

# National Statistics Harmonisation Group

## Quarterly Meeting Agenda:

Thursday 18 September 2014 at 11:00 to 13:30 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 (14:2) 15	Emma Wright
3	1120 – 1135 hrs	a) GSS SPSC Meeting Report	Verbal Update	Emma Wright
		b) Review of NSHG Workplan	NSHG (14:3) 16	Mark Herniman
		c) Census Update and Latest Plans	NSHG (14:3) 17	Paul Waruszynski
4	1135 – 1145 hrs	Paper for Approval - Analysis of Migration Data – Use of Country of Birth and Nationality	NSHG (14:3) 18	NSHG Secretariat
5	1145 – 1155 hrs	Update from the NSHG Steering Group	NSHG (14:3) 19	Jacqui Jones / Jan Thomas
6	1155 – 1205 hrs	Update on Case Studies	NSHG (14:3) 20	Jan Thomas
7	1205 – 1215 hrs	Revised Harmonisation Strategy Implementation Plan (21) NSHG Strategy Plan (21A)	NSHG (14:3) 21 NSHG (14:3) 21A	Palvi Shah
8	1215 – 1225 hrs	Governance of Administrative and Business Harmonisation	NSHG (14:3) 22	Jan Thomas
9	1225 – 1310 hrs	<b>NSHG Topic Group Updates</b>	NSHG (14:3) 23	<b>Topic Group Leads</b>
		Benefits and Tax Credits	No Report Received	Caroline Smith
		Consumer Durables	Nothing to report this period	Jana Kubascikova-Mullen
		Country of Birth & Migration	Group currently without a Lead	TBC
		Crime & Anti Social Behaviour	No Report Received	Nicola White
		Demographic Information	Report Received	Emily Knipe
		Economic Activity	No Report Received	Debra Leaker
		Education	Report Received	Karen Grierson
		EILR	Report Received	Angela Potter-Collins
		Health, Disability and Carers	Group currently without a Lead	TBC
		Housing and Tenure	No Report Received	Hugh Mallinson
		Income	Nothing to report this period	Richard Tonkin
		Integrated Household Survey	Report Received	Tim Vizard
Pensions	Nothing to report this period	Tim Gibbs		
10	1310 – 1325 hrs	AOB		Emma Wright
11	1325 – 1330 hrs	Next Meetings	Wednesday 10th December 2014, between 1100 - 1330 hrs, ONS, Drummond Gate Office, London  Wednesday 4th March 2015, between 1100 - 1330 hrs, ONS, Drummond Gate Office, London	Emma Wright



**Minutes of the National Statistics Harmonisation Group (NSHG) Meeting  
4<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

**1330 to 1600 hrs**

**BIS Conference Centre**

**No 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET**

**Attendees:**

Jan Thomas (Chair)	ONS
David Matz	Home Office
Caroline Smith	DWP (via audio)
Gerry Nicolaas	SRA
Jo Bulman	ONS (via audio)
Julie Jefferies	ONS (via audio)
Karen Grierson	BIS
Karen Hurrell	EHRC (via audio)
Lisa Walters	Welsh Gov (via audio)
Paul Waruszynski	ONS
Pete Betts	ONS
Tim Gibbs	ONS (via audio)
Mark Herniman (Secretariat)	ONS

**Apologies:**

Andy Blinston	BIS
Becki Aquilina	ONS
Emma Wright	ONS
Julia Wilson	Scot Gov
Laura Freeman	MoJ
Lyndsey Melbourne	DfT
Mary Gregory	DECC
Michaela Morris	ONS
Nicola White	ONS
Palvi Shah	ONS
Pam Spicer	ONS
Richard Tonkin	ONS
Roger Morgan	DWP
Sian Bradford	ONS
Tim Vizard	ONS
Tom Anderson	ONS
Tom Knight	DCMS

**1.0 Welcome and Introduction**

1.1 Jan Thomas welcomed members to the meeting, explaining that Emma Wright was unable to chair the meeting on this occasion. Joanna Bulman (ONS and new topic lead for Consumer Durables), Julie Jefferies (ONS and temporary topic lead for Demographic Information) and Paul Waruszynski (ONS – Census Outputs) were welcomed as new members to the NSHG.

**2.0 Review of the Minutes and Actions from the Last Meeting, NSHG (14:1) 06 – Jan Thomas**

- 2.1 There were no comments from the minutes of the last meeting and these were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting held on 5 March 2014.
- 2.2 There were 13 actions from the 5 March meeting. Of these, actions 2 & 9 are 'ongoing' and will be carried over. Action 7, although marked as 'ongoing' is now complete. Action 13 was for the NSHG members to think of suggestions for a theme for this years NSHG Workshop and this will be covered in section 8.0.

**3.0 Update on Harmonisation Work**

**a. GSS SPSC Meeting Report, Verbal Report – Jan Thomas**

3.1 Jan gave a verbal update on the last GSS Statistical Policy & Standards Committee (SPSC)

meeting, stating the revised Harmonisation Strategy was presented to the SPSC where it was received positively. The SPSC were asked to formally agree the strategy and to give some guidance on the NSHG steering group, which was formed to sit between the SPSC and the NSHG to provide direction but stalled, and more focus is now needed. The SPSC was also asked to look at the 'softly, softly' approach to harmonisation, we have taken so far, as it is now felt we have gone as far as we can with this and need more support to deliver the harmonisation work.

- 3.2 There are several initiatives coming, particularly the drive to make more use of administrative data, which will lead to problems further down the line if harmonisation is not taken into account. The SPSC suggested we could attempt to build harmonisation into the larger programmes of work currently going on, such as 'Big Data' and the Admin Data Programme. The use of case studies, was also suggested (which the Harmonisation Team has already started to collate), to disseminate best practice and to show the benefits of harmonisation more clearly.
- 3.3 It was suggested the strategy paper was put to the Heads of Profession once more, which has been done, to get final comments and agreement. The Chair of the SPSC, Jil Matheson, stated the expectation should be that all data is harmonised – harmonisation by default, which is different from the approach used up until now. The work should be about consistency, efficiency and open data/standards and we have been encouraged to take this forward.
- 3.4 The Harmonisation Team has also been asked to look at users frustrations from where things aren't harmonised. NSHG members are asked to highlight any examples of these to the Secretariat, so they can be looked at.

**Action 1 – NSHG members to bring any examples of issues caused by lack of harmonisation to the attention of the Harmonisation Team through the Secretariat.**

- 3.5 In terms of the NSHG Steering Group, work has started to revitalise this, with new members from within the GSS and academia joining the group, to give more steer to the direction of the work. More support in general was suggested via the SPSC as the NSHG is mandated by legislation, the Code of Practice and the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, which all state we should be using standards. There was a feeling that we will be given more support and encouragement in the future.
- 3.6 The meeting was informed that Market & Opinion Research International (MORI) are doing some work with the Welsh Government and the various surveys conducted in Wales. This could be anything from merging surveys to just ensuring that core question sets in use are harmonised. This may be of benefit to the NSHG as MORI would be exploring any instances where lack of harmonisation has caused issues. There is the potential this could help the Harmonisation Team find a really good case study to work with.

**Action 2 – Harmonisation Team to contact Gerry Nicolaas to see if MORI would be prepared to share their findings into where lack of harmonisation has caused issues.**

- 3.7 It was suggested, with regard to raising the profile of the harmonisation work that contact with the Statistics Users Forum (now Stats Users Net) would be useful as they may also have examples of issues caused by lack of harmonisation. This was thought to be a good idea and will be looked into.

**Action 3 – Harmonisation Team to contact Stats Users Net with regard to finding out if they had examples of where lack of harmonisation has caused issues.**

- b. **Review of the NSHG Workplan, NSHG (14:1) 07 – Mark Herniman**

- 3.8 Mark gave an update of the workplan, explaining for the benefit of new members the workplan contains the current programme of work and a table with progress against the programme of work which is updated on a quarterly basis.
- 3.9 To help raise the profile of the harmonisation work it was suggested a consolidated list of useful information links for harmonisation could be sent to an academic network called JISC. They have a mailing list that could potentially reach hundreds of members. There were no further comments or questions from the membership.

**Action 4 – Harmonisation Team to send a consolidated list of useful information links for harmonisation to JISC, to pass onto their members to help raise the profile of harmonisation.**

**c. Census update and Latest Plans Verbal Update – Paul Waruszynski**

- 3.10 Paul presented a report on the current work going on in Census Outputs, outlining the current and future planned releases. The report was handed out at the meeting and is attached at Annex A to these minutes for the benefit of those who attended via audio and those not able to be at the meeting.
- 3.11 A question was asked about the areas in the Census where it is known a lack of harmonisation exists and if there are any proposals or recommendations on how that can be addressed or if the Census is happy with the disharmony, particularly when it comes to UK outputs. It was stated it was an interesting exercise and Census have been able to produce a number of tables for the UK based on the harmonised Key and Quick Statistics. UK level outputs can be produced from the Origin and Destination table, but only where a Quick Statistics equivalent was produced but there will be no extra work to produce others. The only exception was the EuroStat work where UK levels had to be provided but the data was not necessarily derived in the same way, which may mean they are not wholly comparable. The main example of this was Country of Citizenship, where for England and Wales the ‘Passports held’ question or Country of Birth if the ‘No Passport held’ option was selected, was used. Northern Ireland did very much the same with minor differences around the Irish/Northern Irish backgrounds. Scotland, however, didn’t ask the ‘Passports held’ question at all. They had a more complex algorithm that took into account Country of Birth and Length of Residence as well. It was suggested this may also make an interesting case study for the Harmonisation Team in the future.

**Action 5 – Harmonisation Team to contact Paul Waruszynski (Census Outputs) for information on the Country of Citizenship question where the countries in the UK used differing methods to produce the outputs for this, as this may make an interesting case study.**

- 3.12 The issue of releasing tables during the Purdah period prior to the Scottish Referendum was discussed as there are tables due for release in August. It was stated that pre-announced releases can go ahead as long as this is done six months in advance. It was agreed Paul would pass this back to Census so they are fully aware.
- 3.13 With regard to the Microdata Secure samples, a maximum sample size of 10% is quoted. It was asked if this was to make the analysis more manageable. It was stated the sample size was chosen by Census disclosure control team.

**4.0 Interim Standard, Benefits and Tax Credits – Caroline Smith**

- 4.1 Caroline explained the Interim Standard was not quite ready due to resource issues over the last quarter adding there is just one question which needs extra work. This question is to do with what was called ‘Social Fund’ and part of this transferring to Local Authorities and where to place the now separated parts of the question now, without causing confusion. The ONS

Family Resource Survey (FRS) and the NATCEN FRS methodology team are helping out with this. An offer of help was made at the meeting from the Data Collection Methodology Team.

**Action 6 – Caroline Smith to contact Pete Betts to see if Data Methodology Collection can assist with the Interim Standard for Benefits and Tax Credits.**

- 4.2 It was pointed out the Labour Force Survey Steering Group, through Chris Cousins has been looking at the Benefits questions to ensure they are up to date, and that Chris is in regular contact with Caroline Smith.

**5.0 Information Paper, Country of Birth and Migration in Reporting, NSHG (14:2) 09**

- 5.1 David Matz introduced the paper on behalf of Chris Kershaw as he is also part of the Migration Reporting Working Group (MRWG). He explained the paper came out of the joint work by social research colleagues and ONS Census Outputs, where it was decided there was a need to explain why sometimes 'Country of Birth' was used and sometimes 'Nationality' was used when looking at migration data. This paper sets this out and advises producers to consider doing both, as it is considered to be a good working practice. This has been approved by the MRWG and they would welcome any comments on the paper or indeed approval by the NSHG.
- 5.2 It was agreed NSHG members could comment on the paper with a view to formally agreeing it at the next meeting.

