

Harmonisation at the ONS: Comparability of survey and administrative data in conjunction with European influences

01 June 2016

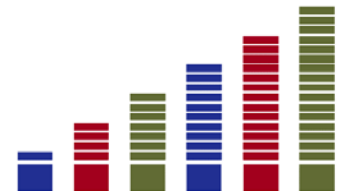
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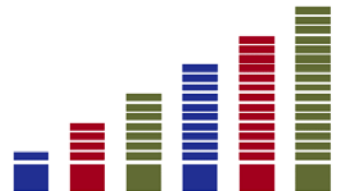
Overview

- What is Harmonisation?
- Benefits of Harmonisation
- ESS Peer Review
- Harmonisation strategy, priorities and work plan
- Issues and Considerations



What is Harmonisation?

- UK cross governmental programme
- Aim to harmonise statistical inputs, processes and outputs across the Government Statistical Service
- Aim to facilitate clearer and more robust comparison between data sources and to improve data quality



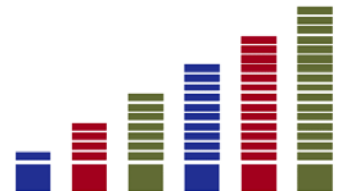
The Harmonisation Vision

“All inputs, processing and outputs for the Census and surveys and all data from administrative records will be harmonised...

...so that users can compare data from different sources with confidence...

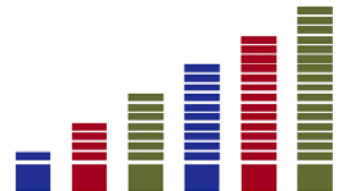
...and can merge and match data more easily...

...taking account of international implications”.



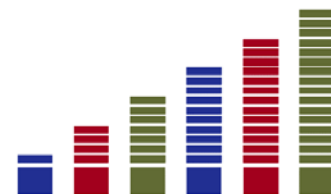
Benefits of Harmonisation

- Comparability and coherence within time series and between separate datasets
- Compliance with UK Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and Code of Practice
- Cost savings and efficiencies by avoiding duplication and providing more outputs from less investment
- Data quality



European Statistics System (ESS) Peer Review

- ESS Peer review to assess compliance against all 15 principles of European Statistics Code of Practice
- Peer Review report for UK published March 2015 and UK Improvement Actions published June 2015
- Peer Review of UK statistical system identified a number of strengths



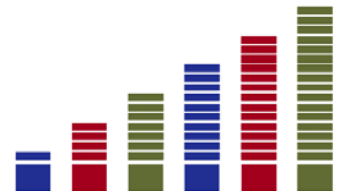
ESS Peer Review

- 16 recommendations as to how compliance with the European Code could be improved

- Recommendation 15:

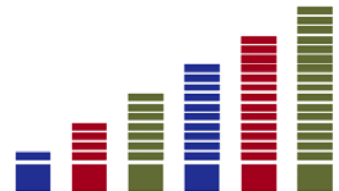
The UK Statistics Authority and the National Statistician, as Head of the GSS, should strengthen efforts to harmonise UK statistics in order to ensure coherence and comparability in the production of official statistics within the UK, over time and among producers of statistics.

- Harmonisation strategy and work plan is driven by UK Improvement action plan



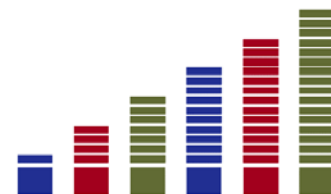
Harmonisation Strategy

- Role of Harmonisation
- Work Priorities
- Communication Strategy
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Case Studies



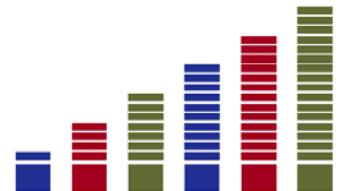
Harmonising Social Surveys

- 15 cross government topic groups e.g. income
- Over 100 Harmonised principles ratified so far
- Quarterly meetings (annual workshop) for National Statistics Harmonisation Group members
- 2021 Census opportunity to develop/update harmonised principles



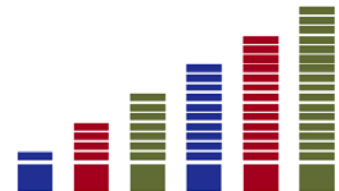
Harmonising Business Surveys

- Establishing a cross government Business Harmonisation Working Group
- Using Framework Regulation Integrating Business Statistics (FRIBS) legislation as opportunity to develop and implement business harmonised principles
- Electronic data collection programme another opportunity!



