

RESPONDENT: 2939137546 – Stephen Thompson
SECTOR: Unknown - Individual

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

1. Decennial decade, online. I find it surprising that this option is forecast to cost 30 per cent more than the paper census conducted in 2011. I also think it is unlikely that anything like the same coverage could be achieved in view of the fact that only 16 per cent of households completed the 2011 census online. 2. Census based on administrative data. There is very little detail on how this would work in practice. Given the track record of the large public sector IT projects, I think it is unlikely that this option would be cost-effective.

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?

High

If medium or high, please give further information.

We would know less about the UK population - according to ONS's own figures, the value of census data is worth more than it costs to collect. There is therefore no obvious case for abandoning it.

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?

Medium

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.

Online data is less durable than paper records. Data created less than fifteen years ago on the internet no longer exists whereas we have manuscript records that are a millennium or more old.

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 of both approaches are that we will lose a 'gold standard' approach with no obvious benefit in return.

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

How countries like India and China collect population statistics.