

Measuring Short-term Migration in the 2011 Census for England and Wales

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1. Executive Summary

Since the 2001 Census, the rates of migration have increased and there has been a greater emphasis on all in-migrants, not just long-term migrants (for 12 months or more). The Census has always measured long-term in-migrants but has not previously measured short-term migrants. Users such as the Bank of England and Treasury have developed an interest in the impact that all in migrants, including those that are short-term, have on the labour market and the economy more widely. The recent influx of EU accession migrants has raised resource planning and funding issues for both local and central government.

The ONS Centre for Demography has produced experimental short-term migration statistics and the Census could provide a major opportunity to benchmark and improve these estimates. Furthermore, accurate information would make it easier to understand differences between different local and national administrative sources. To meet these needs, ONS is considering collecting information from short-term in migrants in the 2011 Census, in addition to the usually resident population. This would involve:

- 1) Lowering the threshold for those that should complete a full census return, as currently only done by usual residents, to include everyone intending to stay in the UK for three months and;
- 2) Including a question on intended length of stay in the UK.

There are concerns from some census users that the census could be undermined by too great a focus on migration, with a potential negative impact on response rates from long-term migrants and the general population. There are also concerns that the Census is not the right vehicle for measuring short-term migration and, furthermore, that the current interest in migration may reduce, especially as a result of an economic downturn. A key question to be addressed is whether ONS can collect information that will shed light on the issue of short-term migration without damaging the traditional Census results.

To address these issues a research project was set up, to allow a decision to be made, prior to the sign-off of the 2009 Census Rehearsal questionnaire, on whether or not to collect information on short-term migrants. This report brings together findings from the various strands of qualitative and quantitative testing conducted including; a postal survey; a separate research project commissioned from the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen); three waves of cognitive testing carried out by the Data Collection Methodology team in ONS; testing of questions on the ONS Opinions (Omnibus) survey; and the analysis of secondary evidence such as Worker Registration data, and research by BMG Research.

The key research questions are presented in the table on the following page along with a brief summary of the research findings for each question.

The issues in this paper refer to short-term immigrants. ONS is also proposing to include all short-term out migrants in the Census population base, specifically by extending the requirement to complete the questionnaire for those who are out of the country for less than 12 months.

Key Research questions	Research findings
1. Will response rates to the 2011 Census be affected by the inclusion of a question on intended length of stay in the UK?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from the postal survey provided no evidence to support the suggestion that response rates would be affected by lowering the usual residence cut-off to one (or three) months and including a question on intended length of stay in the UK. However, it was a voluntary test and the characteristics of responders were not fully representative of the population as a whole. • The qualitative testing provided no evidence to suggest that a question on intended length of stay in the UK would have an effect on peoples' willingness to respond to the Census.
2. Will short-term migrants respond to the 2011 Census?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results were mixed as to whether short-term migrants would respond to the Census. On balance, the evidence indicated that they are willing to respond but are surprised that they should be included in the Census. • Effectively targeted community liaison and publicity etc will be key in improving the response from short-term migrants.
3. Are short-term migrants willing to answer a question on intended length of stay in the UK?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The results showed that short-term migrants will answer an intended length of stay in the UK question.
4. How accurate are the data provided in the intended length of stay in the UK question?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evidence suggested that some respondents, particularly those with no fixed plans, may have some difficulties with the current intended length of stay in the UK question. However, most short-term migrants will select an answer based on the 'best fit' choice. • The evidence suggests that it should be possible to distinguish usual residents from short-term migrants through an intended length of stay in the UK question based on respondents' intentions at the time of the Census.
5. Is the most appropriate cut-off for collecting information on short-term migrants a one month intended stay in the UK or three months intended stay in the UK?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial evidence was not gathered to inform the decision on whether a one month or three month usual residence cut-off should be used. However, NatCen suggested it would be feasible to reduce the cut-off from six months to three months. Below this threshold, people do not consider themselves to be short-term migrants and there is a significant risk of not capturing them even if they are working or studying.

The research is not conclusive but is encouraging and, on balance, does not provide compelling evidence against collecting information from short-term migrants and asking a question on intended length of stay in the UK in the Census. In the absence of any further time for testing or research and based on the findings in this paper, it is considered that reducing the usual residence cut-off to one month would not be viable. However, reducing it to three months should be considered for the 2009 Census Rehearsal. The benefits of this approach are that a three month cut-off ties in with the United Nations definition of a short-term migrant and it adds something to the understanding of short-term migrants as more economically active people would be included than previously.

It is recognised that it would be very difficult to collect sufficiently good quality information to provide accurate estimates of short-term migrants at a local, or even a national level, as response rates from this group will vary from area to area and the Census Coverage Survey will not be able to adjust short-term migrant population counts at that level of detail. The approach may be more effective in the 2011 Census, backed by national and local publicity, but it is still likely that the publicity, community liaison, and engagement with local authorities etc would lead to differential under-coverage.

Whilst the 2011 Census is unlikely to provide robust estimates of the numbers of short-term migrants in its own right, it will help to understand and explain the difference between the census estimates and the rolled forward mid-year estimates produced by ONS. Additionally, it will also give the opportunity to gain significantly more understanding of the administrative and survey sources. Even if coverage was reasonably poor, the understanding of the differences between census results and other sources of short-term migrants could be enhanced by analysing patterns in the individual census data and by matching individual records to administrative sources if this becomes legally possible. There is no evidence to suggest that this poses a real risk to the quality of population estimates for the usually resident population.

Recommendation
<p>1) Lower the threshold for those that should complete a full census return for the 2009 Census Rehearsal in England and Wales to three months total stay in the UK, and;</p> <p>2) Include an intended length of stay in the UK question in the 2009 Census Rehearsal for England and Wales for anyone who has been in the UK for less than 12 months.</p> <p>It is also recommended that this approach is taken for the 2011 Census, subject to performance in the Rehearsal and any changes imposed by Parliament.</p>

2. Introduction

The accurate estimation of the number of short-term migrants in the UK is of very high political importance. In particular, the recent influx of people from the new EU accession countries has raised resource planning and funding issues for both local and central government.

This has led to increasing pressure for ONS to provide more detailed and reliable statistics on short-term migration into the UK. One way of meeting this requirement may be to collect information in the 2011 Census on short-term migrants in addition to the usually resident UK population.

As the proposal to collect full census information from short-term migrants is a relatively new issue that has not been fully explored, a research project was set up to provide evidence on whether census information can be successfully collected from short-term migrants without having any effect on the census usual residents population figures.

After providing some background to the project, and outlining the key research questions, this report summarises why there is a requirement to collect such information from the Census and how the information would be used if it was collected. Details of the research methods that have been used are provided, along with the results of the research. Finally, a recommendation is made on whether or not information on short-term migrants should be collected in the 2011 Census.

3. Background

This section of the report summarises how the requirement to collect census information from short-term migrants emerged, and the different options that were considered for dealing with this requirement.

3.1 Background

In 2005, the UK Registrars General agreed that the enumeration base for the 2011 Census would be *Usual Residents and Visitors*. For the 2011 Census, 'usual residents' of the UK will be defined as people who have lived, or intend to live, in the UK for 6 months or more, and people who have lived, or intend to live, in the UK for less than six months will be classified as 'visitors'. These definitions are similar to the residency rules used in the 2001 Census, although there will be improvements to tighten their application.

When the enumeration base was chosen, the requirement to collect information on short-term migrants was not as strong as it is now, and was not a serious consideration. The only strong requirement identified regarding short-term migrants was to attempt to identify 'temporary migrant workers' who were working for a UK employer and it was agreed that this would be tested.

In addition to the basic questions proposed for visitors, an additional question was therefore added during small-scale testing to ask whether the respondent worked for a UK employer while staying at their enumeration address. This question confused both these short-term economic migrants and the wider population, so the question was not recommended for inclusion in the 2007 Census Test or the 2011 Census.

During initial consultation on census content in 2005, no requirement was identified to collect information on short-term migrants through a question on intended length of stay in the UK, although there was a demand for other new migration related topics. However, subsequent to this, the demand for more information on migration from the census began to increase.

In May 2006, the National Statistician set up an Inter-departmental task force on migration statistics to recommend improvements that could be made to estimates of migration. The task force recommended that the 2011 Census should include questions that identify both short and long-term migrants¹.

Then, in October 2006, an external migration-specific consultation led by the ONS Centre for Demography (ONSCD) identified a requirement to collect information on year and month of arrival to the UK. The National Statistics Quality Review on International Migration Statistics² also recommended the inclusion of a question on year of entry for persons born outside the UK.

¹ The full Migration task force report can be accessed at: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/downloads/TaskForceReport151206.pdf>

² The Quality Review report on International Migration Statistics can be accessed at: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/reviews/downloads/Int-Mig.doc>

Many respondents to the 2006 migration consultation also supported the collection of information on intended length of stay. In particular, they were interested in its potential use in providing information on short-term migrants and temporary foreign workers, especially those from EU accession countries, and their impact on local labour markets and demand for local services.

During 2007, an increasingly strong internal requirement began to develop to collect information on short-term migrants and include a question on intended length of stay in the UK in the 2011 Census, with ONSCD and Labour Market Division (LMD) being the areas within ONS with the greatest interest. However, the demand for questions in the Census is extremely high, and a question on intended length of stay in the UK was not prioritised for inclusion due to the prioritisation of other important new topics such as second residences, citizenship and language. There have also been strong concerns expressed by users that information on intentions might not be a good predictor of actual length of stay, and hence the value of including such a question might be offset by considerable health warnings as to the reliability of the data. However, it should be noted that even without the intended length of stay in the UK question, the inclusion of people in the Census already relies on their judgement of their intentions in order to decide whether or not they are a usual resident and should complete the full Census questionnaire.

3.2 Options Considered for 2011

In early 2008, detailed discussions were held between Census, ONSCD and LMD on whether the information need could be met through surveys or whether it was necessary to attempt to collect the information in the Census. As a result of discussions, four options were identified for the 2011 Census:

1. Continue with current proposals (i.e. do not meet the need);
2. Collect additional information from visitors;
3. Collect full census returns from short-term migrants in the UK for 1 month or more;
4. Collect full census returns from short-term migrants in the UK for 3 months or more.

