobseeker's Allowance:

Replaced Unemployment Benefit and IS for unemployed people in October 1996. The claimant must be out of work or working less than 16 hours a week, actively seeking work and have a Jobseeker's Agreement with the DWP. There are two types: contribution-based, dependent on the amount of NI contributions paid, and income-related, dependent on income and savings. There are fixed age-related allowances, plus for income-based JSA only, extra allowances and premiums. JSA is paid at a lower rate for those aged under 25 than those aged 25 and over.

Employment and Support Allowance (from October 2008):

ESA replaced IB and Illness-based IS for new claimants from October 2008. Being extended to existing claimants over time. All claimants receive a 'Main Phase' payment along with either a 'work related activity'

or 'support' component depending on how the claimant's condition affects their ability to work. Severe Disability/Enhanced Disability/Carer/Pensioner and Higher Pensioner premiums are potential additions available.

Carer's Allowance:

A weekly benefit for people earning £100 per week or less after tax who give regular and substantial care (for 35+ hrs per week) to a severely disabled person who gets either DLA or AA. Paid at two rates: the Allowance itself and the Adult Dependent addition.

Annex B - DisBen Benefit information

Personal Independence Payment:

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) replaces Disability Living Allowance for eligible people aged 16 to 64 from 8 April 2013, initially for new claims in selected areas, followed by new claims from across the country from 10 June 2013. As for DLA, once a claim has been established there is no upper age limit. Existing DLA recipients who were aged 16 to 64 on 8 April 2013, or reach age 16 after that date, will begin to be invited to claim PIP from October 2013 onwards and their DLA will stop when a decision on their PIP claim has been made. There will be no automatic migration from DLA to PIP.

There are two components:

(i) **Daily Living Component** covering 10 activities including eating and drinking, washing and dressing, using the toilet, communicating and understanding, managing medication or therapy, engaging with people and making budgeting decisions [This link provides all the activities - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2013/9780111532072/schedule/1>]. Paid at one of two rates: standard or enhanced

(ii) **Mobility Component** covering two activities: planning and following journeys and moving around. Paid at one of two rates: standard or enhanced.

Disability Living Allowance:

Persons under 65 can claim for DLA if they need help with personal care and/or with getting around. Once an initial claim is made there is no upper age limit. DLA can be paid even if no-one is giving the care needed. There are two components:

(i) **Care Component** which covers things like washing, dressing, using the toilet, cooking a main meal. Paid at one of three rates: Highest, Middle or Lowest.

(ii) **Mobility Component** for persons who can't walk or have difficulty in walking. Paid at Higher or Lower rates).

There will be no automatic migration to PIP (see below) but from October 2013 new claims will only be received for those aged below 16 and changes to existing claims will only be accepted for those aged below 16 or above 65.

Attendance Allowance:

Paid to disabled persons aged 65 or over living at home who need help with personal care because of their illness or disability. There are two rates; a lower rate for attendance during day OR night; and a higher rate for day AND night. Note that respondents can get AA even if no one is actually giving them the care they need.

Severe Disablement Allowance:

Paid from the 29th week of illness to persons of working age who do not qualify for Incapacity Benefit. Persons getting this can also claim Income Support. Be careful not to confuse this benefit with Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disability Premiums within income-related benefits. There is a basic rate and Age additions can be paid in conjunction with Severe Disablement Allowance at two rates: Higher and lower rate. Dependant additions may also be received for adult dependants and for child dependants. New claims to SDA ended April 2001.

Incapacity Benefit:

Paid to people who have been medically assessed as incapable of working, if they have paid enough National Insurance contributions. People ineligible for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) may receive IB. If a person is/was receiving SSP, IB replaces it after 28 weeks. There are three basic rates depending on the period, age of the individual(s) and severity of incapacity. A number of supplements may also be received. From October 2008, ESA replaced new claims to IB.

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit:

Provided for employees injured at work or suffering from an industrial disease. The amount depends on degree of disablement. Some recipients may also be entitled to Unemployability Supplement. Those whose disablement is assessed as 100% also get Constant Attendance Allowance at one of four rates, and may also be eligible for Exceptionally Severe Disablement Allowance. Also see Reduced Earnings Allowance. The reduced under 18 rate has been abolished from April 2013.

Annex C - PenBen Benefit information

Pension credit: (means tested)

From October 2003 this replaced Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). Comprises two elements: i) A Guarantee Credit which is the minimum a pensioner can be expected to live on. Additional amounts for owner occupiers, disability and caring responsibility. ii) The Savings Credit which aims to reward those who have made provision for their retirement over and above the State Pension.