**Action 7 – NSHG members to make comment on the Information paper on Country of Birth and Migration in Reporting, with a view to formally agreeing it at the September 2014 meeting.**

**6.0 Harmonisation Vs Standardisation, NSHG (14:2) 10 – Jan Thomas**

- 6.1 Jan presented the paper on behalf of Becki Aquilina who was unable to be at the meeting, explaining it is important the differences between Harmonisation and Standardisation are understood. One of the reasons for being more precise in our language was the recent proposal this type of harmonisation group should be re-branded to 'standardisation'. After looking at this it was realised this was not the right way to go and this paper puts forward the reasons why.
- 6.2 It was recognised that part of this issue is the term 'Standard' which the NSHG has given to its harmonised products and the fact this could mean its being imposed. It was suggested this should be changed to 'Principles' or even 'Practices' or 'Codes'. This would help to set out that everything is not done in exactly the same way but there is still consistency. This concept was broadly supported by the meeting.
- 6.3 The meeting was asked how the NSHG sits alongside the Information Standards Boards (ISB). It was stated we did have some fairly close cooperation with the ISB for Education through Rob Bauling, a former member of the NSHG and that the ISB tended to look at a much lower level of detail compared to the NSHG. The ISBs are on our distribution lists and there is a loose collaboration with them. It was thought that it may be worth getting someone along to the NSHG Workshop.

**Action 8 – Harmonisation Team to contact the ISB with a view to inviting to the NSHG Workshop.**

**7.0 Draft Harmonisation Strategy Implementation Plan, NSHG (14:2) 11, Jan Thomas**

- 7.1 Jan presented the paper explaining this will be presented as a full paper at the next meeting.
- 7.2 There were no comments or questions from the meeting.

**8.0 NSHG Workshop Theme Suggestions, NSHG (14:2) 12, Jan Thomas**

- 8.1 Jan presented the paper explaining the workshops have rotated each year from a review of the harmonised standards one year to a more 'blue sky thinking' approach the next. We did a review of the standards last year so we now need to think of a suitable theme for this year's workshop and this brief paper sets out some examples of what we could do.
- 8.2 It was explained the main idea of the day was to generate ideas. Based on the agreed topic to be presented we could then break into syndicate groups for about 20 minutes to brainstorm selected topics. This would then be fed back to the whole group. This usually generates work for the coming year and in particular last year it became apparent we needed to promulgate our work further to include the Government Social Research Service and the Government Economic Service. Overall this process helps the NSHG to revitalise its work and not become stale.
- 8.3 It was suggested that Paul Waruszynski could think about some of the problems that came out of the Census and maybe do a short presentation at the workshop. This was thought to be a good idea and Paul will discuss this with Census colleagues.

**Action 9 – Paul Waruszynski to think about the problems that came out of the Census with a view to doing a presentation at the NSHG Workshop.**

- 8.4 It was suggested it may be worth having someone from the UK Statistics Authority as they have now done over 100 assessments and they must have some idea of what they would like to see done better. This was thought to be a very good idea, particular with the new National Statistician in post.

**Action 10 – Harmonisation Team to invite contact the UK Statistics Authority to ask them if a member can attend the NSHG Workshop to do a presentation on the findings from the Assessments and what in their opinion could be done better.**

- 8.5 It was also suggested we could make better use of the Statistics Users Forum (Stats Users Net - Royal Statistics Society), as they are interested in harmonisation, and invite them to the NSHG Workshop.

**Action 11 – Harmonisation Team to invite a representative from the Stats Users Net/Royal Statistics Society to attend the NSHG Workshop.**

- 8.6 With regard to case studies it was stated we could discuss what could be done to deal with circumstances where groups have discussed trying to reduce the number of ways for measuring things but in doing so, have actually come up with more ways to do the same. There are some high profile examples of this and it would be interesting to find out the reasons why.

**Action 12 – Harmonisation Team to ask David Matz (who introduced the discussion point) for examples of where measuring data has actually become more complex as a result of trying to make it easier, with a view to seeing if these can be taken forward for use as case studies.**

## 9.0 NMSG Topic Lead Updates, NMSG (14:2) 13 – Topic Group Leads

### 9.1 Benefits and Tax Credits Verbal Report – Caroline Smith

9.1.1 Nothing further to report than that already mentioned. There were no further comments or questions.

### 9.2 Classifications – Michaela Morris

9.2.1 There was nothing to report this period for this group. There were no comments or questions,

### 9.3 Consumer Durables Verbal Update – Joanna Bulman

9.3.1 Joanna stated she has just taken over as topic lead from Laura Keyes and the only thing in addition to her report was there could be a possible need to review the standards in the future due to the implementation of a new classification with COICOP 5, led by a European requirement to update that classification. At the appropriate time the topic group will review the standard and feed back to the NMSG as necessary.

### 9.4 Country of Birth and Migration – Pete Large

9.4.1 There is currently a resource issue facing this group and work has been postponed till this is addressed. The topic lead has changed posts and attempts are in hand to find a new lead for this group. It was pointed out the new topic lead does not have to come from ONS and from another relevant department would be welcomed.

9.4.2 It was stated that Richard Pereira (Deputy Director of ONS Population Statistics Division) is looking at reducing the number of groups who look at migration related work, as there are too many. This will be followed up with Richard as it may be that the NMSG receives a report from another group looking at migration.

### **Action 13 – Jan Thomas to contact Richard Pereira to discuss the future of the NMSG Country of Birth & Migration topic group.**

### 9.5 Crime and Anti Social Behaviour – Nicola White

9.5.1 Nicola was not able to be at the meeting and had nothing to report for this period.

### 9.6 Demographic Information – Julie Jefferies

9.6.1 Julie presented her report saying she has taken over on a temporary basis until a replacement has been found for Karen Gask since she moved posts. With regard to the proposed 'Gender Identity' question the group was asked if they knew of any survey where a gender question was asked and it was stated it was a new question that was being developed for future use on surveys. Julie stated the main work had been done on the question and it just needed finalising but it was felt there was not sufficient survey methodology expertise to do this. It was suggested that NATCEN may have been involved in this in the past and Julie would check on this.

9.6.2 It was suggested that all the work done to date should be brought together and presented to the NMSG as a proposal. It was thought this would address the issue of what to do next and if the question was actually needed. It was stated this should not be a top priority if users are not pushing for the question.

### **Action 14 – Julie Jefferies to pull together the information on Gender Identity along with the issues involved, the evidence and the arguments and present to the NMSG.**

9.6.3 With regard to 'Same Sex Marriage' and the need to look at the wording of the 'marital status' and 'relationship' questions, discussions have taken place with ONS colleagues. It is suspected there may be some errors related to 'same sex' and 'relationships' and these can be captured or prevented more easily in interview administration than they can in 'self completion' because you

can have a check that only the interviewer is aware of. The wording of the categories also needs to be considered.

- 9.6.4 'Civil partnerships' also need to be reviewed to include clearer guidelines and the consultation for this is due to be published this winter. The issues can be looked at but the standards cannot be reviewed fully until the outcome of the consultation is known. There will be difficulties with the UK as Northern Ireland and Scotland have changed their legislation in the same way and this has impacts on the Labour Force Survey. It was assumed, for 'relationship', the option will be restricted to just include 'married' but this is not confirmed. There has not been the need to change things for the 'face to face' surveys, but may be different for 'self completion' surveys. It was stated that any changes need to be directed by legislation or by question testing and what the user requirements are. It was agreed that Julie could present this issue as an initial paper for the next meeting as her team have thoughts on this in relation to marriage statistics and marital status statistics and have had to deal with it sooner than the surveys have had to.

**Action 15 – Julie Jefferies to prepare a paper on initial thoughts on the issues associated with Civil Partnerships for the next NSHG meeting.**

**9.7 Economic Activity – Debra Leaker**

- 9.7.1 Debra was not able to be at the meeting and did not provide a report

**9.8 Education – Karen Grierson**

- 9.8.1 Karen presented her report. It was agreed that the group would be prepared to look at the Harmonised Standard for Qualifications with a view to reviewing it as this may fit in with some of the work already done.

**Action 16 – Secretariat to send Karen Grierson a copy of the current Harmonised Standard for Qualifications, for possible review.**

- 9.8.2 It was stated it would be good to see this review of 'Educational Attainment' finished, as in the 'migration' sphere there is interest in how many students are going into 'undergraduate' or 'postgraduate' courses due to the poor data currently available.

**9.9 EILR – Sian Bradford**

- 9.9.1 Sian was not able to be at the meeting but did provide a report. There were no comments or questions to take to Sian.

**9.10 Health, Disability and Carers**

- 9.10.1 We do not currently have a topic lead for this group, therefore a report has not been submitted. The Harmonisation Team is currently trying to find a new lead for this group.

**9.11 Housing and Tenure – Hugh Mallinson**

- 9.11.1 Hugh was not at the meeting. No report was submitted.

**9.12 Income – Richard Tonkin**

- 9.12.1 Richard was unable to be at the meeting but did provide a report. There were no comments or questions to take to Richard.

**9.13 Integrated Household Survey – Tim Vizard**

- 9.13.1 Tim was unable to be at the meeting but did provide a report. There were no comments or questions to take to Tim.

**9.14 Pensions – Grace Edgar**

- 9.14.1 Grace was not able to be at the meeting but the group was represented by Tim Gibbs. There was nothing to report this period. There were no comments or questions from the meeting.

**10.0 AOB**

10.1 There were no items of AOB

**11.0 Next Meetings**

11.1 The dates of the next two meetings are:

Thursday 18 September 2014, 1100 to 1330 hrs at ONS Drummond Gate, Meeting Room 3,  
followed by the NSHG Annual Workshop from 1400 to 1700 hrs

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014, 1100 to 1330 hrs at ONS Drummond Gate, Meeting Room 3

**Annexes:**

- A Census Update (handed out at meeting)
- B List of Actions

**National Statistics Harmonisation Group**  
**Census Update, June 2014 – Handed out at the Meeting**

**Introduction**

This short paper is for NSHG members to update them on progress on the 2011 Census Outputs for England and Wales and for the UK.

Please note that dates specified below are provisional and subject to change.

**Summary of census releases over the previous year – England and Wales**

For a complete list of 2011 Census releases for England and Wales and for more information on these releases see the following link: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/census-data/2011-census-data-catalogue/census-data-quick-view/index.html>

**Detailed characteristic tables**

These tables use a greater level of detail in their categories, however, due to disclosure control; these tables are produced at a higher level of geography, for example, middle layer super output areas (MSOA). These include tables on the following areas:

- Housing
- Communal Establishments
- Labour market
- Qualifications
- Approximated Social Grade
- Travel to Work and Car or Van Availability

**Local characteristic tables**

These tables contain are produced at a lower level of geography but as a result contain less detail in the categories, for example, output area. These include tables on the following areas:

- Ethnicity, Identity, Language and Religion
- Health and Unpaid Care
- Migration
- Housing
- Demography and families
- Qualifications
- Labour Market
- Travel to work and car or van availability

**Short term residents**

The tables in this release provide information on some of the key characteristics of the non-UK born short-term resident population of England and Wales such as population size, general health, religion, ethnic group, economic activity and occupation.

