

Let us Bring You to Your Census:

Recent Developments in UK Census Data
Provision

Lucy Bell

Census Registration Service Co-ordinator

UK Data Archive

Email: lajbell@essex.ac.uk

Let us bring you to your Census

- The current situation
- Consultation with stakeholders
- Service development and functionality
- Obstacles and miracles
- The future

The bicentenary of the UK Census

- 2001 – 200 years of UK decennial Censuses
- 1978 – UK Data Archive starts disseminating the 1971 Census data, followed in the 80s with the 1981 data
- 1991 – ESRC/JISC Census of Population Programme begins to extend access to the data

A proliferation of products

- Choices of data:
 - Over 50 datasets
 - 1,000s of tables
- Choices of geography
 - Countries, Regions, Wards, Enumeration Districts, Postcodes, Output Areas
- Choices of year
 - 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001

Varied Census data

- Area Statistics
 - SAS, LBS, Topic Statistics...
- Boundary Data
- Interaction Data
 - Migration, Workflows
- Microdata
 - Samples of Anonymised Records (SARs)
- Derived Datasets
 - LUTS, Deprivation Scores, LCT

Varied sophisticated access systems

- Census Data Support Units:
 - Census Dissemination Unit, MIMAS
<http://census.ac.uk/cdu>
 - Census Geography Data Unit (UKBORDERS), Edina <http://edina.ac.uk/ukborders>
 - Census Interaction Data Service
<http://census.ac.uk/cids>
 - Census Microdata Unit at the CCSR
<http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/sars>

Complicated registration

- Many registration forms to complete:
 - For the Data Support Unit
 - For the type of data (SAS, DBD, SMS, SWS, SARs...)
 - For each country (England and Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)
 - For different years
- Each form to be completed by hand
- Each form to be counter-signed

Solution: a single licence...

- ESRC/JISC, Census Offices and HMSO tripartite agreement
 - Will terminate all old licences, 1971-1991
 - Will bring in 2001 data
 - To be signed summer 2002
 - Intention: rolling agreement

...and a single registration service

- UK Data Archive to co-ordinate all registrations
 - From all Data Support Units
 - For all Census data
 - For all years, 1971-2001
 - For all countries
 - Using online, Athens-compliant system

How the service is being developed

- Team of 3 at the UK Data Archive
- Consultation
 - with users
 - with the 4 Data Support Units
- Co-ordination with other Census data owners
- Use of Athens authentication technology
- Integration with the Census Resource Discovery System

First things first: what do the users want?

- Two consultations:
 - Emailed questionnaire to class tutors
 - Online questionnaire for site representatives
 - Speedy on-line self-registration for students
 - Not too technical and easily explained on-line
 - Single form for all census data services
 - Single Sign On
 - No tutor involvement in gathering students' names

The new service's functionality

- Simple, online, no paper, no signatures
- Athens authenticated
- Email verification check
- Facility for updating users' details
- Facility for inputting publications
- Other pages, containing news and information
- Online feedback page

Obstacles....

- Census Datasets not owned by the UK Office of National Statistics
 - 1981 and 1991 DBD
- Other Census-related datasets may be included
- Access control differences between the Data Support Units
- Technological differences between the Data Support Units (smallest challenge!)

.....and miracles!

- Athens Single Sign On
- Email discussion list
- Support from the Data Support Units and within the UKDA
- Support and enthusiasm from users in the field

The future

- Launch: August 2002
 - All current users will have to re-register because of *Data Protection Act 1998* considerations
- Phase two...
 - Searchable publications database
 - Links
 - Watch this space

Contact information

- Census Registration Service web site:
 - <http://census.data-archive.ac.uk>
- Census Registration Service email:
 - census-registration@essex.ac.uk
- Lucy Bell
 - lajbell@essex.ac.uk