

The Census and future provision of population statistics in England and Wales

Public consultation

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Context

- Census – every 10 years for over 200 years
Successful 2011 Census
- The Beyond 2011 Programme
Reviewing future needs and how best to meet them
A normal part of the census cycle
- The potential for change
 - Rapidly changing society
 - Evolving user requirements
 - Technological advances
 - Improved data sources
 - Improved data access
- Recommendations in 2014
Final decision for Government and Parliament

Why do we need population statistics?

- Service planning
 - where to locate schools, hospitals, etc.
 - housing plans
 - transport
- Policy making and monitoring
 - equality – age, sex, ethnicity, disability
 - ageing population – pensions
- Resource allocation
 - Health, local govt
- Commercial planning
 - location of retail outlets
- Academic and social research

Two potential future approaches

- **A census once a decade, primarily online**

*Provides detailed statistics once every ten years
with updated population estimates each year*

- **A census using existing government data
and compulsory annual surveys**

*Provides more statistics each year, but less detail
than an online census once a decade*

- ***No decision has been made yet***

An online census once a decade

- Invitation to all households to respond online
- Compulsory for all households as in 2011
- Support available
 - Field staff on the doorstep
 - Paper questionnaires if required
- Anticipate at least 65% of households would respond online, the rest on paper / via field staff
- 'Coverage survey' as in 2011
- Questionnaire content to be determined through future consultations

A census using existing government data and compulsory annual surveys

- Reuse data already provided to government to produce annual statistics about **population size**
 - 1% annual survey to correct coverage problems
- 4% annual survey to produce statistics about the **characteristics** of the population
 - Needs up to 5 years' data combined to produce the most detailed statistics
- Up to 50% of households included in surveys over a decade

Administrative data and surveys

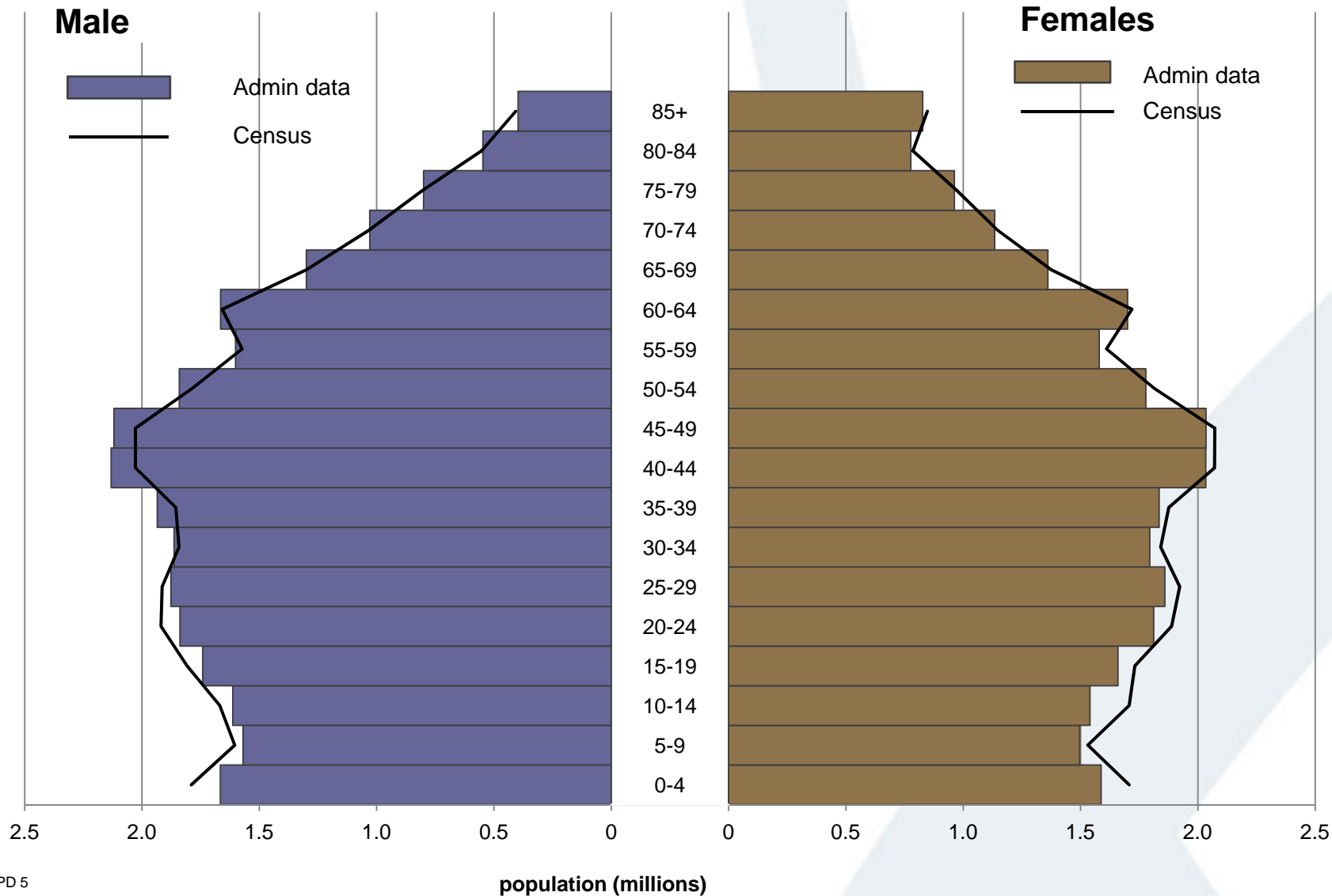
Potential data sources:

- NHS Patient Register
 - DWP/HMRC Customer Information System
 - Electoral roll (> 17 yrs)
 - School Census (5-15 yrs)
 - Higher Education Statistics Agency (Students)
 - Birth and Death registrations
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- Only items such as name, address, D.O.B
 - All sources anonymised prior to linkage

Estimating age and sex using admin data

Administrative data estimates compared to census estimates

England & Wales



Genealogy and the historical record

- Online census provides detailed snapshot once a decade (after 100 years)
- Possibilities with a census using administrative data and surveys:
 - Archive survey responses (40-50% of households over a decade)
 - Archive some data from administrative sources?
- Discussing with The National Archives and Genealogists
- Views invited as part of the consultation

Comparison of census approaches

Online census once a decade

- Statistics once a decade
- More detailed
- All households receive questionnaires each decade
- c. £625m per decade (£1.10 per person per year)
- Limited reuse of existing data
- Primary legislation in place
- Snapshot every 10 years for genealogy

Administrative data and annual surveys

- Statistics every year
- Less detailed
- 50% of households receive questionnaires each decade
- c. £460m per decade (£0.80 per person per year)
- Extensive reuse of existing data
- New primary legislation required
- Discussing possibilities for genealogy with The National Archives

Consultation closes 13th December

**Responses welcome from anyone with
an interest**