

# Counting Everyone In – The Big Challenge

## **Our aim is maximum coverage of the population and to avoid under-representation of any one group**

In 1991 the Census was a success insofar as it achieved 98% coverage of the population. However, the remaining 2% were concentrated in particular sections of the community, rather than being spread uniformly across society. This bias against certain groups might affect the amount of resources they receive from local and central Government which is assessed with the help of census information.

### **Underenumerated groups**

Groups that were missed the most in the 1991 Census were:

- Young people (aged 20 to 29) with a bias towards males; in inner-cities. Reasons include difficulty in gaining access because of lifestyle and multi-occupied housing.
- Babies (under 14 months). Reasons include baby being at hospital on Census Day and being left off the form by parents.
- The elderly, in particular elderly women. Reasons include living alone; difficulties answering the door or filling out the form.
- Students. Reasons include confusion over whether resident at parent's or term-time address.
- Ethnic communities. Reasons include language difficulties; suspicion.

### **Action to minimise underenumeration**

#### **The Community Liaison programme**

Britain has an enormous range of voluntary organisations with the potential to provide reassurance about the aims of the Census for the people they represent and to offer help in completing the form for those who require it.

Contact has been made with groups representing elderly people, ethnic communities, the different faiths, people with disabilities and sensory impairment along with the Citizen's Advice Bureaux and other charitable organisations. A series of regional roadshows across England and Wales has generated a database of individuals and organisations who have pledged their help. As well as practical help they can also offer public support for the Census in their communities and help to promote the Census publicity campaign.

**Other factsheets:**

1. The Census
2. Why We Need a Census
3. Census 2001 - What's New?
5. The Census Organisation
6. Census jobs
7. The Census and the Law
8. Census Taking Through the Ages

**The Census publicity campaign – 'Count Me In'**

A major national advertising and PR campaign will be launched aimed at creating widespread awareness of the Census but also specially targeted at those members of society most likely to have doubts about involvement. The 'Count Me In' campaign stresses the need for everyone to be counted in the Census and the benefits that the Census brings. The aim is for the 'Count Me In' message to be picked up and passed on by voluntary organisations to the communities they serve.

**Special population groups – counting in the exceptions**

There is a range of groups for which the Census has to make special arrangements if they are to be counted.

Special procedures are being developed and agreed with relevant Government departments, agencies and outside bodies in relation to the following:

- HM Forces – liaison to include enumeration of service members overseas or absent on Census night;
- Students – the appointment of 'Student Champions', student members of the enumeration fieldforce;
- People sleeping rough – local authorities and homeless charities are being consulted through DETR (Department of Environment, Transport and Regions) and the National Assembly for Wales to identify appropriate method, time and places to count rough sleepers;
- Prisons - arrangements are made through the Prison Service (Home Office);
- Royal Households;
- Embassies;
- Commercial Shipping;
- Refugees and asylum seekers.

Liaison will also take place with other groups who represent the following:

- Gypsies and Travellers;
- Circuses / Fairs.

**Contact for further information:**

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