Statistical News

Autumn 1994
Issue 106
Central Statistical Office

N THIS ISSUE .... *How exactly is unemployment measured?.. The Family Expenditure Survey - some recent evelopments.... The 1991 Area Transport Survey... Preparing undergraduates for careers in the GSS.*

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It is hoped that *Statistical News* will be of service and interest not only to professional statisticians but to everybody who uses statistics. I should therefore be glad to receive comments from readers on the adequacy of its scope, coverage or treatment of topics and their suggestions for improvement.

Enquiries about individual items in this issue should be made to the appropriate sources where indicated; otherwise they should be addressed to Sallie Taylor, Editor, *Statistical News,* Central Statistical Office, Room D.134, Government Buildings, Cardiff Road, Newport, Gwent NP9 1XG. Telephone: 01633 812915 or Fax: 01633 812693

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FRONT COVER : Penarth Jobcentre, South Wales - courtesy of the Department of Employment Cardiff.

Central Statistical Office

Statistical News

Developments in British Official Statistics

No. 106
Autumn 1994

The Government Statistical Service

MISSION

To provide Parliament, government and the wider community with the statistical information, analysis and advice needed to improve decision making, stimulate research and inform debate.

London: HMSO

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Autumn 1994

News from around the GSS and beyond

From the new Editor ....

As some of you may already be aware, Natalie Williams retired on the 13th October 1994. Natalie departs the CSO after a career spanning over 22 years to become a lady of leisure!. My name is Sallie Taylor and I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as her successor. We have implemented some of Natalie's pre-announced changes in this issue, and many more are planned for the future. I hope that you will approve of these changes as I am anxious to carry on her good work.

The previous government publications section will now be known as news from around the GSS and beyond. We hope to make this section much more informative and news orientated. The various departmental correspondents are at present, busy working on our new ideas. The section will include reports on any new developments and items of interest from around the GSS. In the future, we hope to include photographs to illustrate each news item to give *Statistical News* much more of a visual impact

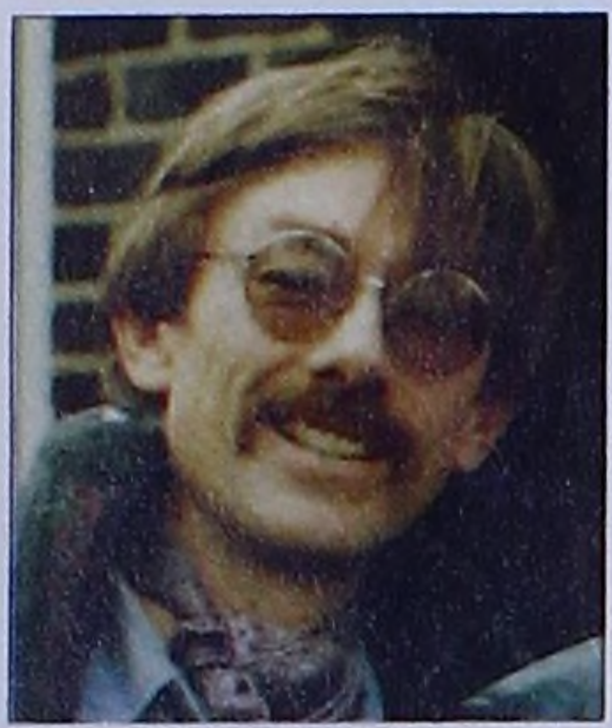
In this issue, we have also introduced the letters page and hope that you, the readers will send me your correspondence for the future. If you have any other comments or criticism of the new format, I would also like to hear from you. We would welcome any suggestions as to how you feel we could improve *Statistical News* for forthcoming editions. *Please send your letters to me at the following address:*

Sallie Taylor
Room D.134
Central Statistical Office
Cardiff Road
Newport
GWENT NP9 1XG

Tel: 01633 812915
Fax: 01633 812863

I look forward to hearing from you.

How exactly is unemployment measured?



James Denman
Employment Department

Introduction

There are a number of different ways of defining "unemployment" and this is just one of the reasons why, across the world, official statistics on unemployment are such a fertile source of controversy. This is certainly the case in the United Kingdom where, over the years, a great deal of odium has been heaped, quite unjustly, on the Employment Department (ED) statisticians responsible for the statistics and where mere mention of the word unemployment can provoke the charge that "the figures are fiddled". The level and intensity of the abuse levelled at ED statisticians is best reflected in a statement made to the House of Commons in 1993:-

> **If the Department of Employment statisticians were a football team, they would be banned for bringing their profession into disrepute.**
>
> *(Official Report, 9 March 1993, Column 873)*

While much of the debate surrounding the figures can be viewed as a healthy response to a contentious subject, a great deal of the criticism provoked by the figures has been ill-informed, and the task of countering this criticism and defending the integrity of official statistics, has consumed a great deal of ED's professional resources.

This is one reason why the Director of Statistics in ED, Peter Stibbard, has given his strong support to the publication of a booklet designed to improve understanding of the Department's unemployment statistics. This booklet, which is published under the title ***'How Exactly is Unemployment Measured?'***, sets out to explain the basis of ED's two measures of unemployment and to dispel some of the more commonly-held myths surrounding these statistics.

Readers wishing to obtain a copy should write to:

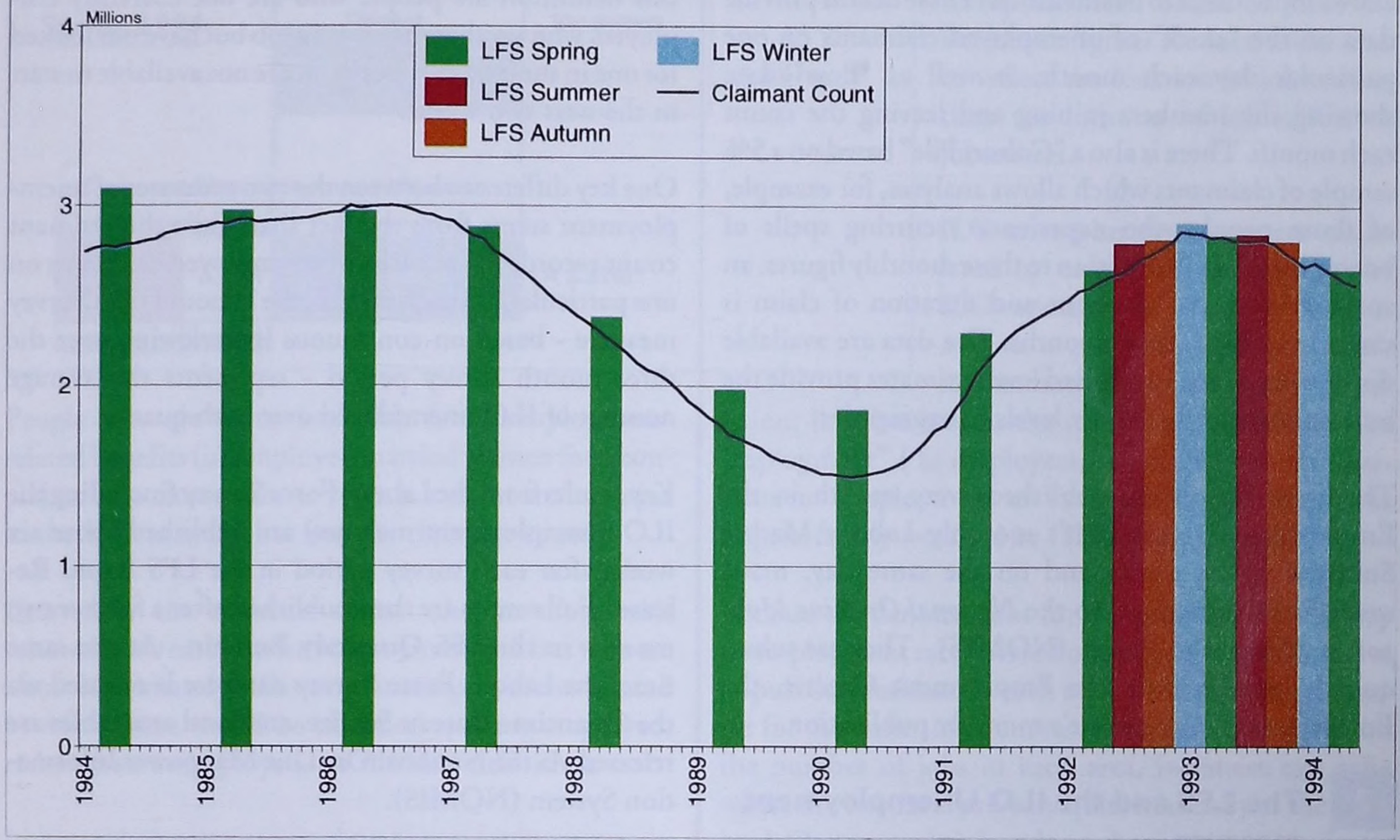
Unemployment Leaflet
SSDB1
Employment Department
Level 1, Caxton House
Tothill Street,
London SW1H 9NF
Tel: 0171 273 5532

Some of the main topics covered by the booklet are summarised in this article.

How is unemployment measured in the UK?

Along with their counterparts in a large number of other countries, ED statisticians regularly compile two rigorously defined measures of unemployment. One comes from an administrative count of people claiming unemployment-related benefits and is known as the *claimant count.* The other is derived from a survey of households called the Labour Force Survey which incorporates a measure of unemployment recommended by the International Labour Organisation and which is known, therefore, as the *ILO measure.* This second measure has been adopted as a standard by a number of international organisations including the Statistical Office of the European Community, and should be used when making international comparisons. Although these two complementary measures are based on different concepts of unemployment and each measures unemployment in a different way, they currently reinforce one another by showing unemployment standing at approximately the same level, and following a broadly similar trend over time.

GB unemployment:
LFS (ILO definition) and Claimant Count compared
Seasonally adjusted



Why two measures?

Both measures have their advantages and disadvantages. The administrative claimant count has the advantage of being available quickly, monthly and at relatively little expense. And because it is a 100 per cent count, the administrative measure can also provide precise information on very small areas. The major disadvantage of this method, however, lies in its dependence on the benefit system which, if altered, can affect the statistics.

The ILO measure is defined entirely independently of the benefit system, although changes in this system may affect the labour market behaviour of respondents to the LFS. And besides being internationally comparable, the LFS-based method allows unemployment to be seen as one part of an integrated classification of the whole population aged 16 and over by economic status: in employment; ILO unemployed, or economically inactive. The ILO measure, moreover, can be analysed in the context of a whole range of demographic and other labour market information provided by the survey. The disadvantages of the ILO measure relate to the current limitations of the Labour Force Survey from which it is derived. The results are available on a quarterly rather than monthly basis and, because of sample size restrictions, estimates are not reliable for areas smaller than counties and the larger local authority districts. This is why the published tables do not show estimates of less than 10,000 unemployed persons (after grossing up).

I The Claimant Count : how it works

The claimant count relies on figures provided every month by the local offices of the Employment Service via the Department of Social Security's computer system. These show the number of people claiming unemployment-related benefits who have declared they are unemployed, capable of, available for and actively seeking work. The count includes people claiming Unemployment Benefit, which is dependent on a claimant's National Insurance contribution record and lasts for a year; unemployment-related Income Support which is means-tested by the Benefits Agency; and National Insurance credits, which maintain claimants' eligibility for a state pension and other benefits.