Any change to the existing proposals increases the risk to achieving the main census aim of maximising overall response rates, which means that option one may be a reasonable and defensible decision.

However, part of the stated key aim of the 2011 Census is to provide a benchmark for key population statistics. Given that migration statistics are of ever increasing importance across Government, it is arguable that these are part of the key population statistics, and the existing proposals for the 2011 Census did not provide the required benchmark.

The alternative options were therefore considered. Of these, option three would meet the requirements most satisfactorily and completely, but is also most likely to jeopardise the estimate of the usually resident population and would increase costs significantly.

Option two would not meet user requirements unless the decision not to collect information from visitors in communal establishments was reversed, which would significantly increase costs.

Option four would partly meet the requirements for information on short-term migrants, at a lower cost than option three. However, some additional funding would still be required, the intended length of stay question would still need to be

shown to work, and no information would be collected on short-term migrants in the UK for less than three months.

Collecting full Census information from short-term migrants requires the inclusion of a question on intended length of stay in the UK in order to be able to separate the short-term migrants from the usually resident census population (based on the six month usual residence definition). In March 2008 it was therefore recommended that, if the additional cost is reasonable, and a question on intended length of stay can be included and shown to work, a full census return should be collected from everyone resident in the UK for a period of one month or more in the 2011 Census.

3.3 Research Project

Although the above recommendation was made in March 2008, the evidence was not available to be able to endorse this recommendation. It was decided that it would be too risky and costly to go into the 2009 Census Rehearsal without having made a decision about which of the above options should be implemented for the 2011 Census. A research project was therefore set up to gather the evidence required to make an informed decision about whether short-term migrants could successfully be included in the 2011 Census.

There were general concerns from some census users that the Census would be undermined by too great a focus on migration, that the Census is not the right vehicle for measuring short-term migration and, furthermore, the current interest in migration may reduce, especially as a result of an economic downturn. Additionally, a key concern that has been voiced through the UK Census Design and Methodology Advisory Committee (UKCDMAC) and other forums is that there could be an effect on response rates for the general population by including a question on intended length of stay in the UK in the Census.

One of the main research issues to be investigated was whether it would be possible to collect information of sufficient quality from short-term migrants in the 2011 Census, without impacting on the census usual resident population figures.

A number of key research questions were identified which would help to address the areas of concern.

3.3.1 Key Research Questions

The following key research questions were developed:

- Will response rates to the 2011 Census be affected by the inclusion of a question on intended length of stay in the UK?
- Will short-term migrants respond to the 2011 Census?
- Are short-term migrants willing to answer a question on intended length of stay in the UK?
- How accurate are the data provided in the intended length of stay in the UK question?
- Is the most appropriate cut-off for collecting information on short-term migrants one month intended stay in the UK or three months intended stay in the UK?

3.3.2 Secondary research questions

A number of secondary research questions were also identified:

- Will the general public be 'put off' by the total number of migration and identity related questions on the census questionnaire?
- Do the general public and migrants have an understanding of who to include as household members and visitors?
- What is the most appropriate terminology to use on the census questionnaire to describe short-term migrants?

For the purposes of this census research a short-term migrant is someone who has stayed or intends to stay in the UK for less than six months. This is in line with the six month definition of a usual resident used in the Census. This differs from the UN recommended definition of a short-term migrant which is 'a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least three months but less than a year (12 months)'.

4. Uses of the Information

4.1 ONS Centre for Demography (ONSCD) requirements

An overarching aim of ONSCD is to minimise and explain the difference between census and mid-year estimate populations (MYEs). Definitional differences are one source of a gap, others include errors in either estimates. There is a definitional difference between estimates in the coverage of migrants. ONSCD's usual resident MYEs only include long-term migrants who are here for a year or more, whereas the census outputs cover people here for six months or more.

ONSCD is also considering producing estimates of populations on other bases and this work would also be helped by an intended length of stay in the UK question. In terms of length of stay there are two types of short-term migrants - those here for one month or more and those here for three months or more. By 2011, ONSCD will be producing estimates of short-term migrants at Local Authority (LA) level. Collecting intended length of stay would allow ONSCD to categorise people into the various population bases by length of stay, but it is needed in particular in order to identify migrants here for between six and twelve months, which is the definitional difference previously mentioned.

In addition, information on short-term migrants for less than six months would help understanding in areas where Local Authorities suggest their population is larger than census figures show, by demonstrating that some of that population is short-term. Finally, identifying and collecting information on short term migrants will enhance our knowledge of short-term migrants and provide socio-economic information on that group.

The intended uses can be summarised as:

- Identifying the ONSCD usual resident population as defined for mid-year estimates
- Assessing and improving local area short-term migration estimates
- Comparisons with, and possibly linkage to, administrative sources
- Understanding the population in ONS surveys
- Understanding the characteristics of short-term migrants

More detail on each of these uses can be found below. ONSCD recognises that at most the Census will provide an estimate of short-term migrants and that a full 'coverage estimation process', as used for the census usually resident population, will not be possible.

4.1.1 Identifying the ONSCD usual resident population

Population statistics produced by ONSCD are based on the UN definition of usual residence - an individual is resident only if they intend to stay for longer than 12 months. The 2001 Census defined usual residence as where individuals spend the majority of their time, generally considered to refer to where individuals spend more than six months of the year. ONSCD would use census information on intended length of stay to exclude migrants who did not intend to stay for 12 months or more. This adjustment was not made for the 2001 Census base from which mid-year estimates have been rolled forward.

Although this adjustment will be small relative to the whole UK population, it may be geographically concentrated and so may be an important factor in some local areas. It also may impact the age/sex distributions at a national level.

A possible alternative to including an intended length of stay question in the census is to match individual census data to records from the new e-Borders system. The e-Borders system will record flows into and out of the country. Roll out of the system began in October 2008 and it is expected that all scheduled and chartered passenger traffic into, and out of, the UK will be covered by the end of 2010. However, there are serious issues about the feasibility of this approach including legal gateways to personally identifiable e-Borders data, development of the necessary data structures (i.e. e-Borders travel histories), and matching data without a unique identifier. In summary, this approach is high risk and is not considered a viable replacement for an intended length of stay question in the 2011 Census. However, the potential of e-Borders for quality assuring the census will continue to be explored.

4.1.2 Assessing and improving local area short-term migration estimates

Over recent years ONSCD have seen growing user interest in short-term migration. This relates to interest in the scale of all immigration flows (both long and short-term) and recognition that the burden of supplying services to short-term migrants will fall on Local Authorities (LAs). Earlier this year, two major inquiries by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the Treasury Select Committee highlighted the importance of the issue for resource allocation:

Official population statistics, used to allocate funding to councils, are failing to count short-term migrants and are putting public services in some parts of the country under increasing pressure, council leaders will say today in a submission to the Government (CLG) inquiry on "Community Cohesion and Migration". (Local Government Association, 2008)

Official mid-year population estimates, based on the 'usually resident' definition of population, do not include short-term migrants. Such estimates do not fully meet the needs of Local Authorities and commercial users who are also interested in, for example, short-term migrants as well as day-time and week-day populations (Treasury Select Committee 'Counting the Population', 2008³).

The Census has the potential to provide an estimate of the number of short-term migrants by extending the enumeration base to include moves made for less than six months (either one or three months) and including an intended length of stay question. At present this is the only single source which could provide a snapshot at local area level.

ONSCD need to use the Census estimate to assess the quality of local area model based estimates it plans to produce prior to the 2011 Census. It is unlikely that ONSCD would be able to use anything other than a complete count for this purpose. If the total count was not correct (for example if there was significant under-enumeration of short-term migrants) it may still be possible to assess the accuracy of ONSCD estimates by comparing the distribution of short-term migrants in the census to the equivalent distribution in ONSCD model based estimates. However, this would have to assume that the undercount was consistent across all local areas. Differential under-coverage would mean it would

³The full Treasury Select Committee report can be accessed at:
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmtreasy/183/183.pdf>

not be possible to attribute differences in the distribution only to error in the ONSCD estimates.

In addition ONSCD would use the intelligence gained by the comparisons to refine and improve its estimates beyond the 2011 Census.

4.1.3. Comparisons to administrative sources

Administrative data sources can provide alternative estimates of population and migration to those produced by ONS. Counts of international immigration based on these sources are now published as regular outputs by the Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions. They are published at local area level.

ONS CD research indicated that these administrative sources record large numbers, but not all, of moves made by short-term migrants. As such moves are not included in ONS CD population statistics, it is not valid to make direct comparisons. Despite this, local area users regularly query why there are differences between official estimates of immigration and counts from administrative sources.

ONS CD would use a count of short-term migrants from the decennial census to assess where such migrants were registering with administrative sources. This would enable more valid comparisons to be made between ONS CD migration statistics and administrative sources. Equally if the Census enumerated short-term migrants, more direct comparisons could be made between Census and administrative sources, potentially by matching at individual person level.

4.1.4. Coverage of population in ONS surveys

Some social surveys, in particular the Labour Force Survey (LFS), collect information from individuals who are outside the MYE definition. Some short-term migrants (those who work or study) are included in the social survey definition whereas the mid-year estimates are based on the 12 month usual resident definition. The mismatch means that currently some short-term migrants from the surveys are weighted to represent 12 month usual residents.

A count of short-term migrants from the decennial census would assist in the provision of estimates of short-term migrants. A by-product would also be that any linkage exercise between LFS data and census to look at survey non-response would be more consistent.

4.1.5 Understanding the characteristics of short-term migrants

Other than numbers at high geographic levels, very little is currently known about short-term migrants (such as family status, country of birth, ethnicity and health). Experimental estimates published by ONS CD do distinguish between those who come for work or study but only at England & Wales level. Users have asked for more detailed cross-classifications which could be produced using results of the census.

At England and Wales level, additional information on basic demographic characteristics such as age and sex cross-classified by work, study or other reasons for visit would provide information that could be used in modelling potential short-term migrants in other sources.

The census provides a unique opportunity to improve our understanding of local area differences in the numbers and characteristics of short-term migrants.