**Postcode headcounts**

This release provides 2011 Census estimates for postcodes in England and Wales. These summary figures give estimates of the number of usual residents, by sex, and the number of households with at least one usual resident, for each unit postcode at as census day, 27 March 2011

**Workday tables**

This release provides 2011 Census estimates on the population and characteristics of the workday population, an alternative 2011 Census output base for England and Wales.

The workday population counts people where they are during the day, so people who are in employment are counted at their workplace address, whilst people who are not in employment are counted at their enumeration address.

The tables in this release provide information on key characteristics of the workday population such as population size, general health, religion, ethnic group, industry, occupation, method of travel to work and distance travelled to work.

### **Workplace tables**

This release provides 2011 Census estimates on the population and characteristics of the workplace population, an alternative 2011 Census output base for England and Wales.

The workplace tables counts the population where they are based on their workplace address, people not in employment are excluded from these tables.

The tables in this release provide information on some of the key characteristics of the workplace population such as religion, population density, country of birth and highest level of qualifications.

### **Welsh Migration tables**

This release contains three tables on migration within Wales, cross-tabulated by ability to speak Welsh and one or more other topics from the census. Two tables are provided at both merged wards and MSOA level, and one table at unitary authority level

### **Armed Forces tables**

This release contains six tables focusing on the armed forces population within England and Wales.

These contain characteristics such as age, sex and ethnic group and these tables have been produced for Local Authorities where the Armed Forces population reaches a certain threshold.

### **Microdata Teaching File**

The Teaching File is a 2011 Census microdata product with a relatively small sample and a low level of detail. The Teaching File meets demand from users for an accessible, non-disclosive microdata file to improve the use of census microdata. It also provides an educational tool of 'real' data to assist with the teaching of statistics and social sciences, and it will encourage wider use of census data.

### **Summary of census releases over the previous year – UK**

For a complete list of 2011 Census releases for the UK and for more information on these releases see the following link: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/uk-census/uk-census-data-releases/index.html>

### **Key and Quick statistic tables**

These are a series of harmonised Key and Quick statistics tables for the UK, published at local authority level

### **European Union Census Statistics**

This release contains a range of census data for the UK which was required by the EU. A total of 60 tables were provided ranging from UK level down to LAU 2 on a wide range of census topics.

New characteristics provided as part of this release include country of citizenship and educational attainment

### **Plans for forthcoming census releases – England and Wales**

#### **Origin and destination tables – July**

Origin-destination data (also known as flow data) will include the travel-to-work and migration patterns of individuals, cross-tabulated by variables of interest (for example occupation). New products for the 2011 Census will also provide the migration patterns of those living at a student address one year ago and will provide information on individuals with second residences.

Any statistics that cannot easily be harmonised across the UK due to differences in the data collected will be provided for usual residents of England and Wales only. These statistics will still provide geographical detail of any flows between the other countries of the UK.

This release will include tables both available publically on the NOMIS website and others with more restrictions on their access.

#### **Health tables and additional user requests – August**

This release will contain a number of tables focusing on health, as well as additional tables requested by users.

#### **Microdata secure samples – August**

This anonymised data will be held in a secure environment, ONS's Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML). They will generally be similar to the 2001 Controlled Access Microdata Sample (CAMS), both household and individual, and will contain a maximum sample size of 10 per cent.

#### **Small population tables – September**

Tables providing characteristics on a number of small population groups.

#### **Out of term population tables – September**

A variety of tables containing demographic characteristics of the 'out of term' population for England and Wales. The out of term population differs from the usual resident population in that full-time students, with a 'students home address' provided, are counted at this alternative address rather than their enumeration address.

#### **Microdata individual safeguarded sample – September**

One type of safeguarded file will be at the individual person level, and it is intended that this will be made available to users, subject to approval, via their desktops (precise details of the conditions are being finalised). The file is likely to contain a similar level of detail to the 2001 small area microdata, and the individual level SAR, with a maximum sample size of 5 per cent.

#### **Additional origin and destination tables – November / December**

This release will include the majority of the origin and destination tables for flows within England and Wales.

#### **Plans for forthcoming census releases – UK**

##### **Key and Quick statistics OA level – June**

These are a series of harmonised Key and Quick statistics tables for the UK, published at local authority level

##### **Origin and destination tables – July**

This release includes publically available origin and destination data at UK level, providing flows for usual residents of England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland

##### **UK migration tables – August**

This release contains a number of tables on migration within the UK. These tables count the numbers of people who move into and out of an area and the characteristics of these people.

##### **United Nations tables – September**

A series of tables requested by the United Nations for the UK, the main geographical breakdown for these tables is the urban / rural split.

##### **Additional origin and destination tables – November / December**

This release will include the majority of the origin and destination tables for flows within the UK.

ANNEX B**ACTIONS FROM THE NSHG MEETING – 4 JUNE 2014**

<b>Action No</b>	<b>Para</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>
1	3.4	NSHG members to bring any examples of issues caused by lack of harmonisation to the attention of the Harmonisation Team through the Secretariat.	NSHG Members	Nothing Received
2	3.6	Harmonisation Team to contact Gerry Nicolaas to see if MORI would be prepared to their findings into where lack of harmonisation has caused issues.	Harmonisation Team - Jan Thomas	Complete
3	3.7	Harmonisation Team to contact the Statistics Users Forum with regard to finding out if they had examples of where lack of harmonisation has caused issues.	Harmonisation Team - Steve Cooley	Complete
4	3.9	Harmonisation Team to send a consolidated list of useful information links for harmonisation to JISC, to pass onto their members to help raise the profile of harmonisation.	Harmonisation Team - Mark Herniman	Complete
5	3.11	Harmonisation Team to contact Paul Waruszynski (Census Outputs) for information on the Country of Citizenship question, where the countries in the UK used differing methods to derive the outputs for this, as this may make an interesting case study.	Harmonisation Team – Becki Aquilina	Complete
6	4.1	Caroline Smith to contact Pete Betts to see if Data Methodology Collection can assist with the Interim Standard for Benefits and Tax Credits.	Caroline Smith	Complete
7	5.2	NSHG members to make comment on the Information paper on Country of Birth and Migration in Reporting, with a view to formally agreeing it at the September 2014 meeting.	NSHG Members	Complete
8	6.3	Harmonisation Team to contact the ISB with a view to inviting to the NSHG Workshop.	Harmonisation Team – Mark Herniman	Complete
9	8.3	Paul Waruszynski to think about the problems that came out of the Census with a view to doing a presentation at the NSHG Workshop.	Paul Waruszynski	Complete
10	8.4	Harmonisation Team to invite contact the UK Statistics Authority to ask them if a member can attend the NSHG Workshop to do a presentation on the findings from the Assessments and what in their opinion could be done better.	Harmonisation Team – Jan Thomas	Complete
11	8.5	Harmonisation Team to invite a representative from the Royal Statistics Society to attend the NSHG Workshop.	Harmonisation Team – Steve Cooley	Complete

12	8.6	Harmonisation Team to ask David Matz (who introduced the discussion point) for examples of where measuring data has actually become more complex as a result of trying to make it easier, with a view to seeing if these can be taken forward for use as case studies.	Harmonisation Team – Palvi Shah	Complete
13	9.4.2	Jan Thomas to contact Richard Pereira to discuss the future of the NSHG Country of Birth & Migration topic group.	Jan Thomas	Complete
14	9.6.2	Julie Jefferies to pull together the information on Gender Identity along with the issues involved and present to the NSHG.	Julie Jefferies	On-going
15	9.6.4	Julie Jefferies to prepare a paper on initial thoughts on the issues associated with Civil Partnerships for the next NSHG meeting.	Julie Jefferies	On-going
16	9.8.1	Secretariat to send Karen Grierson a copy of the current Harmonised Standard for Qualifications, for possible review.	Karen Grierson	Complete



## National Statistics Harmonisation Group

### NSHG Work Plan – September 2014

#### 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 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 associated activities.

#### Current Work Programme

3. **Harmonisation Web pages** – The ONS Harmonisation web pages are currently being reviewed to ensure the content is current. The landing page through which the Harmonisation web pages are accessed has been revised and now has a new fresh look making it easier and cleaner to get to harmonisation information.
4. **Sub topic groups** - There are now thirteen sub groups reporting to the NSHG. The work of these Topic Groups has been ongoing and the quarterly reports from these groups are presented to this meeting.
  - Benefits and Tax Credits
  - Classifications
  - Consumer Durables
  - Country of Birth/Migration and Citizenship
  - Crime and Anti Social Behaviour
  - Demographic Information, Household Relationships to include Civil Partnership
  - Disability; to include general health and carers (no current topic lead)
  - Economic Activity and Employment Status
  - Educational Attainment
  - Ethnicity, National Identity, Language & Religion (EILR) now combined with Sexual identity
  - Housing and Tenure, including Accommodation, Type/Length of Residence, Motor Vehicles & Housing Costs and Benefits
  - Income
  - Pensions

An interim harmonised principle containing the newly revised Benefits and Tax Credits is close to being finalised. Attempts are being made to form a topic group on Social Capital as this is now divorced from Crime and Anti Social Behaviour as the harmonised questions are no longer used and have been replaced by others.

We still have two topic groups without leads: Country of Birth/Migration and Citizenship and Disability, Health and Carers. We are attempting find replacement leads for these groups and would appreciate any suggestions.

5. **UK Data Service Variable and Question Bank** – The Harmonisation team have been working closely with the VQB team at the UK Data Service to add the Annual Business Survey (ABS) and the Monthly Business Survey (MBS) to the VQB as a pilot (due to be before the end of 2014). This is expected to

highlight the numerous differences between the questions used on business surveys and will then be used as an example when promoting the need to harmonise business questions. The harmonisation team continue to provide demos to raise awareness and encourage the use of the VQB.

<http://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/variables>.

6. **Raising the profile of Harmonisation and strengthening links** – The Annual NSHG workshop in 2013, identified various interest groups that need to be approached and consulted to help raise the profile of harmonisation and to strengthen links;

- Government Statistical Service (GSS) – Presented at GSS Methodology Symposium on 3 Jul 14
- Research, Analysis and Statistical (RAS) – Presented at RAS coffee morning on 2 Sept 14
- Royal Statistical Society (RSS) - Jan is now a member of the RSS but has not yet had opportunity to engage with them about harmonisation
- Survey Control Unit (ONS) – Roadshow held 17 Jun 14
- Information Standards Board (ISB)
- Survey Design
- Open Data Initiative
- Admin data and data linkage - Regular meetings set up with admin data colleagues within ONS

A list of relevant stakeholders for social, business and administrative data is currently being developed by the Harmonisation Team to ensure wider dissemination of information.

7. **Harmonisation Roadshows** – Since the last meeting the following Roadshows/presentations have taken place:

- Survey Control Liaison Officers (SCLO) seminar on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014
- ONS Quality Champions on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2014
- The 19<sup>th</sup> Methodology Symposium at BIS, London on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014
- The Welsh Government on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2014.
- SSD Divisional Forum, ONS Newport on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2014
- Population and Demography Directorate, ONS Titchfield on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014

The Harmonisation team have decided to take a break from delivering Roadshows for a while in order to revise and refresh the content. They will however, continue to make contact with the list of identified groups in para 6, to raise the harmonisation profile across the GSS.