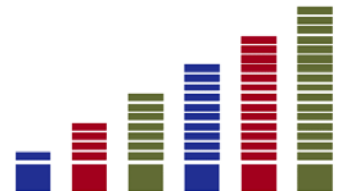
Harmonising Administrative Data

- Identifying and liaising with relevant stakeholders to understand how to harmonise administrative data
- Establishing a cross government Administrative Data Harmonised Working Group
- Working with Administrative Data Census alongside other relevant programmes



Variable and Question Bank (VQB)

- Developed by UK Data Service
- Holds a range of socio and economic datasets: a repository of variables & questions
- Harmonised principles are highlighted by the Government Statistical Service logo
- No users costs and no specialised software/hardware is required - no need to register and log in



Question search



Discover

• Variable and question bank

Series +

Survey +

Country +

Date +

Data collector +

Question: Harmonised set

GSS primary set of harmonised concepts and questions (5)

GSS secondary set of harmonised concepts and questions (0)

Refine

Question: Intent +

Discover > Variables



My Variables

Variable and question bank

Search and browse variables and questions from survey datasets.

full part working part time GO

Reset filters | Clear search | Search only question text/responses | Auto-complete | Help

SEARCH RESULTS

Sorted by: Relevance

Displaying 1-10 of 38 results

1 2 3 4 5 ▶▶▶



FTPTWk : Working full or part-time

Question Text: In your (main) job were you working full-time or part-time?
ONS Omnibus Survey, November 2006

Add to My Variables

View all instances of this variable



View responses...



FTPTWK : Working full or part-time

Question Text: In your (main) job were you working full time or part time?
ONS Omnibus Survey, November 2001

Add to My Variables

View all instances of this variable



View responses...



ftptwk : Working full or part-time

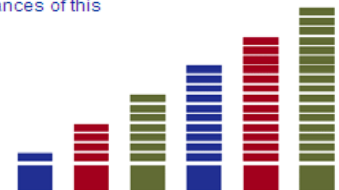
Question Text: In your (main) job were you working full time or part time?
ONS Omnibus Survey, Internet Access Module, April, July and October, 2004 and February 2005

Add to My Variables

View all instances of this variable



View responses...



Harmonisation Resources

**Dedicated
Harmonisation
Team in ONS**

**Harmonisation
Inbox &
Helpdesk**

**Social Topic Leads &
Topic Groups**

Newsletters

Flyers

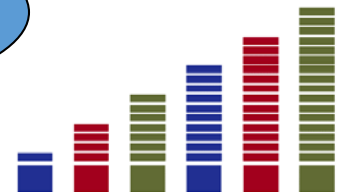
Roadshows

**A-Z of Social
Harmonised
Principles**

**Variable & Question
Bank**

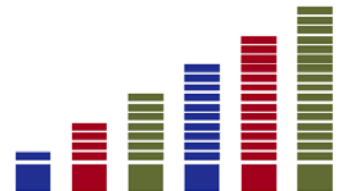
**Community on
StatsUserNet**

**Pages on Government
Statistical Services
(GSS) website**



Issues and Considerations

- ‘Encouragement’ rather than ‘enforcement’
- Conflicting priorities across government
- Confusion between ‘harmonisation’ and ‘standardisation’
- Harmonisation across UK/Europe/Other bodies
- Lots of opportunities to implement harmonisation – need to take advantage of these!



Any questions?