Information is gathered on the National Insurance number, address, occupation, gender and date of birth of each claimant plus the start and termination date of each claim. However no information is published which allows individuals to be identified. These details provide data on the "stock" of unemployed claimants on one particular day each month, as well as "flow" data showing the numbers joining and leaving the count each month. There is also a "Cohort File" based on a 5% sample of claimants which allows analyses, for example, of those people who experience recurring spells of unemployment. In addition to these monthly figures, an analysis by age of claimant and duration of claim is carried out every three months. The data are available down to ward level and ward level estimates provide the building blocks for higher levels of aggregation.

The latest figures are published every month in the Employment Department's monthly Labour Market Statistics press notice and on the same day, made available to subscribers to the *National On-Line Manpower Information System* (NOMIS). They are subsequently published in the Employment Gazette, the Employment Department's monthly publication.

2 The LFS and the ILO Unemployment measure

The quarterly Labour Force Survey is the biggest regular household survey in Great Britain and it covers about 60,000 households throughout the country every quarter, representing approximately 150,000 people. A similar survey is carried out in Northern Ireland on an annual basis, and both surveys comply with a legal requirement for all countries in the European Union.

The survey poses a series of questions about respondents' personal circumstances and their activity in the labour market and the results provide a comprehensive analysis of the economic activity of the whole population aged 16 and over. The LFS classifies respondents into one of three internationally standard categories; those "in employment"; the "ILO unemployed"; and the "economically inactive".

The internationally standard ILO definition of *unemployment* covers: those who were without a job at the time the survey was conducted, and who; were available to start work in the next fortnight, and; had actively looked for work in the last four weeks, or; had found a job and were waiting to start.

People considered *economically inactive* by the ILO definition include those looking after a home, those in retirement, children under 16 and those without work but not seeking or not available for work. Included in this definition are people who are not currently employed, who say that they want a job but have not looked for one in the past four weeks, or are not available to start in the next two weeks.

One key difference between the two measures of unemployment stems from the fact that while the claimant count records the number of unemployed claimants on one particular day each month, the Labour Force Survey measure - based on continuous interviewing over the three month survey period - represents the average number of ILO unemployed over each quarter.

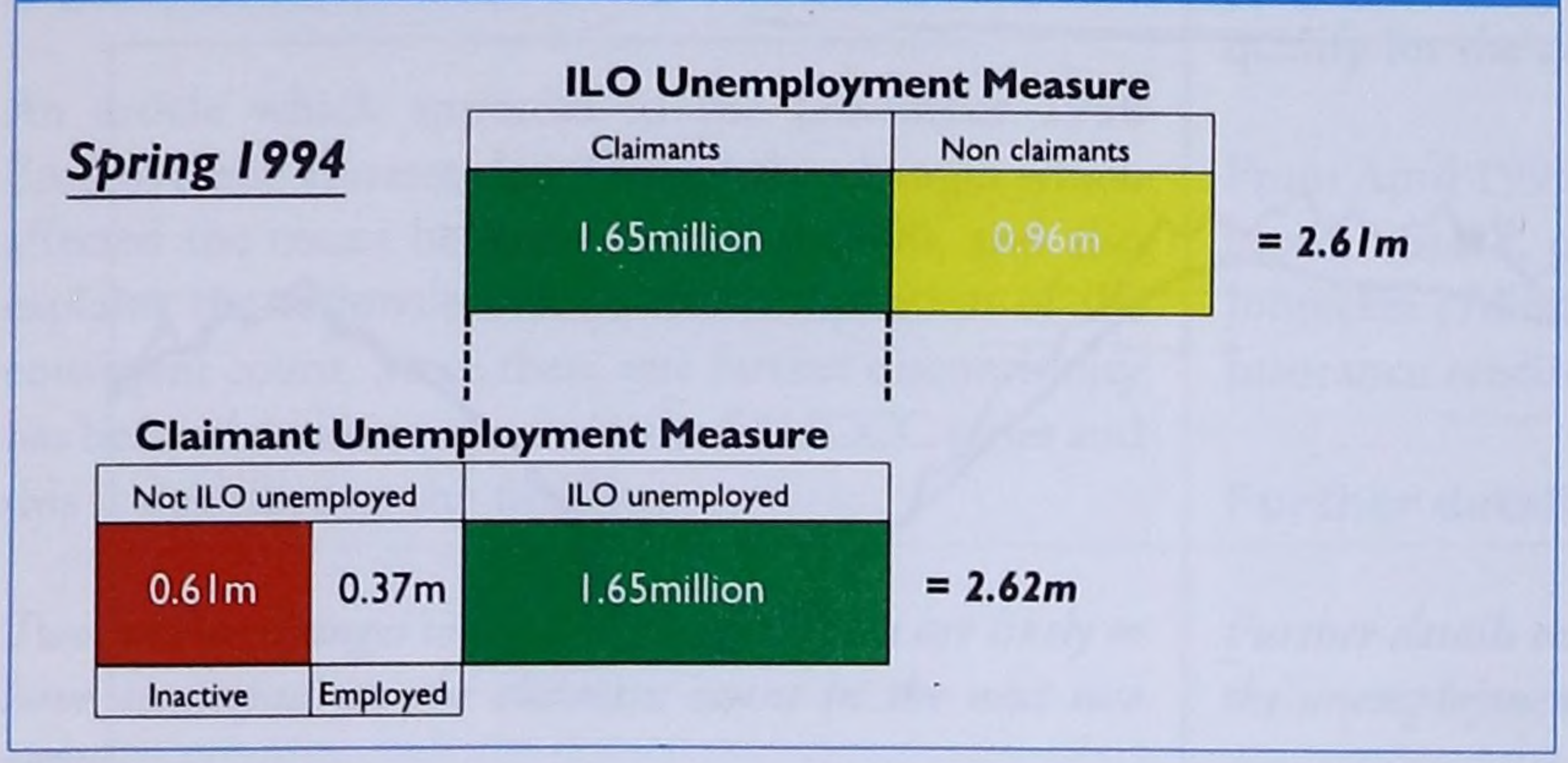
Key results from the Labour Force Survey (including the ILO unemployment measure) are published about six weeks after each survey period in the **LFS Rapid Release**. Full results are then published after a further two months in the **LFS Quarterly Bulletin**. At the same time, the Labour Force Survey database is released via the **Quantime Bureau Service**, and local area tables are released via the National On-Line Manpower Information System (NOMIS).

ILO and the Claimant Count : how do they compare?

Because respondents to the LFS are asked whether they are receiving unemployment-related benefits, it is possible to compare its results with those of the claimant count and to see how many people are unemployed on both measures. Comparisons between the two measures are printed in each issue of the Quarterly Bulletin and the Rapid Release Bulletin, with a more detailed comparison published once a year in the Employment Gazette.

While the overall totals are currently similar, and the majority of unemployed people appear in both measures, there are a number of people who are unemployed on one definition but not on the other. There is also a significant disparity between the sexes in that more men are included in the claimant count than on the ILO measure, whereas for women the reverse is true, and also between age groups, in that more people in the younger and older age groups are included in the ILO measure than in the claimant count, whereas for the intermediate age groups the reverse is true .

Reconciliation between Unemployment Measures - Great Britain *(not seasonally adjusted)*



People who are either ineligible for unemployment-related benefits (unemployed married women for example) or who choose not to register a claim are included in the ILO measure but not the claimant count.

Conversely the claimant count takes in those with relatively low earnings from part-time work but who are also, legitimately claiming unemployment-related benefits.These would be classified as being employed, rather than unemployed, on the ILO definition.

In normal circumstances, claimants must meet certain criteria in order to be eligible for unemployment-related benefits. However, in certain circumstances, it is possible for a person to be legitimately claiming benefits even though they are not available for work, or actively seeking work. A claimant may, for example, be waiting to start a job. Claimants in this position would be classified on the ILO definition as economically inactive rather than unemployed.

The numbers of unemployed people who fit one definition but not the other tend to be very similar, which is another reason why the two measures tend to give similar figures for both the level and the trend of unemployment.

Comparison of rates.

Claimant unemployment rates represent the claimant unemployed resident in each area as a percentage of that area's workforce. The workforce denominator is defined as the sum of; employees in employment whose workplace is in the area, the self employed resident in the area, HM Forces based in the area, participants on long-term Government Training programmes registered in the area, and the claimant unemployed resident in the area. Because the largest component, the "employees in employment" element, represents a workplace-based count of jobs, the workforce figures for local areas tend to reflect the location of jobs rather than the location of jobholders or jobseekers.

ILO unemployment rates are calculated by expressing the number of ILO unemployed resident in each area as a percentage of that area's resident and economically active population; in other words, the total of persons either "in employment" (as employees, self-employed, on Government Employment or Training programmes, or as unpaid family workers) or "ILO unemployed".

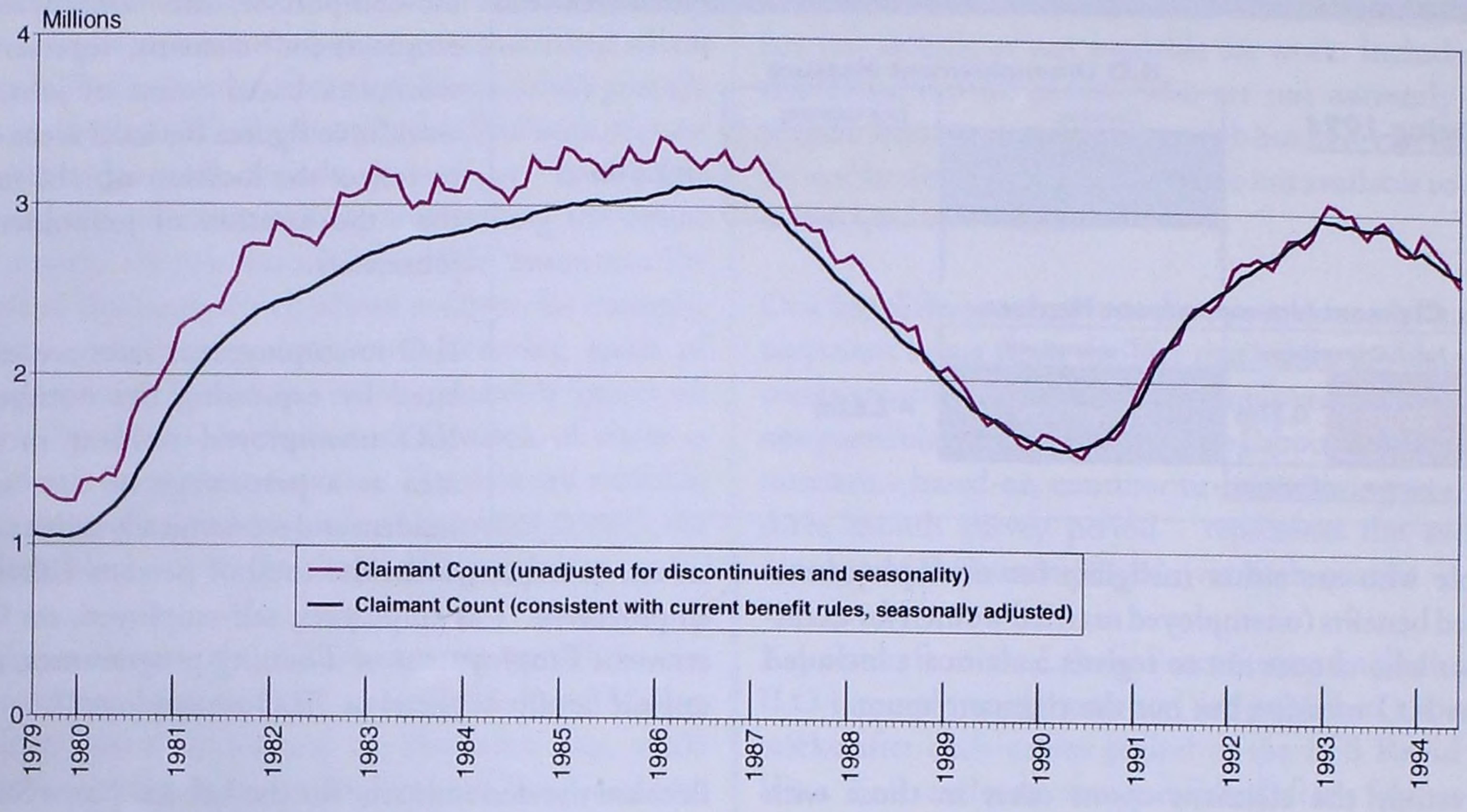
Because the denominator for the Labour Force Survey unemployment rate is based on the economically active population resident in each area, whilst the denominator for the claimant count rate is based, very largely, on the number of jobs in each area, instances can arise where the two rates can vary quite markedly at the local level. One example is London, where commuting forms an important feature of the local labour market.