8. **NSHG Steering Group** – The membership of the NSHG Steering Group has been enhanced to include Siobhan Carey (BIS), Hersh Mann (UK Data Service), Jackie Jones (ONS) and Pete Brodie (ONS). There have been two audio meetings where the role of the steering group and the Terms of Reference have been discussed. Jacqui Jones has been elected as the Chair and there are a further two audio meetings planned for September and October.

9. **Harmonising Business Standards** – The Harmonisation Team have had several positive meetings with various business data colleagues in Newport over the summer to move this work forward. The general consensus is that business data should be harmonised and that some quick wins should be identified first to get people on board. The next step will be the formation of an action plan by the Harmonisation Team (including prioritising requirements, identifying possible topic groups etc) and presenting that to business data colleagues. The Harmonisation team have completed the matrix to show different terms used for turnover across all ONS Business surveys and have written a report which will shortly be circulated to business data experts.

10. **Harmonising Administrative Data** – The harmonisation team have initiated meetings with Beyond 2011 to ensure harmonisation are involved in the process to harmonise administrative sources. The

team have also been invited to attend the planned two day Beyond 2011 workshop during October and will become part of the Integrated Project team

11. **Data Markers (Symbols in Tables)** - HoP's have assessed the proposal and as there was some concern from a couple of departments about the proposal it will be included on the GSS website as guidance for data providers to use if they wish to, but it will not be a GSS standard. We are waiting approval on the language to accompany the proposal on the GSS website.
12. **Revised Harmonisation Strategy** – At the July GSS SPSC meeting the case study from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission was presented. This was as a result of the April GSS SPSC meeting where it was suggested that evidence of the benefits of harmonisation should be gathered, in the form of case studies, to improve engagement, to support the strategy. The feedback from the GSS SPSC at the July meeting, was that:
  - we should maybe also include a case study on Education or Crime
  - and also perhaps something on survey definitions (which was definitively noted as a success)

Case studies should include what we did, the process details, outcomes, user reactions afterwards and examples to show the impact based on the actions taken. Once the case studies have been added, the revised strategy will be circulated to the GSS SPSC for approval and sign-off.

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**Annex A**  
**NSHG Workplan – Review September 2014**

<b>Term of Reference</b> <b>1. To provide strategic direction for the design, development and maintenance of common statistical frames, definitions and classification for Statistics</b>			
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 NSHSG Business Harmonisation	June 2014  A review of the Harmonisation web pages on the ONS web site is currently underway.  A revised Harmonisation Strategy was presented to the GSS SPSC on 30 Apr 14. This was received well.  Annual NSHG Workshop planned for 18 Sep 14.  NSHG Steering Group membership to be enhanced with additional members.	September 2014  The A-Z of Harmonised Principles is now up to date.  The ONS web site landing page that has the link to the Harmonisation pages has been revamped making it easier to find the pages.  The GSS SPSC have had further input to the Harmonisation Strategy, suggesting we need case studies to support the strategy. These are currently being worked on.  NSHG Steering Group now has an additional four members and has met via audio a couple of times, with further meeting planned.	NSHG members
<b>Term of Reference</b> <b>2. To be responsible for setting harmonised principles</b>			
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	June 2014  Revised Benefits and Tax Credits Harmonised Principle is very near to completion and may be ready for 4 Jun 14 NSHG meeting.  Topic Leads are needed for three Topic Groups.	September 2014  Revised Interim Benefits and Tax Credits Harmonised Principle is very near to completion and may be ready for 18 Sep 14 NSHG meeting.  A topic lead has been identified for the Demographic Information group. A meeting has taken place to source a new lead for the Country of Birth and Migration Topic Group.	NSHG members

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>June 2014</p> <p>It was agreed at the GSS SPSC meeting that the ‘softly softly’ approach has taken us as far as it is going to and that a ‘harmonisation by default’ approach should be adopted.</p>	<p>September 2014</p> <p>The UK Data Service Variable and Question Bank have agreed to add the Annual Business Survey (ABS) and the Monthly Business Survey (MBS) to the VQB as a pilot (due to be before the end of 2014).</p>	ONS
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>June 2014</p> <p>The Roadshow for the Survey Control Liaison Officers (SCLLO) seminar on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014 has been rescheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Various other Roadshows are planned for the Summer months, including presentations for the Welsh Government and at the GSS Methodology Symposium.</p> <p>A-Z of Harmonised Principles has been reprinted (May 14) to include recent amendments.</p> <p>NSHG agenda, papers and minutes are now available on the GSSnet web site and in the future this will be the primary way of distributing the quarterly NSHG meeting material.</p>	<p>September 2014</p> <p>A number of successful roadshows took place during June and July. These were generally well supported. No further roadshows are planned for the time being.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for the NSHG have been revised to include further references to the Code of Practice.</p> <p>A ‘Harmonisation Flyer’ has been produced to highlight the benefits of harmonisation and how it is achieved. This also contains useful links to harmonisation material.</p>	NSHG members

**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
<p>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).</p>	<p>June 2014</p> <p>The Harmonisation Team continue to make good progress with the Business Survey teams. The presentation to the Business Survey Change Portfolio Board (BSCPb) on 14 May 14 went well and agreement was reached in principle to harmonise business data.</p> <p>The results of the Census consultation process was published in March 14. It recommended that future needs for population statistics should be met by an online 2021 Census, with increased use of administrative data and surveys to enhance statistics from the census and improve annual statistics between censuses.</p>	<p>September 2014</p> <p>There is nothing to report on future harmonisation topics (Alcohol Consumption and Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETS)).</p> <p>There have been several positive meetings with various business data colleagues in Newport over the summer to move the Business Harmonisation work forward.</p> <p>The harmonisation team have initiated meetings with Beyond 2011 to ensure involvement in the process to harmonise administrative sources. The team have also been invited to attend the planned two day Beyond 2011 workshop during October and will become part of the Integrated Project team</p>	<p>NSHG members</p>

**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
<p>Engage with the Web Data Access project to ensure harmonisation and classification requirements are suitably incorporated.                      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</p>	<p>June 2014</p> <p>The Harmonisation Team has produced a current version of the Harmonisation Flyer which has now been printed and will be used to support events.</p>	<p>September 2014</p> <p>The UK Data Services Variable and Question Bank has been promoted through the Harmonisation Roadshows and is always well received.</p> <p>A full review of the Harmonisation web pages is under way and will hopefully result in a cleaner look to the pages and enable users to find information more easily. The Guidance and Methodology landing site has already been reviewed and updated.</p> <p>A 'Harmonisation Flyer' has been produced to highlight the benefits of harmonisation and how it is achieved. This also contains useful links to harmonisation material.</p>	<p>Mainly ONS</p> <p>NSHG members are also expected to promote harmonisation within their own departments and wherever possible</p>



## **National Statistics Harmonisation Group**

### **Census Update - September 2014**

#### **Introduction**

This short paper is for NSHG members to update them on progress on the 2011 Census Outputs for England and Wales and for the UK.

Please note that dates specified below are provisional and subject to change.

#### **Summary of census releases over the previous year – England and Wales**

For a complete list of 2011 Census releases for England and Wales, and for more information on these releases see the following link: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/census-data/2011-census-data-catalogue/census-data-quick-view/index.html>

#### **Summary of census releases over the previous year – UK**

For a complete list of 2011 Census releases for the UK, and for more information on these releases see the following link: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/uk-census/uk-census-data-releases/index.html>

#### **Since previous update (June 2014)**

#### **UK Key and Quick statistic tables at OA level**

These are a series of harmonised Key and Quick statistics tables for the UK, published at Output Area level

#### **Origin and Destination tables (England, Wales, Northern Ireland and UK)**

In July we published a range of Origin and Destination tables, these record the numbers and the characteristics of people flowing between different addresses on the 2011 Census questionnaires. These include the following sets of tables:

Workplace (flows from enumeration to workplace address)

Migration (flows from address one year ago to enumeration address)

Student statistics (flows from address one year ago to enumeration address, where that address one year ago was a student address)

Second residence (flows involving a second residence address – this question was only asked in the England and Wales Census)

These tables have been produced for the UK where we've been able to harmonise, otherwise they're published for the individual census. Not all the data from Scotland was available for our July release date, these tables will be updated when this data is available.

The data published so far can be accessed via NOMIS:

<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011>

There are also a couple of interactive maps, published as part of short stories written to accompany the release:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/origin-destination-statistics-on-migration-workplace-and-students-for-local-authorities-in-the-united-kingdom/index.html>

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/origin-destination-statistics-on-second-residences-and-workplace-for-merged-local-authorities-and-middle-layer-super-output-areas--msoas--in-england-and-wales/index.html>

### **Supplementary LC and DC tables**

These are a series of extra Local and Detailed Characteristics tables that were released during the start of September. This contains the following tables:

- 6 Detailed Characteristics tables on a range of topics including health and housing
- 1 Quick Statistics table on method of travel to work
- 1 Workplace Population table on location of usual residence and method of travel to work

### **Upcoming statistics**

#### **Out of term population tables – September**

A variety of tables containing demographic characteristics of the out of term population for England and Wales. The out of term population differs from the usual resident population in that full-time students, with a 'students home address' provided, are counted at this alternative address rather than their enumeration address.

#### **Microdata secure samples – October**

These anonymised data will be held in a secure environment, ONS's Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML). They will generally be similar to the 2001 Controlled Access Microdata Sample (CAMS), both household and individual, and will contain a maximum sample size of 10 per cent.

**Microdata individual safeguarded sample – October**

One type of safeguarded file will be at the individual person level, and it is intended that this will be made available to users, subject to approval, via their desktops (precise details of the conditions are being finalised). The file is likely to contain a similar level of detail to the 2001 small area microdata, and the individual level SAR, with a maximum sample size of 5 per cent.

**Small population tables – October to December**

Tables providing characteristics on a number of small population groups.

**United Nations tables – October to December**

A series of tables requested by the United Nations for the UK, the main geographical breakdown for these tables is the urban / rural split.

**Additional origin and destination tables – November / December**

This release will include the majority of the origin and destination tables for flows within England and Wales.

**UK migration tables – November / December**

This release contains a number of tables on migration within the UK. These tables count the numbers of people who move into and out of an area and the characteristics of these people.



**National Statistics Harmonisation Group**

**Paper for Approval - Analysis of Migration Data – Use of Country of Birth and Nationality**

**Introduction**

The attached paper was presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014 NSHG meeting.

David Matz introduced the paper on behalf of Chris Kershaw as he is also part of the Migration Reporting Working Group (MRWG). He explained the paper came out of the joint work by social research colleagues and ONS Census Outputs, where it was decided there was a need to explain why sometimes 'Country of Birth' was used and sometimes 'Nationality' was used when looking at migration data. This paper sets this out and advises producers to consider doing both, as it is considered to be a good working practice. This has been approved by the MRWG and they would welcome any comments on the paper or indeed approval by the NSHG.

David Matz asked the membership to comment on the paper with a view to formally agreeing it at the next NSHG meeting.

**Issues for Discussion**

At the last 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014 NSHG meeting it was agreed NSHG members should make any comment on the paper with a view to formally agreeing it at the 18<sup>th</sup> September NSHG meeting.

No comments have been received from the membership.

