

## UK Data Forum meeting

Medical Research Council, 20 Park Crescent, London  
20<sup>th</sup> March 2006, 1.30pm-3.30pm

### Minutes

<b>Chair:</b>	Professor David Rhind	Vice-Chancellor, City University
<b>Members:</b>	Mr Nick Dyson Mr Keith Dugmore Dr Caroline Stone Mr Ricky Taylor (representing Sue Duncan) Mr Duncan Macniven Dr Malcolm Read Dr Jil Matheson Ms Sharon Jones Mr Richard Bartholomew Dr Kate Chamberlain Mr Steve Roberts (representing David Frazer) Dr Alan Doyle	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs Demographic Decisions Ltd Medical Research Council Cabinet Office  General Register Office for Scotland Joint Information Systems Committee Office for National Statistics Department for Work and Pensions Department for Education and Skills Welsh Assembly Government Department for Work and Pensions  Wellcome Trust
<b>Others:</b>	Mr Michael Bright Ms Lynne Conaghan Professor Peter Elias	Economic and Social Research Council University of Warwick University of Warwick
<b>Apologies:</b>	Dr Norman Caven Dr Bridget Rosewell Ms Karen Dunnell Mr David Frazer Dr Sharon Witherspoon Professor Paul Wiles Ms Sue Duncan Colin Blakemore Ms Claire Feary	Registrar General for Northern Ireland Office of the Mayor of London Office for National Statistics Department for Work and Pensions Nuffield Foundation Home Office Cabinet Office (Ricky Taylor representing) Medical Research Council Economic and Social Research Council

## 1. Minutes of Last meeting (UKDF/05/12)

1.1 Minutes from the last meeting were recorded and approved.

## 2. Matters arising

### 2.1 Minute 2.1 The Strategic Forum for the Social Sciences

The National Longitudinal Strategy Committee last meet on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2005 and provided comments on the draft National Data Strategy. These have now been incorporated into the latest version.

### 2.2 Minute 2.3 Contact with the Office of Science and Technology

Peter Elias reported there has been no further contact with the OST.

### 2.3 Minute 2.4 Generic Special License

A generic version of the Special Data Licence was now available, developed in the first instance to facilitate data exchange between the Centre for Longitudinal Studies and Sure Start researchers working on the Millennium Cohort. The UK Data Archive had agreed to operate the generic version of the licence in addition to the ONS version of the Special Licence. It was agreed that a copy would be sent to Nick Dyson and Paul Wiles.

**Action:**  
**PE**

### 2.4 Minute 6.3 Large Facilities Bid

Members were advised that the bid to the Large Facilities Capital Fund, to fund a new Household Longitudinal Study, had been favourably received, but the amount of money available would be significantly less than had been bid for. The ESRC was now awaiting Ministerial approval to release the funds, with a decision expected by the end of the month.

Members agreed that the ESRC and the ONS would need to coordinate work carefully as the plans to develop and implement the new Household Longitudinal Study progressed.

**Action: MB,**  
**JM, PE**

## 3. The National Data Strategy and plans for dissemination (UKDF/06/17 and 18)

Members considered the latest draft of the National Strategy for Data Resources for the Social Sciences. A number of points were raised in the ensuing discussion:

- There was a need to ensure that the ownership of the document was clear. It was agreed that Ian Diamond would produce a Foreword and David Rhind would prepare an Introduction.
- Reference should be included to efforts to improve and develop further the research methods agenda.
- The document should be illustrated with examples of current developments in the areas of data linkage and with reference to

**Action:**  
**All**

multidisciplinary research efforts.

It was agreed that these points and any other comments from members would be taken on board before the document was submitted for printing.

#### **4. Progress on implementation of the National Data Strategy (UKDF/06/19)**

##### **4.1 Review of Panel and Cohort Studies**

This Review had been conducted over the latter part of 2005; the team had reported their findings and the report published. Appended to Paper UKDF/06/19 were the main recommendations arising from the Review. The ESRC Research Resources Board was progressing work to address all of the recommendations arising from the Review.

The two key recommendations were to enhance the British Household Panel Study. This had now been addressed through the bid to the Large Facilities Capital Fund. The second recommendation was for a further cohort study to be initiated in or around 2012.

Members were asked to note all the recommendations and provide any useful comments to Peter Elias for him to channel them through a small group that was being established to progress the recommendations arising from the Review and will channel to them for the ESRC group. Members queried the membership of this group and were advised that the ESRC had recommended that the group should consist of: Peter Elias, Lindsay Paterson, James Nazroo, Maria Evandrou and Jean Martin. It was suggested that a member of the ONS should be included in this group. This was agreed.

**Action:  
MB**

Members agreed that there was a need to give some active consideration in the future to the design of longitudinal cohort studies and how they connect with administrative data.

**Action:  
All**

##### **4.2 Census 2011**

Peter Elias reported back on discussion he had held with ONS Census staff and Professor Dave Martin, the ESRC Census Data Co-ordinator. It had been agreed that the ONS would produce a strategy document covering all of their aspects of Census outputs and user requirements, to be produced in time of the next meeting of the UK Data Forum.

##### **4.3 Review of International Data Needs and Resources**

Following on from this Review, the ESRC had agreed a series of actions designed to improve knowledge about and access to a wider range of research resources for international collaborative or comparative research. These included:

- taking stock of and considering gaps in the existing portfolio of international data resources held at or due to be acquired shortly by ESDS International.
- engaging with Eurostat with a view towards improving research access to the major harmonised micro-data sets held by Eurostat.

- considering an application for funding for two further waves of the International Social Survey Programme. Examining the feasibility of British participation in the World Values Survey.
- commissioning a series of exploratory studies on the availability of survey and administrative data for South Africa, India, China and the countries of Central/South America (esp. Mexico, Brazil, Argentina).
- working closely with social science research funding agencies in the above countries/regions to facilitate the acquisition of social and economic data.

A report on these activities would be made at the next meeting of the UK Data Forum.

**Action:**  
**PE**

#### **4.4 Access to linked bio-medical and socio-economic survey data**

Peter Elias reported on meetings he had held with MRC and Wellcome staff, to consider the way forward for the development of common governance arrangements for studies which combined socio-economic information with bio-medical data. The ESRC, MRC and Wellcome had agreed to develop a framework document for wider discussion. The framework document would be circulated to UK Data Forum members at the next meeting.

**Action:**  
**PE**

#### **4.5 Access to data in a safe-setting**

Peter Elias reported on a meeting he had with ONS, Newport on this issue. It had been agreed that he would help the ONS to prepare a strategy document. This would elaborate upon the relationship between the ONS Virtual Data Laboratory and the needs of the academic community to gain research access to official datasets held within this facility.

**Action:**  
**PE**

### **5. Future actions (UKDF/06/20)**

Peter Elias explained that he had received a number of comments to the effect that the strategy has not been specific enough about data on organisations. To address these concerns, two related proposals were being developed. The first would look at the availability of data on organisations, to determine what data are available versus research needs. The second would investigate the possibility of opening up research access to databases which have commercial value and were owned by private sector organisations.

**Action:**  
**PE**

### **6. The devolved administrations and the National Data Strategy**

Members discussed the mechanisms established for consultation with the devolved administrations. Representatives of the devolved administrations suggested that regular contact between their staff and the ESRC should be maintained. In particular, as the devolved administrations developed their own research strategies, there was a need to ensure that these were consistent with the approach being developed via the UK Data Forum.

**7. Any other business**

No other business

**8. Date of next meeting**

It was suggested that the next meeting would be held in September 2006.