GREATERLONDON AUTHORITY

Data Management and Analysis Group

General Statistics Team Workplan 2009/10



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General Statistics team work plan 2009/10

The Role of the Team

The role of the General Statistics team is to produce an annual compendium of London statistics, as well as provide support and analysis on data not covered elsewhere within the Data Management and Analysis Group (DMAG).

The team aims to disseminate a wide range of data to London data analysts - those primarily working in the boroughs and functional bodies. This is done in order to save other analysts time and also to help inform them about the datasets available for use, which are increasing in number. This should reduce the amount of duplicated effort across London as a whole.

The team provides expert advice and specialist skills in a range of data areas, which include: Labour Force data, particularly in the form of Labour Force Survey and Annual Population Survey Culture data

Leisure, lifestyle and Tourism data

Business, and employment data

Emergency services data

Some demography related data such as National Insurance Number registrations and electorates

Earnings data

Environment data

Health and disability data

Housing data

Sport data

Transport data, including accidents and casualties

Borough finance data

Elections data

Although some of these subjects are collected and used by other teams in DMAG, often it is not disseminated or publicised as a stand alone product. For example, the Demography team will collect migration data or Vital Statistics data in order to construct demographic projections, but may not distribute or analyse the datasets in their own right.

Main projects carried out in 2008/09

Focus on London

In June 2008, Focus on London 2008 was released. This is a statistical digest relating to some of the key subjects affecting the capital. This was the second time the current team had worked on this publication and the first time it was published independently of ONS. Responsibility for the report passed from ONS to the GLA in 2008 when ONS could no longer devote resources to a report on London.

Abstract:

Focus on London 2008 covers a wide range of demographic, social and economic data, providing a statistical portrait of some of the key issues facing the capital. Produced by the Greater London Authority's statistical arm, Data Management Analysis Group (DMAG) it will be of interest to anyone who has a general interest in, or is carrying out research about, London. The report contains over 200 tables of the latest available data for London on several topics, conveniently presented in one place. This edition continues the series started in 1997.

The report was made available on the web at http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/factsandfigures/fol2008/

Borough Stat-Pack

In January 2009 the team released the second Borough Stat-Pack, following the success of the 2008 version. The Stat-Pack is a leaflet with a data CD and every table is available to borough level. The Stat-Pack was widely distributed in hard copy and via email. It proved extremely popular and further copies were requested by a large number of users.

Abstract:

The Stat-pack is designed to provide a wide range of borough level data, with an aim to reduce the amount of time spent searching for data relating to London boroughs.

The borough Stat-pack contains around 200 Excel spreadsheets of borough level data covering a wide range of topics. By using the links within the spreadsheets, it is possible to navigate to the source of the data where even more data on that subject can most likely be found. A selection of key socio-economic variables from the Stat-pack have been mapped using InstantAtlas mapping software. The Stat-pack takes the form of a leaflet and data on a CD-ROM.

The data was also made available on the web at http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/factsandfigures/boros2009/

Elections

In October 2008, the team published the 2008 London Elections report. The team worked with Michael Minors, an elections consultant. The report presents detailed results of the Mayoral and Assembly elections. The team also organised printing, launch and distribution of the report. http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/factsandfigures/london-elections-may08.pdf

Briefings and Updates

DMAG Briefing 2008-26 London council by-election results

DMAG Briefing 2008-28 Summary of Social Trends 2008

DMAG Update 22-2008 National Insurance Number Registrations 2007-08

DMAG Update 24-2008 GLA Elections Correlations 2008

The team has its own password protected Extranet pages. These were set up at a time when it was not possible to place all the team's work on the main website. However, over the past year everything the team has produced has been placed on London.gov.uk and therefore the need for the General Statistics extranet has diminished.

Staffing

There are two full-time posts in the team, a Senior Research and Statistical Analyst and a Research and Statistical Analyst.

Gareth Piggott has been in the senior role since January 2007.

Elizabeth Williams took up the analyst post in March 2007. However in September 2008, Liz secured a year's secondment to Secretariat. This was later extended to January 2010 to cover maternity leave. Richard Walker, who had previously been working in the business support team within DMAG, was brought into the team to cover Liz's absence. By Christmas 2009, it will be known whether Liz will return to the General Statistics team in January or remain permanently in a scrutiny role. Should Liz not return, the team will begin the recruitment process.

The team has skills in the following software packages: Adobe Creative Suites 3 (desktop publishing and graphics editing programme), SPSS, MapInfo, Instant Atlas (interactive maps), Microsoft Office, and SASPAC.

Clients and Stakeholder Liaison

The team will work to achieve the aims of DMAG and the requirements of the GLA. This will include the Mayor, the Assembly, functional bodies and the London boroughs.

The team will work closely with other teams in DMAG and other key parts of the Intelligence unit including GLA Economics and Information Services. The team has a close working relationship with the ONS regional statistician, Tom Knight, who is based at the LDA.

The team will provide an information request service to the media, the public, businesses, public sector organisations and academics upon request. Furthermore, all Freedom of Information queries will be dealt with in an efficient manner.

2009/10 priorities

Focus on London 2009

The team will use their own expertise and draw on the skills of experts within their fields in order to produce the annual 'Focus on London' report. Focus on London 2009 will be released in summer 2009. There will be a launch at City Hall and further presentations of the reports' main findings will be made at various GLA events.

Gareth is leading in the layout and production of the document. The style will be produced to match closely with recent Focus on London reports. Gareth is responsible for editing all chapters and will also author some sections. Richard Walker will act as assistant editor.

Gareth will be liaising with authors to see that they provide chapters to spec and within deadlines.