**Next Steps**

The NSHG is asked to formally agree the paper at the 18th September 2014 NSHG meeting

**NSHG Secretariat  
Population Methodology & Statistical Infrastructure  
ONS**

**September 2014**

**National Statistics Harmonisation Group**  
**Information Paper**  
**Analysis of Migration Data – Use of Country of Birth and Nationality**

1. Any analysis of migration has to have some way of defining migrants. The United Nations definition of long term migrant (i.e. whether a person changes their country of residence for a year or more) is used by ONS in their analysis of the International Passenger Survey. This reflects intentions of migrants on arrival or departure from the UK and the definition is supplemented in the analysis by migrants' nationality. This approach is well suited to the monitoring of migrant flows, but is not so readily applicable to the analysis of population stocks.

2. In analysis of resident populations the most common attribute used for identifying migrants is country of birth. This is a measure that does not change throughout life and indicates that a person at some point did arrive in the UK having been living abroad. However, although country of birth in some ways appears a straightforward measure, in reality it has some significant limitations:

- A person may be born outside the UK but have British nationality from birth. The best example of this are the many children of British Armed Forces based overseas. This can noticeably boost numbers born overseas, for example this is particularly evident for those born in Germany;
- Currently around half of UK residents born outside the UK now have British Nationality, so in important ways country of birth does not represent the entitlements that individuals have on account of their nationality status;
- The period of time that a person has been a permanent resident in the UK is not indicated by country of birth (e.g. most Irish born migrants arrived in the UK more than 30 years ago), so it does not reflect well issues for public policy regarding the arrival of recent migrants.

3. The limitations are particularly problematic when it comes to presenting data relating to *entitlements*, such as access to the labour market, benefit claims, housing, education and health. Those with British nationality have the same rights, regardless of country of birth. *With such a large proportion of those who are born abroad having now acquired British nationality it is not recommended that country of birth be used as a headline measure in analysis of such data.* Of course, it is also accepted that many users would often wish to also have breakdown of data by country of birth, *so normally both breakdowns should be available with nationality being the headline measure for data relating to entitlements.*

4. It should also be recognised that there remain measures where it is justifiable to analyse data solely by nationality or solely by country of birth:

- An example where nationality is most appropriate would be the monitoring of migration flows via the International Passenger Survey. Country of birth is not a key determinant of a decision to allow entry to the UK;
- An example where country of birth is particularly appropriate is analysis of fertility rates in the projections of the UK population. The acquisition of British nationality would not be expected in itself to alter fertility rates of an individual.

5. The key point to bear in mind that, while there can be circumstances where country of birth and nationality should be used in analysis in isolation, there should be consideration of the merits of both. Often users will want both breakdowns presented.

6. If a country of birth analysis is seen to be particularly appropriate, consideration could also be given as to whether ethnicity provides a better indicator (e.g. where a difference between populations may reflect some issue of discrimination). Country of birth can be relevant for social policy around the integration of migrants where issues arise around provision of service for migrant communities, but again ethnicity may provide a better indicator.

7. It should also be recognised that both country of birth and nationality provide a broad brush picture, with neither indicating the length of time a person has been resident in the UK. While many of those born abroad will have acquired British nationality after being resident in the UK for a considerable period, this is less likely to have happened for EU nationals, where acquisition of British nationality does not confer so many additional rights. Some care needs to be taken in interpreting data on account of differences in the take up of British nationality by different nationality groupings.

8. In the 2011 England and Wales Census information on passport held was asked for, this then being used a proxy for nationality in some reporting. Almost all of those with no passport (97%) were UK born, this group being generally older than average whose passports are likely to have had expired. *In analysis of census data appropriate caveats should be applied to reflect this fact. However, the Census data also includes year of arrival, this allowing for a more informative analysis than would be possible from most other sources.*

**Chris Kershaw & Paul Vickers**  
**Migration Reporting Working Group**  
**May 2014**



## **National Statistics Harmonisation Group**

### **NSHG Steering Group Update September 2014**

#### **Introduction**

The National Statistics Harmonisation Steering Group (NSHSG) has been recently re-launched with a wider membership as suggested by Jil Matheson at a recent Government Statistical Service Statistical Policy and Standards Committee (GSS SPSC) meeting. Two meetings of the revised group have taken place in close succession, on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014, to kick start the work of the group. Jacqui Jones of ONS has been appointed as the Chair.

#### **Issues for Discussion**

##### **NSHSG Terms of Reference (ToR)**

The ToR were provisionally agreed by members at the first meeting. Jacqui Jones proposed some revisions which were agreed by members. The draft ToR and membership can be seen at **Annex A**.

Members have agreed to meet monthly until the strategic objectives and communication strategy have been agreed and finalised by the group and then return to 6 monthly meetings thereafter.

##### **Review of NSHG Strategy and Governance**

The governance arrangements and the main aim of the Steering Group were discussed. Although great progress was made with the previous NSHSG, it was felt there was insufficient challenge with the same chair of the group as the National Statistics Harmonisation Group (NSHG). Alongside this it was felt the group did not have adequate visibility and high level support from statistical Heads of Profession (HoPs).

The revised Harmonisation Strategy was presented and it was explained the GSS SPSC recommended adding case studies to the Harmonisation Strategy which the Harmonisation Team are currently researching. It was suggested looking at case studies that show what is NOT harmonised, as well as what is harmonised, would be useful. This would highlight implications and drawbacks of not harmonising.

Until recently, the Harmonisation Team were directed to use the 'softly, softly' approach, but this was deemed no longer viable by the National Statistician at a recent GSS SPSC meeting. Jil Matheson suggested 'Harmonisation by default' as the new approach because the Code of Practice states harmonisation should be used. The group were asked to consider this stronger approach and a suggestion was raised that this group could strengthen the link between itself and other areas of harmonisation and attempt to influence the GSS SPSC. A further option was to present a compelling case to HoPs, highlighting evidence of resource savings and how harmonisation complies with the Code of Practice.

#### **Next Steps**

The group identified the high level strategic role of NSHSG for the GSS SPSC and NSHG as to;

- ensure Harmonisation becomes formalised by default
- identify what problems we are trying to solve
- improve increased comparability across (data sources) outputs:
  - within themes?
  - across themes?
  - across countries?
- prioritise the ongoing work on harmonisation to enable focus on the most effective outcomes.

The group proposed the strategic direction as;

***Enabling users to make informed decisions in relation to the comparability of data sources/statistics (within and across themes); by improving comparability through the development and use of harmonised principles and standards.***

The NSHSG will support this by;

- championing and raising the profile of harmonisation
- setting the strategy
- resource leverage
- buy-in from Statistics Authority Monitoring and Assessment Team (perhaps invite to NSHSG)
- identifying potential drivers and factors that would help embed harmonisation
- identifying policy implications

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next NSHSG meeting will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

**Jan Thomas/Becki Aquilina  
Classification and Harmonisation  
Unit  
ONS  
Titchfield  
September 2014**

#### **List of Annexes:**

**Annex A. Draft NSHSG Terms of Reference**

## National Statistics Harmonisation Steering Group Terms of Reference

### 1. Remit of the National Statistics Harmonisation Steering Group:

The purpose of this group is to lead the strategic direction of GSS harmonisation, overseeing the development of the GSS Harmonisation work plan and acting as an interface between the GSS Statistical Policy and Standards Committee (SPSC) and the National Statistics Harmonisation Group (NSHG). The steering group will aim to raise the profile and impetus of the work of the NSHG.

### 2. In relation to the strategic direction and communication of GSS harmonisation work, the steering group will:

- provide strategic direction to the GSS and NSHG
- work to raise the profile of the GSS harmonisation agenda through an agreed communication strategy and plan

#### In relation to the direct operational aspects of NSHG, the steering group will:

- provide guidance on new standards to be developed or when standards need updating [how will the steering group do this? What information will they need to deliver this?]
- provide guidance to the NSHG on topic group leadership and membership [how will the steering group do this? What information will they need to deliver this?]
- assist in the resolution of resource issues for harmonising standards [how will the steering group do this? What information will they need to deliver this?]

### 3. Meeting

The steering group will meet twice yearly to oversee NSHG developments.

### 4. Reporting

- The National Statistics Harmonisation Steering Group will report to the GSS SPSC.
- The GSS SPSC and then the statistical Heads of Profession (HoPs) will ratify the strategic direction of the NSHG proposed by the Steering group.

### 5. Membership

- Chair – Jacqui Jones
- Heads of Profession (or as delegated by HoP)
  - Siobhan Carey (BIS)
  - Steve Ellerd Elliot (MoJ)
  - Kate Anderson (HSC IC)
  - Pete Brodie (ONS)
  - Emma Wright (ONS)
  - Jan Thomas (ONS)
- Academic – Hersh Mann (UK Data Service)

Becki Aquilina (secretariat)  
ONS  
July 2014



**National Statistics Harmonisation Group**

**Harmonisation Case Study Update for NSHSG - September 2014**

**Introduction**

1. The GSS SPSC recommended adding case studies to the Harmonisation Strategy and the Harmonisation Team are currently researching these. It was suggested that we look at case studies that show what is NOT harmonised, as well as what is harmonised, to highlight the implications and drawbacks of not harmonising.

**Issues for Discussion**

2. The case studies currently under consideration are as follows:

<b>Case Study Title</b>	<b>Comment</b>
EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS	Complete and to be presented at the NSHG workshop in September.
CENSUS COUNTRY NUMBERS	If changes were adopted how that would improve results for a future census.
POVERTY	Findings from the RSS conference
ADMIN DATA AND MOJ DATA SHARE PROJECT	Work is underway to develop data definitions (including data standards) for the data exchange requirements for community rehabilitation companies as part of the rehabilitation programme (the changes in delivering probation services).  This is still being developed but it is planned that a draft set of definitions will be available at the end of August and information sent to ONS shortly after that.
TURNOVER	Inconsistent guidance to users.
RECENTLY HARMONISED PRINCIPLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer Durables</li> <li>• Demographic Information</li> <li>• Economic Activity</li> <li>• Ethnicity, Identity, Language and Religion – inc Sexual Identity</li> <li>• Health, Disability &amp; Carers</li> <li>• Housing and Tenure</li> </ul>

**Next Steps**

3. The case studies will be completed and some will be added to the Harmonisation Strategy. All will be used in Harmonisation communication and engagement to further demonstrate the benefits of harmonisation.

4. NSHG members are invited to suggest further case studies and Topic Leads are asked to report if recently harmonised standards could be used.

**Jan Thomas**  
**Classification and Harmonisation Unit**  
**ONS**  
**Titchfield**  
**September 2014**



## **National Statistics Harmonisation Group**

### **Draft Harmonisation Strategy Implementation Plan v0.5**

#### **Purpose/Issue**

This paper sets out a draft implementation plan to support the revised harmonisation strategy, as agreed at the GSS SPSC meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

#### **Recommendation/Action**

The NSHG is invited to:

- Approve the draft implementation plan or
- Provide comments for improvement

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#### **Contents**

- 1.0 Introduction to the Implementation Plan
- 2.0 Deliverables from the Harmonisation Strategy
- 3.0 Workpackage and Milestone Planning
- 4.0 Stakeholders and Roles – Communication Planning
- 5.0 Assumptions, Dependencies and Risks

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This harmonisation implementation plan supports the strategy which was approved in April 2014 (the Strategy is at Annex A). The harmonisation strategy focussed on six key areas:
  - Role of Harmonisation
  - Work Priorities
  - Communication
  - Stakeholder Engagement
  - Research Projects
  - Harmonisation Governance
- 1.2 The implementation plan follows this format and sets out the activities that will be undertaken to implement the strategy from 1Q 2014 to 4Q 2016. The National Statistics Harmonisation Steering Group (NSHSG) will provide oversight and assurance for the delivery of the strategy and implementation plan. The Harmonisation Team will provide regular updates to the NSHSG on progress with implementing the strategy.