4.2 Labour Market Division (LMD) requirements

One issue of major importance in labour market terms is related to the collection of additional information about people from overseas who are living and working in the UK, but not for long enough to be included in the Census as a usual resident. In the context of the National Statistics Quality Review of Employment and Jobs Statistics⁴, this has been identified as a possible reason for the undercounting of UK jobs in both the Census and the LFS.

The group of 'temporary migrant workers' is large and growing in importance in its contributions to the UK economy. Indeed, temporary foreign workers make up a significant proportion of the workforce in some areas, in particular in London. In order to identify these people, it would be necessary to determine whether they were doing, or had done, any paid work for a UK-based employer during the period of their stay.

The LFS is known to underestimate employment levels because the survey is weighted to estimates of the 'usually resident' household population, which excludes people who will be staying in the UK for less than 12 months. Including them would go some way to reducing the undercount of jobs in the Census and LFS compared with ONS business surveys.

LMD and key stakeholders (HM Treasury, Bank of England and Department for Work and Pensions) require the LFS to be weighted to more complete and accurate population estimates that include 'short-term migrants'. Likewise the estimates should also exclude short-term emigrants, temporarily away from the UK.

Essentially, users want a count of people who are not usually resident in the UK but who are living in the UK for short periods, working in the UK and contributing to the UK economy whilst they are here. This would not include, for example, people who are visiting an affiliated company for a short period whilst continuing to be paid by a firm based outside the UK, nor would it include participants in training courses or conferences. 'Contributing to the economy' should be considered in National Account terms as 'contribution to UK output'.

Without the inclusion of a question on intended length of stay in the UK, the Census is unable to provide a count of short-term migrants, or a clear distinction between long-term and short-term migrants as envisaged by the Task Force. Some of the short-term migrants that LMD and key stakeholders want to measure will be classified as 'usual residents' in the census, and some will be classified as 'visitors'.

⁴ National Statistics Quality Review of Employment and Jobs Statistics Final Report <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/reviews/labour.asp>

4.3 European Union (EU) Regulations

On 20 February 2008 the European Parliament approved a Council (Framework) Census Regulation covering the harmonisation of outputs from member states' censuses of population and housing. The Council Regulation came into force in July this year.

The regulation provides for the specification of outputs, the means of submission of these to Eurostat, and the requirement to provide metadata and quality reports, to be prescribed by subordinate Commission (Implementing) Regulations.

The Framework Regulation is intended to be a permanent piece of legislation concerned with establishing common rules for the decennial provision of comprehensive population and housing data to be collected from traditional census taking or from alternative sources such as surveys and registers, or from combinations of such sources.

The EU definition of usual residence states that usual residents are:

- Those who have lived in their place of usual residence for a continuous period of at least 12 months before the reference date: or
- Those who arrived in their place of usual residence during the 12 months before the reference date with the intention of staying there for at least one year.

As the UK Census defines a usual resident of the UK as anyone who has stayed or intends to stay in the UK for a period of six months or more, the main census outputs in 2011 will not be on a basis that is consistent with the data that Eurostat require.

The inclusion of a question on intended length of stay in the UK in the 2011 Census for England and Wales would allow England and Wales data to be provided from the Census that is consistent with the statistics that Eurostat require.

5. Research Methods

The research project set up to gather the evidence required to assess whether information on short-term migrants could successfully be collected in the 2011 Census involved a number of different strands. Details of what each of these strands involved and the methods used are given below.

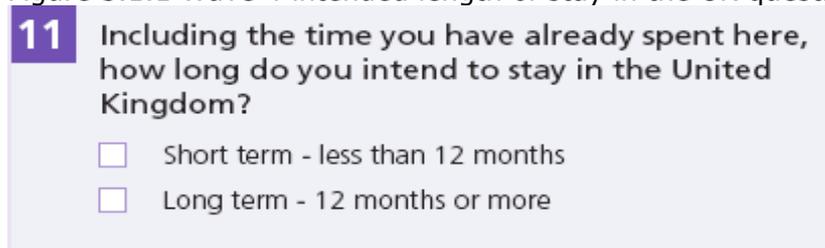
5.1 Cognitive Interviewing

ONS' Data Collection Methodology (DCM) team has carried out qualitative testing in preparation for the 2009 Census Rehearsal. Since the finalisation of the 2007 Test questionnaire in October 2006, the work has been carried out in six waves. Waves 4, 5 and 6 of this testing included a question on intended length of stay in the UK.

5.1.1 Wave 4 Testing

An intended length of stay in the UK question was first tested in Wave 4 of DCM's testing. The question, shown below, asked respondents how long they intend to stay in the UK, including the time they have already spent here. There were only two response categories – short-term and long-term. This question was only asked of respondents born outside the UK.

Figure 5.1.1 Wave 4 intended length of stay in the UK question:



11 Including the time you have already spent here, how long do you intend to stay in the United Kingdom?

Short term - less than 12 months

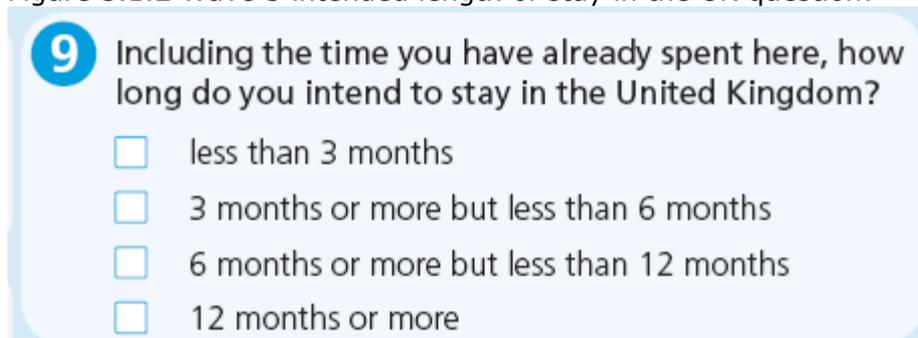
Long term - 12 months or more

In this question short-term was defined as less than 12 months, as the aim of the question was to identify and remove those people here for 6-12 months from the census estimates, to provide the usual residents estimate needed for population estimates and projections.

5.1.2 Wave 5 Testing

When the requirement to collect information on short-term migrants in the census emerged, the response categories in the intended length of stay in the UK question were revised to enable the categorisation of short-term migrants. The revised question, shown below, was tested in Wave 5 of DCM's testing.

Figure 5.1.2 Wave 5 intended length of stay in the UK question:



9 Including the time you have already spent here, how long do you intend to stay in the United Kingdom?

less than 3 months

3 months or more but less than 6 months

6 months or more but less than 12 months

12 months or more

The testing was carried out using purposive sampling techniques, where respondents with particular features or characteristics were selected to enable detailed exploration of the research objectives.

The intended length of stay in the UK question was a priority for Wave 5 testing and therefore DCM tried to recruit respondents who were short-term migrants and people who did not know how long they intended to stay in the UK, with the aim of being able to assess whether the question was being answered correctly. The target was to interview five short-term migrants and three people whose intentions weren't certain, however, due to difficulties in recruiting such people, only one short-term migrant and two people whose intentions weren't certain were interviewed.

5.1.3 Wave 6 Testing

The intended length of stay in the UK question was amended slightly for Wave 6 of DCM's testing, with 'long-term' being added into the response category for '12 months or more'. This question can be seen below.

Figure 5.1.3 Wave 6 intended length of stay in the UK question:

9 Including the time you have already spent here, how long do you intend to stay in the United Kingdom?

- less than 3 months
- 3 months or more but less than 6 months
- 6 months or more but less than 12 months
- long-term - 12 months or more

During Wave 6 of testing, it was decided that a filter should be introduced so that only people who had arrived in the UK within the last 12 months would answer the intended length of stay in the UK question, rather than anybody that was born outside of the UK. This was done to alleviate concerns that very long-term migrants would be offended by having to answer the intended length of stay in the UK question. The intended length of stay in the UK question with the filter is shown below.

Figure 5.1.4 Wave 6.2 intended length of stay in the UK question:

9 If you arrived before June 2007 [GO TO](#) **11**
If you arrived in June 2007 or after [GO TO](#) **10**

10 Including the time you have already spent here, how long do you intend to stay in the United Kingdom?

- Less than 3 months
- 3 months or more but less than 6 months
- 6 months or more but less than 12 months
- Long-term - 12 months or more

The question on intended length of stay in the UK was high priority for this wave of testing, with three key research questions:

- Is this question being answered correctly?
- Do short-term migrants understand that they would have to complete the census questionnaire?
- Do long-term migrants object to answering this question?

Four different criteria were developed to purposively select respondents to answer the above research questions:

1. Polish / Eastern European short-term migrants
2. Short-term migrants in the UK for less than three months
3. People who did not know how long they intended to stay in the UK
4. Long-term UK residents who were born abroad

The aim was to interview three respondents for each of the four categories above. There were some difficulties with recruiting but in total they interviewed three Polish short-term migrants (one who was staying less than 3 months, one who was staying less than 6 months and one who was staying for 6 to 12 months). They also interviewed 10 long-term migrants and one migrant whose intentions to stay was unknown.

5.2 Postal Surveys

Postal surveys were carried out to assess whether there is any impact on response rates from the population as a whole, when a question on intended length of stay in the UK is included on the Census questionnaire. If ONS proceed with a question on intended length of stay in the UK in the 2011 Census, the question will only be asked to those people who arrived in the UK in the previous year. However, there are still concerns that the presence of the question on the questionnaire may affect respondents' willingness to complete and return a census questionnaire.

Two postal surveys were carried out – one was a random sample in England, the other was a random sample in Northampton, an area which we believe has a high concentration of migrants. A split-sample was used for each, giving four different samples:

1. Random sample in England with intended length of stay in the UK question
2. Random sample in England without intended length of stay in the UK question
3. Random sample in Northampton with intended length of stay in the UK question
4. Random sample in Northampton without intended length of stay in the UK question

The total sample was 20,400 addresses, with 5,100 in each of the 4 different samples.

When trying to identify areas of the country with large amounts of migrants, it was only possible to use what data is available to give an indication of the areas that may have a large proportion of migrants, as there is no comprehensive data source for the information. One such source of indicative data is the number of Worker Registration Scheme registrations in an area.

The Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) began in May 2004 and provides information supplied by citizens from eight of the countries that joined the European Union that month (the A8 countries), when they obtain a job in the UK. There are limitations to what the WRS data can tell us because it only relates to

migrant workers from certain countries, and does not collect information from all migrants. In addition, there is no de-registration information, so the data only gives inflows and often the address listed is the employers address rather than their residential address. However, although the data does have some limitations, it can be useful for providing an indication of areas in the country that have large numbers of migrants, given the lack of alternative information.

As the aim of the second postal survey was to look for differences in response rates amongst the whole population where it was hoped more would be migrants, it was not necessary to focus on the area with the largest number of short-term migrants. What was more important was targeting an area with an overall large number of migrants, whether they are short-term or long-term.

Looking at local authority level data for the number of WRS registrations and estimated current A8 stock, alongside intended length of stay, suggested that Westminster, Northampton, Peterborough, and Boston should be considered for the postal survey. These are the areas that had high numbers of WRS applications between January and March 2008, and also had a high number of A8 workers per 1,000 residents.

Although Westminster had the highest number of WRS registrations between January and March 2008, comparison with the National Insurance Number Allocations data suggested that a large number of these migrants did not actually live in Westminster.

Out of the 4 local authorities considered as potential areas for the postal survey, Boston had the lowest number of WRS approved applications between January and March 2008, but had the highest number of A8 workers per 1,000 residents (90). This means that although the overall number of migrants in the area might be lower than other areas, there could be more chance of finding them in the postal survey because they are more common in the population.

However, 39 per cent of the WRS approved applications for Boston were for jobs in the agriculture industry. It is possible that many of these workers lived in communal establishments rather than households, and as the postal survey was carried out for households only, this could have reduced the chance of picking up any migrants in the survey. The WRS applications in Northampton and Peterborough were mainly for jobs in the administrative, business and managerial industry, and it was likely that less of this type of migrant would live in communal establishments than agricultural workers.

Northampton had a higher number of WRS approved applications than Peterborough, and also had a higher number of A8 workers per 1,000 residents. This meant that although the overall population was larger, a sample size of 10,200 should still be able to pick up a reasonable number of migrants. Northampton also had a larger proportion of WRS registrations for migrants who didn't know how long they intended to stay in the UK at the time of their registration. Targeting an area with a large number of this type of migrant could be useful for assessing how they answer the intended length of stay in the UK question.

Northampton was therefore chosen as the area to target in the postal survey. A random sample of addresses in Northampton was provided by ONS Geography. This was also done for the random sample across England.

The questionnaires were posted out between 7 July 2008 and 10 July 2008 for a test date of Sunday 13th July 2008.

5.3 Telephone Follow-Up

Telephone follow-up was used with respondents from the postal surveys, to explore some of the issues relating to the collection of information on short-term migrants in more detail.

It was planned to carry out telephone follow-up with anyone who:

- had correctly completed the intended length of stay in the UK question;
- should have answered the intended length of stay in the UK question but didn't (i.e. arrived in the UK within the last 12 months);
- recorded having an overseas visitor staying with them.

The aims of the telephone follow-up were:

- to establish how accurate answers to the intended length of stay in the UK question were;
- to establish people's reasons for not answering the intended length of stay in the UK question when they should have;
- to establish whether people were correctly classified as visitors or should have been included as a household member.

Only four people had correctly completed the intended length of stay in the UK question, and contact was only achieved with one of these during telephone follow-up. There were no respondents who did not answer the intended length of stay in the UK question when they should have, meaning there was nobody in this group to follow-up.

6 respondents had recorded having an overseas visitor staying with them, however only 4 had provided a telephone number on their questionnaire. Of the 4 respondents who had provided a telephone number, 3 were interviewed during telephone follow-up. The other respondent was not at home during working hours.

5.4 In-depth Interviews and Focus Groups

The Questionnaire Development and Testing hub at the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) were commissioned by ONS to qualitatively explore the acceptability of collecting information from short-term migrants in the census⁵.

The main objectives of this study were:

- to explore short-term migrants' and usual residents' views on introducing a question on intended length of stay in the UK;
- to identify whether there are problems associated with including short-term migrants in the Census;
- to explore the interaction between such factors as question sensitivity, question complexity, respondent recall and effort required to answer the intended length of stay in the UK question.

NatCen considered all of the key research questions and secondary research questions.

16 in-depth interviews were conducted in total, 11 with short term migrants and five with householders who had a short-term migrant staying with them. Respondents were identified through informal networks, snowballing techniques and advertising in different migrant communities.

⁵ The full NatCen report entitled, 'Inclusion of Short-term Migrants in the 2011 Census' written by Meera Balarajan and Joanna d'Ardenne is available at..< [insert web link](#)>

Two focus groups were also conducted, one with the general population and one with short-term migrants (defined as people who had been in the country at least a month but less than one year). The focus groups explored:

- Who should fill in the census questionnaire
- Definition of a short-term migrant using six vignettes
- Definitions of a householder and visitor and clarity of questions
- How respondents felt about the inclusion of short-term migrants in the census

The sample consisted of seven males and nine females of a range of ages. Six were Asian, six were European and four were from Oceania. They interviewed no people with an intended length of stay of less than three months, seven people who intended to stay between three and six months, three people who intended to stay between six and twelve months, and six people who intended to stay for twelve months or more.

5.5 Other Research

5.5.1 Opinions (Omnibus) Survey

The Opinions (Omnibus) survey is an ONS run, multi-purpose survey based on interviews with a monthly sample of around 1200 adults (aged 16 and over) in private households. It currently forms part of the Integrated Household Survey (IHS). One adult is selected from each household to answer the questions. It differs from the census in that all interviews are carried out face-to-face by members of the general field force of interviewers in ONS.

In May and June 2008, additional questions were added to this survey. Respondents were asked the census question on country of birth and if they were born outside the UK they were asked the census question on month and year of most recent arrival to the UK. Each respondent was asked the proposed Census question on intended length of stay in the UK and the interviewer was asked to record any spontaneous reactions or comments to the question. Respondents were then asked to rate how confident they felt about their answer and provide an explanation. The response options ranged from not at all confident to very confident.

5.5.2 BMG Research

BMG Research and the Institute for Employment Research at the University of Warwick undertook a study into the economic impact of migrant workers in the West Midlands. This research was published in November 2007⁶. One of their research objectives was to look at migrant workers' attitudes and motivations for coming to the UK and to see to what extent their plans may change during their time in the UK. Amongst other research, they conducted a quantitative survey of 712 migrant workers in the West Midlands (the migrant workers survey) and a qualitative survey of migrant workers using 8 mini focus groups.

They also conducted a similar research project entitled, 'Migrant Workers in the South East Regional Economy'⁷. Amongst other research, they conducted a quantitative survey of 726 migrant workers in seven local areas across the South

⁶ The economic impact of migrant workers in the West Midlands. Available at: http://www.wmro.org/resources/res.aspx/CmsResource/resourceFilename/1788/Economic-Migrants-Final_V1.0_Report_SM.pdf

⁷ Migrant Workers in the South East Regional Economy. Available from: <http://www.see-in.co.uk/downloads/Research/20080722%20Migrant%20Workers%20in%20the%20South%20East%20Regional%20Economy%20Final%20Report.pdf>

East in early 2008 and five focus groups with migrant workers from A8 and A2 countries.

They asked two banded intended length of stay in the UK questions to assess what respondents' intentions were when they arrived and what their intentions were at the time of the interview.

5.5.3 Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) data

Intended length of stay questions are asked in the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS). Data from this source was reviewed in order to try and establish the accuracy of the intentions data provided.

Through the worker registration scheme, intended length of stay is recorded through a multiple choice question. Options provided are:

- Less than 3 months
- 3 to 5 months
- 6 to 11 months
- 1 to 2 years
- More than 2 years
- Do not know

5.5.4 International Passenger Survey (IPS)

Intended length of stay questions are also asked in the IPS.

Migrants who intend to stay for longer than 12 months are asked about their reasons for migration, and questions on previous migration e.g. when they arrived and left previously, and intentions when they previously arrived. Data from this source was reviewed in order to try and establish the accuracy of the intentions data provided.

In addition to this, the IPS interviewers were questioned to obtain some qualitative feedback on how the question is viewed and whether they have any problems with it.

6. Research Findings

Details of the evidence collected and what this evidence shows in relation to each research question is presented below.

6.1 Will response rates to the 2011 Census be affected by the inclusion of a question on intended length of stay in the UK in the UK?

6.1.1 Postal survey results

The postal survey was designed to assess whether there were any statistically significant differences between the response rates from the general population when a question on intended length of stay in the UK was included or not included in both the England sample and the Northampton sample.

Response rates were calculated using the number of questionnaires returned that passed the 'two of four rule' as a proportion of the number of households that had questionnaires satisfactorily delivered to them. For a household to pass the two-of-four rule, at least one individual on the questionnaire must have answered two out of any four key demographic questions:

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Date of Birth
4. Marital status

Table 6.1.1 – Overall response rates by area

Area	Response rate (%)
England	26.8
Northampton	24.5
Overall	25.7

Table 6.1.1 shows that the overall response rate to the postal test was 25.7 per cent. This is about expected for a voluntary test that involved no follow-up. The response rate was significantly greater for the England sample compared to the Northampton sample by just over 2 per cent (2.3%, 95% CI 1.1,3.5, $\chi^2(1) = 13.57, p < .01$).

Table 6.1.2 – Overall response rates by area and questionnaire type

Area	Questionnaire Type	Number of questionnaires successfully delivered	Number of valid questionnaires returned	Response rate (%)
England	P1	5081	1365	26.9
	P2	5070	1354	26.7
Northampton	P1	5071	1294	25.5
	P2	5081	1196	23.5
Overall	P1	10152	2659	26.2
	P2	10151	2550	25.1

Note: P1= excluded intended length of stay and used a six month usual residence cut-off.
P2= included intended length of stay and used a one month usual residence cut-off.

