

GUIDANCE NOTE: THE USE OF POPULATION DATA IN PUBLISHED REPORTS AND THE CALCULATION OF BVPIs

1. Introduction

This note sets out background information and a procedure for obtaining and using population data in any reports that are to be published by the Council. It aims to ensure that the data quoted in reports is always up to date and derives from sources that are consistently used by everyone.

The note also contains information on where officers can obtain further guidance regarding the use of population data in the calculation of BVPIs.

2. The use of population data in published reports

2.1 The Main Sources of Population Data

There are three basic sources of data, and the choice of which to use depends on the nature of the information required and the date it is to relate to.

These are:

- the **Census**. The latest Census was held in 2001 and the next will be in 2011. The Census is a 100% survey and can provide a range of baseline information that is not available from elsewhere at 100% level; for example for persons with limiting long-term illness and household types. Census data is most profitably used in terms of percentage breakdowns. It can also be used for totals where no other sources are available, but the data source must be quoted to make clear that the data does not apply to the current year. However, for basic current totals of persons by age or gender the Census is *not* the source to use.
- the **Mid Year Estimates**, issued annually by the Office For National Statistics (ONS), is the source that must be used for current Borough population totals by age and gender. The data is issued every August or September and relates to the previous year; thus the present data relates to 2004.
- The **Population Projections** are also issued annually, by the GLA. Current projections run to 2031 and are available by age and gender at both Borough and Ward level. These are projections based on births, deaths and migration and utilising Mid Year Estimates and other Government data (from ONS and elsewhere). They are produced from a GLA-developed model which incorporates housing completions data supplied by the Boroughs and the results of the GLA Housing Capacity Study to which Boroughs had an input. The current round of projections is the 2005 Round. Ethnic group projections are also produced periodically, and can be used provided they are not too out of date and therefore using incorrect base totals.

2.2 Availability of Data

Census data is held within Departments and there should be at least one person in each Department trained in the use of the Census software.

The Census Liaison Officer, and therefore the main source of Census data within the Council is Alan Brooks in the Environment Dept (ext 3481). He can give advice on the data.

For easy reference, three basic reports have been produced and are on the Intranet:

- Key Statistics for the Borough
- Key Statistics for Wards
- Ethnic Groups in Hammersmith & Fulham

These reports summarise some, but not all, of the data available from the Census.

Both the Mid Year Estimates and the Borough level projections will be placed on the Intranet as they appear. These will go down to 5-year age groups but if further detail is required, Alan Brooks should be contacted. Similarly, if Ward or ethnic group projections are required, contact Alan Brooks.

2.3 Points of Detail

When quoting Mid Year Estimates and projections data in reports, figures must be rounded to the nearest 100.

It should be noted that the Mid Year Estimates do not contain an estimate of total **households**. For this, an estimate is made annually as part of the HIP return and will also be placed on the Intranet. The current estimate is for 2005.

Complications can arise when a current population number is required (rather than a percentage) relating to data that is only available in the Census, such as an ethnic group. In such cases Census totals may be quoted, making clear that it is 2001 data, or it may be sometimes appropriate to work out a number relating to a Borough control total from the Mid Year Estimate but using a Census percentage. If this is done the method should be explained, eg in a footnote.

A frequently asked question relates to numbers of people by nationality, eg Somalians. Data on this does not appear in the published reports, and the only information available relates to people by their country of birth in 2001. This is a case where only partial and out of date data is available, but is the best available. For this and other queries, contact Alan Brooks.

Data sources should be quoted when population data is being used in a report.

2.4 Procedure and further guidance

The above gives guidance on where to obtain population data for use in published reports.

When a report is written containing population data it is the view of the CE that it should be sent to him and to Alan Brooks for a final check to ensure that the appropriate figures have been used.

NB: where officers wish to quote unemployment data or rates alongside population data, they should contact John Husbands (ext 3480) for the latest figures.

3. The use of population data in the calculation of BVPIs

3.1 Audit Commission / ODPM Guidance on the calculation of BVPIs

The use of population data in the calculation of BVPIs is prescribed by the ODPM in conjunction with the Audit Commission. The data sources for such population data could vary for each individual BVPI and as such it is impossible to provide a list of actual population data for BVPI calculations, or a list of definitive sources.

Individual BVPIs have set formulae which must be used for their calculation. Where these formulae contain a population measure, the data source which must be used to obtain the population figure to be used in the calculation will be detailed in the ODPM's 'Best Value Performance Indicators: 2005/2006' document.

The correct population data source **must** be used if the BVPI is to be calculated correctly.

3.2 Procedure and further guidance

Officers calculating BVPIs using population data must refer to the ODPM's document to ascertain the correct data source from which the population data is to be drawn.

Each department has a nominated PI officer(s) who can provide guidance and details on the correct population data sources for individual BVPI calculations.

If there is any doubt regarding the correct data source/population figure to use in a calculation, officers should contact their PI officer (listed below) for assistance.

Department	Nominated PI officer	Alternative Contact
EnvD	Stella Washington	n/a
FD	Nigel Monaghan	n/a
HSD	Shaun Dunleavy	n/a
SSD	Lee Fitzjohn	n/a
DSD	Mick Stone	n/a
ED	Jenny Foley	Huw Jones
CF	n/a	Chris Naylor
ACE PP	n/a	Peter Smith
ACE OD	n/a	Anne Wilkinson/David Coates

Additional assistance can also be obtained from Dave Wilsher (Performance and Procurement) on ext 2212.

A copy of the Best Value Performance Indicators 2005/06 document can be downloaded from the ODPM website at <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1136118>