## 2.0 Deliverables from the Harmonisation Strategy

2.1 The high level deliverables from the harmonisation strategy are:

- A move to a “harmonisation by default” approach with more “top down” support, including revitalisation of the Steering Group.
- A formal process for creating new and revised harmonised principles for business and administrative data.
- Overseeing the revision of harmonised principles for social, business and administrative data.
- A refreshed stakeholder analysis and communication plan.
- A more targeted approach to engaging with stakeholders across the GSS and wider.
- A portfolio of case studies of examples of successes (and failures) of harmonisation.

## 3.0 Workpackage and Milestone Planning

3.1 Workpackage Planning

To coordinate the various activities of the implementation plan, a number of workpackages are proposed:

	Workpackage	Workpackage Components	Workpackage Manager/s
<b>A</b>	Harmonisation Strategy and Governance <i>Role of Harmonisation</i> <i>Harmonisation Governance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulation and agreement of strategy and implementation plan</li> <li>• Revitalisation of Steering Group</li> </ul>	Jan Thomas Becki Aquilina Palvi Shah
<b>B</b>	Harmonisation of Social Data <i>Work Priorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Statistics Harmonisation Group (NSHG) secretariat duties</li> <li>• Topic Group coordination</li> <li>• Maintenance of principles and Variable and Question Bank (VQB)</li> <li>• A-Z Guide updates</li> </ul>	Mark Herniman Becki Aquilina
<b>C</b>	Harmonisation of Business Data <i>Work Priorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of project plan</li> <li>• Identification and relationship building with key stakeholders to gain buy in</li> </ul>	Palvi Shah
<b>D</b>	Harmonisation of Administrative Data <i>Work Priorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of project plan</li> <li>• Identification and relationship building with key stakeholders to gain buy in</li> </ul>	Becki Aquilina
<b>E</b>	Communication and Stakeholder Engagement <i>Work Priorities</i> <i>Communication</i> <i>Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of communication plan</li> <li>• Roadshow planning and delivery</li> <li>• Production of written and electronic communication material</li> <li>• Monitoring of harmonisation inbox</li> </ul>	Palvi Shah Mark Herniman
<b>F</b>	Research <i>Research Projects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of harmonised data markers</li> <li>• Development of case studies</li> <li>• Investigation of duplicate definitions of the same concept</li> <li>• Research administrative data via Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN)</li> </ul>	Steve Cooley
<b>G</b>	Wider Harmonisation and Standardisation Related Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in ONS programmes e.g. Enterprise Architecture project</li> </ul>	Jan Thomas

	<b>Role of Harmonisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordination of Phase 2 Workpackage 1 and contribution to other workpackages of ESSnet on Standardisation project</li> </ul>	
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### 3.2 Milestone Planning

The following milestones are expected to be reached by the dates given. The milestones are aligned with the key objectives of the strategy:

<b>Milestone &amp; Key Success Factors</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Workpackage/s</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Role of Harmonisation</b>			
Move to a 'harmonisation by default' approach and link in with the UK Statistics Authority assessment process. <i>- Clear direction and drive from GSS SPSC</i> <i>- Agreement from UK Statistics Authority to include harmonisation in assessment criteria</i>	Harmonisation Team UK Statistics Authority	A	2Q14
Educate and persuade senior management and other stakeholders about the role and benefits of harmonisation. <i>- Willingness of senior management and stakeholders to be engaged in harmonisation</i>	GSS SPSC NSHSG NSHG Harmonisation Team	A	2Q14
Review the reporting structure, membership level and roles of the groups that the NSHG reports to. <i>- Clear understanding and agreement from all parties about purpose of each layer</i>	GSS SPSC NSHSG NSHG Harmonisation Team	A	2Q14
Proactively lead on harmonisation and input to other standardisation initiatives. <i>- Drive from governing bodies to promote initiatives</i> <i>- Resource availability within Harmonisation Team to carry out work</i>	GSS SPSC NSHSG NSHG Harmonisation Team	G	ONGOING
<b>Work Priorities</b>			
Highest priorities are to harmonise business and administrative data and to communicate and engage with our stakeholders. <i>- Buy-in from key stakeholders</i> <i>- Resource availability within Harmonisation Team and from business and administrative data colleagues.</i>	NSHSG Harmonisation Team	C, D, E	ONGOING
Ongoing commitment to review and keep social data harmonised. <i>- Resource availability within Harmonisation Team and from Topic Leads</i>	NSHG Harmonisation Team	B	ONGOING
Harmonisation will play an important role in future linking of Census with survey and administrative data. <i>- Close collaboration between Harmonisation Team, Census, surveys and administrative data colleagues and their buy-in</i>	NSHG Harmonisation Team	B, D	ONGOING
<b>Communication</b>			
Develop targeted communication plan to identify and engage with business output areas that are not harmonised. <i>- Clear understanding within Harmonisation Team of the role of harmonisation within each</i>	NSHSG NSHG Harmonisation Team	E	3Q14

<i>business output area</i>			
Engage with stakeholders within ONS, across the GSS and wider via verbal, written and digital methods of communication. - <i>Resource availability within Harmonisation Team</i> - <i>Willingness of stakeholders to be engaged in harmonisation</i>	NSHG Harmonisation Team	E	ONGOING
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>			
Undertake stakeholder analysis to identify and prioritise all stakeholders, to see where the gaps are. - <i>Awareness of all possible stakeholders, their influence and their level of interest</i>	Harmonisation Team	B, C, D, E	3Q14
Review membership of groups (e.g. NSHG) to ensure the right people are involved. - <i>Clear understanding and agreement from all parties about role of members</i>	NSHSG NSHG Harmonisation Team	A, B	ONGOING
Develop closer relationship with SSD. - <i>Resource availability within SSD and their willingness to engage in the harmonisation process</i>	Harmonisation Team	B, E	ONGOING
<b>Research Projects</b>			
Use the ADRN to carry out research of administrative data. - <i>Ability to access ADRN</i>	Harmonisation Team	D, F	3Q14
Develop case studies to show examples of business output areas that have successfully harmonised. - <i>Provision of useful and relevant information from across the GSS</i>	Harmonisation Team	A, F	3Q14
Identify duplicate non-harmonised definitions across surveys and business output areas which are not adopting harmonisation and target them directly. - <i>Resource availability within Harmonisation Team to carry out research</i>	Harmonisation Team	F	4Q14
<b>Harmonisation Governance</b>			
Confirm the need for an NSHG steering group and provide nominations for membership to revitalise the group. - <i>Clear direction from GSS SPSC</i>	GSS SPSC	A	2Q14
Move to a 'harmonisation by default' approach, in light of the fact it is of emerging importance to a number of strategies. - <i>Clear direction and drive from GSS SPSC</i>	GSS SPSC	A	2Q14
Consider a process by which resource shortages can be highlighted to the GSS SPSC for resolution. - <i>Guidance from GSS SPSC</i>	GSS SPSC NSHSG Harmonisation Team	A	3Q14

#### **4.0 Stakeholders and Roles – Communication Planning**

4.1 A separate stakeholder analysis and communication plan will be produced.

#### **5.0 Assumptions, Dependencies and Risks**

5.1 The following assumptions have been made:

- The NSHSG will approve and own the harmonisation strategy.
- As directed by the GSS SPSC, the strategy will be implemented by default.

5.2 The following dependencies exist:

- Clear guidance, priority setting and support from the GSS SPSC / NSHSG.
- Suitably skilled and experienced harmonisation team to coordinate, support and monitor the harmonisation process.
- Willingness of stakeholders to engage in the harmonisation process.

5.3 The risks to implementing the harmonisation strategy are:

- Inadequate influence / support from the GSS SPSC / NSHSG
- Insufficiently resourced team to work on harmonisation
- Lack of suitable workpackage / milestone planning. Incorrect priority setting
- Too many obstacles prohibiting the move to “harmonisation by default”
- Plans for harmonising business / administrative data are overly ambitious or misaligned
- Value and benefits of harmonisation are not promoted effectively
- Relevant stakeholders are not informed or appropriately involved in the harmonisation process
- Lack of buy in from key stakeholders e.g. business / administrative data experts
- Lack of resource / conflict of priorities within business areas to implement harmonisation
- Cross site working makes it difficult to move harmonisation of business data forward
- Missing / under resourced topic leads. Topic lead roles unclear
- Inability / lengthy process to obtain data for research
- Difficulties in obtaining / effectively conveying information for case studies



## **National Statistics Harmonisation Group**

### **Strategy and Governance**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This harmonisation strategy updates the previous strategy which was approved in July 2011. This is in response to a request from the GSS SPSC to review the strategy with the aim of creating higher impact.

#### **2.0 The Harmonisation Team – Who we are, and what we do**

- 2.1 The Harmonisation Team within ONS has been working on a cross-governmental programme of work to harmonise statistical inputs and outputs, to facilitate clearer and more robust comparison between data sources.
- 2.2 Much work has been undertaken to harmonise social data. Key successes include the development of the Variable and Question Bank (VQB) in collaboration with the UK Data Service, the formation of thirteen topic groups and formal agreement of a set of primary and secondary concepts and questions.

#### **3.0 The Harmonisation Vision – Where we want to be**

- 3.1 All inputs, processing and outputs for the Census and surveys and all data from administrative records will be harmonised, so that users can compare data from different sources with confidence and can merge and match data more easily, taking account of international implications.

#### **4.0 Achieving the Vision**

- 4.1 In order to achieve the vision, this strategy focuses on five key areas:
- Role of Harmonisation
  - Work Priorities
  - Communication Strategy
  - Stakeholder Engagement
  - Research Projects

#### **5.0 Achieving the Vision - Role of Harmonisation**

- 5.1 Harmonisation is a principle that underpins a wide range of strategies and links into most of the priorities of major ongoing projects and initiatives within ONS and across the GSS. Currently the steer that has been given for the approach to harmonisation is that it is 'encouraged' rather than 'enforced'. This can lead to a disparity between business output areas which engage with and adopt harmonisation, and those that fail to do so. It is perhaps the right time to review how effective this 'softly softly' approach has been and whether it is still the correct one. We will also review how harmonisation can inform the UK Statistics Authority assessment process and if the process is sufficiently engaged with the need for harmonisation.

- 5.2 There are a number of conflicting priorities within ONS and across the GSS, but the harmonisation agenda requires more support from some senior bodies to push forward the harmonisation strategy. We need to educate all stakeholders about the role and benefits of harmonisation and to strengthen our relationship with non-GSS bodies, senior staff and HoPs. We will review the reporting structure, membership level and roles of the groups that the NSHG reports to such as the GSS SPSC and make changes where necessary, for example building closer links with the ONS Strategy Group.
- 5.3 Harmonisation is not the same as standardisation. There is a subtle, but important difference between the two. Standardisation is about conformity. Harmonisation is about consistency. This subtle difference indicates that when you harmonise you focus more on common goals and outcomes with a view to improving the comparability of data from different sources and one size does not always fit all. Although the two are different, our strategy can contribute to standardisation initiatives such as the ESSNet Standardisation project and the Electronic Data Collection (EDC) project.

