



Newsletter

February 2012

Keeping stakeholders informed

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Introduction

Welcome to the February edition of our census newsletter. We aim to produce this every couple of months to keep you informed about progress to deliver the census outputs and the planned web dissemination tools that will help users access and exploit census data. The key points to note from this newsletter are:

- a census outputs prospectus will be available online from late March
- a series of regional roadshows in April
- a census analysis workshop is taking place in Manchester on 21 March.

Roadshows April 2012 - keeping stakeholders informed

ONS will hold a series of roadshows in April 2012 to keep stakeholders informed of progress to deliver the 2011 Census outputs and the planned web data access channels. There will be a demonstration of the planned tools and how these will help users to access and exploit ONS data. There will also be a workshop session to seek your feedback about the opportunities and challenges presented by the planned web dissemination tools. Further information about these events and how you can register, will be issued in March 2012.

<u>Locations</u>	<u>Date in 2012</u>
Manchester	17 April
York	18 April
London	19 April
Birmingham	25 April
Newport	26 April
London	27 April

2011 Census outputs

ONS aims to publish the first outputs (population estimates by age and sex at country and local authority level for England & Wales) in July 2012. Further details on the content and timetable for each of the census output releases, as well as the availability of the commissioned table service and UK data, will be made available through the online census output prospectus that will be launched late March 2012. It will be updated as new information becomes available and we will notify you of updates. In the meantime, further information about each of the planned census data releases is accessible via the following link:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/the-2011-census/producing-and-delivering-data/2011-census-outputs/proposed-running-order---2012-census-outputs.pdf>

Census analysis programme and workshops

To ensure maximum benefit and promote use of the census data, ONS is developing a wider analytical work programme to supplement the outputs that will be produced. It incorporates three key areas:

- Narrative reports based on census data and other ONS survey sources
- More complex analysis of the characteristics of particular population groups
- An analytical centre for the census to promote best practice and provide a 'one stop' website for access to analyses drawing on census data, covering both government and academic research.

We are asking census users and key stakeholders to provide input into this process so that it is as useful as possible.

A workshop on analytical products will be presented to users detailing ONS's current proposals and plans for analytical products including:

- Initial thoughts on analytical reports and articles that draw on census, survey and administrative statistics, building on the 'Focus On' series produced after the 2001 Census
- Providing an Analytical Centre for the census to promote wider analytical use of census data
- Promoting best practice and providing a one-stop website for access to analyses drawing on Census 2011, covering both government and academic research.

Users will have the opportunity to:

- Comment on the current proposals
- Stimulate discussions on what analysis users would like to see produced (and indeed the analysis they have planned)
- Discuss the relative priorities of these to help shape ONS census analysis work programme

This workshop will follow a similar format to the one held in London in October 2011 and will be held on

21 March 2012, 10am - 4pm, at Britannia Hotel, Portland Street, Manchester, M1 3LA.

If you wish to attend, please contact katy.taylor@ons.gov.uk. There are limited places available and these will be on a first come, first served basis.

Web Data Access (WDA)

Approvals for the WDA project and the award of the development contract to British Telecommunications (BT) were recently received from HM Treasury and Francis Maude, Minister for the Cabinet Office.

ONS and BT have been working on a small scale mock-up of some of the new features of the website which will be used to provide access to the census outputs together with completing the high level technical design of the solution. Work on the development of the application programme interface (API) and data explorer has now begun. The API will enable registered users to exploit the ONS data by building applications to directly access the data. The Data Explorer will allow users to find and explore data directly on the ONS Website. These new tools are due to be launched by the end of the year. The WDA project is also looking to make a number of non-census datasets available on the website, together with the 2011 Census outputs, including the Retail Sales Index (RSI) and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). We are also working on developing further changes to the new website and also the ONS authoring systems to continue improving the existing site. ONS is building on the lessons learnt from the development of its new website by using a development approach which regularly gains input from users throughout the project lifecycle.

Web Data Access usability testing

Over the past 6 weeks, the WDA team has undertaken user testing on a prototype for a new data explorer to help define what the final website user journeys and data explorer will look like. The prototype is by no means the finished product (not due to be launched until the end of 2012) but does provide the opportunity for users of our data to review our current thinking and comment on how useful the new functionality will be. So far the testing has been conducted in London and Bristol, and has been directed at census users to help ONS understand user requirements for the ONS website and the data it publishes. We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to those who took part. Your contributions have been extremely useful.

Further user testing is currently being planned for the coming months to provide further clarity about web user requirements. If you would like to volunteer to take part in the user tests, we would be really interested to hear from you. Please send your details (name, phone number, e-mail address and a brief description of the work you undertake) to stephen.d.kay@ons.gsi.gov.uk and we will keep you updated about our plans for user testing.

WDA application programming interface (API)

As well as providing access to the 2011 Census data through the website (along with some data on Neighbourhood Statistics and NOMIS), ONS will be providing access to the data through an API. This will enable other systems to directly query the ONS systems to discover and request 2011 Census data to use within their own systems.

Developments are at an early stage, but the intention is that an API service will be available at the time of the 2011 Census second release, containing initial outputs for detailed geographies. Ultimately, the API will provide access to a wide range of ONS data.

We will be providing more information soon and we are keen to involve potential users of the API service. ONS plans to make pre-registration of the API service available from October. To contact us, or to get involved, please email onsapi@ons.gov.uk

Census customer services

Census customer services (CCS) provide expert advice to users and customers about the 2011, 2001, and earlier censuses. They offer a large range of services, including:

- Guidance on accessing data using the National Statistics web services
- Advice on definitions of census terms
- Advice on the most suitable figures for particular applications
- Guidance on the terms and conditions for the use of census data
- Provision of simple extracts of figures from the 2001 Census and earlier censuses

A full list of services and contact details are available on:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/census-customer-services/index.html>

Census staff to present at the LARIA conference

Members of the 2011 Census outputs and web data access teams will be presenting at the 2012 local authority research & intelligence association (LARIA) conference on 19 March in Aston, Birmingham. ONS will also have a stand at the exhibition, so come along and get your questions answered. ONS will be attending a number of conferences during the year to present papers and we will inform you of these in future newsletters.

Next edition

If you have any suggestions on what you would like to see included in future newsletters, please let us know. In the meantime, we will continue to upload relevant information onto the ONS and community of practice/knowledge hub websites. Please send your suggestions to SMC.team@ons.gov.uk

Contact us

Editorial Team: Communications and Stakeholder Management, Population Statistics

Email: smc.team@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: (+44) 1329 447912

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