



Counting a Highly Mobile Population

The House of Commons Treasury Committee report "Counting the Population" which was published on 23rd May, has been welcomed by the Local Government Association (LGA).

The LGA has lobbied for an improvement in the way official population statistics are collected and the use of alternative measures of migration such as GP registrations, National Insurance Numbers and school census data.

The Treasury Sub-Committee's inquiry was undertaken in response to concerns expressed in the House of Commons, by Local Authorities and by others about the adequacy of current population statistics. It examined the current methods used to count the population and the impact of any inaccuracies or inadequacies within population estimates.

Among the recommendations in the report are that:

- the Government works with the Statistics Authority to ensure that strong ethical safeguards are put in place to protect the personal information held by Government departments.
- the Statistics Authority to set out the action that the Authority will take to develop the Government's administrative databases to provide a more accurate and cost effective method of monitoring the population National address register

- the Government consult the Statistics Authority and others to remove any outstanding obstacles to the production of a national address register.
- the Statistics Authority sets strategic objectives to ensure that the data currently gathered throughout the UK can be used to produce annual population statistics that are of a quality that will enable the 2011 Census to be the last census in the UK where the population is counted through the collection of census forms

Further information is available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmtreasy/183/18303.htm>

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