#### In summary:

- **Review effectiveness of the ‘softly softly’ approach to encourage harmonisation, and its role in the UK Statistics Authority assessment process.**
- **Educate and persuade senior management and other stakeholders about the role and benefits of harmonisation.**
- **Review the reporting structure, membership level and roles of the groups that the NSHG reports to.**
- **Proactively lead on harmonisation and input to other standardisation initiatives.**

## 6.0 Achieving the Vision - Work Priorities

6.1 Our work priorities are:

- Harmonising business data (high)
- Harmonising administrative data (high)
- Communicating and engaging with stakeholders (high)
- Harmonising social data (medium)

The rationale behind these priorities is stated below.

- 6.2 Harmonisation of business and administrative data is our top priority. This is because there are a number of initiatives taking place within these areas and harmonisation can facilitate many of them. We need to get buy in from business output areas by engaging with them about how we can help them to harmonise their data. This will be achieved by using the influence of key players to promote the benefits of harmonisation and to demonstrate that the ideal time to harmonise is when new systems are being built or existing ones modified. We will review and continue to follow up on the actions from the initial business workshop held in Autumn 2013. We will also add business surveys and administrative data variables to the VQB to highlight the differences in definitions.
- 6.3 Communication and engagement with stakeholders (in particular those whose processes are not yet harmonised) is a high priority to be achieved through a refreshed communication plan and stakeholder analysis which will be produced once the strategy has been agreed.
- 6.4 Harmonisation of social data is of medium priority as much work has already been completed on social surveys. We need to ensure harmonised concepts and questions are kept up to date and new areas such as well-being are identified. We also need to review these concepts and questions as surveys such as the Labour Force Survey (LFS) move to a mixed-mode method of data collection.

- 6.5 As the work on linking Census with survey and administrative data becomes more prominent, there will be an important role for us to ensure concepts, definitions and outputs are harmonised.

**In summary:**

- **Highest priorities are to harmonise business and administrative data and to communicate and engage with our stakeholders.**
- **Ongoing commitment to review and keep social data harmonised.**
- **Harmonisation will play an important role in the future linking of Census with survey and administrative data.**

## **7.0 Achieving the Vision – Communication Strategy**

- 7.1 There remains a lack of awareness in some business output areas of the purpose and benefits of harmonisation. They work in silos and do not have harmonisation at the top of their agendas due to the perceived resource and system costs associated with harmonising as well as explaining change to customers and other workload issues. Our strategy aims to target and engage with those business output areas that are not yet harmonised to explain the benefits of harmonisation, the issues caused by non-harmonisation and how we can help them to harmonise. This will be achieved via a targeted communication plan.
- 7.2 We already have strong links with groups where there is a formal structure set in place and with whom we meet regularly e.g. through the quarterly NSHG meetings. Members and topic leads receive dedicated support from our team which has resulted in their ongoing commitment.
- 7.3 However, we need to do more to increase our visibility within ONS, across the GSS and wider (e.g. GSR), to promote the harmonisation vision and the long-term benefits. This will be achieved by taking advantage of opportunities to meet with and present to stakeholders. We will also hold regular workshops with new and existing stakeholders to involve them in the decision making process. We will follow up actions from these meetings to ensure momentum is not lost. We will review and improve our written publicity material such as intranet and internet pages and quarterly newsletters. We will explore new ways of communicating with our stakeholders such as setting up online communities, making more use of video conferencing and exploiting social media.

**In summary:**

- **Develop targeted communication plan to identify and engage with business output areas that are not harmonised.**
- **Engage with stakeholders within ONS, across the GSS and wider via verbal, written and digital methods of communication.**

## **8.0 Achieving the Vision – Stakeholder Engagement**

- 8.1 We have many stakeholders, some more engaged with harmonisation than others. Our strategy aims to identify who our stakeholders are, what their priority is in relation to our work plan and how well we have engaged with them so far. This will be achieved via a revised stakeholder analysis. We will then review the gaps to identify those stakeholders we are not reaching (such as those outside the GSS). We need to identify those individuals who have the enthusiasm to drive forward the harmonisation agenda within their areas, such as the ONS divisional Quality Champions, and we need to ensure the right people are consulted on harmonisation changes.

- 8.2 We will review membership of groups such as NSHG to ensure the right people are involved at the right time. We need to identify why some members are not as active as others. We will review the role of the topic leads, checking they are the most appropriate people and seek new ways to support them such as a mentoring scheme to pair up new topic leads with established ones.
- 8.3 We will develop a closer relationship with Social Survey Division (SSD), one of our key stakeholders, to learn from them about how well harmonisation has worked. This will aid us with the next phase of harmonising business and administrative data. We will explore ways to engage with SSD more regularly e.g. via the NSHG or via quarterly meetings.

**In summary:**

- **Undertake stakeholder analysis to identify and prioritise all stakeholders, to see where the gaps are.**
- **Review membership of groups (e.g. NSHG) to ensure the right people are involved.**
- **Develop closer relationship with SSD.**

## **9.0 Achieving the Vision – Research Projects**

- 9.1 There are several pieces of research we can undertake to demonstrate how data quality improves as a result of harmonisation. However there are some constraints to obtaining data needed for empirical research such as legal gateways to access administrative data. We will work with the Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN) to overcome these.
- 9.2 We will continue to develop case studies to show examples of where business output areas have successfully harmonised, highlighting the benefits and issues encountered. We can use these to help promote harmonisation to those business output areas which are not yet harmonised.
- 9.3 We will do further research into comparing similar questions across different surveys to identify duplicate non-harmonised definitions and those surveys which are not adopting harmonisation. We will liaise with those business output areas to discover why this is the case. We need to understand if there is simply a lack of knowledge about harmonisation or whether it has not been adopted because it does not meet user needs. This will form part of our targeted communication plan.

**In summary:**

- **Use the ADRN to carry out research of administrative data.**
- **Develop case studies to show examples of business output areas that have successfully harmonised.**
- **Identify duplicate non-harmonised definitions across surveys and business output areas which are not adopting harmonisation and target them directly.**

## **10.0 Implementation**

- 10.1 This strategy sets out some high level actions which begin to provide the detail of how we will implement this strategy. Further details on the actions required to support delivery of the vision will be set out in a separate implementation plan.

## **11.0 Harmonisation Governance**

- 11.1 The GSS SPSC recommended that a steering group should be set up to guide NSHG and provide strategic direction. The steering group was designed to consist of a group of HoPs, with the Chair at HoP level. In reality, Jennet Woolford (whilst NSHG Chair) was asked to

also chair the steering group meeting and there were two members delegated by HoPs (Steve Ellerd-Elliott (MoJ) and Kate Anderson (HSCIC)). There are a number of noted issues with the steering group and the structure of the steering group:

- Insufficient challenge with the same chair for NSHG and the steering group.
- Representation was limited although Steve and Kate have given some good pointers.
- It was envisaged that more senior members would be involved.

- 11.2 The overall approach to harmonisation is not working as effectively as it could because of the environment in which it is applied. There is currently no mandate to insist on adopting harmonisation within official statistics (the 'softly softly' approach mentioned earlier) although it is included in the Statistics and Registration Service Act and within the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics. We are not aware of harmonisation being highlighted as a requirement or recommendation in any UK Statistics Authority assessment. The harmonisation approach, as guided by the GSS SPSC, is to persuade, influence and encourage via conducting road shows, through the internet, intranet, StatsUserNet, StatNet/GSSNet, booklets, flyers, conferences and meetings (for example with the Good Practice Team - Martin Ralphs).
- 11.3 There is currently a 'bottom up' approach to the promulgation of harmonisation. A 'top down' approach, with more support and direction from senior members of the GSS would be very helpful in championing the cause for wider harmonisation. At times there seems to be an overall lack of engagement with the GSS SPSC.
- 11.4 Resource issues have been highlighted to the GSS SPSC and the response received was to do one thing at a time and concentrate on harmonising well-being questions. The Harmonisation Team is currently coordinating the work of thirteen topic groups for social data harmonisation and is engaging with business and administrative statistics to harmonise their data. The resource requirements are not within the team itself, but with the need for topic leads for certain topics. A process by which the needed resource could be formally requested would be welcomed.

#### **In summary:**

##### **The GSS SPSC is asked to:**

- **Confirm the need for an NSHG steering group and provide nominations for membership to revitalise the group.**
- **Review the 'softly softly' approach to harmonisation, in light of the fact it is of emerging importance to a number of strategies.**
- **Consider a process by which resource shortages can be highlighted to the GSS SPSC for resolution.**



## National Statistics Harmonisation Group

### Governance of Administrative and Business Harmonisation

#### 1. Introduction

For a number of years there has been an agreed process to formalise the agreement of harmonised principles for social statistics (see **Annex A**). Now that the work on harmonisation is extending to include administrative and business data, there are different options about how the governance of these activities can be managed.

This paper is produced to seek the views of NSHG members on how these topics should be handled going forward.

#### 2. Issues for Discussion

The options are to:

##### **a. Include Administrative and Business Data in NSHG, as part of the main meeting**

Considerations:

- Different stakeholders.
- Increase in numbers could make NSHG unwieldy.
- Topics could dominate.

##### **b. Have separate sub groups reporting back to NSHG**

Considerations:

- Different stakeholders could meet separately.
- Increase in admin overheads.
- Discussions could be more focussed on particular topic.

##### **c. Have separate management board reporting back to NSHG/GSS SPSC**

Considerations:

- Loss of overall communication and strategic management for harmonisation.
- Danger in differences in approach negating benefits of harmonisation.