Table 6.1.2 shows that the response rate for Northampton was greater for the P1 questionnaires compared to the P2 questionnaires by 2 per cent (2.0%, 95% CI 0.3,3.7, $\chi^2(1) = 5.37, p < 0.02$). For England, the response rate was also greater for P1 questionnaires by a small non-significant margin (0.2%, 95% CI - 1.6,1.9, $\chi^2(1) = 0.03, p < 0.80$).

These findings indicated that in this postal survey there may be some aspect of the P2 questionnaires (with a one month usual residence cut-off and inclusion of intended length of stay in the UK question) that is putting off a small percentage of people from responding in the area identified as having a high concentration of migrants.

However, further investigation revealed that insufficient stratification during the sample selection process had caused the final samples to be unbalanced. This resulted in differences in the area level deprivation distribution by questionnaire type which was particularly severe in the Northampton sample. In this sample 27 per cent of those receiving the P1 questionnaires lived in areas classified as the most affluent, as defined using the ONS indicator of multiple deprivation, compared with only 13 per cent of those sent the P2 questionnaires. Rates of return were strongly related to area level deprivation with, for example, return rates of 18.7 per cent in the most deprived areas compared to 32.2 per cent in the most affluent ($\chi^2(4) = 277.10, p < .01$, using a standard five category split of the index of multiple deprivation).

To adequately assess differences between P1 and P2 response rates, logistic regression models were used to estimate the difference in response rate by questionnaire type, independent of this effect. After this adjustment, the difference in response rate between questionnaire type for the Northampton sample was no longer significant ($\chi^2(1) = .67, p < .40$). Accounting for this effect in the analysis of the England sample caused little change from the results described above. These further analyses suggest that the differences in response rate found by questionnaire type in Northampton are due to a deprivation imbalance in the selected sample, rather than to a real effect of questionnaire variant.

The findings from the postal survey provide no evidence to support the suggestion that response rates would be affected by lowering the usual residence cut-off on the census questionnaire to one month and including a question on intended length of stay in the UK in the UK. However, it should be noted that in a voluntary test it is known that it is the more compliant part of the population who respond and the characteristics of respondents are not fully representative of the population. Please see Annex A for age-sex profiles of respondents in each area compared to the latest published ONS Population Estimate figures. It is not possible to conclude that response rates for the 2011 Census wouldn't be affected, but the evidence from this postal survey does not provide any evidence to suggest that it could be an issue for the type of people who responded to this survey.

6.1.2 NatCen in-depth interview and focus group results

In the focus group with usual residents, NatCen found that respondents appreciated the need for questions to be asked of some groups and not others and did not think there were too many questions that were not applicable to them in the Census.

Due to the routing system in place, usual residents tended not to notice the question on intended length of stay in the UK. From this, NatCen expect that usual residents may not always notice this question and therefore will not be put-off by its presence on the census questionnaire.

As usual residents did not always notice the question, the NatCen researchers directed respondents to the question upon completion of the questionnaire and asked if they found it acceptable or not. They found that the acceptability varied. On the one hand respondents thought the question was acceptable to ask, and (critically) the question would not stop them filling in the Census. On the other hand, respondents noted that some short-term migrants may not feel comfortable answering the question e.g. those on a limited visa.

Overall, NatCen found that generally respondents did not find it a sensitive question and recommended that the inclusion of an intended length of stay in the UK question will not stop people responding to the 2011 Census.

6.1.3 Summary

Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The respondents in NatCen's focus groups and interviews did not object to the intended length of stay in the UK question. There was no indication that the inclusion of an intended length of stay in the UK question would stop people from responding to the 2011 Census.• The voluntary postal survey provided no evidence to support the suggestion that response rates would be affected by lowering the usual residence cut-off on the census questionnaire to one month and including a question on intended length of stay in the UK.

6.2 Will short-term migrants respond to the 2011 Census?

6.2.1 Postal survey results

Table 6.2.1 shows the response to the intended length of stay in the UK question from those respondents who should have answered the question, i.e. those born outside the UK who arrived in the UK in or after July 2007. It can be seen that across both postal surveys, only seven migrants were identified and only one of these was a short-term migrant.

Table 6.2.1 – Frequency of respondents answering the intended length of stay in the UK question, by intended length of stay in the UK

Area (P2 questionnaire type only)	Less than 3 months	3-6 months	6-12 months	Long-term 12 months or more	No tick	Total
England	0	0	0	6	0	6
Northampton	0	0	0	0	0	0
Error (unidentified questionnaire type)*	1	0	0	0	0	1
Overall	1	0	0	6	0	7

*Note: Questionnaires were identified using a unique reference number placed on a label on the return envelope. In a few cases the label was removed and it was not possible to identify which sample the questionnaire was from.

This information cannot be used to conclude that short-term migrants will not respond to the Census, because there is no way of knowing how many short-term migrants were included in the sample. Although Northampton was chosen as an area with a high population of migrants, the sample size of 10,200 in a population of approximately 200,000 means the number of short-term migrants that received questionnaires may have been very small.

6.2.2 NatCen in-depth interview and focus group results

Overall, NatCen found that the majority of short-term migrants were agreeable to filling in a census questionnaire. However, in-depth interviews highlighted some concerns that respondents had with participation in the census.

6.2.2.1 Perceived inclusion in the census

NatCen found that all the short-term migrants interviewed including those participating in the focus group were surprised that they would have to fill in a census questionnaire. However, on balance the majority felt they could, and should, fill one in. Respondents felt they did not have sufficient information about whether they were supposed to fill in the questionnaire and why they were being asked to. Respondents also expressed concern that the data they provided would not be useful as they are not planning on living in the UK for a long time. NatCen recommended that ONS should clearly explain why short-term migrants should fill in the Census on the front of the questionnaire, in order to increase the feeling of inclusion and participation in the census.

6.2.2.2 Sensitivity

Some of the short-term migrants highlighted concerns that could exist amongst the migrant population generally that the questionnaire was sent from an 'Immigration department' and this could reduce response rates amongst this group. To alleviate concerns, NatCen recommended stating on the front page that the data provided is confidential and will not be used with any other information

already given to the British Government. They also recommended making clear that everyone completes the same questionnaire.

6.2.2.3 Appearance of the Questionnaire

Respondents noted a number of points that would affect their willingness to complete the census questionnaire. The official look and amount of English on the front page encouraged the migrant respondents who could read English to read the questionnaire. The logo helped to make the questionnaire look official, and indicated to respondents that they should find out what the questionnaire was about. Participants indicated that if they had difficulties they would ask friends, colleagues or their employer to help them. The focus group participants suggested it would be useful to have a place, such as a public library, where people could go to speak to someone if they had difficulties.

The majority of respondents found there was no quick clear message that they were supposed to fill in the questionnaire. A recurring point was that they were not sure why they should fill it in. NatCen recommended including a clear instruction on the front page to say who should fill in the questionnaire and why it is important, along with a message of appreciation for participating in the census.

6.2.3 Cognitive testing results

All three Polish short-term migrant farm workers that DCM interviewed in Wave 6 agreed they would not complete a census questionnaire if it arrived in their mail box. One of the group acted as an interpreter and said he did not feel worried about giving his personal details on the questionnaire (he had read the letter on the front page), but he instructed the others in the group to write only their first names in their responses.

DCM acknowledges that it is likely that there are other sorts of short-term migrants who might respond differently. However, a variety of methods of recruiting were tried with little response. This seems to indicate that short-term migrants are not keen to participate in interviews and the lack of response may be increased by language barriers.

Summary

6.2.4 Summary

- NatCen found that short-term migrants were agreeable to the idea of filling in the census questionnaire. However, some concerns were identified which may affect their participation in the census.
- DCM had difficulty recruiting short-term migrants but the three interviewed suggested they would not complete a census questionnaire.
- The postal survey only picked up one short-term migrant. However, this information cannot be used to conclude that short-term migrants will not respond to the census because there is no way of knowing who received the questionnaires.
- Overall, evidence is mixed as to whether short-term migrants would respond to the Census. On balance, the evidence indicates that they are willing to respond, but are surprised that they should be included. English language limitations are likely to reduce the chances of them responding. Improving the instructions on the front page and the publicity and community liaison strategies will be key in encouraging response.

6.3 Are short-term migrants willing to answer a question on intended length of stay in the UK?

6.3.1 NatCen in-depth interview and focus group results

NatCen found that all the short-term migrants they interviewed were willing to answer the question on intended length of stay in the UK and none said that it would stop them filling in the census questionnaire. Only one respondent highlighted that other short-term migrants may have concerns about the question.

Some respondents liked the question and were pleased to answer it. Other respondents were aware that the question was specifically for short-term migrants and were comfortable with this even if they found the question hard to answer.

Before the short-term migrants saw the questionnaire they were asked what questions would be acceptable to ask. They proposed that intended length of stay in the UK could be asked to highly skilled migrants only. They suggested asking 'how long have you stayed here?' This exercise reiterated the willingness of short-term migrants to answer a question on length of stay.

One respondent on a working holiday was uncomfortable with the question. She was not willing to answer the question which she thought was pointless because plans change. She did not know how long she would be in the UK.

Overall, NatCen found that short-term migrants are willing to complete a question on intended length of stay in the UK but they recommend that adding a 'not sure' option to the question would further increase the acceptability and willingness to answer the question.

6.3.2 Postal survey results

There were no respondents that should have answered the intended length of stay in the UK (based on their country of birth and month of arrival) but didn't. However, the numbers of migrants that responded to the questionnaire was very low and it is unknown how many short-term migrants received the questionnaire.

6.3.3 IPS findings

Generally, feedback received from IPS interviewers indicated that there are no problems with asking questions on intended length of stay in the UK on the IPS.

6.3.4 Summary

Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NatCen found the majority of short-term migrants found the intended length of stay in the UK question acceptable and were willing to answer the question.• The postal survey did not identify any respondents who should have answered the intended length of stay in the UK (based on their country of birth and month of arrival) but didn't. However, a very small number of migrants were identified in the survey.• IPS interviewer feedback indicated no issues with short-term migrants' willingness to answer a question on intended length of stay in the UK.• Overall, the evidence suggests that short-term migrants would be willing to complete a question on intended length of stay in the UK if it was included

in the 2011 Census.

