

**Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)
Y Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol (SYG) a Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru (LICC)**

Census Advisory Group for Wales

Welsh Assembly Government News CAGW(07) 01

Consultation events within Wales – Spring 2007

In addition to the ONS user consultation event in Cardiff in March 2007, officials from the Welsh Assembly Government's Statistical Directorate held workshops for key stakeholders (including equality groups, local authorities, police and health authorities, public bodies etc) in North and South Wales during February 2007. The purpose of the workshops was to share information on preparations for the 2011 Census and to gain further views on potential content.

Nearly all Assembly Subject Committees (and the Equality of Opportunity Standing Committee) discussed a paper on the 2011 Census during the period November 2006 to March 2007. The Assembly Committee papers and full meeting transcripts are available at:

<http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees.htm>

To facilitate these discussions, the ONS prepared a list of topics for definite and potential inclusion in a 3 page per person Census questionnaire using the results of previous consultations.

During subject committee discussions and stakeholder workshops in Wales, significant concerns were raised about the potential omission of the Carer and Qualifications questions. There were requests for information on Welsh Language proficiency to be collected in England and also calls for a new Welsh Frequency of Use question to be asked in Wales.

The latest ONS view on priorities for Census content is given in paper AG(07)07.

Other concerns raised at the workshops and committee meetings included the enumeration/delivery procedures in rural areas, Welsh language provision and targeting hard-to-reach groups. Representatives from local authorities also asked for further information on the potential level of local authority involvement expected in order to be able to plan resources at a sufficiently early stage. At the workshops there was widespread support for establishing a Census Newsletter in Wales.

Launch of Census Newsletter

As a means of engaging Census users and stakeholders in Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government's Statistical Directorate recently launched a bimonthly newsletter to inform users of recent news and developments regarding the Census. The next edition is due for publication in late November.

The newsletter is published on the Statistical Directorate website:
www.wales.gov.uk/statistics

If you would like to be added to the circulation list, please contact:

stats.popcensus@wales.gsi.gov.uk

New Minister

Ministerial responsibility for the 2011 Census in Wales transferred from Sue Essex (who retired at the May Assembly elections) to the Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery (Andrew Davies).

Research Work

Welsh Assembly Government researchers have undertaken cognitive interviews to test potential ethnicity and national identity questions within Wales. Further focus groups will also take place across Wales at the end of November. Further information is given at paper CAGW(07)02.

Ethnicity, Identity, Language and Religion

The ONS held a detailed consultation on user needs for ethnicity, national identity, language and religion information from the 2011 Census in England and Wales during December 2006 to March 2007. Comments from interested people and organisations were sought in order to gain a better understanding of key data requirements, to gain an awareness of the range of views held on these topics and to identify the relative priorities for this information given the constraints of space on the Census form.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published a summary report for England and Wales on 31 October 2007. The Welsh Assembly Government's Statistical Directorate simultaneously published a statistical bulletin focusing on the results from Wales only. This is available at:

www.wales.gov.uk/statistics

Key results for Wales:

- The greatest user need between the topics from the 2011 Census was for ethnicity and language data, followed by national identity and religion.
- There was a greater need for national identity data for Wales than for England and Wales combined. The importance of including a national identity question was recognised, in allowing self-identification, promoting response and in complementing the ethnicity question.
- Whilst an overwhelming majority of respondents required information on ethnic group, only 28 per cent thought that the proposed single ethnic group categories would meet their needs. Respondents required either more detail on existing categories, or the addition of further categories, including Welsh ethnic group. For this reason, a number of respondents saw the inclusion of a Welsh category in the Scottish 2006 Census Test as an advantage over the English version.
- In addition to ethnicity, over half of respondents also required information on race, with meeting statutory requirements a recurring reason for this. A number of respondents saw some benefits in having multiple response ethnicity data in terms of obtaining greater detail, but there was concern that this would lead to a greater burden on those completing the Census form,

that comparison with the 2001 Census would be compromised and that as minority ethnic numbers are relatively small in Wales, a larger number of categories may make robust analysis even more difficult.

- The majority of respondents thought that the religion categories were suitable for their needs, though some additional categories were proposed. Whilst the need for data on religion was not as great as for the other three topics, the benefits of gaining a better understanding of the local population and community was recognised.
- Along with ethnicity data, this consultation highlighted that the highest user need in Wales was for language data. Although the main aim of this consultation was to assess the need for data on languages other than Welsh, the majority of those who expressed a need for language data specified that they needed Welsh language data. There was also some support for the collection of Welsh language information in England.