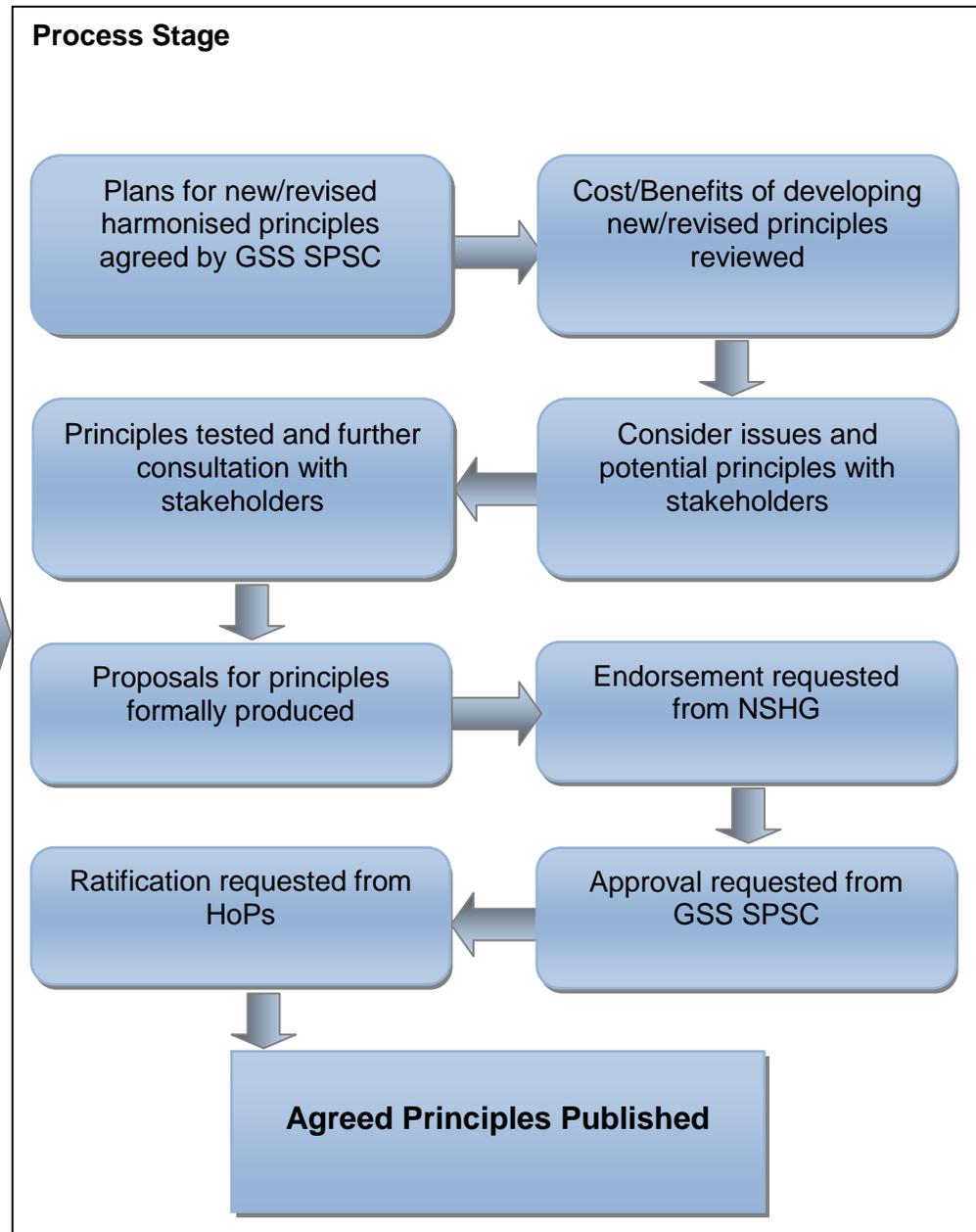
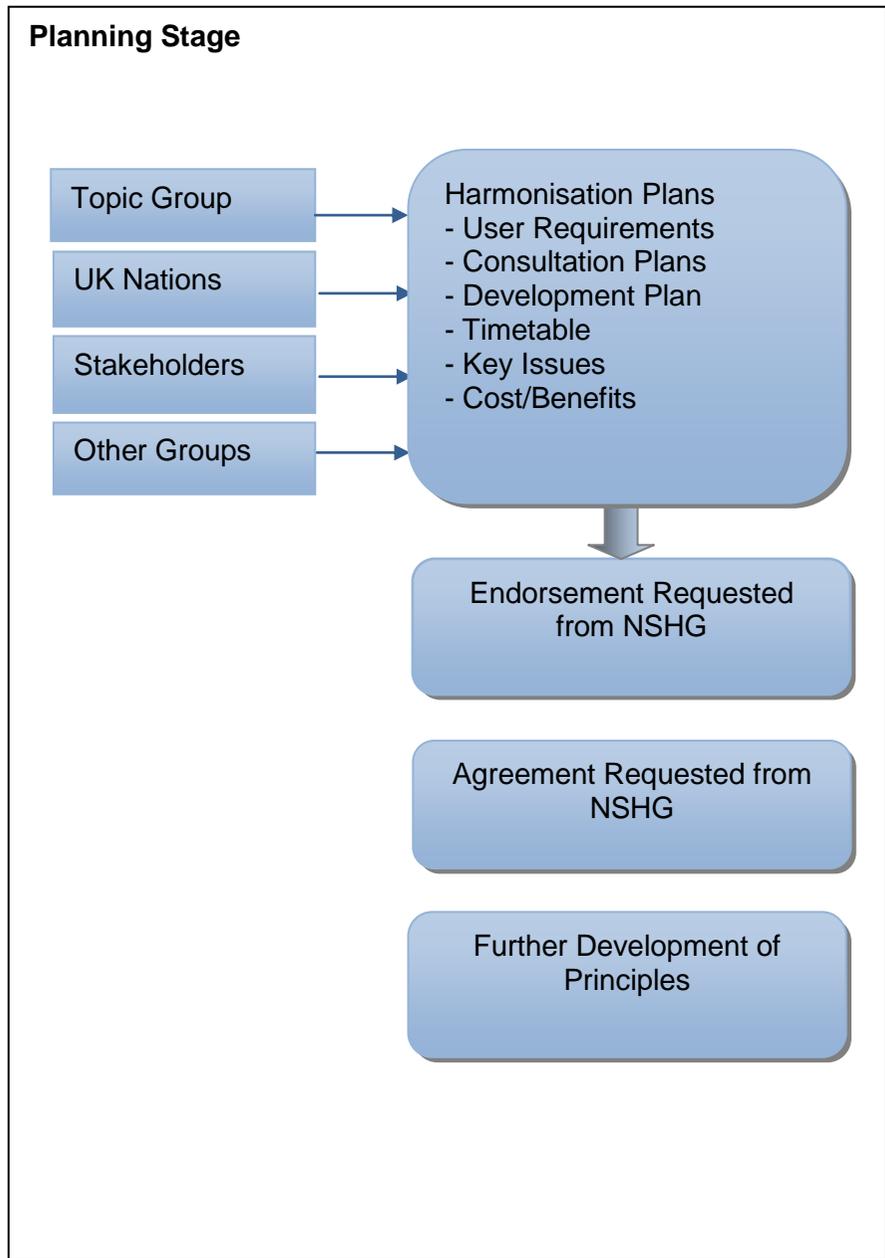
#### 3. Recommendation and Next Steps

The Harmonisation Team recommends **Option b** – to have separate sub groups, one each for Administrative and Business data reporting back to NSHG.

The views of the NSHG are sought.

**Jan Thomas - ONS Titchfield - 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2014**

Annex A – Social Harmonisation Process



**National Statistics Harmonisation Group****Combined Topic Group Report – September 2014****NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report  
Benefits and Tax Credits  
Caroline Smith**

A report has not been submitted for this Topic.

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

Nothing to report this period

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

This Group is currently without a Topic Lead

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

A report has not been submitted for this Topic.

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report  
Demographic information  
Emily Knipe**

<b>Topic Lead</b>	Emily Knipe
<b>Topic Group Members</b>	Nicola Haines, Vital Statistics Output Branch, Office for National Statistics Davie Hay, Department of Health Jos IJpelaar, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency Emily Knipe, Population Statistics Division, Office for National Statistics (Topic Lead) 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
<b>Reporting Period</b>	June to August 2014

<b>Summary Status</b> <i>(An overview of the status of the work at this time)</i>	
Gender Identity: No further work has been done in this area. Same-sex marriage: Initial work on the changes that may be needed to the harmonised questions has started. Details have been received from Peter Betts and Debra Leaker about changes made on LFS and in SSD. Clarification from the harmonisation team was sought over the application of the harmonised questions (Person or household level). Comments are awaited from Karen Hurrell around asking an individual about the 'type' of marriage they are in.	
<b>Progress made during this reporting period</b>	
<b>Product Name</b> <i>(including expected completion date)</i>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Work planned for the next reporting period</b>	
<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Status</b>

<b>Key Issues and Risks</b> <i>(Summary of actual or potential problems along with risks, potential impacts and sensitivities linked to individual needs of UK nations)</i>
<b>Other Information</b> <i>(Any other relevant details)</i>
Karen Gask has now been replaced by Emily Knipe who took up the post on the 1 <sup>st</sup> of July. Work has been delayed due to lack of resource between Karen leaving and Emily starting the post.

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report  
Economic Activity  
Debra Leaker**

A report has not been submitted for this Topic.

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report  
Educational Attainment  
Karen Grierson**

<b>Topic Lead</b>	Karen Grierson
<b>Topic Group Members</b>	Andy Blinston, Tony Clarke, Michael Greer, Rachel Lloyd, Debra Leaker, Matthew Bollington, Jane Carr
<b>Reporting Period</b>	June to August 2014

<b>Summary Status</b> <i>(An overview of the status of the work at this time)</i>	
The topic group has reviewed the desk review and identified some further work to be undertaken. This is still to be completed and an updated desk review to be reviewed by the topic group.	
<b>Progress made during this reporting period</b>	
<b>Product Name</b> <i>(including expected completion date)</i>	<b>Status</b>
Desk review of existing methods for qualifications capture	In progress
Identification of potential resources	In progress
Desk review of other related questions – e.g. age left full time education	Not started
<b>Work planned for the next reporting period</b>	
<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Status</b>
Desk review of existing methods for qualifications capture	
Identification of potential resources	
Desk review of other related questions – e.g. age left full time education	
<b>Key Issues and Risks</b> <i>(Summary of actual or potential problems along with risks, potential impacts and sensitivities linked to individual needs of UK nations)</i>	
Lack of resource to test new questions developed for a simplified approach.	
<b>Other Information</b> <i>(Any other relevant details)</i>	

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report  
Ethnic Group, National Identity, Language, Religion and Sexual Identity  
Angela Potter-Collins**

<b>Topic Lead</b>	Angela Potter-Collins
<b>Topic Group Members</b>	
<b>Reporting Period</b>	June to August 2014

<b>Summary Status</b> <i>(An overview of the status of the work at this time)</i>
A story on inter-ethnic relationships was published on July 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2014.

<p>The branch is continuing to review the Census analysis plans on EILR topics. The next story to be published is on ethnicity and the labour market using LFS and census data (England and Wales). Was originally planned for July but should now be mid to end of October. A story on identities in the UK is scheduled for December. In July an overview of census analysis on EILR topics was presented at a workshop to stakeholders in London. A quality assurance role across the office in relation to EILR outputs continues to be provided. Sian Bradford (previous Topic Lead) has left the branch.</p>	
<b>Progress made during this reporting period</b>	
<b>Product Name</b> <i>(including expected completion date)</i>	<b>Status</b>
As above	Complete
<b>Work planned for the next reporting period</b>	
<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Status</b>
As above	Ongoing
<b>Key Issues and Risks</b> <i>(Summary of actual or potential problems along with risks, potential impacts and sensitivities linked to individual needs of UK nations)</i>	
None	
<b>Other Information</b> <i>(Any other relevant details)</i>	

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

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

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

A report has not been submitted for this Topic.

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report  
Income  
Richard Tonkin**

Nothing to report this period

**NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report  
Integrated Household Survey  
Tim Vizard**

<b>Topic Lead</b>	Tim Vizard
<b>Topic Group Members</b>	
<b>Reporting Period</b>	June to August 2014

**Summary Status** *(An overview of the status of the work at this time)*

- 1) The IHS January – December 2013 (JD13) bulletin and associated data will be released on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2014. The bulletin will be released on the ONS website at 9.30am.
- 2) As notified at June meeting, this will be the last IHS data set published to include data from the Living Costs and Food Survey. Future releases of IHS variables will be delivered as part of the Annual Population Survey (APS). ONS are currently conducting a review to establish the impact of this move from the IHS to the APS, and will shortly undertake a

discontinuity analysis, looking at differences between estimates on the IHS and APS for key survey variables. As part of this analysis, I invite you to contact ONS ([ihg@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ihg@ons.gsi.gov.uk)) with any key IHS variables of interest, where our discontinuity analysis should focus.

<b>Progress made during this reporting period</b>	
<b>Product Name</b> <i>(including expected completion date)</i>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Work planned for the next reporting period</b>	
<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Key Issues and Risks</b> <i>(Summary of actual or potential problems along with risks, potential impacts and sensitivities linked to individual needs of UK nations)</i>	
<b>Other Information</b> <i>(Any other relevant details)</i>	

### NSHG Topic Group Highlight Report

**Pensions**

**Tim Gibbs**

Nothing to report this period