The standardised international monthly measure

Two international organisations, the Statistical Office of the European Community and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development publish a monthly rate of ILO unemployment for each of their member countries, including the United Kingdom. These rates are calculated by taking the latest available ILO measure from each country's Labour Force Survey and projecting the results forward using the recent trend shown by their particular administrative measure (the claimant count in the case of the United Kingdom). Slightly different interpretations of the ILO guidelines can cause minor differences in the monthly rates calculated by each of these organisations, as do variations in the speed with which they incorporate the latest Labour Force Survey results and slight differences in each organisation's methodology.

UK Claimant Unemployment Count

Comparison of unadjusted and consistent, seasonally adjusted counts
(July 1979 - June 1994)



* The unadjusted series refers to people 16+
** The seasonally adjusted series refers to people aged 18+

Alternative measures of unemployment

Several commentators have proposed a variety of alternative measures of unemployment which are either based on an incorrect interpretation of the ILO guidelines, or else represent a loose, "hybrid" combination of components from both the ILO measure and the claimant count measure. None of these measures currently has any basis of international recognition, although a few countries do publish their own national statistics using alternative definitions. The hybrid measures, in particular, have none of the advantages offered by the two official measures of unemployment, lack a coherent conceptual basis, and, hence, are unsuitable for economic and social analysis.

Changes to the Claimant Count

Because the claimant count is a by-product of the system used to administer the payment of unemployment-related benefits, its coverage over time has inevitably been affected whenever there have been changes to the rules and procedures governing peoples' eligibility and propensity to claim. It is this characteristic of the count, in particular, which has made it into a fertile source of political and economic debate.

Whenever administrative changes have led to a change in coverage, and threatened the comparability of the count, the Employment Department's statisticians have recalculated the claimant unemployment figures backwards in order to ensure that the most recent figures, based on current criteria for assessing eligibility for benefits, remain comparable with previous figures. By constructing a special series which remains consistent over time, free from distortions and properly adjusted for seasonality, ED statisticians have preserved the integrity of the claimant count and maintained its relevance as a measure of imbalance in the labour market. The series of unemployment figures derived from this recasting exercise is known as the "seasonally adjusted unemployment consistent with current coverage" series (or SAUCCC series) and this is published every month alongside the unadjusted claimant count.

It has been suggested that ED could avoid the problem of discontinuities by maintaining a consistent series which uses a historical definition of unemployment This would require an estimate of the number of people who *would* be claiming benefits today if the old benefit system were still in place. This approach, however, is fraught with difficulties. Economic, demographic, social and other factors mean that the effect of past changes will have varied over time and any estimates resulting from this approach would be subject to unacceptably large margins of error.

An article which appeared in the December 1990 Employment Gazette describes all the changes which affected the count between 1979 and 1990, and also explains the rationale behind the compilation of the consistent count. Since then, one further discontinuity has been taken into account in the SAUCCC series and this is described in the Booklet.

Two further changes to the UK benefit system are likely to have an impact on the claimant count in the next two years:-

1 Incapacity Benefit

In April 1995 the existing Invalidity and Sickness benefits will be merged into a single Incapacity Benefit. This benefit will be restricted to people who satisfy a new and more objective medical test. There will be some people who are not eligible for incapacity benefit under the new rules, but who will be able to satisfy the conditions for claiming unemployment-related benefits, by actively looking for work for example. There will be no change in the rules governing eligibility for unemployment-related benefits, and so, if people in these circumstances do decide to make a valid claim for unemployment-related benefits then, all other things being equal, there will be an increase in the claimant count.

2 Jobseeker's Allowance

A new single benefit for unemployed people, the Jobseeker's Allowance, will be introduced in 1996, replacing the two existing benefits (Income Support and Unemployment Benefit).

Introduction of the JSA will lead to a simpler, clearer system for unemployed people, and establish a more effective way of helping them get back to work as quickly as possible.Those claiming the Jobseeker's Allowance will be required to enter into a Jobseeker's Agreement setting out how they intend to find work.

People who qualify for this benefit because of their National Insurance contributions will be eligible for a personal allowance for six months. Those still unemployed after six months will only be eligible for the allowance on a means-tested basis along with those people whose contribution record is insufficient to qualify for the contributory personal allowance.

From April 1996, therefore, the claimant count will be based, instead, on the number of people claiming the Jobseeker's Allowance as well as those claiming National Insurance credits.

Further details

Further details on these and other matters connected with the unemployment statistics can be obtained by phoning:

0171 273 5532

or one of the enquiry points listed in the booklet.

The 1991 London Area Transport Survey

by Phil Mongredien / Department of Transport

Introduction

The 1991 London Area Transport Survey (LATS 1991) was undertaken jointly by the Department of Transport (DOT) and the London Research Centre, acting on behalf of the London boroughs. It was the fourth in a series of large-scale transport surveys in London, and will be used to update results from the previous surveys in 1962, 1971 and 1981.

The aim of LATS 1991 was to provide coherent and compatible data describing transport movements by all modes in London, as well as related socio-demographic information. For the purposes of LATS 1991, London is defined as being the area bounded by (and including) the M25, as well as those parts of the Boroughs of Enfield and Havering lying outside it. Its principal users will be the Department of Transport, the London Research Centre and the London boroughs, where it will provide support for policy formulation, planning, scheme assessment and investment as well as general statistical briefing.

The main components of LATS were a large household survey and a major roadside interview survey programme. In addition, results were used from surveys carried out by two of the main public transport operators in the study area, London Underground Limited (LUL) and Network SouthEast (NSE). There was also a series of further 'minor surveys' carried out in order to fill gaps in the coverage, and also to validate the results obtained from the Household Survey.

The Household Survey

The LATS 1991 Household Survey collected a combination of household data, person data, vehicle data and trip data from a sample of 60,000 households within the area bounded by the M25.

The achieved target sample size of 60,000 households (two per cent of households in the London area) was decided upon after analysis of the required accuracy for:

- simple household-based factors at a ward level,
- trip rates (trips per household or per person) for differing modes of transport, trip purposes and areas of residence, *and*
- analysis of trip origins and destinations.

The sample was stratified by electoral ward, and, at the request of the London boroughs, a target of a response from 72 households in each ward was set. Due to the considerable variations in ward population size, the target sample fraction was adjusted slightly in wards with particularly large or small populations. The drawn sample fraction took into account variations in response rates at a borough level in the 1981 survey.

A sample of around 96,000 addresses was drawn, from which useable data were obtained from 59,700 - a response rate of 72 per cent, after allowing for ineligible addresses in the drawn sample. This was equivalent to an average of 71 households per ward in Greater London. The variation in sample size was carefully controlled during fieldwork by either reducing the size of the sample in areas with a better than expected response rate, or by drawing a supplementary sample in areas where the response rate was lower than anticipated.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

- household,
- person,
- trip.

The household section included questions on the composition of the household and any vehicles owned by its members. The person section asked questions of each household member about employment, driving licences and Travelcard ownership, amongst others. The trip section asked for details of all trips made by that person on the preceding day.

Data were collected for Monday to Saturday travel throughout the year, with the exception of school holidays. Sampled households were allocated to particular days of the week, in order that approximately equal numbers of households could be sampled on each day.

The Roadside Survey

This was the second major component survey of LATS 1991. Its aim was to collect the origins, destinations and purposes of all vehicles entering and travelling within the London area. In order to achieve this, a network of four cordons and 20 screenlines covering the whole of the study area was designed, based upon, but more extensive than, the existing network used by DOT for regular traffic monitoring surveys.

At each point where a road crossed one of these cordons or screenlines, roadside interviewing was undertaken between 6am and 10pm on one day only and in one direction only. At the same time, counts were taken of all vehicles passing the site (in each direction, split by vehicle type and time of day). In order that the survey day should be a "typical working day", surveys were restricted to weekdays in Spring and Autumn 1991. At each survey site, a sample of vehicles was stopped by a Police Officer, randomness being achieved by following standard DOT roadside interviewing procedures. Each driver was asked a short series of questions about his or her journey by an interviewer. The interviewer also noted the type of vehicle, the number of passengers and the time of day.

At certain sites, and at certain particularly busy times of the day, drivers were handed self-completion 'mail back' questionnaires, asking for the same information. The average response rate for these questionnaires was about 25 per cent, although it varied between sites. Whilst easier to conduct, this method was only used when absolutely necessary, as it was clearly less reliable than the interview method, where a near 100 per cent response rate among drivers stopped was achieved.

Additional radial screenlines were constructed outside the study area, and roadside interviewing took place along these, in order to gain a more complete picture of travel in the wider M25 corridor.

There was also a series of additional screenlines within the study area. No interviews were carried out along these, only vehicle counts, as their purpose was to estimate the number of commercial vehicle trips which were of sufficiently short distance not to cross one of the main screenlines.

The roadside interviews took place at about 800 sites, and around 1.1 million drivers were interviewed.

The Rail Surveys

In order to complete the coverage of travel and transport in London, a number of other surveys were carried out. The most important of these were the rail operators' (London Underground Limited and Network SouthEast) surveys, which were carried out by the operators themselves, although the Department of Transport was consulted in order to provide adequate linkage to LATS 1991 in the methodological and questionnaire design. Passengers were intercepted on platforms or as they entered stations and were given self-completion 'mail back' questionnaires. Station entry and exit counts were also undertaken.

'Minor' Surveys

Further surveys were also undertaken with the aim of either filling gaps in the data, or validating data from the Household Survey (or both). These included a survey of InterCity passengers, a survey of commuter coach passengers, a survey of passengers at the Victoria Coach Station and counts of bus passengers in Inner London.

Address Coding

The various component surveys of LATS 1991 generated an enormous number of addresses (around 5 million). In order that travel patterns could be clearly identified, each of these needed to be allocated to a unique LATS Zone (of which there were just over 1,000 in the study area). Since traditional (manual) methods of address-coding would have proved prohibitive in terms of both time and cost, an innovative new computerised approach was devised. Address-matching software initially allocated each address to a grid reference, and from there to a postcode, electoral ward and LATS Zone.

Validation and expansion of the surveys

Data from all of the surveys were checked for errors or inconsistencies, before being expanded. For the Household Survey this was done using Census data. Roadside Survey data were expanded using vehicle counts. The expansion was done separately by site, by vehicle type, and, where possible, by time period. Due to the design of the survey, double-counting was likely to have occurred when vehicles crossed more than one cordon or screenline during the course of their trip, and, consequently, allowance was made for this in the expansion process, when trip length and origin/destination data were used to identify and eliminate such records. Data from the various public transport surveys were expanded using the appropriate passenger counts, and any additional data available, including ticket sales information.