State Retirement Pension:

Paid to women aged 61* or over and to men aged 65 or over. This is the normal State Pension and is the same for men and women who have paid their own NI contributions at the standard rate, and for widows/widowers on their late partner's NI contributions. Persons on this pension may also get PC, details will be shown on the notification form for respondents who receive payments directly into their bank or building society account. The majority of pensioners you interview will be getting this pension. From April 2005, State Retirement Pension can be deferred for as long as required.

When a person reaches 80 and does not get an NI Retirement Pension or whose NI pension is less than the Over 80 Pension, they are eligible for Over 80 Pension.

*The pension age for women is rising incrementally to eventually match the pension age of men.

Widow's Pension:

A weekly benefit for women aged 45-65 (or 40-65 if widowed before 11 April 1988), paid when their husband dies or when their Widowed Mother's Allowance ends. Replaced by Bereavement Allowance on 1 April 2001 although existing widows will continue to receive it.

Bereavement Allowance:

Payable to widows and widowers who are widowed when aged 45 and over, with no dependent children. The benefit is time limited and paid for one year only. Widows aged 45-54 will be paid on an age related scale. Widows aged 55-pension age will be paid a fixed amount.

Widowed Parents Allowance:

Formerly Widowed Mother's Allowance. A weekly basic benefit plus an allowance for each dependent child for whom the parent gets Child Benefit. The child(ren) must be the child(ren) of the widow/widower and their late husband/wife.

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (formerly War Disablement Pension)/ Guaranteed Income Payments:

Payable to members of the Regular & Reserve Forces for service injuries, ill-health and deaths.

War Widow's / Widower's Pension:

Payable to widow/ers and children of someone killed in the Armed Forces or who died as a result of injury sustained in the Armed Forces.

Annex D - KidBen Benefit information

Child Benefit:

Paid for each child under 16 years of age, or aged 16-19 and still in full-time further (but not higher) education. Two rates apply: only/elder/eldest child, and lower rate for each subsequent child.

Guardian's Allowance:

Can be claimed for a child who is in effect an orphan and who lives with the claimant, or whom they help to maintain, whether or not they are the legal guardian.

Maternity Allowance:

For women who have paid enough Class 1 or 2 NI contributions but are not entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay because, for example, they are self-employed or recently changed jobs. Payment can be made for a period of 39 weeks beginning 11 weeks before the baby is due (later if still working).

Annex E - SocFund Benefit information

Social Fund loans:

Repayable interest free loans are available: Budgeting Loans to those on Income Support, Income based JSA, income related ESA or Pension Credit to help spread budgeting costs for certain items available from DWP.

From 1 April 2013, Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants were abolished, and funding transferred to English local authorities and the Scottish and Welsh governments, to deliver new local welfare provision.

Funeral Payment: (means tested)

A grant from the Social Fund can be obtained if the respondent or partner gets IS, Income-based JSA, income related ESA, PC, Tax Credits, HB, or CTB and Universal Credit.

Sure Start Maternity Grants (formerly maternity expenses) (means tested):

A grant from the Social Fund for maternity expenses is available if the respondent or partner is getting either Income Support, Income-based JSA, Income-based ESA, PC or Tax Credits or Universal Credit. One-off payment. From 11th April 2011, Payable only for the first child unless multiple births after subsequent pregnancies.

Universal Credit:

People in receipt of Universal Credit will not receive a Budgeting Loan but can get a Budgeting Advance. They may still be repaying a previous Social Fund loan.

Annex F - Otherben Benefit information

Extended Payment of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit

These benefits may be received for a further four weeks by people aged under 60 when they start working full-time following a period of at least six months being unemployed, on a Government Training Scheme, or on Income Support as a lone parent or carer. Also known as Housing Benefit Run On.

Bereavement Payment

Replaces Widow's Payment. A lump sum paid at the time of death to new widows and widowers.

Any Other NI or State Benefits:

- Industrial Death Benefit Widows Pension:

Widows and widowers of those employees killed at work or by an industrial disease may be entitled to this pension if their spouse died before April 1988. Paid at two rates.

- Reduced earnings allowance

Paid to people who cannot return to their regular occupation or do work of the same standard due to disablement caused before October 1990 by industrial accident or disease. It should be included in the 'other state benefits' category.

Benefits information not collected in the FRS:

- Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs):

WFPs are made where there is at least one person at women's State Pension age person in the household to help with heating bills, regardless of whether in receipt of any other state benefits. WFP is not recorded on FRS as DWP impute this information. For more information on this imputation please contact the FRS team (team.frs@dwp.gsi.gov.uk).

- Child Bonus:

Due to year on year fluctuations this benefit is not collected within the FRS.

- Cold Weather Payments:

Due to year on year fluctuations this benefit is not collected within the FRS.