There will be some liaison with external bodies regarding a contribution to the report. This will include London Health Observatory, London Development Agency, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, Metropolitan Police, London Ambulance Service, Environment Agency and the Office for National Statistics. There is still an agreement in place to consult with ONS each year on their level of involvement the following year. The ONS Regional Statistician is closely involved with the project.

The topics that will be in Focus on London 2009 are:

- o Population and Migration
- o Diversity
- o Labour Market
- o Skills
- o Economy and Industry
- Business
- o Income and Lifestyles
- o Poverty
- o Emergency Services
- o Housing
- o Environment
- o Transport

The report will be printed in hard copy, though in line with environmental policy the print run will be reduced on past years, and available online. All the data in the report will be made available as Excel spreadsheets online.

Elections

After the European Elections in June, the team will produce an analysis of the results for London. This will be in the form of a Briefing and will be distributed via hard copy to all elected members at City Hall. The report will look at vote share by party and trends since 1999.

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DMAG Briefing 2009-16

In the early part of 2010, there will be some preparation required for the 2010 local elections and the general election report. It appears there wont be a budget to buy in any external expertise or data for the project. It is possible that a cut down simpler briefing may be produced in 2010 using data that is readily available on the web.

Borough Stat-pack 2010

The team will once again look to expand the Borough Stat-Pack. It is intended to contain more data than ever before, partially because there is more data from more sources available than in previous years. The team will collect a lot more time series data than last year, which will give users a lot more trend data. Any important notes or warnings about the data will also be highlighted within the output.

Various forms of data visualisation have been considered including the interactive maps, which were well received in 2009. Also motion charts may be used though this may depend on the web technology available at launch time. Using the same data, borough profiles will be constructed in order to present the data in an alternative way. It is likely that Excel will be used for this. A different profile will be made for each topic. The team will look at profiles for Employment and Skills (including Benefits and earnings), Demography, Business and Economy, Environment, Health, and Transport. Along with the profiles, a short introduction to the topic, and some key bullet points will be produced for a publication and/or web pages.

Recent months have seen the development of a London Observatory or DataStore idea. The team had been working towards creating an Observatory website similar to those run by other English regions. However, recent developments have seen this project sidelined in favour of the London DataStore project. It is not clear yet exactly what the DataStore will look like but it has been proposed by the webteam that instead of there being an online Stat-Pack, the data will instead form a significant portion of the DataStore.

The Stat-Pack is normally published in January. If the DataStore is running at that time, then it may be that this is the only form of data distribution used. If the DataStore is not ready, then it is likely, it will be produced on CD again. There is a move away from printed material within the GLA, so it is unlikely a printed version will be produced in 2010. Data collection and formatting, will be conducted between September and January.

Other work

Gareth has gained approved researcher status with ONS. Among other things this means he can access the Special License Annual Population Survey (APS) dataset via the Data Archive. This will be particularly important since the Social Exclusion team has lost key staff with experience in this area. During this period Gareth will be providing support for most APS requests. This will include providing data for the London Plan Monitoring report and the Annual Equalities report.

Gareth has been invited to attend Local Economic Assessment meetings along with colleagues from the LDA and London Councils. It is not yet known what input DMAG will have to this government project, though it is expected to be more of a consultation role rather than a great deal of work required from the team.

The LDA have been successful in their bid for ESF funds to start up a London Skills and Employment observatory. Gareth will attend the steering group meetings. It is thought that this project could offer useful cross organisation links that will be of benefit to the GLA as a whole.

There has been some discussion from the Environment Agency and the DEFRA family as a whole that a joint 'State of the Environment' report should be produced instead of each organisation having their own report, which often involves a lot of duplication of effort. Focus on London contains an Environment chapter and for this reason Gareth has been invited to join the State of the Environment steering group, along with colleagues in the GLA environment team. It is not thought a report will be produced within this financial year. Government Office for London are facilitating this group.

Gareth occasionally attends some Association of Regional Observatories (ARO) meetings. This is since Rob Lewis has been winding down activities as he heads towards retirement. ARO tasks are shared with Gareth Baker in the GIS team. It is thought that the new AD of Intelligence will take over this role when they start.

The team will be collecting and assembling data. Whenever a new and important dataset is available, the team will collect and disseminate the data as necessary. This will particularly apply to new government data via ONS and other departments.

Either ad-hoc or regular updates and briefings will be produced where necessary. Where necessary, the content of any briefings can be re-used in authoring chapters for the next FoL.

There is already a considerable amount of historical data held on databases within the team. This will need updating so that a complete set of data is held for time-series purposes.

Due to the nature of the General Statistics team and the wide range of data dealt with, there is likely to be a significant number of enquiries relating to data not covered by other DMAG teams. The team will endeavour to respond to all of these as efficiently as possible. This may involve researching new datasets and bringing them in-house.

The Work Programme 2009/10

April – June - Focus on London July - European Elections report September – December - London Borough Stat-Pack/DataStore January - March - Planning for Focus on London 2010 January - Parliamentary Constituency profile

Interspersed between all projects will be DMAG briefings. Planned Briefings include:

- o Urban Audit III Comparing London with other large European cities. The briefing will also highlight some of the inherent difficulties in using the dataset for cross-city comparisons.
- o Social Trends 39 Summary for London of the ONS report.
- o English Cities comparison A socio-economic analysis of London compared with other major English cities.

Team members must attend all relevant meetings, launches and conferences as and when they occur.

Planned publications

The main publications for the team will be Focus on London 2009, European elections 2009 and Borough Stat-Pack/DataStore. However, briefings and other reports will be produced when necessary.