6.4 How accurate are the data provided in the intended length of stay in the UK question?

6.4.1 NatCen in-depth interview and focus group results

It was considered that those who have fixed plans would find this question easy to answer. However, only two respondents who had fixed plans were included in the sample. The majority of respondents correctly calculated how long they are intending to stay by correctly including the time already spent. However, for some respondents the current question wording was confusing due to having two time clauses, one in the future and one in the past. This reduced their ability to answer the question accurately. NatCen recommended that to include the intended length of stay in the UK question it should be reworded to ease comprehension, recall and the judgement process. They suggested the wording, 'how long do you intend to stay in the UK from today?'

The accuracy of short-term migrants' response was complicated because they felt they were not certain about their plans. They decided on a best fit choice based on the bands provided. However, three of the respondents chose the banding option that gave them the greatest room for manoeuvre, that being 'long-term - 12 months or more'. NatCen suggested that this could highlight an underlying issue that when short-term migrants respond to the 2011 Census they would be worried that they would be held accountable for how they answered the question.

6.4.2 Cognitive testing findings

In Wave 5 of DCM's testing, all but one respondent indicated a good level of understanding of the question. One respondent did not understand what intention meant and thought the question was asking how long she had been living in the UK. This respondent had learnt English as a second language and also had difficulties with other parts of the questionnaire.

During this wave, those who were not confident about the accuracy of their answers didn't have definite plans for their stay, whereas those who were confident about their answers had definite plans involving work, study or family. Respondents who were unsure about how long they would be in the UK chose their answers based on when their visa would end or how long they wanted to stay. Long-term migrants were sure about their intentions to stay, either because they had already been living in the country for more than 12 months or because they had visas, study or work contracts lasting longer than this.

In Wave 6 of DCM's testing, two of the short-term migrants answered the intended length of stay in the UK question correctly. The respondent that answered incorrectly selected the category 'three months or more but less than six months', but should have answered 'six months or more but less than 12 months', according to the answers he gave in retrospective probing. This respondent appeared to have no English and interviewers observed him reading the interpreter's answers before answering his own questionnaire. He gave the same answer as the interpreter. He may have understood the question to mean 'how

long do you intend to stay from today' or he may have copied the interpreter's answer.

Of the longer term migrants, all but one answered the question correctly according to their answer to retrospective check probes. Generally respondents were confident of their answers and if they were unsure they answered according to their current plans. Some of the long-term migrants said they did not know how much longer they would stay but most fitted into the long-term category without taking their intentions into account.

The short-term migrant respondents had arrived in the UK with no firm plans. However, they answered the question according to their current plans. Two had decided to return to Poland to continue their university studies in September and the third had decided to stay until December to look for more work. He thought he would stay longer if he found good work.

DCM recommended that the question should be revised to 'how long do you intend to stay in the UK?'

6.4.3 Postal survey results

Postal survey results showed that a total of 34 people that were born in the UK incorrectly answered the intended length of stay in the UK question by not following the routing from the country of birth question. This equates to 0.7 per cent of all the people born in the UK. All of these respondents ticked the 'long-term - 12 months or more' category. It is possible that these respondents were returning migrants who were born in the UK but who have lived outside of the UK and returned at some point in time, or they may simply be classic routing errors. The percentage of people making an error was low which suggests generally the way the question is currently routed is working.

The postal survey also found that a total of 29 people who were born outside the UK but arrived more than one year ago incorrectly answered the intended length of stay in the UK question. Again, these people all ticked 'long-term - 12 months or more'. It equated to 15.3 per cent of the people born outside the UK that made this error.

6.4.4 Postal test telephone follow-up results

Of the four questionnaires with the intended length of stay in the UK question correctly completed, three were unable to be contacted after several attempts. The respondent that was able to be contacted was a long-term migrant. This respondent found the intended length of stay in the UK question easy to answer, was confident with their answer and said their plans were definite and would only change depending on their visa. This respondent had arrived in the UK five months ago. They correctly included the time already spent in the UK in their answer.

6.4.5 Opinions Survey results

It can be seen from table 6.4.1 that very few short-term migrants were identified through the Opinions Survey testing.

Table 6.4.1 – Intended length of stay in the UK by level of confidence – May 2008 data

Intended length of stay in the UK	Level of confidence				Total
	Not at all confident	Fairly Confident	Confident	Very confident	
Less than 3 months	0	2	0	0	2

3 months or more but less than 6 months	0	0	0	1	1
6 months or more but less than 12 months	0	2	0	0	2
12 months or more	1	4	4	76	85
Other	1	2	2	10	15
Total	2	10	6	87	105

The majority of people interviewed intended to stay in the UK for twelve months or more. Of the three short-term migrants that were interviewed, two were fairly confident and one was very confident with their answer to the intended length of stay in the UK question. The two respondents intending to stay between six and twelve months were fairly confident and most of the longer term migrants were very confident.

The results from the June data shown in table 6.4.2 were very similar to the May data.

Table 6.4.2 – Intended length of stay in the UK by level of confidence –June 2008 data

Intended length of stay in the UK	Level of confidence				Total
	Not at all confident	Fairly Confident	Confident	Very confident	
Less than 3 months	0	1	0	0	1
3 months or more but less than 6 months	0	1	0	0	1
6 months or more but less than 12 months	0	2	1	1	4
12 months or more	1	6	16	95	118
Other	0	1	3	11	15
Total	1	11	20	107	139

Here, there were two short-term migrants in the sample, both whom were fairly confident with their answer. Four respondents intended to stay between six and twelve months, two of whom were fairly confident with their answer, one who was confident and one who was very confident. The majority of long-term migrants were very confident or confident with their answer.

Respondents that were certain about their intentions gave a variety of reasons for this, for example, their course of study is ending; they have a job abroad; they are contracted to work for a certain period of time; because they know they are going home, because England is now their home and because they are not looking to leave.

A variety of reasons were also given from respondents that were uncertain about their intentions, for example, they have not decided how long to stay; they do not know how long they will stay; and their circumstances may change.

Table 6.4.3 – Intended length of stay in the UK by level of confidence for those that arrived in the UK in the previous year – May 2008 data

Intended length of stay in the UK	Level of confidence		Total
	Fairly confident	Very confident	
Less than 3 months	1	0	1
3 months or more but less than 6 months	0	1	1
12 months or more	0	1	1
Other	0	1	1
Total	1	3	4

Table 6.4.3 shows that of the people that arrived in the UK in the previous year, there were only two short-term migrants interviewed.

The respondent intending to stay less than three months was fairly confident with their answer, whereas the respondent staying three to six months was very confident.

Table 6.4.4 – Intended length of stay in the UK by level of confidence for those that arrived in the UK in the previous year – June 2008 data

Intended length of stay in the UK	Level of confidence			Total
	Fairly confident	Confident	Very confident	
Less than 3 months	1	0	0	1
6 months or more but less than 12 months	1	0	1	2
12 months or more	1	2	4	7
Total	3	2	5	10

Table 6.4.4 shows that of the people that arrived in the UK in the previous year, there was only one short-term migrant. This respondent, who was intending to stay less than three months, was fairly confident with their answer.

Two respondents who would be classified as usual residents in census terms, i.e. they intended to stay between six and 12 months, were identified, one who was fairly confident with their answer and one who was very confident.

6.4.6 BMG findings

BMG researchers had the added benefit of being able to send the same ethnic background interviewers out as their target sample, i.e. they sent Polish interviewers to interview Polish respondents. They found this was very successful in getting to the groups they needed to answer the questionnaire.

In the West Midlands Migrant Worker Survey, respondents were asked about their plans for staying in the UK both before their arrival and currently. They found

that on coming to the UK, migrants tended to stay longer than expected and uncertainty about length of stay increases.

They found that A8 migrants in the sample were more likely to change their migration plans and had more uncertainty over their intentions. A2 migrants and those from the rest of Europe were more likely to have plans for shorter stays. Also, the youngest age group (16-24) generally intended to stay for shorter periods than average. Those from the commonwealth were more likely to contemplate permanent settlement (especially those of Pakistani origin). 62 per cent of migrants cited working/finding a job/earning money as a main reason for coming to the UK. Learning/improving English is an important secondary factor for many migrant workers. Of the migrant workers surveyed, more self assessed their English language skills as good /very good than poor/very poor.

Migrants were also asked about their plans for staying in the UK both before their arrival and currently in the South East Migrant Worker Survey. They found that A8 and A2 migrants displayed a considerable degree of uncertainty about their length of stay in the UK. Before they arrived in the UK 24 per cent of respondents did not have plans for how long they would stay. This proportion increased to 38 per cent at the time of the interview – i.e. uncertainty about length of stay increased once in the UK. This uncertainty was evident across all case study areas and sub-groups of respondents.

6.4.7 WRS findings

When the WRS data was investigated, it was found that in the first quarter of 2007, 26 per cent of WRS applicants selected the 'do not know' category. As the WRS does not record migrants as they leave the UK, no information is available on whether stated intentions changed after arrival. It is unclear whether this reflects real uncertainty or whether it is regarded as the easiest answer.

It should be noted that intentions collected in the WRS are collected at the beginning of the respondent's visit to the UK. It is assumed that information collected in the Census would be after arrival where individual's intentions may be clearer.

6.4.8 IPS findings

ONSCD use the IPS data based on intentions to identify long-term migrants who intend to stay for longer than 12 months but left prior to this (migrant switchers) and individuals who intended to stay for less than 12 months but actually stayed for longer (visitor switchers). These adjustments are based on the further IPS questions that ask individuals how long they intend to stay when they originally arrived.

Using this evidence ONSCD have assumed that 3.1 per cent of individuals who stated an original intention to come to the UK for more than a year actually left earlier. It is assumed that 15 per cent of EU and non-EU visitors who were either unsure of how long they would stay said that they might stay longer than 12 months.

Evidence from the IPS suggests that the fraction of intended long-term migrants who leave before they have spent a year in the UK is only around three per cent. The percentage adjustments made for visitor switchers are much higher but are only applied to the small subset of people who were not sure about their intentions or said they might stay for longer than 12 months.