Annex G - Benefit information for those benefits captured elsewhere in the FRS questionnaire.

The FRS asks respondents about receipt of the following benefits however given the type of benefit they are asked at relevant points of the questionnaire. Therefore these benefits fall outside the scope of this interim standard. For more information on how these benefits are captured please contact the FRS team (team.frs@dwp.gsi.gov.uk).

Council Tax Reduction (means tested)

Council tax is based on the value of a dwelling and assumes two adults per household. The full bill consists of two equal elements: a property element and a personal element. Status discounts, which reduce or eliminate the personal element of the tax, are available to single persons and certain other households. Local Authorities and Devolved Administrations offer schemes reducing the council tax liability of some people, which may offer support to some on low incomes. A Disablement relief is available if there is a disabled person in the household.

Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

An allowance paid to children aged 16 to 18 years in low income families to stay on at school. There are two types of payments: Weekly Payments and Bonuses. Information on Weekly Payments are collected on the FRS, but information on Bonuses or on reimbursed travel expenses as part of the allowance are not. EMA has been abolished in England, but is still available elsewhere in the UK.

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

Received by employees during maternity leave. It is paid by the employer. The respondent must have been in the same job for at least 26 weeks and earning enough to have to pay NI contributions. SMP can be paid for up to 39 weeks. The employer may also add 'made-up' pay. It should only be recorded in the last/usual pay. The first six weeks are paid at 90% of respondent's salary, and 33 weeks at the standard flat rate or 90% of average earnings if less than the standard flat rate.

Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP)

Received by employees during paternity leave. It can be paid for up to two weeks. The weekly amount is a standard flat rate or 90% of average earnings if less than the standard flat rate.

Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)

Received by employees for up to 26 weeks at a standard flat rate or 90% of average earnings if less than the standard flat rate.

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Paid by employers to employees who earn enough to have to pay NI contributions. It is paid after four consecutive sick days for a maximum of 28 weeks in any spell or linked spells of sickness. (After 28 weeks, or if the employer's obligation to pay SSP ends before then, the respondent will usually transfer on to Incapacity Benefit). The employer may also add 'made-up' pay. It should only be recorded in the last/usual pay.

Annex B. Receipt of State Support - FRS compared to administrative data

	2012/13 Pre-review			2013/14 New standards		
	Admin (1,000s)	FRS Undercount (%)	Linked Match (2010/11) (%)	Admin (1,000s)	FRS Undercount (%)	Linked Match (2013/14) (%)
State Support						
Income Support	1,230	-11	84	920	-2	91
Pension Credit	2,370	-33	75	2,250	-32	75
Housing Benefit	5,000	-14	85	5,030	-13	86
Council Tax Reduction	5,900	-8	81	5,500	-9	<i>not available</i>
Working Tax Credit	2,290	-21	62	2,340	-23	<i>not available</i>
Child Tax Credit	2,580	-3		2,620	-8	<i>not available</i>
State Pension	11,600	-3	99	11,680	-3	99
Jobseeker's Allowance	1,410	-15	85	1,170	-6	87
Incapacity Benefit	570	5	83	190	58	75
Attendance Allowance	1,550	-48	62	1,490	-46	60
Carer's Allowance	620	-19	69	650	-8	80
Employment and Support Allowance	1,250	-44	<i>not available</i>	1,790	-44	66
Disability Living Allowance (Care)	2,480	-7	80	2,500	-15	79
Disability Living Allowance (Mobility)	2,610	-16		2,630	-23	

Admin column - Administrative figures for caseloads receipt for each benefit

FRS Undercount - FRS estimated caseloads receipt as a percentage of administrative figures

Linked Match - FRS sample in receipt as a percentage of linked administrative records

National Statistics Harmonisation Group**Combined Topic Group Report – December 2015****NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report****Benefits and Tax Credits****Thomas Sims**

See main meeting paper

NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report**Consumer Durables****Jana Kubascikova-Mullen**

Nothing to report for this period.

NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report**Country of Birth and Migration****Pamela Spicer**

Nothing to report for this period.

NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report**Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour**

Topic Lead	Fiona Aitchison
Topic Group Members	Under review
Reporting Period	September to November 2015
Surveys Harmonised Questions Used on	Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

Summary Status <i>(An overview of the status of the work at this time)</i>	
Work on CSEW questionnaire development is ongoing. There is nothing further to report this quarter.	
Progress made during this reporting period	
Product Name <i>(including expected completion date)</i>	Status
Work planned for the next reporting period	
Product Name	Status
Key Issues and Risks <i>(Summary of actual or potential problems along with risks, potential impacts and sensitivities linked to individual needs of UK nations)</i>	
Other Information <i>(Any other relevant details)</i>	

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report
Demographic information**

Topic Lead	Emily Knipe, Population Statistics Division, ONS
Topic Group Members	Nicola Haines, Vital Statistics Output Branch, Office for National Statistics Davie Hay, Department of Health Jos IJpelaar, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency Karen Hurrell, Equality and Human Rights Commission Laura Wilson, Social Survey Division, Office for National Statistics Tony Whiffen, Welsh Government Yolanda Ruiz, Department for Communities and Local Government
Reporting Period	September to December 2015

Summary Status <i>(An overview of the status of the work at this time)</i>	
<p>Gender Identity: This will continue to be monitored through the Census consultation work. I have agreed to provide assistance to the Census consultation team on this work.</p> <p>Same-sex marriage: This will continue to be monitored through the Census consultation work. Question design for the Census will help to inform changes that need to be made to the harmonised marital status question and output design. (Issues are mainly surrounding designing a question when there isn't a relationship matrix on the survey, wording- what we can and can't say, and issues when partners are living separately and how we capture this).</p> <p>LFS is able to capture same sex marriages and headline estimates have been included in Families and Households, 2015 publication for the first time. We will be going back to the LFS team with some issues surrounding the coding of family and household variables for same sex married couple families.</p> <p>Age bands: Harmonisation team approached me about the age bands that PSD use in their standard outputs. I did a small audit and have proposed a new harmonised standard which will be sent out for review shortly- this is yet to happen due to availability of time to work on it.</p>	
Progress made during this reporting period	
Product Name <i>(including expected completion date)</i>	Status
Work planned for the next reporting period	
Product Name	Status
Key Issues and Risks <i>(Summary of actual or potential problems along with risks, potential impacts and sensitivities linked to individual needs of UK nations)</i>	
Other Information <i>(Any other relevant details)</i>	

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report
Economic Activity
Lead TBC**

The Harmonisation team is in the process of finding a new Topic Lead for this group.

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report
Educational Attainment**

Karen Woolgar

Nothing to report for this period

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report
Ethnic Group, National Identity, Language, Religion and Sexual Identity**

Angela Potter-Collins

See main meeting paper

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report
Health, Disability and Carers**

Steve Webster

No report received

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report
Housing & Tenure**

Rob Green

Nothing to report for this period

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report
Income**

Topic Lead	Richard Tonkin
Topic Group Members	Matthew Elsby - HM Treasury Anne MacDonald - Scot Gov (TBC) John Shale – DWP Joanna Wroe - ONS (CTP) Alan Jackson - Welsh Gov (TBC) Jo Bulman - ONS (LCF) Laura Keyse/Gemma N Thomas - ONS (EU-SILC) Jennifer Doak - NISRA (TBC) Jeremy Reuben - HRMC
Reporting Period	September to November 2015
Surveys Harmonised Questions Used on	

Summary Status <i>(An overview of the status of the work at this time)</i>	
Main thing on the income side is to note that we're just about to start looking at the harmonisation of the income variables in the Living Costs & Food survey and the Survey on Living Conditions as part of preparation for ONS data collection modernisation.	
Progress made during this reporting period	
Product Name <i>(including expected completion date)</i>	Status
Work planned for the next reporting period	
Product Name	Status
Key Issues and Risks <i>(Summary of actual or potential problems along with risks, potential impacts and sensitivities linked to individual needs of UK nations)</i>	
Other Information <i>(Any other relevant details)</i>	

NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report Pensions

Topic Lead	Tim Gibbs
Topic Group Members	Steve Dunstan (ONS), Joanna Bulman (ONS), Hazel Clarke (ONS), David Bovill (ONS), Elaine Chamberlain (ONS), Donncha Burke (DWP), Riaz Ali (DWP), Pauline Heather (DWP), James Forsyth – Harris (DWP)
Reporting Period	September to November 2015
Surveys Harmonised Questions Used on	

Summary Status <i>(An overview of the status of the work at this time)</i>	
Progress made during this reporting period	
Product Name <i>(including expected completion date)</i>	Status
Work planned for the next reporting period	
Product Name	Status
Key Issues and Risks <i>(Summary of actual or potential problems along with risks, potential impacts and sensitivities linked to individual needs of UK nations)</i>	
Other Information <i>(Any other relevant details)</i>	
<p>Implementation of policy on Defined Ambition pensions has been postponed. Therefore for the medium term no survey questions will have to be changed as a result of the policy. Agreed at September meeting that the sub group on pensions may approach admin data sources to participate in the group. The pension regulator and HMRC contacted. Automatic enrolment question to be added to the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings working on proposal with some members of sub-group before sharing with more widely for comments.</p>	