Cross-validation of the component surveys

With the data standardized where necessary, the cross-validation process could commence. *The aims of cross-validation were:*

- to compare travel categories existing in more than one data source, and to correct any biases discovered as a result,
- on the evidence of these comparisons, to determine an approach which would give "best" estimates of trips in each travel category, and to use these to create two "combined trip files"

  - one for public transport (Public Transport Combined Trip File (PCTF))

  - and one for private transport (Vehicle Combined Trip File (VCTF)).

Being reliant upon the respondent's memory, household travel surveys have an in-built tendency to under-record certain types of trip. This is not a problem that is encountered with on-mode surveys, since they are expanded to vehicle or passenger counts. However, on-mode surveys are much more susceptible to response biases than household surveys, where the sample can, to some extent, be controlled.

Because of these different factors affecting the accuracy of the results of the two different survey types, it was not surprising to discover inconsistencies between the results of the Household Survey and the equivalent results from the appropriate on-mode survey. Therefore, in each case where an overlap occurred, the task consisted of deciding which source of data was better, and subsequently using that data source in the construction of the appropriate combined trip file.

The construction of the Vehicle Combined Trip File (VCTF)

The VCTF covers all travel by road vehicles, other than buses, namely cars, motorcycles, pedal cycles and commercial vehicles. It was created using data from the

Household and the Roadside surveys. *The two surveys covered slightly different sets of trips:*

- **the Household Survey**
  covered all trips made by residents of the study area in private vehicles over the whole (24 hour) day, and

- **the Roadside Survey**
  covered trips made by both residents and non-residents in all road vehicles which crossed a screenline or cordon in the direction of interview between 0600 and 2159.

In those cases where there was an overlap - specifically, residents' trips made in private vehicles crossing a screenline or cordon between 0600 and 2159 - it was decided that the better estimate would be obtained from the Roadside Survey, because the sampling fraction of the Roadside Survey was substantially greater (on average Household records had an expansion factor ten times that of Roadside records). Therefore, where the two surveys overlapped, the Roadside Survey took precedence in providing trip information for the best estimates. Where possible, adjustments to the figures were made for trips broken down by mode of transport, trip purpose, time of day and area (whether it be Central, Inner or Outer London, or outside the study area) of origin and destination.

In some cases, factors so derived were also applied to related trips for which no direct comparisons were available. Factors for car driver trips were also applied to Household Survey estimates for car passengers.

The construction of the Public Transport Combined Trip File (PCTF)

The PCTF covers trips made by the various modes of public transport, namely bus, British Rail (BR), Underground and taxi. Data were taken from the Household, NSE and LUL surveys.

The main overlap in this case was of LATS area residents travelling either by BR or Underground between 0700 and 2059. For these trips also, the on-mode surveys were reckoned to give better estimates of trips than the Household Survey, since the average expansion factor of their records was only one-sixth of that of comparable Household records. The data were bias-corrected before incorporation into the PCTF.

Where there was an overlap between the two rail surveys (ie passengers using both NSE and LUL trains as part of their trip), the LUL Survey was preferred, because its data were generally more complete than its NSE counterpart's, and suffered from fewer biases. The NSE data were only used for rail trips which did not contain an Underground stage. Bus and taxi trips not involving a rail stage were derived from the Household Survey.

Residents' bus travel data were only available from the Household Survey, therefore, these data could not be cross-validated with any other source. However, data could be bias-corrected using the LATS 1991 Bus Cordon Count Survey, which counted passengers crossing a cordon around Inner London. Results from this survey indicated a shortfall of nine per cent in the Household estimates. As a result, an appropriate adjustment figure was applied to such records.

Bias-correction and reconciliation of the Household Survey database

Finally, factors were applied to records in the Household Survey database so that, as far as possible, the estimates of London residents' travel in overlapping trip categories would be consistent with the best estimates derived from the VCTF and PCTF. No such factors were available for residents' walk and taxi trips (since these records could only be estimated from the Household Survey). For these modes, the expanded Household Survey estimates have not been further adjusted.

The effects of these adjustments was to increase the total number of trips estimated by the Household Survey by nine per cent (and an increase of 11 per cent in the number of person-kilometres travelled). If walk and taxi trips are excluded, the total number of trips by the remaining modes of transport increased by 12 per cent, although there are considerable variations between the different modes of transport and trip purposes.

Results

A comprehensive results report was published in March 1994. *Some of the principal results given in that report were:*

- over 20 million trips were made in London on a typical 1991 weekday.
- almost half of these were made by car, either as driver (36 per cent) or as passenger (13 per cent). Public transport accounted for a quarter of all trips.
- over four million trips were made solely on foot.
- on a typical weekday, 18 per cent of Londoners used the bus at least once. Bus usage was most common amongst Inner London residents.
- over two-thirds of rail trips (including trips made by Underground) either started or ended in Central London.
- the total number of trips made by London residents on Saturdays was only slightly lower than the corresponding weekday figure.
- about 140,000 Londoners (two per cent) rode a bicycle on a typical 1991 weekday. This represents a 30 per cent drop since 1981.
- over 750,000 Londoners owned a Travelcard (valid on bus and rail services within the capital), and a further 200,000 owned a bus pass (valid only on buses).
- between 0700 and 1000, almost half of the trips made in London were between home and work.

Further results are available from the results report:

Travel In London: London Area Transport Survey 1991,
published by HMSO, price £26.

Further enquiries may be addressed to:

Mike Collop
LATS Unit (STC3)
Department of Transport
Room A703 Romney House
43 Marsham Street
London SW1P 3PY
Tel: (0171) 276 8778.

The Family Expenditure Survey: Some Recent Developments

by John King, Central Statistical Office.

All surveys need continuous attention to ensure that they keep pace with users' needs, with changes in the topics being studied and with developments in technology. This article describes some of the major changes that are being made to the Family Expenditure Survey (FES) in order to keep it an up-to-date and efficient operation. The major changes described here are:

- introduction of computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) from April 1994;
- development of a new processing system;
- timetable improvements and release arrangements;
- moving the survey to a financial year basis;
- dropping imputed income and rent of owner-occupiers;
- plans for future developments.

Introduction of CAPI from April 1994

During 1992 and 1993 the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) conducted extensive tests of the feasibility of computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) for the household and individual schedules of the FES. These tests were successful and it was decided to use laptop computers for FES interviews from April 1994. This brings the latest technology and one of the most important developments in survey methodology to the FES. The computerised schedules have been developed by OPCS using the Blaise software from the Netherlands' Central Bureau of Statistics. The same software is already used for the Family Resources Survey and the Labour Force Survey. The FES interview schedules are, however, the most complex and lengthy questionnaires to be transferred to CAPI.

As part of the transfer to a CAPI system the data entry for the weekly expenditure diary has also been transferred to the Blaise system. The opportunity was taken to review the coding scheme, and a new set of codes, using a hierarchical system, has been introduced from April 1994. Computer assisted coding is expected to introduce benefits in accuracy and consistency of the coding, and in a reduction of the time needed for the coding and data entry operation.

The piloting and early experiences on the survey itself have shown that the interview is not adversely affected by the use of laptop computers, and that there appear to be no significant mode changes in levels of main variables and aggregates. It is expected that the quality of the information collected will improve. All of the relevant office checks that were used in the processing system of the old paper-based surveys have been included in the CAPI questionnaire. This means that there is a series of consistency and quality checks being run on the data as they are collected. Problems can be resolved during the interview with the respondent: a considerable improvement over the old method of experienced editors making amendments in the office after the interview. A small amount of office editing remains in the system, to impute answers which the respondents were unable or unwilling to give.

Development of a new processing system

Until the survey round which began in April 1994 the FES had been processed in Runcorn by the Employment Department (ED) on a SIR-based system dating from 1986 (SIR is the acronym for Scientific Information Retrieval). Instead of developing an interface to the CAPI data, it was decided to develop a new system for processing within the CSO. This decision has brought to an end the historic involvement of ED with the FES. ED continued to take data collected up to the end of March 1994 (the end of the paper-based interviews), and has processed the 1993 survey and the data for the 1993/94 database.

The new processing system is based on the CSO's Ingres database. The package Quicktab (with a few enhancements requested by the CSO) will be used to produce tabulations from the data. It is expected that there will be considerable efficiency gains, and time and cost savings, from the new system. The new system has the potential to introduce automated quality control checks and procedures which are done manually at the moment. It will also be possible to provide customers with data in a format that can be easily read into a SIR database if they wish to continue to use SIR for their analysis.

Timetable improvements and release arrangements.

Improvements to the data processing stages by ED and OPCS meant that the database for the 1992 survey was finalised by about the end of July 1993, and *Family Spending* was released in September 1993 - an improvement of about 6 weeks over the previous year. Further improvements, of about 4 weeks, were made in releasing the 1993 survey, and it is expected that similar improvements can be made for the 1994-95 survey although because of the change to a reference period 3 months later it may appear that the results are coming out more slowly.

The new CSO policy on release of data, and the introduction of ***First Releases*** has changed the way FES data are released. Some of the main aggregates are now given in a ***First Release***. About 6 weeks later the report *Family Spending* is published, and at the same time the anonymised database is made available.

Moving the survey to a financial year basis

The FES has always been conducted on a calendar year basis. However, the FES questionnaires have often had to be changed in April to reflect changes in benefits or taxes which take effect from the beginning of the fiscal year. These have required changes to the questionnaires and to the processing system during the survey year. Moving the FES cycle to an April to March year means that changes of this kind can be made once, at the beginning of the year, with the minimum of effort and with no in-year changes. Some users of FES data have also indicated a preference for fiscal year data for their analyses.

The FES moved to an April to March basis in April 1994. The survey round which started then will be referred to as the 1994/95 survey. The transitional arrangements for the change in reference period have included continuing the fieldwork for the survey during the January-March quarter of 1994, using the same questionnaire as the 1993 survey. It was necessary to continue collecting data during this period because the information will be used to compile the weights for the Retail Prices Index, and for other purposes including inputs to the Consumers' Expenditure component of the National Accounts.

Family Spending, and the usual tables and datasets provided to users, have been produced for the 1993 survey, and will be produced for the 1994/95 survey. In addition, a set of tables and a dataset for 1993/94 (April-March) will be produced, to provide data with which the 1994/95 results can be compared.

Dropping imputed income and rent of owner-occupiers

Imputations for income and rent of owner-occupiers were dropped for the 1992 survey. These imputations were based on the rateable values of properties. However, rateable values were becoming increasingly difficult to collect, and were, of course, very out of date. No satisfactory alternative basis for the imputations has been found, although some research was conducted. Conceptually this is an important area, and further research will be conducted to find acceptable ways of making these imputations.

The change means that, beginning with the 1992 survey, income and expenditure have been operationally defined on a "cash payments" basis. Income of households is now defined in the same way as in earlier surveys, except that imputed income of owner-occupiers is excluded. On the expenditure side, the imputed rent of owner-occupiers has been replaced by the interest component of their mortgage payments (if any).

Plans for future developments

Expenditure of the under 16s

When the FES was first introduced it was probably reasonable to collect daily expenditure information only from those aged 16 or over. However, times change and consideration is now being given to reducing the age at which individuals are asked to participate in the survey. Those under 16 may well have significant levels of expenditure, and the expenditure may be concentrated on particular categories or items.

OPCS has been exploring this topic in a series of qualitative studies. Depending on the results of the next test, planned for November, it is possible that a lower age limit for the diary could be introduced in the 1995/96 survey round. There are several considerations being investigated. Four of the main questions are: down to what age can a diary be completed; how to draw the line operationally between spending on one's own account and as an agent of, say, a parent; what is the level of spending at different ages; and where should the new age limit be and at what age does the cost of collecting the additional data outweigh the value of it.

