CSO Consultation on Census Outputs - 6 April 2010

The CSO wishes to invite all users of statistics and other persons with an interest in the census to give their views on the type and range of information they believe should be made available from the 2011 Census. In planning the Census 2011 dissemination programme a number of important changes are being considered compared with the methods used in previous censuses. These changes cover a range of areas such as type of outputs, level of detail, web format, and mapping interface.

1. Hard Copy versus web only tables

In past censuses all census tables, apart from those in the Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) series, were released in hard copy format organised in a series of volumes. They were simultaneously released as PDF files on the CSO website. It is proposed for 2011 that the majority of census tables will only be released on the web site. It is planned to continue to publish the Preliminary Report, the Principal Demographic Results and the Prinicpal Socio-Economic Results in both hard copy and on the web.

What are your views on the proposal to release the majority of census tables in web only format?
Enter your Reply here:

IPH agrees with this proposal as it's a more environmentally responsible method of disseminating census data.

2. Web tables

Census tables for the 1996, 2002 and 2006 censuses have been released in Beyond 20/20 format while the standard CSO format for web tables is PC-Axis (a small number of census tables are also currently released in this standard format). For 2011 the CSO is examining the option of releasing all of the 2011 census tables in this PC-Axis format. Under this proposal the tables from the 2006, 2002 and 1996 censuses would be migrated from their present Beyond 20/20 format to the PC-Axis format after the full Census 2011 outputs have been produced. Alternatively, all census tables could continue to be released in their present Beyond 20/20 format, as in the most recent census.

As a user what is your preference regarding the format of the 2011 census tables, PC-Axis format, or Beyond 20/20 format? Give reasons if you wish.
Enter your Reply here:

On a general note, IPH would welcome any initiative that integrates Census data with other data sources.

On a technical note, supporting only one of the table formats is fine if no important functionality is lost. Both formats are quite straight-forward to use and allow users to do similar things. If PC-AXIS is chosen, a link to the instruction manual should be more prominent than it currently is.

3. Census releases

For 2011 it is proposed to issue a number of Census releases. Each release will cover particular themes and will contain commentary and analysis along with charts and maps, and will be accompanied by a number of key detailed tables.

What are your views on this proposal? In particular, have you any suggestions regarding the topics to be covered?
Enter your Reply here:

1) IPH is committed to tackling health inequalities and advocates a social determinants perspective of health. IPH would recommend that Census data be disaggregated by social factors such as social class, education, employment, income, household composition, social capital, geography etc. There is particular potential to examine population-level associations between the social determinants of health and self-rated health.

2) As a census is also being conducted in Northern Ireland in 2011, it is an excellent opportunity to compare population measures across the island of Ireland.

3) As Census data is relevant to many sectors, it would be useful to present census data by the sectors to which they are relevant (eg health, finance, transport). Adopting a broad view of which data is relevant to each sector would allow people to see the important links between sectors.

4. Small Area Population Maps (SAPMAP)

A new census product that enables users to access the 2006 Census Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) by way of a map search has now been launched. This new interface allows users to identify on the map the boundary of the geographic area they are interested in, either by entering their address or by navigating an interactive map. The user can then access all of the census tables that have been produced for that area. We would like to get your feedback on this new (SAPMAP) product, as part of our consultation process on our 2011 Census outputs and products. Particular aspects which you may consider are

• Ease of use
• Intuitiveness
• Response times
Enter your Reply here:

The system is not very intuitive for a first time user. My understanding is that a user first selects a geographical area and then selects statistics. With this in mind:
 1. **Perhaps include a text panel explaining this two step process. This would allow users to get stated quickly**

Maps are quite slow to load – even over a fast connection (8M download speed)

5. Population Profiles

For 2011 the CSO is developing a new product which will provide summary profiles for a range of geographic areas in the country, for example towns, Electoral Divisions, Garda districts. This new product will comprise a two page report covering a selection of key variables, a small map, some summary tables and charts. A prototype has been developed to assist in garnering feedback, and is available here.

IPH supports the development and reporting of local level data.