It should be noted that intentions collected in the IPS are collected at the beginning of the respondent's visit to the UK. It is assumed that information collected in the Census would be after arrival where individual's intentions may be clearer.

6.4.9 Summary

Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NatCen research indicated that some respondents found answering the intended length of stay in the UK question difficult and were not always able to answer accurately, particularly if they had no fixed plans. However, they would provide a 'best fit' answer. NatCen recommended including a 'not sure' option and rewording the question to ease comprehension, recall and the judgement process.• DCM did not identify particular problems with the accuracy of intended length of stay in the UK information from short-term migrants.• Although few migrants were identified in the Opinions Survey, the short-term migrants interviewed were generally fairly confident with their answers.• 2007 WRS data suggests around 26 per cent of WRS applicants do not know how long they intend to stay and BMG research suggests that A8 and A2 migrants displayed a considerable degree of uncertainty about their length of stay in the UK.• Overall the evidence suggests that some respondents, particularly those with no fixed plans, may have some difficulties with the current intended length of stay in the UK question. However, most short-term migrants will select an answer based on the 'best fit' choice. ONS recognise that intended length of stay in the UK is a subjective question and peoples' intentions will change. Therefore, it is likely that responses to this question provided in 2011 will be sufficient to allow Census usual residents and short-term migrants to be distinguished.

6.5 Is the most appropriate cut-off for collecting information on short-term migrants one month intended stay in the UK or three months intended stay in the UK?

6.5.1 NatCen in-depth interview and focus group results

NatCen used vignettes to explore respondents' understanding of who is a short-term migrant in different situations.

Findings from the vignettes showed that people in the country for one month, irrespective of reason, are not considered as short-term migrants. Generally, those who are in the country and working or studying for three months were considered to be short-term migrants and should fill in the Census questionnaire, although respondents were not always consistent on this. If the cut-off was reduced to one month, there is a risk that not all the people in this category would be captured even if they were working or studying in the country. Those who have the right to work for at least one month may not fill in the Census if they are asked to fill it in during their first four weeks in the country.

The in-depth interviews explored how respondents would define a short-term migrant. Two key factors were duration of stay in the UK and reason for being in the UK, namely whether they were working or studying. Those who are on holiday, irrespective of duration of stay, were not considered as short-term migrants but rather as visitors. The most frequently cited time someone should have spent in the UK working or studying before being asked to participate in the census as a short-term migrant was three months.

6.5.2 Summary

Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NatCen research showed the most frequently cited time someone should have spent in the UK working or studying before being asked to participate in the census as a short-term migrant was three months.• If the cut-off was reduced to one month there is a risk that not all people in this category would be captured even if they were working or studying.• NatCen research indicates it would be feasible for ONS to collect information on short-term migrants by reducing the cut-off which defines who should complete the census questionnaire from six months to three months.

6.6 Will the general public be 'put off' by the total number of migration and identity related questions on the census questionnaire?

6.6.1 Cognitive testing results

In Wave 5 of DCM's testing, long-term migrants had no objections to answering the intended length of stay in the UK question or any of the other migration or identity related questions, however very few long-term migrants were interviewed.

6.6.2 NatCen in-depth interview and focus group results

There was a mixed reaction to the migration and identity questions from the short-term migrants. Some respondents felt there were too many questions, although one respondent suggested additional questions could be asked. Generally there was acceptability amongst the short-term migrants about answering migration and identity related questions in the census.

Some respondents found the individual questions repetitive and felt they would leave out questions they didn't like or found difficult to answer.

Respondents were happy to answer the question on month and year of arrival and found it easy to answer. None of the respondents were uncomfortable with the question on citizenship. There were some issues with the second residence and ethnicity questions.

The general population in the focus group thought that all the identity questions were appropriate and did not think the overall census response rate would be influenced by the questions on migration and identity.

6.6.3 Postal Survey results

Analysis was conducted to investigate whether item non-response rates to migration and identity questions were higher than for other questions and how this varied by questionnaire type. The results showed that generally, the item non-response rates to the questions immediately before and after the intended length of stay in the UK question i.e. country of birth, month and year of arrival, citizenship and second residences were comparable with the response rates to the other census questions. There did seem to be slightly higher item non-response to these questions in the questionnaires that included an intended length of stay in the UK question but it is difficult to attribute this to the intended length of stay in the UK question itself, particularly as more complex routing is introduced which could lead to more questions being missed in error.

6.6.4 Summary

Summary

- NatCen found a general acceptability amongst the short-term migrants and the general public about answering migration and identity related questions in the census.
- Cognitive testing did not indicate any objections to answering the intended length of stay in the UK question or other migration or identity questions on the census questionnaire.
- Analysis of item non-response in the postal survey indicated that generally, the item non-response rates to the migration and identity type questions were comparable with the response rates to the other census

questions.

6.7 Do the general public and migrants have an understanding of who to include as household members and visitors?

6.7.1 Postal survey telephone follow-up results

Of the three contacted respondents who included an overseas visitor staying with them, all of them received a questionnaire without an intended length of stay in the UK question, and a six month usual residence cut-off. All these respondents stated that they were very confident that the overseas visitor they had recorded was correctly identified as a visitor and not a short-term migrant. Two of the visitors were visiting relatives and one was someone on a two week trip to the UK. They had all arrived within a month prior to the census test day (13th July) and intended to stay either less than one month or one month or more but less than three months. All of the respondents stated that they consulted the visitor over their inclusion on the questionnaire.

6.7.2 NatCen in-depth interview and focus group results

6.7.2.1. Short-term migrants understanding of the usual resident/visitor distinction

NatCen found that most short-term migrants saw themselves as visitors (six respondents), with some describing themselves as a migrant (three respondents), and one as a short-term migrant. This suggests that they may be more likely to include themselves in the visitors section rather than the household members section of the questionnaire.

Short-term migrants varied in their understanding of who should be considered household members and visitors and some had difficulties with the term 'usually live' which highlights the importance of clear questions and instructions providing a clear description of who to include. Of some concern is the fact that some confusion arose with short-term migrants considering themselves as visitors. This is potentially problematic as they may be more inclined to complete the visitor section rather than the usual residents section.

Respondents had some difficulties answering questions on usual residents. The option 'people living at this address who have come from overseas to live in the UK for 1 month or more' was at the end of the list and was often not read. It was also seen to be counter-intuitive that one person can be classed multiple times. In some cases people were included as visitors who should have been included as usual residents. That said, all the short-term migrants interviewed included themselves as a household member, including those who described themselves as visitors. However, this could be an artefact of the survey situation. In some cases, short-term migrants classified themselves as household members and visitors. They recommended that it is made very clear that being a usual resident and a visitor are mutually exclusive.

6.7.2.2 Usual residents' understanding of the usual resident/visitor distinction

It is assumed that short-term migrants who live in households with usual residents will not be the main questionnaire completer which makes it important to ensure that usual residents who house short-term migrants understand the distinction.

Usual residents had various conceptions of who should be considered a household member and a visitor. Who usual residents classed as a household member varied according to what factors they considered as important to defining a householder. For example, respondents who thought permanency of stay was important would not include people from abroad as householders if they had definite plans to leave. Likewise people who viewed formality of living arrangement as a factor would not include guests staying with them as householders even if they were staying with them in the UK for an extended period of time.

Usual residents who had short-term migrants staying with them did not always include them as household members. This means that even if short-term migrants are willing to complete the Census they may still be excluded if they are not the main questionnaire-filler at their UK residence. The main reasons for failing to include them were not seeing the relevant option in H1; having preconceptions about the usual resident/visitor distinction; and not having enough space to record their own family and the short-term migrant.

Those that did include short-term migrants tended to make the mistake of also including them as visitors. This demonstrates the need for it to be made obvious that the categories are mutually exclusive.

Although some usual residents understood that they were supposed to include short-term migrants they felt loathed to do so. This was because they felt the census was not relevant to the person staying with them or it might worry the person. They also have difficulty deciding how to collect the relevant information. Usual residents who have friends or relatives staying may not feel it necessary or appropriate to ask the guest their details and are concerned that they would be held accountable if inaccurate information was provided.

6.7.3 Summary

Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telephone follow-up had too few respondents to draw any conclusions, but those who responded were very confident that the overseas visitor they had recorded was correctly identified as a visitor and not a short-term migrant.• NatCen found that the majority of short-term migrants saw themselves as visitors. For short-term migrants to complete the census, NatCen recommended that the instructions need to be much clearer to explain who is a household member and who is a visitor.• NatCen found that usual residents who have short-term migrants staying with them did not always include them as household members and sometimes would count them as both household members and visitors.

6.8 What is the most appropriate terminology to use on the census questionnaire to describe short-term migrants?

6.8.1 NatCen in-depth interview and focus group results

The majority of respondents were comfortable with the term short-term migrant, but do not always realise when they are included in that description. Many of the respondents saw themselves as a visitor or a migrant and only one described himself as a short-term migrant.

NatCen recommended that in order to get a good response rate from short-term migrants, there needs to be clear guidance in the publicity and on the front page that they should participate, with details of who should be included as a short-term migrant. The front few pages of the Census questionnaire have since been developed to help make short-term migrants aware that they should participate in the Census.

One respondent suggested use of the term 'long-term visitor' and the short-term migrant focus group proposed the term 'temporary resident'.

6.8.2 Summary

Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NatCen found that the majority of respondents were comfortable with the term short-term migrant, but do not always realise when they are included in that description.• NatCen recommended that in order to get a good response rate from short-term migrants, there needs to be clear guidance in the publicity and on the front page that they should participate, with details of who should be included as a short-term migrant.

7. Maximising coverage of short-term migrants

7.1 Targeted field enumeration, community liaison and publicity

As a consequence of operational practicalities and resource limitations, certain 'hard to count' groups have been prioritised for targeted field enumeration, community liaison and publicity strategies. Hard to count groups are defined as 'groups that are less likely to participate in the census without targeted support either before or during the Census'. The field operations team with the Census division will be overseeing the field approach for hard to count groups.

Short-term migrants have been identified as a Hard to Count group as specific enumeration barriers have been identified. A multifaceted approach will therefore be developed combining enumeration, publicity and community liaison

7.2 Local Authority (LA)/Community Liaison strategy

Even if short-term migrants are not enumerated as usual residents they will still be required to be included in the census questionnaire as a visitor, so community liaison plans are very important.