Dissemination

The dissemination of the FES data is also under review. *Family Spending* now has more text, and some charts illustrating the text: further improvements will be made with succeeding reports. A readership survey was included with the 1994 edition, and its results will be used to guide future development of the publication. The tables in the report are produced using spreadsheets, and the spreadsheets themselves are now available separately on diskette. Consideration is being given to other forms of electronic dissemination, and also to the appointment of marketing agents to expand the capability for producing ad hoc tabulations. Although the FES is a resource which is extensively exploited by government departments and by the academic community, who have access through the ESRC Data Archive, the CSO feels that it is not used outside these circles as widely as it could be.

Research

There is a continuing research programme funded by CSO to investigate a range of areas of concern. Current and planned projects include:

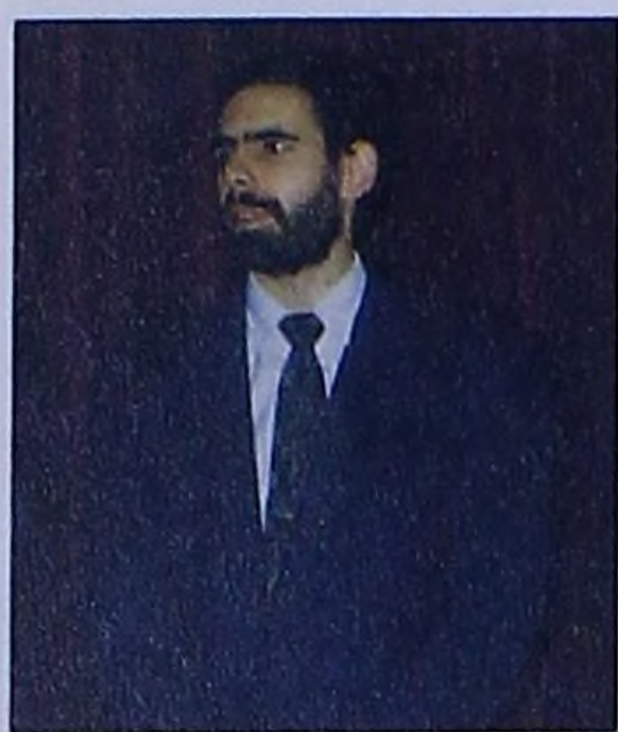
- investigation of the nature of non-response, comparing the FES sample in January to June 1991 with the 1991 Population Census. This work will be taken further than previous census comparison studies to include recommendations on grossing-up the data to adjust for non-response;
- the perennial issue of grossing-up methods is also being examined by an interdepartmental group of users, who are comparing different approaches currently in use and the extent of common ground;
- investigation of how the survey captures self-employment income;
- the effect of incentives on response;
- the relationship between the FES and the Family Resources Survey (jointly with the Department of Social Security).

All these projects aim to improve the quality of the data collected and their analysis, and to ensure that value for money is achieved in the survey.

Contact:

Family Expenditure Survey Section
Central Statistical Office
Millbank Tower
London SW1P 4QQ
Telephone: 0171 217 4207 or 4184

Preparing undergraduates for careers in the Government Statistical Service: a view from the inside



Darren Short
Central Statistical Office

Darren Short recruits graduates to the Government Statistical Service's equivalent of a management development programme. He is also responsible for guiding their subsequent training and development. The following article is based on a talk he gave to the 1994 Annual Conference of the Association of Statistics Lecturers in Universities.

Introduction

Every year, the Government Statistical Service (GSS) runs a competition to recruit statistical graduates into their fast-stream entry programme. Those selected must show promise both as government statisticians and managers and have the potential to achieve, on merit, rapid promotion.

There are many excellent applicants. However, a large number fail to meet the required standard in the selection process, despite appearing from their application forms to have the attributes and knowledge needed. Some do pass the selection process but then fail to realise their potential on-the-job. This article gives possible reasons and guidance to those considering applying in the future and to those responsible for preparing them for a career in statistics.[1]

Careers in the GSS

Within the decentralised GSS there are 5,000 or so people working in over 30 Government Departments and Agencies. This number includes professional statisticians, operational researchers, research officers, survey officers, economists and a large number of administrators.

Statisticians can be found at each grade within the organisation. Those in senior management positions include Bill McLennan, Director of the Central Statistical Office (CSO) and Head of the GSS, and, in each department, Directors of Statistics who are in charge of statistical operations. These senior managers have working for them statisticians with varying degrees of management responsibility and experience who manage most of the administrative support staff. In total, these statisticians provide the GSS with its statistical backbone, with most of its managers and with most of its senior managers of today and tomorrow.

Most statistical graduates enter the GSS in the junior statistician grades and progress at a pace dictated by their performance in a wide range of skills. These skills reflect the dual role of being a statistician and a manager. Indeed, they are recruited because of their potential to achieve this rise to senior positions. This dual role forms a core part of this article.

Although this article concentrates on those with statistical qualifications, it is important to note that they are not the only graduates entering the GSS. A very successful 'Trainee Statistician' scheme operates which recruits around 13 graduates each year from other disciplines and trains them in statistics through an intensive post-graduate conversion course run for the GSS by the University of Greenwich. They then continue in the GSS in the same way as those who enter with statistics as their first degree.

Statistician and manager: recruitment competition

The competition

Running from October to March, this competition attracts around 400 applicants each year - each meeting the minimum criteria of a first or second class honours degree with at least a 25 per cent statistical content. In 1994, these 400 were competing for 35 available vacancies.

The application forms

The importance of meeting the requirements of being a good statistician and a good manager is reflected heavily in the recruitment process. The application form asks applicants about their educational background and their competencies and experience in statistics. An equal amount of space is also allocated to questions dealing with examples of initiative, positions of responsibility and drive and determination. The tutor's reference seeks views on a wide range of abilities including statistics, communication skills, determination to complete tasks and leadership qualities.

The 1½-day selection process

Using this information, a sift board selects those invited to attend a 1½ day assessment. In 1994, 180 were invited, although the number will be reduced in 1995 to reflect a smaller number of vacancies. Of the candidates reaching this second stage, around four in ten were in their final degree year. Of the others, nearly three-fifths had upper seconds with the remainder split fairly evenly between firsts and lower seconds.

The 1½-day selection process consists of a variety of tests.

On statistics, candidates face three:

- a first written paper which asks them to comment on whether or not a given statement can be supported by several statistical tables and charts. A good example might be a selection of environ mental statistics and a statement that "Britain is going green";
- a second paper requires candidates to write a brief for a non-statistician manager on a given statistics-related problem based on 10 or so supporting written documents;
- an interview with a government and an academic statistician who, in addition to assessing statistical knowledge, also test for good oral communication skills.

These three exercises test candidates' ability to use statistics to solve practical, everyday problems; to identify which facts are important; to draw conclusions and to be able to communicate answers on technical topics clearly to non-statisticians. The fact that there is no single correct answer to the exercises seems to confuse some candidates who may have been used to statistical problems which are idealistic rather than realistic.

In 1994, one in seven candidates exceeded the required standard in these statistical exercises, while just over half failed to meet this standard. *Comments from government and academic statisticians on this latter group included:*

- Surprisingly superficial statistical analysis
- Little or no considered interpretation of the data
- Could not describe simple statistical techniques to a layperson
- Could not apply statistical knowledge to practical situations
- Statistical answers showed a serious failure of comprehension
- Poor at interpreting statistical tables
- Confused over even basic statistical concepts such as index numbers and regression
- Could not suggest how to improve a spurious analysis
- Unstructured written analysis

Non-statistical qualities are also tested by cognitive tests and further exercises which look at communication skills, roles in teams, problem solving, basic intellect, English and numerical understanding. Many candidates fall down badly on at least one of these aspects and assessors regularly raise doubts about candidates' communication skills and ability to structure written answers.

In 1994, across all statistical and non-statistical tests, only one in four candidates met or exceeded the required standard. Many of the others fell well short.

Success in the recruitment process

As a result of this year's 1½-day competition, only 35 of the 180 applicants assessed were considered to meet or exceed the standards required and to have the statistical and managerial skills needed to be a government statistician.

Early development

Once recruited, the successful candidates spend a maximum of their first six years in a training grade in preparation for more senior management responsibility.

This time is spent working towards a substantial competence framework of skills and qualities covering staff, financial and organisational management, interpersonal skills, knowledge of the organisation, IT and statistics.

The majority of their development takes place on the job via a series of five or six different posts within the GSS (not necessarily in the same department). These aim to expose recruits to a wide range of situations and experiences. For example, some of the postings might involve working with other statisticians; others with economists, administrators, the press or senior civil servants. Recruits will find themselves working in teams of various sizes and on various statistical and non-statistical topics.

The two things which all these jobs will have in common are that they are developmental and in the front line - they are most definitely not back room:

Continuing statistics

Some recruits extend their knowledge by studying for an MSc at evening class, something which is encouraged and may be part funded by their department. Other recruits use the varying on-the-job opportunities to develop their statistical skills, supported where necessary by specific technical and refresher training as required. In addition, they are encouraged to join the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) and participate in its meetings.

Succeeding

The bottom line, when it comes to working in the GSS, is that new recruits will be working in statistical environments and will need to prove that they have the level of statistical ability required to do a wide range of GSS activities. However, success depends heavily on developing the many other desired non-statistical skills. Amongst the qualities which are highly valued are: innovation, imagination, team working, drive and determination and seeking and taking responsibility. Indeed, the competition for promotion to senior ranks is such that only those who develop across the full range of competencies will succeed.

Improving the chances of success

For their statistical work, most statisticians in the GSS rely heavily on their degree. Consequently, they need a good knowledge-base in their first degree of the techniques most commonly found in the GSS. They also need to be able to apply these techniques rapidly if they are to have an impact and confirm that they have the potential to succeed. They must be in a position to deal with practical situations from the start and would therefore benefit from gaining appropriate experience during their degree.

The same is true for non-statistical skills such as working in teams, giving presentations, dealing with customers, planning projects and managing them. Experience of these during their degrees would also be good preparation for their new careers - in the GSS and, no doubt, also with other employers of statisticians.

I discussed how well statistics degrees prepare students for a career in the GSS with some recruits from recent years. *Their comments included:*

- For policy makers to value our advice, our written work needs to be clear, concise, well constructed and logical. Degrees did not prepare us for this;
- Need theory and applied - too much of either is bad;
- Degrees used few GSS examples or data sets - many data sets were old;
- Need to study in degrees how to advise non-statisticians, role of statisticians and how to present statistics;
- More study of statistical sources;
- Need to get our 'hands dirty' on real statistical problems.
- Need to be kept up-to-date on current statistical news through newspapers, RSS, etc.

A target

There may not be such a thing as the perfect graduate for the GSS but someone heading in the right direction would have a good knowledge of statistical theory and the ability to apply and explain it. They would have the potential to be a good manager with strong oral and written communication skills. They would be energetic, committed and imaginative. They would seek and take responsibility and would be able to work on their own initiative.

Your reactions

I would be very happy to hear from anyone wishing to react to this article.

Please write to me at:

Central Statistical Office
Room 1803
Millbank Tower
Millbank, London
SW1P 4QQ

[1] The recent White Paper on the Civil Service and Review of Fast Stream Recruitment may impact on the nature of GSS recruitment. Further information will be included in future issues of Statistical News. For latest information, contact the author of this article.

News from around the GSS and beyond

Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Go York

The title of this short note was chosen as the code name of the operation to re-locate a number of MAFF Divisions to a new building in York. First to go is the Statistics (Census and Prices) Division, currently based at Guildford, which is scheduled to start occupying the new premises at "King's Pool" from 17 October 1994. An advance party is moving into temporary accommodation in Leeds from 5 September and the move is expected to be completed by the end of March 1995.

