

**RESPONDENT:** 2826485461 – Ben Spiegel  
**SECTOR:** Unknown - Individual

**Q1 - What are your views of the different census approaches described in the consultation document?**

My primary view is that the use of administrative data will reduce the quality of data on smaller scales, to the detriment of future policy, social, and economic analysis and research. This will reduce the usefulness of ONS data and cause a variety of issues for any longitudinal research. Online surveys, combined with intensive efforts to identify underserved and undercounted populations, are the best method for conducting a rigorous, cost-effective census

**Q2 - Please specify any significant uses of population and housing statistics that we have not already identified.**

Research and policy on entrepreneurship is increasingly focusing on the very local level instead of the national or regional scales. This requires survey and census data that can show the social and economic differences between neighbourhoods and communities.

**Q3 - Please specify any significant additional benefits of population and housing statistics that we have not already identified.**

**Q4 - What would the impact be if the most detailed statistics for very small geographic areas and small population groups were no longer available? High, medium, low or no impact?**

High

**If medium or high, please give further information.**

Local data is key to my research on the economic, social, and cultural underpinnings of entrepreneurship. I require data on the demographic makeup, social and labour structure, and business registrations at a very small scale in order to carry out my research. The loss of high resolution data will likely require that I transition my research away from the United Kingdom and towards the US, where localized data is more readily available. This would be a disappointment because my research is aimed at understanding how regions can build more resilient and equitable economies through social enterprise.

**Q5 - What would the additional benefit be if more frequent (i.e. annual) statistics about population characteristics were available for areas like local authorities and electoral wards? High, medium, low or no additional benefit?**

No Additional Benefit

**If medium or high please give further information.**

**Q6 - Please specify any significant uses of census information for historical research that we have not already identified.**

**Q7 - What advantages or disadvantages for genealogical or historical research can you see from a move to a solution based on archiving administrative data sources?**

**Q8 - What are your views of the risks of each census approach and how they might be managed?**

The experience of Canada shows the danger in making large changes to the census methods. A shift away from compulsory surveys towards a smaller sample frame has made local data all but useless, especially for under-served minority and peripheral populations. Four prominent Canadian researchers reported that the new census methods wildly underreported economic inequality measures as compared to the more accurate (though restricted) tax data (see <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/canadas-voluntary-census-is-worthless-heres-why/article14674558/>). Further, a recent article in the Stanford Law Review (Richards and King 66 Stan L. Review Online 41, <http://www.stanfordlawreview.org/online/privacy-and-big-data/three-paradoxes-big-data>) makes the point that data collection methods that do not include mandatory surveys risk missing increasingly wide swaths of the population that do not have regular access to computer networks. As more and more policies are based on this data, the uncounted populations are marginalized even further by their exclusion. It is important that the ONS do not make changes that reduces the availability or quality of local data. Future economic and social policies depends on this data being readily available in way that makes comparison with earlier and future surveys possible.

**Q9 - Are there any other issues that you believe we should be taking into account?**