

RESPONDENT: 2825977181 – Louisa Smith
SECTOR: Unknown - Individual

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

Collecting administrative data from multiple sources and trying to build up all the data about a person could be complex, especially in the case of students etc. who may be registered to vote in two LAs and may exist at multiple addresses on different databases. Also a survey of a percentage of households each year would not, in my opinion, produce an accurate picture like a survey of everyone every 10 years does. This would also require legislative changes to make filling in these questionnaires compulsory. An online census in 2021 should be feasible, as the majority of the population will have access to the internet by that point. It is also an option of people to complete the census on computers in their local libraries or as you suggest, to get paper copies to households who have not responded. In summary: I think that an online census would provide more accurate information by including the whole population. I also think that the use of administrative data would be complicated by corner cases who are registered to vote in more than one area, multiple property owners and students with a term time address and a permanent address.

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

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?

Medium

If medium or high, please give further information.

I think it would be medium because losing detail may affect policies on benefits, which I believe should be linked to the cost of living in your area.

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?

Low

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 risks with administrative data are double counting of people with multiple addresses or whose data is inconsistent. In the change over period this could perhaps be handled by sending questionnaires to any affected individuals who can be identified, although this may be defeated by anonymising the data before it is brought

together. I also feel that a change in the way data is collected could distort the figures collected and reduce the ability of future or present analysts to compare data and understand how the population has changed.

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

This online based consultation will only reach people who have access to the internet and would therefore be able to fill out a census online. However many people may withhold information where the option is given if they do not feel comfortable with sending that data over the Internet, which although it can be secure (eg. online banking) you still have to take a lot of precautions yourself to protect against identity fraud. Entering all (or a lot of) your personal data into one form would obviously increase this risk, and I am not sure I would be comfortable with entering all my data in one place like that.