The Division is experiencing a good 100% turnover in staff. Considerable progress has been made in resettling existing staff who are not relocating. Appointments have been made for most of the posts with staff from elsewhere in MAFF, transfers from OGDs, many of whom are already living in the area, and direct recruitment from outside the Civil Service. The new recruits will quite literally be getting their boots dirty on their first days in York attending an "Introduction to Agriculture" course.

Whilst the Division is going through a period of upheaval in the new few months it is hoped that there will be a minimal effect on the service provided. Although there have been considerable resource pressures over the last year (it has felt like the Grand Old Duke of York marching uphill) much has been achieved. I cannot thank the staff, both existing and new, enough for the substantial efforts that have been put in. The move is in sight. From then on it should be plain sailing - we should be so lucky!!! Most of Statistics (Agricultural Commodities) will follow in April 1995.

Peter Helm
Statistics (Census and Prices) Divison
MAFF

Central Statistical Office

September saw the release of The Government Statistical Service Consulting Users. This new publication from the Central Statistical Office explains how users of GSS statistics are involved in the development of government statistics. It has details of all the GSS's statistical advisory and consultative committees. It also provides information on the independent user groups which exist.

The publication is available free from the CSO library in Newport (Tel 01633 812973).

1990 Input-Output tables for the UK

A full set of input-output tables for the UK in 1990 are now available from the Central Statistical Office (CSO). The tables include the domestic and imports use matrices in commodity by industry and symmetric commodity by commodity forms, and the Leontief inverse. The Leontief inverse is especially useful in modelling changes in the demand for all products that result from a shift in final demand of particular goods or services.

An article describing the tables and presenting them in an aggregated form was published in the July 1994 edition of Economic Trends.

The full set of tables are available, in computer readable and hard copy form, for a handling charge of £50 from:

Maxine Richards
Input-Output Section
Central Statistical Office
Room 131a/2
Government Offices
Great George Street
London, SW1P 3AQ
Telephone 0171-270-6045.

For more information about the tables contact:

Duncan Millard at the CSO on 0171-270-6062

The CSO also produces annual input-output balances. The balances simply present the match, at purchaser prices, of supply and demand in the economy in an input-output framework - they do not include any derived tables. The 1990 balance is currently available at the above address for a handling charge of £30. Balances for 1991 and 1992 will be available in the autumn.

Employment

1993 Census of Employment

This is the first full census since 1981 with over a million businesses contacted for their employment details. An Optical Character Recognition (OCR) system has been installed to cope with the increased volume of data capture. This OCR system is linked to a Document Image Processing (DIP) system resulting in a virtually paperless office. The OCR/DIP system was installed and developed by Andersen Consulting. The DIP system includes data checking. Returns with errors on them are sent to the DIP workstations where operators can view the image of the form, the data taken from the form by the OCR system, the nature of error, and take the necessary corrective action.

To date about 95% of business have returned their census forms and over two thirds of these have been processed successfully through the system. Use of this technology has reduced the number of staff needed to process the census by about a third. DIP operators have found the technology easy to use and have achieved their target of clearing 120 forms per working day on the system.

Contact:

Peter Thomas 01928 792 600

Publication of Government Training and Enterprise Programmes Statistics

Statisticians at the Employment Department regularly publish Great Britain figures on the numbers of starts and participants on Government training programmes in the Labour Market Statistics Press Notice and the Employment Gazette. They also publish figures (England & Wales only) on the characteristics (eg gender, ethnic origin etc) and outcomes (in a job, gained a qualification etc) of those on Youth Training and Training for Work in the Employment Gazette.

These figures will now be made available via the Employment Department's National On-line Manpower Information system (NOMIS). NOMIS will also hold similar figures at regional and TEC levels. This means that figures on Government training programmes will be more widely available than ever before.

Contact:

Training Statistics Help-line 0114 259 4027

Inter-TEC Comparisons 1993/94

In the September 1994 issue of the Employment Gazette, the Employment Department published a table comparing the performance of the English and Welsh TECs. The table shows the relative performance of the 82 TECs in delivering the Employment Department's main programmes - Youth Training, Training for Work and Investors in People, in the 12 months from April 1993 to March 1994.

Contact:

Eric Yates 0114 259 3357

Guide to Sources of Labour Market Data

This guide is produced by the Statistical Services Division of the Employment Department. It's aim is to provide users of labour market information with details of what is available and where to obtain it. It contains details of user help-lines and contact points for different topics. It also lists details of publications, articles and analyses, information available in computer readable form and other sources of information.

Contact:

Harminder Tiwana 0171 273 5525

Skill Needs in Britain 1994

The Employment Department carries out an annual Skills Monitoring Survey. The aim of this survey is to collect information on recruitment difficulties, skill needs and employers' training activities. It covers establishments with 25 or more employees in all industries except agriculture in Great Britain. The report of the latest survey was published on 27th September 1994. It reports that 11% of employers were experiencing recruitment difficulties at the time of the survey (Spring 1994). This compares with 6% in 1993, 5% in 1992 and 7% in 1991. However this is still well below the 22% recorded in 1990.

Contact:

Helen Ward 0114 259 4216

Health & Safety Commission Annual Report 1993/94

The Health and Safety Commission will publish it's annual report for the year 1993/94 towards the end of November. The annual report and it's Statistical Supplement will include figures on the numbers and types of injuries and fatalities at work. It will also include figures on occupational ill-health and the number of prosecutions brought to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Contact:

HSE Books 01787 881 165

The Labour Force Survey

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the largest quarterly household survey carried out in Great Britain. It provides a wealth of information on the labour market and is compiled on the basis of internationally standard concepts and definitions. Over the past few months, there have been a number of improvements in the dissemination of LFS data. These include enhancements to the LFS Quarterly Bulletin and the availability of some LFS information at county, TEC/LEC and local authority level.

One of the most important changes is that key results from the LFS are now released only 1½ months after the end of each survey period. Key results for autumn (September to November) 1994 will thus be published in January in the LFS Rapid Release (LFSRR). Figures in the LFSRR cover total employment, including the service sector and self-employment; full and part-time employment; ILO unemployment; and economic activity and ILO unemployment rates. Regional and broad industry analyses are also included.

Fuller data from the LFS continue to be published to the existing timetable. For example, the full results for the summer 1994 quarter will be published in December and the full results for the autumn quarter will be published in March.

Contact:

The LFS Help-line 0171 273 5585.

Training Statistics 1994

On 7th December 1994, the Employment Department will publish the 1994 edition of Training Statistics. The volume brings together the main statistical sources relating to the training system and highlights some of the key facts illustrated by the data. It will contain figures showing the incidence of training and who receives training, together with figures showing the form that training takes and the funding and results of training.

Contact:

Chris Hurst 0114 259 3489

Identification of unemployed clients needing additional help

Statisticians at the Employment Service have been working with psychologists to develop a process for identifying unemployed clients in need of extra help. The aims of the exercise were to test a more consistent method of identifying clients who need additional help during the early stages of unemployment and to evaluate the effect of the additional help given. Several Employment Service Jobcentres participated in the pilot which started on the 8th August 1994 and lasted for a period of two weeks.

Contact:

Andrew Birtwhistle 0114 259 6270

1993 Survey of Public Attitudes to the Environment

This statistical bulletin was published by the Department of the Environment in September 1994. The Department commissioned NOP Market Research Limited to undertake a national survey of England and Wales in 1993 to investigate people's environmental concerns, awareness, and behaviour. The survey covered a large number of environmental issues, ranging from global warming to noise.

The survey was based on a random sample of 3,200 adults drawn from the electoral register in England and Wales. 160 constituencies were randomly selected, and a sample of 20 electors drawn from each of these constituencies. Considerable efforts were made to maximise the response and a total of 2,038 people were interviewed face-to-face in their homes during July and August 1993.

The bulletin presents comprehensive and detailed results, and compares some results with those from similar surveys in 1986 and 1989. The bulletin includes analysis of people's levels of concern and optimism about environmental issues, their opinions on who should pay, and who is responsible for environmental protection, their knowledge of the causes of environmental problems, and their actions taken to help the environment.

Broad results from the survey were published in the Digest of Environmental Protection and Water Statistics at the end of April 1994, and an appraisal of the survey methodology appeared as an article in the Spring 1994 edition of Statistical News.

Reference

Department of the Environment Statistical Bulletin
1993 Survey of Public Attitudes to the Environment
Price £5.00 net

Available from:

Department of the Environment
Publications Sales Unit
Building 3, Spur 7
Government Buildings
Lime Grove
Eastcote, Ruislip
Middlesex HA4 08SF
Telephone: 081 429 5186/5187/5177
Fax: 0181-429-5195

Digest of Data for the construction industry

In January 1995 the second edition of the digest will be published by HMSO in the wake of extremely positive reviews of the first edition.

It came to light in meetings between the Construction Sponsorship Directorate and representatives of the industry - on the Consultative Committee on Statistics - that there was a large demand for a single publication that pulled together the wide variety of information available on the construction industry. In particular, this would include information from within Government.

Although the market for the digest extends into many areas, its target audience is broadly management - both within the industry and clients of the industry - who would use the digest for planning purposes.

This edition of the digest will include statistics on spending on prisons, courts and schools; the amount of floorspace in England and Wales; and planning decisions by district and county councils.

For more information please contact:

Steve Hickman 0171 276 4608

Inland Revenue

The 1994 edition of Inland Revenue Statistics was published in September. As well as updating regular published information on the taxes administered by the Inland Revenue the publication included estimates of the distribution of personal wealth, analyses of personal income derived from the 1991-92 and 1992-93 Surveys of Personal Incomes and analyses of company income by industrial sector.

A number of new developments were included in the 1994 edition, namely:

- a new table on personal incomes at local authority district level;
- a new table on corporation tax assessments giving more details of numbers of companies, income, allowances and tax; and
- a number of new tables on personal pensions for employees

Contact:

David Bailey 0171 438 7158

Office of Population Censuses and Surveys

1991 Census Reports Programme completed

The two Census Offices for Great Britain (OPCS and the General Register Office, Scotland) will this autumn complete the programme of over 350 reports from the 1991 Census.

The reports have been produced in several main series:

- Local Statistics Reports present a full range of statistics covering all the topics included in the Census for areas such as counties and Scottish Regions, local authority districts, and regional and district health authority areas.
- Local Statistics Monitors present a selection of the statistics published in the main reports with a brief commentary and some comparisons with earlier censuses. In addition, some Monitors have been published for geographic areas not covered by the main reports, such as wards and civil parishes; postcode sectors; health districts; and parliamentary constituencies.
- Topic Reports present detailed results, mainly at the national area level, either for each individual topic covered by the Census, such as economic activity; housing; long-term illness; migration; and household; and family composition; or for sub-groups of the population such as children and young adults; persons aged 60 or over; communal establishments; and ethnic groups. For many of these topics, Monitors have also been published giving some summary statistics and commentary illustrated by maps and charts.
- Key Statistics Reports present around 150-170 summary statistics for particular types of area throughout the country, with national figures, laid out for easy comparison between areas.

In addition to these statistical reports, the Census Offices have published explanatory volumes designed to assist the user in getting maximum benefit from the Census. These include a range of User Guides, a volume of Definitions, and a General Report, which provides a full background to the several stages of planning and executing a population census.

For further information please contact:

OPCS Census Customer Services
Tel: 01329 81 3800

Social Security

Publication of 'Social Security Statistics 1994'

The primary Department of Social Security statistical publication 'Social Security Statistics 1994' is due for early release this year. It is hoped that this release will coincide with the Royal Statistical Society Conference to be held in Newcastle in September. After the significant improvement of last year's edition, further strides forward have been made this year, setting high standards for future GSS publications.