The community liaison strategy for the 2011 Census is still under development, however it is expected that the process will involve mapping the likely groups of short-term migrants; mapping networks and addresses that will cover these groups; encouraging recruitment from within those groups for the enumeration and field operation processes; and documenting coverage through a structured, mapped (both geographical and demographic) coverage approach. The main focus will be to ensure that short-term migrants are not missed out or disadvantaged in any way which could lead to an undercount.

It will be a challenge to the community liaison strategy to target short-term migrant effectively as research has shown that in some cases migrants have little involvement with their community groups. These people might still be disinclined to complete a census questionnaire. A New Migrant Study commissioned by Slough Local Authority in 2006⁸ showed that there was a lack of community involvement for a significant proportion of migrants. A quarter of the migrants interviewed intended to stay for less than 6 months. The study found that 38 per cent of those migrants interviewed were not involved in any type of community group e.g. sports clubs, special interest groups, etc. There were also language issues, with 24 per cent of migrants describing their written English as poor. Further information about the community liaison strategy will be available in due course.

7.3 Publicity

No specific publicity strategy has been developed yet for short-term migrants. However, there are plans to conduct two small scale tests, one in Slough and one in an agricultural area in the East of England during early 2009. These tests will focus on migrant workers and will be used as an opportunity to test the publicity for short-term migrants as well as the field procedures and the community liaison strategy for this group.

⁸ http://www.slough.gov.uk/documents/Slough_Migrant_Study06.pdf

7.4 Use of field staff

The first attempt at contact with a new migrant would be made by follow-up staff. The new migrant study suggests that 'no contact' is a real possibility because the individual may be unavailable (the study showed 60 per cent worked 40 hours a week or more), or they will be unwilling to answer the door.

It is hoped that guidance will be able to be provided to field staff as to how they can use the community and LA contacts made as a practical step to help improve coverage e.g. set up clinics to help with questionnaire completion. It has also been proposed to recruit field staff that are representative of the community to help maximise response.

The field operations team are planning further research to see how field staff can increase response rates. For example, they plan to speak to local authorities to see if they have any methods they use to engage with groups such as migrants if they want to complete official forms. These sorts of strategies should help to improve response from short-term migrants.

7.5 Census Coverage Survey (CCS)

The key tool that the Census uses to measure coverage is the CCS, a large survey (around 320,000 households) that takes place six weeks after Census Day. Its primary aim is to measure coverage of the usually resident population. It will also be used to measure coverage of the short-term migrant population, although there are a number of issues. In addition, the likely quality of any estimates is not known without further work.

The method for measuring coverage could be along the following lines:

- Both the census and the CCS attempt to count short-term migrants.
- The records are matched (within the sampled areas around 5,000 short-term migrants would be in the census and the same in the CCS with about 4,000 matches) and a Dual System Estimator applied, probably at a higher level than in the usual coverage methodology to ensure sample sizes are sufficient (probably at Estimation Area by broad age-sex group).
- A simple ratio estimator could then be applied to use the non-sampled census counts of short-term migrants as an auxiliary. Whilst this would give Estimation Area (EA) level estimates, the confidence intervals are likely to be very wide due to the low response levels and small sample size. Local authority estimates could be obtained, assuming the EA level coverage rates hold in the individual local authorities (this causes bias but reduces variance).

One major issue is that the CCS takes place six weeks after Census Day, meaning that it will not be able to count a large proportion of the short-term migrants as they will have left. This creates a bias in the estimates (which is unlikely to be able to be removed). Further work would be required to estimate the size of this bias and the likely confidence interval widths, which may be as much as 10 per cent on a relative scale.

8. Limitations of the research

There was limited time and resource between the decision to explore collecting information on short-term migrants and the need to make a decision on inclusion in the 2009 Census Rehearsal questionnaire. This restricted the amount of work that could be conducted.

For the qualitative research (ie NatCen's project and the cognitive testing) the numbers of participants in the research were lower than would be ideal. The purpose of the qualitative work was to explore, understand and explain the range and diversity of ways in which people go about answering census questions. The sampling methods were purposive and designed to ensure coverage across certain key variables rather than compile a sample that is statistically representative of the short-term migrant population in general. Thus it is not possible to extrapolate about the size or extent of problems in the general population from the qualitative research.

For the quantitative research (i.e. the postal surveys and the Opinions Survey testing), the number of people sampled and the time period over which the testing was conducted would ideally have been extended.

The limitation of the postal survey is that the demographics of the respondents were not representative of the population, which limits the conclusions that can be drawn. The age profile of respondents in the postal test was compared to the 2007 mid-year population estimates. The results showed that across all four samples there were generally more older respondents in the postal survey, particularly those aged 60 and over. There were also less younger people, particularly in the 20-29 age group. There was also an issue with insufficient stratification during the sample selection process which resulted in differences in the area level deprivation distribution by questionnaire type. Although this was accounted for during the supplementary analysis, it means that the sample being considered was smaller than originally planned.

There are also other challenges in interpreting the results of the postal survey results because the conditions do not mirror exactly the conditions of the census. The 2011 Census is compulsory, which will increase response. There will also be national and local publicity and enhanced LA and community liaison.

Although evidence was gathered relating to all the key and secondary research questions it would have been preferable to gather more evidence relating to the issue of the cut-off period used to define whether someone should complete a full census return, i.e. one month or three months.

The issues in this paper refer to short-term immigrants. There is a proposal for the 2011 Census to include all short-term out migrants in the Census population base by specifying the requirement to complete the questionnaire to those who are out of the country for less than 12 months. There will be a reliance on other members of the household to complete information on the person away. Where the whole household are abroad as short-term migrants it is likely that those people will be missed both from the Census and the Census Coverage Survey. The Census will not be able to identify how many short-term out migrants are captured by this change.

9. Conclusions/Recommendation

9.1 Conclusions

The aim of this research project was to establish whether or not it would be possible to collect full census information from short-term migrants whose total length of stay in the UK was at least one month or three months, and include a question on intended length of stay in the UK, without jeopardising the usually resident census population count.

Five key research questions and three secondary research questions were proposed and a number of different strands of research were used to provide evidence to help make informed decisions on each of these questions.

After accounting for differences in response rate by questionnaire type due to a deprivation imbalance in the selected sample, the postal survey provided no evidence to support the suggestion that response rates would be affected by lowering the usual residence cut-off to one month and including a question on intended length of stay in the UK. The qualitative evidence supported this finding.

Results were mixed as to whether short-term migrants would respond to the Census. On balance, the evidence indicated that they are willing to respond but are surprised that they should be included in the Census. Work on improving the instructions on the questionnaire, and effectively targeting the publicity and community liaison will help short-term migrants to understand their involvement in the Census, and improve the chance of them responding. Even then, response rates are likely to be lower than for the general population.

The results of this project showed that short-term migrants will answer an intended length of stay in the UK question, although the accuracy can vary. Some migrants are unsure of their plans but they will generally answer the question. It should be noted that even without the intended length of stay in the UK question, respondents are still expected to make a judgement on whether or not they are a usual resident, in order to decide whether or not to complete the full questionnaire, so the issue of peoples' intentions being likely to change will always exist. This research does not provide evidence to suggest that ONS could not accurately distinguish usual residents and short-term migrants based on the responses to the intended length of stay in the UK question.

NatCen and DCM proposed some suggestions to amend the intended length of stay in the UK question, however these are unable to be implemented. The addition of a 'not sure' option to the intended length of stay in the UK question would not make it possible to categorise the people who tick this category as short-term migrants or usual residents. The suggestion to ask length of stay from the current date onwards rather than including the time already spent has been previously considered and ruled out. This is because it requires total intended length of stay to be derived from month and year of arrival, and banded intended length of stay in the UK, which would lead to uncertainty in classifying people as usual residents or short-term migrants. The only way to get around this would be to ask an unbanded intended length of stay in the UK question although this is likely to present further problems.

In the absence of any further time for testing or further research and based on the findings in this paper, it is thought that reducing the usual residence cut-off to one month would not be viable, however reducing it to three months should be attempted for the 2009 Census Rehearsal. The rehearsal will provide an

opportunity to evaluate the success of the approach. Additionally, it is considered that a question on intended length of stay in the UK can be included with a reasonable amount of certainty that the question will be answered and the quality of the data will be sufficient to distinguish usual residents from short-term migrants based on respondents' intentions at the time of the Census.

The benefits of the chosen approach are that a three month cut-off ties in with the United Nations definition of a short-term migrant and it adds something to the understanding of short-term migrants as more economically active people would be included than previously.

It is recognised that it would be very difficult to collect sufficiently good quality information to provide accurate estimates of short-term migrants at a local, or even a national level, as response rates from this group will vary from area to area and the Census Coverage Survey will not be able to adjust short-term migrant population counts at that level of detail. The approach may be more effective in the 2011 Census, backed by national and local publicity, but it is still likely that the publicity, community liaison, and engagement with local authorities etc would lead to differential under-coverage.

Whilst the 2011 Census is unlikely to provide robust estimates of the numbers of short-term migrants in its own right, it will help to understand and explain the difference between the census estimates and the rolled forward mid-year estimates produced by ONS. Additionally, it will also give the opportunity to gain significantly more understanding of the administrative and survey sources. Even if coverage was reasonably poor, the understanding of the differences between census results and other sources of short-term migrants could be enhanced by analysing patterns in the individual census data and by matching individual records to administrative sources if this becomes legally possible. There is no evidence to suggest that this poses a real risk to the quality of population estimates for the usually resident population.

9.2 Recommendation

Recommendation
<p>1) Lower the threshold for those that should complete a full census return for the 2009 Census Rehearsal in England and Wales to three months total stay in the UK, and;</p> <p>2) Include an intended length of stay in the UK question in the 2009 Census Rehearsal for England and Wales for anyone who has been in the UK for less than 12 months.</p> <p>It is also recommended that this approach is taken for the 2011 Census, subject to performance in the Rehearsal and any changes imposed by Parliament.</p>

Annex

Age-sex profiles of the population of England and the respondents in the postal surveys

