Abstract

In recent years, the countries of the United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) have developed systems for collecting, compiling and disseminating small area statistics through their respective Neighbourhood Statistics systems. These systems have been based on small area geographies that have been developed to allow the dissemination of statistics at the lowest level possible, taking account of need for accuracy, sufficient sample sizes, stability over time (which is not possible with administrative geographies), statistical disclosure issues and other factors. In England, this hierarchical statistical geography is based on the 2001 Population Census-based Output Areas, which have been aggregated to two layers of “Super Output Areas”. Similar geographies have been developed for the other countries of the UK.

Consideration is now being given to how and when these geographies need to be updated, keeping a balance between stability and continuity, and reflecting changes due to growth and decline of population in certain areas.

This presentation will describe the use of these statistical geographies for government statistical outputs, including for examining differences between different types of urban and rural areas.

Keywords: neighbourhood statistics, output areas, super output areas, statistical geography