Copies can be obtained by contacting:

Mrs Michelle O'Donnell on 0191-22-57298

DSS Statisticians gain favourable review

A recent review of the Analytical Services Division (ASD) (the statistics, economics and operational research branch) of the Department of Social Security has concluded that it is "highly successful". John Merchant and Christine Jeannette's investigation over the past few months found ASD to be "well integrated" and "highly valued" with a "highly skilled workforce".

Trade and Industry

Recent developments in the United Kingdom Energy Sector

The United Kingdom is at the forefront of introducing competitive markets as a means of balancing supply and demand for energy. The need for information to monitor progress and trends in production, consumption, prices etc remains an essential part of this process.

The United Kingdom is in the enviable position of being largely self-sufficient in energy. In 1993 there was a 4.0 per cent increase in the production of primary fuels compared with 1992. The main increases were in the production of crude oil (up 6.4 per cent) and natural gas (up 17.6 per cent), with new fields coming on stream in both cases. Gas is increasingly being used to generate electricity - there was a fourfold increase in its use in 1993 compared with 1992. The production of nuclear electricity increased by 16.5 per cent due to higher performance levels. The United Kingdom had an overseas trade surplus in fuels of about £1¼ billion in 1993, compared with £¼ billion in 1992, as a result of increases in the value of exports of crude oil and petroleum products. The latest figures can be found in the 1994 edition of the Department of Trade and Industry's Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics, which contains detailed information on energy supply and demand, along with annexes on long term trends, renewable energy, combined heat and power, and energy and the environment. Up to date monthly energy statistics can be found in the Department's monthly bulletin Energy Trends.

For further information about these two publications contact:

Mike Ward
DTI
Room 3.3.15
1 Palace Street
London SW1E 5HE
Tel:0171-238-3576

The new annual Energy Report was launched this year by the Department of Trade and Industry. This follows the Government's commitment in the Coal Review White Paper to publish information relevant to business and investment decisions. Volume 1 of the Energy Report, 'Markets in Transition' highlights the main changes and expected developments in the United Kingdom energy sector as it moves towards a fully competitive market. Volume 2 'Oil and Gas Resources of the United Kingdom' deals specifically with the oil and gas sector.

For further details contact:

Peter Dye
DTI
Room 2.1.10
1 Palace Street
London SW1E 5HE
Tel 0171-238-3511

Re-organising economics and statistics in DTI

The reorganisation follows a KPMG review of the work of ES Division which recommended that we would be in a better position to serve our internal policy customers if we worked alongside them, rather than being in a central division. Consequently, many statisticians with their economist colleagues have been bedded out within policy Deputy Secretary commands. This applies to statisticians and economists whose work links directly with DTI commands such as Energy, Industry and Regional/Small Firms.

There remains a smaller ES core which includes a Statistical Support branch. This branch deals with work areas that are central to more than one commands, such as cross sectoral analysis between industry sectors and trade statistics. It also provides statistical support to non-industry and non-energy commands, including insolvency statistics, statistical and database support to all statisticians and economists in DTI, policy on industrial statistics and survey control.

Contact:

Sandra Tudor 0171 215 1912

Transport

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

First Report on Road Travel Speeds in English Urban Areas

This report, published in August, gives details of the results from the first national Urban Speed Survey, undertaken by the Department of Transport in Autumn 1993. The survey measured vehicle speeds on the major roads of each of the 19 largest English conurbations (with the exception of London, which has seen similar surveys since the late 1960s, results of which are to be published in a separate report in November), as well as in five randomly chosen smaller towns. The biggest urban area surveyed (in terms of population) was the West Midlands conurbation, and the smallest was Peterborough.

The intention of the survey is to monitor trends in traffic speed over time, rather than to act as a means of comparing road conditions in different towns. However, for the record, Peterborough had the fastest surveyed network (an average peak speed of 36.8mph), whilst Leicester had the slowest (15.8mph). The report also reveals that, in almost all areas, daytime off-peak speeds are faster than peak speeds, the difference being most pronounced in Tyneside. Finally, the report also provides parking density data (ie the average number of vehicles parked per mile of road) for each surveyed area.

The report is available from HMSO, priced £6.70.

Contact point:

Phil Mongredien 0171 276 8005

National Travel Survey 1991/93

Results from the latest three calendar years of the continuous National Travel Survey (NTS), which is carried out by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) on behalf of the Department of Transport (DoT), were published on 7 September 1994.

The continuous NTS has now been running since July 1988. Each year about 3,500 households in Great Britain agree to take part in the survey. They provide information on a range of topics: personal details; details of household vehicles; and details of all journeys carried out over a sample period of seven days (such as purpose, mode of travel, time of day, distance and duration of the journey).

The report mostly aggregates data over 3 years, since only then is the size of the sample sufficiently large to analyse details of journeys with confidence. *Key findings of the report include:*

- The economic recession of 1991/92 reduced the number of journeys, particularly business journeys, across Britain. However, journeys were generally longer and hence there was little change in the average distance travelled per person per year since 1988/90.
- Londoners travelled only 7 per cent further in 1991/93 than in 1985/86. The comparable rise for outside London was 24 per cent.
- Shopping habits have changed. The number of Sunday shopping journeys per person per year almost doubled between 1985/86 and 1991/93.

Reference

National Travel Survey 1991/93
HMSO,
price £17 net
ISBN 0 11 551632

Publication of Transport Statistics Great Britain 1994

Transport Statistics Great Britain 1994, the Department's annual digest of statistics, was published in September. It contains a comprehensive range of transport statistics mainly for the years 1983 to 1993, together with a number of articles on transport themes. The 1994 edition, for the first time contains an article contributed form outside the Department - on multiple - fatality transport accidents (1946 - 1992). The publication gives information on road transport, energy and the environment, public transport, water and air transport. There is also a section on international comparisons, as well as some selected historical series.

Transport Statistics Great Britain 1994
is available from HMSO,
priced £26, ISBN 0 11 557633 6.

HM Treasury

Civil Service

On 13 July a White Paper on the Civil Service[1] was published which reaffirmed the fundamental principles of a professional civil service, accountable through Ministers to Parliament, recruited impartially and dominated by a high ideal of the value of public service. The White Paper set out how the Government see the current reforms of the Civil service being taken forward and draws together the implications for the future of the civil service.

The White Paper will have implications for all civil servants but particularly for the GSS members of PMS division in the Treasury who work on personnel statistics. Changes in the civil service, eg delegated pay and grading to all departments and delayering, will have implications for the way data may need to be collected. Monitoring changes in the size and structure of the civil service, comparing promotion rates by gender or ethnic origin, looking at pay rates or analysing the background of the senior civil service are all the kinds of day to day work of PMS in providing support to the Treasury policy divisions.

Various other reports were produced at the same time as the White Paper, including a report reviewing the civil service fast stream entry[2]. Again PMS provided data for the report. The report will be of particular interest to members of the statistician group since they are among the fast stream grades covered.

[1] The Civil Service: Continuity and Change; HMSO; £7.10p

[2] Review of Fast Stream Recruitment; HMSO; £15

Scotland

Input Output Tables for Scotland

The 1989 Scottish Input-Output Tables were published on 3 August 1994. These update the 1979 Scottish tables. They provide a detailed and internally consistent picture of the Scottish economy for 1989. They display the flows of all goods and services, valued in monetary terms, from industry to industry and from producer to consumer. This is achieved by displaying the transactions of the economy in matrix form.
Planning has now started on the annual update of the tables, beginning with publication of the 1992 tables in the late summer of 1995.

Contact:

Jill Alexander 0141 242 5459

Scottish Environment Input-Output Project

Now the Input-Output tables for 1989 have been published The Scottish Office is turning its attention into extending these matrices to form Social Accounting Matrices. In particular, by equating environmental coefficients (such as air-pollution, waste, radioactivity etc) to the industrial groupings used in the Input-Output tables, environmental accounting models may be derived. SOEnD and SOID have begun work, in collaboration, to produce such models which will provide users with a greater understanding of economic-environmental impacts.

Professor Jim McGilvray, Department of Economics at the University of Strathclyde visited The Scottish Office and gave a stimulating seminar on the subject.

Contact:

Sandy Stewart 0131 244 4990

The Roofless Population and Household Projections for Scotland

The Housing Statistics Unit has been considering the feasibility of using mark-recapture methods to estimate the roofless population. A specification for research, based on this approach, is in preparation.

A review of the methodology used to produce household projections for Scotland and sub-nationally is in progress.

Contact:

Fiona Hird 031 244 2687

Further and Higher Education in Scotland

A revised Further Education Statistics (FES) collection is being implemented for the academic session 1994/95. New forms and Notes for Guidance were issued in August 1994.

From 1 August 1994 the Higher Education Statistics Agency takes over the data collection of all statistics relating to higher education in the UK. Previously, information relating to 'traditional' universities was collected by Universities Statistical Record while information on colleges and 'new' universities was collected by the relevant government department in each of the UK countries.

Contact:

Eric Platten 031 244 5375

Index of Production and Construction for Scotland

The Economics and Statistics Division of the Scottish Office Industry Department, published the rebased Index of Production and Construction for Scotland (1990=100) in November 1993. The rebasing process, which takes place every 5 years, permits revision of the coverage and treatment of data in each sector and an adjustment to its weight to reflect, more correctly, its contribution in the new base year, which is 1990.

The most recent Index publication, published on 10 August 1994, relates to 94Q1, and contains recalculated seasonal adjustment factors. These incorporate, for the first time, a 5-point centred moving average smoothing for the top 20 companies.

Contact:

Jill Alexander 041 242 5459

Gross Domestic Product (Output) for Scotland

Also recently published were rebased (to 1990=100) estimates of the growth in Scotland's Gross Domestic Product (Output) covering years up to and including 1992. The structure of the model used to derive GDP(O) for Scotland closely mirrors that used by CSO for deriving UK estimates. The UK weights for industries, or groups of industries, are adapted to represent the contribution of each industry to value added (net output) in Scotland.

Contact:

Marion Ogg 041 248 5446

Transport Statistics for Scotland

Road deaths in Scotland fell in 1993 to below 400 for the first time on record. This was published on 25 May 1994 in the Statistical Bulletin "Key 1993 Road Accident Statistics". This was the earliest that such annual statistics have been published for Scotland thanks to the earlier return of statistics by the police and local authorities. The Minister responsible for road safety in Scotland, Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, wrote personally thanking Chief Executives and Chief Constables in Scotland for the prompt supply of statistics.

Contact:

Peter Duncan 031 244 4992

Northern Ireland

Research in Russia

Over the past year, Statistics and Social Division has been involved in conducting a social research project in a district of the Moscow region (Serpukhov) for the European Commission's Technical Assistance Programme to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS). the research is concerned with assessing the social impact of economic restructuring in the area with a view to assisting TACIS in developing policies that help to reduce the social costs of the transition process.

The study has involved the conduct of a household survey, a survey of enterprises in the area and interviews with key local authority personnel and has been conducted in collaboration with a number of Russian research organisations. Some of the issues investigated include the inadequacy of existing social protection measures, the role of enterprise social benefits, labour market issues and an analysis of household income levels. A report on the research has been forwarded to TACIS.

Contact:

Dr James Gilan 01232 521029

Anonymous Records

Samples of Anonymised Records (SARs) from the Northern Ireland Census (1991) will soon be available, and so for the first time social researchers will have access to Northern Ireland Census microdata. The records contain neither names nor addresses nor any other information which would lead to the identification of an individual or household. Most of the SAR variables for Northern Ireland are the same as those for the Great Britain SARs and so a harmonised SARs dataset is to be produced, providing data for the UK as a whole.

The Northern Ireland SARs will be available from the Census Microdata Unit at the University of Manchester, and may also be accessed on-line from the Manchester Computing Centre.

For further information please contact,

Ruth Durrell, Administrator
Census Microdata Unit
Faculty of Economic & Social Science
University of Manchester
MANCHESTER M13 9PL

Size isn't everything

Data from the Northern Ireland Census (1991) are being made available, for smaller areas, through a collaborative project agreed between the Census Office for Northern Ireland, the Economic and Social Research Council, and Queen's University of Belfast. The machine-readable data consists of a set of 75 prespecified tables, the Small Area Statistics (SAS), designed to match closely to equivalent tables for Great Britain. The SAS datasets should be available in early October.

Contact:

Customer Services Section Census Office for Northern Ireland 01232 521440.

Mid-year estimates

The provisional mid-year population estimates (Northern Ireland) for 1993 will be available from the General Register Office (NI) from September 1994. Finalised 1991 and 1992 mid-year estimates will be available at the same time along with revised figures for 1982 to 1990 which now take account of the 1991 Census of Population.

Contact:

Mrs Jacquie Hyvart 01232 521481

Other Organisations

Bank of England

Infaltion Report

The August Inflation Report provided a detailed analysis of recent price and cost developments in the UK economy and offered the Bank of England's analysis of future prospects. Output price inflation remained subdued: RPIX inflation (the Government's target measure) was 2.4% in June; underlying inflation on the Bank's RPIY measure (which excludes the effect of indirect taxes) fell to 1.7%. The economy continued to grow at above its long-term potential rate and unemployment had fallen further, though other labour market indicators gave conflicting signals. If official interest rates were to remain unchanged over the next two years, it was probably that inflation would gradually rise to a level above the mid-point of the Government's target range.

Quarterly Bulletin

In addition to regular articles providing commentaries on the operation of UK monetary policy, and developments in the world economy and in financial markets, the August issue of the Bank's Quarterly Bulletin contained the following items:

UK trade - long-term trends and recent developments

This article considered why trade performance matters, analysing the factors that determine whether a current account gives grounds for concern and considering some longer-term trends in UK trade performance. It also assessed the impact of two recent major influences - sterling's depreciation following the suspension of ERM membership and the recent recession in continental Europe - and suggested some elements in the short-term UK trade outlook.

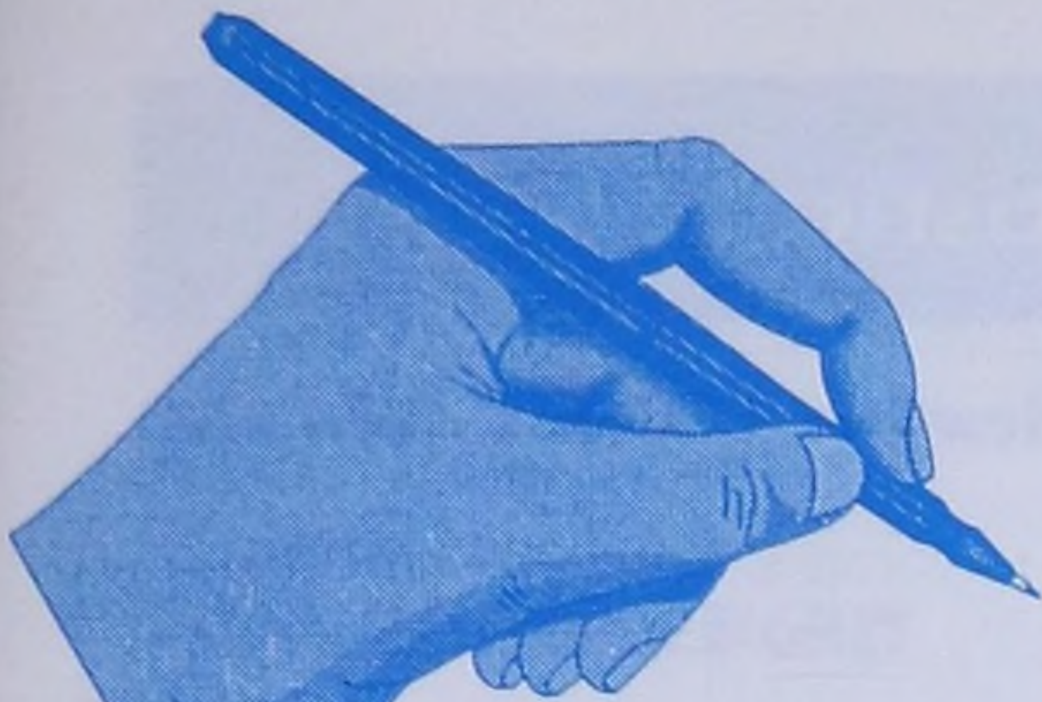
Estimating market interest rate and inflation expectations from the prices of UK government bonds
The article summarised recent Bank research into how best to derive interest rate and inflation expectations from the prices of gilts. It explained the important issues of estimation and interpretation that arise, and outlined a number of changes the bank proposes to make to the techniques it uses.

Company profitability and finance

The article assessed the evolution of firms' financial position over 1993 and 1994 Q1, comparing it with the 1982-84 recovery. Profitability has been markedly higher this time; industrial and commercial companies' retained earnings were up by over a third in 1993. Firms have made unprecedented net repayments of bank debt, while increasing their use of capital markets. Investment has been higher as a share of GDP, but has not yet picked up as the recovery has progressed.

Investment appraisal criteria and the impact of low inflation

The article looked at the impact of a return to low inflation on corporate investment decision-taking. It considered the different investment appraisal criteria used by firms - and the role they give them - and assessed the significant of firms' apparent slowness to adjust their criteria.



Readers Write ....

From: **C D Watkins**
Commercial Planning Manager at British Steel

After the teething problems, I am pleased that the UK's implementation of INTRASTAT is now providing a satisfactory level of information and thanks are due to the Customs staff involved for staying with a difficult task, not least in helping the many traders who had difficulties in coping with the new system.

With so much hard work invested, I am concerned to learn that there is now a proposal for more summary classification of tariff codes solely for trade within the European Union (EU). It would involve extra work and costs for companies such as British Steel because they would have to re-design their systems to reflect new tariff numbers, and we would lose the benefit of access to data in its present more detailed form. In any case we regard the consistency between EU and third country data as an advantageous simplification in the building and current operation of our systems.

Philip Turnbull of the Central Statistical Office (CSO) replies ......

There have been summary discussions among Member States and Eurostat (the Statistical Office of the European Communities) to consider ways of improving the quality of INTRASTAT data. Several ideas, including the possibility of collecting and publishing the EC data at 6-digit level, and simplifications of the 8-digit codes were discussed without reaching any conclusion. At this early stage of discussions no recommendations have been put forward and certainly no decisions have been made.

The CSO has an open mind on this issue at the moment. On the one hand we have a remit to produce statistics of value to users; while on the other hand we continue to be committed to minimising burdens on business and improving the quality of the figures. Further consultation within government and with external users will be re-opened before a firm UK line emerges. Users will be kept posted on developments via the International Trade Statistics Users' Group. *Philip Turnbull can be contacted at the:*

Central Statistical Office, Great George Street, London SW1P 3AQ.
Telephone: 0171 270 6250.

Editor's notes: *INTRASTAT is the system introduced across the European Union in 1993 to collect intra-EU trade statistics. Fundamental to this system is that businesses provide information broken down by product tariff codes.* ***The International Trade Statistics Users' Group*** *can be contacted at:*

37-41 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4JH.

Departmental news correspondents for Statistical News

Sallie Taylor (Editor), Room D.134, Central Statistical Office, Cardiff Road, Newport, GWENT NP9 1XG

John Harrison Room D.115 Central Statistical Office Cardiff Road, Newport GWENT NP9 1XG	**Central Statistical Office**
Sunita Gould Portcullis House 27 Victoria Avenue Southend-on-Sea ESSEX SS2 6AL	**Customs & Excise**
Rick Loyd Room 143 Northumberland House Northumberland Avenue LONDON WC2N 5BP	**Ministry of Defence**
Jayne Harrison Room N619 Moorfoot SHEFFIELD S1 4PQ	**Employment Department**
Michelle Probert Room N5/17a 2 Marsham Street LONDON SW1P 3EB	**Department of Enviroment**
Graham Jackson Room 1G7 Ladywell House Ladywell Road EDINBURGH EH12 7TF	**General Register Office for Scotland**
Michael Barker Skipton House 80 London Road Elephant and Castle LONDON SE1 6LW	**Department of Health**
Jackie Orme Room 815 50 Queen Anne's Gate LONDON SW1H 9AT	**Home Office**

David Bailey Room 7/2 North West wing Bush House Aldwych LONDON WC2B 6RD	**Inland Revenue**
Alf Munster 6th Floor Trevelyan House Great Peter Street LONDON SW1P 2BY	**Lord Chancellor's Department**
Trevor Campbell Room 234 Parliament Buildings Stormont Belfast NORTHERN IRELAND BT4 3SS	**Northern Ireland Departments**
Penny Pease Room 302 22 Kingsway LONDON WC2B 6GG	**Office of Manpower Economics**
Gill Colmer St Catherine's House 10 Kingsway LONDON WC2B 6JP	**Office of Population Censuses and Surveys**
Edmund Rich Room 553 94 Victoria Street LONDON SW1E 5JL	**Overseas Development Administration**
Anne Sorbie Room G/50 New St.Andrew's House St James' Centre EDINBURGH EH1 3SZ	**Scottish Office**
Deborah Horn 10th Floor The Adelphi 1-11 John Adam Street LONDON WC2N 6HT	**Department of Social Security (London)**
Clare Robinson Room B2607 PO Box 2GB NEWCASTLE NE99 2GB	**Department of Social Security (Newcastle)**

Sandra Tudor 2/20 Green 151 Buckingham Palace Road LONDON SW1W 9SS	**Department of Trade and Industry**
Iain Bell Room A7/04 43 Marsham Street LONDON SW1P 3E8	**Department of Transport**
Paul Vickers Room 88/4 HMT Parliament Street LONDON SW1P 3AG	**Her Majesty's Treasury**
Paul Cronin Room 2-004 Cathays Park CARDIFF CF1 3NQ	**Welsh Office**

Articles in recent issues of Statistical News

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Firm agreements for supplying data to the national accounts	Stephen Penneck
Statistical liaison with local government: recent developments	Richard Laux
Recent developments in balance of payments statistics	Bruce Buckingham

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Family resource survey	Sharon Blackburn and Sue Lincoln

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Passing the TES(t): Training of European Statisticians	Darren Short
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Copies of the above and earlier articles may be obtained from: Central Statistical Office, Government Buildings, Cardiff Road, Newport, Gwent NP9 1XG, Library Room 1.001. The cost is £5 a copy, inclusive of postage and handling, for the articles listed, and for articles from earlier issues. The appropriate remittance should accompany each order. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to 'The Central Statistical Office'.

Statistical News - a quarterly publication from CSO.

Statistical News provides a comprehensive account of current developments in British official statistics to help all who use or would like to use official statistics.

Every issue contains two or more articles dealing with a subject in depth. Shorter notes give news of the latest developments in many fields, including international statistics. Some reference is made to other work which, though not carried out by government organisations, is closely related to official statistics. Appointments and other changes in the Government Statistical Service are also given. A cumulative index in the winter edition provides a permanent and comprehensive guide to developments in all areas of official statistics.

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